البارومیتر العربي
ARAB BAROMETER

Arab Barometer IX

Mauritania Report



June 2026

Executive summary

While citizens continue to face significant economic challenges and express growing concern over corruption, these are signs of increased confidence in state institutions and improvements in evaluations of government performance in non-economic areas. At the same time, a closer look reveals persisting divides in public opinion based on socioeconomic status. Wealthier Mauritanians consistently express more positive views of conditions in the country, while poorer citizens hold negative outlooks.

People remain concerned over the economic situation, viewing the economy negatively just as they did in recent years. Inflation, poverty, unemployment, and low wages continue to be the primary economic issues, reflecting persisting perceptions of little or no progress in addressing these challenges. Food insecurity remains widespread, with many citizens expressing concern over securing enough food to eat. Accordingly, it is no surprise that people want their government to focus on easing conditions by investing in subsidies, controlling inflation, and creating jobs.

Views of the economic situation shape evaluations of government performance. People continue to be skeptical of the government's efforts to control inflation. Although the government gets more credit for job creation and reducing inequality, socioeconomic levels reflect greater variations in such evaluations. Conversely, people rate the government's performance positively when it comes to maintaining security and providing public services.

Trust in several state institutions has increased in recent years. The government, parliament, presidency, and armed forces have all enjoyed a growth in public trust as compared to two years ago. The justice system has witnessed the biggest boost in trust, likely as a result of recent reform programs. Yet, trust remains correlated with income levels: poorer Mauritanians are less likely to express confidence in public institutions than their wealthier compatriots.

Despite these challenges, only a small minority of Mauritanians say they have considered leaving their country. Youth and college-educated citizens tend to form the majority of those wanting to leave. Pursuit of economic and educational opportunities abroad seem to be the key motives for potential migrants, a significant proportion of whom are willing to emigrate even without the necessary papers.

Political engagement appears to be in decline. Interest in politics has decreased, so has self-reported, and actual, voter turnout in elections, with many expressing reservations about the quality of the latest legislative elections. Large segments of the population view civil society as playing only a minimal role in public

life. Simultaneously, perceptions of freedoms have improved modestly, though largely driven by those of higher socioeconomic standings.

Notwithstanding growing disengagement in politics, Mauritanians maintain strong support for democracy as a preferable system of governance. Majorities reject notions associating democracy with weaker economic performance or instability. Yet, citizens make it clear that they care primarily about outcomes, namely better economic conditions and sustained security. Many in Mauritania place less emphasis on the type of government and more on its ability to deliver tangible achievements on these fronts. At the same time, support for strong leadership has risen significantly in the past few years.

Support for political representation and equal access to employment for women remains widespread, even if mainly driven by women themselves. Though, traditional attitudes remain intact when it comes to political leadership and family decisions.

As for the environment, Mauritanians remain concerned primarily over water-related challenges. They identify water scarcity and pollution as the key environmental challenges facing their country and they report direct impacts on their daily life as a result. While climate change is not perceived as the main challenge, people clearly recognize its importance and support stronger government intervention to address its effects.

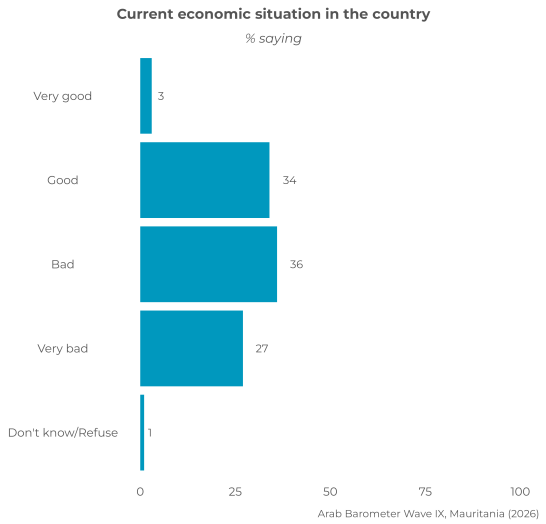
Ultimately, socioeconomic status emerges as the main source of variation in public opinion across almost all issues examined in the survey. Poorer Mauritanians consistently express more negative views of economic conditions, government performance, public services, and freedoms than their wealthier compatriots. These findings suggest that substantial inequalities continue to shape the lives and experiences of ordinary Mauritanians in their country.

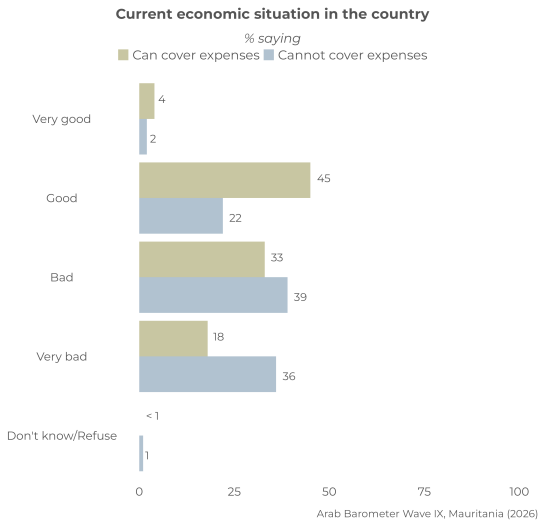
These are among the main findings of a nationally representative face-to-face survey conducted in Mauritania. The survey included 1,204 randomly selected citizens from across all regions of Mauritania and was fielded from April 28 to May 12, 2026 using a multistage clustered sample. The margin of error for the reported results is ±3 percentage points. The surveys are part of Arab Barometer's ninth wave.

The Economy

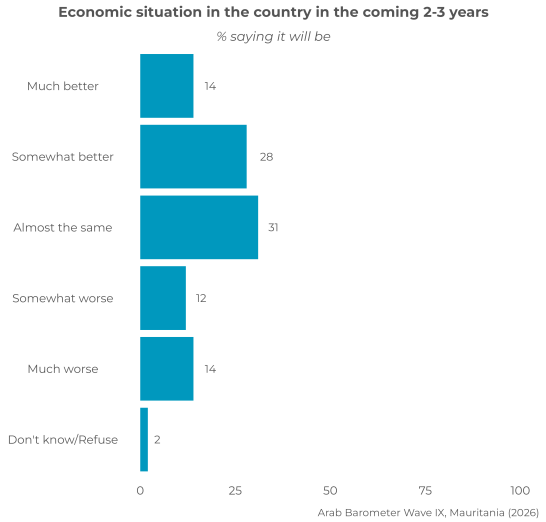
Public perceptions of Mauritania's economic situation have remained largely unchanged over the past few years. Today, a few more than a third view their economy as very good (three percent) or good (34 percent). This level is similar to that observed two years ago (36 percent). Yet, it remains the majority's

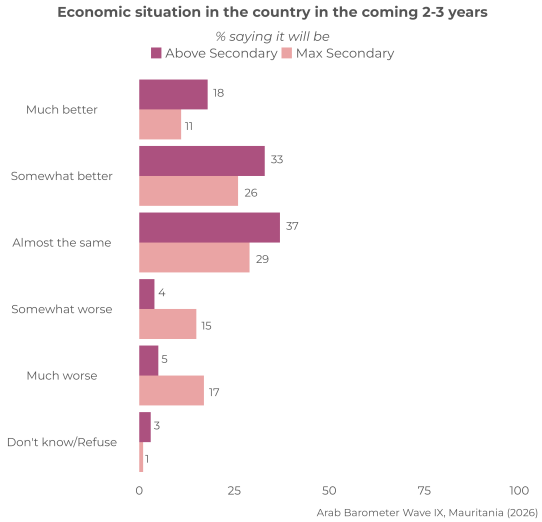
view that the economy is not doing well. Roughly a third (36 percent) say economic conditions are bad, while a quarter (27 percent) say they are very bad. Unsurprisingly, Mauritanians whose income meets their basic needs are twice as likely to view the economy positively as those struggling to make ends meet (49 percent vs. 24 percent). Older Mauritanians are also more likely to rate the economy positively than their younger compatriots by a margin of nine points.





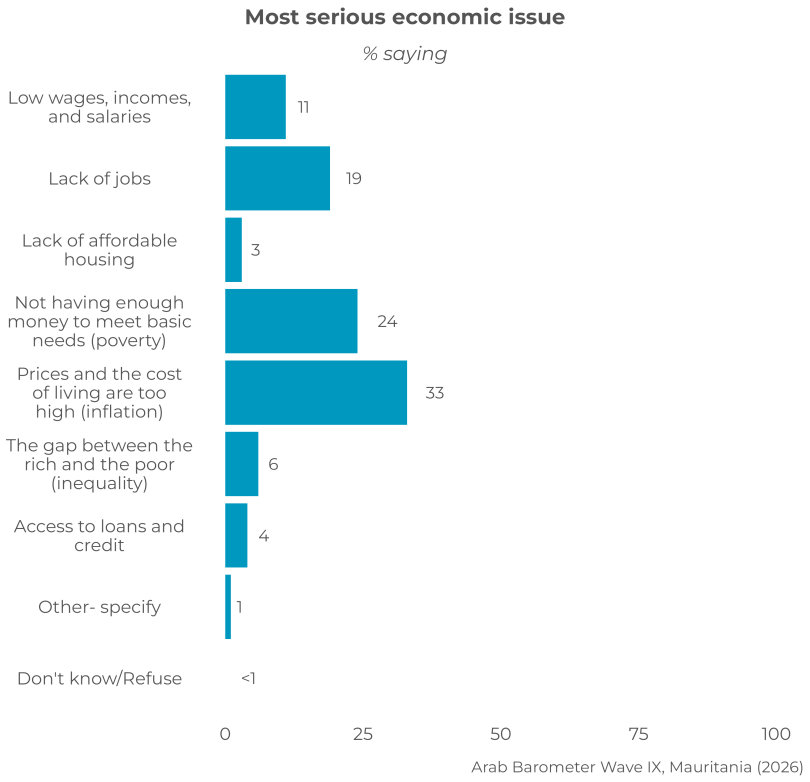
A plurality in the country expresses optimism regarding the future of their economy. Roughly four-in-ten (42 percent) Mauritanians say they expect the economic situation to be much (14 percent) or somewhat (28 percent) better in the coming few years. At the same time, three-in-ten (31 percent) expect conditions to remain unchanged. These views are also similar to 2024 levels when 39 percent of Mauritanians expressed optimism and 33 percent said the economic situation will remain the same. Notably, those with a university degree have more optimistic outlooks than those with at most a secondary degree (51 percent vs. 37 percent). Better-off Mauritanians share this optimism much more than their less fortunate counterparts by a wide margin of 25 points. Interestingly, views do not vary significantly across age groups.



