

# THE MILLENNIAL DIALOGUE

SENEGAL



# METHODOLOGY

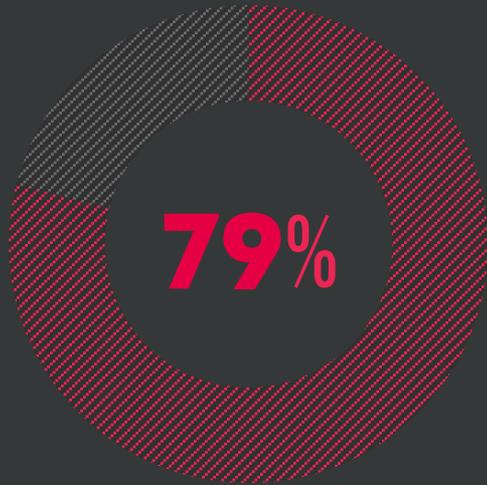
*AudienceNet conducted an initial online survey amongst 500 16-35 year old Senegalese residents and a week-long, moderated, online dialogue with 40 Senegalese Millennials, segmented as follows: the politically engaged the politically disaffected.*

*The sample was recruited from Millennials across Senegal, with representation of varying age groups; household income levels, gender and educational attainment levels.*

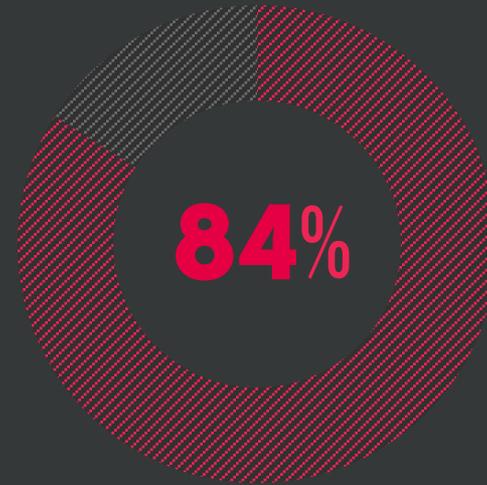
# INTEREST & ENGAGEMENT WITH POLITICS



# MOST YOUNG PEOPLE IN SENEGAL ARE HAPPY AND OPTIMISTIC...



*Are generally happy  
with their lives*

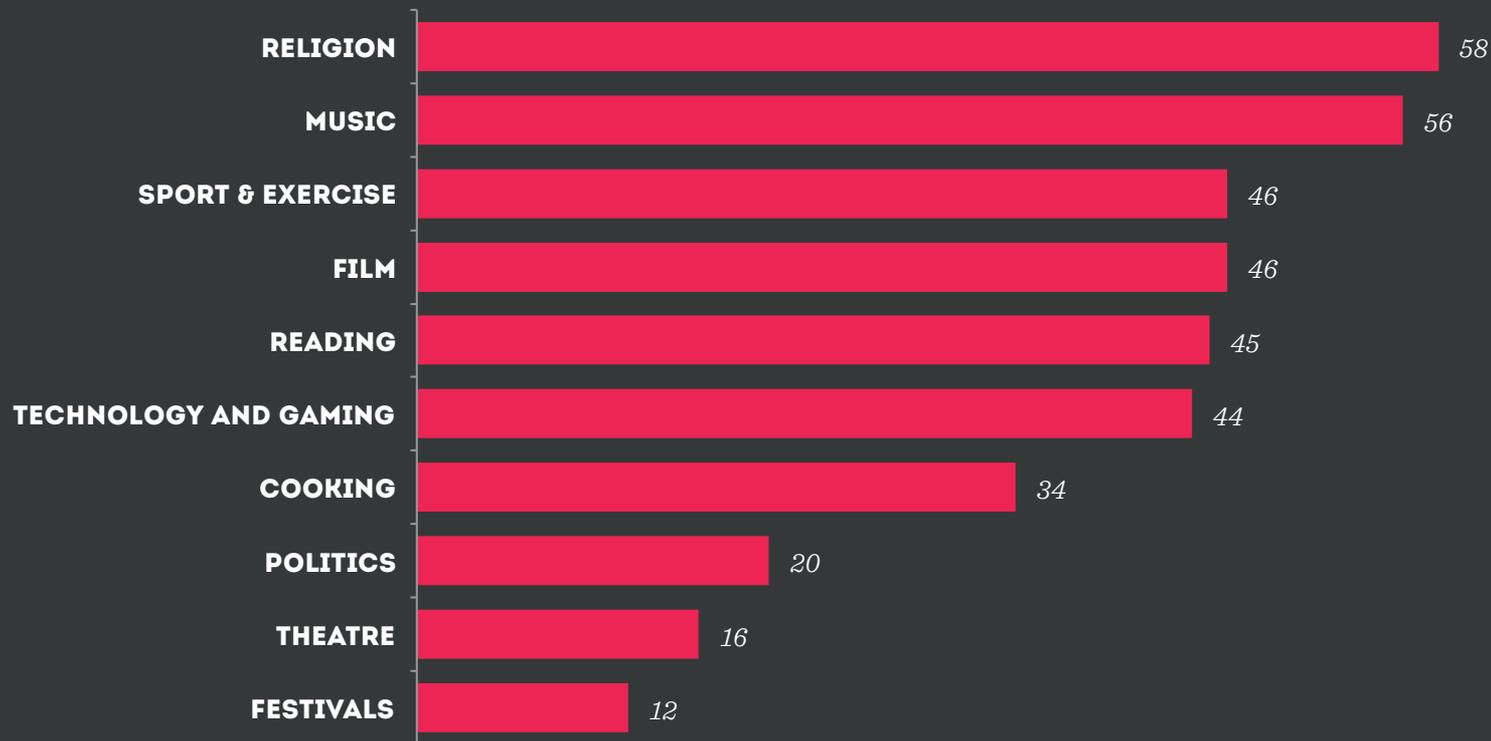


*Are optimistic about  
their future*

Q: Taking all things into consideration, how happy are you with your life right now? BASE: 500

Q: Looking to the future and the things you might like to do and achieve in life, how positive/optimistic are you that you will get what you hope for? BASE: 500

# ... BUT NOT VERY INTERESTED IN POLITICS



Q: Which of the following are you interested in? Tick all that apply. BASE: 500

# TAKING AN INTEREST IN POLITICS IS ALSO NOT CONSIDERED TO BE IMPORTANT

- 1 BEING SUCCESSFUL/ MAKING MONEY
- 2 BEING HAPPY AND IN GOOD HEALTH
- 3 SPENDING TIME WITH FAMILY/ FRIENDS
- 4 CONTRIBUTING TO SOCIETY
- 5 EQUALITY IN SOCIETY
- 6 BEING FREE TO DO AND SAY WHAT I WANT
- 7 BEING INVOLVED WITH MY LOCAL COMMUNITY
- 8 HAVING MY VOICE HARD
- 9 **TAKING AN INTEREST IN POLITICS**
- 10 HAVING LEISURE TIME

Q: What is most important to you from the following list? Choose a maximum of 3 things. BASE: 500

# WHY ARE SO FEW YOUNG PEOPLE INTERESTED IN POLITICS?

Most Senegalese Millennials argued that young people are not interested in politics because they feel they have been lied to and misled by politicians.

