

PREDICTIONS 2026

UAE Edition

December 2025

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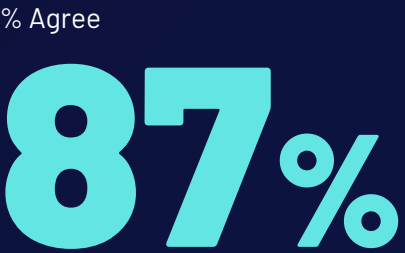
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Past & future
resolutions

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS FOR 2026

01

In the UAE, the outlook for 2026 is defined by optimism, with a clear majority stepping into the new year with a positive mindset

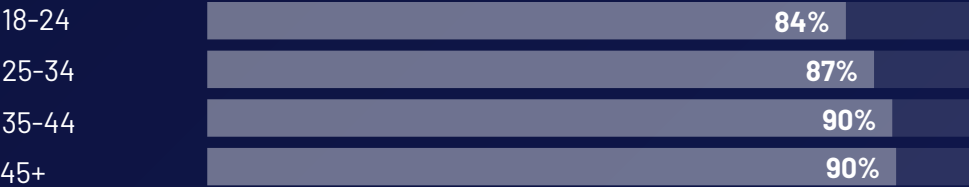


I am optimistic that 2026 will be a better year for me than it was in 2025

By Gender



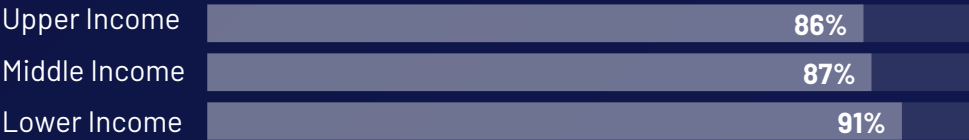
By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



That optimism extends to well-being, with strong expectations of improved physical and mental health in 2026



% Agree

90%

My physical health will be better in 2026 than it was in 2025



% Agree

87%

My mental health will be better in 2026 than it was in 2025



EXPECTATIONS FOR WORLD AFFAIRS IN 2026

02

In global affairs, a hopeful outlook emerges as many believe 2026 could mark the end of the conflicts in the Middle East and Ukraine



% Likely

61%

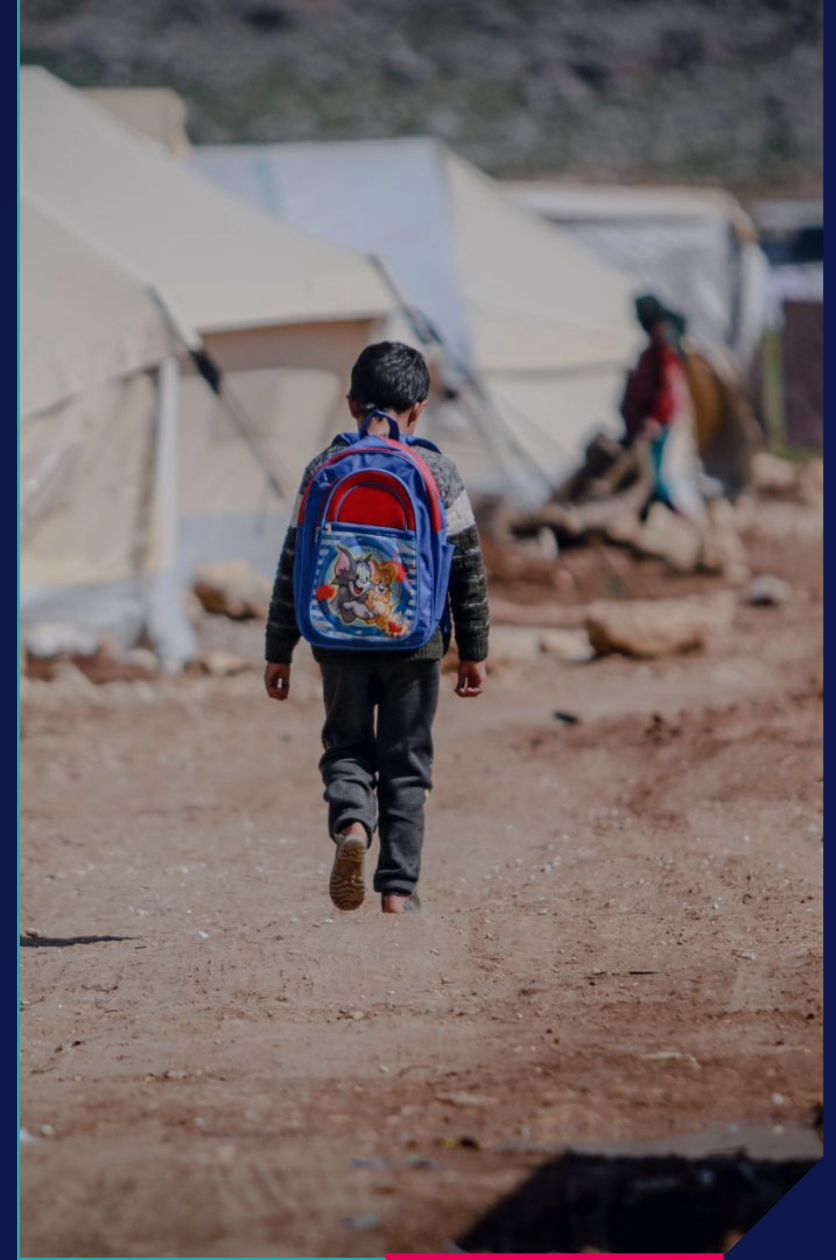
The current wars in the Middle East will end in 2026



