National Survey of Bangladeshi Public Opinion

August 1 – September 16, 2019

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RESEARCH

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Methodology

- The survey was conducted by IRI's Center for Insights in Survey Research with a local research partner under the supervision of Redstone Scientific between August 1, 2019 and September 16, 2019.

- Data was collected using a multi-stage stratified probability sample through in-person, in-home interviews. The sample was stratified by division, by district and by urban and rural locations.

- The sample consists of 4,993 respondents aged 18 and older, and is representative of voting-age adults nationally.

- The sample was distributed into 500 primary sampling units (PSU) from all 64 districts of all eight divisions. PSUs were defined as *mouza* in rural areas and as *mahalla* in urban areas.

- PSUs were selected using the Probability-Proportional-to-Size (PPS) method. In each PSU, after identifying a centrally-located starting point, a skip pattern was used to select the appropriate household. Within each household, a respondent was selected using the Kish Grid. A gender quota was implemented at the PSU level in order to enhance representativeness.

- The margin of error is plus or minus 1.4 percent at the mid-range with a confidence level of 95 percent. The response rate was 67 percent.

- The information in this report has been compiled in accordance with international standards for market and social research methodologies. Figures in charts and tables may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

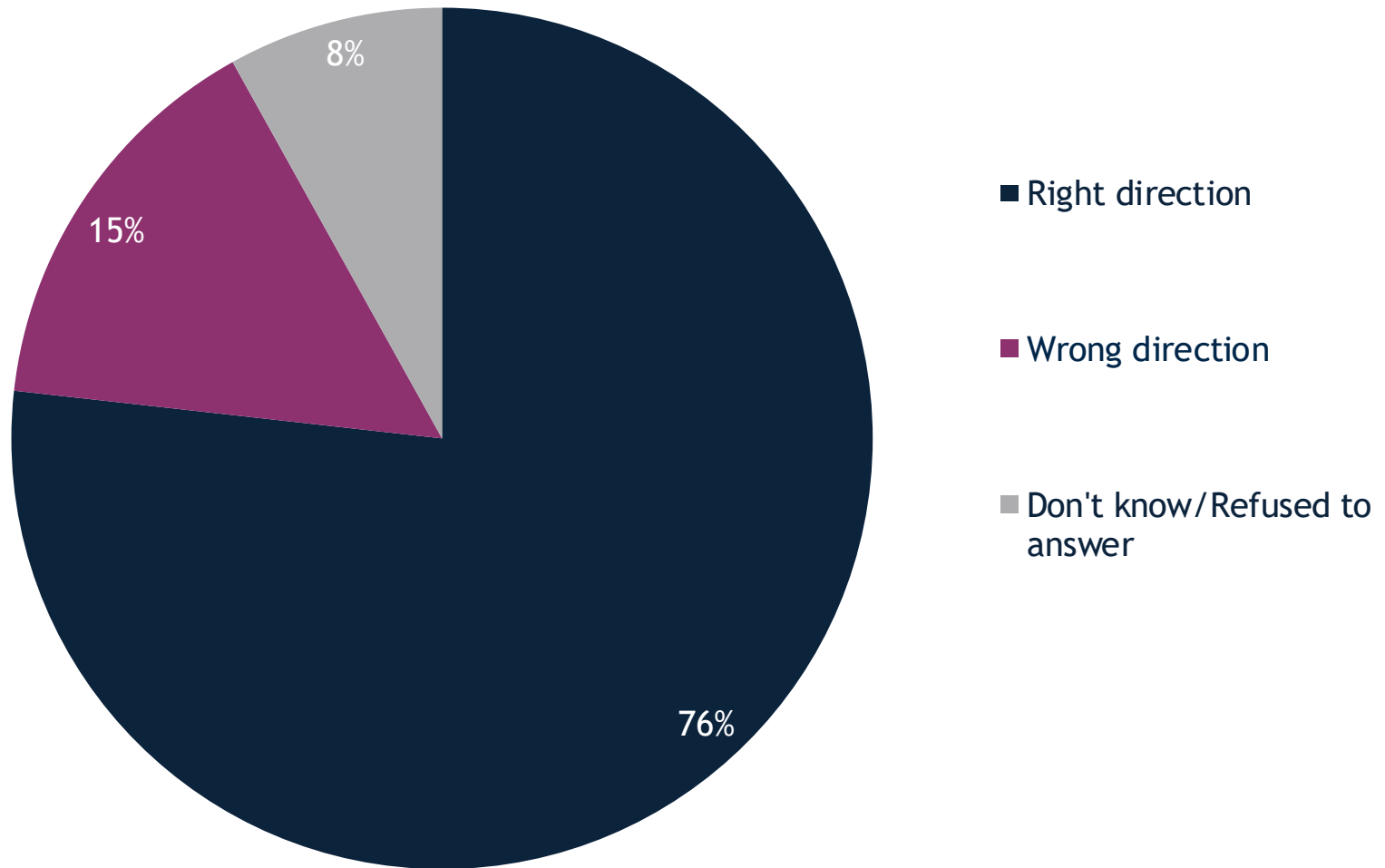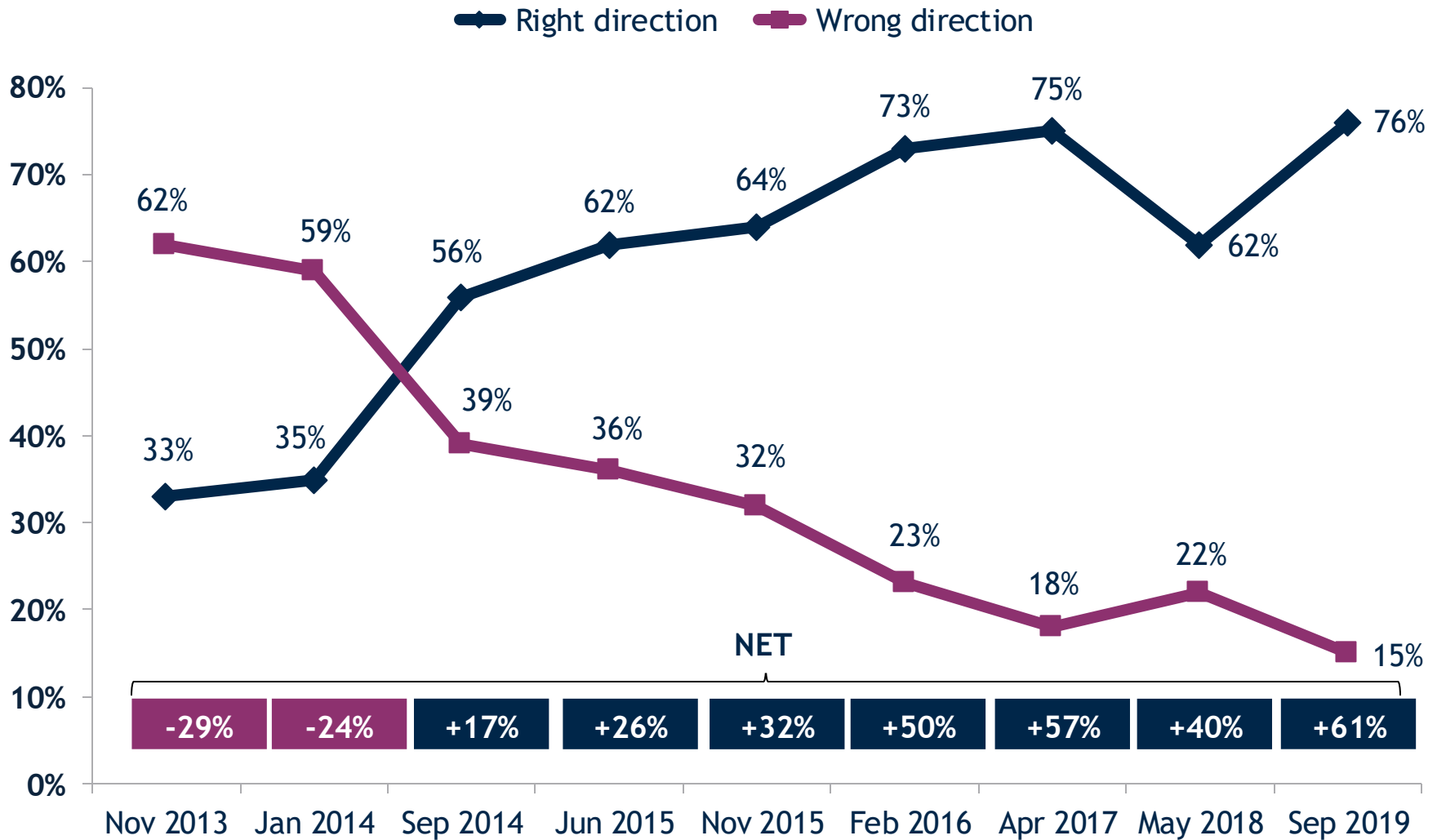# Political and Economic Outlook

In general, would you say that things in Bangladesh are heading in the right direction or are they heading in the wrong direction?

- Right direction
- Wrong direction
- Don't know/Refused to answer

76%

15%

8%

In general, would you say that things in Bangladesh are heading in the right direction or are they heading in the wrong direction?

Right direction — **Wrong direction**

	Nov 2013	Jan 2014	Sep 2014	Jun 2015	Nov 2015	Feb 2016	Apr 2017	May 2018	Sep 2019
Right direction	33%	35%	56%	62%	64%	73%	75%	62%	76%
Wrong direction	62%	59%	39%	36%	32%	23%	18%	22%	15%
NET	-29%	-24%	+17%	+26%	+32%	+50%	+57%	+40%	+61%

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In general, why do you think that things are heading in the right direction?

Asked of those responding "right direction"; spontaneous response; n=3,815

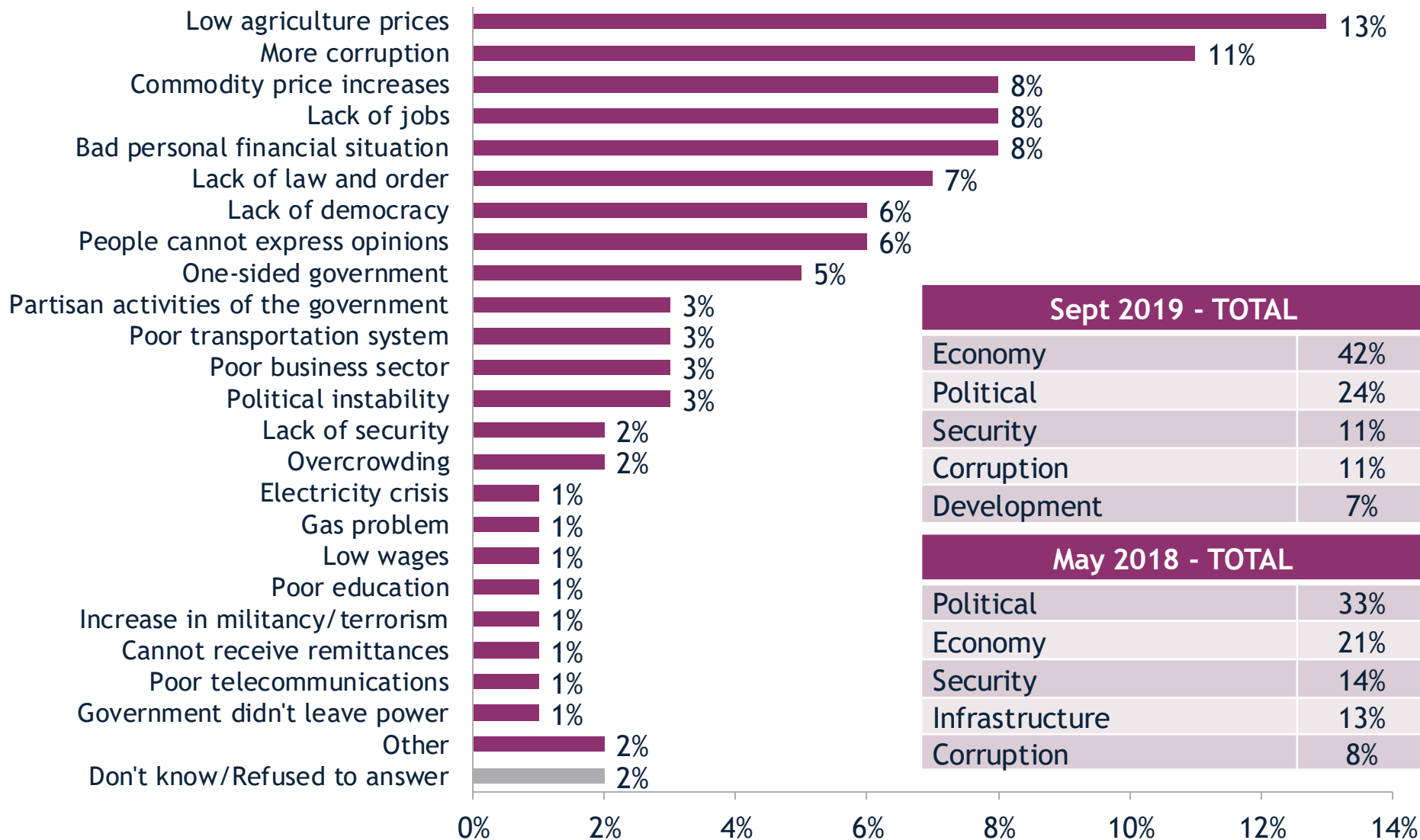| Category	Value
Overall development	22%
Better economy	16%
Transportation infrastructure	11%
Higher living standard	10%
Improvement in education	7%
Better law & order	7%
Padma bridge	4%
Fewer acts of terrorism/militancy	3%
Electricity availability	2%
Digital Bangladesh	2%
Telecommunications improvement	2%
Agricultural development	2%
Old Age Allowance Program	2%
Better food security	2%
More jobs	2%
Child marriages have stopped	1%
Development of garment sector	1%
Advancements in medical science	1%
Business sector is growing	1%
Other	2%
Don't know/Refused to answer	1%

Sept 2019 - TOTALS	
Development	46%
Economy	31%
Security	10%

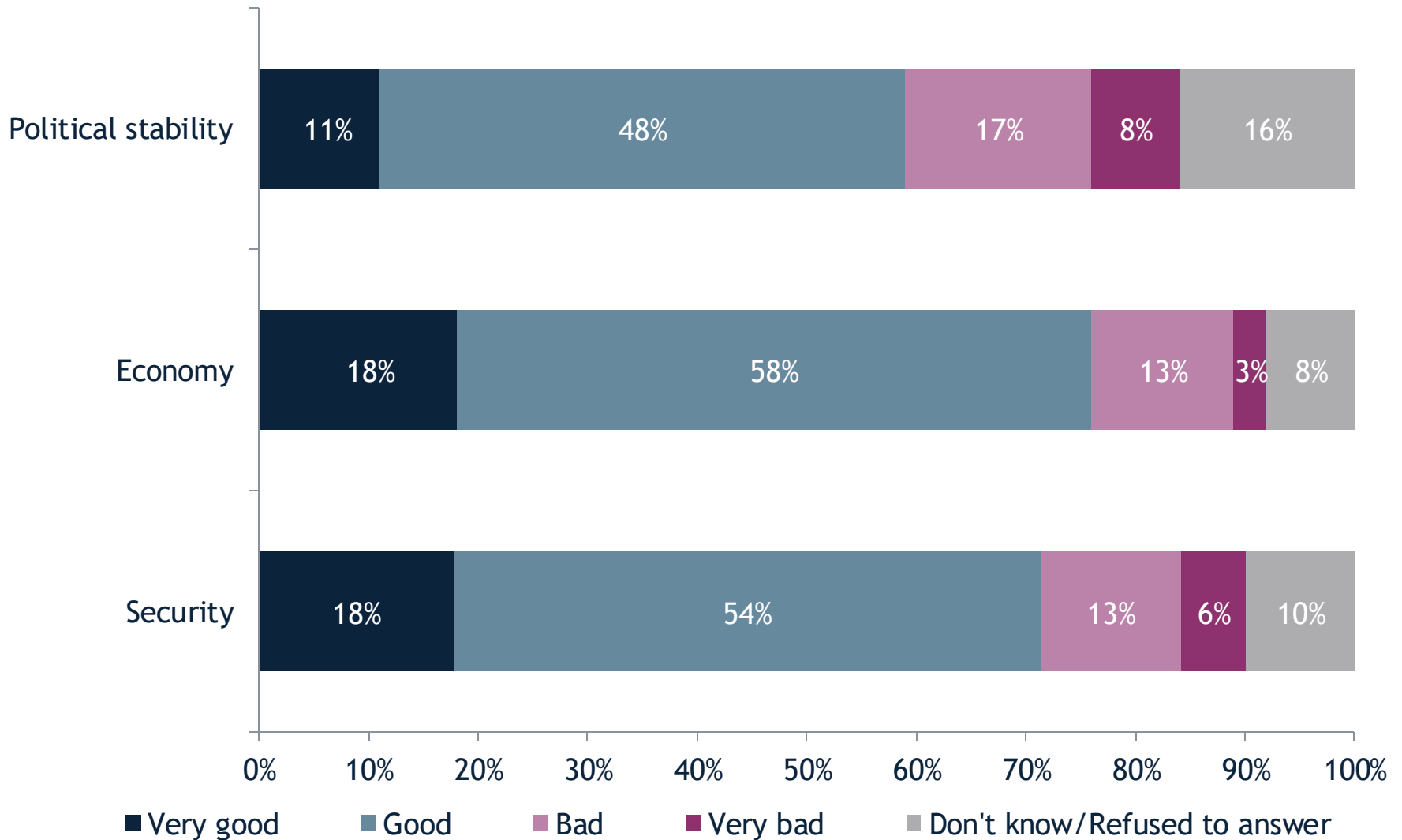| May 2018 - TOTALS	
Economy	46%
Development	30%
Security	9%

In general, why do you think that things are heading in the wrong direction?

