

Centre for Policy, Research and Strategic Studies
The Gambia
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Press release

Gambians divided on whether ECOMIG should leave the country, survey shows

Gambians are split on whether the ECOWAS Military Intervention in the Gambia (ECOMIG) should leave and let the Gambia Armed Forces and Police take charge of security matters in the country, Afrobarometer's inaugural national survey in the country reveals. The call for ECOMIG to leave is highest in West Coast and among the youth.

Regarding security issues, the study also shows that about four in 10 Gambians say they have felt unsafe in their neighbourhood or have had something stolen from their homes during the past year, while more than half have feared various forms of violence. Though a majority say the Gambia Armed Forces protect the country from security threats, more than a third say they do not have the resources they need to be effective.

The ECOMIG troops were deployed in the Gambia as part of an international response to ensure respect for the results of the country's 2016 presidential election.

Afrobarometer survey

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan research network that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions, and related issues in Africa. Six rounds of surveys were conducted in up to 37 African countries between 1999 and 2015, and Round 7 surveys are being completed in 2018. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples.

The Afrobarometer team in the Gambia, led by the Centre for Policy, Research and Strategic Studies (CepRass), interviewed 1,200 adult Gambians in July and August 2018. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level.

Key findings

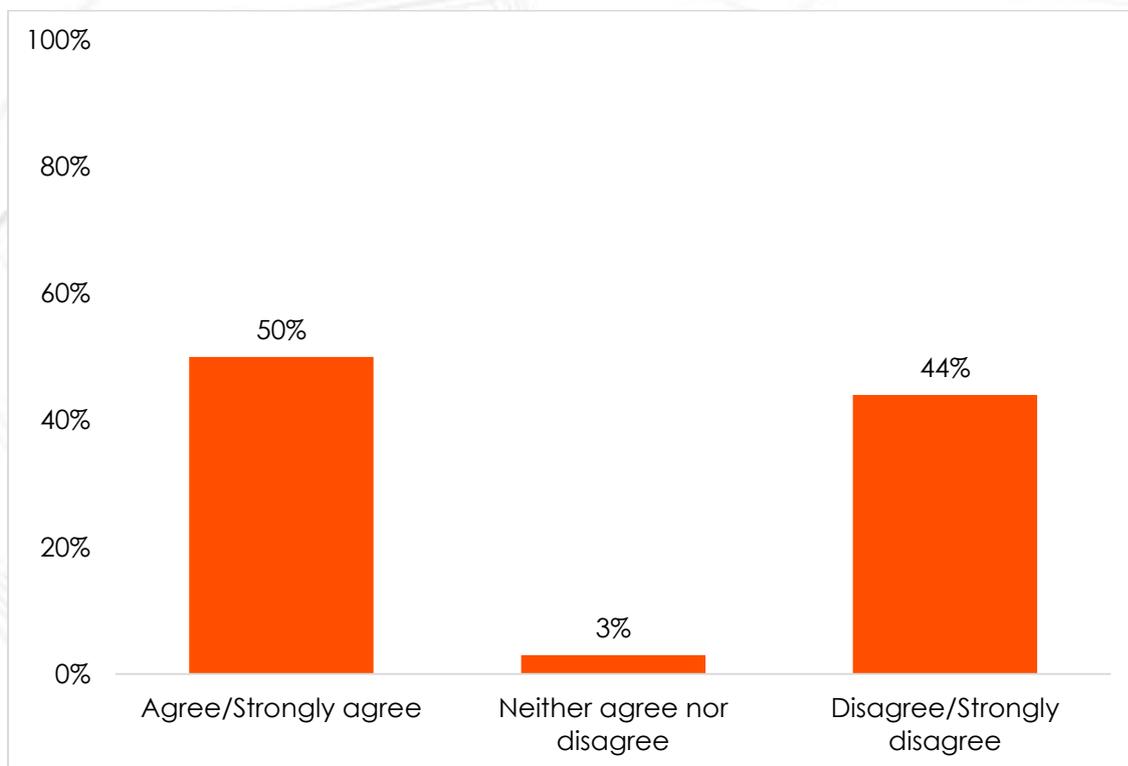
- Gambians are split on whether ECOMIG should leave and let the Gambia Armed Forces and Police take charge of security matters in the country (Figure 1).
- The idea that it is time for ECOMIG to leave is most popular in West Coast, Kanifing, and Upper River and among the youth aged 18-35 years (Figure 2). Men, educated citizens, and urban residents are somewhat more likely to agree that it is time for ECOMIG to leave than women, uneducated citizens, and those in rural areas.
- Over the past year, four in 10 Gambians had something stolen from their house (40%) or felt unsafe walking in their neighbourhood (36%). One in four (25%) feared crime in their home, and one in 14 (7%) were physically attacked (Figure 3).
- In the past two years, about half or more of Gambians have feared violence during a public protest (49%), in the neighbourhood (53%), or at political events (56%). About

