



الباروميتر العربي
ARAB BAROMETER

Arab Barometer VII

Algeria Report



2022

Executive summary

In 2021, Algeria began slowly recovering from the economic damage caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the oil price shock of 2020. Algerians remain frustrated with economic conditions, with most describing economic conditions as bad, and a quarter saying it is the most important issue facing their country after corruption. Nevertheless, they are increasingly optimistic about the future, with their assessments of the current economic situation and expectations for the future having substantially improved since 2019. This optimism may help explain a plateau in Algerians considering emigration after a brief bump in 2019.

Algerians are less concerned about COVID-19 than other challenges, ranking it below corruption, the economy, public services, and instability. Though most Algerians are not vaccinated and do not expect to be, concerns about COVID-19 are more often based on the economic and social disruption caused by the pandemic rather than the disease itself.

Few Algerians are satisfied with the country's political system as it is, with nearly all believing it should be reformed, if not completely replaced. The quality of health, education, and waste collection services, as well as of roads and transportation infrastructure, fails to meet the majority of Algerians' expectations, and many experience regular water and to a lesser extent electricity outages. While most Algerians prefer a democratic system, they remain skeptical of its ability to provide economic growth and stability and security.

Algerians support strengthening economic ties with Turkey and, increasingly, Russia, with favorable views of both countries, while most want to weaken ties with France, the former colonial power. Algerians are generally skeptical of the motivations behind foreign assistance, particularly from the United States; however, most also note that it can be effective in certain sectors. Few say they do not want foreign aid.

Patriarchal views remain strong in Algeria, with the vast majority believing that men are better political leaders than women, and nearly a third believing it to be more important that men receive a university education than women. A substantial minority also say women face an increasing risk of harassment and violence.

Most Algerians are concerned about the environment, believing that a lack of both citizen awareness and government action are contributing significantly to environmental challenges. In particular, many are concerned about the availability and quality of water. It is also worth noting that, while most Algerians support the government doing more to address climate change, it competes

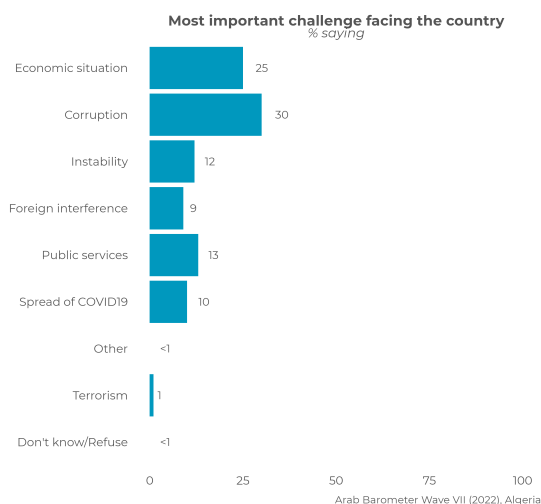
with many other priorities, with effectively none mentioning it as the top challenge the country faces or as an explicit top government spending priority.

Discrimination against Black people is reported in the country, particularly in its northern regions. On the other hand, few Algerians say that racial discrimination in general is a problem, and fewer report experiencing hearing a racist or discriminatory phrase used against them.

These are among the key findings from a nationally representative public opinion survey conducted in Algeria by Arab Barometer from 26 May to 7 July 2022. The survey conducted 2,162 face-to-face interviews in the respondent's place of residence and had a response rate of 25.2 percent. The margin of error for the reported results is ± 2 percentage points. The surveys are part of Arab Barometer's seventh wave which is the the largest publicly available survey that captures the sentiments of citizens across MENA following the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional information about the surveys can be found at www.arabbarometer.org.

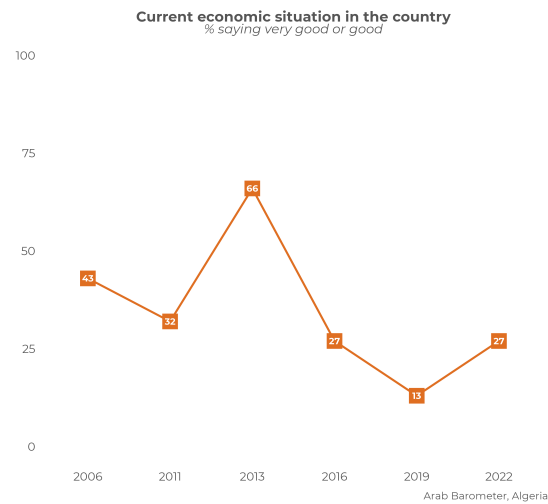
Algeria's Challenges

Algerians see corruption and the economic situation as the biggest problems in their country, with 30 percent naming corruption as the most important challenge facing the country and 25 percent naming the economic situation. This prioritization is consistent across age, sex, urban-rural divide, and levels of wealth. In the Northwest, North Central, and Algiers regions experiencing the highest levels of multidimensional poverty according to the World Bank¹ Algerians are at least 16 percentage points more likely to report the economic situation as the most important challenge. Following corruption and the economy, public services (13 percent), instability (12 percent), COVID-19 (10 percent), and foreign interference (9 percent) are most likely to be listed.

