

# Sri Lanka Opinion Tracker Survey

**2022-13**

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## Sri Lankans agree by a wide margin that the economy, economic crisis, and inflation are the most important national problems

*No other concerns come close, but poor and better-off Sri Lankans differ in the importance of key problems*

**BY** Ravi P. Rannan-Eliya, Azrah Ghaffoor and Nalin Kumara

### FOR MEDIA INQUIRIES

Dalreen Barthelot  
Email: dalreen`at`ihp.lk

### RECOMMENDED CITATION

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## About the IHP Sri Lanka Opinion Tracker

The IHP Sri Lanka Opinion Tracker Survey (SLOTS) was launched in August 2021 to track public experience and opinion during the recovery from COVID-19 and has now been extended to track public perceptions during the economic crisis. It is run by the Institute for Health Policy (IHP), which is an independent, non-partisan research centre based in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The SLOTS lead investigator is Dr Ravi Rannan-Eliya of IHP, who was trained in public opinion polling at Harvard University, and who has conducted numerous opinion surveys over three decades.

SLOTS interviews representative samples of Sri Lankan adults daily by telephone to gather their current views and situation. All interviews include a core set of common questions, with additional rotating sets of other questions that examine issues of topical importance. The survey is made possible by the generous funding support of the Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust and others. The survey has an omnibus design, and the Institute welcomes sponsorship to continue the survey, to add new questions, or to undertake tailored analyses of the data. Potential sponsors should contact the Institute for further details.

SLOTS respondents consist of a mix of respondents reached by random digit dialing of mobile numbers, and others coming from a national panel of respondents who have agreed to be re-interviewed, and who were previously recruited using random selection. As with any survey, bias can arise from the sampling design and non-response, which means that respondents are not representative of the underlying population. To adjust for this, unless otherwise noted, all reported estimates and analyses use data that have been weighted to ensure that they are representative of the national adult population. This weighting process uses propensity weighting and iterative proportional fitting (raking) to match the national population according to gender, age, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic ranking, sector, and geographical location.

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# Sri Lankans agree by a wide margin that the economic crisis and inflation are the most important national problems

*No other concerns come close, but poor and better-off Sri Lankans differ in how important they view key problems*

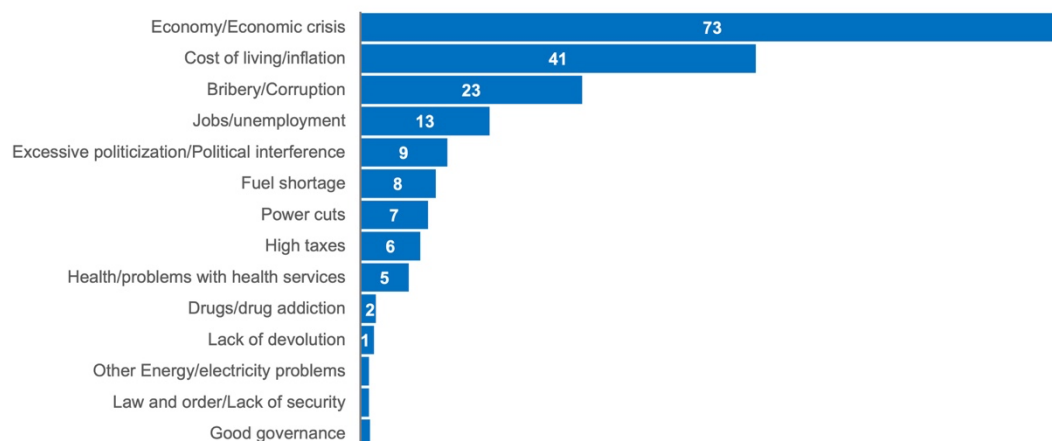
The public views the economy and economic crisis, followed by inflation as the top two problems facing Sri Lanka – and no other concerns come close.

Seven-in-ten Sri Lankans (73%) view the economy and the economic crisis as one of the top two problems for the country, with the public also rating inflation (41%) and jobs and unemployment (13%) as major economic problems. After economic issues, one-in-four Sri Lankans (23%) view corruption as a priority issue, followed by one-in-ten (9%) who cite politicization or political interference.

