

Kampala, Uganda  
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## News release

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### **Many Ugandans mistrust the Electoral Commission, question its impartiality, Afrobarometer survey shows**

Only about half of Ugandans think the country's Electoral Commission (EC) is impartial, and fewer than half say they trust it, the latest Afrobarometer survey shows.

In its Round 8 survey conducted in October 2019, Afrobarometer found substantial doubts about the neutrality and trustworthiness of the body charged with managing Uganda's 2021 elections.

Public trust in how elections are organized and superintended is a central element in the legitimacy of any electoral exercise. As Uganda approaches general elections, these findings invite a critical reflection on the independence of the Electoral Commission to avoid casting a shadow over electoral outcomes.

#### **Key findings**

- Four out of 10 Ugandans (41%) think the Electoral Commission (EC) makes decisions that favour particular people, parties, or interests. Only a slim majority (52%) say it performs its duties as a neutral body guided by law (Figure 1).
- Perceptions of EC neutrality are particularly weak among residents in the Central (42%) and Northern (47%) regions and among supporters of opposition political parties (34%) (Figure 2).
- Only four in 10 Ugandans (43%) say they trust the Electoral Commission "somewhat" or "a lot," a 10-percentage point drop since 2015 (Figure 3). Elsewhere in East Africa, trust in electoral management bodies has also declined.

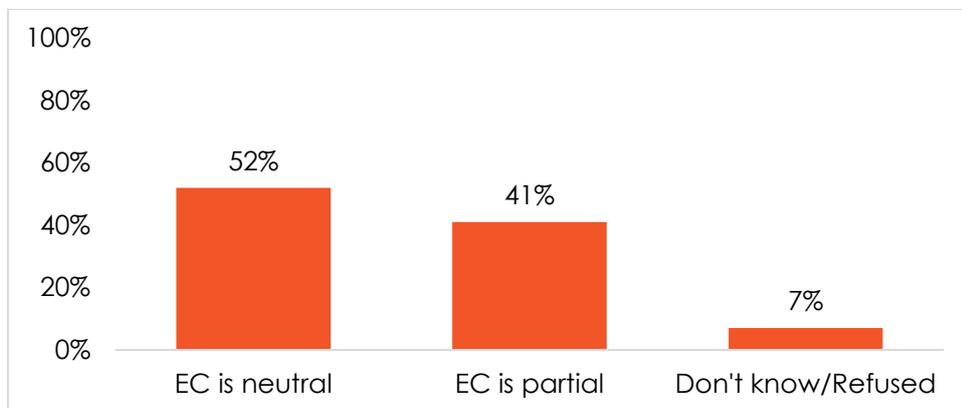
#### **Afrobarometer surveys**

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. Round 8 surveys in 2019/2021 are planned in at least 35 countries. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples.

The Afrobarometer team in Uganda, led by Hatchile Consult Limited, interviewed 1,200 adult Ugandans between 30 September and 31 October 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 in Uganda were conducted in 1999, 2002, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2014, and 2017.

