SECTARIANISM IN SYRIA

Sectarianism in Syria: Survey Study

The Day After (TDA) is an independent, Syrian-led civil society organization working to support democratic transition in Syria. In August 2012, TDA completed work on a comprehensive approach to managing the challenges of a post-Assad transition in Syria. The initial Day After Project brought together a group of Syrians representing a large spectrum of the Syrian opposition — including senior representatives of the Syrian National Council (SNC), members of the Local Coordination Committees in Syria (LCC), and unaffiliated opposition figures from inside Syria and the diaspora representing all major political trends and components of Syrian society — to participate in an independent transition planning process.

The Day After (TDA)

An indispensable introduction

Since its inception, studies on *attitudes* sparked numerous academic debates, which were not only limited to defining them, but also on finding the most optimal means of measurement[1]. Daniel Katz defined *attitudes* as the predisposition of individuals to evaluate symbols, objects or aspects from their worlds in a favorable or unfavorable manner. As for *opinion*, it is the verbal expression for *attitudes* using words; however, *attitudes* may also be expressed through non-verbal behavior[2]. Subsequent studies focused on the behavioral side of *attitudes* as though they constituted a reaction to a specific matter. This matter necessitates raising the question about whether behavior is a result of attitudes – or in a more specific way: are attitudes determinants of behavior? If yes, this implies that knowing individuals' attitudes can help in predicting their behavior or even having control over them. But how could one scientifically identify individuals' attitudes, and how can they be measured? Is what individuals disclose sufficient for doing so? It can be easily demonstrated that what individuals disclose when answering a questionnaire on a sensitive topic and around a hypothetical position may not be consistent with their actual behavior once they are placed in that particular situation in reality.

This means that in many cases, behavior can be different from what individuals disclosed verbally or in writing. However, questionnaires still make up the most widely used tool to study attitudes in the field of social sciences. Since the effectiveness of questionnaires may still be limited in studying what individuals conceal, other more efficient tools are available, especially what is widely known as qualitative studies such as participant observation, or the various kinds of individual and group interviews. But in our present topic, isn't the declaration and manifestation of sectarianism highly significant? Are there any discrepancies among the different geographical areas, age groups, or educational levels of our sample? What are the ideological and social backgrounds of those who openly reject individuals belonging to different sects? Surveys can also put forth other questions worth addressing. In any

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[1] Even the translation of the term to Arabic is problematic, since it can also mean "stance". We ruled that the word "توجه" in Arabic was the most appropriate term for this study.

[2] Katz, Daniel (1960) "The Functional Approach to the Study of Attitudes", *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 2, Special Issue: Attitude Change (Summer, 1960), pp. 163-204:168.

case, one cannot adopt a particular approach at the expense of another since approaches in general are complementary, and only the subject of the study can determine the need to adopt a particular approach in lieu of another. For example, depicting a general image in the study of Syrians' attitudes toward sectarianism requires the use of surveys, while retrieving a profound knowledge of the sectarianism issue in Syria requires adopting the qualitative approach[3].

Numerous countries conduct periodic surveys to monitor phenomena such as xenophobia or stances on immigrants, or for the management of cultural diversity in areas with large ethnic or racial disparities, or in areas where manifestations of racial discrimination are visible. The outcomes of the more recent studies are usually compared to those of previous studies in order to track the evolution of the issue at stake, as well as to evaluate past policies and determine what can be done in the years ahead. In the case of Syria, the image looks very bleak. No universities or research centers were concerned with conducting such studies, and the former Syrian government institutions were not even interested in the views of the Syrians or their attitudes. With regards to the issue of sectarianism in particular, the latter has long been considered a taboo to the extent that even mentioning it was enough to raise all kinds of accusations; in fact, any attempt to address it remains a venture inducing undesirable consequences.

As we tackle this mission, we are fully aware of all the difficulties implied, especially that we are working in a context of war that has been spinning for many years and that is often described as a 'sectarian war'. But we are confident about the importance of this study and the need to conduct it, since it will significantly contribute to improving our knowledge about sectarianism in Syria, and will develop into a rich research substance in the hands of researchers aiming at conducting studies that will strengthen the monitoring and follow-up of this problem. Subsequently, this study will assist decision-makers in Syria in the future on formulating new policies to overcome the issue of sectarianism and building a state based on citizenship and

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[3] Addressing the issue of methodologies, their limitations and capabilities, weaknesses and strengths, is what enables a more efficient use of methodological tools, and thus leads to a better knowledge of our situation. There are undoubtedly other useful methods to address the issue of sectarianism in Syria, but what we are trying to refer to herein is the complete absence of quantitative and qualitative methods; in fact, we are not basing our research on any previous qualitative or quantitative field studies, but is it possible to understand the sectarianism situation in Syria without them?!

equality that Syrians have sacrificed so much to attain. As we place this survey of nearly 2500 Syrian respondents distributed across the Syrian territory and refugee camps in Turkey in the hands of readers, we call on Syrian researchers to provide as much constructive criticism as possible, with the aim of designing a more effective and reliable questionnaire, with a representative sample when possible.

Research team – The Day After

December 1, 2015

Research Methodology and Sample

In the period between June 23rd and September 7th, 2015, The Day After (TDA) conducted a field survey that included 2498 respondents, among which 1424 are men and 1074 are women. A group of 40 well-trained and skilled surveyors conducted the face-to-face interviews on the field. The process was indeed arduous and exhausting, and involved numerous problems, difficulties, and challenges; however, we ultimately overcame these. The questionnaire was relatively lengthy, and although we tried to shorten it, we were simultaneously trying to include as many aspects as possible that would provide a good knowledge of the subject of the study.

The circumstances induced by the war in Syria make it impossible to pull a representative sample of the Syrian population, knowing that there are many inaccessible areas either because of the war or because of the control imposed by the armed forces that would not allow any research of this kind. Besides, there was lack of a statistical data on the population distribution and the constant change of the latter, which were triggered by the advancement of battles. We were compelled to halt our activities in particular areas even after conducting several interviews, since working there has become significantly perilous.

In such circumstances, Syrian researchers find themselves at a juncture where they are facing down the following two choices. They can refrain from conducting any quantitative field research under the pretext of a lack of access to a representative sample of the Syrian population. Alternatively, they can work within the limitations inflicted by the current circumstances, under which they can create indicative yet improbable samples providing a field data that would enable to us shape a better understanding of our society, while taking into account the different demographic and social factors in Syria and comparing the results of various population groups with one another. And this is what has been done in the present study.

Thus, our goal is not to use polls that reflect meticulous percentages of the Syrians' views and attitudes, but rather to conduct a survey designed to allow us to identify the most important of these opinions and attitudes based on a diverse and

sufficient sample composition, which we eventually were able to attain. Hence it should be made clear at the outset the need not to disseminate the results of this study on the Syrian society as a whole, and this must be applicable to all the questions enlisted in this research.

Studying the attitudes implies the emphasis on three main components:

1. Cognitive or perceptive: acknowledging the sectarian situation in Syria, its deployment, and peculiarity.
2. Emotional: related to the forms of satisfaction and resentment towards sectarianism in Syria, its manifestations and severity levels: Strongly support – Strongly Disagree.
3. Behavioral: behavior and its connection to the two previous components (emotional and cognitive)

In addition, the present study encompasses three main aspects:

1. Exposure to sectarian discrimination: in the workplace, in the daily life, public institutions, before the law and so on.
2. Accepted social distance: referring to the tolerable degree of divergence and convergence in social relations among members of different communities.
3. Measures and policies: the degree of acceptance or resistance of respondents vis-à-vis specific policies set by the forthcoming Syrian authorities with a view to overcome the sectarianism problem.

We will not be displaying the results in accordance with the sequence of questions adopted in the questionnaire; rather, we will re-arrange them in a way that makes the reading smoother, and include the objective and utility of every question.

Below is a map exhibiting the locations of where the interviews have taken place, in addition to detailed tables minutely displaying the distribution of the sample.

Legend:
- AL QAMISHLI
- ALEPPO
- IDLEB
- DAMASCUS AND ITS SUBURBS
- LATAKIA
- TARTOUS
- HOMS
- SWAIDA
- HAMA
- DERAA
- TURKEY CAMPS
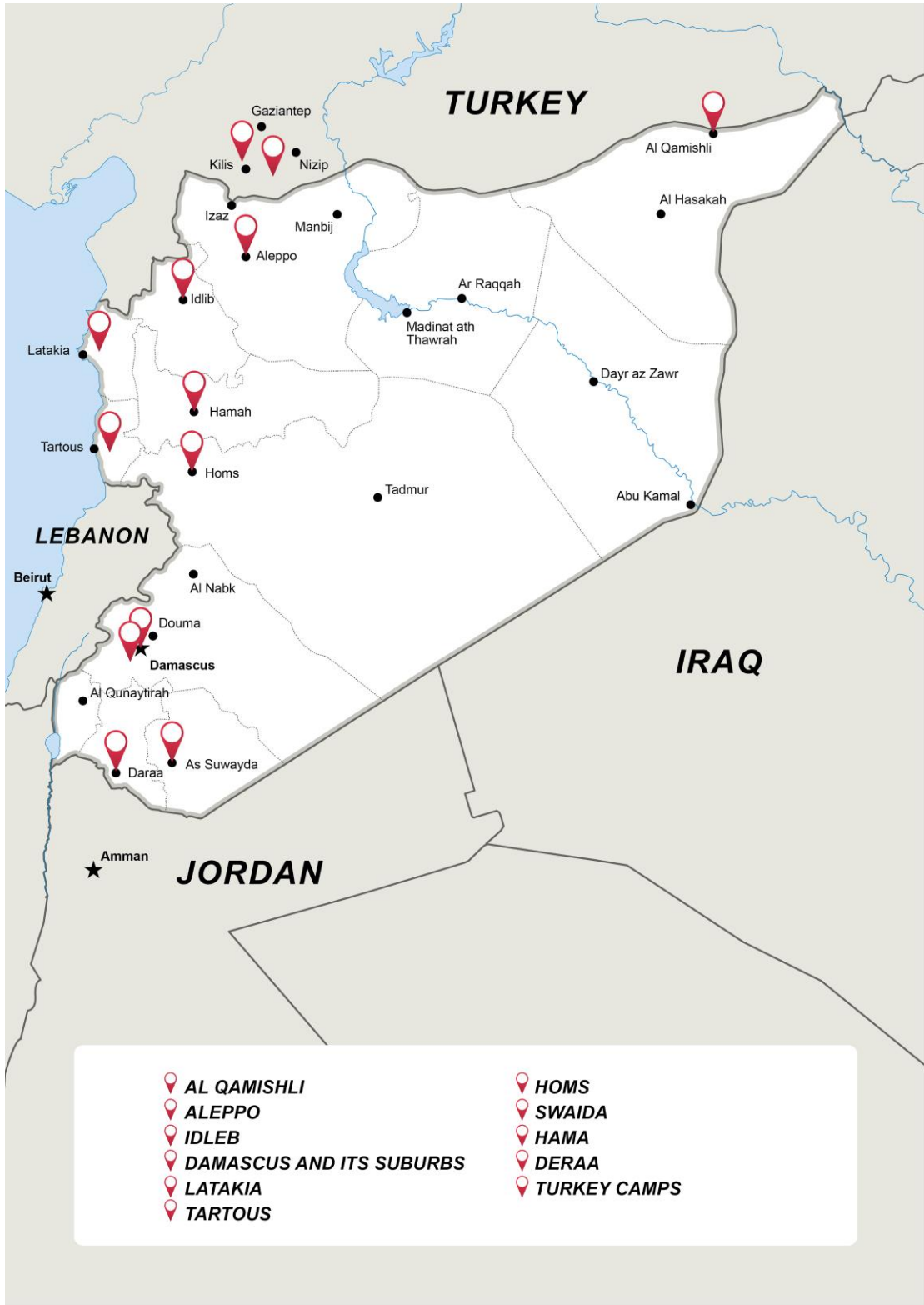
| | Sunni | Shiite or Alawite | Ismaili | Druze | Christian | Murshidi | Prefer not to answer | | Gender | | Total Number | |
									Female	Male		
Hassakah	31.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.5	4.2	57.4		22.7	77.3	216	100
Aleppo	97.9	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.8		27.1	72.9	284	100
Idleb	95.5	0.0	0.0	0.4	3.0	0.0	1.1		47.6	52.4	536	100
Latakia	30.1	32.3	10.0	0.4	14.9	11.9	0.4		39.0	61.0	269	100
Tartous	2.1	16.9	66.9	0.0	7.7	5.6	0.7		49.3	50.7	142	100
Homs	21.1	39.1	0.0	0.0	3.9	2.3	33.6		43.4	65.6	128	100
Damascus and its Suburbs	33.1	21.6	4.2	5.2	10.8	4.5	20.6		55.7	44.3	287	100
Swaida	1.9	0.9	0.0	34.3	0.9	0.0	62.0		60.1	39.9	213	100
Hama	63.4	20.4	1.4	0.0	14.1	0.7	0.0		28.9	71.1	142	100
Deraa	92.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.0	7.3		53.9	46.1	178	100
Turkey camps	99.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0		47.6	52.4	103	100
Sample (%)	57.0	10.2	5.4	3.6	5.6	2.6	15.4		43.0	57.0		
Total number	1425	255	136	91	140	66	385		1074	1424	2498	

Table 1. Sample distribution based on demographic factors

Province	Age range (%)					Income (per thousand Syrian Pound)				Ideology				
	< 25	26 - 35	36 - 45	46 - 55	> 56	< 25	25 – 75	> 75	Prefer not to answer	Extreme Political Islam	Islamist	Moderate	Secular	Extreme Secularism
Hassakah	6.0	42.1	40.7	10.6	0.5	24.1	43.1	27.3	5.6	0.5	1.9	3.2	27.8	66.7
Aleppo	27.1	42.3	22.2	6.3	2.1	20.4	30.6	10.6	38.4	9.5	30.3	32.0	18.7	9.5
Idleb	29.5	34.3	23.5	8.0	4.7	41.2	41.6	9.3	7.8	9.0	18.3	33.6	25.4	13.8
Latakia	19.7	42.0	24.9	9.7	3.7	29.4	29.7	8.6	32.3	0.7	3.3	15.2	17.5	63.2
Tartous	39.4	37.3	20.4	2.1	0.7	6.3	4.2	0.0	89.4	0.0	0.0	12.0	85.9	2.1
Homs	21.9	25.8	26.6	15.6	10.2	11.7	43.8	10.9	33.6	1.6	3.9	22.7	28.9	43.0
Damascus and its Suburbs	18.5	56.4	17.4	4.9	2.8	12.5	37.3	6.3	43.9	3.1	3.8	10.1	35.5	47.4
Swaida	19.7	31.5	27.7	14.6	6.6	20.2	33.3	5.6	40.8	0.0	2.8	11.7	56.3	29.1
Hama	9.9	73.2	15.5	0.7	0.7	23.9	71.1	0.7	4.2	3.5	34.5	32.4	26.1	3.5
Deraa	36.5	30.9	24.7	6.2	1.7	55.1	31.5	3.9	9.6	1.7	13.5	83.1	1.1	0.6
Turkey camps	15.5	36.9	31.1	13.6	2.9	40.8	43.7	5.8	9.7	30.1	44.7	21.4	1.9	1.9
Sample (%)	23.0	40.8	24.6	8.2	3.4	27.5	37.0	8.8	26.7	5.1	13.5	25.4	28.7	27.2
Total number	23.0	40.8	24.6	8.2	3.4	687	925	220	666	128	338	635	718	679

Table 2. Sample distribution based on age, income, and ideology

Province	Ideology				
	Extreme Political Islam	Islamist	Moderate	Secular	Extreme Secularism
Hassakah	0.5	1.9	3.2	27.8	66.7
Aleppo	9.5	30.3	32.0	18.7	9.5
Idleb	9.0	18.3	33.6	25.4	13.8
Latakia	0.7	3.3	15.2	17.5	63.2
Tartous	0.0	0.0	12.0	85.9	2.1
Homs	1.6	3.9	22.7	28.9	43.0
Damascus and its Suburbs	3.1	3.8	10.1	35.5	47.4
Swaida	0.0	2.8	11.7	56.3	29.1
Hama	3.5	34.5	32.4	26.1	3.5
Deraa	1.7	13.5	83.1	1.1	0.6
Turkey camps	30.1	44.7	21.4	1.9	1.9
Sample (%)	5.1	13.5	25.4	28.7	27.2
Total number	128	338	635	718	679

Table 3. Sample distribution based on ideology

Chapter I: Recognizing and assessing the sectarian situation in Syria

Opinions on the existence of numerous religious sects

During the last few years, Syria has gone through significant social changes, a popular revolution and a devastating war, combined with a sharp social division and tension in the relations between the various religious sects. These changes presuppose the existence of both a new perception of Syria and a method of dealing with its multi-religious and multi-ethnic nature, which is why it was deemed necessary to identify the views of the Syrians in the presence of many different religious communities in Syria at the outset.

Generally speaking, do you think having numerous sects in Syria is…

27.0 39.1

33.9

- Positive
- Neither positive nor negative
- Negative
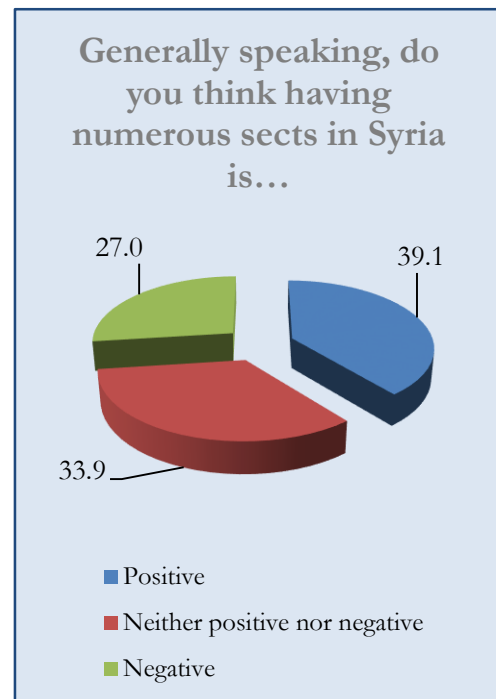
Figure 1. Sectarian pluralism

Despite the lack of a preceding data to compare the current results with, and consequently the inaptitude of identifying how this opinion has changed, the expected advantage of this question is that it helps us understand the respondents' current attitudes vis-à-vis the people of different religious sects. While 27 percent of respondents believed that the existence of many sects in Syria is a "negative" issue, most of them consider it as a "positive" or "neither positive nor negative" issue. In other words, most respondents do not believe that the existence of many sects in Syria constitutes a stand-alone problem; rather, the largest percentage of them, which amounts to 39.1 percent, continues to consider this pluralism as a positive issue (Figure 1).

Sectarianism: in what sense?

Any analysis on the trends and opinions on sectarianism requires a primary identification of the respondents' prevailing understanding of it. We included a question in the questionnaire that incorporates four different and gradual levels of sectarian discrimination, starting with a "violent aggressive behavior towards the other" and ending with a "negative or positive discrimination on the mere basis of belonging to another sect". As reflected in Figure 2, the largest proportion of respondents are those who think that sectarianism is a negative or positive discrimination against other individuals on the mere basis of belonging to another sect. However, a considerable proportion linked sectarianism to hostile and violent manifestations (19.1 percent).
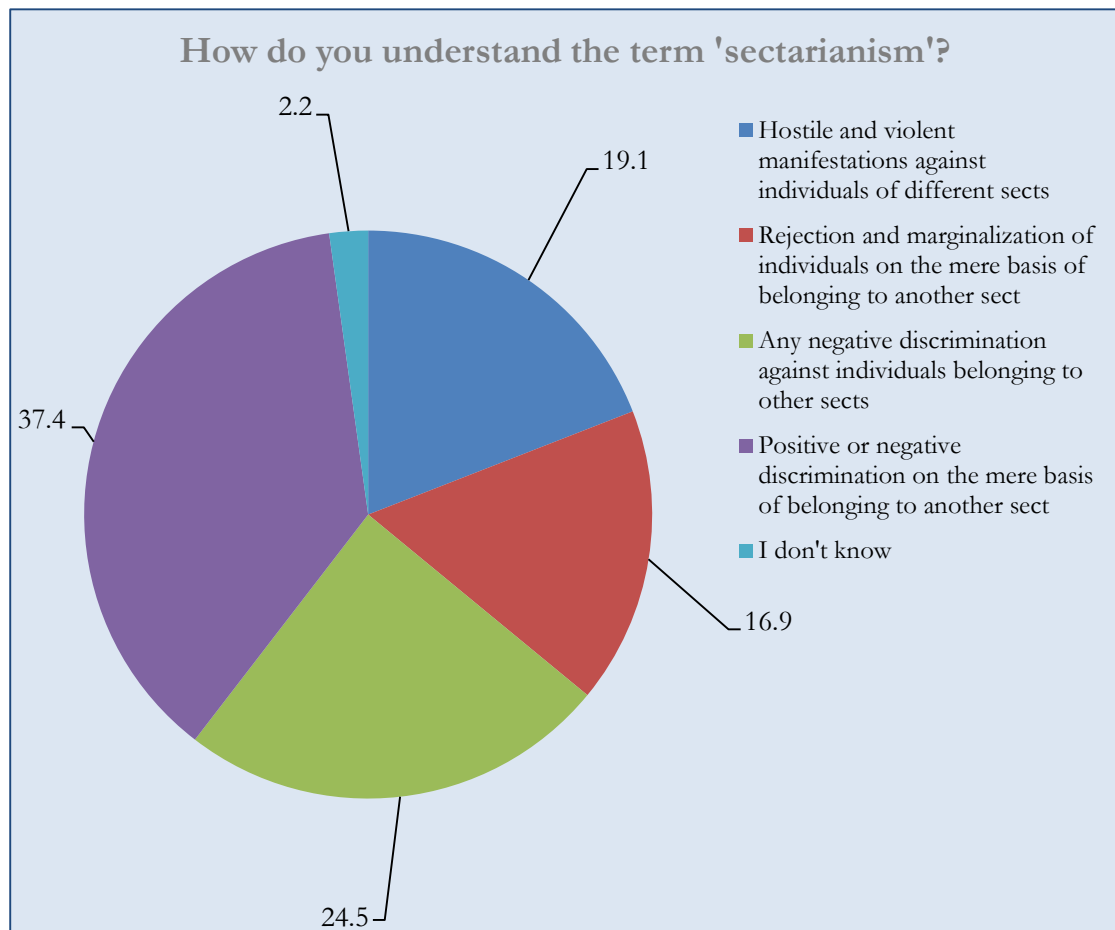

Figure 2. Defining sectarianism

Sectarianism as a problem

After identifying the respondents' tendencies towards religious pluralism and their different understandings of sectarianism, it became possible to observe the extent to which they perceive it as a problem that must be addressed. While those who reported that the existence of many sects in Syria is a negative issue were quasi-unanimous in stating that sectarianism is a serious or very serious problem, about only half of those who deemed it a positive issue said that too, and only 19.1 percent of them believed that there is no sectarianism problem at all in Syria (Figure 3).
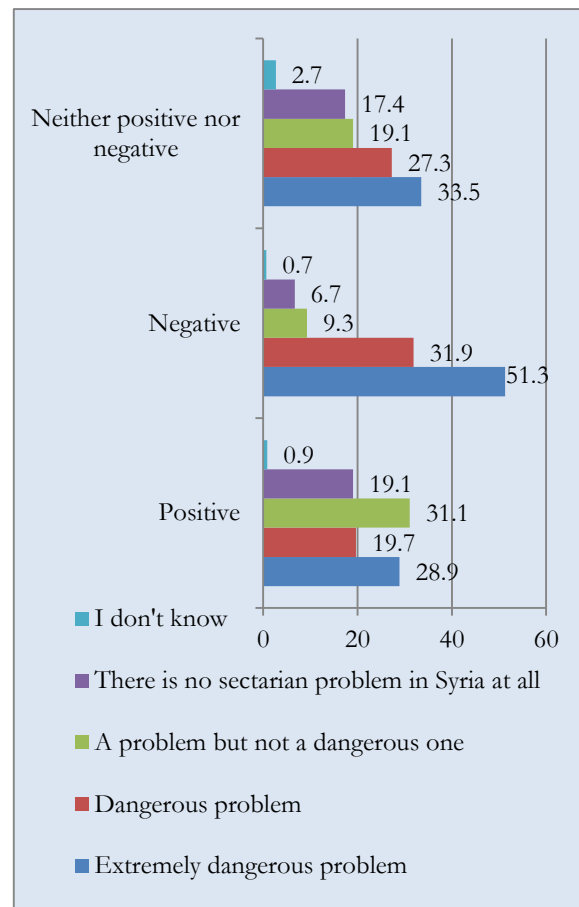
Figure 3. Defining sectarianism pluralism in Syria %

As shown in Figure 4, it is possible to notice that a large percentage (64.6%) of those who defined sectarianism as violent and hostile manifestations say it is a very serious problem, while this percentage drops to a quarter among those who say that sectarianism is a negative or positive discrimination.

It also seems that the percentage of those who deny the existence of a sectarian problem in Syria varies depending on the understanding of sectarianism: the percentage starts with 5.7% among those who understand sectarianism as a hostile and violent manifestations, and then increases to 23.4% among those who say it is a negative or positive discrimination.

Although most men and women respondents say that sectarianism is a serious or very serious problem, more women than men tend to deny the existence of a sectarian problem in Syria at 23.6% and 9.0%, respectively (Figure 5).
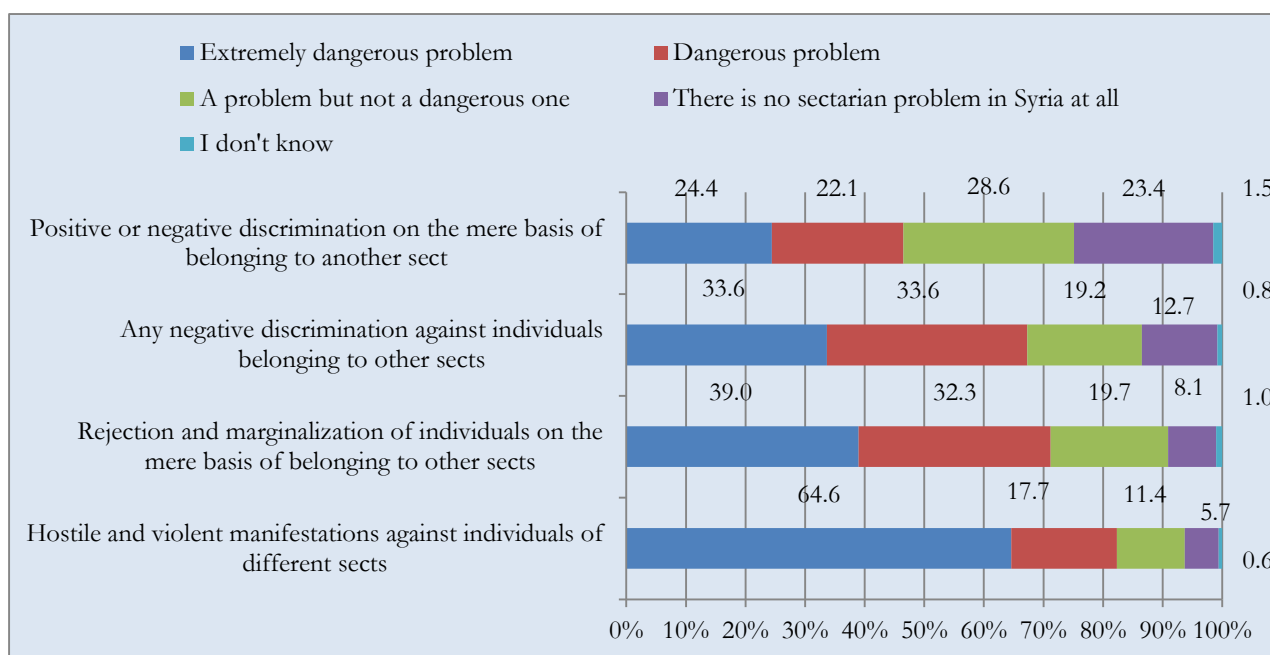
Figure 4. 'Sectarianism as a problem' by definition %
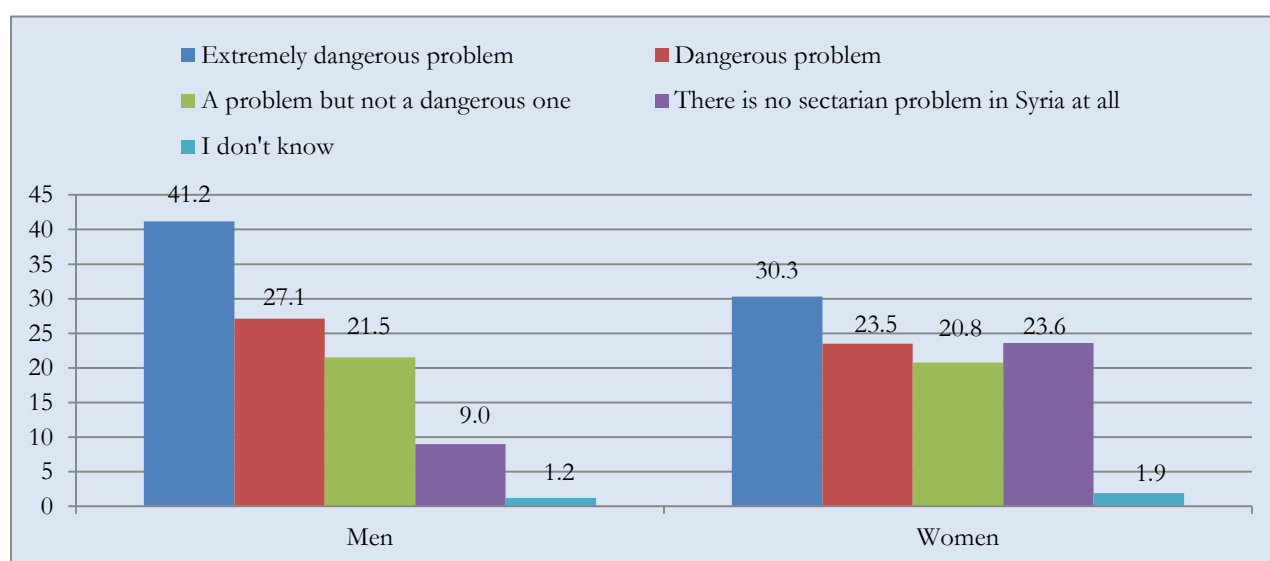
Figure 5. Sectarianism as a problem by gender %

Figure 6 displays the answers according to current areas, and the seriousness of the sectarian situation in Syria is manifested in some areas more than others: there is almost a consensus in each of Hama (89.4%), Deraa (84.8%), Homs (82.0%), Damascus and its countryside (85.1%), refugee camps in Turkey (81.6%) that sectarianism is serious or very serious problem. This was similarly the opinion of

most respondents in Latakia (69.1%) and Hassakah (69.4%); however, the percentage drops to almost half in Aleppo.

Figure 6. 'Sectarianism as a problem' by current location %
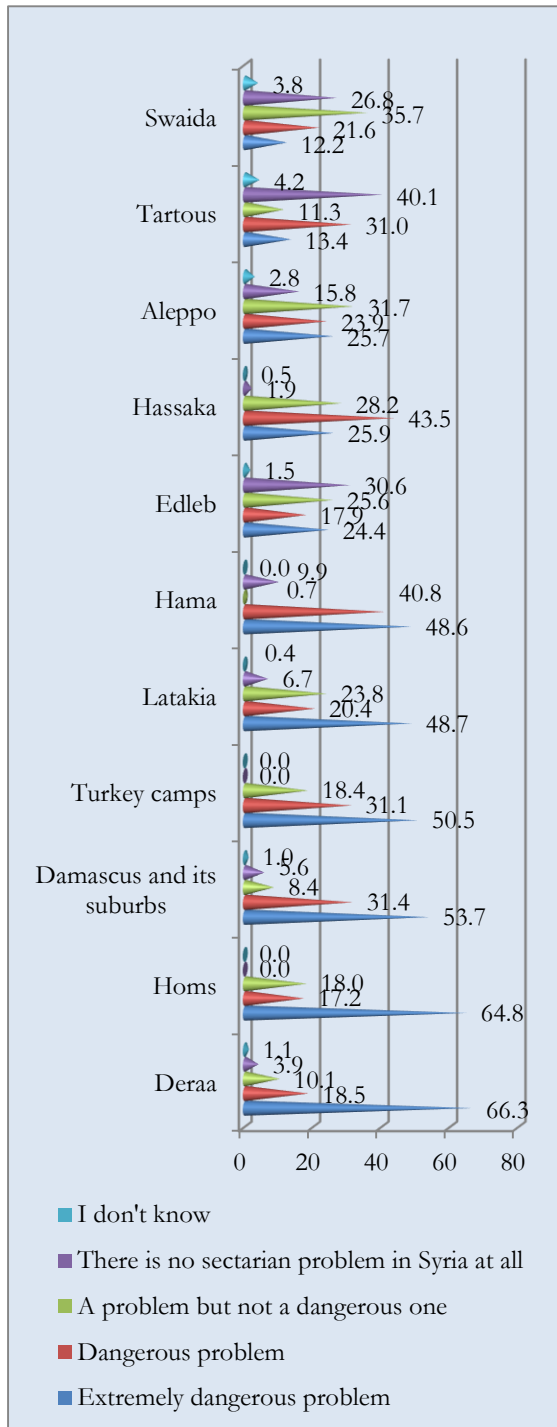
However, in Idlib, Tartous, and Sweida, this percentage drops to 44.4%, 42.3% and 33.8%, respectively. What is particularly interesting is that Deraa comes at the forefront of the areas reporting that sectarianism is a serious or very serious problem, while the largest percentage of respondents in the neighboring city of Sweida tends to deny or minimize the seriousness (62.5%). This observation raises many questions around the remarkable difference between the two neighboring cities: is it because of the relationship between the two cities? Or are other reasons suggesting another type of correlation, such as the relationship with the political power, and what Deraa has gone through during the Syrian revolution?

