

Myanmar Political Aspirations 2015 Asian Barometer Survey

PRESENTATION FOR FEEDBACK FOR FINAL REPORT
AUGUST 2015

Introduction to Asian Barometer Survey



About ABS – Consortium of Academics from East Asia and the United States based in National Taiwan University. Affiliated with the Global Barometer Survey.

Surveys in East Asia began in 2001. Now on 4th wave of comparative survey research

Focus is on the study of democracy, with attention to political culture, governance and political behavior

Project provides open access to data for research and time-line series.

Introduction to 2015 Myanmar ABS

Local partner Yangon School of Political Science. Independent research team. Focus on research and capacity-building.

Project started from May 2014 through March 2015.

Preliminary findings presented to stakeholders in June and for public feedback in August. Final reports will be published by December 2015.

National survey project funded by Taiwan Foundation for Democracy and the National Endowment for Democracy

Three aims: 1) Understand public views of politics; 2) Encourage capacity-building for survey research and understanding of survey research and 3) Include Myanmar in cross-national comparative research.



Interpreting Surveys Cautions

Cautions for over-interpreting specific numbers; important to look at trends and relationships

Importance of context for survey interpretations

Surveys offer insights, but there are limits on explanations. Surveys are one of many tools to promote understanding.

Role of 'reserve' in responding to questions

Role of translation and understanding of political concepts

Survey research in Myanmar is a learning process



Fieldwork Experience

YSPS local implementing organization. Led by research team.

Four teams of trained interviewers sent to north, central and southern Myanmar. One team comprised only of ethnic minorities. Special team also sent to Rakhine

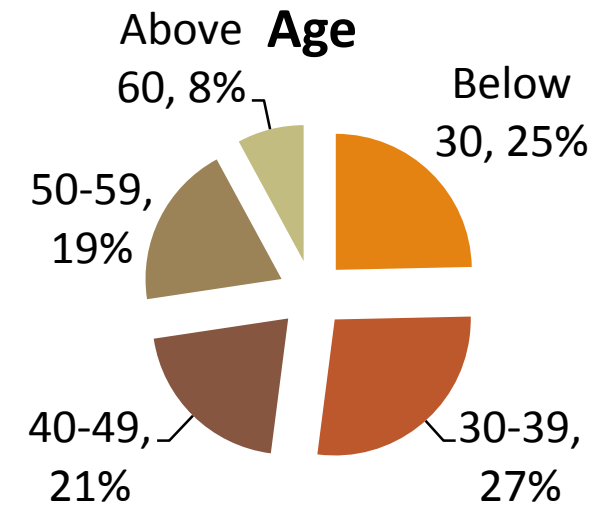
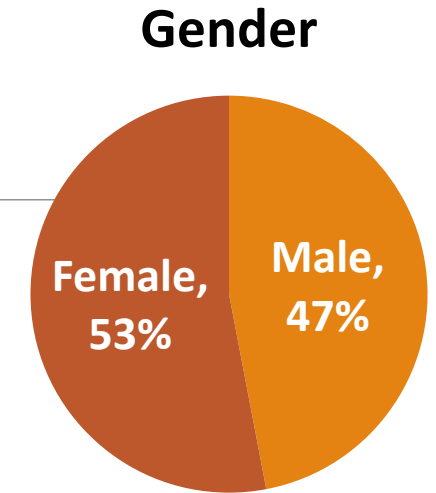
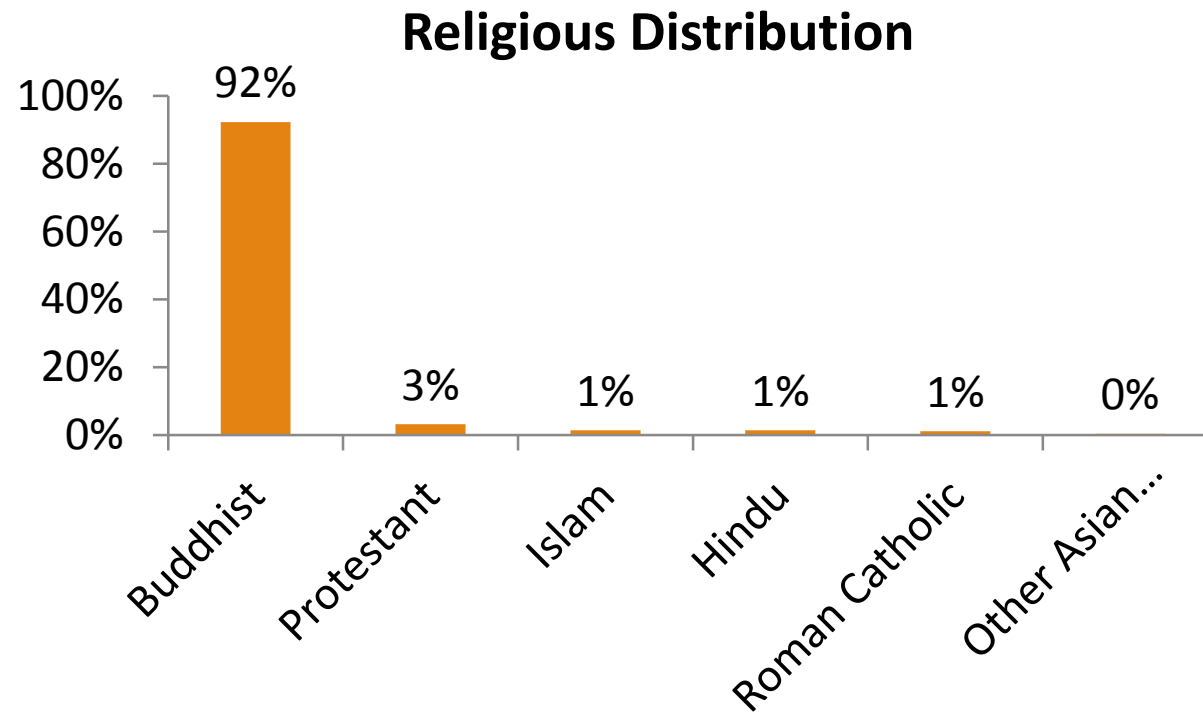
Fieldwork January 5-March 19th All states and regions included in the ABS survey

Refusal rate low 13%, high participation

Assistance from authorities at national, state and local levels. Independent administration

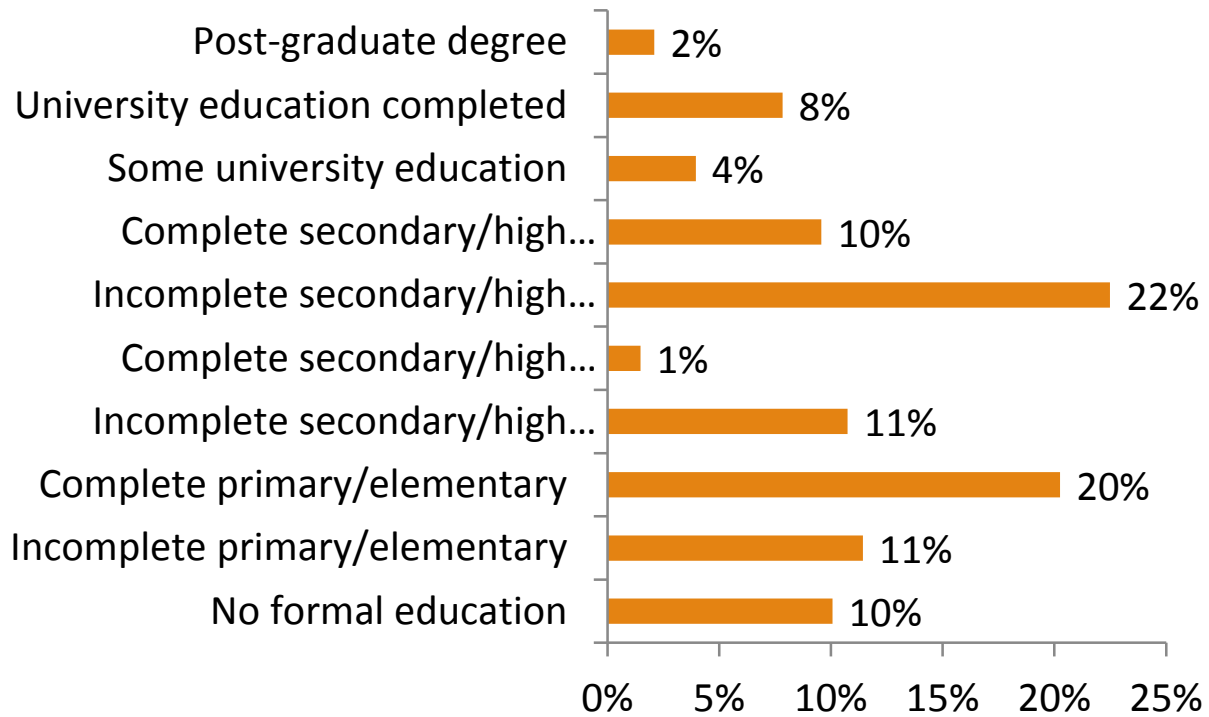


About the Respondents

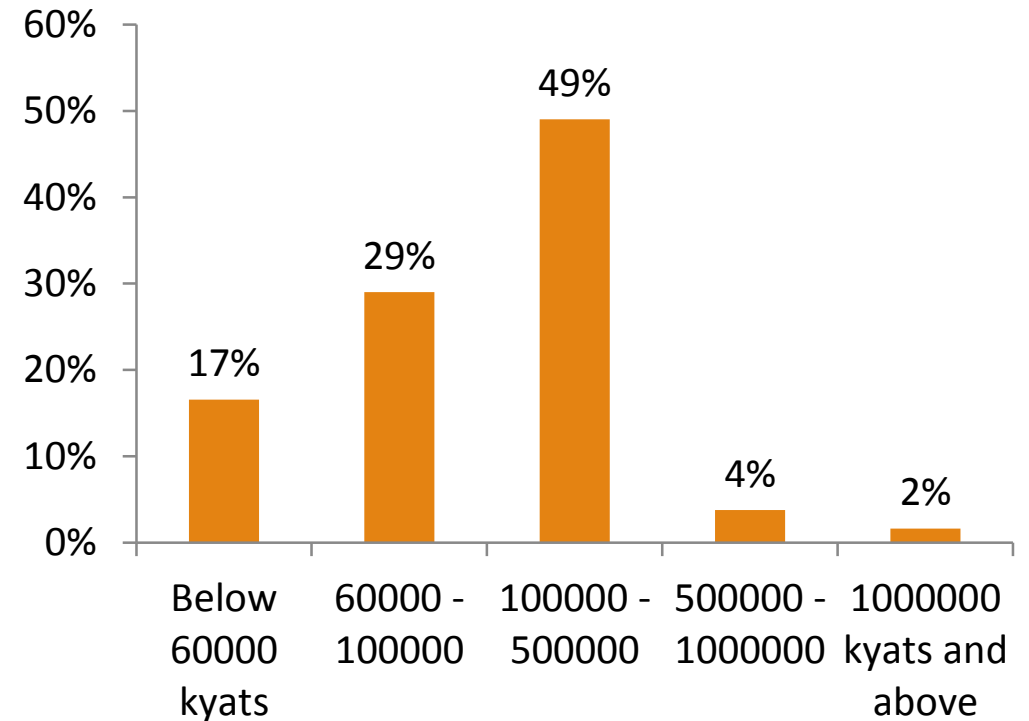


Socio-Economic Distribution

Education Levels



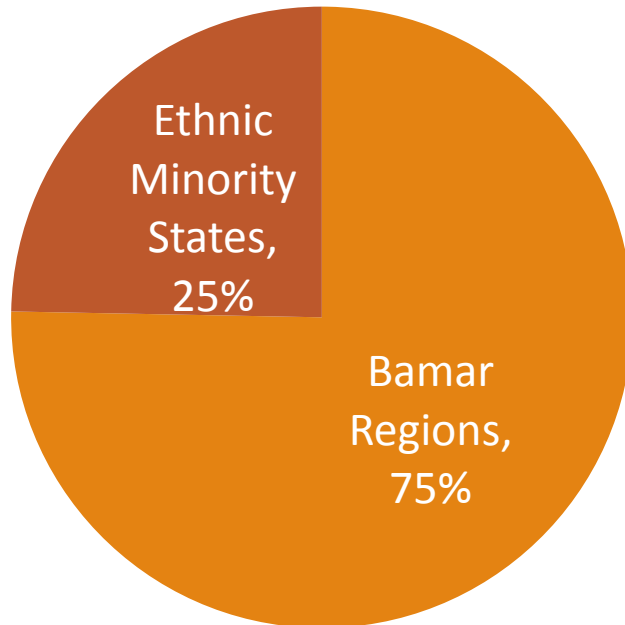
Income Levels



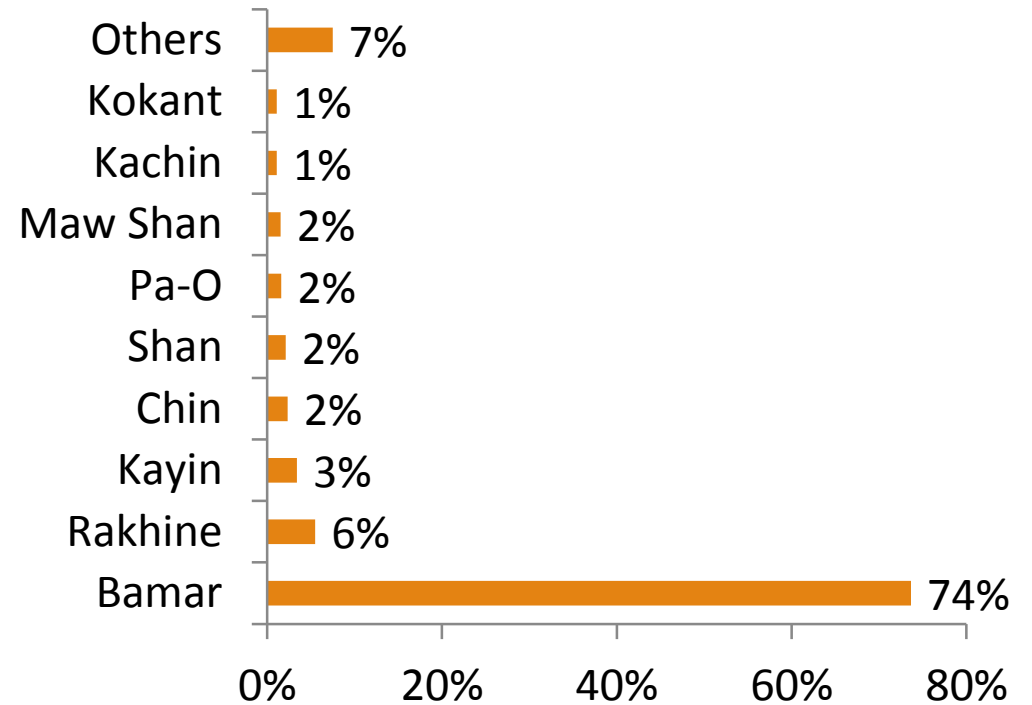
*Ethnic diversity, but not all groups included.
National not ethnic sample*

Ethnic Distribution

Bamar Regions vs. Minority States



Ethnic Distribution



Overview of Findings

Session 1

- A. Economic Conditions
- B. Social Capital
- C. Political Identity – Religion and Ethnicity
- D. Political Culture
- E. Democracy

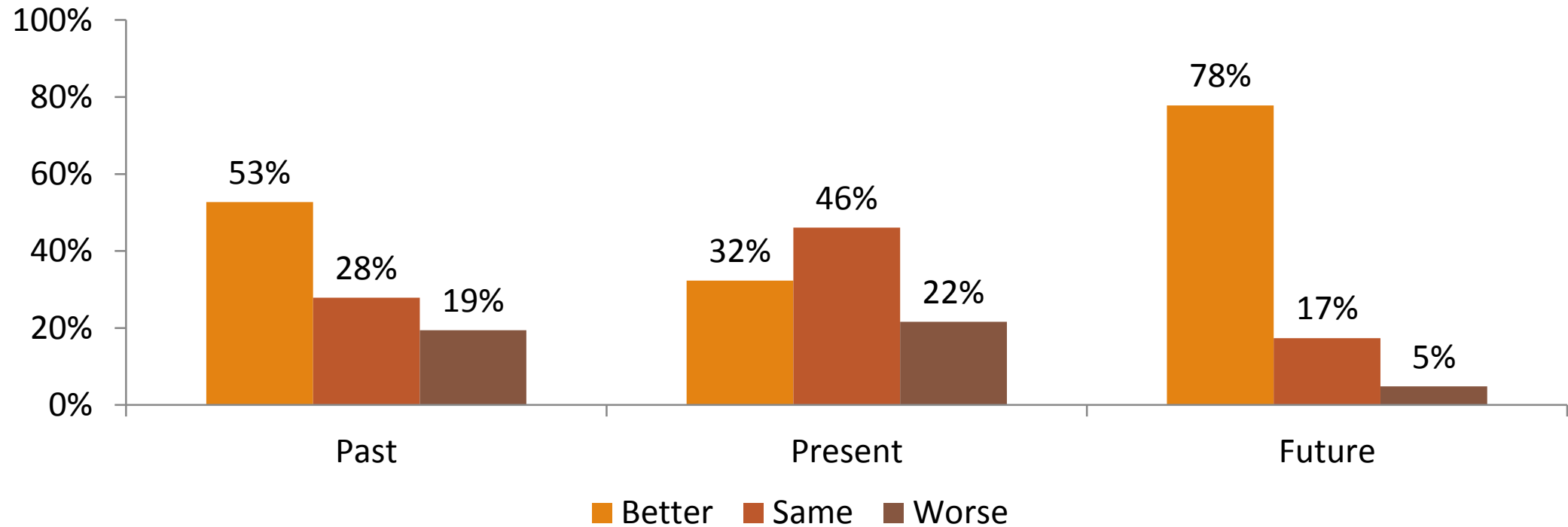
Session 2

- F. Political Engagement
- G. Elections
- H. Institutional Trust & Systemic Support
- I. Government Performance and Governance



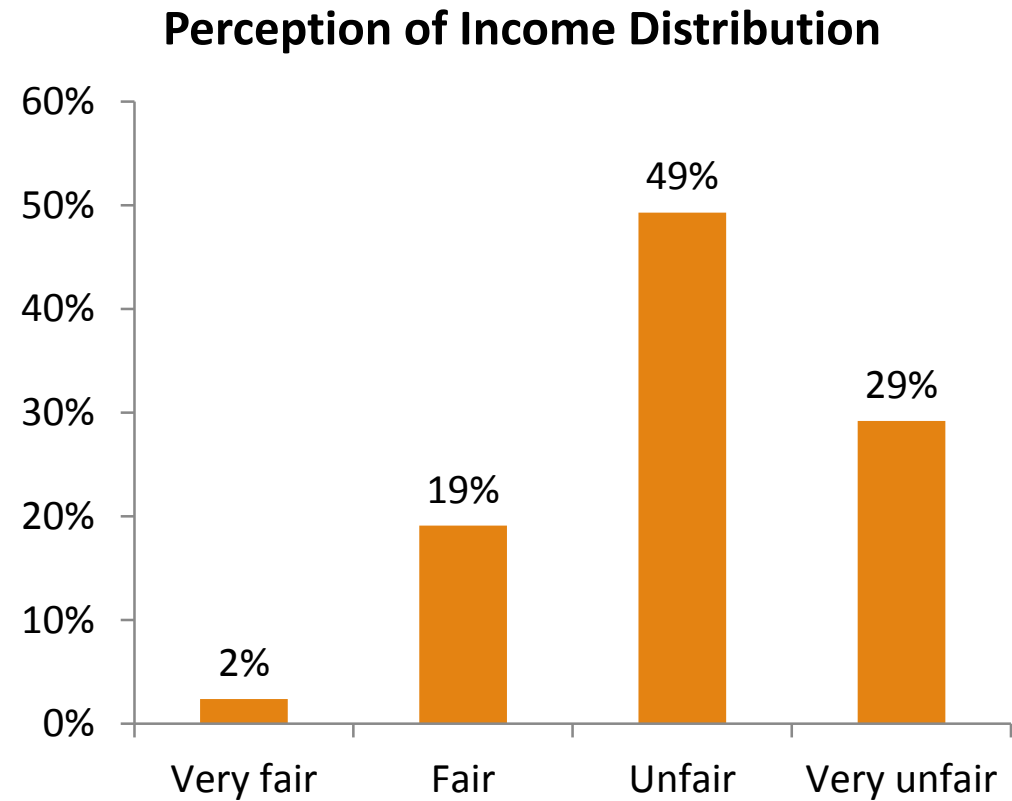
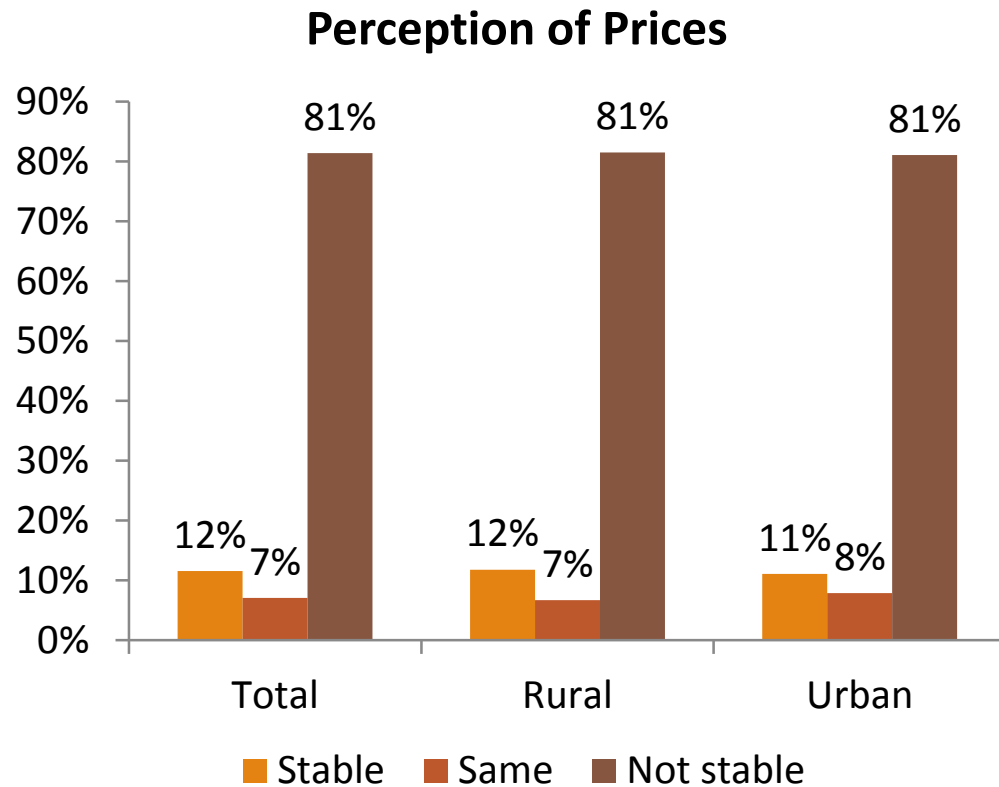
A. Economic Conditions

