



الباروميتر العربي
ARAB BAROMETER

Arab Barometer VIII

Mauritania Report

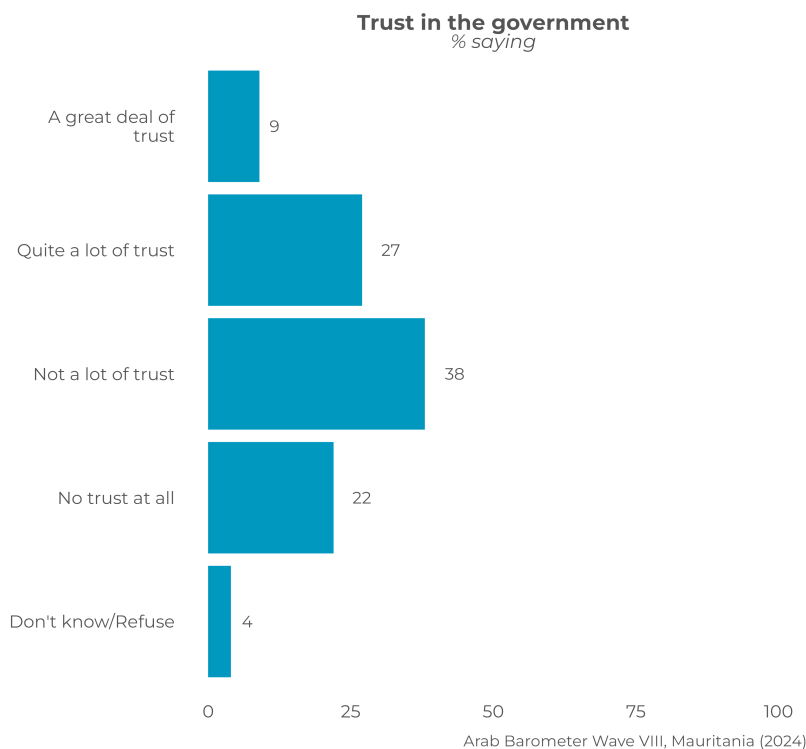


Sahel Foundation



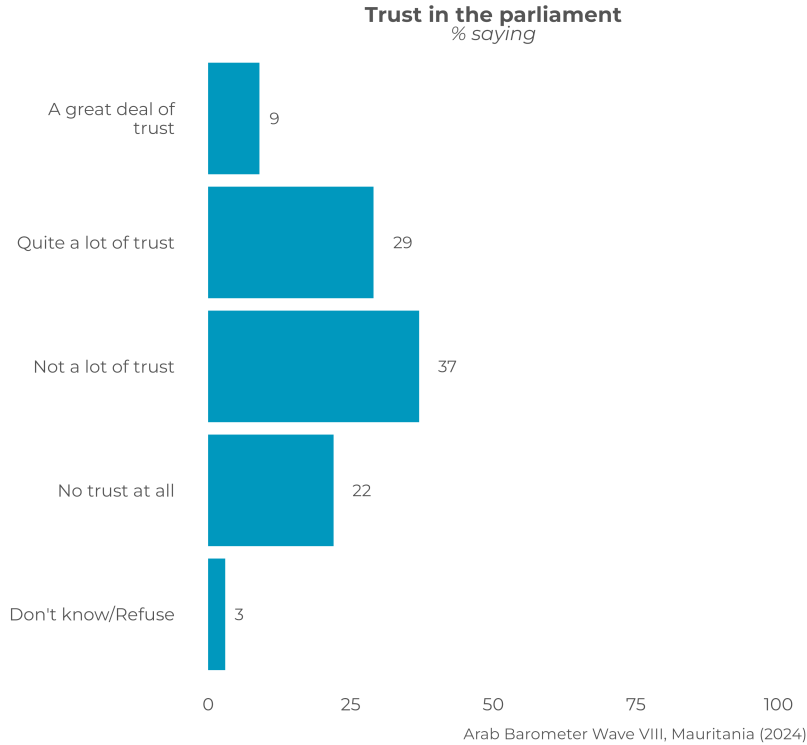
Trust in the Government

Mauritania has begun a new phase of peaceful rotation of power, being an embodiment of democracy. This democratic transition has been seen through the country's last government. Therefore, we observe the rising trend of citizens' trust in the current government. Nine percent of Maurititanians say they trust the government to a great extent, and more than a quarter (27 percent) say they trust it. In contrast, 38 percent say they have little trust in the government, while nearly one-fifth (22 percent) have no trust in their government at all. In order to increase citizens' trust in the government, it may be worthwhile to enhance communication between the government and citizens and transparently explain decisions and plans. Moreover, it could be important to that end to improve the quality of public services such as health, education, and infrastructure; strengthen the role of citizens in decision-making and participation in the political process; and take effective measures to combat corruption and promote good governance.



Trust in the Parliament

The current Mauritanian parliament has transitioned from a bicameral system to a single chamber represented in the National Assembly, following the dissolution of the Senate. There’s no clearer indication of citizens’ confidence in parliament as the voice of the people than the results of the Arab Barometer. From the survey, confidence levels in parliament appear to be very similar to those in the government, with 1 in 10 Mauritians (9 percent) expressing a high level of trust in parliament, while 29 percent say they trust it and 37 percent say they trust it to some extent. In contrast, 22 percent say they have no trust in their parliament at all. The survey shows a disparity in the level of trust in Parliament, with high and medium confidence rankings being low, compared to rankings of low trust and no trust chosen by the respondents. This indicates the presence of challenges in building trust between the Parliament and the citizens.

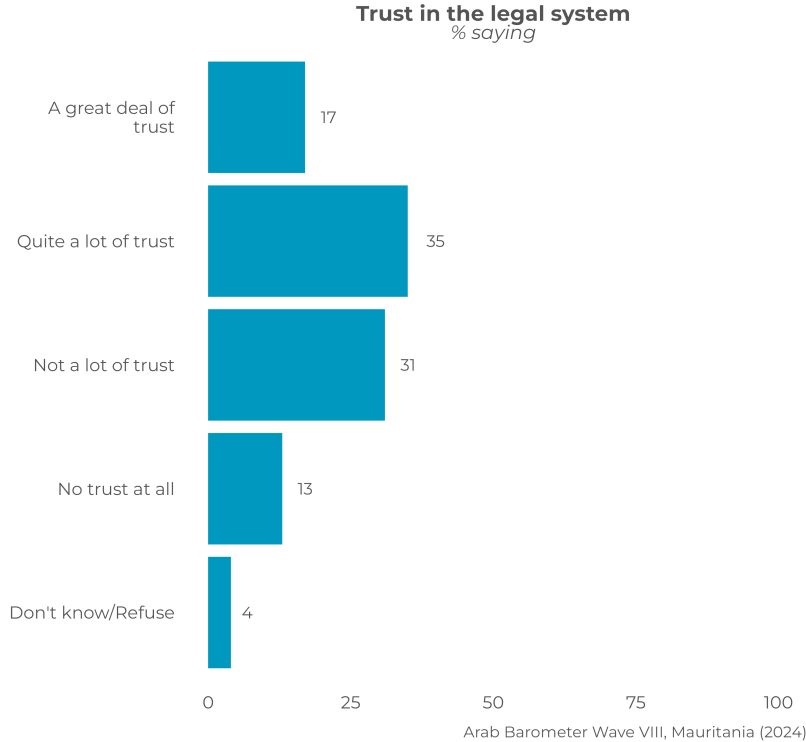


The survey results show the need to enhance open communication between members of parliament and citizens, and increase transparency in decision-making processes. AB results also reveal the need to enhance the quality and effectiveness of the Parliament’s work and ensure the representation of all groups

and interests. There is a need to provide accountability and oversight mechanisms for the performance of MPs, and enhance transparency in the management of finances and expenditures. In addition, the active participation of citizens in parliamentary work and decision-making must be encouraged.

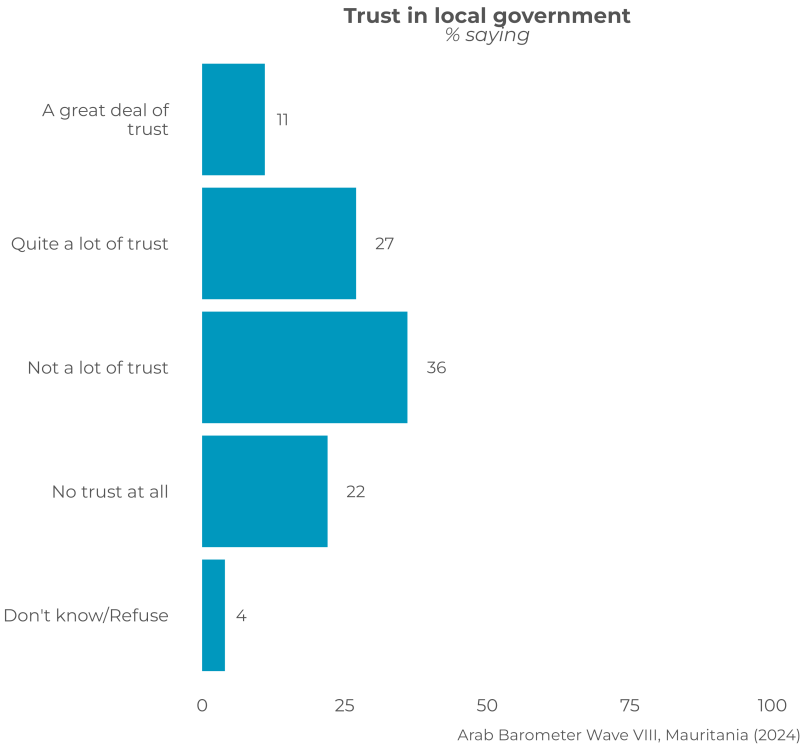
Trust in the Judiciary

The judiciary is a tool that must exist to establish justice on earth and equality between people, especially in an Islamic society such as Mauritania. The results of the Arab Barometer survey show the extent of Mauritanian citizens' confidence in the judiciary. More than half of the Mauritanians say they trust the judicial system to a great extent (17 percent) or that they trust it (35 percent). Roughly 3 in 10 Mauritanians (31 percent) say they have little confidence in the judiciary, while 13 percent have no confidence in the judiciary at all. This large difference in percentages indicates a split in the Mauritanians' opinions towards the judiciary. This calls for increasing the level of transparency in the performance of the justice system and its various decision-making processes, to build trust between the judiciary and citizens, improve the quality and effectiveness of judicial work, and apply the standards of justice and accountability in a fair and equitable manner.



