Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
5 May 2025

News release

Tanzanians prefer elections as means of choosing their leaders, express high levels of trust in the electoral commission

An overwhelming majority of Tanzanians endorse elections as the best way to choose their leaders and express trust in the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), the latest Afrobarometer survey shows.

Most citizens say they feel free to vote for the candidate of their choice and continue to rate recent national elections as free and fair, either entirely or with only minor problems. Public evaluations of electoral fairness have remained consistently high since 2005.

Ahead of general elections in October 2025, these findings point to a resilient belief in the value and legitimacy of electoral democracy in Tanzania.

Key findings

- Almost nine out of 10 Tanzanians (88%) say regular, open, and honest elections are the best way to choose their leaders (Figure 1).
- Nearly all Tanzanians say they feel "completely free" (86%) or "somewhat free" (12%) to choose whom to vote for without feeling pressured (Figure 2).
- About eight in 10 citizens (79%) say they trust the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) "somewhat" or "a lot." Only 8% express "just a little" trust, while 7% say they do not trust the commission at all (Figure 3).
    - While not as high as in 2005 (87%) and 2021 (85%), levels of trust in the commission have recovered from lows between 2012 and 2017 (57%-67%) (Figure 4).
- More than eight in 10 Tanzanians (84%) say the last national election, held in 2020, was "completely free and fair" or "free and fair with minor problems." Assessments of election quality have remained fairly stable for the past two decades (Figure 5).

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. Nine survey rounds in up to 42 countries have been completed since 1999. Round 10 were launched in January 2024. Afrobarometer's national partners conduct face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Tanzania, led by REPOA, interviewed a nationally representative sample of 2,400 adult citizens of Tanzania in June-July 2024. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-2 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys were conducted in Tanzania in 2001, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017, 2021, and 2022.

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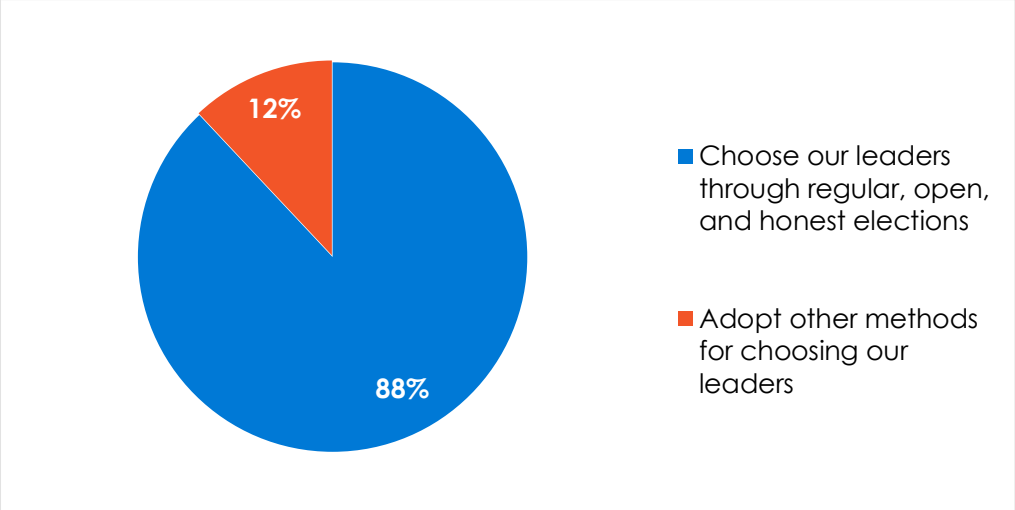
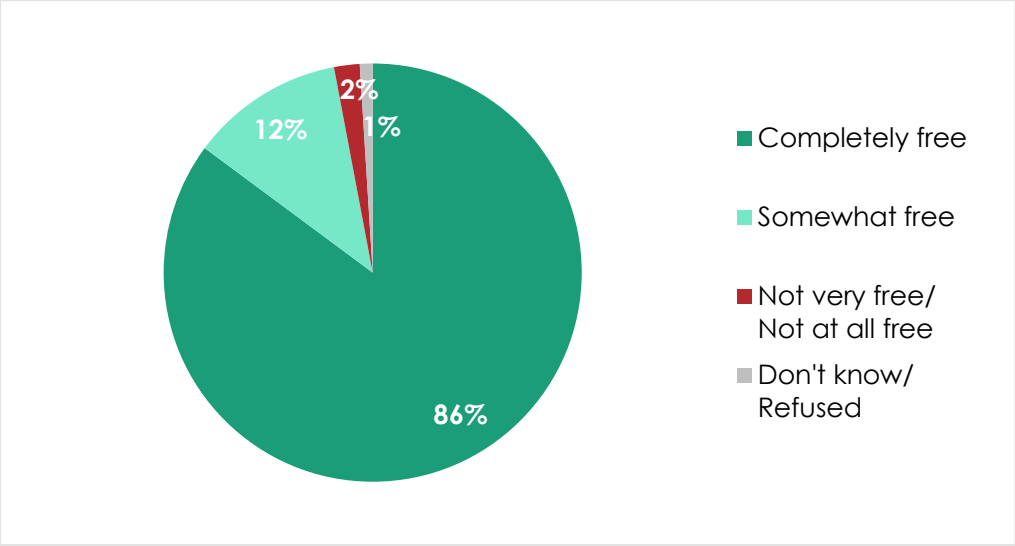
Charts

