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32 años

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Vicerrectoría de proyección social

Public Opinion on Forced Internal Displacement and Extraordinary Security Measures in El Salvador

8 out of 10 Salvadorans think the State should recognize forced internal displacement by violence

7 out of 10 Salvadorans think that the restrictions placed on some prisons did little or nothing to reduce crime in the country

5.2% of those surveyed said they had to flee to protect themselves or a family member from a threat or act of violence

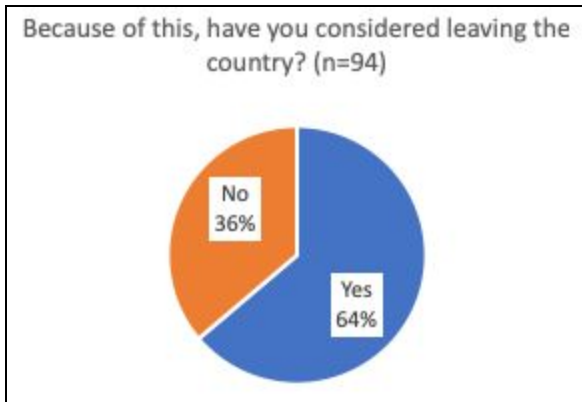
According to a public opinion survey carried out by IUDOP (The University Public Opinion Institute of the Universidad Centroamericana), 88.6% of Salvadorans affirmed that the State should recognize the existence of forced internal displacement due to violence. This question was part of a public opinion survey about forced internal displacement due to violence in the country, and public perceptions of the extraordinary security measures implemented by the current Government. The survey sample included 1,806 adults, and is thus representative of Salvadorans 18 years and older who are living in the country. The survey has a sampling error of about 2.3%.

Public Opinion on Forced Displacement due to Violence



The survey explored the topic of forced displacement due to violence through various questions. First, it asked those surveyed if, during the current year, they had changed their place of residence to protect themselves or their family from a threat or act of violence. The results show that 94.8% of those surveyed we're not obligated to move, while 5.2% (94 people) reported changing their place of residence

to protect themselves from threats or acts of violence.

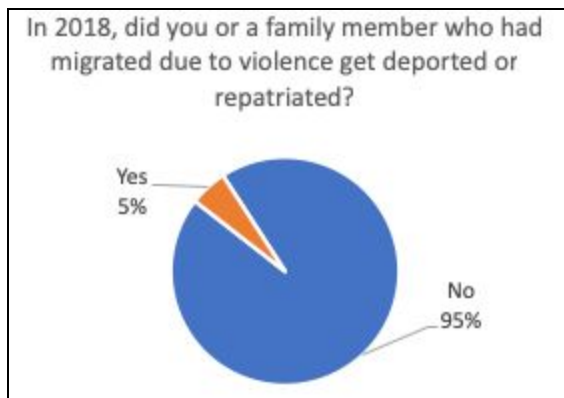


The group that was forced to move was asked if they had considered moving to another country. Approximately six out of every ten people (63.8%) who were forced to change their place of residence, affirmed that they had considered going to live in another country, while four out of every ten (36.2%) said they had not considered this alternative. When asked what country they had considered moving to, about half (51.8%) indicated that they had considered migrating to the US, 13.3% alluded to migrating to Europe, 8.3% said

they had considered going to South America, and another 8.3% had considered going to another country in Central America (in particular, Guatemala and Costa Rica were mentioned). Other countries and regions were mentioned in lower numbers, and 5% of those asked did not answer the question.

In the same vein, the survey asked participants if during the current year, due to threats or acts of violence, they or a member of their household had migrated to another country. 88% of those surveyed responded that neither themselves nor a member of their household had been forced to leave the country for those reasons; nevertheless, 12% of those surveyed (217 cases) reported that they or someone they live with had been forced to migrate due to threats or acts of violence. Participants who answered affirmatively were asked how many people in their household had been forced to migrate; in 41% of the cases one person had migrated, in 45.2% of cases two to three people had migrated, and in 13.8% of cases four or more people had migrated.

