

THE 2026 RAMADAN HANDBOOK

UAE Edition

February 2026

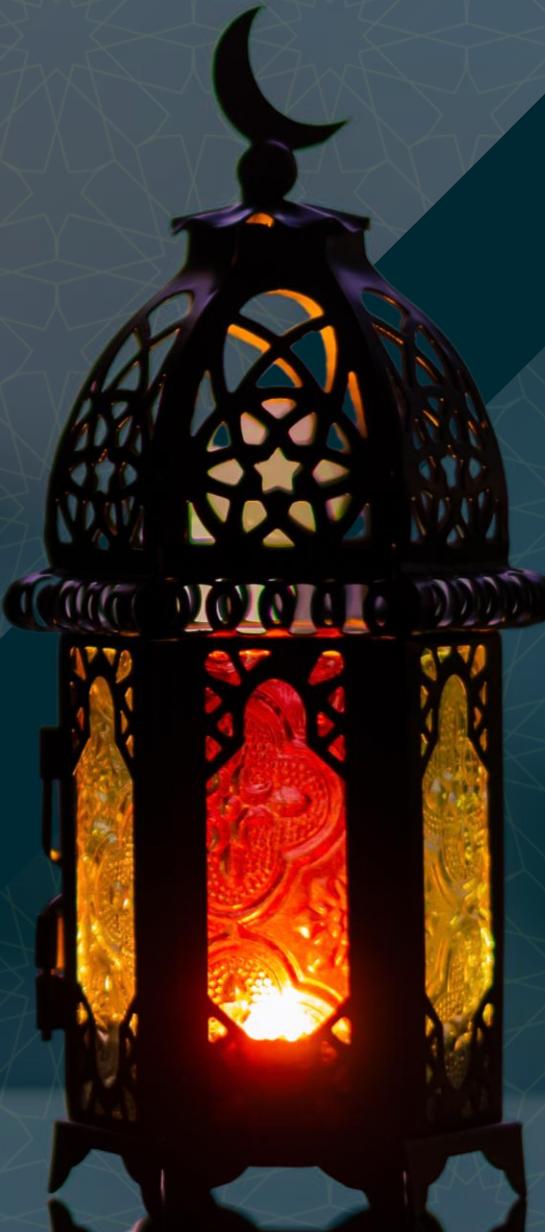


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Lifestyle Changes In Ramadan

01





For the vast majority, Ramadan is a deeply spiritual period, centered on reflection, devotion, and giving.



81%

Take Ramadan as a time of deep spiritual reflection and increased religious devotion



80%

Believe Ramadan is about engaging in acts of charity



77%

Focus more on spirituality during Ramadan



Despite reduced sleep, most continue to maintain their activity and productivity during the holy month.

■ Increase ■ Stay the same ■ Decrease

Sleep during Ramadan

20% 22% 58%

Activity levels during Ramadan

33% 26% 40%

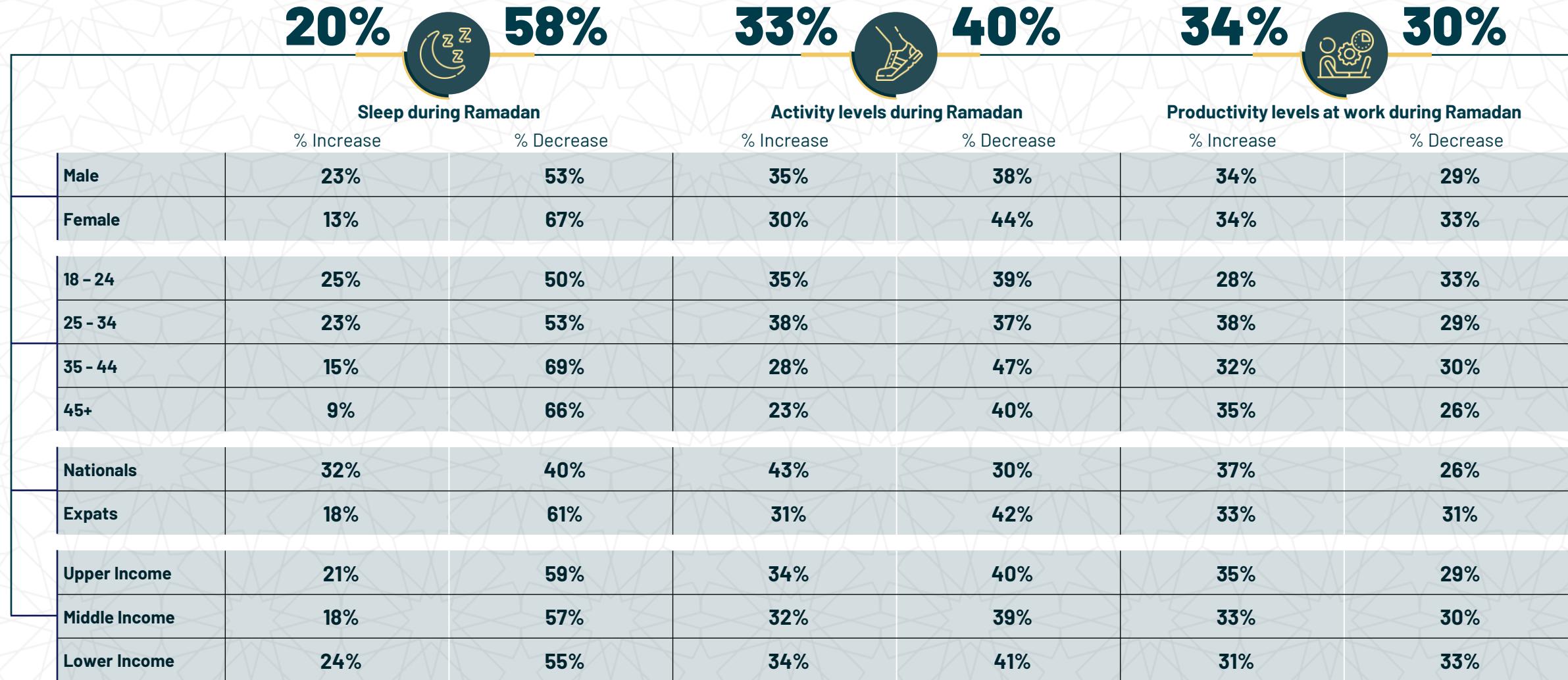
Productivity levels at work during Ramadan

34% 36% 30%



Sleep, activity and productivity

- by demographics



At the same time, Ramadan is a moment of emotional connection, with many reconnecting with family and drawing on a strong sense of nostalgia.



87%

Spend more time with family than with friends during Ramadan



69%

Feel that Ramadan evokes a sense of nostalgia, taking them back to cherished family times



Yet alongside this warmth, there is a perception of fewer shared gatherings and a softer sense of Ramadan's spirit.



53%

▲ +5 pts

Feel that nowadays, fewer people gather around the iftar table as compared to the past



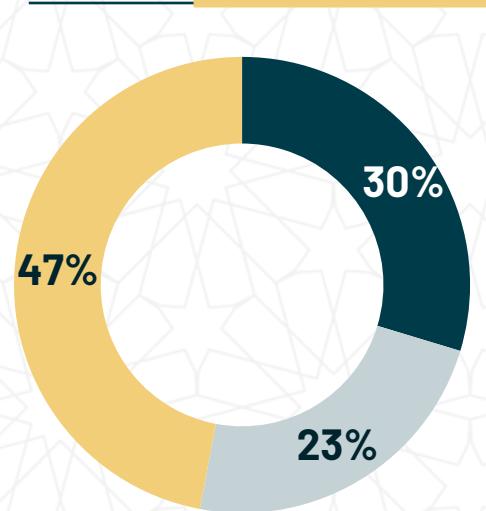
46%

Believe the spirit of Ramadan doesn't feel as strong as it did in the past





As a result, nearly half spend more time at home during Ramadan, opting for fewer outings.