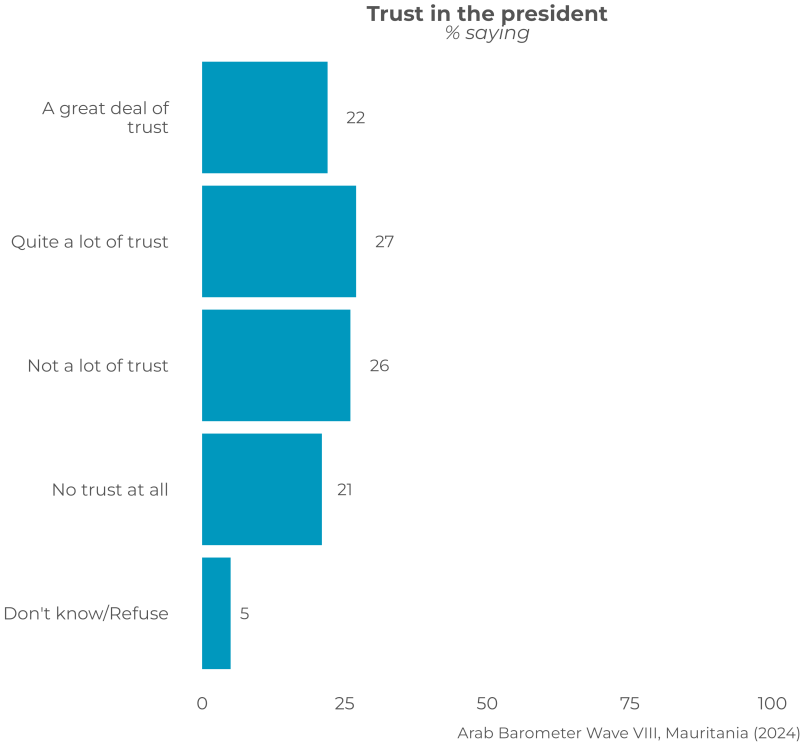
Trust in Local Government

Recently, there has been a qualitative leap in the performance of local government services such as the urban cluster and other vital local government activities. The following percentages show the extent of Mauritians' trust in the local government. One in 10 Mauritians say they trust their local government to a great extent, while more than a quarter (27 percent) say they trust it. However, more than a third of Mauritians (36 percent) express limited trust in their local government, while 22 percent do not trust it at all. These rates indicate the need to increase the level of transparency in the work of local government and provide periodic accounts of its performance and expenditures, as well as the need to improve the quality of local services and infrastructure to meet the needs of citizens and build trust.



Trust in the President

The current President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania has won the trust of citizens through his ten-year program, formulated both before his election and subsequent assumption of office. The extent of citizens’ trust in the President of the Republic is reflected in the following percentages: nearly half show a high level of trust, with 22 percent indicating very high trust and 27 percent stating that they trust him. Additionally, a quarter of respondents (26 percent) express moderate trust, while one-fifth (21 percent) express no trust in the president at all. The findings from Wave VIII of the survey reveal a convergence in citizens’ perceptions of the president, with minor differences noted. In this context, it becomes imperative to enhance transparency in government operations, provide regular updates on the president’s decisions and performance, emphasize achievements and reforms undertaken during the presidency to bolster trust and validate the government’s performance. Encouraging dialogue and citizen participation in governmental decision-making processes is crucial, as is integrating citizens’ views and opinions into the decision-making framework.

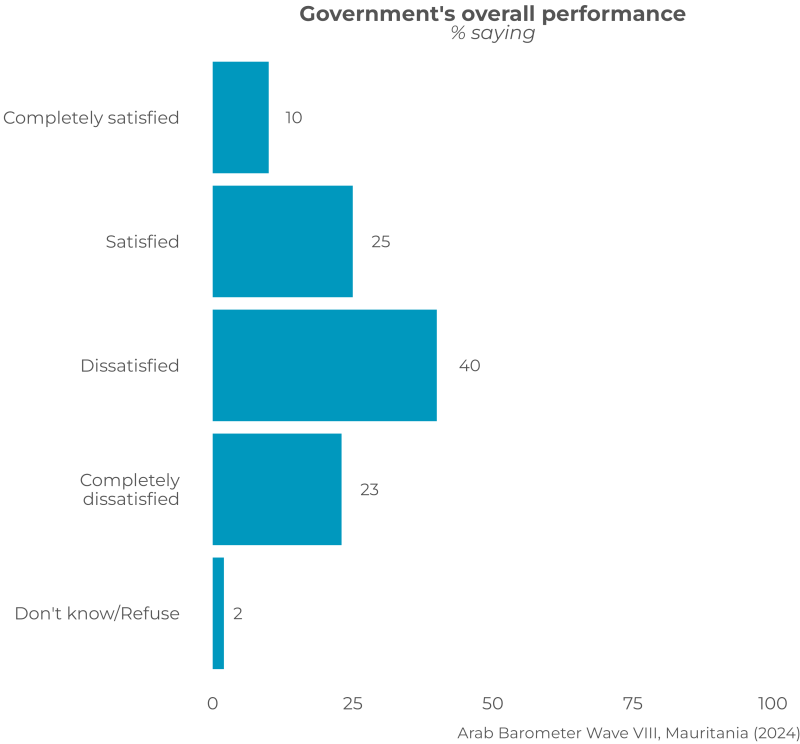


Trust in the Prime Minister

According to Article 33 of the Constitution and related regulatory decrees, the Prime Minister in Mauritania holds a pivotal role. While responsible for determining the government's general policy under the supervision of the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister also allocates tasks among ministers, oversees and coordinates governmental activities, and is accountable for the government's performance before the Parliament. However, when it comes to trust in the Prime Minister, the majority of Mauritians seem to harbor skepticism. Responses to a general question about the Prime Minister reveal that 12 percent express great trust, while a quarter indicate trust. Nevertheless, a significant percentage of Mauritians (35 percent) express limited trust, with another quarter (24 percent) stating no trust at all. The survey findings underscore the imperative for the government to enhance its performance, fulfill its commitments, instigate positive changes, facilitate citizen participation in critical decision-making processes, and provide transparent explanations for its decisions.

Government's Overall Performance

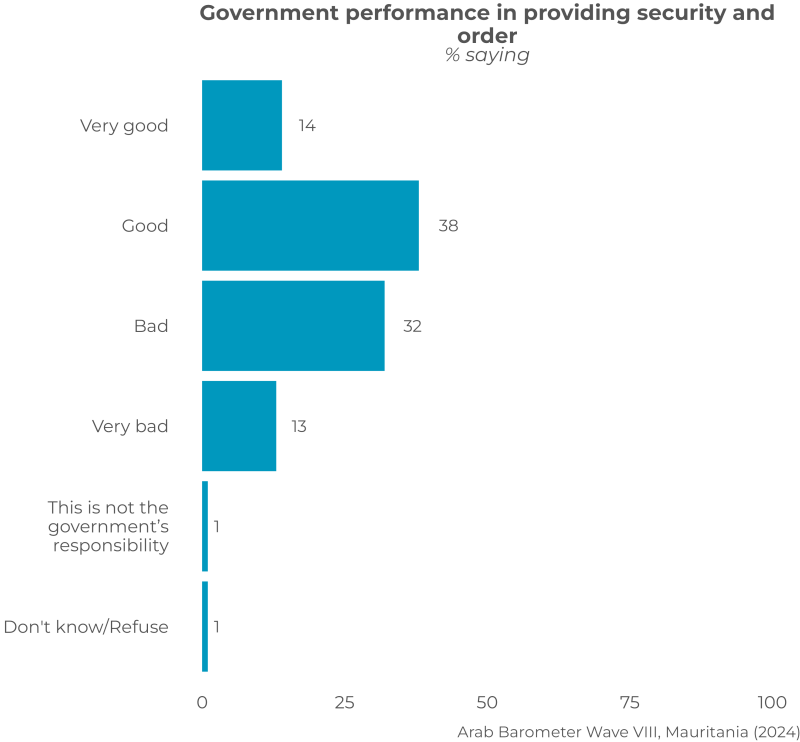
The Arab Barometer's survey reveals a considerable diversity in Mauritians' perspectives on government performance. Specifically, 10 percent say they are very satisfied, 25 percent satisfied, 40 percent dissatisfied, and 23 percent very dissatisfied. These findings underscore potential hurdles for the government in addressing these disparate viewpoints, highlighting the necessity for ongoing dialogue between the government and citizens, to understand the needs and improvements required in various areas, which can help build a relationship of trust and cooperation between state and society.



Government Performance in Providing Stability and Security

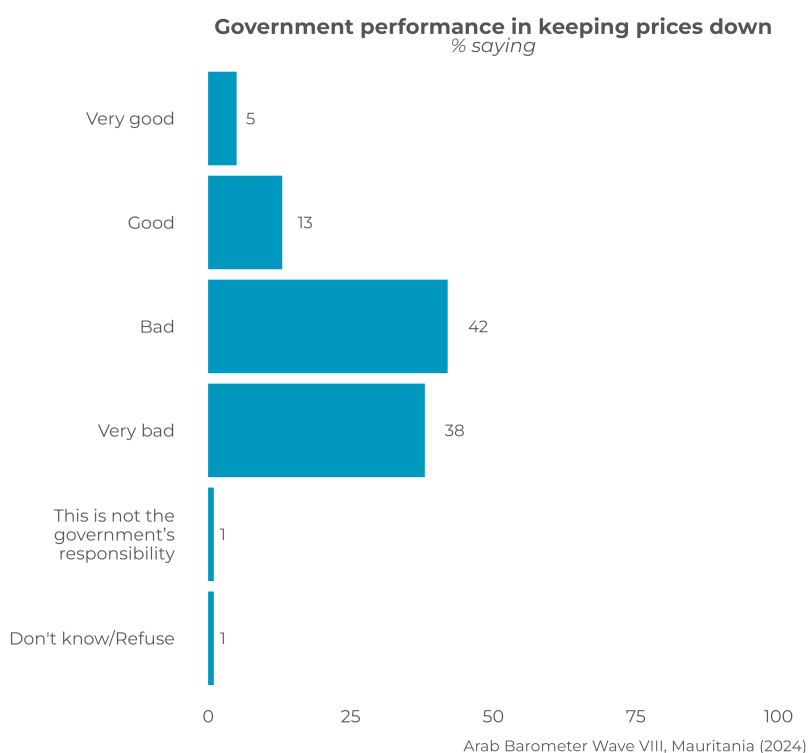
The survey reveals a significant divergence in perceptions regarding the government's performance in ensuring stability and security. On one hand, 14 percent of respondents rate the government's performance in this area as very good, while 38 percent consider it good. On the other hand, 32 percent assess it as bad, with an additional 13 percent deeming it very bad, showcasing a broad range of viewpoints and evaluations among individuals. The findings indicate that the percentage of citizens satisfied with the government's performance (those rating it as very good and good) surpasses the percentage of negative evaluations (bad and very bad). This suggests the presence of a supportive segment of the public for the government, albeit with notable levels of dissatisfaction. To enhance perceptions of the government's performance in ensuring internal stability and security, several actions can be undertaken. These include enhancing transparency and communication channels with citizens, improving the responsiveness and quality of security services, bolstering the training and qualifications of security personnel, and fostering collaboration

with civil society and international institutions to reinforce stability and security measures.



Performance in Lowering Prices

The varying percentages reflect a significant disparity in citizens' perceptions of the government's performance in lowering prices. Only five percent view the government's performance in reducing consumer prices as very good, while 13 percent consider it good. In contrast, a substantial 42 percent believe the government's performance is bad, with an additional 38 percent ranking it as very bad. This highlights a clear divide between supporters and critics of the government's efforts. The proportion of satisfied individuals (those rating the performance as very good and good) is notably lower than the percentage of dissatisfied individuals (rating it as bad and very bad), indicating widespread discontent with the government's attempts to mitigate prices.

