

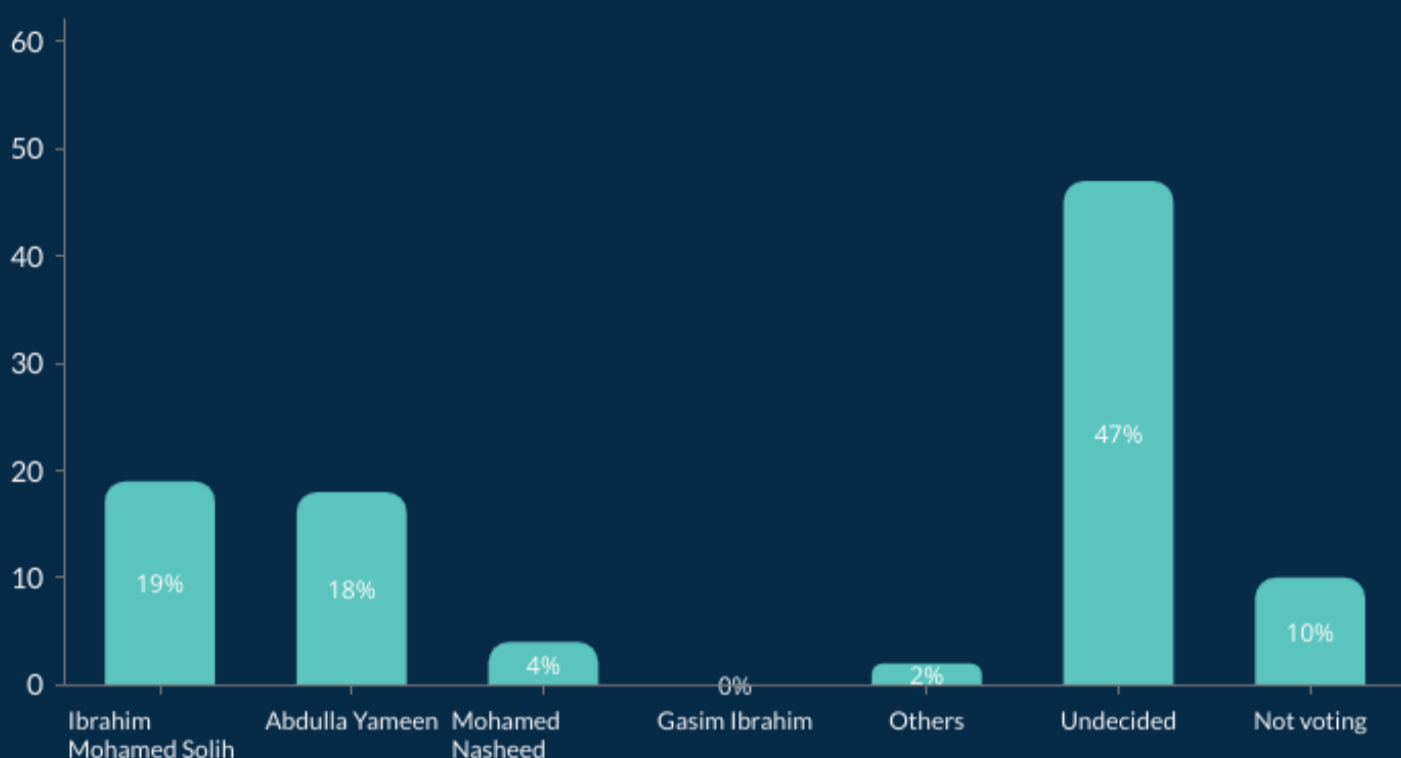
BAANI ELECTION POLL- SNAPSHOT

JULY 2023 POLL IN NUMBERS

WE ASKED MALDIVIANS WHO THEY WOULD VOTE FOR IF AN ELECTION WERE TO BE HELD TOMORROW

Here are their answers

Candidate preference (weighted)



IN JUNE
WE CALLED

5579

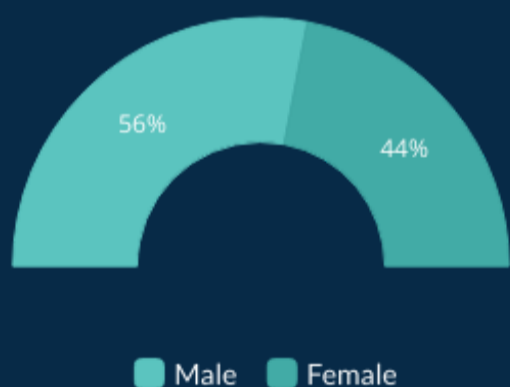
RANDOMLY GENERATED
NUMBERS

OF THOSE

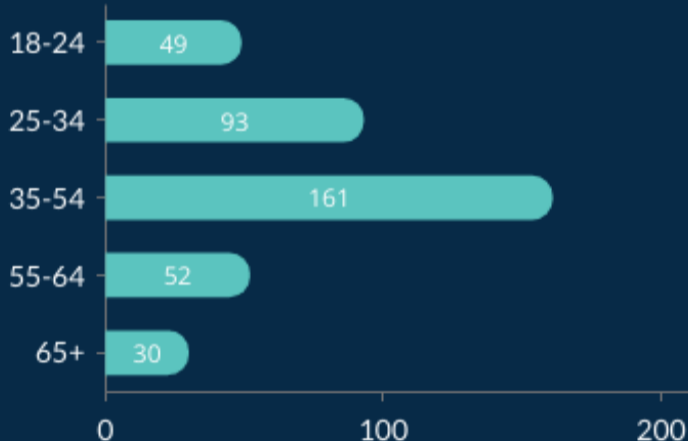
- 385 Calls were successful
- 438 Calls were rejected
- 896 Were either switched off or did not pick up
- 3860 Numbers were inactive