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## The economy and inflation top the public’s concerns about problems facing the country

*% who say each of the following is one of the top problems facing the country today*



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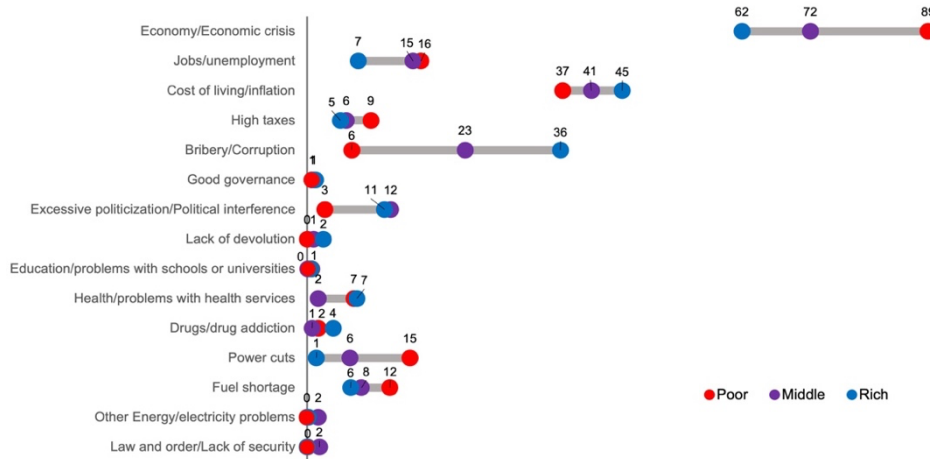
Survey of 622 adults during Oct. 4–Nov.30, 2022, with estimates adjusted for age, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sector, and province. No answer responses not shown.

Significant numbers of Sri Lankans also list fuel shortages (8%) and power cuts (7%) as priority problems, followed by 6% who mention high taxes and 5% who mention problems with the health services, according to Sri Lanka Opinion Tracker Survey (SLOTS) interviews of 622 adults conducted between Oct. 4–Nov. 30, 2022.

Better-off and poor Sri Lankans differ in their rating of key problems. The poorest one third of Sri Lankans almost universally (89%) rate the economic crisis as one of the two main national problems, but less than two-thirds (62%) of the richest one third of Sri Lankans do. In contrast, better-off Sri Lankans are far more likely to view corruption (36%) and political interference (11%) as leading problems, with few poor Sri Lankans listing corruption (6%) and political interference (3%) as leading problems.

**Poor Sri Lankans rate the economy and unemployment as more important problems than the better-off, whilst better-off Sri Lankans much more likely to name corruption as a priority issue**

*% who list problem as one of the top problems facing the country*



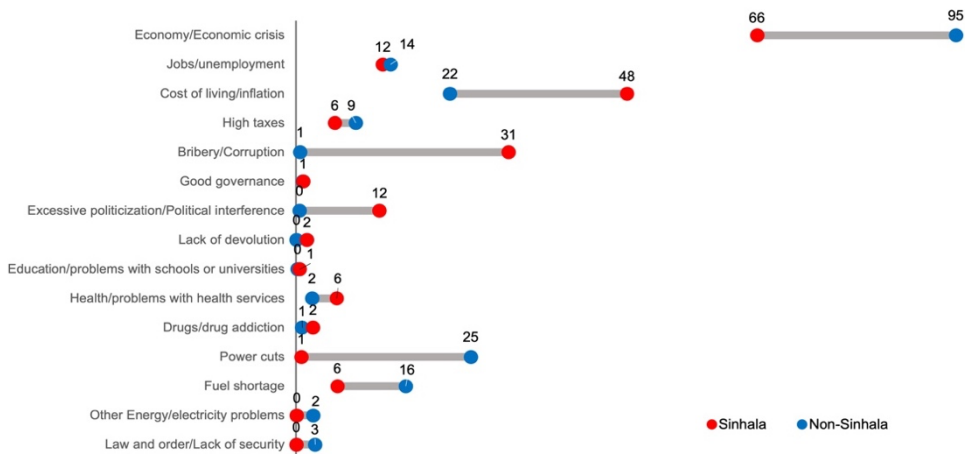
**Institute for Health Policy Sri Lanka Opinion Tracker Survey**

Survey of 622 adults during Oct. 4–Nov.30, 2022, with estimates adjusted for age, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sector, and province. No answer responses not shown.

These differences are paralleled in differences in views between Sinhala and non-Sinhala adults, which also reflects Sinhala adults on average being socioeconomically advantaged than members of other ethnicities. Non-Sinhala adults are far more likely than Sinhala adults to rate the economic crisis as a leading problem (95% versus 66%). In contrast, the view of corruption (31%) or political interference (12%) as the leading problems is largely a Sinhala concern, with negligible numbers of non-Sinhala adults listing these as the top problems.

**Sinhala adults more likely to see corruption and political interference as the top problems, and less likely to mention the economic crisis**

*% who list problem as one of the top problems facing the country*



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Survey of 622 adults during Oct. 4–Nov.30, 2022, with estimates adjusted for age, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sector, and province. No answer responses not shown.