

# **Iraqi Views on Politics, Sectarianism and Women**

Results from the March 2011 National Survey and  
Focus Groups

# Research Methodology

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- **National survey: February 24 – March 23, 2011**
  - 2,400 face-to-face interviews (1,436 weighted) of adults 18 years old and over; distributed representatively by province; national margin of error (MoE) of +/- 2.0%
  - Oversample in Kirkuk: Feb 26 - March 15, 457 total interviews (45 weighted) (+/- 2.0% MoE)
  - Regional breakdowns
    - Baghdad: Feb. 24 - March 10, 500 interviews (351 weighted) (+/- 4.38% MoE)
    - West: Feb. 26 - March 11, 500 interviews (391 weighted) (+/-4.38% MoE)
    - South: Feb. 24-28 (except Dhi Qar, where interviews lasted until March 3), 500 interviews (499 weighted) (+/- 4.38% MoE)
    - North: March 5–23, 500 interviews (194 weighted) (+/- 4.38% MoE)
  
- **Focus groups: February 16–21, 2011**
  - 10 focus groups
  - Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, Baghdad, Basra, and Anbar
  - Groups were homogenous based on ethnicity, religion, gender, age, education, and political leanings

# Relative Stability in Iraq

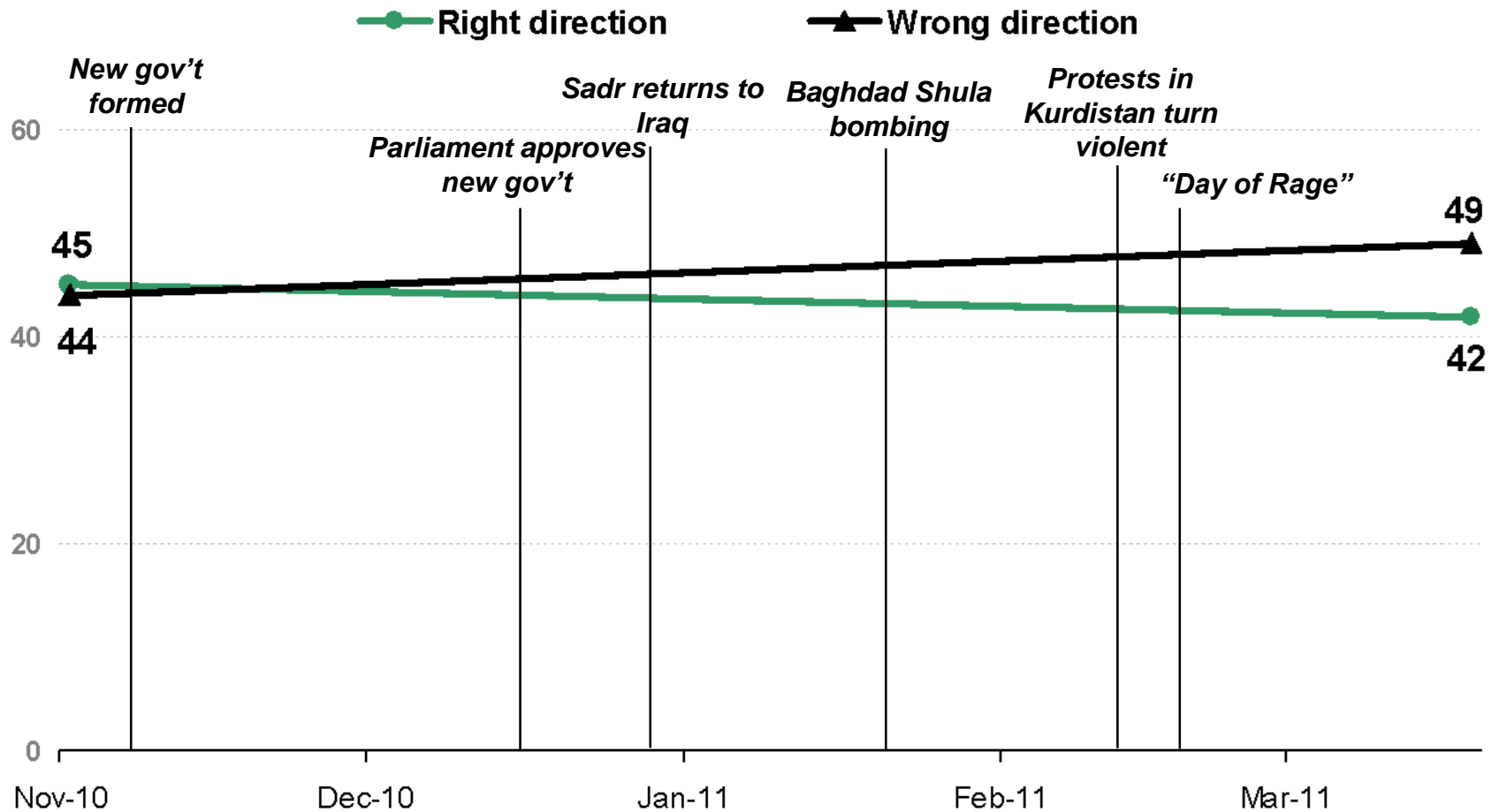
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## Key findings on country mood

1. Despite protests and unrest, increase in violence and frustration with government, a relatively positive view of the country
2. However, dissatisfaction among Sunnis (West region), the poor, and young men threaten stability
1. Iraqis moving toward a better universe of problems as security concerns are replaced by focus on jobs and services
1. Although questions remain about Iraq's "democracy," a strong belief that democracy can improve lives

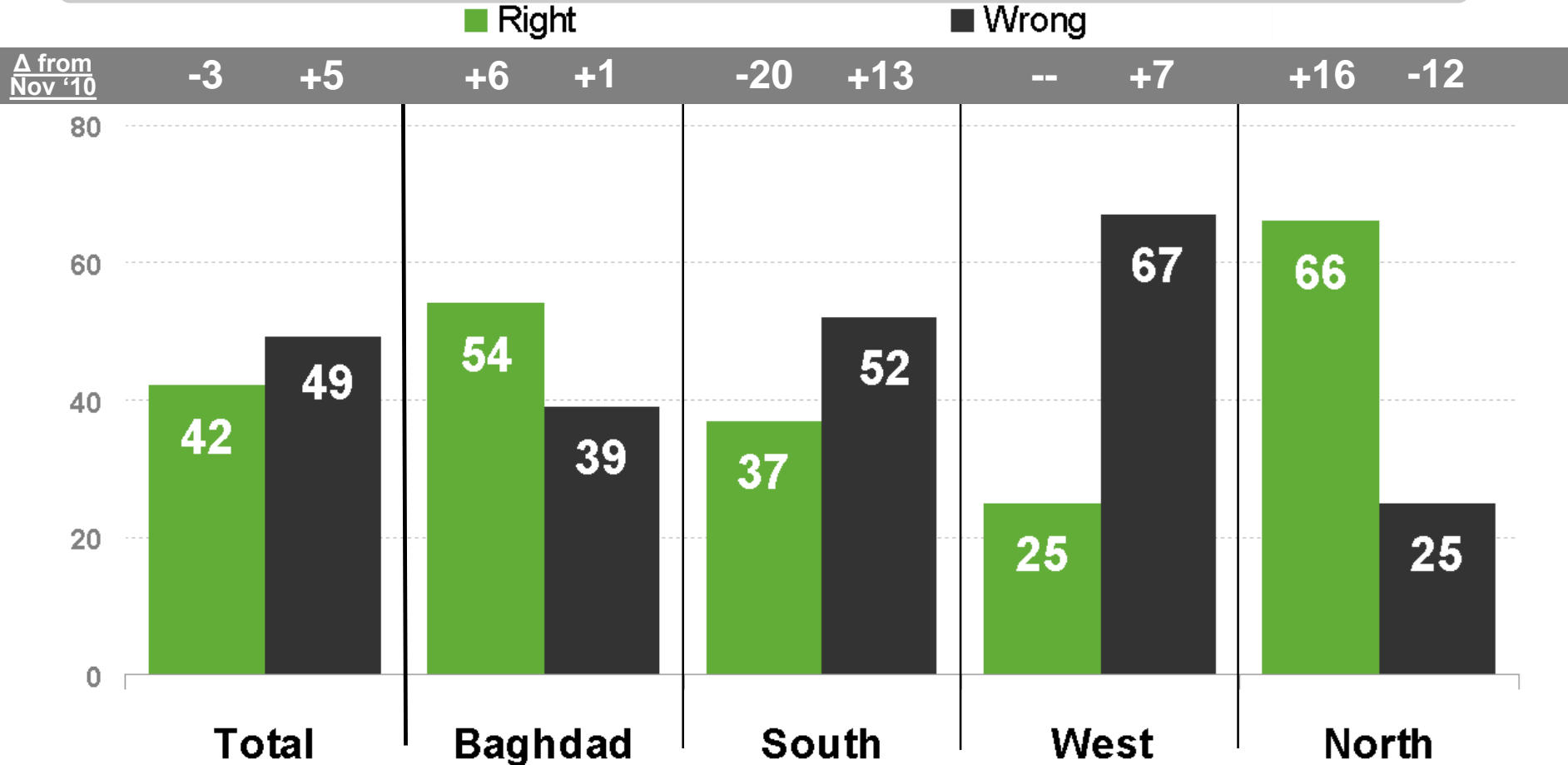
# Country mood remains relatively positive

Generally speaking, do you think that things in Iraq are going in the right direction, or do you feel things are going in the wrong direction?



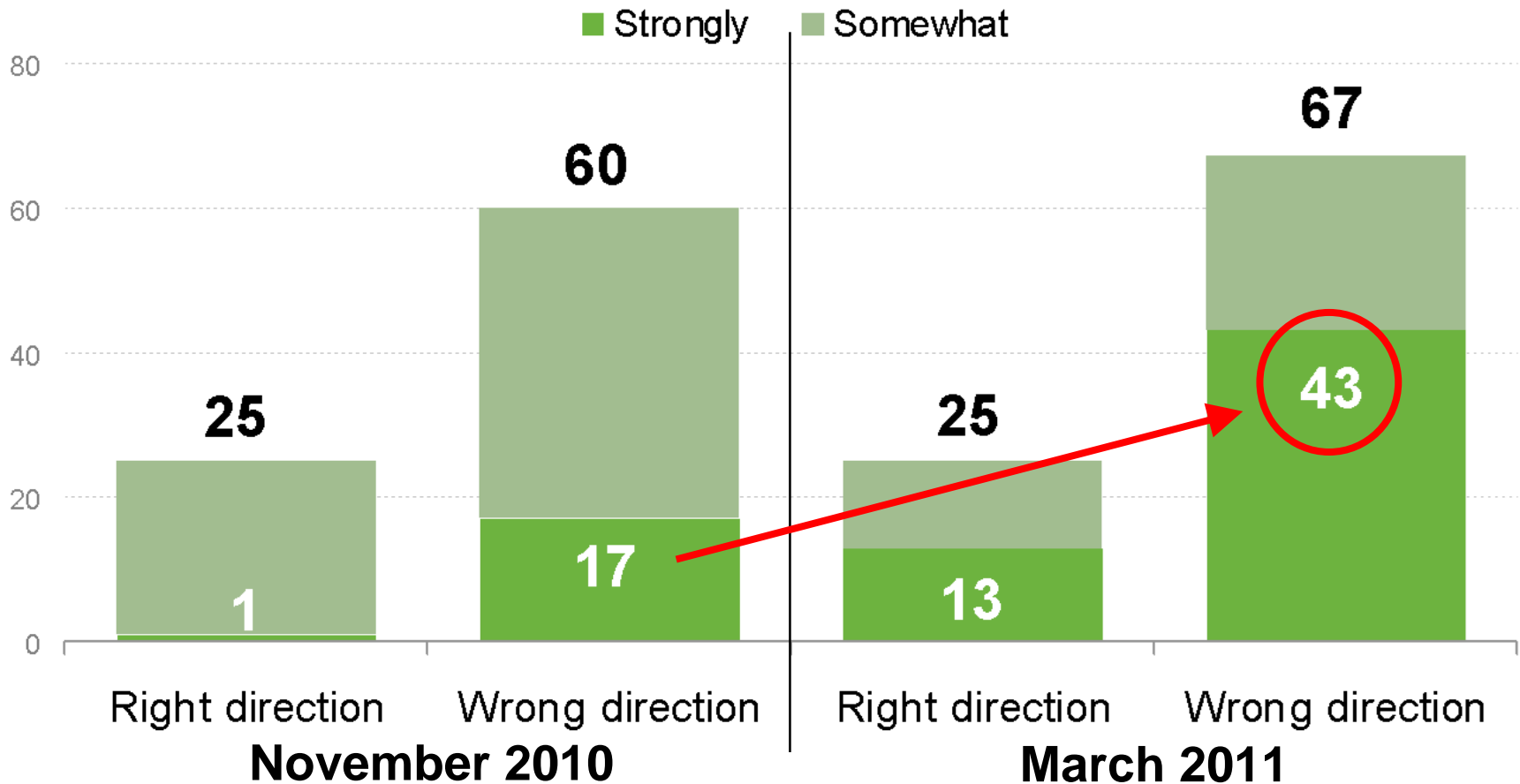
# Increased pessimism largely driven by the South, West regions

Generally speaking, do you think that things in Iraq are going in the right direction, or do you feel things are going in the wrong direction?



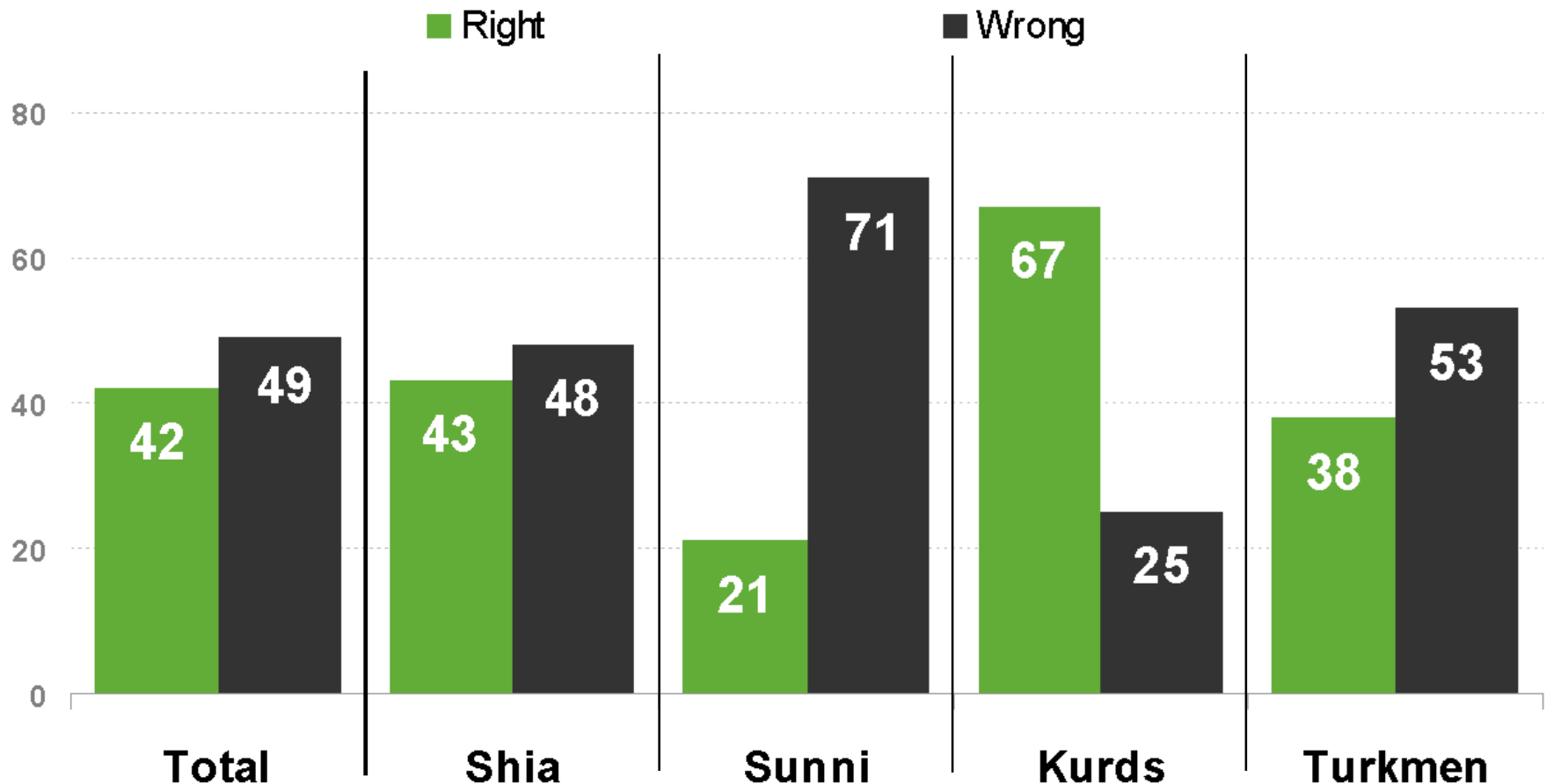
## Negative country mood intensifies in the West region

Generally speaking, do you think that things in Iraq are going in the right direction, or do you feel things are going in the wrong direction? (**West Region only**)



# Sunnis continue to be most pessimistic, Kurds most optimistic

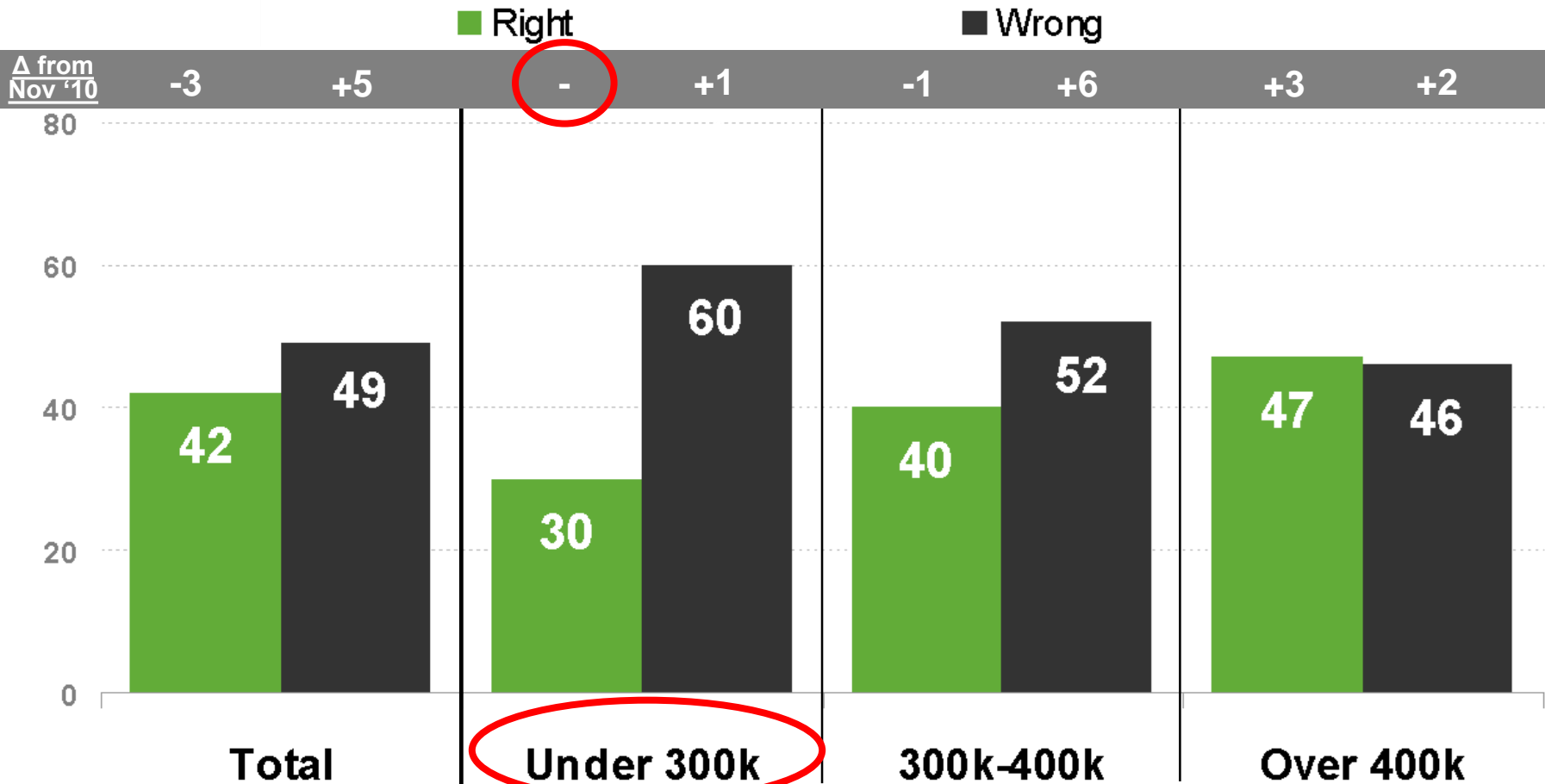
*Generally speaking, do you think that things in Iraq are going in the right direction, or do you feel things are going in the wrong direction?*





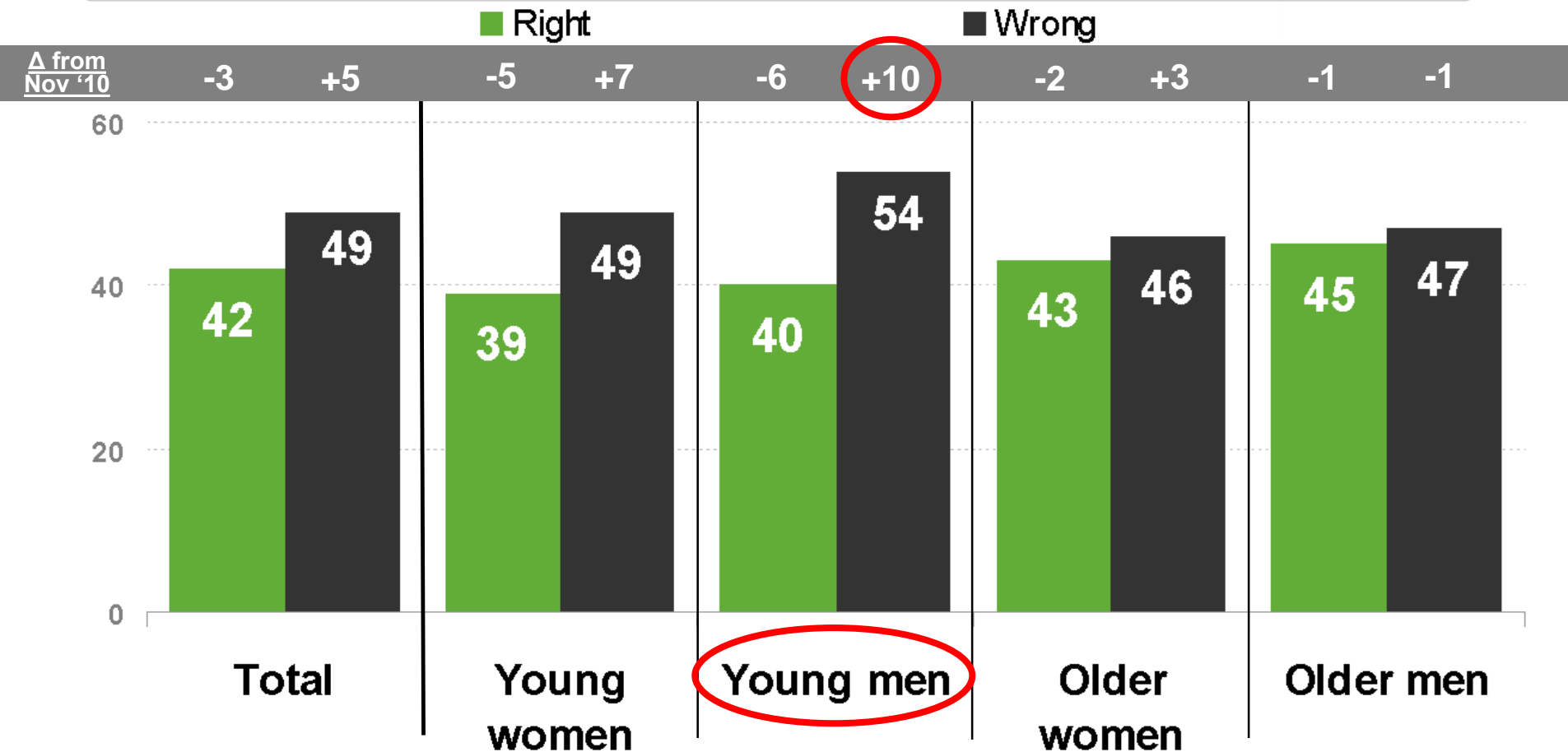
# Significant increase in wrong direction among the poor

Generally speaking, do you think that things in Iraq are going in the right direction, or do you feel things are going in the wrong direction?



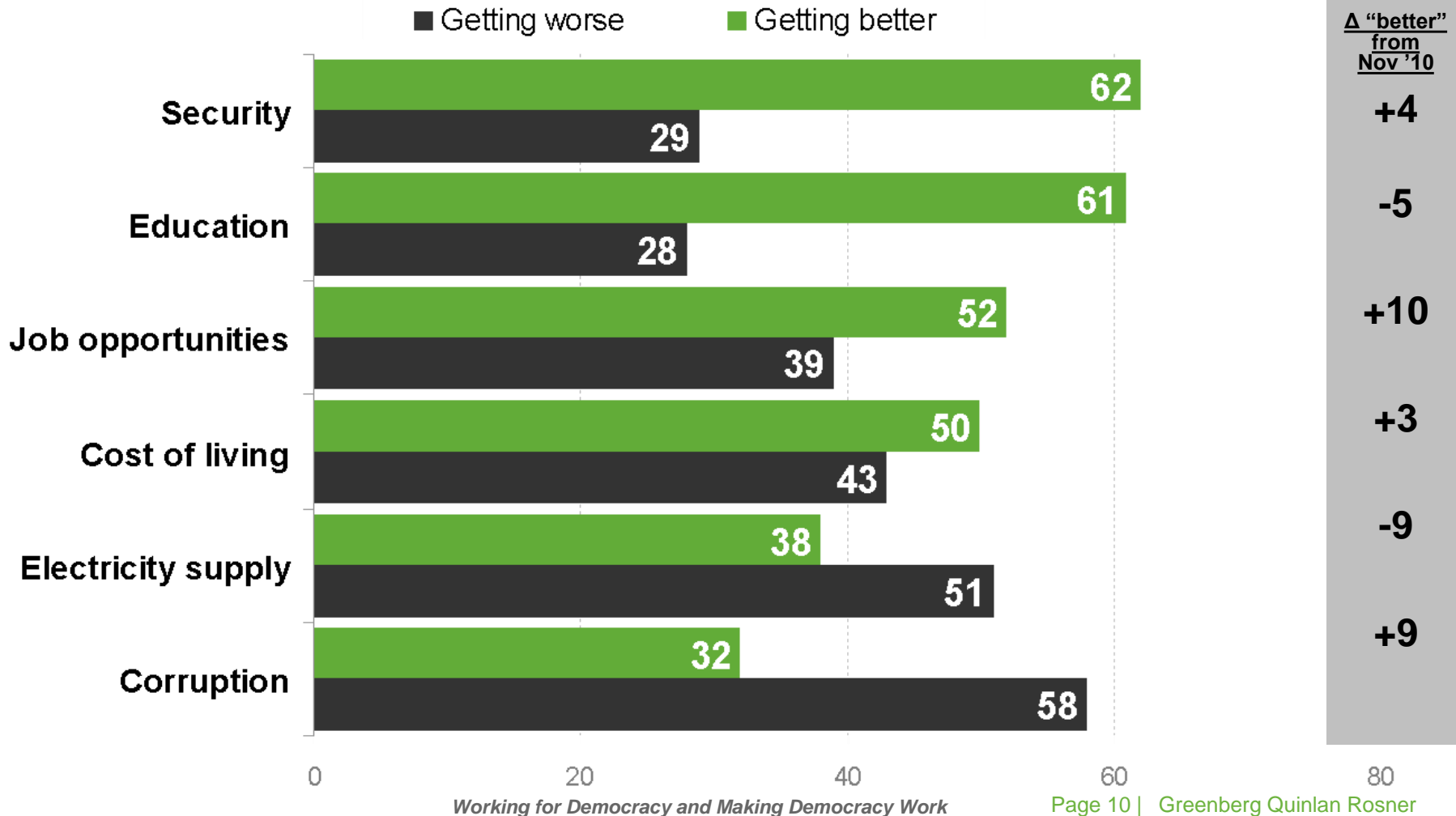
# Increased pessimism largely driven by young Iraqis

Generally speaking, do you think that things in Iraq are going in the right direction, or do you feel things are going in the wrong direction?



