

Banjul, the Gambia
28 July 2021

News release

Majority of Gambians see corruption increasing and government failing in efforts to fight it, Afrobarometer survey shows

A growing number of Gambians say corruption is on the rise and the government is not doing enough to combat it, the latest Afrobarometer survey shows.

Over the past three years, citizens' perceptions of widespread corruption among public officials have increased significantly. A substantial number of Gambians also report having to pay bribes to obtain public services, and only half believe they can report corruption to the authorities without fear of retaliation.

An anti-corruption bill introduced in the National Assembly in December 2019 is yet to be passed, and the Gambia has no anti-corruption commission despite being a signatory to numerous conventions, including the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption. The [2020 Corruption Perceptions Index](#) ranked the Gambia 102nd, or more corrupt than 101 out of 179 countries.

Key findings

- Six in 10 Gambians (61%) say the overall level of corruption in the country increased "somewhat" or "a lot" during the past year, almost double the proportion recorded in 2018 (32%) (Figure 1).
- Three-fourths (76%) of citizens say the government is not doing a good job of fighting corruption, a 39-percentage-point increase compared to 2018 (37%) (Figure 2).
- More than four in 10 Gambians say "most" or "all" officials in the police (48%) and the president's office (42%) are corrupt. Public perceptions of corruption among key public officials increased sharply except with regard to religious leaders (Figure 3).
- Among respondents who had contact with key public services during the previous year, substantial proportions say they had to pay bribes to get police assistance (36%), avoid problems with the police (16%), or obtain identity documents (21%), medical care (12%), or public school services (9%) (Figure 4).
- Only half (49%) of Gambians say that ordinary people can report incidents of corruption to authorities without fear of retaliation or other negative consequences, a 9-percentage-point drop since 2018 (Figure 5).

Afrobarometer surveys

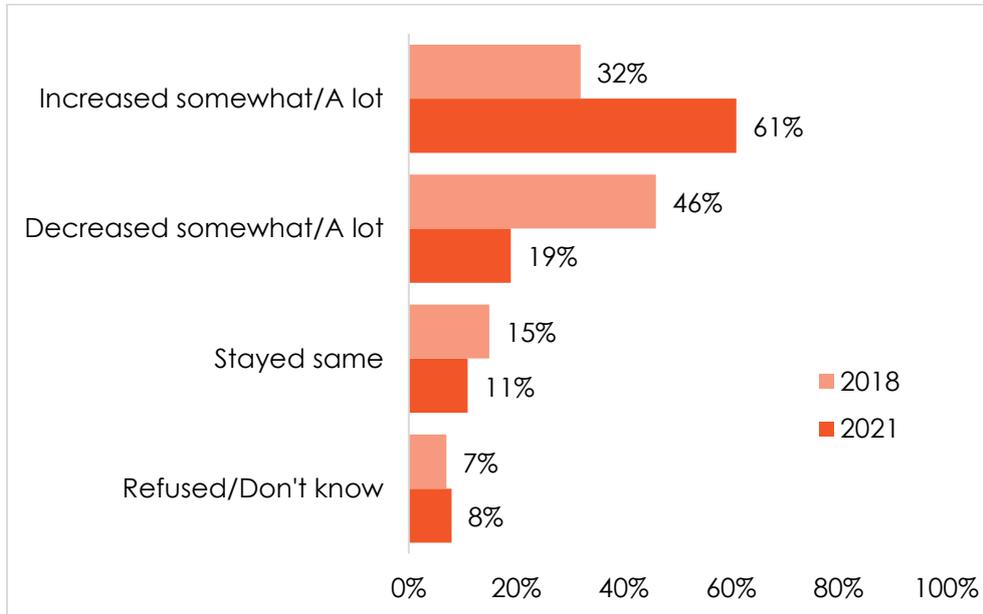
Afrobarometer is a pan-African, nonpartisan survey research network that provides reliable data on Africans' experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life. Seven rounds of surveys were completed in up to 38 countries between 1999 and 2018. Round 8 surveys (2019/2021) cover 34 countries. 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 Center for Policy, Research and Strategic Studies (CepRass), interviewed 1,200 adult Gambians between 30 January and 23 February 2021. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-3

percentage points at a 95% confidence level. A previous Afrobarometer survey was conducted in the Gambia in 2018.

