



# UGANDA GOVERNANCE PULSE

## A Public Perception Survey

- JULY 2020 -



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As members of the IEPG, we are honoured to be part of a process that will progressively be known as one that publishes the most compressive independent public perception survey on governance and economic outlook in Uganda. We promise our readers a highly independent and unbiased process and product.

Kampala, Uganda  
July 2020

# List of acronyms

ANT – Alliance for National Transformation  
DP – Democratic Party  
EC – Electoral Commission  
ERP - Economic Recovery Package  
FDC – Forum for Democratic Change  
FOWODE- Forum for Women in Democracy  
GLISS- Great Lakes Institute for Strategic Studies (GLISS)  
IEGP- Independent Expert Peer Group  
IRCU - Inter-Religious Council of Uganda  
IRI- International Republican Institute  
LC – Local Council  
NAADS - National Agricultural Advisory Services  
NCF - National Consultative Forum  
NRA - National Resistance Army  
NRM – National Resistance Movement  
OWC - Operation Wealth Creation  
PEAP - Poverty Eradication Action Plan  
PMA - Programme for Modernization of Agriculture  
PPS - Proportionate to Population Size  
RWI- Research World International  
SAGE - Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment  
SCENE-Strengthening Citizen Engagement in Elections  
TEFU- The Elders Forum of Uganda  
UGP- The Uganda Governance Pulse  
UNCST- Uganda National Council for Science and Technology  
UND - Uganda National Dialogue  
UNNGOF- Uganda National NGO Forum  
UPC – Uganda People’s Congress  
WEF - Women Entrepreneurship Fund  
YLP - Youth Livelihood Programme

# Executive Summary

The Uganda Governance Pulse is an independent public perception survey of the Independent Expert Peer Group (IEPG). The IEPG is comprised of individual professionals in the realms of public policy, academia, governance practice and politics. The IEPG was established in 2019 with the goal of initiating and conducting regular public perception surveys to periodically produce and publish the Uganda Governance Pulse as an appropriate reflection of public perceptions on a range of governance issues in Uganda. The IEPG is hosted and facilitated by the Great Lakes Institute for Strategic Studies (GLISS).

This edition of the Uganda Governance Pulse report is based on a survey conducted in March 2020. The survey was conducted by Research World International (RWI) on behalf of IEPG based on a jointly developed questionnaire. RWI conducted the survey involving 2,321 respondents spread over 218 parishes in 218 sub-counties in all the 15 regions of Uganda. The survey design applied probability sampling which is regarded as the fundamental basis for survey research of this nature. The selection of the sample by regions was calculated basing on the 2014 National Housing and Population Census published by the Uganda National Bureau of Statistics (UBOS). The survey sample comprised of 51 percent female and 49 percent male. At least 69 percent of the respondents were from rural settings while 31 percent were from urban setting. The sample also involved a combined 55 percent of the respondents aged 18-34 years. Majority of the respondents had lower secondary education or less with 29 percent having completed O'Level education and 24 percent not completing primary level education.

The IEPG provided overall oversight of the survey process and the production of this report by applying a number of quality assurance measures. The use of an independent polling company ensured that field work, data collection and analysis were handled in the most professional manner. Through a series of working sessions, the IEPG was able to discuss the survey findings in detail. The final quality assurance measure was the call back exercise conducted at the end of June 2020 involving a randomly selected sample of respondents who participated in the survey. Out of the 300 respondents selected for the call back, at least 60 percent reported to have participated in the survey. The key limitation to the call back exercise is that it was undertaken three months after the survey was conducted due to the lockdown measures imposed by Government to control the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Perceptions on economic performance and trends;**

There is a general outlook of uncertainty with regard to the personal living condition and the economic direction of the country. This is reflected in the number of respondents who reported that their living conditions were very bad (10%), bad (29%) and neither good nor bad (40%) as contrasted with those who reported their living conditions to be good (20%) or very good (1%). Similarly, the findings show that a combined 77 percent of the respondents perceived the economic conditions in the country at the time of the survey to be bleak; Eight percent (8%) perceived the conditions to be very bad; 25 percent believed the economic conditions to be bad; and 44 percent thought the economic conditions were neither bad nor good. This uncertainty is also reflected in the proportion of the population who held a positive outlook of the economic (26%) or didn't know how the economy would look like 12 months from the time of the survey (34%) compared to 40 percent who held a positive perception. Across the 15 regions, the population in Sebei (70%), Acholi (65%),

Toro (54%), Bugisu (52%), Ankole (50%) and Kigezi (50%) are optimistic about the economic prospects over the 12 months period following the survey. The perceptions on the economy are also consistent with generally low levels of confidence in how Government is running the economy where 41 percent of the population are not confident while another 11 percent expressed no opinion.

### **Political freedom and expression**

The overall findings from the survey is that Ugandans generally feel free to talk about politics in the country. The data shows that a combined 49 percent of the population were either very free or free to talk about politics as compared to a combined 26 percent who said they were not free or simply had no comment. The highest percentage (44%) of the population that reported not being free to talk about politics was in the Rwenzori region. The data shows that the most popular mode of political participation was through LC1 meetings. The data also shows that only one percent of the population was likely to engage in violent protest as a form of political participation.

### **Membership or affiliation to political parties or organizations**

The survey data shows that only 57 percent of the population consider themselves to be members of or are affiliated to political parties or organizations. This is in contrast to the 32 percent and another 9 percent who reported that they were not members or not affiliated to political parties or organizations. Another important finding is that more men (63%) than women (51%) reported to be members or affiliated to political parties. The data also shows a higher percentage (61%) of the population in rural areas who reported to belong to or considered themselves affiliated to political parties than the urban population (48%).

Out of the 1,320 respondents who reported to be affiliated to political parties, a majority (79%) indicated that they belonged to the NRM party. According to the data, the majority of the population identify themselves with NRM party across all the regions with some regions such as Toro (98%), Karamoja (96%), Kigezi (95%) Teso (93%), West Nile (92%) and Bukedi (91%) on the top. The NRM party is followed by the People Power (PP) Movement which records a strong support in Bugisu (29%), Buganda (24%) and Sebei (20%). What is quite curious is that Forum for Democratic Change which is considered Uganda's leading opposition political party was mostly mentioned only in Buganda by 12 percent of the respondents.

### **Possession of membership cards of political parties or organizations**

Another major finding with regard to membership or affiliation to political parties and organizations is the proportion of the population that possess party membership cards or how the cards were obtained. According to the data, only 49 percent of the respondents reported that they possessed a party membership card as opposed to 51 percent who did not. Kigezi (65%), Teso (61%) and Busoga (60%) reported the highest number of respondents with party membership cards. On the other hand, Ankole (72%), Karamoja (70%) Acholi (67%) and Buganda (60%) reported the highest number of respondents without party membership cards even when they reported to be members or have affiliation with political parties. As can be seen from the data, Karamoja, Ankole and Acholi are some of the regions where majority respondents reported to be members or affiliated to political parties or organizations but low numbers for those that have party membership cards.

### **Awareness of the electoral process**

With regard to awareness about the electoral process, a majority of the population (89%) reported that they were aware about the voter verification exercises which were conducted in November to December 2019 before the survey. The largest percentage of the population (45%) reported that they got most of their information through verbal communication from local council leaders while another 40 percent got the information from listening to radio. It is quite noticeable that social media and newspapers seem to play a less significant role with regard to citizens accessing election related awareness information.

### **Perceptions on the timing of announcing dates for presidential elections**

At the time of the survey which was less than a year to the presidential elections, the Electoral Commission had not announced the date for the elections. The survey therefore aimed to collect citizens' perceptions on the right timing for announcing the dates for presidential elections. It is important to recognize that certainty regarding the dates for an important election such as the presidential elections is central for effective participation for both those who intend to contest for the office and as well as the voters. At least 29 percent of the respondents suggested that the date for presidential elections should be announced at least 1 year before the elections. Another 28 percent proposed 6 months prior to the elections while 21 percent expressed no opinion over the matter.

### **Awareness regarding elections governing bodies**

A considerable majority (58%) were aware that the Electoral Commission is the body in charge of organizing elections. However, there is a considerable 28 percent who mentioned police while six percent and another five percent mentioned religious leaders and the media respectively. Analyzed by region, the data shows that 80 percent of the population in Lango, 52 percent in Teso and 45 percent in Acholi perceived the police to be in charge of organizing elections. Ankole (10%) had the highest number of respondents who perceived religious leaders to be responsible for organizing elections while West Nile had the highest number of respondents (10%) who perceived that the media was the one in charge.

### **Citizens participation in elections**

Overall survey data shows high levels of participation in the previous elections of up to 82 percent of the population compared to 18 percent who reported they have never participated in any elections prior to the survey. It is important to note that the proportion of the population reporting that they have never participated in previous election may include 2.5 million first time voters which implies a higher proportion of citizens who participated in previous elections. Gender disaggregated data shows that there are more men (84%) than women (80%) who reported to have participated in previous elections while data by setting shows higher levels of participation by the population in rural areas (85%) in comparison to urban areas (75%).

### **Perceptions on participation in the 2021 presidential elections**

The high levels of participation in elections is reflected in the data of those who reported readiness to participate in the forthcoming presidential elections scheduled for 2021. An overwhelming majority, up to 91 percent, expressed readiness to participate. In contrast, only four percent said they will not participate while another five percent reported that they were undecided. Bugisu has the highest percentage of the population (14%) who reported that they were undecided about participation in the 2021 presidential elections. At least 60 of the respondents who indicated that they don't intend to participate in the 2021 presidential elections perceive the elections not be free and fair. Up to 35 percent reported that they did not have National Identification Numbers (NIN) while five percent indicated they won't be participating in the elections because they are far away from the polling stations.

### **Perceptions on participation in the parliamentary and local council elections**

Perceptions on participation in parliamentary and local council elections were equally high at 89 percent and 88 percent respectively. With regard to parliamentary elections, the survey found that 48 percent of the respondents intend to vote for their incumbent members of parliament compared to 43 percent who say otherwise. Gender disaggregated data shows that women (54%) are more likely to vote for their incumbent member of parliament compared to 43 percent of the male respondents. Regionally, the data shows that Sebei (72%), Bugisu (66%), Karamoja (65%) and Lango (65%) have the highest proportion of the population that are likely to vote their incumbent members of parliament. On the other hand, Bunyoro (60%) and Buganda (50%) have the highest proportion of the population that are likely to vote against incumbent members of parliament. In contrast, a slightly higher proportion of the population (58%) who indicated they intend to participate in the local council elections also reported that they are likely to vote their incumbent district council chairperson.

### **Prevalence and impact of money in elections**

The survey found that at least 15 percent of the respondents had received money or other forms of inducements in previous elections. This is in contrast to 82 percent who indicated they had not received such inducements. According to the regionally segregated data, this practice seems to be more prevalent in Sebei (34%), Karamoja (29%), Kigezi (26%) Bugisu (25%), Teso (24%) and Bukedi (23%). The survey further found that 58 percent of those who received these inducements received them as groups while 42 percent received them as individuals. The offer of monetary or other inducements is also more prevalent or associated with parliamentary elections where 94 percent of the respondents indicated that they had received money offers or inducements during parliamentary elections compared to 55 percent for the presidential elections and 29 percent for local council elections. The survey further found that 45 percent of those who received offers of money or other inducements considered them to be important in making their choices for the respective office bearers.



## **Perceptions on the choice of president at the time of the survey**

Another major finding of the survey regards the perceptions of citizens on the choice of president if elections were held at the time of the survey. The survey was conducted at a time when there had been no nominations for presidential aspirants. Consequently, an open-ended question was asked to give respondents the opportunity to mention any qualified person they considered appropriate to be president. According to the data, 47 percent of the respondents chose incumbent president Yoweri Museveni as their choice of president. Mr. Museveni is followed by Mr. Robert Sentamu Kyagulanyi aka Bobi Wine (22%) while Dr. Kizza Besigye was preferred by 17 percent of the respondents. The data further shows that Mr. Museveni 50:39 and Dr. Besigye (19:15) draw more preference from rural voters compared to urban voters while Mr. Kyagulanyi draws his highest preference from urban voters compared to rural voters at the ratio of 32:18 percent.

Regionally disaggregated data shows that Mr. Museveni has his highest support in Bukedi, Lango and Tooro at 65% for each of these regions while his lowest support in Buganda at 27 percent. Mr. Kyagulanyi has his highest support in Bugisu (39%), Sebei (36%) and Busoga (30%) while his lowest support is reported in Rwenzori (2%) and Kigezi (3%). Dr. Besigye registers his highest support in Rwenzori (35%) while his lowest support is in Lango at seven percent.

## **Constitutional amendment to remove age limit, timing for President Museveni's retirement and presidential succession**

The Uganda Governance Pulse surveys perceptions on a range of issues regarding succession and transfer of power for the office of president. Three important issues are addressed by the survey: the constitutional amendment to remove presidential age limit from the constitution; the timing of President Museveni's retirement; and the choice of a president to succeed Mr. Museveni. The data shows that 59 percent of the population did not support the amendment of the constitution to remove age for persons seeking to contest for the presidency. The amendment was supported by 27 percent of the population while 14 percent of the population declined to comment on the issue.

Regarding the timing of Mr. Museveni's retirement, 20 percent of the respondents would like to see President Museveni retire from the presidency immediately while another 15 percent would like to see him retire in 2021. On the other hand, 19 percent of the respondents would like to see him retire in 2026 while another 21 percent don't want to see him ever retire. At least 25 percent of the respondents declined to comment on this issue.

An important question regarding succession to President Museveni was asked in an open-ended question to allow respondents a free hand in making their preference and hence remove the biases often presented by a predetermined list of personalities. The survey found that 23 percent of the population would choose Mr. Robert Kyagulanyi as the person to succeed President Museveni. Mr. Kyagulanyi is followed by Dr. Kizza Besigye at 10 percent and Mr. Muhoozi Kainerugaba at 6 percent. Mr. Kyagulanyi was mentioned more by male respondents (28%) as compared to females (21%) and respondents among the age band of 18-34 years. Dr. Besigye was evenly mentioned across rural and urban setting as well as age bands while he was mentioned more among female (19%) respondents than male respondents (14%). Mr. Muhoozi Kainerugaba was mentioned more among female (8%) than male (4%) respondents.

### **Awareness and support for the Uganda National Dialogue process**

The survey further found that there was general lack of awareness about the Uganda National Dialogue process which has been promoted by the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU) and the Government of Uganda since December 2018. A majority of the respondents (86%) indicated that they were not aware of the process in contrast to only 14 percent who reported they had heard about it. However, there seems to be a general preference (55%) that the IRCU should be the institution to convene the Uganda National Dialogue compared to the preference of government which is at 29 percent.

### **Public perceptions about the general direction of the country**

The survey aimed to establish the perception of the citizens about the general direction of the country. The data in this issue suggests a degree of uncertainty among the citizenry with regard to the direction of the country. At least 27 percent of the population perceive the country to be moving in the right direction while 26 percent perceive that the country is going in the wrong direction. Another 33 percent stated that the country was neither headed in the right or the wrong direction and 15 percent said they didn't have an answer to the question. The data shows that Acholi (54%), Teso (44%) and Lango (43%) have the largest proportion of the population that perceive the country to be headed in the right direction while Busoga (49%) and Buganda (35%) have the highest proportion of the population that perceive the country to be headed in the wrong direction. A significant proportion of the population in Sebei (66%), Rwenzori (65%) and Ankole (52%) perceive the country to be heading neither in the wrong nor in the right direction.

In conclusion, it is important to note that this is the first in a series of periodic surveys that will be conducted by the Independent Expert Peer Group to produce and publish the Uganda Governance Pulse. This particular survey was briefly disrupted by the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic soon after the fieldwork was completed in mid-March 2020. The lockdown measures instituted in response to the pandemic interrupted the process of data analysis and hence led to the delay in producing this report. However, lessons have been learnt which will help improve on the subsequent surveys. For example, there will need to be revisions on the survey tool to make some of the questions more precise, remove any inherent biases where they are detected, and ensure that the post fieldwork quality assurance process is done in a timely manner.

# 1. Background, scope and quality control

## 1.1 Introduction

The Uganda Governance Pulse (UGP) is a collaborative initiative dedicated to undertaking regular tracking of selected economic and governance parameters to inform governance and public policy discourse in Uganda. The initiative builds on the practice of public perception surveys or opinion polling by developing and applying a customized methodology and survey tool to undertake periodic public perception surveys. While public perception surveys and public opinion polling is not something new, the regularity and intensity of the surveys buttressed by a robust expert peer review system is a key feature that distinguishes The Uganda Governance Pulse from traditional opinion polling initiatives in Uganda.

The UGP initiative is motivated by three inter-related objectives:

- i) Collecting, analyzing and disseminating reliable public perceptions data on relevant and contemporary governance issues and economic conditions in Uganda.
- ii) Encouraging the use of public perceptions trends data to inform governance and public policy debates in the country;
- iii) Providing policy and decision makers with credible evidence on the perception of citizens on selected governance and public policy issues.

This is the first edition of The Uganda Governance Pulse Report. The Report provides data and analysis from a survey conducted during the first half of March 2020. The report is organized into three parts. Part 1 covers introduction, general background and methodology. Part 2 covers the main findings of the survey. Part 3 covers the general conclusions and lessons for subsequent surveys.

## 1.2 Context for the Survey

According to Rachel Macreadies (2011), public opinion polls, particularly those released in the lead up to an election, stimulate considerable debate and speculation amongst the media, the public and politicians. Opinion polls capture public opinion, or the public's mood on a given issue at a particular moment in time. Opinion polls are regularly conducted on voting intentions and leadership preferences but can be undertaken on any public policy issue, which the polling groups or commissioners of such polls deem important. The study of public opinion polling has drawn on journalism and market research and attracts scholars of history, sociology, psychology and communications.

The practice of public opinion polling implicitly treats average public opinions as the opinion of all the members of a defined universe, such as the electorate as measured by means of standard questions presented to an appropriate sample. A public opinion poll is a method of systematically interrogating a smaller, representatively selected sample of the public; a sample that is fundamentally an accurate "mirror" of the opinions held by the entire population as a whole.

The opponents of opinion polls often question whether it is even possible to argue that a small sample of people can be taken to reflect the “mood” of the whole community. Perhaps it’s important to remember the words of Vincent-Wayne Mitchell; “The point is that a country’s political mood and opinion is in a constant state of flux, and even the general election only captures that flux at one point of time. Opinion polls are, therefore, trying to predict the position of what is essentially a moving target and that is not easy.”<sup>1</sup>

### 1.3 Recent opinion polling in Uganda

In an attempt to track changes in Uganda’s polity in areas of macro economy, social policy and governance, a number of governance and media organisations have over time sponsored public perception surveys. In Uganda, the most recent opinion polls were conducted by Research World International (RWI), Afrobarometer, and International Republican Institute (IRI), among others. Unlike Afrobarometer which is done periodically, most of these polls are timed to coincide with major events especially electoral processes. Consequently, such polls are conducted either before or after national elections. Some of the polls cover a wide range of themes including citizens’ perceptions regarding the delivery of public services, access to print, electronic and social media, among other things. Through these surveys, the public, politicians, policy makers, the media and other interested groups have access to accurate measures of public attitudes and information which can be pivotal in informing public policy.

It is important to note that opinion and public perception surveys come with their own challenges especially with respect to reliability and objectivity of the results. Even in Uganda, opinion poll results are a subject of intense public debate, with deeply vested political interests questioning the credibility as well as data from these polls. Four specific challenges can be observed based on public responses to previous public perception survey data in Uganda.

The first challenge is the regulatory and political environment in which surveys have to be conducted. Over the years, Government has been tightening the regulatory regime governing the application and approval of permits to conduct research in the country. In principle, research permits which cover the conduct of perception surveys in Uganda are issued by the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST). Progressively, a vetting process involving the Office of the President was introduced to precede any issuance of such permits. The involvement of the Office of the President, field level state functionaries and an environment of fear that pervades the general operating environment has the potential to influence the way respondents answer some of the survey questions.

Secondly, some people question the generalization of a limited sample of respondents to accurately reflect the views of an entire population. For example, how can a sample of some 2,000 respondents be generalized to reflect the views of all of Uganda’s population currently estimated at over 40 million people? According to the American Association for Public Opinion Researchers best practice guidelines, the quality of a survey is best judged by “how much attention is given to preventing, measuring and dealing with the many important problems that can arise”, rather than just the size or scope of the poll. For a poll to be accurate it must be based upon a representative, randomised sample, employ valid or reliable questions, and have polling personnel to carefully communicate with those interviewed.

1 Vincent-Wayne Mitchell (V. W. Mitchell (1992) ‘Opinion Polls: Right of Wrong? – A Lesson in Social Research’, Marketing Intelligence & Planning, vol. 10, no. 9, pp. 4-9, p. 9.)

A third challenge relates to the diversity of Uganda's geographical structure. Uganda has at least 15 distinct regions going by its geographical configuration at independence in 1962. These regions are culturally and linguistically distinct with differences in natural resource endowments, development status and human development indices. Most previous polls do not pay attention to these diversities and differences. By generalizing perceptions at the national level, it is possible to suppress the differences in opinions driven by these cultural, linguistic and other differences based on geography.

Finally, the most significant gap in recent practices in public perception surveys in Uganda is that the surveys are always event driven, not regular and sometimes not time sensitive. The problem therein is that the 'peak period' surveys may not reflect the latent public perceptions off peak. More importantly, these surveys do not provide the necessary trends data to allow for tracking changes in public perceptions over a selected range of parameters and over time.

This first edition of UGP adds value to these previous initiatives by aiming to ensure that these surveys are produced on a periodic basis and are subjected to appropriate peer review. The UGP employs an arms-length approach to quality control to enhance analytical depth, intellectual rigor and credibility of the survey process, as well as the reports generated from the survey data. In the next section, we describe in detail how the process of producing The Uganda Governance Pulse Report is organized and the methodological approaches that help address these challenges.

## 1.4 Organization of work

The process leading up to this report can be traced back to April 2016 at the convening of selected thought leaders in academia, civil society and development practice convened by GLISS.<sup>2</sup> The convening identified absence of public perception trends data on key governance issues and recommended the undertaking of regular surveys to build such data. The Uganda Governance Pulse was subsequently initiated in 2019 as a process to conduct regular public perception surveys to bridge this knowledge and data gap. The Uganda Governance Pulse is therefore designed as a long-term initiative to conduct periodic public perception surveys with the purpose of generating credible perception trends data on governance issues and economic conditions in the country.

## 1.5 Process quality control

Significant design efforts were invested in ensuring that the process of conducting the surveys is shielded from inherent biases of the convening and funding organizations while at the same time ensuring sufficient intellectual rigor. This is achieved in the following ways:

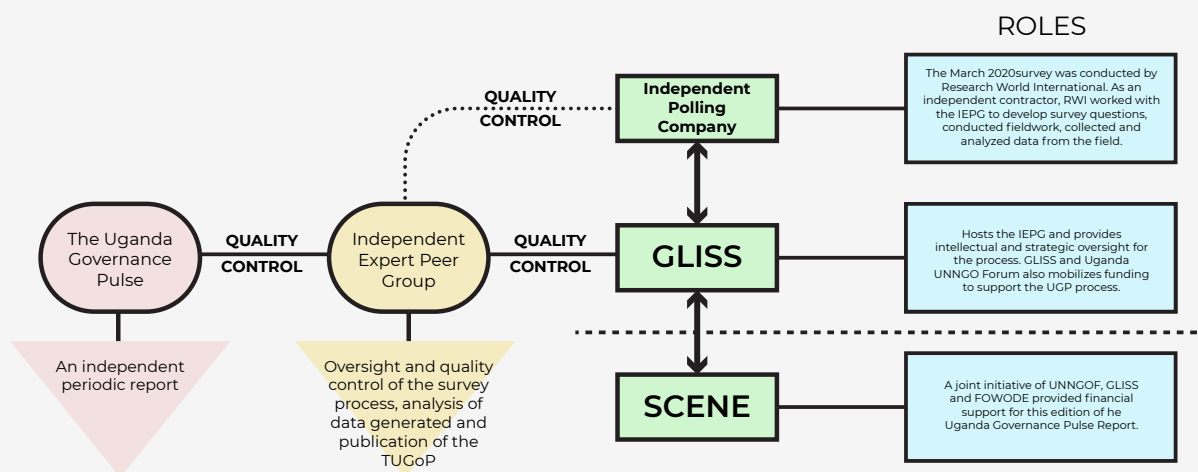
*i. Independent Expert Peer Group (IEPG)*

The Uganda Governance Pulse is managed and produced independently by the Independent Expert Peer Group (IEPG). The IEPG is convened and facilitated by Great Lakes Institute for Strategic Studies (GLISS) and is comprised of Ugandan academics and practitioners in the fields of governance and public policy. The IEPG members are invited to the group by the host institution. The IEPG develops the survey tool, discusses and recommends the methodology to be used, provides oversight over the conduct of the fieldwork and oversees the production of the report until its publication. The

<sup>2</sup> See Inspired! Intrigued! Challenged: Record of Proceedings of Proceedings of Uganda Transition Scenarios Thought Leadership Group Meeting, Lake Victoria Serena Hotel, April 23-26, 2016 (Unpublished). For more information about UTSTLC, see <https://glissafrika.org/transition>.

IEGP members bring together multi-disciplinary professional expertise, diverse political persuasions and gender backgrounds. Consequently, the Uganda Governance Pulse represents the collective understanding and interpretation of data collected during the fieldwork.

Figure 1: Uganda Governance Pulse Process Flow Diagram



### ii. Customized public perception survey tool

The Uganda Governance Pulse public perception survey tool ([www.glissafrika.org](http://www.glissafrika.org)) is the primary instrument for the production of Uganda Governance Pulse Report. The current version of the tool was developed and completed in January 2020 prior to the commencement of fieldwork.

