

# Views on elections and the state of democracy: Highlights from Afrobarometer Round 10 survey in Namibia

---

Friday, 31 May 2024

Radio results launch

Christie Keulder, National investigator

# At a glance

---

- Namibians' support for democracy has increased from 55% in 2021 to 60% in 2024.
- Satisfaction with democracy declined significantly between 1999 (72%) and 2021 (49%) but has rebounded slightly, to 55%.
- Partisanship has been on the decline, from 80% of Namibians who said they feel close to a political party in 2014 to 51% in 2024.



# What is Afrobarometer

---

- Pan-African, non-partisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life.
- Goal: To give African publics a voice in policy and decision making.
- Nine survey rounds in up to 42 countries have been completed since 1999.
- Round 10 surveys are currently underway.

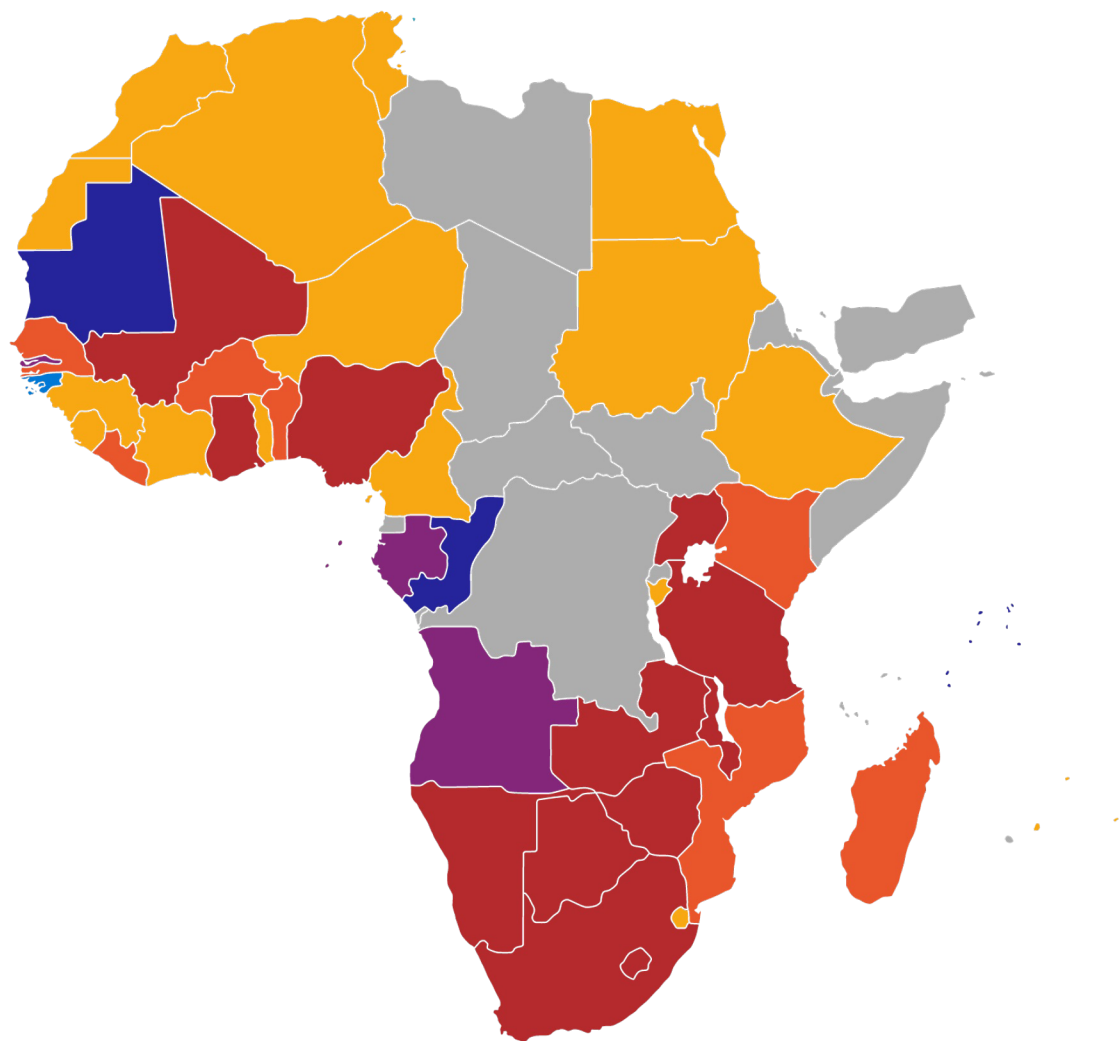


# Where Afrobarometer works



## First surveyed in

- 1999 - 2001
- 2002 - 2008
- 2012 - 2013
- 2015 - 2019
- 2022 - 2023
- To be surveyed in R10
- Never surveyed





# Methodology

---

- Nationally representative sample of adult citizens (aged 18+).
- Face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.
- Standard questionnaire allows comparisons across countries and over time.
- The Afrobarometer team in Namibia, led by Survey Warehouse, interviewed 1,200 adult Namibians between 14 and 31 March 2024.
- Sample size of 1,200 yields country-level results with margins of sampling error of +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level.



# Survey demographics

---

Gender	%
Men	50
Women	50
Residence	
Urban	56
Rural	44
Education	
No formal education	6
Primary	19
Secondary	54
Post-secondary	21
Religion	
Christian	97
Other	3

