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IFES YEMEN SURVEY BRIEFING REPORT 2012



April 2012

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IFES Yemen Survey Briefing Report 2012

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IFES Yemen Survey: Briefing Report 2012



International Foundation for Electoral Systems

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I. Survey Objectives

In March 2012, IFES conducted a nationally representative survey of voting-age adults in Yemen through face-to-face interviews. The survey collected data to elicit citizens' opinions on various issues and their levels of confidence regarding the process of the 2012 presidential elections, and to identify needs for upcoming elections. The main research areas of the survey are as follows:

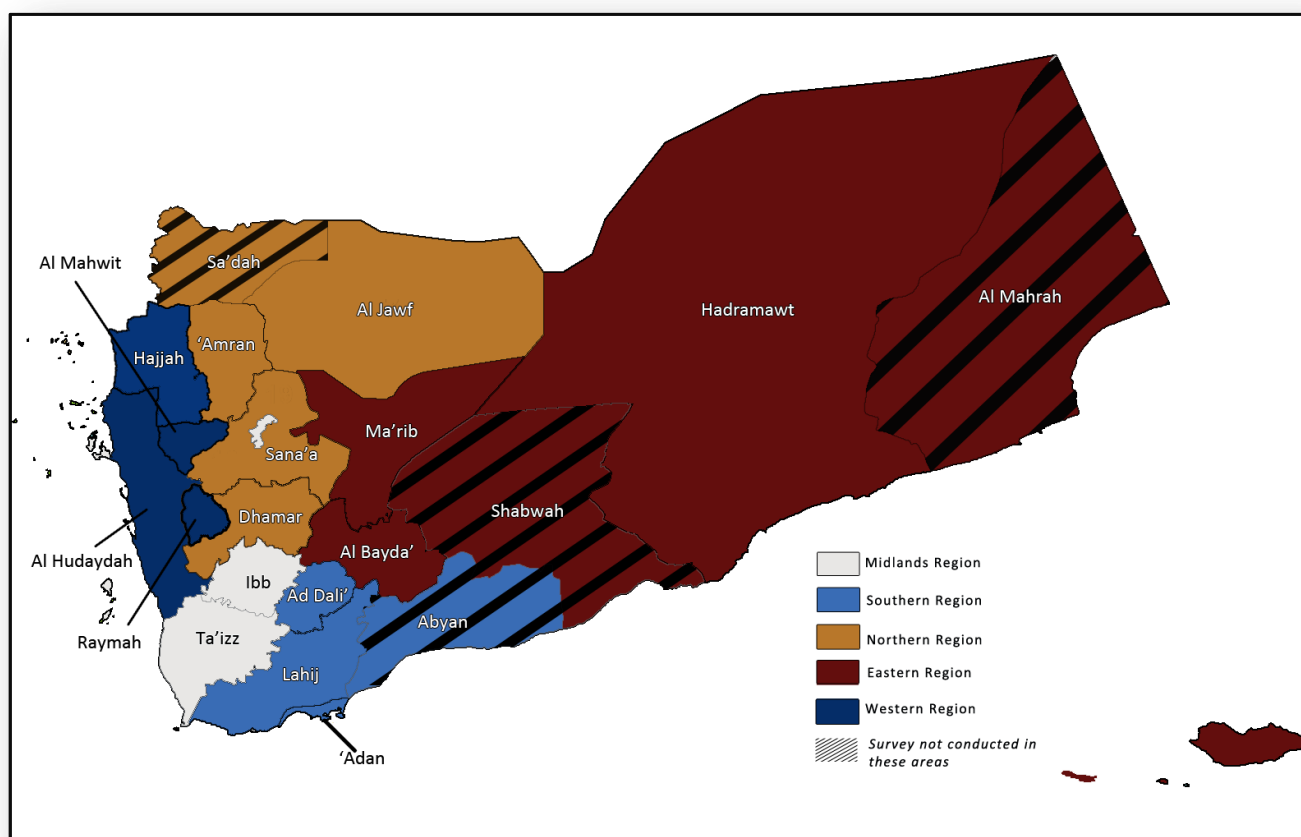
- Attitudes toward the 2012 election and satisfaction with the current situation in Yemen, including:
 - Expectations of fairness in the recent election
 - Information received prior to the recent election
- Opinions on issues surrounding upcoming parliamentary elections, including:
 - Attitudes and views of the electoral process
 - Awareness of upcoming elections
- Level of support for the involvement of women and the youth in politics

II. Methodology

Survey Sample Specifications

The sample was designed to be nationally representative of Yemen’s adult population (18 years or older). The sample consisted of 2,000 respondents who were randomly selected and interviewed face-to-face in their homes. The sample was stratified proportionately across 17 governorates of Yemen, covering 91% of Yemen’s population. This represents all of Yemen’s governorates excluding the four governorates of Abyan, Sa’dah, Shabwah and Al-Mahrah. Al-Mahrah was excluded because it represents less than 0.5% of the population.

At the time the survey was conducted, security concerns prevented travel to both Abyan and Shabwah governorates, and Sa’dah is completely controlled by the al-Houthi group, who often do not allow civil society organizations to operate. Please see the map below for regions covered in the survey. The striped regions are those that were excluded from the survey sample.



A total of 200 primary sampling units were selected from the 17 governorates using the probability proportionate to size (PPS) selection method.

A weight factor was introduced to bring the realized sample in line with the desired sample to adjust for minor discrepancies for observed age proportions.

Survey, Questionnaire and Report Specifications

- The **survey questionnaire** was composed of 49 closed questions, 10 open-ended questions and 13 demographic questions.
- The **sample size** of the survey is 2,000 respondents.
- **Sample sizes for key demographic segments:**
 - **Gender:** Male = 1,000; Female = 1,000
 - **Age groups:** 18-24 = 508; 25-34 = 582; 35-44 = 451; 45-54 = 259; 55-64 = 126; 65 or older = 74
 - **Education groups:** Illiterate = 612; Less than primary = 393; Primary = 197; Intermediate = 235; Secondary = 375; University or higher = 188
 - **Regional groups:** Midlands Region = 690; Southern Region = 190; Northern Region = 380; Eastern Region = 250; Western Region = 490
- Unless otherwise noted, the **margin of error** is $\pm 2.19\%$ with a 95% confidence interval.
- **Fieldwork dates:** March 14-28, 2012.
- **Survey firm:** IFES contracted the Yemen Polling Center (YPC), a Sana'a-based research organization, to implement the survey. Oversight was provided by the IFES Applied Research Center (ARC).
- **Charts:** There may be slight variation between numbers presented in the analysis and the data figures or tables due to rounding. This occurred in only a few cases and the difference was never greater than 1 percent.
- **Regional groups:**¹ Throughout this report, data is frequently aggregated by region. Yemen's 21 governorates (including the General Secretariat of Sana'a) have been distributed into five different geographic areas. While governorates in each grouping may share similar economic, political or social characteristics, the divisions presented in this survey are not meant to correlate with official geographic or political classifications. For example, the northern and southern regions in this report are not reflective of the division of governorates that were part of the former North Yemen (Yemen Arab Republic) or South Yemen (People's Democratic Republic of Yemen). The five geographic areas have been divided as follows. For more detail on specific characteristic of each regional group and governorates, please refer to Appendix A.
 - **Midlands region:** Sana'a city (Amanat al 'Asimah), Ibb, Taiz
 - **Southern region:** Aden, Ad-Dali, Lahij
 - **Northern region:** Sana'a Governorate, Amran, Dhamar, Al-Jawf
 - **Eastern region:** Marib, Al-Bayda, Hadramawt
 - **Western region:** Al-Hudaydah, Hajjah, Al-Mahwit, Raymah

Feedback

- This analytical report was developed by Research Coordinator David Jandura and Senior Research Specialist Rola Abdul-Latif. For any feedback or questions about data analysis or methodology, please contact Abdul-Latif at rabdullatif@ifes.org.

¹ The population breakdown by regional groups according to 2010 official census projections is as follows (in thousands): Midlands region 7,383 (32%), Western region 5,319 (23%), Northern region 5,000 (22%), Eastern region 2,830 (12%), Southern region 2,622 (11%).

- For any questions about IFES programming in Yemen, please contact Program Manager for Middle East and North Africa Eric Hodachok at ehodachok@ifes.org or Yemen Chief of Party Grant Kippen at gkippen@ifes.org.

III. Executive Summary

Following Yemen's early presidential election in February 2012, IFES conducted a nationwide survey of voting-age adults in Yemen, establishing a baseline of data on a range of political and electoral issues pertaining to the election and views on future electoral events. Survey questions were designed to establish attitudes toward the 2012 election, satisfaction with the current situation in Yemen through measuring perceptions of fairness of the election, availability of information leading up to the election and general feelings of the electoral process. The survey results discussed in this report establish a baseline of data and provide important insights on the election, as well as future electoral events.

The presidential election was marked by relatively high voter turnout, with nearly six in 10 eligible voters reporting they cast a ballot. This finding corresponded with official statements reporting a 65% voter turnout. Although the general attitude of surveyed Yemenis was that the election was free and fair, the survey revealed that those who participated in the election had a higher opinion of the process than those who did not. Many who did not participate indicated a distrust of the election itself, regardless of the administrative quality, although other factors – including apathy or intention of boycotting the process – also played a part. The lack of confidence among those who did not participate is evidence that further efforts should be made to communicate with voters about the procedures of the election. Additionally, respondents from the southern region had a far more negative assessment of the electoral process.

From an operational standpoint, the voting process was viewed as generally smooth, although there were areas of concern including the high number of voters witnessing voting in the open, women not being required to remove their veil for identification purposes and a lack of information on how to correctly mark ballots. In addition, voters in the southern governorates of Aden, Ad-Dali, Abyan and Lahij were more likely to report experiencing problems at the polling center, such as the theft of ballot boxes, long lines and closing of the polling center by force. In general, many still had concerns over the presence of only one candidate. Although the presence of only one candidate in the race reduced the importance of identified irregularities, survey results nevertheless reveal key areas of the voting process that should be strengthened before the next election.

Few voters experienced any problems related to the voter registry on Election Day. This was in part because the government waived voter registration requirements for the early presidential election. Eligible voters only had to provide an acceptable form of national identification (ID) in order to cast a ballot. Most voters were registered to vote based on their home address and found it easy to find their polling centers. The government also set up special voting centers specifically for non-resident voters or internally displaced persons.

The survey also sought to capture the experience of traditionally marginalized voter groups, such as women and persons with disabilities. Of the respondents who identified their household as having a voting age family member with a disability, 52% claimed the family member voted in the election, down slightly from the national average. With regard to women, survey findings revealed that despite the overall high voter turnout, women voted in far lower numbers than men (45% versus 75%, respectively). Several factors were cited for this discrepancy, including the lack of a national ID, as well as a percentage of women reporting they abstained from voting based on their husbands' direction. In addition to a higher abstention rate from the early presidential election, women were far less likely than men to have taken part in civic activities in the past year.

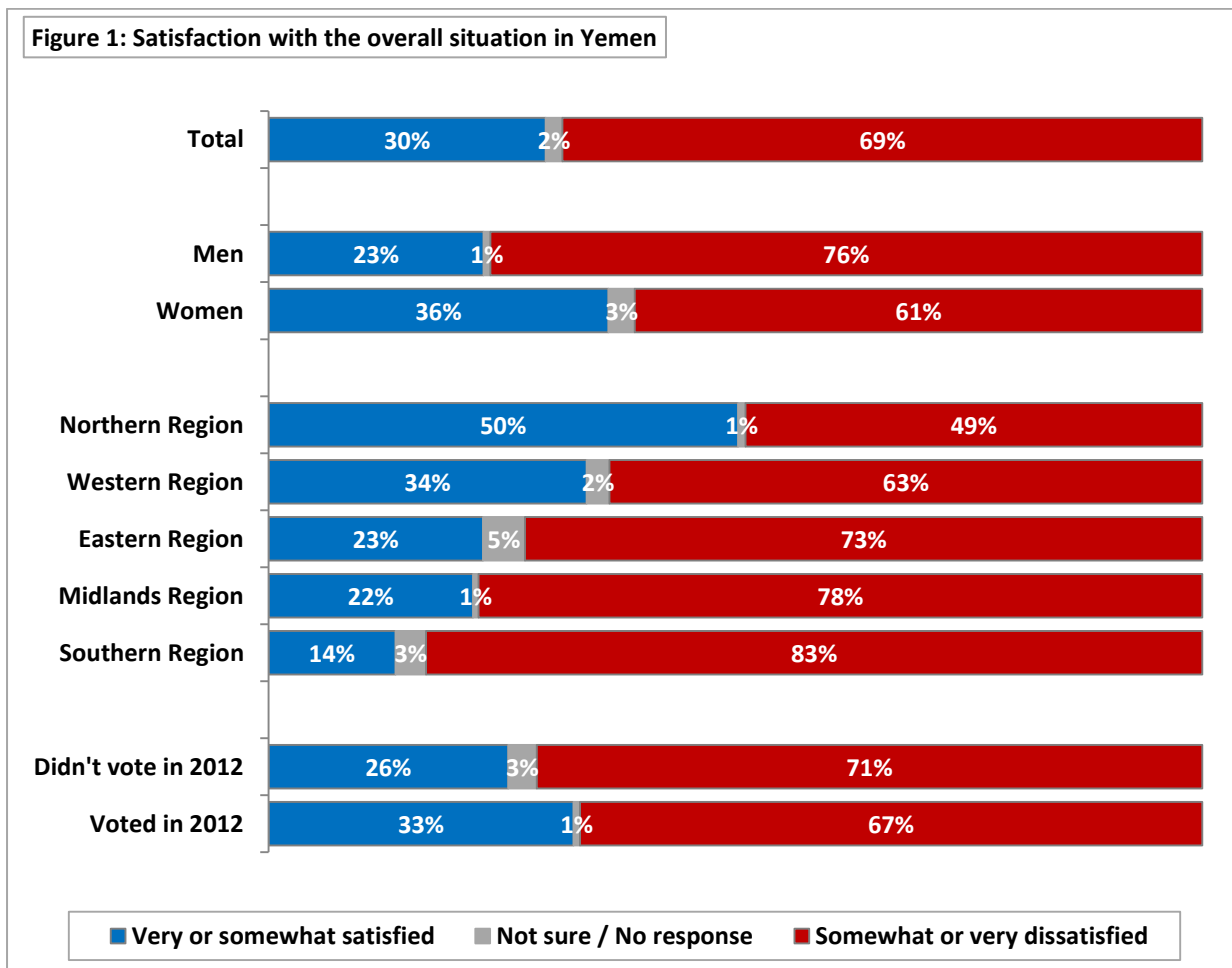
Finally, the survey also provided useful information regarding the upcoming parliamentary elections and constitutional referendum. Of those surveyed, most intend to vote in the upcoming constitutional referendum and legislative elections, although there are large differences in regard to gender and region. Women are significantly less likely than men to indicate their intention to vote while on a regional level, the south and east of the country show similar discrepancies. This information will be useful in designing voter education campaigns that target constituencies with lower participation rates.

IV. Opinions on the Current Situation in Yemen

One month after the early presidential election, a majority of Yemenis remain dissatisfied with the state of their country. Economic issues are the primary driver of dissatisfaction with high prices and poverty viewed as top concerns. Those who are satisfied, in contrast, are focused on the evolving political situation in the country. Many are optimistic that a new president can bring change, while others express satisfaction that the transition will bring about more stability and less violence.

Majority of Yemenis are unsatisfied with state of country financially

Only 30% of Yemenis are either very (12%) or somewhat (18%) satisfied with the overall situation in the country. In contrast, 47% are very dissatisfied, while a further 21% are somewhat dissatisfied. Satisfaction with the state of the country is not uniform, as wide geographic disparities exist. Satisfaction is highest in the north, where 50% of respondents express a positive view. This was followed by the western region, where only 34% express satisfaction. In contrast, approval was much lower in other regions, with 23% expressing satisfaction in the east, 22% in the midlands, and a dismal 14% in the south (Figure 1).