REQUIRED SAMPLE FOR THE POLL 384 RESPONSES

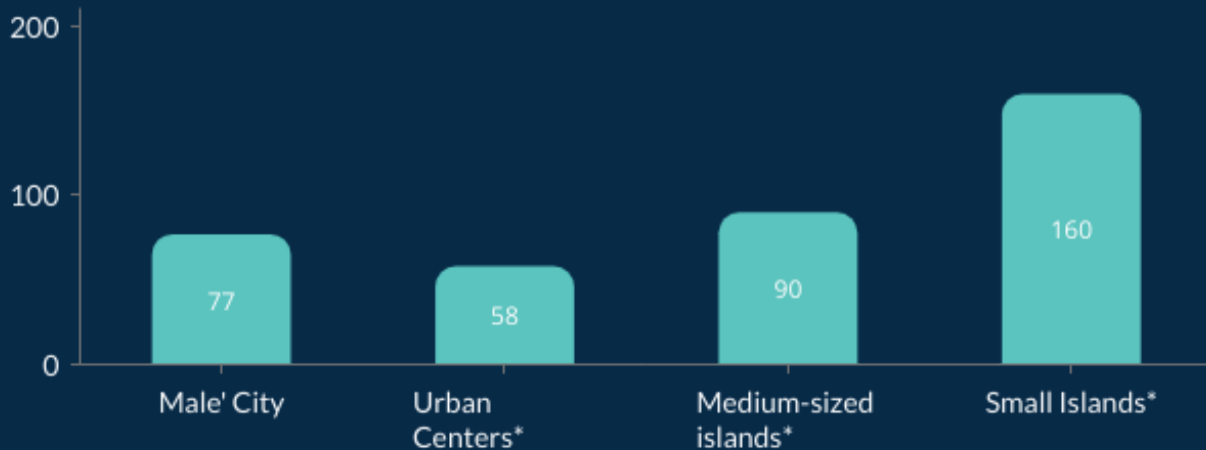
Responses by Gender



Responses by Age Groups



Responses by Location



* Urban Centers - Islands with population higher than 5000.
* Medium-sized - Islands with population higher than 1500
* Small islands - Islands with population less than 1500

THE POLL RESULTS ARE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE VOTING POPULATION OF THE MALDIVES, WITH A 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL AND A 5% MARGIN OF ERROR. THIS MEANS THAT IF THE POLL WAS CONDUCTED MULTIPLE TIMES, 95% OF THE TIME THE RESULTS WOULD BE WITHIN 5% OF THE RESULTS SHOWN.



Baani Election Poll 2023 - July Report

A public information project by the Baani Center for International Policy

25 July 2023



Baani Election Poll - July Report

Introduction

Our opinion poll gauges the popularity of all the main political leaders through a random telephone interview. The poll is conducted monthly, to allow us to see how politicians' popularity shifts over time.

The poll follows internationally established methodology guidelines regarding sample size, as well as weighting for respondents' age and gender. Our poll has a 95% confidence level, with a 5% margin of error and is conducted in Dhivehi by a team of trained Maldivian enumerators.

Our Polling Methodology

Sample Size

In the 2019 parliamentary election, 264,442 individuals were eligible to vote.¹ Based on this figure,, we need to conduct a minimum of 384 telephone interviews to generate results with a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error. This means that if the survey was conducted multiple times, 95% of the time the results would be within 5% of the results in this report.

The Questionnaire

The telephone questionnaire collected the following information from each participant:

1. Citizenship(Q1)
2. Age (Q2)
3. Gender (Q3)
4. Permanently registered island (voting constituency) (Q4)
5. Preferred candidate (Q5)
6. Preferred political party (Q6)

Information was only collected from Maldivians, who are 18 years of age at the time of the call. The Poll was conducted in Dhivehi over the phone.

To determine respondents' preferred political candidate, we asked the following open-ended question: Q5) *"If a presidential election was held tomorrow, and all the main politicians are able to contest, who would you vote for?"*

¹ <http://statisticsmaldives.gov.mv/yearbook/2021/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2021/06/20.5.pdf>

This approach was taken because it still remains unclear who the candidates will be at the presidential election. The question helped us capture the respondents' preference at the time of the survey. In future polls, we may rephrase the question to limit responses to candidates who are officially on the ballot.

The full questionnaire (Dhivehi and English) can be found at Annex 1.

Phone Number generation

To achieve the required sample size of 380 telephone interviews, we estimated having to call around 3,800 numbers, assuming a success rate of 10 per cent. As we were unable to obtain a list of active mobile phone numbers from telecom operators we had to generate our own list. To do this, we used a random number generator to generate two separate lists of 7 digit numbers. The first list consisted of numbers that begin with a "7" (Dhiraagu Numbers), and the second list consisted of numbers that begin with a "9" (Ooredoo numbers). The two lists were then merged and randomized to create a fully random list of phone numbers.

Polling Period

To ensure that we capture voters' preferences in a timely manner, we conducted telephone interviews over a four-day period. A survey conducted over a longer period could potentially obscure the data set as respondents would be influenced by political events. Data collection began on July 17 and concluded on July 20.

Enumeration

To conduct the survey we employed a team of experienced Maldivian enumerators and trained them. The enumerators input the data gathered from the surveys into our data collection tool. Additionally, the enumerators tracked the number of successful calls and deactivated numbers, allowing us to track response rates.

Data Weighting

In order to weight the data, we use publicly available information to determine our desired makeup of the sample, which was then compared to our actual sample. A weighting factor for each of our data categories (age and gender) was then determined and used to calculate a weighted result.

