

Ghana Center for Democratic Development  
Accra, Ghana  
9 December 2019

## News release

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### Plurality of Ghanaians aren't taking sides yet in presidential contest, latest Afrobarometer survey shows

More than four in 10 Ghanaians aren't taking sides yet in a presidential race, outnumbering declared supporters of the ruling party as well as its challengers, the latest Afrobarometer survey shows.

When asked in September-October how they would vote if a presidential election were held "tomorrow," more Ghanaians said they would not vote or didn't know or wouldn't say how they would vote than declared for the ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP) or the National Democratic Party (NDC).

The proportion of adult citizens who said they would not vote is the highest since 2008 and has increased by 6 percentage point between 2017 and 2019.

Among respondents who declared a preference, the NPP maintained a lead over the NDC, though its lead has shrunk by 15 points compared to survey responses in 2017. And without a clear understanding of undeclared voters, it is impossible to draw solid conclusions about a likely election outcome.

These findings suggest that a large chunk of the electorate is still waiting to be convinced, during the year remaining before Ghana's 2020 presidential election, to vote for a specific candidate – or even to vote at all.

#### Key findings

- When asked which party's candidate they would vote for if presidential elections were held the following day, more than four in 10 Ghanaians (42%) said they would not vote (11%), did not know (12%), or refused to answer the question (19%) (Figure 1).
- The proportion of Ghanaians who said they would not vote and who did not declare a voting intention is the highest recorded in Afrobarometer surveys going back to 2008 (Figure 2).
- Youth were twice as likely as older citizens to say they would not vote (14% of those aged 18-35 vs. 7% of those aged 56 and above), as were urban residents (15%) compared to rural residents (7%) (Figure 3).
- The proclivity to sit out the election was also considerably stronger among the highly educated (17% of those with post-secondary education) and relatively well-off citizens (13% among those experiencing no lived poverty) compared to the less educated (6% of those with no formal education) and poor citizens (4% among those experiencing high lived poverty).
- Compared to 2017, the proportion of respondents who said they would vote for the NPP has dwindled by 15 percentage points (from 49% to 34%) while the share who said they would vote for the NDC has remained unchanged (22%) (Figure 4).

- Among declared voters, the NPP and NDC both held leads in eight out of the 16 regions, with the NDC generally more popular in the newly created regions<sup>1</sup> (Figure 5).