### iii. Independent opinion polling company

The independence and integrity of the survey is further enhanced by contracting independent polling companies to develop the poll questions corresponding with the approved themes, conducting the fieldwork and analysing the data. For this report, the survey was conducted by Research World International (RWI). RWI is a Ugandan based polling company with long-term experience in conducting opinion polls and market surveys with an unrivaled reputation in conducting opinion polls. As an independent polling company, RWI ensures both the technical quality of survey tools and the integrity of data collection and analysis. However, the production of the report and the timing of its release is ultimately the responsibility of IEGP.

## 1.6 Scope of the Survey

The IEPG adopted the following themes that are covered by the Uganda Governance Pulse report.

### i. Public perceptions on the economy:

This theme focuses on the perceptions of the citizens on the economy considering their economic conditions prior to the survey, at the time of the survey and the future outlook of

economic conditions.

**ii. Perceptions on political freedom and political participation**

Generally, political freedom enables citizens to engage in all aspects of life and to participate in political processes in society. In simple terms, political freedom is generally described as freedom from oppression or coercion or the absence of disabling conditions that would inhibit citizens from actively participating in politics and other aspects of public life. This theme contains questions that track trends in the perception of citizens regarding their political freedom, participate in politics on the freedom to associate or belong to a political parties and other citizen political formations.

**iii. Awareness of the electoral process**

Participation in elections is one of the highest expressions of civic consciousness and civic competence of citizens. Information about the electoral process is important in enabling citizens make informed choices during elections. Survey questions under this theme seek to establish trends in the awareness of citizens regarding key processes and events associated with elections, including voter registration and verification, election governing agencies, among others.

**iv. Perceptions on participation in elections:**

Survey questions under this theme seeks to survey the perceptions of citizens on their readiness to participate in presidential, parliamentary and local council elections. This information is considered essential for election governing bodies such as the Electoral Commission as well as political parties which have to determine where they should invest to increase voter education and voter awareness of the electoral process.

**v. Use of money in the electoral process**

Unregulated use of money in elections has emerged as one of the actions with heavy distorting effect in the electoral process. While there is general consensus suggesting that increased use of money is not desirable and undermines democracy, its deployment to influence voters has been rising consistently.<sup>3</sup> Yet, there haven't been systematic efforts to track such monies and its impact on voters' choices. The survey questions under this theme are designed to survey the use of money in elections, the modes in which it is delivered and the extent to which it impacts on the choices of voters.

**vi. Amendment of the constitution to remove age limit**

Knowledge and respect for a nation's constitution by both leaders and citizens is one of the strongest tenets of governance. Yet, since 2005, a series of constitutional amendments led to the removal of several safeguards against an individual overstaying in power. Political leaders mainly President Museveni and those who support his stay in power argue that such safe guards are not necessary since citizens are able to choose their leaders through elections. The last such amendment was the highly acrimonious removal of the 75 year age limit in 2017. Given the controversy that accompanied the amendment, this theme seeks to track the changes in public perception over this particular amendment and the impact it may have on political choice.

**vii. Public discourse on political transition**

Countries that have leaders who stay in power for a long time often have difficulties in achieving peaceful transitions. Quite often, such leaders end up dominating the public policy space and state institutions making planning for political transitions problematic. The Uganda Governance Pulse seeks to track changes in public perceptions around a

<sup>3</sup> For a detailed analysis of campaign financing in Uganda, see ACFIM, (2019). Unregulated Campaign Spending and its Impact on Electoral Participants in Uganda: A Call for Legislative Action and Civic Engagement. Kampala.

potential transition from President Museveni. It is envisaged that trends data on this important issue will help Government, political parties and the civil society to engage meaningfully in any discourse on the politics of transition in the country.

**viii. *Uganda National Dialogue (UND) process***

In December 2018, Government and Ugandan clergy leaders under the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU) and The Elders Forum of Uganda (TEFU) issued the Uganda National Dialogue Communique outlining an agenda and modalities for the convening of a national dialogue. The Uganda National Dialogue is billed as an all-inclusive, non-partisan process to bring together Ugandans to address the structural challenges that hold the country from making faster progress towards transformation and shared prosperity. The Uganda Governance Pulse seeks to track citizens' perceptions on the Uganda National Dialogue process with regard to awareness of the process, knowledge of the agenda and support for the process.

**ix. *Perception on the general direction of the country***

This theme is designed to capture the general perceptions of the citizens on the overall direction of the country. The key survey questions here are whether the country is headed in the right or wrong direction. It is assumed that survey data on this thematic area will provide Government and other actors a reasonable understanding of the issues that impact on public perceptions.



## 2. Methodology

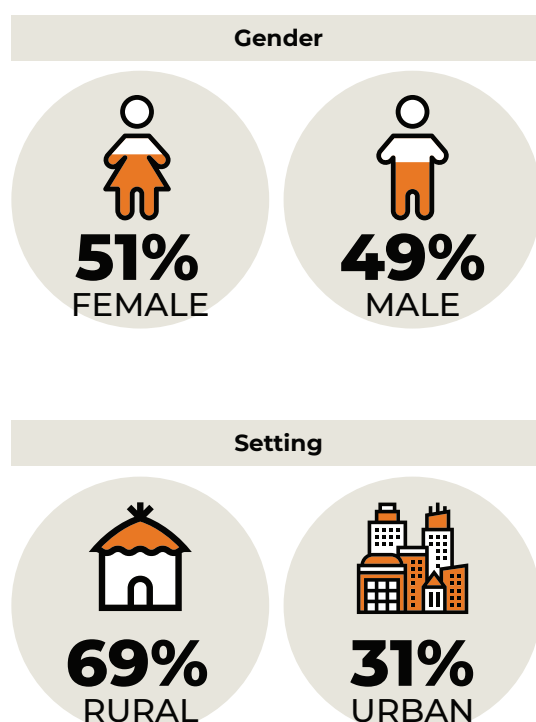
### 2.1 Introduction

The survey was conducted by applying quantitative approach methods involving face-to-face interviews. A structured questionnaire (Annex 1) was developed by Research World International (RWI) in collaboration with the Independent Expert Peer Group. Prior to the fieldwork exercise, the questionnaire was programmed on the Survey To Go application. The summary of the methodology is shown Table 1.

*Table 1: Summary of the methodology used during the research.*

<b>Study Strategy</b>	National representative public opinion poll
<b>Study approach</b>	Quantitative
<b>Technique</b>	Face-to-face interviews on android platform
<b>Instrument</b>	Structured questionnaire programed on the Survey To Go platform
<b>Target respondents</b>	Ugandan 18 Yrs and above
<b>Gender</b>	Female & male
<b>Total sample size</b>	2,321 face-to-face interviews
<b>Sampling</b>	Randomly selected sample across the country
<b>Analysis</b>	Descriptive by regional comparisons, urban-rural comparisons, gender specific, age-specific.

*Figure 2: Survey sample by gender, setting, age and level of education*



### 2.2 Sample selection

This survey covered a sample of 2,321 respondents of age 18 and above. For the purpose of sample design, the 2014 Population and Housing Census was used as the basis for estimating proportional population distribution across regions. The survey design applied probability sampling which is regarded as the fundamental basis for survey research of this nature. The survey was conducted in 218 parishes in 218 sub-counties in all the 15 regions of Uganda (Figure 3).

The survey treated a parish as the sampling point, or the smallest cell for data collection. In each parish or ward, no more than 11 respondents were interviewed. This allowed the study to spread and disperse the sample over several districts. The number of sampling points to be surveyed in each region was determined by the sample size allocated to that region, which was allocated on the basis of proportionate to population size (PPS).

The distribution of the sample across the regions is based on the 2014 National Housing and Population Census data. As shown in Table 2 below, Buganda region which has the largest population of all the regions accounts for the largest sample for the survey.

Figure 3: Sample size and distribution by region and by gender

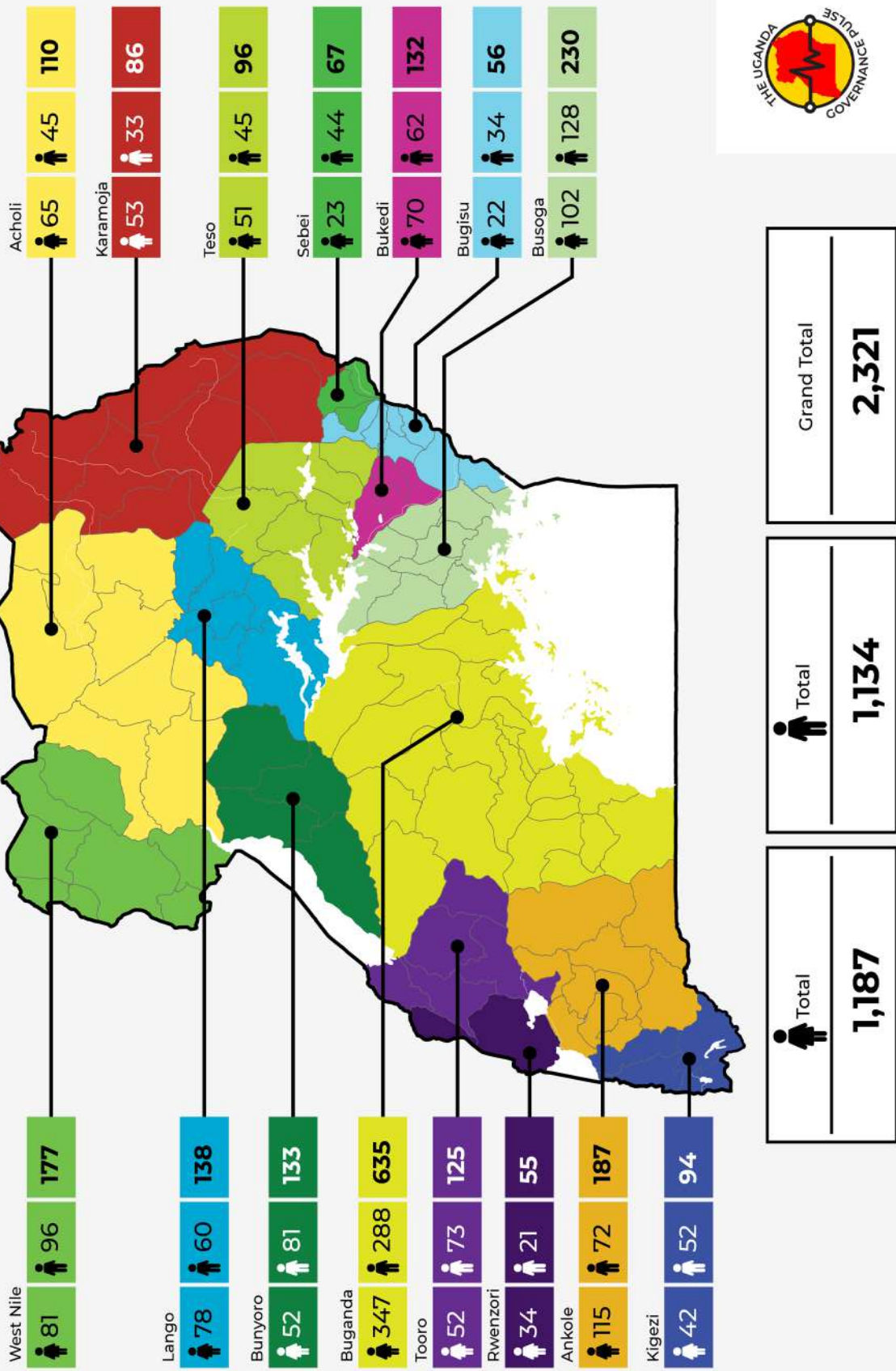
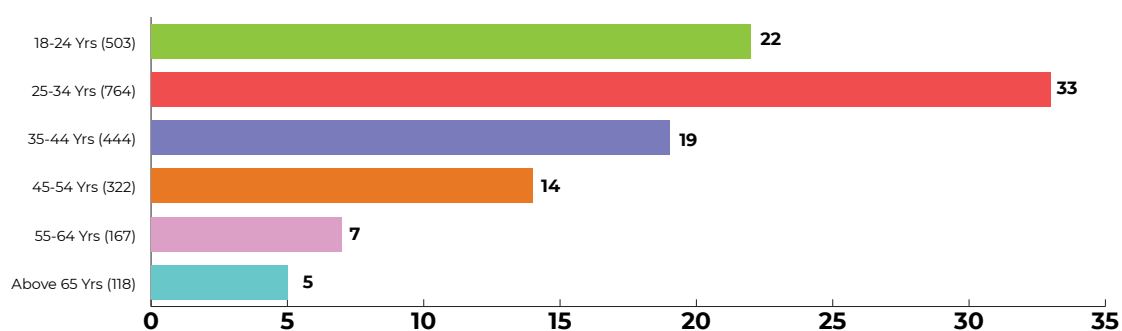


Table 2: Proportional sample size by region and gender

Region	Gender		Setting		Grand Total	Proportion	Sample
	Male	Female	Rural	Urban			
Acholi	310,043	354,335	503,952	160,427	664,379	0.04	104
Ankole	683,576	781,796	1,177,107	288,265	1,465,372	0.10	229
Buganda	1,998,540	2,216,956	2,306,858	1,908,638	4,215,497	0.27	660
Bugisu	292,892	331,369	508,328	115,933	624,261	0.04	98
Bukedi	386,245	446,889	708,116	125,017	833,133	0.05	130
Bunyoro	431,027	465,789	728,513	168,303	896,816	0.06	140
Busoga	737,284	849,269	1,322,676	263,876	1,586,552	0.10	248
Karamoja	199,245	227,967	386,600	40,613	427,213	0.03	67
Kigezi	275,802	334,554	508,041	102,315	610,356	0.04	96
Lango	426,602	486,024	804,598	108,028	912,627	0.06	143
Rwenzori	188,733	218,390	326,046	81,077	407,123	0.03	64
Sebei	72,804	80,980	128,964	24,820	153,783	0.01	24
Teso	377,015	428,445	723,788	81,673	805,461	0.05	126
Tooro	261,457	286,986	426,416	122,027	548,443	0.04	86
West Nile	542,561	636,011	1,012,285	166,286	1,178,572	0.08	185
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>7,183,826</b>	<b>8,145,760</b>	<b>11,521,990</b>	<b>3,807,596</b>	<b>15,329,586</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>2400</b>

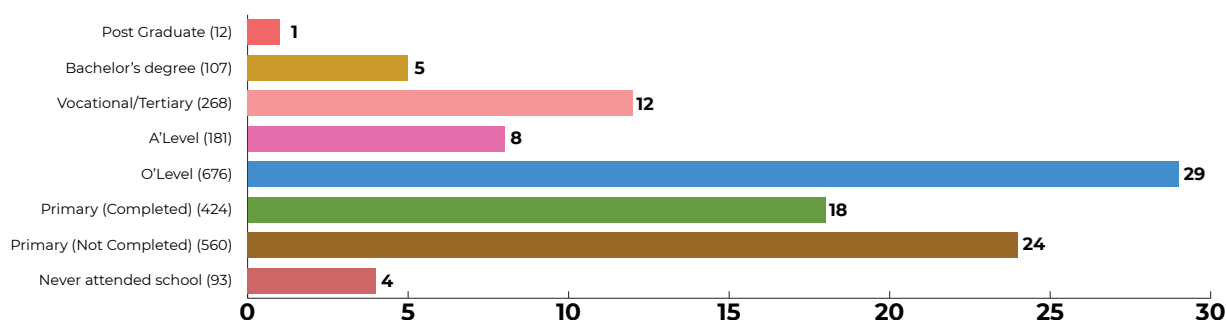
At the household level, the respondent to be interviewed was selected using the KISH GRID. All members of the household aged 18 years and above were listed in the household schedule on the KISH GRID. If the selected respondent was not at home, the enumerator made two call backs over a span of two days and a follow up to a place of work for those whose households had been selected but not at home. This was largely the case with Kampala where most interviews were done on the weekends and the evenings.

Figure 4: Percentage of the survey sample by age bands.



At least 69 percent of the respondents were from the rural areas against 31 percent who were from the urban areas. The age bands 18-24 (22%) and 25-34 (33%) had the highest representation reflecting Uganda's population which is dominated by young people. In terms of education, at least 24 percent of the respondents indicated that they had not completed primary level education while 29 percent indicated they had completed O'Level education.

Figure 5: Percentage of the survey sample by level of education.



Fieldwork was undertaken over a period of 10 days commencing March 8, 2020 until March 18, 2020. A total of 45 field assistants worked under 7 supervisors and 5 quality control team leaders to administer the survey tool. On average, a total of 250 interviews were conducted per day. All interviews were directly linked to a control server immediately after the interview was conducted.

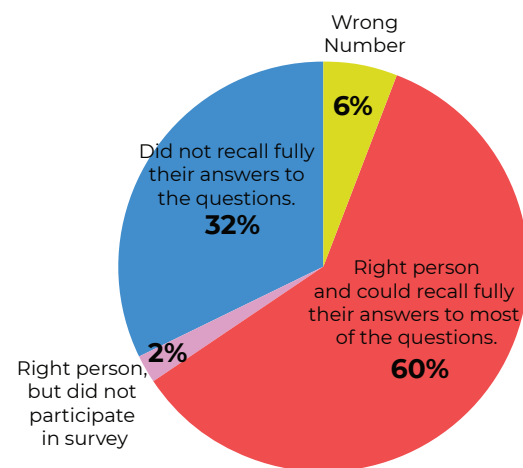
## 2.3 Additional quality assurance through call back of survey respondents

For additional quality assurance, out of the 2,321 respondents interviewed, a random sample of 300 people was selected for call-backs. It is important to note that due to the Covid-19 pandemic control measures, it was not possible to immediately conduct the scheduled call-backs as a quality assurance measure. Consequently, this quality check was conducted at the end June 2020, some three months after the survey. It is assumed that such time lag may affect the respondents' recollection of their participation in the survey. According to the call back data, 60 percent of the respondents indicated that they had participated in the March 2020 survey. An additional 32 percent could not fully recall their answers to some of the questions. A small proportion (2%) did not recall in detail whether they participated, while another six percent mentioned that the call back team had a wrong number and did not know the person that was interviewed.

## 2.4 Conclusion

The fundamental goal of the survey was to come up with the same results that would have been obtained had every Ugandan above 18 years been interviewed. This goal was maintained throughout the survey process by ensuring the checks and balances in the survey design process (Figure 1), appropriate sample size, effective quality measures in undertaking the fieldwork and the analysis of fieldwork data. Based on the sampling strategy and the quality control measures employed throughout the survey and report production process, the survey results are given with a +/-2% margin of error and at a 95% confidence level.

Figure 6: Call back sample results



# 3. Perceptions on economic performance and trends

## 3.1 Introduction

The economic situation of citizens in terms of access to public services, employment, business, incomes and being able to meet the most basic human needs (education, health, water, shelter) is an important matter of public policy. Public perceptions on the economy may be shaped by the personal economic conditions of the citizens, views on the economic policies and programmes of government, or the amount of information they may have on the overall economic situation of the country. Trends data on citizens' perception of the economic situation is important because it can inform policy makers in designing public policy responses that are people centered and generally reflect the perceptions of a bigger cross section of the population.

Generally, Uganda's economy has changed over time since the country attained independence in 1962. Among Ugandans above 45 years of age, public perceptions about Uganda's economy are shaped by the nostalgia about the economic success that existed at independence. Comparisons are often drawn with developed countries such as South Korea, Malaysia and Taiwan, which were at par with Uganda in development at independence. From the 1970s, the economy was heavily impacted by a breakdown in governance and the political instability and uncertainty that characterized this period. Prior to the adoption of the 1995 constitution that sought to usher in a new era of democratic and economic governance, Uganda's political and economic history is dominated by Idi Amin's reign of terror (1971-1979), a five-year guerrilla war by the National Resistance Army (NRA) rebels and widespread insurgency that covered most of Eastern and Northern Uganda in the late 1980s to early 1990s.

However, most of the economic conditions and progress to date are associated with President Museveni's ascendance to power in 1986 and the wide ranging policies and programmes that have been pursued under his leadership. As early as 1987, an Economic Recovery Package (ERP) was jointly agreed upon with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and other International Institutions, to rebuild Uganda after years of civil strife. The ERP was characterized by domestic market liberalization and privatization, macro-economic stability induced currency reforms, and trade policy reform.<sup>4</sup> A decade later in 1997, Government launched the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) which became Uganda's comprehensive development policy framework until 2007. The Programme for Modernization of Agriculture (PMA) which was adopted in August 2000 and its component called the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) is one of the popular programmes adopted in pursuance of the PEAP.

As early as 2001, there were already political signals of a policy shift from poverty eradication as a policy narrative towards a wealth creation narrative. Indeed, President Museveni's campaign slogan for 2001 framed in the Luganda dialect 'Bonabagawale' (everybody should become rich) became the defining narrative for formulation of economic policy and budgeting following his re-election in 2001. This slogan mutated into Prosperity for All for Mr. Museveni's 2006 campaign and has since 2011 come to be known as Operation Wealth Creation (OWC). Among many other factors, it is this shift in political sloganeering

4 Jaimovich, D & Kamuganga D. (Circa 2011, undated). Three decades of trade policy in Uganda: two generations of reforms in the quest to become part of the global market. Freit Working Papers available at <https://freit.org/WorkingPapers/Papers/Development/FREIT437.pdf>

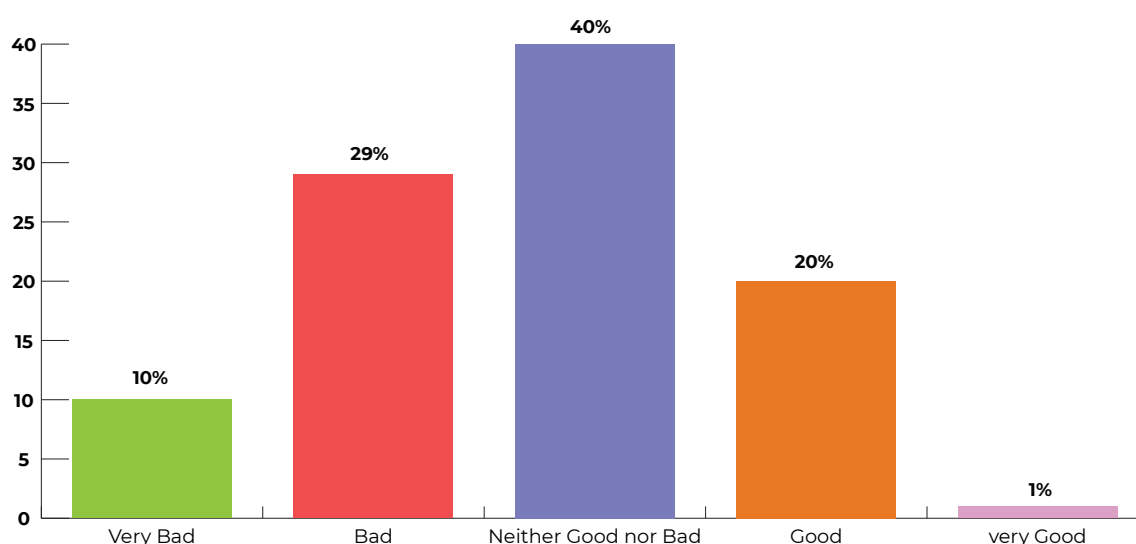
that has inspired widespread investment in economic infrastructure as well as a host of economic and social welfare programmes (Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP), Women Entrepreneurship Fund (WEF), Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment SAGE) and in some cases tax relief programmes.

The survey under this theme addresses two inter-related questions – perceptions of citizens regarding their own living conditions and their perceptions about the general economic conditions of the country. The Uganda Governance Pulse surveys the citizens on whether they perceive their living conditions to be good or bad or whether they have positive or negative view of the obtaining economic conditions at the time of the survey.

### 3.2 Personal living conditions of citizens

According to the survey, at least 40 percent of the respondents reported that their living conditions were neither bad nor good. This may be compared to a combined 39 percent who reported their living conditions to be very bad (10%) or bad (29%), or 21 percent who reported their living conditions to be good (20%) and one percent who reported their living conditions to be very good (1%) (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Personal living conditions of citizens



Gender disaggregated, the data shows that more men (41%) perceived their living conditions to be neither good nor bad compared to the women (39%). Across gender, rural or urban setting as well as age bands, more respondents perceived their lives to be very bad or bad compared to those who perceived their lives to be good or very good.

Across the country, regionally disaggregated data shows that more respondents perceived their living conditions to be neither good nor bad. Rwenzori (47%), Busoga (40%), Bukedi (35%) and Buganda (34) had the largest number of respondents reporting this condition. It is also important to note that a considerable proportion of the population in Acholi (33%), Bunyoro (31%) and Lango (30%) reported a similar perception which is above the national average of 29 percent. The regions which reported the living conditions to be very bad were Teso (20%) and Tooro at 14 percent. On the other hand, the largest number of respondents who reported their living conditions to be good were in Ankole (35%), Karamoja (33%) and Kigezi (30%).