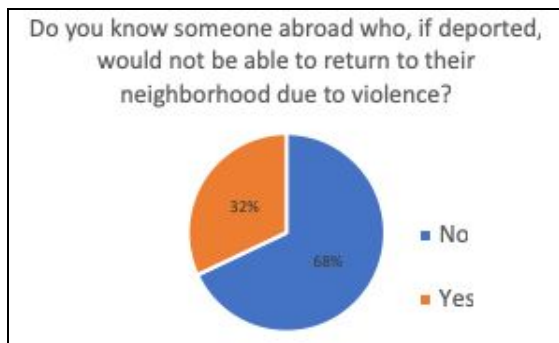
On the other hand, the survey asked participants if, during the current year, a child or adolescent in their household was forced to change schools due to threats or acts of violence. Every participant with a child or adolescent living in their place of residence was asked this question (1497 cases). Within this group, 94.2% stated that no child or adolescent in their household had to change schools due to threats or acts of violence, and 5.8% of those consulted (87 cases) did



have to change schools for those reasons. When asked how many times they had to change school, eight out of every ten people stated they only had to change schools once, two out of every ten cases said it had occurred two or three times.

The survey also asked citizens if, during the current year, they or a family member, who had migrated due to violence, had been deported. 94.7% of those

surveyed responded negatively, while 5.3% affirmed that they or a family member had been deported after migrating to escape violence.



Those surveyed were also asked if they knew someone currently living abroad who, if deported or repatriated, would not be able to return to their neighborhood due to violence. Approximately seven out of every ten people surveyed (68%) said that they did not know someone who, if deported, would not be able to return to their home due to violence, while three out of ten people (32%) said they knew someone in that situation.

The survey also gauged public opinion on the options available to someone who had migrated due to insecurity, but had then been deported. The most common responses to this question, which encompassed two-thirds of the answers, were that people in that situation could migrate again to another country (32%), ask the State for help (18%), or ask their friends or family for help (16.5%). Other answers were provided at much lower rates.

Another portion of the survey explored public perceptions of people who were displaced due to violence. The survey asked people to state to what extent they agreed with three statements. Over half (51.5%) of those surveyed agreed with the phrase: “This neighborhood would accept people from other parts of the country that are fleeing violence,” while people disagree or strongly disagreed with the phrase at a lower rate (45.8%). Additionally, 2.8% said they had no opinion regarding the statement.

When presented with the statement, “People who are fleeing from violence and abandon their home tend to have ties to gang members and problems with the law,” public opinion was very divided: 48.8% of those surveyed disagreed or strongly disagreed, and a similar number of participants (46.4%) agreed or strongly agreed. In this case, 4.8% of those surveyed did not state an opinion on the matter.

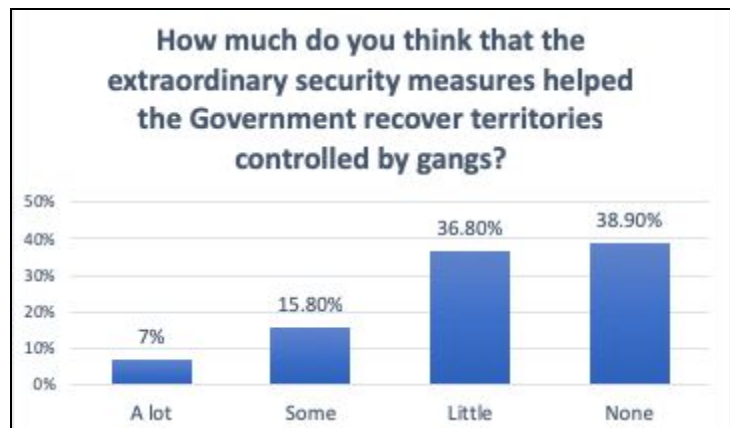
In both of the previous statements, public opinion was not markedly incline towards agreement or disagreement; this was different, however, for the following statement: “The Salvadoran State should create a special law that protects people who are forced to leave their home due to violence.” A high percentage of the population (92%) said they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, while a smaller group (8%), said that they disagreed or strongly disagreed with it.

The survey also asked if Salvadorans thought the State should recognize the existence of forced internal displacement due to violence, and a large majority (88.6%) of the population agreed, while a minority (9.5%) disagreed.

