



الباروميتر العربي
ARAB BAROMETER

Arab Barometer V

Jordan Country Report



2019

Executive summary

Jordan's existing social contract has come under severe strain. As the public grows more frustrated, the long-term trends suggest that the current situation is likely unsustainable. Trust in political institutions is in steep decline across the board - including government, parliament and even the judiciary. Jordanians have lost a sense of political possibility, and are not optimistic about their futures. Although trust in the security institutions remains high, other key political institutions need to increase their popular legitimacy. Given that this trend is not irreversible, the government has an opportunity to embrace this challenge and ensure a better future for all Jordanians.

A clear majority of Jordanians say that the economy is the biggest challenge facing their country, with corruption being the second most common response. However, nearly all say corruption is rampant in state agencies. Many do not believe the government is addressing these challenges adequately, and satisfaction with government performance is lower than any time over the last decade. Citizens are particularly frustrated with the government's efforts to create jobs and limit inflation.

As a result, almost half of all Jordanians are considering emigrating. That figure has doubled over the last two years. The poor economic conditions and stymied political process have combined to produce this clear rise in pessimism and desire to leave the country, particularly among the educated youth. Most potential migrants wish to go to North America and the GCC.

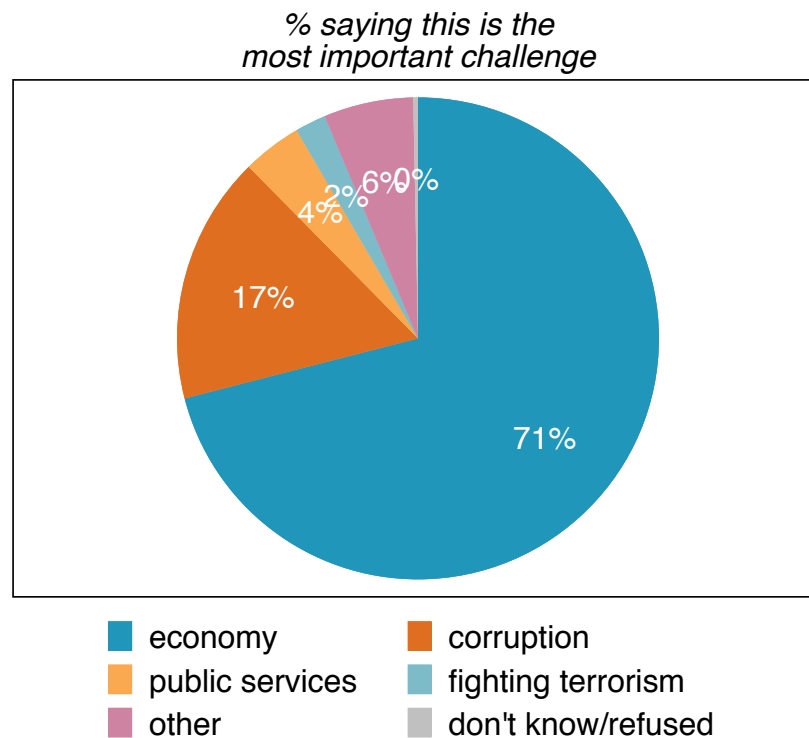
Jordanians favor stronger relations with the outside world. Moreover, Jordanians do not feel party to regional rivalries, and Jordan has successfully avoided the regional wave of political polarization (e.g between Saudi Arabia and Qatar). That being said, Turkey is the most popular of the regional and international powers among Jordanians, and minorities favor stronger relations with Russia and Iran.

These are among the key findings from a nationally representative public opinion survey conducted in Jordan by the Arab Barometer in October-November 2018. The survey conducted 2,400 face-to-face interviews in the respondent's place of residence has a margin of error of ± 2 percent and had a cooperation rate of 81 percent.

Economic Conditions

Jordanians are united on the main challenge facing their country. An overwhelming majority plurality (71 percent) say economic issues are the primary issue, followed by corruption (17 percent). These two issues are the primary concern for nearly all Jordanians (88 percent).

