



A TURNING POINT
FOR AFRICAN YOUTH

AFRICAN YOUTH SURVEY 2024

 **iff**
ICHIKOWITZ
FAMILY FOUNDATION

The African Youth Survey 2024 is dedicated to the hopes and aspirations of Africa's youth.

African Youth Survey 2024

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Special thanks to:

The various commentators whose analysis and insight brought depth and context to the findings. To Profit Partnership (Pty) Ltd for the design, layout and production.



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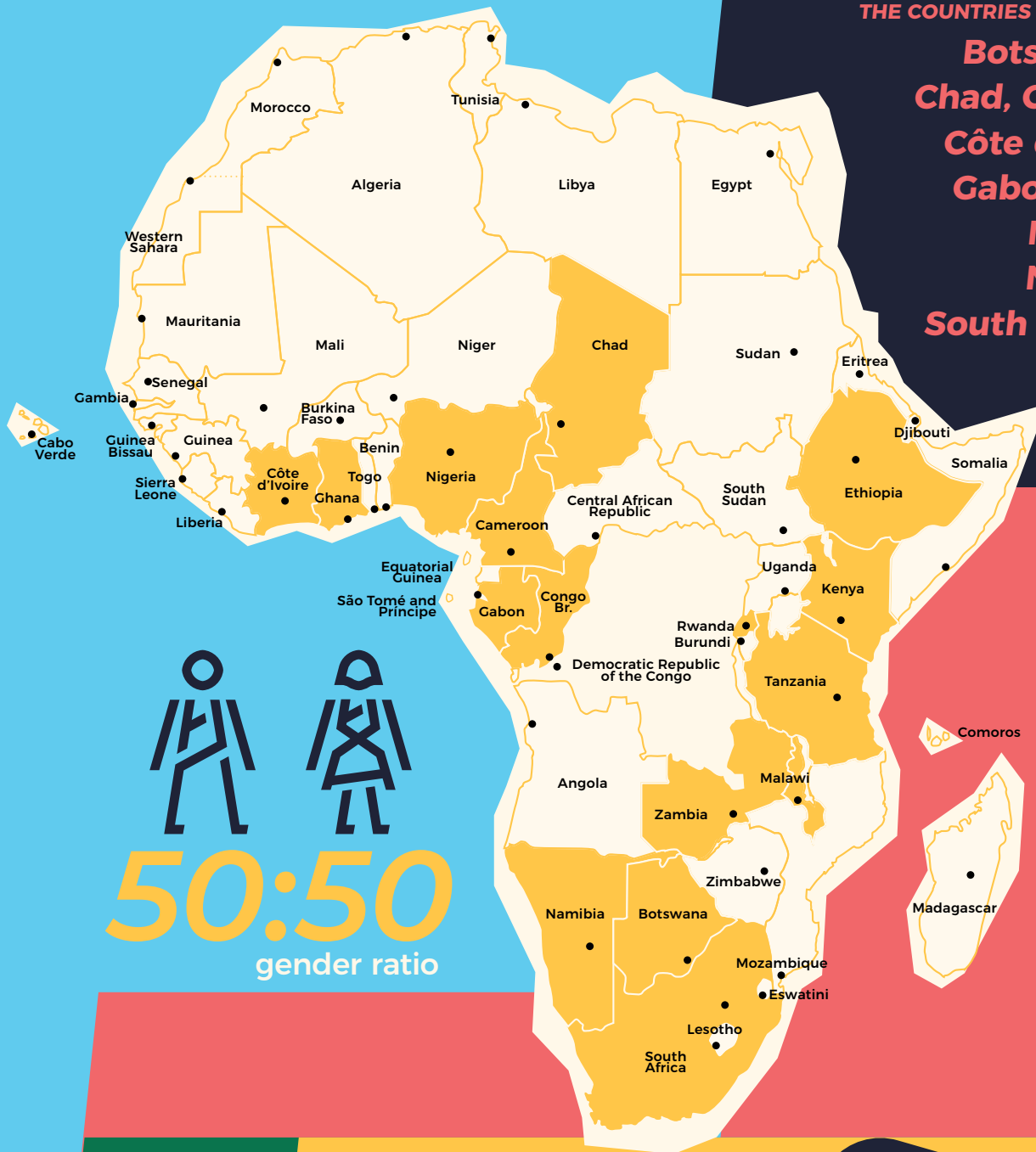
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THE COUNTRIES SAMPLED IN 2024 INCLUDED:

Botswana, Cameroon, Chad, Congo Brazzaville, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia



50:50
gender ratio

Seychelles

18-24
years of age

Mauritius
Reunion

5,604

face-to-face interviews
with country nationals



SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The Ichikowitz Family Foundation launched the African Youth Survey in 2020 to provide governments, the private sector and civil society with insights into the aspirations, motivations, and viewpoints of Africa's youth. The most comprehensive study of its kind to date, the African Youth Survey gives a voice to one of the world's key demographics and provides them with the opportunity to share their opinions, experiences, and aspirations with the world.

Remarkable transformation is taking place in Africa, where the population is expected to almost double to 2.5 billion over the next 25 years. This change will not only revolutionise many African nations but also significantly alter their global relationships. While birth rates are falling in wealthier countries, Africa's birth rate remains high, driving the most youthful and rapidly expanding population worldwide. Africa boasts the world's youngest population, with 70% of those living in Sub-Saharan Africa under 30 years of age. By 2050, African youth are expected to account for over a third of the world's youth and will make up 75% of all Africans under 35 years of age. This considerable youth population offers significant opportunity to drive the continent's current and future growth, but only if these emerging generations are sufficiently empowered to maximise their full potential.

From inception in 2020, this study has been a valuable resource to policymakers, media, and stakeholders of high-quality research on the key issues of the moment, growing its reputation as one of the most impactful pieces of research on the continent.

PSB Insights, a global insights consultancy, has conducted three waves of research among youth across the continent for the African Youth Survey. Each wave consisted of:

- Face-to-face interviews (approx. 300 per market; approx. 1,000 in South Africa in 2024)
- African youth (nationals of each country) between the age of 18-24
- Sample split 50:50 male and female
- Three distinct interview locations across each country, increasing to 18 locations in South Africa in 2024
- Five separate districts within each interview location
- Respondents offered to take the survey in a range of local languages for each country
- Responses recorded electronically via tablet
- No incentives were offered as part of research

Note: Where 2024 African Youth numbers are shown on their own, this includes Congo Brazzaville, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Zambia, Botswana, Namibia, Chad, Cameroon, Tanzania, and Côte d'Ivoire. Comparisons of change between 2020, 2022 and 2024 are shown only among like-for-like markets, which are Congo Brazzaville, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, and Zambia.

Country	2020	2022	2024
Angola	-	×	-
Botswana	-	-	×
Cameroon	-	-	×
Chad	-	-	×
Congo Brazzaville	×	×	×
Côte d'Ivoire	-	-	×
DRC	-	×	-
Ethiopia	×	×	×
Gabon	×	×	×
Ghana	×	×	×
Kenya	×	×	×
Malawi	×	×	×
Mali	×	-	-
Mozambique	-	×	-
Namibia	-	-	×
Nigeria	×	×	×
Rwanda	×	×	×
Senegal	×	-	-
South Africa	×	×	×
Sudan	-	×	-
Tanzania	-	-	×
Togo	×	-	-
Uganda	-	×	-
Zambia	×	×	×
Zimbabwe	×	-	-
Total Countries	14	15	16
Total Interviews	4,200	4,507	5,604
			14,311

The African Youth Survey

FOREWORD

Welcome to the third edition of the African Youth Survey (AYS). It is a profound pleasure to tell you that the results of this survey are as relevant and as fascinating as they were when the AYS was first launched four years ago. In fact, you will find this edition even more compelling reading.

When we conceived the survey, the overriding purpose was to measure the temperature of one of the most important demographics in any society, the youth. In Africa, which already has the youngest population in the world, it was even more important to take the pulse of this cohort of respondents.

The aim, in retrospect, was rather quaint. We believed the actual sentiment in Africa was very different to the hopeless tropes so entrenched in the industrialised north of the dark continent beset by the horsemen of the apocalypse, conquest, war, famine and death – and pestilence too.

We succeeded because the respondents painted a picture that was the polar opposite of the prejudices of the developed world, but the true worth of the African Youth Survey has evolved into so much more than just showing that Africans, especially the next generation of leaders, actually believe in themselves and their continent. It has become an incredibly important – and accurate – indicator of trends, from domestic to global politics.

All of this is important, but it has now come into even sharper relief in this edition because the world is a far more different place; disrupted by geopolitical tension, volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous. Against this backdrop, the voice of the African youth becomes

even more significant since the continent once again is becoming a proxy battleground for the competing ideologies of an increasingly multi-polar world.

Where do the loyalties of the next generation of African leaders lie; are they blindly pro-American or slavishly pro-Russian? Is it as simple as a binary concept or is it more nuanced? What is the effect of China's extensive belt and road initiative? These questions have been asked and the answers are as fascinating as ever and, as has become the norm for the African Youth Survey, fly in the face of accepted beliefs on the question.

There is much to warm the hearts of Africa's supporters at home and abroad, as confidence returns to pre-pandemic levels. But there is much that continues to vex today's youth. As we plumb their greatest fears, we can gauge how these will impact on their desires. In the process, we get a unique insight into what we can expect from a continent that will provide a third of the world's youth in a quarter of a century's time.

From their beliefs on Africa's direction to its role on the world stage as the UN moves ever closer to giving the continent a permanent seat on the all-important Security Council to issues like climate change and the concomitant global warming, corruption, migration, quality of life, crime, terrorism and security, the African Youth Survey takes another step closer to understanding the hopes – and the hates – of a very important group of people. There are very important indicators about the health and future evolution of democracy on the continent and insights into the congruity – or otherwise – of government policies and what the youth need and want.



The old African adage has never been truer: if you want to go fast go alone, if you want to go far, go together. I believe this is the African Youth Survey's intrinsic value; it provides the key to going far together.

Building on the work of the previous two editions, the African Youth Survey is creating an invaluable body of knowledge that is indispensable for both local political leaders, multinational companies and global aid NGOs when it comes to policy direction, investment and aid programmes in a post COVID world.

As we move ever deeper into the epoch that was dubbed the African century only 25 years ago, what needs to be done to make this a reality is becoming clearer: unlocking the potential that lies within Africa and properly harnessing it – organically and sustainably – to the benefit of not just the people who live there, but to the whole world.

If Africa cannot provide this generation with the lives they aspire to, they will have no compunction seeking a better life elsewhere in the countries already groaning under the weight of mass immigration and the toxic rise of local identity politics in response.

The gift of the African Youth survey has always been to do the heavy lifting to get into the hearts and minds of the next generation of African leaders and learn how best to work with them. The old African adage has never been truer: if you want to go fast go alone, if you want to go far, go together. I believe this is the African Youth Survey's intrinsic value; it provides the key to going far together.

IVOR ICHIKOWITZ

Chairman – Ichikowitz Family Foundation

GUEST FOREWORD

Dr Sian Proctor is the first woman in the world to become a commercial astronaut spaceship pilot as well as the first female African American woman to be a mission pilot. A visionary artist, futurist and professor of geology, Dr Proctor is also a US State Department science envoy for the civilian use of space. Follow her on X: or Instagram @drsianproctor

Several weeks before this edition of the African Youth Survey was published, I was in Kenya and South Africa talking to various groups of people, particularly the youth, about my own journey into space - and the journeys that await them.

It might seem a strange pursuit for Afro sceptics who still choose to see Africa at best as still in its development phase and at worst a continent without hope, especially since space is one of the costliest endeavours imaginable.

But the doomsayers and cynics would be wrong - as they are about so much else.

The civilianization of humanity's last frontier brings with it not just the thrill of aspiration, but the very real tools that we need to resolve our issues right here on earth. Space travel is also no longer in the tight grasp of rival global superpowers, but well within the realms of ordinary mortals. We no longer need to dream it; we can all go to space and perhaps one day even settle on the moon or on Mars.

Africans have that right. It is not impossible. South Africa's Mark Shuttleworth was Africa's first astronaut, Egypt's Sara Sabry was next; the first African woman and first Arab. Very shortly, the very first Nigerian astronaut, will go to space with SERA, the Space Exploration and Research Agency.



The space industry will be worth an estimated trillion dollars by the end of this decade, which Africa can participate in and benefit from – not by sending their own rockets but by working in collaboration with others. Humankind has never lived continuously on the moon or anywhere outside of Low Earth Orbit. To be able to do so requires us to be innovative. There are great opportunities for universities, agencies and companies to work together to provide the necessary locales and help build analogue sites on Earth, like the Mars Desert Research Station in Utah in the US or the HI-SEAS Habitat in Hawaii, that can simulate the experiences on Earth that will be found on the Moon or Mars and in the process we can develop solutions together to living in areas where there is no easily accessible water – or too much radiation from the sun and intolerably cold; places where there is insufficient breathable air and managing resources and waste can be life or death.

It is one of the great, untold benefits of the new race to space: The route to the moon and from there to Mars is through addressing scenarios and creating solutions that will ultimately benefit Earth. To get our astronauts of the future flight ready, to make sustainable life on the moon or Mars a reality rather than a possibility, we need to solve for space the most pressing questions facing Earth from climate change to the management of increasingly scarce resources.

It truly is a win-win situation underpinned by the Artemis Accords that guide countries to work together in a spirit of peaceful cooperation for the betterment of humankind. We are building a JEDI future together, one where access to space is Just, Equitable, Diverse, and Inclusive.

A JEDI future is premised upon going together and we have not even begun to scope the benefits, because the ripple effect of innovation and inspiration will evolve in ways we cannot begin to imagine. Part of this process means increasing our STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education because the greatest growth in opportunity is going to occur in this area, directly with the scientists and engineers that are employed, the technicians that support them and indirectly through the entrepreneurs that find opportunities.

All we need to do is to inspire the youth. They do not need anyone's permission to take part, they just need to know how to unlock their part in a future that can belong as much to them as everyone else in the world, which is why the African Youth Survey, and in particular, this edition is so important to changing the narrative.

Just as I have been on a mission to get people to understand the potential of space and their role in it, changing the narrative from an exclusionary state-based space race to a global opportunity, so too has the African Youth Survey changed the narrative about this continent and its next generation of leaders.

Africa must become flight ready to unlock its incredible potential. The AYS shows that the foundations are already there in the passion and determination among the youth to chart their own destiny.

It is up to us to help provide a pathway. The sky is no longer the limit now that we have the keys to explore the universe. It's time to get flight ready, to be able to travel to infinity – and beyond.



Artwork by Dr Sian Proctor, part of her *Afrobotica* collection.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the fastest-growing demographic globally, African youth are the ones to watch; how will they shape their countries, influence the continent, and make their mark on the global stage? Now in its third iteration, the African Youth Survey provides an in-depth look at the perspectives, sentiments and intentions of young people across the continent on critical social, political, and environmental issues.

While the world recovers from the catastrophic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, African youth continue to consider infectious disease fatalities among the most significant events of the past five years. The pandemic's economic devastation still resonates deeply, with a widespread perception among African youth that economic prospects are poor. Most African youth believe their governments should do more to combat unemployment in the region, and although there has been slight improvement, only two-fifths of young people in Africa currently feel they have a good quality of life.

Green Shoots of Afro-Optimism

Despite the significant economic challenges they face, African youth remain a hopeful and ambitious cohort. The majority plan to build their own business in the future, and four-in-five have a strong sense of what they want to do with their lives. Youth are more likely to report feeling 'concerned' than 'pessimistic' about the future of their country, and there is reported confidence that their standard of living will improve. Many young Africans believe, in fact, that their quality of life will surpass that of their parents, and they increasingly feel that the continent is

moving in the 'right direction'. Despite this growing positivity in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority continue to say they believe things across the continent are heading in the 'wrong direction'. Nonetheless, there is a sense that youth have not resigned themselves to expect the worst about the long-term trajectory of their country and still believe that things can be turned around. At this moment, they are using their voices to call on leaders in their countries to take action in order to address current and future challenges facing Africa.

Whilst expressing bold ambitions, African youth are also pragmatists. They are acutely conscious of significant roadblocks hindering progress in their countries. There is a sense among a significant proportion that diplomacy is fragile, with corruption cited as the most pertinent concern for youth across Africa. It is strongly regarded that corruption is rife within political and civil institutions including government, business, and the police. It is therefore no surprise that when asked to pick a key priority for decision-makers, African youth unequivocally state that governments



must address, and adequately sanction, corruption. However, levels of satisfaction with government efforts to address corruption remain consistently low across the continent.

There is a sense that youth are at an inflection point, calling on their government to address key issues and right the long-term trajectory of their country or, failing this, using their own agency to improve their current and future prospects. However, despite strong belief that it is the government's responsibility to improve conditions for African populations, only half of eligible youth across Africa have registered to vote – a proportion which has remained consistent over time. This may be because a growing segment of young Africans feel that non-democratic systems could be preferable for the region, and that African countries should design their own democratic structures.

Safety and Stability

In many African countries, young people fear political instability, and those living in Kenya, Nigeria, and Ethiopia are most likely to feel the negative impact of terrorism, insurgency and armed conflict. Concerningly, there is a growing trend across the continent of young people being approached for recruitment by terror groups, and an increase in African youth reporting acquaintance with someone supporting terrorism in their local context. Despite this significant increase, the majority of African youth are still confident in their government's capabilities to deal with terrorism and insurgency.

Considering the very real issues of unemployment, corruption, and political instability, there is a risk that young people living across Africa may look elsewhere for opportunities to prosper. A significant and increasing proportion of African youth currently say they are planning to emigrate within the next five years. Africa may find itself losing out on young ambition, particularly to the allure of North America and Europe, where prospects are deemed by youth to be more appealing. Whilst the majority of African youth who intend to move overseas to pursue opportunities see this as a temporary measure, a growing proportion do feel that a move abroad could become a permanent relocation.

African youth are not only concerned for their own prospects; there is also growing concern for the interests of minority groups in their countries. For instance, three-quarters of young people are now worried about gender-based violence, and the lack of protection for women's rights. However, attitudes towards people from the LGBTQ+ community are less straightforward, with a smaller proportion expressing concern for this cohort. Additionally, the majority of African youth agree that their country has a moral obligation to accept refugees. This is despite expressing high levels of concern for immigration and asylum across Africa.

Foreign Relations and Africa on the Global Stage

To level the playing field, African youth are looking to their politicians to do more to enhance their country's global influence. Young people across Africa hold the belief that their leaders have a voice to drive change on the global stage, and they want to see their governments taking more direct engagements on global issues.

Despite a maintained interest in spotlighting Africa on the global stage, the majority of African youth do remain sceptical of outside influence, for fear of exploitation of their countries' natural resources. Youth continue to identify China and the United States as the two most influential foreign powers in the region, however, for most countries and international organisations their perceived influence has trended down over time.



Regardless of the perceived downward trajectory of influence, positivity towards this influence has remained high with around three-quarters agreeing that the impact of most foreign actors in their country has been 'very positive' or 'somewhat positive'. There is a growing sense among African youth that closer relationships with economic giants such as China or the USA could improve their country; these alliances could enhance infrastructure, increase access to affordable goods, and ultimately boost local economies. To that end, when surveyed in January 2024, many youth expressed optimism about the impact of a Biden administration on their country, which would suggest that this would carry through to a potential Kamala Harris presidency.

On the other hand, views towards the influence of the European Union and European states such as the United Kingdom and France are mixed. Africa's growing global significance and the reinforcement of multiple poles of power in the world order have diversified its pool of potential international partners, making Europe an important but not exclusive choice and highlighting the potential for collaboration beyond aid.

While Russia is not viewed as one of the most influential international actors in the region, an increasing proportion view the impact of Russia's influence in their country negatively. By far the primary source of negative sentiment towards Russian influence is the detrimental impacts on African countries caused by Russia's engagement in conflicts, with over two-thirds of African youth agreeing that the Russia-Ukraine conflict could

have been avoided. Nonetheless, when assigning responsibility for the outbreak of war, a third place primary blame on political leaders from the United States, European Union, and NATO. A fifth of youth feel Russian political leaders are primarily responsible, with a similar proportion saying everyone shares blame for the conflict. Just 15% of African youth think Ukrainian political leaders should take primary blame.



Climate Change and Environment

Climate change and the associated negative consequences of rising temperatures is a significant and increasing concern for young people across Africa. Seen as the most

vulnerable region in the world to the impact of climate change, it is not a surprise that the vast majority of African youth have great concern for the potential harm of climate change for future generations, for the people in their country, and for the harm that it will cause them personally.

A significant majority of African youth are still underwhelmed by their government's efforts to address the causes, and manage the implications, of the climate crisis. When asked what governments could be doing more of to address climate change, there is high consensus among African youth that governments should be adopting green energy sources, mitigating the impact on food and water supplies, and reducing carbon emissions.

When considering how to finance climate mitigation and management, African youth are divided as to whether their government should be advocating for funding to prioritise solutions to future climate change, or whether they should be pushing for financial compensation from developed countries. Regardless of the financial approach, it's felt by many that countries are spending too much time on consensus-building rather than taking action on climate issues, and that individual governments are failing to take the necessary action to mitigate climate impacts. There is also a strong perception among youth in Africa that there is low international interest on climate issues. These are the key barriers identified by youth for why the international community is not on-track to meet its agreed target to keep the global average surface warming to below 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2025, as outlined in the Paris Agreement.

African Youth in the Digital Age

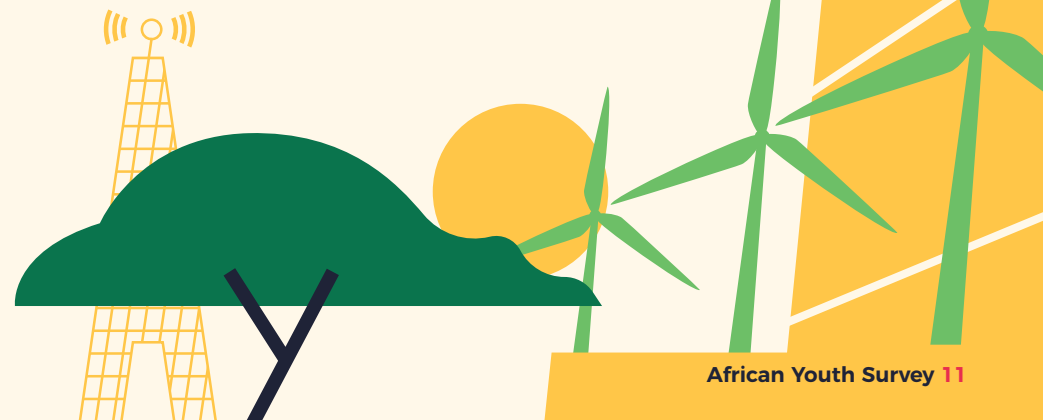
African youth are keen to ride the wave of the technological boom, and smartphone use is continuing to grow among this cohort; two-thirds now report to be using a smartphone for three or more hours a day. There is also an increasing perception among African youth that mobile data is becoming more affordable, which may account for the growing trend of young people in Africa using apps like Facebook.

Although smartphone usage is on-the-up, only two-thirds of young people have regular, private, internet access. This is at odds with the strong perception among African youth that internet connectivity is a fundamental human right. Despite yearning for more unrestricted and regular access to smartphones and the internet, African youth do acknowledge that this access isn't without its issues. There are real concerns that internet-enabled activities such as online dating might be ruining social match-making norms.

African youth also share concern about the increasing levels of exposure to fake news online; the proportion claiming to be exposed to fake news on a weekly basis is now at nearly half of young people. There is also worry that organisations are using fake news to advance their agendas, and over three-in-five worry about the impact of fake news and misinformation on upcoming elections. Artificial intelligence is generally seen to be a force for good and positive progress overall, yet many African youth do still worry that widespread access to this technology might do more harm than good, and that it will make the creation and spread of fake news easier.

Into the Future

In 2024, African youth paint a cautiously optimistic picture of the future. They have greater confidence in what's possible; they will start businesses, move overseas to pursue opportunities, and as a result have more promising prospects than those of the generations that have come before them. However, they are not blind to the systemic barriers that might stand in their way; there is corruption, job scarcity, and an impending climate crisis. Youth are urging politicians and decision-makers across the region to tackle corruption, improve employment prospects, act on climate change, navigate global influence with caution, and create a more prosperous economic climate for young people who are looking to kick-start their careers and futures.



Top findings

What does Africa's youth have to say about the future of their world?

1. Afro-Optimism – Overall attitudes remain negative about the direction of the continent, individuals' countries, and their national economies, but there are small improvements following dips during COVID. Death from infectious diseases remains the most impactful event of the past five years, though some countries worry about political instability. Addressing corruption is now the top barrier to progress followed by creating new, well-paying jobs

2. International Influence on Africa – Seven-in-ten remain concerned about the influence of foreign powers with China and the US seen to have the greatest influence, though many view it positively. For China, positivity is driven by affordable products and investments in infrastructure, while those who see the US's influence as positive point to economic support offered. Although Russia is not viewed as one of the most influential international powers in the region, an increasing proportion negatively view the impact of this influence in their country, mainly driven by the detrimental impacts being felt from Russia's engagement in conflicts

3. Africa's Role on the Global Stage – Youth are looking for their leaders to balance addressing domestic issues with increasing their country's global influence. Most think their leaders have a voice and can drive change on the global stage and want to see their governments taking more direct engagement on international issues both within the continent and beyond

4. Democracy and Government – The vast majority continue to support democracy, but a growing proportion say that sometimes non-democratic systems are preferable and that African countries need to design their own democratic structures. Equality under the law remains the top pillar of democracy and most say their voice matters to leaders, with just under half registered to vote

5. Quality of Life and Living Standards – Perceived standards of living bounce back to 2020 levels with two-in-five saying their standard is 'good' or 'very good' and most continue to expect it to be better in two years with three-quarters saying they will have a better life than their parents. However, there continues to be widespread dissatisfaction with governments' efforts to reduce poverty and tackle rising costs, and satisfaction with nearly all government services is up from 2022, but down from 2020

6. Future Ambitions – Four-in-five continue to say they know what they want to do with their life and future family plans are stable too with seven-in-ten planning on having fewer children than their parents, starting a family later, and getting married later. Employment opportunities and job prospects are bleak – three-quarters say it is difficult to find a job, nearly all are concerned about the lack of economic job prospects, and two-thirds are dissatisfied with their governments' efforts to create jobs and fight unemployment. Corruption is seen as the top barrier to getting a job followed by there not being enough well-paying jobs and not having enough government support. Seven-in-ten say they plan to start a business, but lack of access to capital / money and corruption are seen as the biggest barriers to these ambitions. Over half say they plan to emigrate in the next five years, citing economic reasons and education opportunities with most wanting to move to North America. While most plan to make this a temporary move, a growing proportion say it could be permanent

7. Corruption – Reducing government corruption is seen as the key priority to progressing the continent. Four-in-five are worried about corruption in their country with high levels of concern about corruption in government, business, and the police. Most are dissatisfied with efforts to tackle corruption and there is widespread support for a range of policies to address it, including police taskforces, tougher penalties, and banning those convicted of corruption from standing for public office

8. Safety and Security – Two-in-five are satisfied with the police and security services and a quarter say that they or a family member have been a victim of a crime in the past five years. Most think penalties and punishments are about right, but a third say they are not harsh enough. Only half say that they are equal before the law and three-quarters are worried about gender-based violence and the lack of protection for women's rights. While most want more protections for minority communities, only a third say this for the LGBTQ+ community. Three-in-five are confident in the government's ability to deal with terrorism and insurgency, but it is felt to be impacting their lives in many markets with noticeable increases in those who know someone who supports or has been approached by a terror group, or have been approached themselves

9. Environment – Three-quarters are concerned about climate change, but less than half are satisfied with efforts to address it and four-in-five say their government needs to be doing more to address it across a range of measures. The top barriers to achieving global warming targets are seen to be taking too much time on consensus building over action, individual governments failing to take action, and low international interest in the issue. Seven-in-ten are worried about plastic waste, but this is trending down as satisfaction with recycling infrastructure improves. African youth are most concerned by water scarcity with three-quarters (76%) report being 'very' or 'somewhat concerned' and two-in-five youth (40%) now report spending more than a quarter of their income on accessing clean water, a significant increase from 2022. Three-in-five worry about poaching of wild animals with widespread agreement that it leads to their extinction

10. Immigration – Two-thirds are concerned about immigration and asylum and only two-in-five are satisfied with government efforts to tackle illegal immigration. Three-in-five say that illegal immigration negatively impacts their country in various ways such as diverting government resources and driving up crime. While most say their country has a moral obligation to accept refugees, a third disagree

11. Technology – Four-in-five say internet connectivity is a fundamental human right, but only two-in-three have regular, private, internet access. The proportion who say mobile data is affordable is growing and more can afford it regularly than in 2022. Smartphone usage has increased with two-thirds saying they use it for three or more hours a day and a third saying they spend more time online than they would like to. Social media apps are the most frequently used. Three-in-five say that online dating apps allow them to meet people they would have never met before and over half say they would be open to meeting others through online dating. However, a similar proportion say it is ruining social norms and traditional dating, and just under half say their family would be accepting of someone they met through online dating. AI is seen as a force for good and positive progress, but many still worry that it can do more harm than good

12. News and Media – Television remains the top source but it is declining while Facebook remains in second and is climbing. BBC and CNN are the most trusted news sources, but the proportion who say they encounter fake news at least once a week has risen to nearly half. Fake news is seen to be a serious problem as a range of organisations use it to advance their agendas, and over three-in-five worry about the impact of fake news and misinformation on upcoming elections



Bogolo Kenewendo was the youngest Cabinet Minister in Africa and in Botswana's history during her tenure. She is the former Cabinet Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry of Botswana. In her capacity as minister, Kenewendo was appointed by United Nations Secretary General António Guterres in 2018 to the High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation, co-chaired by Melinda Gates and Jack Ma. In June 2022, Kenewendo was appointed as Special Advisor and Africa Director to the United Nations Climate Change High-Level Champions.

AFRO-OPTIMISM: CHARTING AFRICA'S PATH TO A PROSPEROUS FUTURE

As we stand at the crossroads of global transformation, the narrative of Afro-Optimism gains unprecedented relevance and urgency.

Afro-Optimism isn't just a hopeful vision for Africa's future; it's a tangible roadmap driven by strategic reforms, robust investments, and a resilient mindset.

While this year's African Youth Survey indicates that Afro-Optimism is on the rise, with 37% believing that the African continent is heading in the right direction compared to just 31% in 2022, there is much that can be done to raise the hopes of even more young Africans.

The continent and certainly the world is going through turbulent economic times – however, as a cautious optimist, a Pan-African advising global economic policies, my belief in Africa's immense potential is reinforced by its human capital, its natural capital and the zest for life that lies in Africa.

Make no mistake – we can achieve even higher levels of Afro-Optimism through economic reforms and business facilitation. During my tenure as Botswana's Minister of Investment, Trade, and Industry, I had the privilege of spearheading reforms that drastically improved the ease of doing business. By reducing the time required to start a business from 49 days to just 7 and introducing an online business registration system, we demonstrated that Africa could compete on the global stage with efficiency and innovation.

But these reforms were not just administrative changes; they were pivotal in mobilising domestic capital and attracting significant foreign direct investment while also integrating local SMEs into global value chains.

One of the cornerstones of Afro-Optimism is no question the embrace of the unstoppable digital transformation. In Botswana, we launched a digital economy strategy aimed at fostering an e-commerce ecosystem. This move is essential for integrating African economies into the global digital marketplace, thus ensuring that African businesses can compete and thrive. The digital era offers a unique opportunity to leapfrog traditional developmental stages and establish a robust digital infrastructure that supports innovation and entrepreneurship.

While not a monolith, it is important that legislative infrastructure in Africa is supportive of entrepreneurship by any means necessary; that our economic climate and the conditions for independent wealth creation are inclusive, and encourage a 2024-era sense of 'ownership'.

In Botswana, we undertook the first policy hackathon on the National Entrepreneurship Policy (NEP). This event marked a significant shift in policy-making by actively involving young people for the first time. By bringing together public and private sector leaders, the hackathon aimed to dismantle longstanding barriers to innovative entrepreneurship and ensure that the new NEP was inclusive and reflective of the community's needs.

This collaborative approach was crucial for the successful implementation of the policy because, as I believe, no one has a monopoly on good ideas.

Furthering our commitment to youth engagement, we incorporated young voices into the work of the United Nations Secretary-General's Digital High-Level Panel. Hosting roundtables to consult and share the outcomes of the panel ensured that we had cross-pollination of ideas, allowing for a richer and more inclusive digital policy framework. This initiative not only empowered the youth but also ensured that their perspectives were considered in shaping global digital strategies.

Including the youth in the formation of digital economic policy strategies will fuel optimism among youth about the future direction of their national economies. At the moment, such optimism stands at a staggeringly low 28%, but by creating such frameworks, Africa's youth can be confident they are working within the right conditions to succeed.

The world is undergoing a green transition and this is reflected in the direction of investment. Climate finance has doubled from USD 480 billion to USD 4.8 trillion worldwide in the last decade. Discussions have often been focused at the macro level, emphasising billions and trillions of dollars in global investments. However, it is time to bring this conversation to the micro level, where thousands and certainly millions of dollars can make a tangible difference for entrepreneurs and SMEs in the real economy.

To create an enabling environment for these players, we must focus on deliberate investment, trade and industrial policies. We must create value, build competitiveness and facilitate trade. By easing the business environment and improving access to finance, we can create an ecosystem that nurtures SMEs and aligns with the ambitions of Africa's youth for prosperity and development.

The renaissance of industrial policy is crucial for value chain development especially within areas we have comparative advantage in. One would be remiss in not mentioning our vast resource wealth – Africa holds 30% of the world's transition minerals, positioning the continent as a critical player in the global green economy.

Industrial policy must prioritise the development of industries around these resources, ensuring that Africa benefits from the entire value chain – from extraction to processing and manufacturing. The realisation of true to life financing industrialization will also lead to the effective implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which we have all worked hard to operationalise.

To capitalise on such vast potential, we must build competitiveness at the continental, national and local levels. This can be achieved through strategic reforms that make it easier to do business, facilitate trade, and improve access to trade finance and investment.

Simplifying regulatory frameworks, investing in infrastructure, and enhancing digital connectivity are essential steps – these efforts will not only attract domestic and foreign investment, but also empower local entrepreneurs to innovate and grow their businesses.

If we tie all these elements together, we create an ecosystem that responds to the goals and ambitions of young Africans.

This is what our common future is about. It aligns with the vision of 'Africa Vision 2063', which seeks to create a prosperous, integrated and united continent. By focusing on sustainable development, digital transformation and industrial policy, we can realise the Africa we want.

