



People's development agenda, leaders' performance, national dialogue, freedoms, and perceptions of social media

Findings from Afrobarometer Round 8 survey in Zimbabwe

7 July 2021



At a glance

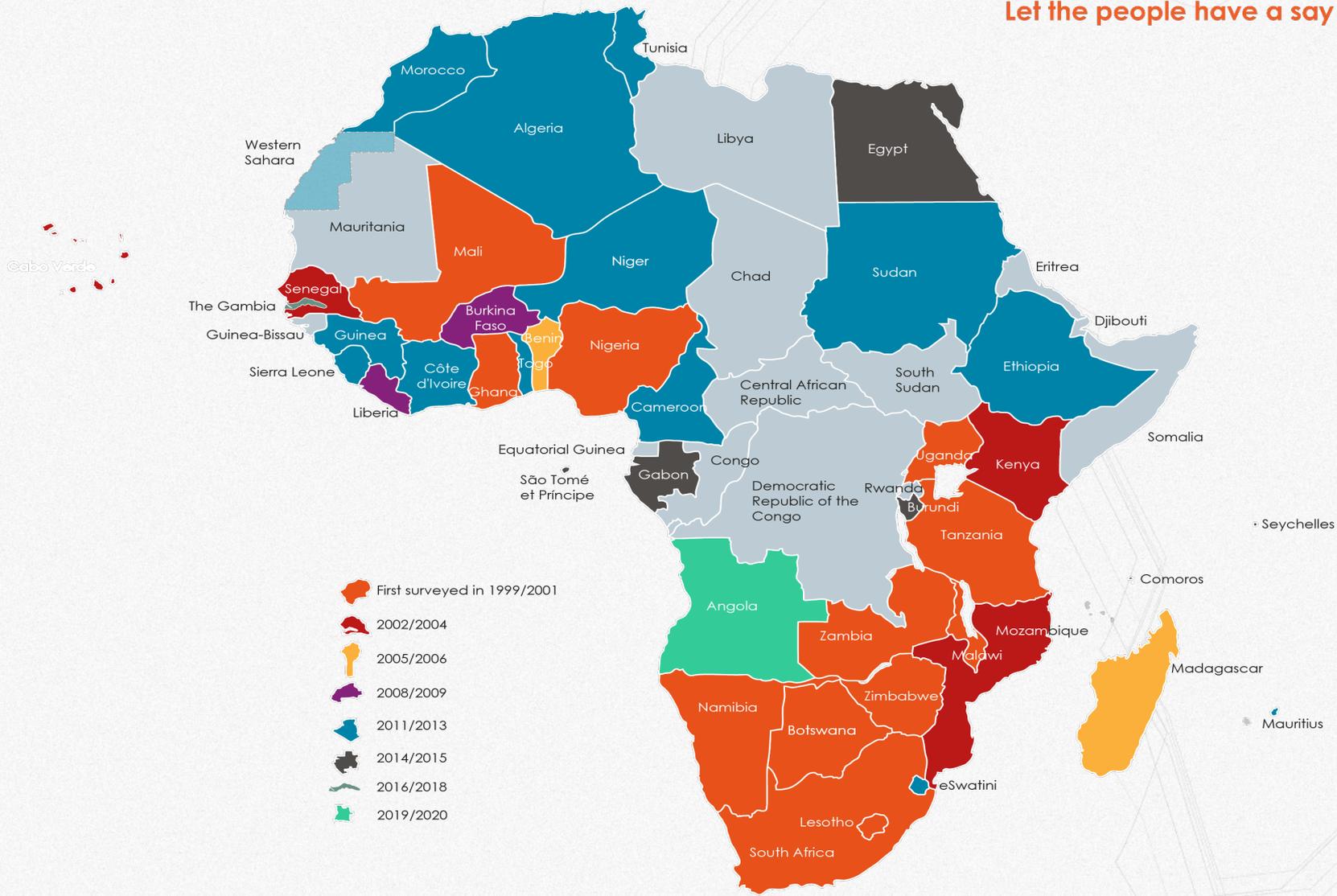
- **People's development agenda:** Unemployment is the single most important problem that Zimbabweans want their government to address, followed by infrastructure/roads and education.
- **National dialogue:** Almost three-fourths (73%) of Zimbabweans call for an all-inclusive national dialogue that goes beyond political parties.
- **Views on fundamental freedoms:** Almost four out of five citizens (79%) say they “often” or “always” have to be careful what they say about politics.

What is Afrobarometer?

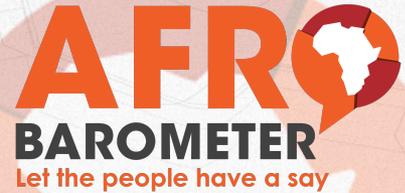


- A pan-African, non-partisan, non-profit survey research network that provides reliable data on Africans' experiences and evaluations of quality of life, governance, and democracy.
- Started in 12 African countries in 1999. Round 8 surveys in 2019/2021 cover 34 countries.
- **Goal:** To give the public a voice in policymaking by providing high-quality public opinion data to policymakers, policy advocates, civil society organizations, academics, news media, donors and investors, and ordinary Africans.
- A national partner in each country conducts the survey. In Zimbabwe, the Afrobarometer Round 8 survey was conducted by the Mass Public Opinion Institute (MPOI).

Where Afrobarometer works



Methodology



- Nationally representative sample of adult citizens
 - ❑ All respondents are *randomly* selected.
 - ❑ Sample is distributed across regions/states/provinces and urban/rural areas in proportion to their share in 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.
- Standard questionnaire allows comparisons across countries and over time.
- Sample size in Zimbabwe of 1,200 adult citizens yields a margin of error of +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level.
- Fieldwork for Round 8 in Zimbabwe was conducted between 16 April and 1 May 2021.

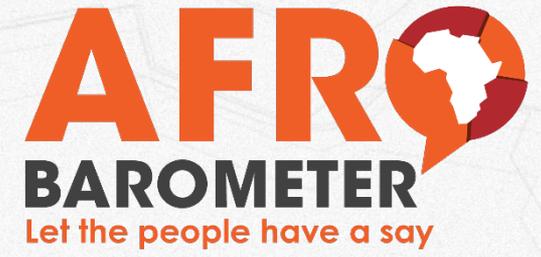
Survey demographics

| Zimbabwe | 2021



Gender	%
Men	50
Women	50
Residence	
Urban	38
Rural	62
Education	
No formal education	3
Primary	21
Secondary	60
Post-secondary	16

Province	%
Harare	20
Bulawayo	5
Midlands	12
Masvingo	10
Mashonaland East	10
Mashonaland West	12
Mashonaland Central	9
Matabeleland South	5
Matabeleland North	5
Manicaland	12

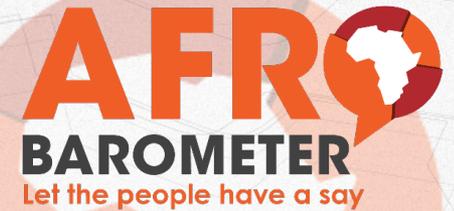


Findings



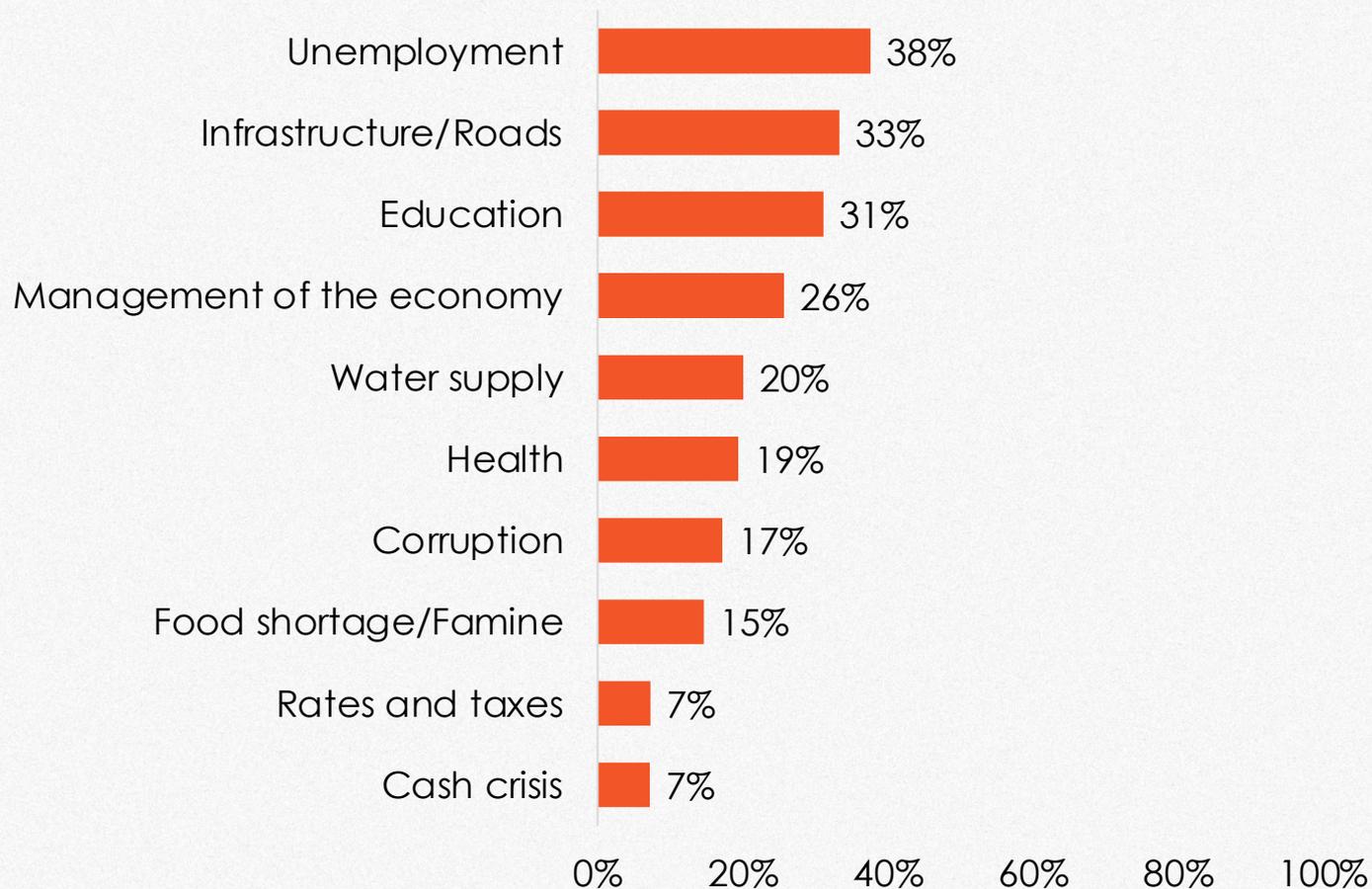
People's development agenda

Key findings



- Unemployment is the most important problem that Zimbabweans want their government to address, cited by 38% of respondents as one of their three priorities.
- Infrastructure/roads (33%), education (31%), and management of the economy (26%), follow as top priorities on citizens' agenda.