% Likely

59%

The war in Ukraine will end in 2026



Hope for resolution is matched by expectations of political progress – from reconstruction to peace negotiations and wider international recognition

% Likely

72%

Major reconstruction efforts will commence in Gaza with international support in 2026



71%

Formal Middle East peace talks will take place in search for a lasting end to the conflicts in 2026



64%

More major Western powers will formally recognize an independent State of Palestine



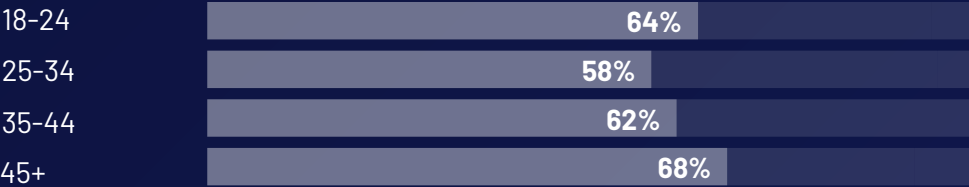
With this momentum, many also believe the world will become a safer place in 2026



By Gender



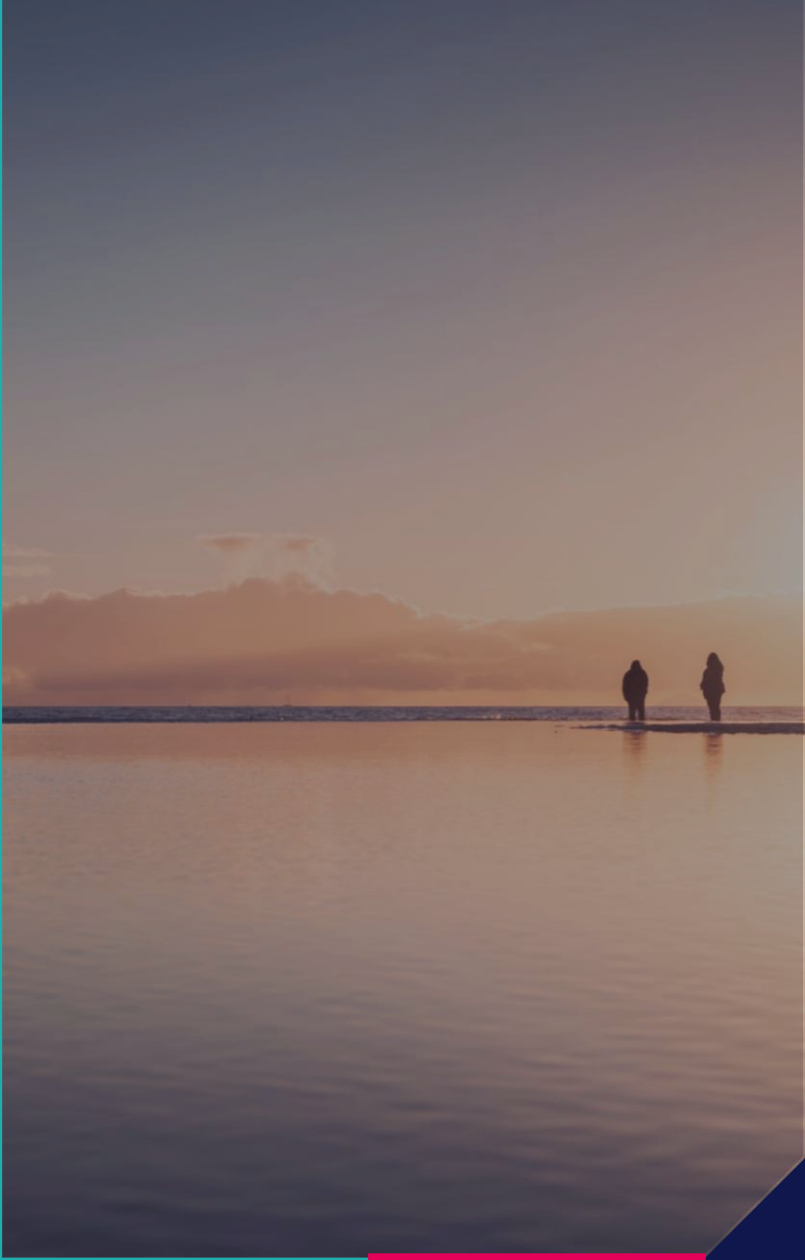
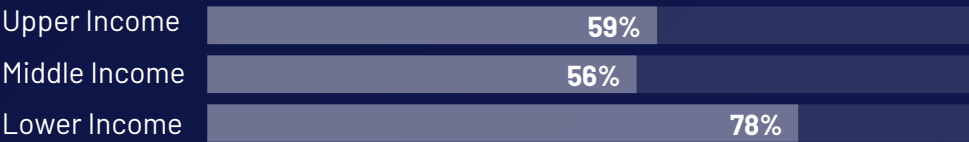
By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



