

ADVISION LESOTHO

Advision Lesotho
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News release

Basotho cling to their independence in spite of serious political and economic challenges

Most Basotho, protective of their independence, are against intervention or assistance from neighbouring southern African countries to guarantee free elections and prevent human-rights abuses in their country, according to the latest Afrobarometer survey.

Basotho are almost equally divided on whether the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the African Union (AU) are helpful to Lesotho or not, survey results show.

In addition, a majority of Basotho say their country should continue to be independent of South Africa, despite the two countries' close ties.

The survey was conducted in May 2014, before the SADC's intervention following an attempted coup by the army in August. It was the SADC's third intervention in Lesotho, after a 1998 post-election deployment of South African soldiers to maintain order and mediation efforts after the dispute over the allocation of proportional seats post 2007 general election.

Key findings

- More than half (54%) of survey respondents say that southern African countries should respect the independence of other countries in the region and take a hands-off approach to their internal affairs (Figure 1). One-third (34%) say that governments in southern Africa have a duty to try to guarantee free elections and guard against human-rights abuses in other countries in the region.
- Only one-fourth to one-third of respondents say that the SADC and the AU are helpful to Lesotho, while similar proportions say they are not helpful and even larger percentages say they do not know (Figure 2).
- Four in 10 Basotho (39%) say that Lesotho can only realise meaningful development if it becomes part of South Africa; 57% disagree (Figure 3). Seven in 10 respondents (71%) say it is difficult to cross the border between South Africa and Lesotho. Basotho are evenly split on whether the law should be changed to allow them to hold dual South African-Basotho citizenship (Figure 4).

Afrobarometer

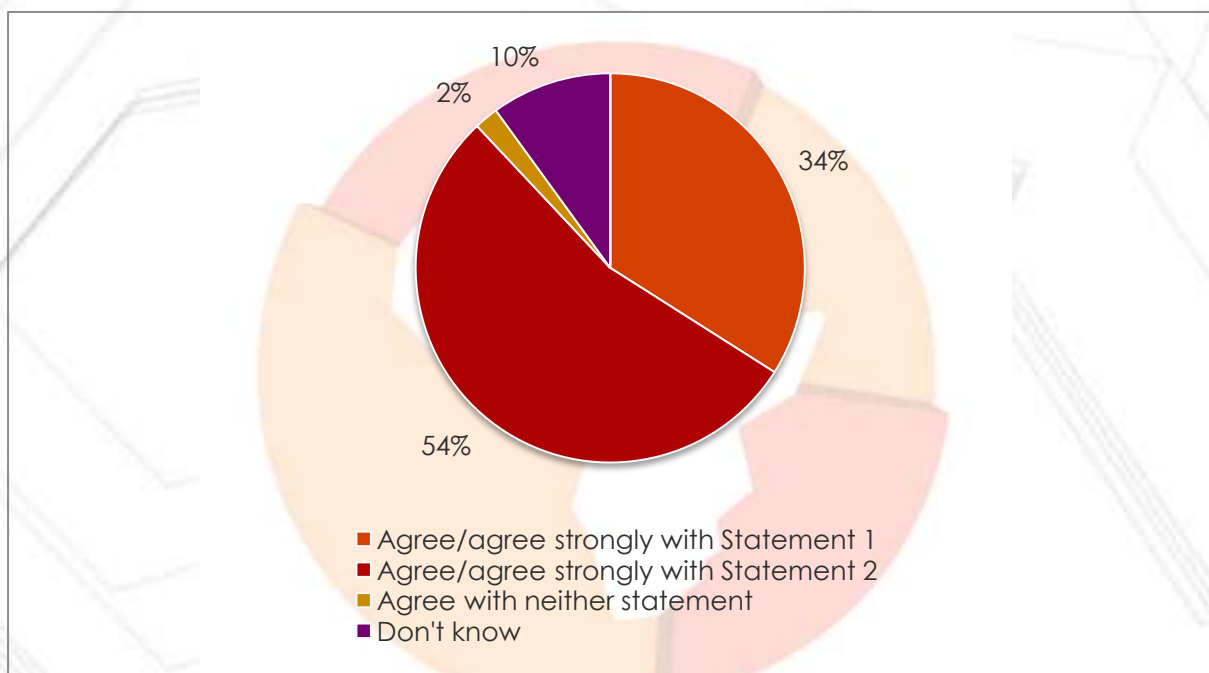
Afrobarometer is an African-led, non-partisan research network that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions, and related issues across more than 30 countries in Africa. Five rounds of surveys were conducted between 1999 and 2013, and Round 6 surveys are currently under way (2014-2015). Afrobarometer conducts face-to-

face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples of between 1,200 and 2,400 respondents.