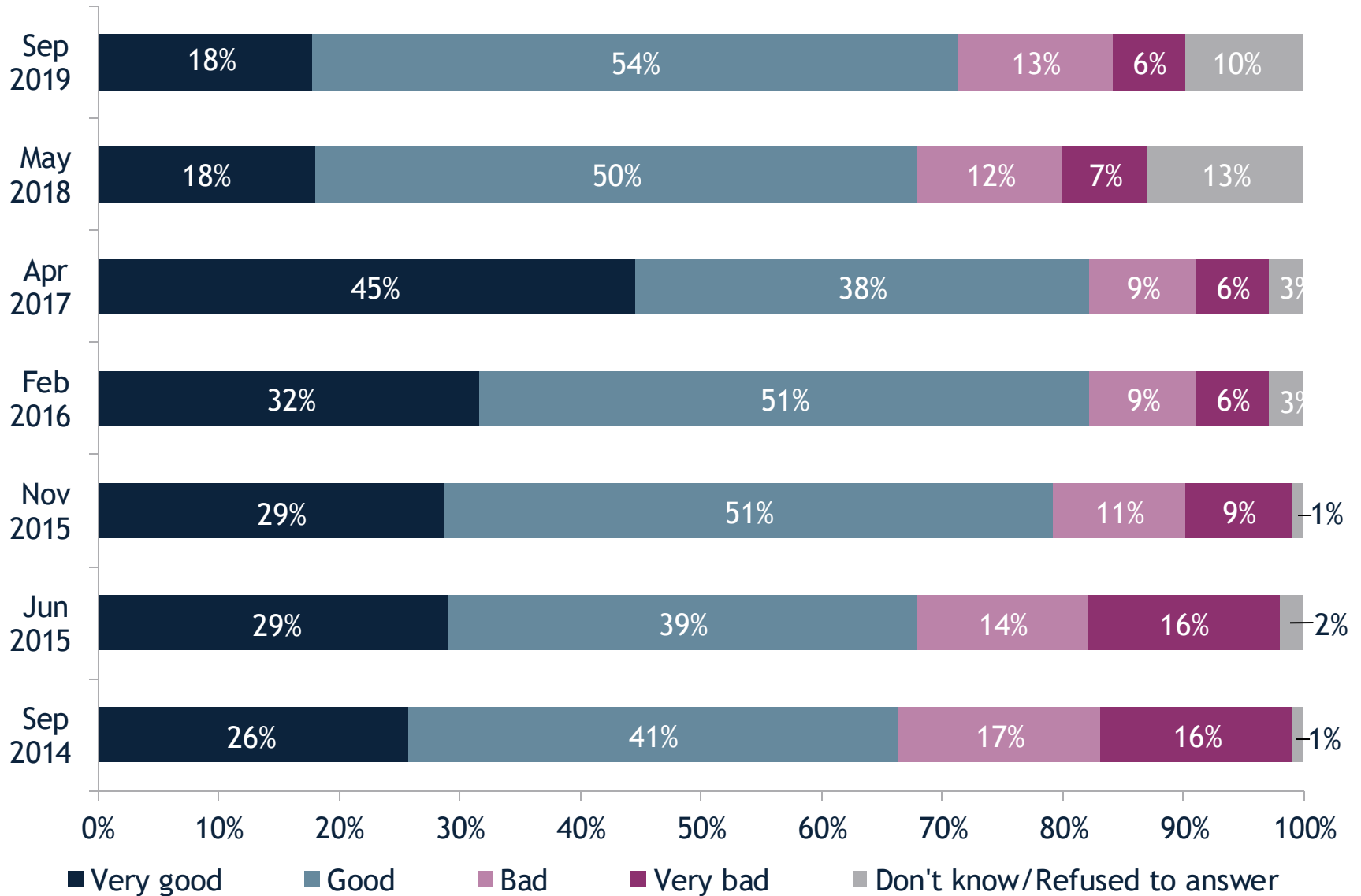## Asked of those responding "wrong direction"; spontaneous response; n=761

Response	%
Low agriculture prices	13%
More corruption	11%
Commodity price increases	8%
Lack of jobs	8%
Bad personal financial situation	8%
Lack of law and order	7%
Lack of democracy	6%
People cannot express opinions	6%
One-sided government	5%
Partisan activities of the government	3%
Poor transportation system	3%
Poor business sector	3%
Political instability	3%
Lack of security	2%
Overcrowding	2%
Electricity crisis	1%
Gas problem	1%
Low wages	1%
Poor education	1%
Increase in militancy/terrorism	1%
Cannot receive remittances	1%
Poor telecommunications	1%
Government didn't leave power	1%
Other	2%
Don't know/Refused to answer	2%

Sept 2019 - TOTAL

Economy	42%
Political	24%
Security	11%
Corruption	11%
Development	7%

May 2018 - TOTAL

Political	33%
Economy	21%
Security	14%
Infrastructure	13%
Corruption	8%

Thinking now about the following, would you rate the situation with each as good or bad? And would you say very good or very bad?
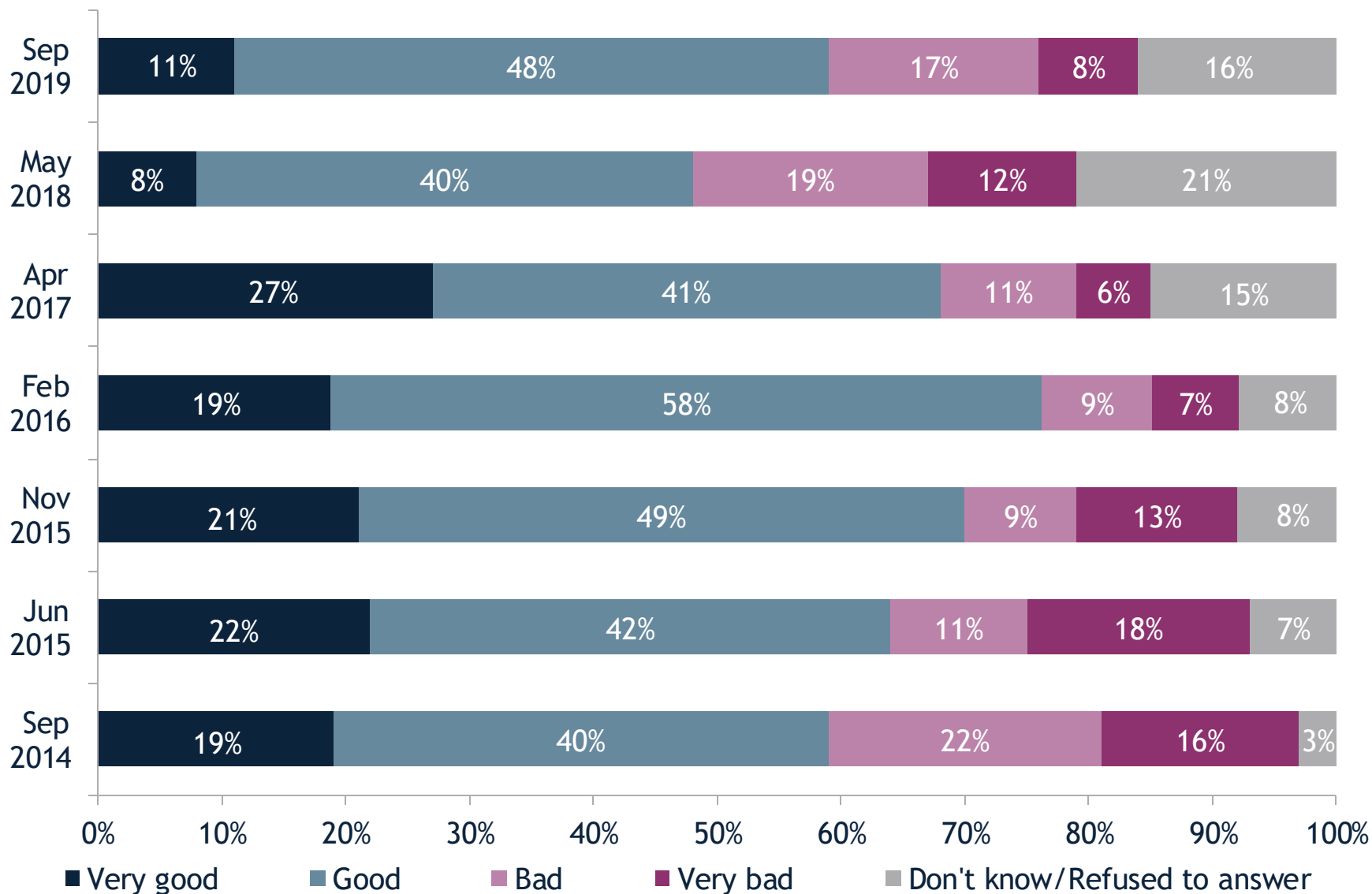

	Very good	Good	Bad	Very bad	Don't know/Refused to answer
Political stability	11%	48%	17%	8%	16%
Economy	18%	58%	13%	3%	8%
Security	18%	54%	13%	6%	10%

Thinking now about the economy, would you rate the situation as good or bad? And would you say very good or very bad?

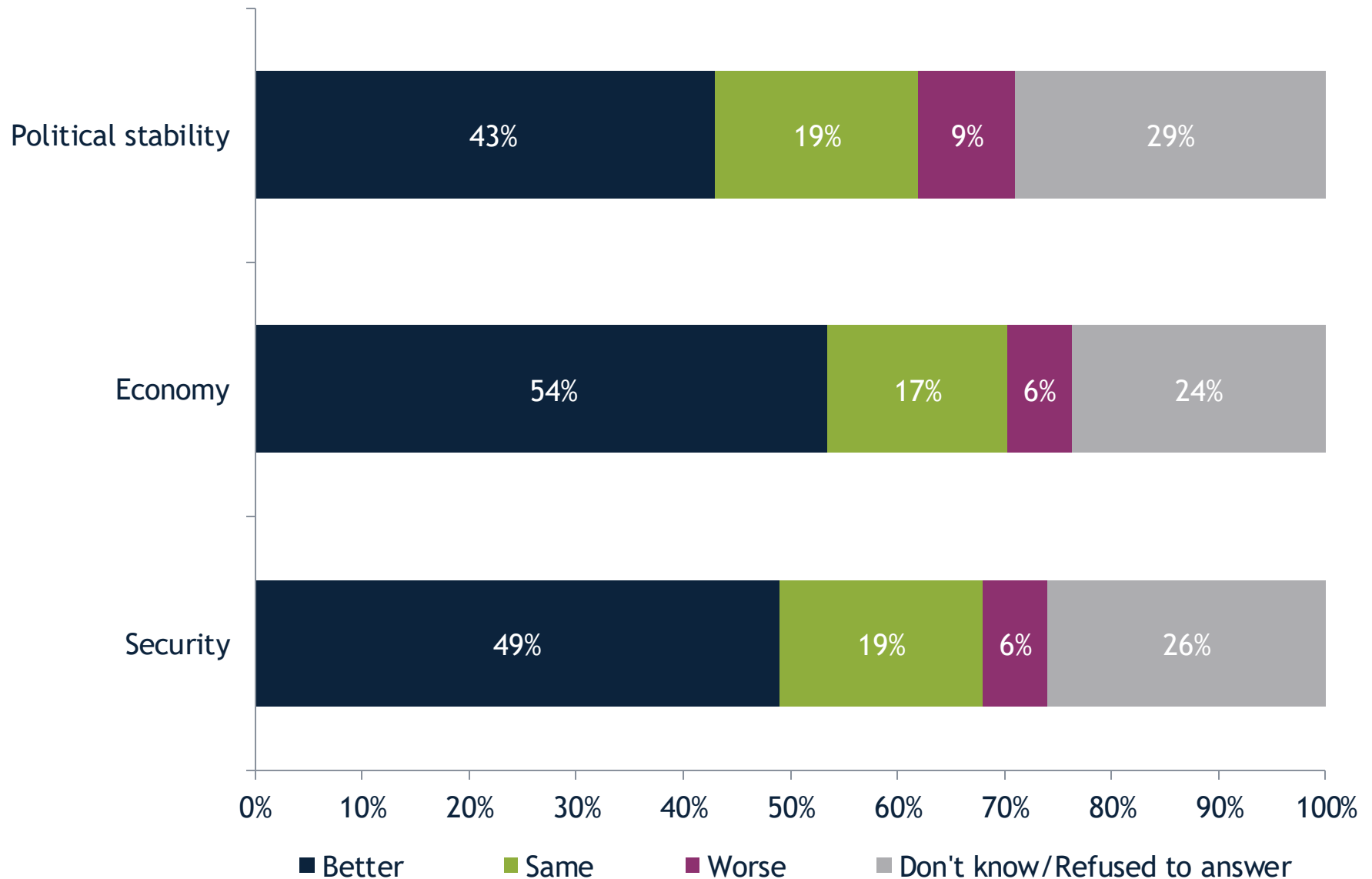|	Very good	Good	Bad	Very bad	Don't know/Refused to answer
Sep 2019	18%	58%	13%	3%	8%
May 2018	15%	54%	14%	6%	12%
Apr 2017	41%	42%	8%	5%	4%
Feb 2016	35%	48%	10%	5%	2%
Nov 2015	30%	49%	12%	7%	2%
Jun 2015	28%	44%	14%	12%	2%
Sep 2014	22%	47%	19%	11%	1%

■ Very good ■ Good ■ Bad ■ Very bad ■ Don't know/Refused to answer
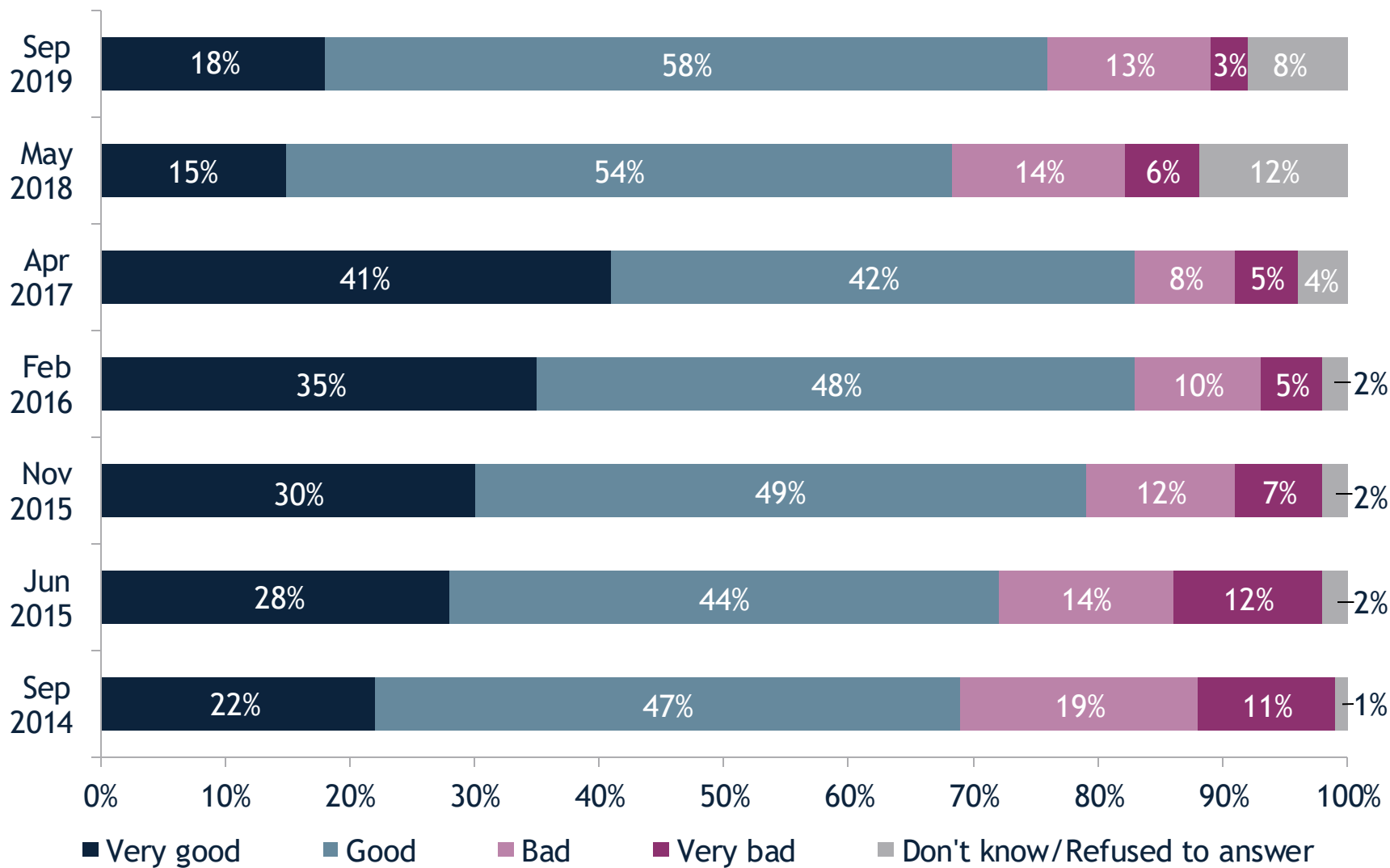
Thinking now about security, would you rate the situation as good or bad? And would you say very good or very bad?

|	Very good	Good	Bad	Very bad	Don't know/Refused to answer
Sep 2019	18%	54%	13%	6%	10%
May 2018	18%	50%	12%	7%	13%
Apr 2017	45%	38%	9%	6%	3%
Feb 2016	32%	51%	9%	6%	3%
Nov 2015	29%	51%	11%	9%	1%
Jun 2015	29%	39%	14%	16%	2%
Sep 2014	26%	41%	17%	16%	1%

■ Very good ■ Good ■ Bad ■ Very bad ■ Don't know/Refused to answer

Thinking now about political stability, would you rate the situation as good or bad? And would you say very good or very bad?

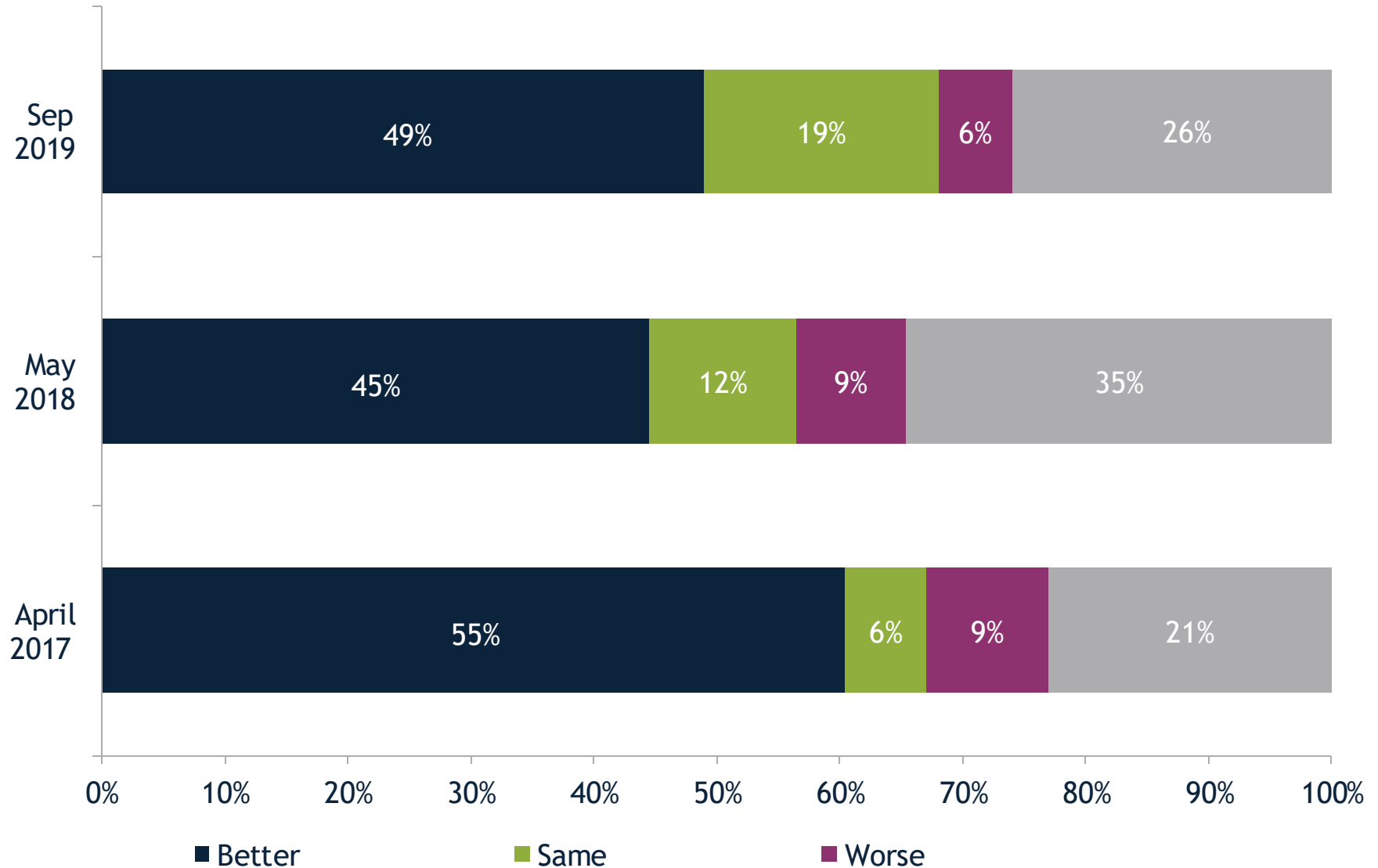|	Very good	Good	Bad	Very bad	Don't know/Refused to answer
Sep 2019	11%	48%	17%	8%	16%
May 2018	8%	40%	19%	12%	21%
Apr 2017	27%	41%	11%	6%	15%
Feb 2016	19%	58%	9%	7%	8%
Nov 2015	21%	49%	9%	13%	8%
Jun 2015	22%	42%	11%	18%	7%
Sep 2014	19%	40%	22%	16%	3%