Perceptions of Economic Conditions



Current conditions more difficult than past; Optimism for the future

Prices and Income Distribution



Majority see prices as unstable and unfair income distribution

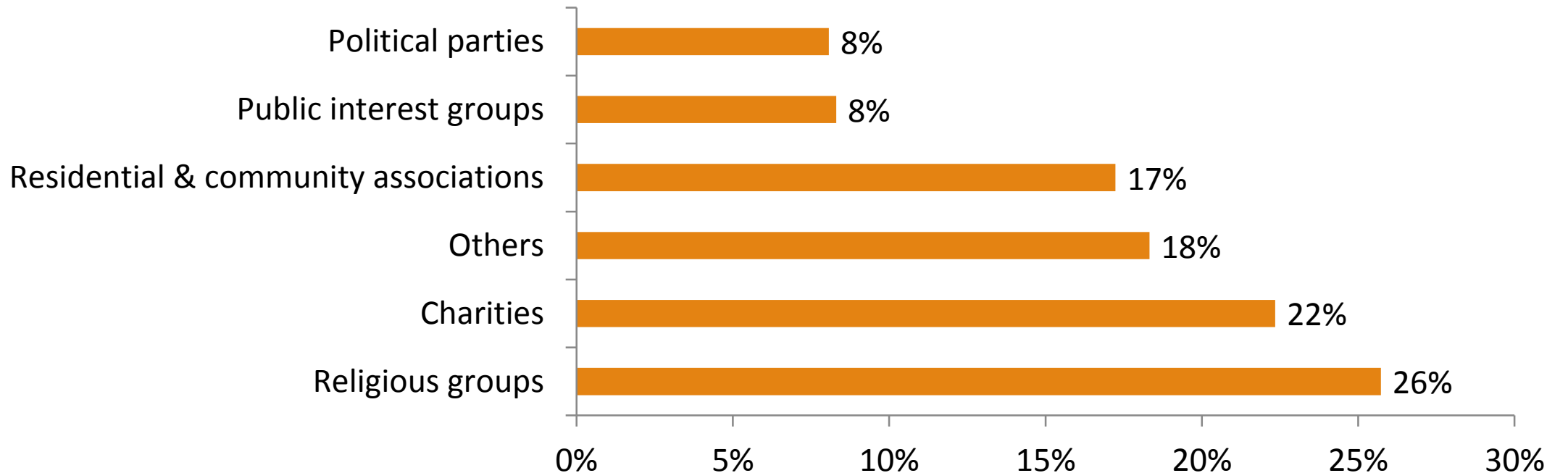
B. Social Capital



Myanmar has a robust civil society

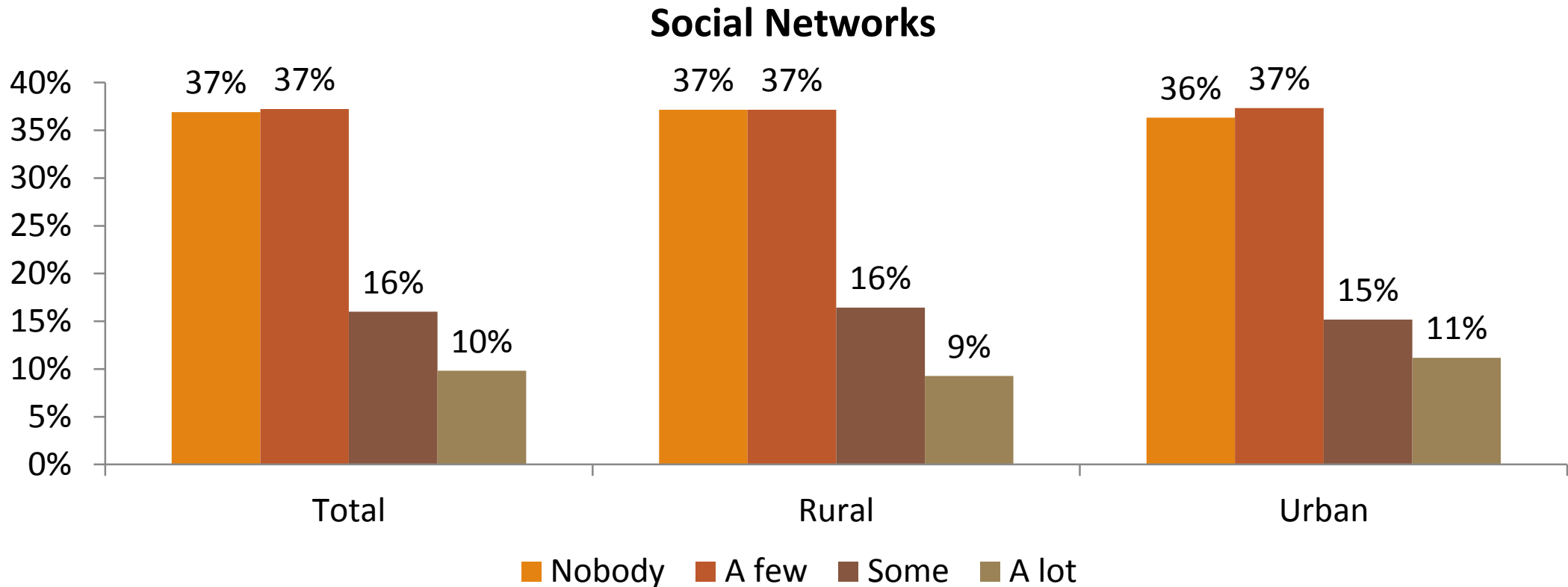
Joining Organizations

Joining Organizations by Types



***Traditional organizations in religion, charities and residential/community high membership
Political parties less membership, but overall considerable civil society engagement***

Social Networks

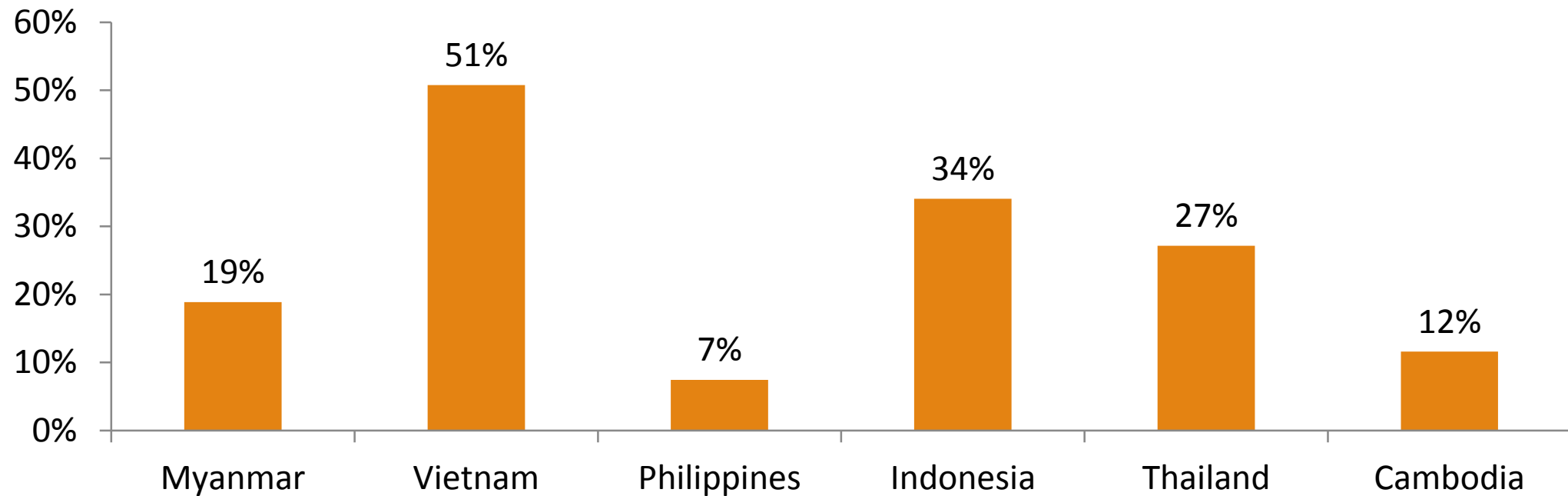


Rich social ties and networks, with minimal difference by locality

Low levels of social trust among Myanmar

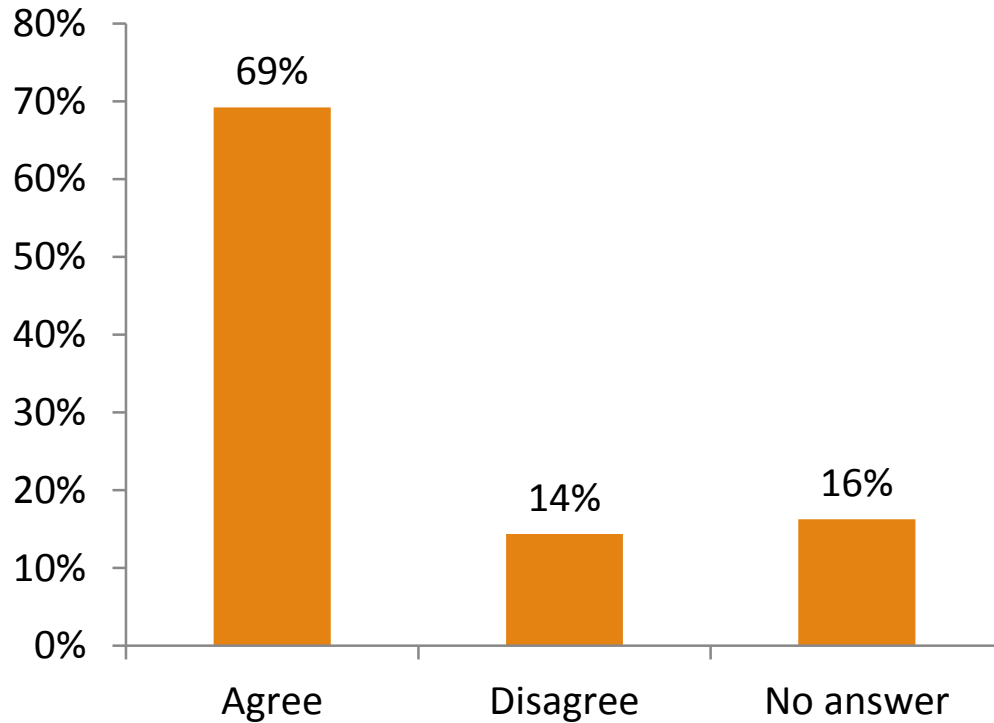
Social Trust

**Social Trust
Cross-National Comparison**

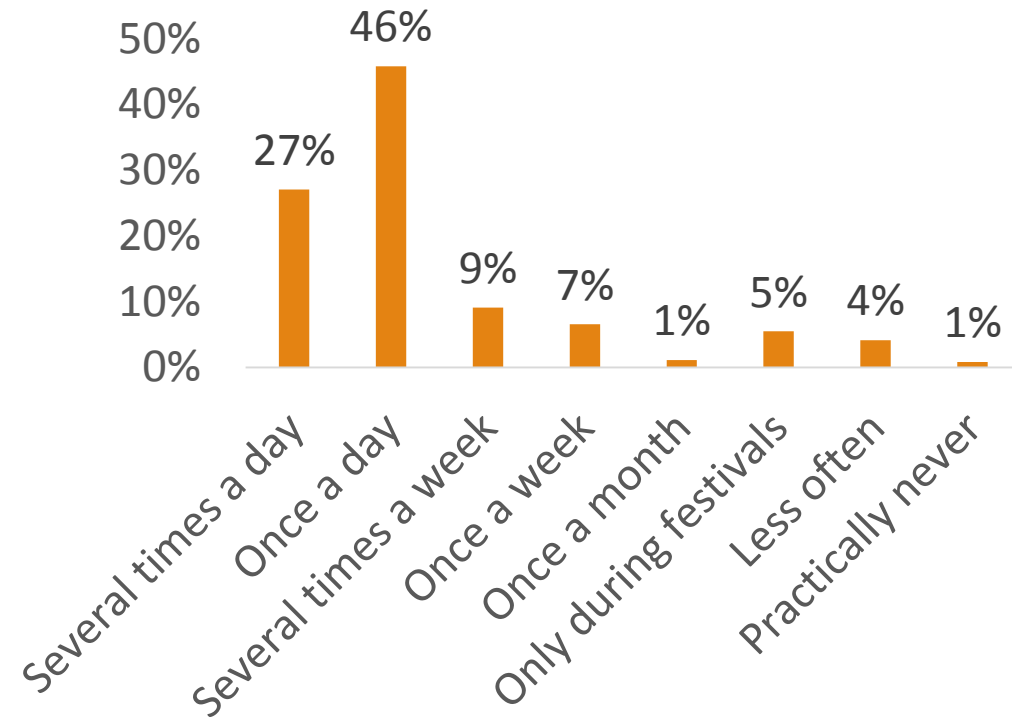


C. Political Identity: Role of Religion

Consult Religious Authority

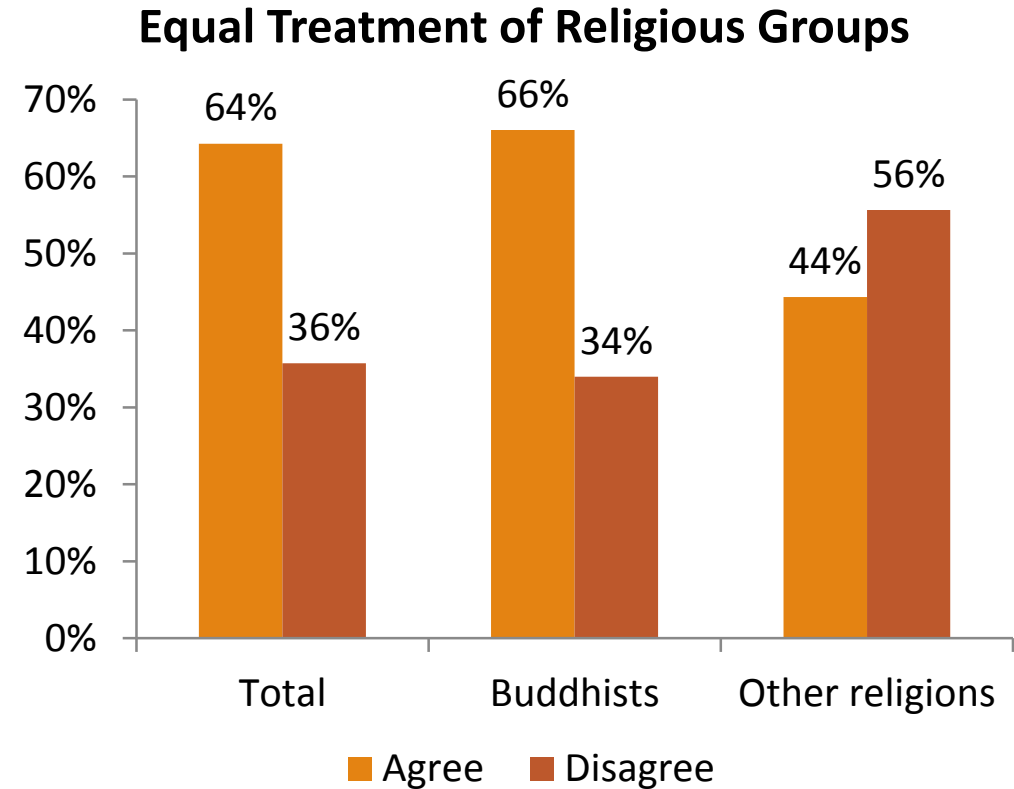
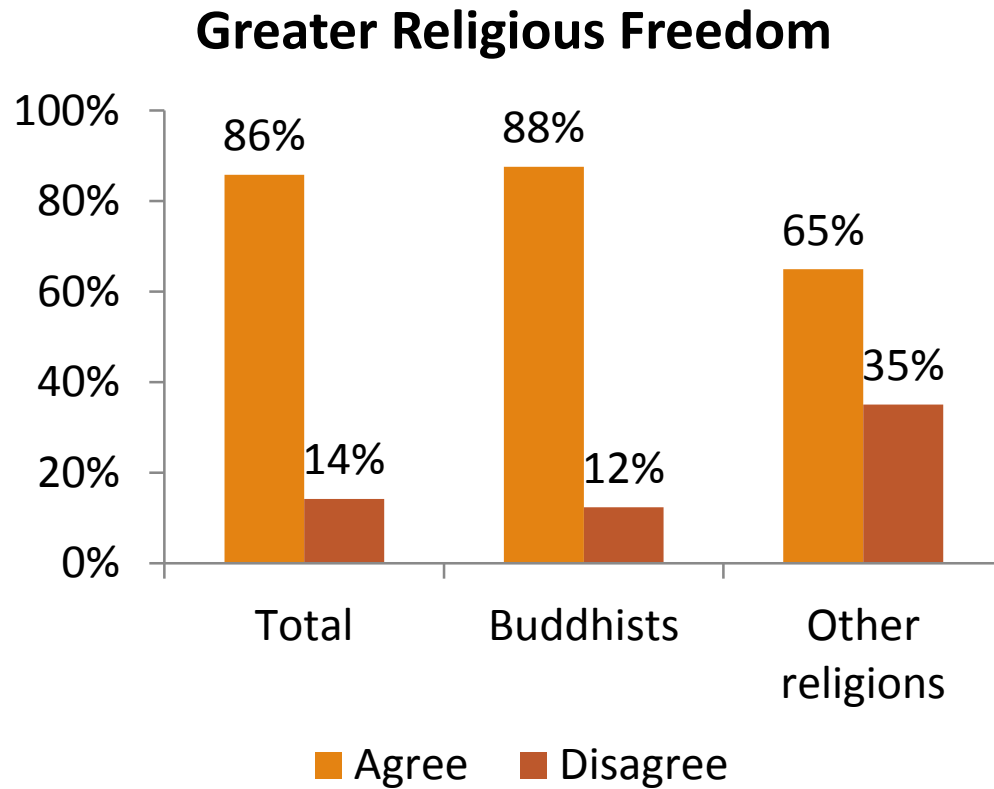


Religiosity



Religion prominent in political and social life

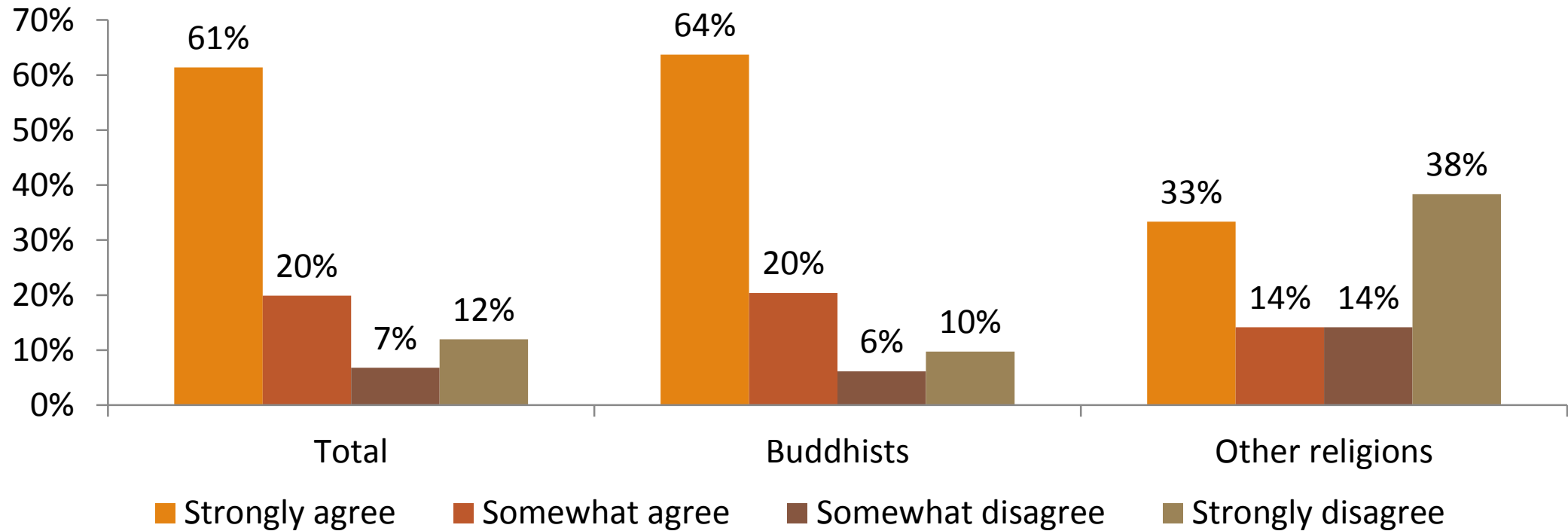
Religion and Politics



Positive views of religious freedom and treatment, except by religious minorities

