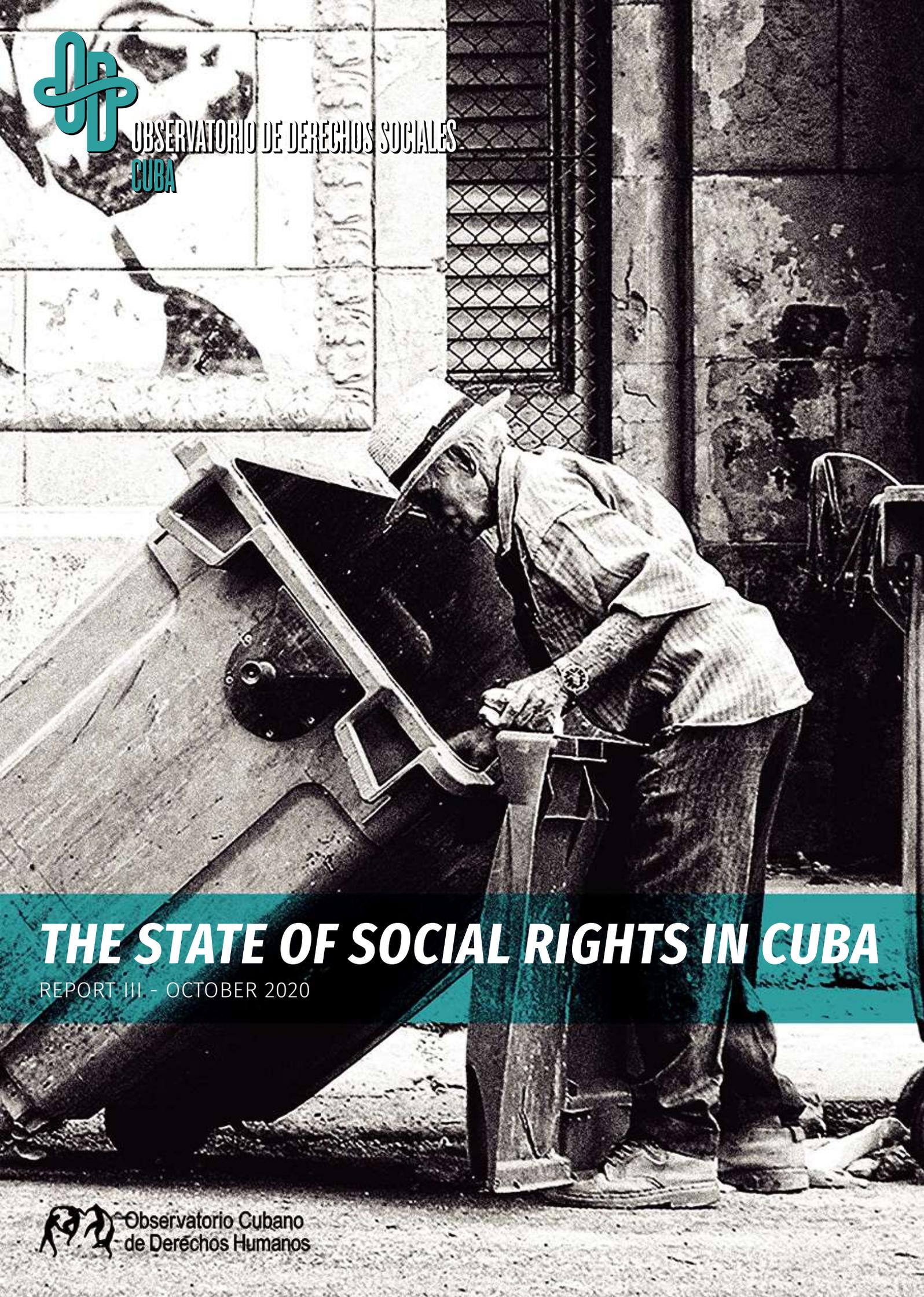




OBSERVATORIO DE DERECHOS SOCIALES  
CUBA



# ***THE STATE OF SOCIAL RIGHTS IN CUBA***

REPORT III - OCTOBER 2020



Observatorio Cubano  
de Derechos Humanos

## INTRODUCTION

In this document, we present the most significant conclusions from the third report on *The Situation of Social Rights in Cuba*, the result of the work carried out by a technical team and a network of observers who have collected the responses of over 1,200 Cubans across the national territory. This data collection joins those previously carried out in a unique and systematic set of studies, which have made it possible to compare the evolution of the social situation on the island over two years (2019-2020). The interviews for this third piece of research have been conducted within the context of COVID-19, which implied an important, but necessary, additional effort, including adopting the recommended protective measures, in order to obtain first-hand knowledge of the critical circumstances for a significant part of the Cuban population. For this reason, we also asked citizens for their future expectations in relation to the most pressing aspects in their day-to-day lives. Based on systematic observations regarding the situation in Cuba, again we present the data that reveals the social conditions in which millions of Cubans are living.