■ Very good   ■ Good   ■ Bad   ■ Very bad   ■ Don't know/Refused to answer

Thinking more about this, in the coming year, do you think that the situation with each is going to get better, worse or stay the same?
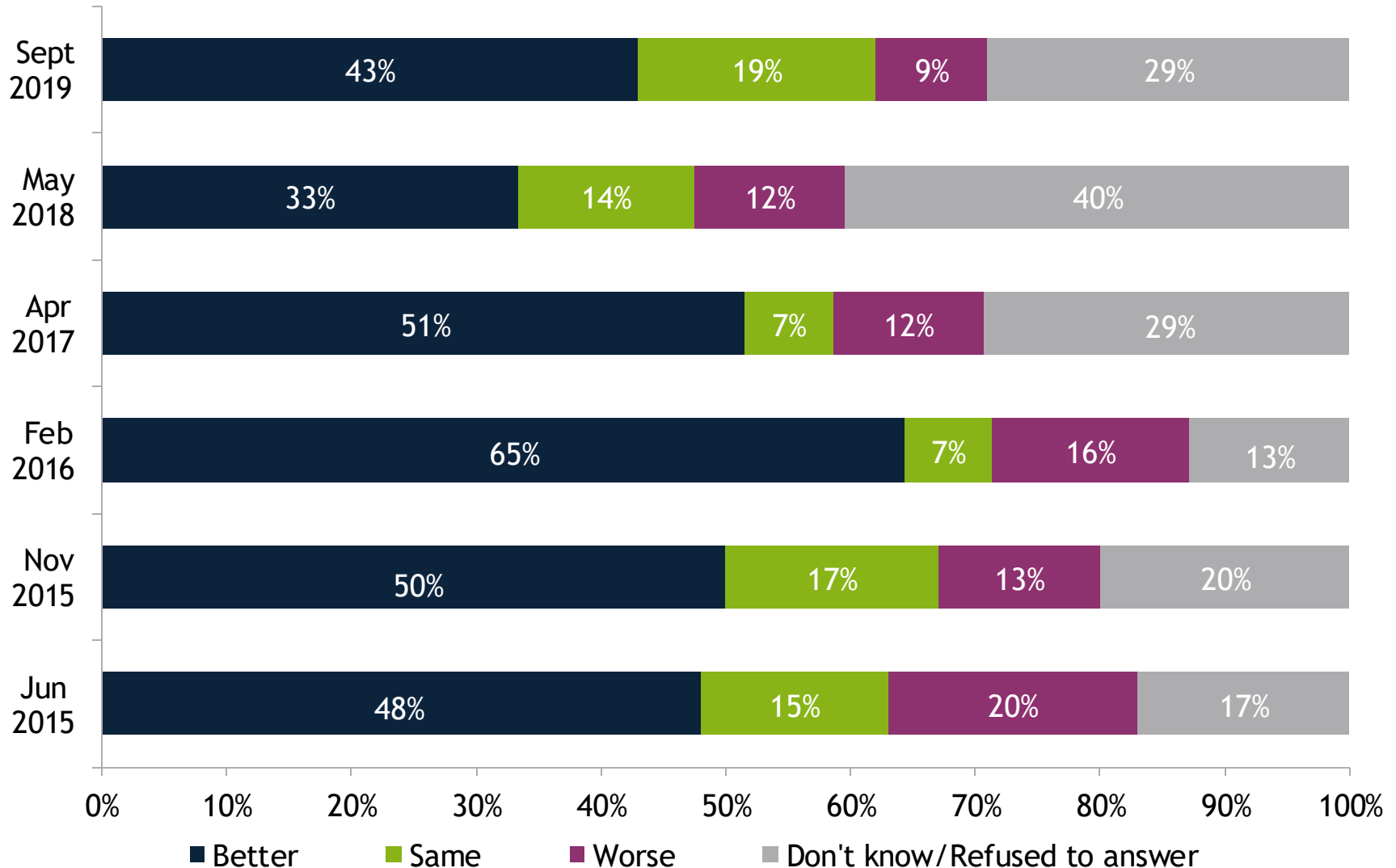

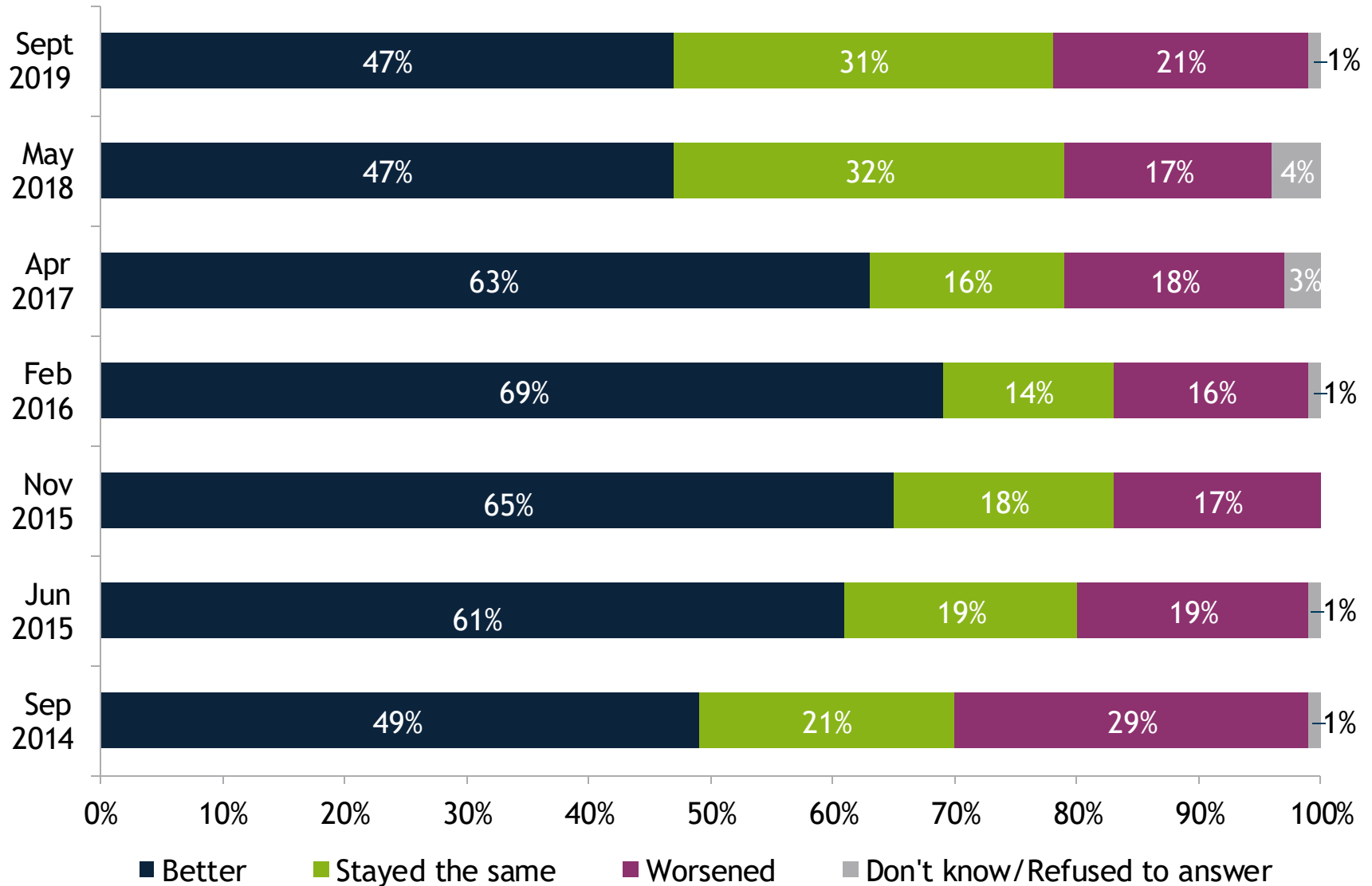|	Better	Same	Worse	Don't know/Refused to answer
Political stability	43%	19%	9%	29%
Economy	54%	17%	6%	24%
Security	49%	19%	6%	26%

Thinking more about this, in the coming year, do you think that the situation with the economy is going to get better, worse or stay the same?

	Better	Same	Worse	Don't know/Refused to answer
Sep 2019	54%	17%	6%	24%
May 2018	47%	13%	7%	33%
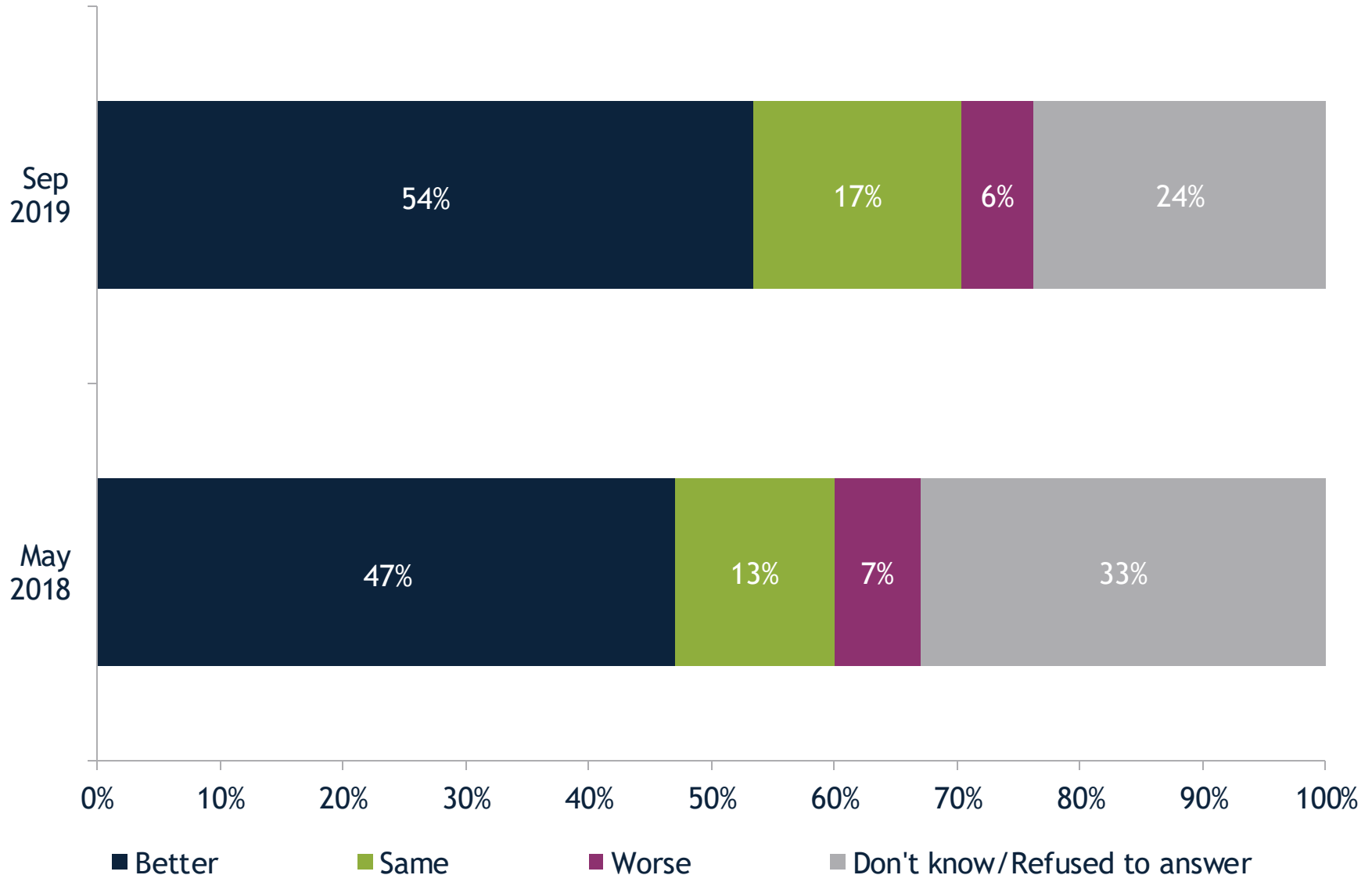
Thinking more about this, in the coming year, do you think that the situation with security is going to get better, worse or stay the same?
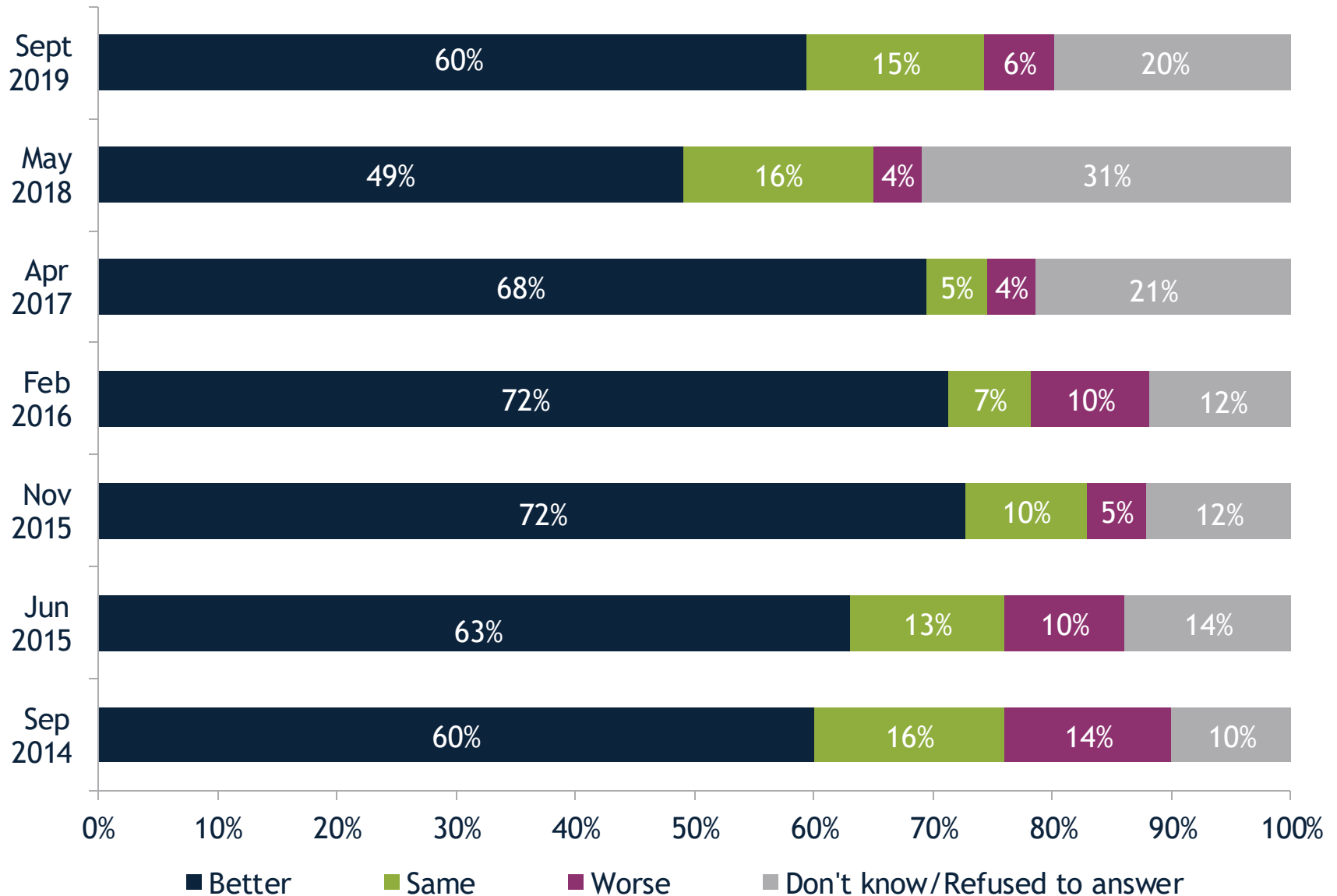

	Better	Same	Worse	
Sep 2019	49%	19%	6%	26%
May 2018	45%	12%	9%	35%
April 2017	55%	6%	9%	21%

■ Better   ■ Same   ■ Worse

Thinking more about this, in the coming year, do you think that the situation with political stability is going to get better, worse or stay the same?
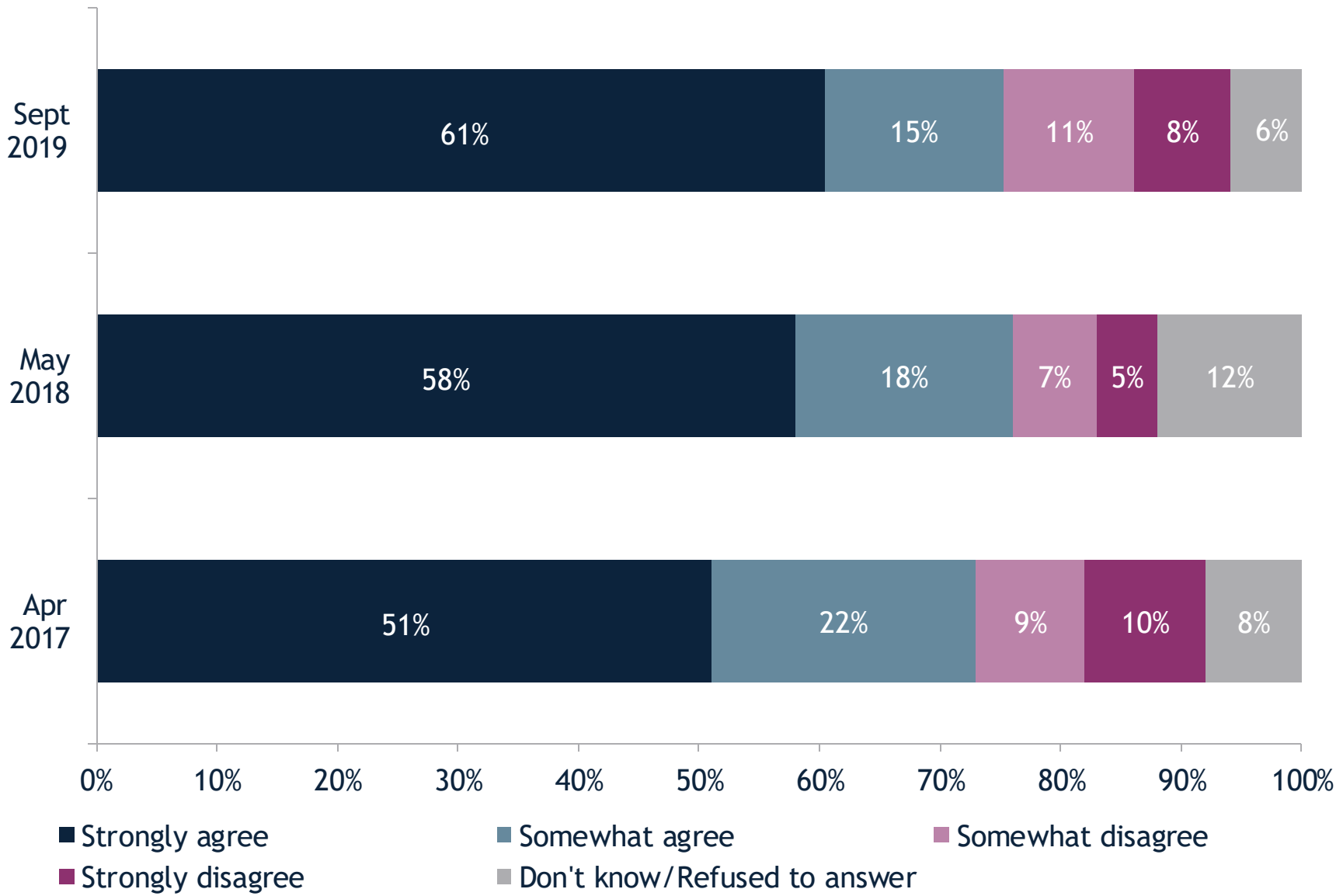

	Better	Same	Worse	Don't know/Refused to answer
Sept 2019	43%	19%	9%	29%
May 2018	33%	14%	12%	40%
Apr 2017	51%	7%	12%	29%
Feb 2016	65%	7%	16%	13%
Nov 2015	50%	17%	13%	20%
Jun 2015	48%	15%	20%	17%

Legend: ■ Better ■ Same ■ Worse ■ Don't know/Refused to answer

Thinking now about the personal economic situation of you and your family, over the past year has it gotten better, stayed the same or worsened?