Safety Measures

We take data safety seriously and took the following measures to protect our data:

- 1) Our data is stored securely with limited access.
- 2) Following each poll the phone number lists will be stored only for a period of one month and will not be shared with third parties, to ensure privacy of survey respondents.
- 3) All data sharing happens through double-encrypted services.

Prior to polling we informed telecom operators, Maldives Police Service, National Bureau of Statistics and the Communication Authority of Maldives of our plans to conduct polling.

Limitations

While we put in extensive efforts to ensure our polling methodology is rigorous, no polling survey is perfect. Following are the limitations we encountered:

- 1) Data weighting - We have been unable to obtain location based demographic data from the Elections Commission. As a result, all location based results in this poll are not weighted. We did model location-based weighting by using our own estimates – and it affected the overall poll results by less than 1 percent. Nevertheless, in future polls, we hope to obtain the necessary data from the Elections Commission in order to allow location based weighting.

Results

Sample

During the July enumeration period we made a total of 5,579 telephone calls.

As seen in **Figure 1.1**, of the 5,579 calls, 385 were successful responses while 438 were persons who did not want to participate in the survey. Meanwhile, 896 numbers were either switched off or unresponsive and 3,860 phone numbers were inactive.

As shown in **Figure 1.2**, 56 percent of the respondents were male while 44 percent of the respondents were female.

Bani weighted the gender data based on the results of the 2022 census, resulting in a weighted sample size of 196 male and 188 female responses.

Please note that all gender based analysis in this report will use the weighted data as opposed to the actual response data.

Figure 1.1: Total Calls Breakdown

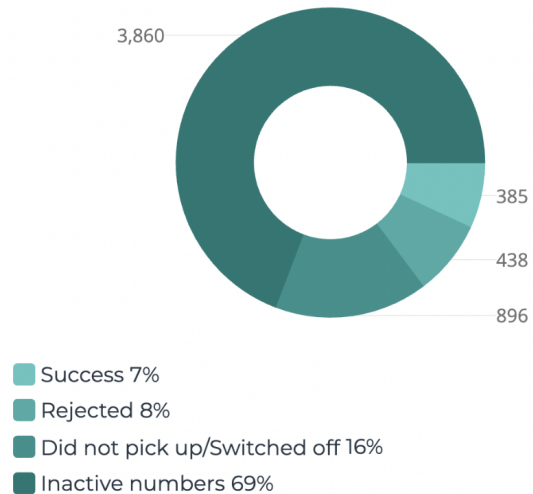
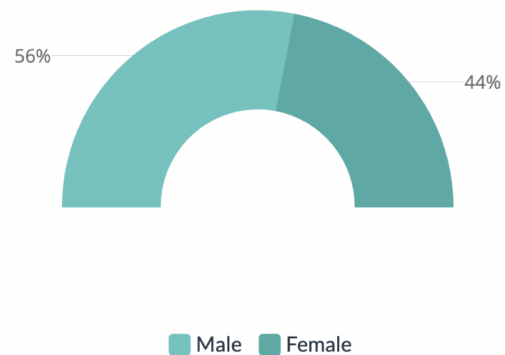
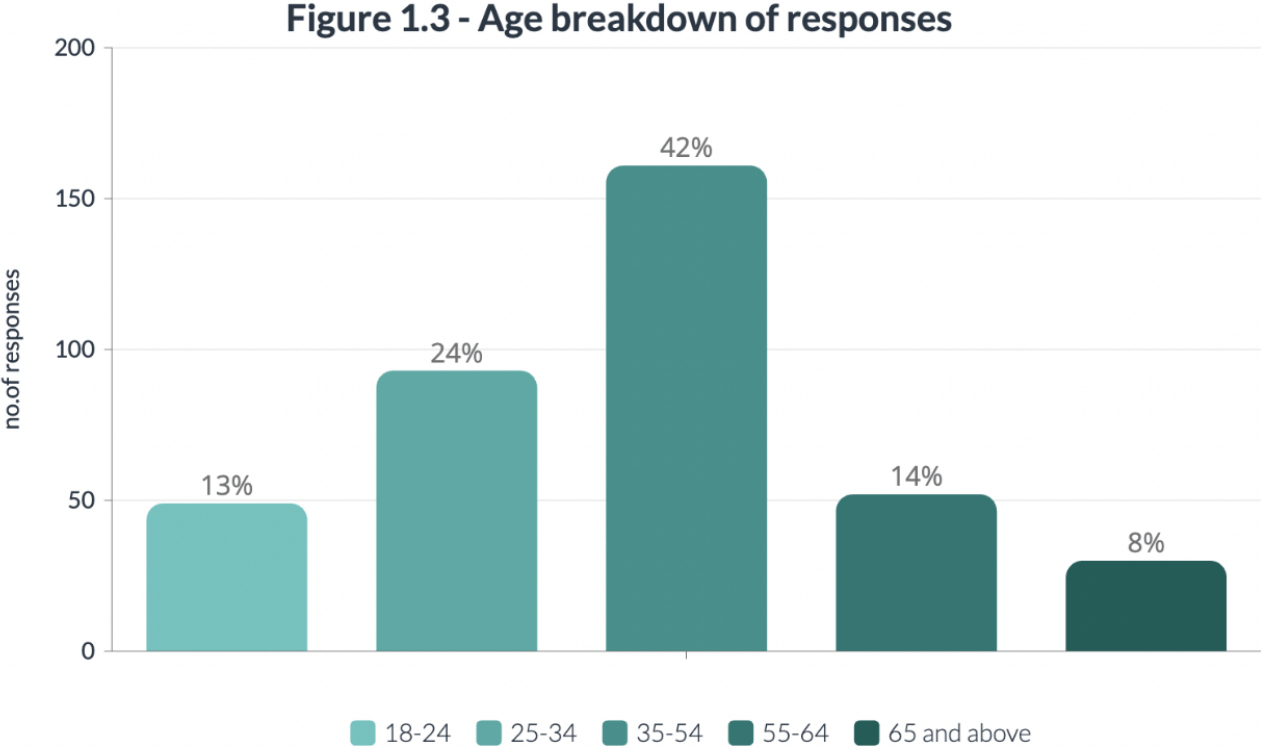


Figure 1.2 - Gender breakdown of responses



When looking at the different age groups (**Figure 1.3**), 13 percent respondents were between 18 to 25 years old, 24 percent were between 25 to 35 years old, 42 percent were between 35 to 54 years old, 14 percent were between 55 to 64 years old, and 8 percent were above 65.

