

Press Release

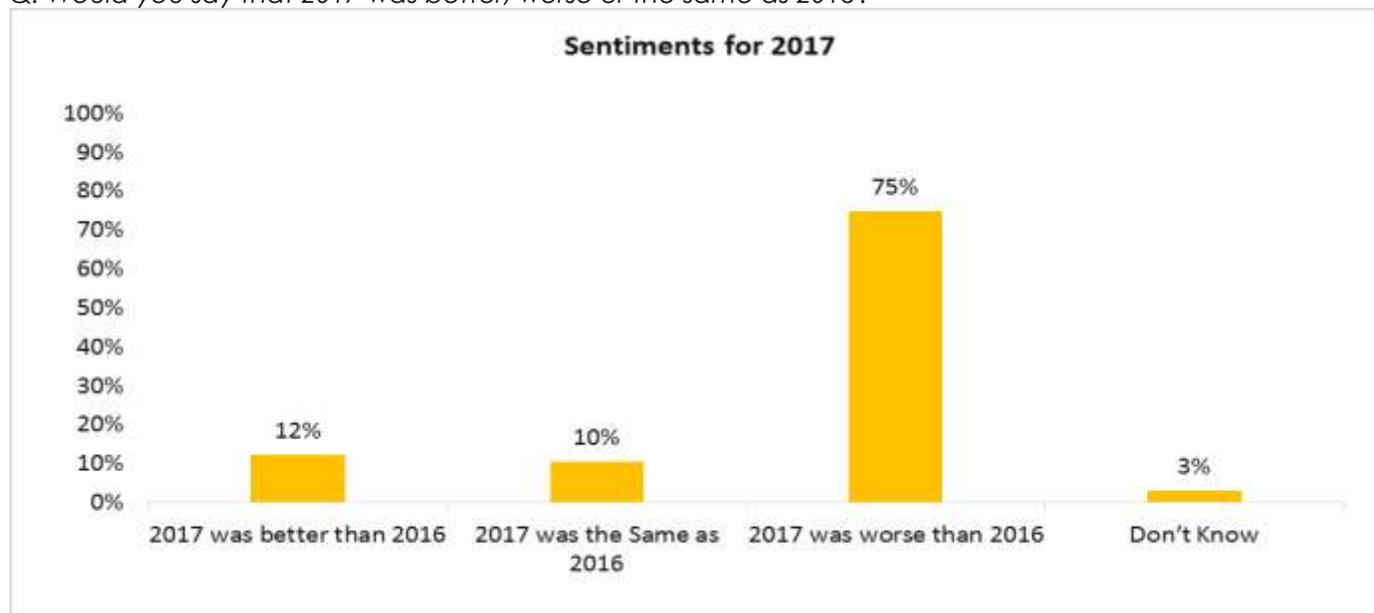
Year End Poll: 2017 Was a Bad Year for Kenyans

28th December 2017, Nairobi Kenya...In 2017, Kenyans experienced a number of challenges ranging from political unrest, slow economic growth, job layoffs, inflation to high cost of living. It is against this background that a new survey conducted by TIFA Research tried to find out how Kenyans felt about the just ending 2017.

The Year End Poll was conducted between the 12th and 16th December 2017, found out that three quarters of Kenyans (75%) feel that 2017 was worse than 2016. They also have the perception that the political climate, economic conditions, employment prospects, cost of living and internal security deteriorated in 2017.

“Basically, 2017 was a bad year for Kenyans. The prolonged election period coupled with drought impacted negatively on the economy and this resulted to high inflation and reduced employment prospects” says Maggie Ireri, the CEO of TIFA Research.