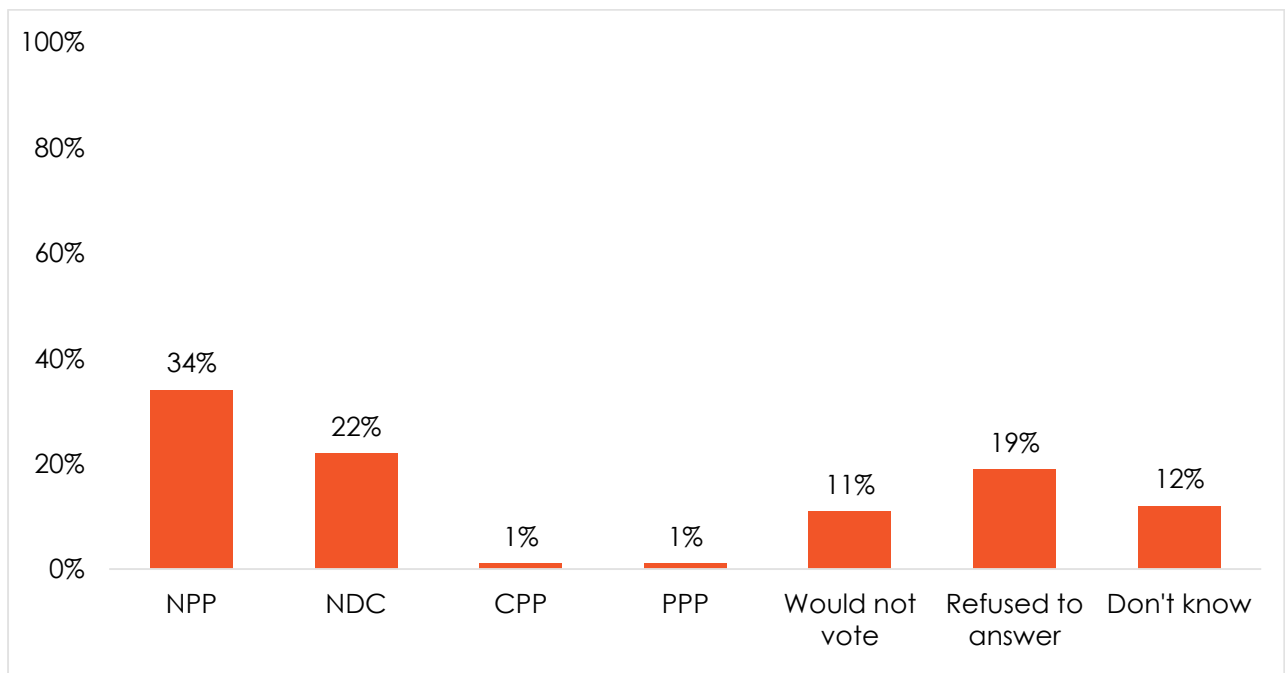
### Afrobarometer surveys

Afrobarometer heads a pan-African, nonpartisan research network that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions, and related issues across Africa. Seven rounds of surveys were completed in up to 38 countries between 1999 and 2018. Round 8 surveys are planned in at least 35 countries in 2019/2020. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples.

The Afrobarometer team in Ghana, led by the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana), interviewed 2,400 adult Ghanaians between 16 September and 3 October 2019. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-2 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys were conducted in Ghana in 1999, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2014, and 2017.

### Charts

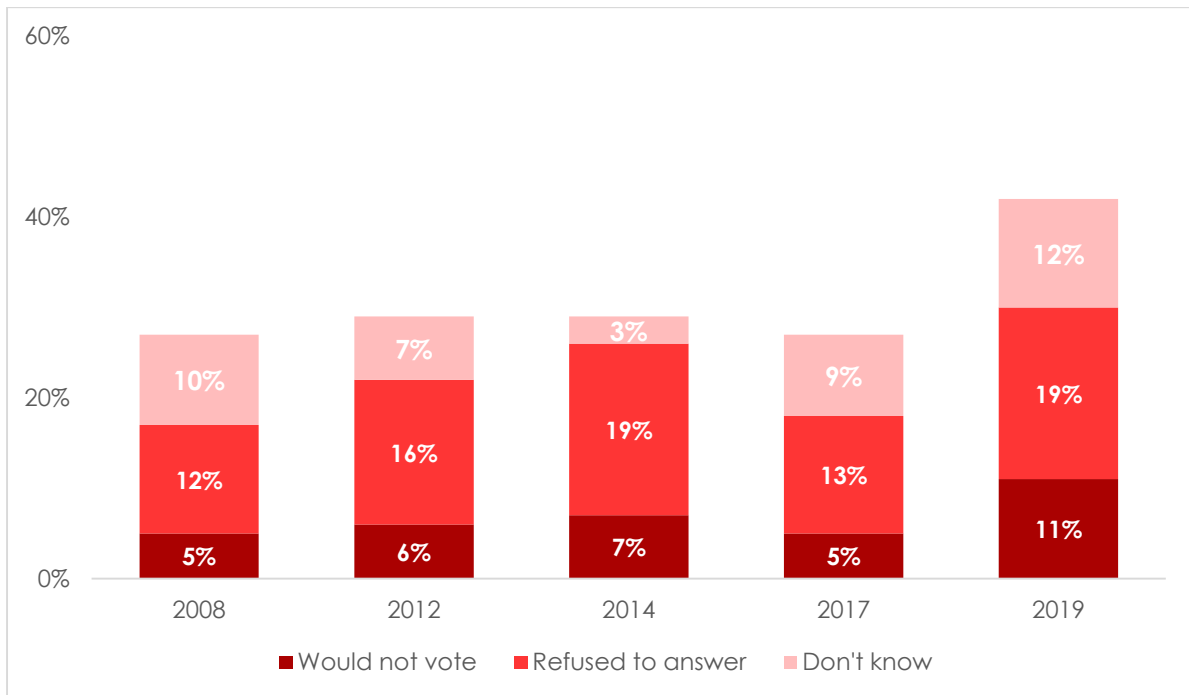
**Figure 1: Whom would you vote for? | Ghana | 2019**



