

# The Youth Pulse

Perceptions and Attitudes of Young People Towards the 2023 Elections



Funded by  
the European Union



# Objectives of the Youth Pulse Study

- a) To understand youth and participation in governance and election
- b) Identify barriers and enablers of voting for young men and young women
- c) Understand youth perceptions about election management bodies and political parties
- d) Synthesise the policy priorities for young people in the 2023 election
- e) Explore the state of electoral violence and innovative contributions youth are willing to make to peace





# Methodology

- The study also employed a desk review of relevant literature on youth and youth participation in elections.
- A quantitative survey of 1,600 respondents (80% youth) and 20% elders/ 50/50 gender split
- We used the sampling frame of registered voters for the 2022 elections.
- Stratified two-stage sampling
  - First stage: random selection of voter registration centres - 200 VRCs selected
  - Second stage: random selection of registered voters – 8 voters in 8 households per VRC
- Online survey on WhatsApp, N=500 participants.
- A qualitative study with 40 key informants across 16 districts of Sierra Leone.
- Triangulation of information



# The Youth Pulse

## The Big Ideas!

- ❑ Youth are ready to participate in governance
- ❑ Low knowledge about the electoral system undermines youth's constructive participation
- ❑ Perception and stereotypes are major barriers to youth participation
- ❑ Encouraging examples of youth innovation in governance and peacebuilding to build on



# Did you register to vote?

**REGISTER TO VOTE**

From 3rd September, 2022. - 4th October, 2022.

**It's your right and duty!**

Go to the nearest center and register!

**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY**  
9th Floor, West Wing, Youyi Building, Freetown

National



Male



Female



■ NO  
■ Yes

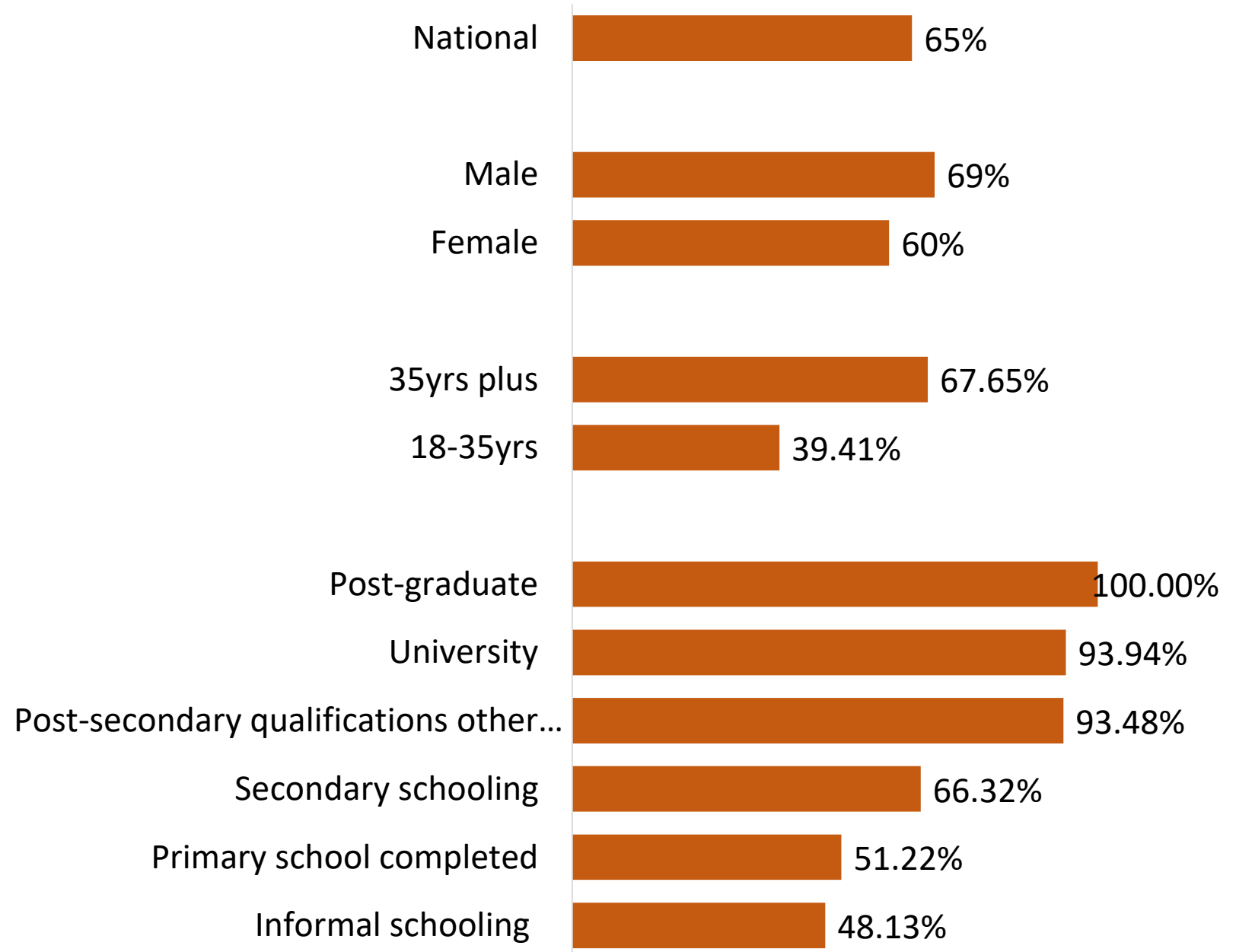
## Online participants

**Do you plan to vote?**

**Yes = 90%**

What is the date  
for the 2023  
election?  
Respondents  
who said it is  
24<sup>th</sup> June.

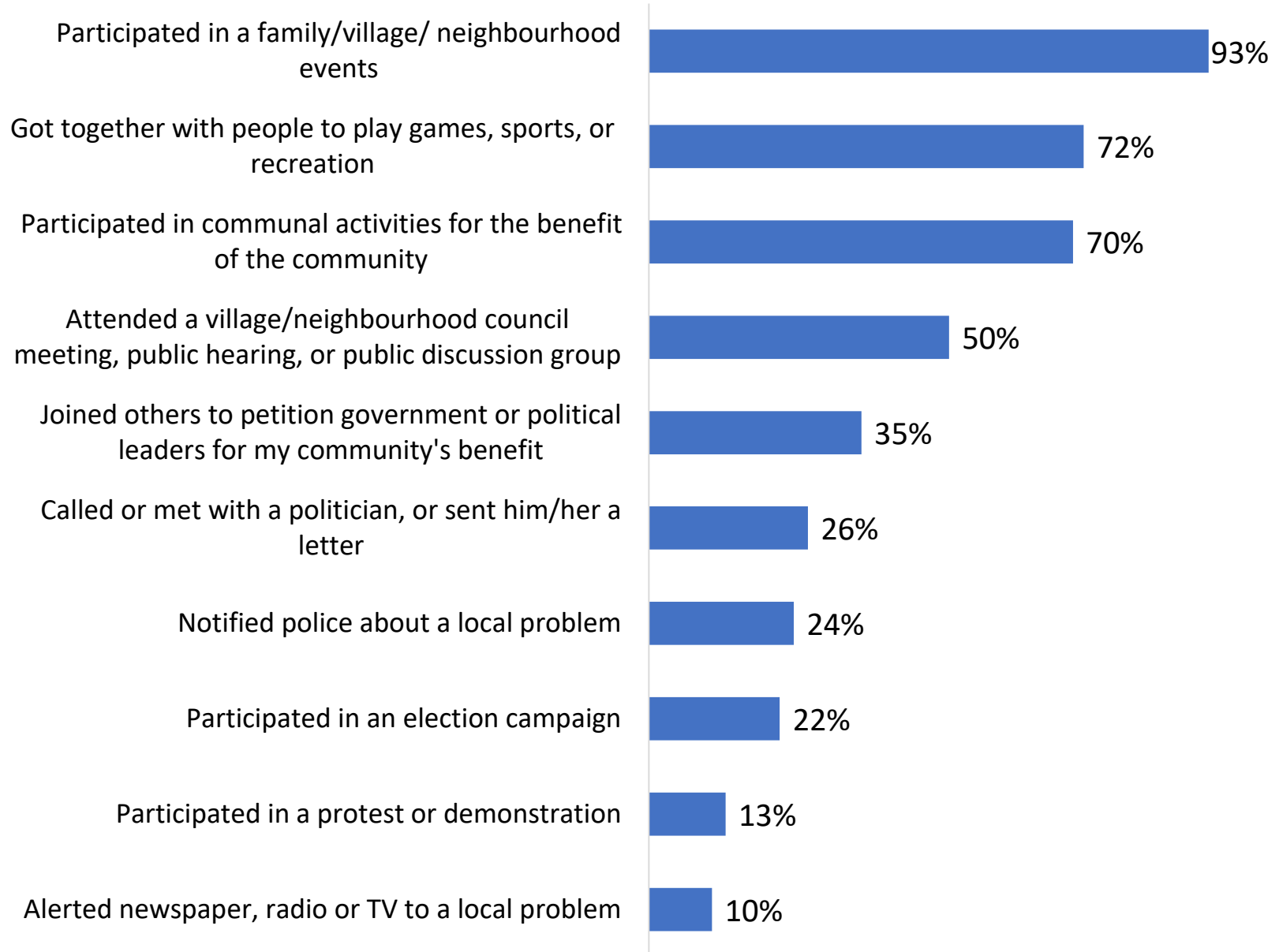
---



YOUTH  
PARTICIPATION:  
How many times have you done this in the last one year?