There is a small difference in citizens' assessment of the country's situation between those who voted in the recent presidential election and those who did not. Thirty-three percent of those who voted say they are satisfied with the state of the country, while only 26% of those who did not vote said the same.

Economic issues top the list of reasons why Yemenis are dissatisfied with the state of the country. Fifty-six percent of those who are dissatisfied list high prices as one of the reasons, while a further 34% list poverty as

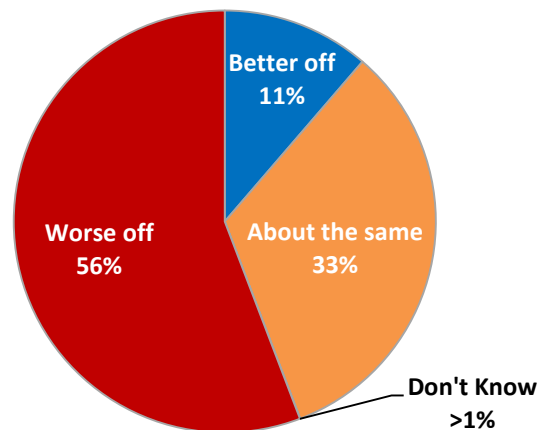
their primary reason for dissatisfaction. General economic problems and unemployment also made the top five reasons, with 28% and 25% listing them, respectively. Beyond economic issues, 29% of respondents cited the lack of security as a main concern. Of those satisfied with the situation in the country, nearly half say they are optimistic for the future. While some economic issues were mentioned (availability of gas/fuel and the return of electricity) most responses dealt with the political situation. Twenty-nine percent attributed their satisfaction to the removal of former President Saleh from power, while 38% noted it was due to the decrease in violence and increased stability of the country (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Reasons for Assessment of the Country
Respondents were allowed to provide multiple responses

Why Satisfied? (n=593)	% of Cases	Why Dissatisfied? (n=1371)	% of Cases
Optimism for the future	46%	High prices	56%
More stability/ less violence	38%	Poverty	34%
New president/ Saleh is gone	29%	Lack of security	29%
The return of electricity	25%	General economic problems	28%
Lower chance of war	23%	Unemployment	25%
Availability of gas / fuel	19%	Services: electricity, water, roads telecommunications	24%
More democracy/ freedom to choose leaders	14%	Corruption	15%
Good / free elections	13%	General political problems	14%

The concern with economic issues was further emphasized when Yemenis were asked to assess their financial situation. Only 11% of respondents believe their household is better off financially than the same time a year ago, while 56% say they are worse off. Thirty-three percent say their situation is about the same (Figure 3).

Figure 3: "Is your household better or worse off financially than it was a year ago?"



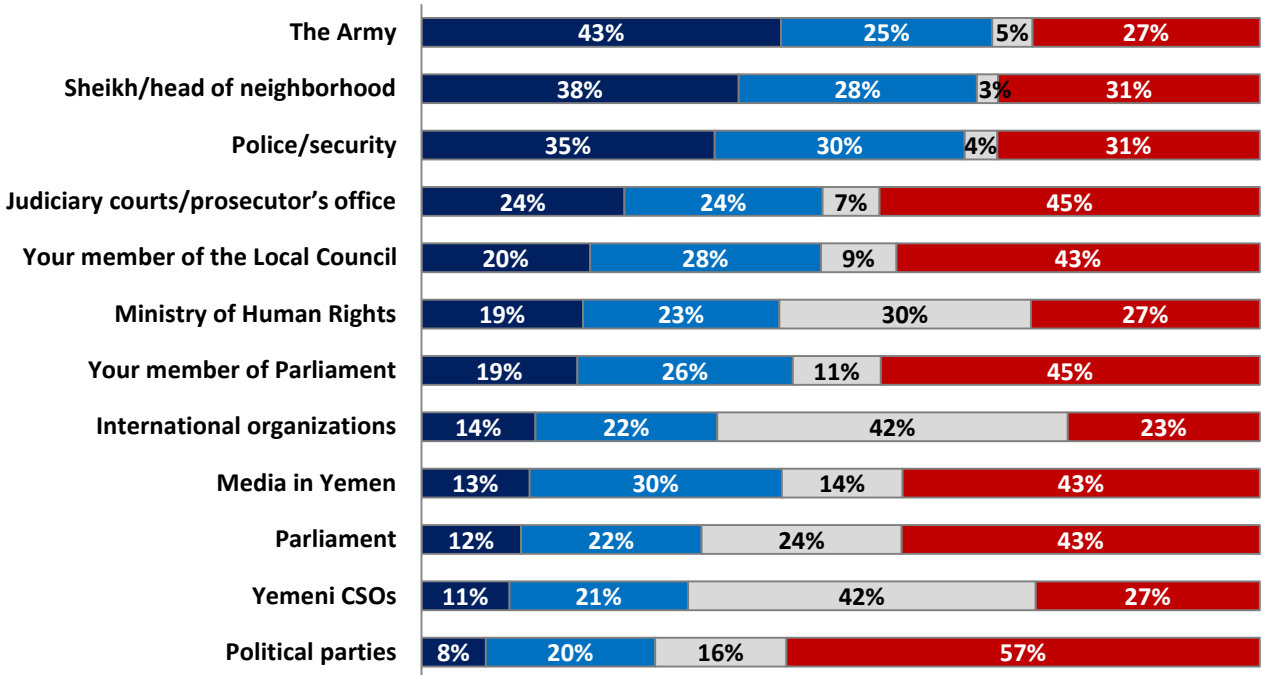
Yemenis have mixed assessment of country's institutions

Yemen's citizens expressed high confidence in certain institutions, including the army, police and their local sheikhs. However, key civic and political institutions – such as political parties and parliament – suffer from extremely low levels of confidence (Figure 4). For other listed institutions – such as the judiciary, local council members, their member of parliament and the media – opinions are more divided.

Civil society organizations, both local and international, suffer from low awareness among the population. Forty-two percent of respondents are not familiar enough to form an opinion of either. Likewise, a significant share (30%) of Yemenis are unaware of the Ministry of Human Rights. This highlights a deficit in knowledge and suggests that efforts to raise awareness about the roles of these institutions should be a key goal.

Figure 4: Confidence in institutions

■ Very confident
 ■ Somewhat confident
 ■ Do not know the institution
 ■ Not confident



Regional divisions persist; the southern region is much less likely to have confidence in Yemeni national institutions. This region does, however, have more confidence in international organizations (49% are very or somewhat confident compared to 34% for the rest of the country). Those who voted in the 2012 presidential election tend to express higher confidence levels in institutions than those who did not. For instance, while nearly half (41%) of those who voted express confidence in the parliament, only 23% of those who did not vote express confidence in this institution. Similarly, confidence in the police and security forces is much higher among those who voted (72%) than those who did not vote (55%). This should not be surprising, as those who voted typically have more buy-in with the country's institutions than those who did not.

V. Participation and Experience in the 2012 Election

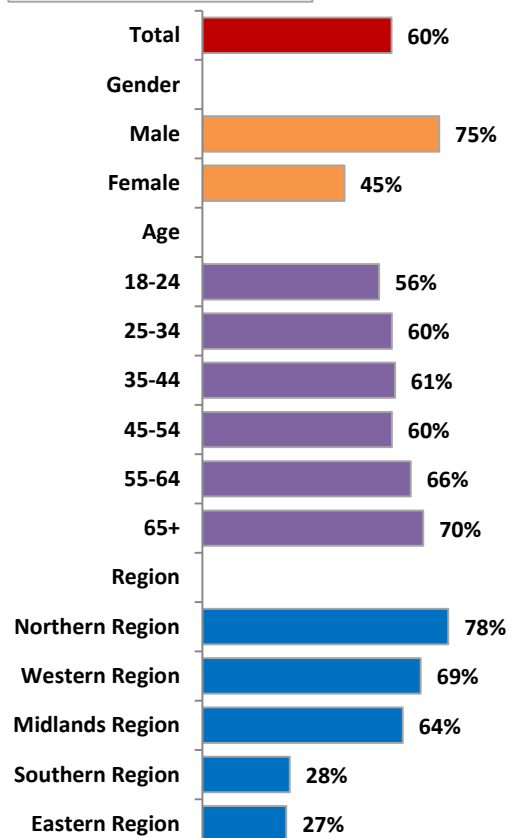
Around six in 10 eligible voters participated in the 2012 early presidential election. Women voted in far lower numbers than men. A small percentage of women also reported not voting based on their husbands' direction. Participation was high in the north of the country, but extremely low in the south and east. There is also a positive relationship between age and participation as older voters are more likely to have voted than younger ones. For the most part, voters felt the administration of the election was smooth and that electoral procedures were followed properly. However, those who did express a more negative assessment of the electoral process were more likely to come from the south. Voting operations were generally smooth, with most voters expressing confidence in the conduct of the election. However, areas of concerns include a high number of voters witnessing voting in the open, women not being required to remove their veil for identification purposes and not being provided information on how to correctly mark their ballot. The presence of only one candidate may in essence reduce the importance of these irregularities; however, it still reveals key areas that should be strengthened before the next election.

During the election, voters only needed to provide a national ID to vote, regardless of whether they were registered to do so. This allowance was created due to the infeasibility of updating the voter registry in time for the early election. Most voters were registered to vote at their home address and found it easy to find their polling centers. Just under half of those who were not registered to vote cast a ballot at a special voting center.² Those with disabilities were mostly able to participate in the election although some faced additional obstacles to doing so.

Turnout in the election was relatively high but not equal across all demographics

Sixty percent of respondents claimed they voted in the 2012 presidential election, a number very close to the official tally of 65%. Men were far more likely to vote than women (75% compared to 45%) and older citizens more likely than younger ones. This highlights a large gender gap in voter participation, which should be addressed in future voter education and motivation campaigns through better targeting of women. Similarly, lower turnout among the youth demonstrates that further efforts should be made to engage this demographic.

Figure 5: Voter turnout by demographics



² First time voters were able to vote at any polling station as long as they had a piece of photo ID, however non-resident registered voters and internally displaced persons (IDPs) were required to vote at special polling centers.

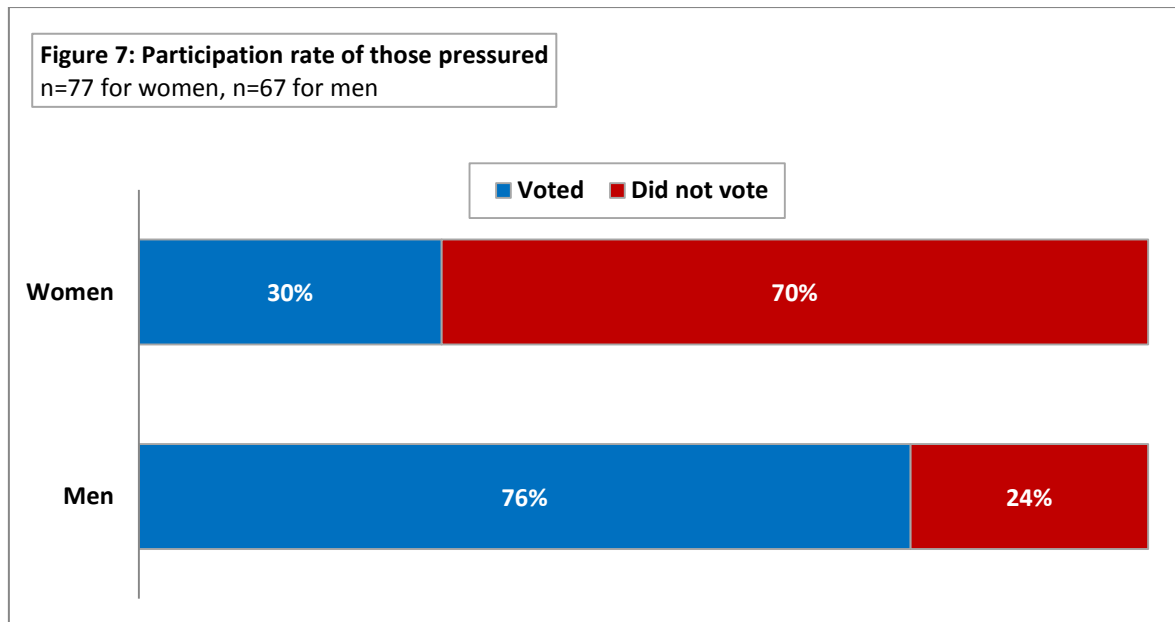
Notably, there were stark differences in turnout depending on the region. Voter turnout, as reported in the IFES survey, was highest in the north, where 78% claimed to have voted. This was followed by the west and the midlands where 69% and 64% voted, respectively. In contrast, only 28% of citizens in the south voted while the east experienced a turnout of only 27% (Figure 5). These regional differences, however, may be attributed to the strength of tribal structures in the south and east, as well as the significant presence of militant, terrorist and separatist groups in those governorates.

Those who did not vote were asked to give a reason for abstaining. Although no response was predominant, the most common answer (16%) was that the individual did not have their national ID card. This was followed by more vague reasons of being sick or busy (14% and 9%, respectively). Ten percent of those surveyed abstained because they were actively boycotting the elections (a response that came almost exclusively from the south and east of the country), while 9% stated they were not interested in politics. Seven percent stated there was no need to vote because only one candidate was running. Eight percent of women voters stated they did not vote because their husband told them not to (Figure 6). These results indicate that future voter education efforts should include not only informational messages, but motivational messages as well.

Figure 6: Reasons for abstaining from 2012 presidential elections	% of Cases
I did not have my national ID	16%
I was sick	14%
I boycotted the election on principle	10%
I was busy	9%
I am not interested in politics	9%
My husband (family) told me not to	8%
No need to participate because only one candidate was running	7%
The polling center is far	6%
I was worried about my safety/security/violent incidents	5%

Low levels of coercion or threats of violence affected more women than men

Only 7% of voters claimed that a group or an individual attempted to pressure them to abstain from the election. This number was almost identical to the 7% who claimed they knew somebody who was intimidated. However, 51% of those who reported being pressured still voted. Women were slightly more likely to be pressured than men (54% of those who experienced coercion were women while only 46% were men), and the threats on women appeared to have had a greater impact than those on men. Women who were pressured were 46% more likely to stay home than their male counterparts; 30% of pressured women still voted while 76% of men did (Figure 7). While the sample size for these numbers is very small, the difference still falls far outside of the margin of error for each gender; the margin of error was 11.2 for women and 12.0 for men.



