SPOTLIGHT*KSA

VIEWS ON INFLATION

September - 2026

Contents

Key Findings

Prices are rising, and many people feel it personally

Most people say **prices have gone up over the past six months**. For many this is more than a headline figure: a **large share worry about covering their everyday costs, and many say they have scaled back the way they live to keep up**. Lower-income households, expats and older people feel the strain most, while younger and higher-income people are more comfortable. Even so, **most still think living costs in Saudi Arabia compare well with nearby countries.**

People are adapting, not cutting back

Most people are **taking active steps to deal with rising prices**, and those steps are mainly about staying in control. The most common are **keeping an eye on what they spend, cooking at home, shopping where things cost less and buying only what they need**. Cutting back on going out and on clothes and personal care is also widespread. **Transport, food and drink, and utility bills are the areas where price rises are felt most sharply.**

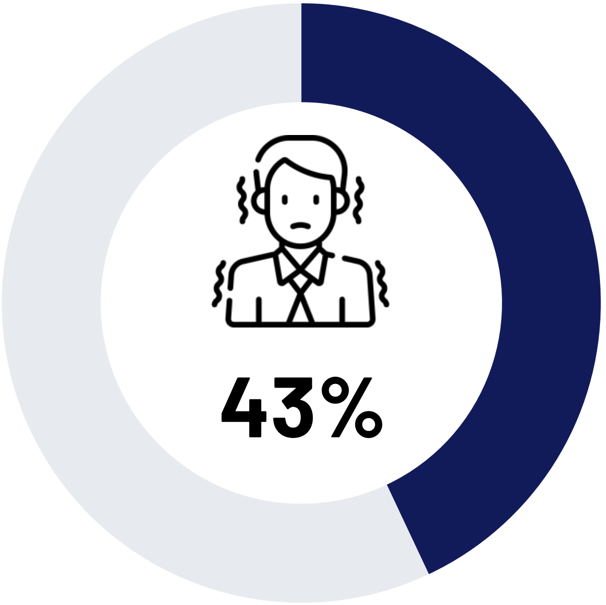
The year ahead is expected to be steady rather than difficult

Looking forward, **most people expect things to hold rather than worsen. Inflation is what they most often expect to rise, followed by interest rates and taxes**, but in each case the majority **think levels will stay about where they are**. Views on their own household are more positive: **more expect their income and standard of living to improve than to slip**, though they are least confident about how much will be left over at the end of the month. **Older and lower-income people are the most likely to expect further increases.**