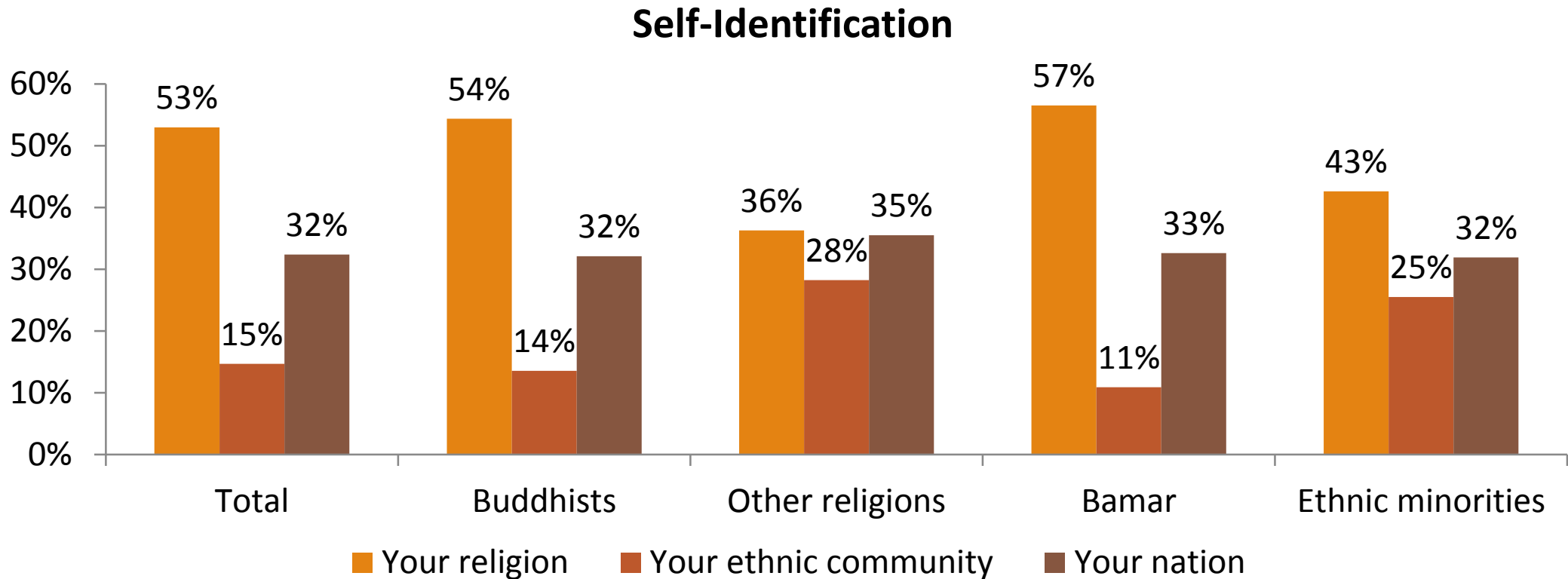
Citizenship and Religion

Citizenship Based on Religion



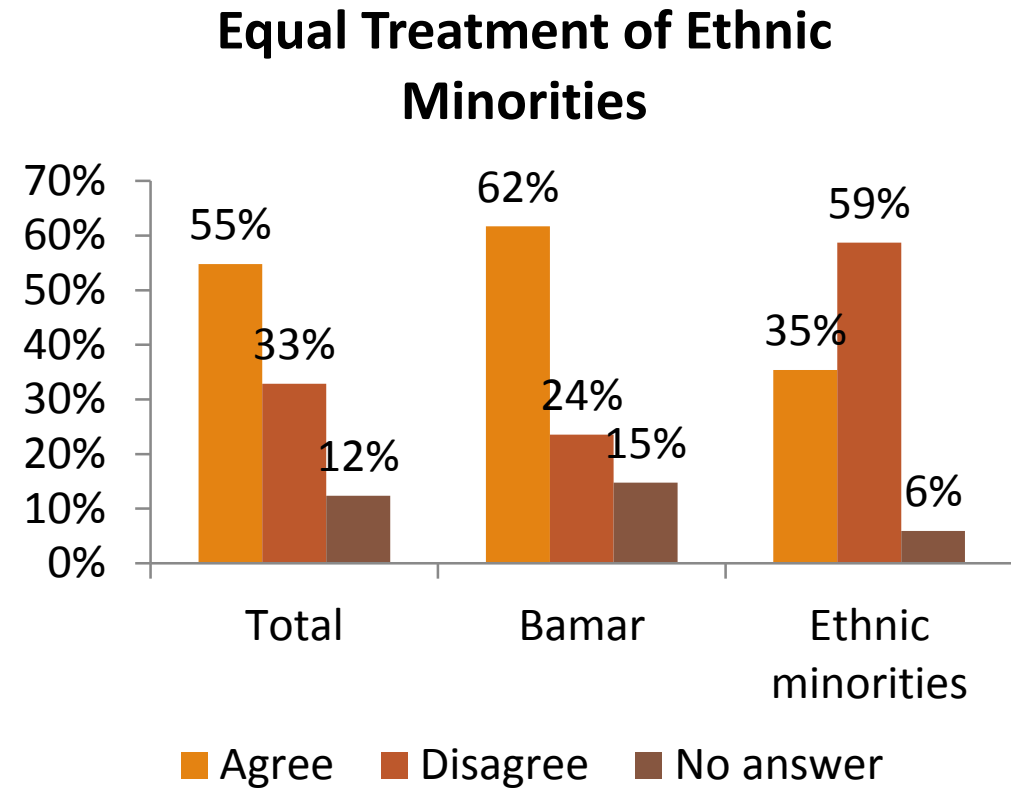
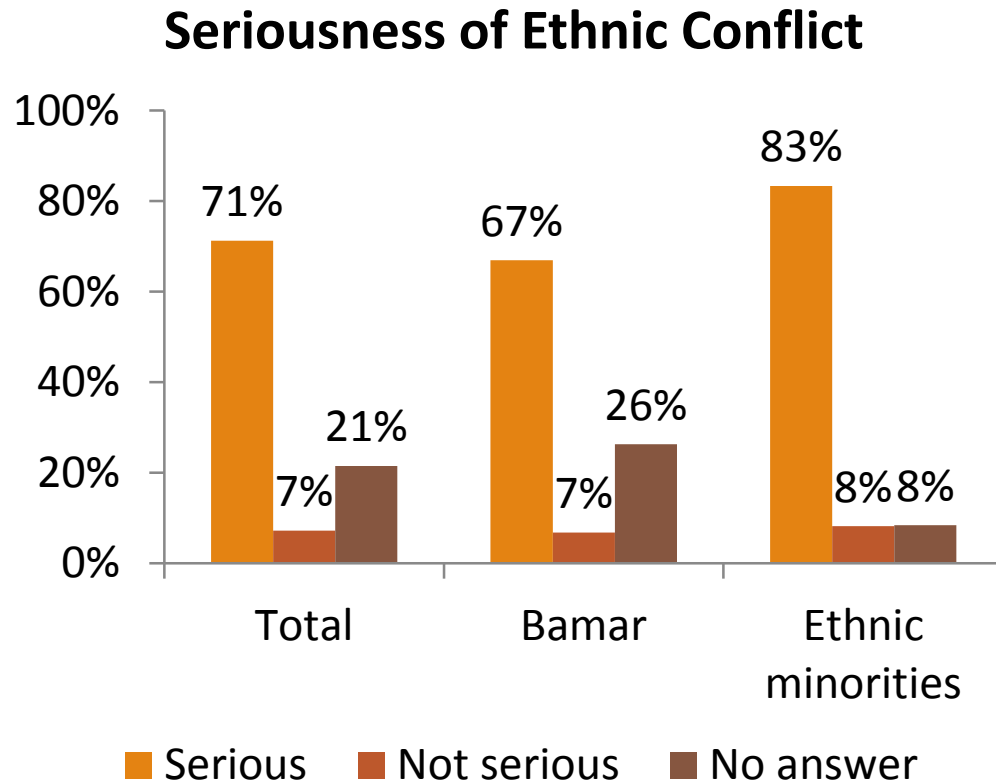
Close tie between religion and citizenship perceived, but less so among religious minorities

Self-Identity



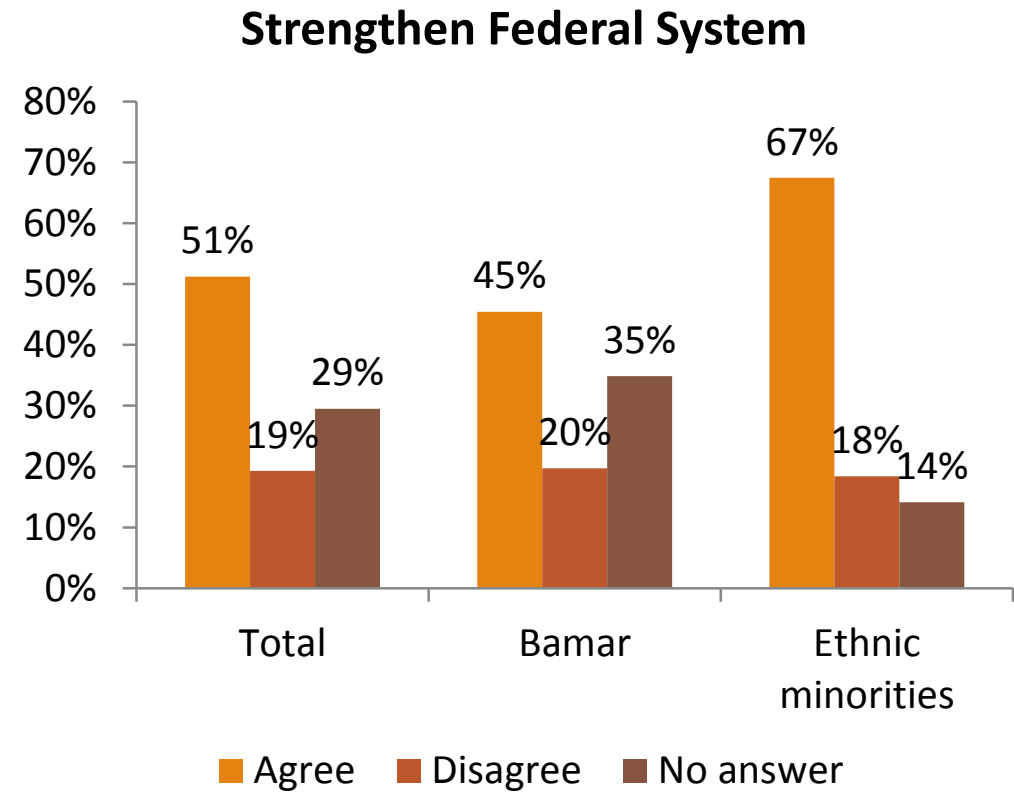
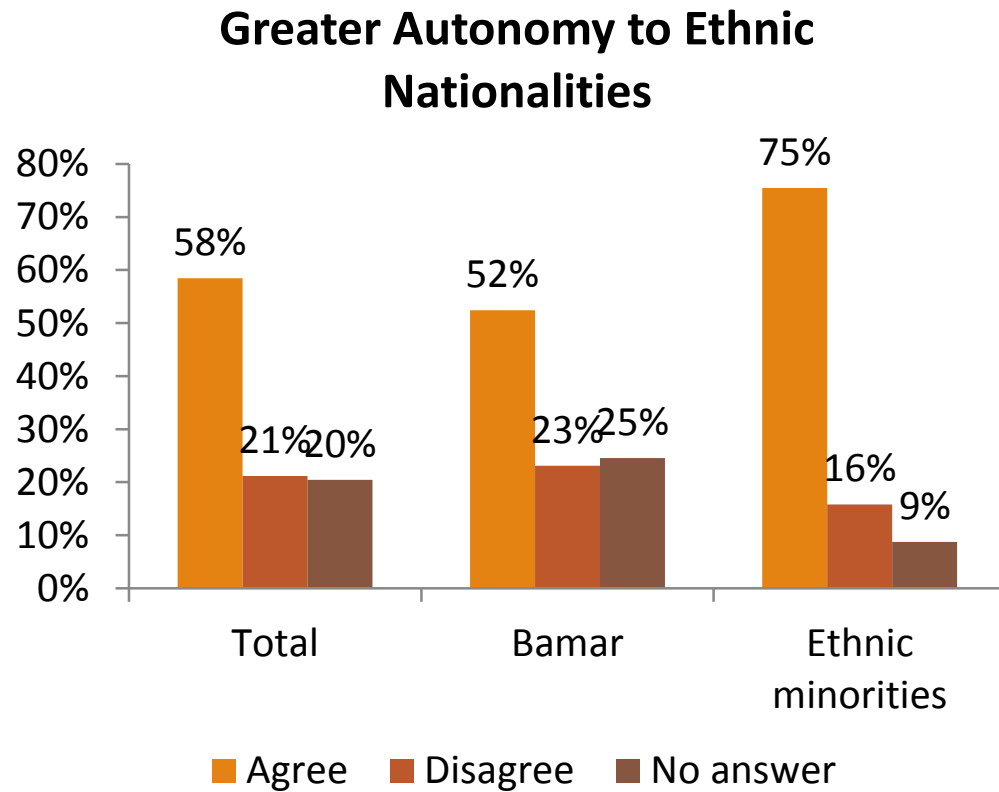
Religion is dominant form of self-identity given priority by individuals

Ethnicity and Politics



Ethnic conflict seen as serious by all, with treatment of ethnic minorities of concern

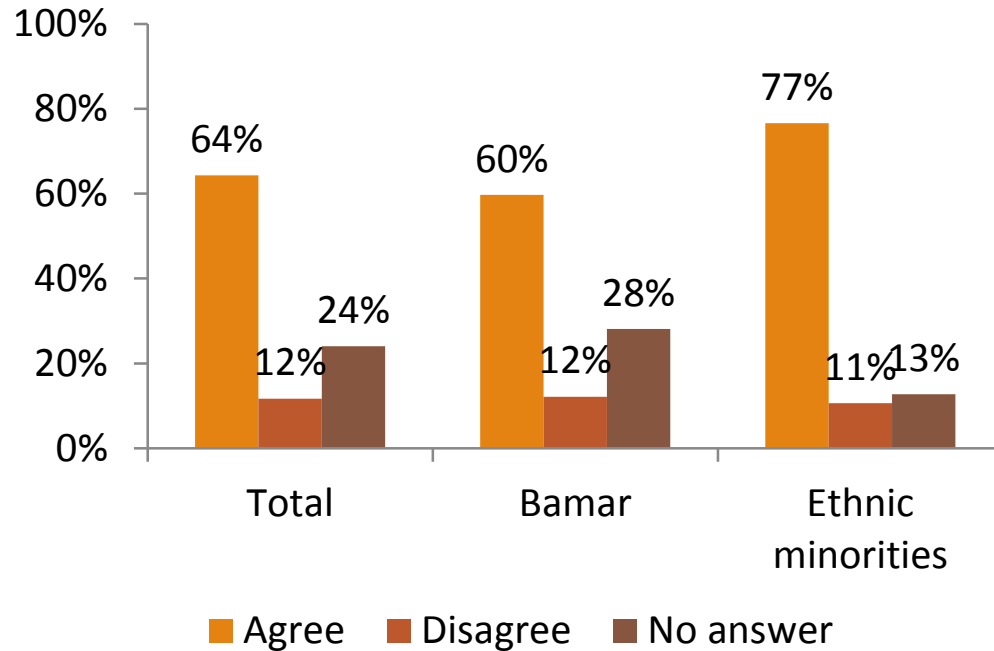
Autonomy and Federalism



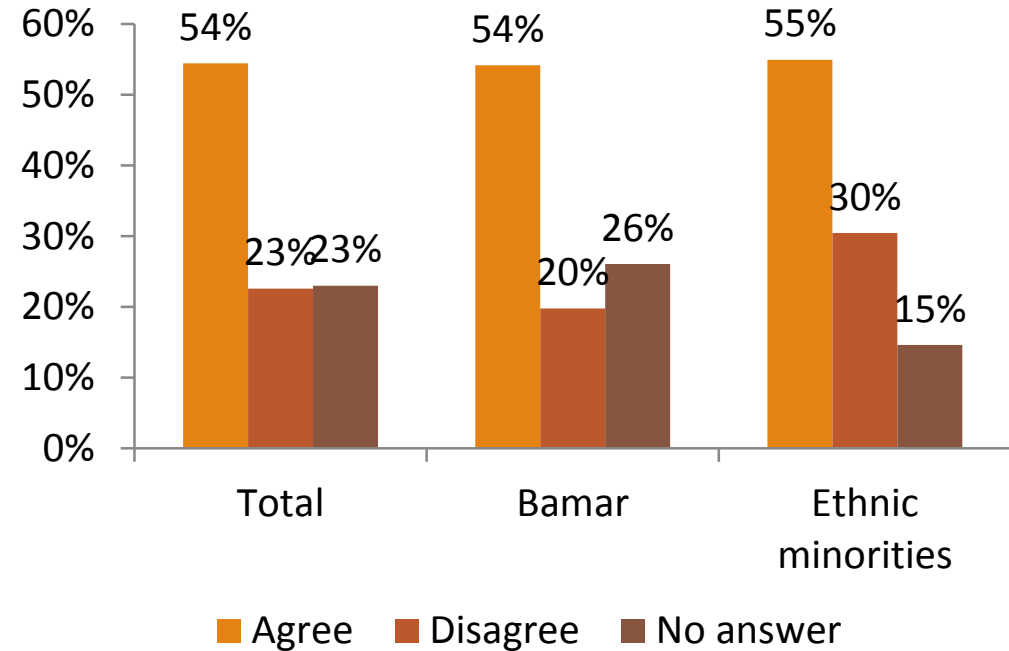
Broad support for greater autonomy and strengthening federalism

Devolution of Political Power

Regional Legislatures Choosing Chief Ministers

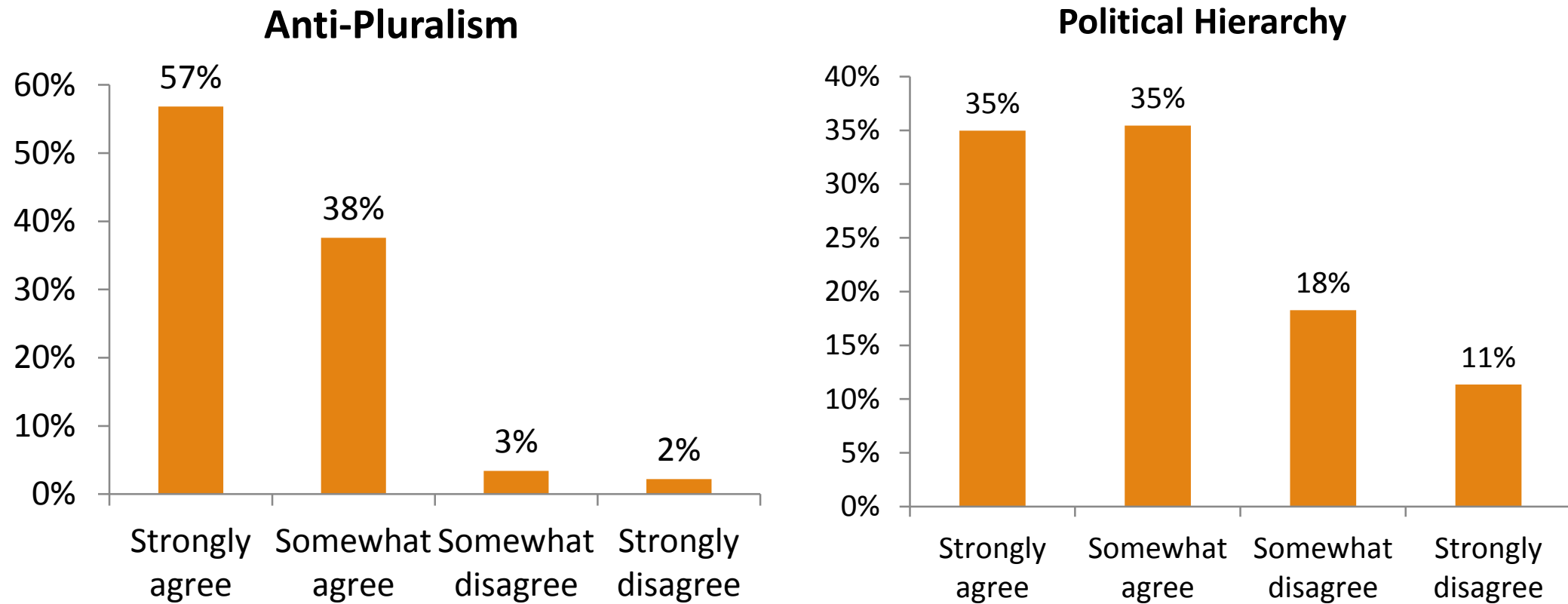


Peace Process Protects Rights of Minorities



Support for devolution of political power and the peace process

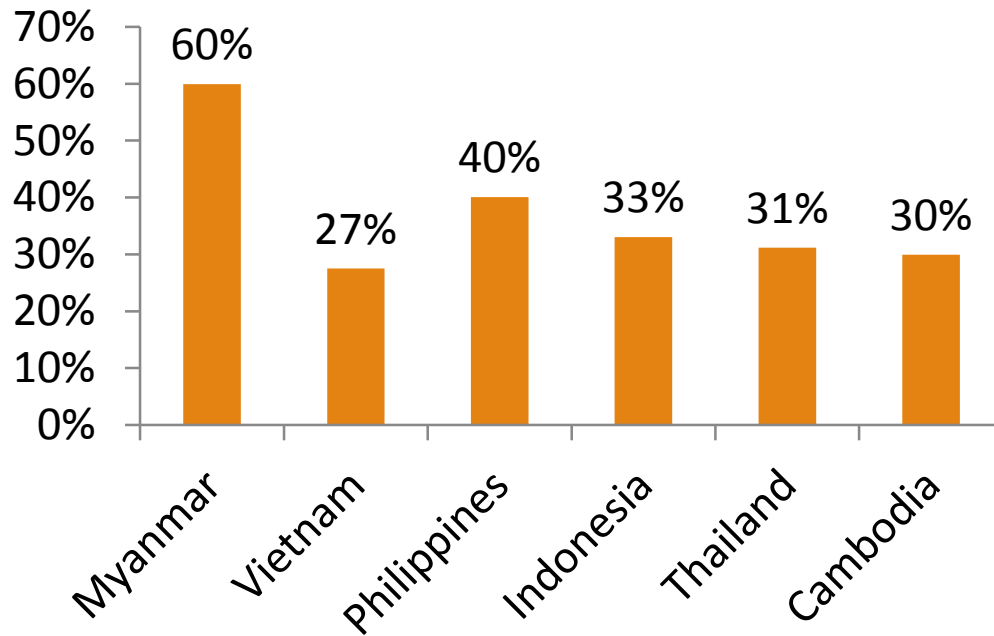
Traditional Political Culture



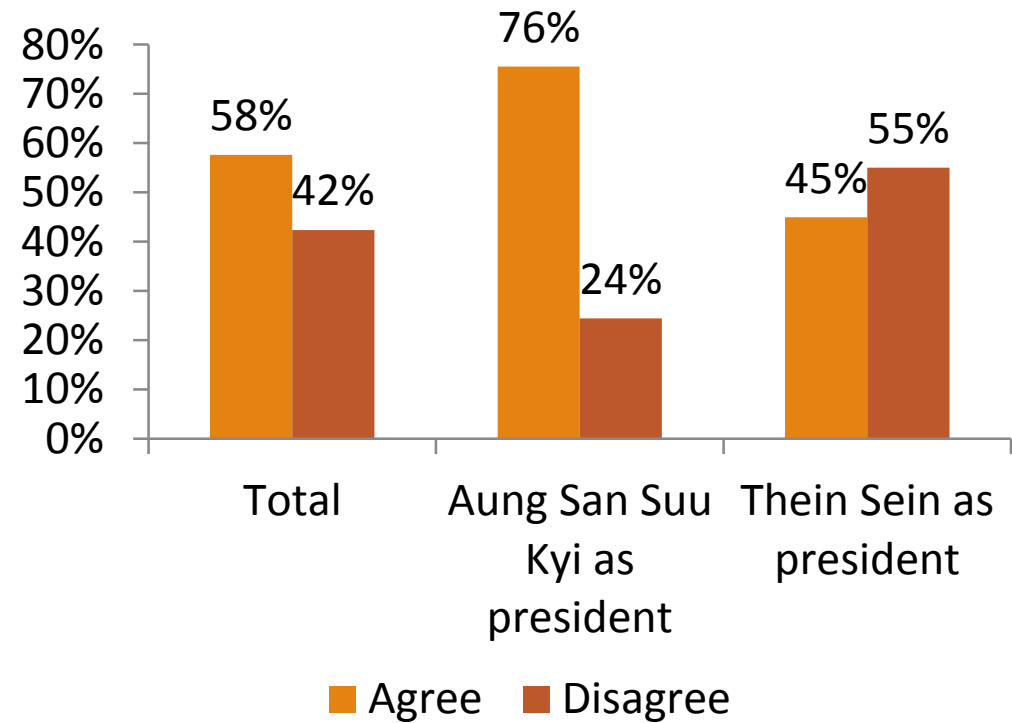
Conservative political culture along multiple trajectories