*“The way politics are conducted in this country should be rejected by every sane, sensible and humane soul. The best definition of Senegalese politics is “the art of deception”.”*

*“Five words to describe Senegalese political figures? Dishonest. Hypocritical. Disloyal. Misleading. Deceitful. Perfidious.”*

*“Our political figures do not fulfil the promises they made during campaigning once they get elected. They forget the reasons why they were voted for, which explains why young people are disinterested with politics.”*

*“Young people who have been misled since the dawn of Independence now believe that the political arena is not genuine at all.”*

*“Our politicians have failed their missions. It is obvious that they only care about their wallets and want to make their families and entourage wealthy. Young people are now aware that politicians do not serve their constituencies.”*

# WHY ARE SO FEW YOUNG PEOPLE INTERESTED IN POLITICS? (CONT.)

Others said they thought young people lacked interest in politics because they didn't fully understand the importance of politics or because they did not feel like politicians were considering the needs of the Senegalese people.

*“Here, politics is childish. I sometimes wonder if our politicians really care about Senegal and its inhabitants. Debates are often moot and there is no constructive approach whatsoever. It is all about war of words -- the most eloquent person wins, even when he/she talks non-sense. Politicians are really talented at driving a wedge between civilians and prompting violent clashes for the sake of their own political agendas.”*

*“Young people see politics as a dirty and unhealthy field. To them, it is complicated, and they often do not fully understand the stakes. Also, they fail to remember the noble side of politics and instead focus on the negative stereotypes (dishonesty, treachery, embezzlement, etc.). The reason why they are so disinterested is that they are insensitive to political rhetoric. Their aspirations are not taken into account.”*

# TAKING PART

9% said they sometimes took part in political meetings and the same was the case for protests and demonstrations

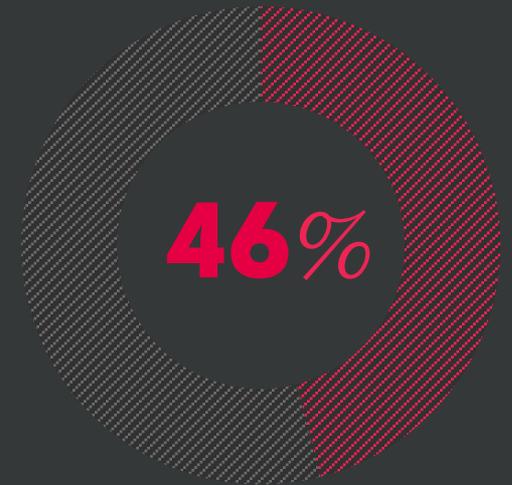
9%

Take part in  
*political meetings*

9%

Take part in  
*protests/demonstrations*

This compares to *41%* who  
take part in *religious*  
*meetings/events* and...



who take part in *team*  
*sports*

Q: Which, if any, of the following do you sometimes take part in? BASE: 500



# POLITICIANS CONNECTING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

38%

**FELT CONFIDENT THAT THEY  
AND THEIR PEERS COULD  
MAKE THEMSELVES HEARD**

63%

**SAID THEY WOULD VOTE IF  
THEIR WAS AN ELECTION  
TOMORROW**

Q: Thinking of any particular issue that you and/or your friends might have strong views about, to what extent do you feel that your voice can be heard and listened to? BASE: 500

# WHY POLITICIANS AREN'T TRUSTED

When asked why they did not trust politicians, the three key reasons stated by millennials were unfulfilled promises, lies and young people feeling ignored by politicians. In order to gain young peoples trust they wanted politicians to take their opinions seriously.

*“Young people do not feel their voices are being heard. The state of Education in the country is proof that they are right. We [college students] are simply cast aside. How could you possibly trust a regime that is oblivious to education, the backbone of this country?”*

*“In order to repair the damage done, we must create some sort of “Youth Parliament”. It would help a lot.”*

*“It is the consequence of a long process which started with unfulfilled promises, culminating with young people being used as disposable street soldiers during political protests.”*

*“The youth needs to be reassured [by politicians]. (...) For example, in the United States, politicians are not primarily seeking wealth when running for office. That is reassuring for the voters, because they know the candidates are not in it to fill their pockets.”*

*“It is impossible to trust people who create a thread of lies for personal gain. Politicians only pay visits to constituents during the campaigning period to read their utopic manifestos. Then, once they reach their targets, all the so-called objectives fade into thin air.”*

# TRUSTWORTHY POLITICIANS?

The majority of participants could not think of any politicians who they felt they could trust. The few politicians mentioned by millennials as trustworthy were either retired or international.

*“In my opinion, the only political figure worthy of trust was Nelson Mandela. He fought for an ideal and was ready to pay with his life. He made a sacrifice for his country. And yet, once he rose to power, he did not take advantage of his status. He paid a hefty price to get up there but he never abused his power.”*