Most important problem that the government should address | Zimbabwe | 2021



Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, what are the most important problems facing this country that government should address? (Up to three responses per person)*

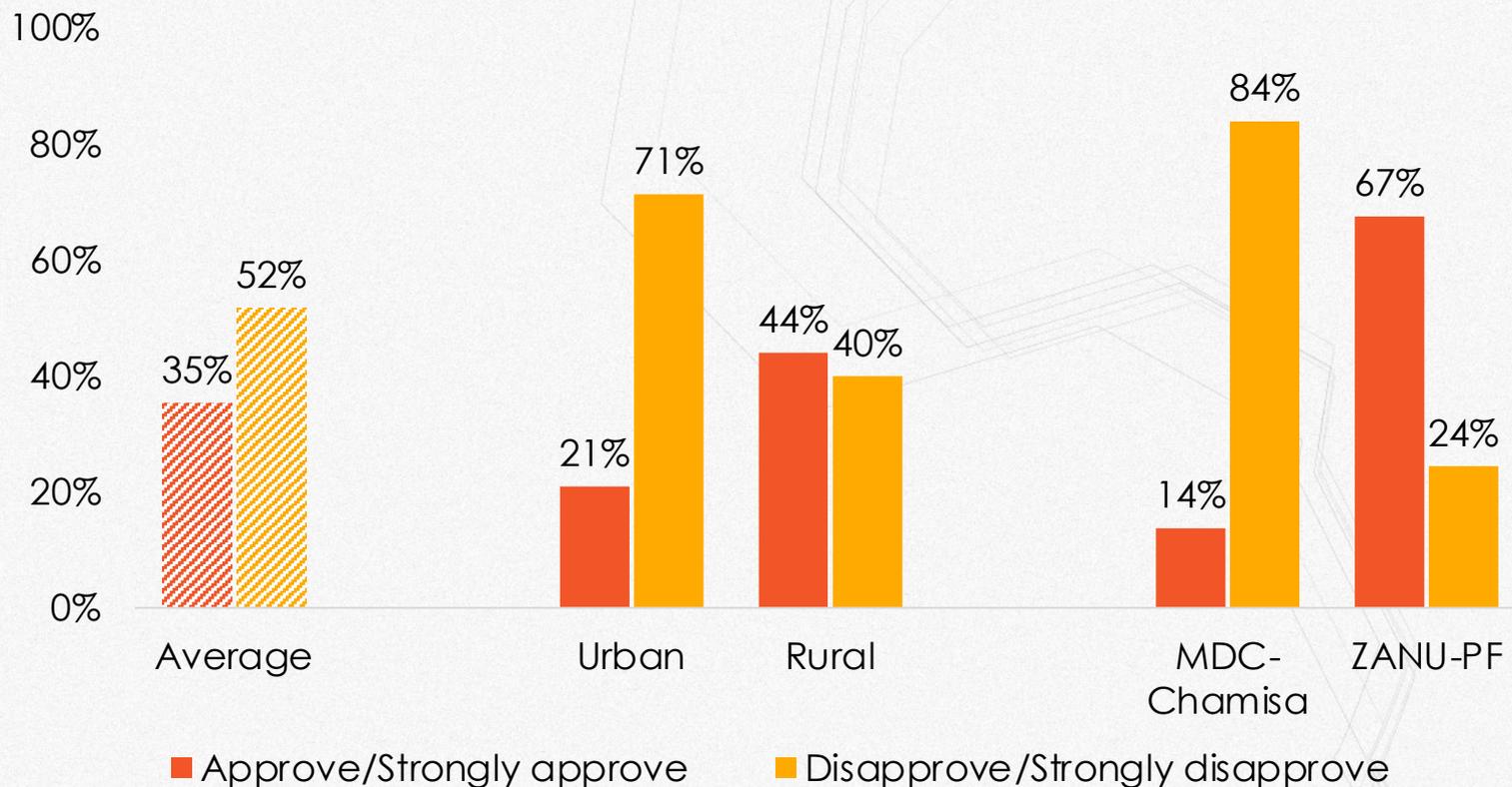
Leaders' performance ratings

Key findings



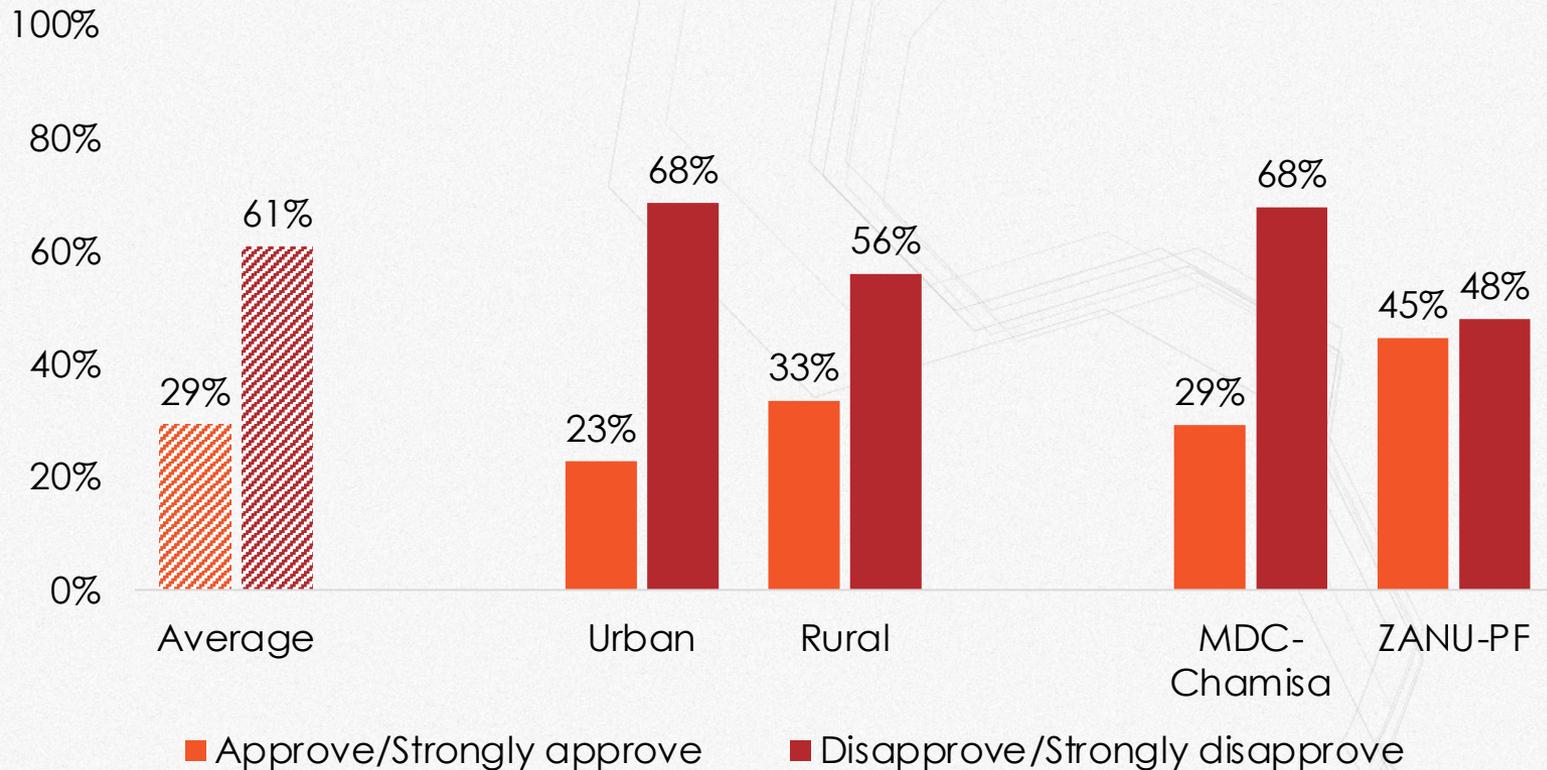
- More than half (52%) of Zimbabweans disapprove of the way President Mnangagwa has performed his job over the past 12 months.
- Six in 10 (61%) rate their member of Parliament's performance poorly.
- Opinions are split on how local councillors did their jobs: 48% approve and 47% disapprove of their performance.
- Traditional leaders received the most positive ratings, with 72% approving of their performance.

Performance rating for President Mnangagwa | by urban-rural location and party affiliation | Zimbabwe | 2021



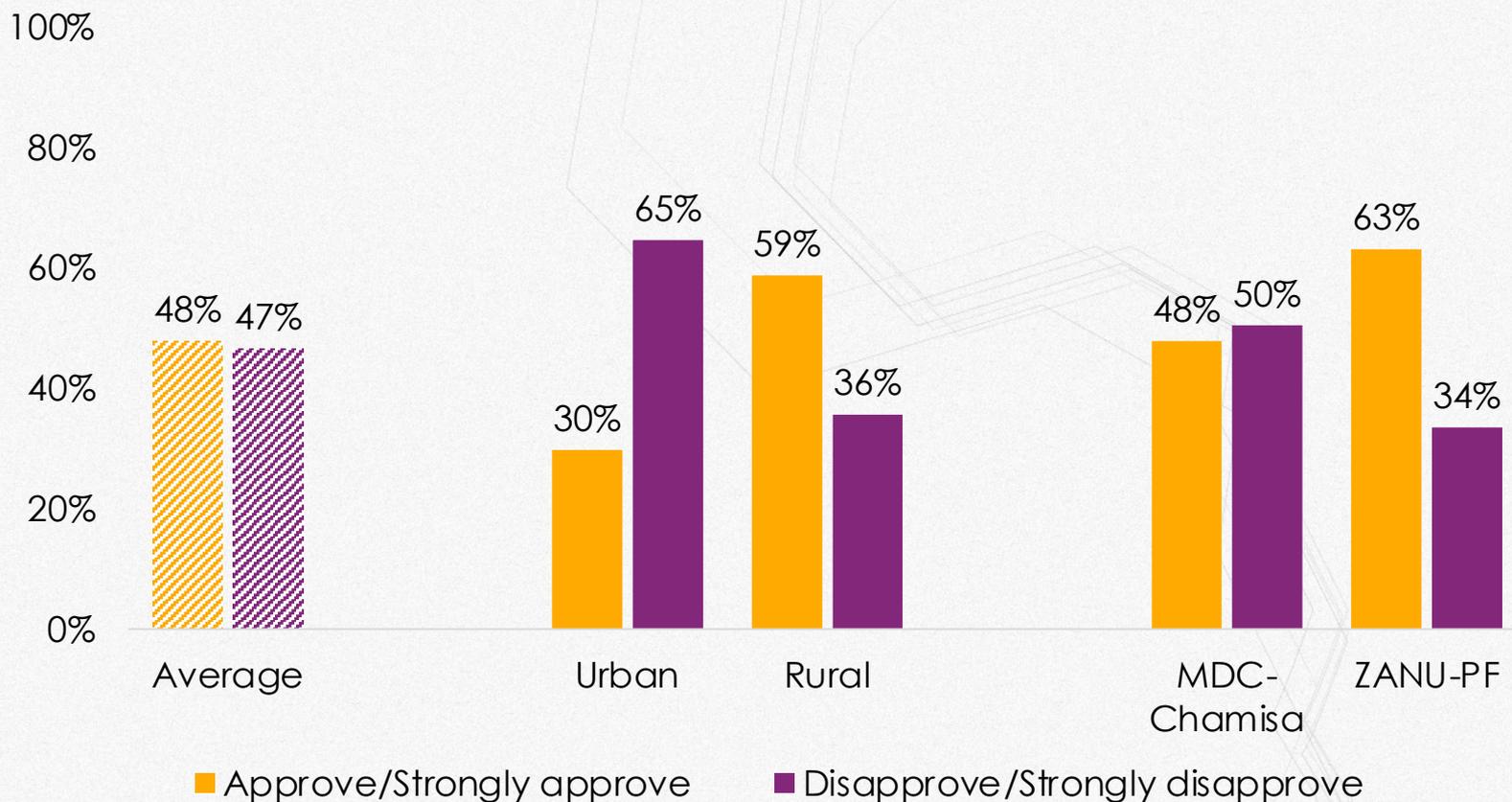
Respondents were asked: Do you approve or disapprove of the way that the following people have performed their jobs over the past 12 months, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: President Emmerson Mnangagwa?