**Respondents were asked:** *If presidential elections were held tomorrow, which party's candidate would you vote for?*

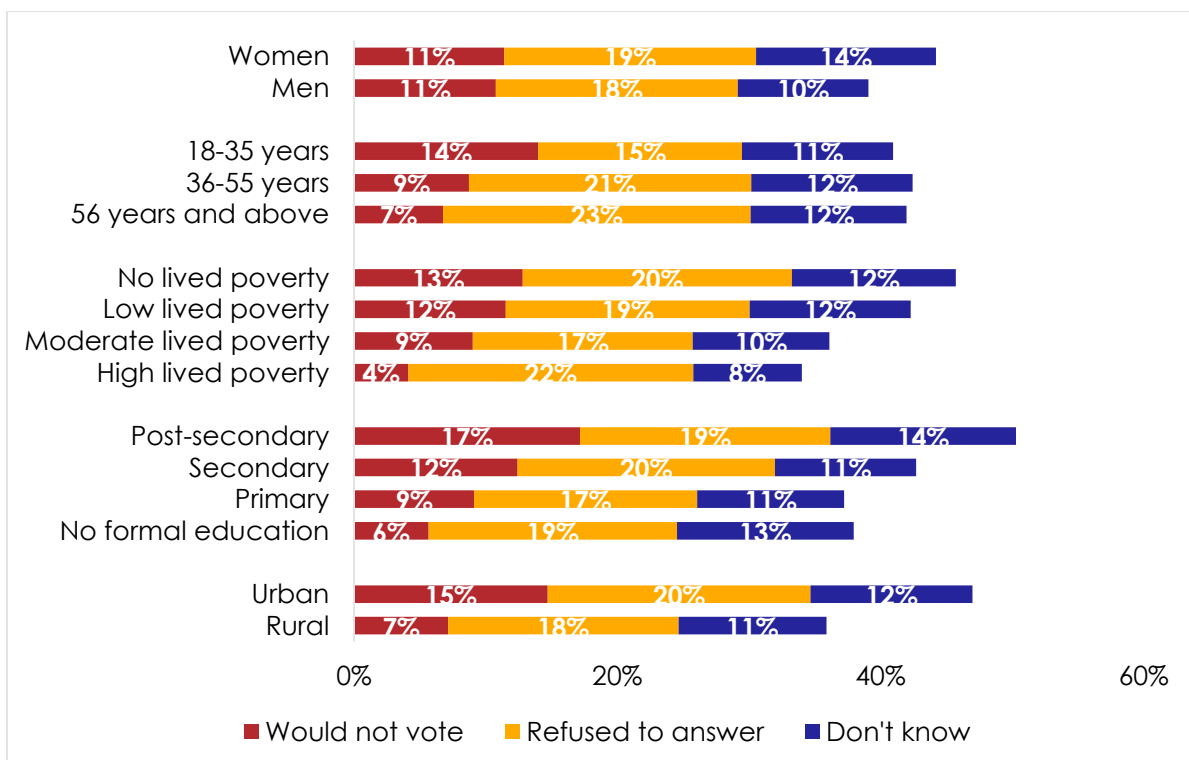
<sup>1</sup> Small sample sizes in regions with relatively small shares of the national population result in large survey margins of error (i.e. less precise survey findings) in those regions. Findings for North East, Savannah, Ahafo, Upper West, Oti, and Western North regions should be interpreted with care.

**Figure 2: Non-voters and undeclared voters | Ghana | 2008-2019**



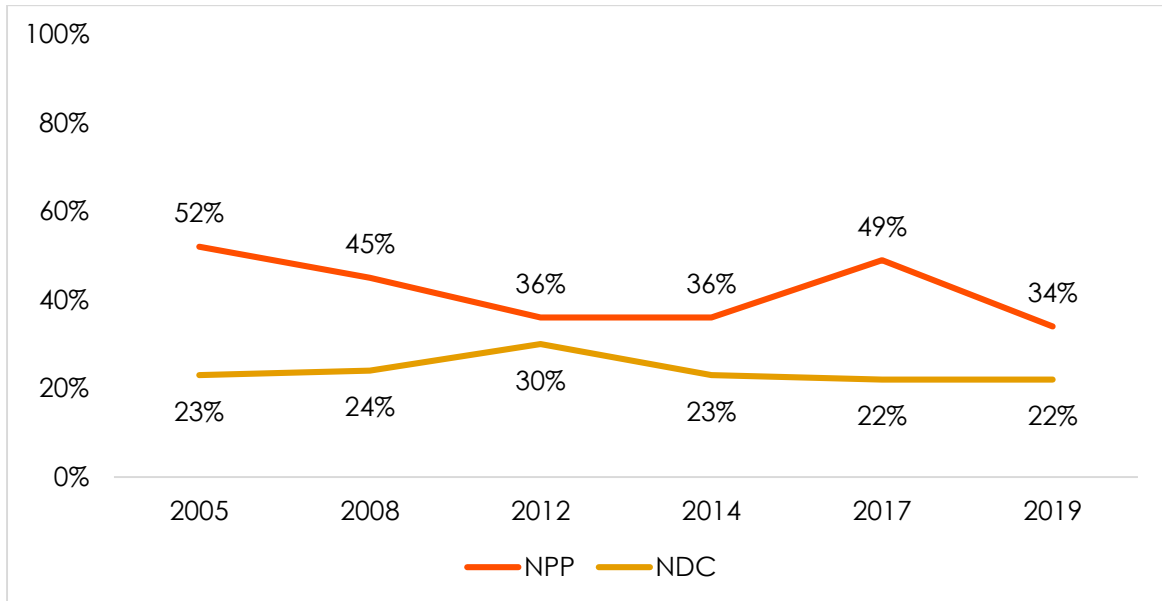
**Respondents were asked:** *If presidential elections were held tomorrow, which party's candidate would you vote for?*