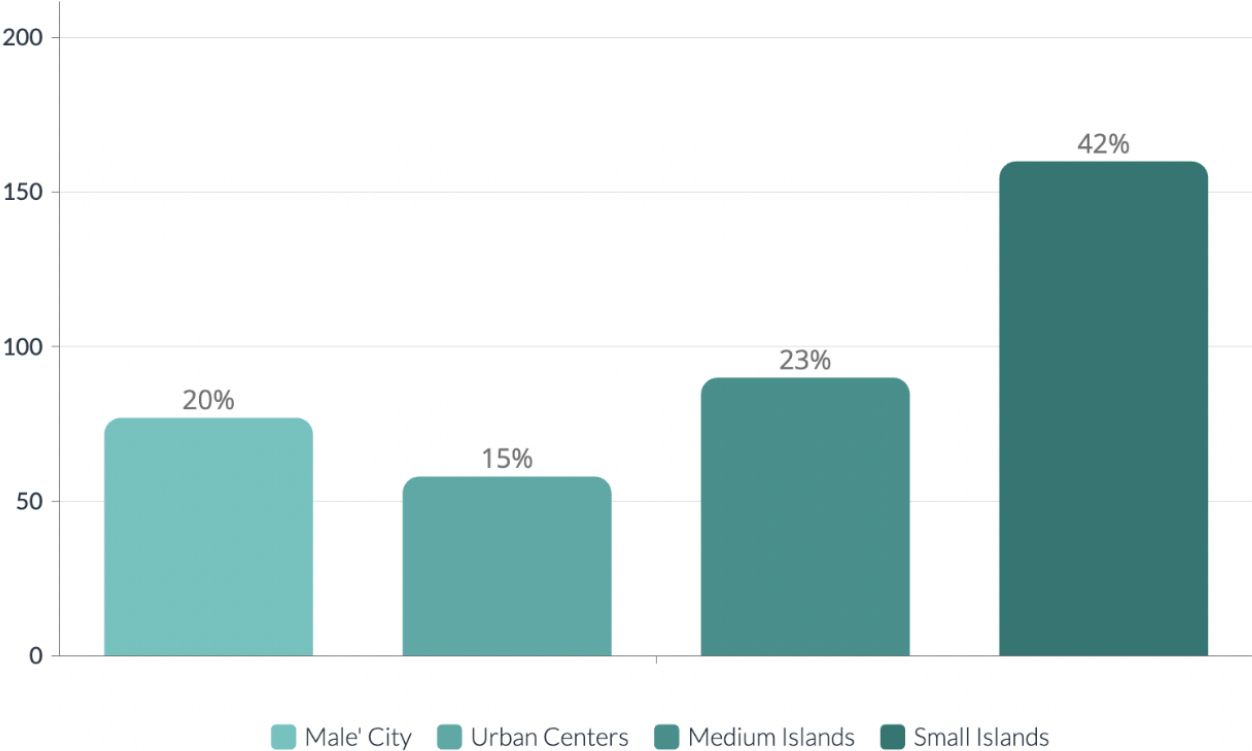


Here, again, we weighted the data using information from the 2022 census. All age based analysis below uses weighted data. The age weighting is as follows:

- 18 to 24 years - 60
- 25 to 34 years - 106
- 35 to 54 years - 150
- 55 to 64 years - 40
- 65 and above - 29

When looking at the geographic spread of the respondents (**Figure 1.4**), 20 percent of the respondents were from Male' City, 15 percent were from Urban Centers (islands with population above 5,000). Medium-sized island (population above 1,500) responses made up 23 percent of responses and 42 percent of the responses were from small islands (population below 1,500).