Figure 8: Personal living conditions of citizens by gender, setting and age bands

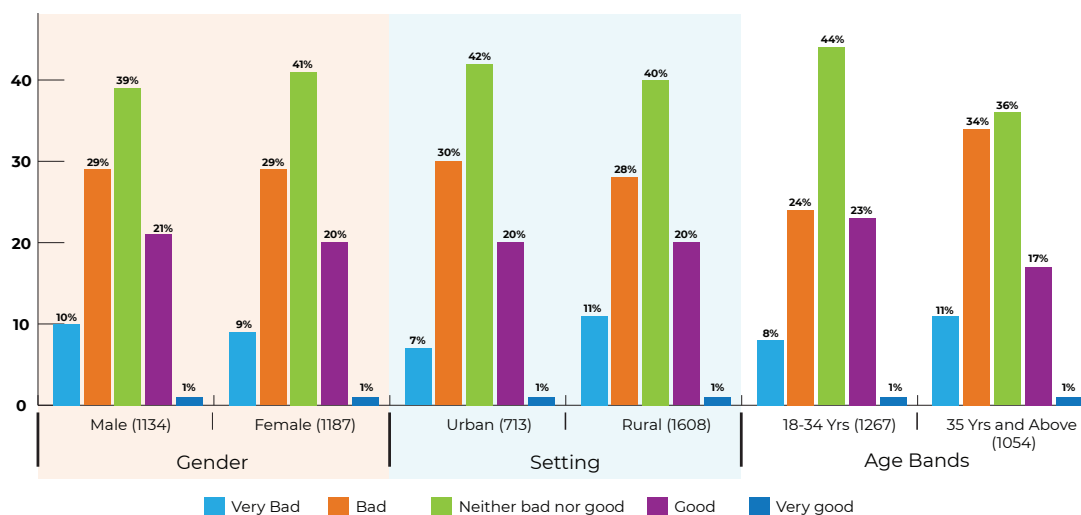


Table 3: Living conditions of citizens by regions

	Region															
	Overall	Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
<b>Base</b>	<b>2321</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>125</b>
Very bad	10%	7%	0%	14%	13%	16%	20%	9%	9%	8%	9%	8%	3%	13%	9%	14%
Bad	29%	34%	47%	35%	40%	16%	23%	16%	33%	14%	30%	20%	16%	31%	24%	27%
Neither bad nor good	40%	44%	22%	30%	33%	48%	33%	58%	36%	43%	44%	48%	46%	44%	35%	25%
Good	20%	14%	29%	20%	13%	20%	21%	16%	22%	33%	15%	23%	35%	13%	30%	34%
Very good	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	0%	3%	0%	0%	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%

The data also shows that respondents who have never attended school (41%) perceived their living conditions to be bad compared to those who had a bachelor's degree (15%) or postgraduate degree (17%). Another important observation is the general perception among all respondent groups by education profile that their living conditions were neither bad nor good.



### 3.3 Perceptions on current economic situation in the country

The larger proportion of the population reported that the economic conditions in the country were neither bad nor good. A combined 33 percent perceived the situation to be bad or very bad while 22 percent perceive it to be good. Only one percent perceive the economic situation to be very good. This data is almost consistent with the finding on the living condition of individuals as shown in Figure 7.

Figure 9: Perceptions on current economic situation in the country

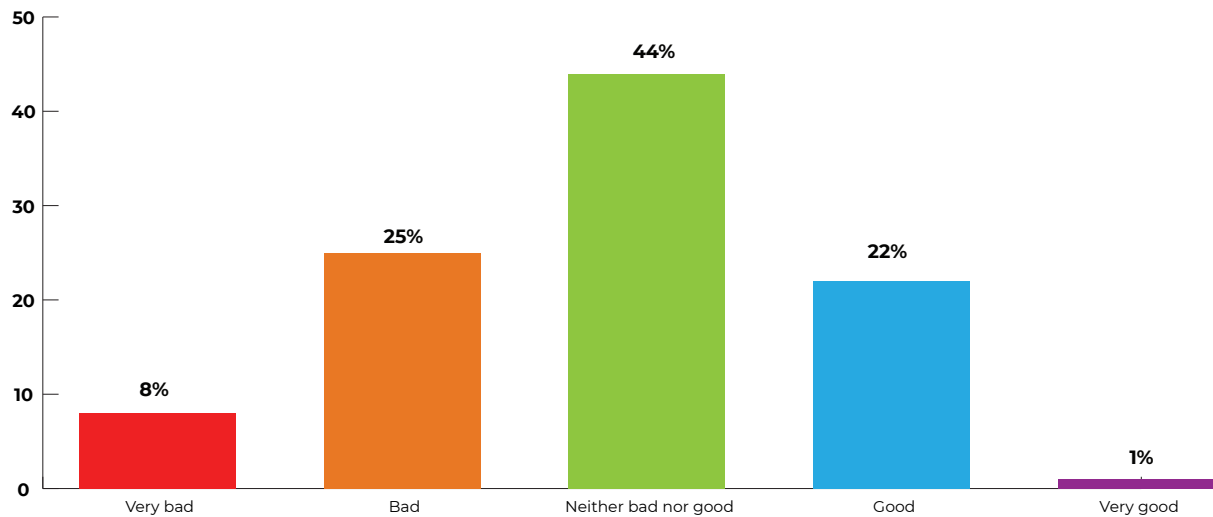
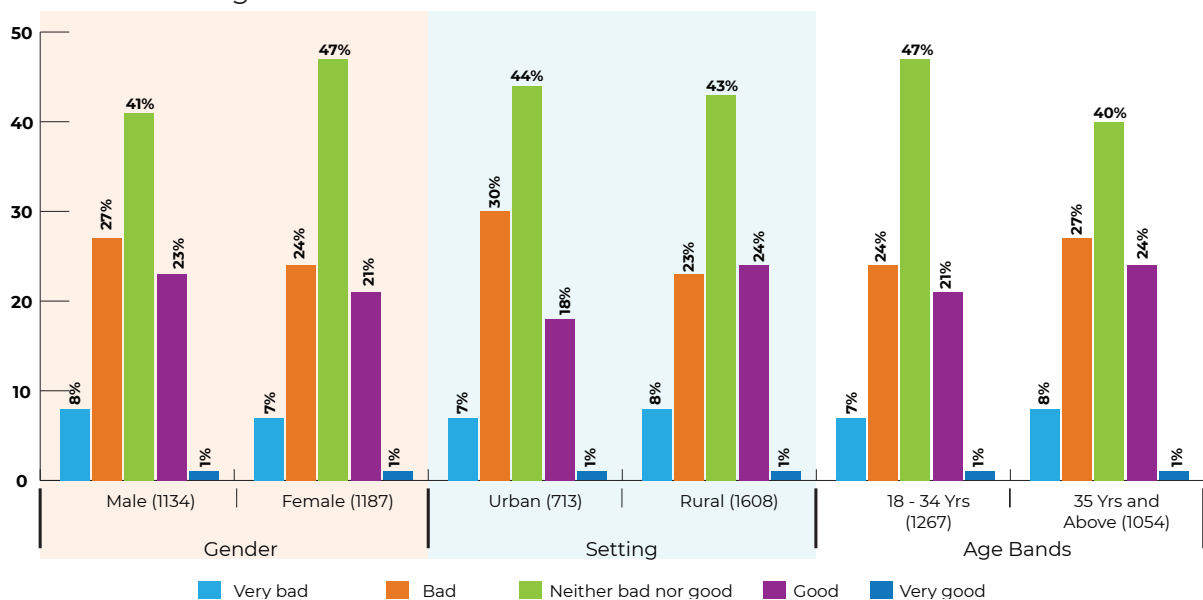


Figure 10: Perceptions on the current situation in the country by gender, setting and age bands



However, there are noticeable differences across regions. For example, Busoga (13%) and Bunyoro (11%) have the highest proportion of the population who perceive the economic situation in the country to be very bad. An equally higher proportion of the population in Bunyoro (41%), Rwenzori (40%) and Buganda (33%) consider the situation to be bad. At 60 percent, Tooro has the highest proportion of the population who perceive the economic situation to be good. Again, the general perception across all the regions is that the economic situation is neither bad nor good.

Table 4: Perceptions on the current economic situation in the country by region

	Region															
	Overall	Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
Base	2321	635	55	132	230	56	96	67	110	86	138	177	187	133	94	125
Very bad	8%	9%	0%	7%	13%	5%	5%	0%	5%	7%	9%	8%	3%	11%	9%	2%
Bad	25%	33%	40%	24%	27%	5%	16%	1%	26%	9%	27%	13%	27%	41%	23%	14%
Neither bad nor good	44%	46%	27%	45%	37%	55%	50%	66%	48%	51%	38%	50%	47%	43%	35%	22%
Good	22%	11%	33%	23%	22%	34%	29%	33%	20%	29%	24%	28%	24%	6%	28%	60%
Very good	1%	0.5%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	3%	1%	0%	0%	5%	3%

When asked how the economic situation at the time compared to how it was 12 months before, 36 percent of the respondents reported that it was neither bad nor good. At least 29 percent perceived the situation to have been bad while 26 percent perceived it to have been good. Again, it is important to observe that only one percent of the respondents perceived the economic conditions in the country to have been very good 12 months prior to the survey. This split in the perception about the economic condition of the country 12 months before the survey is also reflected cross gender, setting, age bands as well as education bands.

Figure 11: Perceptions on economic conditions in the country compared to 12 months prior to the survey (Base N=2321)

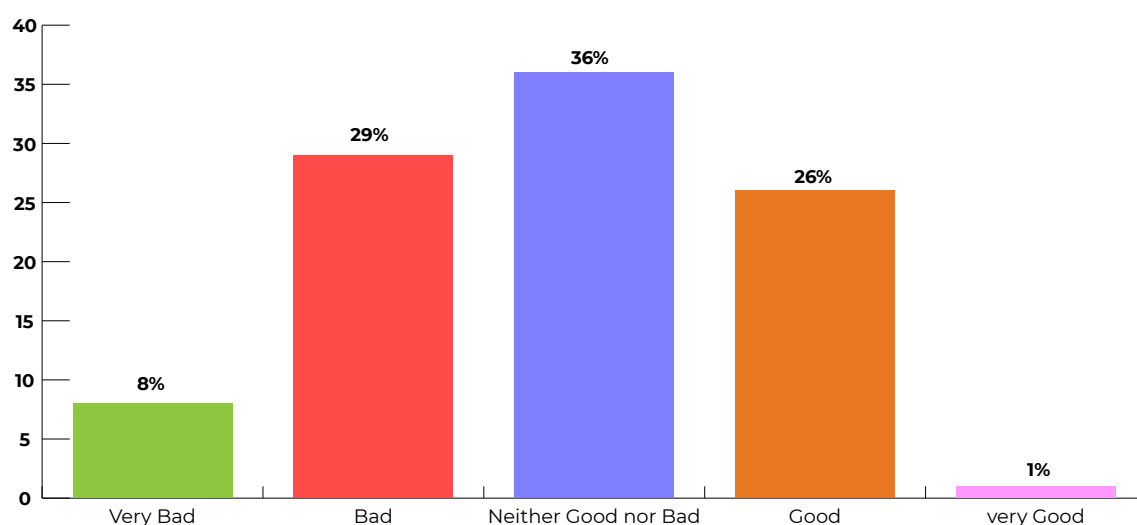
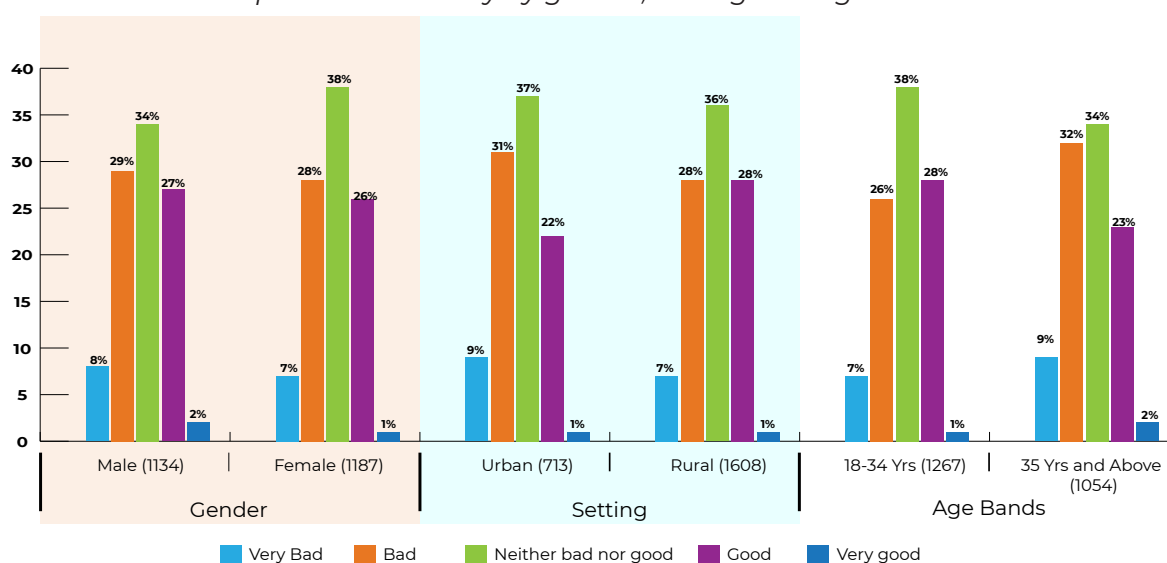


Figure 12: Perceptions on economic conditions in the country compared to 12 months prior to the survey by gender, setting and age bands



However, the proportion of the respondents who perceived the conditions to have been bad 12 months prior to the survey stand out for Rwenzori (55%), Busoga (47%) and Buganda (33%) regions.

Table 5: Perceptions on economic conditions in the country compared to 12 months prior to the survey by region

	Region															
	Overall	Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
<b>Base</b>	<b>2321</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>125</b>
Very bad	8%	12%	4%	8%	10%	7%	7%	1%	3%	8%	6%	4%	3%	8%	11%	0%
Bad	29%	33%	55%	23%	47%	11%	17%	12%	28%	16%	26%	27%	20%	37%	26%	19%
Neither bad nor good	36%	40%	13%	40%	19%	57%	40%	45%	32%	31%	38%	38%	40%	47%	32%	22%
Good	26%	14%	29%	27%	23%	21%	35%	40%	33%	41%	29%	30%	37%	8%	26%	55%
Very good	0%	0.3%	0%	1%	0.4%	4%	1%	1%	5%	3%	1%	1%	0%	0%	6%	4%

### 3.4 Future economic outlook

The Uganda Governance Pulse surveys the perceptions of the citizens on future economic prospects projecting a period of 12 months from the time of the survey. In this regard, only 40 percent of the respondents had a positive perception of the 12 months' economic outlook of the country. This sharply contrasts with 26 percent who held a negative perception and another 34 percent who reported they didn't know how the future would look like. With the exception of age bands where the respondents aged 18-34 years held a positive outlook of the economic situation compared to the age band above 35 years, there is generally an equal split along gender and setting.

Figure 13: Perceptions on future economic prospects

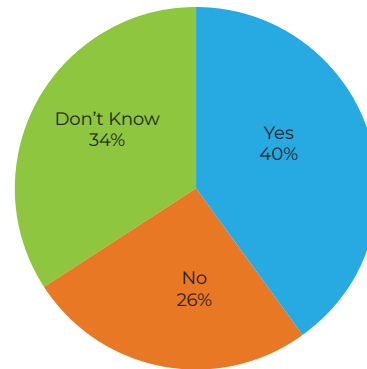
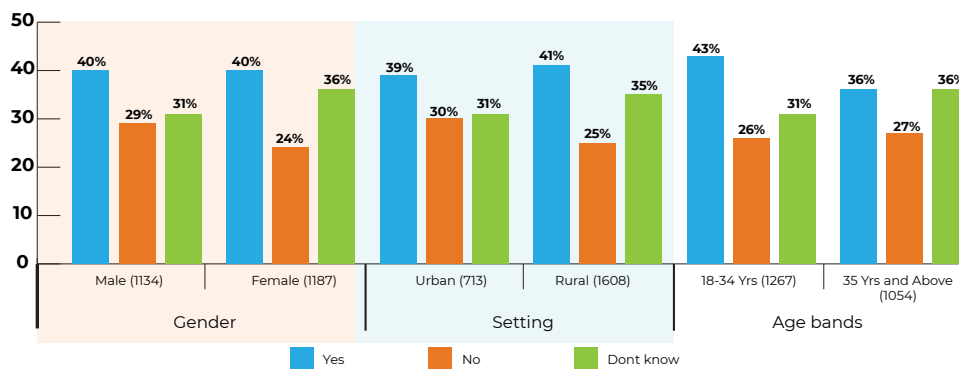


Figure 14: Perceptions on future economic prospects by gender, setting and age bands



Regionally disaggregated data shows higher levels of economic optimism in Sebei (70%), Acholi (65%), Tooro (54%), Bugisu (52%), Ankole (50%), Lango (50%), Kigezi (50%) and West Nile (49%) regions all of which are above the national average of 40 percent. When analysed along education bands, it is also worth noting that respondents who never attended school (44%) and those who completed primary school (41%), O'Level (44%), vocational or tertiary education (46%) and post graduate training (50%) were somewhat more optimistic about the outlook of the economy over the next 12 months reporting a more than the national average of 40 percent.

Table 6: Perceptions of future economic prospects by region

	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
Base	2321	635	55	132	230	56	96	67	110	86	138	177	187	133	94	125
Yes	40%	31%	31%	39%	33%	52%	39%	70%	65%	30%	50%	49%	50%	13%	50%	54%
No	26%	38%	13%	17%	37%	14%	15%	3%	17%	7%	31%	21%	24%	34%	16%	17%
Don't Know	34%	31%	56%	45%	30%	34%	47%	27%	18%	63%	19%	30%	26%	53%	34%	30%

### 3.5 Confidence in Government running of the economy

When asked about whether they had confidence in the way government was handling the economy, there is a difference of only two percent between those who are not confident (41%) and those who are confident (39%) (Figure 15). Consistent with other data, Tooro region records the highest percentage (69%) of the population with confidence in how Government is handling the economy followed by Sebei (64%). Bunyoro (56%) and Buganda (53%) have the highest percentage of the population expressing less confidence in the way government is running the economy (Table 7). Also important to note is a substantial percentage of the population in Teso (39%) who returned the “don’t know” answer to this question.

Figure 15: Public confidence in the way Government is handling the economy

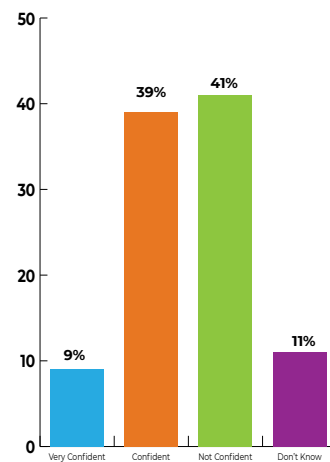
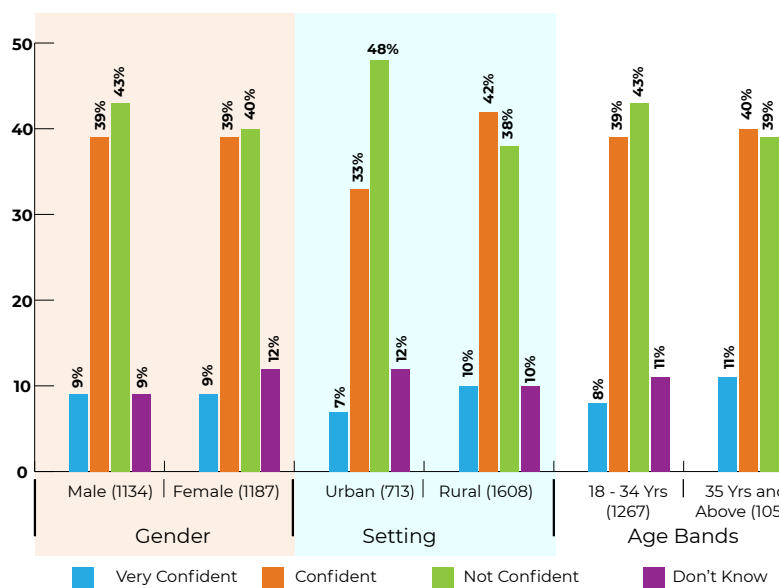


Figure 16: Public confidence in the way Government is handling the economy by gender, setting and age bands



The data on the outlook on the economy over the next 12 months seems to be consistent with the perceptions in the way government is running the economy. The population is generally split between those who are confident on the way government is handling the economy where a combined 48 percent are either very confident or confident as compared to the combined 52 percent who are either not confident or didn't express any opinion on the matter.

Table 7: Public confidence in the way Government is handling the economy by region

	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
<b>Base</b>	<b>2321</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>125</b>
Very Confident	9%	6%	7%	7%	9%	2%	7%	6%	12%	9%	25%	11%	2%	2%	28%	16%
Confident	39%	29%	45%	30%	34%	43%	27%	64%	54%	52%	53%	35%	47%	31%	32%	69%
Not Confident	41%	53%	45%	46%	49%	46%	27%	30%	30%	23%	22%	40%	43%	56%	34%	10%
Don't Know	11%	12%	2%	17%	9%	9%	39%	0%	5%	15%	0%	14%	9%	11%	6%	6%

Notably, most of the regions expressed confidence levels above the national average of 39 percent with Tooro in the lead at 69% and Sebei 64% respectively. Teso (27%) and Buganda (29%) Bukedi (30%), Busoga (34%), West Nile (35%), Bunyoro (31%) and Kigezi (32%) all report confidence levels at less than the national average of 39 percent. On the other hand, Bunyoro (56%), Buganda (53%), and Busoga (49%) have the highest number of respondents that reported that they are not confident in the way government is handling the economy.

# 4. Political Freedom and Expression

*The only freedom which deserves the name, is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it.*

*-John Stuart Mill*

## 4.1 Introduction

Freedom – the condition in which people have the opportunity to speak, act and pursue happiness without unnecessary external restrictions - is one of the most important intangible assets of any individual or community. This is because freedom leads to enhanced expressions of creativity and original thought, increased productivity, and an overall high quality of life. In this regard, there can be many dimensions of freedom: political freedom, economic freedom, freedom of expression, freedom of speech, press freedom, freedom of religion, and many such other freedoms.

This theme of the Uganda Governance Pulse survey focuses on political freedom and expression. At a general level, political freedom is that arrangement in which “the rule of law, resting on the power of the people, would put an end to the rule of man over man” (Arendt 1972 p. 139)<sup>5</sup>. Political freedom is generally described as a relationship free from oppression or coercion, the absence of disabling conditions for an individual and the fulfillment of enabling conditions, or the absence of lived conditions of compulsion in society. Put differently, political freedom may also refer to the positive exercise of rights, capacities and possibilities for action, and the exercise of social or group rights. In this regard, political freedom is closely interconnected with the principles of civil liberties and human rights inherent in every human being.

According to Freedom House,<sup>6</sup> at the very minimum, citizens in a politically free nation should be able to do all of the following:

- Participate freely in the political process;
- Vote freely in legitimate elections;
- Elect representatives who will be accountable to them.
- Exercise freedom of expression and belief.
- Assemble and associate freely.
- Have access to an established, equitable system of rule of law.
- Have social and economic freedoms including equal access to economic opportunities and the right to hold private property.

The Uganda Governance Pulse surveys the perceptions of citizens regarding their political freedoms including the freedom to belong to political parties and affiliations of their choice. Currently, Uganda has registered political parties. However, there are also formations such as ‘People Power Movement’, the ‘Peoples Government’ and many other economic and cultural formations that provide avenues for political participation.

5 Arendt H;1972. Crisis of the republic: Lying in politics, Civil Disobedience on violence, thoughts on politics and revolution. New York

6 [www.freedomhouse.org](http://www.freedomhouse.org)

In avoidance of being overly prescriptive, the questions around political participation are asked as open-ended questions largely to give opportunity to respondents to indicate their affiliations based on what they perceive to be the political formations to which they belong.

## 4.2 How free are you to talk about politics?

The survey data shows that Ugandans are on average free to talk about politics. A combined 49 percent of the respondents reported that they were either very free or free to talk about politics while another 25 percent reported that they were somewhat free.. When the data is disaggregated according to age bands, it is evident that the population above 35 years considered themselves freer to talk about politics compared to those aged 34 years and below.