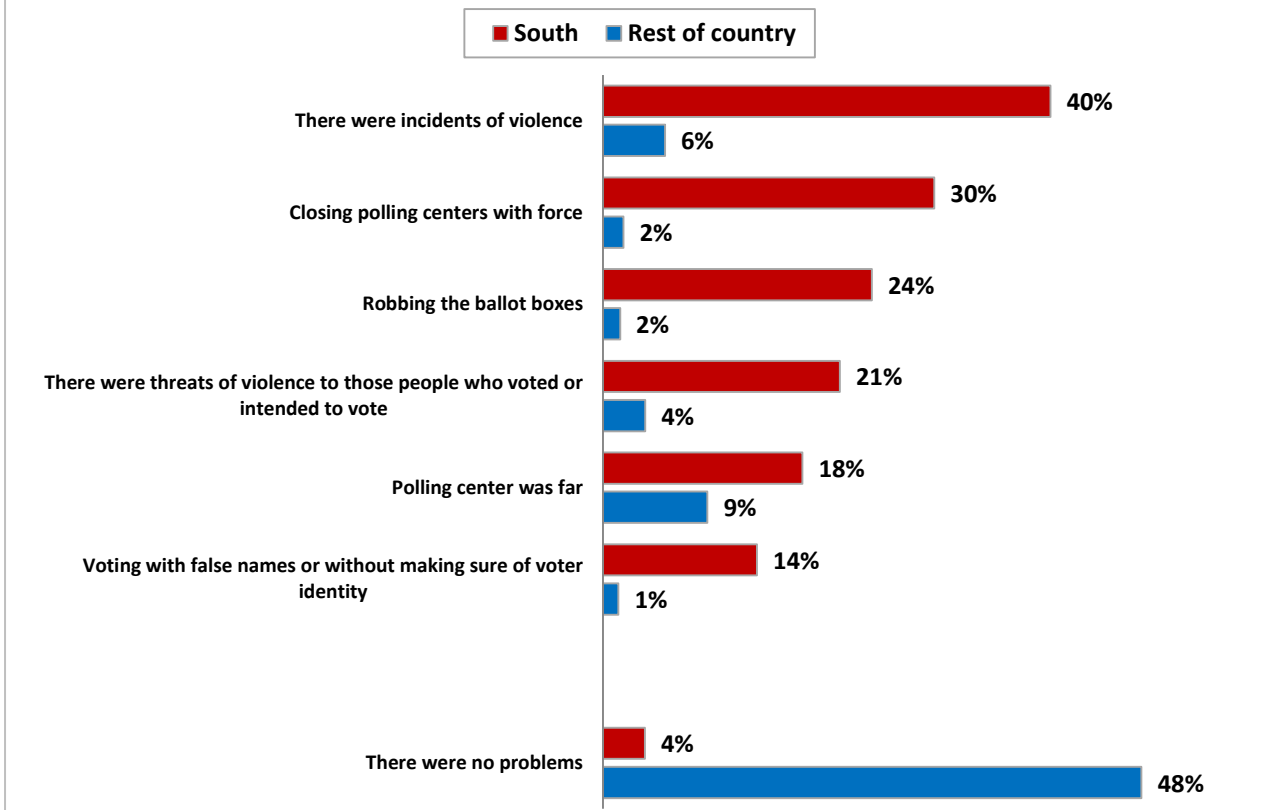
Assessment of the election mostly positive outside of the south

Respondents were asked to list both positive and negative aspects of the electoral process. Few were able to list specific complaints about the election, with the long distance from the polling center being the most cited at 10%.

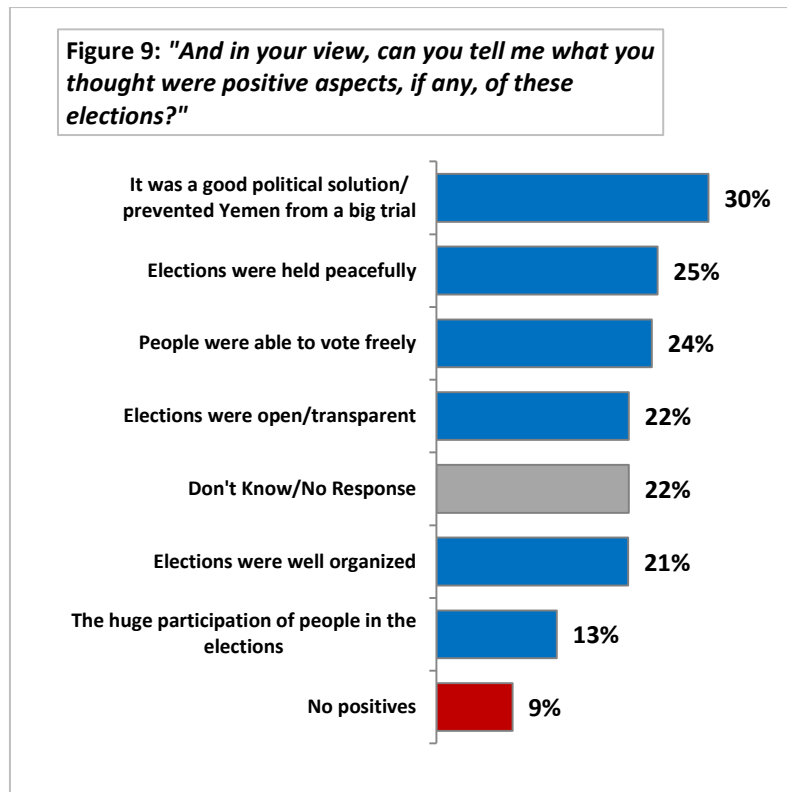
Complaints about the election, however, need to be viewed in the context of regional perceptions. The vast majority of complaints came from the south and most instances of specific problems practically disappear when that region is removed from the sample. Complaints of election-related violence are highest in the southern region, where 40% of respondents say this was a problem, compared to only 6% in the rest of the country. These complaints are more pronounced for respondents in Aden compared to other southern governorates.

Additionally, closing the polling center with force was an issue for 30% of southerners, compared to only 2% for the rest of the country. Twenty-four percent of southerners complained about theft of the ballot box (2% for the rest of the country), 21% complained about threats of violence (4% for the rest of the country), 18% complained about the polling center being too far (9% for the rest of the country) and 14% complained about people voting with false names (1% for the rest of the country). While 48% of respondents in non-southern governorates claimed there were no problems, only 4% of those in the south claimed the same (Figure 8).

Figure 8: "In your opinion, what are the problems that you know the electoral process faced in general either inside or outside the polling centers?"



Respondents in all regions had an easier time listing specific positive aspects of the election. Most responses focused on the political process as a whole, rather than specific administrative issues. Thirty percent of respondents felt the election was a good political solution to the ongoing political turmoil. This response was listed by 50% of those in the southern region and by 29% of those in the rest of the country; 67% of southerners who gave that answer actually voted, which is a much higher percentage than the overall number of southerners who voted. Twenty-five percent of those surveyed cited the fact that the elections were held peacefully while 24% noted that people were able to vote freely. A further 22% stated that the elections were open and transparent and 21% liked that they were well-organized (Figure 9).

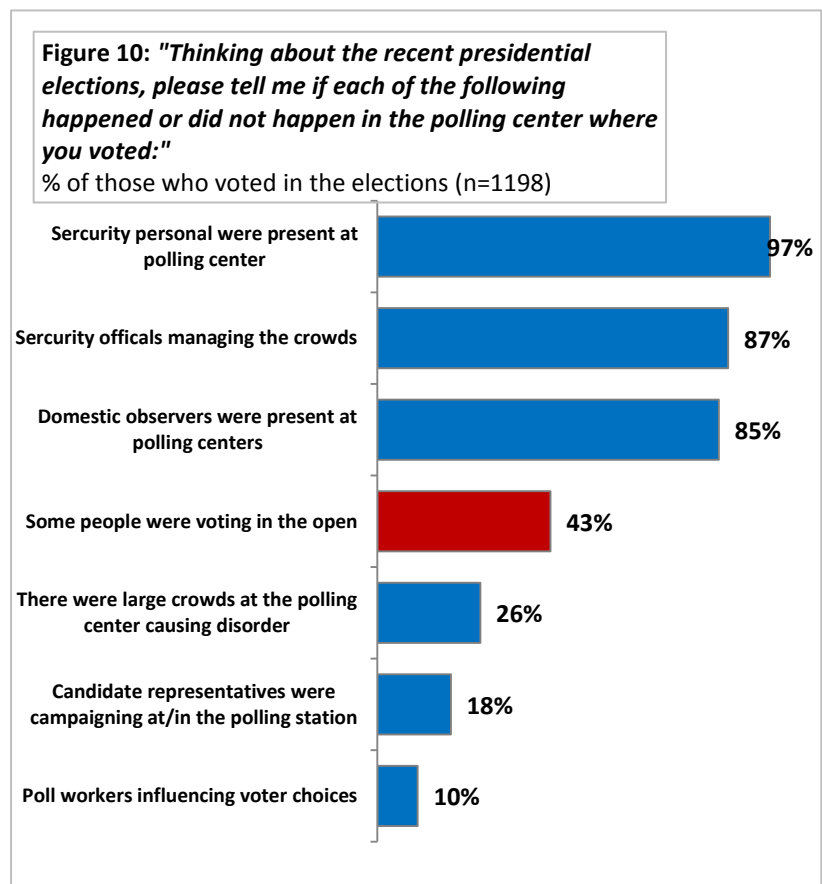


Polling center procedures generally satisfactory with a few exceptions

Voters were asked a series of questions to evaluate their impression of whether election procedures took place adequately or if there were irregularities. The survey data indicates that standard polling center procedures were followed with a few exceptions of reported irregularities, such as people voting in the open.

The first series of questions asked voters if certain practices happened or not on Election Day in the polling center where they voted. The questions included both internationally recognized best practices that are expected to take place during an election, as well as irregular practices that could point to concerns in the general conduct of elections.

Forty-two percent of those surveyed who had voted in the 2006 election felt that the 2012 election was better organized. Twenty-five percent believed it was more or less the same, while only 13% felt that it was worse. Ninety-seven percent stated that they are either very (69%) or somewhat (28%) satisfied with the overall voting process.

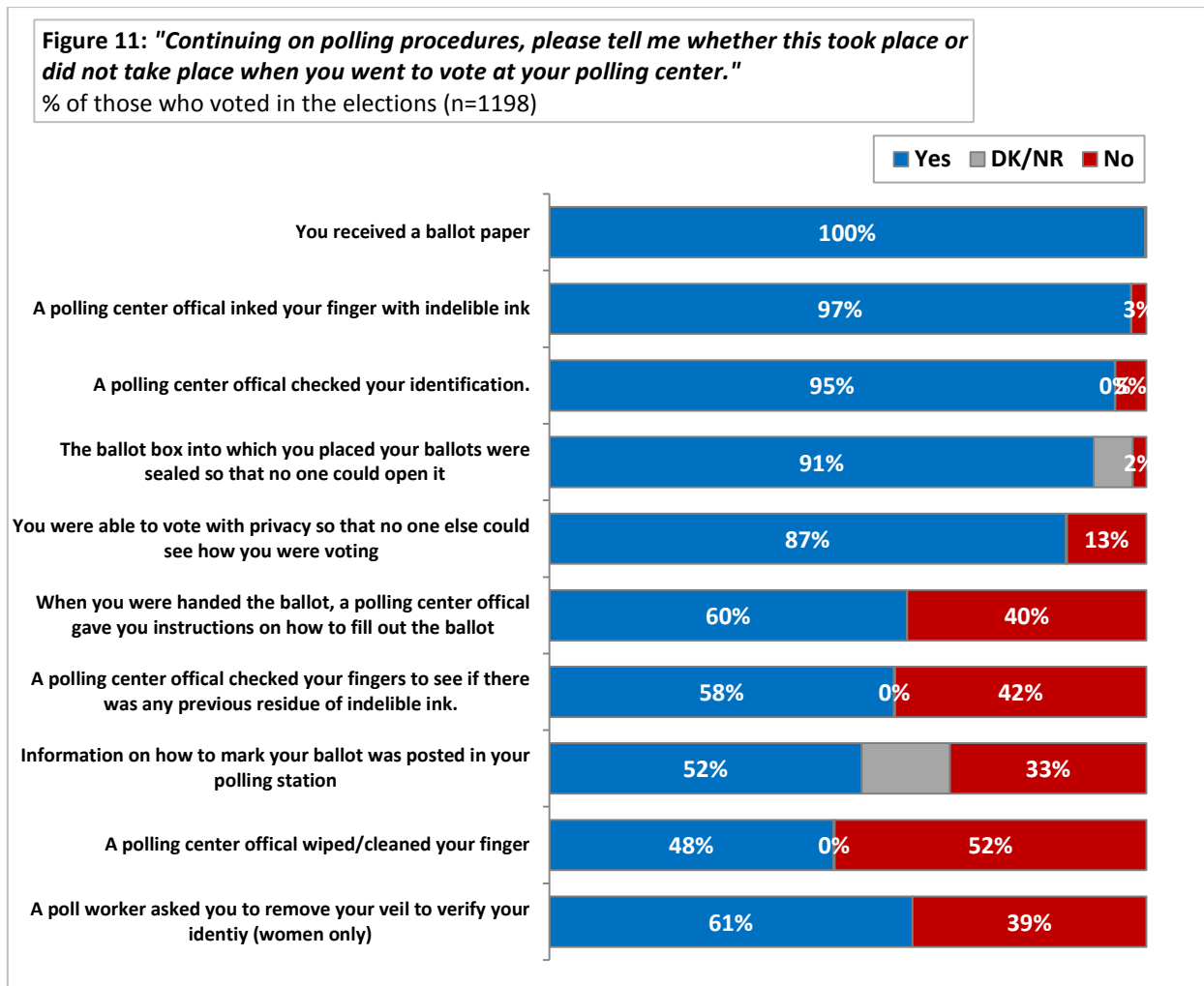


Ninety-seven percent of voters saw security personnel at the polling center. Of that group, only 3% felt intimidated by their presence (Figure 10). Sixty-four percent felt secure due to the presence of security personnel and 33% felt no different. Eighty-seven percent of voters witnessed security officials managing the crowds and 85% saw domestic observers at the polling centers. Overall, low numbers of voters reported witnessing major problems at the polling centers.

Approximately one-quarter of those surveyed (26%) experienced large crowds causing disorder; 18% witnessed candidate representatives campaigning at or in the polling center; and 10% observed poll workers influencing voter choice. However, 43% of voters saw other people voting in the open. Nevertheless, 96% of those who witnessed this activity were either very (64%) or somewhat (33%) satisfied with the conduct of the election. While it is true that the presence of only one candidate may have lowered the importance of a secret ballot, the high incidence of voting in the open reveals a need to inform voters on why their ballot should remain secret. The presence of domestic observers appeared to have had little impact on whether this took place or not; 44% of those who witnessed observers also witnessed voting in the open while 43% who did not witness observers saw this same activity. Perhaps this suggests that in the future, domestic observers could benefit from additional training to better deter the occurrence of such irregularities.

In contrast, the presence of candidate/party representatives campaigning at the polling center increased the likelihood that a respondent witnessed voting in the open. Fifty-nine percent of those who saw candidates campaigning also saw open voting, while only 40% of those who saw no party representatives saw the same. This behavior was far more common in the south and the east, where 76% and 71% of voters, respectively, witnessed it.

Continuing on the issue of polling procedures, respondents who voted were asked if specific procedures – from the time they arrived at the polling center until they cast their vote – took place systematically or not on Election Day. These included standard polling practices, which are expected to take place for electoral procedures to be considered satisfactory.

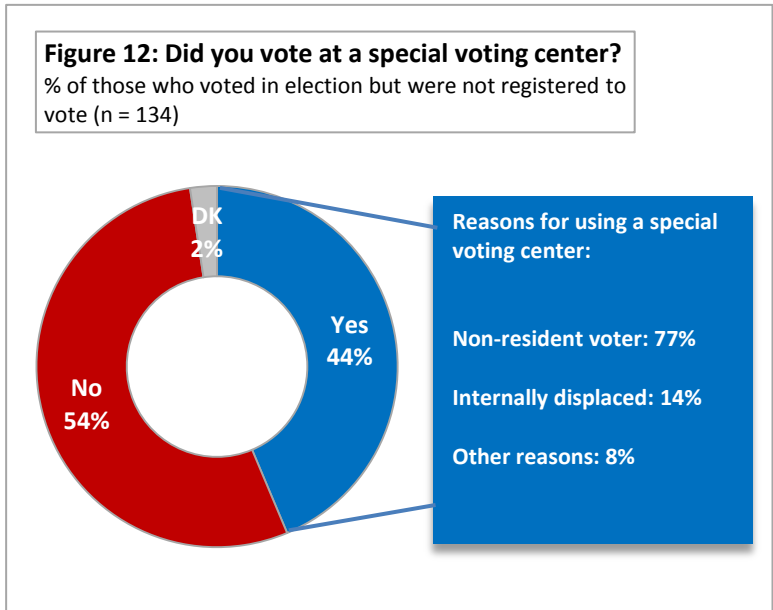


The survey data indicates that standard polling center procedures were followed with a few exceptions. This was mostly related to voters not receiving information on how to mark their ballot, women not being asked to remove their veils for identification purposes and various issues surrounding indelible ink. Only 58% of voters reported that a polling center official checked their finger for any residue of previous ink and only 48% stated that the poll worker wiped their finger clean. Sixty percent of voters reported being given instructions on how to properly fill out their ballot after it had been handed to them, while 40% state this did not happen. Only 52% recall seeing information on how to fill out their ballot in the polling center, while 33% did not and 15% were unsure (Figure 11).

