

**Doha 03/01/2023**

### **The ACRPS Announces the Results of the 2022 Arab Opinion Index**

The ACRPS is delighted to announce the publication of the 2022 Arab Opinion Index. The AOI is a regular public opinion survey conducted by the ACRPS across a range of Arab countries. This year's AOI is based on the findings of face-to-face interviews conducted between June and December 2022 with 33,300 individual respondents in 14 Arab countries (Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Algeria, Palestine, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Qatar) with a margin of error of +/- 2-3%. It is the fruit of some 72, 000 hours of work by more than 900 researchers in areas requiring 890,000km of travel, making it the largest public opinion survey in the Arab World in terms of sample size, the number of countries covered, the number of variables tested, and the volume of data collected. It supplies data to enrich the work of many academic institutions and researchers. The findings are presented by country and as pan-Arab averages. Countries are divided into different regional categories:

- **Arab Maghreb:** Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Tunisia.
- **Nile Valley:** Egypt, Sudan.
- **Arab Mashreq:** Palestine, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq.
- **Gulf:** Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar.

### **General Conditions**

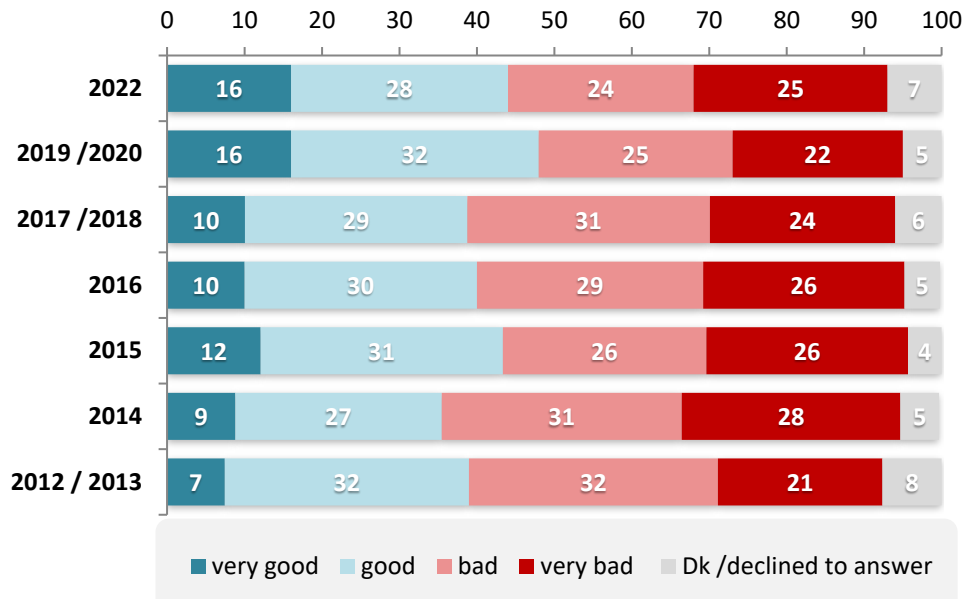
A slight majority of 52% of citizens believe that their countries are headed in the wrong direction, compared to 42% who say they are headed in the right direction.

Those who reported that things were headed in the wrong direction gave many reasons for this. While 40% attributed this to economic reasons, 14% stated that the reason is the unstable political conditions, such as political confusion and the failure of the political system to function as it should, 9% stated that the reason is poor state management and policy, and 7% indicated a general lack of stability.

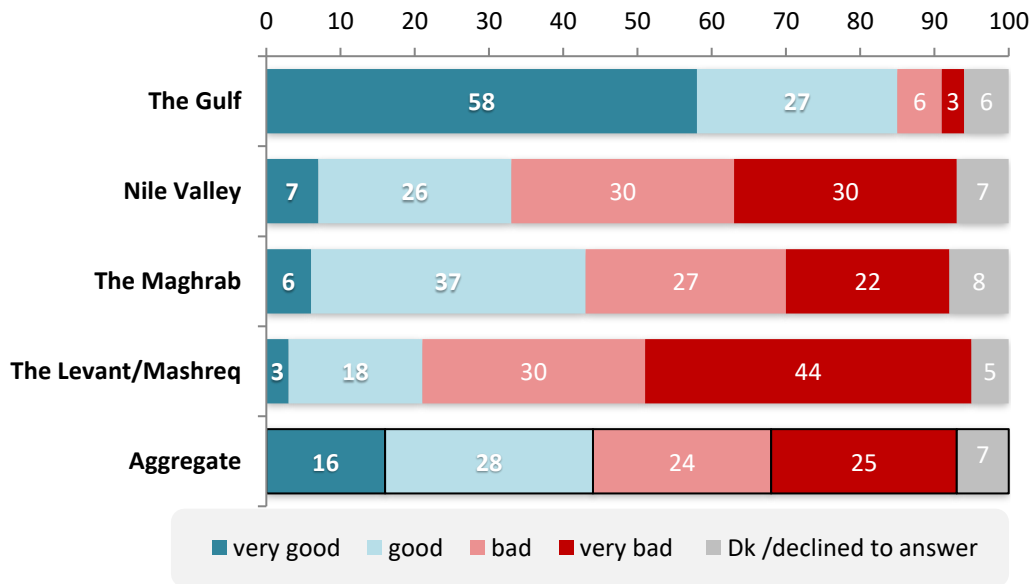
Meanwhile, of the respondents who answered that that their countries are headed in the right direction, 83% provided reasons: 19% stated that the conditions in the country had improved, 15% noted the security and safety in their countries, 13% attributed their answer to good governance, 7% to an improvement in the economic situation, 5% to political stability, and another 5% to a sense of optimism about the future.

Meanwhile, 44% of citizens characterized the political conditions in their country as generally good (very good or good), while 49% characterized them as bad (very bad or bad).

**Figure 1: Longitudinal comparison of respondent assessments of the political situation in their countries**

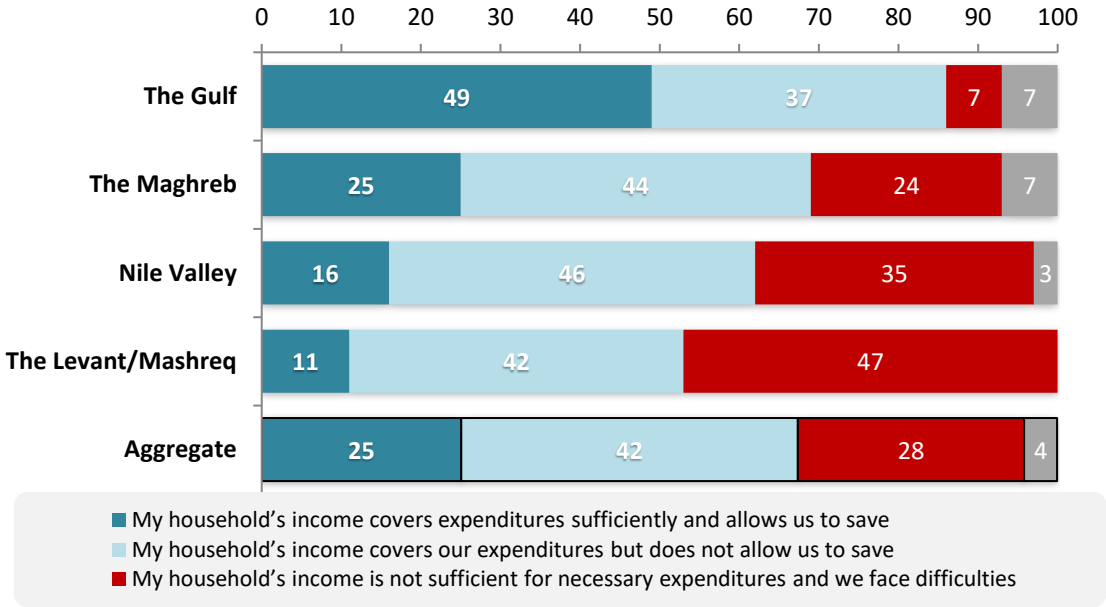


**Figure 2: Regional comparison of respondent assessments of the political situation in their countries**



The results also show that citizens’ economic conditions are unsatisfactory. 42% say that their family’s income covers basic needs but that they are unable to save (i.e. in hardship), while 28% say that they face difficulties making ends meet (i.e. in need). Excluding Gulf respondents, the majority of citizens in Arab countries are either in hardship or in dire need.

**Figure 3: Regional comparison of self-reported household income sufficiency**



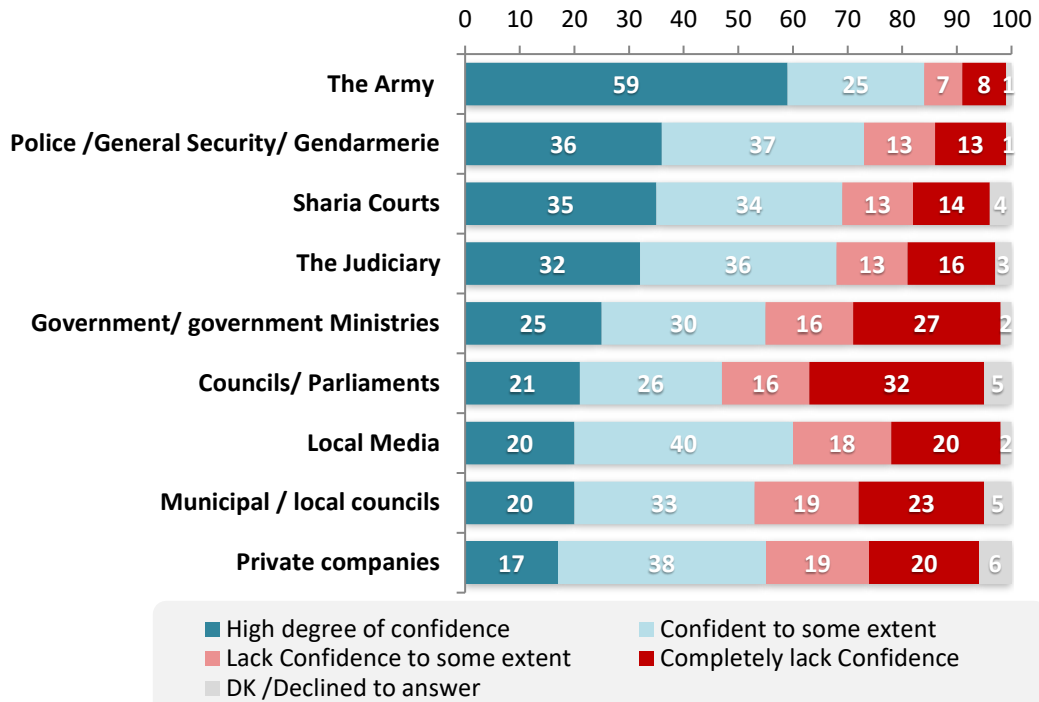
**State Institutions and Government Performance**

The results show that citizens’ confidence in state institutions varies. While confidence in military and security institutions is high, confidence in judicial, executive and legislative institutions is weaker, with parliaments enjoying the least confidence of all the institutions (47%). A slight majority 57% of respondents believe that parliaments fulfil their function to oversee government. While respondents in the Mashreq in particular gave negative responses, responses from the Gulf were most positive. The results also show that assessment of government performance in foreign, economic, public and service policy is mixed, similar to results in previous years.

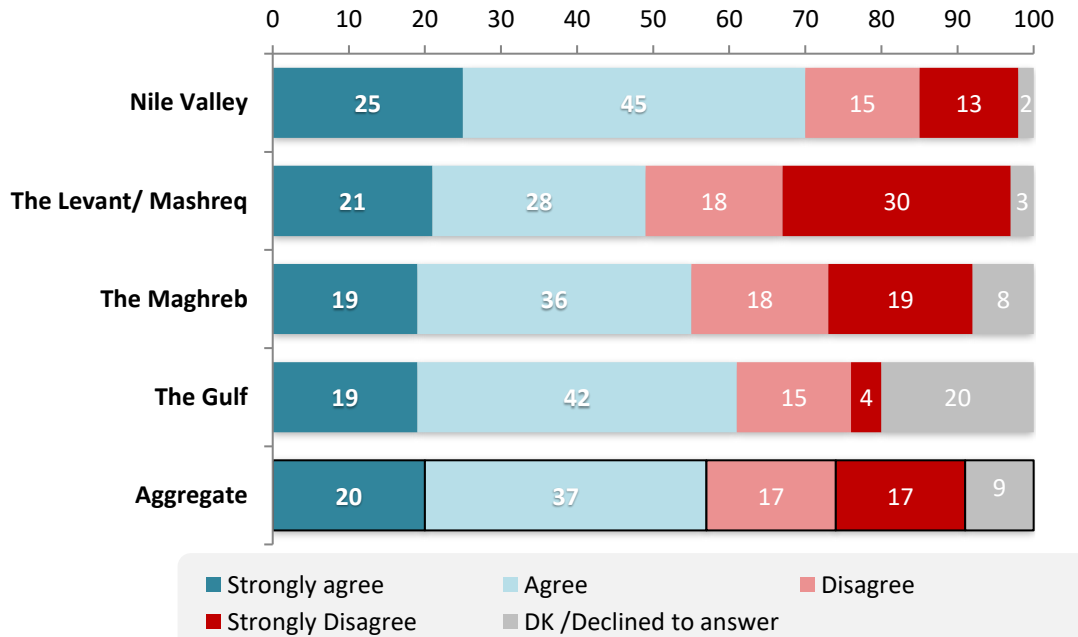
There is also near consensus on the fact that financial and administrative corruption are widespread in Arab countries: 87% believe that it is present, to varying degrees. Data from previous years shows that citizens’ assessments on this point have not changed much. Respondents from the Mashreq were the most likely to say there is corruption, while those in the Gulf were most likely to say that there was no corruption.