## THEMATIC AREAS

**1 RIGHT TO HEALTH**

**2 RIGHT TO FOOD AND FOOD SECURITY**

**3 RIGHT TO WATER**

**4 RIGHT TO HOUSING**

**5 RIGHT TO A JOB AND A FAIR SALARY**

**6 RIGHT TO SOCIAL PROTECTION (social security, work leave, unemployment, retirement, maternity leave, etc.)**

**7 RIGHT TO QUALITY AND FREE EDUCATION**

**8 RIGHT TO A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT**

## METHODOLOGY

Representative study on a national scale. The fieldwork was carried out by means of personal interviews assisted by digital tools built on 'Open Data Kit (ODK)' technology. Given the COVID19 context, specific and mandatory safety and health protection protocols were established, as well as monitoring the locally established measures. The questionnaire used was drawn up entirely by the OCDH team, with the advice of various experts and based on previous experience in the field and pilot tests carried out.

## DATA SHEET

**POPULATION** Cuban resident population of both sexes, 18 years and older

**SAMPLE** 1,249 respondents

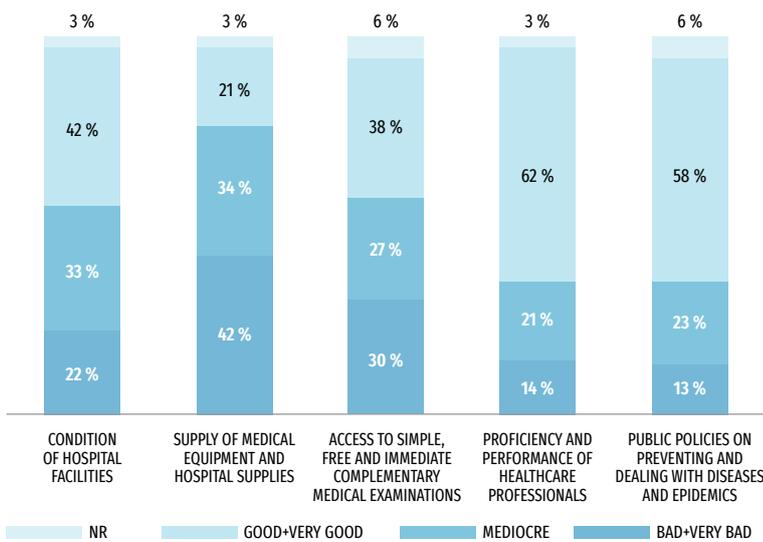
**SAMPLING METHOD** Simple random method; proportional allocation method

**MARGIN OF ERROR** +/- 2.7 %

**CONFIDENCE LEVEL** 95%

**FIELD WORK** July 17 to August 10, 2020

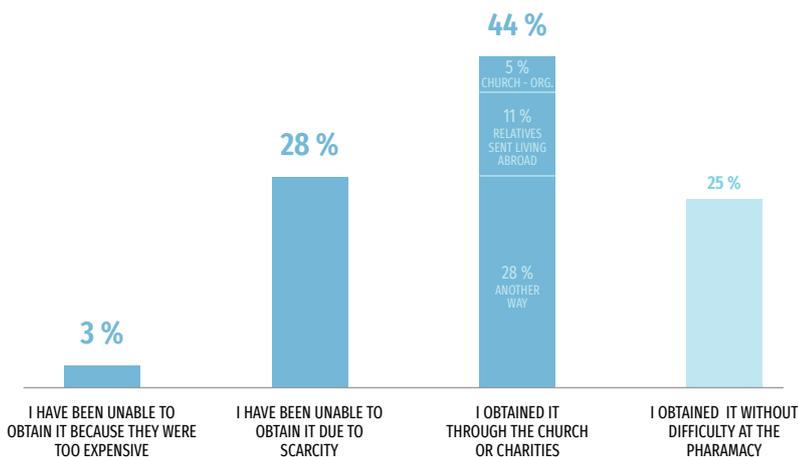
## RIGHT TO HEALTH Health System Assessment



