



SEEKING SECURITY: PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY IN LIBYA

November 2013

JMW Consulting



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1 Acknowledgements

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Cover Photo – Man in Ghat (Ancuta Abrudan, 2013)

2 Executive Summary

As Libya proceeds through a political transition launched following the overthrow of Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and JMW Consulting are conducting a series of nationwide public opinion surveys with funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark. These surveys are designed to assess Libyan attitudes toward the transition, citizen confidence in political leaders and newly created institutions; and to solicit opinions on a range of issues facing the country. Diwan Market Research, a public opinion firm based in Tripoli, Libya, is conducting these surveys in collaboration with JMW Consulting. NDI is utilizing survey findings as part of a broader program to support the development of democratic and representative Libyan political parties.

The report below contains findings from the second survey, conducted nationwide from September 10 to 30, 2013. These findings aggregate the results of face-to-face interviews with 1,200 Libyan respondents. Respondents were randomly selected in a probability-proportional-to-size sampling and were interviewed in all 13 governorates of Libya.¹

This study details Libyan citizens' opinions on a range of topics, including: the current situation and national direction; the performance of elected institutions; awareness and perceptions of political parties; elections for a constitution-drafting body; the constitutional process and content; the status of women; and security, including attitudes toward militias. The report also includes comparisons with findings from the first survey in this series, conducted in May 2013. The findings yield several broad themes about Libyan views:

1. *Libyans are increasingly concerned about the country's direction.* While the proportion of respondents who describe themselves as pessimistic has increased from May to September 2013, a majority (61 percent) remains optimistic. Libyans believe that efforts to disarm militias, promote political stability, and ensure personal security are the most important tasks facing the country. Despite their growing concerns, Libyans continue to strongly support democracy, with 85 percent of Libyans believing that democracy is the best form of government.
2. *Libyans exhibit growing dissatisfaction with the performance of the General National Congress (GNC).* Sixty percent of Libyans now describe the GNC's performance as poor. The Congress' approval rating fell by 23 points compared to survey findings in May 2013. Libyans place high importance on GNC members' efforts to resolve conflict and directly engage citizens.
3. *Libyans view political parties with increased negativity.* Forty-four percent of Libyans now believe that parties are not necessary for a democracy. Similarly, favorability ratings for both political parties and political leaders have declined steeply from May to September 2013. In their consideration of which party to support in elections, Libyans continue to identify political factors—party identity, platform, and performance—as more important than local or tribal ties.
4. *Libyans hope that the constitution-drafting assembly (CDA) will be comprised of legal experts and civil society representatives, not tribal leaders or political parties.* A majority of Libyans support quotas that reserve seats for women and ethnic minorities in the assembly. Sixty percent of Libyans intend to vote in the CDA elections and seek candidates with legal expertise and a strong commitment to protecting human rights in the constitution.

¹ The sampling is based on census data from 2006.

5. *Libyans believe that women should play a greater role in politics.* Seventy-one percent of Libyans feel that the degree of women's participation in the political process has not reached a satisfactory level. A majority believe that quotas similar to those adopted for the GNC elections should be applied to ensure that women are represented in a future national legislature.
6. *The vast majority of Libyans have negative perceptions of militias that are not accountable to government authority.* Groups formed to combat Gaddafi in 2011 are more likely to be tolerated by Libyans than those created after the fall of the former regime. Libyans support disarming these groups and a large majority support criminalizing firearms by law as an effective means to do so.

3 Political Context

Figure 1: Map of Libya



Following the popular uprising that led to the overthrow of the Gaddafi regime, Libya’s interim government, the National Transitional Council (NTC), issued a “constitutional declaration” in August 2011 that included a timetable for holding elections and drafting a new constitution. On July 7, 2012, Libyans elected 200 members to a General National Congress (GNC), a proto-legislature that replaced the NTC and is tasked with overseeing the constitution-drafting process. In March 2013, the GNC amended the constitutional declaration to provide for the popular election of the 60-member constitution-drafting assembly (CDA) instead of its appointment by the GNC. Subsequently, the GNC approved an electoral law in July 2013 for the CDA elections based on an individual, rather than party-based, candidate system. The law reserves six seats (10 percent of the total) for women, and an additional two seats for each of Libya’s main ethnic minority communities: the Amazigh, Tabu, and Tuareg.

This survey was conducted from September 10 to 30, 2013, a little more than a year after the GNC took office and a few days before the launch of candidate registration for the CDA election. In mid-September, striking petroleum workers disrupted oil production across Libya, and militias in the East occupied petroleum shipping facilities. Thefts of electrical wiring and a cut in the country’s primary water supply by an armed group disrupted these utilities for many of Libya’s coastal cities throughout the beginning of the survey period. Criticizing the government’s inability to address these challenges and improve the security situation, the Islamist Adala Wa Binaa Party (Justice and Construction or AB) called for Prime Minister Ali Zeidan’s resignation.

Insecurity was pervasive during the survey period, with assassinations of law enforcement and military officials in Benghazi, a car bombing of a foreign ministry building in Benghazi and an

attempted car bombing of a foreign ministry building in Tripoli, armed robberies of diplomats in Tripoli, and ethnic clashes between Arab and Tabu tribes in the southern region of Sebha. Libya's weak national army and police forces are unable to prevent armed militias from exerting control in many parts of the country.

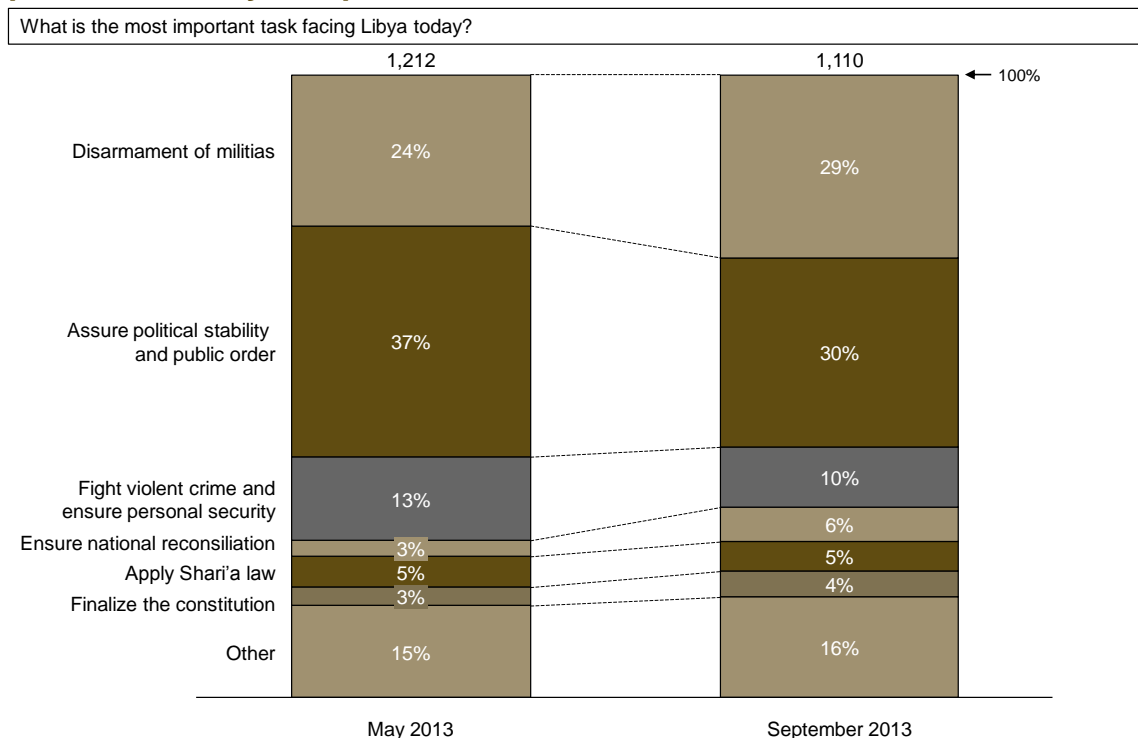
4 National Direction

Summary:

- Similar to the May 2013 survey, Libyans view efforts to disarm militias, promote political stability, and ensure personal security as the most important tasks facing the country.
- While Libyans are increasingly pessimistic about the country's direction, a majority remain optimistic.
- Forty-one percent of Libyans believe that the country is worse off than before the revolution, but 65 percent predict that three years from now, the situation in Libya will be better off than before the revolution.
- A significant majority of Libyans continue to support democracy, with 85 percent believing that democracy is the best form of government.

This section assesses Libyans' views on the situation facing the country and expectations for the future. Security continues to represent citizens' top priority, in line with findings from May 2013. Thirty percent of Libyans feel that the most important challenge facing the country is to assure political stability and public order, while a similar share prioritizes efforts to disarm militias. These figures have not shifted significantly since May 2013. In both instances, other priorities—whether related to economics, religion, or political concerns such as constitution-drafting or national reconciliation—are far less commonly viewed as the most important task facing the country.

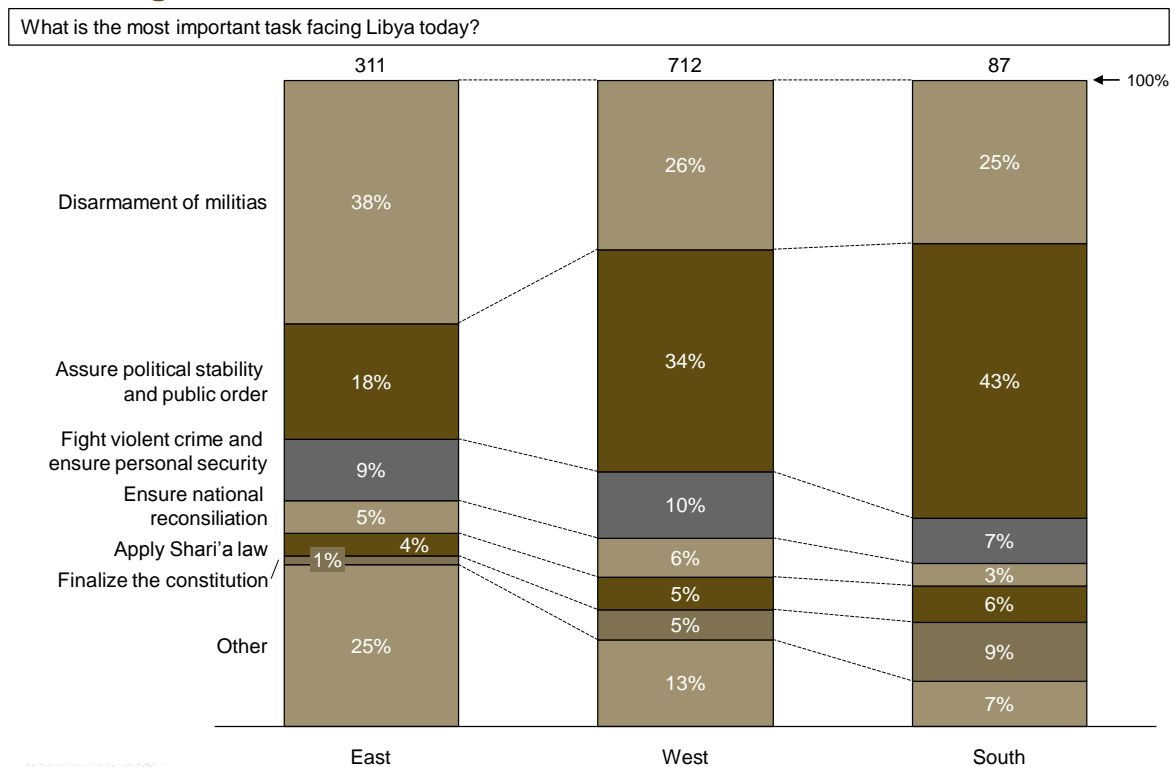
Figure 2: Libyans continue to prioritize disarming militias and assuring political stability and public order.



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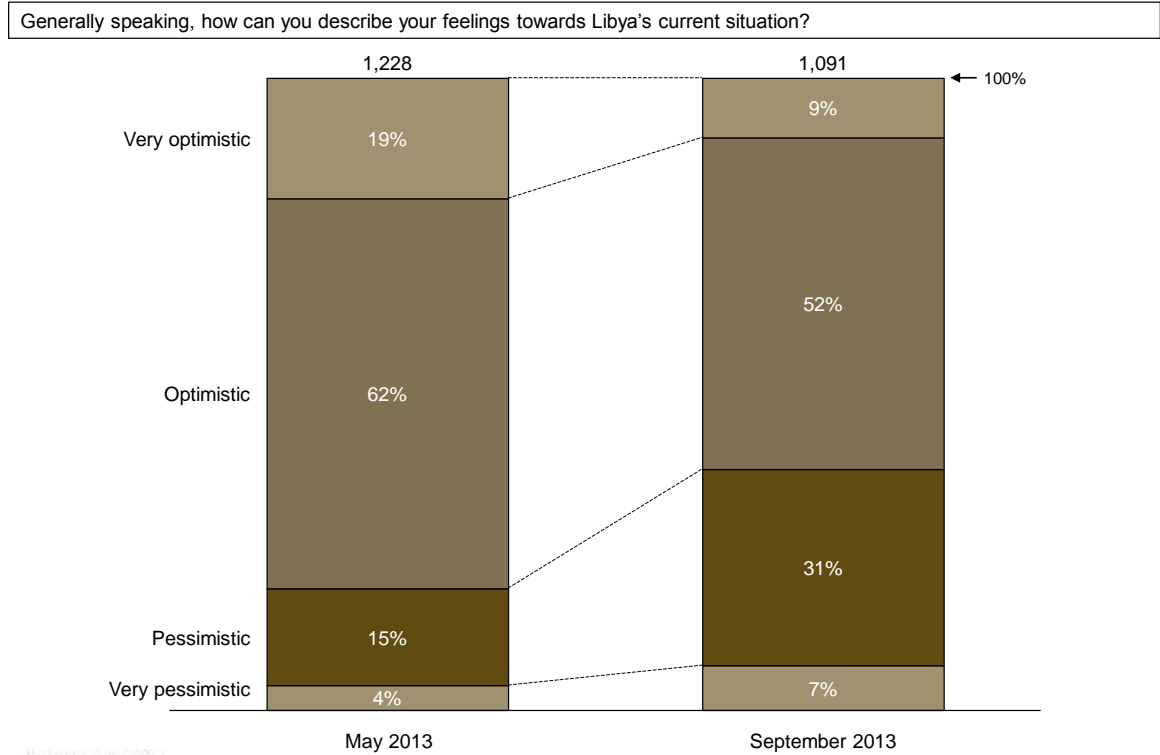
Libyans' ranking of national priorities varies by region. Respondents from the East place a higher importance on the need to disarm militias, while in the West and South political stability and public order are seen as a higher priority.