It can analogously be observed that most of the Alawites and Shiites (77.6%), as well as the Murshidis (75.8%), consider sectarianism a serious or very serious problem. The majority of Sunnis (61.1%), Christians (62.1%) and Ismailis (56.6%) have provided the same answer; *au contraire*, the largest proportion of Druze respondents (58.3%) tends to deny or minimize the seriousness (Figure 7).
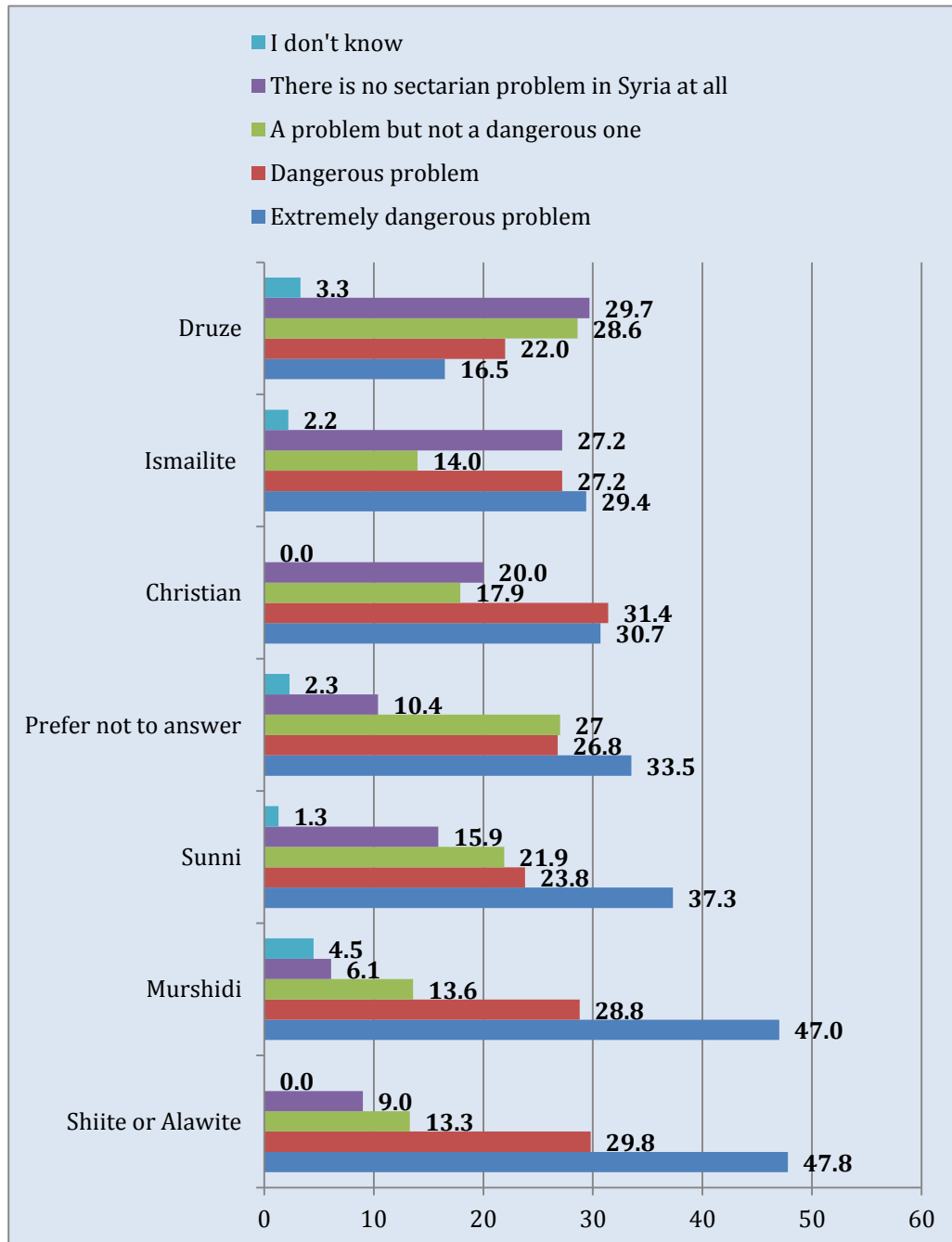
Figure 7. 'Sectarianism as a problem' by sect %

The causes of the sectarian problem

Is the sectarian problem a result of ancient historical ties between the communities in Syria, or is it a consequence of matters regarding the relationship with the political power in Syria? We included a question about the causes of this problem in the questionnaire that comprised four different answers, two of which relate to political power and the two others are linked to the historical circumstances that govern the relations between the religious sects in Syria. It seems that the largest proportion considers the reasons are closely linked to political power, whereby 33.9 percent believe that the arrival of the Baath Party to power in 1963 instigated the sectarian problem, and 28.2 percent think this problem surfaced after the breakout of the Syrian revolution. Around 36 percent of the respondents say it is linked to historical reasons, and most of those who chose "other" said that it is an old problem but has just clearly emerged and its severity has recently been amplified (Figure 8).

When did this problem begin?

28.2   1.9   17.9
                18.1
33.9

- It is an old problem and cannot be solved
- It is an old problem but can be solved
- It started after the Baath party came to power
- It started after March 2011
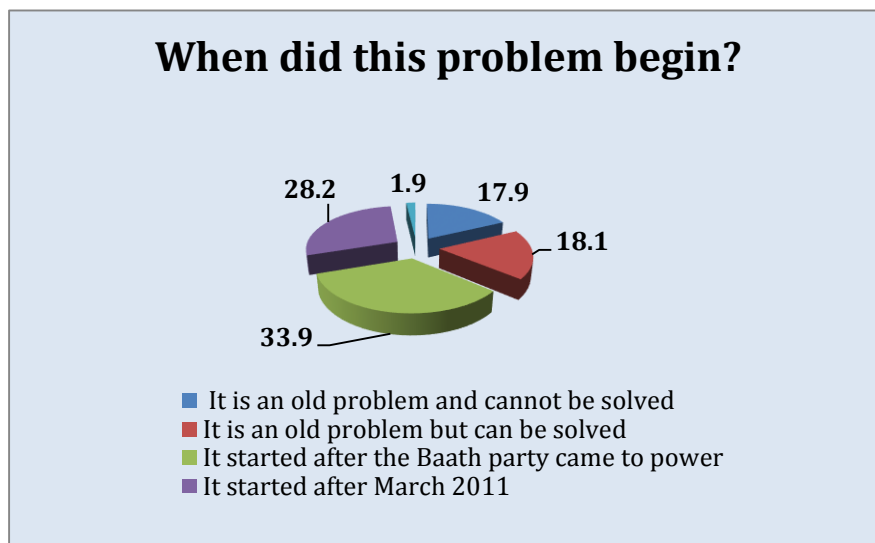
Figure 8. Causes of sectarianism and how it started %

The majority of respondents in Tartous, Hassakah, and Damascus and its suburbs believe that sectarianism is a problem dating back to historical reasons. As for the rest of the areas, the majority tends to see it as a political problem, whereby there is a near-consensus among those surveyed in Daraa, Hama, and the camps in Turkey (Figure 9).
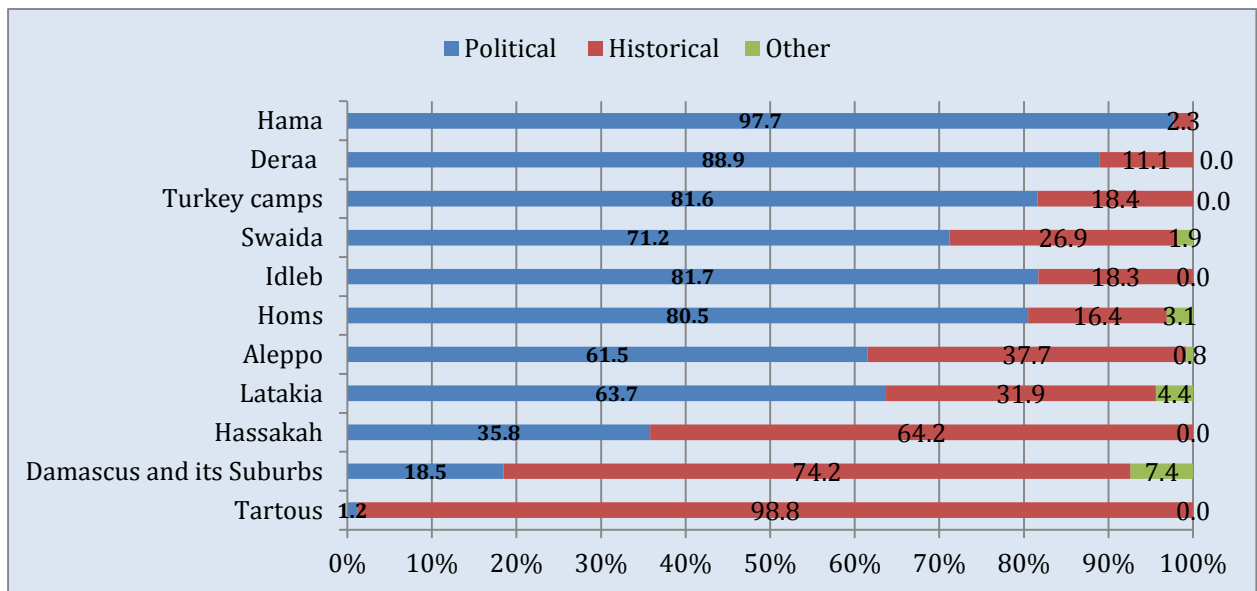
Figure 9. Causes of sectarianism by location %

Looking at the results connected with religious sects, we can see that the majority of Ismailis and Murshidis believe the problem dates back to historical reasons, while most Sunnis say it is closely linked to power and politics. However, the Christian, Druze, Shiite and Alawite communities are divided among themselves and approximately 50 percent of each said the problem is linked to political reasons while the other half responded differently ('historical reasons' or 'other') (Figure 10).
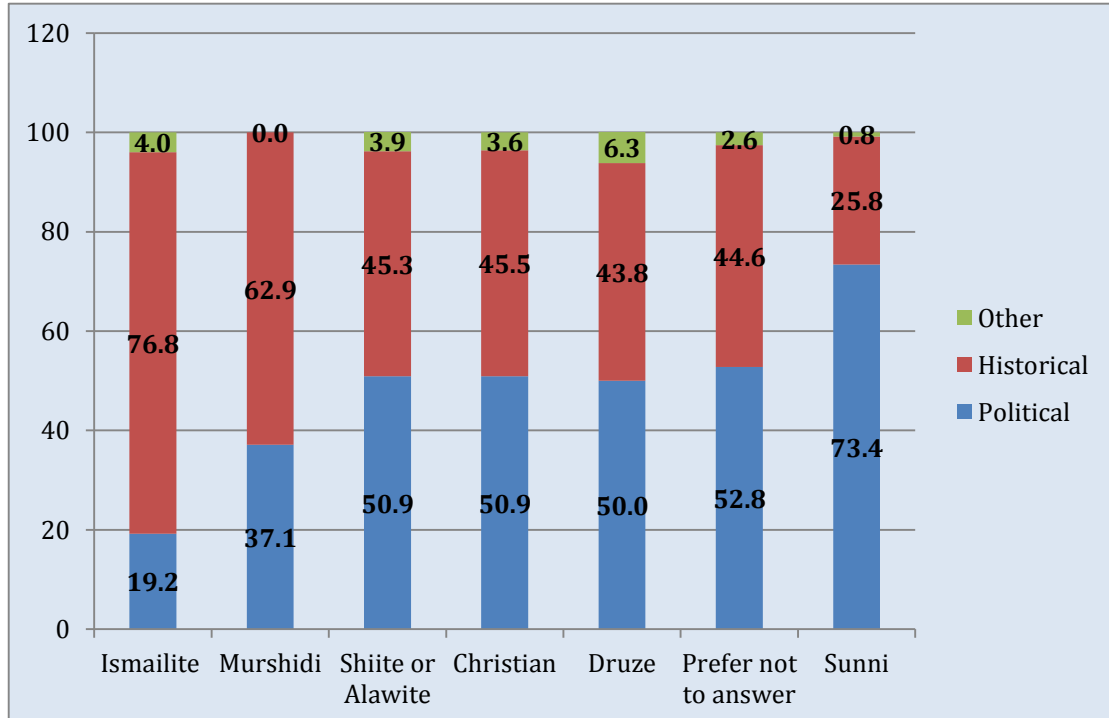
Figure 10. Causes of sectarianism by sect %

Chapter II: the relationship between the individual and the sect

Disclosing affiliation to a particular sect

Although the majority of respondents disclosed a certain sectarian belonging, some respondents still refrained from declaring any association with religious sects. We notice that Hassakah and Sweida come at the forefront – followed by Homs and Damascus and its suburbs – with a remarkable discrepancy between the results in the rest of the regions (Figure 11). In addition, it appears that the abstention from disclosing sectarian affiliation is significantly linked to respondents' ideology, whereby the percentage of abstinence increases correspondingly with higher levels of secularism and much less with political Islam (Figure 12).
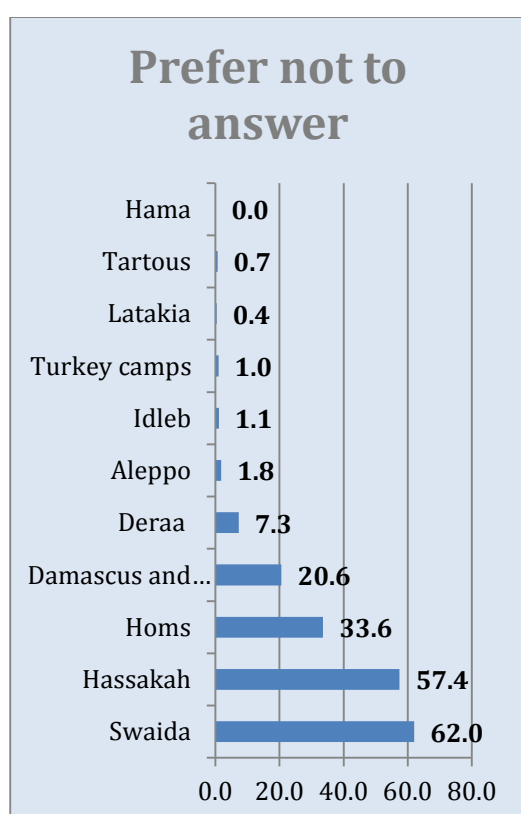
Figure 11. By current location %
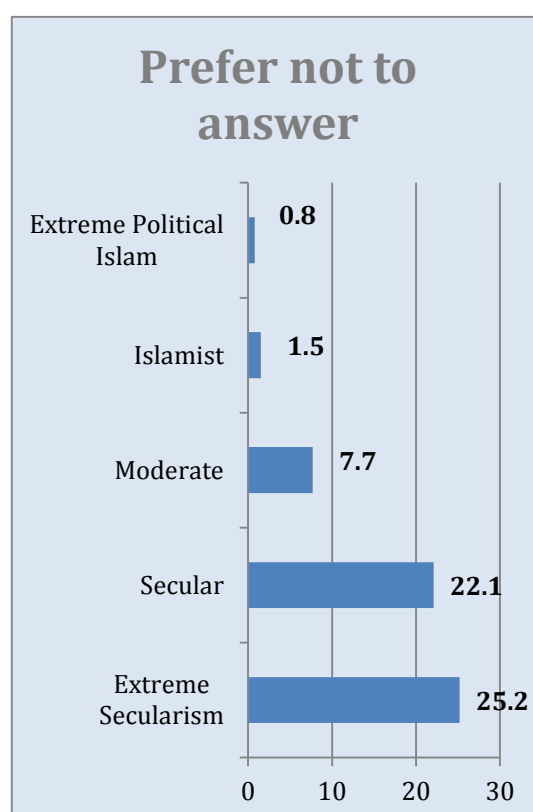
Figure 12. By ideology %

The importance of the sect and its presence

We asked the respondents whether they believed their sects are better than the rest of the sects in terms of customs and beliefs (Fig. 13). Although this question may not be effective to know the implicit sentiments that respondents do not want to show, it is still important for our research in that it enables us to compare the sample distribution of respondents who think their own sect are better than others in the following way: in which categories does this percentage increase, and in which geographical areas? The relatively large proportion of those who chose this answer allows us to make such a comparison. In fact, more than half of the respondents have chosen this answer while about a quarter reported it is like the rest of sects (Figure 13).

It is also important to observe the role of ideology on shaping respondents' answers. More Islamists opted for the aforementioned answers than secularists: the percentage increases from 45.1% among extreme secularists to 86.2% among extreme Islamists (Figure 14). Nevertheless, this high percentage among secularists raises the question around the correlation between secularism and sectarianism and shows that, contrary to popular belief among many secular Syrians, secularism does not seem incompatible with belonging to the sect.
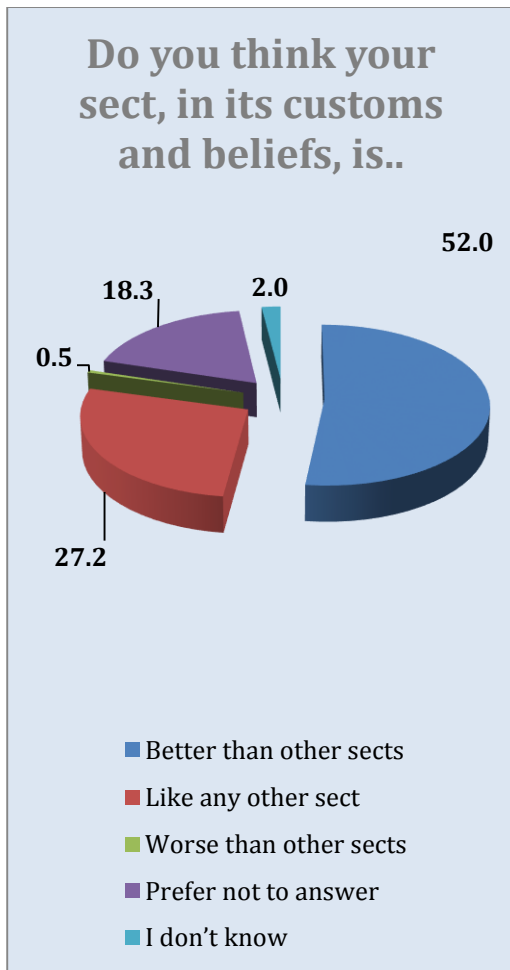
Figure 13. The 'best' sect %
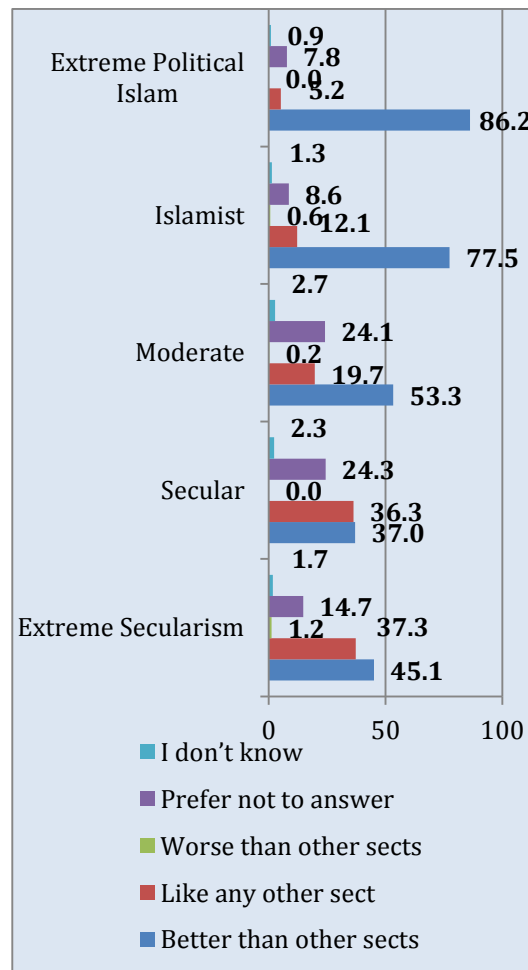
Figure 14. The 'best' sect based on ideology %

Looking at the results by the current region or location of the respondents, we find that there is a near-consensus in Hama, Latakia, and the refugee camps in Turkey among respondents who claimed that their sects are better than any other sect. In addition, a large percentage of respondents provided the same answer in Idlib (65.3%) and Aleppo (58.6%), while this percentage reached its lowest level in Hassakah with only 9.9%. It is noteworthy that the high percentages of those who refused to answer this question were found in each of Deraa, Tartous and Sweida (Figure 15).
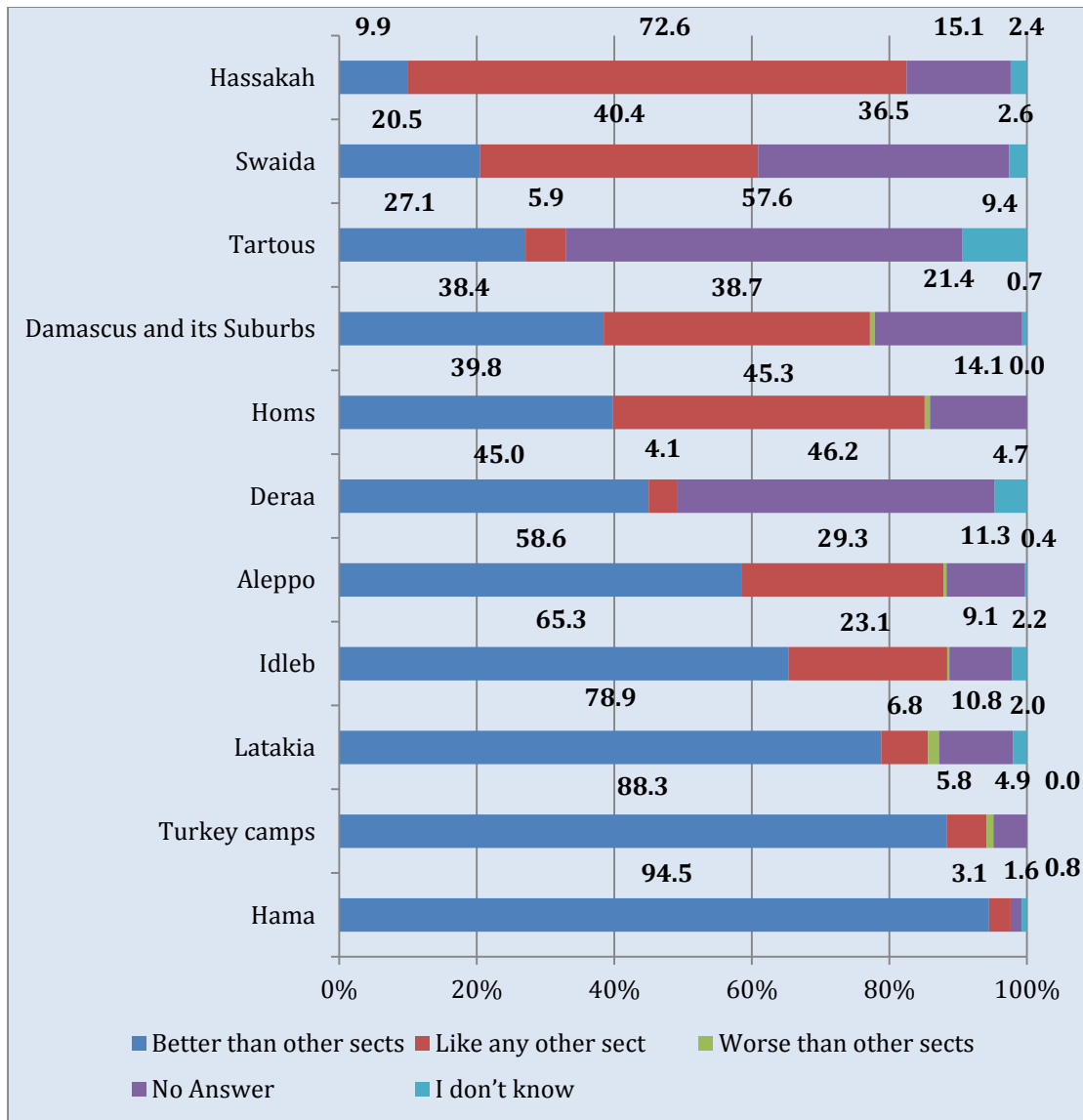
Figure 15. The 'best' sect based on current location %

About the Syrian revolution

Has belonging to one's religious sect played an instrumental role in determining the position towards the Syrian revolution at its inception, and how? We approached the respondents by asking about "the main motive for the eruption of the opposition demonstrations in 2011", and the possible answer choices are divided into the following three classifications:

1. In favor of the revolution: the possible answers are "because of the tyranny exercised by and the demonstrators' pursuance of establishing a civilian democratic state" and "the exposure to sectarian discrimination and Alawites' control over the state" respectively. These answer choices either give

legitimacy to the revolution in that it broke out to establish a democratic state, or justifies it on the basis of exposure to discrimination and the dominance of one sect over the state.

2. Ideological position (can hold two explanations), which is "because the current government is secular and the demonstrators wanted to establish an Islamic government". On the grounds that the government is branded as "secular" and the revolution is often described as "Islamic", this answer may be chosen by a secular individual against the revolution, or an Islamist supporting it.

3. Against the revolution: the possible answers are "sectarian since the President is an Alawite", "conspiracy with the enemies of Syria because of its resistant role", and "there weren't any demonstrations, rather armed bandits". These answer choices strip the revolution from away any libertarian nature whereby it becomes solely sectarian, or deems it a foreign plot, or takes away the peaceful nature of the demonstrations and reduces them to "armed bandits".

Below are the results according to sects (Figure 16):

- The answers provided by Sunni respondents demonstrate a quasi-unanimity about supporting the revolution (85.9%): they were distributed mainly between "exposure to sectarian discrimination and Alawites' control over the state" and "tyranny exercised by and the demonstrators' pursuance of establishing a civilian democratic state" at 28.7% and 57.2% respectively. Contrariwise, only 6.7 percent of Sunnis gave answers against the revolution and 3.9 percent opted for the ideological position.

- Alawites' and Shi'a's answers demonstrated a position against the revolution (93.7%) mainly distributed as follows: "there weren't any demonstrations, rather armed bandits" (37.1%), "conspiracy with the enemies of Syria because of its resistant role" (33.6%), "sectarian since the President is an Alawite" (12.2%), and 3.4% opted for the ideological position (the secularism of the regime versus the Islamism of the revolution).

- More than half of Christian respondents support the revolution (53.5%): half of them claimed it happened because of the "tyranny exercised by and the demonstrators' pursuance of establishing a civilian democratic state" (45.5%)

and the remaining 8% chose "the exposure to sectarian discrimination and Alawites' control over the state". The answers of the other half of Christian respondents were scattered between opposing the revolution (35.8%) and what we described as the ideological position (3.6%).

- The largest proportion of Murshidi respondents is in support of the revolution (48.4%): 19.4 percent of them stated the main drive behind the revolution is the "exposure to sectarian discrimination and Alawites' control over the state" and 29 percent considered the main purpose is the "tyranny exercised by and the demonstrators' pursuance of establishing a civilian democratic state". As for the remaining responses, 32.3 percent of them opposed it and 4.8 percent fell under the ideological position. A relatively high percentage did not provide any clear stance and preferred not to answer by opting for the "I don't know" answer choice (14.5%).

- The largest proportion of Ismaili respondents provided answers in opposition to the revolution (53.5%): only 9.1 percent of them considered the revolution's primary motive is the "exposure to sectarian discrimination and Alawites' control over the state" and 14.1 percent said the motive was "tyranny exercised by and the demonstrators' pursuance of establishing a civilian democratic state".

- The largest proportion of the Druze also provided answers in opposition to the revolution (43.8%): only 7.8 percent mentioned the "exposure to sectarian discrimination and Alawites' control over the state" and 17.2 percent chose the "tyranny exercised by and the demonstrators' pursuance of establishing a civilian democratic state". The other answers were scattered among those in opposition to the revolution, the ideological position (9.4%), and a relatively high percentage did not provide any clear stance and preferred not to answer by opting for the "I don't know".
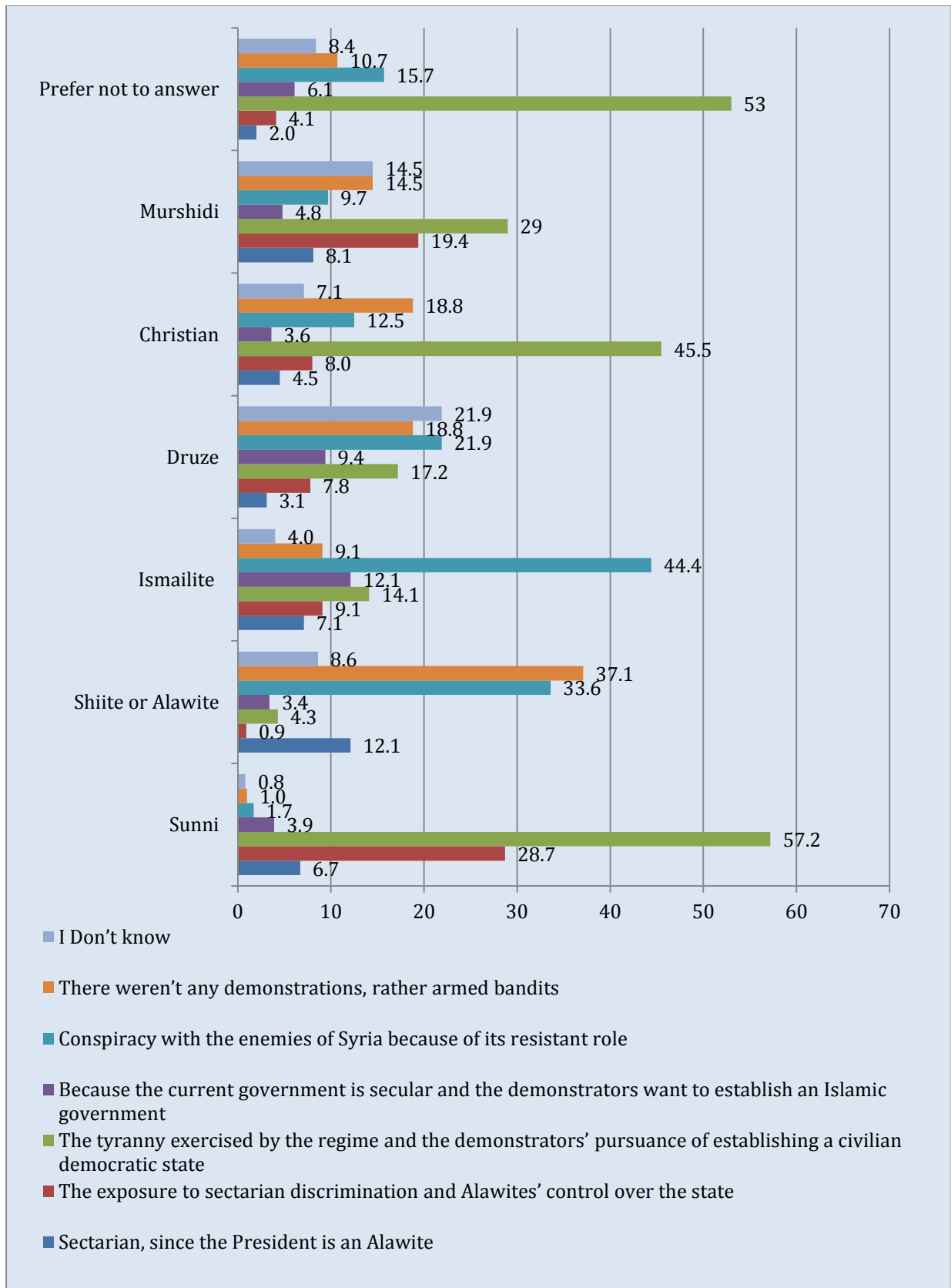
Figure 16. Main reason behind the 2011 demonstrations by sects %

Legend:
- I Don't know
- There weren't any demonstrations, rather armed bandits
- Conspiracy with the enemies of Syria because of its resistant role
- Because the current government is secular and the demonstrators want to establish an Islamic government
- The tyranny exercised by the regime and the demonstrators' pursuance of establishing a civilian democratic state
- The exposure to sectarian discrimination and Alawites' control over the state
- Sectarian, since the President is an Alawite

Figure 17. Main reason behind the 2011 demonstrations by ideology

Looking at the ideological position: "Because the secular government and the demonstrators want to establish Islamic rule", we note that the responses are similar among secularists and Islamists except for "extreme political Islam", whereby the percentage of the latter increased to 11.2% and is perhaps an attempt to confer an Islamic stain on the 2011 demonstrations. However, the responses of secularists and Islamists concentrated on the reason being the "tyranny exercised by and the demonstrators' pursuance of establishing a civilian democratic state" and exceeded the rate of 40% for both. The only difference is found among those in the "maximum political Islam" category: whereas about a third of them opted for the ideological position, the overall tendency was inclined to the "exposure to sectarian discrimination and Alawites' control over the state" at 45.7 percent (Figure 17).

Figure 18 displays the answers according to location. There is quasi-unanimity around supporting the revolution in Hassakah, Deir Ezzor, Hama, Daraa, Idlib and refugee camps in Turkey. In addition, most respondents in Aleppo and half of those in Damascus and its suburbs also support it. Respondents in Latakia and Homs are divided amongst themselves around supporting the revolution, while it received certain opposition in Sweida and nearly a complete opposition in Tartous.