FINANCIAL WORRIES

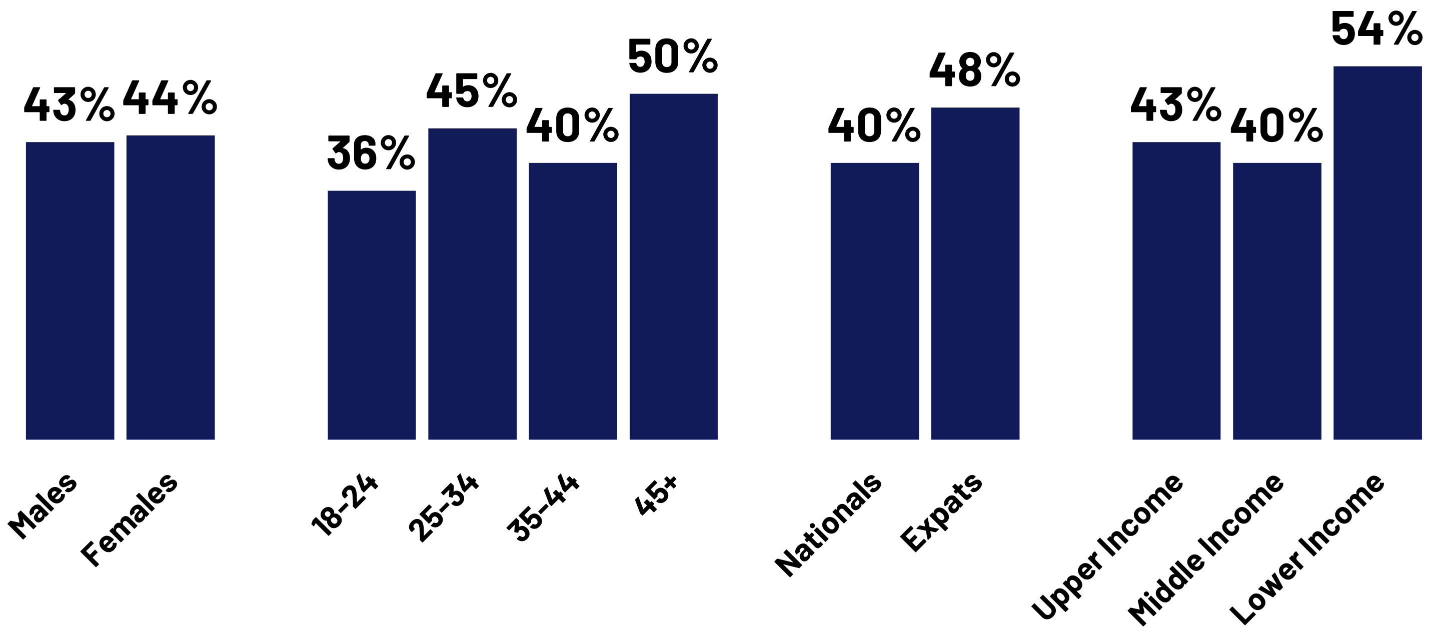
Financial worries

% Agree – by demographics



I worry about not being able to financially cover my daily expenses

+9 pts

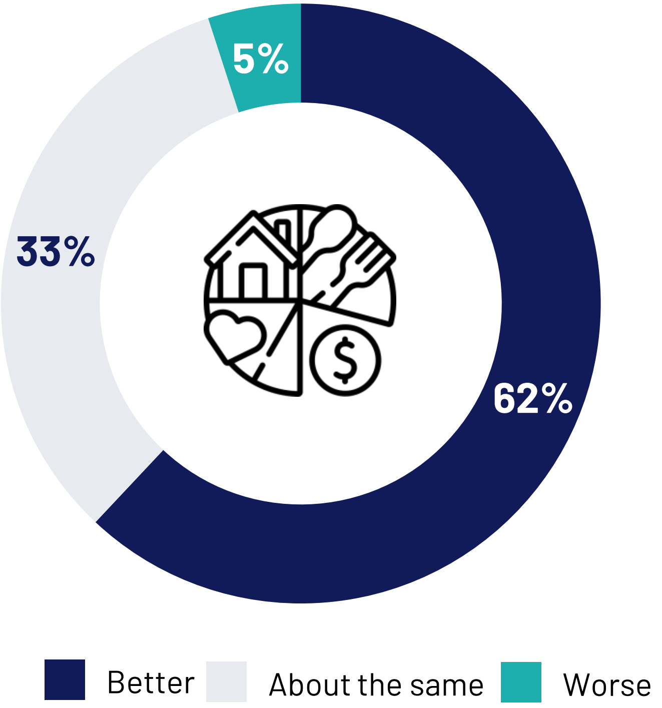


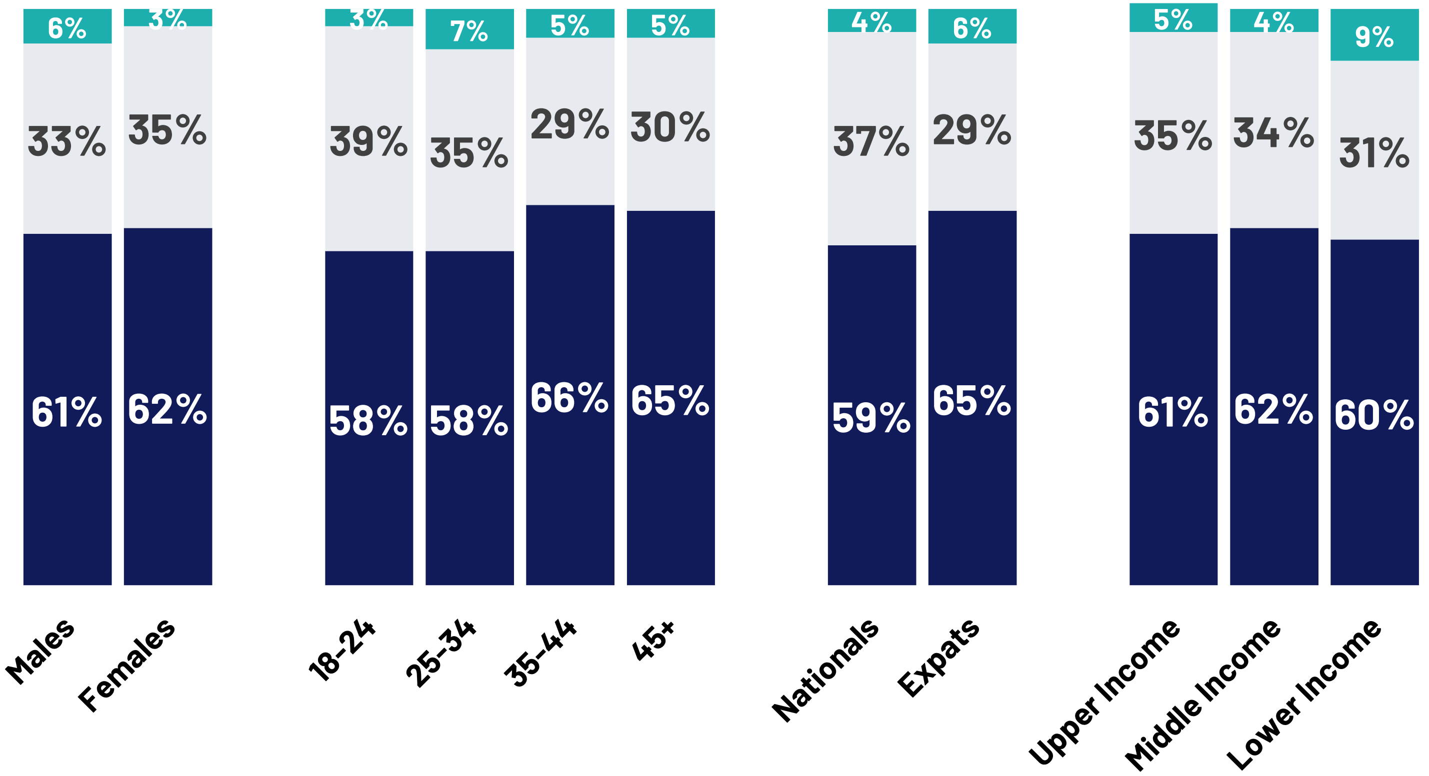
Change vs 2024

Views on the cost of living

% by demographics

Views on cost of living compared to neighbors