	Better	Stayed the same	Worsened	Don't know/Refused to answer
Sept 2019	47%	31%	21%	1%
May 2018	47%	32%	17%	4%
Apr 2017	63%	16%	18%	3%
Feb 2016	69%	14%	16%	1%
Nov 2015	65%	18%	17%	
Jun 2015	61%	19%	19%	1%
Sep 2014	49%	21%	29%	1%

■ Better   ■ Stayed the same   ■ Worsened   ■ Don't know/Refused to answer

Thinking more about your personal economic situation, in the coming year do you think it will get better, stay the same or get worse?

	Better	Same	Worse	Don't know/Refused to answer
Sept 2019	60%	15%	6%	20%
May 2018	49%	16%	4%	31%
Apr 2017	68%	5%	4%	21%
Feb 2016	72%	7%	10%	12%
Nov 2015	72%	10%	5%	12%
Jun 2015	63%	13%	10%	14%
Sep 2014	60%	16%	14%	10%

■ Better   ■ Same   ■ Worse   ■ Don't know/Refused to answer

Would you say you agreed or disagreed with the following statement: The gap between the rich and the poor in Bangladesh is growing larger. And would you say you strongly or somewhat agreed/disagreed?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/Refused to answer
Sept 2019	61%	15%	11%	8%	6%
May 2018	58%	18%	7%	5%	12%
Apr 2017	51%	22%	9%	10%	8%

Priority Issues

What is the single most important problem in Bangladesh?
Open-ended response

Problem	%
Corruption	19%
Drugs	17%
Unemployment	10%
Security (Crime/Terrorism)	7%
Education	5%
Rape	5%
Poverty	4%
Healthcare	4%
Political instability	3%
Food security	3%
Traffic/Transportation infrastructure	3%
Inflation	2%
Power/Electricity/Gas	2%
Natural disasters	2%
Human rights	1%
Water/Sanitation	1%
Political reform	1%
Low agricultural prices	1%
Rohingya issue	1%
Religious extremism	1%
Other	1%
Don't know/Refused to answer	9%

Sept 2019 - TOTALS	
Economy	20%
Corruption	19%
Drugs	17%
Security/Law & Order	13%
Infrastructure	6%
Political	5%

What is the most important problem facing Bangladesh?
Comparison of previous survey data

Issue	Sept 2019	May 2018	Apr 2017	Feb 2016	Nov 2015	Jun 2015	Sep 2014	Jan 2014	Nov 2013
Economy	20%	16%	20%	21%	17%	11%	13%	7%	23%
Corruption	19%	21%	5%	9%	18%	24%	20%	36%	20%
Drugs	17%	10%							
Security/Law and order	13%	10%	19%	21%	13%	15%	9%	11%	11%
Infrastructure	6%	3%	10%	8%	11%	6%	17%	1%	3%
Political instability	5%	6%	6%	12%	11%	16%	13%	39%	34%

Approval Ratings

Thinking now about the following institutions and people, would you say you approve or disapprove of the job they are doing?
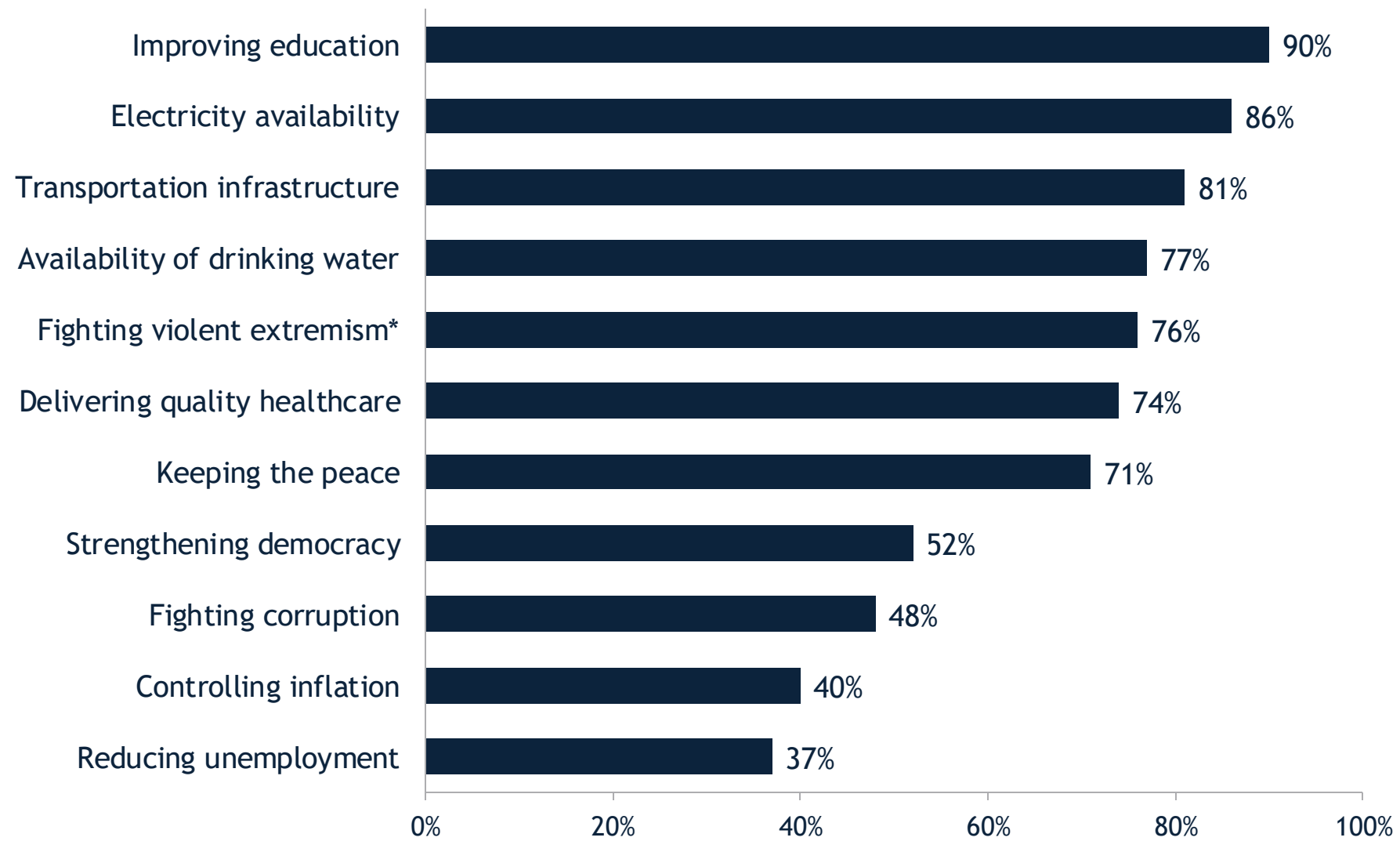## Total "approve" shown
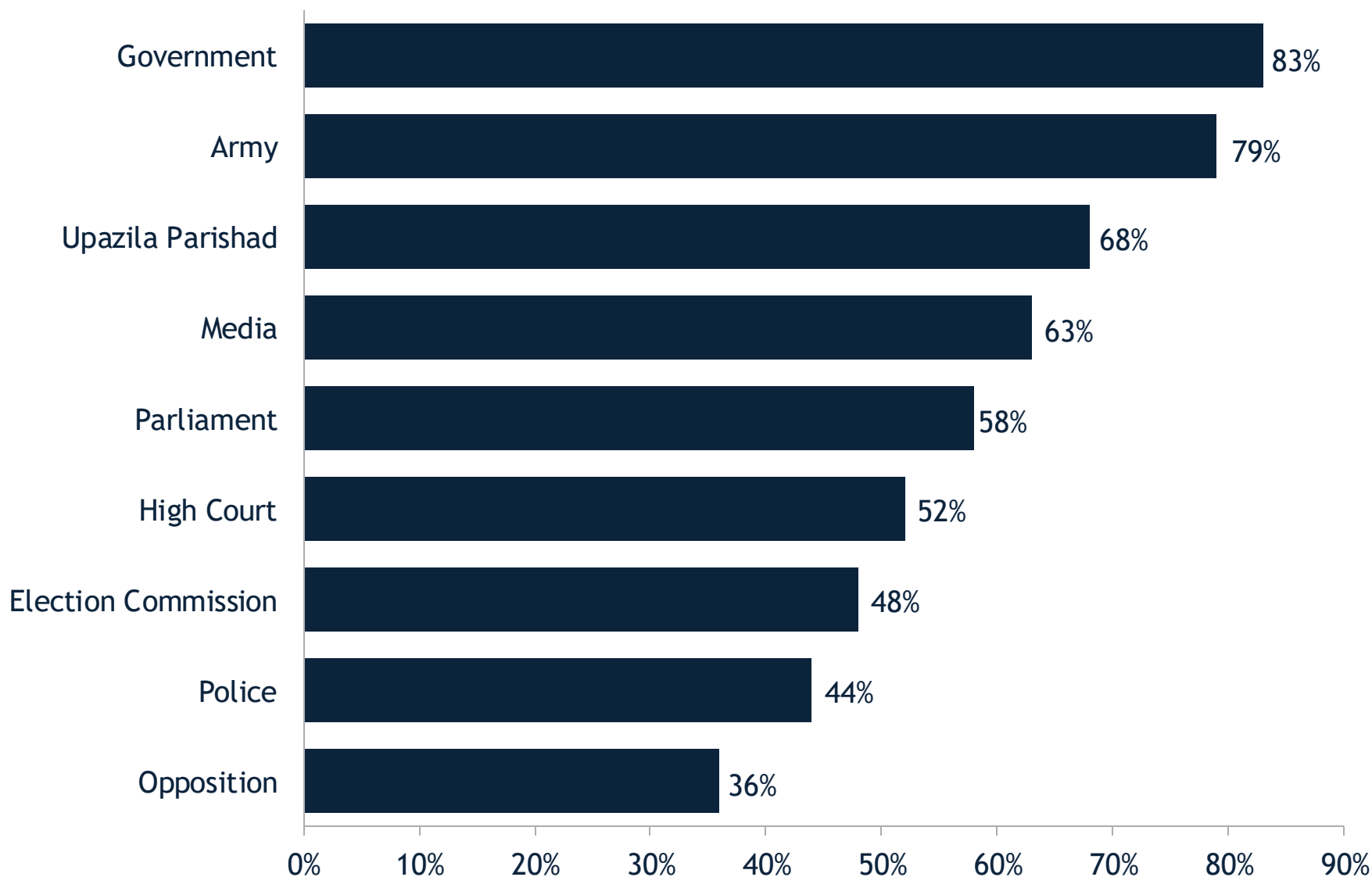
Institution	Approve
Government	83%
Army	79%
Upazila Parishad	68%
Media	63%
Parliament	58%
High Court	52%
Election Commission	48%
Police	44%
Opposition	36%

Thinking now about the following institutions and people, would you say you approve or disapprove of the job they are doing? Total "good job" shown

Army
- Sept 2019: 79%
- May 2018: 80%
- Apr 2017: 90%
- Feb 2016: 88%
- Nov 2015: 95%

Upazila Parishad
- Sept 2019: 68%
- May 2018: 65%
- Apr 2017: 75%
- Feb 2016: 75%
- Nov 2015: 77%

Government
- Sept 2019: 83%
- May 2018: 64%
- Apr 2017: 79%
- Feb 2016: 78%
- Nov 2015: 72%

Media
- Sept 2019: 63%
- May 2018: 60%
- Apr 2017: 79%
- Feb 2016: 80%
- Nov 2015: 89%

Parliament*
- Sept 2019: 58%
- May 2018: 51%
- Apr 2017: 64%

High Court
- Sept 2019: 52%
- May 2018: 50%
- Apr 2017: 70%
- Feb 2016: 65%
- Nov 2015: 72%

Election Commission
- Sept 2019: 48%
- May 2018: 47%
- Apr 2017: 66%
- Feb 2016: 59%
- Nov 2015: 62%

Police
- Sept 2019: 44%
- May 2018: 44%
- Apr 2017: 56%
- Feb 2016: 52%
- Nov 2015: 42%

Opposition
- Sept 2019: 36%
- May 2018: 42%
- Apr 2017: 40%
- Feb 2016: 39%
- Nov 2015: 48%

Legend: ■ Sept 2019 ■ May 2018 ■ Apr 2017 ■ Feb 2016 ■ Nov 2015

*Not asked in previous surveys

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Thinking now about the member of parliament who was elected to represent your area, do you think that person is doing a good job or a bad job? And would that be a very or somewhat good/bad job?

- Very good — 20%
- Somewhat good — 56%
- Somewhat bad — 9%
- Very bad — 3%
- I don't know my MP — 5%
- Don't know/Refused to answer — 8%
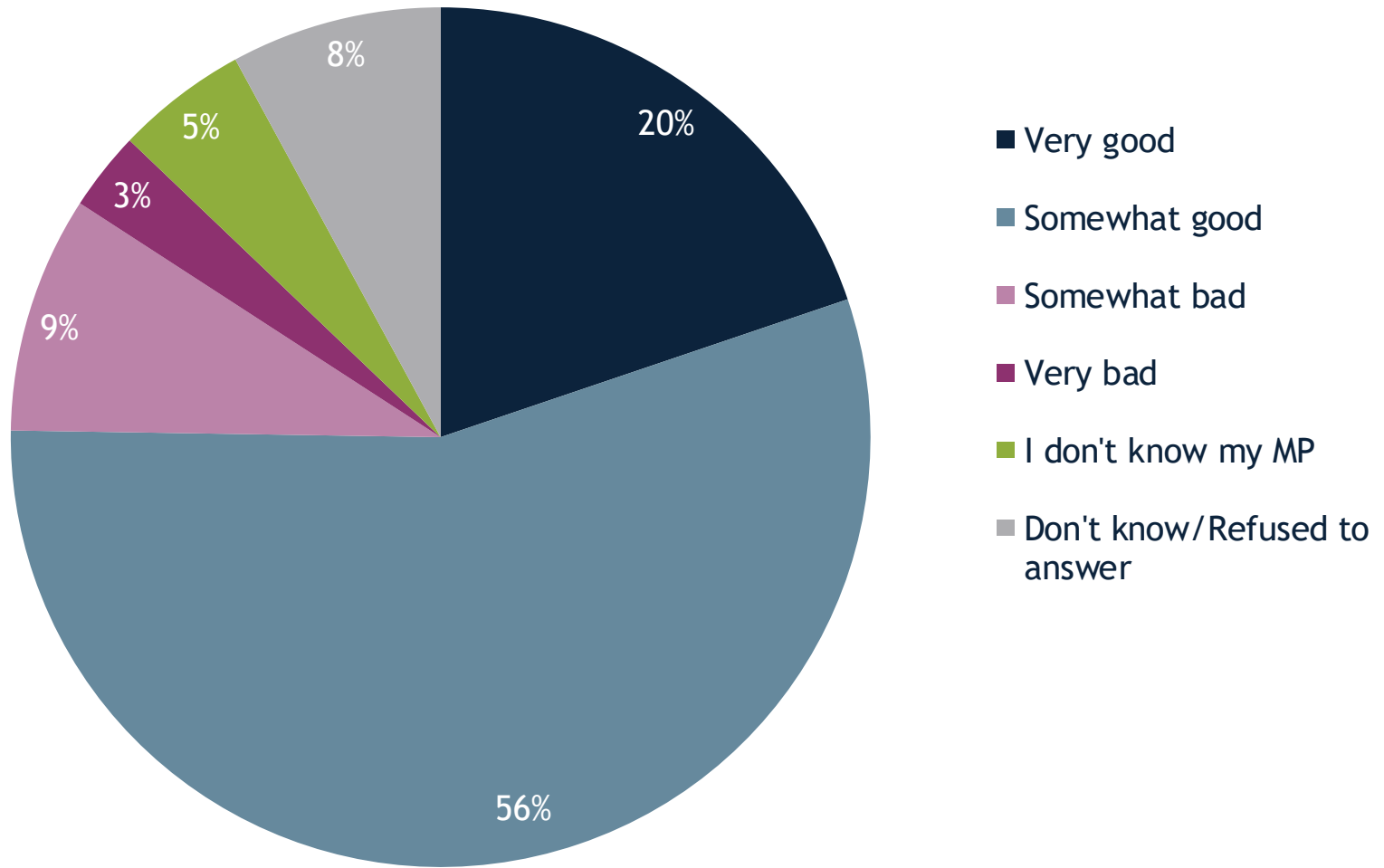
On each of these issues, how would you rate the national government's performance?