Afro-Optimism is more than a vision; it is a call to action for Africa and its global partners. It requires a concerted effort to implement strategic reforms, embrace digital transformation, foster sustainable development, and invest in human capital. By doing so, we can unlock Africa's vast potential and ensure a prosperous and inclusive future for all.

As we continue to forge this path, let us remain steadfast in our belief in Africa's promise and our commitment to turning that promise into reality.



AFRO-
OPTIMISM

Overall attitudes remain negative about the direction of the continent, individuals' countries, and their national economies, but there are small improvements following dips during COVID. Death from infectious diseases remains the most impactful event of the past five years, though some countries worry about political instability. Addressing corruption is now the top barrier to progress followed by creating new, well-paying jobs.

Following the drop in Afro-Optimism among youth in the African Youth Survey 2022, positivity is rebounding in 2024 as youth are more confident about the future of their continent, country and economy in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Perceptions that the African continent is heading in the right direction have risen from 31% in 2022 to 37% today, and are now close to pre-pandemic levels seen in 2020 (40%).

- **Most likely to say Africa is going in the right direction:** Rwanda (92%), Côte d'Ivoire (90%), and Tanzania (72%)
- **Most likely to say Africa is going in the wrong direction:** Nigeria (84%), Cameroon / Chad (66%), and Congo Brazzaville (62%)

African youth also express greater optimism about the future direction of their country than in 2022. Confidence that their country is moving on the right path has increased from 27% in 2022 to 32% in 2024. While agreement about country direction has rebounded in 2024, optimism still remains slightly below levels of positivity in 2020 (38%) with two-thirds (66%) still expressing negativity towards the future trajectory of their country.

- **Most likely to say their country is going in the right direction:** Rwanda (98%), Côte d'Ivoire (91%), and Tanzania (62%)
- **Most likely to say their country is going in the wrong direction:** Nigeria (94%), Cameroon (89%), and Congo Brazzaville (79%)

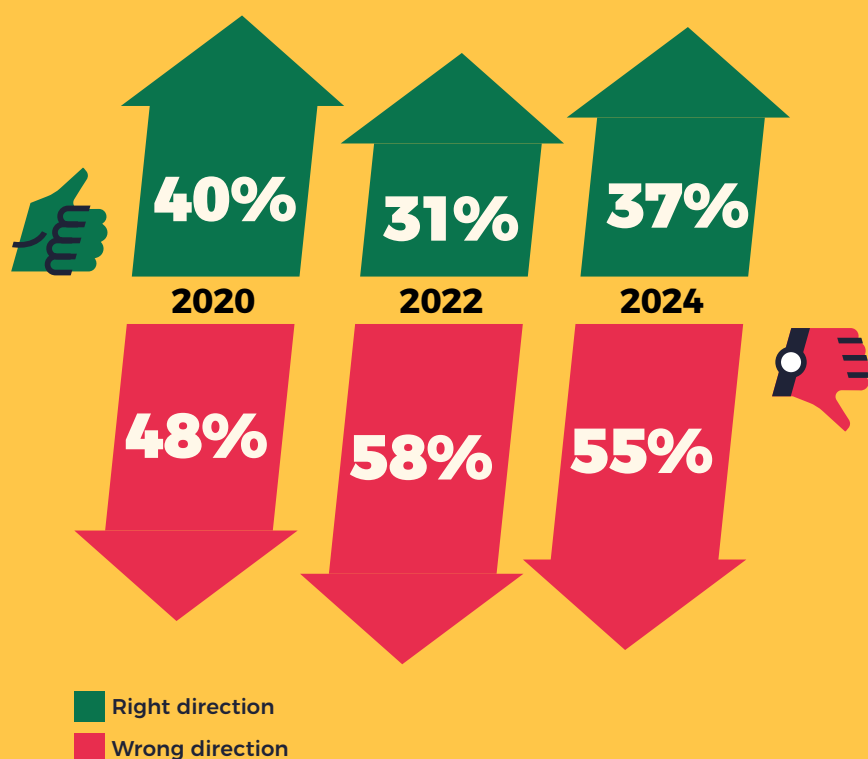
Likewise, while optimism about the future direction of the national economy has seen a slight increase since 2022, rising from 25% to 28% in 2024, over two-thirds of youth (69%) remain negative about their economic outlook. Similar to country direction, Ghana sees the sharpest decline in optimism about the direction of the national economy from 2022 (-42%), while youth in Rwanda express significantly greater confidence (+41%) in their country's economic outlook, rising to 95% in 2024. Perceptions about the future economic direction of their country are reflected in the World Bank's Africa's Pulse report. From bottoming out in 2023, economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa is expected to accelerate in 2024 and 2025 due to greater private consumption driven by declining inflation rates. However, inflation remains high compared to pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels, and economic growth remains below rates of expansion seen in the previous decade indicating transformative policies are needed to sustain economic growth for the long-term.¹

- **Most likely to say their national economy is going in the right direction:** Rwanda (95%), Côte d'Ivoire (85%), and Tanzania (59%)
- **Most likely to say their national economy is going in the wrong direction:** Nigeria (92%), Cameroon (86%), and Ghana (84%)

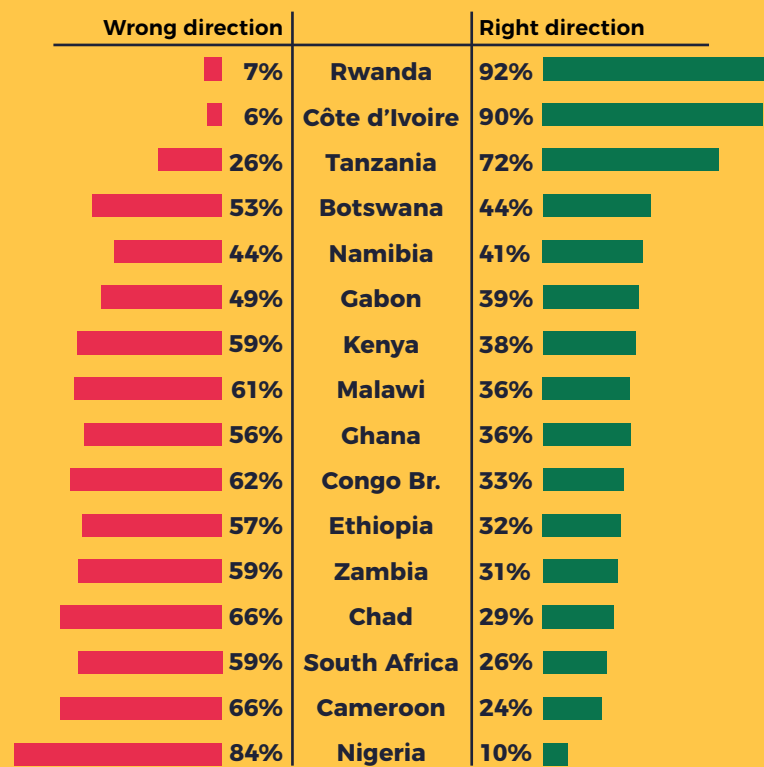
¹ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/africa-pulse>



African Continent Direction



*Comparing only countries asked in 2020, 2022 and 2024, so figures will differ slightly to the 2024 overall figure which contains 6 additional countries



When asked to describe how they feel about the future of their country, nearly two-in-five youth (37%) reported feeling 'optimistic' or 'excited', a five-point increase from 2022. Youth in Rwanda and Côte d'Ivoire express particularly high levels of positivity towards the future of their country. For these markets, this sentiment permeates throughout most areas within this study, as youth consistently respond with positive views about key issues in their countries. However, while positive perceptions about the future of their country have begun to rebound post-COVID-19, over two-in-five (43%) are less positive and this has stayed level from 2022 (42%). Some of Africa's largest and key economies such as Nigeria (54%), South Africa (54%), and Kenya (61%) are among the most pessimistic or concerned about the future. Nigerian youth in particular consistently express high levels of concern, dissatisfaction, and general negativity towards current conditions and issues in the country. On top of the higher commodity and food and fuel prices, and headline inflation caused by the Russia-Ukraine conflict, these major

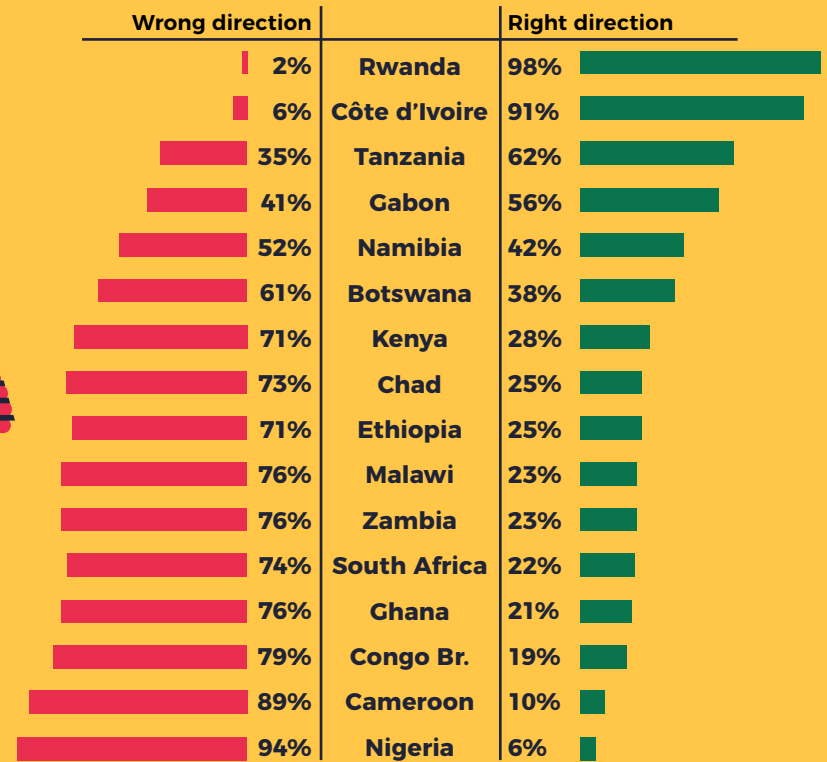
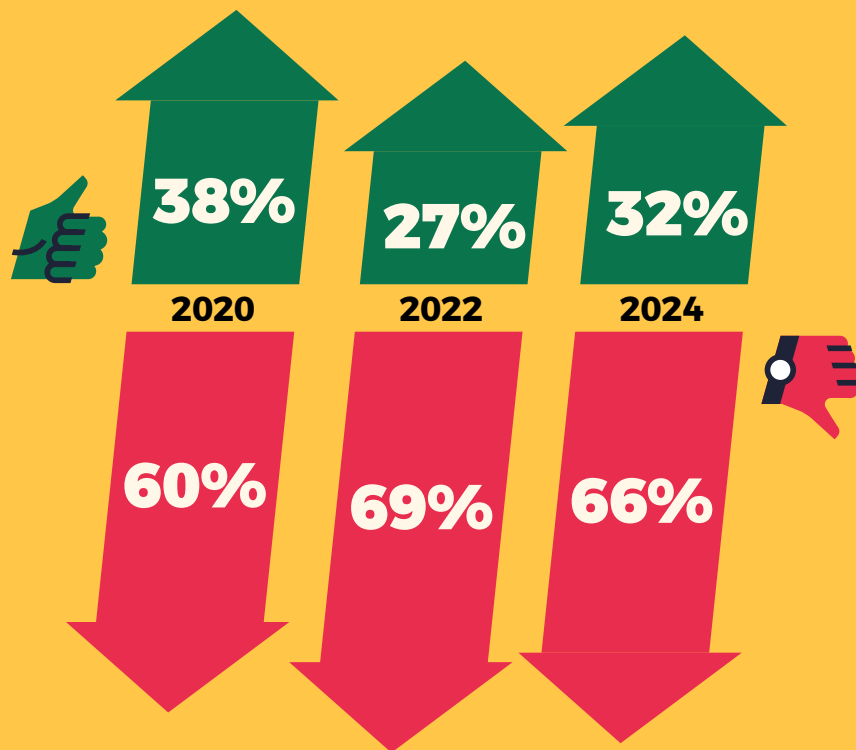
African economies have been struck with low growth post-pandemic.² Unfortunately, economic expectations predict growth in Africa to remain weak but stable in the context of economic challenges, climate issues, and geopolitical instability.³

While levels of negativity remain high, the majority of youth are concerned (34%) rather than pessimistic (9%) about the future of their country. This indicates that youth have not resigned themselves to expect the worst about the long-term trajectory of their country and still believe that things can be turned around. At this moment, youth are using their voices to call on leaders in their countries to take action in order to address current and future challenges facing Africa.

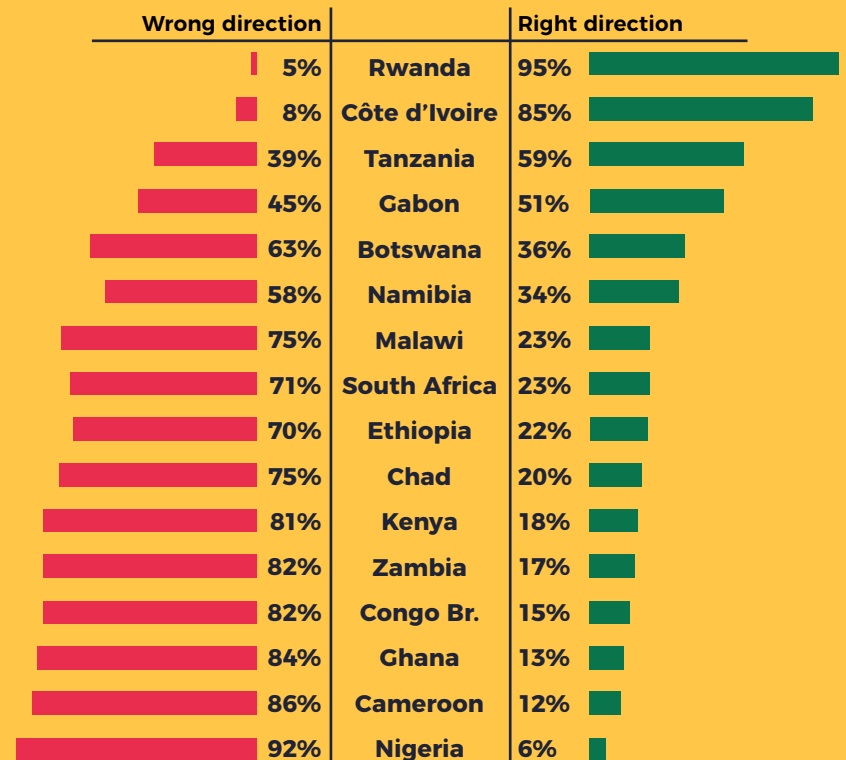
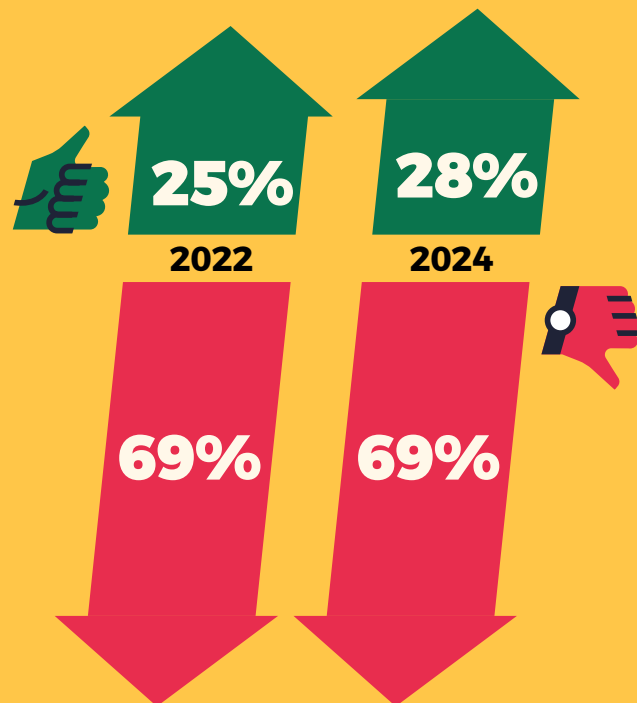
² <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2023/01/africa-2023-continuing-political-and-economic-volatility>

³ https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/WESP_2024_Web.pdf

Country Direction

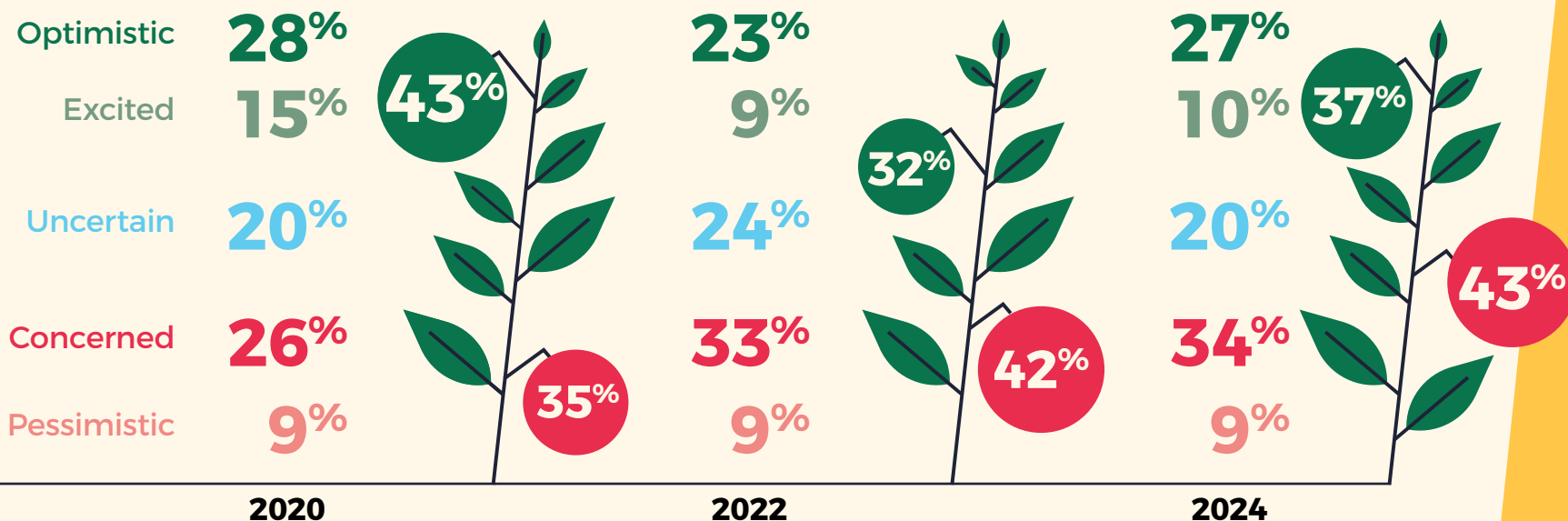


National Economy Direction



■ Right direction
 ■ Wrong direction

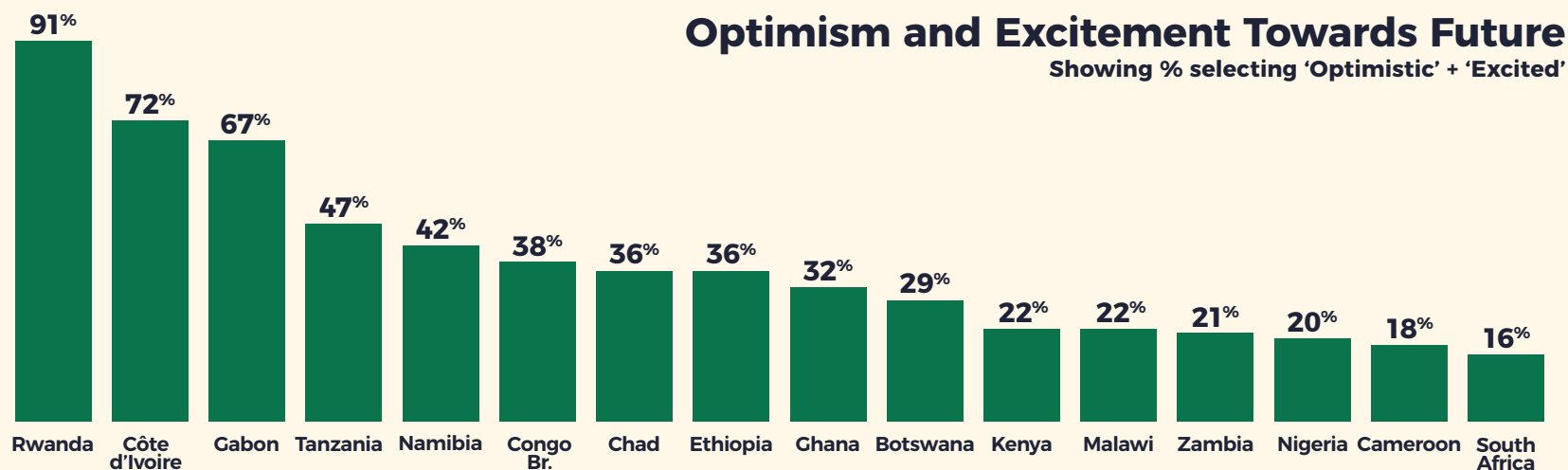
While positive perceptions about the future of their country have begun to rebound, more remain negative than positive about the future



- **Most likely to feel optimistic or excited about the future of their country:** Rwanda (91%), Côte d'Ivoire (72%), and Gabon (67%)
- **Most likely to feel pessimistic or concerned about the future of their country:** Malawi (61%), Nigeria / South Africa (54%), and Kenya (52%)

Past and Future Challenges

While there are clear signs that Afro-Optimism is rebounding in the wake of COVID-19, the impact of unprecedented socioeconomic challenges for the continent and the world as a whole persist. Two-in-five youth (39%) say that deaths from infectious diseases such as COVID-19, Ebola, tuberculosis,



MOST IMPACTFUL EVENT OF LAST FIVE YEARS

39% Deaths from infectious disease continue to be the most impactful events in recent memory for African Youth



Most impactful event of last 5 years 2022 2024

Deaths from infectious disease **45%** **39%**

Political instability **15%** **14%**

The technological / digital revolution **9%** **11%**

Increased access to essential services and resources **8%** **11%**

Environmental challenges **5%** **9%**

Democratic changes **10%** **9%**

International involvement in Africa **7%** **7%**

14%
Political instability

malaria, and HIV/AIDS is the event that has had the largest impact on Africa in the past five years. While this has slightly declined from 45% in 2022, it continues to be by far the most impactful event of recent years followed by political instability (14%), the technological digital revolution (11%), and increased access to essential services and resources (11%). The only exceptions where deaths from infectious diseases is not seen to be the most impactful event are Ethiopia, Cameroon, and Côte d'Ivoire, where youth say political instability has had the biggest impact on Africa in the past five years.


Looking ahead to the next five years, African youth feel the top priority for the continent to progress and move forward should be reducing government corruption (23%). According to the 2023 Corruption Perception Index, Sub-Saharan Africa remains the region with the lowest average score, despite isolated improvements in some



Most Important Things for Africa to Progress

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

	2020	2022	2024
Reducing government corruption Kenya: 35%; Nigeria: 33%; Congo Br./Zambia: 28%	28%	22%	23%
Creating new, well-paying jobs Cameroon: 41%; Nigeria: 32%; South Africa: 25%	24%	28%	20%
Increasing access to basic needs and services Zambia: 23%; Nigeria/South Africa: 21%; Chad/Tanzania: 19%	16%	15%	17%
Modernizing the education system Malawi/Nigeria/Zambia: 19%; Congo Br./Ethiopia: 18%; Botswana: 17%	15%	17%	15%
Achieving peace and stability in Africa Côte d'Ivoire: 32%; Ethiopia: 25%; Rwanda: 23%	17%	13%	15%
Making it easier to start a business Congo Br: 23%; Rwanda: 20%; Botswana: 19%	10%	13%	14%
Building a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship Kenya: 16%; Cameroon: 15%; Botswana/Rwanda: 14%	12%	13%	12%
Granting more personal freedoms to citizens Tanzania: 16%; Côte d'Ivoire/Ethiopia/Gabon: 15%; South Africa: 13%	6%	11%	11%
Embracing digital and technological innovation Côte d'Ivoire: 16%; Rwanda: 13%; Botswana/Tanzania: 12%	6%	10%	10%
Addressing climate change/global warming Tanzania: 17%; Gabon: 15%; Malawi: 14%	4%	6%	10%



countries, with pressure mounting on both democracy and the rule of law.⁴ The emphasis youth place on reducing government corruption has increased slightly from 22% in 2022 and has taken the top priority spot from creating new, well-paying jobs (20%), which has fallen from 28% in 2022. The only exceptions where these two issues are not seen as the top priorities for the continent to progress are Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Côte d'Ivoire where youth place greater importance on achieving peace and stability in Africa. Youth in Tanzania also have a slightly different perspective on progress for the continent, with increasing access to basic needs and services (19%) being outlined as the key priority for moving forward, followed by creating new, well-paying jobs (18%).

⁴ The CPI ranks 180 countries and territories around the globe by their perceived levels of public sector corruption, scoring on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean). <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2023>



Esther Wadzanai Mano, a Zimbabwean scholar-activist who recently completed an MPhil in African Studies at the University of Cambridge, examines the legacy of colonialism through the lens of liberation and education. An Earlham College graduate and former Watson Fellow, she advocates for decoloniality and educational equity.

AFRICA'S YOUTH ARE CALLING FOR TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE IN AFRICA'S POLITICAL LANDSCAPE, CHALLENGING CORRUPT AND NEO-COLONIAL SYSTEMS WHILE ASSERTING THEIR RIGHTFUL ROLE IN SHAPING THEIR COUNTRIES' FUTURES.

The changing perceptions of foreign influence among African youth today mark a pivotal moment in the continent's quest for self-determination and political reform. Overall, the 2024 African Youth Survey illustrates a broad trend where African youth perceive foreign influence in a negative light when viewed abstractly. Despite gaining political independence, African nations continue to struggle under the shadow of neocolonialism through the vicious cycle of unfavourable foreign policy, international borrowing and debt, and entrenched domestic poverty. The 2024 Africa Youth Survey reveals intriguing shifts in Africa's rising generation's perceptions of the value of foreign powers' influence on African nations. This data uncovers a growing dissatisfaction among young Africans with external relations

between African governments and global superpowers including the United States, China, the European Union and Russia.

In 2024, just over half of African youth (55%) viewed former colonial powers as having a positive influence on their country, while nearly one third (31%) considered their influence to be negative. The European Union's influence has also waned, with a 14-point drop in positive perceptions since the first survey conducted in 2020. Survey respondents view former colonial powers' influences differently, with 69% viewing France's influence positively, and the UK, now outside of the EU, garnering a much higher positive perception from 85% of respondents. This disparity underscores a

deeper divide between anglophone and francophone African youth. In francophone countries such as Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali, recent anti-colonial actions such as the formation of the African Economic Confederation (AES) reflect a strong, immediate push against perceived colonial dominance, with youth actively supporting these shifts in political allegiance and power. This support has led to significant political changes, including the expulsion of French and U.S. military forces from francophone West African nations.

While fewer than half of African youth respondents (41%) view Russia as having a significant influence on their country, 68% of young Africans view this influence positively. This disparity is likely due to Russia's increased efforts to engage Africa in the recent past more than foreign actors, despite the unpopular war in the Ukraine and resultant global boycotts.

Declining from 78% in 2020, 70% of African youth in 2024 see the U.S. having an impact on their country. Meanwhile, 76% of African youth see a direct Chinese impact in their country, a marked decline from 83% in 2020. Interestingly, the character of these influences is shifting. More young Africans now view Chinese influence positively – 82% this year compared to 78% two years ago – while fewer, 79%, see America having a positive influence, a steeper dive from 87% in 2020, reflecting growing discontent with American foreign involvement. This trend underscores a growing resistance to Western imperialism and a preference for more equitable partnerships in Africa's economic and political landscape. Although these changes are incremental, they indicate a broader re-evaluation by African youth of foreign involvement and its impact on African nations, a waning confidence in traditional Western powers and a nuanced shift in perceptions towards China.

According to the 2024 survey, nearly three-quarters (72%) of young Africans are concerned about the influence foreign countries and organisations have on the continent and in their country, a decrease from 74% in 2022 and 81% in 2020. This reduction, continues to signify a significant awareness and resistance against external control. The growing wave of youth uprisings across Africa – from Kenya, to Senegal, to Nigeria – reveals, that African youth today are increasingly rejecting bad governance, economic injustice, systemic corruption, and the legacy of colonial exploitation.

Recent events in Kenya serve as a potent example of the findings of the 2024 African Youth Survey. Kenya has witnessed a powerful outpouring of youth-led protests against a controversial Presidential tax bill backed by the IMF-World Bank alliance, which would have significantly increased taxes on everyday essentials amid soaring unemployment and inflation. The unrest met with violent state-led repression and loss of life,

underscoring the disconnect between the Kenyan youths and the Kenyan government, recently designated as a "Major Non-NATO Ally." This designation reflects an ongoing pattern of Western interference that often masquerades as support while entrenching economic and political subservience. Despite President Ruto's subsequent withdrawal of the controversial finance bill, the protests have continued, along with calls for the President's removal. Sparking widespread youth-led conversations across the continent, this dynamic, corroborated by the 2024 African Youth Survey, underscores a powerful desire among young Africans for their voices to be central in national governance, diplomacy and policy-making. Youth in Kenya exemplify a resounding pan-African youth call for transformative change in Africa's political landscape, challenging corrupt and neocolonial systems while asserting the rightful role of youth in shaping their countries' futures.

I stand in solidarity with the young people across the African continent who have been at the forefront of recent waves of protest, driven by discontent with current living conditions and our political leaders' failure to ameliorate them. This rising tide of youth resistance highlights a crucial juncture for Africa: a critical need for unity and a decisive break from Western dominance. As we navigate these shifts, we, African youth, must stay vigilant and proactive in reclaiming our autonomy and shaping our futures free from external domination. How can we harness this growing awareness to foster self-determination and empowerment? How might these evolving perceptions of foreign influence impact our collective drive for sovereignty?

The recent protests in Kenya, along with similar uprisings across Africa, underscore a significant trend: African youth are increasingly demanding self-determination and pushing back against imperialist influences. How will you contribute to this movement?



+ INTERNATIONAL +
INFLUENCE ON AFRICA



Seven-in-ten remain concerned about the influence of foreign powers with China and the US seen to have the greatest influence, though many view it positively. For China, positivity is driven by affordable products and investments in infrastructure, while those who see the US's influence as positive point to economic support offered. Although Russia is not viewed as one of the most influential international powers in the region, an increasing proportion negatively view the impact of this influence in their country, mainly driven by the detrimental impacts being felt from Russia's engagement in conflicts.

When asked about the influence foreign countries and organisations have on the continent and their country, African youth continue to convey high levels of concern with over seven-in-ten (72%) saying they are 'very concerned' or 'somewhat concerned' about their impact. However, this sentiment is trending down over time, dropping from 74% in 2022 and 81% in 2020. Youth in South Africa express the highest levels of concern about foreign powers, where nine-in-ten (90%) say they are concerned and two-in-three (66%) say they are 'very concerned'. By contrast, only half of youth in Rwanda (49%) say that they are concerned with just one-in-five (19%) saying they are 'very concerned'. The high levels of concern among South African youth could be attributed to the strong sentiment within the country for promoting a more multipolar world order that provides better representation and agency for developing nations, supplanting the antagonistic bipolarity of a US-China dominated world order. The 'influence' of foreign powers could be viewed negatively as a means to prevent countries from advocating for their own interests in international forums, and pushing for fairer inclusion in the global financial system.¹

- **Highest levels of concern about the impact of foreign powers on their country:** South Africa (90%), Congo Brazzaville (81%), and Kenya (80%)
- **Lowest levels of concern about the impact of foreign powers on their country:** Rwanda (49%), Côte d'Ivoire (54%), and Chad (58%)

Assessing the various levels of influence different foreign actors have on the continent, African youth continue to see

¹ <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2023/12/south-africa-in-the-emerging-world-order?lang=en>

China (76%) as having the greatest impact on the region, with more than half (51%) saying it has 'a lot of influence' on their country. The United States is a close second (70%), with over two-in-five (42%) youth saying it has 'a lot of influence' on their country. However, for many countries and international organisations, their perceived influence has trended down over time, particularly for China, the World Trade Organisation, the European Union, and the United Kingdom. At the same time, the perceived influence of the United States, the African Union, and France declined from 2020 to 2022 but have plateaued since.

- **Most likely to say China has influence on their country:** Kenya (96%), Rwanda (85%), and Congo Br. (81%)
- **Most likely to say the United States has influence on their country:** Kenya (94%), Ghana / Rwanda (85%), and Nigeria (79%)

The United States, China, and Russia have been vying for allies in Africa, with China's economic rise raising the geopolitical stakes, and Russia acting as a spoiler to Western interests. However, this notion of a "scramble" for diplomatic influence and natural resources where African states are utilised by global powers needs to take into account the actions of many African countries leveraging these powers against each other in order to achieve their own strategic interests. An example of this is South Africa, which continues to reinforce its strong intra-BRIC relationship with China and Russia alongside maintaining beneficial economic and political relations with the US.²

² <https://www.cfr.org/blog/new-scramble-africa>; <https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/12/21/south-africa-in-emerging-world-order-pub-91310>; <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2023/08/symbolism-over-substance-south-africa-ramaphosa-announces-brics-30>

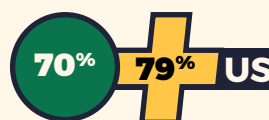
FOREIGN INFLUENCES

Of all the foreign actors seen to have an influence on the continent, youth still see China as having by far the biggest impact.

How much influence, if any at all, do you think the following countries/organisations have on your country and is it positive or negative?

● INFLUENCE **+ POSITIVE**

Influence = A lot + some influence
Positive = Very + somewhat positive



Despite the perceived downward trajectory of influence, positivity towards this influence has remained high with around three-quarters agreeing that the impact of most foreign actors in their country has been 'very positive' or 'somewhat positive'. This rises to around four-in-five youth for China, the African Union, the World Trade Organisation, the United Kingdom, and the United States. While positive perceptions of the African Union's influence remain some of the highest across all foreign countries and organisations, these perceptions have continued to decline, falling from 87% in 2020 to 84% in 2022 and now down to 80% in 2024.