**Figure 3: Non-voters and undeclared voters | by socio-demographic group | Ghana | 2019**



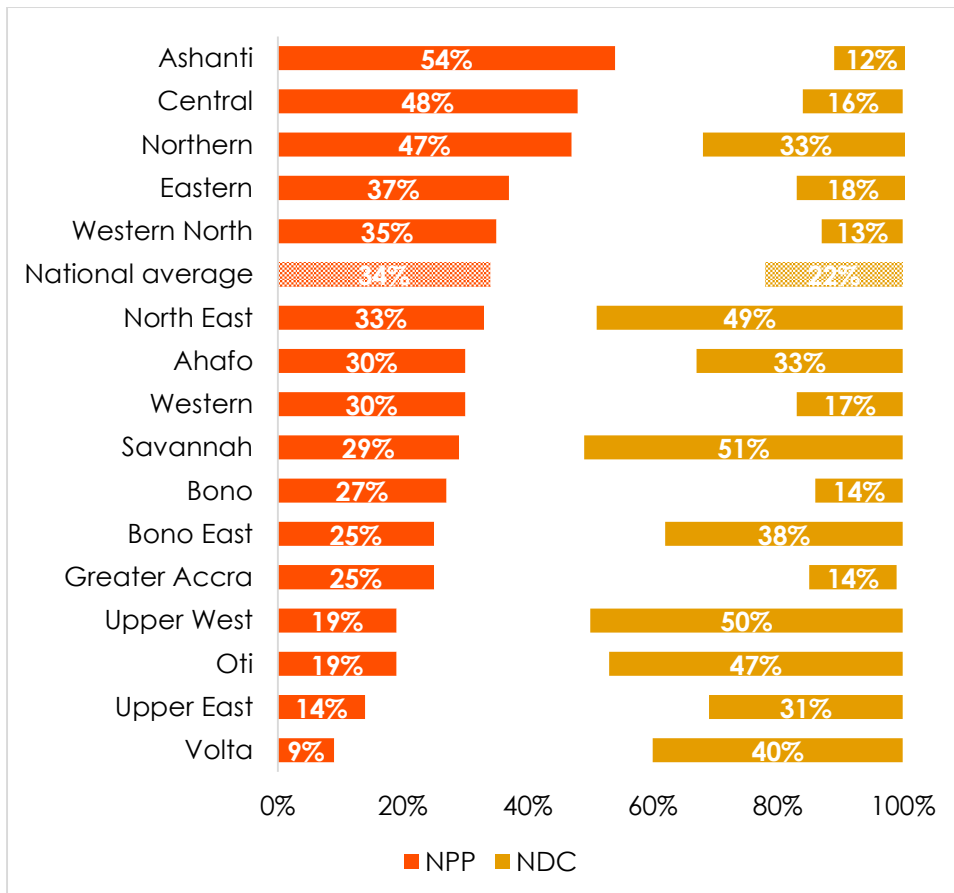
**Respondents were asked:** *If presidential elections were held tomorrow, which party's candidate would you vote for?*

**Figure 4: Whom would you vote for? | Ghana | 2005-2019**



**Respondents were asked:** *If presidential elections were held tomorrow, which party's candidate would you vote for?*

**Figure 5: Differences in voter preferences | by region | Ghana | 2019**



**Respondents were asked:** *If presidential elections were held tomorrow, which party's candidate would you vote for?*

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