



Nigeria's February 14 elections: Popular opinions and attitudes

Findings from the Round 6 Afrobarometer survey in Nigeria



At a glance

- Nigerians are generally dissatisfied with current economic conditions and the government's performance on key issues.
- Most say they are free to vote as they choose, but fear of political intimidation or violence has increased sharply.
- Views of the INEC are mixed.
- Based on voting preferences expressed in December 2014, the PDP and APC are running neck and neck.



What is Afrobarometer?



- An African-led, non-partisan survey research project that measures citizen attitudes on democracy and governance, the economy, civil society, and other topics.
- Started in 12 countries in 1999, expanded to more than 30 African countries in Round 5 (2011-2013).
- **Goal:** To give the public a voice in policy making by providing high-quality public opinion data to policymakers, policy advocates, civil society organisations, academics, news media, donors and investors, and ordinary Africans.
- National partners in each country conduct the survey. In Nigeria, the Afrobarometer Round 6 survey was conducted by Practical Sampling International (PSI) in collaboration with the CLEEN Foundation.

Where Afrobarometer works



Methodology

- Nationally representative sample of adult citizens
 - *All respondents are randomly selected.*
 - *Sample is distributed across regions and urban-rural areas in proportion to their share in the national population.*
 - *Sample covered 33 of Nigeria's 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory.*
 - *It was not possible to conduct interviews in Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe due to unrest in the region, so substitutions of sampling units were made from neighbouring states in the same zone.*
 - *Each zone is represented in the sample in proportion to its share of 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.

Methodology (cont.)



- Standard questionnaire allows comparisons across countries and over time.
- Sample size of 2,400 yields a margin of error of $\pm 2\%$ at a 95% confidence level.
- Fieldwork for Round 6 in Nigeria was conducted between 5 and 27 December 2014. (For 80 cases, supplementary interviews were conducted on 18 and 19 January 2015.)



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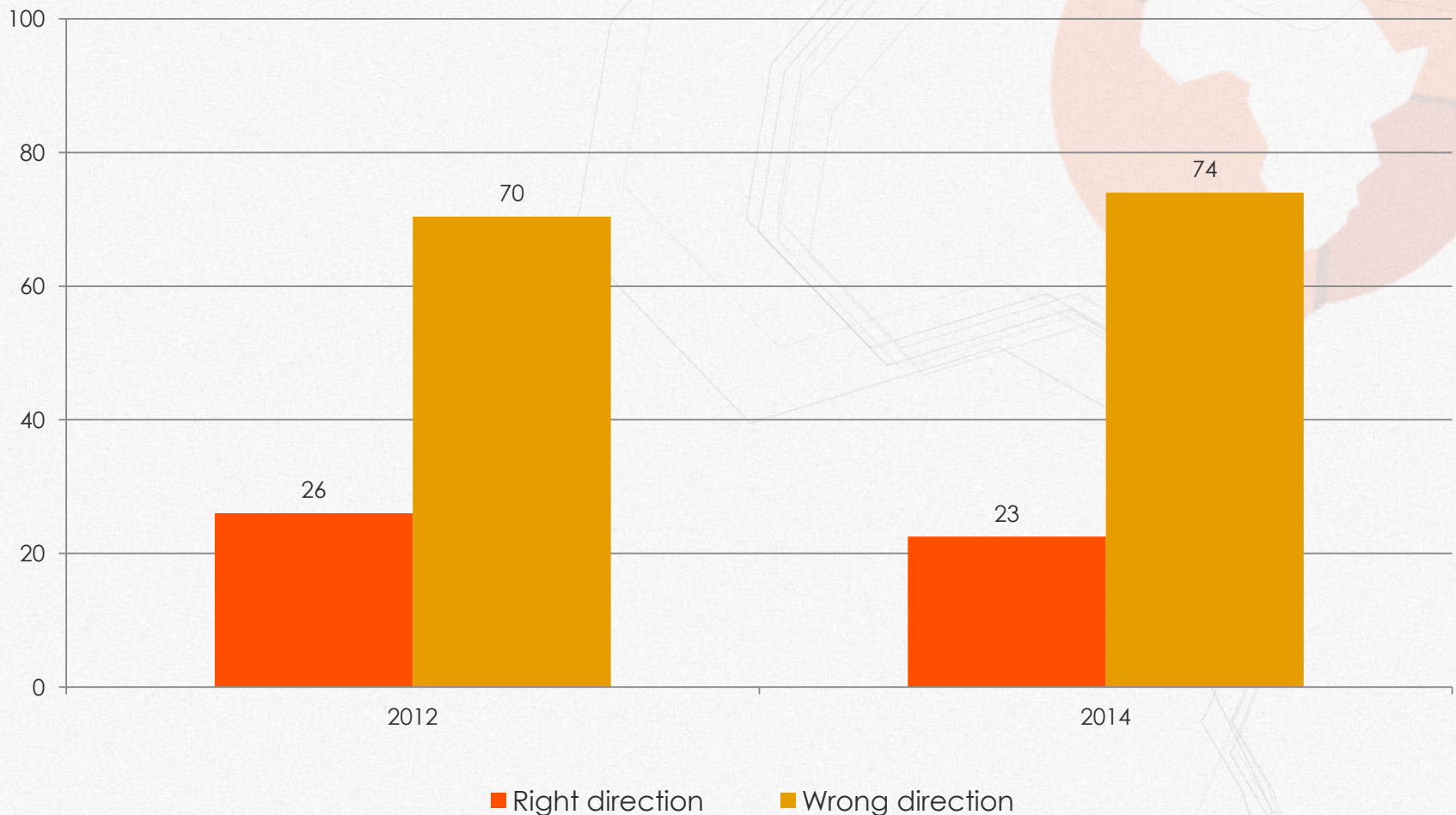
National context

Key findings – national context

- Three-quarters (74%) of Nigerians say the country is headed in the wrong direction.
- Satisfaction with democracy is low (29%).
- A majority (57%) say the economy is in bad shape.
- The public gives poor ratings for government performance in many sectors (economic management, creating jobs, fighting corruption, providing a reliable supply of electricity).
 - People are evenly divided in their assessments of the response to insecurity caused by armed extremists.
 - Response to Ebola is the major exception (94% positive).

