

Preliminary Poll of the Iraqi Parliamentary Election (2025)

An analysis of citizens' opinions in the
(Kurdistan Region, Kirkuk, Nineveh and
on Article 140)

Sbey Research Center

September 2025



Abstract

This report provides an in depth analysis for the results of the latest poll conducted by Sbey Research Center, which was conducted in September 2025 on the upcoming Iraqi parliamentary elections.

The survey focuses on citizens' views in the Kurdistan Region, Kirkuk, Nineveh and on Article 140, regarding three main issues: the impact of economic crisis and salaries on voting behavior, the level of trust in political process and parties, and the reasons behind voters' decisions.



The main findings indicate that, despite widespread dissatisfaction with the economic situation, the ruling parties still maintain a broad and strong popular base. Also, the report provides an in depth analysis of these phenomena along with the thought processes of Kurdish voters through graphical data interpretation.

Introduction:

Sbey Research Center, dedicated to fostering evidence based policymaking and scientific research, conducting surveys and field research on public issues as its core mandate. Within this framework, this survey titled as “Citizens Perspective on the Iraqi Parliament Election” was conducted across **the Kurdistan Region, Kirkuk, Nineveh and regarding Article 140.**

Main Objectives of the Project:

- To examine the impact of economic conditions (financial crises and salaries) on the level of citizen participation and voting behavior.
- To assess the level of citizen’s trust in the electoral process and political parties, both ruling and opposition.
- To investigate the social and political factors influencing voter’s decisions, especially regarding the role of clans and tribal affiliation.

Through the analysis of collected data, This report aims to provide a clear depiction of the evaluations and expectations of Kurdish voters regarding future elections.

Survey Methodology

Research design and data collection:

The survey was conducted using a **quantitative approach**, relying on statistical and numerical methods to identify relationships between variables and to quantify public opinion. For data collection, **Kobo Toolbox** and the **Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI)** system was utilized. This approach ensured the confidentiality of respondents’ information.

Duration and Sample of the Survey:

The data collection process was carried out from **September 1, 2025, to October 2, 2025**, and was conducted by a team of five researchers.

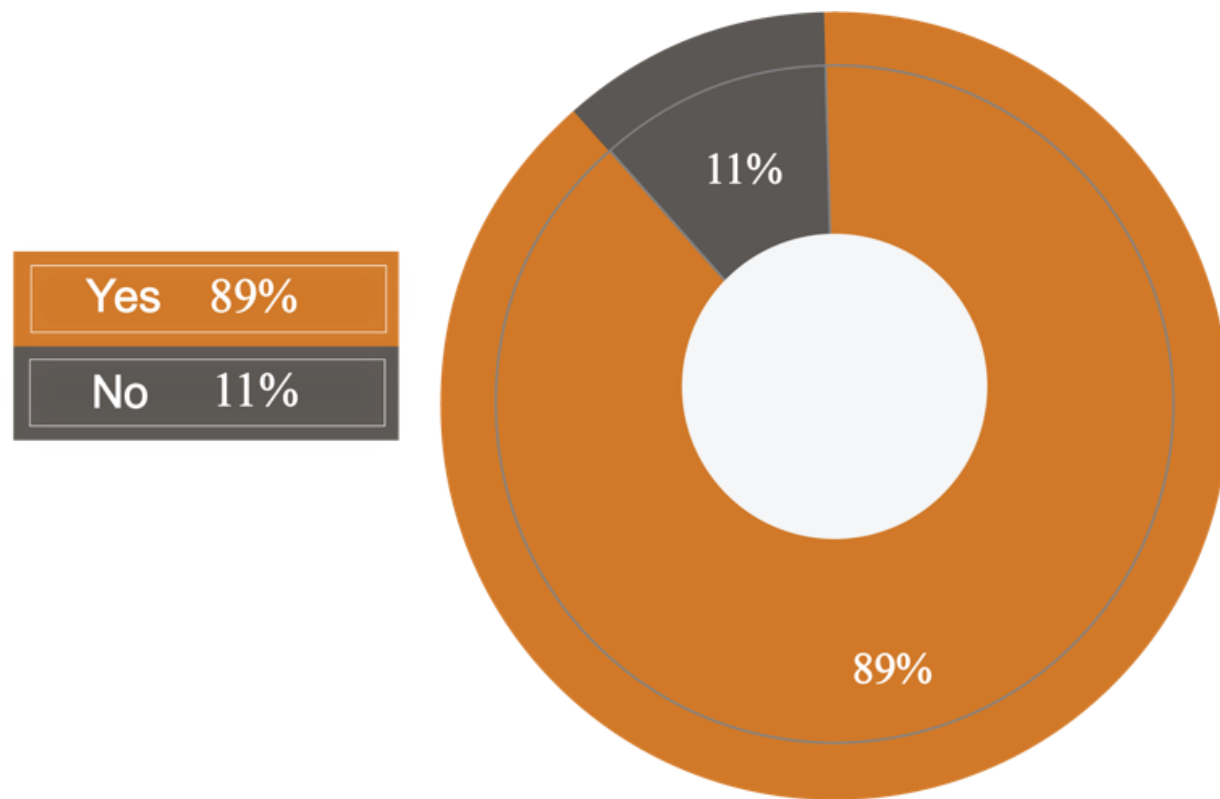
All survey participants were Kurdish and were selected from different geographical areas of the Kurdistan Region, with 229 individuals representing the disputed territories.

Summary Table of Correlations

Total Number of Correlations	Successful Contact (Completed Survey)	Unwilling to Participate	Card or Other Information Issue	Age Ineligible
2992	1809	575	219	27

Biometric card (voter card)

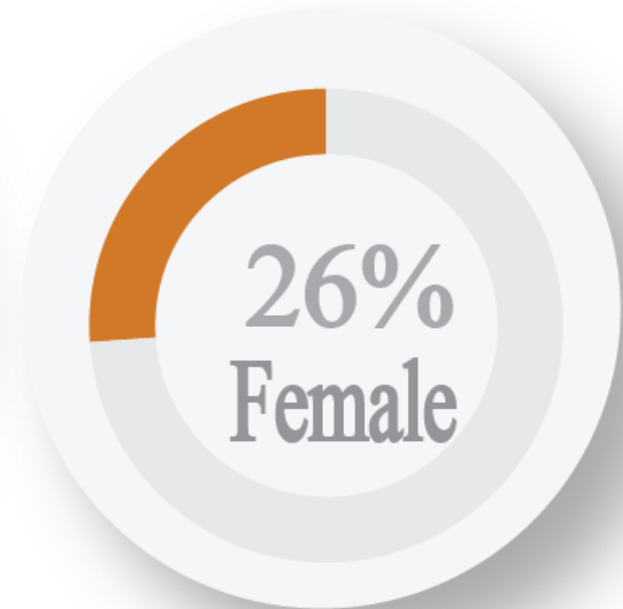
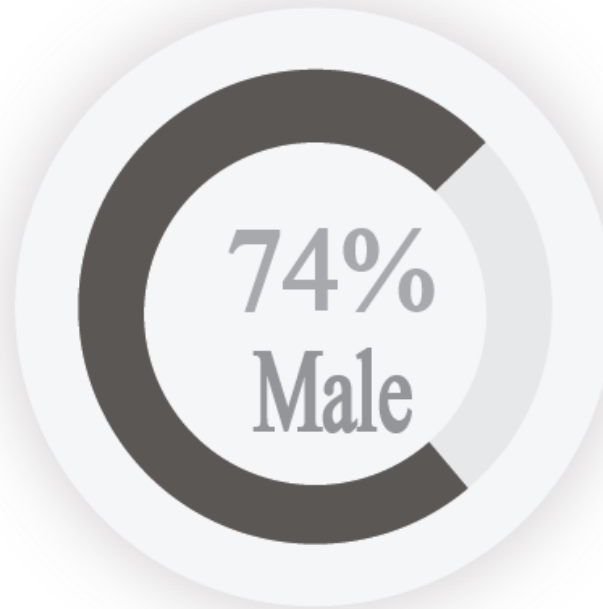
11% of participants (219 individuals) have not yet received or collected their voting cards; the majority of them are from Sulaymaniyah province, followed by Erbil.