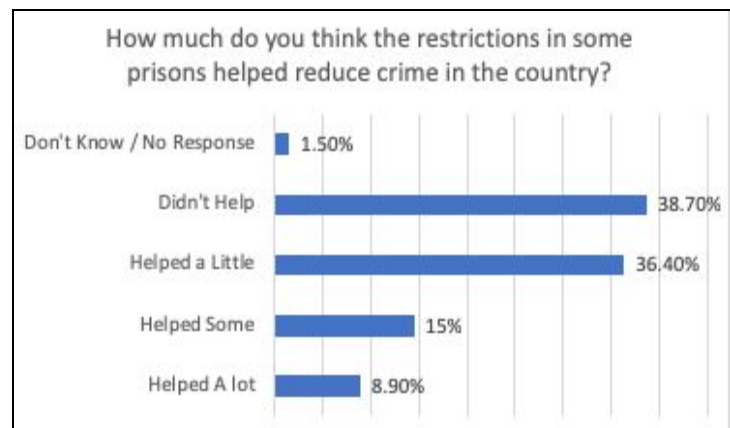
Public Opinion of Extraordinary Security Measures and Perceptions of Incarcerated People

The survey explored public perceptions of the extraordinary security measures implemented by the Government since 2016, and public opinion of incarcerated people.

A majority, 75.7%, of those surveyed indicated that the extraordinary security measures helped the Government recover little to none of the territory controlled by gangs. Some 22.8% said the measures have recovered some or a lot of gang-controlled territory. 1.4% of participants did not provide an answer.



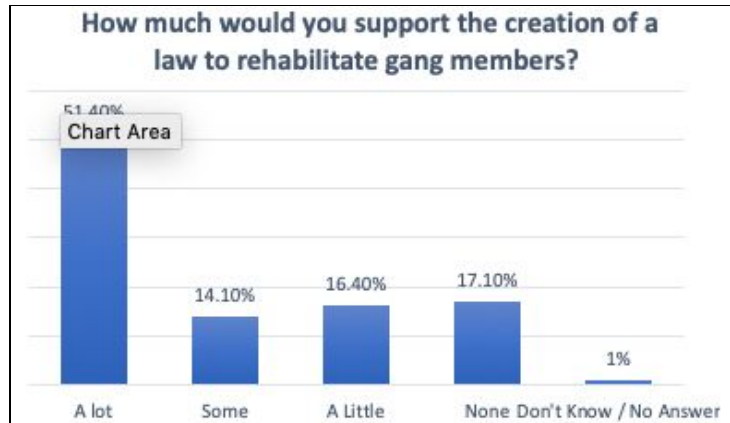
Regarding the restrictions placed on some of the country’s prisons in accordance with Legislative Decree № 321, which regulates the extraordinary measures, 75.1% of the population surveyed believe that the restrictions did little or nothing to reduce crime. 23.4% think the restrictions helped to reduce crime a lot or some. Only 1.5% of participants did not answer the question.



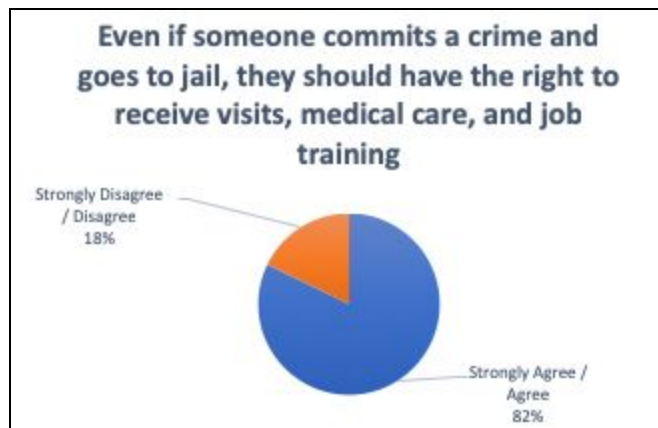
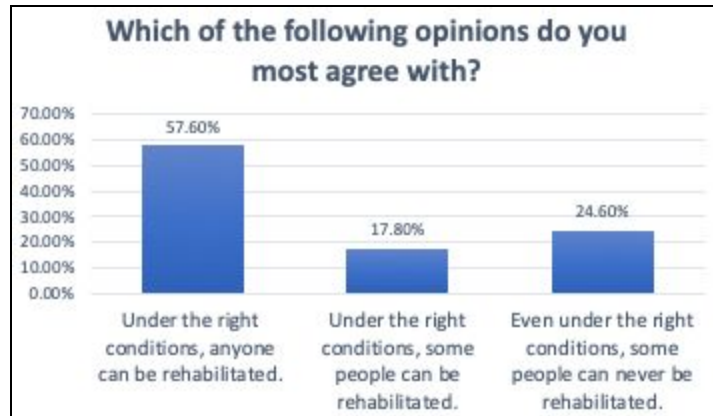
In regards to the public’s perceptions of incarcerated people, the survey included three scenarios to gauge how safe they would feel living alongside someone who had recently been released from jail. When asked, 87.9% said they would feel unsafe or very unsafe. Some 10.7% of participants responded that they would feel safe or very safe in this scenario. When the scenario was adjusted to include that the person who had recently been released from prison was a minor,