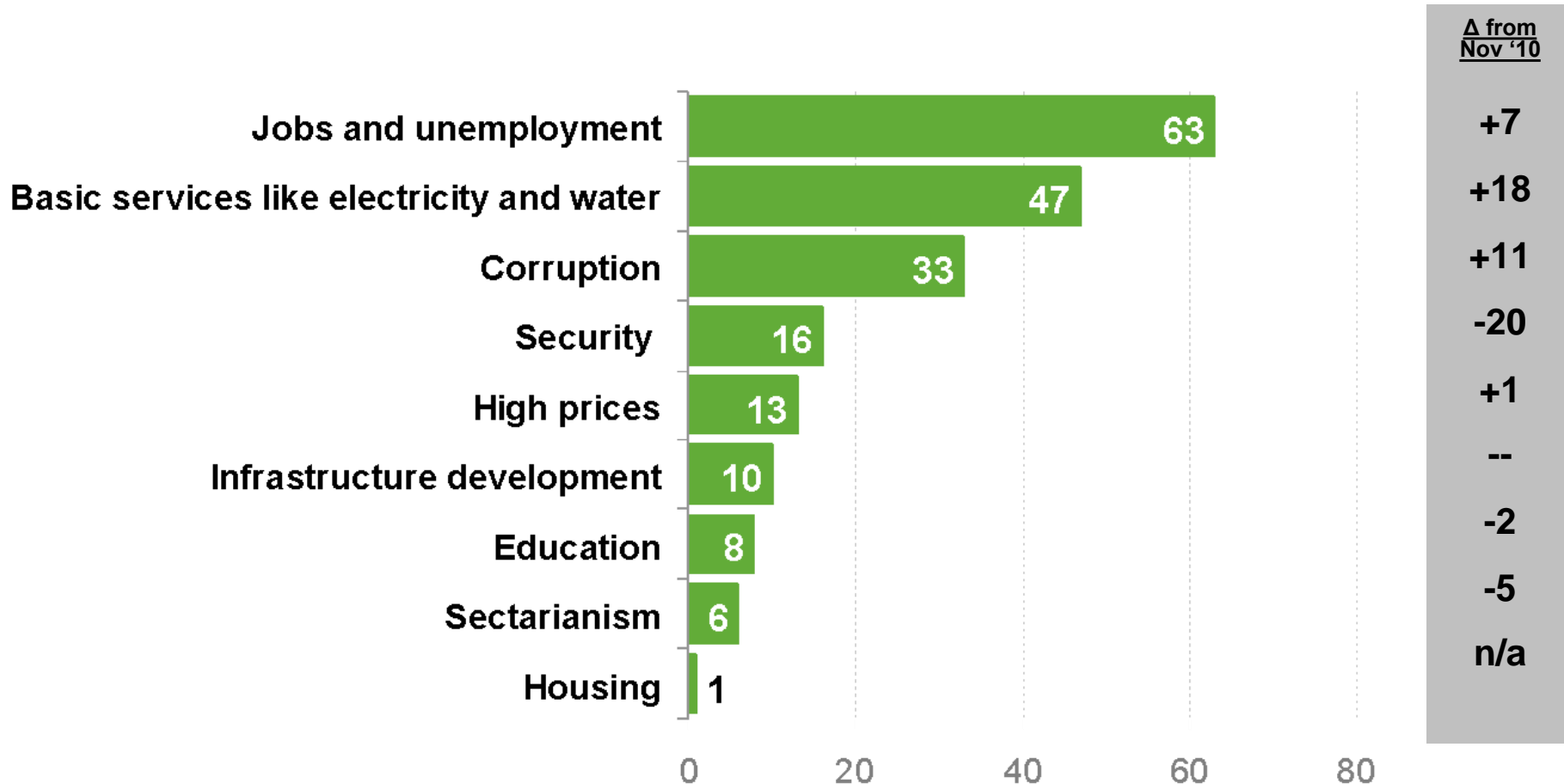
# Perceptions of security strongest area of improvement

Now I will read you a list of issues. Please tell me if you think this issue is getting better or worse in Iraq.



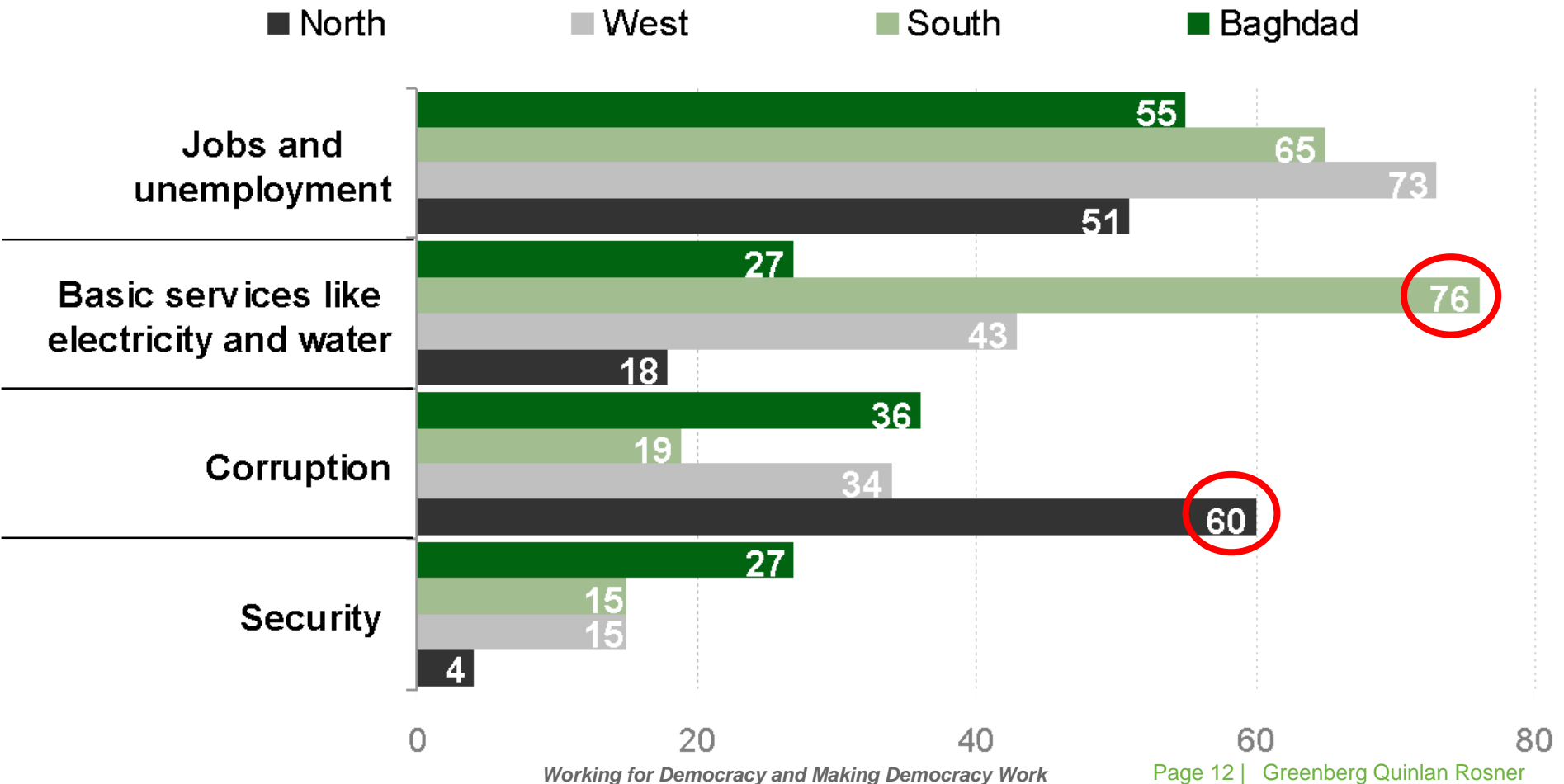
# Increasing concerns about jobs and services, drop in security

Now, I am going to read you a list of concerns that some people may have. Please tell me which TWO of these are the most important for the government to address.



# Services dominate concerns in South, corruption in North

*Now, I am going to read you a list of concerns that some people may have. Please tell me which TWO of these are the most important for the government to address.*



# Perceptions of job opportunities worse among poorer Iraqis

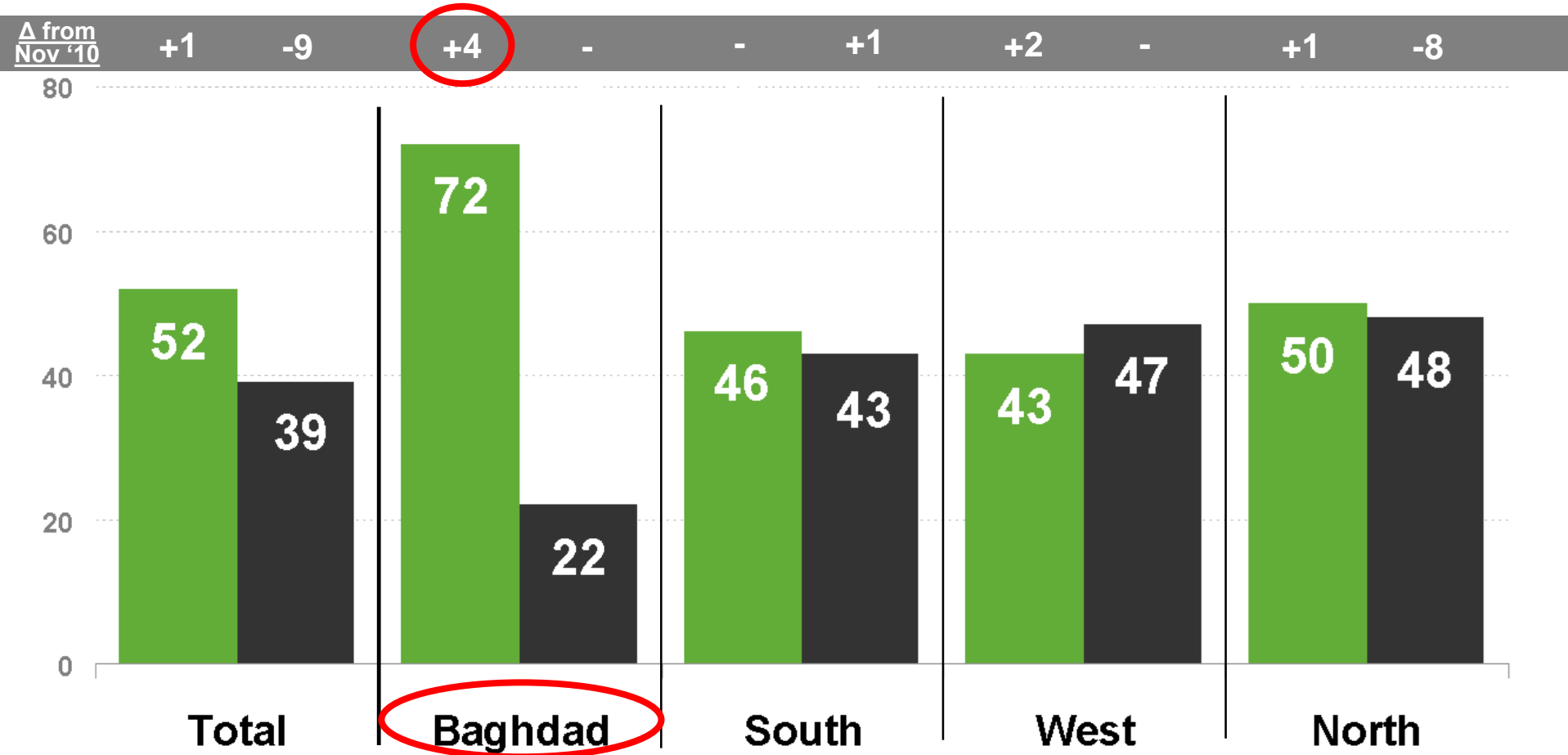
Please tell me if you think **job opportunities** are getting better or worse in Iraq.



# Perceptions of job opportunities significantly better in Baghdad

Please tell me if you think **job opportunities** are getting better or worse in Iraq.

■ Better ■ Worse



# Most see Iraq's economy as weak, slightly better personal situation

Now I want to ask you about the economy. Would you say **Iraq's economy** right now is strong or weak?

How do you think **the financial position of your own household** will change over the next 12 months - do you think it will get worse, or do you think it will get better?

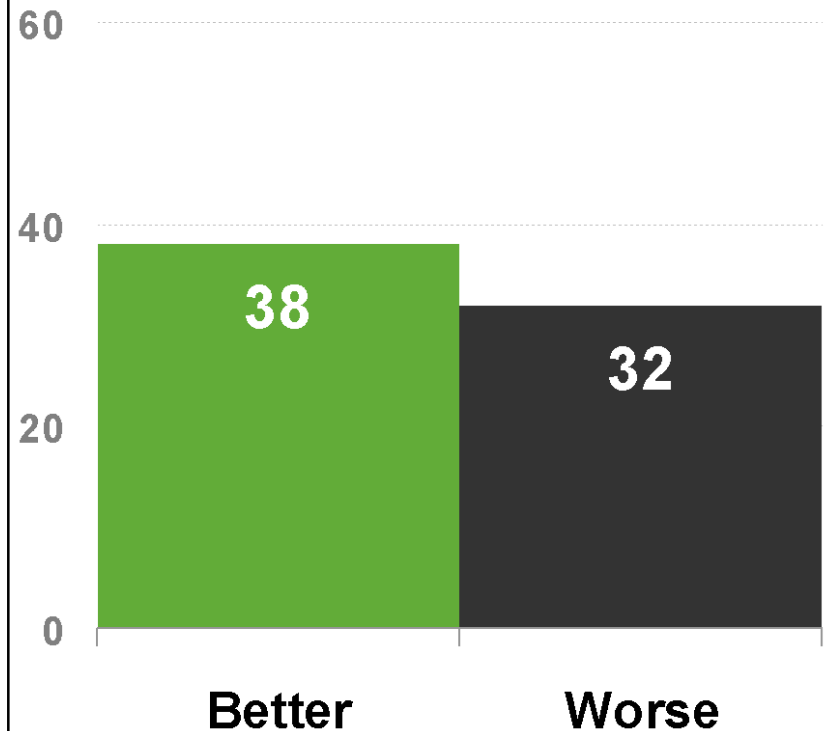
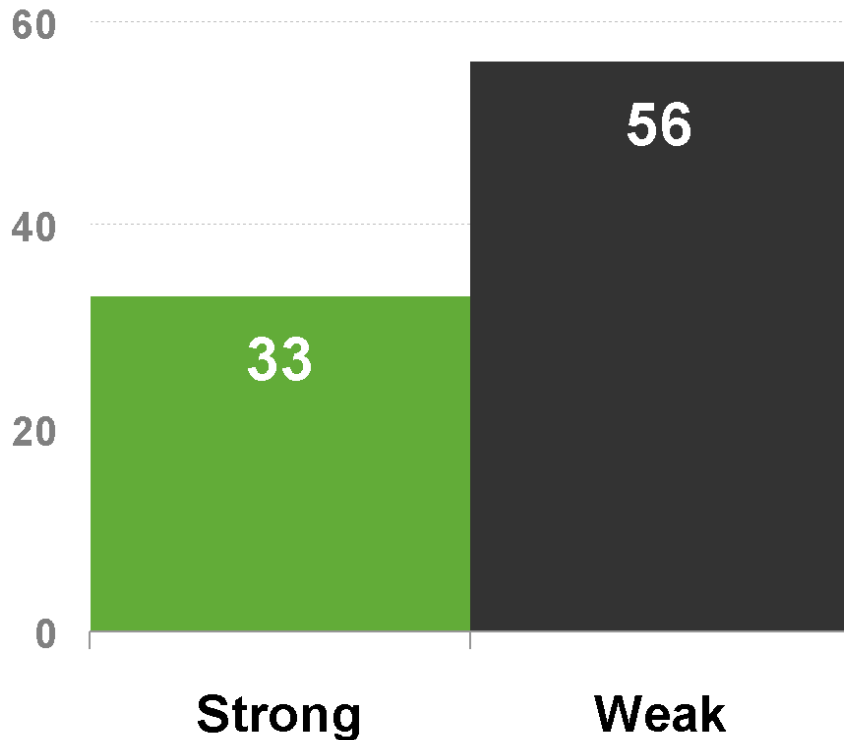
$\Delta$  from Nov '10

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-10

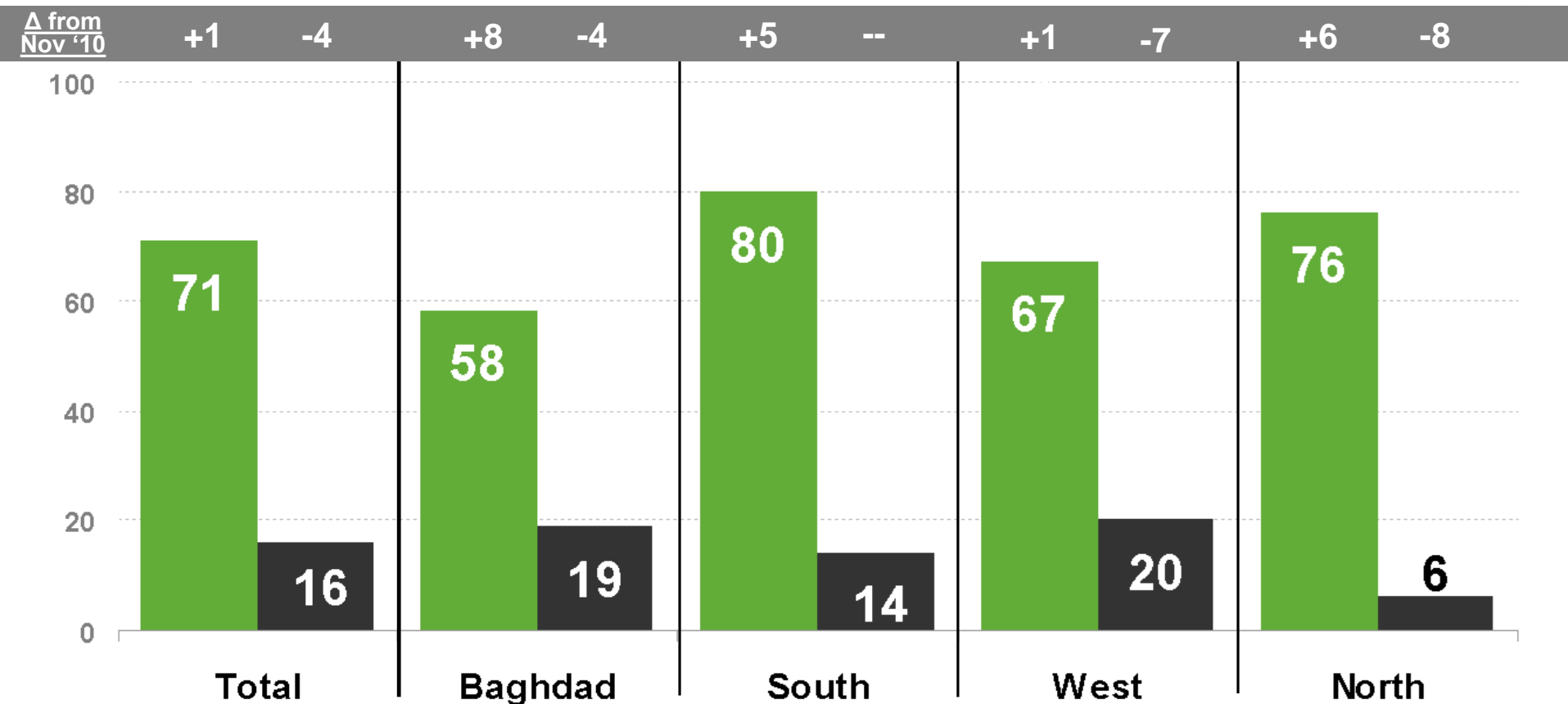
+6





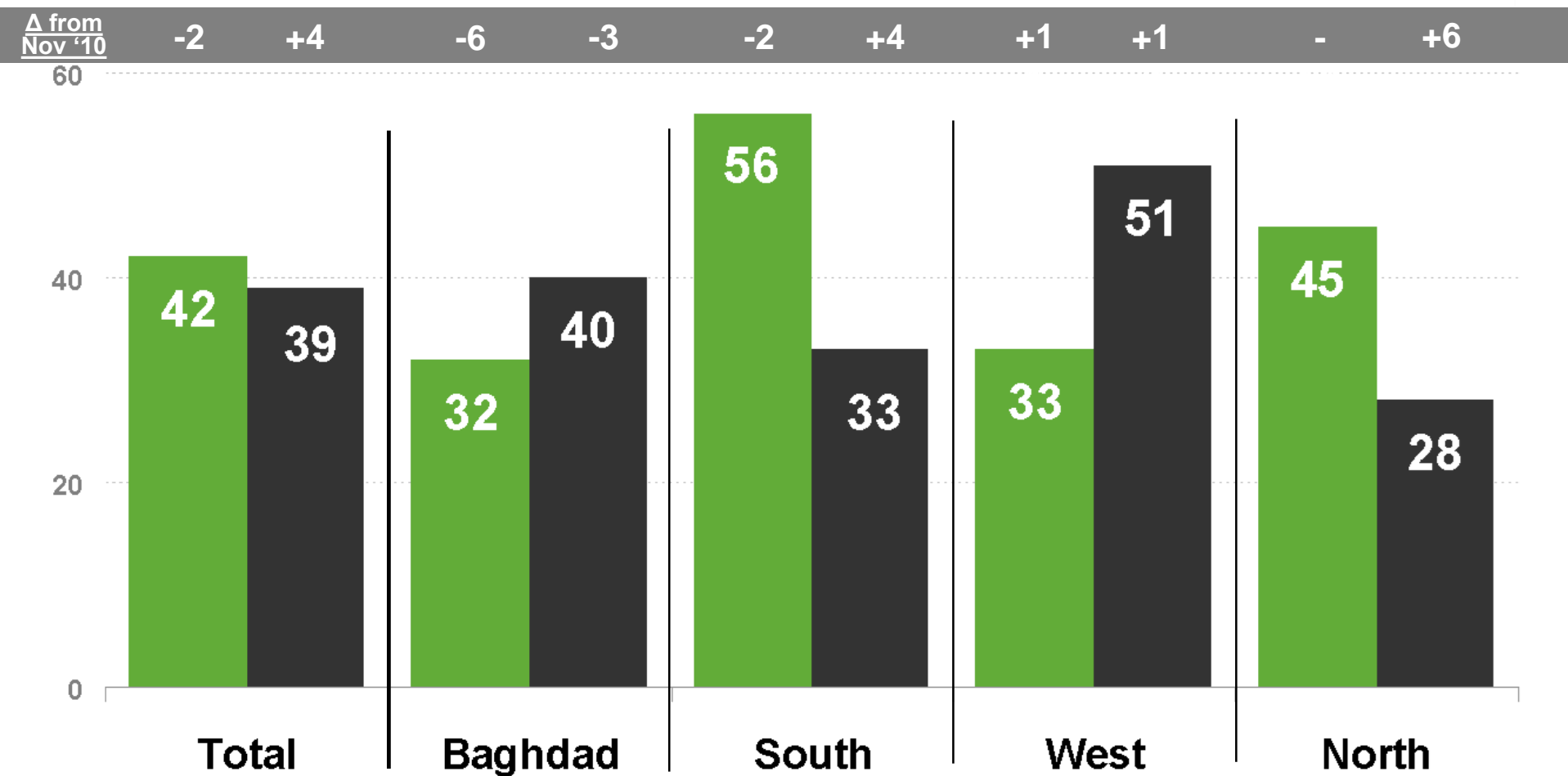
# Increase in perception that democracy improves quality of life

- Making Iraq more democratic will likely improve services and our quality of life.
- Making Iraq more democratic would likely make services worse and hurt our quality of life.



# Significant shifts in whether Iraq is a democracy, esp in North

■ Iraq today is a real democracy.    ■ Iraq today is not a real democracy.