Women and Politics

Prefer Choice of Boy over Girl Cross-National Comparison



Women in Politics



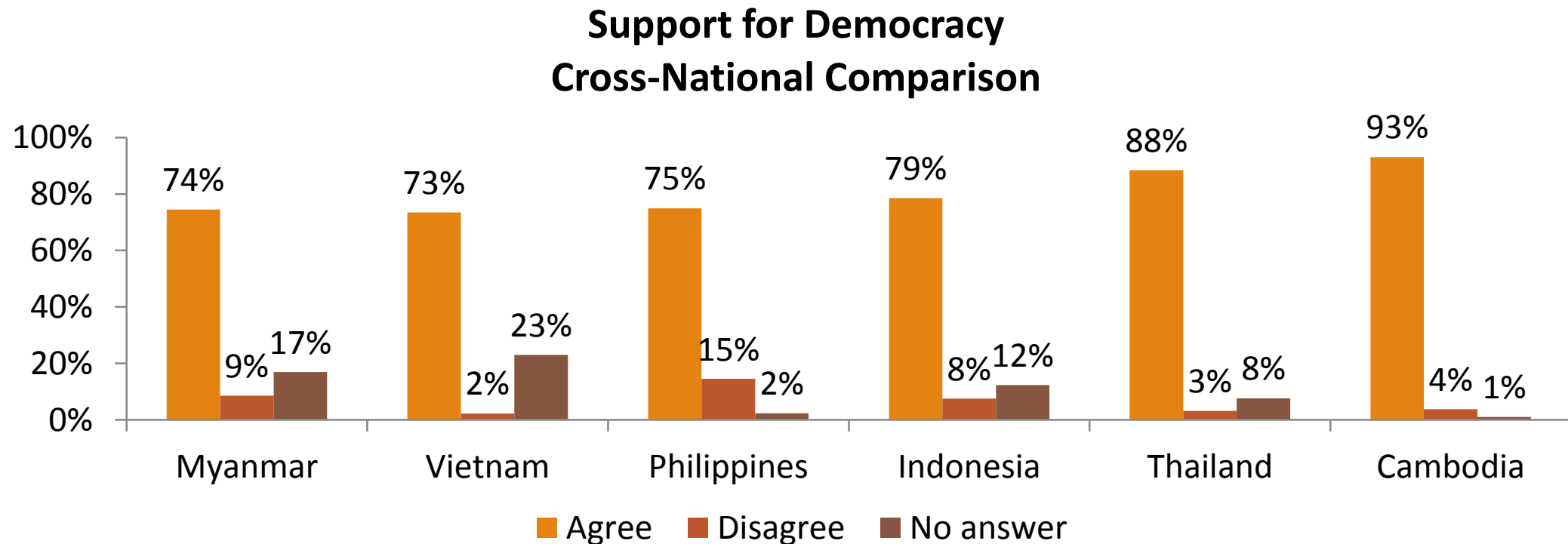
High discrimination toward women, although less so in politics, especially among Daw ASSK supporters

Traditional Values



Myanmar most political conservative traditional values in East Asia

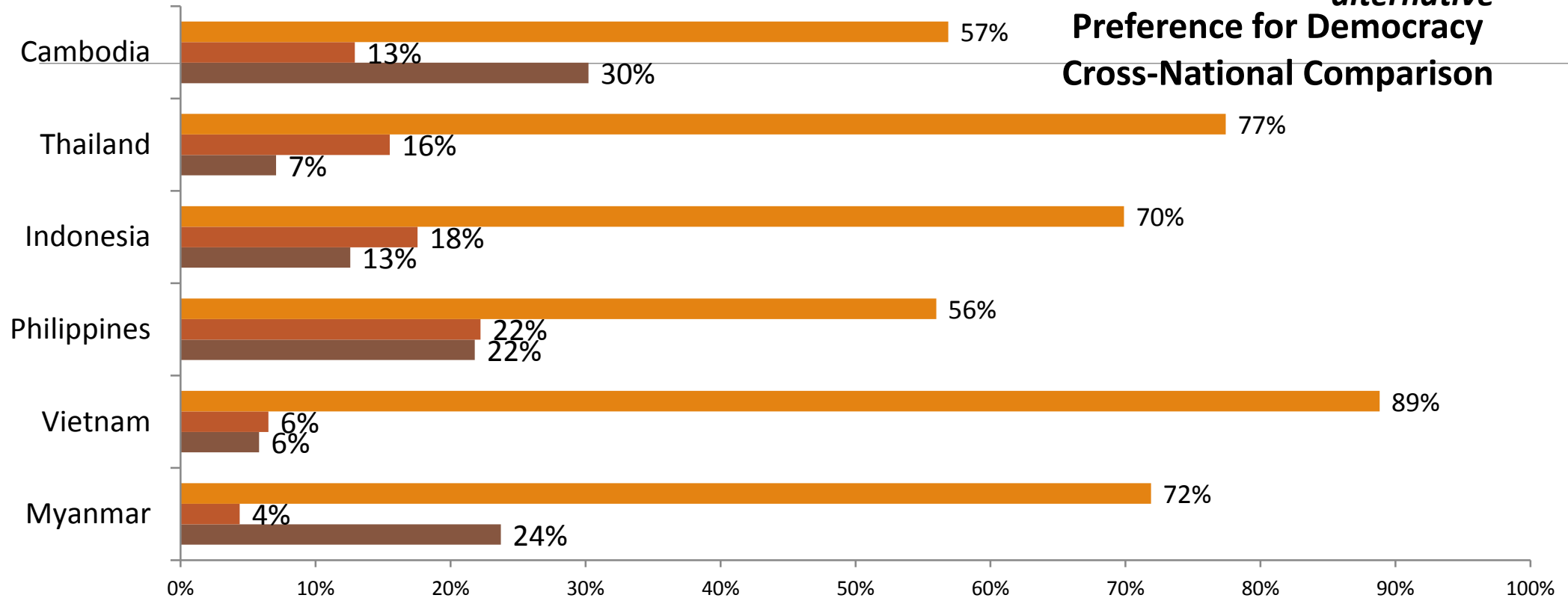
E. Democracy: Support for Democracy



High support for democracy on par with other East Asian countries

Preference for Democracy

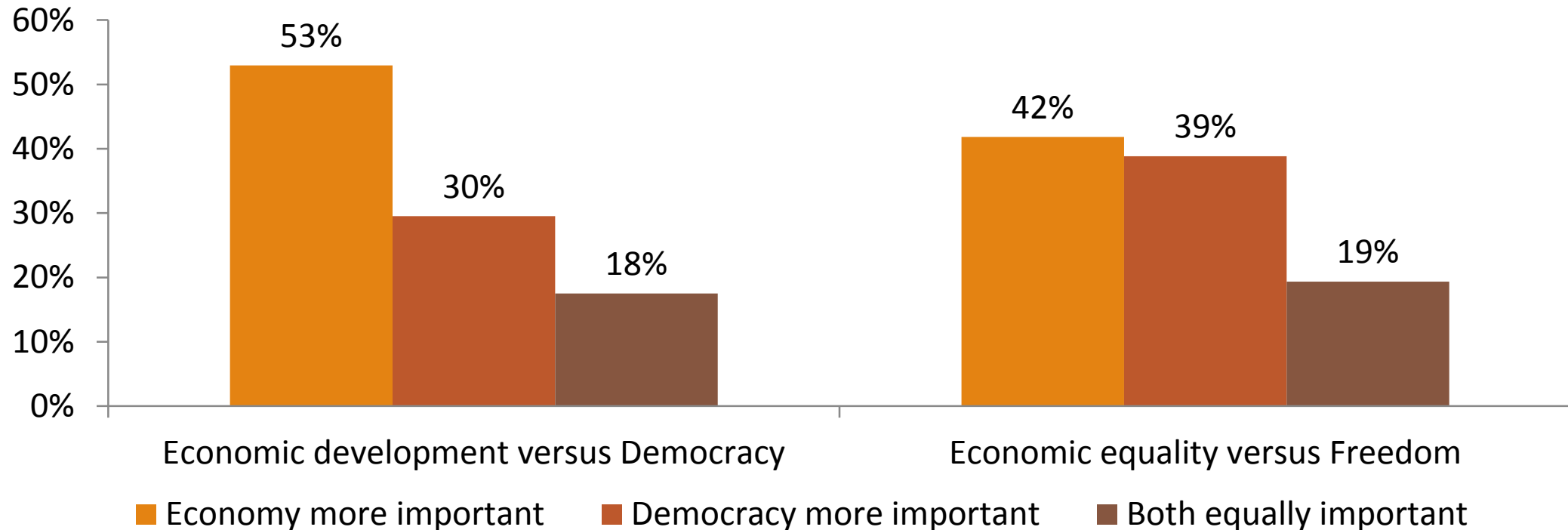
Myanmar among highest preference for democracy and least support for authoritarian alternative



- Democracy is always preferable to any other kind of government
- Under some circumstances, an authoritarian government can be preferable to a democratic one
- For people like me, it does not matter whether we have a democratic or a nondemocratic regime

Democratic Alternatives

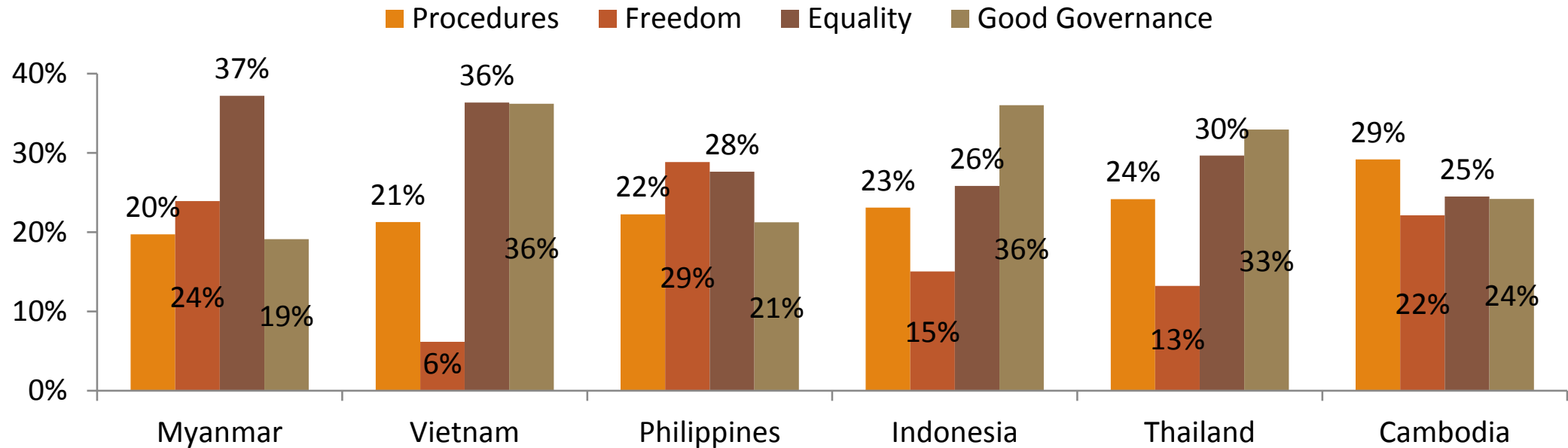
Economy vs. Democracy



Economy more of a priority than democracy; equality on par with democracy

Understanding of Democracy

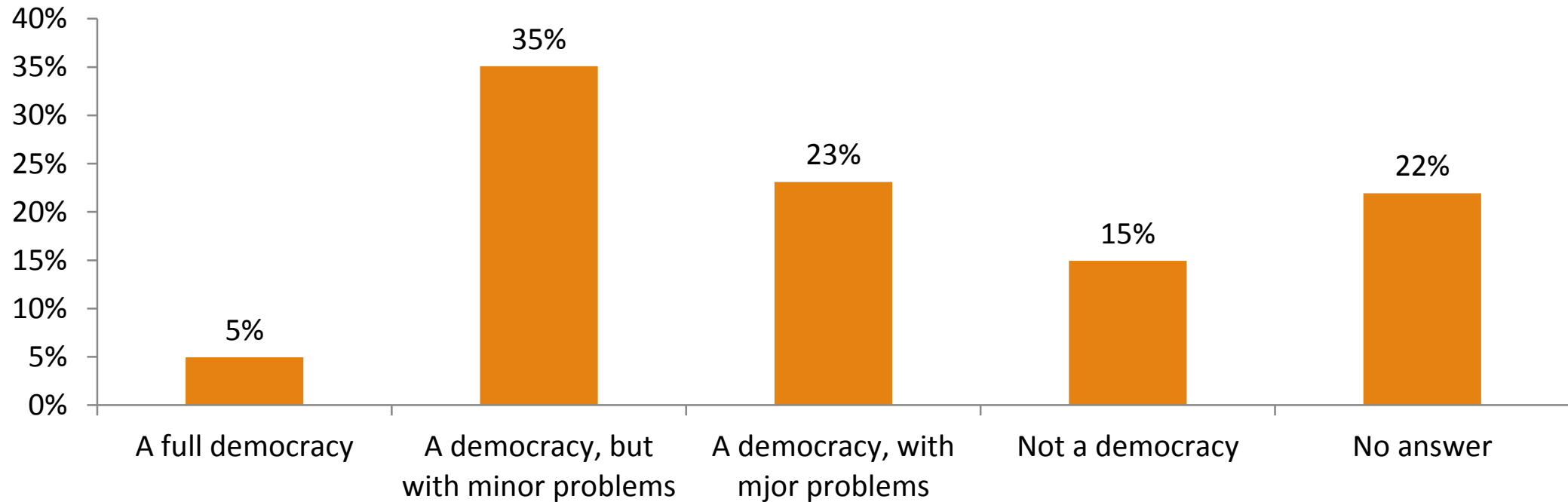
Understanding of Democracy Cross-National Comparison



Myanmar have complex varied understanding of democracy

Levels of Democracy

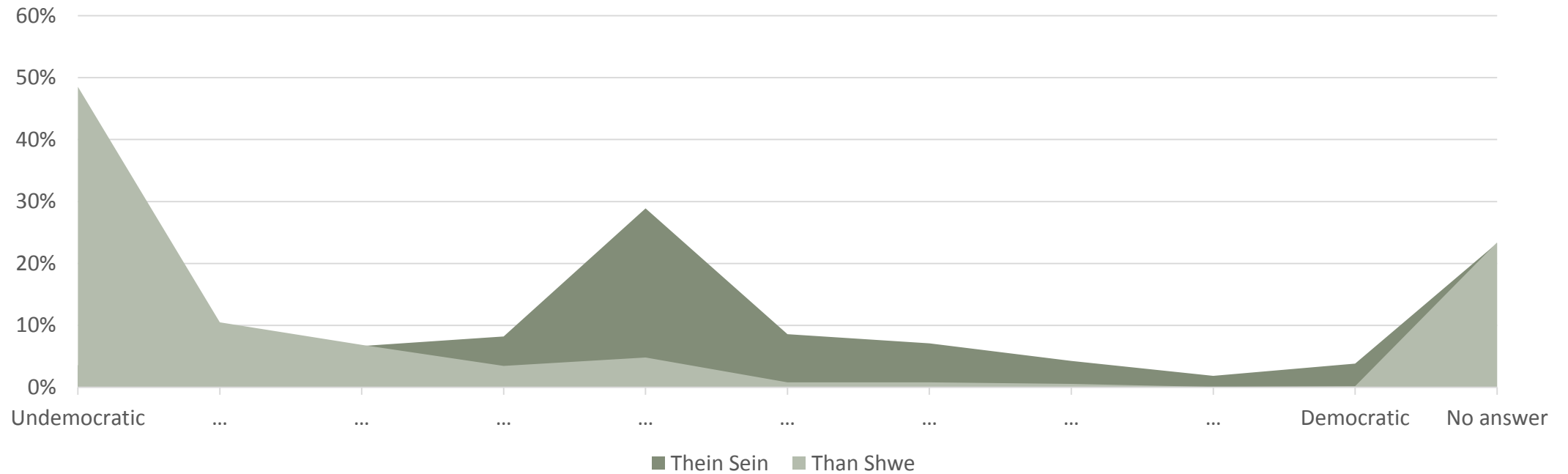
Perceived Levels of Democracy



Democracy in Myanmar seen to have problems

Democratic Change

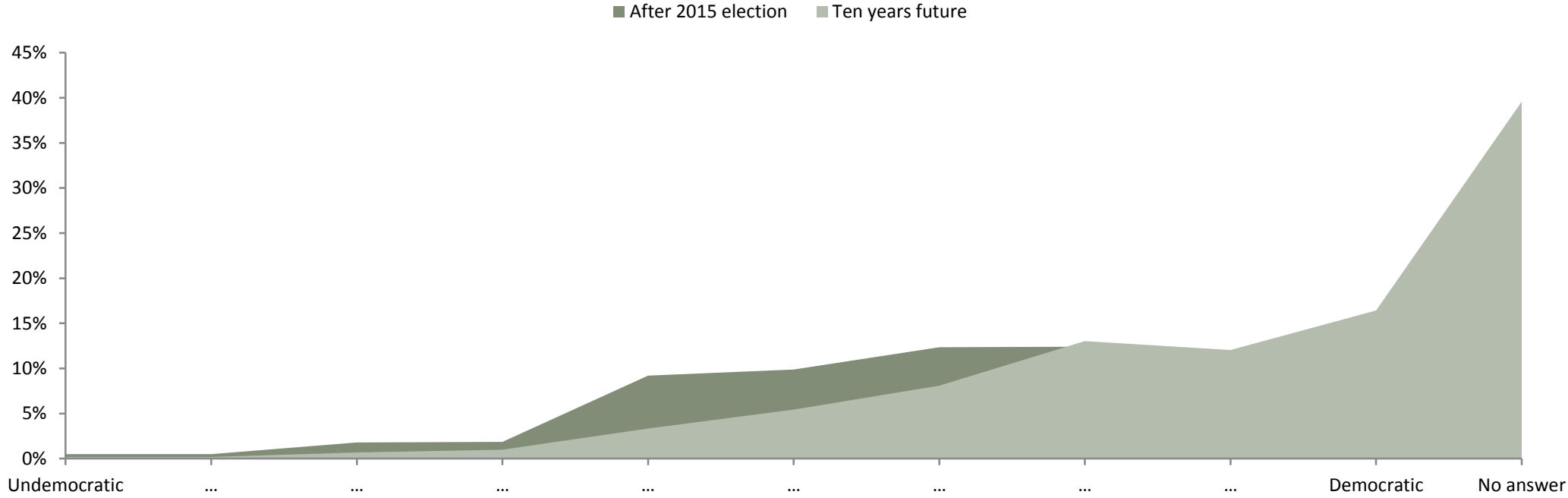
Levels of Democracy Than Shwe vs. Their Sein



Democratic change perceived with the change of leadership

Democracy and the Future

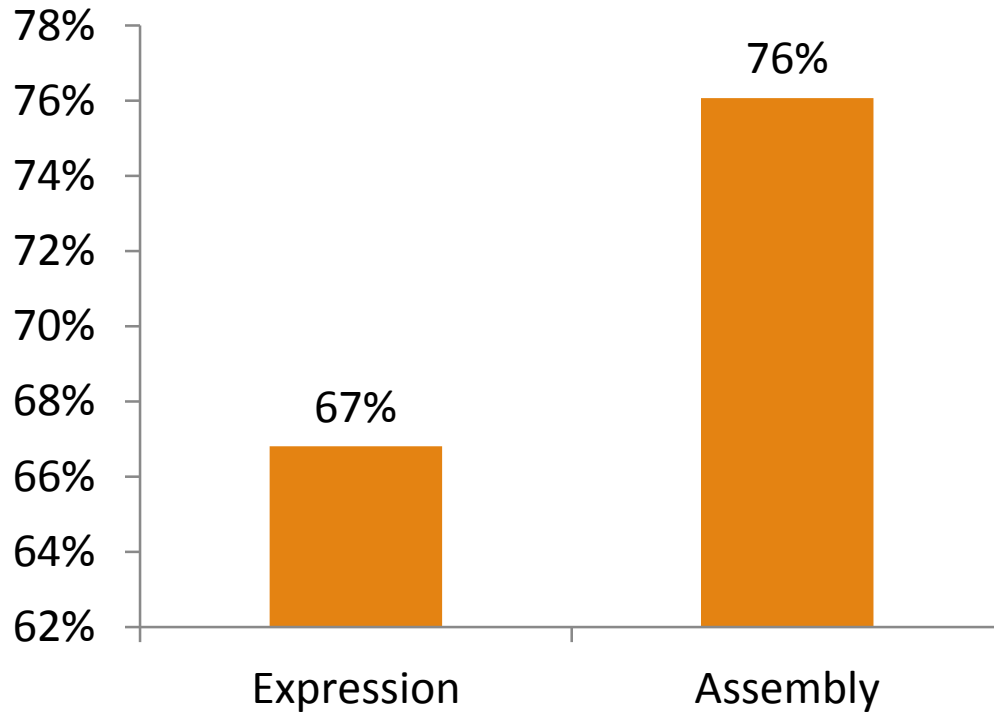
Levels of Democracy in the Future



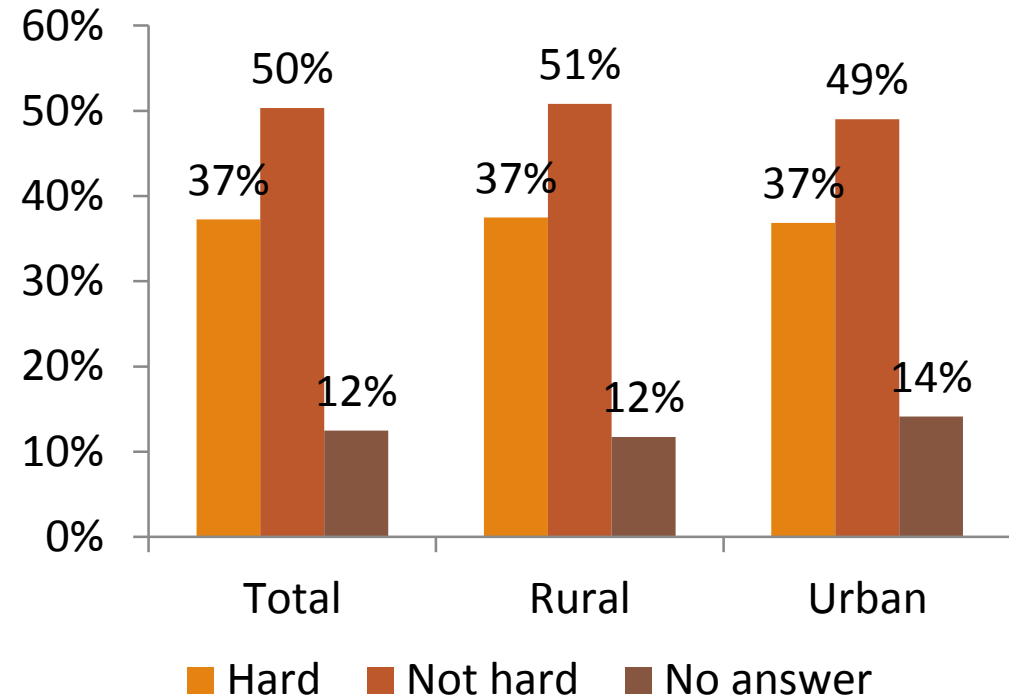
Positive outlook for democracy in the future