Turkey camps
- 0.0
- 0.0
- 0.0
- 0.0
- 3.9
- 56.3
- 33.0
- 6.8

Deraa
- 0.0
- 0.0
- 0.0
- 4.1
- 54.4
- 38.6
- 2.9

Hama
- 0.0
- 7
- 8.6
- 2.3
- 63.3
- 18.8
- 0.0

Swaida
- 17.9
- 19.9
- 24.4
- 12.2
- 13.5
- 8.3
- 3.8

Damascus and its Suburbs
- 15.9
- 15.1
- 4.8
- 0.7
- 50.6
- 4.8
- 8.1

Homs
- 0.8
- 26.6
- 53.9
- 9.4
- 1.6
- 2.3
- 5.5

Tartous
- 14.1
- 9.4
- 62.4
- 14.1
- 0.0
- 0.0
- 0.0

Latakia
- 1.2
- 23.9
- 15.5
- 5.2
- 21.1
- 20.3
- 12.7

Idleb
- 0.3
- 0.3
- 1.1
- 4.8
- 52.4
- 37.4
- 3.8

Aleppo
- 1.3
- 0.4
- 1.3
- 4.6
- 56.1
- 18.8
- 17.6

Hassakah
- 1.4
- 0.5
- 0.0
- 0.0
- 94.3
- 3.8
- 0.0

Legend:
- I Don't know
- There weren't any demonstrations, rather armed bandits
- Conspiracy with the enemies of Syria because of its resistant role
- Because the current government is secular and the demonstrators want to establish an Islamic government
- The tyranny exercised by the regime and the demonstrators' pursuance of establishing a civilian democratic state
- The exposure to sectarian discrimination and Alawites' control over the state
- Sectarian, since the President is an Alawite

Figure 18. Main reason behind the 2011 demonstrations by current location%

We will now try to identify the demographic, social and ideological backgrounds of those respondents biased towards the revolution[4]. Although the most prominent reason is the "tyranny exercised by and the demonstrators' pursuance of establishing a civilian democratic state", it is useful to pay attention to second most preferred answer choice, which is "exposure to sectarian discrimination and Alawites' control over the state":

- Latakia (49%), Idlib (41.6%), Daraa (41.5%) and refugee camps in Turkey (73%) come at the forefront, while the vast majority of other regions claimed the main motive was linked to establishing a civilian democratic state (Figure 19).

- It is also observed that the proportion of those who gave this answer decreased when respondents' income increased. This proportion drops from 38.3 percent among those who earn a low income (less than 25 thousand SYP) to 17.9 percent among those who earn a high income (more than 75 thousand SYP) (Figure 20).

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[4] It should be noted that the number of sample elements was too small in some categories or regions, thus we did not include the results in the table to avoid any misunderstanding.
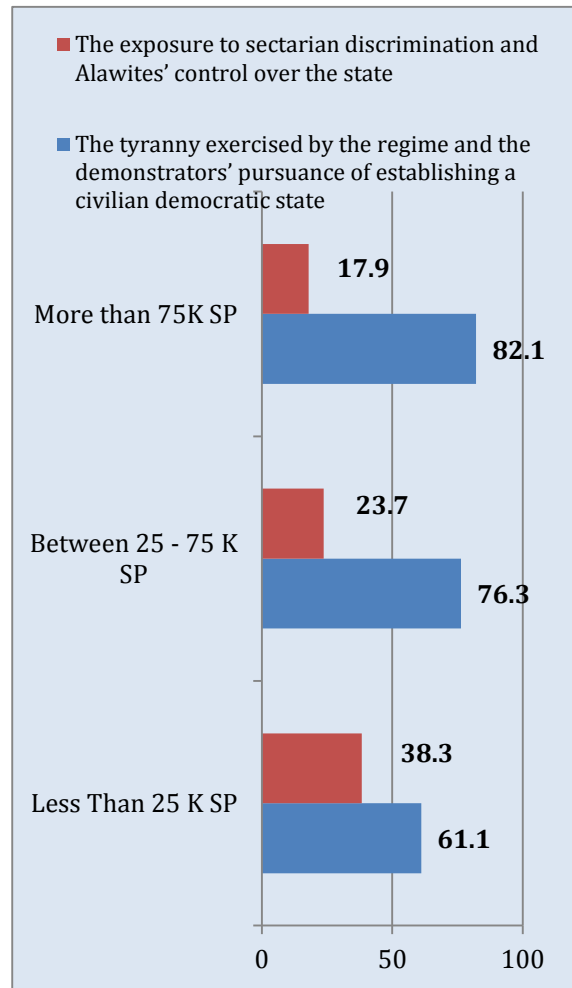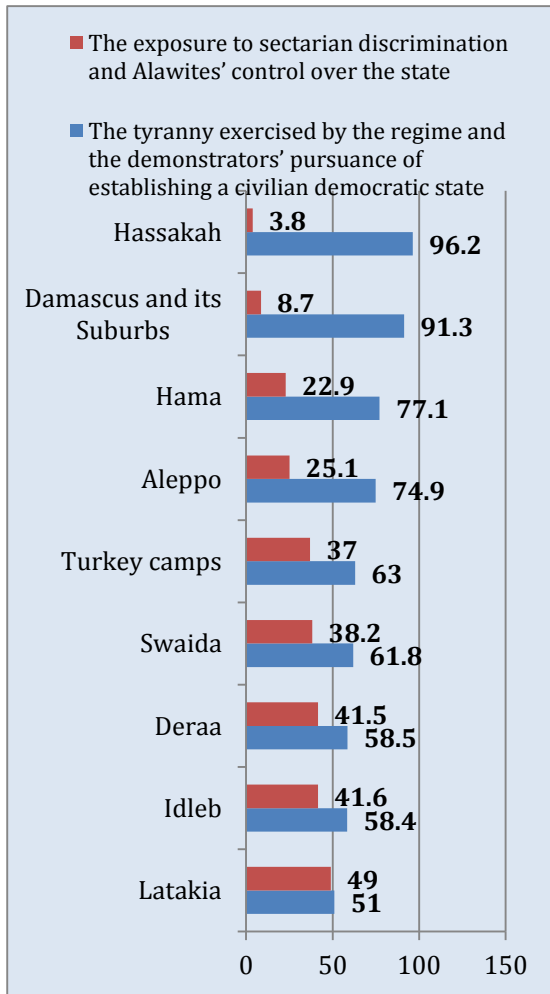
Figures 19 – 20. Supporters of the revolution by location and income %
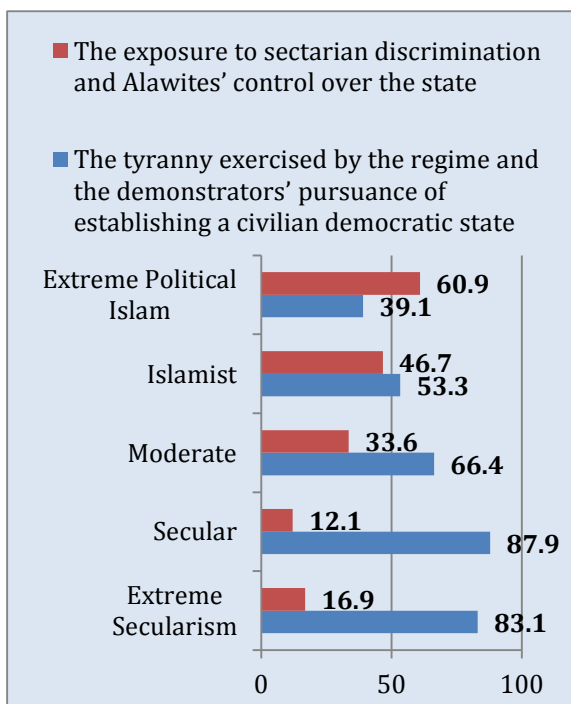
• Examining the ideological constituent shows how the reference to being subject to sectarian discrimination as a primary reason for the outbreak of the revolution increases when moving from extreme secularism to extreme political Islam, since the largest proportion of both says that the primary reason is the exposure to sectarian discrimination (Figure 21).

Figure 21. Supporters of the revolution by ideology %

- Survey results suggest that combatants are divided, and half of them state this is the reason for the outbreak of the revolution in 2011, and this percentage gradually declines among the unemployed, farmers, and self-employed; it gets to around a quarter among civil servants and students; and reaches its lowest levels among employees in the private sector and civil society organizations (18.6%) and mid-level managers (12.5%) (Figure 22).

- There also seem to be discrepancies across different levels of education (Figure 23), whereby the highest percentage of those with elementary school education chose this answer (57.1%), while nearly all university graduates and postgraduates think the main reason for the revolution is linked to establishing a civic and democratic state and only 20 percent of them said the reason is linked to sectarian discrimination. The latter position was analogous to the position of the Kurd and Arab respondents, with 96% and 66.2% respectively.
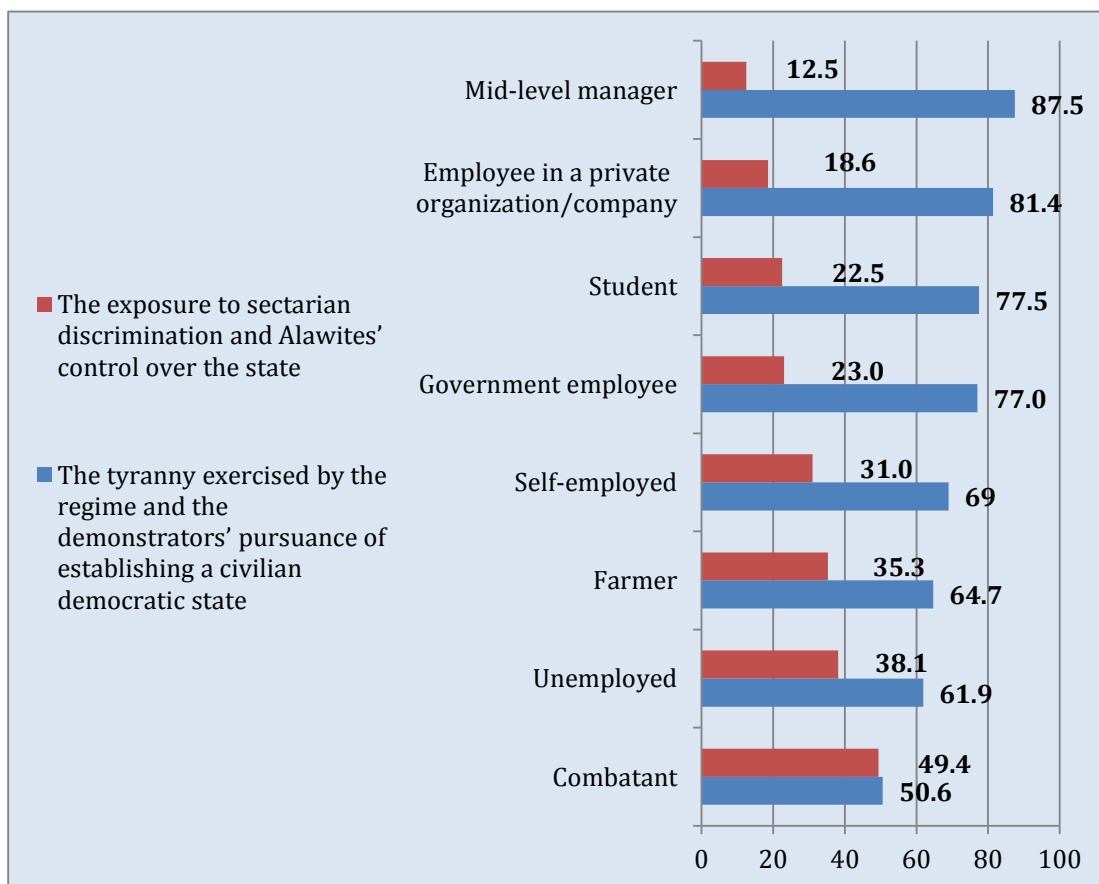
Figure 22. Supporters of the revolution by occupation %
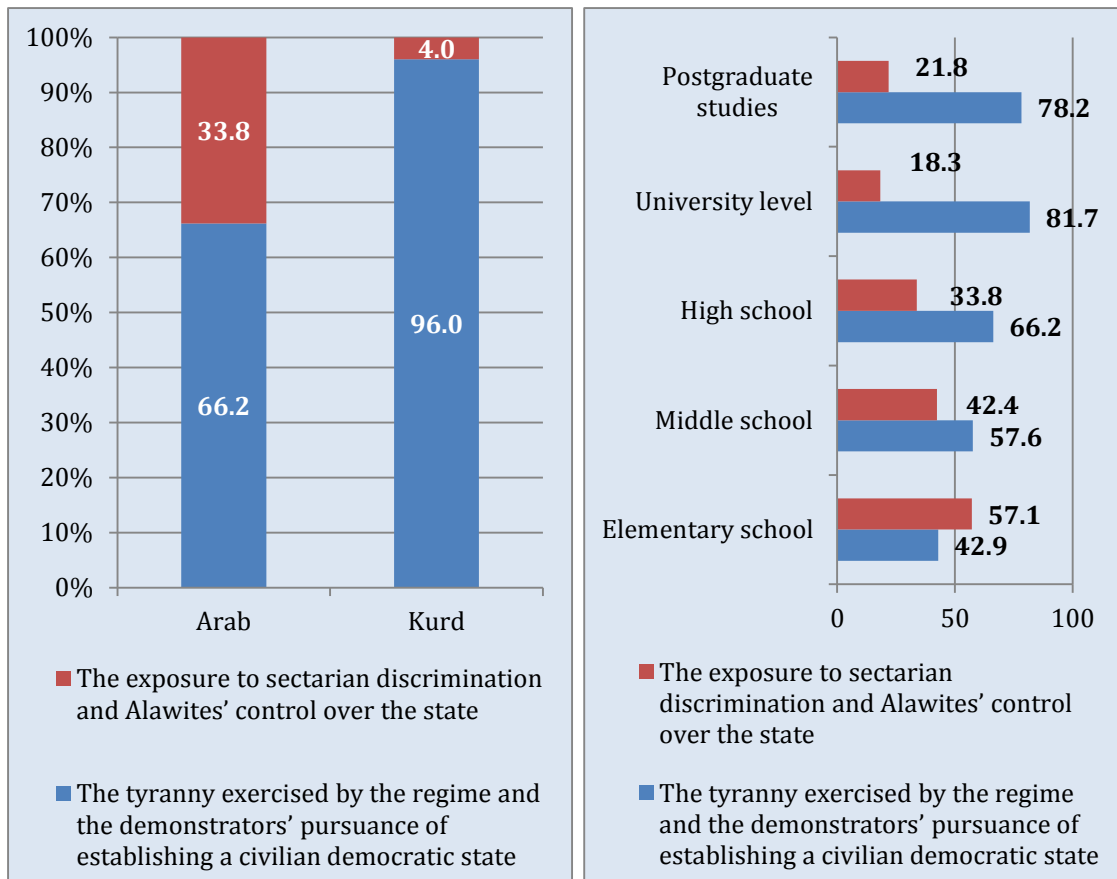
Figures 23 – 24. Supporters of the revolution by ethnicity and educational level %

- It is interesting to observe the relationship between the respondents' severity of exposure to sectarian discrimination and their stance on the motives of the revolution. Among those who had reported being discriminated against for only once, 12.6% said sectarian discrimination is the leading reason for the outbreak of the demonstrations in 2011. However, this percentage gradually increases to reach 36.2% among those who say they have constantly been subjected to sectarian discrimination (Figure 25).
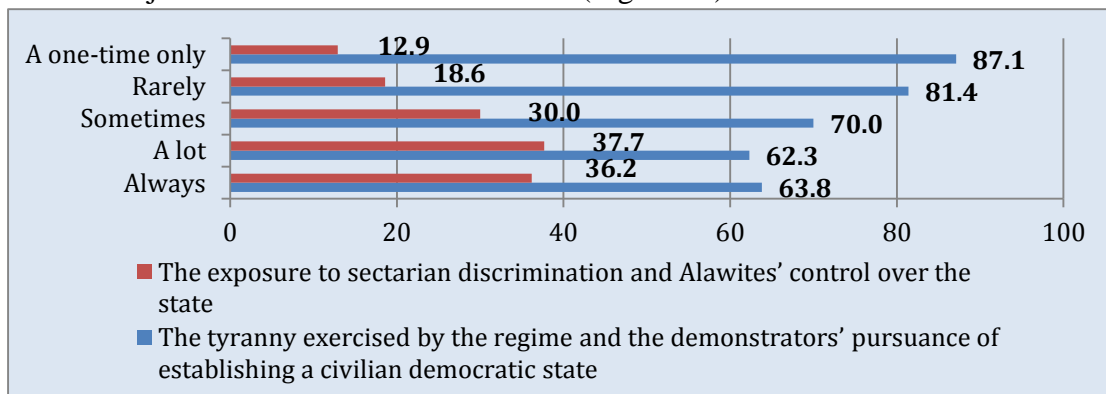
Figure 25. Supporters of the revolution by recurrence of sectarian discrimination

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In short, we can say that the presence of sectarian discrimination as the main reason for the inception of anti-regime demonstrations in 2011 is higher among Islamists than seculars, as well as among those with lower income than those with higher income, and among the less educated more than the more educated. In addition, respondents in Latakia, Idlib, Daraa, and refugee camps in Turkey reported the same aforementioned result more than those in other areas – so did the combatants, unemployed, farmers, and the self-employed in comparison with respondents exercising other professions. Likewise, more Arabs than Kurds provided this answer, and so did the respondents who were most exposed to sectarian discrimination than those who were least exposed to it.

About political life

To study the role of sectarianism in political life, several answer choices have been given to respondents[5]. We included 'religious sect' among other choices when we asked the respondents to determine the importance of sectarianism in the election of a President of Syria in the future. What is relevant to us here is that the percentage of those who said that the future President's religious sect is important or very important amounted to 63.3% (Figure 26).

The responses vary according to sects: there is quasi-unanimity among Sunnis that the future President's religious sect is important or very important (79%), and a large percentage of Shiites and Alawites gave the same response (68.1%).
However, Ismailis are quasi-unanimous in that the religious sect of the future President is not important at all (79.8%), and a high percentage of Christians and Murshidis share the same view at 59.8% and 67.7% respectively (Figure 27).

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[5] The question was the following: "In democratic presidential elections were held in Syria, which of the following issues would you consider very important, important, or not important at all for the presidential candidate?" and the answer choices are: political position post-2011, political position prior to 2011, religious sect, electoral program, reputation, nationalism, ideology (Secular/Islamist)
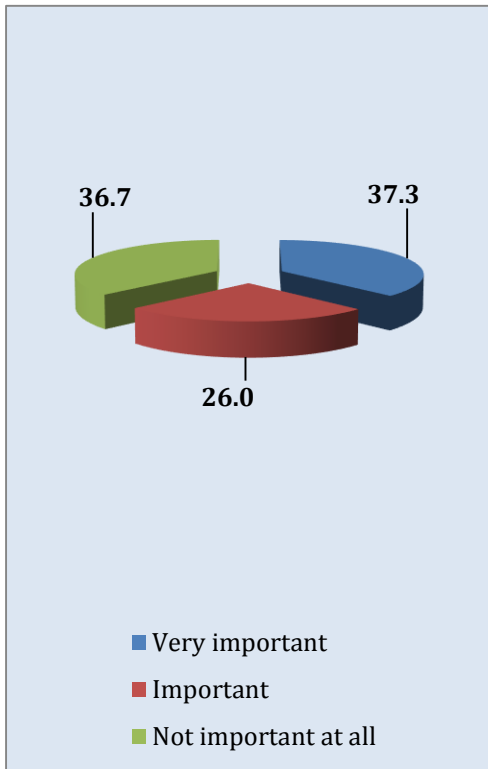
Figure 26. Importance of the future President's sect %
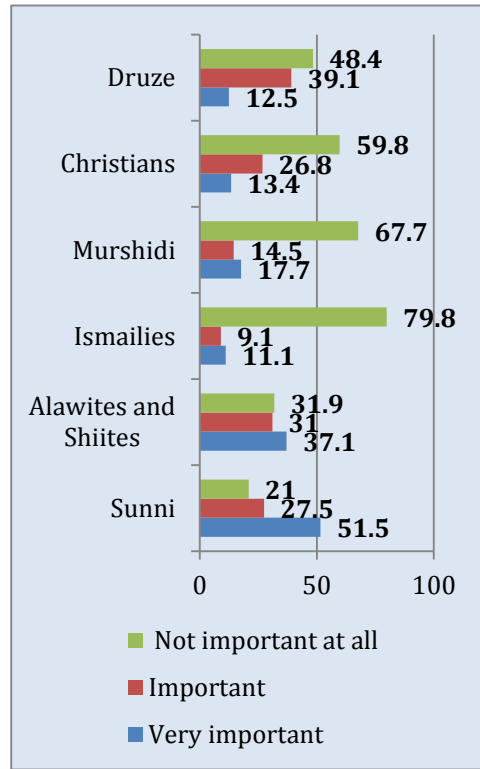
Figure 27. By sect %

Figure 28 displays the answers according to the percentages of those who said that the sect is not important at all; Tartous, Hassakah and Homs are at the forefront, while Hama, Deraa and the refugee camps in Turkey come last.

There also seems to be a correlation between income and the importance accorded to sect here, whereby those with higher incomes tend to give less importance to sect: the proportion of respondents who give less importance to sect increased from 26.6% among those with low incomes to 48.4% among those with high incomes (more than 75000 SYP) (Figure 29).
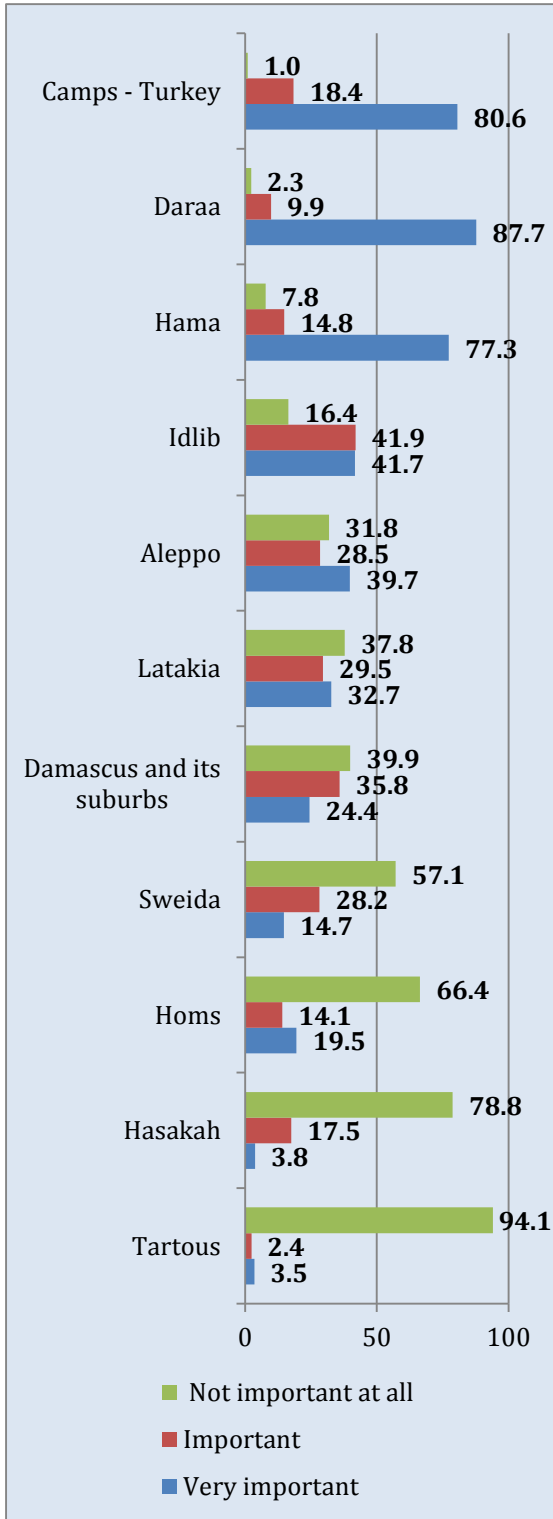
Figure 28. By current location %

Camps - Turkey
- Not important at all: 1.0
- Important: 18.4
- Very important: 80.6

Daraa
- Not important at all: 2.3
- Important: 9.9
- Very important: 87.7

Hama
- Not important at all: 7.8
- Important: 14.8
- Very important: 77.3

Idlib
- Not important at all: 16.4
- Important: 41.9
- Very important: 41.7

Aleppo
- Not important at all: 31.8
- Important: 28.5
- Very important: 39.7

Latakia
- Not important at all: 37.8
- Important: 29.5
- Very important: 32.7

Damascus and its suburbs
- Not important at all: 39.9
- Important: 35.8
- Very important: 24.4

Sweida
- Not important at all: 57.1
- Important: 28.2
- Very important: 14.7

Homs
- Not important at all: 66.4
- Important: 14.1
- Very important: 19.5

Hasakah
- Not important at all: 78.8
- Important: 17.5
- Very important: 3.8

Tartous
- Not important at all: 94.1
- Important: 2.4
- Very important: 3.5

Legend:
- Not important at all
- Important
- Very important

Figure 29. By income level %

More than 75 thousand Syrian pounds
- Not important at all: 48.4
- Important: 27.6
- Very important: 24

Between 25 thousand and 75 thousand Syrian pounds
- Not important at all: 33.1
- Important: 29.7
- Very important: 37.2

Less than 25 thousand Syrian pounds
- Not important at all: 26.6
- Important: 20.1
- Very important: 53.2

Legend:
- Not important at all
- Important
- Very important

The proportion of respondents who said it is important or very important increases gradually when moving from extreme levels of secularism to extreme levels of political Islam: the proportion of those who said that it is not important at all increased from 3.4% for those who situate themselves in the "extreme political Islam" category, to 58.8% for extreme secularists. However, it is important to note the relatively significant proportion (47.5%) of secularists who said that the future President's sect is important or very important (Figure 30). This further perpetuates the issue we raised earlier around the correlation between secularism and sectarianism. The combatants' quasi-unanimity around giving normal or high importance to the sect is also remarkable since only 8.5% of them said that it is "not important at all". The highest proportion of respondents who provided the latter answer is among the civil servants (43.3%) (Figure 31).
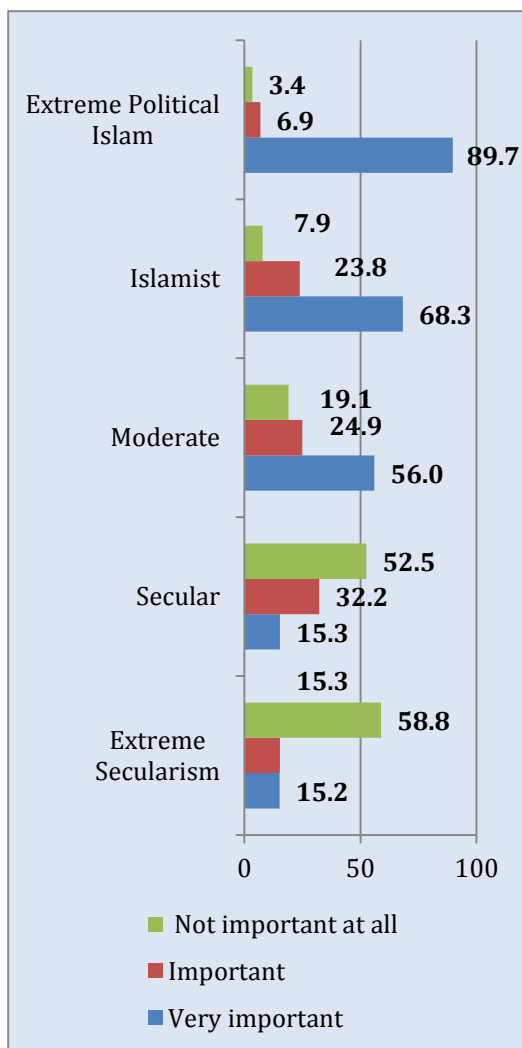
Figure 30. By ideology %
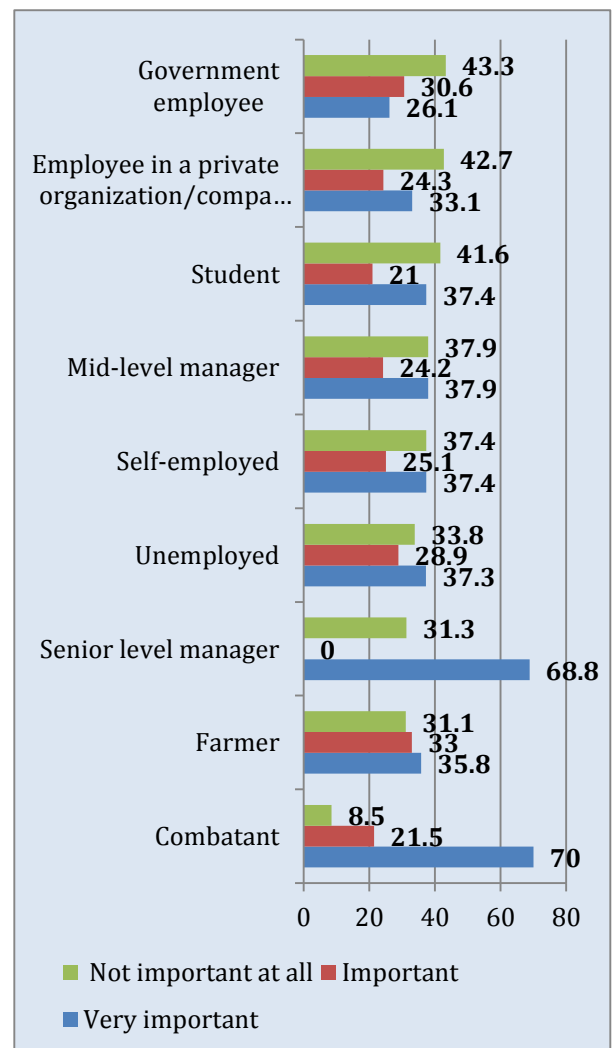
Figure 31. By occupation %

It also seems that most Arabs, Turkmen and Circassians think it is important or very important, which comes entirely in contrast to the responses of Assyrians, Kurds, and Armenians whom said it was not important at all (Figure 32).
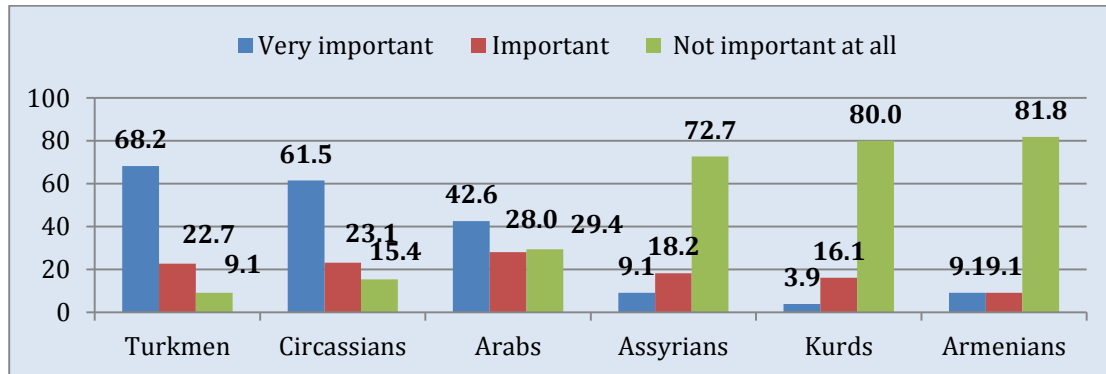
Figure 32. By ethnicity %

About media outlets

Media outlets are playing a central role in fueling sectarian tensions or surpassing them, as the most important Arab television stations are linked to certain politically and ideologically diverse third parties. Understanding the positions of respondents vis-à-vis media outlets helps us comprehend their outlook and attitudes around sectarianism.

We picked the following five television channels: Al Jazeerah in Qatar (dominated by a Sunni Islam orientation), Al Mayadeen (Iranian funding), the pro-regime Al Dunya, the pro-opposition Orient channel, and Al Arabiya (Saudi funding).

Respondents do not seem to be satisfied with the role of the aforementioned media outlets. More than half of the respondents say that Orient TV, Al Arabiya and
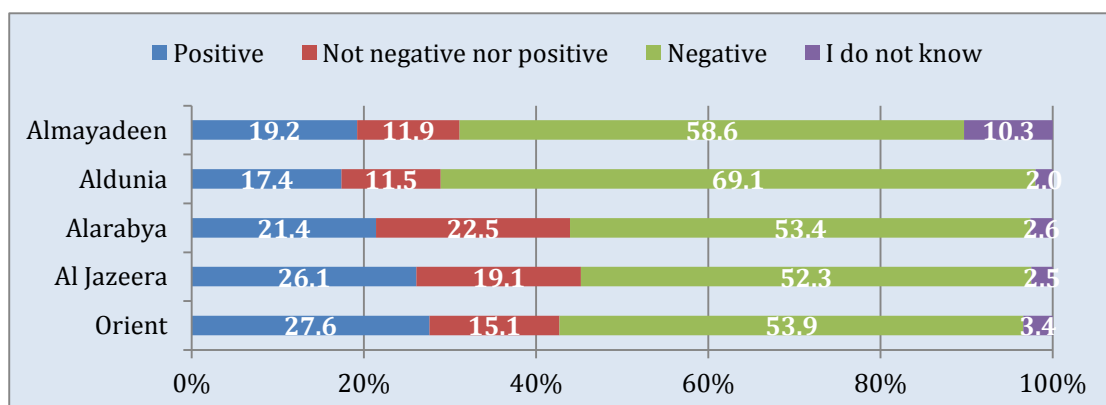
Figure 33. How would you describe the role of each of the following channels with regards to sectarianism in Syria? %

Al Jazeerah play a negative role; this percentage increases to 58.6% when it comes to Al Mayadeen, and reaches its highest level at 69.1% for Al Dunya (Figure 33). However, the matter becomes different when analyzing the results according to sects:
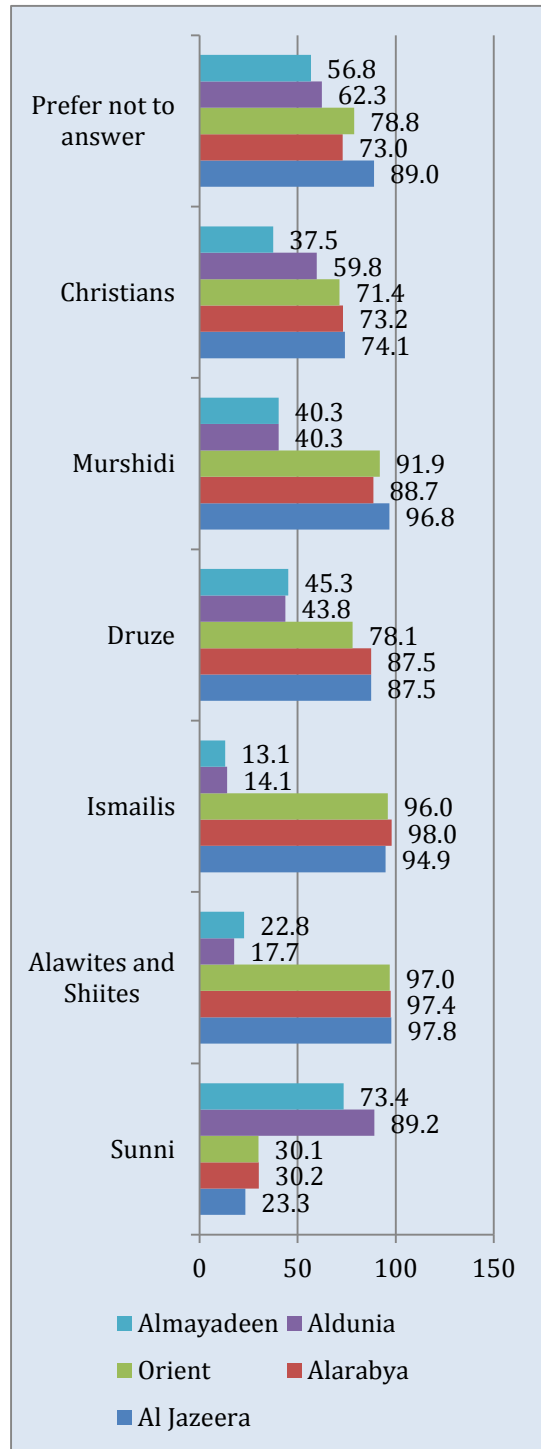
Figure 35. Media outlets by sect %

- There is near-consensus among minorities that Orient TV, Al Jazeerah and Al Arabiya have a negative role, whereas most Sunnis say that each of these stations play a positive role with 45.7%, 43.2% and 33.9% respectively.

