Abuja, Nigeria
11 November 2026

News release

Nigerians doubt electoral fairness ahead of 2027 polls, expect widespread abuses, latest Afrobarometer survey shows

Nigerians express limited confidence in the credibility of next year's elections, according to a new Afrobarometer survey.

Fewer than four in 10 citizens think the 2027 elections will be free and fair. Most expect there to be vote buying and political violence, while overwhelming majorities also suspect that valid votes will not be counted, that political parties and candidates will disregard electoral laws, and that incorrect results will be announced.

Political disengagement is also evident, as about two-thirds of citizens say they do not feel close to any political party. However, roughly the same proportion say they are likely to vote, including almost half who say they are "very likely" to do so.

Despite their concerns, Nigerians demonstrate a strong preference for inclusive national leadership. An overwhelming majority of potential voters say that their votes will be determined by candidates' stands on policy issues.

But significant shares also indicate that they will vote for a candidate from their state, a candidate of their religious group, a candidate of their ethnic group, or a candidate who bribes them with money or a gift.

Key findings

- Only about one-third (35%) of citizens say the 2023 Nigerian election was "completely free and fair" or "free and fair with minor problems" (Figure 1).
- Just one in three respondents (33%) say they feel close to a political party (Figure 2).
- Almost two-thirds (64%) of Nigerians say they are likely to vote in the 2027 elections, including 48% who say they are "very likely" to do so (Figure 3).
    - Among potential voters, an overwhelming majority (92%) say they intend to vote for a presidential candidate whose policies they agree with (Figure 4).
    - Roughly one-third say they will vote a candidate from their state (33%), a candidate of their religious faith (32%), or a candidate of their ethnic group (31%), while 19% would elect someone who gave them money or a gift.
- Only 37% expect the upcoming election to be largely free and fair, while 48% believe it will be neither free nor fair (Figure 5).
- Large majorities of Nigerians anticipate electoral abuses in the 2027 elections: Nearly nine in 10 (89%) consider vote buying likely, while about eight in 10 foresee valid votes not being counted (79%), political violence (79%), political parties and candidates disregarding electoral laws (78%), and incorrect election results being announced (78%) (Figure 6).

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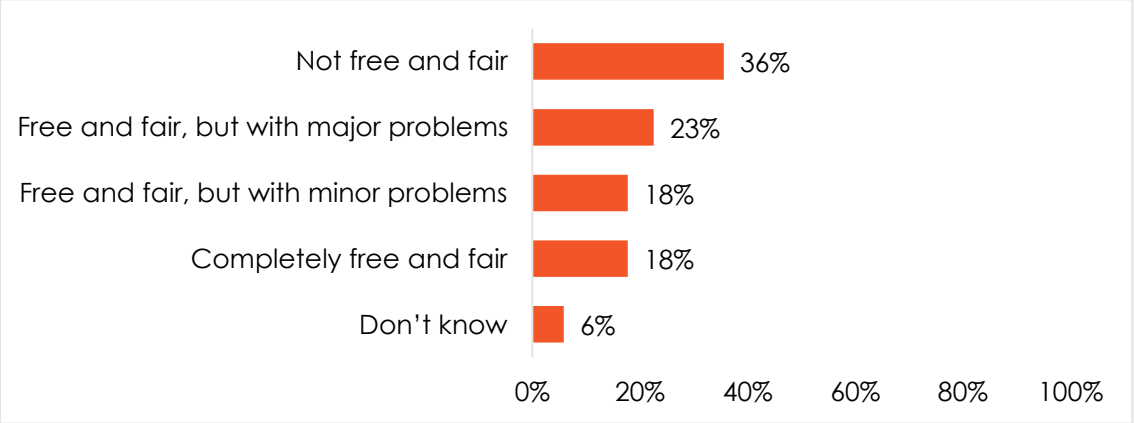
Afrobarometer surveys

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. Ten survey rounds in up to 45 countries have been completed since 1999. Round 11 surveys were launched in May 2026.