Q. Would you say that 2017 was better, worse or the same as 2016?

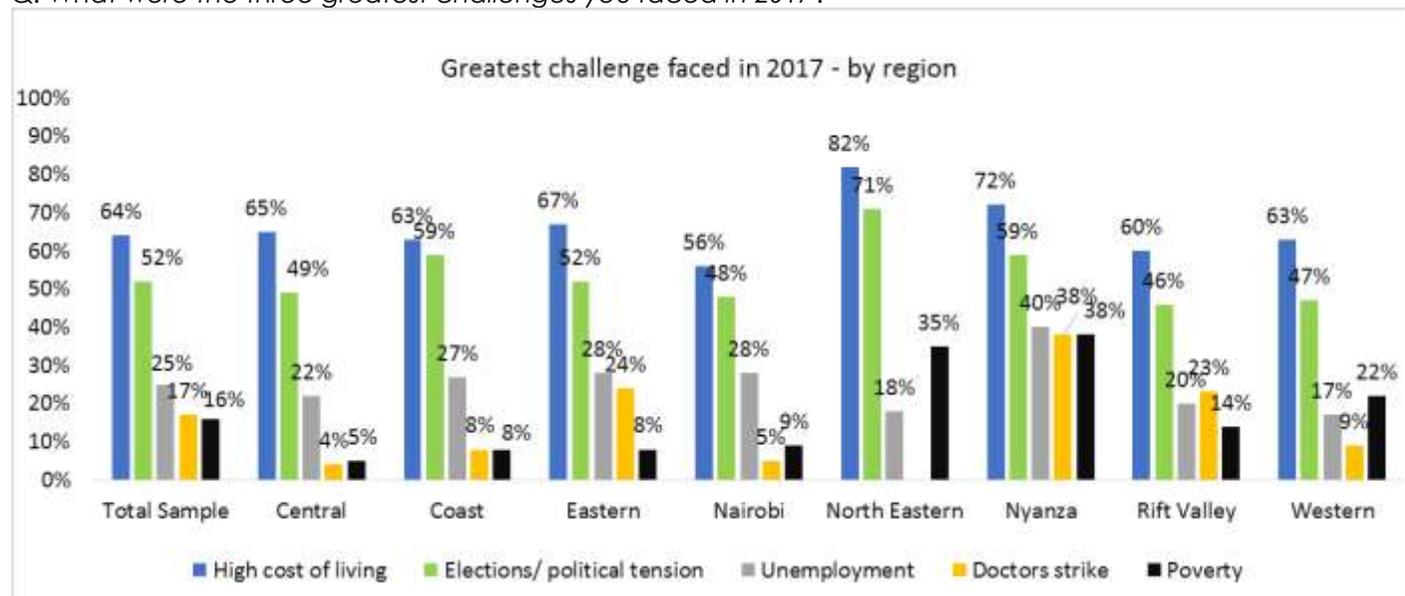


(n=1,005 respondents)

Top Challenges: High Cost Of Living and Political Tension

The main challenge faced in 2017 was the high cost of living as mentioned by 64% of Kenyans followed by political tension (52%) and then unemployment (25%). The doctors' strike (17%) was mentioned as a key challenge as they recall that thousands of Kenyans across the country were deprived of medical care for an extended period.

Q. What were the three greatest challenges you faced in 2017?



(n=1,005 respondents)

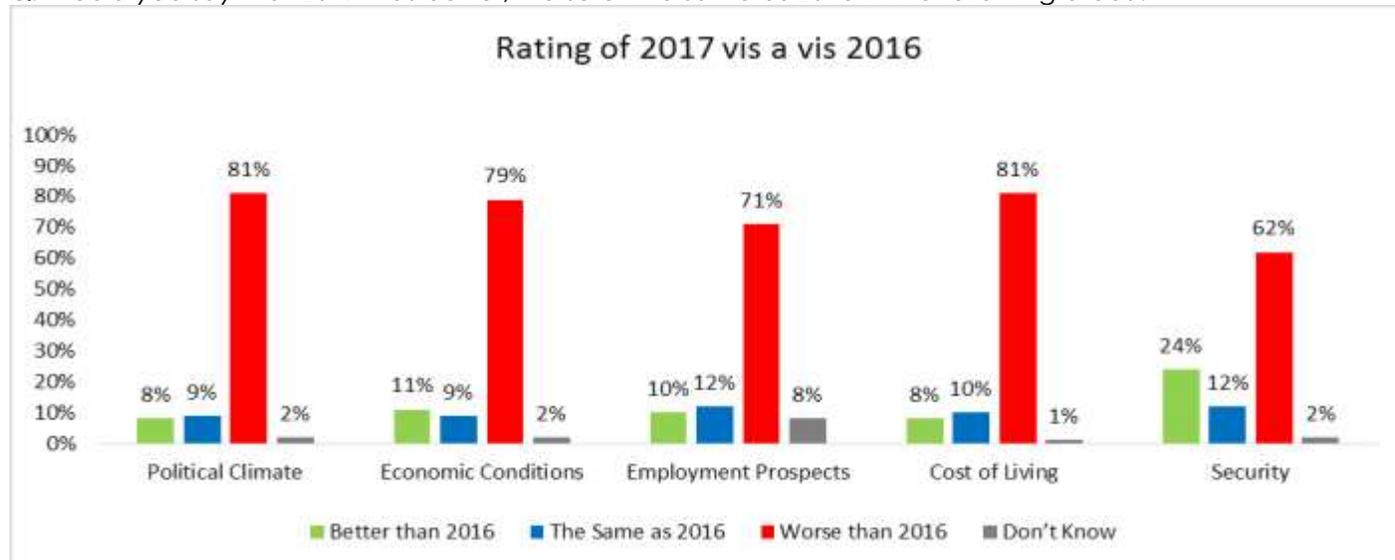
The high cost of living is consistently mentioned as the greatest challenge across all regions. The highest mentions of this challenge was in North Eastern (82%) followed by Nyanza (72%).