Democratic Space

Political Freedoms

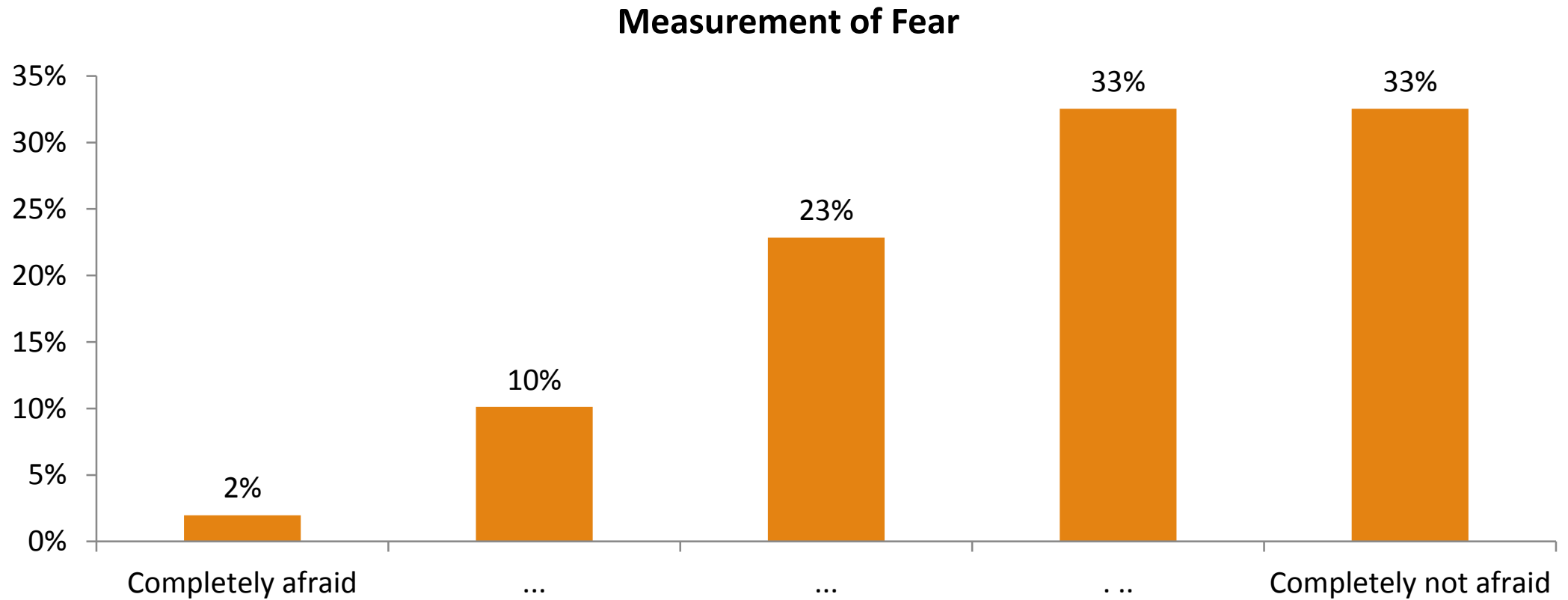


Converse over Political Issues



Expansion of freedoms perceived, but still some difficulties in democratic space

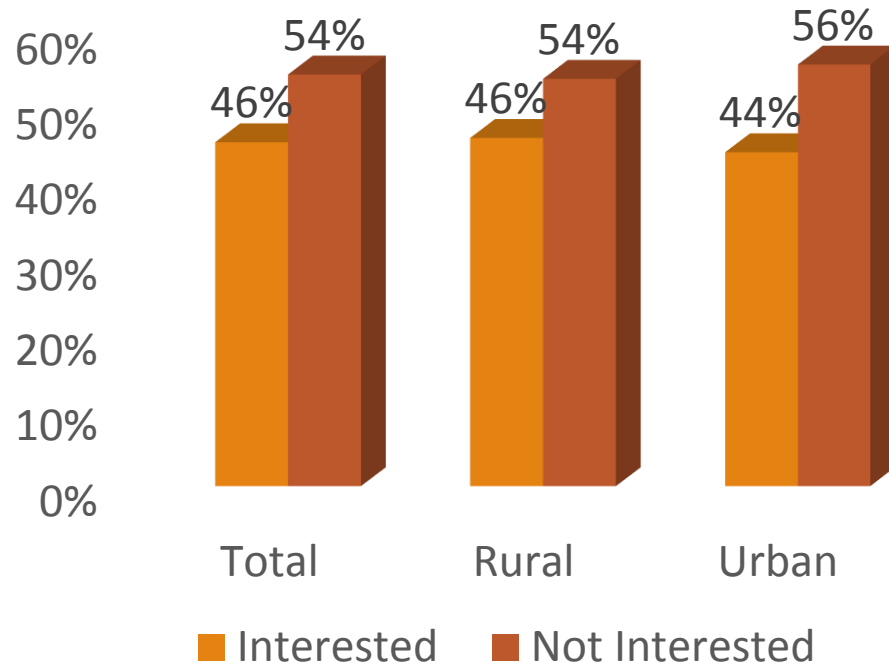
Fear and Surveys



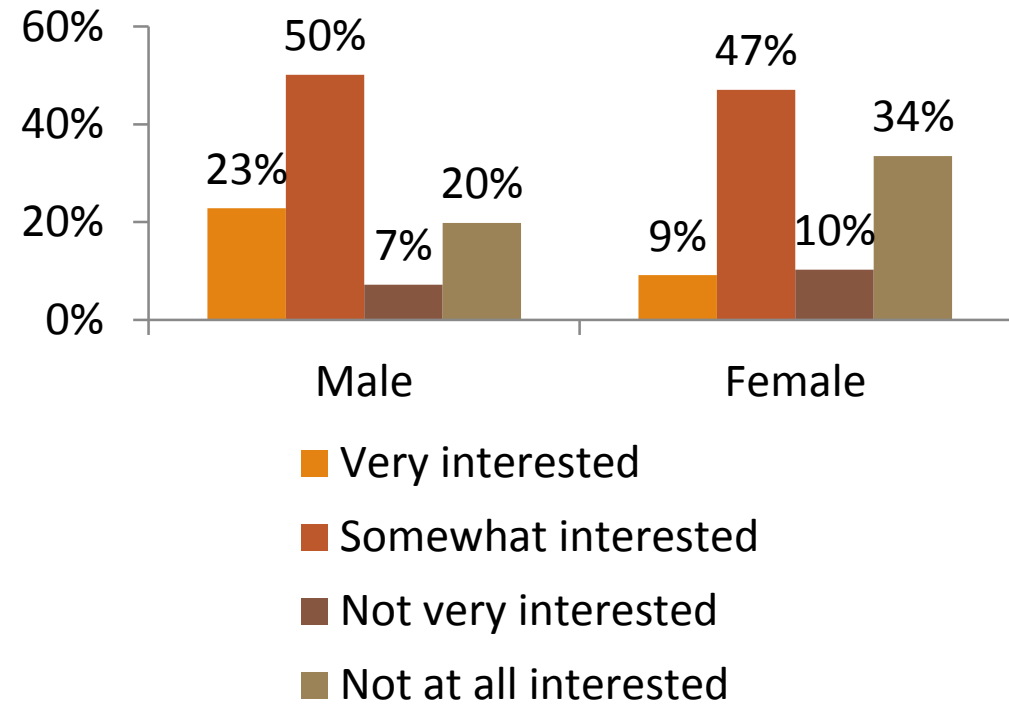
Limited fear noted in the conduct of the ABS

F. Political Engagement

Political Interest

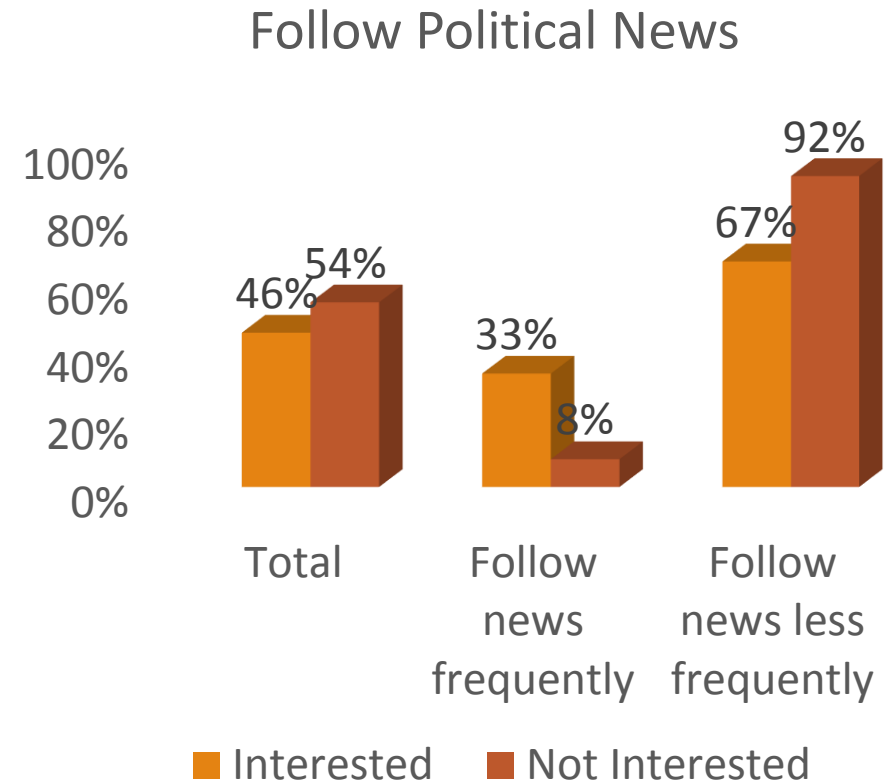
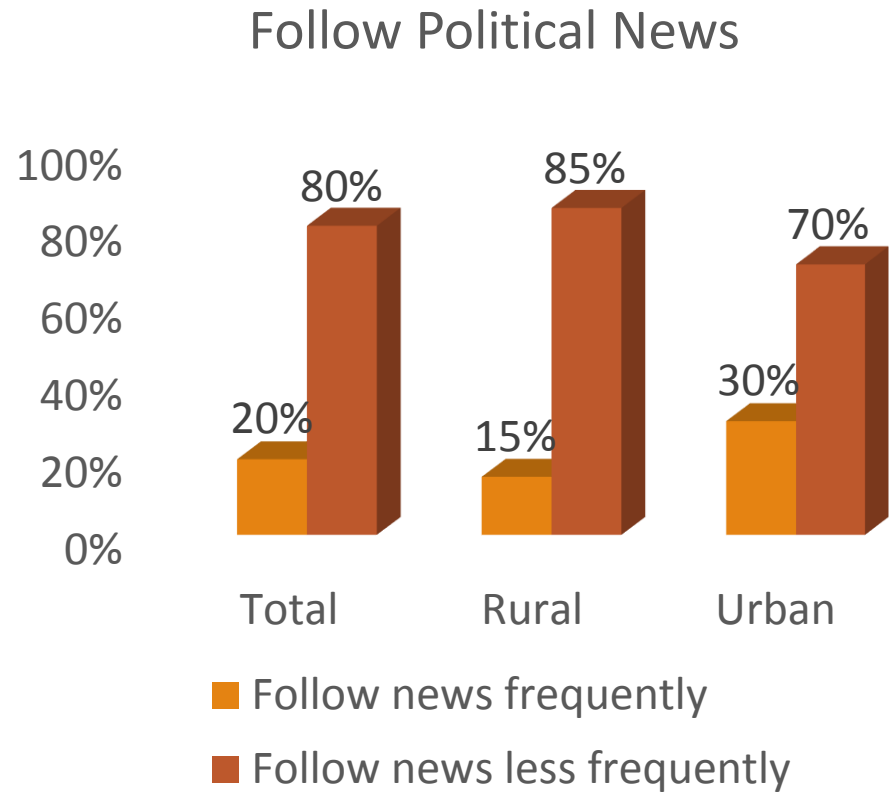


Political Interest by Gender



Moderate political interest, with less female interest in politics compared to men

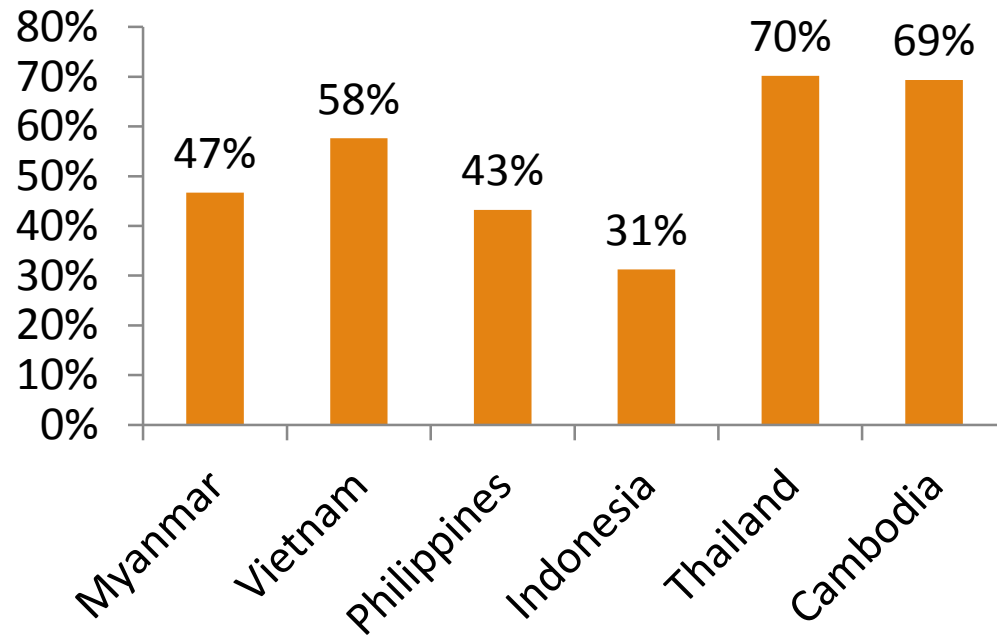
Follow Political News



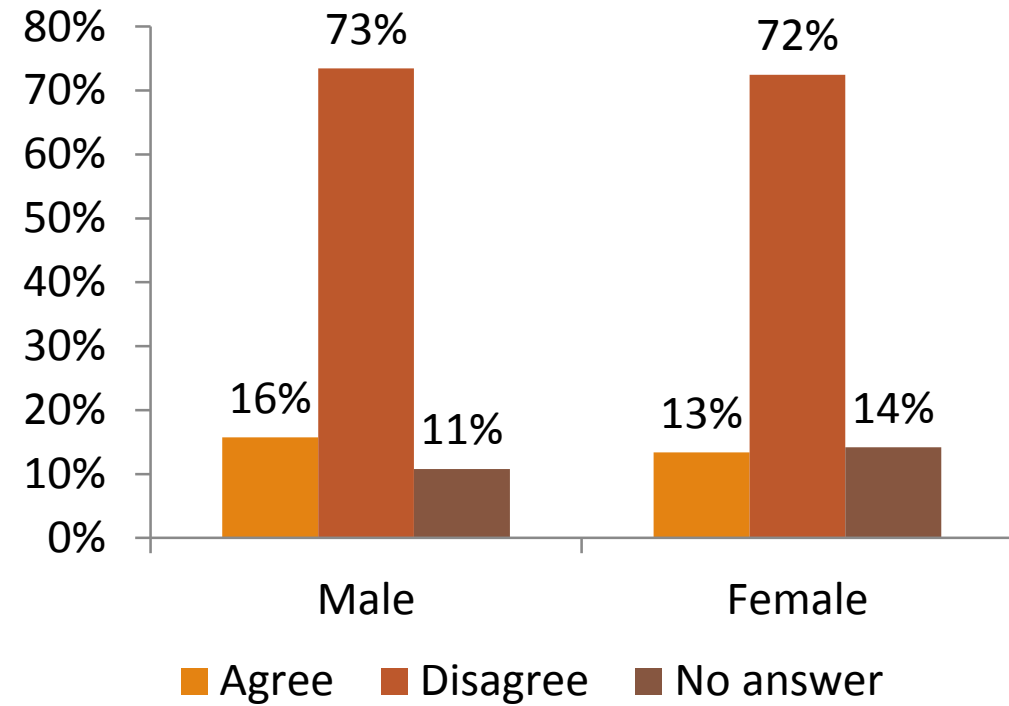
Low numbers follow the news, especially in rural areas

Political Efficacy

**Political Efficacy
Cross-National Comparison**

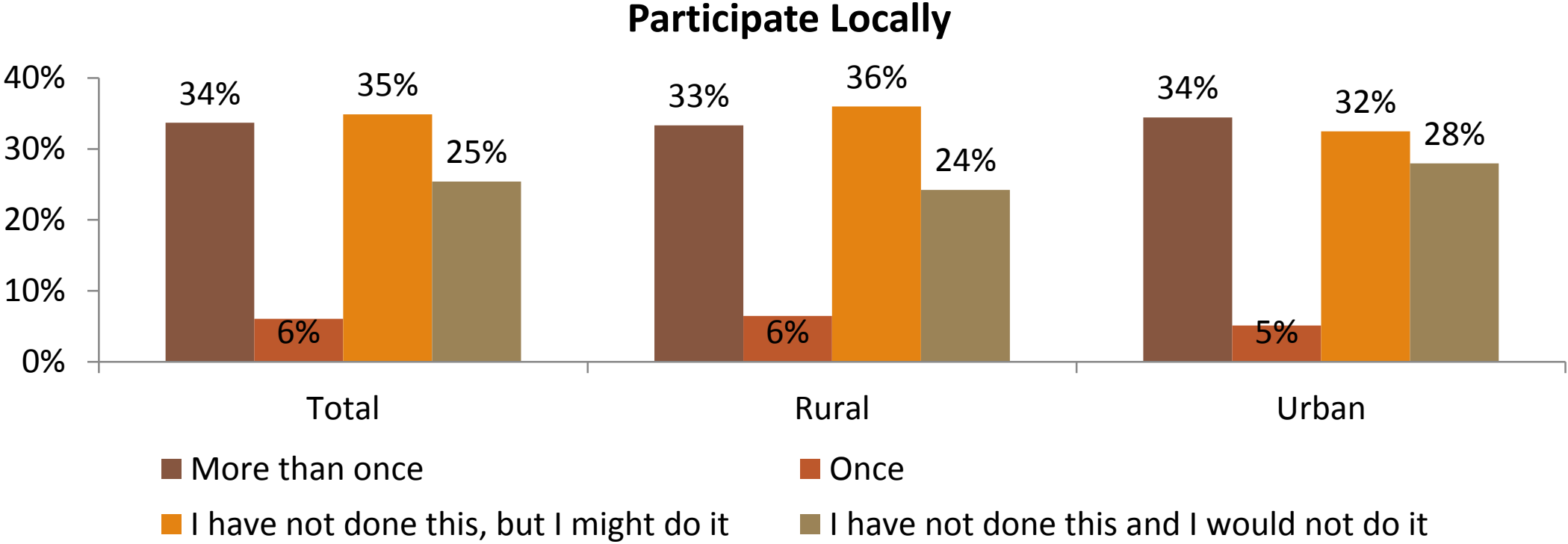


Political Efficacy by Gender



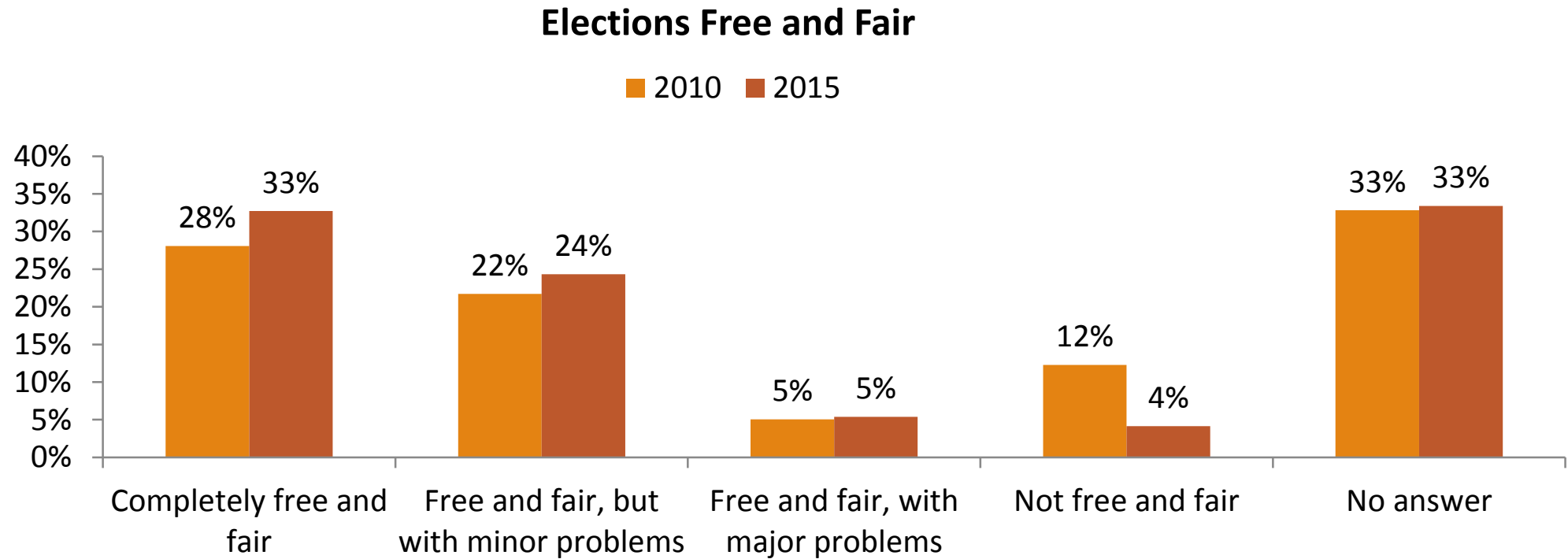
Myanmar among the lowest in political efficacy, with no meaningful gender differences