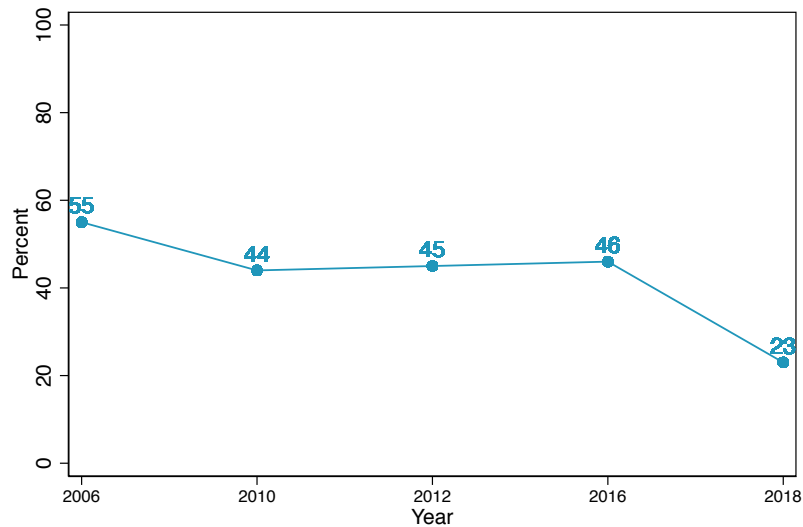
What is the most important challenge facing your country today?



Note: Weighted estimates.
Source: Arab Barometer V.

Perceptions of economic conditions have declined in recent years. Overall, just under a quarter (23 percent) rate the economy as good or very good, which is a dramatic decline from 2016 (-23 points). This may be due to several factors, including the decline in global refugee aid, the decline in foreign aid for the government, and the prolonged impact of government austerity measures. However, it is clear that 2018 is a significant departure from trend data - as positive ratings of the economy were between 45 and 55 percent between 2006 and 2016.

How would you evaluate the current economic situation in your country? *% saying the current economy is very good or good.*



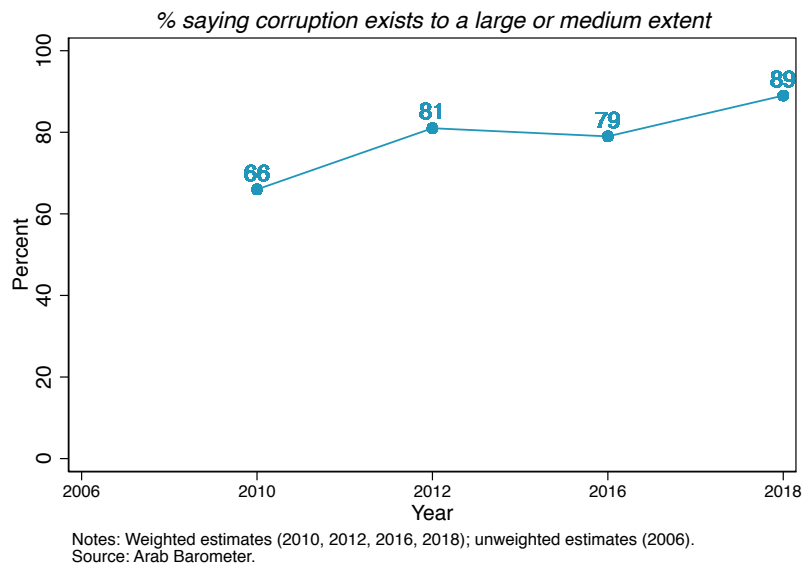
Notes: Weighted estimates (2010, 2012, 2016, 2018); unweighted estimates (2006).
Source: Arab Barometer.

However, there remains some optimism about the economy. About a third (34 percent) of Jordanians expect economic conditions to improve in the near future, which is consistent with previous surveys. Educated Jordanians are somewhat more pessimistic than their less educated counterparts, with 29 percent of those with higher education saying the economy will be better in 2-3 years compared to 35 percent of those with secondary education and 37 percent of those with basic education.

Corruption

Corruption remains a significant challenge for Jordan. Almost all Jordanians (89 percent) say that corruption is found within state institutions to a large or medium extent. This percentage has increased by 10 points since 2016, from 79 percent to 89 percent, and by 23 points since 2010. Perceptions of corruption are consistent across all groups.