Political tension has the highest incidence in North Eastern (71%) followed by Nyanza and Coast both at 59% mentions. In comparison to other regions, Nyanza had the highest mentions for unemployment, doctors' strike and poverty and this could be an indication of their general dissatisfaction with the situation in the country.

“The crisis in Kenya was not only evident in political tension but also in the wallets of many citizens who could not afford to purchase basic food commodities such as maize flour, milk and sugar, whose prices rose sharply and in some instances by over 200%. 2017 was the year when food prices became the yard stick for Kenya's economic performance in the eyes of the ordinary mwananchi” says Ms Ireri.

In the Year End Poll, Kenyans shared their sentiments on four key indicators – the economy, employment, politics, cost of living and security. Below are their opinions.

Q. Would you say that 2017 was better, worse or the same as 2016 in the following areas?

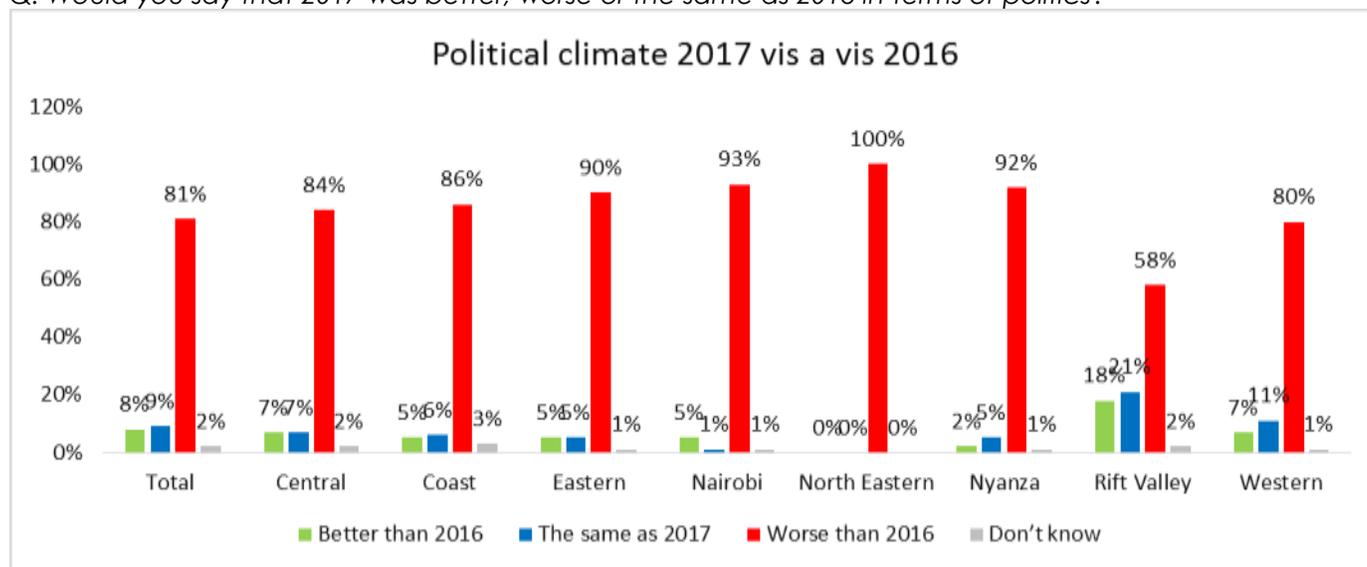


(n=1,005 respondents)

Exacerbated Political Climate in 2017

Considering that 2017 was an election year and that Kenyans voted twice, 81% felt that the political climate worsened. Rift Valley is an outlier as only 58% were of the opinion that the political situation deteriorated – this could be an indicator that they did not feel the brunt of local and national politics in the same magnitude as other regions.