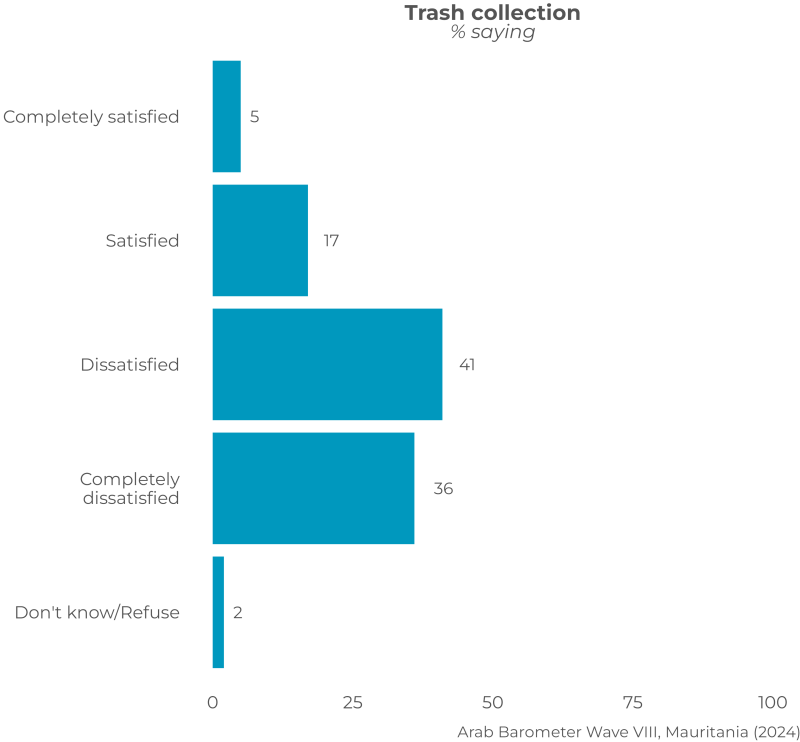


To enhance the government's performance in this realm, several measures can be implemented. These include bolstering control over and oversight of prices, fostering transparency in pricing mechanisms, implementing economic policies geared towards achieving stability and curbing inflationary pressures, and fostering collaboration with the private sector and civil society to collectively work towards these objectives.

Evaluation of Public Services

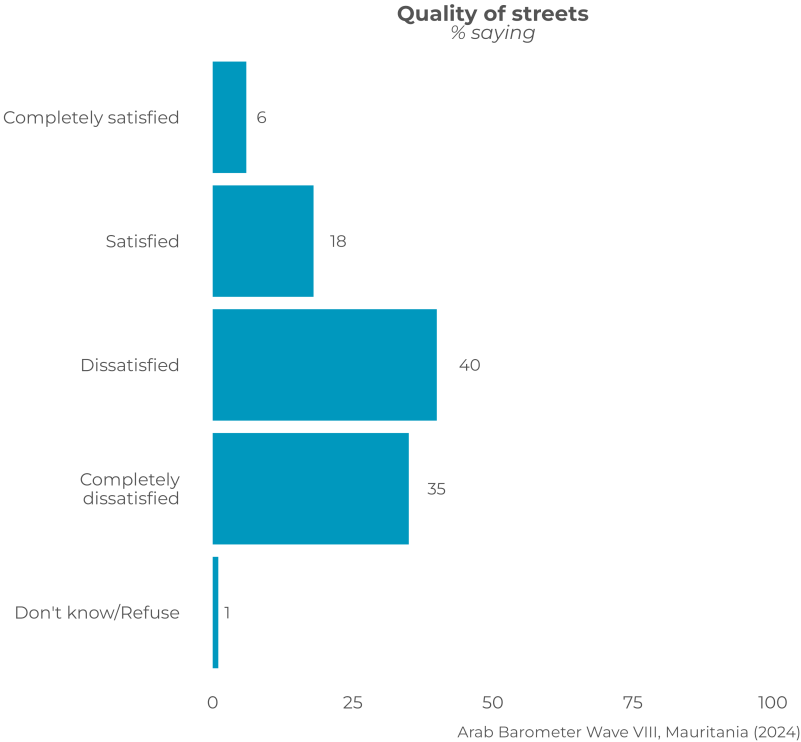
When considering public waste management services, the majority of Mauritians express dissatisfaction with the level of service provided. Less than a quarter report being very satisfied or satisfied. In contrast, almost 4 in 10 Mauritians (41 percent) indicate dissatisfaction, with more than a third (36 percent) expressing complete dissatisfaction. The proportion of dissatisfied and very dissatisfied individuals notably outweighs the percentage of those satisfied, signaling significant challenges in waste collection services. Addressing this issue entails investing in the development of waste management infrastructure to align with rates of population growth and urban expansion. Furthermore, educating citizens about the importance of segregating and disposing of

waste correctly, and encouraging active participation in environmental cleanliness are essential steps. Improving the quality and efficiency of waste collection services, such as establishing regular waste collection schedules and leveraging modern technologies for enhanced collection and disposal operations, is imperative. Additionally, fostering collaboration and partnerships between the government and private companies in waste collection and disposal is crucial for enhancing service delivery.



The survey results reveal a prevailing dissatisfaction among Mauritians regarding the condition of roads and streets, primarily due to the dilapidated state of existing infrastructure and the lack of adherence to construction standards by overseeing companies. This neglect results in frequent traffic accidents, highlighting the poor quality of roads in Mauritania. Consequently, only 6 percent of Mauritians express being very satisfied with street quality, while 18 percent say they are satisfied. In contrast, three-quarters of Mauritians express dissatisfaction (40 percent) or strong dissatisfaction (35 percent) with the quality of their country’s roads. These percentages underscore widespread negative sentiments toward street quality, indicating systemic and/or operational issues that necessitate immediate attention. The significant proportion of citizens deeming the roads to be of very poor quality underscores fundamental

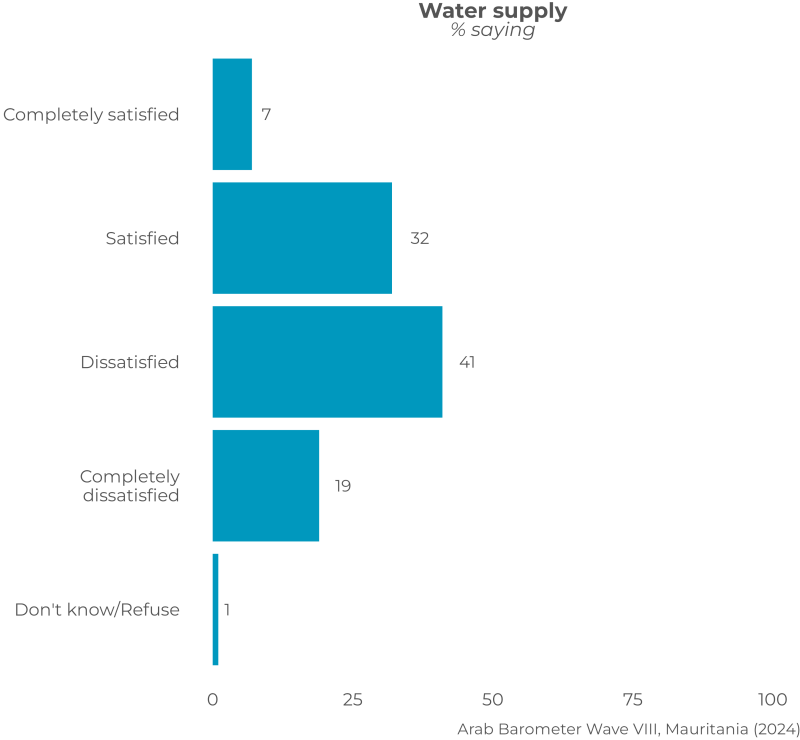
infrastructure challenges. Addressing these issues requires a thorough assessment of infrastructural and technical deficiencies, along with the formulation of urgent plans for repairing defective roads and enhancing routine maintenance.



With three-quarters of the population dissatisfied with road quality, it is evident that the vast majority of citizens harbor extreme dissatisfaction, warranting comprehensive corrective actions. The overwhelming dissatisfaction percentage underscores the urgent need for intervention to improve the situation. This entails engaging in dialogue sessions with local communities to better comprehend their concerns and needs, as well as intensifying efforts to enhance infrastructure quality to meet citizen expectations.

In most Mauritanian cities, there is a severe shortage of drinkable water, particularly exacerbated during these times of rising heat and high temperatures. In such circumstances, most urban areas rely on traditional wells for water supply, regardless of the inherent risks to the population. The scarcity of water service is a significant obstacle and a pressing concern for citizens, leading to widespread dissatisfaction among Mauritians. Only 7 percent express being very satisfied, while a third (32 percent) report satisfaction with water supply services. In

contrast, 6 out of 10 Mauritians say they are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the current state of water provision.



The power crisis in Mauritania is extensive, with a majority of Mauritians expressing dissatisfaction, over outages ranging from partial outages to near-total ones. Given the integral role electricity plays in people’s daily lives, this dissatisfaction is significant. When queried about electricity provision, only 3 in 10 Mauritians reported being very satisfied or satisfied. Conversely, over two-thirds expressed dissatisfaction or strong dissatisfaction with the availability of electricity in the country.

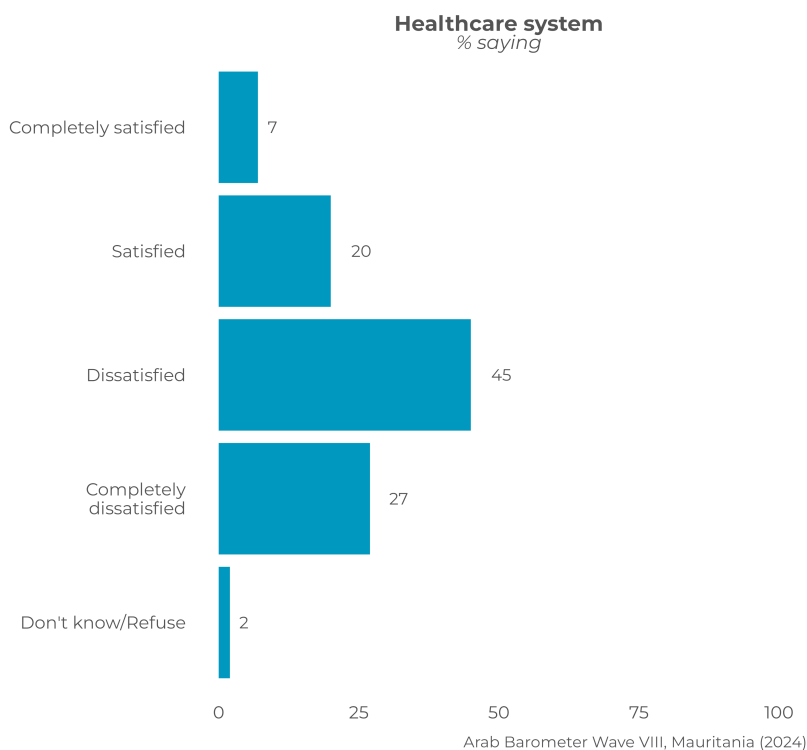
It is evident from the question regarding civil defense that the majority of responses leaned towards “dissatisfied” with the service provided. Specifically, 8 percent expressed being very satisfied, 25 percent somewhat satisfied, 39 percent dissatisfied, and 26 percent not satisfied at all. This indicates that a combined total of 65 percent of Mauritians are dissatisfied with the civil defense service.

It is widely acknowledged that the Internet has revolutionized communication between individuals and societies, enabling remote and effortless interaction

through email, social media platforms, and text messaging applications. It has facilitated the rapid dissemination of ideas and information like never before. However, the findings of the Arab Barometer indicate that the majority of Mauritians are dissatisfied with the Internet service. According to the survey results, only 12 percent say they are very satisfied, with a quarter reporting satisfaction with internet services. Conversely, nearly 6 out of 10 Mauritians express dissatisfaction or strong dissatisfaction with these services.