# Key findings

---



# Demand for democracy

---



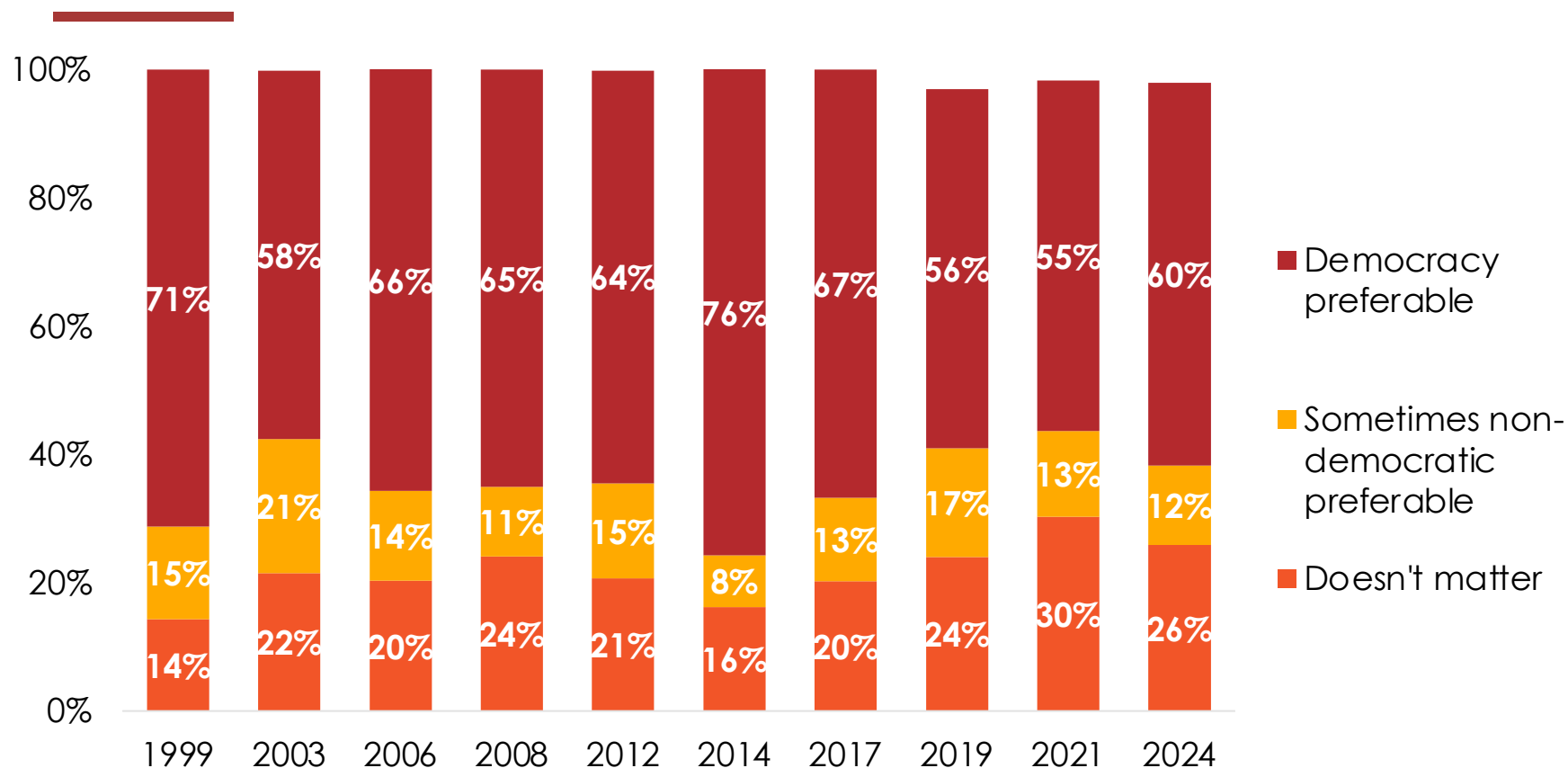


# Key findings

---

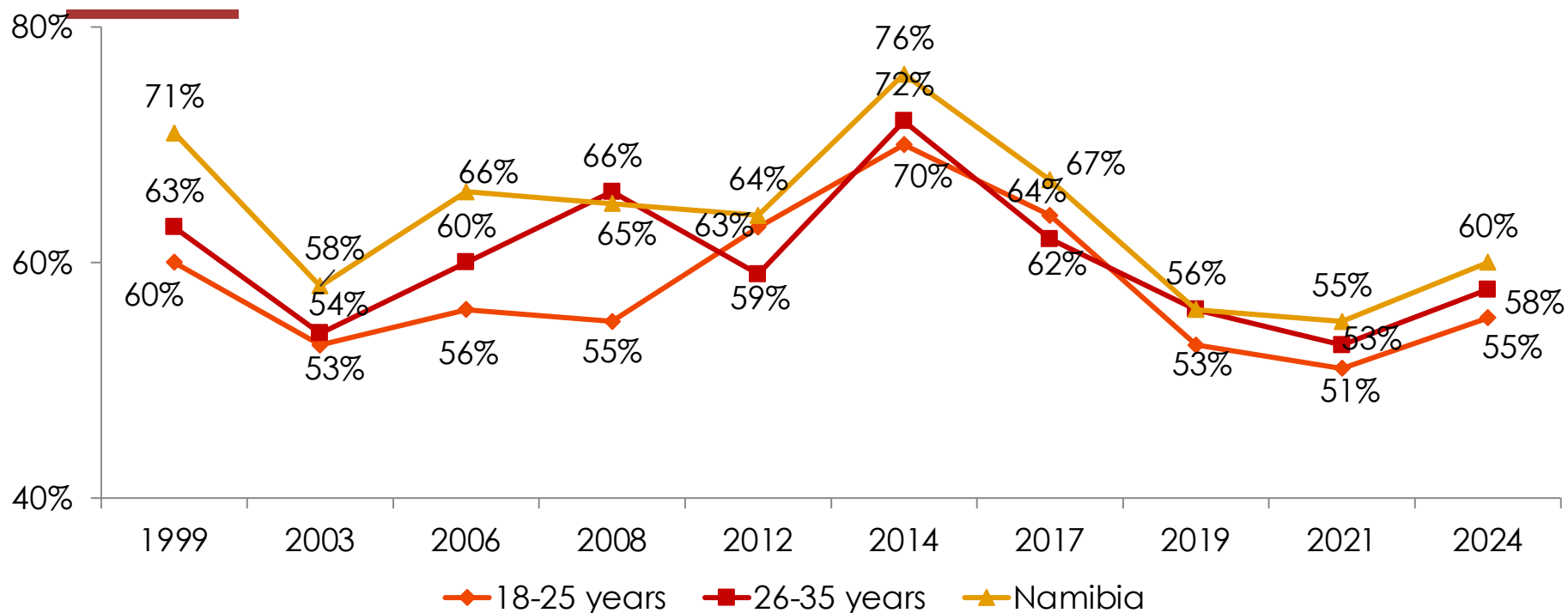
- Namibians' support for democracy has increased from 55% in 2021 to 60% in 2024.
- Support for non-democratic alternatives declined slightly after 2021, but support for military government remained the highest, with 19% support, down from 27% in 2021.
- Full demand for democracy has declined significantly from 51% in 2014 to 31% in 2024.

# Support for democracy | Namibia | 1999-2024



**Respondents were asked:** Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion?  
Statement 1: Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government.  
Statement 2: In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable.  
Statement 3: For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have.

# Support for democracy | among youth | Namibia | 1999-2024



**Respondents were asked:** Which of these statements is closest to your own opinion?

Statement 1: Democracy is preferable to any kind of government.

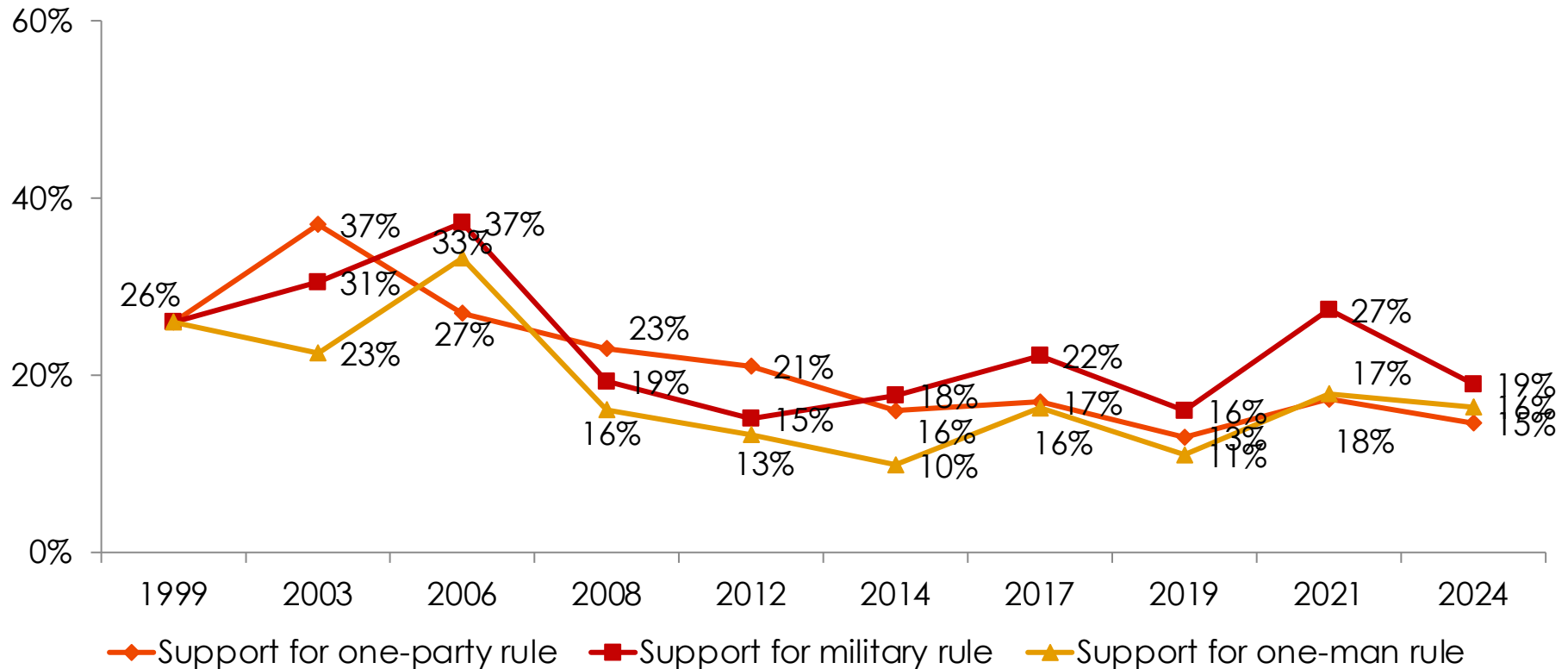
Statement 2: In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable.

Statement 3: For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have.