88.8% said they would feel unsafe or very unsafe, and 9.9% said they would feel safe or very safe. A third version of the scenario added that the person released from jail was involved in a criminal group. When presented with this scenario, almost everyone interviewed (95.9%) said they would feel unsafe or very unsafe, while 4% responded that they would feel safe or very safe.

The poll also asked participants to state their level of support for the creation of a law to rehabilitate gang members. 65.5% responded that they support or greatly support such a law. Another 33.5% said that they would support it a little or would not support such an initiative. Only 1% of participants did not answer.



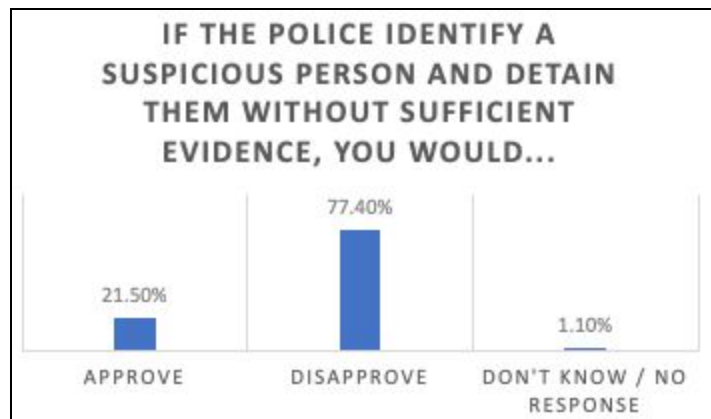
Regarding the rehabilitation of the prison population in the country, 57.6% of those surveyed believe that “under the right conditions any person can be rehabilitated.” 24.6% agree that “even under the right conditions, some people cannot be rehabilitated.” 17.8% of those surveyed agree that “under the right conditions some people can be rehabilitated, but others cannot.” On a related note, eight out of ten Salvadorans agree or strongly agree that incarcerated people should maintain the right to receive visits, medical care, and job training while incarcerated. A smaller proportion of people said that they disagree or strongly disagree that incarcerated people should have those rights. With respect to human rights, 69.2% of those surveyed said that they agree or strongly agree that the human rights of everyone, even incarcerated people, should be respected. Meanwhile, 29.4% disagree or strongly disagree.



Regarding the implementation of harsher measures, or measures whose legality toes the line. 65.7% of survey participants said they agree or strongly agree that criminals should be punished more harshly, rather than being incarcerated, to decrease violence in the country. About a third of participants (32.2%) said they disagree or strongly disagree with that opinion. However, when asked about whether or not they approve of the death penalty, answers were divided; 51.6% do not approve of it, and 45.7% would approve.

The survey also asked participants about the level of security that they feel around the police. 56.8% answered that they feel little to no security around a police officer, while 41.5% said they feel safe or very safe around a police officer. 1.7% of survey participants did not answer the question.

Finally, regarding the actions of the police and potential excessive use of force, approximately seven out of every ten Salvadorans (67.9%) agree or strongly agree with the following statement, “This country lacks a police force that makes decisions quickly and efficiently, even if they don’t respect some rights,” while 30.9% of the population said they disagree or strongly disagree. Only 1.2% of participants did not provide an answer.