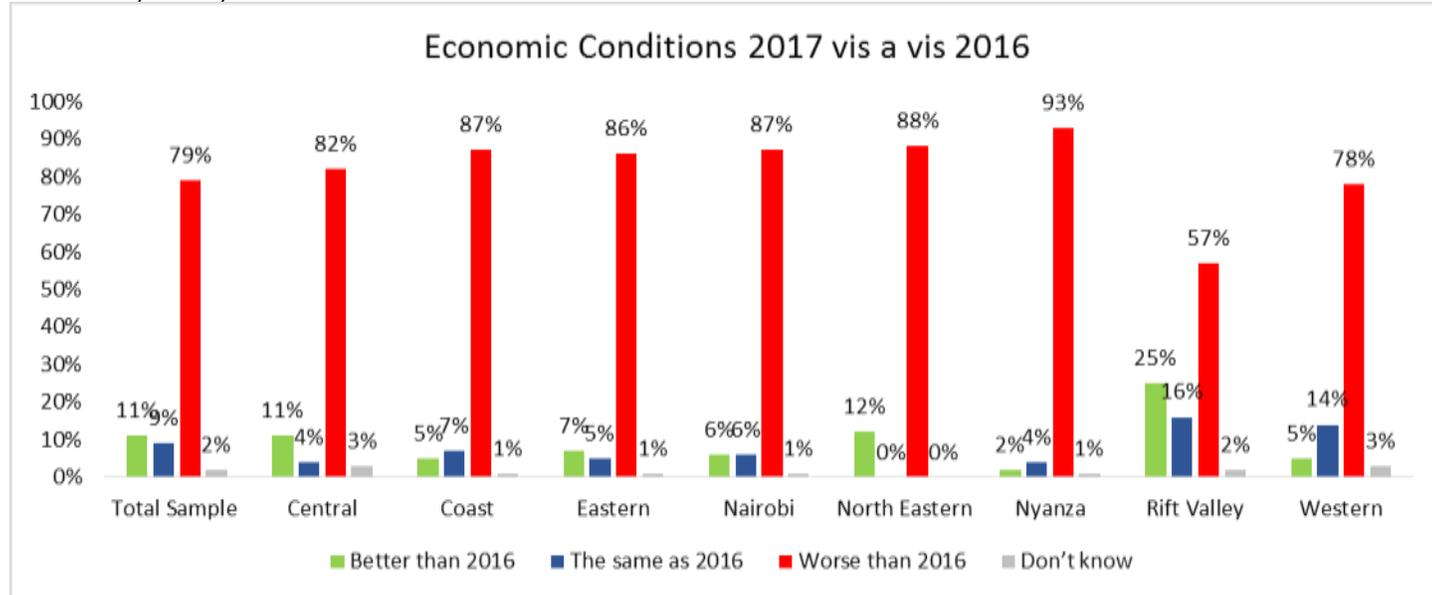
Q. Would you say that 2017 was better, worse or the same as 2016 in terms of politics?



Economic Conditions Worsened in 2017

According to TIFA's Year End Poll, 79% of Kenyans felt that the economic conditions worsened in 2017 in comparison to 2016. The highest negative perception of worsening economic conditions was from Nyanza whilst the lowest mentions were in Rift Valley.

Q. Would you say that 2017 was better, worse or the same as 2016 in terms of economic conditions?



Kenya lowered its 2017 economic growth forecast from 6.1% to 5.5% due to drought and political uncertainty¹. The agriculture sector contributes to about 26% of GDP and employs over 40% of the total population and over 70% of Kenya's rural population.² The drought affected crop production and animal productivity. This in turn affected the agro-processing industry as there was constrained supply of food products. Given the importance of agriculture, the adverse effects of the drought cannot be overemphasized.