The Afrobarometer team in Nigeria, led by NOIPolls, interviewed a nationally representative, random, stratified probability sample of 1,600 adult Nigerians in June-July 2024. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-2.5 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. For more on our sampling methodology, click here. Previous standard surveys were conducted in Nigeria in 2000, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2020, 2022, and 2024.

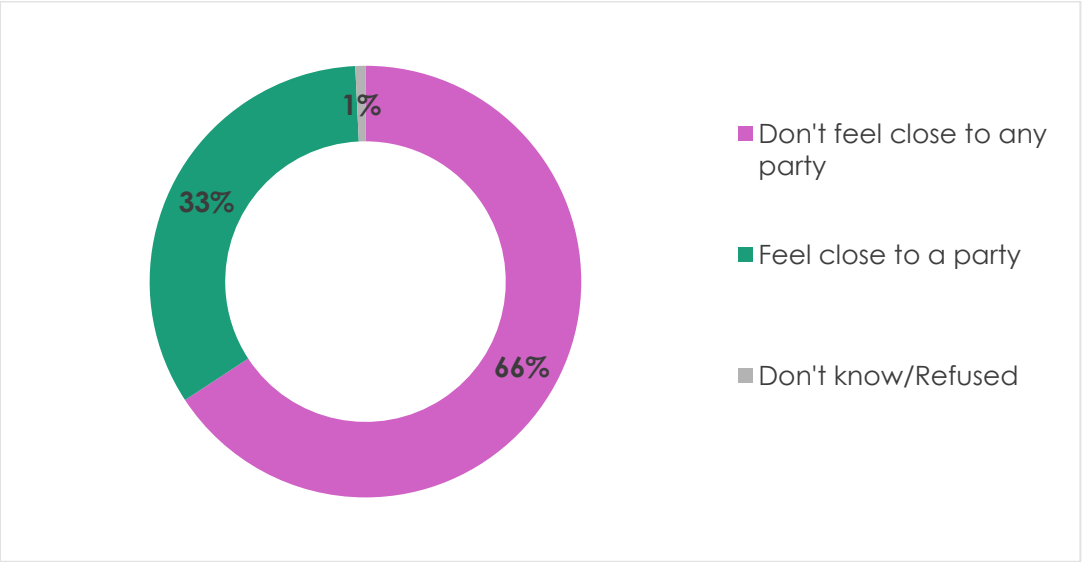
Charts

Figure 1: Freeness and fairness of the last election | Nigeria | 2026



Respondents were asked: *On the whole, how would you rate the freeness and fairness of the last national election, held in 2023?*

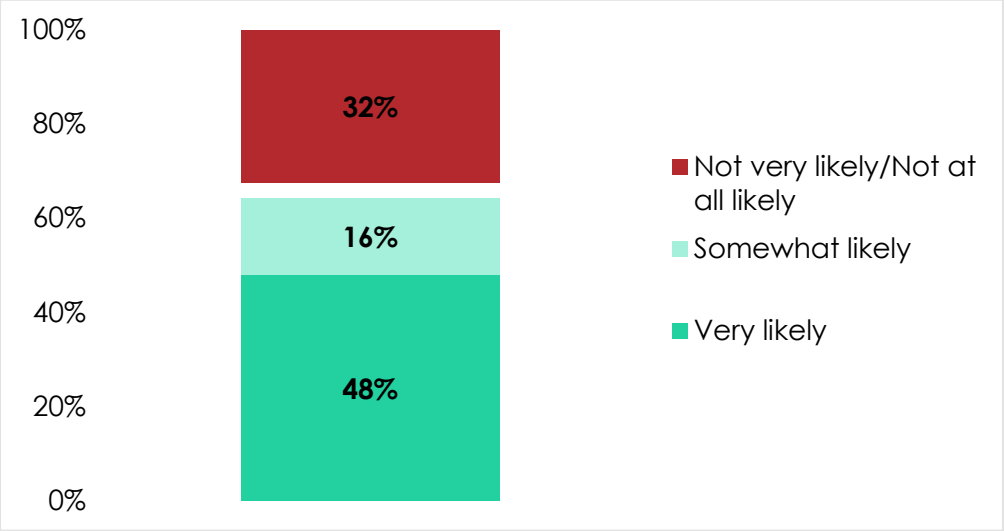
Figure 2: Feel close to political party? | Nigeria | 2026