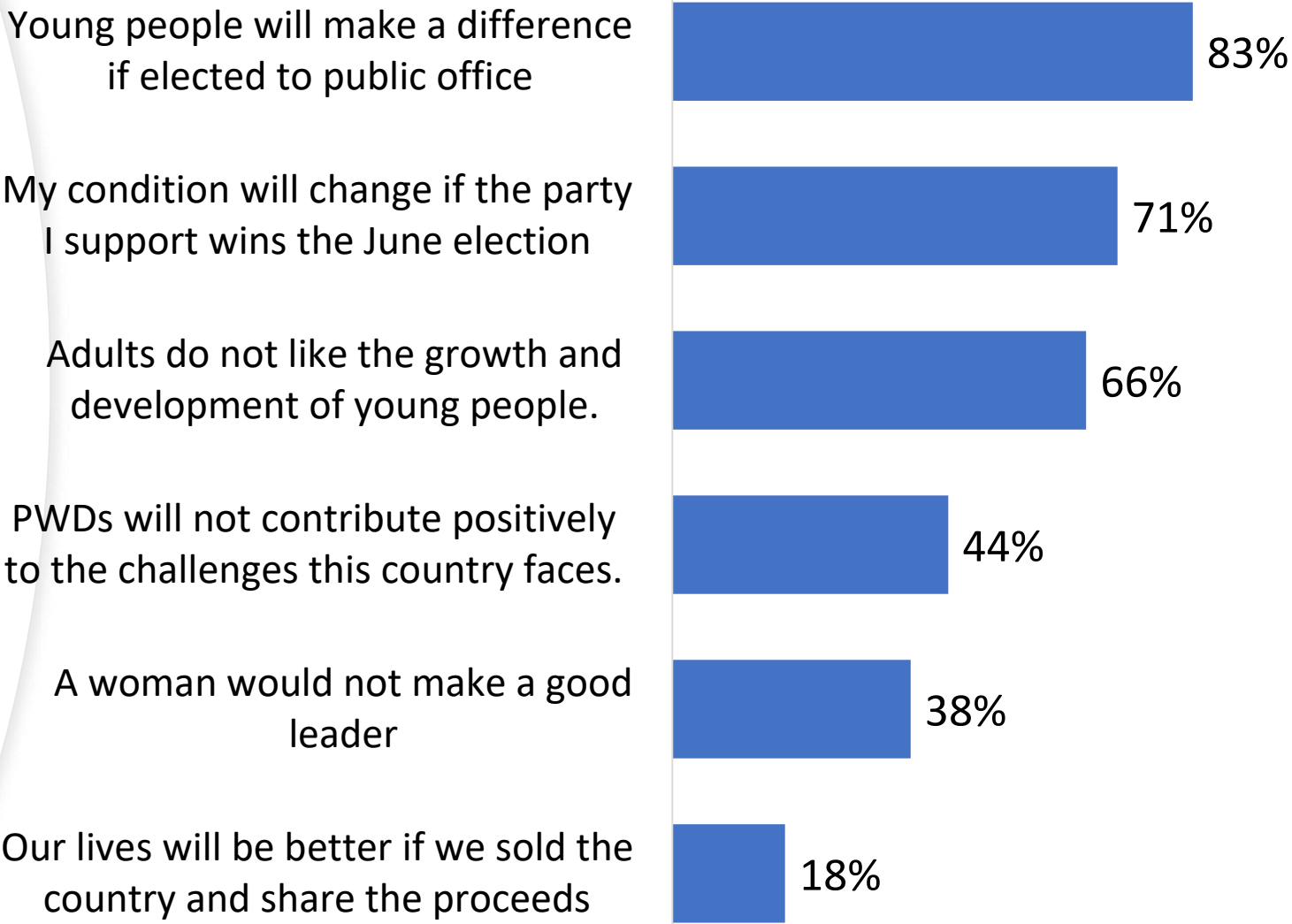
---

I did this at least Once



Percentage of youth who believe these statements.

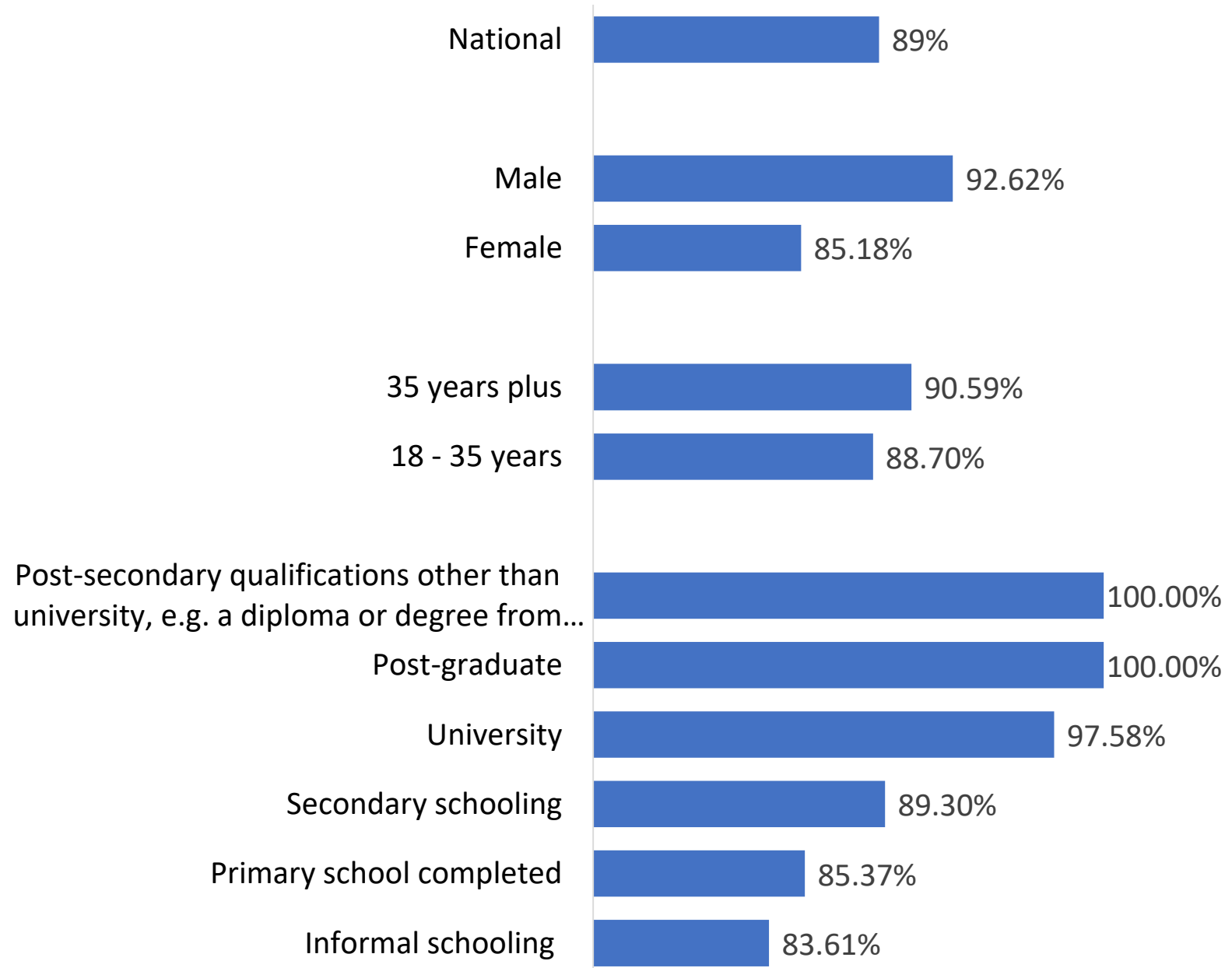
Some of the views that shape youth participation.





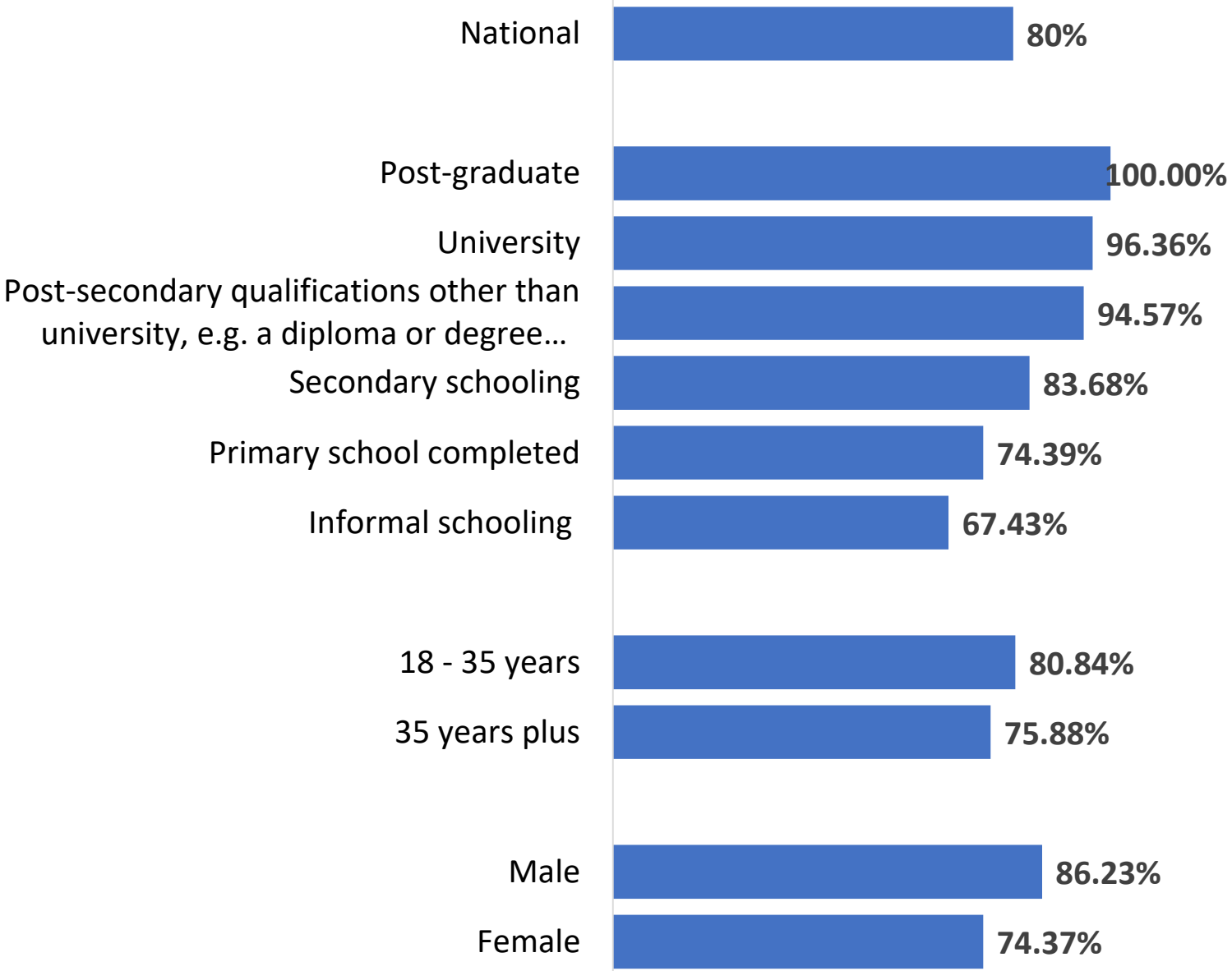
When do we hold elections?  
Respondents who said its after every five years.