Figure 3: Libya's South and West are relatively less concerned with disarming militias.



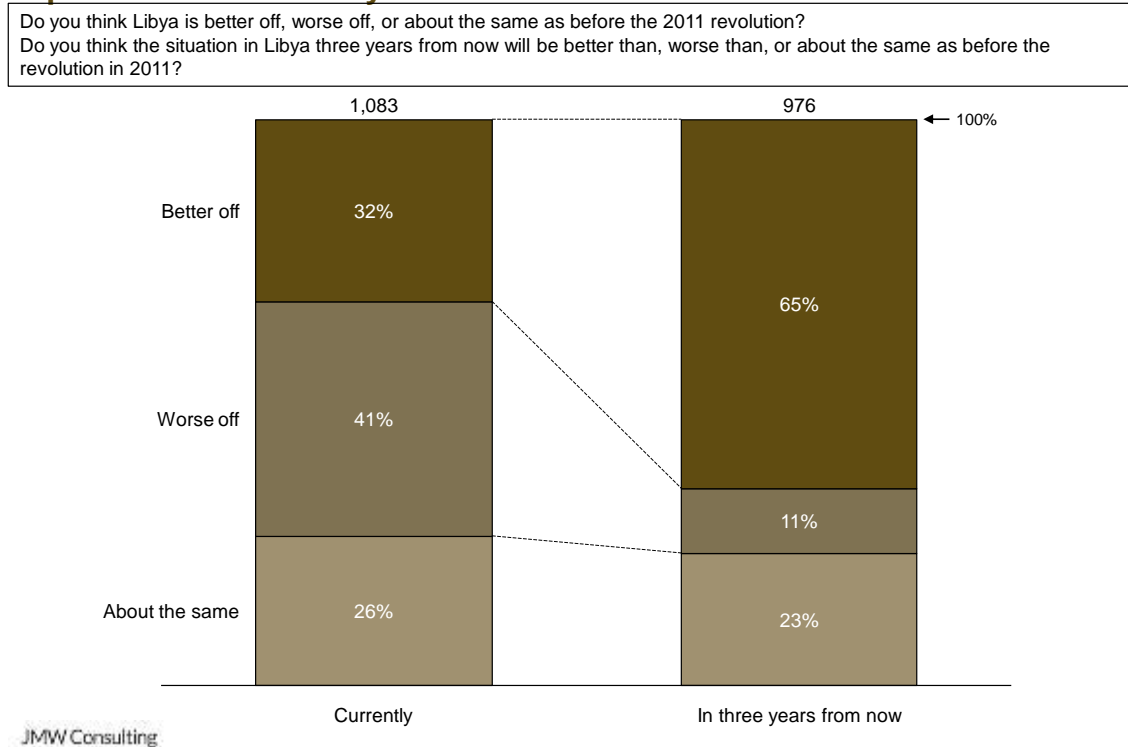
Overall, respondents remain optimistic about the current state of affairs in Libya, though pessimism is growing. The proportion of Libyans describing themselves as ‘Very optimistic’ or ‘Optimistic’ fell by 20 percent from May to September, while the share of pessimistic respondents doubled to 31 percent in September.

Figure 4: Libyans express increasing pessimism, though a majority remain optimistic.



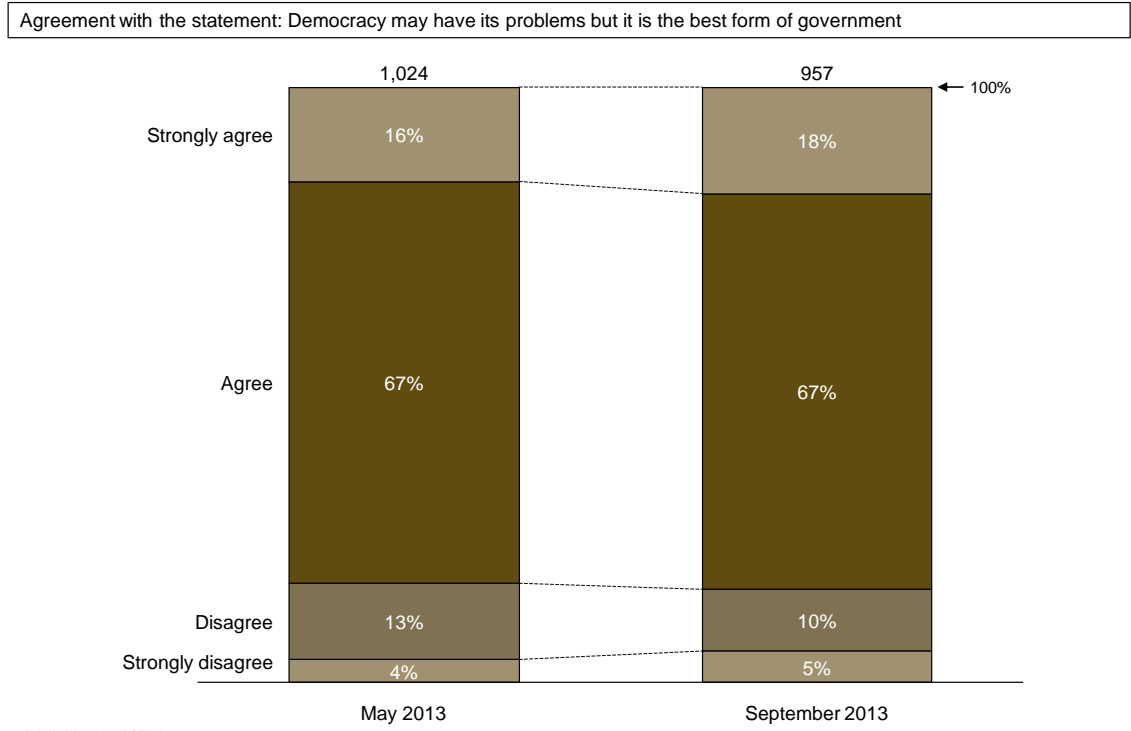
Despite growing pessimism about the immediate situation facing Libya, respondents remain optimistic about the future. Forty-one percent of respondents feel that Libya is worse off now than before the 2011 revolution, while 32 percent believe the country is better off. When asked to envision how the future three years from now will compare to the pre-revolutionary period, however, 65 percent of respondents predict that Libya will be better off; only 11 percent anticipate that the country will be worse off three years from now.

Figure 5: Forty-one percent of Libyans believe that the country is now worse off than before the 2011 revolution, but a majority predict improvements in three years.



Growing pessimism and preoccupation with security issues have not weakened Libyans' profound support for a democratic political system. Eighty-five percent of Libyans view democracy, despite its flaws, as the best form of government. Libyans' faith in democracy is noteworthy given that their satisfaction with current leaders and institutions fell significantly from May to September 2013.

Figure 6: Eighty-five percent of Libyans believe democracy is the best form of government.

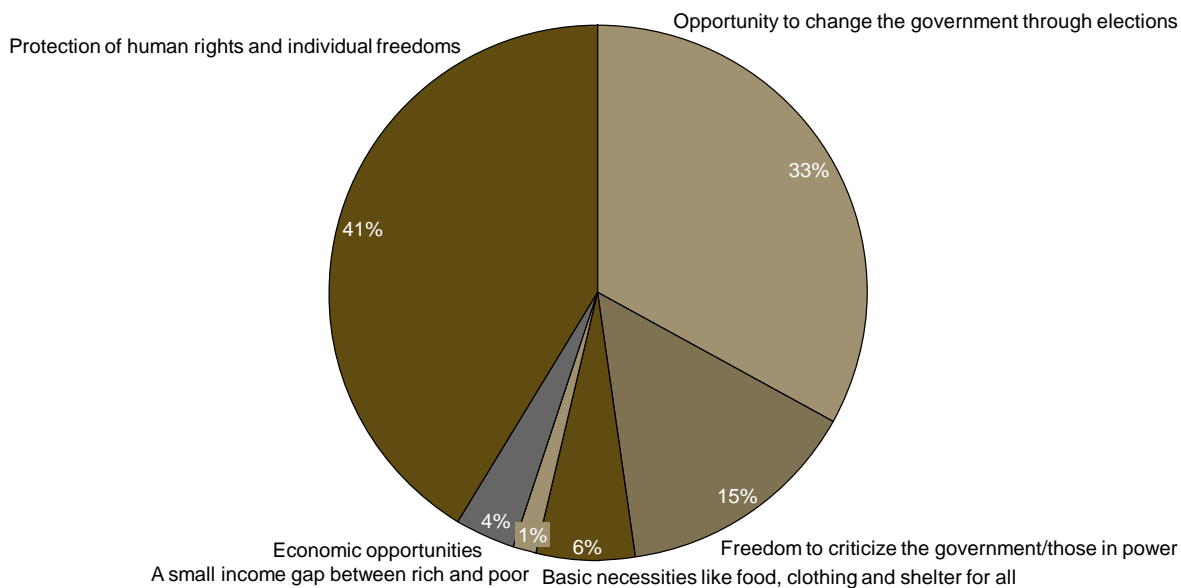


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Similar to the May survey, according to Libyans the most important characteristics of democracy concern political rights: forty-one percent believe the most important characteristic is the protection of human rights and freedoms, while 33 percent believe the opportunity to change the government through elections is most important. Only 11 percent of Libyans view the most important characteristic of democracy as economic in nature (producing economic opportunities, reducing income inequality, and providing access to basic living necessities).

Figure 7: Libyans characterize democracy through the protection of human rights and individual freedoms, elections, and the freedom to criticize those in power.

If you have to choose only one thing, what would you choose as the most important characteristic of democracy?



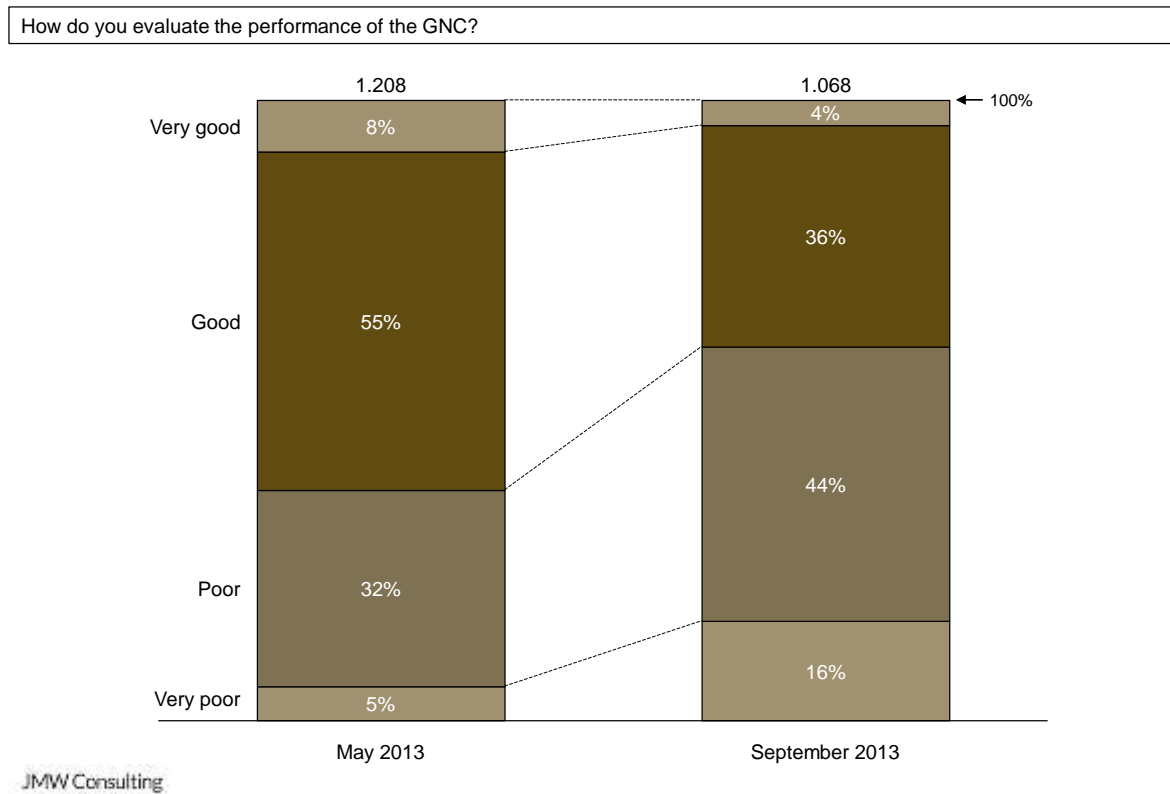
5 GNC Performance

Summary:

- In contrast to polling data from May 2013, a majority of Libyans now views the GNC's performance as poor.
- Libyans in the East and South rate the performance of the GNC slightly more critically than Libyans from the West.