# Political Landscape Stable, Maliki Challenged

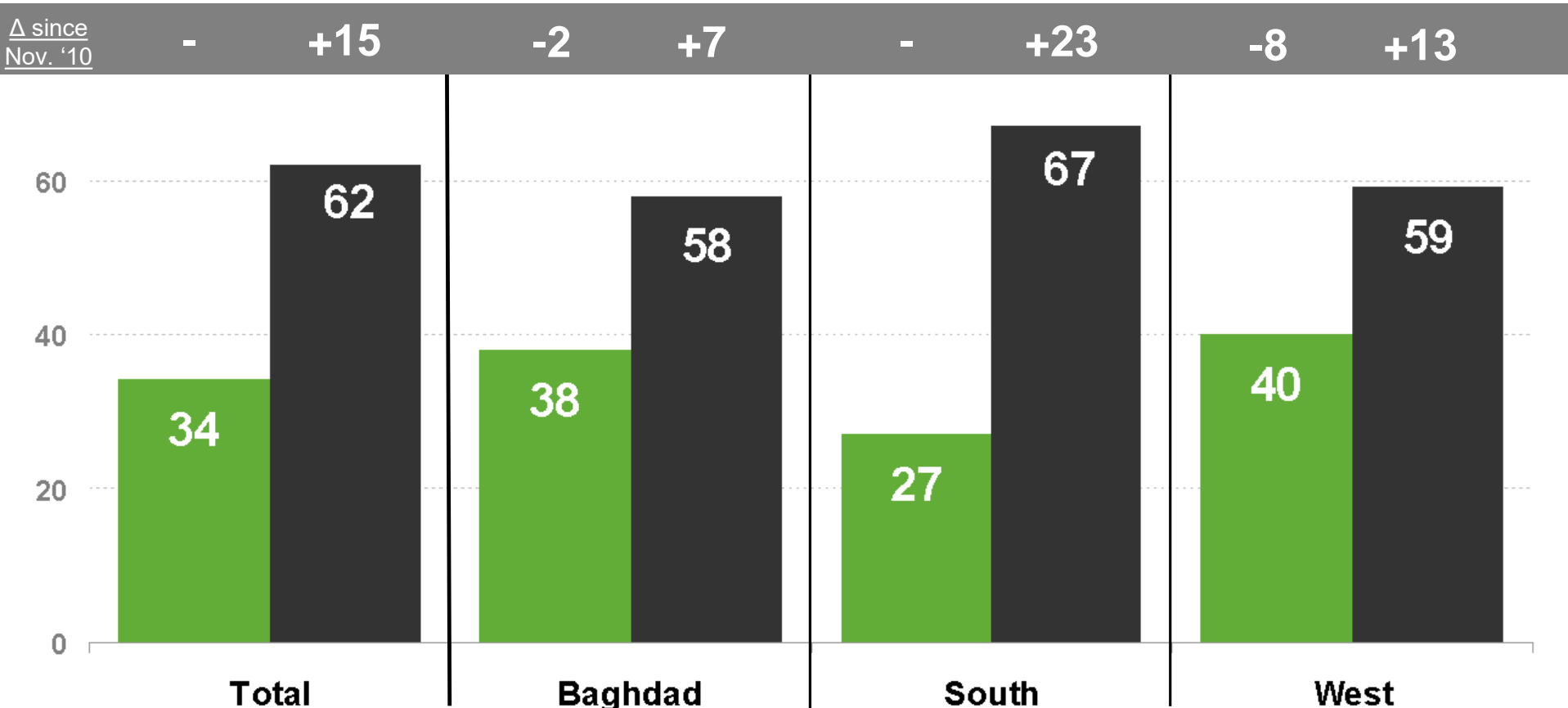
## Key findings on political landscape

1. Stability in political party and leader favorability highlights key differences between Iraq and “Arab spring” countries
1. However, drop in Maliki favorability among poorer Iraqis and in South highlights vulnerabilities and creates openings for other leaders
1. Sadr most likely to exploit political openings, particularly given his improved favorability among poorer Iraqis and young men; Nujaifi also well-positioned
1. Iraqis anger toward local government translates to weaker job approval for provincial governments

# Drop in approval of provincial government

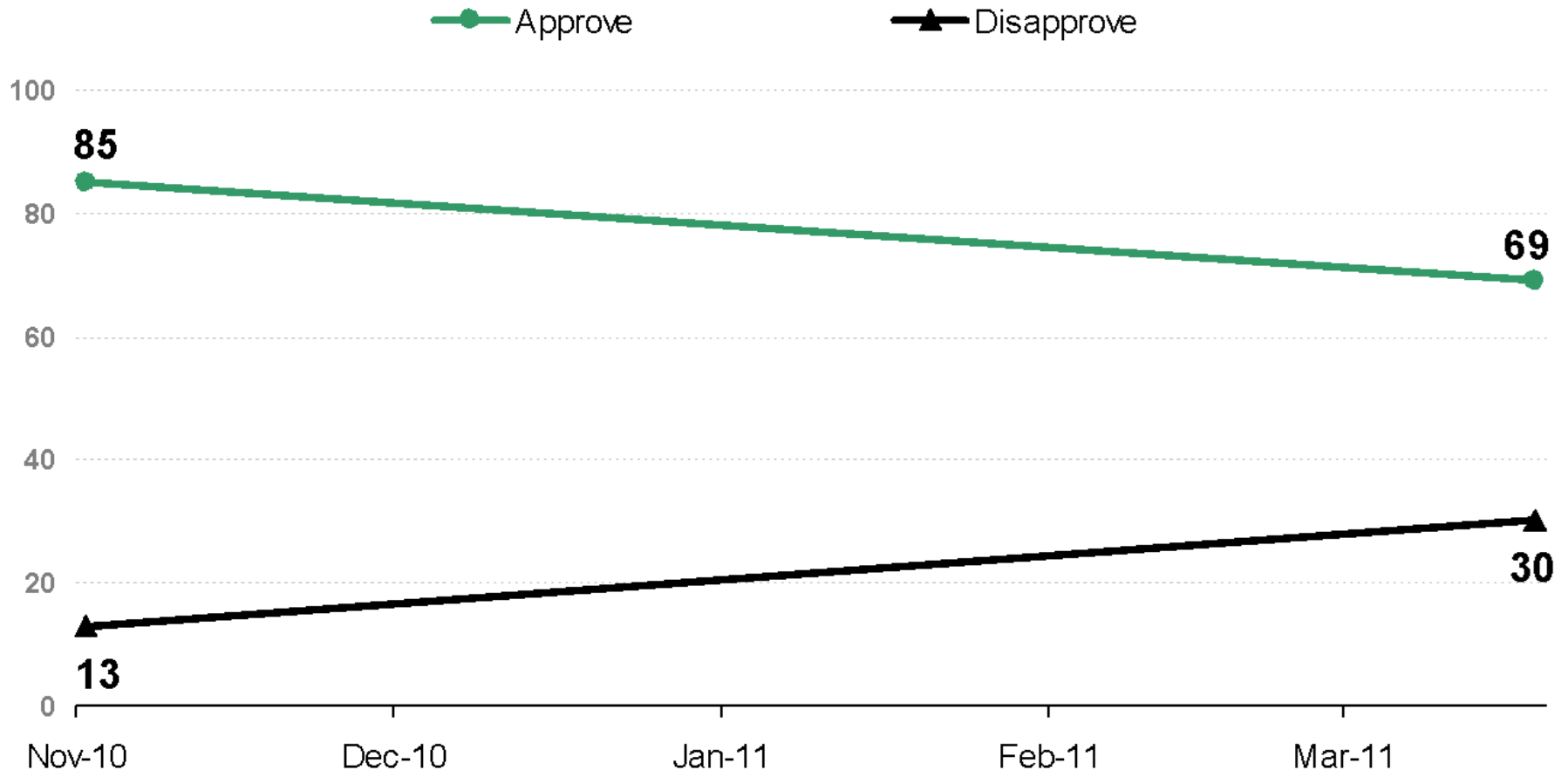
Generally speaking, do you approve or disapprove of the job being done by your provincial government?  
(Not asked in Kurdistan)

■ Approve      ■ Disapprove



## KRG approval drops, but remains high

Generally speaking, do you approve or disapprove of the job being done by the Kurdistan Regional Government, or the KRG? (**NORTH ONLY**)



# Undercurrents of Iraq's Sectarianism

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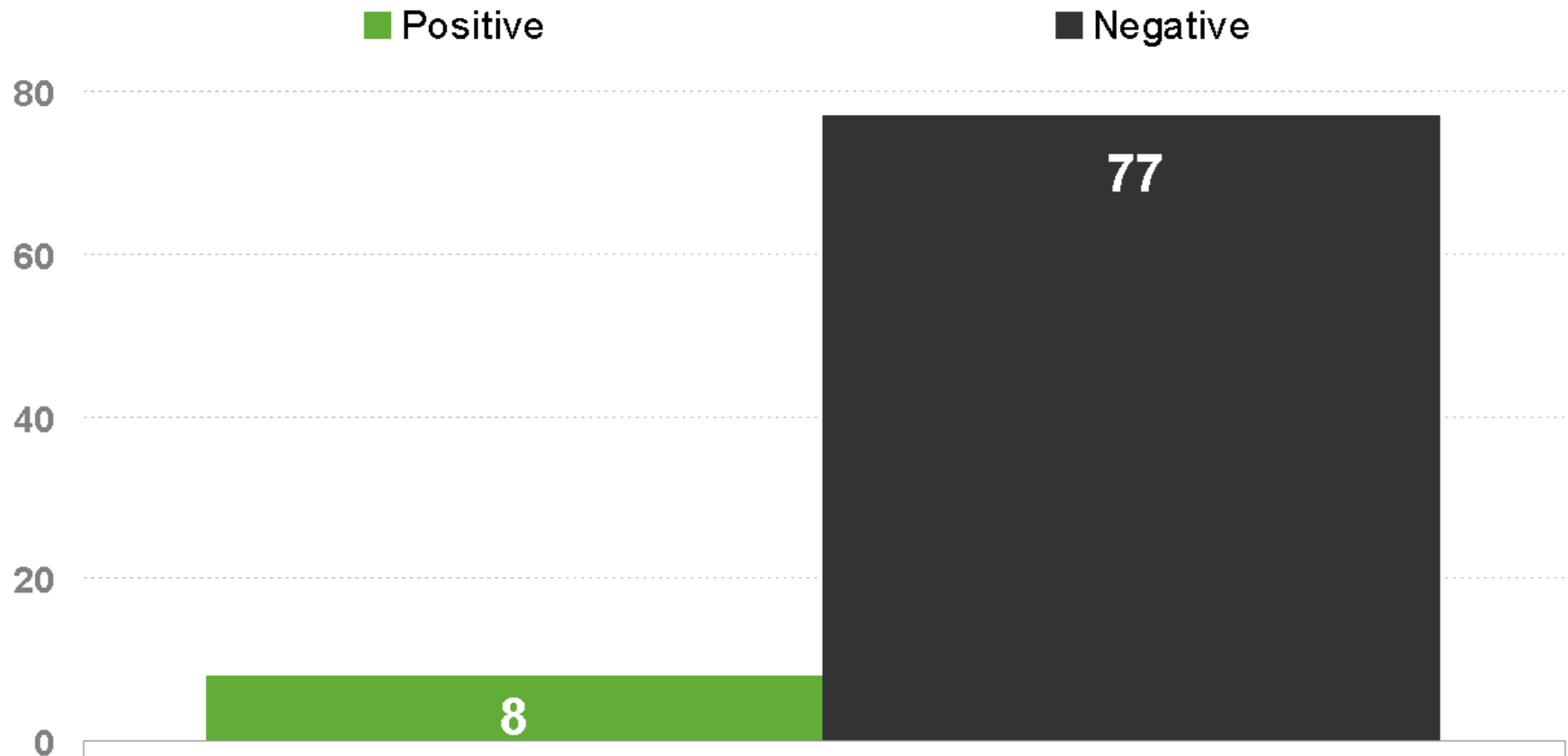
## Key findings on Iraq's sectarianism

1. Iraqis perceive a decrease in sectarianism and view it negatively, yet it continues to play a role in political, economic, and social behavior
1. Iraqis view their world through sectarian lenses, but blame political parties (and foreign influences) for deepening sectarianism; highlights the significant role parties play in reducing tensions
1. Sectarian fears among Sunnis (and continued feelings of disenfranchisement) drive fears about civil war
1. Kurdistan's push for independence and status of Kirkuk fuels sectarian tensions
1. Economic and unity actions by political parties and leaders most effective way to reduce sectarianism



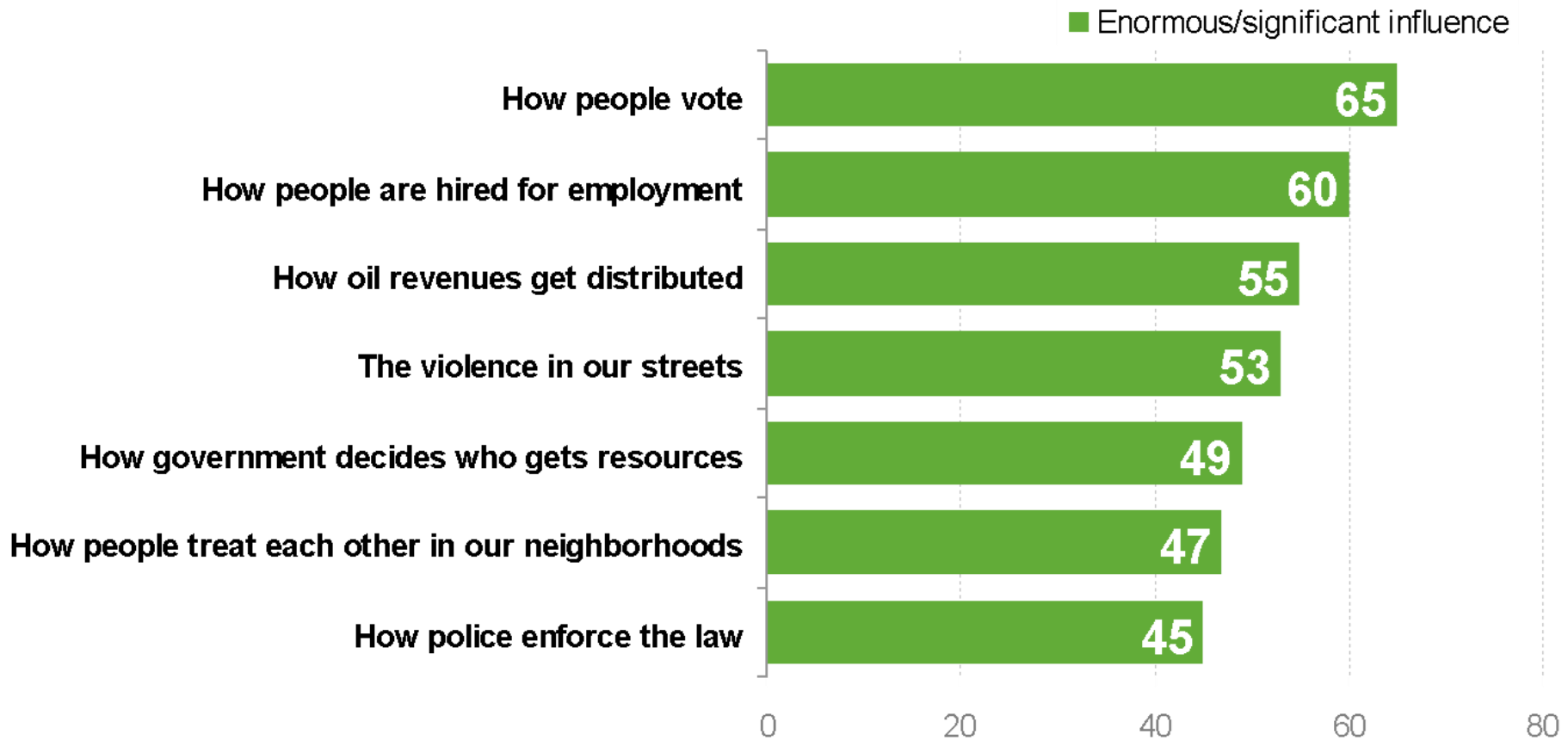
## Most see sectarianism playing a negative role

*Now to something different. In general, do you think sectarianism plays a positive or a negative role in Iraq?*



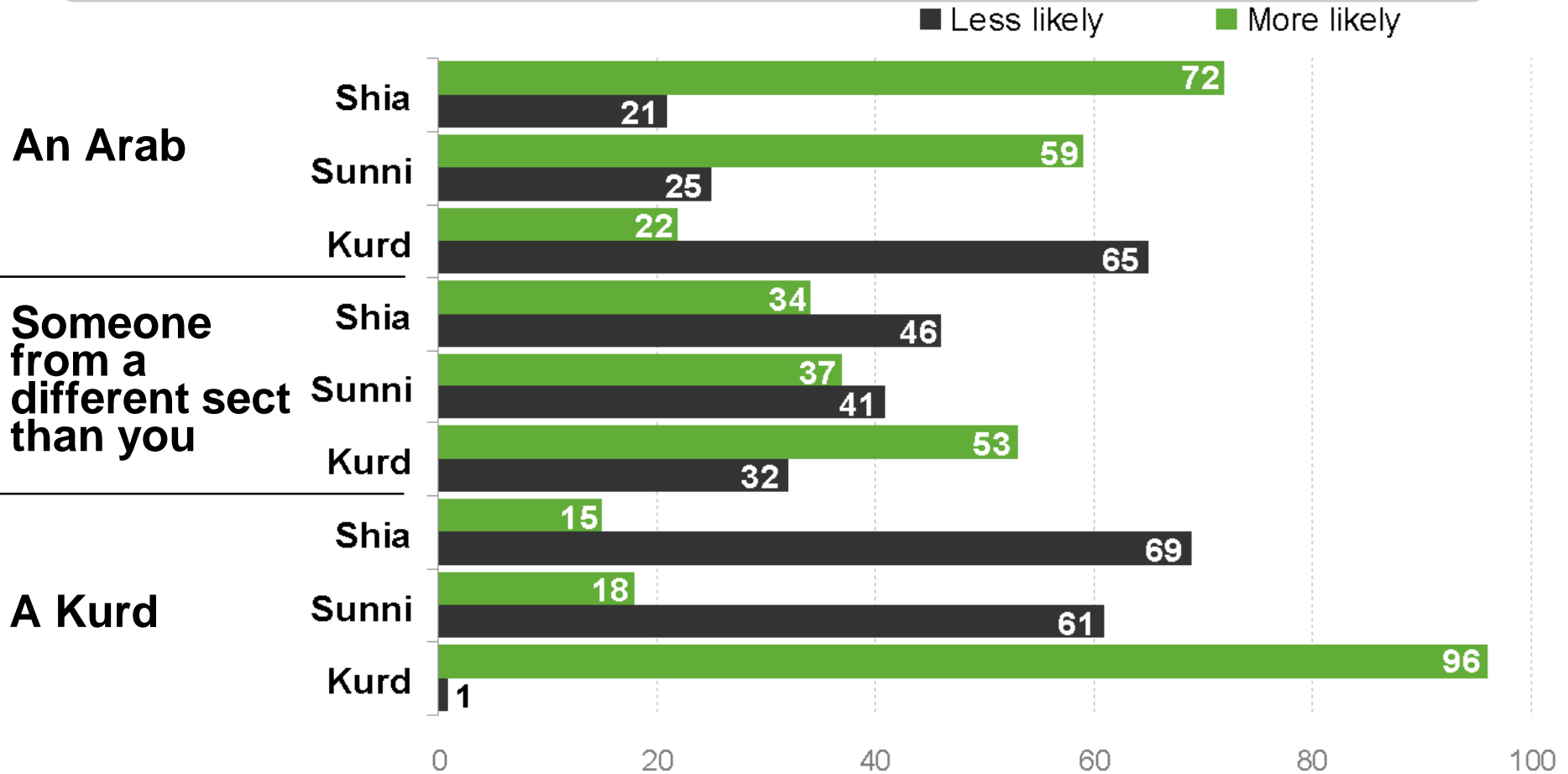
# Sectarianism has most influence in voting and hiring practices

*Now I am going to read you a list of areas that sectarianism might play a role in Iraq. For each one, please tell me if you think sectarianism has an enormous influence, a significant influence, some influence, just a little influence, or no influence at all.*



# Ethnicity strong influence on vote, sect also influential

*I am going to read a list of characteristics that a candidate for parliament might have. For each one, please tell me if this characteristic makes you more or less likely to support that kind of candidate.*

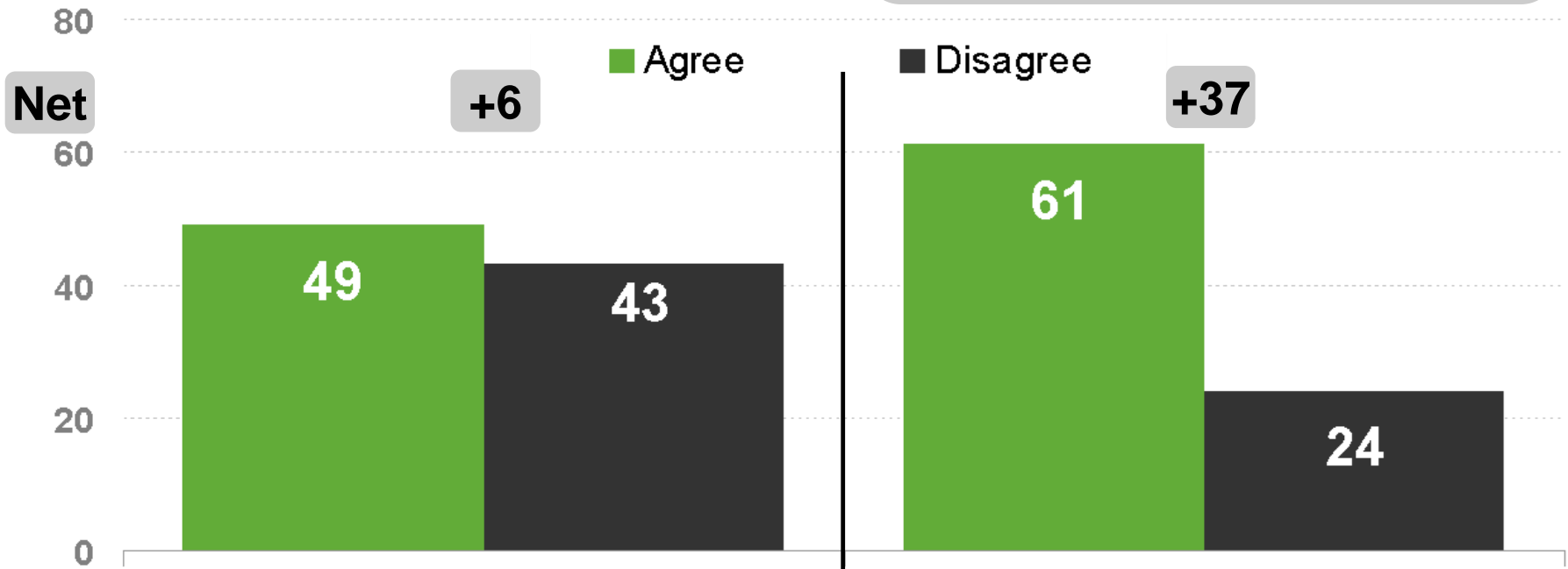


# Iraqis lean toward parties not based on sect or ethnicity

Now I would like to read a few statements. For each one, please tell me whether you disagree or disagree.

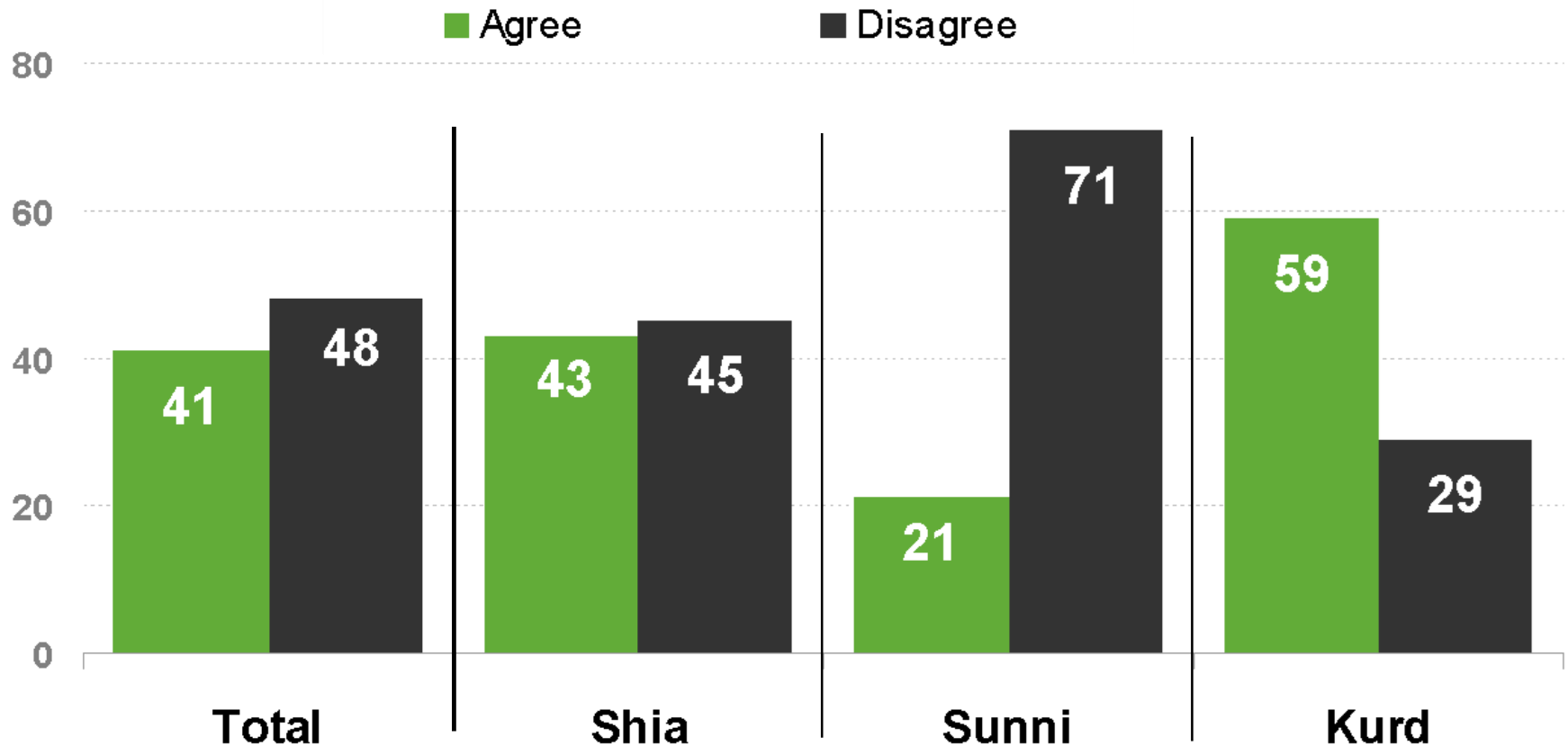
*It is okay for people to join political parties mostly made of people from their own religious sect and ethnicity, so that they can advocate for their common interests.*

*It is better for political parties not to be based on religious sect and ethnicity, because that will reduce the chances for sectarian discrimination or violence when one party or another is in control.*



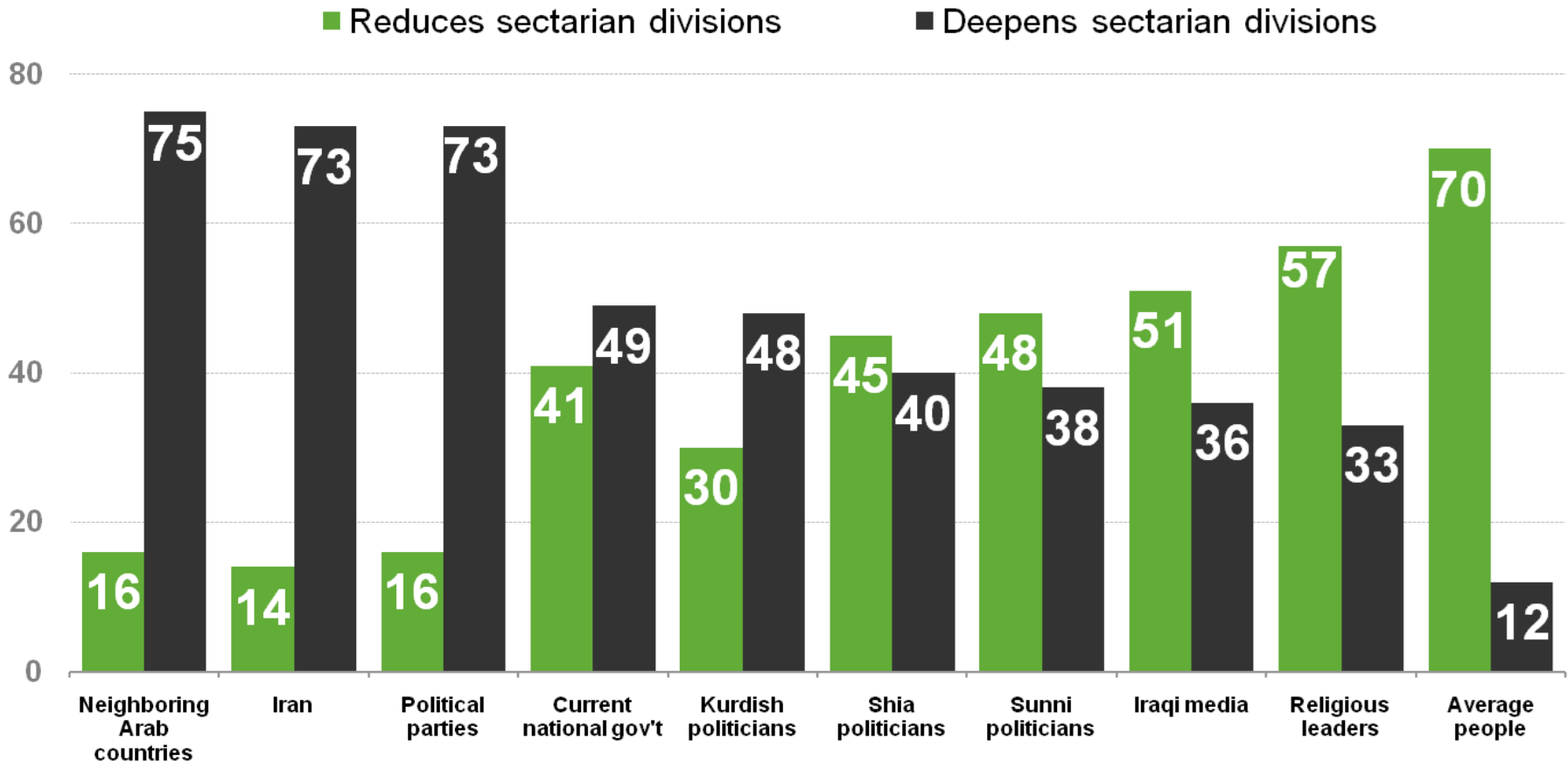
## Hiring based on ethnicity and sect varies among groups

*Now I would like to read a few statements. For each one, please tell me whether you disagree or disagree: It is natural for people to favor people from their own religious sect or ethnicity in things like hiring, because loyalty is important.*