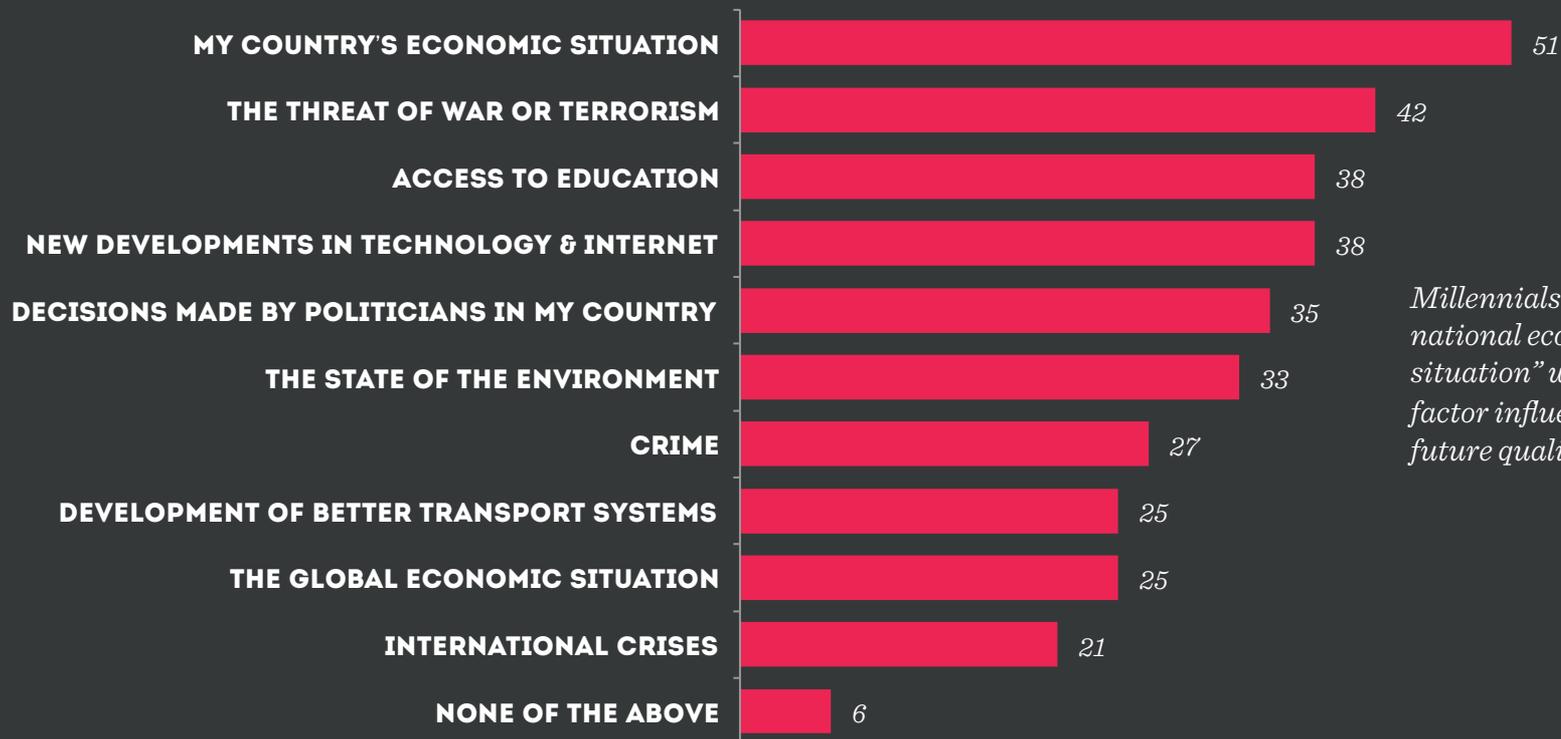
*“A political figure worthy of trust is Barack Obama, because he cares about all aspects of society and honours his commitments. His governance is not restricted to his country -- he is an ambassador above all.”*

*“I could mention [former Senegalese president] Abdoulaye Wade. In my opinion, he is trustworthy. He loves his country, the young generations and his compatriots. He had set up [the Senegalese agricultural programme] GOANA so that we would grow crops massively, but people betrayed him.”*

# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE...



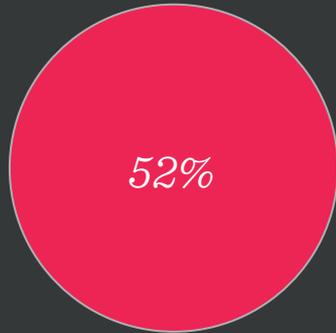
# FACTORS AFFECTING FUTURE QUALITY OF LIFE



*Millennials think “the national economic situation” will be the top factor influencing their future quality of life.*

Q: Which of the following do you feel will affect your future and the quality of your life? Tick all that apply. BASE: 500

# WHAT WOULD THEY RATHER BE?



*Business Owner  
or Founder*



*Doctor*



*Academic/  
Writer*



*Sportsman/  
Sportswomen*



*Research  
Scientist*



*Famous  
Celebrity*



*Lawyer*



*Politician*



*Religious  
Leader*



*Musician*

Q: You may not want to be any of them but given the following choices, which of the following would you personally rather be? Tick all that apply. BASE: 500

# TIME TRAVEL ACTIVITY | THEIR OWN FUTURE

The participants were asked to imagine that they could travel 20-30 years in to the future and describe what they think their lives would be like. Most hoped to have started a family and maybe have started their own businesses to help create jobs in the country.

*“I would be a prominent businessman. I say that because I know that, deep down, I am a born leader of men.”*

*“I will be independent, earn a living in a dignified manner and live my life without fear of being judged.”*

*“If everything goes according to plan, I will open an accounting cabinet and thus create jobs.”*

# TIME TRAVEL ACTIVITY | **SENEGAL**

When asked what the country might be like in 20-30 years time, there was a fairly even split of those who thought Senegal would be a more modern and developed country and those who thought progress would be somewhat slower.

*“Regarding Senegal’s future, I can see the living conditions being enhanced. However, the wealthy and powerful would still take advantage of those who are less fortunate in order to maintain their status. That is just how things are in Senegal.”*

*“Granted, Senegal is evolving quite slowly, but there are projects in the pipeline which could benefit everyone in the future. This country has an advantageous geographical location [the most Western point in Africa]. At some point, we will have to take advantage of it to build a better future. I can imagine Senegal being an African hub.”*

*“[In the future] nothing would change in Senegal, given that in 60 years of independence, everything has remained the same. I sometimes wonder if we are ready for change, because we are all so used to the same brand of politics.”*

*“I am quite optimistic about the Senegal of the future! Although the politicians will still be the same, I think the citizens will be more enlightened, hardworking and driven.”*

# TIME TRAVEL ACTIVITY | GOVERNMENT

When we asked what the government might be like in 20-30 years time, there were very mixed views. Some thought there would be little or no change to the government, while others were optimistic and hoped for modernisation and democratisation.