Performance rating for members of Parliament | by urban-rural location and party affiliation | Zimbabwe | 2021



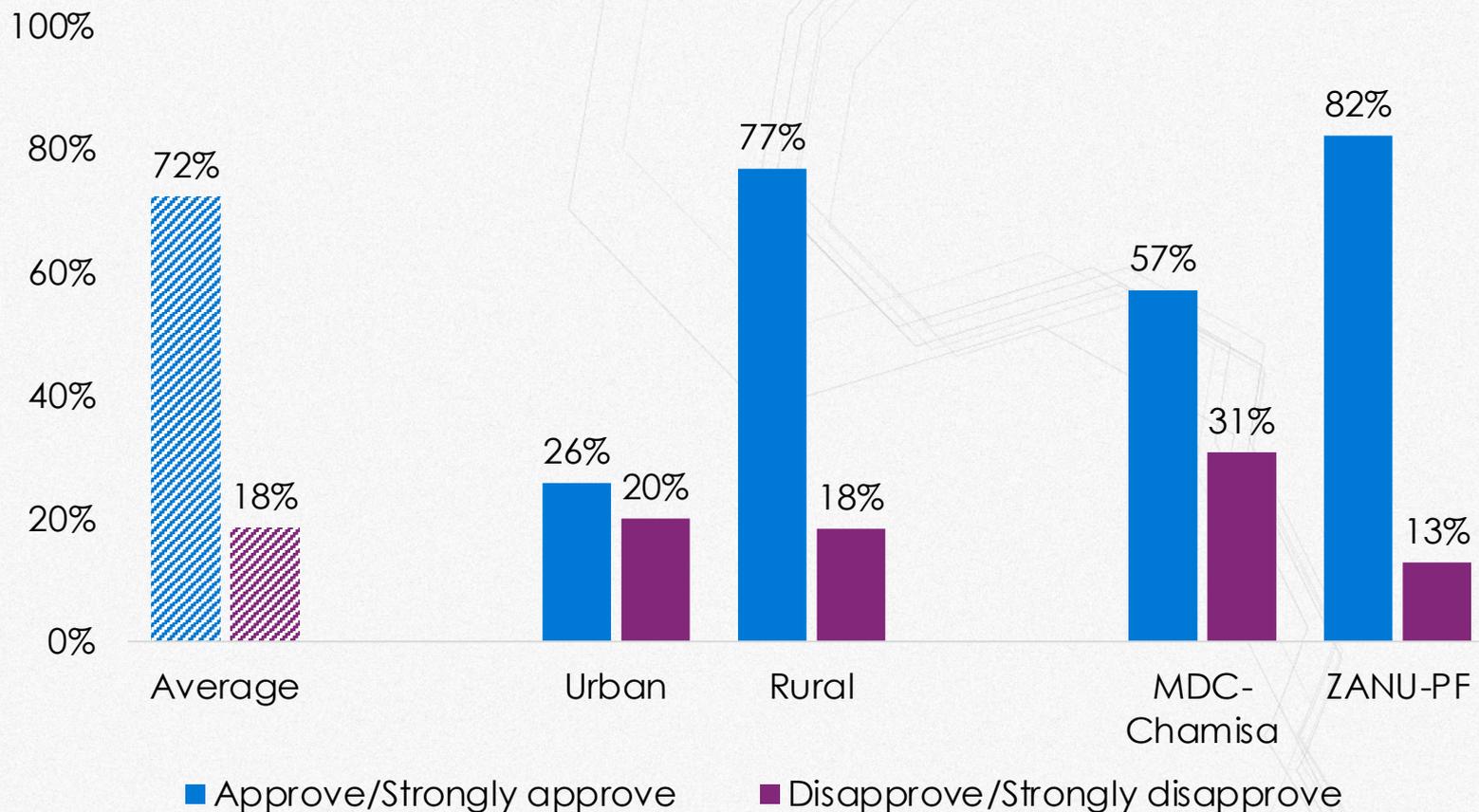
Respondents were asked: Do you approve or disapprove of the way that the following people have performed their jobs over the past 12 months, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: Your member of Parliament?

Performance rating for councillors | by urban-rural location and party affiliation | Zimbabwe | 2021



Respondents were asked: Respondents were asked: Do you approve or disapprove of the way that the following people have performed their jobs over the past 12 months, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: Your elected local government councillor?

Performance rating for traditional leaders | by urban-rural location and party affiliation | Zimbabwe | 2021



Respondents were asked: Do you approve or disapprove of the way that the following people have performed their jobs over the past 12 months, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: Your traditional leader?

National dialogue

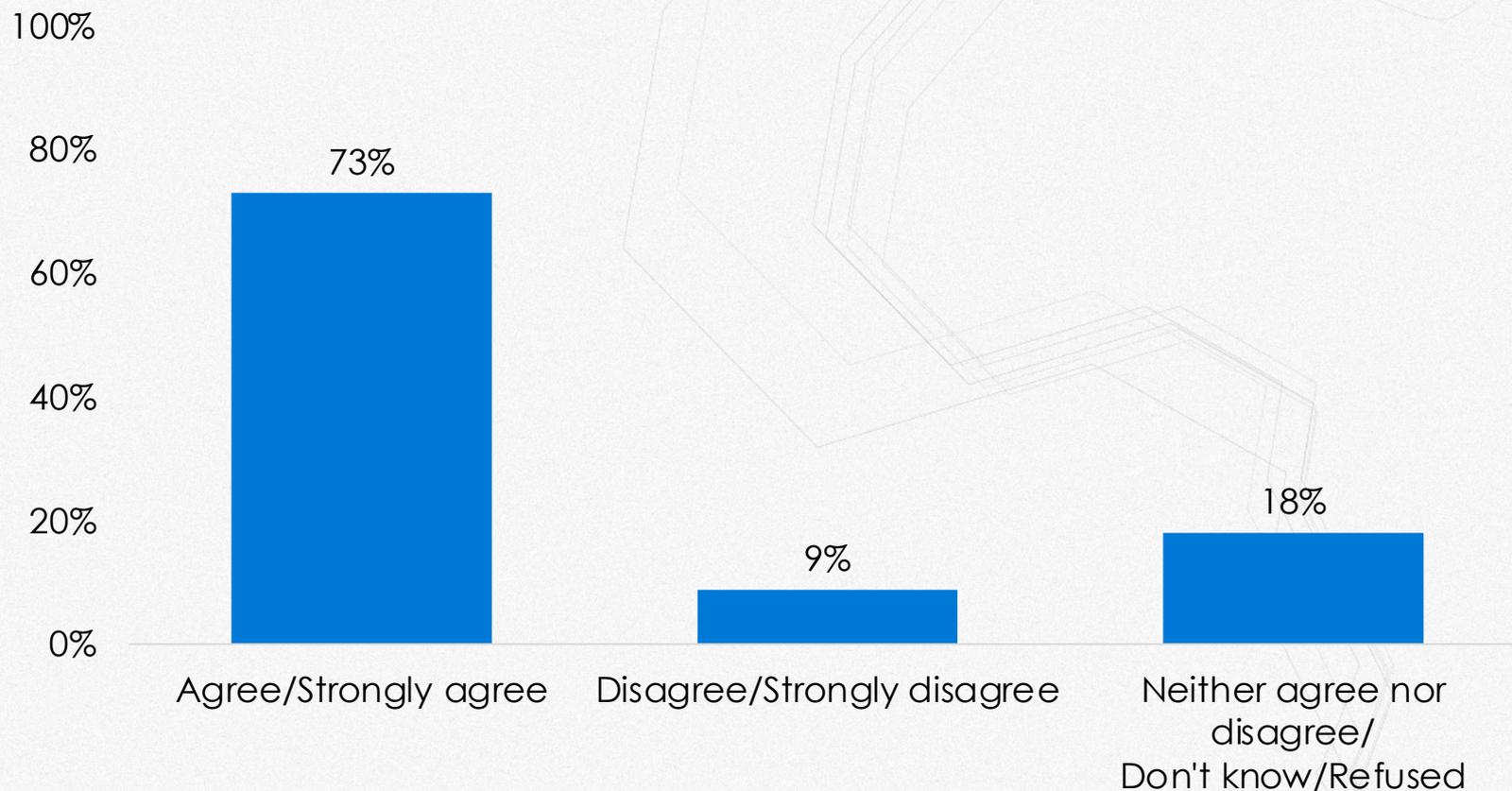
Key findings



- Almost three out of four Zimbabweans (73%) call for a national dialogue that extends beyond political parties to include other stakeholders such as businesses, churches, and civil society.
- More rural residents (76%) than urbanites (68%) are supportive of an all-inclusive national dialogue.
- A huge majority (90%) of residents in Mashonaland Central province “agree” or “strongly agree” that a national dialogue going beyond political parties is needed.

Support for an all-inclusive national dialogue | Zimbabwe

| 2021

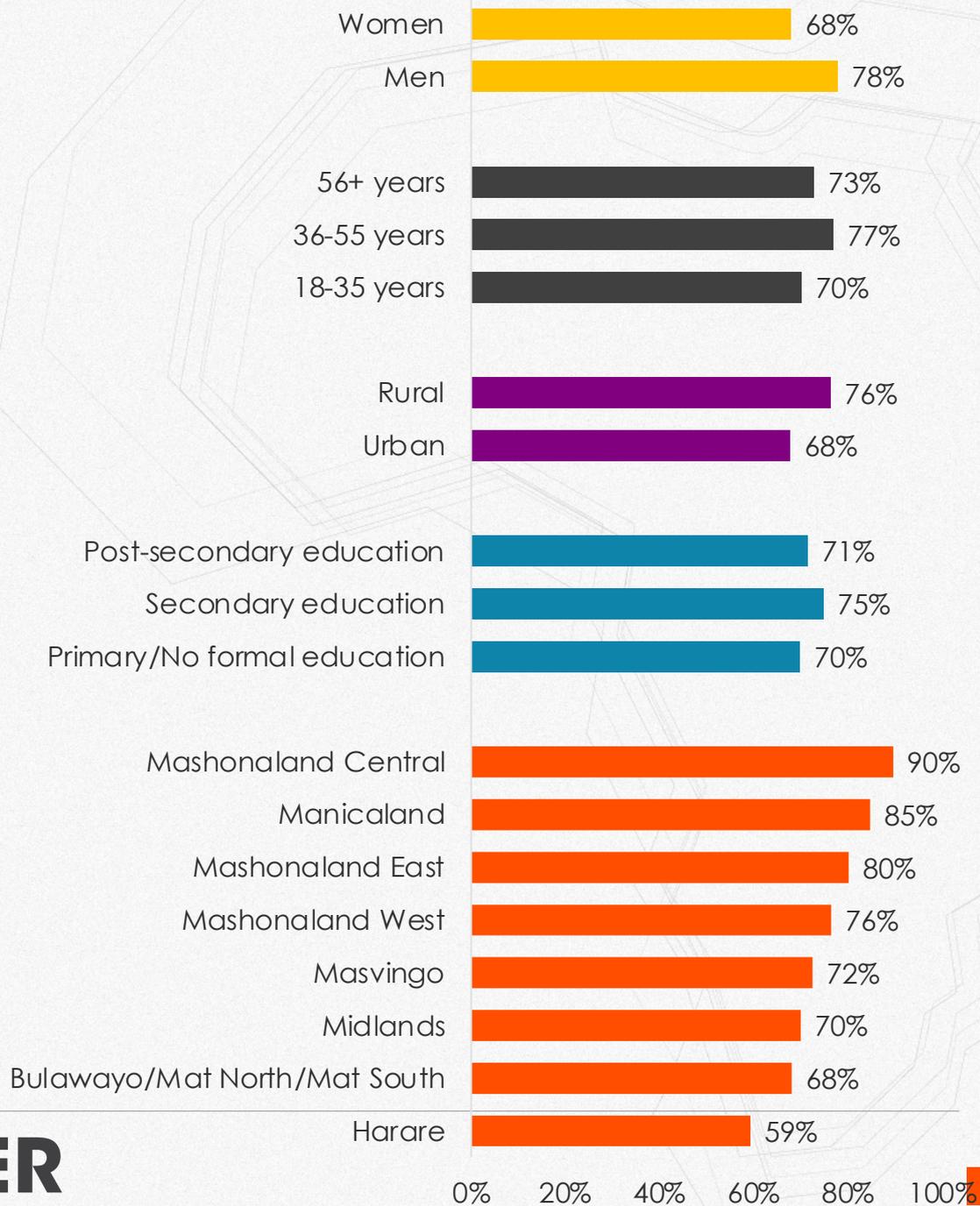


Respondents were asked: For the following statement, please tell me whether you disagree or agree, or haven't you heard enough to say: The national dialogue process in Zimbabwe should go beyond political parties and include the participation of other stakeholders, including businesses, churches, and civil society?