- Go out more during Ramadan
- No change
- Go out less during Ramadan



By Gender

Male	32%	26%	42%
Female	24%	18%	58%

By Age

18-24	37%	24%	39%
25-34	36%	18%	45%
35-44	17%	29%	54%
45+	10%	29%	61%

By Nationality

Nationals	43%	28%	29%
Expats	27%	22%	51%

By Income Level

Upper Income	29%	26%	44%
Middle Income	33%	19%	48%
Lower Income	24%	24%	52%



With more time spent at home, many place great importance on creating a festive atmosphere during Ramadan.

59%

Believe that
decorating and
creating a festive
atmosphere at home
is an essential part of
Ramadan customs



By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



Eating Habits In Ramadan

02

Alongside spiritual reflection, Ramadan is widely seen as a time to reset the body and focus on health.



81%

▲ +7 pts

Consider Ramadan an opportunity to reset their body



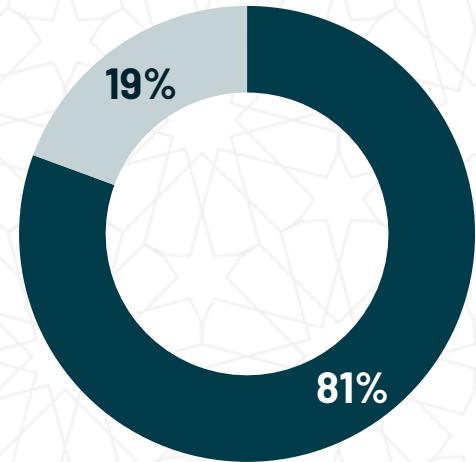
74%

Consider Ramadan as a period of physical discipline and health consciousness





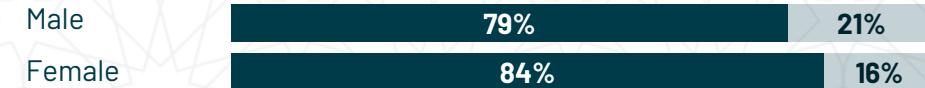
This focus on health translates into everyday choices, with most people leaning towards home-cooked meals during Ramadan.



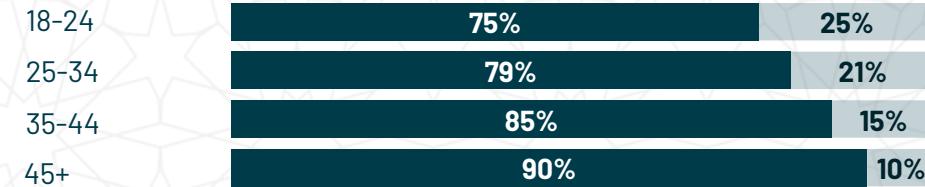
- Tend to eat more home-cooked meals
- Tend to eat out more



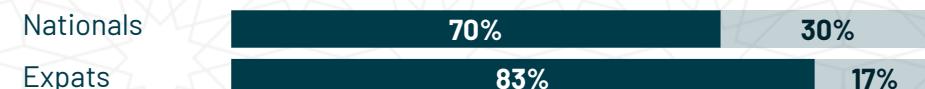
By Gender



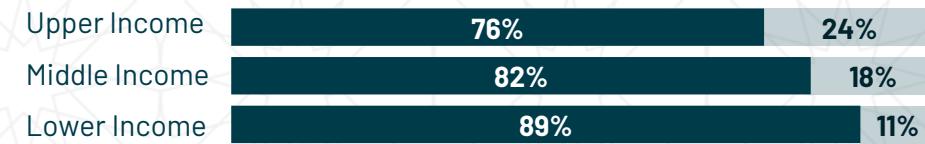
By Age



By Nationality

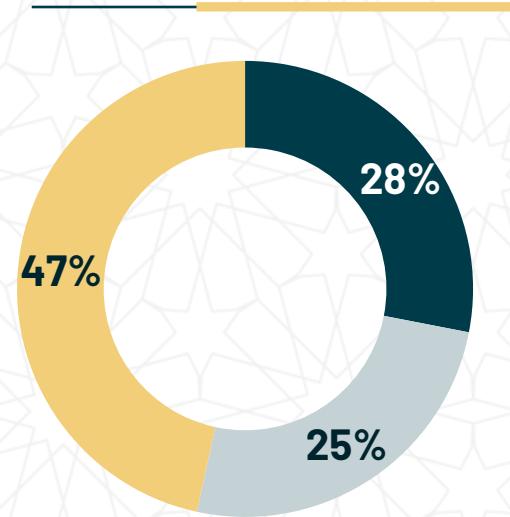


By Income Level





As home-cooked meals take priority, 1 in 2 order food delivery less frequently during Ramadan.



- Order food delivery more often during Ramadan
- No change
- Order food delivery less often during Ramadan



By Gender

Male	29%	26%	45%
Female	25%	24%	51%

By Age

18-24	31%	30%	39%
25-34	31%	27%	42%
35-44	22%	17%	61%
45+	21%	32%	47%

By Nationality

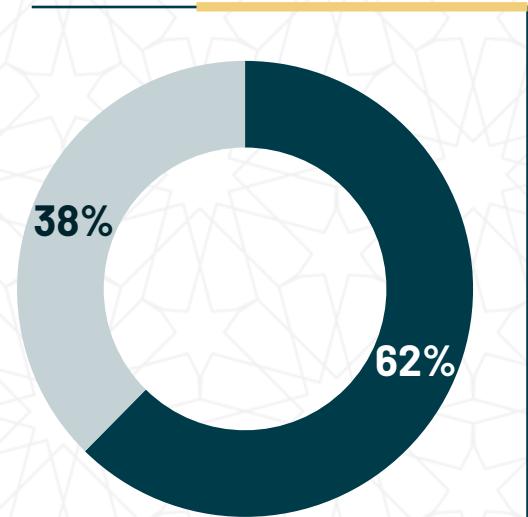
Nationals	37%	30%	33%
Expats	26%	24%	49%

By Income Level

Upper Income	26%	30%	44%
Middle Income	31%	23%	45%
Lower Income	26%	18%	55%



That said, food delivery is more common at Iftar than at Suhoor.



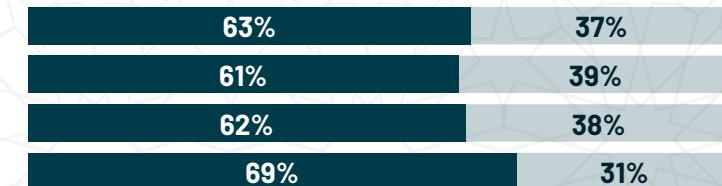
- Tend to order food delivery more for Iftar meals during Ramadan
- Tend to order food delivery more for Suhoor meals during Ramadan



By Gender



By Age



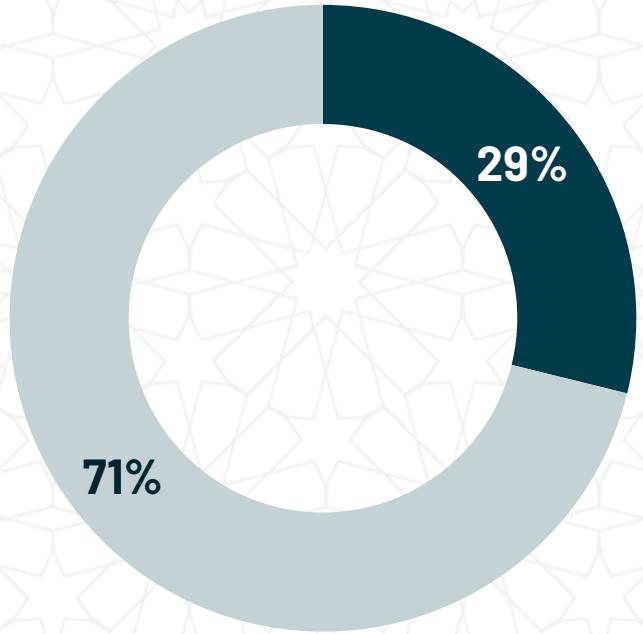
By Nationality



By Income Level



At Iftar, meals follow familiar traditions, typically beginning with dates and accompanied by daily appetizers and a variety of main dishes.