- There is near consensus among Sunnis around Al Dunya's negative role, and Christians (59.8%) and Druzes (43.8%) are inclined towards the same opinion, but Murshidis are divided among themselves. However, a large proportion of Shiites and Alawites (65.6%) describes Al Dunya's role as positive, while the percentage of dissatisfaction with its performance drops to 37.4% among Ismailis.

- Most Ismailis (73.3%) describe Al Mayadin's role as positive, but this figure drops to 58.6% among Alawites and Shiites and reaches its lowest level (5.8%) among Sunni respondents. In general, the percentage of those who answered "I don't know" is remarkably higher for Al Mayadin than for the other suggested media outlets.

- Murshidis seem to agree on the negative role of Al Jazeera, Al Arabiya and Orient, but are divided over the position vis-à-vis Al Dunya and Al Mayadeen.

In other words, we can say that Sunnis prefer Al Jazeerah, Al Arabiya and Orient TV, whereas Alawites and Shiites are more biased towards Al Dunya and Al Mayadeen; in addition, the latter is the Ismailis' most preferred station, while respondents from other sects do not seem to have a preferred channel (out of channels listed) since they either divide among themselves or describe the roles of the aforementioned channels as negative.
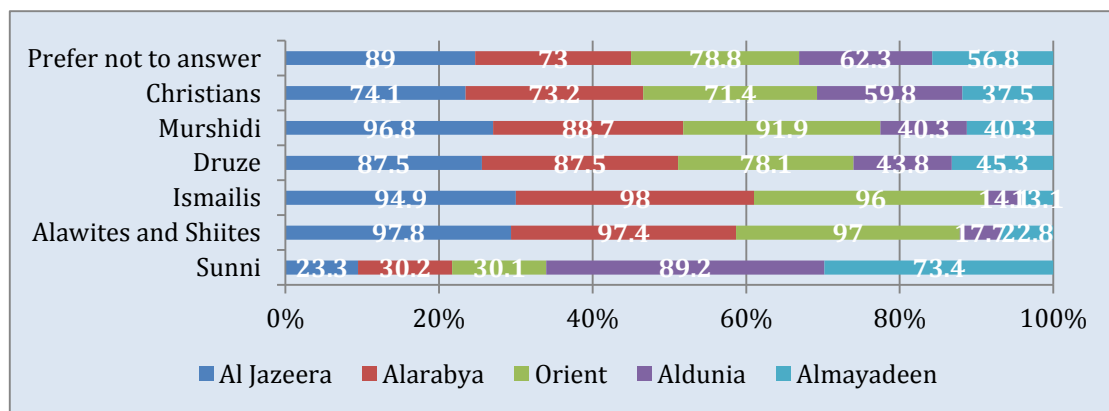
Figure 34. Negative role %

Figure 35. Positive role %

To what extent would you consider yourself sectarian/not sectarian

Category	Value
Not sectarian at all	26.2
Slightly sectarian	36
Somewhat sectarian	24
Sectarian	8.9
Extremely sectarian	4.9
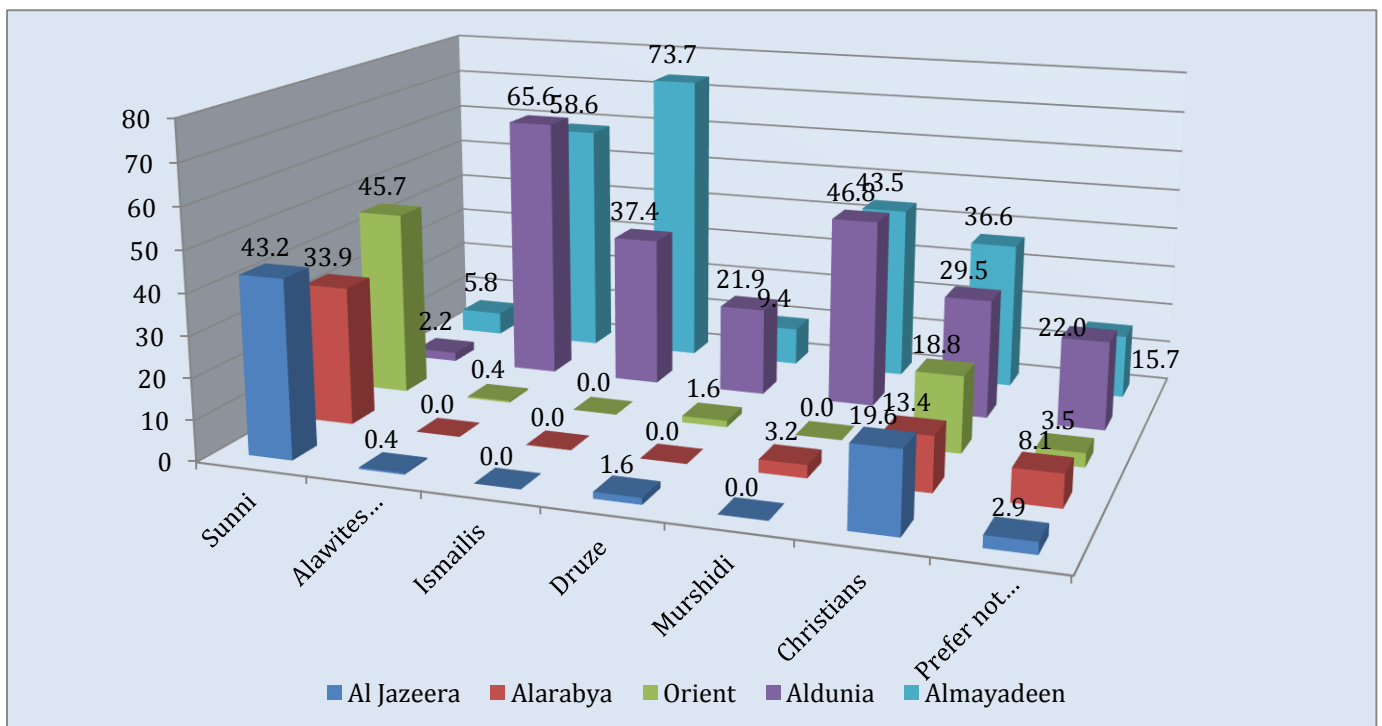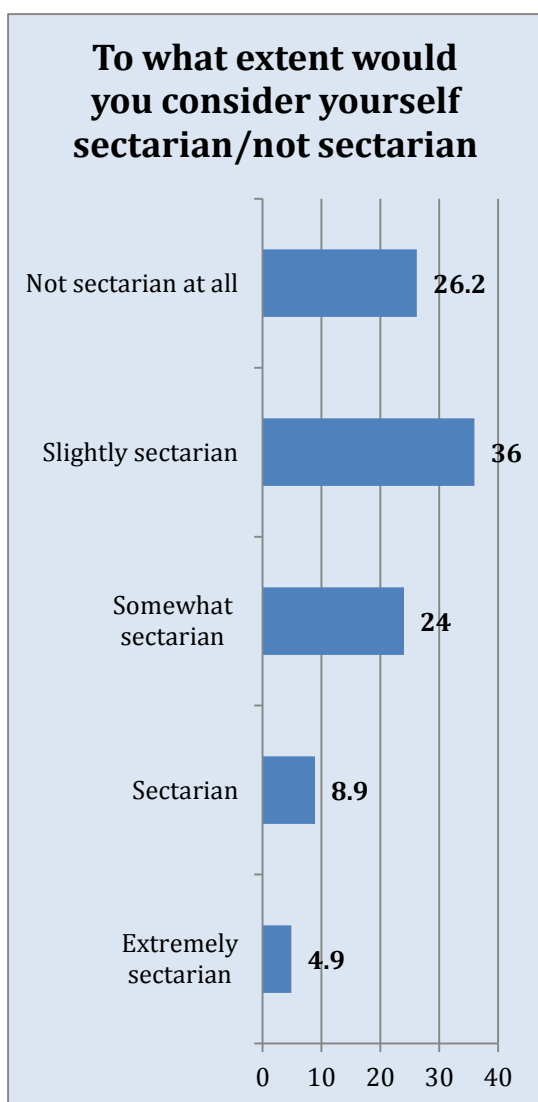
Figure 36. Manifestation of sectarianism %

Manifesting sectarianism

The manifestation of sectarianism does not only reflect one's position vis-à-vis the other, but the severity of belonging to a particular group as well. Once again, we hereby indicate that this type of questions may not reveal respondents' implicit sentiments. Regardless of the sincerity of the answers, we use them in this research due to its practicality in the detection of the growing declaration of sectarianism. We presented a series of numbers beginning with 0 (extremely sectarian) and ending with 10 (not sectarian at all), and we asked the participants to conduct a self-report based on this scale. Subsequently, we decoded the answers in the following way: 0 being 'extremely sectarian'; 1 – 3 being 'sectarian'; 4 – 6 being 'moderately sectarian'; 7 – 9 being 'slightly sectarian'; and 10 being 'not sectarian at all'. Surprisingly, only one quarter of respondents said they were 'not sectarian at all' while three quarter of them identified themselves as slightly, moderately or extremely sectarian (Figure 36). If we take into consideration the difficulty of manifesting sectarian sentiments or ideas as mentioned above, especially since this matter has for long been considered a taboo, it is likely that the ratio is in effect larger.

Chapter III: Inter-sectarian Relations

Mutual complaints and concerns

In order to draw parallel between the mutual concerns and perceptions around inter-sectarian relations among the different sects, we asked the respondents about the first thing that comes to mind when we mention 'sectarian problem' in Syria. The answers were distributed as follows: the Sunni–Alawite relations (37.6%), the relationship between all different sects (25.1%), the relationship between Sunnis and minorities in general (23.3%), and the relationship between all communities on the one hand and the Alawites on the other hand (11.8%) (Figure 37).

What's the first thing that comes to mind when we mention 'sectarian problem' in Syria?
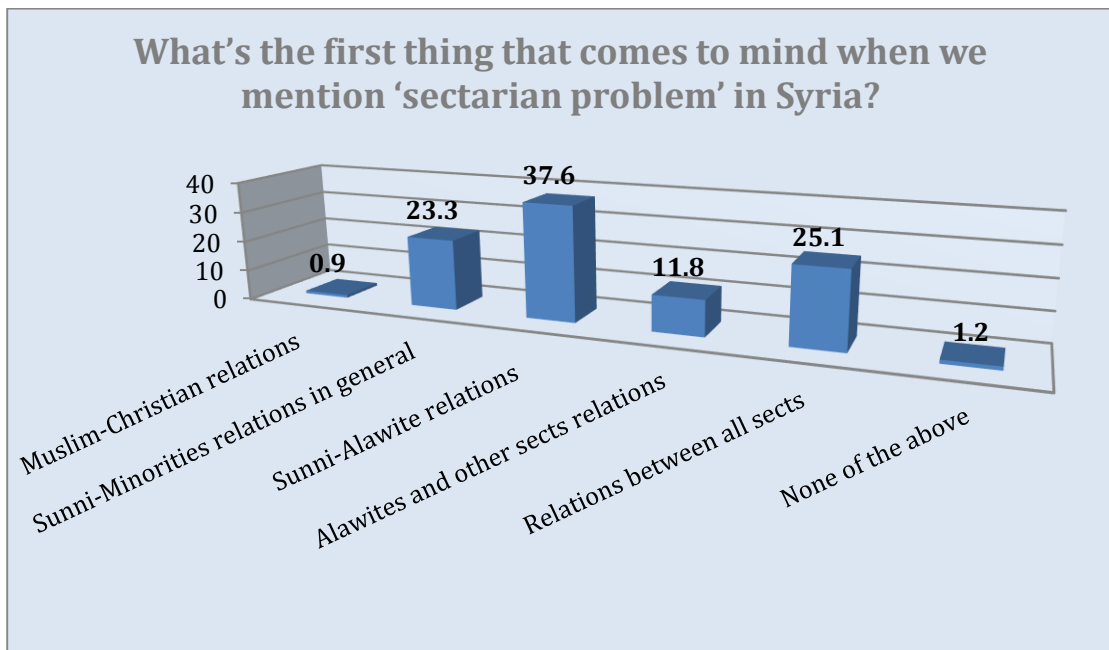
Figure 37. First thing coming to mind around 'sectarian problem' in Syria %

It is remarkable how respondents in Deraa and Hama tend to refer to the relations between Sunnis and Alawites when asked about what first comes to their minds; almost half of the respondents in Aleppo and refugee camps in Turkey give the same answer. As for the respondents in Latakia, the answers form two main trends: the first one refers to the relations between Sunnis and Alawites (34.7%) and the second to the relations between all different sects (32.3%). More than half of respondents in Hassakah in Sweida also gave the latter answer, and so did 67.4% of those in Tartous. More than half of respondents in Homs and 42.8% of those in Damascus and its suburbs mentioned the relations between Sunnis on the one hand and the rest of the sects on the other (Figure 38).

If we look at the answers by sects, we notice that around half of Sunnis pointed to the Alawite-Sunni relations, and around half of Ismailis and Druzes mentioned the relations between all different sects. However, the answers provided by the Alawites and Shiites are distributed between the following options: "Alawite-Sunni relations" and "the relations between Sunnis and minorities in general". A small percentage of Murshidis mentioned Alawite-Sunni relations, and rarely were the Christian-Muslim relations ever referred to, even among Christians themselves (the percentage barely reached 10.7).

Figure 38. By location %

Sweida
- Sunni-Alawite relations: 11.5
- Relations between all sects: 51.3
- Sunni-Minorities in general relations: (bar)
- Relations between all sects on the one hand and Alawites on the other: 11.5
- None of the above: 7.7

Tartous
- Sunni-Alawite relations: 22.4
- Relations between all sects: 64.7
- Relations between all sects on the one hand and Alawites on the other: 10.6
- None of the above: 1.2

Damascus and its suburbs
- Sunni-Alawite relations: 23.2
- Relations between all sects: 20.3
- Sunni-Minorities in general relations: (bar)
- Relations between all sects on the one hand and Alawites on the other: 12.9
- None of the above: 0.4

Homs
- Sunni-Alawite relations: 25
- Relations between all sects: 14.8
- Sunni-Minorities in general relations: (bar)
- Relations between all sects on the one hand and Alawites on the other: 0.8
- None of the above: 3.9

Hasakeh
- Sunni-Alawite relations: 37.7
- Relations between all sects: 53.8
- Relations between all sects on the one hand and Alawites on the other: 4.2
- None of the above: 0.9

Latakia
- Sunni-Alawite relations: 34.7
- Relations between all sects: 32.3
- Relations between all sects on the one hand and Alawites on the other: 16.7
- Muslim-Christian relations: 0

Idlib
- Sunni-Alawite relations: 30.4
- Relations between all sects: 16.4
- Relations between all sects on the one hand and Alawites on the other: 22.3
- None of the above: 0.5

Aleppo
- Sunni-Alawite relations: 51.9
- Relations between all sects: 10.9
- Relations between all sects on the one hand and Alawites on the other: 17.6
- None of the above: 0.8

Camps - Turkey
- Sunni-Alawite relations: 51.5
- Relations between all sects: 5.8
- Relations between all sects on the one hand and Alawites on the other: 4.9
- None of the above: 0

Daraa
- Sunni-Alawite relations: 67.3
- Relations between all sects: 18.1
- Relations between all sects on the one hand and Alawites on the other: 3.5
- None of the above: 0.6

Hama
- Sunni-Alawite relations: 71.9
- Relations between all sects: 3.1
- Relations between all sects on the one hand and Alawites on the other: 0
- None of the above: 0

Legend:
- None of the above
- Muslim-Christian relations
- Relations between all sects on the one hand and Alawites on the other
- Sunni-Minorities in general relations
- Relations between all sects
- Sunni-Alawite relations

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Figure 39. By sect %

Legend (right to left in chart):
- None of the above
- Muslim-Christian relations
- Relations between all sects on the one hand and Alawites on the other
- Sunni-Minorities in general relations
- Relations between all sects
- Sunni-Alawite relations

Data by sect:

Murshidis: 27.4, 25.8, 30.6, 12.9

Druze: 9.4, 26.6, 50, 10.9

Ismailis: 24.2, 6.1, 51.5, 18.2

Prefer not to answer: 6.1, 18.6, 47, 24.1

Christians: 10.7, 8.9, 30.4, 24.1, 25.9

Alawites and Shiites: 4.7, 40.1, 21.6, 32.8

Sunni: 13.4, 21.9, 15.9, 47.8

Complaints of Sunnis

58.1% of Sunnis say that "Sunnis' complaints of sectarian discrimination against them" have motives, or are well-founded and understandable. Alawites and Shiites tend to reject these allegations since only 11.6% gave the same answer as Sunnis, and more than half of them said these complaints have political goals and aren't justified. Nevertheless, a considerable percentage of them (30.6%) did not deny them but considered them "exaggerated". The latter was the Ismailis' preferred answer (46.5%). Druzes are generally split between giving this particular answer, and saying that the complaints have certain motives, or are well-founded and understandable. As for Murshidis, they were divided into two currents: the first one

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says they are "exaggerated" while the other one denies them or perceives them as a mere pretext for political purposes (Figure 40).
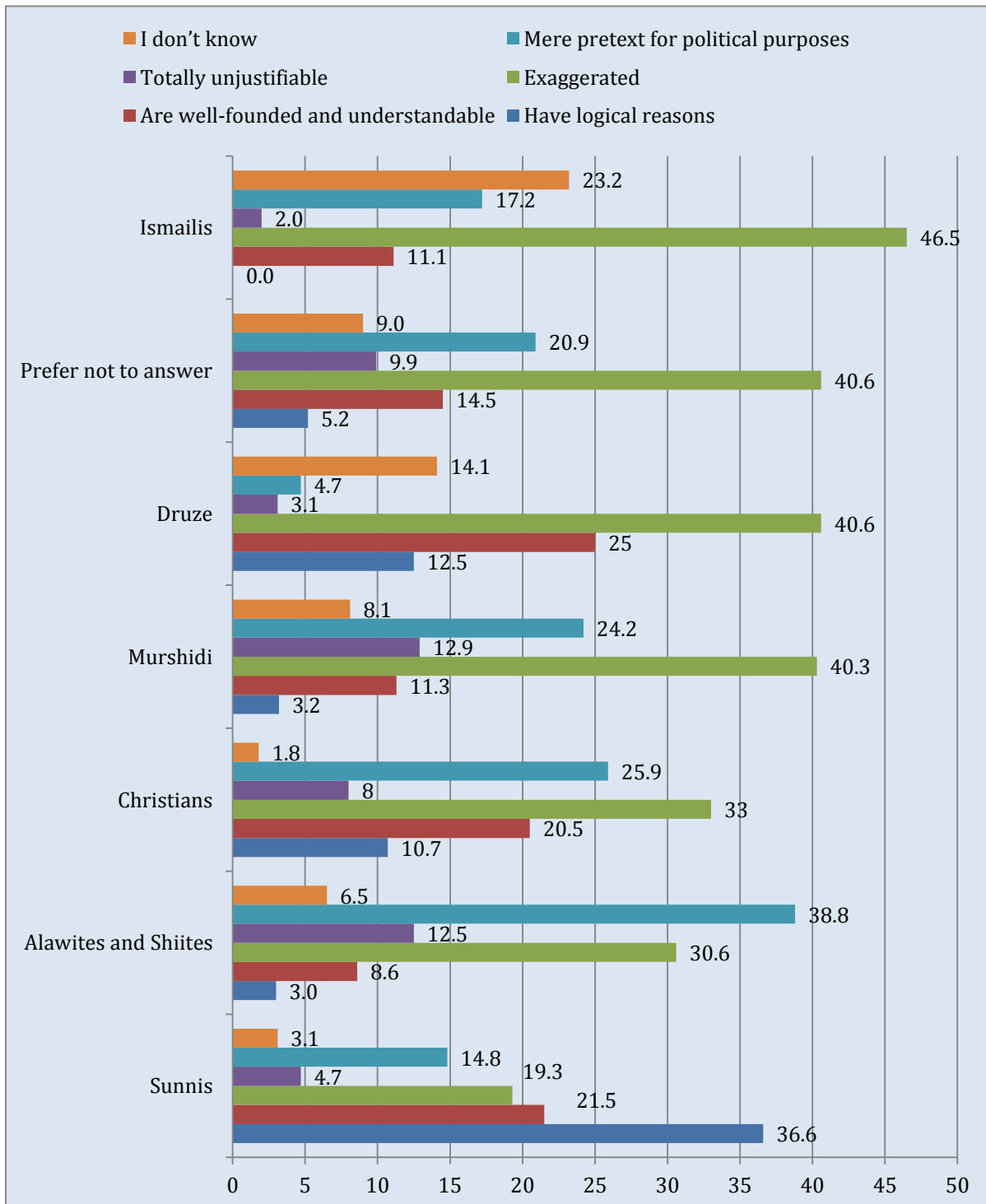
Figure 40. Complaints of Sunnis about sectarian discrimination against them %
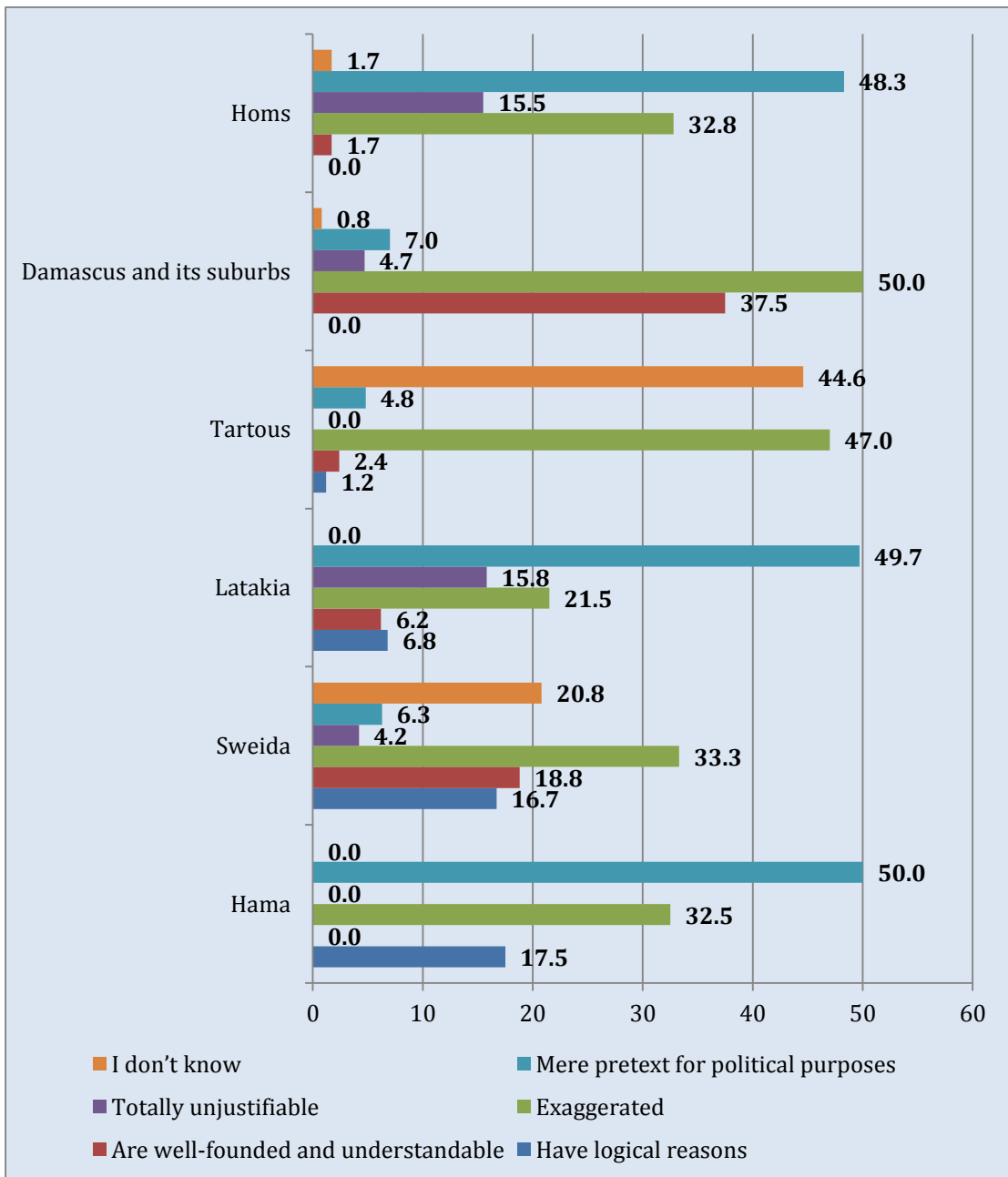
Figure 41. Complaints of Sunnis in the opinion of minorities by current location %. The sample was composed of Sunnis in other areas, which is why they were not included in this figure

The following figure presents the views of the minorities only with regards to Sunnis' complaints as per the location. The denial of such complaints was primarily in each of Homs (63.8%) and Latakia (65.5%), where respondents said that these complaints are not justifiable at all or that they are a mere pretext for political purposes, and Hama came second (50%). However, what is striking in both Homs and Hama is that about a third of respondents did not completely deny them but said they were exaggerated, while this percentage dropped to 21.5% in Latakia. Most of

respondents who demonstrated an understanding of this complaint were in the Sweida as well as in Damascus and its suburbs, where respondents said that these complaints have logical reasons or that they are justified and understandable, with a percentage of 35.5% and 37.5% respectively. In Tartous, answers were divided in two main streams: those who do not deny the complaints but say they are exaggerated, and those who refrained from exposing a clear stance in this regard and said they did not know or abstained from giving an answer.

Figure 42. Concerns of minorities by sect %
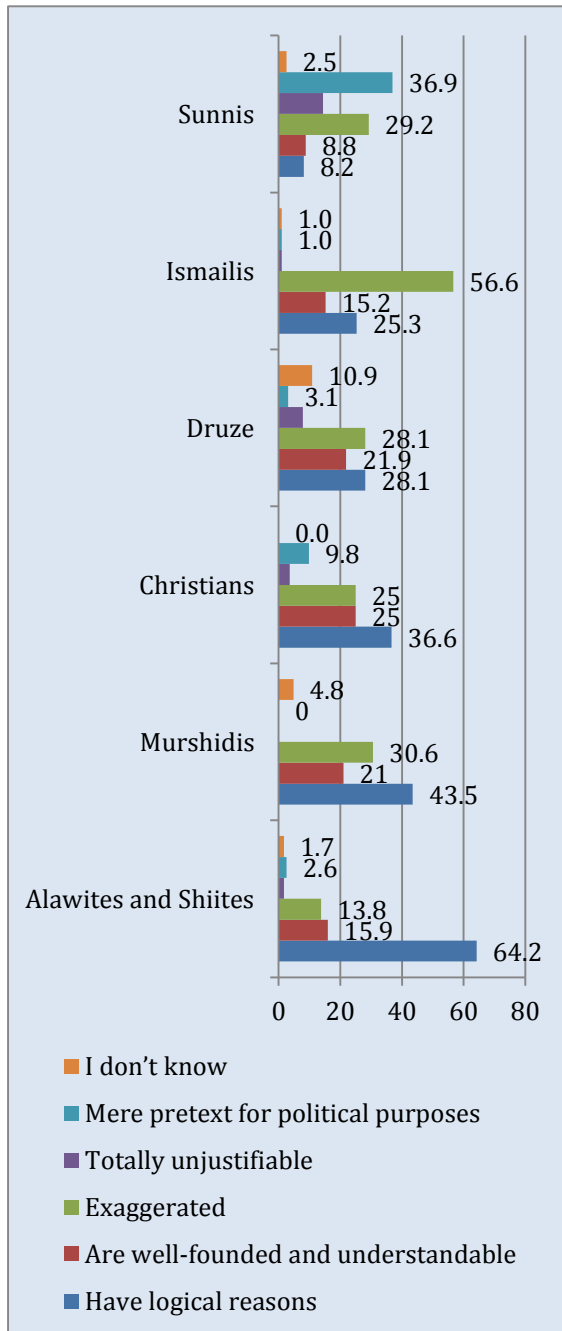
Concerns of minorities

There is near-consensus among Alawites and Shiites that minorities' concerns about the Sunni majority have motives, or are well-founded and understandable, and the largest proportion of Murshidis gave the same answer at 64.5% and 61.6% respectively. Half of the Druzes said that such concerns have logical reasons and are understandable. But the responses given by Ismailis were somewhat different from those given by other minorities since the largest part of Ismailis said the concerns are 'exaggerated' (56.6%). Sunnis do not approve of these allegations: more than half of them denied them and said they are unjustifiable or classified them as a mere pretext for political purposes. Nevertheless, a considerable ratio of Sunnis (29.2%) does not deny minorities' concerns but describes them as 'exaggerated'(Figure42).

Figure 43 displays Sunnis' opinion around the concerns of minorities based on location. Those who rejected these claims the most are primarily located in Deraa (79%), followed by those located in Latakia and refugee camps in Turkey, who said these concerns are unjustifiable or classified them as a mere pretext for political purposes (around 70%). Half of Sunni respondents in Aleppo and Hama also gave the latter answer. However, around one third of respondents in Hama do not deny these concerns but describe them as exaggerated. A third of Sunni respondents in Hassakah and Damascus and its suburbs think minorities' concerns have logical reasons, or are well-founded are understandable.

Results in Homs are remarkable since most respondents (59.3%) do not deny these concerns but say they are exaggerated, and so did around half of the Sunnis in Damascus and its suburbs, 41.3% of Idlib respondents, and one third in each of Hama and Hassakah.
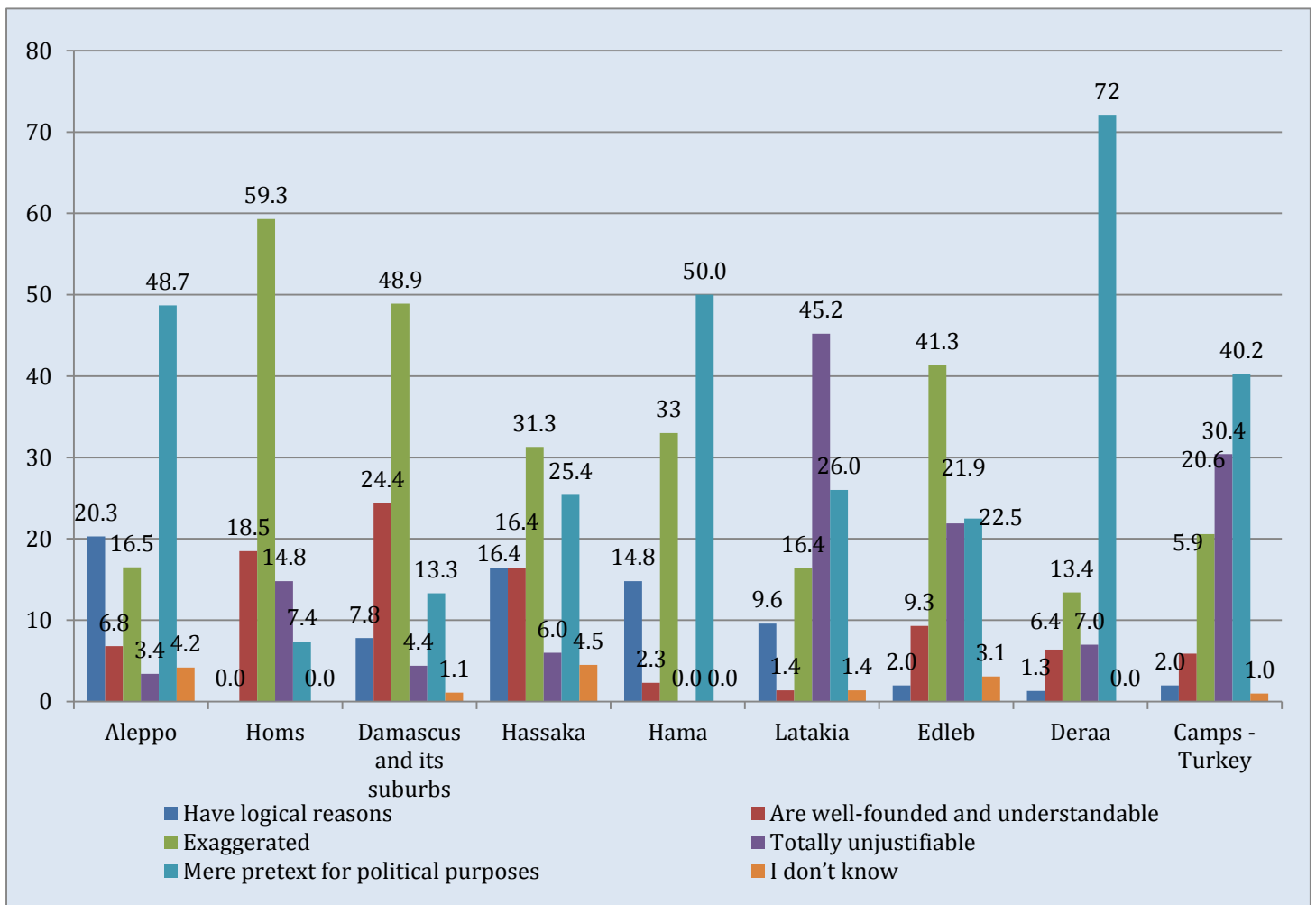
Figure 43. Concerns of minorities in the opinion of Sunnis by current location

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Communicating with people from other sects

TDA asked respondents about if they communicate with people from other sects and to what extent this occurs, i.e. whether this occurs regularly, occasionally, or if it does not happen at all. Table 4 shows the answers that reported no communication at all, which is what matters the most to us since the lack of communication may imply the existence of prejudice and the proliferation of stereotypes about "the other". We noted the following:

- A large percentage of Sunnis said they did not communicate with Shiites at all (60.1%) nor with Yazidis (66.2%), and this percentage drops to 58.3% when referring to the communication with Murshidis, 54.7% with Ismailis, 36.8% with Alawites and reaches 21% with Christians. This implies that Sunnis in our sample communicate with Christians much more than with other sects (Table 4).
- In general, Alawites, Shiites, Ismailis, Druzes, Christians and Murshidis communicate with everyone but not with Yazidis (Table 4).