Figure 1.4 - Geographic breakdown of responses



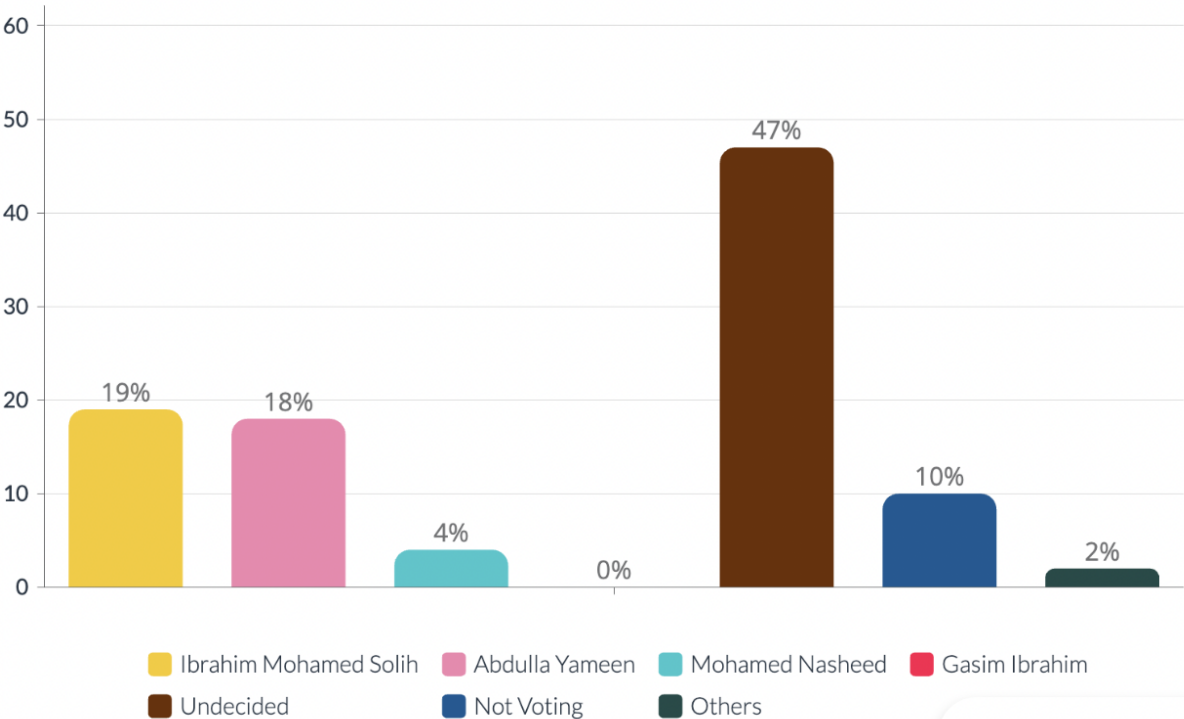
Since the 2022 census data records resident population, as opposed to the number of people registered to an island, we requested for a list of eligible voters disaggregated by location from the Elections Commission. However, this information was not available at the time of publication and we were unable to weight the data by location. If we had used the resident population figures from the census to weight the data, the results would have been heavily biased towards Male', the capital city. However, this would not have been useful since voting is based on the voter registry for each constituency, not on the resident population.

Preferred candidate

July’s data (Figure 2.1) indicates that while a majority of Maldivians (47%) are yet to decide on how they will vote in the upcoming election, the difference between the two leading candidates, President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih and former President Abdulla Yameen has dropped to 1 percent. President Solih received 19% support while former President Yameen received 18% support.

Figure 2.1 - Voter Preference

When asked who they would vote for if an election were to be held tomorrow (weighted)

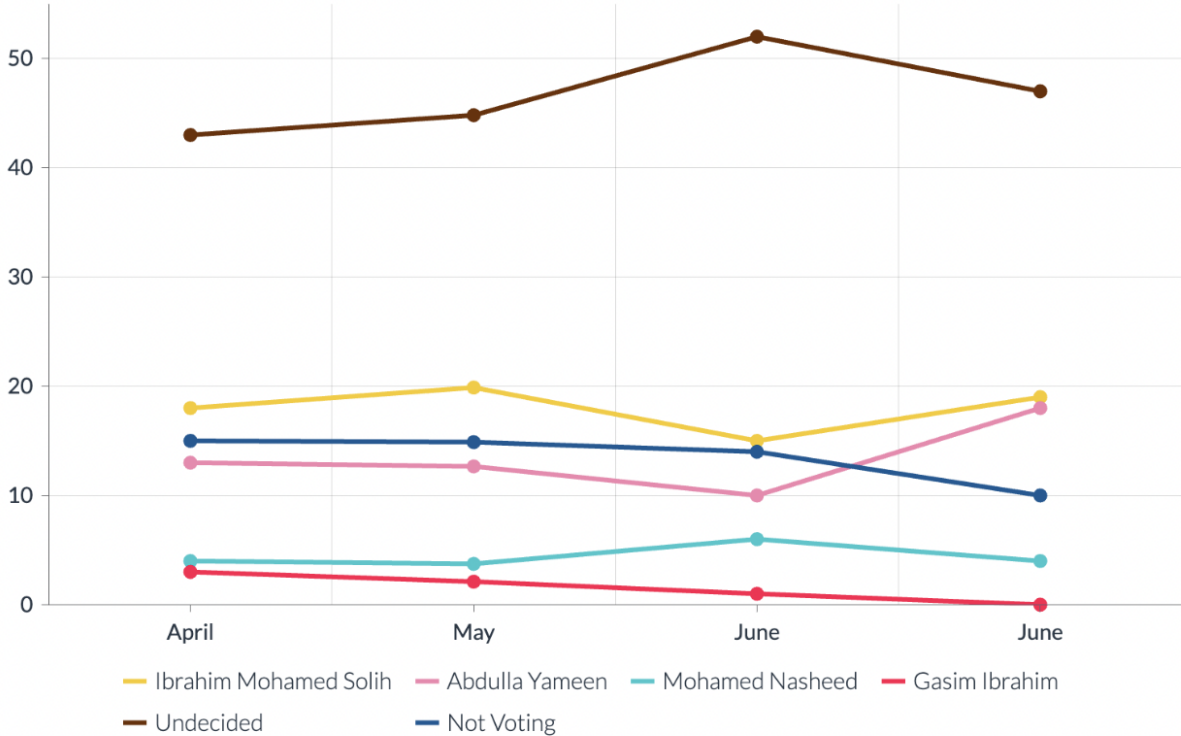


Speaker of Parliament and former President Mohamed Nasheed was the third most popular candidate with a 4% vote share. Other candidates received 2% support. Ten percent of Maldivians indicated that they are not going to vote in the upcoming election.

Compared to the previous months (**Figure 2.2**), President Solih seems to have regained some lost ground in June going from 15% in June to 19% in July. Meanwhile, President Yameen’s poll numbers saw a stronger resurgence from 10% in June to 18% in July. President Nasheed’s popularity decreased slightly from 6% percent in June to 4% in July.