Respondents were asked: *Do you feel close to any particular political party?*

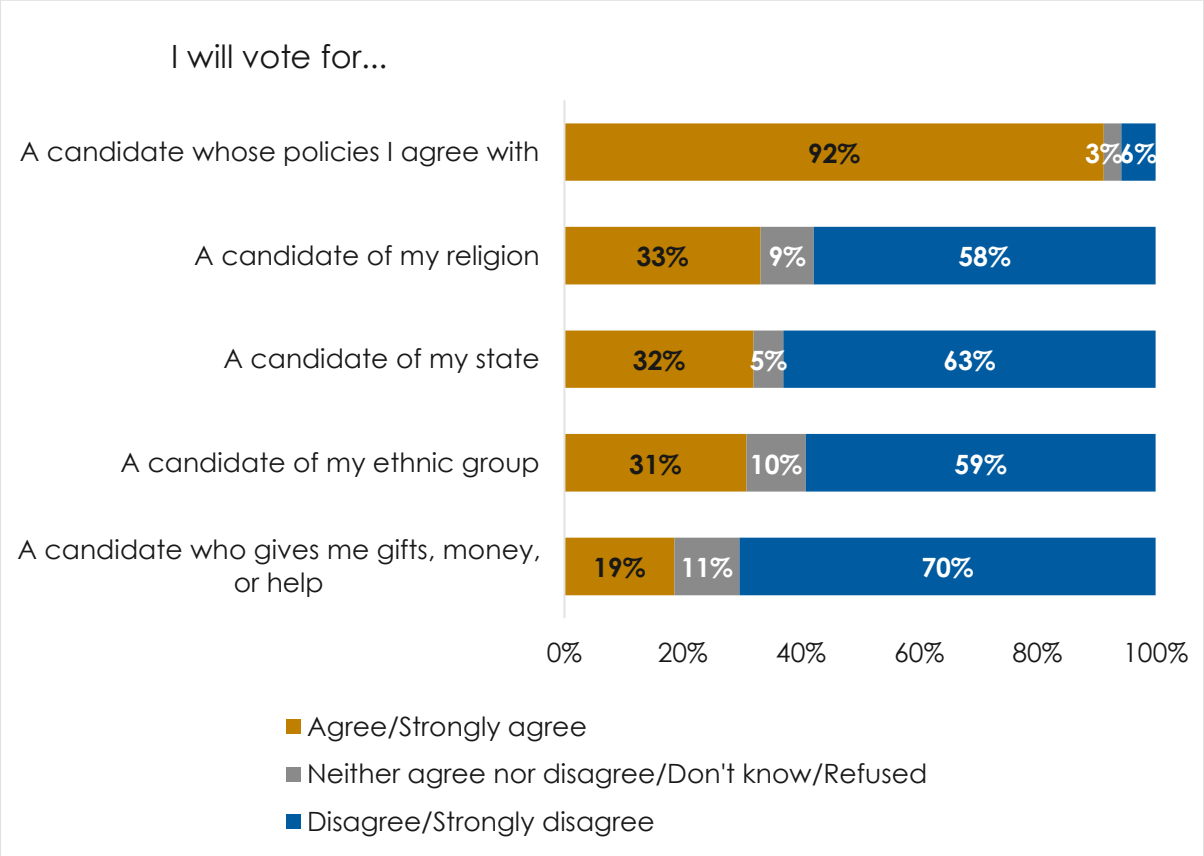
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Figure 3: Likelihood of voting in next election | Nigeria | 2026



Respondents were asked: *Thinking about the forthcoming elections in 2027, how likely is it that you will vote for a candidate in the presidential election?*