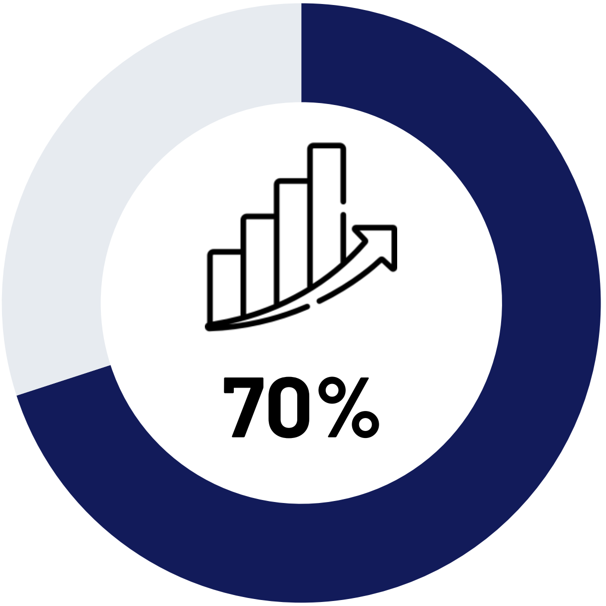




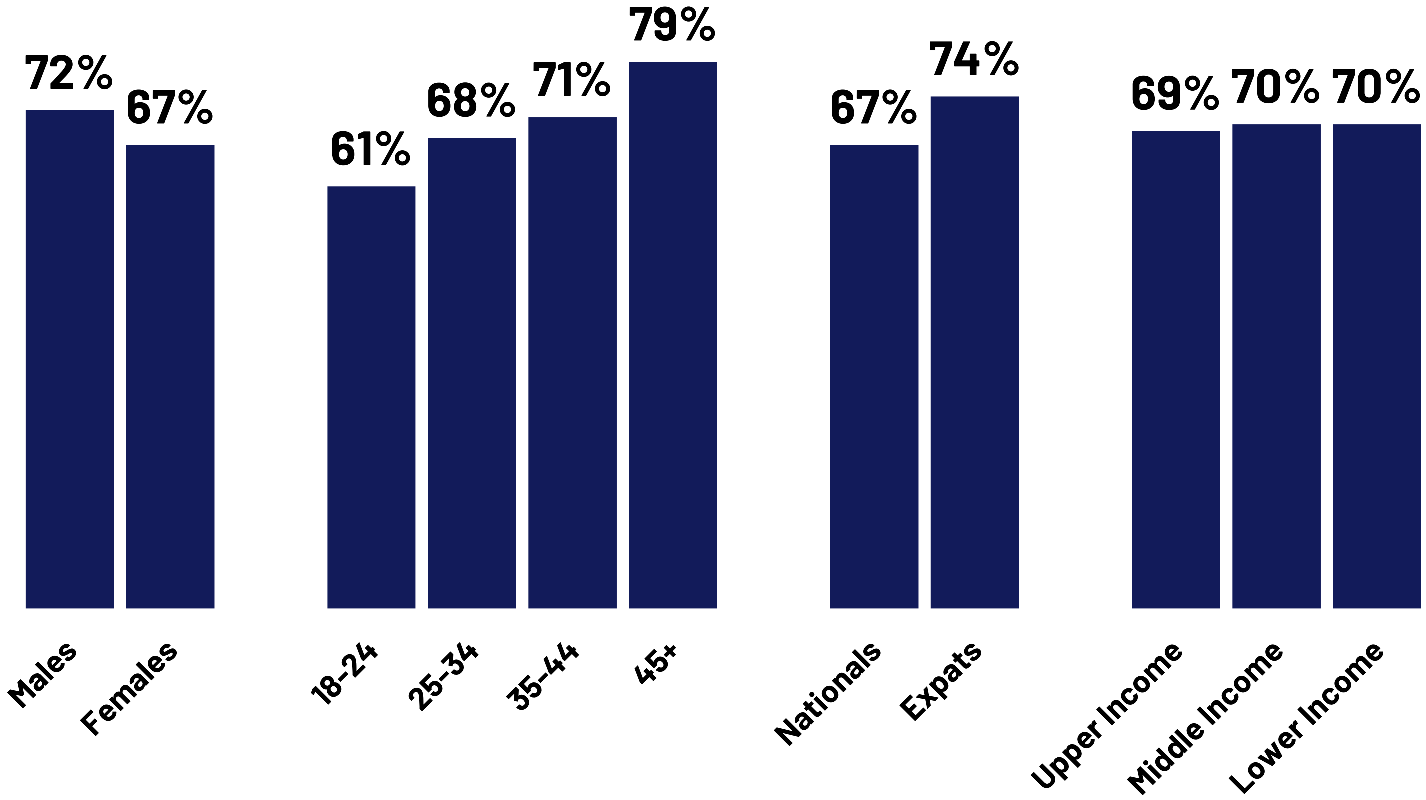
VIEWS ON PRICES AND SPENDING

Views on prices

% Increase – by demographics

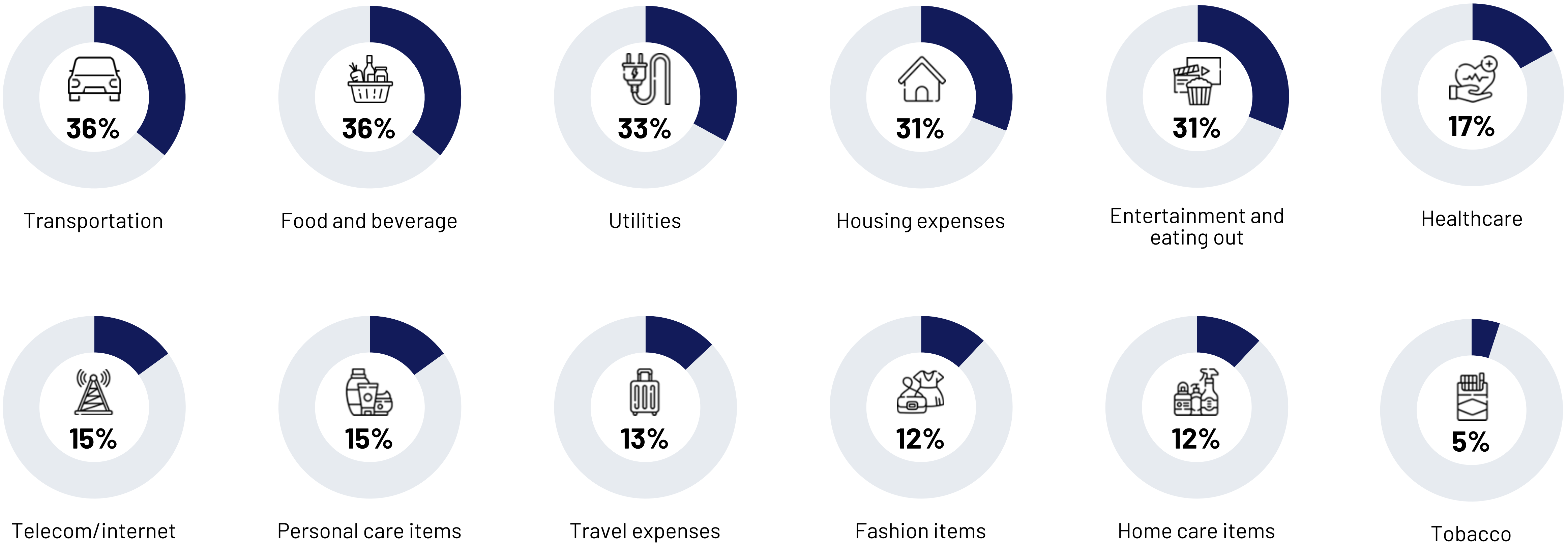


Believe that prices have increased in the past 6 months



Views on price increase per category

% Increase