Figure 2.2 - Voter Preference

When asked who they would vote for if an election were to be held tomorrow (cross comparison across months)

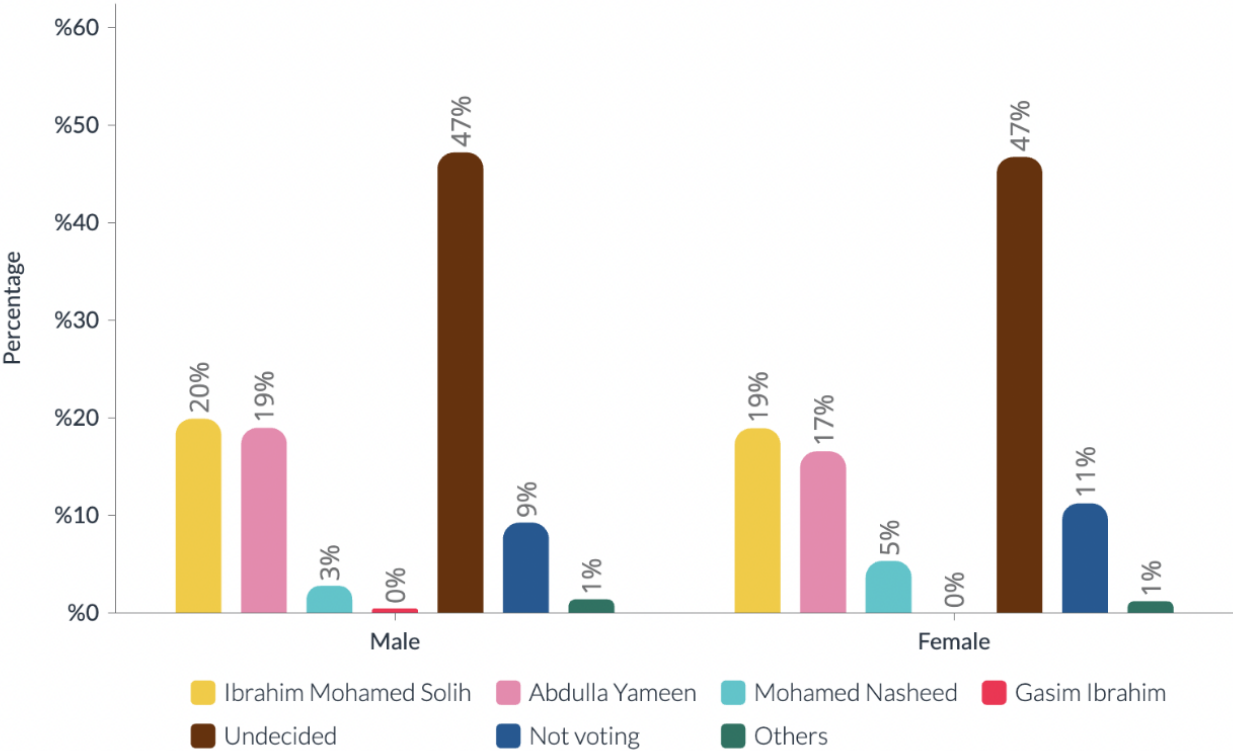


People who said they would not vote in a presidential election remained almost consistent at 14-15% over the first three months but decreased in July to 10%. The undecided category also slightly decreased from 52% in June to 47% in July.

When looking at preferences between men and women (**Figure 2.3**), President Solih was the most popular candidate across both Male (20%) and Female (19%) respondents. Both men and women are equally undecided on who to vote for at 47%.

Figure 2.3 - Voter preference across genders

When asked who they would vote for if an election were to be held tomorrow (weighted)