---



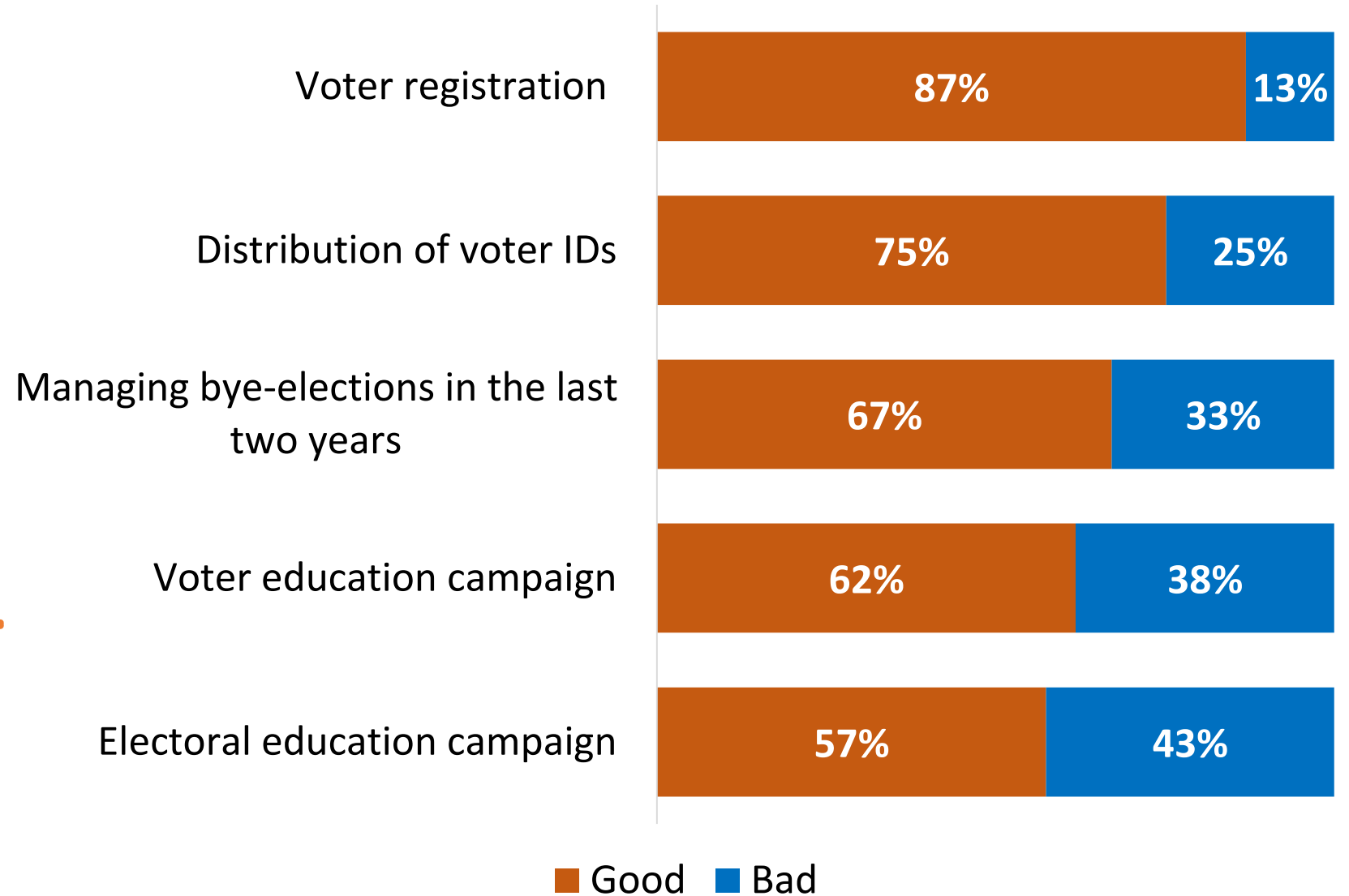
What type of election do we hold in Sierra Leone?  
Respondents who says its multiparty election

---



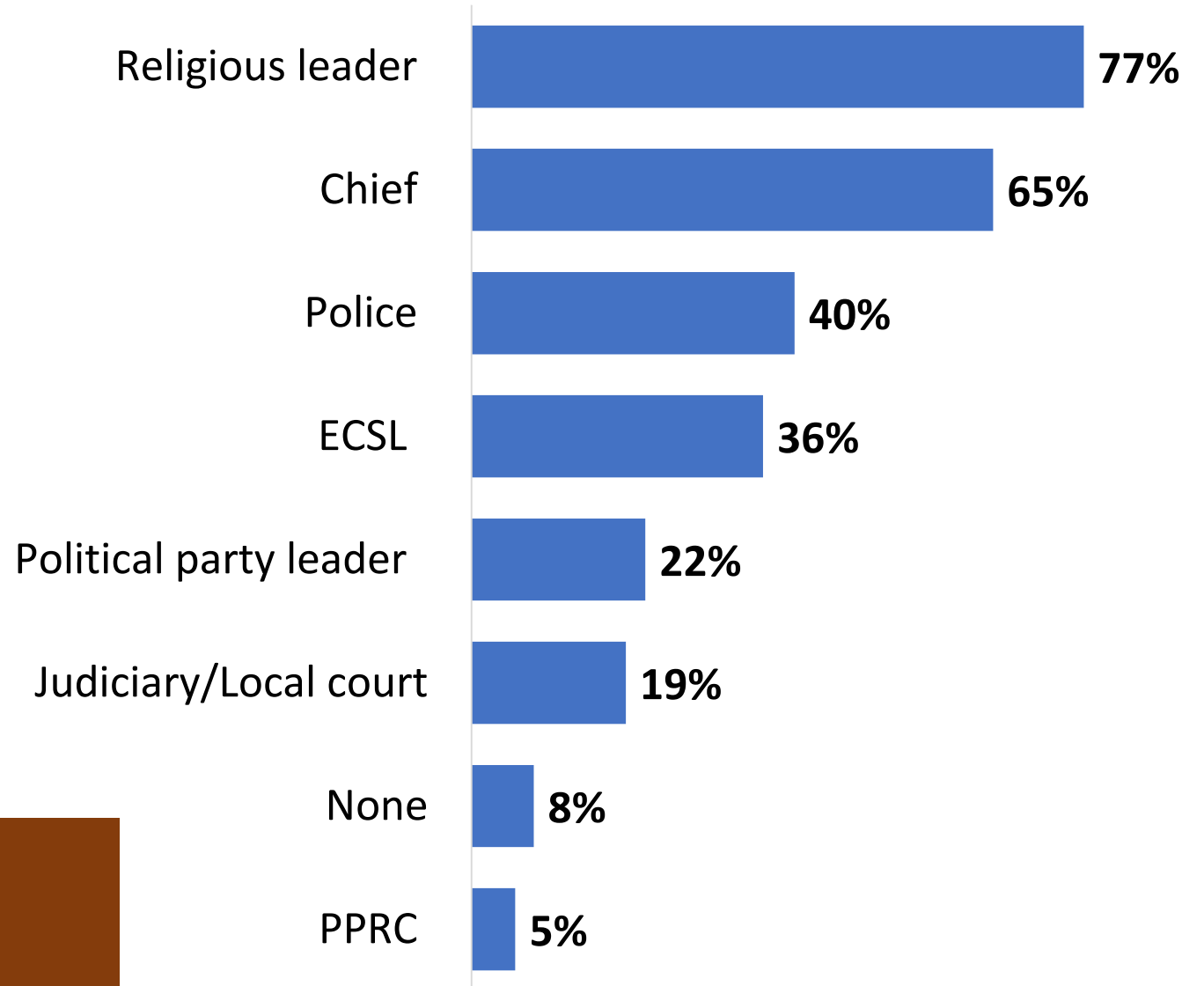
# Young people's experience and feedback on the work of ECSL.

---



## Contact with EMBs

Which of the following institutions have you interacted with in the last two years?