**76 %**  
rate the "Supply of medical equipment and hospital supplies" as either mediocre or very bad.

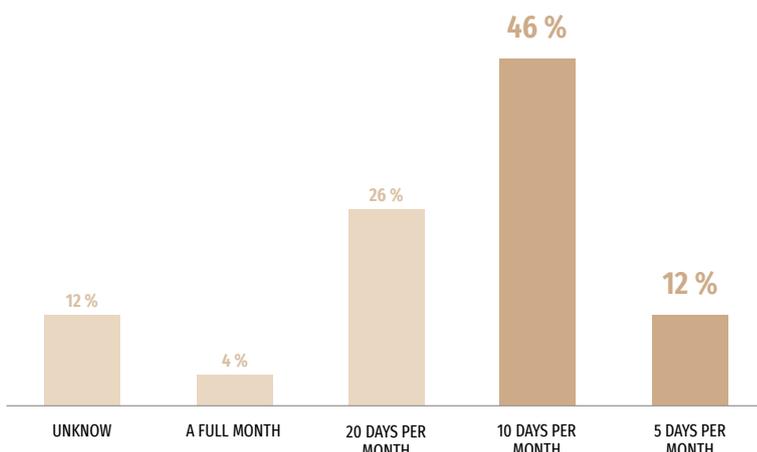
**6 OUT OF 10**  
Cubans rate both the "Access to simple, free and immediate complementary medical examinations" between mediocre and very bad.

## RIGHT TO HEALTH What has been your experience obtaining medicine?



**75 %**  
of Cubans in need of medicine were unable to obtain it at the pharmacy.  
**28%** due to scarcity.  
**44%** obtained them another way (by relatives living abroad, Church or charities).

## RIGHT TO FOOD How many days do the products received through the rations book last for your family?



For **6 out of 10** the food acquired through the rations book is only enough to cover **5-10 DAYS A MONTH**

For a little over **70%** of the population, there have been no access to some basic foods during the last 3 months.

## RIGHT TO FOOD

### Family nutrition quality assessment.

The majority of the population,

**67%**

considers the family nutrition as deficient.

Over the last three months **38%** were forced to skip one of their daily meals due to the lack of money or resources.

## ELECTRICITY

**39%**

of the population has power outages from 2 to 6 hours.

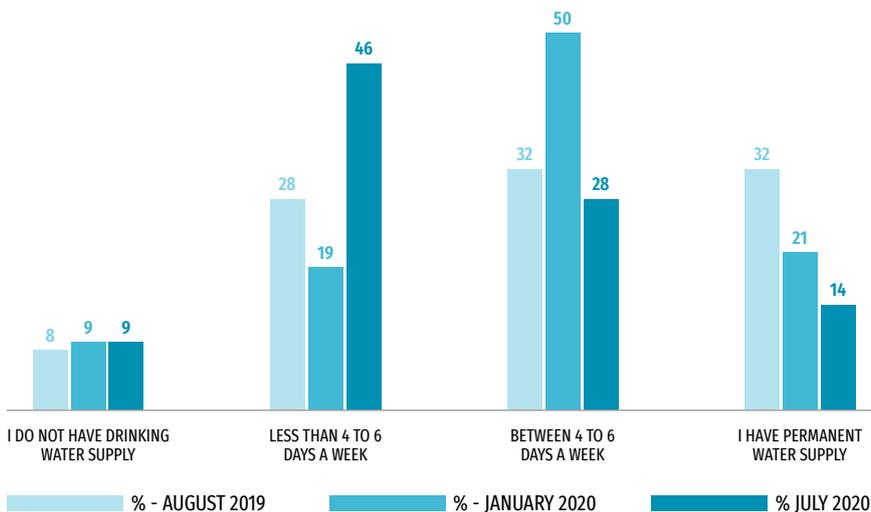
**22%**

of the population from 6 hours to 1 day.

Recurring outages (more than 10 within that period) have increased from 8% (January 2020) to 14% (August 2020).