72%

2022: 74% 2020: 81%

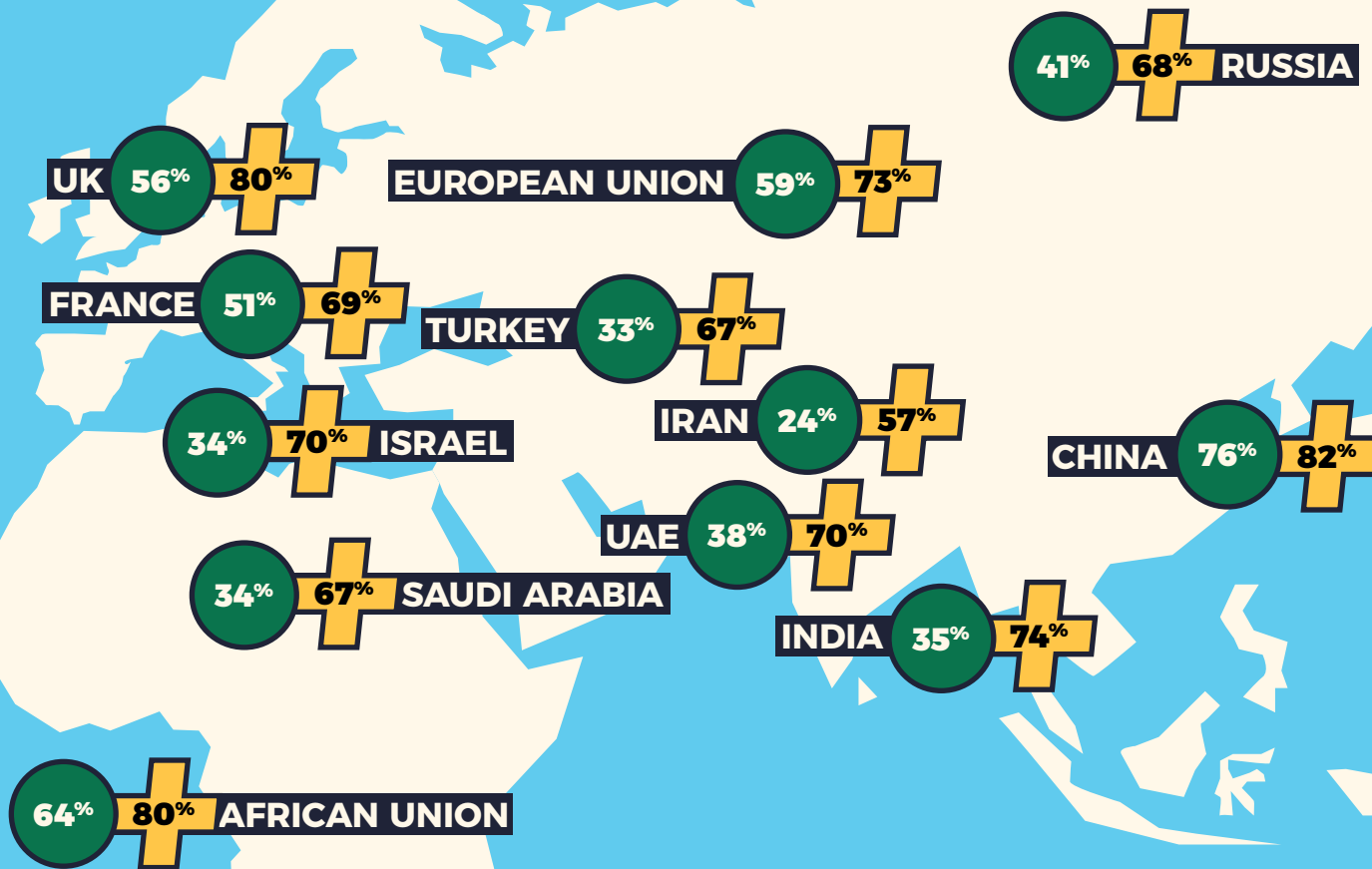
TOP 3 COUNTRIES:

South Africa: 90%
Congo Br.: 81%
Kenya: 80%

BOTTOM 3 COUNTRIES:

Chad: 58%
Côte d'Ivoire: 54%
Rwanda: 49%

of African youth are concerned about the influence from foreign powers



Specifically thinking about the influence of former colonial powers, across a range of issues³ just over half of African youth (55%) think that former colonial powers have a positive influence on their country. At the overall level, African youth are most positive towards the influence of former colonial powers on education and training in their country (61%), followed by trade and trade relations (60%), foreign direct investment (57%), and military support (56%) to their country. General positivity towards former colonial powers is highest

³ Issues include education and training, trade and trade relations, foreign direct investment, military support, access to and use of natural resources, politics and leadership, and culture and identity in my country.

among youth in Kenya where seven-in-ten youth (71%) are positive about the British colonial impact on their country. On the other hand, a third of youth (31%) say former colonial powers have a negative impact on their country, and this rises to around half of youth in Gabon (52%) and Cameroon (47%). Negative sentiment in Gabon and Cameroon is likely driven by the gradual increases in public opinion turning against France, rejecting French influence, and blaming it for all the region's ills. For Gabon in particular, youth have perceived a significant increase in the influence of France on their country, from 66% in 2022 to 81% in 2024, potentially a driving force exacerbating negative sentiment among youth.

Positivity Towards Influence of Former Colonial Powers on their Country

Showing % selecting 'Very positive' + 'Somewhat positive'

Education and training **60%** **61%**

Trade and trade relations **56%** **60%**

Foreign direct investment **56%** **57%**

Access to and use of natural resources **46%** **52%**

Military support **50%** **56%**

Politics and leadership **44%** **49%**

Culture and identity **46%** **47%**

■ 2022 ■ 2024

55% 

Overall, just over half of youth think that former colonial powers have a positive influence while a third say that it is negative

31% 

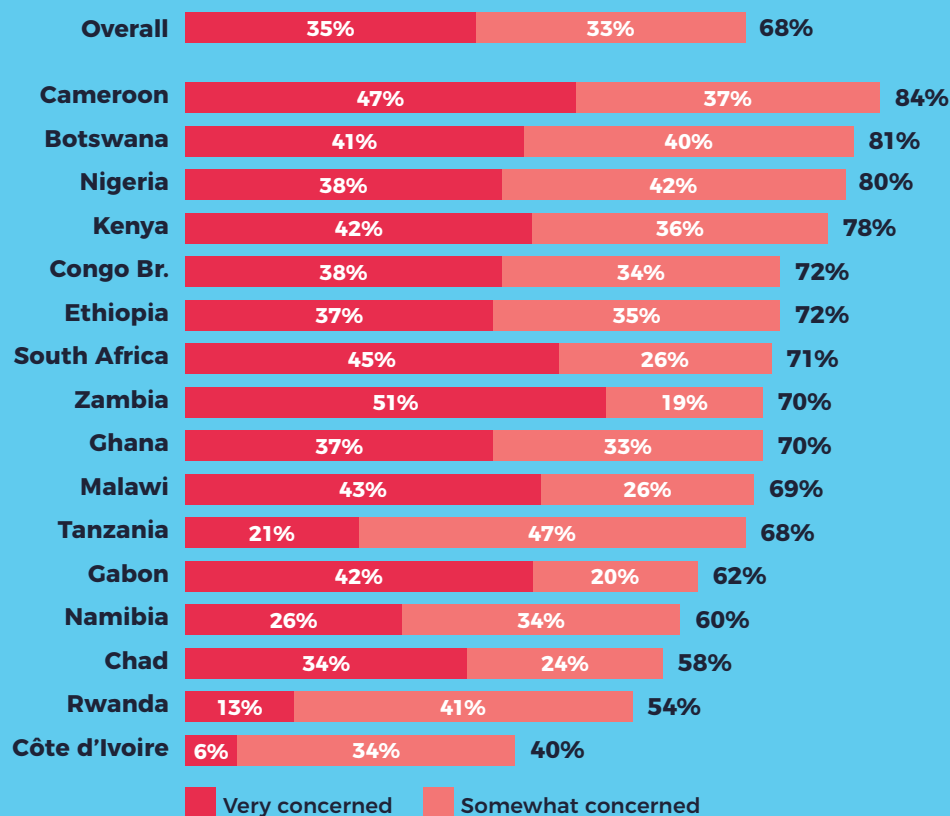


AGREE 65%
DISAGREE 33%

that foreign companies have taken advantage of my country's resources without benefitting locals.

67%
support limiting natural resource extraction to local companies

Concern about Corruption in International Companies



Foreign Companies and Resources

Despite the high levels of positivity towards all major foreign countries and organisations, there is still strong concern among African youth about the impact of foreign companies extracting resources from their country. Two-in-three (65%) believe that foreign companies have been allowed to take advantage of their country's resources without sufficiently benefitting or contributing to local populations, and this conviction has remained high from 2022 (65%). Adding to worries about the exploitation and extraction of natural resources by foreign companies is widespread concern about corruption within international companies, with over two-thirds of youth (68%) 'very concerned' or 'somewhat concerned'. This concern rises to over around four-in-five youth in Cameroon (84%), Botswana (81%), Nigeria (80%), and Kenya (78%), while in Côte d'Ivoire concern falls to just two-in-five youth.

As stated above, the exploitation and extraction of natural resources by foreign companies without fair compensation to locals is the primary driver of negative sentiment towards Chinese and American influence in the region, and the second highest factor behind negative perceptions towards Russia's impact. Concerns about resource exploitation and extraction are particularly high in Côte d'Ivoire (85%), South Africa (82%), and Nigeria (79%). In contrast, 76% of Rwandan youth disagree that foreign companies have taken advantage of their country's natural resources. Nonetheless, across all markets, there is strong approval towards policies that limit the influence of foreign companies and only allow natural resources to be extracted by local companies (67%). This sentiment could be further supported by foreign nations like the United States and Russia having increased interest in natural resources (especially minerals) in Africa.¹ At least half of youth in all markets approve of these policies, with strongest support in Cameroon (86%), South Africa (76%), and Kenya (74%).

¹ <https://www.csis.org/analysis/central-african-republic-mine-displays-stakes-wagner-groups-future>



CHINA

Perceptions of China's Influence

While African youth see China as the most influential international actor in their countries, China's perceived influence continues to decline – from 83% agreeing that it has influence on their country in 2020 to 79% in 2022 to 76% in 2024. This reflects broader trends that identify China's slowed economic growth and the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic compounded with US-China trade tensions, shifting patterns in China's capital outflows and political priorities, and growing debt concerns as factors reshaping economic and political dynamics between China and African nations.⁴

Despite this, positivity among youth towards China's impact on their country has increased from 78% in 2022 to 82% in 2024. Positive perceptions of China's influence are near universal among youth in Rwanda and Chad (both 96%), Kenya (95%), and Nigeria (93%), while youth in Gabon (60%), Ethiopia (63%), and Namibia (70%) are least likely to say their influence is positive. Furthermore, youth identify Jack Ma, the co-founder of Alibaba Group, and Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, among the global political figures and business leaders that will have the biggest impact on Africa in the near future.

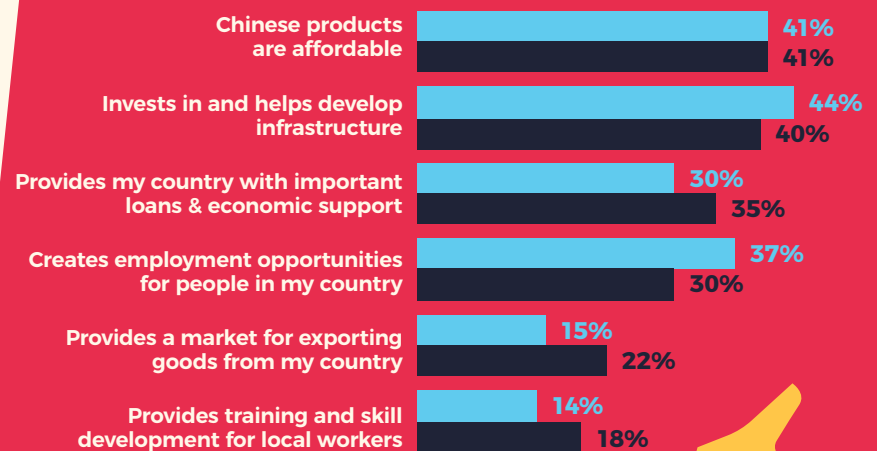
Youth that view China's influence as positive continue to highlight the affordability of Chinese products (41%) and Chinese investments in and support developing infrastructure projects (40%) as the primary drivers of positive perceptions. China-Africa trade relations have been growing over the past two decades, primarily driven by increasing value of Chinese exports to African countries while commodity price drops on the global markets have led to declining values for African exports to China. In addition, Chinese investments into

⁴ <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WP/Issues/2024/02/23/Navigating-the-Evolving-Landscape-between-China-and-Africas-Economic-Engagements-545104>

82%

Perceive China to have a positive influence

Drivers of Positive Perceptions of China



2022 2024

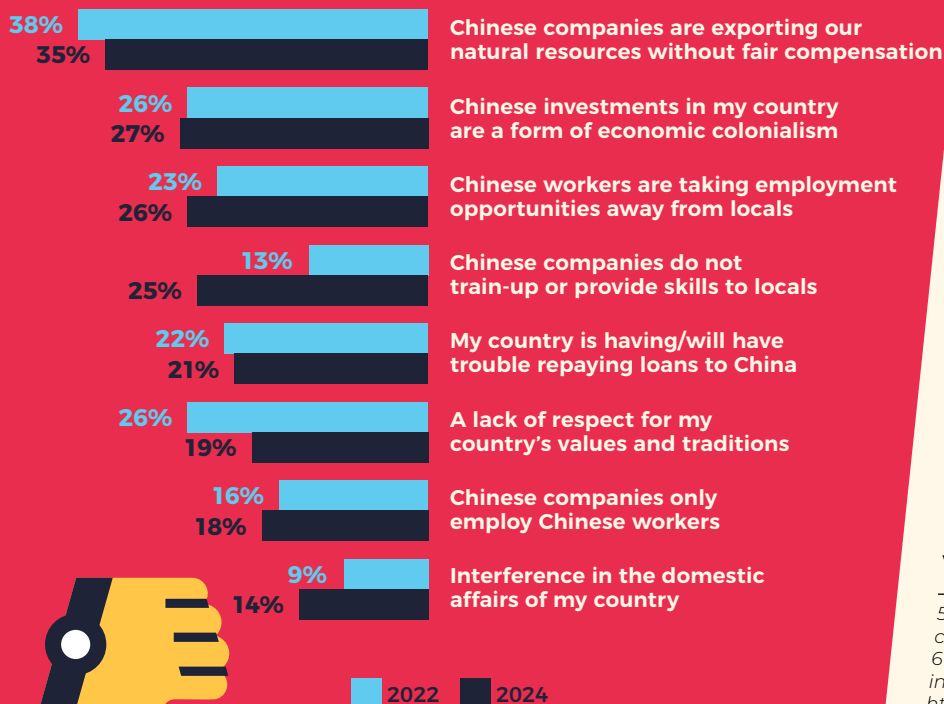




17%

Perceive China to have a negative influence

Drivers of Negative Perceptions of China



infrastructure projects across the continent have expanded in scope and ambition since the launch of China's Belt and Road Initiative in 2013.⁵ Youth in Kenya (64%) and Ghana (43%) are mainly positive towards the provision of loans and economic support from China, while youth in Botswana (46%) are primarily positive about the employment opportunities created by China's influence in their country. Additionally, there is a small but growing proportion of African youth that say China provides a market for exporting goods from their country, rising from 15% in 2022 to 22% in 2024. However, youth are less likely to say that China is creating employment opportunities for people in their country, declining from 37% in 2022 to 30% in 2024.

Among the minority (17%) of African youth that view China's influence on their country as negative, the exportation of natural resources without fair compensation and benefit (35%) continues to be the primary driver of this sentiment. China's demand for energy and raw materials to maintain its position as an economic powerhouse requires concerted foreign engagement with Sub-Saharan Africa that directly ties this region to China's industrial policy and foreign direct investment (FDI) strategies. Chinese FDI in Africa had been steadily increasing over the last few decades, peaking at US\$5 billion in 2021, however, this contracted to US\$1.8 billion in 2022 with the impacts and aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁶ As such, negative perceptions of China's influence in Africa are also driven by concerns surrounding Chinese investments being a form of economic colonialism (27%) and Chinese workers taking employment opportunities away from locals. In addition, there is a noticeable increase in youth that are frustrated with Chinese companies not training-up or providing skills to locals, increasing from 13% in 2022 to 25% in 2024, while feelings that Chinese companies do not respect local values and traditions has declined from 2022.

⁵ <https://www.sais-cari.org/data-china-africa-trade>; <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2023/01/china-africa-relations>

⁶ <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/China-in-Sub-Saharan-Africa-Reaching-far-beyond-natural-resources.pdf>; <https://www.sais-cari.org/chinese-investment-in-africa>



RUSSIA

Perceptions of Russia's influence

While African youth do not view Russia as one of the most influential international actors in the region, around two-in-five (41%) continue to see it as having influence on their country, a level well below that of the US and China. For Malawi and South Africa in particular, the perceived influence of Russia in these countries has increased significantly from 2022. Among Malawian youth, Russia's influence jumps from 14% in 2022 to 49% in 2024, while in South Africa, perceptions increase from 34% in 2022 to 57% in 2024. These increases are potentially driven by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the ramifications of this conflict being felt globally. Specifically among Malawian youth, another likely factor behind increasing perceptions of Russia's influence are the donations of fertilisers that have supported smallholders and subsistence farmers in Malawi, who make up the vast majority of the population, to circumvent rising costs and fertiliser shortages.

Overall, perceptions of Russia's influence have remained stable and positive over time at around two-in-three (68%), well-behind the perceived positive influence of the US and China. Nonetheless, when asked which global political or business

68%

Perceive Russia to have a **positive** influence

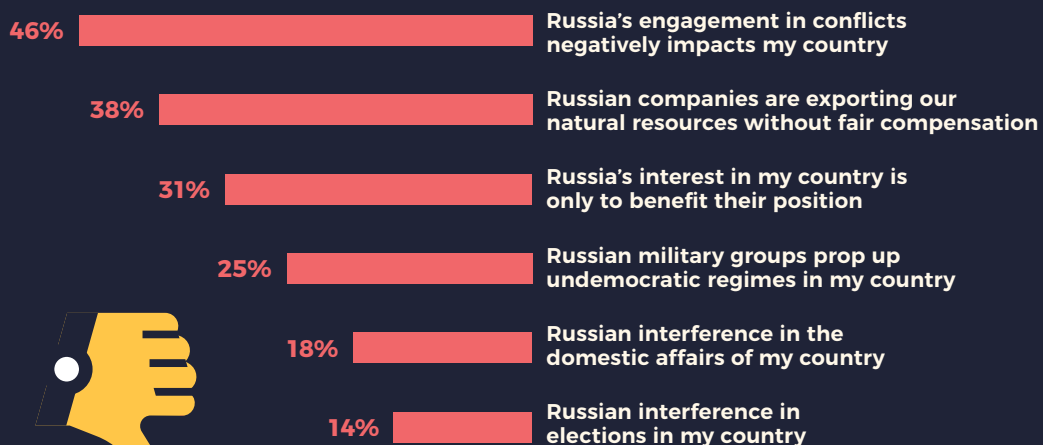
Drivers of Positive Perceptions of Russia





30% Perceive Russia to have a **negative** influence

Drivers of Negative Perceptions of Russia



leaders will have the biggest impact on the continent, youth expect Vladimir Putin to be one of the most influential foreign leaders in Africa in the near future. Russia is increasingly leveraging anti-Western sentiment to reinforce its influence on the African continent amid geopolitical competition with the West. Although Russia's involvement across the continent falls well short to that of both China and the West, some African governments, such as South Africa, are pivoting towards Moscow. This is likely driven by frustrations with the failures of Western intervention, lack of African representation in international institutions, and desires of African nations to engage with a variety of partners in order to strengthen their positions at home and abroad.⁷

Those that hold positive perceptions of Russia's influence in their country cite the provision of Russian grain and fertiliser to their country (57%) as by far the main factor driving these views. Beyond this, youth also highlight the strong history of relations between their country and Russia (45%) and economic support in the form of important

⁷ <https://www.cfr.org/background/russias-growing-footprint-africa>

Russian loans to their country (41%) as key issues driving up positive perceptions towards Russia's influence in their country. Focusing particularly on the history of relations with Russia, this is seen as the main driver of positivity among South African (61%) and Tanzanian (61%) youth. These countries are among the top for perceived levels of Russian influence, with over seven-in-ten (71%) youth agreeing that Russia has an impact on their country.

A sizable minority (30%) of African youth view the impact of Russia's influence in their country negatively, and this proportion has increased from 23% in 2022. Negative perceptions rise to around half of youth in Botswana (55%) and Gabon (49%), potentially driven by their views towards Russia's engagement in its conflict with Ukraine. By far the primary source of negative sentiment towards Russian influence is the detrimental impacts on African countries caused by Russia's engagement in conflicts (46%). The Human Rights Foundation explains the all-encompassing negative impact Russian conflicts and their private mercenaries have caused across a range of African countries through the resulting human rights abuses, democratic erosion, corruption, organised crime, disinformation campaigns and economic hardships from lack of grain and fertilizer imports from Ukraine.⁸ Negativity is also driven by perceptions that Russian companies are exporting natural resources without fair compensation and benefits to locals (38%), Russia's interest in their country is only to benefit their position on the global stage (31%), and the involvement of Russian military groups in propping up undemocratic regimes (25%).

⁸ <https://hrf.org/russias-influence-in-sudan/>

68%

agree the Russia-Ukraine conflict could have been avoided

TOP 3 AGREE

Kenya: 91%
Congo Br. / Zambia: 78%
Rwanda: 76%

TOP 3 DISAGREE

Gabon / Côte d'Ivoire: 46%
Ghana: 33%
Ethiopia: 32%

UKRAINE

RUSSIA

Focusing specifically on the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, over two-thirds of African youth (68%) agree that the conflict could have been avoided, with over two-in-five (42%) saying they 'strongly agree'. Across all markets, at least half of youth agree with this sentiment, rising to near unanimous agreement among Kenyan youth (91%). However, in Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon, nearly half (46%) disagree with the viewpoint that the conflict could have been avoided. When assigning responsibility for the Russia-Ukraine conflict, African youth are most likely to place primary blame on political leaders from the United States, European Union, and NATO (32%) for the outbreak of the war. By contrast, just over one-in-five (23%) say that Russian political leaders are primarily responsible for the conflict. A fifth (21%) of youth believe primary responsibility rests with everyone, while just 15% think Ukrainian political leaders are to blame. However, youth in Botswana (45%), Zambia (39%), and South Africa (32%) are most likely to place the blame for the conflict on Russian political leaders, while Nigeria is the only market where the majority say that everyone shares blame for the outbreak of war (45%). The sentiment among South African youth of Russia being to blame for the Russia-Ukraine conflict shows a misalignment between the South African public's views on the conflict and the country's decision to engage in a strategic partnership with Russia.⁹

⁹ <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IN/IN12185>

Primary Responsibility for Russia-Ukraine Conflict

US / EU / NATO

32%

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Ghana / Gabon: 47%
Congo Br.: 46%
Rwanda: 42%

RUSSIA

23%

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Botswana: 45%
Zambia: 39%
South Africa: 32%

EVERYONE SHARES SOME BLAME

21%

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Nigeria: 45%
Zambia: 39%
Chad: 27%

UKRAINE

15%

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

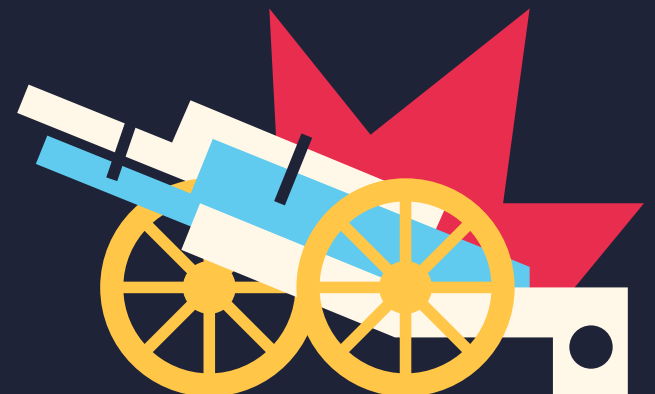
Tanzania: 26%
Ethiopia: 24%
Rwanda: 19%

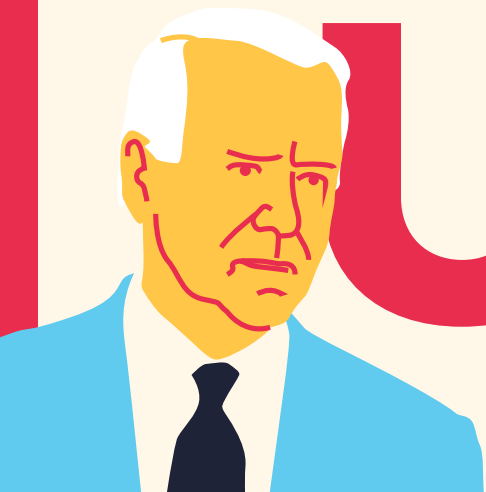
DON'T KNOW

9%

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Chad: 23%
Cameroon: 22%
Namibia: 19%





USA

79%

Perceive the US to have a **positive** influence

Perceptions of America's influence

Although the influence of many foreign countries and organisations has trended down since 2020, the perceived impact of the United States has plateaued in 2024 (70%) following a dip from 78% in 2020 to 69% in 2022. Youth continue to perceive the US as one of the most influential foreign actors in the region, second only to China (76%). Furthermore, there is an expectation among African youth that American political and business leaders – Joe Biden, Donald Trump, Bill Gates, Elon Musk, and Mark Zuckerberg – will be among the most impactful foreign leaders in Africa in the next five years.

While there has been a sizable uptick in positive perceptions towards the US's influence, rising from 75% in 2022 to 79% in 2024, this is still significantly below 2020 levels of positivity (87%). Nonetheless, nearly two-in-five African youth (38%) now view the US's influence as 'very positive', primarily citing the provision of important

Drivers of Positive Perceptions of the US



21%

Perceive the US to have a **negative** influence



Drivers of Negative Perceptions of the US





Perceptions Towards Future Biden and Trump Administrations

Showing 'Better' under...

	 Biden	Same under both	 Trump
Foreign investment in your country	44%	24%	24%
Promoting gender equality in your country	44%	25%	23%
Political support / relations with my country	44%	24%	23%
Trade relations with your country	42%	25%	23%
Military support for your country	42%	25%	24%
Youth empowerment in your country	42%	24%	24%

Across a range of measures, most youth say they expect their country will be better off under a Biden administration.

loans and economic support to their country by the US (41%). Beyond this, the creation of employment opportunities for people in their country (33%), support investing in and developing infrastructure projects in their country (33%), and the provision of training courses and skill development for local workers (30%) are other key reasons behind the positive perceptions of US influence in the region.

Among the minority of youth (21%) that view US influence in their country negatively, the exportation of natural resources without fair compensation and benefit to locals (36%) is cited as the primary driver of negative sentiment. Nearly a third are concerned about the interference of the US in the domestic affairs of their country (32%), view American investments as a form of economic colonialism (31%), feel the US lacks respect for their country's values and traditions (31%), and believe US loans create current and future repayment issues for their country (29%). These ideas are further supported by recent conversations at the UN Security Council pushing for a focus on more inclusive "African solutions to African problems" and a need to separate from traditional responses citing recent success in Mozambique.¹⁰

When asked in January 2024 about the upcoming US election at the end of that year, around two-in-five youth believe their country will be better off across a range of measures¹¹ under a future Biden administration. Around a quarter say they expect no difference in relations with the US under either leader, while a similar proportion say they think their country would be better off under a Trump administration. Given Kamala Harris' experience as Biden's Vice President, this would suggest that youth are likely to be more supportive of a potential Harris presidency than a second Trump term.

¹⁰ <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15249.doc.htm>

¹¹ Measures include foreign investment, promotion of gender equality, political support/relations, trade relations, military support, and youth empowerment.

EUROPE

Perceptions of European Influence

When assessing the influence of European countries and the European Union (EU) in Africa, views of youth are mixed. The EU (59%) is seen as the fifth most influential foreign country or organisation, behind levels of perceived influence for the African Union (64%) and World Trade Organisation (61%) and well behind the top most influential countries of China (76%) and the US (70%). Furthermore, its perceived influence has fallen significantly from 72% in 2020 and 63% in 2022, as has the perceived positivity of its influence in the region, dropping from 81% in 2020 to 75% in 2022 and 73% in 2024. Africa's growing global significance and the reinforcement of multiple poles of power in the world order have diversified its pool of potential international partners, making the EU an important but not exclusive choice and highlighting the potential for collaboration beyond aid. Amid increasing scepticism towards the Western-led global governance system, African countries are pushing for more representation and challenging the current norms that characterises their partnership with the EU.¹²

¹² <https://ecdpm.org/work/trouble-paradise-eu-africa-partnership-geopolitical-context>

While the United Kingdom (56%) is identified as less influential in Africa compared to the levels of perceived influence for China and the US, positivity towards the influence of the UK (80%) in Africa is among some of the highest, alongside that of the African Union (80%) and WTO (80%) and just behind China (82%). Additionally, although perceptions of UK influence have trended down from 64% in 2020 to 58% in 2022 and now 56% in 2024, positive perceptions of this influence have remained stable post-pandemic, falling from 87% in 2020 to 79% in 2022 but then increasing slightly to 80% in 2024. In line with declining levels of perceived influence, UK-Africa trade and investment has consistently fallen as a percentage of total UK trade since 2012, and Brexit has created additional barriers to trade and investment that affect both inward and outward flows from African countries.¹³

¹³ <https://www.institute.global/insights/economic-prosperity/reset-and-revitalise-uk-africa-trade-and-investment>

Influence of the European Union

Showing % selecting 'A lot of influence' + 'Some influence'

59%
2022: 63%
2020: 72%

Positive Influence of the European Union

Showing % selecting 'Very positive' + 'Somewhat positive'

73%
2022: 75%
2020: 81%



In contrast to the EU and UK, perceptions of France's influence in Africa have not trended down over time but have instead rebounded post-COVID-19. Between 2020 and 2022 France's perceived influence dropped from 58% to 48%, however, in 2024 this has risen to 51%. Nonetheless, this is still lower than levels of influence from the EU (59%) and UK (56%). Positive perceptions of France's influence in Africa have also trended in a different way to that of the EU and UK, plateauing at 67% between 2020 and 2022 and now increasing to 69% in 2024. In recent years, France has framed its approach to the region in terms of a partnership with African economies and more dialogue with African societies. It has also provided support for African entrepreneurship and diaspora projects alongside partnership-based investments that have focused on building reciprocal, demanding and ambitious relationships with African nations.¹⁴

Interestingly, when looking at the perceived influence of the UK and France among their former colonies, there is a clear divergence between the two countries. Among former British colonies, just under two-in-three youth (63%) say that the UK still has influence on their country with around one-in-three (34%) saying it has 'a lot of influence'. However, youth in former British colonies overwhelmingly agree that the influence is positive – over four-in-five (83%) 'strongly' or 'somewhat' agree that the influence is positive. By contrast, among youth in former French colonies, three-quarters (77%) say that France still has influence on their country, with over half (51%) saying it has 'a lot of influence'. By contrast, just over half (55%) of youth in former French colonies say that France has a positive influence on their country to this date, with these sentiments being reflected in many recent anti-France protests in countries like Niger, Gabon, Mali, and Chad.

¹⁴ <https://ecfr.eu/article/operation-reciprocity-frances-evolving-relationship-with-africa/>

Influence of Foreign Countries

Showing % selecting
'A lot of influence' + 'Some influence'

56% **UK**
2022: 58%
2020: 64%

51% **France**
2022: 48%
2020: 58%

Positive Influence of Foreign Countries

Showing % selecting
'Very positive' + 'Somewhat positive'

80% **UK**
2022: 79%
2020: 87%

69% **France**
2022: 67%
2020: 67%



Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to the Republic of South Africa, the Republic of Mozambique and the Republic of Botswana. Prior to this, Ms Abravitova was appointed as the Counsellor at the Embassy of Ukraine in Pretoria. Earlier, she served as the Counsellor of the Middle East and Africa Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine. Ms. Abravitova entered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine in March 2003. Her overseas tours have included Ottawa (Canada), Brussels (Belgium), and Geneva (Switzerland).

UKRAINIAN-AFRICAN YOUTH SHARE THE DREAM OF A BETTER TOMORROW

True friendship is based not just on narrow self-interests, but upon mutual benefit and shared values.

This is why Ukraine considers our relations with Africa to be rooted in the ground of true friendship and, for this reason, to be enduring and focused on a horizon where we both exchange the challenges of the moment for a brighter future warmed by the sun of our common principles.

Because both Africa, with your great demographic and promise, and Ukraine, which looks to a world beyond war, are so invested in the future, we place great value on our youth.

This African Youth Survey is thus inspirational from our perspective, and offers Ukraine insights on how we strengthen our friendship going forward.

Russia's war of aggression against us has only reinforced our bonds with Africa, on which Ukraine has long placed a high priority. Until 2020, half

of the grain imports for 15 African nations came from Ukraine and for seven African countries, Ukrainian grain accounted for 70 percent.

Unfortunately, Russia's bombardment of our fields and blockades of our ports have interrupted this long-standing commercial relationship and directly led to a shortfall of more than 30 million tons of grain since 2022.

In 2019, the year before first COVID-19 and then Russia's invasion struck in successive blows, Africa as a whole was the destination for 10 percent of our exports overall.

Like many African states impacted by colonialism, Ukraine now knows first-hand the costs of a

foreign power projecting itself on our sovereignty. We share the goal of real independence and prosperity based on our own capabilities and that is why our relationships in Africa transcend the quid-pro-quo dynamic inherent in those with neo-colonial powers. We speak the common language of equality, understanding that its benefits are often hard-won.

It is noteworthy in this survey that Russia ranks as one of the lowest of foreign powers tested both with respect to its relative influence (only 41 percent called it influential) and the positive value it brings. The perceptions of Russian influence is very insightful, specifically that 31% feels that Russia is only interested in Africa to benefit their own position, and a quarter feels that Russian military groups are propping up undemocratic regimes in Africa.

More alarming is the finding that 32% of Africa's youth blames the Ukraine-Russia War on Western powers (US/EU/NATO) while only 23% blames Russia. A recent report by an African think tank details how foreign-sponsored disinformation has quadrupled in Africa since 2022, the year the previous African Youth Survey was conducted. That same report names Russia as the primary source of these efforts, which is unsurprising to us.

This presents a clear call to action to ourselves and our Western allies to pay more attention to countering the misinformation and fake news generated by Moscow that is indeed having a negative impact on the continent.