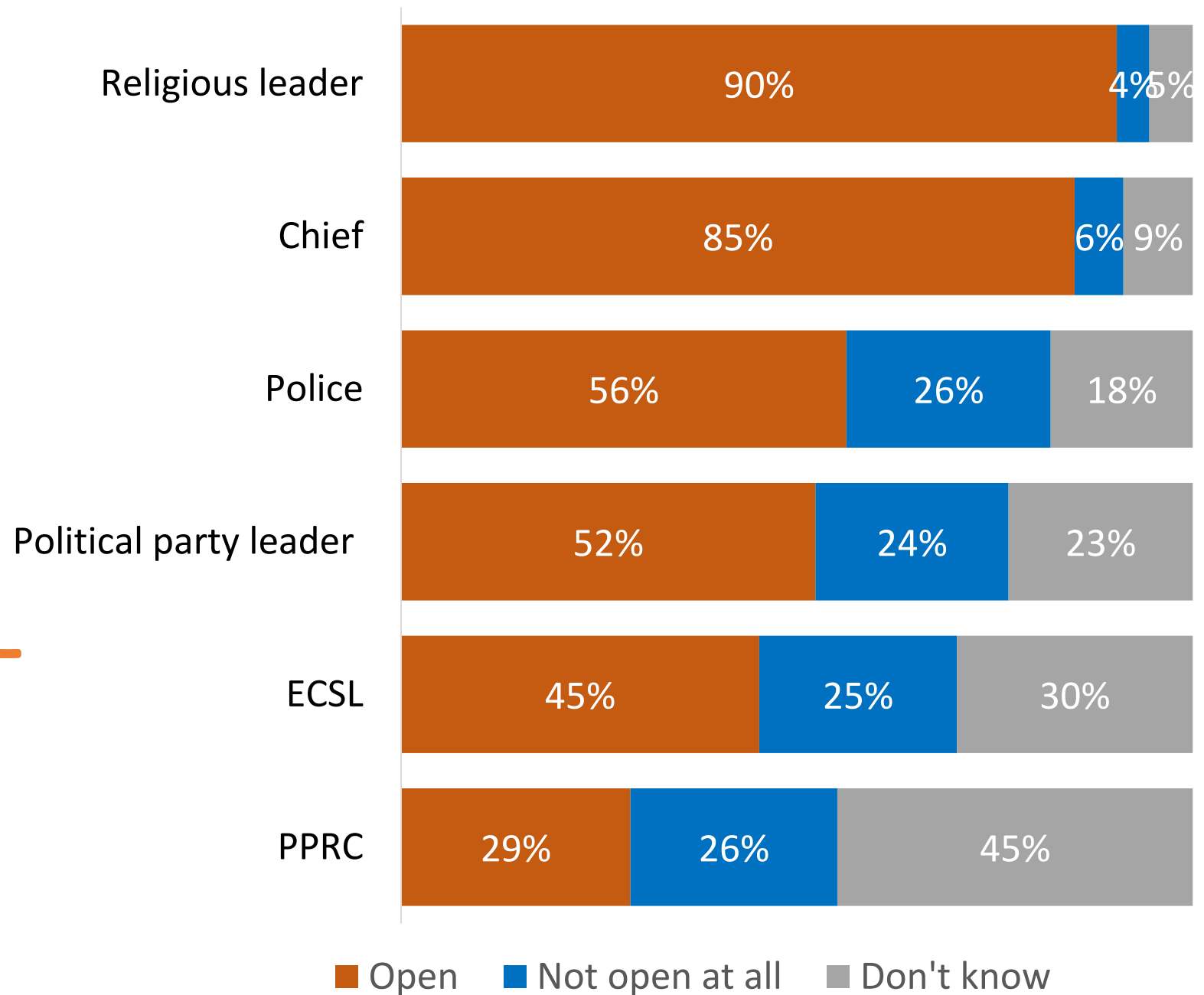
---

### View about ECSL Online

- Good and very good - 70%
- Fairly bad and very bad 30%

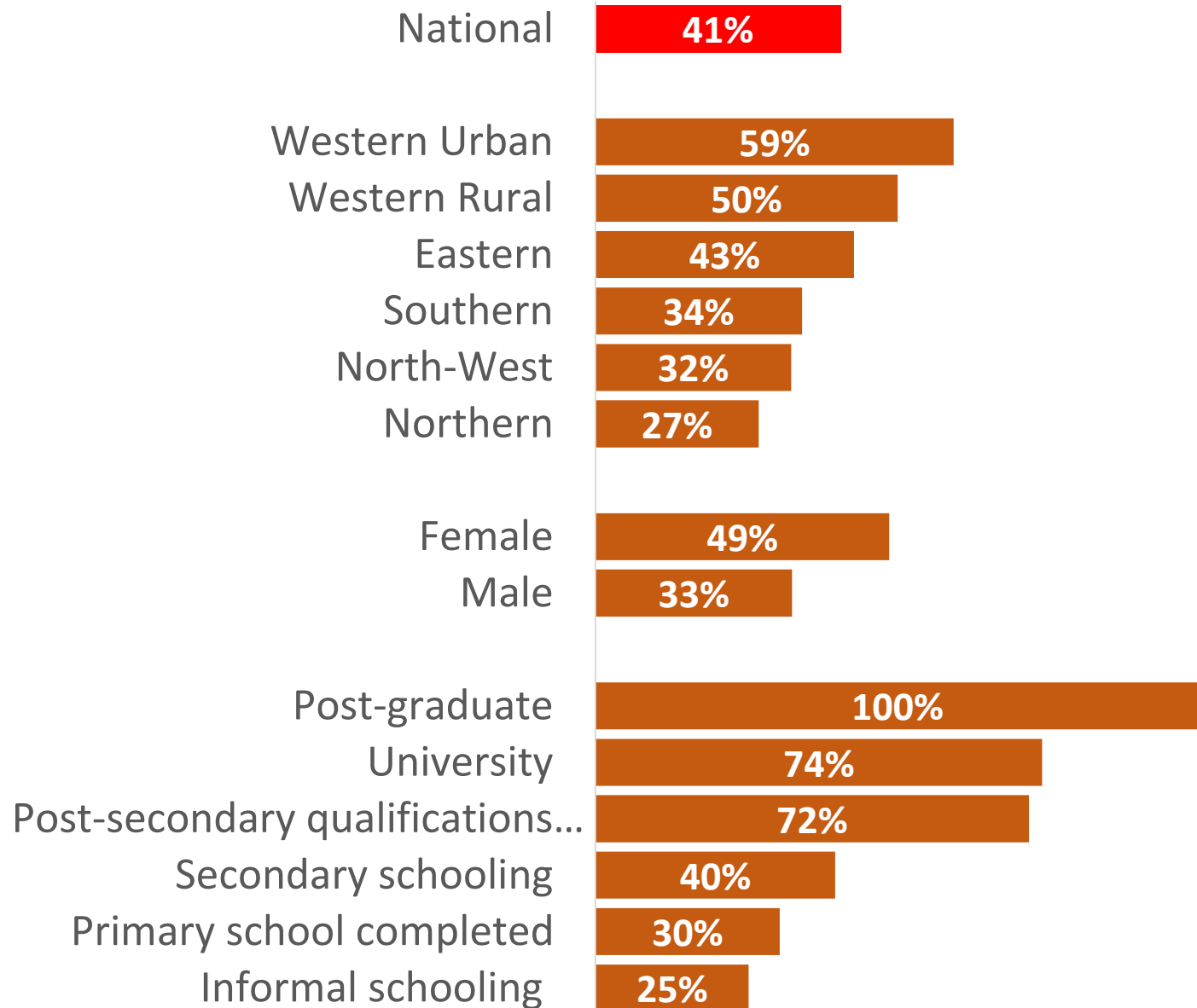
Which of the following is open to feedback from young people?

---



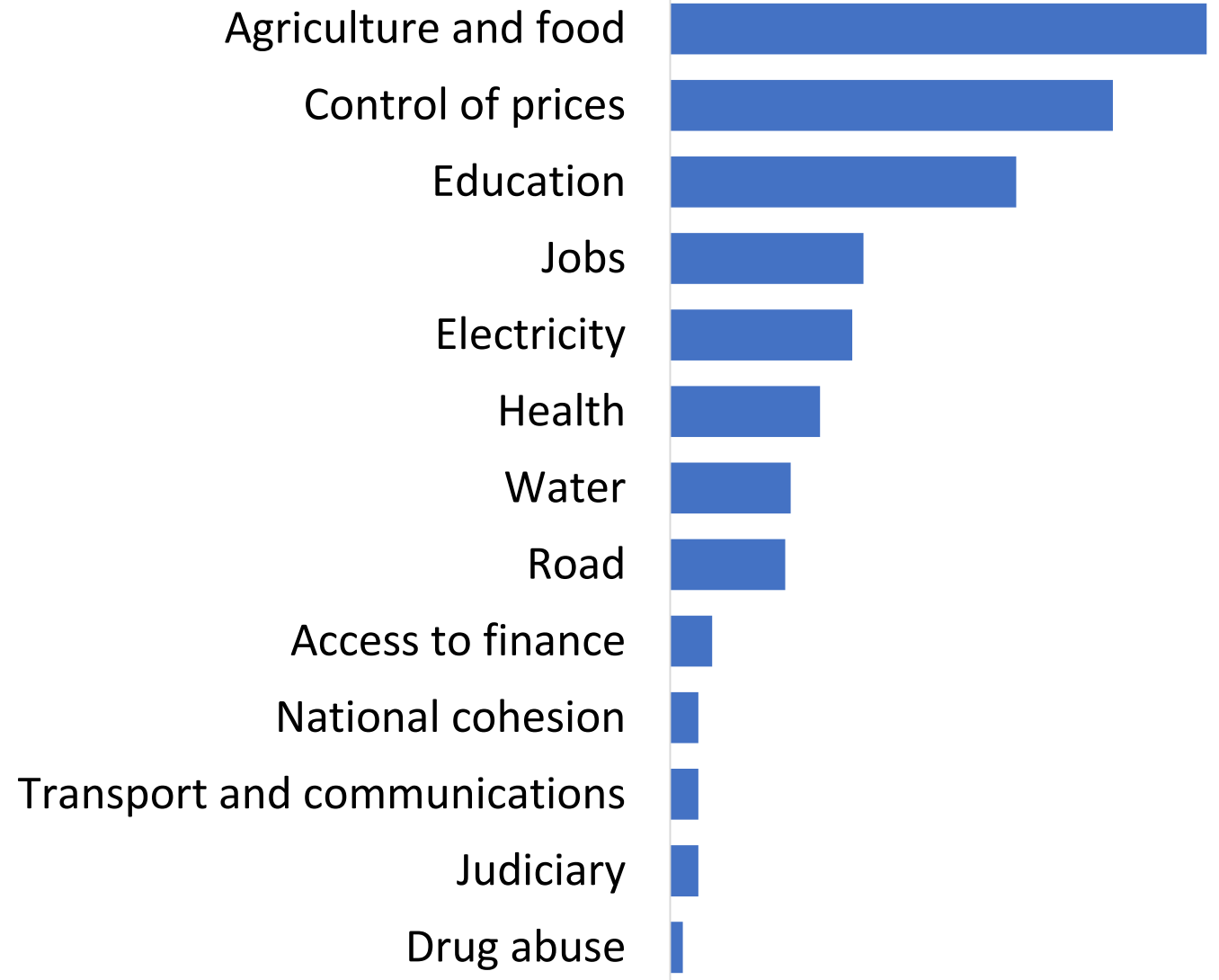
Have you heard about the PR system?  
Respondents who answered yes.