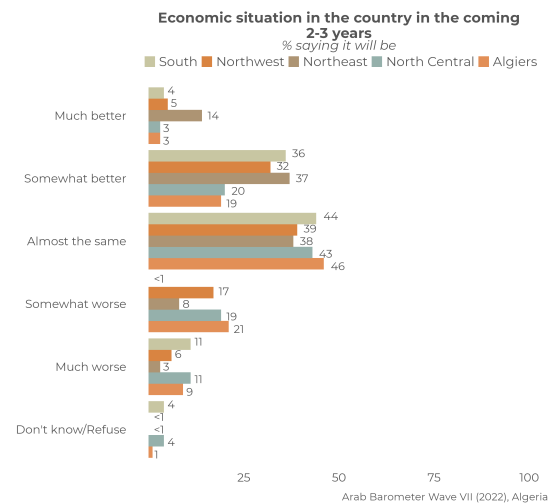


The economy is an important concern for Algerians, with a quarter reporting it as the most important challenge facing the country. Only 27 percent of Algerians report the current economic situation as good or very good. There is little difference in this assessment between the young and old, men and women, rich and poor, urban, and rural, or those with tertiary education and those without. There is some geographic variation between the capital and the rest of the country, with 93 percent of those in Algiers reporting the current economic situation to be bad or very bad, compared to 78 percent in north central Algeria, 71 percent in the Northwest, 70 percent in the South, and 66 percent in the Northeast.

¹“Algeria Economic Monitor: Restoring the Algerian Economy after the Pandemic” (Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group, December 23, 2021).



Nevertheless, Algerians' perceptions of the economic situation are improving. The percentage of Algerians reporting the economic situation as good or very good is 14 percentage points higher than in 2019, and 38 percent say the economic situation will be better or much better in the coming three years, a 16-percentage-point increase from 2019. Those living in the Northeast which the World Bank reports has among the lowest poverty rates in the country² - are markedly more optimistic about the economy, with 51 percent saying it will be much better or somewhat better, while those living in Algiers and North Central are markedly less optimistic, with only 22 and 23 percent reporting the same respectively, compared to 41 percent in the South and 37 percent in the Northwest.

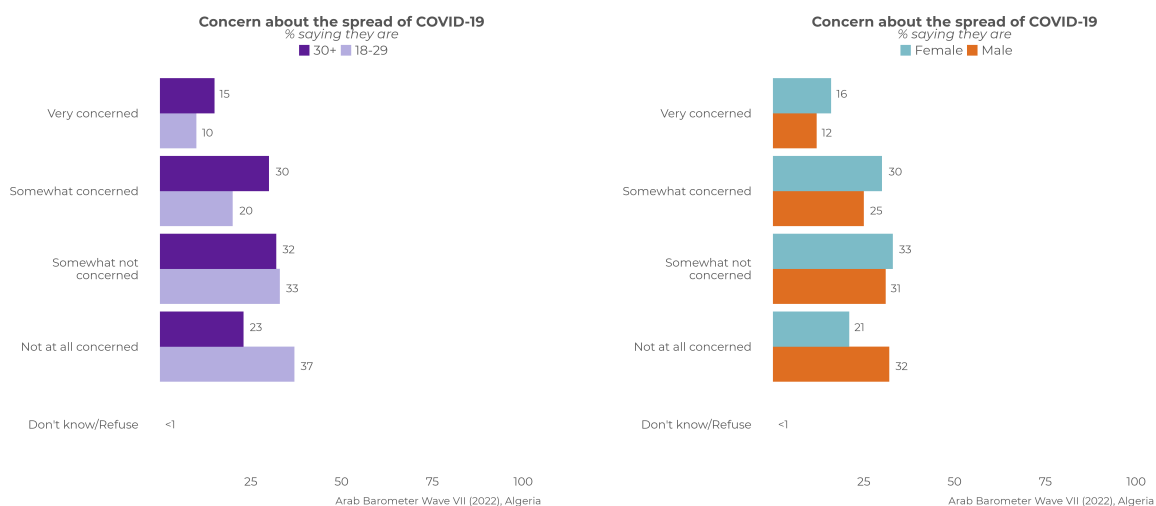


²“Algeria Economic Monitor: Restoring the Algerian Economy after the Pandemic.”

In terms of employment, Algerians largely prefer work in the public sector (65 percent). Compared to the private sector, Algerians cite it as offering better job security (72 percent compared to 17 percent for the private sector) and better salary (53 percent compared to 37 percent). The majority also see the public sector as the most important area for job creation, with 58 percent saying the government should focus on creating jobs in the public sector, compared to 24 percent saying they should focus on both public and private, and only 18 percent saying they should focus on the private sector.

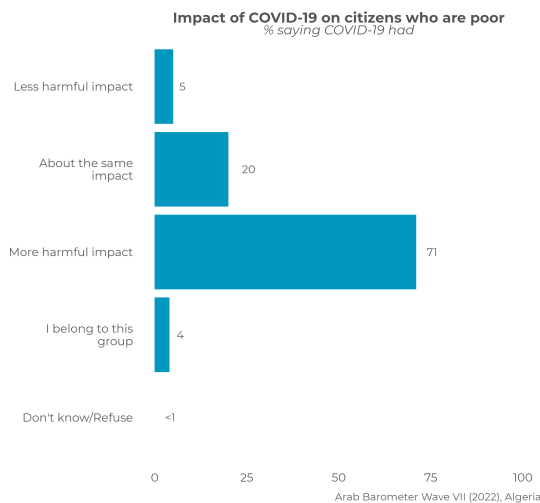
COVID-19

Two years into the pandemic, Algerians do not see COVID-19 as the main challenge their country faces, more often viewing corruption (30 percent), the economic situation (25 percent), the state of public services (13 percent), and instability (12 percent) as more concerning than the spread of COVID-19 (10 percent). Less than half of Algerians, 42 percent, are concerned about the spread of COVID-19, although older Algerians and women are in general more concerned (45 percent and 46 percent respectively) compared to adults ages 18-29 (30 percent) and men (37 percent). While nearly a third of those unconcerned cite the availability of the vaccine as justification, one in five believe the threat is exaggerated, with similar results across demographic groups.