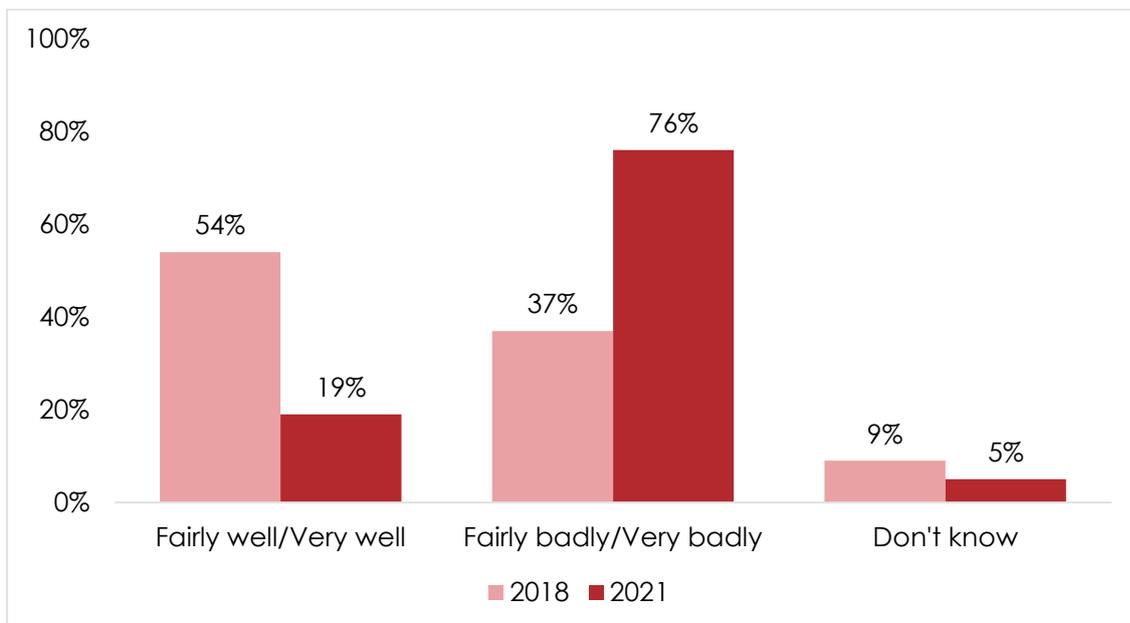
Charts

Figure 1: Level of corruption | The Gambia | 2018-2021



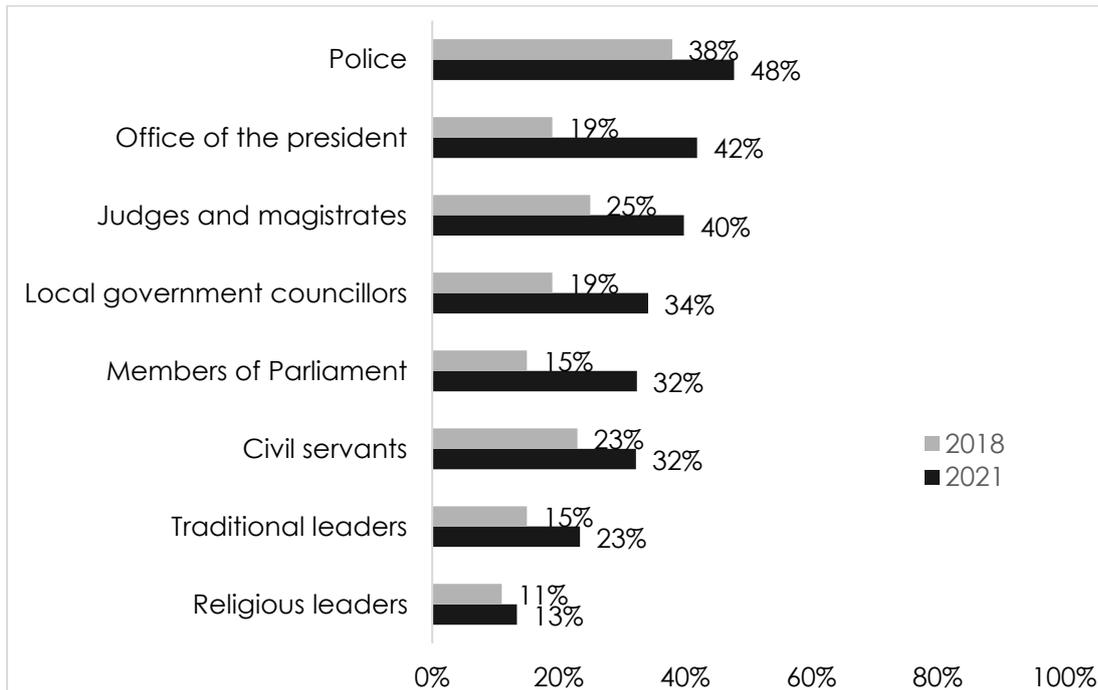
Respondents were asked: In your opinion, over the past year, has the level of corruption in this country increased, decreased, or stayed the same?

