



Inflation, the Falkland Islands, and October Elections: A Pulse on Argentinian Politics

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On March 2nd, the Argentinian government demanded the resumption of negotiations over the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands, a British Overseas Territory off the coast of Argentina. This move comes amid the backdrop of recent political and economic turmoil in the country. In December 2022, Vice President Fernández de Kirchner was convicted and deposed on corruption charges, and inflation continues to climb, passing 100% earlier this year. Many perceive the renewed focus by the government on the Falkland Islands as a political smoke screen, clouding an unpopular government and drawing attention away from upcoming presidential elections. **To better understand the political and economic environment in Argentina, Premise launched a sentiment survey.**

Insights

- **84% of Argentines expressed dissatisfaction with the Alberto Fernández government.** As displayed on **Figure 1**, A vast majority of Argentines believe the government should focus on **solving the issues of inflation and corruption.** These are two areas in which Alberto Fernández's government has failed as evidenced by the sky-high inflation rate and the arrest of his vice president.

Figure 1: Political Priorities

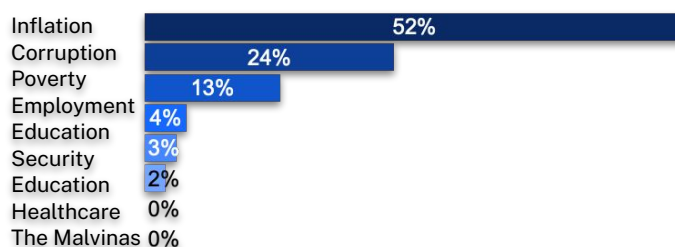
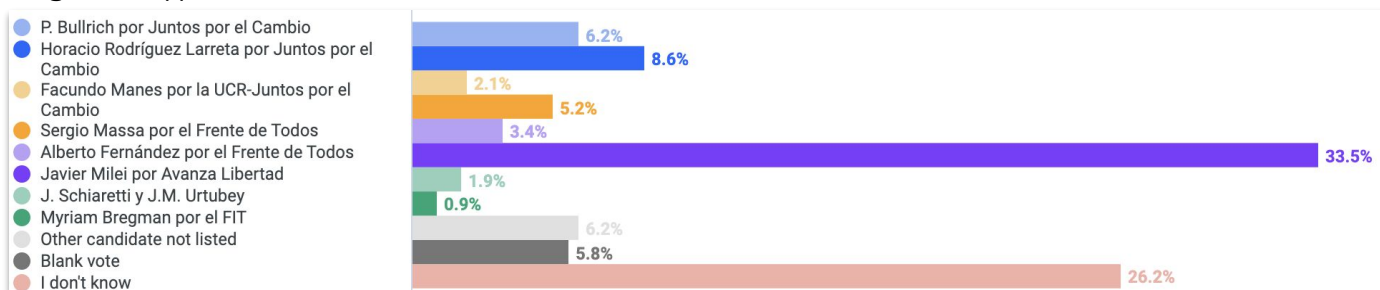


Figure 2: Support for selected Presidential candidates



- President Alberto Fernández's coalition, **Frente de Todos**, a leftist group of Peronist and Kirchnerist parties, **has drawn only 8.6% of support across two candidates in the primaries.** The weak showing **reflects significant (84%) discontent** with the performance of his government.
- Despite the traditional opposition in Argentina, **Juntos por el Cambio**, a coalition of center-right parties, showing more support in the poll (15.4%), **both of the established coalitions are proving no match to the popularity of dark-horse candidate Javier Milei.**
- **A majority of decided voters (33.5%) expressed that they would vote for the populist, libertarian candidate Javier Milei.** The political outsider has surged in popularity in a nation that is weary and fed-up with the political class. He is most notorious for making hyperbolic statements such as he would [“set fire to the Central Bank if he were to become president”](#) and his refusal to form alliances with other politicians because it would confuse him with the [“caste he denounces.”](#)
- A noteworthy minority **(26.2%) of respondents claim they are still unsure of who they will vote for** in the upcoming elections. It is a known fact that Argentines are wary of answering political questionnaires, with [some experts claiming nearly 60% of Argentines refuse to answer political questionnaires.](#) If inflation continues to persist in the lead up to the election, many of these voters could throw their support behind Milei as his anti-establishment, populist message continues to resonate throughout the country.