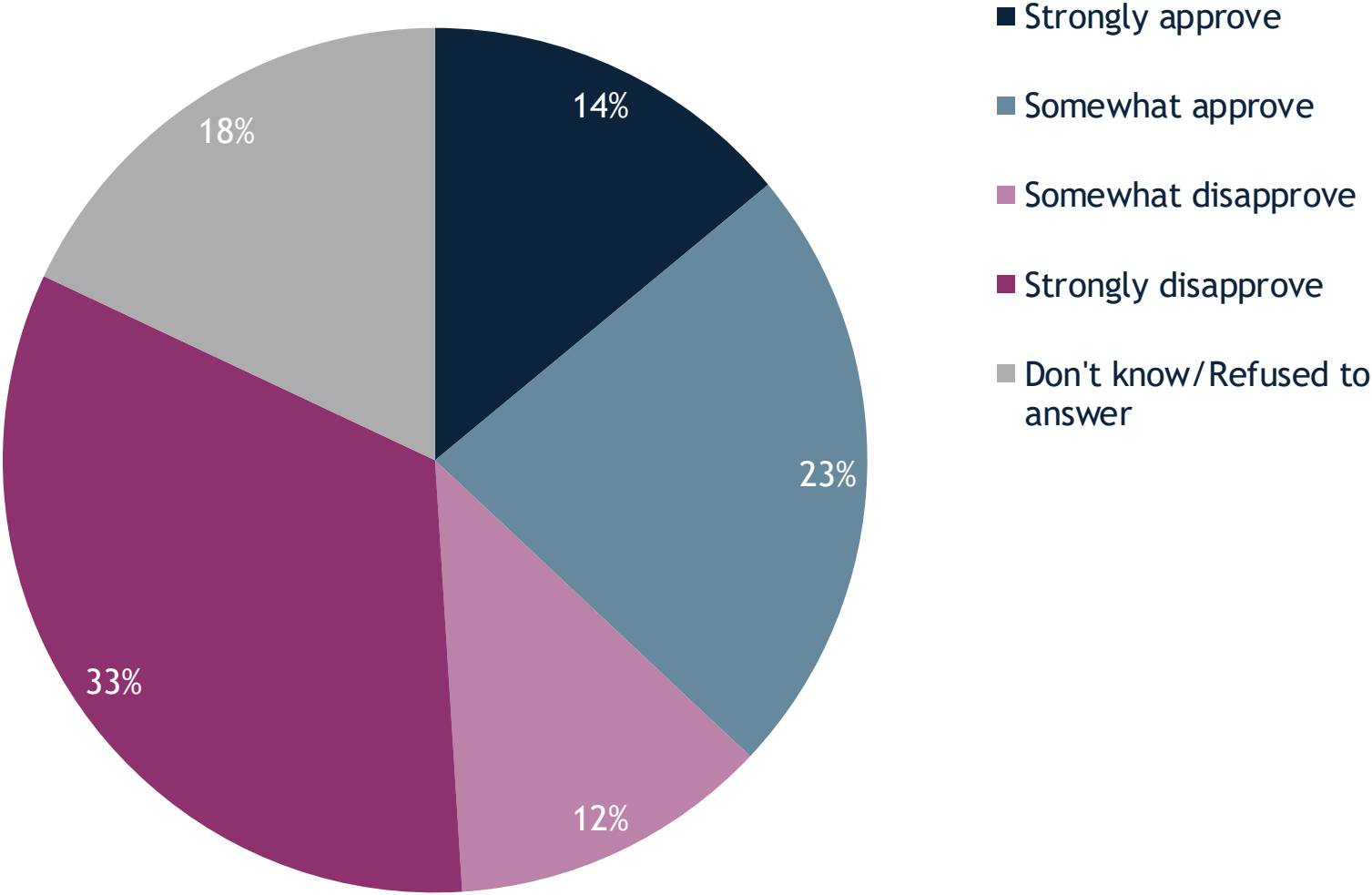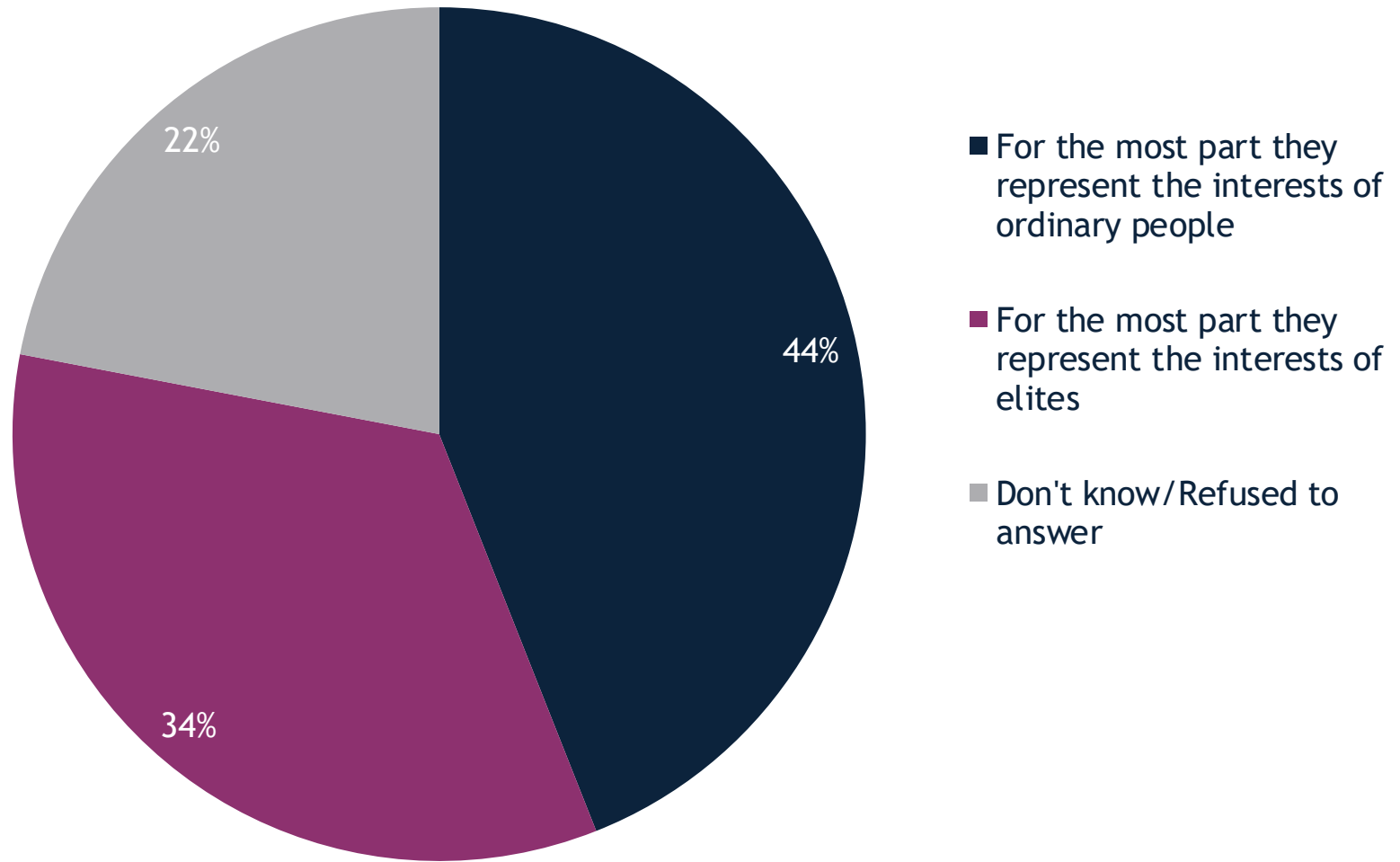## Percentages shown are total responding "strongly approve" and "somewhat approve"

Issue	Percentage
Improving education	90%
Electricity availability	86%
Transportation infrastructure	81%
Availability of drinking water	77%
Fighting violent extremism*	76%
Delivering quality healthcare	74%
Keeping the peace	71%
Strengthening democracy	52%
Fighting corruption	48%
Controlling inflation	40%
Reducing unemployment	37%

On each of these issues, how would you rate the national government?
Percentages shown are total responding "strongly approve" and "somewhat approve"

Improving education
- Sept 2019: 90%
- May 2018: 71%
- Apr 2017: 90%
- Feb 2016: 88%

Electricity availability
- Sept 2019: 86%
- May 2018: 64%
- Apr 2017: 78%
- Feb 2016: 70%

Transportation infrastructure
- Sept 2019: 81%
- May 2018: 61%
- Apr 2017: 84%
- Feb 2016: 77%

Availability of drinking water
- Sept 2019: 77%
- May 2018: 67%
- Apr 2017: 79%
- Feb 2016: 70%

Fighting violent extremism*
- Sept 2019: 76%
- May 2018: 59%
- Apr 2017: 76%

Delivering quality healthcare
- Sept 2019: 74%
- May 2018: 67%
- Apr 2017: 83%
- Feb 2016: 78%

Keeping the peace
- Sept 2019: 71%
- May 2018: 50%
- Apr 2017: 72%
- Feb 2016: 72%

Strengthening democracy
- Sept 2019: 52%
- May 2018: 44%
- Apr 2017: 62%
- Feb 2016: 49%

Fighting corruption
- Sept 2019: 48%
- May 2018: 35%
- Apr 2017: 60%
- Feb 2016: 58%

Controlling inflation
- Sept 2019: 40%
- May 2018: 33%
- Apr 2017: 47%
- Feb 2016: 62%

Reducing unemployment
- Sept 2019: 37%
- May 2018: 24%
- Apr 2017: 51%
- Feb 2016: 61%

Legend: ■ Sept 2019 ■ May 2018 ■ Apr 2017 ■ Feb 2016

*This issue was not asked about in the February 2016 survey

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On the following issue, how would you rate the national government?
Addressing the Rohingya refugee crisis

Legend:
- Strongly approve
- Somewhat approve
- Somewhat disapprove
- Strongly disapprove
- Don't know/Refused to answer

14%
23%
12%
33%
18%

Thinking now about civil society organizations, in your opinion do you think that such organizations for the most part represent the interests of ordinary people or do they mostly represent the interests of the elites?

- ■ For the most part they represent the interests of ordinary people
- ■ For the most part they represent the interests of elites
- ■ Don't know/Refused to answer

Elections

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Would you like to see new political parties in future elections or are you satisfied with the current choices?

May 2018

16%

26%

59%

Sept 2019

14%

21%

66%
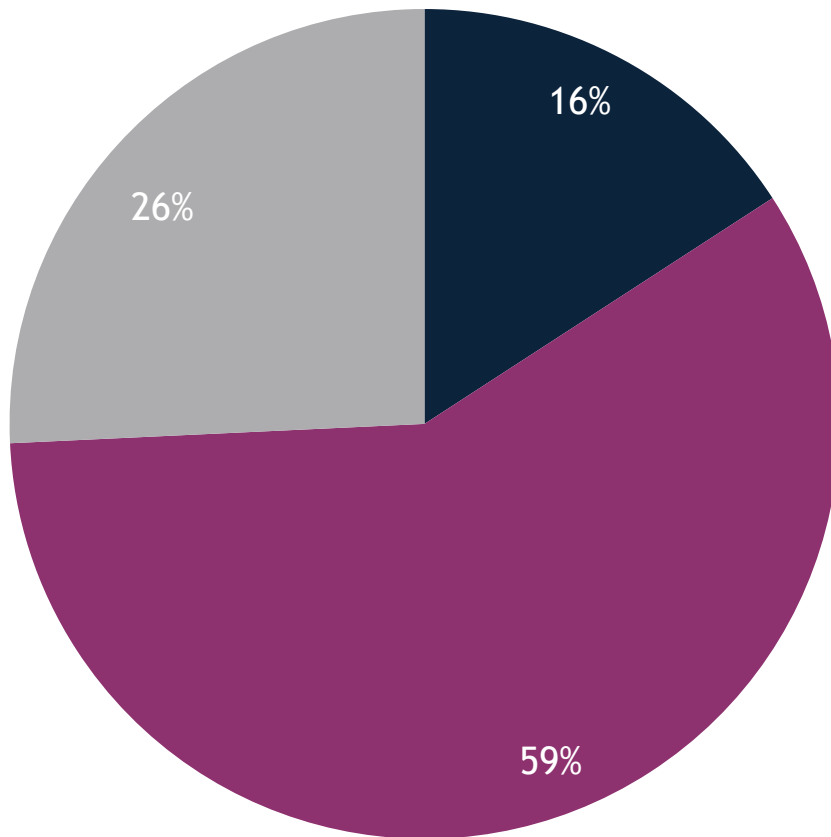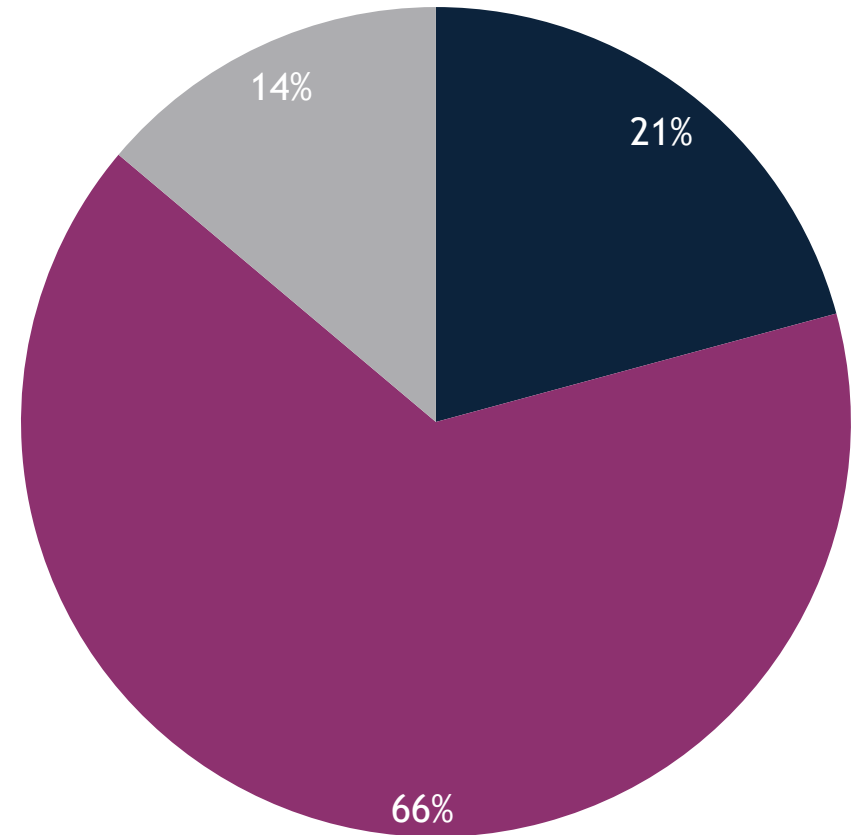
■ I'd like to see new political parties ■ I'm satisfied with the current choices ■ Don't know/Refused to answer

How important is it to you that the Awami League-led government seek input from other political parties and include them in the decision-making process?

May 2018
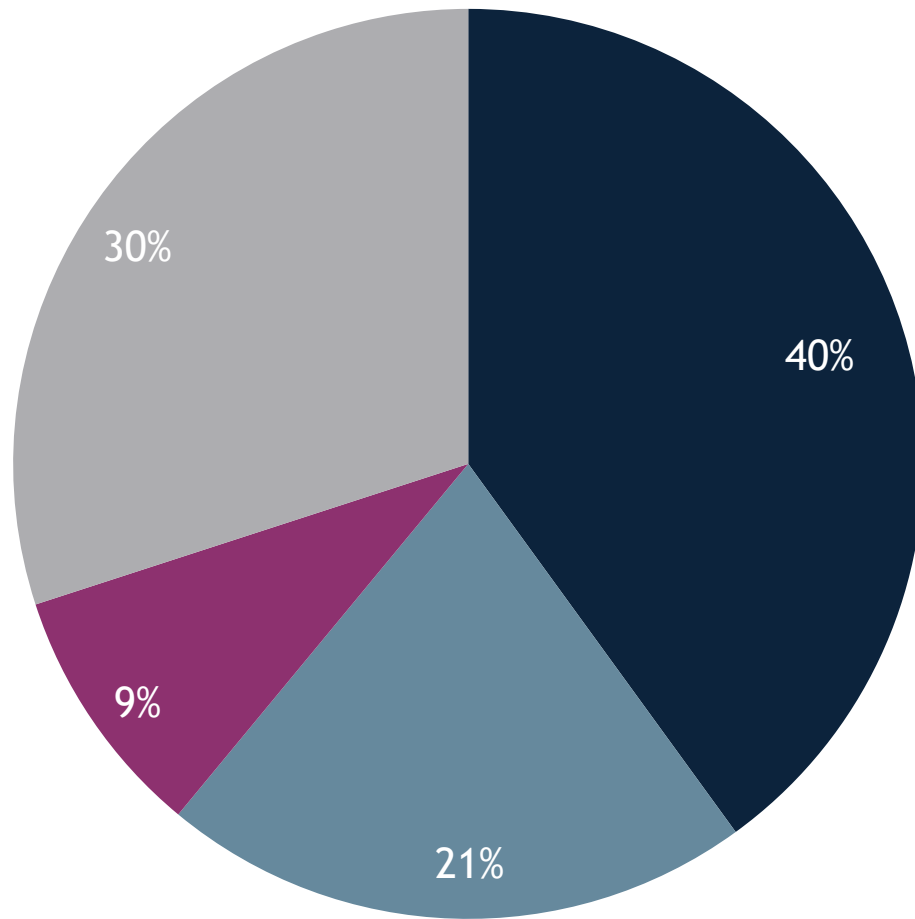
Sept 2019
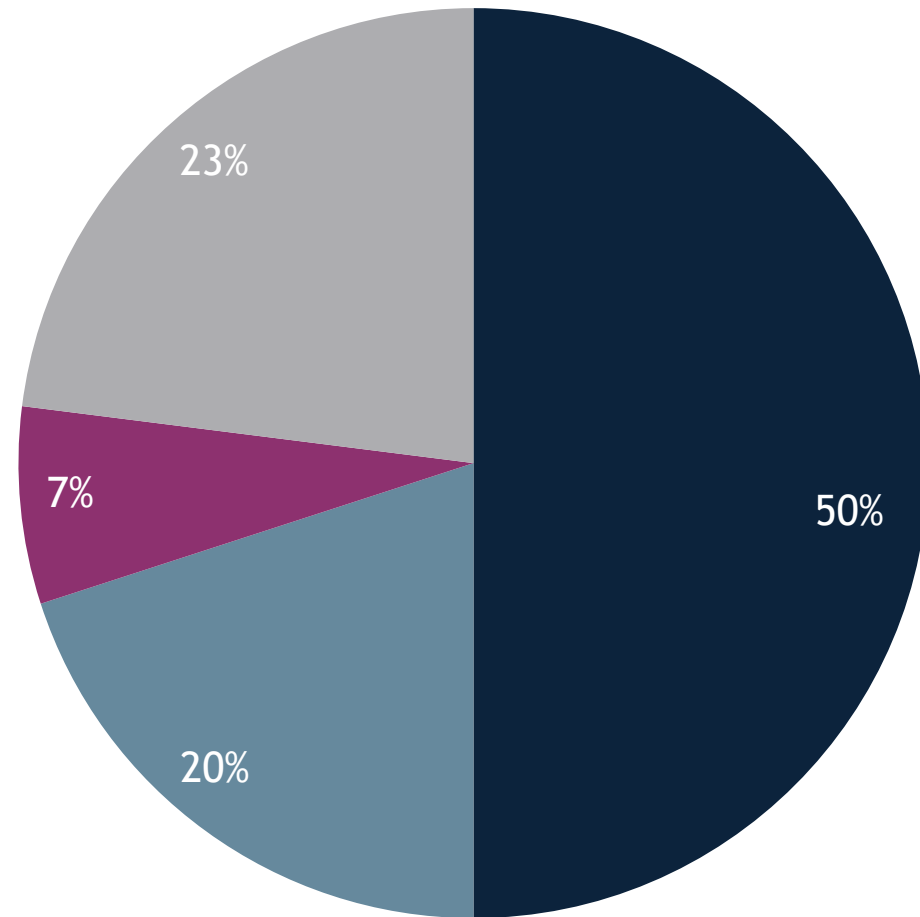
■ Very important　　■ Somewhat important　　■ Not important at all　　■ Don't know/Refused to answer

Do you agree or disagree with this statement:
The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and the Awami League are capable of putting aside their differences and working together to solve the problems facing Bangladesh. And would you say you strongly or somewhat agree/disagree?