(% who say democracy is preferable to any kind of government)

# Support for non-democratic alternatives | Namibia

## | 1999-2024



**Respondents were asked:** There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives (% who “agree” or “strongly agree”:

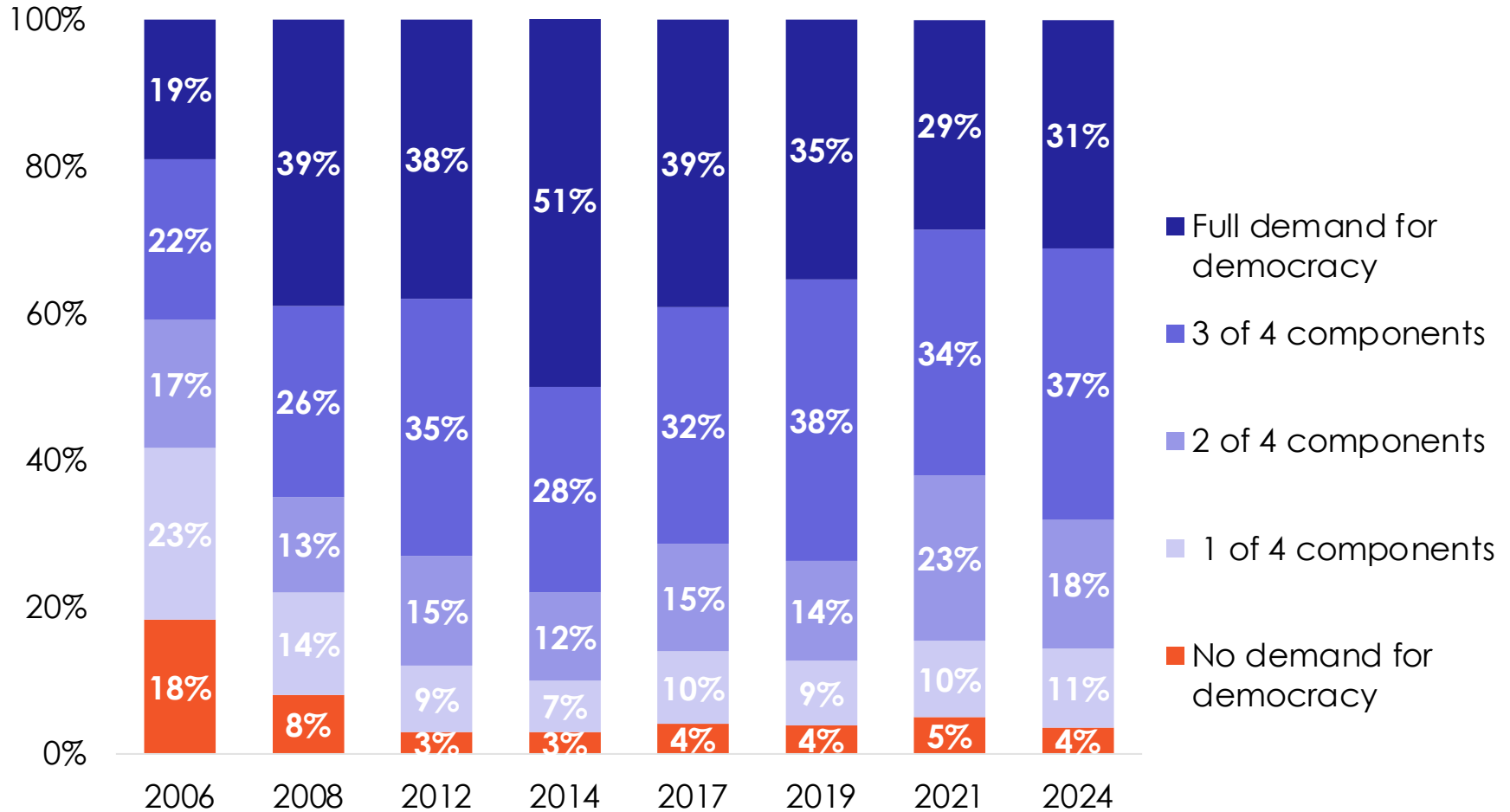
Statement 1: Only one political party is allowed to stand for election and hold office.

Statement 2: The army comes in and governs the country.

Statement 3: Elections and the National Assembly are abolished so that the president can decide everything.