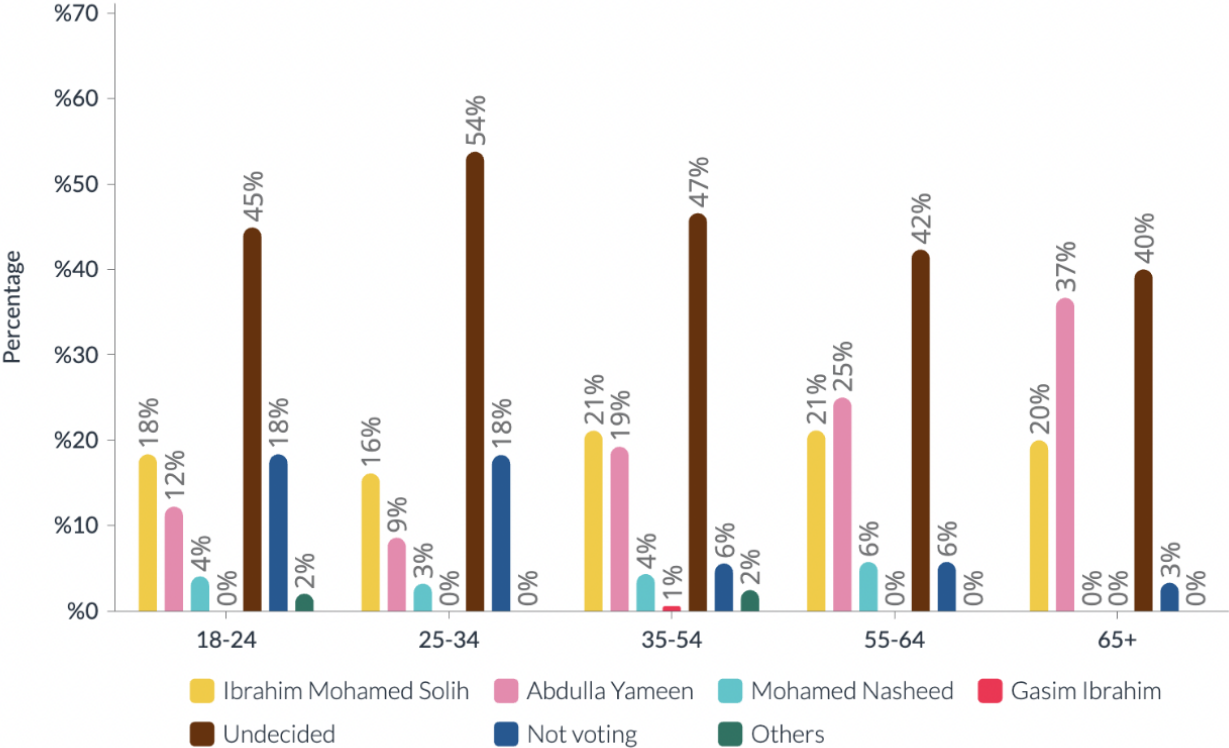


Former President Abdulla Yameen was close behind, with 19% of men indicating support and 17% of women indicating they would vote for the former President. Meanwhile, across both genders, 47% indicated that they are yet to decide on how they will vote. Speaker of Parliament Mohamed Nasheed won a popularity rating of 3% amongst male voters and 5% amongst female voters.

When looking at voter preference across age groups (Figure 2.4), President Solih was the most popular candidate amongst those between 18-24 years, 25-34 years and 35-54 years. Meanwhile, former President Yameen was the most preferred candidate for those between 55-64 years and above 65 years. Yameen scored the highest popularity across all ages with 37% of those above 65 years choosing to vote for the former president.

Figure 2.4 - Voter Preference across age groups

When asked who they would vote for if an election were to be held tomorrow (weighted)

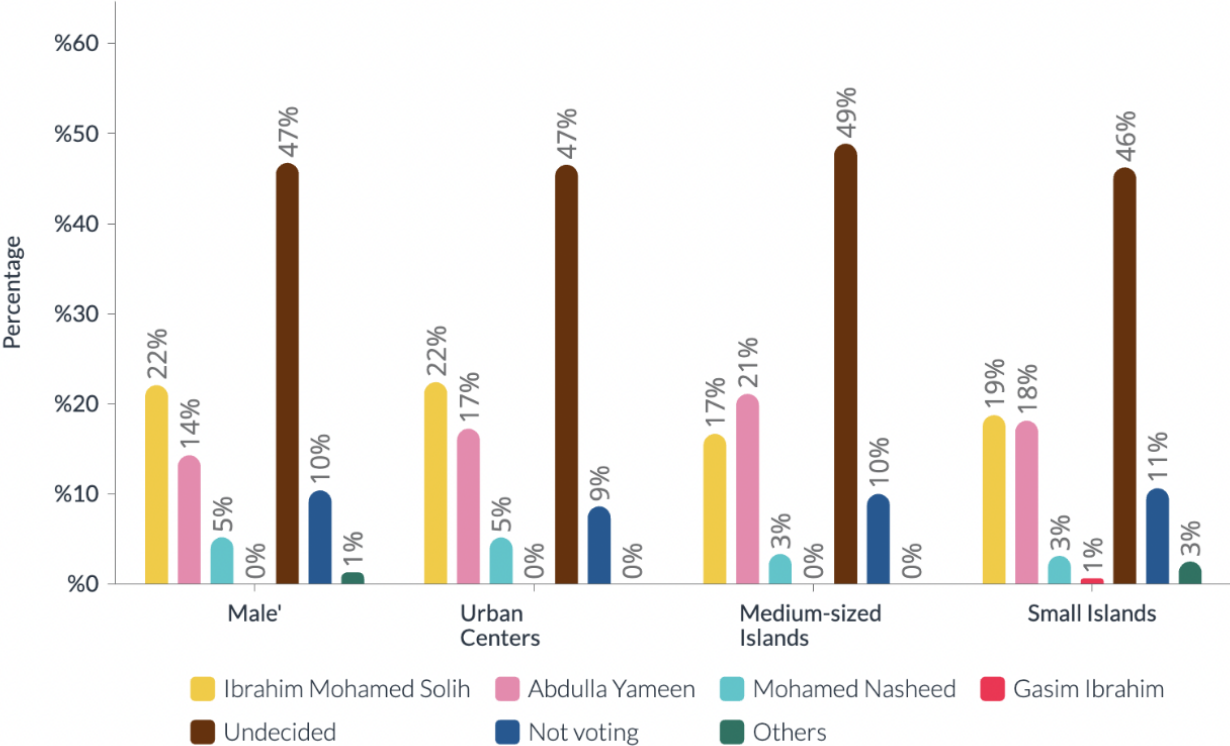


While a considerable portion of the population remains undecided across all age groups, those aged 65 and above exhibit the lowest level of indecision, standing at 40%. Among those who expressed their intention not to vote, the largest proportion (18%) came from the 18 to 24-year-old and 25 to 34 years old age brackets, whereas only 3% of individuals between 55 and 64 years old reported that they would abstain from voting.

President Solih was the most popular across Male' and urban centers(**Figure 2.5**), winning 22% of the support from both locations. Meanwhile,. Former President Abdulla Yameen emerged as the favored candidate in medium-sized islands, securing 21% of the vote compared to President Solih's 17%.