Figure 17: Perception on freedom to talk about politics

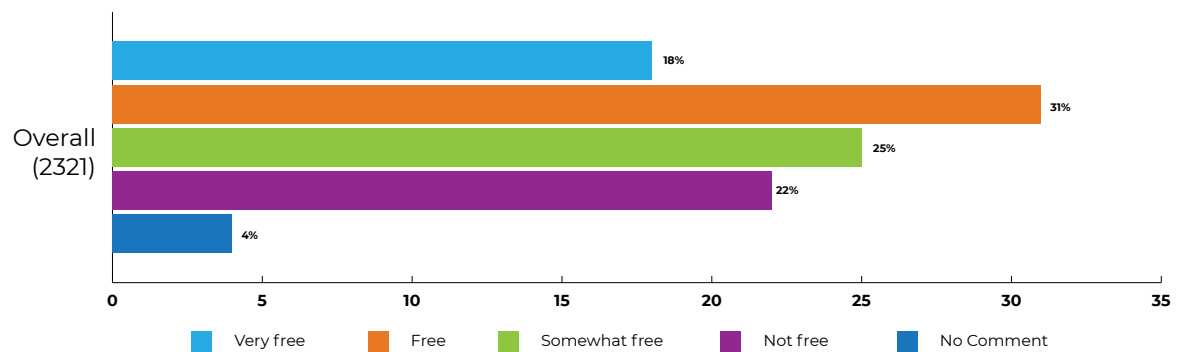
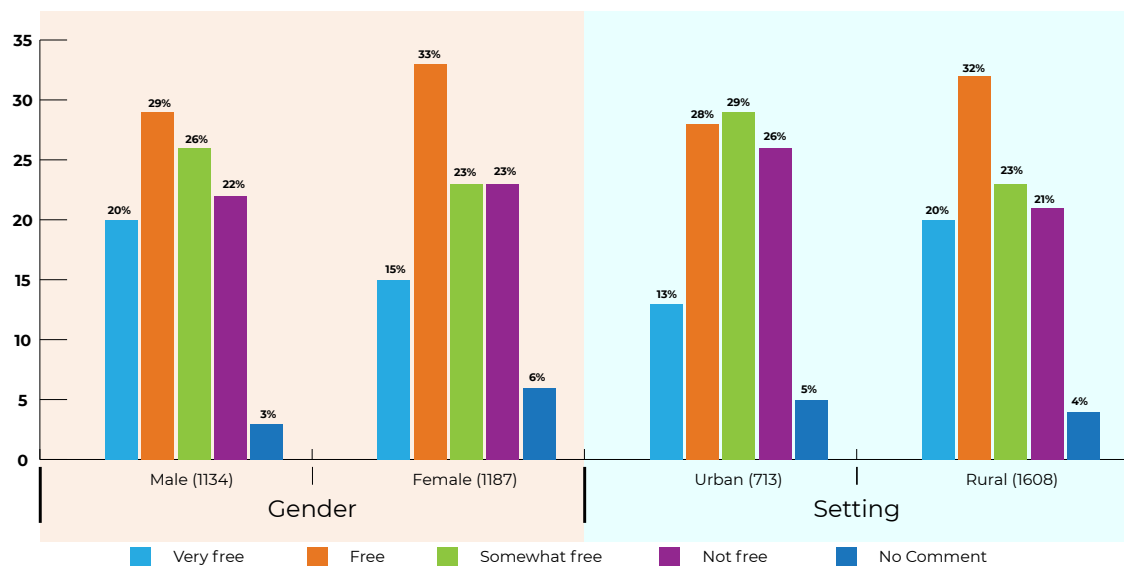


Figure 18: Perception on freedom to talk about politics by gender and setting



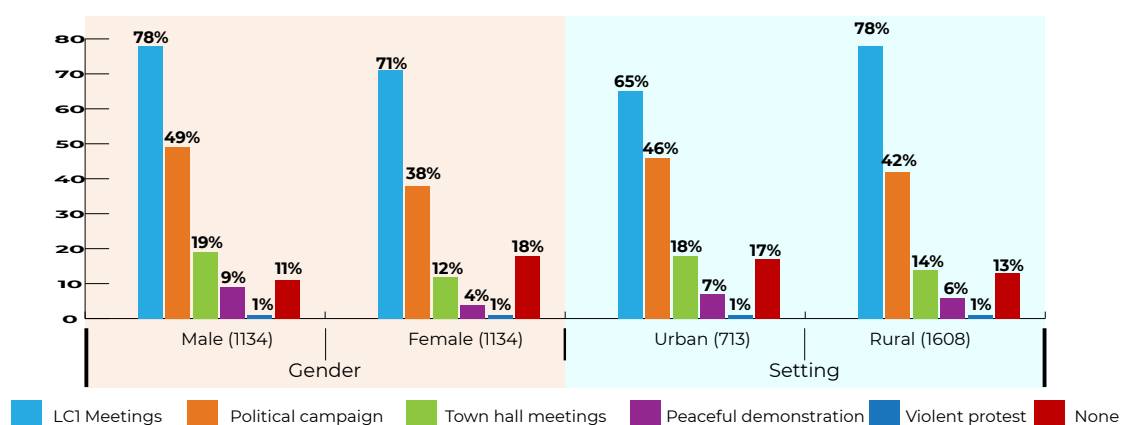


While the data seems to be consistent across gender, setting and age bands, there are considerable differences across the regions. In particular, Rwenzori (2%) and Ankole (6%) reported the lowest number of respondents who are very free to talk about politics. Kigezi reported the highest percentage of people who are very free to talk about politics at 50 percent. On the other hand, Rwenzori (44%) reported the highest percentage of the population who are not free to talk about politics.

### 4.3 Perceptions on selected modes of participation in politics

According to the survey, the highest mode of participation in selected political activities is the local council 1 (LC1) meetings followed by political campaign rallies. As shown in Figure 19, 74 percent of the population of the population reported that they participate in LC1 or other local council meetings. Another 43 percent indicated that they participate in political campaigns while another 15 percent indicated they participate through town hall meetings. While 6 percent of the population reported that they participate in politics through peaceful demonstrations, only a negligible 1 percent indicated they participate through violent protests.

Figure 19: Perceptions on selected modes of participation in politics.



This finding also cuts across gender, age bands and level of education. However, the data also shows that the population above 24 years were more active in LC1 meetings compared to the age band 18-24 years. Figure 20 shows participation in selected political activities by gender and urban or rural settings.

Figure 20: Participation in selected political activities by gender and setting

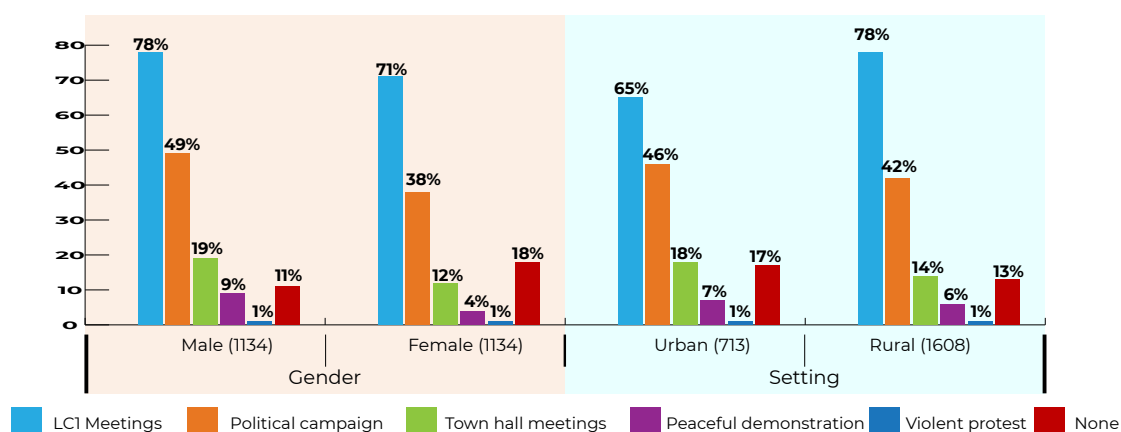
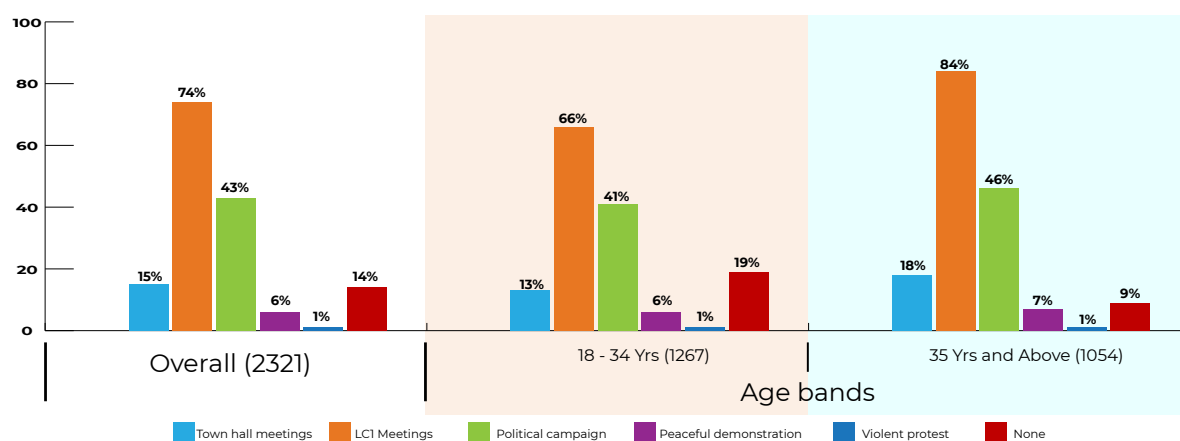


Figure 21: Participation in selected political activities by age bands.



As shown in Table 9 below, there are high levels of participation in LCI meeting reported from all the 15 regions with Tooro (90%) being the highest while the lowest participation was reported for Kigezi at 57 percent. A considerable percentage of the population in Bukedi (24%), Teso (34%), Acholi (23%) and Kigezi (23%) indicated they had not participated in any of the listed political activities.

Table 8: Citizens' participation in selected political activities by region

	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
<b>Base</b>	<b>2321</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>125</b>
LCI meetings	74%	69%	71%	67%	87%	64%	58%	79%	59%	83%	72%	84%	77%	88%	57%	90%
Political campaign	43%	37%	58%	38%	64%	50%	28%	66%	37%	33%	58%	40%	38%	55%	48%	22%
Town hall meetings	15%	17%	15%	5%	9%	21%	1%	30%	18%	12%	17%	36%	3%	20%	5%	18%
None	14%	18%	4%	24%	7%	11%	34%	6%	23%	6%	13%	12%	13%	9%	23%	2%
Peaceful demonstration	6%	3%	2%	7%	6%	23%	3%	21%	11%	13%	11%	10%	1%	4%	11%	1%
Violent protest	1%	0.3%	0%	0%	1%	11%	0%	4%	3%	8%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%

## 4.4 Participation in political party activities

In 2005, Ugandans voted in a national referendum to return the country to multiparty politics. Political party activities had been banned in 1986 when President Museveni's National Resistance Movement overthrew the short-lived government of Gen. Tito Okello Lutwa. Since 2005, more than 26 political parties have been formed. Platforms such as the National Consultative Forum (NCF) and the Inter-Party Organization for Dialogue were established to strengthen the culture of multiparty politics as a foundation for multi-party democracy in the country.

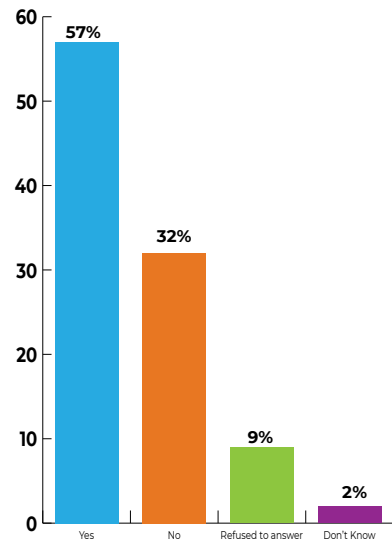
The Uganda Governance Pulse seeks to survey and track the extent of citizens' participation in political party activities by looking at issues of affiliation, party membership and financial contribution to the funding of political parties by citizens.

#### 4.4.1 Membership of political parties or organizations

For purposes of this survey, membership in a political party or political organization is premised on possession of a registration card of party or organization. On the contrary affiliation is regarded as a situation where a citizen feels he or she belongs to a political party or organization without possession of a membership card. To eliminate any possible bias, the question was left open ended allowing respondents to state a political party or grouping of their choice.

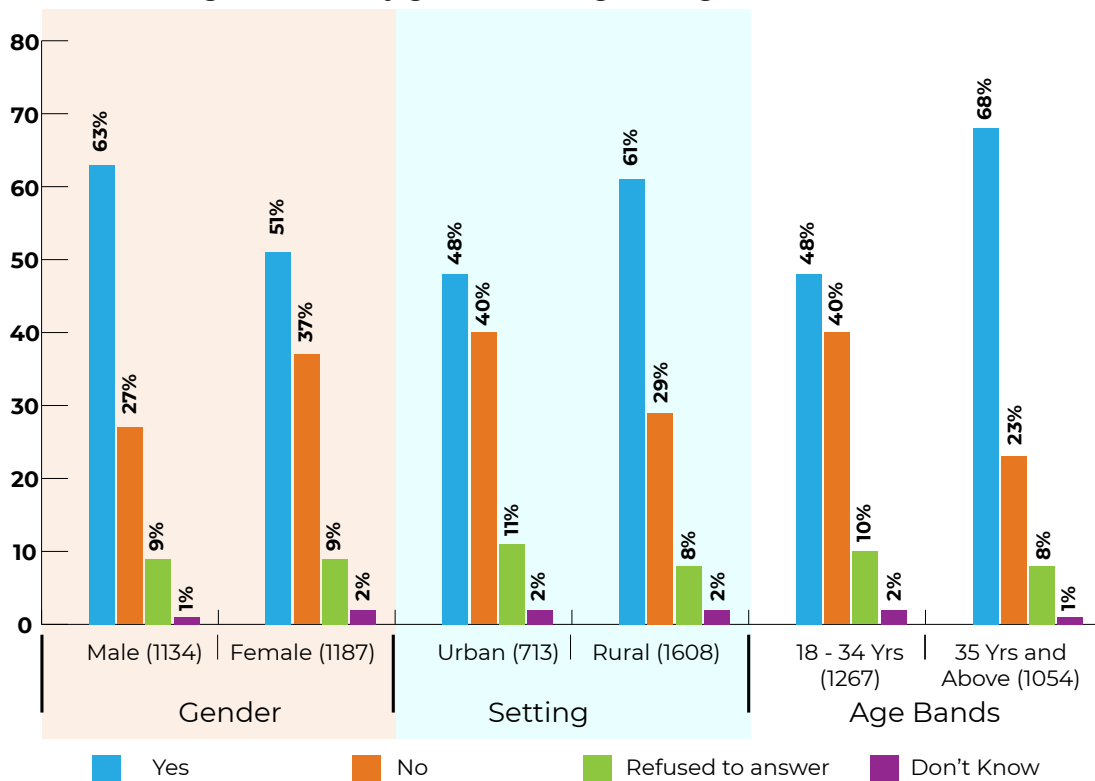
According to the survey data (Figure 22), 57 percent of the respondents reported that they were either members or affiliated to a political party while 32 percent did not. Another 9 percent opted not to answer this question.

Figure 22: Proportion of the population that are members or affiliated to political parties or organizations



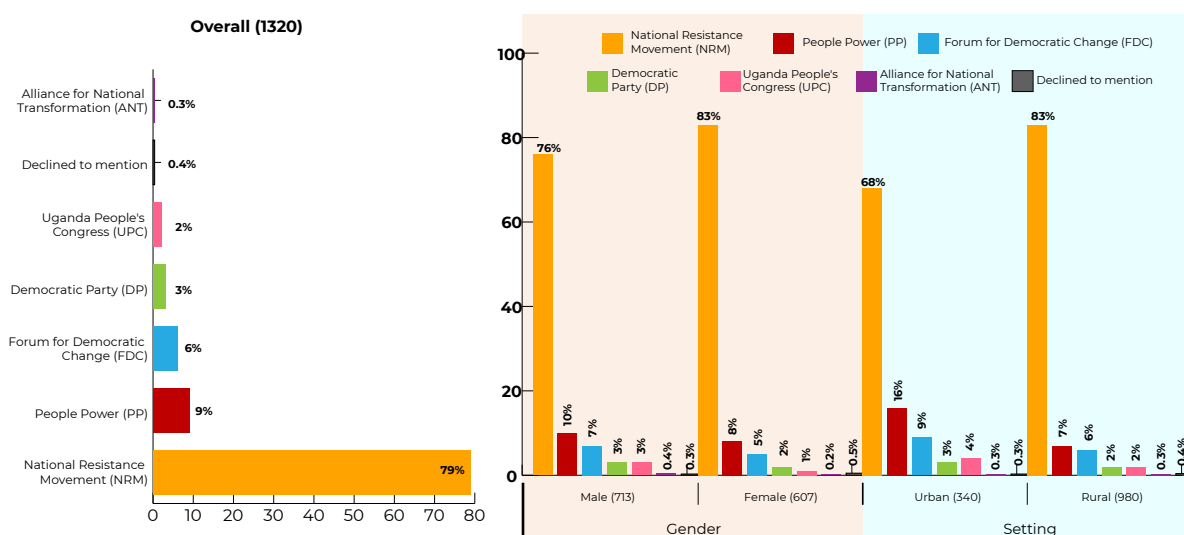
Generally, the data (Figure 23) shows that more men (63%) are members or affiliated with political parties than women (51%). The data also shows that more people in rural areas (61%) compared to those in urban areas (48%). At least 68% of the respondents aged 35 years and above reported to be members or were affiliated to political parties compared to 48% in the 18-34 age band.

Figure 23: Proportion of the population that are members or affiliated to political parties or organizations by gender, setting and age bands.



Of the 57 percent of the respondents who said they belong to a political party, when asked which political party they belonged or were affiliated to, a majority, 79 percent said they belonged to the National Resistance Movement (NRM). This was followed by People Power (9%) and the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) at 6 percent.

Figure 24: Percentage of Respondents by affiliations to political parties or organizations



The affiliation to NRM seems to cut across the different parameters including gender, setting and education bands. Table 9 below also shows the affiliation to NRM by region. A similar trend is observable with regard to age bands. It can also be observed that the People Power Movement has its highest preference among the 18-24 years age band.

Table 9: Political parties and organisations selected

	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
<b>Base</b>	<b>1320</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>93</b>
National Resistance Movement (NRM)	79%	53%	84%	91%	77%	55%	93%	51%	85%	96%	80%	92%	85%	87%	95%	98%
People Power (PP)	9%	24%	0%	4%	12%	29%	0%	20%	4%	4%	1%	2%	6%	6%	3%	1%
Forum for Democratic Change (FDC)	6%	8%	16%	3%	9%	13%	4%	26%	4%	0%	1%	3%	8%	6%	2%	1%
Democratic Party (DP)	3%	12%	0%	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Uganda People's Congress (UPC)	2%	0%	0%	1%	1%	3%	2%	0%	4%	0%	18%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Alliance for National Transformation (ANT)	0.3%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Declined to mention	0.4%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

#### 4.4.2 Political party or organization card holding membership

The commitment of citizens to political parties may be demonstrated in many ways. Such commitment may be demonstrated by the willingness to buy party membership cards, and to make voluntary financial contributions to support the activities of their political parties or for elective offices on the ticket of the political party of interest. Consequently, the Uganda Governance Pulse seeks to track citizens' enthusiasm about political parties by tracking trends in card-holding membership and campaign contributions to persons seeking elective offices.

Figure 25: Proportion of the population with membership cards of a political party or organization

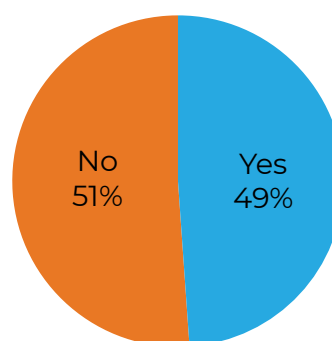
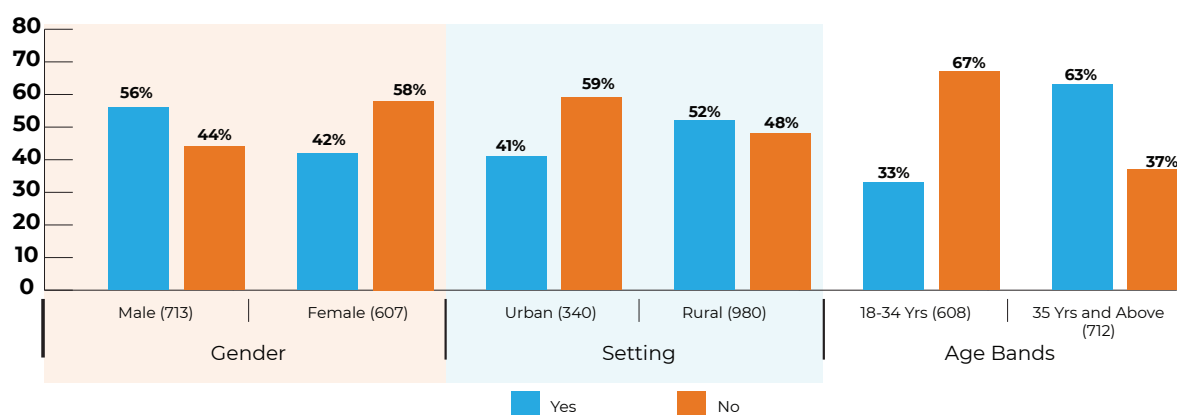


Figure 26: Proportion of the population with membership cards of a political party or organization by gender, setting and age bands



The evidence from the survey (Figure 25) shows that only 49 percent of the population possess party membership cards as opposed to 51 percent who do not have party cards. As shown in Figure 26, it is notable that more women as well as the 18-24 years age bands don't have party cards compared to those who reported to be in possession of party membership cards within the respective respondent category.

Table 10: Proportion of the population with or without party membership cards by region

	Region															
	Overall	Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
Base	1320	247	44	90	181	31	56	35	46	23	107	101	130	71	65	93
Yes	49%	40%	57%	54%	60%	45%	61%	57%	33%	30%	56%	52%	28%	59%	65%	52%
No	51%	60%	43%	46%	40%	55%	39%	43%	67%	70%	46%	48%	72%	41%	35%	48%

Disaggregated by region, the data shows that the highest percentage of the population with no party membership cards are in Ankole (72%), Karamoja (70%) and Acholi (67%). The highest proportion of the population with party cards is found in Kigezi (65%) Busoga (60%), Bunyoro (59%), Rwenzori (57%) and Sebei (57%).

Across age bands, people between 18 and 24 are least likely to have a party membership card with the age group 25-34 the most likely to own a party membership card.

Figure 27: Modes of access to party membership cards

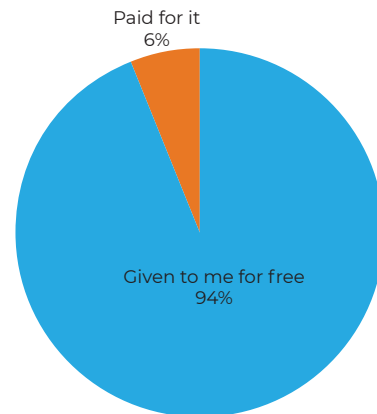
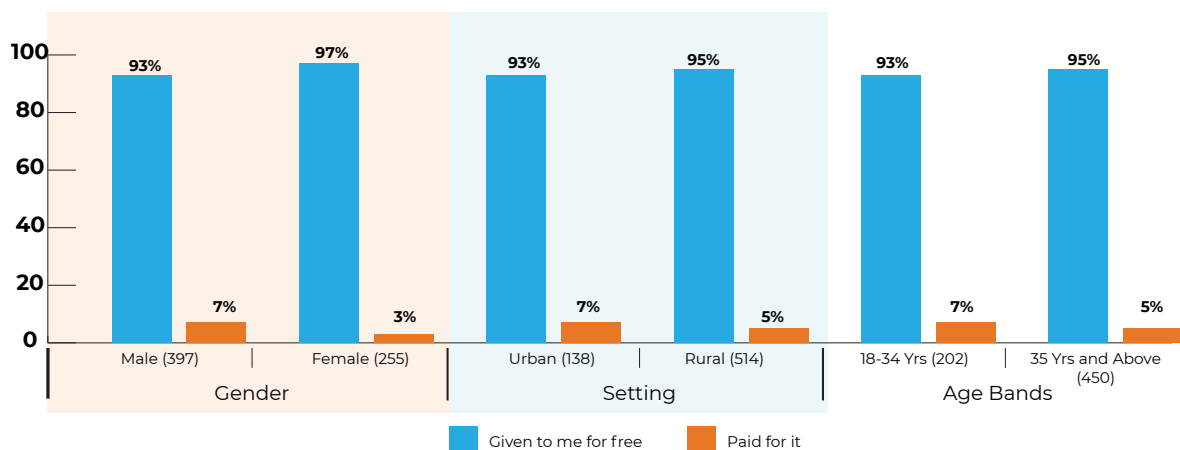
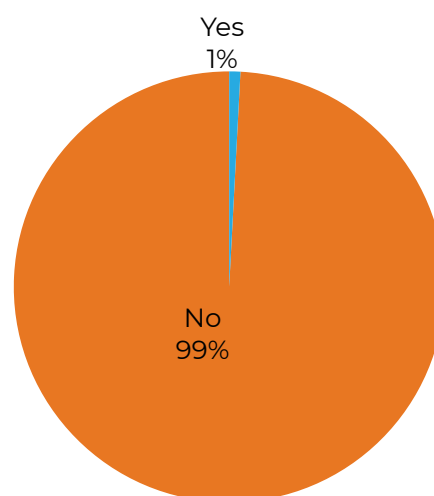


Figure 28: Modes of access to party membership cards by gender, setting and age bands



The data from the survey shows that the majority of the population (94%) who reported to have membership cards got them for free. Only 6 percent reported have paid for their party membership cards. This finding is consistent with the data on the number of respondents who reported to be members of NRM given the party's current free membership card policy. As shown in Figure 29 below, the majority of the respondents also reported that they have never made any financial or material support to candidates contesting for elective offices .

Figure 29: Financial or other material contributions to persons seeking elective offices



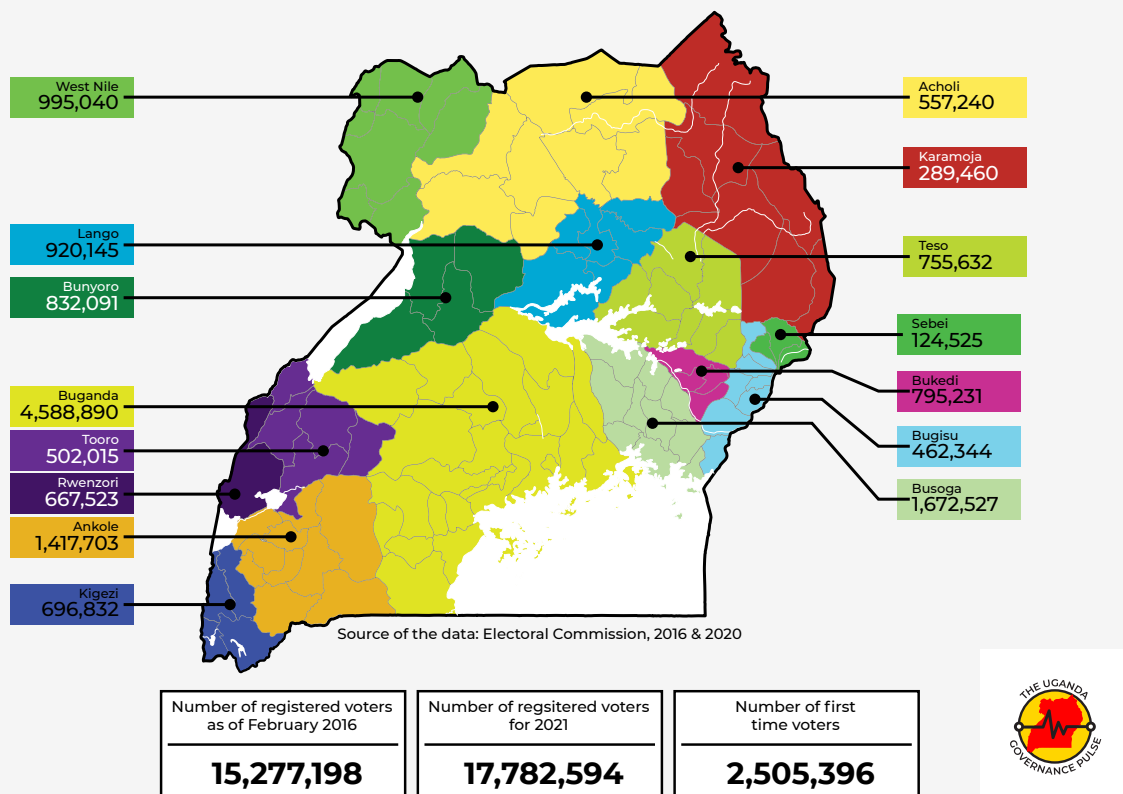
# 5. Awareness of the electoral process

## 5.1 Electoral process and elections

Regular, credible, free and fair elections is the hallmark of a democratic society. Such elections determine who should stay in office, who should be thrown out of office and who should replace those thrown out<sup>7</sup>. The electoral process is not only a necessary means to a greater good of ensuring that a given population owns its destiny, but is also an end in itself as a fundamental human right. This, therefore, means that it is important to understand how and why citizens are likely to vote in an election and the factors that influence their choices.