The Afrobarometer team in Lesotho, led by Advision Lesotho, interviewed 1,200 adult Basotho in May 2014. A sample of this size yields results with a margin of error of +/-3% at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys have been conducted in Lesotho in 2000, 2003, 2005, 2008, and 2012.

Charts

Figure 1: Support for regional intervention in domestic politics | Lesotho | 2014

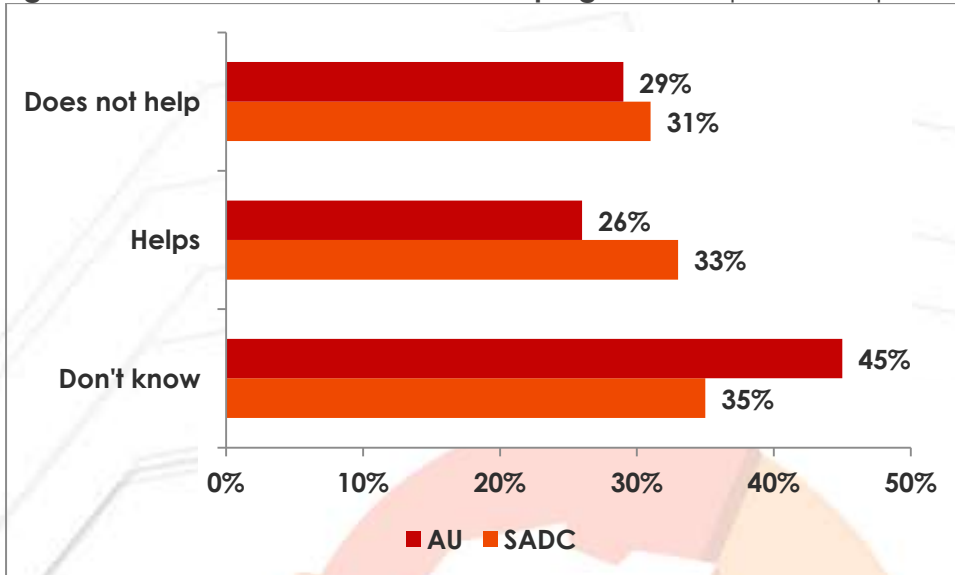


Respondents were asked: Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement 1 or Statement 2.

Statement 1: The governments of each country in southern Africa have a duty to try to guarantee free elections and prevent human-rights abuses in other countries in the region, for example by using political pressure, economic sanctions, or military force.

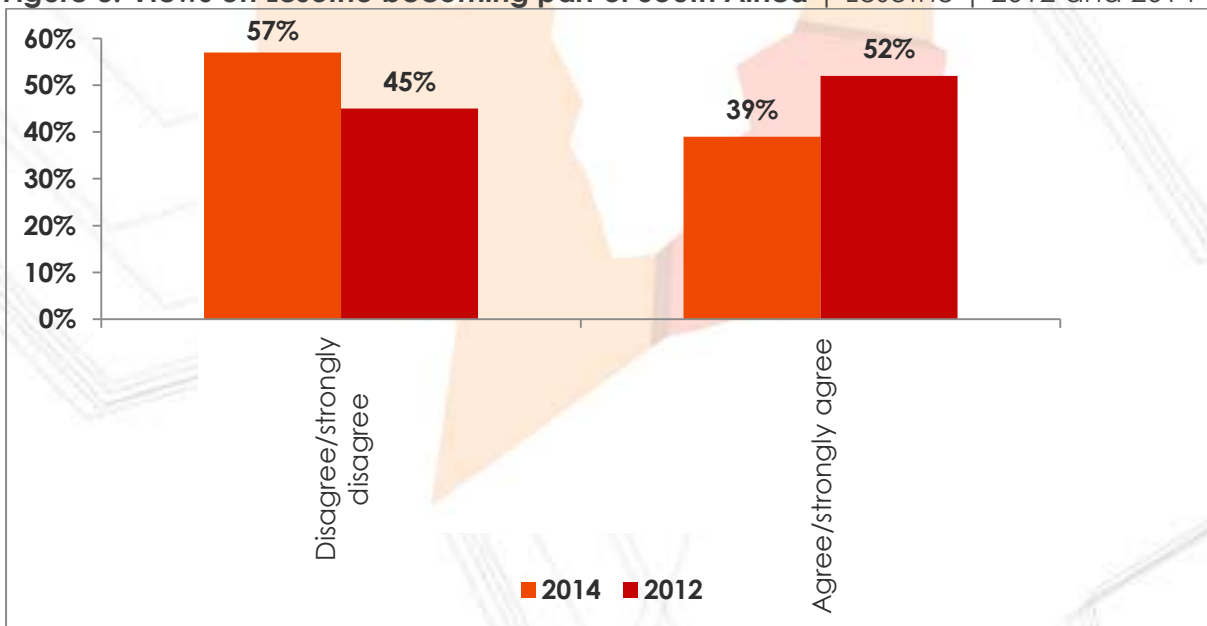
Statement 2: Each country in this region should respect the independence of other countries and allow them to make their own decisions about how their country should be governed.