Figure 2: Government's handling of corruption | The Gambia | 2018-2021



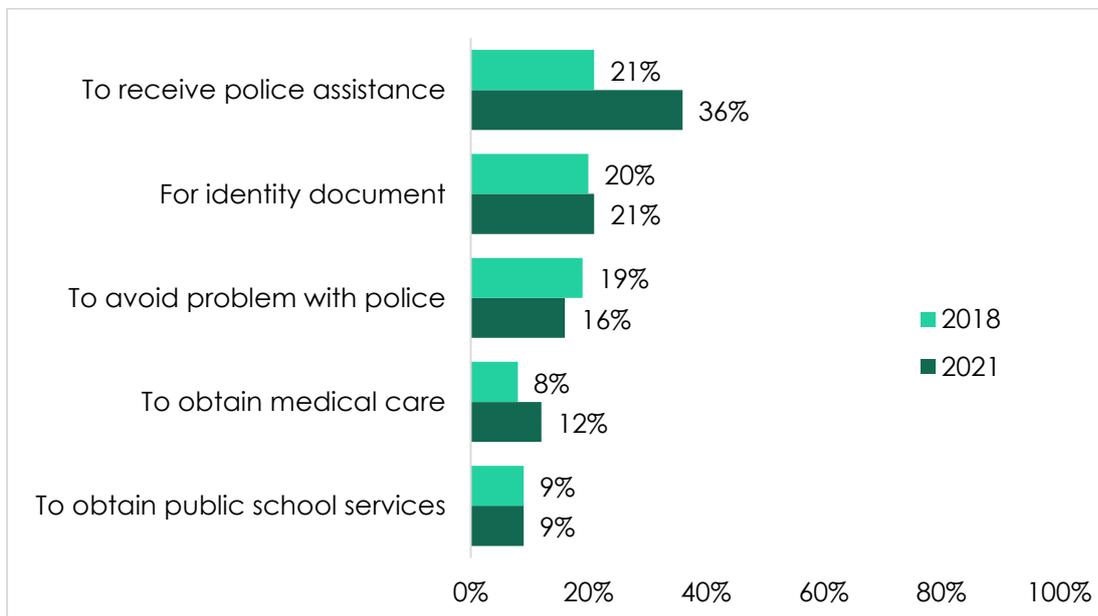
Respondents were asked: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Fighting corruption in government?

Figure 3: Perceived corruption among leaders | The Gambia | 2018-2021



Respondents were asked: How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? (% who say "all" or "most")

Figure 4: Paying bribes to obtain public services | The Gambia | 2018-2021

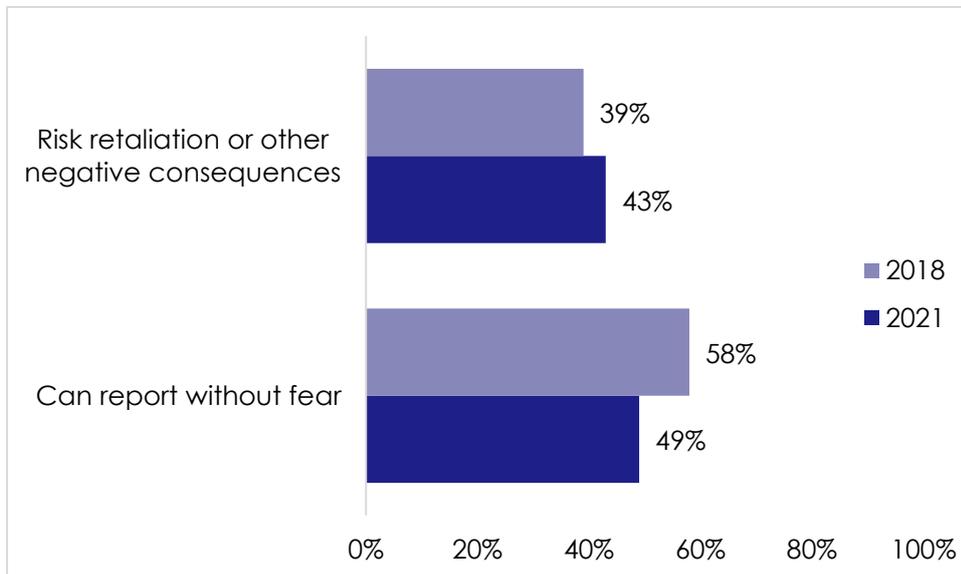


Respondents who said they had contact with selected public services during the previous year were asked: And how often, if ever, did you have to pay a bribe, give a gift, or do a favour:

- For a teacher or school official in order to get the services you needed from the schools?
- For a health worker or clinic or hospital staff in order to get the medical care you needed?
- For a government official in order to get the document you needed?
- For a police officer in order to get the assistance you needed?
- For a police officer in order to avoid a problem?

(% who say "once or twice," "a few times," or "often") (Note: Respondents who said they had no contact with these services during the previous year are excluded.)

Figure 5: Can ordinary people report corruption without fear? | The Gambia
 | 2018-2021



Respondents were asked: *In this country, can ordinary people report incidents of corruption without fear, or do they risk retaliation or other negative consequences if they speak out?*

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