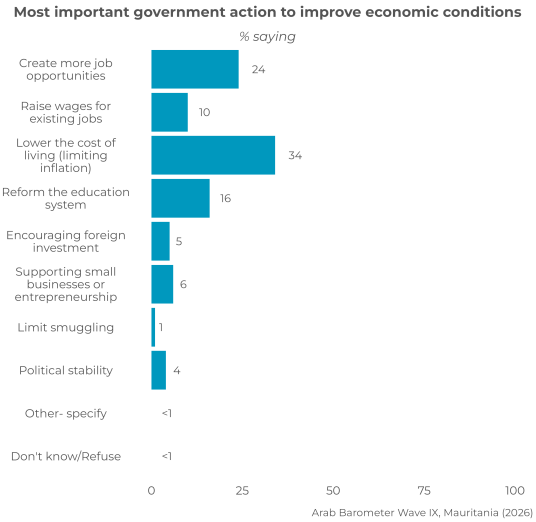


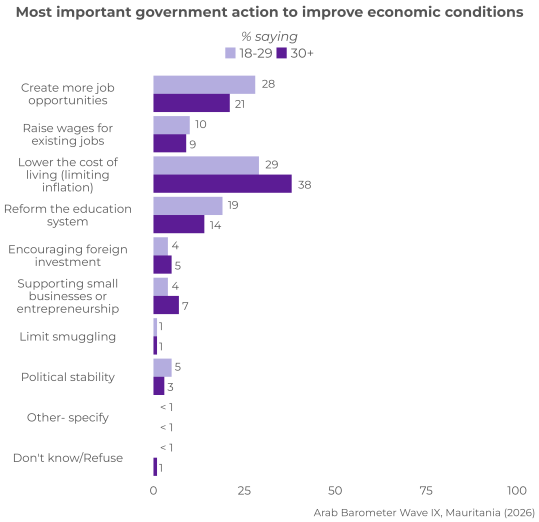
Mauritanians continue to view economic conditions as one of the key challenges facing their country. Three-in-ten (29 percent) say it is the most important challenge today, positioning the state of the economy as second only to corruption (34 percent). These levels are roughly similar to those observed in 2024 when a quarter of Mauritanians rated the economy as the biggest challenge compared with 31 percent who said the same about corruption. Unsurprisingly, those struggling to cover their basic needs are more likely to view the economy as a bigger challenge. For these Mauritanians, the economic situation is the most important challenge (35 percent), followed by corruption (31 percent). For their wealthier compatriots, corruption is viewed as more important (36 percent) than the economy (24 percent).

A more detailed analysis reveals that Mauritanians continue to cite four key economic issues facing their country. The most commonly cited issue is inflation. A third of Mauritanians view the rising cost of living as the most serious economic issue for their country. This is followed by poverty (24 percent), lack of jobs (19 percent), and low wages (11 percent). Notably, these are the same issues Mauritanians pointed to in the Arab Barometer Wave VIII survey of 2024. This suggests that conditions have remained largely unchanged over the past few years, at least when viewed through the lens of the general public.

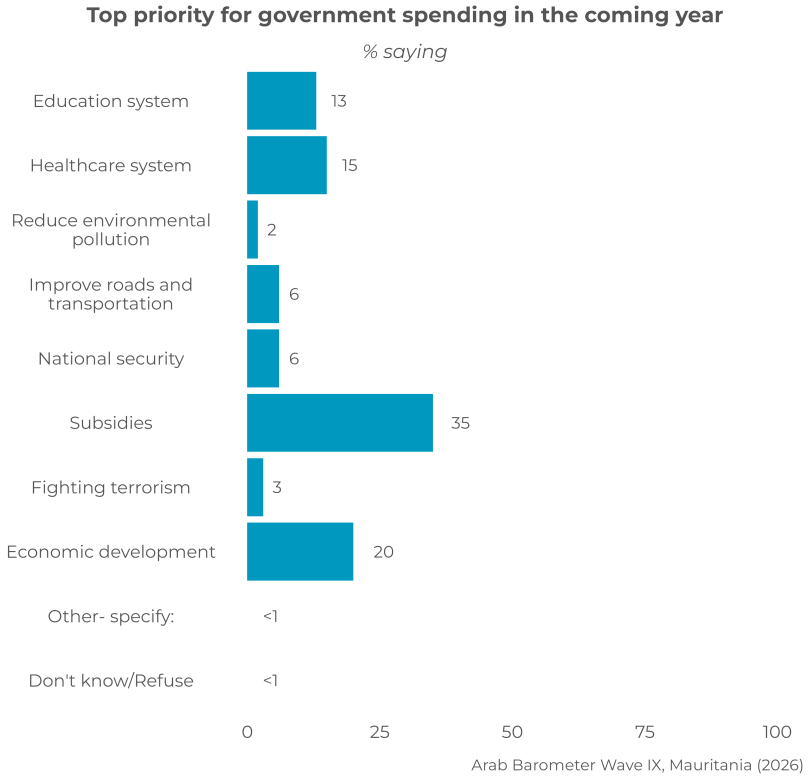


This perception is reinforced when examining what citizens want from their government in order to improve economic conditions. Citizens remain focused on the same interventions they had identified before. A third of the population say the government should focus on limiting inflation (34 percent) while a quarter (24 percent) point to job creation as the most important move. Reforming education (16 percent) and raising wages (ten percent) follow. These four actions were the most cited by Mauritanians, roughly in the same order, two years ago. Older Mauritanians clearly believe that limiting inflation (38 percent) should be the first step for the government, followed by creating jobs (21 percent). Youth, however, put the two possible interventions on the same footing.

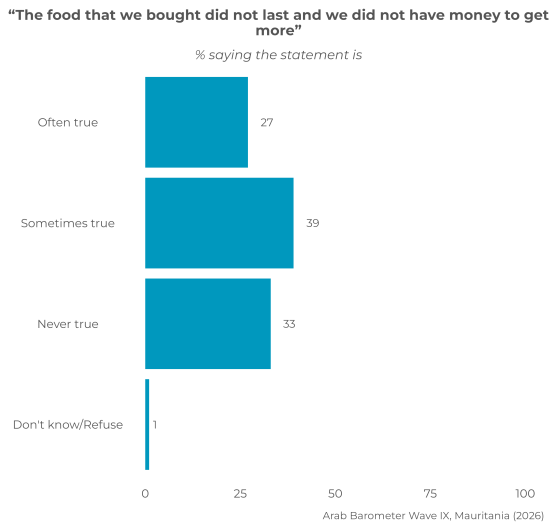


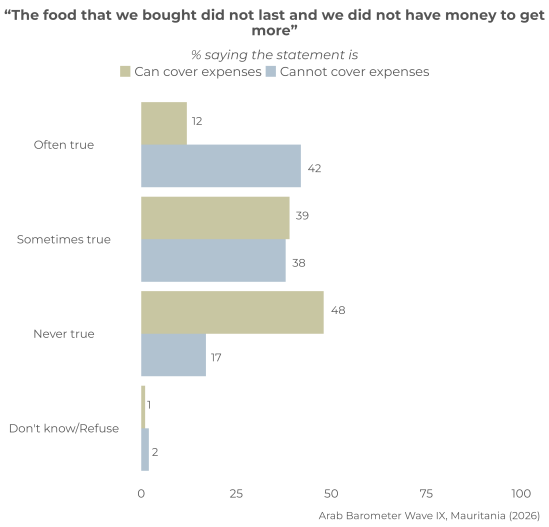


Given the general perceptions viewing inflation as the key economic challenge in Mauritania, it is no surprise that roughly a third (35 percent) of citizens say that the government should prioritize spending on subsidies to ease the struggles of ordinary Mauritanians. Subsidies surpass economic development (20 percent), the healthcare system (15 percent), and education (13 percent) on the list of government spending priorities in the public eye.



