



Star Awards Pty Ltd.
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News release

Many Batswana open to higher taxes, but not on the backs of small traders

Half of Batswana favour paying higher taxes if it will mean more government services, outnumbering those who would reduce both taxes and services, a new Afrobarometer study shows.

But most citizens see it as fair to tax rich people at higher rates than ordinary people, and few think the government should focus on collecting taxes from small traders and other people working in the informal sector.

Most Batswana believe that the government generally uses the taxes it collects for the well-being of the population, although many say tax avoidance is common.

The findings come at a time when the finance ministry is proposing increases in corporate and personal tax rates and doing away with some exemptions in order to offset a large budget deficit.

Key findings

- Half (50%) of Batswana favour paying higher taxes if it will mean more government services, while four in 10 (40%) would prefer lower taxes even if it means fewer government services (Figure 1).
- Only three out of 10 Batswana (31%) want the government to make sure that small traders and other people working in the informal sector pay taxes on their businesses. At the same time, a majority (63%) “agree” or “strongly agree” that it is fair to tax rich people at higher rates than ordinary people to help pay for government programs to benefit the poor (Figure 2).
- A majority (59%) of Batswana say the government usually uses the taxes it collects for the well-being of the population (Figure 3). But fewer than four in 10 (37%) say it's easy to find out what taxes and fees they are supposed to pay to the government (Figure 4).
- Close to half (46%) of Batswana say citizens “often” or “always” avoid paying taxes they owe (Figure 4).

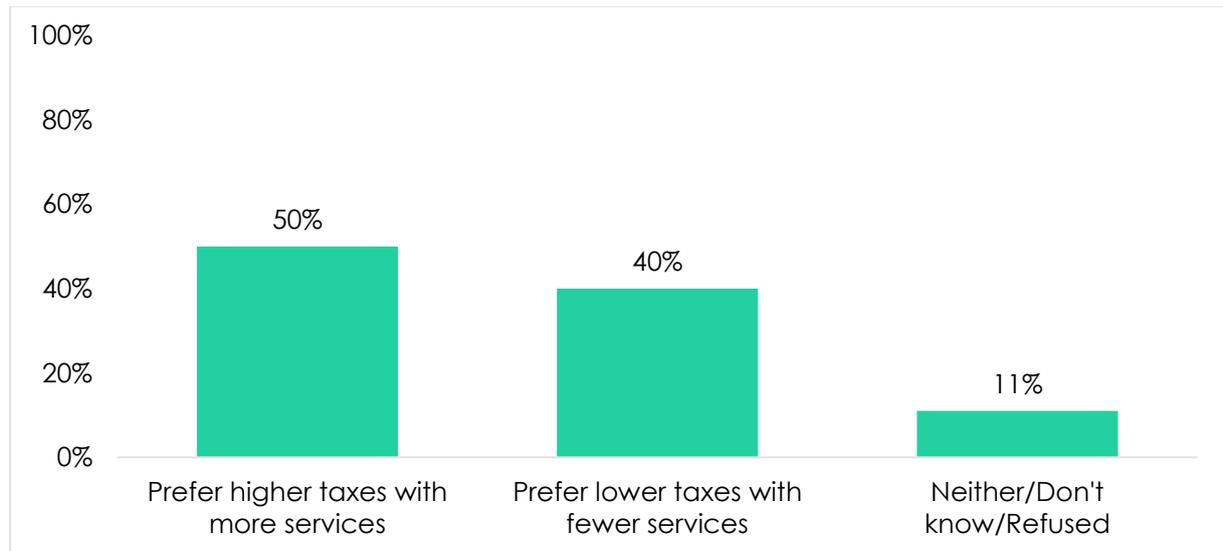
Afrobarometer surveys

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. Seven rounds of surveys were completed in up to 38 countries between 1999 and 2018, and Round 8 surveys are currently underway. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer national partner in Botswana, Star Awards Ltd., interviewed a nationally representative, random, stratified probability sample of 1,200 adult Batswana in July-August 2019. 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, and 2017.