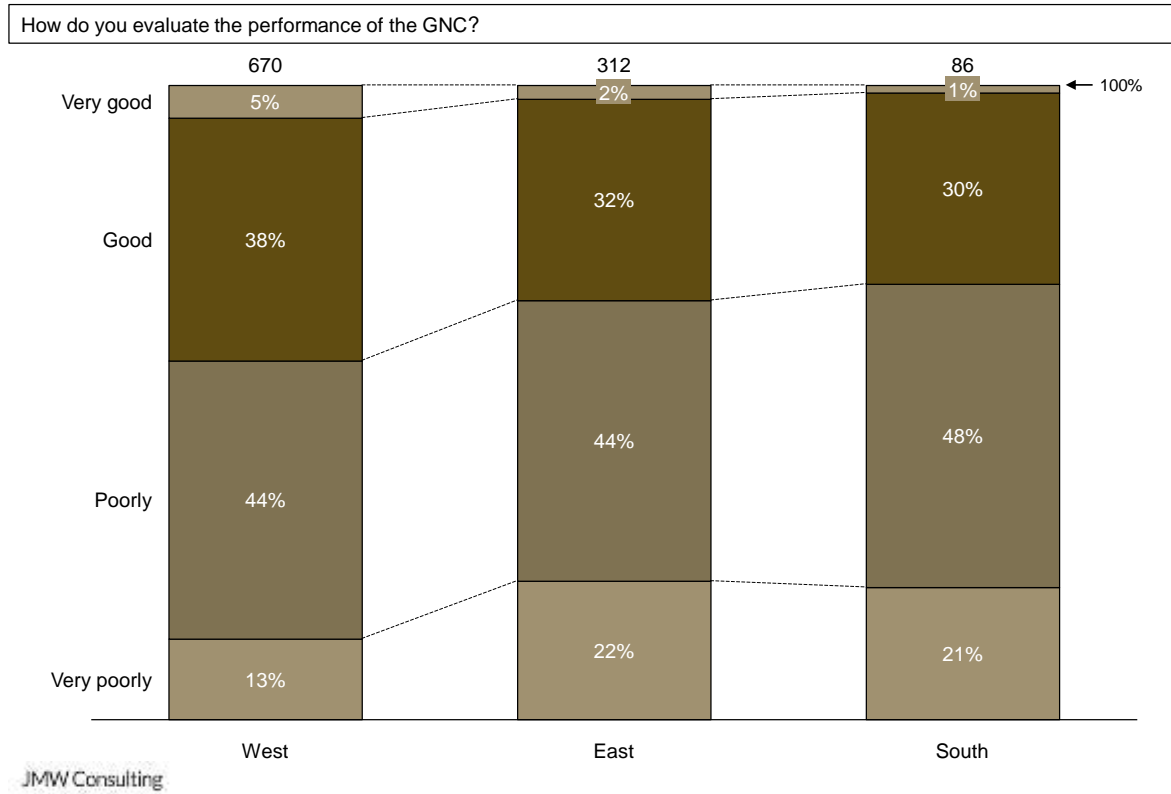
Libyans' perceptions of the GNC's performance deteriorated from May to September 2013. The share of respondents who rated the GNC's performance as either good or very good fell from 63 percent in May to 40 percent in September. The proportion of Libyans who describe the GNC's performance as poor or very poor increased to 60 percent from 37 percent. The number of Libyans who described the GNC's performance as 'very poor' more than tripled from May to September.

Figure 8: Libyans are increasingly dissatisfied with the GNC's performance.



Respondents from western Libya are more likely to rate the GNC's performance positively compared to those in the East and South.

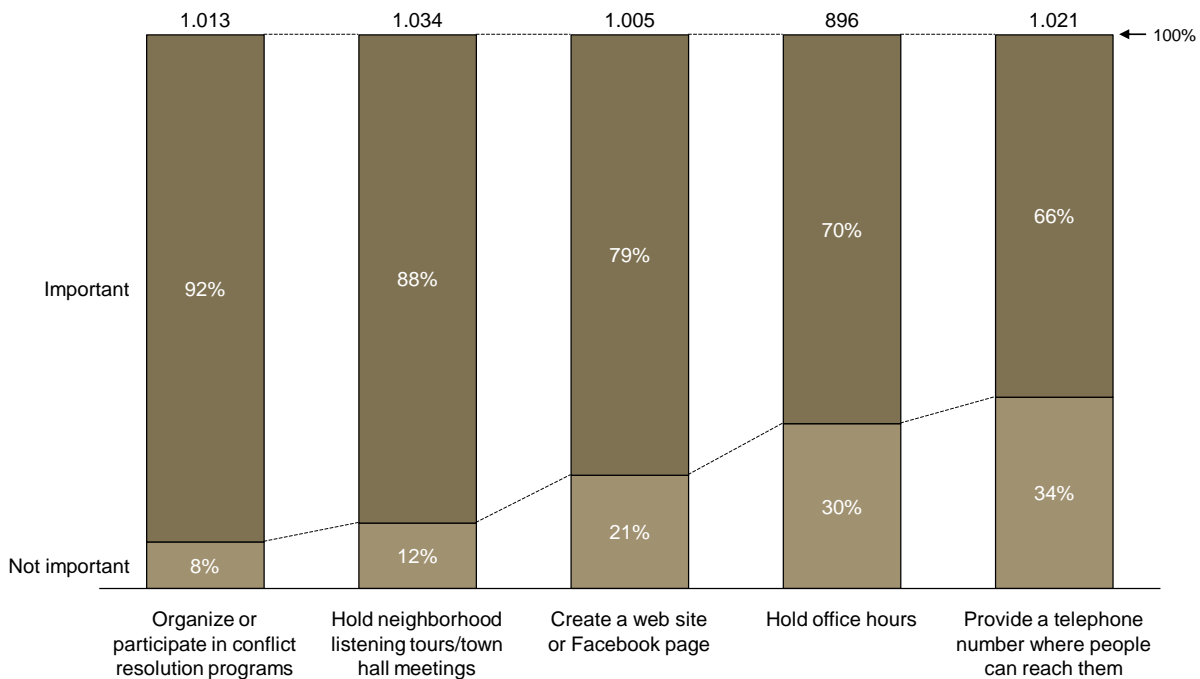
Figure 9: GNC's performance elicits slightly more positive views in Libya's West.



When asked to rank the importance of potential actions that the GNC could undertake, Libyans place high priority on conflict resolution and direct interaction between members and the public. Actions to make GNC members more accessible, whether through Facebook, office hours, or by telephone, are also deemed important by a majority of respondents.

Figure 10: Constituents value GNC members' efforts to promote conflict resolution and directly engage citizens.

Here is a list of actions that members of the General National Congress could take. Please tell me if you think the actions are important or not important.



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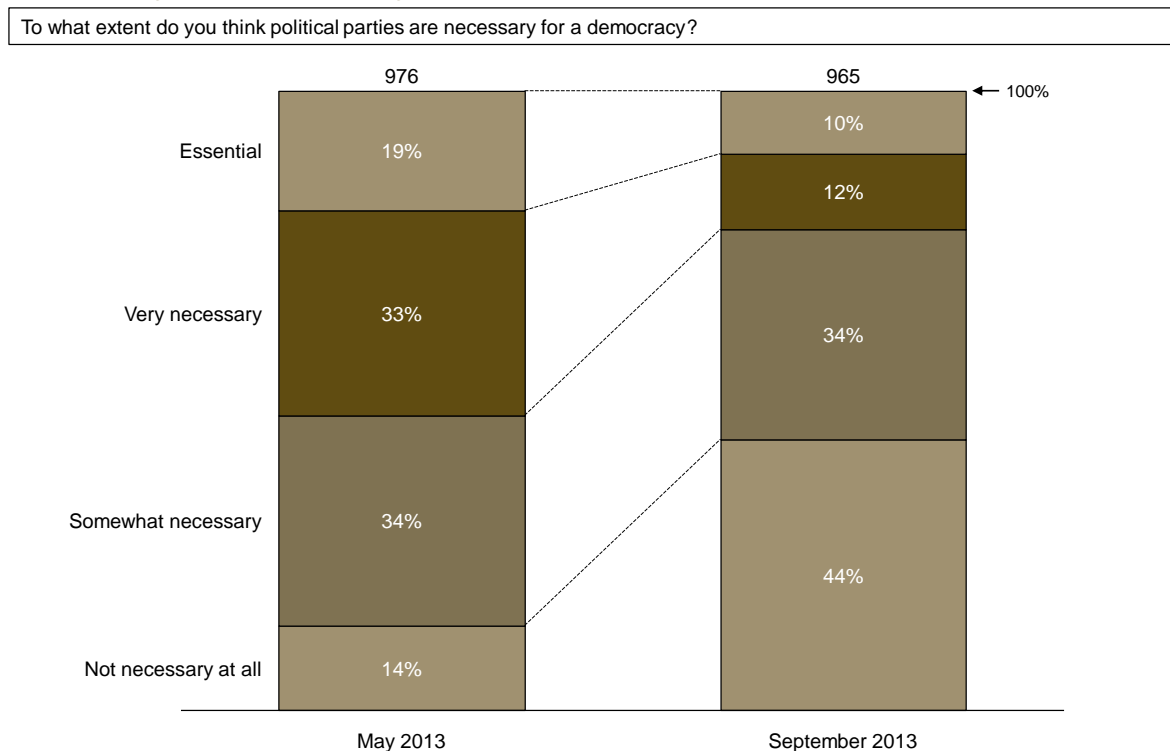
6 Political Parties and Leaders

Summary:

- Libyans view political parties with increasing negativity; 44 percent of respondents believe that parties are not necessary for democracy.
- Parties' favorability ratings decreased, with only the National Forces Alliance (NFA) maintaining a positive net favorability. A strong majority of potential Libyan voters say they would support the NFA in a future election.
- When comparing political leaders, former NTC Chairman Mustafa Abdul Jalil receives the most support, followed by former interim Prime Minister Mahmoud Jibril.
- The favorability of all political leaders decreased between May and September, especially for Prime Minister Ali Zeidan, whose favorability dropped 51 percentage points over the four-month period.

Libyans are increasingly skeptical about the value of political parties in the country's political transition. While a majority still believe that the presence of political parties is to some extent a necessary attribute for democracy, the amount of support for this view has fallen significantly since May. The proportion of Libyans who believe parties are not necessary for a democracy increased by 30 percentage points from 14 percent in May to 44 percent in September.

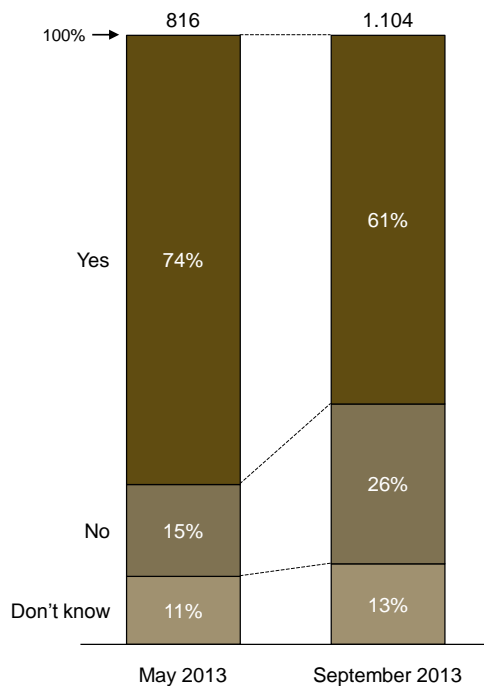
Figure 11: Libyans increasingly believe that political parties are not necessary for democracy.



Fewer Libyans expressed an intention to vote in future parliamentary elections. Sixty-one percent of Libyans responded in September that they would vote if elections were held tomorrow, in contrast to 74 percent in May. Among potential voters, the NFA continues to garner strong support among Libyans. Support for the NFA among likely voters increased from 64 percent in May to 71 percent in September.

Figure 12: A smaller majority of Libyans intends to vote in elections.