Local Political Participation



Highest political participation at the local level, with local problem solving

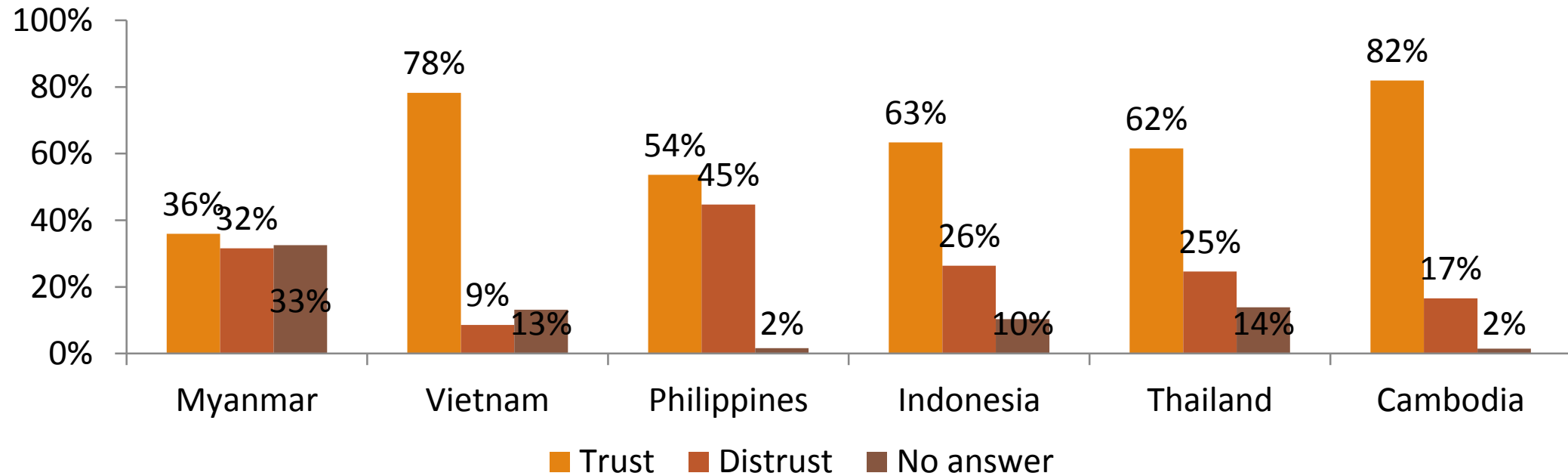
G. Electoral Process



Differing views of the electoral process, but many do not answer

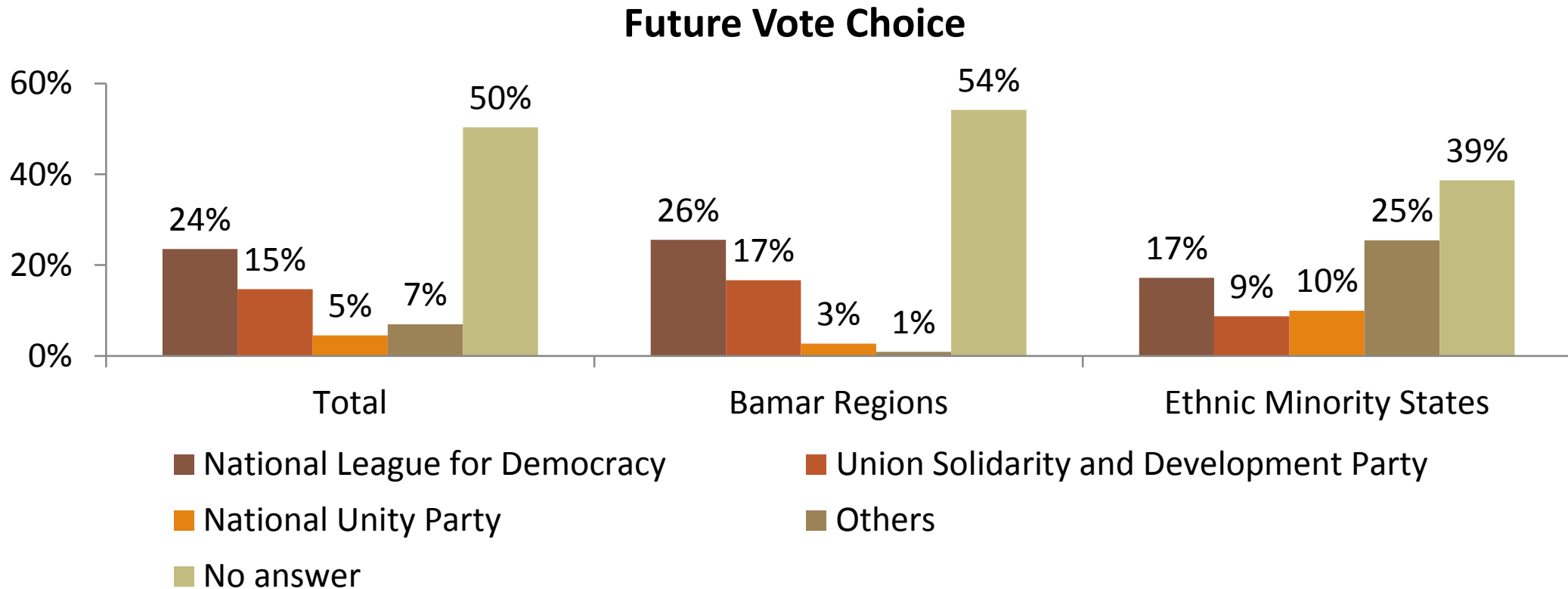
Trust in UEC

Trust in the Election Commission Cross-National Comparison



Comparatively low trust in the Myanmar Election Commission

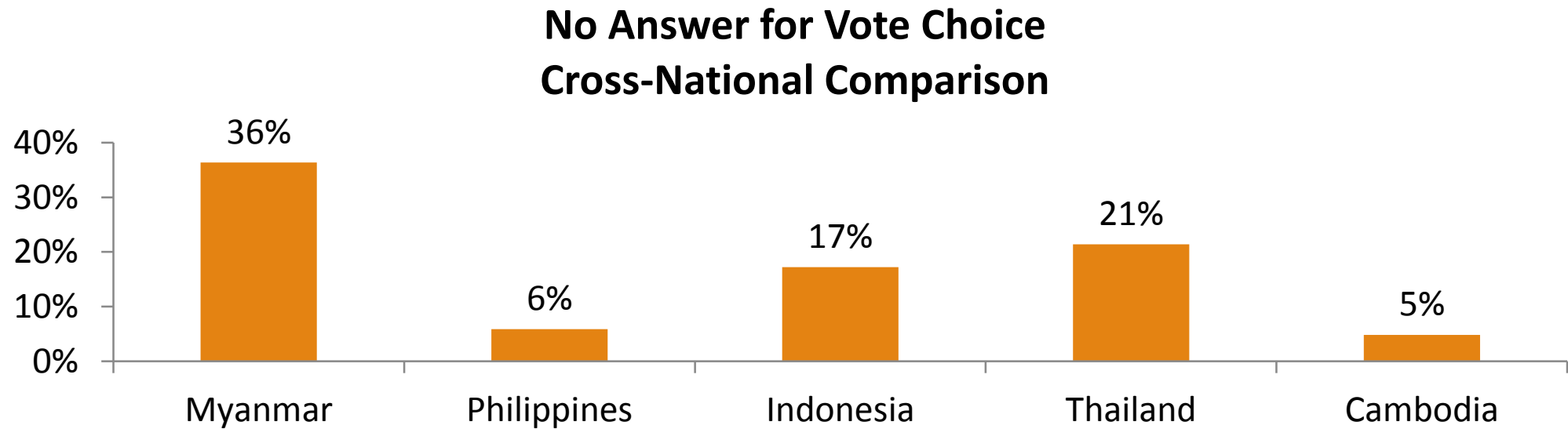
Future Vote Choice



Most voters express reserve in answering vote choice

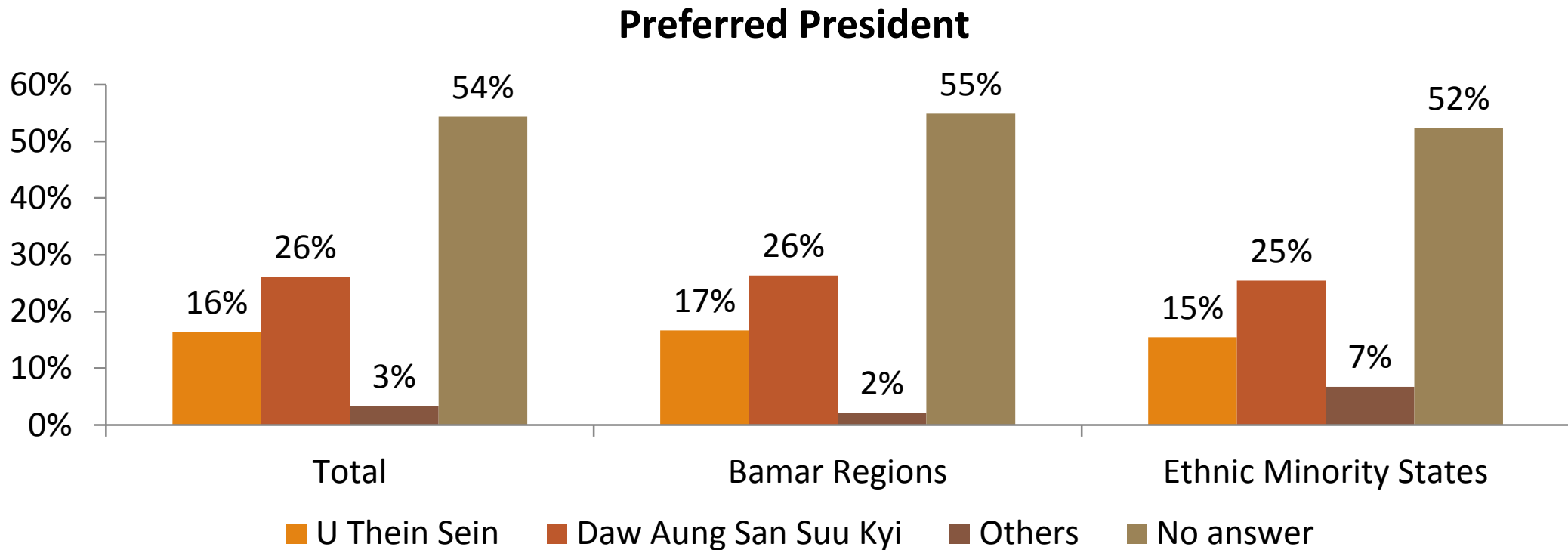
NLD highest support, but differences Bamar and Ethnic minority areas

Reserve in Expressing Vote Choice



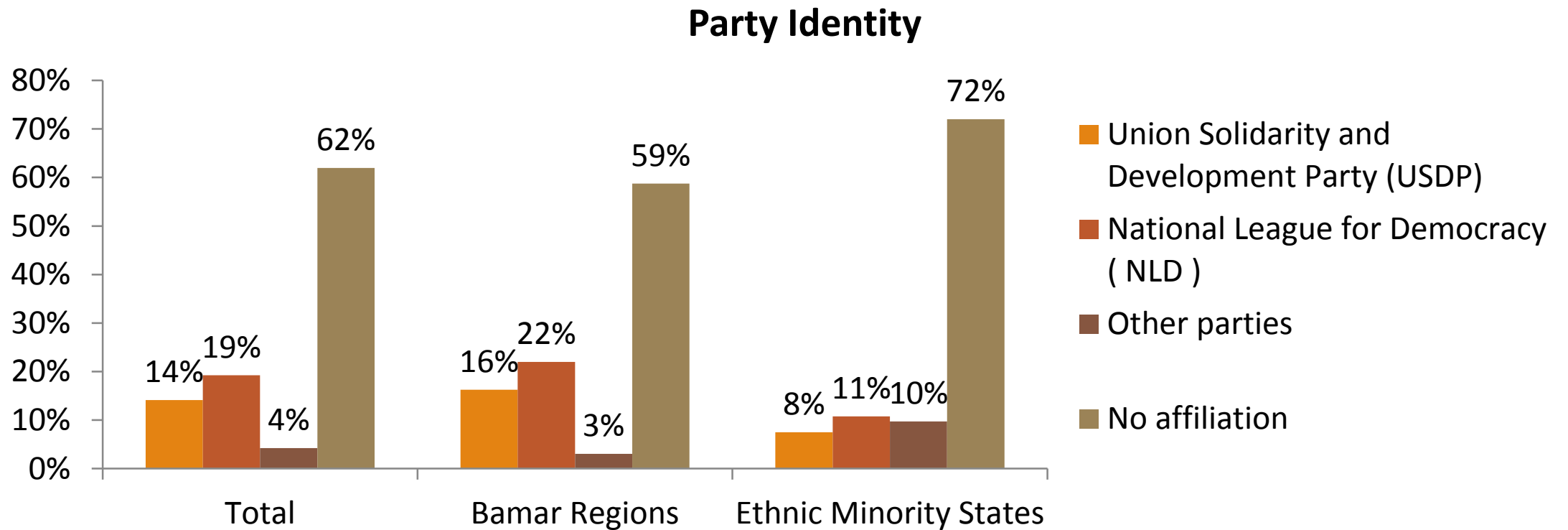
Myanmar highest reserve in expressing vote choice

Preferred President



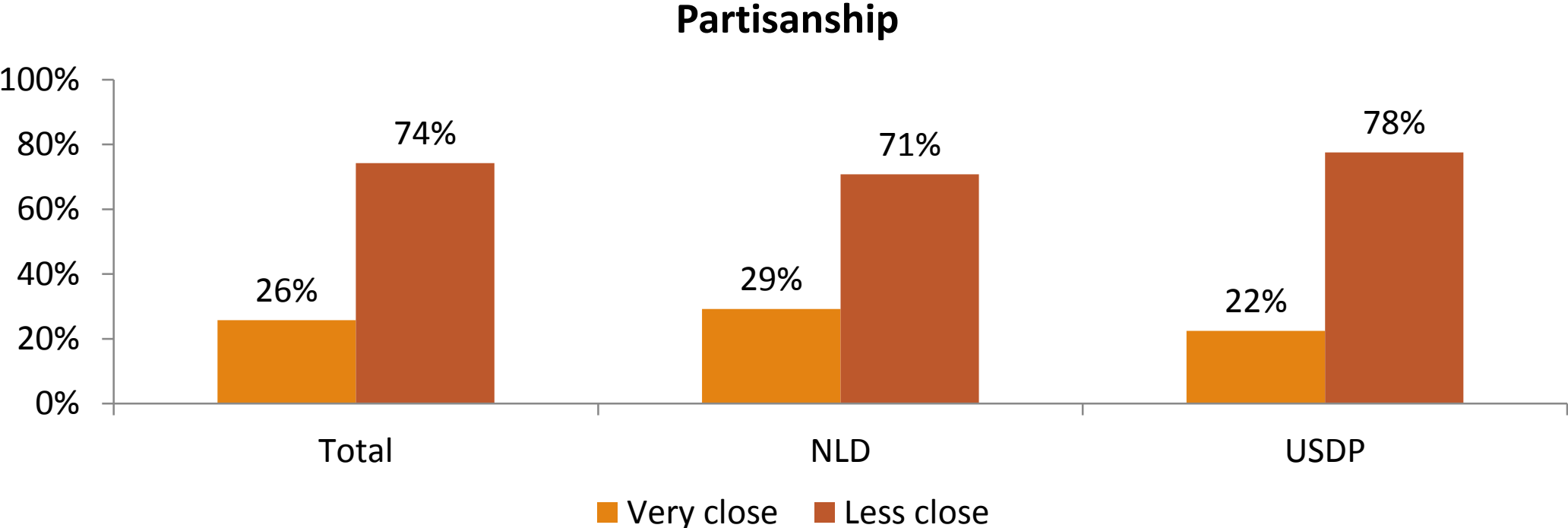
Majority reserve in giving preference for president; Those that do prefer Daw ASSK

Party Identity



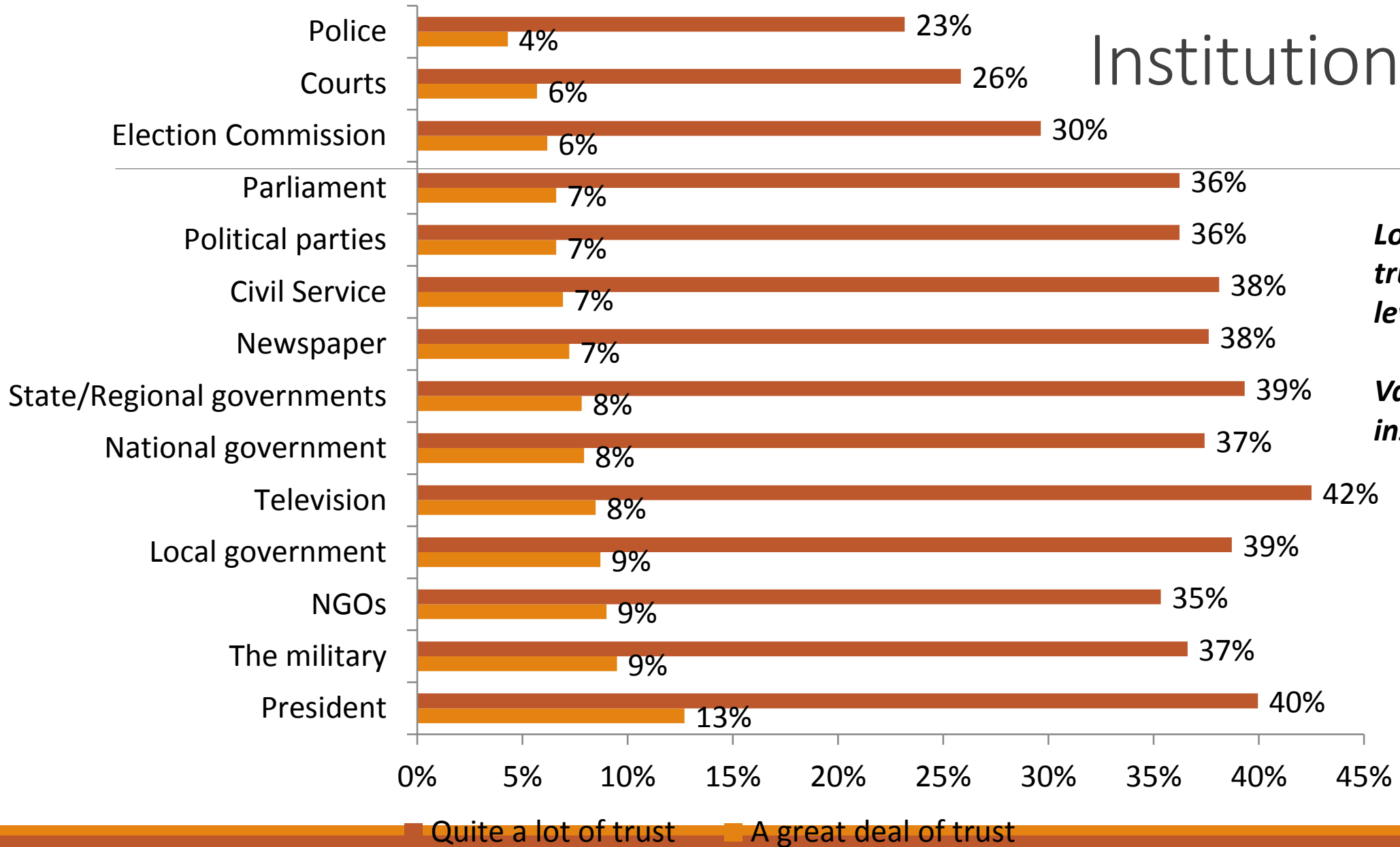
Party Identity of USDP and NLD less in minority areas. More reserve in expressing party identity in ethnic states

Partisanship



Parallel levels of partisanship of two dominant national parties

Institutional Trust



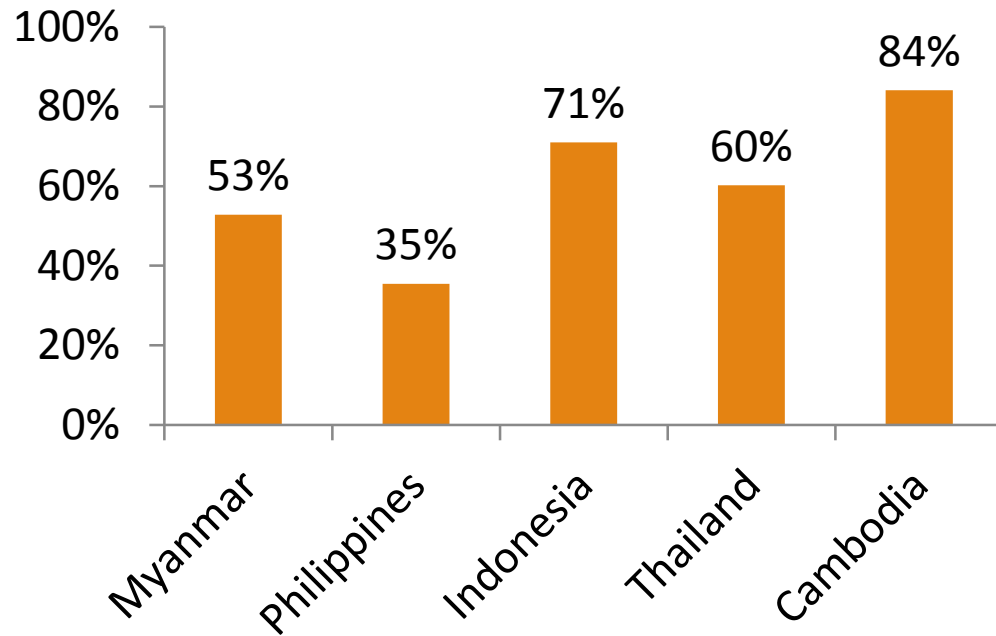
Low levels of high trust, moderate levels of some trust

Variation across institutions

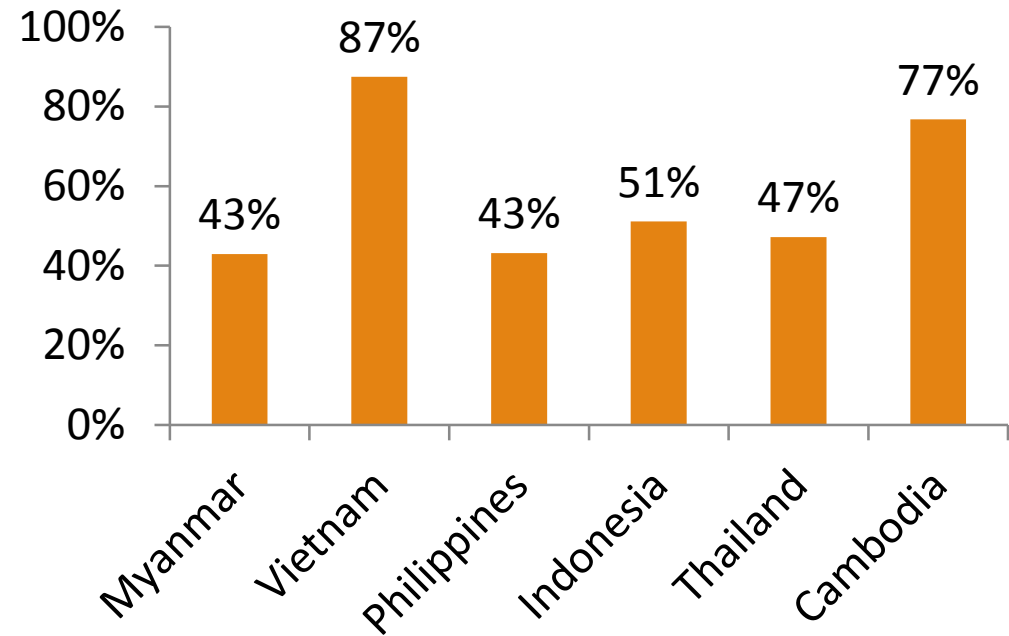
■ Quite a lot of trust ■ A great deal of trust

Trust in Executive and Parliament

Trust in the Executive Cross-National Comparison



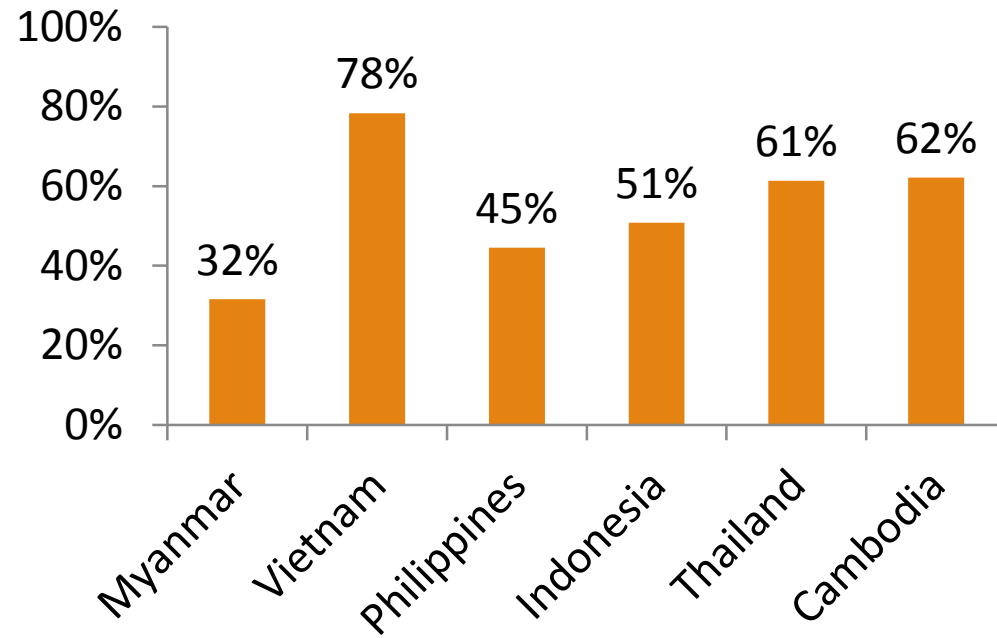
Trust in the Parliament Cross-National Comparison