Demographic section of the survey

Male: 1343 (74%)

Female: 466 (26%)



Key Findings

- **Economic crisis as a main factor:**
The salary issue and the ongoing economic crisis have a significant impact on voters' attitudes and were identified by the majority of participants as the most important concern.
- **The salary issue** was identified as the most important topic and the most influential factor affecting election outcomes, with 35.7% of participants considering it as the key factor.

74.6% of participants stated that they are very likely to participate in the election, indicating a high expected level of voter turnout.

- **Public Base of the Ruling Parties:**
Despite dissatisfaction with the economic situation, the ruling parties still maintain a broad popular base.
- **Trust in the Electoral Process:**
A high level of distrust toward the electoral process and political parties (particularly the opposition) exists among citizens.
- **Independence in Voting:**
63.3% of participants stated that they do not consult anyone about how to vote.
- **Voting Card Issue:**
A notable proportion (about 11%) of participants do not have a voting card, which is a potential risk to overall voter turnout in the election.

Prediction:

According to this survey, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) leads with 41.6%, ahead of other lists. However, a high level of uncertainty (25.4%) is observed, which could potentially affect the final outcome. Similarly, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) list ranks second with 31%.

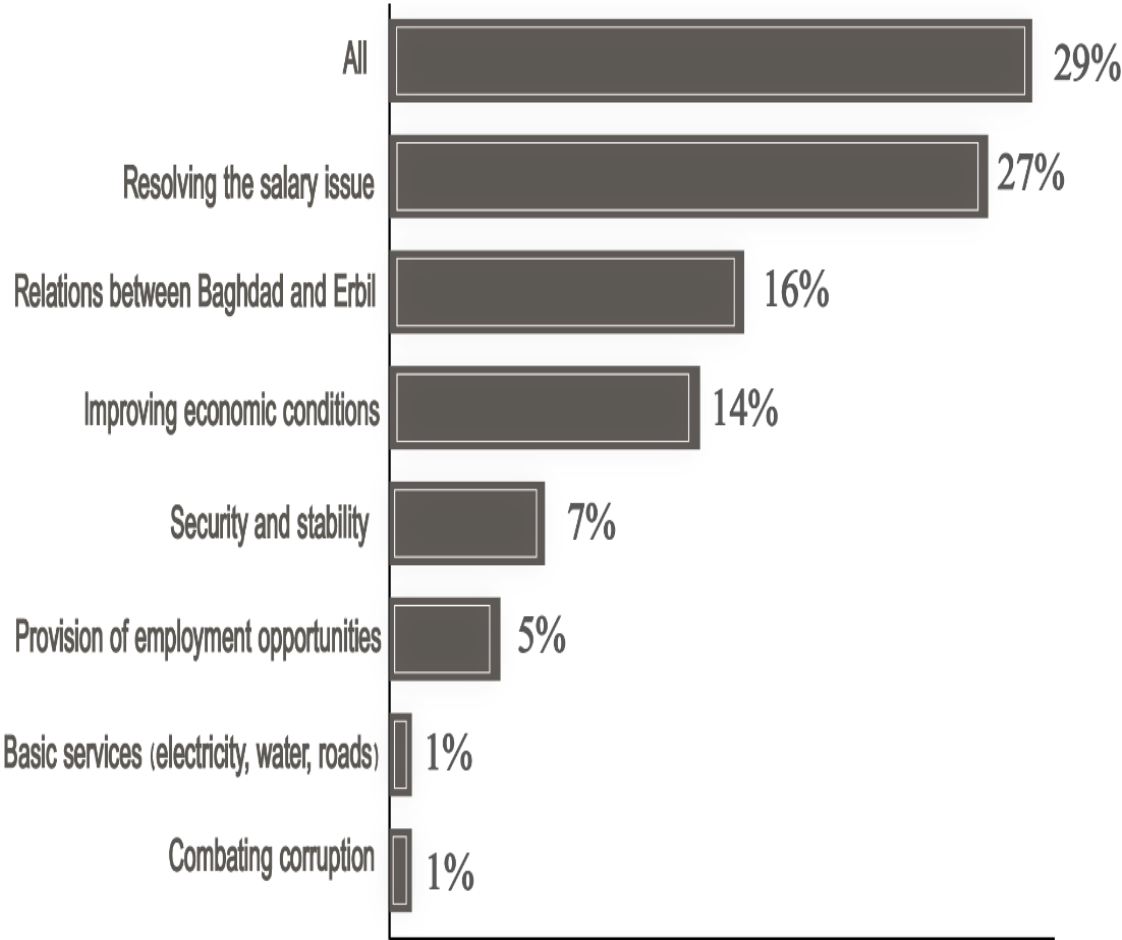


Data Analysis:

Economic Impact on Voting

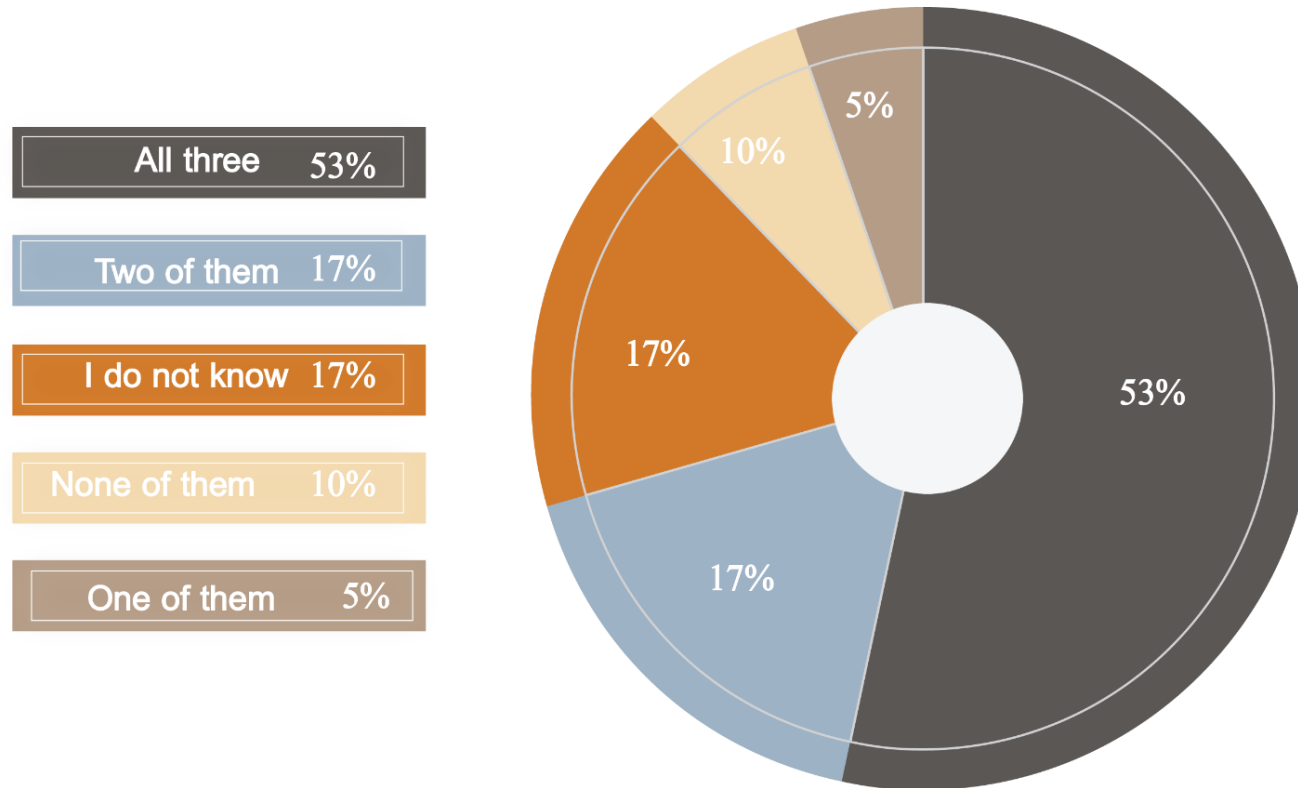
As mentioned in the general data, the economic situation and the issue of salary play a central role. The graph below (referenced in the general report) shows that the majority of citizens consider this issue as a primary factor for evaluating the government and making voting decisions.