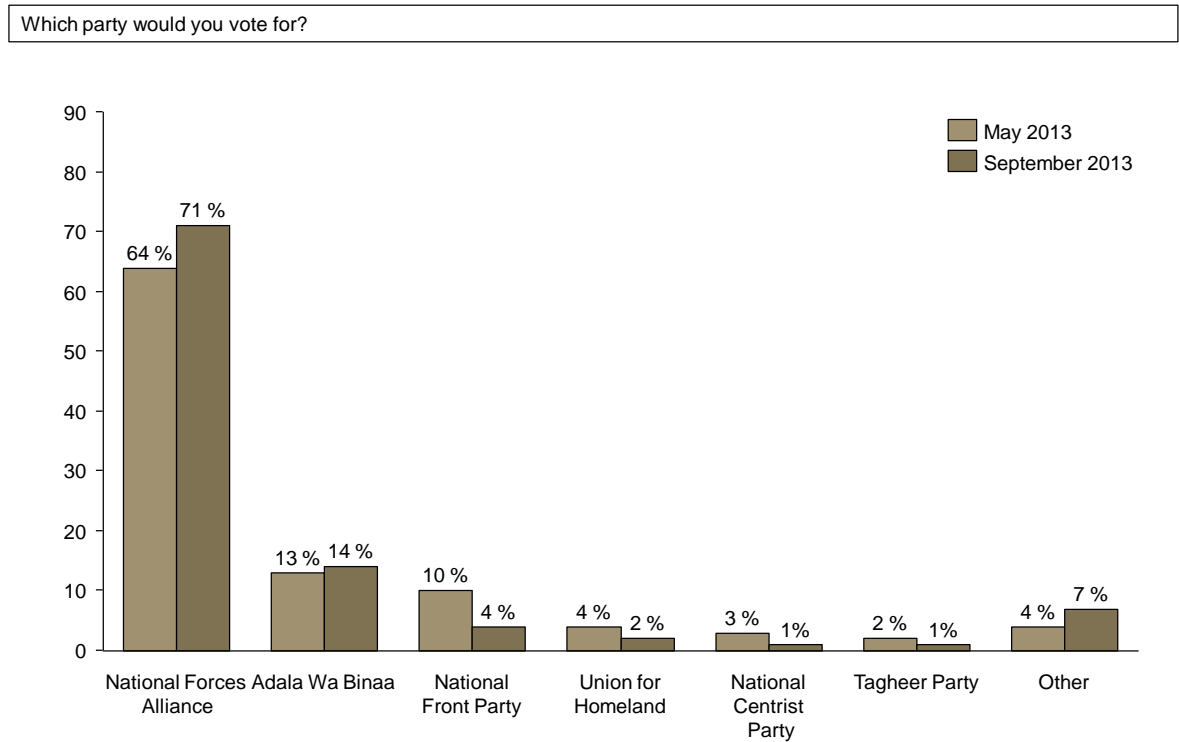
If parliamentary elections were held tomorrow would you vote?



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Among potential voters, the NFA continues to garner strong support among Libyans. Support for the NFA among likely voters increased from 64 percent in May to 71 percent in September.

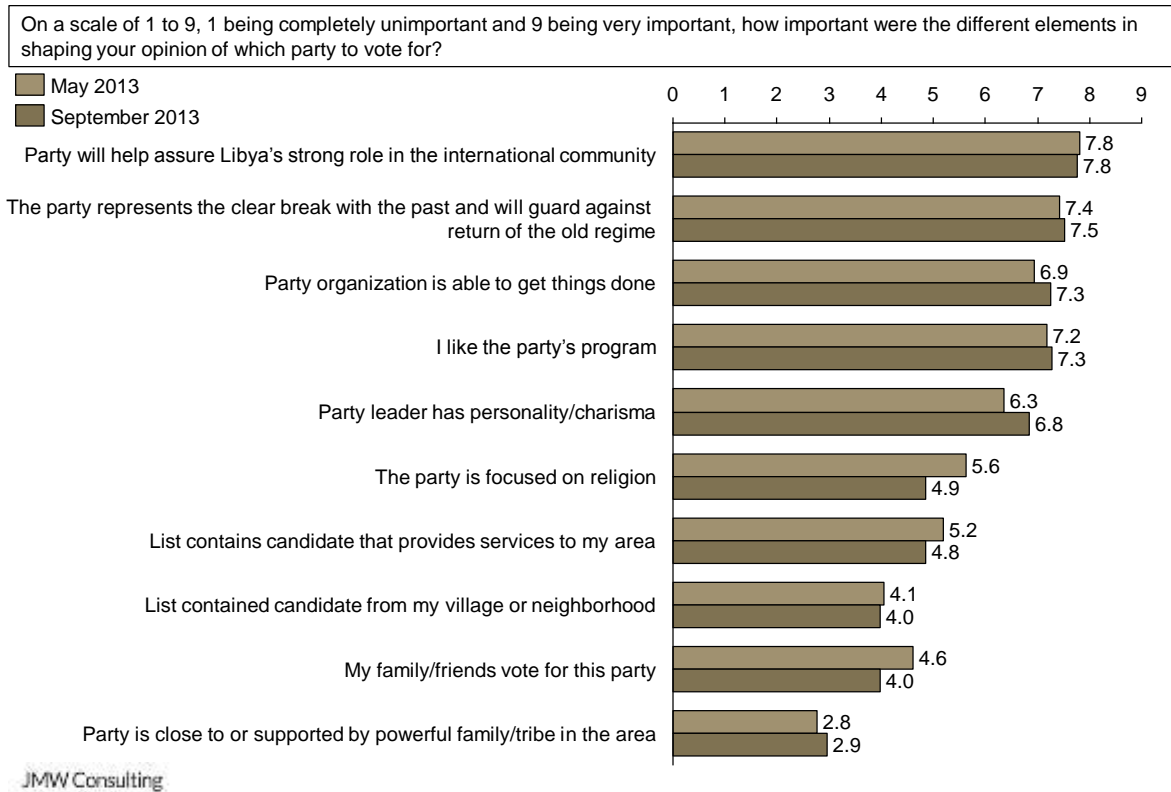
Figure 13: Support for the National Forces Alliance remains high among likely voters.



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In deciding which party to support in elections, Libyans continue to identify political factors—party identity, platform, and performance—as more important than local or tribal ties. In general, Libyans are more likely to vote for a political party if it is seen as: promoting Libya’s role internationally; representing a clear break from the former regime and a bulwark against the return of former regime members; organizationally capable and able to accomplish its goals; and, having a favorable political program. Libyans are less likely to favor a certain party for reasons pertaining to local, interpersonal, or tribal connections.

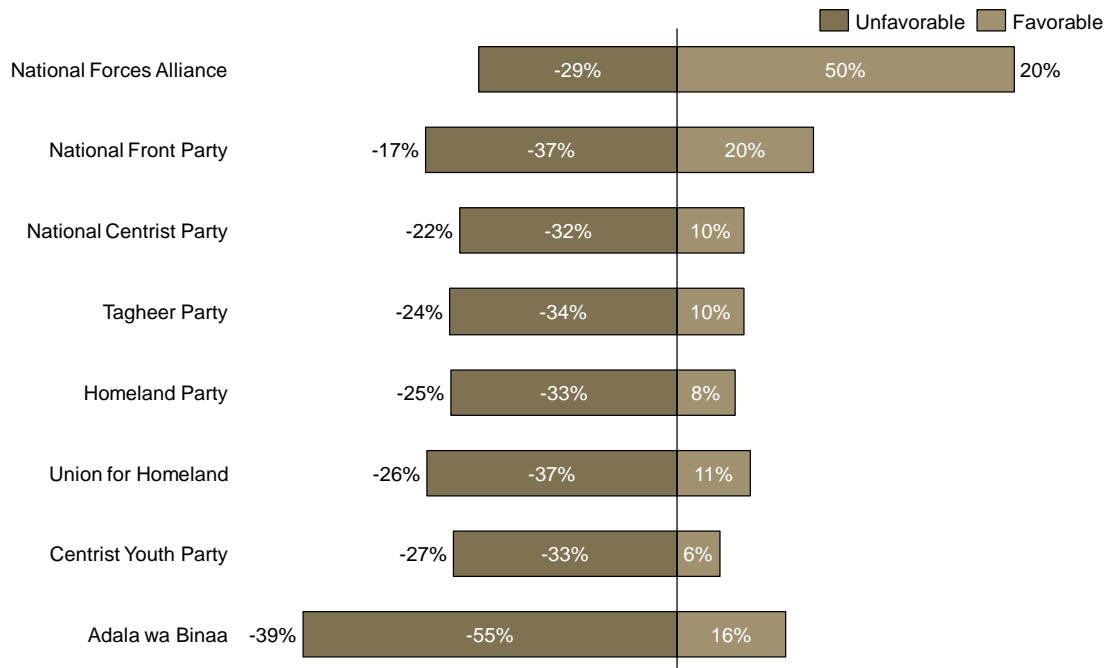
Figure 14: Voters’ support for individual parties is generally driven by parties’ ambitions, not local and tribal ties.



In addition to Libyans' increasing skepticism of parties as a vital aspect of a democracy, respondents in September also view specific parties more negatively than in May. The NFA is the only party that maintains a net positive favorability (favorable minus unfavorable). Each other party has a net negative favorability with the Adala wa Binaa (AB) party polling the lowest with a net approval of negative 39 percent. The findings also confirm Libyans' lack of awareness of many parties; the only parties recognized by more than half of respondents are the NFA and AB.

Figure 15: The National Forces Alliance is the only party with a net positive favorability rating.

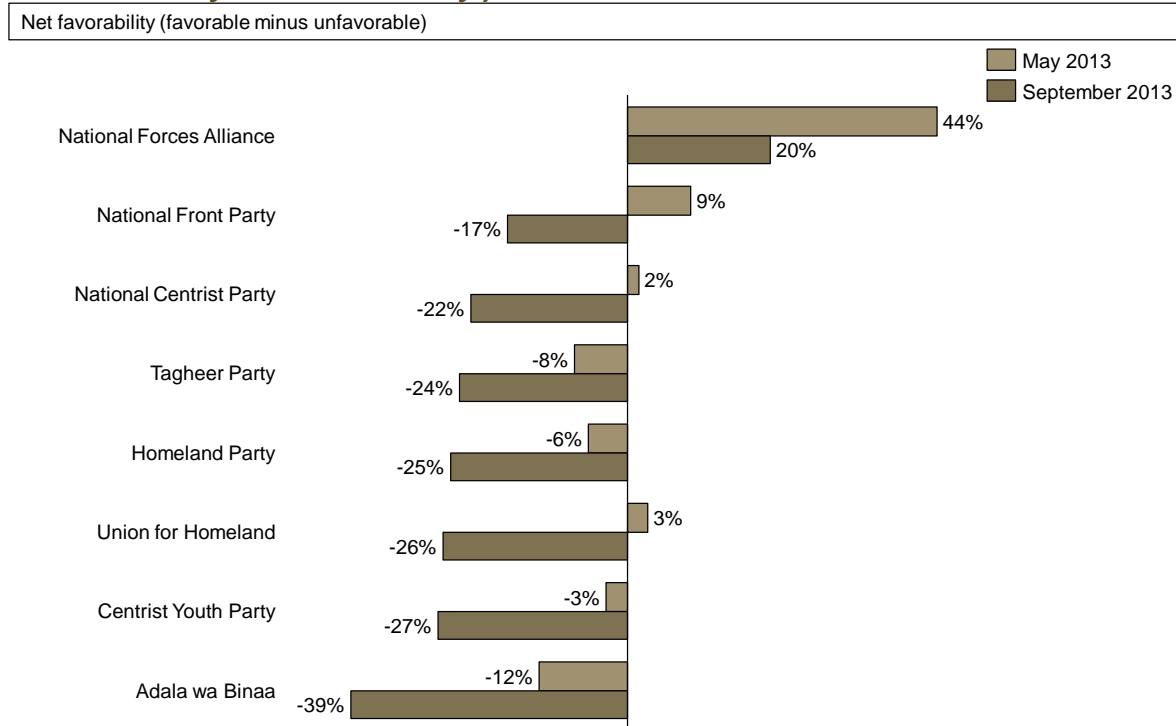
For each of the following, please tell me if you feel positively, negatively about the party, or if you don't know the party well enough to have an opinion



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When compared to previous polling data, party favorability ratings have decreased for all parties. The Tagheer Party experienced the smallest decrease (16 percentage points), while support for the Union for Homeland Party fell the most (29 percentage points).

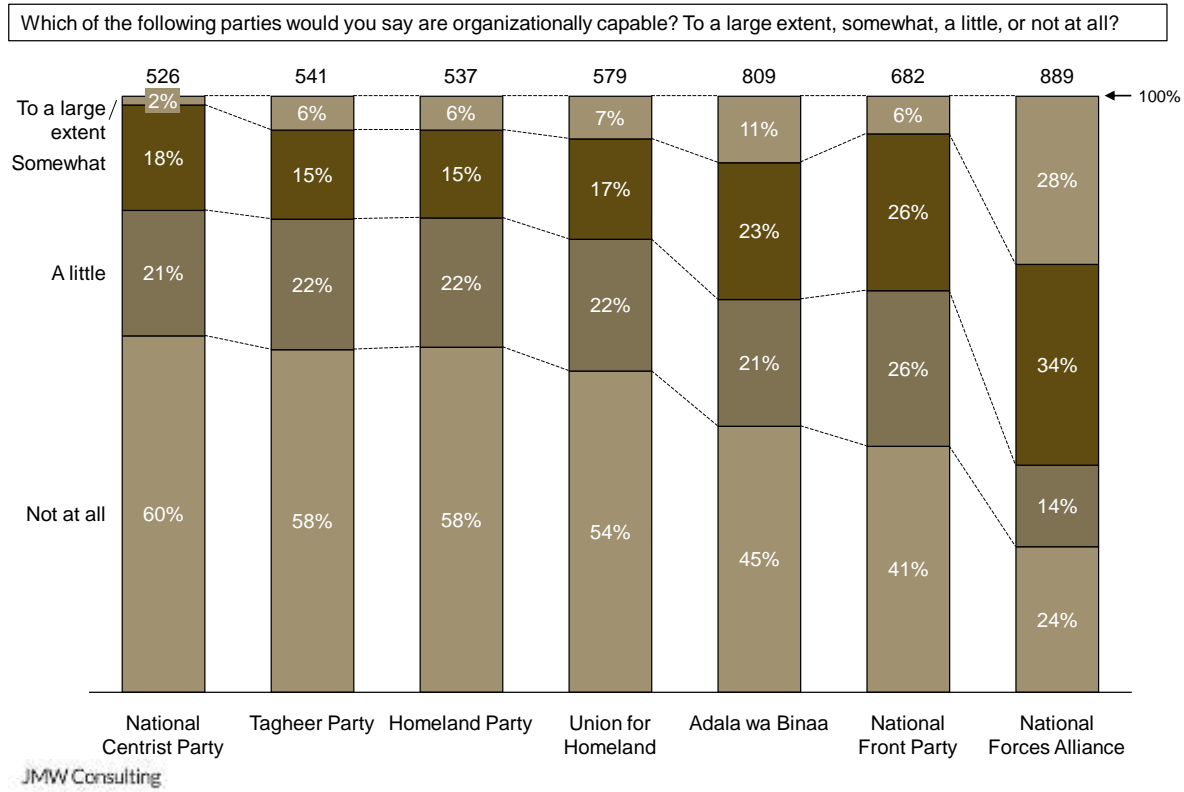
Figure 16: Libyans increasingly view political parties negatively. (Parties are ranked by net favorability.)