	No communication at all							
	Sunni	Alawites	Shiites	Ismailis	Druze	Christians	Yazidis	Murshidi
Sunni	-	36.8	60.1	54.7	45.3	21.5	66.2	58.3
Alawites and Shiites	10.8	-	-	9.1	34.1	0.4	68.1	9.5
Ismailis	8.1	0.0	13.1	-	19.2	0.0	87.9	7.1
Druze	1.6	0.0	14.1	29.7	-	0.0	60.9	35.9
Christians	3.6	3.6	43.8	14.3	21.4	-	55.4	24.1
Murshidi	12.9	1.6	41.9	8.1	50.0	0.0	72.6	-
Prefer not to answer	0.3	14.2	18.6	37.4	25.8	1.4	41.4	39.4

Table 4. Lack of communication with individuals of other sects

We then asked the respondents about the reasons for this lack of communication and presented two types of answers (Figure 44):

1. The first one comprises the following three answer choices that are not linked to the other and to his/her sect, but to external circumstances: the non-existence of people belonging to other sects in the respondent's area, the lack

of encounter between the respondent and the people belonging to other sects, or because of the limited nature of the respondent's social relationships.

2. The second one comprises the following four answer choices that are linked to the other and to his/her sect: declaring the lack of desire to communicate with them, assuming the non-existence of things in common, preferring to communicate exclusively with members of the same sect, and assuming that the other does not want to communicate.

After recoding the questions according to their respective categories (external circumstances or the other and his/her sect), we analyzed them according to certain demographic variables. Declaring what we named 'matters related to the other and his/her sect' is not easy; yet, this question enables the comparison between the results in a way that allows us to identify the locations or groups with a high percentage of sectarian sentiments. Results in Figure 44 show that around a quarter of Sunnis, Shiites and Alawites mentioned reasons linked to the other and so did 18.8% of Druze respondents; respondents who referred the least to the other and his/her sect were the Ismailis and the Christians.
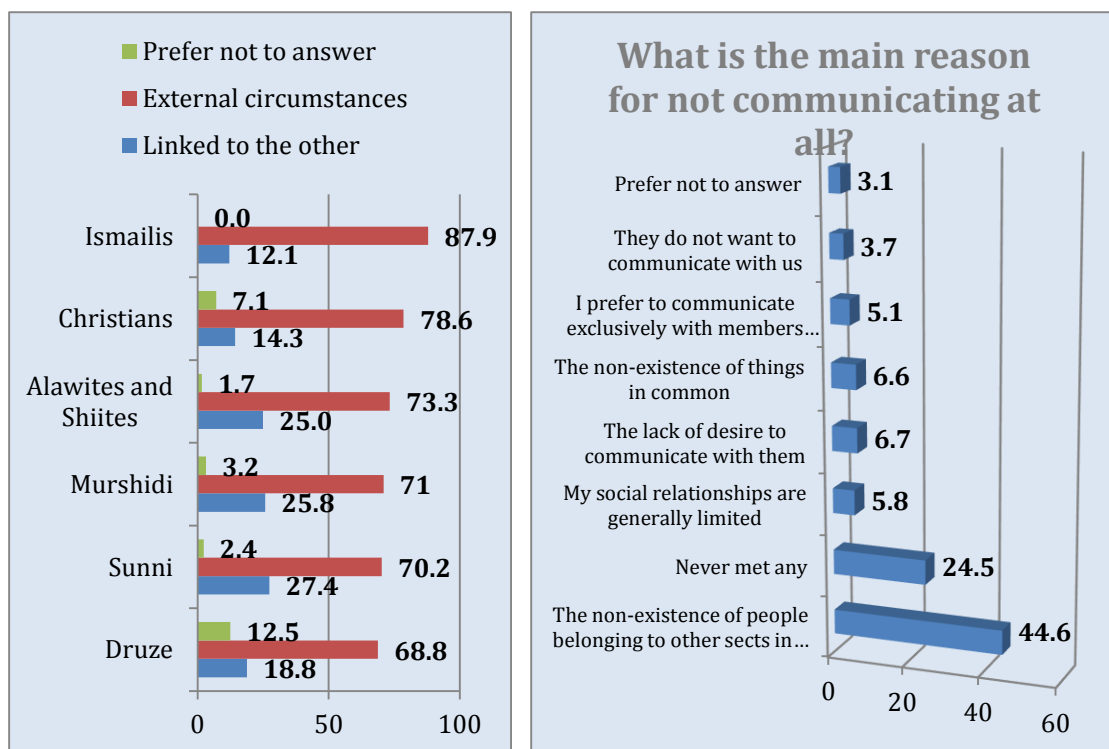
Figure 44. Reasons of the lack of communication: External/Related to the other %

Looking at the results by locations, we find that answers given Hama, Latakia and refugee camps in Turkey come at the forefront of the highest percentage referring to reasons linked to the other and his/her sect, while this percentage drops to its lowest level in Tartous and Hassakah.

The result analysis also presents a correlation between the reasons and ideology. The answers referring to reasons linked to the other and his/her sect have higher percentages among Islamists than among seculars, whereby it was at 14.8% for the seculars and reached 62.1% at extreme levels of political Islam (Figure 46). Men tend to give this answer more than women: 17.7% of women referred to reasons linked to the other and his/her sect, while 24.9% of men did (Figure 47).
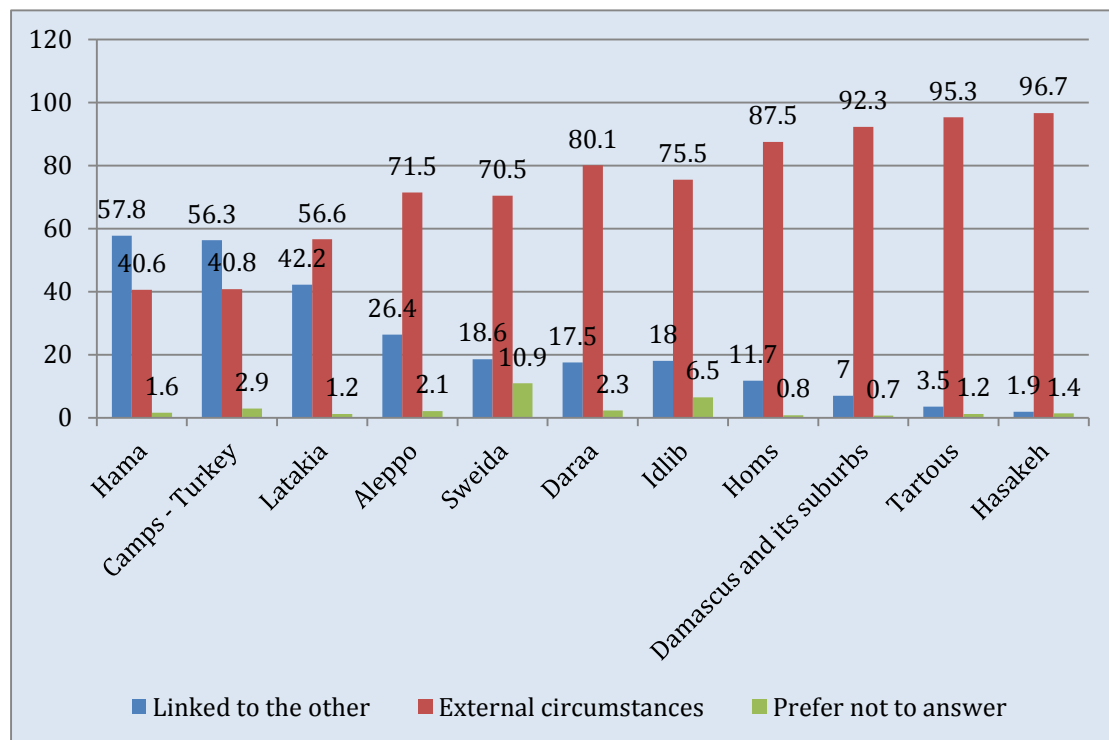
Figure 45. Reasons of the lack of communication: by current location %
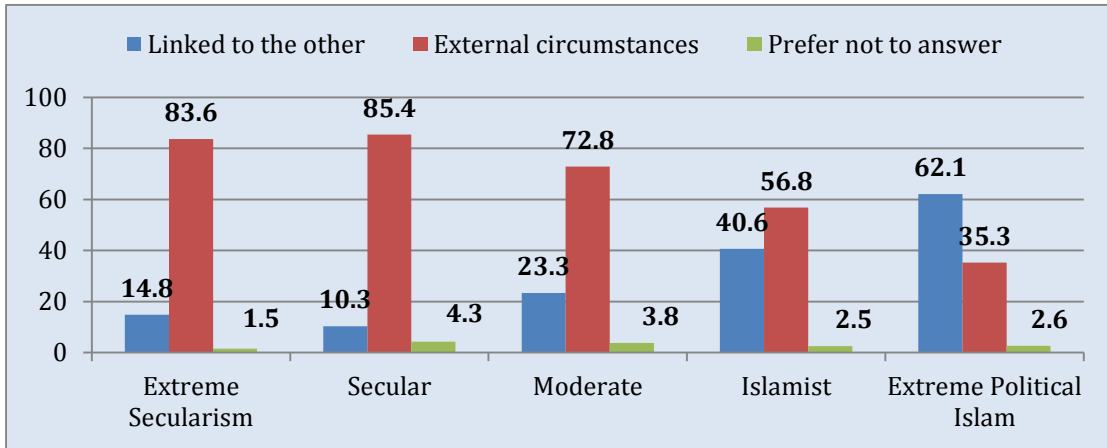
Figure 46. Reasons of the lack of communication: by ideology %
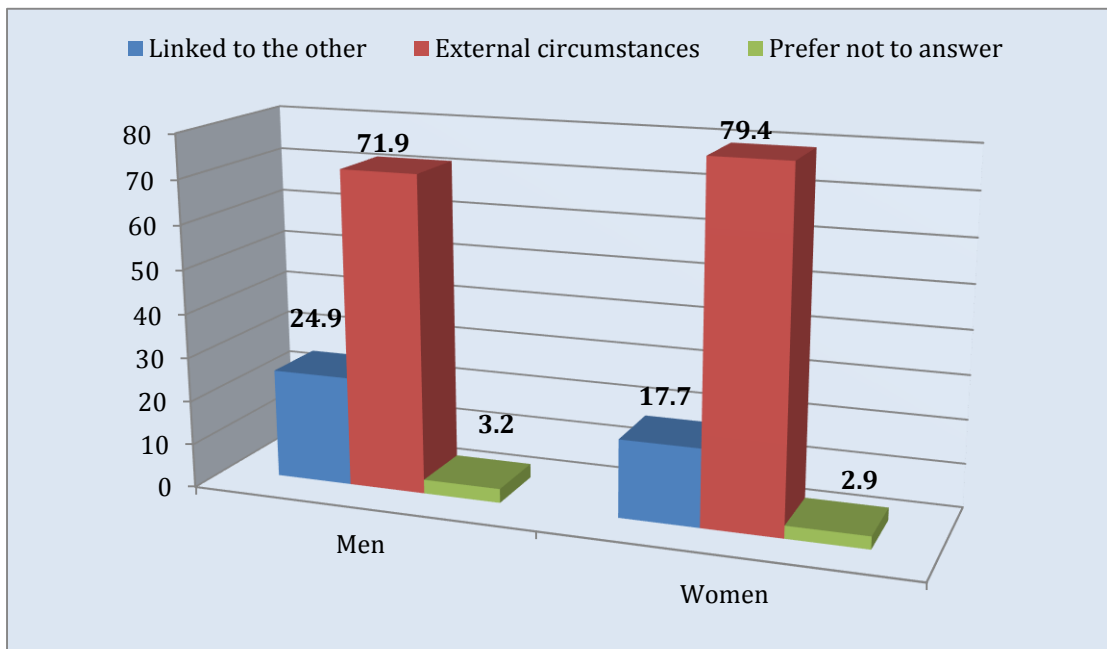
Figure 47. Reasons of the lack of communication: by gender %

The nature and transformation of inter-sectarian relations after 2011

Interpersonal relations in Syria were shaken after the outbreak of the Syrian revolution in 2011 at different levels (family ties, friendships, other relations). But what happens to inter-sectarian relations? Have these relations changed, and how? What's the form of this transformation and what are its implications?

We first tried to identify the nature of these relations. More than one third of respondents picked neighborly relations and more than half went for friendships. The highest percentage was for "acquaintances" while the lowest was for family ties (Figure 48).
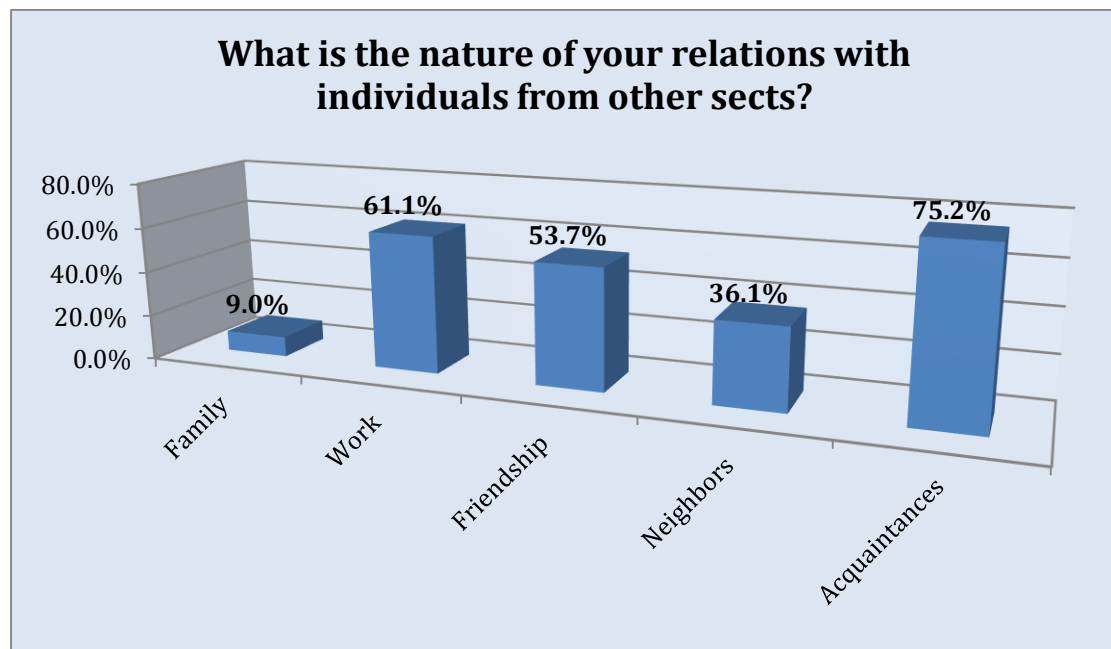
Figure 48. Nature of relations

45.6% of respondents said these relations deteriorated (Figure 49). Results show that respondents' relations in Hama, Latakia, refugee camps in Turkey and Aleppo were the most affected – followed by Deraa, Idlib and Homs – whereas respondents' relations in Tartous, Sweida and Hassakah were the least affected (Figure 50).
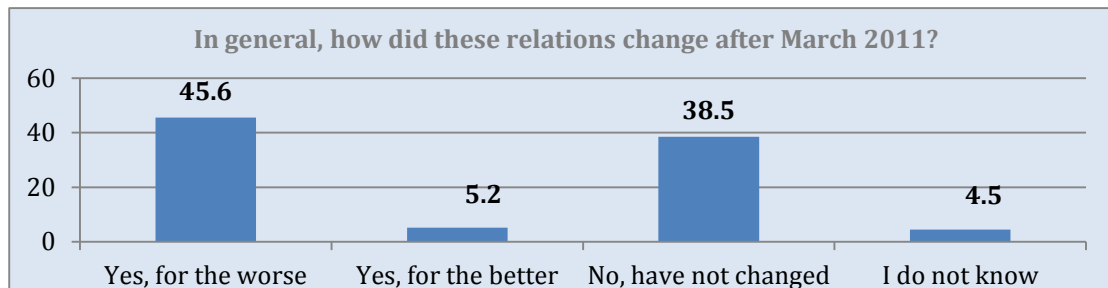
Figure 49. Transformation of relations after 2011
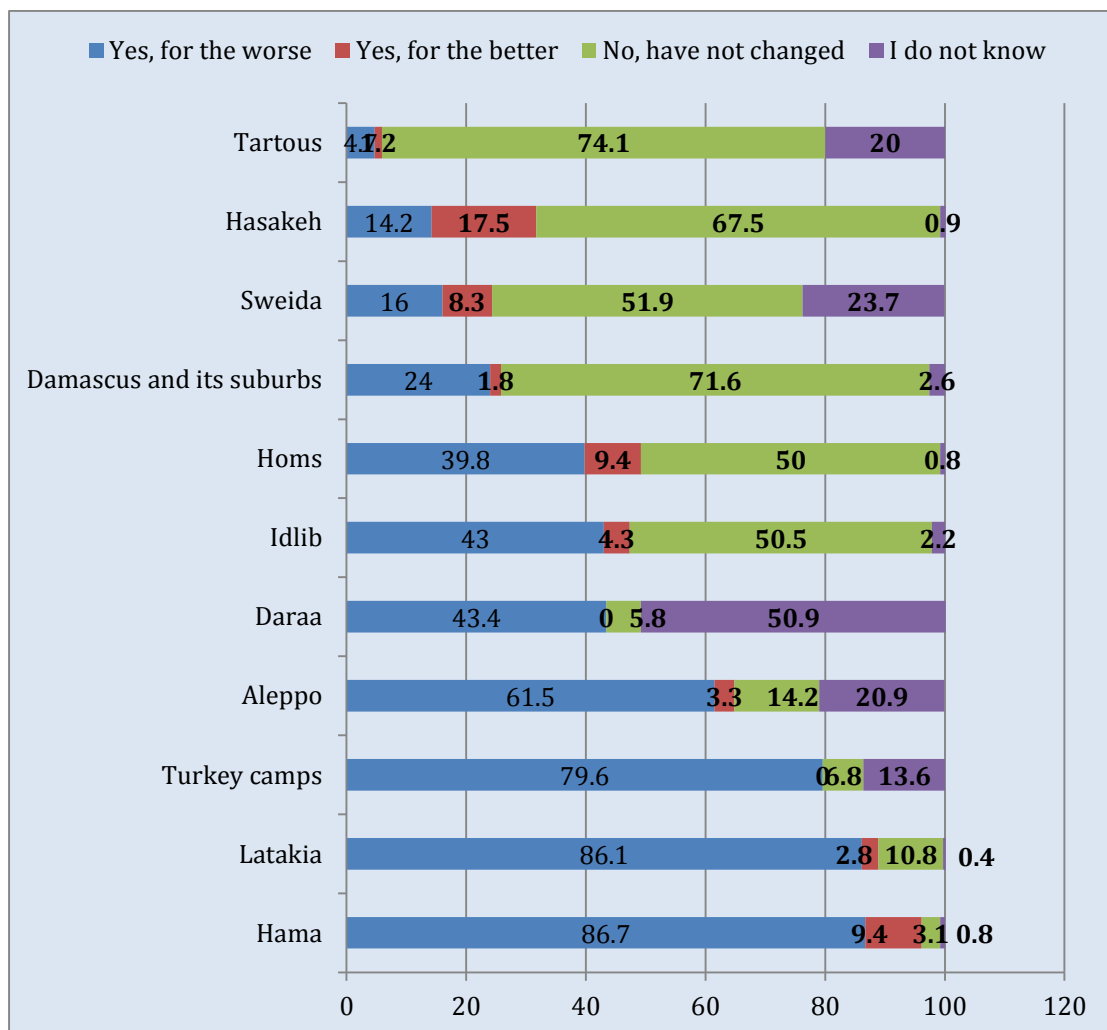
Figure 50. Transformation of relations by current location %

When observing income disparity, we find that inter-sectarian relations were more negatively affected among low-income earners than high-income earners (Figure 53). Ideology also had its own role to play in the transformation of these relations. In fact, the percentage of respondents who said inter-sectarian relations have deteriorated for them gradually increases with the transition from extreme levels of secularism to extreme levels of political Islam, at 37% and 73.3% respectively (Figure 51). More men reported deteriorated relations than women, whereby almost half of the men said they have changed for the worse compared to 37.4% of women (Figure 52).
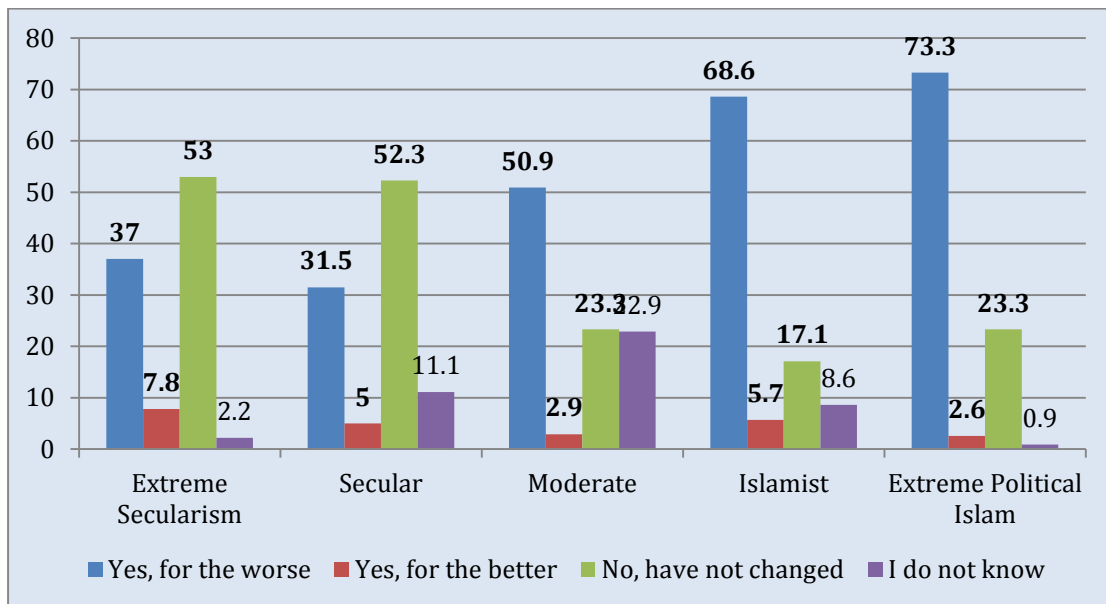
Figure 51. Transformation of relations by ideology %
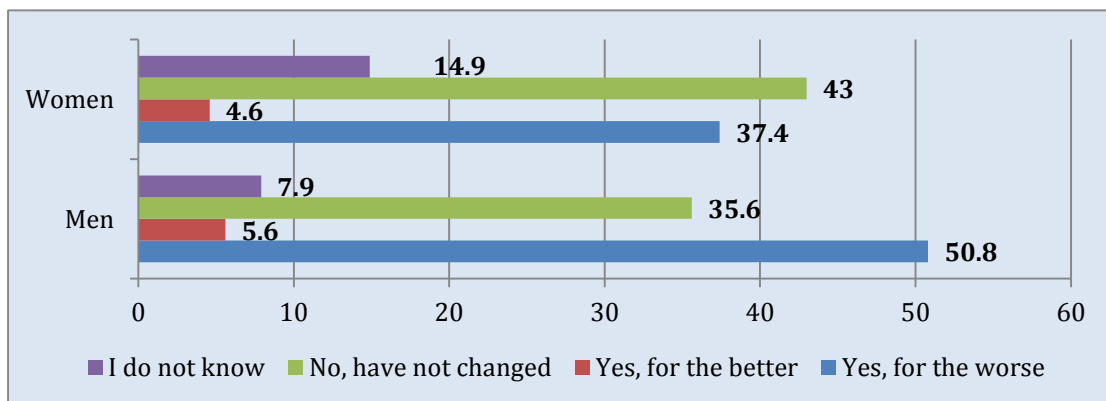
Figure 52. Transformation of relations by gender %
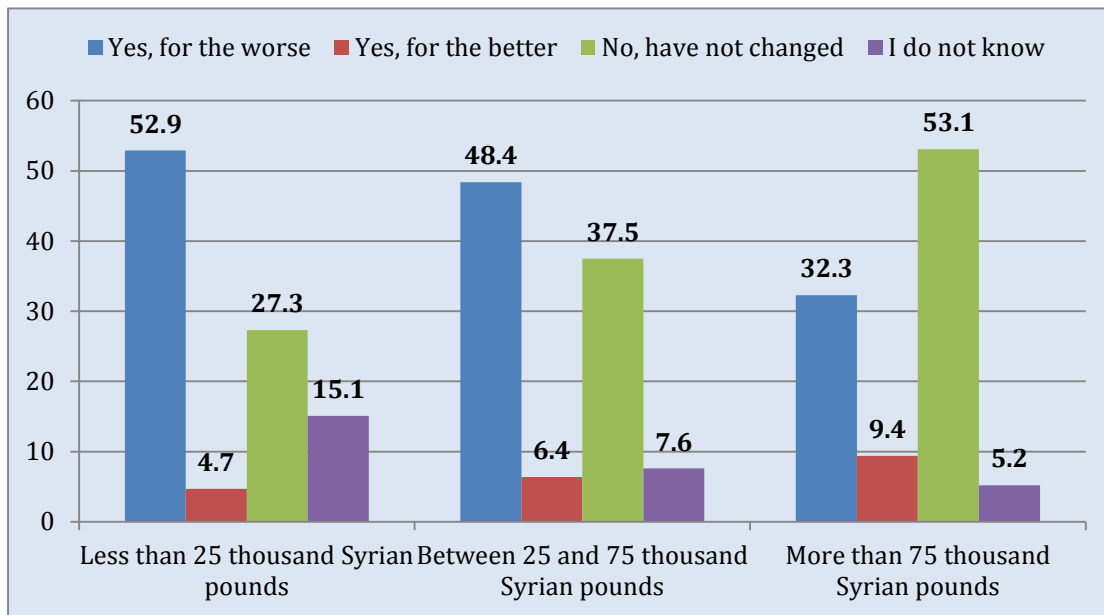
Figure 53. Transformation of relations by income level %

Perceptions of the acceptable social distance

In the questionnaire, we posed a hypothetical question although this type of questions is not quite effective in providing accurate numerical reflections of reality. For instance, asking a respondent about his position if his own son marries from another sect: the respondent may give any answer in case he does not have a son. Nevertheless, what is deemed useful is the comparison between the different hypothetical questions – and so is the comparison between demographic factors – since we can generate a general idea of the acceptable social distance between individuals of different sects. We classified our hypothetical questions by different levels of severity, primarily between keeping a relatively large social distance (living in the same neighborhood for instance) and keeping a very short distance (marriage)[6]. The largest proportion of respondents accepts hosting people from different sects without reservations (61.7%), but this percentage drops to less than half when assuming more continuous relations such as neighborliness in the district, and goes further down to reach 42.2% when asked about living in the same building.

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[6] There were questions about other types of social relations in the draft questionnaire, such as relationships at work (worker - employer) or in school, but we had to make some adjustments to the questionnaire in general because of the length of time it takes, and we confined ourselves to these questions about social distance. We also tried adapting them to the reality of war, whereby a person is forced to live in a building where the majority is from others sect because of internal displacement, and perhaps some the respondents are already living in such a place, but that does not mean they are satisfied with it. Thus, the option "I try to avoid talking to him" may reflect this tension between respondents' attitudes and reality. As for those who chose this answer for the question about marriage, it is possible that they considered it as the closest option to their position in the event that the marriage had actually happened and became a *fait accompli*.
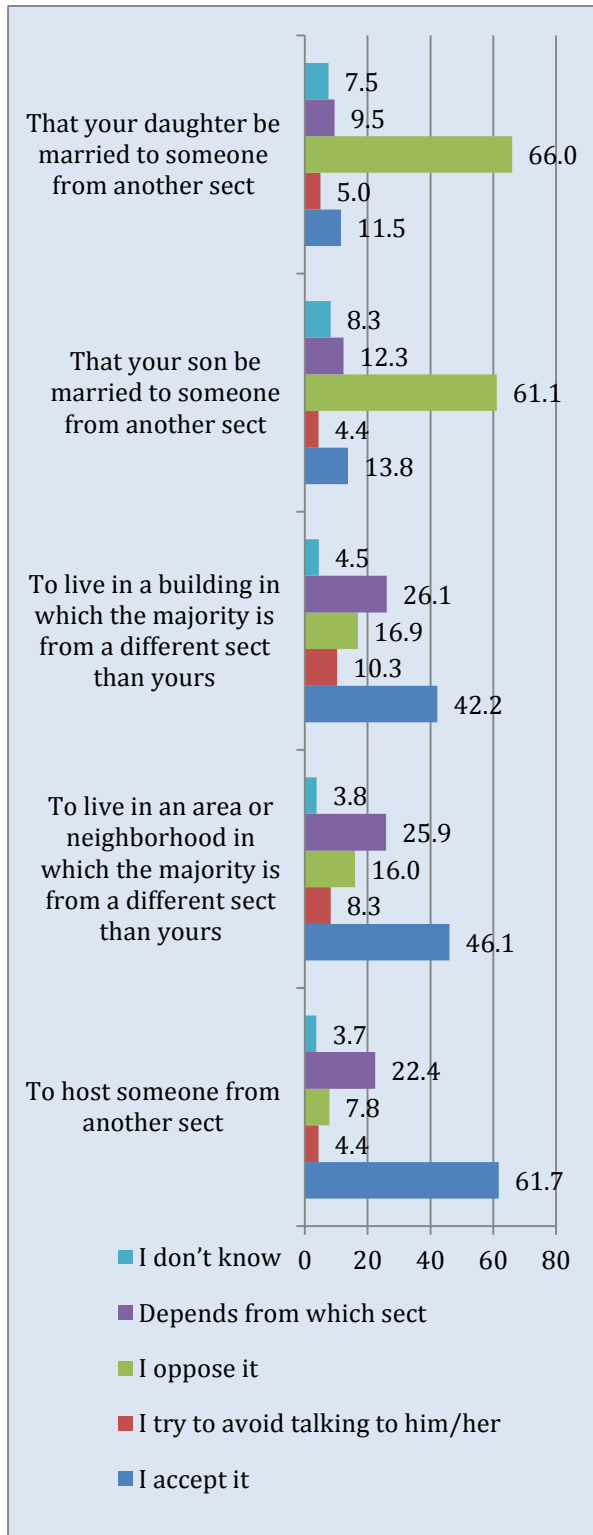
Figure 54. What would be your position in these situations? %

The big difference appears when asked about marrying members of the other sect, where only a small percentage of the respondents said they accepted it (13.8% for marriage of the son and 11.5% for marriage of the daughter). What is also remarkable is the relatively high percentage of respondents who opted for "it depends from which sect", which implies that there are some sects "closer" than others. Percentages in this case generally ranged around one quarter, but dropped when asked about marriage. Results suggest that there are higher levels of intolerance when the issue of marriage is raised, even when "closer sects" are involved (Figure 54).

Regarding the marriage of the girl with a person from a different sect, groups that displayed a strong resistance were the Sunnis, Christians, Alawites and Shiites, and then followed the Druze although a considerable percentage (17.2%) refrained from giving a clear stance around this issue and said it did not know or preferred not to answer. The percentage of those who reject it decreases and reaches the lowest levels on Ismaili and Murshidi respondents. Interestingly, the largest proportion of Murshidis responded that its position may vary depending on the husband's sect; and the largest percentage of the Ismailis, which amounted to about a half, found the solution in avoiding talking to him (Figure 55).