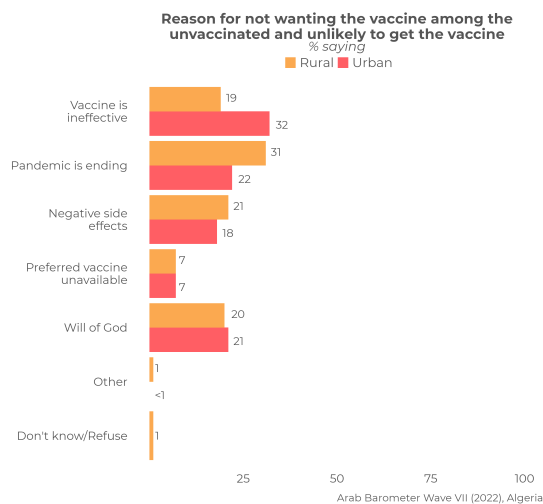
Algerians see the economic and social disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic as more concerning than catching the virus. Economic concerns

are key, with 46 percent saying either inflation (25 percent), scarcity of basic supplies (12 percent), or loss of income (9) is the biggest challenge caused by COVID-19. Other key concerns include disruption of social life (14 percent), disruption of education (13), and psychological effects (11 percent), while only 9 percent say getting COVID-19 has been the biggest challenge. Algerians believe the pandemic has affected poorer households in particular, with 71 percent saying that the pandemic had a more harmful impact on less wealthy citizens. Poorer households are also 6 percentage points more likely to report loss of income and 5 percentage points more likely to report inflation as the biggest challenge caused by COVID-19 compared to households that could cover their expenses.



Forty-five percent of Algerians over 18 reported being vaccinated against COVID-19. This figure is notably higher than the rate of 18 percent reported by World Health Organization³, which includes all those living in Algeria who have received at least one dose rather than only Algeria citizens over 18. Among unvaccinated Algerians, three quarters (76 percent) do not expect to get the vaccine. Many unvaccinated Algerians (28 percent), and those living in cities in particular (32 percent), believe the vaccine is ineffective, while 25 percent report that there is no need since the pandemic is ending (including 31 percent of those in rural areas), and 19 percent are worried about negative side effects from the vaccines.

³Hannah Ritchie, Edouard Mathieu, Lucas Rodés-Guirao, Cameron Appel, Charlie Giattino, Esteban Ortiz-Ospina, Joe Hasell, Bobbie Macdonald, Diana Beltekian and Max Roser (2020) - "Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19)". Published online at OurWorldInData.org. Retrieved from: <https://ourworldindata.org/coronavirus> [Online Resource]

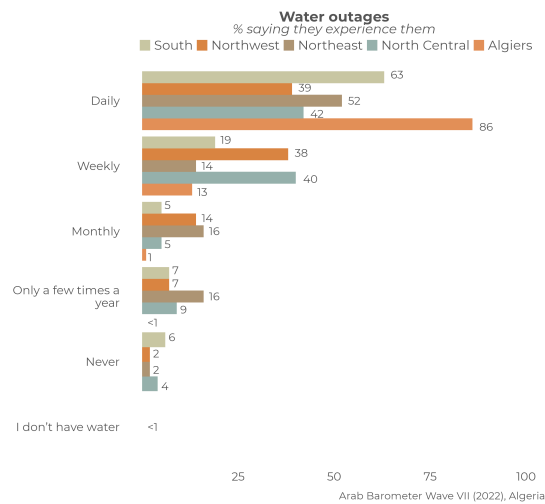


Government Performance

Algerians' perceptions of basic services are generally poor. A majority of Algerians are dissatisfied with the public educational system (62 percent), the health-care system (64 percent), the quality of streets (67 percent), and trash collection (57 percent). While this dissatisfaction is fairly consistent across age, education, sex, and urban and rural groups, there are some regional differences: Algiers in particular is more likely to be satisfied with public education, being the only region with a majority, 53 percent, reporting satisfaction.