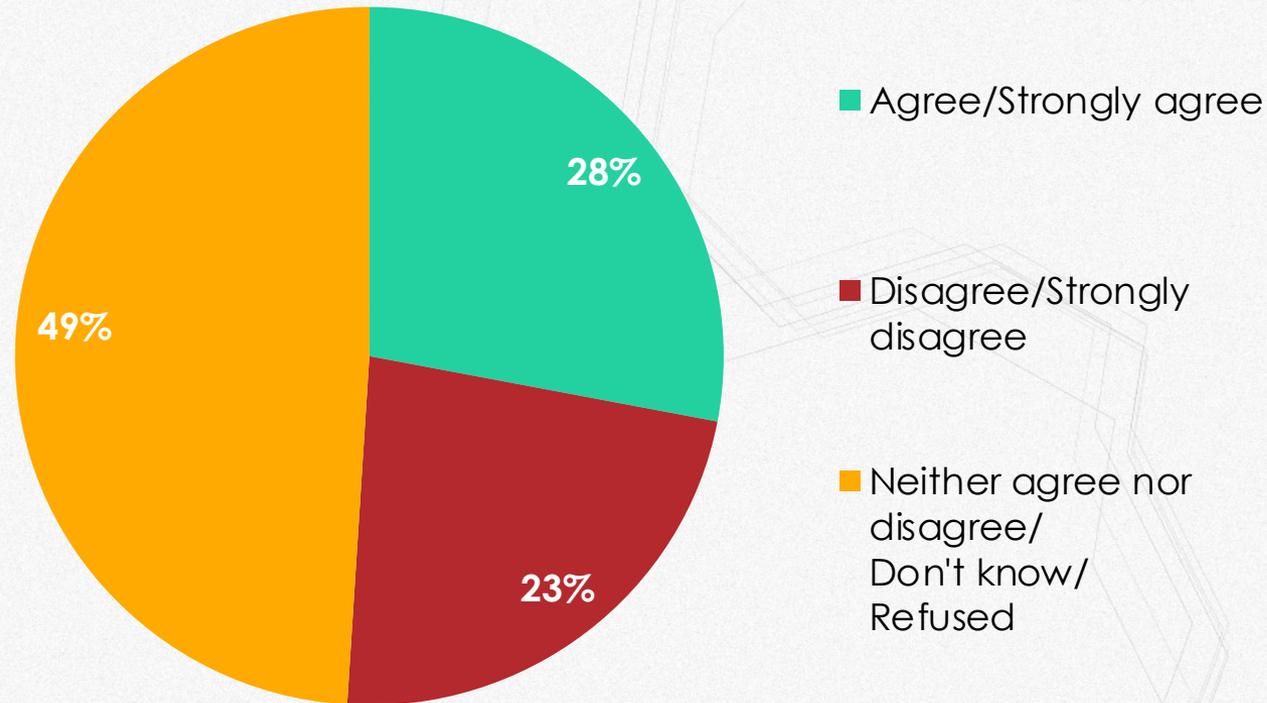
Support for an all-inclusive national dialogue

| by demographic group | Zimbabwe | 2021

Respondents were asked: For the following statement, please tell me whether you disagree or agree, or haven't you heard enough to say: *The national dialogue process in Zimbabwe should go beyond political parties and include the participation of other stakeholders, including businesses, churches, and civil society?* (% who "agree" or "strongly agree")



Support for POLAD | Zimbabwe | 2021



Respondents were asked: For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you disagree or agree, or haven't you heard enough to say: The ongoing Political Actors Dialogue (or POLAD) framework is the only option to bring about national stability and development in Zimbabwe?

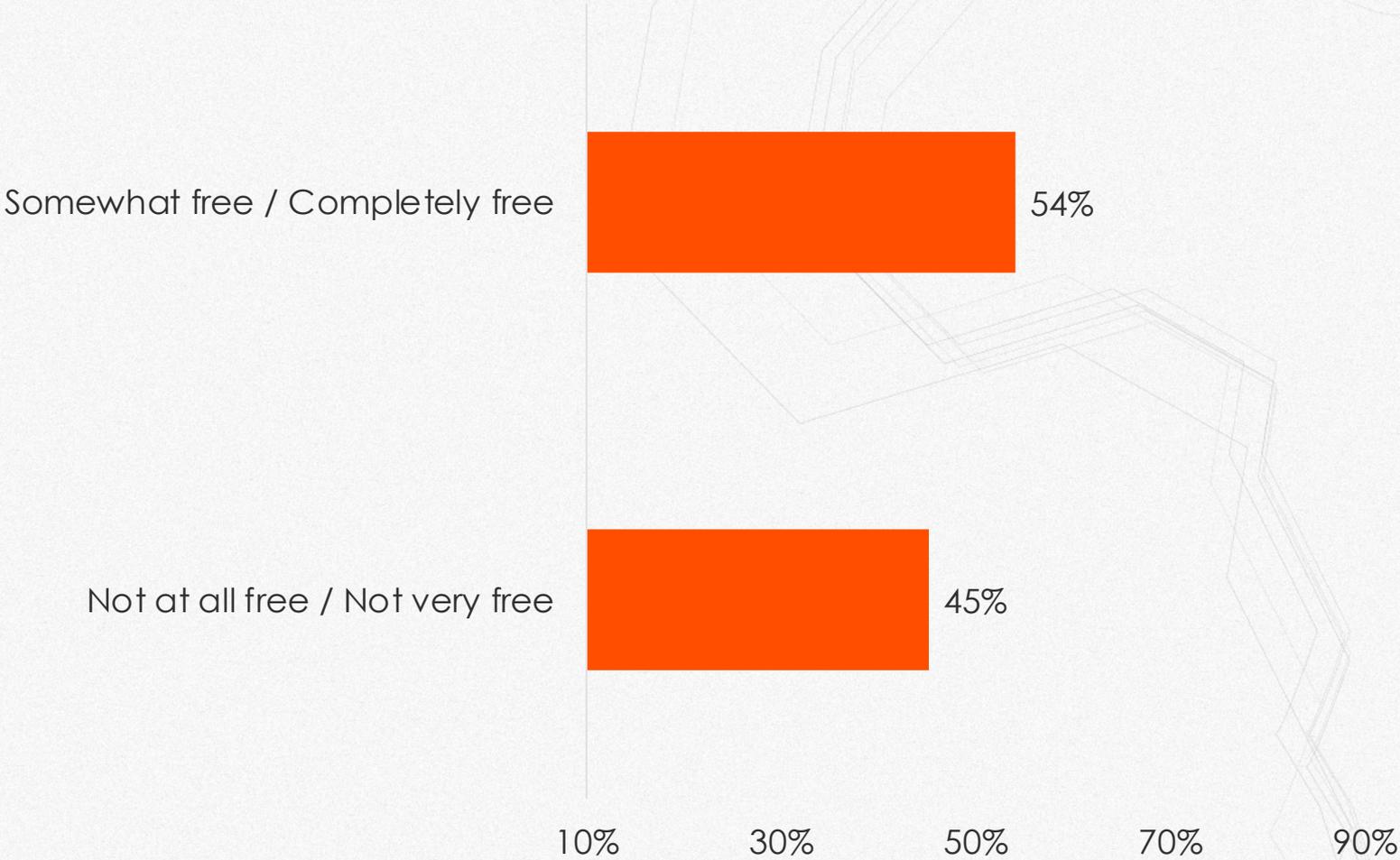
Perceptions of freedoms

Key findings



- More than half (54%) of Zimbabweans say they are “somewhat free” or “completely free” to say what they think, a 6-percentage-point increase compared to 2017 (48%).
- But eight out of 10 citizens (79%) say they “often” or “always” have to be careful about what they say regarding politics.
- More than four out of 10 respondents (42%) say they are “not very free” or “not at all free” to join any political organization they want.
- Almost seven out of 10 (68%) say they are “somewhat free” or “completely free” to vote for a candidate of their choice.

Freedom of speech | Zimbabwe | 2021

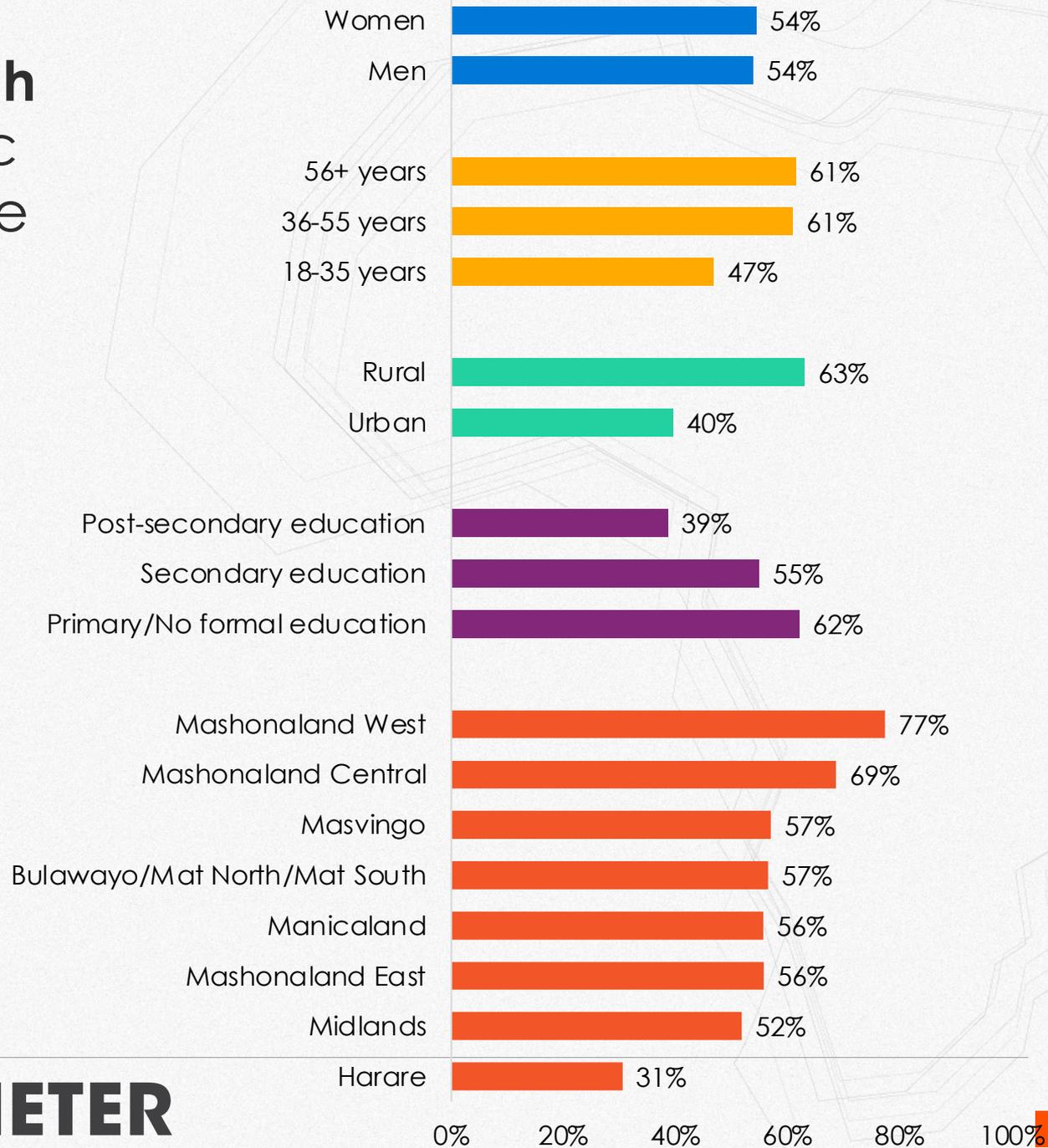


Respondents were asked: In this country, how free are you to say what you think?

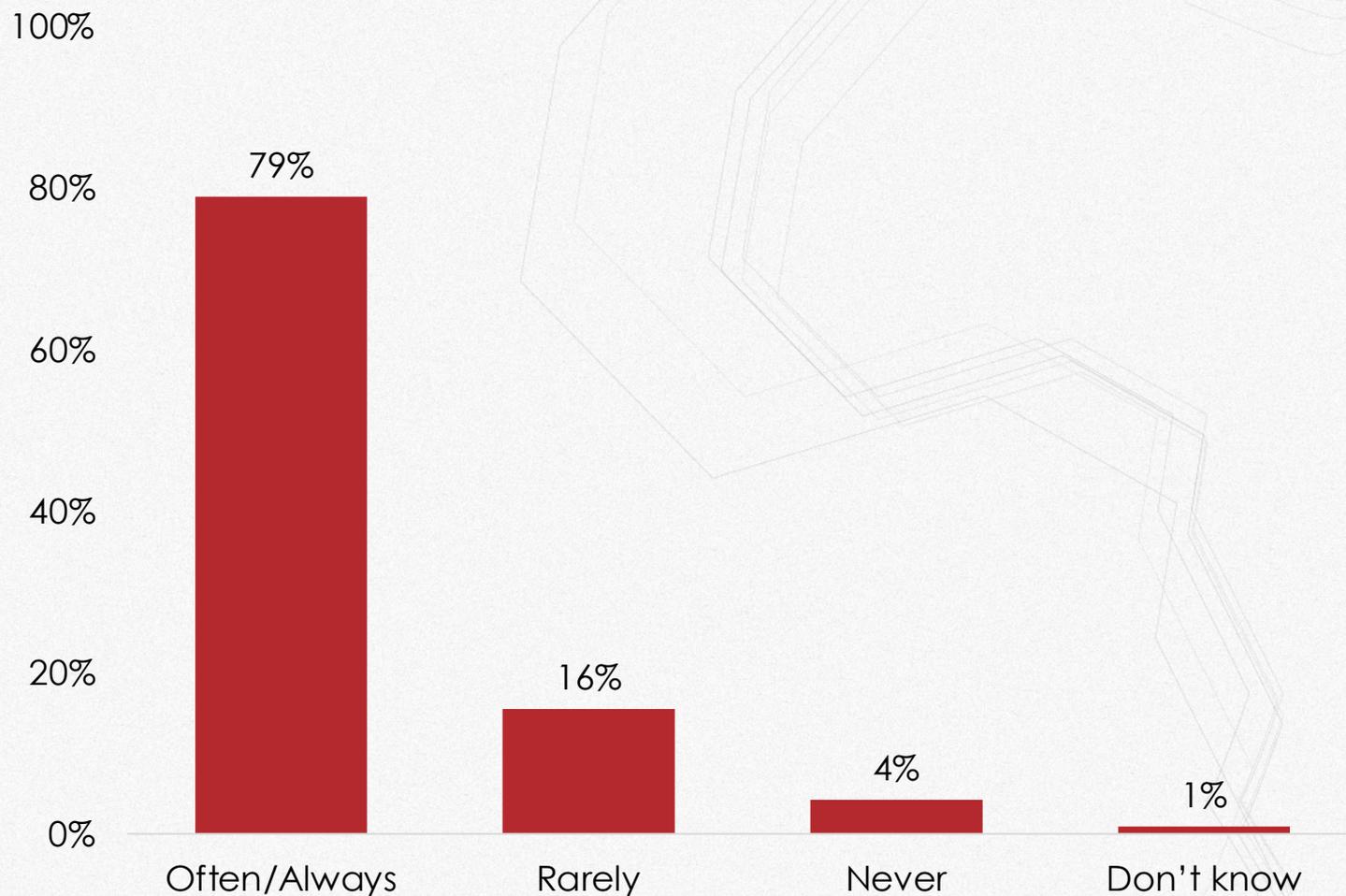
Freedom of speech

| by demographic group | Zimbabwe
| 2021

Respondents were asked: *In this country, how free are you to say what you think? (% who say “somewhat free” or “completely free”)*