*“Government would have less control because the private sector would overtake the public sector. As far as the voting process is concerned, I think the general mentality would change – candidates would not be elected based on their familial backgrounds.”*

*“If we are lucky enough to have [the mayor of Dakar] Khalifa Sall as our president, the country would modernize remarkably. Regarding the voting process, history tells us that transparency here is utopia.”*

*“There would not be massive changes in the government neither.”*

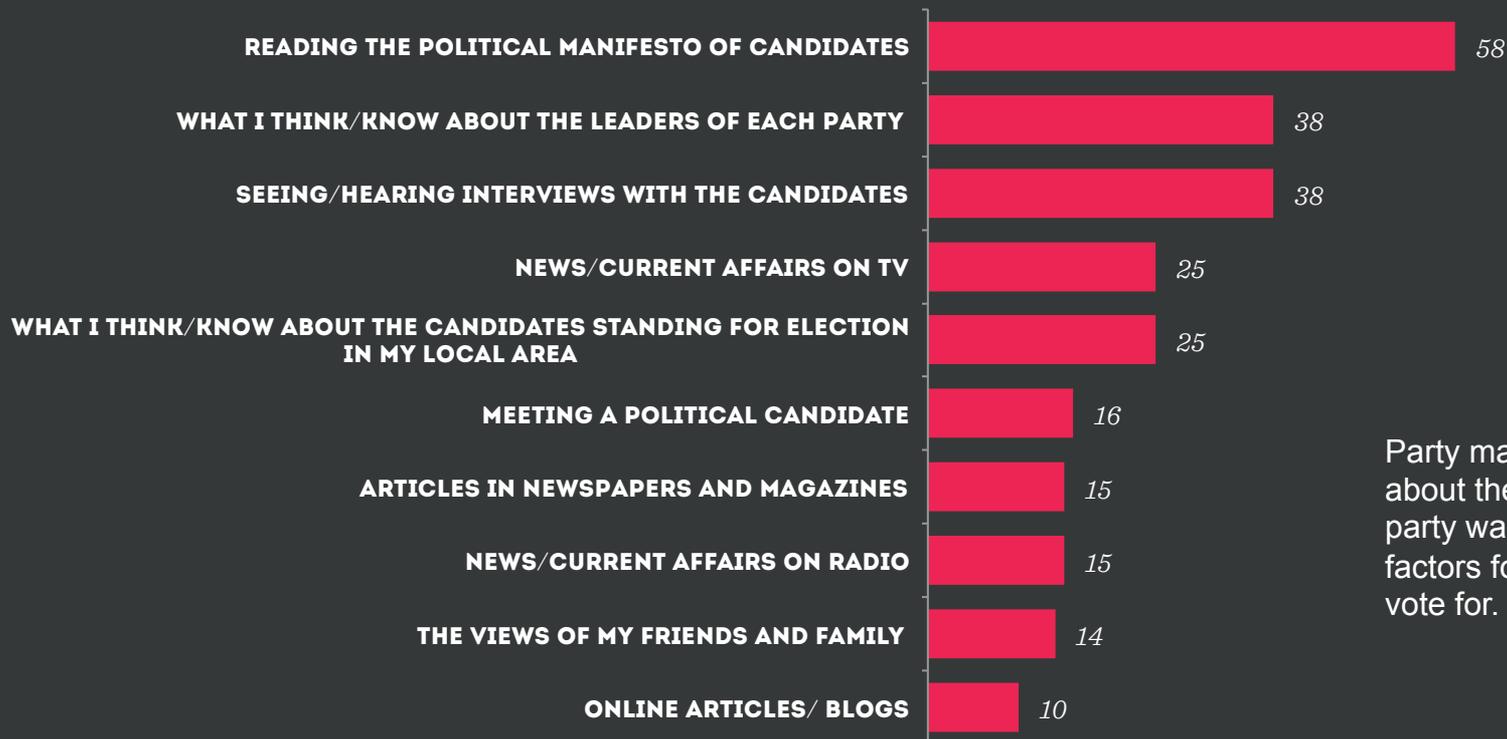
*“[In the future] nothing would change in Senegal, given that in 60 years of independence, everything has remained the same. I sometimes wonder if we are ready for change, because we are all so used to the same brand of politics. We would still be stuck with the same type of government – farcical and submissive towards foreign countries – and a nightmarish style of democracy!”*

# VOTING



# FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO VOTING DECISION

(% 'Great Extent' or 'Some Extent')

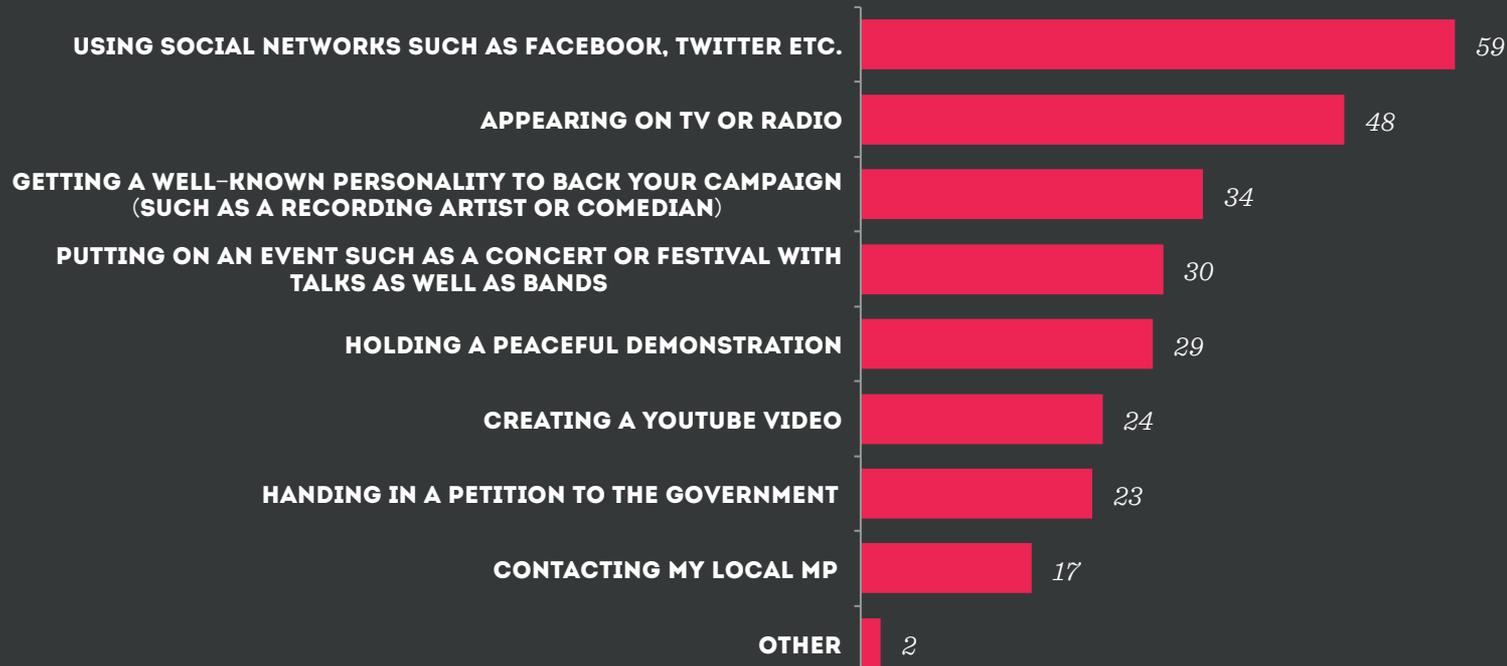


Party manifestos and views about the leaders of each party was seen as the key factors for deciding who to vote for.