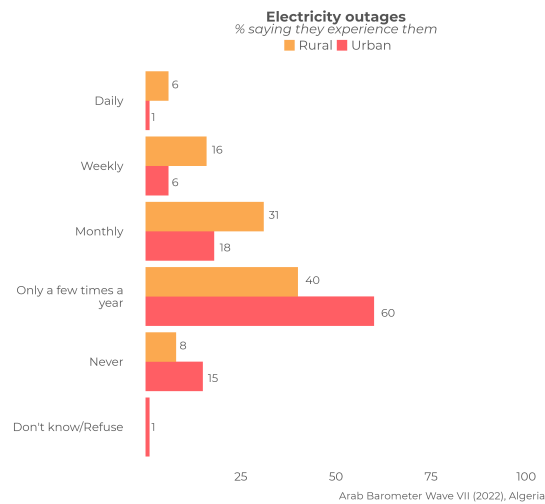
Algerians also report regular disruptions to utilities. Half of Algerians report experiencing water outages daily in the past twelve months, while an additional quarter (26 percent) experience them on a weekly basis. These outages are particularly severe in Algiers, where they occur either daily or weekly for 99 percent of the population, though a majority of the population experiences them at least weekly in all other regions. The high level of water outages reported in Algiers is likely due to a water rationing program in the capital in summer 2021 that restricted hours residents of the capital could access drinking water due to water shortages.⁴

⁴Ait, Amine. "Rationnement de l'eau: Le Nouveau Programme d'Alger." Algérie 360, June 24, 2021. <https://www.algerie360.com/rationnement-de-leau-le-nouveau-programme-dalger/>.



Far fewer Algerians experience regular electricity outages, with most (53 percent) experiencing them only a few times a year. Rural households experience outages at disproportionately high rates, with 53 percent experiencing them at least monthly compared to only 24 percent of urban households. In line with this urban-rural divide, Algiers experiences far lower rates of electricity outages than other areas, with only 6 percent reporting monthly outages and none reporting more frequent outages, whereas 44 percent of those in the Northeast, 37 percent in the South, 37 percent in the Northwest, and 24 percent in north central Algeria experience electricity outages at least monthly. The former minister of energy has attributed outages in various parts of the country to a lack of network maintenance.⁵

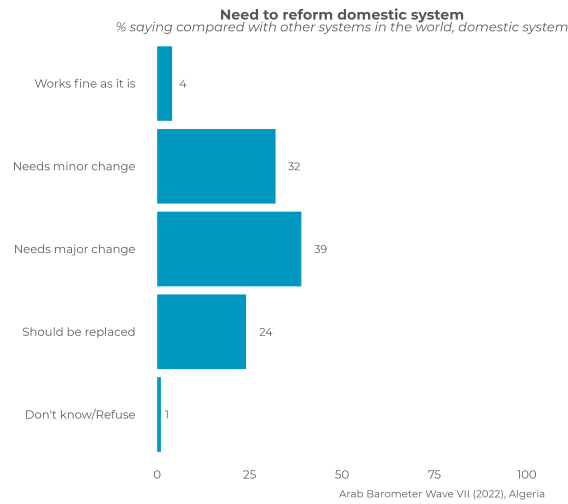
⁵“Coupures d’électricité: Les Justifications Du Ministre de l’énergie,” Algérie Actu, December 24, 2020, <https://algerieactu.com/coupures-deelectricite-les-justifications-du-ministre-de-lenergie/>.



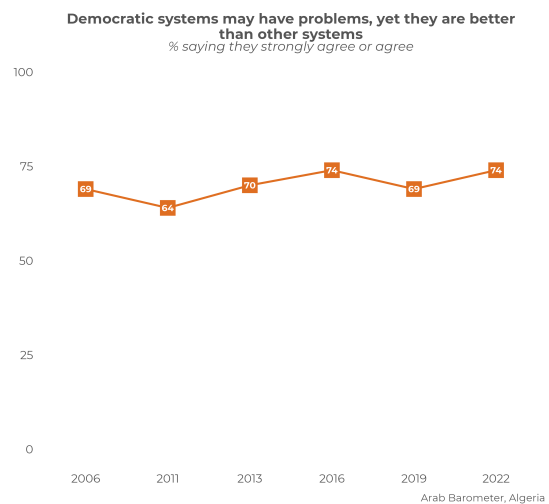
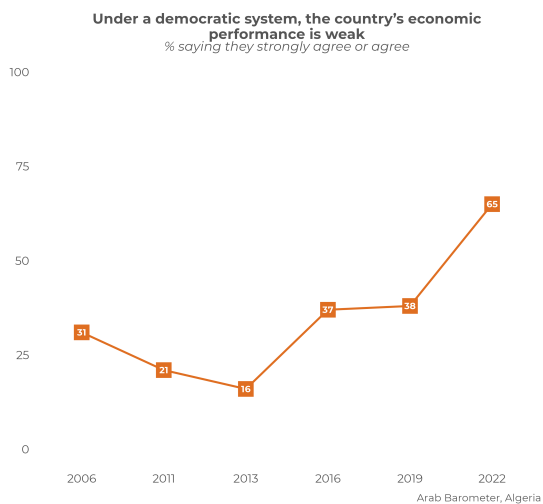
There is no broad consensus on what the top government spending priority should be, but there are some distinctions between demographic groups. Overall, twenty-five percent of Algerians list healthcare as the top priority, while 22 percent list improving roads and transport, 19 percent the education system, 15 percent subsidies, 9 percent reducing pollution, and 7 percent national security. Algerians who have studied beyond secondary school are 13 percentage points more likely to prioritize education than those who did not. Households that can cover their own expenses are also more likely to prioritize the education system than households that cannot by 8 percentage points, while poorer households are 9 percentage points more likely to prioritize subsidies. Rural Algerians in particular are concerned about roads and transport, with 10 percentage points more saying it should be a priority than among urban Algerians.