Regarding the potential use of torture by the police to gain information about organized crime, 53.9% of the population approved the use of torture, while 43.7% disapprove of its use. 2.4% of those surveyed did not provide an answer. However, when asked if they would approve if someone were detained by the police without sufficient evidence or proof of a crime, 77.4% of those surveyed said they would disapprove of the situation, while 21.5% said they would. Only 1.1% refrained from responding.

San Salvador, January 9, 2019.

Technical Notes

Institution Responsible for the Survey: Iudop - UCA

Total Number of Valid Surveys: 1,806

National Sample: Randomly chosen samples collected in successive phases with departmental, sex, and age group-based quotas. Carried out in 14 departments, with a distribution proportional to the population, established in geographic segments.

National Sampling Error: +/- 2.3%

Confidence Level: 95%

Method Used: In-person interviews through field visits

Date Realized: Nov. 16 to Dec. 2, 2018

Written and Analyzed by: Laura Andrade,
Coordinator of Public Opinion Studies, Carmen
Guevara, Analyst

All answers are in percentages of the total number of people who responded.

Table 1: Please state which political party you support.

None	49.3%
Nuevas Ideas	17.5
Arena	15.7
FMLN	10.2
GANA	5.5
Other	0.6
No Answer / Don't Know	1.2

Table 2: If you are religious, which religion do you belong to?

None / Agnostic / Atheist	15.5
Catholic	45.2
Evangelical	32.8
Other	6.4

Table 3: What is your current job status?

Have a job	43.2
Take care of the home	22.8
Currently looking for work	10.5
Student	7.9
Not currently working, but have a job	7
Retired, pensioned, or disabled and unable to work	6.9

Don't work & not looking for work	1.6
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Table 4: When you see a police officer, how safe do you feel?

Very Safe	12.9
Safe	28.6
A Little Safe	28.3
Unsafe	28.5
Don't Know / No Answer	1.7

Table 5: During the current year, have you had to change residences to protect yourself or your family from a threat or act of violence?

No	94.8
Yes	5.2

Table 6: As a result, have you considered migrating to another country? (Only asked participants who said they had changed their place of residence due to a threat or act of violence.) n=94

Yes	63.8
No	36.2

Table 7: What country or region did you consider going to? (Only asked participants who said they changed residences due to a threat or act of violence, and had considered migrating to another country.) n=60

United States	51.8
Europe	13.3

South America	8.3
Canada	5
Guatemala	5
Costa Rica	3.3
Australia	3.3
Other	5
Don't Know / No Answer	5

Table 8: During the current year, due to a threat or act of violence, did a child or adolescent in your household have to change schools? (Only asked participants who said they had a child or adolescent living in their household.) n=1,497

No	94.2
Yes	5.8

Table 9: How many times? (Only asked participants who said that a child or adolescent in their household had to change school due to violence.) n=87

One Time	82.8
2 or 3 Times	17.2

Table 10: During the current year, due to a threat or act of violence, did you or a member of your household migrate to another country?

No	88
Yes	12

Table 11: How many people? (Only asked participants who answered yes to the question in Table 10.) n=217

One person	41
2-3	45.2
4-5	11.5
6-7	2.3

Table 12: During the current year, did you or a member of your family who migrated due to violence get deported or repatriated?

No	94.7
Yes	5.3

Table 13: Do you know someone who currently lives abroad and would not be able to return home if deported?

No	68
Yes	32

Table 14: In your opinion, if a person migrates due to insecurity and is repatriated or deported, what can they do when they return to El Salvador?

They can't do anything	5.2
Migrate again	32
Ask the State for help	18
Ask family and friends for help	16.5
They can't return to their home (change residences)	12.6

Migrate again	9.2
Ask a church for help	5.5
Other	1

Table 15: Please state if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: My neighborhood would welcome people from other parts of the country who are fleeing violence.

Strongly Agree	6.5
Agree	45
Disagree	36.5
Strongly Disagree	9.3
Don't Know / No Answer	2.8

Table 16: Please state if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: People who have to move to escape violence tend to have ties to gangs or problems with the law.