Views on price increase per category

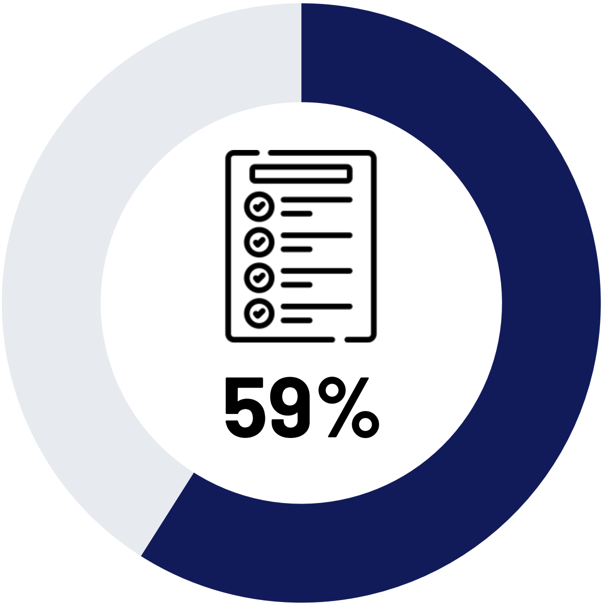
% Increase – by demographics

	Transportation	Food and beverage	Utilities	Housing expenses	Entertainment and eating out	Healthcare	Telecom/internet	Personal care items	Travel expenses	Fashion items	Home care items	Tobacco
Total	**36%**	**36%**	**33%**	**31%**	**31%**	**17%**	**15%**	**15%**	**13%**	**12%**	**12%**	**5%**