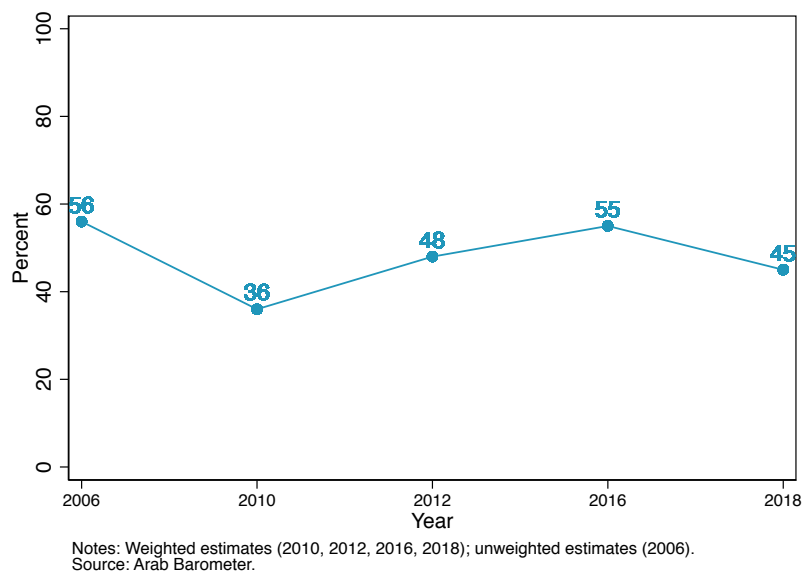
To what extent do you think that there is corruption within the national state agencies and institutions in your country?



While corruption is rampant, fewer than half of Jordanians believe that the government is taking significant steps to tackle the problem. Although higher than in many other countries, just 45 percent say the government is cracking down on corruption to a great or medium extent, which is down 10 points since 2016, but higher than in 2010 (36 percent).

In your opinion, to what extent is the national government working to crackdown on corruption?

% saying to a large or medium extent.

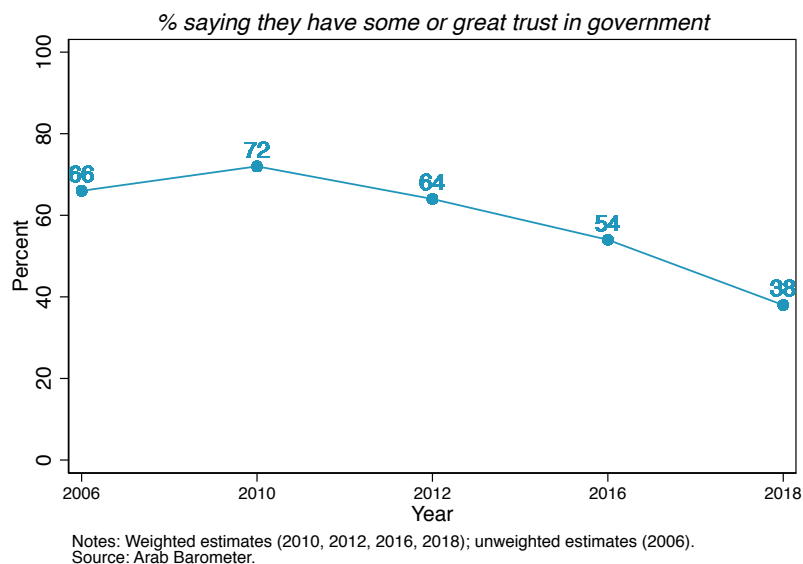


Educated Jordanians are the least likely to believe the state is tackling corruption. Just a third (34 percent) of those with higher education say the government is doing so, while those those with a basic level of education are 20 points more likely to say the same. Meanwhile, males (39 percent), those with a higher income (38 percent), and residents of the south (37 percent) are less likely to think the government is addressing the issue than their female, lower income, northern counterparts.

Institutional Trust and Government Performance

Levels of institutional trust in Jordan have declined across the board, but especially with regards to political institutions. Jordanians are far less likely to trust the government than in previous waves. A little more than one third (38 percent) have a great deal or quite a lot of trust in the government. This figure is roughly half what it was in 2010 (72 percent), since it began declining with every consecutive wave (64 percent in 2012, 54 percent in 2016).