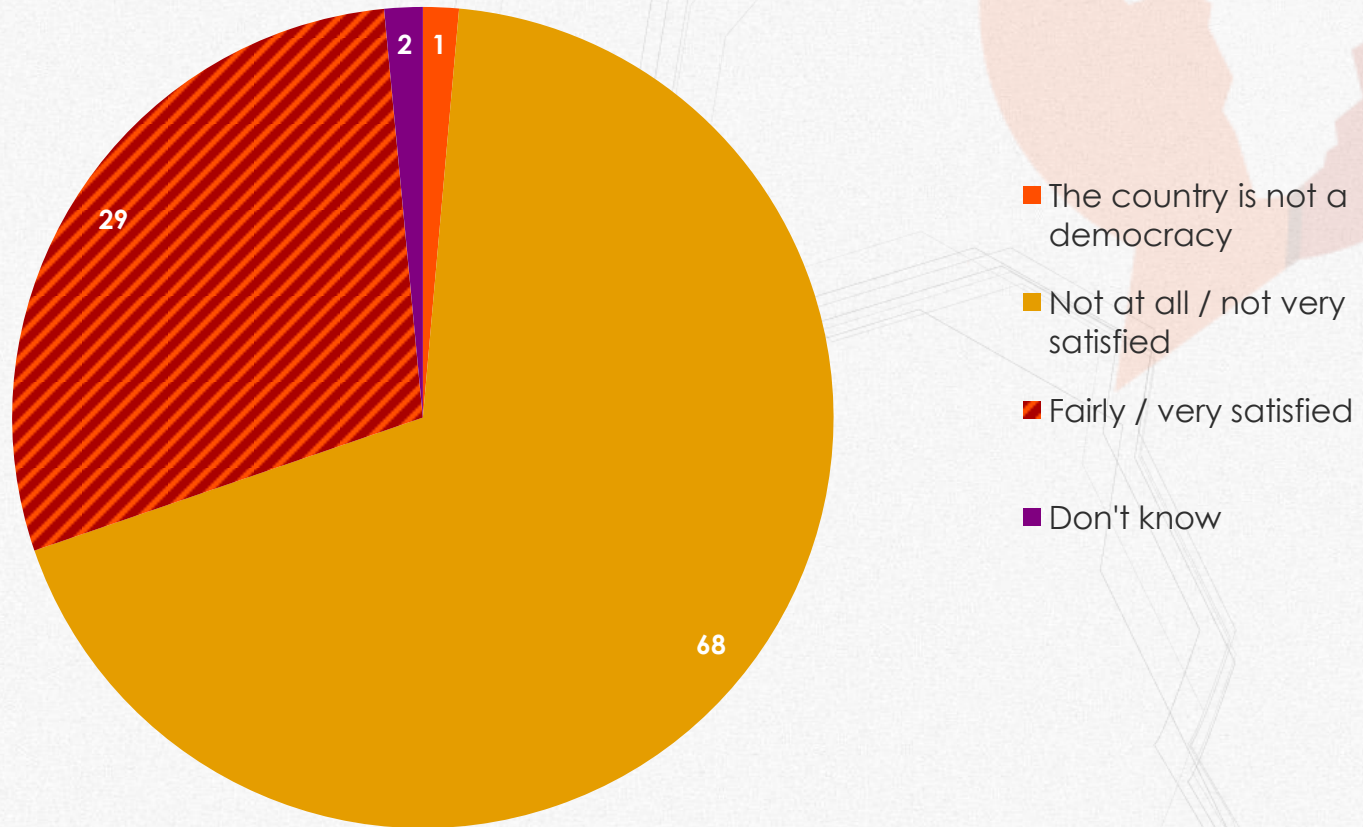


Overall direction of the country | 2012-2014



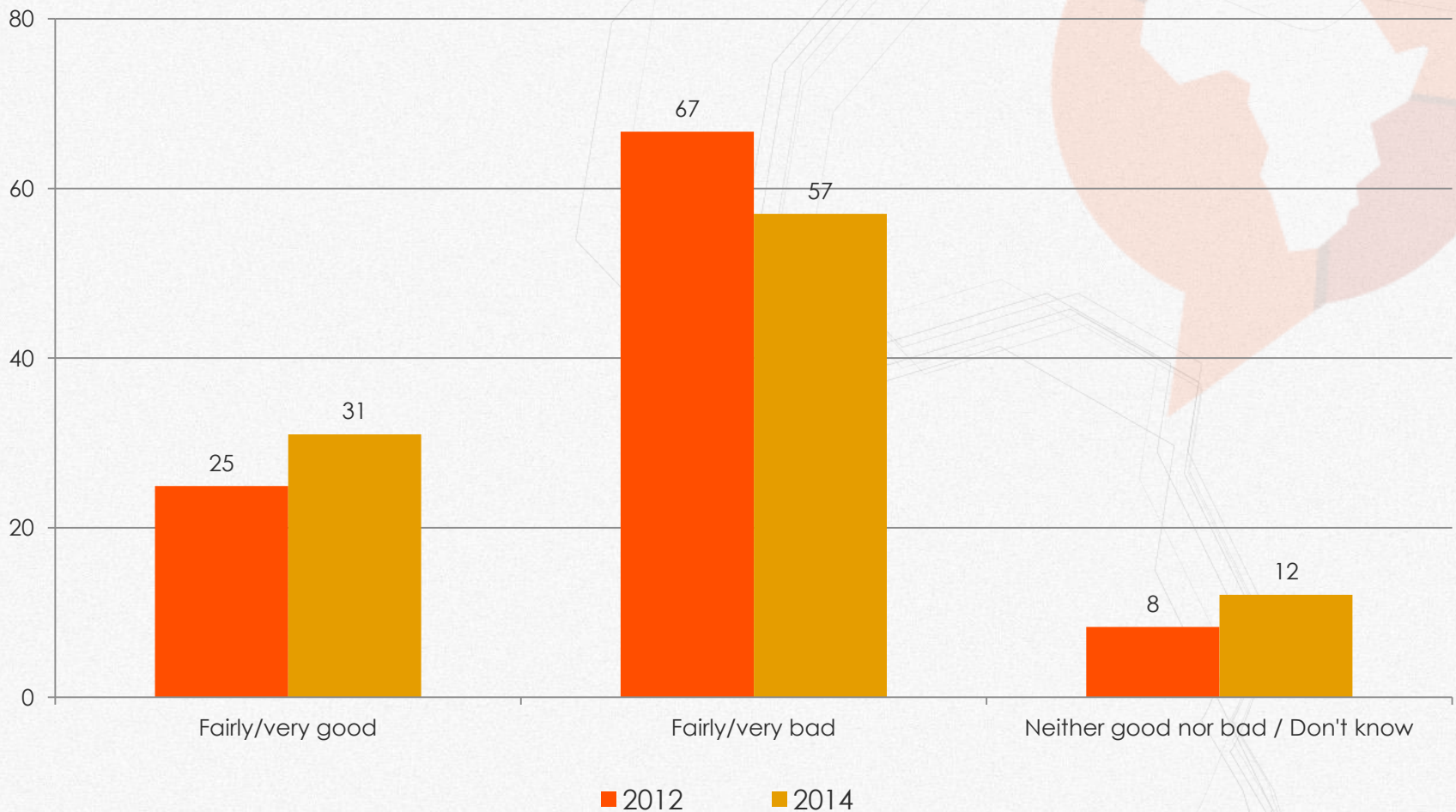
Respondents were asked: *Would you say that the country is going in the wrong direction or going in the right direction? (%)*

Satisfaction with democracy | 2014



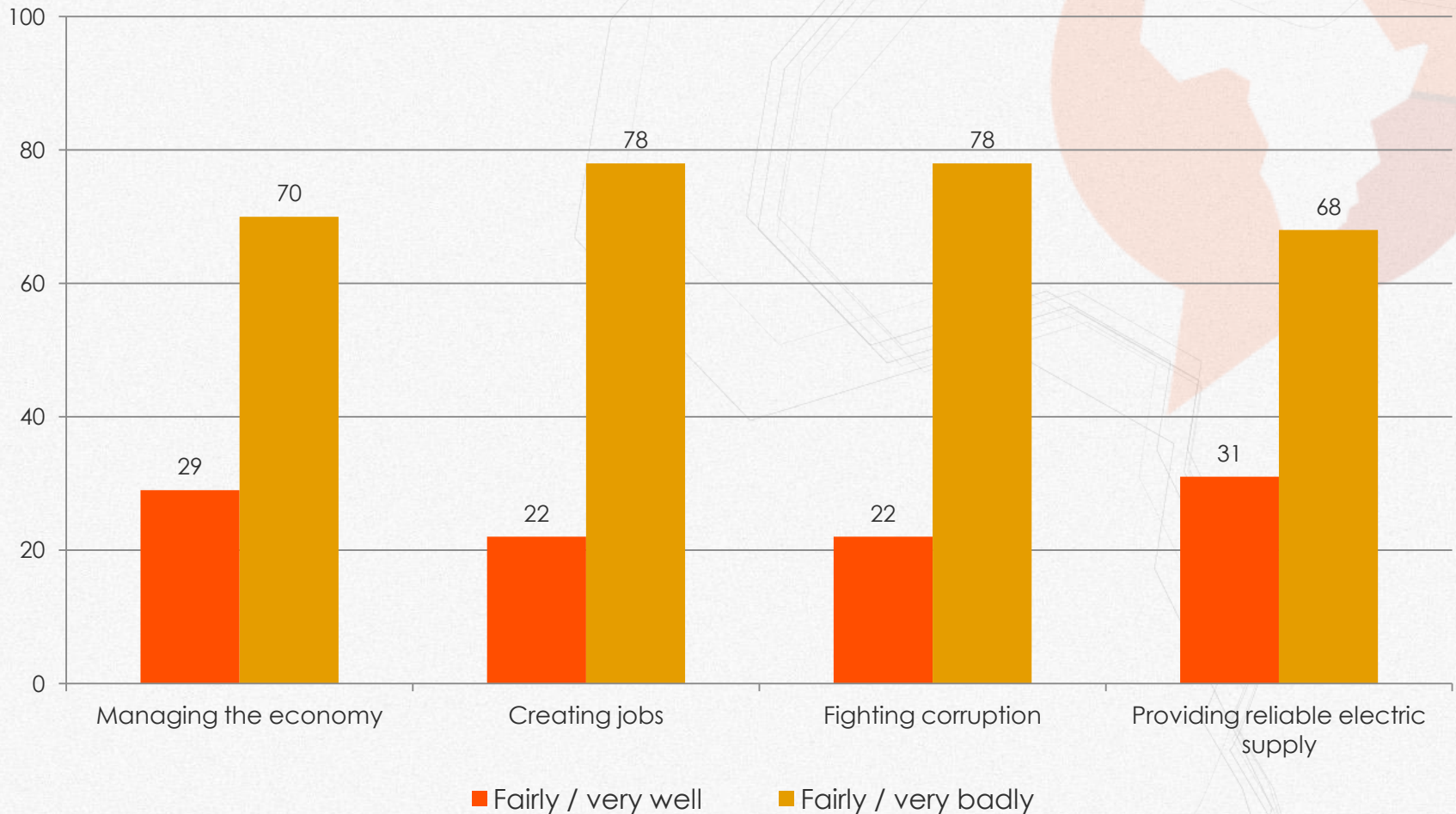
Respondents were asked: Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in Nigeria? (%)

Condition of the national economy | 2012-2014



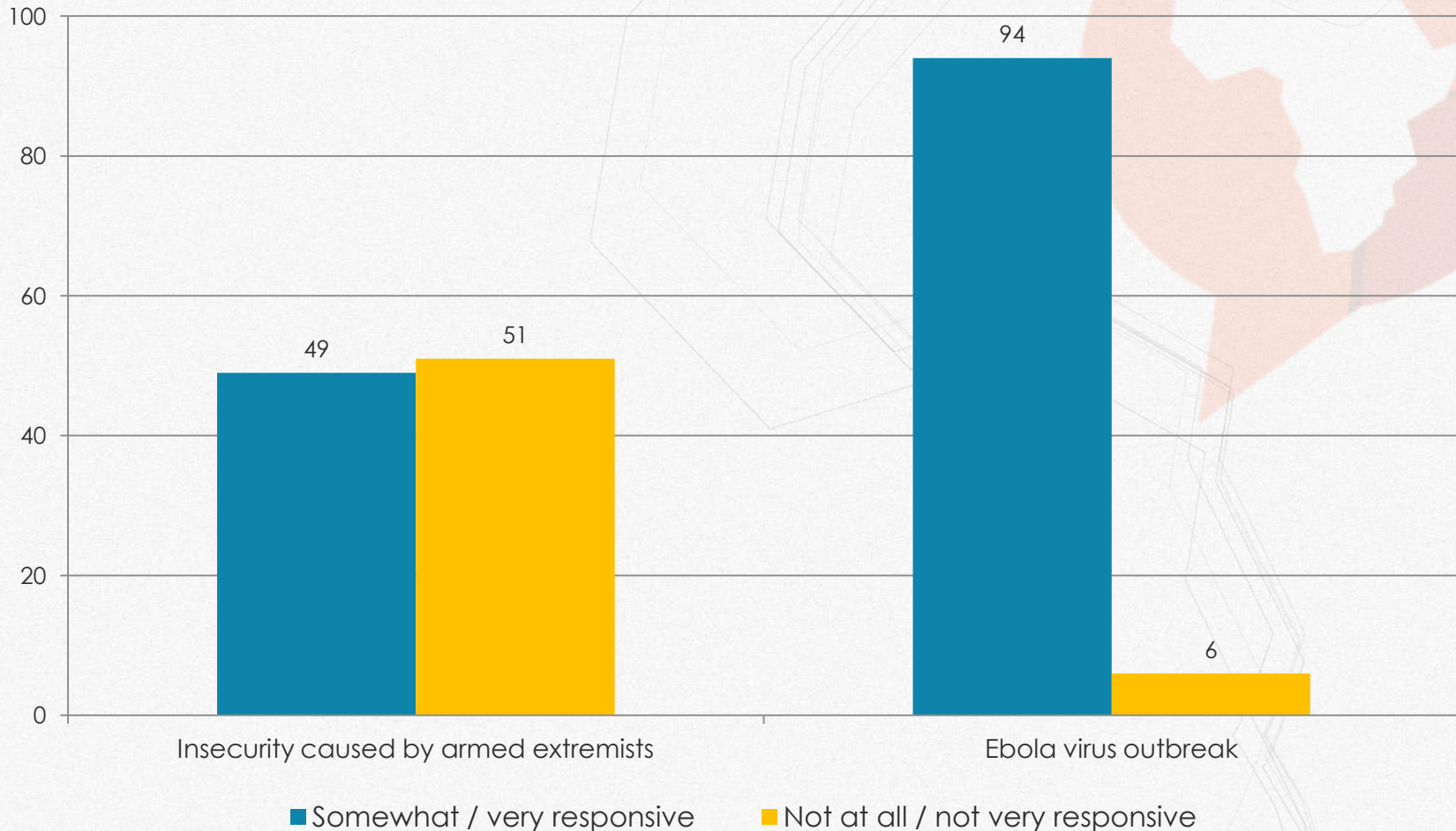
Respondents were asked: *In general, how would you describe the present economic condition of this country? (%)*