# Demand for democracy | support democracy and reject authoritarian alternatives | Namibia | 2006-2024



# Supply of democracy

---

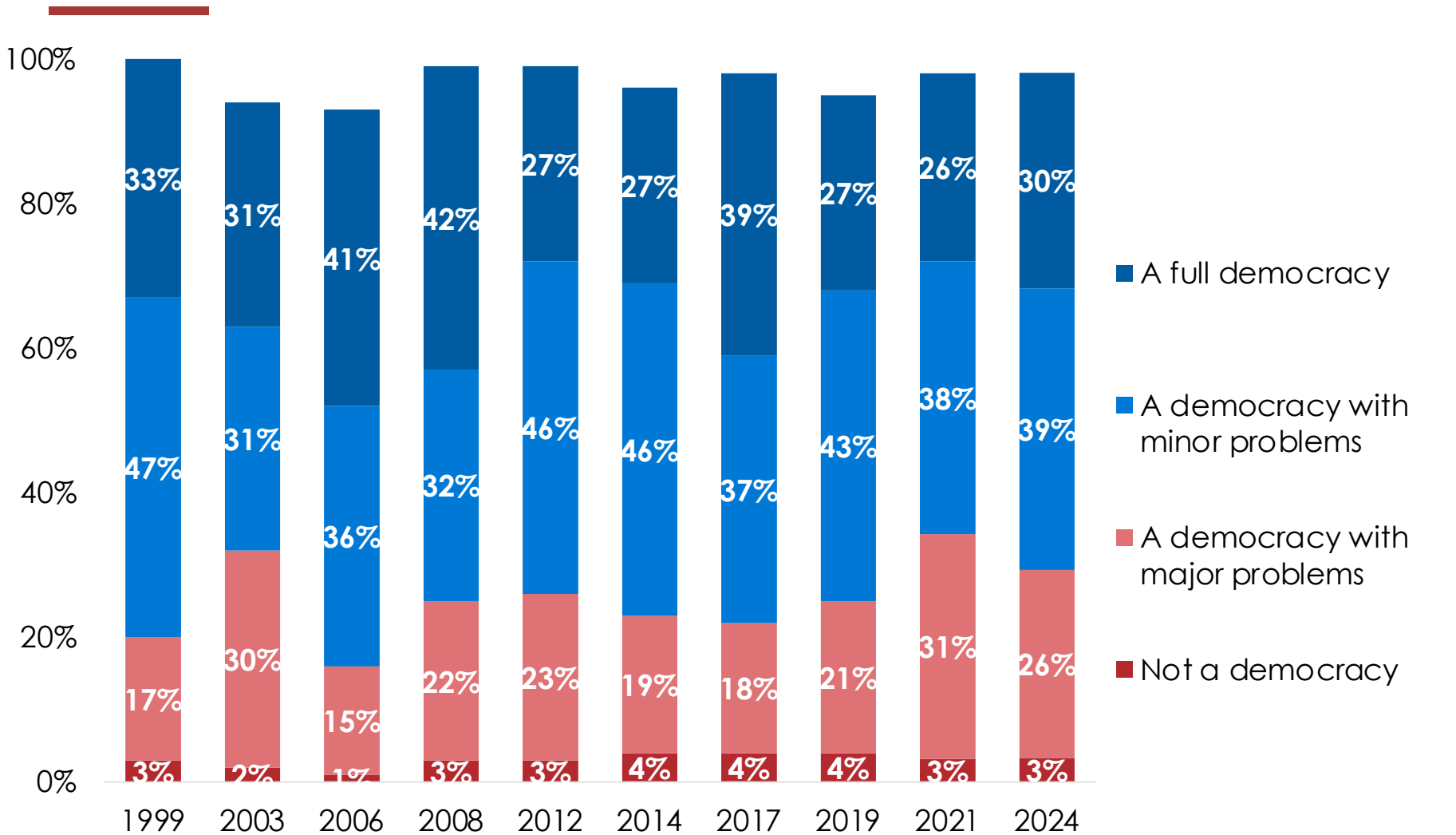


# Key findings

---

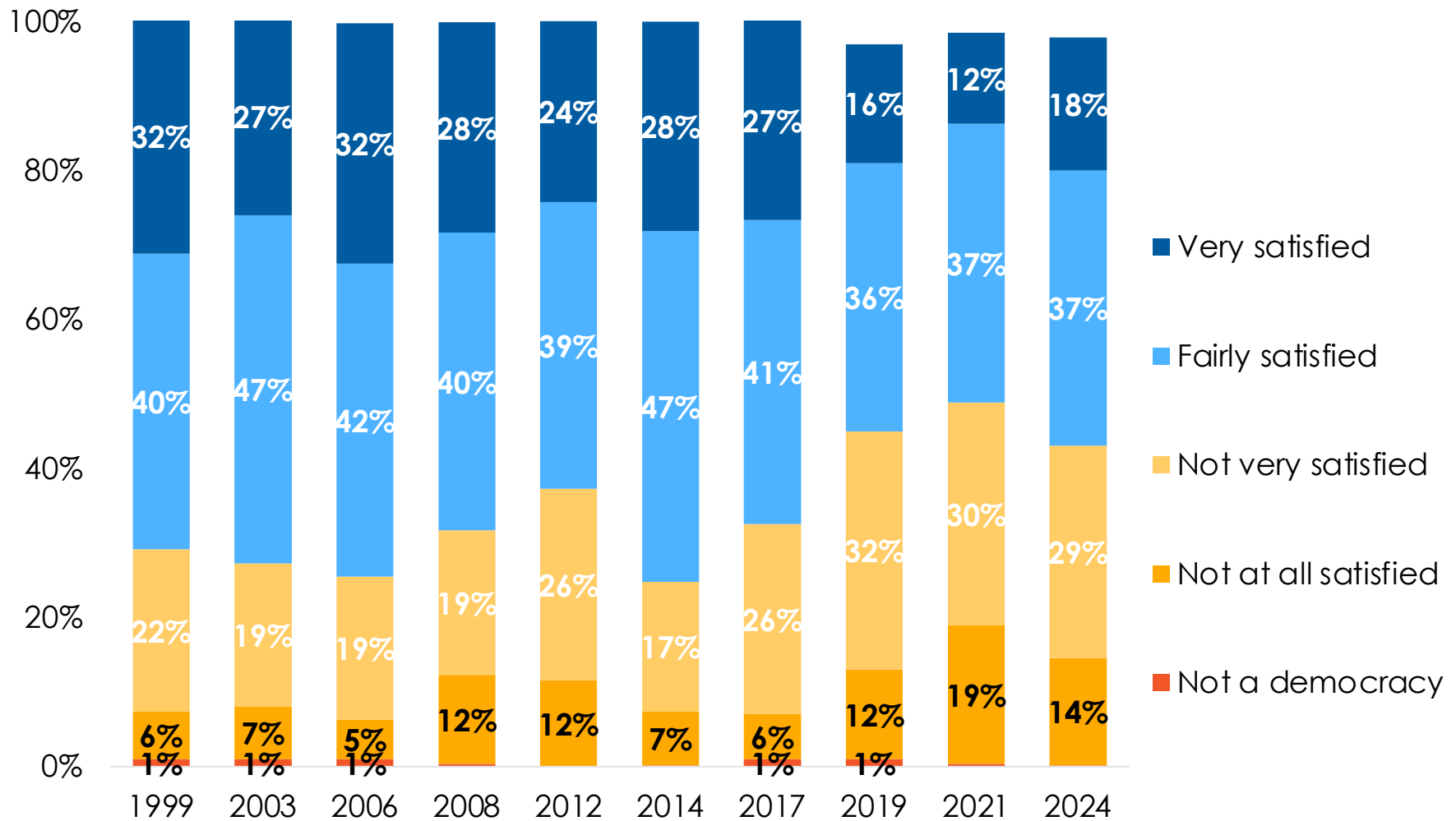
- More than two-thirds of Namibians see their country as a “full democracy” (30%) or a “democracy with minor problems” (39%).
- Satisfaction with democracy declined significantly between 1999 (72%) and 2021 (49%) but has rebounded slightly, to 55%.
- Perceptions of the supply of democracy have remained relatively consistent between 2019 and 2024. Fewer than half (47%) of Namibians perceive a full supply of democracy.