This confirm the perspective that **“the economy determines our awareness, not awareness determines our economy”**. Meaning that everyday economic conditions directly influence individual political decisions. Even though the situation is difficult, ruling parties have been able to benefit from these crises since they use salary control and distribution as a form of pressure cards.



Trust in Political Parties and Their Position

One of the key questions in the survey was: **“Out of three people close to you, how many would vote for the ruling parties?”** The responses, as shown in the graph below, provide important insights into the social position of these parties.



An analysis of participants' opinions on close contacts' voting for the ruling parties

Analysis: The combined responses of “all three” and “two” form a high percentage, indicating that the ruling parties are still dominant among the population.

This implies that voting is not just an individual decision, but depends on the social environment and surrounding pressures.

At the same time, the notable proportion of respondents who answered “none” or “don’t know” points to a clear division within society.

Within hidden and grey voters, the chances of other political parties outside of the KDP and PUK remain high. Specially following recent events in Sulaymaniyah and Kurdistan, dissatisfied citizens or those outside the two ruling parties, are reluctant to reveal their votes or political preferences openly.

Other graphs in the survey (included at the end of this report) further clarify these layers, for example, showing the level of trust in the electoral process and institutions.

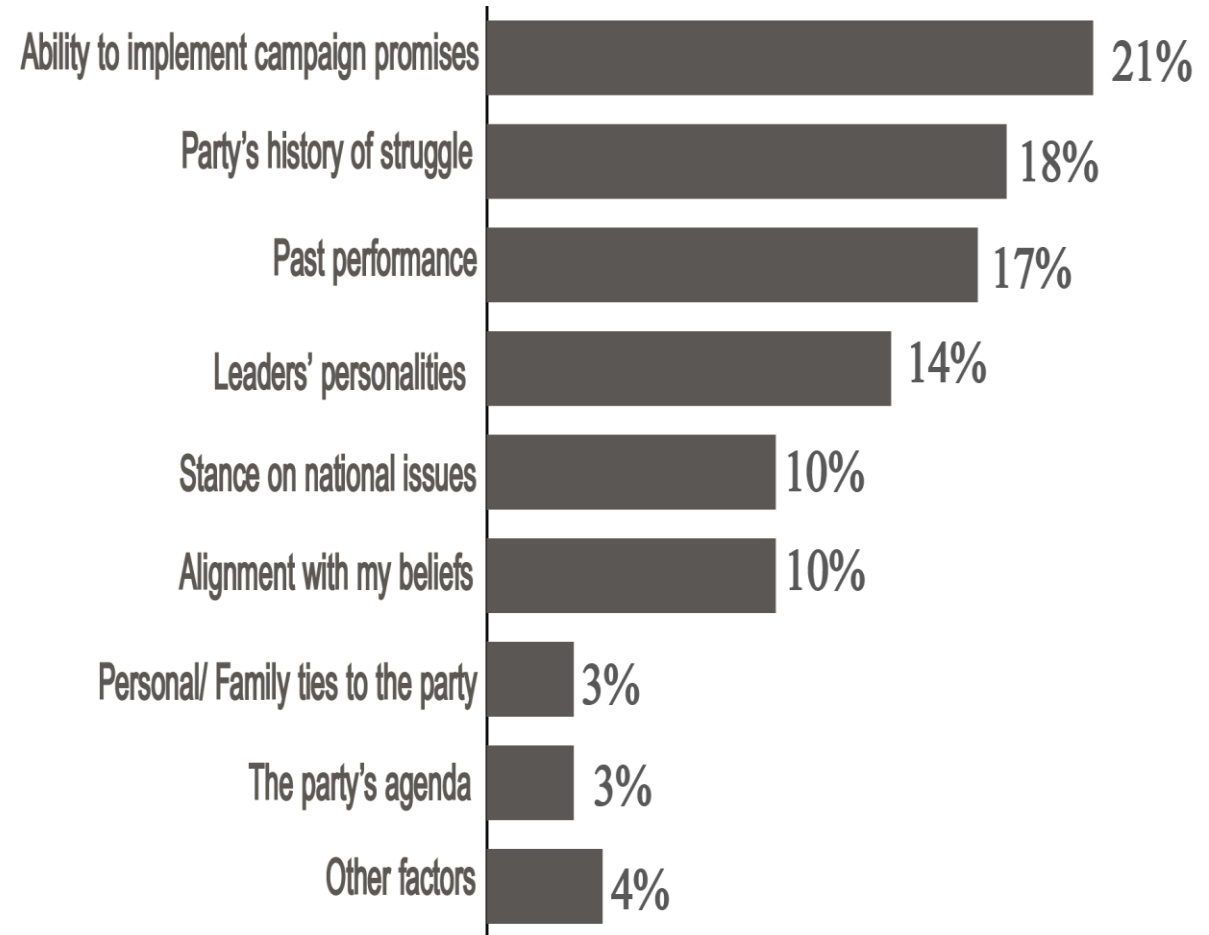
Factors Influencing Voting and Political Participation

The different columns in this graph may represent factors such as “trusting a candidate,” “personal interest,” “social pressure,” or “boycotting.”

The high variation and irregularity of the columns indicate that the motives for voting are not uniform.

Some voters vote from an ideological perspective, while others are influenced by material interests or social ties. This confirms the thesis that politics in the Kurdistan region is a complex mixture of political conviction and social ties.

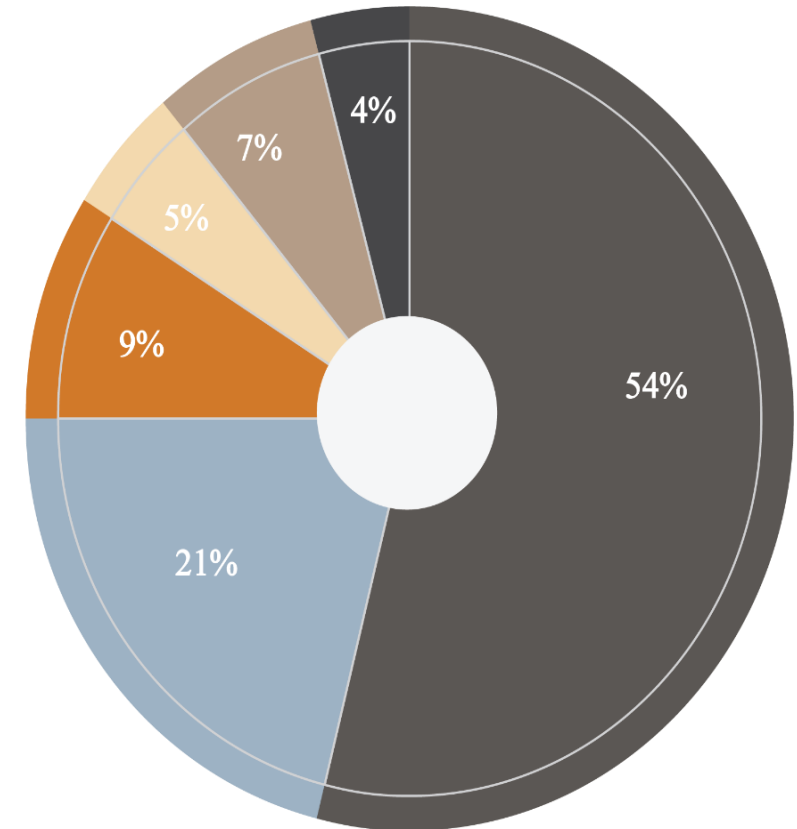
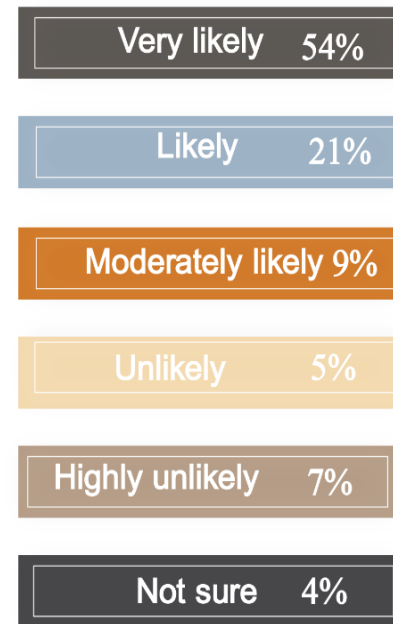
Factors Influencing Voting for a Political Party



If the election were held today, how likely would you be to participate

This graph is likely to show the expected level of turnout.