---



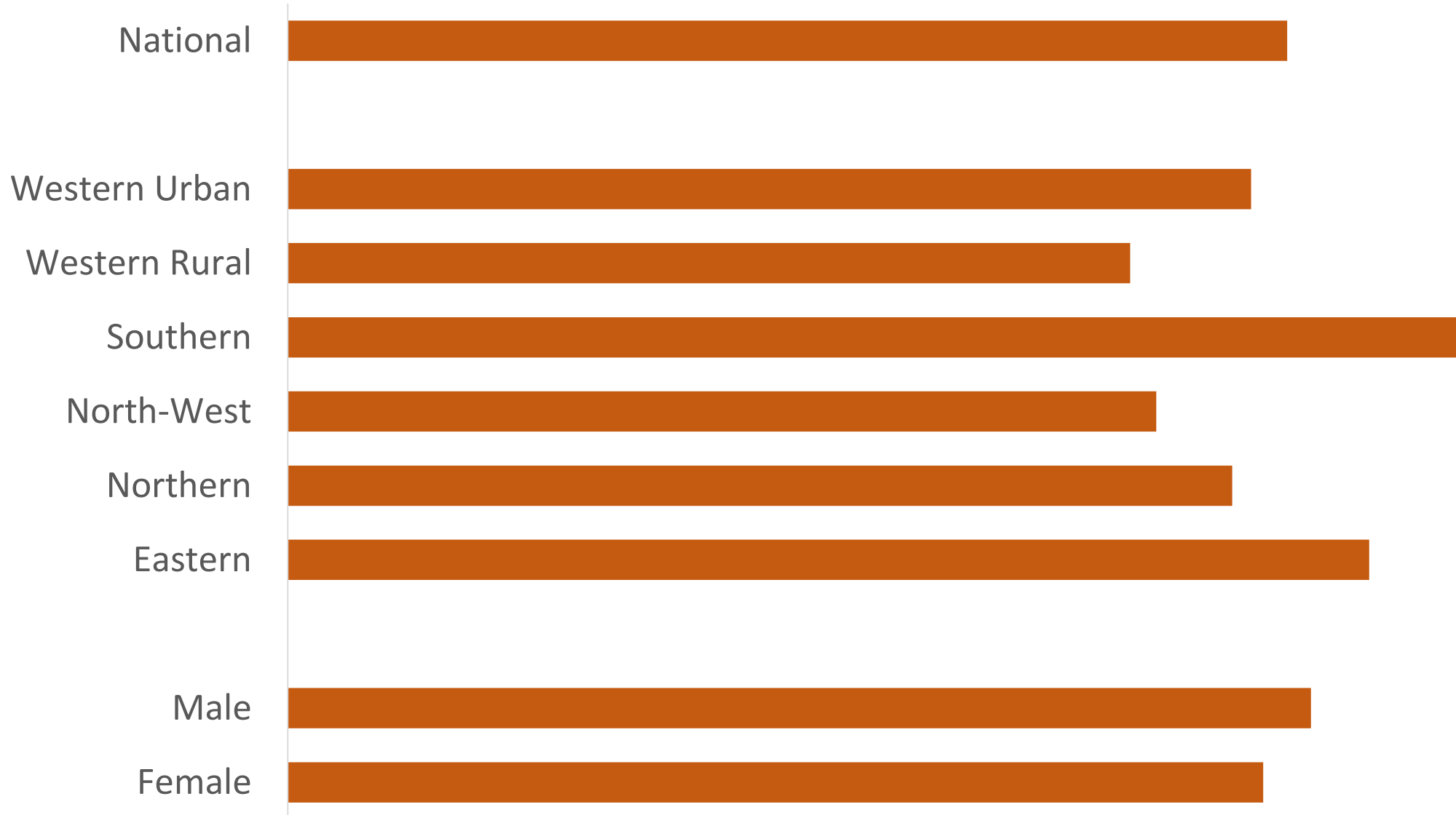
If the next government should solve only one problem, what should that problem be?

---



**Youth Voices online**  
- Economy/prices 80%  
- Agriculture/food 20%

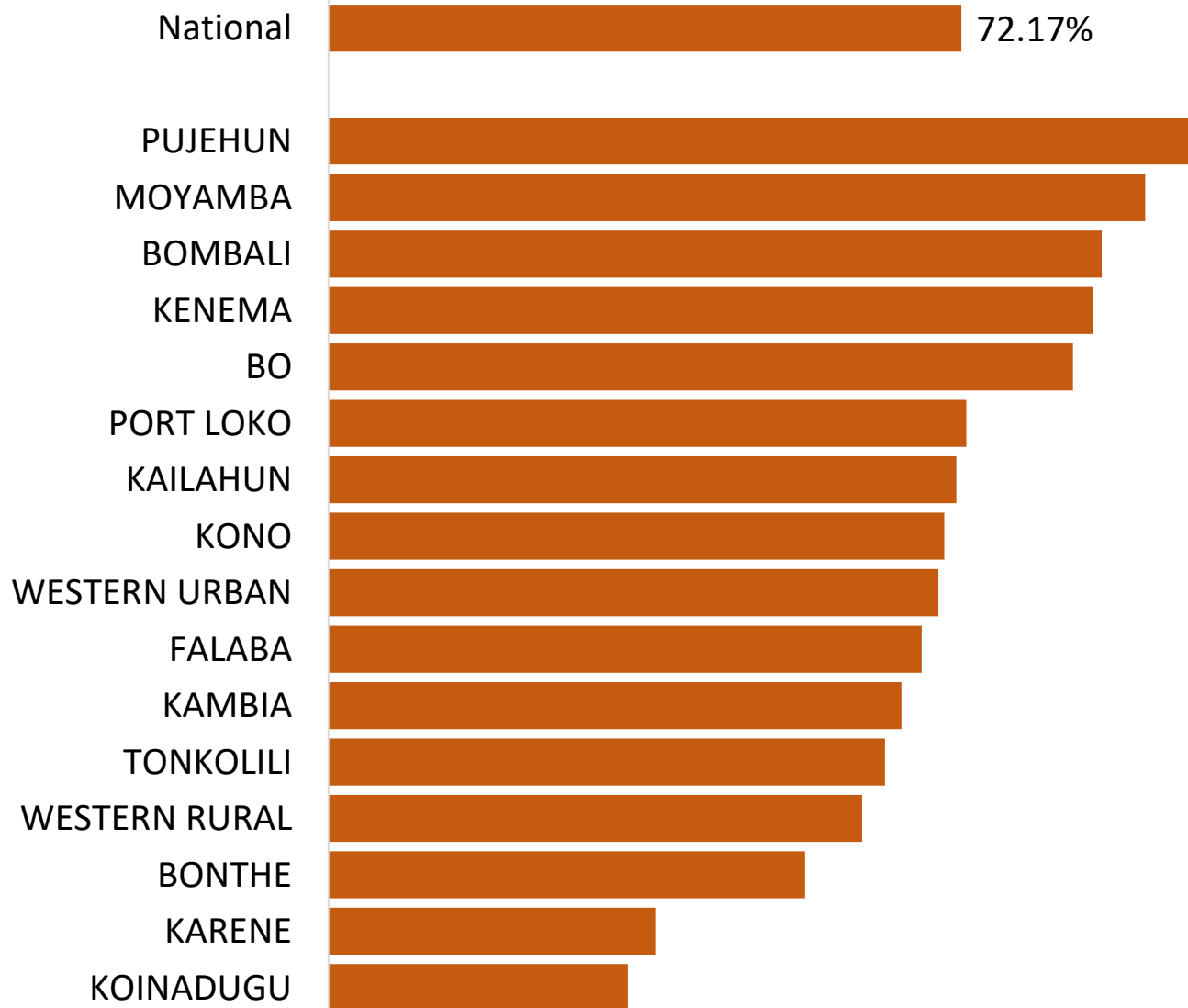
# Do you have hope that issue will be addressed after the election?



Do you hope  
this issue will  
be addressed  
after election?

