

International Day of Living Together in Peace; a Call for Peaceful Coexistence in Nigeria

What makes you proud and happy to be a Nigerian?



20%

Abundance of
Natural Resources

15%

Cultural
Diversity

12%

Peaceful
Coexistence

11%

My Place
of Birth

7%

Freedom of
Speech and
Movement

On a scale of 0-10, where 0 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'very well'. How well do you interact with Nigerians of different ethnic backgrounds from yours?

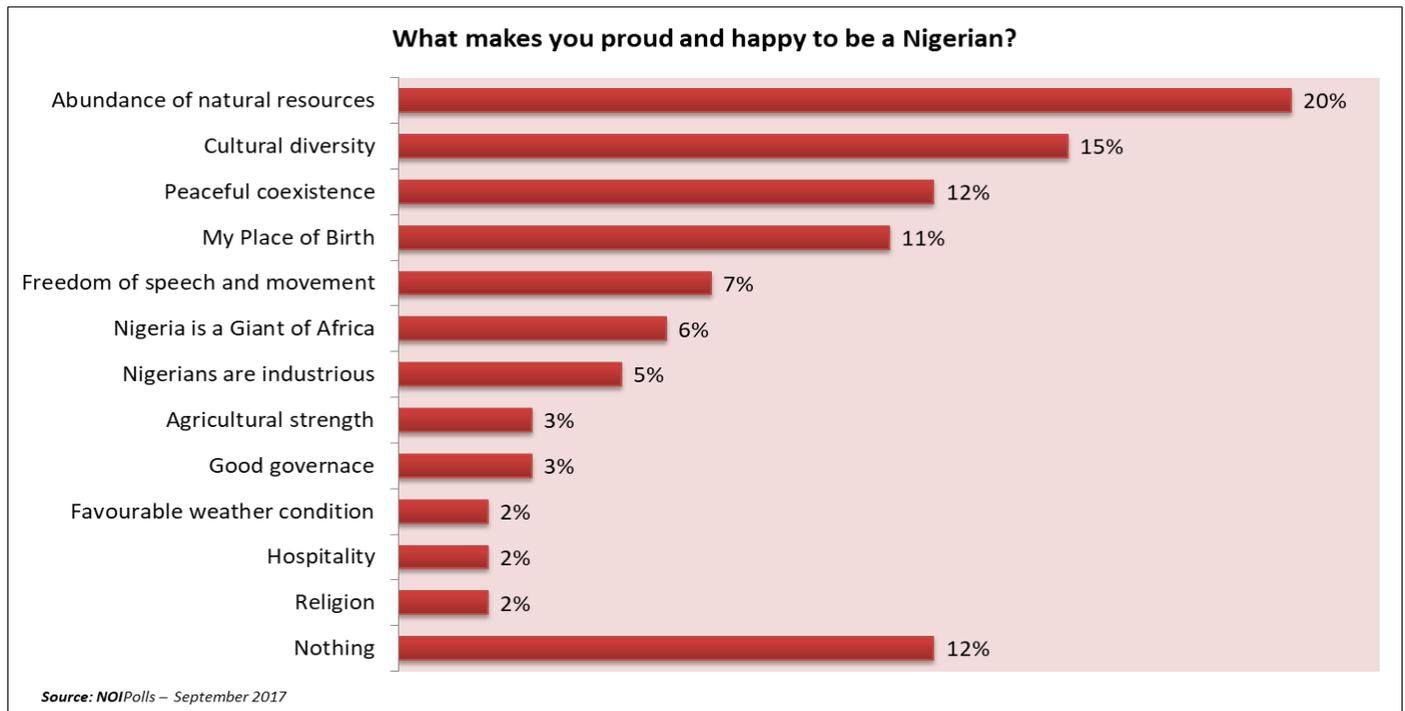
7.5
Average



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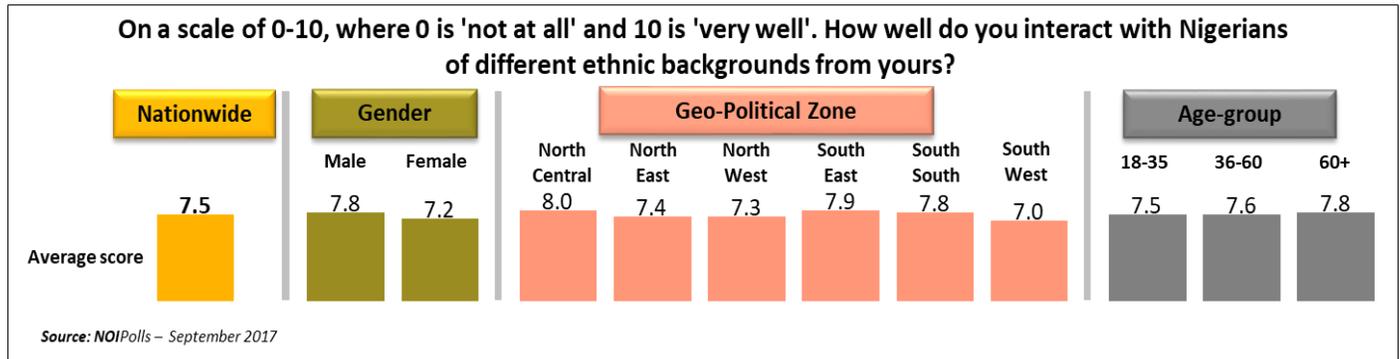
Abuja, Nigeria. May 15th, 2018 – The inauguration of the United Nation’s (UN) International Day of Living Together in Peace, having been officially recognised by the UN General Assembly in December 2017, will be celebrated on May 16th 2018. The annual celebration was declared as a means of regularly mobilizing the efforts of the international community to promote peace, tolerance, inclusion, understanding and solidarity. The Day aims to uphold the desire to live and act together, united in differences and diversity, in order to build a sustainable world of peace, solidarity and harmony. In addition, the Day further invites countries to promote reconciliation to help to ensure peace and sustainable development, by working with communities, faith leaders and other relevant actors, through reconciliatory measures and acts of service and by encouraging forgiveness and compassion among individuals.

In line with this, NOIPolls presents results and findings from its previous public opinion poll which gauged the perception of Nigerians on what makes them proud to be Nigerians. The poll revealed that, besides the abundance of natural resources, Nigerians are proud of the cultural diversity and the peaceful coexistence that exists within its enormous ethnographic heritage, amidst other factors shown in the chart below. These findings are encouraging considering that Nigeria has experienced it’s fair share of security challenges that has threatened peaceful coexistence amongst different tribes and religious groups in the country. Over time, there have been challenges of Boko Haram insurgency, Herdsmen and farmer’s crisis and sectarian crisis which have distorted peaceful coexistence in some regions of the country.