A further 34% of respondents stated that their home countries uphold the law equitably for all citizens, while 39% said that they uphold the law while giving some groups favorable treatment and 24% that they do not apply the law equally whatsoever. The opinion that countries apply the law inequitably was most common among respondents from the Mashreq.

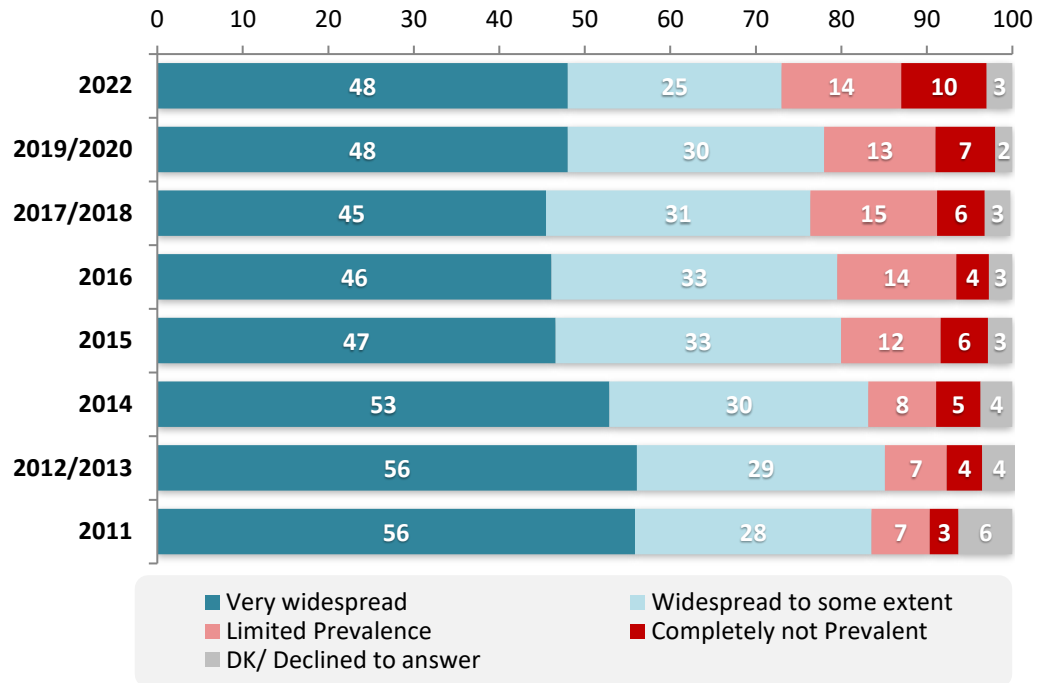
**Figure 4: Citizens' trust in major state institutions**



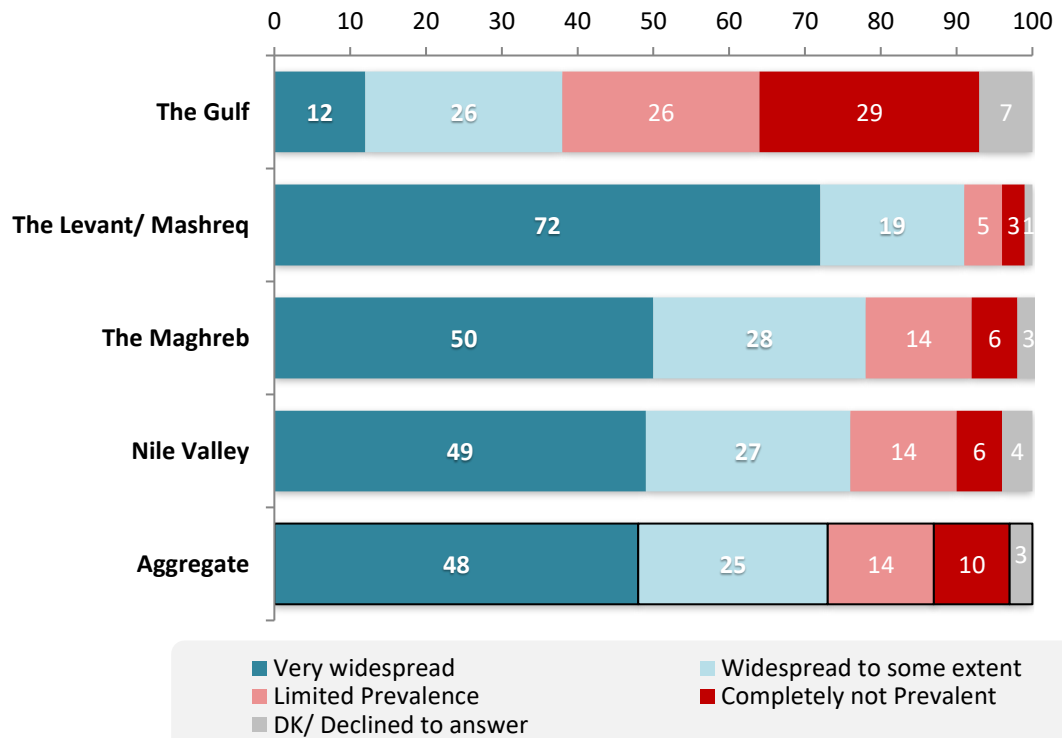
**Figure 5: Regional comparison of respondent evaluations of their parliaments/legislative councils' performance in their duty to monitor governments**



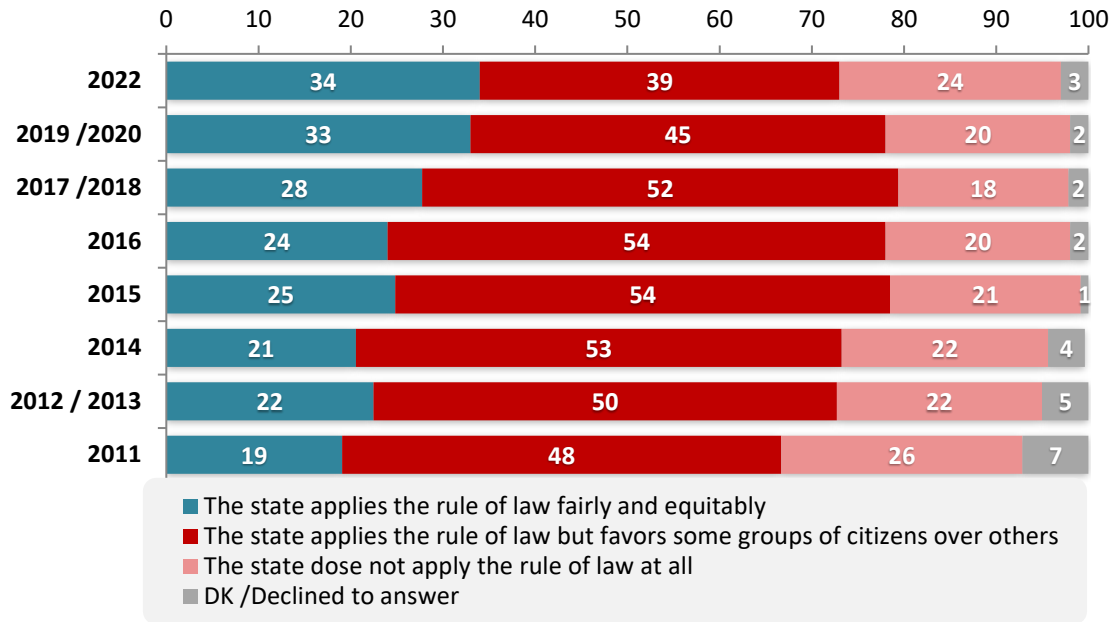
**Figure 6: Longitudinal comparison of public opinion on the prevalence of financial and administrative corruption in the respondents' countries**



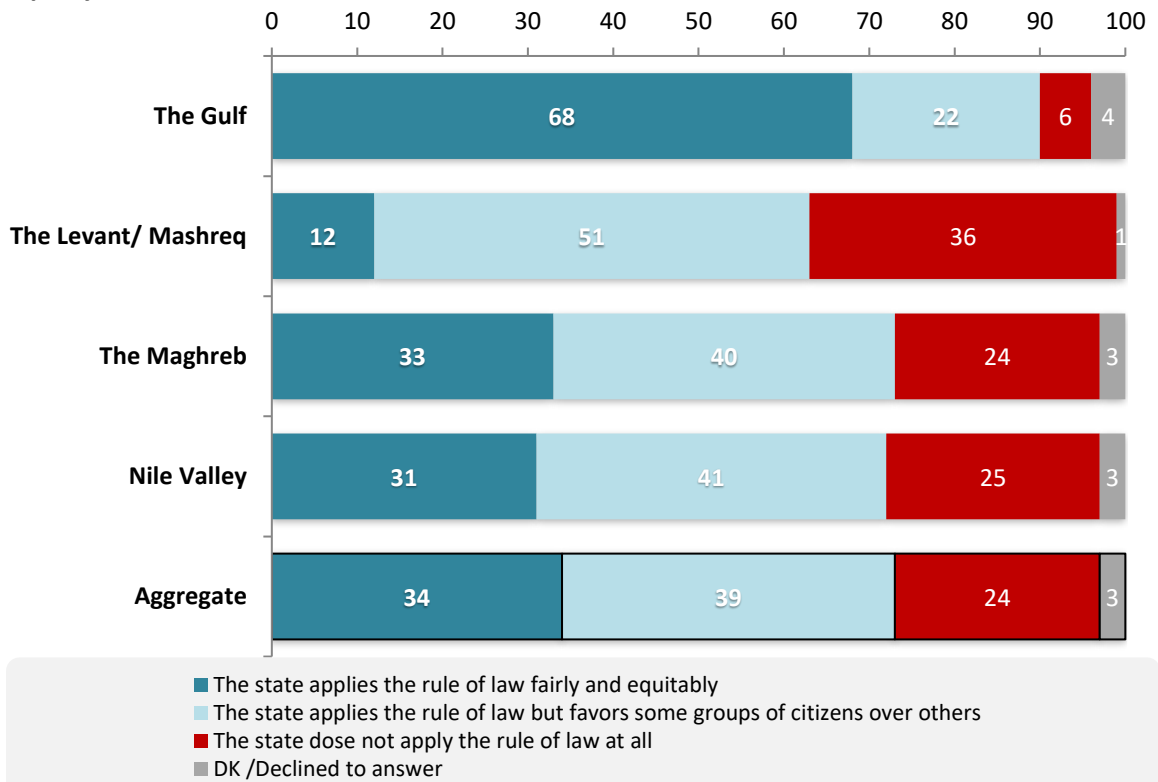
**Figure 7: Regional comparison of public opinion on the prevalence of financial and administrative corruption**



**Figure 8: Longitudinal comparison of public opinion regarding the extent to which the state applies the law equally**



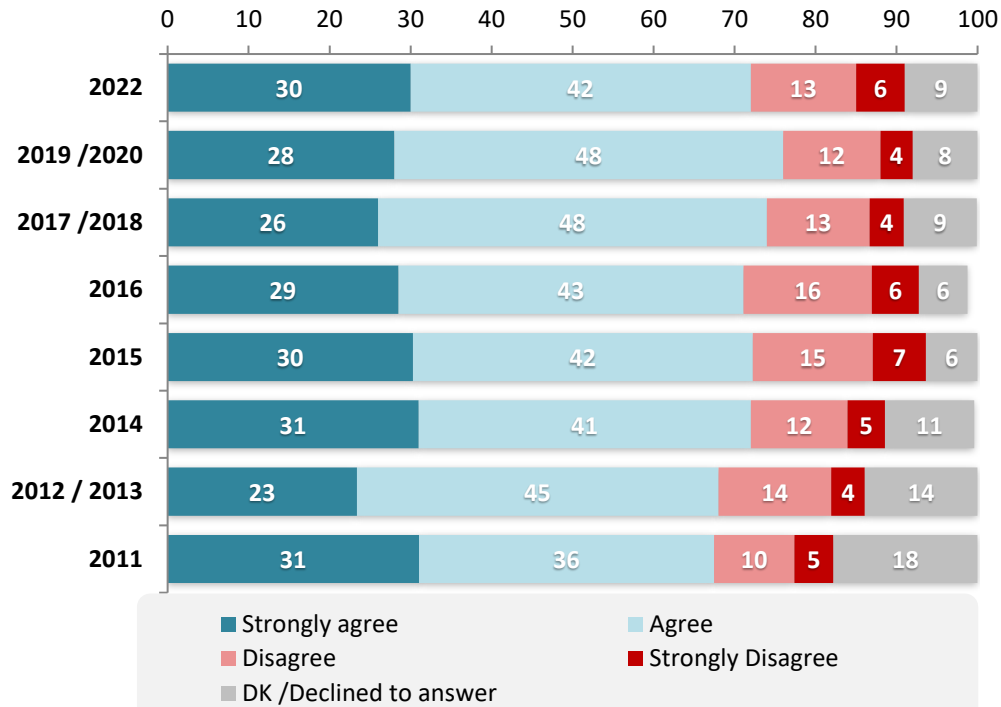
**Figure 9: Regional comparison of public opinion regarding the extent to which the state applies the law equally**



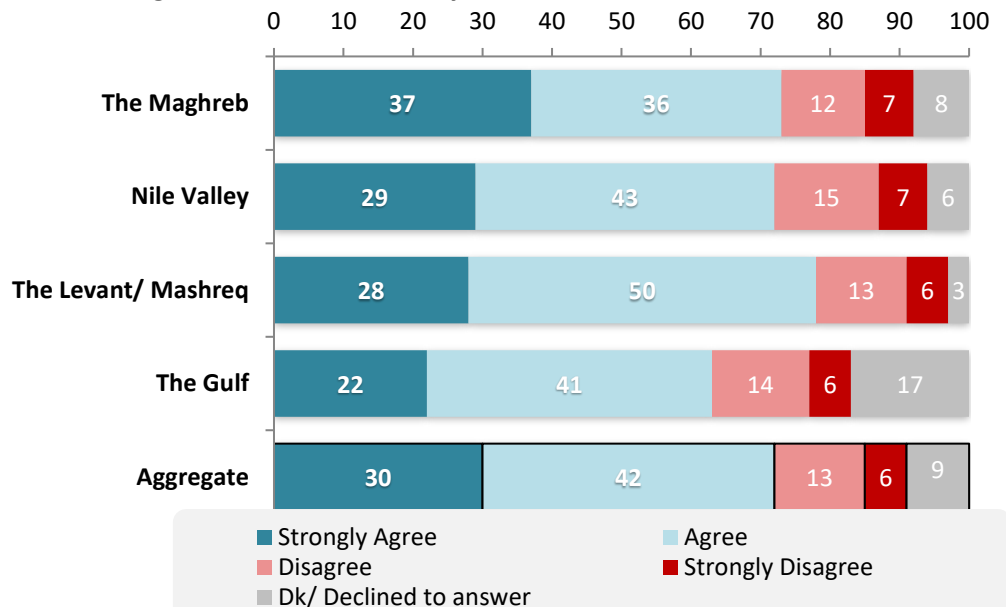
## Views on Democracy

The results show that there is near unanimous support for democracy, with 72% of respondents indicating their support for a democratic system and only 19% opposed.