Figure 1: Preference for elections | Tanzania | 2024



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.

Figure 2: Freedom to choose whom to vote for | Tanzania | 2024



Respondents were asked: *In this country, how free are you to choose who to vote for without feeling pressured?*

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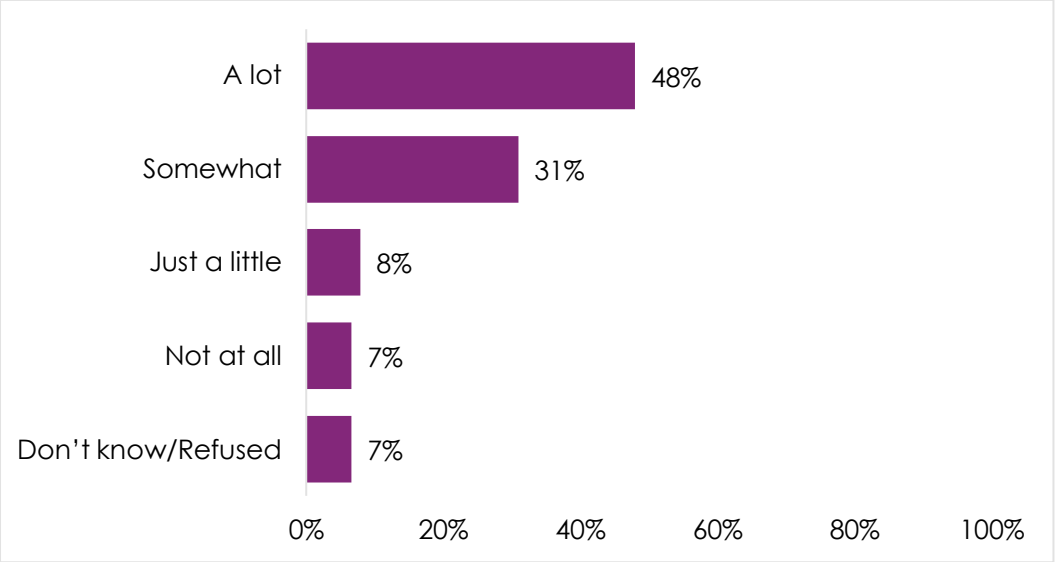
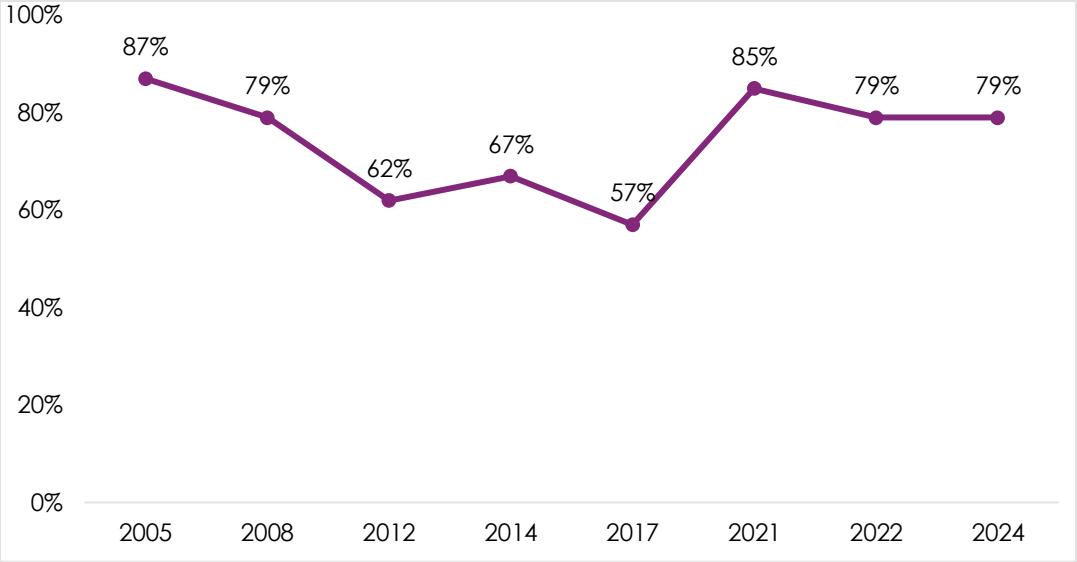
Figure 3: Trust in the electoral commission | Tanzania | 2024