- Usually eat one main dish during Iftar
- Usually eat a variety of main dishes during Iftar

92%

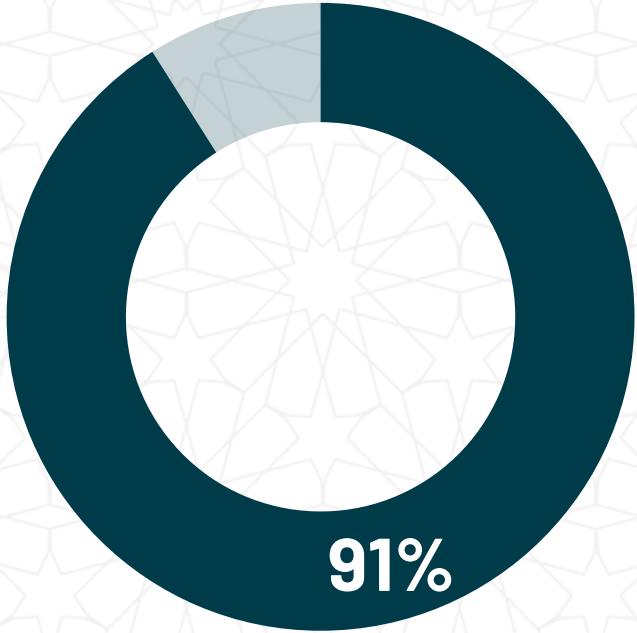
Always break their fast with dates

79%

Have appetizers everyday at Iftar



After Iftar, snacking is common, often balancing healthier choices with occasional indulgence.



82%

Have healthy snacks after Iftar

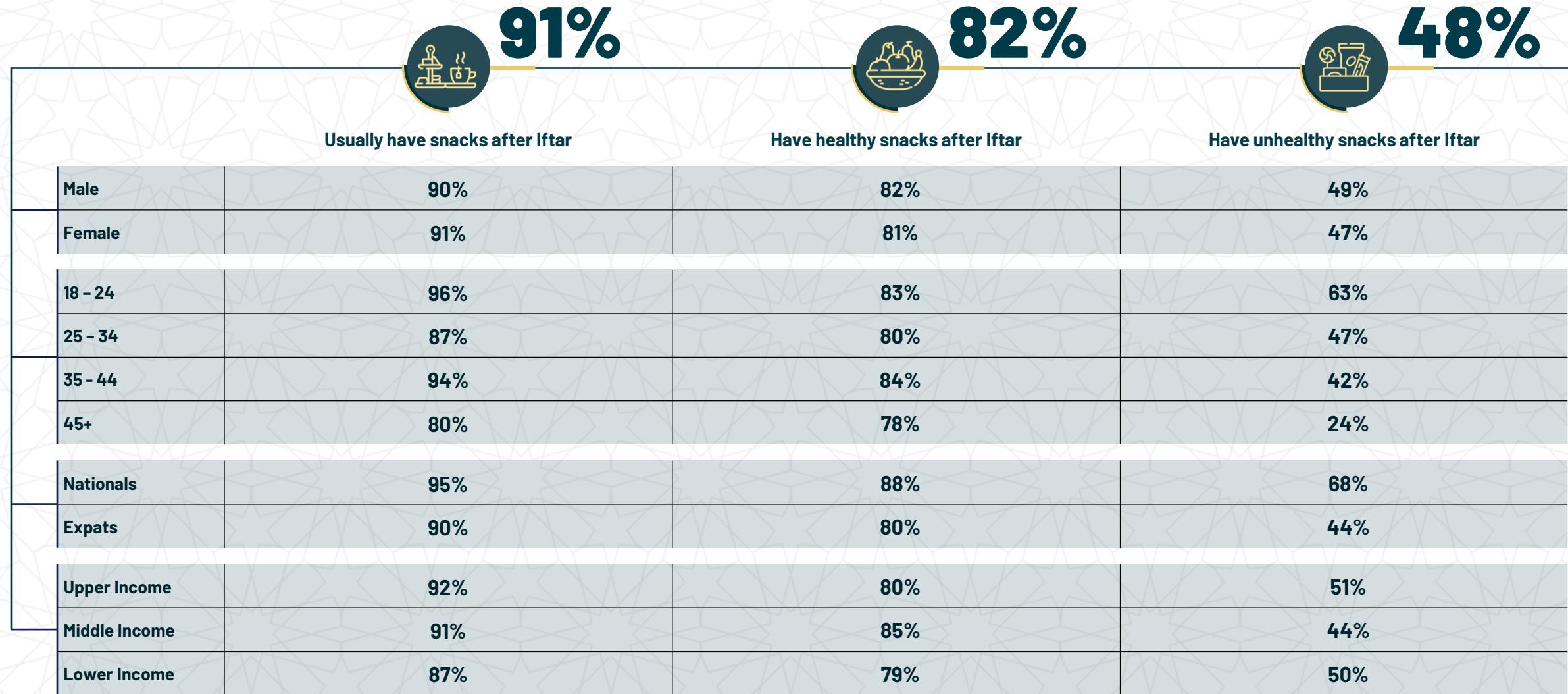
48%

Have unhealthy snacks after Iftar



Snacking behaviour during Ramadan

- by demographics





Meanwhile, Suhoor remains a consistent part of Ramadan nights for the vast majority.

88%

Have Suhoor
on most nights



By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level





With multiple eating occasions and a wide spread of dishes, many make a conscious effort to repurpose leftovers and reduce food waste.

68%

Make an effort to repurpose leftovers to minimize food waste during Ramadan



By Gender



By Age



By Nationality

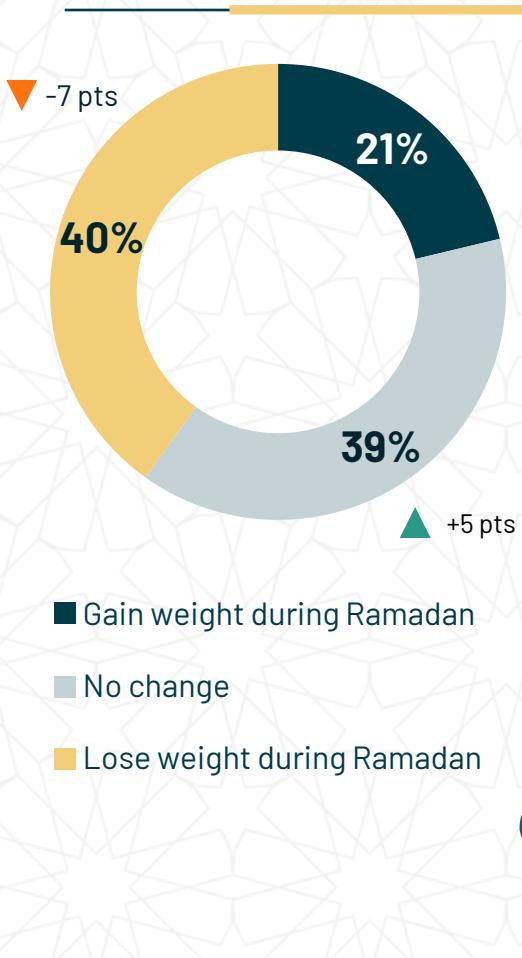


By Income Level





Despite shifts in eating habits, most people tend to maintain or lose weight during Ramadan.



By Gender

Male	21%	37%	42%
Female	21%	43%	36%

By Age

18-24	25%	40%	34%
25-34	22%	36%	42%
35-44	17%	40%	43%
45+	16%	45%	39%

By Nationality

Nationals	33%	41%	27%
Expats	19%	38%	43%

By Income Level

Upper Income	22%	38%	40%
Middle Income	22%	36%	42%
Lower Income	18%	45%	37%

Financial & Shopping Behaviors In Ramadan

03

For many, Ramadan brings added responsibilities and higher everyday costs, making financial planning a key focus, often with saving starting well in advance.