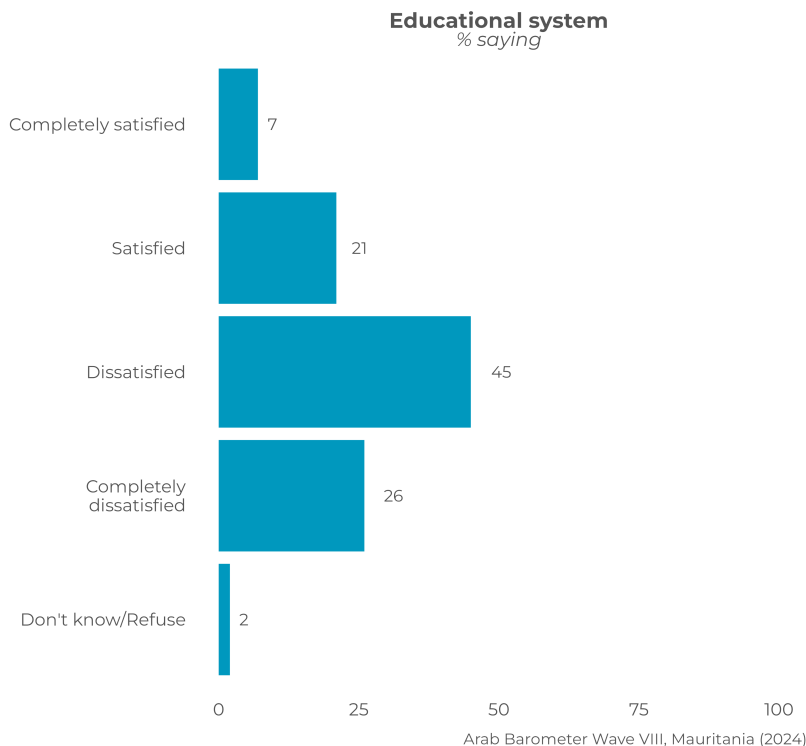
Evaluation of the Healthcare System

The health system is one of the biggest challenges that any country can face and the most important area that any country must take care of, especially in third world countries, because the health system is the most important thing that the state must improve and monitor. In Mauritania, 45 percent of the citizens surveyed reported their dissatisfaction with the health system, citing poor health infrastructure, lack of human resources, lack of oversight, and government negligence as reasons that made the health system very weak and almost non-existent, as some fake and expired medicines are sold widely. While 20 percent believe that the health system is in a good state, 7 percent say they are fully satisfied. On the other hand, over a quarter (27 percent) say they are not at all satisfied with the country's healthcare system.



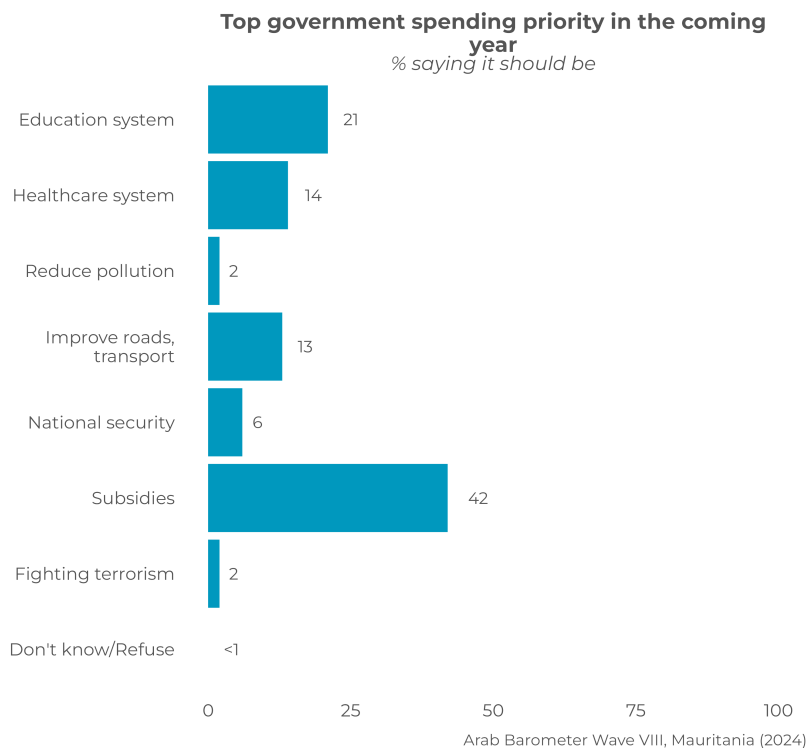
Evaluation of the Education System

Education is the most important area for societies, especially developing countries like Mauritania. Discussions about education are present in all public discussions because it is the first way to progress and growth of any society and the most successful way to bridge the gap between classes. In response to the question on the quality of the educational system in Mauritania and the measures taken by the government to improve the status of education, 7 percent of those surveyed said they are very satisfied with the educational system, while one-fifth (21 percent) said they are satisfied. Meanwhile, 45 percent expressed their dissatisfaction with education, especially with regard to the infrastructure, the lack of attention given by the state to it, the marginalization of the teacher in general, and the weakness in the students' performance, which they think stems from the lack of competence in some teachers and even educational trainers, and the weakness of training centers, whether teachers or pedagogy professors. A quarter (26 percent) of citizens expressed their absolute dissatisfaction with performance in the provision of education.



Government's Spending Priority

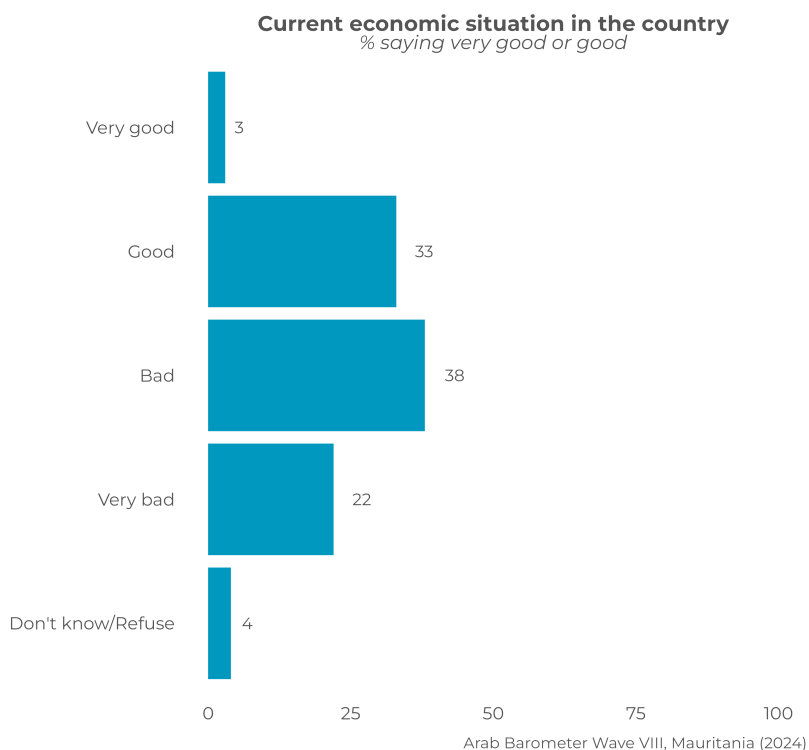
It was no surprise to see government subsidies at the top of government spending priorities ranked by citizens. Around 42 percent of Mauritania say that subsidies should be the first priority for spending in the coming year, followed by education at 21 percent, the health system (14 percent) and improving roads and transportation (13 percent).



Economy

The COVID-19 crisis and the repercussions of the war in Ukraine continue to overshadow the health and well-being of the population and strain the economy. The global pause in economic activity during the first quarter of 2020 and the uncertainty of a recovery in the foreseeable future have led to serious economic damage and social impacts, to say the least. The combination of declining investment and shrinking domestic demand plighted Mauritania. Despite the economic and social measures taken by the government, Mauritians have grown increasingly frustrated and pessimistic about the economy

over the past few years, with only three percent saying the economic situation is very good. Almost a third say the situation is good. In contrast, 6 in 10 Mauritians say the economic situation is bad (38 percent) or very bad (22 percent). These rankings reflect reality, as the Mauritanian economy suffers from structural imbalances that hinder its growth, including weak agricultural and pastoral activities, as well as the absence of a coherent economic policy with regard to the mineral sector.



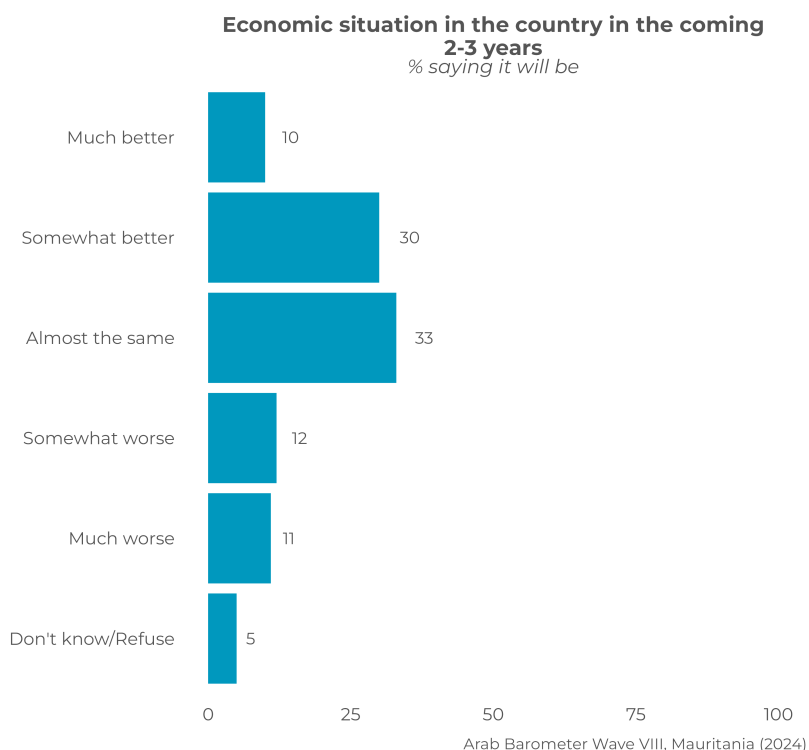
It is expected that the Mauritanian economy will witness a strong acceleration next year, due to the entry of the “Ahmeyim” gas field – at the maritime border with Senegal – into the production phase. Estimates from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) indicate that the Mauritanian economy’s growth rate will reach around 5.1 percent in 2024, before jumping to 14.3 percent in 2025, driven by the start of production in the Ahmeyim field.

Bloomberg quoted statements from Felix Fischer, head of the IMF mission to Mauritania, in which he stated that the start of production in the Ahmeyim field will positively contribute to Mauritania’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth from 2024 onwards. He explained that the IMF expects economic growth in

Mauritania to reach 14.3 percent in 2025, with gas exports accounting for 11.6 percent of the country’s total exports.