# Extent of democracy | Namibia | 1999-2024



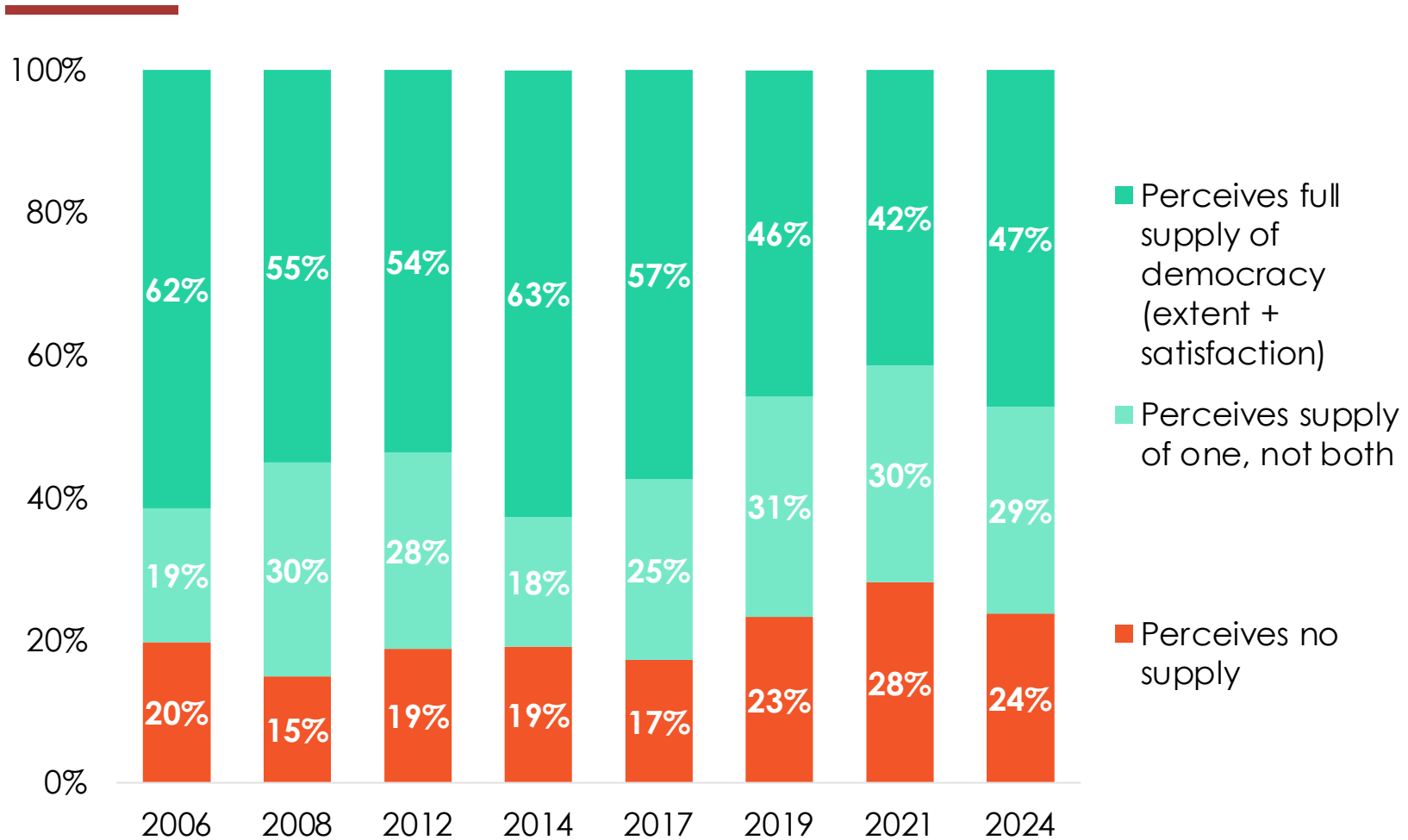


# Satisfaction with democracy | Namibia | 1999-2024



# Supply of democracy | extent and satisfaction

## | Namibia | 2006-2024



# Partisanship

---



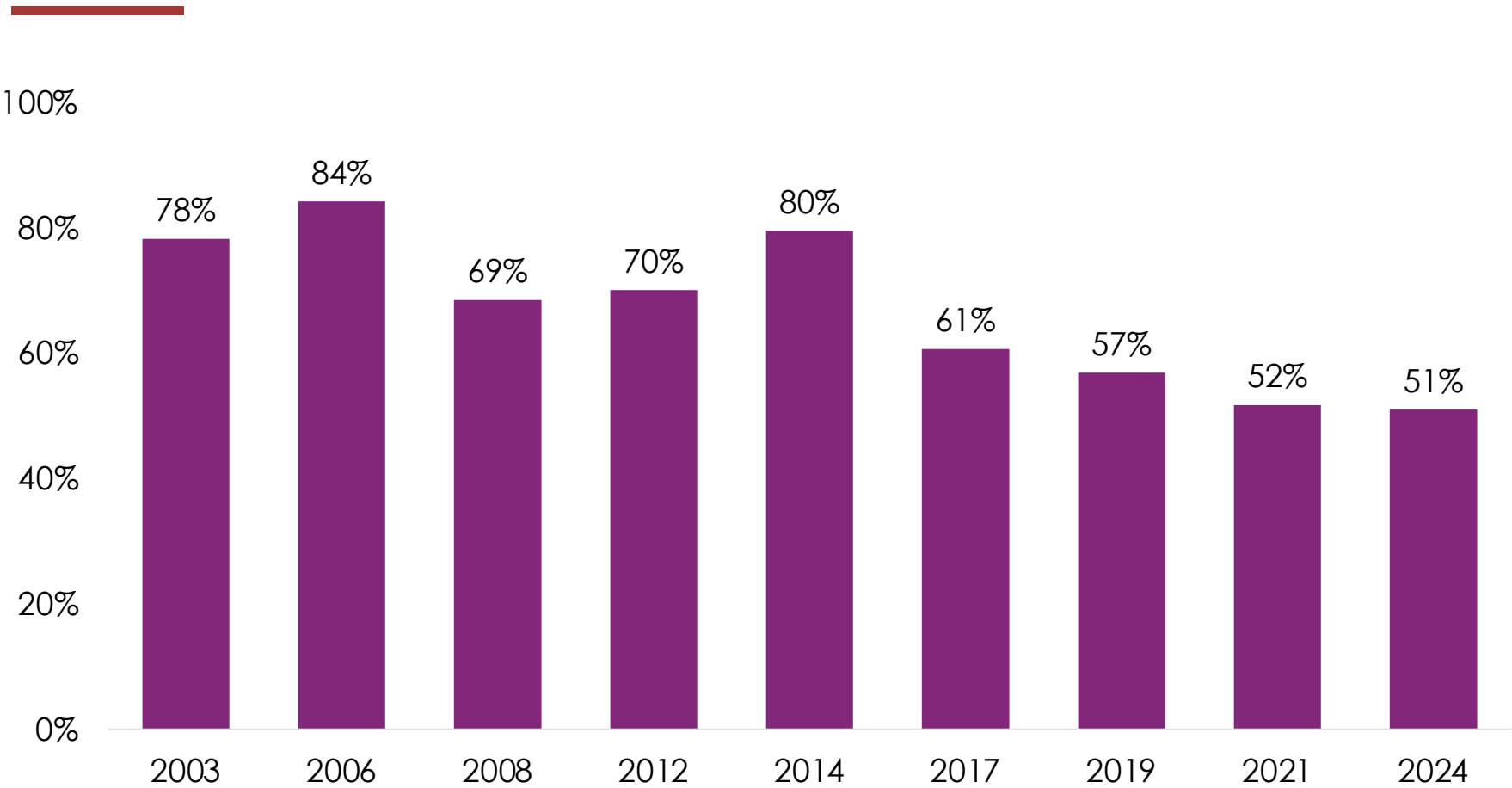
# Key findings

---

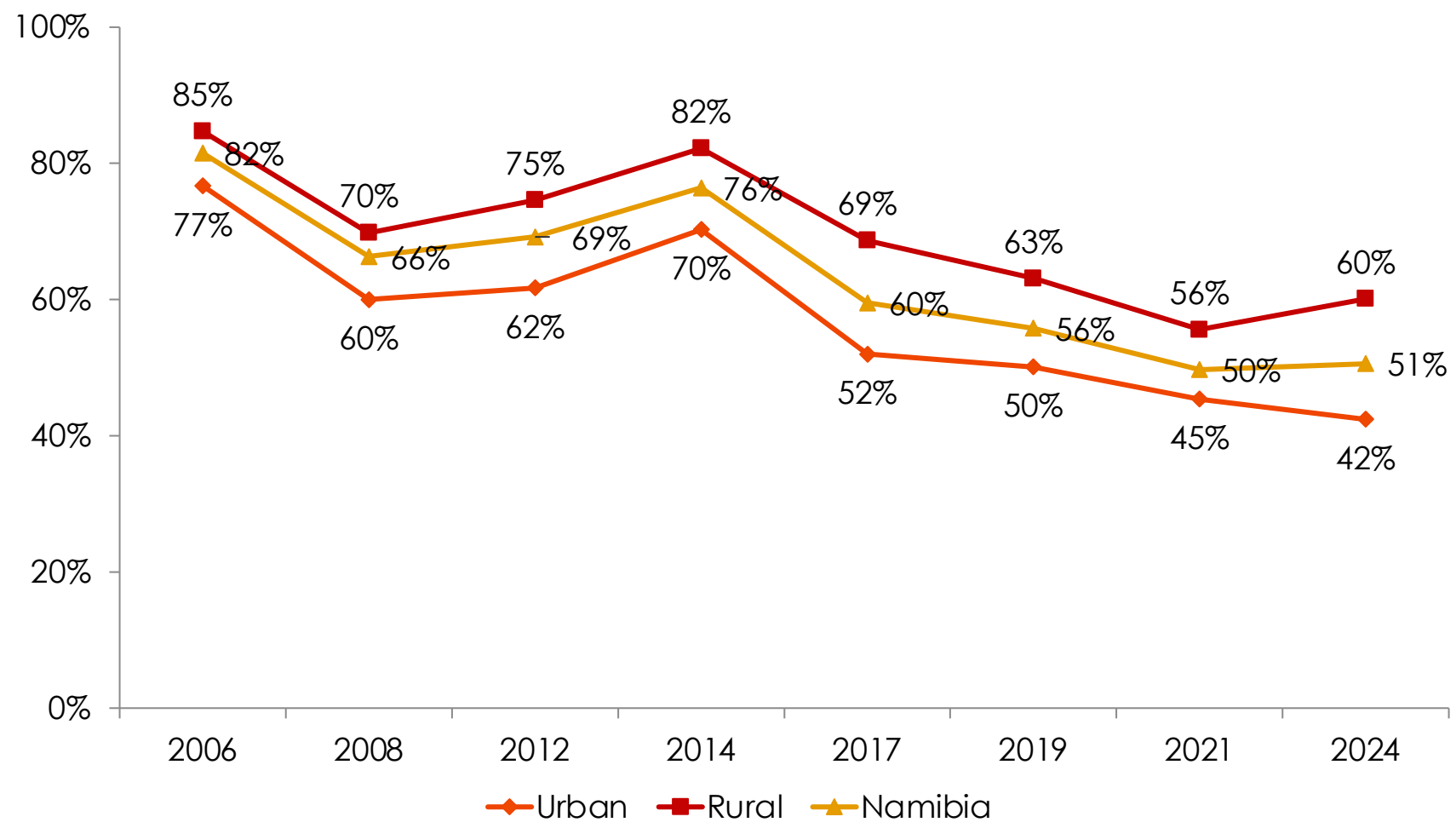
- Partisanship has been on the decline, from 80% of Namibians who said they feel close to a political party in 2014 to 51% in 2024.
- Partisanship is particularly weak in urban areas (42%) and among Namibia's youth (46%).
- Fewer than half (46%) of citizens say they trust the ruling party, down from 71% in 2014. Trust in opposition parties has declined from 46% to 35% since 2014.