To underline the point, state actors with malign intent want to undermine your trust in all institutions. That is because they see the world in zero sum terms, and by diminishing faith in others, they believe their own cynical alternatives will appear somehow more attractive.

This is a destructive approach to be sure, but for countries like Russia, which has diminished our capacity to provide Africa grain, for instance, it is an essential part of their external strategy.

Ukraine's outreach to Africa is based not on division, but rather friendship, common values and trust. That is why, despite the challenges of war, we are opening new embassies this year and expanding our efforts at positive engagement across the continent.

We will also continue our efforts to defy Russia's Black Sea naval blockade of our grain shipments, and in the past year have experienced some successes in this regard.

Like Africans old and young, Ukrainians know that things of value often require a struggle – we are committed to that fight.

Just as the future offers great promise to Africa's rising generation, Ukraine too is forward-focused and intends to continue strengthening our common bonds in the years ahead.

Like many African states impacted by colonialism, Ukraine now knows first-hand the costs of a foreign power projecting itself on our sovereignty.



AFRICA'S

ROLE ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

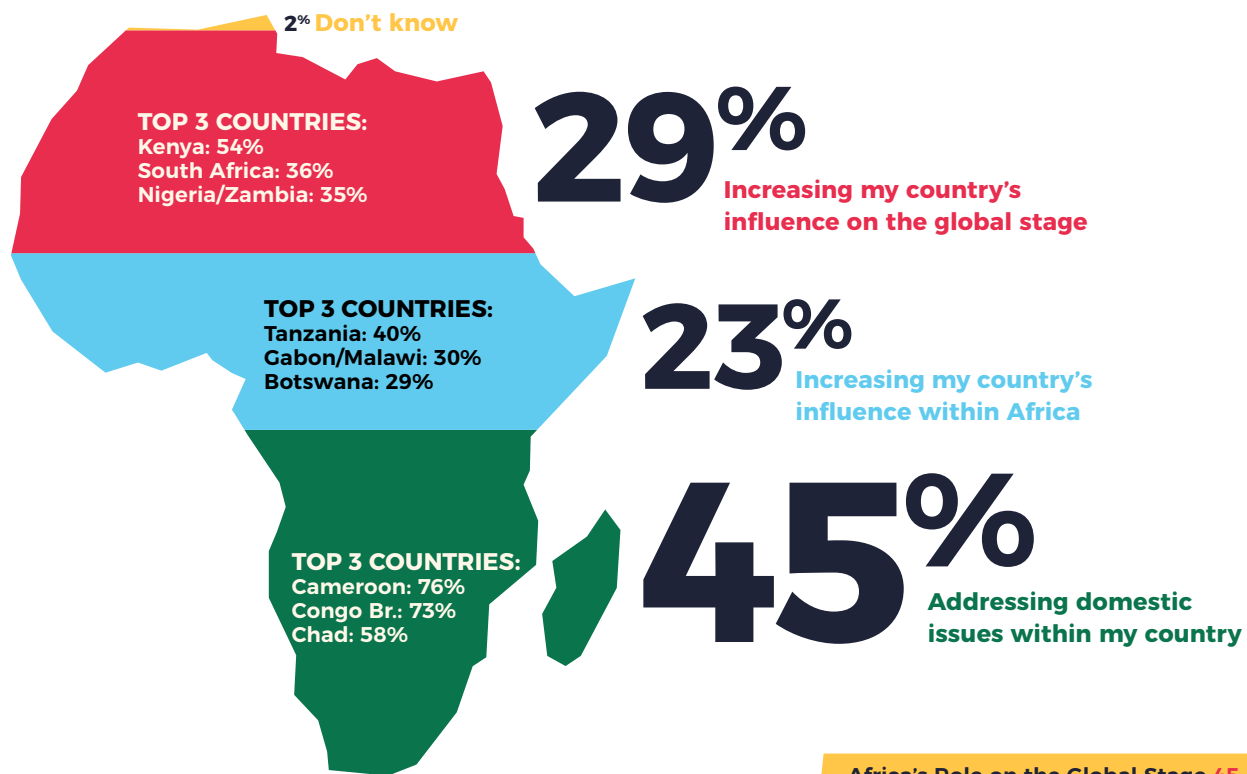


Youth are looking for their leaders to balance addressing domestic issues with increasing their country's global influence. Most think their leaders have a voice and can drive change on the global stage and want to see their governments taking more direct engagement on international issues both within the continent and beyond

Despite high levels of concern about the influence of foreign powers in the region, African youth do not want their leaders to shy away from the global stage. When asked what the main priority for national leaders should be, youth are looking to leaders to balance both international and domestic issues - nearly half want the focus to be on addressing domestic issues (45%), while the other half are split between increasing their country's regional influence (23%) and expanding their country's influence on the global stage (29%). Youth in Cameroon (76%) and Congo Brazzaville (73%) express the strongest desire for national leaders to prioritise domestic issues. On the other hand, in Tanzania, the dominant sentiment is focused on increasing their role within Africa (40%), while in Kenya, over half of youth (54%) say that they want leaders to prioritise growing their presence on the global stage. Regardless of where youth want their leaders to focus attention, there is clear confidence in the ability of African leaders to influence issues on the global stage with two-thirds (64%) agreeing, and a further two-thirds (63%) believing African leaders are included in key global discussions.



Which of the following should be the main priority for national leaders in your country?



When thinking about current affairs and international conflicts, two-thirds (69%) of African youth feel their leadership should play a more active role in negotiating peace settlements for international conflicts. This sentiment is strongest in Kenya (89%), Zambia (80%), and Rwanda / Tanzania (78%), reflecting the desire of some of these countries to play a greater role in international affairs. In contrast, over a third of youth in Gabon (39%), Namibia (39%), Cameroon (37%), and South Africa (35%) disagree that their country should be taking a more active role in peace settlements.

On the issue of actively engaging with international conflicts by offering military support and supplies, just under three-in-five youth (57%) believe that this is something their country should be doing. Similarly, Rwandan (79%), Kenyan (74%), and Tanzanian (70%) youth want their country to be more internationalist and offer military support and supplies, while around half in Congo Brazzaville (51%), Cameroon (49%), and Chad (48%) disagree with taking a more active military role in international conflicts, in line with their desire for their governments to prioritise domestic issues.

Thinking more broadly about taking positions on conflicts, just under three-in-five (57%) youth say their country should take a position on conflicts within the African continent, while agreement drops to just under half (49%) for taking a stance on conflicts outside Africa. Again, youth in Kenya and Tanzania are among the most likely to agree that their country should be more internationalist and take a position on conflicts both within and outside of the African continent. Tied to this, less than half of youth are looking for their country to take a stronger position on the Russia-Ukraine (44%) and Israeli-Palestinian (43%) conflicts. Nearly three-in-ten 'strongly disagree' with this sentiment, compared to less than one-in-five that 'strongly agree'. Youth in Kenya and Tanzania express the strongest conviction for taking a more pronounced stance on these specific conflicts.

African Leaders on the Global Stage

63%

AGREE that African leaders are included in key discussions on global issues

TOP 3 AGREE

Kenya: 83%
Botswana: 74%
Tanzania / Zambia: 71%

TOP 3 DISAGREE

Ethiopia / Cameroon: 49%
Namibia: 44%
Gabon: 42%

64%

AGREE that African leaders have the influence to drive change on global issues

TOP 3 AGREE

Kenya: 85%
South Africa: 75%
Tanzania: 73%

TOP 3 DISAGREE

Cameroon: 46%
Gabon: 43%
Congo Br.: 42%

My Country Should be Doing More in International Conflicts

69%

AGREE their country should play a more active role in negotiating peace settlements

TOP 3 AGREE

Kenya: 89%
Zambia: 80%
Tanzania / Rwanda: 78%

TOP 3 DISAGREE

Gabon / Namibia: 39%
Cameroon: 37%
South Africa: 35%

57%

AGREE their country should be offering military support / supplies to international conflicts

TOP 3 AGREE

Rwanda: 79%
Kenya: 74%
Tanzania: 70%

TOP 3 DISAGREE

Congo Br.: 51%
Cameroon: 49%
Chad: 48%

My Country Should Take a Position on Conflicts...

...in countries inside Africa

57%
AGREE

TOP 3 AGREE

Kenya: 73%
Rwanda: 70%
Tanzania: 69%

TOP 3 DISAGREE

Ghana: 55%
Gabon / Zambia: 48%
Malawi: 47%

...in countries outside Africa

49%
AGREE

TOP 3 AGREE

Tanzania: 69%
Kenya: 66%
Ethiopia: 61%

TOP 3 DISAGREE

Cameroon: 65%
Zambia: 59%
Congo Br.: 58%

My Country Should Take a Stronger Stance on the...

...Russia-Ukraine conflict

44%
AGREE

TOP 3 AGREE

Kenya: 71%
Tanzania: 66%
Ethiopia: 51%

TOP 3 DISAGREE

Ghana: 68%
Botswana: 65%
Nigeria: 62%

...Israeli-Palestinian conflict

43%
AGREE

TOP 3 AGREE

Kenya: 69%
Tanzania: 66%
Ethiopia: 55%

TOP 3 DISAGREE

Botswana: 68%
Ghana: 66%
Cabo: 61%

AFRICA IS THE CONTINENT OF THE FUTURE. BUT WHOSE FUTURE?

Mvemba Phezo Dizolele is a senior fellow and director of the Africa Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington DC. He is also a lecturer in African studies at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies.

It is often said that Africa is the continent of the future. This is a straightforward argument informed by the vast endowment in natural resources, from rare earth minerals to rivers and forests. Resources have come to define Africa. This definition, however, begs the question, whose future?

Africa is indeed the continent of the future for one overarching reason – its demographics. Africa is young, and Africa is female. The continent's most crucial resource is its population of 1.4 billion. One of the most salient characteristics of this population is its youth. With a median age of 19 years, Africa is the youngest continent. Because Africa is not a country, it is worth looking at other references. For instance, in Mali and Kenya, the median ages are 16 and 19, respectively. But in the United States and China, the median ages are 38 and 39 years, respectively. In Germany, the epitome of Europe's socioeconomic progress, the median is 49 years. In 2023, the European Union, the median age was 44.5 years. These numbers reflect on average a 25 to 30 year gap between the Africans and their counterparts in neighbouring Europe.

When broken down, these statistics mean that it is quite common to find countries where the median age is sixteen, sometime even fifteen. Thus, Africa offers much to the world. As Germany and its peers in Europe continue to age, they cannot afford to pursue their current policies toward Africa. They will need to replenish their labour force with a steady influx of workers. With the world's ever-changing dynamics, they will need security. They will need to preserve their culture, which requires an infusion of creativity and talent both in the sciences, technology and arts. Given its young demographics, Africa is well-positioned to meet Europe's needs, at

least in principle. This has been evident through the strong presence of African youth, immigrants or first-generation born in Europe, in academe, sports, music, the armed forces and other sectors. This is a direct result of steady and long-standing, legal and illegal immigration.

Policy-wise, this reality means that Europe needs to start looking at Africa differently.

European policymakers, members of the European Parliament and politicians should view African youth through a new lens, not one that buttresses walls around Fortress Europe. They should consider African youth as their constituents and not see them as a threat.

One must note that migration is a natural yearning, but the default human stance is to stay and improve one's condition where one finds oneself. Today, migration discourse ignores the fact that African migration is primarily intra-continental. Most immigrants move within Africa.

Historical data shows that African countries, which on average have only existed for sixty years

European policymakers should view African youth through a new lens, not one that buttresses walls around Fortress Europe. They should consider African youth as their constituents and not see them as a threat.

in their current, modern form as states, and their populations are even younger than 19 years. Accordingly, African countries and their populations face tremendous challenges, including nation-building, governance, security, and economic development. These challenges, which are part of the growing pains of newly reconfigured entities with wide linguistic, ethnic, and regional differences, manifest themselves through various forms, such as wars, conflict, and protests.

On the ground across Africa, different waves of African youth have been at the forefront of change for decades. The youth have mobilized against colonization and dictatorship. They fought against Bretton Woods institutions' inequitable policies, such as the structural adjustment programmes, and for better governance at home. They have denied would-be dictators their anti-constitutional ambitions.

The days when one wondered whether African youth were serious and committed to change are long gone. It is getting increasingly difficult to ignore their demands for change as youth movements have blossomed all over the continent. The long catalogue of these protests attests to the vibrant state of youth engagement across the continent. These include Kenya's #RejectFinanceBill2024, Nigeria's #EndBadGovernance, Senegal's Y'en a Marre, Burkina Faso's Balai Citoyen, the Democratic Republic of Congo's LUCHA, Zimbabwe's #ThisFlag in Zimbabwe and South Africa's #FeesMustFall.

Youth, civic and political engagement is an important part of socioeconomic and political development in Africa. As digital technology expands across Africa, the youth will continue to find better and effective ways to express their demands for equitable governance. They will continue to hold their leaders to account and do not need permission to assert their rights. Leaders will ignore them at their own peril.





DEMOCRACY È GOVERNMENT



The vast majority continue to support democracy, but a growing proportion say that sometimes non-democratic systems are preferable and that African countries need to design their own democratic structures. Equality under the law remains the top pillar of democracy and most say their voice matters to leaders, with just under half registered to vote.

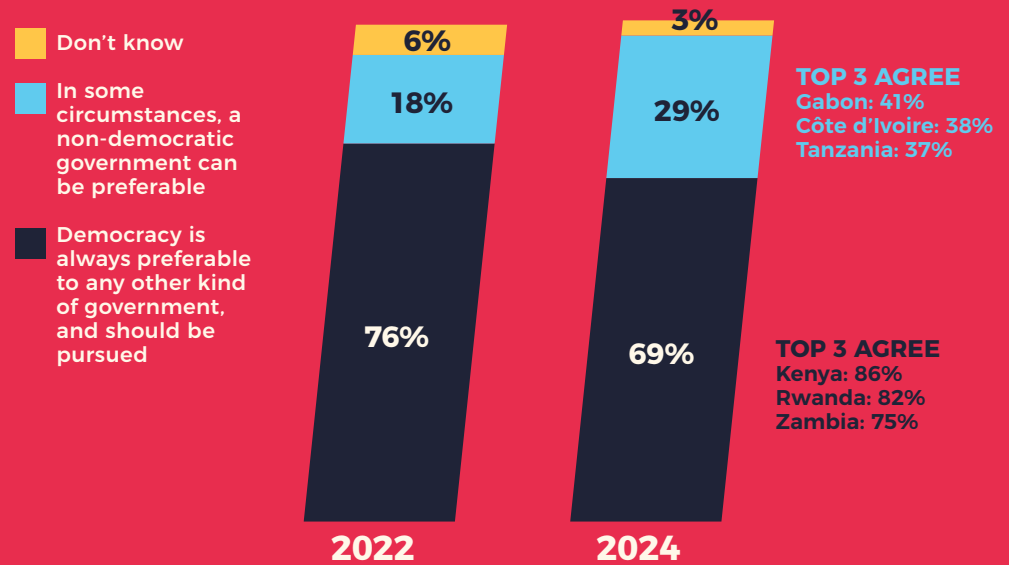
While there continues to be a strong appetite for democracy among youth across the African continent, this has declined since 2022. Over two-thirds of African youth (69%) still believe that democracy is always preferable to any other kind of government and should be pursued, however, this has dropped from 76% in 2022. Conversely, there is a growing proportion of youth that feel, in some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable, rising from 18% in 2022 to 29% in 2024. Continued turmoil in Africa has begun to shift mindsets “conflating democratic governance with pro-Western or even neocolonial agendas”, as said by the Council on Foreign Relations. As African youth begin to associate democracy with corrupt and unfair elections, sentiments may change throughout the continent.¹

- **Most likely to say democracy is always preferable to any other kind of government and should be pursued:** Kenya (86%), Rwanda (82%), and Zambia (75%)
- **Most likely to say, in some circumstances, non-democratic government can be preferable:** Gabon (41%), Côte d'Ivoire (38%), and Tanzania (37%)

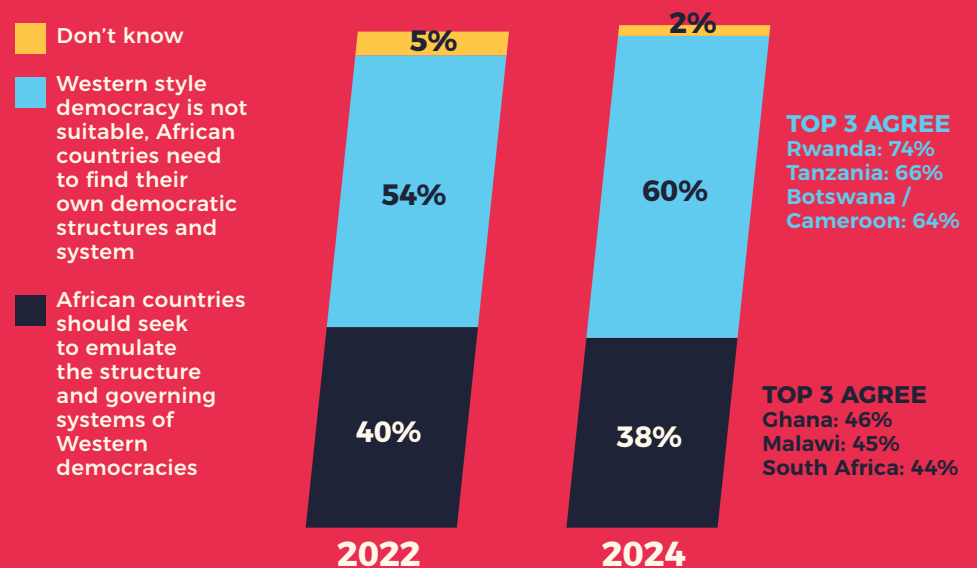
On the structure and system of democracy, the majority of African youth (60%) continue to believe that Western style democracy is not suitable and African countries need to create their own democratic structures and systems for the African context. This sentiment has strengthened since 2022, rising from 54%. In contrast, around two-in-five (38%) assert

¹ <https://www.cfr.org/blog/democracy-name-only-africa>

Appetite for Democracy



Suitability of Western Style Democracies in Africa



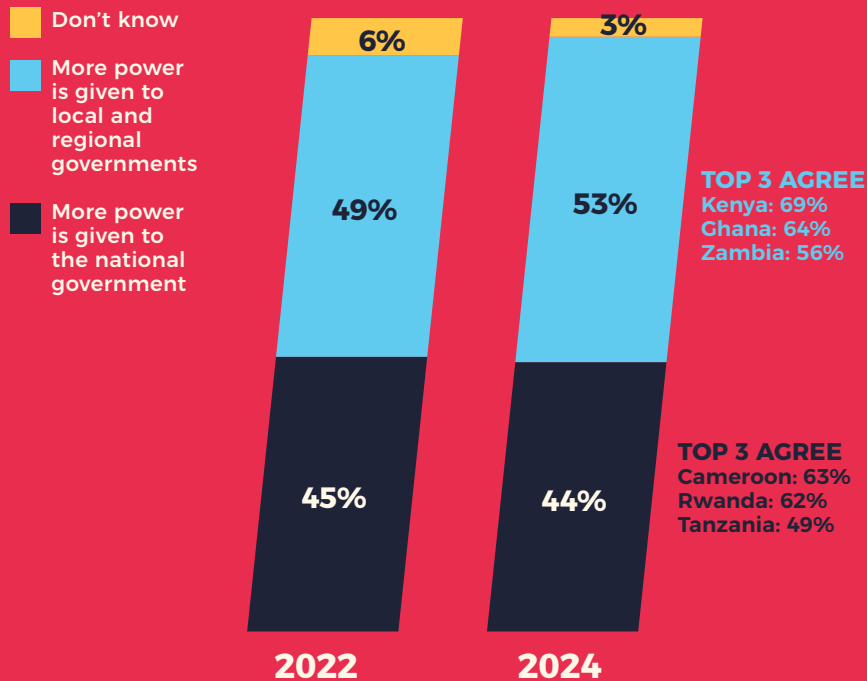
that African countries should seek to emulate the structure and governing systems of Western democracies, a slight decline from 40% in 2022. Reflecting their strong appetite for democracy and the established democratic protocols within their country, youth in Rwanda are also most likely to contend that Western style democracy is not suitable for the African context (74%) and that new systems and structures need to be created that work for the continent and its people.

When asked where power should sit in the country to provide the most benefit, African youth are divided as to whether they favour devolution or centralisation of power. Just over half of African youth (53%) now feel that more power should be devolved to local and regional governments, increasing from 49% in 2022. On the other hand, a sizable minority (44%) believe that it would be more beneficial for the national government to be given more power, remaining stable from 45% in 2022. The rise in support for devolution of power to local and regional governments mainly comes from a decline in youth that were previously unsure of where more power in government should sit, falling from 6% in 2022 to 3% in 2024. Views on where power should be concentrated

within their country vary by market, with Kenyan youth much more in favour of distributing more power to local and regional governments (69%) while youth in Cameroon (63%) and Rwanda (62%) support increasing the power of the national government.

Thinking about the most important pillars of democracy, equality of all citizens under law (46%) remains the most important democratic value, albeit declining slightly from 48% in 2022. African youth also place great importance on free and fair elections (40%), which has fallen slightly from 43% in 2022, and on freedom of speech (40%), which has also dropped slightly from 44% in 2022. In contrast, the right to a fair trial sees a slight increase in importance, rising from 22% in 2022 to 25% in 2024. However, this alongside freedom of press (17%) and the right to assemble/demonstrate (15%) are less likely to be viewed as the most important democratic pillars. There are a number of countries where equality under law is now viewed as the most important pillar of democracy. In Malawi (51%), Botswana (48%), Zambia (46%), and Gabon (44%) freedom of speech is seen as the top pillar; in Nigeria (60%), Zambia (46%), Namibia (37%), and Tanzania (36%) free and fair elections is

Power in Government



Most Important Pillars of Democracy

- 46%** Equality of all citizens under law
- 40%** Free and fair elections
- 40%** Freedom of speech
- 25%** The right to a fair trial
- 17%** Freedom of the press
- 15%** The right to assemble / demonstrate



64%

of youth agree that sometimes non-peaceful protest and actions are needed to effect political change

TOP 3 AGREE

Côte d'Ivoire: 82%
Congo Br.: 77%
Kenya / Gabon: 76%

TOP 3 DISAGREE

Botswana: 55%
Cameroon: 50%
Rwanda: 23%

Countries where Equality Under Law is not the Most Important:

Malawi	Freedom of speech	51%
Botswana	Freedom of speech	48%
Zambia	Freedom of speech	46%
Gabon	Freedom of speech	44%
Nigeria	Free and fair elections	60%
Zambia	Free and fair elections	46%
Namibia	Free and fair elections	37%
Tanzania	Free and fair elections	36%
Côte d'Ivoire	The right to a fair trial	41%

the most important; and in Côte d'Ivoire (41%) the greatest importance is placed on the right to a fair trial.

African youth feel confident that they are being heard by their representatives and national leaders, with two-thirds believing their voice matters to their country's leadership. Confidence is strongest in Rwanda (92%) and Zambia (82%), where around two-thirds of youth 'strongly agree' that they feel valued by their leadership. Youth in Côte d'Ivoire also express high levels of agreement that their voice matters to their national leaders (81%), but their conviction in this is weaker as this proportion is primarily made up of youth that 'somewhat agree' (61%) they feel valued. At the other end of the scale, less than half of youth in Cameroon (44%) and Congo Brazzaville (48%)

agree their voice is taken on board by national leaders in their country. Nonetheless, there is a broader sense that African youth are seeking more diverse representation in leadership, with widespread agreement among youth that there are not enough female African leaders and role models (70%). This sentiment is particularly strong in Kenya (89%), where over half of youth (51%) 'strongly agree', while agreement falls to less than half of youth (48%) in Gabon. Making up 50% of the population, African women deserve the right to participate in decision-making processes, policy implementation, and law initiatives as a fundamental human right.² Despite the desire of African youth and women to see more female African

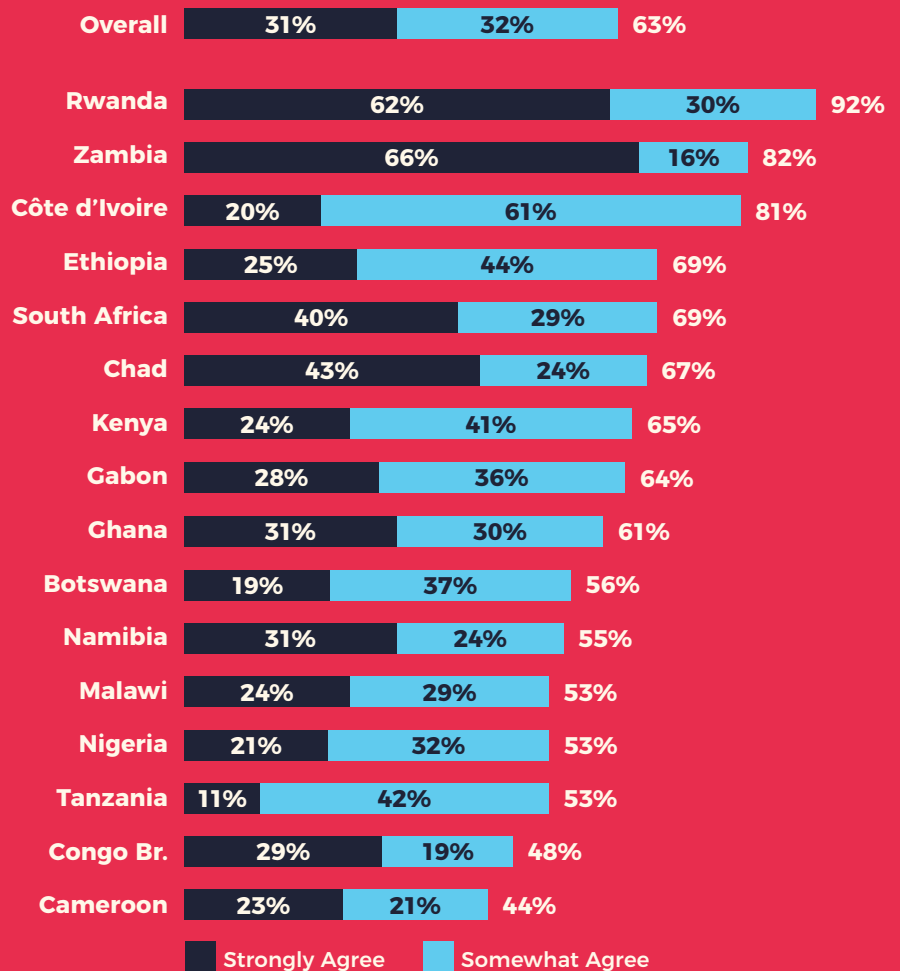
² https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/43035-doc-Women_of_Impact_-_Inspiring_Stories_of_African_Women_Leaders.pdf

Does your voice matter to your national leaders?



63%

agree their voice matters



leaders and role models, a major barrier to this is gender-based violence against women, which according to the World Bank, impacts 42% of women in Eastern and Southern Africa during their lifetime.³

Tied to their sense of feeling valued and listened to by their leadership, many African youth actively engage with democratic processes with nearly half of youth (46%) saying they are registered to vote. This rises to around two-thirds of youth in Chad (71%), Côte d'Ivoire (64%), Ghana (64%), and South Africa (63%). In contrast, around seven-in-ten in Congo

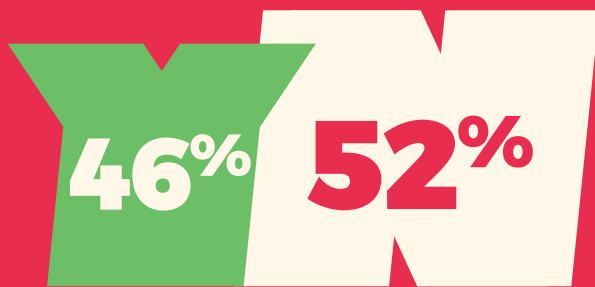
³ [https://www.worldbank.org/en/events/2023/11/30/standing-up-against-gender-based-violence-gbv-in-africa-afe-1123#:~:text=Gender%2Dbased%20violence%20\(GBV\),sexual%20violence%20in%20their%20lifetimes.](https://www.worldbank.org/en/events/2023/11/30/standing-up-against-gender-based-violence-gbv-in-africa-afe-1123#:~:text=Gender%2Dbased%20violence%20(GBV),sexual%20violence%20in%20their%20lifetimes.)

Brazzaville (70%), Malawi (68%), and Cameroon (67%) are not registered to vote. Specifically among countries within the report that have upcoming elections in 2024⁴, when asked to rate their chances of voting three-in-five youth (61%) think they are 'very likely' to vote, while nearly a quarter (23%) are 'uncertain'.⁵

⁴ Countries in the study with upcoming elections are Ghana, South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, and Chad.

⁵ Voting intention was rated on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 represents definitely will not vote and 10 represents definitely will vote. 'Very likely to vote' is a combination of "10 - definitely will vote" + "9" + "8"; 'Uncertain to vote' is a combination of "7" + "6" + "5" + "4"; 'Unlikely to vote' is a combination of "3" + "2" + "1 - definitely will not vote"

Have you registered to vote in your country?



TOP 3 'YES'

Chad: 71%
Côte d'Ivoire / Ghana: 64%
South Africa: 63%

TOP 3 'NO'

Congo Br.: 70%
Malawi: 68%
Cameroon: 67%



61% of youth are likely to vote in the upcoming elections



70%

agree there are not enough female African leaders and role models in their country

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Kenya: 89%
Botswana / South Africa: 82%
Zambia / Nigeria: 79%

BOTTOM 3 COUNTRIES

Chad: 58%
Ethiopia: 57%
Gabon: 48%

A portrait of Consolata Chikoti, a young Black woman with long braids, wearing a dark blazer over a light-colored top, and large hoop earrings. She is looking slightly to the right of the camera.

YOUTH CALLING FOR INCREASED PROTECTION FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF GENDER- BASED VIOLENCE

Consolata Chikoti, an esteemed lawyer and rising global health scholar from Tanzania, boasts a wealth of expertise in championing gender equality, sexual reproductive health, and human rights. Consolata has been honored with two prestigious fellowships tailored for young African leaders: the Leadership and Advocacy for Women in Africa and the Young African Leaders Initiative-Mandela Washington Fellowship, Georgetown University.

The 2024 African Youth Survey emerges at a pivotal moment for the African continent, one grappling with a multitude of challenges, including the pressing issues of climate change, the arduous journey of post-COVID recovery, a surge in insurgencies marked by civil strife, a troubling rise in coups and its own issues in addressing 2024-era human rights, including matters of modern diversity, equity and inclusivity (DEI).

However, the survey also coincides with a significant gathering of global leaders, who are set to reaffirm their dedication to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (U.N. SDGs) at the forthcoming 'Summit of the Future', culminating in a Pact for the Future; where the aspirations of youth will take centre stage.

Contrary to popular belief, despite the challenges faced by the African continent above, there in fact shine numerous rays of hope and optimism.

Africa boasts the privilege of having the youngest population in the world, with 40% of all Africans being under the age of 15. And while the African Youth Survey sheds light on the voices of the young generation, what is clear is that more must be done to elevate their voices in decision-making processes.

This is crucial, not only because youth are the architects of the future world, but also because at least 90% of sustainable development goals indicators are linked to youth. The actions and decisions made today will ultimately have a profound impact on future generations, and today's youth have a unique opportunity to become problem solvers and change-makers unlike ever before in history.

In particular, the latest study highlights a mix of apprehension and unease regarding the reporting of and punishment of those who commit crimes against women and other marginalized groups. It also sheds significant light on the hopeful prospects of addressing women's rights' issues in the years to come.

The report reveals a spectrum of opinions on crime regulations across various nations; however, the youth are united in their concern over the scarcity of African female role models in leadership positions.

While significant progress has been made in enhancing political participation, diversity and inclusivity throughout Africa, it does not diminish the reality that nearly all African nations still grapple with inadequate protection for women's human rights and a lack of access to justice for those who are victims of gender-based violence.

This year heralds the 21st anniversary of the Maputo Protocol and the 45th anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, with over half of African nations having ratified these pivotal instruments, whose tenets are enshrined in the constitutions of various

African states. Nevertheless, the growing apprehension among the youth regarding the safeguarding of women's rights underscores a troubling disconnect between the commitments to human rights protection and the tangible behavioural changes, as well as the mechanisms for accountability that are so desperately needed.

In the present day, Africa tragically leads all continents in the harrowing statistic of women murdered by their intimate partners, with over 20,000 lives lost annually. Additionally, a staggering 130 million girls are forced into marriage before reaching the age of 18, amidst an alarming resurgence of opposition to women's rights.

In South Africa, the situation is particularly dire, with three women falling victim to partner violence every hour.

With the increasing interconnectedness of the world and the rise of conflicts threatening democratic values, it is the women and youths who bear the brunt of these challenges. The ongoing leadership crisis only exacerbates the existing inequalities, leaving them more vulnerable to harm.

The latest African Youth Survey reveals that the youth in Africa are not only aware of these issues but also unanimously call for greater emphasis on upholding rule of law and protecting marginalized groups.

These findings should serve as a wake-up call for our leaders to seriously consider whether they are truly committed to building a prosperous future for Africa, as outlined in the 2063 agenda, where women and youth are given full support and empowerment to shape their destiny in all aspects of life.

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HOUSING

H HEALTH

TRANSPORT

EDUCATION

EQUALITY

REFUGEE

WATER

QUALITY OF LIFE & LIVING STANDARDS

Perceived standards of living bounce back to 2020 levels with two-in-five saying their standards are 'very good' or 'good' and most continue to expect it to be better in two years with three-quarters saying they will have a better life than their parents. However, there continues to be widespread dissatisfaction with governments' efforts to reduce poverty and tackle rising costs, and satisfaction with nearly all government services is up from 2022, but down from 2020.

Perceived standards of living have rebounded in the post-COVID-19 era back to 2020 levels, in line with the rebounds in positivity and confidence towards the future direction of their continent, country, and economy. Over two-in-five now say their standard of living is 'very good' or 'good', a jump from 32% in 2022 and on par with 43% in 2020, while those saying standards are 'very poor' or 'poor' falls from nearly a quarter (23%) to one-in-five (20%).

