Mali achieved independence from France in 1960 as a one-party state under the leadership of President Modibo Keita. A 1968 military coup transferred power to President Moussa Traore for more than two decades, although single-party elections were introduced in 1979. Traore was subsequently overthrown during a military coup in 1991, and a transitional committee was established. Alpha Oumar Konare was elected President in the country’s first multiparty elections, which followed in 1992, and he won re-election in 1997. In 2002, Konare was term-limited out of office, and he was succeeded by Amadou Toumani Toure, a former general who ran as an independent. Toure was re-elected in 2007, this time as a candidate of the Alliance for Democracy and Peace (ADP). In 2008, Mali had a Freedom House ranking of “free,” with a political rights score of 2 and a civil liberties score of 3.

This document provides a summary of popular attitudes regarding the demand for and supply of democracy in Mali as revealed over the course of four Afrobarometer surveys conducted between 2001 and 2008 (Jan.-Feb. 2001, N=2089; Oct.-Nov. 2002, N=1283; June-July 2005, N=1244; Dec. 2008, N=1480). Samples of this size yield a margin of error of +/- 3 percent at a confidence level of 95 percent. The charts that follow capture perceptions of:

- The meaning of democracy;
- The demand for democracy (including individual support for democracy, patience with democracy and rejection of military rule, one-party rule, and one-man rule);
- Support for democratic institutions (including attitudes towards elections, term limits, multi-party rule, and checks on presidential powers); and
- The supply of democracy (including satisfaction with democracy and the perceived extent of democracy, quality of elections and the protection of key freedoms).

### Points of Interest

- Solid majorities support democracy and reject all three forms of authoritarian rule (2.1-2.4).
- Patience with democracy has, however, dropped sharply between 2005 and 2008 (2.5)
- Support for multiparty competition has risen steadily between 2002 and 2008 (3.3)
- After a steep climb between 2001 and 2003, ratings of the extent of democracy have remained steady (4.1), but satisfaction with democracy has been dropping steadily since 2002 (4.2)
- Evaluations of election quality have, however, been climbing steadily (4.3)
# MEANING OF DEMOCRACY

## 1.1 Variable: Meaning of democracy

**Question:** What if anything does democracy mean to you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meaning of Democracy</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civil liberties/personal freedoms</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality/justice</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government by, for, of the people</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace/unity/power sharing</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working together</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other negative meanings</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other positive meanings</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In 2005 respondents could offer up to three meanings. Figures shown are the percentage of all substantive responses offered.*
2.1 Variable: Support for democracy

Question: Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion?

A: Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government.
B: In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable.
C: For someone like me, it doesn’t matter what kind of government we have.

2.2 Variable: Reject military rule

Question: There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives: The army comes in to govern the country?

2.3 Variable: Reject one-party rule

Question: There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives: Only one political party is allowed to stand for election and hold office?

2.4 Variable: Reject one-man rule

Question: There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives: Elections and Parliament/National Assembly are abolished so that the President/Prime Minister can decide everything?

(Percent who disapprove/strongly disapprove of military rule, one-party rule and one-man rule)
2.5 Variable: Patience with democracy

Question: Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Statement A or Statement B.
A: Our present system of elected government should be given more time to deal with inherited problems.
B: If our present system cannot produce results soon, we should try another form of government.

Summary of Demand for democracy
DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

3.1 Variable: Choose leaders through elections vs. try another form

**Question:** Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Statement A or Statement B.

A: We should choose our leaders in this country through regular, open and honest elections.

B: Since elections sometimes produce bad results, we should adopt other methods for choosing this country’s leaders.

![Bar chart showing responses to the question about choosing leaders through elections.](chart1)

3.2 Variable: No term limits for the president vs. two terms only

**Question:** Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Statement A or Statement B.

A: There should be no constitutional limit on how long the president can serve.

B: The constitution should limit the president to serving a maximum of two terms in office.

![Bar chart showing responses to the question about term limits for the president.](chart2)
3.3 Variable: Political parties divisive vs. many parties needed

**Question:** Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Statement A or Statement B.

A: Political parties create division and confusion; it is therefore unnecessary to have many political parties in Mali.

