

Accra, Ghana
10 August 2018

News release

International Youth Day: Unemployment, poverty push young Africans toward emigration, new video shows

About half of two groups that are critical to African countries' economic future – the young and the highly educated – have considered emigrating in search of greener pastures, according to a **new Afrobarometer video** based on data from nine countries.

Among the nine countries surveyed in 2017 – Zimbabwe, Ghana, Benin, Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire, Malawi, Uganda, Mali, and Nigeria – Zimbabwe has the highest proportion of young potential emigrants. Although the main drivers for potential emigration are the same across all countries – the quest for jobs and better economic prospects – the preferred destinations vary greatly by country, with potential emigrants split between leaving and staying on the continent.

In a year filled with reports of would-be emigrants dying or being captured and subjected to inhumane treatment, the world marks International Youth Day (12 August) under the theme "Safe Spaces for Youth." The new Afrobarometer video, released in conjunction with the global observation, reinforces calls for more concrete steps to create thriving economies that generate jobs, improve living conditions, and make it unnecessary for Africa's youth to embark on perilous journeys in search of a future.

Key findings

- On average, more than one-third (36%) of respondents across nine African countries say they have considered emigrating, including 16% who have given it "a lot" of thought (see Figure 1). Zimbabwe has the highest percentage of respondents who have given some thought to emigration: almost half have considered emigration "a lot" (22%), "somewhat" (13%), or "a little" (12%).
- Almost half (45%) of 18- to 25-year-olds and fully half (50%) of respondents with post-secondary qualifications have considered emigrating (Figure 2). The proportions are particularly large among Zimbabweans, Ghanaians, and Malawians.
- Among those who have considered emigrating, one in nine (11%) say they are already making specific preparations to leave, while 29% say they plan to move in the next year or two but are not yet making concrete preparations (Figure 3).
- Across the nine countries, the main motivating factors for potential emigrants are to find work (46%) and to escape economic hardship/poverty (25%) (Figure 4).
- Although more than half (53%) of potential emigrants want to leave the African continent, almost as many would prefer to go to another country within the same region (36%) or to another African country (8%) (Table 1). South Africa is the most preferred location within Africa, while Europe (21%) and North America (19%) are the most popular destinations outside Africa.