## RIGHT TO WATER

### Household water supply: comparison (%)



**83%**

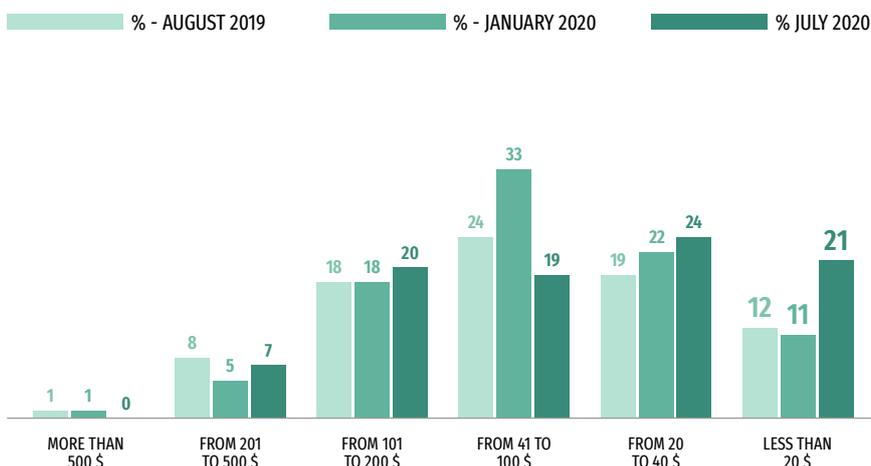
of Cubans do not have a permanent running water supply.

Households with a permanent drinking water supply:

August 2019: 32%  
January 2020: 21%  
August 2020: 14%

## RIGHT TO A JOB AND A FAIR WAGE

### Household income level: comparison (%)



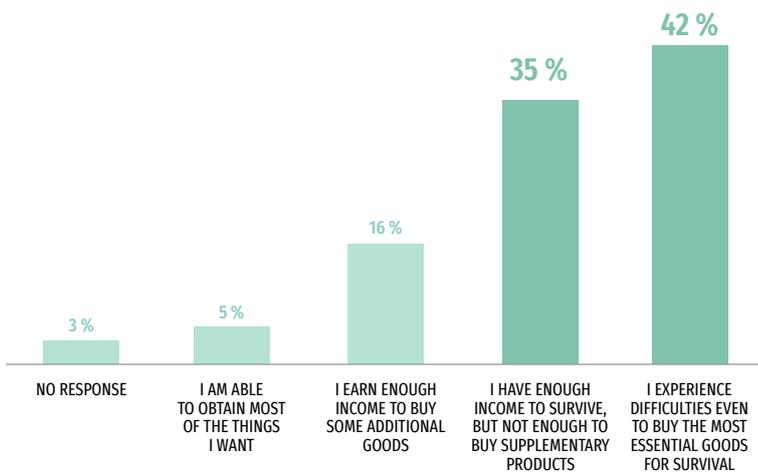
Families living  
**ON LESS THAN  
20\$ PER MONTH:**

August 2019: 12%  
January 2020: 11%  
August 2020: 21%

\* Since the opening of retail establishments for the sale of essential products in US dollars, this currency has increased in value against the Cuban peso and the CUC\$ (Cuban convertible peso). This has entailed a significant devaluation of the national currency with which both employees and pensioners are paid.

## RIGHT TO A JOB AND A FAIR WAGE

### Description of the household's economic situation



**77%**  
of Cubans acknowledge a situation of severe or mediocre scarcity.

**42%** say they experience "difficulties even to buy the most essential goods for survival".

## RIGHT TO A JOB AND A FAIR WAGE

Unions and the defense of labour rights.