Q: If you did vote, which of the following factors would contribute to your decision as to who to vote for? Tick all that apply. BASE: 375

# MEANS THEY WOULD USE TO START A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN *(‘extremely useful’ %)*

If they were to start their own campaign, however, Senegalese millennials would be more likely to focus their efforts on social media



Q: If you and/or your friends wanted to start a campaign to bring about change, which of the following do you think would be very useful? Tick all that apply. BASE: 500

# WHAT WOULD THEY DO DIFFERENTLY?

When asked what they would do differently if they were to run a political campaign, millennials said they would talk directly to the people and try not to make big promises they would not be able to keep after the election. They would focus their campaign on one specific issue.

*“If I were to start a campaign, I would put emphasis on poverty, having grown up in an underprivileged family. I know how it feels. I would set myself apart from other campaigners by being ever-present in their everyday lives instead of being distant and making false promises.”*

*“I would go out and knock on people’s doors with humility. I would also make sure my entourage is trustworthy and unfamiliar with controversy.”*

*“My campaign would tackle issues such as youth unemployment and the reintegration of women. [Beforehand] I would conduct a marketing research in order to choose my positioning, build a brand image and prepare a communication strategy.”*

*“I would speak mainly about agriculture, because, in a country like ours, the primary sector could help us reduce importation.”*

*“I would “reinvent” communication – instead of endless speeches, I would use visual communication. I would be willing to use Hollywood techniques to make it happen. I would also use the media and the internet in order to spread my message in the broadest possible way.”*

*“In order to set myself apart, I would not try to make the voters believe the impossible. The best way to convince people is to tell the truth in order to instil trust and show unwavering determination to serve them and meet the targets that were initially set.”*

# POSTER CAMPAIGN

The respondents were asked to work together to develop ideas for posters that would encourage young people to get engaged in politics and call for unity in the country. They wanted to use simple language and eye grabbing pictures.

*“I would convince the youth that “mankind is the cure to mankind”. That is the kind of motivation young people need.”*

*“I would use a familiar tone in order to reach out to more people. I would speak [the traditional language] Wolof to display my ethnicity to the community. I would only speak French for diplomatic purposes. I would use catchy pictures like a painting which shows a child walking on a rocky field to reach, aiming to reach the greenery at the other end. Such a picture would convey the message that, while the journey is sometimes rocky, the destination is always beautiful. I would also make references to countries like China or Japan and quote the likes of Thomas Sankara and Barack Obama.”*

Titles:

**“ON OUR WAY ”**

**“NEVER GIVE IN, NEVER GIVE UP ”**

**“WORK NOW. WORK AGAIN. WORK ALWAYS. ”**

# THE ‘IDEAL’ CANDIDATE

When we asked who their ideal candidate was, there were some heated debates on gender, with a majority saying their ideal candidate would be a male, however there were also quite a few participants who thought gender was irrelevant. Most wanted their candidate to be over the age of 35.

*“My ideal candidate would be a male aged under 45 with a dressing style halfway between traditional and classy and an Obama-like personality. He would typically spend his weekend keeping in touch with the civilians.”*

*Moderator: Why not a female candidate?*

*“It is not unimaginable, but since the independence of this country [1960], I have not seen a woman capable of shouldering the burden.”*

*“My ideal candidate would be aged between 32 and 35 and reside in the north or the south of the country, because if she lived in [the capital] Dakar, she would only care about improving that particular city and forget that there are fourteen others in Senegal. She must be smartly-dressed person who would visit hospitals and foster homes during weekends and invest a lot in childcare charities. I would pick a woman because women have a bigger competitive spirit [than men].”*

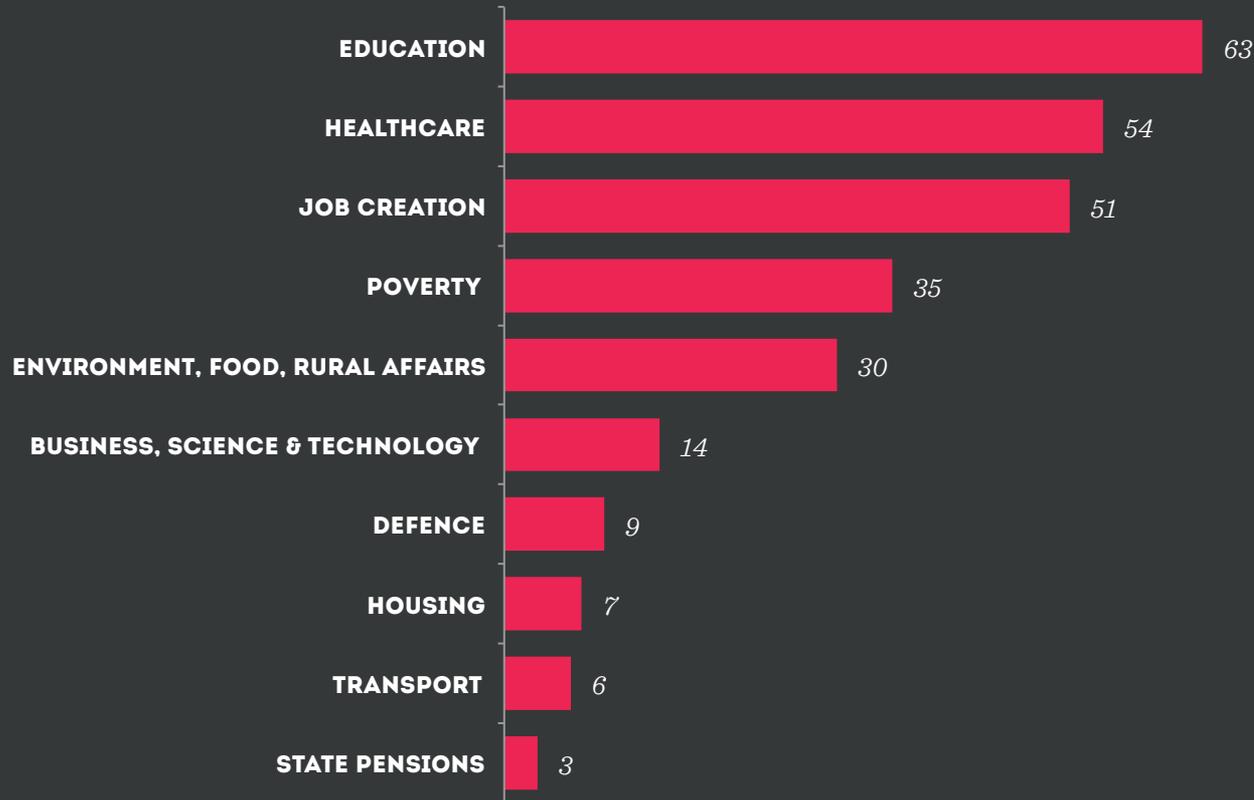
*“My ideal candidate would be, above all, male. Men are more suited to running a country. He must also be composed, wise and always honour his commitments. People would be fond of his spontaneity, his devotion and his kindness.”*