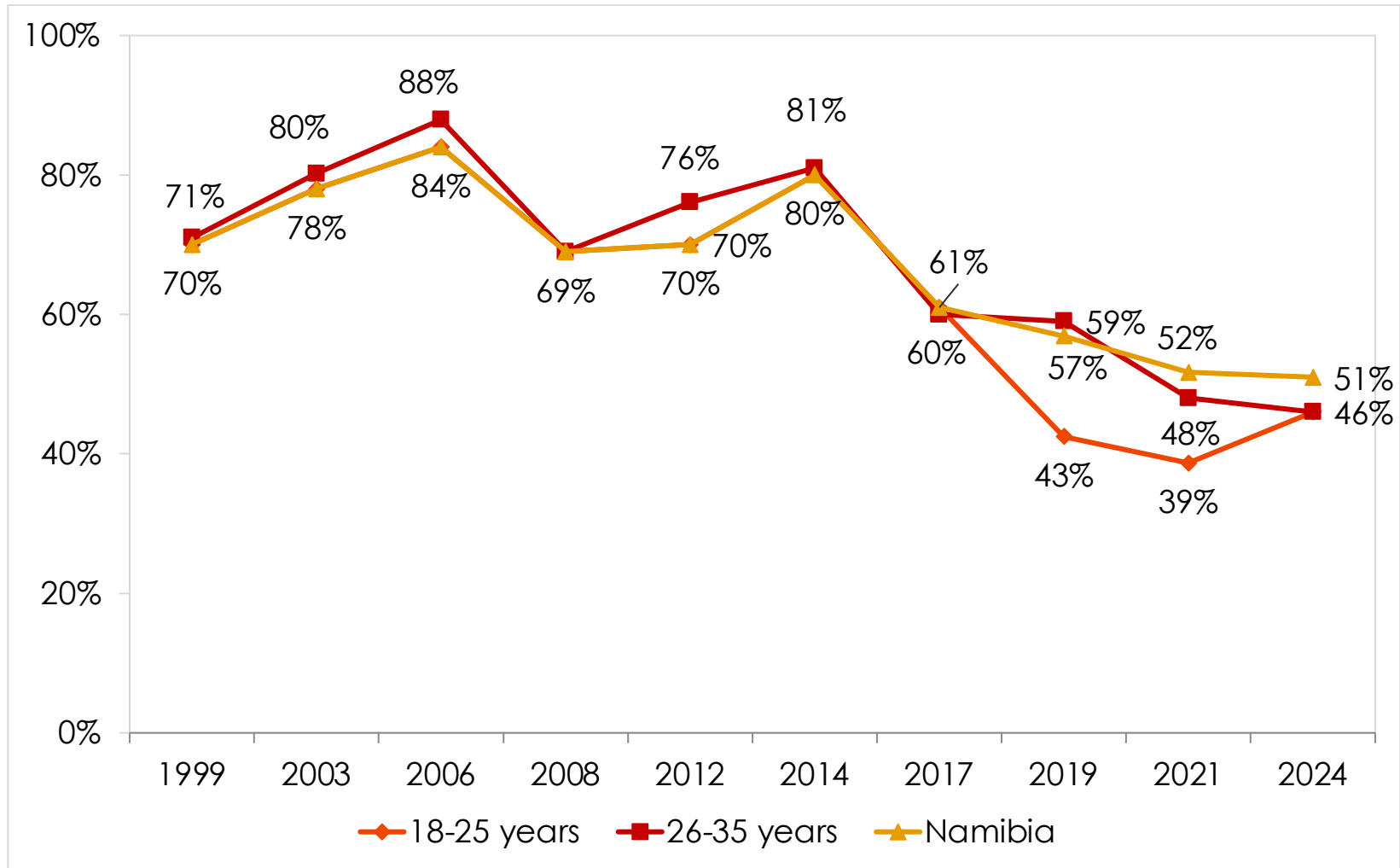
# Partisanship | Namibia | 2003-2024



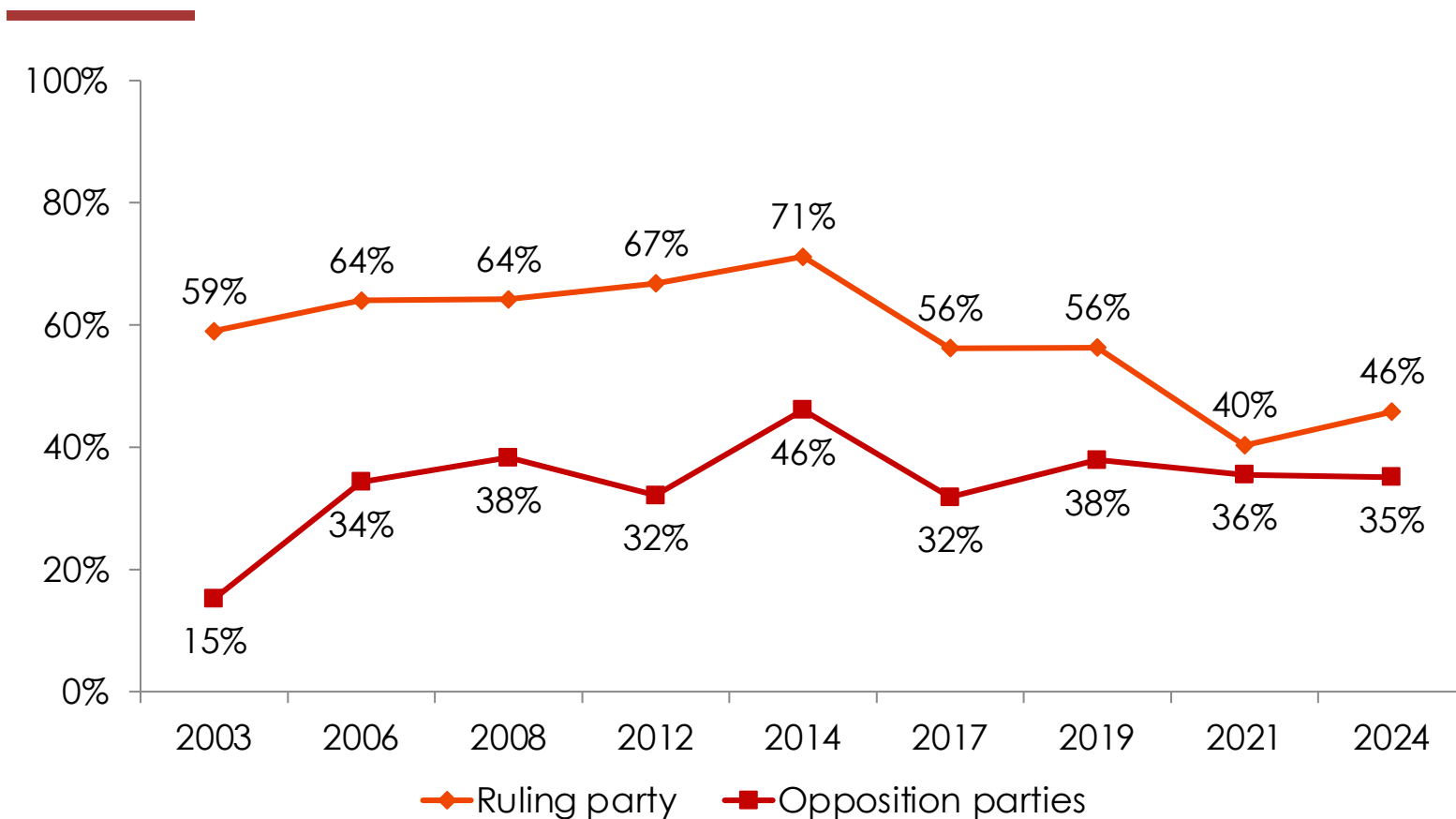
# Partisanship | by location | Namibia | 2006-2024