Careful about political speech | Zimbabwe | 2021

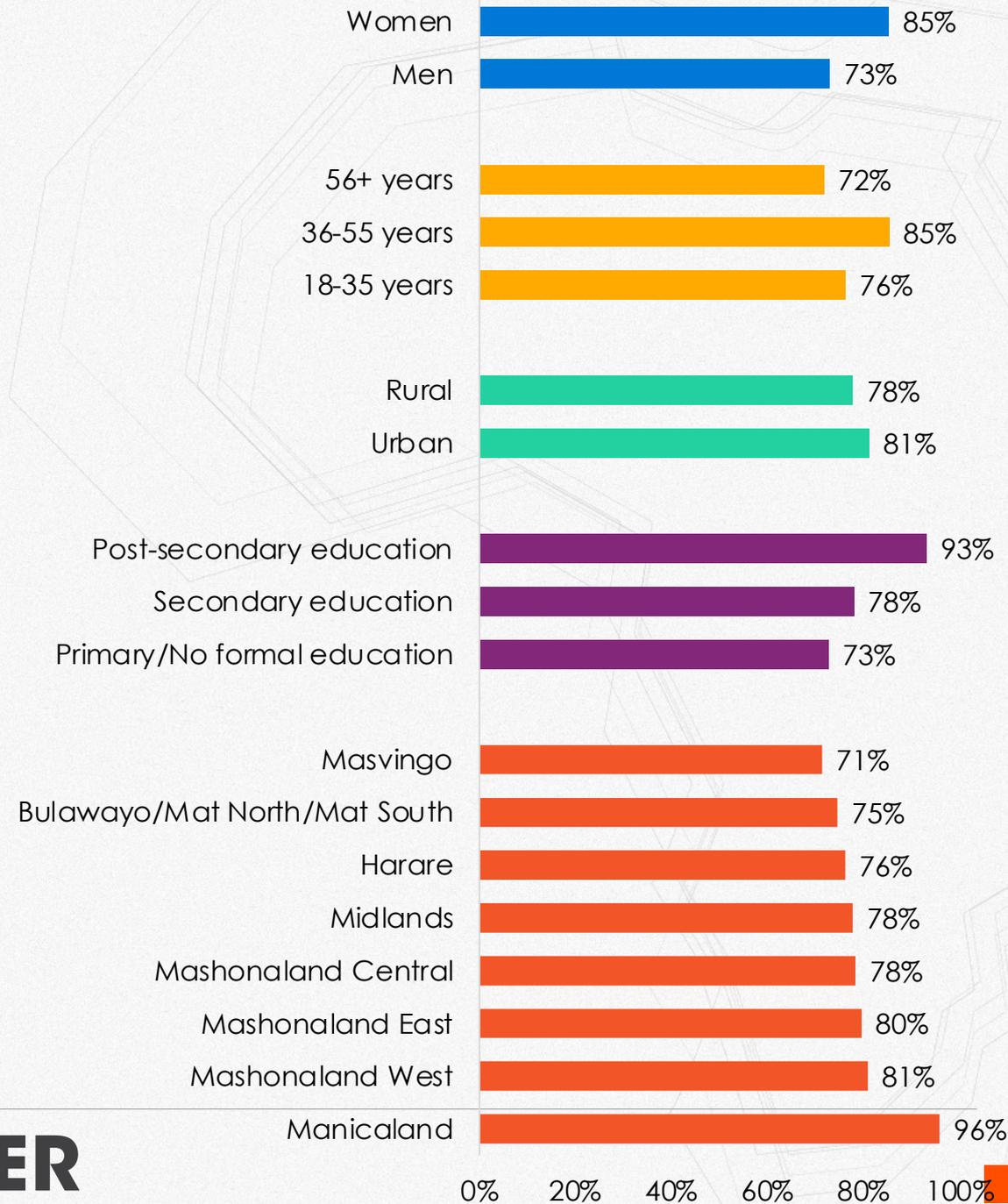


Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, how often, in this country do people have to be careful of what they say about politics?*

Careful about political speech

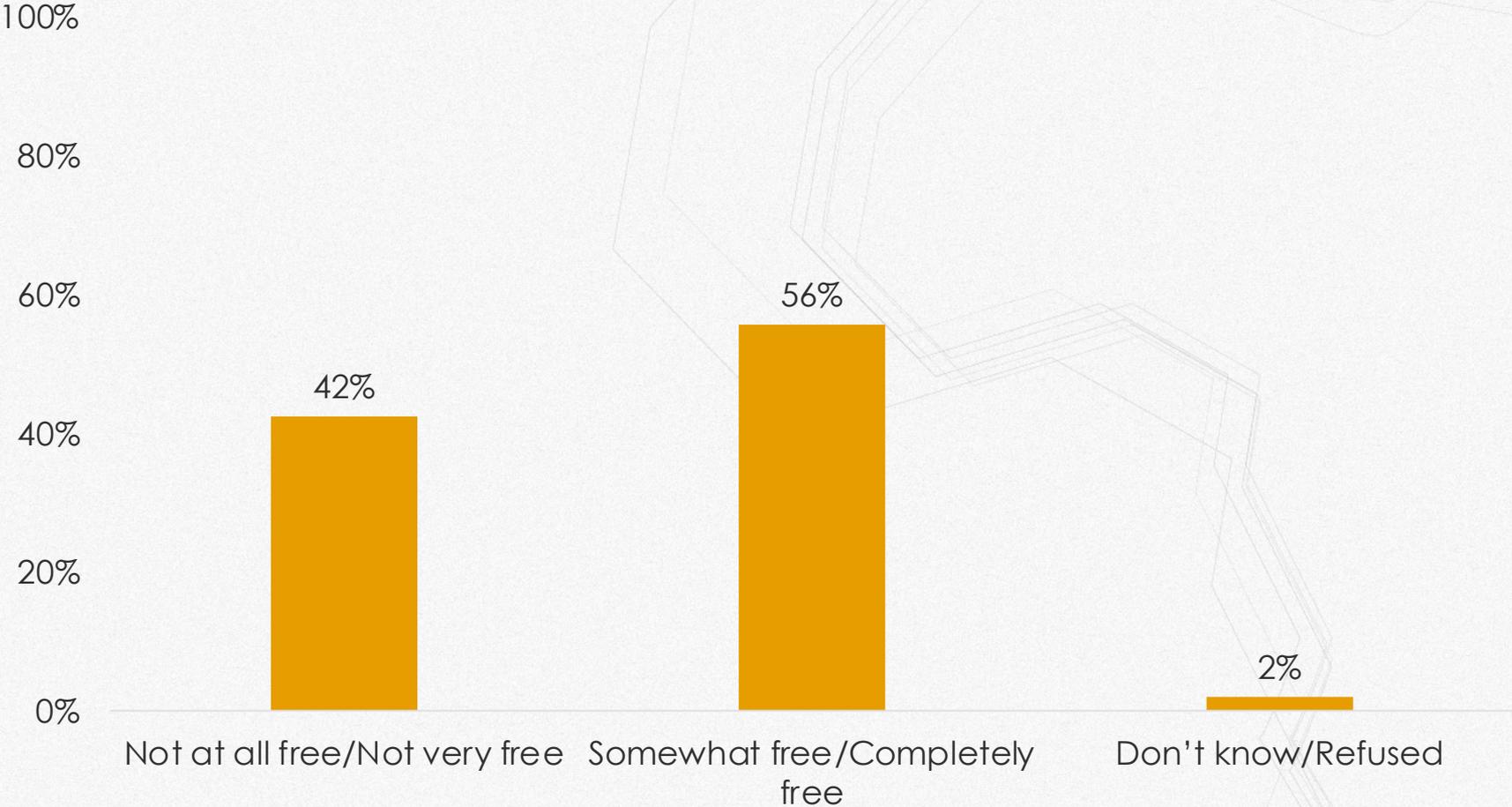
| by demographic group | Zimbabwe | 2021

Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, how often, in this country do people have to be careful of what they say about politics? (% who say "often" or "always")*



