A photograph of a young man in camouflage pants sleeping on a bed in a room with Arabic graffiti on the wall. The man is lying on his side, facing left, with his head on a patterned pillow. The bed has a striped mattress. The wall behind him is covered in dense, handwritten Arabic text in various colors and styles. A piece of clothing hangs on the wall to the right of the man. The lighting is dim, creating a somber atmosphere.

# “Voices of Syria” Project

Vera Mironova  
University of Maryland

Loubna Mrie  
Syria

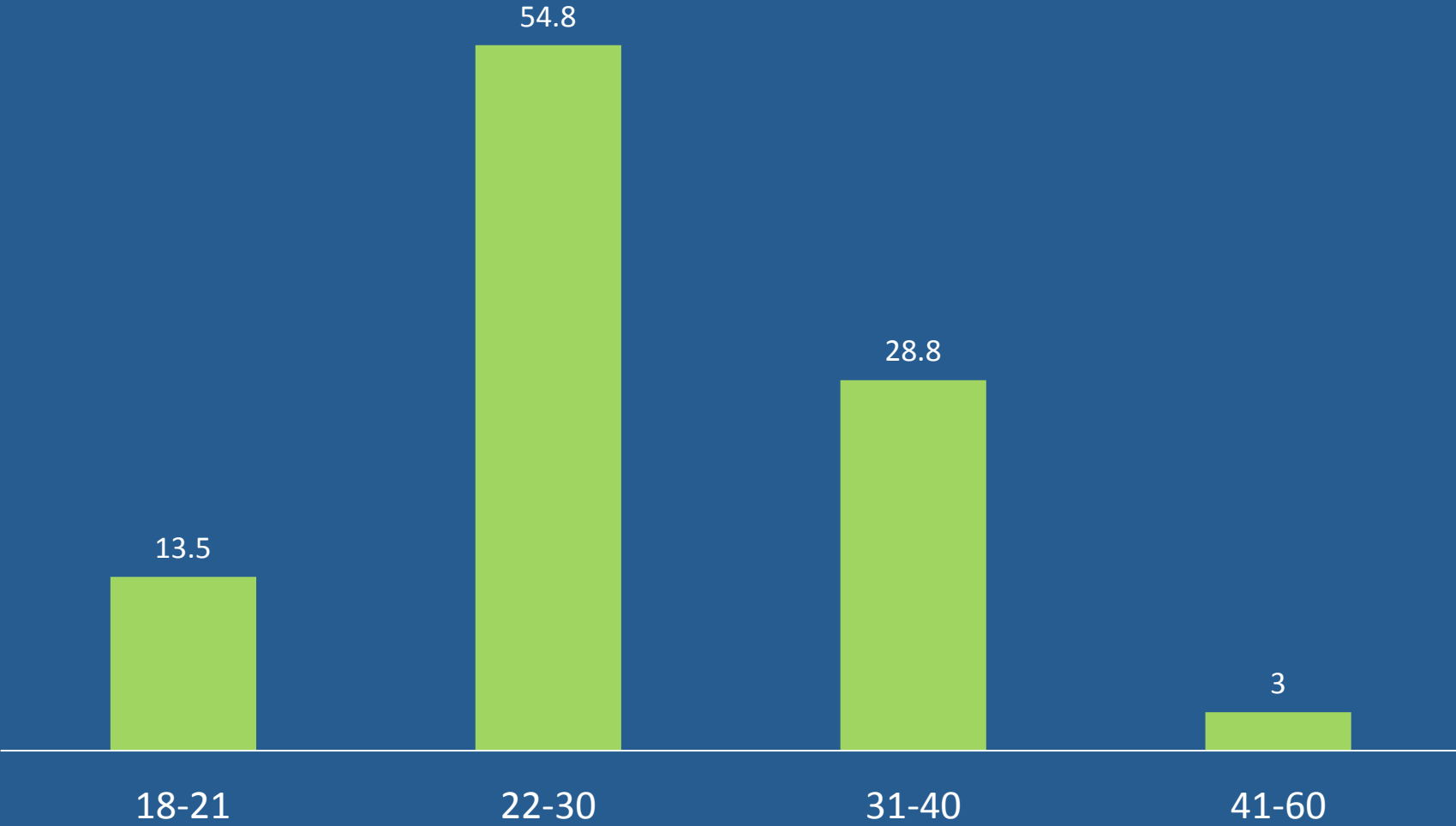
Sam Whitt  
High Point University

# Methodology

- Unknown population parameters and security concerns preclude random sampling
- We rely on non-probability, cluster sampling
- All interviews conducted by local Syrian.
- 100 Interviews with ex-combatants in Turkey and inside Syria from various Islamist brigades (Nov-Dec 2014)

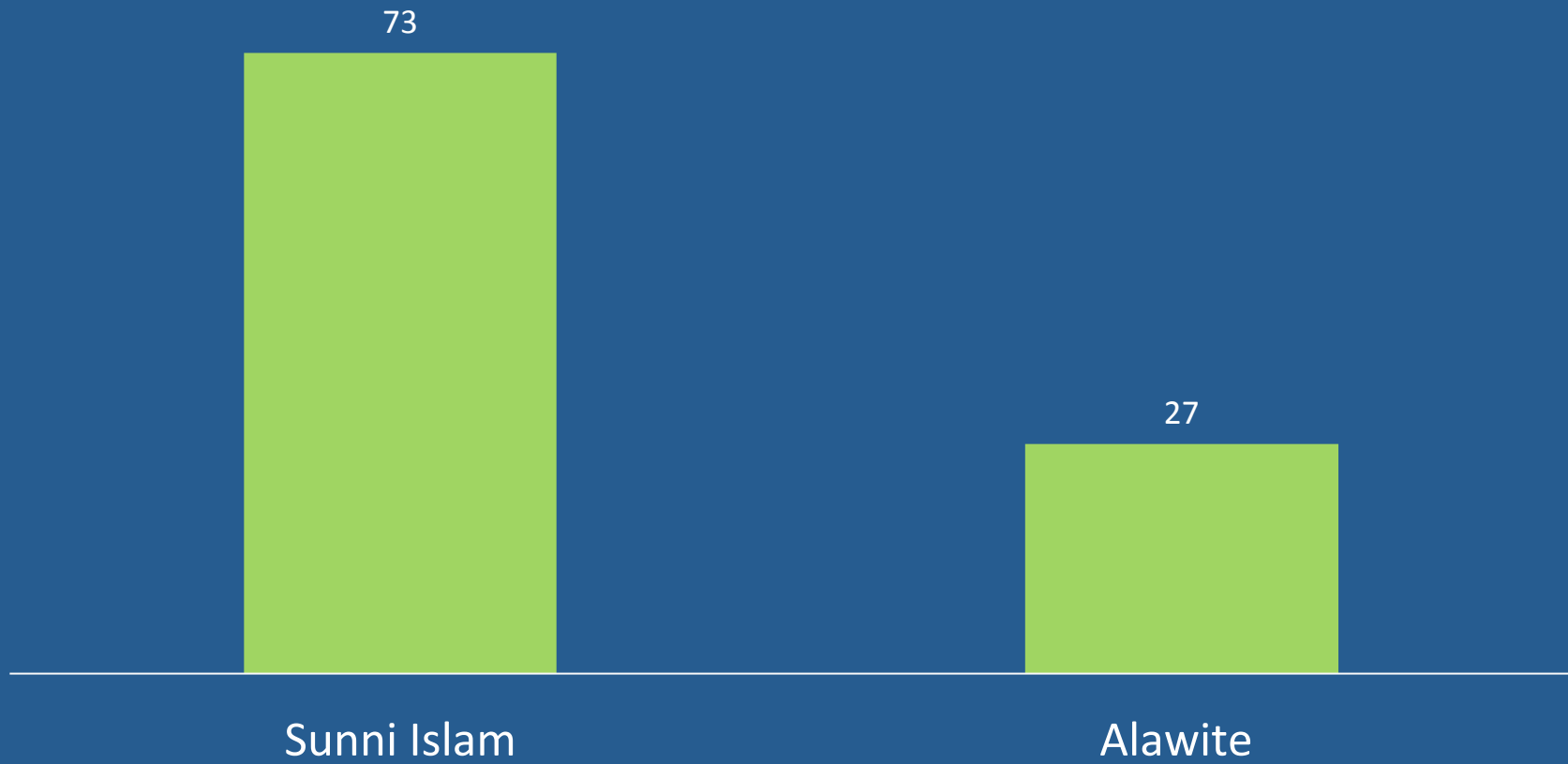
# Demographics

# Respondent Age Group



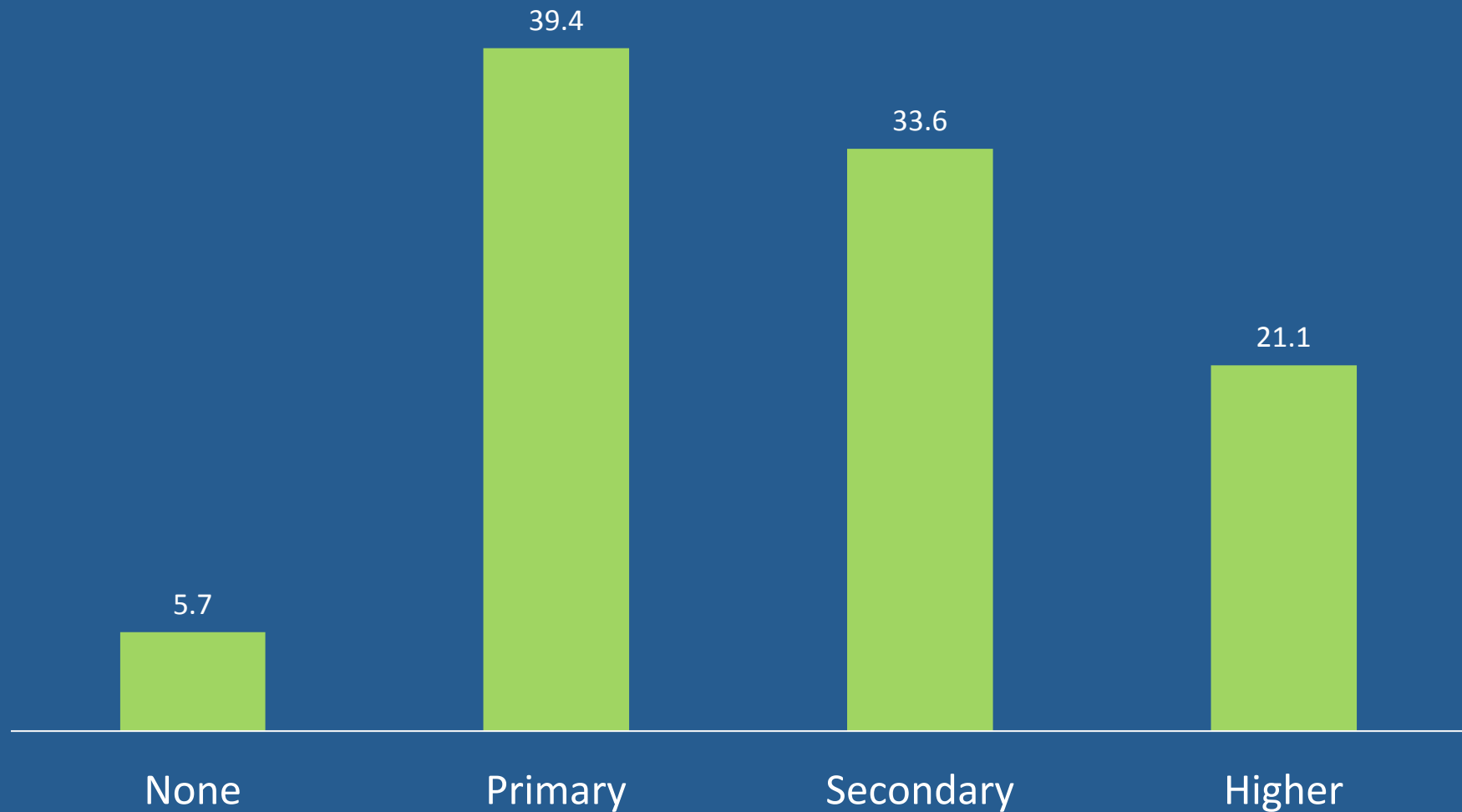
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# Religion



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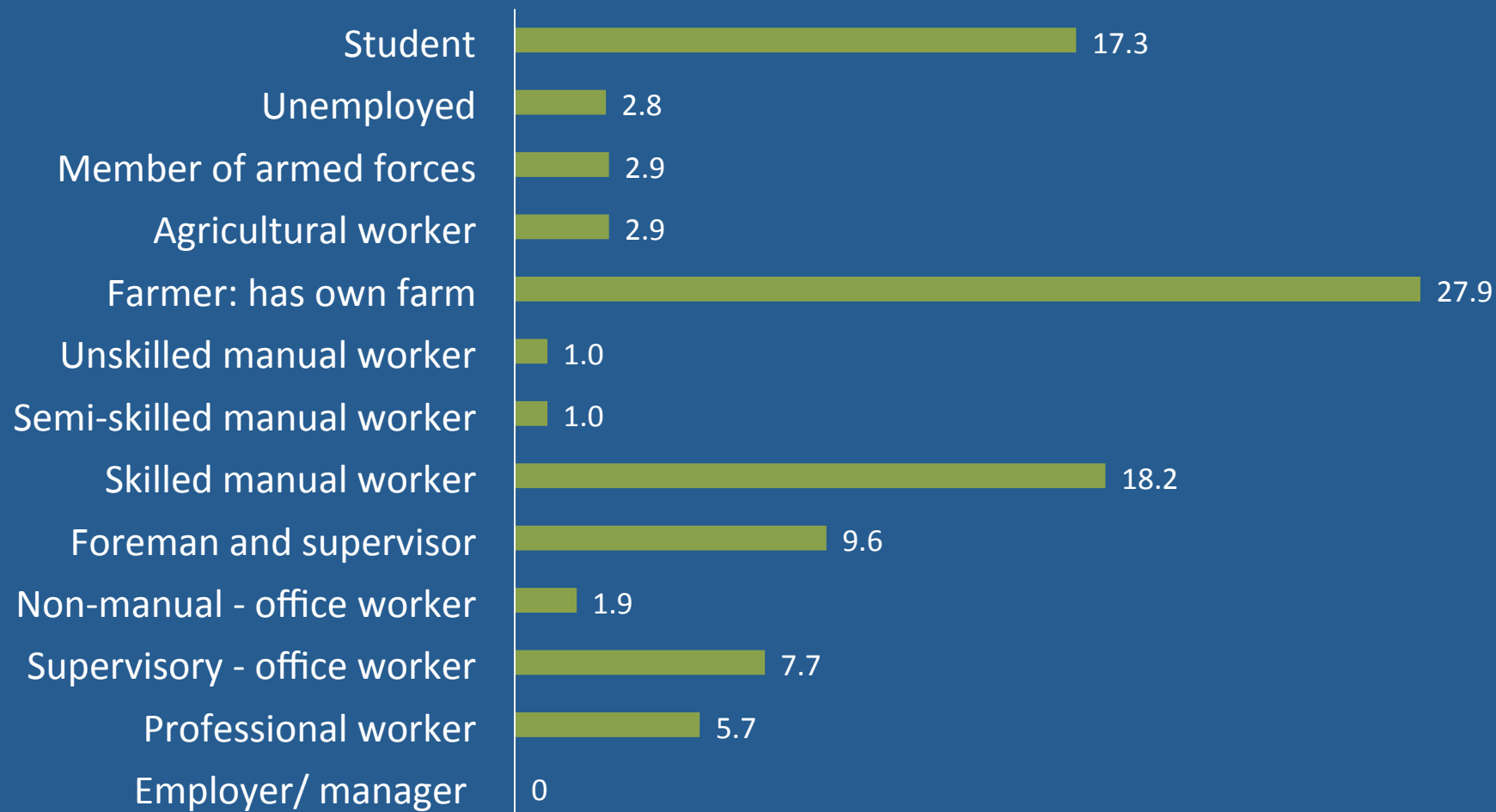
# Respondent Education Levels



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## Occupation Before War

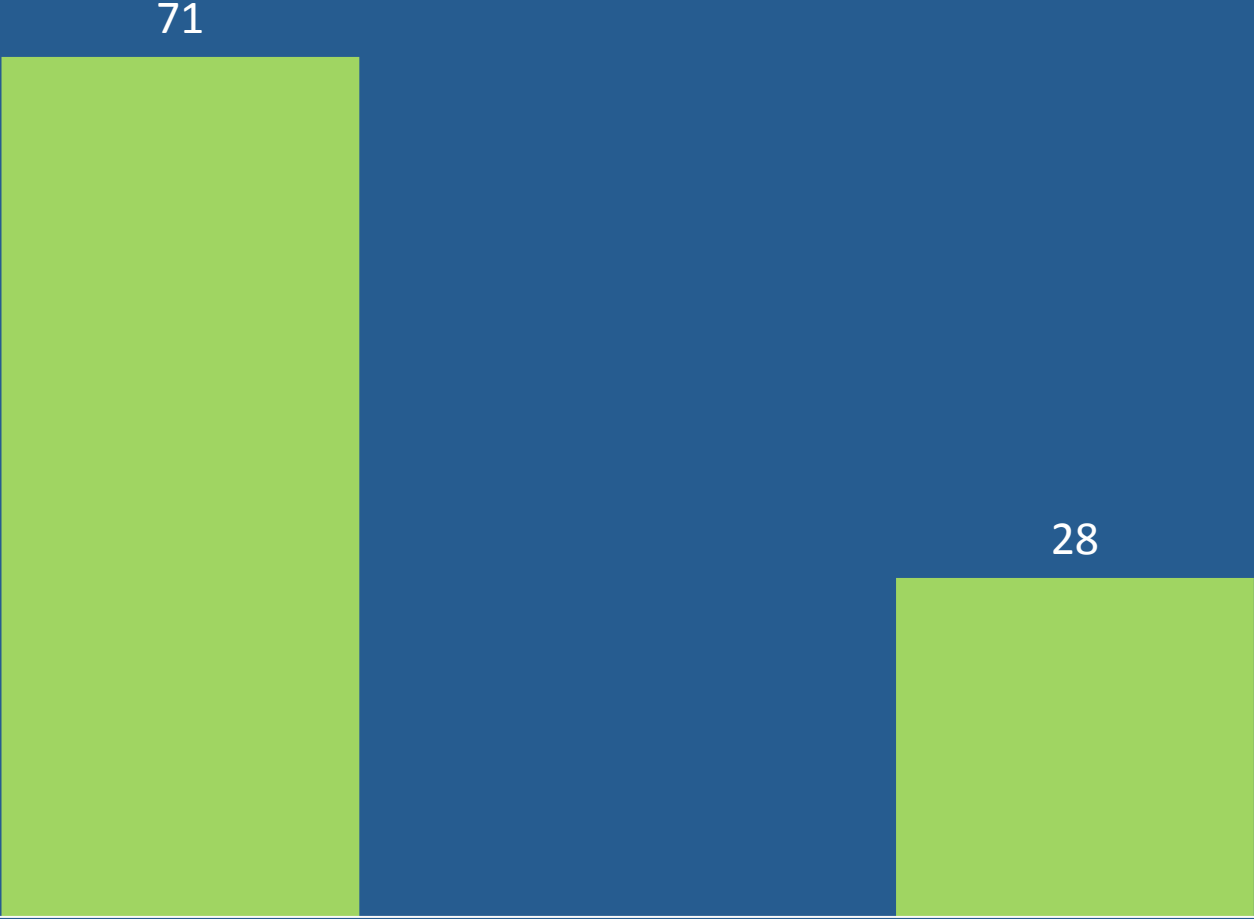
*Q: What type of work were you doing before the war began ?*