This again suggests further training of polling workers might help improve electoral practices at the polling center both in terms of providing the necessary voter information and in helping reduce the possibility of voter fraud, as in the case of not requiring veiled women to reveal their identity. Furthermore, only 61% of female voters report being asked to remove their veil for verification purposes, while 39% of women say this did not happen.

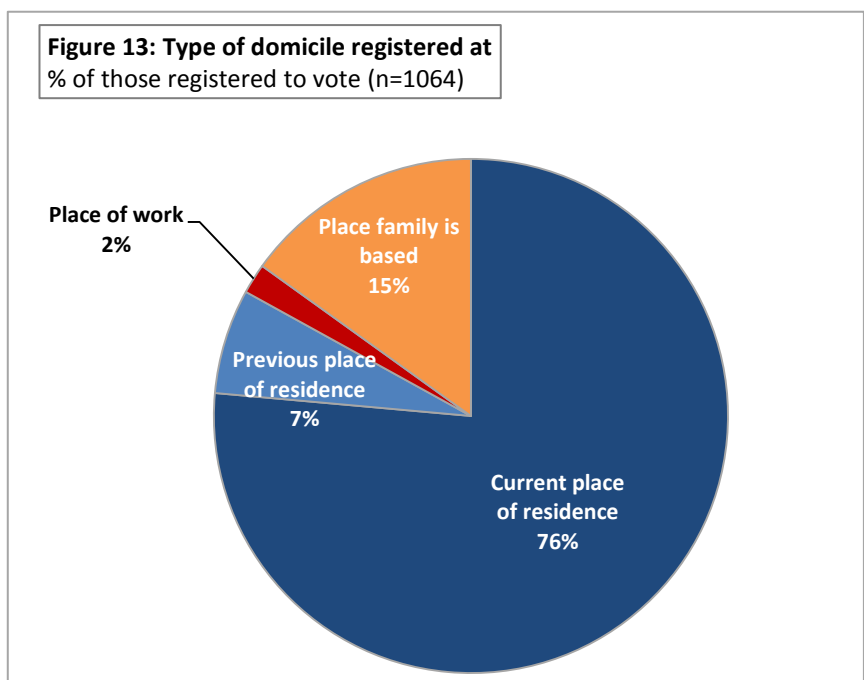
Most voters had no problems with voter registration or finding polling centers

Due to the schedule of the 2012 election, normal voter registration requirements were waived in order to ensure that all eligible citizens were able to participate. Citizens only had to present some form of acceptable identification to vote, whether they were on the voter registry or not. The government also set up special voting centers specifically for non-resident voters, or internally displaced persons (IDPs). Of those who were not registered to vote, 44% voted at one of these centers, while 54% did not. Only 2% are unsure if they did so. Of those who voted in a special center, 77% claim it was because they were a non-resident voter and 14% say it was because they were internally displaced. Eight percent gave other reasons such as their primary voting center being closed or not having an ID (Figure 12).



Eighty-eight percent of those who voted were formally registered to do so in the election. As noted above, voter registration requirements were waived due to the early nature of this election. Consequently, eligible voters did not need to be listed on the voter registry to be able to cast a ballot. Of those registered, 76% were registered at their current place of residence, while 15% were at the place their family is based. Seven percent were registered at their previous place of residence and 2% were registered at their place of work. Ninety-four percent of those surveyed voted in the same district where they were registered to vote and 6% did not (Figure 13).

Ninety-three percent of voters found that it was either very (77%) or somewhat (16%) easy to locate their polling center (Figure 14). Voters generally found it easy to locate their polling center, regardless of where they were registered. There was little variety in this response when broken down by what type of domicile voters were registered. Voters who cast a ballot at a special voting center found it somewhat more difficult to find their appropriate polling center, although not by a wide margin. While 90% of those who did not



vote in a special voting center found it either very (78%) or somewhat (12%) easy to find their station, 84% of those who did vote in a special voting center found it either very (65 %) or somewhat (19%) easy. While both groups found it generally easy to locate their polling center, more people who voted at a regular voting center found it very easy (78% to 65%).

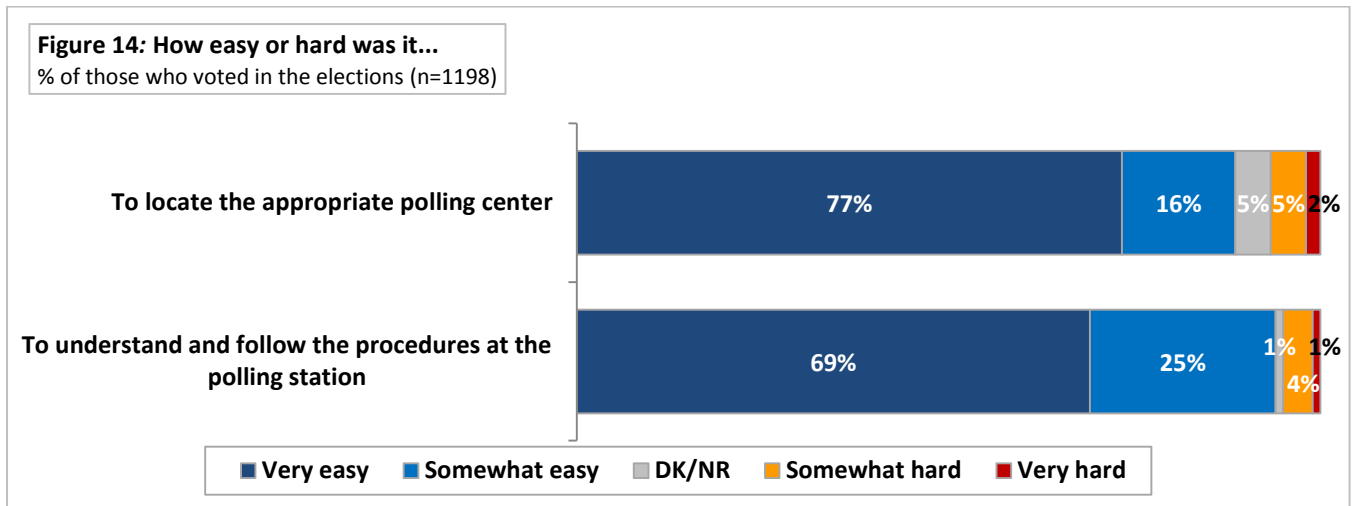


Figure 14 also shows that 94% of voters found that it was either very (69%) or somewhat (25%) easy to understand and follow the procedures at the polling center. Eighty-one percent of those surveyed felt that the polling center official seemed “mostly knowledgeable” about polling center procedures. A further 17% said they did not know, while only 2% claimed that officials did not seem knowledgeable. Sixty-one percent said they personally knew some of the members of the polling subcommittee in the polling center.

Most persons with disabilities were able to vote but in lower numbers than the general population

The survey also aimed to get a sense of the voting experience of persons with disabilities. Consequently, voters were asked if there were adult members in their household who are physically disabled and whether they participated in the elections. The survey also asked if voters witnessed persons with disabilities experiencing any trouble during Election Day.³

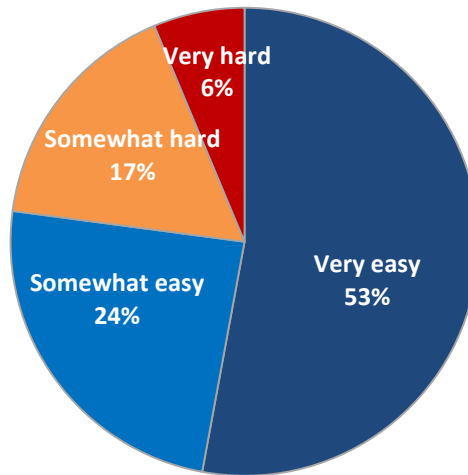
Nine percent of respondents identified a voting age member of their household as physically disabled. Of those, 52% claim that that family member voted. While this suggests that turnout among persons with disabilities was lower than the national average (60% in this survey and 65% officially), one should be cautious in drawing firm conclusions, as the lower sample size increases the margin of error from 2.19% to 7.24%. Respondents who reported having a disabled household member voted in higher numbers than the national average (67% vs. 60%). This is evidence against the possibility that those with disabilities who did not vote are simply coming from politically inactive households.

³ Data in this section is based on responses provided by survey respondents who have a physically disabled family member and not strictly from physically disabled respondents themselves. This is due to the design of this survey which is nationally representative, without any oversampling of physically disabled respondents. Consequently, the questions were not exclusively asked of physically disabled respondents that the survey encountered as the sample size would have been too small to draw any meaningful conclusions.

When asked how easy it was for that disabled household member to vote, 53% said it was very easy and 24% said it was somewhat easy. Only 17% said that it was somewhat difficult while 6% said it was very difficult. In a separate set of questions, 29% of voters witnessed a person with disabilities voting or trying to vote at their center. Of this group, 87% felt the disabled person needed help and 81% of that group claimed they received that help (Figure 15).

Figure 15: How easy or difficult it was for family member with a disability to access the polling center and vote

% of those with a disabled member of household who voted (n=93)



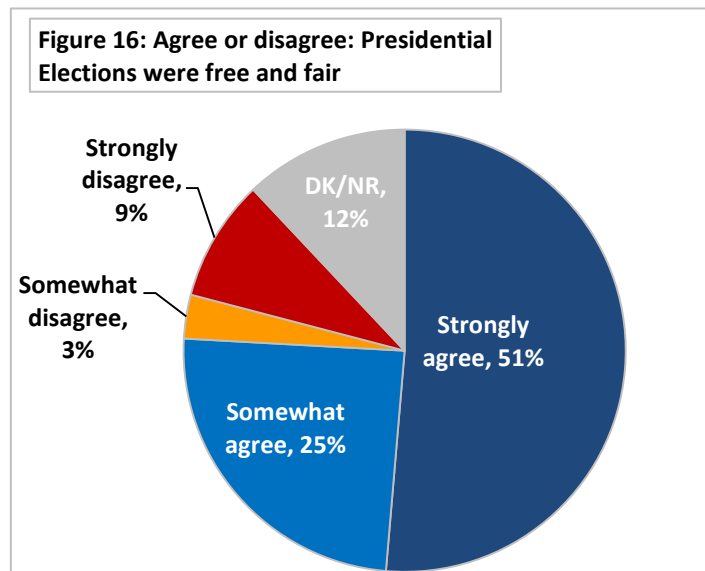
VI. Perceptions of 2012 Presidential Election

A majority of Yemenis surveyed felt the 2012 early presidential election was both free and fair. This margin, however, masks regional disparities that may correlate with larger political issues. For example, Yemenis in the south and the east expressed a more negative perception of the election than those from other regions. In addition, many who did not participate in the presidential election appear to show a distrust of the election itself, regardless of the administrative quality.

Despite their overall positive assessment of the integrity of the elections, many Yemenis still had concerns over the presence of only one candidate. Others expressed concern that the election was forced upon them, and that there was outside interference. While voters generally felt the election represented the will of the people, many were unsure about the quality of the counting and results process, indicating a greater need to communicate with the population about this crucial aspect of the election cycle.

Early 2012 presidential election generally viewed as fair although disparities appear based on region and participation

Overall, 76% of Yemenis either strongly (51%) or somewhat (25%) agree that the 2012 presidential election was free and fair (Figure 16). Similar margins of opinion believe that the results of the election reflected the will of the people (77% either somewhat or strongly agreeing). Belief that the election was not free or fair was concentrated mostly in the south and the east, where 47% and 36%, respectively, either somewhat or strongly disagree. In contrast, 91% of those in the north believe the election was free and fair, along with 85% in the midlands and 82% in the western region.



When those who feel the election was not free and fair were asked why, Figure 17 shows that most respondents said a lot of people boycotted the elections (40%). The fact that then-Vice President Hadi was the only candidate on the ballot was also an issue, with 39% saying a noncompetitive election as being a reason for their negative assessment. Following this, 26% stated that people did not feel safe because of violence and 25% noted that the election was forced upon them. On a similar note, 15% expressed concern that there was outside interference from the United States and Gulf countries. Election administration issues were also cited, but to a lesser extent: 20% of respondents cite observance of fraudulent activities at the polling center and 16% believed that the vote counting was flawed.

Figure 17: Reasons for believing 2012 Presidential elections were not free and fair

	% of Cases
A lot of people boycotted the elections	40%
Elections were not competitive	39%
People did not feel safe/because there was violence	26%
It was forced upon us	25%
Fraudulent activities at the polling center	20%
Lack of trust in vote counting/results not reflecting how people voted	16%
Because there was outside interference (the U.S. and Gulf States)	15%

Respondents were also asked whether they agreed or disagreed with three statements regarding the elections: “the results of the elections reflect the will of the people,” “every eligible voter had an equal opportunity to participate in the election” and “vote counting and announcing results were done accurately.”

A vast majority of those Yemenis surveyed either strongly or somewhat agree that the results of the election reflected the will of the people (77%) and that every eligible voter had an opportunity to vote in the election (78%). Only a slim majority (51%) agrees that vote counting and the announcing of results was done accurately, whereas a large percentage (38%) do not know. Differences between men and women on these questions are narrow – the largest disparities exist between regions as well as between those who voted and did not vote. This suggests that perceptions on the conduct of the election correlate to Yemenis’ opinions on the larger political transition process. The high share of “do not know” responses suggests there may be a need for a better strategy to inform citizens about the counting and election results process (Figures 18, 19, 20).

Figure 18: "The results of the elections reflected the will of the people"

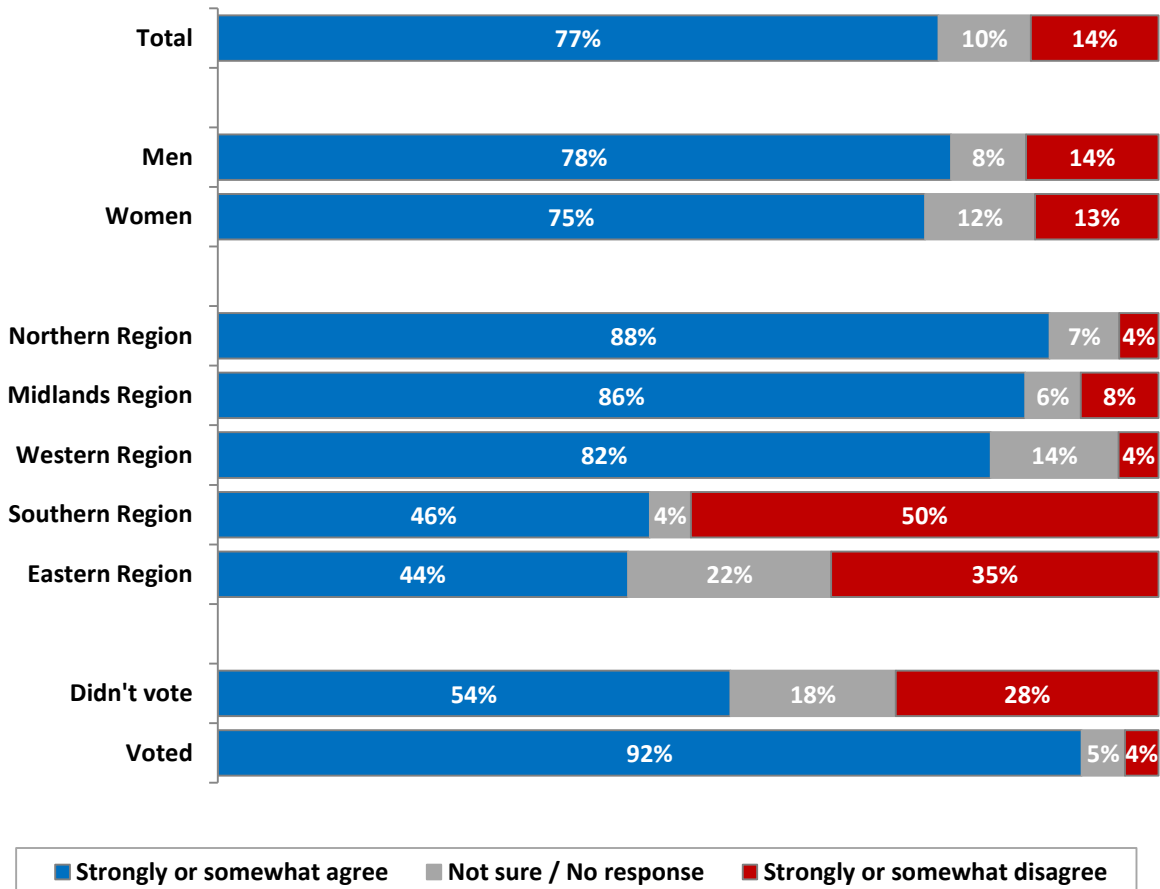


Figure 19: "Every eligible voter had an equal opportunity to participate in the election"