Afrobarometer

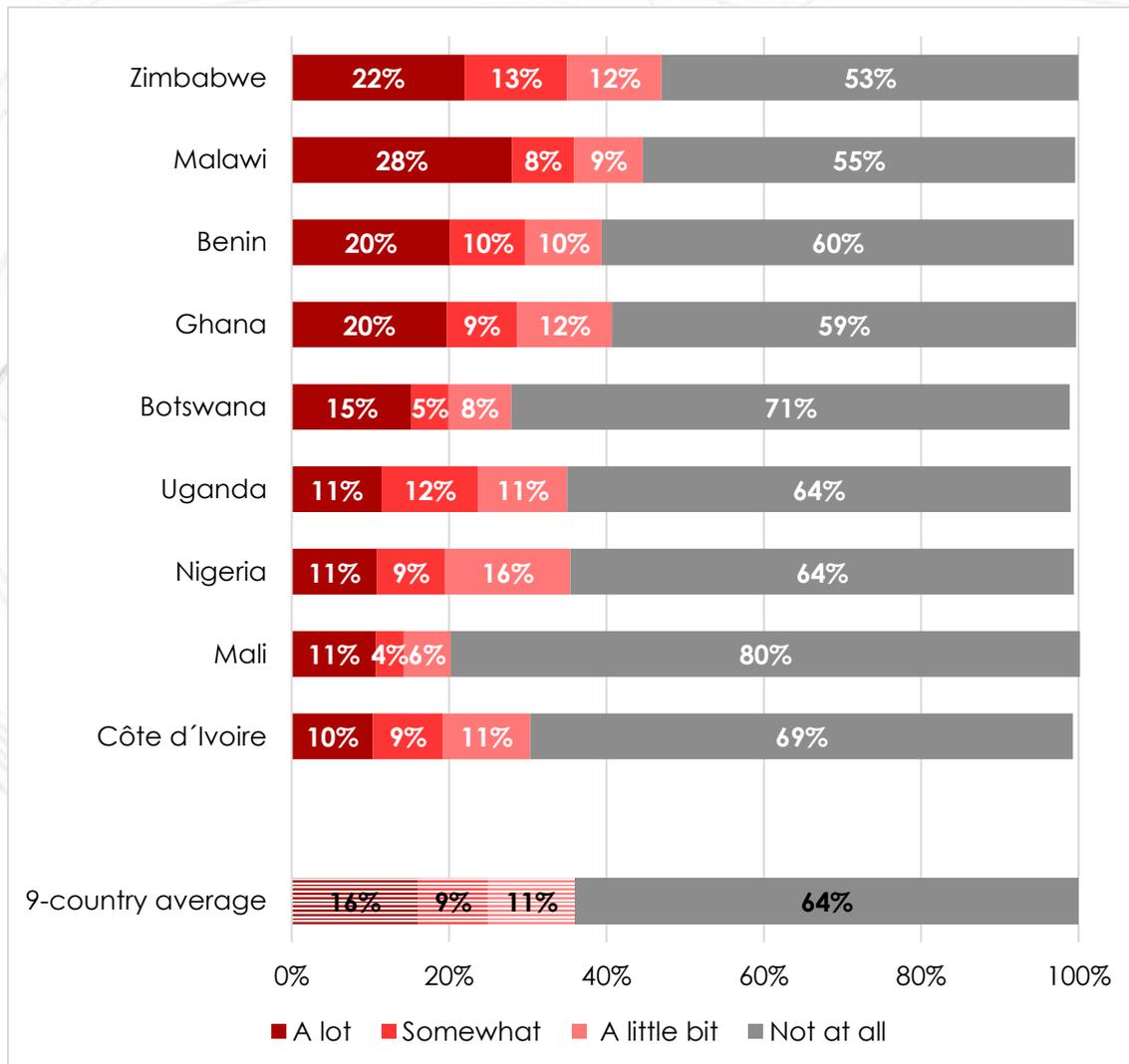
Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan research network that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions, and related issues across Africa. Six rounds of surveys were conducted between 1999 and 2015, and Round 7 surveys

(2016/2018) are currently being completed. Cross-country analyses of Round 7 data from more than 30 countries will be released starting in late 2018.

Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples, which yield country-level results with a margin of error of +/-2 or +/-3 percentage points (for samples of 2,400 or 1,200, respectively) at a 95% confidence level.