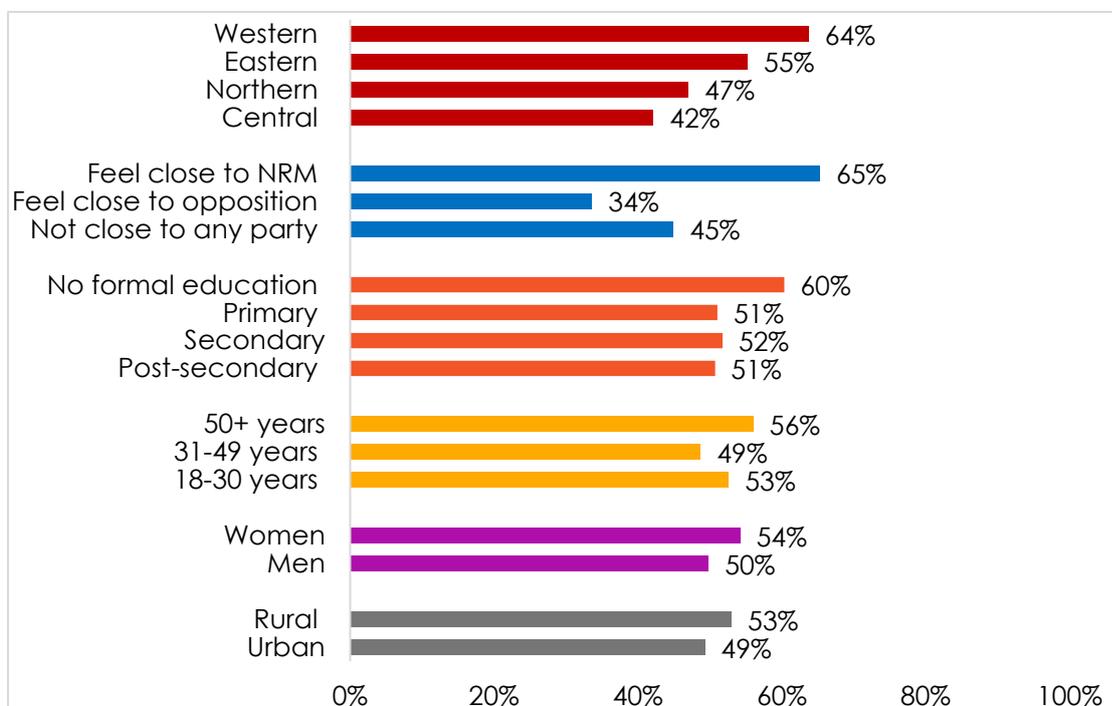
**Charts**

**Figure 1: Is the Electoral Commission neutral or partial? | Uganda | 2019**



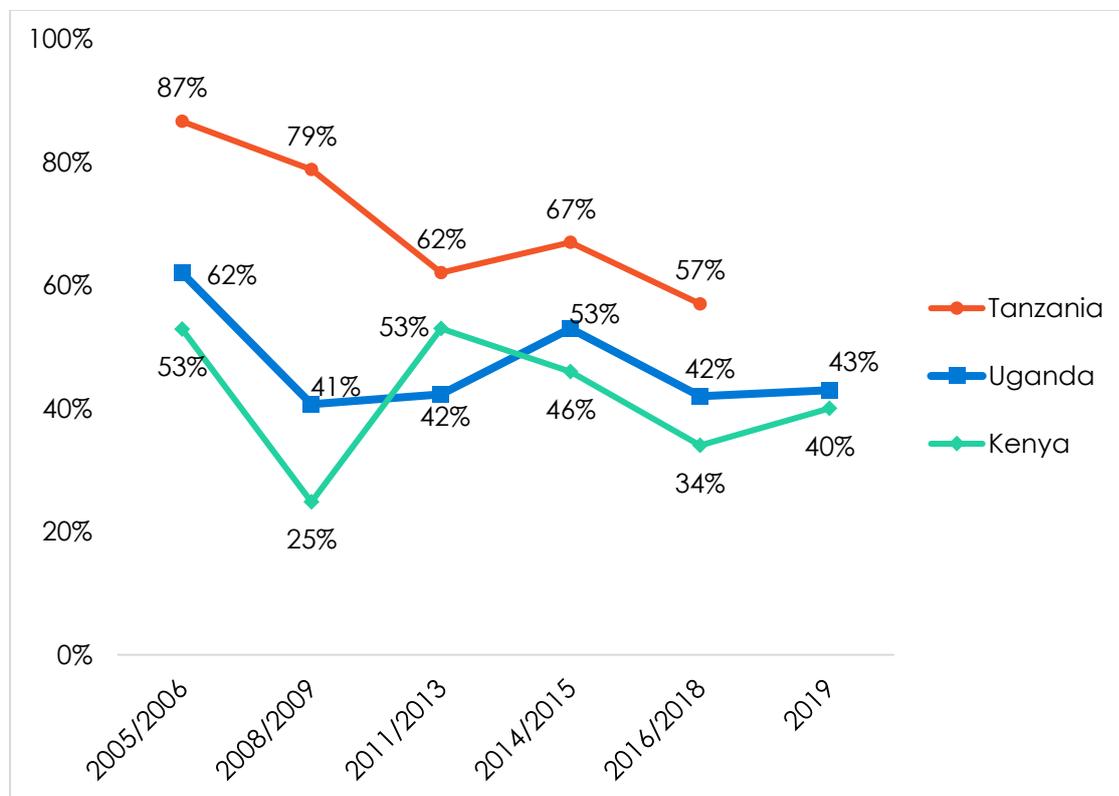
**Respondents were asked:** Which of the following statements is closest to your view?  
 Statement 1: The Electoral Commission of Uganda performs its duties as a neutral body guided by law.  
 Statement 2: The Electoral Commission of Uganda makes decisions that favour particular people, parties, or interests.  
 (% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with each statement)

**Figure 2: Electoral Commission is a neutral body | by socio-demographic group | Uganda | 2019**



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 Statement 1: The Electoral Commission of Uganda performs its duties as a neutral body guided by law.  
 Statement 2: The Electoral Commission of Uganda makes decisions that favour particular people, parties, or interests.  
 (% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with Statement 1)

**Figure 3: Trust in the national electoral commission | Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania**  
 | 2005-2019



**Respondents were asked:** How much do you trust the [national electoral commission], or haven't you heard enough about them to say? (% who say "trust a lot" or "trust somewhat")

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