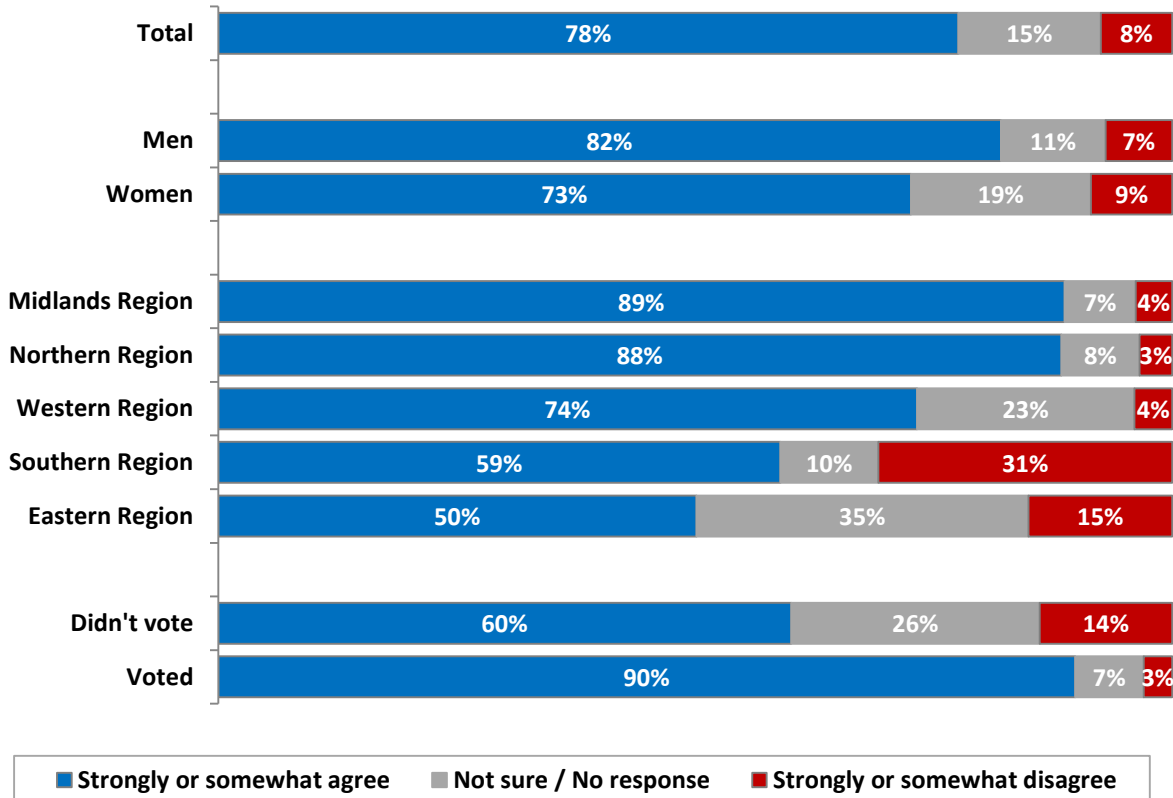
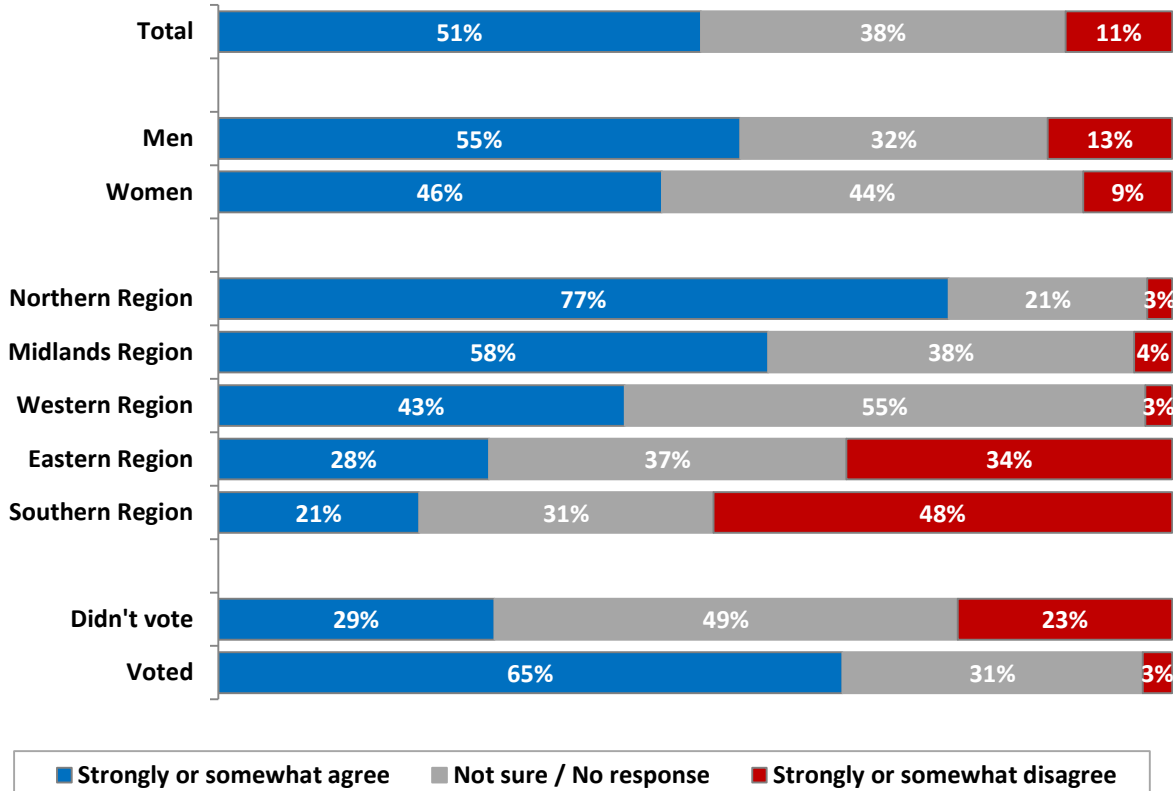


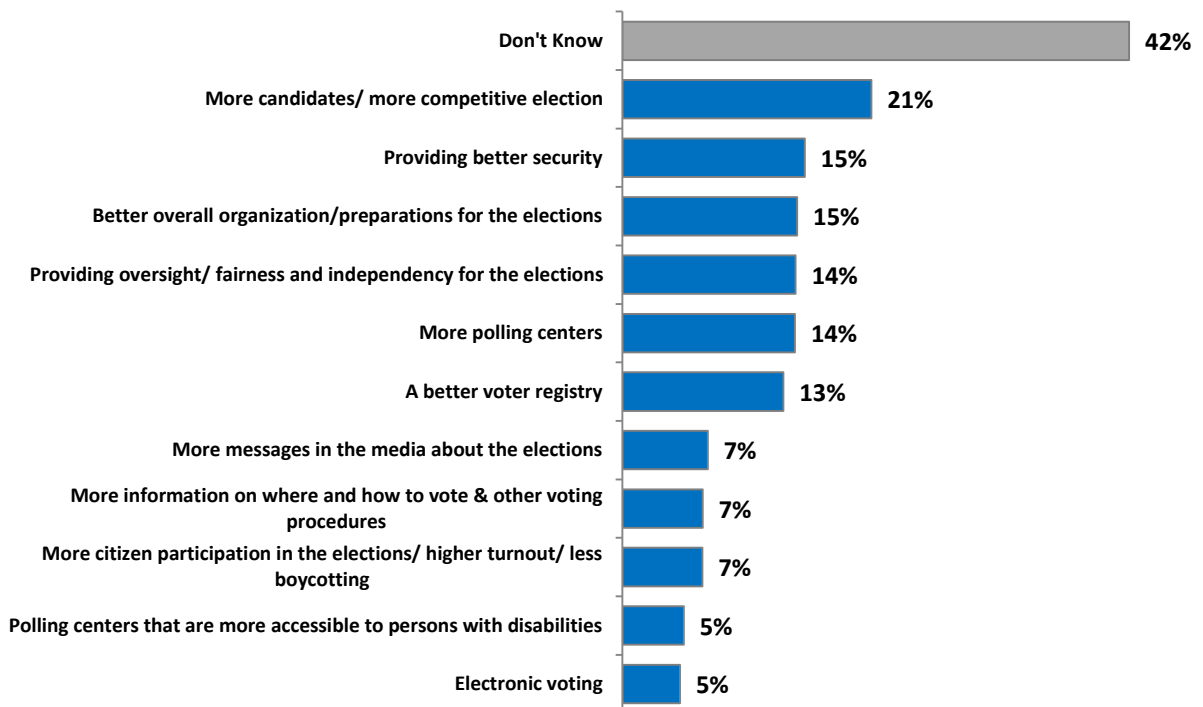
Figure 20: "Vote counting and announcing results were done accurately"



Respondents were asked what change they would make to the voting procedure, if they had that option. While 42% were unable to think of anything, the most common suggestion (21%) was that there should be more than one candidate on the ballot (Figure 21). This is technically not a procedural issue, so its presence as the number one suggestion reflects a level of frustration with the lack of candidate choices in this election. Sixty-eight percent of those who listed more candidates as their suggestion voted anyway and 87% plan to vote in the next parliamentary elections.

With regard to procedural issues, the most common responses were that there needed to be better security (15%) and better overall organization and preparation (15%). This was followed by the need to provide oversight for the independence of the elections (14%) and create more polling centers (14%). Thirteen percent noted there should be a better voter registry. Those who had a family member with disabilities who voted in the election were statistically no more likely to suggest improving access for voters with disabilities than those who did not.

Figure 21: "Looking back at your experience in the recent presidential election, if you had the chance to change or improve any voting procedure, what would it be?"



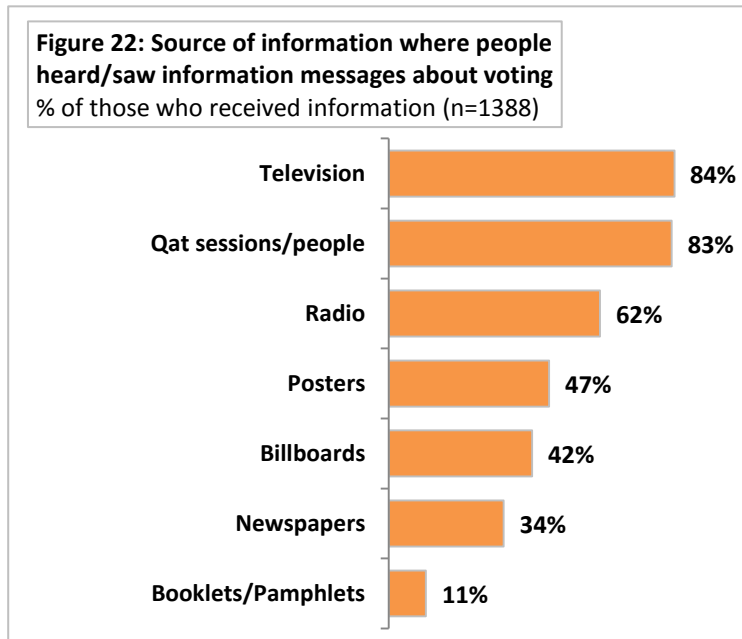
VII. Information Sources and Media Use

Using television to disseminate key voter information and education messages can reach a wide range of eligible voters, including women. Talk show and news programs, both on the television and the radio, are the preferred method of receiving information for Yemenis. However, informal channels of communication such as *qat* sessions⁴ rank nearly as high as a means for citizens to collect information. In contrast, very few view the Internet as a useful source of information on election-related issues. This holds true even for younger Yemenis, and demonstrates that the Internet may not be an effective method of reaching voters.

Television is the dominant source of information for Yemenis

A majority of Yemenis (69%) saw or heard information messages or activities aimed at informing citizens about voting ahead of the early presidential elections. Of these, 28% found the information “abundant and helpful;” 49% felt it was satisfactory but still would have liked more information; and 20% believed they needed more information. Men were more likely to receive information about the election (75%) than women (64%) and younger citizens more likely than older. While 73% of those between 19 and 24 had received information, only 56% of those over 65 did.

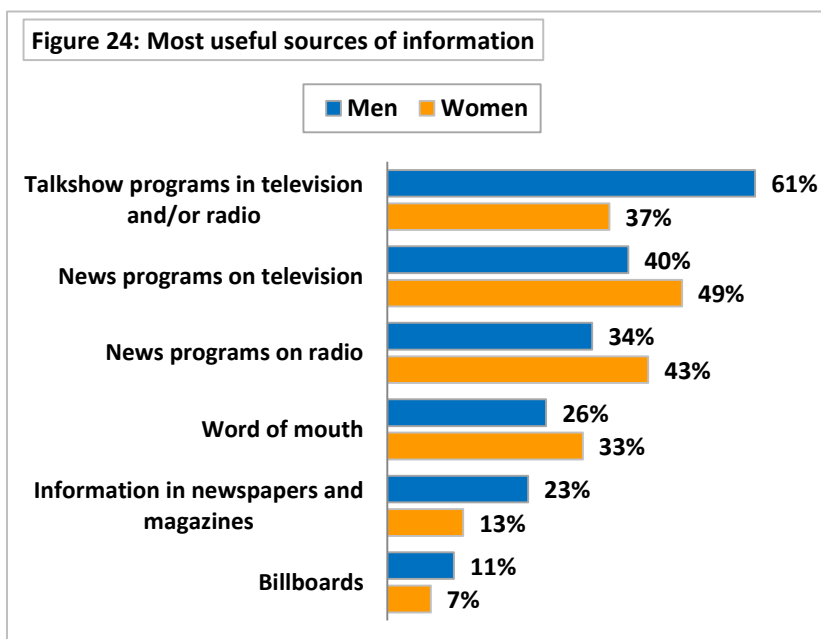
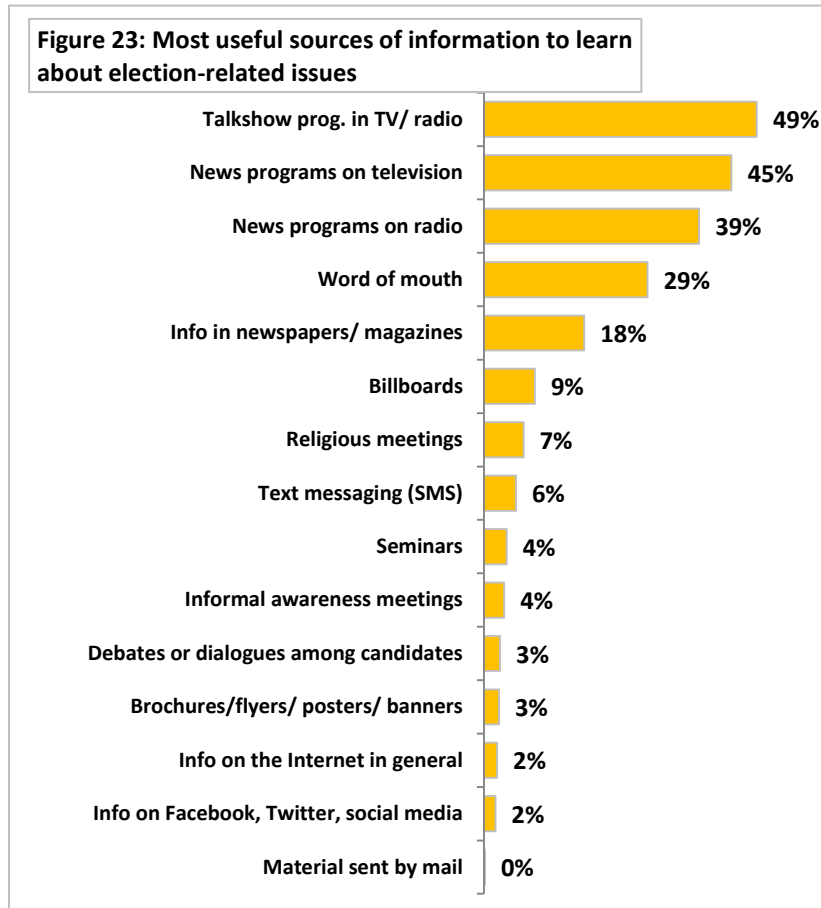
Seventy-six percent of those who voted in the early presidential election received information beforehand compared to 60% of those who did not vote. While citizens in the midlands and southern regions were very likely to receive information (79% and 75% respectively) those in the east and the west were far less likely (61% and 60% respectively). Figure 22 shows the most common medium for receiving information was television, with 84% noting they heard messages through that medium. This is followed by word of mouth at 83%, radio (62%), posters, (47%), billboards (42%), newspapers (34%) and booklets/pamphlets (11%).