- **Most likely to say their standard of living is 'very good' or 'good':** Côte d'Ivoire (72%), Nigeria / Rwanda / Tanzania (59%), and Namibia (52%)
- **Most likely to say their standard of living is 'very poor' or 'poor':** Chad (55%), Cameroon (49%), and Malawi (40%)

However, this rebound in perceptions of current standard of living does not translate into improved expectations for future living standards. While around seven-in-ten (72%) African youth think their standard of living will get better over the next two years, this has continued to decline over time, from 77% in 2022 and 84% in 2020. Tied to this, expectations that conditions will stagnate and stay the same over time has increased from 10% in 2020 to 13% in 2022 and is now at nearly a fifth of youth (18%) in 2024. Across all markets, just one-in-ten youth or less say they believe their standard of living will get worse over the course of the next two years, however, those that feel things will 'stay the same' rises to around two-in-five in Ethiopia (44%) and Ghana (38%). This sense of a stagnating standard of living is only apparent in a few markets, with fervent positivity towards improving living standards evident among youth in Congo Brazzaville (89%), Nigeria, Rwanda (89%), and Zambia (87%).

41% now say their standard of living is 'very good' or 'good'...

43%
2020

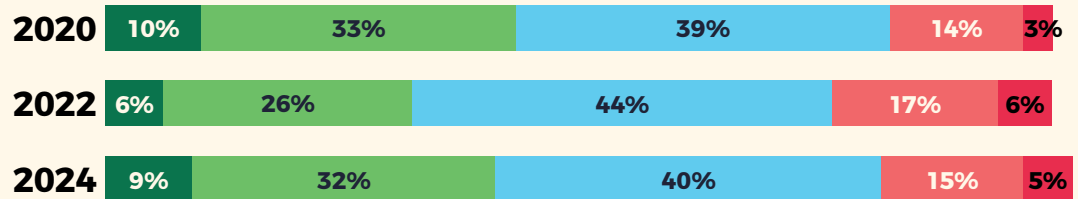
32%
2022

41%
2024

...a jump from **32% in 2022**

Despite expectations for future living standards trending down over time, perceptions that youth will have a better quality of life than their parents have increased from 2022. Three-quarters (76%) of African youth now say they think their lives will be better than their parents, jumping from 70% in 2022. This increase mainly comes from those that previously believed they would have a worse life than their parents did, which has declined from 15% in 2022 to 7% in 2024. Similar to expectations about future standard of living, youth in Zambia (95%), Nigeria (94%), Rwanda (93%), and Congo Brazzaville (90%) are extremely positive about their future quality of life compared to their parents. On the other hand, a sizable proportion of Tanzanian (41%) and Ethiopian (39%) youth are again set in their belief that things will be about the same, while youth in Ghana are most likely to say their quality of life will be worse than their parents (25%).

Current Standard of Living



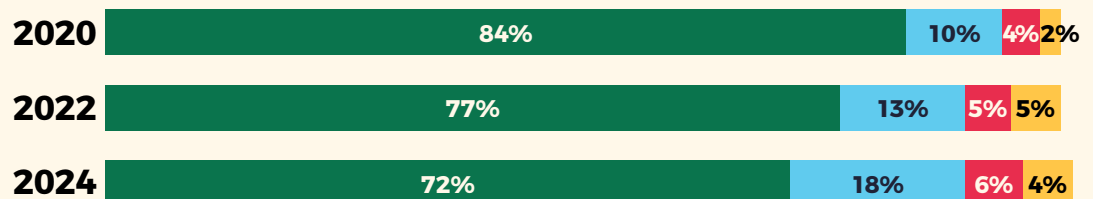
Very good Good Fair Poor Very poor

TOP 3 'VERY GOOD' OR 'GOOD'
Côte d'Ivoire: 72%
Nigeria / Rwanda / Tanzania: 59%
Namibia: 52%

TOP 3 'FAIR'
Kenya: 54%
Botswana: 45%
South Africa / Zambia: 44%

TOP 3 'VERY POOR' OR 'POOR'
Chad: 55%
Cameroon: 49%
Malawi: 40%

Standard of Living in Two Years



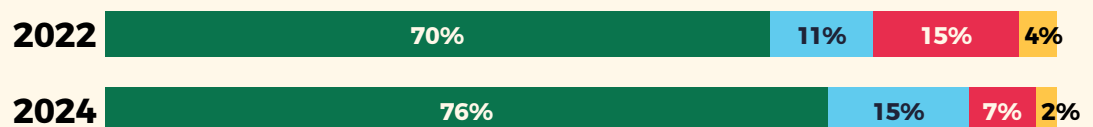
Get better Same Get worse Don't know

TOP 3 'BETTER'
Congo Br. / Nigeria / Rwanda: 89%
Zambia: 87%
Chad: 82%

TOP 3 'SAME'
Ethiopia: 44%
Ghana: 38%
Tanzania: 33%

TOP 3 'WORSE'
Ethiopia: 11%
Malawi / South Africa: 9%
Kenya: 8%

Future Quality of Life Compared to their Parents



Better life than my parents Same Worse life than my parents Don't know

TOP 3 'BETTER'
Zambia: 95%
Nigeria: 94%
Rwanda: 93%

TOP 3 'SAME'
Tanzania: 41%
Ethiopia: 39%
Gabon: 28%

TOP 3 'WORSE'
Ghana: 25%
Ethiopia: 10%
Namibia / Tanzania: 9%

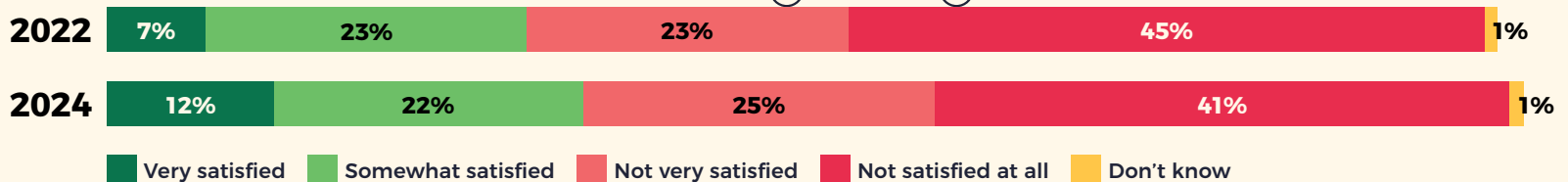


Though perceptions of current living standards and expectations for the future are rebounding to pre-pandemic levels, perceptions towards current conditions in their day-to-day lives are lagging behind. Only around half of youth are satisfied with most public services and infrastructure in their country, with satisfaction remaining below pre-pandemic levels for most issues. Recycling is the only category where satisfaction has trended up over time, rising from 39% in 2020 to 41% in 2022 and now reaching 46% in 2024. However, still less than half of youth express satisfaction with this issue. Education and public schools, mass transit/public transport, healthcare/clinics, and police and security are other categories that have experienced an increase in satisfaction from 2022 but still remain below pre-pandemic levels. On the other hand, satisfaction with telecommunication and data networks, energy availability and electricity, water and sanitation, and roads have all trended down from 2020.

Thinking more broadly about the overall performance of the national government to address poverty in their country, around two-thirds (66%) of African youth continue to express dissatisfaction with government efforts to tackle and reduce poverty in their country, and a similar proportion (64%) are unhappy with their government's efforts to tackle rising costs (e.g. inflation, food and fuel costs, etc.). Rwanda and Côte d'Ivoire are the only markets where a majority of youth say they are satisfied with the government's performance in reducing poverty and tackling rising costs. By contrast, over four-in-five youth in Cameroon and Nigeria express dissatisfaction with their government's efforts to address both of these issues, with dissatisfaction high across most markets. Although the World Bank reports a projected boost in growth, the rate of economic expansion in the region is still lower than the pre-pandemic growth rates, and the slower pace of growth is not enough to make a substantial impact on reducing poverty or returning to pre-pandemic inflation levels.¹

¹ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2024/04/08/african-afew-economies-projected-to-grow-in-2024-but-faster-and-more-equitable-growth-needed-to-reduce-poverty>

Reducing Poverty



TOP 3 SATISFIED
 Rwanda: 84%
 Chad / Tanzania: 45%
 Gabon / Malawi: 43%

TOP 3 DISSATISFIED
 Cameroon: 88%
 Nigeria: 85%
 Ghana: 83%

Satisfaction with Public Services

	2020	2022	2024
Telecoms & data networks	68%	56%	55%
Education & public schools	57%	48%	52%
Mass transit / public transport	55%	46%	50%
Healthcare / clinics	51%	45%	50%
Energy availability / electricity	54%	49%	48%
Water and sanitation	52%	49%	47%
Recycling	39%	41%	46%
Roads	52%	47%	45%
Housing*	-	-	43%
Police & security	46%	40%	42%

*Added in 2024 study, so historical data not available

64% are dissatisfied with government efforts to tackle the rising cost of living

TOP 3 SATISFIED
 Rwanda: 69%
 Côte d'Ivoire: 60%
 Namibia: 47%

TOP 3 DISSATISFIED
 Cameroon: 89%
 Nigeria: 87%
 Zambia: 81%

CHANGING THE MINDSET OF YOUNG PEOPLE FROM JOB SEEKERS TO JOB CREATORS

Nkosinathi Moshwana: Executive Head- Step Up 2 A Start Up & Chief Operating Officer of Primestars. He is the youngest Chief of Operations in the history of Primestars and leads a team that delivers high-impact youth development initiatives to underprivileged high school learners across South Africa. Under his leadership, the Primestars team has positively impacted the lives of well over a million young people.

The youth of South Africa are not lost..... they know exactly what they want for their future, they just lack the opportunity to realise their power. What is the solution? More needs to be done to empower young South Africans to realise their potential and ignite their passion to succeed.

As such, youth empowerment programmes are vital initiatives that not only offer hope but tangible opportunities for a brighter future. To break the cycle of poverty and unemployment means providing our youth with the necessary skills, knowledge, and opportunities to thrive. In not only believing in them but making them believe in themselves.

The country faces significant socio-economic challenges, including increasingly high unemployment rates, particularly amongst the youth. On a global scale, South Africa's unemployment rate is amongst the highest. According to recent statistics, youth aged 15-34 years continue to have the highest unemployment rates at up to 59.7%.

Fostering an entrepreneurial mindset within our youth is now more than ever a moral imperative and responsibility. The critical argument is that we must move their mindset from job seekers to that of job creators. Many young people are struggling to transition into the job market and some contributing factors include misalignment between education offerings and the needs of the labour market, a lack of opportunities into the job market, economic stagnation, limited access to resources and support on their entrepreneurial journey to turn their idea into reality!

Where do we start? The team I lead at Primestars delivers various high-impact programmes, one of which targets this specific issue. Step Up 2 A Start Up was created to address a gap in the small business development ecosystem by targeting high-school youth on a national and digital level through theoretical and hands-on elements. The South African government's growth path commits to creating 11 million jobs by 2030. The National Development Plan envisages that 90% of these jobs will be created in small and expanding companies. To achieve this, thousands of new companies will need to be created and supported by both government and the relevant industries.

The programme is specifically designed to drive innovation within the beneficiaries and inspire thinking of new technologies, products or services. This in turn fosters economic growth both at a community and national level. It empowers the youth to realise their potential by teaching them to utilise opportunities in the economy and create business solutions to the challenges and problems identified within their respective communities. The

programme's focus this year is the green economy and climate change in line with the global agenda on sustainability. To develop these young eco-entrepreneurs and reduce the country's high unemployment rate, the youth must be provided with the right tools, skills, and inspiration that will enable them to create businesses, and become gainful employers in a circular, restorative, inclusive, and clean economy.

The Primestars team, that I lead, ensures that the beneficiaries not only realise that we believe in them but motivates them to believe in themselves.

The implementation model features an edutainment film called Karabo's Kitchen. This is supplemented with a practical handbook that gives students the tools and knowledge needed to succeed as social entrepreneurs. The programme then moves into its "competition phase", featuring a national entrepreneurship boot camp, featuring business lessons from industry experts, which then culminates in the coveted National Youth Entrepreneurship Awards ceremony.

Each year over 13,000 learners benefit from the programme and in 2023 over 750 competition entries were received from under-resourced township, rural, urban and peri-urban communities across the country.

Looking ahead to 2024, Step Up 2 A Start Up Alumni from previous years will showcase their experience and subsequent successes by engaging with this year's beneficiaries to motivate them to believe that their dreams can come true.

The Alumni includes, Brian Mlambo - a previous beneficiary who this year launched his own book 'Navigating The Odyssey' which serves as a guide to budding entrepreneurs by relating his own journey since participating in the Step Up 2 A Start Up programme.

Another alumni is Contse Seloacoe, who has started his own jam business and now employs 8 people. He was a finalist this year in the Top16 Youth-Owned Brand Awards.

The success of these and other beneficiaries proves that our implementation model is successful and our end goal is to make entrepreneurship part of the school curriculum nationwide! Addressing youth unemployment in South Africa requires a multifaceted approach, with entrepreneurship playing a pivotal role and we cannot do it alone. We call on government, the private and public sector to amplify our mission. The potential is immense, and the time to act is now.

They are not just our future they are our present and our foundation to a better tomorrow.



FUTURE AMBITIONS



Four-in-five continue to say they know what they want to do with their life and future family plans are stable too with seven-in-ten planning on having fewer children than their parents, starting a family later, and getting married later. Employment opportunities and job prospects are bleak – three quarters say it is difficult to find a job, nearly all are concerned about the lack of economic job prospects, and two-thirds are dissatisfied with their governments’ efforts to create jobs and fight unemployment. Corruption is a key barrier to employment and entrepreneurial spirits.



There is widespread confidence among African youth about the plans they have for the future. Four-in-five youth (78%) continue to say that they already know what they want to do with their life, with this conviction strongest in Chad (91%), Rwanda (91%), Kenya (87%), and Zambia (87%). In Chad and Zambia specifically, seven-in-ten youth ‘strongly agree’ they are assured in their plans for the future, while youth in Namibia (63%), Ghana (64%), and Tanzania (64%) are least likely to say they know what they want to do with their life. African youth are boldly paving their own paths towards success, as evidenced by the continent’s impressive rate of entrepreneurship – the highest in the world. With small to medium enterprises generating 80% of jobs and consistent venture capital investment, African youth are feeling empowered to take control of their futures.¹ Thinking about future family plans, youth also remain confident in their intentions to have fewer children (75%), start a family later (72%), and get married later than their parents did (70%), with over two-in-five ‘strongly agreeing’ with these sentiments. Similar to plans for the future, youth in Kenya and Rwanda are most strongly assured in their intentions about when they will start a family and how big it will be.

¹ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/08/africa-youth-global-growth-digital-economy/>

78%

say that they feel like they already know what they want to do with their life
-2% from 2022

75%

Plan on having fewer children than their parents did
+2% from 2022

72%

Plan on starting a family later than their parents did
Same as 2022

70%

Plan on getting married later than their parents did
-2% from 2022



Employment

When asked to identify the most important issues for the African continent to progress and move forward, creating new, well-paying jobs comes out as a top concern for youth (20%) second only to reducing government corruption (23%). However, there appears to be a growing disparity between the prioritisation of creating employment opportunities for future progress and the current state of the employment market. Almost three-quarters of African youth (73%) say that, in the current job market in their country, finding a new job is difficult, with around half (48%) feeling it is 'very difficult'.

Corruption is highlighted as the biggest barrier to finding employment (40%), and around seven-in-ten youth express concerns about corruption in national companies (71%) and international companies (68%) operating in their country. Lack of well-paying jobs (29%), and not enough government support (27%) are also identified by youth as key barriers to being able to obtain job opportunities. This translates into overwhelming concern with the employment prospects, with over four-in-five youth (85%) 'very concerned' or 'somewhat concerned' about the lack of job opportunities. Although the proportion of youth that say they are 'very concerned' about this issue has trended down over time, overall levels of concern have stayed consistently high from 86% in 2022 and 92% in 2020.

85%

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Cameroon: 97%
Kenya / Nigeria / South Africa: 95%
Botswana: 93%

are **concerned** about the lack of job prospects

-1% from 2022

73%

say finding a new job is difficult



Difficult is the % selecting 'Very difficult' + 'Somewhat difficult'

Barriers to Employment

40% Too much corruption

29% Not enough well paying jobs

27% Not enough government support

22% Lack of opportunities to achieve the necessary qualification

22% I do not have the right connections or networks

19% Lack of appropriate training and education

18% Opportunities in my local area are limited

18% Not receiving feedback on unsuccessful applications

17% Uncertain economic environment

16% Lack of available digital technologies or infrastructure

14% Lack of forums/websites to search for available jobs

66%

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Nigeria: 87%
Cameroon: 82%
Ghana: 79%

are **dissatisfied** with government efforts on job creation and unemployment

-4% from 2022

Likely driving these concerns about the availability of job prospects is the government's perceived poor performance on improving employment opportunities. Two-thirds of African youth (66%) are dissatisfied with their government's efforts on job creation and fighting unemployment, down from seven-in-ten youth in 2022. Across most markets, it appears that the job market is competitive and unrewarding, and significantly heightened concerns about the lack of job opportunities are tied to severely low levels of satisfaction with the government's poor performance on creating jobs and tackling unemployment. Youth in most countries are clearly highlighting a disconnect between their vision and hope for future opportunities and the government's performance meeting their needs and desires. Côte d'Ivoire is the only outlier to this trend, with almost two-thirds of youth (63%) saying it is 'very easy' or 'somewhat easy' to find a job, just over half (52%) are concerned about the lack of job prospects, and almost two-thirds (63%) expressing satisfaction with the government's efforts on job creation and fighting unemployment.

71%

Concerned about corruption within national companies

68%

Concerned about corruption within international companies

Afro-Entrepreneurial Spirit

Over seven-in-ten African youth (71%) continue to say they plan to start their own business within the next five years, however, entrepreneurial ambitions have declined slightly from 77% in 2022 and 75% in 2020. Intention to start a business is highest in Nigeria (93%) and Zambia (90%), where around nine-in-ten youth have entrepreneurial interests. The only exception is Ethiopia, where less than half (46%) have dreams of creating their own business.

By far the biggest barrier towards setting up a business continues to be a lack of access to capital (52%) and thus, if given \$100, nearly half of youth (45%) would invest in a business or start their own business using this money. Beyond limited access to financing, African youth also cite corruption (40%) as a key barrier to their entrepreneurial ambitions, and this has increased from 32% in 2022 in line with broader concerns about widespread corruption in their country. The only outlier where lack of access to capital is not the biggest barrier is Tanzania, where youth identify the lack of available digital technologies or infrastructure (38%) as the primary obstacle they face when starting a business. The Social Sciences Research Network states the high cost of doing business for African youth is closely tied to inadequate infrastructure that poses a threat to key entrepreneurial industries such as agriculture (due to the need of safe and reliable transportation) and Information Technology (due to the need of consistent electricity supply). Despite these challenges, African youth seem determined to overcome these hurdles.²

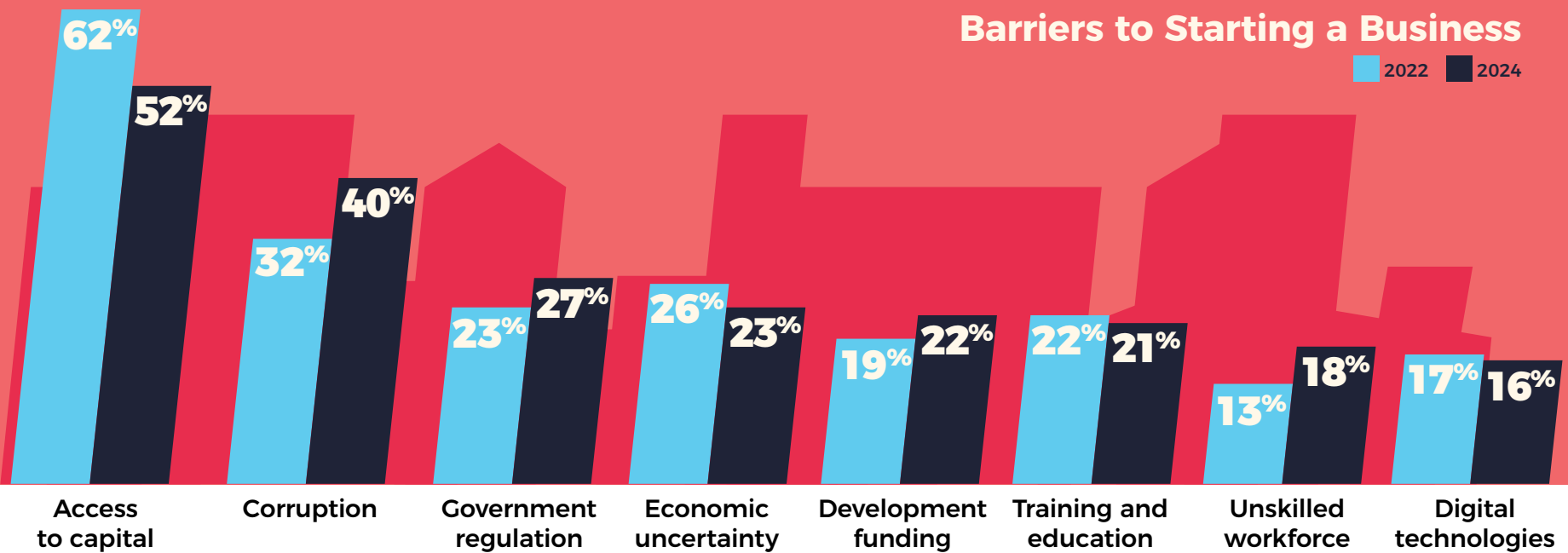
² https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4472404





Barriers to Starting a Business

2022 2024



Countries where “Not Enough Access to Capital” is not the Biggest Barrier:

TOO MUCH CORRUPTION

South Africa: 52%
Congo Br.: 50%
Gabon: 49%
Chad: 41%

LACK OF AVAILABLE DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES OR INFRASTRUCTURE

Tanzania: 38%

45% INVEST

Top 3 Countries
Zambia: 73%
Nigeria: 65%
Malawi: 55%

Invest in/start a business

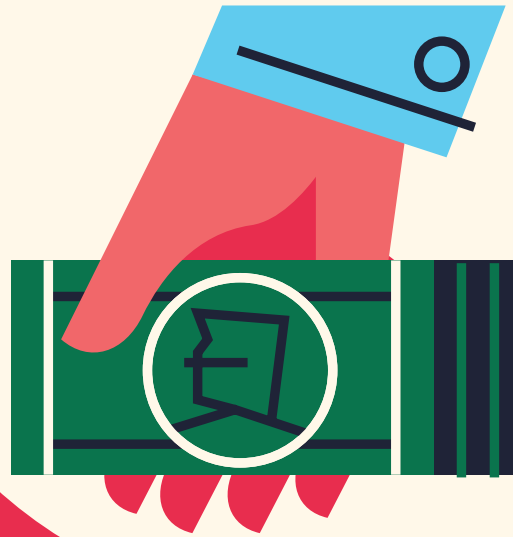
16% Invest in my education

11% Save up

DONATE

4% Donate to charity

If you were given \$100 USD, what would you do with it?



6% Spend it recreationally

5% Spend it on someone else

10% Purchase common household goods

2% Buy lottery tickets/gamble



SPEND

Emigrate

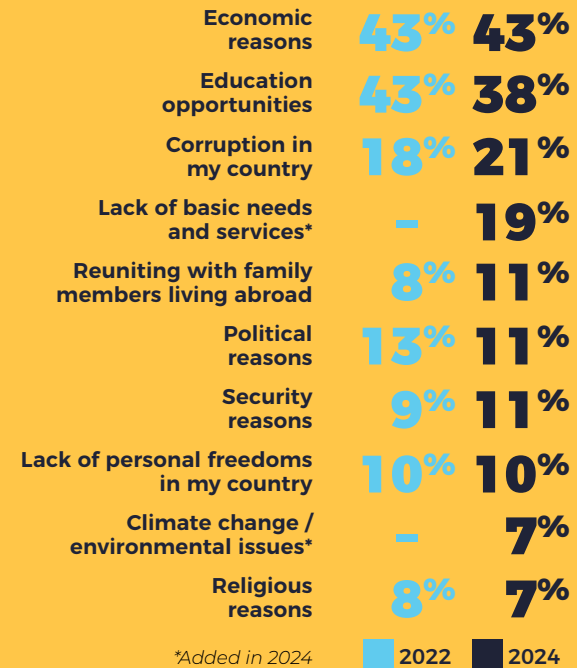
Consideration to emigrate is increasingly top of mind for the majority of African youth, with nearly three-in-five (58%) saying they are 'very likely' or 'somewhat likely' to consider emigrating to another country in the next three years. This sentiment has increased from 51% in 2022, likely driven by the improving freedom of movement post-COVID 19. In Nigeria, over four-in-five youth (85%) say they are likely to emigrate in the next three years, with three-in-five (58%) 'very likely' to move away from their country.

Youth that are considering emigrating away from their country cite economic reasons (e.g. to look for a job) (43%) and education opportunities (e.g. to pursue higher education) (38%) as the primary factors driving them to consider moving abroad. The UN supports this, stating "rapid growth of the labour force coupled with sluggish growth of employment creates the trigger for the youth migration..." coupled with poor quality education, African youth are left with few choices but to migrate to other countries to achieve their goals.³ While in most markets these are the key reasons to consider emigrating, corruption is cited as the top reason in South Africa (38%) and Gabon (32%), while among youth in Tanzania the lack of basic needs and services (23%) is the primary factor driving likelihood to emigrate. When asked if they would be emigrating temporarily or permanently, two-thirds of youth (65%) say they would only be moving away for a temporary period of time. However, this sentiment has declined from 71% in 2022 and in turn nearly a third of youth (31%) now say that they plan to make their move abroad permanent, up from around a quarter (26%) in 2022. Youth expecting to make a permanent move are most likely to be in Nigeria (45%), Ghana (44%), and Congo Brazzaville (41%), while on the other hand nine-in-ten youth in Rwanda (90%) that are considering emigrating say their move will only be temporary.

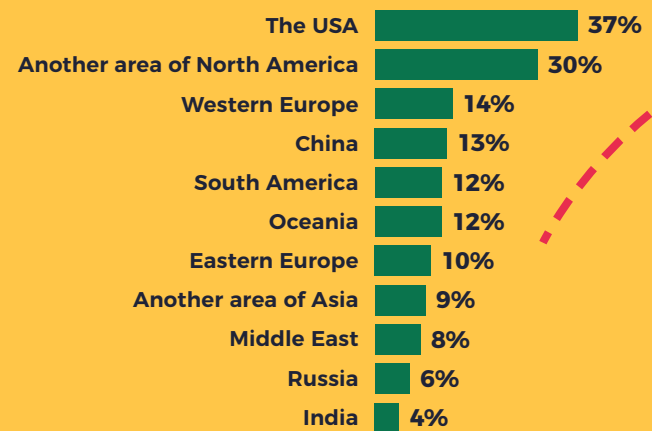
Outside of Africa, the United States (37%) and the rest of North America (e.g. Canada or Mexico) (30%) are by far the most appealing destinations for African youth that are considering emigrating away from their country. While Europe is a less popular destination for those likely to emigrate, those that express a desire to move to this region cite France (41%) or the United Kingdom (34%) as the most appealing destinations, likely due to existing language knowledge and deep-rooted connections these countries have with many African nations.

³ <https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/migration-dynamics-refugees-and-internally-displaced-persons-africa>

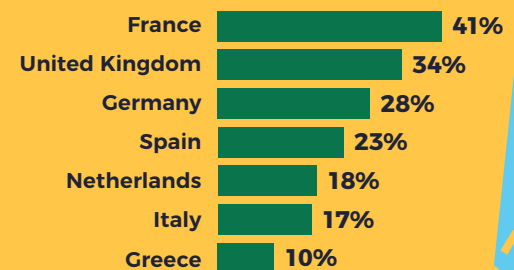
Main reasons for emigrating



Regions Youth Wish to Move to Outside of Africa



Countries Youth Wish to Move to Inside Europe



65% -6% from 2022
Temporarily
for some time

31% +5% from 2022
Permanently without
plans to return

Likely to
Emigrate

58%

+7% from 2022

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Côte d'Ivoire / Nigeria: 85%

Kenya: 76%

Congo Br.: 70%

While there are fewer who prefer to migrate to Europe, the majority express a desire to go to France or the UK, likely due to existing language knowledge and the deep-rooted connection these countries have with many African nations

BON
VOYAGE



HUMAN RIGHTS AND ITS PLACE IN AFRICA'S FUTURE

Mmabatho Motsamai is the founder of The Afrolutionist, a digital institution that enhances critical discussions and projects on inclusive development in Africa in line with Sustainable Development Goal 17 (SDG17). A Bosch Alumni, Motsamai is also an Anzisha Media Finalist (2016), and a current Board member of the Botswana National Youth Council, Akina Mama Wa Afrika, ITU Generation Connect Youth Visionaries Board, an AFR100 Youth Ambassador and recognized in MIPAD 100 as the most influential person of African Descent (2020).

Change in African opinions about LGBTQ+ rights has frankly, been slow and uneven.

According to this rendition of the groundbreaking African Youth Survey, only 37% of African youth polled agreed that LGBTQ+ rights needed more protection than the rights of ethnic minorities, nonetheless up marginally from 31% in 2020.

According to a 2023 BBC report, nearly half of the 64 nations with laws that criminalise homosexuality are in Africa, many dating to the colonial era. When American Vice President Kamala Harris toured three African nations that year, she was in fact widely criticized for her support of LGBTQ+ rights.

In Ghana, which was considering a bill to criminalise gay rights and impose jail terms for those who identify as LGBTQ+, American Vice President Kamala Harris called for "all people to be treated equally". In Tanzania, a

former minister spoke against U.S. support for LGBTQ+ rights before her visit and in Zambia, some opposition politicians threatened to hold protests.

Many African countries have softened their opposition to LGBTQ+ rights. Of Africa's 53 nations, 25 today no longer have anti-LGBTQ+ laws. Even in Kenya, whose high court in May 2019 upheld laws criminalising homosexual acts, the same court ruled in 2023 that it was wrong for authorities to ban the gay community from registering a rights organization, even as certain rights remained illegal there.

Also in 2019, Botswana's High Court ruled in favour of decriminalising homosexuality,

following similar actions by Mozambique and the Seychelles. In 2020, Gabon reversed a law that criminalised homosexuality, and in 2021 Angola's President Joao Lourenco signed a revision to the penal code to allow same-sex relationships and ban discrimination based on sexual orientation.

The latest African victory for gay rights came in June, when a Namibian court ruled that laws banning same-sex acts violate the nation's constitution. While convictions for colonial-era offenses are rare, they fueled discrimination against gay men who had lived in fear of arrest. Same-sex marriage remains illegal, except if said same-sex couple had married abroad and one is not a Namibian citizen.

While these victories are celebrated, the death penalty is still legally prescribed for same-sex acts in Brunei, Mauritania, Somalia, and some northern states of Nigeria, according to the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association. Sudan repealed the death penalty for consensual same-sex sexual acts in 2020. But a recent Ugandan law cracks down harder on homosexual activities.

Though there have been many wins, there is still a need for LGBTQ+ rights within Africa to be observed, accepted and be part of the social change within Africa.

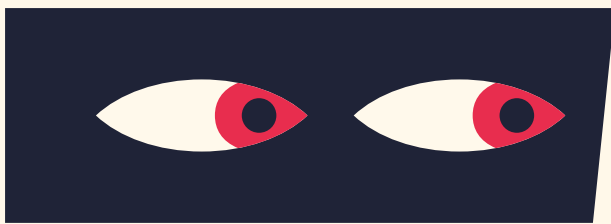
Despite the laws, some observers say the risk of prosecution for same-sex sexual acts is minimal, that the laws are primarily for "show". Still, South Africa is the only African nation where same-sex marriages and civil unions are legal (other than two small French colonial islands, Mayotte and Réunion).

Though there have been many wins, there is still a need for LGBTQ+ rights within Africa to be observed, accepted and be part of the social change within Africa.

The old colonial prohibitions so long imprinted on African societies are only slowly being erased, despite social pressures from the United Nations (UN) and other influencers.

However, through collaborative effort in diplomatic, traditional, political and religious spaces, in response to clear and compelling calls to action seen in the outspoken voices here in the African Youth Survey of 2024, those in support of modern tolerance and inclusivity - it will be possible for LGBTQ+ persons to obtain all of their social, political and economic freedoms.

The fundamental hope is to ensure that one day, all Africans, regardless of class, sexual orientation, gender and creed, will have equitable human rights and freedoms.



CORRUPTION



Reducing government corruption is the top priority for African youth looking ahead to the next five years, chosen by 23% of respondents. Concern is widespread across different spheres, including national and local governments, businesses, and police forces. African youth express dissatisfaction with current efforts to tackle corruption, and there is strong support for introducing policies aimed at reducing corruption.

83%

**of youth are concerned
about corruption in
their country**

Reducing Corruption is the Top Priority

Looking ahead to the next five years, when asked what would be the most important thing for Africa to progress, 'reducing government corruption' is the highest selected priority, chosen by a fifth of African Youth (23%). This scores higher than all other priorities, such as 'creating new, well-paying jobs' (20%) and 'increasing access to basic needs and services' (17%), and is a particular priority for youth in Kenya (35%) and Nigeria (33%). According to the 2023 Corruption Perception Index, Sub-Saharan Africa remains the region with the lowest average score, despite isolated improvements in some countries, with pressure mounting on both democracy and the rule of law.¹ As such, there are high levels of concern towards this issue with four-in-five youth (83%) reporting that they are 'very' or 'somewhat' concerned about corruption in their country. Whilst levels of concern are very high, there does appear to be a downward trend with concern declining from 94% in 2020 and 85% in 2022.

- **Highest levels of concern about corruption in their country:** Cameroon (97%), Kenya (95%), and South Africa (94%).
- **Lowest levels of concern about corruption in their country:** Rwanda (54%), and Côte d'Ivoire (58%).