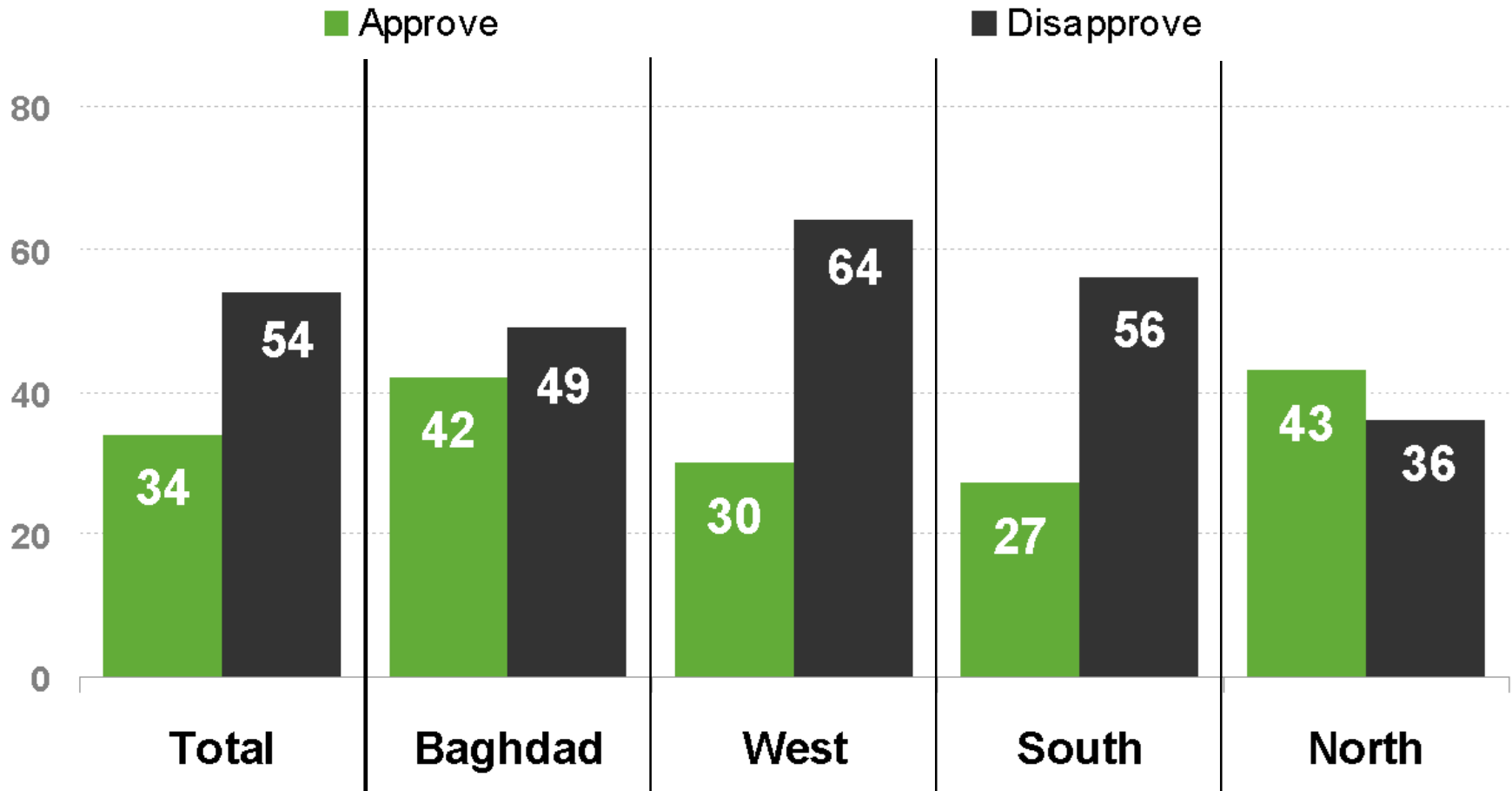
# Other countries and political parties deepen sectarian divisions

*Now I am going to read you a list of some people and institutions. For each, please tell me if you think it mostly deepens sectarian divisions in Iraq, or mostly helps to reduce sectarian divisions in Iraq.*



## Majorities disapprove of minister allocation

*As you may know, Parliament recently approved the ministers of the new government. In general, do you approve or disapprove of how the ministries were allocated in the new government?*



## Ministry allocation highlights sectarianism

*We have 42 ministries. In my opinion, this is a waste of public money. Each is acting according to his whim. There aren't any competent people and the reason is sectarian allocations. However, I hope that all will be well because our country is a democratic one.*

**Baghdad Shia Man**

*There has to be fairness in distribution [of ministry positions] so that people feel that there is no difference between a person from Basra and a person from Anbar. This increases the level of affection and feeling of security between the Iraq people.*

**Basra Shia Man**

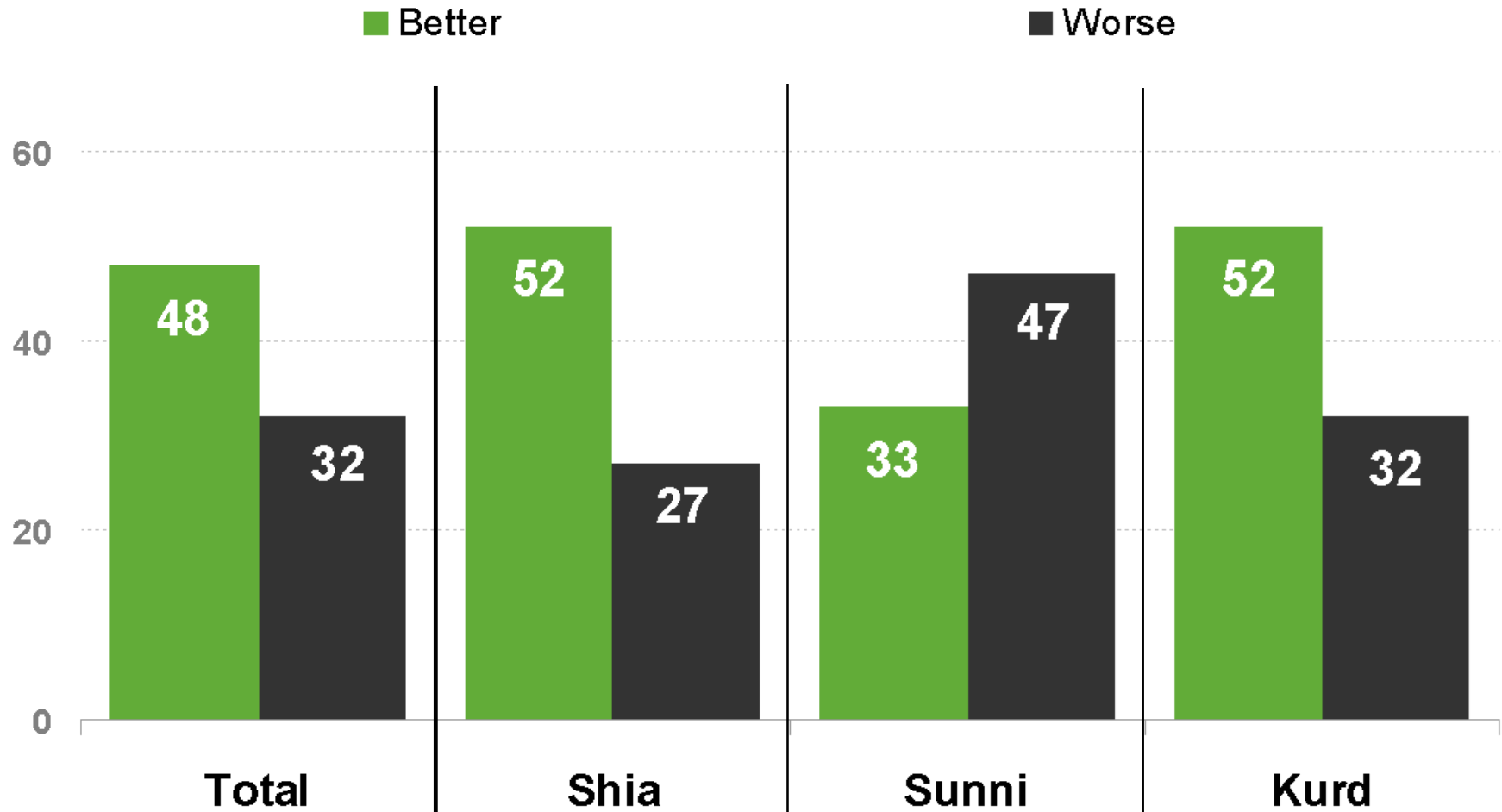
*Ministries should be allocated according to competence and not nepotism and partisanship. They can bring in party members but we want them to be competent and to work for Iraq and not for their sect.*

**Anbar Sunni Female**



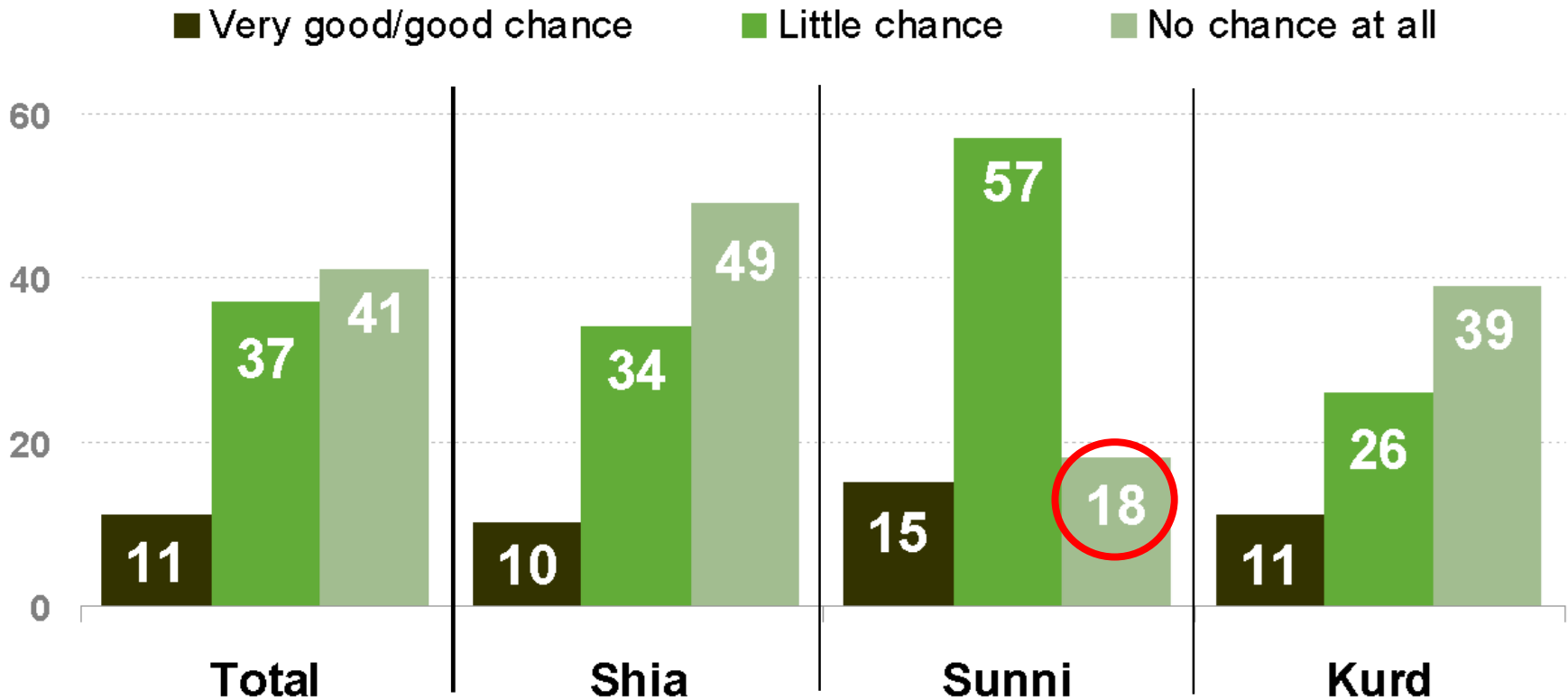
# Sectarianism decreasing among Shia/Kurds, worse among Sunnis

Please tell me if you think **sectarianism** is getting better or worse in Iraq.



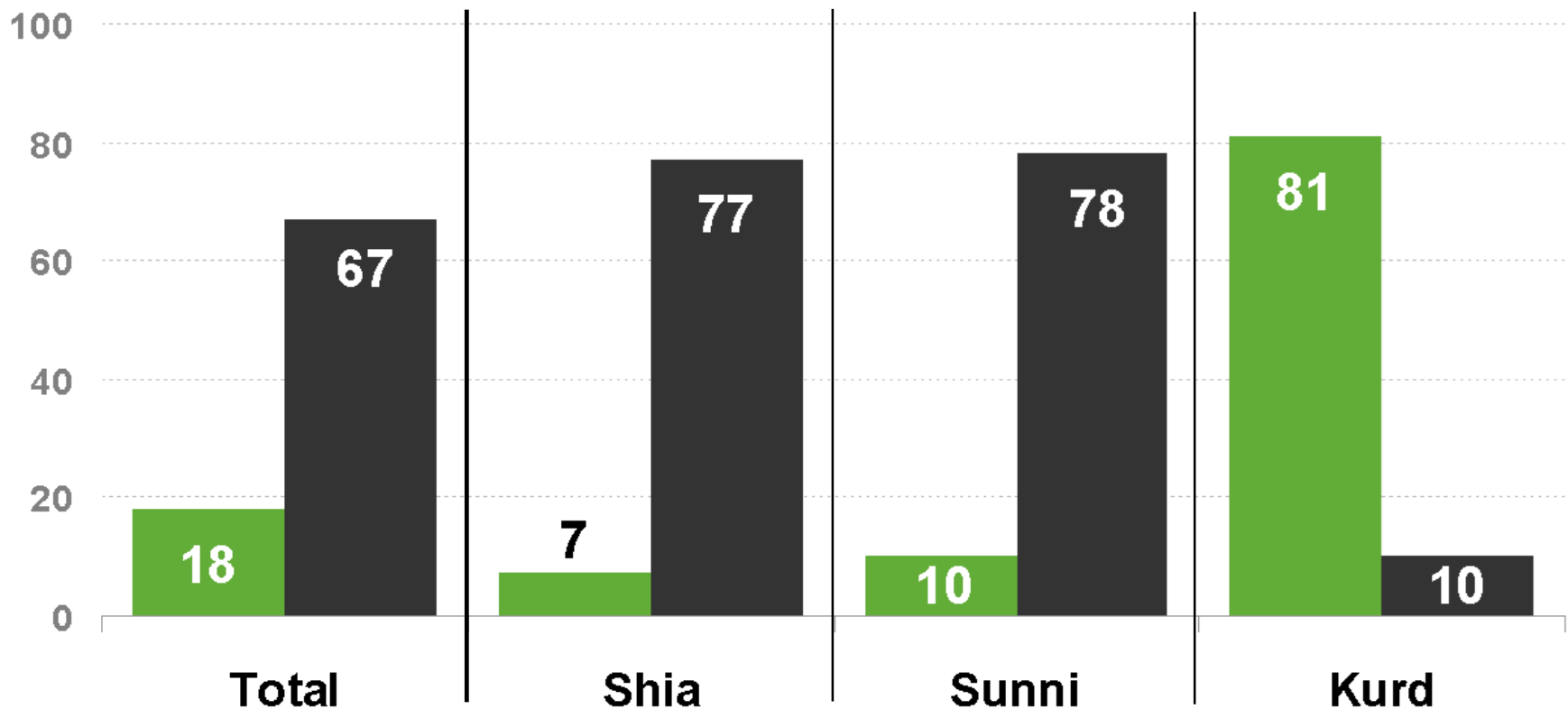
# Sunnis most likely to think there is a chance of civil war in Iraq

*Some people have been saying that Iraq might have a full-scale civil war in the next 10 years. What do you think? Do you think there is a very good chance that Iraq will have a full-scale civil war in the next 10 years, a good chance, little chance, or no chance at all that Iraq will have a full-scale civil war in the next 10 years?*



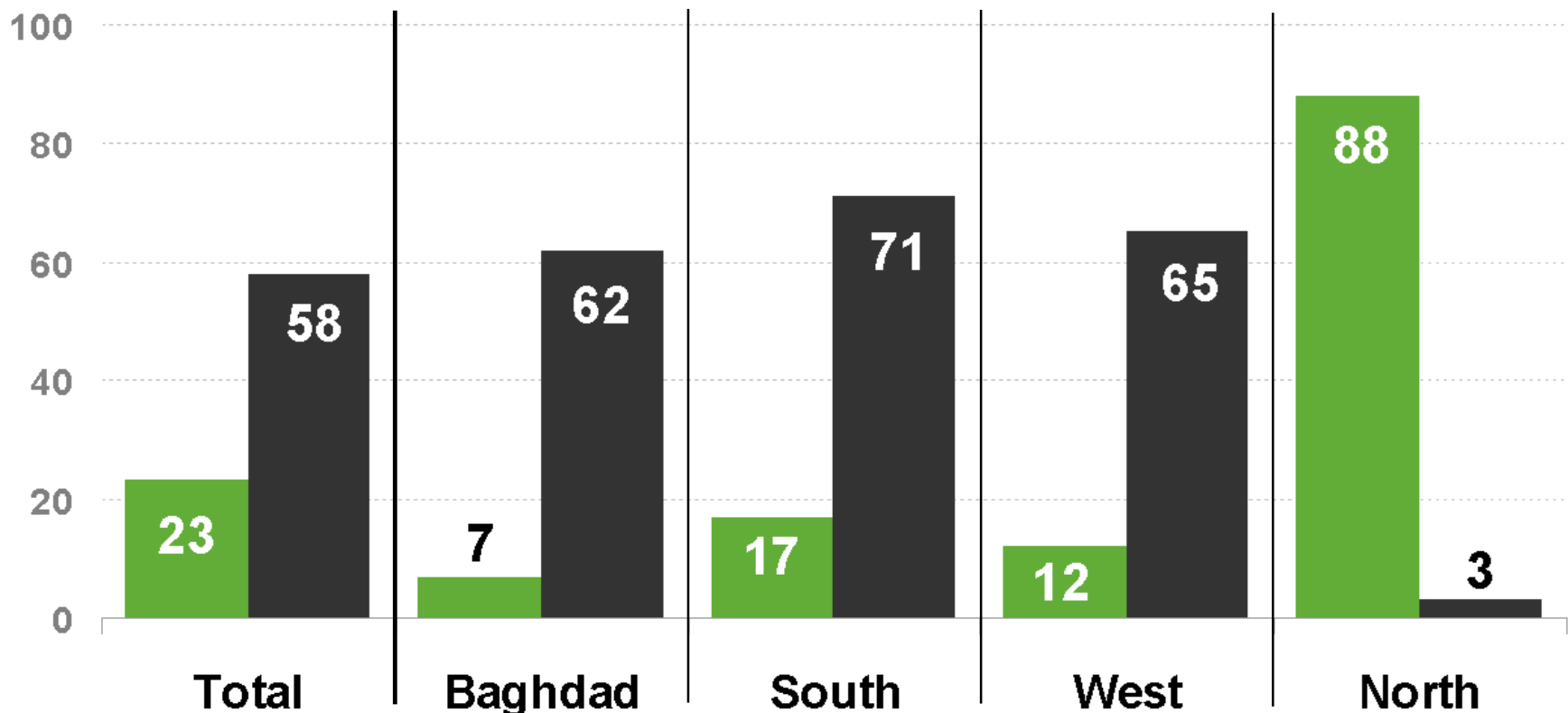
## Strong divisions over Kurdistan's independence

- Kurdistan should become an independent country.
- Kurdistan should remain an autonomous region of Iraq.



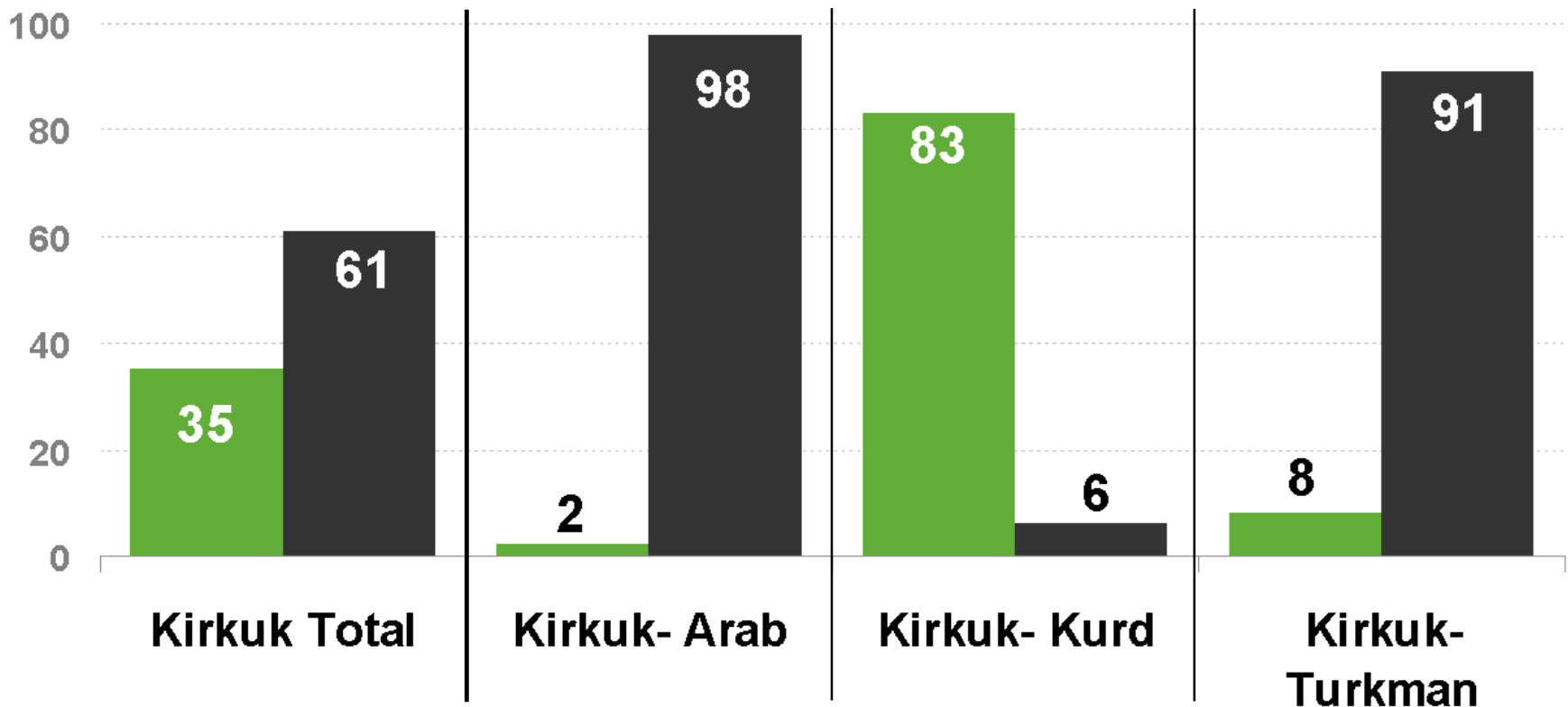
## Only North thinks Kirkuk should become a part of Kurdistan

- Kirkuk should become part of Kurdistan.
- Kirkuk should not become part of Kurdistan.



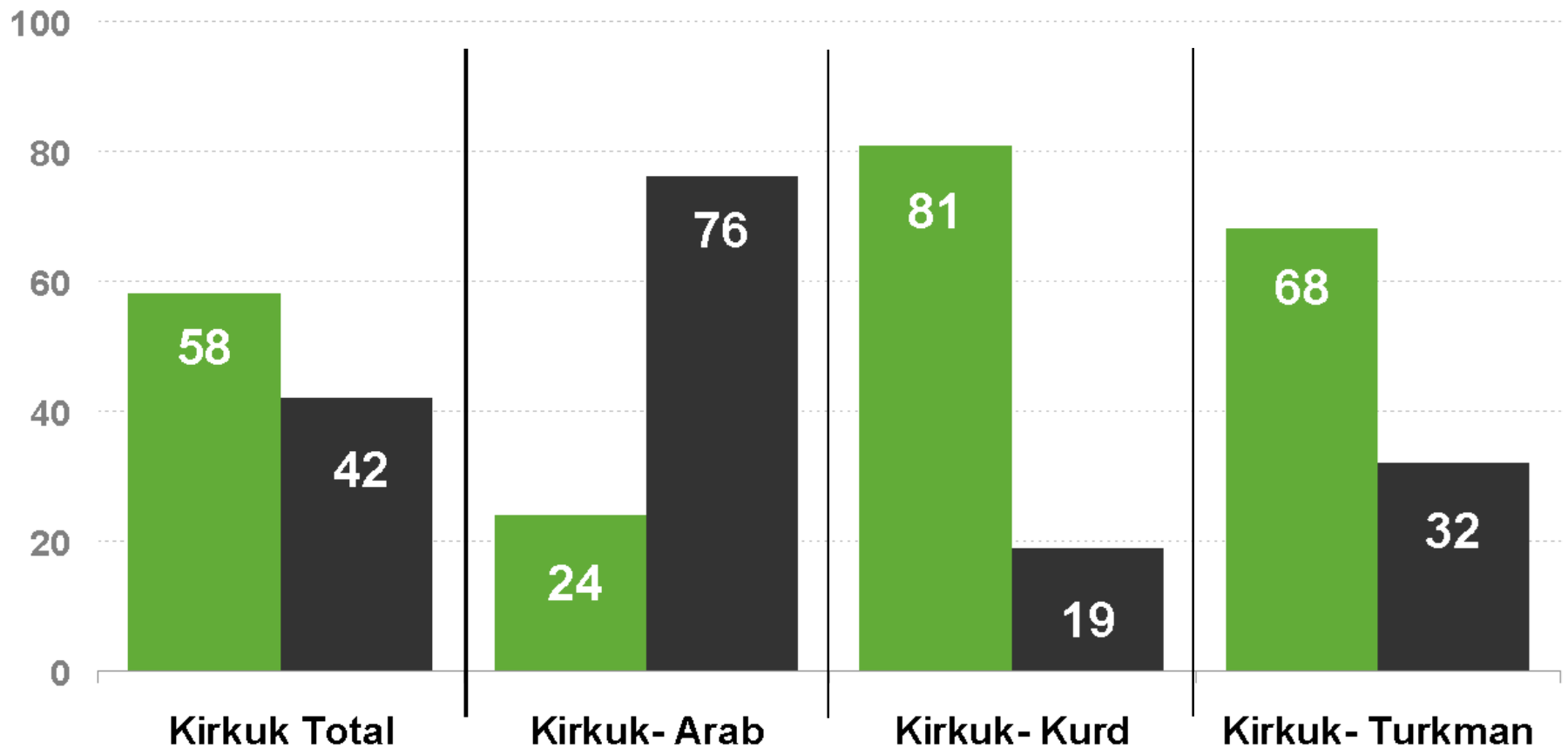
## Only Kirkuk Kurds think Kirkuk should be a part of Kurdistan

- Kirkuk should become part of Kurdistan.
- Kirkuk should not become part of Kurdistan.