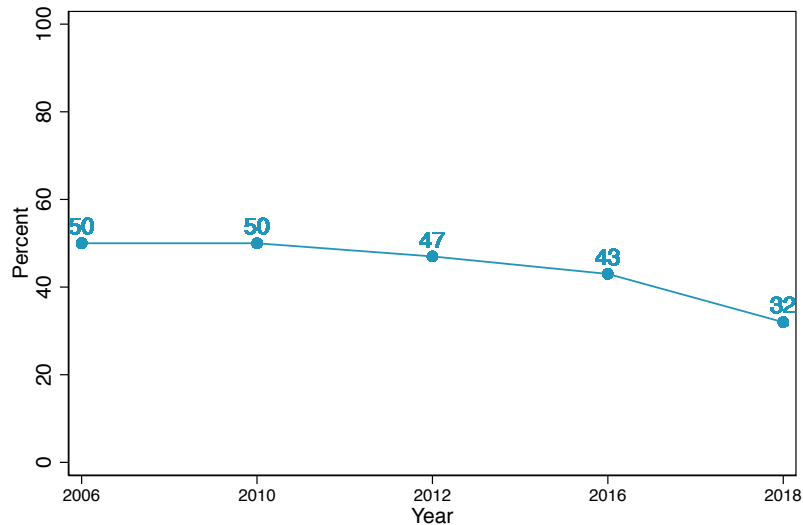
I'm going to name a number of institutions. For each one, please tell me how much trust you have in them: Government



Trust is lower among the better educated. Those with a basic level of education (43 percent) are more likely to have confidence in the government than those with a university degree (34 percent) or secondary degree (37 percent).

Jordanians are becoming less satisfied with government performance. About a third of Jordanians (32 percent) said they are satisfied with government performance, compared to half in 2006 and 2010. Satisfaction is particularly low in the realms of job creation (14 percent) and controlling inflation (12 percent).

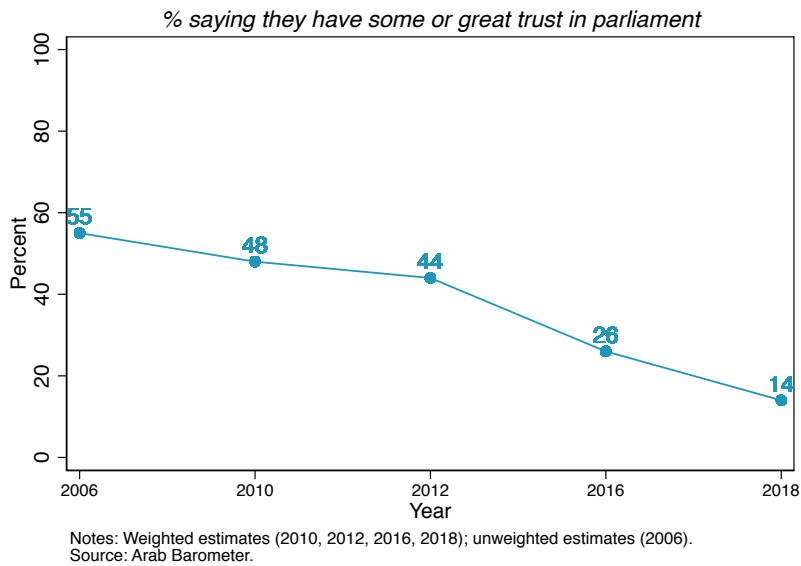
On a scale from 0-10, to what extent are you satisfied with the current government's performance? (0 = dissatisfied; 10 = satisfied)
% placing themselves at 6 or higher.



Notes: Weighted estimates (2010, 2012, 2016, 2018); unweighted estimates (2006).
Source: Arab Barometer.

Trust in parliament has also witnessed a staggering decline. Only one-in-seven (14 percent) have a great deal or some trust in parliament, compared with 16 percent who say little trust and two thirds (68 percent) who say no trust. Trust has declined substantially since 2006, when 55 percent had at least some confidence in the legislature. Trust in parliament has declined with every wave since 2006 (46 percent in 2010, 44 percent in 2012, 26 percent in 2016).