Government handling of key issues and priorities | 2014



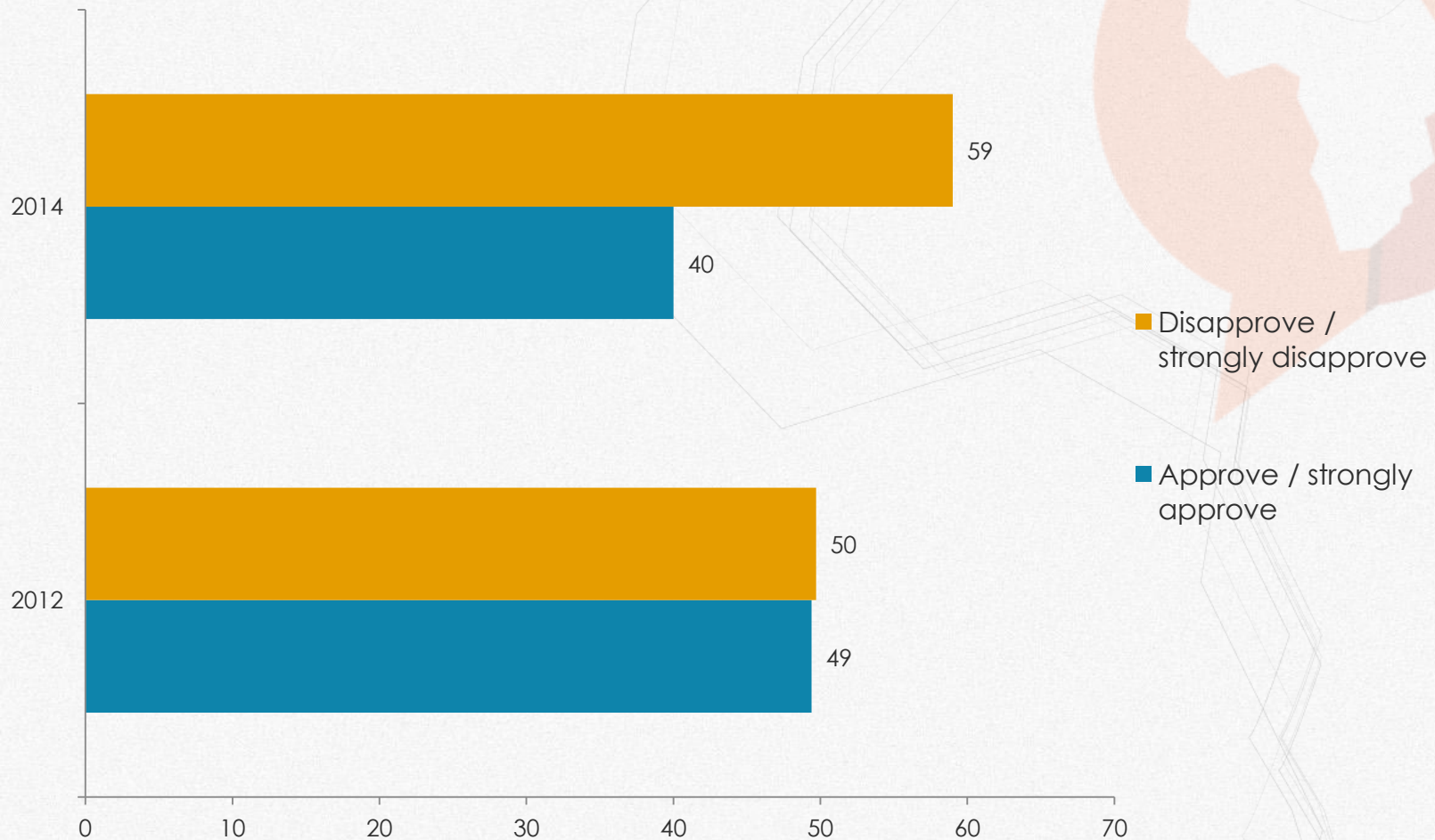
Respondents were asked: *How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say? (%)*

Government responsiveness to national emergencies | 2014



Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, how responsive do you think the federal government has been to the following emergencies? (%)*

Approval of presidential performance | 2012-2014



Respondents were asked: *Do you approve or disapprove of the way that President Goodluck Jonathan has performed his job over the past 12 months, or haven't you heard enough to say? (%)*



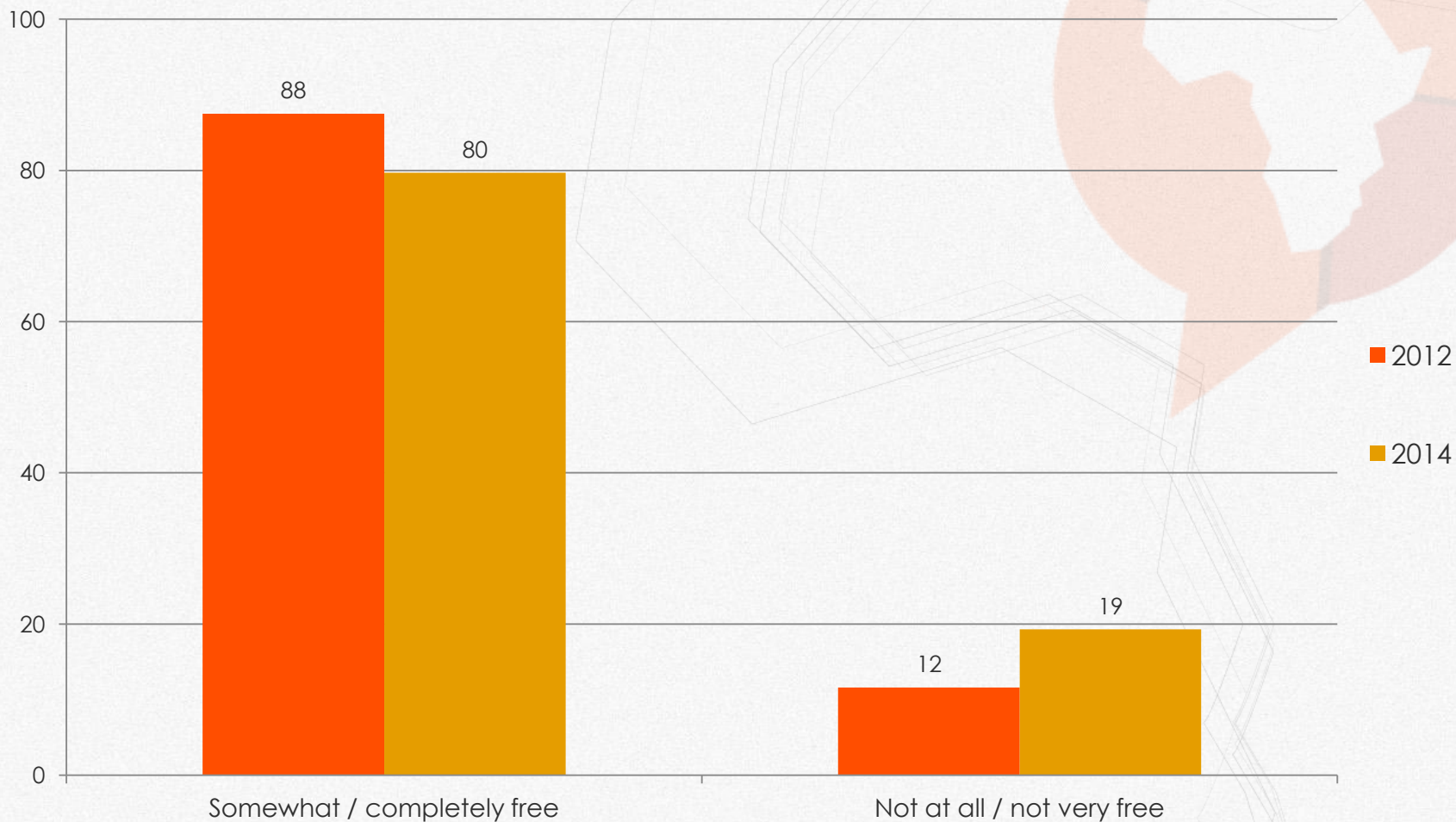
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The election environment

Key findings – election environment

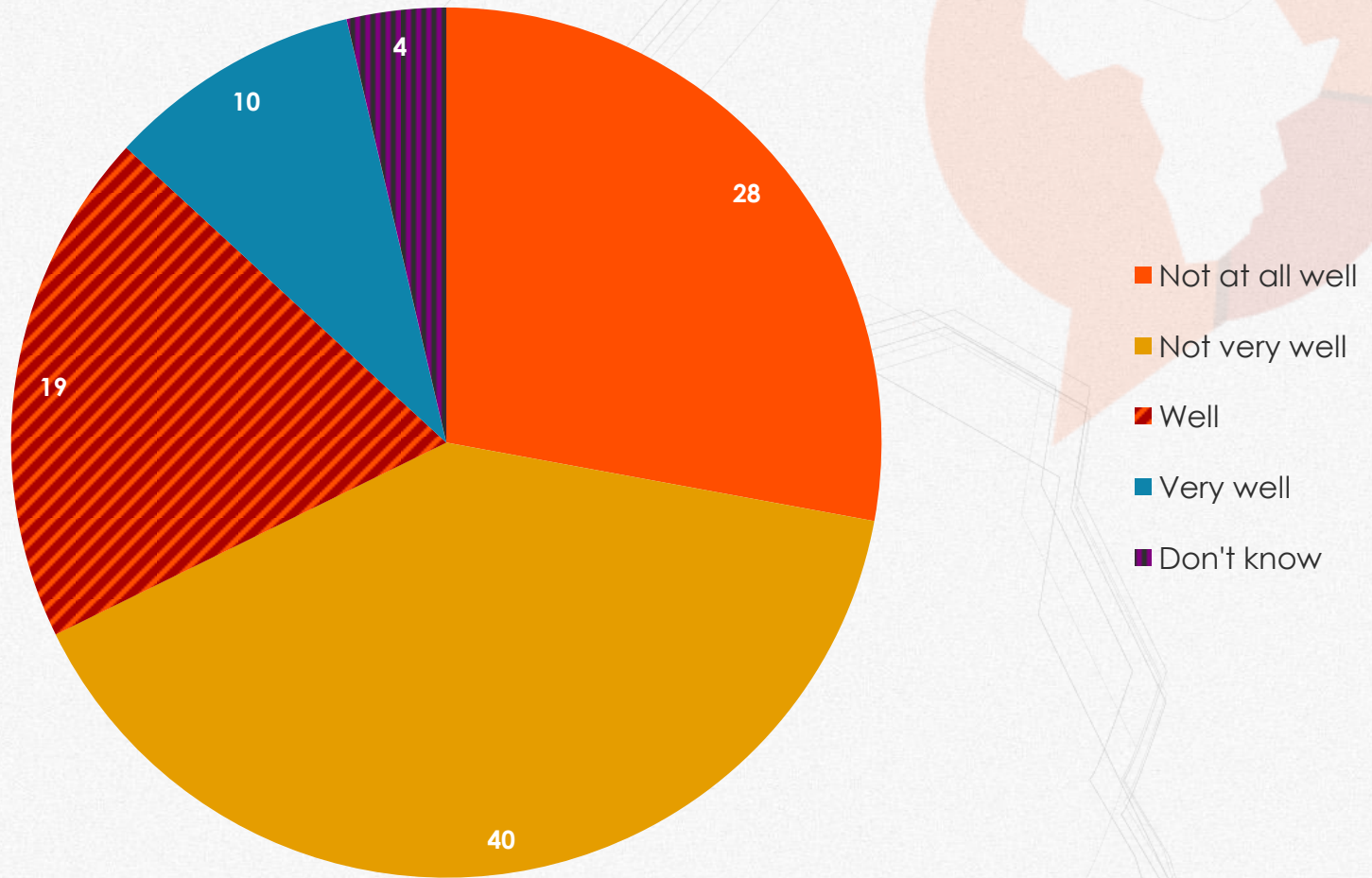
- Three-fourths (77%) of Nigerians say elections are the best system for choosing leaders.
- 80% feel free to vote as they choose, down from 88% in 2012.
- In practice, significant concerns about elections in Nigeria:
 - 68% lack confidence in elections as a means to “enable voters to remove from office leaders who do not do what the people want.”
 - Only 23% believe that elections are “often” or “always” determined by a fair count of votes.
 - Only 35% consider that there is “often” or “always” fair media coverage of campaigns.
 - 57% say electoral bribery happens frequently.
- 50% fear electoral intimidation or violence, a dramatic increase from 34% two years ago.