**Figure 10: Longitudinal comparison of public perception of the statement “The democratic system, despite its shortcomings, is better than other systems”**

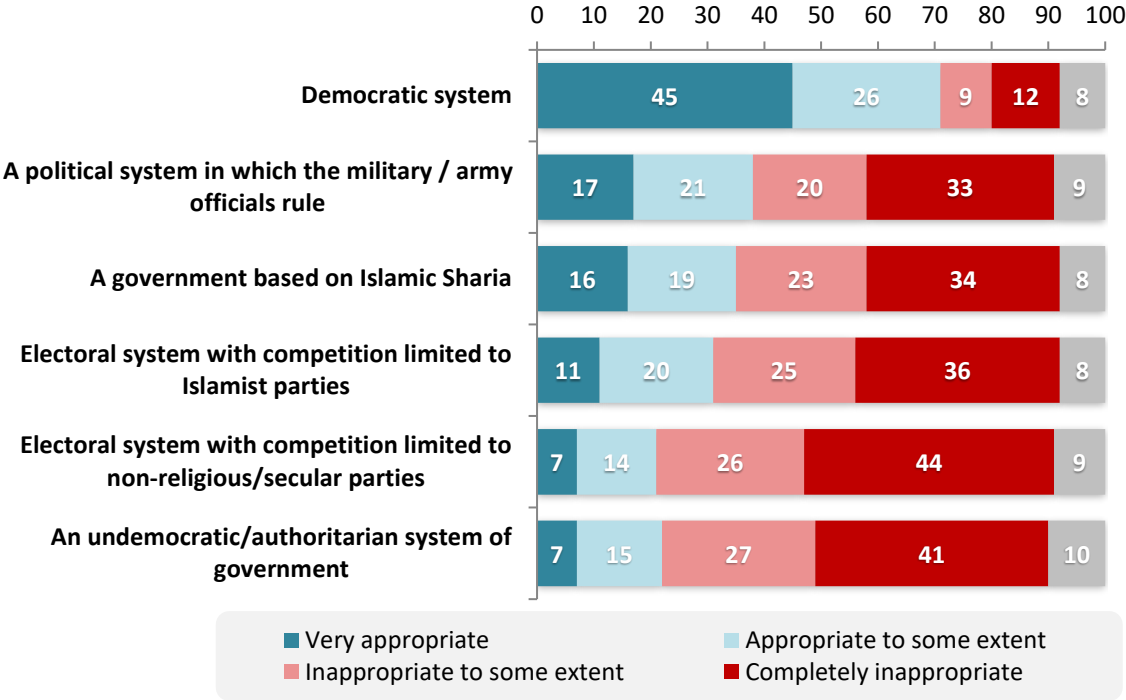


**Figure 11: Regional comparison of public perception of the statement “The democratic system, despite its shortcomings, is better than other systems”**



71% of respondents stated that a pluralist democratic system would be appropriate to their countries, while 53-70% agreed that undemocratic systems – governments based on Sharia without elections, army or military rule, authoritarian or limited democracies – would be inappropriate. Comparison with the results of previous years shows that general approval for democracy is constant.

**Figure 12: Respondents' perceptions of the appropriateness of various types of government for their home countries.**

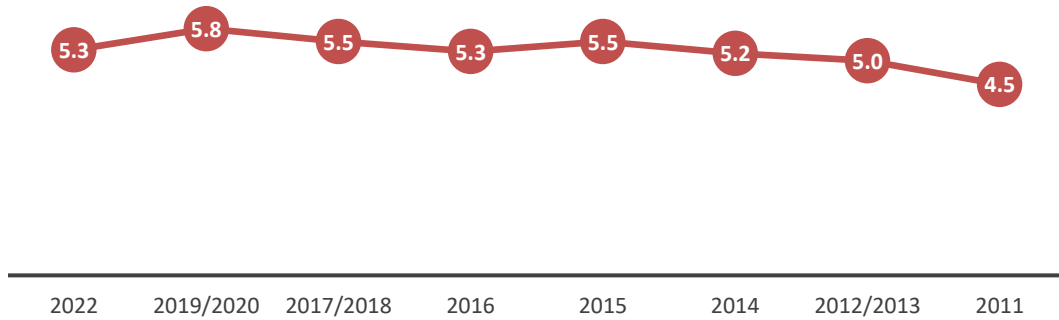


This consensus on support for democracy is accompanied by a negative evaluation of existing democracy in the Arab region. Respondents gave democracy in the region an average score of 5.3/10 – that is, democracy remains, as far as they are concerned, only halfway there. This score has declined since the last AOI in 2020.

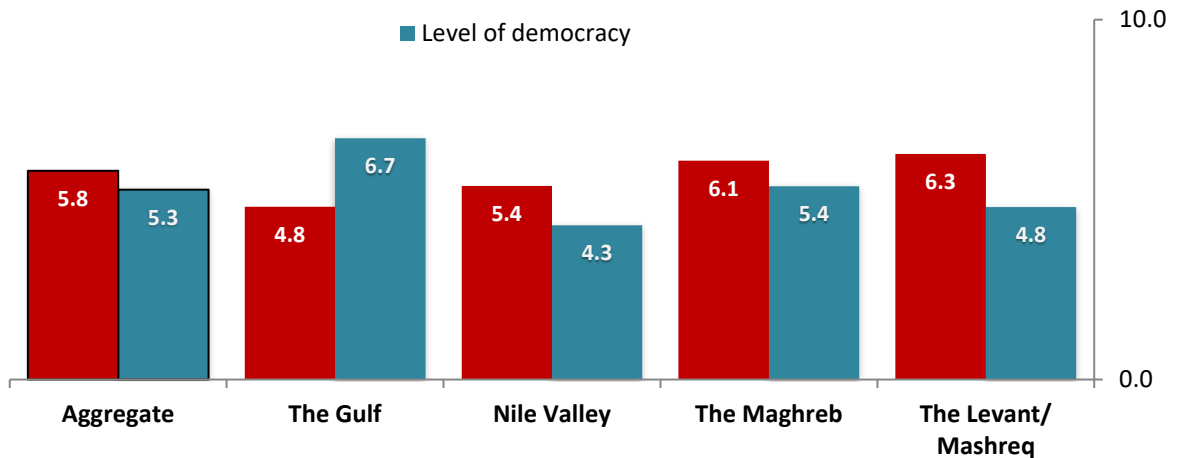
Citizen assessments of the level of democracy as measured by their ability to criticise their governments (between 1 and 10) shows that this ability is limited: 5.8/10. Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Palestine received the lowest scores here.



**Figure 13: Democracy Scale Average by Year**



**Figure 14: Democracy scale versus ability to criticize the government by region**



### The Arab Spring

Since 2011, the majority of respondents have looked positively at the Arab Spring, with 46% stating that the revolutions and protests of that year were positive (very or somewhat positive) and 39% negative (very or somewhat negative). The most positive evaluations of the Arab Spring revolutions were recorded in Kuwait (76%) and Egypt (73%). Respondents held that the revolutions and popular protests were a response to corruption, poor economic conditions and an attempt to transition to democracy and overthrow authoritarian regimes. The results show that popular opinion is divided about the present state and future of revolutions. While 40% of respondents stated that that the Arab Spring is facing obstacles but will ultimately achieve its goals, 39% believe that it is over and that the old regimes have returned to power.

Figure 15: “Back in 2011, several Arab countries witnessed revolutions and popular protests, in which people took to the streets in demonstrations. What is your assessment of that?”

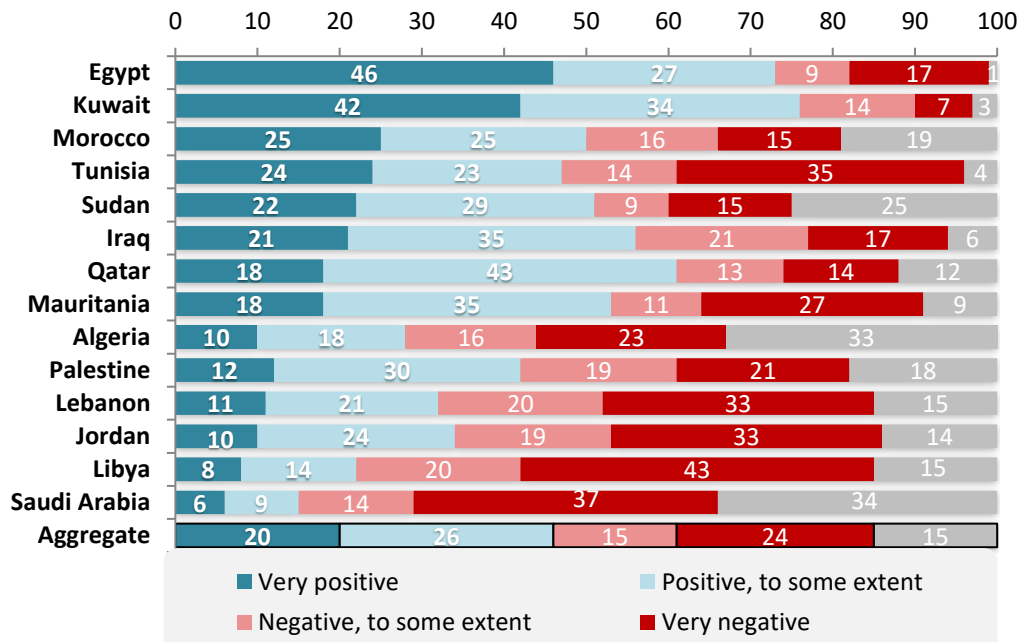
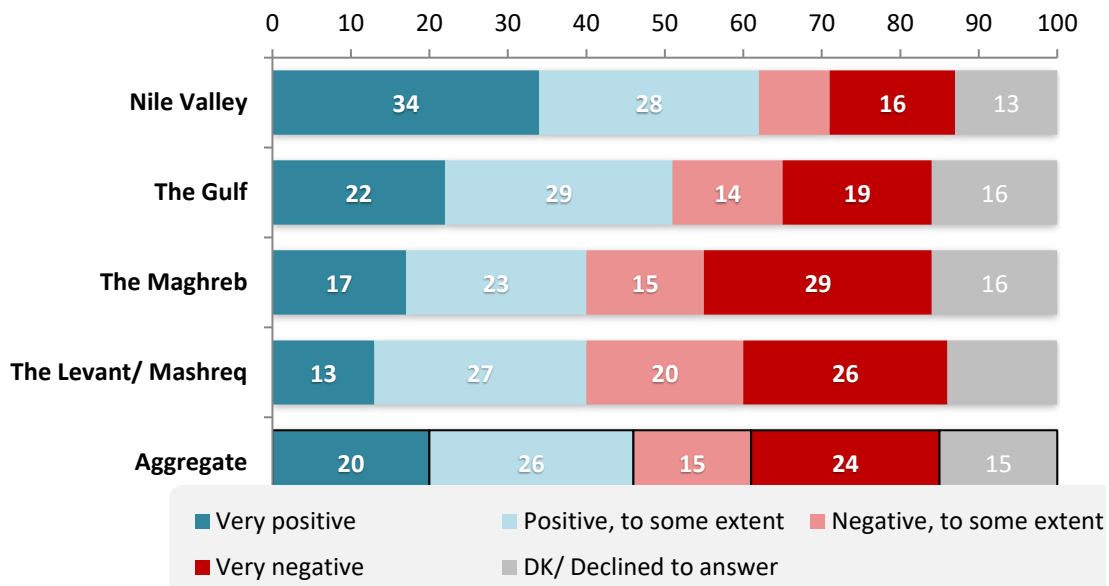