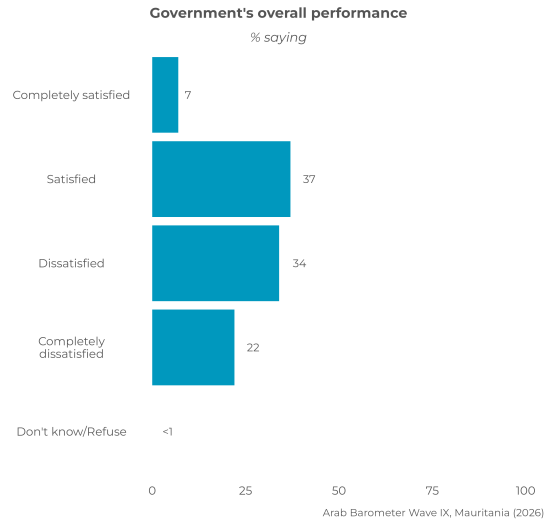
This focus on inflation and its remedies hints at the deeper challenges Mauritanians are facing in their daily lives. Findings from this survey suggest the persistence of food insecurity in the country. Two thirds of people say it is often (27 percent) or sometimes (39 percent) the case that they run out of food without having the necessary resources to buy more. This level has remained unchanged since 2024. Furthermore, roughly six-in-ten (58 percent) say they have been worried about having enough food to eat, while at least a half (53 percent) say they have resorted to eating only a few kinds of food due to financial constraints. Unsurprisingly, poorer Mauritanians are exposed much more directly to these issues. They are, for example, twice as likely to report concern over having enough food supplies than their better-off compatriots (78 percent vs. 40 percent). Three-quarters (74 percent) of the poor report eating only a few kinds of food as compared to three-in-ten (31 percent) wealthier Mauritanians saying the same. Those who are less fortunate are at least twice as likely to report skipping meals or their households running out of food. It is, thus, to be expected that poorer Mauritanians point to subsidies as priority to a greater extent than wealthier people.

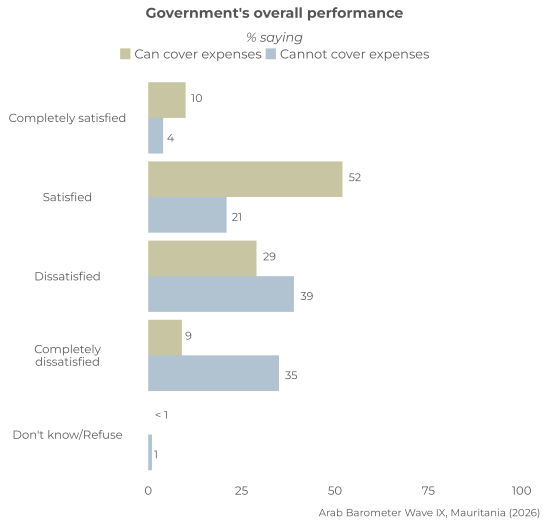




Government Performance

Overall, satisfaction with the government's performance has risen from 35 percent in 2024 to 44 percent. This increased level of satisfaction is primarily driven by wealthier Mauritanians, of whom six-in-ten express satisfaction. A quarter of poorer people express similar satisfaction. Notably, the college-educated tend to say they are satisfied more than those with no more than a high school education.

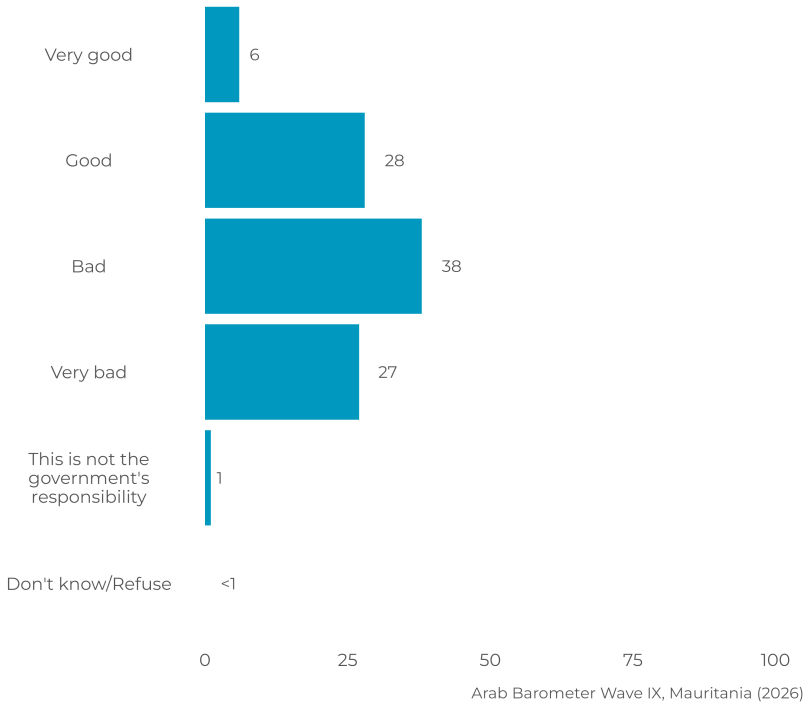




The economic struggles ordinary Mauritanians face are reflected in evaluations of government performance. On economic fronts, the government is largely perceived to have done a poor job, especially in controlling inflation. Today, no more than 15 percent of the population rate the government's performance in keeping prices down as very good or good. While this rating has remained largely unchanged since 2024, negative ratings paint a grimmer picture. Two years ago, 38 percent of Mauritanians said the government's performance on this front is very bad. This proportion has risen to half (51 percent) this year, reflecting a growing dissatisfaction with the government's inability to control inflation. Those who are less well-off are the more likely to rate the government's efforts poorly. Two thirds (67 percent) of them say the performance is very bad with an additional quarter (27 percent) saying it is bad. In comparison, roughly a quarter of wealthier Mauritanians say the government is doing a very good or a good job keeping prices down.

Government performance in narrowing the gap between rich and poor

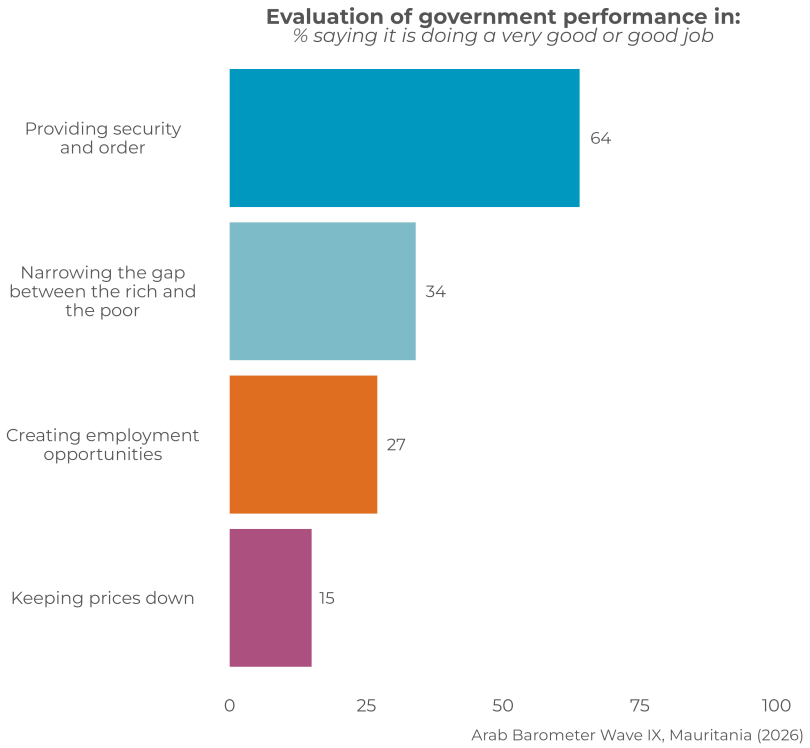
% saying



Arab Barometer Wave IX, Mauritania (2026)

On other economic issues, Mauritanians look more positively on the job the government is doing. About a quarter (27 percent) say the government is doing a very good or a good job in creating employment opportunities. This is slightly higher than the rating observed in 2024 when a fifth said the same. This rating,

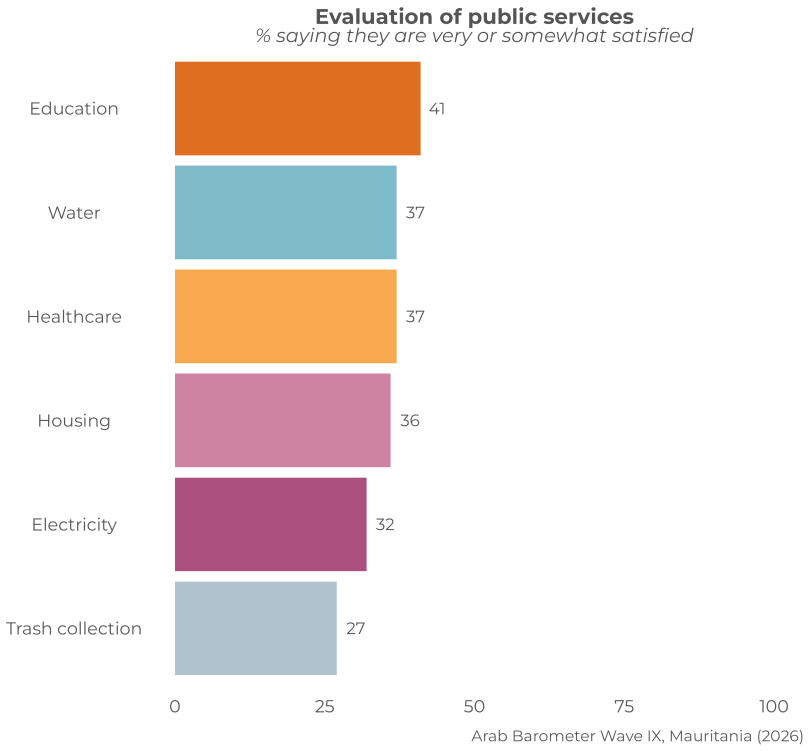
however, is also largely driven by wealthier Mauritanians who are more likely to rate the government's job creation work positively than their poorer compatriots by a wide margin. The latter hold overwhelmingly negative views as 47 percent of them say the government's performance is very bad and 43 percent say it is bad. This is also the case for the government's effort to combat inequality, although Mauritanians generally hold more positive views of these efforts. A third (34 percent) say the government is doing a good job, with nearly a fifth of the poor holding this view as compared to roughly half of wealthier Mauritanians.