# THE ISSUES THAT MATTER



# HIGH PRIORITY FOR PUBLIC SPENDING

(%)



*Job creation, education and healthcare topped the priority list for Senegalese millennials.*

Q: Imagine that you were in government. Please select up to three areas you would give most priority to? BASE: 500



19%

**BELIEVED IN THE  
IMPORTANCE OF EQUALITY  
OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION IN  
SOCIETY**

Q: Which of the following statements do you agree with? Tick all that apply. BASE: 500



46%

**BELIEVED IN THE  
IMPORTANCE OF EQUALITY  
FOR ALL GENDERS IN  
SOCIETY**

Q: Which of the following statements do you agree with? Tick all that apply. BASE: 500

# THE ISSUES THAT MATTER

The main issues for Senegalese millennials were levels of youth unemployment and the quality of education. Millennials thought that these two issues were highly interlinked and wanted the government to help create jobs for recent graduates.

*“I think the primary issue the politicians have to tackle is unemployment. The fact is many graduates do not meet the recruiters’ criteria. For example, there are few openings in the accounting sector, and yet many students are enrolling in accounting courses. Instead, we should focus on technical formation.”*

*“Politicians have to focus on reducing unemployment. There are too many students who, despite graduating from college, end up being unemployed.”*

*“Me and my friends complain a lot about the current state of the education system. I enrolled in a private institution, but school days are inconsistent and professors do their job unprofessionally. It is unfair, because we put our money into these schools. I think launching a petition and contacting the school directors could help remedy the situation.”*

*“My only concern is what will happen to our future. If the present is any indication, our future is void. Students are ambitionless because the authorities fail to make them believe that they can harbour ambitions.”*

# THE ISSUES THAT MATTER CONT.

Other issues mentioned included equality for all sexual orientations, safety and the economy.

*“I want homosexuality to be legalized in Senegal. There are so many gay people who cannot grow into the society because they do not feel at ease with all the prejudice. I know so many fellow homosexuals who have been forced to marry women and ended up getting a divorce. That is an issue I care about. I want to live in a world devoid of homophobia.”*

*“One of our major concerns is access to loans. It is nearly impossible to borrow money from banks.”*

*“In some Senegalese cities, there is total insecurity. Thieves steal handbags in broad daylight. And yet we all know that a country with minimal security deters foreign investors.”*

# POLITICIANS/ POLITICAL PARTIES



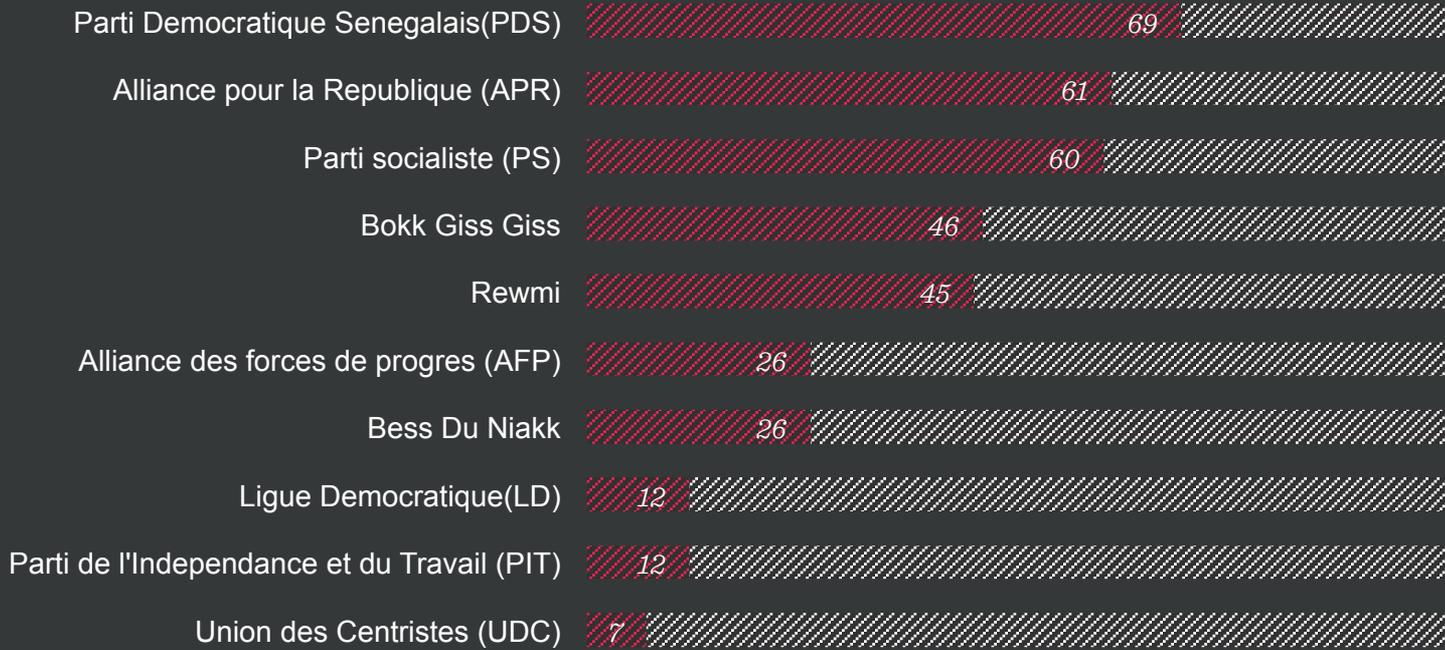
# CONTACTING YOUR LOCAL MP

*“Indeed, I contacted the mayor of my borough once. Me and my companions had launched a petition for the removal of street vendors because the area was transforming into a street market, and the mayor responded favourably. [However] he said that he alone could not make an impact. We then gave him our full help and support to reach our goal.”*