May 2018

- 39%
- 20%
- 5%
- 11%
- 25%

Sept 2019

- 39%
- 17%
- 6%
- 18%
- 20%

■ Strongly agree   ■ Somewhat agree   ■ Somewhat disagree   ■ Strongly disagree   ■ Don't know/Refused to answer

Democracy

Would you say you agreed or disagreed with the following statement: There is a gap between the political elites and the people and it is growing larger.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/Refused to answer

56%
20%
6%
5%
15%
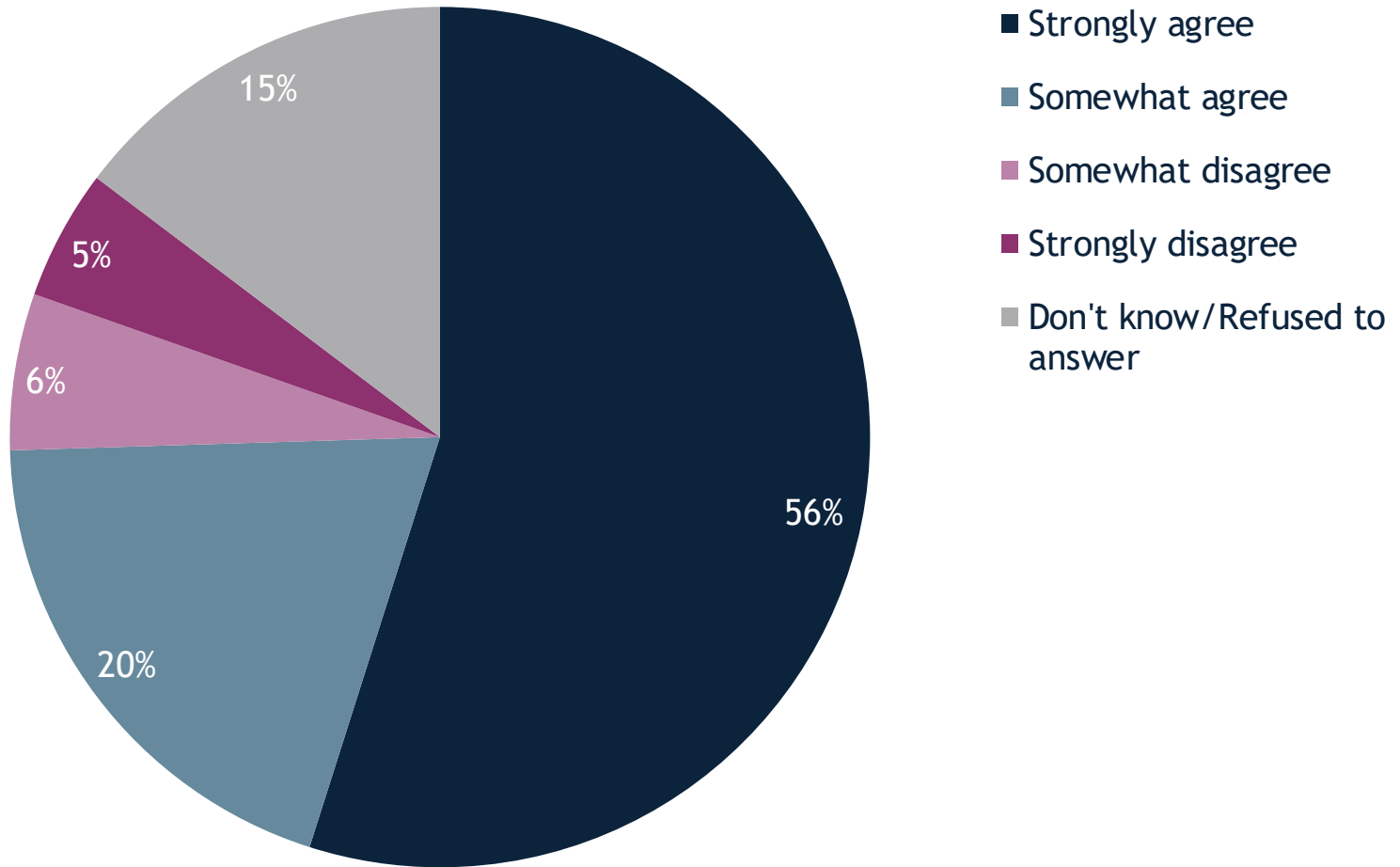
On a scale from one to five, to what extent do you think that people in Bangladesh feel free to publicly express their political opinions, with one being they do not feel free to express their opinions at all, and five being they feel completely free to express their opinions?
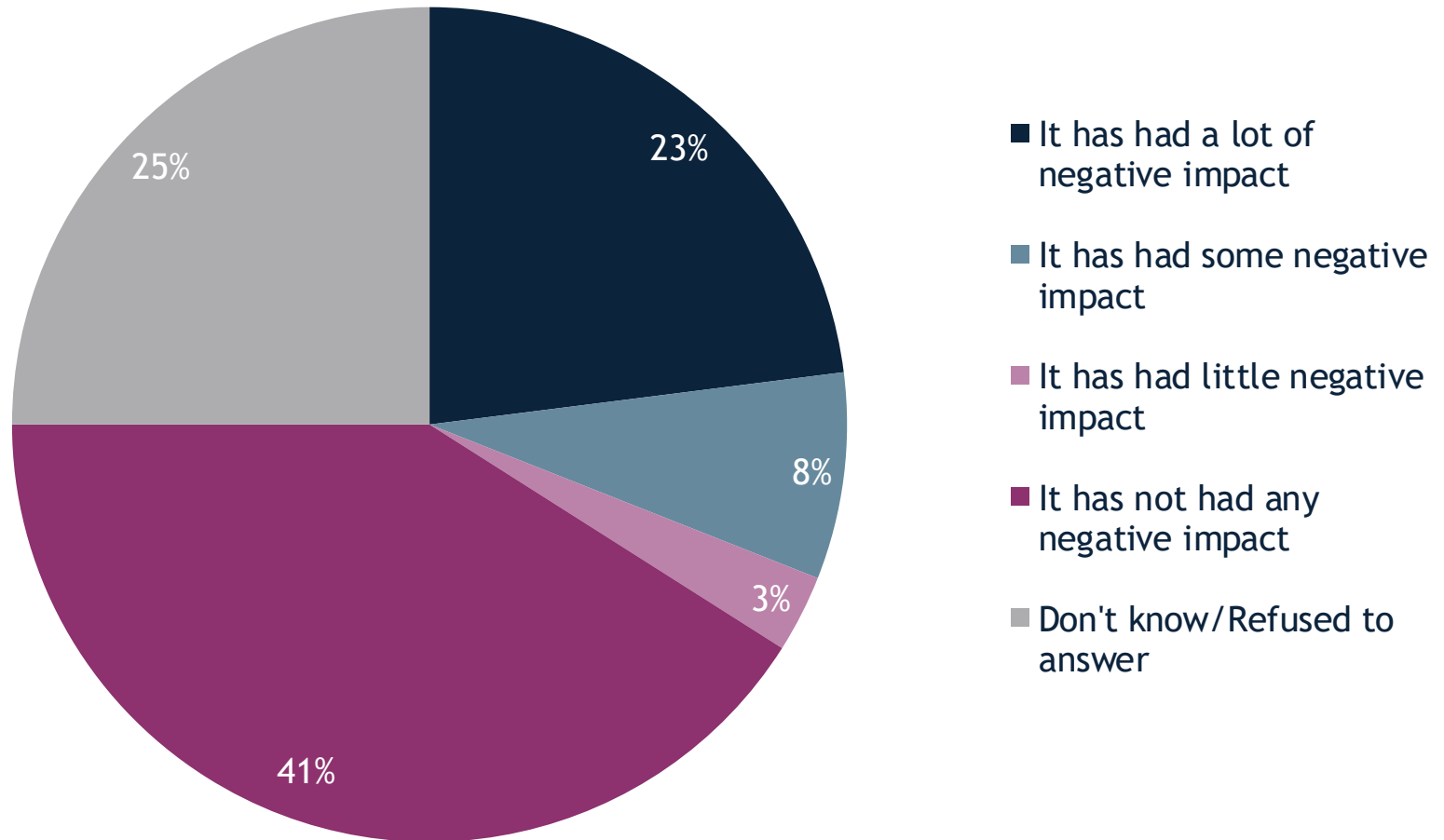

Sept 2019: 1 = 48%, 2 = 3%, 3 = 2%, 4 = 1%, 5 = 34%, Don't know/Refused to answer = 12%

May 2018: 1 = 30%, 2 = 8%, 3 = 18%, 4 = 6%, 5 = 17%, Don't know/Refused to answer = 21%

Legend: ■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ Don't know/Refused to answer

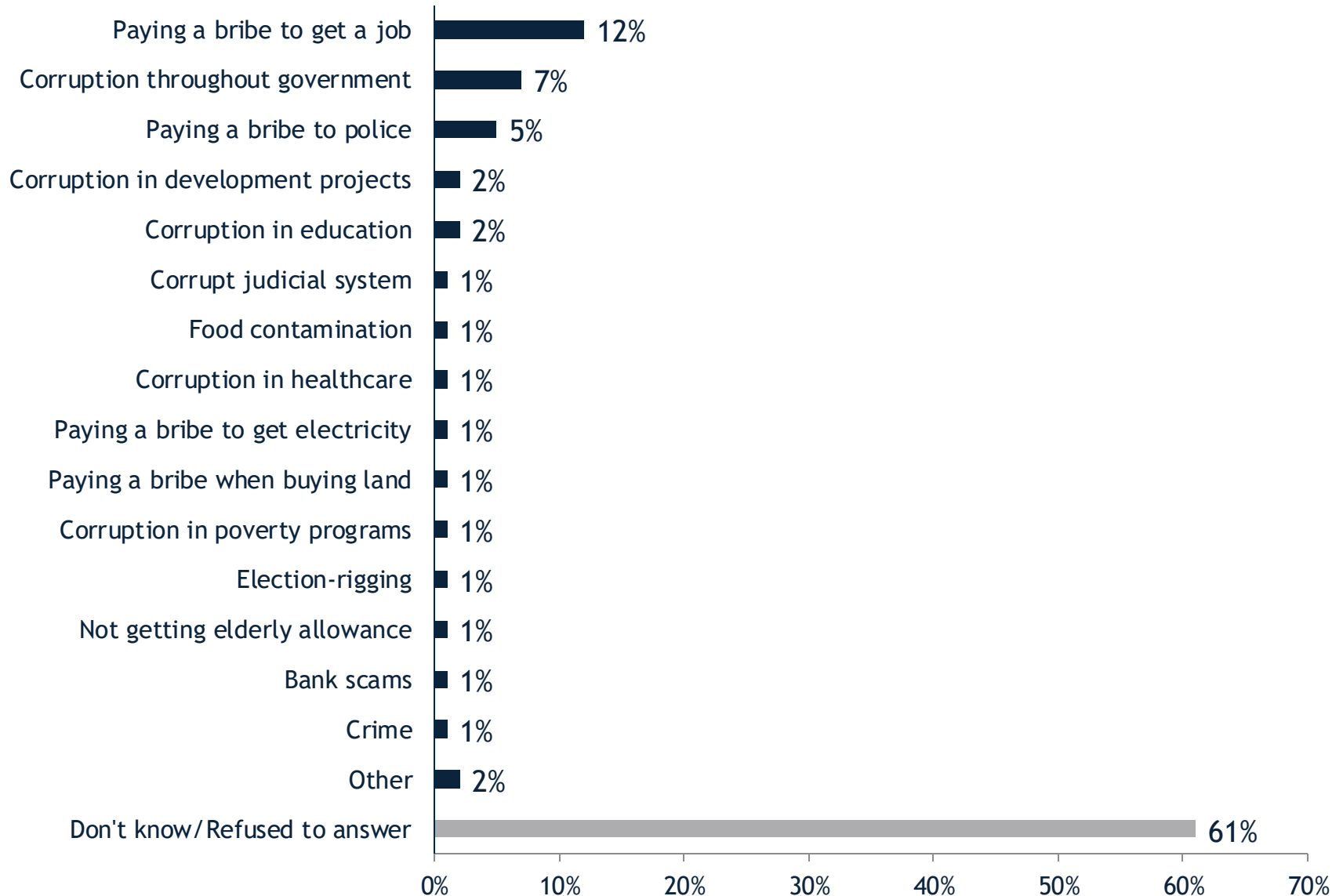Corruption

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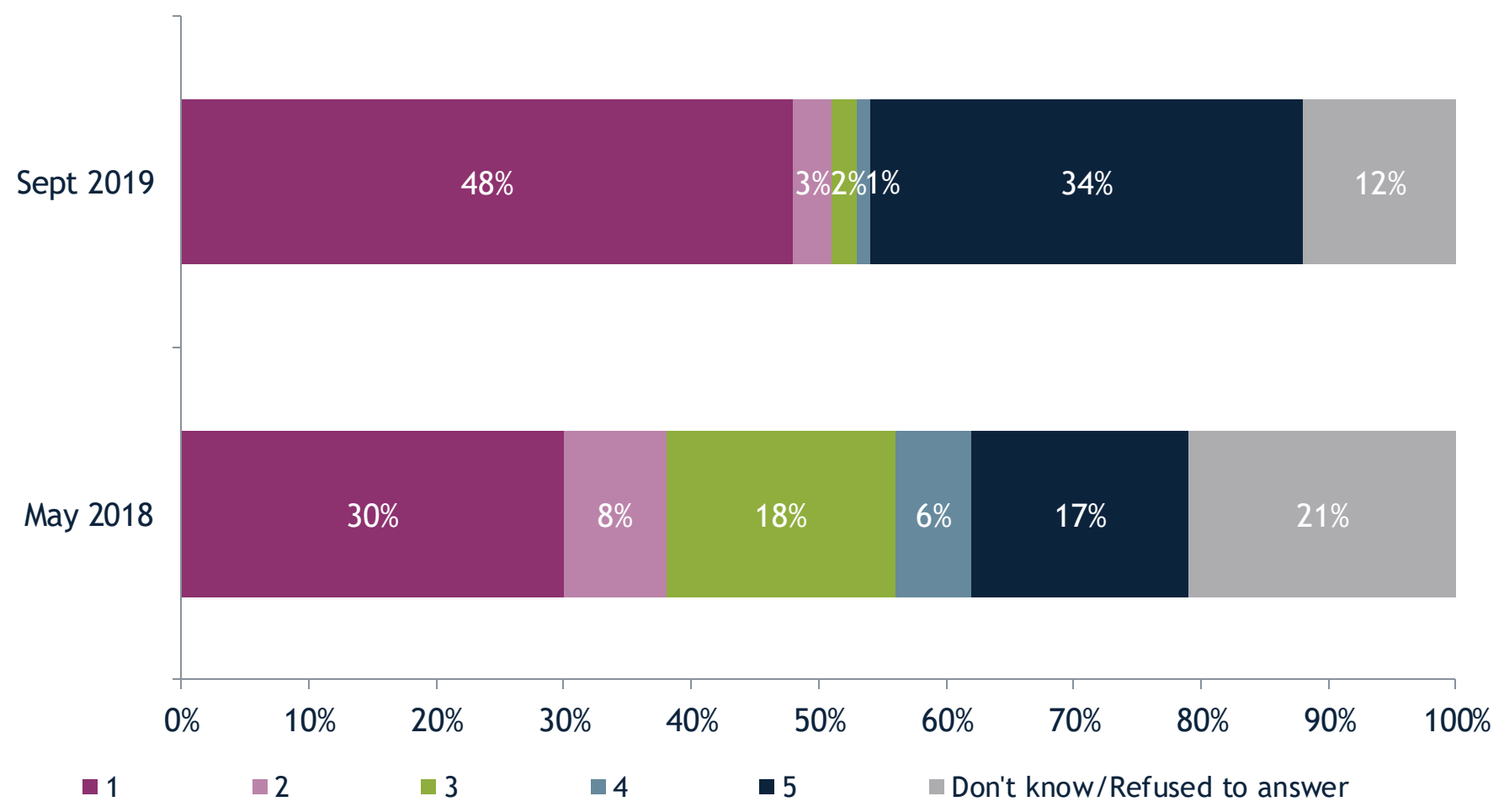
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Now I would like to discuss corruption with you. When I say corruption, I mean having to do a favor, give a gift or pay a bribe because someone misuses their position for personal gains. To what extent, if any, has corruption had a negative impact on you?
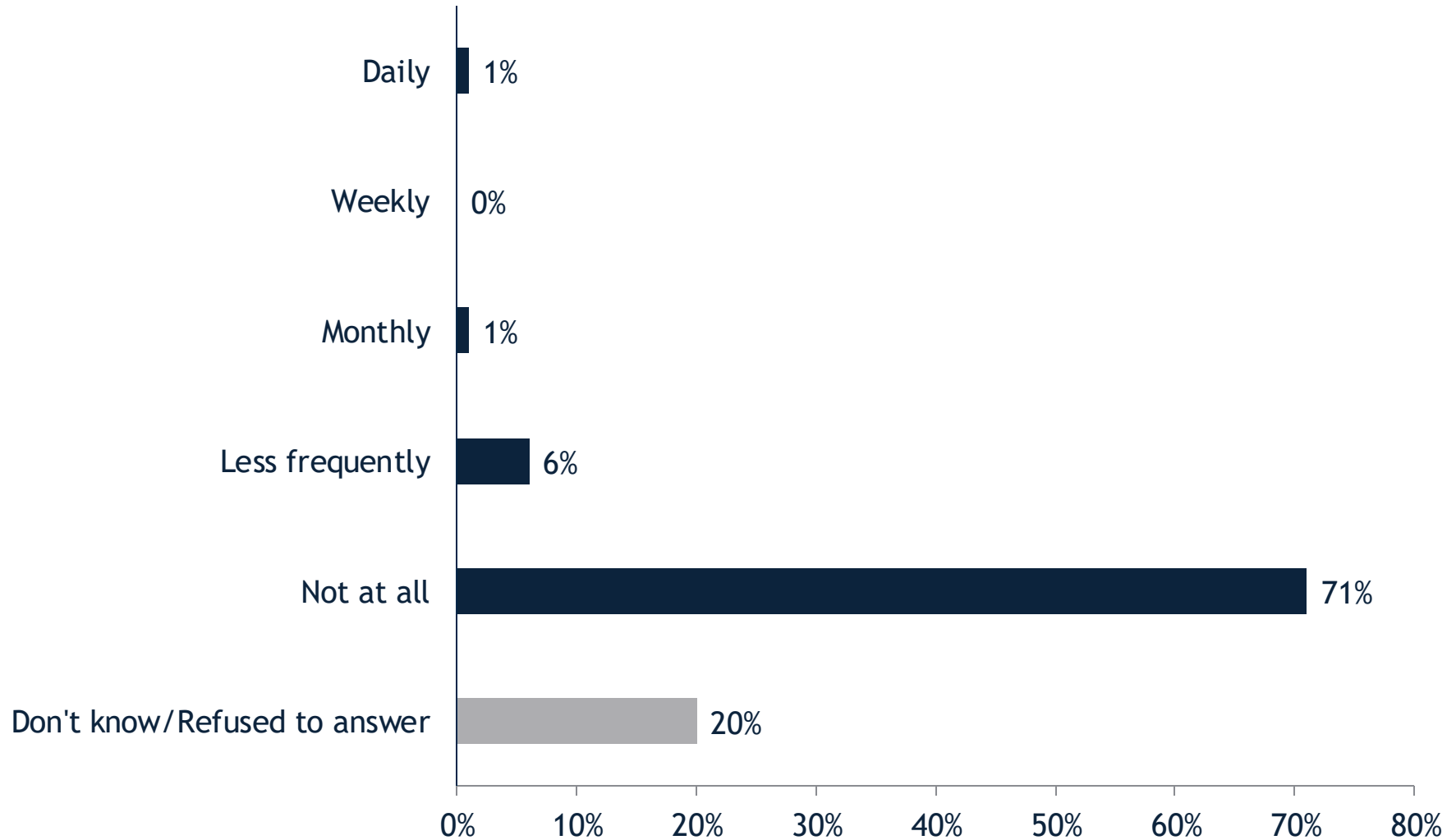

- It has had a lot of negative impact — 23%
- It has had some negative impact — 8%
- It has had little negative impact — 3%
- It has not had any negative impact — 41%
- Don't know/Refused to answer — 25%

Thinking some more about this, can you give one example of corruption in Bangladesh?