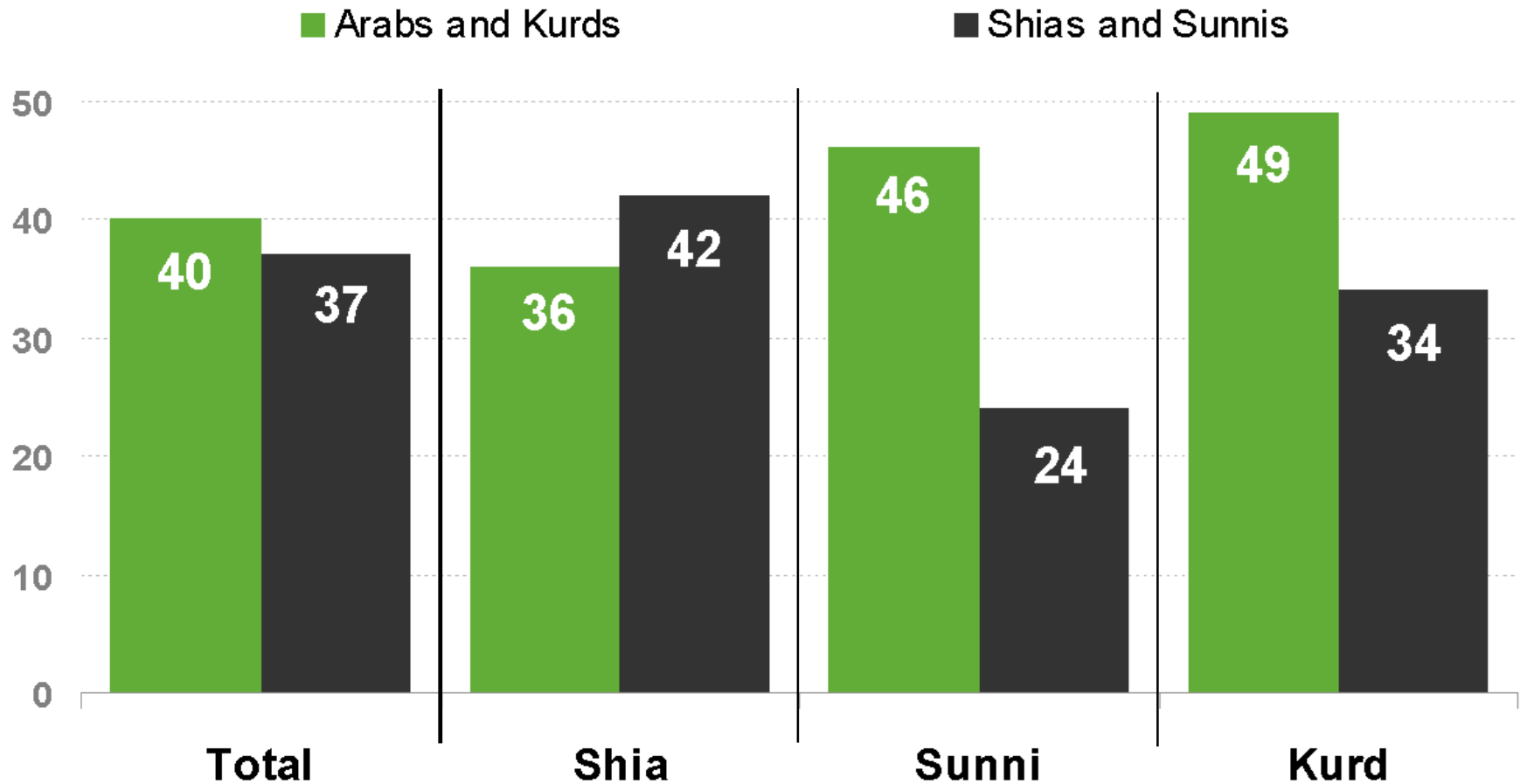
## Kirkuk Kurds much more likely to vote

- Likely to vote in next parliamentary elections
- Not likely to vote in next parliamentary elections



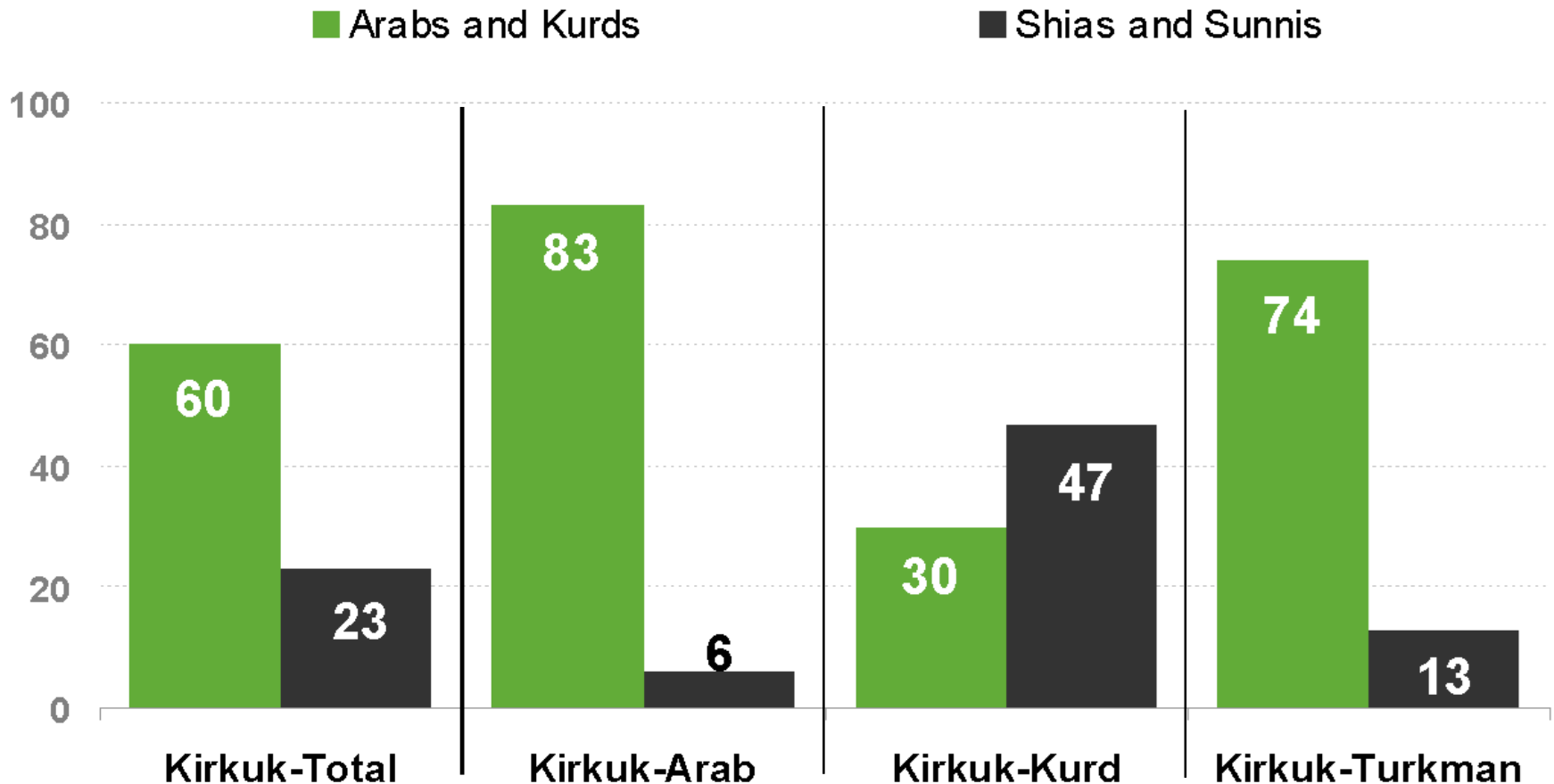
# Source of conflict differs by Shia, Sunni and Kurds

*Which do you think is the greater source of conflict in Iraq, differences between Kurds and Arabs or Sunnis and Shias?*



# Source of conflict differs among ethnicities in Kirkuk

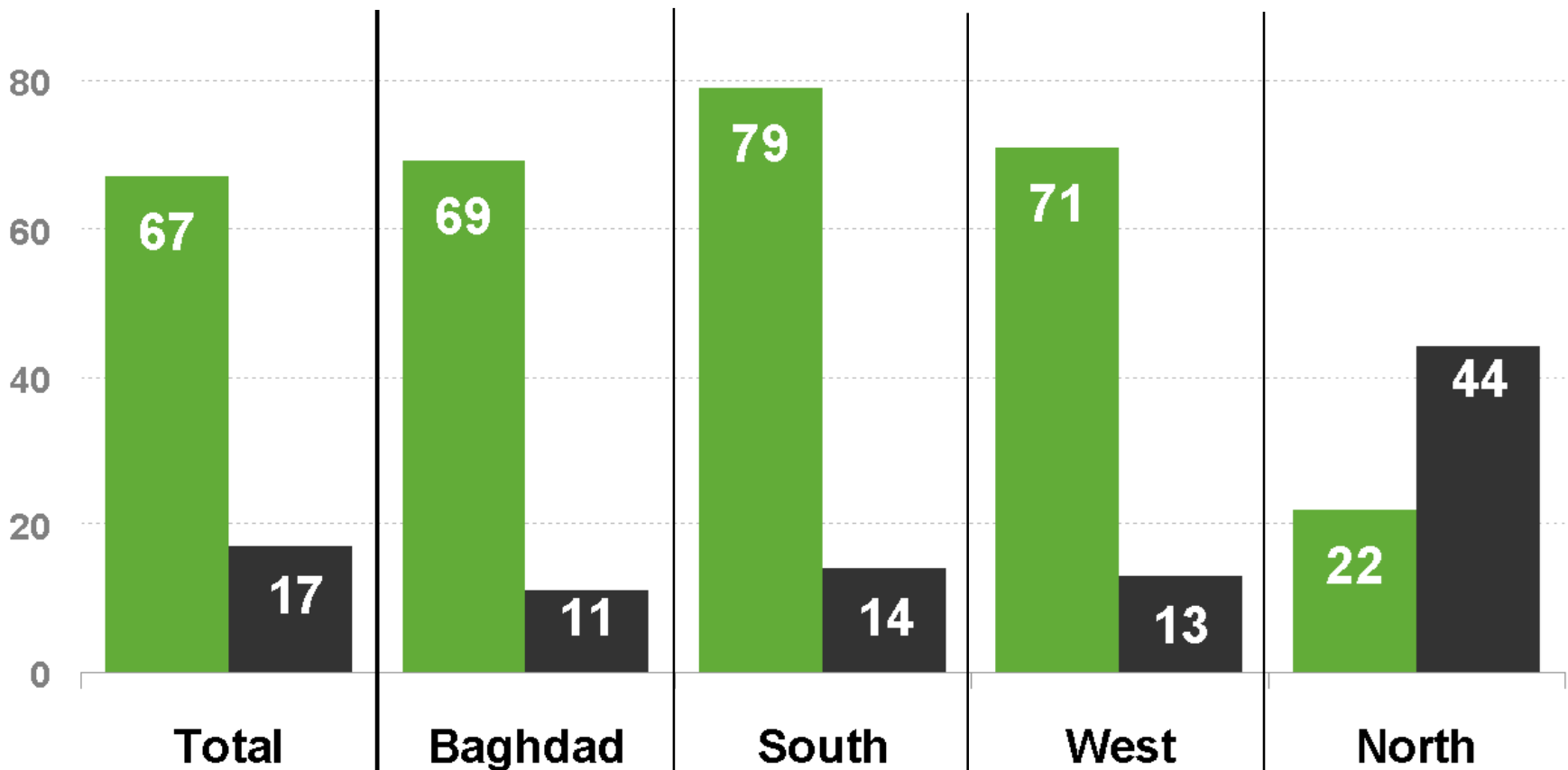
*Which do you think is the greater source of conflict in Iraq, differences between Kurds and Arabs or Sunnis and Shias?*





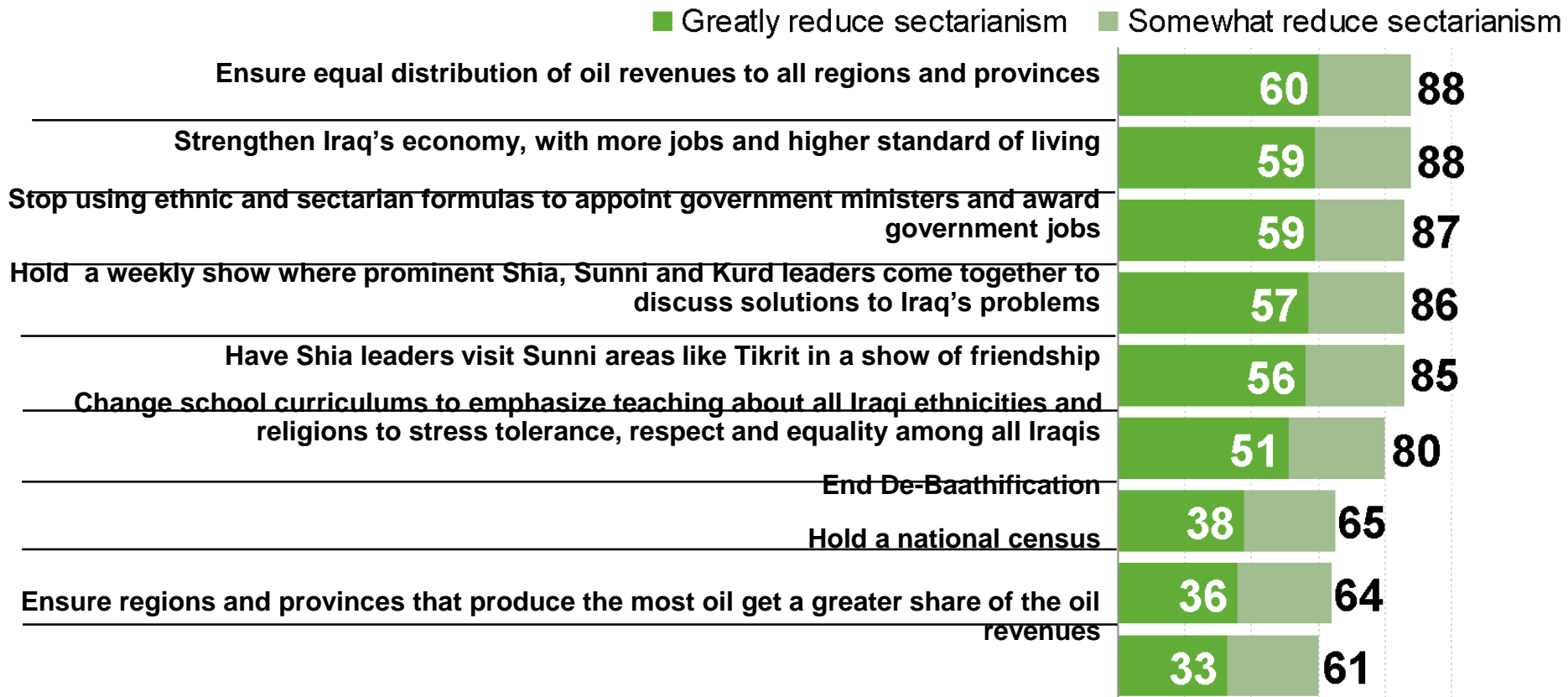
# Most think sectarianism can be overcome, except in North

- With time, sectarianism will become less of a factor in Iraq.
- Sectarianism is too deeply-rooted in Iraqi society to ever really go away.



# Economic and unity actions can reduce sectarianism

*I would like to read you a list of some things that might be done to reduce sectarianism in Iraq. For each one, please tell me if you think it would greatly reduce sectarianism, somewhat reduce sectarianism, only slightly reduce sectarianism, would not reduce sectarianism at all, or would increase sectarianism*



# Anti-sectarian messages on foreigners and leaders strongest

Percent ***much more likely to support*** a party leader who says the following statements:

**(Sectarianism – Foreigners)** A leader says: We need to stop the foreign influences that are driving violent sectarianism and take back our country. We need to stand strong against countries, who want to keep us divided for their own purposes. Now is the time for all Iraqis to unite against foreign influences.



**(Sectarianism – Political Leaders)** A leader says: Sectarianism is dividing our streets, our government, and our country. We need to resist electing political leaders that use aggressive sectarian rhetoric for their own political gains. Instead, we need to elect leaders that will unite us.



**(Sectarianism – Oil)** A leader says: We are a country of Shias, Sunnis, Kurds, Turkmen and many more; but most important is that we are all Iraqis. To reduce sectarianism we need to make sure that all Iraqis prosper, that is why I am advocating for an equal distribution of oil revenues to all Iraqis.



**(Sectarianism – Inclusive Gov't)** A leader says: We are a country of Shias, Sunnis, Kurds, Turkmen and many more; but most imp is that we are all Iraqis. The end of sect'sm needs to start with gov't. We should no longer distribute gov't positions based on religion/ethnicity. From now on we are putting the right person in the right position.



**(Sectarianism – Public Awareness)** A leader says: Helping average citizens understand that all Iraqis are equal is the key to overcoming sectarianism in this country. That is why we must begin with efforts to teach people about all Iraqi ethnicities and religions.



**(Sectarianism – Separate)** A leader says: The best way to promote development and security in Iraq is to have autonomous regions. That's why Kurdistan is so successful. We need to give Arab Shias and Arab Sunni the same opportunity to succeed.



## Messaging differences among religion/ethnicity

<b>% Much more likely to support</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Shia</b>	<b>Sunni</b>	<b>Kurds</b>
<b>Foreigners message</b>	63	62	70	58
<b>Political leaders message</b>	58	62	53	53
<b>Oil message</b>	56	57	55	56
<b>Inclusive government message</b>	54	50	68	52
<b>Public awareness message</b>	52	53	48	52
<b>Separate message</b>	24	24	10	44

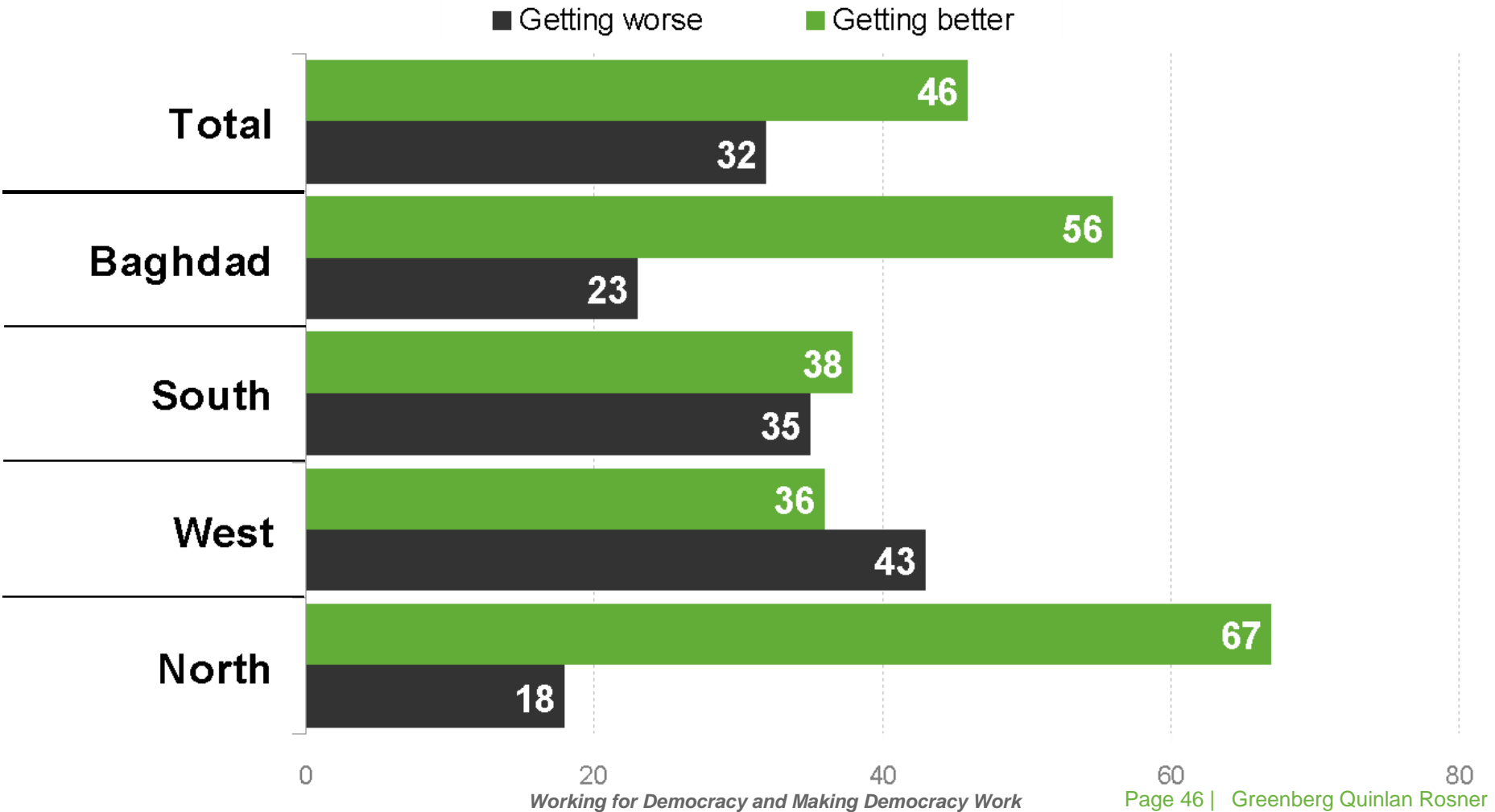
# Iraq's Challenging Environment for Women

## Key findings on women

1. Although conditions for women are perceived as improving, Iraq continues to be a challenging environment for women
1. Wide approval for higher education and professions for women shows an openness for advancement of women
1. Yet, significant obstacles hinder women's ability to advance in politics, business and social issues, largely driven by male attitudes, religious affiliation, and rural attitudes
1. Kurds and Kurdistan strong example of positive environment for women

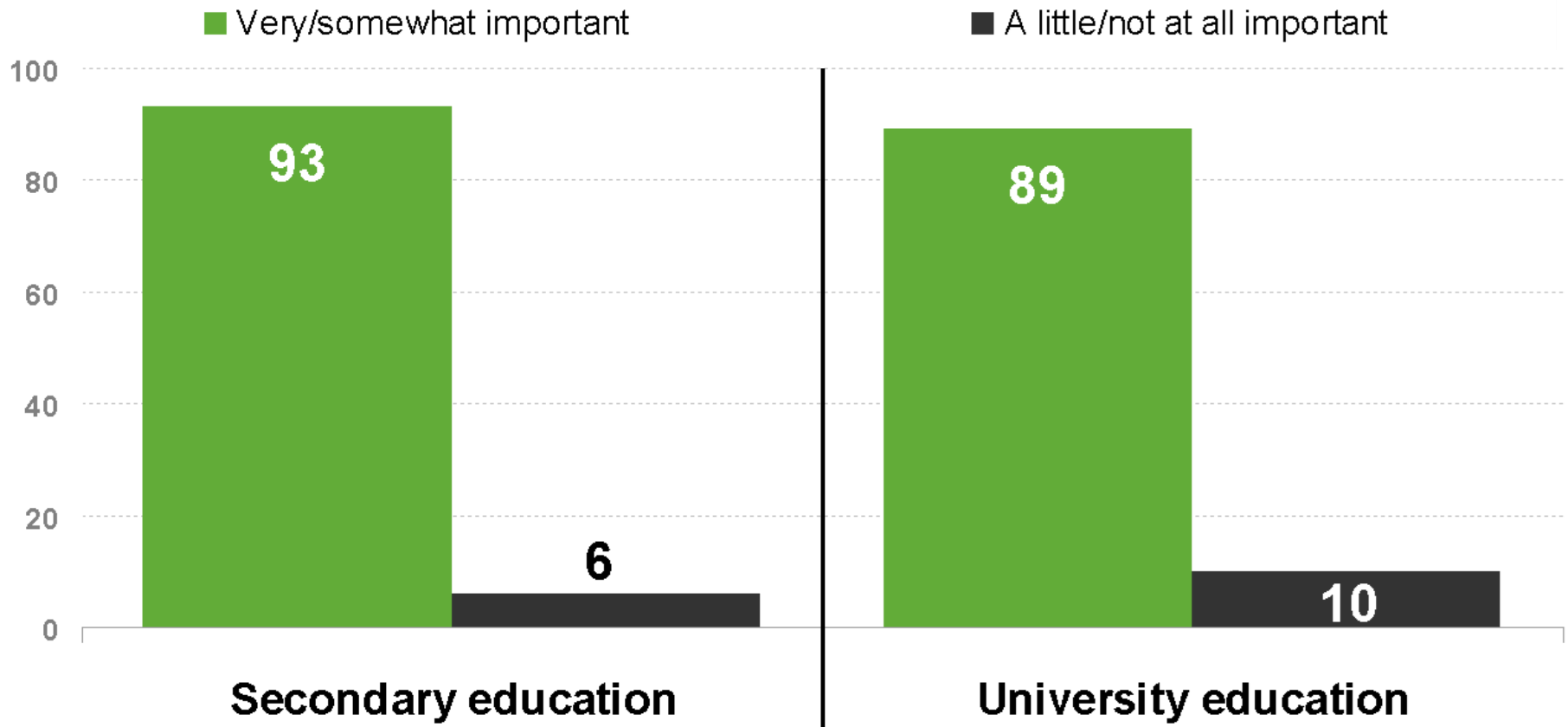
# Conditions for women perceived as improving

Please tell me if you think this issue is getting better or worse in Iraq: “**conditions for women**”



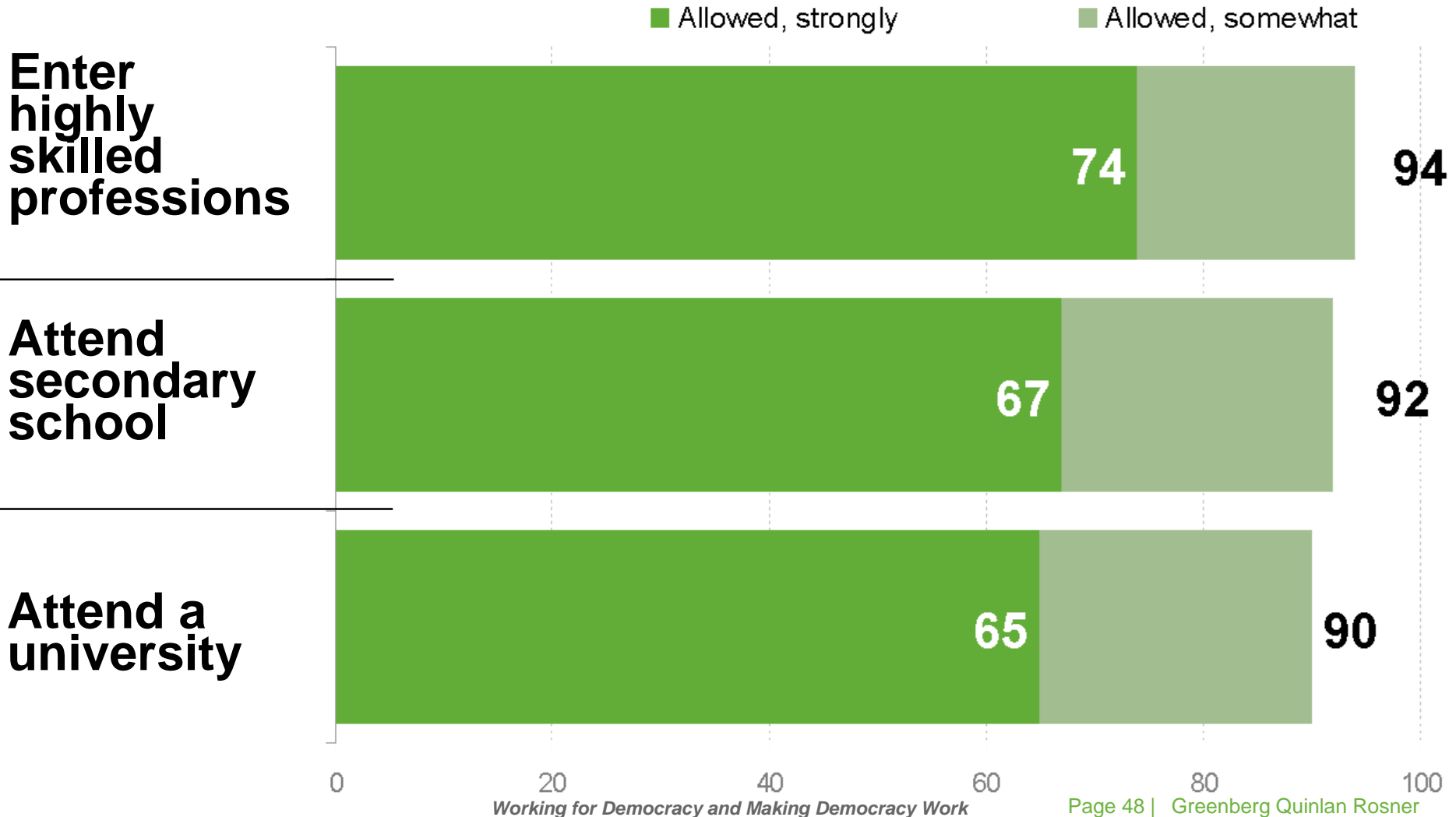
## Strong majority see education as important for women

*How important is it for girls and women in Iraq to receive a secondary/university education? Do you think a secondary/university education for girls and women is very important, somewhat important, a little important, or not at all important?*