The gold standard for an election in Uganda is established in the 1995 Constitution under Article 59 on right to vote and Article 61 on functions of the electoral commission.

Figure 30: Map of Uganda showing registered Voters as at February 2016. Below the map, registered voters and new voters for 2021 general elections.



7 Harrop, M., and Miller, W. L., 1987. Elections and Voters: A comparative introduction. Meredith Press, 1987.

The Uganda Governance Pulse aims to track the perceptions of citizens on the electoral process and elections.

## 5.2 Citizens' awareness of the voter registration and verification exercise

A credible voters register is the essential foundation for a credible, free and fair elections. The compilation, verification and accessibility to the voters' register is therefore a matter of great interest to citizens and those who are interested in the credibility of the electoral process. A periodic assessment of citizens' engagement on the voter registration and verification exercise can therefore be an important indicator of the citizens' interest in the electoral process or lack thereof.

Figure 31: Citizens' awareness of the voter verification exercise (Base N=2321)

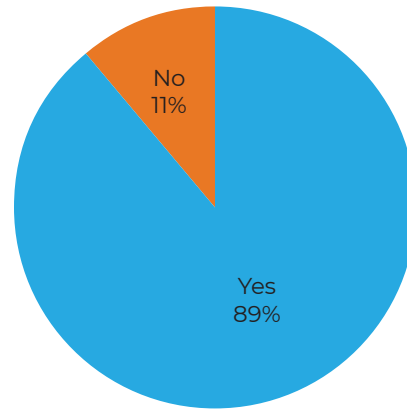
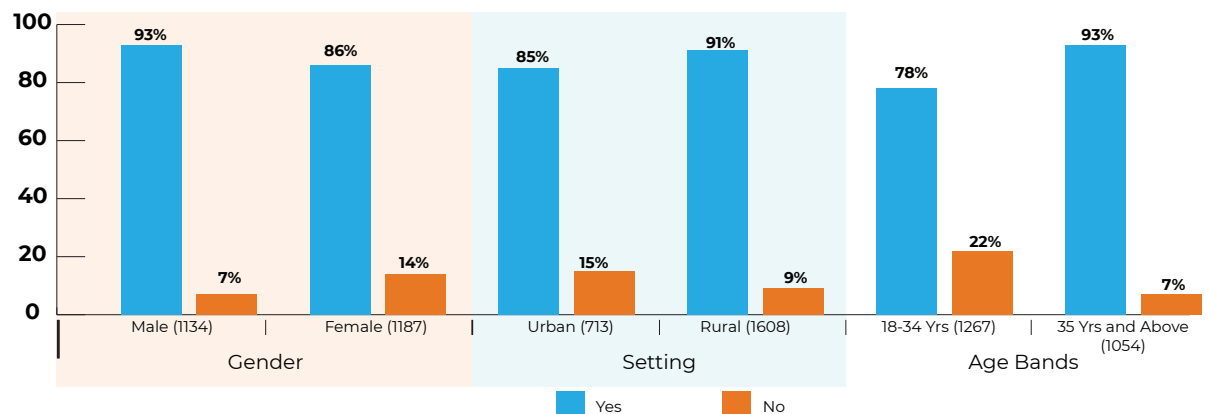


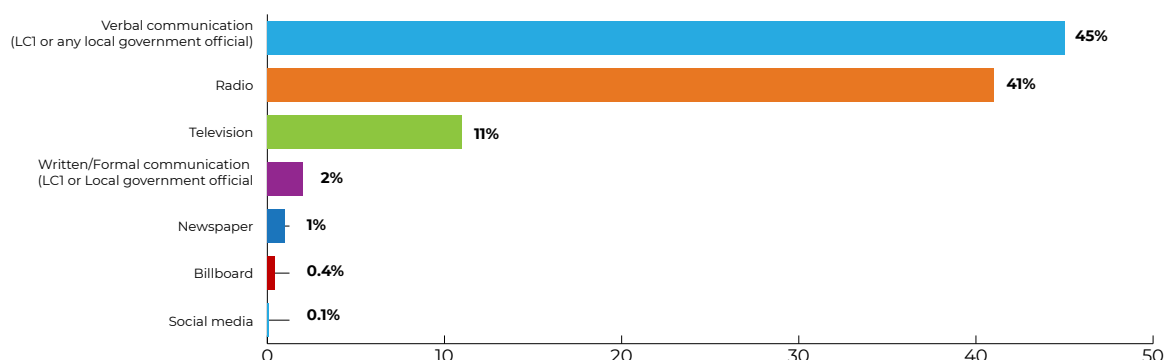
Figure 32: Citizens' awareness of the voter verification exercise by gender, setting and age bands



The survey found that the majority of citizens had considerable knowledge about the voter verification exercise. Up to 89 percent reported that they knew about the voter verification exercise. More males (93%), rural people (91%) and those over 35 years (93%) were more informed than their category counterparts. As shown in Figure 33, the largest percentage (45%) of the population reported that they learnt about the voter verification exercise through verbal communication by the LCI councils followed by radio at 41 percent. The last study on radio penetration in the country shows that there are approximately 320 radio stations across the country. Only 11 percent of the respondents reported that they received information about the exercise from television.



Figure 33: Sources of information on the voter verification exercise (Base N=2074)



Disaggregated regional data (Table 12) shows Lango (79%) and Rwenzori (71%) recording the highest percentage of respondents who reported to derive their information regarding voter registration from LCI or other local government officials. Likewise, Kigezi (73%) and Bunyoro (72%) with the highest percentage of respondents who reported to have accessed information about the exercise via radio. It is to be noted that even with purported social medial penetration, the percentage of the respondents that reported accessing voter verification information via social media was negligible at 0.1 percent. This is particularly intriguing given the evidenced that even young people within the lower age bands do not necessarily use social media for such civic engagement.

Table 11: Sources of access to information on voter verification by region.

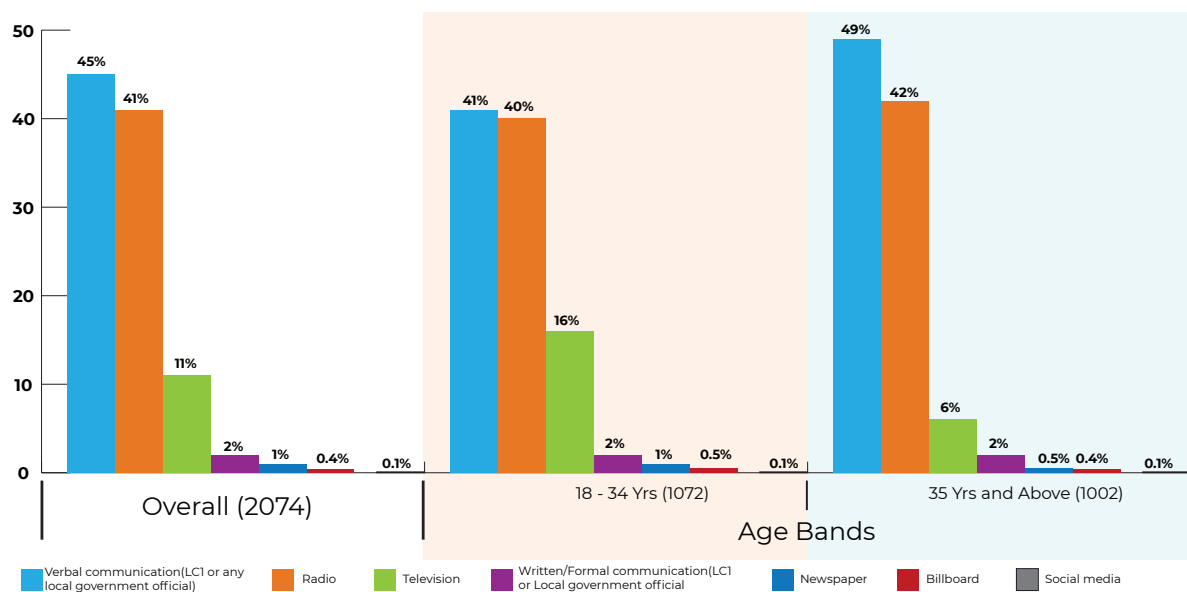
	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
<b>Base</b>	<b>2074</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>111</b>
Verbal communication (LCI or any local government official)	45%	28%	71%	47%	46%	48%	64%	53%	54%	63%	79%	63%	54%	19%	20%	42%
Radio	41%	43%	21%	47%	44%	46%	33%	32%	36%	20%	14%	31%	33%	72%	73%	49%
Television	11%	26%	6%	2%	6%	6%	0%	10%	0%	0%	2%	4%	13%	9%	5%	9%
Written/Formal communication (LCI or Local government official)	2%	2%	2%	0%	2%	0%	1%	3%	9%	15%	3%	1%	0%	1%	2%	0%
Newspaper	1%	1%	0%	1%	2%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Billboard	0.4%		0%	4%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	3%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Social media	0.1%	0.2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

It is important to note the differences with regard to the media through which citizens get some of the critical governance information. As shown on Figure 34, the biggest proportion of the female respondents (51%) received information about the voter verification exercise from verbal communication compared to 39 percent of male respondents. The data also shows that more male (47%) accessed similar information from via radio compared to 35 percent female. It is also notable that the rural population receive information more through verbal communication (49%) and radio (42%) compared to the urban setting where up to 24 percent received their information via television.

Regionally disaggregated data (Table 12) shows that Lango (79%) and Rwenzori (71%) had the highest proportion of the population reporting that their main source of information about the voter verification exercise was through verbal communication from local council officials. On the other hand, Kigezi (73%) and Bunyoro (72%) had the highest percentage of the population reporting that they received their information via radio while Buganda (26%) and Ankole (13%) received their information via television.

Of the 2,074 respondents who reported to have had knowledge about the voter verification exercise, at least 85 percent reported that they had verified that their names were on the register.

Figure 34: Proportion of voter who verified that their names were on the register



Ninety one percent of the respondents reported that they knew the physical location of their voting station. It is however important to note a significant percentage of the registered voters from Bugisu (27%), Ankole (22%), Acholi (16%) and West Nile (15%) who reported not knowing the location of their polling stations. Another noticeable number is those registered voters in the 18-24 years age band (21%) who reported that they did not know the physical location of their polling stations. It is assumed that most of these would be first-time voters.

Table 12: Knowledge of location of polling citizens by region.

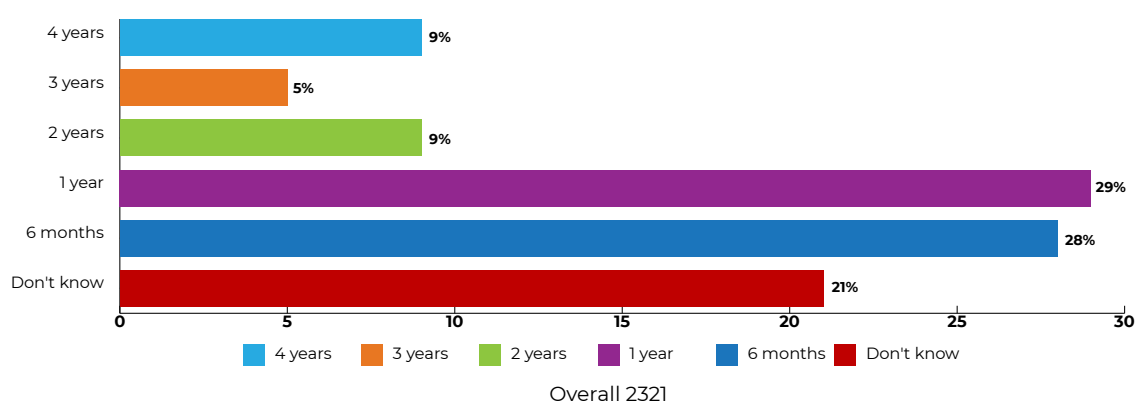
	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
Base	2321	635	55	132	230	56	96	67	110	86	138	177	187	133	94	125
Yes	91%	91%	95%	95%	96%	73%	94%	93%	84%	97%	91%	85%	78%	97%	99%	94%
No	9%	9%	5%	5%	4%	27%	6%	7%	16%	3%	9%	15%	22%	3%	1%	6%

While there is wide spread knowledge of the location of the polling stations by the citizens, the unique issue that stand out is the 27 percent and 22 percent of the respondents in Busoga and Ankole respectively who indicated that they did not know the location of their polling station (Table 13).

### 5.3 Announcement of dates for presidential elections

Advance knowledge of dates when general elections are held is a very important determinant in the choices of voters and those who seek to contest for elections. Uncertainty about such important dates can impact negatively on the voting population hence raising a possibility of unintended voter suppression. At the time of conducting the survey in March 2020 and before the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was less than twelve months before the presidential elections scheduled for the first quarter of 2021.<sup>8</sup> The Electoral Commission had just announced an election road map and yet even the Commission itself did not know the dates on which the presidential elections would be held.

Figure 35: Citizen's perceptions on when presidential elections should be held



As would be expected, the question as to whether registered voters knew the dates for the 2021 elections turned out close to 100 percent did not know. When voters were asked the appropriate time for announcing the dates for a forthcoming presidential election, the biggest percentage of the respondents suggested one year (29%) or six months (28%) prior to the date of the elections.

8 Under Uganda's current Constitution, presidential elections must be held at least 122 days prior to the expiry of the tenure of the incumbent president.

Figure 36: Citizens' perceptions on when the date for presidential elections should be announced by gender and setting.

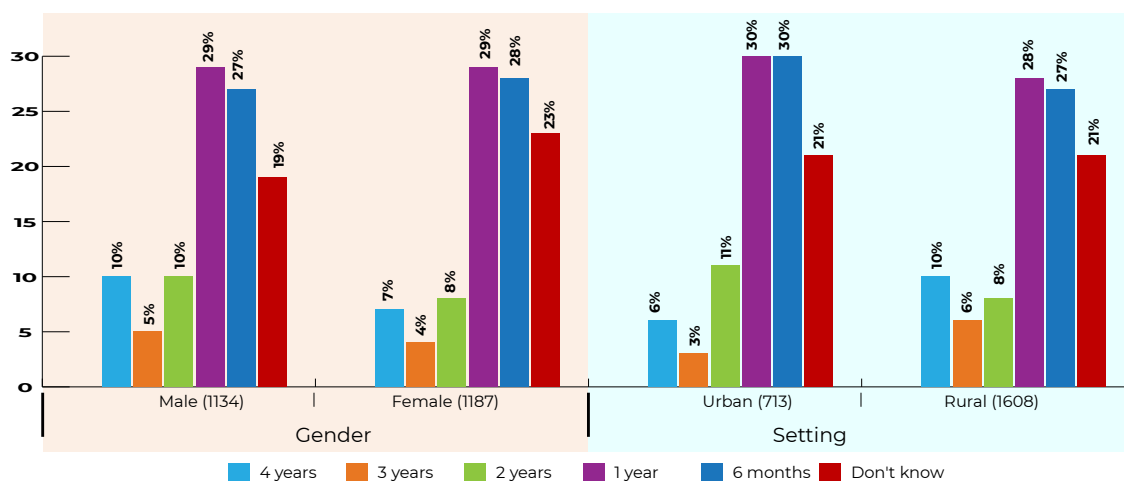
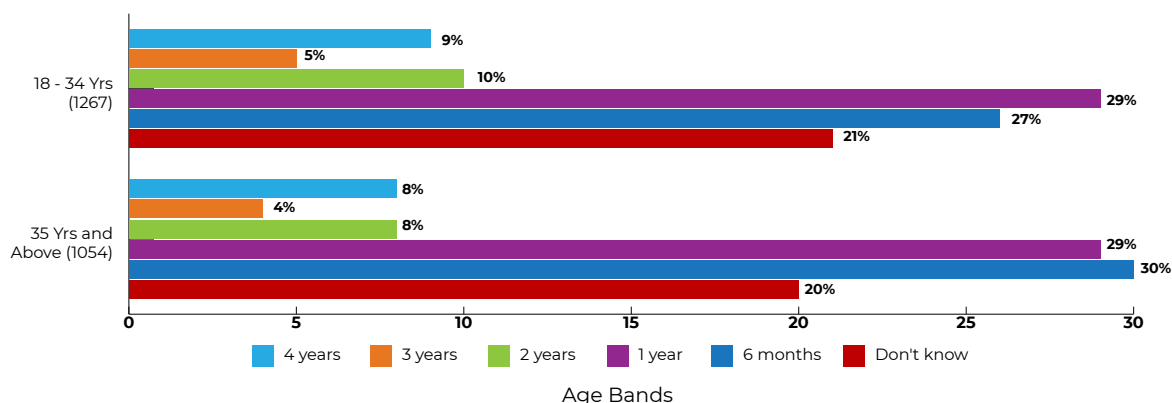


Figure 37: Citizens' perceptions on when the date for presidential elections should be announced by age band.



## 5.4 Citizens perceptions regarding elections governing bodies

This survey aims to track changes in citizens' understanding of election governing bodies and the trust they have in such bodies to organize credible, free and fair elections. An open-ended question was therefore asked as to which institutions respondents thought was the most important during elections. As shown in Figure 38, 58 percent of the population perceive the Electoral Commission to be the most important institution in that regard followed by Uganda Police Force (28%). Also noticeable is the percentage of voters who perceive religious leaders (6%) and the media (5%) to be important.

Figure 38: Citizens' perception of the most important institution for organizing elections in Uganda

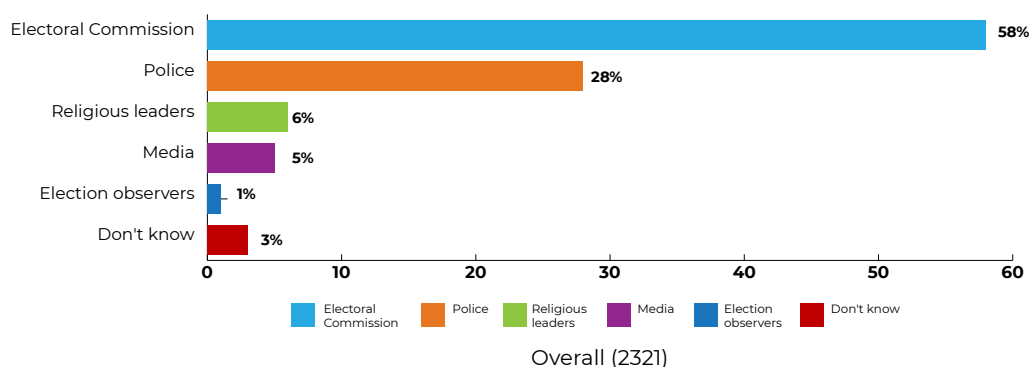
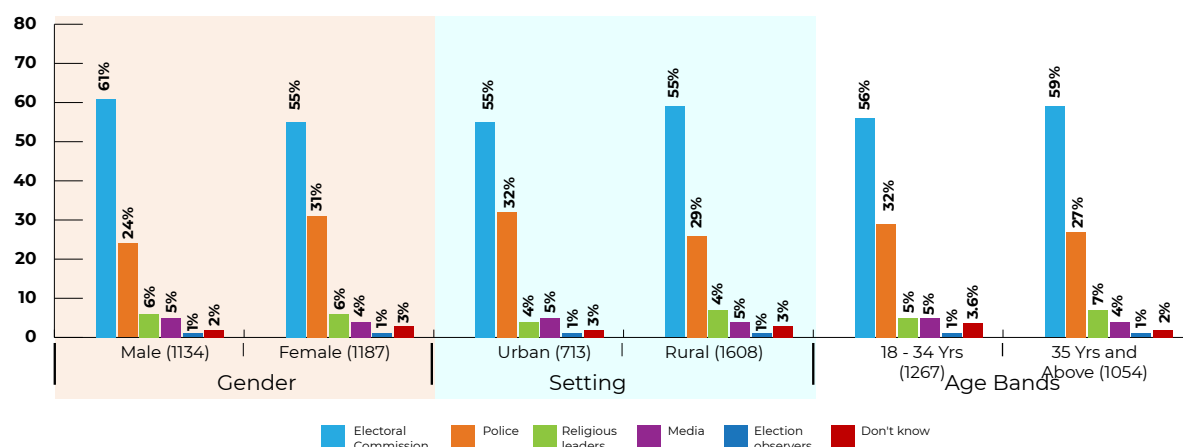


Figure 39: Citizens' perception of the most important institution for organizing elections in Uganda by gender, setting and age bands



Disaggregated regional data shows that the highest percentage of the population reporting that the Electoral Commission is the most important body in organizing elections was in Toro (97%) and Ankole (86%). This contrasts sharply with Lango where 80 percent of the respondents identified the police as the most important institution.

Table 13 : Citizens' perception of the most important institution for organizing elections in Uganda by region.

	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
<b>Base</b>	<b>2321</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>125</b>
Electoral Commission	58%	56%	64%	42%	66%	68%	40%	66%	48%	40%	12%	40%	86%	77%	66%	97%
Police	28%	26%	29%	37%	20%	14%	52%	24%	45%	36%	80%	36%	2%	7%	24%	2%
Religious leaders	6%	7%	7%	8%	6%	7%	4%	7%	2%	2%	1%	6%	10%	8%	4%	2%
Media	5%	7%	0%	5%	3%	4%	1%	1%	4%	6%	2%	10%	2%	3%	5%	0%
Don't know	3%	3%	0%	5%	3%	7%	1%	1%	1%	10%	2%	7%	0%	2%	0%	0%
Election observers	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	0%	2%	0%	1%	6%	2%	1%	0%	3%	0%	0%

## 5.5 Trust in the Electoral Commission

At least 42 percent of the respondents reported that they trust the Electoral Commission will organize and conduct free and fair elections. This sharply contrasts with 35 percent who say they don't trust the Electoral Commission and another 23 percent who said they did not know if the EC will organize a free and fair election.

Figure 40: Level of trust in the Electoral Commission

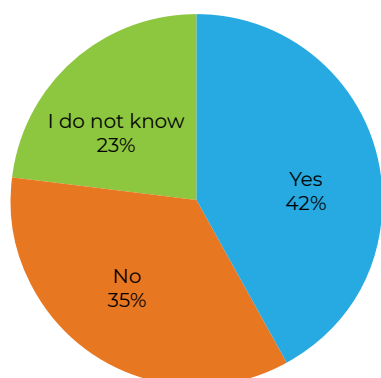
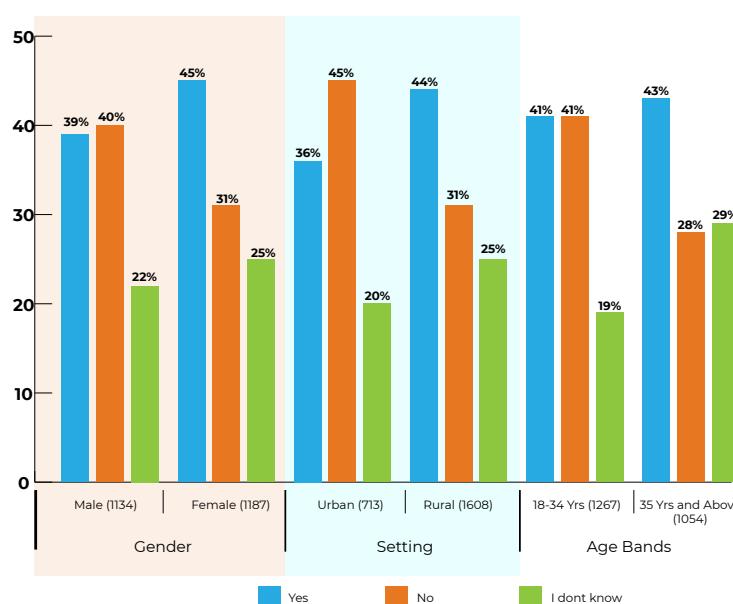


Figure 41: Level of trust in the Electoral Commission by gender, setting and age bands.



As may be seen from Figure 40, a bigger proportion of females (45%) trust the Electoral Commission compared to 39 percent male. A higher proportion of the respondents from rural areas (44%) also trust the Electoral Commission compared to 36 percent from the urban areas. It is also important to note the highest proportion of the population (45) that does not trust the Electoral Commission to conduct a free and fair election in is the urban setting.

Table 14: Level of trust in the Electoral Commission by region

	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
<b>Base</b>	<b>2321</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>125</b>
Yes	42%	34%	45%	36%	37%	29%	36%	42%	55%	52%	60%	49%	28%	59%	29%	68%
No	35%	51%	24%	25%	37%	57%	21%	40%	31%	31%	23%	26%	30%	31%	33%	10%
I do not know	23%	15%	31%	39%	27%	14%	43%	18%	14%	16%	17%	25%	42%	11%	38%	22%

Regionally disaggregated data shows that the highest trust in the Electoral Commission to organize a free and fair election is in Tooro (68%), Lango (60%) and Bunyoro (59%). On the other hand, Buganda (51%) and Bugisu (57%) had the highest proportion of the population that indicated that they did not trust the Commission. An equally significant percentage of the respondents in Teso (43%), Ankole (42%) Bukedi (39%) and Kigezi (38%) indicated they did not know whether to trust the Electoral Commission or not.

