

Accra, Ghana
12 August 2020

News release

International Youth Day: Unemployment and education are Ghanaian youth's most important problems

Unemployment and education are the most important problems that young Ghanaians want the government to address, the most recent Afrobarometer survey shows.

In surveys over the past decade, unemployment has consistently ranked No. 1 among the priorities of Ghana's youth, with education consistently in second or third position.

Job creation and education are also citizens' top priorities for additional government investment in youth development, and citizens are willing to pay more taxes to support programs to help young people. While citizens' ranking of priorities for additional investment to help youth is consistent across key socio-demographic groups, urban and educated residents are more likely than their rural and uneducated counterparts to cite job creation and less likely to prioritize education. The priorities of young respondents differ very little from those of their elders.

In Ghana, unemployment and exclusion from democratic processes and decision-making are blamed for leaving youth vulnerable to manipulation by political parties, which engage some of them in political violence. Although successive governments have, over the years, tried to address the youth's needs through various social intervention programs aimed at skills training and job creation, the challenges persist.

Key findings

- When Afrobarometer asked adults of all ages to cite the most important problems they want the government to address, infrastructure/roads was the most frequently cited priority (mentioned by 59% of respondents), followed by unemployment (39%) and education (38%) (Figure 1).
- However, unemployment and education are the most important problems that young Ghanaians (aged 18-35 years) want the government to address. Young adults are 14 and 5 percentage points, respectively, more likely than seniors to cite unemployment and education as their top priorities (Figure 2).
- Six in 10 Ghanaians (60%) would "somewhat support" or "strongly support" higher taxes to fund programs to help the youth (Figure 3).
- Six in 10 respondents (59%) say job creation would be the highest priority if the government could increase its spending to help the youth (Figure 4).
- Urban residents are more likely than their rural counterparts to cite job creation (65% vs. 53%) and less likely to prioritize education (16% vs. 24%) (Figure 5). Likewise, educated citizens are more likely to prioritize job creation (69% among those with post-secondary education vs. 47% among those with no formal education), and less likely to prioritize investment in education (17% vs. 26%).