*“I, personally, never tried to contact an elected representative. And I would be lying if I said that I intend to, because I do not see the point. I know how the Senegalese administration works: all letters go straight into the archives without even being read. The only way to make your voice heard and get straight answers is to go speak in the media.”*

*“I have never contacted an elected representative or an MEP – I prefer avoiding them. But I know that one day, I will have to. However, instead of a letter, I would prefer meeting in person to confront him/her about the current state of the job market.”*

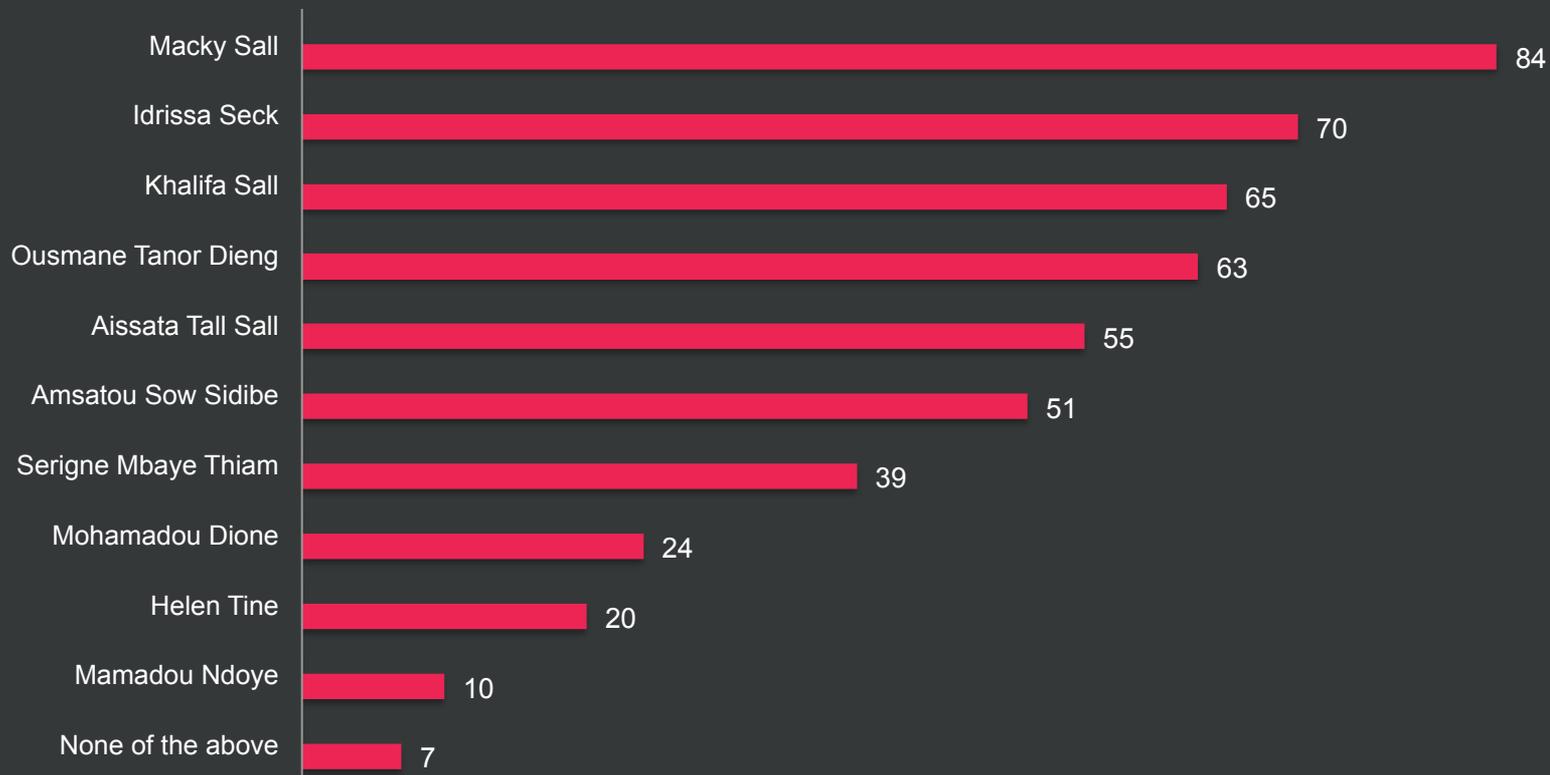
# AWARENESS OF POLITICAL PARTIES (%)



**AWARENESS WAS RELATIVELY LOW FOR ALL PARTIES**

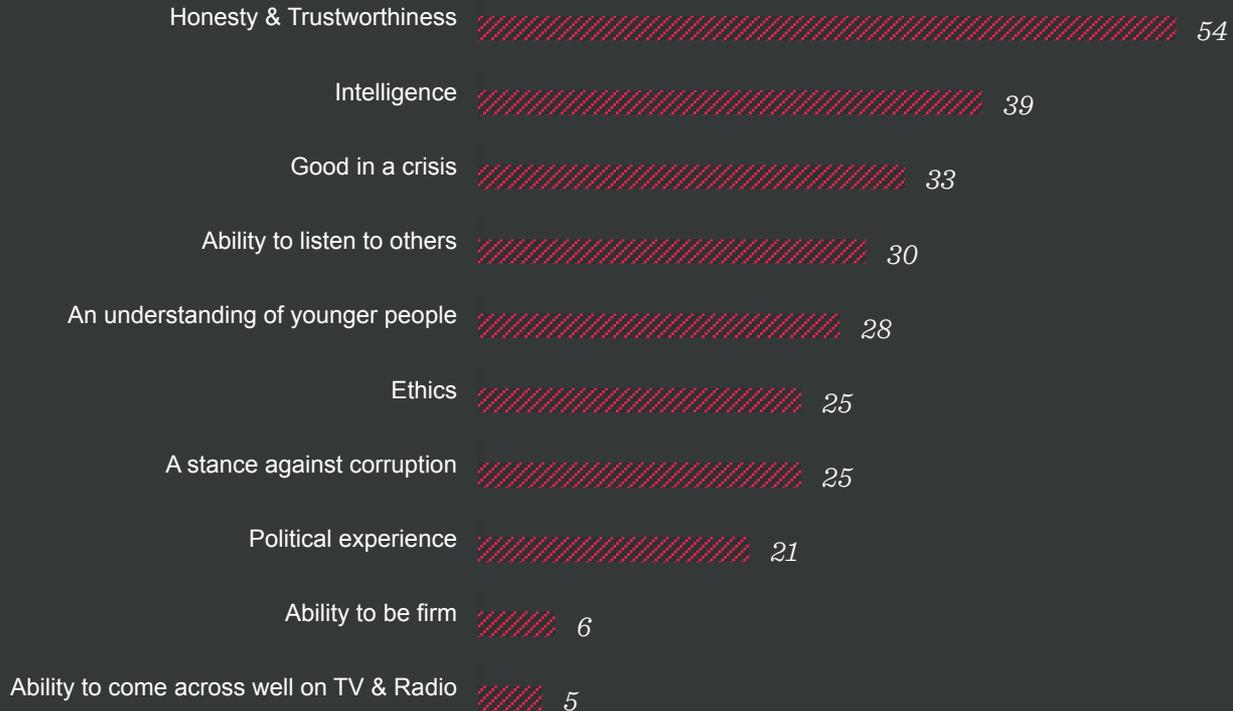
Q: Which, if any, of the following political party coalitions are you aware of? Tick all that apply. BASE: 500