# Partisanship | among youth | Namibia | 1999-2024

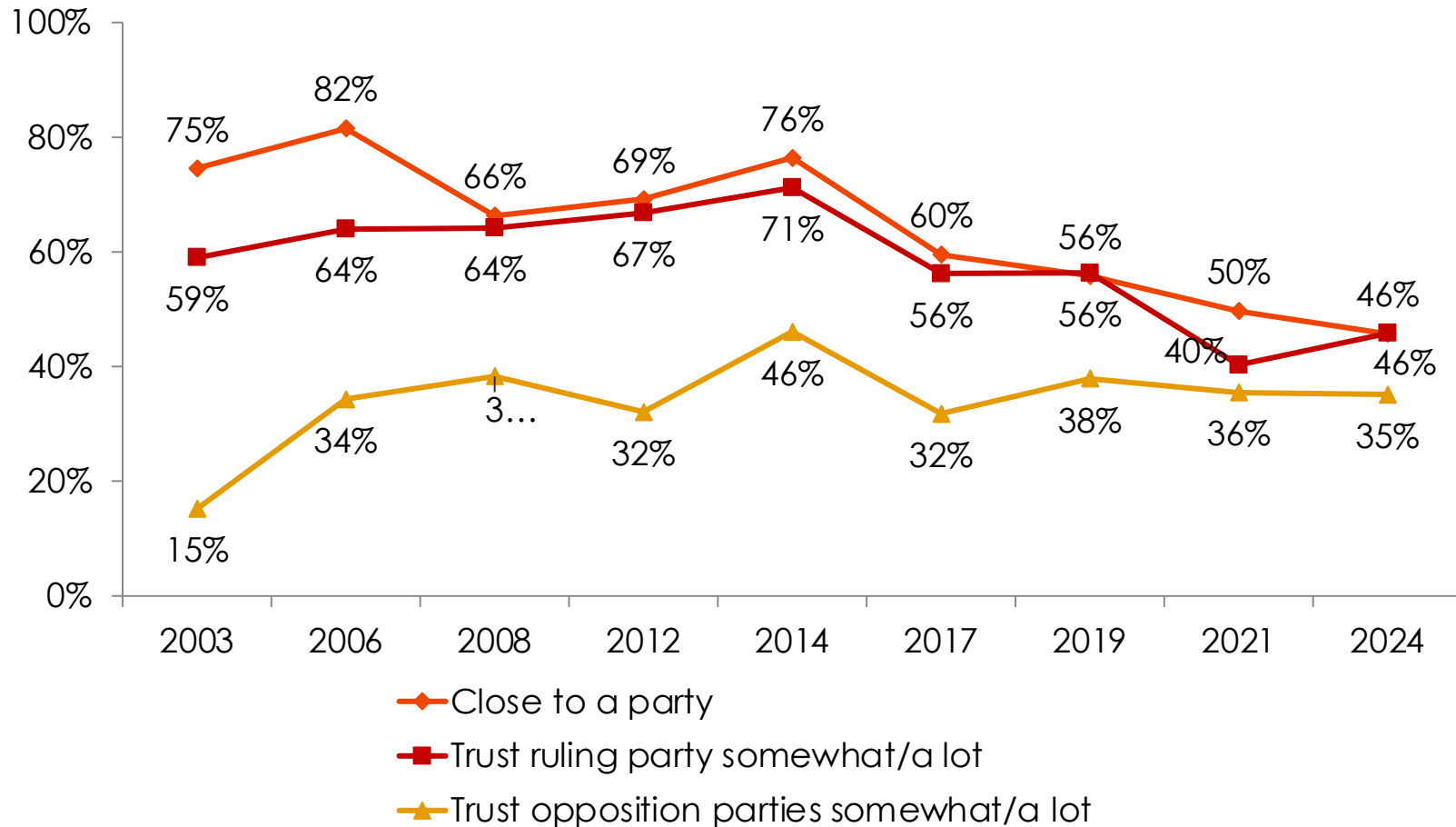


# Trust in political parties | Namibia | 2003-2024



**Respondents were asked:** How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? (% who say "somewhat" or "a lot")

# Partisanship and trust | Namibia | 2006-2024



## Respondents were asked:

Do you feel close to a political party? (% "yes")

How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: Ruling party? Opposition parties? (% who say "somewhat" or "a lot")

# Voting

---





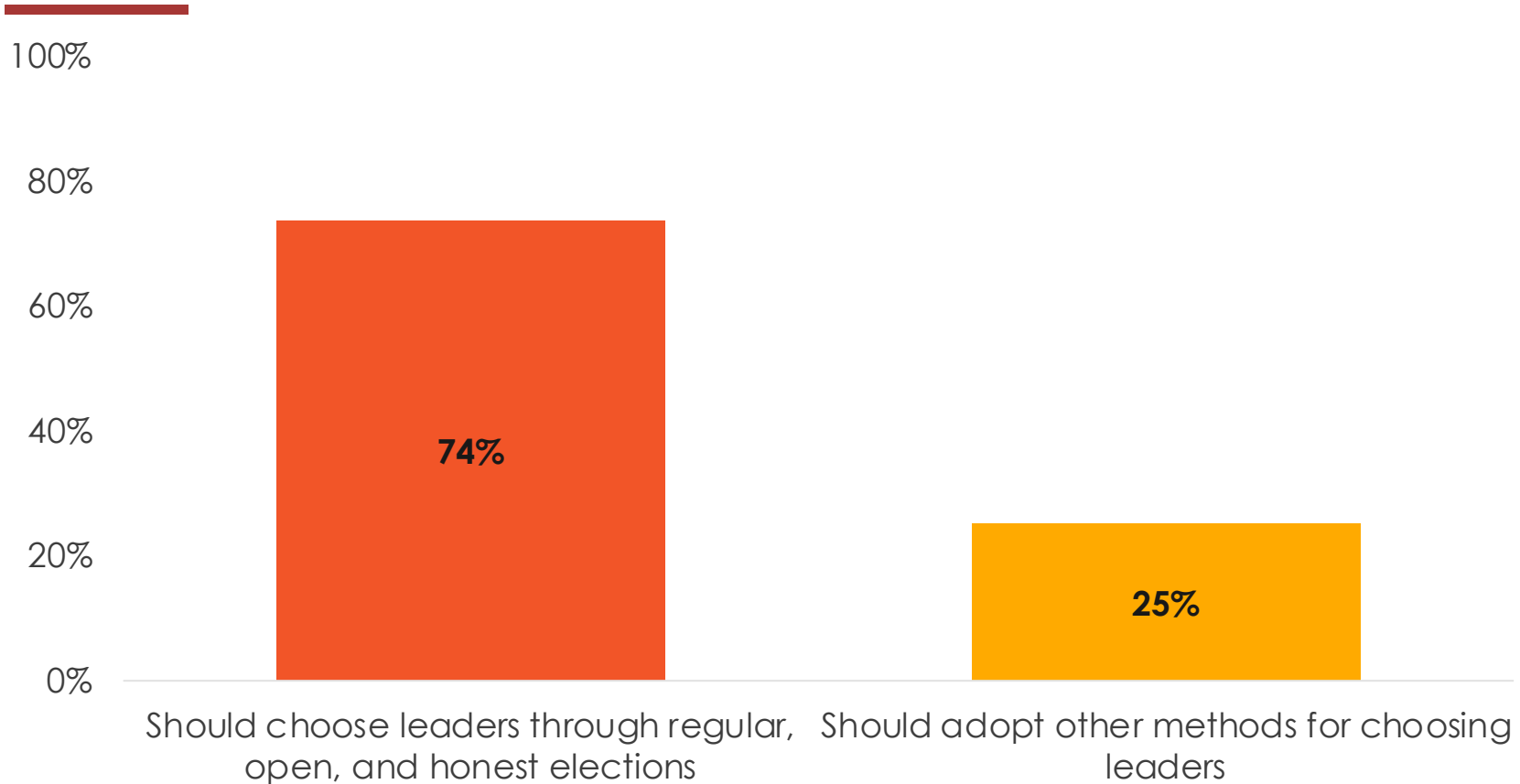
# Key findings

---

- About three-quarters (74%) of Namibians support elections as the best way to choose their leaders, while one-quarter (25%) say other methods for choosing the country's leaders would be preferable.
- Overwhelming majorities report that they feel “somewhat free” or “completely free” to join any political organisation (87%) and to choose whom to vote for without feeling pressured (90%).
- Two-thirds (66%) of respondents describe the 2019 election as having been largely free and fair.

# Support for elections as the best way to choose leaders

## | Namibia | 2024



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

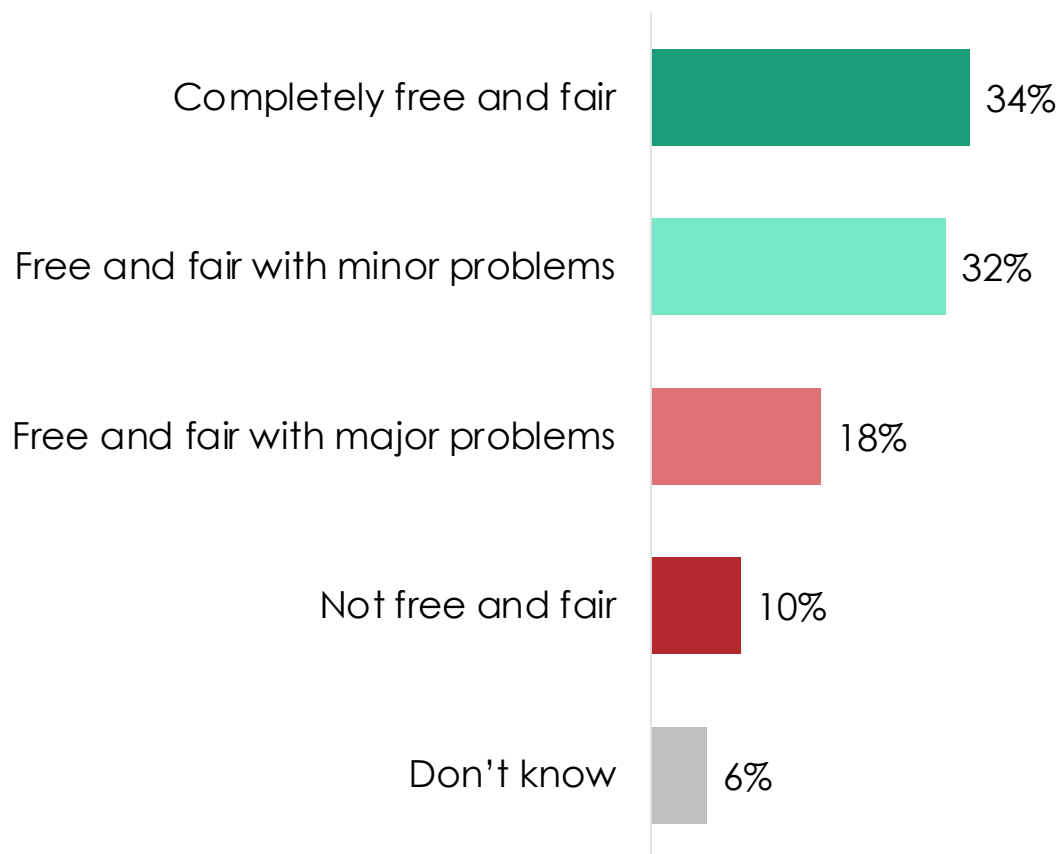
Statement 1: We should choose our leaders in this country through regular, open, and honest elections.