# Displacement



# Current Location



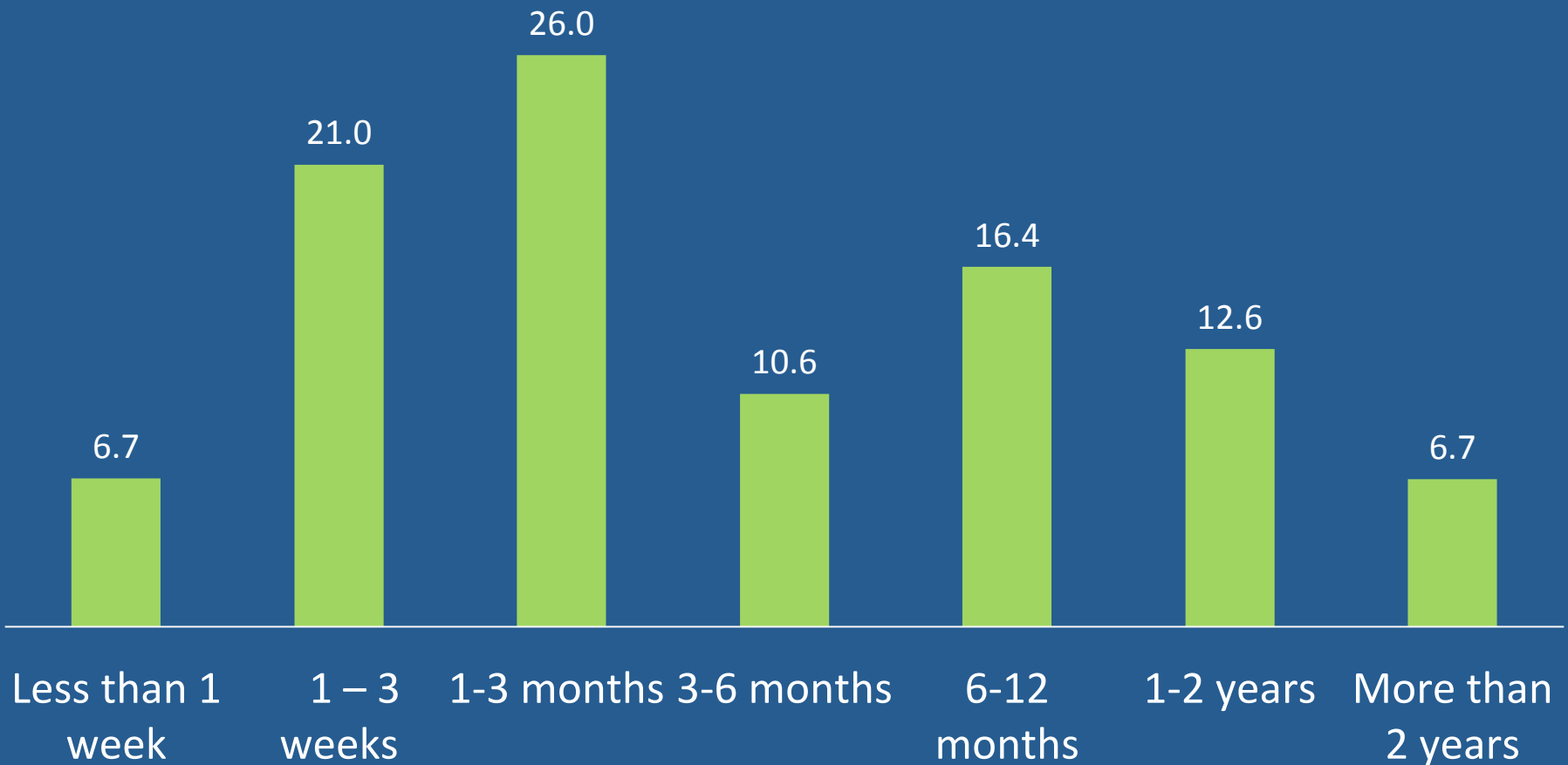
Turkey

Syria

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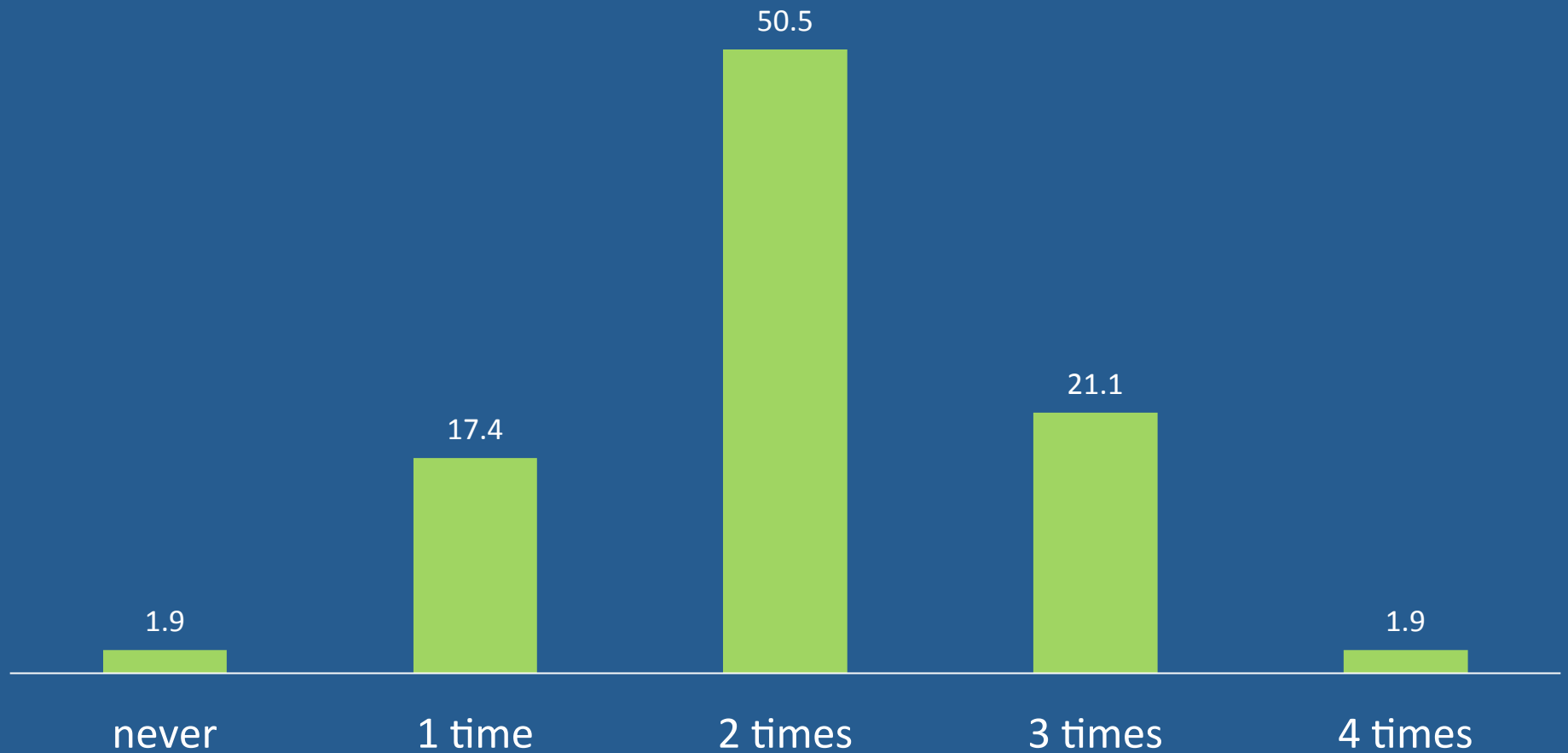
## Time in Current Location

*Q: How long have you been in the location where you are currently living/seeking shelter?*



## Displacement by Conflict

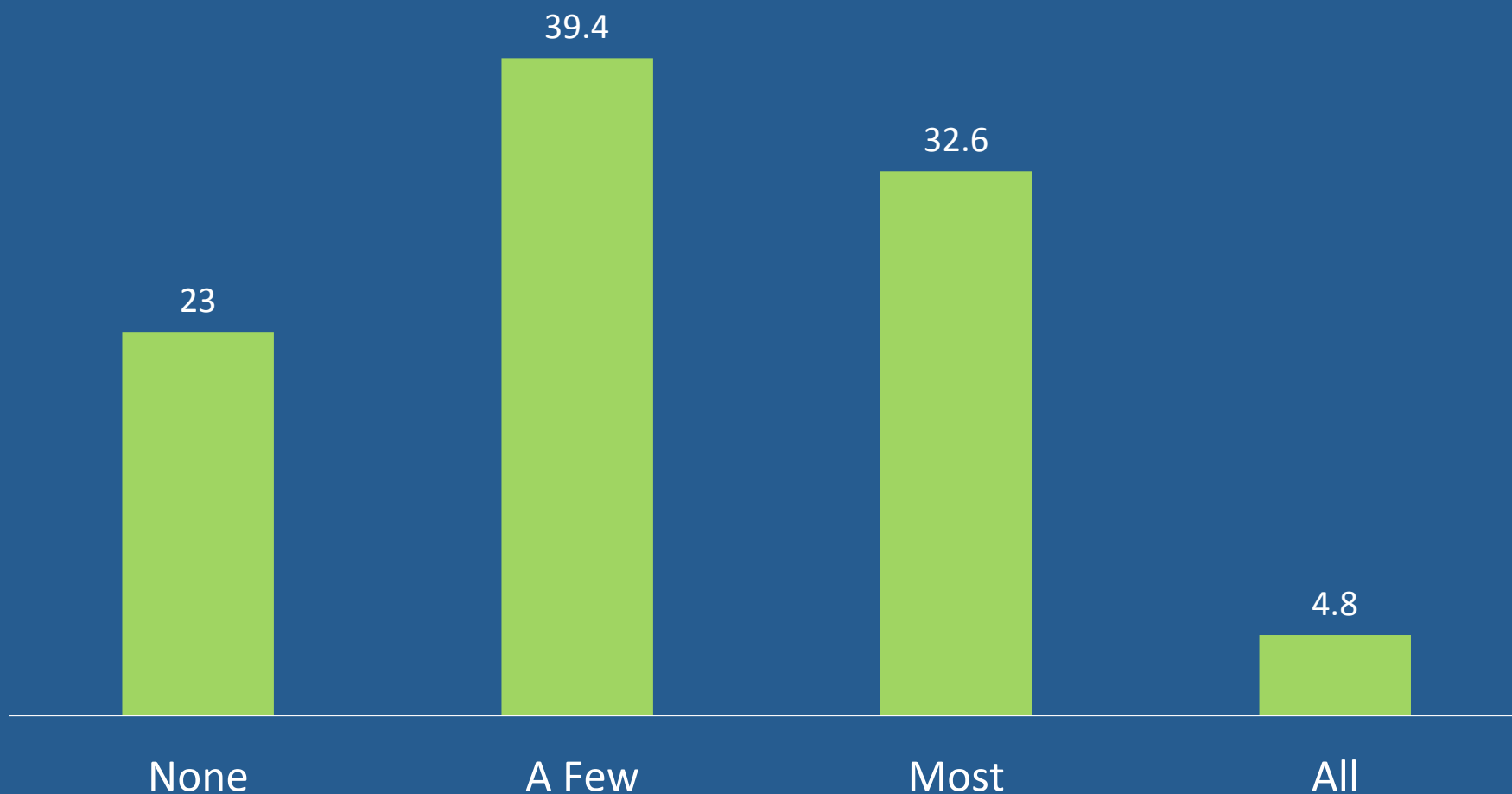
*Q: How many times have you moved since the war began?*



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## Displacement of Family Members

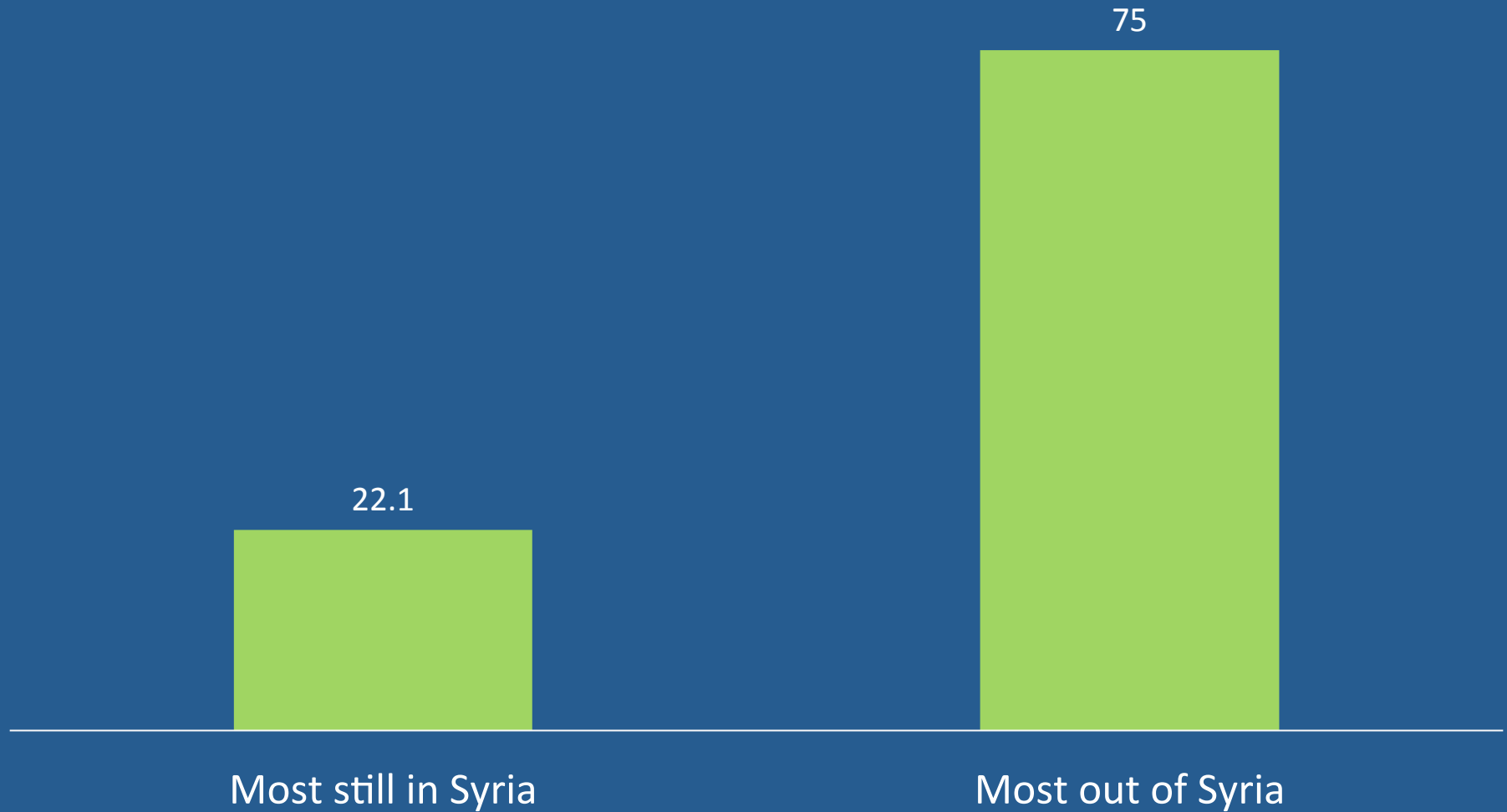
*Q: How many immediate family members are with you here?*



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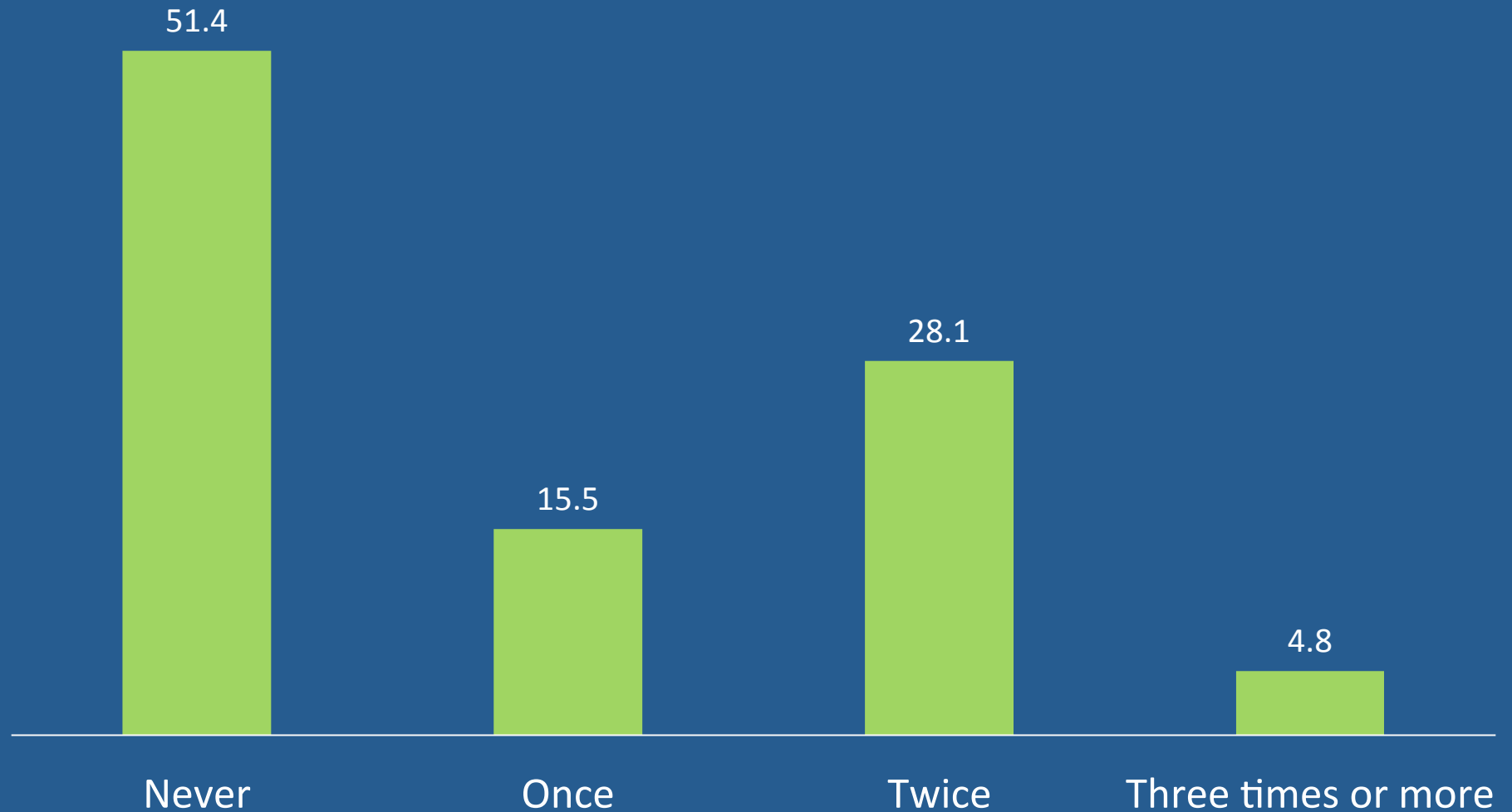
## Displacement of Family Members

Q: Where are most of your immediate family members now ?



## Cross-Border Migration

*Q: How often have you returned to Syria ?*



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## Reasons for leaving Syria

Q: Why did you decide to leave Syria?



## Reasons for leaving Syria

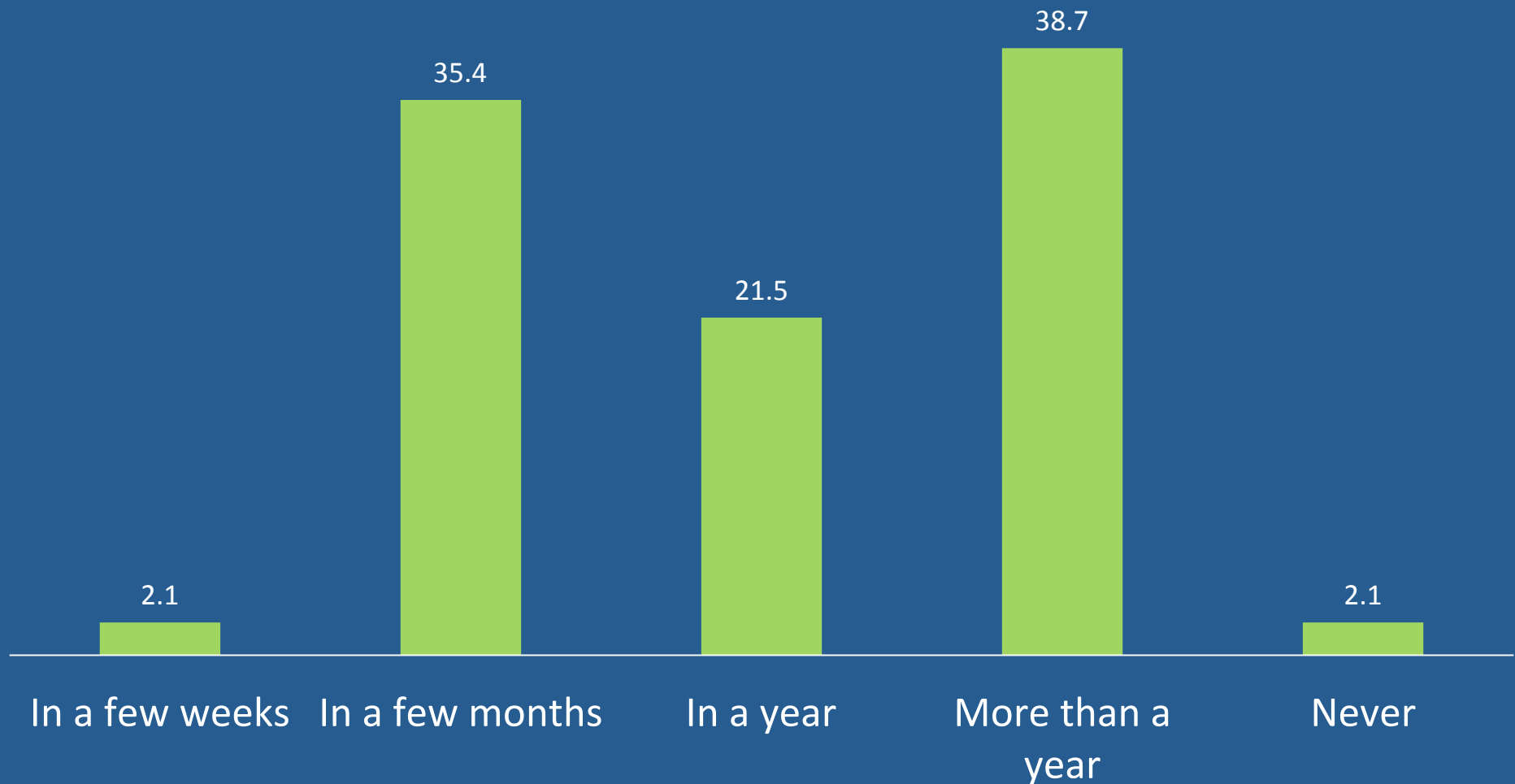
Q: And what was the most important reason for you to leave Syria?