Freedom to vote as you choose | 2012-2014



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

Election efficacy | 2014

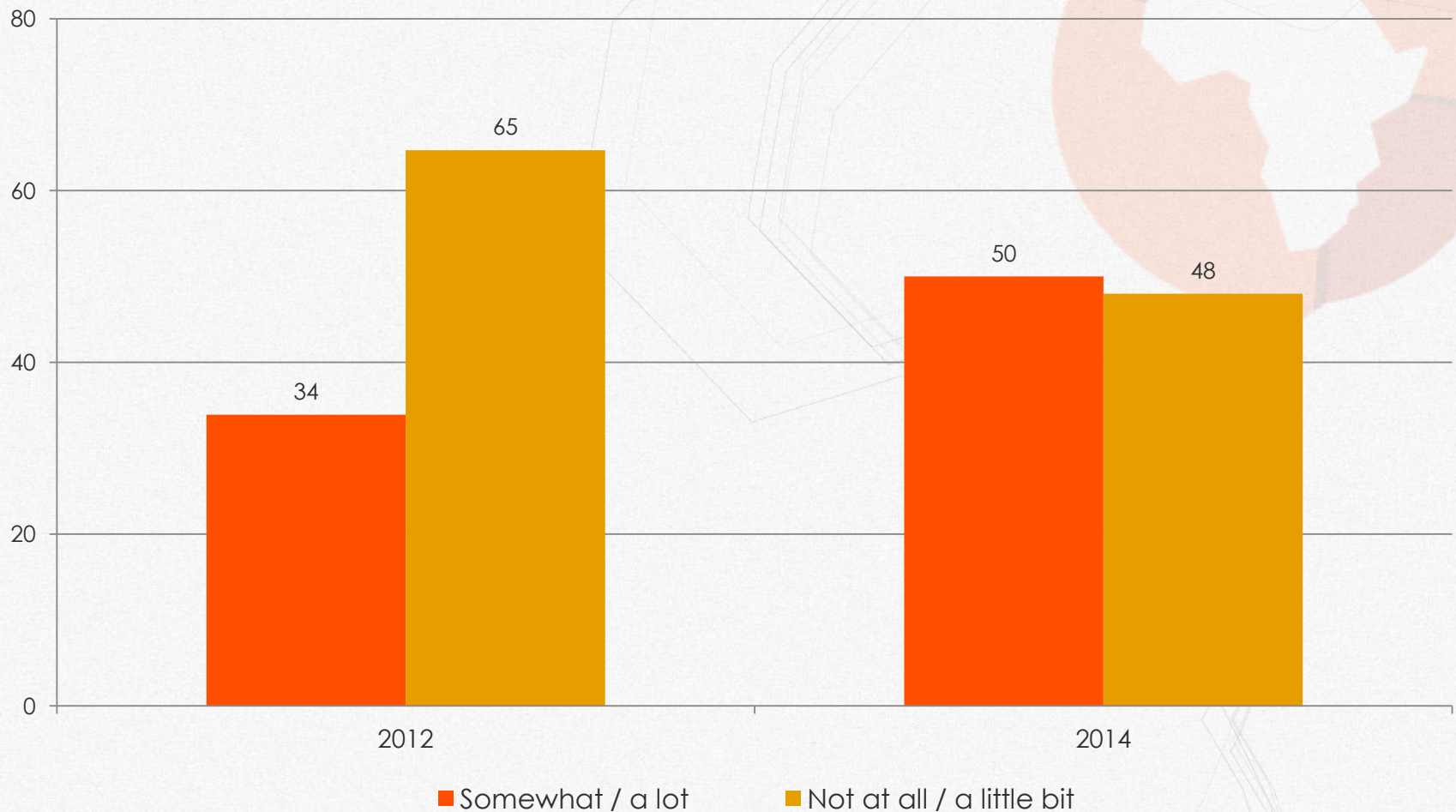


Respondents were asked: *How well do elections enable voters to remove from office leaders who do not do what the people want? (%)*

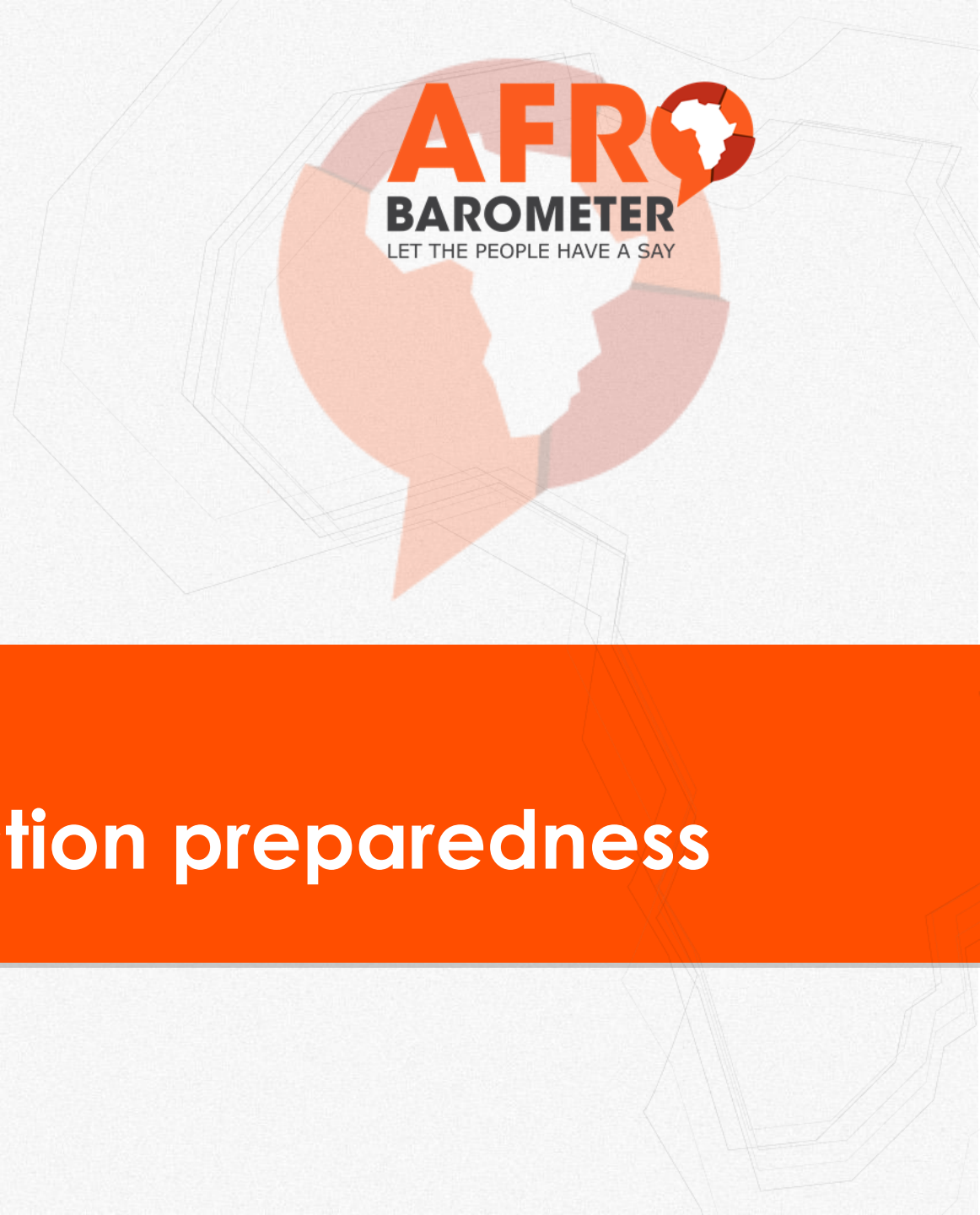
Evaluations of the election environment | 2012-2014 | %

<i>In your opinion, how often do the following things occur in this country's elections:</i>	Never	Sometimes	Often/Always	Don't know
<i>Voters are offered genuine choice in the elections</i>	17	46	33	5
<i>Voters are threatened with violence at the polls</i>	14	46	34	6
<i>The media provides fair coverage of all candidates</i>	13	46	35	6
<i>Opposition candidates are prevented from running for office</i>	32	36	25	8
<i>Voters are bribed</i>	6	34	57	4
<i>Votes are counted fairly</i>	23	52	23	3

Fear of political intimidation or violence | 2012-2014



Respondents were asked: During election campaigns in this country, how much do you personally fear becoming a victim of political intimidation or violence? (%)