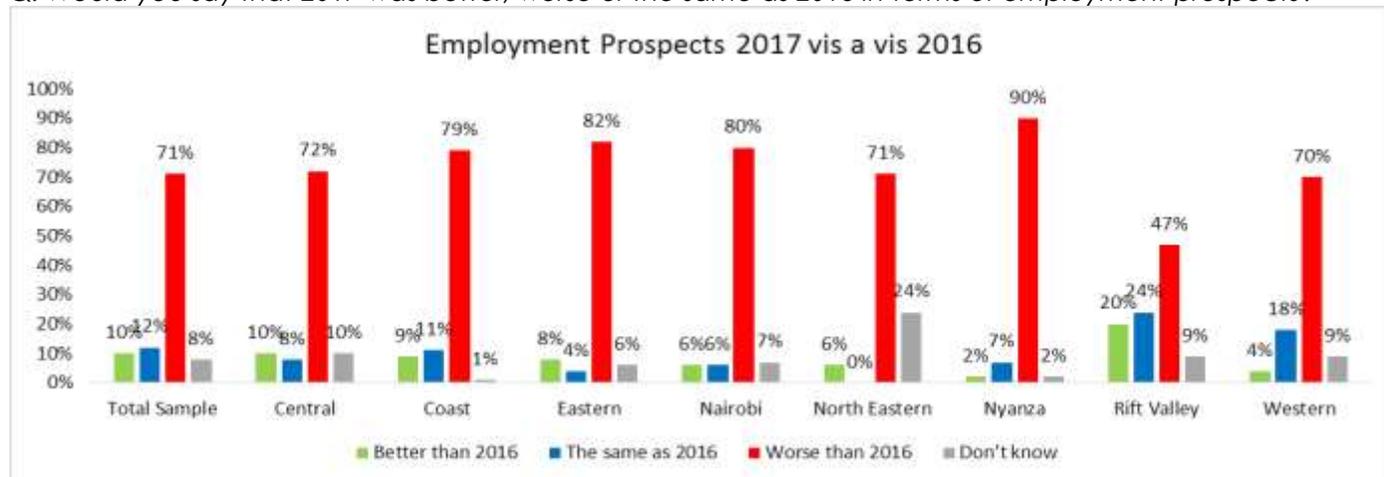
¹ <https://www.afdb.org/en/countries/east-africa/kenya/kenya-economic-outlook/>

² Source: Food and Agriculture Organization

Employment Prospects Reduced in 2017

TIFA's Year End Poll indicates that 71% of Kenyans felt that employment prospects worsened in 2017. Nyanza region had the highest mentions for employment prospects worsening whilst Rift Valley had the lowest.