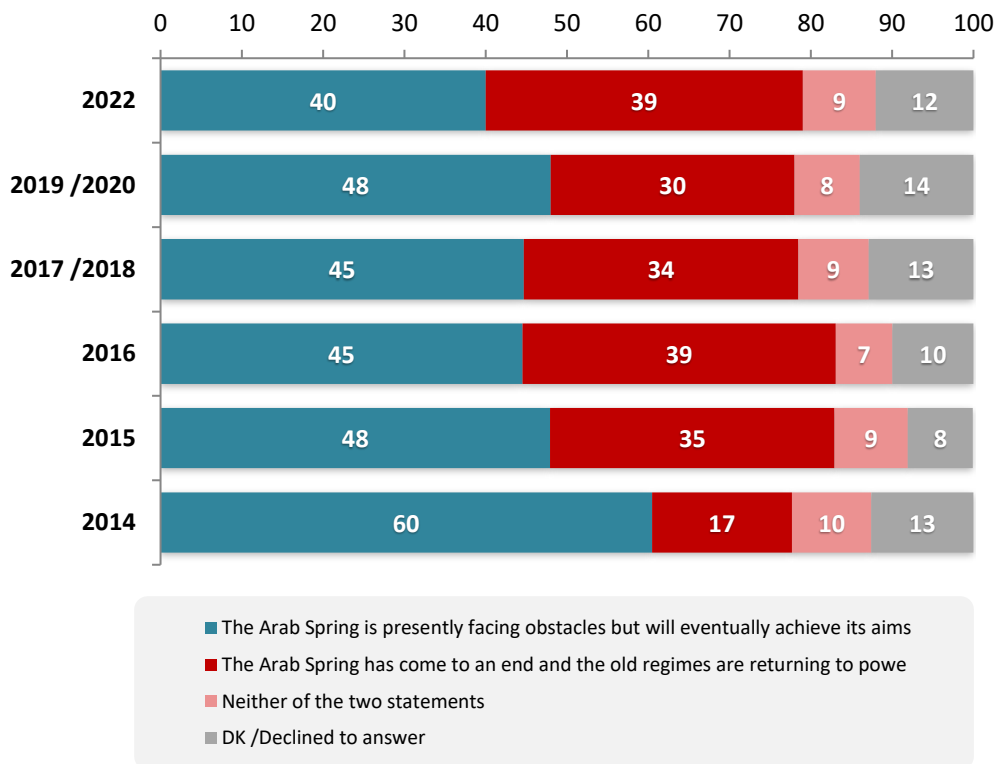
Figure 161: Regional comparison of the public assessment of the popular revolutions and protests that took place back in 2011



**Figure 17: Most important most reasons for the outbreak of the Arab Spring**

Responses	First most important reason
Against corruption	25
Due to poor economic conditions	16
Against dictatorship	14
For political freedoms	6
To end oppression	7
For justice and equality	5
For democracy	4
For dignity	4
External plot	1
Other	1
don't know, decline to respond	17
Total	100

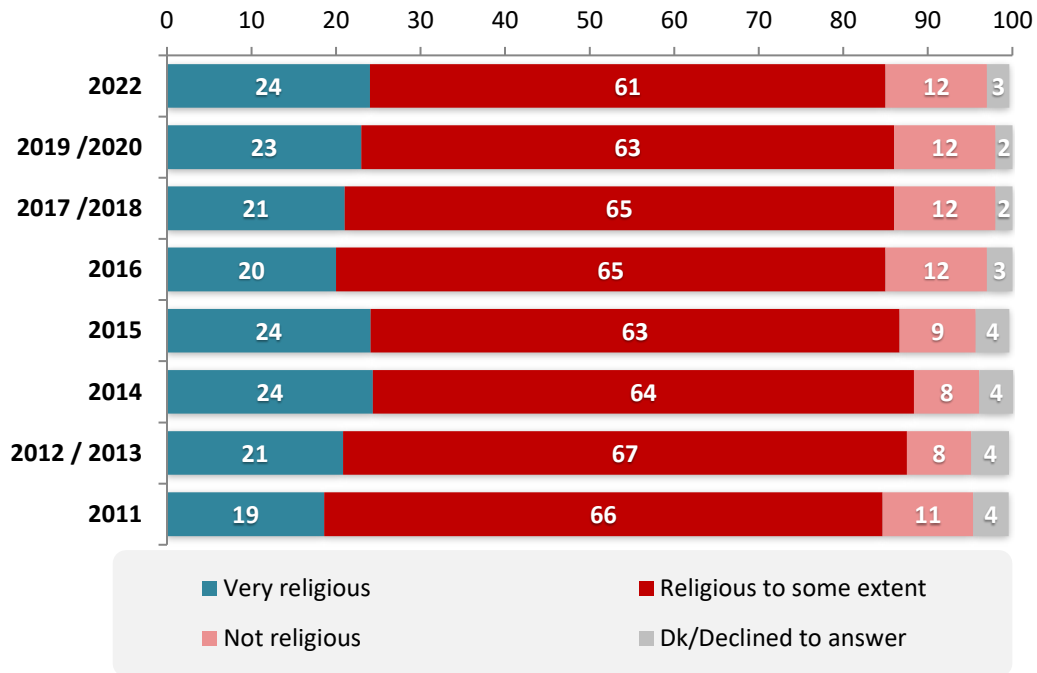
**Figure 18: Assessment of the fate of the Arab Spring (choice of two statements) over time**



## The role of religion

Based on self-reporting, Arab citizens are divided into three blocs, the largest of which (61%) said they are somewhat religious, compared to 24% who said they are very religious, and 12% who said they are not religious.

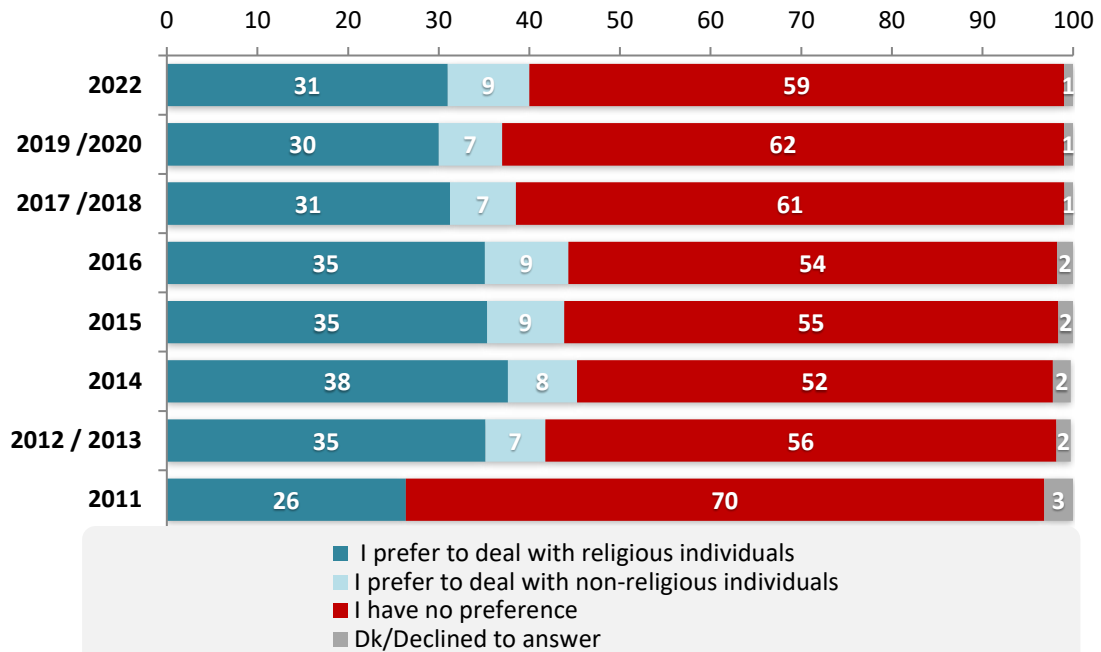
**Figure 19: Longitudinal comparison of self-defined religiosity**



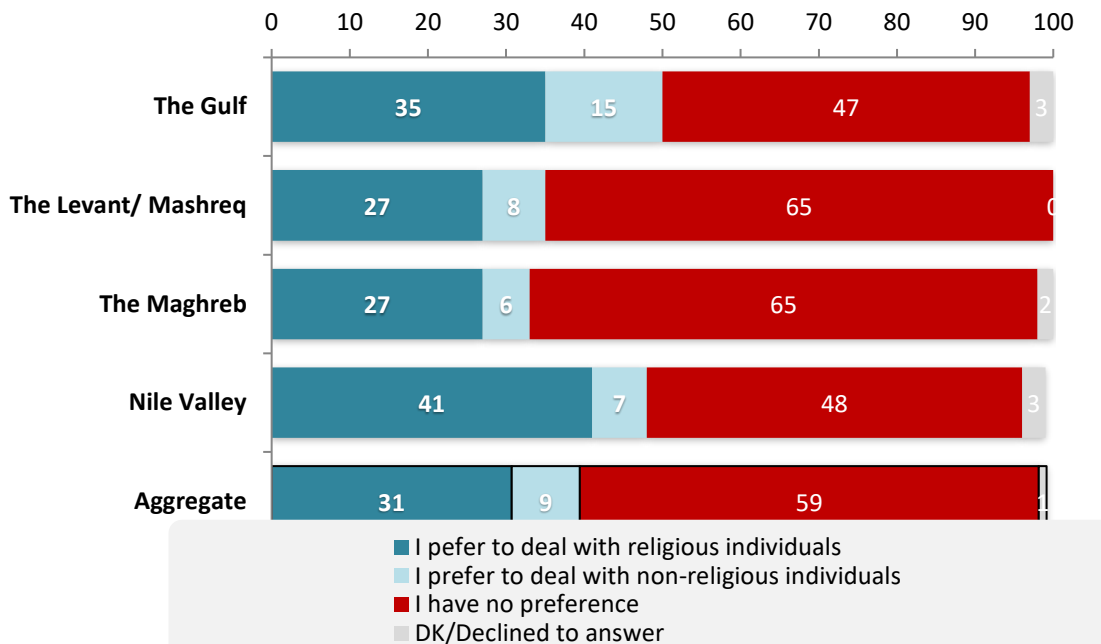
While a majority of Arabs are religious, to varying extents, this does not preclude widespread religious tolerance: 65% of respondents believe that no one has the right to declare followers of other religions infidels/apostates. Additionally, 59% of Arabs show no real preferences for other religious individuals in their personal, day-to-day dealings, nor do they believe that irreligious people are generally worse individuals than they are. A majority of 72% of respondents believe that the state or electoral candidates should not use religion to win support or votes.

The data also shows that public opinion in the Arab region is divided on the separation of religion and politics, with the majority favoring this separation. It is worth noting that the number of respondents supporting separation has been gradually increasing since 2011, with the highest level of support in Iraq and Lebanon and the lowest in Mauritania and Qatar.

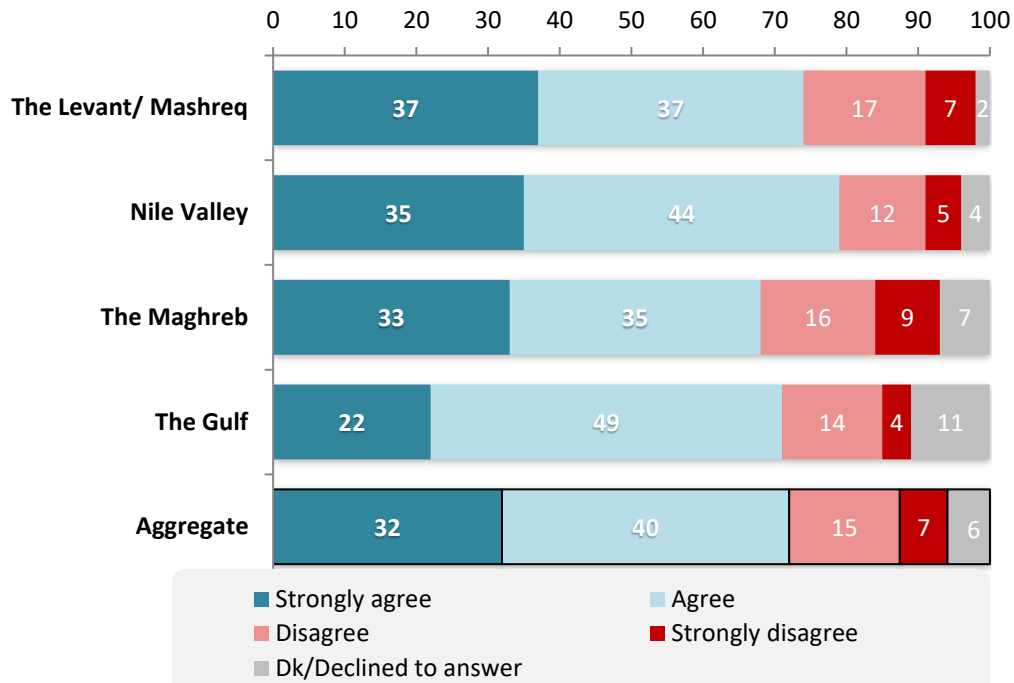
**Figure 21: Longitudinal comparison of responses to the question “In your day-to-day life, do you prefer to deal with religious individuals?”**



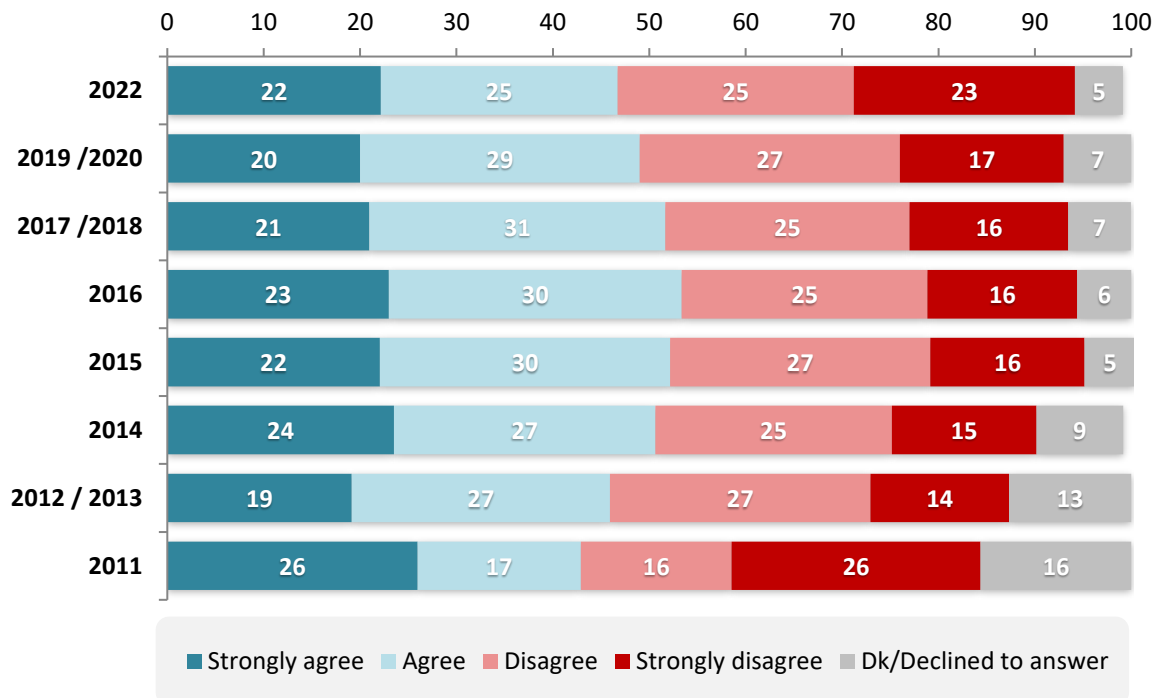
**Figure 22: Regional comparison of responses to the question “In your day-to-day life, do you prefer to deal with religious individuals?”**



