

# Argentina on a knife-edge as presidential election offers clashing visions of the future

BUENOS AIRES, Nov 17 (Reuters) – Argentine voters are angry and afraid. Which is stronger will tip the balance of the South American country's presidential election on Sunday and may reshape its diplomatic ties, economic future, and the wider region's political fault lines.

The country of some 45 million people will vote in the Nov. 19 run-off election between Sergio Massa, currently economy minister for the ruling Peronists, and libertarian outsider Javier Milei. Opinion polls indicate a tight race and a deeply divided electorate.

On the ground in Buenos Aires and beyond there is fury with the government, which has presided over inflation racing towards 150% that has pushed two-fifths of the population into poverty. That has weakened Massa and driven the abrupt rise of his right-wing rival.

Up against this is fear of Milei, a wild-haired former TV pundit whose outspoken and aggressive style has led some to compare him to former U.S. President Donald Trump. He has often appeared at rallies brandishing a chainsaw, a symbol of his plans to slash state spending.

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