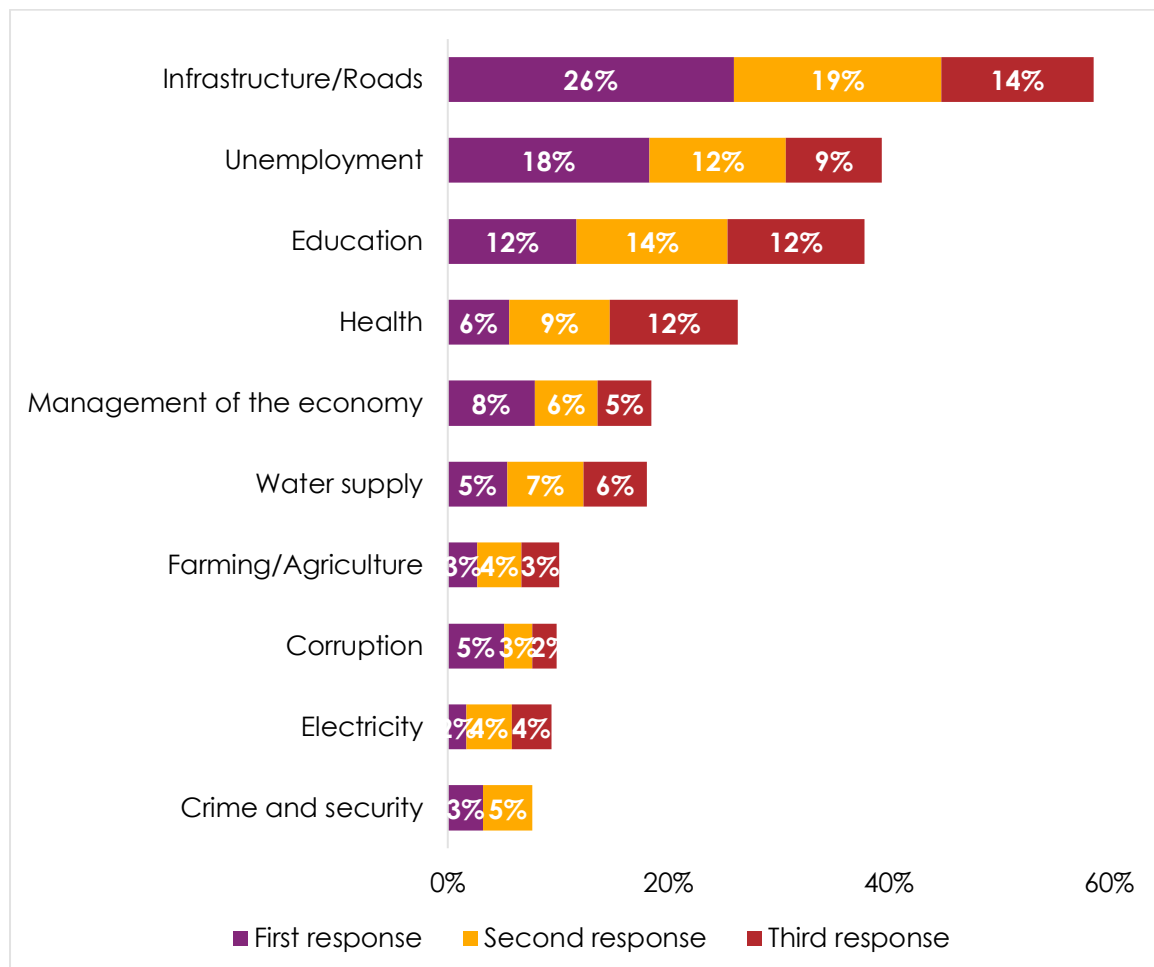
Afrobarometer surveys

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, nonpartisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African 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 in 2019/2020 are planned in at least 35 countries. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples.

The Afrobarometer team in Ghana, led by the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana), interviewed 2,400 adult Ghanaians between 16 September and 3 October 2019. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-2 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys were conducted in Ghana in 1999, 2002, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2014, and 2017.