Male	36%	39%	35%	31%	29%	17%	16%	13%	12%	12%	12%	6%
Female	37%	33%	31%	32%	35%	16%	14%	18%	14%	12%	11%	4%
18-24	38%	27%	20%	28%	31%	10%	18%	24%	15%	15%	11%	6%
25-34	34%	35%	28%	30%	30%	21%	12%	16%	12%	16%	11%	8%
35-44	33%	38%	40%	31%	34%	18%	15%	9%	15%	7%	12%	5%
45+	42%	44%	43%	36%	30%	15%	19%	12%	10%	9%	13%	1%
Nationals	40%	34%	34%	28%	32%	14%	16%	16%	12%	13%	11%	7%
Expats	31%	39%	32%	36%	30%	20%	15%	14%	15%	11%	13%	3%
Upper Income	38%	32%	33%	33%	30%	15%	11%	15%	18%	16%	13%	10%
Middle Income	38%	40%	31%	29%	33%	15%	15%	15%	12%	12%	13%	5%
Lower income	30%	31%	39%	36%	27%	24%	22%	13%	11%	10%	8%	2%

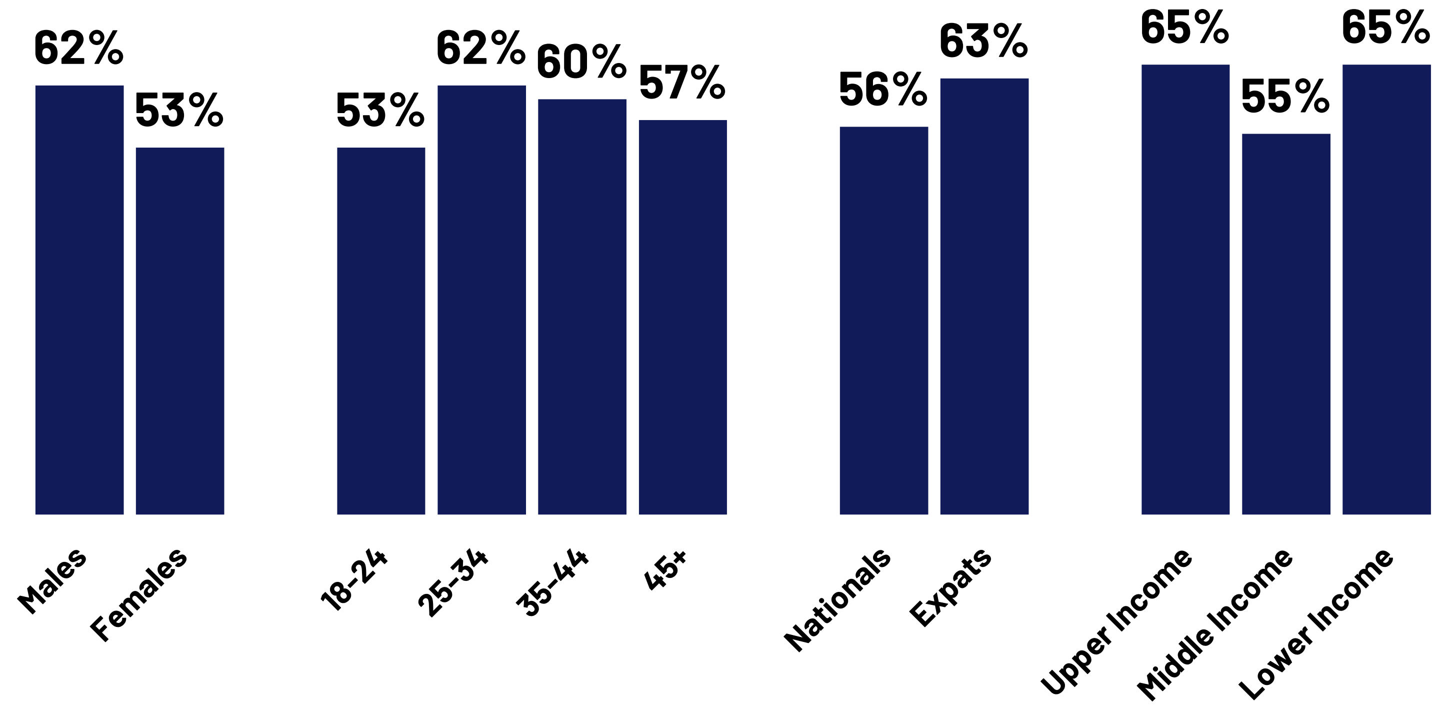
HOW ARE PEOPLE DEALING WITH INFLATION?