A majority of the population (64 percent) say the Mauritanian government is doing a very good or a good job in providing security and maintaining order in the country. This constitutes a 12-point increase as compared to 2024 levels. While better-off Mauritanians are more likely to hold this view, more than half of their poorer compatriots also hold a positive evaluation of government performance in this area. The public also exhibits overwhelming levels of trust in the military and police forces. Nine-in-ten Mauritanians say they have a great deal or quite a lot of trust in the armed forces; an increase from three quarters (76 percent) in 2024. As for the police, it enjoys the trust of 73 percent of the

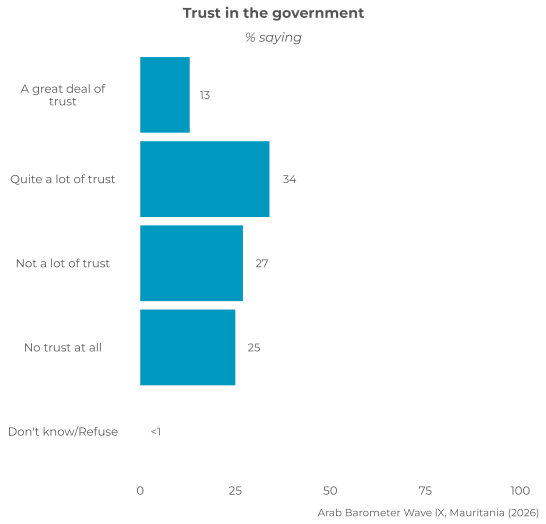
population, a 13-point increase as compared to two years ago.

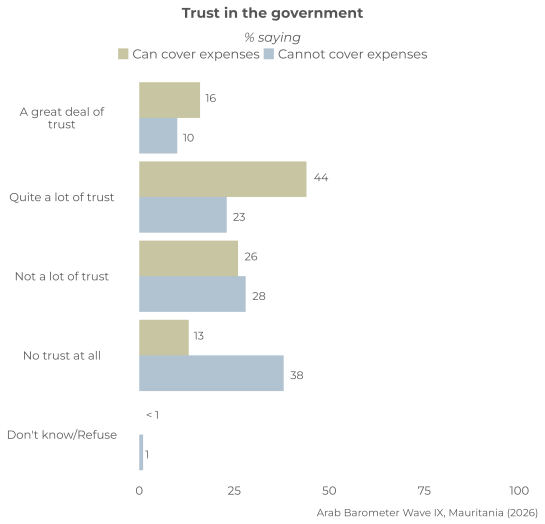
The increase in positive evaluation of government performance in non-economic fields is further reflected in ratings of service provision. Four-in-ten (41 percent) say they are completely satisfied or satisfied with the education system in Mauritania, while 37 percent say the same about the healthcare system. Both levels witnessed a double-digit increase from 27 percent and 26 percent, respectively, two years prior. Similar, even if smaller, increases can be seen for other services, particularly trash collection. It remains the case, however, that views and evaluations vary greatly by income levels. While more than half of wealthier people express satisfaction with the education system, this satisfaction is shared by just a quarter of poorer Mauritanians. Three quarters of the latter say they are dissatisfied (38 percent) or completely satisfied (37 percent). Evaluations of the healthcare system reflect slightly wider variation. Only a fifth of poorer Mauritanians say they are satisfied as compared to more than half of their wealthier compatriots. Four-in-five of the less-fortunate express dissatisfaction with healthcare services in Mauritania.



Trust in the State

Similar to satisfaction with the government's overall performance, trust in the Mauritanian government has witnessed an uptick recently, a phenomenon observed in several countries across the region. Almost half of Mauritanians (47 percent) say they have a great deal or quite a lot of trust in their government. This is up from 36 percent two years ago. Older citizens are more likely to express trust in the government than their younger compatriots. However, the greatest variation in views can be seen through income levels. While six-in-ten wealthier Mauritanians say they trust the government, only a third of their poorer compatriots share this sentiment. The majority of poorer people say they have little (28 percent) or no trust at all (38 percent).

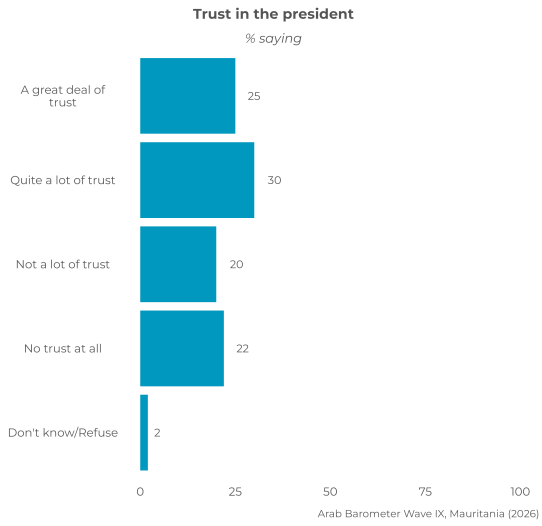


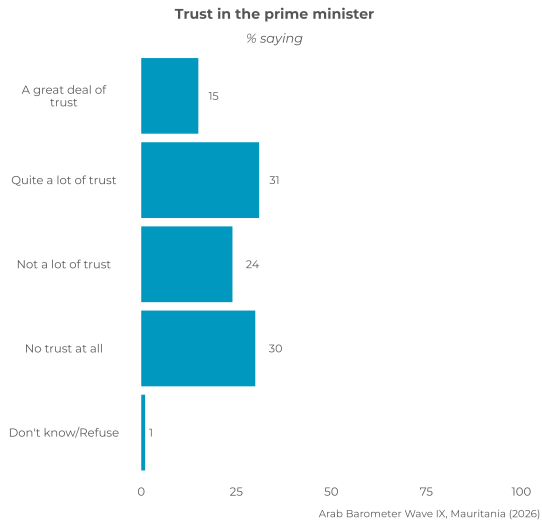


Trust in the parliament has remained largely unchanged in recent years. Four-in-ten (41 percent) say they have a great deal or quite a lot of trust in the legislative body; in 2024, 38 percent of Mauritanians said the same. Just like trust in the government, wealthier citizens are much more likely to trust the parliament than their poorer compatriots. While more than half (53 percent) of the better-off say they trust their parliament, only three-in-ten (28 percent) of the less-fortunate say the same.

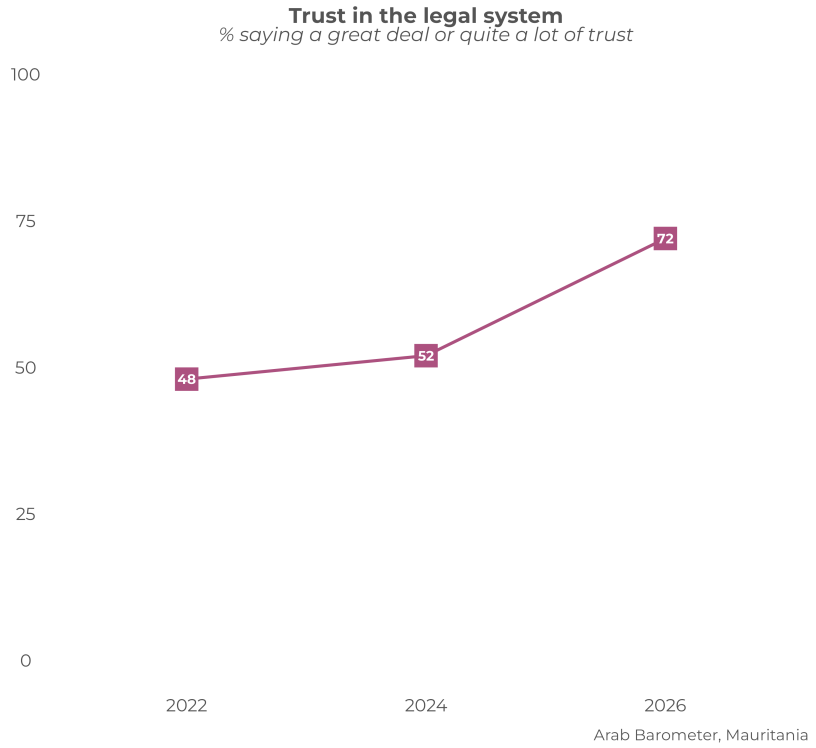
President Mohamed Ould Ghazouani has seen a slight increase in popular trust with 55 percent of the population saying they trust their president, as compared to 49 percent saying the same in 2024. Youth are ten points less likely to say they trust him than older Mauritanians, while the wealthier are more likely to express trust in the president than the poorer by a margin of 26 points. Mauritania's current prime minister, Mokhtar Ould Djay, enjoys slightly more trust

than his predecessor, Mohamed Ould Bilal. Fewer than half (46 percent) say they trust Ould Djay. Only 37 percent said they trusted Ould Bilal near the end of his appointment in 2024. Similar to the president, Mauritanian youth are less trusting of their prime minister than older people (40 percent vs. 50 percent). Those who are less fortunate are half as likely to express trust in the prime minister as well (31 percent vs. 60 percent).