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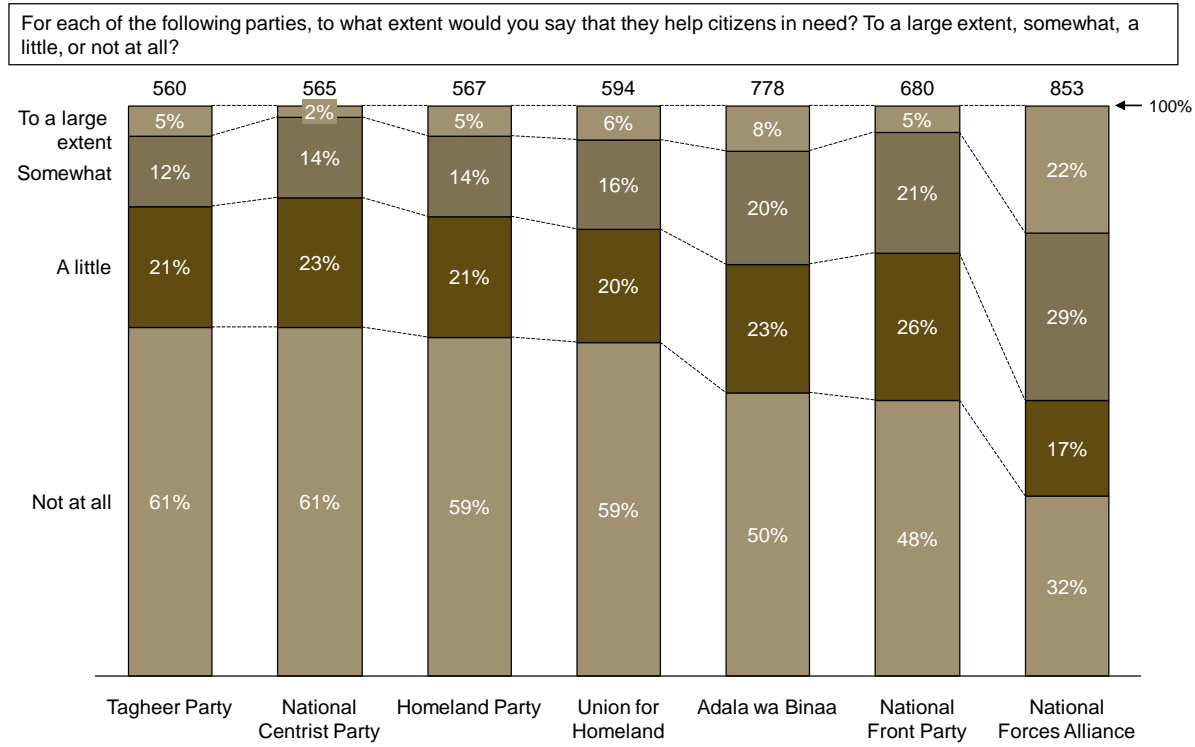
According to a majority of Libyans, only three parties—the NFA, National Front, and AB—maintain some degree of organizational capability. A majority of Libyans feel that the rest of the parties lack organizational capability.

Figure 17: National Forces Alliance is seen as having the highest degree of organizational capability.



When asked which parties help citizens in need, a majority of Libyans again rank the NFA, National Front, and AB parties as the top three in descending order. Even for the NFA, which is seen as most helpful to citizens in need, half of Libyans believe the party is only a little helpful or not helpful at all.

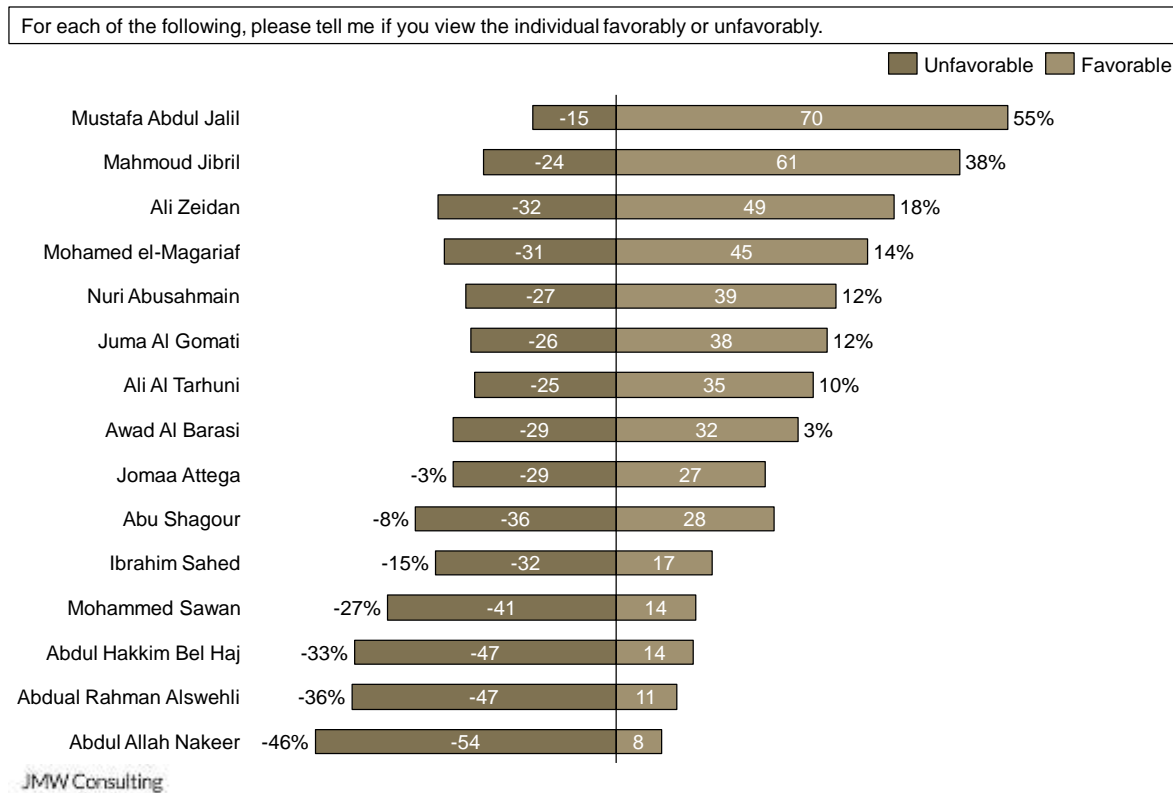
Figure 18: The National Forces Alliance is seen as the most helpful party to citizens in need.



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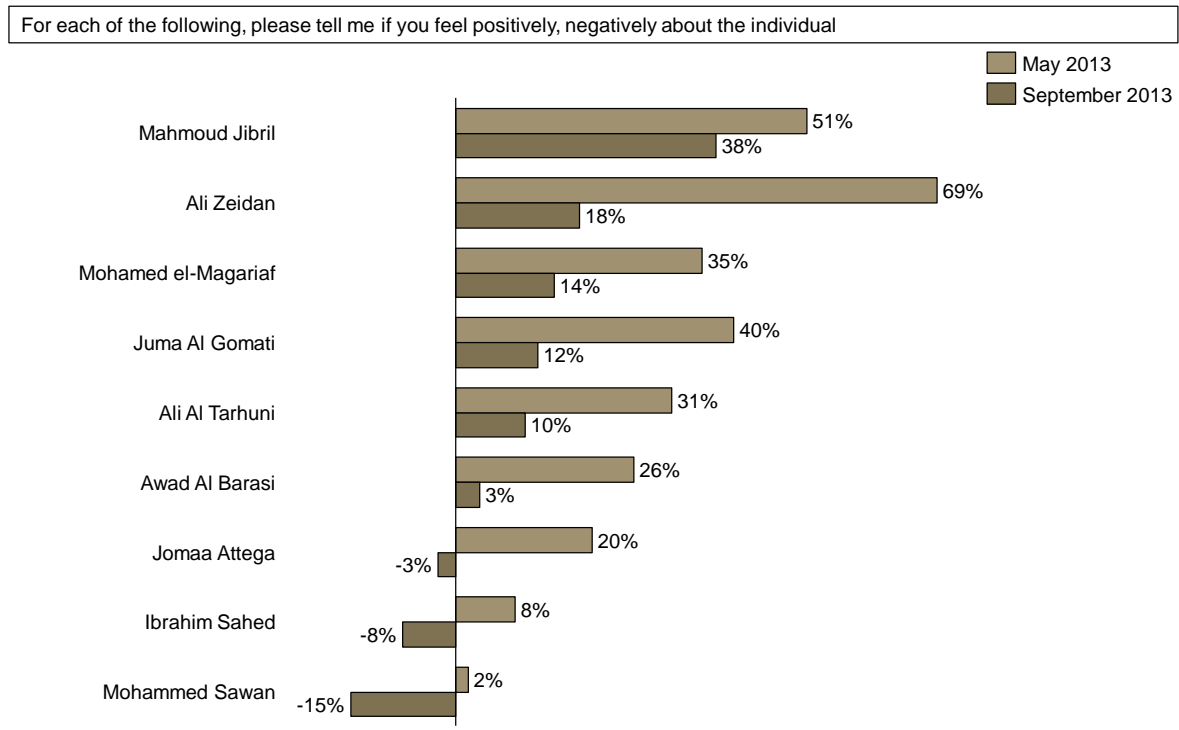
Despite Libyans' unfavorable views of political parties, individual political leaders themselves tend to provoke more positive reactions. Former NTC Chairman Mustafa Abdul Jalil has the highest net favorability rating among Libyan political leaders at 55 percent, followed by former interim Prime Minister and head of the NFA Mahmoud Jibril at 38 percent, and current Prime Minister Ali Zeidan at 18 percent. Libyans are also more likely to be aware of individual political leaders than political parties. For example, 60 percent of Libyans recognize Ali Al Tarhouni, leader of the National Centrist Party (NCP), while only 42 percent of Libyans were able to indicate a view of the party itself.

Figure 19: Former NTC Chairman Mustafa Abdul Jalil evokes the highest net favorability rating for individual politicians.



Support for every listed political leader declined from May to September 2013. The most severe example is Prime Minister Ali Zeidan, who experienced a 51 percentage point drop in favorability.

Figure 20: All political leaders' favorability has declined.

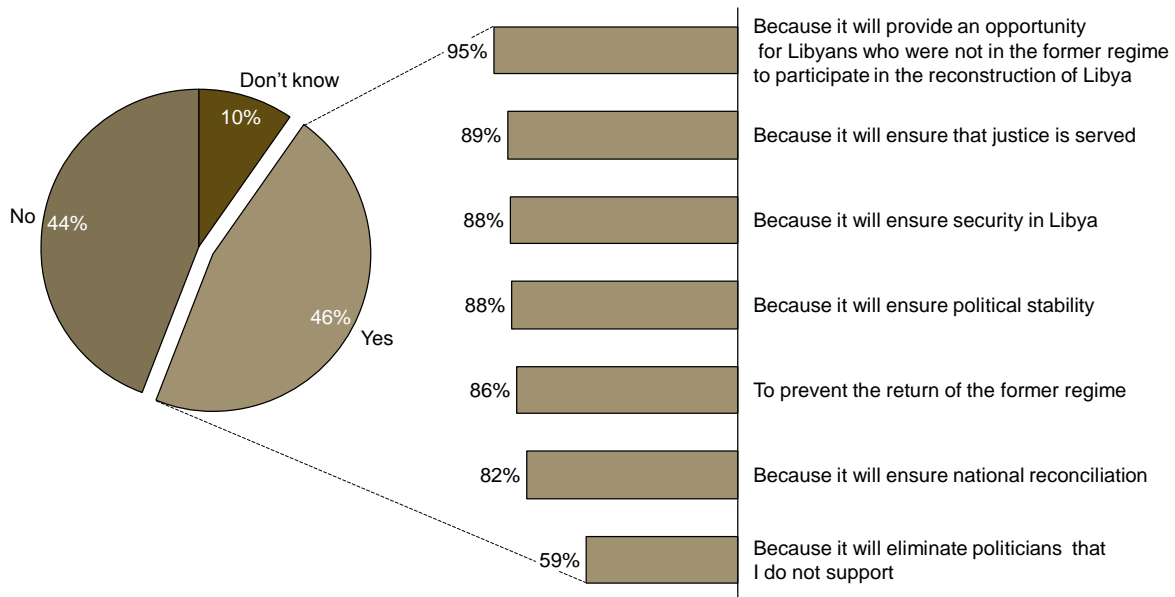


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On May 5, the GNC passed the Political Isolation Law, legislation that could exclude a wide range of officials with past affiliations with the Gaddafi regime from holding public office and leading political parties for a ten-year period. Almost equal numbers of Libyans support and oppose the law. Those in favor view the law as an opportunity for people who were not part of the former regime to participate in the reconstruction of Libya. Supporters also claim that the law will ensure justice, improve security, foster political stability, and prevent elements of the former Gaddafi regime from returning to power. A majority of supporters also stated that the law would exclude politicians that they do not support, though this justification was the least commonly cited.