## Likelihood of Return to Syria

*Q: Given the way things are now , when do you think you will be able to return to Syria ?*

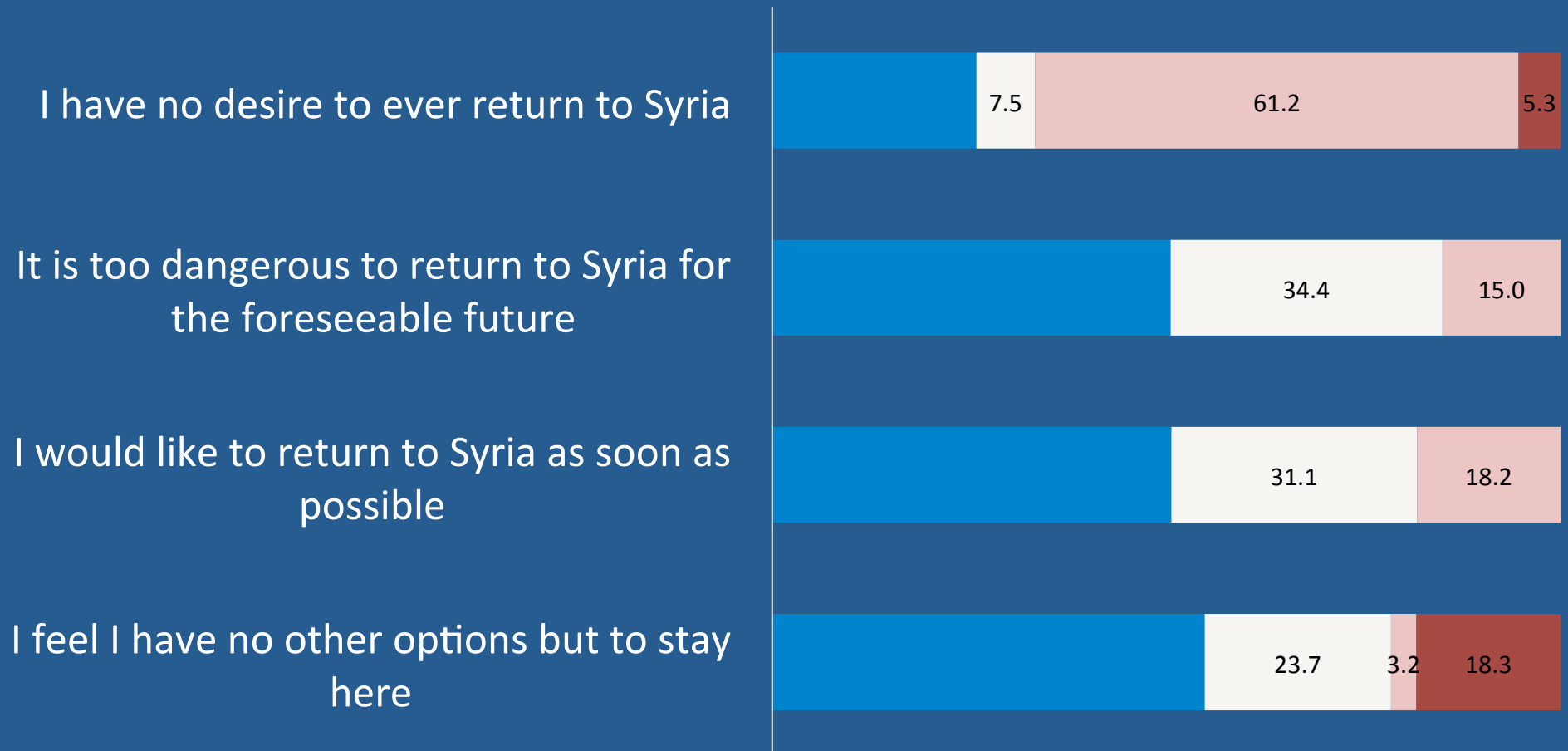


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## Likelihood of Returning to Syria

Q: Please indicate whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements

■ Strongly agree   ■ Somewhat Agree   ■ Somewhat disagree   ■ Strongly disagree



# Safety and Security

## Assessment of Current Conditions

Q: Compared to 12 months ago, do you think conditions here have:

■ Got a little worse   ■ Stayed the same   ■ Got a little better   ■ Got a lot better

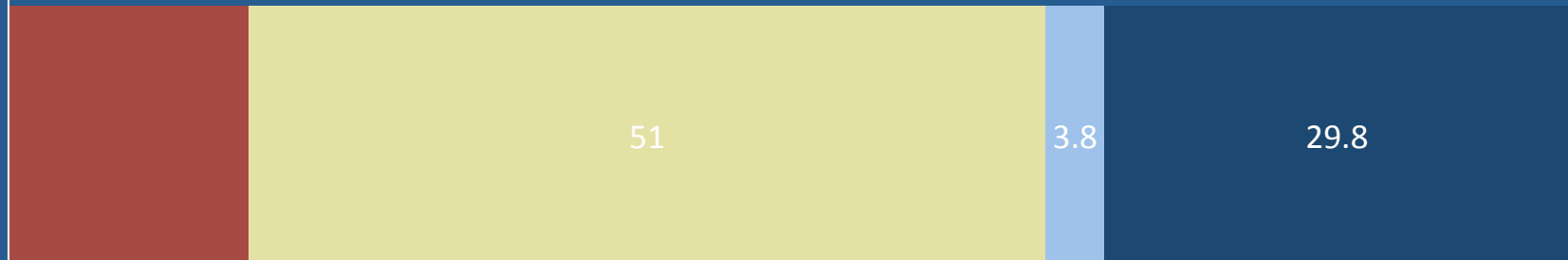
Ex-Fighters



## Expectations for the Future

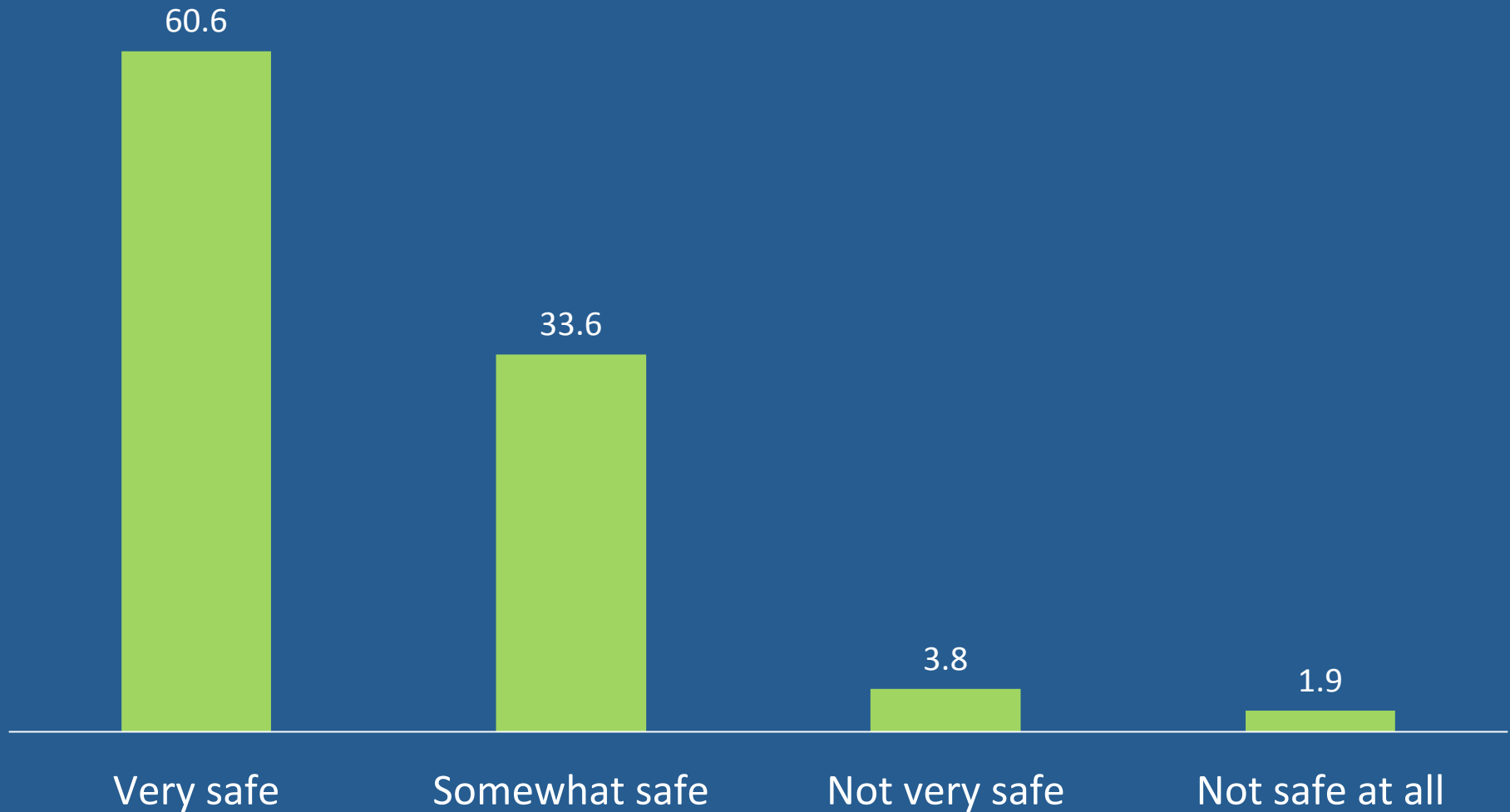
Q: And over the next 12 months, do you expect conditions here to ... ?

Ex-Fighters



## Safety in Current Location

*Q: How safe do you feel in your current location today?*

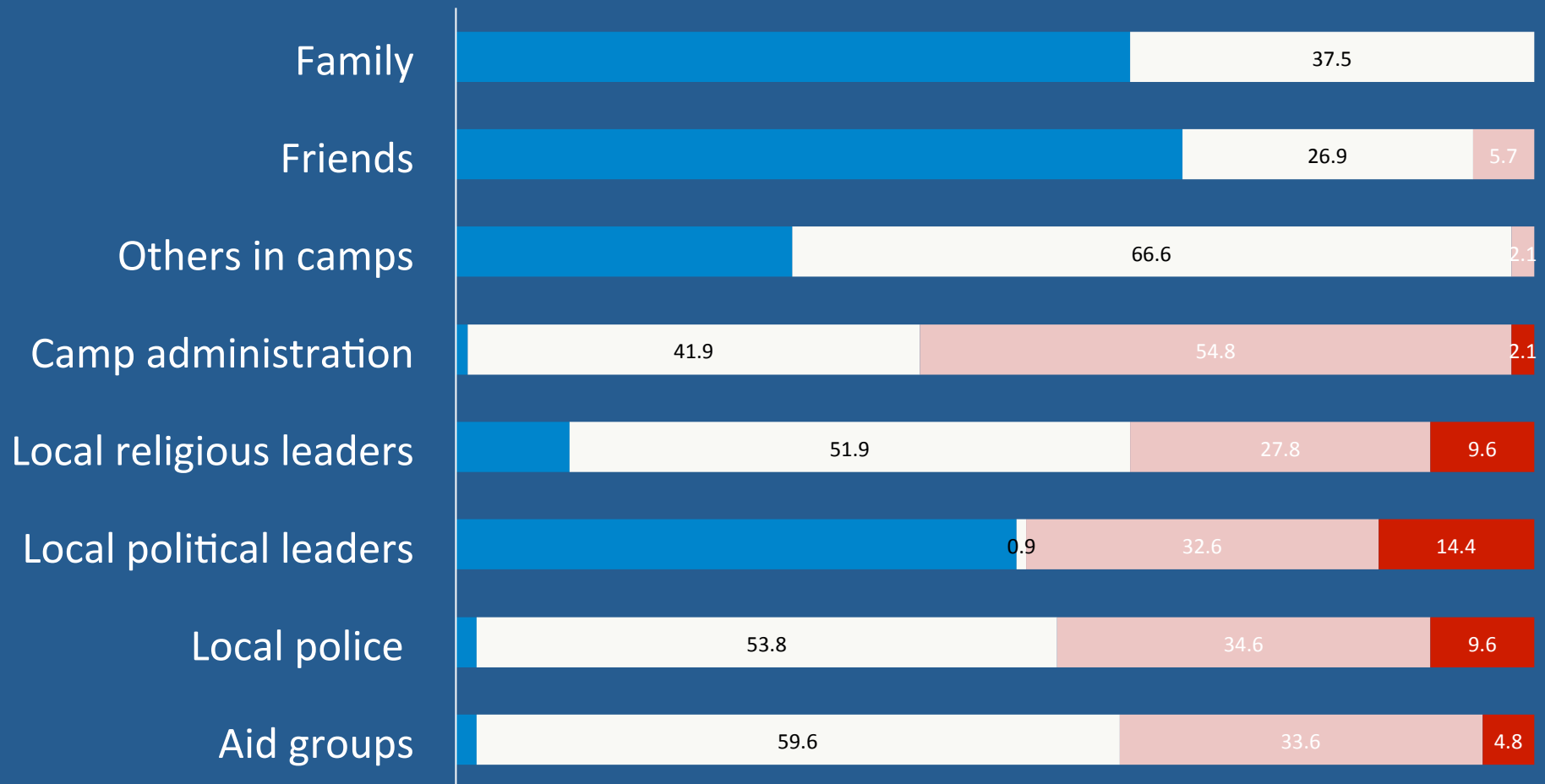


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## Who keeps you safe?

Q: How much confidence do you have in the following to help keep you safe?

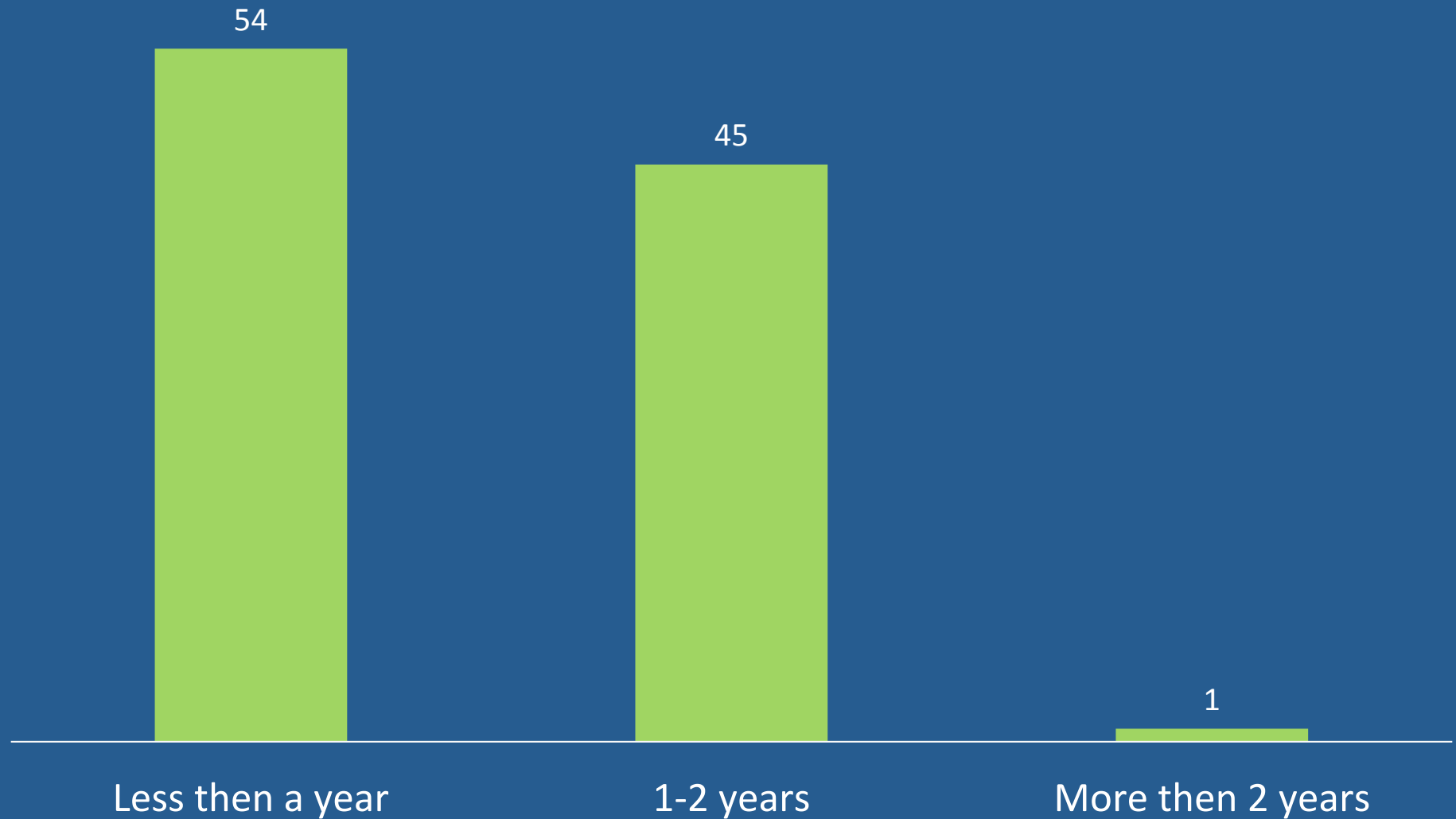
■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat Agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Strongly disagree



# Rebel Recruitment

## Duration in Fighting Group

*Q: How long did you fight with this (your last) group?*



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## Reasons Given for Joining Rebel Groups

*Q: If you have fought why did you join (select all that apply)?*



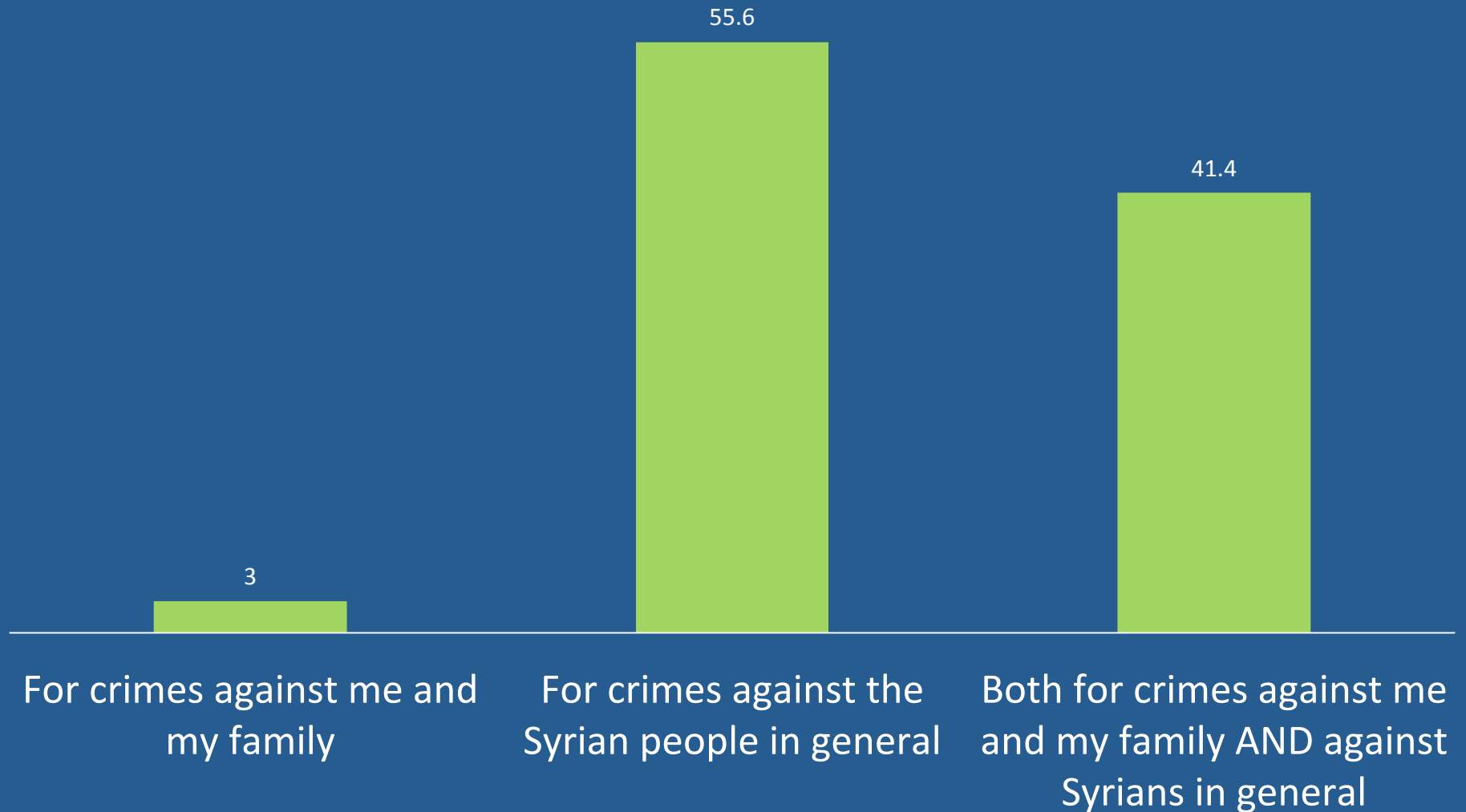
## Main Reason Given for Joining Rebel Groups

Q: What was the most important reason? (%)