Respondents were also asked to select the information sources they believed were the most helpful for them to learn about election-related issues and procedures. Talk show programs – either via television or radio – were the most cited information source at 49%. This is followed by television news programs at 45%, radio news programs (39%), word of mouth (28%), newspapers and magazines (18%) and billboards (9%). Internet and social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter rank low on the list of preferred sources of information on election-related issues, with only 2% of respondents mentioning them among their most useful information sources (Figure 23).

⁴ Leaves from *qat* plants are known for their stimulant properties. In Yemen, there is a strong social custom, particularly among men, of gathering together for *qat*-chewing sessions.

More women (33%) than men (26%) cite word of mouth among the most important information sources for election-related issues and procedures. Women are also more likely to cite news programs on television (49% compared to 40%) and news programs on the radio (43% compared to 34%) than men. In contrast, far more men (61%) than women (37%) cite information in talk show programs on television and/or radio as an important source, while they cite newspapers and magazines as more important by a margin of 23% to 13% (Figure 24).



VIII. Knowledge and Information about the Upcoming Elections

Amongst those Yemenis surveyed, most intend to vote in the upcoming constitutional referendum and legislative elections, although there are large differences in regard to gender and region. Women are significantly less likely than men to indicate their intention to vote, while on a regional level, the south and east of the country show similar discrepancies. These disparities correspond to participation in the 2012 early presidential election. To ensure equal buy-in from every segment of the population, voter education campaigns should focus extra attention on women, as well as those in the south and east of the country.

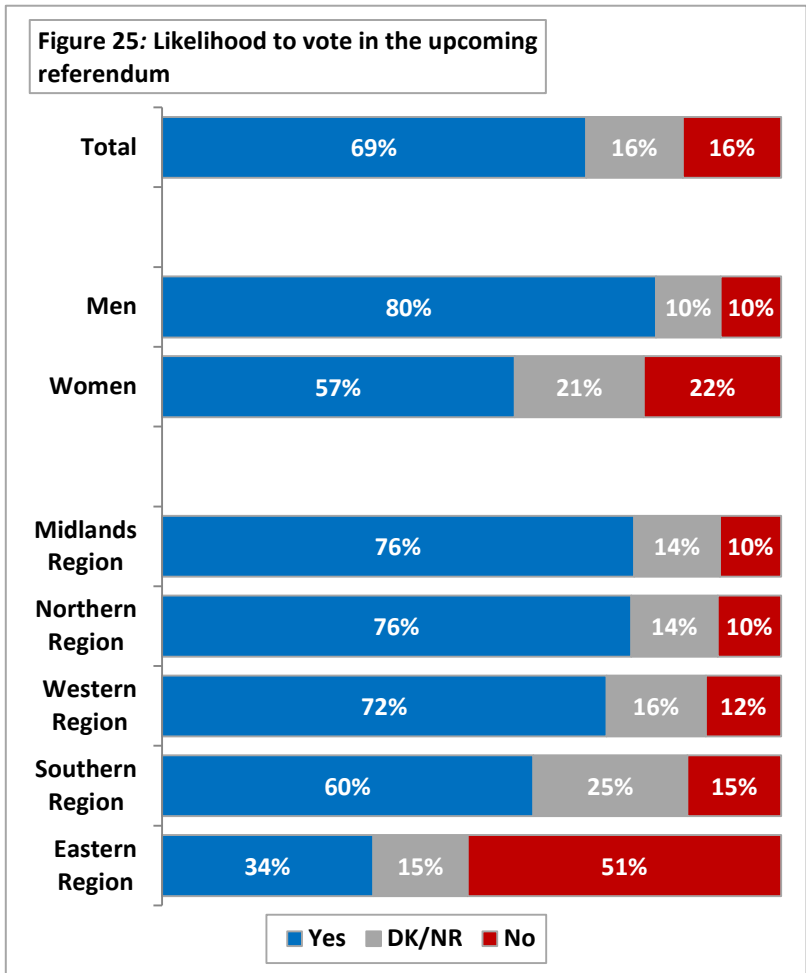
Reasons cited for not intending to vote are primarily related to apathy, not feeling one’s vote is important, or the desire to actively boycott the process. While intention to vote is high for both polls, Yemenis appear more eager to participate in legislative elections than the referendum. Finally, while knowledge of the Supreme Committee for Elections and Referendums (SCER) is low, most voters who have heard of the election management body have some level of confidence in it to hold credible elections.

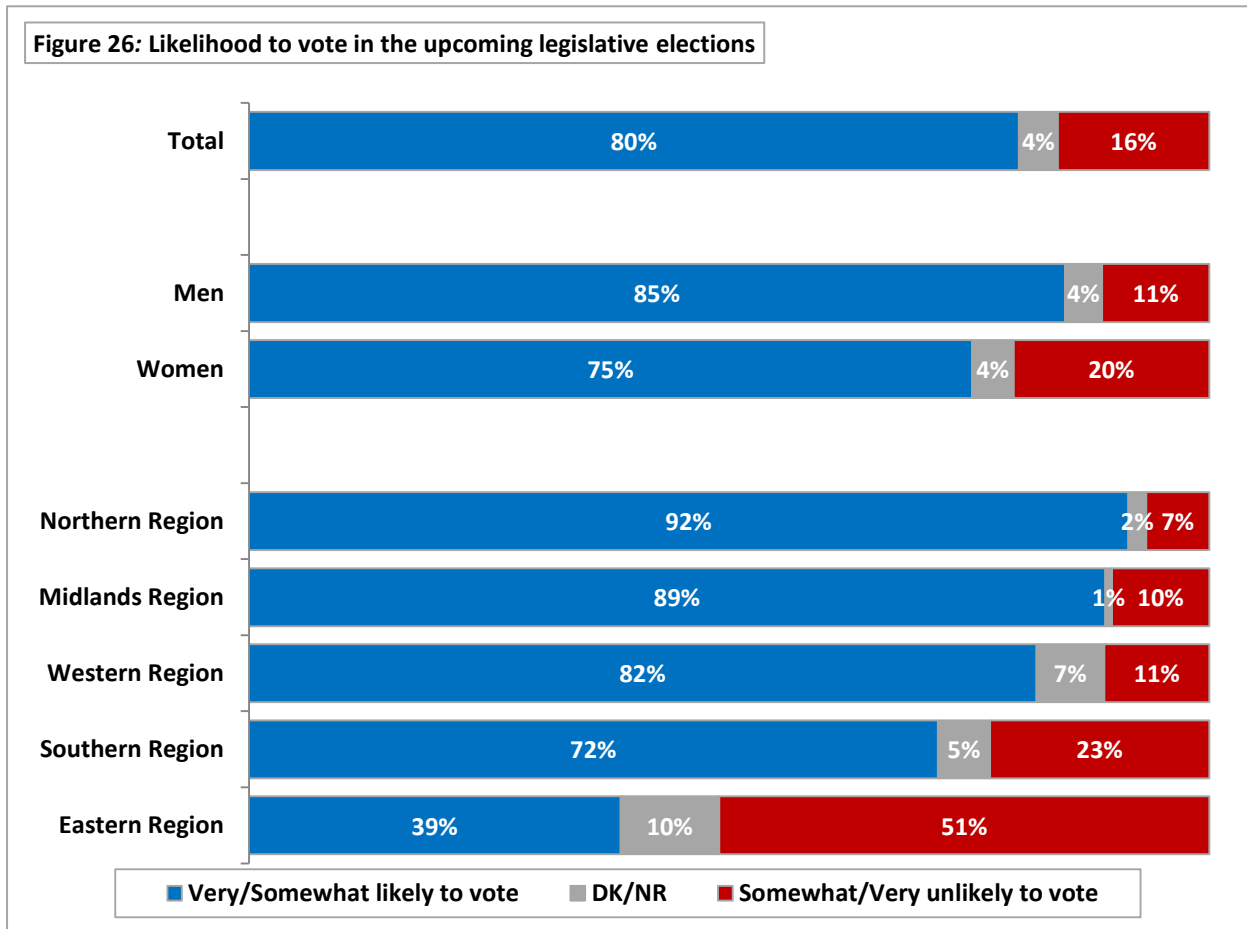
Most Yemenis plan on participating in the upcoming election and referendum

Sixty-nine percent of Yemenis intend to participate in the upcoming constitutional referendum while 16% do not and 14% are unsure. Eighty-five percent of those who participated in the 2012 early presidential election are intending to vote, while only 44% of those who did not vote plan on participating. Men are far more likely to indicate they will vote (80%) than women (57%). Finally, while intention to vote is high in most regions, only 34% of those living in the east say they will (Figure 25).

Eighty percent of Yemenis report either being very (51%) or somewhat (29%) likely to vote in the upcoming legislative elections (Figure 26). Eighty-five percent of men are either very (64%) or somewhat (21%) likely to vote, while 75% of women are either very (39%) or somewhat (37%) likely.

Ninety-six percent of those who voted in the recent presidential election indicate they are likely to vote in the next legislative election while only 58% of those who did not vote in the presidential election say the same. Once again, intention to vote is high in all regions with the exception of the east, where only 39% say they are either very (23%) or somewhat (16%) likely to vote.





Respondents were also asked why they planned on either voting or abstaining from the upcoming legislative elections (Figure 27). Twenty percent of those who indicated they would not vote say it is because they are not interested; 61% of these respondents claimed they are not interested in matters of politics and government. Seventeen percent plan to actively boycott the election and 12% cite non-specific personal reasons for not voting. Twenty-five percent of those who voted in the 2012 early presidential election but do not plan on voting in the next legislative election say it is because their vote will not make a difference. For those who plan on voting, improving the overall economy is the most cited reason at 27%. This was followed by creating honest leaders (i.e. “ending corruption”) at 18%.

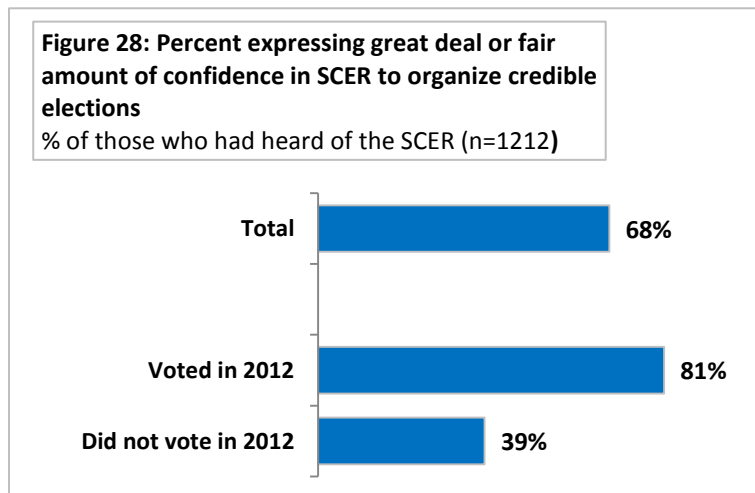
Figure 27: Reasons for Planning on Voting or Not Voting

Most important reason you want to vote (n=1602)	% of Cases	Why are you unlikely to vote? (n=316)	% of Cases
Improve the economy / prosperity / jobs / prices	27%	Not interested	20%
End corruption / honest leaders	18%	Boycott elections	17%
To choose leaders / to participate / it's my right / chance to choose	18%	Personal reasons: too old, sick, against my religious beliefs, etc.	12%
Civic duty / duty as citizen / we have to / obligation	12%	Family and relatives prohibited	9%
End violence / stability	9%	My vote will not make a difference / election won't make any change	9%
Better education / housing / health care	5%	Don't understand politics	9%

Knowledge of the Supreme Committee for Elections and Referendum is low but it enjoys some confidence

When first asked to name the institution in charge of running the early presidential election, a large majority of Yemenis (68%) were unable to name the SCER. In future elections, greater efforts should be made to make voters aware of the SCER and its responsibilities. When later prompted with the name of the SCER, 60% of Yemenis report to have heard either a lot (22%) or a little (38%) about the organization. Of those who claimed they heard a lot or little of the SCER, 68% have a great deal (26%) or a fair amount (43%) of confidence in the institution to organize credible elections.

Confidence is much higher among those who voted in the 2012 election; 81% either have a great deal or fair amount of confidence than in those who did not (39%). This should not be considered proof that confidence in the SCER increases automatically with knowledge of it, as it is possible citizens who are more likely to vote are also more likely to have confidence in all national institutions. The SCER enjoys high confidence in the midlands (72% either having a great deal or fair amount of confidence), the north (85%) and the west (78%). However, the SCER suffers from low approval in the south and the east, where only 39% in each region have any confidence in the body to hold credible elections (Figure 28).



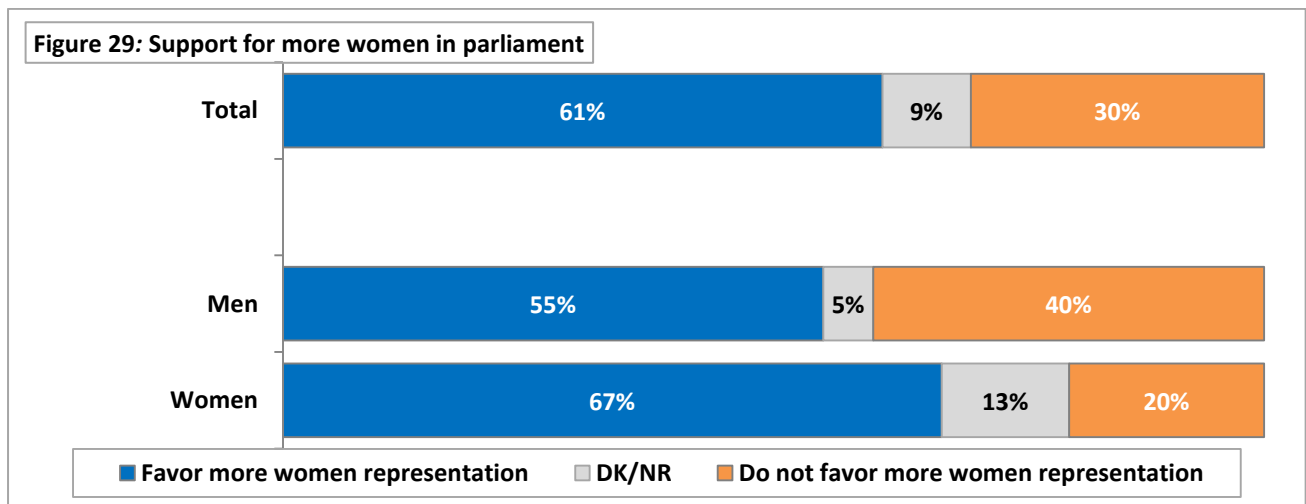
IX. Women and Youth Participation

While historically and politically marginalized, women and younger Yemenis took an active role in the revolt that eventually forced President Saleh to step down from power. However, women still face hurdles to equal representation and participation. In addition to a higher abstention rate from the early presidential election, women were far less likely than men to have taken part in civic activities in the past year. Furthermore, while female awareness of, and support for, a gender quota in parliament increased from a 2010 IFES survey, there was no significant difference among men. Moreover, only a slim majority of men believed the one female representative in a parliament of 301 was too little. Support for increased youth representation in government was slightly higher, with modest majorities supporting a more active role for those under the age of 29 years.