EXPECTATIONS FOR SOCIETY IN 2026

03

In societal outlooks, the UAE is expected to attract even more expats in 2026

% Likely

81%

There will be a significant increase in the number of expats who will choose to move to UAE in 2026 than in 2025

By Gender

Male	81%
Female	81%

By Age

18-24	83%
25-34	78%
35-44	82%
45+	91%

By Nationality

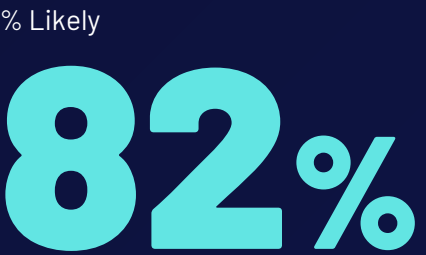
Nationals	83%
Expats	81%

By Income Level

Upper Income	81%
Middle Income	79%
Lower Income	86%



This is accompanied by an anticipated rise in residents receiving long-term visas such as the Golden Visa and Blue Residency

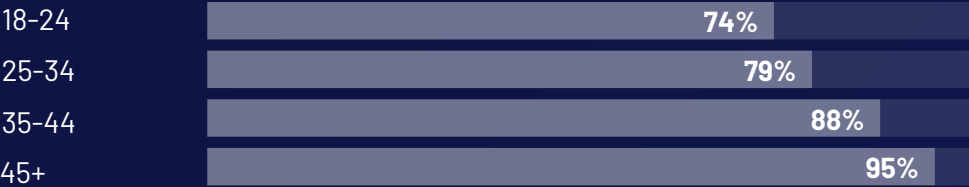


The number of residents receiving long-term residency will increase in 2026 compared to 2025

By Gender



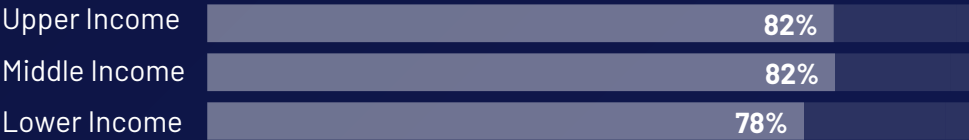
By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



These outlooks are complemented by rising confidence in meaningful progress for women, including more leadership opportunities and fairer pay



% Likely

79%

UAE will see an increase in the participation of women in leadership roles



% Likely

67%

Women will be paid the same as men for the same work



Expectations for gender equality and leadership

% Likely - by demographics



UAE will see an increase in the participation of women in leadership roles		Women will be paid the same as men for the same work
Male	79%	67%
Female	80%	69%
18 - 24	79%	67%
25 - 34	76%	64%
35 - 44	84%	74%
45+	85%	64%
Nationals	77%	73%
Expats	80%	67%
Upper Income	80%	64%
Middle Income	79%	68%
Lower Income	80%	73%

04

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE ECONOMY IN 2026

Turning to the economy, the majority foresee a stronger global outlook in 2026, though nearly half worry about potential market instability

85%

% Agree

The global economy will be stronger in 2026 than it was in 2025



By Gender

Male	85%
Female	86%

By Age

18-24	89%
25-34	83%
35-44	88%
45+	77%

By Nationality

Nationals	86%
Expats	85%

By Income Level

Upper Income	81%
Middle Income	88%
Lower Income	91%

48%

% Likely

Major stock markets around the world will crash



By Gender

Male	49%
Female	47%

By Age

18-24	40%
25-34	54%
35-44	48%
45+	40%

By Nationality

Nationals	42%
Expats	49%

By Income Level

Upper Income	50%
Middle Income	49%
Lower Income	42%

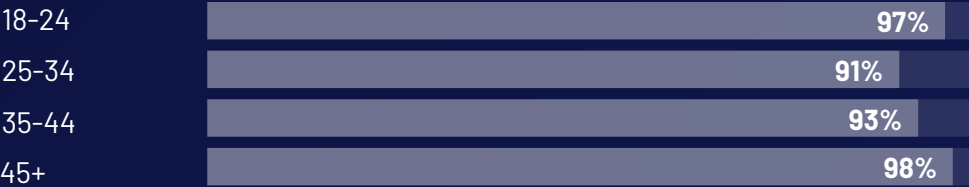
At the national level, optimism is even more pronounced, with overwhelming belief that the UAE economy will grow even further



By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



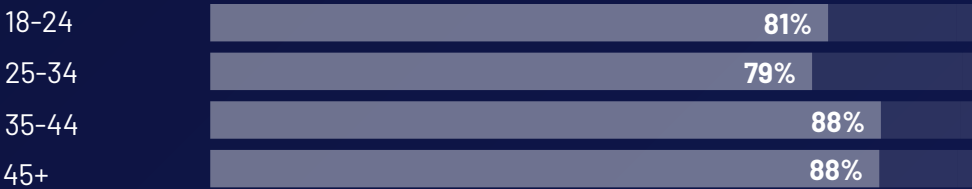
This confidence extends beyond the country's borders, as almost 4 in 5 anticipate increased international investment