51%

Agree that financial planning becomes a priority during Ramadan to manage both personal and communal duties



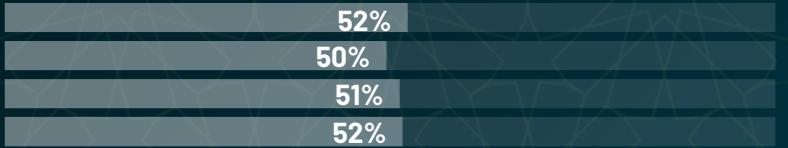
By Gender

Male
Female



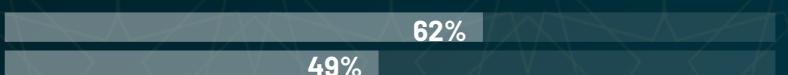
By Age

18-24
25-34
35-44
45+



By Nationality

Nationals
Expats



By Income Level

Upper Income
Middle Income
Lower Income



48%

Tend to save more money in the months leading up to Ramadan to prepare for the increased expenses



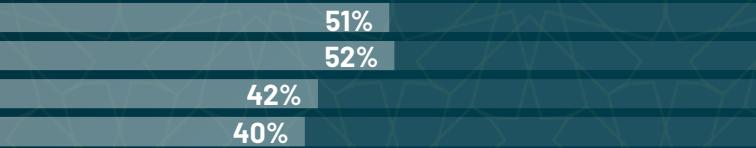
By Gender

Male
Female



By Age

18-24
25-34
35-44
45+



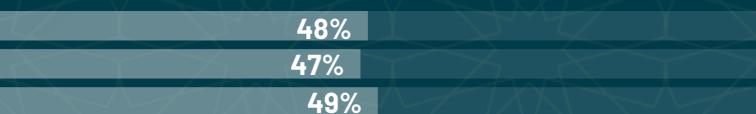
By Nationality

Nationals
Expats



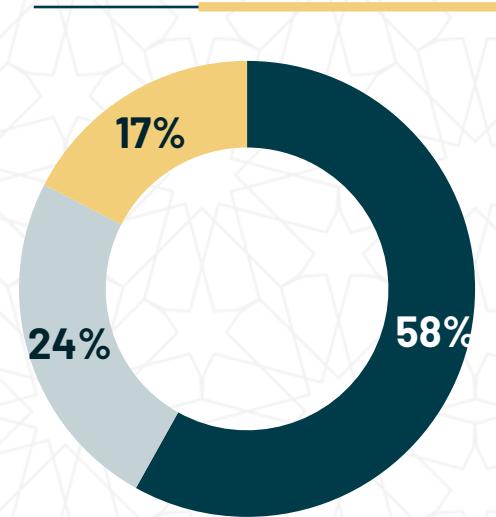
By Income Level

Upper Income
Middle Income
Lower Income





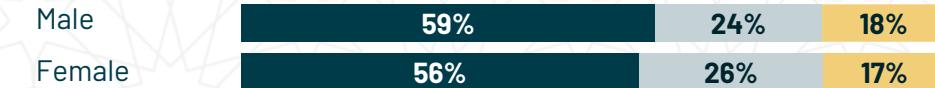
Despite planning and saving ahead, spending still rises for most during Ramadan.



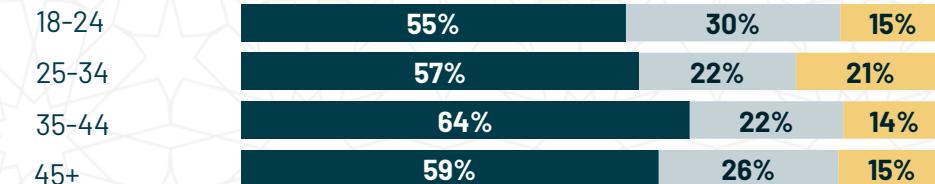
- Spend more money
- No change in spending habits
- Spend less money