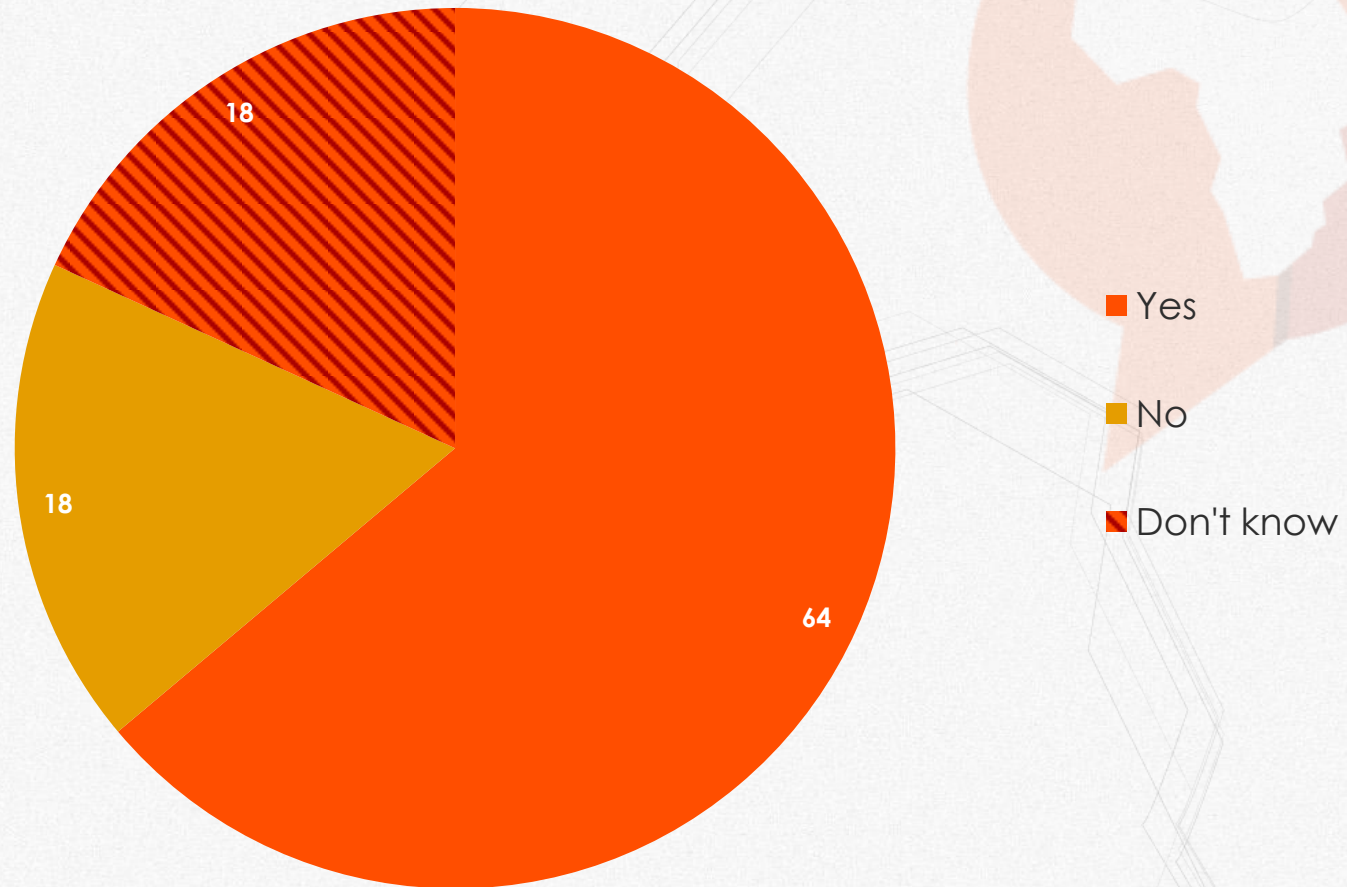


INEC and election preparedness

Key findings – INEC and election preparedness

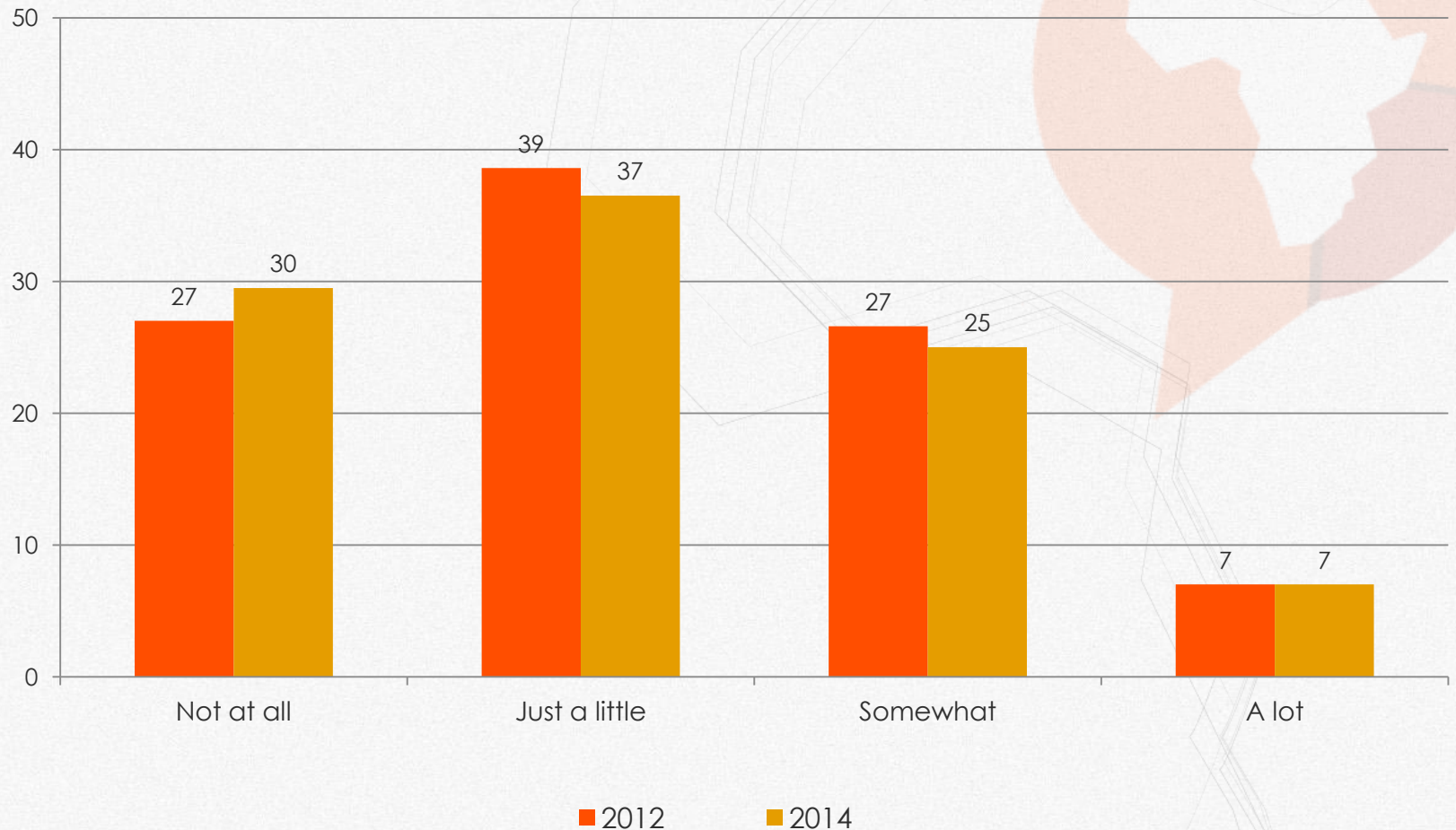
- Contradictory views of the INEC:
- Two-thirds (64%) of Nigerians believe the INEC is “ready to hold credible free and fair elections.”
- Only 32% say they trust the INEC “somewhat” or “a lot.”

Is the INEC ready for elections? | 2014



Respondents were asked: Concerning the forthcoming 2015 elections, do you think that the Independent National Electoral Commission, or INEC, is ready to hold credible free and fair elections? (%)

Trust in the INEC | 2012-2014



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



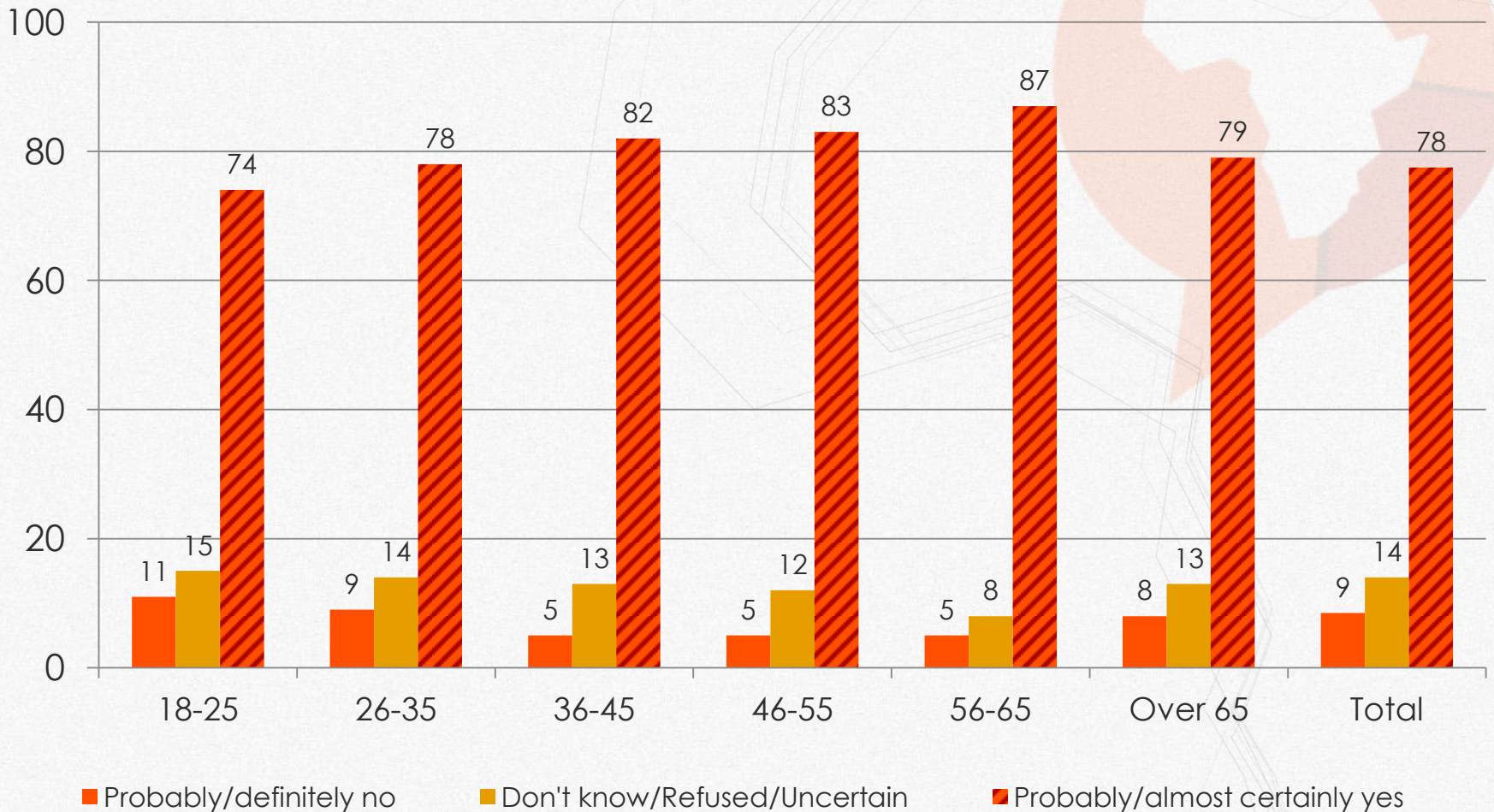
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Voter engagement