By Gender



By Age



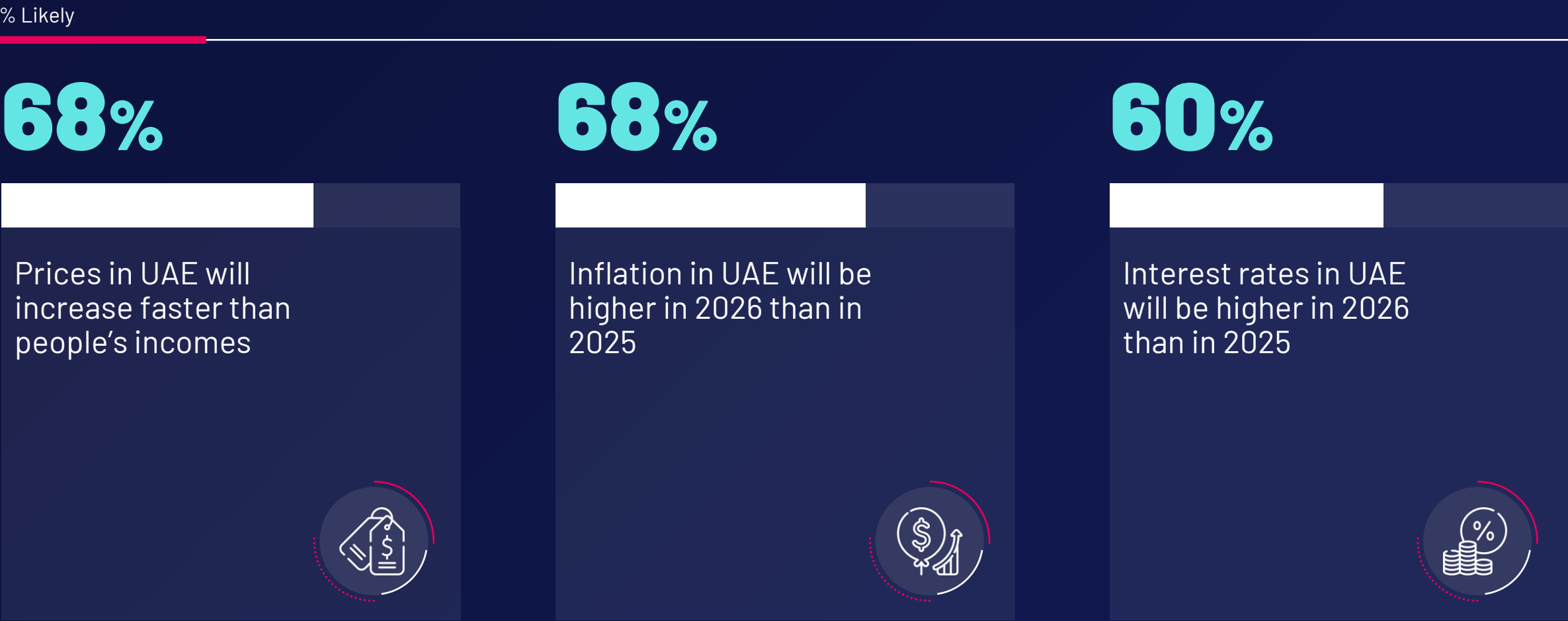
By Nationality



By Income Level

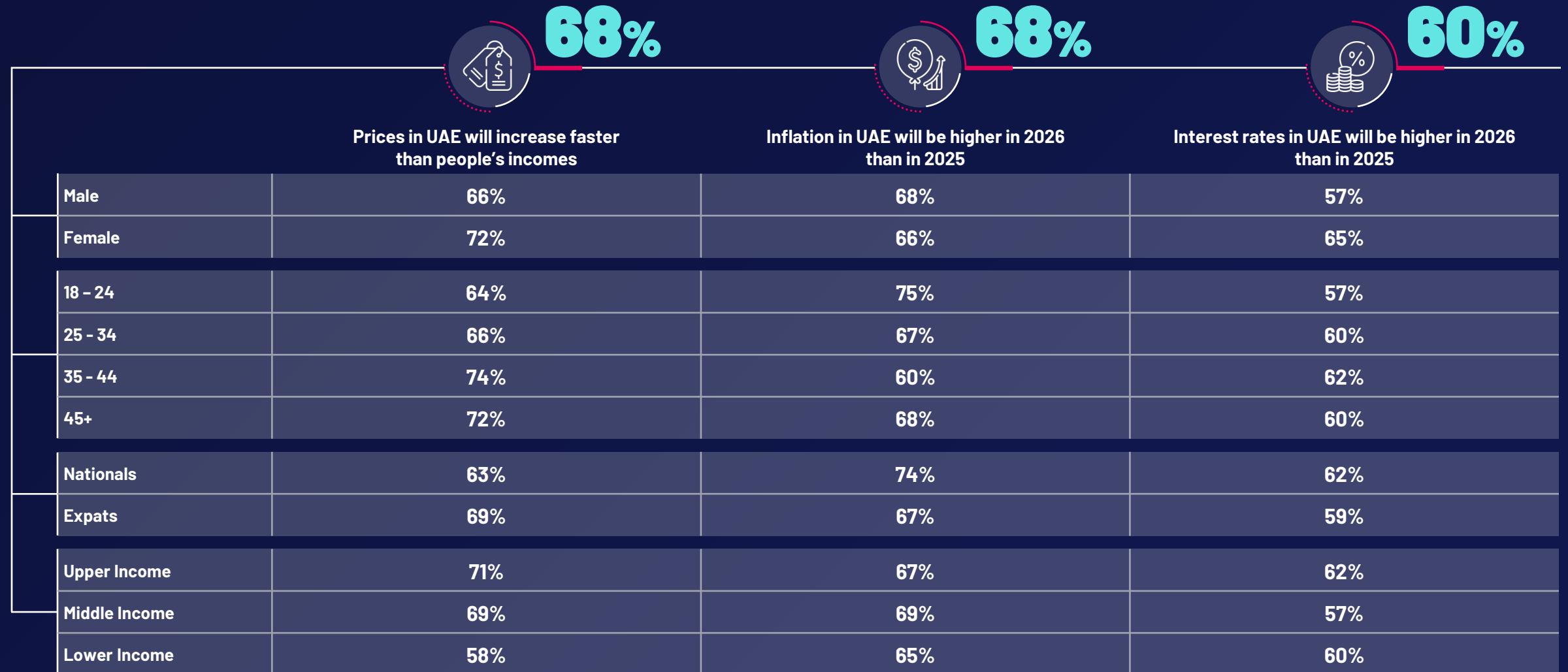


Despite this optimism, concerns persist over rising prices, inflation, and interest rates, with expectations for these pressures growing compared with 2025



Economic expectations

% Likely - by demographics



These financial pressures also shape perceptions of the job market, with 3 in 5 expecting it to be harder to find work in 2026

% Likely

61%

It will be more difficult to find a job in UAE in 2026 than it was in 2025

By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



Despite these challenges, most still believe their personal finances will strengthen

% Likely

72%

My personal financial situation will improve in 2026

By Gender

Male	72%
Female	72%

By Age

18-24	71%
25-34	70%
35-44	75%
45+	80%

By Nationality

Nationals	68%
Expats	73%

By Income Level

Upper Income	76%
Middle Income	69%
Lower Income	71%





In fact, the majority see 2026 as a year of financial opportunity, anticipating stronger investment conditions and greater likelihood of major purchases



76%

The economic environment in UAE will be better for investment in 2026 than it was in 2025

% Likely



69%

The price of gold will reach unprecedented high levels in 2026

% Likely



66%

I will make a major purchase (e.g. house, car) in 2026