# AWARENESS OF POLITICIANS (%)



Q: Which, if any, of the following political party coalitions are you aware of? Tick all that apply. BASE: 500

# IMPORTANT QUALITIES FOR AN ELECTED POLITICIAN (%)

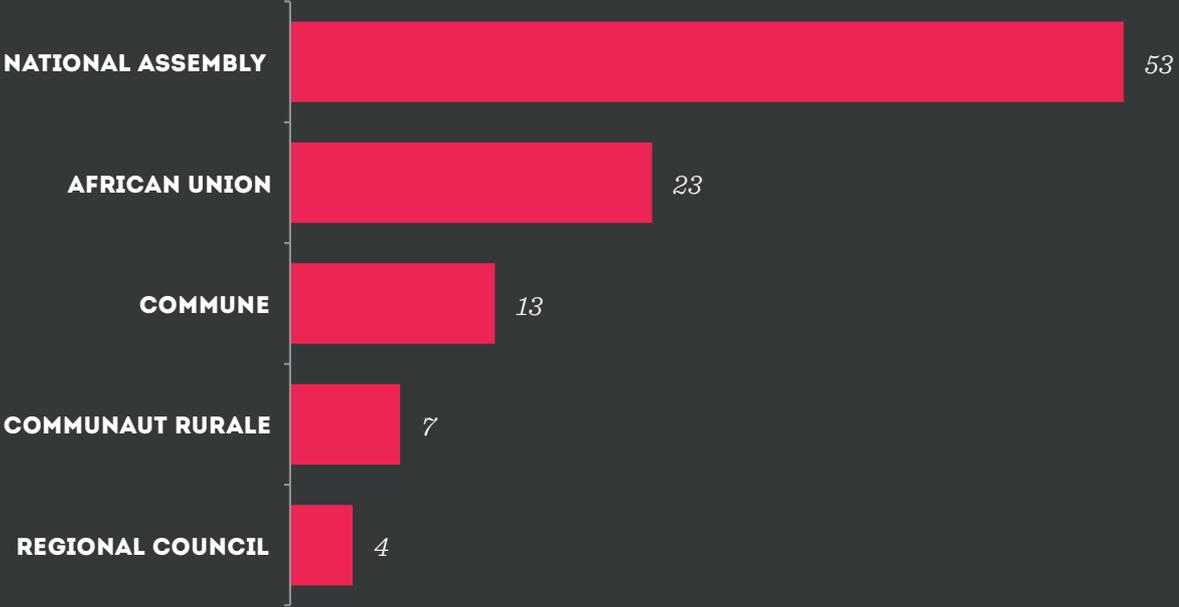


Q: What qualities from the following list should an elected politician possess? Please select up to three qualities you believe are the most important? BASE: 500

# ELECTORAL REFORM

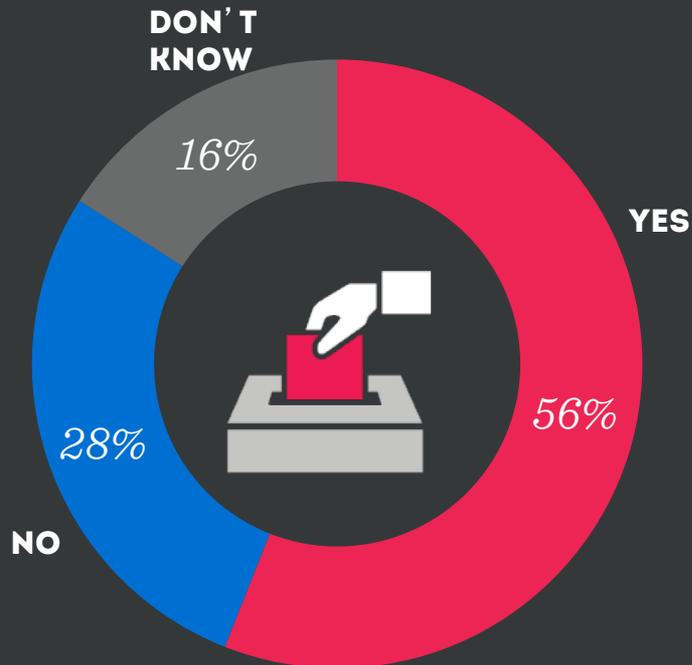


# INSTITUTIONS THEY FEEL REPRESENT THEM (%)



Q: As a citizen of Senegal, which of the following institutions do you feel represents your voice? BASE: 500

# SHOULD IT BE MADE COMPULSORY TO VOTE?



# 60%

*Of those aged 31-35 said "yes" - voting should be made compulsory*

Q: Do you think that it should be made compulsory, by law, to vote at a general election? BASE: 500

# WOMEN IN POLITICS

(% who agree with each statement)

**THREE QUARTERS OF FEMALES (75%) THOUGHT THAT THERE SHOULD BE MORE WOMEN IN POLITICS, THIS COMPARES TO 53% OF MALES. AMONGST 16–20 YEAR OLDS 68% BELIEVED THAT THERE SHOULD BE MORE WOMEN IN POLITICS.**

*“There should be a more women in politics”*

[VALUE]%

[VALUE]%

■ Yes ■ No

Q: Thinking of the current gender balance in politics, do you think there should be more women politicians? BASE: 500