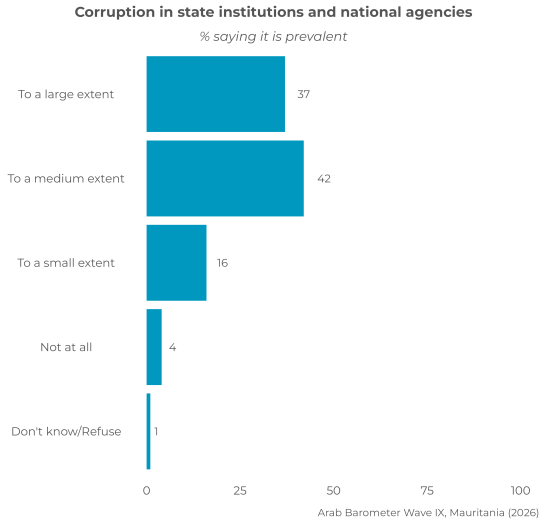
Recently, Mauritania launched a program aimed at reforming and modernizing the country's justice system. A key goal of the program is to improve accessibility to the justice system for ordinary Mauritanians. It is likely that the impacts of this program explain the sharp increase in public trust in the judicial apparatus. Prior to the establishment of the program in 2023, half (48 percent) of Mauritanians said they had a great deal or quite a lot of trust in their courts. Today, roughly seven-in-ten (72 percent) express trust in the country's justice system. Notably, differences by income are less pronounced when it comes to trust in the courts; the margin between wealthier and poorer citizens is 18 points, much less than it is for other state institutions.

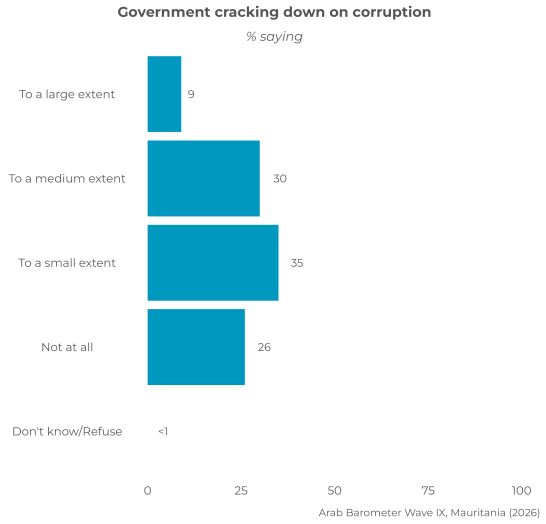


Furthermore, half of the population say they have trust in their regional government (49 percent). College-educated Mauritanians are eight points less likely to express trust in regional government compared to those with no more than high school education. Here again income levels play a crucial role in differentiating views. While six-in-ten wealthier citizens say they have a great deal or quite a lot of trust in their regional governments, only four-in-ten (38 percent) of their poorer compatriots say the same.

Corruption

As previously mentioned, corruption remains a key challenge for Mauritania. Citizens continue to rank it first on the list of challenges facing their country (34 percent), surpassing the economy, public services, and immigration. Mauritanians with college education are seven points more likely to point to corruption as the key challenge compared with their less-educated compatriots. It should come as no surprise, then, that four-in-five citizens perceive corruption to be prevalent in state institutions and agencies. Notably, this level has remained largely the same as in 2024 when 76 percent said the same. People struggling to make ends meet are more likely to view corruption as widely present than their better-off counterparts (86 percent vs. 73 percent).

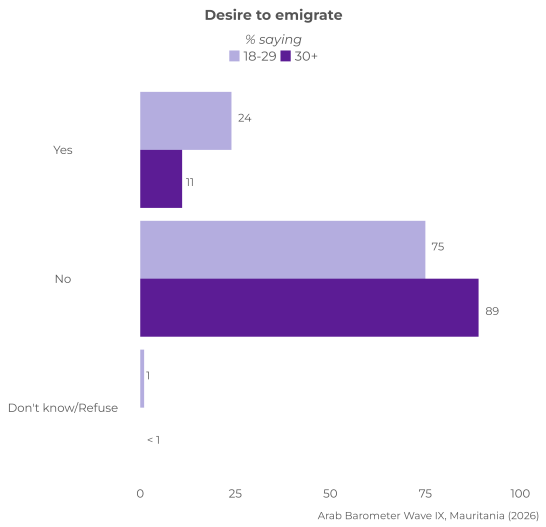


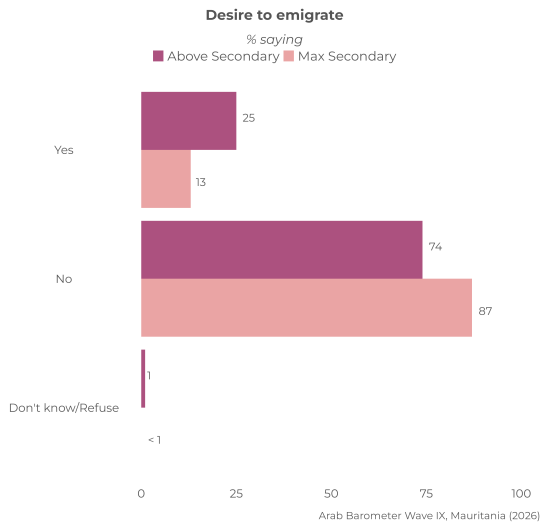


Perceptions that the government is fighting corruption have remained largely constant in recent years. No more than two-in-five (39 percent) say they believe the government is combatting corruption to a large or a medium extent; a level similar to that of 2024 (41 percent). Older Mauritanians tend to hold this view more than youth by a margin of nine points. Similarly, university-educated Mauritanians are more likely to acknowledge the government's anti-corruption effort than those with lower educational attainment (52 percent vs. 35 percent). As in many other instances, however, the clear distinction is seen through income levels. While half of citizens with higher incomes credit the government (52 percent), only a quarter of poorer Mauritanians (24 percent) share similar views.

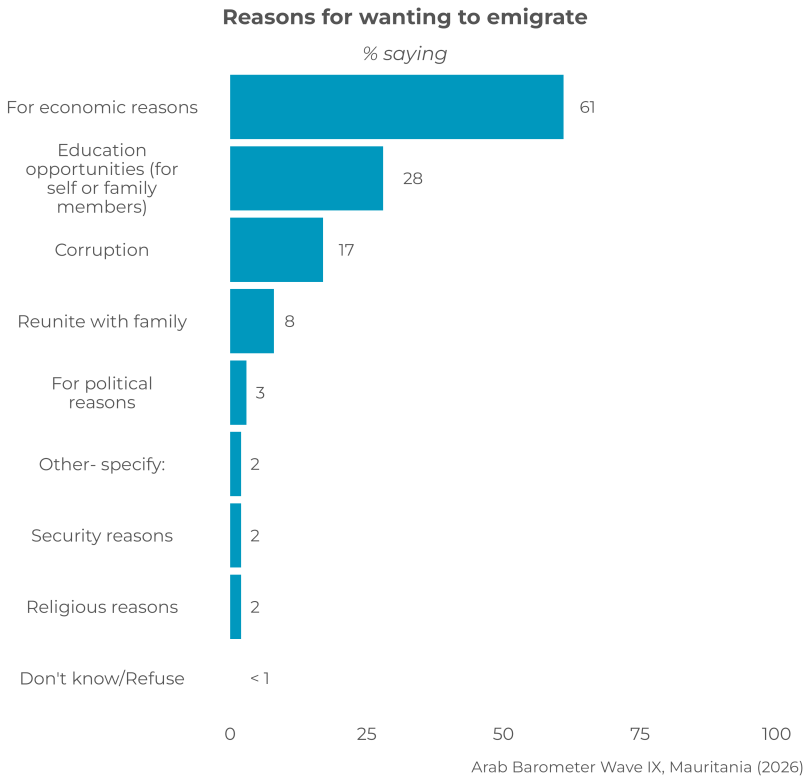
Migration

Despite all the challenges facing ordinary Mauritanians, only a small minority expresses a desire to emigrate from the country. Less than a fifth (16 percent) say they have considered leaving, down from 22 percent in 2024. Mauritanian youth are twice as likely to say they want to leave than their older compatriots (24 percent vs. 11 percent). This is also the case for the college-educated (25 percent) who are twice as likely to express a desire to emigrate than those with no more than a high school education (13 percent). Income levels do not seem to play a role here, even though economic reasons top the list of migration motives.





Six-in-ten potential migrants from Mauritania cite economic factors as a reason for their desire to leave the country. This is followed by pursuit of educational opportunities (28 percent), corruption (17 percent), and family reunification (eight percent). Less-educated and poorer Mauritanians with the desire to emigrate are more likely to cite economic reasons, while youth are more likely to point to educational opportunities as their motive.



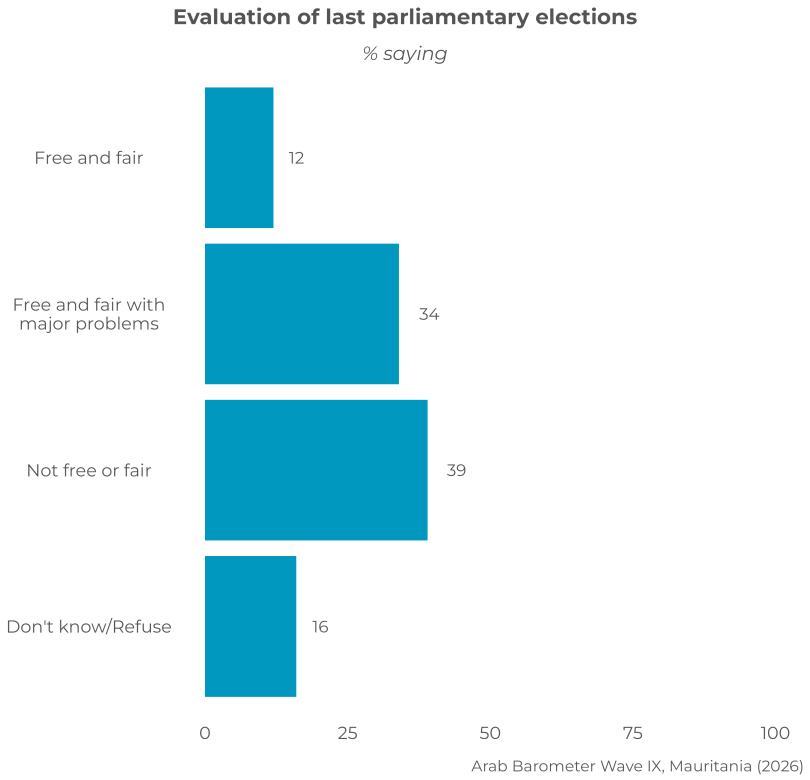
Among potential migrants, two-thirds say they are taking concrete steps to emigrate. This is more often the case for youth (ages 18-29) (71 percent vs. 58 percent of older people) and those with college education (75 percent vs. 59 percent of the less-educated). The most preferred destinations include the United States (35 percent), Canada (21 percent), and France (20 percent). A third of these potential migrants say they are willing to emigrate even if they lack the necessary documents to do so legally. This is mainly the stance of youth (45 percent vs. 17 percent) and less educated potential migrants (40 percent vs. 24 percent).