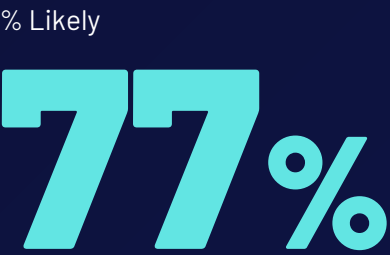
% Likely

Outlook on investment and major purchases

% Likely – by demographics



Yet housing stands out as a key pressure point, with high expectations of increasing buying or renting costs heading into 2026

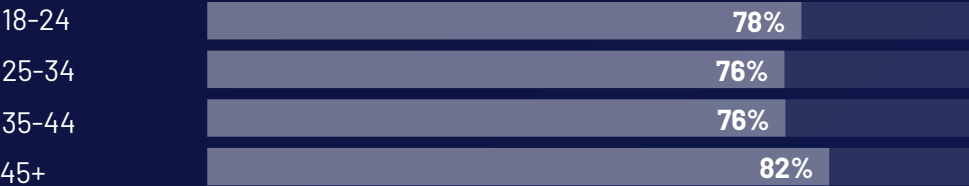


The cost of buying/renting a home in UAE will increase in 2026

By Gender



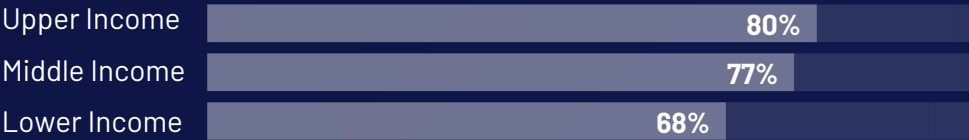
By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



05

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE WORKPLACE IN 2026

In the workplace expectations reveal a mixed picture – enthusiasm grows for shorter workweeks, yet many foresee reduced flexibility in remote arrangements



% Likely

76%

More companies in the UAE will adopt shortened work weeks in 2026 than in 2025



% Likely

62%

Businesses in the UAE will become less flexible in work arrangements like remote working compared to 2025



06

EXPECTATIONS FOR TOURISM IN 2026

As for travel, anticipation is high – most expect the UAE to welcome even more tourists in 2026 than it did in 2025



By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



07

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT IN 2026

Turning to the environment, climate concerns are evident, with strong majorities expecting higher global temperatures and more extreme weather events locally