Key findings – voter engagement

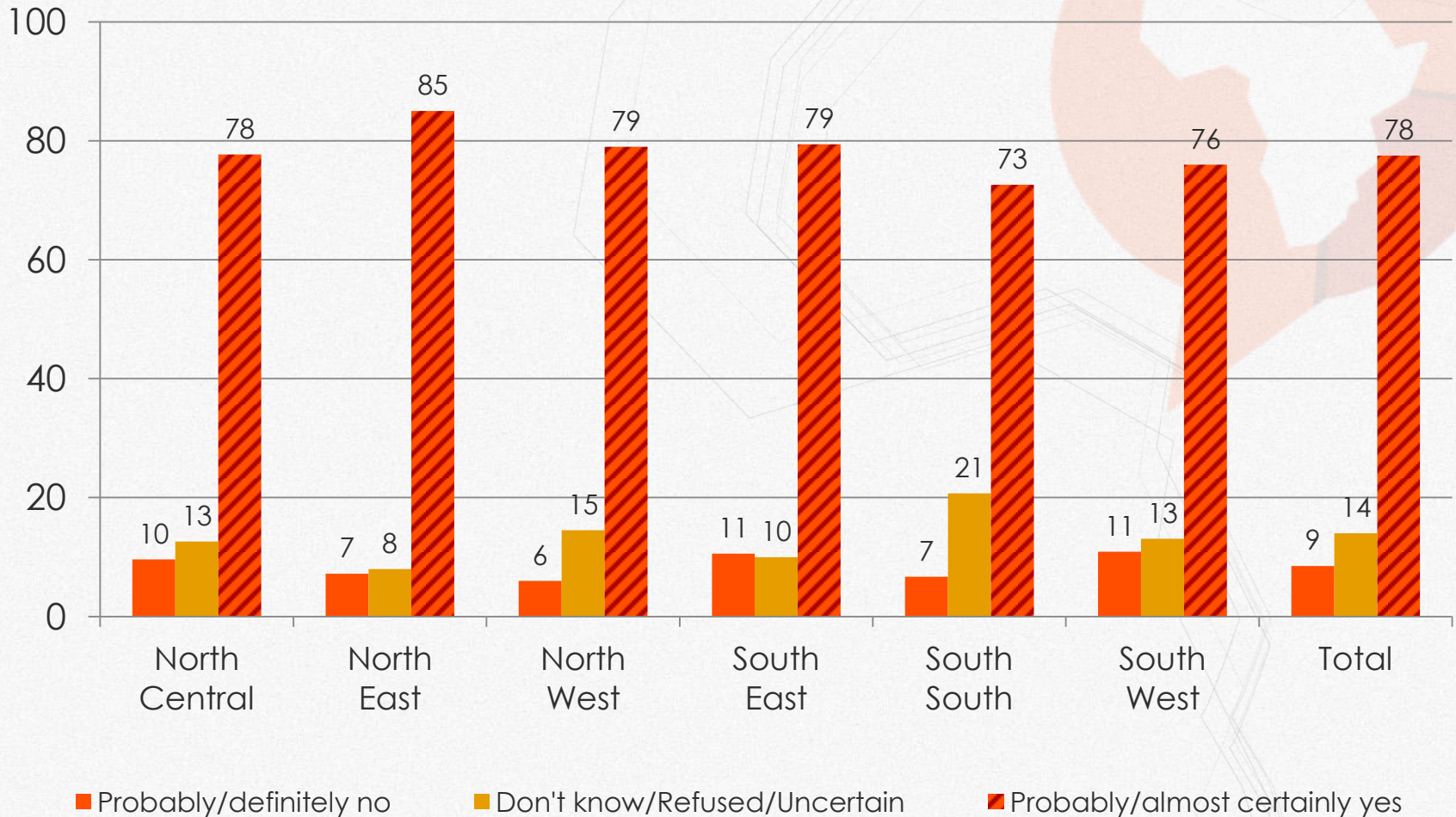
- 78% plan to vote in the 2015 elections.
- Intention to vote increases with age.
- Men are more likely (83%) than women (73%) to plan on voting.
- Voting intentions vary across zones:
 - 85% in North East say they intend to vote, but some voters in this insecure region may be disenfranchised due to takeover of territory by insurgents or population displacement.
 - 73% in South South plan to vote, the lowest level among the six zones.

Planning to vote, by age | 2014



Respondents were asked: *Do you intend to vote in the forthcoming 2015 elections?* (%)

Planning to vote, by zone | 2014





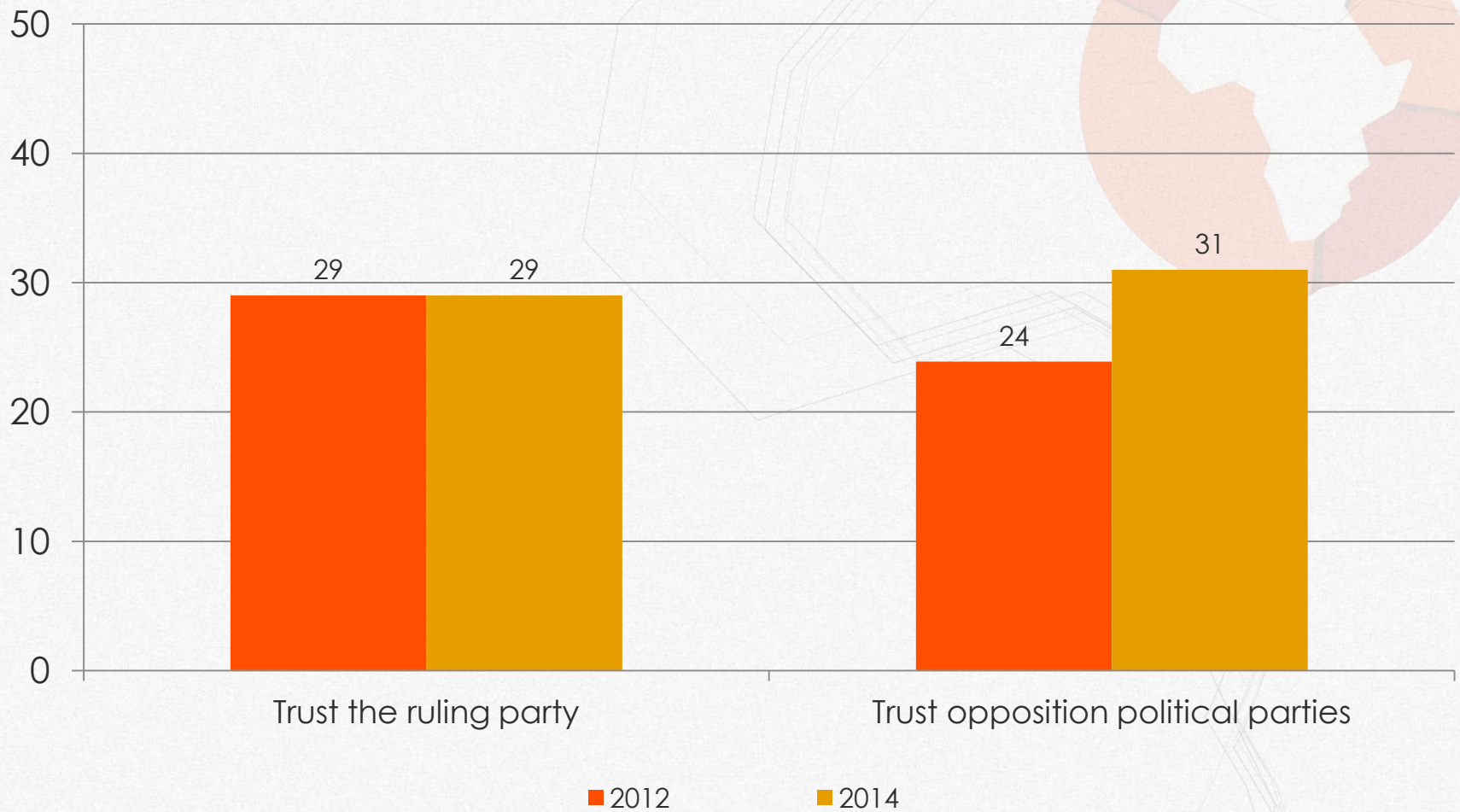
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Political party evaluations

Key findings – political party evaluations

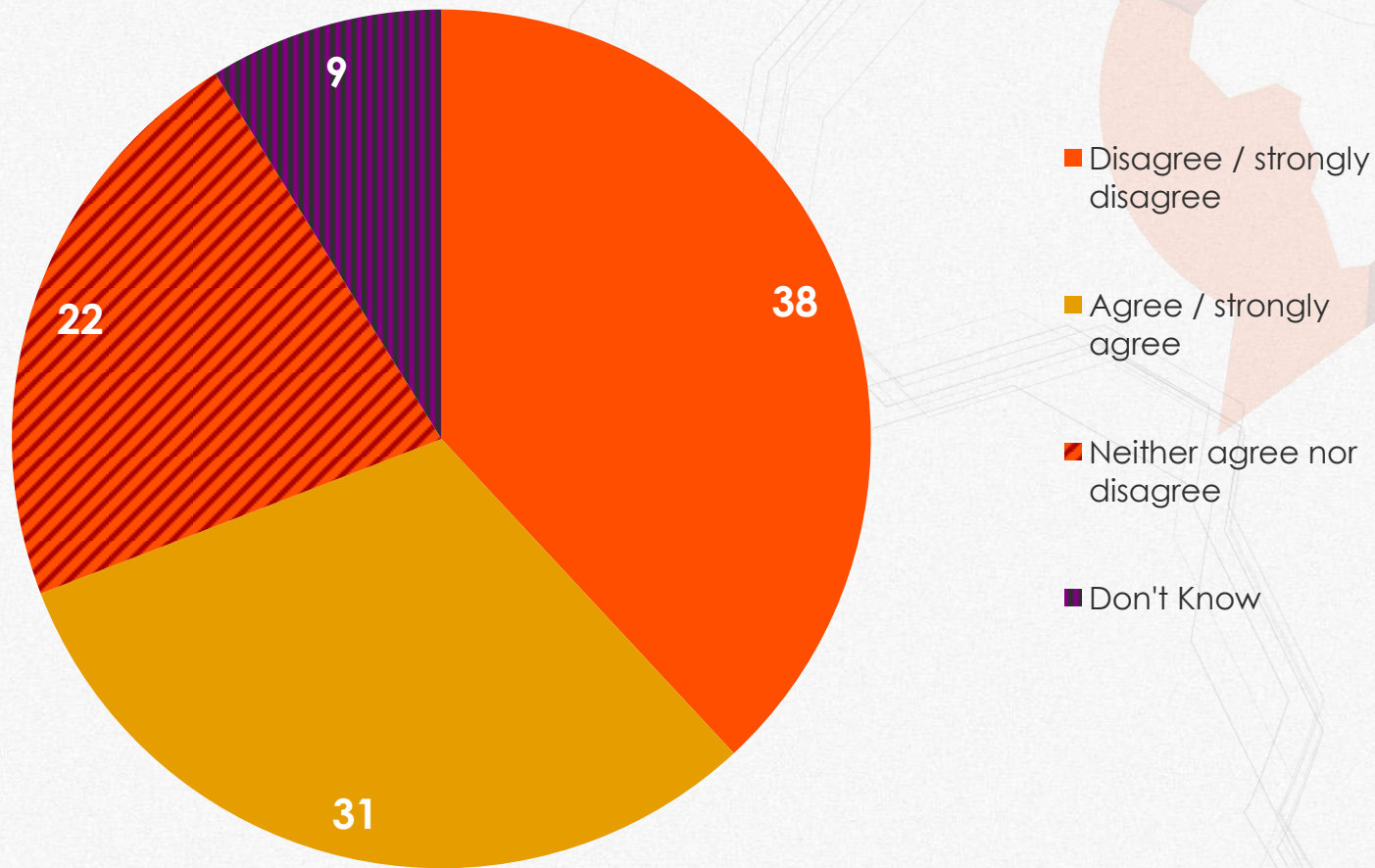
- Compared to 2012, trust in opposition parties has risen from 24% to 31%, while trust in the ruling party has remained unchanged at 29%.
- About one-third (31%) believe the opposition offers a “viable alternative vision and plan for the country.”
- Respondents are almost evenly split on the question of which party would do better in managing critical issues.