Freedoms and Civic Engagement

A quarter of Mauritanians say they are very interested or interested in politics. Two years ago, a third (34 percent) expressed similar interest. While three-in-ten (31 percent) older Mauritanians say they have political interests, less than a fifth (17 percent) of youth share this interest. The case is similar for college-educated people who are roughly twice as likely to express interest in politics than their compatriots with lower educational attainments (38 percent vs. 20

percent). These findings suggest a growing disengagement with political affairs among ordinary people. When asked about voting in the latest parliamentary elections, 55 percent report voting as compared to 63 percent reporting the same in 2024. These levels align closely with official electoral data that show recent declines in voter turnout.

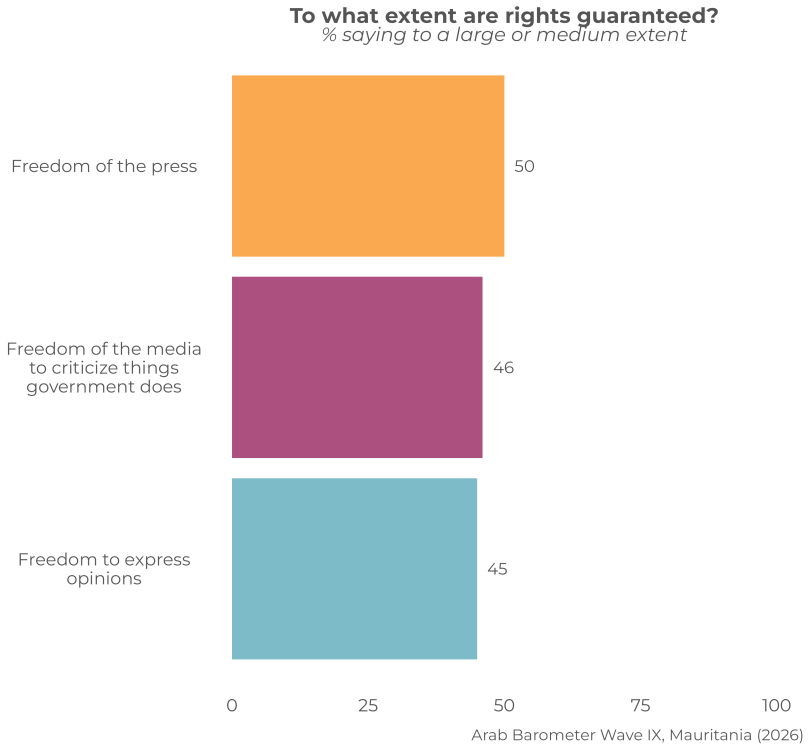
Evaluations of these elections may partially explain the decline in voter turnout and growing disengagement with politics. Roughly one-in-ten say the last parliamentary elections were completely free and fair (12 percent). A third (34 percent) say they were free and fair but with major problems, while the plurality (39 percent) believe the elections were neither free nor fair. Notably, the latter view is held by half of poorer Mauritanians (49 percent) as compared to only 30 percent of their wealthier compatriots. This suggests a deepening disenchantment of large segments of society and their move away from participation in political life.



Further compounding this reality is perceptions of Mauritanian civil society. While trust in civil society organizations remains largely unchanged since 2024 at 42 percent, this trust is primarily driven by well-off citizens (50 percent vs. 34 percent of poorer people). More telling are the answers when asked about the role

of civil society in the country. The plurality of Mauritanians (42 percent) say it does not play any role. This is followed by a fifth who say raising money (19 percent), caring for marginalized groups (18 percent), or raising awareness (17 percent), respectively. The view that civil society plays no role in Mauritania is largely held by poorer people (48 percent vs. 36 percent of their better-off counterparts) and those with no more than high school education (46 percent vs. 30 percent of the college-educated).

Findings from this survey reveal a slight uptick in Mauritanian perceptions of freedoms in the country. Today, 45 percent of people say the freedom to express opinions is guaranteed to a great or a medium extent. This is a seven-point increase when compared to levels of 2024. The same is true for press freedom which increased from 42 percent to 50 percent and freedom of the media to criticize the government which witnessed a six-point increase in the past two years. Once again, this rise can be largely attributed to wealthier Mauritanians holding overall positive views of these conditions in their country. When it comes to freedom to express opinions, more than half of the better-off population (54 percent) say it is guaranteed, while roughly a third (36 percent) of less-fortunate people say the same. This is also the case for freedom of the media to criticize government actions where the margin between the two income groups is 18 points. Freedom of the press is no different; while nearly six-in-ten (58 percent) wealthier Mauritanians say it is guaranteed, only four-in-ten (41 percent) of their poorer compatriots share this evaluation.



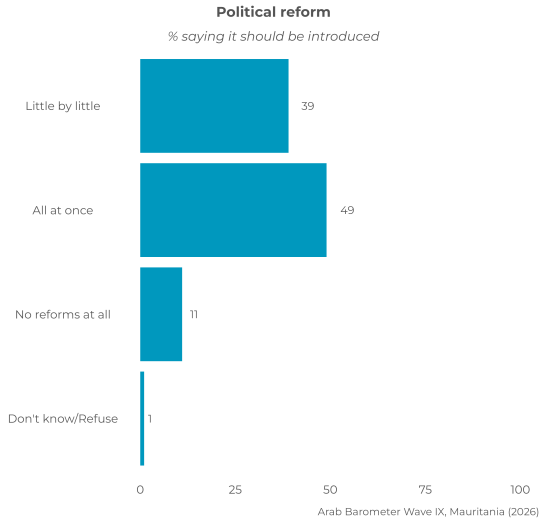
Despite remaining unchanged overall, perceptions that the freedom to protest is guaranteed in Mauritania follows a similar storyline. Today, a third (34 percent) of the population say it is guaranteed to a great or a medium extent. Wealthier people are 20 points more likely to hold this view than those struggling to make ends meet (44 percent vs. 24 percent).

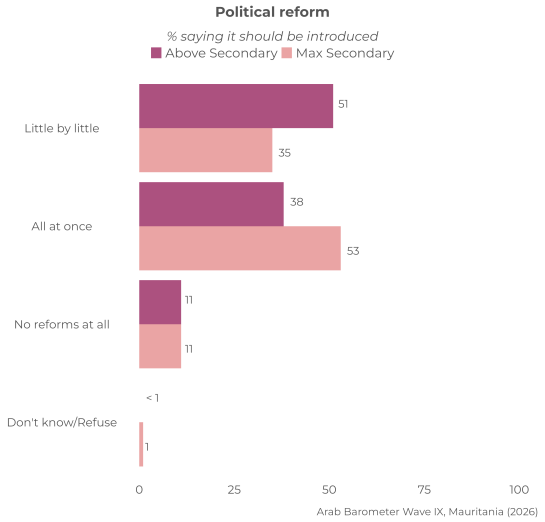
Democracy

Generally, Mauritanians perceive their government to be more responsive today than it was two years ago. In 2024, only a quarter (23 percent) viewed the government as very or largely responsive to what the public wants. This percentage has increased to 31 percent in the 2026 survey. The increase, however, masks a more complex reality. Public perceptions of government responsiveness vary greatly by income. While nearly half of higher-income people (45 percent) see the government as responsive, less than a fifth of the lower-income groups (17 percent) share this view. College-educated Mauritanians are also ten points more likely to hold such views than their compatriots with lower educational attainment (39 percent vs. 29 percent). This variation reiterates suggestions

that a growing gap exists within Mauritanian society rendering living experiences wildly different.