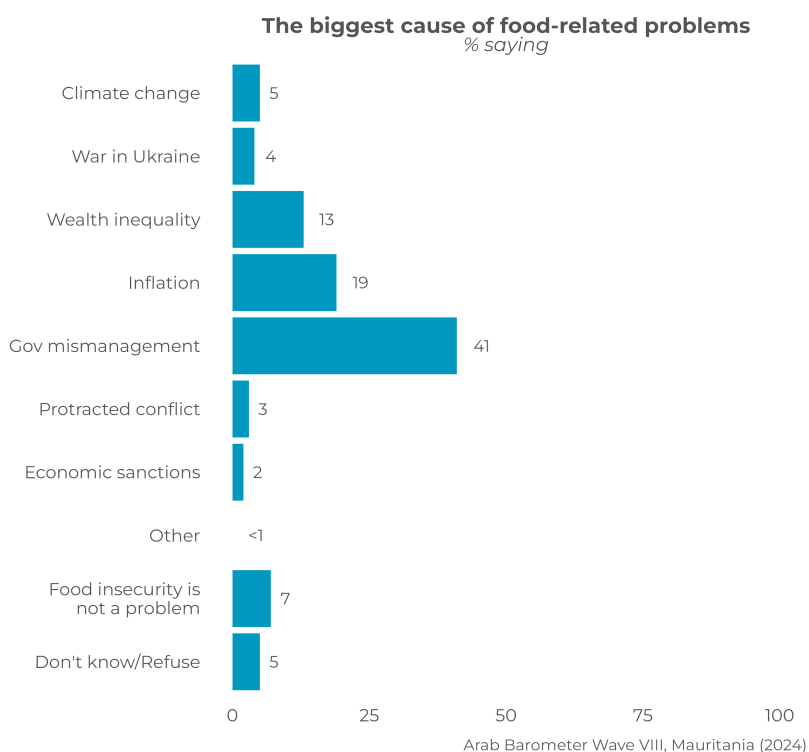
The Ahmeyim project, managed by British Petroleum (BP) and Cosmos Energy, is expected to produce approximately 2.5 million tons of liquefied natural gas annually during the first phase. According to the companies’ forecasts, production volumes are expected to increase to 5 million tons annually starting 2027, and to 10 million tons from 2030 onwards.

Despite these international and national reports, only 40 percent of the citizens believe that the economic situation will be much better or slightly better in the coming years, while a third expect the situation to remain the same. Meanwhile, a minority believes that the situation will be worse or much worse.



One of the manifestations of the deterioration of economic conditions and the lack of food security in recent years is Mauritania’s cancellation of much of its food subsidies, raising taxes on exports, and the scarcity of some goods in the local market. The Arab Barometer presented the following phrase to citizens: “We fear that food will run out before we have the money to buy more.” The majority

of citizens say that this phrase is always true (25 percent) or sometimes true (44 percent). While only about a quarter of Mauritians (27 percent) say it is never true. Mauritians link food-related problems to poor government management as the biggest reason behind these issues (41 percent), followed by inflation (19 percent), and the gap between the rich and the poor (13 percent).

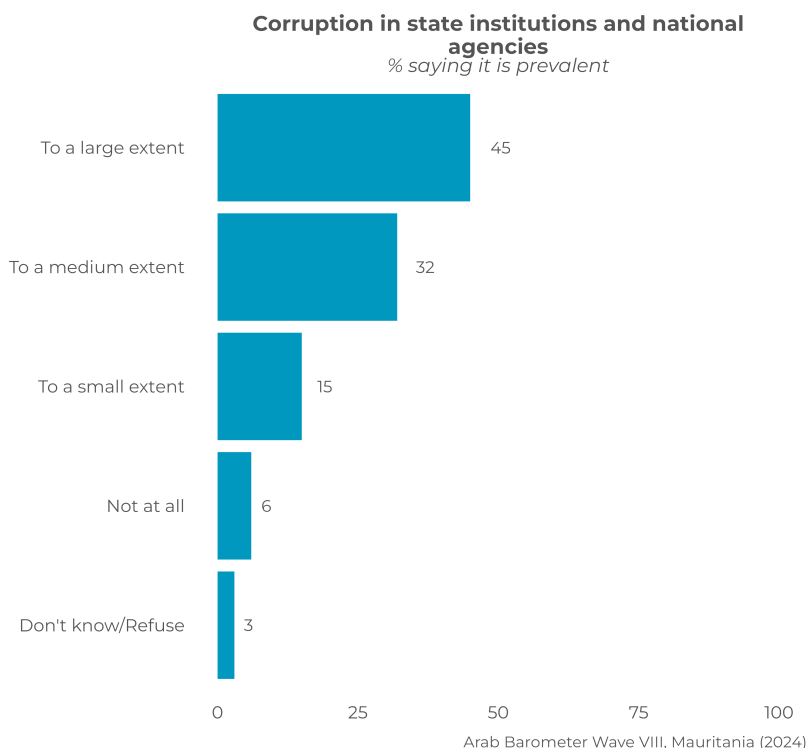


Regarding economic inequality, a quarter of Mauritians (26 percent) say that the gap between the rich and the poor widened during the past year. In contrast, nearly half (48 percent) say it remained the same, while one-fifth (19 percent) believe it shrunk during the same period. The survey results show that only a quarter of Mauritians express satisfaction with the government's performance in reducing the income gap. In contrast, 45 percent of people believe the government's performance in this area is poor, and 27 percent say it is very poor.

In order to improve economic conditions, the people believe that the government should reduce the cost of living (34 percent), create new job opportunities (24 percent), raise wages, and reform the education system (13 percent, respectively).

Corruption

The survey indicates that perceptions of corruption within state institutions is widespread to a large extent, reaching a percentage of 45 percent. This is a significant figure corroborated by data and reports issued by regulatory institutions, especially opposition parliamentarians. Furthermore, the favorable percentage, which acknowledges the presence of corruption even if moderate, reached 32 percent. Combining both percentages reveals that approximately 77 percent of Mauritians believe there is corruption at the level of state institutions. This is despite the existence of “Al-Rashad” system, through which investment budgets are disbursed via invoices and service contracts ensuring that the funds are only spent by their rightful recipients against invoices, agreements, and contracts.



As for corruption in local councils and municipalities, the survey indicates that nearly half (48 percent) believe that most local officials are corrupt. This is surprising because these officials often have little to manage, so no matter how high their corruption rate is, the amount of money they handle is very low.

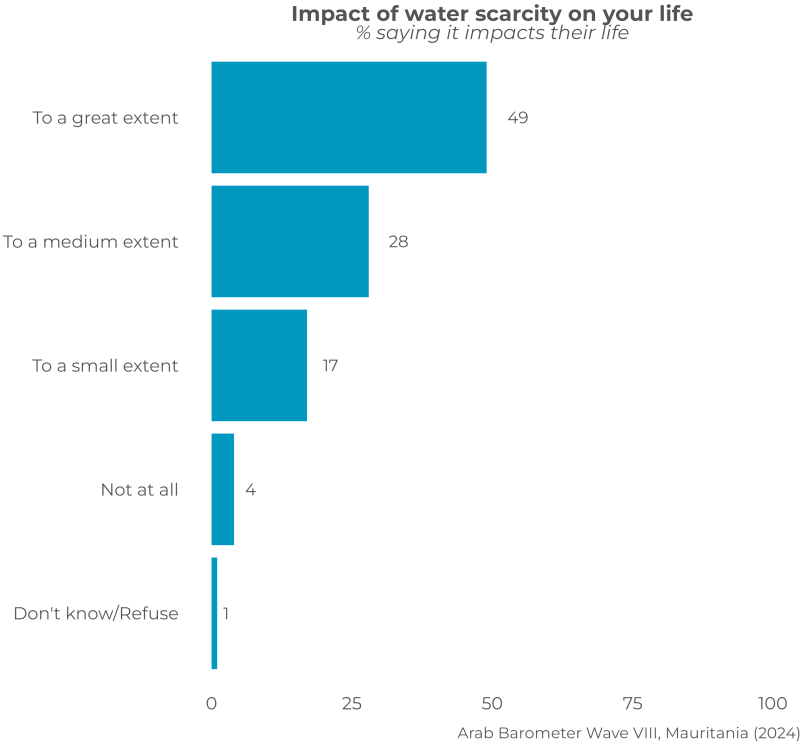
Regarding the government's efforts to combat corruption, the largest percentage (34 percent) indicates that the government is combating corruption to a very limited extent. This is supported by the fact that rarely do we hear of a government official being dismissed or prosecuted for corruption, which is sufficient evidence of the accuracy of the percentage on this indicator. Adding the 24 percent who see those efforts as modest and the 25 percent on the other end denying any effort to eradicate corruption, it results in approximately 83 percent being dissatisfied with the government's efforts in tackling corruption.

Environment

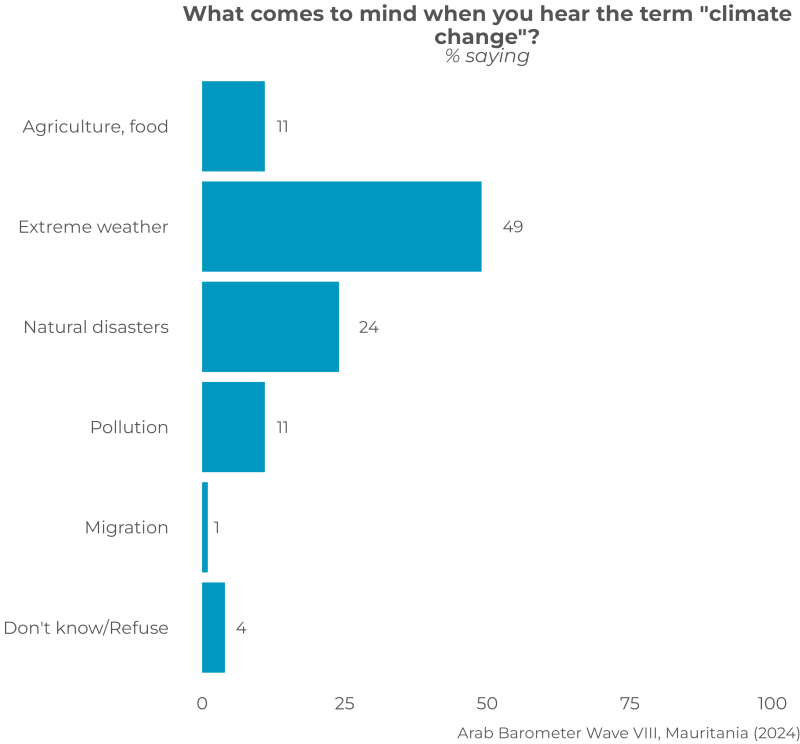
For Mauritians, the primary challenges related to water are the greatest environmental challenge they perceive of. Notably, most inland cities in Mauritania suffer from water scarcity. Many mention either contamination of drinking water, occasional scarcity, pollution of water sources, or simply insufficient resources in the first place. This is not surprising given the growing regional and international concerns about water security. Another challenge is waste management, with some ranking this issue as the biggest environmental challenge facing several Mauritanian cities due to the inefficiency of waste management systems.

Regarding the impact of rising temperatures on the daily lives of Mauritanian citizens, it is as follows: 42 percent say they are significantly affected, 32 percent say they are moderately affected, and another group sees little to no impact on their daily lives (21 percent).

Regarding the impact of water scarcity on the daily lives of citizens, most areas and cities in Mauritania face significant water scarcity, affecting the daily lives of ordinary citizens as follows: 49 percent say they are impacted to a great extent, 28 percent to a moderate extent, and 17 percent to a minor extent, while some say water scarcity does not affect them at all (4 percent).