Strongly Agree	6.9
Agree	39.5
Disagree	41.9
Strongly Disagree	6.9
Don't Know / No Answer	4.8

Table 17: Please state if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: The Salvadoran State should have a special law to protect people who are forced to move due to violence.

Strongly Agree	32.2
Agree	59.8
Disagree	6.4
Strongly Disagree	1.6

Table 18: Do you think the Salvadoran State should recognize the existence of forced internal displacement due to violence?

Yes	88.6
No	9.5
Don't Know / No Answer	1.9

Table 19: To what extent do you think the Government's extraordinary security measures helped recover territory controlled by gangs: a lot, some, a little, or not at all?

A Lot	7
Some	15.8
A Little	36.8
Not At All	38.9
Don't Know / No Answer	1.4

Table 20: To what extent do you think that the restrictions placed on some prisons helped to reduce crime in the country: a lot, some, a little, or not at all?

A Lot	8.9
Some	14.5
A Little	36.4

Not At All	38.7
Don't Know / No Answer	1.5

Table 21: Imagine that someone who has recently been released from jail is living in your neighborhood. How safe would you feel living with this person in your neighborhood: very safe, safe, unsafe, or very unsafe?

Very Safe	0.5
Safe	10.2
Unsafe	63.3
Very Unsafe	24.6
Not Safe / No Answer	1.4

Table 22: Imagine that someone who has recently been released from jail is living in your neighborhood. If this person were a minor, how safe would you feel living with this person in your neighborhood : very safe, safe, unsafe, or very unsafe?

Very Safe	0.6
Safe	9.3
Unsafe	64.6
Very Unsafe	24.2
Don't Know / No Answer	1.3

Table 23: Imagine that someone who has recently been released from jail is living in your neighborhood. If this person is linked to a criminal group, how safe would you feel living with this person in your neighborhood: very safe, safe, unsafe, or very unsafe?

Very Safe	0.4
Safe	3.6
Unsafe	55.2
Very Unsafe	40.7

Table 24: To what extent would you support the creation of a law to rehabilitate gang members: very much, some, a little, or not at all?

Very Much	51.4
Some	14.1
A Little	16.4
Not At All	17.1
No Answer / Don't Know	1

Table 25: There exist many opinions on the rehabilitation of incarcerated people. I'm going to read some opinions on the topic. Please tell me which one most resonates with you:

Under the right conditions, anyone can be rehabilitated	57.6
Under the right conditions, some people can be rehabilitated, while others cannot	17.8
Even under the right conditions, some people can never be rehabilitated	24.6

Table 26: Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: Even if someone commits a crime and goes to jail, they still have the right to receive visits, medical care, and job training.

Strongly Agree	15.5
Agree	66.7
Disagree	14.7
Strongly Disagree	3.1

Table 27: Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: The best way to decrease violence in the country is to more harshly punish people involved in crime, instead of incarcerating them.

Strongly Agree	17.7
Agree	48
Disagree	28.4
Strongly Disagree	3.8
Don't Know / No Answer	2.2

Table 28: Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: Our country lacks police who make quick and efficient decisions, even if they don't respect some rights.

Strongly Agree	15.3
Agree	52.6
Disagree	26.8
Strongly Disagree	4.1
Don't Know / No Answer	1.2

Table 29: Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: Everyone's human rights

should be respected, even those of people involved in crime.

Strongly Agree	11.6
Agree	57.6
Disagree	24.4
Strongly Disagree	5
Don't Know / No Answer	1.4

Table 30: Please tell me if you approve or disapprove of the following scenario. If the country's representatives approve the death penalty, would you approve or disapprove of it?

I would disapprove	51.6
I would approve	45.7
Don't Know / No Answer	2.7

Table 31: Please tell me if you approve or disapprove of the following scenario. If the police torture someone involved in crime to get information on an organized crime group, would you approve or disapprove?

I would disapprove	53.9
I would approve	43.7
Don't Know / No Answer	2.4

Table 32: Please tell me if you approve or disapprove of the following scenario. If the police identify and detain a suspicious person without sufficient evidence or proof of their guilt, would you approve or disapprove of this?