Taking measures to counter the increase in prices

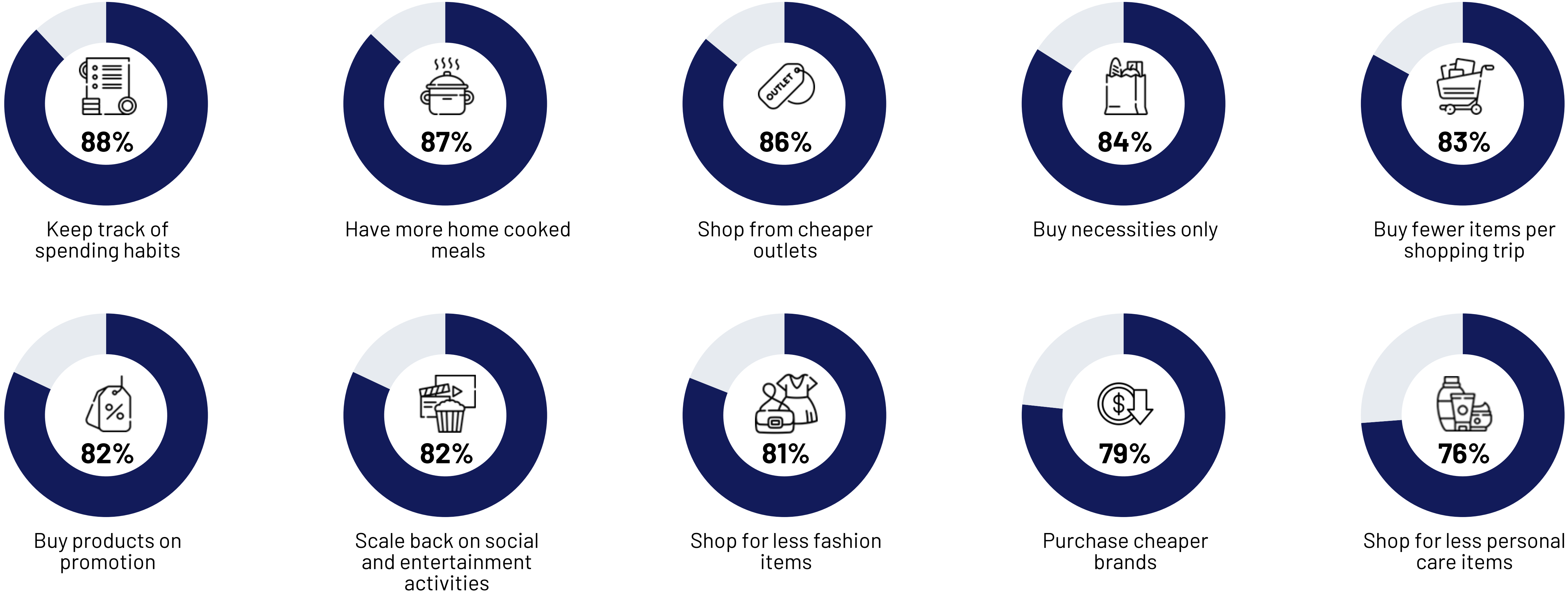
% – by demographics



Have taken or plan to take measures to counter the increase in prices



Top measures taken to counter the increase in prices



% Out of those who take measures

Top measures taken to counter the increase in prices

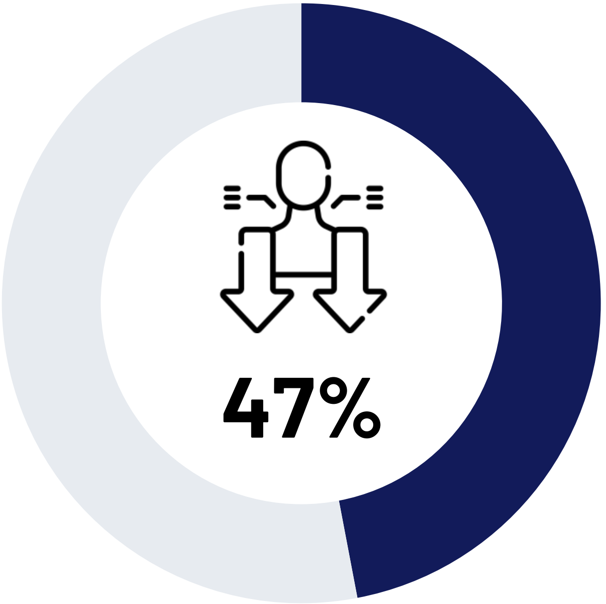
% - by demographics

	Keep track of spending habits	Have more home cooked meals	Shop from cheaper outlets	Buy necessities only	Buy fewer items per shopping trip	Buy products on promotion	Scale back on social and entertainment activities	Shop for less fashion items	Purchase cheaper brands	Shop for less personal care items
Total	**88%**	**87%**	**86%**	**84%**	**83%**	**82%**	**82%**	**81%**	**79%**	**76%**
Male	87%	86%	84%	85%	81%	81%	81%	82%	78%	75%
Female	89%	89%	90%	84%	86%	84%	83%	80%	80%	78%
18-24	83%	84%	92%	79%	83%	86%	76%	77%	79%	71%
25-34	83%	82%	77%	79%	79%	84%	84%	77%	75%	73%
35-44	89%	90%	87%	86%	86%	82%	81%	83%	83%	78%
45+	96%	94%	93%	94%	86%	77%	84%	87%	80%	83%
Nationals	85%	88%	85%	82%	85%	79%	87%	78%	77%	75%
Expats	91%	86%	88%	87%	80%	86%	76%	85%	81%	77%
Upper Income	89%	94%	86%	83%	84%	86%	81%	79%	78%	73%
Middle Income	86%	86%	86%	86%	81%	81%	82%	81%	78%	75%
Lower income	90%	84%	87%	81%	87%	81%	82%	83%	82%	81%