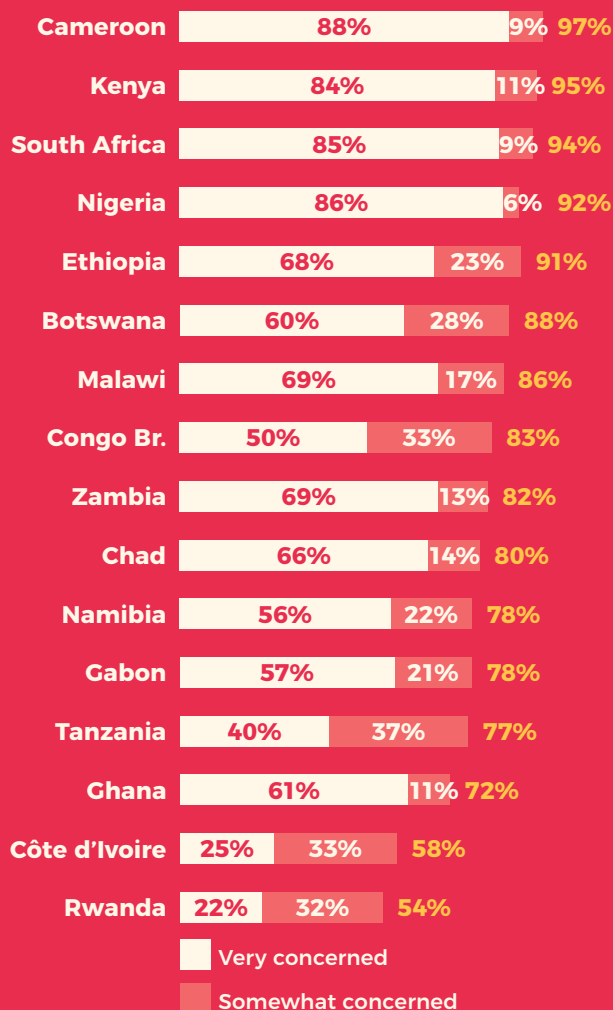
¹ The CPI ranks 180 countries and territories around the globe by their perceived levels of public sector corruption, scoring on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean). <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2023>

The high level of concern about corruption is not isolated to one area but is widespread across a range of different spheres. Concern is consistently high regarding corruption within the national government (73%), within provincial or local government (70%), within national companies/businesses (71%), and within police and security forces (69%). Overall, youth in Cameroon express the highest levels of concern for corruption across these spheres (89% on average), with particular concern directed towards corruption in the national government (91%). On the other hand, Rwandan youth (44% on average) and youth in Côte d'Ivoire (35% on average) express the lowest levels of concern.

Exacerbating this widespread concern, African youth express clear dissatisfaction towards current efforts to tackle government corruption in their countries, which aligns with the World Bank findings that if corruption is left unchecked, it can erode the trust and faith that citizens have in their leaders and institutions.² The majority of youth (62%) state that they are dissatisfied, and two-in-five (39%) are 'not at all satisfied'. However, levels of satisfaction do look very different by country. An overwhelming majority of youth in Rwanda (92%) report being satisfied with their government's efforts to tackle corruption, while a similar proportion of youth in Cameroon (87%), Nigeria (85%) and Ghana (80%) report high levels of dissatisfaction.

2 <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2023/12/13/building-trust-by-combating-corruption-in-western-and-central-africa>

Concern about Corruption



73% are concerned about corruption in national government

HIGHEST CONCERN
 Cameroon: 91%
 Nigeria: 88%
 Zambia: 85%

LOWEST CONCERN
 Rwanda: 40%
 Côte d'Ivoire: 41%
 Ghana: 65%

70% are concerned about corruption in provincial or local government

HIGHEST CONCERN
 Cameroon: 89%
 Kenya: 88%
 Nigeria: 85%

LOWEST CONCERN
 Côte d'Ivoire: 34%
 Rwanda: 43%
 Namibia / Tanzania: 64%

71% are concerned about corruption in national companies/businesses

HIGHEST CONCERN
 Cameroon: 88%
 Congo Br.: 83%
 Kenya: 82%

LOWEST CONCERN
 Côte d'Ivoire: 29%
 Rwanda: 54%
 Namibia / Tanzania: 65%

69% are concerned about corruption in police and security forces

HIGHEST CONCERN
 Cameroon / Nigeria: 88%
 Kenya: 85%
 Congo Br.: 81%

LOWEST CONCERN
 Côte d'Ivoire: 36%
 Rwanda: 38%
 Namibia: 60%

Policies to Address Corruption

To tackle corruption in their countries, African youth widely support the introduction of policies aimed at reducing and eradicating corruption from their countries. There is particularly strong support ('strongly' or 'somewhat' approve) for the notion of creating a police taskforce to tackle corruption in government (75%), and of introducing tougher penalties for those convicted of corruption (74%). They also highly approve that those convicted of corruption should not be allowed to stand for public office (72%), that candidates running for positions in office must not have a criminal record (70%), and that leaders should be required to publish their financial records and business interests each year (69%). The IMF aligns with the view of African youth, as they report improved fiscal institutions with greater transparency and controls, along with measures to constrain corrupt behaviour and measures to reduce corruption opportunities, have helped countries that have managed to lower corruption.³ Given the high levels of concern about corruption in these countries, youth in Kenya (89%) and Cameroon (86%) are most likely to support anti-corruption policies in their country, while support for policies is lowest among youth in Ethiopia (62%), Gabon (63%) and Namibia (63%). However, even in these countries a majority of youth endorse policies to reduce levels of corruption.

³ <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/fandd/issues/2019/09/tackling-corruption-in-sub-saharan-africa-sobrinho>

62% of youth are dissatisfied with their national government's efforts to tackle government corruption

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Cameroon: 87%
Nigeria: 85%
Ghana: 80%

Policies for Tackling Corruption

75% Creating a police taskforce to tackle corruption in the government

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Rwanda: 95%
Cameroon: 90%
Kenya: 89%

74% Introducing tougher penalties for those convicted of corruption

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Kenya: 93%
Rwanda: 91%
Cameroon: 90%

72% Those convicted of corruption should not be allowed to stand for public office

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Cameroon / Kenya: 88%
South Africa: 81%
Zambia: 79%

70% Candidates running for positions in office must not have a criminal record

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Kenya: 88%
Cameroon / Nigeria: 82%
South Africa: 79%

69% Requiring leaders to publish their financial records and business interests each year

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Kenya: 87%
Cameroon: 82%
South Africa: 74%



AFRICA RISING TO THE CHALLENGE OF SAFETY AND SECURITY



Dr Joel Amegboh, Assistant Professor of African Security Studies, Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS)AC, Washington, DC.

Dr Amegboh is responsible for overseeing the Africa Center's academic programming on national security strategy development, managing security resources in Africa and the ACSS' Youth, Peace and Security programmes.

One of the core functions of any government is to provide for the security and safety of its citizens. Safety and security are preconditions for sustainable investment, job creation and development which are the top priorities of many African governments. Safety and security, therefore, are central to the confidence and trust that citizens have in their government.

Looking across African countries in which this year's youth survey was conducted, it is noteworthy that in general less than half - 42 percent of respondents- are satisfied with the police and security services. This marks a marginal increase of four points over

how respondents answered the same question (38 percent satisfied) in 2022.

This figure varies a great deal from country to country. While countries like Rwanda enjoy overwhelming levels of satisfaction, in Nigeria only 12 percent of youth voice confidence in the government's ability to keep them safe as do a mere 27 percent in Congo-Brazzaville and 29 percent in Gabon.

In a broader context, safety and security are a perennial concern. The African Union's Political Affairs, Peace and Security Commissioner Ambassador Bankole Adeoye told a conference in Addis Ababa in February that insecurity on the continent was on the rise. From Libya to the Lake Chad Basin, and the wider Sahel zone, from Somalia in the Horn of Africa to Cabo Delgado in northern Mozambique, he said, 'the security picture is depressing'. One 'positive' was that the African Union had achieved numerous institutional milestones on its way to Agenda 2063 and Silencing the Guns by 2030.

According to the 2022 Ibrahim Index of African Governance, 70 percent of Africans lived in a country where overall levels of safety and security had declined since 2012. While the methodology for that research may not compare precisely with the African Youth Survey, the IIAG does provide a background that is useful for setting the scene for more current research. Broadly speaking, in the security space there is ample room for improvement and cause to look for where progress can be achieved.

More than half of the survey respondents, 53 percent, noted that terrorism, insurgency or armed conflict impacted their ability to move about freely without fear or harm, which is a two-point increase over the 2022 survey results. Of course,

this includes many regional and transnational threats beyond the scope of police services, yet it is important to understand the broader picture.

Terrorism in particular looms large on the horizon of security threats for many Africans and this year's survey reflected an increase in the percentage of those who had been approached by a member of a terror group or an insurgent in the last year – 9 percent in 2024 versus 4 percent in 2022. A deeper look at these numbers underscores the cause for concern.

On another positive note, there is a modest uptick in this year's survey in the percentage of citizens who express confidence in their government's ability to confront terrorism, as 61 percent do, which is five points higher than two years ago. This does not, however, necessarily cancel out the rising threat of terrorism. Rather, it reflects the reality and encourages the perception that governments are generally trying to address the main security issues.

In short, addressing the threats to public safety and security across Africa tests governments, multi-national organizations like the African Union and the United Nations, security services and civilian authorities at regional and local levels. A prerequisite for success is good governance. This is central to the effective administration of a state's resources, the rule of law and the development of a strong civil society.

Governments and security services have the opportunity to share best practices and over the coming years will show innovation in using a range of tools from technology to cooperation with civil society to rise to this challenge. Thanks to research like this, we are better informed about where to focus these efforts.

Terrorism in particular looms large on the horizon of security threats for many Africans, and this year's survey reflected an increase in the percentage of those who had been approached by a member of a terror group or an insurgent in the last year.

SAFETY È SECURITY



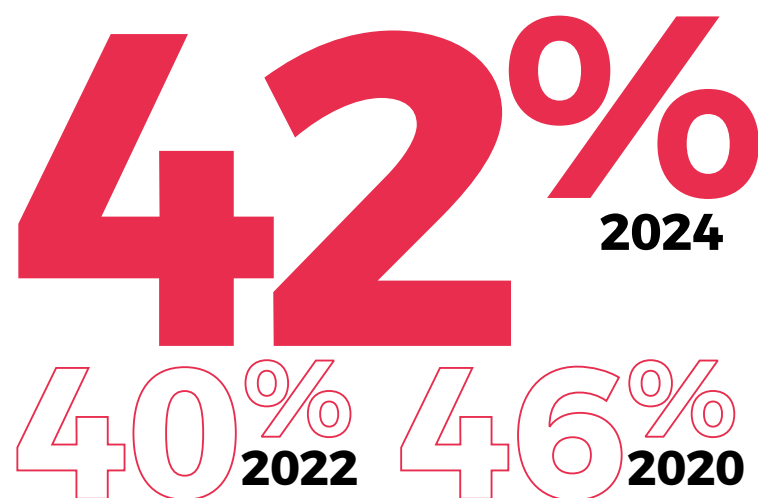
Fewer than half of African youth express satisfaction with police and security services in their country, and one-in-four state that they or their immediate family have been victims of crime in the past five years. While two-thirds would be comfortable reporting a hate crime, they express significant concern about gender-based violence and lack of protection for women's rights. Although most believe more should be done to protect ethnic minorities, fewer think the same for LGBTQ+ communities. Over half say terrorism impacts their freedom of movement, but most have confidence in their government's ability to handle these issues.

Just two-in-five youth say they are satisfied with police and security services in their country



Reporting & Sanctioning Crime

When asked to consider their levels of satisfaction with police and security services in their country, fewer than half of African youth (42%) claim to be 'very' or 'somewhat satisfied'. Whilst there are some countries with very high levels of satisfaction, such as Rwanda (99%) and Côte d'Ivoire (75%), the average is dictated by very low satisfaction in countries such as Nigeria (12%), Congo Brazzaville (27%), and Gabon (29%). Additionally, while overall satisfaction among African youth has increased slightly since 2022 (40%), satisfaction remains below pre-pandemic levels (46%).



HIGHEST SATISFACTION

Rwanda: 99%
 Côte d'Ivoire: 75%
 Botswana: 63%

LOWEST SATISFACTION

Nigeria: 12%
 Congo Br.: 27%
 Gabon: 29%

Thinking about safety in their daily lives, one-in-four African youth (25%) state that they, or someone in their immediate family, has been a victim of crime in the past five years. When asked how comfortable they might feel reporting a hate crime to the authorities, two-thirds (66%) of African youth say that they would be 'very' or 'somewhat comfortable'. At a country level, youth in Rwanda (95%), Kenya (87%), and Zambia (75%) report highest levels of comfort with reporting hate crime to their local authorities, whereas youth living in Ethiopia (49%), Cameroon (51%), and Congo Brazzaville (52%) are least comfortable doing so. Levels of comfort change depending on the nature of the crime. For instance, a greater proportion (69%) of youth state that they would be comfortable reporting crime that was felt to be on the basis of religious beliefs, compared to a crime which had occurred on the basis of sexual orientation (62%).

African youth are somewhat conflicted as to whether the penalties and punishments for crime in their country are adequate; a fifth (20%) feel that they are 'too harsh', two-fifths feel they are 'about right' (43%), whilst a third (33%) believe that they are 'not harsh enough'. However, this conviction

varies among some countries. Three-in-five youth (57%) in South Africa firmly believe that penalties and punishments for breaking the law are not harsh enough, while seven-in-ten youth in Côte d'Ivoire (70%) feel current penalties are adequately severe. There is also mixed opinion among African youth as to whether everyone in their country is treated equally before the law, with around half (56%) stating that they 'strongly' or 'somewhat agree', and a significant proportion (42%) stating that they 'somewhat' or 'strongly disagree'.

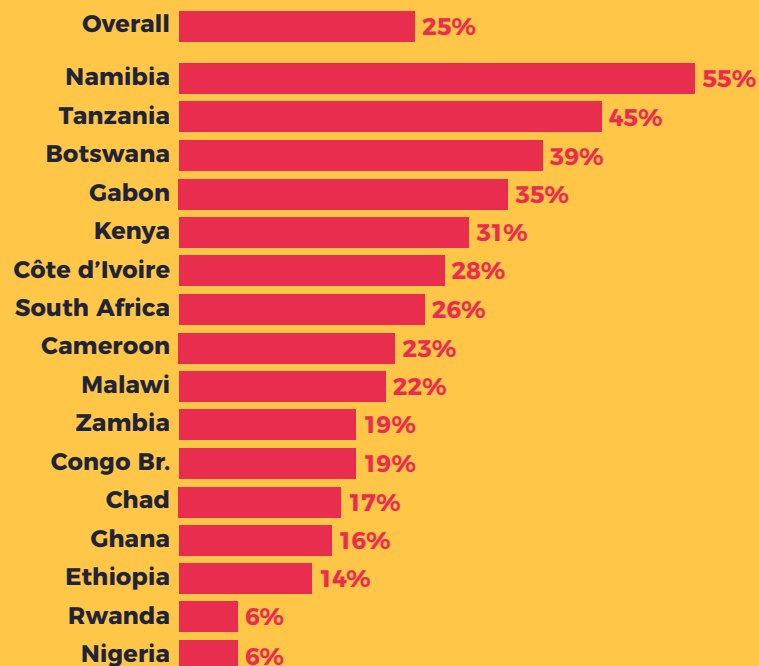
- **Most likely to agree that everyone is treated equally before the law:** Rwanda (92%), Botswana (73%), and Zambia (73%).
- **Most likely to disagree that everyone is treated equally before the law:** Cameroon (72%), Congo Br. (68%), and Chad (60%).

Crimes Against Marginalised Groups

When asked to consider their levels of concern relating to gender-based violence (GBV), the vast majority (75%) of youth reported that they are 'very' or 'somewhat concerned' about levels of GBV in their country. This concern rises to near unanimous levels in South Africa (95%) and Kenya (95%), which aligns with the UN reporting the rate of violence against women in South Africa being one of the highest in the world.¹ Despite greater concern in Kenya and South Africa, youth in Rwanda (47%), Côte d'Ivoire (56%), and Ghana (61%) show the lowest concern for this issue. African youth are also worried about the lack of protection of women's rights in their country, with almost three-quarters (73%) claiming to be 'very' or 'somewhat concerned' about this issue. As with concern for GBV, youth in South Africa (93%), Kenya (90%), and Nigeria (89%) report the highest levels of worry for the protection of women's rights. While concern is lower among youth in Rwanda (39%), Côte d'Ivoire (56%), and Namibia (62%), a significant proportion

¹ <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/feature-story/2023/12/south-african-womens-group-trains-police-to-respond-to-gender-based-violence>

Victim of a Crime in the Past Five Years



Comfort Reporting Crimes to Authorities

69% Religion or Religious Beliefs

TOP 3 COUNTRIES
Rwanda: 96%
Kenya: 90%
Zambia: 76%

68% Race or Ethnicity

TOP 3 COUNTRIES
Rwanda: 95%
Kenya: 81%
Malawi: 78%

65% Gender / Sex

TOP 3 COUNTRIES
Rwanda: 96%
Kenya: 90%
Zambia: 78%

62% Sexual Orientation / Preference

TOP 3 COUNTRIES
Rwanda: 92%
Kenya: 88%
Zambia: 72%

Penalties and
punishments in
my country are...

Not harsh enough

33%

Too harsh

20%

About right

43%

in these countries still express worry about this issue in their country. As stated earlier, there is widespread agreement among youth that there are not enough female African leaders and role models (70%), and the extremely high levels of concern towards GBV and lack of protection for women's rights are likely exacerbating this issue.

In line with these rising concerns towards the protection of women in society, African youth are largely in agreement that their country should do more to protect ethnic minorities (80%), although this has declined from 84% in 2022. The protection of ethnic minorities is reported as a greater concern among youth living in Rwanda (92%), Kenya (91%), and Nigeria (90%), compared with Gabon (56%) and Chad (60%), where concern is relatively much lower.

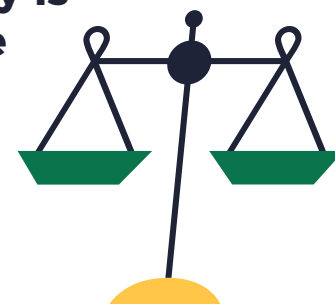
However, when considering the protection of LGBTQ+ communities, which is an umbrella term for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people, a vastly smaller proportion of African youth (37%) agree that more should be done to protect this category compared with ethnic minorities. Whilst agreement that more should be done to protect LGBTQ+ communities has shown an uplift since 2020, increasing from 31%, the trend of showing greater concern for ethnic minorities than those from LGBTQ+ communities remains consistent since 2020.

54%
2022

56%
2024

agree everyone in
their country is
equal before
the law

TOP 3 COUNTRIES
Rwanda: 92%
Botswana / Zambia: 73%
Côte d'Ivoire / Ghana: 71%



75%

are concerned about gender-based violence

HIGHEST CONCERN

South Africa / Kenya: 95%
Cameroon: 87%
Nigeria: 86%

LOWEST CONCERN

Rwanda: 47%
Côte d'Ivoire: 56%
Ghana: 61%

73%

are concerned about not enough protection of women's rights

HIGHEST CONCERN

South Africa: 93%
Kenya: 90%
Nigeria: 89%

LOWEST CONCERN

Rwanda: 39%
Côte d'Ivoire: 56%
Namibia: 62%



Despite widespread agreement that more needs to be done to protect ethnic minorities, just a third feel similar about protecting LGBTQ+ communities

80%

84%₂₀₂₂
81%₂₀₂₀

my country should do more to protect rights of ethnic minorities

37%

38%₂₀₂₂ 31%₂₀₂₀

my country should do more to protect the rights of LGBTQ+ people

Terrorism and conflict

Over half (53%) of youth in Africa say that terrorism, insurgency, and armed conflict has a 'great deal' or 'somewhat' impact on their ability to move freely and without fear or harm, and this sentiment has remained consistent from 2022 (51%). Those living in Kenya (74%), Nigeria (73%) and Ethiopia (69%) are most likely to report that they feel the impact of terrorism, insurgency, and armed conflict. These countries have consistently fallen victim to the violence of terrorist groups; as the 2023 Global Terrorism Index ranks Nigeria 8th and Kenya 18th globally among countries most impacted by terrorism and violent extremism from groups like Boko Haram, Islamic States West Africa Province (ISWAP) and al-Shabaab among others.² While Ethiopia faces the conflict of civil war, the threat from al-Shabaab has persisted, highlighted by their attack in 2022.³ However, when asked to consider their government's ability to deal with terrorism, insurgency, and armed conflict, confidence among African youth is relatively high; a third (30%) state they are 'very confident' and a further third (31%) state that are 'somewhat confident'. In addition, overall confidence has slightly increased from 56% in 2022 to 61% in 2024.

- **Highest confidence in the government's ability to handle terrorism, insurgency, and armed conflict:** Rwanda (97%), Côte d'Ivoire (80%), and Kenya (76%).
- **Lowest confidence in the government's ability to handle terrorism, insurgency, and armed conflict:** Nigeria (42%), Ethiopia (40%), and Chad (38%).

However, it is concerning that the proportion of African youth who say that they have been approached by a terror group recruiter or radical insurgent has increased. Almost one-in-ten youth (9%) now claim this to be the case, compared to just 4% in 2022. This figure is substantially higher in Tanzania (24%), Malawi (19%), and Ghana (19%) than the continent's average. As compared to data from 2022, there is also an increase in the proportion of African youth who report they know someone who has been approached by a terror group recruiter or radical insurgent, rising from 6% to 13% in 2024, and there is an increase in those who claim to know someone who supports a terror group or radical insurgent, jumping from 5% to 10% in 2024.

² <https://www.statista.com/statistics/271514/global-terrorism-index/#:~:text=The%20global%20terrorism%20index%20systematically,affected%20by%20terrorism%20on%20Earth.>

³ <https://www.cfr.org/background/al-shabaab>



61%

+5% from 2022

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Rwanda: 97%

Côte d'Ivoire: 80%

Kenya: 76%

are confident in their government's ability to deal with terrorism, insurgency, and armed conflict

53%

+2% from 2022

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Kenya: 74%

Nigeria: 73%

Ethiopia: 69%

say terrorism, insurgency, and armed conflict has had 'a great deal' or 'somewhat' of an impact on moving freely and without fear or harm

Which of the following apply to you?

13%

+7% from 2022

I know someone who has been approached by a terror group recruiter or radical insurgent

10%

+5% from 2022

I know someone who supports a terror group or radical insurgent

9%

+5% from 2022

I have been approached by a terror group recruiter or radical insurgent

70%

-4% from 2022

None of the above

7%

-8% from 2022

Don't know





By Jon Offei-Ansah, Publisher, Africa Briefing Magazine, London

NAVIGATING THE LANDSCAPE OF FAKE NEWS IN 2024

The 2024 African Youth Survey highlights a significant shift in the way young Africans consume news, moving away from traditional media towards digital platforms. This transformation reflects the evolving technological landscape and underscores the influence of social media on public perception.

However, this shift also brings the challenge of fake news, threatening informed citizenship and societal stability.

In recent years, African youth have increasingly and unequivocally turned away from traditional media. Television, once the top news source for 73% of young people in 2022, now accounts for 64% in 2024. Similarly, radio usage has declined from 49% to 39%. This indicates a steady move away from traditional media sources.

Conversely, social media platforms have become much more prominent. Facebook usage among young people has risen to 56% in 2024, up from 49% in 2020. WhatsApp and TikTok, channels included in the survey commissioned by the Ichikowitz Family Foundation for the first time, have become significant news sources for 41% and 32% of youth, respectively. This shift to digital media is emboldened by the widespread availability of smartphones and the internet.

With the rise of digital media, fake news has become a significant concern. The 2024 survey shows that 44% of African youth encounter fake news more than once a week, up from 36% in 2022. This increase highlights the urgent need for strategies to combat misinformation.

Fake news is an existential threat to African societies. It wields the power to influence public opinion quickly and undermine democratic processes. The survey reveals that 72% of youth believe terrorist organisations use fake news to push their agendas, followed by politicians (71%) and foreign governments (69%). Additionally, 61% of youth polled think religious organisations do the same. These perceptions highlight the manipulative potential of fake news and widespread distrust in various institutions.

In Africa, where political and social tensions are high, the impact can be severe. Young people, as

active news consumers on digital platforms, are particularly vulnerable to misinformation, which can influence their beliefs and actions.

To effectively navigate the media landscape, African youth must develop strong media literacy skills. Media literacy in 2024 has a much different meaning than in years past – It involves the ability to critically analyse and evaluate information from various sources. Educational institutions, policymakers and civil society organisations play crucial roles in promoting media literacy.

Educational curricula should include media literacy training, teaching students how to verify information and recognise bias. Workshops and campaigns can raise awareness about the dangers of fake news. Policymakers can support these initiatives by allocating resources and collaborating with technology companies to address misinformation. Civil society organisations can further organise grassroots efforts to promote media literacy.

Combating fake news ultimately requires collaboration between governments, technology companies, media organisations and civil society. Governments can implement regulations to hold individuals and organisations accountable for spreading fake news while protecting freedom of speech. Technology companies can and should develop policies to prevent the dissemination of false information, investing in advanced algorithms in the era of 'A.I.' and partnering with fact-checking organisations.

Media organisations must adhere to high standards of journalistic integrity, ensuring accurate and unbiased reporting. They can also educate the public about critical thinking and media literacy.

Yes, addressing fake news requires concerted efforts from all stakeholders. By fostering 2024-era media literacy, implementing effective regulations, and promoting ethical journalism, we can create a media landscape that upholds truth and transparency.

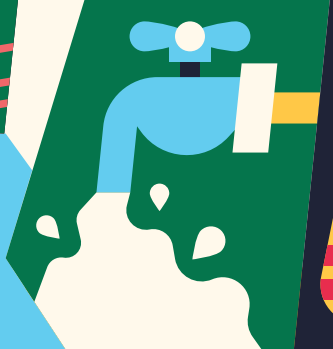
The African Youth Survey's findings no doubt serve as a clarion call for governments, educational institutions, technology companies, media organisations, and civil society to work together to build a media environment that empowers African youth to make informed decisions. This digital transformation of news consumption can in fact positively contribute to the development of informed, engaged, and resilient societies across Africa.

In conclusion, the 2024 African Youth Survey highlights the opportunities and challenges of the digital age – While social media platforms provide unprecedented access to information, they also pose significant risks in the form of fake news.

Comprehensive strategies that promote media literacy and critical thinking are essential to safeguard the integrity of information and support the aspirations of African youth in an ever-more interconnected world.

In Africa, where political and social tensions are high, the impact of fake news can be severe. Young people, as active news consumers on digital platforms, are particularly vulnerable to misinformation, which can influence their beliefs and actions.

ENVIRONMENT



-CO₂

CLIMATE HAS NO BORDERS



78% of youth are concerned about climate change

74%
2022

82%
2020

African youth express high concern about climate change, yet satisfaction with government efforts to address climate change is below half. Water scarcity is a major concern for African youth, but less than half are satisfied with water and sanitation services in their country, and many spend a significant portion of their income on accessing clean water.

48% are satisfied with their national government's performance on addressing climate change

BY COUNTRY:

- Rwanda: 87%
- Côte d'Ivoire: 68%
- Tanzania: 62%
- Kenya: 54%
- Namibia: 54%
- Congo Br.: 52%
- Ethiopia: 49%
- Chad: 48%
- Zambia: 47%
- Malawi: 45%
- Gabon: 43%
- Botswana: 40%
- Chana: 33%
- South Africa: 33%
- Nigeria: 32%
- Cameroon: 28%

Addressing Climate Change

As stated by the United Nations, climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns leading to extreme weather conditions, such as heatwaves, wildfires, droughts, hurricanes and flooding, all of which are key issues across the African continent. As such, concern for climate change is extremely high among African youth, with over half claiming to be 'very concerned' (52%) and a further quarter (26%) 'somewhat concerned' with this issue, and overall concern has increased from 2022, rising from 74% to 78% in 2024. Africa's contribution to climate change in comparison to the likes of China and the US is negligible, with emissions accounting for less than five percent of the global total. Yet the continent is being impacted disproportionately as it is the most vulnerable region in the world. The rate of temperature increase in the region has accelerated rapidly in recent decades, heightening the threat and severity of weather- and climate-related hazards, and damaging food security, ecosystems and economies.¹ In 2023 alone, all areas of the African continent and at least 34 million people were impacted by extreme weather events, up from 19 million in 2022. These catastrophic weather events ranged from disastrous flooding in Libya to extreme heat waves in Malawi.²

- **Highest concern about climate change:** Kenya (90%), South Africa (86%), and Malawi (81%).
- **Lowest concern about climate change:** Côte d'Ivoire (60%), Ghana (63%), Namibia (64%).

¹ <https://futures.issafrica.org/thematic/14-climate-change/>; <https://ghana.un.org/en/244689-africa-suffers-disproportionately-climate-change>

² <https://www.carbonbrief.org/analysis-africas-extreme-weather-have-killed-at-least-15000-people-in-2023/>

Will Climate Change...



71%
AGREE

...increase
conflicts?*

73%
AGREE

...harm future
generations?
-3% from 2022

69%
AGREE

...harm you
personally?
Same as 2022

73%
AGREE

...harm people in
your country?
-2% from 2022

*New question added in 2024, so tracked data not available

When considering the impacts of climate change, African youth have widespread concerns: they feel it is likely to harm future generations (73%) and people in their country (73%), alongside harming them personally (69%). Just one-in-ten youth (9%) think climate change will have no impact on them. There is also a significant majority (71%) that believe the impacts of climate change will increase conflicts over water and farmland, and lead to resource hoarding. As reported by CFR, temperatures in the Sahel are rising 1.5 times faster than the global average, affecting the lives of those dependent on natural resources and increasing violence due to communities dependent on those resources.³

Despite the high concern about climate change and its impacts, satisfaction with government performance in addressing climate change falls to below half (48%) of African youth saying they are 'very' or 'somewhat satisfied', and this has not improved since 2022 (48%).

- **Highest satisfaction with government efforts to address climate change:** Rwanda (87%), Côte d'Ivoire (68%), and Tanzania (62%).
- **Highest dissatisfaction with government efforts to address climate change:** Ghana (64%), South Africa (64%), and Nigeria (63%).

³ <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/violent-extremism-sahel>



Government Action Needed

Tied to low levels of satisfaction with their government addressing climate change, the vast majority of youth in Africa feel that their government needs to be doing more to address climate change (81%). However, this sentiment has decreased since 2022 (87%), indicating that African youth may be witnessing country-led efforts. It is felt most greatly that the government needs to be doing more to address climate change in Kenya (96%), Rwanda (95%), and Zambia (88%). When asked what governments could be doing more to address climate change, there is high consensus among African youth that governments should be adopting green energy sources (80%), mitigating the impact on food and water supplies (79%), and reducing carbon emissions (78%).

However, when asked how governments should go about addressing climate change, there is some polarisation among African youth; half (51%) feel that governments should be pushing discussion and debate on the international stage even if it takes longer to act, whereas an almost equal proportion (44%) believe that it would be more effective to lead and drive action among a smaller group of countries to act sooner. Youth in Côte d'Ivoire (73%) and Gabon (68%) are notably more likely to endorse working on the international stage, while Rwandan youth are stronger proponents of working in a smaller group (69%).



My government...

...needs to be doing more to address climate change

TOP 3:
Kenya: 96%
Rwanda: 95%
Zambia: 88%

81%
-6% from 2022



...needs to mitigate the impact on food and water supplies

TOP 3:
Rwanda: 97%
Kenya: 94%
Zambia: 90%

79%



...needs to be doing more to reduce its carbon emissions

TOP 3:
Kenya: 96%
Rwanda: 94%
Zambia: 88%

78%
-6% from 2022

...needs to be doing more to adopt green energy sources

TOP 3:
Kenya / Rwanda: 94%
Zambia: 90%
Botswana / Nigeria: 86%

80%
-6% from 2022



On an equally divisive issue, when thinking about financing to address climate change issues, half (53%) of African youth believe that their government should be advocating for funding to prioritise solutions to future climate change issues rather than pushing for financial compensation from developed countries (42%). Youth from Rwanda are particularly keen on their government endorsing future solutions (75%), whereas those from Tanzania (56%) and Ghana (54%) want compensation from developed countries.

Barriers to Achieving Climate Targets

As part of the Paris Agreement, almost two-hundred parties committed to adopting efforts to keep the global average surface warming to below 1.5 degrees celsius by 2025. According to the UN Emissions Gap Report (2023), the world is on track for a temperature rise far beyond the agreed climate goals.⁴ The perception among African youth is that progress in this area has been hindered due to too much focus on consensus building rather than action (34%).

⁴ <https://www.unep.org/resources/emissions-gap-report-2023>

Government Efforts to Address Climate Change

Pushing discussion and debate on the international stage even if it takes longer to act

51%

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Côte d'Ivoire: 73%
Gabon: 68%
Congo / Tanzania: 58%

Leading and driving action among a smaller group of countries to act sooner

44%

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Rwanda: 69%
Zambia: 56%
Botswana: 53%

Pushing for solutions to future climate change issues

53%

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Rwanda: 75%
Kenya: 62%
Côte d'Ivoire / Zambia: 57%

Pushing for financial compensation from developed countries

42%

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Tanzania: 56%
Ghana: 54%
Gabon: 48%

* Missing values = Don't know

due to individual governments failing to take action (33%), and due to low international interest in addressing the issue (30%). This is further supported by COP28 outcomes that merely helped recognise challenges faced by African nations, but did not offer support to address those challenges.⁵ While a relatively smaller proportion of African youth feel lobbying by the oil and gas industry (21%) has stalled progress, a significant proportion of youth in Rwanda (36%) and Nigeria (34%) also feel that this has been a key issue hindering the international community from reaching their targets.

⁵ <https://www.wri.org/insights/vulnerable-countries-cop29-climate-action>

Environmental Issues

Beyond the broader issue of climate change, African youth also show great concern for specific environmental issues that are affecting their day-to-day lives, such as water scarcity and sanitation, the impact of plastic waste, and the poaching of wild animals in their country.

Water Scarcity and Sanitation

Of all the environmental issues presented to them, African youth are most concerned by water scarcity. Three-quarters (76%) report being 'very' or 'somewhat concerned', and the extent of current concern has remained consistent from 2022 (75%). Youth in South Africa (91%), Nigeria (86%), and Cameroon (84%) express the most pronounced levels of concern about water scarcity, while concern is lowest in Rwanda (47%) and Côte d'Ivoire (53%). South Africa is particularly vulnerable, ranking 22nd out of 164 countries for levels of water stress and is in the extremely high bracket, regularly using almost their entire water supply each year.⁶ South Africa's extreme vulnerability to climate change coupled with inefficient water usage, deteriorating water infrastructure and surging demand have resulted in towns and cities across the country struggling to deal with water scarcity.⁷

Exacerbating these high levels of concern, satisfaction with water and sanitation services and infrastructure in their country falls to under half of youth (47%), with this sentiment continuing to decline over time, from 51% in 2022 and 52% in 2020. At the country level, satisfaction among Rwandan youth (96%) stands out as a clear outlier that is significantly higher than all other countries. On the other hand, an overwhelmingly high proportion of those in Gabon (78%), Cameroon (78%) and Congo Brazzaville (69%) state that they are 'not at all' or 'not very satisfied' with the quality

⁶ <https://www.wri.org/insights/highest-water-stressed-countries>

⁷ <https://impact.economist.com/sustainability/resilience-and-adaptation/how-improving-institutions-can-help-solve-south-africas-water-crisis>

Factors Hindering Achievement of 1.5°C Global Warming Target

34% Too much focus on consensus building rather than action

TOP 3
Kenya: 46%
Ghana: 44%
Botswana /
South Africa: 40%

33% Individual governments failing to take action

TOP 3
Nigeria: 44%
Ghana / Malawi /
South Africa: 41%
Côte d'Ivoire: 40%

30% Low international interest in addressing the issue

TOP 3
Tanzania: 44%
Kenya: 39%
Botswana: 36%

24% Disputes over compensation for developing countries

TOP 3
Gabon /
Malawi: 31%
Kenya / Tanzania: 30%
Congo Br.: 29%

21% Inaction by Western governments

TOP 3
Côte d'Ivoire: 35%
Ethiopia: 31%
Gabon / Tanzania: 27%

21% Lobbying by the oil and gas industry

TOP 3
Rwanda: 36%
Nigeria: 34%
Gabon: 24%

of water and sanitation services and infrastructure in their countries.