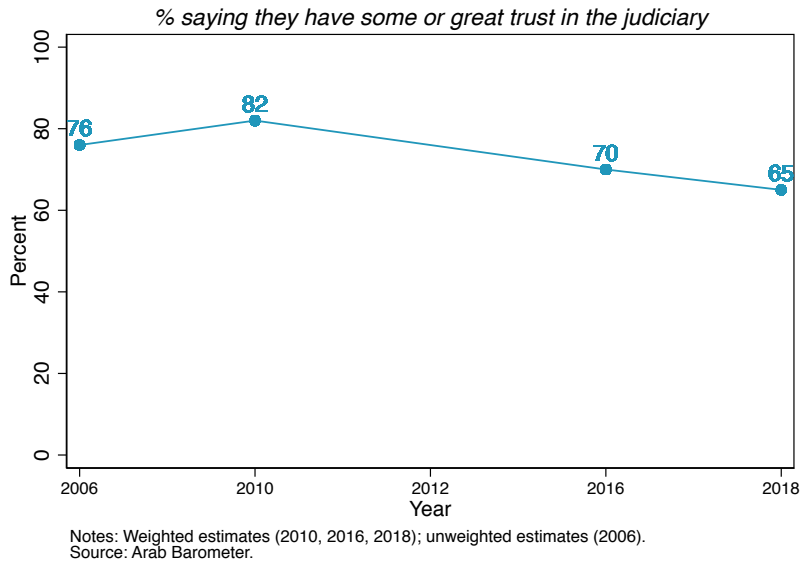
I'm going to name a number of institutions. For each one, please tell me how much trust you have in them: Parliament



A similar percentage have confidence in the Muslim Brotherhood (14 percent), whereas trust in political parties is at 7 percent. Those with a higher level of education are about 2.5 times more likely to trust political parties than those with basic education (10 percent vs. 4 percent).

Moreover, trust in the judiciary has also declined. In 2010, 82 percent trusted the judiciary, whereas in 2018 65 percent did so.

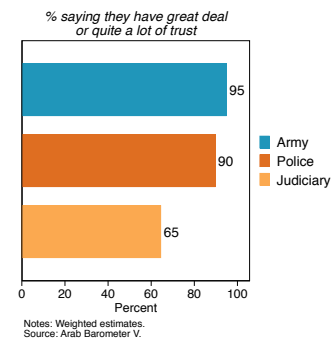
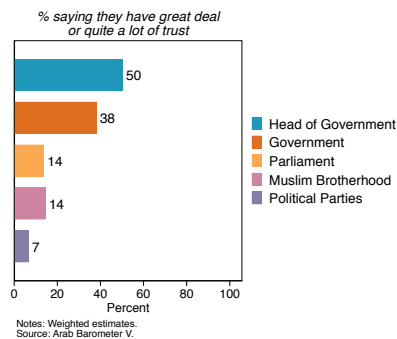
I’m going to name a number of institutions. For each one, please tell me how much trust you have in them: The judiciary



Levels of trust are significantly higher in institutions that are tasked with ensuring law and order. Almost all Jordanians (95 percent) trust the army and the police (90 percent). The levels of trust for both the army and the police are the highest in any country surveyed by the Arab Barometer.

I’m going to name a number of institutions. For each one, please tell me how much trust you have in them.

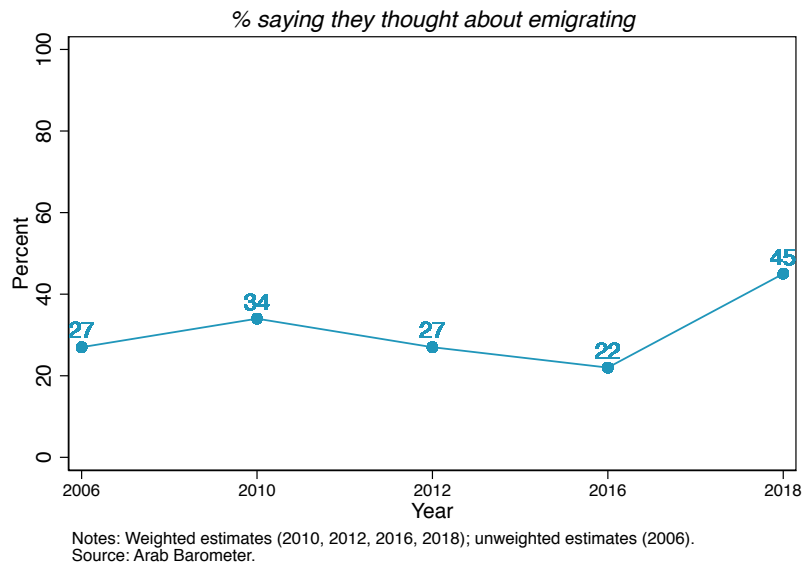
% saying they have a great deal or quite a lot of trust.