**Figure 23: Regional comparison of perception of the statement “The government has no right to use religion to win support for its policies”**



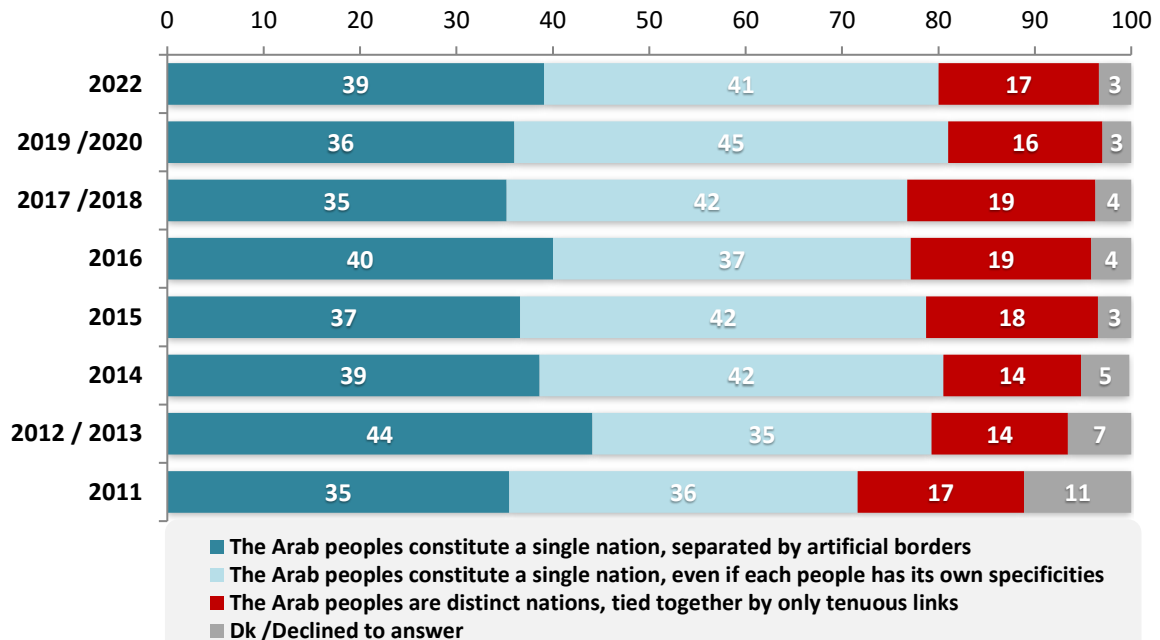
**Figure 24: Longitudinal comparison of support for the statement “It would be better for my home country if religion was separated from politics”**



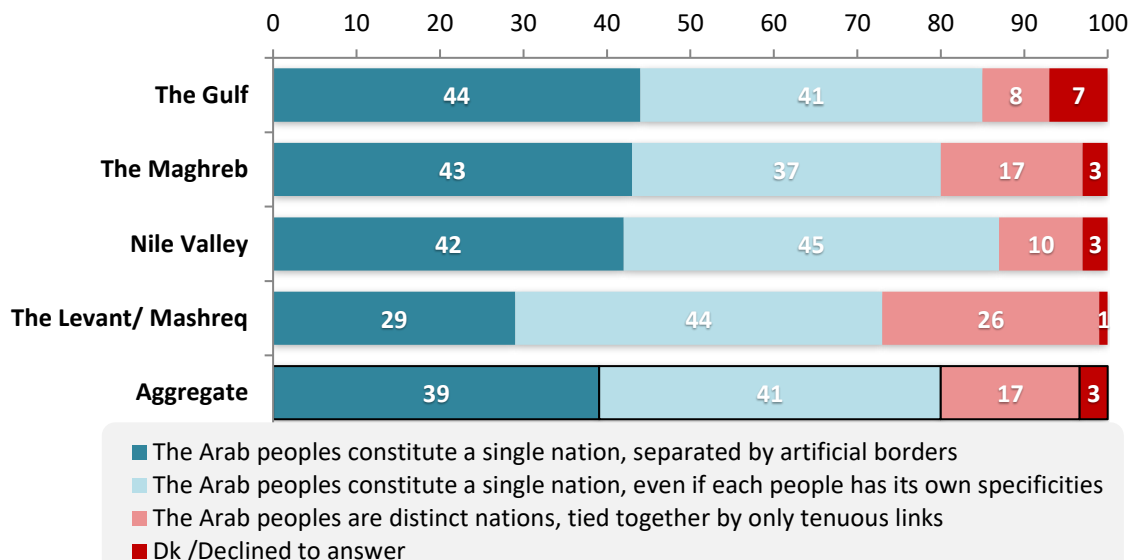
## Intra-Arab Relations

A total of 80% of respondents to the 2022 Arab Opinion Index supported the sentiment that the various Arab peoples formed a single nation, in contrast to only 17% who agreed with the statement that “the Arab peoples are distinct nations, tied together by only tenuous links.”

**Figure 25: Longitudinal comparison of assessments of Arab national unity**



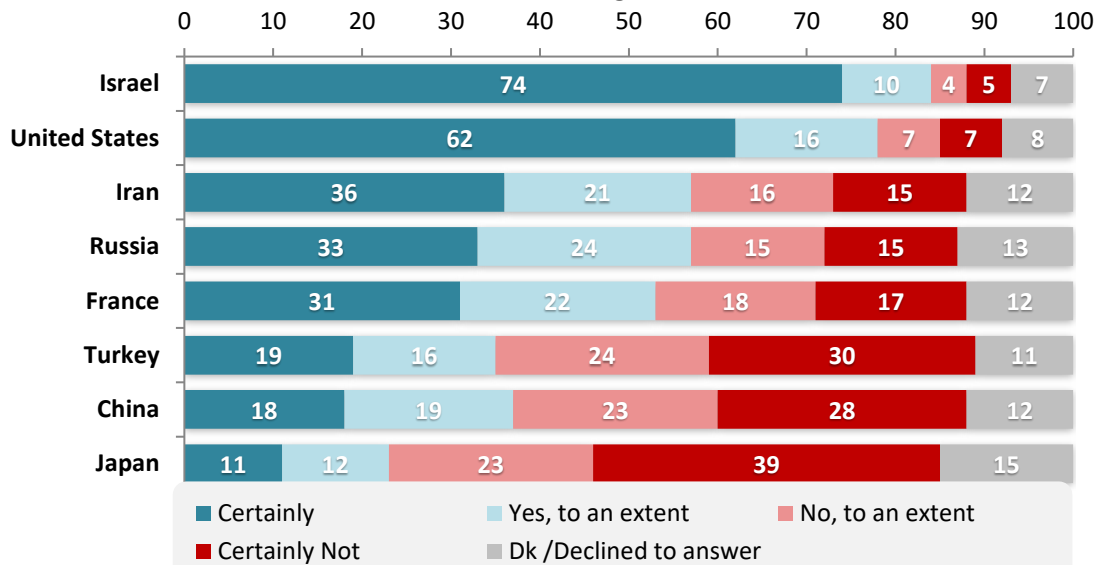
**Figure 26: Regional comparison of assessments of Arab national unity**



## Regional and International Threats to the Region and Stability

Respondents were asked about the extent to which the policies of some forces threaten the security and stability of the region. The results demonstrate public consensus (84%) that Israel is the greatest threat to the security and stability of the Arab region. A further 78% of the public agrees that US policy threatens the security and stability of the region. Iranian and Russian policies were considered a threat to the region by 57% of respondents respectively and French policies by 53%.

**Figure 27: The current policies of which regional and international powers threaten the security and stability of the region?**

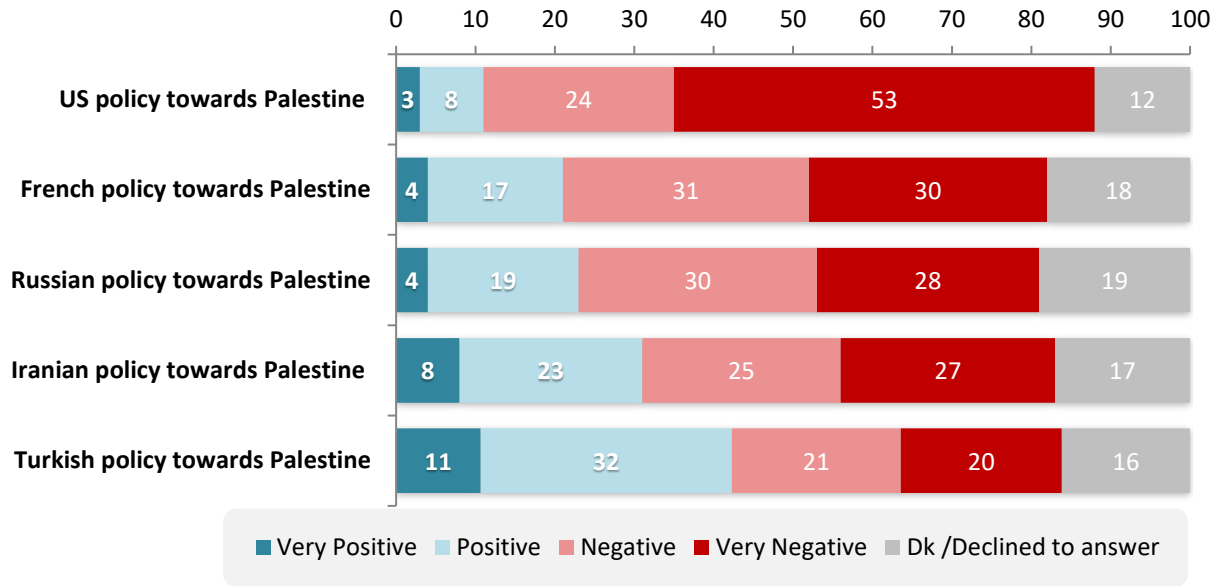


The AOI sought to identify respondent attitudes towards the Palestinian cause, especially salient given the widespread talk by experts and politicians of ‘Arab disengagement’ from the Palestinian cause. The results clearly indicate that Arab societies still consider the Palestinian cause important to all Arabs, and not just a Palestinian issue. This was expressed by 76% of respondents who stated that “The Palestinian cause concerns all Arabs, and not just the Palestinian people alone.”

Public opinion is mostly negative regarding the policies of the US, Russia, Iran, and France towards Palestine. Meanwhile Arab public opinion is split regarding Turkish policy in Palestine between those who evaluated it negatively (41%) and positively (43%).