# 6. Participation in elections

## 6.1 Introduction

The Uganda Governance Pulse surveys and tracks changes in citizens' perceptions regarding participation in presidential, parliamentary and district council chairperson elections by exercising their right to vote. This is done by asking respondents whether they participated in previous elections and whether they intend to participate in future elections. This data is relevant to public policy as it helps track enthusiasm gap and inform design and execution of civic and voter education programmes. The data may also be used by prospective candidates and competing political parties in targeting their campaigns.

## 6.2 Participation in previous elections

Generally, the survey data shows that on average, 82 percent of the population participate in general elections. Considered by setting, more citizens from rural areas (85%) reported to have participated in previous elections compared to those in the urban setting (75%). The data also shows that the majority of respondents (98%) in the age band above 35 years have previously participated in elections as compared to 68 percent in the 18-34 years' age band.

Figure 42: Proportion of the population who reported they have participated in previous elections

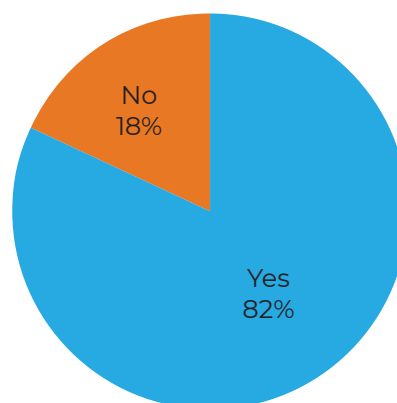
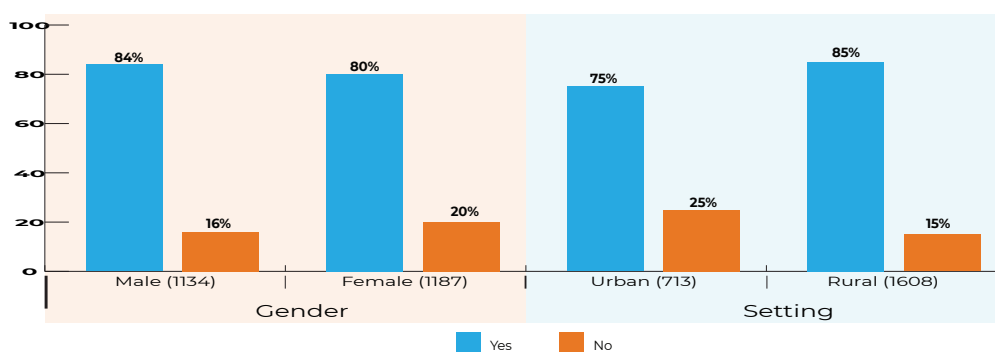


Figure 43: Proportion of the population who reported they have participated in previous elections by gender, setting and age bands.



Disaggregated regional data (Table 15) shows Teso (94%) Busoga (90%), Lango (90%) Rwenzori (89%), Bukedi (89%) Kigezi (88%), Toro (88%) and Bunyoro (85%) with the highest percentage of respondents who reported to have participated in previous elections. Bugisu (66%) and Acholi (67%) reported the lowest participation which is still above the national average turnout of 55% percent reported by the Uganda Electoral Commission for the general elections held since 1996.

Table 15: Level of participation in previous elections.

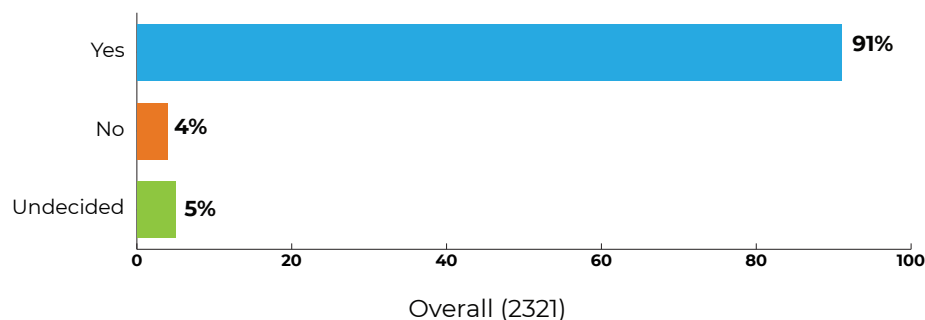
	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
Base	2321	635	55	132	230	56	96	67	110	86	138	177	187	133	94	125
Yes	82%	75%	89%	89%	90%	66%	94%	84%	67%	84%	90%	79%	78%	85%	89%	88%
No	18%	25%	11%	11%	10%	34%	6%	16%	33%	16%	10%	21%	22%	15%	11%	12%

As shown in Table 15, Bugisu (34%), Buganda (25%), Ankole (22%) and West Nile (21%) reported relatively a higher proportion of respondent who reported that they have not participated in previous elections.

### 6.3 Participation in the forthcoming 2021 presidential elections

The UGP survey data shows an overwhelming interest in participating in the 2021 presidential elections with 91 percent of the respondents reporting that they intend to participate. Only 4 percent of the population indicate that they don't plan to participate while 5 percent is undecided.

Figure 44: Proportion of citizens expressing interest in participating in 2021 presidential elections.

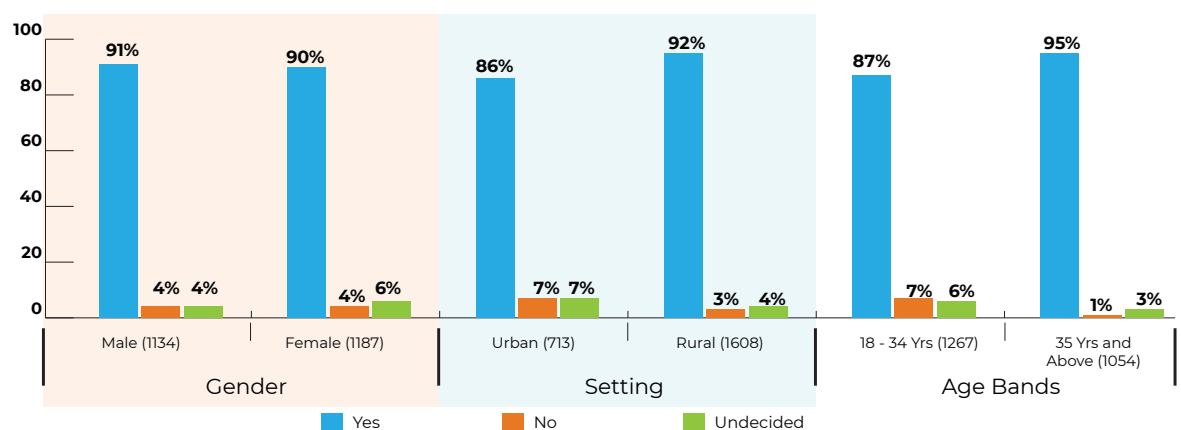


Enthusiasm for elections and voting among Ugandan voters is consistent with a number of opinion polls conducted in the recent past. A poll conducted by Research World International (Unpublished) found that 96 percent of respondents planned to participate in the general elections that were held in February 2016. A similar survey conducted by the International Republican Institute (unpublished) in 2015 found that 87 percent of the respondents said they would vote in the 2016 elections.

The interest among citizens to participate in the forthcoming 2021 elections can be observed across all parameters of the survey. The same number of male and female respondents (91%) are interested in participating in the presidential elections. For all the age segments and education bands, interest to participate in the presidential elections is at more than 80 percent.



Figure 45: Proportion of citizens expressing interest in participating in 2021 presidential elections by gender, setting and age bands.

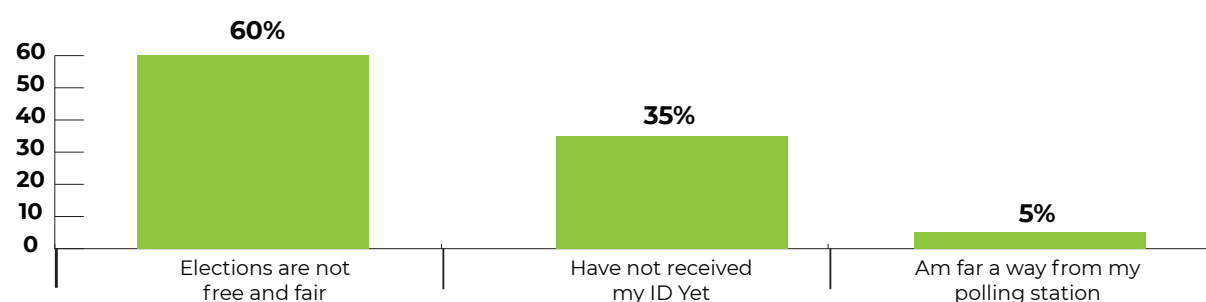


While there are some disparities across the regions, the enthusiasm is consistent with overall perceptions regarding the presidential elections. With the exception of Bugisu (79%), Buganda (83%), Acholi (87%) and Ankole (88%), all the other 11 regions recorded participation interest above the overall average (91%).

Table 16: Proportion of citizens expressing interest in participating in 2021 presidential elections by region.

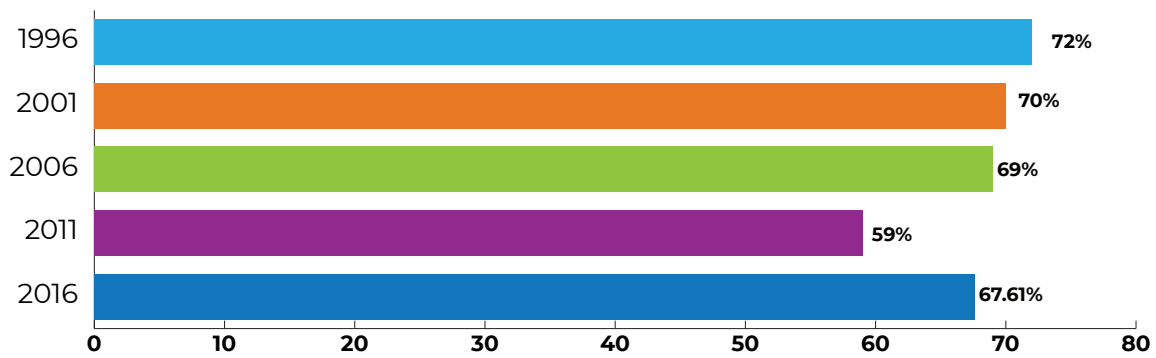
	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
Base	2321	635	55	132	230	56	96	67	110	86	138	177	187	133	94	125
Yes	91%	83%	98%	94%	95%	79%	96%	91%	87%	94%	95%	94%	88%	97%	9%	94%
No	4%	9%	2%	3%	2%	7%	2%	4%	7%	2%	1%	2%	3%	1%	1%	3%
Undecided	5%	8%	0%	3%	3%	14%	2%	4%	5%	3%	4%	3%	9%	2%	0%	2%

Figure 46: Reasons advanced for intention not to participating in the 2021 elections.



Those who intend not to participate in the 2021 elections indicated that they consider the elections not to be free and fair or they do not possess national identity cards which is an important identification document required at the time of voting.

Figure 47: Voter turn up for general elections since 1996

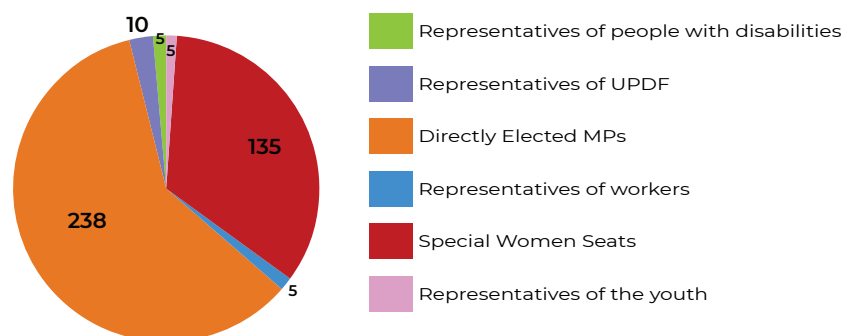


However, it is important to observe that there is clearly considerable inconsistency between voter enthusiasm reflected in these polls and the official voter turnout figures reported by the Electoral Commission. For example, for the 2016 elections, the Commission reported a voter turnout of 67.61 percent which is way below the turnout figures for the two polls conducted both before and after the elections. As shown in Figure 45 above, Uganda Electoral Commission data shows similar turnout figures way below the reported enthusiasm for all the elections held under the current constitutional order which commenced with the promulgation of the 1995 Constitution (Figure 45).

## 6.4 Perceptions on participation in parliamentary elections

Parliamentary elections are one of the most significant elections in the country. Parliament or the legislature is prescribed under the constitution to be the representative organ of citizens. Under the current dispensation, Uganda's parliament is comprised of members elected through direct and indirect elections. The Uganda Governance Pulse surveys the perception of the public regarding interest to participate in parliamentary elections and the potential voting pattern of voters.

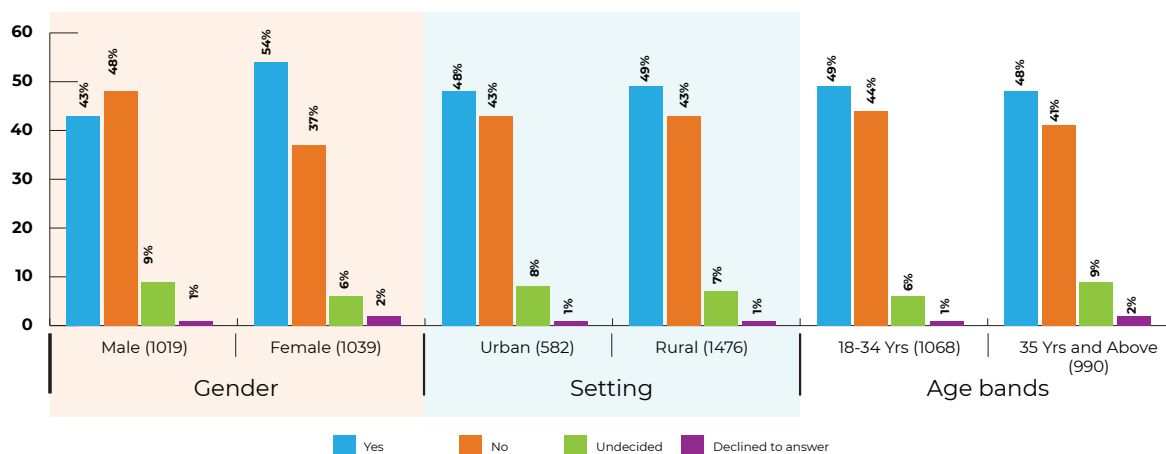
Figure 48: Composition of the Ugandan legislature as at March 15, 2020.



The survey data shows overwhelming enthusiasm to participate in the parliamentary elections. Overall, 89 percent of the respondents reported that they intend to participate in the parliamentary elections. This is in contrast to the 5 percent who said they do not intend to participate and the 6 percent that are undecided (Figure 47). This enthusiasm is reflected across all the analysis parameters.

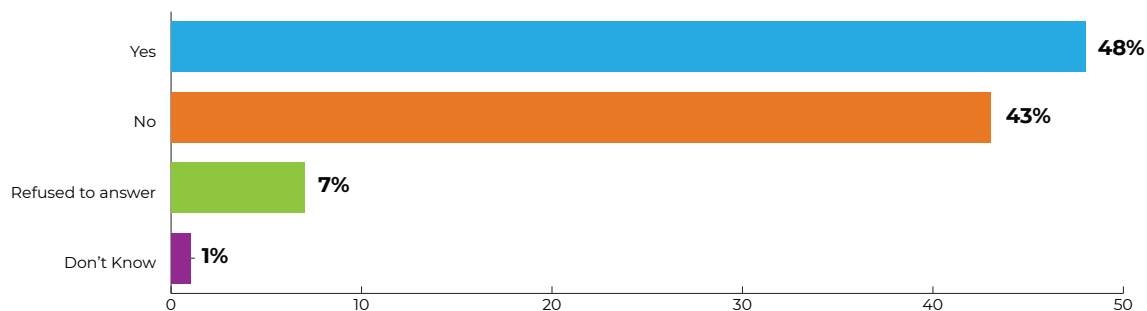
The survey data shows more women (54%) being ready to participate in the elections compared to men at 43 percent. Enthusiasm is even across rural and urban setting as well as age bands. However, slightly more young people (44%) indicated that they will not participate in the parliamentary elections compared to the age band of 35 years and above (41%).

Figure 49: Proportion of the population expressing interest to participate in the 2021 parliamentary elections by gender, setting and age bands.)



Besides the questions regarding participation in the parliamentary elections, respondents were asked whether they would vote for their incumbent Members of Parliament. As shown in Figure 49, at least 48 percent reported that they intend to vote for the incumbent MPs in comparison to 43 percent who indicated they would not. A gender analysis of the data shows that women (54%) were more likely to vote for their incumbent MPs compared to men (43%).

Figure 50: Proportion of the population like to vote for or against incumbent members of parliament



Disaggregated regional data shows that voters were more likely to vote for incumbent MPs in Sebei (72%), Bugisu (66%), Karamoja (65%) and Lango (65%). Bunyoro (60%) and Buganda (50%) have the highest percentage of respondents who reported that they would not be voting for their incumbent MPs.

Table 17: Proportion of the population like to vote for or against incumbent MPs by region

	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
<b>Base</b>	<b>2058</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>107</b>
Yes	48%	40%	44%	60%	45%	66%	69%	72%	45%	65%	65%	52%	49%	32%	35%	39%
No	43%	50%	46%	28%	46%	32%	18%	26%	38%	29%	29%	37%	49%	60%	52%	52%
Undecided	7%	6%	10%	11%	7%	2%	12%	2%	18%	4%	5%	10%	2%	5%	13%	8%
Declined to answer	1%	4%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%

## 6.5 Participation in the 2021 local council elections

Like in the case of presidential and parliamentary elections, there is clearly high levels of enthusiasm to participate in the forthcoming local council elections scheduled for early 2021. As shown in Figure 50, at least 88 percent of the population expressed interest to participate in the forthcoming local council elections. This enthusiasm is also shared across the different parameters including gender, rural or urban settings as well as age bands. Up to 94 percent of respondents aged 35 years and above and up to 91 percent of male respondents reported that they will be participating in the 2021 local council elections (Figure 52).

Figure 51: Proportion of the population expressing interest to participate in the 2021 local council elections.

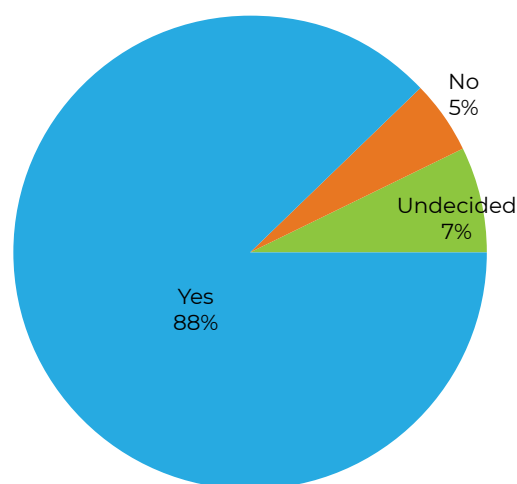
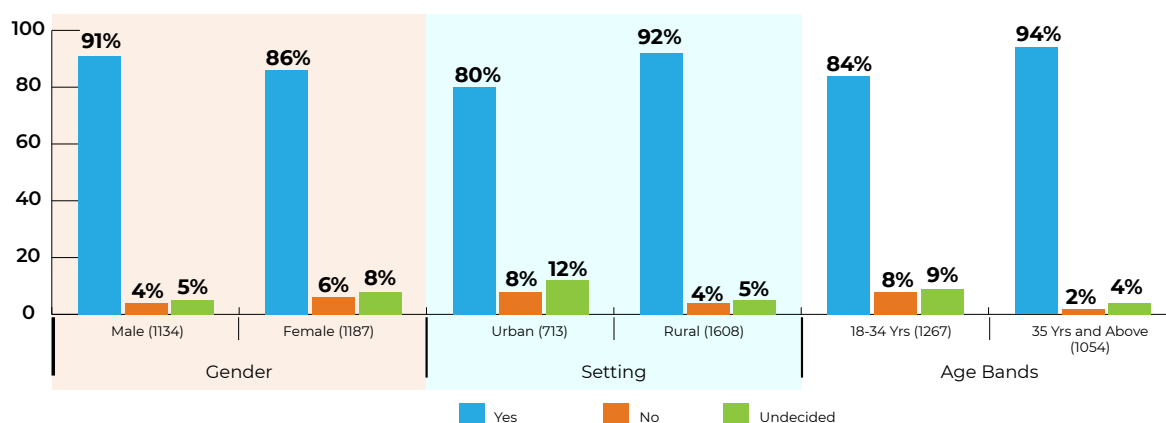


Figure 52: Proportion of the population expressing interest to participate in the 2021 local council elections by gender, setting and age.



The high levels of enthusiasm to vote in the 2021 local council elections is also clearly reflected in the regional specific data. With the exception of Buganda (76%), Bugisu (88%), Acholi (89%) and Karamoja (84%), all the other regions reported enthusiasm over 90 percent of the population.

Table 18: Proportion of the population expressing interest to participate in the 2021 local council elections.

	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
Base	2321	635	55	132	230	56	96	67	110	86	138	177	187	133	94	125
Yes	88%	76%	95%	95%	95%	88%	97%	97%	89%	84%	91%	94%	93%	94%	97%	90%
No	5%	10%	5%	2%	2%	7%	3%	1%	7%	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	6%
Undecided	7%	14%	0%	3%	3%	5%	0%	1%	4%	14%	6%	2%	5%	5%	1%	3%

The data (Figure 52) also shows that 58 percent of the population would vote for their incumbent district chairperson compared to 37 percent who may not vote for the incumbent. The perceptions about voting or not voting for incumbent district chairpersons are evenly spread across gender, setting and age bands.

Regionally disaggregated data also shows the highest percentage of the population likely to vote for their incumbent chairpersons to be in Ankole (86%), Sebei (83%), Bugisu (80%), (Bukedi (70%) and Bunyoro (70%). On the contrary, data for some of the regions show

Figure 53: Proportion of the population likely to vote for or against incumbent district chairpersons.

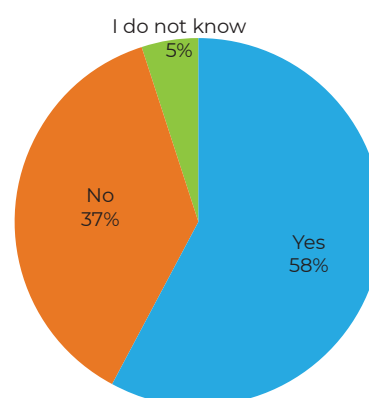
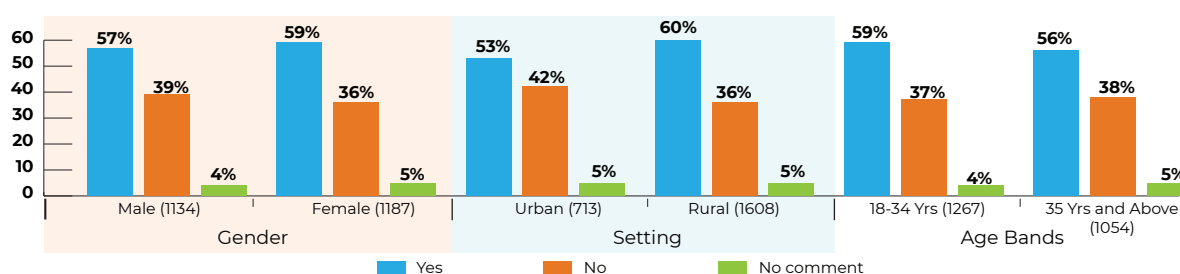


Figure 54: Proportion of the population likely to vote for or against incumbent district chairpersons by gender, setting and age



that the population is most likely to vote against the incumbent district chairpersons. The most prominent of these districts are Rwenzori (62%), Busoga (49%), Teso (45%), and Kigezi (58%) where the proportion of the population reporting interest to vote for the incumbent district chairpersons to be below the national average of 58 percent.

Table 19: Proportion of the population likely to vote for or against incumbent district council chairperson by region

	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
<b>Base</b>	<b>2321</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>113</b>
Yes	88%	51%	31%	70%	45%	80%	48%	83%	62%	61%	58%	50%	86%	70%	38%	60%
No	5%	44%	62%	26%	49%	20%	45%	17%	37%	38%	35%	40%	13%	29%	58%	35%
Undecided	0%	5%	8%	5%	6%	0%	6%	0%	1%	1%	7%	10%	1%	2%	3%	4%

# 7. Public perception on money and elections

## 7.1 Introduction

Generally, money is needed to facilitate activities of political parties and individuals seeking elective offices during the election season. At an institutional level, political parties need funds to finance their operations including operating countrywide offices, recruitment of members, training and capacity building, and supporting candidates seeking elections as flag bearers of the party. At an individual level, a person seeking elective office needs funds to run a full campaign operation including establishing campaign offices, organizing campaign rallies and other events, recruiting and training campaign agents as well as retaining polling agents on the day of elections.

However, there is growing concern that unregulated use of money in elections is likely to have a major distorting effect on Uganda’s democratic process. The levels of spending by political parties, presidential and parliamentary elections have elevated the issue of money and elections in the public policy discourse in elections. The Uganda Governance Pulse survey aims to regularly track public perceptions on the use of money in elections, whether money or other material inducements affect the voting decisions of voters and whether citizens make monetary contributions towards funding for political parties.