Thinking about the availability of drinking water, the most common means of accessing clean water is with a tap/sink at home (56%), by a communal tap/sink in a shared building (36%), or from bottled water (30%). Drinking water from a tap in their house rises to around four-in-five youth in Kenya (80%), South Africa (79%) and Côte d'Ivoire (77%). However, whilst the majority (66%) of African youth report that they can 'very' or 'somewhat easily' access clean water on a day-to-day basis, this access comes with financial consequences. Two-in-five youth (40%) now report spending more than a quarter of their income on accessing clean water, a significant increase from a quarter of youth (26%) in 2022. The proportion of youth spending over half of their income on clean water has increased from one-in-ten (11%) in 2022 to nearly one-in-five (17%) in 2024. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization reports that those who are most vulnerable and disadvantaged often pay more for water services than their connected counterpart communities.⁸ Even in communities with water services, many members of the community are forced to buy bottled water due to concerns about the quality of the water they are receiving.⁹

8 <https://www.unesco.org/en/wwap/wwdr/2019>

9 <https://www.greenpeace.org/africa/en/blogs/51757/water-crisis-in-south-africa/>

WATER



76% <sup>75%
2022</sup> <sup>88%
2020</sup> are concerned about water scarcity

TOP 3 COUNTRIES
South Africa: 91%
Nigeria: 86%
Cameroon: 84%

Are you satisfied with water and sanitation in your country?

47%

HIGHEST DISSATISFACTION
Cameroon / Gabon: 78%
Congo Br.: 69%
Ghana: 66%

-2% from 2022
-5% from 2020

52%

+2% from 2022
+4% from 2020

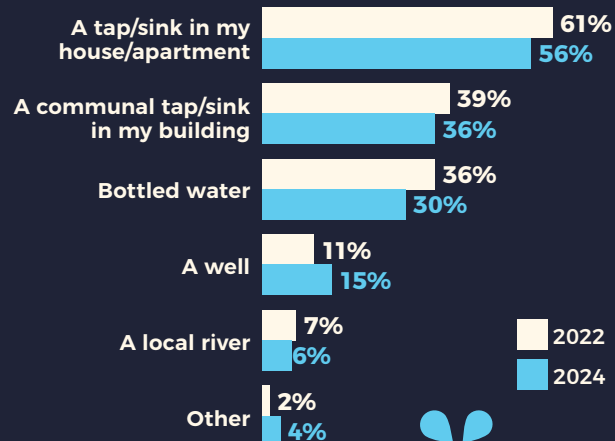
66% of youth can easily access clean water
Same as 2022
TOP 3 COUNTRIES
Rwanda: 91%; Côte d'Ivoire / Kenya: 87%; South Africa: 80%

40% <sup>+14%
from 2022</sup> spend more than a quarter of their income on clean water

spend more than a quarter of their income on clean water



Most Common Water Source



PLASTIC WASTE



72% say they are concerned about the issue

74%₂₀₂₂ 79%₂₀₂₀

HIGHEST CONCERNED

Cameroon: 88%
Kenya: 81%
South Africa / Zambia: 80%

LOWEST CONCERNED

Rwanda: 38%
Côte d'Ivoire: 55%
Namibia: 56%

How satisfied are you with your national government's performance on recycling?



46%

+5% from 2022

52%

-2% from 2022

DISSATISFACTION

BY COUNTRY

Ghana: 71%
Gabon: 69%
Cameroon: 65%
Congo Br.: 65%
Chad: 63%
Nigeria: 62%
Ethiopia: 57%
Zambia: 54%
South Africa: 48%
Malawi: 46%
Namibia: 43%
Tanzania: 42%
Botswana: 40%
Kenya: 37%
Côte d'Ivoire: 27%
Rwanda: 14%

Plastic waste

When thinking about the issue of plastic waste in their countries, concern among African youth is also very high. Tied to the reliance on bottled water as a source of drinking water, almost three-quarters (72%) of African youth state they are 'very' or 'somewhat concerned' about the issue, rising to nearly nine-in-ten youth in Cameroon (88%) and eight-in-ten youth in Kenya (81%), South Africa (80%) and Zambia (80%). With the UN's Environment Programme Finance Initiative estimating emerging economies in Africa to increase their use of plastics six fold in the next 40 years, continued high levels of concern will be reasonable.¹⁰ However, this concern about plastic waste drops to around three-in-five in Rwanda (38%) and around half of youth in Côte d'Ivoire (55%). While concern remains high overall, this has trended down from 79% in 2020 and 74% in 2022.

In parallel, while satisfaction with infrastructure and services for recycling sits at less than half of youth in 2024 (46%), this has trended up over time from 38% in 2020 and 41% in 2022. In comparison to satisfaction with all other infrastructure and service issues presented to youth in the study, satisfaction with recycling is the only one that is continuing to trend upwards from 2020. Youth in Rwanda (85%) and Côte d'Ivoire (72%) have the highest stated levels of satisfaction with recycling, while those in Ghana (71%) and Gabon (69%) are clearly looking for more to be done in this area as they have the highest levels of dissatisfaction with recycling services and infrastructure in their country.

¹⁰ <https://www.unepfi.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/UNEP-FI-Redirecting-Financial-Flows-to-end-Plastic-Pollution.pdf>

* Missing values = Don't know

POACHING

Poaching of wild animals

While African youth are less concerned about animal poaching compared to the other environmental issues presented in the study, concern is still high with a third (35%) reporting to be 'very concerned' and a further quarter (24%) 'somewhat concerned'. However, levels of concern are consistently trending down over time, from 72% in 2020 and 63% in 2022. Whilst concern for animal poaching is trending down, over half of African youth (51%) continue to report that recent years have seen an increase in the amount of poaching of wild animals in their country. This is especially high in Botswana with three-quarters (74%) of youth stating that levels of poaching are increasing.

Although it is widely accepted by youth that the poaching of wild animals leads to their extinction (66%), the proportion of youth that acknowledge poaching has certain benefits (e.g. protection communities, crops, and livestock) has increased from 42% in 2022 to 47% in 2024. In addition, the reliance on poaching as an income stream has increased significantly since 2022 (28%), with nearly two-in-five youth (37%) now reporting that their community relies on money or food from poaching to supplement their income. This reliance on poaching for financial benefits is particularly key in Ghana (58%) and Tanzania (57%). According to United for Wildlife and Conservation Through Public Health, despite the dampening effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on global demand for illegal wildlife commodities, the fall in tourism has led to traditional conservation efforts to struggle and demand for these products has begun to surge again. Additionally, wildlife criminals have started using more sophisticated tactics to combat increased laws and policies aimed at curbing the trade.¹¹

¹¹ <https://unitedforwildlife.org/news/illegal-wildlife-trade-post-covid/>
<https://ctph.org/the-pandemic-poachers/>

59% <sup>63%
2022</sup> <sup>72%
2020</sup> are concerned about the about poaching of wild animals

66%

-4% from 2022

The poaching of wild animals leads to their extinction

Botswana: 83%
Rwanda: 82%
Cameroon: 79%
Kenya: 79%
Zambia: 74%
Côte d'Ivoire: 73%
Tanzania: 71%
Namibia: 69%

Malawi: 68%
South Africa: 67%
Congo Br.: 66%
Ethiopia: 65%
Ghana: 57%
Gabon: 52%
Nigeria: 50%
Chad: 46%

47%

+5% from 2022

Poaching has certain benefits, such as protecting communities, crops, and livestock

Ghana: 65%
Tanzania: 58%
Malawi: 56%
Namibia: 53%

Gabon: 51%
Nigeria: 50%
Côte d'Ivoire: 48%
Zambia: 48%
Congo Br.: 47%
South Africa: 47%
Ethiopia: 44%
Botswana: 39%
Chad: 36%
Cameroon: 34%
Kenya: 33%
Rwanda: 21%

51%

-2% from 2022

Recent years have seen an increase in the amount of poaching of wild animals in my country

Botswana: 74%

Côte d'Ivoire: 69%

South Africa: 69%

Tanzania: 69%

Namibia: 66%

Ghana: 60%

Kenya: 62%

Malawi: 61%

Ethiopia: 56%

Zambia: 53%

Congo Br.: 51%

Gabon: 49%

Chad: 45%

Cameroon: 41%

Nigeria: 41%

Rwanda: 12%

37%

+9% from 2022

My community relies on money or food from poaching to supplement our income

Ghana: 58%

Tanzania: 57%

Côte d'Ivoire: 49%

Malawi: 49%

South Africa: 47%

Ethiopia: 43%

Namibia: 39%

Nigeria: 39%

Botswana: 38%

Congo Br.: 33%

Chad: 30%

Kenya: 29%

Zambia: 29%

Gabon: 25%

Cameroon: 18%

Rwanda: 18%



Professor Lee White - Leading African conservationist, climate scientist and former Minister of Environment of Gabon

AFRICAN YOUTH DEMAND CLIMATE ACTION

Professor Lee White has worked for 40 years as a field biologist and conservationist, across equatorial Africa, specifically in Gabon, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda and Rwanda. During his conservation career he participated in the creation of 53 new protected areas, authored 120 scientific articles in international peer-reviewed journals, as well as 7 books and raised over \$500 million to fund conservation and ecosystem management in Gabon and elsewhere in Central Africa.

On November 8, 2021, I was attending the high-level negotiations at COP26 in Glasgow, in my capacity as Gabon's environment minister. Gabon was chairing the African Group of Negotiators, so it was my responsibility to speak on behalf of over 1 billion people living on the continent that is most vulnerable to climate change. Africa's lead negotiators gave me two red lines to defend – concrete progress on the Global Goal on Adaptation, GCA and a commitment to

operationalise the Loss and Damage Fund. It was my 13th COP and knowing how fast things can fall apart at the UN climate change negotiations, I created a WhatsApp group to enable me to communicate in real time with all the African ministers in attendance.

To my dismay, one after another my fellow ministers announced on the group that they would be leaving before the last day of the meeting, scheduled to be Friday 12 November. By the Thursday there were only three Ministers left: myself, Keriako Tobiko, the Cabinet Secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry in Kenya and Yasmine Fouad, the Environment Minister in Egypt. Yasmine was co-chairing the ministerial negotiations on Finance, so only Keriako and I were there to represent Africa in the Ministerial consultations chaired by the UK's Alok Sharma.

Frankly it was embarrassing that only two of the 54 African Ministers considered it to be a priority to stay for the critical part of COP26, considering our much abused slogan that we are the continent that has contributed the least and will suffer the most because of climate change. If it had not been for Keriako's dogged support, I would have been a single, naturalized, white minister, negotiating for Africa's future. With support from Africa's dynamic, young negotiating team Keriako and I were able to defend our red lines. There was a commitment in Glasgow to double funding for adaptation and to advance the work on GCA and to work towards the creation of a fund for Loss and Damage.

In 2009, ahead of the Copenhagen COP, the great African statesman, Kofi Annan, Chair

of the Africa Progress Panel, warned us that half the nations on the continent have high or extreme risk of conflict as a result of climate change. It gives me hope that this report demonstrates that the majority of young people in Africa feel that climate change is a critical issue. Given Keriako's leadership when he was a government minister, it is perhaps not surprising that the highest concern was expressed by young people in Kenya. Sadly, I am not surprised by the low levels of satisfaction that most young people feel regarding the collective government action on this issue across the continent. Hopefully this report will underline the fact that African governments have to deliver action on climate, as well as on the environment in general, if they are to retain the confidence, and votes, of the majority of young people.

Africa is simply not viable in a world where the average temperature is on track to increase by 2 to 4 degrees Celsius by 2100. That would see some continental regions up to 10 degrees warmer and the resulting droughts will produce hundreds of millions of climate refugees, 80% of whom will be women and children. Our collective ambition to promote sustainable development in Africa and an effective global response to climate change will determine whether or not the continent's youth, potentially its greatest asset, have a viable future.

Our collective ambition to promote sustainable development in Africa and an effective global response to climate change will determine whether or not the continent's youth, potentially its greatest asset, have a viable future.



IMMIGRATION



Two-thirds of African youth express concern about asylum and immigration issues in their country, and many believe that illegal immigration results in the government diverting resources from citizens, increases crime, and leads to job losses for locals. Despite these concerns, the majority of African youth believe their country has a moral obligation to help refugees from neighbouring countries, although a growing minority opposes refugee entry due to perceived negative impacts.

66%
+1% from 2022

TOP 3 COUNTRIES
South Africa: 83%
Cameroon: 75%
Ethiopia / Malawi: 73%

of youth are **concerned** about
asylum and immigration

42%
TOP 3 COUNTRIES
Rwanda: 89%
Côte d'Ivoire: 68%
Tanzania: 65%

are **satisfied** with government
efforts to limit illegal
immigration

When asked how concerned they are about the issues of asylum and immigration in their country, two-thirds of African youth (66%) report feeling 'very' or 'somewhat concerned' and this has remained consistent overtime, where overall concern was reported at 66% in 2020 and 65% in 2022.

- **Highest concern for asylum and immigration:** South Africa (83%), Cameroon (75%), Ethiopia (73%), and Malawi (73%)
- **Lowest concern for asylum and immigration:** Rwanda (30%), Chad (53%), and Côte d'Ivoire (53%)

Concern for illegal immigration manifests as worry across a number of dimensions for youth in Africa. For instance, the majority of African youth feel that illegal immigration results in the government taking resources away from citizens (62%), that it drives up crime in their area (61%), and that illegal immigrants are taking the jobs of the locals (57%). Youth living in South Africa (87%) and Botswana (79%) express the greatest levels of agreement across all areas of concern, while those in Rwanda (36%) have the lowest levels of agreement. In addition, there is a significant majority of youth across Africa (59%) who agree that illegal immigrants should be forcefully removed from their country.

These high levels of concern with illegal immigration are met with low levels of satisfaction towards the performance of governments in limiting this issue. Just two-in-five (42%) state they are satisfied with their government's track record of preventing illegal immigrants from entering the country. Satisfaction with how their government is handling illegal immigration is lowest in the countries with greatest levels of concern on the issue. For instance, just a fifth of youth in Cameroon (20%) and a quarter of youth in South Africa (25%) state that they are 'very' or 'somewhat satisfied' with their government. With major migration travelling through the Sahel and up to key European transit countries like Tunisia after major disruptions in the region, it is understandable that youth are showing concern in their own countries.¹ In contrast, Rwandan youth are the least concerned (30%) about asylum and immigration in

¹ <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2024/07/tunisias-transformation-into-a-transit-hub-illegal-migration-and-policy-dilemmas?lang=en¢er=middle-east>



To what extent do you agree that illegal immigrants...

...are taking government resources away from citizens

62%

TOP 3:
South Africa: 88%
Botswana: 81%
Zambia: 76%



...are driving up crime in my area

61%

TOP 3:
South Africa: 86%
Botswana: 84%
Cameroon: 76%

...should be forcefully removed

59%

TOP 3:
South Africa: 85%
Botswana: 75%
Malawi / Zambia: 72%

... are taking the jobs of locals

57%

TOP 3:
South Africa: 88%
Botswana: 75%
Zambia: 70%

their country and in parallel show the highest levels of satisfaction (89%) towards the efforts of their government in limiting illegal immigration.

While there is clear concern towards the issues and specific impacts of asylum and immigration on their countries, the majority of African youth (63%) agree that their country has a moral obligation to help refugees from neighbouring countries regardless of their impact. However, there is a sizeable, growing minority that say refugees have a negative impact on their country and should not be allowed to enter, increasing from 27% in 2022 to 34% in 2024. There is near unanimous agreement among youth in Rwanda (93%) that they have a moral obligation to help refugees from neighbouring countries, with high levels of agreement also in Kenya (80%) and Cameroon (80%). On the other hand, nearly three-in-five South African youth believe refugees should not be allowed to enter the country due to the negative impacts they bring.

My country has a moral obligation to help refugees from neighbouring countries regardless of their impact

63%
-3% from 2022

TOP 3 'MORAL OBLIGATION':
Rwanda: 93%
Cameroon / Kenya: 80%
Botswana: 76%

Refugees have a negative impact and should not be allowed to enter my country

34%
+7% from 2022

TOP 3 'NEGATIVE IMPACT':
South Africa: 56%
Tanzania: 45%
Gabon / Ghana: 42%

* Missing values = Don't know

YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Chiedza Juru - Founder and President, Annot Inc.

The Africa Youth Survey reveals confidence among African youth about their future. Notably, 78% of youth have a clear vision for their life goals, with especially high confidence in Chad, Rwanda, Kenya, and Zambia. This optimism extends to entrepreneurial ambitions, reflecting a generation eager to shape their destiny. However, challenges such as unemployment, corruption and limited access to capital continue to impede progress. As the Founder and President of Annot Inc., I am dedicated to addressing these barriers through education and youth empowerment, leveraging the African diaspora's support.

The survey highlights the urgent issue of youth unemployment, with 73% of respondents struggling to find jobs. Corruption is a significant barrier, cited by 40% of youth, along with a lack of well-paying jobs (29%) and inadequate government support (27%). These findings reveal a gap between the aspirations of African youth and the actions of their governments. While youth are eager to shape their futures, systemic obstacles hinder their progress. This calls for innovative solutions to bridge this gap and foster an environment where young people can thrive.

Enhancing access to capital is crucial for addressing youth unemployment. The World Economic Forum notes that Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) contribute about 50% of GDP in Sub-Saharan Africa and provide over 80% of the continent's jobs. As such youth entrepreneurship is critical to economic development, yet the survey indicates that 52% of youth view a lack of capital as the main barrier to starting a business; with 45% saying they would start a business if they had the funds. This issue can be tackled by promoting venture capital led by Africans locally and in the diaspora. The Venture Capital Africa Report (March 2024) reveals a significant downturn in Africa's venture capital ecosystem in 2023, due to a global decrease in startup funding. This shortfall forced many early-stage companies to cut back or close. The exit of North American investors, accounting for half of



Chiedza Juru is the Founder and President of Annot Inc., a non-profit 501(c)(3) dedicated to unlocking the potential of young people through education, youth empowerment, and diaspora engagement. With over a decade of experience as an education and youth development specialist, she has spearheaded innovative programmes that have benefited thousands of students in East and Southern Africa. As the former Chairperson of the Zimbabwe Youth Council Board, Chiedza played a pivotal role in shaping national youth policies, including the National Youth Policy and the Youth Bill, which have positively impacted young people in Zimbabwe. A graduate of the Harvard Kennedy School of Government with a Master's in Public Administration and a Chartered Accountant by profession, Chiedza is deeply committed to empowering African children and youth.

the investment drop, underscores the cyclical nature of foreign investment in Africa. This highlights the urgent need for committed local investors who can support African entrepreneurs long-term. By investing in young entrepreneurs, Africans and the diaspora can spark job creation and economic growth.

At Annot Inc., we harness the power of the African diaspora to drive meaningful change. Our initiatives connect African youth with resources and mentorship from diaspora professionals, offering both financial support and valuable expertise. The diaspora plays a crucial role in fostering youth entrepreneurship on the continent. By leveraging their skills, networks, and resources, diaspora members contribute significantly to job creation and economic development. Initiatives such as diaspora bonds and investment funds can channel resources into impactful projects benefiting local communities. Additionally, diaspora professionals can serve as mentors and role models, sharing their experiences to inspire and guide the next generation of African business leaders. This investment and mentorship from the diaspora are essential for building a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem capable of sustaining long-term growth.

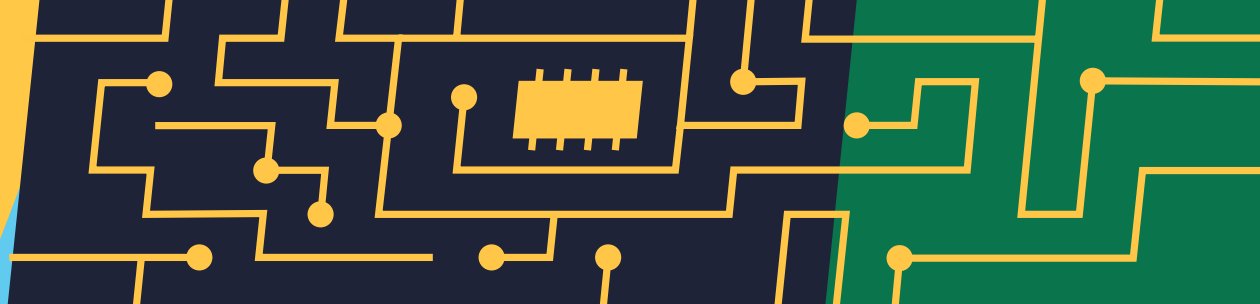
To further boost youth entrepreneurship and enhance diaspora participation in economic development, African governments can implement several key policies. Firstly, governments should create incentives for diaspora investment, such as tax breaks and streamlined regulations for diaspora-led businesses. Secondly, establishing dedicated entrepreneurship funds and grants for young people can ease financial barriers. Additionally, governments can foster

public-private partnerships to develop incubation centres and innovation hubs that support young entrepreneurs. Finally, enhancing transparency and eliminating corruption in funding allocation will ensure that resources are used effectively to support and grow local businesses.

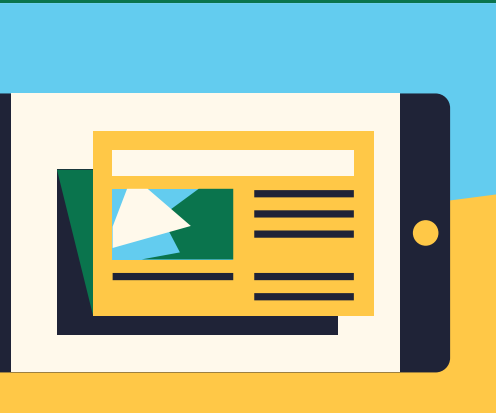
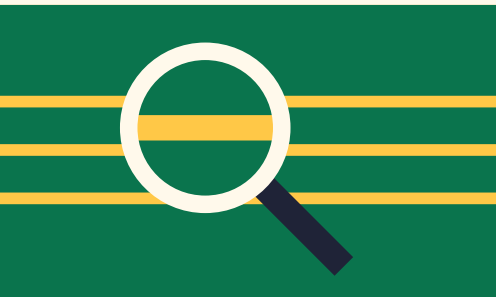
The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is a game-changer for African youth. By opening up borders and promoting intra-African trade, it creates new opportunities for businesses and entrepreneurs. Youth can now access larger markets, diversify their products, and scale their operations across the continent. This not only boosts job creation but also fosters economic integration and collaboration. There is a need to fast-track the implementation of the AfCFTA.

Consideration to emigrate is increasingly top of mind for the majority of African youth, with nearly three-in-five (58%) saying they are likely to consider emigrating to another country in the next three years. The phenomenon of "brain drain" has long been a concern for Africa, with talented individuals leaving the continent in search of better opportunities. However, we can turn this challenge into an advantage by promoting "brain gain." By encouraging collaboration with diaspora professionals and creating conducive environments for their contributions, we can harness their expertise for the continent's development.

The Africa Youth Survey paints a picture of a generation ready to take control of their future but hindered by systemic challenges. By addressing these barriers through innovative solutions and leveraging the power of the African diaspora, we can create a brighter future for African youth.



TECHNOLOGY



Internet connectivity is seen as a fundamental human right, but only two-in-three have regular, private internet access. The proportion who say mobile data is affordable is growing and more can afford it regularly, and in parallel smartphone usage has increased with two-thirds saying they use it for 3 or more hours a day and a third saying they spend more time online than they would like to. Views towards online dating are mixed, and while AI is seen as a force for good and positive progress, many still worry that it can do more harm than good.



The African Youth Survey 2024 has illuminated several critical insights into how Africa's youth engage with technology, their perspectives on its impact, and the role it plays in their lives. This chapter delves deeper into these findings, exploring the nuances of youth interaction with technology across different countries and contexts. One of the most compelling findings is that approximately four-in-five (79%) young Africans view WiFi and the ability to connect to the internet as a fundamental human right. This sentiment, which has returned to pre-COVID levels, is particularly strong in Nigeria (93%), Rwanda (92%), Côte d'Ivoire (91%), and Ghana (90%), where over nine-in-ten youth endorse this view. The importance placed on internet connectivity underscores the role of digital access in shaping the opportunities and experiences of African youth today.

WiFi and Connecting to the Internet is a Fundamental Human Right



79%
AGREE

TOP 3 COUNTRIES
Nigeria: 93%
Rwanda: 92%
Côte d'Ivoire: 91%

70%
2022

78%
2020





Do you have regular, private access to the internet (workplace excluded)?

TOP 3 COUNTRIES
Nigeria: 92%
Kenya: 87%
Zambia: 85%

67%

64%₂₀₂₂ 68%₂₀₂₀

30%

34%₂₀₂₂ 31%₂₀₂₀

* Missing values = Don't know

55%

are satisfied with telecommunications and data networks

56%₂₀₂₂ 68%₂₀₂₀

TOP 3 COUNTRIES
Rwanda: 95%
Kenya: 80%
Côte d'Ivoire: 76%



However, despite this belief in the essential nature of internet access, satisfaction with telecommunications and data services has declined significantly from 68% in 2020 to 56% in 2022 and now 55% in 2024. While two-thirds (67%) of youth report having regular, private internet access, this has not improved from 68% in 2020, highlighting the clear need for improvements in service quality. This is evident in countries like Cameroon (28%), Chad (33%), and Gabon (35%), where around a third of the youth express satisfaction with their

telecommunications and data networks, reinforcing the gap between the perceived importance of internet access and the reality of service provision on the ground.

- **Highest satisfaction with telecommunications and data networks:** Rwanda (95%), Kenya (80%), and Côte d'Ivoire (76%)
- **Lowest satisfaction with telecommunications and data networks:** Cameroon (28%), Chad (33%), and Gabon (35%)

When examining the cost of internet usage, the proportion of youth who perceive the cost of mobile data as 'a bargain' or 'a fair price' has increased significantly from 31% in 2022 to 41% in 2024. In parallel, half of youth can afford data for 20 days or more a month, with the proportion of youth who cannot afford mobile data coverage at all in a month dropping from a fifth (22%) in 2022 to one-in-ten (10%) in 2024. However, affordability varies across countries. In Cameroon (79%), Ethiopia (76%), and Nigeria (74%), around three-quarters of youth find the cost of data high, while in Côte d'Ivoire four-in-five (80%) perceive it as a bargain or fairly priced. Youth in Côte d'Ivoire are also most likely to be able to afford data for 20 days or more per month (70%), however, nearly half (48%) of youth in Chad cannot afford data at any time in a month. These disparities underscore the diverse range of barriers that can limit digital engagement among youth, even when access is available.

I can afford mobile data coverage for...

	2022	2024
At all times	13%	21%
20-30 days per month	20%	28%
10-19 days per month	22%	26%
Less than 10 days per month	23%	16%
I cannot afford at all times	22%	10%

41% **+10%**
from 2022

find the price of data to be 'fair' or 'a bargain'

TOP 3 COUNTRIES
Côte d'Ivoire: 80%
Kenya: 64%
Ghana: 58%



77%

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Rwanda: 96%

Kenya: 92%

Botswana / Nigeria / South Africa: 84%

approve of providing free high-speed WiFi in all major cities

76%

TOP 3 COUNTRIES

Rwanda: 96%

Kenya: 90%

Nigeria: 89%

approve of expanding high speed internet to 60% of country



Daily Smartphone Usage

>1 hour

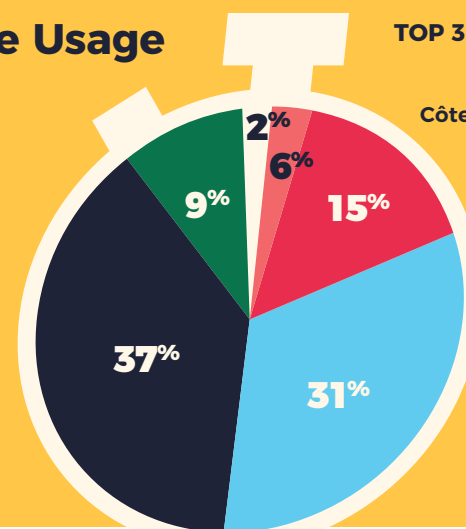
1-2 hours

3-4 hours

4< hours

No smartphone

Don't know



TOP 3 COUNTRIES

'3+ HOURS':

Nigeria: 90%

Côte d'Ivoire: 88%

Kenya: 82%

Looking ahead to the next five years, there is overwhelming support among African youth towards improving internet access. Three-quarters approve of policies aimed at providing free, high-speed wifi in all major cities (77%) and expanding high-speed internet coverage to 60% of the country, with the strongest support found in Rwanda and Kenya. These high levels of approval suggest a shared recognition among youth of the transformative potential of digital connectivity for individual and societal advancement.

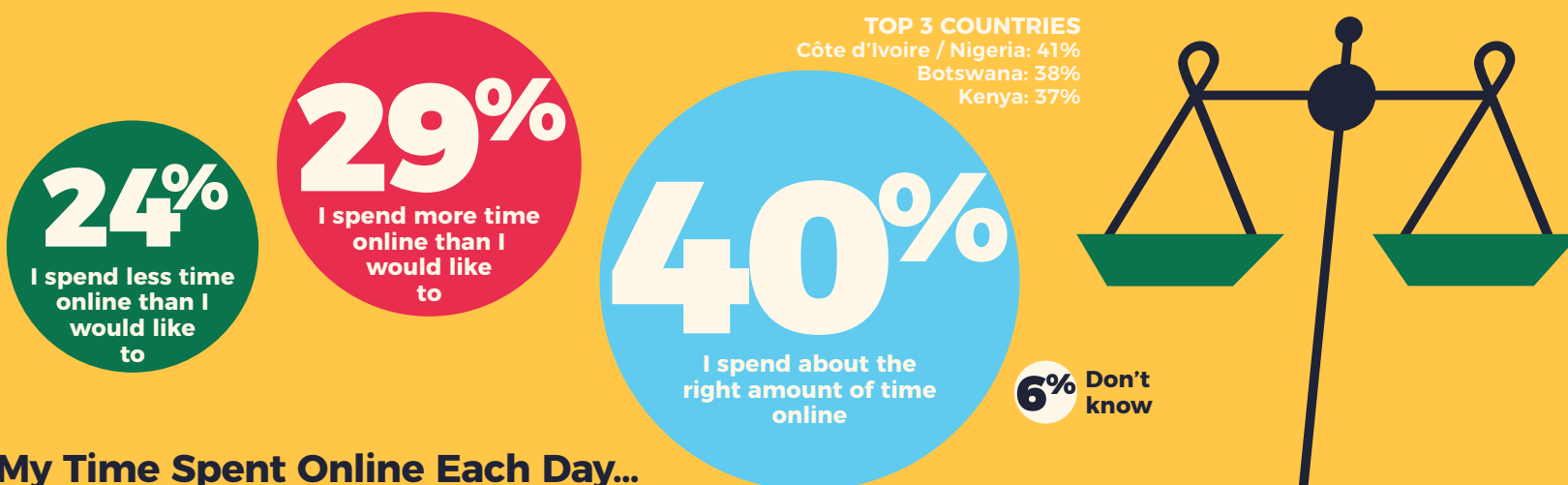
In terms of digital technology usage, daily smartphone use is increasing with two-thirds (68%) of youth now spending three hours or more per day on their phones. This has risen

significantly from 55% in 2022 and 51% in 2020. At the country level, over four-in-five Kenyan youth (82%) spend three or more hours on their phones per day, rising to around nine-in-ten among youth in Nigeria (90%) and Côte d'Ivoire (88%). On the other hand, in Malawi, a sizable and alarming proportion (25%) of youth say they do not own a smartphone. When thinking about feelings towards their daily online usage, while most youth say they spend less time online than they would like (24%) or about the right amount of time online (40%), nearly three-in-ten (29%) feel they spend more time online than they would like to. However, most youth feel that their time spent online each day either has no effect on their mental (45%) and physical health (49%), or improves

their mental (32%) and physical health (28%). Nonetheless, a sizable minority express concern that time spent online each day worsens both their mental (16%) and physical health (16%). Social media apps (74%) continue to be the most frequently used applications, underscoring the importance of these platforms in the daily lives of African youth. These digital spaces serve not only as sources of information and entertainment but also as platforms for self-expression, civic engagement, and community building. Multimedia (39%), productivity apps (32%), and commuting apps (30%) are other frequently used apps by youth.

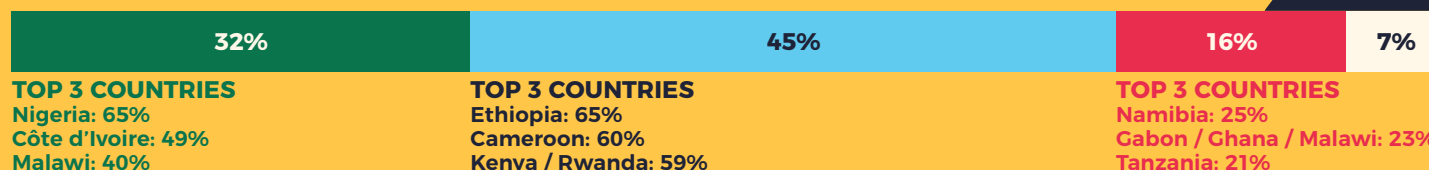
As digital platforms continue to rise, they have begun to significantly influence the social interactions of African youth, particularly in the realm of dating. Online dating apps have gained traction, with over three-in-five (62%) youth believing these platforms allow them to meet a range of people they would not have met otherwise. This is reinforced by the majority of youth (55%) preferring online dating apps to match them with a range of people regardless of identity or culture, with just over a third (35%) wanting matches to be tailored based on their identity or culture. However, there are proportions of youth that are less open to dating apps. Nearly three-in-five (57%) feel that these apps are disrupting social norms and traditional dating, and just under half (49%) agree their family would accept a partner met through an online dating app. Despite this concern, there appears to be a general openness towards these platforms, indicating a shift in societal attitudes driven by technology.