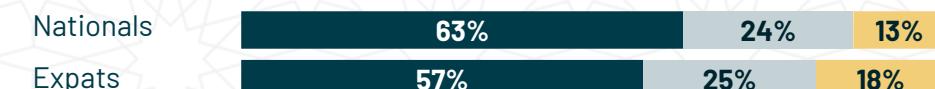
By Gender



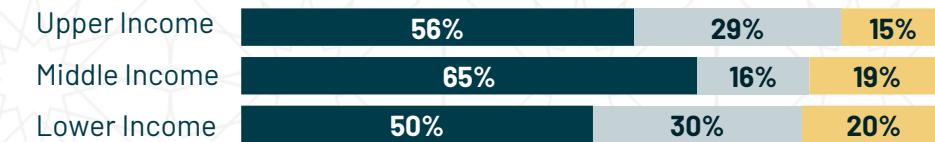
By Age



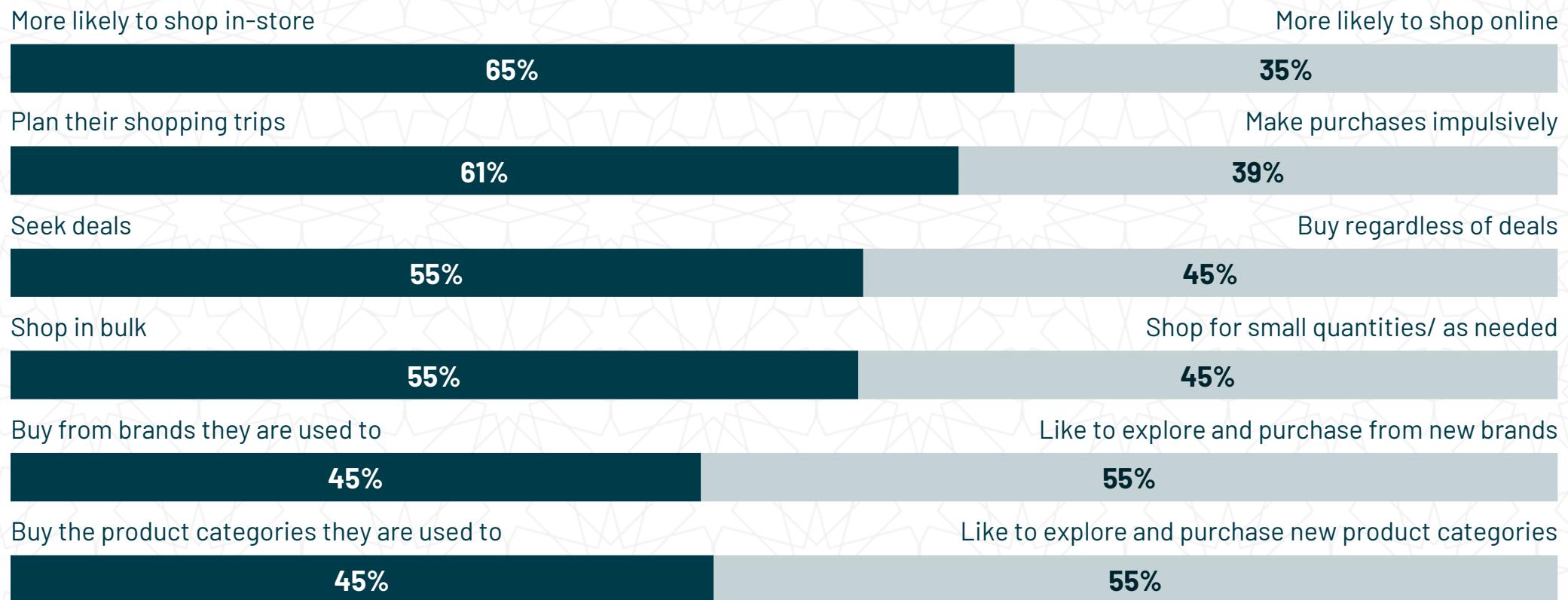
By Nationality



By Income Level

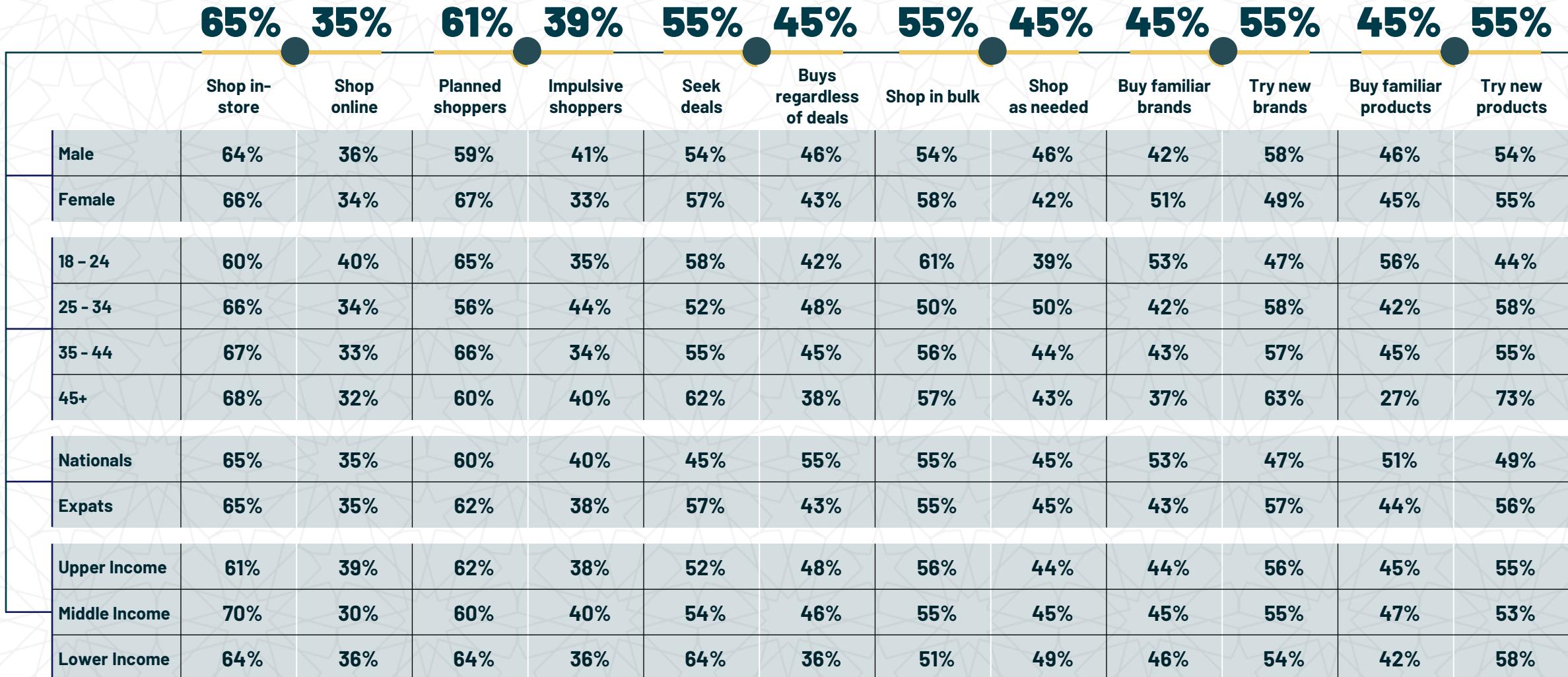


As spending rises, Ramadan shopping becomes more intentional, with shoppers in the UAE more likely to go in-store, plan their trips, and seek deals, while staying open to new brands and categories.



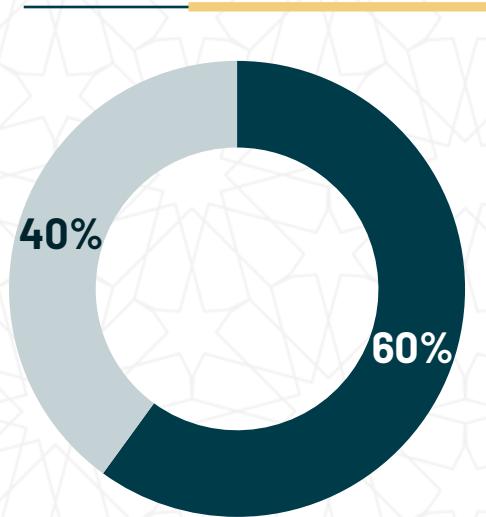
Types of shoppers during Ramadan

- by demographics





Even so, grocery shopping is an enjoyable part of the Ramadan experience for many.



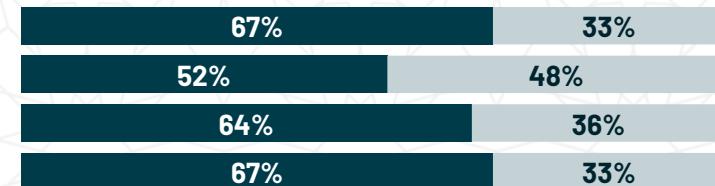
- Consider shopping for food and beverages to be an enjoyable activity during Ramadan
- Find shopping for food and beverages a chore during Ramadan



By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



Ramadan promotions become a key moment shoppers look forward to, often shaping both what they buy and when, with many delaying bigger purchases to benefit from discounts.

59%

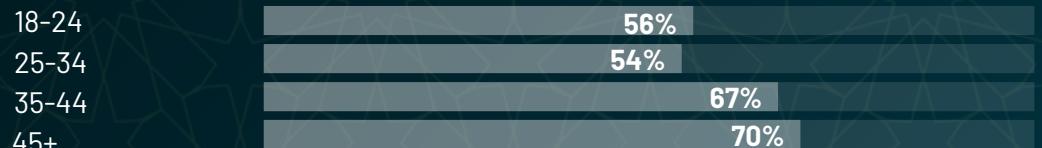
Look forward to Ramadan's special offers and promotions each year



By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



41%

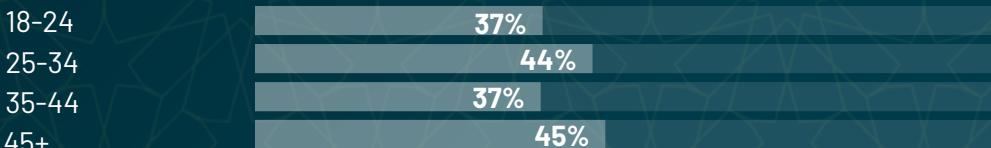
Delay big-ticket purchases until Ramadan to benefit from its special offers