In this pie, if the question concerns the intention to participate, a high percentage in one of the columns (for example, “Yes, I will participate”) compared to the others (such as “No” or “I’m undecided”) can provide an initial prediction of the potential voter turnout. However, it should be noted that the intention to vote does not always translate into actual voting behavior.



Results:

The survey paints a multidimensional and complex picture of the political situation in the Kurdistan Region amid the chaos surrounding the Iraqi parliamentary elections. On one hand, the economic crisis and salary issues have become the focus of people's concerns and will have a direct impact on the ballot box.

On the other hand, the ruling parties are still able to garner votes due to maintaining control over key economic resources and leveraging patronage and social networks

Distrust of some citizens in the process and not possessing the voting cards by a large proportion, are two major challenges that could affect the turnout rate and the legitimacy of the election.

Finally, the data show that Kurdish voters make their decisions based on “a tension between their concerns of economic livelihood, loyalty to political parties, and the influence of social relations.

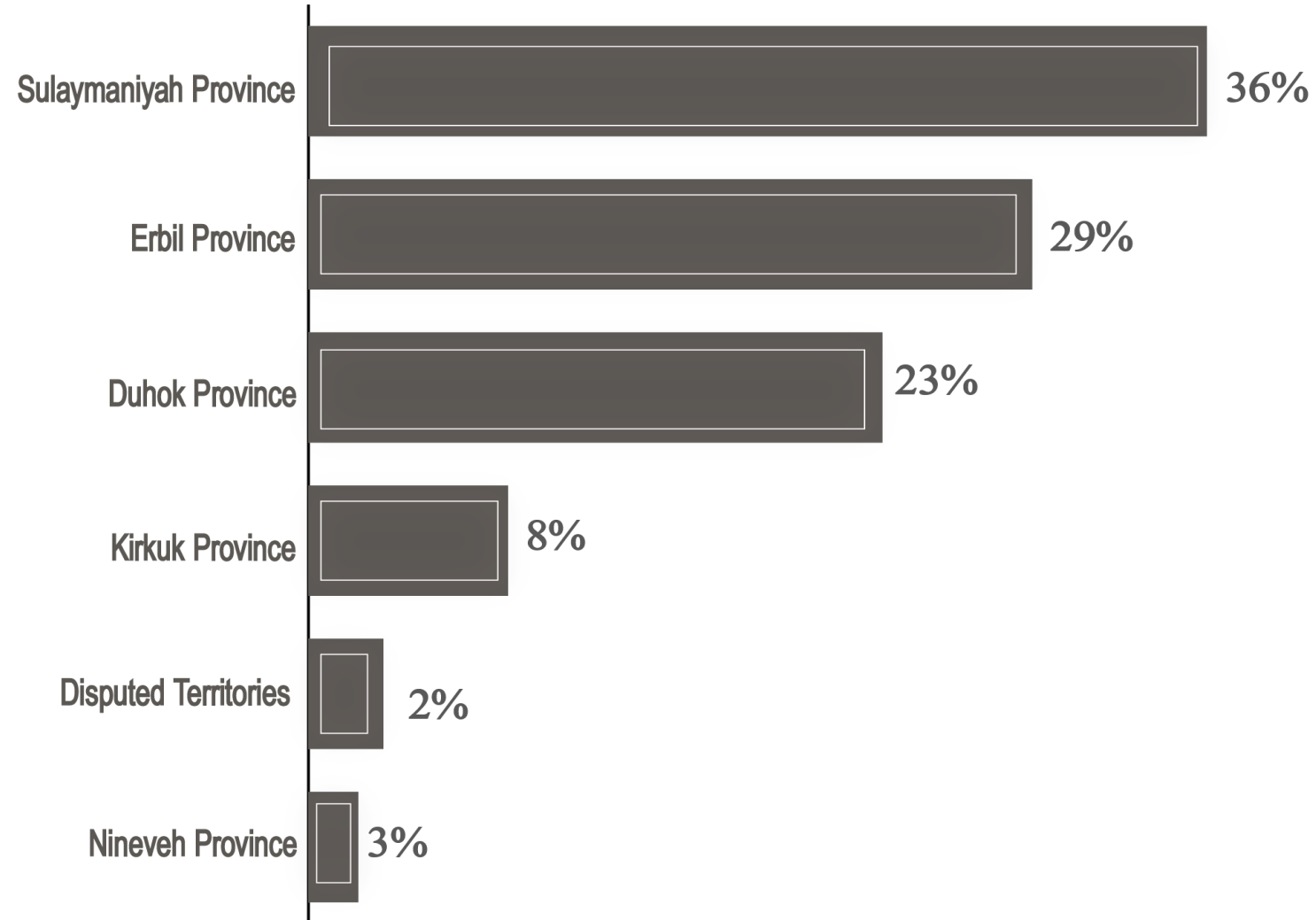
Final Forecast According to the Sbey Research Center Survey (for Kurdish Parties Only)

Party	Erbil	Sulaymaniyah	Duhok	Kirkuk	Nineveh	Overall
KDP	8-9	2-3	9-10	1-2	4-5	24-29
PUK	2-3	7-8	0-1	4-5	0-1	13-18
NGM	1-2	2-3	0-1	0	0	4-6
KJP	0-1	0-1	0	0	0	0-1
KIU	0-1	1-2	1-2	0	0	2-4
People's Front	0	0-1	0	-	-	0-1
NSM	1-2	1-2	0	-	-	2-4
Total	15	17	12	7	4	55

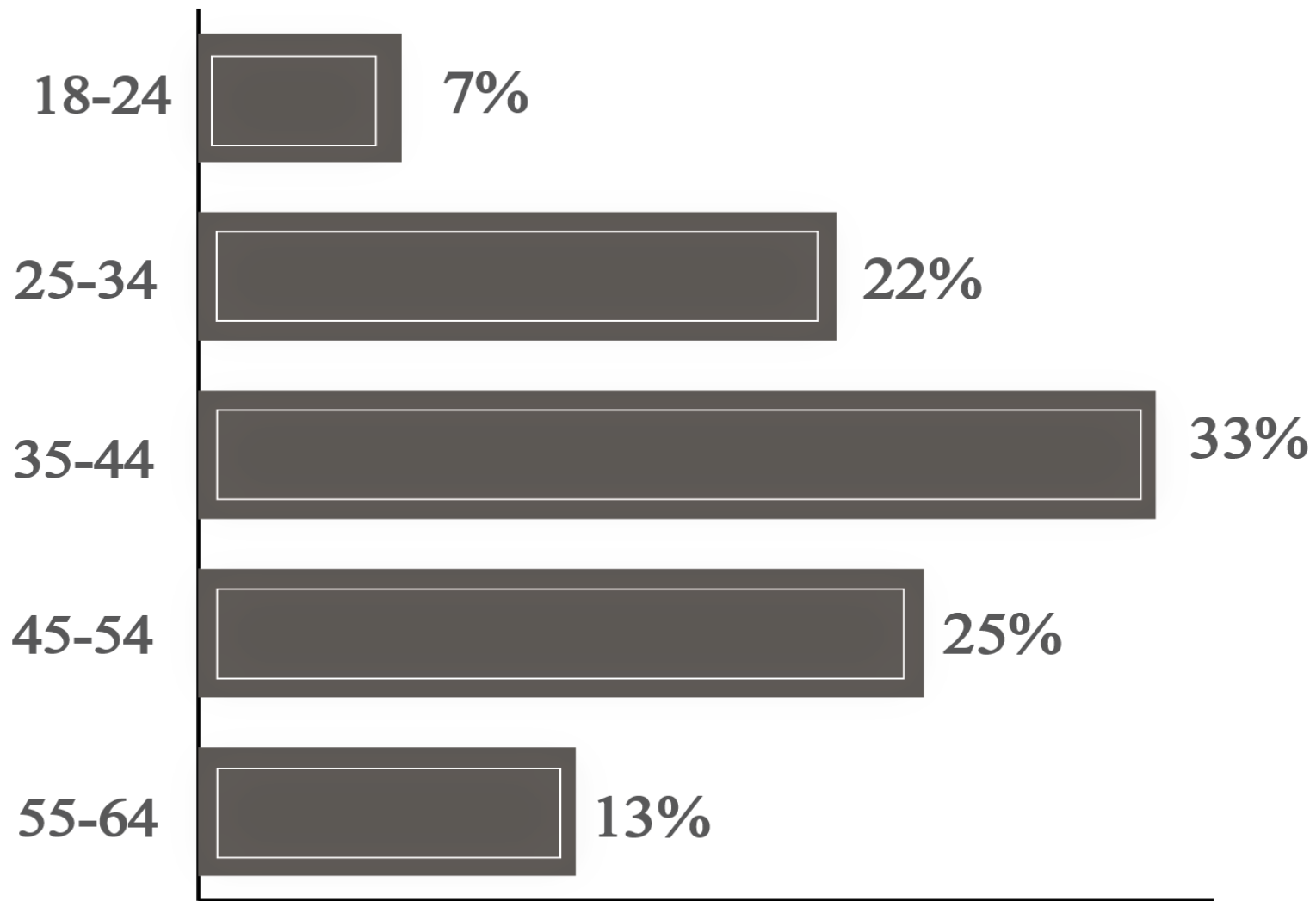
Important Note:

- These numbers refer only to competitive seats (excluding minority quotas).
- In Kirkuk and Nineveh, most seats are allocated to Arab, Turkmen, Christian, and Yazidi groups.
- The margin of error in the results is approximately 3%.

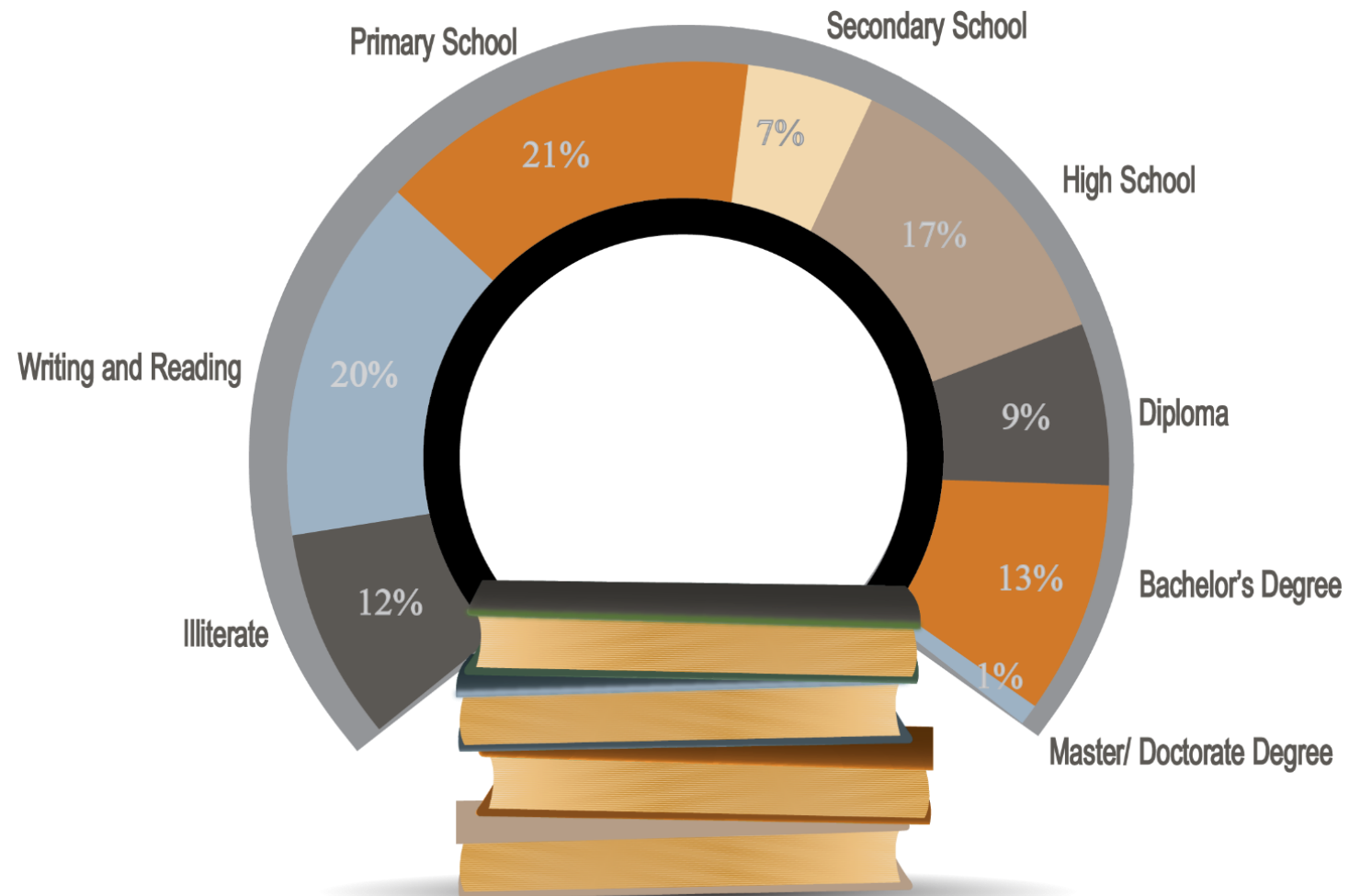
Place of Residence



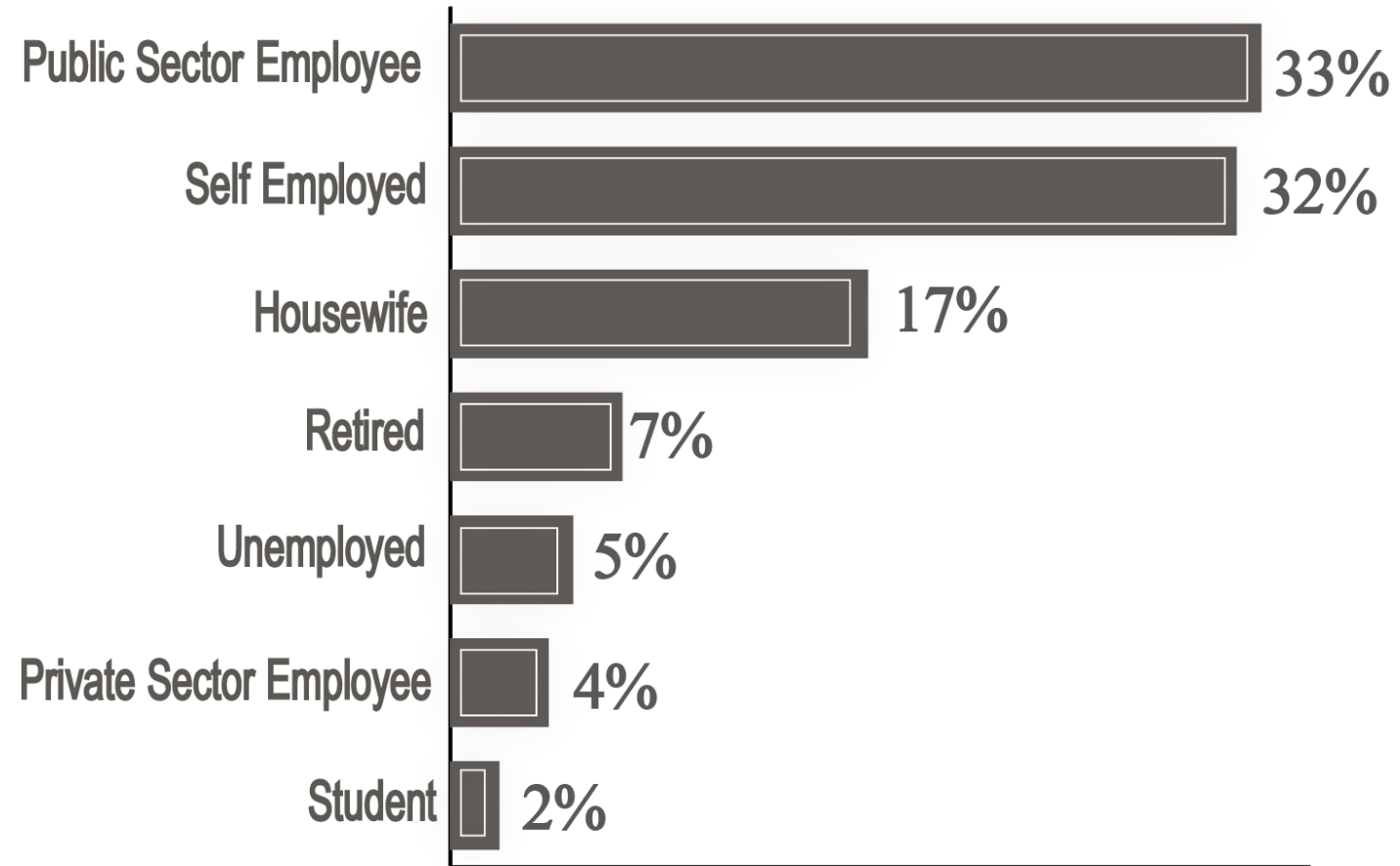
Age



Level of Education

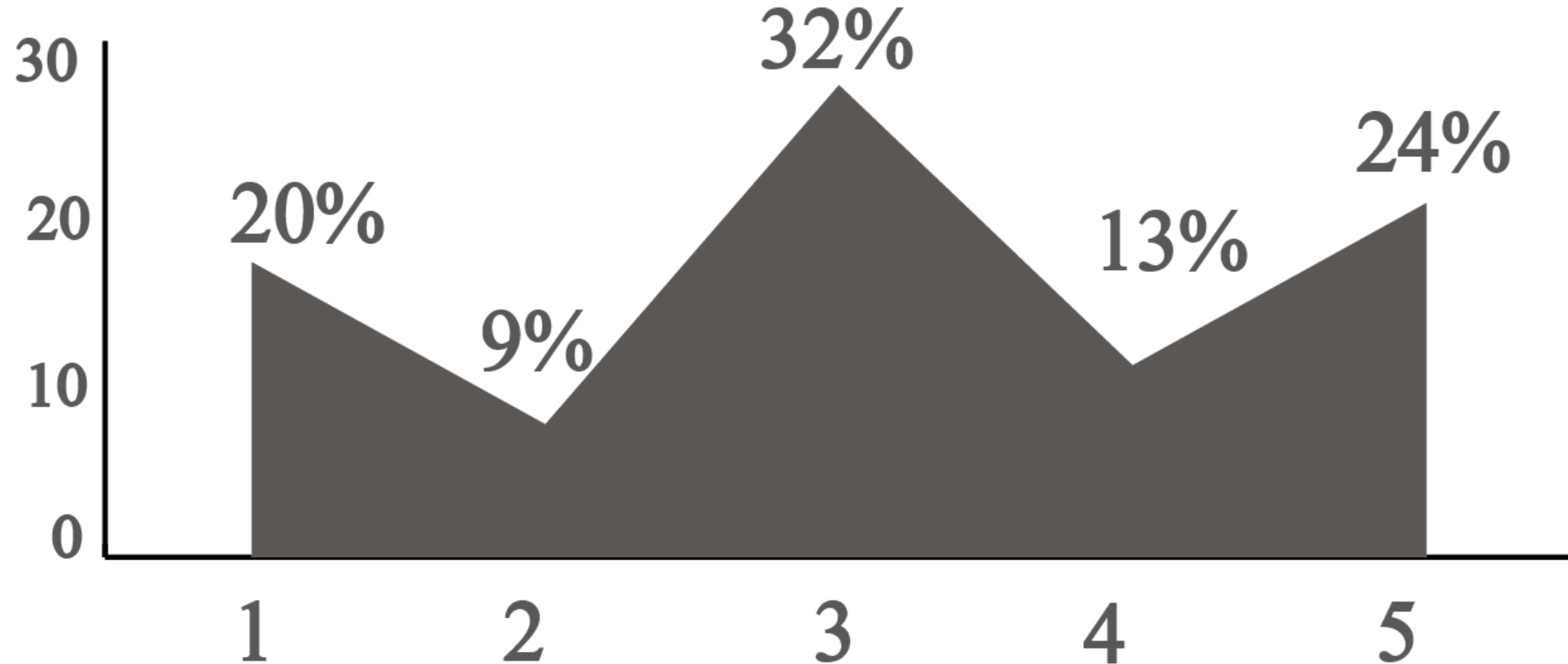


Working Status (Occupation)