I would disapprove	77.4
I would approve	21.5
Don't Know / No Answer	1.1

Table 33: Approximately what is the monthly budget of your household? (Including all the members of your household.)

Less than \$240	23.6
\$240-\$490	31.3
\$490-\$600	14.3
\$601 or more	11.4
Don't Know / No Answer	19.4

Table 34: How often do you read, watch, or listen to the news in this country?

Never	10
Rarely	25.2
One to two times a week	14.1
Always	50.6

Table 35: Of the following means of communication, which are the ones that you most watch, listen to, or read? (For people who answered that they check the news with some frequency.) [First news source listed] n=1,623

Television	52.5
Facebook	23.3
Print Newspaper	9
Digital Newspaper	8.2

Radio	5.8
Twitter	1.2

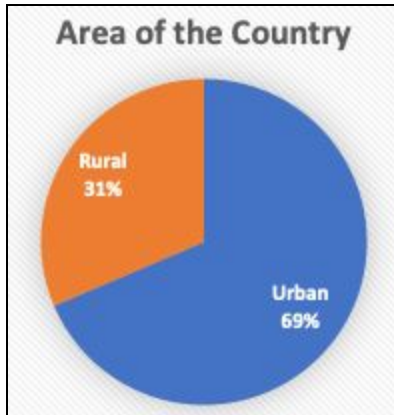
Table 36: Of the following means of communication, which are the ones that you most watch, listen to, or read? (For people who answered that they check the news with some frequency.) [Second news source mentioned] n=1,038

Television	32.7
Facebook	31.7
Print Newspaper	13.2
Radio	10.7
Digital Newspaper	7.5
Twitter	4.2

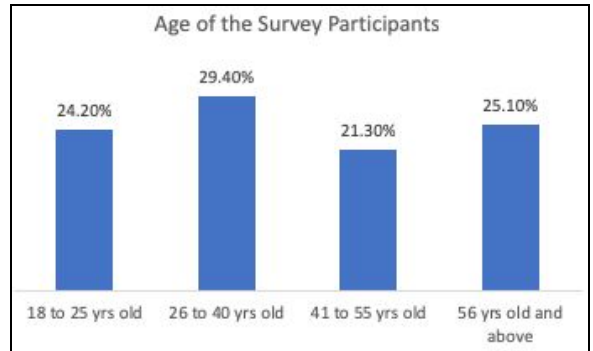
Table 37: Of the following means of communication, which are the ones that you most watch, listen to, or read? (For people who answered that they check the news with some frequency.) [Third news source mentioned] n=374

Facebook	24
Print Newspaper	21.3
Television	16.8
Radio	15.2
Digital Newspaper	14.9
Twitter	7.7

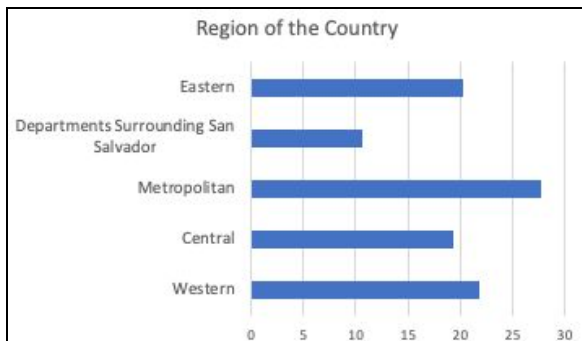
Graph 1



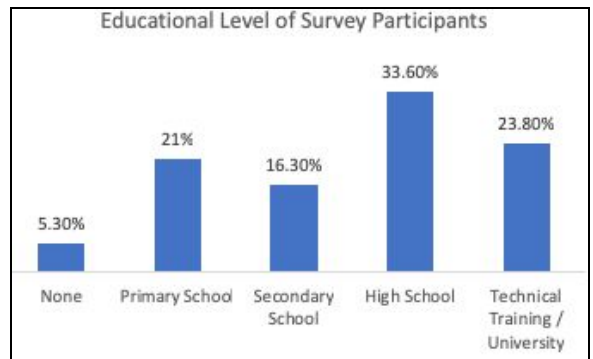
Graph 4



Graph 2



Graph 5



Graph 3