## 7.2 Offers of monetary and other material inducements during campaigns

Participants in the survey were asked whether they have ever been given money or any other inducements by a candidate or party or their agents as an incentive for voting for a candidate. At least 15 percent of the respondents indicated that they had been offered such inducement in contrast to 82 percent who had not received such inducement. Another 3 percent declined to answer this question. It appears from the data that such offers cut across gender, setting and age.

Figure 55: Offer of monetary and other inducements in elections

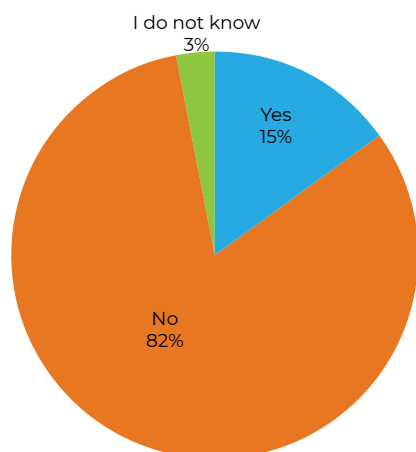
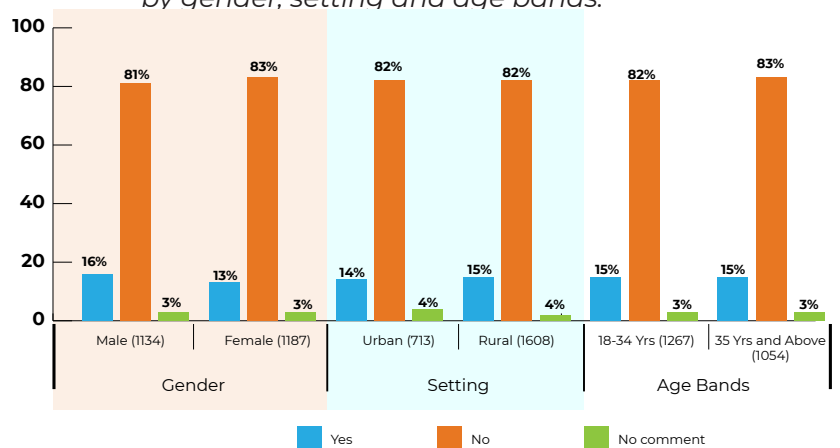


Figure 56: Offer of monetary inducements in elections by gender, setting and age bands.



The survey data shows the highest proportion of the population reporting to have received any inducements to be in Sebei (34%), Karamoja (29%), Kigezi (26%), Bugisu (25%), Teso (24%) and Bukedi (23%).

Table 20: Offer or monetary and other inducements in elections by region

	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
Base	2321	635	55	132	230	56	96	67	110	86	138	177	187	133	94	125
Yes	15%	10%	4%	23%	16%	25%	24%	34%	8%	29%	14%	20%	9%	15%	26%	3%
No	82%	85%	95%	77%	83%	70%	74%	60%	90%	63%	86%	79%	89%	83%	73%	95%
No comment	3%	6%	2%	1%	0.4%	5%	2%	6%	2%	8%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%

### 7.3 Model of delivery of money and other inducements for voters

An important question is how such inducements are delivered to the citizens. In this regard, respondents were presented two delivery options to choose from: group or individual. At least 50 percent of the respondents who indicated that they had received such inducements indicated that they received them through a group while 42 percent indicated the inducements were offered to them as individuals. The data also shows that more men (61%) received inducements as individuals compared to women (55%) while young people (66%) within the age band of 18-34 received such inducements through groups as compared to 40 percent in the age band of 35 years and above who received inducements through the same delivery mechanism.

Figure 57: Mode of delivery of money and other inducements for voters (Base N=344)

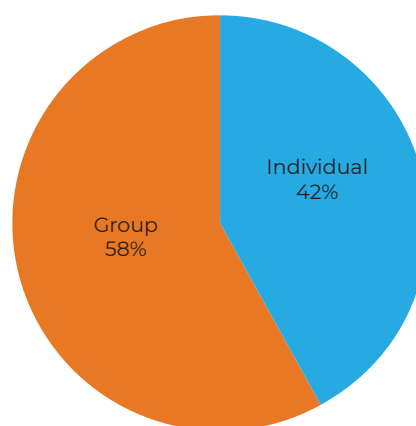
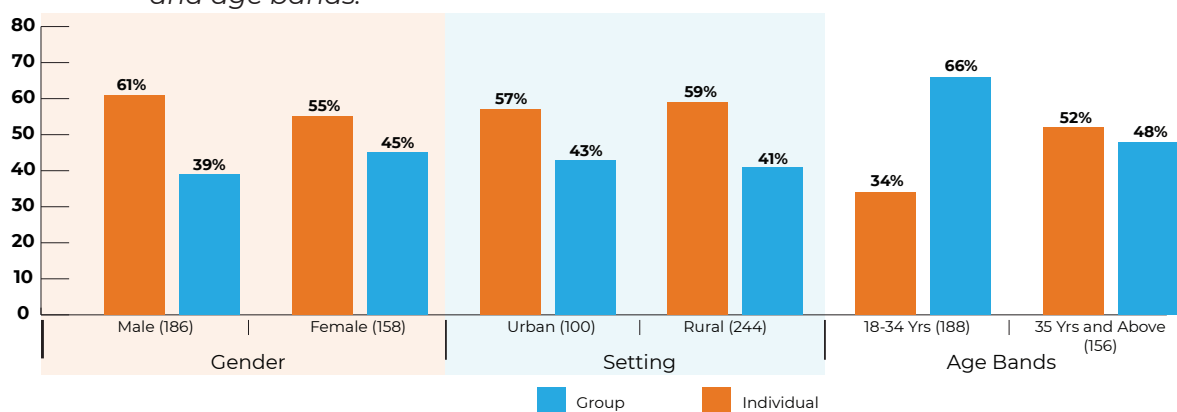


Figure 58: Mode of delivery of money and other inducements to voters by gender, setting and age bands.





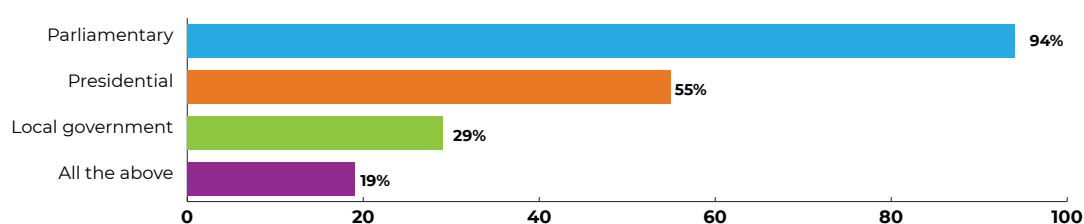
Regionally disaggregated data shows that the highest proportion of the population that indicated they had received inducement through the 'group delivery mechanism' was in West Nile (94%), Bunyoro (80%), Kigezi (79%), Lango (79%), Acholi (78%), Teso (74%) and Bugisu (71%). On the other hand, Busoga (78%), Buganda (58%), Karamoja (56%), Ankole (53%), Tooro (50%) reported higher proportions of respondents who received inducements as individuals. The data also shows that respondents within the age band of 35 -54 years were more likely to have received inducements as individuals as compared to other age bands. This also seems to be the case for respondents who never attended school or had a bachelors' degree.

Table 21: Mode of delivery of money and other inducements to voters by region.

	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
<b>Base</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>4</b>
Group	58%	42%	0%	43%	22%	71%	74%	65%	78%	44%	79%	94%	47%	80%	79%	50%
Individual	42%	58%	100%	57%	78%	29%	26%	35%	22%	56%	21%	6%	53%	20%	21%	50%
No comment	3%	6%	2%	1%	0.4%	5%	2%	6%	2%	8%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%

Generally, there are three types of elections in Uganda even when all of them are inter-related. These are presidential elections, parliamentary elections and local council elections. An important policy question therefore is whether inducements are offered during all these different elections. According to the data, the majority of the respondents (95%) who reported to have received monetary or other inducements reported that this was for parliamentary elections. This is in comparison to 55 percent who indicated they had received the inducement in relation to parliamentary elections, 20 percent for the local council elections and 19 percent for all the three election types.

Figure 59: Type of elections in which money or other inducements were offered.



An important finding basing on regional specific data is that close to 100 percent of all the respondents who indicated they had received some form of inducements also indicated that they had received such inducement in relation to the presidential elections.

Figure 60: Type of elections in which money or other inducements were offered by gender, setting and age bands.

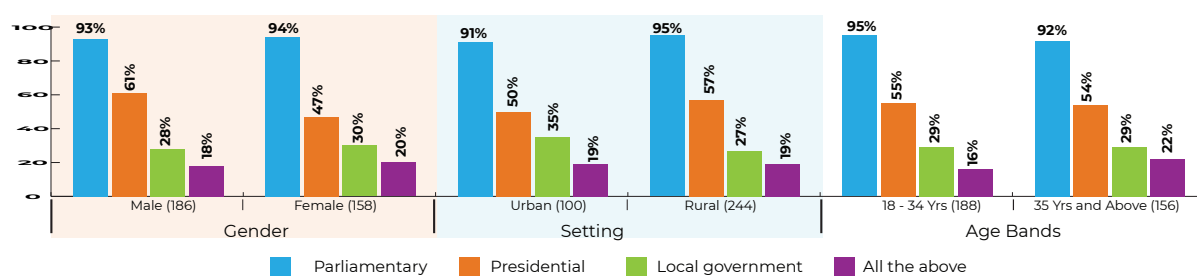


Table 22: Type of elections in which money or other inducements were offered.

	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
Base	344	62	2	30	37	14	23	23	9	25	19	35	17	20	24	4
Presidential	55%	97%	100%	87%	92%	100%	96%	100%	100%	100%	89%	80%	94%	95%	96%	100%
Parliamentary	94%	52%	0%	50%	65%	71%	43%	83%	33%	64%	47%	29%	65%	60%	58%	75%
Local government	29%	34%	0%	7%	19%	57%	9%	61%	22%	20%	74%	37%	41%	10%	13%	0%
All the above	19%	10%	50%	53%	35%	0%	43%	4%	22%	0%	0%	31%	6%	5%	13%	0%

## 7.4 Impact of inducements on peoples' voting behavior

An important follow up regarding offers of inducement during elections is whether such inducements influence voters in making their choices on who to vote for. As shown in Figure 61, up to 45 percent of the respondents indicated that monetary and other forms of inducements influenced their voting decisions. This is in contrast to 52 percent of the same respondents who indicated that they were not influenced by these inducements.

Figure 61: Importance of money and other inducements in influencing voter behavior.

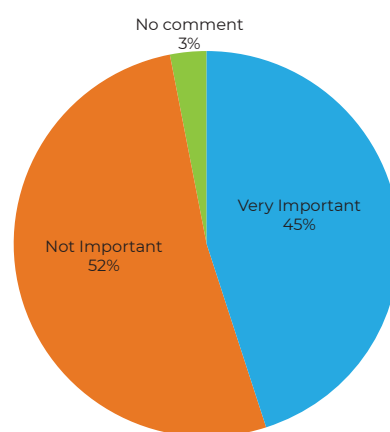
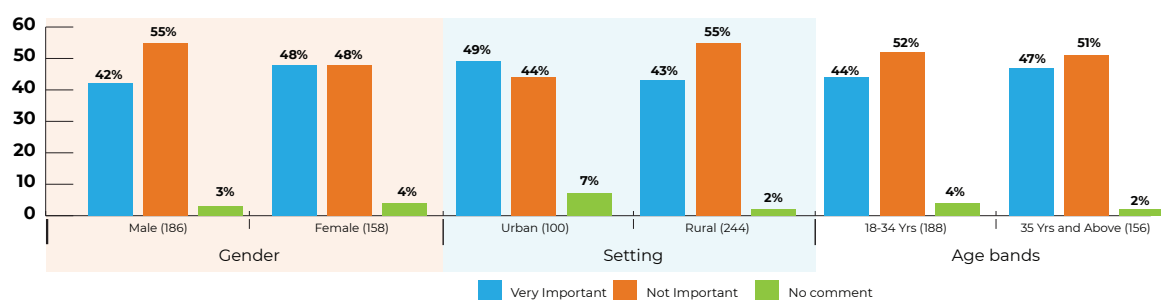


Figure 62: Importance of money and other inducements in influencing voter behavior by gender, setting and age bands.



An analysis of regionally disaggregated data shows that a higher population of respondents in Busoga (70%), Karamoja (64%), Bukedi (63%) and Teso (61%) consider these inducements to be very important in influencing their voting decisions.

Table 23: Importance of money and other inducements in influencing voter behavior.

	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
<b>Base</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>4</b>
Very Important	55%	29%	0%	63%	70%	57%	61%	48%	0%	64%	47%	17%	41%	30%	54%	50%
Not Important	52%	63%	100%	37%	27%	43%	39%	52%	100%	28%	53%	80%	47%	70%	46%	50%
No comment	3%	8%	0%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	8%	0%	3%	12%	0%	0%	0%

An important question is how such inducements are delivered to the citizens. In this regard, respondents were presented two delivery options to choose from: group or individual. At least 50 percent of the respondents who indicated that they had received such inducements indicated that they received them through a group while 42 percent indicated the inducements were offered to them as individuals. The data also shows that more men (61%) received inducements as individuals compared to women (55%) while young people (66%) within the age band of 18-34 received such inducements through groups as compared to 40 percent in the age band of 35 years and above who received inducements through the same delivery mechanism.

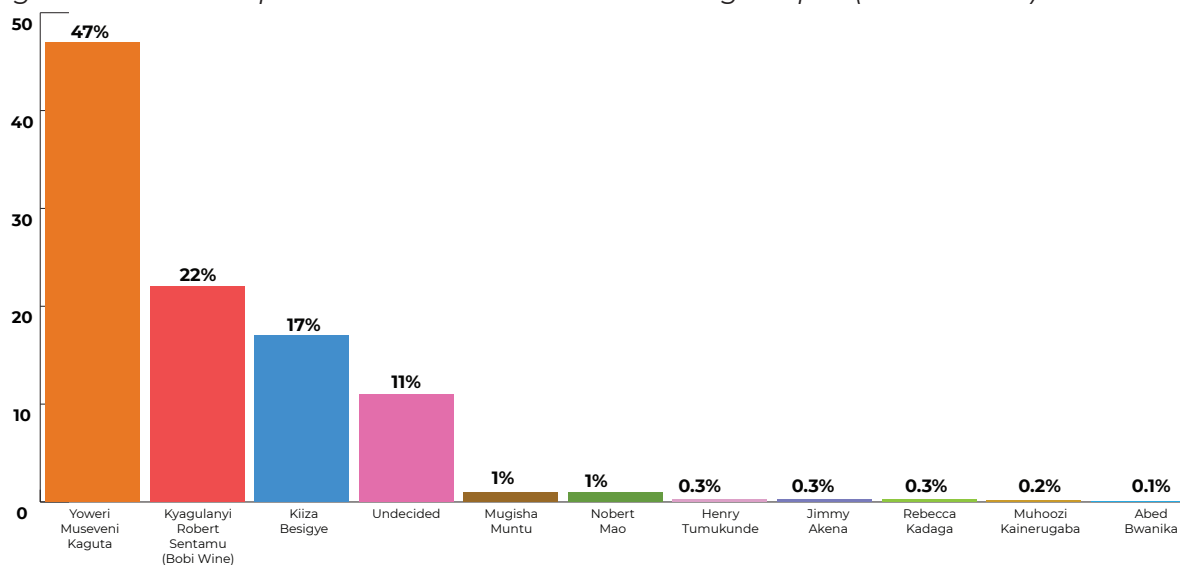
# 8. Perceptions regarding choice of president

## 8.1 Introduction

This part of the survey aims to track the perceptions of citizens on their choice of president at the time when the survey was conducted. In previous polls, the survey instruments listed the names of potential presidential candidates and asked respondents to choose from that pre-selected list. For this edition of the Uganda Governance Pulse, the survey was conducted in March 2020 prior to the nominations of presidential candidates by the respective political parties. Consequently, an open-ended question was used to give respondents the opportunity to choose any whom they thought was qualified to be president. This means that every Ugandan had a chance to be picked as a preferred presidential candidate.

## 8.2 Choice of president

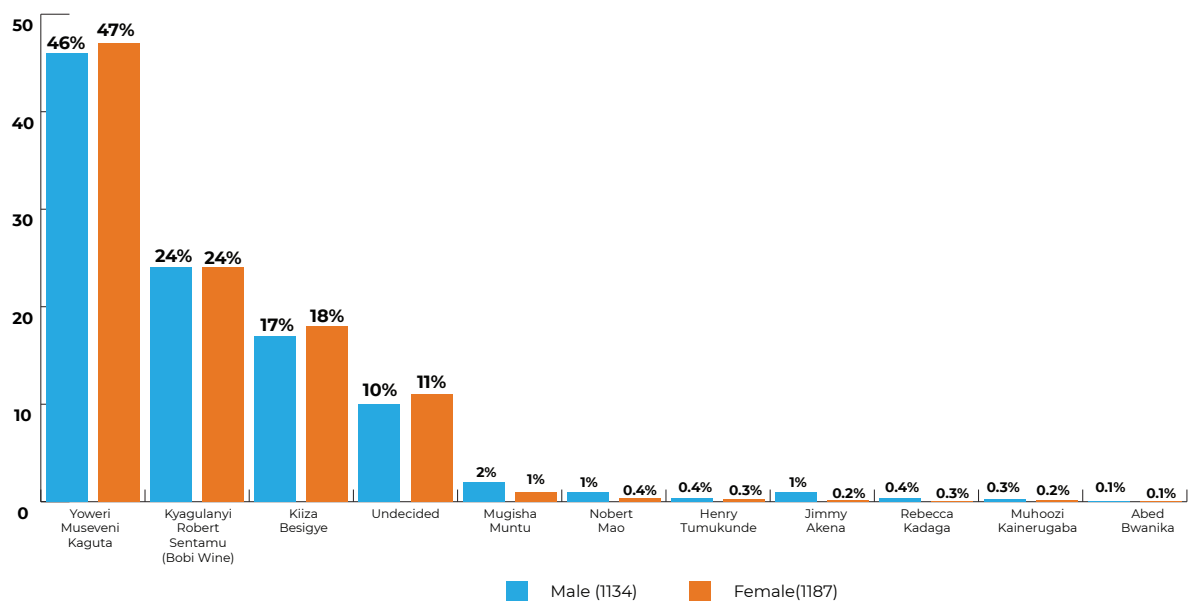
Figure 63: Choice of president at the time of conducting the poll (Base N=2321)



The survey data shows that 47 percent of the population would have chosen Yoweri Museveni as their preferred presidential candidate if elections were held at the time of the survey. Mr. Museveni is followed by Mr. Robert Sentamu Kyagulanyi aka Bobi Wine at 22 percent while Dr. Kizza Besigye was preferred by 17 percent of the respondents. At least 11 percent of the respondents were undecided. Given that a number of politicians such as Rebecca Kadaga and Amama Mbabazi have scored higher percentages in previous polls, it may safe to conclude that the emergence of Robert Kyagulanyi is evidence of Uganda's continuously shifting political landscape. This implies that each of these surveys should be considered as perceptions of the citizens at the time the poll was conducted.

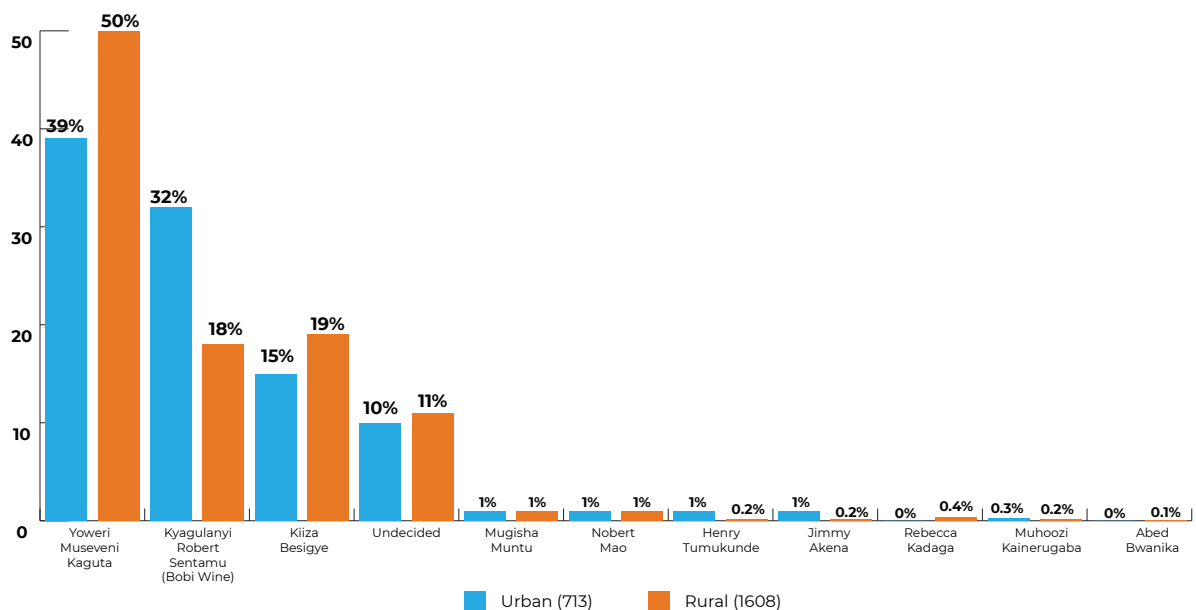
Considered along gender diversity, it is important to note how the preference for each of the 3 top choices as well as the number of undecideds is evenly split between male and female.

Figure 64: Choice of president at the time of conducting the survey by gender



The survey shows that Mr. Museveni (50:39) and Dr. Besigye (19:15) draw more preference from rural voters compared to Mr. Robert Kyagulanyi who draws his highest preference from urban voters as compared to rural voters at the ratio of 32:18 percent.

Figure 65: Choice of president at the time of conducting the survey by rural and urban setting.



Analysed by age bands, the data shows that Mr. Museveni draws his highest preference (63%) from the respondents in the age band of 35 years and above as compared to Mr. Kyagulanyi (35%) who draws his highest preference from the age band of 18-34 years. The preference for Dr. Besigye and those who are undecided are evenly split across the two age bands.

Analysis of the data by education level shows that Mr. Museveni has his highest preferences among respondents who have never attended school (56%), have not completed primary level education (52%) and those with a postgraduate level education (65%). On the other hand, Mr. Kyagulanyi has his highest preference among respondents who completed primary education (27%), O'Level (36%) and vocational or tertiary level training. The preference for Dr. Besigye is evenly spread across the different education bands.

According to the data disaggregated by regions, Mr. Museveni registers his highest preference in Bukedi, Lango and Fort portal where he is preferred by 65 percent of the respondents. His lowest score on this parameter is Buganda where he is preferred by only 27 percent of the respondents. Mr. Kyagulanyi has his highest preferences in Bugisu (39%), Buganda (37%) and Busoga (30%) while he records his lowest preferences in Rwenzori (2%), Kigezi (3%) and Toro (5%). Dr. Besigye recorded his highest preference in Rwenzori (35%) and Kigezi (26%) while his lowest preference is recorded in Lango (7%), West Nile (8%) and Karamoja (9%). The highest number of undecided respondents are in West Nile (19%) and Kigezi (15%).

Table 24: Choice of president at the time of conducting the survey by region.

	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
<b>Base</b>	<b>2321</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>125</b>
Yoweri Museveni Kaguta	47%	27%	51%	65%	44%	45%	49%	40%	58%	53%	65%	56%	52%	53%	55%	65%
Kyagulanyi Robert Sentamu (Bobi Wine)	22%	37%	2%	14%	30%	39%	10%	36%	12%	27%	11%	14%	16%	13%	3%	5%
Kiiza Besigye	17%	22%	35%	11%	14%	11%	20%	21%	17%	9%	7%	8%	20%	17%	26%	22%
Undecided	11%	10%	11%	9%	8%	4%	20%	1%	12%	9%	12%	19%	6%	13%	15%	6%
Mugisha Muntu	1%	2%	2%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	3%	1%	1%
Nobert Mao	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Henry Tumukunde	0.3%	0.3%	0%	0%	0.4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	0%	1%
Jimmy Akena	0.3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	5%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Rebecca Kadaga	0.3%	0.2%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Muhoozi Kainerugaba	0.2%	0.3%	0%	0%	0.4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Abed Bwanika	0.1%	0.3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

# 9. Perceptions on presidential succession and transfer of power

## 9.1 Introduction

The question of a peaceful political transition and presidential succession is central to the continued stability, sustainable peace and development of any country. As has been pointed out in all manner of public discourse and commentaries, Uganda has not had a peaceful transfer of power from one president to another or from one political party to another. Since independence, all transfers of power have been violent and often led to loss of life, destruction of property and serious disruptions in the economy of the country.

At the time of conducting this survey, President Museveni was in his 35<sup>th</sup> year as president. Over this period, his government managed to suppress widespread insurgency in most parts of the country, establish security and stability, and pursue policies that led to economic recovery and growth for the most part of the last 3 decades. However, to stay in power, he also engineered a series of constitutional amendments that resulted into the removal of presidential term limit and presidential age limit. Apart from elections, these two safeguards were designed by the framers of the 1995 Constitution to create predictability with regard to when a president may relinquish the seat of Uganda's presidency.

In the absence of these safeguards and with highly contested electoral process, the question of succession to President Museveni and peaceful transfer of power has increasingly become important matters of public policy and debate. The Uganda Governance Pulse will regularly track the perceptions of citizens regarding this debate in order to generate trends data that can inform policy makers and level out public policy discourse on the matter. In this regard, three questions were asked around this issue: support for the vote by parliament to amend the constitution to remove presidential age limit; perceptions on when President Museveni should retire; and who should be president when Mr. Museveni retires or ceases to be president.

## 9.2 Perceptions on the constitutional amendment to remove age limit

Overall, 59 percent of the respondents participating in the survey reported that they did not support the action of parliament to vote to amend the constitution to eliminate the safeguard on age limit for persons seeking to contest for office as president. At least 27 percent reported that they supported the amendment while 14 percent declined to comment on this question. The data also shows that the opposition to the amendment was evenly spread among the two gender groups, urban and rural settings and across age bands.