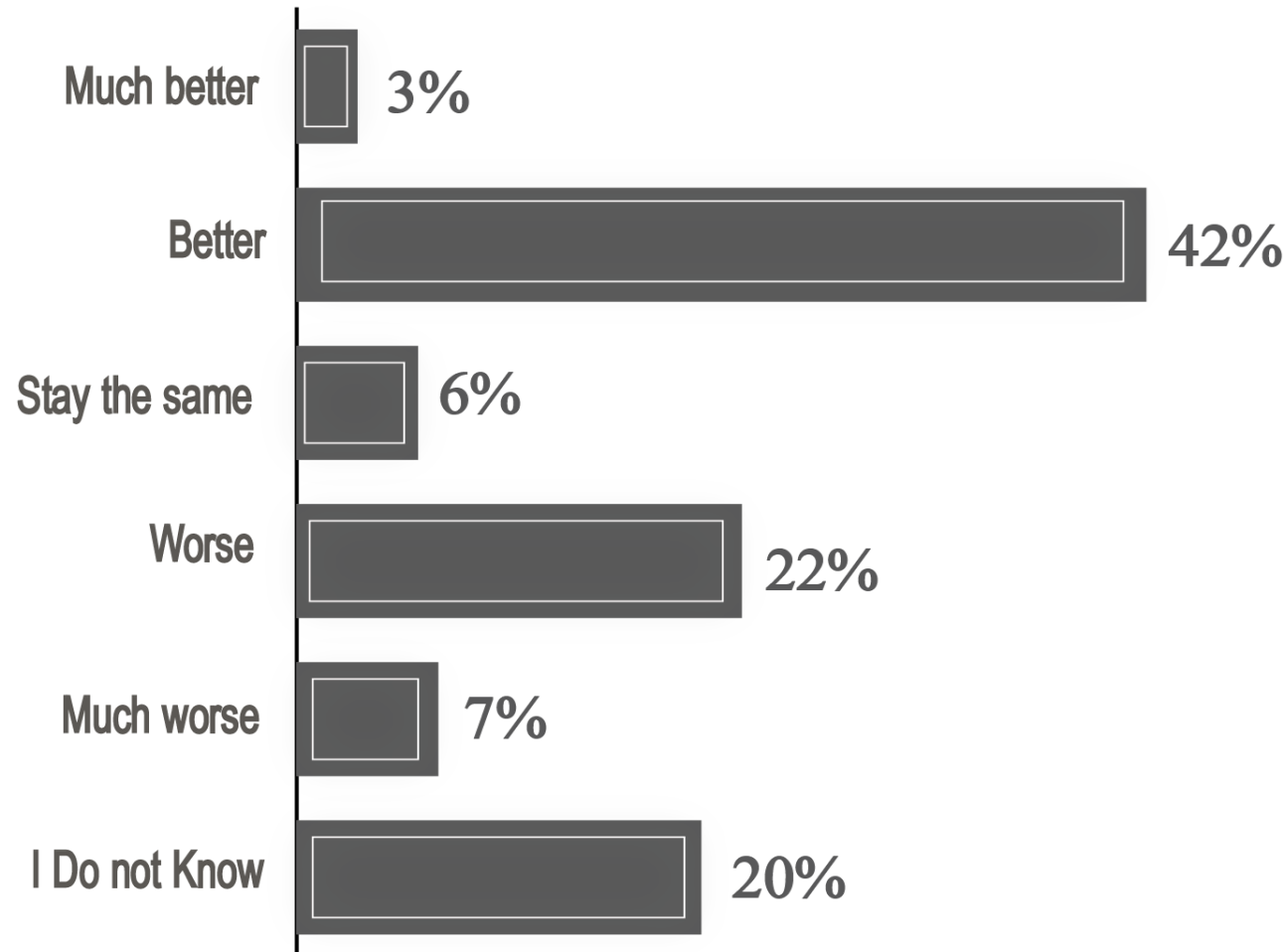


Trust in the Electoral Process, on a Scale of 1–5

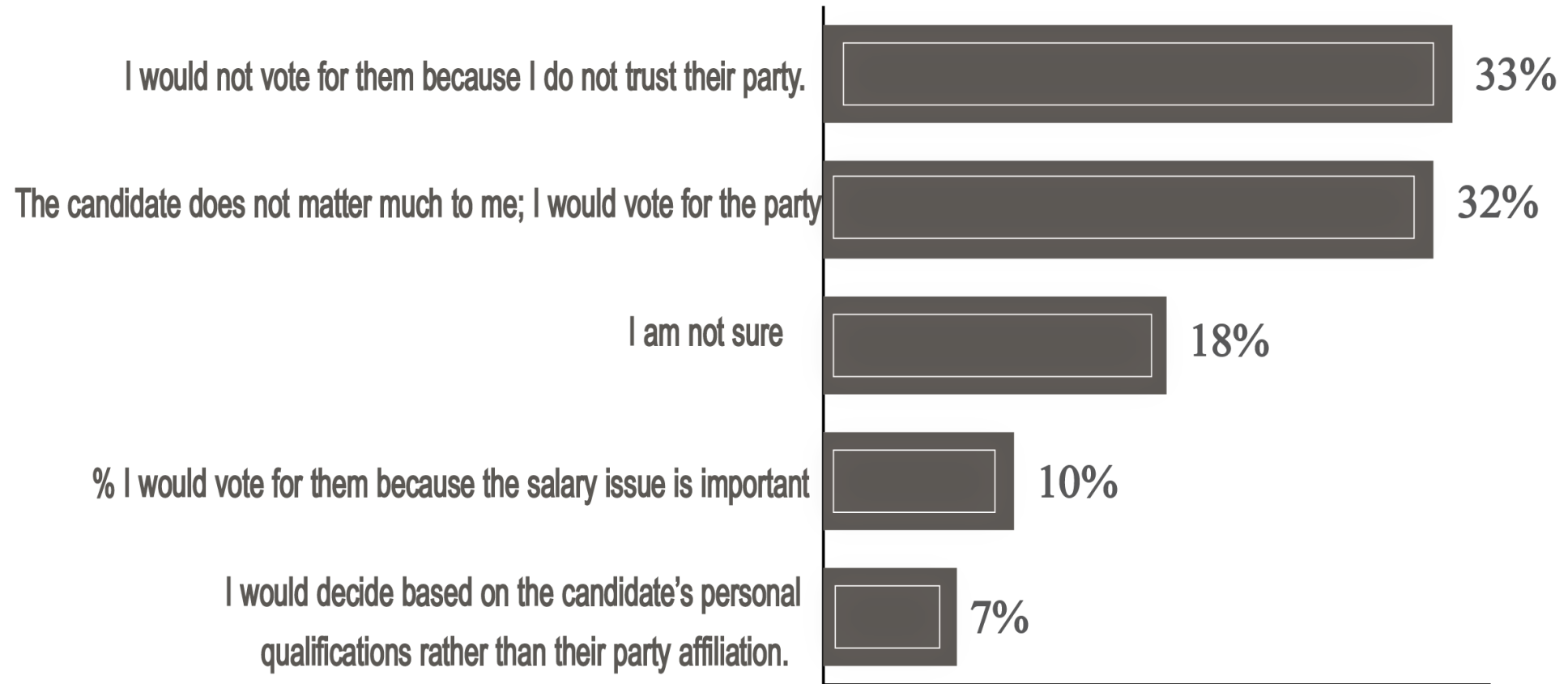
Mean= 3.1



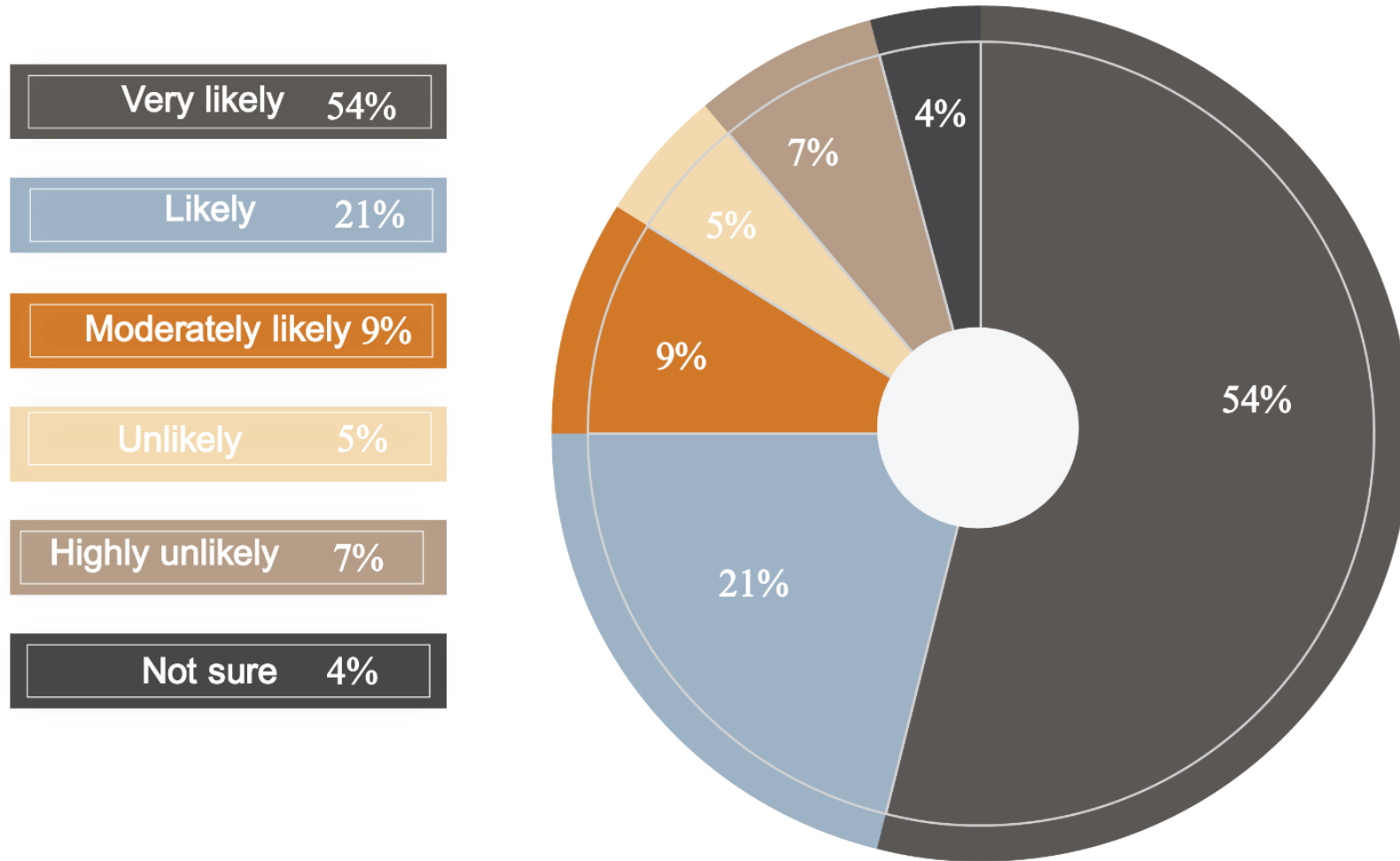
Expectation for the Region's Economic Situation in the Coming Year (2026)