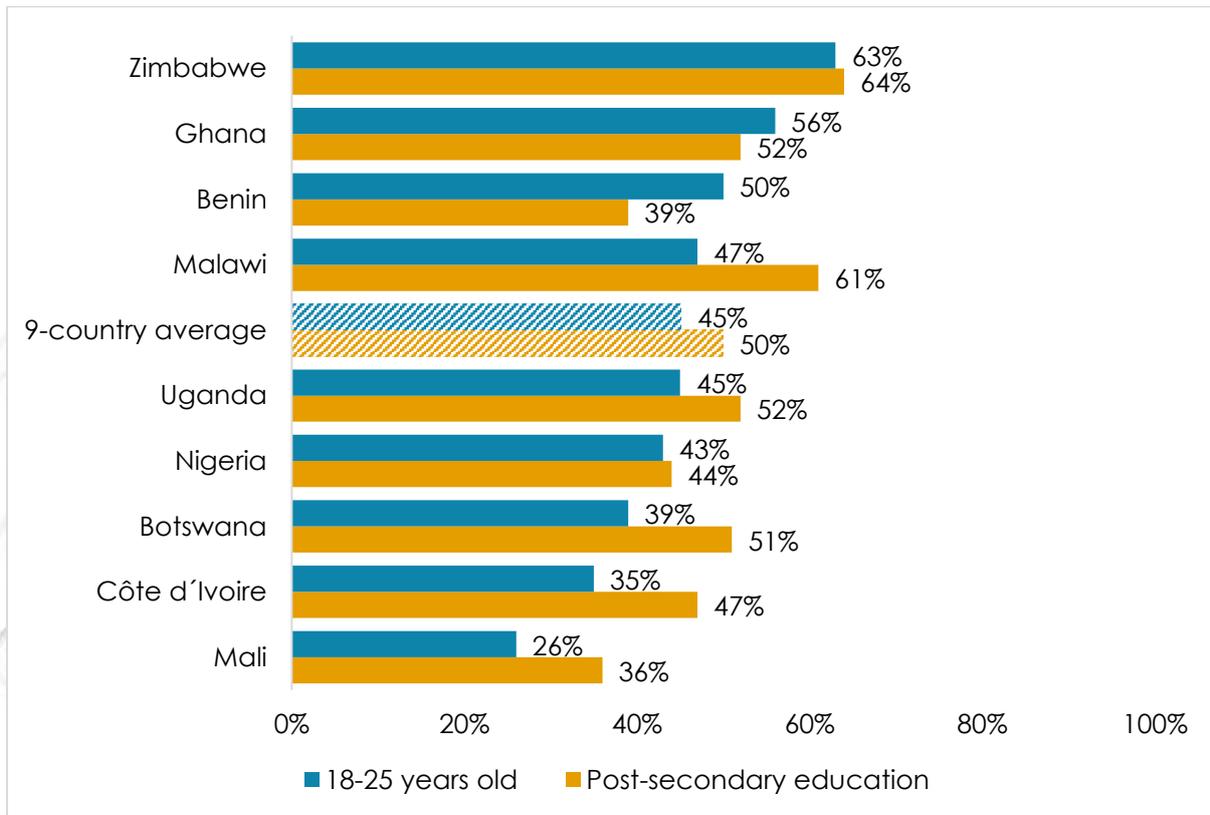
Charts

Figure 1: Considered emigrating | 9 African countries | 2017



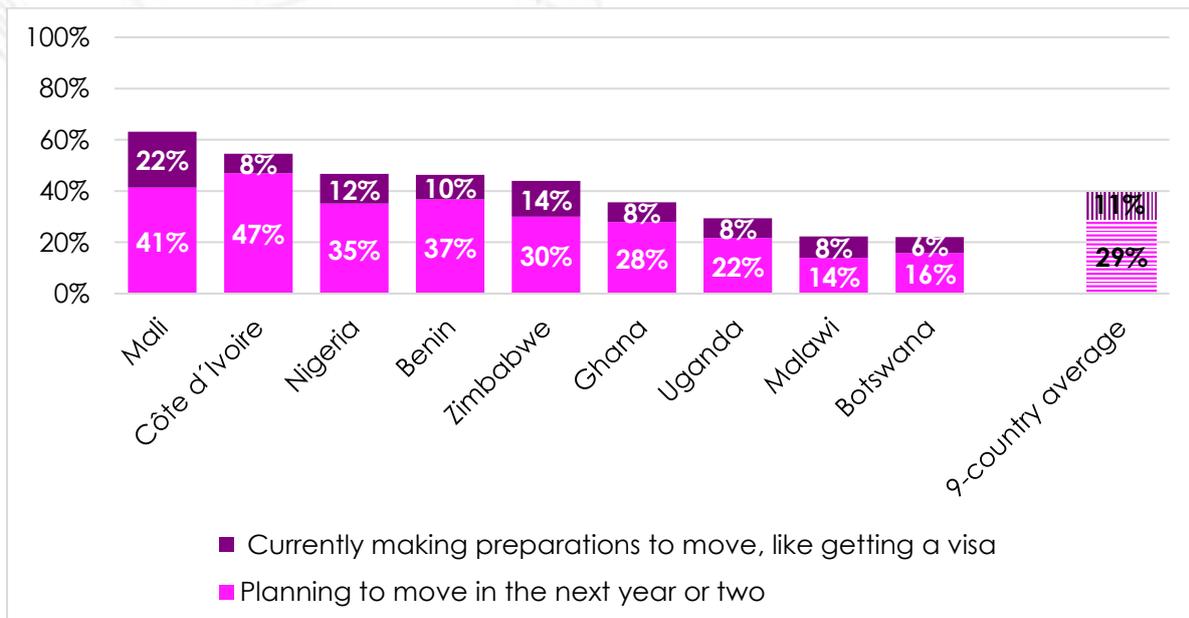
Respondents were asked: How much, if at all, have you considered moving to another country to live?