By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



Entertainment Choices In Ramadan

04



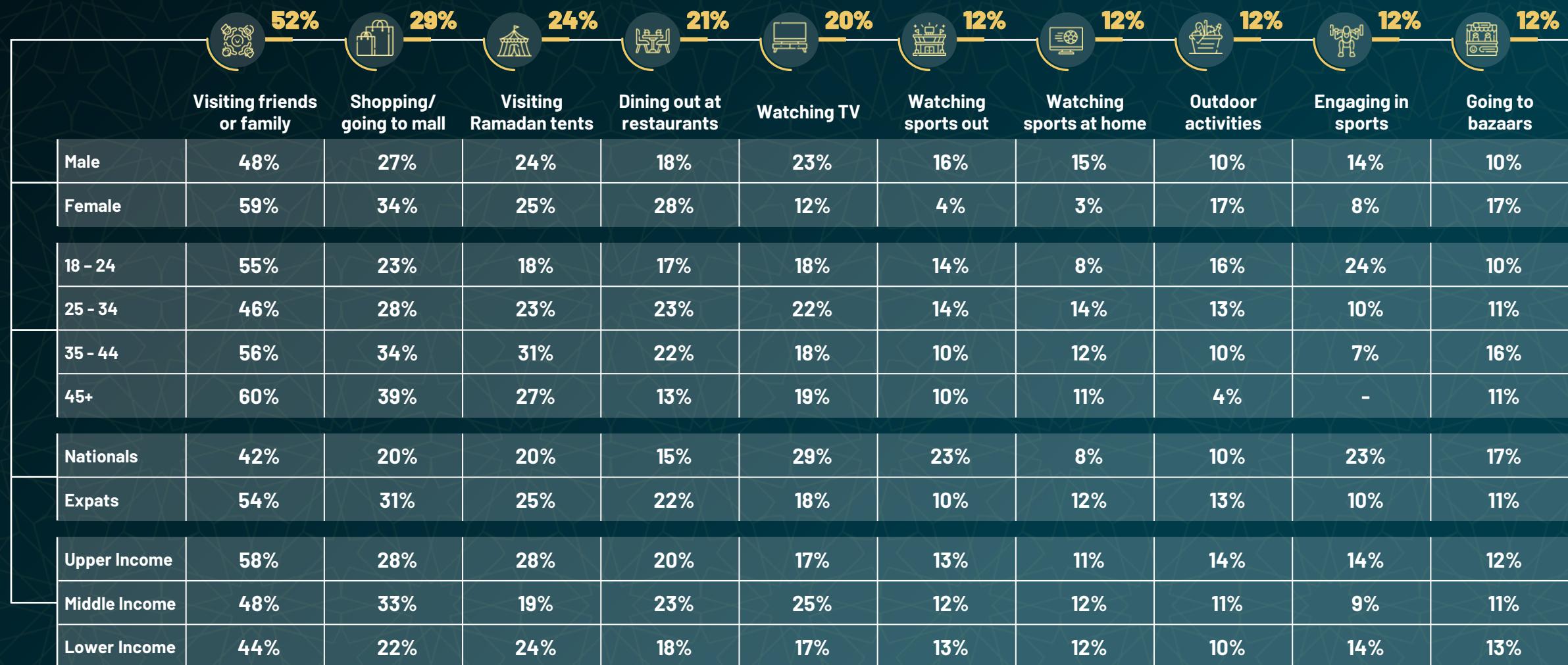
During Ramadan, entertainment is largely social and home-focused, with visiting loved ones and shopping trips topping the list.

Top entertainment activities during Ramadan – Top 10



Entertainment activities during Ramadan

Top 10 - by demographics



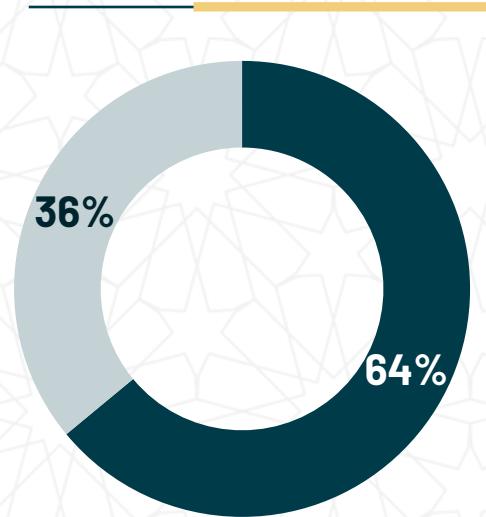
Brand Interaction & Advertising

05





When it comes to discovering brands during Ramadan, digital channels dominate.



- Use online sources to obtain information about brands
- Use offline sources to obtain information about brands