Figure 21: Supporters of the Political Isolation Law feel it will provide opportunities for those unconnected to the Gaddafi regime to rebuild Libya.

On June 1, the GNC passed a political exclusion law that banned anyone who possessed any political office in the Gaddafi regime between 1 September 1969 and 23 October 2011 from holding positions of responsibility for the next 10 years. Do you support this law?

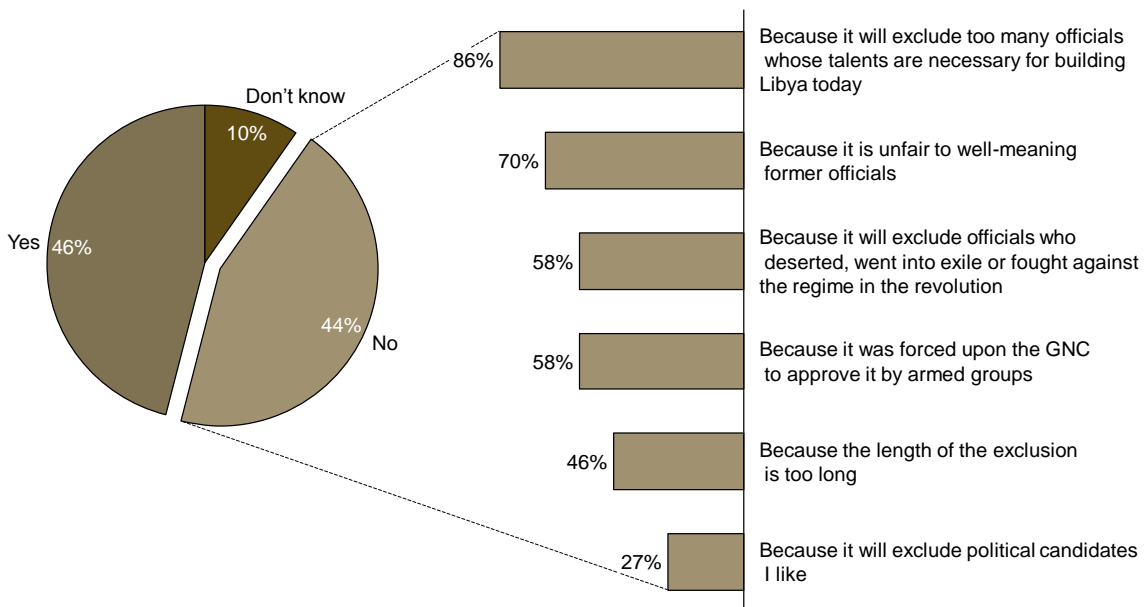


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Among the 44 percent of Libyans who oppose the Political Isolation Law, 86 percent maintain that the measure would exclude too many talented officials whose contributions are needed to rebuild Libya. Opponents also cited concerns about how the law would be implemented, worrying in particular that it would unjustly affect well-intentioned officials from the former regime, that it would also encompass many who had served Gaddafi but fought against the regime in 2011, or that the exclusion period of 10 years is too long. Likewise, 58 percent of opponents disapprove of the process by which the GNC passed the law, asserting that armed groups coerced the legislature. Twenty-seven percent of the law's opponents based their opposition on the law's exclusion of politicians they like.

Figure 22: Opponents of the Political Isolation Law fear that it will exclude officials necessary for rebuilding Libya.

On June 1, the GNC passed a political exclusion law that banned anyone who possessed any political office in the Gaddafi regime between 1 September 1969 and 23 October 2011 from holding positions of responsibility for the next 10 years. Do you support this law?



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7 The Development of a New Constitution

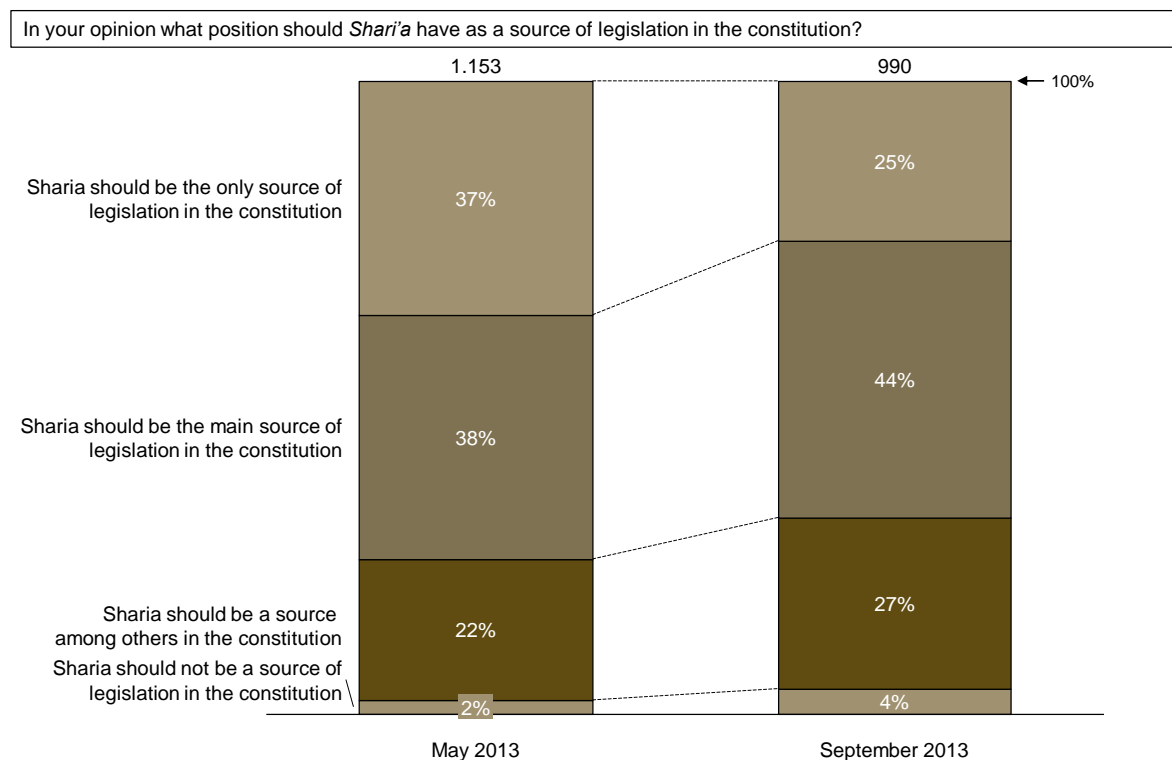
Summary:

- The proportion of Libyans who believe that *Shari'a* law should be referenced in the constitution as the only source of legislation declined from May to September 2013.
- The vast majority of Libyans feel that the constitution should guarantee economic as well as civil and political rights.
- Libyans believe that legal experts and civil society representatives should be represented in the constitution-drafting assembly. A majority of Libyans opposes the presence of tribal leaders and political parties in the assembly.
- The majority of Libyans support the idea of quotas ensuring the representation of women and ethnic minorities in the constitution-drafting assembly, though 72 percent of Libyans believe the current quota for minority communities should be reduced.

In March 2013, the GNC announced that Libya would hold a national election for a constitution-drafting assembly (CDA, also referred to as the Committee of Sixty.) In July, the legislature passed an electoral law for selecting members of the CDA; the law reserved six seats for women and two seats each for the Amazigh, Tabu, and Tuareg minority communities.

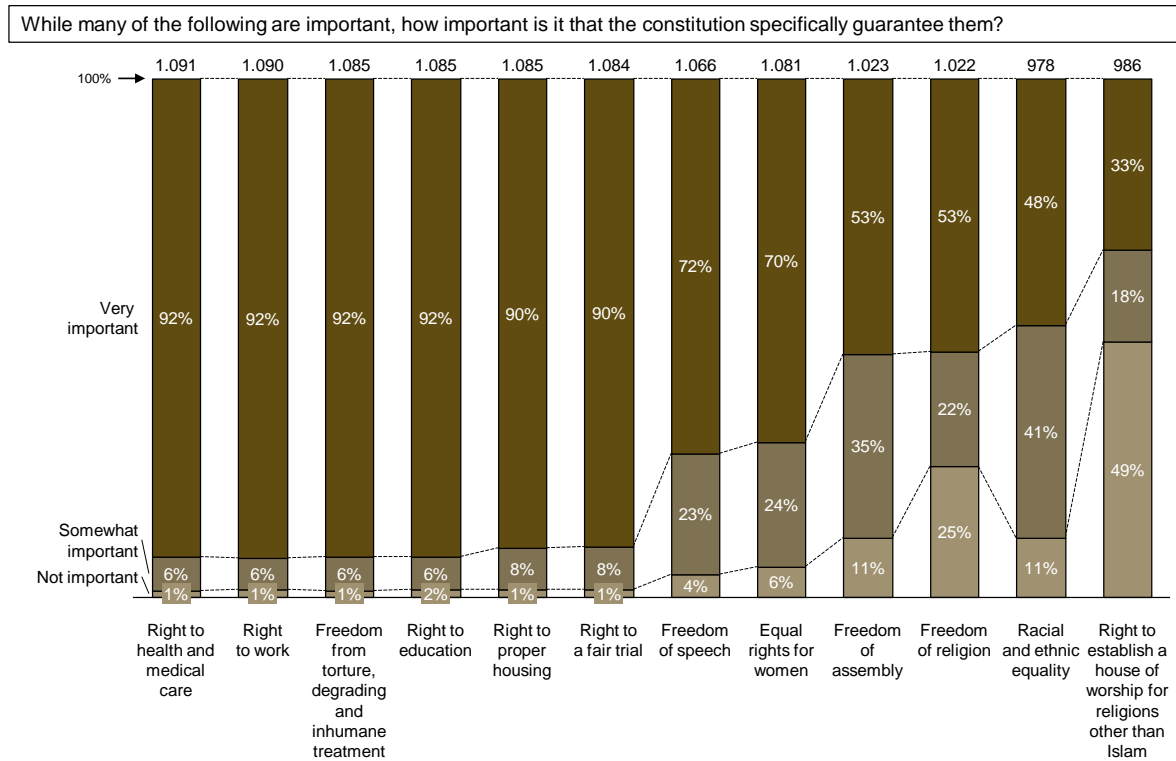
Thirty-seven percent of Libyans believed in May 2013 that *Shari'a* or Islamic law should be the *only* source of legislation identified in the constitution. This figure dropped to 25 percent in September 2013. Similarly, while the proportion of Libyans who believe that *Shari'a* should be the *main* source of legislation increased, a greater share of Libyans feel that *Shari'a* should be listed in the constitution as one source among others.

Figure 23: Support for *Shari'a* as the only source of legislation in the constitution has declined.



The vast majority of Libyans believe that basic economic, civil, and political rights should be enshrined in the constitution. In terms of economic rights, at least 90 percent of Libyans feel that it is very important to include the right to health and medical care, employment, education, and proper housing in the constitution. Strong majorities also support provisions to guarantee freedom from torture and a right to a fair trial. Seventy percent of Libyans view equal rights for women as very important. Libyans are more divided, however, on the importance of specific constitutional guarantees for freedom of assembly and freedom of religion.

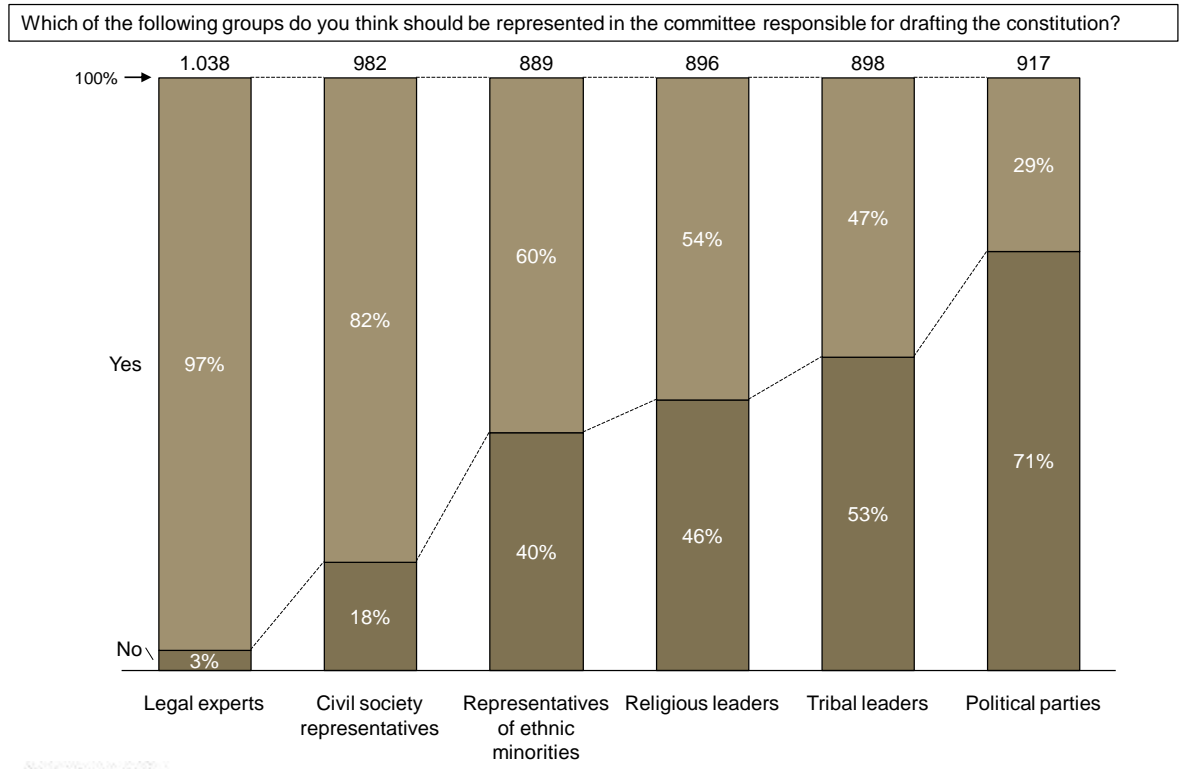
Figure 24: Libyans express widespread support for constitutional guarantees of many economic, civil, and political rights.