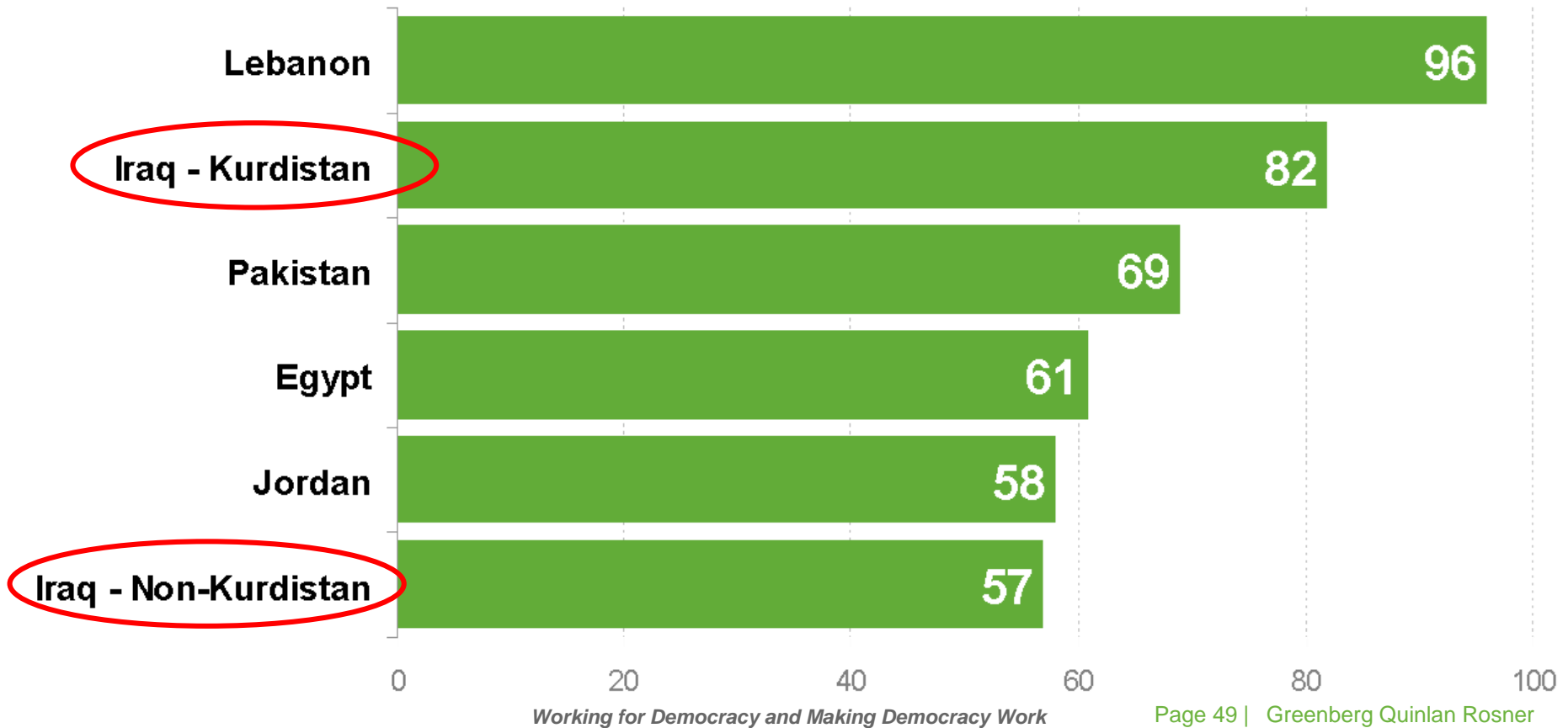
## Most believe in higher education and professions for women



# Women work where they want | total by country

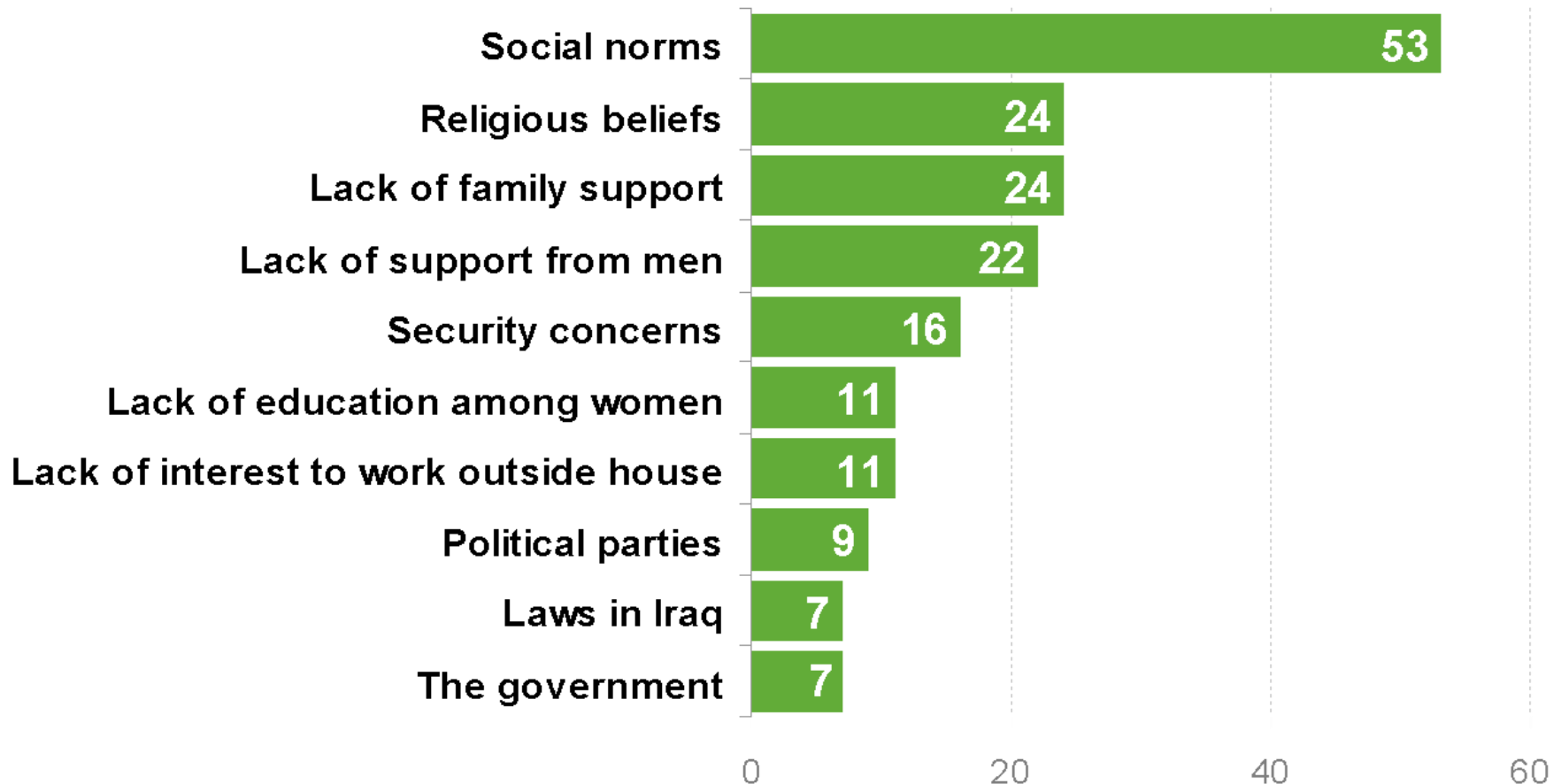
For each item, please tell me if you think Iraqi women should or should not be allowed to **work wherever they want**. (“Allowed strongly and somewhat”) (GQR 2011)

Please tell me whether you agree with: **Women should be able to work outside the home**. (“Completely and somewhat agree”) (Pew’s Global Attitudes Project 2010)



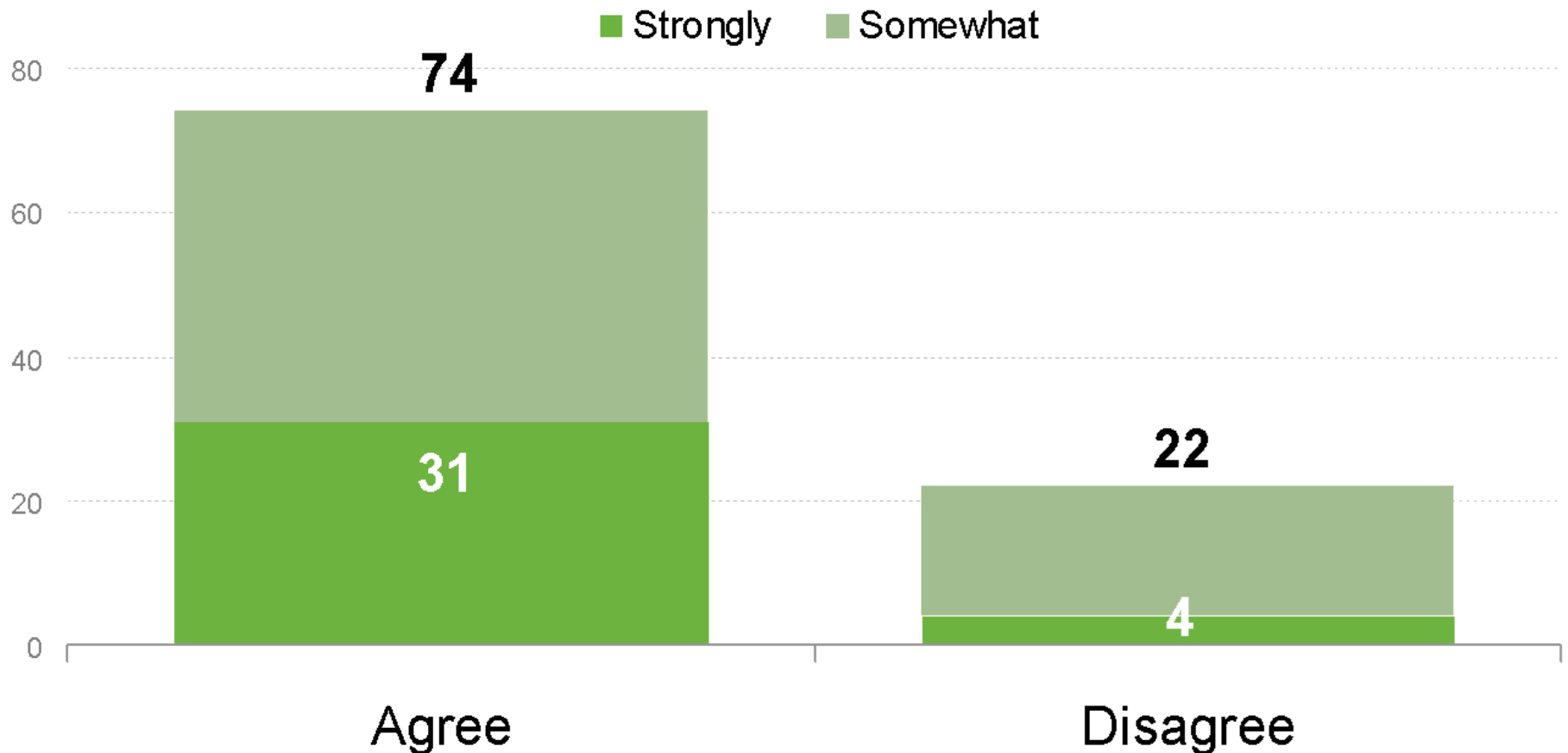
# Majority see social norms holding women back from work

*What do you think are the TWO main reasons why women are not more involved in work outside of the home?*



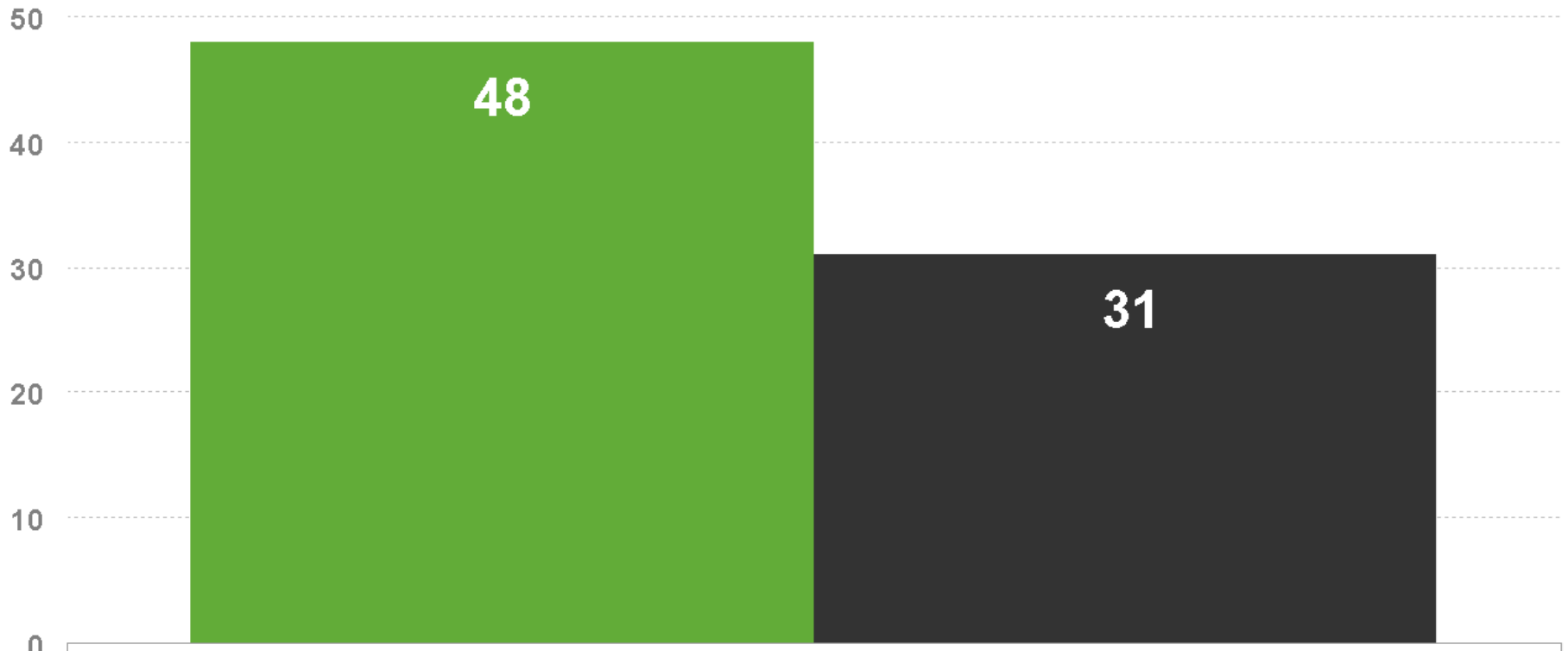
## Most agree with 25 percent women MP mandate

*As you may know, the Iraqi constitution mandates that 25 percent of the members of parliament be women. Do you agree or disagree with this mandate?*



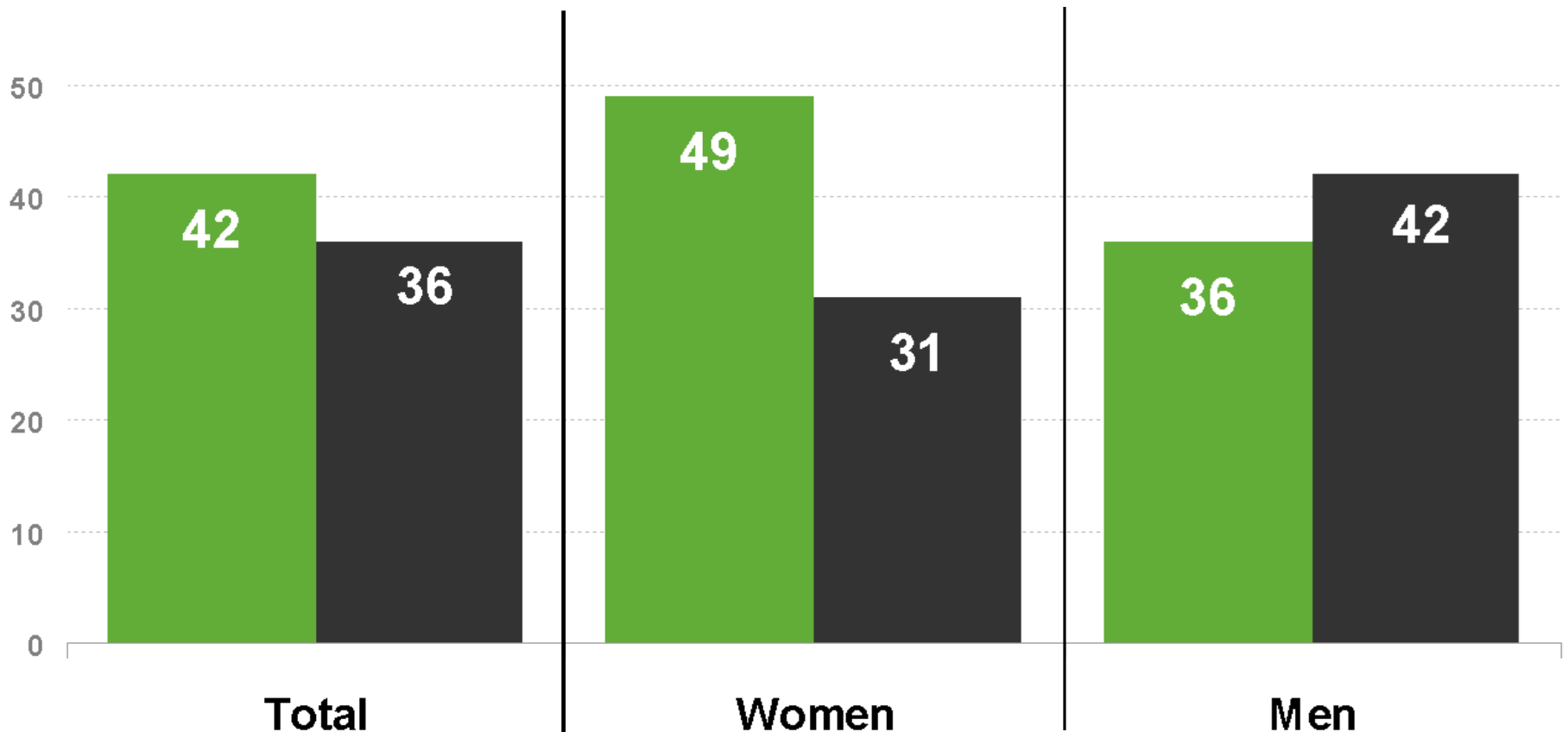
## Even with more women MPs, women marginalized

- Even if there are many women in parliament, women will still not have a significant influence on political priorities and policies.
- The more women there are in parliament, the greater influence they will have on political priorities and policies.



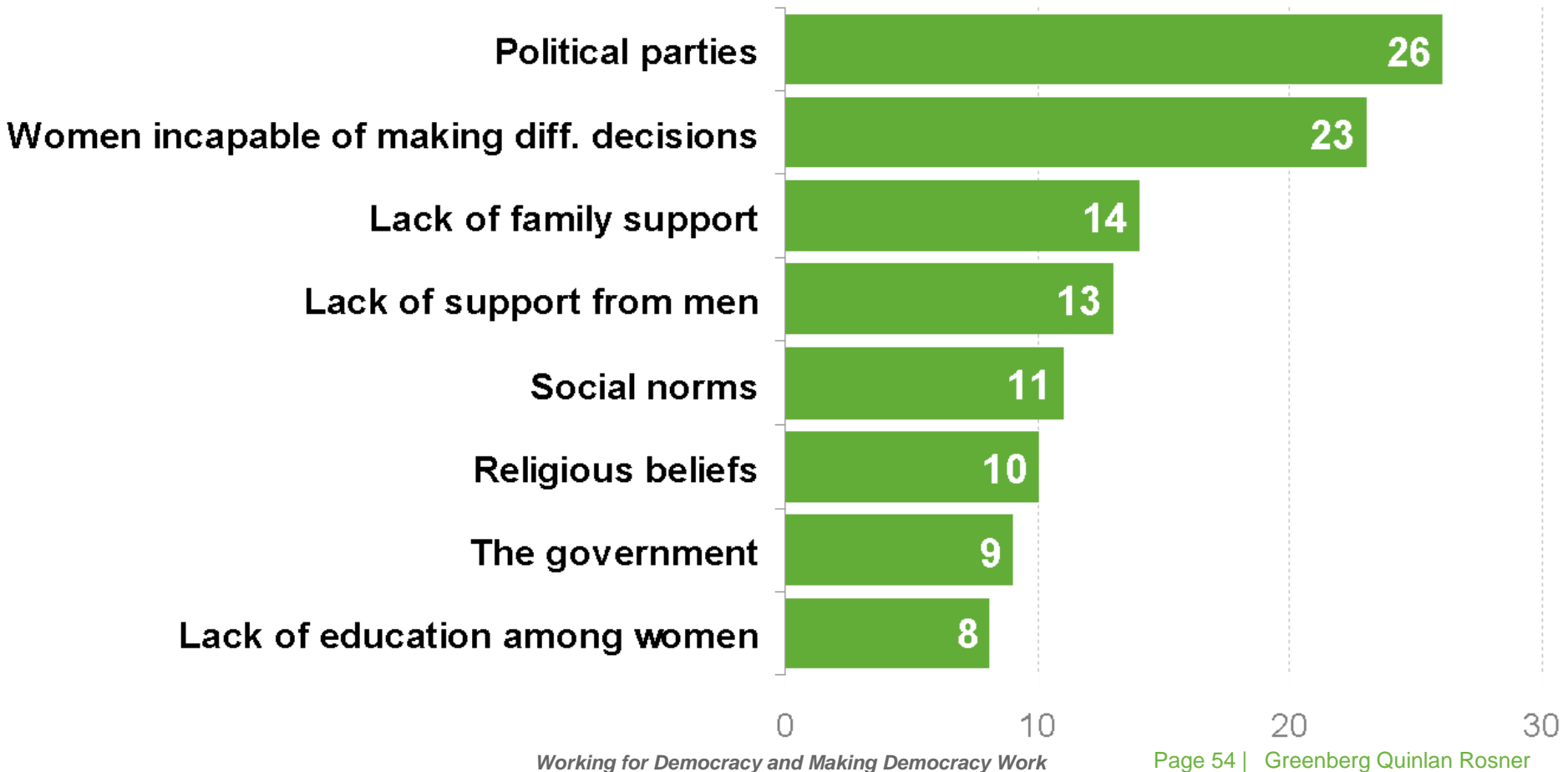
## Gender discrepancy on who will represent women's interests

- Only women can sufficiently represent the interests of women in politics.
- Men can sufficiently represent the interests of women in politics.



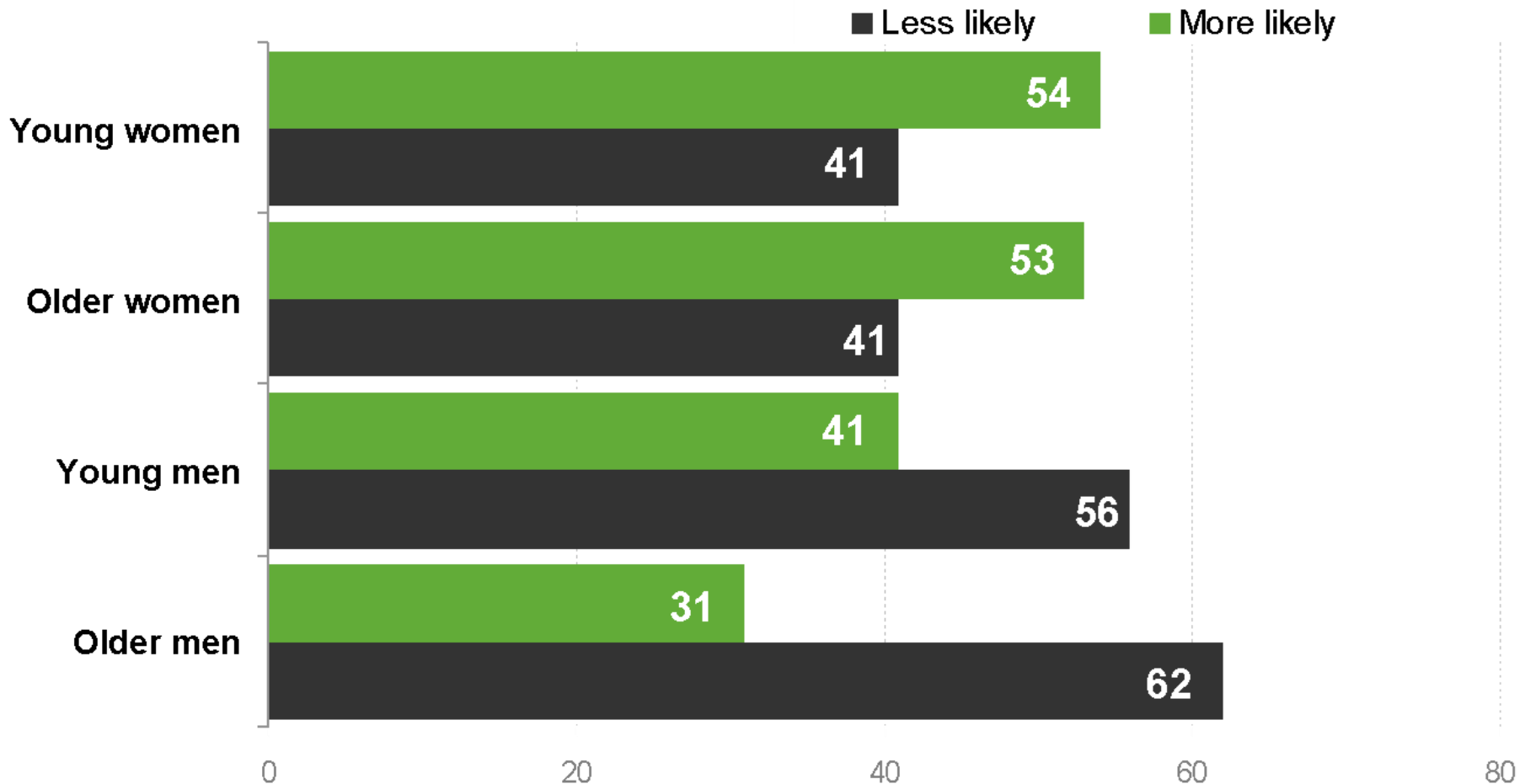
# Parties and perceived lack of capability hinder women in politics

*What do you think are the TWO main reasons why more women are not involved in politics and government?*



# Women more likely to support a woman candidate than men

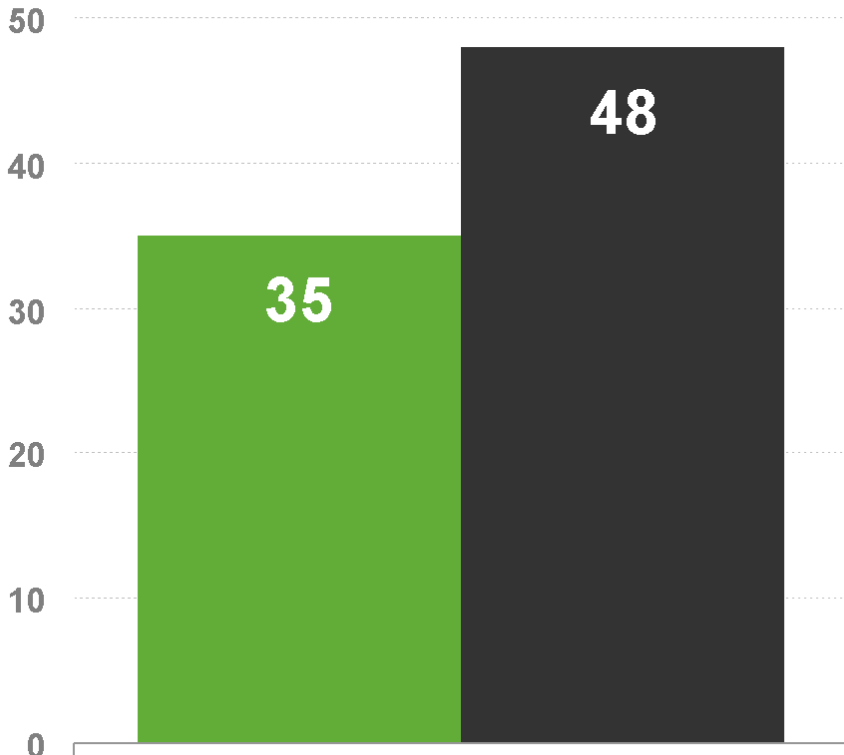
Please tell me if this characteristic makes you more or less likely to support that kind of candidate: "a woman"



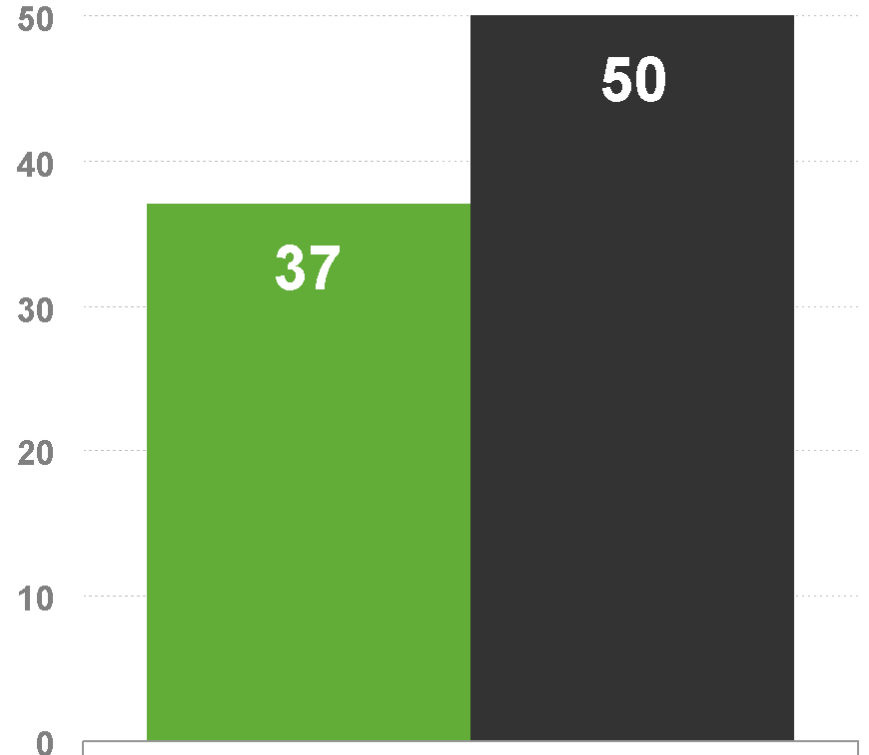


# Most believe men should have a greater role in govt/business

- Women and men should have an equal role in running the government.
- Men should have a greater role in running the government.