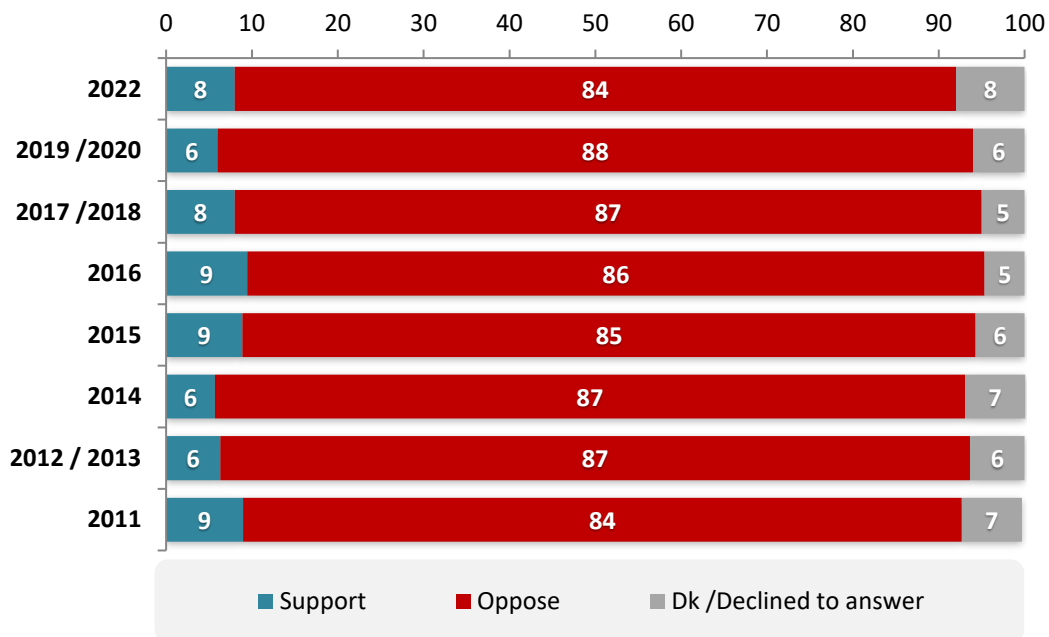


**Figure 28: Respondent Perceptions of the policies of international powers on Palestine**

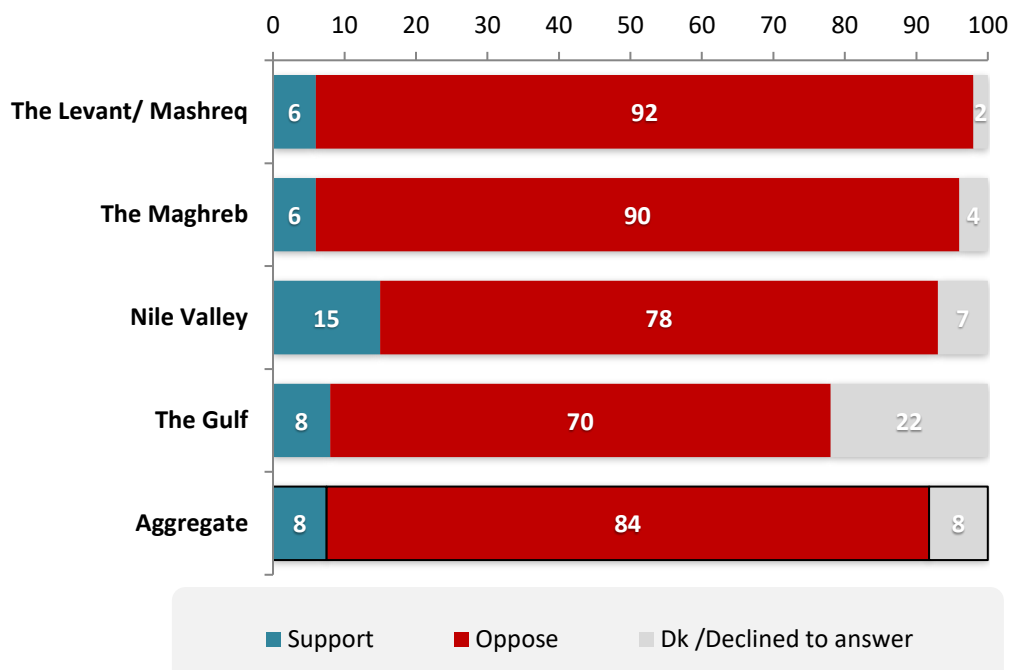


An overwhelming majority (84%) of Arabs disapprove of recognition of Israel by their home countries. When asked to elaborate on the reasons for their positions, respondents who were opposed to diplomatic ties between their countries and Israel focused on several factors, such as Israeli racism towards the Palestinians and its colonialist, expansionist policies. Notably the response was similar in every region. The results show that the opinions of citizens who refuse to recognize Israel are not based on cultural or religious positions and that the consensus applies to all regions.

**Figure 29: Longitudinal comparison of support for governments recognizing Israel**



**Figure 30: Regional comparison of support for governments recognizing Israel**



**Figure 31: Reasons given for opposing diplomatic recognition of Israel since 2014 (as a percentage of respondents)**

	2022	2019/2020	2017 2018/ 2018/	2016	2015	2014
Colonialist occupying power in Palestine	36.6	33.7	31.7	27.0	24.5	23.4
Expansionist state set on controlling more Arab territory	9.0	9.4	10.1	13.0	13.0	2.4
A terrorist state/supports terrorism	7.0	7.6	7.4	7.6	10.4	1.2
Israeli dispossession of the Palestinians; continued oppression of the Palestinians	6.5	6.8	8.3	8.1	6.9	5.5
Religious reasons to oppose Israel	5.1	6.7	6.6	5.2	3.3	4.9
(Israel) is racist towards Arabs	5.2	5.9	6.3	8.2	10.3	12.2
Recognizing Israel negates the Palestinian people	3.6	4.8	5.3	5.8	5.6	7.5
Israel is an enemy of my people/the Arabs in general	3.7	4.1	3.4	3.3	4.7	11.5
Israel threatens regional security	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.2	3.4	2.5
Israel violates agreements and treaties	1.8	1.6	1.6	2.1	2.4	2.3
Israel does not exist	-	2.3	1.1	0.6	0.3	3.4
Other	0.2	-	-	-	-	-
No reasons given	2.5	1.9	1.6	1.8	0.6	10.2
<b>Total of those opposed to recognizing Israel</b>	<b>84.3</b>	<b>88.2</b>	<b>86.8</b>	<b>85.9</b>	<b>85.4</b>	<b>87.0</b>
<b>Approve of the recognition of Israel</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>6.0</b>
<b>Do not know/declined to answer (as a percentage of respondents)</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Figure 32: Reasons given for opposing diplomatic recognition of Israel by region**

	Mashreq	Maghreb	Gulf	Nile Valley	Average
Colonialist occupying power in Palestine	47.9	36.5	29.9	24.2	34.6
Expansionist state set on controlling more Arab territory	9.5	8.9	8.5	8.3	8.8
A terrorist state/supports terrorism	9.3	7.0	2.5	8.8	6.9
Israeli dispossession of the Palestinians; continued oppression of the Palestinians	5.4	6.0	8.9	5.7	6.5
Religious reasons to oppose Israel	3.5	6.9	10.5	6.4	6.8
(Israel) is racist towards Arabs	4.9	6.2	4.0	4.9	5
Recognizing Israel negates the Palestinian people	3.1	4.4	2.6	4.1	3.5
Israel is an enemy of my people/the Arabs in general	3.6	4.4	1.4	5.1	3.6
Israel threatens regional security	2.4	4.1	2.9	3.4	3.2
Israel violates agreements and treaties	0.6	2.3	1.1	3.6	1.9
No reasons given	0.5	3.2	4.3	1.7	2.4
<b>Total of those opposed to recognizing Israel</b>	<b>91.5</b>	<b>90.5</b>	<b>70.3</b>	<b>78.4</b>	<b>82.7</b>
Approve of the recognition of Israel	6.1	5.5	7.4	15.4	8.6
Do not know/declined to answer (as a percentage of respondents)	2.5	4.2	22.3	6.6	8.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### Social media

Just 22% of respondents reported that they do not use the internet, compared to 77% who said that they use the internet to varying extents. Internet use has increased in the 2022 and 2020 surveys are compared with previous years – a statistically significant increase. 88% of Internet users rely on their mobile devices to access the internet and 98% of internet users reported that they have accounts on social media applications and platforms. 86% of Internet users have a Facebook account, while 47% have an Instagram account, 37% have a Snapchat account, and 34% have an account on Twitter. Among the many reasons cited for using social media, the largest percentage (36%) reported that they use the internet in order to communicate with friends and acquaintances, while 10% reported that they use it in order to keep up with popular events (trends), and 10% in order to fill their free time.

Figure 33: Frequency of internet use

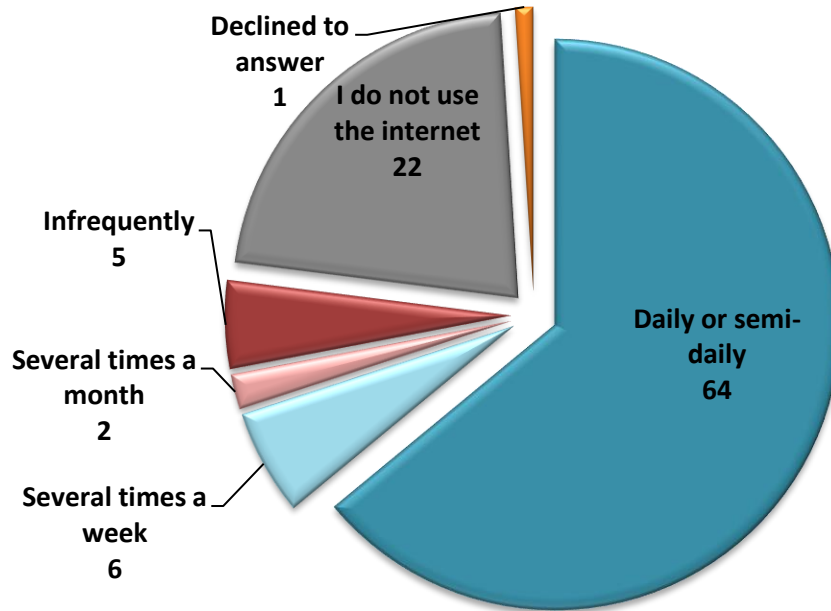


Figure 34: Regional comparison of respondents who report using the internet

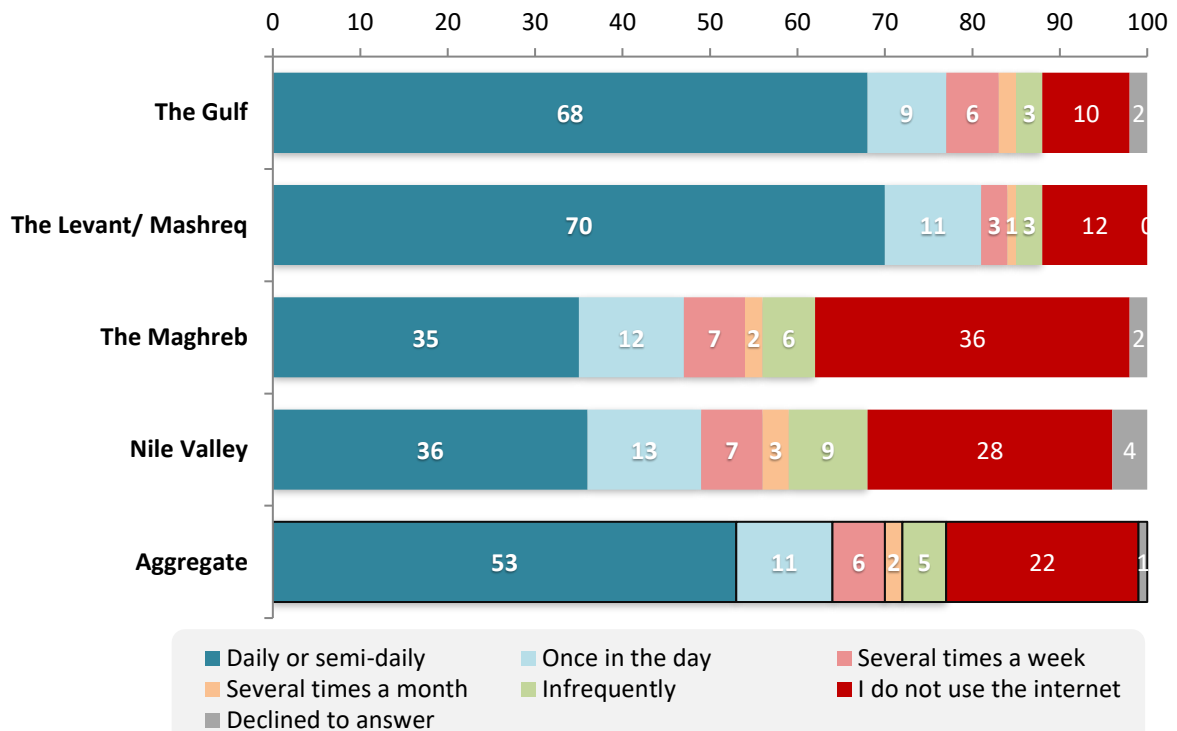


Figure 35: Respondents who report having a social media account, by platform

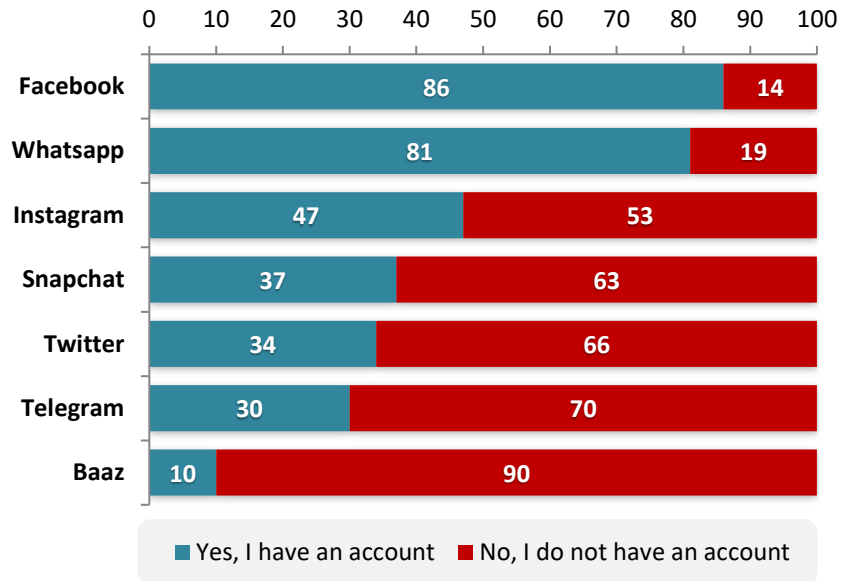
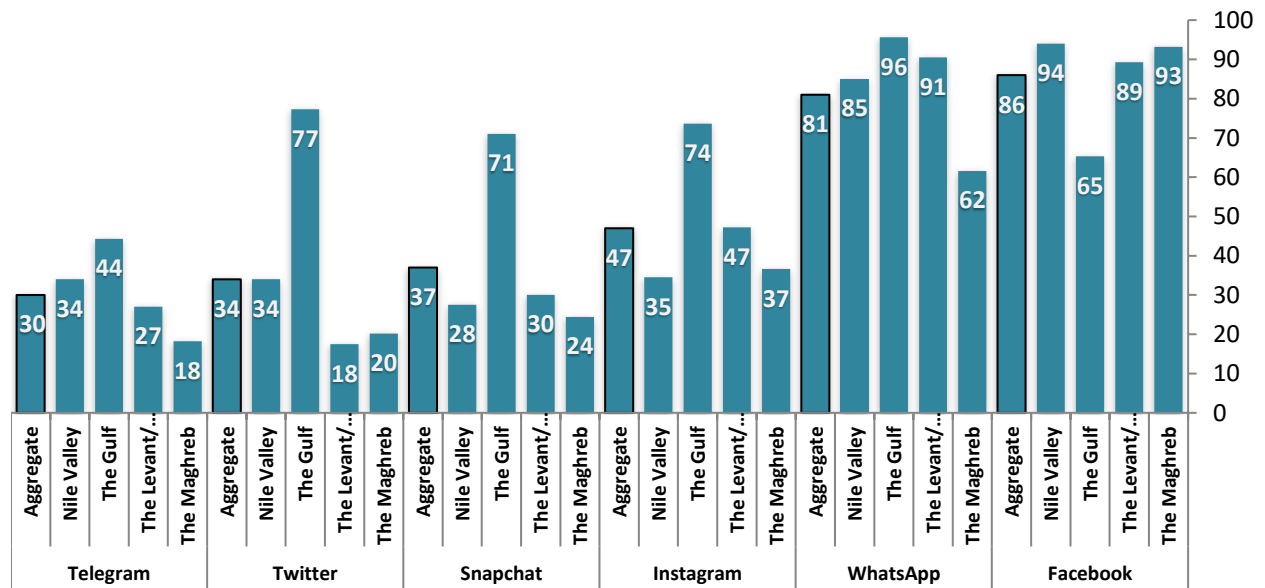


Figure 36: Regional comparison of respondents who state that they have a social media account



**Figure 37: Which of the following reasons do use social media for?**

Order of reasons reasons	Most important reason	Second most important reason	Third most important reason	Average
In order to communicate with friends and acquaintances	58	14	6	<b>36</b>
In order to be up to date with trends	8	14	10	<b>10</b>
in order to fill free time	8	11	5	<b>10</b>
in order to follow the news	7	12	15	<b>9</b>
In order to follow content I am interested in	5	11	13	<b>8</b>
In order to meet new people	5	10	13	<b>7</b>
To share with friends what I do in my day	3	6	10	<b>5</b>
To work or develop my career	2	2	4	<b>2</b>
In order to share my political and social views	1	2	3	<b>2</b>
Other	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Don't know/ Decline to answer	3	0	23	<b>1</b>
No other reason	0	18	0	<b>10</b>
Total	100	100	100	<b>100</b>

Social media users are most likely to follow social topics, followed by political topics. 28% of social media users reported that they prefer written/text content, 23% reported that they prefer video content, and 20% preferred images.