Myanmar moderate levels of trust of institutions comparatively

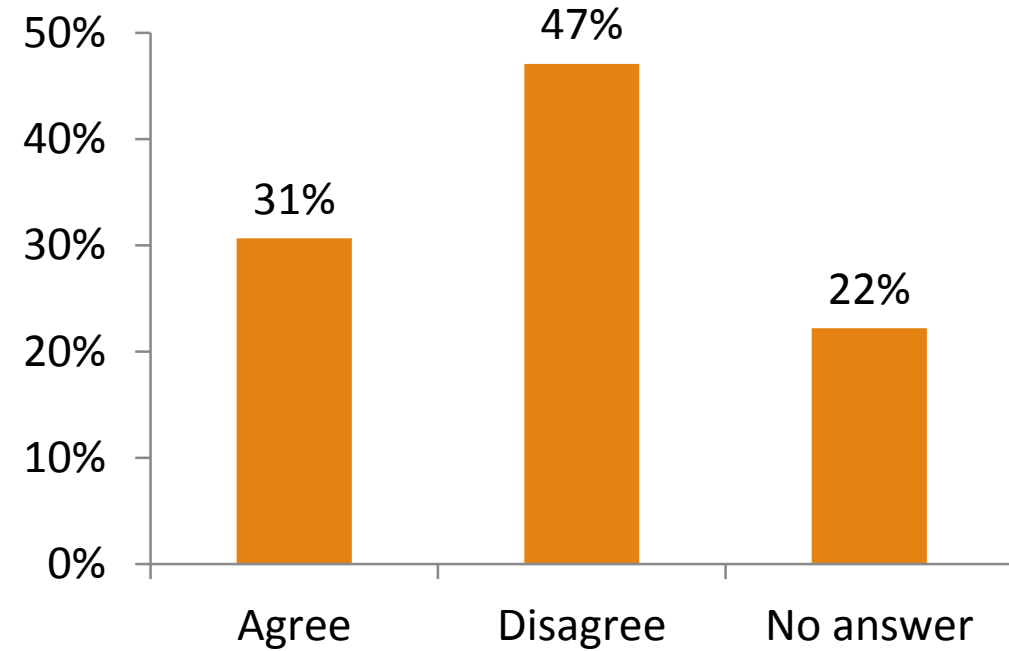
Judiciary

**Trust in the Courts
Cross-National Comparison**



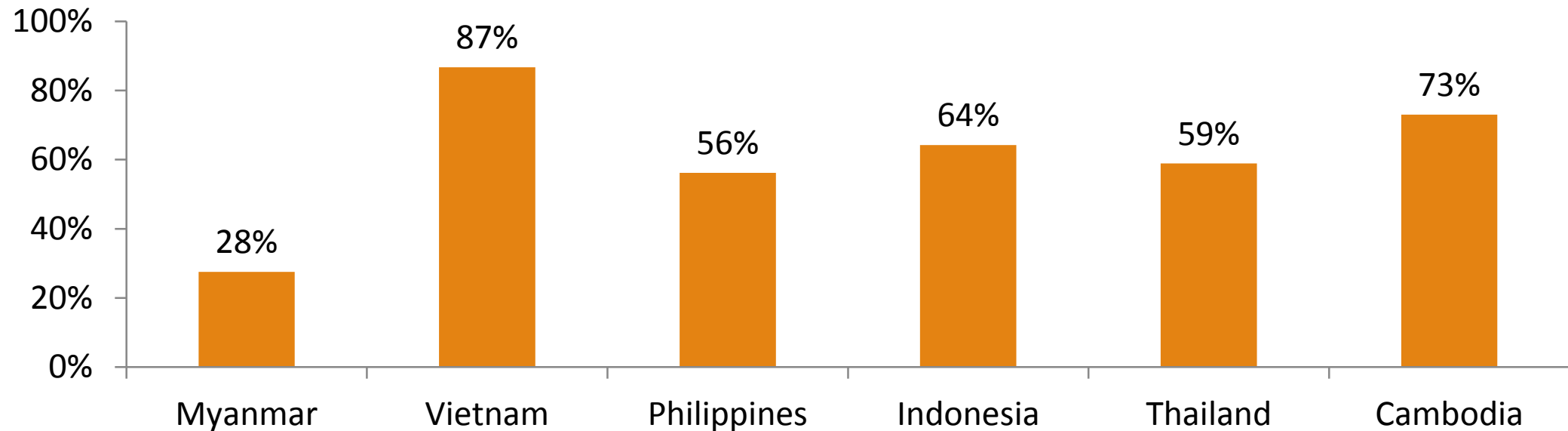
Low trust in courts and judiciary

**Having Judiciary Check on
Leaders?**



Police

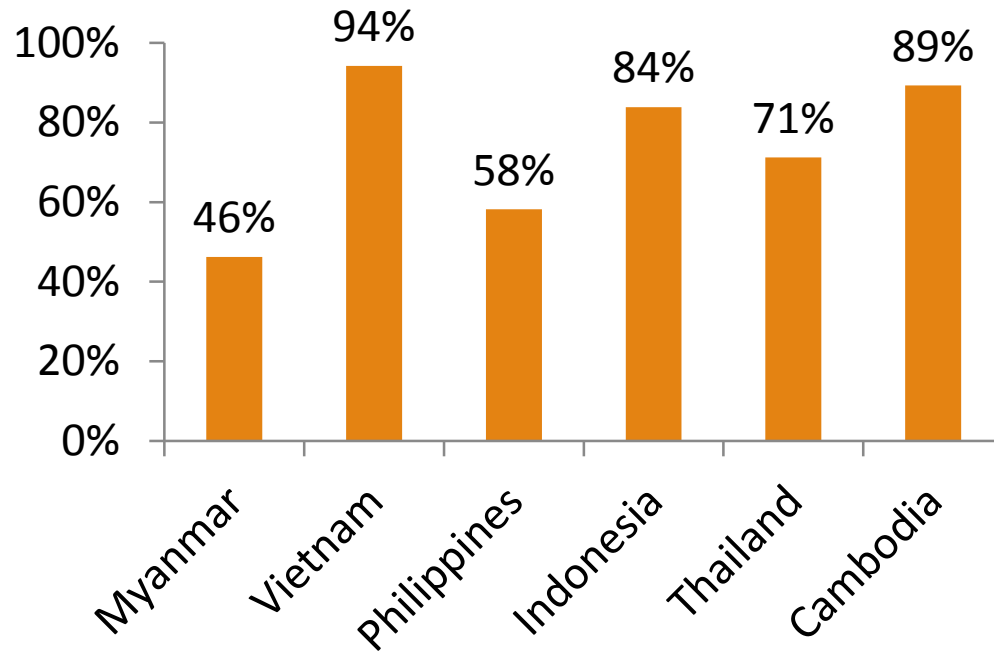
**Trust in the Police
Cross-National Comparison**



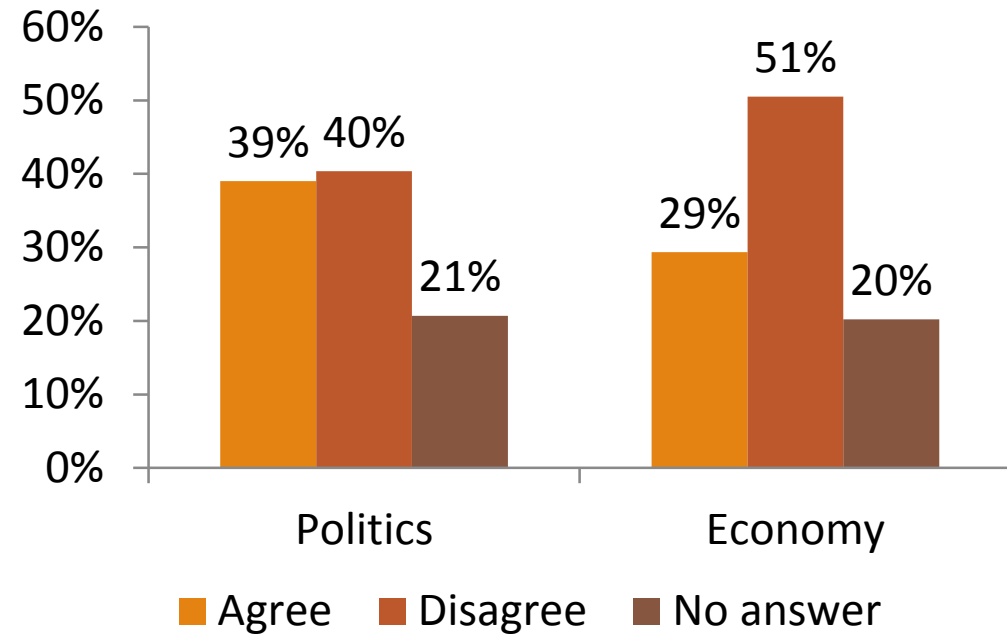
Lowest support of police cross-nationally

Military

Trust in the Military Cross-National Comparison

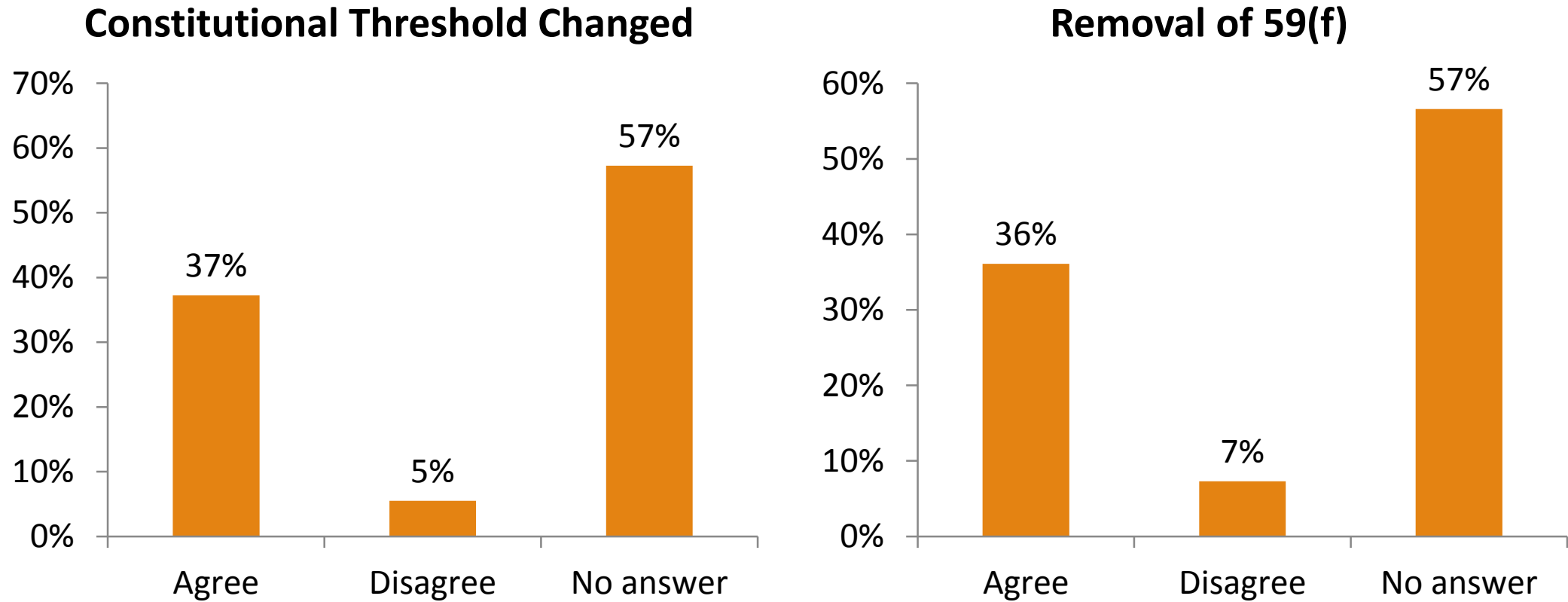


Military Involvement in Politics and Economy



Low level of support for military comparatively. Less support for military involvement in economy

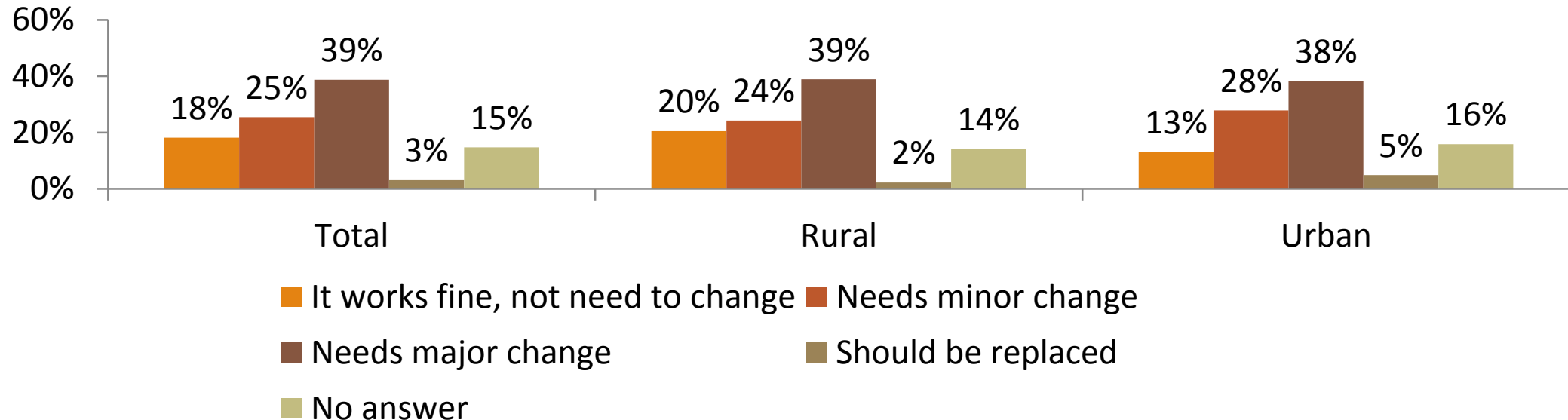
Constitutional Change



Majority reserved on constitutional reform, but those that answer favor it

I. Systemic Support

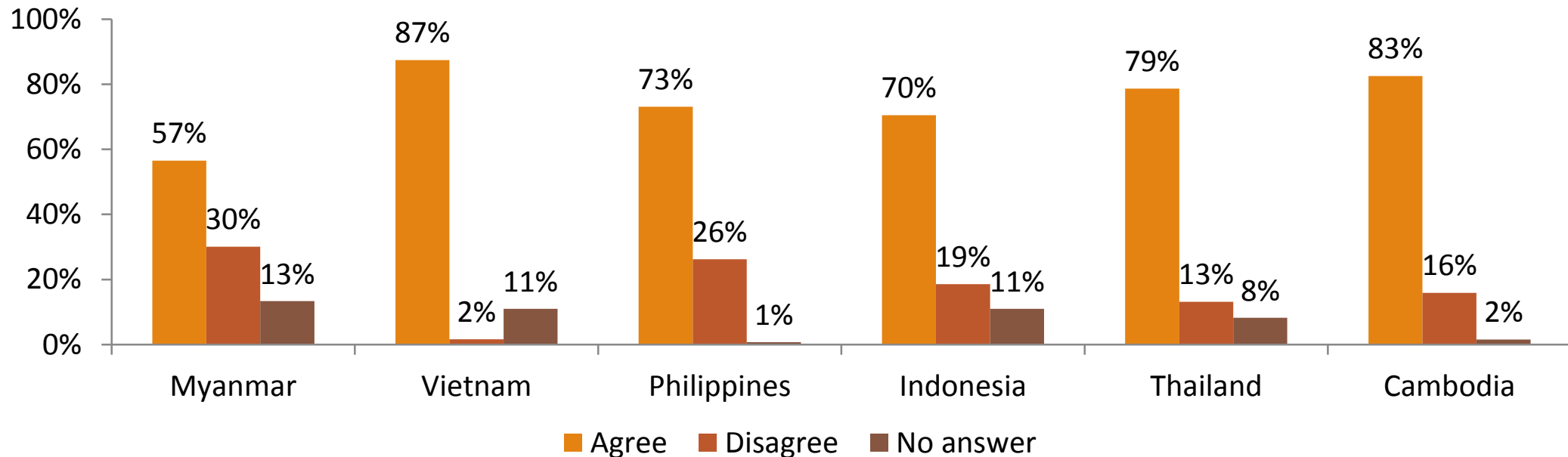
**Systemic Support
Rural-Urban Comparison**



Majority believe system needs change of some sort

System and Problem Solving

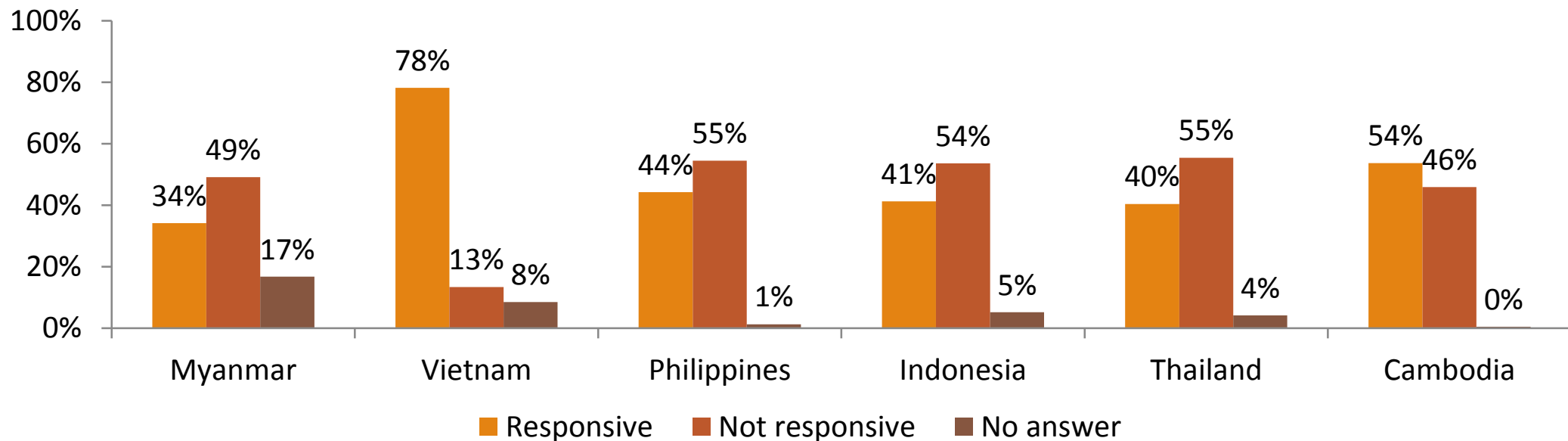
**System Capable of Solving Problems
Cross-National Comparison**



Myanmar lowest level confidence system capable solving problems

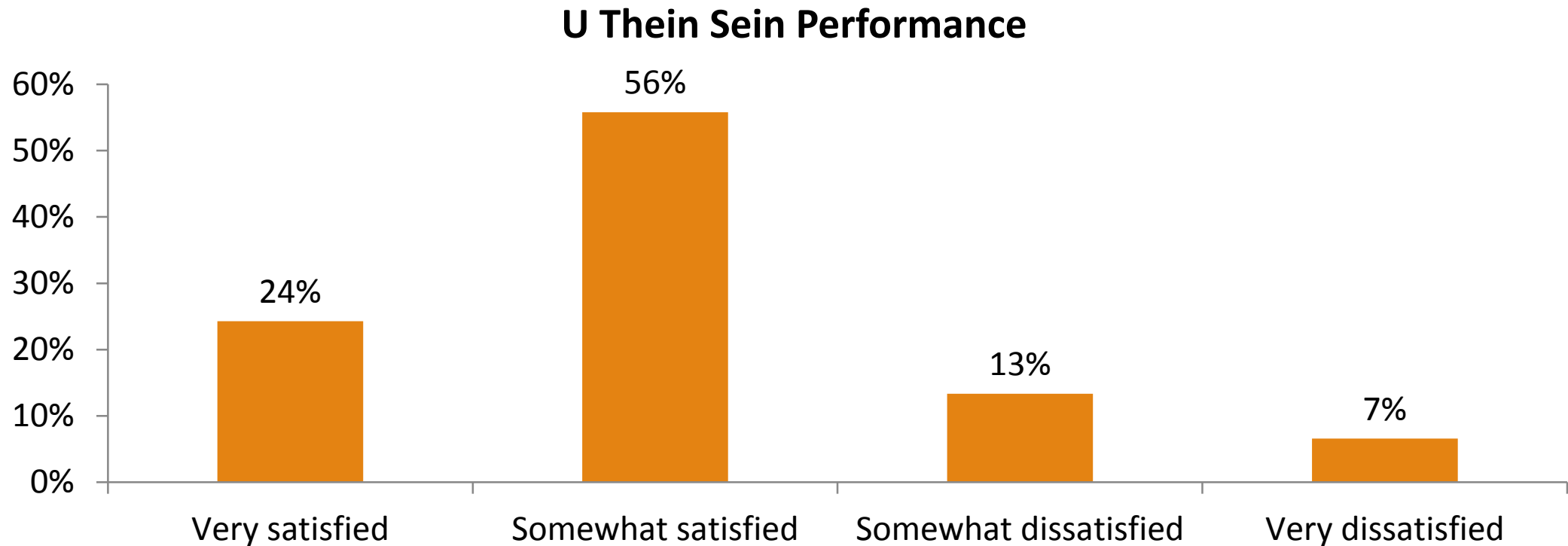
I. Government Performance

**Responsiveness of Government
Cross-National Comparison**



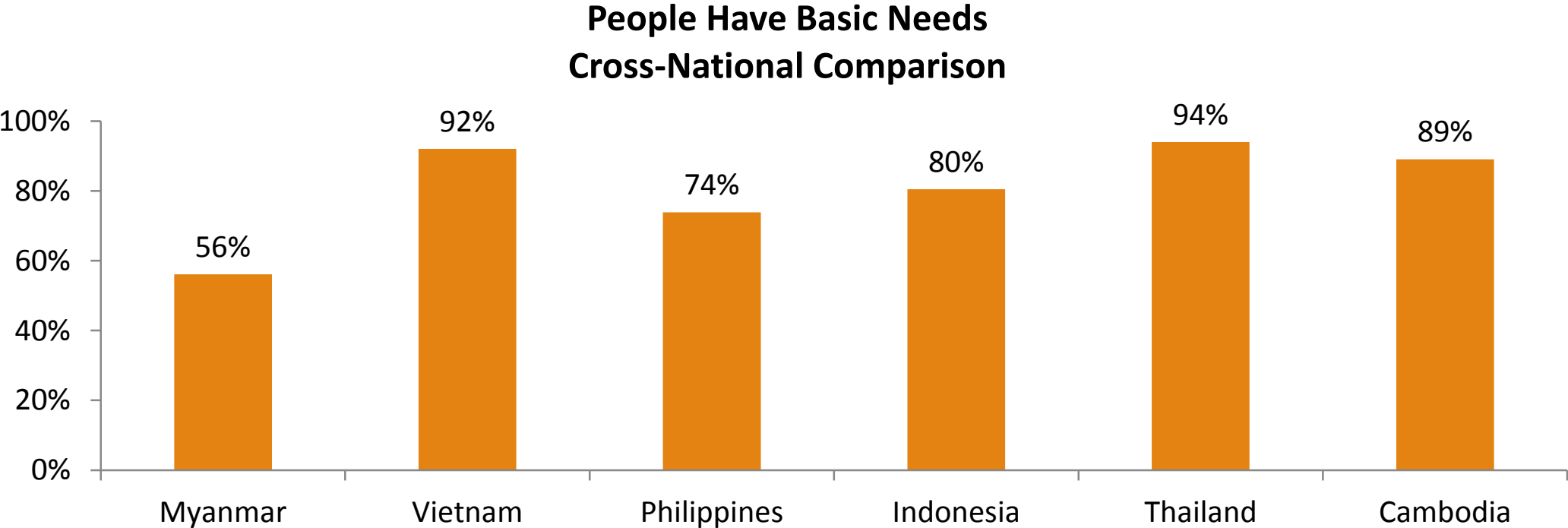
Even lower levels comparatively believe government responsive