Feelings Towards Daily Online Usage

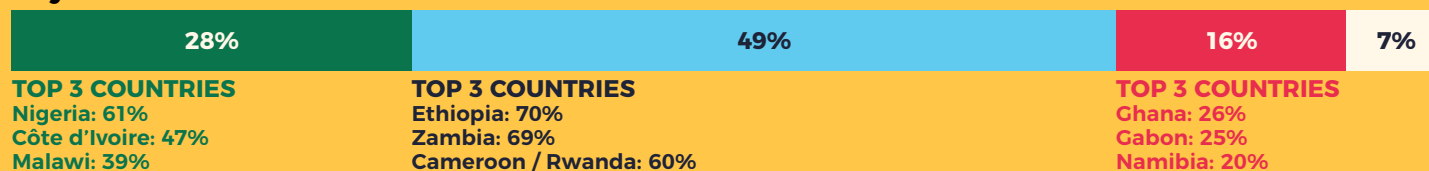


My Time Spent Online Each Day...

Mental Health

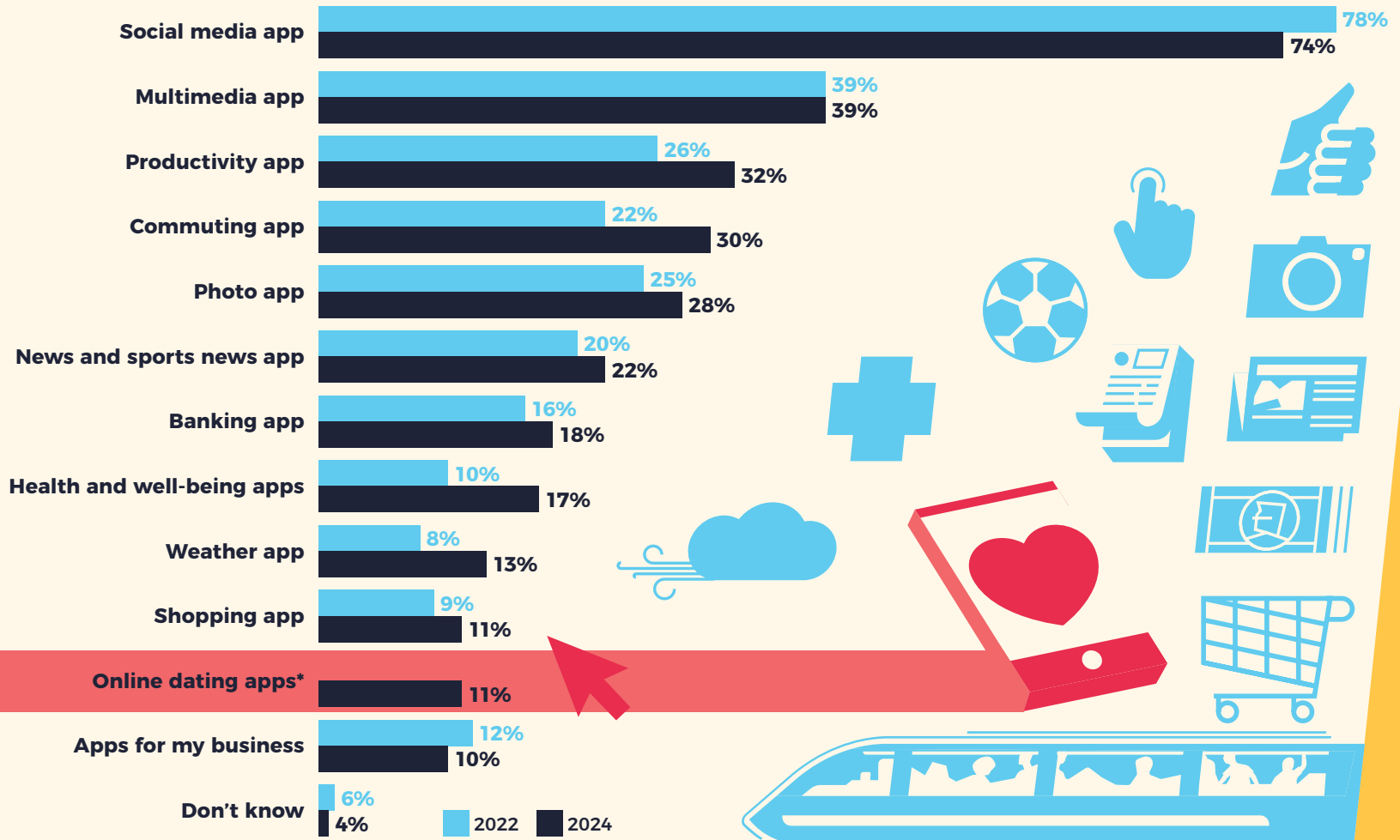


Physical Health



Improves my health | Has no effect on my health | Worsens my health | Don't know

Most Frequently Used Apps on Smartphone



*Added in 2024 study, so historical data not available

Attitudes Towards Online Dating Apps

Online dating apps allow me to meet a range of people I would have never met before **62%**

I would be open to meeting others through online dating apps **57%**

Online dating apps are ruining social norms and traditional dating **57%**

My friends and peers are using online dating apps **56%**

My family would be accepting of someone I met through an online dating app **49%**

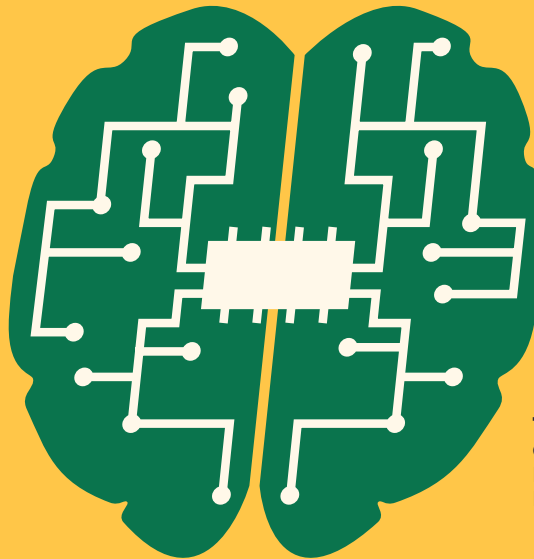
Around three-in-five think dating apps allow them to meet a range of people. Over half are open to using them or say their friends already use them.

This intersection of technology and social interaction extends to the realm of artificial intelligence (AI). Over half (51%) of the youth see AI as a force for good and progress, especially in Nigeria (72%) and Rwanda (62%). However, AI also brings challenges. Nearly two-in-five (38%) of youth feel AI can cause more harm than good, and there are concerns about AI's potential to exacerbate the spread of fake news, with seven-in-ten (71%) expressing worry about this issue.

Technology plays a pivotal role in the lives of African youth. They see it as a fundamental right, integral to their daily routines and social interactions. However, issues such as service quality, cost, and the potential misuse of advanced technologies like AI are areas of concern. Looking towards the future, it is crucial for policymakers, the private sector, and civil society to address these challenges to fully harness the potential of technology in empowering Africa's youth. This will not only enhance Afro-optimism but also ensure that the continent's digital revolution brings about equitable progress. It is through such concerted efforts that we can ensure the digital landscape of Africa is shaped in a way that truly benefits its youth, paving the way for a brighter and more connected future.

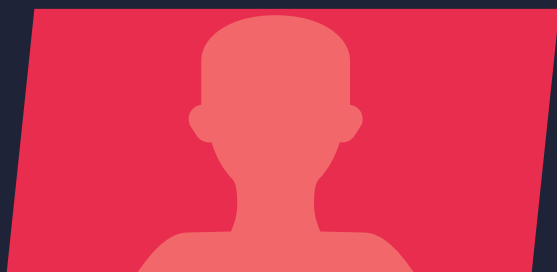
51% say artificial intelligence is mostly a force for good and positive progress

TOP 3 COUNTRIES
Rwanda: 72%
Nigeria: 62%
Chana / Tanzania: 55%



38% say artificial intelligence can often cause more harm than good

TOP 3 COUNTRIES
Gabon: 48%
Kenya: 47%
Botswana: 46%



71%

worry that AI makes it easier to create and spread fake news

TOP 3 COUNTRIES
Rwanda: 87%
South Africa: 83%
Kenya: 79%

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND INCLUSIVITY – KEY TO THE FUTURE OF AFRICA’S YOUTH

Dr. Ozak Ejiofor (née Esu), is a Nigerian Chartered Electronics & Electrical Engineer and STEM Ambassador. Inspired by childhood electricity scarcity, she pioneered wind energy damage detection technology and earned international acclaim for her engineering contributions and efforts to inspire youth in STEM careers.

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated digital adoption, emphasizing connectivity and exposing the digital divide. Highlighted by the World Bank and now with the 2024 African Youth Survey, Africa’s digital needs for people, businesses and even governments, have become painfully evident, with a class of people left behind, lacking access, opportunity and skills.

Today, Africa’s youth strive to access better technology to fulfil their dreams and potential. Most are tech-savvy and active on social media, despite the challenge of consistent internet access. They firmly believe in universal internet access, with four out of five African youth considering it a fundamental human right, according to the study. Additionally, three out of four want their governments to provide free high-speed internet access in major cities and expand coverage in less populated areas.

This perspective aligns with the global recognition that internet access plays a significant role in safeguarding basic human rights.

More young Africans now perceive mobile data as affordable. Approximately half can afford data for 20 or more days a month. Consequently, smartphone usage has surged, with two-thirds of respondents using data for three or more hours daily. Interestingly, one in three admits to spending more time online than desired, with social media remaining the dominant use for the internet in Africa.

However, only one in eight African youth can afford data consistently and just two-thirds have regular, private internet access. Encouragingly, the percentage of those unable to afford mobile data coverage at all has decreased from 21 percent in 2022 to 10 percent in 2024. Sub-Saharan African nations have faced the highest mobile data prices globally, approximately four times higher than rates in northern Africa and two and a half times those in Western Europe. Both price and service availability pose barriers to wider internet usage, and many African governments have yet to ensure affordable, universal internet access. Consequently, satisfaction with



telecommunications and data services has declined from 68 percent in 2020 to 55 percent today. Notably, some countries perform well in this regard: youth satisfaction with internet access stands at 95 percent in Rwanda, 80 percent in Kenya and 76 percent in Côte d'Ivoire. Conversely, satisfaction rates are significantly lower in Gabon (35 percent), Chad (33 percent) and Cameroon (28 percent).

The survey also explored young Africans' views on artificial intelligence (AI). While over half see AI as a force for good and positive progress, others express concern. Three in eight believe that AI can do more harm than good and over seven in ten worries about its potential to exacerbate the spread of fake news. These concerns underscore the delicate balance between the benefits and risks of digitisation. Emerging technologies like AI, automation and smart cities enhance our lives, but digitisation also exposes countries to vulnerabilities such as cyber espionage, critical infrastructure sabotage and crime. Historically, Africa contributed negligibly to overall internet traffic, rendering its systems less vulnerable to sophisticated cyberattacks. However, as the continent becomes more digitally connected, governments must adopt proactive, strategic approaches to mitigate these risks.

Africa stands at a pivotal moment where thoughtful digital strategies can propel progress while safeguarding against potential threats. To achieve this, African governments can take specific actions to drive digital transformation while simultaneously addressing the challenges posed by digitisation:

- **Invest in digital infrastructure:** Prioritise building robust digital infrastructure, including high-speed broadband internet access, data centres and reliable communication networks. Foster public-private partnerships to accelerate infrastructure development.
- **Promote digital literacy:** Launch nationwide digital literacy campaigns to empower citizens with essential

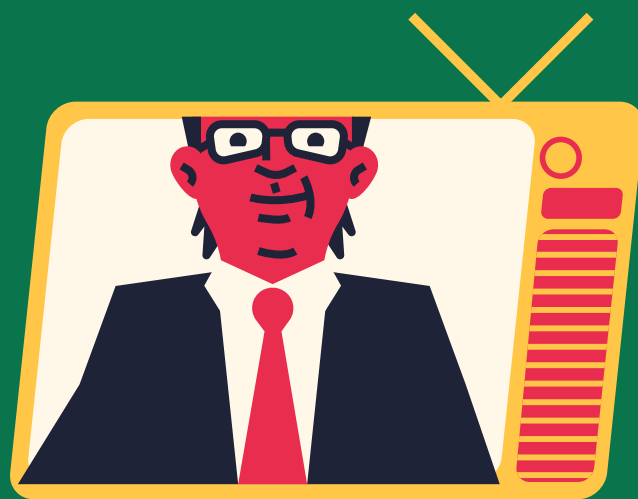
digital skills. Invest in educational programmes that teach coding, cybersecurity and data literacy. Promote Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) careers in academia and industry, through role models.

- **Support local innovations:** Create innovation hubs, incubators and accelerators to nurture homegrown tech startups. Offer incentives for research and development in emerging technologies.
- **Strengthen cybersecurity measures:** Develop comprehensive cybersecurity policies and regulations. Collaborate with international partners to enhance threat intelligence sharing.
- **Leverage data for decision-making:** Encourage data-driven governance by collecting, analysing and using data effectively. Ensure privacy protections while maximizing data utilisation.
- **Promote e-Government services:** Digitise government services to improve efficiency, transparency and accessibility. Implement online platforms for citizen engagement and feedback.
- **Collaborate regionally:** Work with neighbouring countries to harmonise digital policies and standards. Jointly address cross-border challenges like cybercrime and digital trade.

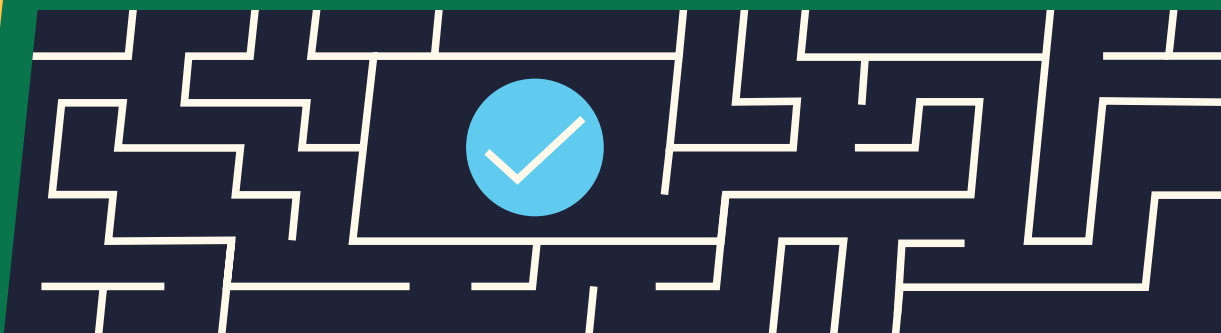
African governments need to think big on digital transformation, and the time for growth and action is now!

The work ahead is ambitious and bold, and when achieved, it can truly transform the way people, businesses, and governments collaborate to fast-track economic transformation for both the present and future generations.

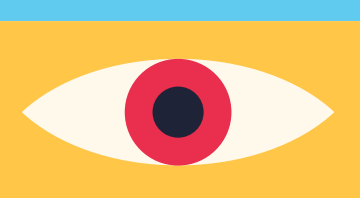
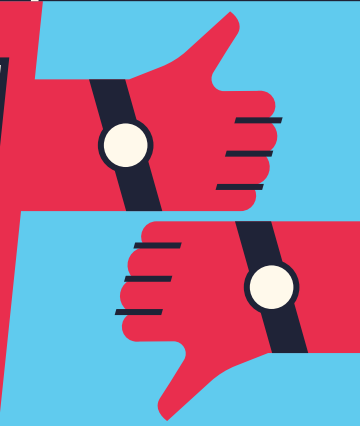
Let's act together for a brighter future.



NEWS È MEDIA



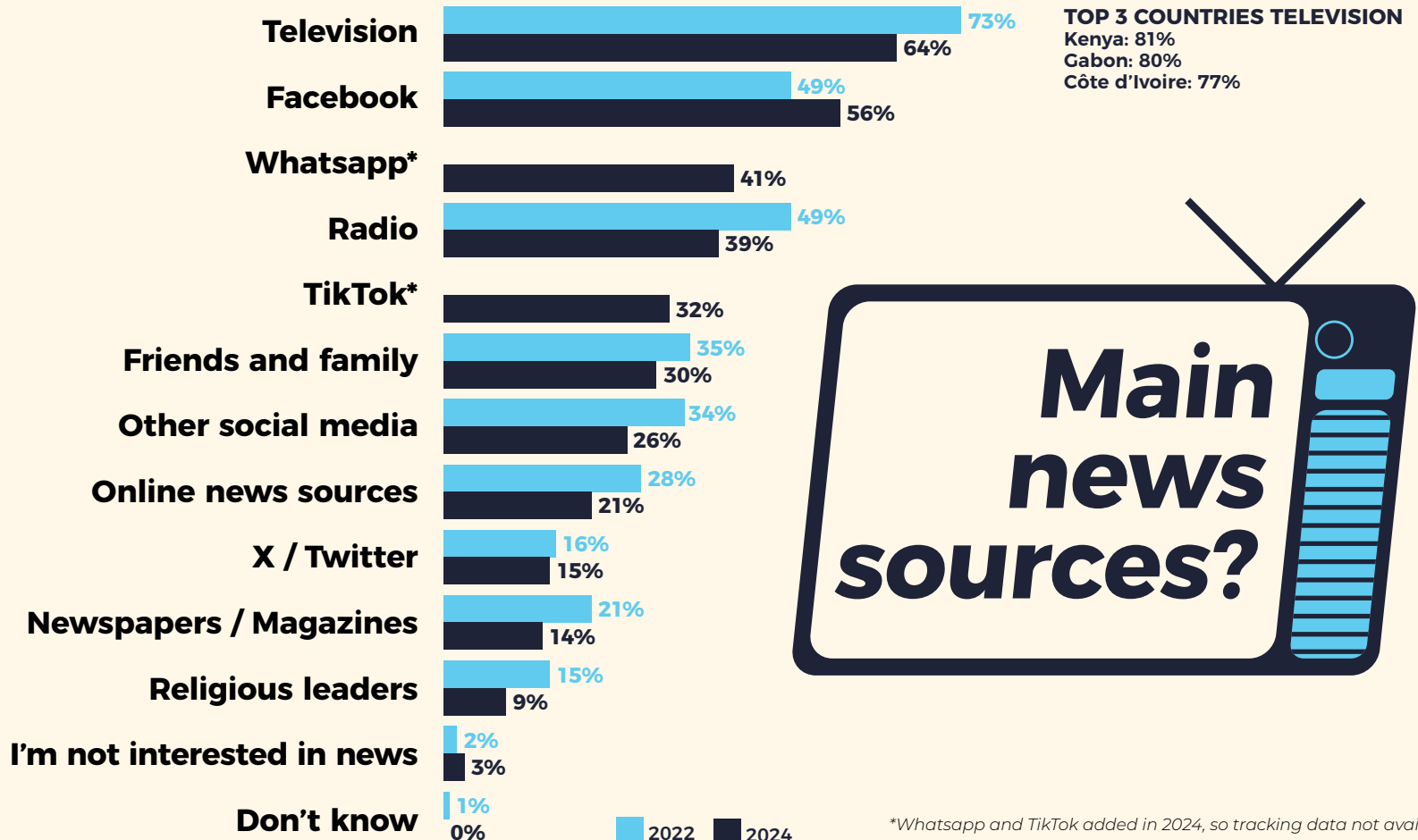
FAKE NEWS



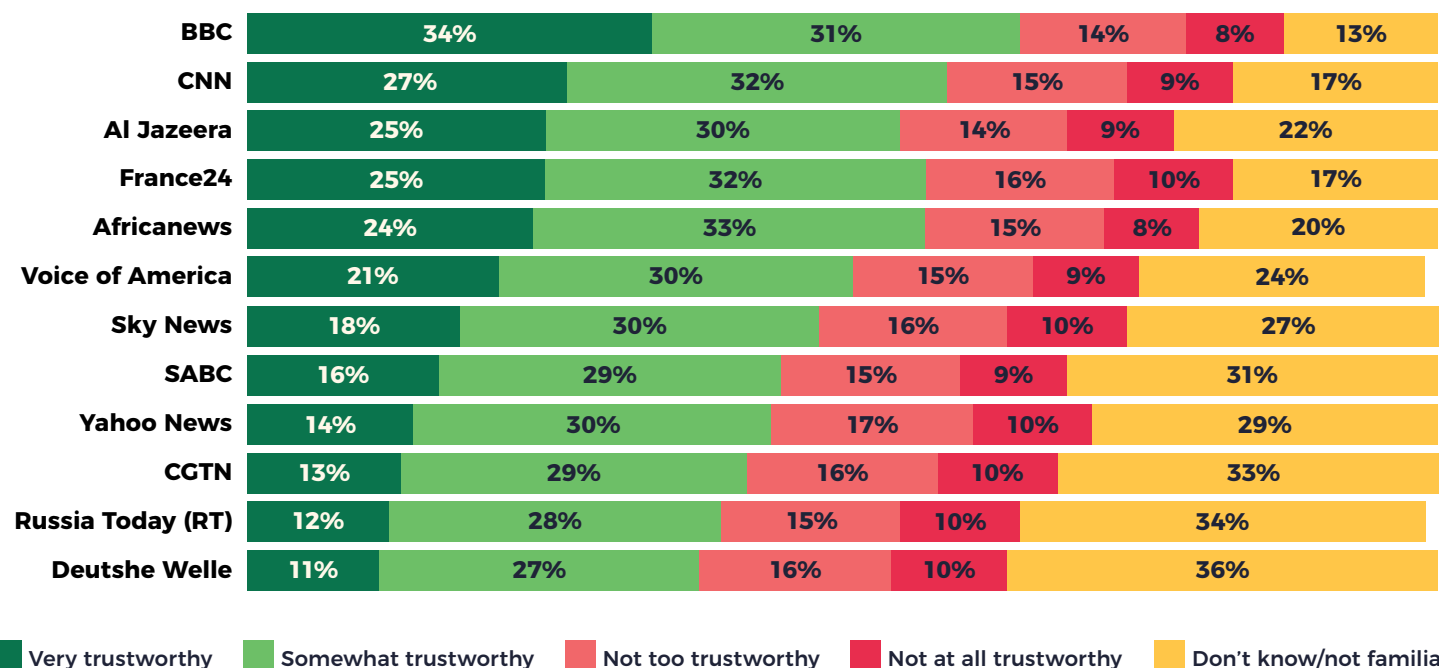
Television remains the primary news source for African youth, but more are turning to Facebook, WhatsApp, and TikTok for news, reflecting a global trend towards online social media as a news source. However, this shift has led to increased exposure to fake news, with nearly half of African youth encountering it more than once a week. BBC, CNN, and Al Jazeera are cited as the most trustworthy news sources.

When asked what sources youth use to get their news, television remains top of the list (64%), albeit with a significant decline since 2022 (73%). Likewise, use of radio as a news source (39%) has also seen a significant decline since 2022 (49%). Instead, African youth are increasingly relying on Facebook as a source of news, with over half of young people overall (56%) reporting using it 2024, compared to 49% in 2022. A survey option for the first time in 2024. Whatsapp (41%) and TikTok (32%) also score very highly as sources of news for young people. This data reflects a global trend of young people moving away from traditional media outlets, and towards online social media as a source of news.

- **Most likely to use television for news:** Kenya (81%), Gabon (80%), and Côte d'Ivoire(77%).
- **Most likely to use Facebook for news:** Gabon (74%), Nigeria (70%), and Cameroon (65%).
- **Most likely to use Whatsapp for news:** Gabon (59%), Nigeria (58%), and South Africa (54%).
- **Most likely to use radio for news:** Rwanda (68%), Malawi (65%), and Chad (55%).



Trustworthiness of News Sources



Fake News

Likely a result of this trend towards digital online media, African youth are increasingly claiming to be highly exposed to fake news, with nearly half (45%) reporting to come across fake news more than once a week compared to 36% in 2022. Fake news is seen to be impacting the ability of African youth to stay informed about issues (66%), and this is felt most strongly in South Africa (80%), Zambia (78%), and Côte d'Ivoire (78%). When asked which news outlets they trust the most, BBC (65%), CNN (59%) and Al Jazeera (55%) are cited as the most trustworthy sources of news, while Chinese Global TV (42%), Russia Today (40%), and Deutsche Welle (38%) are the least trusted news outlets. Around a quarter of youth say they find each news source in the study not trustworthy, though familiarity of the media outlets is a likely driver of this sentiment. The COVID-19 Pandemic left many traditional news sources in disarray as their main source of revenue: Advertisements sales and events, disappeared. With traditionally trusted media outlets gone, the journalism space has been left wide-open for less reliable sources.¹

¹ <https://www.ned.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Pandemic-Struggle-Media-Sustainability-Africa-Olorunyomi.pdf>

Additionally, fake news is also felt to be associated with a host of wider societal issues. A significant majority of African youth agree that fake news is a serious problem in their community (75%), and that fake news has led to a greater divide in their society (71%). There are also beliefs that various organisations utilise fake news to deliberately push their own agenda. Around seven-in-ten youth agree that terrorist organisations (72%), politicians (71%), and foreign governments (69%) leverage fake news as a tool to push their agendas, and three-in-five youth (61%) think religious organisations do the same.

Tied to the high levels of concern about fake news and its wider societal impacts, the majority of African youth (62%) are concerned about the potential for misinformation campaigns and fake news to affect upcoming elections in their country. This concern is felt most acutely in Nigeria (85%), South Africa (79%), Ethiopia (77%), and Zambia (75%), while youth living in Cameroon (25%) and Chad (31%) are the least concerned about the impact of misinformation and fake news on elections in their country.

The proportion of youth who say they have come across fake news multiple times a week has risen to nearly half

FAKE NEWS

	2022	2024
At least once a day	17%	22%
2-3 times a week	19%	23%
Once a week or less	21%	21%
Once a month or less	24%	20%
Never	12%	10%
Don't know	8%	5%



Impact of Fake News on Society

Fake news is a serious problem in my community today **75%** +3 from 2022

Ethiopia / Rwanda: 86%; Zambia 84%; South Africa 83%

Terrorist / criminal orgs deliberately share fake news to push their agenda **72%** -1 from 2022

Rwanda: 82%; South Africa: 81%; Kenya / Nigeria: 79%

Fake news has led to greater divide within my society **71%** -6 from 2022

Ethiopia: 83%; Kenya: 80%; Nigeria: 79%

Politicians deliberately share fake news to push their agenda **71%** -5 from 2022

Nigeria: 89%; Kenya / South Africa: 82%; Zambia: 78%

Foreign governments deliberately share fake news to push their agenda* **69%**

South Africa: 80%; Kenya / Nigeria: 77%; Zambia: 74%

Fake news impacts my ability to stay informed about issues **66%** -5 from 2022

South Africa: 80%; Côte d'Ivoire / Zambia: 78%; Chad: 75%

Religious organisations deliberately share fake news to push their agenda **61%** +7 from 2022

South Africa: 77%; Botswana: 69%; Kenya: 68%

*Added in 2024, no tracked data available

62% TOP 3 COUNTRIES
Nigeria: 85%
South Africa: 79%
Ethiopia: 77%

say they are **concerned** about misinformation campaigns and fake news impacting elections





GETTING IT FROM THE SOURCE

Gomotsegang is a writer and storyteller with a passion for social justice, art, and music. She holds a BA in Political Studies & International Relations from the University of the Witwatersrand. When she's not crafting compelling narratives, you can find her head buried in a captivating book.

Gomotsegang Motswatswe, Account Director, Burson

In an era where information flows as freely as water, African youth are proving to be more discerning than ever before. Gone are the days when we could assume young people would blindly consume whatever content came their way. The latest African Youth Survey paints a picture of a generation that's not only tech-savvy but also increasingly critical of the information they encounter, demonstrating a nuanced understanding of the evolving media landscape.

Let's face it: social media has become as much a part of our daily lives as our morning coffee. But here's the kicker – while platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, and TikTok are becoming go-to news sources for many young Africans, they're not falling for the fake news trap as easily as one might think. This generation, raised in the digital age, is developing a keen sense for separating fact from fiction.

While television still reigns supreme when it comes to news consumption (64%), there's been a significant drop from 73% in 2022. Similarly, radio has also seen a decline as a primary news source, down to 39% from 49% in 2022. This shift away from traditional media is mirrored in the rise of social media platforms as news sources, reflecting a global trend of young people seeking information from spaces they find relatable and engaging. In Gabon, for instance, a whopping 74% of youth are turning to Facebook for their daily dose of current events, compared to a still significant 70% in Nigeria. And let's not forget about WhatsApp – in South Africa, more than half of young people are getting their news updates through the messaging app. Interestingly, while still trailing Facebook, both WhatsApp (41%) and TikTok (32%) are emerging as significant players in the news landscape for young people, demonstrating the rapid evolution of how information is disseminated and consumed.

But here's where it gets interesting. Despite this digital pivot, our youth aren't naively swallowing everything they see online. They're acutely aware of the fake news epidemic, with nearly half (44%) reporting encounters with misinformation more than once a week, a marked increase from 36% in 2022. It's a digital minefield out there, and they know it. This exposure to fake news is having a tangible impact, with 66% of youth believing it affects their ability to stay informed, a sentiment felt most strongly in South Africa (80%), Zambia (78%), and

Côte d'Ivoire (78%). These numbers highlight the urgency for media literacy initiatives tailored to the specific challenges of the digital age.

So, where are they turning for reliable information? The old guards of international news – BBC, CNN, and Al Jazeera – are still holding strong as the most trusted sources, cited by 65%, 59%, and 55% of youth respectively. It seems that in a world of clickbait and sensationalism, there's still a place for established journalism, with its emphasis on fact-checking and balanced reporting. Conversely, trust in outlets like Chinese Global TV (32%), Russia Today (30%), and Deutsche Welle (39%) remains low, highlighting a potential scepticism towards certain international narratives and a preference for news sources perceived as less biased.

But let's not sugarcoat it – fake news is a real problem, and African youth are feeling its impact. Three-quarters (75%) believe it's causing serious issues in their communities, and even more (71%) think it's widening societal divides, eroding trust and hindering constructive dialogue. They're not blind to the tactics either, recognising that everyone from politicians (71%) to religious organisations (61%) might be using misinformation to push their agendas, with terrorist organisations (72%) and foreign governments (69%) also raising significant concerns. This awareness speaks to the need for transparency and accountability from those in positions of power.

Perhaps most concerning is the shadow fake news casts over democracy. With 62% of African youth worried about misinformation affecting upcoming elections, it's clear that the fight against fake news is about more than just getting the facts straight – it's about preserving the integrity

of our political processes and ensuring that citizens can make informed decisions based on accurate information. This concern is particularly heightened in Nigeria (85%), South Africa (79%), Ethiopia (77%) and Zambia (75%), reflecting the often-contentious political landscapes in these nations and the potential for misinformation to exacerbate existing tensions.

So, what's the takeaway here? African youth are not passive consumers of information. They're active, discerning participants in the digital age, navigating a complex media landscape with increasing sophistication. They're embracing new technologies while still valuing traditional sources of reliable information. This generation understands that knowledge is power, and they're actively seeking it out from sources they deem trustworthy. As we move forward, the challenge will be to support this discernment, to provide the tools and education needed to combat misinformation effectively. Because in the end, an informed youth is the backbone of a thriving democracy and a prosperous Africa.

African youth are not passive consumers of information, they're active, discerning participants in the digital age.

Citizen Action through inspiration, insight and sustainability

From a challenging past of adversity and hardship, it's the people of Africa that make this continent special; they tell a story of triumph of the human spirit and the power of human beings to forge new beginnings from the ashes of injustice and build a future based on equality and democracy. When you are on this continent you will be awed by our infrastructure, bedazzled by our beauty and humbled by our people and you will know what it means to say: "anything is possible".

At the heart of our common humanity, is our instinct to forge an environment in which we can thrive and flourish.

Democracy provides the environment for this. But, democracy is not simply elections – our power to vote for the people who make decisions is important; but that is not where our responsibility ends. We must work tirelessly, every day to craft our society in a way that is just, equitable and dignified.

And we commit to this. We pledge to building citizens for action through inspiration, insight and sustainability.

This is our promise.

The Ichikowitz Family Foundation

The Ichikowitz Family Foundation (IFF) has committed itself to the kind of active citizenship that promotes the preservation of our heritage, the conservation of our environment, and the education of our people.

We use various channels, such as film, music, research, publications and art to foster dialogue between people, to be a torchbearer for innovation and to conserve Africa's biodiversity and heritage for future generations.

We aim to help build a continent where people are encouraged to dream big, to challenge the inconceivable and achieve the impossible



Key Programmes

The African Oral History Archive

Our African Oral History Archive charts the untold stories of Africa's vivid history, magnificent heritage and collective memory. Over 160 interviews in the African Oral History Archive have been recorded to date. To celebrate 20 years of South Africa's Democracy, the Foundation produced a series of films, books and artworks to celebrate our most acclaimed and unknown history makers. The award-winning documentary series, The Rainbow Makers, is in distribution across broadcast, educational and multi-media platforms. Currently, lesson plans are being developed for distribution to high schools.

Conservation

The Ichikowitz Family Foundation has a strong track record of conservation leadership within Africa having financed and initiated innovative anti-poaching and environmental programmes for ten years.

The Foundation's anti-poaching initiatives include the donation of surveillance aircraft and other critical equipment to national parks, training programmes to strengthen the capabilities of park rangers and counter-poaching units, the implementation of award-winning global and national campaigns to raise awareness of the plight of endangered species, and the creation of one of the largest Anti-Poaching and K9 Training Academy's in Africa.



Citizenship

Torchbearer for innovation.
Building self-belief and
confidence among Africans.



Heritage

Promote an understanding
of our complex history.
Insights into the hopes and
aspirations of Africa's youth.



Conservation

Conserve the continent
and biodiversity.

“One of the most important demographic shifts happening across the world today is Africa’s burgeoning youth population. Our continent’s total population stands at 1.4 billion; and by 2050, it will add another billion people, by which time young Africans will constitute the world’s largest source of labour. By the end of the century, the population in Africa is projected to reach 4.2 billion – representing 40% of the world’s population – and most of them will be in their twenties.

“It has never been more important that policymakers around the world understand and listen to the voices of Africa’s youth. Whether on natural resource economics, the tangible impacts of climate change, efforts to combat disease, or to preserve democracy – these are all areas in which global engagement will be absolutely critical. Through the African Youth Survey, Africa’s youth are voicing their ambitions and challenges. How the rest of the world responds will shape the future of our planet.”

Ivor Ichikowitz, Chairman of the Ichikowitz Family Foundation



www.ichikowitzfoundation.com



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