However, raising the issue of civil marriage throughout the survey brought a paradox to the surface: only 26.4% of respondents who support civil marriage clearly and specifically stated they accept marrying their daughters off to a person from another sect; the highest percentage (43.5%) said they wouldn't do so; and 17.7% said "it depends from which sect" (Figure 56). This raises questions about whether the talk around civil marriage, especially in secular circles, is a mere slogan brought up in the context of the ideological conflict with the Islamists. To find out more on their position, we sought to analyze the relationship between the ideological self-evaluation and approving the marriage of the daughter from a person belonging to another sect. The percentage of those opposing it gradually and significantly increases with the transition from extreme secularism (48.2%) to extreme political Islam (87.1%). Nevertheless, it should be noted herein that over half of the secular respondents opposed this kind of marriage (Figure 58).
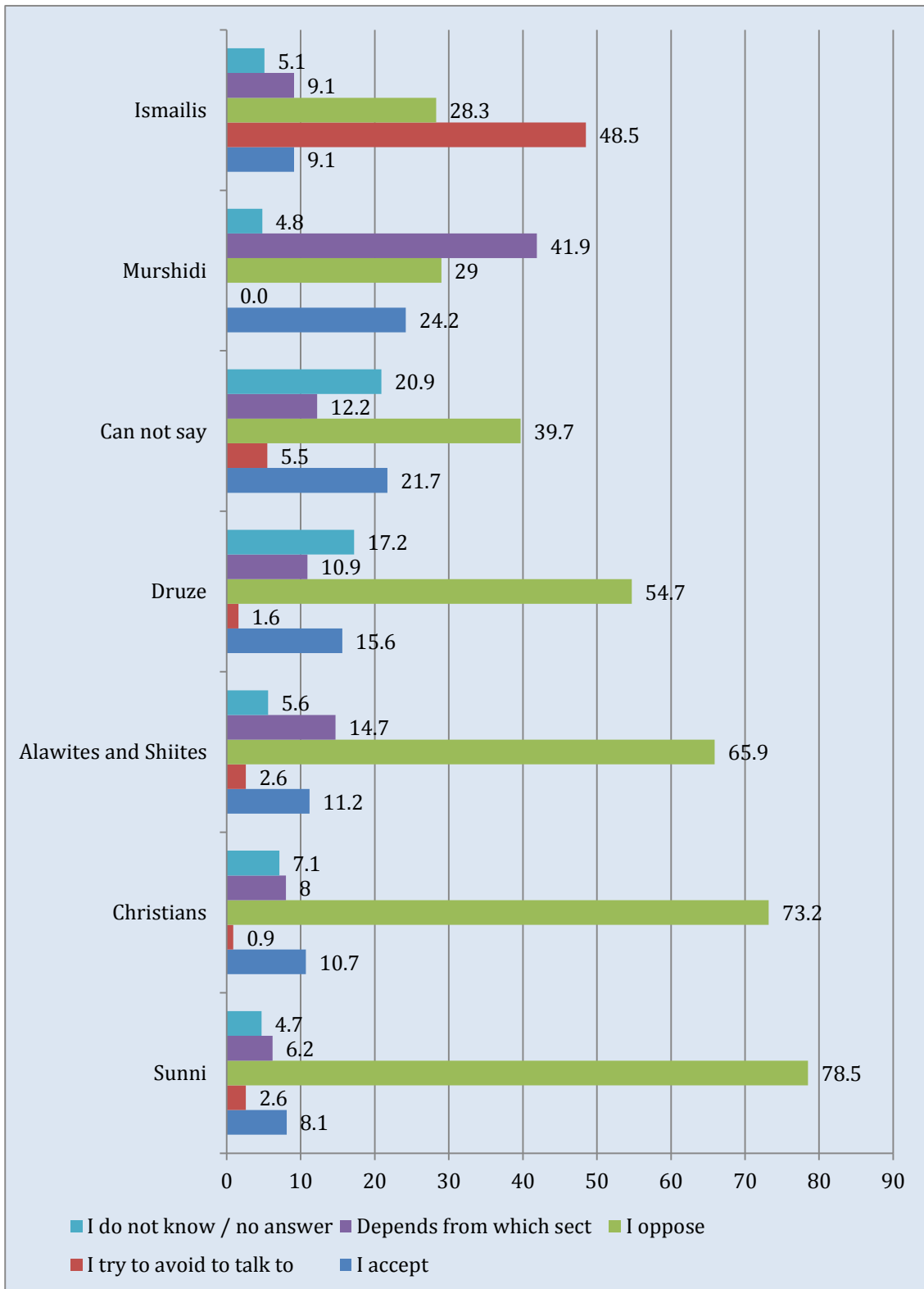
Figure 55. Marriage of the daughter with someone from a different sect %

Legend:
- I do not know / no answer
- Depends from which sect
- I oppose
- I try to avoid to talk to
- I accept

Data:

Ismailis
- I accept: 9.1
- I try to avoid to talk to: 48.5
- I oppose: 28.3
- Depends from which sect: 9.1
- I do not know / no answer: 5.1

Murshidi
- I accept: 24.2
- I try to avoid to talk to: 0.0
- I oppose: 29
- Depends from which sect: 41.9
- I do not know / no answer: 4.8

Can not say
- I accept: 21.7
- I try to avoid to talk to: 5.5
- I oppose: 39.7
- Depends from which sect: 12.2
- I do not know / no answer: 20.9

Druze
- I accept: 15.6
- I try to avoid to talk to: 1.6
- I oppose: 54.7
- Depends from which sect: 10.9
- I do not know / no answer: 17.2

Alawites and Shiites
- I accept: 11.2
- I try to avoid to talk to: 2.6
- I oppose: 65.9
- Depends from which sect: 14.7
- I do not know / no answer: 5.6

Christians
- I accept: 10.7
- I try to avoid to talk to: 0.9
- I oppose: 73.2
- Depends from which sect: 8
- I do not know / no answer: 7.1

Sunni
- I accept: 8.1
- I try to avoid to talk to: 2.6
- I oppose: 78.5
- Depends from which sect: 6.2
- I do not know / no answer: 4.7

Figure 56. Marriage of the daughter by the position vis-à-vis civil marriage %

Observing the results by location gives a good idea about inter-sectarian relations through understanding in-law relationships. It seems that refugee camps in Turkey, Deraa, Hama and Latakia constitute the regions that reject these relationships the most. This rejection undoubtedly remains the prevalent response across the different regions, but its percentage relatively decreases and reaches its lowest level in Hassakah (Figure 57). Results suggest that the Turkmen, Circassians and Armenians in Syria reject civil marriage, and so does the largest proportion of Assyrians and most of the Arabs. Although the Kurds had the lowest percentage of respondents opposing this kind of marriage, a considerable proportion of them refrained from taking a clear stance in this regard and said "I don't know" or refused to answer this question, and so did about a quarter of Assyrians (Figure 60).

Income levels also seem influential, whereby the opposition to this kind of marriage has decreased when comparing opposition percentages of high-income earners to those with lower incomes at 71.9% and 56.3% respectively (Figure 59).
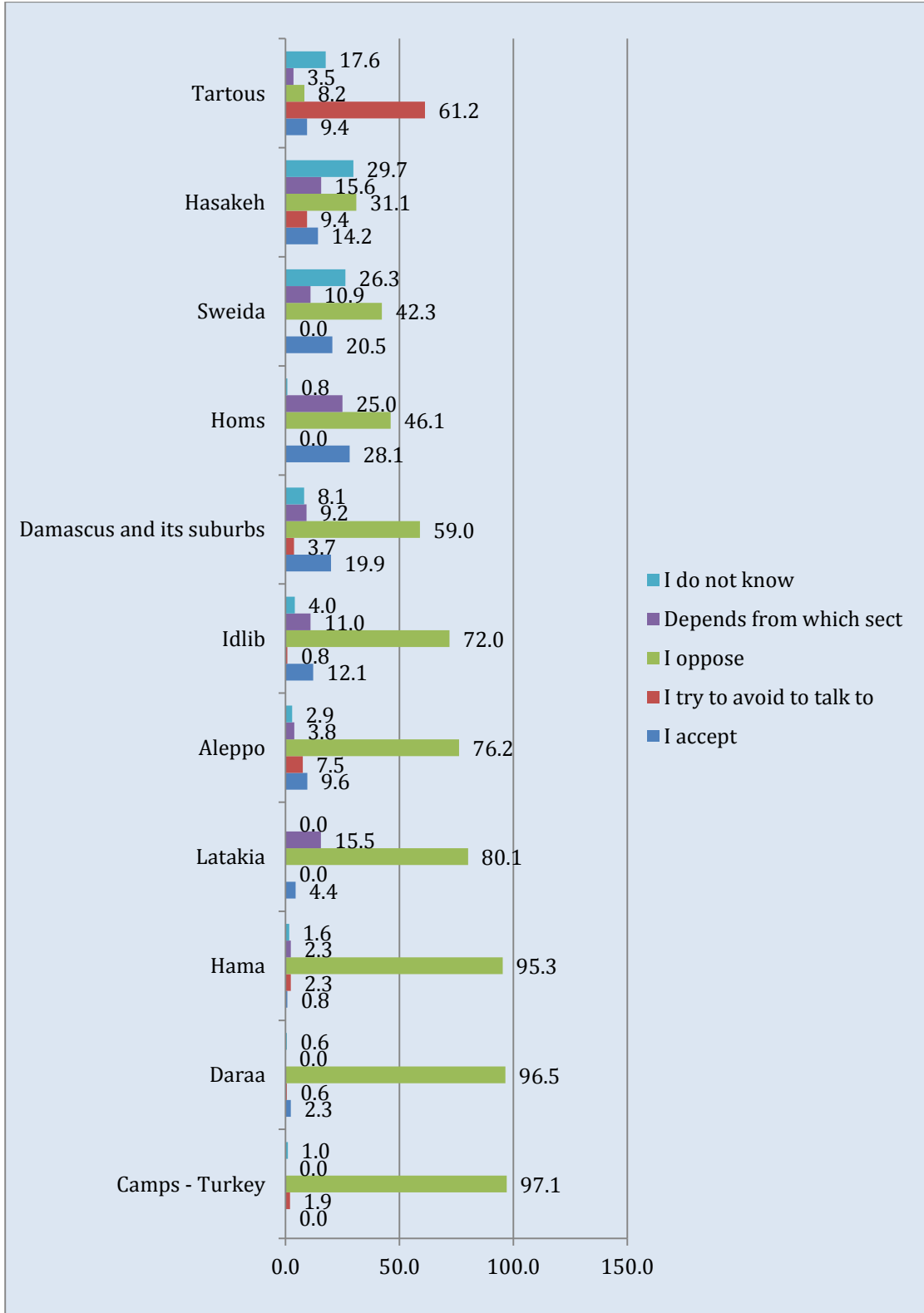
Figure 57. Marriage of the daughter by current location %
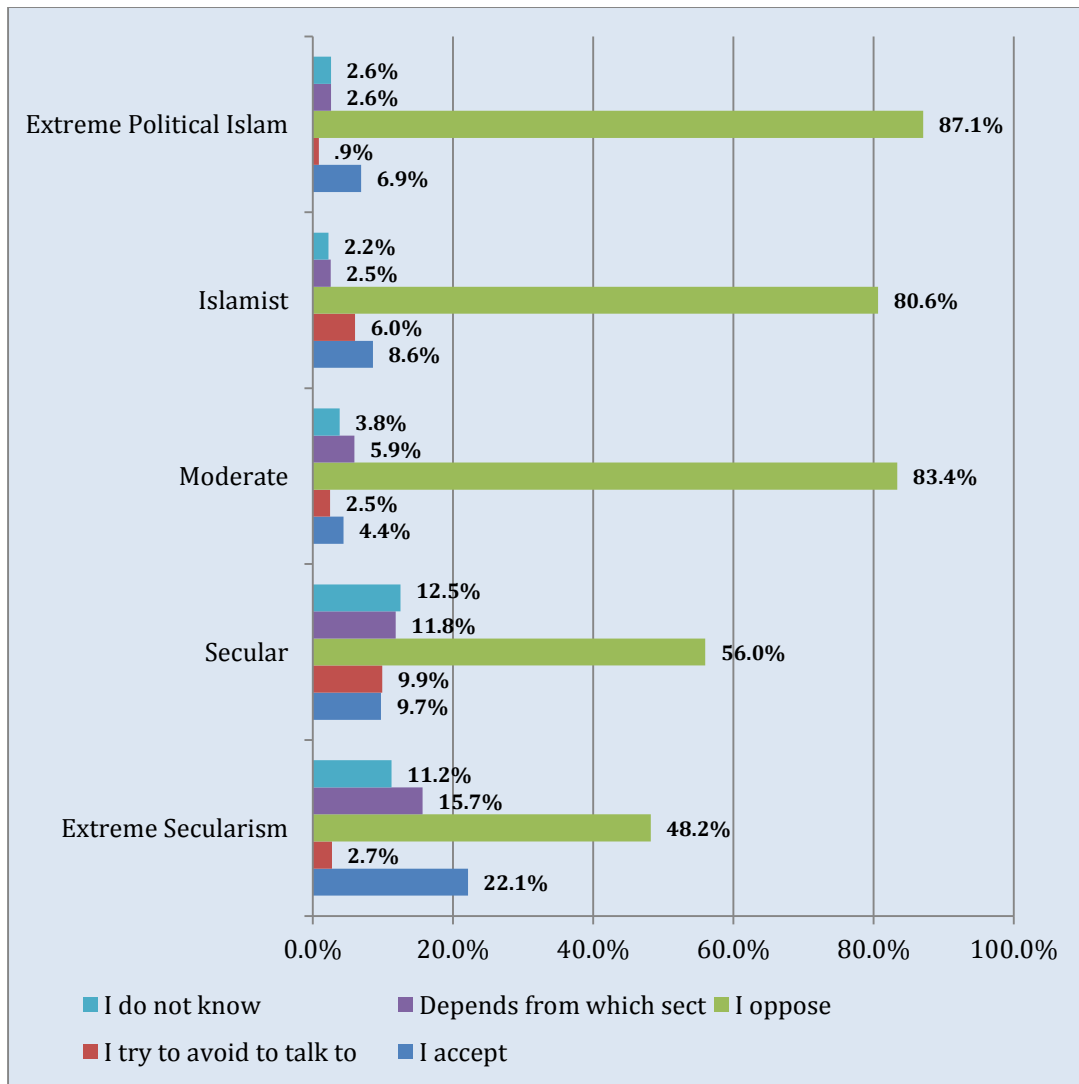
Figure 58. Marriage of the daughter by ideology
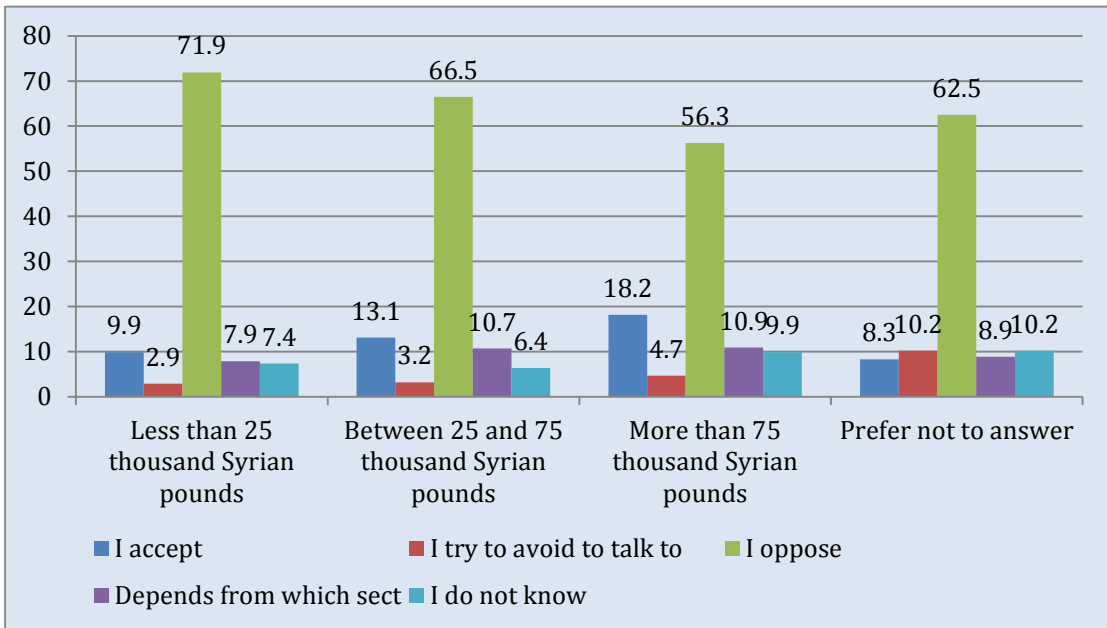
Figure 59. Marriage of the daughter by income level
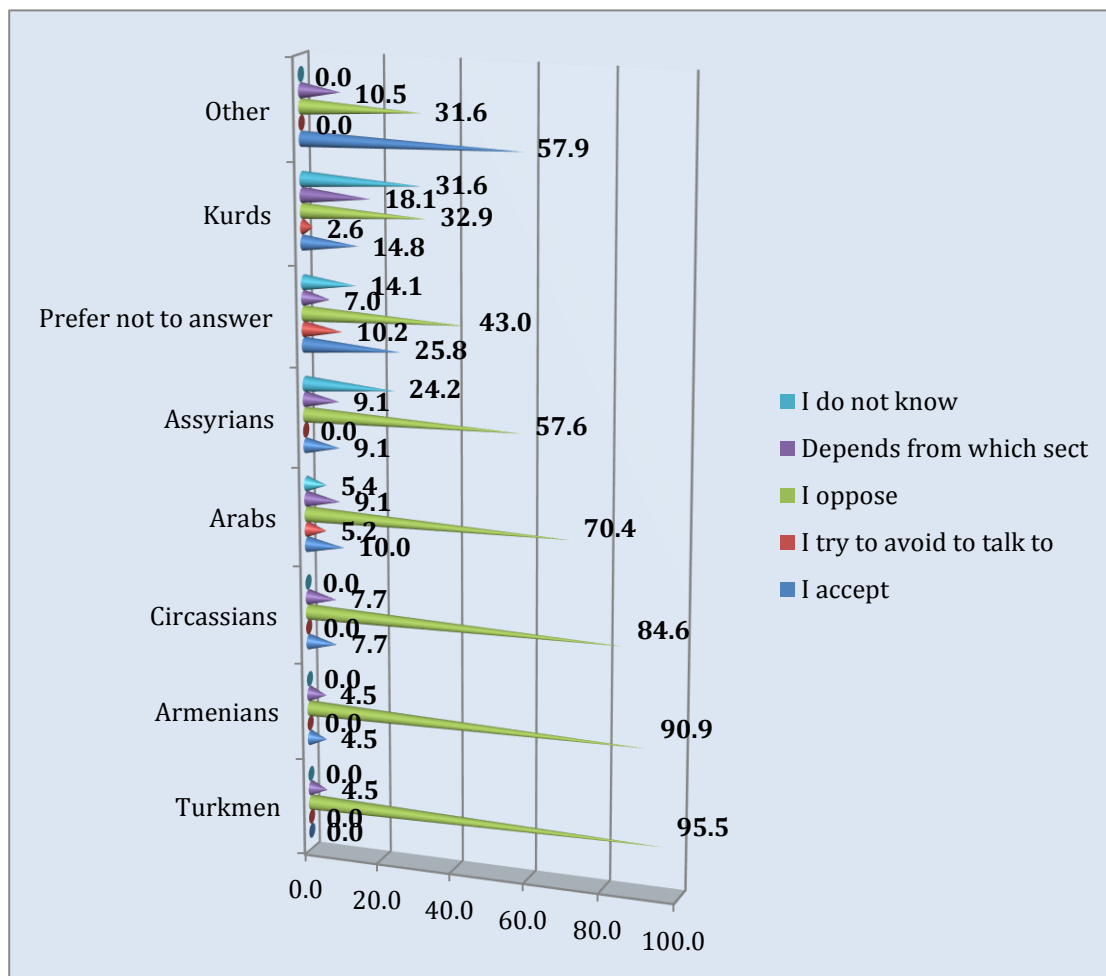
Figure 60. Marriage of the daughter by ethnicity

Inter-sectarian trust

It can be observed, from the previous question, how a considerable proportion (reached a quarter at times) reported that its position might vary depending on the sect to which the spouse belongs. This raises the issue of trust between members of different sects. The first question is whether there is a sect that respondents trust more than others. Although it is difficult to answer this kind of direct questions, about 37.8% answered yes, there is one sect or more trusted by respondents more than others, and then we asked them to name the sect(s). Following this question, we asked another one linked to inter-sectarian trust, but is more difficult to answer than the former: "Is there a sect or more that you do not trust at all?" We then asked the respondents to name the sect(s), and it was striking that the percentage of those who said "yes" amounted to about half (47.8%), and 52.2% responded negatively (Figure 61).
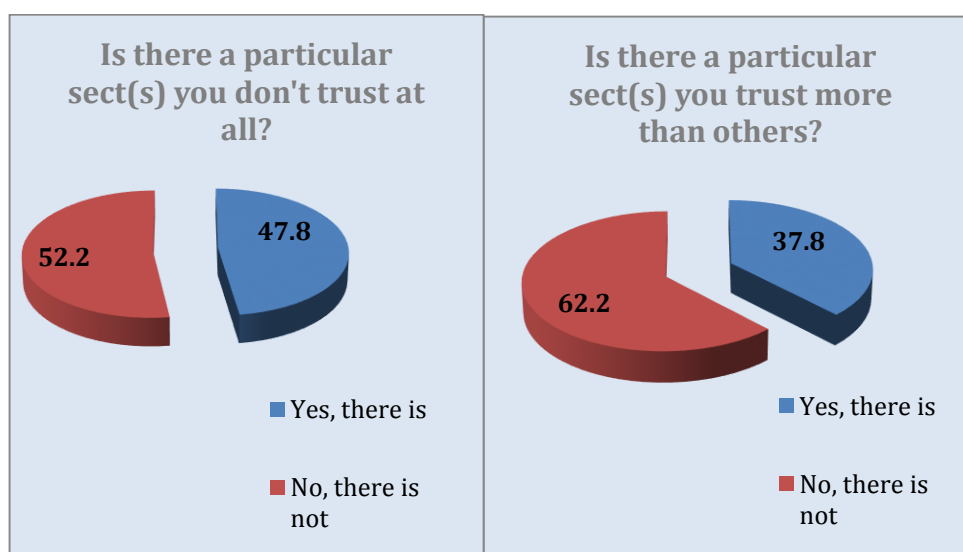
Figure 61. Inter-sectarian trust, or lack thereof

The responses of those who answered "yes" to the last two questions were distributed as follows:

- Most of those who said there is one (or more) sect they trusted more than others named Christians (77.9%) (Figure 62)
- The majority of those who said there is one (or more) sect they do not trust named Shiites (69.7%) and Alawites (67%) (Figure 62).
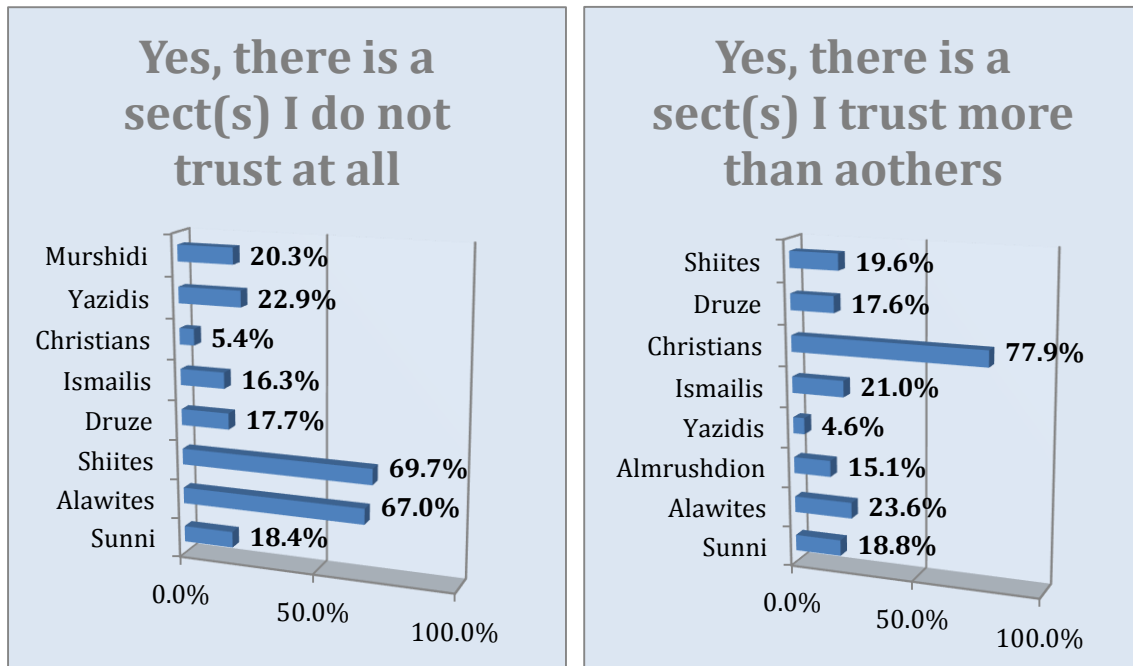
Figure 62. Trust, or lack thereof %

Where does this distrust emanate from? Is there a correlation between this distrust and the nature of political power in Syria? This is what we will address in the following chapter about religious sects and political authority.

Chapter IV: The relation between religious sects and the authority

The 'special' sect

TDA asked the respondents whether they think there is a special relation between the state and one (or more) particular sect. The majority of respondents, which amounts to 67.6%, said there is one or more particular sect that benefits from the political authority more than others (Figure 63). When we asked them to name this sect(s), nearly all respondents referred to the Alawite religious sect (93.4%), and 50.9% also mentioned Shiites (Figure 64).

Do you think there is one or more particular sect that benefits from the political authority more than others?

Yes, there is	All sects are equally affected	All sects benefit equally	I don't know
67.6	11.3	11.9	9.2

Sunni	Alawites	Murshidi	Yazidis	Ismailis	Christians	Druze	Shiites
15.5%	93.4%	10.2%	4.0%	8.2%	13.9%	12.1%	50.9%
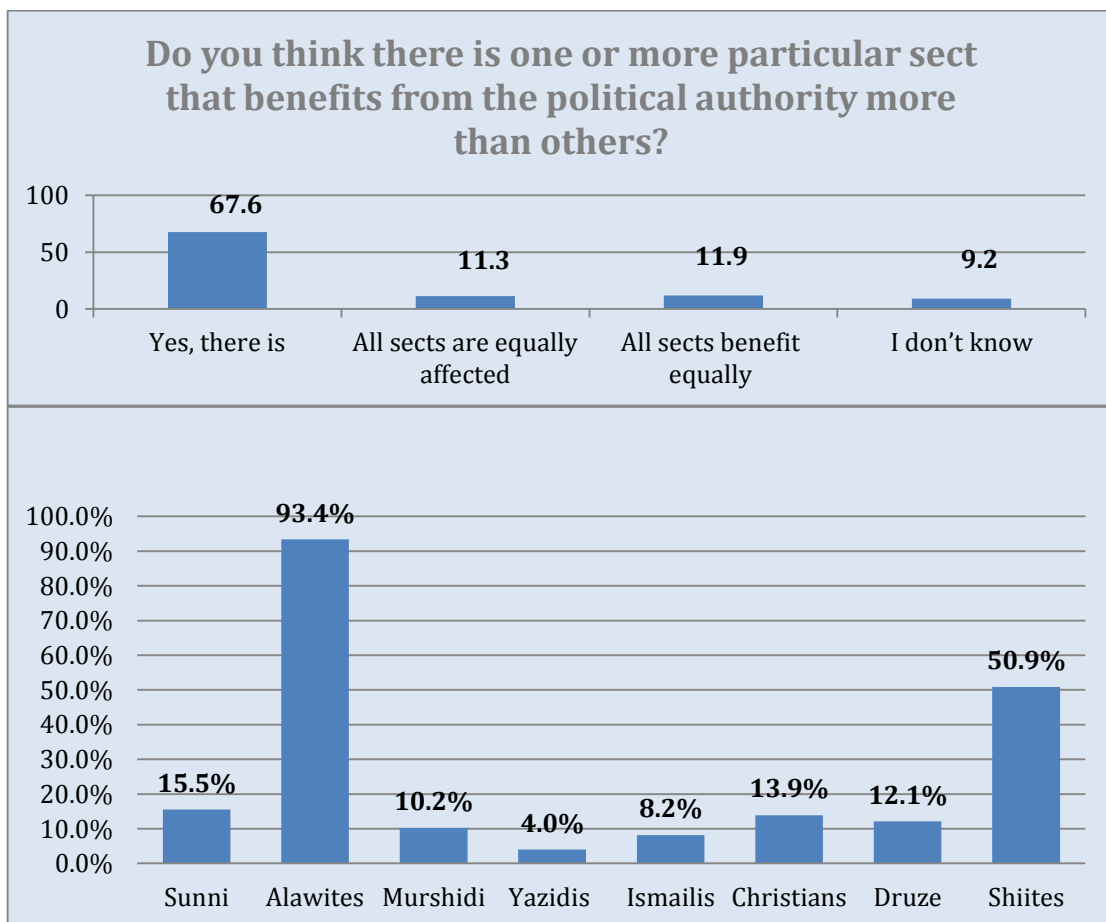
Figure 63. The 'special' sect

Sectarianism in state institutions, in the opposition and in other entities

Results suggest that there is near-consensus among respondents[7] to describe Hezbollah and Daesh as very sectarian, and that the Syrian intelligence, Presidency, and National Defense Forces are sectarian or very sectarian (two-thirds or more). The latter rate slightly decreases when respondents are asked about the Syrian Arab Army and Al-Nusra Front, to 70% and 67.1% respectively, but it reaches about one-third when asked about the Free Syrian Army and the National Coalition. What is remarkable is the very low percentage of those who said that the Syrian judiciary and tribunals are not sectarian at all (Figure 64). Findings show that Sunnis are the most apprehensive of state institutions' sectarianism and the forces associated with them. There is almost a consensus on each of the following being very sectarian: Hezbollah, the Presidency, Syrian Intelligence, and Daesh; 71% of Sunnis gave the same answer about the Syrian Arab Army and the National Defense forces. This percentage significantly drops in the case of the courts, government institutions, and Al-Nusra Front – and reaches the lowest level when asked about the opposition (Free Syrian Army and the National Coalition) (Table 5).

There is quasi-unanimity among Shiites and Alawites about the sectarianism of Daesh, Al-Nusra Front, the National Coalition and the Free Syrian Army. However, the percentage of those who describe state institutions as sectarian dramatically drops; for example, only 10.3% of the Alawites and Shiites described the intelligence services as very sectarian, while the figure reached 90.9% among Sunnis. What is also noticeable is that the respondents' high rates denying any sectarian character of the Presidency, the Syrian Arab army, the judiciary, courts, and government institutions, remarkably drop to around one-third when asked about the sectarian character of the National Defense Forces, Hezbollah and intelligence services (Table 5).