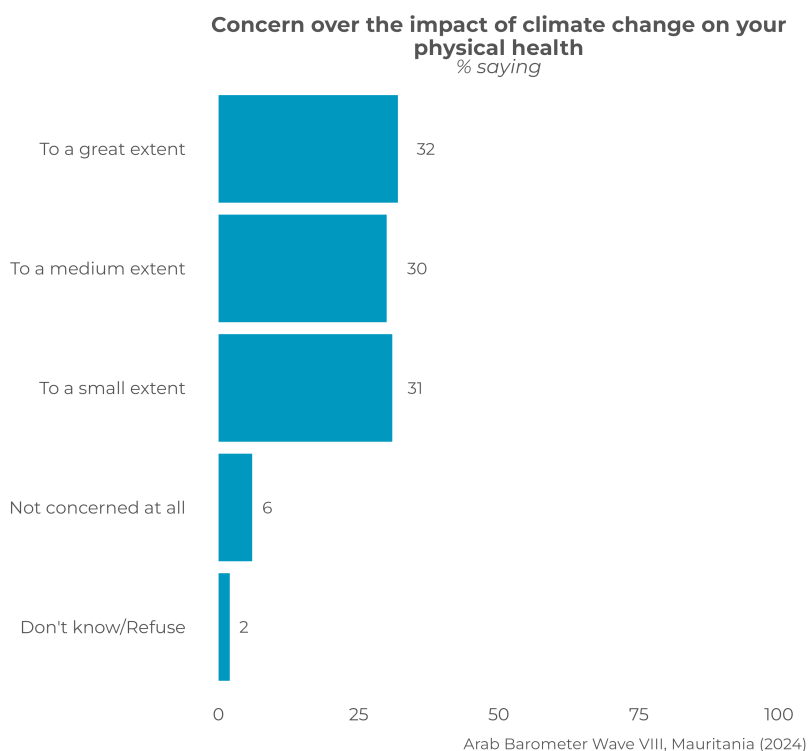
When asked about their understanding of the term “climate change”, half (49 percent) say weather comes to mind, while 24 percent selected natural disasters, 11 percent agricultural production or pollution, respectively. It is evident that many Mauritians do not grasp the concept of climate change. Clearly, however, Mauritians desire to see greater government action to address climate change (63 percent).



When asked about phasing out the use of fossil fuels, 28 percent strongly support it, while 35 percent somewhat prefer it. In contrast, about a third somewhat (27 percent) or strongly (8 percent) oppose the phasing out of fossil fuels.

When asked about setting a target date for gradually phasing out the use of polluting vehicles, the responses were as follows: 36 percent strongly prefer it, 30 percent somewhat prefer it, while 20 percent somewhat oppose it and 10 percent strongly oppose this option.

Addressing the question regarding concerns about the effects of climate change on the physical health of Mauritanian citizens, the responses were as follows: 32 percent are significantly concerned, 30 percent are moderately concerned, totaling approximately 62 percent of Mauritanian citizens who feel that climate change has physical effects. Meanwhile, 31 percent say they are slightly concerned, and 6 percent feel no concern at all.



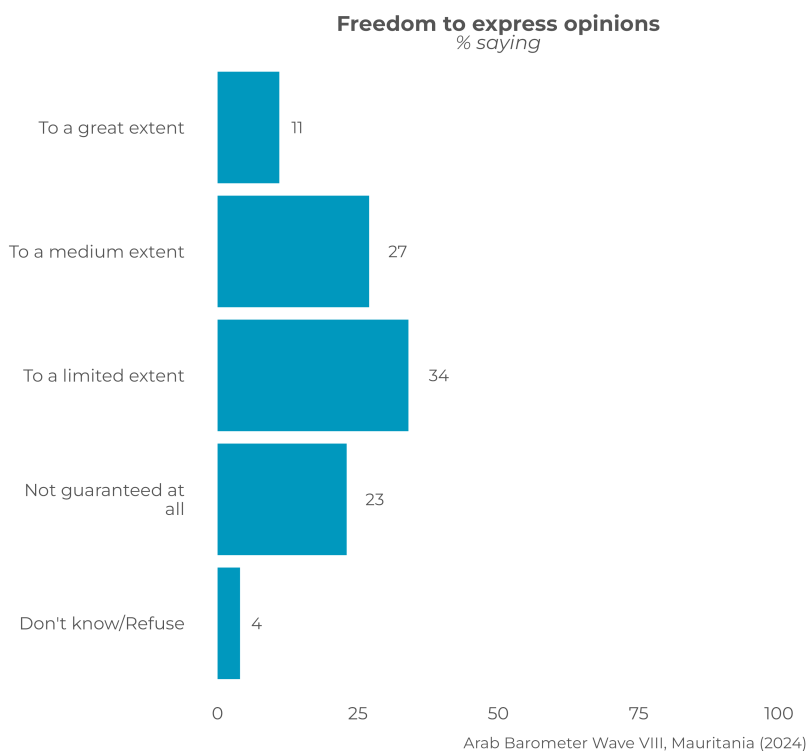
Regarding the question on concerns about the effects on the mental health of Mauritanian citizens, the responses were as follows: 35 percent are significantly concerned, 28 percent are moderately concerned, totaling 63 percent of citizens who feel concerned, while 27 percent are slightly concerned, and 9 percent feel no concern.

Among Mauritanian citizens, when asked about concerns about the effects of climate change on their jobs or livelihoods, their responses were as follows: 30 percent are significantly concerned, 25 percent are moderately concerned, totaling 55 percent of Mauritians who are concerned about their jobs or livelihoods due to climate change. Additionally, 27 percent are slightly concerned, and 16 percent feel no concern at all, believing that climate change does not affect their daily lives.

Freedom

AB's survey shows a diverse distribution of perceptions regarding the guarantee of the freedom of expression, where 11 percent see it as strongly guaranteed, 27 percent believe it is moderately guaranteed, 34 percent see it as slightly

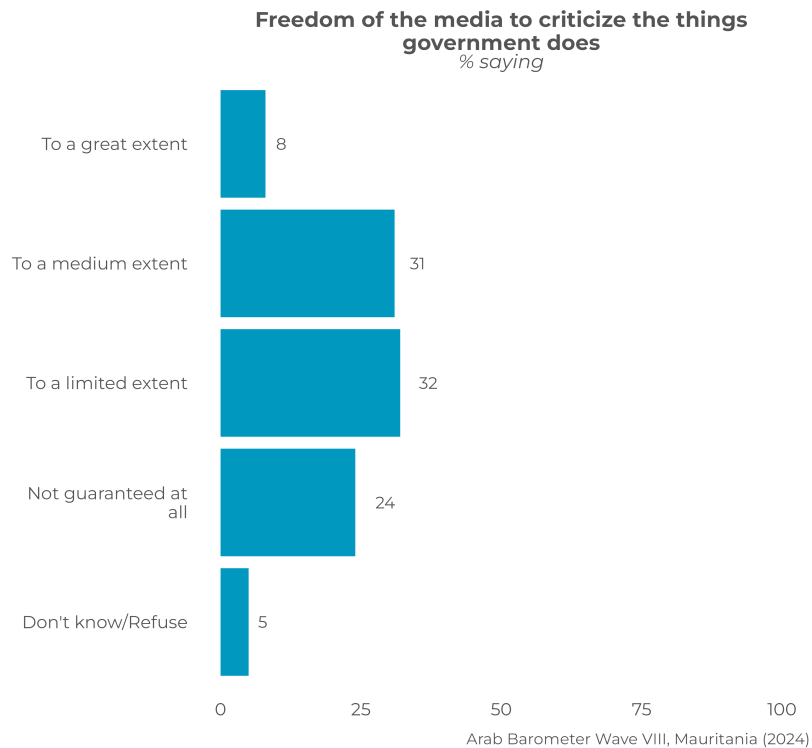
guaranteed, 23 percent say it as not guaranteed, and 4 percent declined to answer.



The varied distribution of opinions can be interpreted as reflecting different perspectives and experiences of individuals in Mauritania. There may be specific challenges affecting the level of trust in the guaranteeing of the freedom of expression, such as political, economic, and social conditions.

The survey highlights the importance of public discussions and raising the awareness on questions of individual and collective freedoms in society. It may be beneficial to deepen the dialogue on these issues to improve understanding and enhance mutual respect.

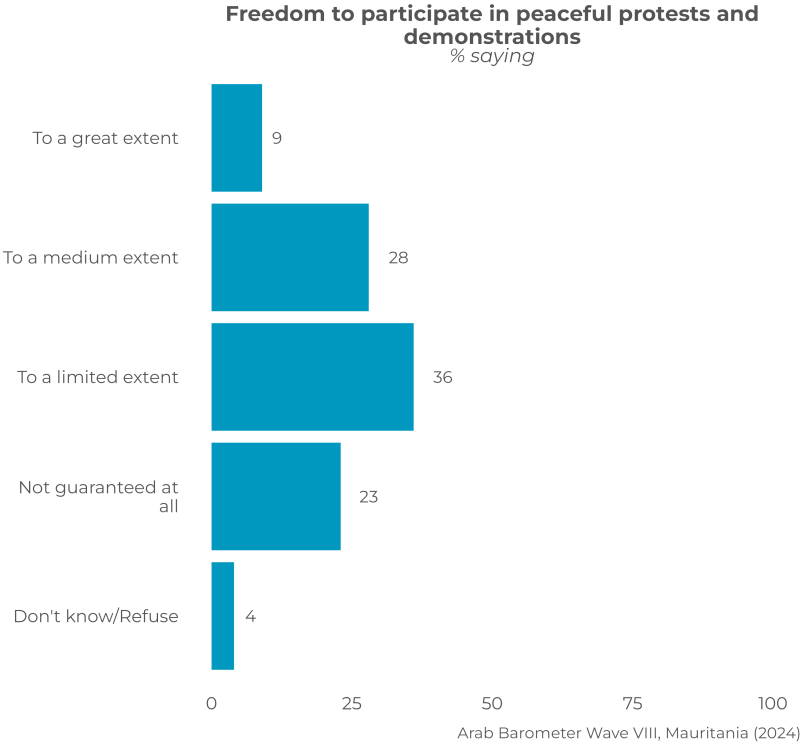
Roughly 4 in every 10 Mauritians say that the media enjoys a high (8 percent) or moderate (31 percent) level of freedom in criticizing government actions. These percentages indicate that there is a segment of citizens who believe that the media has relative freedom to criticize or evaluate the government's performance.



There is also no consensus on the level of public trust in the media's freedom to express criticism. One-third of Mauritanians say that the freedom to criticize the government by the media is somewhat guaranteed (32 percent), while a quarter (24 percent) say it is not guaranteed at all.

The same applies to press freedom in general, as the percentages converge significantly in this regard. There is a clear variation in people's trust in press freedom, with a predominance of skeptics and those with undetermined perceptions, necessitating the protection and guarantee of press freedom and its independence. Additionally, there is a need to encourage awareness about the importance of independent and reliable journalism in building societies.

Furthermore, there are varying percentages in the level of trust people have in the freedom to participate in protests and sit-ins, with a clear discrepancy between those who see it as largely guaranteed and those who doubt it.