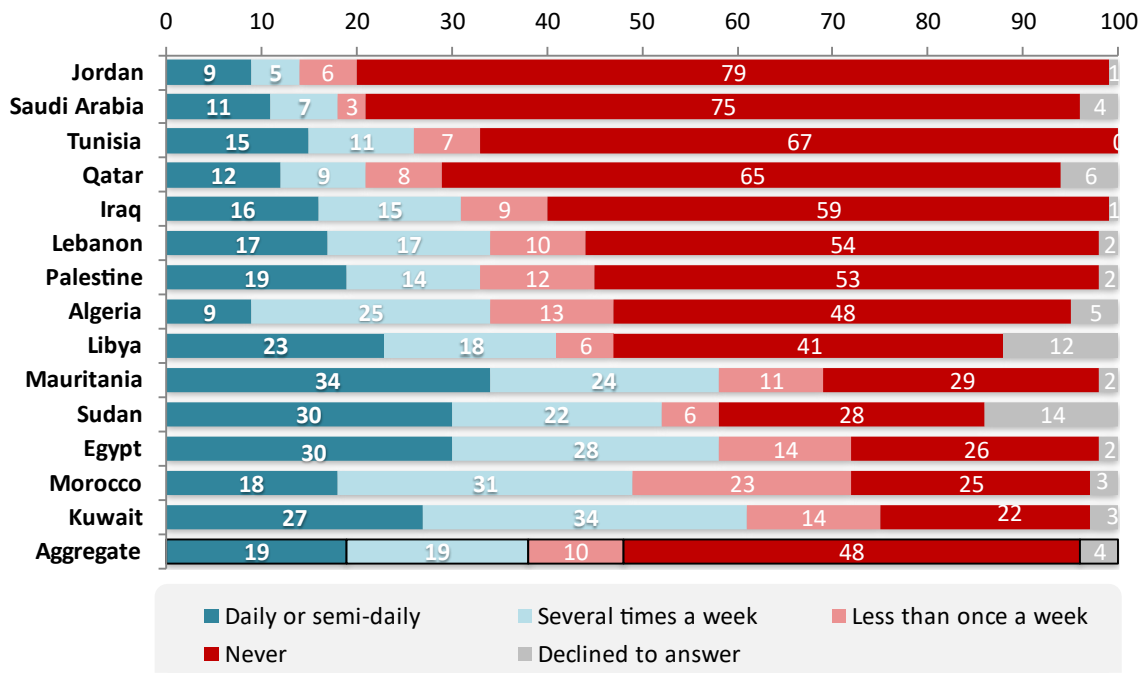
43% of social media users said that they trust the information and news circulated on social media, against to 57% who do not trust it. This indicates a decrease in trust in information and news circulated on social media compared to the last AOI survey. About half of the respondents in Kuwait (48%), Egypt (43%), and Mauritania (43%), expressed trust in the news and information published by the public pages of social media users, compared to a majority of the respondents of the other eleven countries who expressed their lack of lack of trust in this information and news.

Trust in social media varies according to account. 48% of social media users trust the information and news published on the pages of television news outlets. 44% trust the information published by the social media pages of media professionals. Social media users reported the least trust in news and information circulated on social media pages of influencers and celebrities.

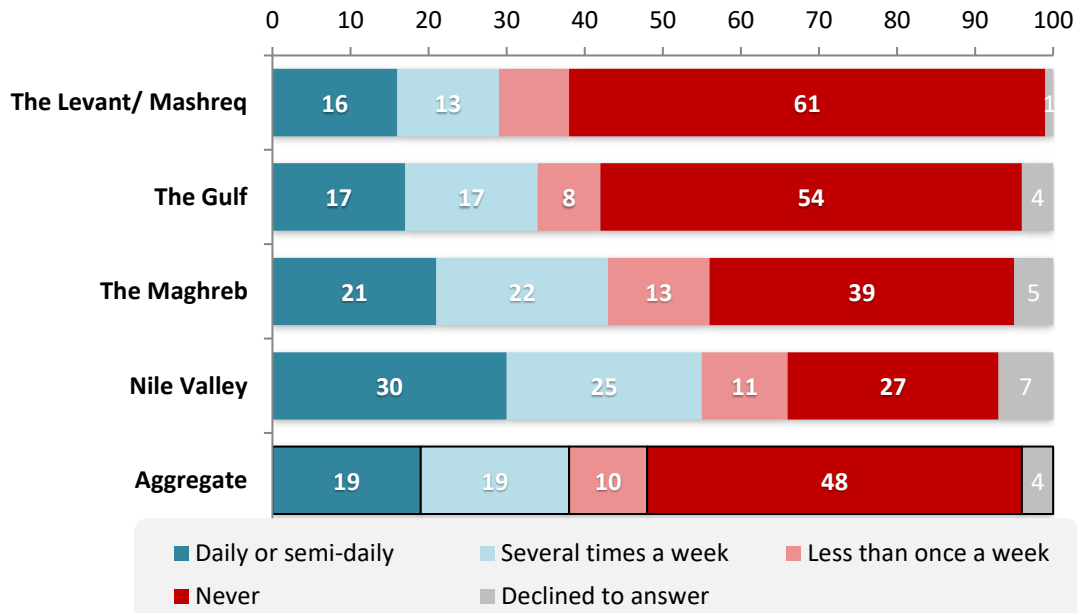
Social media users were asked several questions to determine the extent to which they use it to obtain news and political information; expressing their opinions on political events; and interacting with political issues. 75% of social media users obtain news and

political information via social media, and 43% use it more than once a day. 51% of social media users express their views on political events via social media, with 22% using it for this purpose daily or several times a day. 48% of social media users interact with or participate in political issues, against 48% who don't. Nationally, Jordan used social media to interact with political issues the least. This was a pattern generally reflected in the Mashreq.

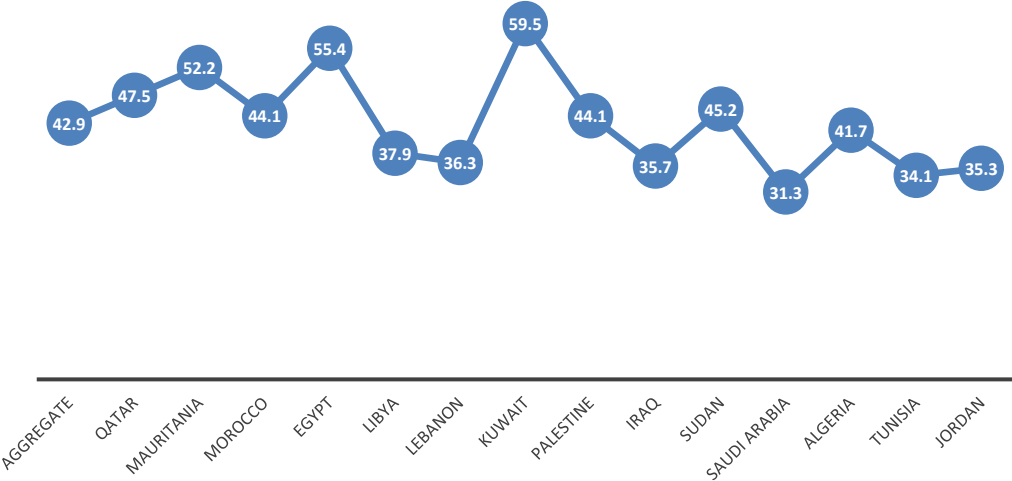
**Figure 38: The extent of social media usage to interact with political issues**



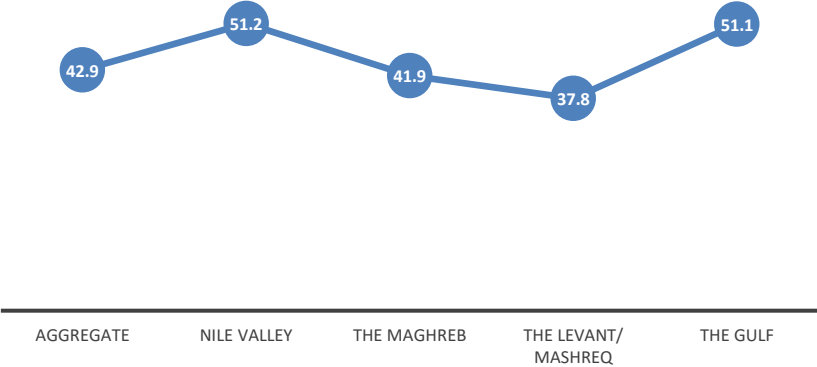
**Figure 39: Regional comparison of the extent of social media usage to interact with political issues**



**Figure 40: Trust of social media users in the news and information circulated on social media**

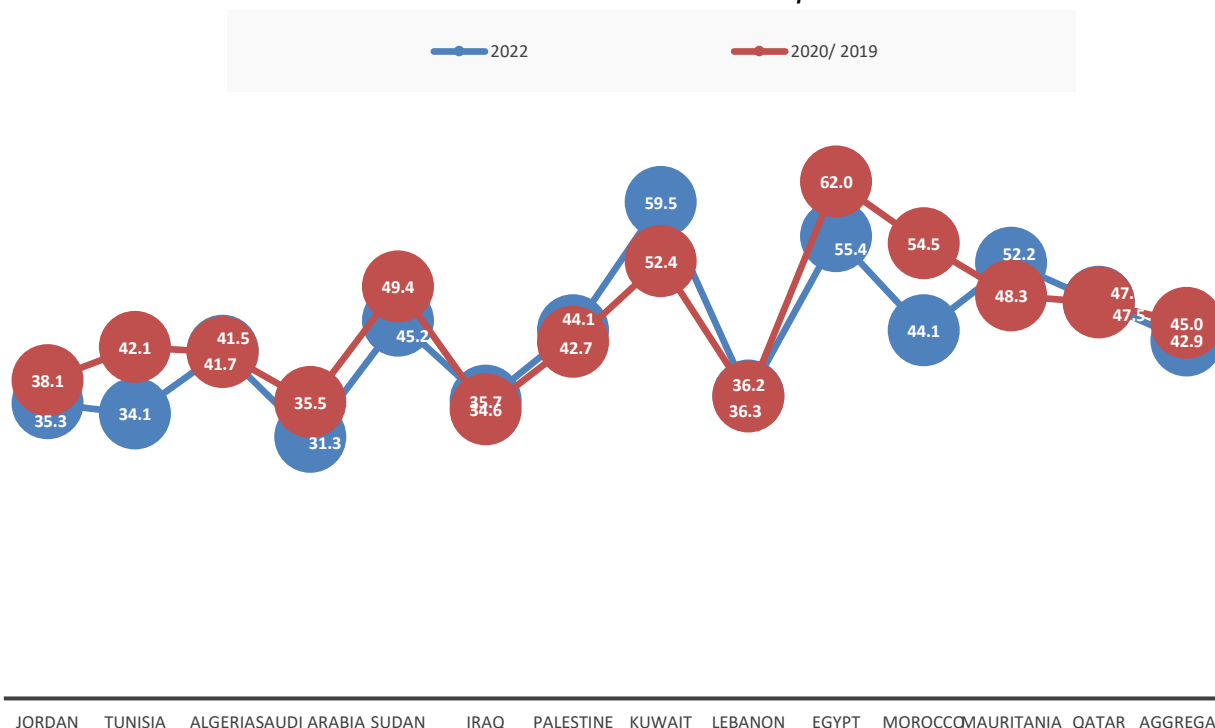


**Figure 41: Regional comparison of trust of social media users in the news and information circulated on social media**





**Figure 42: Comparison between the levels of trust reported by social media users in the news and information circulated on social media in 2019/2020 and 2022**