- **Only 32.6% of Argentines were aware of the government's request to renew negotiations** surrounding the Falklands. Further, **no Argentines believed that the Falkland islands should be the political priority of the government.** Despite this seeming ambivalence, **80% of Argentines agreed to varying degrees that the Falkland Islands were part of Argentina**, a stark contrast with a 2013 referendum that saw 99.8% of Falkland Island residents voting to remain citizens of the U.K.

- **39.1% of Argentines believe** (Figure 3) that the government's current focus on the Falkland Islands is to distract from domestic political issues, while **33.1% believe it is for the government to project strength prior to the upcoming elections.** With so many Argentines perceiving the government's attention toward the Islands as disingenuous, **it adds validity to sentiment Premise captured on lack of satisfaction with the current administration, and can help explain the attraction of voters to the anti-establishment candidate, Javier Milei.**

Figure 3: Why has the Argentinian government decided to refocus attention on the Falkland Islands?

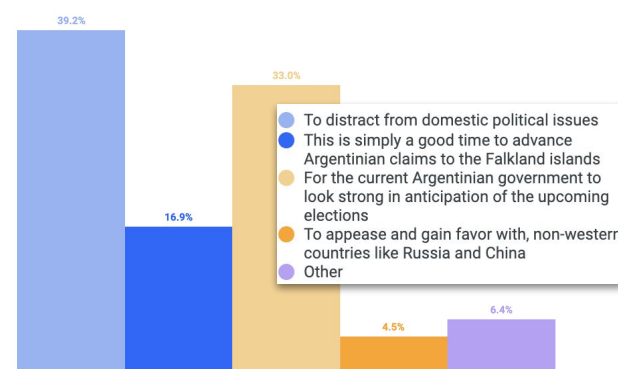
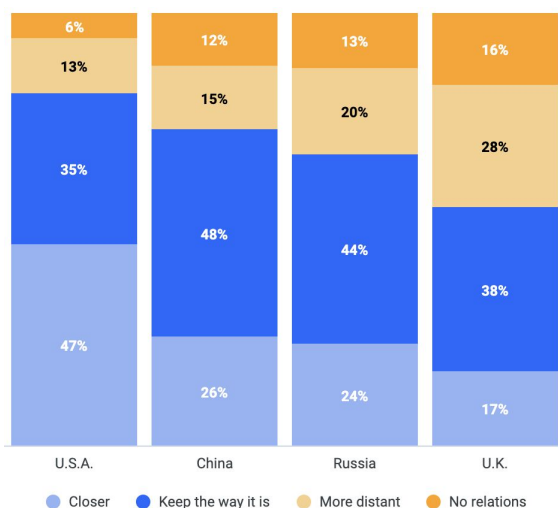


Figure 4: Country Relations Preference



- When asked which was more important, strong relations with the U.K. and the West or sovereignty over the Falkland Islands, a **slight majority, 57.5% said sovereignty over the islands.**
- **Argentines overwhelmingly prefer stronger relations with the United States, a key ally of the United Kingdom** (Figure 4). But this sentiment is not felt towards the U.K, with Argentines preferring closer relations with China and Russia when compared to the United Kingdom
- There remains little doubt that Argentines perceive the Falkland Islands as sovereign Argentine territory and that the conflict has soured the country's relationship with the United Kingdom. However, given strong, continued support for closer ties to the US, **the conflict does not seem to have poisoned Argentines' perception of the West as a whole.**

Methodology

From 11 March 2023 to 17 March 2023, Premise surveyed a stratified sample of 534 adults, representative by age, gender and geography across Argentina. Post-stratification weights were applied to align the demographics of the actual sample with the target population based on region, age and gender.

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