Support for more women’s representation is increasing among women but remains low among men

Yemeni women suffer from one of the highest rates of political underrepresentation in the world. In the last legislative elections, held in 2003, a record low of 16 female candidates ran for 301 seats and only one woman actually won her race. When prompted with the fact that only one woman entered parliament after the last election, 61% of respondents agreed that there should be more representation for women while 30% did not (Figure 29). Nine percent were unsure. Sixty-seven percent of women favor more representation compared to 55% of men. Although 75% of single women favored more representation, only 65% of married women did. Marriage was not significantly associated with a different level of support among men, however.

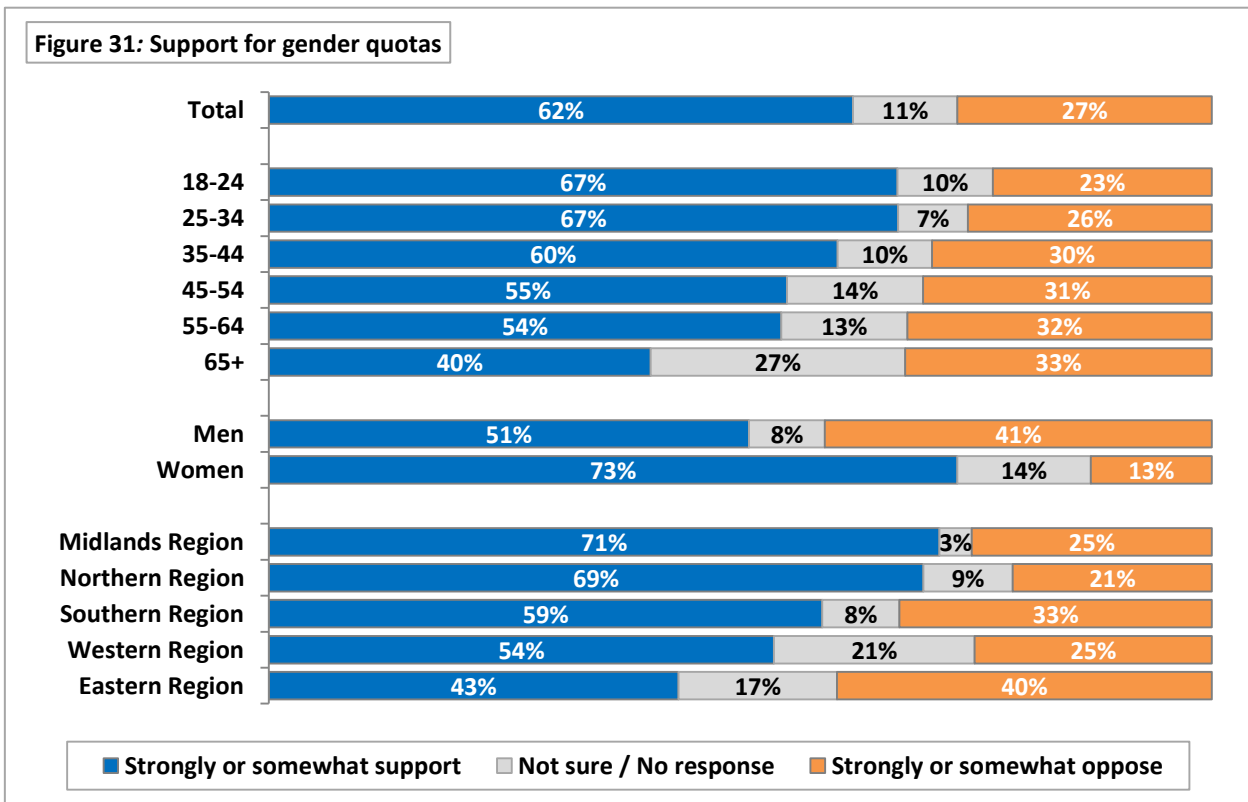
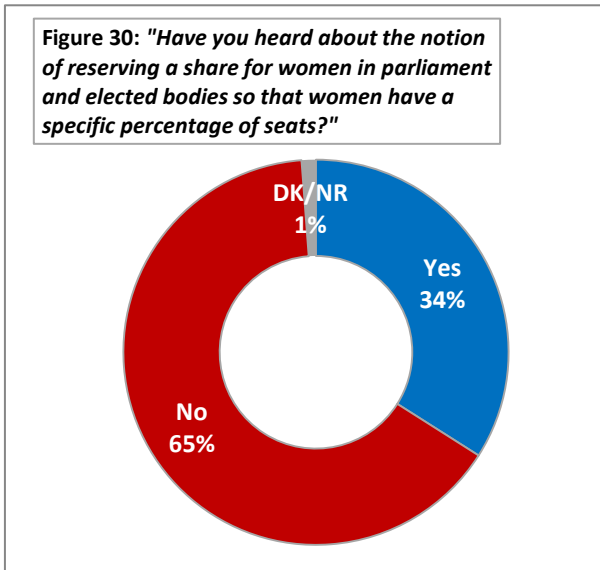
The south favors more female representation by a slightly higher margin than the rest of the country (63% compared to 61%) – although this is in part due to the average being brought down by regions in the east and west, where support for more women is very low.



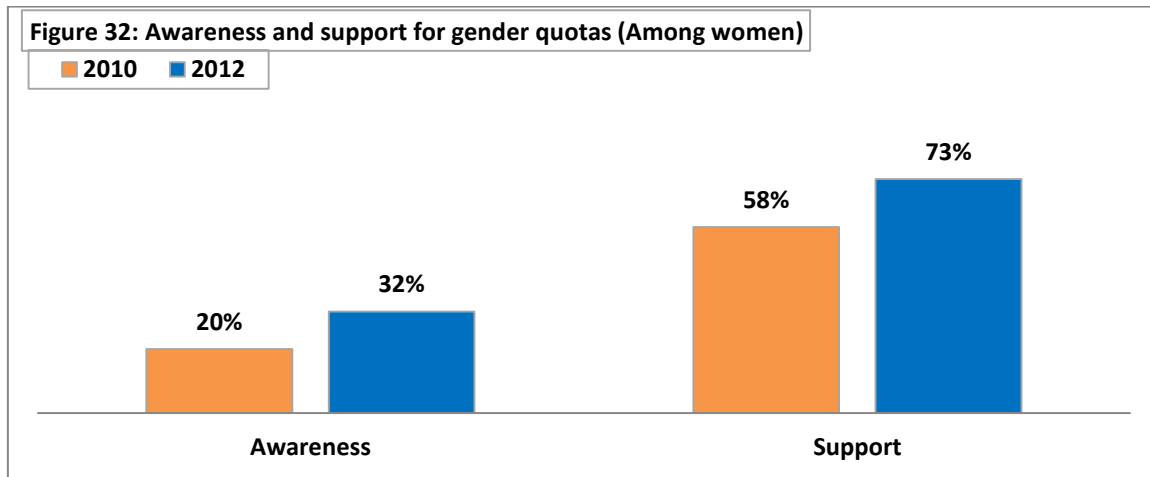
When asked if the situation for women in Yemen would improve, 69% say it would improve, 17% say it would stay the same, 6% say it would become worse and 9% do not know. Seventy-five percent of women think the situation will improve, while only 63% of men do. Seventy-seven percent of those in the midlands think the situation will improve, and 76% in the north feel the same. Sixty-three percent in the west feel this way, while only 56% in the east and 53% in the south feel the same.

Establishing a gender quota for women has long been a goal of many Yemeni female activists. In particular, women’s groups in 2011 made a concerted effort to pass a constitutional amendment reserving 44 seats (15% of parliament) for women. These attempts, however, have never been successful. With a new constitution set to be written before the next parliamentary elections, this presents a rare opportunity for such a reform to be implemented. This survey asked respondents two questions about gender quotas: their knowledge of them and whether they supported one for Yemen. These questions were identical to ones IFES asked in its 2010 Status of Women in the Middle East North Africa (SWMENA) project, providing information on any changes in perceptions that may have taken place over the past two years.

Only 34% of respondents had heard about the notion of a gender quota, in which a certain percentage of seats in parliament are reserved for women (Figure 30). When informed of what a gender quota is (without details on any specific method of electing women) 62% of Yemenis either strongly or somewhat support the idea of one in the House of Representatives. Predictably, women were far likelier to support a gender quota, with 73% voicing support, compared to only 51% for men (Figure 31). Younger demographics were also more likely to support a gender quota, with only the 65+ age groups not being supportive. Knowledge of a gender quota is associated with a much higher probability that an individual will support it: eighty-five percent of those who have heard of a gender quota support the idea of one in Yemen while only 51% of those who had not heard of it do.

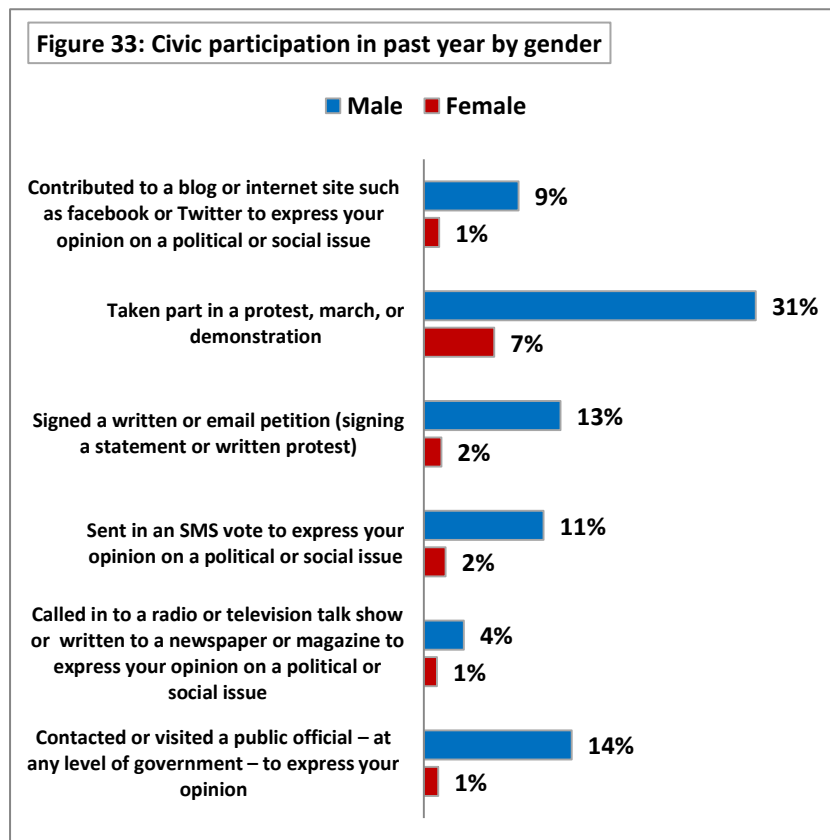


Awareness and support for gender quotas among women has increased since IFES surveyed the population for its 2010 SWMENA project.⁵ In that poll, only 20% of women had heard of the concept of a gender quota and 58% supported such an idea for Yemen. In 2012, 32% of women have heard of the concept and 73% support one (Figure 32).



Women are less likely to be politically engaged or be civically active

Men are more politically active than women and more likely to have engaged in some sort of civic activity in the past year. Sixty-nine percent of respondents are either very (31%) or somewhat (39%) interested in matters of politics in Yemen. Interest was higher among men (73% being somewhat or very interested) than among women (65%). This is an increase for both genders from the 2010 IFES survey in which 57% of men and only 32% of women were either somewhat or very interested. The gender gap in this response is also smaller, implying the events of the past year had a substantial impact on Yemeni women. Regionally, interest is highest in the north, with 80% expressing interest, while the lowest is in the east of the country,



⁵ The Status of Women in the Middle East and North Africa (SWMENA) project is a gender-focused research project that IFES implemented in Yemen, Lebanon and Morocco. Fieldwork for the Yemen SWMENA survey was conducted in in May 2010. The survey had a robust sample that is nationally representative of 2,000 women and 500 men.

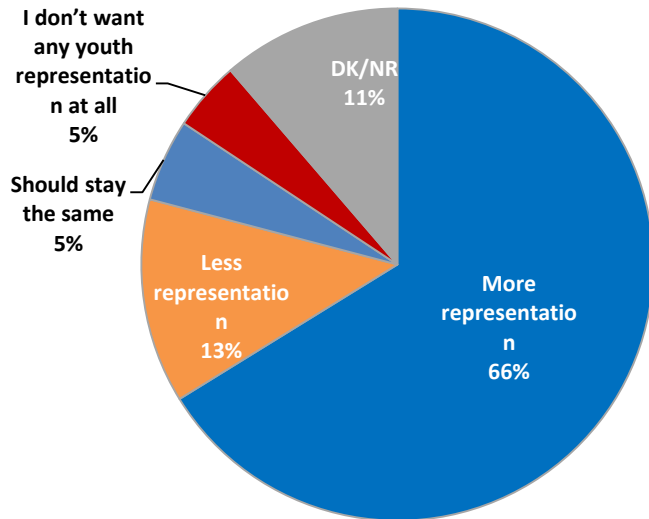
where only 56% express interest.

While 31% of men stated that they took part in a protest or demonstration in the past 12 months, only 7% of women claimed the same. Similarly, 14% of men claimed to have contacted a government official in the past 12 months, compared to only 1% of women. Figure 33 shows a gender gap in participation in every question asked of respondents. Thirteen percent of men signed a written or email petition, compared to 2% of women, 11% of men sent an SMS to express their opinion (2% of women), 9% of men contributed to a blog or internet site such as Facebook or Twitter to express their opinion (1% of women) and 4% of men called into a radio or TV show to express their opinion (1% of women) (Figure 33).

Public generally in favor of increased youth representation and inclusion

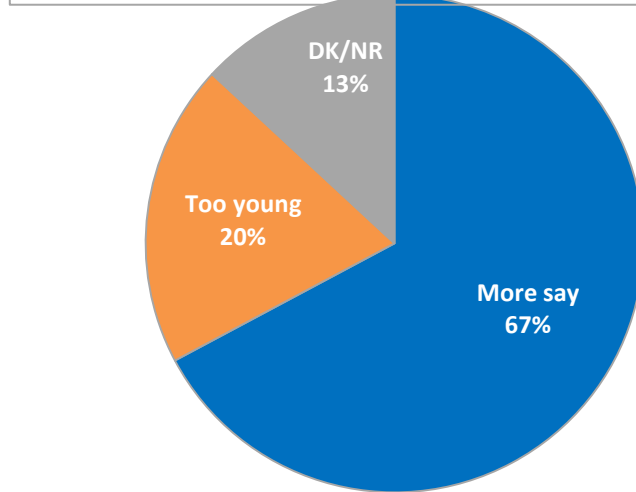
Respondents were asked two questions on their opinions of representation of youth, which was defined as those between 18 and 29.⁶ Sixty-six percent of respondents said there should be more representation of the youth in the Yemeni House of Representatives and 13% said there should be less. Five percent said it should stay the same and 4% said there should be no representation at all. Eleven percent said they did not know (Figure 34).

Figure 34: "Do you think there should be more or less representation of the youth in the Yemeni House of Representatives? And by youth I mean Yemenis aged between 18 and 29."