Democracy

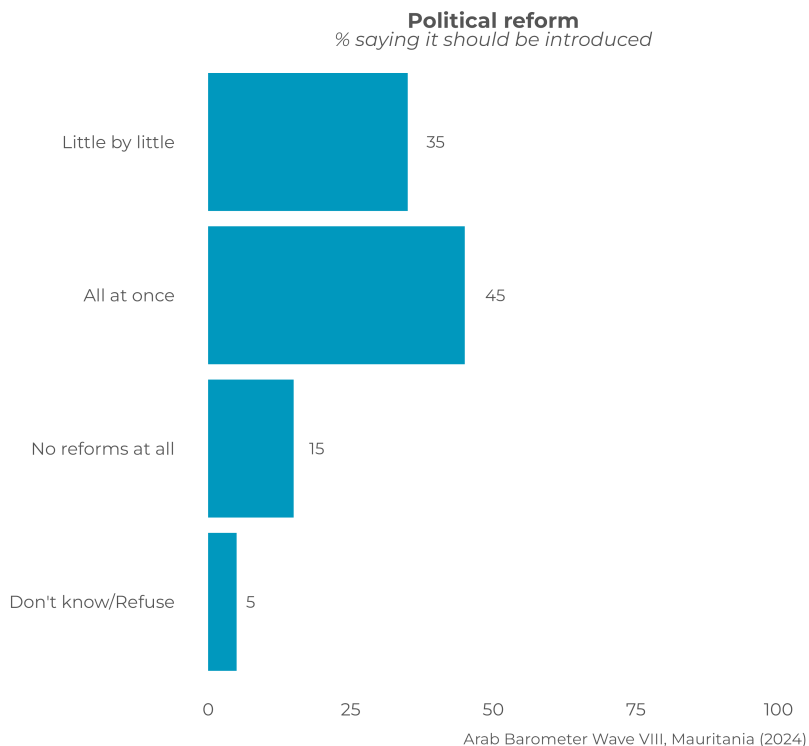
The beginning of the 1990s marked a crucial stage in Mauritania’s political history, as it witnessed profound and radical transformations driven by a combination of internal and external factors. These factors converged to stir the stagnant waters of the country’s political life. These factors significantly contributed to the emergence of political debates about the future of the country. Serious discussions began to surface in the political arena regarding democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, heralding a new wave of political discourse and exchanges that pushed the state to seriously consider comprehensive reforms. These reforms began with the adoption of a constitution that enshrined respect for human rights and embraced democracy in the sense of a departure from authoritarian tendencies on one hand, and recognition of diversity within a framework of political pluralism on the other.

However, the system established by the 1991 Constitution came to an end following the military coup that ousted President Maaouya Ould Sid’Ahmed Taya in August 2005. This marked the beginning of a new phase in Mauritania’s political history, characterized mainly by efforts to overcome the mistakes of the

previous political system and address social changes and political aspirations. This led to the enactment of the 2006 constitution and subsequent amendments in 2012 and 2017, which aimed to materialize these aspirations.

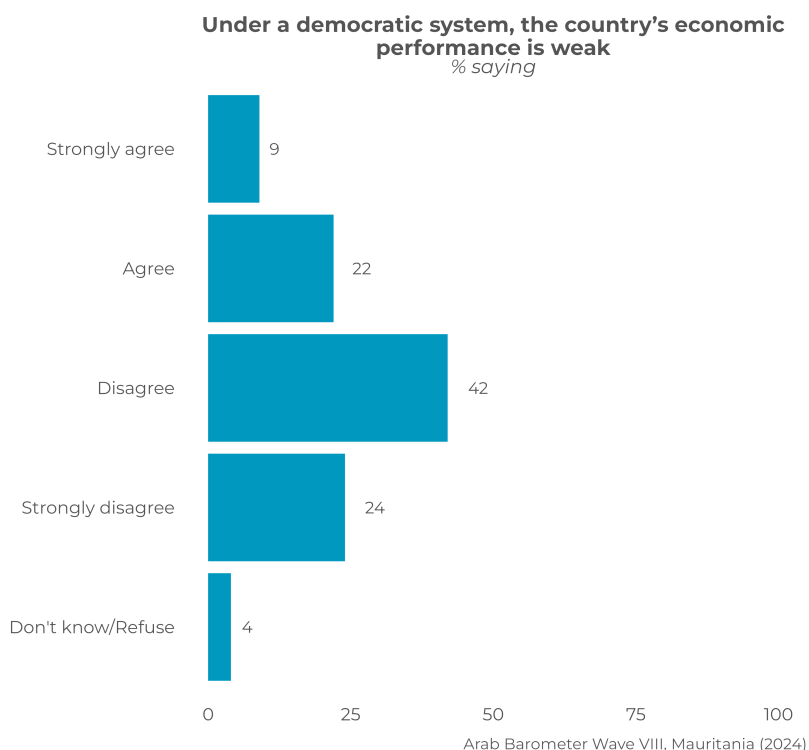
In recent years, Mauritians have increasingly felt frustrated with the political system for its failure to meet their aspirations for change, development, and democracy. This sentiment persists despite more than three decades of democratic practice. There is a prevailing sense that democratic practices have merely entrenched practices that contradict democratic values, such as tribalism, sectarianism, and favoritism, at the expense of the national project. Moreover, widespread oppression and marginalization of large segments of the population have persisted, with a small elite class monopolizing power and wealth. The oases dwellers in particular have been disproportionately affected by this reality.

As a result, people desire deep political reforms. About 45 percent see the necessity of implementing reforms all at once, and this percentage is likely to increase in the coming years if the Mauritanian political system does not undergo radical reforms. However, it is not guaranteed that demands for political reforms in the coming years will remain peaceful and free of violence.



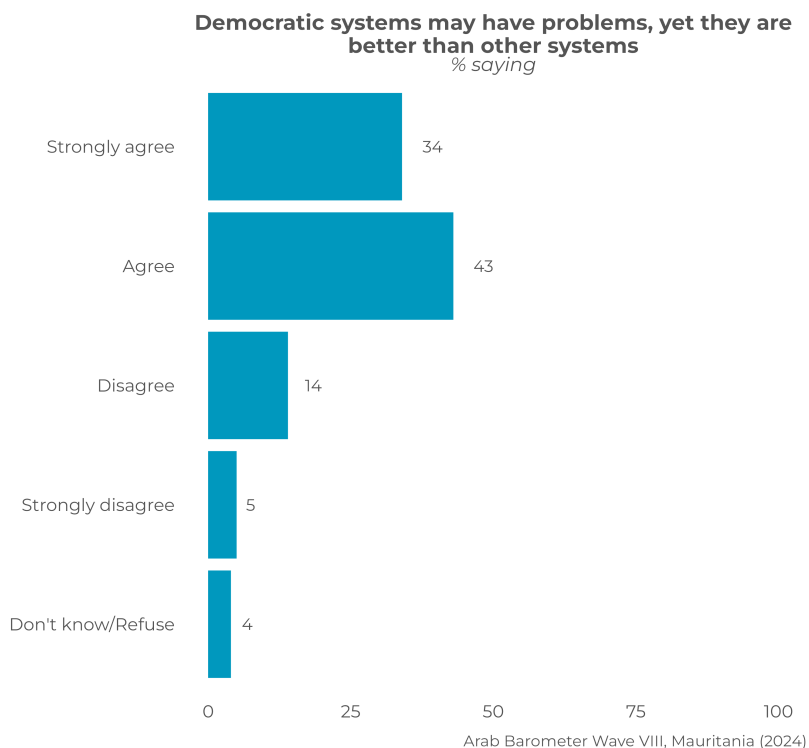
The bleak situation is further exacerbated by a sense of frustration regarding the performance of the democratic system as a whole, given the irregularities in electoral processes, forgery, and poor organization. These factors have contributed to a rise in voter apathy and political disengagement during electoral events.

Regarding the potential correlation between the economic situation and democracy, only 9 percent strongly agree that the economic performance is weak under democracies, while 22 percent agree (31 percent overall). On the other hand, 42 percent disagree, and 24 percent completely disagree (a majority of 66 percent, roughly two-thirds). This suggests that no one wants to solely blame democratic systems for the failure of economic policies, as this failure can be attributed to various factors, including corruption and lack of transparency.



Despite the dire situation of democracy in Mauritania, some still hold hope that the democratic system is best equipped to address the challenges at hand. About three-quarters of Mauritians still believe that democracy as a system remains superior to other systems. This stance is strongly supported by the fact that 54 percent of respondents believe that democracy is the only viable system

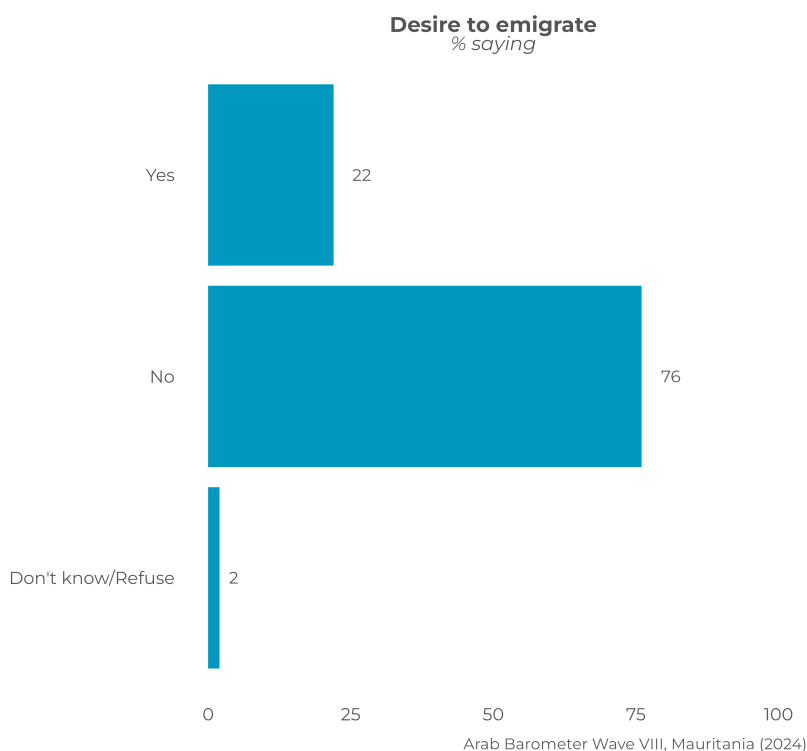
for governance, while 14 percent believe that a non-democratic government may be more suitable, and 25 percent believe that the type of government does not matter.



In sum, while concerns about the Mauritanian democratic system are growing and various challenges are emerging, calls for reform are increasing with a heightened tone of expressing such preference for reform, without commenting on the type of government or individuals to perform the reforms. Today, the priority lies in reforming the political and economic system in a way that addresses the aspirations and legitimate desires of the people.