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[7] Those who said, in a previous question, that they have been exposed to discrimination
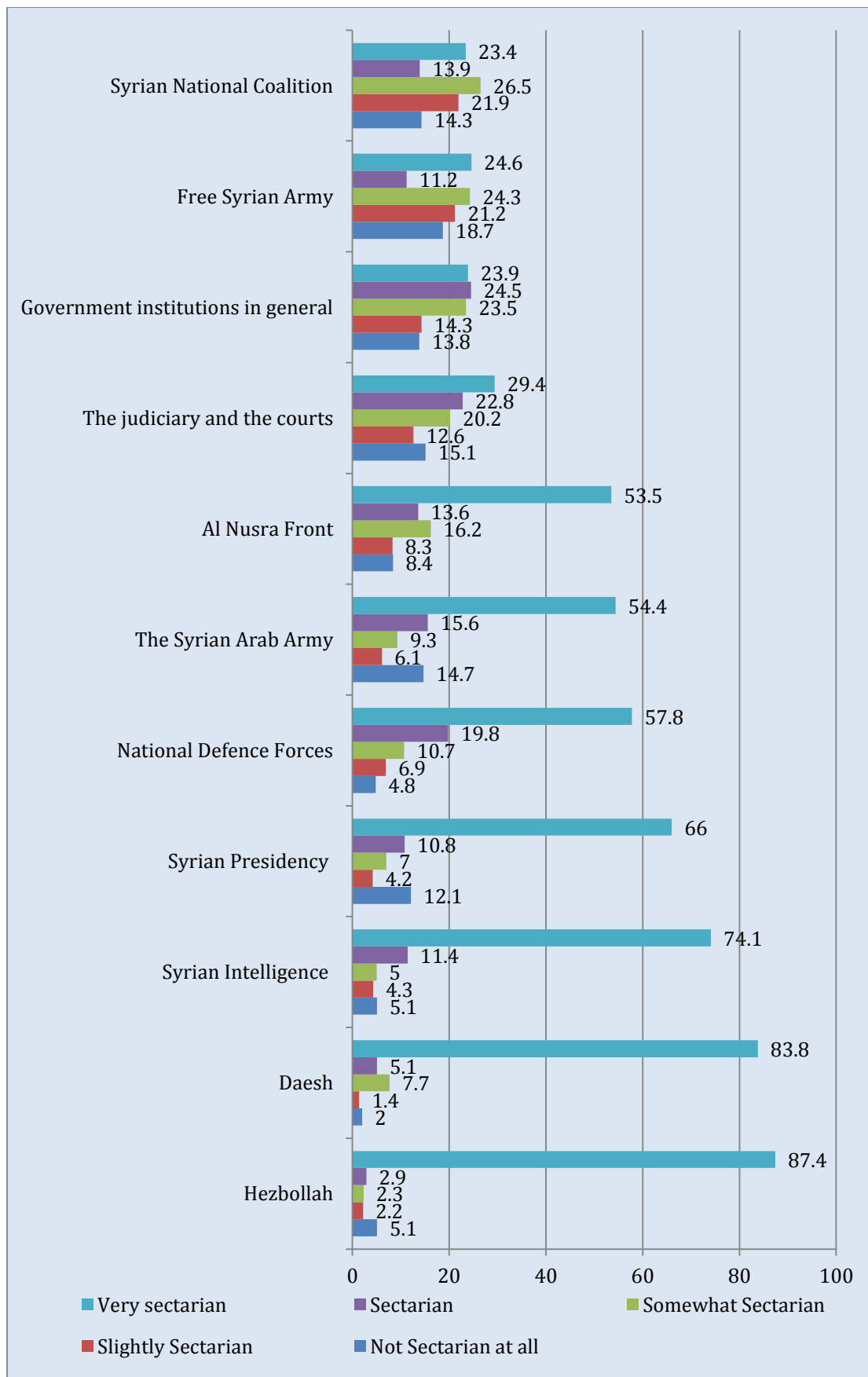
Figure 64. Sectarianism in state institutions, in the opposition and in other entities %

Legend:
- Very sectarian
- Sectarian
- Somewhat Sectarian
- Slightly Sectarian
- Not Sectarian at all

Syrian National Coalition
- Very sectarian: 23.4
- Sectarian: 13.9
- Somewhat Sectarian: 26.5
- Slightly Sectarian: 21.9
- Not Sectarian at all: 14.3

Free Syrian Army
- Very sectarian: 24.6
- Sectarian: 11.2
- Somewhat Sectarian: 24.3
- Slightly Sectarian: 21.2
- Not Sectarian at all: 18.7

Government institutions in general
- Very sectarian: 23.9
- Sectarian: 24.5
- Somewhat Sectarian: 23.5
- Slightly Sectarian: 14.3
- Not Sectarian at all: 13.8

The judiciary and the courts
- Very sectarian: 29.4
- Sectarian: 22.8
- Somewhat Sectarian: 20.2
- Slightly Sectarian: 12.6
- Not Sectarian at all: 15.1

Al Nusra Front
- Very sectarian: 53.5
- Sectarian: 13.6
- Somewhat Sectarian: 16.2
- Slightly Sectarian: 8.3
- Not Sectarian at all: 8.4

The Syrian Arab Army
- Very sectarian: 54.4
- Sectarian: 15.6
- Somewhat Sectarian: 9.3
- Slightly Sectarian: 6.1
- Not Sectarian at all: 14.7

National Defence Forces
- Very sectarian: 57.8
- Sectarian: 19.8
- Somewhat Sectarian: 10.7
- Slightly Sectarian: 6.9
- Not Sectarian at all: 4.8

Syrian Presidency
- Very sectarian: 66
- Sectarian: 10.8
- Somewhat Sectarian: 7
- Slightly Sectarian: 4.2
- Not Sectarian at all: 12.1

Syrian Intelligence
- Very sectarian: 74.1
- Sectarian: 11.4
- Somewhat Sectarian: 5
- Slightly Sectarian: 4.3
- Not Sectarian at all: 5.1

Daesh
- Very sectarian: 83.8
- Sectarian: 5.1
- Somewhat Sectarian: 7.7
- Slightly Sectarian: 1.4
- Not Sectarian at all: 2

Hezbollah
- Very sectarian: 87.4
- Sectarian: 2.9
- Somewhat Sectarian: 2.3
- Slightly Sectarian: 2.2
- Not Sectarian at all: 5.1

	Very Sectarian										
	Syrian Presidency	Hezbollah	Daesh	Al Nusra Front	Syrian Intelligence	The Syrian Arab Army	National Defence Forces	The judiciary and the courts	Government institutions in general	Syrian National Coalition	Free Syrian Army
Sunni	85.7	96.3	77.8	32.8	90.9	71.0	71.0	40.9	33.3	10.1	9.0
Alawites and Shiites	5.6	34.9	100.0	100.0	10.3	5.6	11.9	3.2	2.4	78.6	86.5
Ismailis	11.6	79.1	100.0	100.0	41.9	4.7	23.3	4.7	7.0	23.3	69.8
Druze	20.0	65.0	100.0	95.0	30.0	10.0	20.0	0.0	5.0	50.0	50.0
Christians	24.1	77.6	100.0	79.3	39.7	17.2	25.9	15.5	5.2	32.8	50.0
Murshidi	8.8	85.3	100.0	100.0	52.9	8.8	20.6	2.9	2.9	17.6	35.3
Prefer not to answer	47.9	85.1	89.3	92.6	59.1	39.1	49.8	8.4	7.4	47.0	39.1
	Not Sectarian at all										
Sunni	2.9	0.8	2.6	12.4	0.2	2.6	0.3	3.1	2.8	21.0	27.5
Alawites and Shiites	64.3	36.5	0.0	0.0	37.3	82.5	31.0	64.3	61.9	0.8	0.0
Ismailis	20.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.3	32.6	9.3	60.5	44.2	0.0	0.0
Druze	35.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	35.0	5.0	25.0	5.0	0.0	5.0
Christians	12.1	1.7	0.0	1.7	0.0	34.5	3.4	32.8	32.8	3.4	1.7
Murshidi	14.7	5.9	0.0	0.0	5.9	32.4	5.9	73.5	67.6	0.0	0.0
Prefer not to answer	18.6	8.4	89.3	0.9	8.8	15.8	8.8	16.3	16.3	1.4	2.3

Table 5. Sectarianism in state institutions, in the opposition and in other entities by sect %

Perceptions about the relationship between sects and the Authority: loyalty or opposition

What are the perceptions of each sect about other sects' relationship with the authority? How do these perceptions impact inter-sectarian relations?

- There seems to be some kind of consensus among Sunnis that Alawites, Shiites and Murshidis are loyal to the regime, and most believe that the position of Ismailis and Druze is similar, but they are divided among themselves regarding the Christians (loyalists/divided) despite the fact that only 6.3% of them say Christians are opposed to the Syrian regime (Table 6).

- The situation is reversed for the Alawites and the Shiites, with a near consensus that Sunni are opposed to the regime whereas Christians are

loyalists, and most of them believe that the rest of the sects are also loyalists with the exception of Yazidis (Table 6).

- Most Druze believe that all sects are loyal to the regime except for Sunnis, and so do the Ismailis but exclude Yazidis, for apparently Ismailis believe that Yazidis are divided among themselves or are opponents of the regime (Table 6).

- Murshidis also say that Shiites and Alawites are loyal to the regime but the largest percentage of them thinks Ismailis and Yazidis are divided among themselves (Table 6).

- Like the rest, Christians agree that Alawites and Shiites are loyal to the regime and that that Sunnis are opposed to it; however, a relatively high percentage of them believe that the Ismailis and Druze are divided among themselves (Table 6).

	Sunni	Alawites	Shiites	Ismailis	Murshidi	Christians	Yazidis	Druze
Regime loyalists								
Sunni	-	97.8	89.5	75.2	90.4	49.0	78.5	68.9
Alawites and Shiites	1.7	-	-	60.3	70.7	80.2	27.7	64.1
Ismailis	2.0	99.0	97.0	-	76.0	89.9	3.1	73.7
Murshidi	1.6	95.2	92.7	40.7	-	62.9	6.8	35.6
Christians	0.0	98.2	99.0	51.0	70.5	-	29.7	55.6
Druze	3.2	98.4	98.1	73.9	93.0	85.5	65.4	-
Divided								
Sunni	-	1.5		19.8	8.5	44.7	12.1	27.0
Alawites and Shiites	12.9	-	-	32.3	22.5	19.8	37.1	33.8
Ismailis	11.1	1.0	2.0	-	15.6	10.1	43.8	24.2
Murshidi	19.7	4.8	7.3	51.9	-	37.1	47.7	64.4
Christians	17.9	1.8	1.0	45.0	23.9	-	33.8	43.5
Druze	30.6	1.6	1.9	23.9	4.7	14.5	0.0	-
Regime opponents								
Sunni	-	0.7		5.0	1.0	6.3	9.4	4.1
Alawites and Shiites	85.3	-	-	7.4	6.8	0.0	35.2	2.2
Ismailis	86.9	0.0	1.0	-	8.3	0.0	53.1	2.0
Murshidi	78.7	0.0	0.0	7.4	-	0.0	45.5	0.0
Christians	82.1	0.0	0.0	4.0	5.7	-	36.5	0.9
Druze	66.1	0.0	0.0	2.2	2.3	0.0	34.6	-

Table 6. Perceptions about the relationship between sects and the Authority %

Chapter V: Exposure to sectarian discrimination

The magnitude and extent of sectarian discrimination

About three-quarters of respondents said they had been subjected to sectarian discrimination (personally or a family member or relatives), and only 28.5% said they have never been exposed to it (Figure 65).

Only 16.6% of Sunnis reported that they have never been exposed to it; this percentage increases to 30.6% for Murshidis, 45.7% for Alawites and Shiites, and up to about half of the Christians, and to 56.6% for the Ismailis. But it amounts to its highest level when it comes to the Druze, where 68.8% of them said they were never subjected to sectarian discrimination (Figure 66).

Apparently, everyone seems to be subjected to discrimination in some form, although the extent of it differs among the different sects. It can also be observed how the Sunnis were the most vulnerable to these practices, and that the figure was the least for the Druze. However, more than half of the Alawites and the Shiites say they, too, were prone to such practices (Figure 66). It seems that Tartous and Sweida were the least susceptible to this type of discrimination, whereas Idlib, Daraa and Hassakah are the most vulnerable (Figure 67).

73
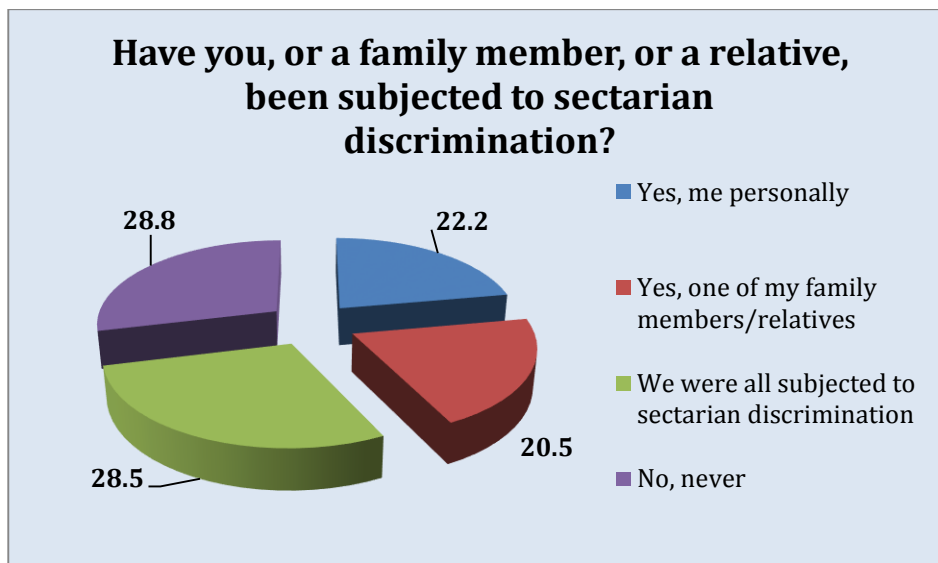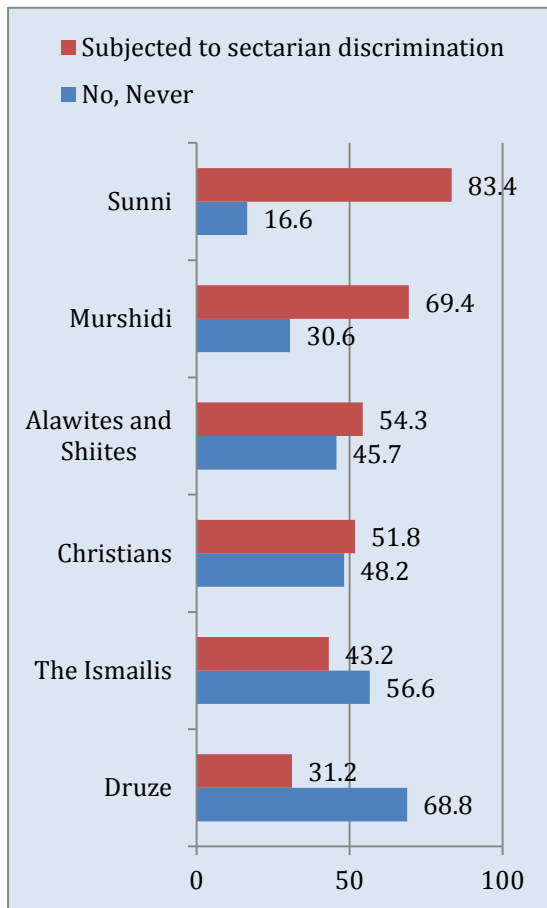
Figure 65. Exposure to sectarian discrimination %
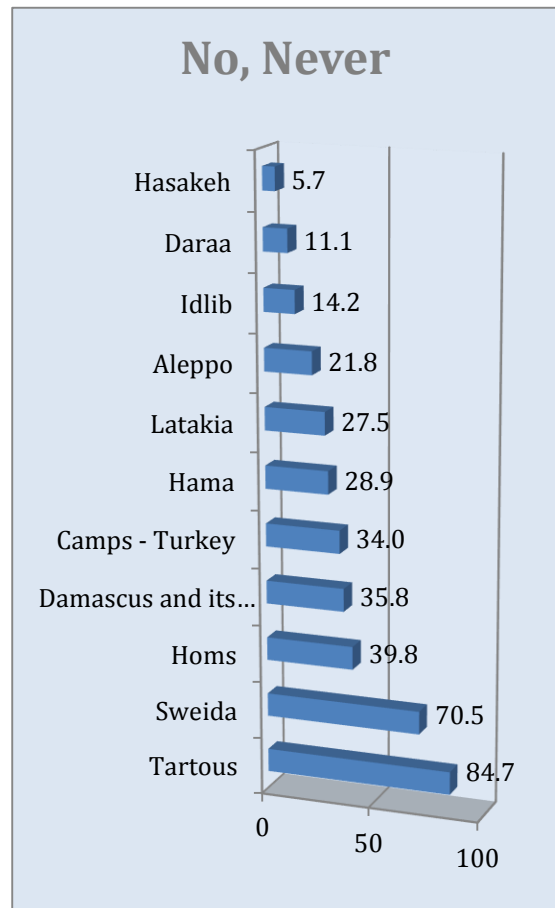
Figure 66. By sect %   **Figure 67. By current location %**

But how was the intensity of exposure to this discrimination, and how did it differ according to certain demographic variables?

We asked those who said they have been subjected to sectarian discrimination if the latter recurred. 89.4% of Sunnis and 78.9% of Murshidis responded they were constantly or frequently or occasionally subjected to it, while this percentage drops to 65% for the Alawites and the Shiites, and reaches about half among the Druze, Christians and Ismailis (Figure 68). As for the geographical areas, it seems the proliferation of sectarian discrimination was widespread across all regions but was less severe in Tartous (Figure 69).

But what kind of discrimination are we talking about? Where did such practices occur? Who are the actors responsible for exercising them? This will be the subject of the following paragraph.
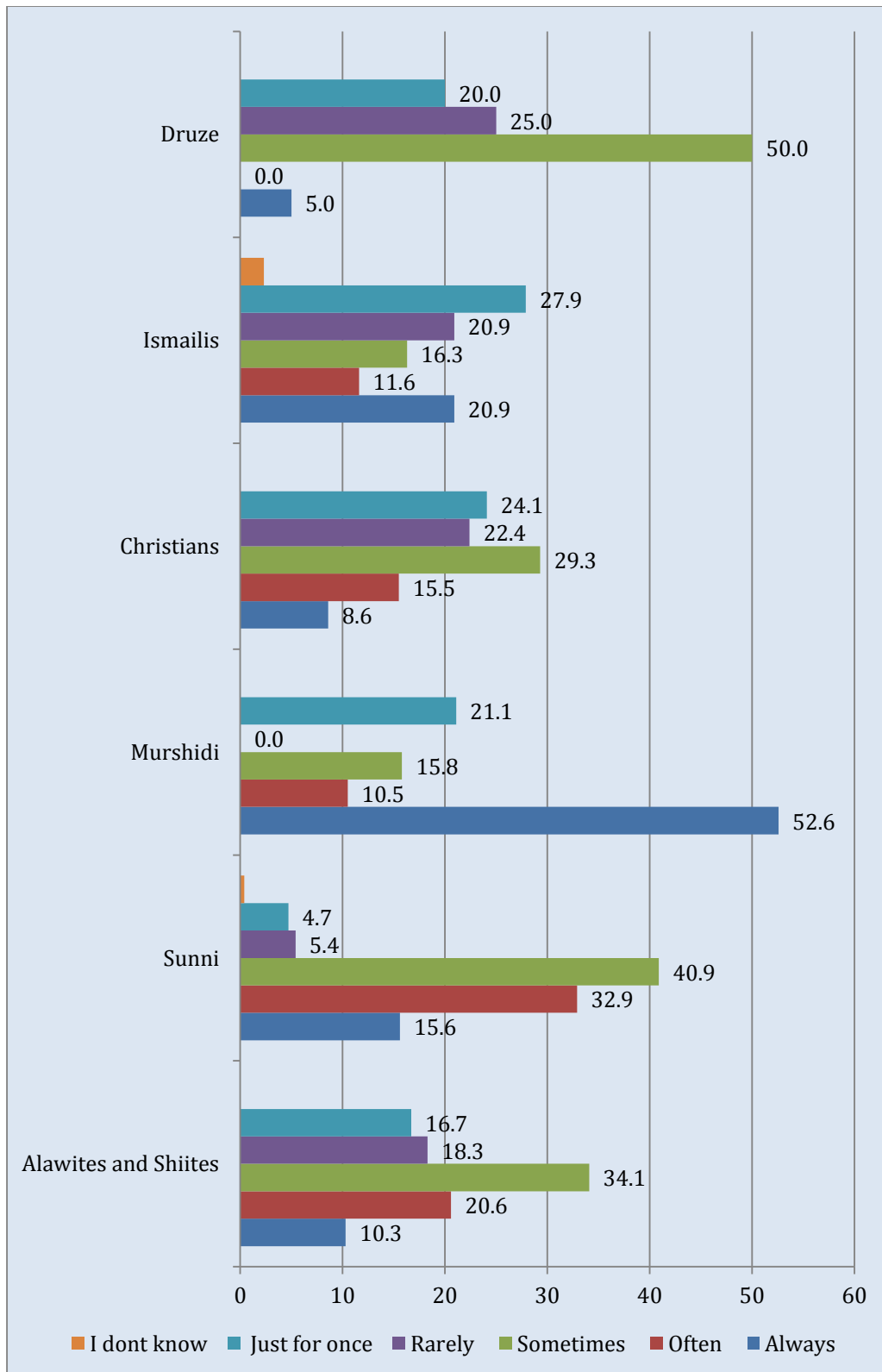
Figure 68. Recurrence of sectarian discrimination by sect %

Legend: ■ I dont know ■ Just for once ■ Rarely ■ Sometimes ■ Often ■ Always

Druze: Just for once 20.0, Rarely 25.0, Sometimes 50.0, Often 0.0, Always 5.0

Ismailis: Just for once 27.9, Rarely 20.9, Sometimes 16.3, Often 11.6, Always 20.9

Christians: Just for once 24.1, Rarely 22.4, Sometimes 29.3, Often 15.5, Always 8.6

Murshidi: Just for once 21.1, Rarely 0.0, Sometimes 15.8, Often 10.5, Always 52.6

Sunni: Just for once 4.7, Rarely 5.4, Sometimes 40.9, Often 32.9, Always 15.6

Alawites and Shiites: Just for once 16.7, Rarely 18.3, Sometimes 34.1, Often 20.6, Always 10.3

Figure 69. Recurrence of sectarian discrimination by location

Legend:
- I dont know
- Just for once
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

Tartous: 7.7, 46.2, 23.1, 0, 0

Damascus and its suburbs: 1.2, 27.3, 31.4, 7, 2.3

Latakia: 0, 15.9, 22, 22, 37.4

Turkey camps: 0, 10.3, 33.8, 32.4, 8.8

Homs: 0, 3.9, 46.8, 27.3, 6.5

Aleppo: 0, 7.5, 36.9, 28.3, 20.3

Hasakeh: 0.5, 3.6, 28.1, 34.4, 32.3

Idlib: 0.3, 1.3, 42.9, 39.7, 10.4

Daraa: 1.3, 0, 67.8, 27, 1.3

Sweida: 2.2, 0, 58.7, 17.4, 4.3

Hama: 0, 0, 50.5, 23.1, 26.4

Actors responsible for sectarian discrimination

The Syrian Arab Army ranked first in being responsible for sectarian discrimination whereby 60% of respondents mentioned it, followed by 55.3% for intelligence services and 52.8% for government departments. This percentage hits its lowest levels at the Free Syrian Army (Figure 70) About a third of respondents said they were subjected to sectarian discrimination in "random incidents with people from different sects".

- Sunnis primarily refer to government institutions as places where they have been subjected to sectarian discrimination, whereas Alawites and Shiites mention "random incidents with people from different sects" in addition to opposition parties or Daesh or Al-Nusra Front. Some Shiites and Alawites cited the Gulf States in the "other" answer box, while some Sunnis named the educational system (school or university) (Table 7).

- The responses of Ismailis and Christians are distributed between government institutions and opposition faction, and around half of Ismailis and third of Christians say they have been subjected to sectarian discrimination in "random incidents with people from different sects" (Table 7).

- Druze respondents mainly refer to random incidents with people from different sects, workspaces and the Free Syrian Army (Table 7).

Findings suggest that Deraa, Hama, Idlib, Aleppo and refugee camps in Turkey witness a widespread expansion of sectarian discrimination by state apparatuses, and in particular from The Syrian Arab Army and intelligence services. While in Hassakah and Latakia, such practices were carried out by all state institutions as well as by opposition factions, Al-Nusra Front and Daesh. In Homs, these violations were committed by Syrian intelligence services, Al-Nusra Front, Daesh, and the Free Syrian Army (Table 8).

It is noted that sectarian discrimination in random incidents with people from different sects was significantly higher in Homs and Damascus and its suburbs than any other areas. This percentage was quite high in Sweida and Deraa in comparison with percentages reported in other areas; respondents in the aforementioned two

cities, more than respondents in other areas, reported that this sectarian discrimination occurred in the workspace (Table 8).
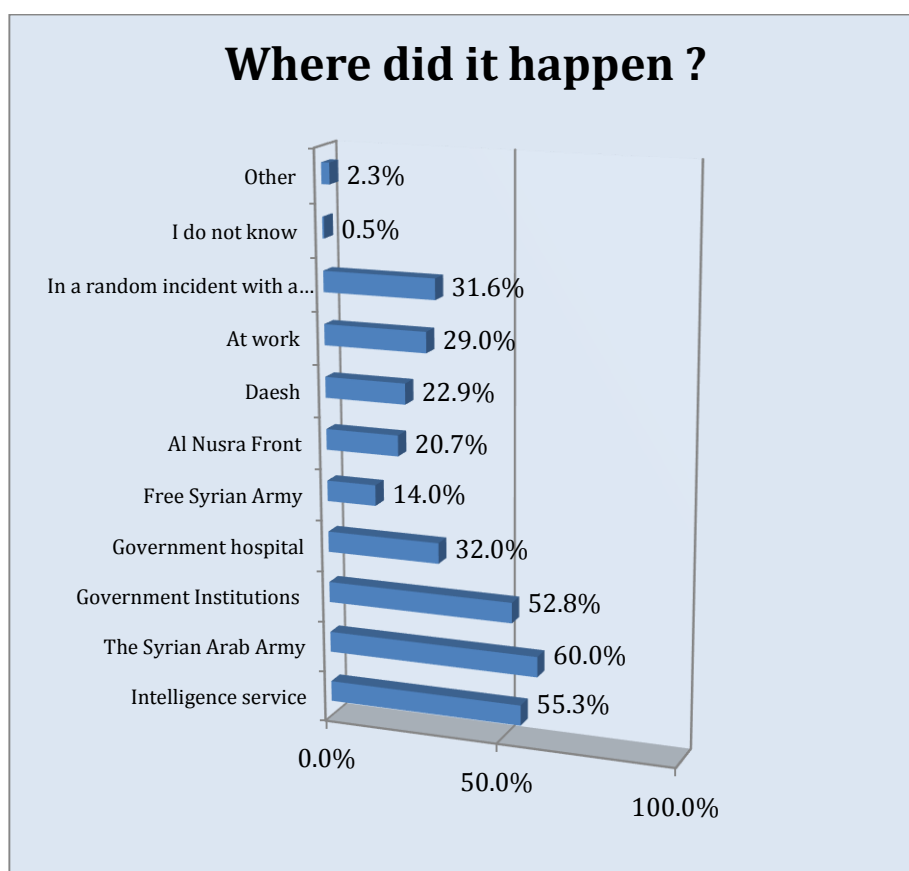
Figure 70. Actors responsible for sectarian discrimination %

Entity	Sunni	Alawites and Shiites	Ismailis	Druze	Christian	Murshidi
The Syrian Arab Army	74.0	6.3	23.3	10.2	25.9	57.9
Syrian Intelligence	64.9	6.3	39.5	5.0	31.0	55.3
Government Institutions	62.1	10.3	32.6	15.0	17.2	21.1
Government hospital	41.7	4.0	9.3	15.0	13.8	7.9
At work	33.9	15.1	16.3	30.0	12.1	10.5
In a random incident with a person from different sect	27.3	64.3	48.4	30.0	31.0	39.5
Daesh	13.3	38.9	46.5	5.0	44.8	63.2
Al Nusra Front	8.9	37.3	39.5	10.0	43.1	63.2
Free Syrian Army	4.1	46.0	20.9	30.0	34.5	47.4

Table 7. Place where exposure to sectarian discrimination occurred – by sect %

	Free Syrian Army	Syrian Intelligence	Government Institutions	Government hospital	At work	In a random incident with a person from different sect	Daesh	Al Nusra Front	Free Syrian Army
Daraa	82.9	80.9	78.3	67.1	79.6	42.8	5.9	5.3	2.6
Hama	84.5	87.9	45.1	38.5	6.6	14.3	9.9	3.3	1.1
Aleppo	79.7	82.4	63.6	47.1	39.0	26.7	23.5	17.1	1.1
Idlib	69.9	44.9	57.6	36.7	22.5	16.8	6.3	2.2	1.6
Camps - Turkey	72.1	66.2	75.0	39.7	25.0	32.4	8.8	1.5	4.4
Hasakeh	67.2	68.8	72.4	21.4	21.9	3.1	55.7	66.7	31.3
Latakia	53.3	59.3	31.3	20.3	20.3	29.1	59.9	48.4	33.5
Tartous	30.8	0.0	30.8	0.0	15.4	38.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Damascus and its suburbs	20.9	8.7	30.8	12.8	21.5	68.6	3.5	6.4	18.6
Sweida	13.0	17.4	37.0	23.9	56.5	41.3	13.0	10.9	17.4
Homs	5.2	26.0	10.4	0.0	2.6	88.3	33.8	35.1	42.9

Table 8. Place where exposure to sectarian discrimination occurred – by location %

"Sectarian discrimination was a main impediment to the achievement of my most important aspirations"

TDA surveyors put forward the aforementioned statement when surveying the respondents, and asked them to give their opinions. Only 13.6% said they do not approve of this statement. In Figure 71, we notice how the approval percentage culminated in the responses of Sunnis and Murshidis, while it hit its lowest level at the responses of Alawites and Shiites. What is important here is not the accuracy of the answers, as there is no means to verify them; what matters to us is how respondents determine this sectarian reality in Syria, since the latter is undoubtedly reflected in their attitudes toward sectarianism.

The second purpose of this question was to benefit from the opportunity of comparing the results with similar studies in neighboring countries. In fact, this question[8] in particular has been incorporated in a research conducted by the Gulf Centre for Development Policies about social disintegration in the Gulf, in which the researchers handled the issue of sectarianism with interest. The result in the abovementioned research was somewhat "inverted" in comparison with ours: the overwhelming majority of Shiite respondents in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia favored the statement, and to a lesser extent in Kuwait.

The issue is thus not about the nature of the sect, but is more related to the social presence settings of each sect and to the structure of political power in every country.

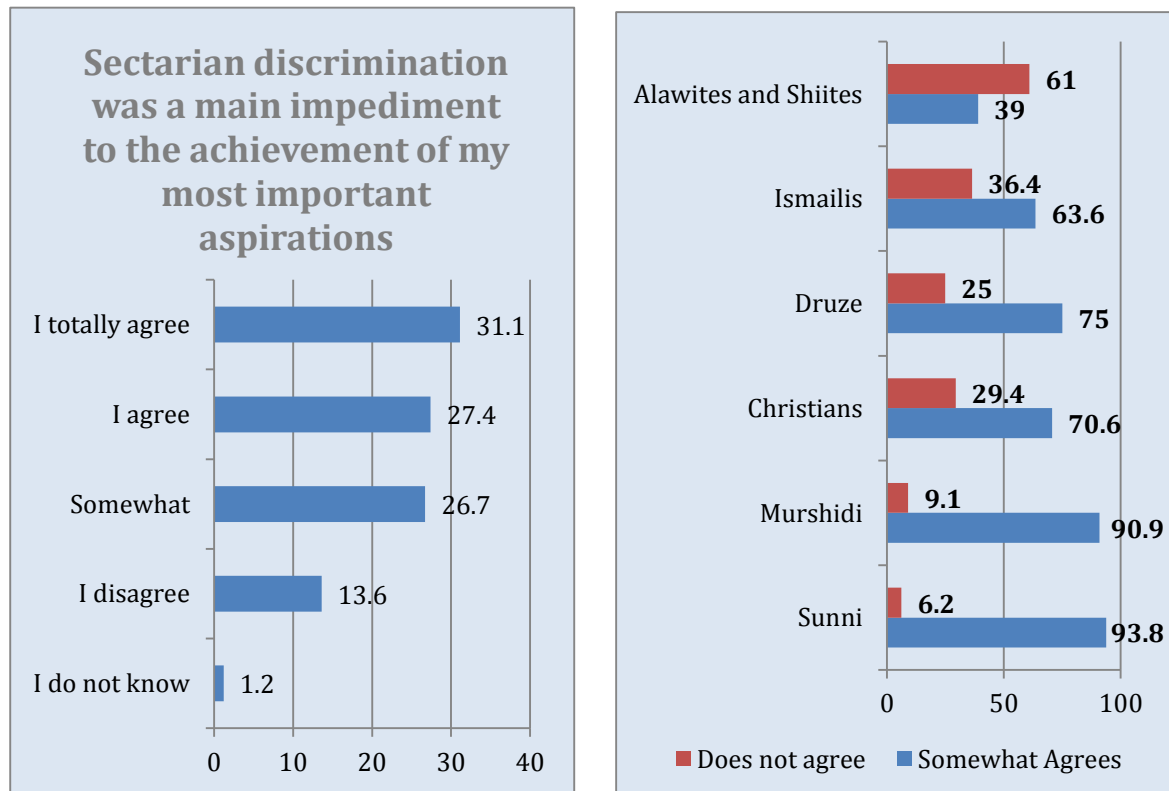**Figure 71. Abovementioned statement and distribution of responses by sect**

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[8] The statement was as follows: "Sectarian discrimination had an impact on my chances to achieve the most important of my goals in life." See **The Constant and the Variable 2014: the Gulf between social disintegration and the interdependence of money and power**, the Gulf Centre for Development Policies (Available in Arabic).

Chapter VI: recommendations and solutions to overcome the sectarian problem

The most appropriate form of governance

Based on previous answers, we remarked the respondents' recognition of the importance of the state's role and its relations with sects, as well as its responsibility for the sectarian discrimination and exercising it. The present question is what form of government the respondents want following everything that happened in Syria. The question was about the most appropriate form of governance to overcome the problem of sectarianism. Most respondents (65.3%) still call for a State based on citizenship and equality and deem it the optimal solution to overcome the sectarian problem. But we should not overlook the fact that a considerable proportion of respondents opted for sectarian quota system (about half of Murshidis and a quarter of Ismailis and Christians), partition (one-third of the Alawites and Shiites), and an Islamic rule (quarter of Sunnis) (Table 9).

We will now try to identify the areas where respondents voiced their preference for options other than the State based on citizenship and equality (Table 9):

- Demands for an Islamic rule relatively increased in refugee camps in Turkey and Deraa, but they did so somewhat to a lesser extent in Idlib and Aleppo
- Demands for a confessional/sectarian quota system relatively increased in Latakia, with a noticeable discrepancy when compared to other areas
- Demands for partition increased in Latakia and Hassakah considering the failure to coexist

What is most appropriate form of governance to overcome the problem of sectarianism?