By Gender



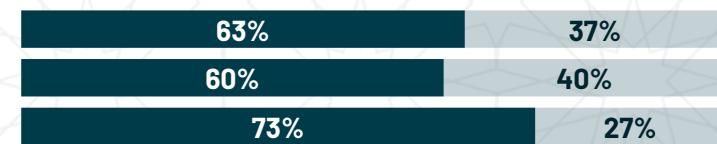
By Age



By Nationality

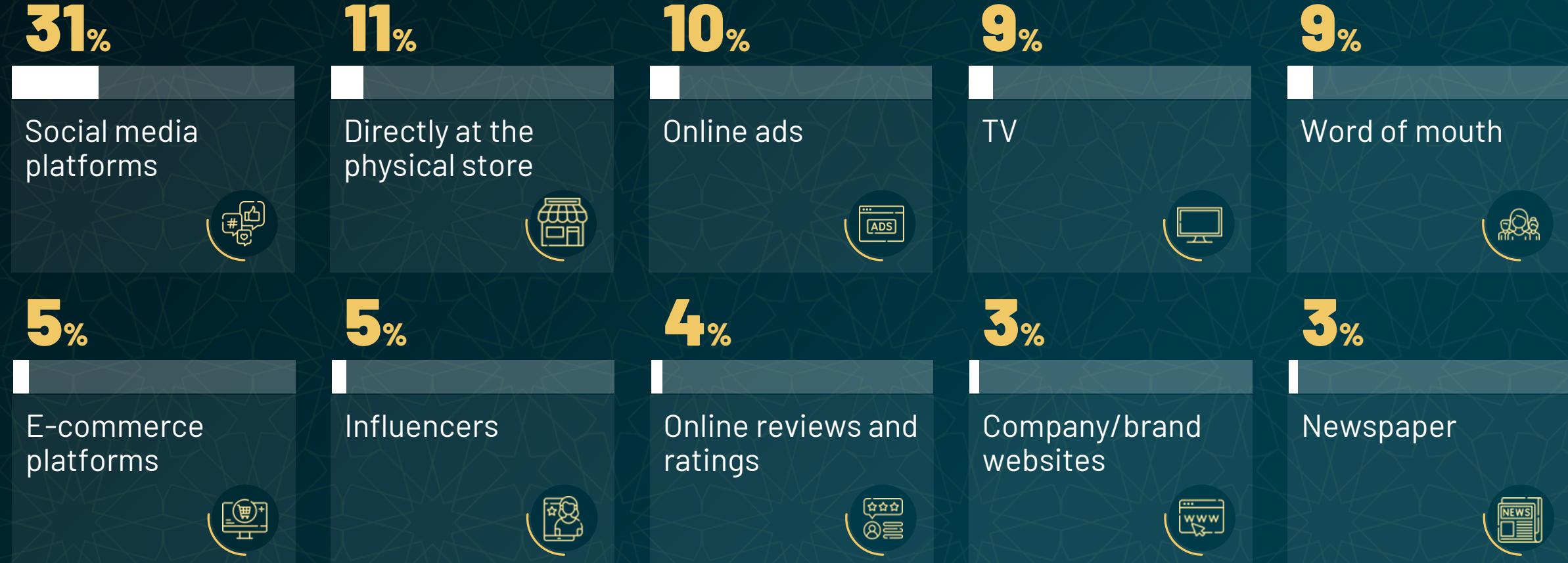


By Income Level



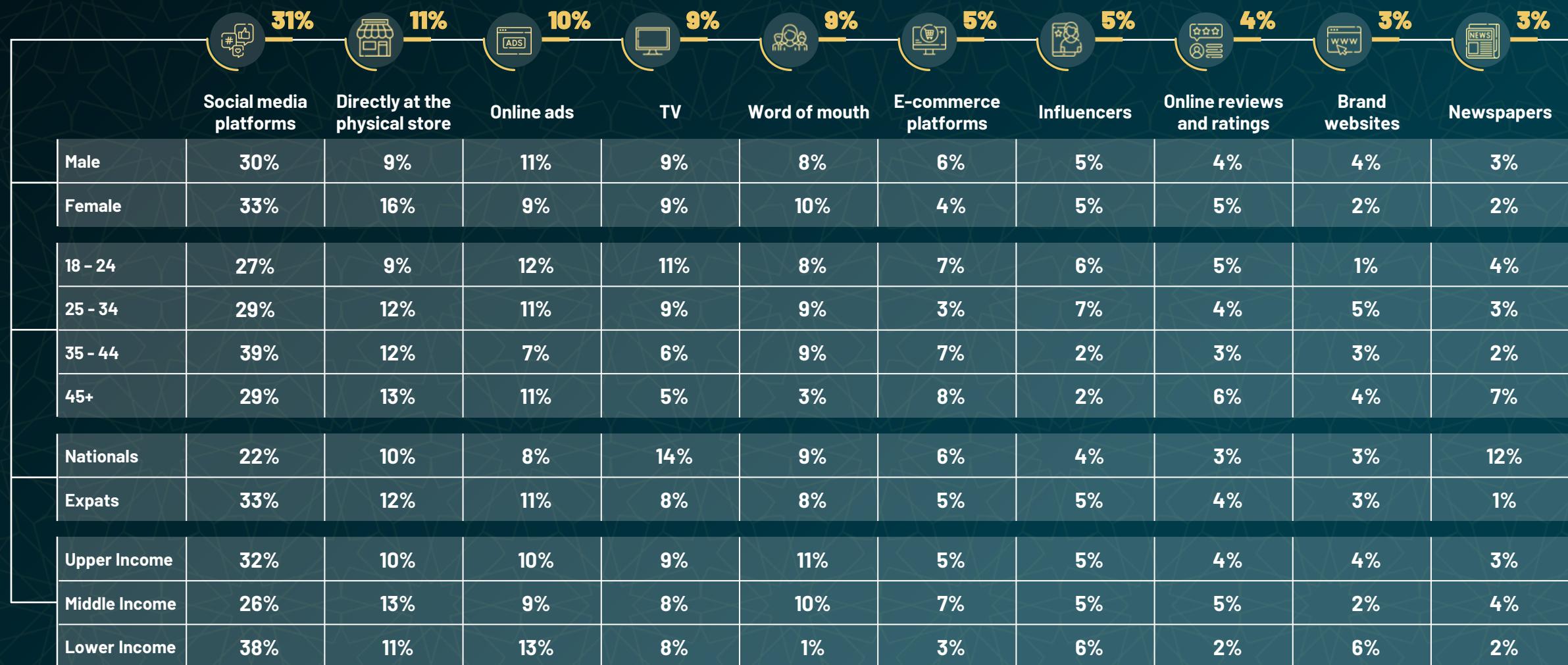
Within this digital-first landscape, social media emerges as the top source of brand information.

Main sources used to obtain information about brands – Top 10



Main sources used to obtain information about brands

Top 10 - by demographics



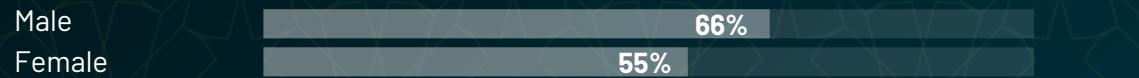
However, this heavy presence fuels perceptions of ad overload, with many feeling the month has become increasingly commercialized.

62%

Believe there are too many ads during Ramadan



By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



57%

Feel that Ramadan has become more commercialized over the years



By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



Yet despite this sentiment, Ramadan advertising remains effective, translating into strong brand recall and purchase decisions.

52%

Have previously purchased a product based on an ad they saw during Ramadan



By Gender

Male	55%
Female	44%

By Age

18-24	42%
25-34	57%
35-44	55%
45+	46%

By Nationality

Nationals	62%
Expats	50%

By Income Level

Upper Income	52%
Middle Income	48%
Lower Income	60%

49%

Are more likely to remember brands that advertise during Ramadan



By Gender

Male	51%
Female	42%

By Age

18-24	48%
25-34	48%
35-44	52%
45+	41%

By Nationality

Nationals	59%
Expats	47%

By Income Level

Upper Income	52%
Middle Income	45%
Lower Income	47%

Most Prominent Ramadan Brands

06

Brands most associated with Ramadan in UAE

Top 10 brands – sorted by alphabetical order



The Ramadan Personas

07



The diverse Ramadan personas - each with unique attitudes and behaviours during the holy month

29%

The Content Explorer



25%

The Passionate Shopper



18%

The Social Connector



15%

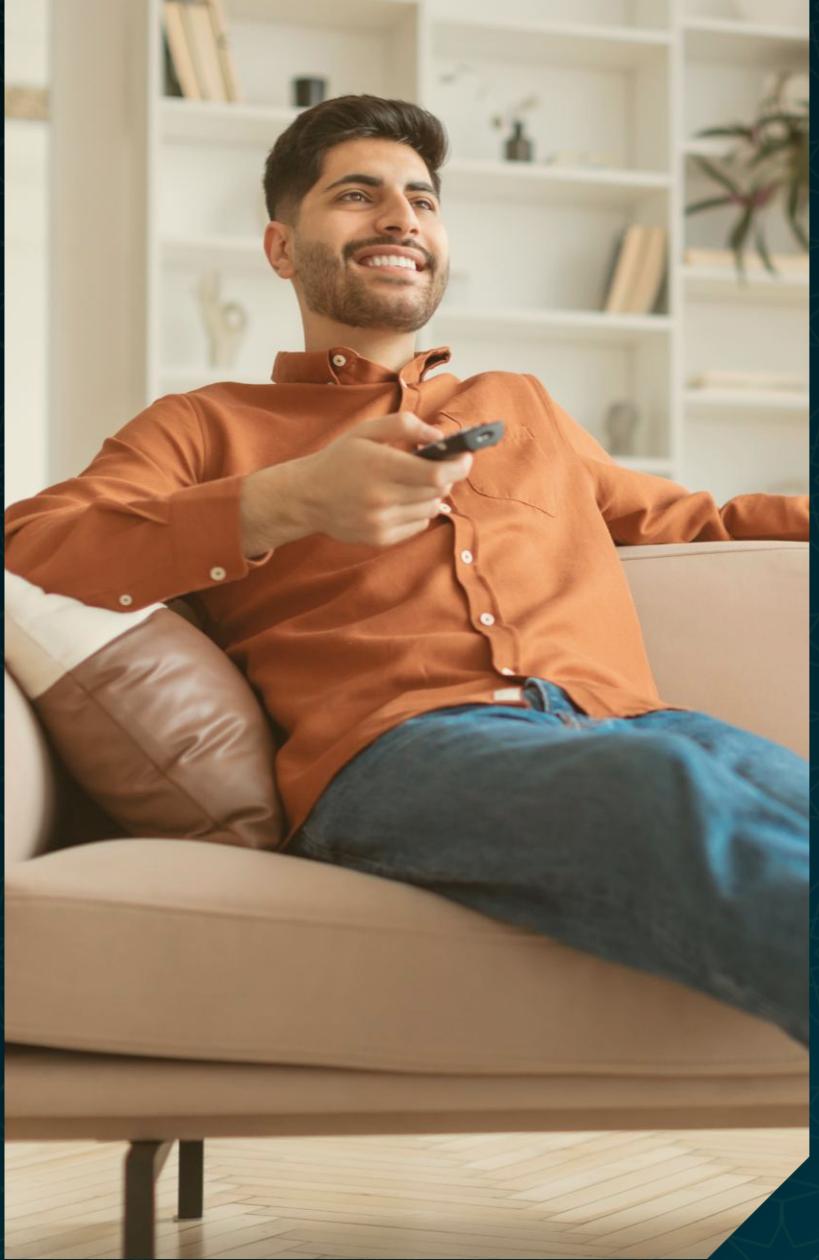
The Festive Spirit



13%

The Self Nurturer





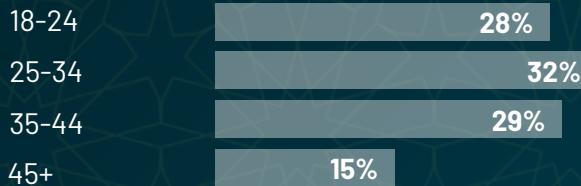
Who is the Content Explorer? (29%)