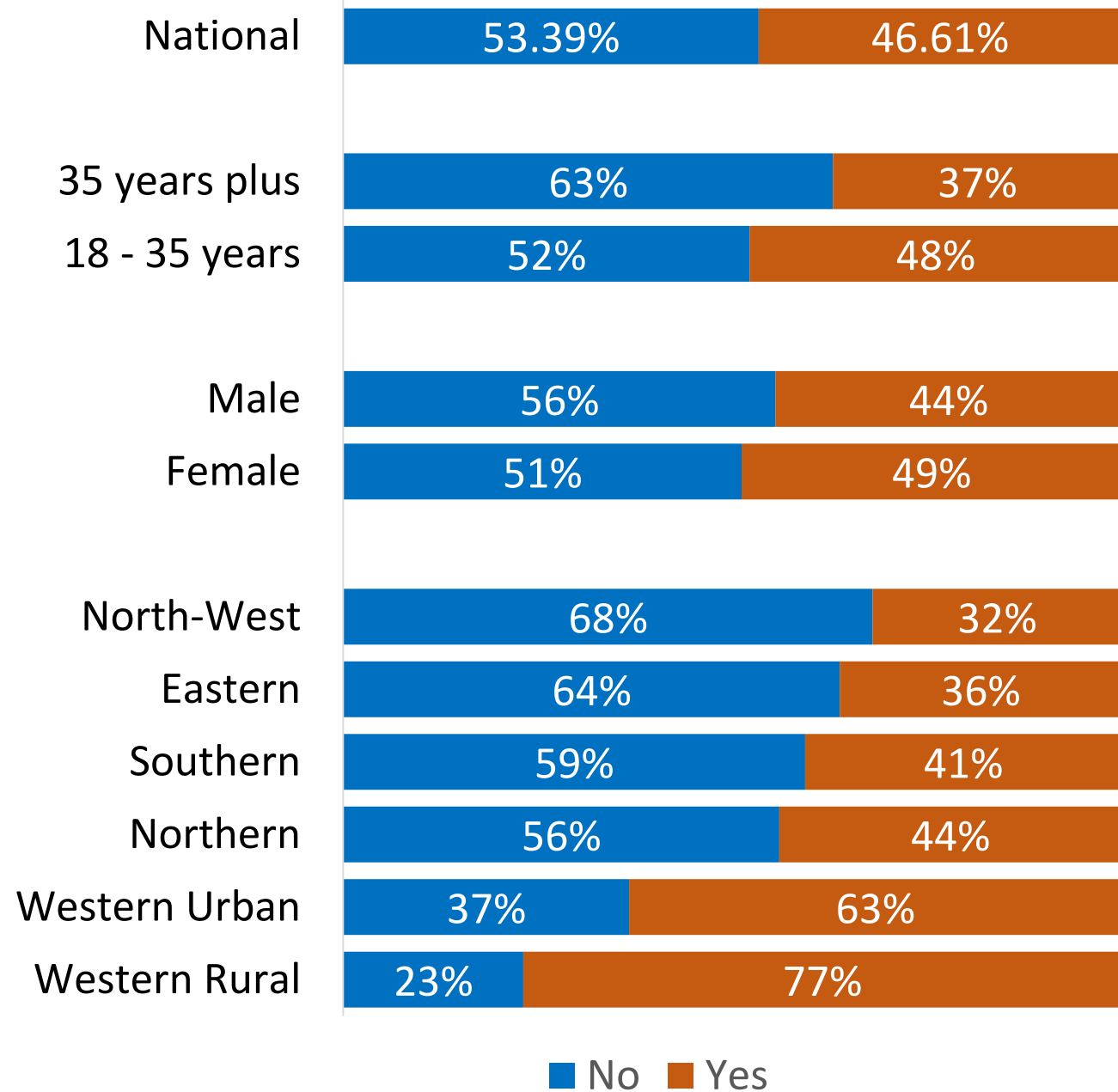
---

District distribution of young people who believe  
their main issues will be addressed after election.



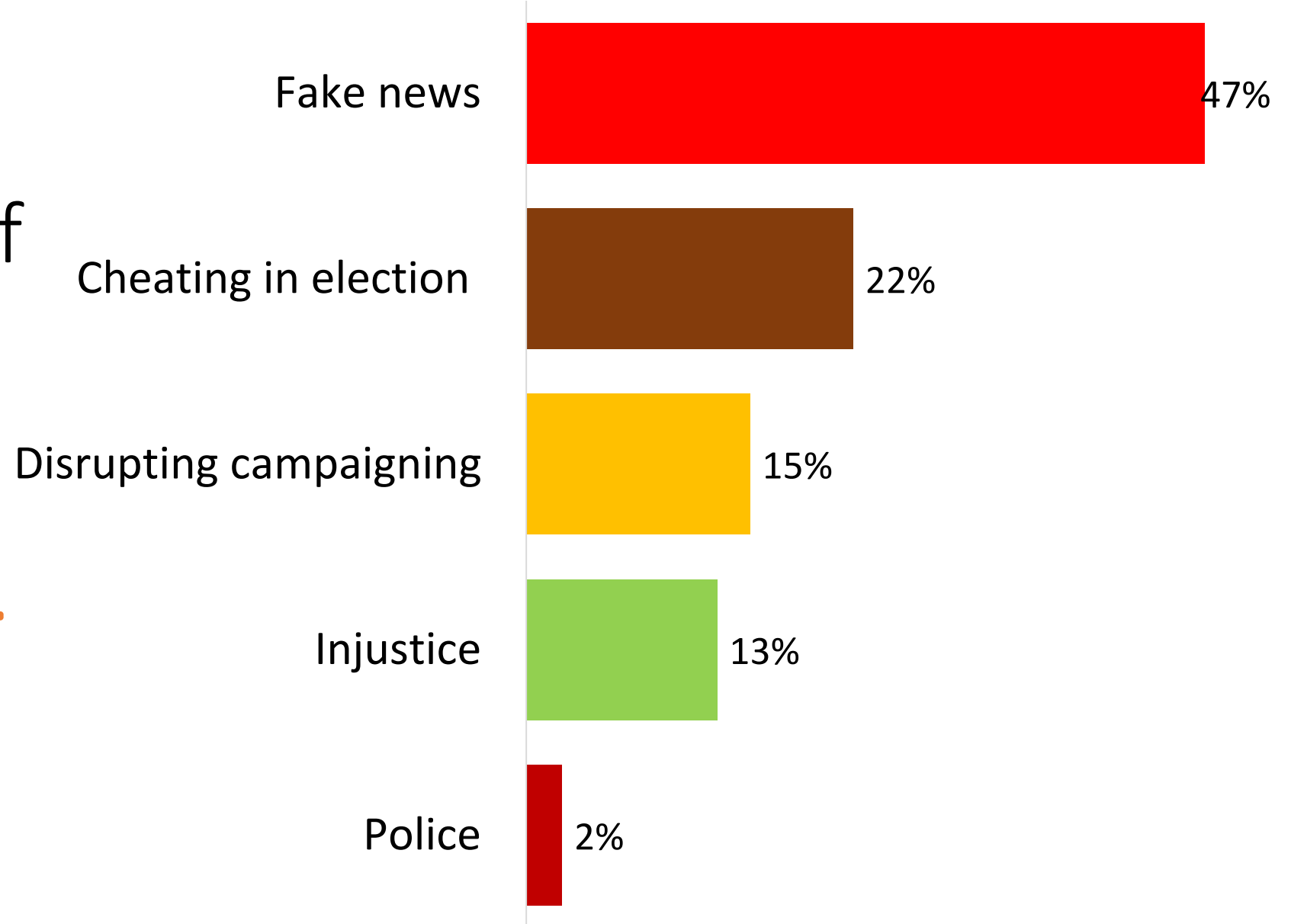
# Are you worried about violence in the coming election?

---



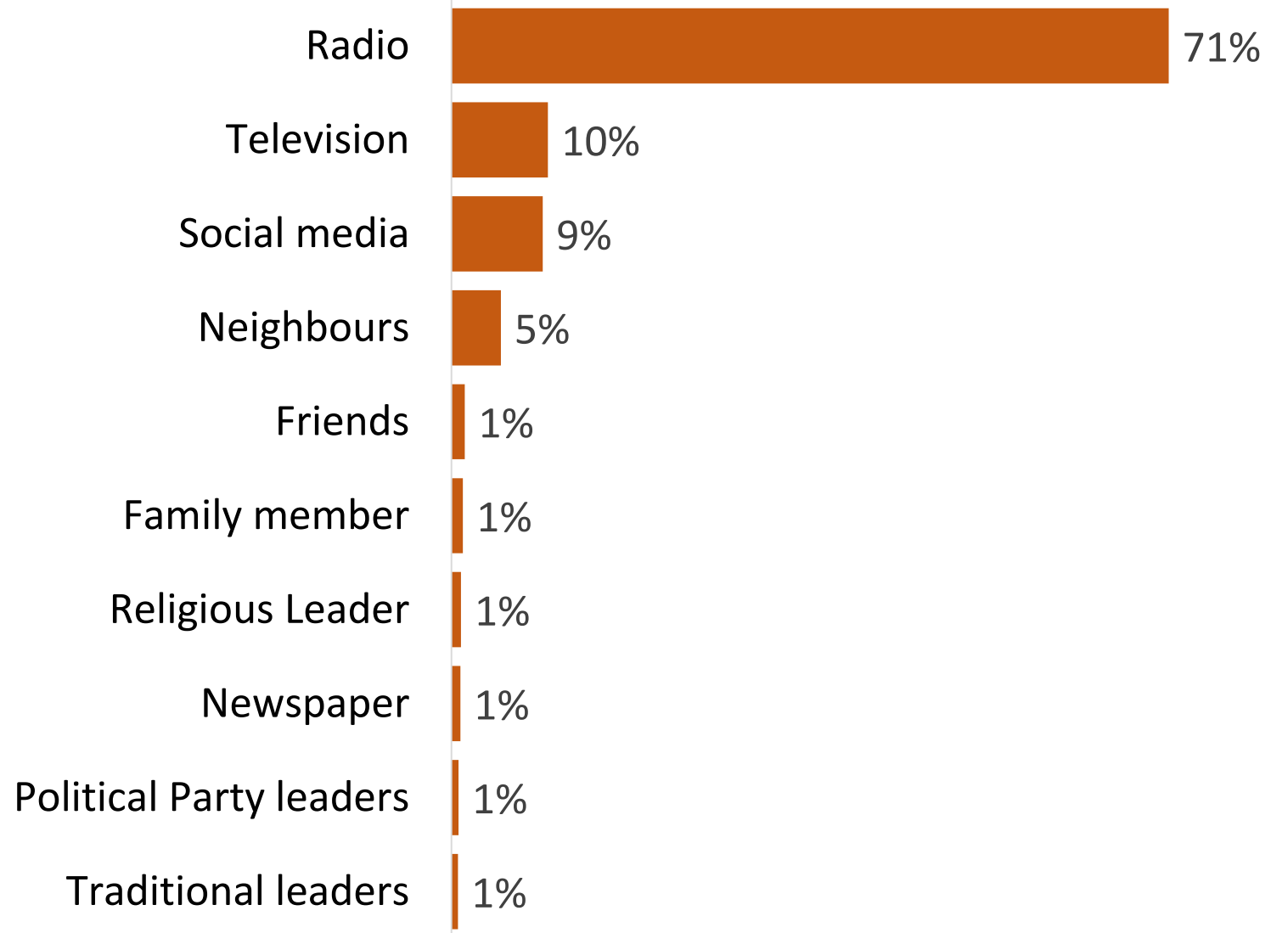
What is/has been the major cause of violence in your community?