Freedom to join any political organization | Zimbabwe

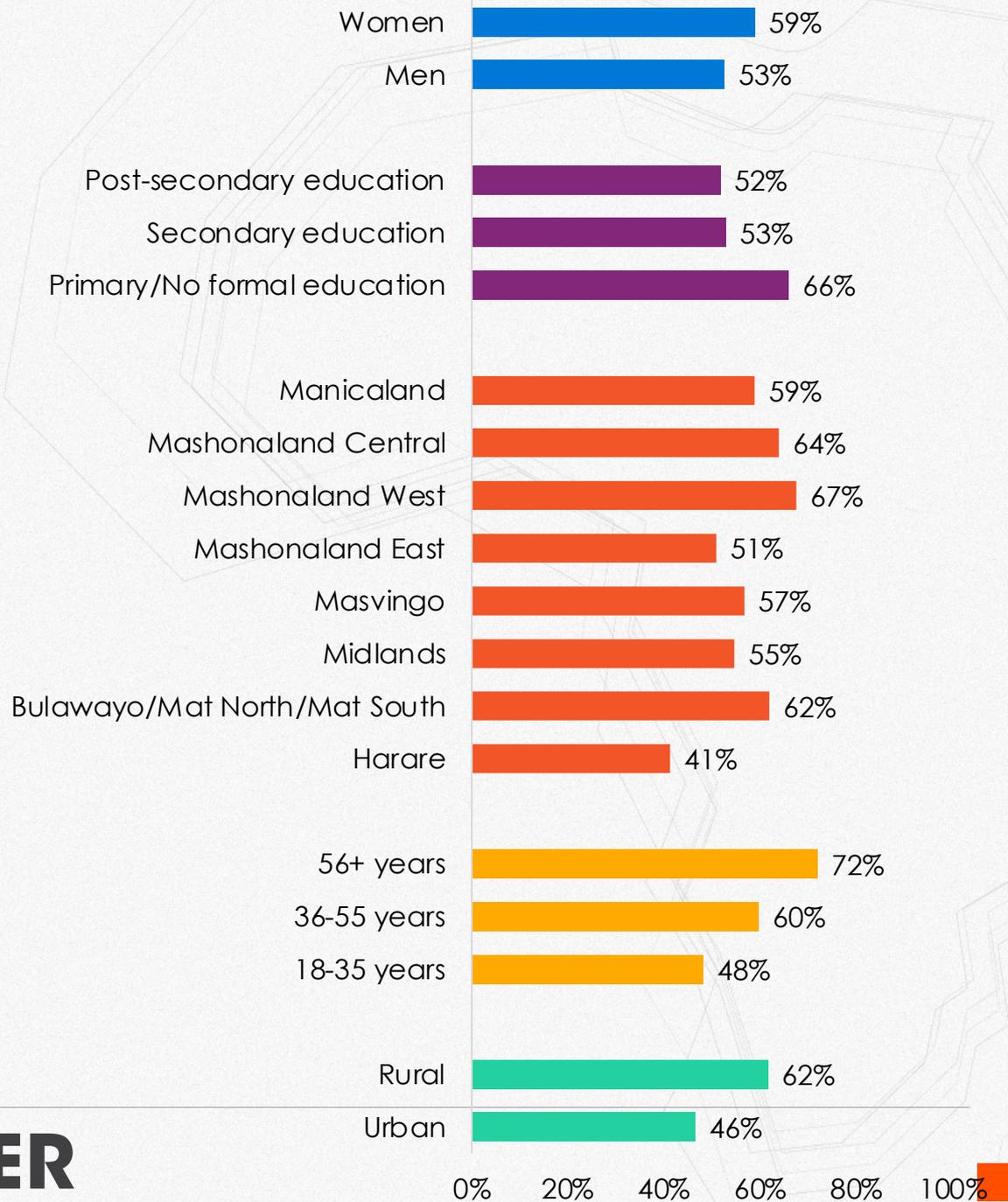
| 2021



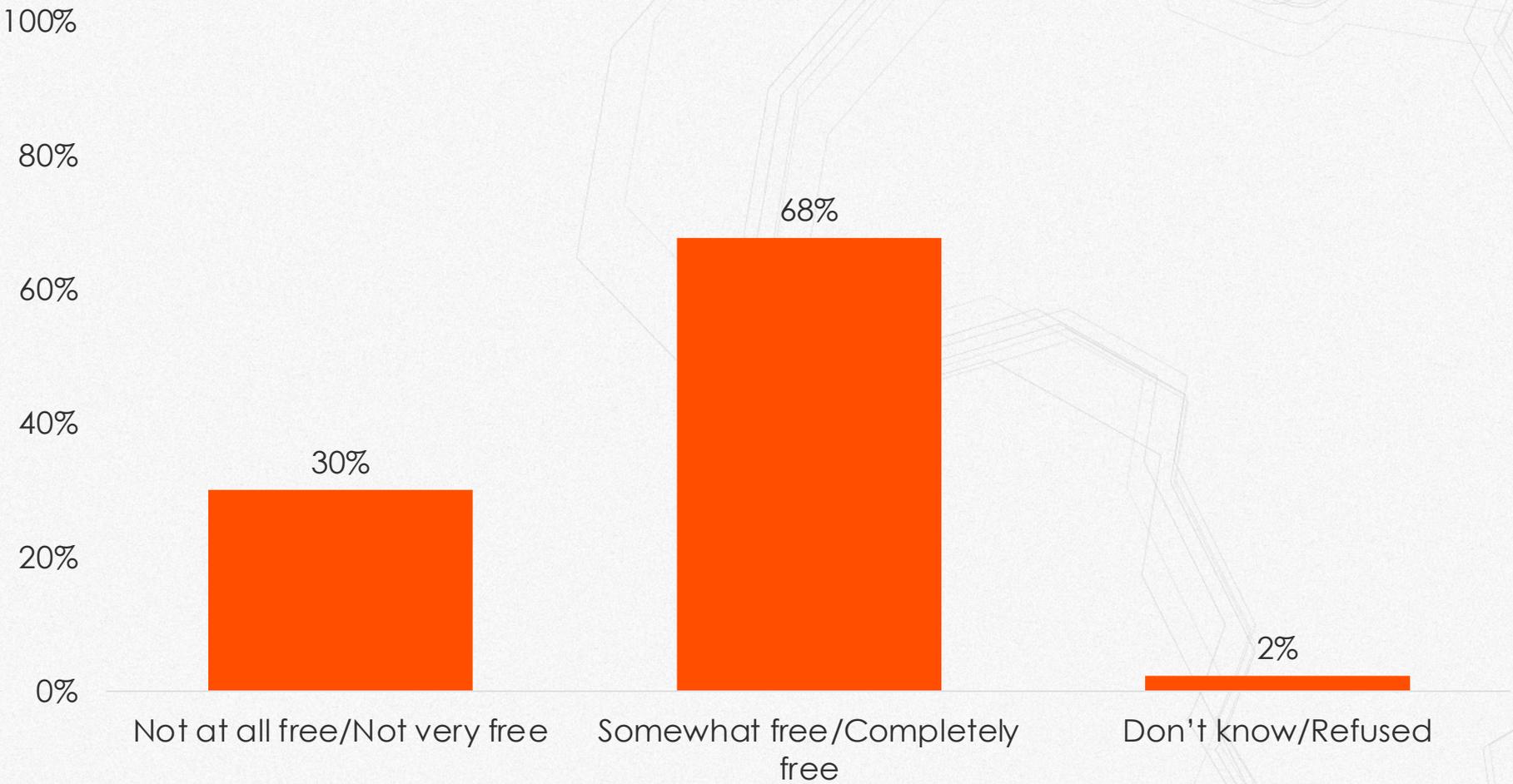
Respondents were asked: In this country, how free are you to join any political organization you want?

Freedom to join any political organization | by demographic group | Zimbabwe | 2021

Respondents were asked:
In this country, how free are you to join any political organization you want? (% who say "somewhat free" or "completely free")



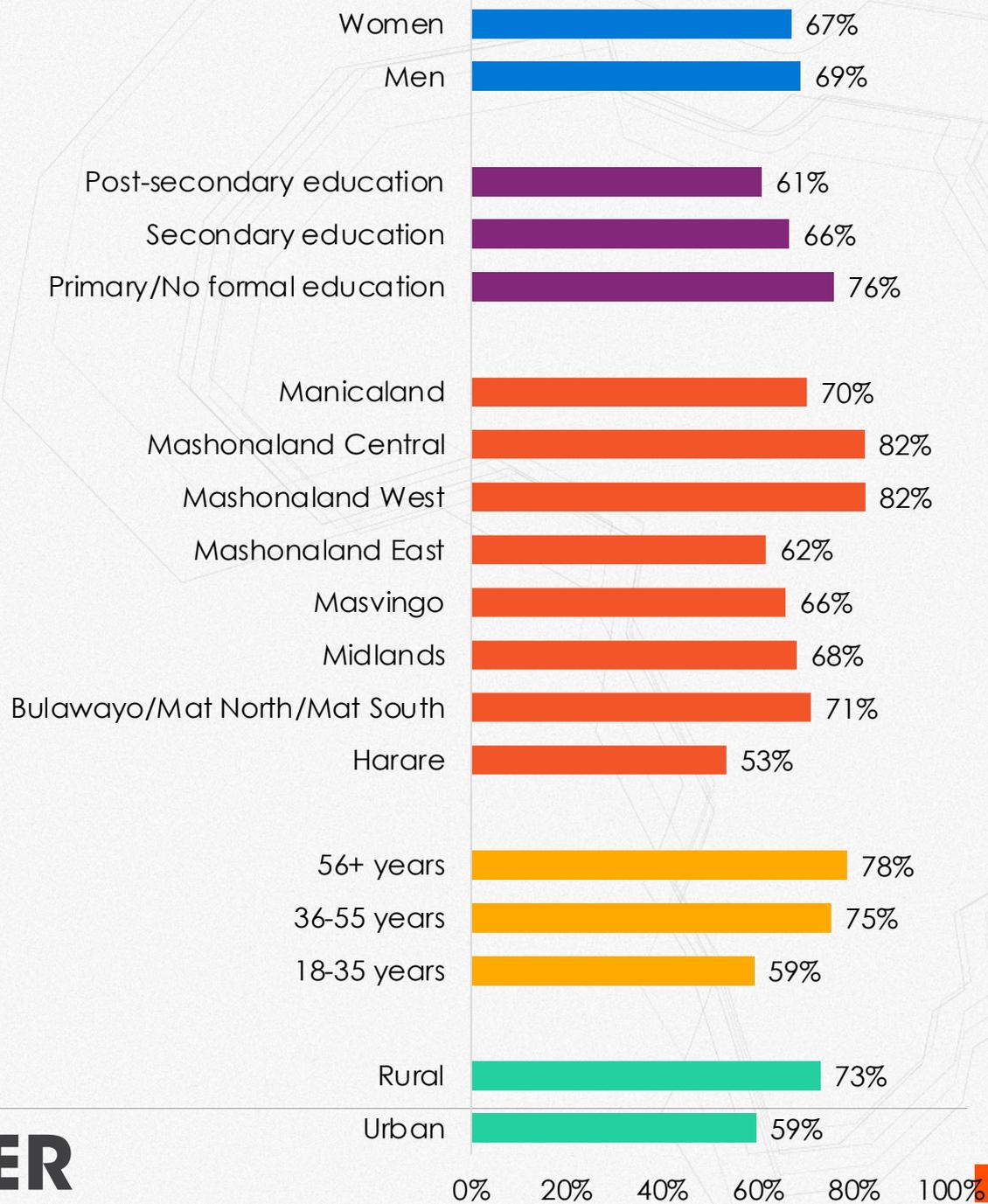
Freedom to choose whom to vote for | Zimbabwe | 2021



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

Free to choose whom to vote for | by demographic group | Zimbabwe | 2021

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



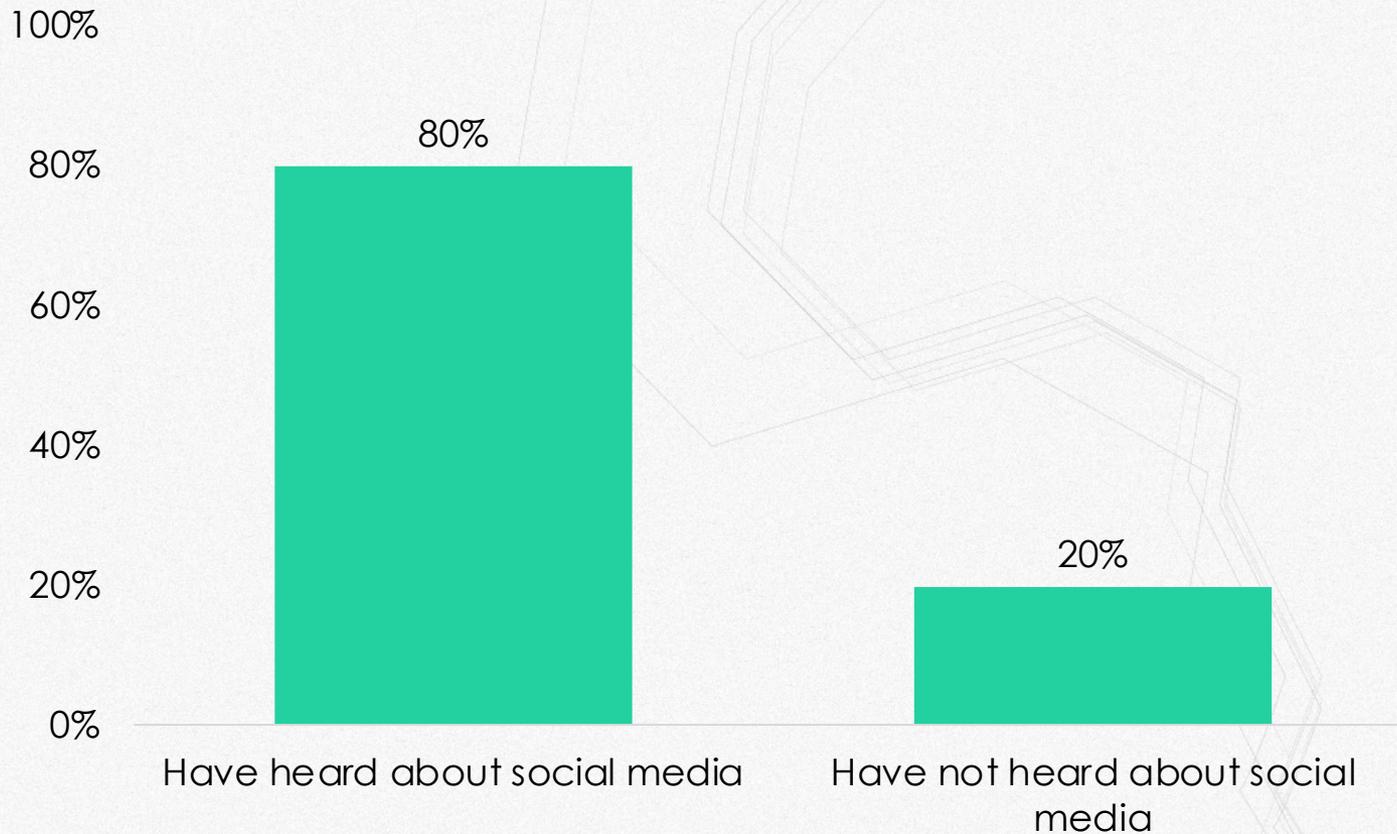


Perceptions of social media

Key findings

- Eight in 10 adult Zimbabweans (80%) say they have heard about social media.
- More than four in 10 (42%) say they get news from social media “every day” or “a few times a week.”
- About two-thirds (65%) hold the view that social media and the Internet help to keep citizens informed and active, and thus unrestricted access to them should be protected.
- Above half (55%) believe social media users spread information that they know is false.
- Among those who have heard about social media:
 - Six in 10 (61%) see its overall effects on society as positive.
 - But a majority (71%) also say social media makes people more likely to believe false news.