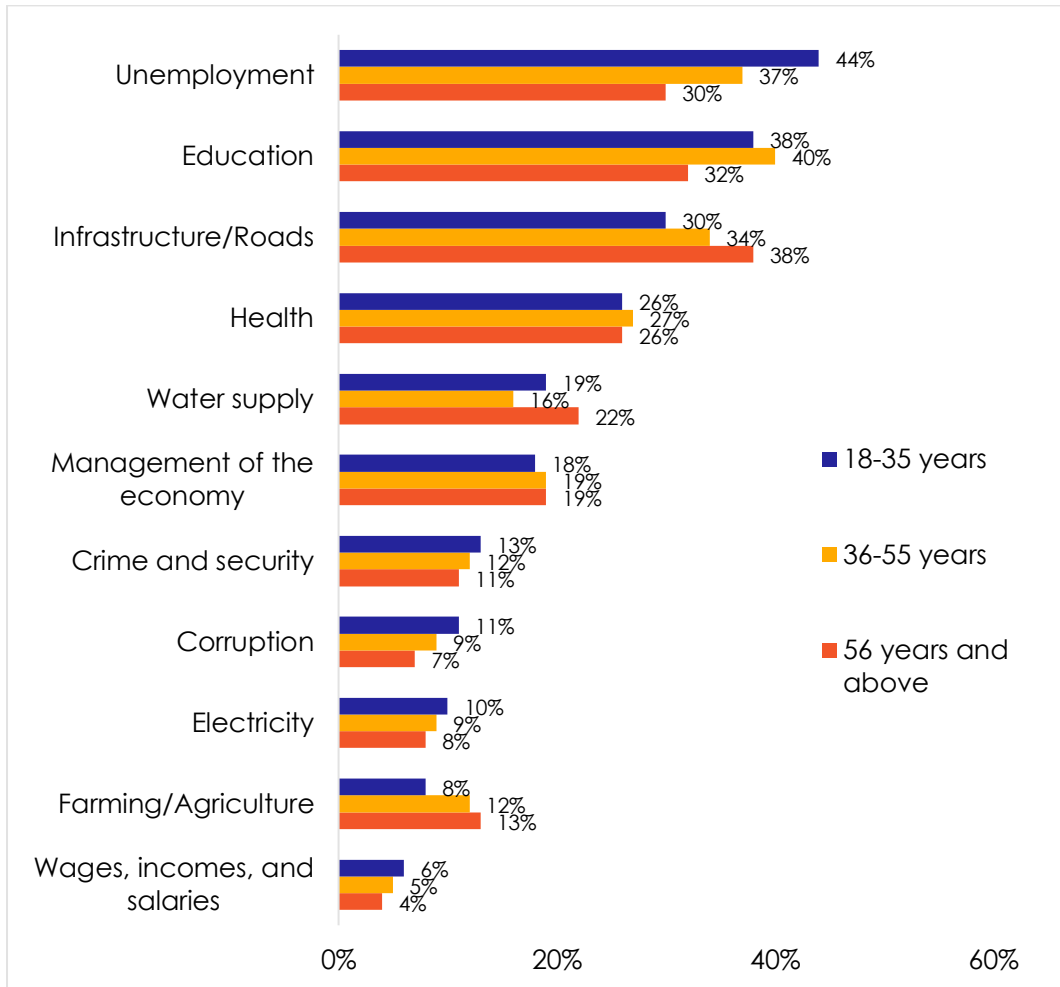
Charts

Figure 1: Most important problems | Ghana | 2019



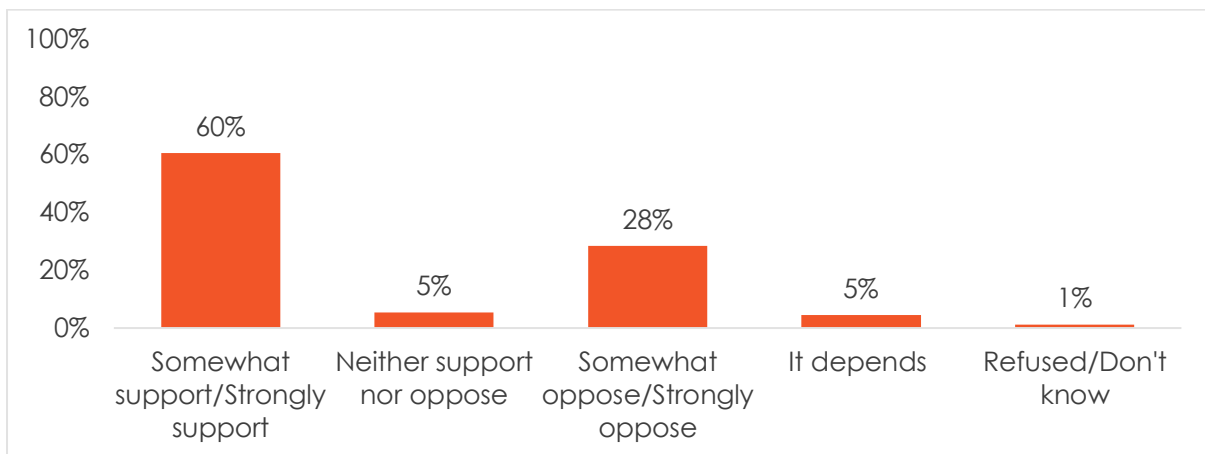
Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, what are the most important problems facing this country that government should address? (Respondents could give up to three answers.)*

Figure 2: Most important problems | by age group | Ghana | 2019



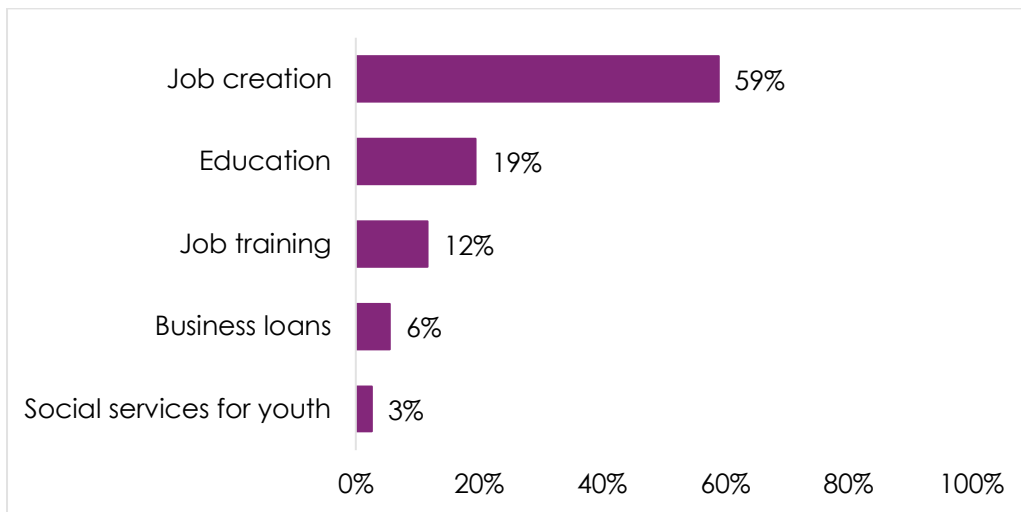
Respondents were asked: In your opinion, what are the most important problems facing this country that government should address? (Respondents could give up to three answers.)