---



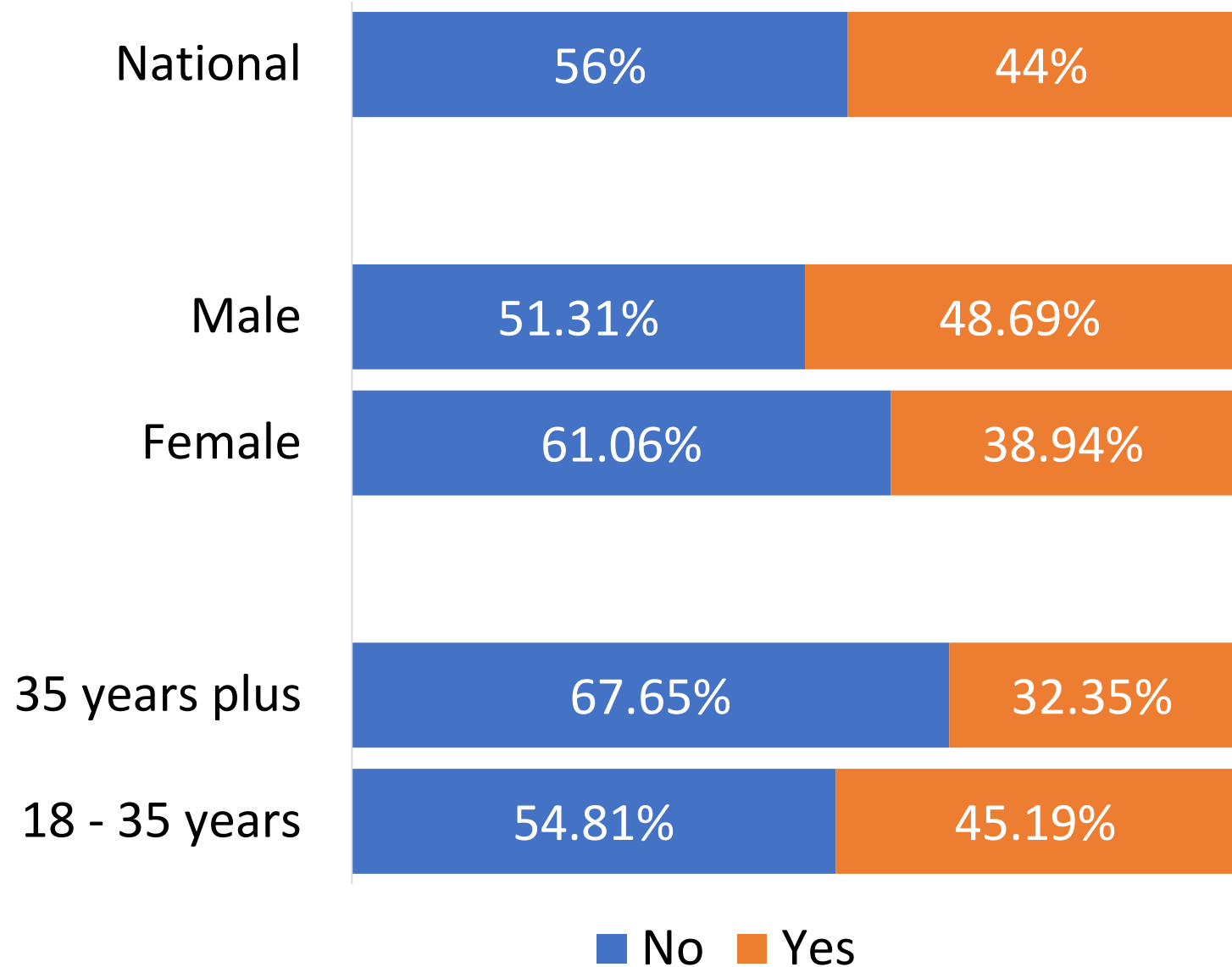
# What is your most trusted source of news for the election?

---



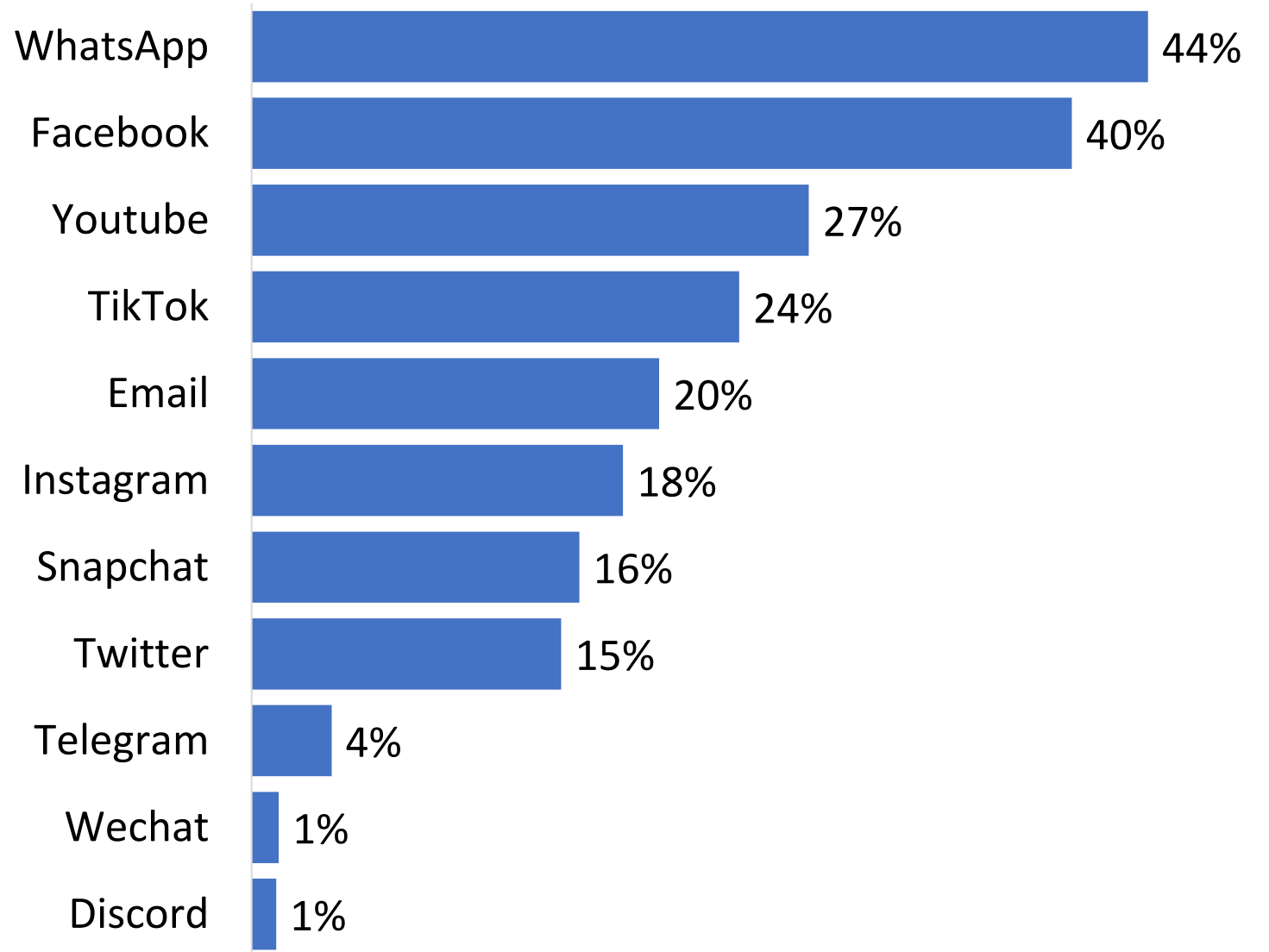
# Do you use social media?