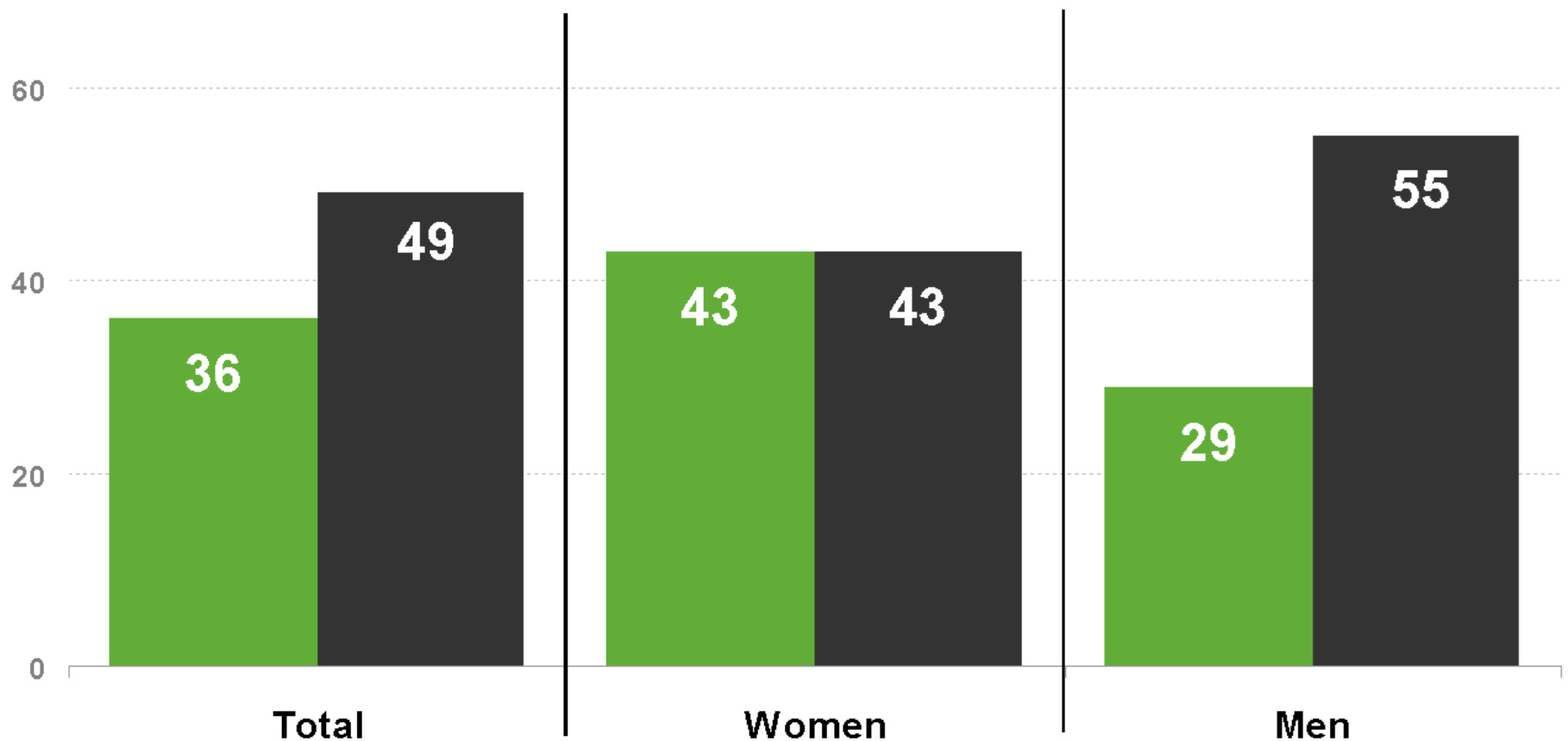


- Women and men should have equal roles in running businesses and industry.
- Men should have a greater role in running businesses and industry.

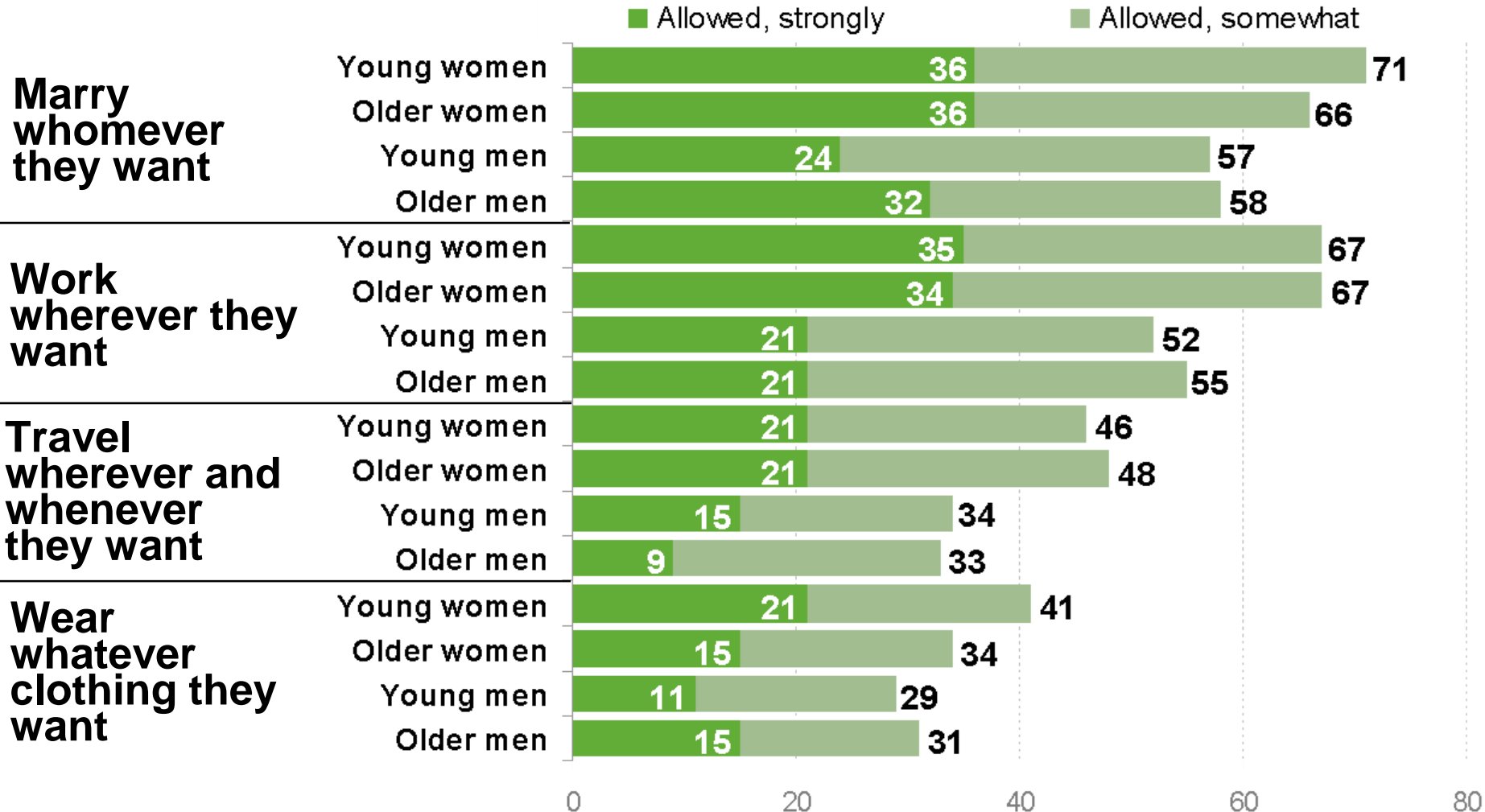


# Gender difference in role of women in government and business

- Women and men should have an equal role in running the government/businesses and industry.
- Men should have a greater role in running the government/businesses and industry.



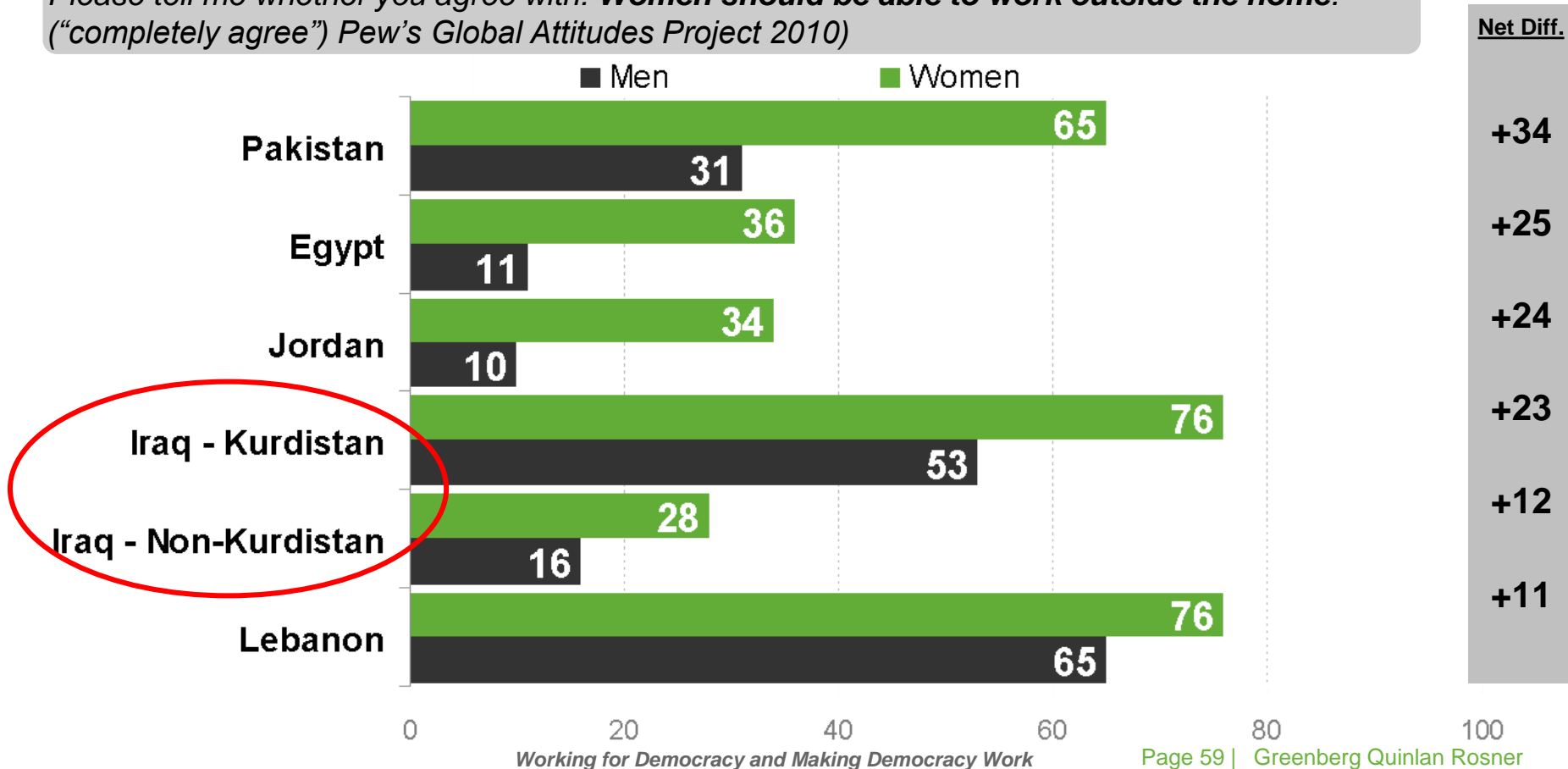
# Men more conservative on social issues impacting women



# Gender discrepancies on women working throughout region

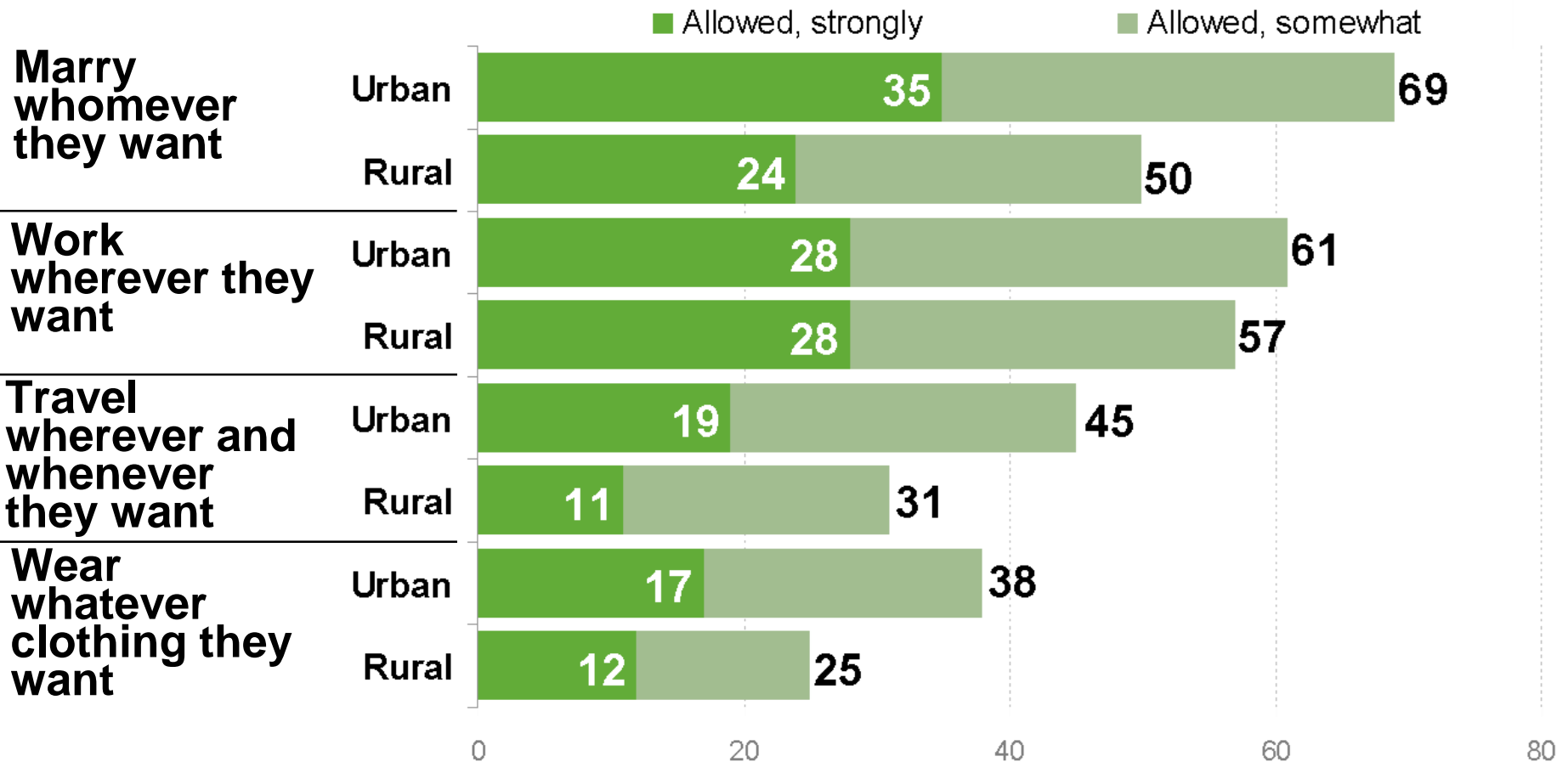
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Please tell me whether you agree with: **Women should be able to work outside the home**. (“completely agree”) Pew’s Global Attitudes Project 2010)



# Urban areas more liberal on social issues impacting women

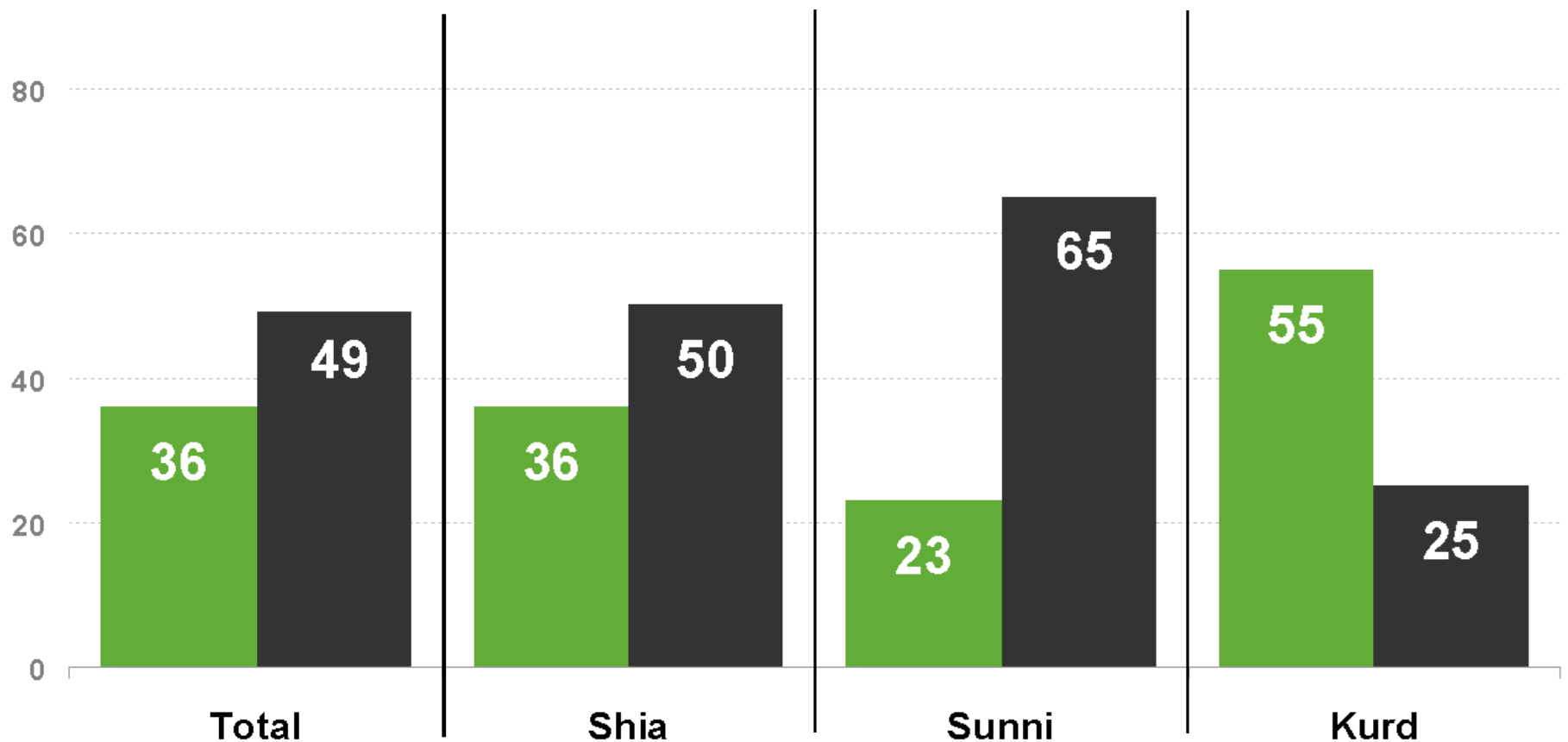
*Now I want to ask you about the role of women in Iraq. For each item, please tell me if you think Iraqi women should or should not be allowed to do that particular item.*



## Kurds more liberal, Sunnis more conservative on role of women

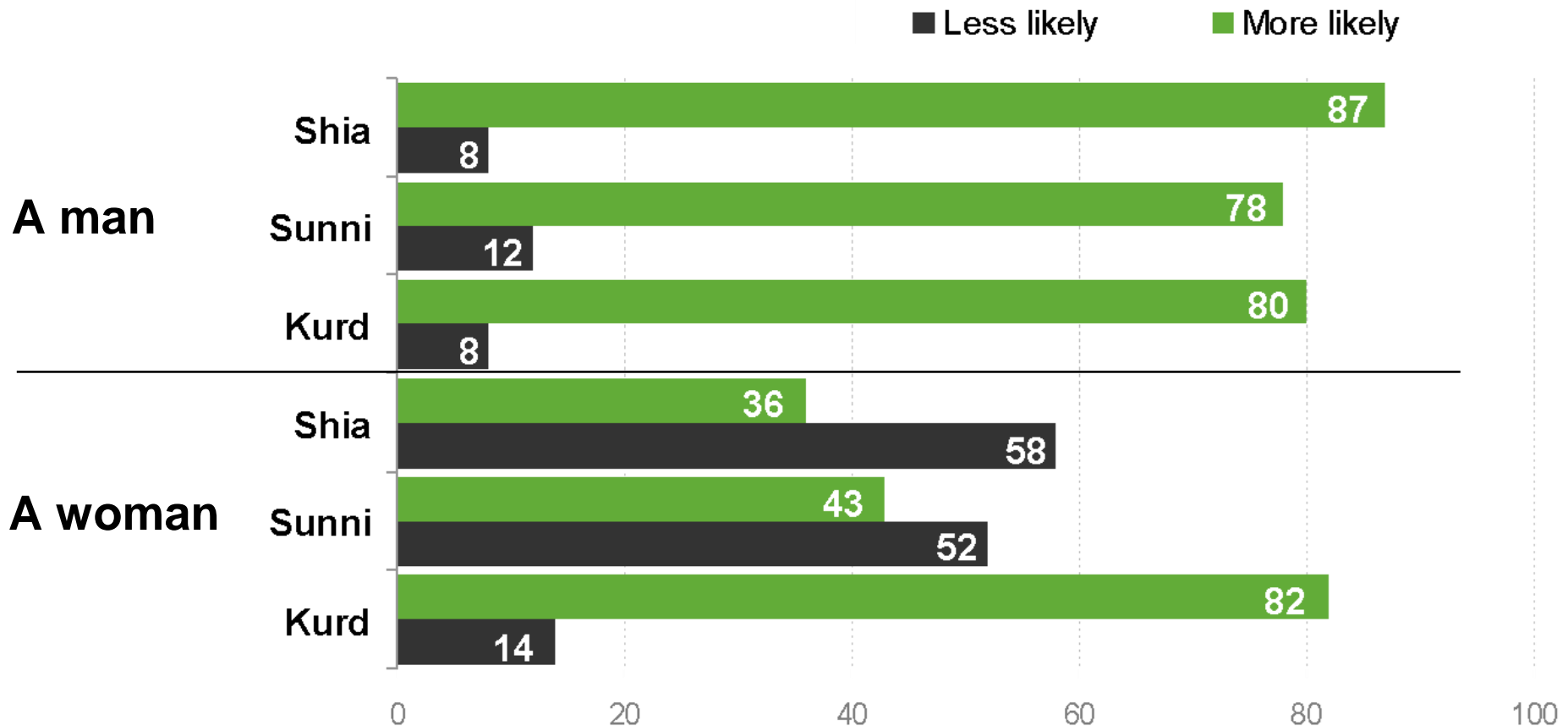
■ Women and men should have an equal role in running the government/businesses and industry.

■ Men should have a greater role in running the government/businesses and industry.