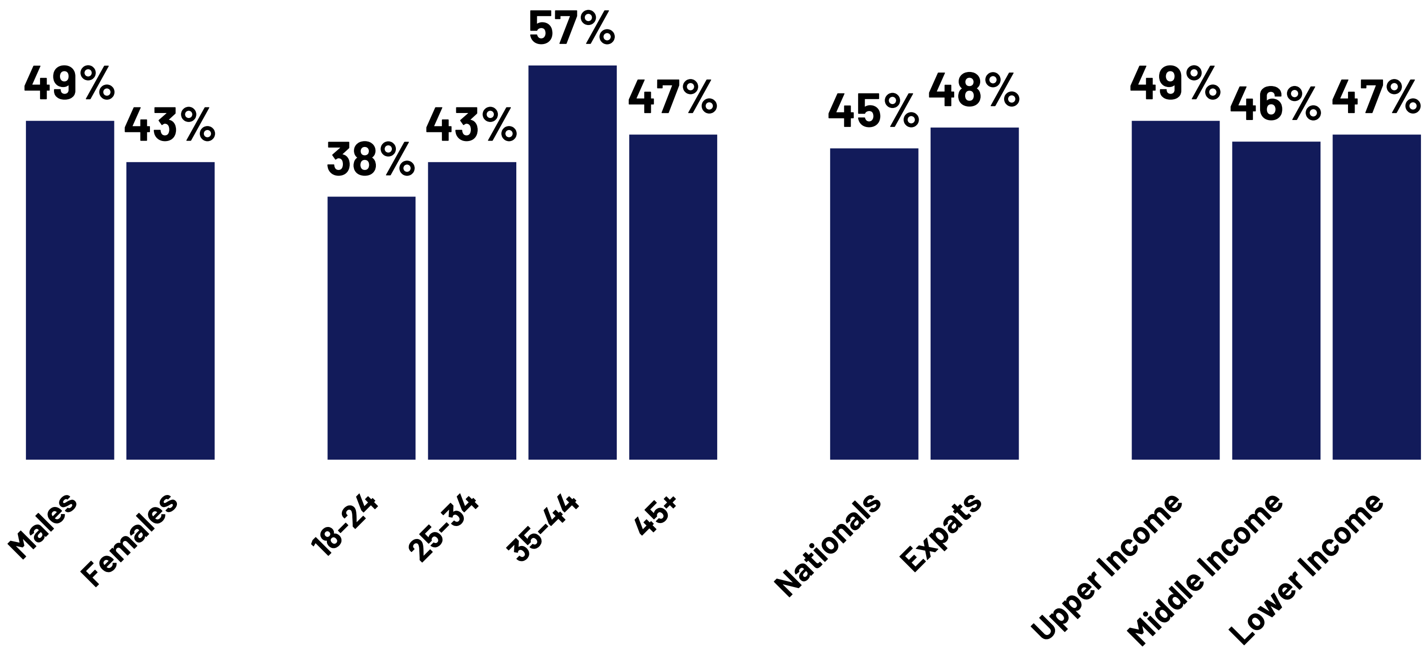
THE IMPACT OF INFLATION ON LIFESTYLE

Lifestyle adjustments in response to rising prices

% Agree – by demographics



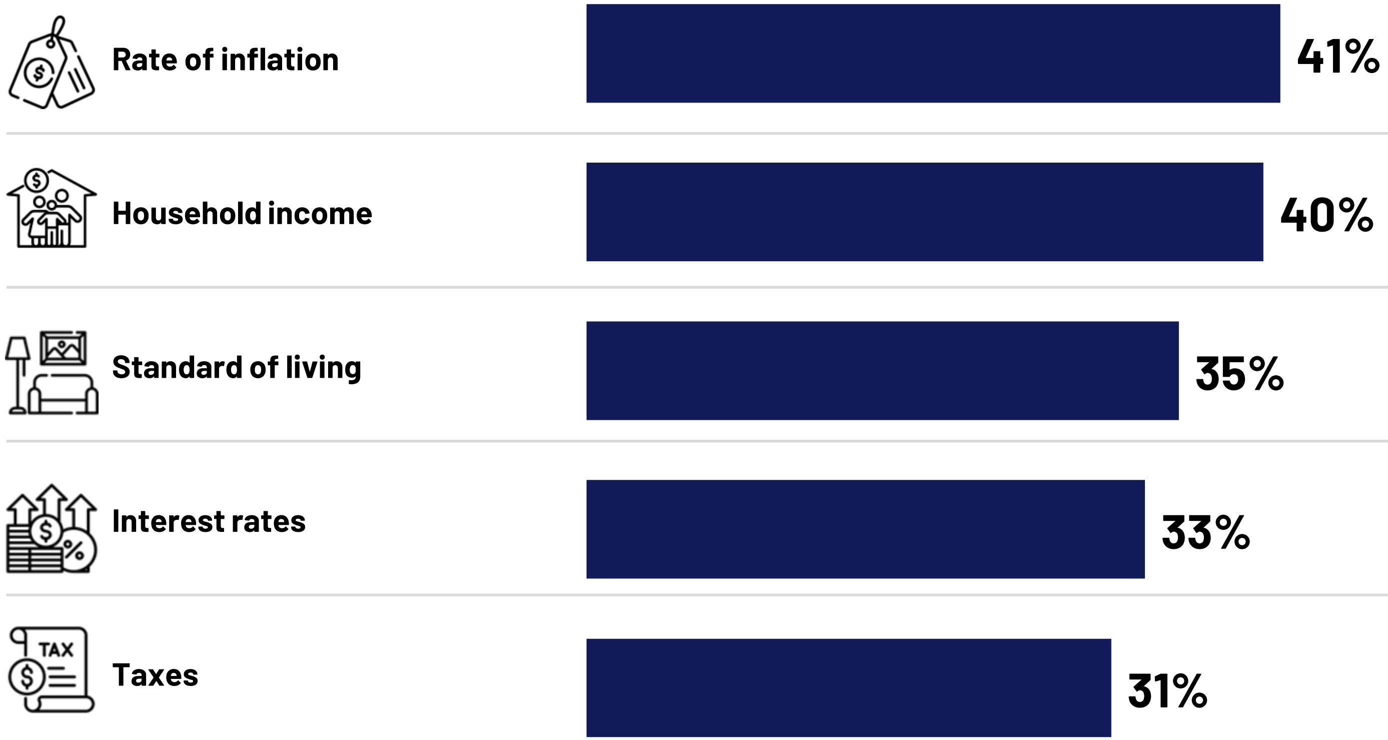
I downgraded my way of living to accommodate the increase in prices



ECONOMIC PREDICTIONS

Expectations for the year ahead

% Expect to increase



Recommendations to Address Concerns and Shifts

Actionable recommendations for stakeholders across Saudi Arabia's consumer landscape

Make value visible, not just cheap

Justify price rather than cutting it. With promotions, cheaper outlets and cheaper brands all widely used, the risk is being judged on price alone. Communicate quality, size and longevity so shoppers can see what they are paying for.

Win the small basket

Shoppers are buying fewer items per trip and sticking to necessities. Rethink pack sizes, entry price points and multibuy mechanics so brands stay in a smaller basket rather than being edged out of it.

Grow with the home occasion

Home cooking and staying in are among the most common responses to price pressure. Position products around everyday meals and at-home entertaining and treat this as a lasting shift in occasion rather than a temporary trade-down.

Reward the planners

Keeping track of spending is the most widespread behavior of all. Loyalty schemes, clear pricing, budgeting tools and flexible payment turn that instinct into a reason to stay with a brand instead of shopping around.

Sample and methodology

Sample size

500 respondents

Sample criteria

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

Methodology

The survey was conducted via Ipsos online panel

Geographical coverage

Conducted in Saudi Arabia
with a nationwide coverage

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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