Spontaneous response

Category	Percentage
Paying a bribe to get a job	12%
Corruption throughout government	7%
Paying a bribe to police	5%
Corruption in development projects	2%
Corruption in education	2%
Corrupt judicial system	1%
Food contamination	1%
Corruption in healthcare	1%
Paying a bribe to get electricity	1%
Paying a bribe when buying land	1%
Corruption in poverty programs	1%
Election-rigging	1%
Not getting elderly allowance	1%
Bank scams	1%
Crime	1%
Other	2%
Don't know/Refused to answer	61%

In the past 12 months, how often, if at all, have you had to do a favor, give a gift or pay a bribe?

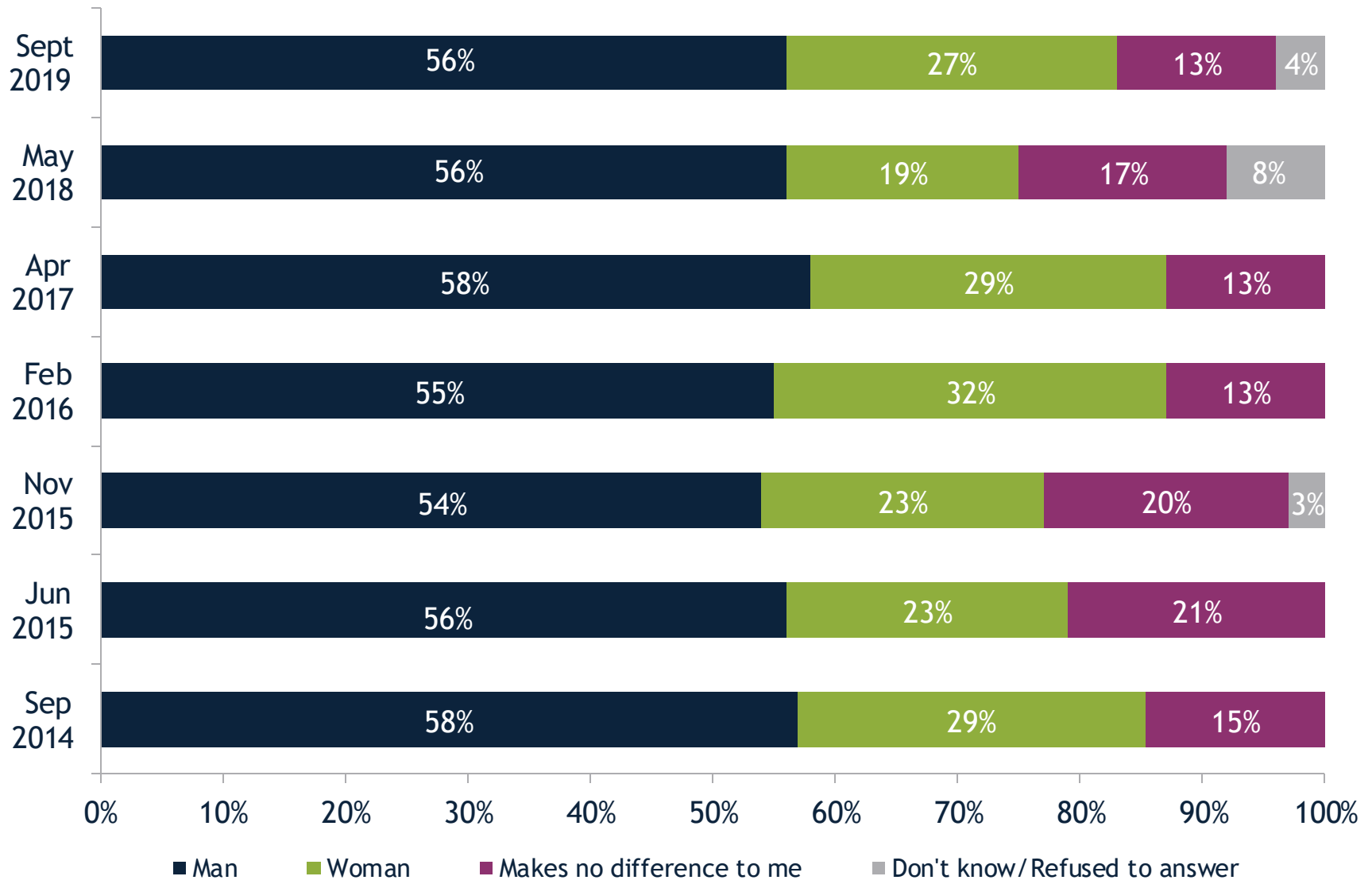| Category	Percentage
Daily	1%
Weekly	0%
Monthly	1%
Less frequently	6%
Not at all	71%
Don't know/Refused to answer	20%

Women & Youth

CENTER FOR INSIGHTS IN SURVEY RESEARCH

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If there are two candidates running for office and they are exactly the same aside from the fact that one is a man and one is a woman, which candidate are you more likely to support?
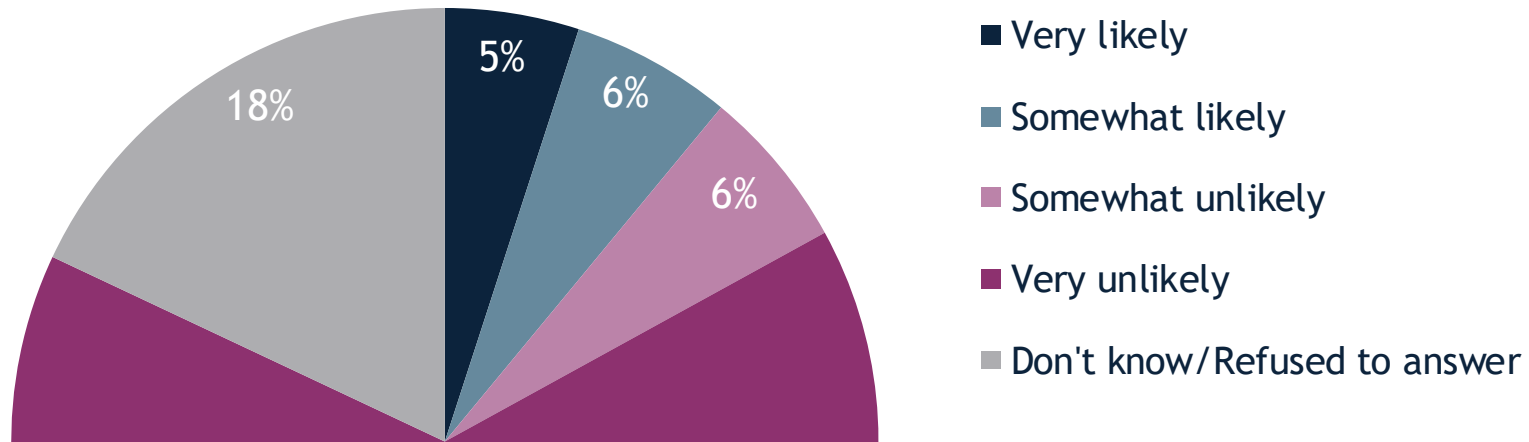
	Man	Woman	Makes no difference to me	Don't know/Refused to answer
Sept 2019	56%	27%	13%	4%
May 2018	56%	19%	17%	8%
Apr 2017	58%	29%	13%	
Feb 2016	55%	32%	13%	
Nov 2015	54%	23%	20%	3%
Jun 2015	56%	23%	21%	
Sep 2014	58%	29%	15%	

■ Man   ■ Woman   ■ Makes no difference to me   ■ Don't know/Refused to answer

If there are two candidates running for office and they are exactly the same aside from the fact that one is a man and one is a woman, which candidate are you more likely to support?
Disaggregated by gender

Men	Sept 2019	May 2018	Apr 2017	Feb 2016	Nov 2015	Jun 2015	Sep 2014
Man	72%	70%	76%	74%	77%	69%	79%
Woman	12%	7%	11%	14%	5%	10%	7%
No difference	14%	17%	13%	12%	16%	21%	14%
Don't know/Refused	3%	6%	-	-	2%	-	-

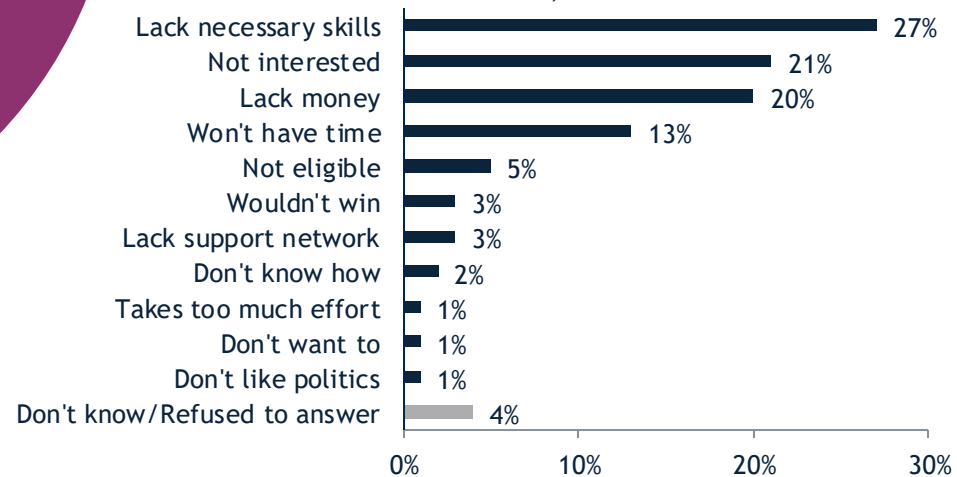| Women	Sept 2019	May 2018	Apr 2017	Feb 2016	Nov 2015	Jun 2015	Sep 2014
Man	39%	42%	40%	36%	31%	42%	34%
Woman	43%	32%	47%	50%	41%	37%	51%
No difference	13%	17%	14%	14%	24%	22%	16%
Don't know/Refused	5%	9%	-	-	4%	-	-%

BASE: Men (n=2,499; +/- 1.96%) / Women (n=2,494; +/- 1.96%)

How likely, if at all, are you to run for local or national office by the age of 35?
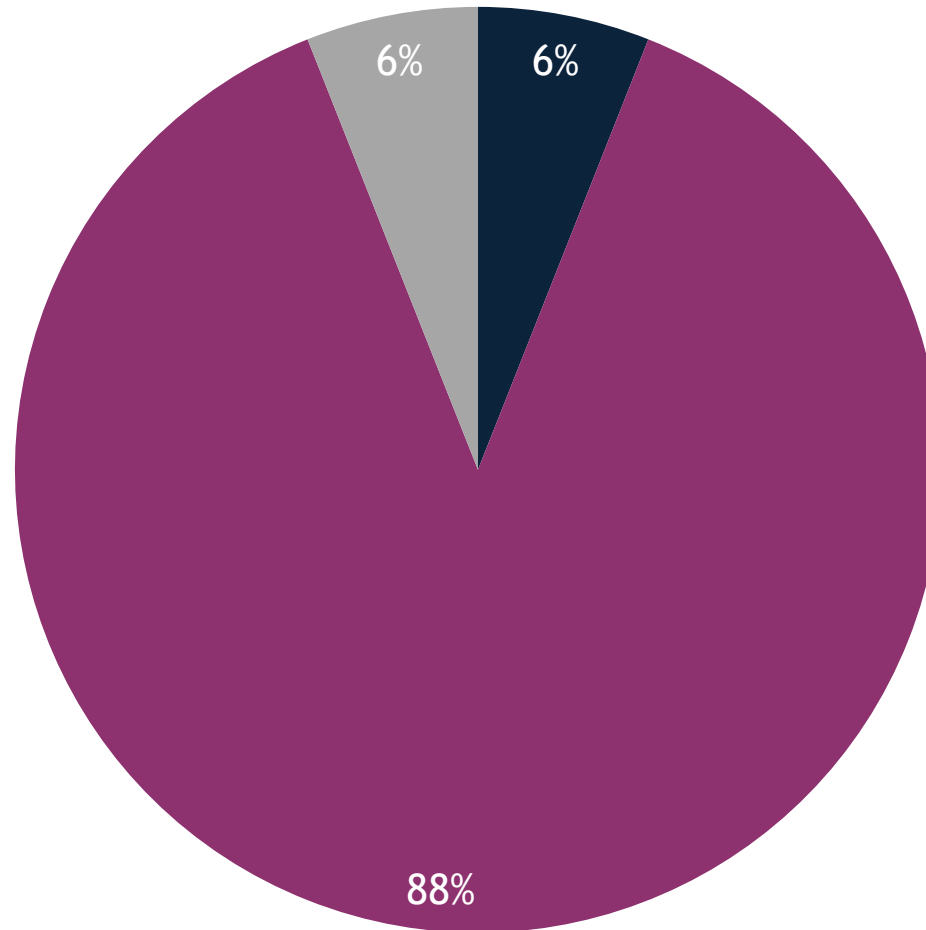## Asked only of respondents 35 years of age and younger; n=2,063

Pie chart:
- Very likely: 5%
- Somewhat likely: 6%
- Somewhat unlikely: 6%
- Very unlikely: 65%
- Don't know/Refused to answer: 18%

What is the primary reason why you would be unlikely to run for office?
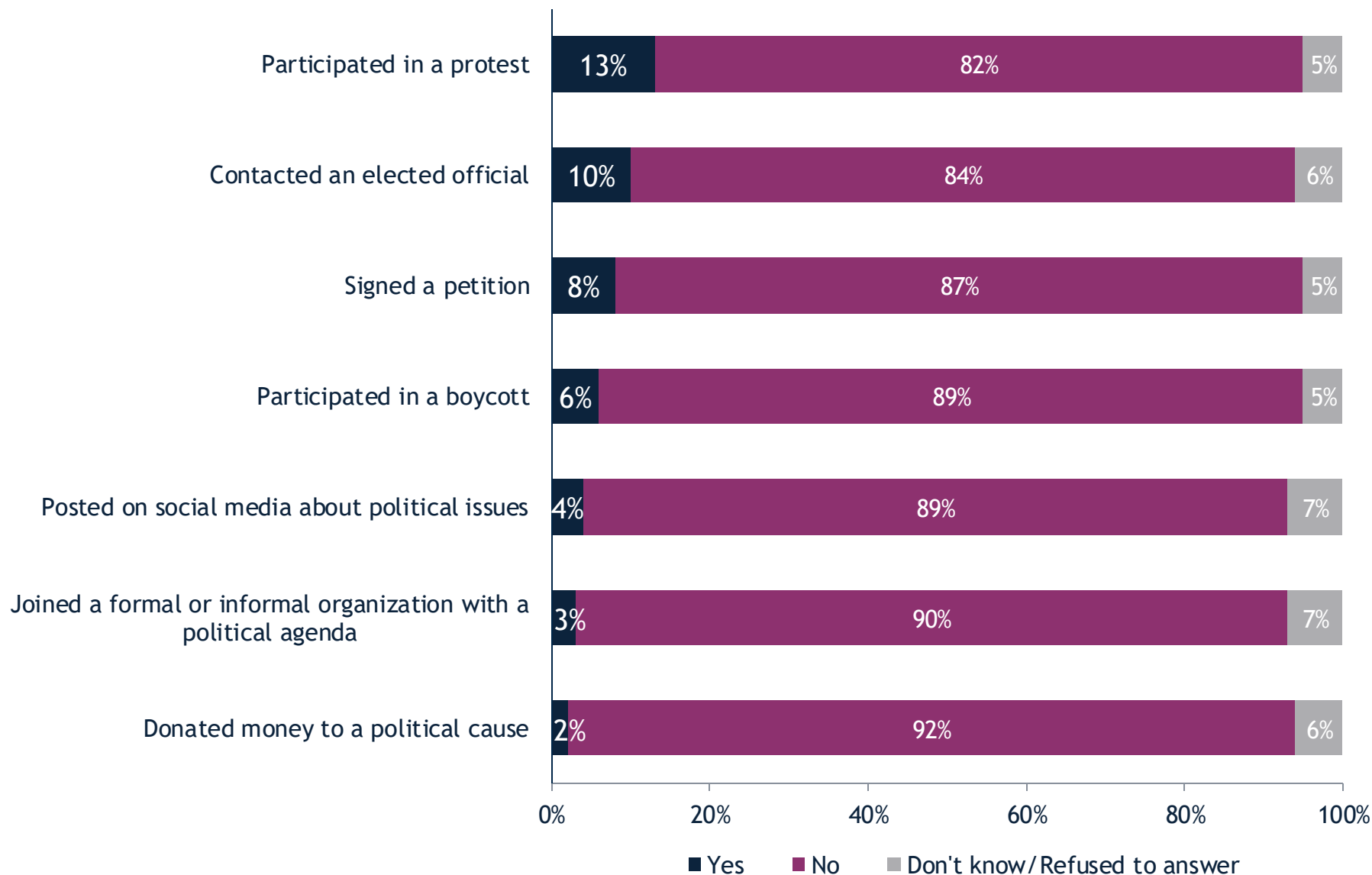Asked of those unlikely to run; open-ended response; n=1,455

Reason	Percent
Lack necessary skills	27%
Not interested	21%
Lack money	20%
Won't have time	13%
Not eligible	5%
Wouldn't win	3%
Lack support network	3%
Don't know how	2%
Takes too much effort	1%
Don't want to	1%
Don't like politics	1%
Don't know/Refused to answer	4%

Are you a member of a political party?
Asked only of respondents 35 years of age and younger; n=2,063

6% **6%** **88%**

■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know/Refused to answer

Have you ever engaged in any of the following activities?
Asked only of respondents 35 years of age and younger; n=2,063