one in six say they actually experienced violence in the neighbourhood (17%) or at a political event (15%) (Figure 4).

- A majority (61%) say the Gambia Armed Forces “often” or “always” protect the country from security threats, and half (50%) say they are respectful to citizens. However, only 37% say the armed forces get the resources they need to be effective (Figure 5).

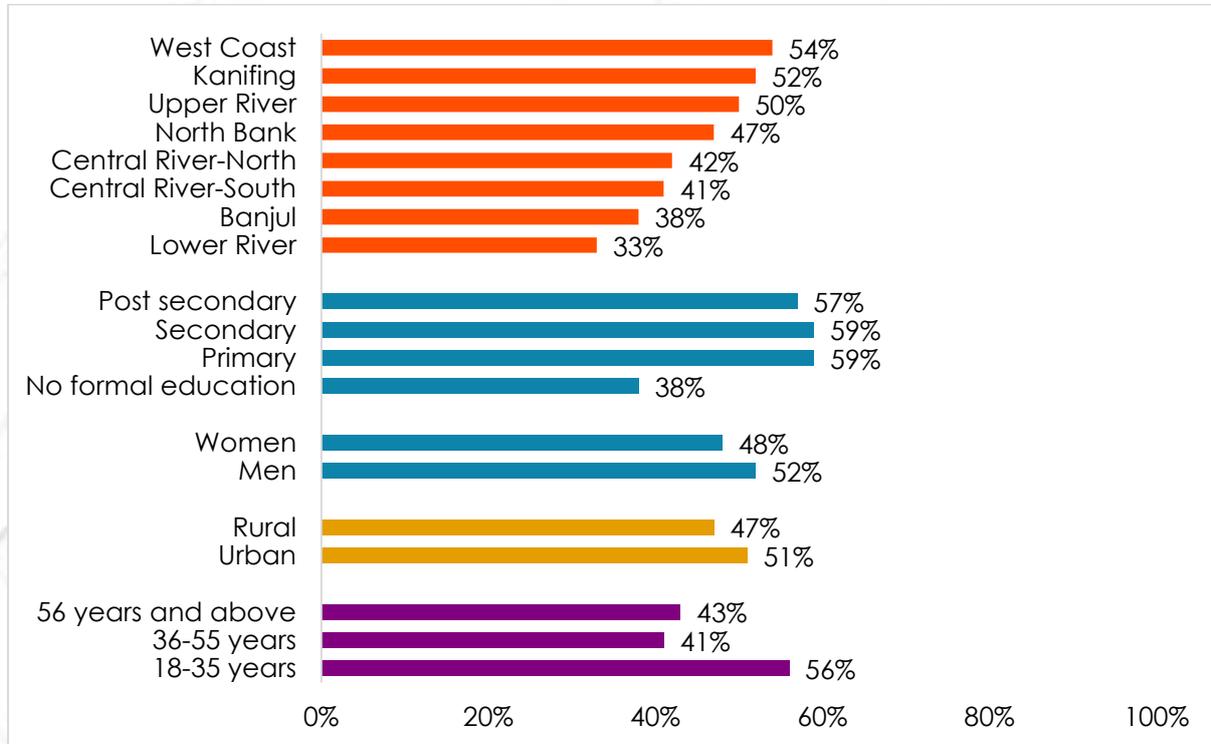
Charts

Figure 1: Time for ECOMIG to leave? | The Gambia | 2018



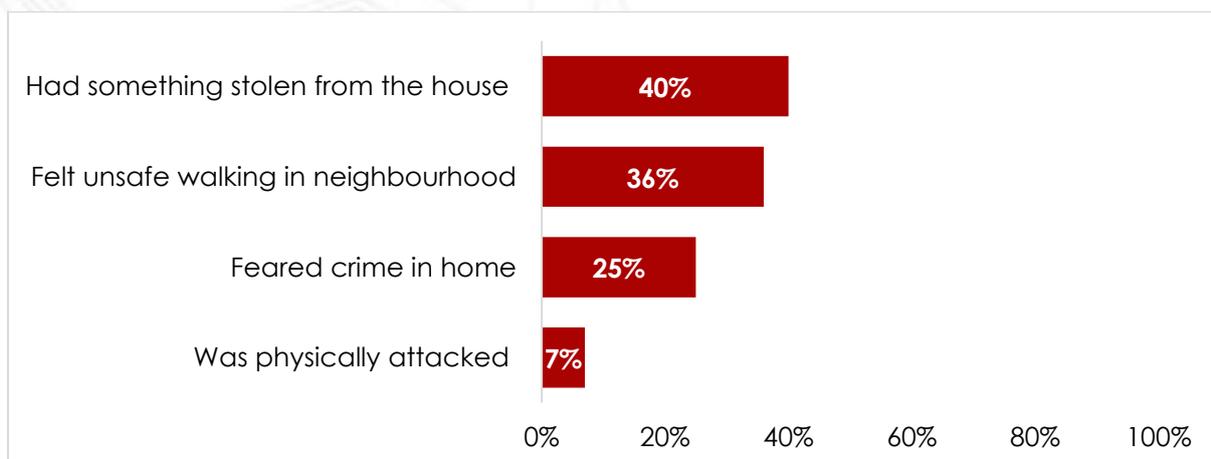