Figure 2: Considered emigrating | by age and education | 9 African countries | 2017



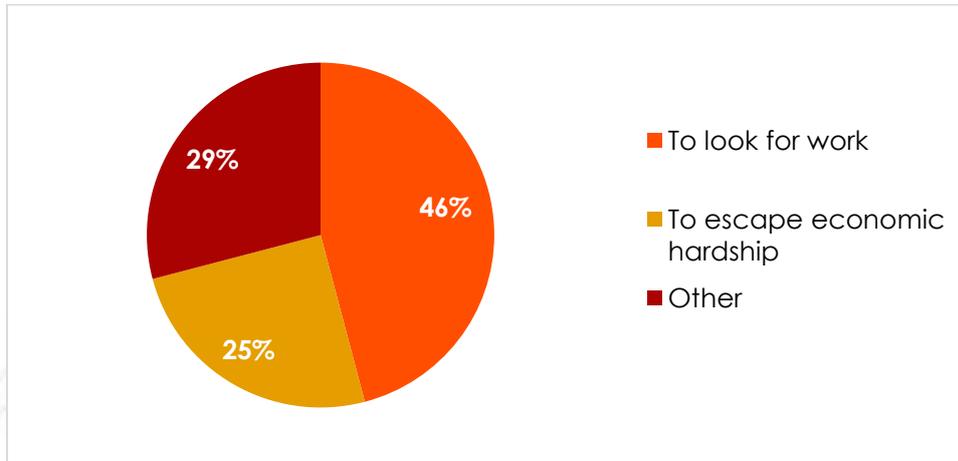
Respondents were asked: How much, if at all, have you considered moving to another country to live? (% who say "a lot," "somewhat," or "a little")

Figure 3: Potential emigrants making preparations to move | 9 African countries | 2017



Excluding those who said they had "not at all" considered emigration, respondents were asked: How much planning or preparation have you done in order to move to another country to live?

Figure 4: Reasons for considering emigration | 9 African countries | 2017



Excluding those who said they had “not at all” considered emigration, respondents were asked: There are several reasons why people leave their home to live in another country for an extended period of time. What about you? What is the most important reason why you would consider moving from [your country]?

Table 1: Preferred destination for potential emigrants | 9 African countries | 2017

	Within the region	Other African country	Europe	North America	Central/ South America	Middle East	Asia	Australia	Elsewhere outside of Africa
Malawi	71%	8%	4%	9%	2%	1%	1%	0%	3%
Zimbabwe	66%	8%	11%	5%	0%	3%	0%	4%	2%
Botswana	49%	3%	13%	16%	1%	1%	3%	2%	3%
Benin	48%	9%	19%	10%	2%	1%	2%	0%	6%
Uganda	30%	15%	13%	23%	2%	11%	1%	1%	2%
Mali	27%	20%	37%	9%	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%
Nigeria	14%	6%	21%	32%	6%	4%	4%	4%	6%
Côte d'Ivoire	8%	4%	45%	28%	3%	2%	2%	1%	5%
Ghana	6%	3%	31%	39%	2%	2%	2%	2%	6%
9-country average	36%	8%	21%	19%	2%	3%	2%	2%	4%

Excluding those who said they had “not at all” considered emigration, respondents were asked: If you were to move to another country, where would you be most likely to go? (Figure shows % of substantive responses.)

For more information, please contact:

Brian Howard
 Afrobarometer publications manager
 bhoward@afrobarometer.org
 Tel.: 001-713-624-0373

Visit us online at www.afrobarometer.org