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Strong majorities of Libyans believe that legal experts and civil society representatives should be included in the CDA. A majority oppose including tribal leaders and political parties, while public opinion is divided on whether religious leaders should play a role in constitution-drafting.

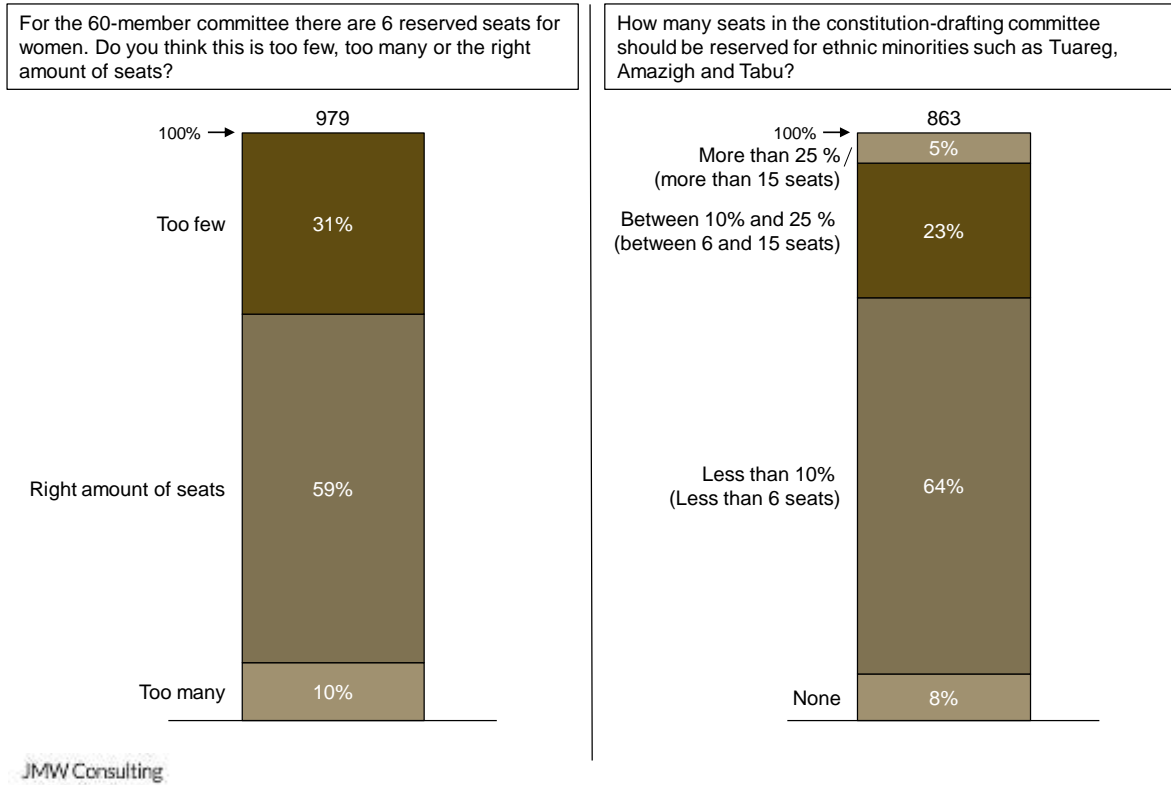
Figure 25: Libyans support the inclusion of legal experts and civil society representatives in the constitution-drafting assembly



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While Libyans support quotas that would ensure the representation of women and ethnic minorities (Amazigh, Tabu, and Tuareg) in the 60-member CDA, majorities believe that the current quotas as outlined in the July 2013 electoral law are sufficient. Fifty-nine percent of Libyans support the current women’s quota of six seats (10 percent of the total number of seats). While 92 percent of Libyans express support for some form of quota to ensure the representation of minority communities, 74 percent support reductions to the current quota that provides two seats each for the Amazigh, Tabu, and Tuareg.

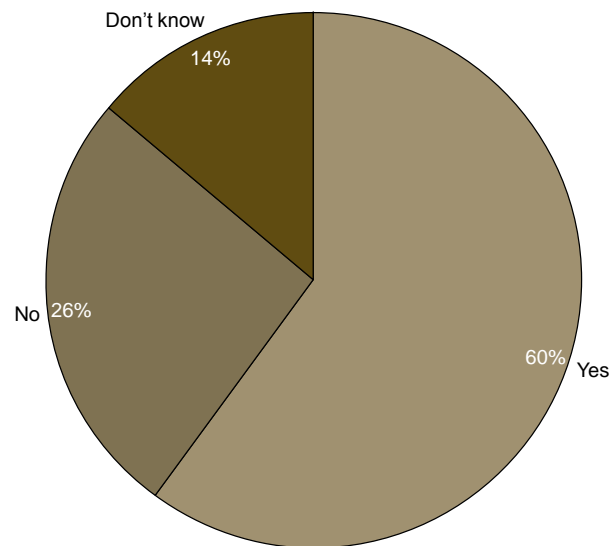
Figure 26: Strong support for quotas to ensure representation of women and ethnic minorities in the constitution-drafting assembly.



While a majority of Libyans intend to vote in elections for the CDA, roughly a quarter responded that they do not intend to vote.

Figure 27: Sixty percent of Libyans intend to vote in the upcoming election for a constitution-drafting assembly.

As you may know, there will be elections for the 60-member committee. Do you intend to vote in the election?

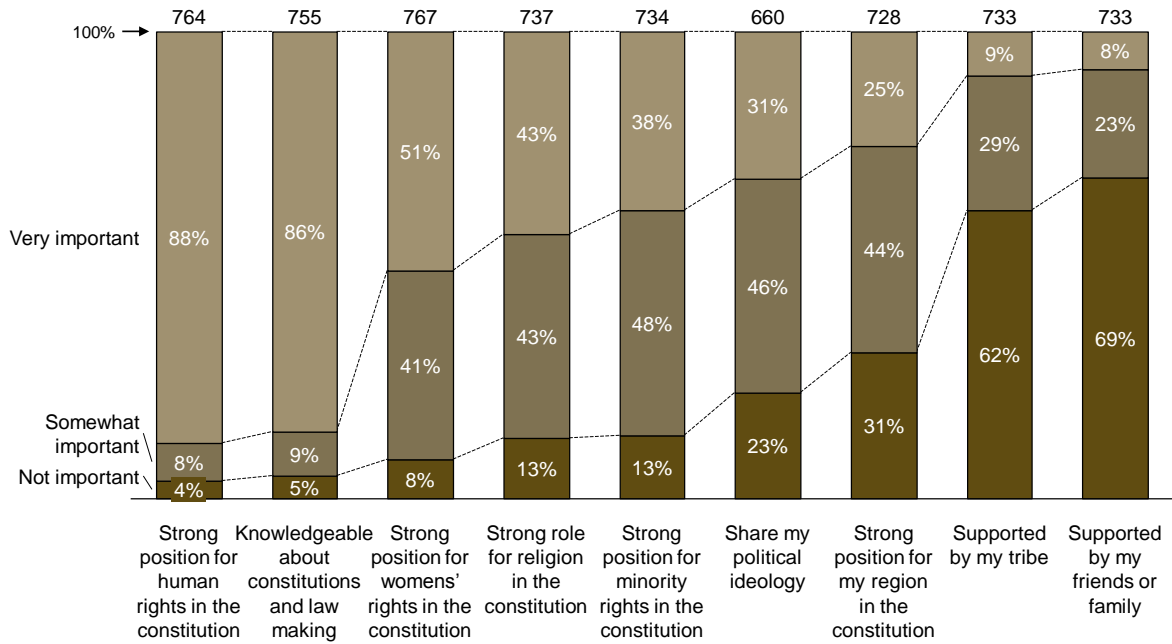


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Ninety-six percent of likely voters believe that it is important or somewhat important that candidates pledge to include human rights in the constitution. Likewise, 95 percent of likely voters value a candidate’s judicial and constitutional expertise. Libyans generally do not believe that personal or tribal ties are an important factor in selecting a candidate for the CDA.

Figure 28: Libyans want constitution-drafting assembly members to demonstrate support for human rights and have legal expertise.

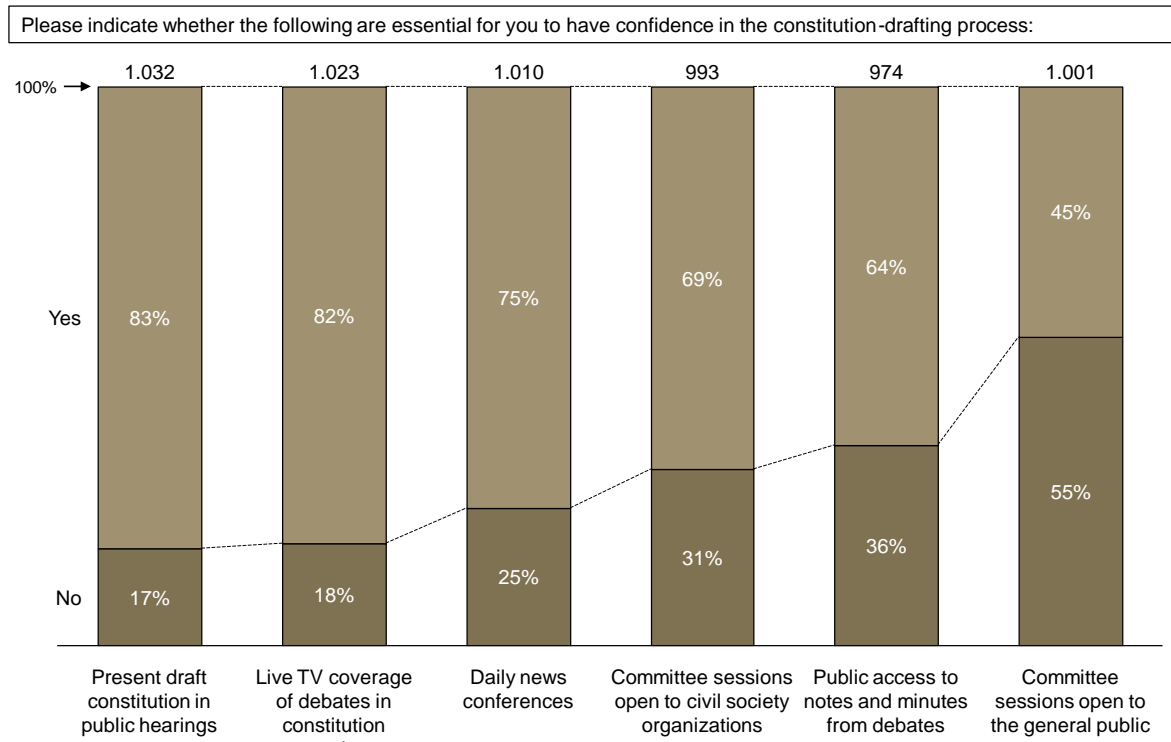
As you may know, there will be elections for the 60-member committee. Do you intend to vote in the election?
 If yes: How important is each of the following in choosing the candidate you support in the election for the 60-member committee – would you say very important, somewhat important, or not at all important?



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Libyans value transparency in the constitution-drafting process. Majorities support formal mechanisms for guaranteeing transparency, such as public hearings and access to notes and minutes from constitutional debates. Respondents also hope to receive continuous and timely information on the drafting process through live television coverage of proceedings and daily press conferences.

Figure 29: Citizens express a strong desire for a transparent constitution-drafting process with regular efforts to inform the public.