Migration

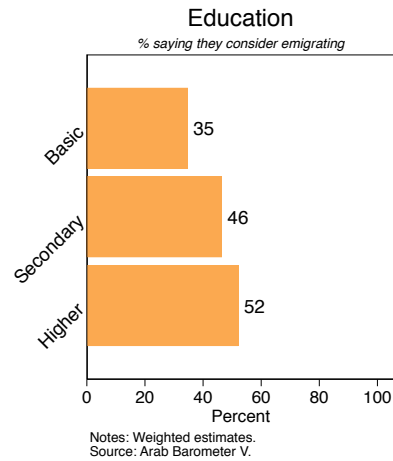
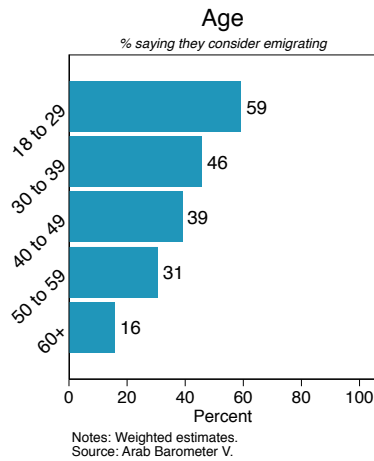
Jordanians are twice as likely to want to emigrate than they were in 2016. Now, fully 45 percent say they want to leave their homeland, which is a 23-point increase since the 2016 survey. Notably, this also reverses a trend where the percentage wanting to emigrate had been decreasing, falling from 34 percent in 2010 to 22 percent in 2016.

Have you ever thought about emigrating from your country?



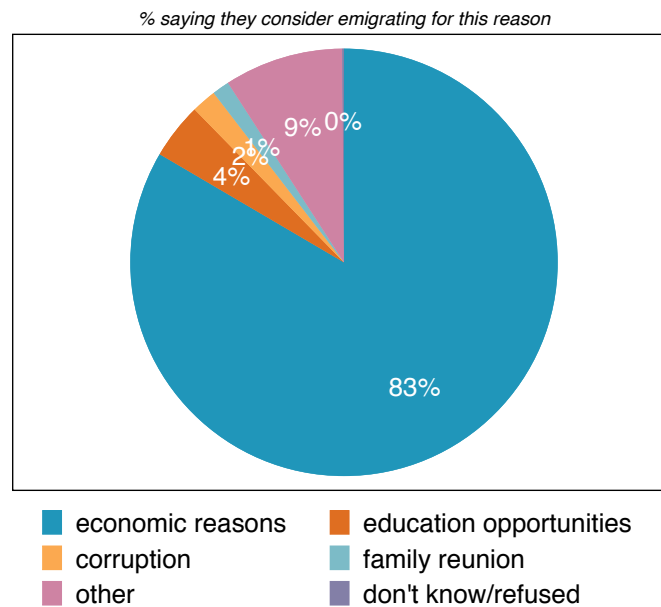
Migration is strongly linked with age – 59 percent of those ages 18-29 want to leave Jordan, compared with less than half (46 percent) of those ages 30-39, 39 percent for 40-49, 31 percent of those 50-59 and 16 percent who are sixty or older. Jordan is also at risk to suffer a brain drain as a majority of those with a university degree want to leave their homeland. Additionally, men are far more likely to want to emigrate than women (53 percent vs. 36 percent).

Have you ever thought about emigrating from your country?



More than four-in-five Jordanians who wish to migrate cite economic considerations (83 percent) as their primary reason. The remaining 17 percent are scattered across different factors, including educational opportunities, corruption, or to unite with family.

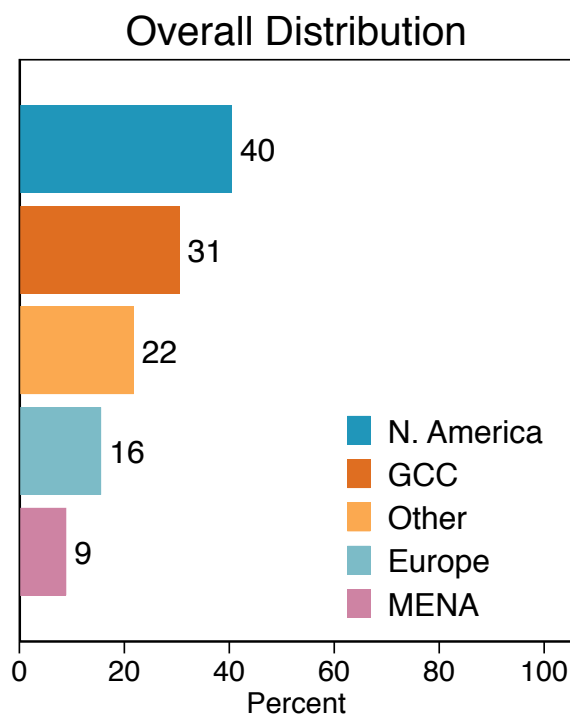
People want to emigrate for different reasons. Why have you thought about emigrating?