Statement 2: Since elections sometimes produce bad results, we should adopt other methods for choosing this country's leaders.

# Freeness and fairness of the 2019 national election

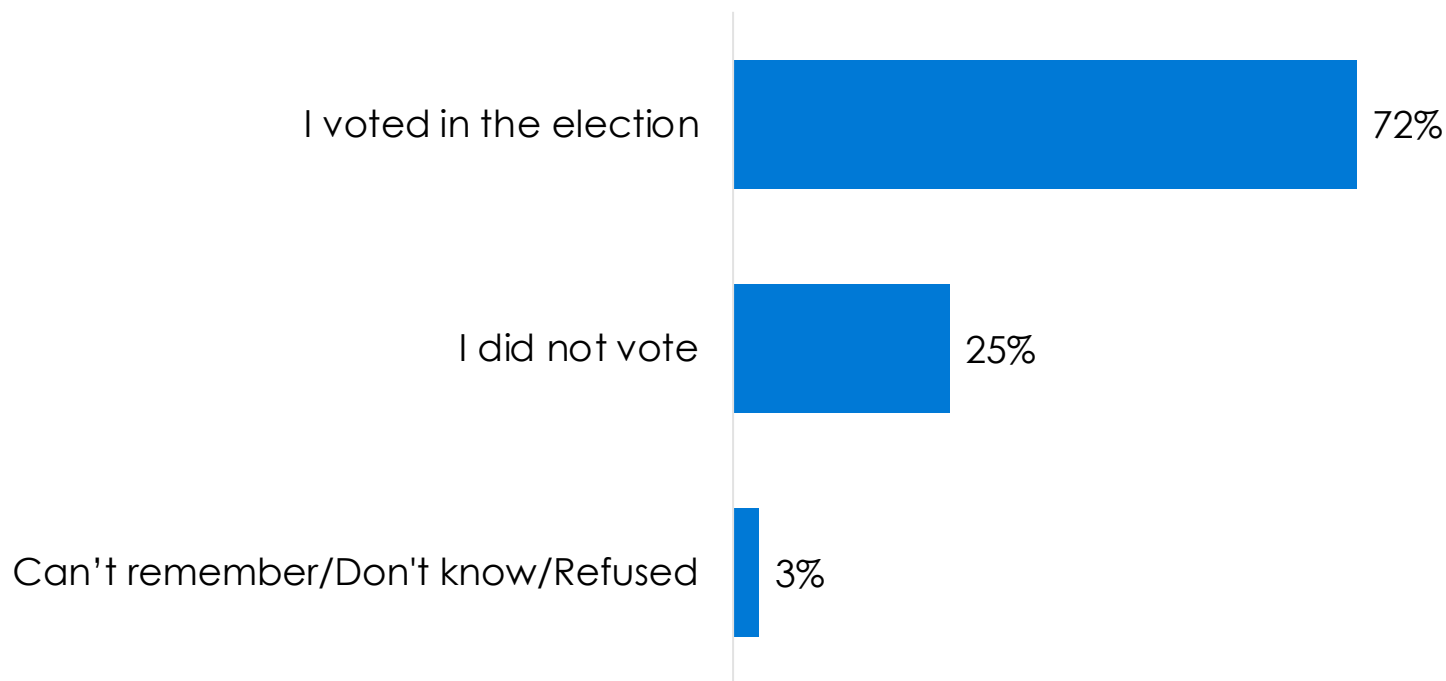
## | Namibia | 2024

---



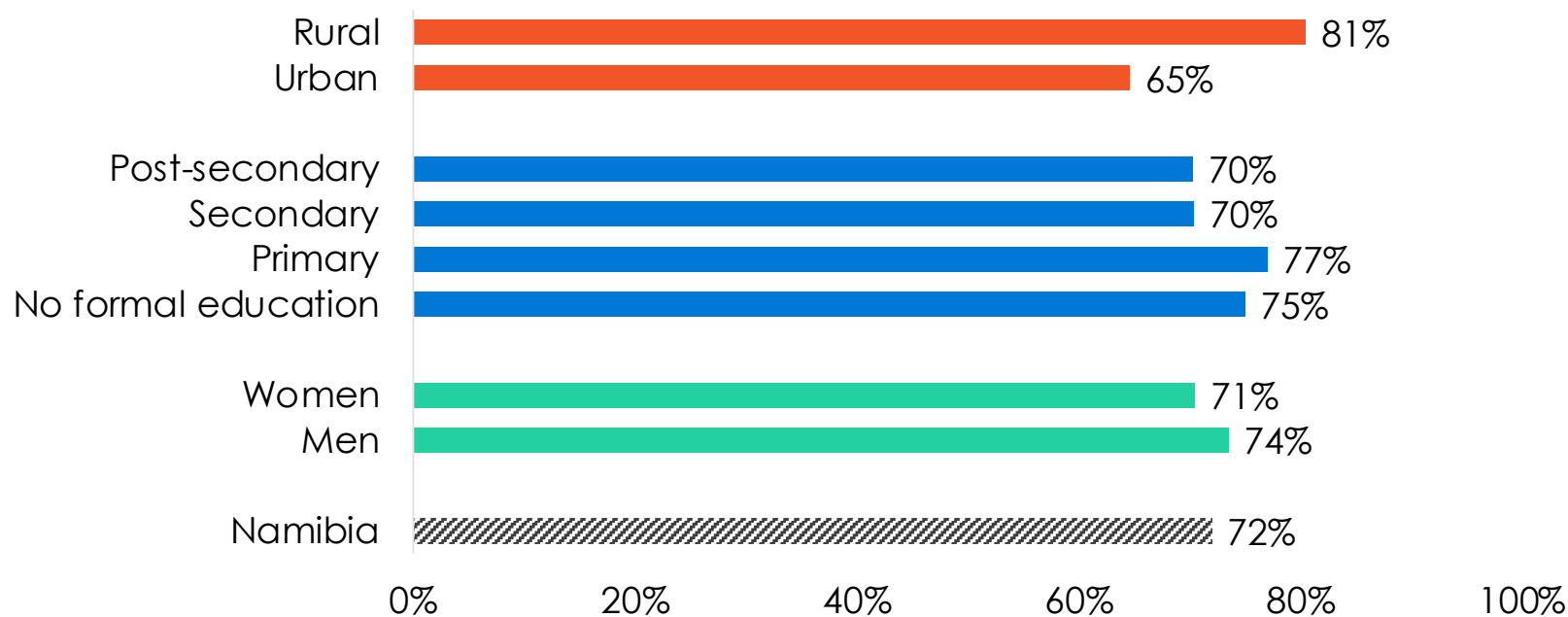
# Voting in the 2019 national election | excluding respondents who were too young to vote | Namibia | 2024

---



**Respondents were asked:** People are not always able to vote in elections, for example, because they weren't registered, they were unable to go, or someone prevented them from voting. How about you? In the last national election, held in 2019, did you vote, or not, or were you too young to vote? Or can't you remember whether you voted? (Respondents who were not old enough to vote in 2019 are excluded.)

# Voting in the 2019 national election | by demographic group | Namibia | 2024



**Respondents were asked:** People are not always able to vote in elections, for example, because they weren't registered, they were unable to go, or someone prevented them from voting. How about you? In the last national election, held in 2019, did you vote, or not, or were you too young to vote? Or can't you remember whether you voted?  
(% who say "I voted in the last election." Respondents who were not old enough to vote in 2019 are excluded.)

# Conclusion

---

- Namibia is one of only a few African countries where the perceived supply of democracy exceeds the demand. A significant section of the population (38%) either does not care about the type of political system (26%) or believes a non-democratic alternative may be better (12%). This segment has grown significantly since 2014, when it was 24%.
- Partisanship is at an all-time low, with nearly half of the voting-age population not feeling close to a political party. This coincides with a decline in trust in parties, especially among young and urban Namibians.
- Namibians generally support the notion that their leaders should be elected and that the last elections were largely free and fair, albeit with minor problems. Yet one in five did not vote, mainly in urban areas. This presents perhaps the biggest challenge to political parties and election management bodies for the coming elections.



# Thank you

---

[www.afrobarometer.org](http://www.afrobarometer.org)

#VoicesAfrica on Twitter, Facebook,  
LinkedIn, Instagram.

Do your own data analysis – on any  
question, for any country and survey  
round.

It's easy and free at  
[www.afrobarometer.org/online-data-  
analysis](http://www.afrobarometer.org/online-data-analysis).

