

Lobito-Benguela, Angola  
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## News release

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### **New law decriminalizing same-sex relationships mirrors Angola's lead in tolerance**

Angola's new law decriminalizing same-sex relationships mirrors the country's status as one of Africa's most tolerant societies with regard to sexual orientation, an Afrobarometer analysis shows.

In survey data collected in late 2019 – between Parliament's adoption and the president's signature of a revised penal code – almost four in 10 Angolans expressed tolerant attitudes toward same-sex relationships. The law, which took effect last week, eliminates a colonial-era ban on “vices against nature” and prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

Angola joins other Portuguese-speaking countries, as well as several anglophone countries in the Southern Africa region, in expressing some of the continent's highest levels of tolerance for same-sex relationships.

While the interplay of changes in the law and public opinion requires further analysis, nearby Botswana recorded a 10-percentage-point gain in tolerant attitudes after a 2019 High Court ruling that decriminalized same-sex relations.

#### **Key findings**

- Almost four in 10 Angolans (38%) said they would like it or not care if their neighbour were homosexual (Figure 1).
- While more than half (55%) of citizens still expressed intolerant attitudes toward same-sex relationship, Angola recorded the eighth-highest level of tolerance among 36 surveyed countries in Africa, almost double the 36-country average of 20% (Figure 2).
- Angola's relatively high level of tolerance is consistent with some of its Southern African neighbours, including Namibia (64%), Botswana (48%), South Africa (70%), Mozambique (48%), and Lesotho (24%). In contrast, Malawi (6%), Zambia (4%), and Zimbabwe (8%) fall at the opposite end of the spectrum.
- Angola joins other Portuguese-speaking countries as a leader in tolerance on the continent, including Cabo Verde (81%), Mozambique (48%), and São Tomé and Príncipe (40%). On average, 52% of citizens in these four lusophone countries express tolerant attitudes toward same-sex relationships, compared to just 17% across the other 32 countries.

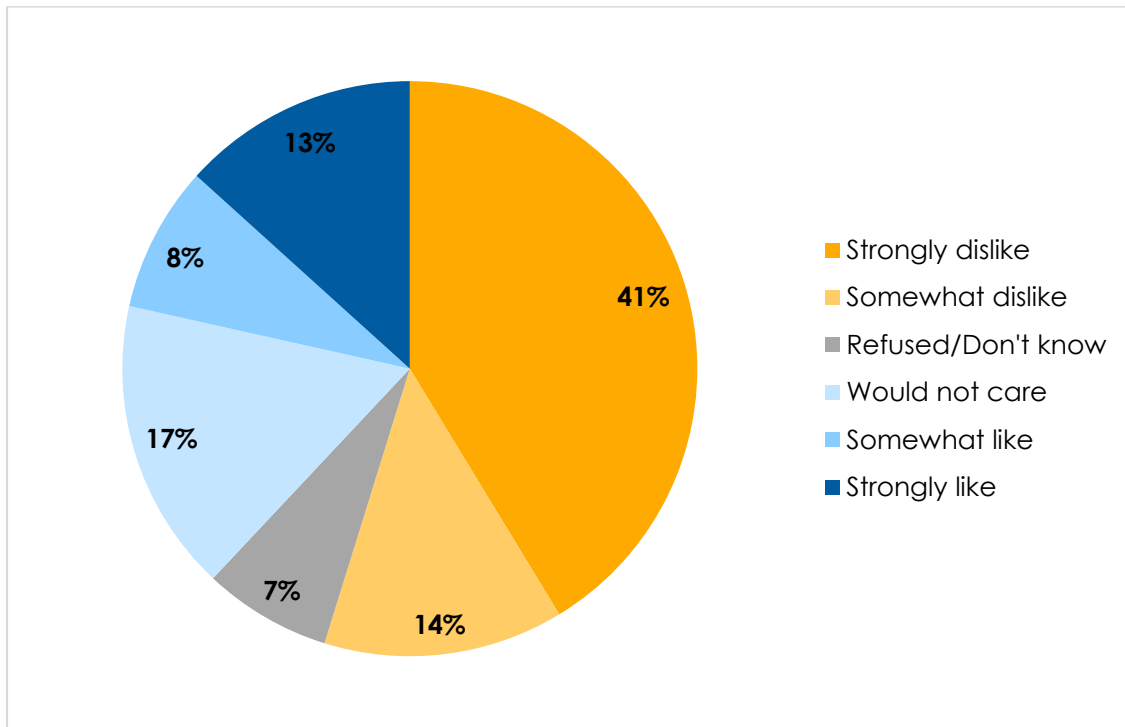
#### **Afrobarometer surveys**

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

In its first survey in Angola, the Afrobarometer team, led by Ovilongwa – Estudos de Opinião Pública, interviewed 2,400 adult Angolans between 27 November and 27 December 2019. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-2 percentage points at a 95% confidence level.