Political Preferences

Nearly all Algerians believe that the current governing system needs reform when compared to other systems in the world, with only 4 percent saying that it works fine as it is. That said, the extent of that reform varies, with a third believing it needs minor change, a little more than a third believing it needs major change, and a quarter believing it should be replaced entirely. Those living in the South and the Northeast are at least ten percentage points less likely than all other regions to believe it should be replaced, though they are not substantially more likely to believe that it works fine as it is (1 and 6 percent respectively, compared to 2-3 percent in the other three regions). This difference may reflect the previously discussed generally better perceptions of the economic situation in these areas.



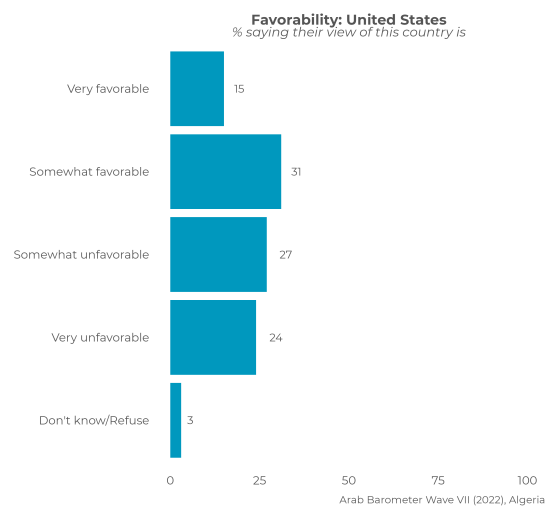
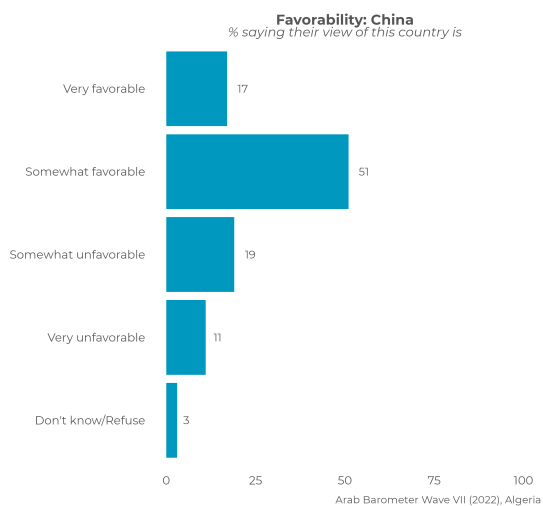
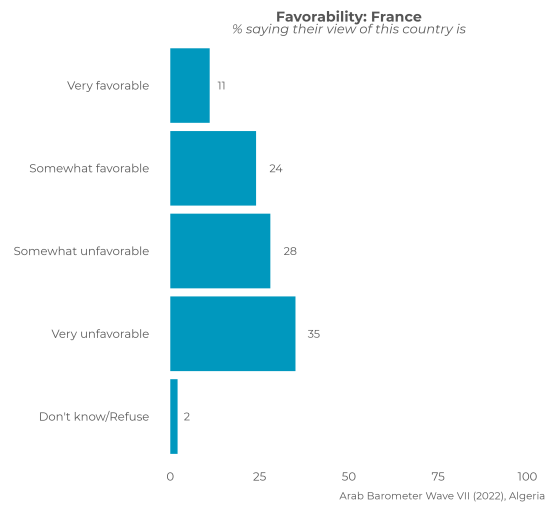
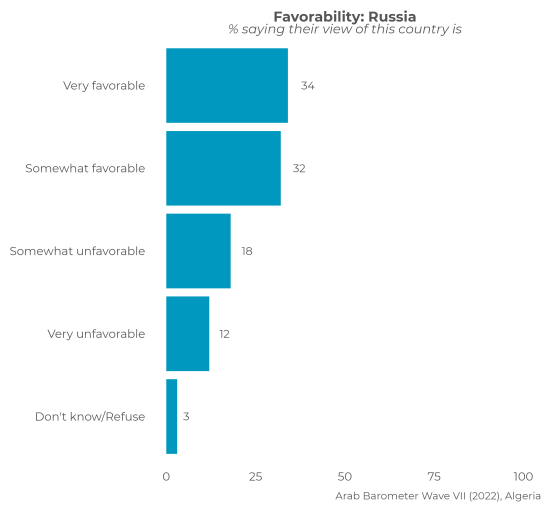
Algerians are increasingly critical of democratic systems, though they continue to prefer them over other types. Nationwide, since 2019 the country saw a 27-percentage-point increase in Algerians saying the country’s economic performance is weak under a democratic system, a 23-percentage-point increase in those who say that democratic regimes are indecisive and full of problems, and an 18-percentage-point increase in those who say that democratic systems are not effective at maintaining order and stability. Nevertheless, at 74 percent, agreement that democratic systems are better than other systems it at least as high as in any previous survey of Algeria. However, by a stronger measure of commitment to democracy, only 54 percent of Algerians say that democracy is always preferable.



International Relations

Algerians demonstrate a growing preference for Turkey and Russia, generally positive attitudes toward China, unfavorable attitudes towards France, and more moderate views of the United States, the United Kingdom, and Saudi Arabia. Four-in-five Algerians view Turkey favorably, and three-in-five want economic relations with the country to become stronger. Similarly, two-thirds of Algerians have favorable views of Russia and over half (55 percent) want to strengthen economic ties with the country, a steep twenty-point increase from 2019. On the other hand, nearly half (44 percent) want to weaken economic relations with France, and nearly two-thirds (63 percent) of Algerians view the country unfavorably. On the other hand, slightly less than half of Algerians (47 percent) view the United States favorably, with 31 percent wanting to strengthen economic relations with the country, 42 wanting them to remain the same, and 24 percent wanting them to be weaker. Attitudes toward China are more positive than the United States, with two-thirds of Algerians viewing it favorably, though only 38 percent want to strengthen economic relations with the country, while 41 percent want them to remain the same and 18 percent want them weaker.