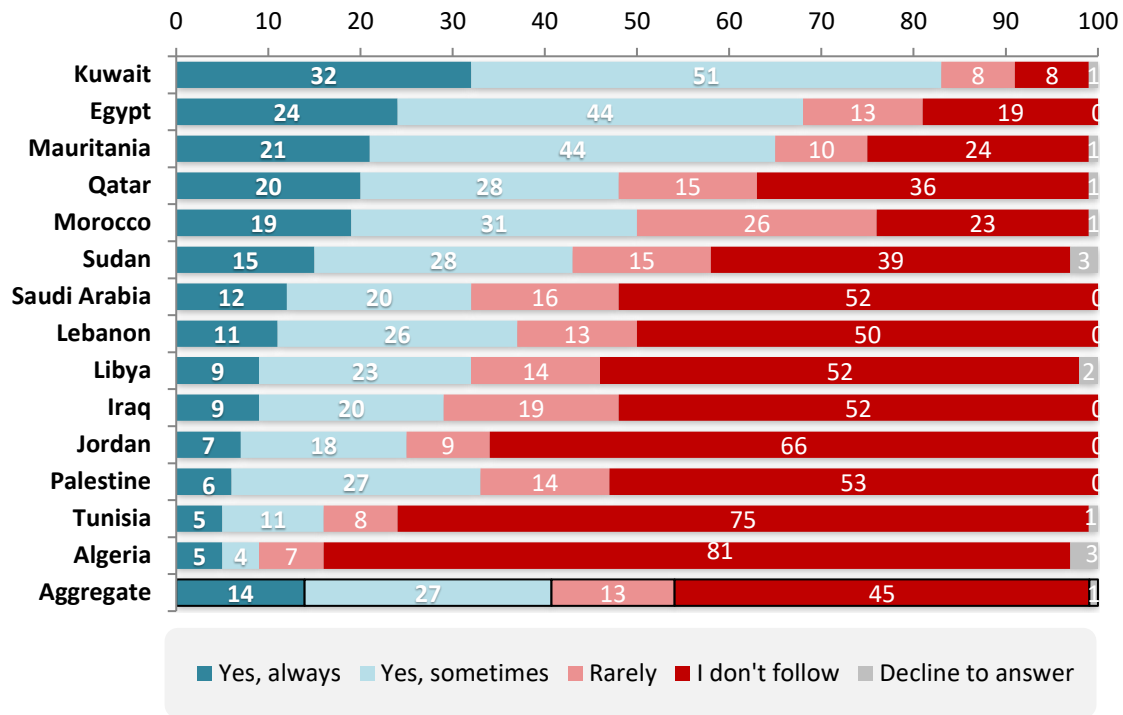
**Reported trust of social media users in various types of social media accounts**

	Jordan	Tunisia	Algeria	KSA	Sudan	Iraq	Palestine	Kuwait	Lebanon	Libya	Egypt	Morocco	Mauritania	Qatar	Average
News broadcasters' pages	43.0	38.3	36.3	63.0	48.0	36.7	48.6	52.4	39.5	40.2	59.5	51.3	55.6	62.8	<b>48.2</b>
Media professionals' pages	31.2	36.0	34.9	47.4	45.2	35.5	50.8	53.6	36.5	42.1	54.0	49.1	48.2	55.9	<b>44.3</b>
News groups on WhatsApp	26.6	20.7	24.3	35.0	38.2	25.7	39.9	47.7	36.4	36.3	42.7	36.4	47.3	40.0	<b>35.5</b>
Public pages of social media users	26.4	26.4	35.2	26.8	39.3	31.5	34.0	48.4	29.3	35.0	43.3	37.0	43.1	35.4	<b>35.1</b>
Facebook newsgroups	24.2	29.8	32.0	31.2	39.7	26.1	33.2	39.2	31.5	38.1	39.8	32.3	42.7	36.1	<b>34.0</b>
Pages of influencers and celebrities	18.9	21.8	20.5	24.7	36.4	29.4	27.6	43.3	25.3	39.2	47.2	38.5	44.5	39.5	<b>32.6</b>

**Social Media Influencers**

Social media users reported that they often follow influencers at a rate of 14%, compared to 27% who said they follow them sometimes, while 13% reported that they rarely follow, and about half of social media users reported that they do not follow any influencers. Results vary from country to country, with majorities in Algeria, Tunisia, and Palestine reporting that they do not follow influencers. The majority in Kuwait, Egypt, Mauritania, Qatar and Morocco reported that they do follow influencers on social media.

**Figure 43: Do you follow influencers?**



The results show that social media users followed influencers in various fields, most commonly sports, followed by politics, social issues, and health.

**Figure 44: Types of influencer followed by social media users in order of followship**

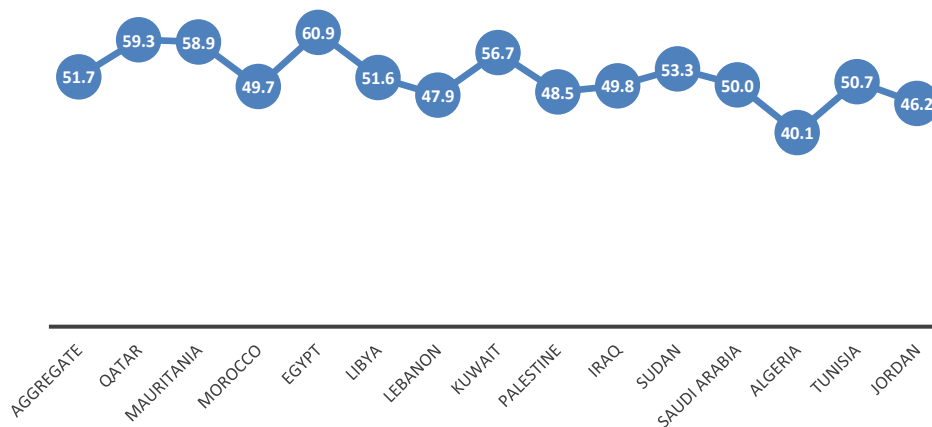
	Most followed	Second most followed	third most followed	Aggregate
Sports influencers	21	8	6	15
Political influencers	17	10	4	14
Social influencers	11	11	13	12
Beauty influencers	16	6	5	11
Health/medical influencers	8	12	8	11
Culinary influencers	9	11	6	7
Religious influencers	6	7	9	7
Physical training influencers	3	6	6	5
Technology influencers	3	4	8	4
Educational influencers	2.5	5	11	4
Other	1	2	1	1
Declined to answer	2	0	0	1
No further type of influencer	0	18	23	8
Aggregate	100	100	100	100

**Figure 45: Do Arab societies trust social media influencers?**

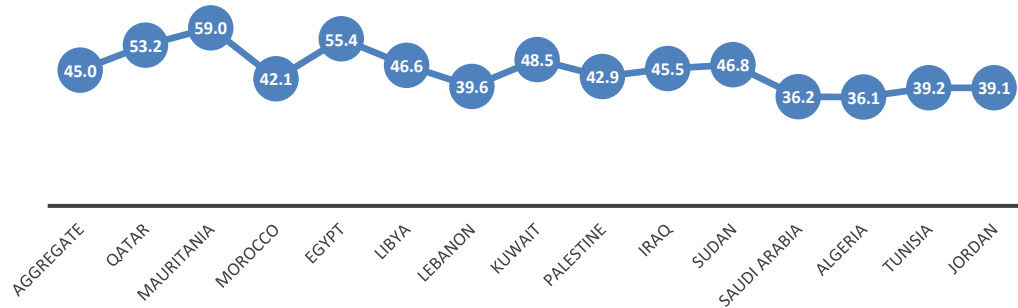
	Most followed	Second most followed	third most followed	Aggregate
Sports influencers	21	8	6	15
Political influencers	17	10	4	14
Social influencers	11	11	13	12
Beauty influencers	16	6	5	11
Health/medical influencers	8	12	8	11
Culinary influencers	9	11	6	7
Religious influencers	6	7	9	7
Physical training influencers	3	6	6	5
Technology influencers	3	4	8	4
Educational influencers	2.5	5	11	4
Other	1	2	1	1
Declined to answer	2	0	0	1
No further type of influencer	0	18	23	8
Aggregate	100	100	100	100

Following influencers does not translate into trust in what they post or influence on personal opinions. As 45% of social media users who follow influencers reported that they are influenced by what these influencers publish, compared to 55% who do not trust them. 52% reported that they trust the information these influencers publish, compared to 48% who expressed a lack of trust.

**Figure 46: The extent to which respondents trust the information published by the influencers they follow**



**Figure 47: The extent to which social media users report that they are influenced by the posts of influencers they follow**



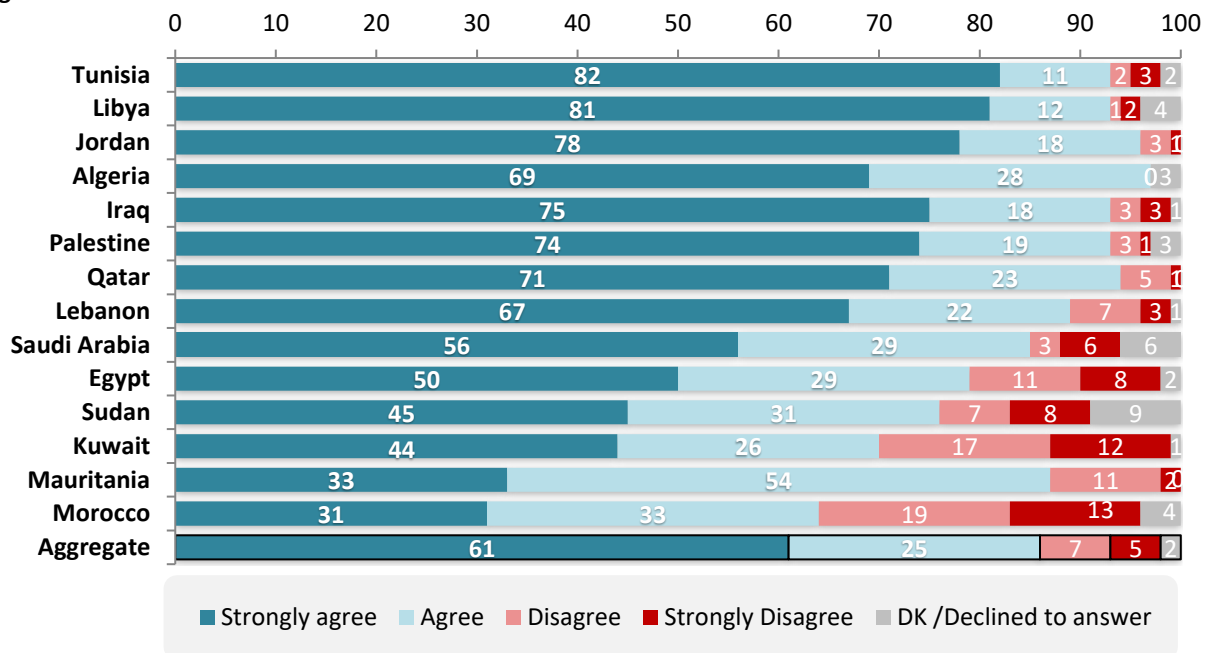
### Social Media and Children/Teenagers

86% of respondents believe that social media has become a danger to children and teenagers. This consensus stretches across every region surveyed.

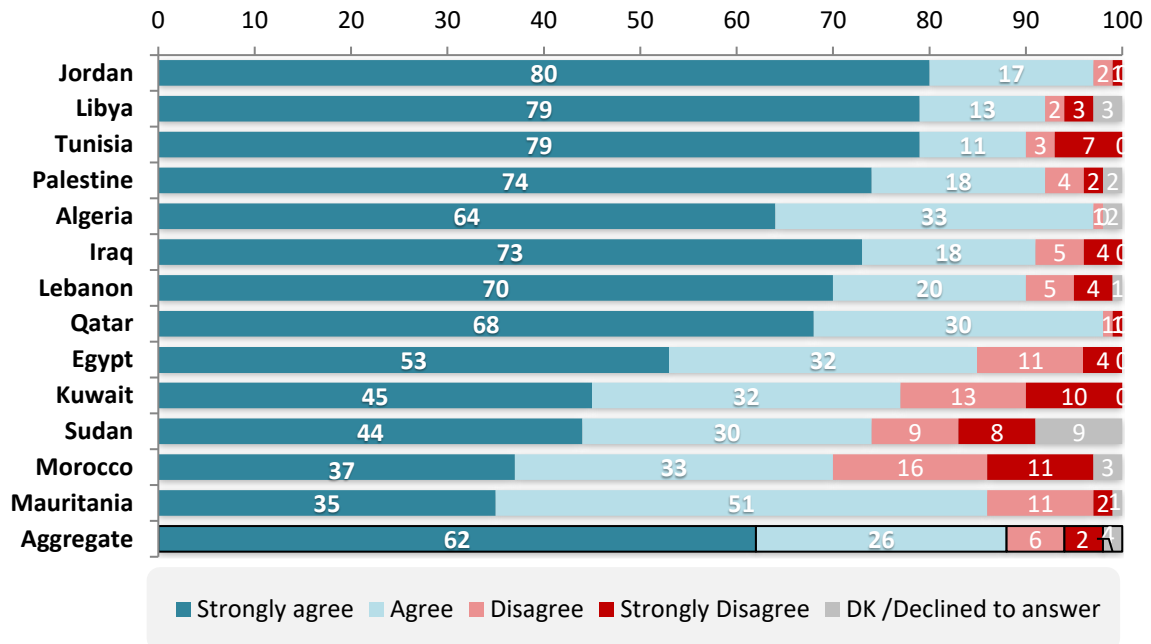
88% of the respondents stated that the use of social media without parental control can expose children and teenagers to bad influences. The vast majority agreed with this sentiment in every country surveyed, while the highest rates of disagreement were in Morocco (27%), followed by Kuwait (23%).

89% of respondents support the need for parents to monitor the use of social media by children and teenagers, compared to 10% who oppose it. A majority of more than three quarters of respondents in each of the surveyed communities reported the need for oversight of children's and teenagers' use of social media.

**Figure 48: To what degree do you agree or disagree that social media has become dangerous for children and teenagers?**



**Figure 49: To what extent do you agree or disagree that uncontrolled use of social media can expose children and teenagers to bad influences?**



**Figure 50: To what extent do you agree or disagree that it is necessary for parents to oversee the use of social media by children and teenagers?**