There is no doubt that lack of peace and tranquillity hinders the development of any nation and Nigeria is not excluded. Peaceful coexistence requires the recognition, acceptance and respect for differences, fostered by healthy social interaction between different ethno-religious groups in Nigeria. The chart below revealed that the level of social interaction among the Nigeria population on a scale of 0 to 10 (where 0 represents no interaction and 10 represent a high level of interaction) stood at 7.5. This represents a positive level of social interaction among

Nigerians; which can influence peaceful coexistence given other positive socio-economic factors such as governance and economic stability.



In conclusion, given that Nigerians are open to peaceful coexistence as clearly shown in the findings above, the National Orientation Agency (NOA) and other stakeholders should synergise efforts in public education on the importance of living together in peace in Nigeria. As a short term strategy, public education on peaceful coexistence may be carefully presented in form of public debates championed through various media outlets (especially radio stations) and social media platforms. Also, open rallies in educational institutions, NYSC camps; public places such as motor parks and religious institutions can be adopted for the dissemination of key messages to foster greater peaceful coexistence among Nigerians. As a long term strategy, government at all levels should integrate the doctrines of peaceful coexistence in the curriculum at the basic education in order to raise a new generation of peace loving citizens. Finally, the power of sports as a unifying tool can also be harnessed in bridging divides and strengthening tolerance and peaceful coexistence in Nigeria.

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