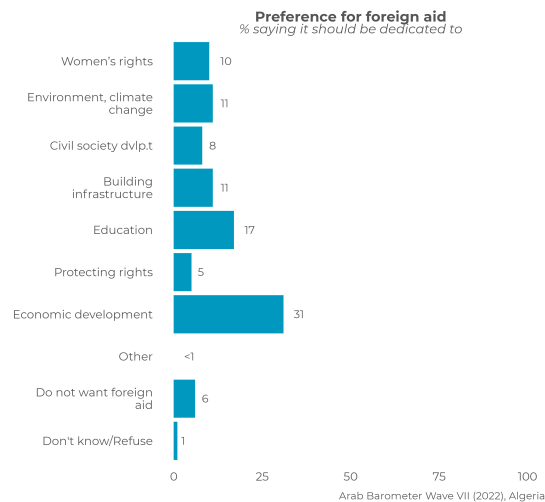
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By and large, there are not differences in attitudes across demographic groups, but there are some key exceptions. Algerians ages 30 and older are 11 percentage points more likely to want to strengthen economic relations with Turkey, 10 percentage points less likely to want to strengthen them with the United Kingdom, and 6 percentage points less likely to want to strengthen them with France. More highly educated Algerians are 8 percentage points less likely to want to strengthen economic ties with France and are 7 percentage points more likely to want to weaken them.

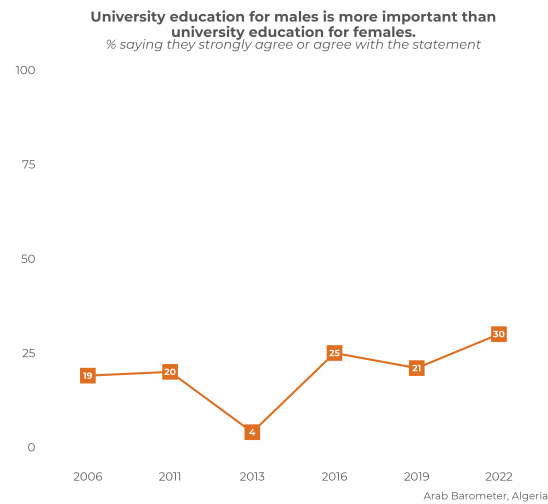
Algerians are generally skeptical of the United States and China as providers of foreign aid, but more so of the United States than China. Nearly half (44 percent) believe that gaining influence is the main motivation of American foreign aid, compared to 30 percent for Chinese foreign aid. Despite their skepticism

of the motivations, Algerians do believe that foreign aid benefits their country. At least half of Algerians believe U.S. foreign aid strengthens education initiatives (61 percent), advances women’s rights (56 percent), and strengthens civil society (61 percent). And while there is limited consensus on what foreign aid should be spent on - though economic development is the frontrunner at 31 percent - only 6 percent say they do not want any foreign aid.



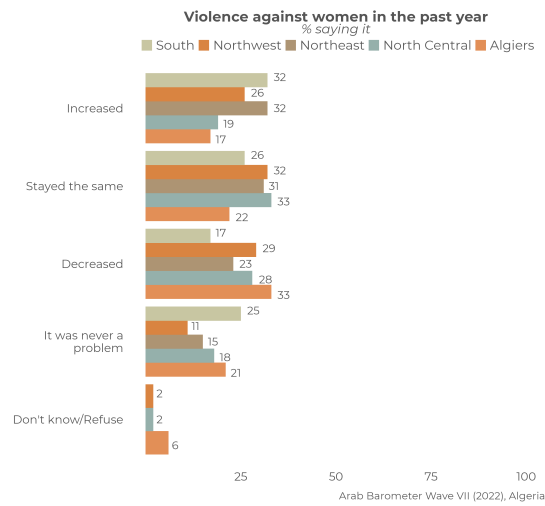
Gender

Many Algerians do not favor women and men playing equal roles in society. Three quarters (76 percent) believe that men are better at political leadership than women, with broad support for this statement across age, education, urban-rural, and regional divides. This finding is consistent with sentiments in 2016 and 2019, while there is also slowly increasing agreement with the idea that university education is more important for men than for women (from 25 percent in 2016 and 21 percent in 2019 to 30 percent in 2022). On the other hand, the belief that men should have the final say in all family decisions appears to be slowly decreasing (from 77 percent in 2016 and 71 percent in 2019 to 65 percent in 2022).