## Personal or Collective Grievances?

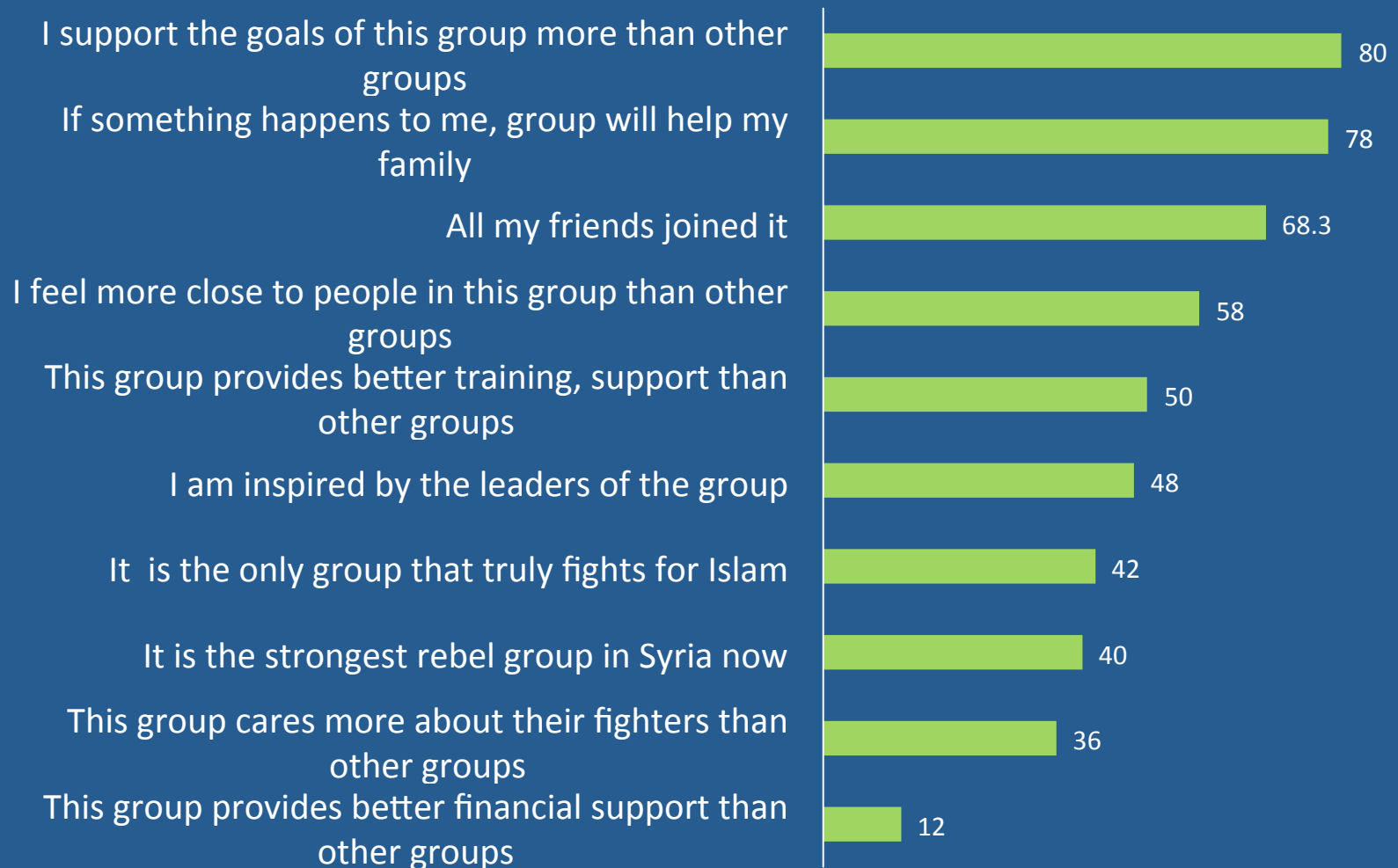
*Q: If you joined to take revenge against Assad, is it because he and his forces committed crimes against you and your family, or is it for crimes more generally against the Syrian people or both?*



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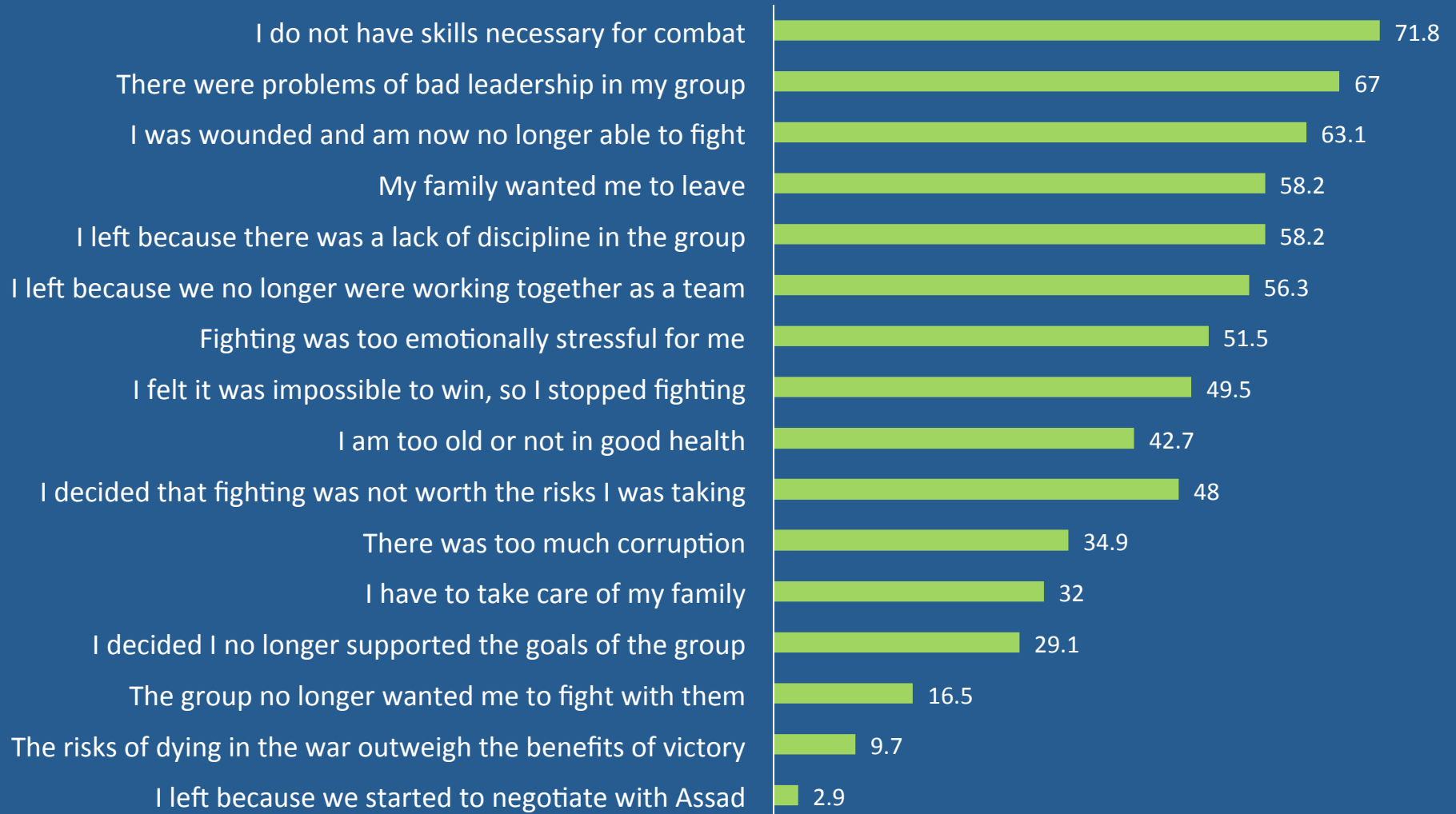
## Reasons Given for not Joining Other Groups

*Q: Why did you join this group as opposed to some other group? (select all that apply)*



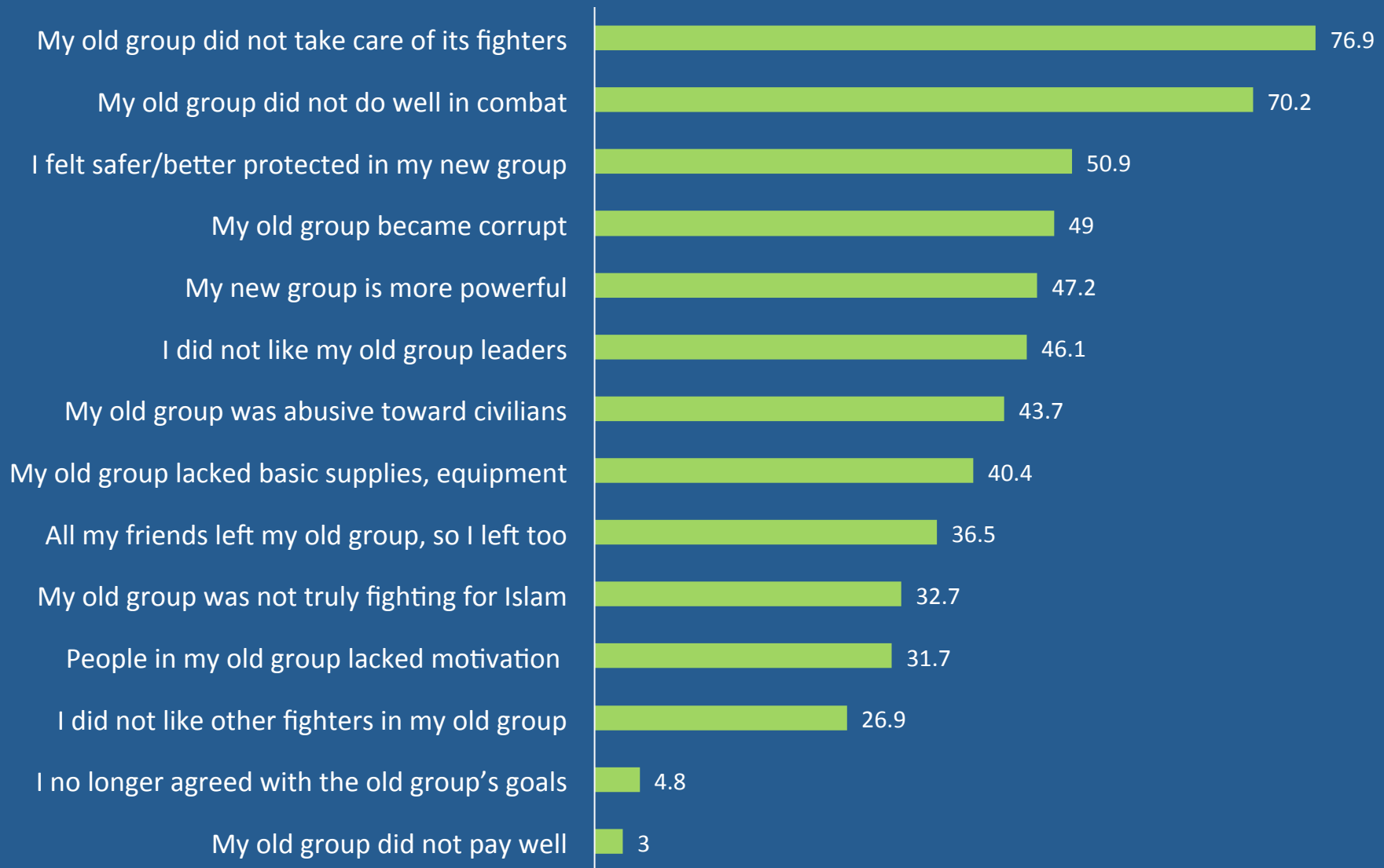
## Reasons Given for Leaving Rebel Groups

*Q: Why are you no longer fighting? (select all that apply, % selecting each option)*



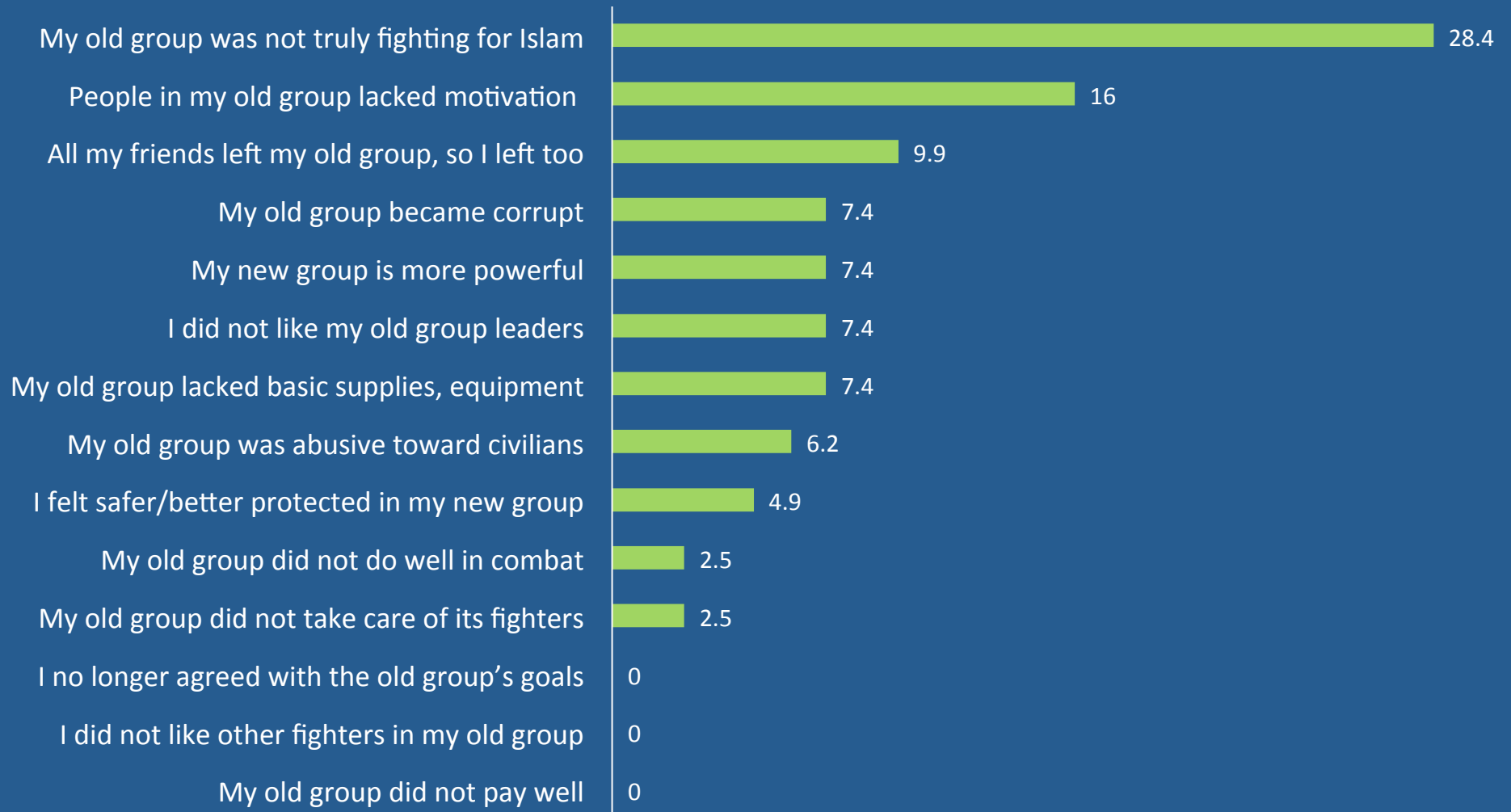
## Reasons Given for Switching from One Rebel Group to Another

*Q: If you served in more than 1 group, why did you switch?*



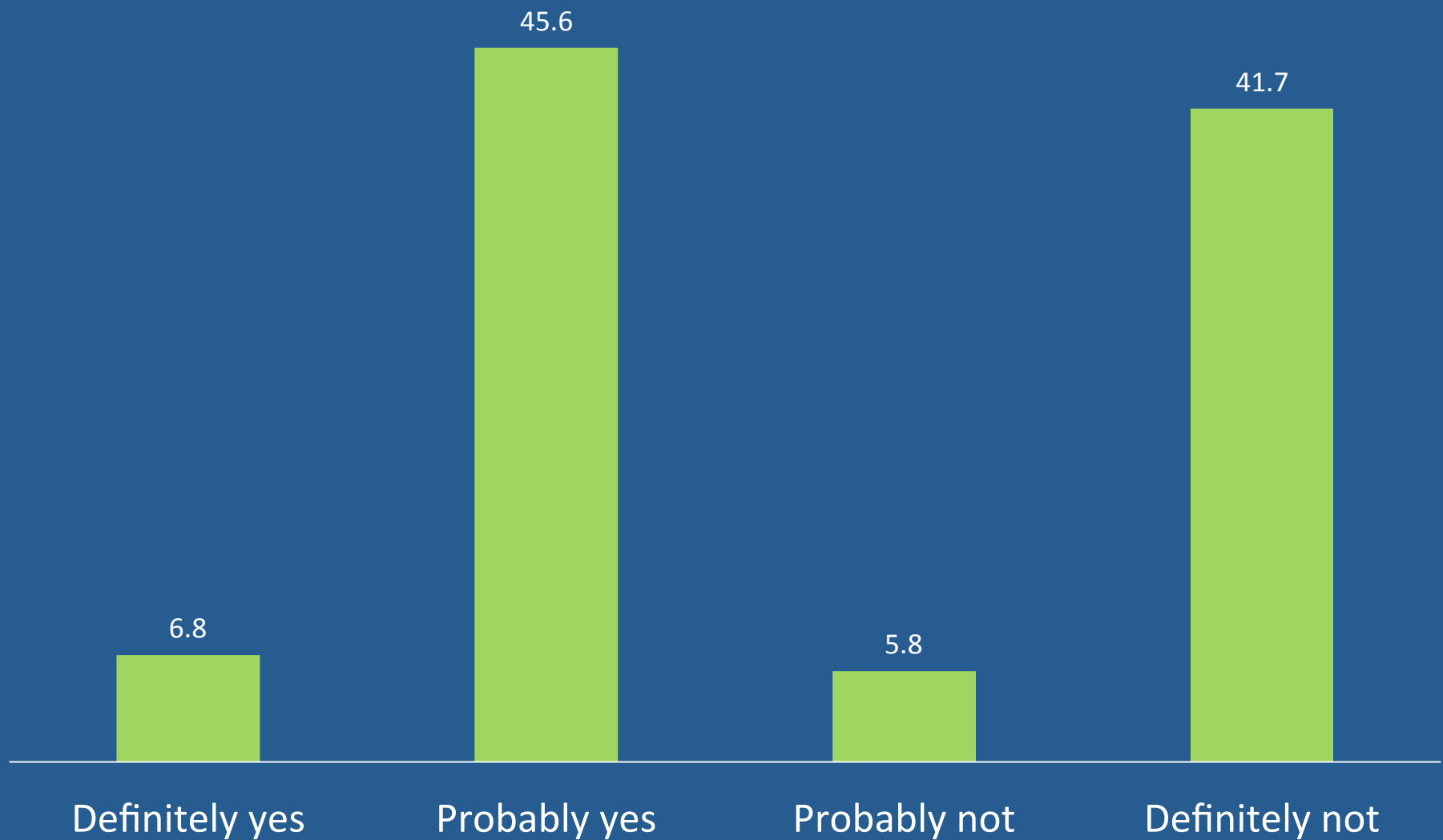
## Most Important Reason for Switching Groups

*Q: And what was the most important reason or why you switched groups?*



## Likelihood of Returning to Combat

*Q: Do you think you will ever fight again ?*



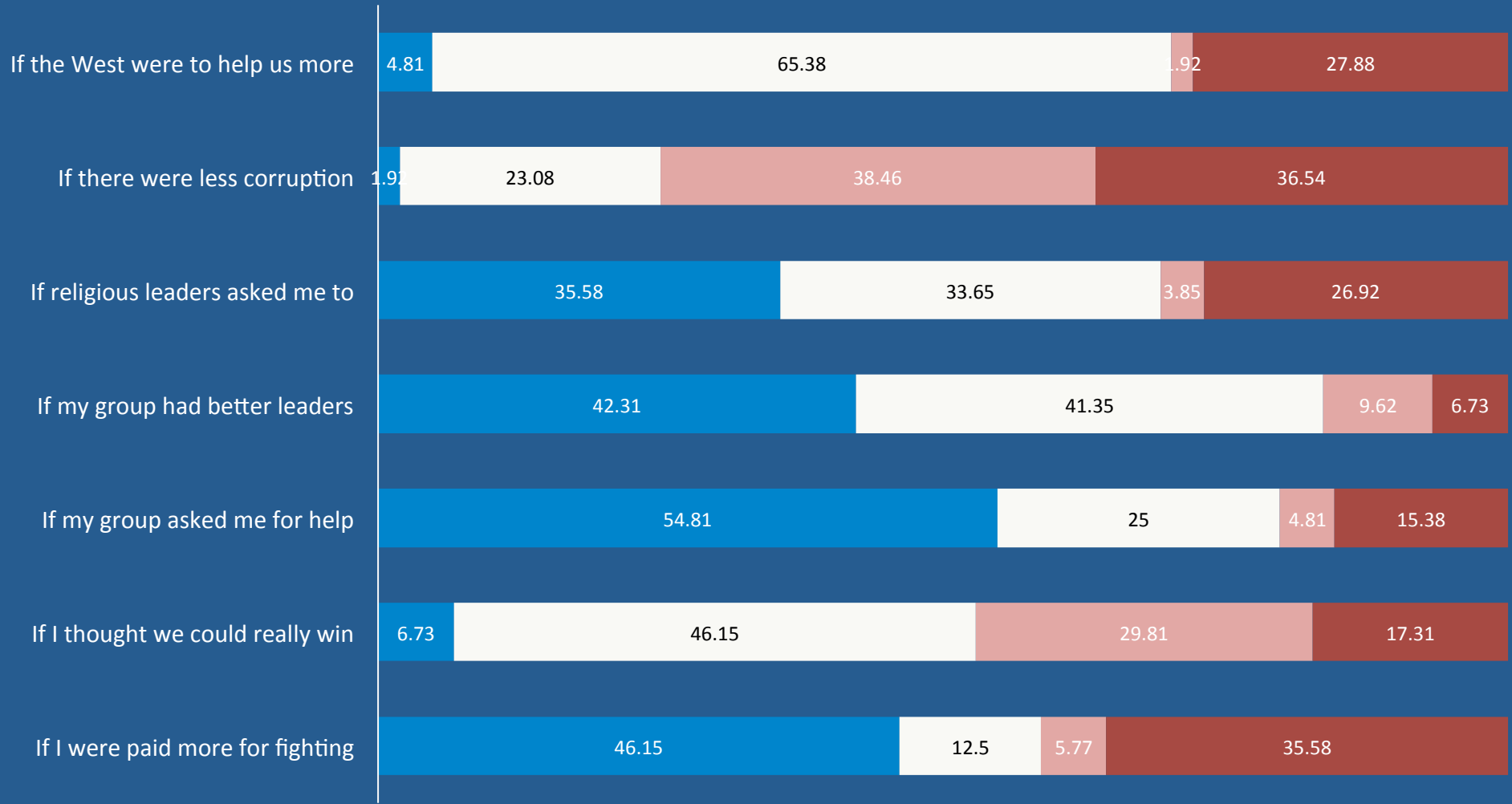
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# What Would Make You Fight Again?