Trust in ruling and opposition parties | 2012-2014



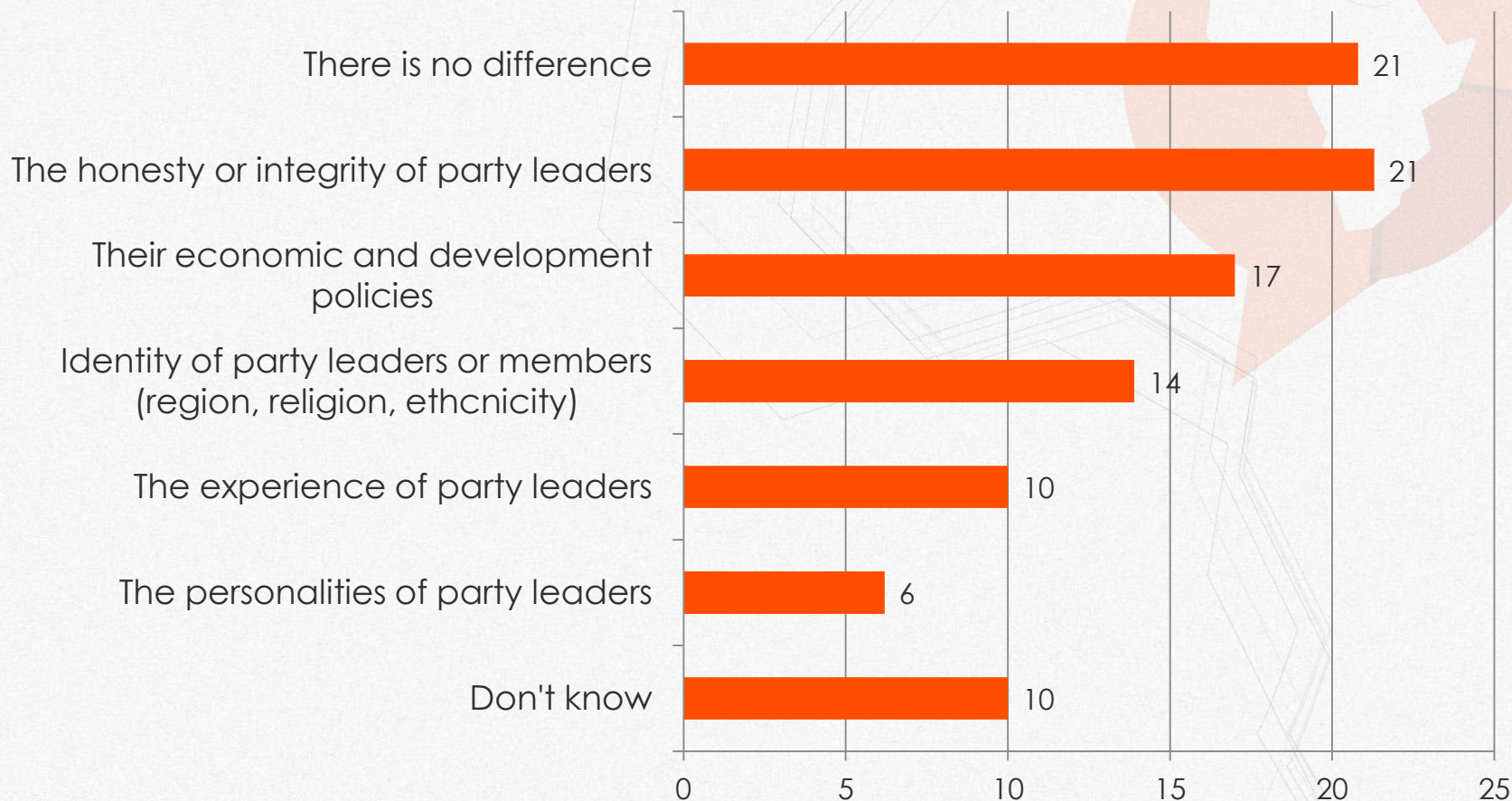
Respondents were asked: How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough to say? (% who said "somewhat" or "a lot")

Opposition offers viable alternative | 2014



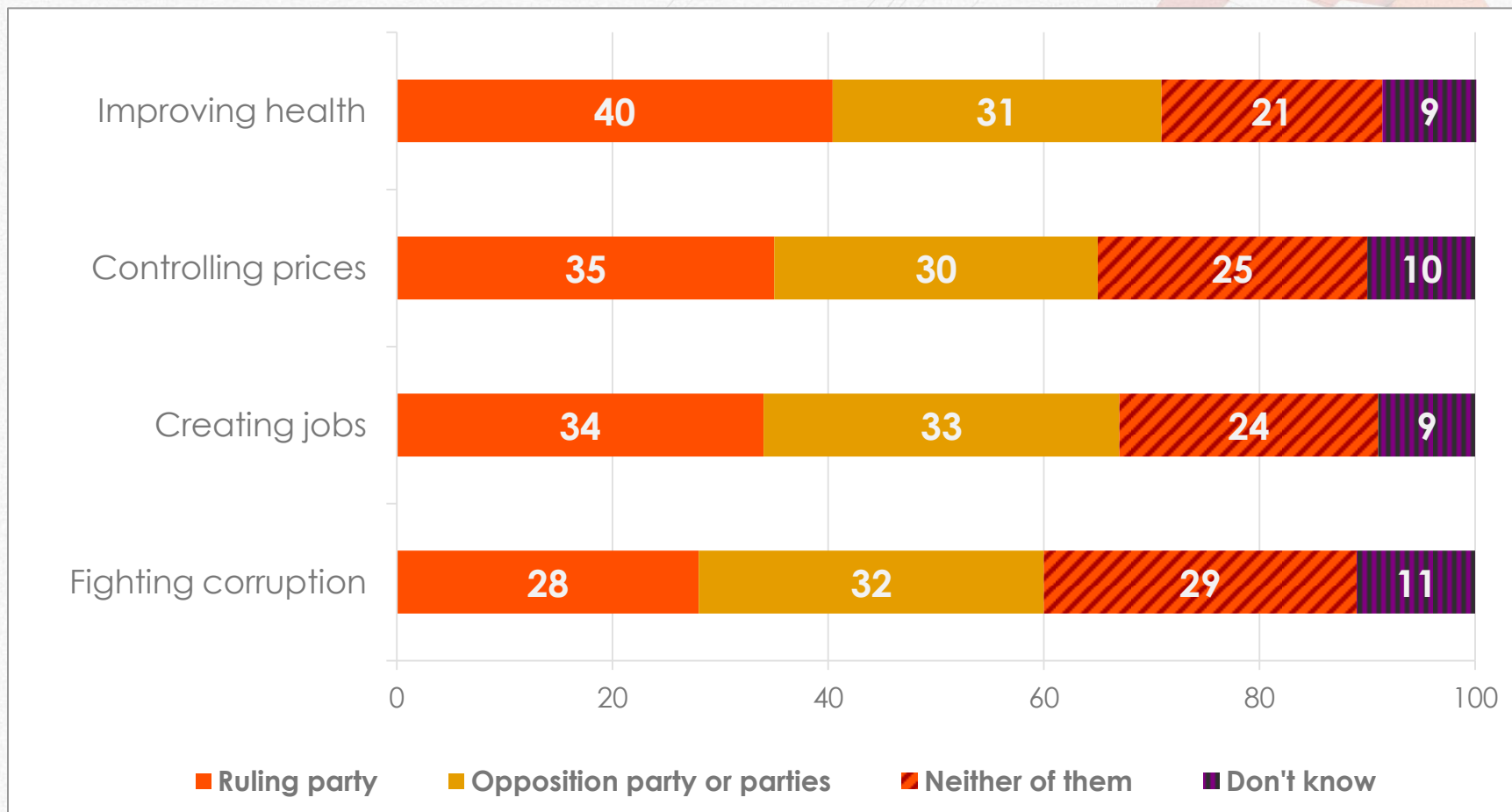
Respondents were asked: Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: The political opposition in Nigeria presents a viable alternative vision and plan for the country? (%)

Differences between ruling and opposition parties | 2014



Respondents were asked: Which of the following do you see as the most important difference between the ruling party and opposition parties in Nigeria? (%)

Most capable party | 2014



Respondents were asked: Looking at the ruling and opposition political parties in this country, which would you say is most able to address each of the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say? (%)



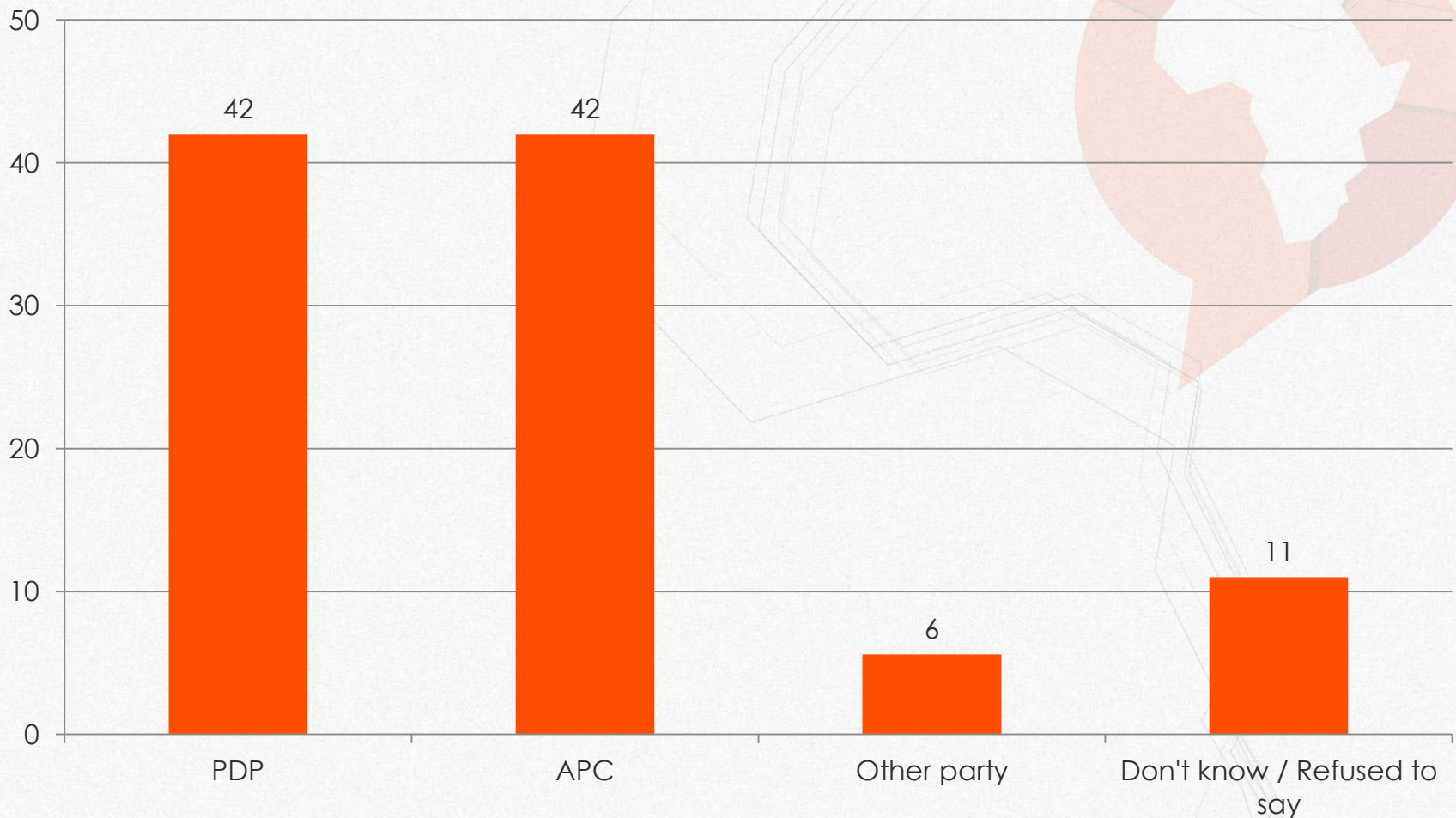
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Voting intentions