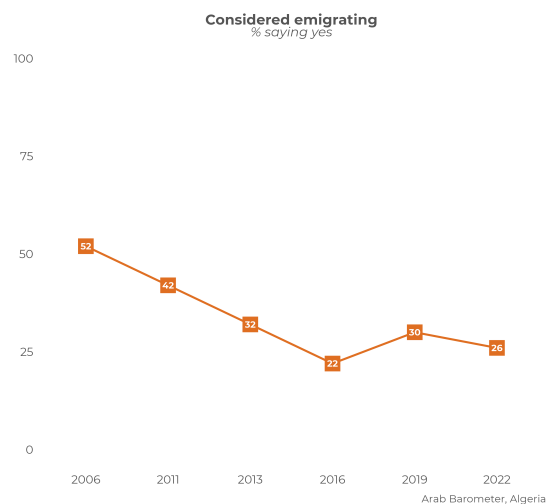
Algerians also express concern about poor treatment of women. Among the 44 percent of Algerians who believe men and women should be separated in the workplace, two in five (39 percent) attribute it to the risk of harassment. While harassment is the primary concern for most Algerians, those 30 and over and those who can cover their expenses are particularly concerned compared to those ages 18-29 and those who cannot cover expenses respectively, with both groups being 13 percentage points more likely to report it as the reason men and women should be separated, respectively. On the other hand, those in the Northwest are markedly less concerned about workplace harassment, with only 16 percent reporting it as a concern, at least 25 percentage points lower than all other regions.

Furthermore, one in four (26 percent) Algerians says violence against women increased over the past year, compared to 30 percent saying it stayed the same and another 26 percent saying it decreased, while only 16 percent say it was never a problem. Algerians in the South and Northeast in particular note increasing violence against women, with 32 percent reporting it in each of these regions, compared to 26 percent in the Northwest, and only 19 percent and 17 percent in north central Algeria and Algiers, respectively.



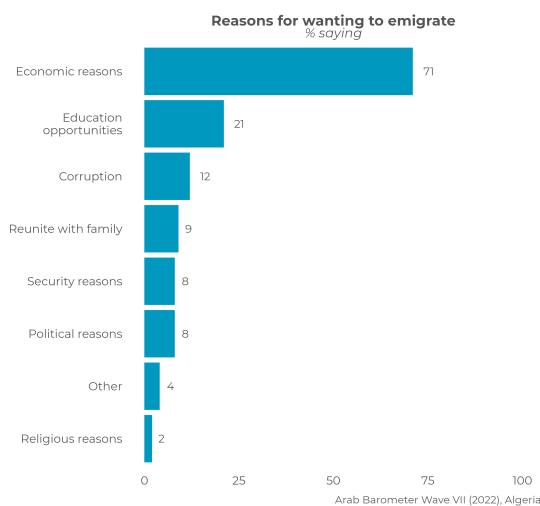
Emigration

Following a steady decline in the percentage of those who were considering emigrating from 52 percent in 2006 to 22 percent in 2016, levels today are slightly higher than in 2016 with roughly a quarter of Algerians (26 percent) now considering leaving their homeland. More educated Algerians and those who live in north central Algeria or Algiers are more inclined to consider moving from their country. Algerians who have a university education are 12 percentage points more likely to consider emigration than those who have not. Similarly, Algerians in north central Algeria and Algiers are at least 12 percentage points more likely to want to emigrate compared to the other regions.



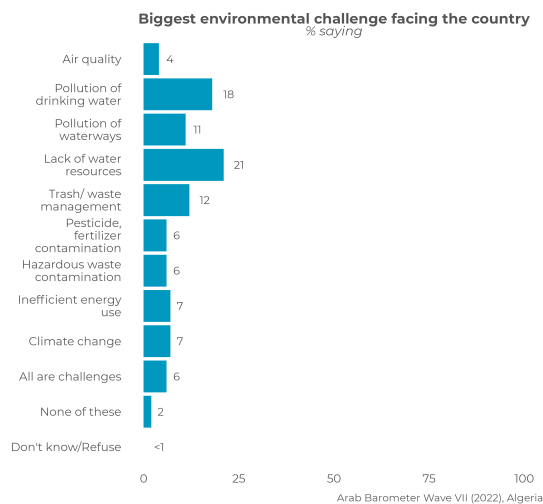
The primary motivation for emigration for Algerians is economic considerations.

Nationwide, seventy-one percent of Algerians who have considered leaving their homeland have done so for economic reasons. While there is some variation within demographic groups—for example, Algerians who pursued higher education are 11 percentage points more likely to cite education opportunities as a motivation—economic reasons remain by far the most important reason across age, sex, education, and urban-rural and regional divides. Despite unfavorable attitudes towards France, the country remains the top choice as a destination country for many Algerians, with 43 percent listing it as their preferred emigration destination, followed by 33 percent for Canada, and 29 percent for Germany. Relatively few would prefer to emigrate within the Middle East and North Africa, with 13 percent listing Turkey, 9 percent the United Arab Emirates, 6 percent Qatar, 2 percent Kuwait, and 1 percent or less other countries in the region.



Environment

Algerians are especially concerned about their continued access to clean water. Half of Algerians specifically list water as the biggest environmental challenge facing the country, whether due to lack of water resources (21 percent), pollution of drinking water (18 percent), or pollution of waterways (11 percent). The prioritization of water is largely consistent across demographic groups and regions, though concerns about drinking water are particularly high in Algiers (which has experienced water rationing during the summer) at 31 percent, 8 percentage points higher than the South and at least 12 percentage points higher than the other three regions.