Respondents were asked: Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: The ECOWAS Military Intervention in the Gambia (ECOMIG) has served its purpose. It is time they leave for the Gambia Armed Forces and Police to take charge of security matters of the country.

Figure 2: Time for ECOMIG to leave? | by socio-demographic groups | The Gambia | 2018



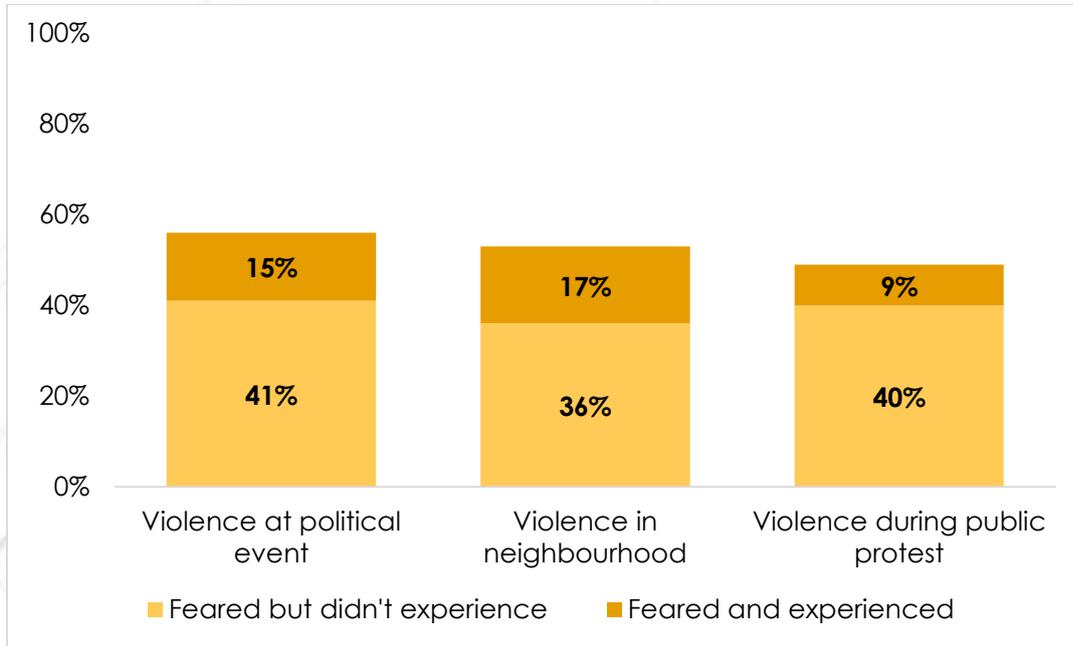
Respondents were asked: Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: The ECOWAS Military Intervention in the Gambia (ECOMIG) has served its purpose. It is time they leave for the Gambia Armed Forces and Police to take charge of security matters of the country. (% who "agree" or "strongly agree")