B: Many political parties are needed to make sure that Malians have real choices in who governs them.

![Chart showing percentage of agreement with statements over years.]

3.4 Variable: Parliament makes laws vs. President does

**Question:** Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Statement A or Statement B.

A: The members of Parliament/National Assembly represent the people; therefore they should make laws for this country, even if the President/Prime Minister does not agree.

B: Since the President/Prime Minister represents all of us, he should pass laws without worrying about what the Parliament/National Assembly thinks.

![Chart showing percentage of agreement with statements over years.]
3.5 Variable: President free to act vs. obey the laws and courts

**Question**: Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Statement A or Statement B.

- A: Since the President/Prime Minister was elected to lead the country, he should not be bound by laws or court decisions that he thinks are wrong.
- B: The President/Prime Minister must always obey the laws and the courts, even if he thinks they are wrong.

![Bar chart showing responses to the question about President free to act vs. obey the laws and courts.]

3.6 Variable: Parliament monitors President vs. cooperate

**Question**: Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Statement A or Statement B.

- A: Parliament should ensure that the president explains to it on a regular basis how his government spends the taxpayers’ money.
- B: The President should be able to devote his full attention to developing the country rather than wasting time justifying his actions.

![Bar chart showing responses to the question about Parliament monitors President vs. cooperate.]

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3.7 Variable: Opposition parties examine government vs. cooperate

Question: Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Statement A or Statement B.
A: Opposition parties should regularly examine and criticize government policies and actions.
B: Opposition parties should concentrate on cooperating with government and helping it develop the country.

![2008 Agree with A vs. Agree with B](chart1)

3.8 Variable: Media examines government vs. cooperate

Question: Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Statement A or Statement B.
A: The news media should constantly investigate and report on corruption and the mistakes made by the government.
B: Too much reporting on negative events, like corruption, only harms the country.

![2008 Agree with A vs. Agree with B](chart2)
SUPPLY OF DEMOCRACY

4.1 Variable: Extent of Democracy

Questions: In your opinion how much of a democracy is Mali today?

![Bar chart showing the extent of democracy in Mali from 2001 to 2008.]

- Not a democracy/A democracy with major problems: 43%, 37%, 34%, 45%, 63%, 57%, 60%
- A democracy with minor problems/A full democracy: 29%, 34%, 34%, 34%, 60%, 63%, 57%
- Don't understand/Question/democracy/Don't know: 8%, 8%, 6%, 6%

4.2 Variable: Satisfaction with democracy

Question: Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in Mali?

![Bar chart showing the satisfaction with democracy in Mali from 2001 to 2008.]

- Not at all satisfied/Not very satisfied: 34%, 32%, 39%, 46%, 49%
- Fairly satisfied/Very satisfied: 60%, 63%, 57%
- Don't know: 6%, 4%, 4%, 4%
4.3 Variable: Elections free and fair

**Question:** On the whole, how would you rate the freeness and fairness of the last national election, held in [20xx]. Was it:

![Bar chart showing ratings of elections freeness and fairness](chart1)

4.4 Variable: Future of democracy

**Question:** In your opinion, how likely is it that Mali will remain a democratic country?

![Bar chart showing likelihood of Mali remaining democratic in 2005](chart2)

**Question:** Please tell me if the following things are worse or better now than they were a few years ago, or are they about the same: Freedom to say what you think?

![Graph showing freedom of speech for 2001, 2002, and 2005.]


**Question:** In this country, how free are you: to say what you think?

![Graph showing freedom of speech for 2008.]

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Question: Please tell me if the following things are worse or better now than they were a few years ago, or are they about the same: Freedom to join any political organization you want?

![Freedom of association (2001-2005) graph]


Question: In this country, how free are you: to join any political organization you want?

![Freedom of association (2008) graph]
4.9 Variable: Voting freedom (2001-2005)

Question: Please tell me if the following things are worse or better now than they were a few years ago, or are they about the same: Freedom to choose who to vote for without feeling pressured?

![Graph showing voting freedom from 2001 to 2005](image)


Question: In this country, how free are you: to choose who to vote for without feeling pressured?

![Graph showing voting freedom in 2008](image)