Note: Weighted estimates.
Source: Arab Barometer V.

Potential migrants are most likely to look to go to North America (40 percent) or a GCC country (31 percent). Meanwhile, 16 percent want to go to Europe while 9 percent want to go to a non-GCC Arab country. Additionally, 22 percent prefer another destination including sub-Saharan Africa, Asia or Latin America. Notably, a vast majority of potential migrants (82 percent) say they would *not* migrate illegally compared with only 18 percent who say they would consider leaving even if they lacked the necessary papers.

Which region are you thinking of emigrating to?

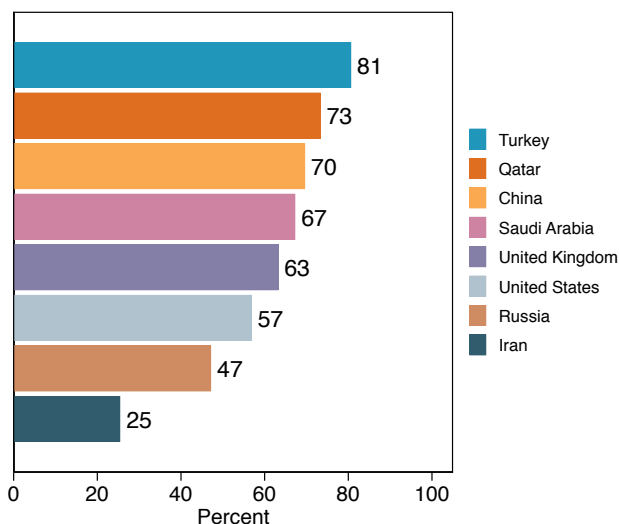


International Relations

Overall, Jordanians favor stronger relations with the outside world. Majorities of Jordanians favor stronger relations with Turkey, Qatar, China, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. And while minorities favor stronger relations with Russia and Iran, this indicates that Jordanians do not see themselves as party in any of the ongoing regional rivalries (neither the Saudi-Qatari rivalry, nor the US-Russia one). Minority preference for stronger relations with Russia and Iran might be due to the role both countries have played in propping up the Assad regime and exacerbating the Syrian refugee crisis.

International Relations

% saying international relations should become stronger with...



Notes: Weighted estimates.
Source: Arab Barometer V.

Jordanian preference for stronger relations with certain countries has witnessed some interesting trends. While preference for stronger relations with the US has remained similar to 2016 levels, the proportion of Jordanians who favor stronger relations with Russia has increased by 20 percentage points since then (from 27 percent to 47 percent). In turn, preference for stronger relations with Turkey witnessed a 34-point increase since 2016 (from 47 percent to 81 percent). Even preference for stronger relations with Iran has increased from 11 percent in 2016 to 25 percent in 2018. However, preference for stronger relations with Saudi Arabia has declined from 78 percent in 2016 to 67 percent in 2018.

Jordanian appetite for foreign aid remains high. Majorities prefer an increase in foreign aid from Saudi Arabia (76 percent), China (73 percent), the US (69 percent), the UK (69 percent), the European Union (68 percent) and Russia (60 percent). Nevertheless, a majority of Jordanians (52 percent) believe the primary motivation behind foreign aid provision is to gain influence over their country.



About Arab Barometer

The Arab Barometer is a nonpartisan research network that provides insights into the social, political, and economic attitudes and values of ordinary citizens across the Arab world.

We have been conducting rigorous, and nationally representative face-to-face public opinion surveys on probability samples of the adult populations across the Arab world since 2006. The margin of error is ± 3 percent.

The Arab Barometer is the largest repository of publicly available data on the views of men and women in the MENA region. Our findings give a voice to the needs and concerns of Arab publics.



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