Key findings – voting intentions

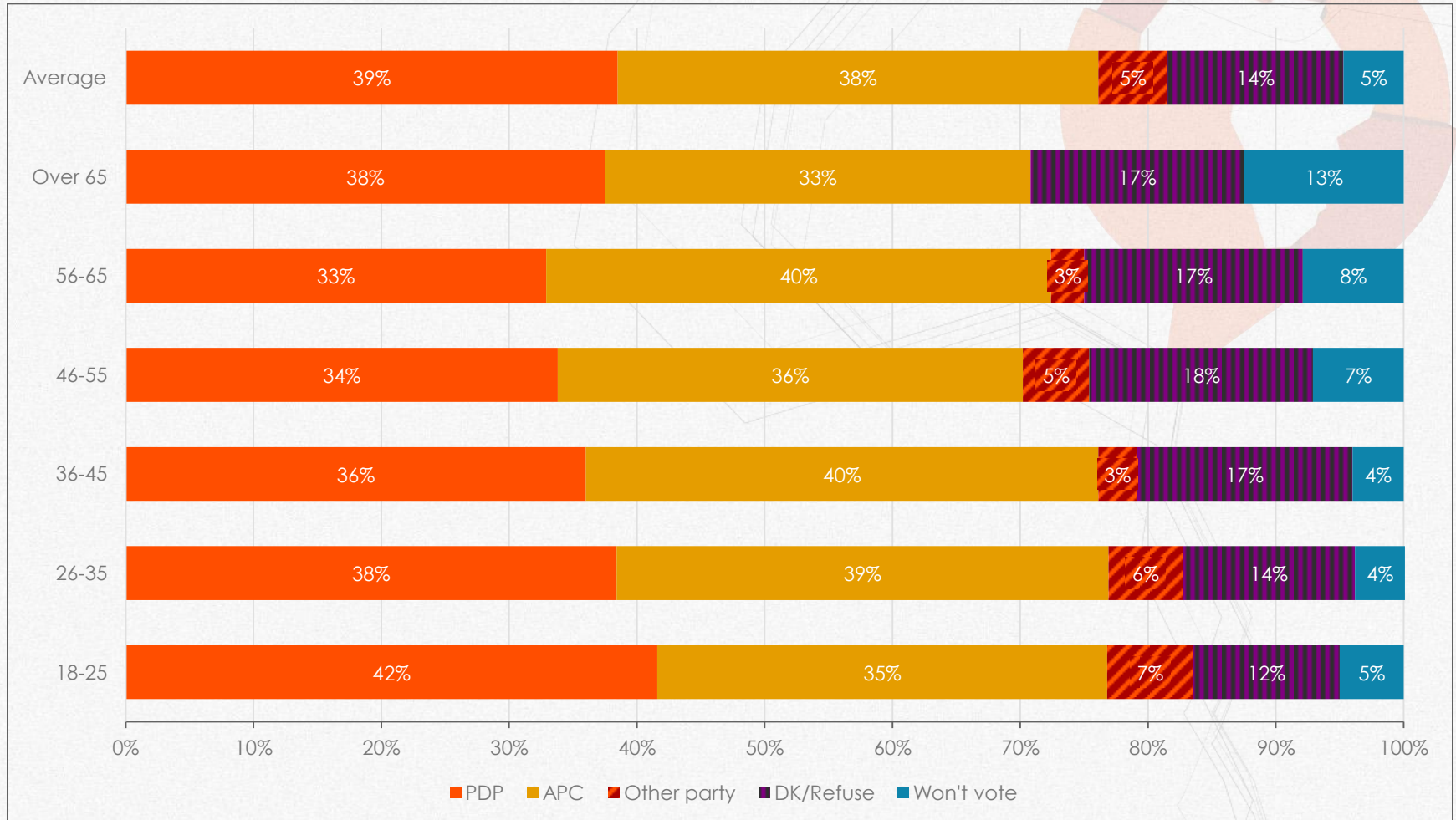
- Snapshot of voter attitudes in December 2014, just before the presidential campaigns went into full swing. As in any close contest, small shifts in partisan preferences could swing the election either way.
- Presidential race is too close to call:
 - Among all respondents, 39% PDP, 38% APC (+/-2% margin of sampling error).
 - Among likely voters, 42% each.
- Only moderate differences in party preference across gender and age group.
- Larger differences across the country's six zones.

Voting intentions among likely voters, presidential election | 2014

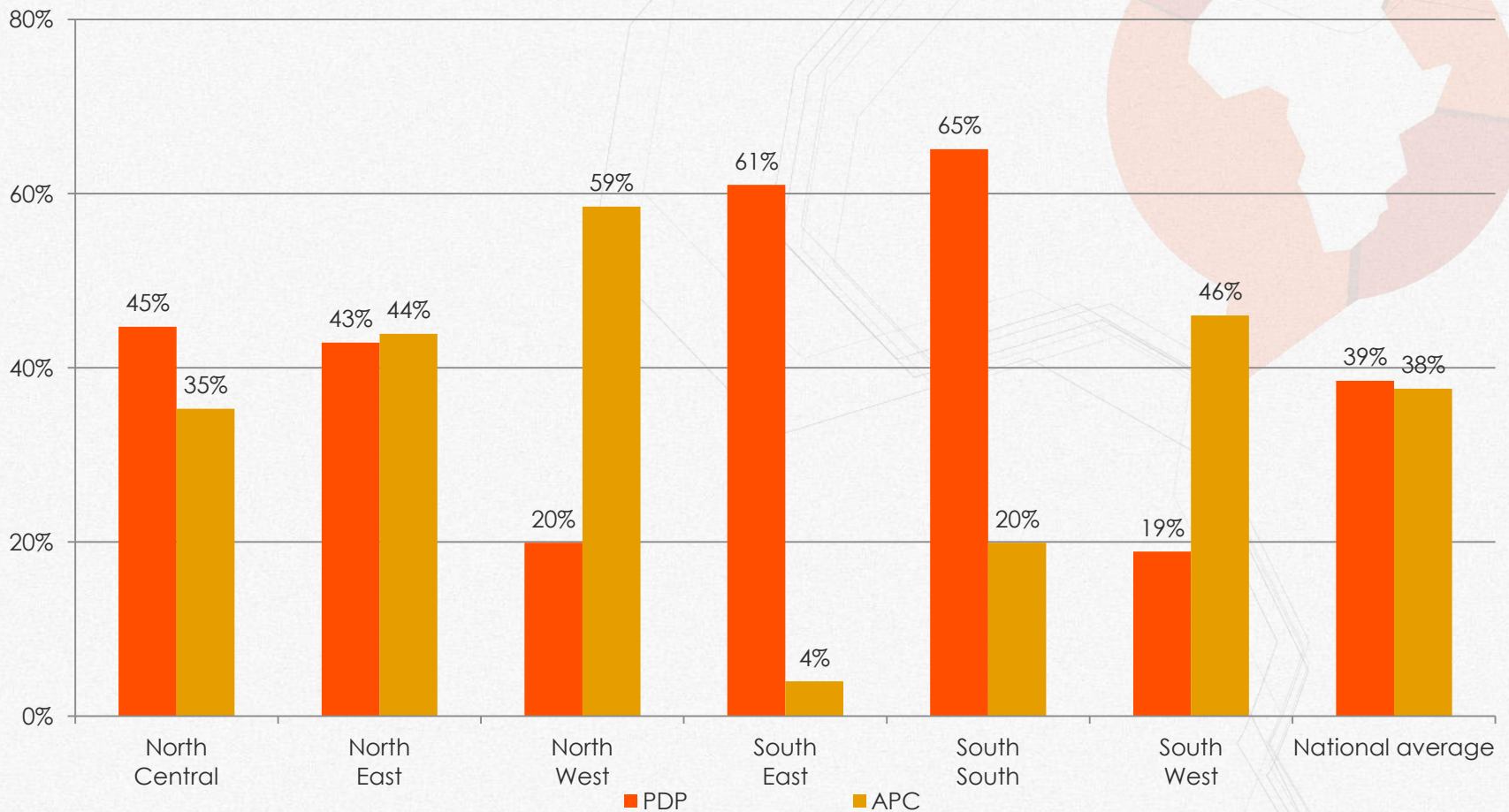


Respondents were asked: *If presidential elections were held tomorrow, which party's candidate would you vote for? (% of likely voters; due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100%)*

Presidential voting intentions by age (all respondents) | 2014



Presidential voting intentions by zone (all respondents) | 2014



Conclusions – election environment



- Large majorities support elections as the best mechanism for choosing their leaders, have confidence in their ability to vote as they choose, and intend to go to the polls.
- A sizeable majority believe that the INEC is adequately prepared to manage the polls, but public trust in the institution is weak.
- Many citizens lack confidence in the integrity of the electoral process and express concerns about security and intimidation around the elections.
- The public perceives an uneven and often ineffective government response to critical challenges facing the country.



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Conclusions – vote choice



- Nigerians are evenly divided in their preference for the ruling party and the main opposition challengers.
- Support for the opposition is at the highest level recorded in any Afrobarometer survey in Nigeria; challengers are set to make their strongest showing since the restoration of multiparty elections in 1990.
- There are sharp differences in party support across the country's zones.
- The campaign environment is fluid and highly competitive. As such, the race remains too close to call.



Thank you