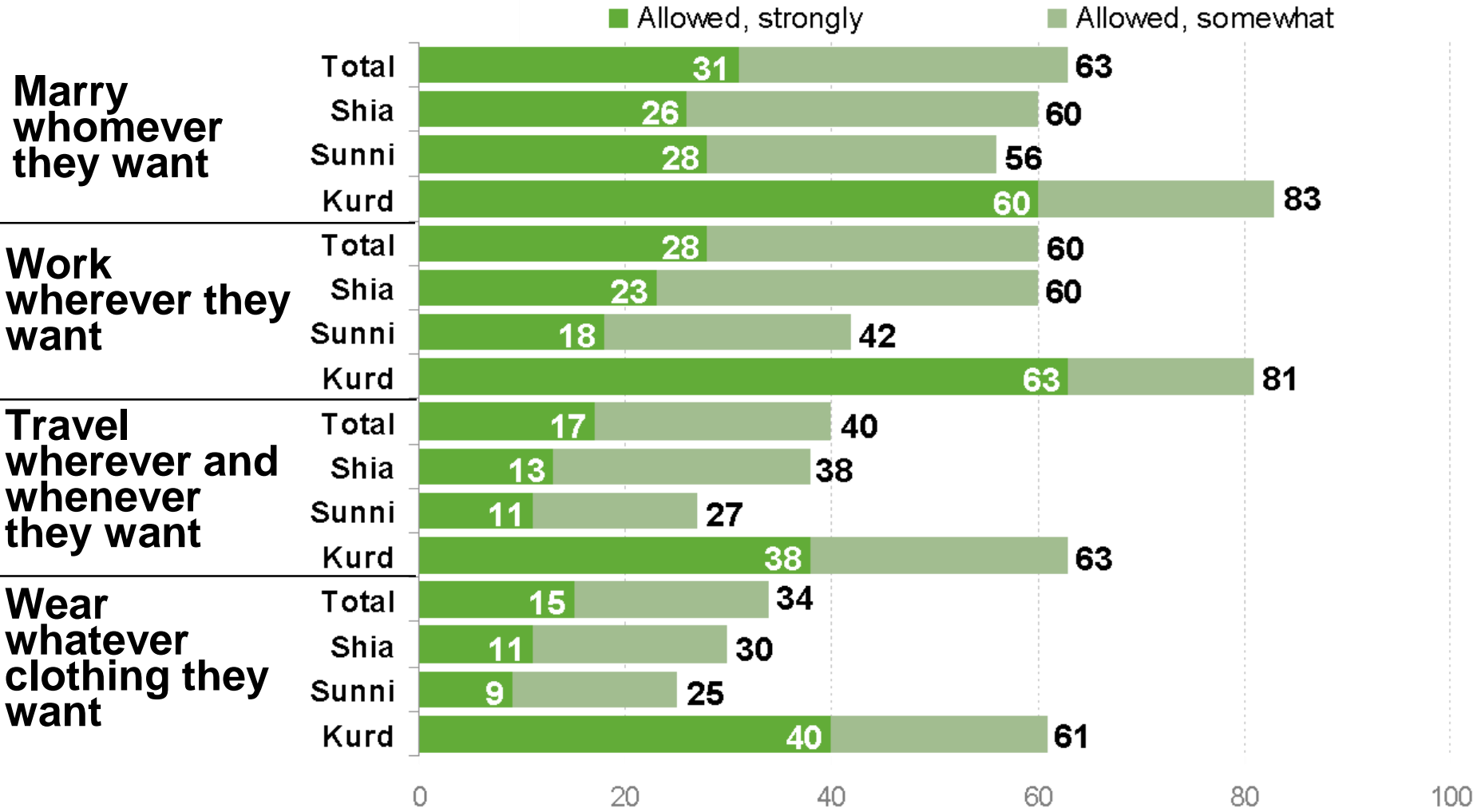


# Only Kurds more likely to support a woman candidate

*I am going to read a list of characteristics that a candidate for parliament might have. For each one, please tell me if this characteristic makes you more or less likely to support that kind of candidate.*

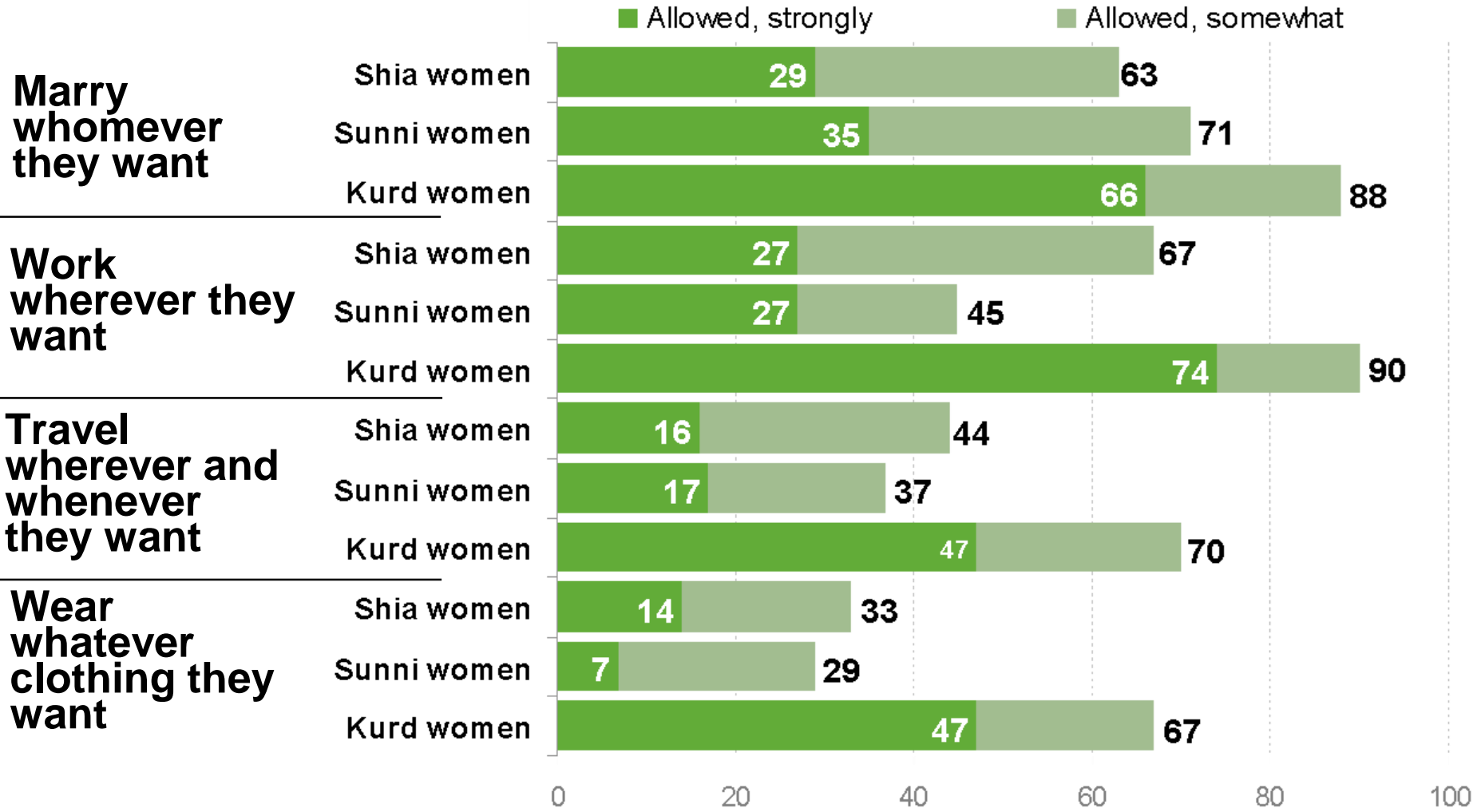


# On social issues, Kurds most liberal, Sunnis most conservative





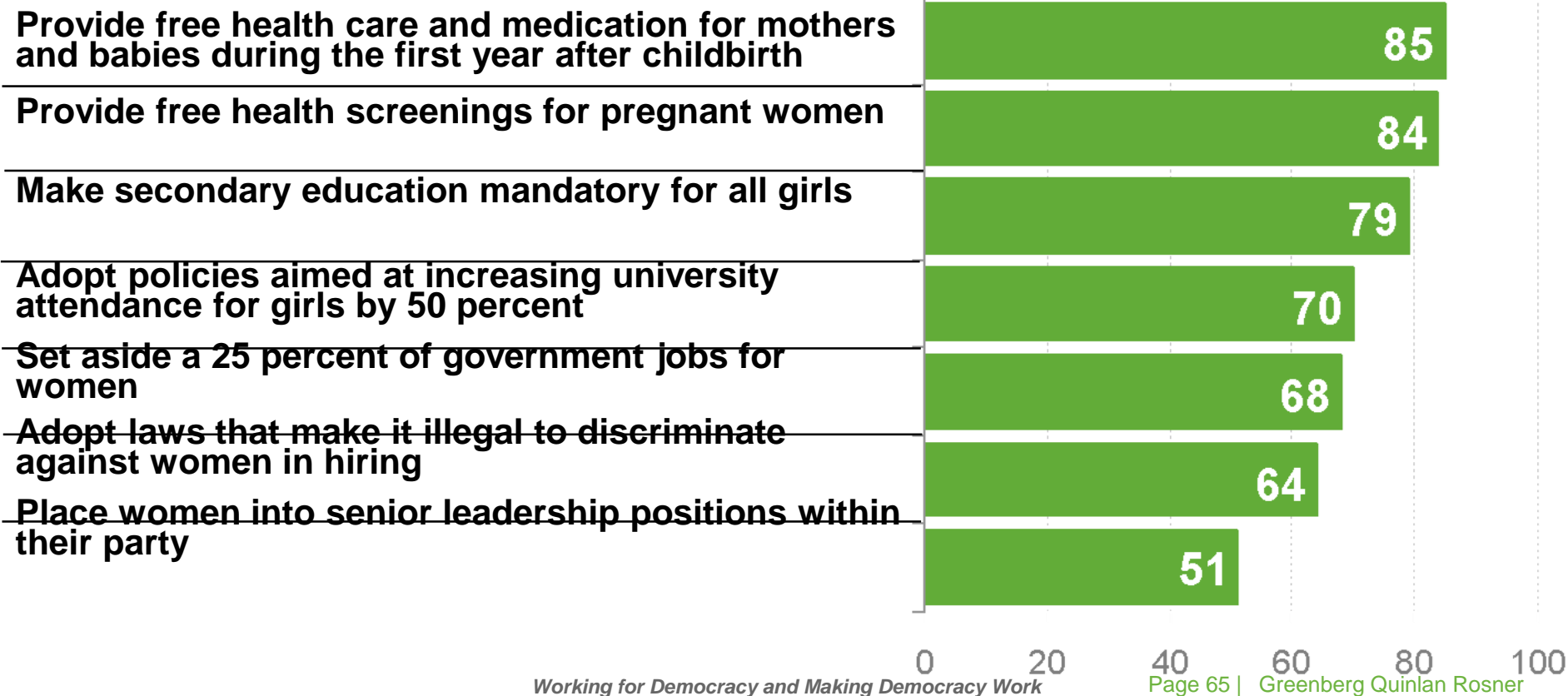
# Kurdish women more liberal on social issues impacting women



# Women health issues strongest women-focused proposals

*I would like to read you a list of some policies some political parties might support. After each one, please tell me whether this policy, if enacted, would make you more likely to support a political party that proposed this.*

■ More likely to support the political party that proposed this

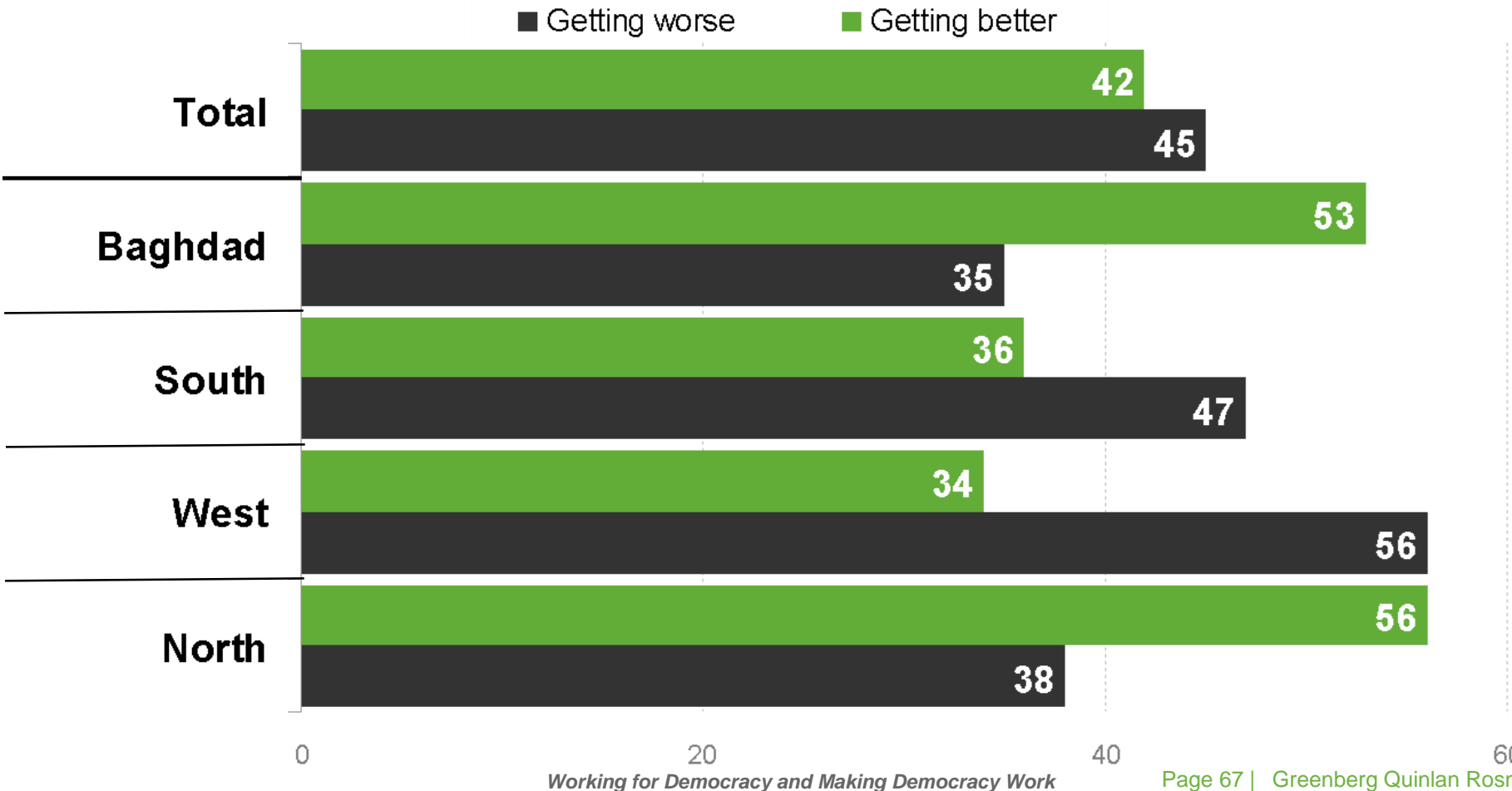


# Youth Issues

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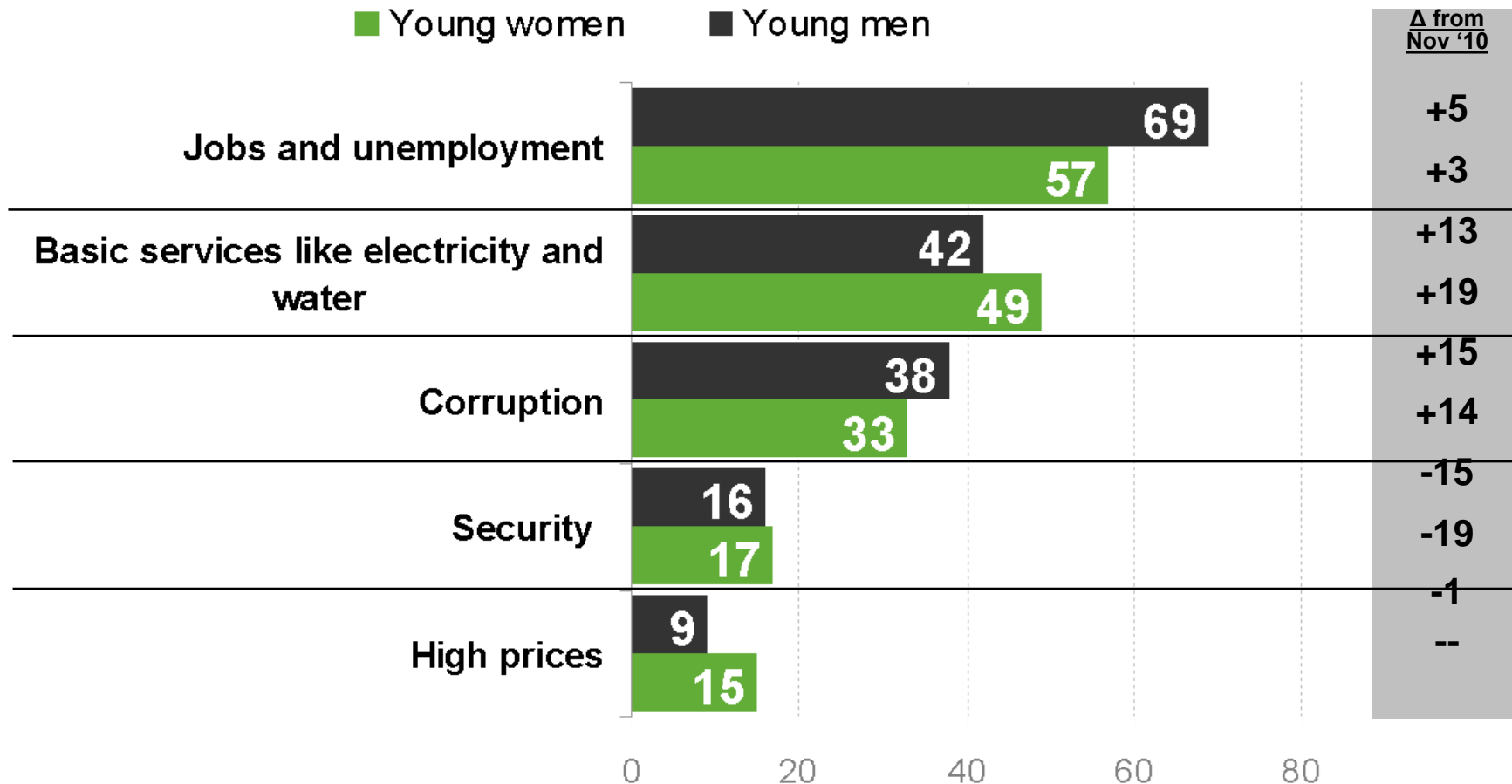
# Mixed on whether conditions for youth improving

Now I will read you a list of issues. Please tell me if you think this issue is getting better or worse in Iraq:  
**Conditions for the youth.**



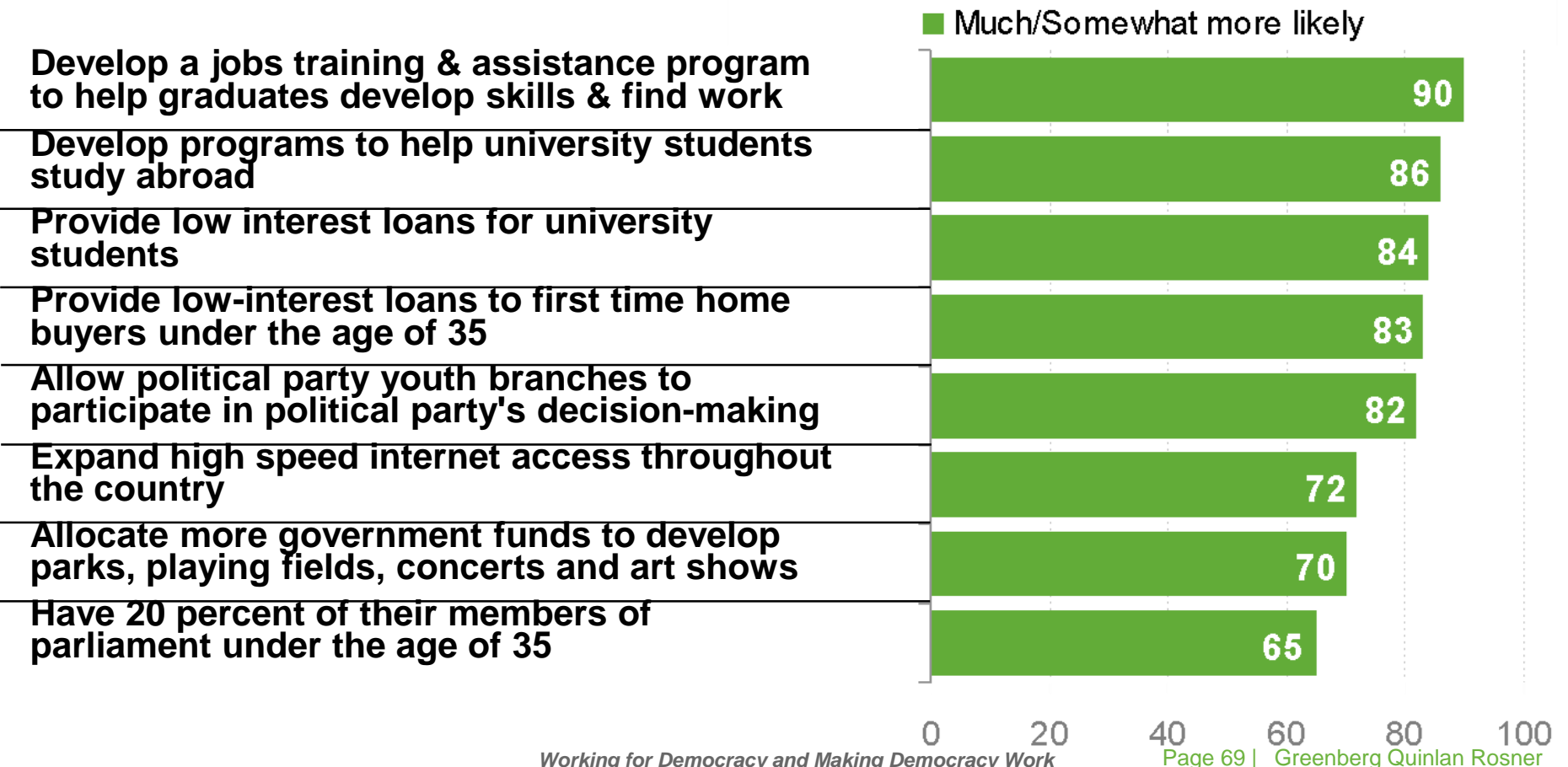
# Jobs number one concern among youth, esp. young men

Now, I am going to read you a list of concerns that some people may have. Please tell me which TWO of these are the most important for the government to address.



# Job training, edu opportunities strongest proposal among youth

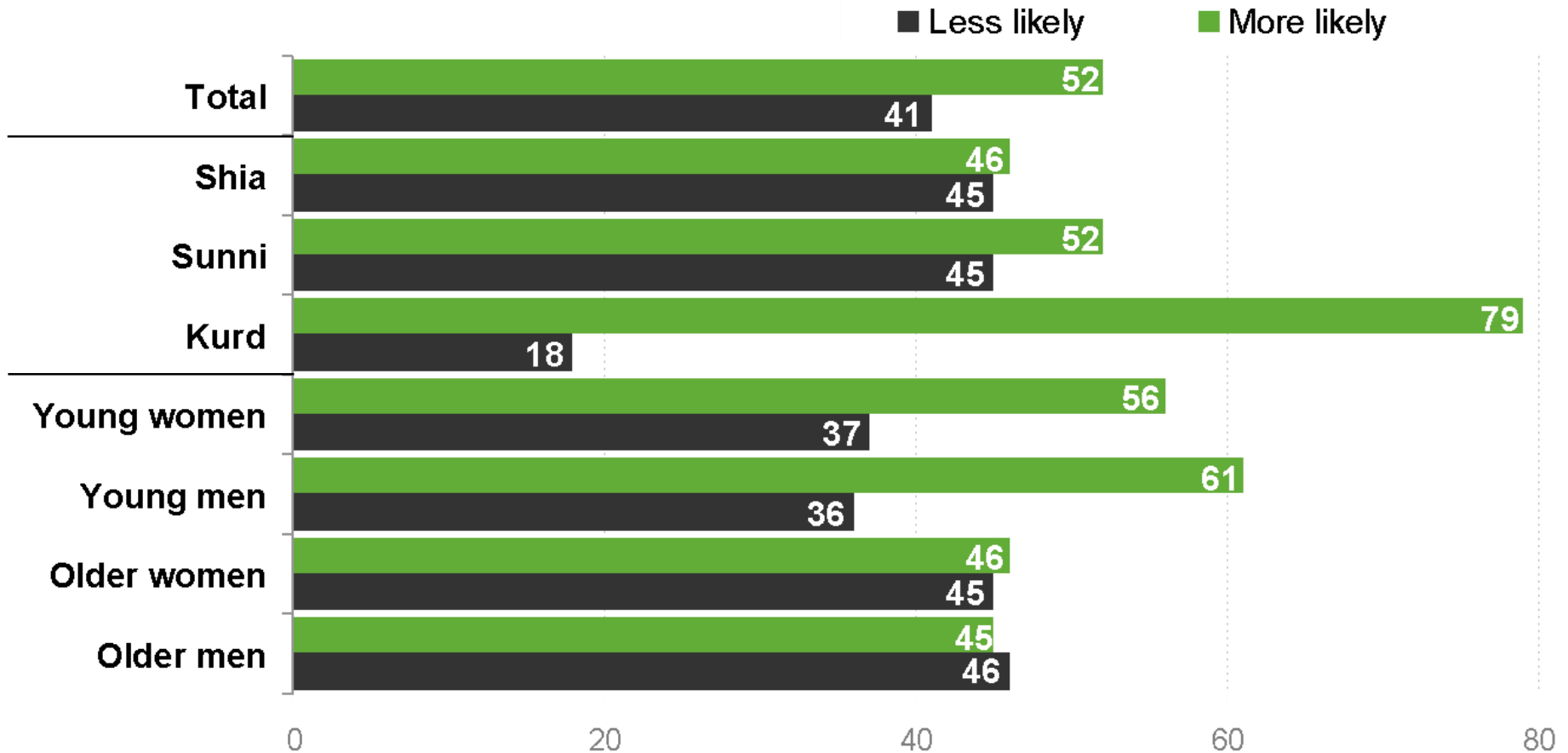
*I would like to read you a list of some policies some political parties might support. After each one, please tell me whether this policy, if enacted, would make you more likely to support a political party that proposed this. (Under 35 years old)*



# Young much more likely to support young candidates

*I am going to read a list of characteristics that a candidate for parliament might have. For each one, please tell me if this characteristic makes you more or less likely to support that kind of candidate:*

***Under the age of 35***



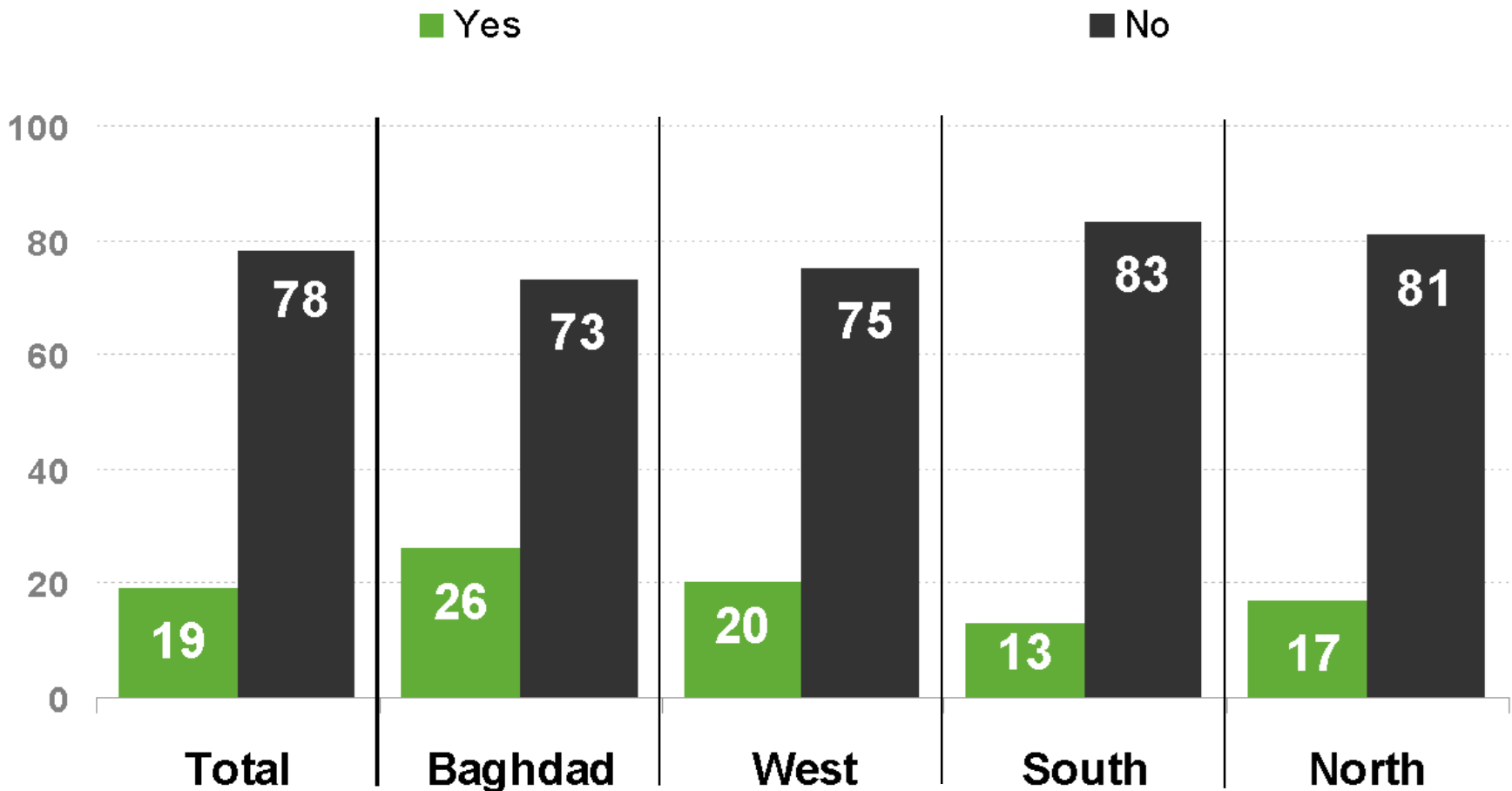
# Internet Access Highest Among Young Men

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## Internet access highest in Baghdad

*Do you have regular access to the internet?*



# Internet access significantly higher among young men

*Do you have regular access to the internet?*