*Q: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the following would make you want to fight again?*

■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat Agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Strongly disagree

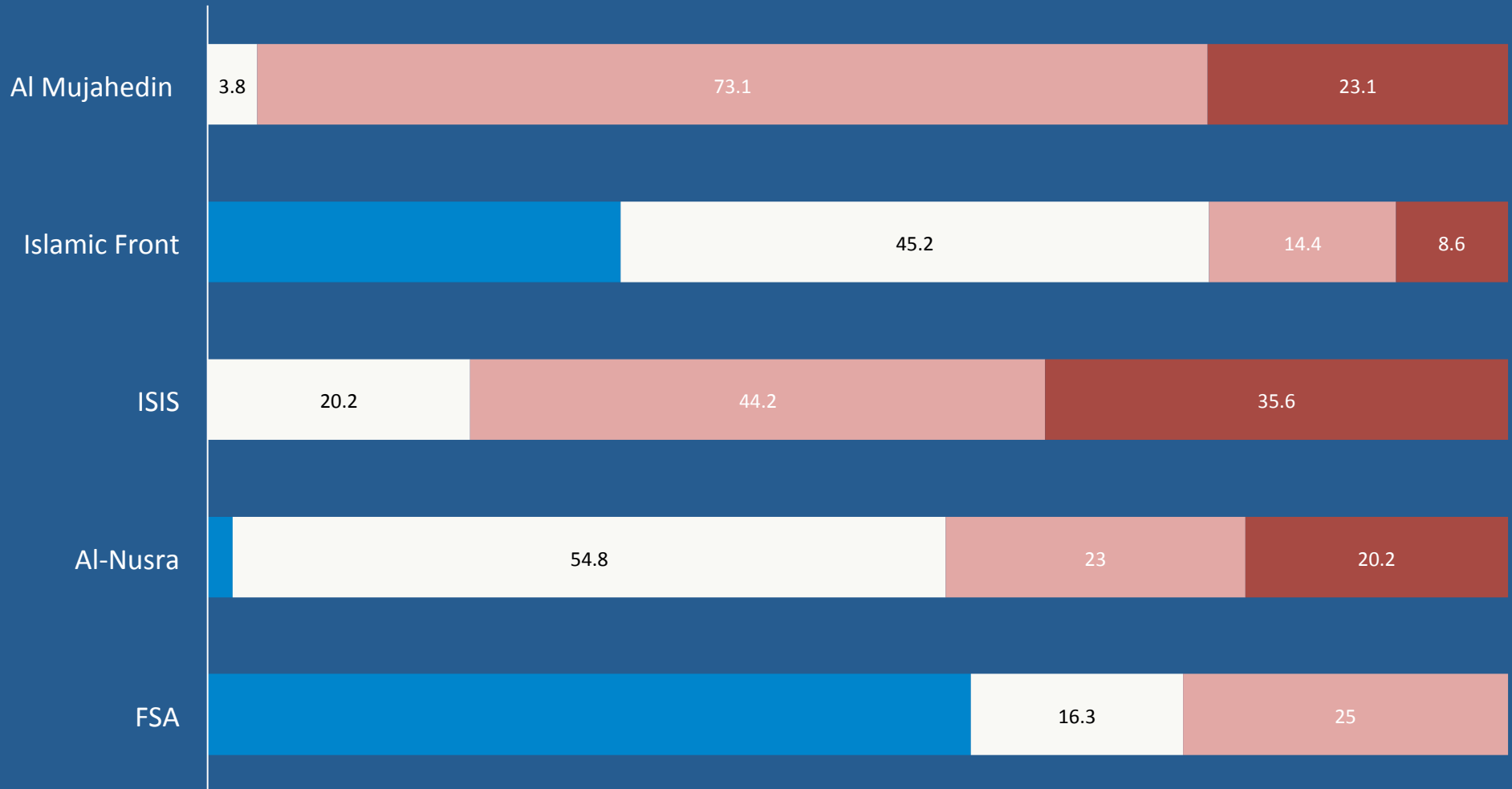


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## Support for Different Rebel Groups

*Q: If given the opportunity, to what extent would you be willing to fight for any of the following?*

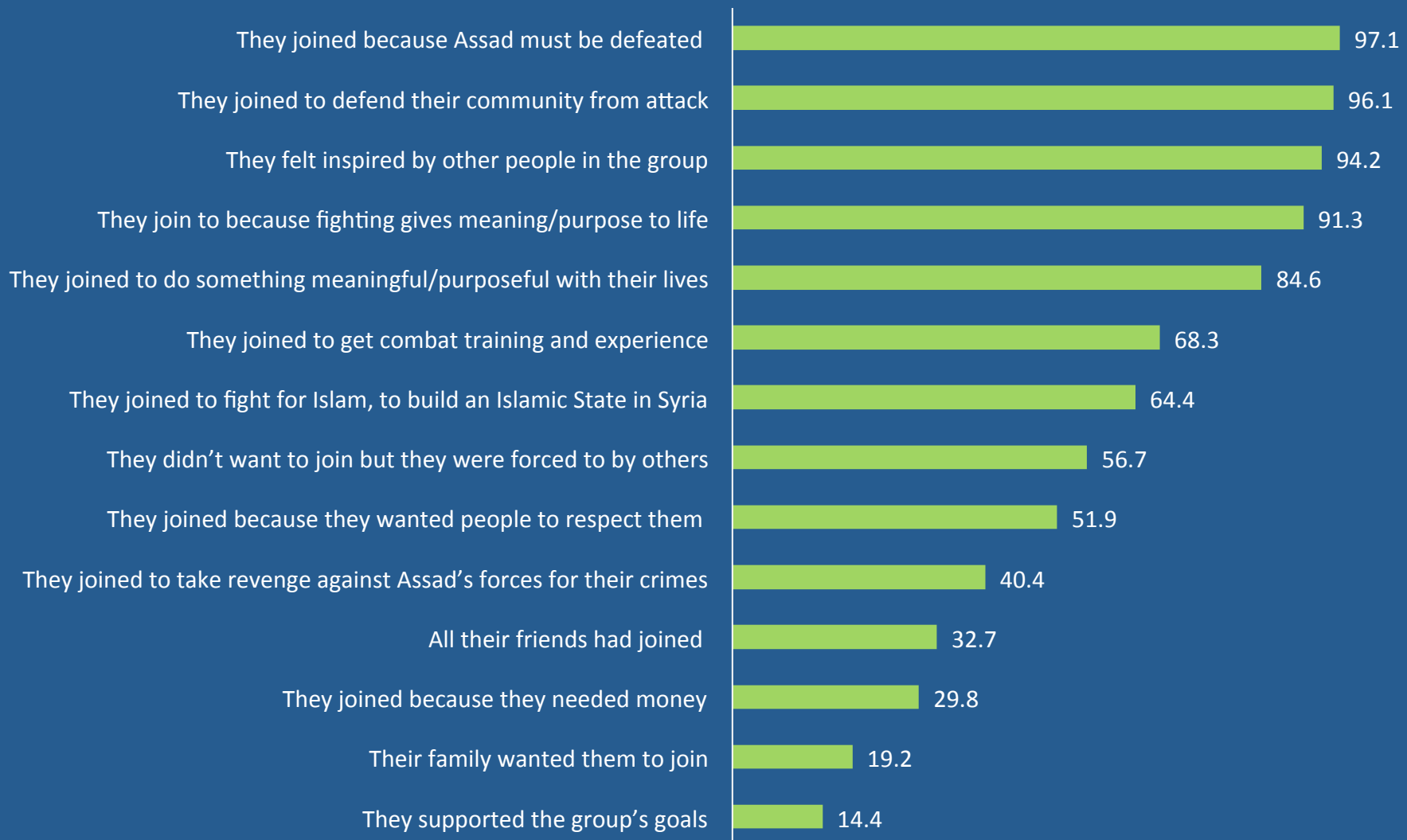
■ Definitely yes   ■ Probably yes   ■ Probably not   ■ Definitely not



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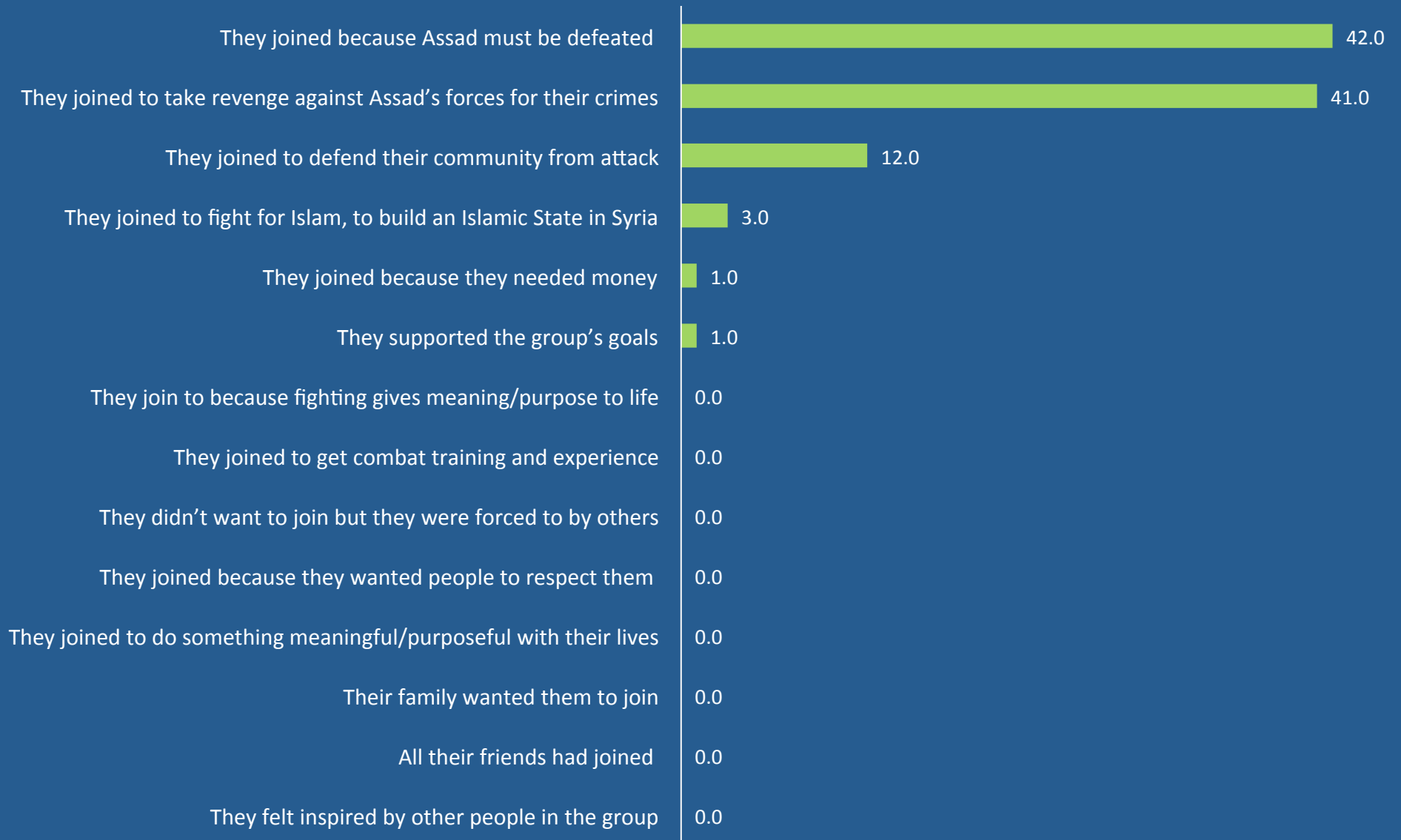
## Reasons Given For Why Others Joined Your Group (Islamists)

Q: Why do you think most people join your group ? (select all that apply, % selecting each option)



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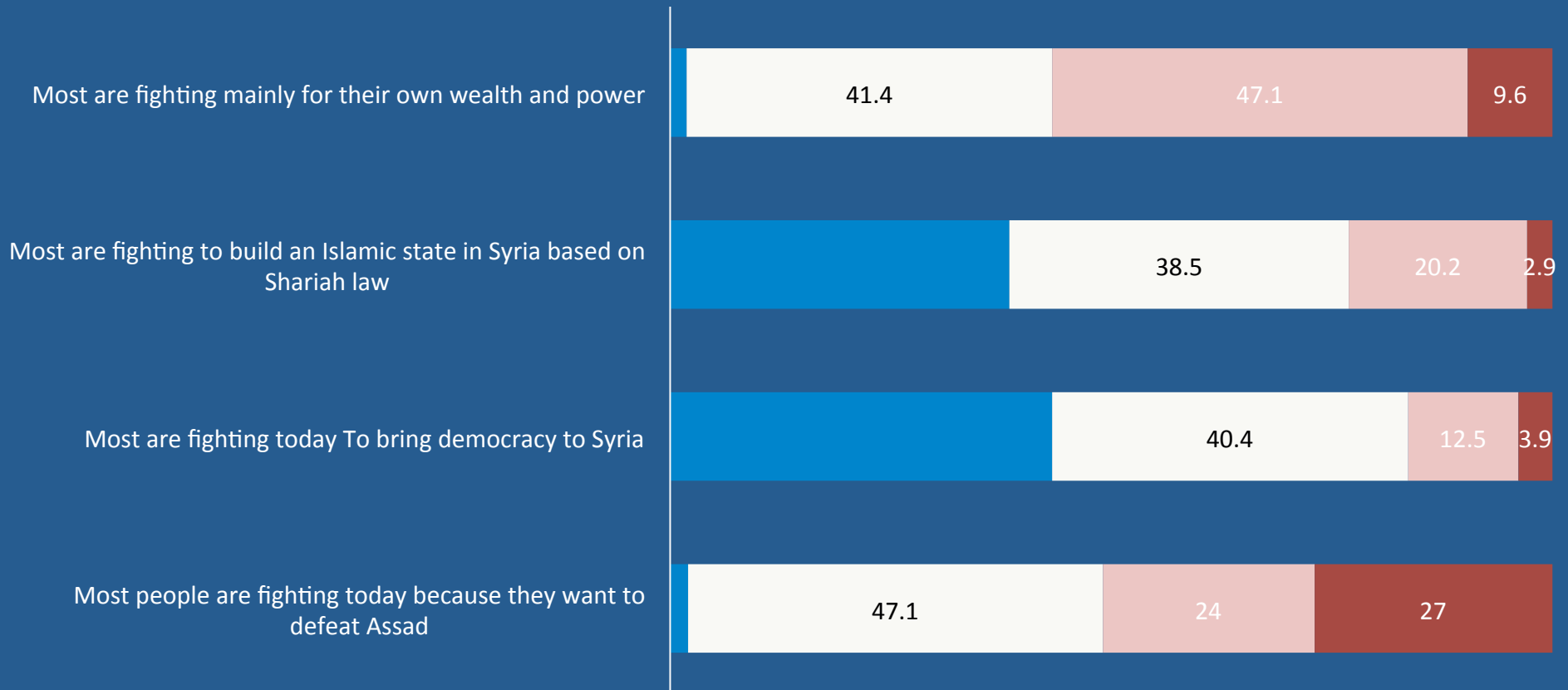
## Main Reason Given For Why Others Joined Your Group Q: *And what was the most important reason ? (%)*



## Beliefs about Why Most Are Fighting in Syria Today

Q: To what extent do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements

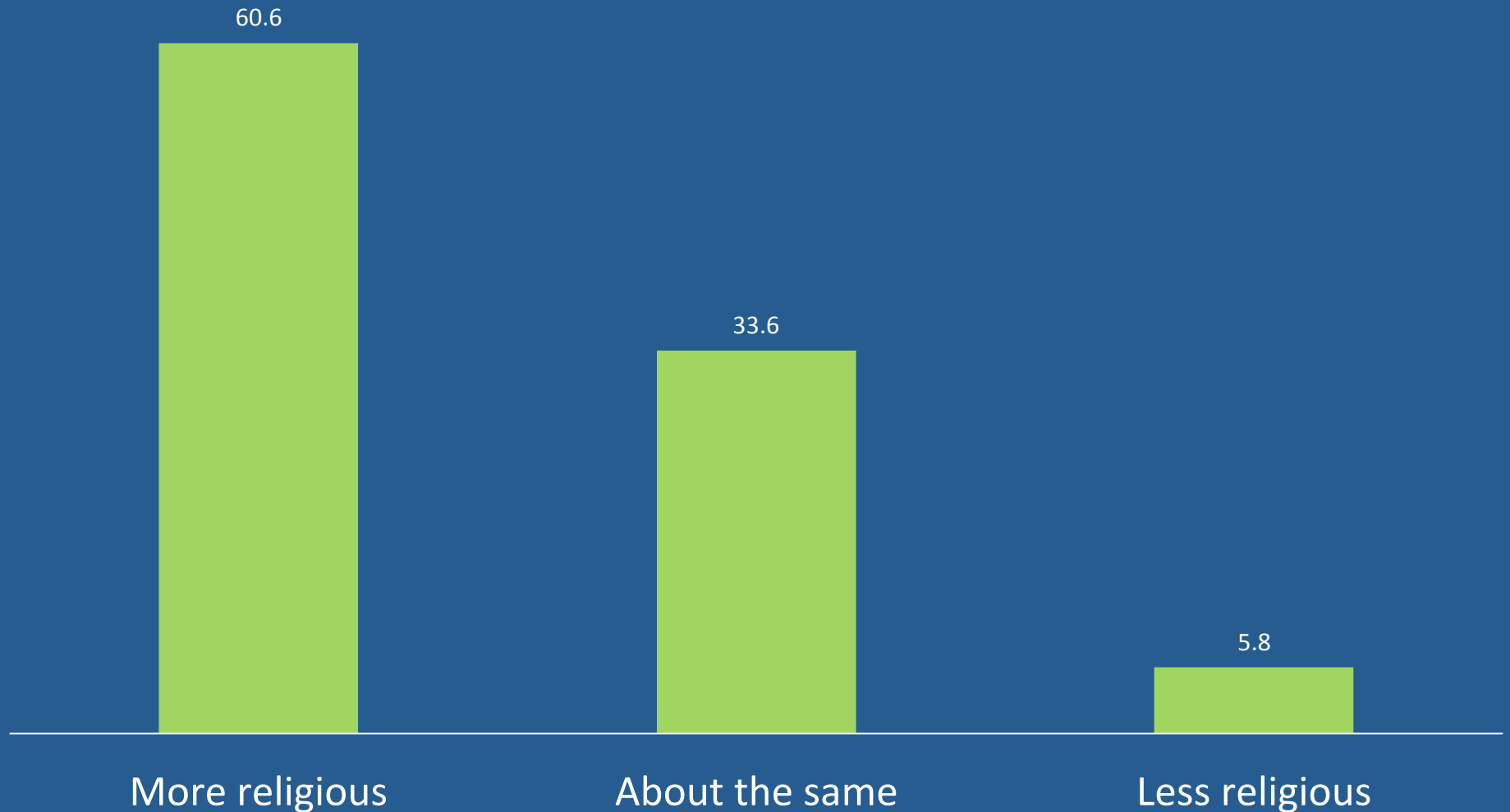
■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat Agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Strongly disagree



Religion

## Change in Religiosity Since the Beginning of the War

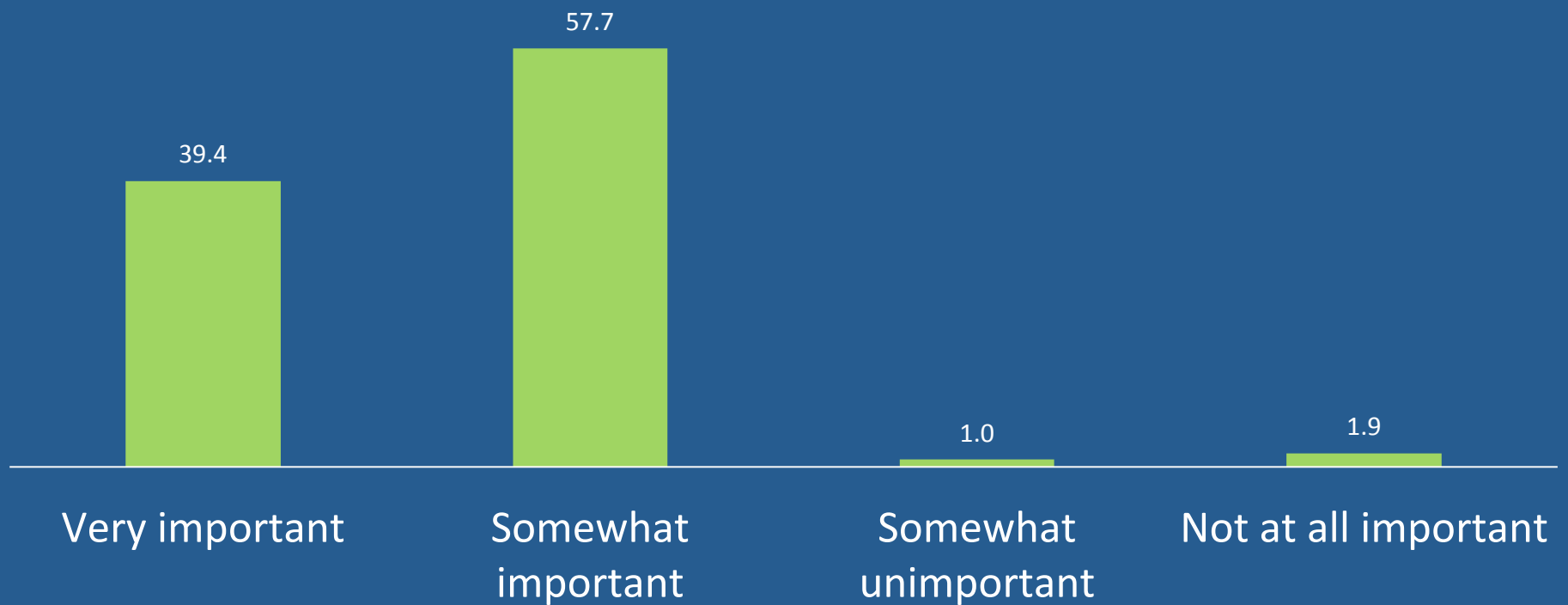
*Q: Since the war started do you think you have become more religious, less religious, or are about the same ?*