Charts

Figure 1: Higher taxes with more government services vs. lower taxes with fewer government services | Botswana | 2019

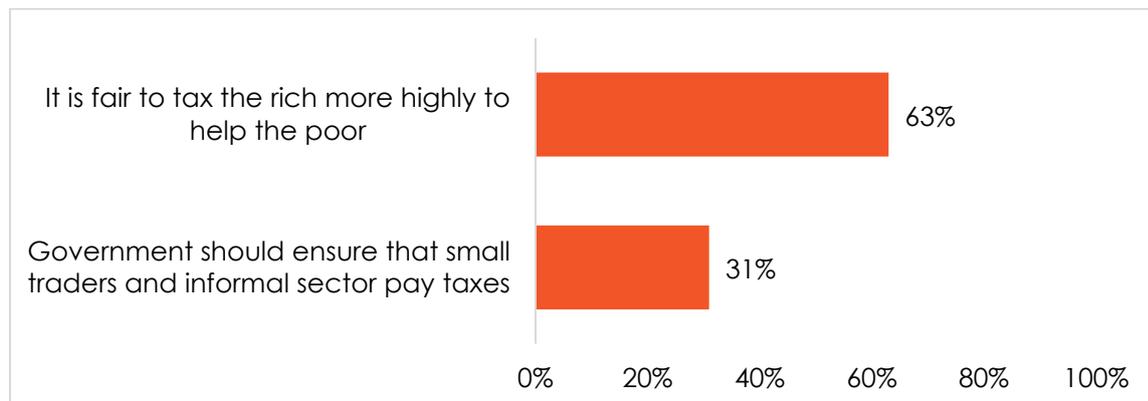


Respondents were asked: Which of the following statements is closest to your view? (% who "agree" or "agree very strongly" with each statement)

Statement 1: It is better to pay higher taxes if it means that there will be more services provided by government.

Statement 2: It is better to pay lower taxes, even if it means there will be fewer services provided by government.

Figure 2: Views on tax burdens on the rich and on small traders | Botswana | 2019

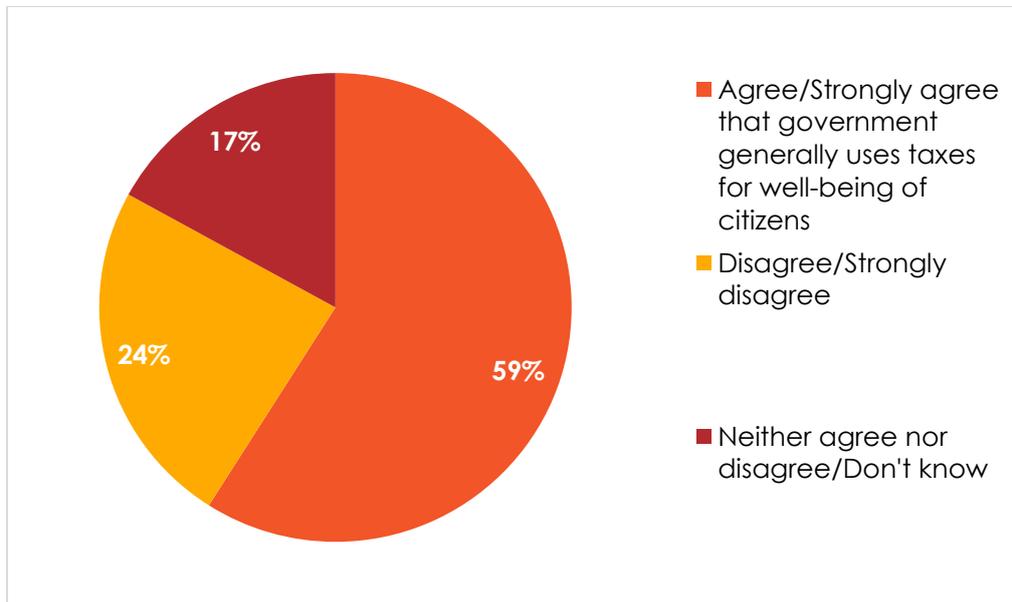


Respondents were asked: Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? (% who "agree" or "agree very strongly")

It is fair to tax rich people at a higher rate than ordinary people in order to help pay for government programs to benefit the poor.