Figure 3: Feeling unsafe | The Gambia | 2018



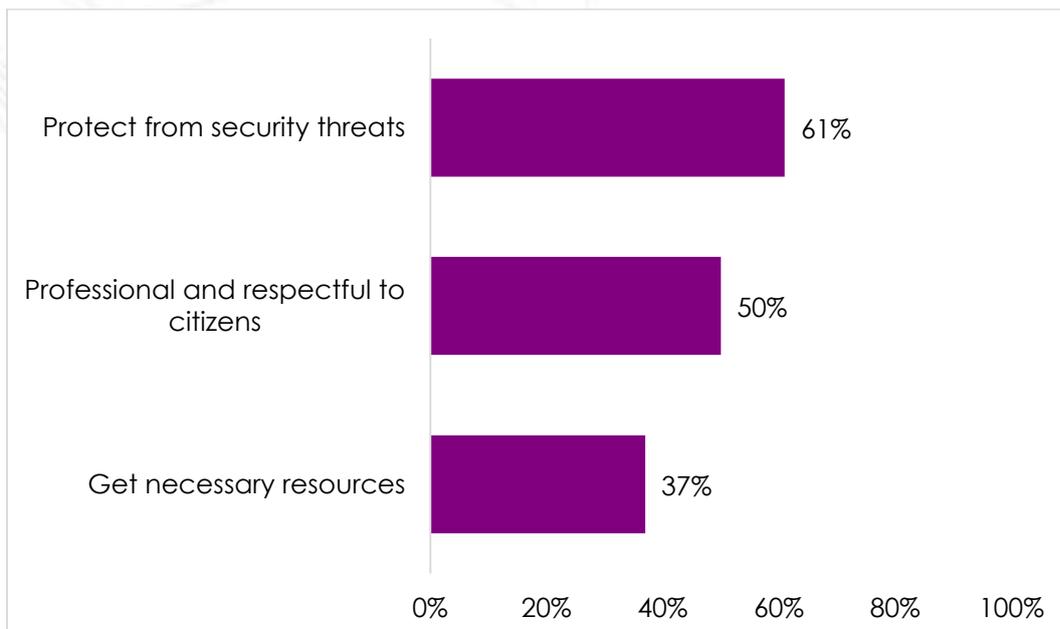
Respondents were asked: - Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Felt unsafe walking in your neighbourhood? Feared crime in your home? (% who say "just once or twice," "several times," "many times," or "always")
 - During the past year, have you or anyone in your family: Had something stolen from the house? Been physically attacked? (% who say "once," "twice," or "three or more times")

Figure 4: Fear and experience of violence | The Gambia | 2018



Respondents were asked: Please tell me whether, in the past two years, you have ever personally feared any of the following types of violence. [If yes:] Have you actually personally experienced this type of violence in the past two years?

Figure 5: Performance of armed forces | The Gambia | 2018



Respondents were asked: In your opinion, to what extent do the armed forces of our country:

- Keep our country safe from external and internal security threats?
- Get the training and equipment needed to be effective?
- Operate in a professional manner and respect the rights of all citizens?

(% who say "often" or "always")

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