% Likely

78%

Average global temperatures will increase



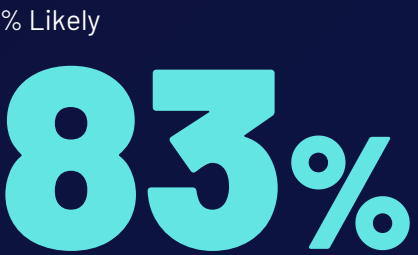
% Likely

73%

There will be more extreme weather events in UAE in 2026 than there were in 2025



In response, 4 in 5 expect the government to tighten climate policy through more demanding emissions-reduction targets

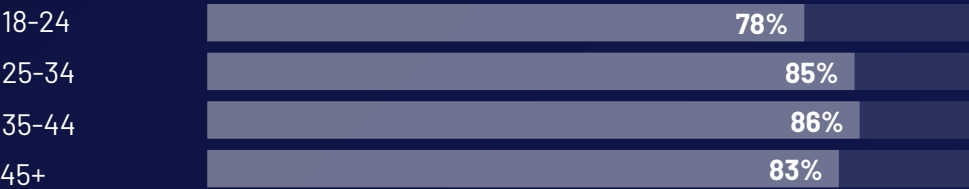


The Government in UAE will introduce more demanding targets to reduce carbon emissions more quickly

By Gender



By Age



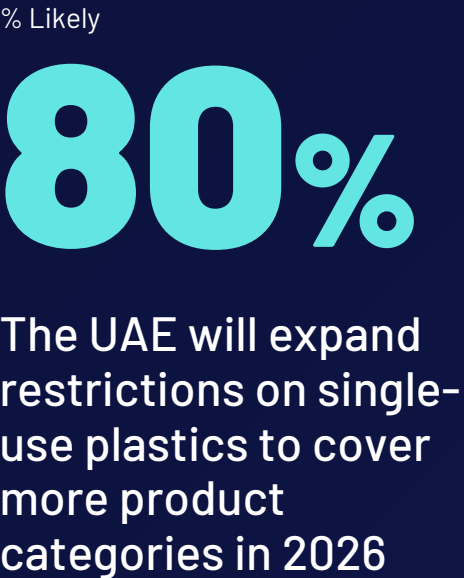
By Nationality



By Income Level



Alongside this, a large majority also anticipate expanded restrictions on single-use plastics



By Gender



By Age



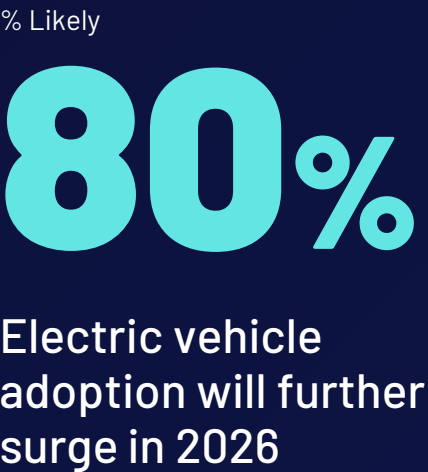
By Nationality



By Income Level



This broader environmental push is expected to extend to transport choices, encouraging greater adoption of electric vehicles



By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



However, sustainability efforts are not expected to reduce car use, as nearly 3 in 4 anticipate longer travel times due to worsening traffic

% Likely

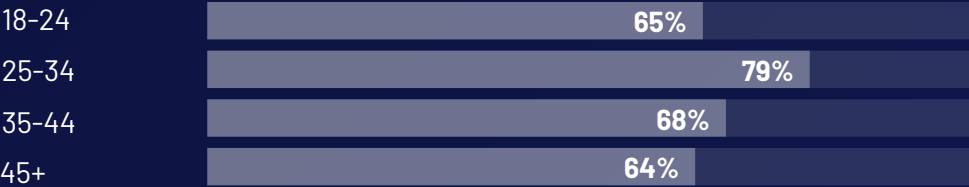
72%

Getting from one place to another in the UAE will take significantly longer in 2026 due to increased traffic congestion

By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



Alongside policy expectations, many are hopeful that new technologies will play a major role in addressing climate change



By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



EXPECTATIONS FOR TECHNOLOGY IN 2026

08

As digital habits deepen, people foresee more online socializing, despite nearly half expressing a desire to reduce their social media use



% Likely

77%

People in the UAE will spend more time socializing online than face-to-face



% Likely

49%

I will use social media less



Expectations for technology

% Likely - by demographics



People in UAE will spend more time
socializing online than face-to-face

I will use social media less

	Male	76%	52%
	Female	79%	41%
	18 - 24	74%	43%
	25 - 34	77%	51%
	35 - 44	78%	51%
	45+	82%	49%
	Nationals	77%	47%
	Expats	77%	49%
	Upper Income	78%	49%
	Middle Income	77%	49%
	Lower Income	73%	47%

And with AI's growing influence, people see a mixed future ahead, where new jobs emerge with concerns over roles that may be replaced

72%

% Likely

Artificial intelligence will lead to many new jobs being created in UAE



By Gender

Male	73%
Female	70%

By Age

18-24	74%
25-34	71%
35-44	70%
45+	78%

By Nationality

Nationals	78%
Expats	71%

By Income Level

Upper Income	73%
Middle Income	68%
Lower Income	76%

69%

% Likely

Artificial intelligence will lead to many new jobs being lost in UAE



By Gender

Male	68%
Female	70%

By Age

18-24	71%
25-34	70%
35-44	65%
45+	71%

By Nationality

Nationals	66%
Expats	69%

By Income Level

Upper Income	70%
Middle Income	69%
Lower Income	65%

Beyond employment, the majority predict difficulty distinguishing real content from AI and greater vulnerability to data breaches