**1 IN 10**  
of the only existing union considers that the union defends their labor rights.

**60%** believe that the union defends their rights a little (**31%**), or not at all (**29%**).

## RIGHT TO A JOB AND A FAIR WAGE

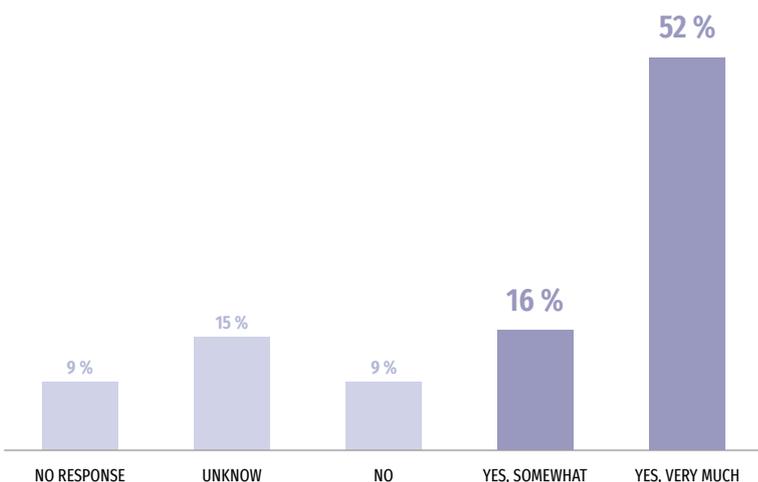
Government support for unemployed people.

**93%**  
of unemployed people have not received any kind of government aid.

**22%** have not worked for over a year.

## RIGHT TO FREE AND QUALITY EDUCATION

### Do you believe that the education system is indoctrinated by some political ideology?



**68%**  
of Cubans consider that there is indoctrination within the education system.

Young people and people aged 31 to 45 are those who express the most concern regarding an existing political indoctrination in schools.

## RIGHT TO FREE AND QUALITY EDUCATION

### Educational System Assessment.

# 1 OF 2

Cubans consider the Educational facilities mediocre to bad or very bad (16% and 32%, respectively).

## RIGHT TO HOUSING

### State of Households.

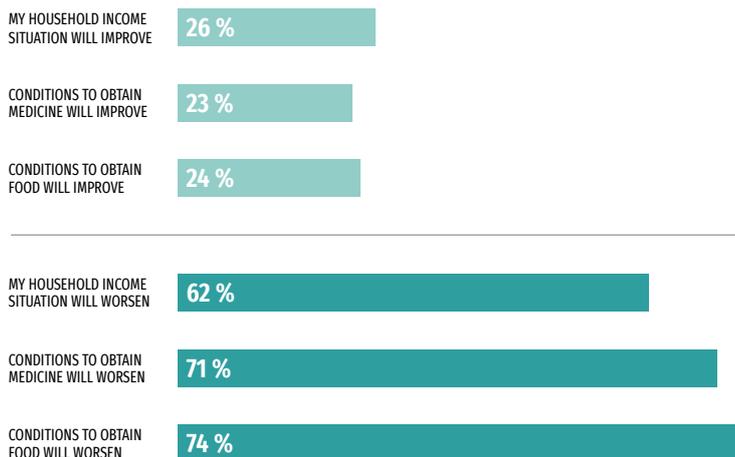
# 46 %

of families need to renovate or repair their homes.

11% of families live in homes at risk of collapse.

## FUTURE PROSPECTS

### How do you expect the situation to evolve over the next six months?



The pessimistic feeling is the predominant in the majority of the Cubans.

# Over 70 %

believe that the conditions for obtaining medicine and food will worsen.

6 out of 10 believe that their income situation will get worse.

## THE PROFILE OF ELDERLY PEOPLE IN CUBA

The research confirms the critical situation in which the elderly (adults over 70 years old) find themselves regarding their social rights.



- The lack of some foodstuffs has increased in up to 52% of cases; an alarming figure.
- "Difficulties buying the most essential goods for survival" has increased; it is now at 64%, therefore exceeding the already high figure of 59% recorded during the previous research.
- The elderly are those living in the smallest homes (39% of them reside in homes with an area of 40 square meters or less), and they also tend to reside in single-room houses (38%) and generally live alone, more than any of the other age ranges.
- More than half of their homes require renovation or repair and another 22% of houses are "in danger of collapse".

The **Social Rights Observatory (ODS-Cuba)** is an initiative from OCDH that since 2009 has been working in the documentation and investigation of the violation of human rights in Cuba.

ODS-Cuba was created because of the need to have **updated information about the Cuban population in terms of health, jobs, housing, access to water, education, and food supply, that is supported by evidence.** In order to do this, research, monitoring, and information sharing is conducted with regards to social rights on the island.

We have the objective to be **a monitoring instrument for civil society and the international community about the situation of social rights in Cuba,** with the goal to contribute to the decisions that would improve the quality of lives of Cubans.



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