Heard about social media? | Zimbabwe | 2021

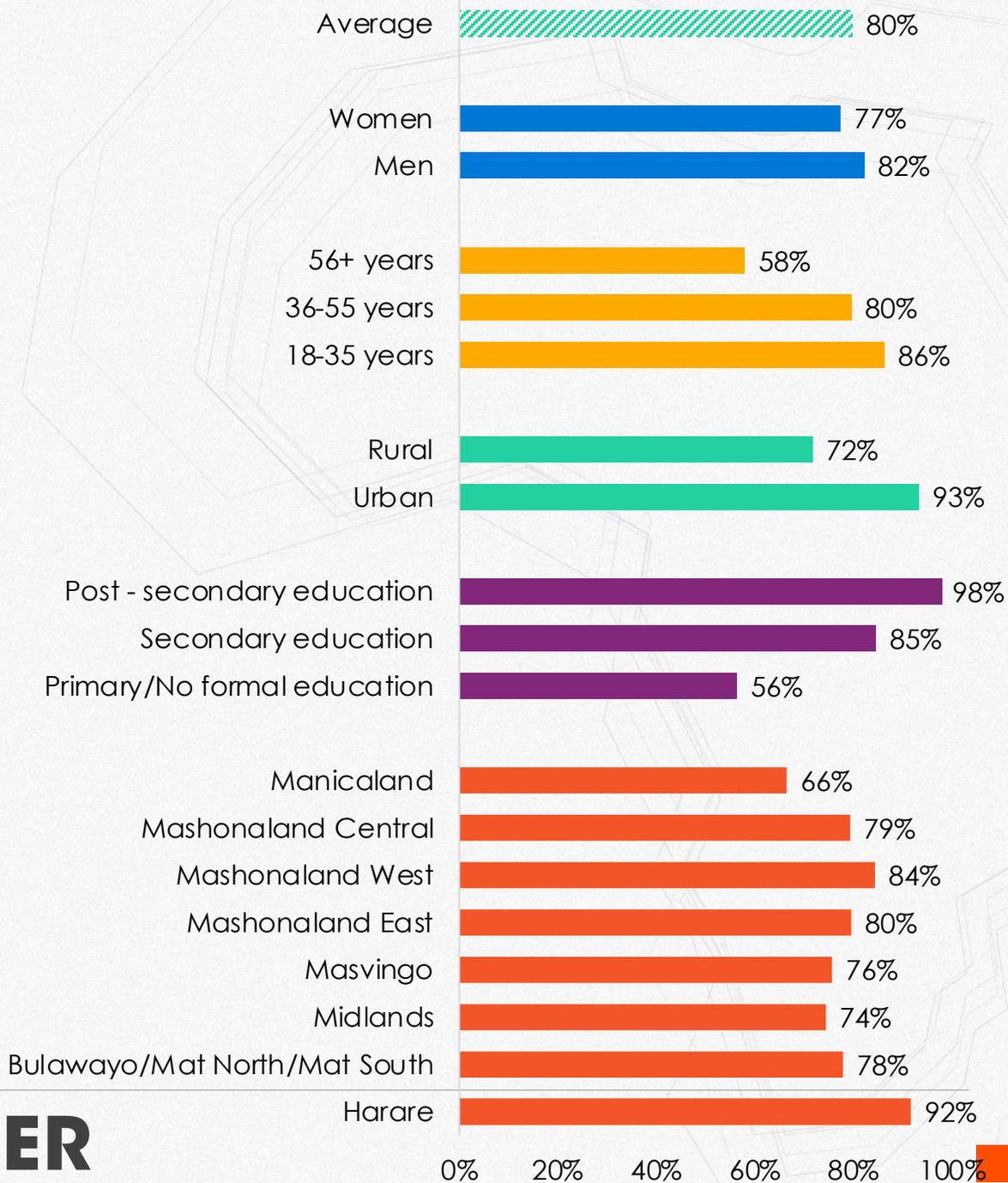


Respondents were asked: *Have you heard about social media, for example, Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp?*

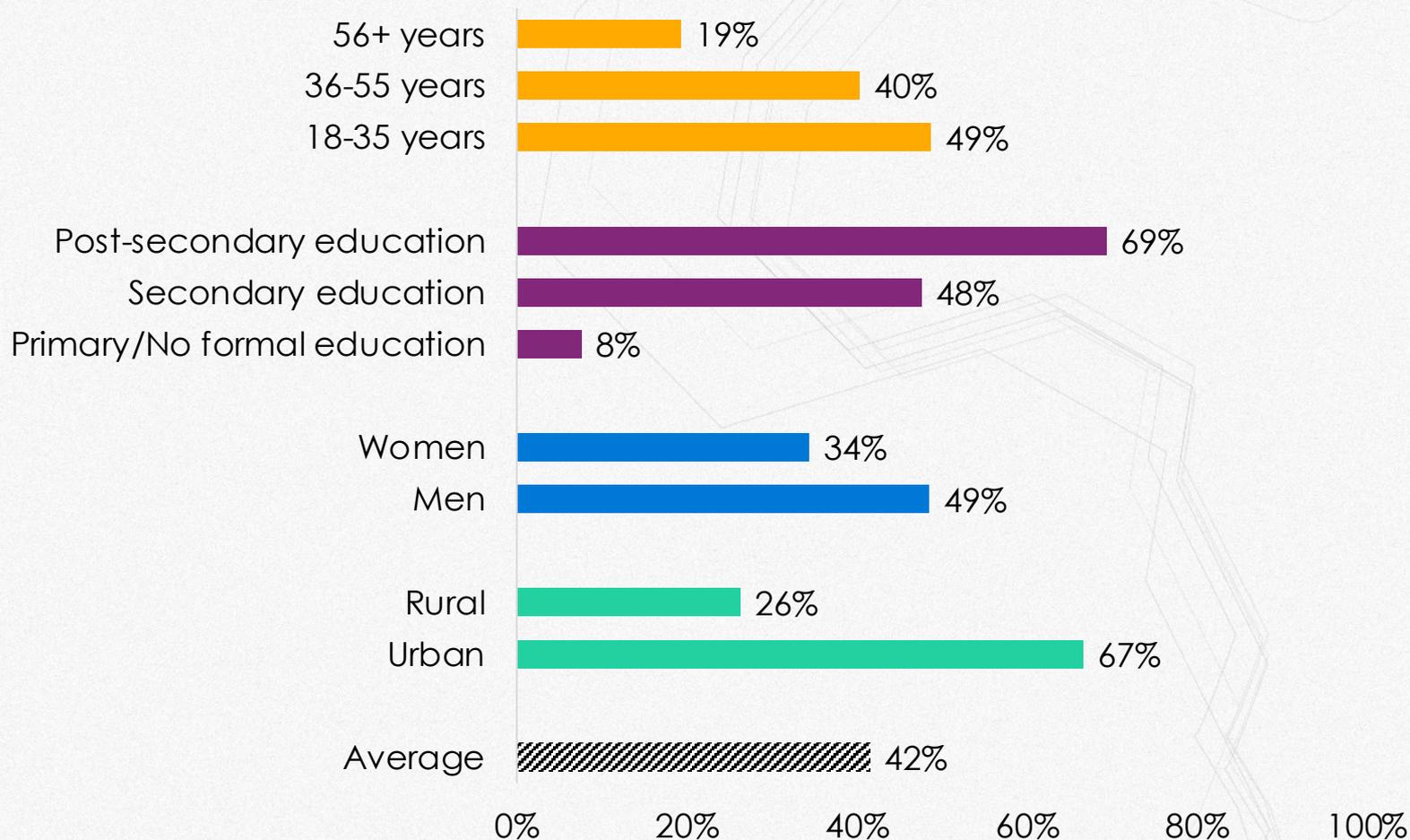
Heard about social media

| by demographic group | Zimbabwe | 2021

Respondents were asked: *Have you heard about social media, for example, Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp? (% who say "yes")*



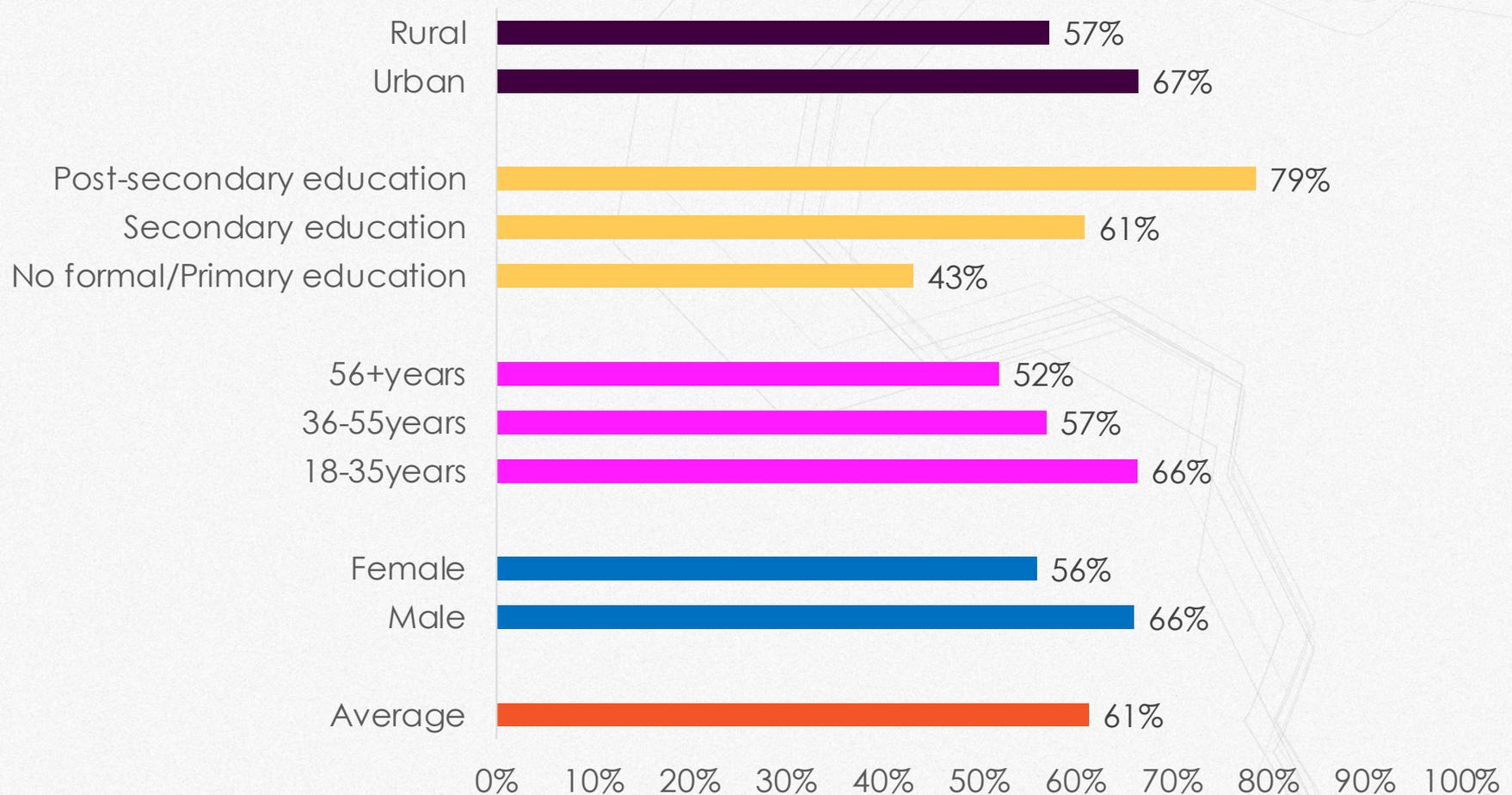
Regularly get news from social media | by demographic group | Zimbabwe | 2021



Respondents were asked: How often do you get news from the following sources: Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, or others? (% who say “a few times a week” or “every day”)