79%

% Likely

By 2026, most people will have trouble telling real content from AI-generated content



By Gender

Male	79%
Female	79%

By Age

18-24	79%
25-34	76%
35-44	84%
45+	73%

By Nationality

Nationals	79%
Expats	79%

By Income Level

Upper Income	77%
Middle Income	81%
Lower Income	77%

71%

% Likely

AI will increase the risk of personal data being exposed or leaked in 2026



By Gender

Male	72%
Female	69%

By Age

18-24	65%
25-34	74%
35-44	72%
45+	73%

By Nationality

Nationals	72%
Expats	71%

By Income Level

Upper Income	73%
Middle Income	70%
Lower Income	68%

Despite these digital risks, people are anticipating bold advances in technology, from autonomous delivery trials to the arrival of flying cars



% Likely

77%

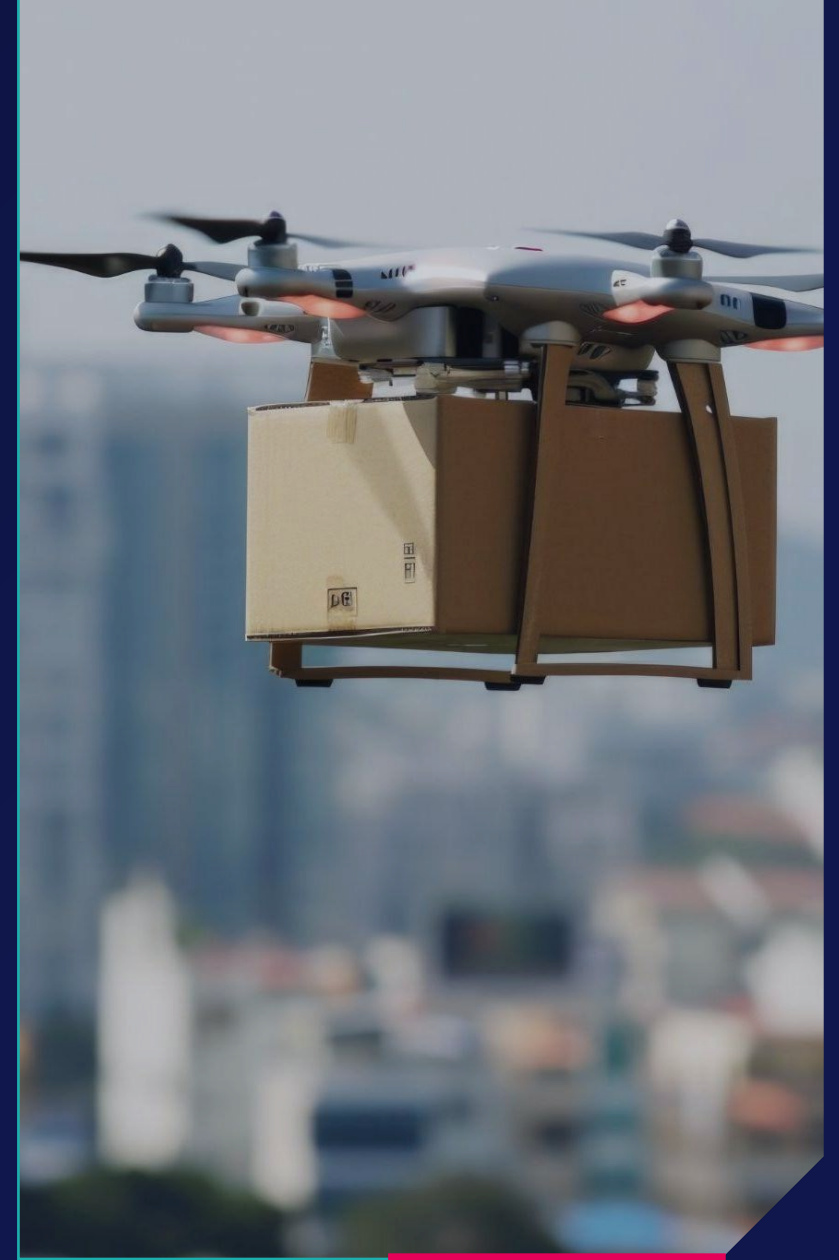
At least one Emirate will pilot autonomous delivery (robots or drones) in 2026



% Likely

68%

Flying cars will be introduced in the UAE in 2026



Expectations for technological advancements

% Likely - by demographics



At least one Emirate will pilot autonomous delivery (robots or drones) in 2026		Flying cars will be introduced in the UAE in 2026
Male	77%	70%
Female	76%	64%
18 - 24	74%	59%
25 - 34	75%	66%
35 - 44	82%	79%
45+	80%	75%
Nationals	75%	69%
Expats	77%	68%
Upper Income	79%	70%
Middle Income	76%	66%
Lower Income	75%	70%

But alongside these leaps in innovation, many believe 2026 will also bring tougher rules for major tech companies