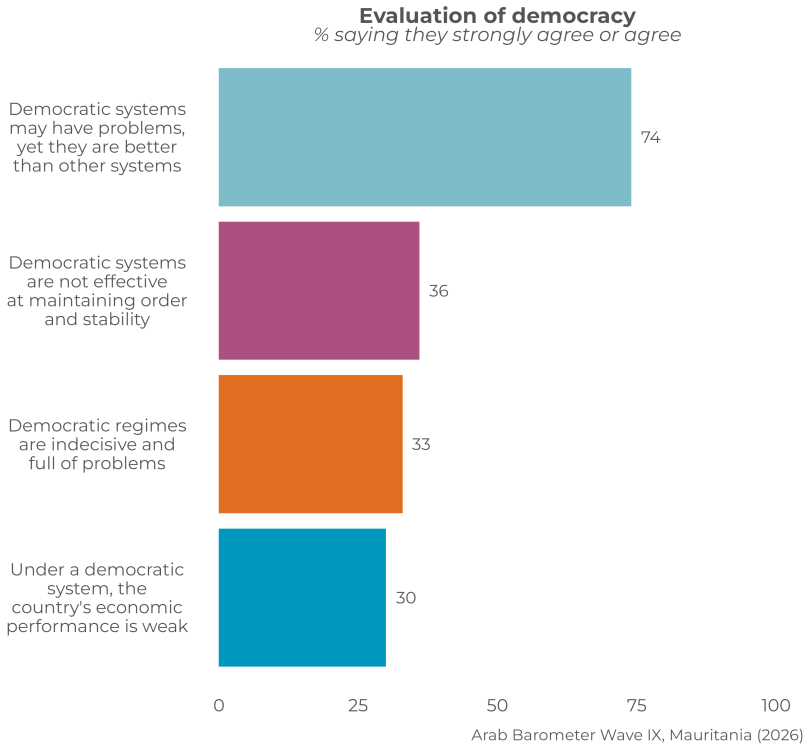
While agreeing that the country requires political reforms, Mauritanians disagree on how such reforms should be introduced. While half (49 percent) say reforms should be introduced all at once, four-in-ten (39 percent) say reforms should be introduced incrementally. These levels are similar to those observed in 2024 when 45 percent said they support immediate reforms while 35 percent expressed support for more gradual reforms. Only one-in-ten (11 percent) believe their country needs no reforms at all; a view held by 15 percent in 2024.





Those with college education advocate for incremental reforms (51 percent), whereas less-educated Mauritanians tend to be more supportive of immediate reforms (53 percent). The latter view is also shared by poorer citizens (53 percent), while their better-off compatriots are divided between immediate (46 percent) and gradual reforms (43 percent).

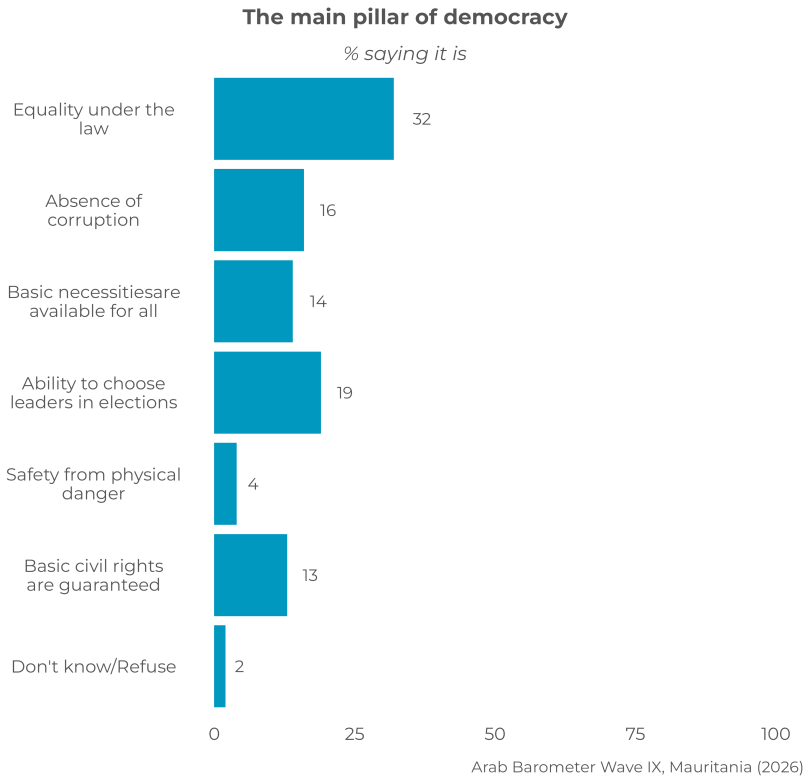
When it comes to political systems, Mauritanians continue to prefer democracy over other types of governments. Three quarters (74 percent) of the population say that despite their problems, democratic systems are better than their alternatives. The majority rejects the association of democracy with negative performance indicators. Roughly a third or fewer correlate democratic systems with weak economic performance (30 percent), lack of order (36 percent), or indecisiveness (33 percent), which is lower than most other countries in the MENA region. Such levels have remained largely unchanged since 2024.



While a plurality (45 percent) say democracy is always preferable to any other kind of government, this percentage has dropped from 54 percent in 2024. The drop does not necessarily signal an increase in support of non-democratic governance. Rather, more Mauritanians say the type of government does not matter to them compared to before (36 percent vs. 25 percent in 2024). Fewer than a fifth (17 percent), largely similar to previous surveys, say that under certain circumstances, non-democratic systems may be preferable.

Notably, Mauritanian youth are equally divided between always preferring democracy (43 percent) and saying the type of government does not matter (42 percent). Their older compatriots tend to also prefer democracy (46 percent), although a third of them say that the kind of government they live under doesn't matter to them (33 percent). Similarly, half of college-educated citizens say democracy is always preferable, while only 28 percent of them believe the type of government does not matter to them. Those with only a high school education (43 percent preferring democracy and 40 percent saying type does not matter), as well as people struggling economically (41 percent for each), are more equally divided between the two views, while wealthier citizens tend to prefer democracy (49 percent).

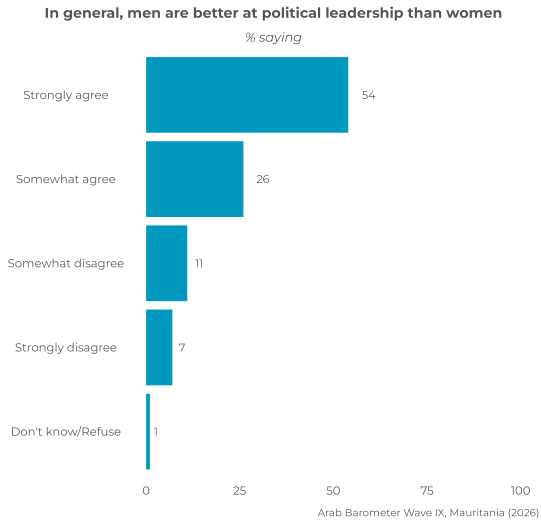
Mauritanians want a government that can solve the country's problems and provide adequate services. When asked about the main pillar of democracy, people hold different views. While a third (32 percent) say it is equality under the law, a fifth (19 percent) cite free and fair elections. Others point to the absence of corruption (16 percent), provision of basic necessities (14 percent), and guaranteed civil rights (13 percent). A clear majority (75 percent) say they agree with the statement that the type of government does not matter as long as it is capable of solving the country's economic problems. Seven-in-ten (72 percent) say the same if the government can provide order and stability. Poorer and less-educated citizens are more likely to hold this view than their better-off and college-educated counterparts by margins of ten and eight points, respectively. There is a striking increase in the percentage of Mauritanians believing their country needs a strong leader capable of bending the rules if necessary. Seven-in-ten (72 percent) hold this view, up from only half two years ago.

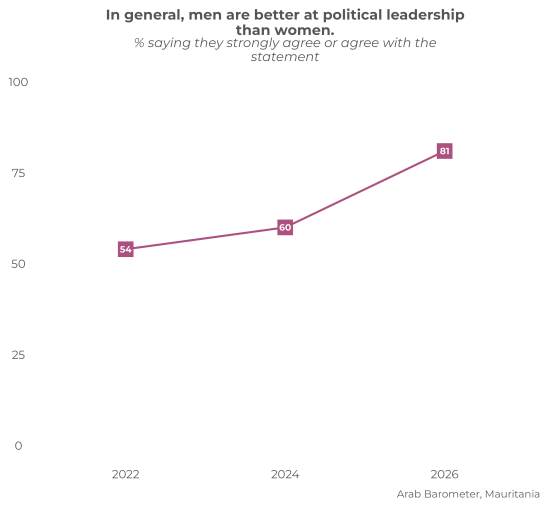


Gender Issues

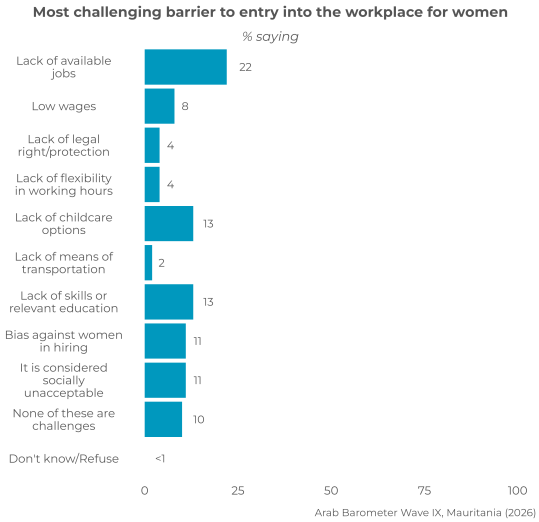
Four-in-five (81 percent) Mauritanians believe that men are generally better political leaders than women. This level is 21 points higher than in 2024, signaling

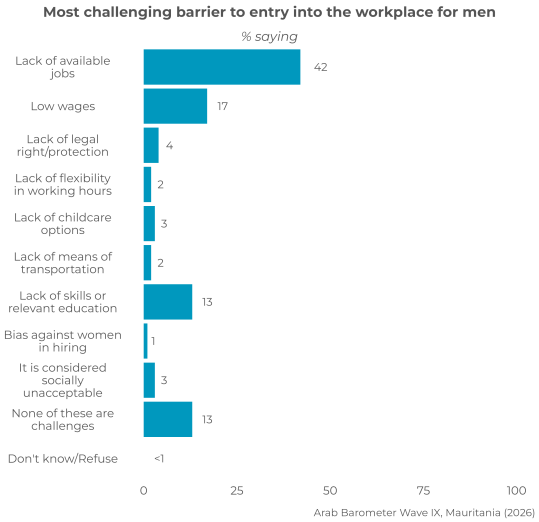
a backward shift for views of women in the country. Mauritanian women are less supportive of this perspective; men tend to hold the view more than women by a margin of 14 points. Yet, an overwhelming majority say they support instituting a gender quota for women in parliament and the cabinet (79 percent, each). This support has risen by 11 points for parliament and 16 points for cabinet. Women (86 percent) and wealthier (86 percent) Mauritanians express greater support for gender quotas than men (72 percent) and poorer citizens (71 percent).