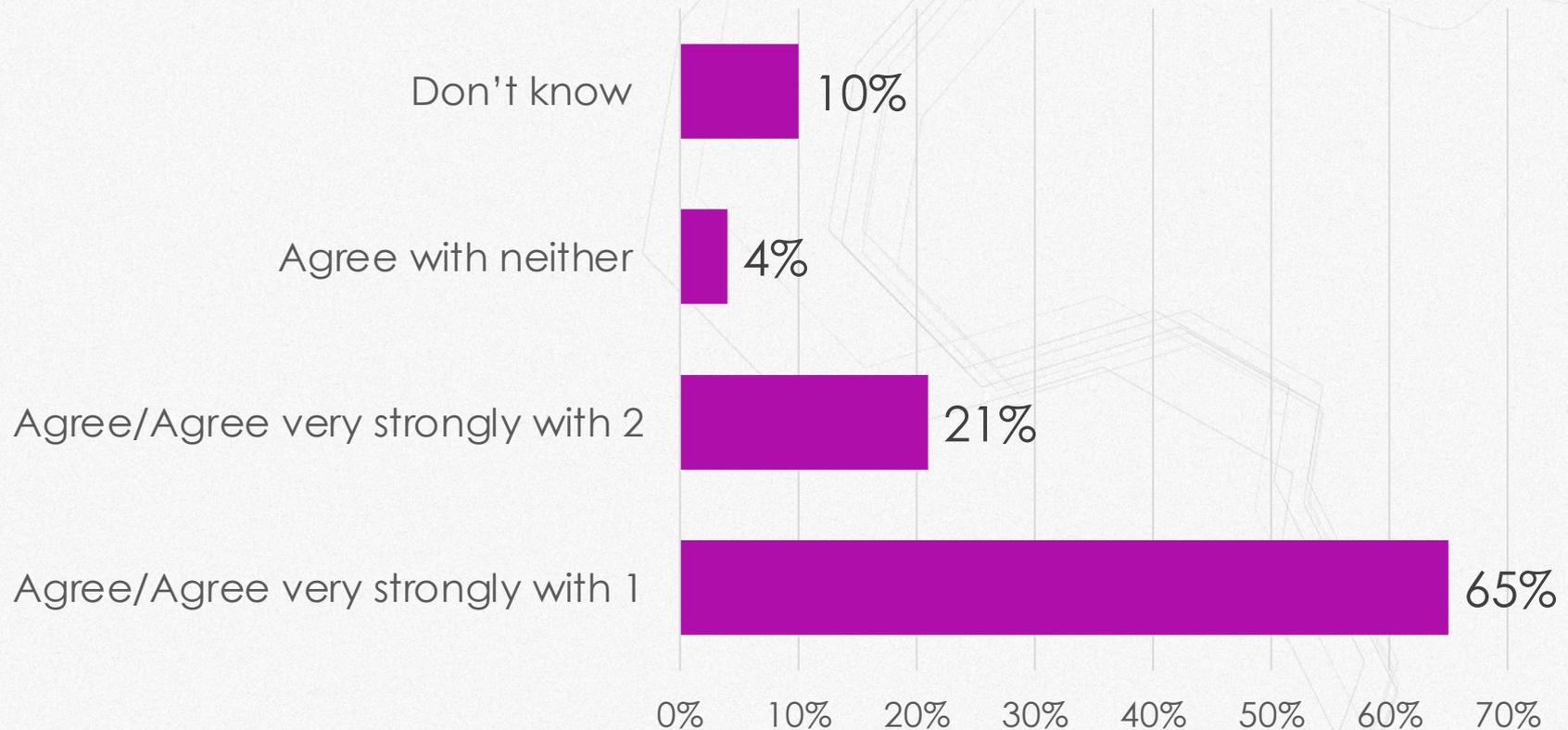
Overall effects of social media on society are positive

| by demographic group | Zimbabwe | 2021



Respondents were asked: Overall, do you think that the effects of social media on society are mostly positive, mostly negative, or haven't you heard enough to say? (% who say "somewhat positive" or "very positive")

Unrestricted access to the internet versus government regulation | Zimbabwe | 2021



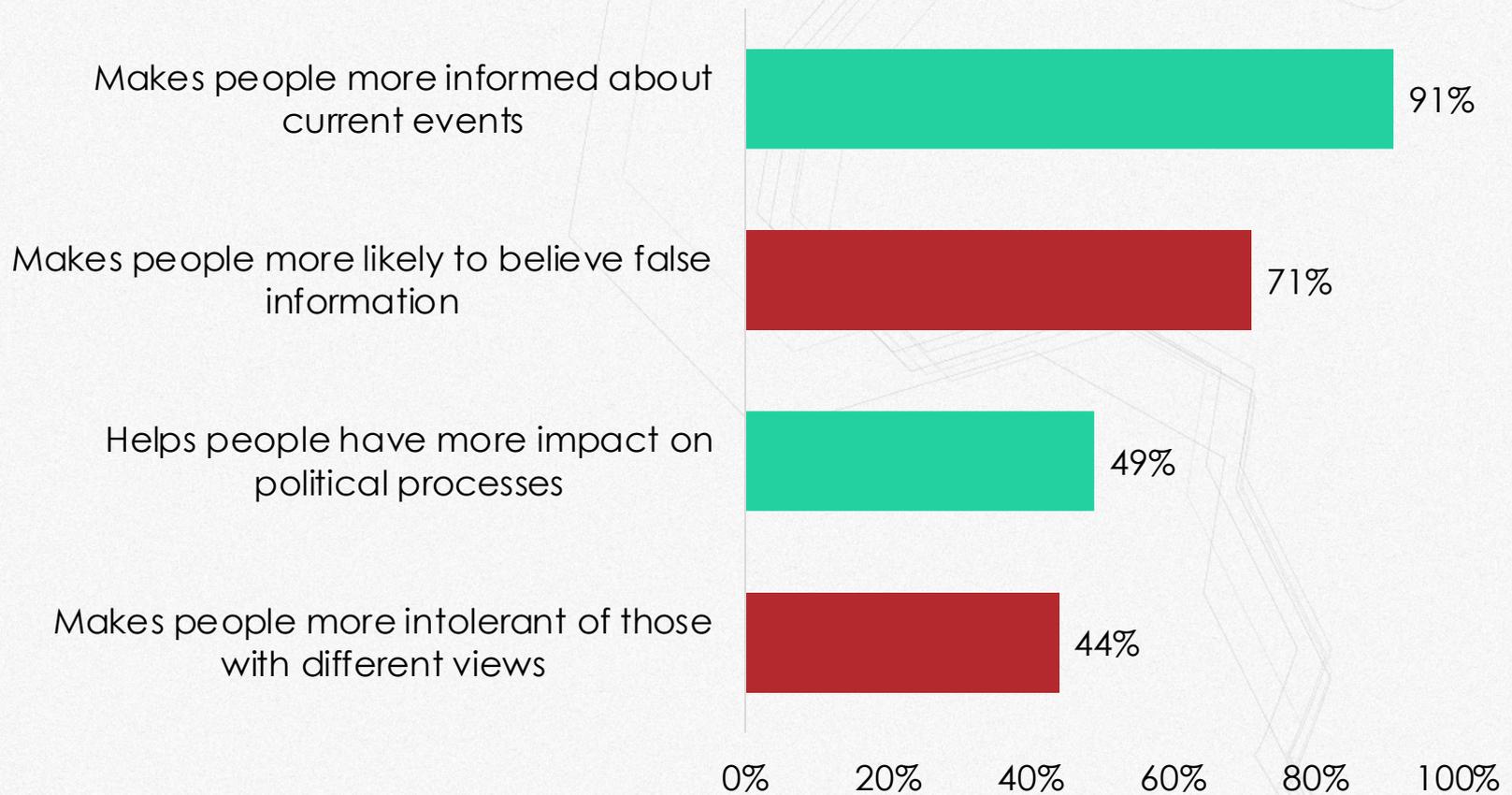
Respondents were asked: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?

Statement 1 : Unrestricted access to the Internet and social media helps people to be more informed and active citizens, and should be protected.

Statement 2 : Information shared on the Internet and social media is dividing Zimbabweans, so access should be regulated by government.

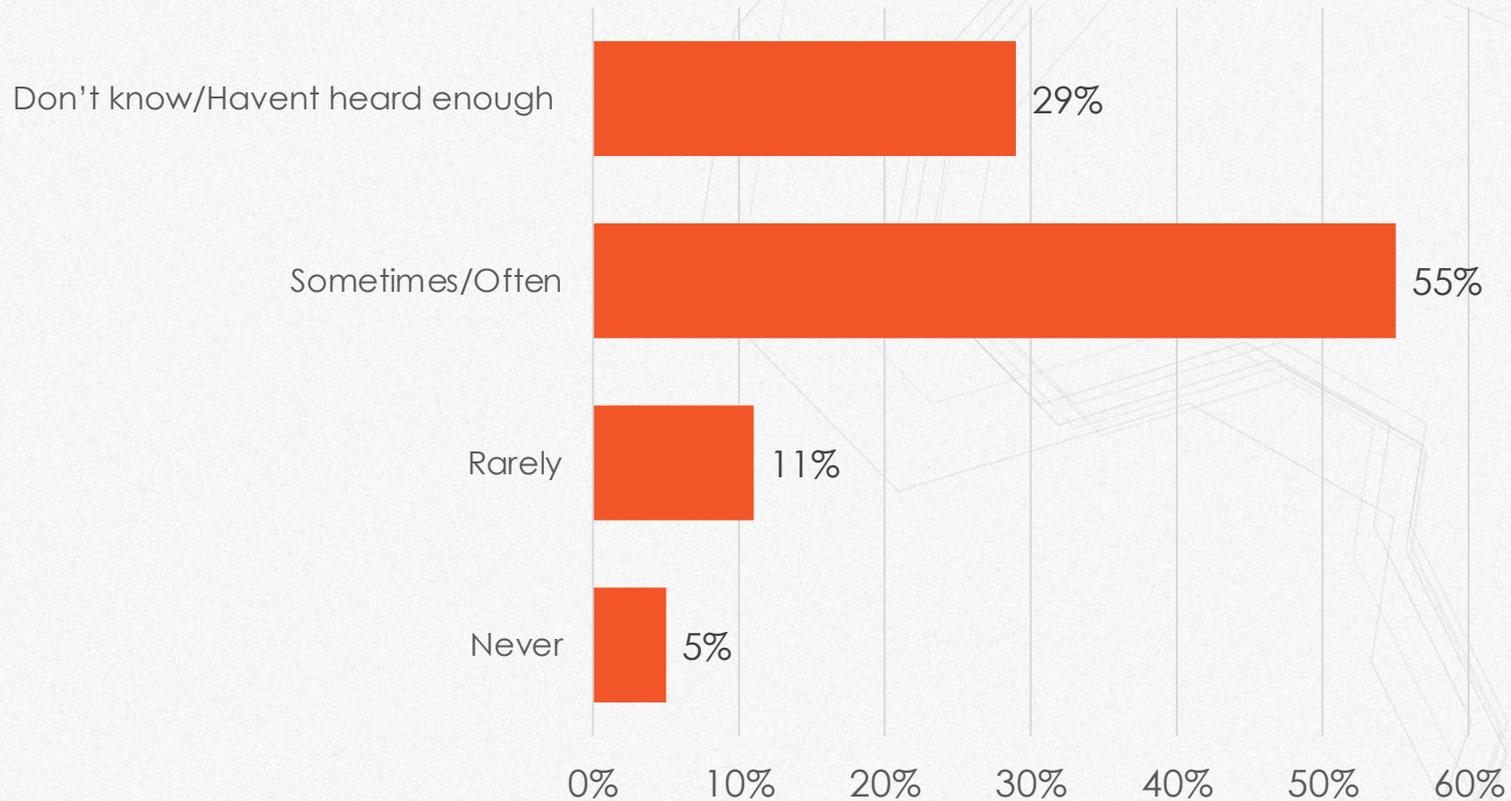
Specific positive and negative effects of social media

| Zimbabwe | 2021



Respondents were asked: Regardless of whether you personally use social media yourself, please tell me whether you agree or disagree that social media. ... (% who “agree” or “strongly agree” with each statement)

Social media users spread information that they know is false | Zimbabwe | 2021



Respondents were asked: Please tell me how often, in this country, you think people from each of the following groups spread information that they know is false : social media users



Conclusion

Conclusion



- Citizens want the government to deal with unemployment.
- More than half of Zimbabweans disapprove of the way President Mnangagwa has performed his job over the past 12 months.
- A majority want an all-inclusive national dialogue.
- Small majorities say they enjoy freedom of speech and freedom to join political organizations of their choice.
- But a huge majority of citizens say they “often” or “always” have to be careful about what they say regarding politics.
- Most Zimbabweans have heard about social media. Among those who are, a majority see its overall effects on society as positive, but a majority also think it makes people more likely to believe false news.



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