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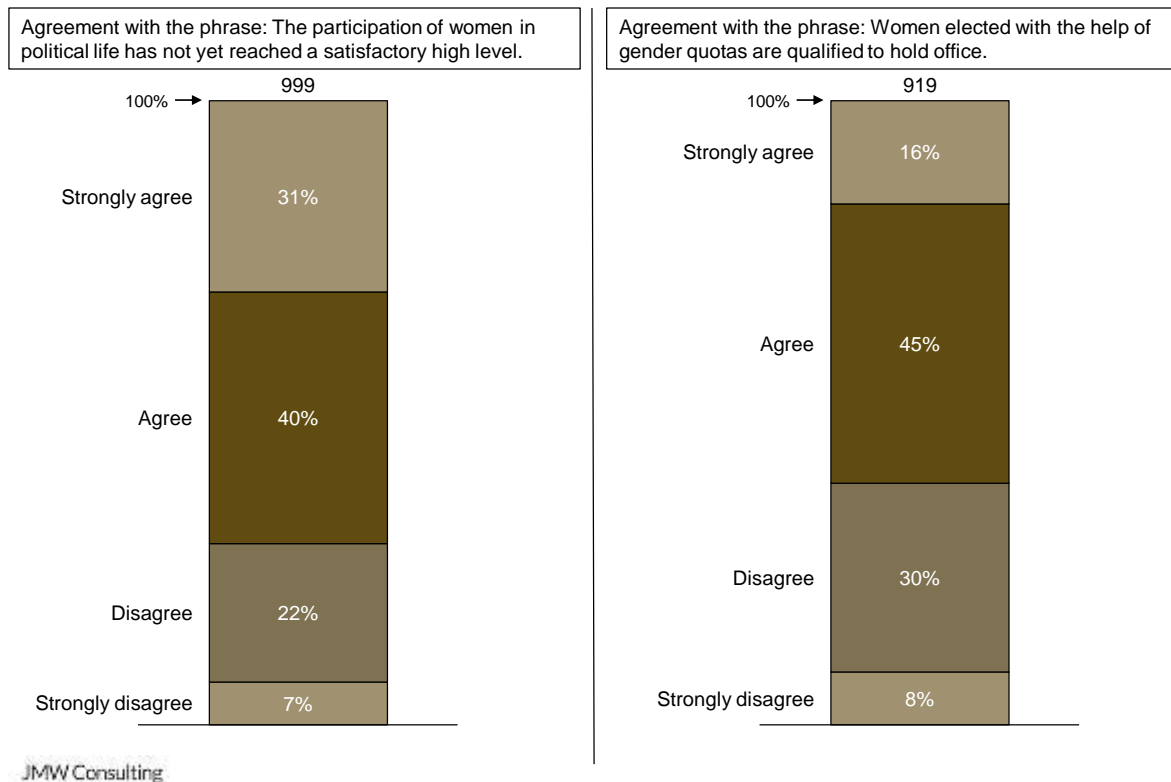
8 Women

Summary:

- A majority of Libyans believe that women should play a larger role in the political process.
- Seventy-eight percent of Libyans support a quota to ensure women's representation in the next parliament.

This section explores Libyans' attitudes toward women's roles in politics and the economy. Seventy-one percent of Libyans agree that the participation rate of women in political life in Libya has not yet reached a satisfactory level. Similarly, a majority of Libyans feel that women elected through gender quotas are qualified to hold office.

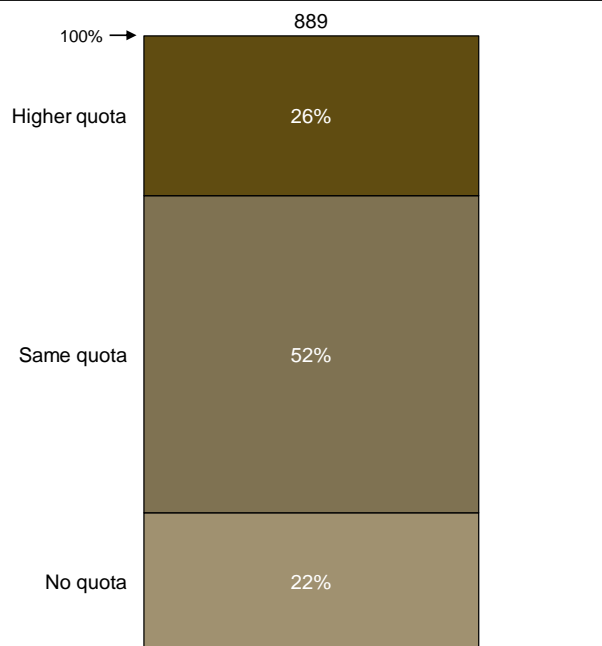
Figure 30: A majority of Libyans believe that women should play a larger role in politics.



When asked whether they would support a quota for women’s representation in the next parliamentary election (once a new constitution is adopted), 78 percent of Libyans support maintaining the same quota from the July 2012 election.² One-quarter of Libyans believe that the quota should be higher.

Figure 31: Broad support for quotas to ensure female representation in Libya’s next parliamentary election.

As you may know, there was a quota in the last GNC election. Thirty-two women were elected through the quota system and 1 woman was elected as an independent. As a result, 17 percent (33 women) of GNC seats are held by women. Would you support the same quota in the next parliamentary election, a higher quota in the next election, or no quota in the next election?



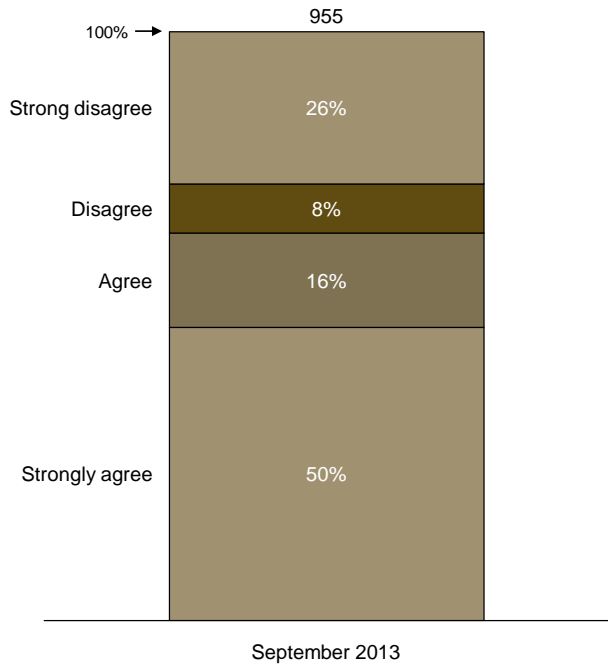
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² The July 2012 GNC election required political parties to submit ‘zipper-lists’ where candidate names alternated by gender. Parties running candidate lists in multiple districts were also required to ensure that women candidates were placed at the top of half of the submitted lists. Under this system, 32 women were elected from party lists (40 percent of the total seats reserved for party list candidates). Out of the 120 seats reserved for individual candidates, 1 woman won a seat, bringing the total representation of women in the GNC at the time of its inauguration to 33 out of 200, or approximately 17 percent.

Two-thirds of Libyans strongly agree or agree that men should have a priority over women in employment. Libyans appear divided on the question, with large portions favoring the more extreme answers relative to the moderate responses.

Figure 32: A majority of Libyans agree that men should have priority over women in employment.

May 2013: Agreement on the statement: "Men **have** priority over women in employment"
September 2013: Agreement on the statement: "Men **should have** priority over women in employment"



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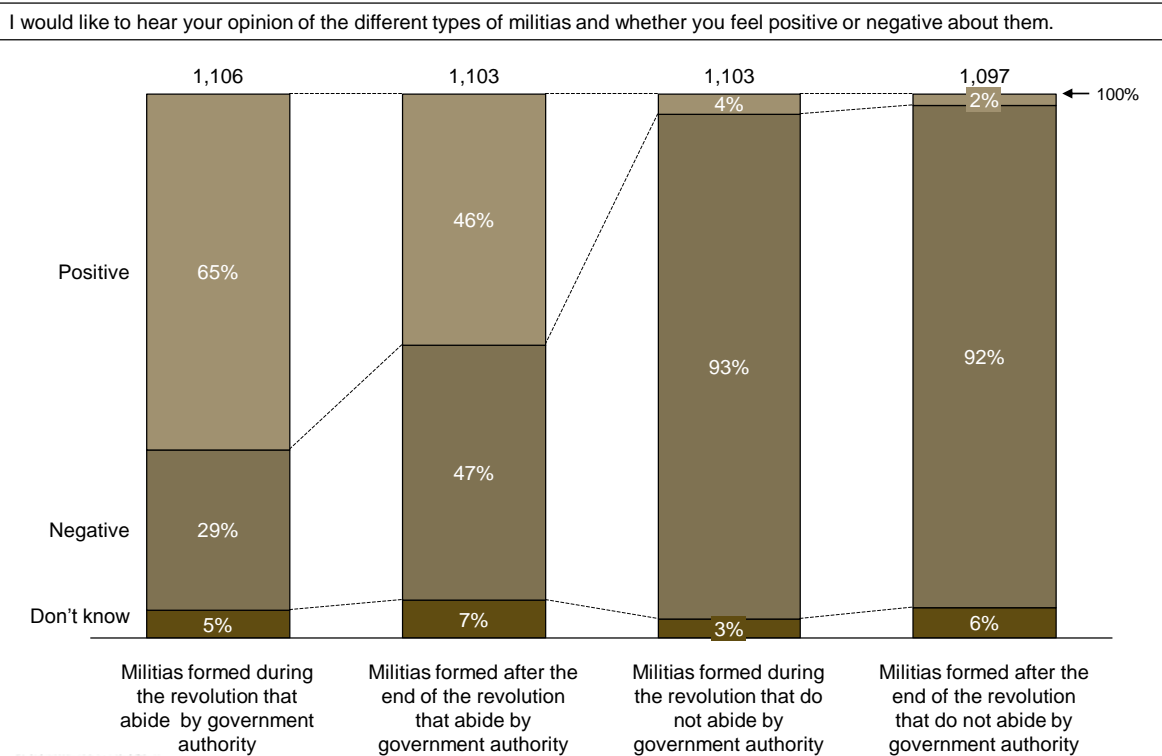
9 Militias

Summary:

- Libyans have more positive perceptions of militias formed during the revolution than those formed after the revolution, though they have unfavorable views of any militia that does not presently abide by government authority.
- A majority of Libyans support efforts to disarm all militias, although there is more tolerance for allowing groups abiding by the government’s authority to remain armed.
- Criminalizing the possession of firearms is seen as the most preferable method for disarming militias.

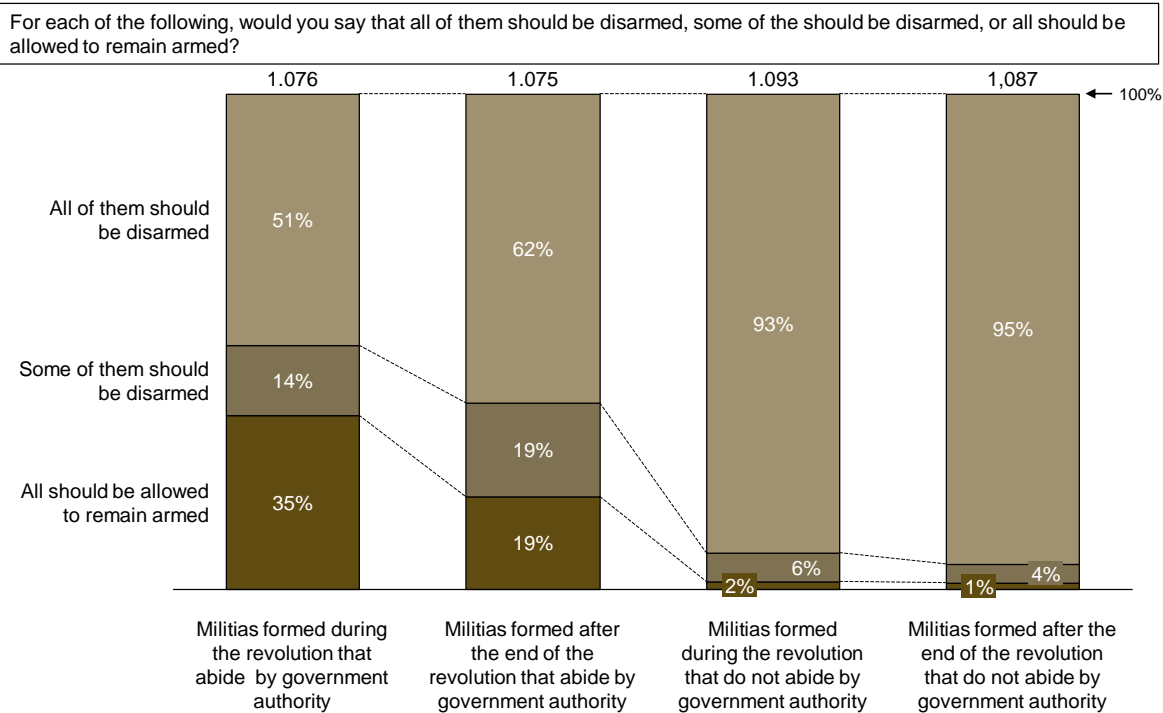
The timing of an armed group’s formation—whether created in 2011 to combat the Gaddafi regime or following the fall of the Gaddafi regime—effects whether Libyans view the group positively or negatively, with groups formed to oppose Gaddafi eliciting more positive views. A more important factor influencing public opinion of militias, however, is whether they are currently abiding by government authority. Groups failing to abide by government authority evoke strongly negative reactions among Libyans.

Figure 33: Strong majority of Libyans perceive militias not abiding by government authority negatively.



A majority of Libyans believe that all types of militias should be disarmed, regardless of when they were formed or whether they currently heed the government's authority. Libyans' support for efforts to disarm a certain group diminishes if the groups are seen as obeying the government, and if they were formed in 2011 to combat the Gaddafi regime.

Figure 34: A majority of Libyans support disarming militias, especially those not abiding by the government's authority.



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A large proportion of Libyans believe that militias should be disarmed through the promulgation of laws that criminalize firearms, though smaller majorities also support providing monetary compensation to militias that surrender weapons, or condone the use of force to disarm militias.

Figure 35: Legal measures to criminalize firearms are the most popular method of disarmament.