Respondents were asked: *How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: The Independent National Electoral Commission or INEC?*

Figure 4: Trust in the electoral commission | Tanzania | 2005-2024



Respondents were asked: *How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: The Independent National Electoral Commission or INEC? (% who say "somewhat" or "a lot")*

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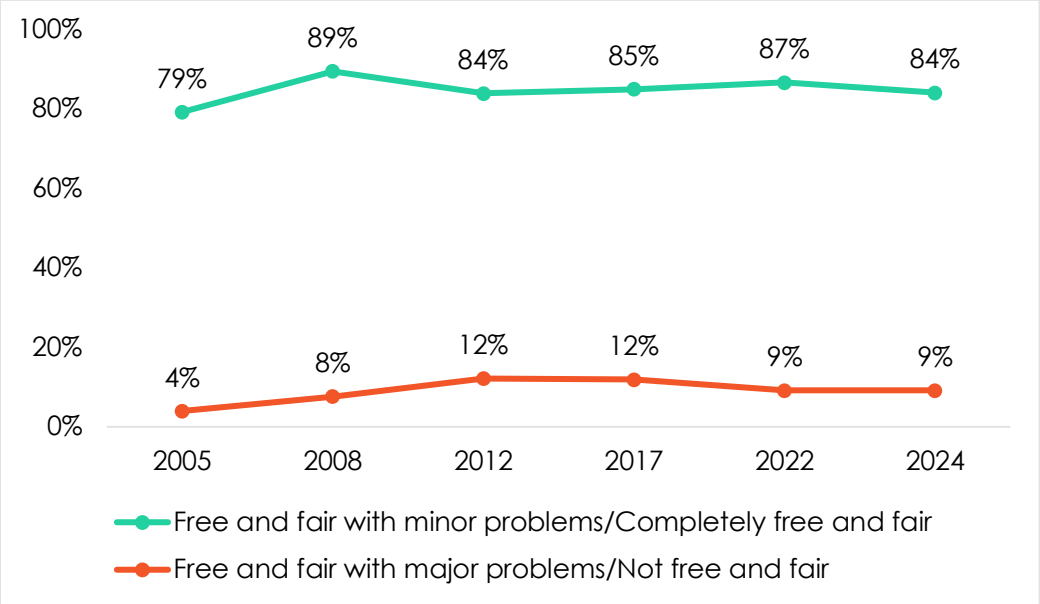
Figure 5: Freeness and fairness of the last national election | Tanzania | 2005-2024



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

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