Figure 2.5 - Voter Preference Across Locations

When asked who they would vote for if an election were to be held tomorrow (unweighted)

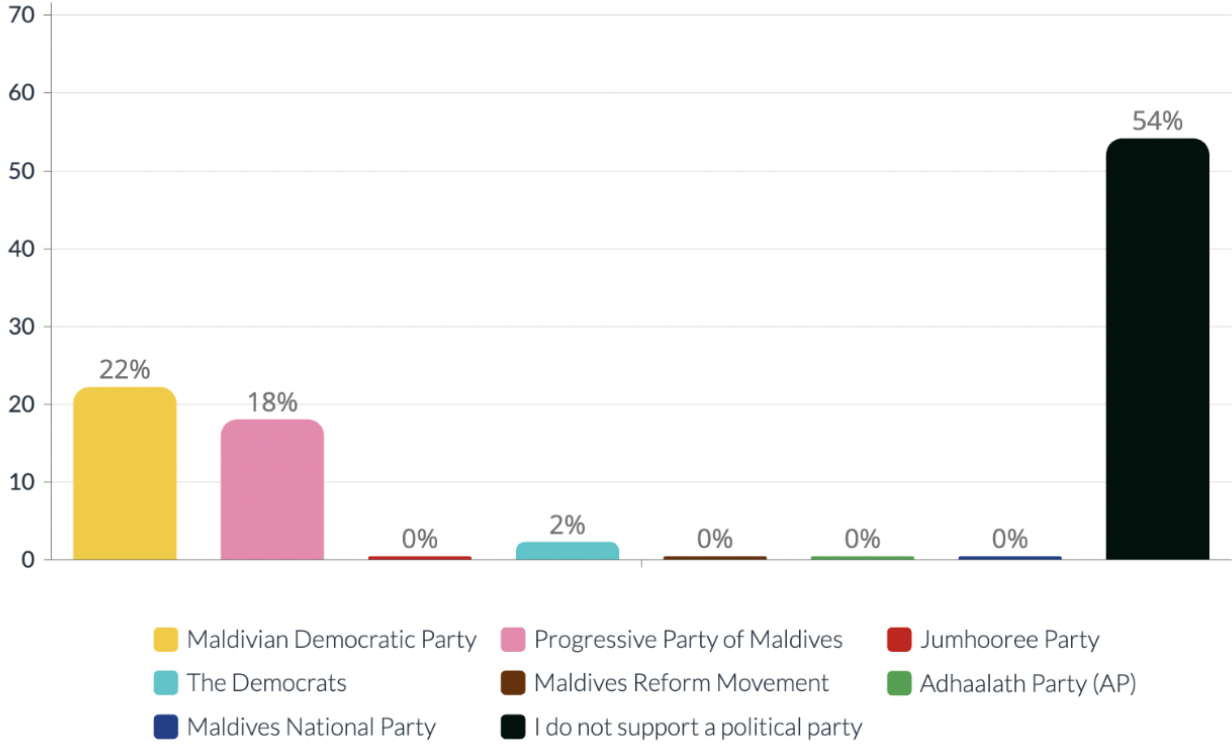


Across all locations, most voters are yet to decide who to vote for, with over 45% of voters in all locations indicating that they are yet to decide on who they will vote for in the upcoming election. Speaker Nashede scored 5% in Male' and urban centers.

When asked if they supported any political party or political ideology (**Figure 2.6**), 54% of the respondents stated that they did not support a political party. The ruling Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) was the most popular with 22% of respondents stating that they supported the party.

Figure 2.6 - Party preference

When asked if they supported a political party or political ideology



Meanwhile, the opposition Progressive Party of Maldives received 18% of support. Newly formed the Democrats, received 2 percent of the support.

Analysis

July's poll revealed a significant jump in popularity for former President Yameen, who's support increased from 10% in June to 18% in July – an increase greater than the poll's 5% margin of error.

President Solih's numbers also improved over the past month, from 15% in June to 19% in July. Former President Nasheed's popularity dipped from 6% in June to 4% in July, while support for Gasim Ibrahim vanished in July, leaving him on 0%.

With undecided voters still stubbornly high, at 47% in July (down from 52% in June), the election still remains inherently difficult to predict. Since Baani started conducting the monthly tracker poll in April, those saying they are undecided on who they will vote for has remained well above 40%.

The Elections Commission will announce the list of candidates in early August. It will be interesting to see if the number of undecided voters decreases once people are sure of who will stand in the election, or whether the election will remain highly uncertain right up until voting day. Baani's August opinion poll will shed some light on this question.

Baani will conduct monthly polls up to the presidential elections in September. All our results are available online at <https://baanicentre.org/research/>.

Annex 1 - Baani Election Poll Questionnaire (English)

Assalaamu Alaikum!

I am calling on behalf of Baani Centre, a local NGO. We are conducting a poll to gauge the public's opinion of political leaders ahead of the 2023 presidential election.

Your number was randomly selected for the survey, which will take 2 minutes. Participation is voluntary, and we will not ask any questions that can be used to identify you. We will share the results of the opinion poll with you when it is finished.

May I proceed with the survey?

- If yes - Proceed to Questions below
- If no - Thank them and conclude the call

Q1) Are you a Maldivian citizen? (ask if only unable to determine)

- a) Yes
- b) No

If the answer is no, conclude the survey.

Q2) What is your age? (Do not provide options)

- a) 18 to 25 years old
- b) 25 - 35 years old
- c) 35 - 50 years old
- d) Over 50 years old

If the answer is "Under 18 years," conclude the survey.

Q3) What is your sex? (ask only if unable to determine)

- a) Male
- b) Female

Q4) Which island are you registered to?

- a) Select from Island list

Q5) If a presidential election was held tomorrow, and all the main politicians are able to contest, who would you vote for? (Do not provide options)

- a) President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih
- b) Former president Abdulla Yameen
- c) Speaker of Parliament and former President Mohamed Nasheed
- d) Ibrahim Qasim

- e) Colonel Mohamed Nazim
- f) Others

Q6) What is your preferred political party or political ideology?

- a) Maldivian Democratic Party
- b) Progressive Party of Maldives
- c) Jumhooree Party
- d) The Democrats
- e) Adhaalath Party
- f) Maldives National Party
- g) Maldives Reform Movement
- h) Others
- i) I do not support a political party of ideology

Thank you for your participation. Share website if requested.