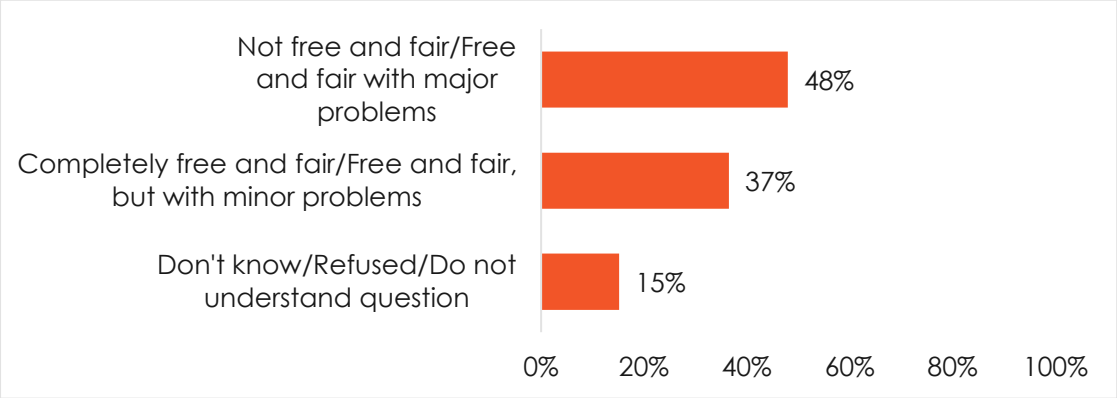
Figure 4: How citizens will vote | Nigeria | 2026



Respondents who say they are likely to vote in the 2027 general elections were asked: *Please tell me whether you disagree or agree with the following statements with regard to the 2027 presidential election. (Respondents who say they are not likely to vote were excluded.)*

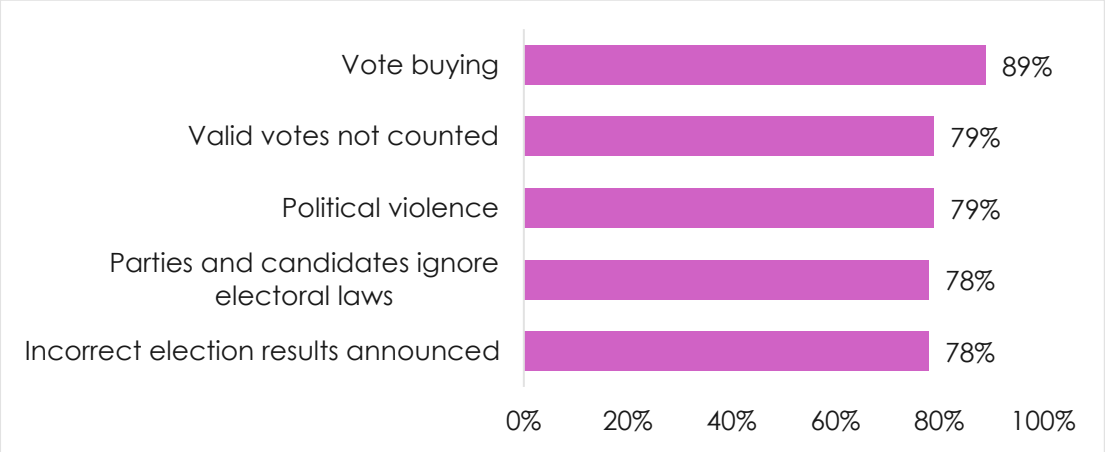
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Figure 5: Expected election freedom and fairness | Nigeria | 2026



Respondents were asked: *How free and fair do you expect the 2027 presidential and legislative elections to be?*

Figure 6: Likely to occur on Election Day | Nigeria | 2026



Respondents were asked*: Thinking about the upcoming 2027 presidential and legislative elections, how likely do you think the following will occur:*

Political parties and candidates will ignore electoral laws?
Political parties or candidates will engage in vote buying?
Supporters of political parties or candidates will engage in violence?
Some valid votes will not be counted?
An incorrect result will be announced after the counting of ballots?

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