% Likely

75%

Strict rules for large technology companies will be introduced by the Government in UAE

By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



EXPECTATIONS FOR THE 2026 WORLD CUP

09

With the 2026 World Cup approaching, many anticipate a first-time champion emerging

% Likely

72%

In 2026, a team that has never won the World Cup title before, will win it for the first time

By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



PAST & FUTURE RESOLUTIONS

10

Looking back on 2025, the majority entered the year with resolutions they aimed to accomplish

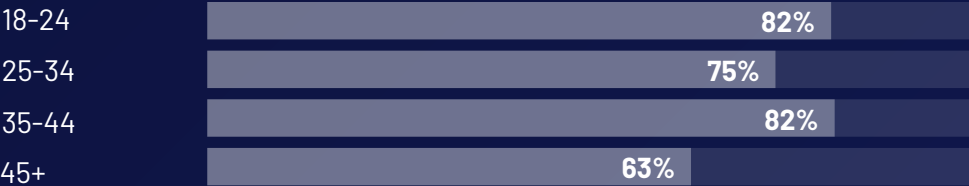
78%

Had set resolutions for things they wanted to accomplish in 2025

By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



And overall, reflections are positive with about 4 in 5 achieving the goals they set

Success in achieving 2025 goals set

30%



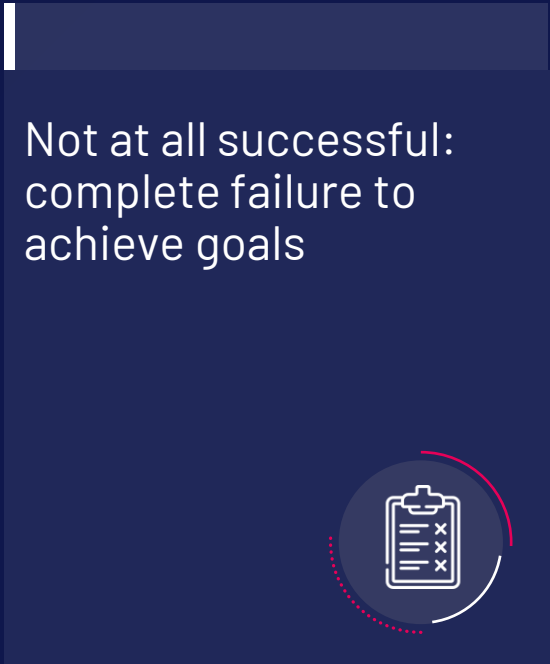
57%



11%



2%



Heading into 2026, an even larger share plan to set new resolutions, reflecting a growing drive for personal growth

92%

Will set personal resolutions to accomplish specific goals in 2026

By Gender

Male	92%
Female	92%

By Age

18-24	90%
25-34	90%
35-44	95%
45+	94%

By Nationality

Nationals	95%
Expats	91%

By Income Level

Upper Income	91%
Middle Income	93%
Lower Income	89%



And when looking at the goals themselves, finances, career growth and self-improvement priorities take center stage in 2026

Types of personal goals for 2026

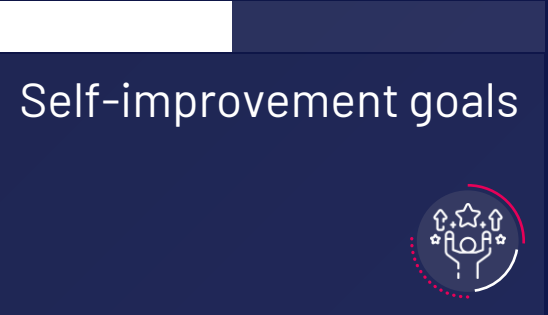
48%



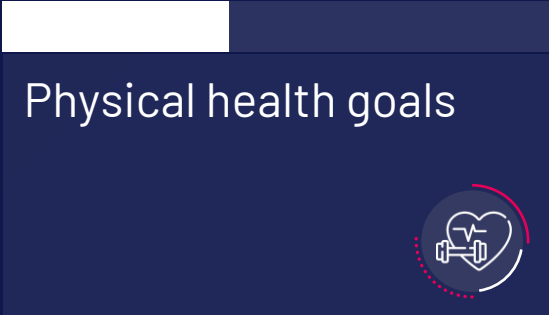
43%



43%



41%



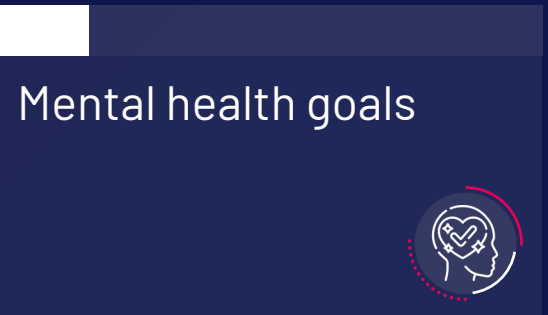
23%



20%



17%



9%



Sample and methodology

Sample size

500 respondents

Sample criteria

General public: representative of the population across gender, age (18+), nationality, region and SECs

Methodology

The survey was conducted via Ipsos online panel

Geographical coverage

Conducted in UAE
with a nationwide coverage

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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