U Thein Sein Performance



Majority express some satisfaction with U Thein Sein's performance

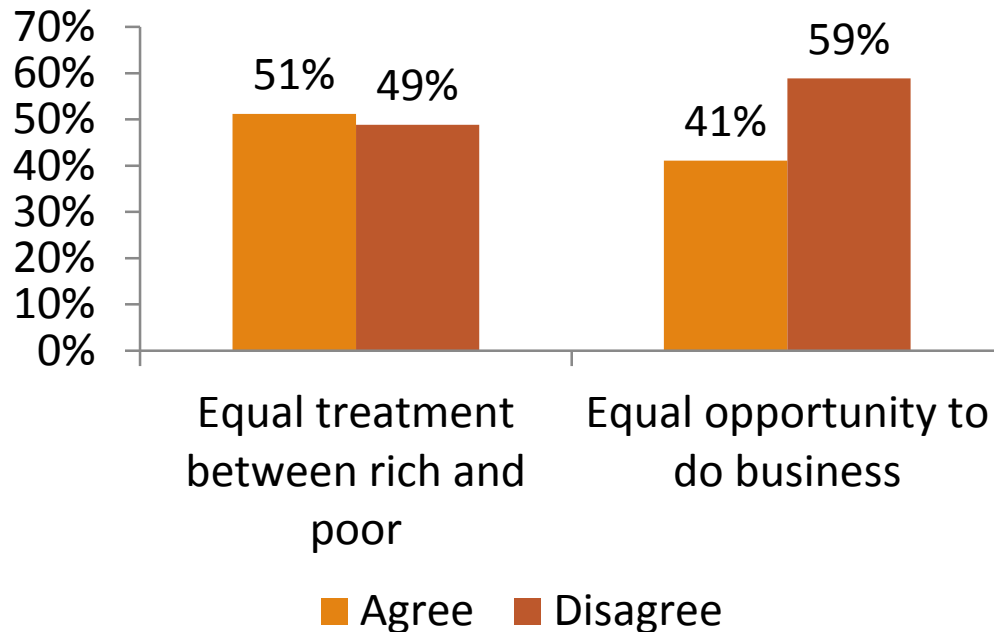
People Have Basic Needs



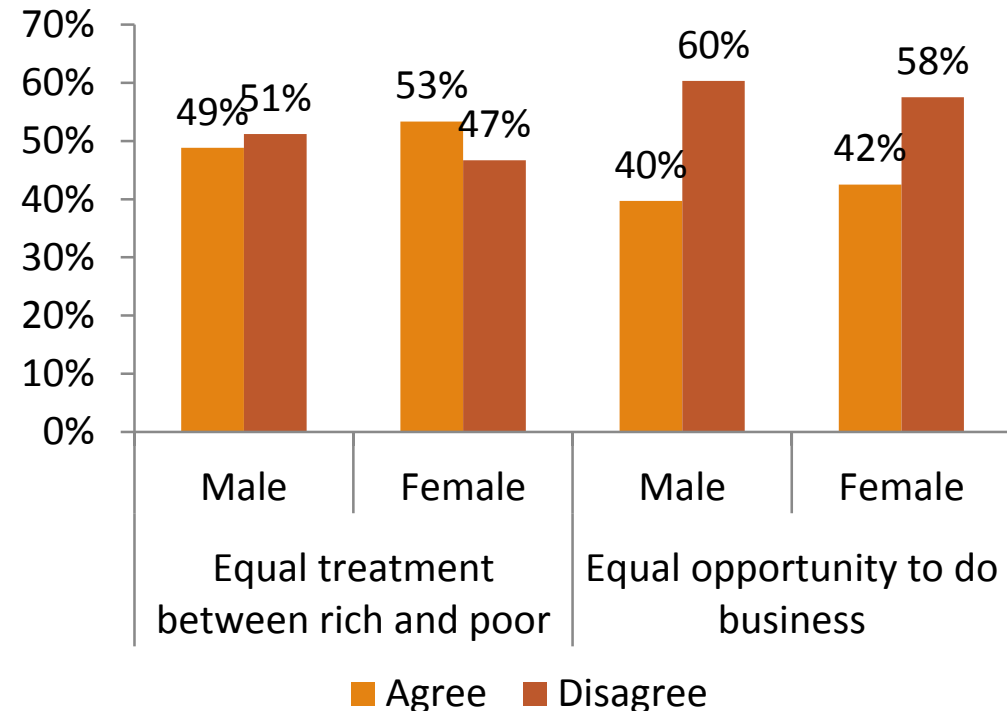
Majority believe people have basic needs, but lowest in region

Equality and Government

Equal Treatment by the Government



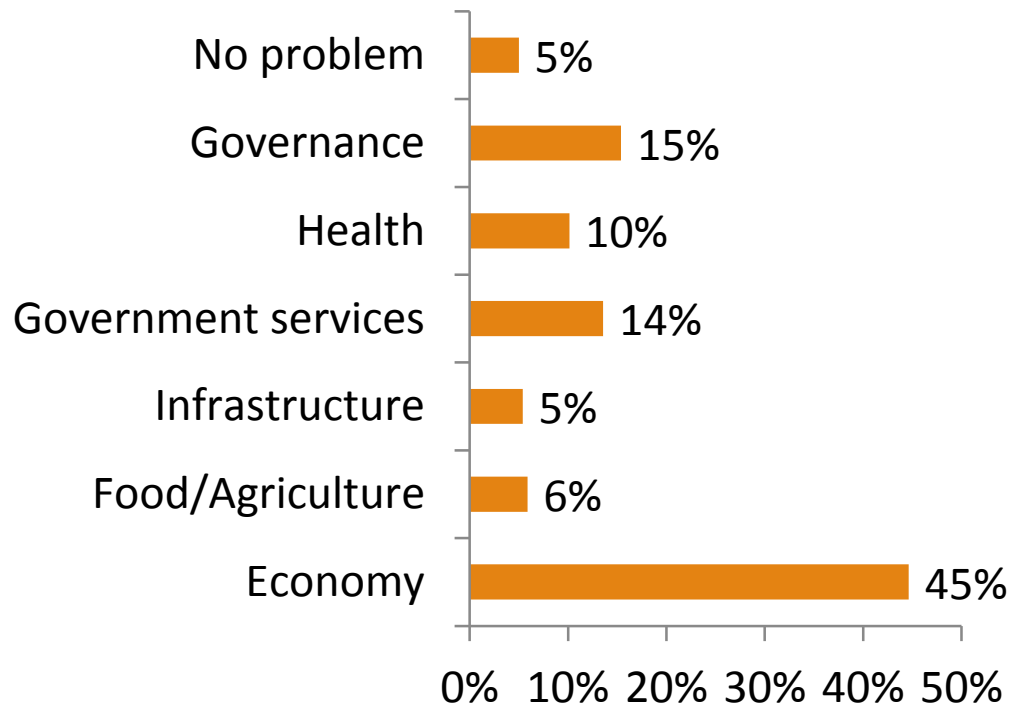
Equal Treatment by Gender



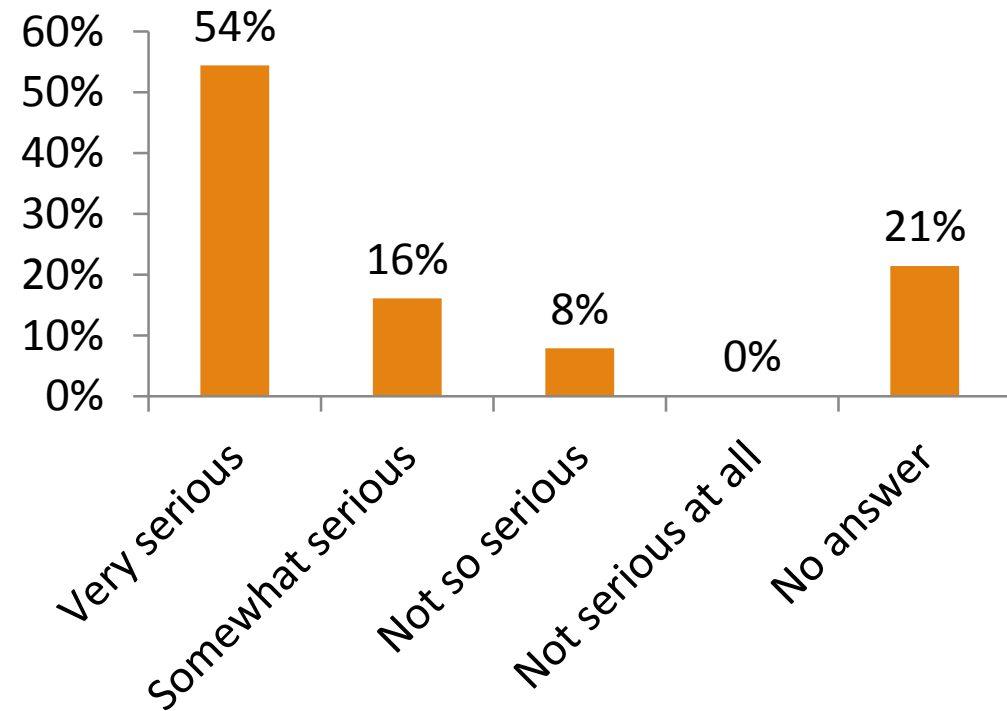
Myanmar divided on treatment with less positive views of business opportunities, especially by women

Serious Policy Problem

Most Serious Problem



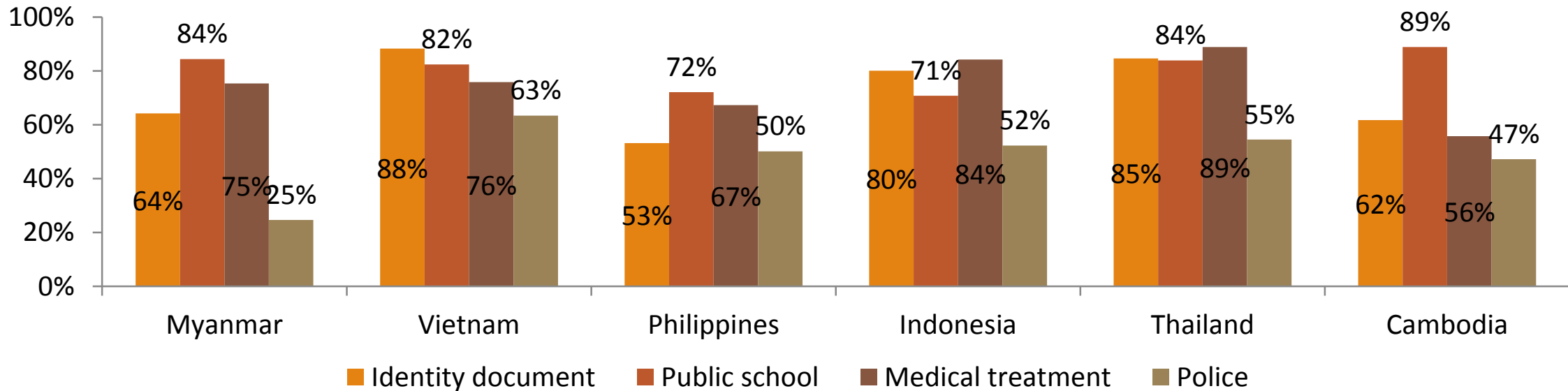
Seriousness of Land Grabbing



Economy seen as most serious policy problem. Land grabbing specifically seen as serious.

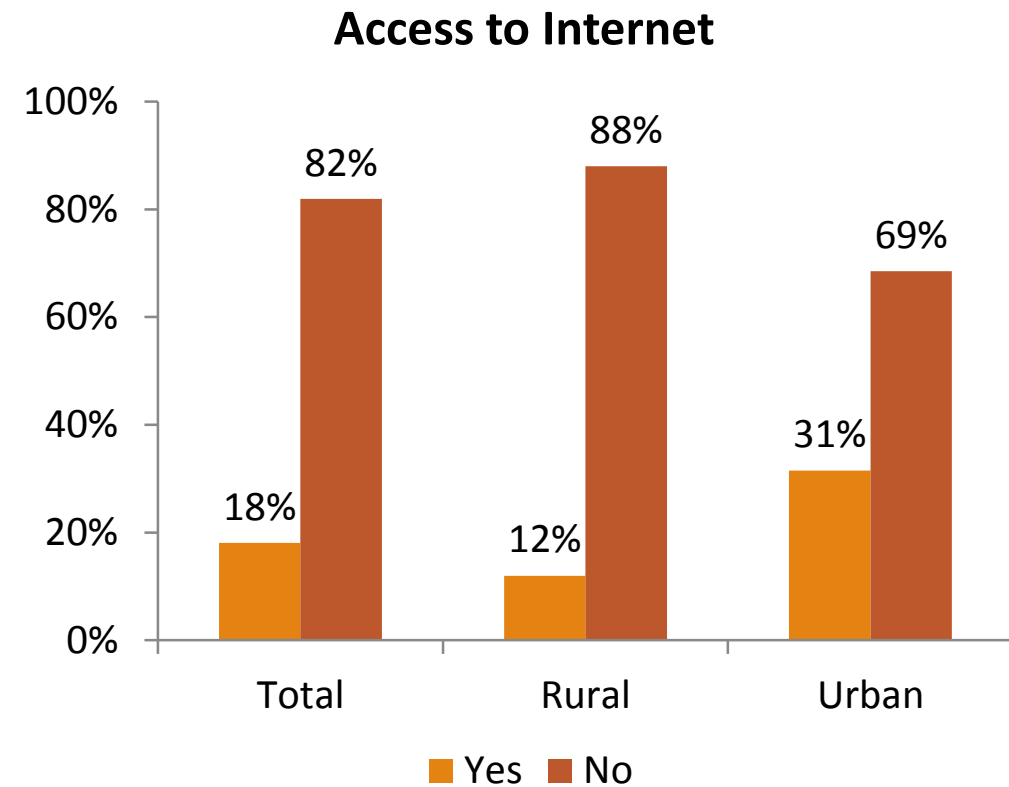
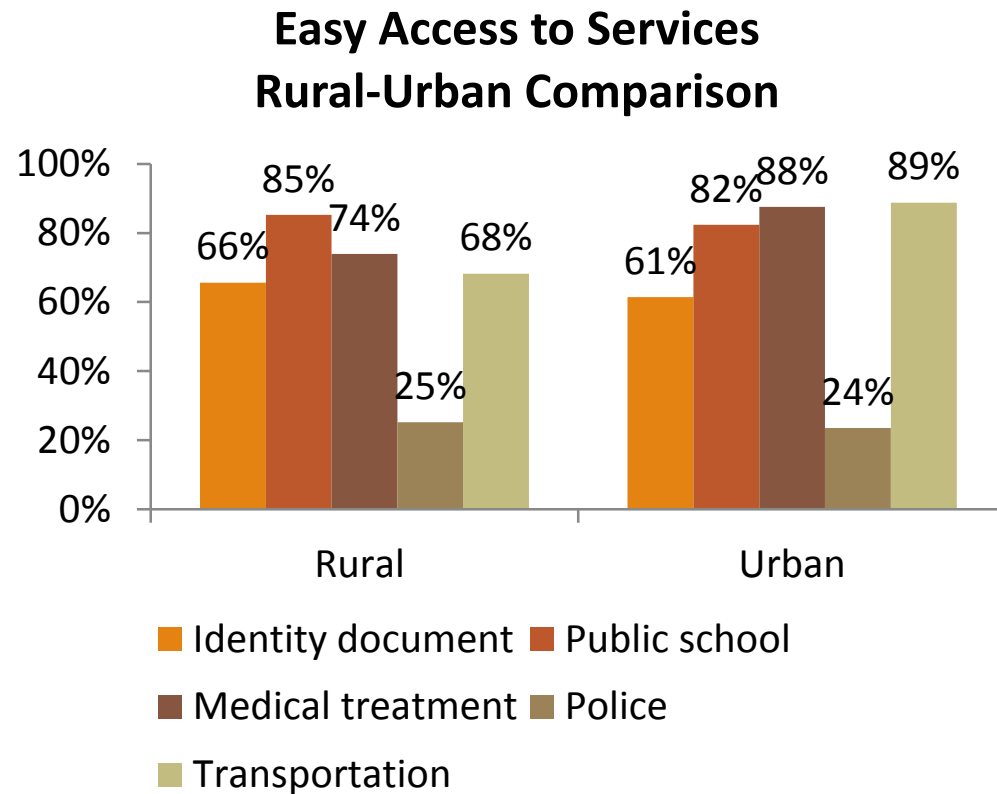
Easy Access to Services

**Easy Access to Services
Cross-National Comparison**



Positive assessments of services, but lower levels than other countries

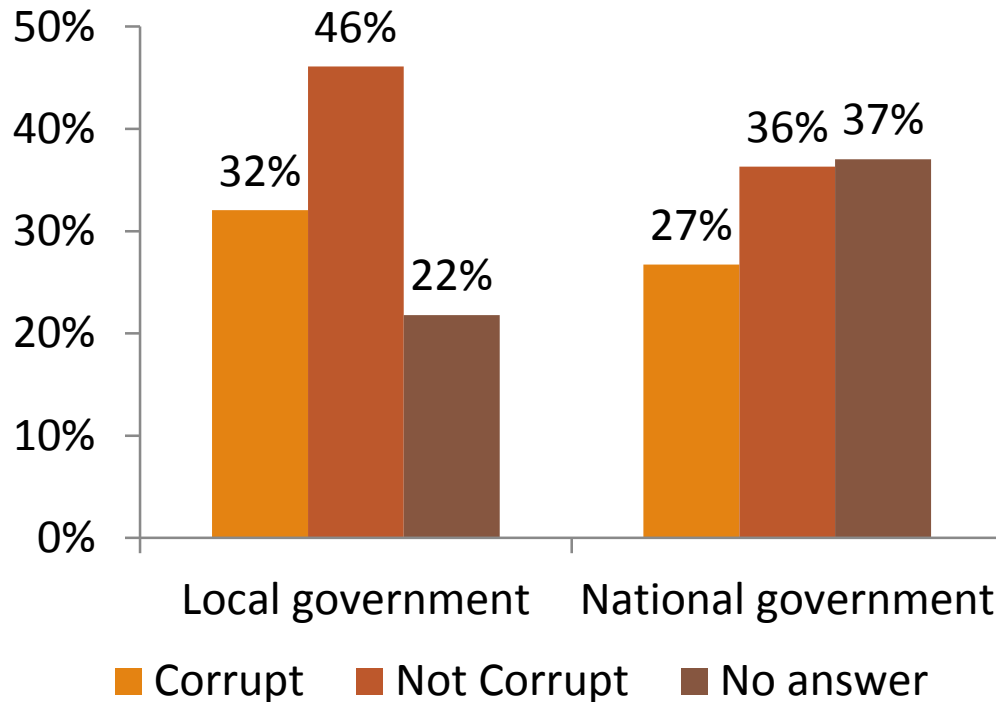
Access to Services by Place



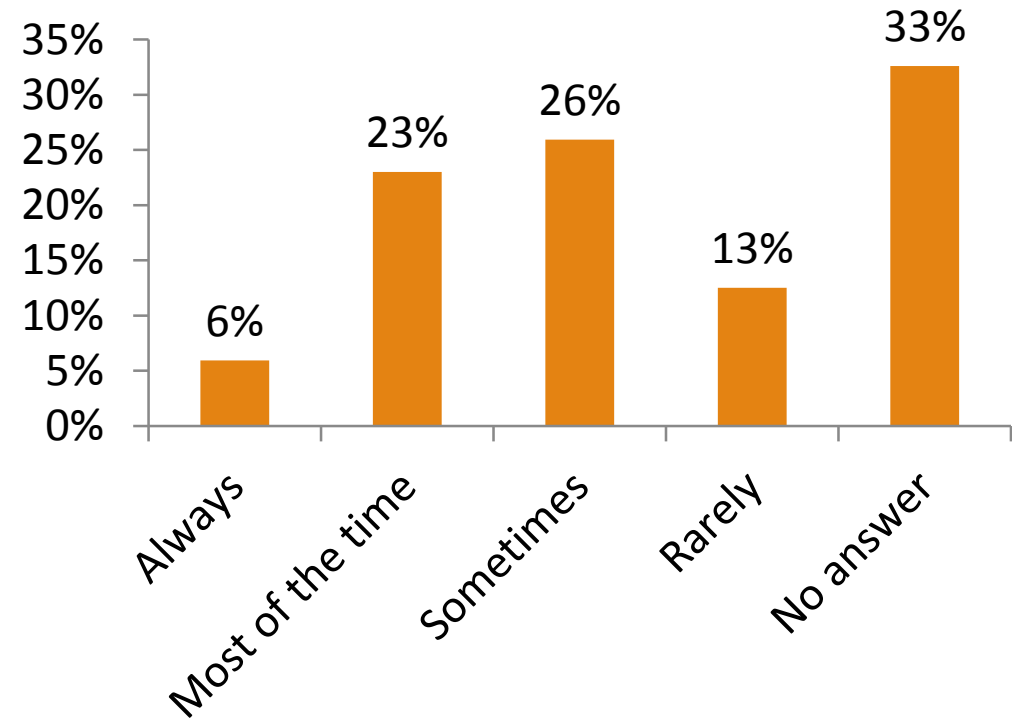
Better access for services in urban areas. Expanding internet access

Perceived Corruption and Abuse by Officials

Corruption in the Government



Abuse of Power



Negative perceptions of abuse by officials, with lower corruption levels

Conclusions

Rich and varied findings on political attitudes and behavior, but these raise questions for further research

Conflicting trends for democracy and governance, but frank assessments by public

Myanmar public has important political voice and survey research promotes understanding, but it is only first step

Thank you for your time and we welcome your feedback and questions