Q. Would you say that 2017 was better, worse or the same as 2016 in terms of employment prospects?

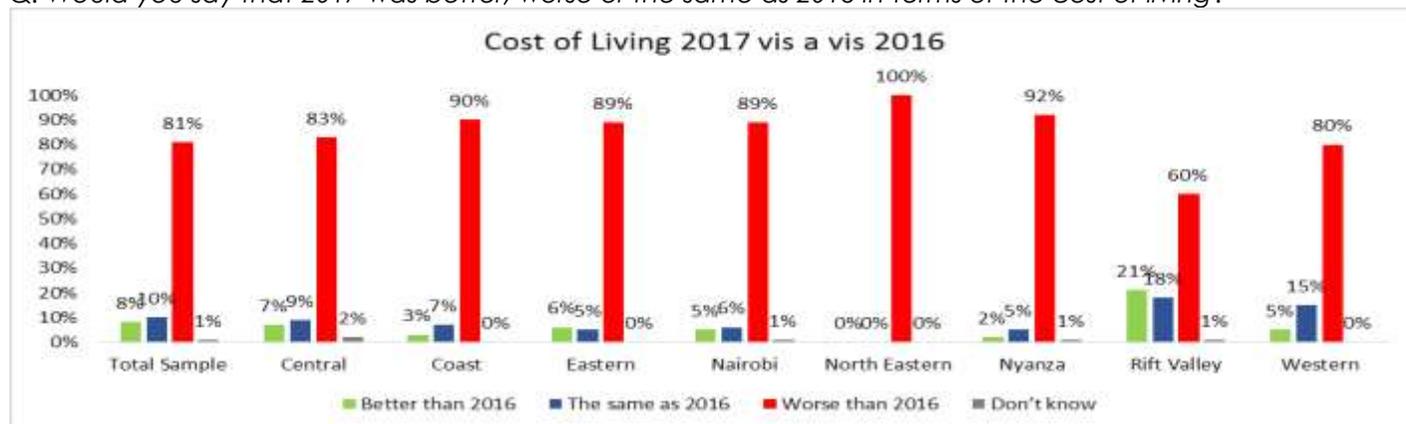


The sentiments on employment prospects are an indication of the reality. The job market in Kenya experienced layoffs in various sectors including; media, banking, manufacturing, insurance, NGO's and retail. This is attributable to various factors, such as slow economic growth, political unrest, automation replacing people, inflation and high costs of doing business. The agricultural sector that employs a considerable number of Kenyans underperformed due to the effects of the drought and this affected the livelihoods of many. Unemployment is considered a by-product of a weak economy.

The Cost Of Living Escalated in 2017

The survey findings show that a majority (81%) of Kenyans feel that the cost of living escalated in 2017. North Eastern, Coast and Nyanza had the highest proportion of respondents mentioning that the cost of living worsened whilst Rift Valley had the lowest at 60% mentions.

Q. Would you say that 2017 was better, worse or the same as 2016 in terms of the cost of living?



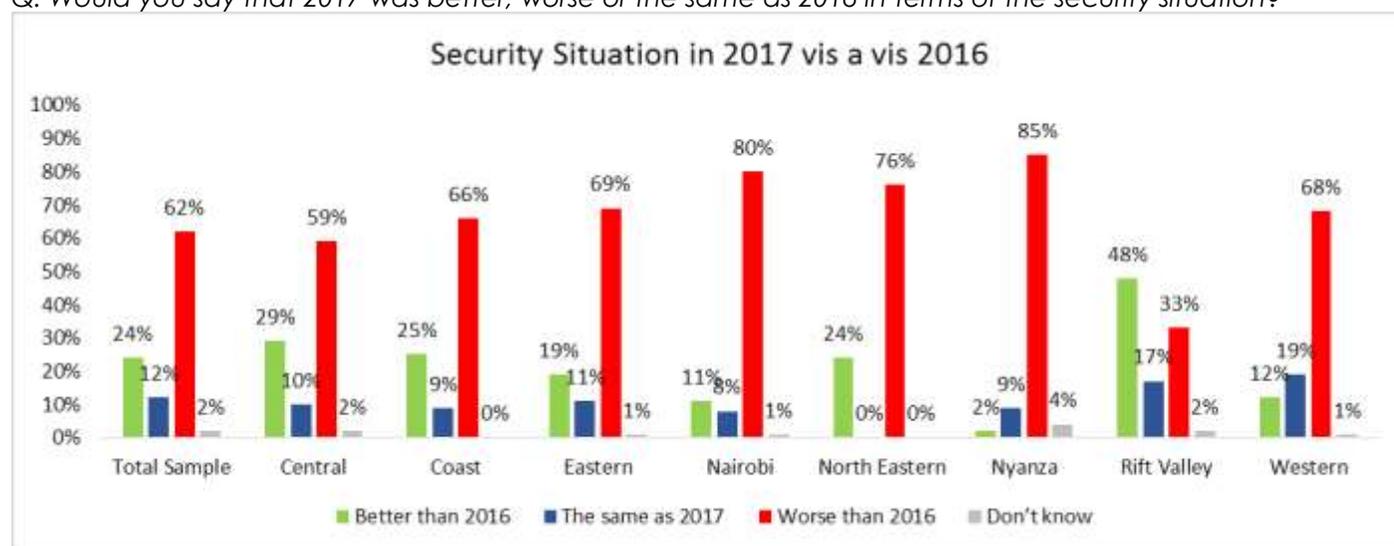
These concerns on the cost of living are in line with the reality as the inflation rate in Kenya rose from an average of 6.32% in 2016 to 7.95% in 2017 and this is evident from the increase in the prices of basic household goods. The average price of a 2KG packet of maize flour in April 2017 sold at an all time high of KES153 and only reduced to KES 90 after the government subsidy.