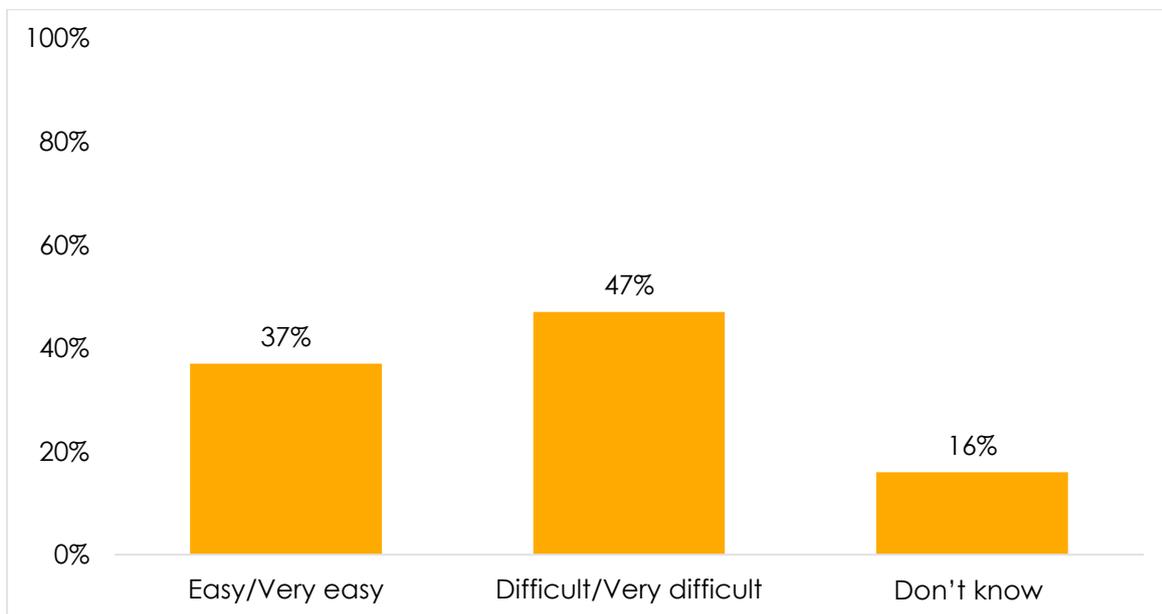
Government should make sure small traders and other people working in the informal sector pay taxes on their businesses.

Figure 3: Does government use tax revenues for citizens' well-being? | Botswana | 2019



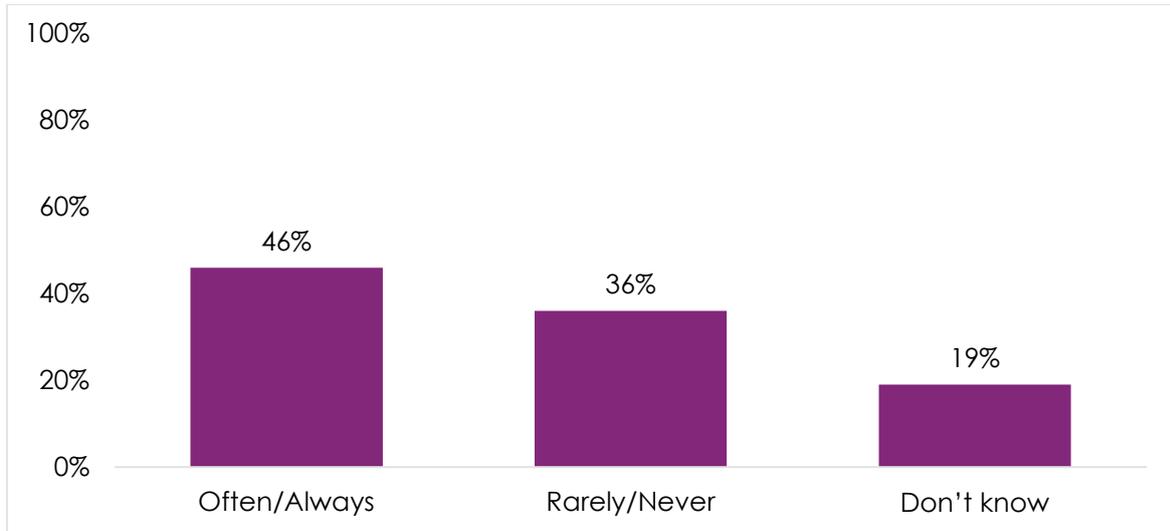
Respondents were asked: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The government usually uses the tax revenues it collects for the well-being of citizens?

Figure 4: Difficulty finding out what taxes or fees to pay | Botswana | 2019



Respondents were asked: Based on your experience, how easy or difficult is it to find out what taxes and fees you are supposed to pay to the government?

Figure 5: How often do people avoid paying taxes? | Botswana | 2020



Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, how often, in this country, do people avoid paying taxes that they owe the government?*

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