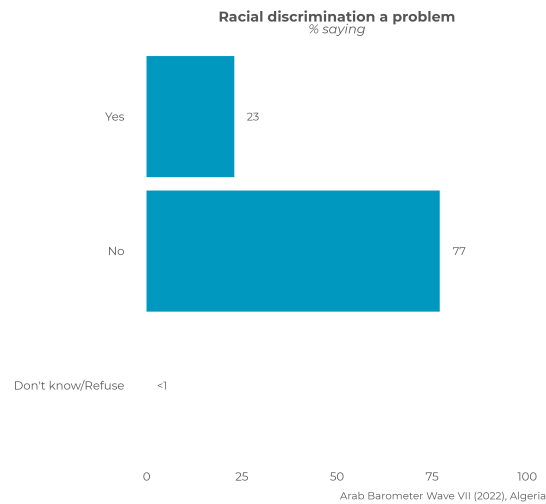


Algerians largely see addressing environmental challenges as a shared responsibility, with 78 percent saying a lack of environmental awareness among citizens contributes to these challenges to a medium or large extent and 79 percent saying a lack of environmental initiatives or spending by the government. Three-in-five (62 percent) Algerians would like to see the national government do more to address climate change, though those living in Algiers are much more likely to be satisfied with the government’s current efforts.

Racial Discrimination

Racial discrimination is reportedly prevalent in Algeria, though it is yet to be recognized as a large-scale problem by most of those living in the country. Only about a quarter (23 percent) of Algerians report that racial discrimination is a problem, with relatively high levels in the northeast and north-central Algeria, at 31 percent and 25 percent respectively, compared to at most 19 percent in the other three regions. Notbably, the Northeast and North Center contain the traditionally Amazigh Kabylie region, which has experienced continuing tensions over recognition of Amazigh cultural and linguistic identity, including raids and arrests of Kabyle separatists in 2021.⁶ Those living outside of cities are more likely to see racism as a problem, with rural Algerians 9 percentage points more likely to believe it to be the case so than urban Algerians. Similarly, Algerians who have attended university are 8 percentage points more likely to say racial discrimination is a problem compared to less educated Algerians.

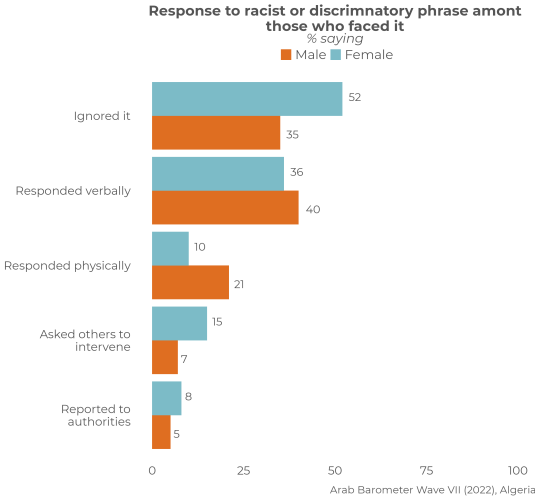
⁶“Berbers Mark 20 Years since Algeria’s ‘Black Spring’ Protests,” The New Arab, April 19, 2021, [https://english.alaraby.co.uk/news/berbers-mark-20-years-algerias-black-spring-protests](https://english.alaraby.co.uk/news/berbers-mark-20-years-algerias-black-spring-protests;); “Algeria Raids Homes, Arrests Kabyle Separatists in Northeast,” The New Arab, June 29, 2021, <https://english.alaraby.co.uk/news/algeria-arrests-kabyle-separatists-raids-homes-northeast>.



On the other hand, most Algerians (65 percent) report that discrimination against Black people exists to a great (7 percent), medium (22 percent), or small (36 percent) extent in the country, particularly in its northern regions. Overall, only 34 percent of Algerians say there is no discrimination at all against Black individuals, while 36 percent say there is to a small extent, 22 percent to a medium extent, and 7 percent to a great extent. Notably, those living in the South are at least 22 percentage points more likely to say that there is none at all compared to the northern regions, where sub-Saharan migrants and asylum seekers have repeatedly faced crackdowns, detention, and collective deportation.⁷

Few Algerians report having had a racist or discriminatory phrase used against them, with only 4 percent saying they have experienced it many times and 16 percent only once or twice. This experience appears consistent across sex, age, education, wealth levels, and the urban-rural divide. Among those who have, the most common responses were to ignore it (42 percent) or respond verbally (37), while 15 percent responded physically, 11 percent asked others to intervene, and 6 percent reported it to authorities. Algerian men are 17 percentage points less likely to have ignored it than women and 11 percentage points more likely to have responded physically, although women are more likely to have asked others to intervene (8 percentage points higher).

⁷“UN Calls on Algeria to Stop Expelling Thousands of Sub-Saharan African Migrants,” UN News, May 22, 2018, <https://beta.news.un.org/en/story/2018/05/1010392>; “Algeria: Mass Racial Profiling Used to Deport More than 2,000 Sub-Saharan Migrants,” Amnesty International, October 23, 2017, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/10/algeria-mass-racial-profiling-used-to-deport-more-than-2000-sub-saharan-migrants/>; “Algeria: Migrants, Asylum Seekers Forced Out,” Human Rights Watch, October 9, 2020, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/10/09/algeria-migrants-asylum-seekers-forced-out>.





ABOUT ARAB BAROMETER

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

We have been conducting rigorous, and nationally representative public opinion surveys on probability samples of the adult populations across the Arab world since 2006 across 15 countries.

We are the longest-standing and the largest repository of publicly available data on the views of men and women in the MENA region. Our findings give a voice to the needs and concerns of Arab publics.



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