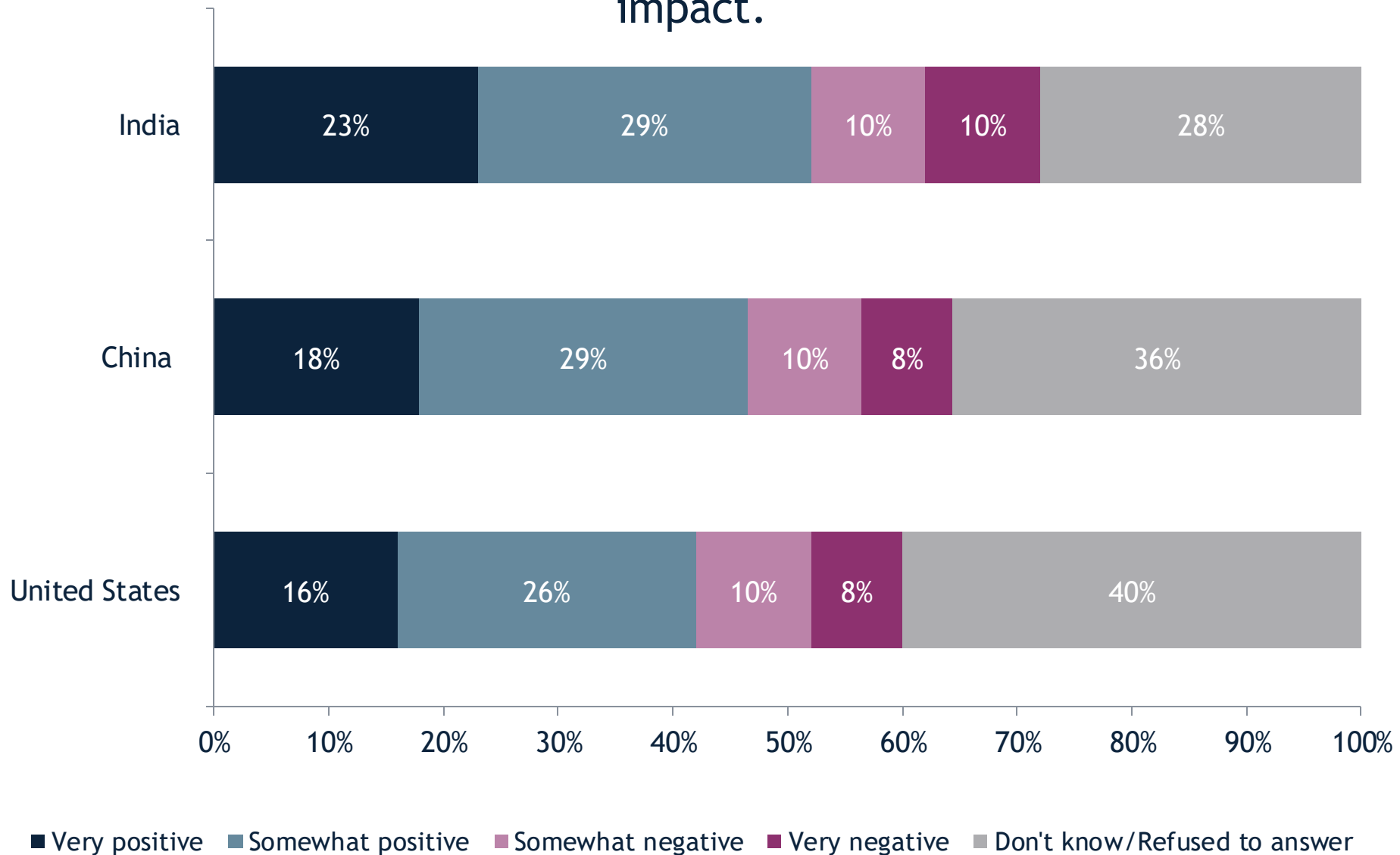| Activity	Yes	No	Don't know/Refused to answer
Participated in a protest	13%	82%	5%
Contacted an elected official	10%	84%	6%
Signed a petition	8%	87%	5%
Participated in a boycott	6%	89%	5%
Posted on social media about political issues	4%	89%	7%
Joined a formal or informal organization with a political agenda	3%	90%	7%
Donated money to a political cause	2%	92%	6%

■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know/Refused to answer

For each of the following countries, please tell me if you think that each country is having a positive or negative impact on Bangladesh, and whether or not that is a very or somewhat positive/negative impact.
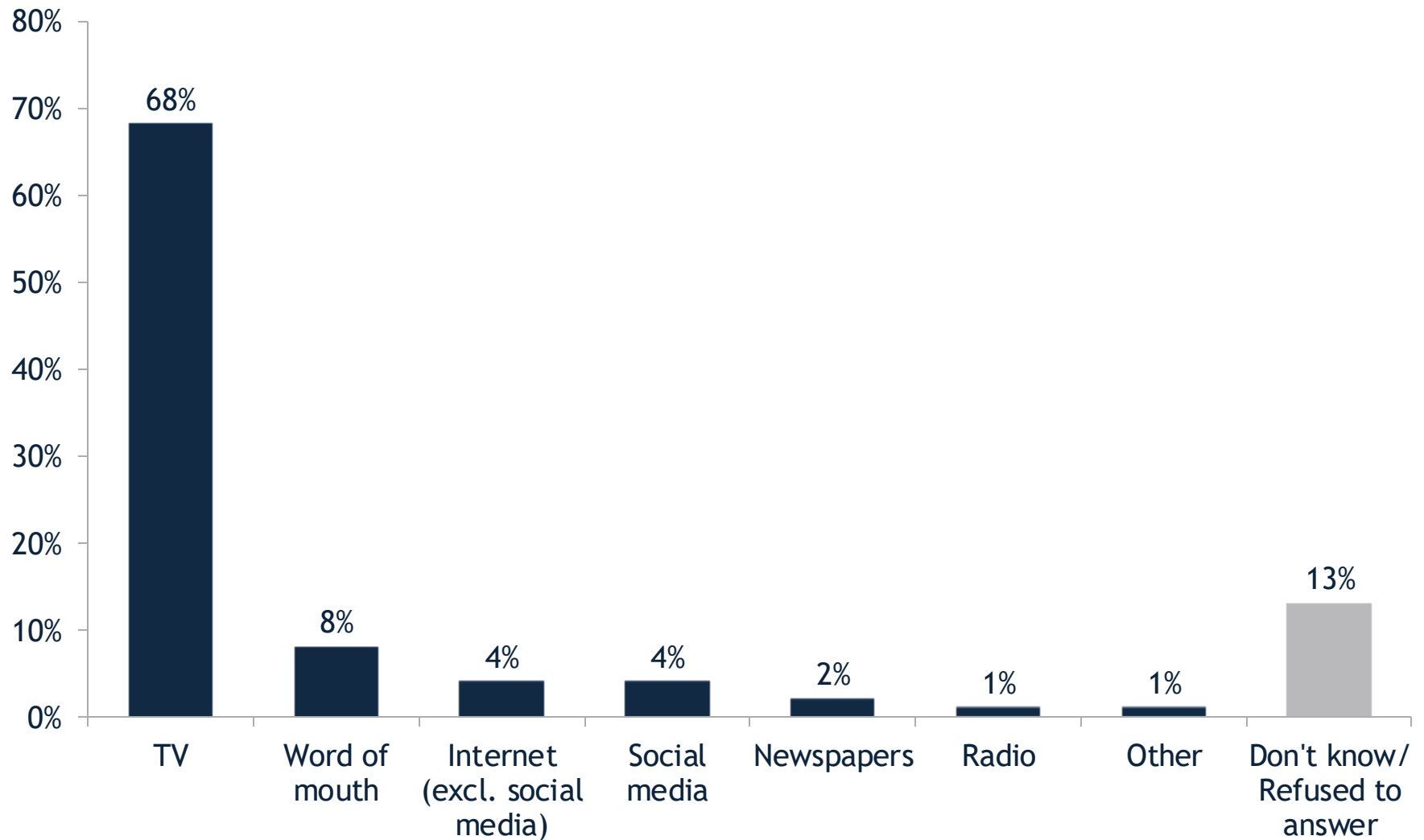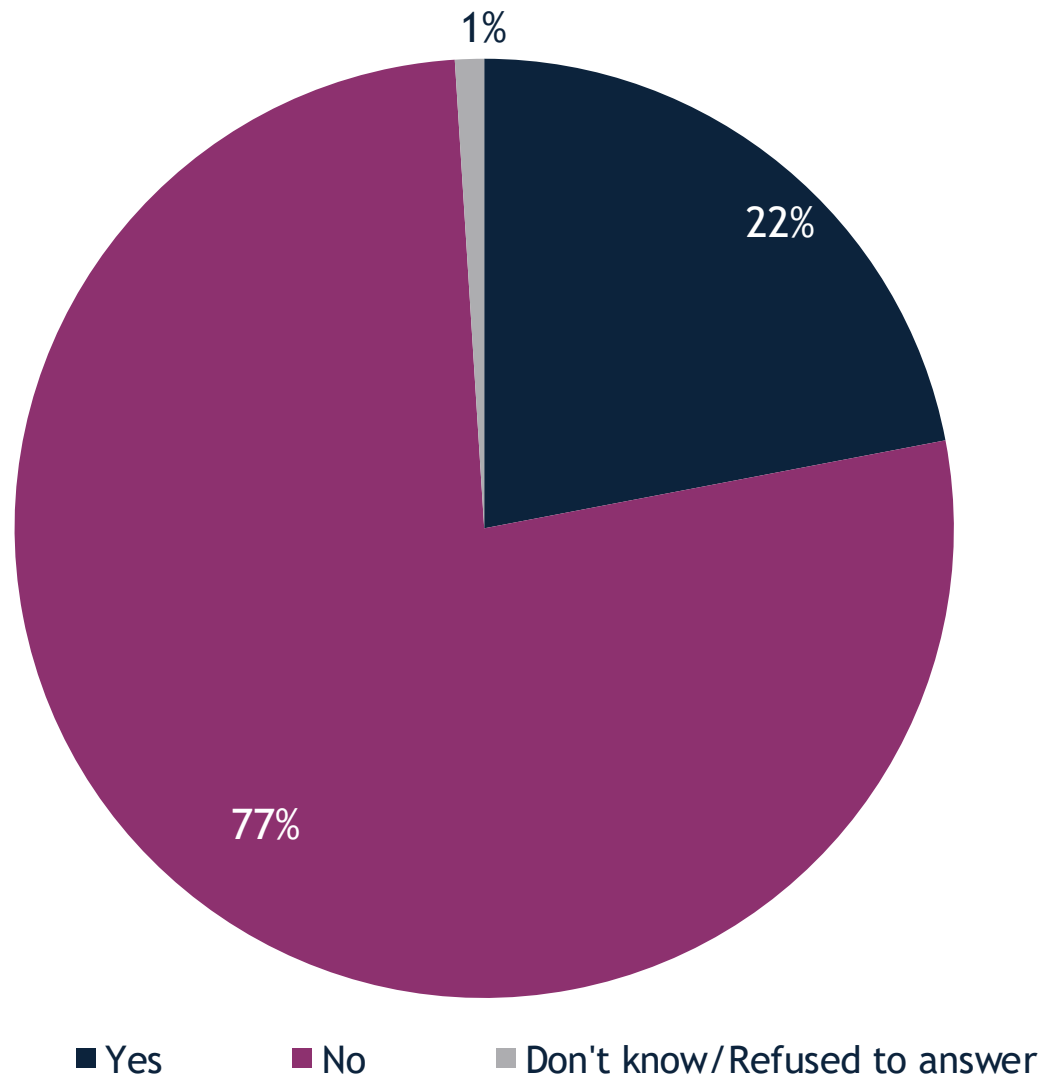
Country	Very positive	Somewhat positive	Somewhat negative	Very negative	Don't know/Refused to answer
India	23%	29%	10%	10%	28%
China	18%	29%	10%	8%	36%
United States	16%	26%	10%	8%	40%

■ Very positive ■ Somewhat positive ■ Somewhat negative ■ Very negative ■ Don't know/Refused to answer

Media

From which type of media are you most likely to get your news?

Do you have access to the internet?

1%

22%

77%

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/Refused to answer

How often do you use the Internet?
Asked of those with access to the Internet; n=1,091

Response	Percentage
Almost every day	71%
At least once a week	21%
At least once a month	5%
Rarely, if ever	2%
Don't know/Refused to answer	0%
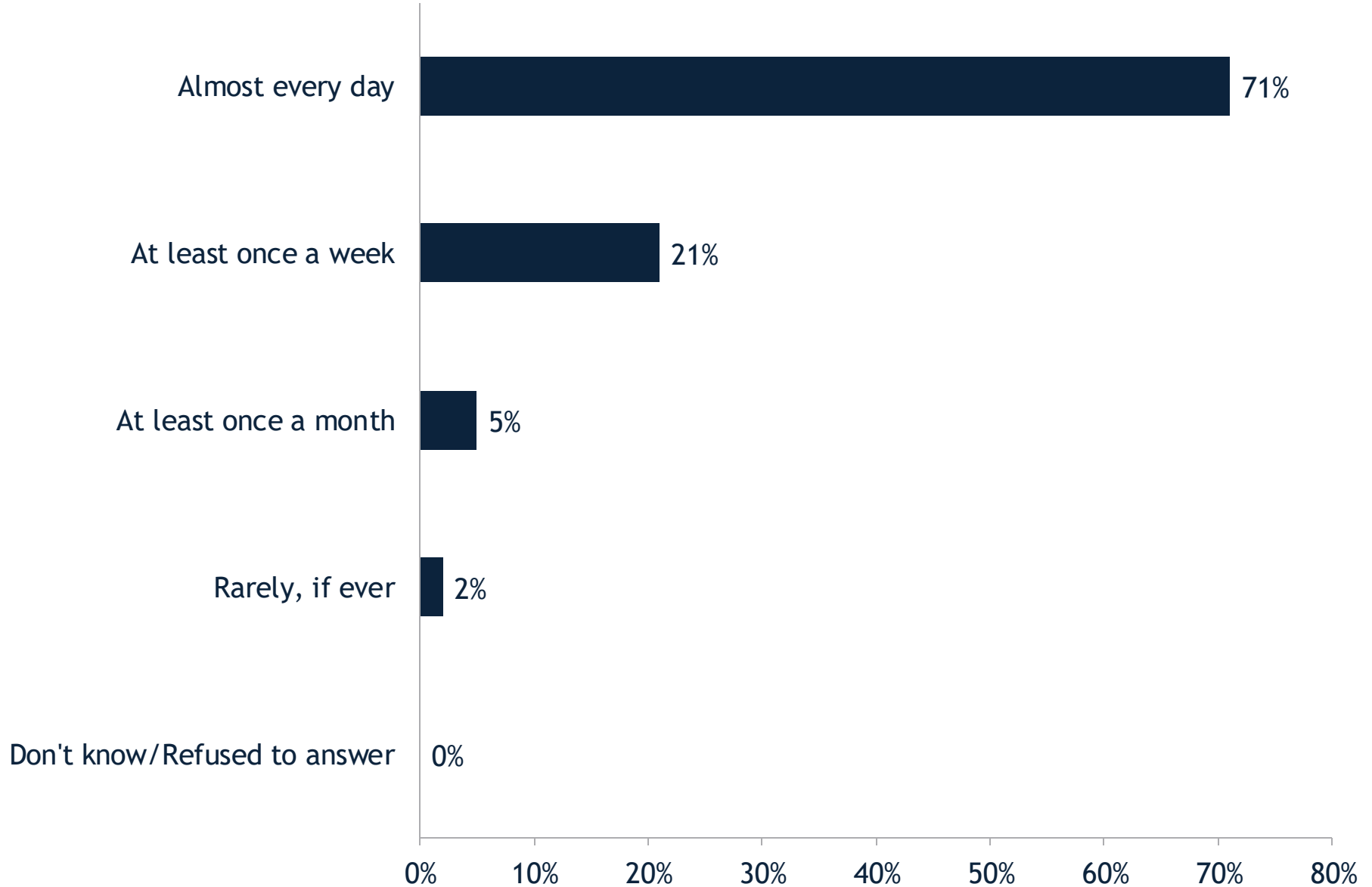
Do you use Facebook?
Asked of those with access to the Internet; n=1,091

13%

87%
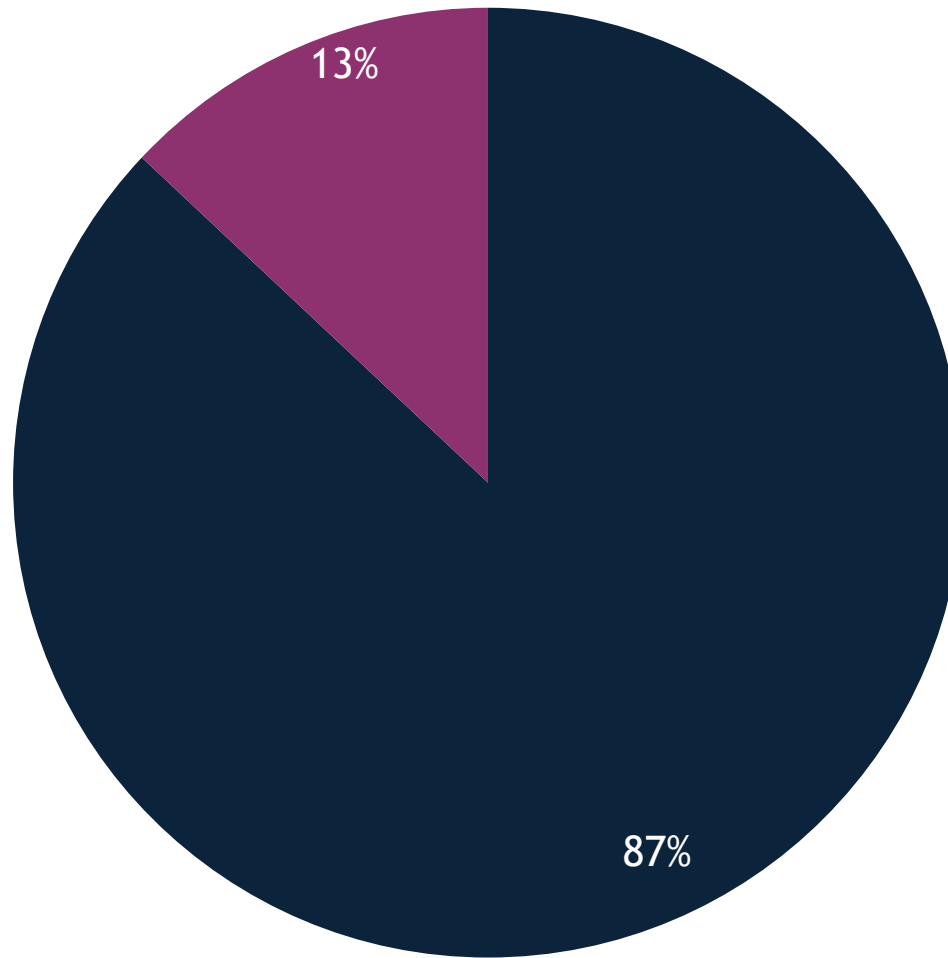
■ Yes　　■ No　　■ Don't know/Refused to answer

Demographics

Economic Situation

Living comfortably on income	13%
Getting by on income	32%
Finding it difficult on income	33%
Finding it very difficult on income	21%
Don't know/Refused	1%

Division

Dhaka	25%
Chittagong	20%
Rajshahi	13%
Khulna	11%
Rangpur	11%
Sylhet	7%
Barisal	6%
Mymensingh	8%

Education

Cannot read or write	10%
Can only read/write name	15%
Literate/No formal schooling	2%
Class 1-4	12%
Class 5-9	35%
SSC/*Dakhil*	12%
HSC/Alim	8%
Diploma	1%
College	4%
Post-Graduate	1%

Age

18-30	32%
31-40	30%
41-50	18%
51-60	12%
61+	8%

Religion

Sunni Muslim	91%
Shiite Muslim	1%
Hindu	7%
Buddhist	1%
Christian	<1%

Gender

Male	50%
Female	50%

Area

Rural	76%
Urban	24%