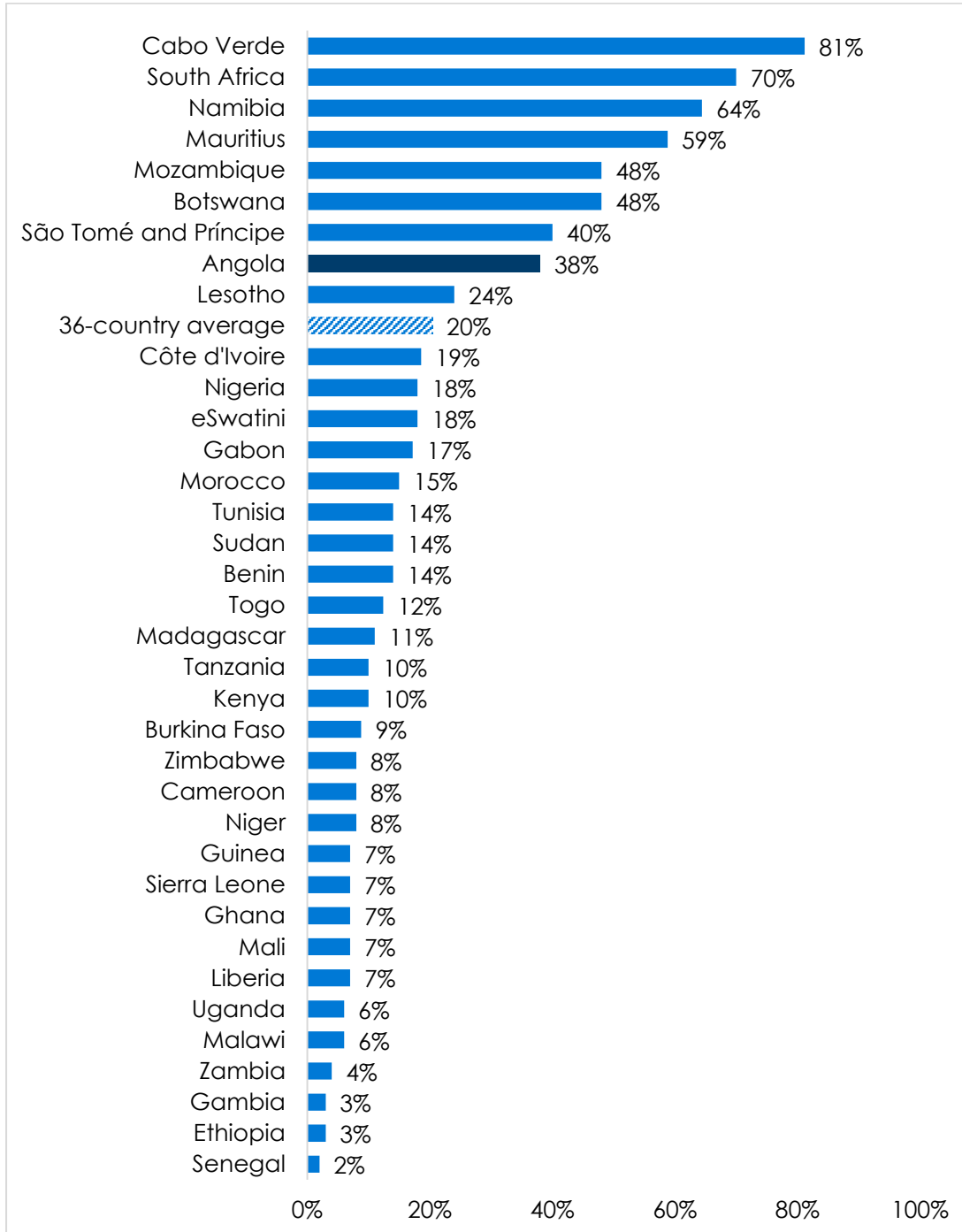
**Charts**

**Figure 1: Tolerance toward same-sex relationships | Angola | 2019**



**Respondents were asked:** For each of the following types of people, please tell me whether you would like having people from this group as neighbours, dislike it, or not care: Homosexuals?

**Figure 2: Tolerance toward same-sex relationships** | 36 countries | 2016/2018 and 2019/2021\*



**Respondents were asked:** For each of the following types of people, please tell me whether you would like having people from this group as neighbours, dislike it, or not care: Homosexuals? (% who say they would “strongly like,” “somewhat like,” or “not care”)

\*Findings from survey Round 7 (2016/2018) where Round 8 (2019/2021) data not yet available: Cameroon, eSwatini, the Gambia, Madagascar, Morocco, Mozambique, São Tomé and Príncipe, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

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