A digital enthusiast who engages deeply with Ramadan-related programs and content on social media

By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



80%

View Ramadan as a season for exploring and watching series and catching up on Ramadan-themed programs

65%

View Ramadan as a time for digital connection and engaging with Ramadan-related social media content



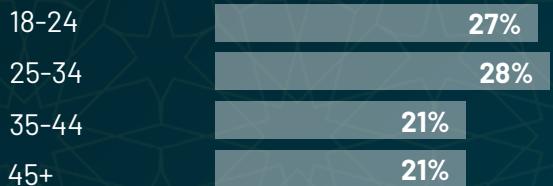
Who is the Passionate Shopper? (25%)

A shopping lover who indulges in the busy markets and attractive deals during Ramadan

By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



74%

Take Ramadan as a time to indulge in shopping, whether for Eid gifts or personal treats

56%

Perceive Ramadan as a season of shopping, with attractive deals and bustling markets



Who is the Social Connector? (18%)

A social butterfly cherishing shared experiences and connections during Ramadan with family, friends and the community

By Gender



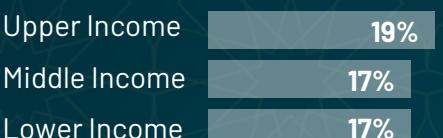
By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



82%

Believe Ramadan a time to connect with many friends and social groups

72%

Believe Ramadan is a time of togetherness and shared experiences with loved ones



Who is the Festive Spirit? (15%)

A person who creates a festive atmosphere around them and enjoys the traditions of Ramadan

By Gender



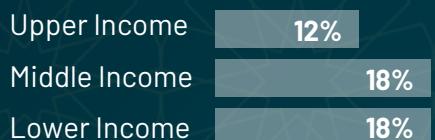
By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



78%

Believe that decorating and creating a festive atmosphere at home is an essential part of Ramadan customs

58%

Believe that Ramadan embodies the spirit of festivity, with its community Iftar/Suhoor meals and shared joy



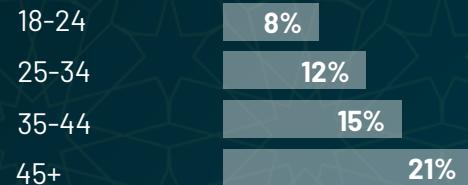
Who is the Self Nurturer? (13%)

A person who sees Ramadan as a time not only for spiritual growth but also physical well-being and health consciousness

By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



97%

Consider Ramadan an opportunity to reset their body

95%

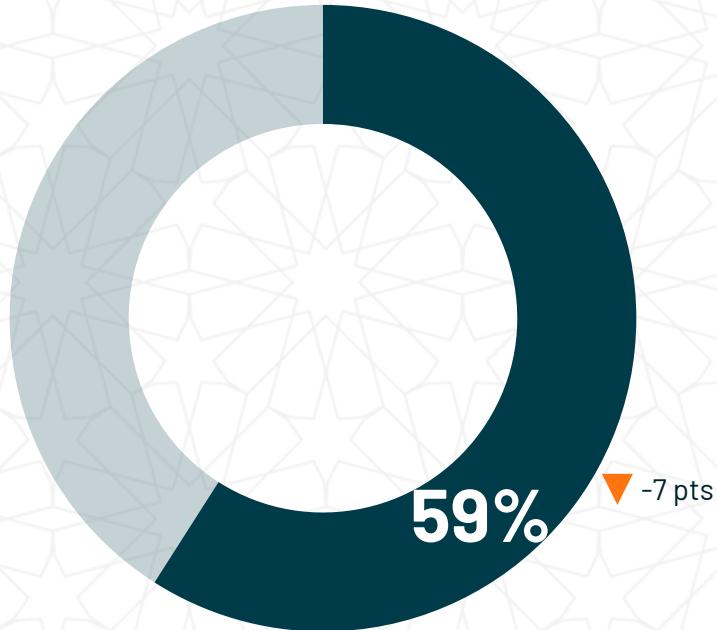
Consider Ramadan as a period of physical discipline and health consciousness

Eid Plans

08



Looking ahead to Eid, many already have plans in place for travel and time away, with a stronger inclination towards domestic trips or staycations than international travel.



Plan on traveling during the Eid holiday

37%

Plan on travelling domestically or having a staycation

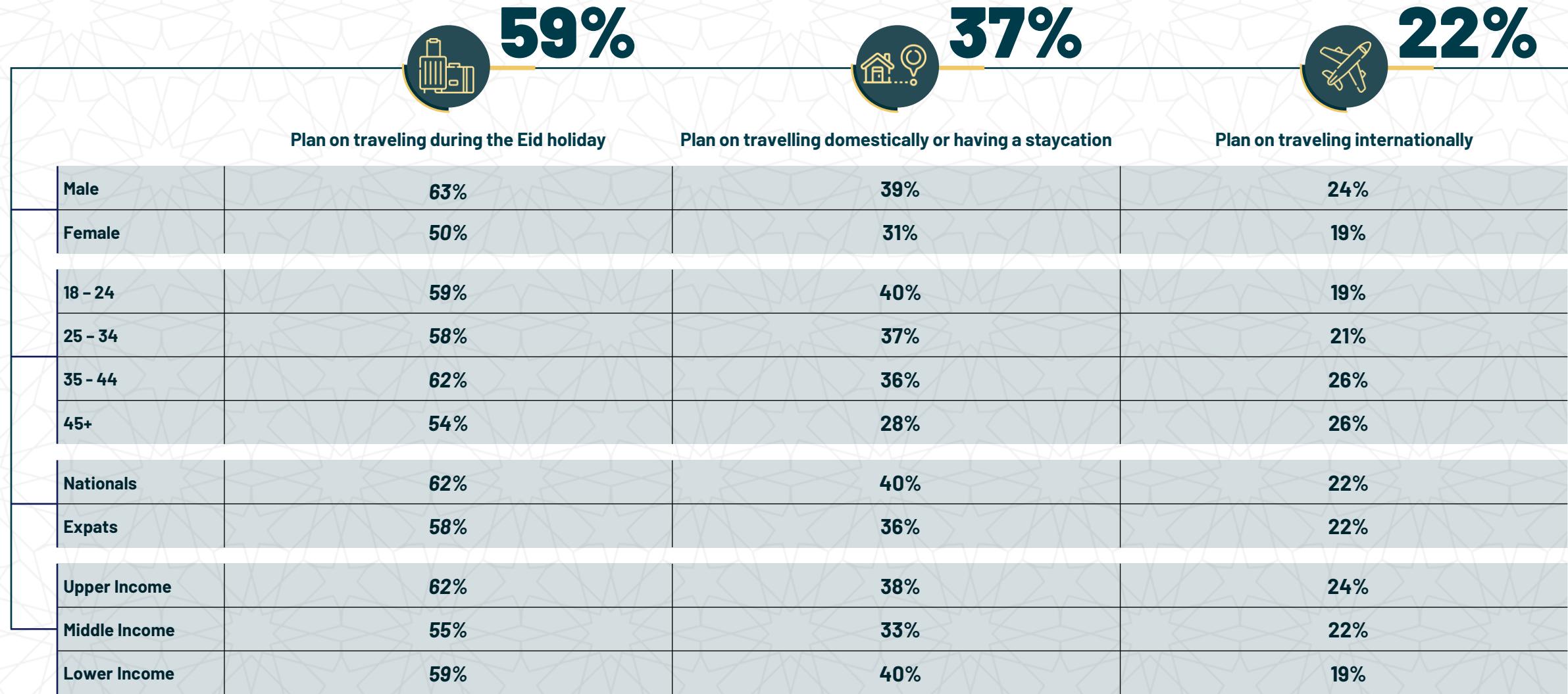
22%

Plan on traveling internationally



Travel plans during the Eid holiday

- by demographics



Sample and methodology

Sample size

500 respondents

Sample criteria

General public: representative of the Muslim population across gender, age (18+), nationality, regions 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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