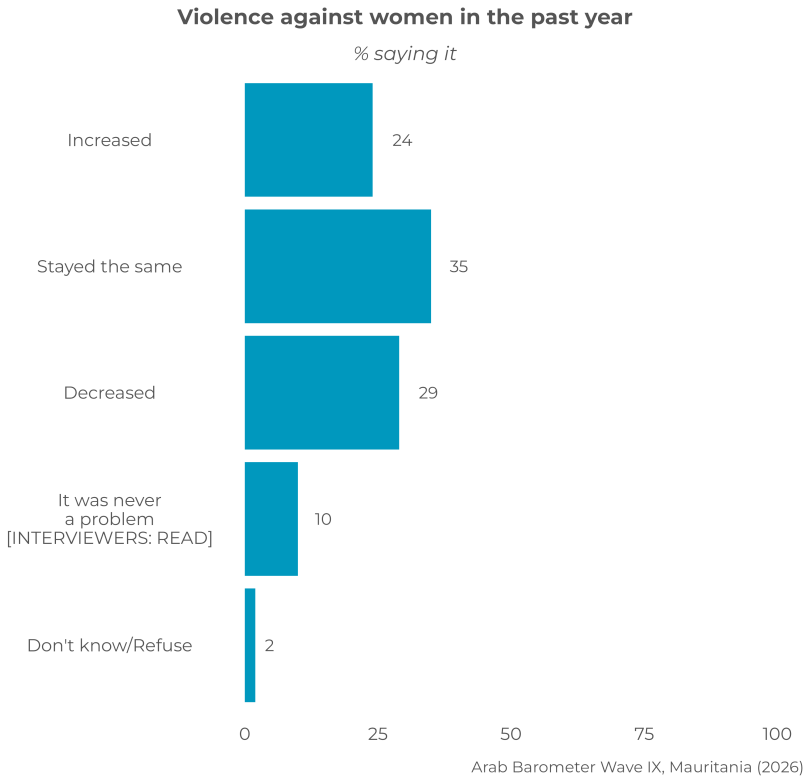
Support for women's inclusion in the labor force has remained the same since 2024, with two thirds (67 percent) saying men and women should have equal job opportunities. This high support for women's work is largely driven by women themselves, who are much more likely to hold this position than men (77 percent vs. 56 percent). In reality, Mauritanians perceive several barriers hindering women's entry into the job market. Lack of available jobs (22 percent), lack of childcare options (13 percent), lack of skills (13 percent), along with bias and social barriers (11 percent, each) are all obstacles women face when wanting to work. The lack of agreement on one or two barriers suggests that most likely there are myriad challenges facing Mauritanian women who want to enter the labor force. These factors are compounded by harassment in the workplace, viewed by half (51 percent) of Mauritanians as very or fairly widespread against women. By comparison, the key barriers for men are lack of available jobs (42 percent) and low wages (17 percent).





At home, most Mauritanians maintain patriarchal views. Four-in-five (78 percent) say the final say in all decisions concerning the family should be left to the male head of the household. This is a 20-point increase since 2024. Expectedly, men tend to hold this view more than women (85 percent vs. 72 percent).

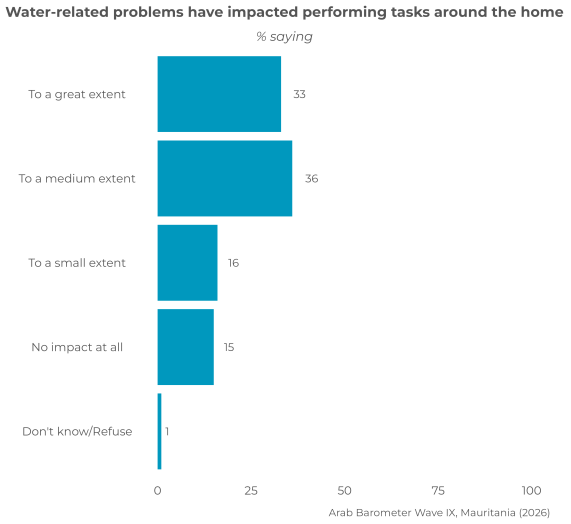
A quarter of the population (24 percent) say violence against women has increased in the past year. Roughly a third (35 percent) believe it has stayed the same while three-in-ten (29 percent) say it has decreased. Women are 14 points more likely to say violence against them has increased, whereas men are eight points more likely to say it has decreased. For women facing violence or abuse, two thirds (66 percent) say she can receive assistance from a male member of her family, half (48 percent) point to female relatives, and 38 percent refer to the police.

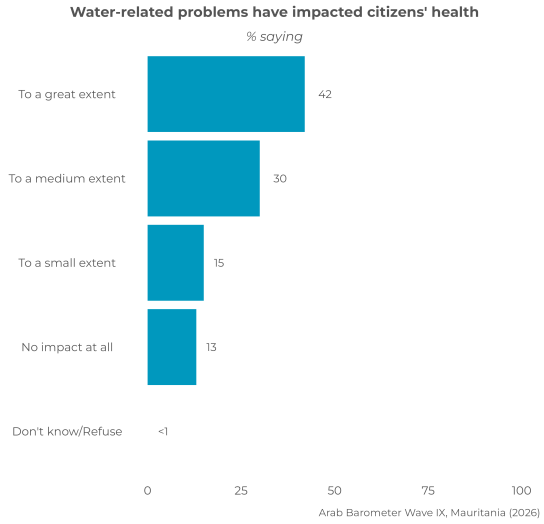


The Environment

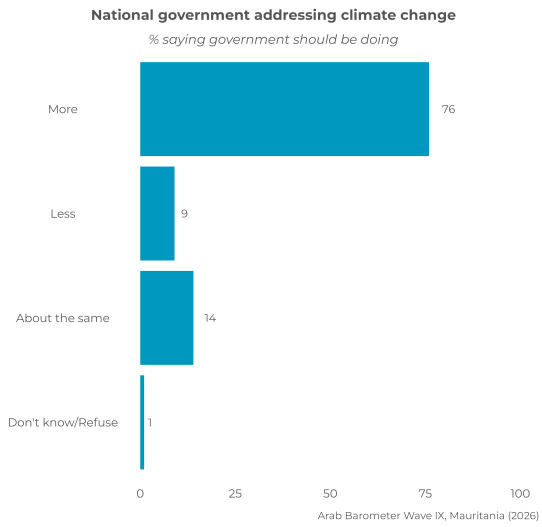
Water remains the biggest environmental challenge facing Mauritania. Four-in-ten mention either pollution of drinking water (19 percent) or lack of water resources (20 percent), along with six percent pointing to pollution of water bodies, as the key challenge. More Mauritanians cite water-related challenges now than in 2024. Meanwhile, smaller percentages say waste management (13 percent), air quality (ten percent), and climate change (ten percent).

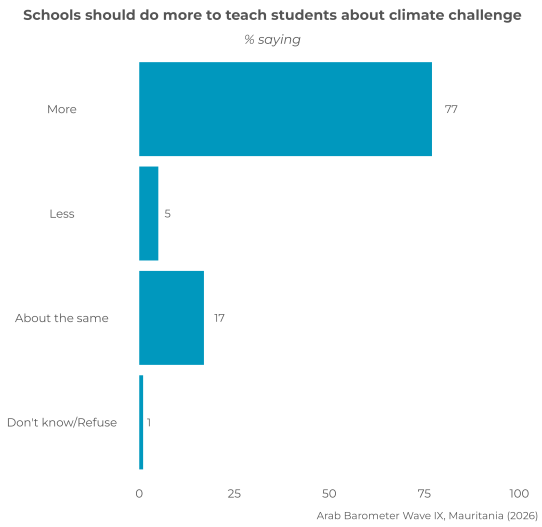
Mauritanians recognize the direct impact of water-related issues on their daily lives. Seven-in-ten say these issues have impacted performing tasks around the house (69 percent) and impacted people's health (72 percent). Roughly two thirds say they have impacted food production (65 percent) and migration from rural to urban areas (64 percent).





The fact that only one-in-ten Mauritanians name climate change as the biggest environmental challenge says less about public perceptions of the issue and more about the magnitude and urgency of other challenges. Mauritanians clearly recognize the significance and damage caused by climate change. The vast majority believe it the responsibility of the government to address climate change (88 percent). Additionally, three-quarters want their government to do more in addressing climate change. This marks a 13-point increase when compared to just two years ago. Notably, poorer Mauritanians tend to support more governmental actions in response to climate change than their wealthier counterparts (82 percent vs. 71 percent). Overwhelming majorities support measures such as prioritizing alternative energy development (92 percent), phasing out car pollution (84 percent), and phasing out the use of fossil fuel (76 percent). For Mauritanians, cleaner energy (55 percent), waste reduction (27 percent), and energy efficiency (25 percent) seem to be the best way to combat climate change.





It is quite alarming that half (51 percent) of the population expresses concern over having to relocate from their homes due to climate change in the near future. It is noteworthy that while six-in-ten (61 percent) college-educated citizens share this concern, no more than half (47 percent) of those with at most a high school education say the same. Similarly, half of Mauritanians say they are very or somewhat concerned over the possible occurrence of natural disasters in the country. Older and well-educated people tend to be more concerned than younger and less-educated citizens.

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.