---



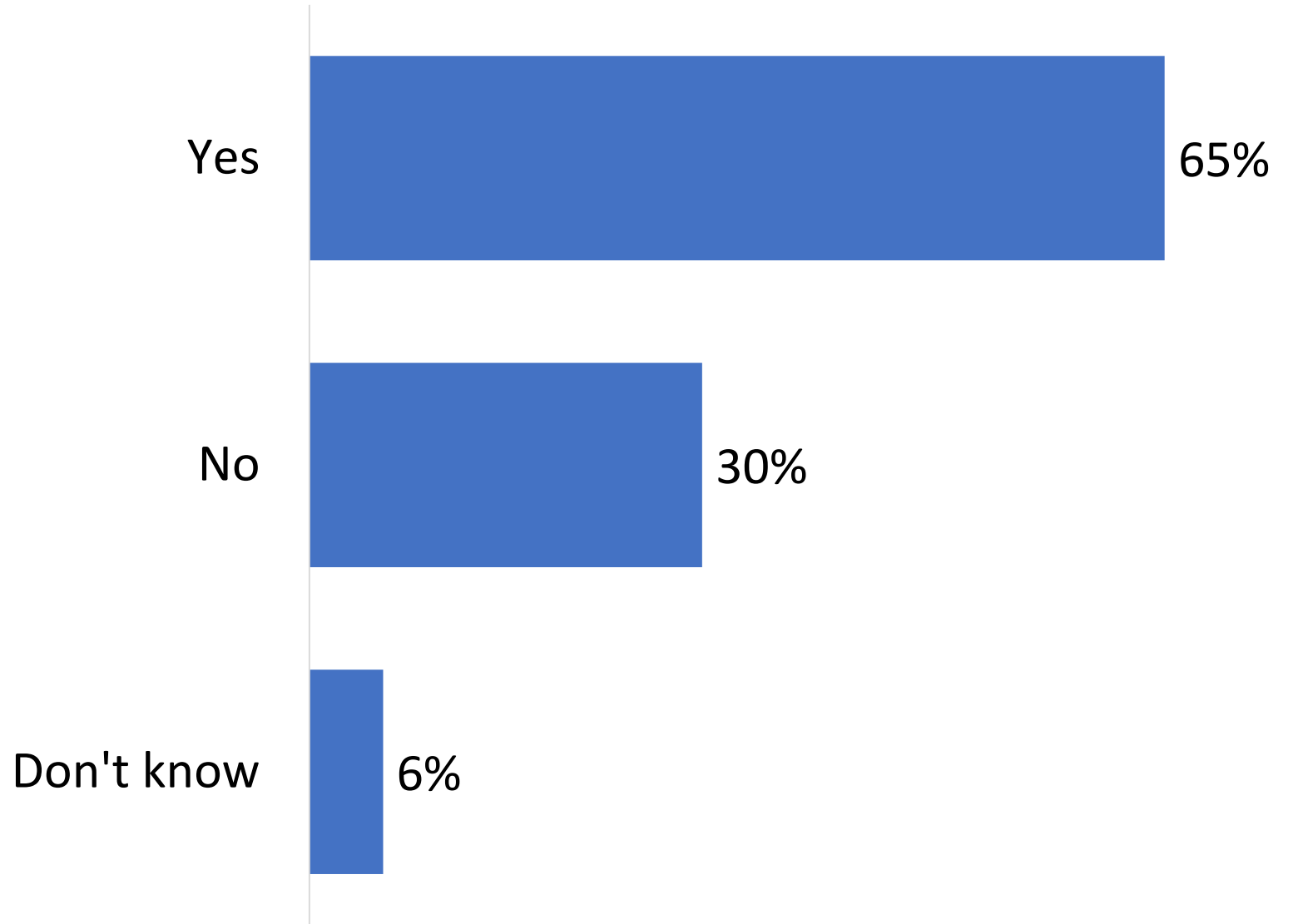
Which social media outlet do you use at least once a month?

---

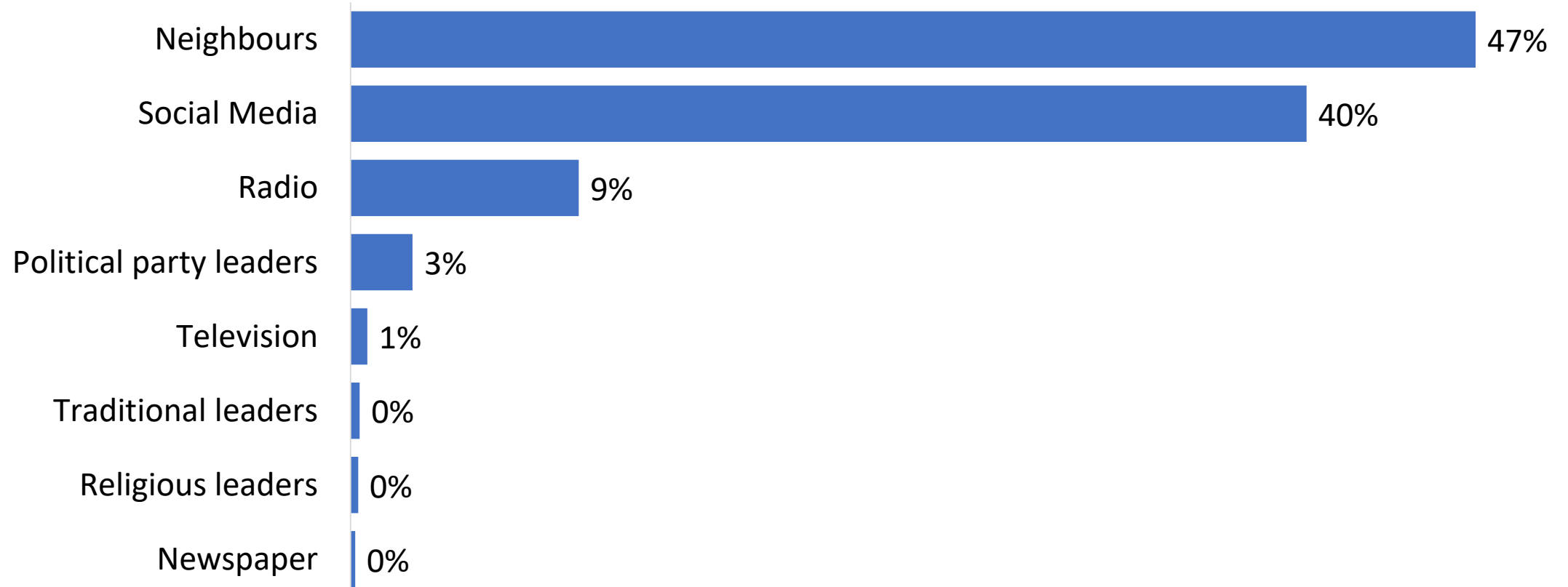


Do you believe there is fake news during this election period?

---



# What is the main source of fake news?



## Online participants

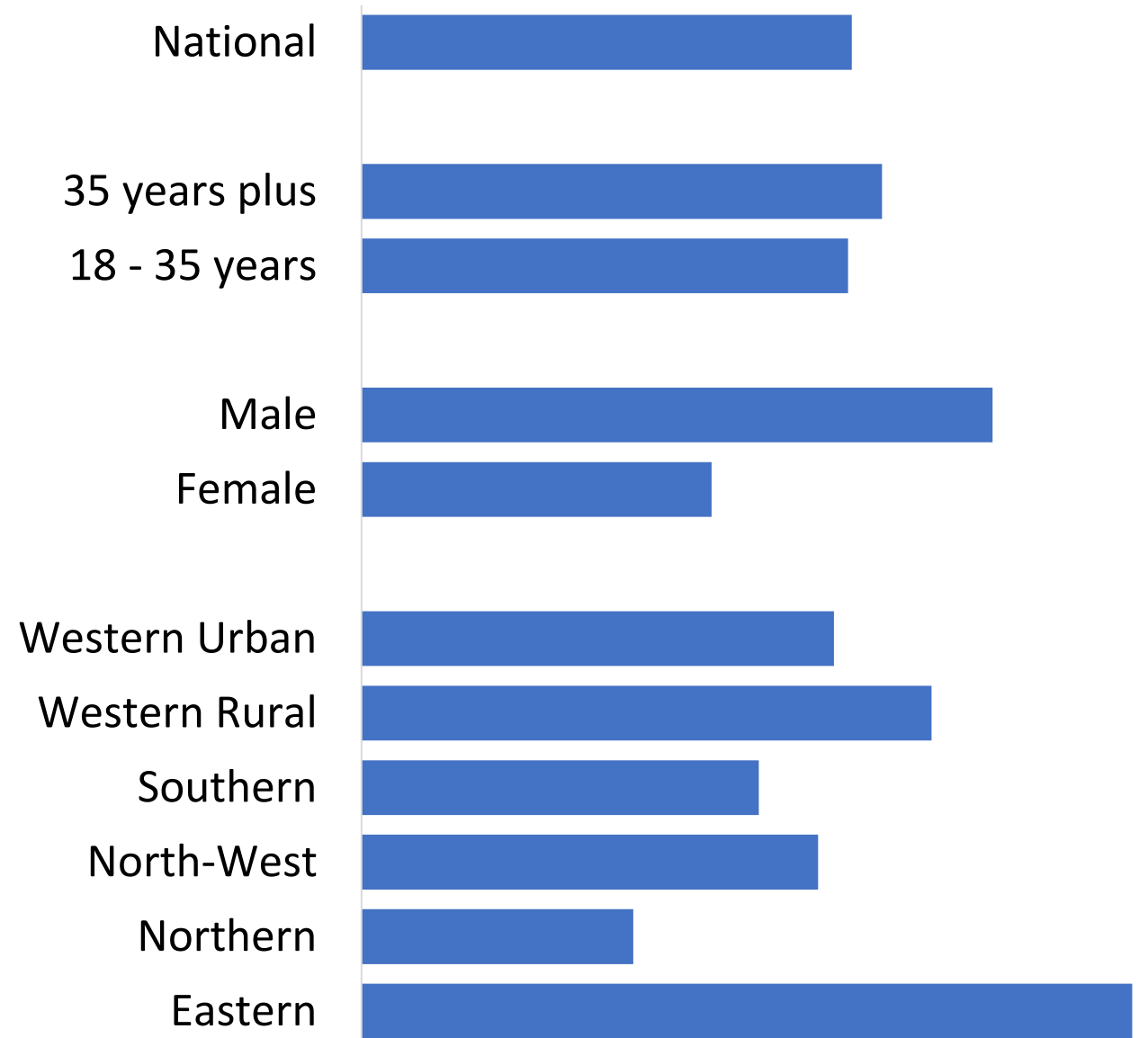
Which of the following areas would you be happy to be engaged during this election?

- Community Peace education campaign 56%
- Civic and voter education – 22%
- None - 22%

---

# Taking steps to prevent violence

## Have you taken steps to prevent violence?



# The Road ahead

- Trust in the ECSL is high but youth participation is constrained by low understanding of electoral processes and mechanisms
- Negative perceptions, myths and beliefs are big barriers to constructive engagement in governance and elections
- Radical steps should be taken engage youth online and in communities on the PR system and the threshold for winning seats
- Food, prices, education and jobs are the biggest policy priorities for young people in the 2023 election
- At least one third of young people are willing to make innovative contributions to community peace and stability