Figure 3: Paying more taxes to support programs to help young people | Ghana | 2019



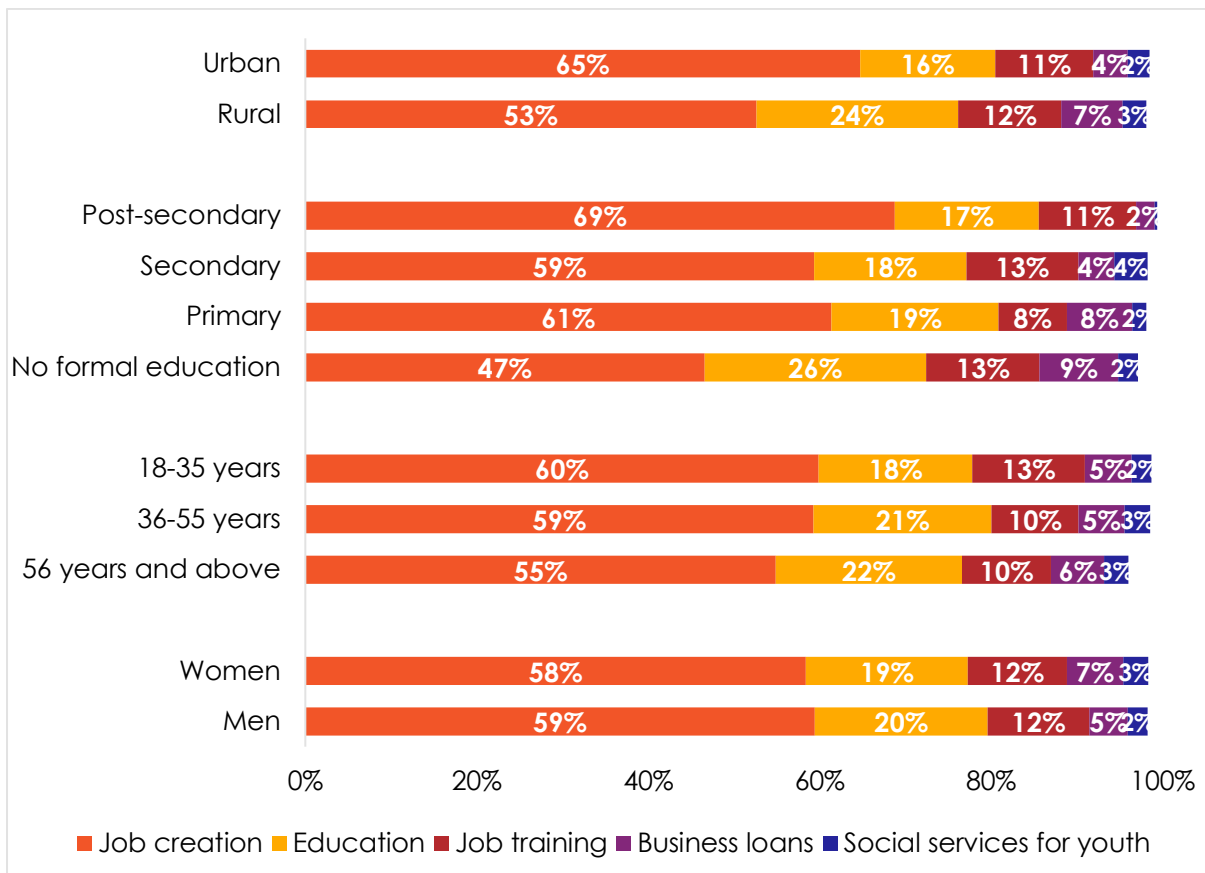
Respondents were asked: If the government decided to make people pay more taxes in order to support programs to help young people, would you support this decision or oppose it?

Figure 4: Highest priority for additional investment to help youth | Ghana | 2019



Respondents were asked: If the government could increase its spending on programs to help young people, which of the following areas do you think should be the highest priority for additional investment?

Figure 5: Highest priority for additional investment to help youth | by socio-demographic group | Ghana | 2019



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