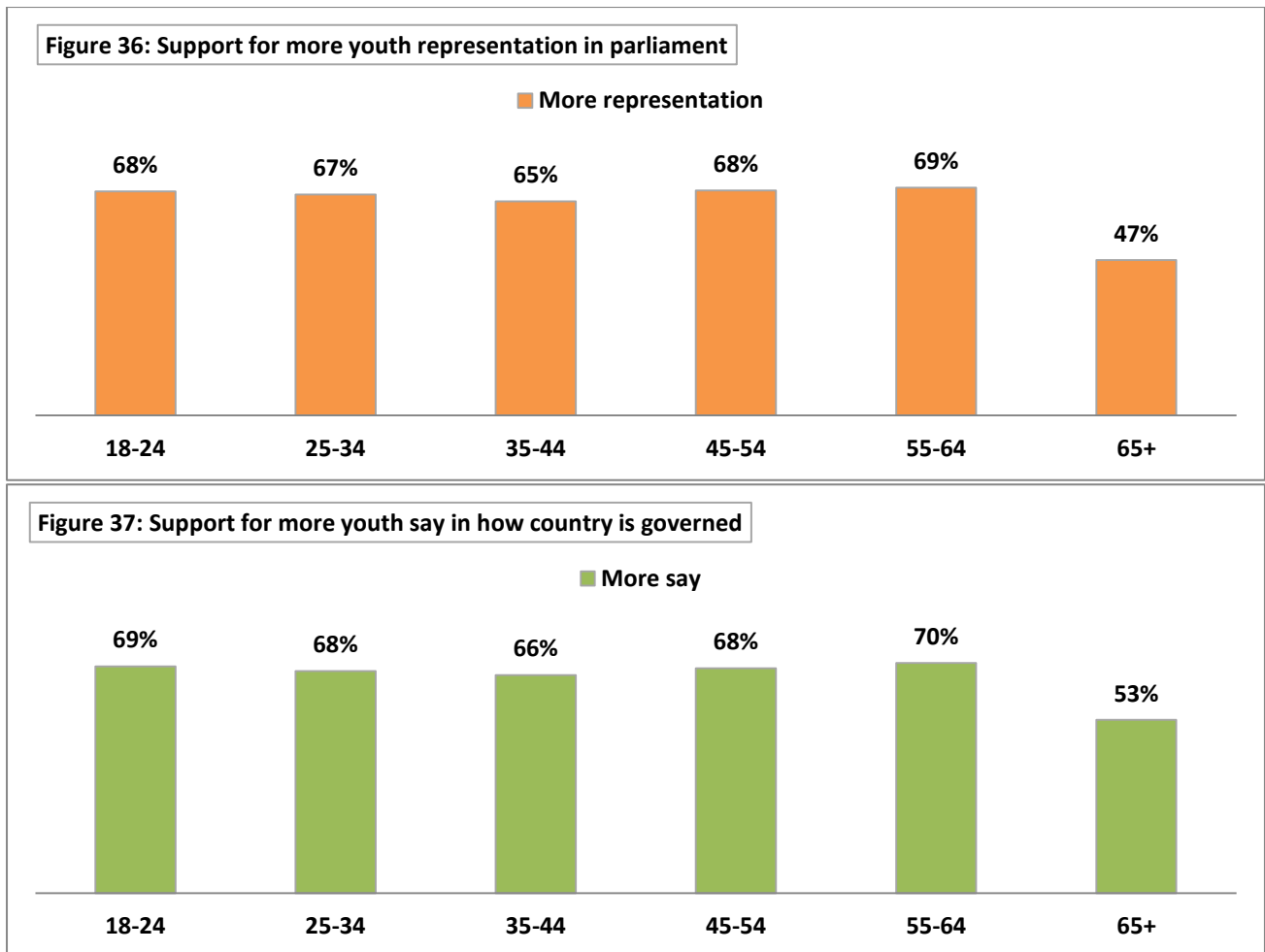


In a separate question, 67% said youth should have more say in how the country is governed while 20% said they are too young. Thirteen percent did not know (Figure 35). Age has little impact on either of these variables, as all age groups, except those over 65, have nearly identical levels of support (Figures 36 and 37).

Figure 35: "And in your view, do you think the youth in Yemen should have more of a say in how the country is governed or are they too young to make such decisions?"



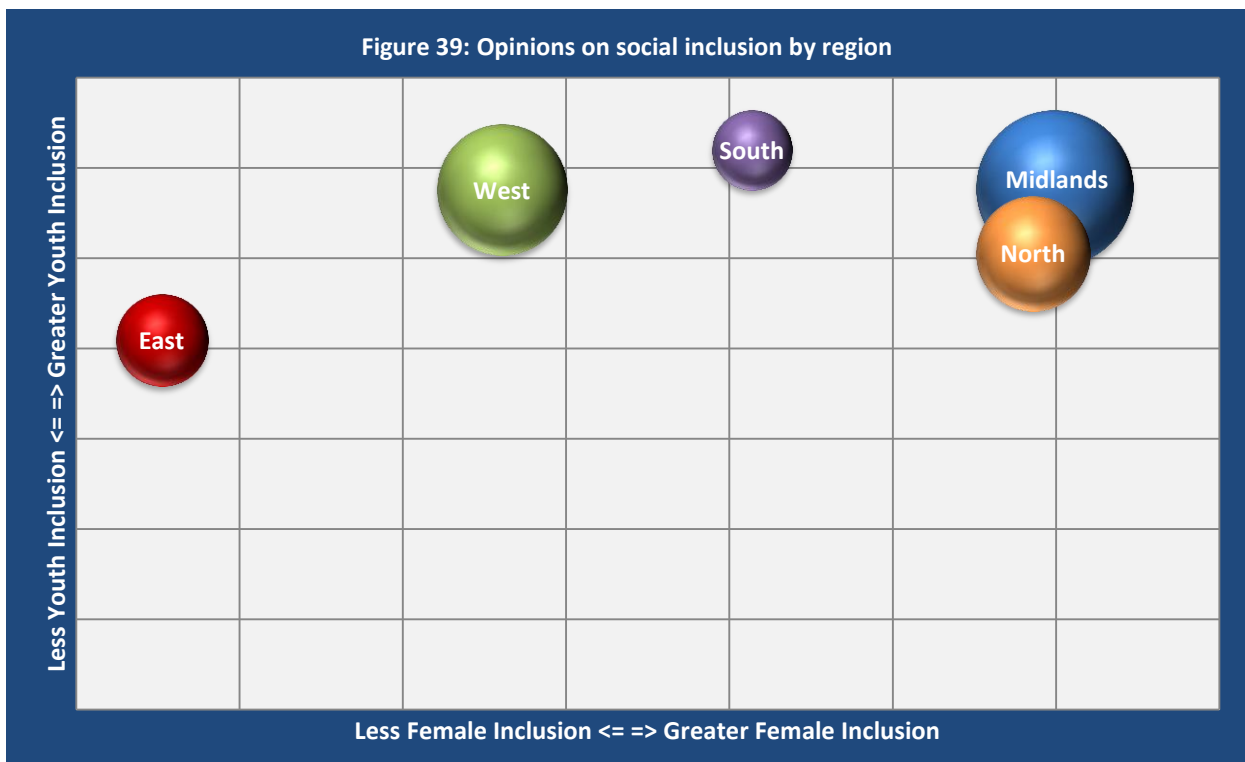
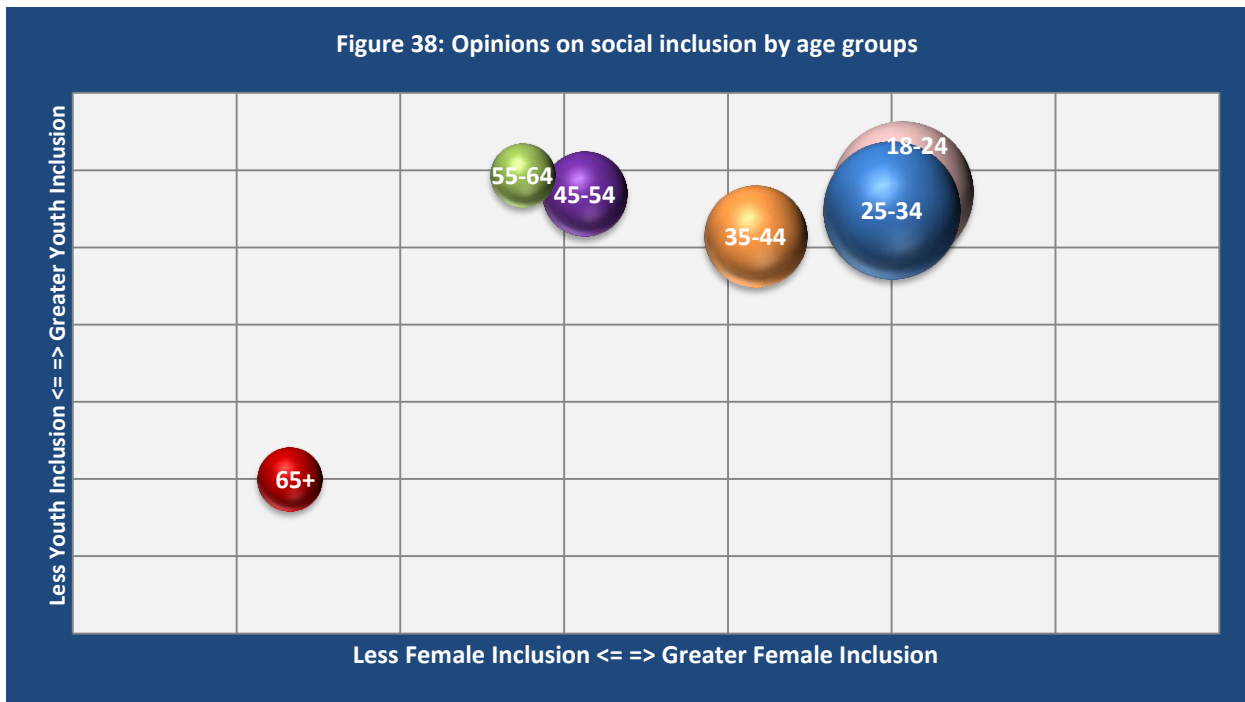
⁶ The minimum age required for running for office in Yemen is 25 years old.



Acceptance of social inclusion differs by age and region

In total, this survey asked respondents two questions on youth representation and two questions on female representation. By grouping these two sets, we can get a better idea of how certain subgroups in Yemen feel toward inclusion of typically politically-marginalized groups. Figure 36 shows that by age, Yemenis 18-24 are the most supportive of a more inclusive government, favoring more representation for women and youth. They are also the largest age group by sheer numbers (although not in terms of political participation). This is followed closely in size and support by those aged 25-34. This trend continues in a modest, almost linear, fashion to the age of 64. Those over 65, however, are far less likely to support either more female, or youth representation in government. It should be noted, however, that those aged 65 and over are also far more likely to vote than other age groups (Figure 38).

Divided by region, there is a large gap in perceptions toward increased women's representation in government. Most regions are modestly supportive of more youth representation, but only the midlands and northern regions are strongly supportive of more female representation (Figure 39).



X. Appendix A – Regional Groups

Midlands region: This region is representative of the most populous cities in Yemen that were part of North Yemen prior to unification in 1990.

- **Sana'a (city):** The city of Sana'a is the capital of Yemen. Although it is located in the Sana'a Governorate, the city itself forms a separate administrative district called Amanat al 'Asimah. Due to its political significance, Sana'a attracts many Yemenis seeking work, with the public sector serving as the largest source of employment. However, unemployment is still a concern and Sana'a has a large informal market.
- **Ibb:** Ibb is the most densely populated governorate in the country after Sana'a city. Ibb is known as "the fertile province" as it is the governorate with the most rainfall in the country. Almost the whole governorate outside of urban centers is cultivated and a large number of crops are produced here, including wheat, barley, sesame and sorghum. Politically, many of the most significant anti-government protests since 1999 have originated in Ibb.
- **Taiz:** Taiz, the capital of this governorate, is the third largest city in Yemen, and was the nation's capital between 1948 and 1962. It is the most important commercial center in Yemen due to its proximity to the richest farmland in the nation, as well as the port of Mokha on the Red Sea.

Southern region: The southern region, as defined in this report, includes those governorates with a population large enough to influence election results. With the exception of Ad-Dali, the governorates in this group were part of the former Yemen People's Republic (South Yemen), and are still characterized by the presence of a strong southern separatist movement.

- **Aden:** The port city of Aden, located in Aden governorate, was the capital of South Yemen until unification, and is the current commercial capital of the modern Republic of Yemen. The secessionist group, the Southern Yemen Movement, originated in Aden in 2007 as a result of dissatisfaction with unification with North Yemen.
- **Ad-Dali:** Ad-Dali is marked by a low population and significant civil unrest and ongoing economic crises. There is little to no government penetration in this governorate and the Southern Movement, which seeks independence from the north, is very active.
- **Lahij:** Separatists have been very active in Lahij, with armed clashes occurring since unification. Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) militants have also taken over several areas, although the Yemeni Defense Ministry confirmed the surrender of militants in July 2012. There is also an ongoing humanitarian crisis as water and food become inaccessible.

Northern region: This regional group represents some of the most populated areas in the north of the country. With the exception of Sana'a Governorate, all other governorates in this regional group are considered to be tribal areas. The state has little to no influence in these governorates, as the sheikh is generally considered to be the leader.

- **Sana'a:** The governorate of Sana'a is known for its mountainous landscape, and fertile valleys. It is a largely agricultural-based economy, with a number of popular archaeological and historic sites.
- **Amran:** Ongoing conflicts between rival tribal coalitions, the Bakil and the Hashid, have resulted in violent clashes between tribes over land. The clashes have resulted in a decrease in the government's

authority in Bakil parts of the governorate. As a result the influence of Shi'a rebel leader Abdul-Malik al-Houthi has increased.

- **Dhamar:** Dhamar is a major agricultural region, producing almost all of the crops grown in the Yemeni highlands. This governorate is an important seat for the Zaydi religious sect.
- **Al-Jawf:** Since 2011, the majority of this governorate has been under control of the Shi'a Islamist group, Houthis. AQAP has launched several suicide attacks in Al-Jawf against the Houthis.

Eastern region: The eastern region includes governorates with a strong tribal presence, however unlike in the northern region, the state does have influence here. Marib and Al-Bayda are part of the former Yemen Arab Republic. The other two governorates were part of the Yemen's People Republic. All of these governorates are lightly populated.

- **Marib:** Marib is known as an oil producing region, and source of the Marib-Ras Eisa pipeline, which has been crippled by frequent attacks by local tribesmen and militant groups.
- **Al-Bayda:** Considered an AQAP stronghold, Al-Bayda has also been impacted by Yemen's ongoing food crisis, with over 60% of the population considered food insecure.
- **Hadramawt:** The governorate of Hadramawt is made up of the formerly independent Qu'aiti state and sultanate, which were eventually absorbed into the former South Yemen. The area is agricultural, with the population living primarily in densely built towns centered on traditional watering stations along the wadis. Society is still highly tribal, and characterized by strict Islamic observance.

Western region: All governorates in this regional group are formerly part of the Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen). The state has a strong presence in these governorates; however, there are areas in Hajjah that are still tribal.

- **Al-Hudaydah:** Al-Hudaydah is Yemen's second most populous governorate, and its eponymous capital city serves as an important Red Sea port.
- **Hajjah:** Located in northwestern Yemen along the Red Sea. Due to long-term conflict between the Al-Houthi movement and government armed forces, Hajjah hosts one of Yemen's largest concentrations of IDPs.
- **Al-Mahwit:** Al-Mahwit is one of Yemen's most fertile regions, with a large number of the governorate's population engaged in agriculture, raising livestock or self-employed in free trades.
- **Raymah:** Raymah governorate, with a population of approximately 500,000, broke off from Sana'a governorate in 2004. While Raymah has one of the most diverse climates and topographies in Yemen, a lack of infrastructure has limited the governorate's economic and social development.