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## Importance of Religion

*Q: In general, how important are your religious beliefs to you in your daily life ?*

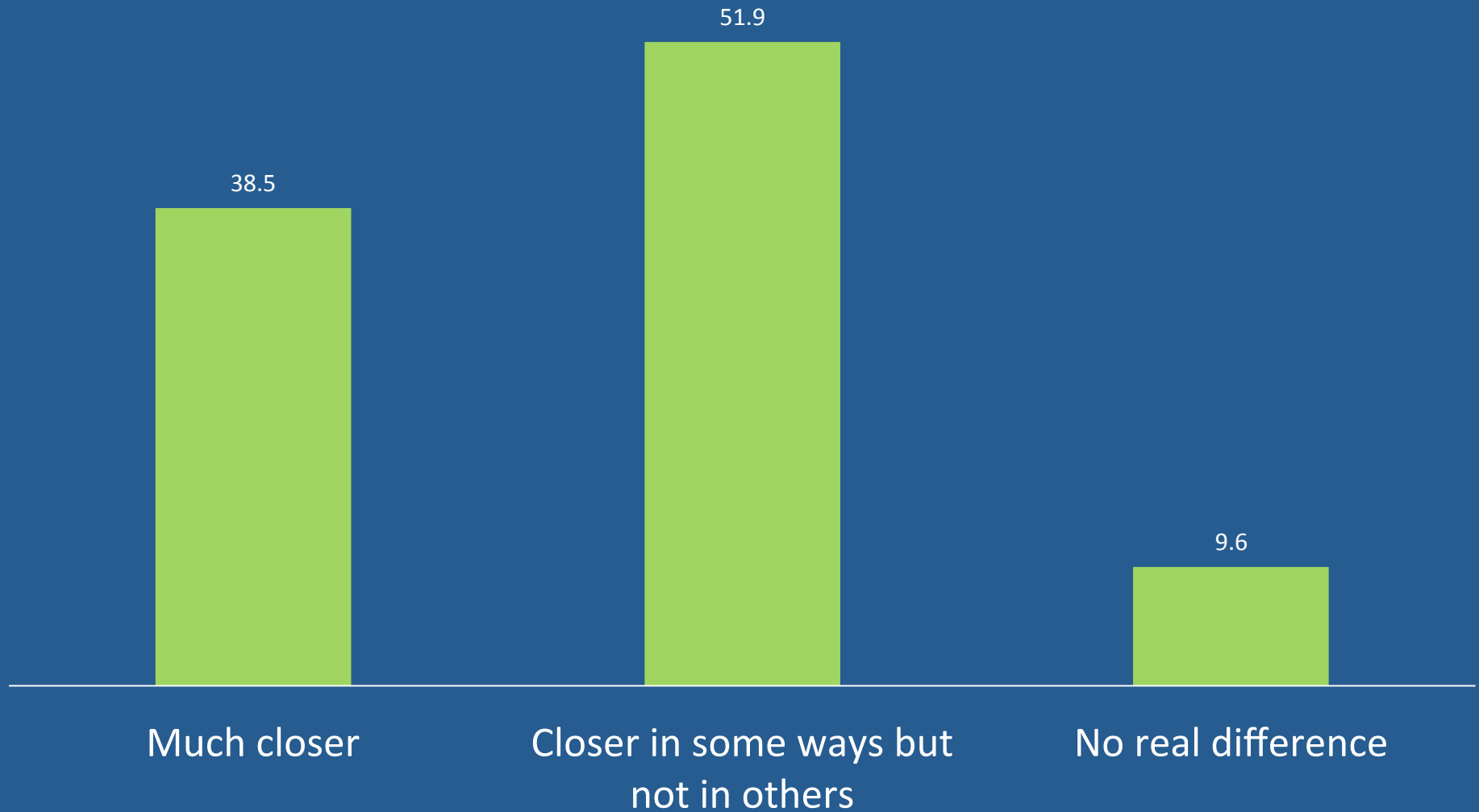


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## Saliency of Sectarian Divisions

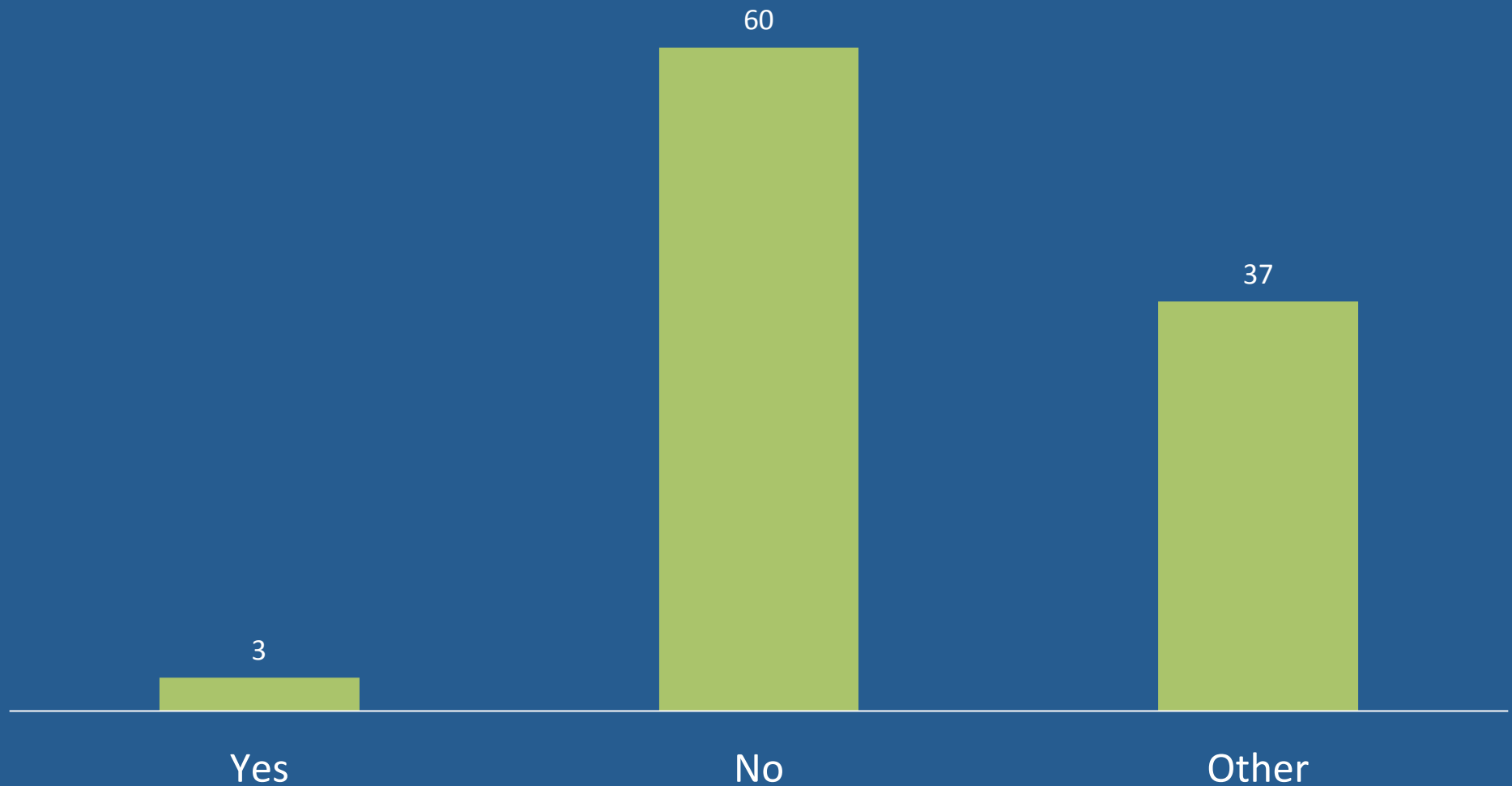
*Q: In general, how close do you feel to people of your religion compared to other people in Syria ?*



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## Jihad and war in Syria

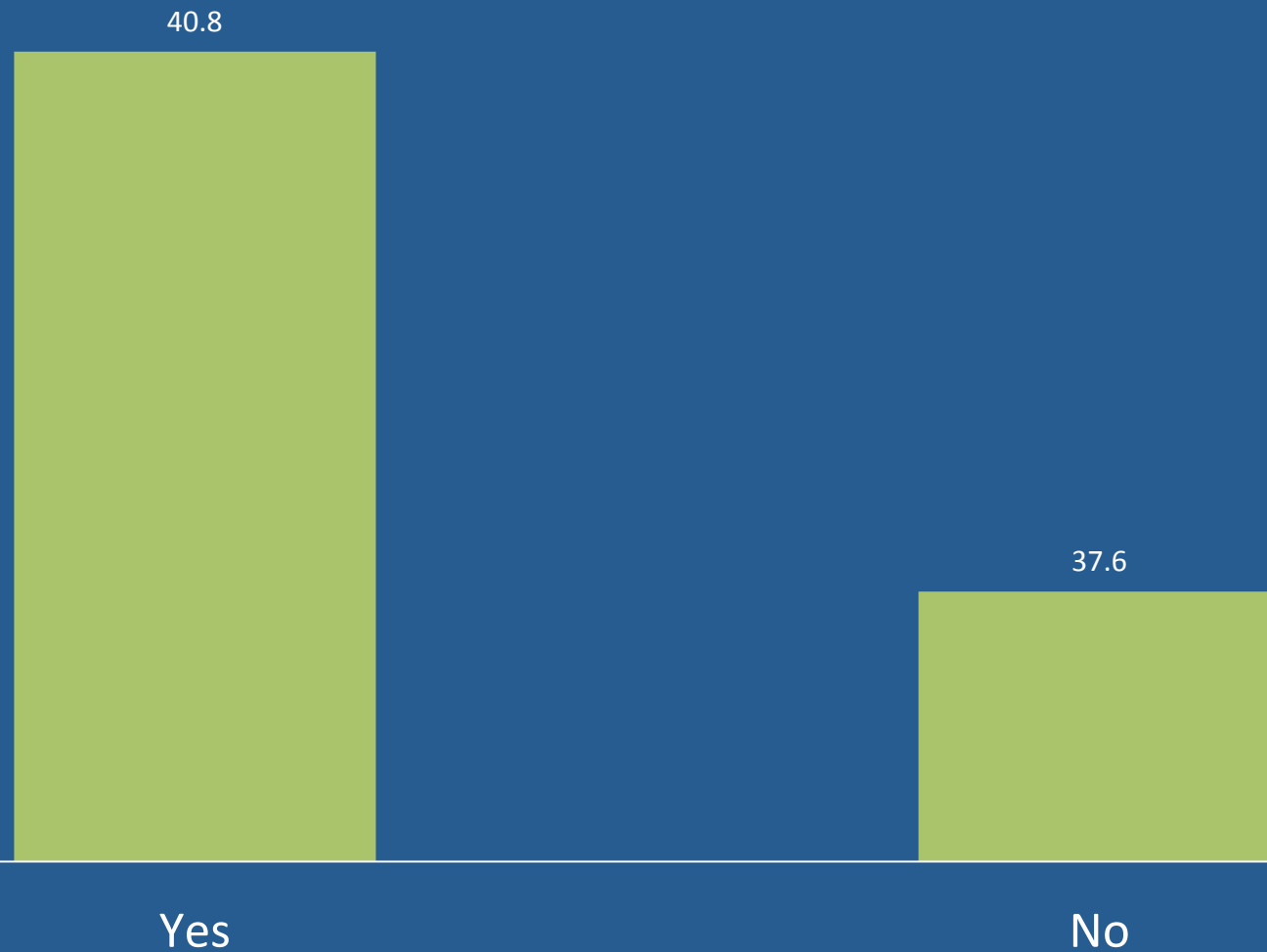
*Q: Do you believe that the war in Syria today is a Jihad according to Islamic law ?*



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## Jihad Means Revenge

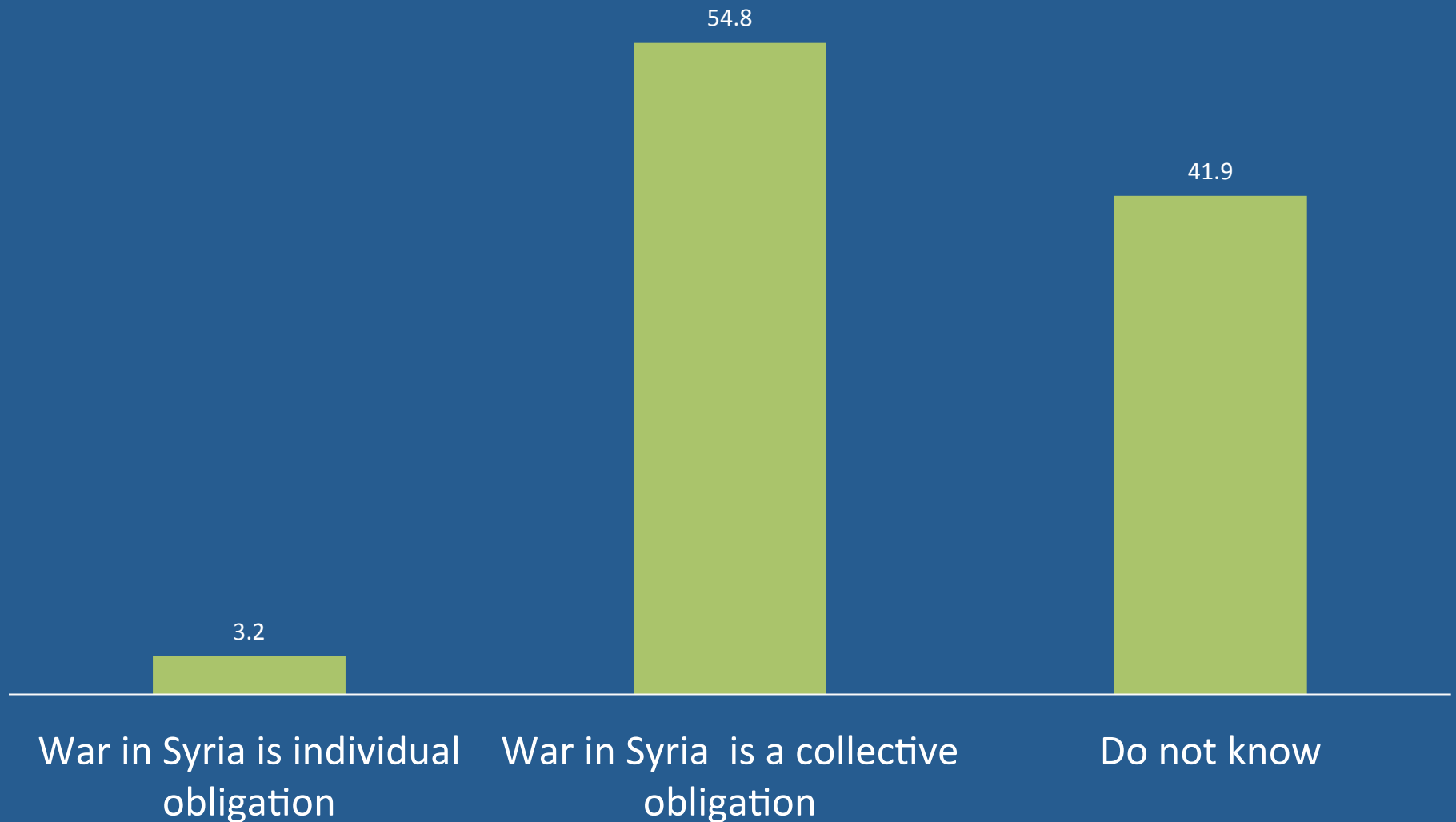
*Q: do you believe that Jihad is in some ways about taking revenge?*



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## Who has to fight in Syria

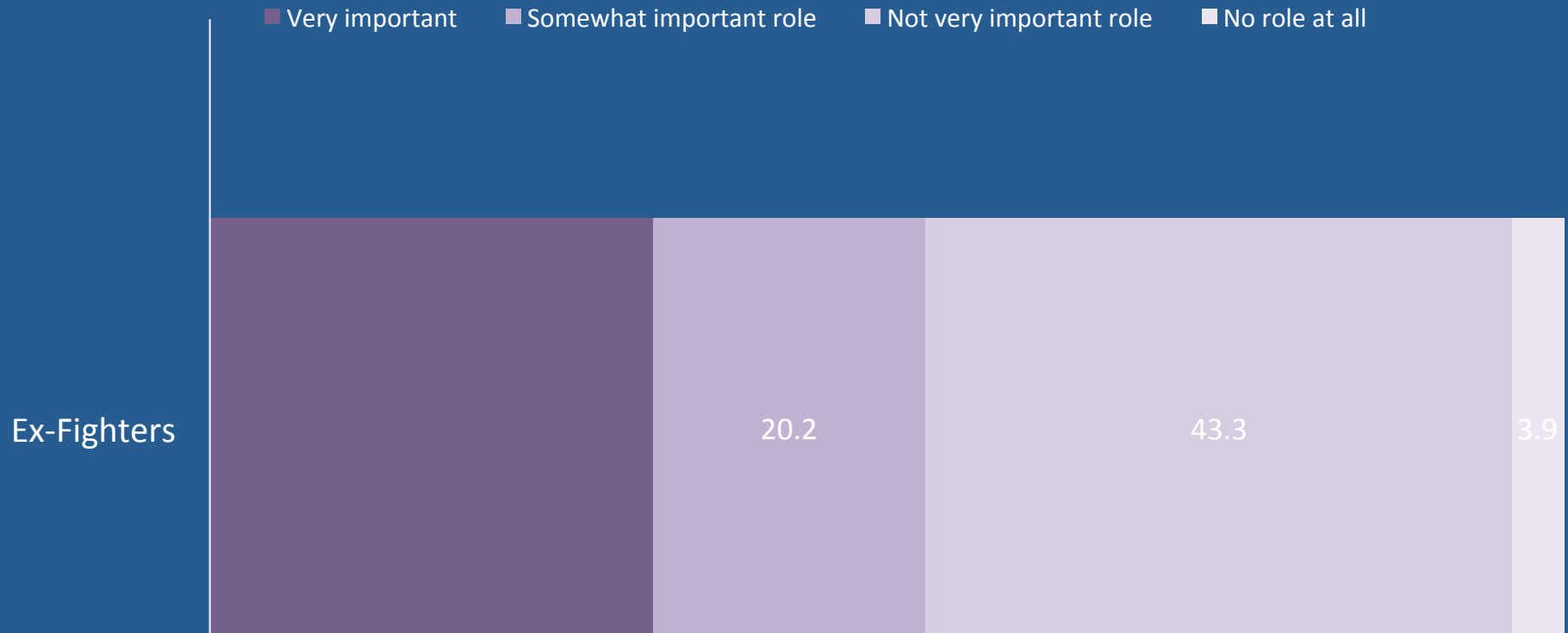
*Q: Is the Syrian Jihad fard ayin (an individual obligation) or fard kifayya (a collective obligation)?*



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## Role of Religion in Syria's Future Politics

*Q: In your opinion, what role should religion play in Syrian politics in the future ?*