Figure 2: Value of SADC and AU in helping Lesotho | Lesotho | 2014



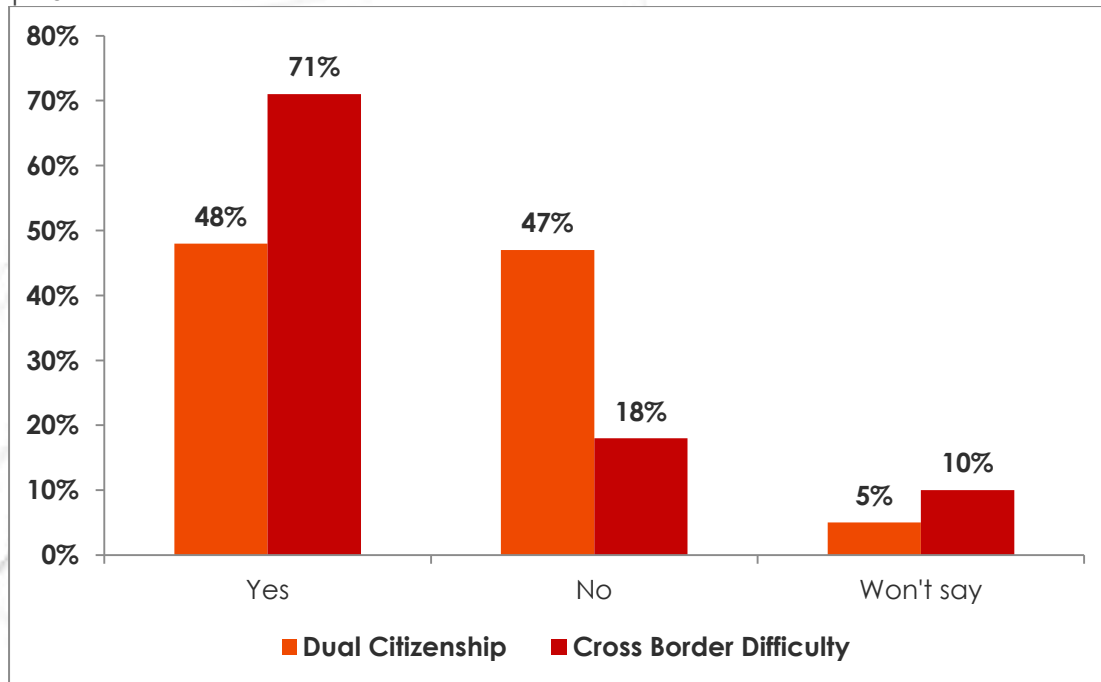
Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, how much do each of the following do to help your country, or haven't you heard enough to say: regional organisation SADC? African Union?* (Responses: "Do nothing to help" or "Help a little bit" and "Help somewhat" or "Help a Lot")

Figure 3: Views on Lesotho becoming part of South Africa | Lesotho | 2012 and 2014



Respondents were asked: *Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: Given her unique geographical position, Lesotho can only realize meaningful development if it becomes part of the Republic of South Africa.*

Figure 4: Support for dual citizenship versus difficulty of crossing the border | Lesotho
 | 2014



- Respondents were asked: Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements: Given Lesotho's links with South Africa, the law should be changed to allow Basotho citizens to hold dual South African citizenship. (Responses: "strongly agree" or "agree" and "strongly disagree" or "agree")
- In your opinion, how easy or difficult is it for people in Southern Africa to cross international borders in order to work or trade in other countries, or haven't you heard enough to say? (Responses: "very difficult" or "difficult" and "very easy" or "easy")

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