Figure 66: Perceptions on the 2017 amendment to remove age limit from the 1995 Constitution (Base N=2321)

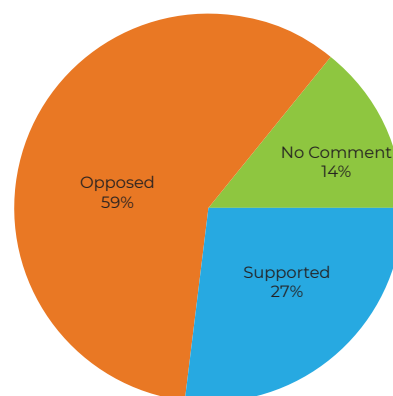
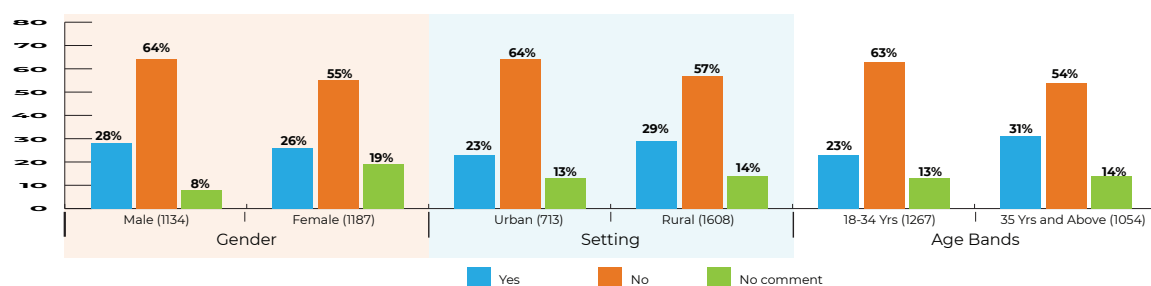


Figure 67: Perceptions on the 2017 amendment to remove age limit from the 1995 Constitution by gender, setting and age bands.



Analysis of the data by regions shows that the highest opposition to the age limit amendment was in Sebei (82%), Buganda (65%), Rwenzori (65%), Karamoja (64%) Bunyoro (62%) and Busoga (62%). On the contrary, the highest support for the amendment was in Teso at 40 percent.

Table 25: Perceptions on the 2017 amendment to remove age limit from the 1995 Constitution by region

	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
<b>Base</b>	<b>2321</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>125</b>
Yes	27%	17%	13%	36%	25%	36%	40%	13%	42%	15%	37%	33%	29%	32%	38%	35%
No	59%	65%	65%	52%	62%	59%	55%	82%	53%	64%	46%	50%	58%	62%	57%	54%
No comment	14%	19%	22%	12%	13%	5%	5%	4%	5%	21%	17%	18%	13%	7%	4%	10%

Among age bands, the highest opposition to the age limit constitutional amendment was among the 18-24 years (66%) and 25-34 years (62%) age bands. By contrast, the highest support for the amendment was among the 54-64 years (41%) and the 65+ years age band (36%).

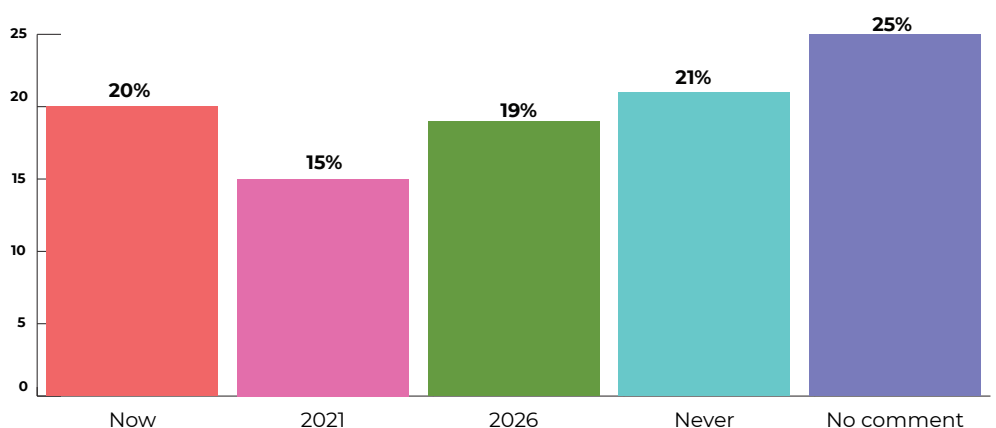
Opposition to the amendment was also highest among respondents who had an education level of bachelor's degree (68%), A'Level and those with vocational or tertiary level education. By contrast, support for the amendment was highest among respondents with a post-graduate degree.

The survey data shows that at least 20 percent of the respondents would like to see President Museveni retire from the presidency immediately while another 15 percent would like to see him retire in 2021. This contrasts sharply with those who want to see him retire in 2026 and those who don't want to see him retire (21%). A considerable number of respondents (25%) opted not to respond to this particular questions.

Analysis of the data by different parameters shows some differences in the public perceptions regarding the timing of President Museveni's retirement. For example, male respondents who say he should retire now (24%) or 2021 (17%) are higher than female respondents at 16 percent and 14 percent respectively. The female respondents (25%) who say he should never retire are higher than the male respondents at 17 percent. More female respondents (29%) also declined to make a comment on this issue compared to the 21 percent of the male respondents.



Figure 68: Perceptions on the timing of President Museveni's retirement



Similar differences are noticeable between the urban and rural setting as well as the different age bands. There are more respondents among the 18-34 age band that say Mr. Museveni should retire now (22%) or 2021 (19%) compared to those in the age band of 35 years and above. A higher percentage of respondents in the age band above 35 years say Mr. Museveni should retire in 2026 (20%) or never (26%).

Analysed by region, the data shows that Rwenzori (29%), Buganda (26%) Acholi (26%) and West Nile (25%) and Bugisu (29%) have more respondents who say Mr. Museveni should retire now or in 2021. By contrast, a higher number of respondents in Toro (43%) Sebei (33%), Kigezi (29%) Ankole (28%), and Bugisu (25%) reported that Mr. Museveni should retire in 2026. The highest number of respondents who say that Mr. Museveni should not retire are in Fortportal (40%), Bukedi (32%) West Nile (30%), Lango (30%), Ankole (28%) and Kigezi (27%).

Table 26: Perceptions on the timing of President Museveni's retirement by region

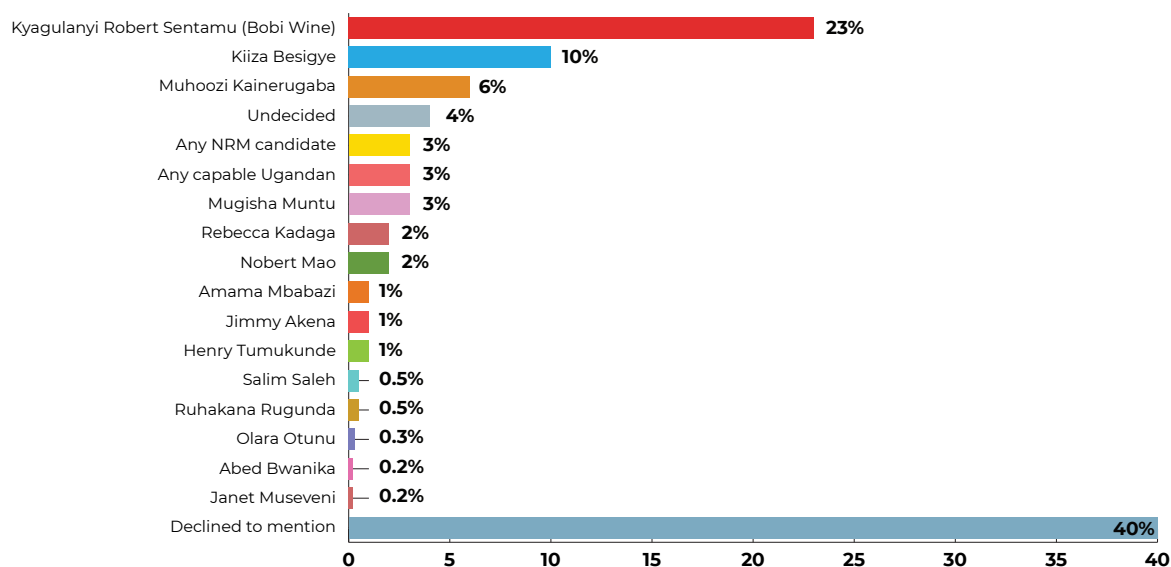
	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
<b>Base</b>	<b>2321</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>125</b>
Now	20%	26%	29%	17%	22%	18%	20%	12%	26%	10%	7%	25%	18%	16%	17%	6%
2021	15%	20%	0%	11%	13%	29%	8%	19%	28%	15%	20%	6%	16%	19%	10%	3%
2026	19%	11%	15%	11%	21%	25%	14%	33%	15%	19%	23%	10%	28%	23%	29%	43%
Never	21%	13%	9%	32%	22%	13%	25%	9%	17%	14%	30%	30%	28%	11%	27%	40%
No comment	25%	30%	47%	30%	21%	16%	33%	27%	13%	42%	20%	29%	10%	32%	18%	7%

An important finding from the data regards the number of respondents across all regions and age bands who declined to comment on this question which goes as high as 47 percent in Rwenzori and for those who never attended school (46%) or have a post-graduate degree (42%).

### 9.3 Perceptions about presidential succession

One of the important political questions of the moment is who should succeed President Museveni when he retires or ceases to be president. In order to reduce the possibility of biasing the respondents on the choice of responses, this was asked as open-ended question which would enlist answers based on the respondent's perception only. The majority of the respondents (23%) who opted to answer this question chose Mr. Robert Kyagulanyi aka Bobi Wine. He was followed by Dr. Kizza Besigye (10%) and Muhoozi Keinerugaba (6%). Another 4 percent of the respondents said they were undecided on this issue. However, a significant majority of 40 percent declined to mention any person.

Figure 69: Choice of president in the event President Museveni retires or ceases to be president



The highest percentage of respondents who declined to mention anybody were female (34%), or rural (39%) or within the age band of 35 years and above (36%). On the other hand, Robert Kyagulanya was mentioned more by male respondents (28%) as compared to females (21%). When analysed by urban and rural settings, there was an even split of 24:23 percent respectively. He was also mentioned more among respondents within the age band of 18-34 years (29%) in contrast with the age band of 35 years and above (16%). Dr. Besigye was evenly mentioned across setting and age bands while he was mentioned more among female respondents (19%) than male respondents (14%). Muhoozi Keinerugaba was mentioned more among female (8%) than male (4%) respondents while he was generally mentioned among urban and rural settings as well as across age bands.

Regionally disaggregated data shows that the highest percentage of respondents who declined to mentioned a preferred successor to President Museveni was in West Nile (56%), Karamoja (53%) and Acholi (51%). Robert Kyagulanyi had the highest preference in Bugisu (54%), Buganda (37%), Busoga (30%) and Karamoja (29%). Kizza Besigye has his highest preference in Kigezi (33%) and Toro (30%) while Muhoozi Keinerugaba's preference is recorded to be at less than 20 percent across all the regions.

When analysed by age bands, the 45-54 years age band and above had the highest percentage of respondents declining to mention any preferred person to succeed President Museveni. The highest mention for Robert Kyagulanyi was within the 18-24 years age band, Kizza Besigye in the 55-64 years age band (19%) and Muhoozi Keinerugaba in the 65+ years age band (10%).

# 10. Awareness and perceptions on the Uganda National Dialogue

On December 18, 2018, President Museveni, Religious Leaders under the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU), The Elders Forum of Uganda (TEFU) issued a communique creating a political framework for the convening of the Uganda National Dialogue (UND). According to the Uganda National Dialogue framework paper, the mission of the Dialogue is a “just and morally upright society founded on socio-economic justice, shared prosperity, popular governance and respect for the rule of law.” The conveners of the Dialogue envisage it as an all-inclusive non-partisan national process that brings together Ugandans to address structural problems that are holding the country back from achieving accelerated progress towards social, economic and political transformation. The 8 agenda items of the Uganda National Dialogue as set out in the dialogue framework paper are shown in Figure 70.

Unlike the electoral processes which are inherently partisan and do not involve citizens beyond campaigns and voting, the Uganda National Dialogue aims at establishing a national platform for citizens to engage in addressing fundamental public policy and governance issues in the country that go beyond the limits of partisan politics.

Figure 70: Proposed agenda of the Uganda National Dialogue



Source: Uganda National Dialogue Framework Paper, 2018 (unpublished)

The Uganda Governance Pulse tracks the perceptions of citizens about the national dialogue process. The objective is to track changes in the awareness of the citizens about the process, the public support for the process, as well what they think are the most credible institutions to convene a national dialogue.

Overall, the survey found that there was very limited awareness of the Uganda National Dialogue process. A majority 86 percent of the respondents reported that they were not aware of the process as opposed to only 14 percent who reported they were aware. The lack of awareness of the process cuts across all the analytical parameters. Lack of awareness was reported highest amongst women at 91 percent.

It is instructive to note that the lack of awareness about the dialogue is evenly spread across urban (86%) and rural (85%) settings and across the age bands. Across the 15 regions, the least awareness about the dialogue was recorded in Rwenzori (5%), Bugisu (7%) and Karamoja (7%). The highest level of awareness was recorded in Bunyoro (22%), and Acholi (19%).

Figure 71: Level of awareness of the Uganda National Dialogue process (Base N=2321)

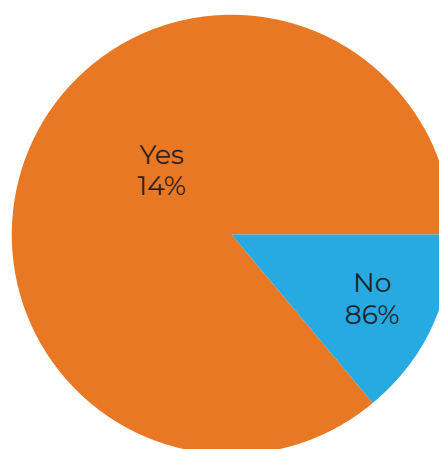


Figure 72: Level of awareness of the Uganda National Dialogue process by gender, setting and age bands.

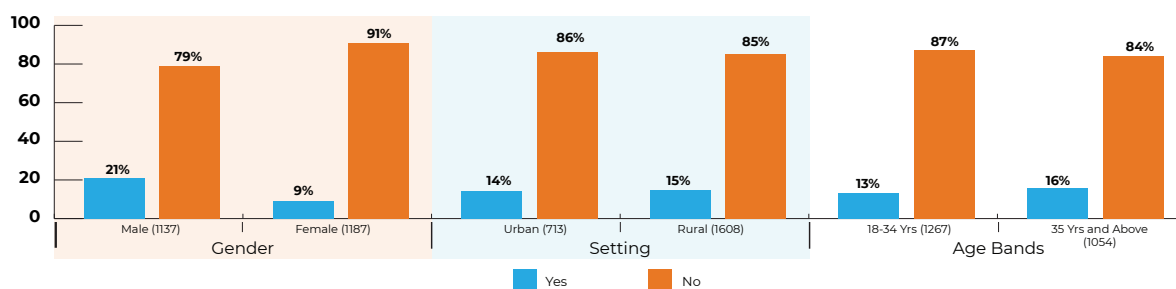


Table 27: Level of awareness of the Uganda National Dialogue process by region.

	Region															
	Overall	Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
Base	2321	635	55	132	230	56	96	67	110	86	138	177	187	133	94	125
Yes	14%	15%	5%	17%	15%	7%	19%	4%	19%	7%	12%	15%	13%	22%	17%	14%
No	86%	85%	95%	83%	85%	93%	81%	96%	81%	93%	88%	85%	87%	78%	83%	86%

Analysed by age bands, the data shows that respondents within the 18-24 years age band (10%) were least aware of the dialogue process while awareness was slightly higher among respondents in the 55-64 age band (21%). The data also shows that respondents who never attended school (99%) and those who never completed primary school (92%) were the least aware of the dialogue. However, it is important to note that across all education bands, the evidence shows that citizens are not aware of the Uganda National Dialogue.

Besides the awareness, respondents were asked whether they support the idea of a national dialogue. Overall, 38 percent reported that they supported the idea of a national dialogue. A majority 62 percent did not support the idea. The support for the process is slightly higher among men (42%) than women (35%), among rural (40%) than urban (35%) dwellers, and among respondents in the age band above 35 years (42%) in comparison to the 18-34 years age band (36%). Analysed along education levels, the idea of a national dialogue has more support among respondents who completed O'Level education and above with each of the respective education bands registering a percentage increase. Survey data disaggregated by regions shows considerable disparity in the support for the dialogue across the 15 regions. The highest support for the process is in Acholi (77%) and Bunyoro (66%) while the lowest support is in Sebei (3%), Lango (14%) and Kigezi (15%).

*Table 28: Proportion of the population that support the idea of the Uganda National Dialogue by region*

	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
<b>Base</b>	<b>2321</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>125</b>
Yes	38%	39%	55%	56%	42%	16%	48%	3%	77%	22%	14%	33%	45%	66%	15%	16%
No	62%	61%	45%	44%	58%	84%	52%	97%	23%	78%	86%	67%	55%	34%	85%	84%

A major issue about the convening of national dialogue process around the world is the credibility of the institution or entity convening such a process given its nature and the diversity of parties and interests involved. In the case of Uganda, the data shows that the majority of the citizens (59%) support a dialogue process convened by the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU) while another 29 percent support a possible convening by government. The support for IRCU cuts across all parameters including gender, setting, age bands and education levels.

Analysis of regional data shows that a significant number of respondents in Bunyoro (78%), Teso (78%) and Rwenzori support an IRCU convened national dialogue process. On the other hand, only Ankole had a high number of respondents (56%) supporting a dialogue process convened by government.

Table 29: Population preference for the institution to convene the Uganda National Dialogue by region.

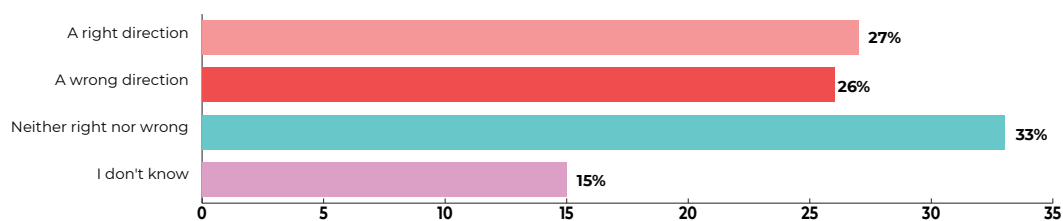
	Overall	Sub region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
<b>Base</b>	<b>893</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>
Religious leaders	55%	59%	70%	61%	39%	56%	78%	100%	48%	37%	65%	47%	29%	78%	36%	65%
Government	29%	25%	27%	31%	39%	33%	20%	0%	33%	47%	20%	22%	56%	9%	21%	5%
Civil society	10%	9%	3%	8%	20%	11%	2%	0%	7%	11%	10%	20%	8%	1%	36%	5%
Elders	7%	8%	0%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%	12%	5%	5%	10%	6%	11%	7%	25%

# 11. Public perceptions on the direction of the country

The UGP measures the general perception on the direction of the country. Respondents were asked a general question as to whether Uganda is headed in the right or wrong direction. In order to better understand what shape the public perceptions about the direction of the country were, the survey also includes open ended questions that prompt respondents to provide the reasons for a right and wrong direction answer.

Generally, there is an even split between respondents who say Uganda is headed in the right direction (27%) and those who say the country is headed in the wrong direction (26%). However, the majority of the respondents (33%) reported that the country was headed neither in the right nor in the wrong direction. Another 15 percent said they didn't know. This implies some degree of uncertainty among a considerable proportion of the population. The data also shows an even spread on all responses across gender groups, setting and age bands.

Figure 73: Public perceptions on the general direction of the country.



The data also shows the highest percentage of the respondents perceiving the country to be headed in the right direction to be in Acholi (54%), Teso (44%) and Lango (43%). On the other hand, the highest percentage of the respondents who perceive the country to be headed in the wrong direction are in Busoga (49%), and Buganda (35%). A significant percentage of the respondents in Sebei (66%), Rwenzori region (65%), and Ankole (52%) perceive the country to be going neither in the wrong nor in the right direction.

Figure 74: Public perceptions on the general direction of the country by gender

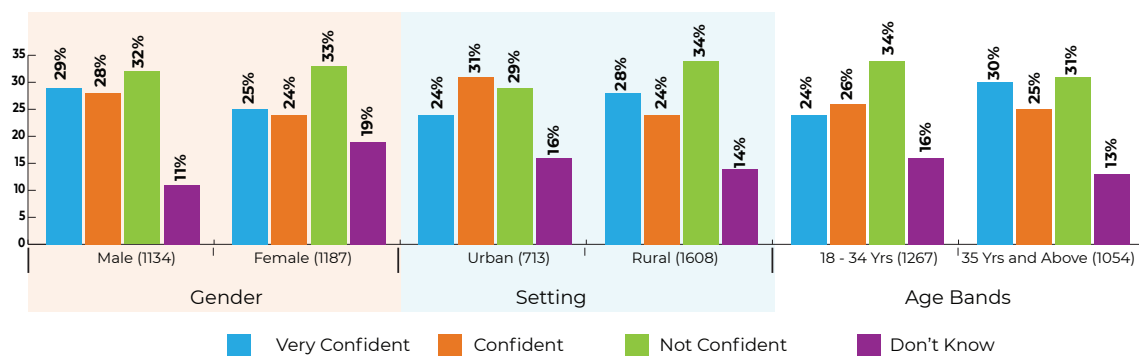


Table 30: Public perceptions on the general direction of the country.

	Overall	Region														
		Buganda	Rwenzori	Bukedi	Busoga	Bugisu	Teso	Sebei	Acholi	Karamoja	Lango	West Nile	Ankole	Bunyoro	Kigezi	Tooro
<b>Base</b>	<b>2321</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>125</b>
A right direction	27%	14%	16%	38%	26%	18%	44%	18%	54%	14%	43%	37%	28%	20%	32%	36%
A wrong direction	26%	35%	11%	26%	49%	20%	17%	7%	17%	7%	17%	23%	32%	17%	19%	6%
Neither right nor wrong	33%	34%	65%	23%	15%	43%	13%	66%	25%	44%	38%	29%	35%	52%	23%	26%
I don't know	15%	17%	7%	13%	11%	20%	27%	9%	5%	35%	1%	11%	5%	11%	26%	32%

Across education bands, a considerable percentage of respondents who have never attended school or not completed primary school education largely perceive the country to be going neither in the right nor the wrong direction or did not express an opinion on the matter. Another significant number are the respondents who completed O'Level whose perception is that the country is going neither in the wrong nor in the right direction and those who completed A'Level who consider the country to be going in the wrong direction (35%), or neither right nor wrong direction (38%).

To better understand the perceptions of the population on the direction of the country, the survey included open ended questions to be answered by those who perceive the country to be going in the right or wrong direction. Over all, those who perceive the country to be going in the right direction mainly cited improved security (30%), improved road network (28%), improved education system (28%) and the presence of peace in the country as the reasons for their held perception. Regionally disaggregated data shows that the issue of security was mostly cited in Bunyoro region (56%). The quality of the road network was mostly cited in Sebei (75%), Teso (48%), Acholi (44%) and Toro (40%) while the issue of education was mostly mentioned in Karamoja (58%) and Acholi (51%), Sebei (42%) and Teso (40%). The issue of peace was mostly mentioned in Lango (72), Karamoja (67%) and Toro (47%).

Respondents who perceive the country to be headed in the wrong direction cited high levels of corruption (46%), high levels of unemployment (27%), high levels of poverty (15%) and poor health care system (14%) among other reasons. With the exception of female respondents, the mention of these issues across gender, setting and age bands was equal to or above the national average of 46 percent. High levels of corruption were mainly mentioned in Bunyoro (59%), Bukedi (53%), Busoga (52%), Rwenzori (50%), Karamoja (50%) and Kigezi (50%). Karamoja also mentioned the high levels of unemployment (50%) as one of the reasons for perceiving the country as moving in the wrong direction.



## 12. Conclusion

This report represents the first in a series of periodic surveys that will be undertaken under the auspices of the Independent Expert Peer Group. The report therefore provides an important baseline upon which future surveys will be based. The ultimate objective is to develop a standardized survey process in order to develop trends data that may provide useful insights in the changing perceptions of Ugandans in issues of economic wellbeing and governance.

As a first report, the IEPG has learnt a number of lessons that will inform future surveys and report production. Most importantly, we realize that the survey tool will need to be modified to make the survey questions complete and more specific. In particular, there will be need to eliminate potential biases in some of the questions. Secondly, it will be important to consider determination of the survey sample based on the 15 regions around which the data and analysis are organized. The regional sample size may increase on the weight of the data and analysis undertaken at the regional level.





## The Uganda Governance Pulse

The Uganda Governance Pulse is a collaborative initiative dedicated towards undertaking regular tracking of selected economic and governance parameters to inform public policy, public debates and decision making in Uganda. The initiative builds on the practice of public perception surveys or opinion polling by developing and applying a customized methodology and survey tool to undertake regular surveys. The regularity and intensity of the surveys buttressed by a robust peer review system is the main distinguishing feature of the Initiative.

This Initiative has 3 specific objectives:

- i) Encourage the use of trends data to inform public policy and debate;
- ii) Promote the use of evidence in public policy discourse on governance issues;
- iii) Provide policy and decision makers with credible evidence on the perception of citizens on matters covered by the survey.

The Initiative is implemented by the Independent Expert Peer Group (IEPG). IEPG is a network of individuals with vast experience in research, policy practice, politics and governance. The IEPG is hosted by the Great Lakes Institute for Strategic Studies (GLISS).



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