Migration

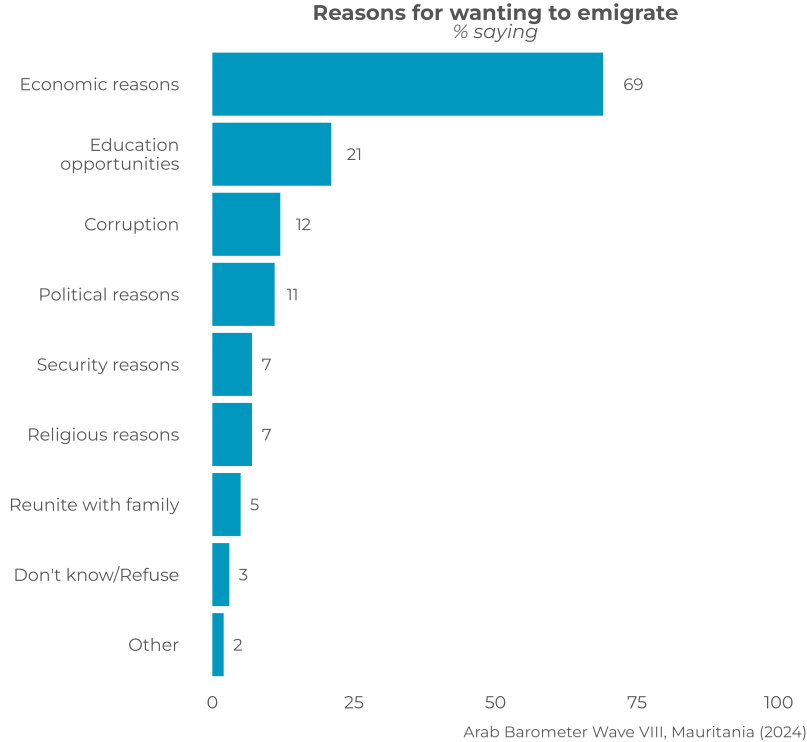
The percentage of Mauritians considering migration is 22 percent, and this percentage reflects a small portion of the young age group (18-29 years old) who are contemplating migration, with different percentages of thinking of leaving the homeland based on gender and education. There is a significant disparity between genders in the perception of migration, with a higher percentage of males considering it compared to females.



The survey results indicate that young people have a greater tendency to migrate compared to older age groups (30 and older), necessitating balanced efforts to raise awareness and educate both genders about stability and the available opportunities within the country. Additionally, providing sustainable employment and education opportunities for young people is crucial.

Regarding the motives behind the desire to emigrate, the results are as follows: Economic motives (70 percent of potential emigrants): The increase in the percentage of those seeing economic reasons for leaving their country reflects the importance of the economic conditions experienced by the younger generation. This may motivate decisions to emigrate to improve the financial standing. To face this tendency, there is need for the enhancement of economic opportunities within the country, providing support programs for the young, improving the business environment, and encouraging investments to provide sustainable employment opportunities. Educational motives (23 percent): This percentage reflects the interest in obtaining better educational opportunities outside Mauritania. To counter this tendency, there is a need for improving the quality of education, and providing diverse and suitable educational opportunities for the young in the country. Corruption, security, political, and religious motives (12 percent, 8 percent, 11 percent, and 8 percent, respectively): These

percentages reflect the dominance of political, security-related, and corruption issues, affecting stability and decreasing the desire to stay in the homeland. Family reunification motives (5 percent): This percentage reflects the desire of some individuals to reunite with their love ones outside the country, reflecting social and familial factors for migration. Other factors (5 percent): This reflects a set of other factors driving some individuals to emigrate, which may include personal or other unspecified economic factors.

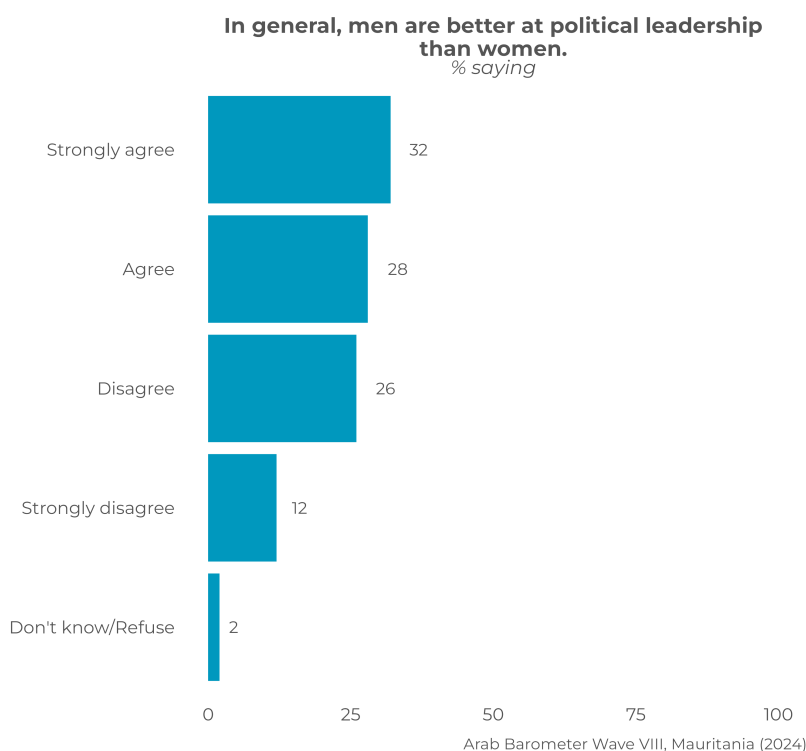


Concerning the preferred destinations, the results show a clear variation, with a significant percentage of those desiring to emigrate to the United States and Canada.

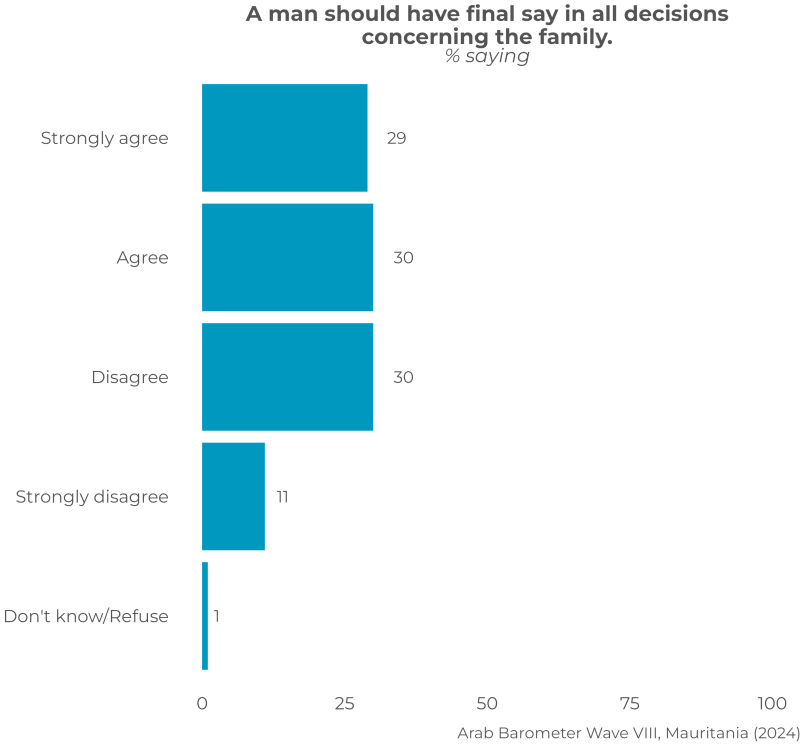
Gender

Roughly 6 out of 10 Mauritians agree with the statement that men perform better than women in positions of political leadership. Conversely, a considerable percentage either disagrees or strongly disagrees with this proposition. As expected, while men tend to believe they are better suited for political leadership, women lean towards rejecting this assumption. There is a clear disparity

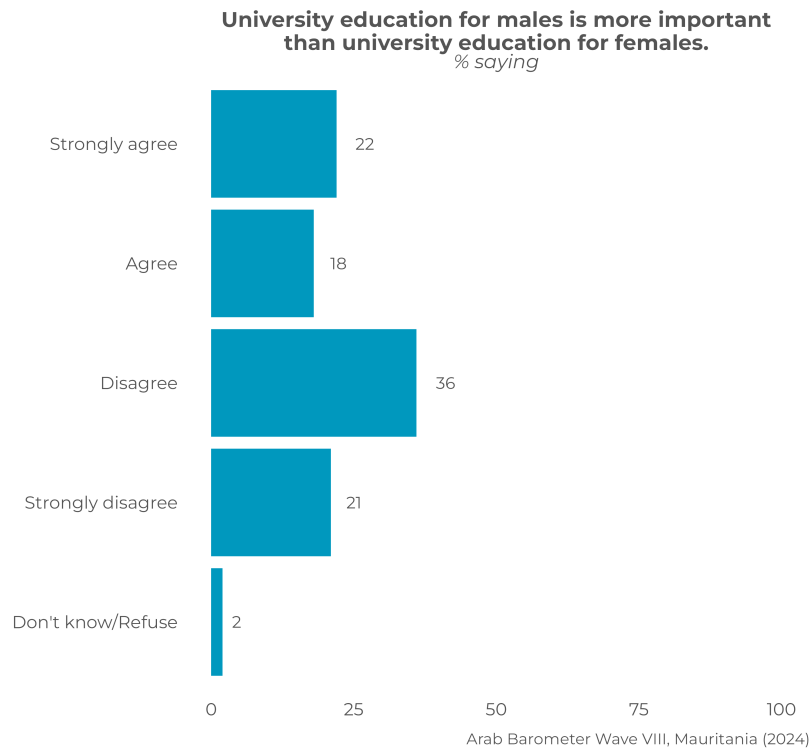
in the Mauritians' positions regarding gender and political leadership, with varying degrees of support and opposition. This difference is attributed to multiple factors influencing perspectives on women's political leadership, necessitating the promotion of awareness about gender equality in political leadership and the enhancement of women's roles in political and social life. Additionally, encouraging public discourse on gender equality and enhancing women's rights in political participation is essential. However, two-thirds of Mauritians agree (45 percent) or strongly agree (23 percent) with the prospect of a minimum quota in the Parliament for women.



On a social level, differences between males and females in perceptions of the role of men in the family and household's decision-making are evident. While approximately 60 percent believe that men should have the final say concerning family decisions, about 40 percent express their rejection of this statement. The results reveal a significant difference between men and women in this position. Enhancing dialogue and understanding among family members may be required to achieve balance and stability in family decision-making, encouraging the building of relationships based on respect and cooperation among family members to overcome differences and challenges.



Regarding education, the majority in Mauritania express their rejection of the statement that higher education is more important for men than for women. Only 22 percent strongly agree with this statement, while a similar percentage completely disagree with it. While 18 percent agrees, double this percentage (36 percent) disagrees. These percentages underscore the need to encourage and support programs and initiatives that promote higher education for women and enhance their role in society.



The opinions expressed in the survey on violence against women in Mauritania reflect a clear disparity in perceptions and personal experiences of the respondents. The percentage of women who believe that violence against women has slightly increased over the last year is higher than that among men, attributed to personal experiences or specific observations of violent incidents. In this context, there is a need to enhance awareness and education about the impacts of violence against women and the necessity to combat it, as well as to strengthen laws and policies that protect women’s rights and punish perpetrators in cases of violence.



About Arab Barometer

Arab Barometer is the leading and most influential research network on public opinion in the Middle East and North Africa. We are nonprofit and nonpartisan, hosted at Princeton University and the University of Michigan.

Founded in 2006, we are the longest-standing research network that conducts rigorous and nationally representative public opinion surveys in the Arab world. We disseminate the findings through analyses and reports to deepen public conversations and facilitate data-driven solutions to the pressing problems facing ordinary citizens across MENA.

Our public opinion surveys give ordinary citizens a stronger voice, and our analysis, highlighting key demographic differences and changing trends, help comprehend MENA citizens' shifting views, attitudes, and behaviors.



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