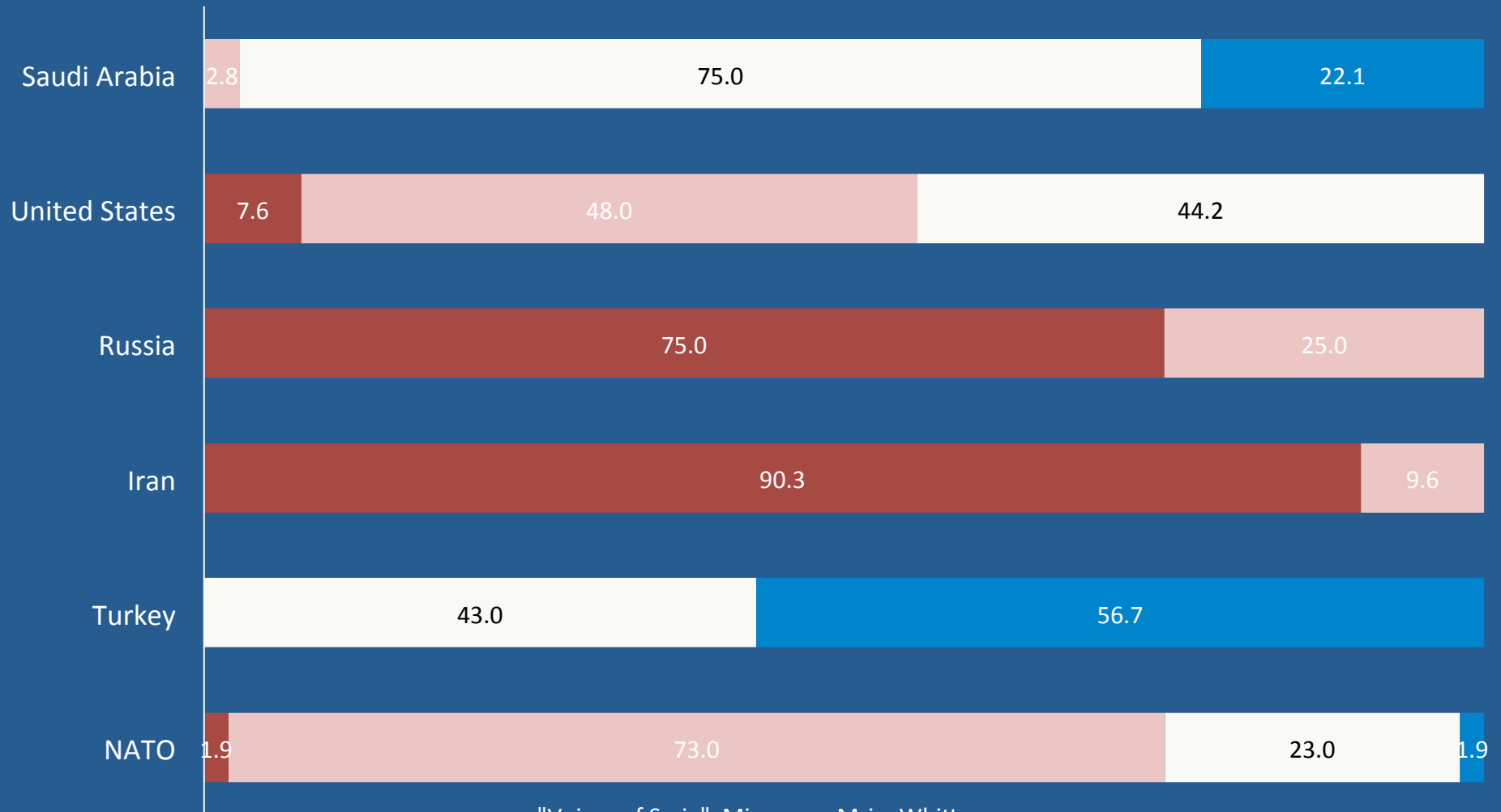


# Political views

## Views of Other Countries

*Q: Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable view of the following:*

Very Unfavorable    Somewhat unfavorable    Somewhat favorable    Very Favorable

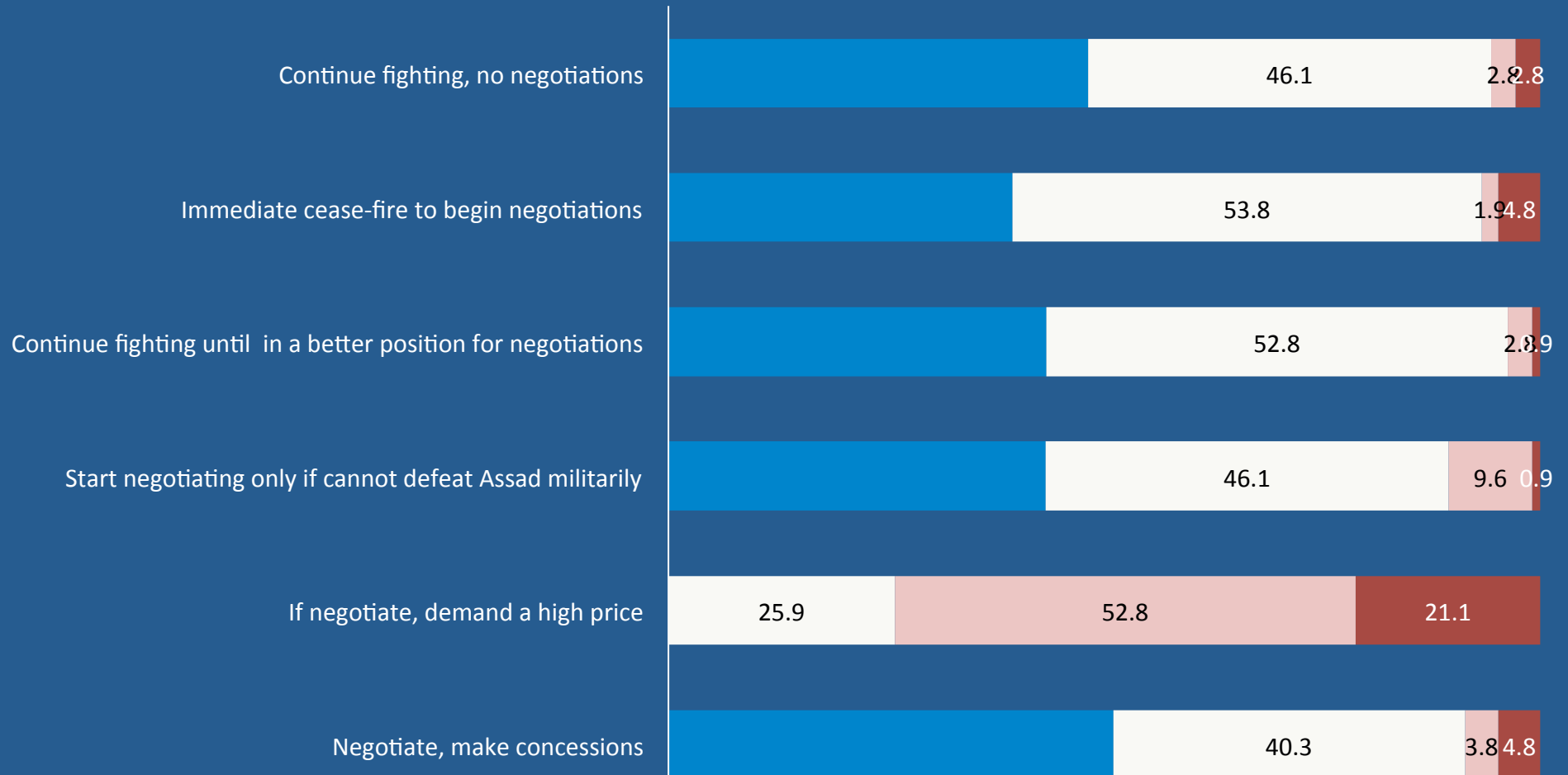


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## Views on Negotiations with Assad

Q: Tell me whether you strongly support, somewhat support, or strongly oppose the following (%)

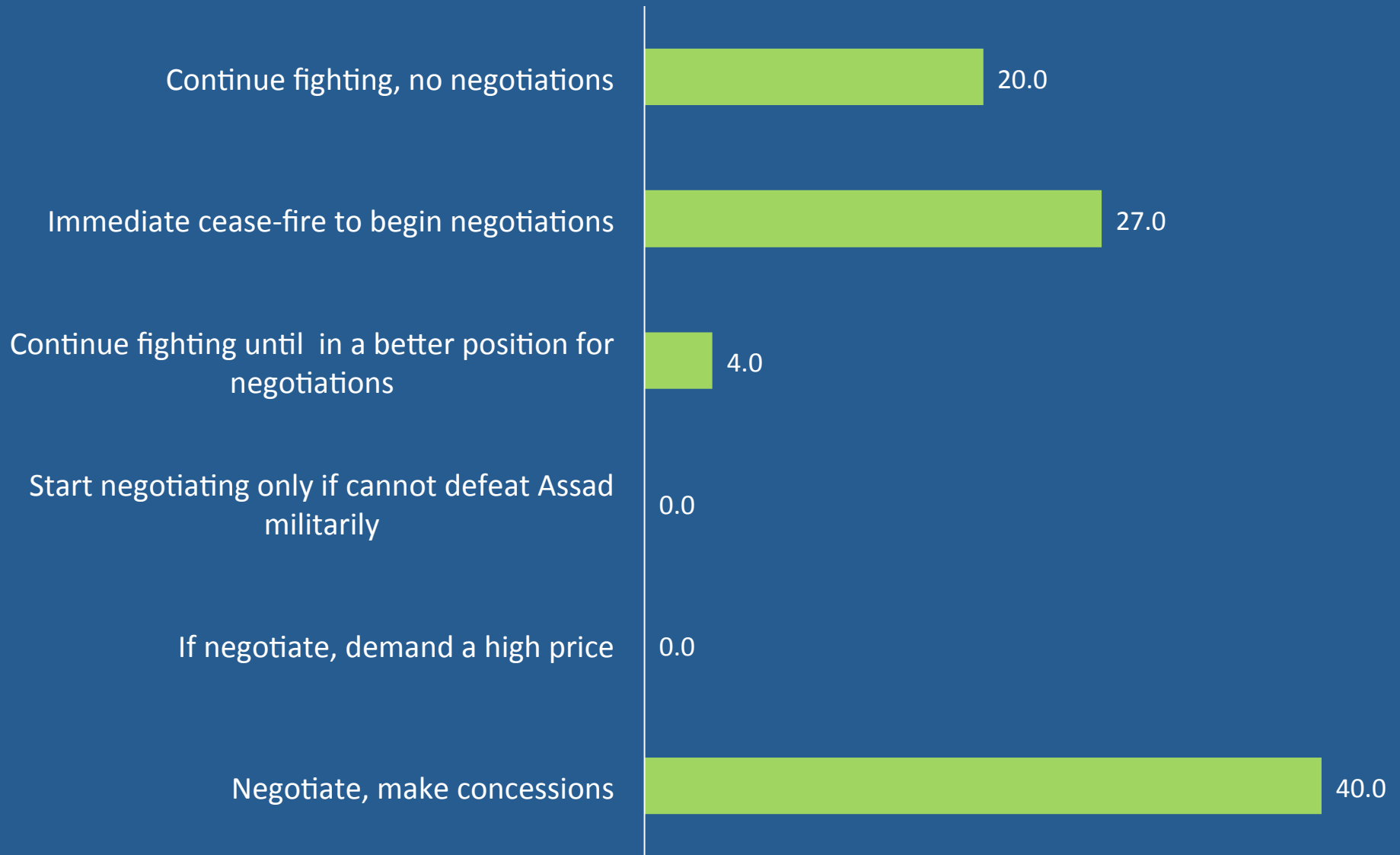
■ Strongly support   
 ■ somewhat support   
 ■ somewhat oppose   
 ■ Strongly oppose





## Views on Negotiations with Assad

*Q: Which of these options do you support the most*



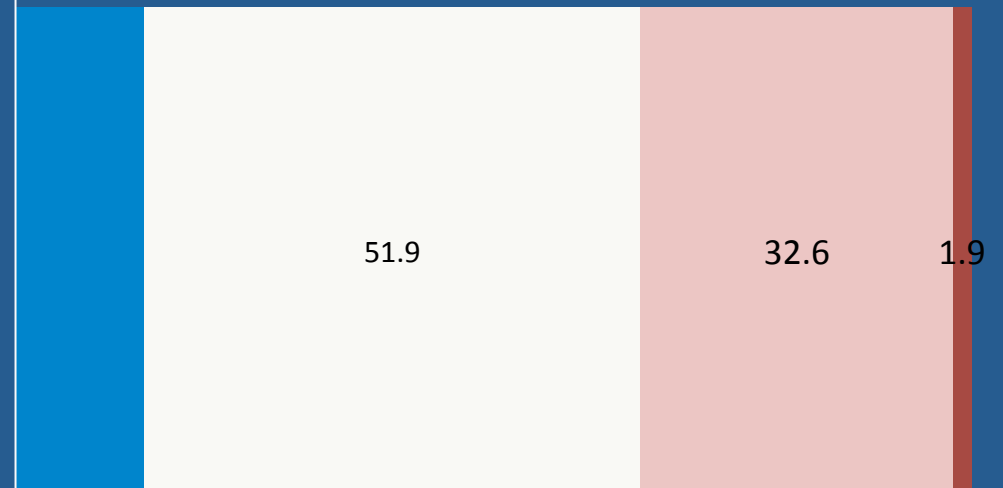
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## Negotiation as Betrayal to the Cause of Fighting

*Q: To what extent do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements*

■ Strongly support   ■ somewhat support   ■ somewhat oppose   ■ Strongly oppose

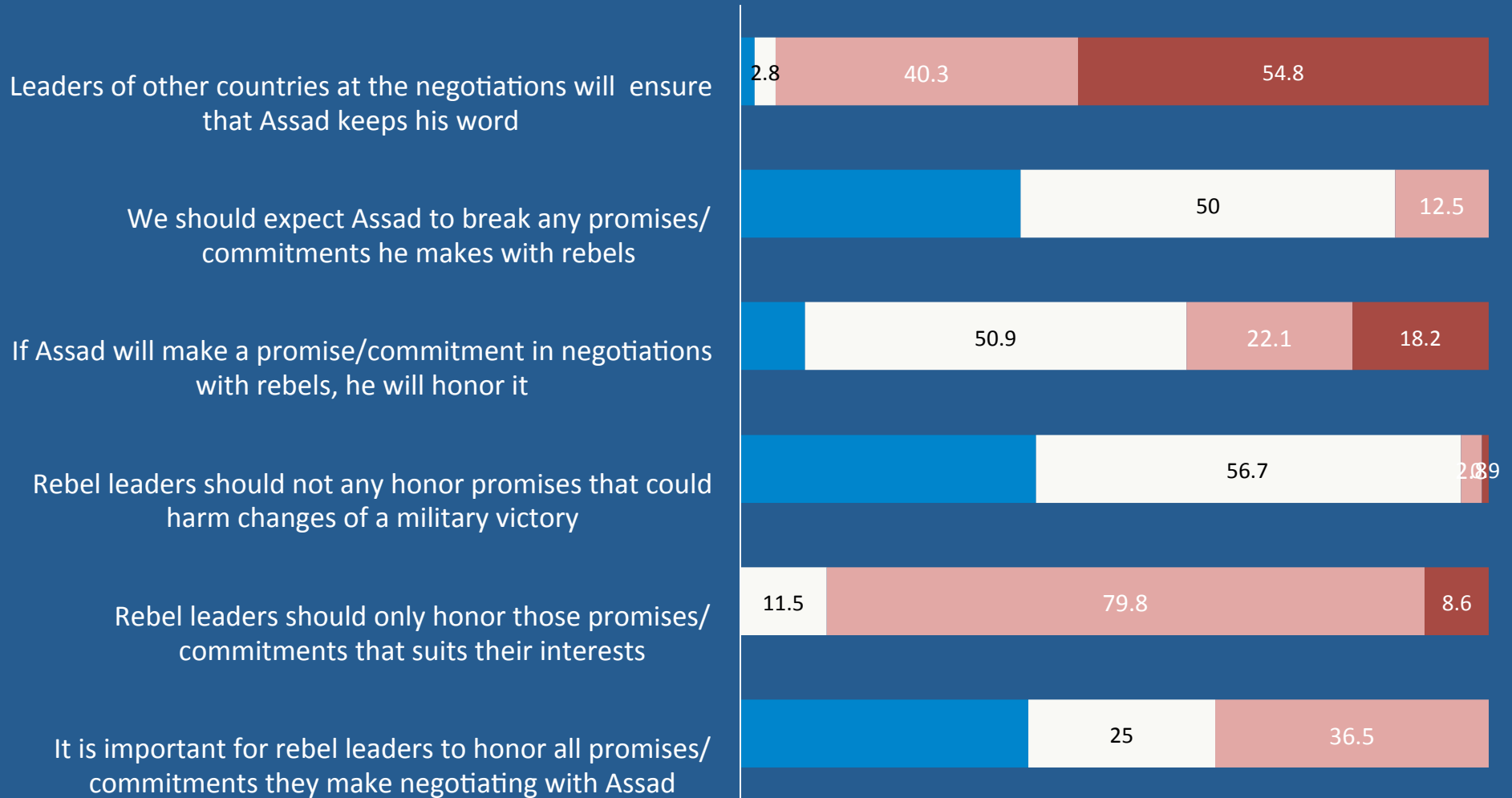
If we negotiate, then we are betraying those who have died fighting



## Credible Commitments to Negotiations

*Q: To what extent do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements*

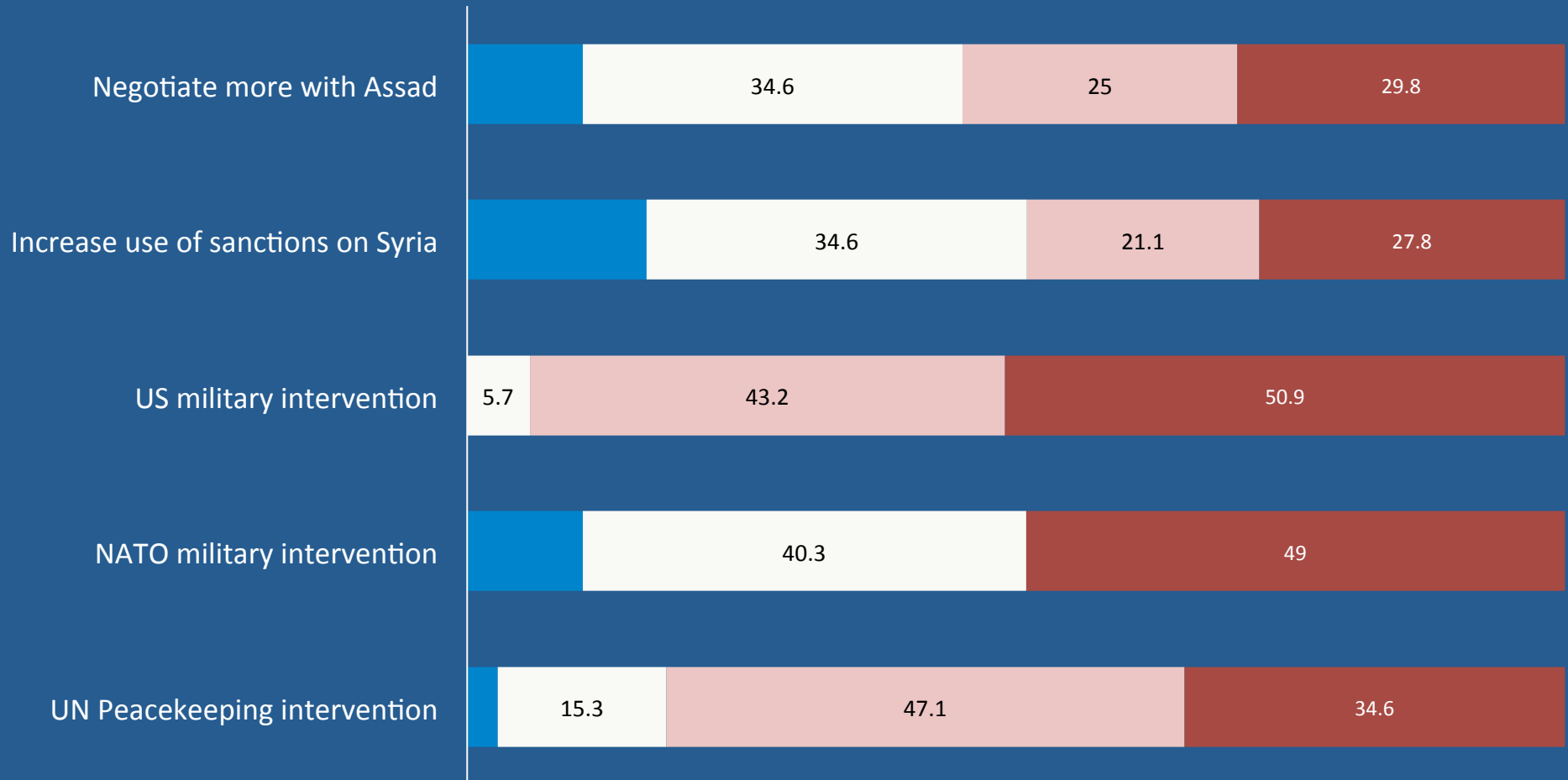
■ Strongly agree   
 ■ Somewhat Agree   
 ■ Somewhat disagree   
 ■ Strongly disagree



## Views on Outside Intervention in Syrian Conflict

*Q: There is often discussion about the role of what other countries could do to bring an end to the Syrian conflict. To what extent do you support the following? (%)*