- Islamic rule: 13.5
- Sectarian quota system: 7.4
- Partition, considering the failure to coexist after all what happened: 10.0
- Political system based on citizenship and equality before the law: 65.3
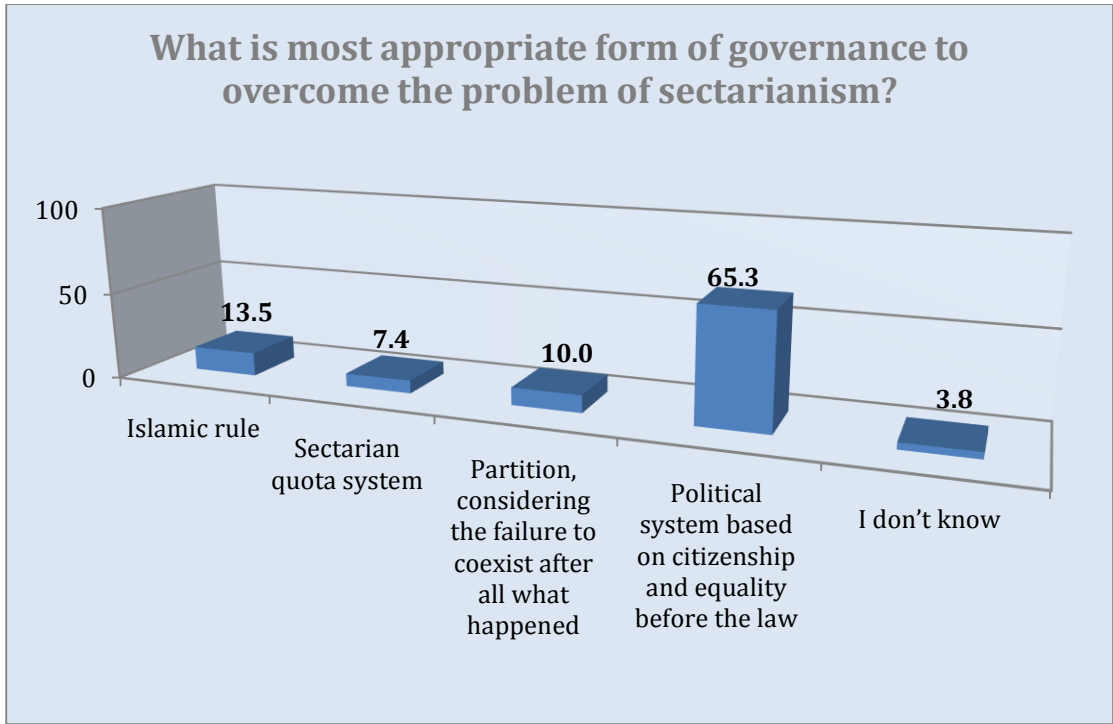- I don't know: 3.8

Figure 72. Form of governance %

	Islamic rule	Sectarian quota system	Partition, considering the failure to coexist after all what happened	Political system based on citizenship and equality before the law	I don't know
Sunni	23.4	5.2	6.8	62.4	2.2
Druze	0.0	3.1	9.4	81.3	6.3
Alawites and Shiites	0.0	2.2	32.3	59.5	6.0
Ismailis	0.0	23.2	1.0	68.7	7.1
Christians	0.0	23.2	0.0	74.1	2.7
Murshidi	0.0	48.4	11.3	30.6	9.7
Prefer not to answer	0.0	2.0	11.9	78.8	5.8
	Islamic rule	Sectarian quota system	Partition, considering the failure to coexist after all what happened	Political system based on citizenship and equality before the law	I don't know
Hasakeh	0.0	0.9	22.2	75.9	0.9
Aleppo	19.2	2.1	4.6	71.5	2.5
Idlib	25.3	7.3	5.6	61.3	0.5
Latakia	6.0	31.1	24.7	37.8	0.4
Tartous	0.0	1.2	1.2	85.9	11.8
Homs	0.0	0.8	3.1	93.8	2.3
Damascus and its suburbs	3.0	6.6	13.7	62.0	14.8
Sweida	1.3	3.8	6.4	82.7	5.8
Hama	14.1	2.3	12.5	70.3	0.8
Daraa	38.0	0.6	0.0	57.9	3.5
Camps - Turkey	36.9	13.6	2.9	46.6	0.0

Table 9. Form of governance by sect and current location %

We asked two additional questions for those who demanded an Islamic rule to identify which Islamic rule they are referring to:

- We first asked them if minorities would be obliged to pay *jizya* or convert to Islam: around half of them said yes, and the other half was divided between those who said 'no' and those who abstained from giving a clear stance (Figure 77).
- We then asked them if they ever heard of the Qalb Lawza incident, the massacre of many Druze villagers in Idlib. We asked the 61.5% who said yes another question: what is your position toward this massacre? 70.5% of them said the perpetrators should be held accountable. Whereas 14.2% said it was 'inevitable' and 15.3% abstained from giving a clear stance and chose not to answer (Figure 73).

What is your position toward this massacre?

15.3   14.2

70.5

- It was inevitable
- Perpetrators must be held accountable
- Prefer not to answer

Have you ever heard of the Qalb Lawza incident?

38.5

61.5

- Yes
- No

Do you think minorities would have to pay *jizya* or convert to Sunni Islam?

25.9

48.6

25.5

- Yes
- No
- I don't know
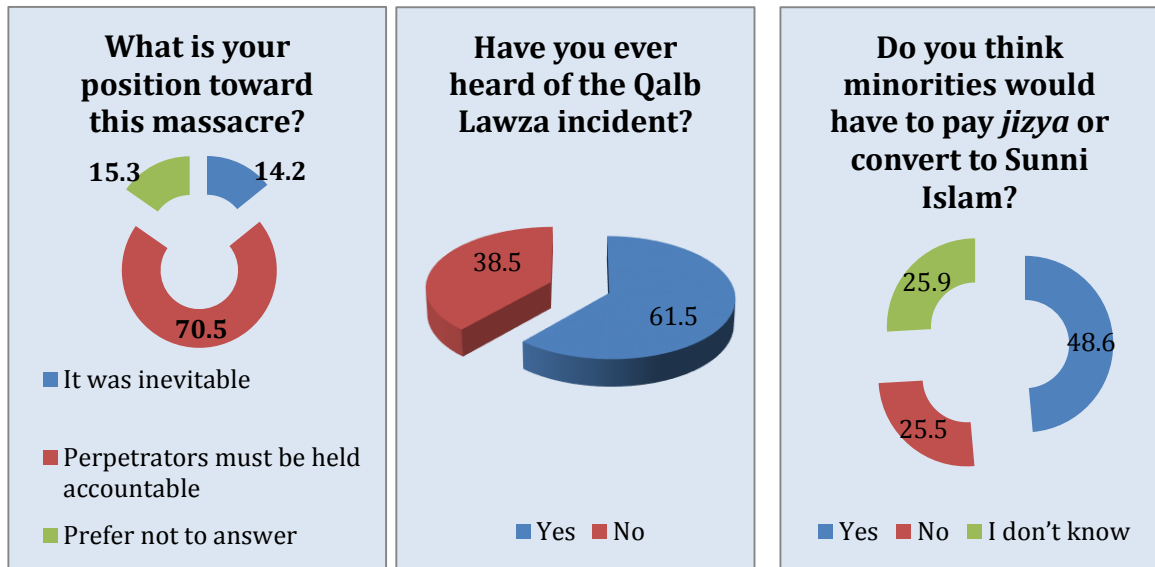
Figure 77. Minorities and the Qalb Lawza massacre

Measures and policies for the future Syrian authorities

Everybody in our sample agreed on the necessity of all outlined measures and unanimously supported them with little or no opposition. It is likely to have a representative sample of Syrians supporting these options, for the percentage of support in our sample constituted a certain unanimity among respondents, except for a proposal "to solve the intelligence services" since the largest proportion of Alawites (70.5%) expressed its disapproval of this measure (Table 10).

	I agree						
	Dissolving intelligence services	Dissolving all armed groups and re-building the army in Syria on national bases	Restructuring of government institutions on the principle of equal opportunities	Inclusion of materials for citizenship and equality-based education in school curricula	The prohibition of entities or parties that resort to sectarian incitement	A comprehensive national dialogue among the various sects in Syria	Qualifying preachers in mosques to disseminate a tolerant discourse that is not based on compulsion
Sunni	99.1	97.5	99.2	96.2	99.2	96.7	97.4
Alawites and Shiites	29.5	80.0	93.1	98.7	100.0	72.7	93.5
Ismailis	100.0	99.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	98.0	97.8
Murshidi	92.9	95.1	98.4	100.0	100.0	95.2	86.0
Druze	80.0	91.7	100.0	93.7	95.3	98.4	94.3
Christians	86.9	95.5	100.0	97.3	99.1	98.2	96.2
	I oppose						
Sunni	0.9	2.5	0.8	3.8	0.8	3.3	2,6
Alawites and Shiites	70.5	19.5	6.9	1.3	0.0	27.3	6.5
Ismailis	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	2.2
Murshidi	7.1	4.9	1.6	0.0	0.0	4.8	14.0
Druze	20.0	8.3	0.0	6.3	4.7	1.6	5.7
Christians	13.1	4.5	0.0	2.7	0.9	1.8	3.8

Table 10. Measures and policies %

Conclusion and recommendations

Syrians in our sample do not perceive religious pluralism in Syria as a problem in itself. On the contrary, a substantial proportion of them still deem it a positive characteristic of Syria. At the same time, most respondents recognize the seriousness of the sectarian situation in Syria and are aware that its causes are linked to the state and political authority. Despotism in Syria has negatively impacted its social fabric and matters turned out to be more catastrophic after the Syrian regime declared the war on the Syrian people in 2011. This has been reflected in the polarization and distrust that emerged in the analysis of the results, in particular between Sunnis on the one hand and the Alawites and Shiites on the other, and in some areas more than others. Unfortunately, our sample does not encompass Syrian refugees in all neighboring countries but it undoubtedly raises the question about the serious implications of the brutal practices inflicted on the Syrian population, especially those whose towns were destroyed and were thus forced to leave, as demonstrated in the outcome analysis of the sample in the camps in Turkey.

There is no doubt that this study carried loads of bad news, but there is also a positive and crucial element, which is the respondents' desire and determination to overcome the issue of sectarianism, and large proportion of them still considers the State based o citizenship and equality to be the most appropriate form of governance to achieve this end. There was a wide-ranging support for all measures suggested in the questionnaire that the upcoming Syrian authorities could adopt in surmounting this problem. However, it should be emphasized that any solution must be complemented with fundamental changes in the current power structure. As this study also demonstrated, the Syrian government and its institutions constituted an essential source of sectarian discrimination, spread and development of feelings of injustice, and distrust among individuals of different sects.

To our knowledge, this survey has been the first of its kind, and we hope it provided researchers with a valuable data to help in the completion of further studies, and in making use of the numerous questions and variables included in it. Qualitative studies will most definitely enable us to answer the many questions that remain unanswered. In addition, conducting periodic surveys (with representative samples

when possible) around sectarianism is extremely important since it firstly allows us to identify changes in Syrians' attitudes toward sectarianism, and secondly offers a better knowledge of the consequences of the past Syrian government policies. At the same time, it will enable the upcoming Syrian authorities to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of policies aimed at reducing the prevalence of this problem and eventually eliminate it. It also helps to understand the impacts left by regional and international policies on local communities in the region, whose role has so far indicated that they contributed to the aggravation of this problem and exacerbated its complexity.

Summary of the main findings

<u>Chapter 1:</u>

o Most respondents do not believe that the presence of many sects in Syria constitutes a stand-alone problem; rather, the largest percentage of them, which amounts to 39.1 percent, continues to consider this pluralism a positive issue.

o 37.4% of respondents defined sectarianism as a negative or positive discrimination on the mere basis of belonging to another sect, whereas a high percentage linked sectarianism to hostile and violent manifestations (19.1%).

o While those who reported that the existence of many sects in Syria is a negative issue were quasi-unanimous in stating that sectarianism is a serious or very serious problem, about half of those who deemed it a positive issue said that too

o The majority (64.6%) of those who defined sectarianism as a violent and hostile manifestation against individuals of different sects say it is a very serious problem, while this percentage drops to a quarter among those who perceive sectarianism as a negative or positive discrimination.

o Although most men and women respondents say that sectarianism is a serious or very serious problem, more women than men tend to deny the existence of a sectarian problem in Syria at 23.6% and 9.0%, respectively

o The seriousness of the sectarian situation in Syria is manifested in some areas more than others: there is almost a consensus in each of Hama, Deraa, Homs, Damascus and its countryside, and refugee camps in Turkey that sectarianism is a serious or very serious problem. This was similarly the opinion of most respondents in Latakia and Hassakah

o Most Alawites and Shiites, as well as Murshidis, consider sectarianism a serious or very serious problem. The majority of Sunnis, Christians, and Ismailis have provided the same answer. But the largest proportion of Druze respondents tends to deny or minimize the seriousness.

o A high percentage of respondents think the reasons behind sectarianism are linked to power and politics: 33.9% believe the arrival of the Baath Party to power in 1963 instigated the sectarian problem, and 28.2% think this problem

surfaced after the breakout of the Syrian revolution. Around 36% of the respondents say it is linked to historical reasons,

- o Ismailis and Murshidis believe the problem dates back to historical reasons; Christian, Druze, Shiite and Alawite communities are divided among themselves; and it seems that most Sunnis say it is closely linked to power and politics.

- o The majority of respondents in Tartous, Hassakah, and Damascus and its suburbs believe that sectarianism is a problem dating back to historical reasons. As for the rest of the areas, the majority tends to see it as a political problem, and there is a near-consensus around this among those surveyed in Daraa, Hama, and the camps in Turkey.

Chapter 2:

- o Respondents in Hassakah and Sweida come at the forefront of those who refrained from declaring any association with religious sects, followed by Homs and Damascus and its suburbs – with a remarkable discrepancy between the results in the rest of the regions. It seems that the percentage of abstinence increases correspondingly with higher levels of secularism and much less with political Islam.

- o There is near-consensus among respondents in Hama, Latakia, and the refugee camps in Turkey who claimed that their sects are better than any other sect, and a considerable percentage of respondents provided the same answer in Idlib and Aleppo, while this percentage reached its lowest level in Hassakah. More Islamists opted for this answer than secularists. However, this high percentage among secularists raises the question around the correlation between secularism and sectarianism and shows that, contrary to popular belief among many secular Syrians, secularism does not seem incompatible with belonging to the sect.

- o The answers provided by Sunni respondents demonstrate a quasi-unanimity about supporting the 2011 opposition demonstrations, while Alawites' and Shi'a's answers demonstrated a position against the revolution. The largest proportion of Murshidi respondents is in support of the revolution (48.4%) but

the largest proportion of Ismaili and Druze respondents provided answers in opposition to the revolution.

o The responses of secularists and Islamists concentrated on the reason of the 2011 demonstrations being the "tyranny exercised by and the demonstrators' pursuance of establishing a civilian democratic state" and exceeded the rate of 40% for both.

o The "exposure to sectarian discrimination and Alawites' control over the state" was the second most preferred answer for the respondents, whereas the first is "tyranny exercised by and the demonstrators' pursuance of establishing a civilian democratic state".

o The presence of sectarian discrimination as the main reason for the inception of anti-regime demonstrations in 2011 is higher among Islamists than seculars, as well as among those with lower income than those with higher income, and among the less educated more than the more educated. In addition, respondents in Latakia, Idlib, Deraa, and refugee camps in Turkey reported the same aforementioned result more than those in other areas – so did the combatants, unemployed, farmers, and the self-employed in comparison with respondents exercising other professions. Likewise, more Arabs than Kurds provided this answer, and so did the respondents who were most exposed to sectarian discrimination than those who were least exposed to it.

o The percentage of those who said that the future President's religious sect is important or very important amounted to 63.3%. Answers differ according to certain demographic variables: its importance increases among Sunnis, Shiites, and Alawites but decreases among others, and there is near consensus among combatants around its importance. Its importance increases when moving from extreme secularism to extreme political Islam. It also grows among Arabs, Circassians, Turkmen, but decreases among Kurds, Assyrians and Armenians.

Chapter 3:

o Around half of Sunnis pointed to the Alawite-Sunni relations, and around half of Ismailis and Druzes mentioned the relations between all different sects. However, the answers provided by the Alawites and Shiites are distributed between the following options: "Alawite-Sunni relations" and "the relations

between Sunnis and minorities in general". A small percentage of Murshidis mentioned the Alawite-Sunni relations, and rarely were the Christian-Muslim relations ever referred to, even among Christians themselves.

o 58.1% of Sunnis say that "Sunnis' complaints of sectarian discrimination against them" have motives, or are well-founded and understandable. Alawites and Shiites tend to reject these allegations and more than half of them said these complaints have political goals and aren't justified. Nevertheless, a considerable percentage of them (30.6%) did not deny them but considered them "exaggerated".

o There is near-consensus among Alawites and Shiites that minorities' concerns about the Sunni majority have motives, or are well-founded and understandable, and the largest proportion of Murshidis, Christians and half of Druzes gave the same answer, but the largest part of Ismailis said the concerns are 'exaggerated'. Sunnis do not approve of these allegations: more than half of them denied them and said they are unjustifiable or classified them as a mere pretext for political purposes. Nevertheless, a significant ratio of Sunnis (29.2%) does not deny minorities' concerns but describes them as 'exaggerated'.

o This implies that Sunnis in our sample communicate with Christians much more than with other sects. In general, Alawites, Shiites, Ismailis, Druzes, Christians and Murshidis communicate with everyone but not with Yazidis.

o Around a quarter of Sunnis, Shiites and Alawites mentioned reasons linked to the other and his/her sect when explaining the lack of communication with individuals from other sects, and so did 18.8% of Druze respondents; respondents who referred the least to the other and his/her sect were the Ismailis and the Christians. Answers referring to reasons linked to the other and his/her sect have higher percentages among Islamists than among seculars, and in particular areas more than others: Hama, Latakia and refugee camps in Turkey come at the forefront, while this percentage drops to its lowest level in Tartous and Hassakah.

o 45.6% of respondents said their relations with individuals from other sects deteriorated after the outbreak of the Syrian revolution in 2011. Results show that respondents' relations in Hama, Latakia, refugee camps in Turkey and Aleppo were the most affected – followed by Deraa, Idlib and Homs –

whereas respondents' relations in Tartous, Sweida and Hassakah were the least affected. Inter-sectarian relations were more negatively affected among low-income earners than high-income earners, among extreme Islamists more than extreme seculars, and among men more than women.

o The majority of respondents accept hosting people from different sects without reservations (61.7%), but this percentage drops to less than half when assuming more continuous relations such as neighborliness in the district, and goes further down to reach 42.2% when asked about living in the same building. The big difference appears when asked about marrying members of the other sect, where only a small percentage of the respondents said they accepted it (13.8% for marriage of the son and 11.5% for marriage of the daughter).

o Only 26.4% of respondents who support civil marriage clearly and specifically stated they accept marrying their daughters off to a person from another sect; the highest percentage (43.5%) said they wouldn't do so; and 17.7% said "it depends from which sect". But it should be noted that over half of the secular respondents opposed this kind of marriage.

o About 37.8% of respondents said there is one or more sect they trusted more than others, and about 47.8% said there is one or more sect they did not trust at all.

o Most of those who said there is one (or more) sect they trusted more than others named Christians (77.9%). The majority of those who said there is one (or more) sect they do not trust named Shiites (69.7%) and Alawites (67%)

Chapter 4:

o The majority of respondents, which amounts to 67.6%, said there is one or more particular sect that benefits from the political authority than others. Nearly all respondents referred to the Alawites and Shiites.

o Findings show that Sunnis are most aware of State institutions' sectarianism and the powers associated with it; there is a near-consensus on each of the following being very sectarian: Hezbollah, the Presidency, Syrian Intelligence,

and Daesh; 71% of Sunnis gave the same answer about the Syrian Arab Army and the National Defense forces. This percentage significantly drops in the case of the courts, government institutions, and Al-Nusra Front – and reaches the lowest level when asked about the opposition (Free Syrian Army and the National Coalition)

o There is quasi-unanimity among Shiites and Alawites about the sectarianism of Daesh, Al-Nusra Front, the National Coalition and the Free Syrian Army. However, the percentage of those who describe state institutions as sectarian dramatically drops.

o Sunnis prefer Al Jazeerah, Al Arabiya and Orient TV, whereas Alawites and Shiites are more biased towards Al Dunya and Al Mayadeen (the latter is Ismailis' preferred station) and respondents from other sects do not seem to have a preferred channel since they either divide among themselves or describe the aforementioned channels' roles as negative.

o The answers provided by Sunni respondents demonstrate a near-consensus on supporting the 2011 demonstrations of the opposition, whereas Alawites' and Shi'a's answers demonstrated a position against them. More than half of Christian respondents and the largest proportion of Murshidis support them (48.4%) whereas a very considerable proportion of Druze and Ismaili respondents opposed them.

o Responses of secularists and Islamists concentrated on the reason being the "tyranny exercised by and the demonstrators' pursuance of establishing a civilian democratic state" and exceeded the rate of 40% for both.

o Exposure to sectarian discrimination and Alawites' control over the state is the second most chosen answer for the reasons behind the outbreak of 2011 demonstrations, and the first most chosen reason is the demonstrators' pursuance of establishing a civilian democratic state.

o The presence of sectarian discrimination as the main reason for the inception of anti-regime demonstrations in 2011 is higher among Islamists than seculars, as well as among those with lower income than those with higher income, and among the less educated more than the more educated. In addition, respondents in Latakia, Idlib, Deraa, and refugee camps in Turkey reported the same aforementioned result more than those in other areas – so did the combatants, unemployed, farmers, and the self-employed in comparison with

respondents exercising other professions. Likewise, more Arabs than Kurds provided this answer, and so did the respondents who were most exposed to sectarian discrimination (either personally or to their parents, friends or acquaintances) than those who were least exposed to it.

Chapter 5:

o About three-quarters of respondents said they had been subjected to sectarian discrimination (personally or a family member or relatives), and only 28.5% said they have never been exposed to it.

o Apparently, everyone seems to be subjected to discrimination in some form, although the extent of it differs among the different sects. It can also be observed how the Sunnis were the most vulnerable to these practices, and that the figure was the least for the Druze.

o 89.4% of Sunnis and 78.9% of Murshidis responded they were constantly or frequently or occasionally subjected to it, while this percentage drops to 65% for the Alawites and the Shiites, and reaches about half among the Druze, Christians and Ismailis.

o The Syrian Arab Army ranked first in being responsible for sectarian discrimination whereby 60% of respondents mentioned it, followed by 55.3% for intelligence services and 52.8% for government departments. This percentage hits its lowest levels at the FSA (Table). About a third of respondents said they were subjected to sectarian discrimination in "random incidents with people from different sects".

o Findings suggest that Deraa, Hama, Idlib, Aleppo, and refugee camps in Turkey witness a widespread expansion of sectarian discrimination by state apparatuses, and in particular from The Syrian Arab Army and intelligence services. While in Hassakah and Latakia, such practices were carried out by all state institutions as well as by opposition factions, Al-Nusra Front and Daesh. In Homs, these violations were committed by Syrian intelligence services, Al-Nusra Front, Daesh, and the Free Syrian Army

o It is noted that sectarian discrimination in random incidents with people from different sects was significantly higher in Homs and Damascus and its suburbs than any other areas. This percentage was quite high in Sweida and Deraa in comparison with percentages reported in other areas; respondents in the

aforementioned two cities, more than respondents in other areas, reported that this sectarian discrimination occurred in the workspace

o Sunnis primarily refer to government institutions as places where they have been subjected to sectarian discrimination, whereas Alawites and Shiites mention "random incidents with people from different sects" in addition to opposition parties or Daesh or Al-Nusra Front. Some Shiites and Alawites cited the Gulf States in the "other" answer box, while some Sunnis named the educational system (school or university)

o Only 13.6% said they do not approve of the following statement: "Sectarian discrimination was a main impediment to the achievement of my most important aspirations" and Sunnis' responses formed the highest approval percentages (93.8%) while it hit its lowest level at the responses of Alawites and Shiites.

o Comparing our results with those of another study on Gulf states shows that the issue is not about the nature of the sect, but is more related to the social presence settings of each sect and to the structure of political power in every country.

Chapter 6:

o A large proportion of respondents (65.3%) still calls for a State based on citizenship and equality and deems it the optimal solution to overcome the sectarian problem. But we should not overlook the fact that a considerable proportion of respondents opted for sectarian quotas (about half of Murshidis and a quarter of Ismailis and Christians), partition (one-third of the Alawites and Shiites), and an Islamic rule (quarter of Sunnis).

o About half of those who opted for an Islamic rule said minorities must be compelled to pay *jizya* or convert to Islam, and the other half was divided between those who said 'no' and those who abstained from giving a clear stance

o Demands for an Islamic rule relatively increased in refugee camps in Turkey and Deraa, but they did so somewhat to a lesser extent in Idlib and Aleppo; demands for a confessional/sectarian quota system relatively increased in Latakia, with a great discrepancy when compared to other areas; and demands

for partition increased in Latakia and Hassakah considering the failure to coexist

o The majority of those who opt for an Islamic rule (70.5%) and who heard about the Qalb Lawza incident – the massacre of many Druze villagers in Idlib – said the perpetrators should be held accountable. Whereas 14.2% said it was 'inevitable' and 15.3% abstained from giving a clear stance and chose not to answer.

o Everybody in our sample agreed on the necessity of all below measures and unanimously supported them with little or no opposition, except for a proposal "to dissolve intelligence services" since the largest proportion of Alawites and Shiites expressed their disapproval of this measures. The proposed measures are: dissolving all armed groups and re-building the army in Syria on national bases; dissolving intelligence services; the restructuring of government institutions on the principle of equal opportunities; inclusion of materials for citizenship and equality-based education in school curricula; the prohibition of entities or parties that resort to sectarian incitement; a comprehensive national dialogue among the various sects in Syria; qualifying preachers in mosques to disseminate a tolerant discourse that is not based on compulsion.

Questionnaire

1. **Generally speaking, do you think having numerous sects in Syria is…**
   o A negative issue
   o A positive issue
   o Neither positive nor negative

2. **How do you understand the term 'sectarianism'?**
   o Hostile and violent manifestations against individuals of different sects
   o Rejection and marginalization of individuals on the mere basis of belonging to another sect
   o Any negative discrimination against individuals belonging to other sects
   o Positive or negative discrimination on the mere basis of belonging to another sect
   o I don't know

3. **What do you think about sectarianism in Syria?**
   o Very serious problem
   o Serious problem
   o It is a problem but not a serious one
   o There is no sectarian problem in Syria at all (jump to question 29)
   o I don't know

4. **When did this problem begin?**
   o It is an old problem and cannot be solved
   o It is an old problem but can be solved
   o It started after the Baath party came to power
   o It started after March 2011
   o Other

5. **What's the first thing that comes to mind when we mention 'sectarian problem' in Syria?**
   o Sunni–Alawite relations
   o The relationship between Sunnis and minorities in general
   o The relationship between all communities on the one hand and the Alawites on the other hand

- o The relationship between all different sects

- o None of the above

6. Do you think your sect, in its customs and beliefs, is…

- o Better than other sects

- o Similar to any other sect

- o Worse than other sects

- o Prefer not to answer

- o I don't know

7. What would be your position in the following situations?

	I accept it	I try to avoid talking to him/her	I oppose it	Depends from which sect	I don't know
To live in an area or neighborhood in which the majority is from a different sect than yours					
To live in a building in which the majority is from a different sect than yours					
To host someone from another sect					
That your son be married to someone from another sect					
That your daughter be married to someone from another sect					

8. Are there individuals from a particular sect(s) other than yours that you trust more than others?

- o Yes

- o No (jump to question 9)

8. b. Can you name this sect(s)?

9. Are there individuals from a particular sect(s) other than yours that you do not trust at all?

- o Yes

- o No (jump to question 10)

9. b. Can you name this sect(s)?

10. Are you in favor of civil marriage?

- o Yes
- o No
- o I don't know/No answer

11. How would you describe your relations with individuals from the following sects?

	Constantly	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	No connection at all
Sunnis					
Alawites					
Murshidis					
Ezidis					
Ismailis					
Christians					
Druze					
Shïites					

12. What is the main reason for not communicating at all?

- o The non-existence of people belonging to other sects in the respondent's area
- o Never met any
- o My social relationships are generally limited
- o The lack of desire to communicate with them
- o The non-existence of things in common
- o I prefer to communicate exclusively with members of my same sect
- o They do not want to communicate with us
- o Prefer not to answer

13. What is the nature of your relations with individuals from other sects?

- o Family relations
- o Friendship
- o Professional relations
- o Neighborly relations
- o Acquaintance

14. In general, how did these relations change after March 2011?

- o They deteriorated
- o They improved

o They didn't change

o I don't know

15. To what extent do you think individuals from the following sects are loyal/opposed to the Syrian government in Damascus?

	They are all loyalists	Mostly loyalists	Loyalists in general	Divided	Dissidents in general	Mostly dissidents	They are all dissidents	I don't know
Sunnis								
Alawites								
Murshidis								
Ezidis								
Ismailis								
Christians								
Druze								
Shiites								

16. Which of the following is closer to your opinion around the main motive for the eruption of the opposition demonstrations in 2011?

o Sectarian, since the President is an Alawite

o The exposure to sectarian discrimination and Alawites' control over the state

o The tyranny exercised by the regime and the demonstrators' pursuance of establishing a civilian democratic state

o Because the current government is secular and the demonstrators want to establish an Islamic government

o Conspiracy with the enemies of Syria because of its resistant role

o There weren't any demonstrations, rather armed bandits

o I don't know

17. Do you think there is one or more particular sect that benefits from the political authority more than others?

o Yes, there is

o No, there is not – all sects are equally affected (jump to question 18)

o No, there is not – all sects equally benefit (jump to question 18)

o I don't know (jump to question 18)

17. b. Name the sect(s)

18. Concerns of minorities about the Sunni majority:

- o Have logical reasons

- o Are well-founded and understandable

- o Exaggerated

- o Totally unjustifiable

- o Mere pretext for political purposes

- o I don't know

19. Concerns (of Sunnis) about sectarianism exercised against them:

- o Have logical reasons

- o Are well-founded and understandable

- o Exaggerated

- o Totally unjustifiable

- o Mere pretext for political purposes

- o I don't know

20. In your view, what is most appropriate form of governance to overcome the problem of sectarianism?

- o Islamic rule

- o Sectarian quota system (jump to question 21)

- o Partition, considering the failure to coexist after all what happened (jump to question 21)

- o Political system based on citizenship and equality before the law (jump to question 21)

- o I don't know (jump to question 21)

20. a. Do you think minorities would have to pay *jizya* or convert to Sunni Islam?
- o Yes

- o No

- o I don't know

20. b. Have you ever heard of the Qalb Lawza incident?
- o Yes

- o No (jump to question 21)

20. c. What is your position toward this massacre?
- o It was inevitable

- o Perpetrators must be held accountable

- o Prefer not to answer

21. Have you, or a family member, or a relative, been subjected to sectarian discrimination?

> o Yes, I have personally been subjected to it
>
> o Yes, one of my family members/relatives (jump to question 23)
>
> o We have all been subjected to it
>
> o Never (jump to question 26)

22. To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

	Strongly agree	Agree	I don't know	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Sectarian discrimination was a main impediment to the achievement of my most important aspirations					

23. How often did this discrimination occur?

> o Constantly
>
> o Often
>
> o Sometimes
>
> o Rarely
>
> o Only once
>
> o I don't know

24. Where did it occur?

o Syrian intelligence service

o Syrian Arab Army

o Government departments

o Public hospitals

o Free Syrian Army

o Al-Nusra Front

o Daesh

o In the workspace

o Random incidents with people from different sects

o I don't know

o Other

25. Please insert a number from 1 to 5 next to each of the following entities to describe to what extent each of them exerts sectarianism discrimination against Syrians, 1 being 'not sectarian at all' and 5 being 'very sectarian'

	1	2	3	4	5
Presidency					
Intelligence services					
Syrian Arab Army					
National Defense Forces					
The judiciary and the courts					
Government departments in general					
Syrian National Coalition					
Free Syrian Army					
Al Nusra Front					
Daesh					
Hezbollah					

26. How would you describe the role of each of the following channels with regards to sectarianism in Syria?

	Positive	Neither positive nor negative	Negative	I don't know
Al Jazeerah				
Al Arabiya				
Al Mayadeen				
Orient				
Al Dunya				

27. In case democratic presidential elections were held in Syria, which of the following issues would you consider very important, important, not important at all for the presidential candidate?

	Very important	Important	Not important at all
The political position post-2011			
The political position prior to 2011			
The religious sect			
The electoral program			
The reputation			
Nationalism			
Ideology (Secular/Islamist)			

28. Which of the following measures you think the future Syrian authorities must undertake to overcome the problem of sectarianism?

	Strongly support	Support	I don't know	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Dissolving intelligence services					
Dissolving all armed groups and re-building the army in Syria on national bases					
Restructuring of government institutions on the principle of equal opportunities					
Inclusion of materials for citizenship education in school curricula					
The prohibition of entities or parties that resort to sectarian incitement					
A comprehensive national dialogue among the various sects in Syria					
Qualifying preachers in mosques to disseminate a tolerant discourse that is not based on compulsion					

Sex	Age	Marital status	What is your average monthly income?
o Male	-	Single	< 25 000 SYP
o Female		Married	25 000 – 75 000 SYP
		Widowed	> 75 000 SYP
		Divorced	Prefer not to answer

Current occupation	Previous occupation	Area of origin	Current residence area
o Farmer	o Farmer	o Hassakah	o Hassakah
o Government employee	o Government employee	o Deir Ezzor	o Deir Ezzor
o Employee in a private organization/company	o Employee in a private organization/company	o Aleppo	o Aleppo
o Combatant	o Combatant	o Idleb	o Idleb
o Self-employed	o Self-employed	o Latakia	o Latakia
o Student	o Student	o Tartous	o Tartous
o Mid-level manager	o Mid-level manager		
o Senior level manager	o Senior level manager	o Damascus Suburbs	o Damascus Suburbs
o Unemployed	o Unemployed	o Damascus	o Damascus
o Other	o Other	o Swaida	o Swaida
		o Quneitra	o Quneitra

o Hama
o Deraa

o Hama
o Deraa
o Jordan Camps
o Turkey camps
o Lebanon Camps

Religion – sect
o Sunni
o Shia
o Alawite
o Ismaili
o Druze
o Yazidi
o Christian
o Prefer not to answer

Ethnicity
o Arab
o Kurdish
o Armenian
o Assyrian
o Turkmen
o Circassian
o Prefer not to answer
o Other

Level of education
o Illiterate
o Elementary school
o Middle school
o High school
o University level
o Postgraduate studies

When speaking about the form and politics of the upcoming state in Syria, we tackle two major political currents: secularists who want to separate religion from the state and political Islamist groups that want establish a theocratic state. Below is a set of numbers, from 0 to 10, where the zero is 'extreme secularism' and 10 is 'extreme political Islam' – in which position would you place yourself?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Below is a set of numbers, from 0 to 10, where the zero is 'very sectarian' and 10 is 'Not sectarian at all' – to what extent would you consider yourself sectarian/not sectarian?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

The Day After is undergoing a daring adventure, as it is broaching a subject that has long been – and still constitutes – a taboo, albeit it was a real concern for most Syrians surreptitiously: sectarianism. The regime has forbidden any social or academic research on this sensitive issue. No universities or research centers were keen on conducting such studies, nor were former Syrian government institutions originally interested in the views of the Syrians and their attitudes.

As we tackle this mission, we are fully aware of all the difficulties implied, especially that we are working in a context of war that has been spinning for many years and that is often described as a 'sectarian war'. But we are confident about the importance of this study and the need to conduct it, since it will significantly contribute to improving our knowledge about sectarianism in Syria, and will develop into a rich research substance in the hands of researchers aiming at conducting studies that will strengthen the monitoring and follow-up of this problem. Subsequently, this study will assist decision-makers in Syria in the future on formulating new policies to overcome the issue of sectarianism and building a state based on citizenship and equality that Syrians have sacrificed so much to attain.