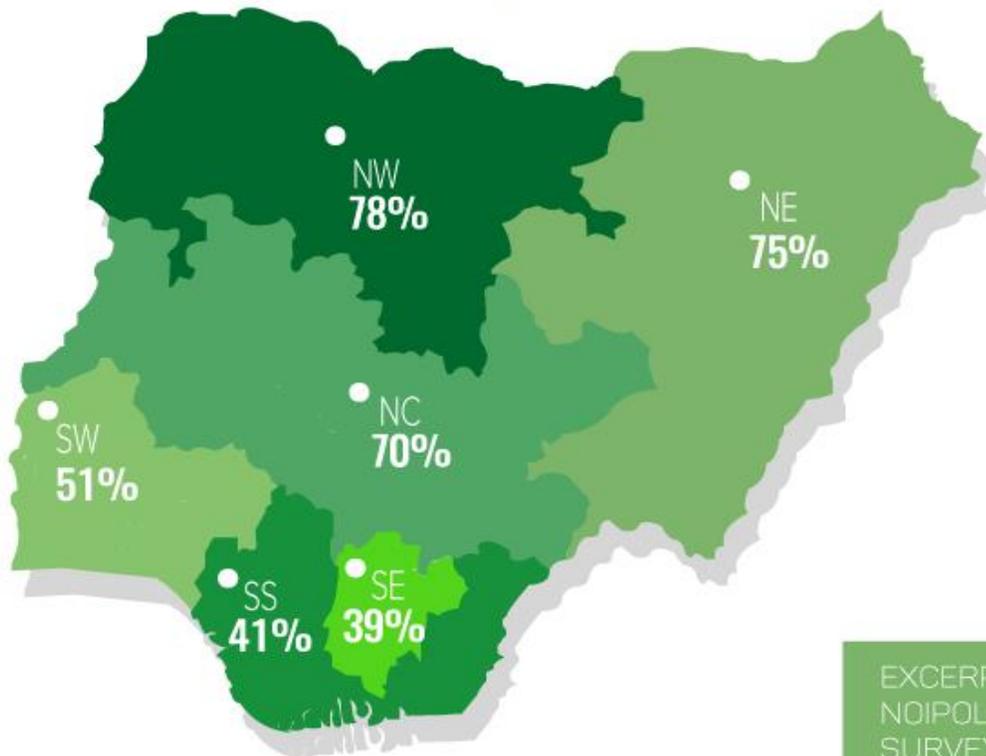




INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE: A CALL TO STRENGTHEN PEACE AND UNITY IN NIGERIA

60%

OF RESPONDENTS SAY THAT
AFTER OVER 100 YEARS OF EXISTENCE AND OVER 57 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE,
NIGERIA HAS FARED WELL AS ONE NATION DESPITE PERIODS OF CONFLICTS



EXCERPT FROM
NOIPOLLS NATIONAL
SURVEY CONDUCTED
IN 2017

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE

International Day of Peace; A Call to Strengthen Peace and Unity in Nigeria

Abuja, Nigeria. September 25th, 2018. The International Day of Peace is observed around the world annually on the 21st of September. According to the United Nations, the Day provides a globally shared date for all humanity to commit to Peace above all differences and to contribute to building a Culture of Peace. The UN Member States adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in 2015; and its Goal 16 is targeted at promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, providing access to justice for all and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels¹. The theme for the 2018 international Day of Peace was **“The Right to Peace - The Universal Declaration of Human Rights at 70”** signifying the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Since her independence, Nigeria has been ravaged by a civil war, an insurgency and various ethno-religious crisis with the Fulani herdsmen and farmers clashes been the most recent. Peace is of paramount importance in any country especially one like Nigeria which is characterized by different ethnicities and cultural diversity. In recent years the country has been plagued by various crisis like the continued Boko Haram insurgency, farmers and herdsmen conflict, kidnapping and ritual killings which puts citizens’ right to peace in jeopardy.

An excerpt from NOIPolls national survey conducted in 2017 highlighted that after over 100 years of existence and over 57 years of independence, a larger proportion of respondents (60 percent) are of the opinion that Nigeria has fared well as one nation despite periods of conflicts, while 40 percent thought otherwise. This perspective was equally shared in the same proportion by both male and female respondents. However, some little variations exist in terms of age distribution, where 62 percent, 56 percent and 61 percent of people aged 18-35, 36-60 and 61 and above felt the country has fared well as one nation during the period of its independence.

After over 100 years of existence and about 57 of independence, would you say Nigeria has fared well as ONE NATION? (Disaggregated by Gender and Age-Group)						
Response	Nationwide	Gender		Age Group		
		Male	Female	18-35	36-60	61+
Yes, Nigeria has fared well.	60%	60%	60%	62%	56%	61%
No, Nigeria has not fared well	40%	40%	40%	38%	44%	39%

In terms of geo-political distribution of responses as to whether Nigeria has fared well as one nation in its 57 years of independence, there are noticeable differences between the Northern and Southern regions. There were also some differences between urban and rural dwellers with 57 percent of the former and 64 percent of the latter agreeing that Nigeria has done well as a nation in 57 years of its independence.

¹ <http://www.un.org/en/events/peaceday/>

After over 100 years of existence and about 57 of independence, would you say Nigeria has fared well as ONE NATION? (Disaggregated by Geo-political Zone and Urbanization)									
Response	Nationwide	Geo-Political Zone						Urbanization	
		North Central	North East	North West	South East	South South	South West	Urban	Rural
<i>Yes, Nigeria has fared well</i>	60%	70%	75%	78%	39%	41%	51%	57%	64%
<i>No, Nigeria has not fared well</i>	40%	30%	25%	22%	61%	59%	49%	43%	36%

In conclusion, the survey revealed that most Nigerians, at the time the survey was conducted, believed that the country has fared well as one nation since independence. Therefore, it is crucial for government and all concerned stakeholders to promote peace and unity amongst Nigerians through various campaigns and programs. This year's international day of peace (right to peace) is a wakeup call to further foster unity, peace and progress in Nigeria.

Nigerians need to imbibe the culture of togetherness, cultivate the attitude of national interest, value the importance of national unity, and treasure our reputation for integrity, sovereignty, cultural diversity, natural endowment, and human resources while respecting each other's right to peace. The right to peace is fundamental to the existence of all humans and no one should be deprived of such right and liberty. The cost of peace is always cheaper than that of war, conflict and crime. United Nations has encouraged member nations in this year's celebration to be more proactive in order to ensure sustainable development and Nigeria is a key player in United Nation's peace keeping efforts.

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