■ Strongly support   ■ somewhat support   ■ somewhat oppose   ■ Strongly oppose

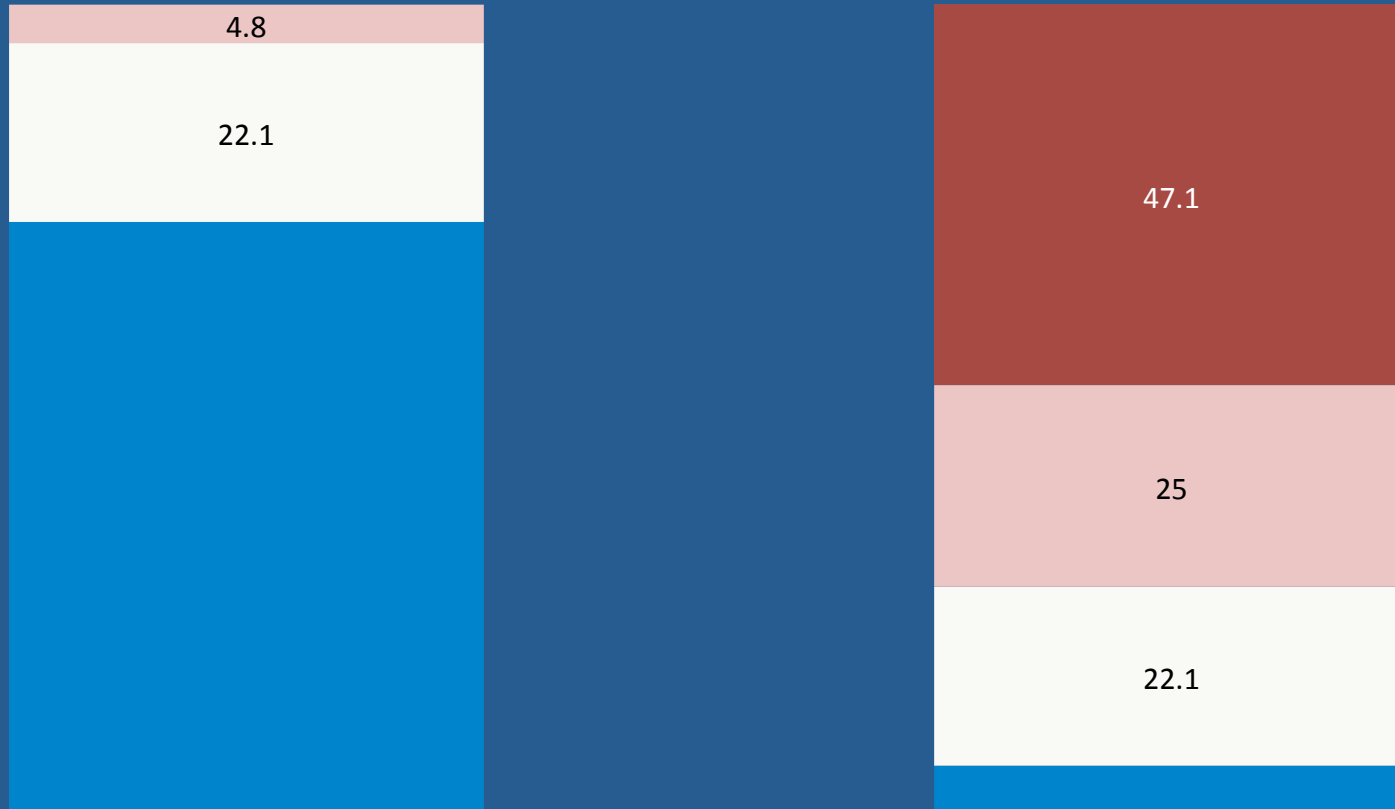


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## Views on Syrian Unity

Q: To what extent do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree with the following statements

■ Strongly support   ■ somewhat support   ■ somewhat oppose   ■ strongly oppose

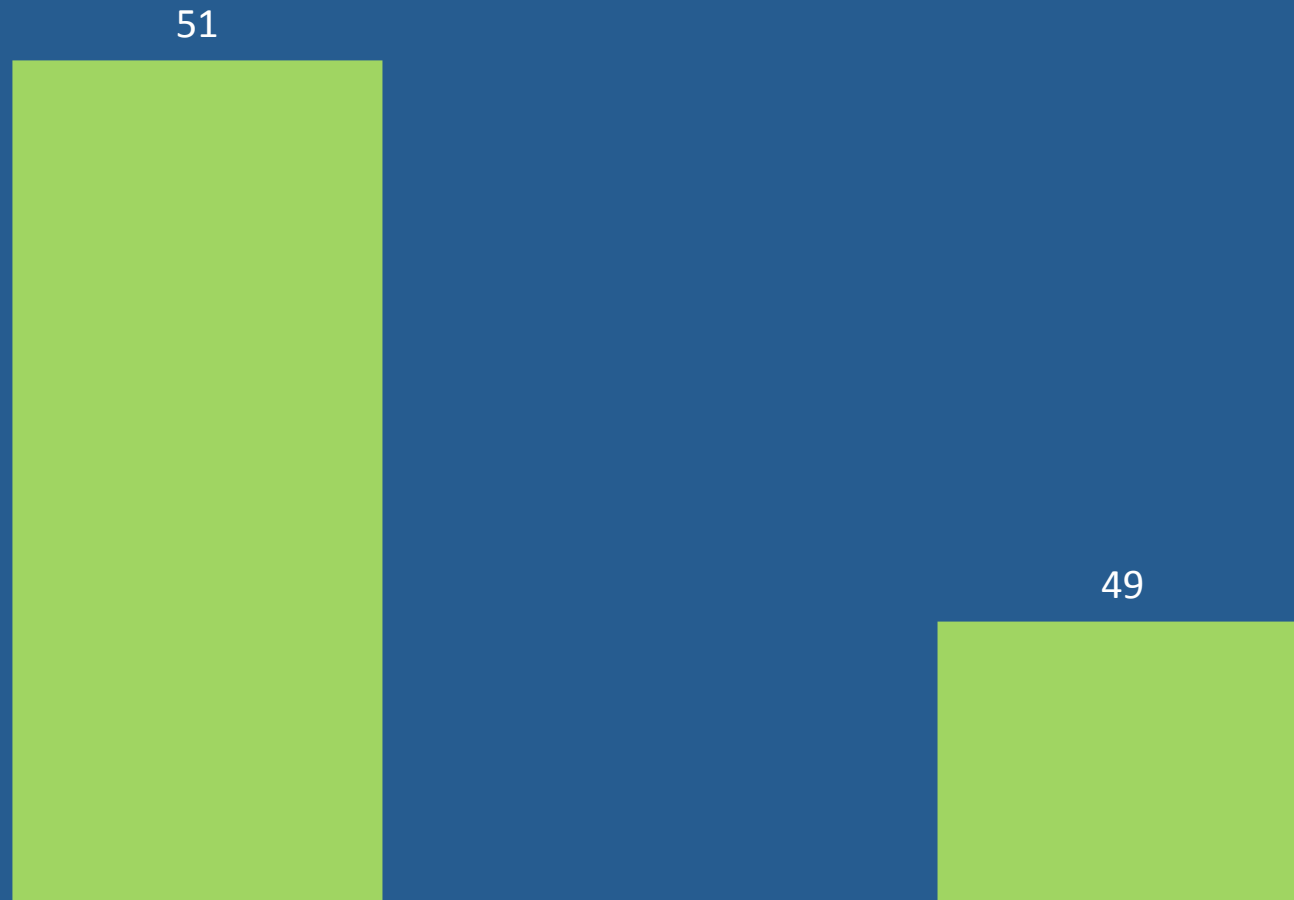


It is essential that Syria remains a unified state

Parts of Syria should be allowed more regional autonomy

## Justice and Accountability

*Q: Which of these two statements comes closer to your own view?*



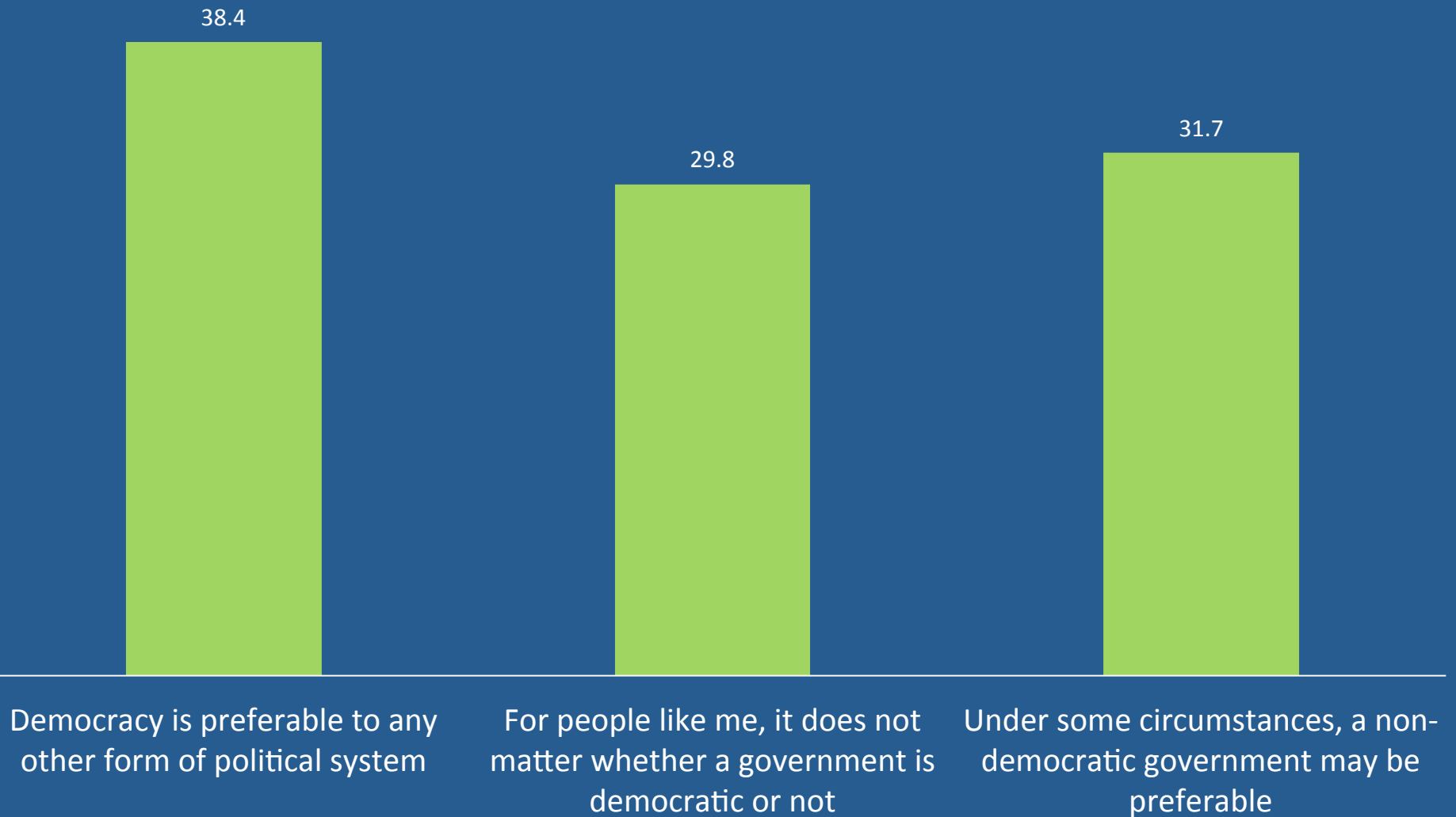
All those who are responsible for war crimes in Syria should be held accountable in the courts for what they have done

Only the top leadership should be held accountable for crimes committed during the war in Syria

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## Support for Democracy

Q: Which of these two statements comes closer to your own view? (%)



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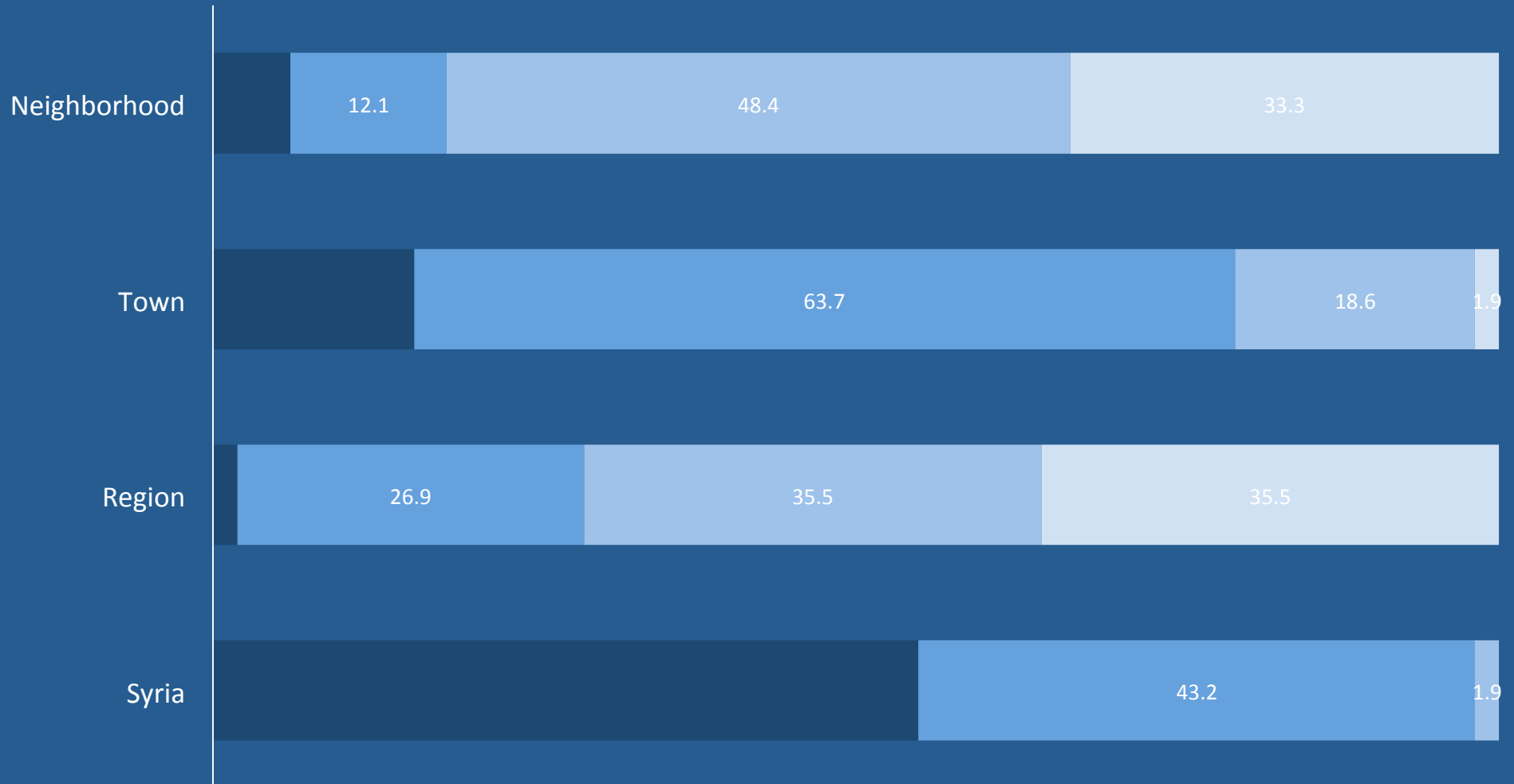
# Social Capital



## Social Distance by Location

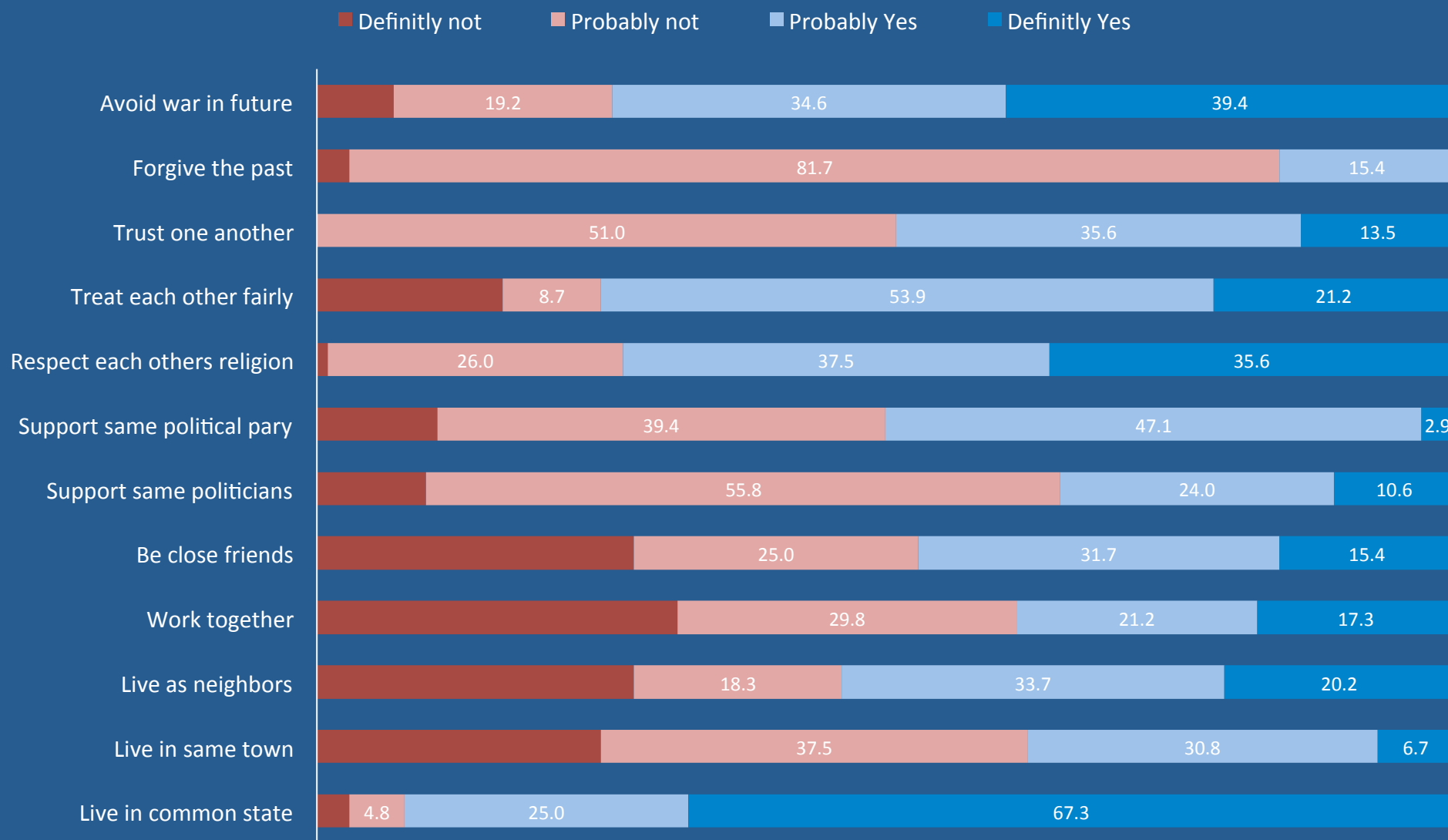
Q: In general, how close do you feel to other people in the following locations?

Very Close   Somewhat Close   Not Very Close   Not Close at all



## Views on Reconciliation After Violence

*Q: Giving the way things are now, to what extent do you think Syrians on different sides of this conflict will be able to do the following:*

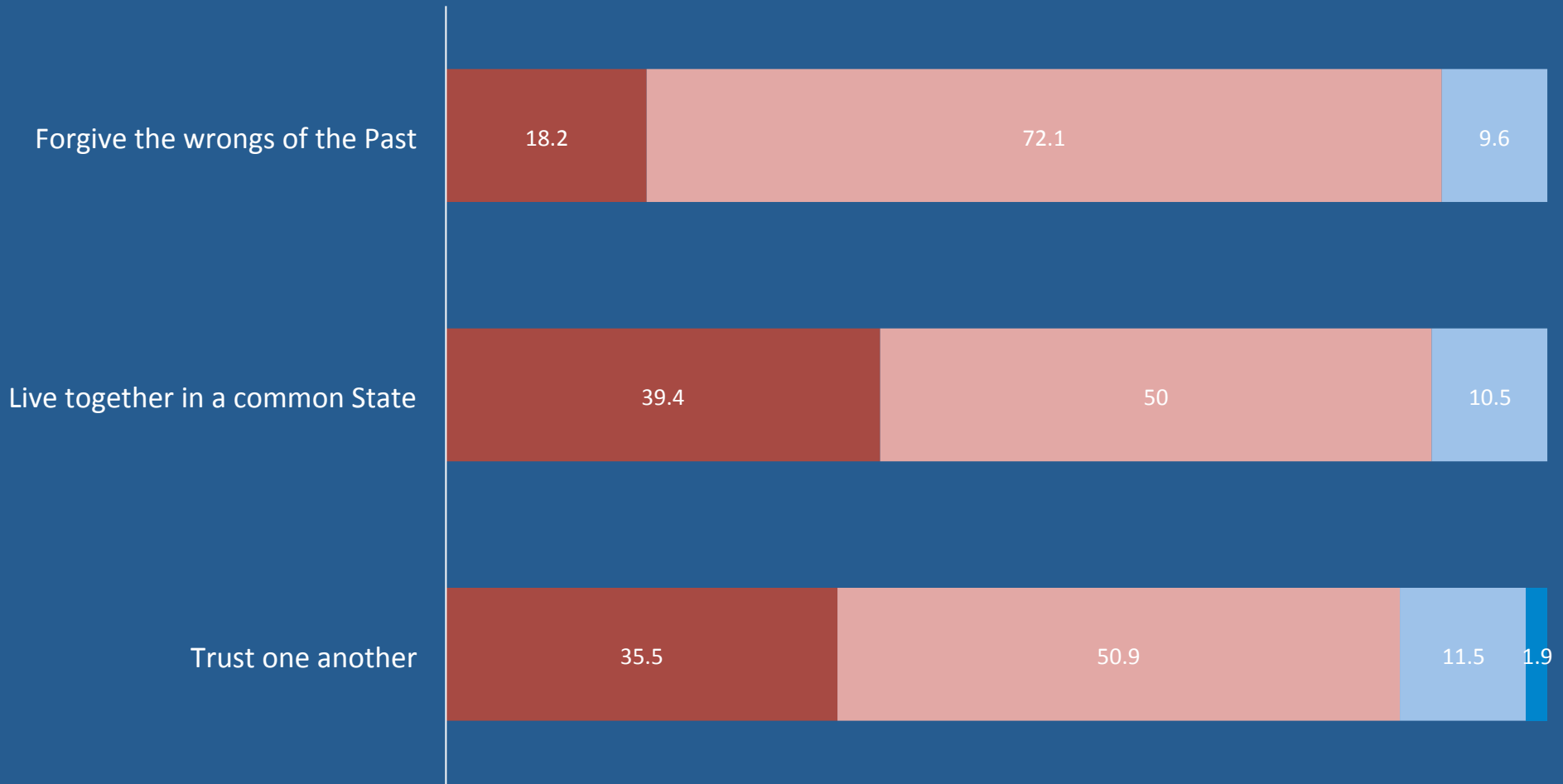


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## Reconciliation with Alawites

*Q: What about relations between Sunni Muslims and Alawati people of Syria? Do you think it will be possible to do the following again after the war?*

Definitely not   Probably not   Probably Yes   Definitely Yes



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