“In addition to Unga, other basic commodities whose prices shot up include milk, sugar, dry beans, and potatoes. It is therefore not surprising that the cost of living was a key concern amongst Kenyans as most households were forced to dig deeper into their pockets in order to meet their basic needs” says Ms Ireri.

Internal Security Deteriorated in 2017

The findings also show that 62% of Kenyans felt that internal security worsened in 2017 whilst 24% had a contrary opinion. The worst sentiments pertaining security was from Nyanza at 85% followed by Nairobi at 80%. This negative sentiments in Nyanza and Nairobi could be attributed to the fact that these regions were more active in political demonstrations.

Q. Would you say that 2017 was better, worse or the same as 2016 in terms of the security situation?

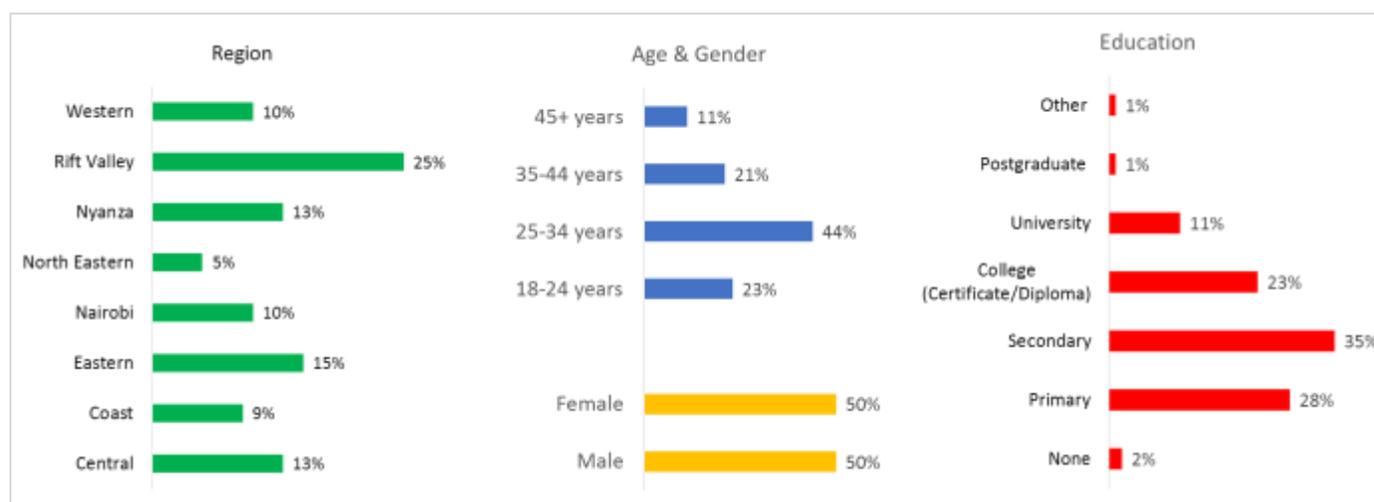


Since the introduction of multi-party democracy, Kenya has had six general elections: 1992, 1997, 2002, 2007, 2013 and 2017. Apart from the 2013 one, all of them have had a common factor of post-election violence (PEV). In 2017, there was a series of political demonstrations that resulted to human injuries, loss of lives and destruction of property. These could be contributing to the negative sentiments on internal security.

Year End Poll Methodology

The fieldwork for this survey was conducted between 12th and 16th December 2017. Data was collected through CATI (Computer Aided Telephonic Interviews). TIFA Research Kenya funded the survey.

The target population for this survey was Kenyans aged 18 years and above. The sample size was 1,005 respondents living in urban and rural areas. The margin-of-error (for the total sample) attributed to sampling and other random effects of this poll's sample size is +/- 3 with a 95% confidence level. The margin of error at the region level his higher depending on the region. Below is a summary of the respondents' demographics.



About TIFA Research

Trends & Insights For Africa (TIFA) Research Ltd is an African-based full service market research company. We conduct social and market research solutions and are also pioneering the industry in sports research. We work closely with our clients to enable them to transform the research data into insights and consequently into action. See our detailed company profile on www.tifaresearch.com

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