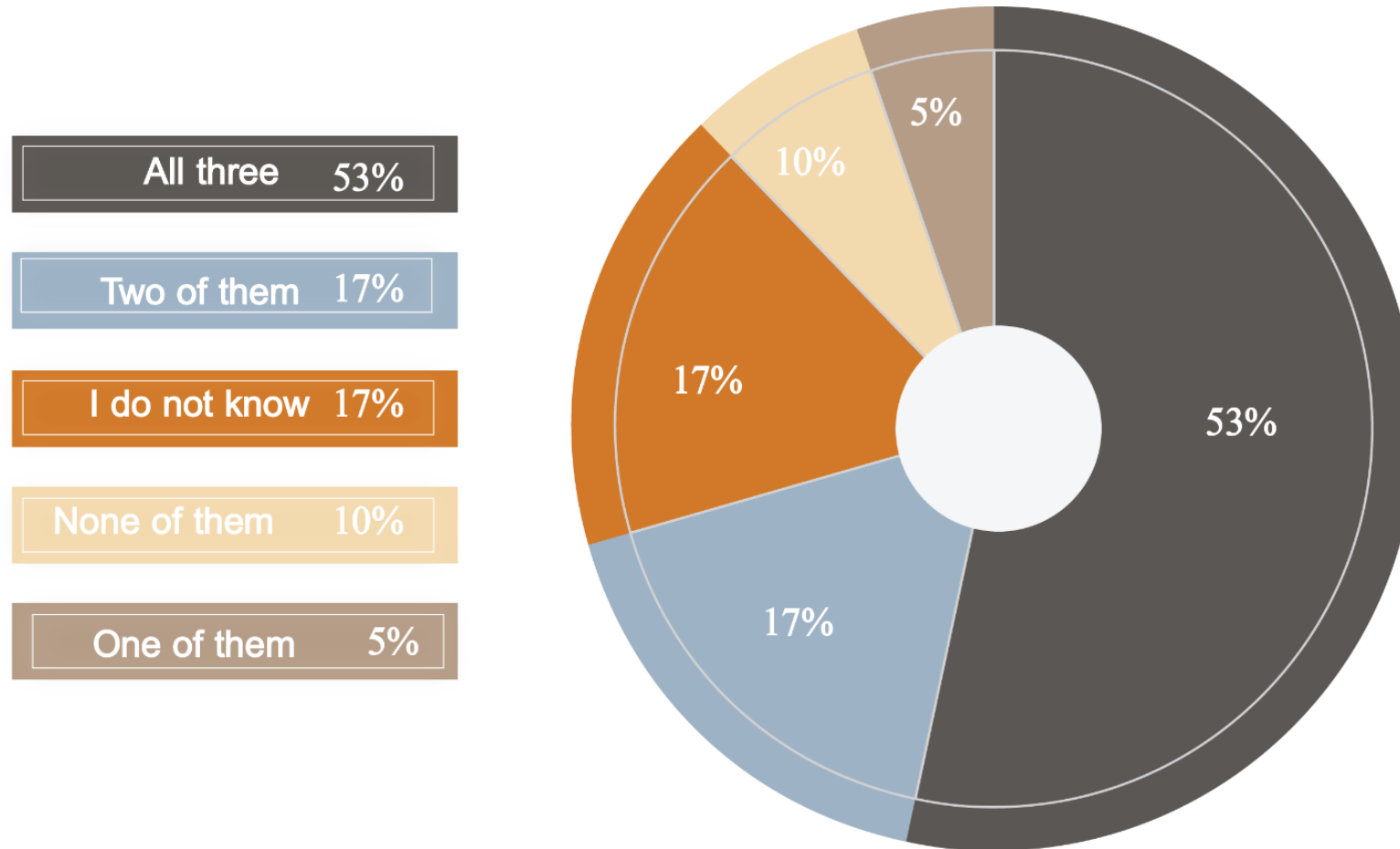
If a candidate pledges to address the salary issue but is affiliated with a party that has not fulfilled its previous promises...



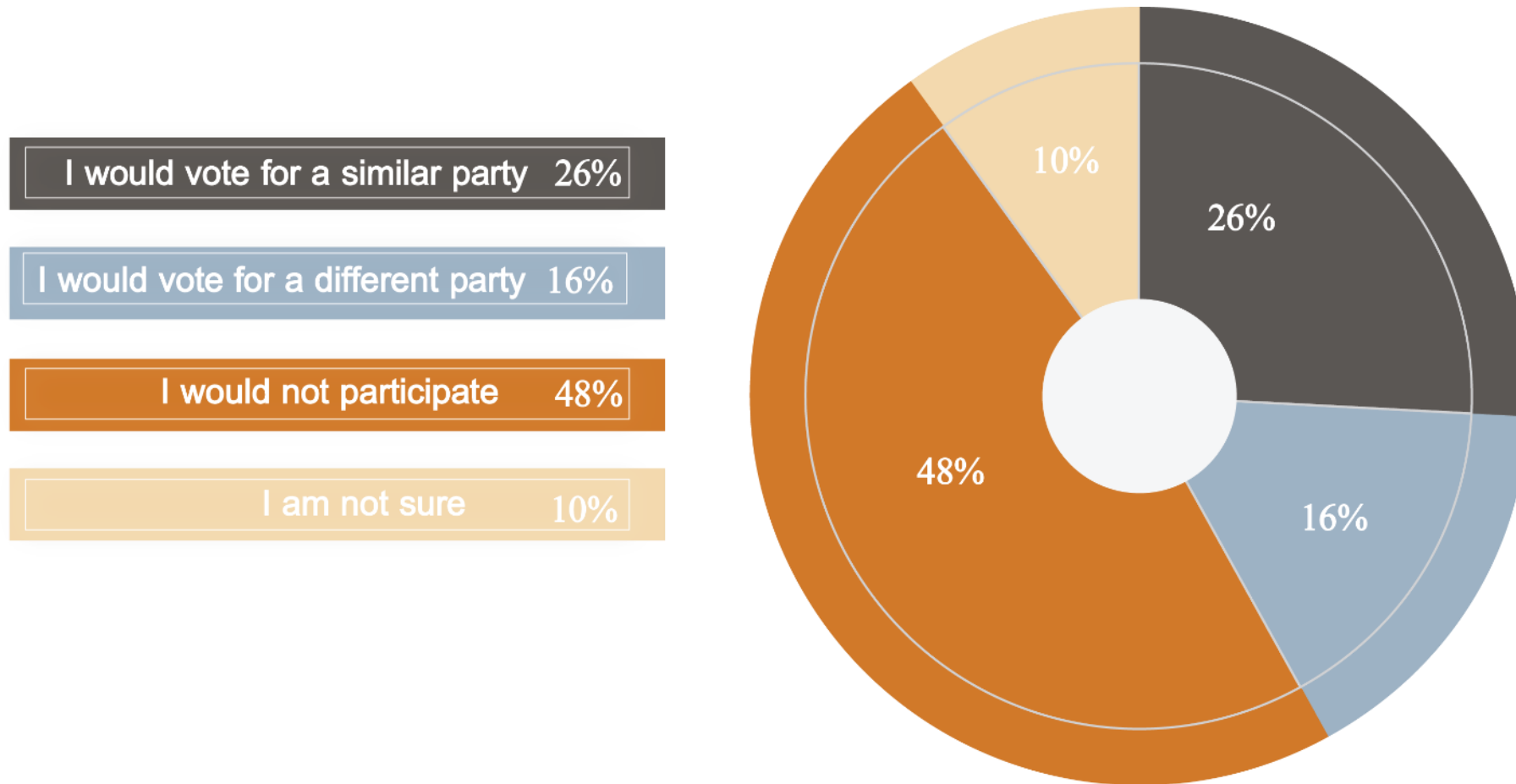
If elections were held today, how likely would you be to participate?



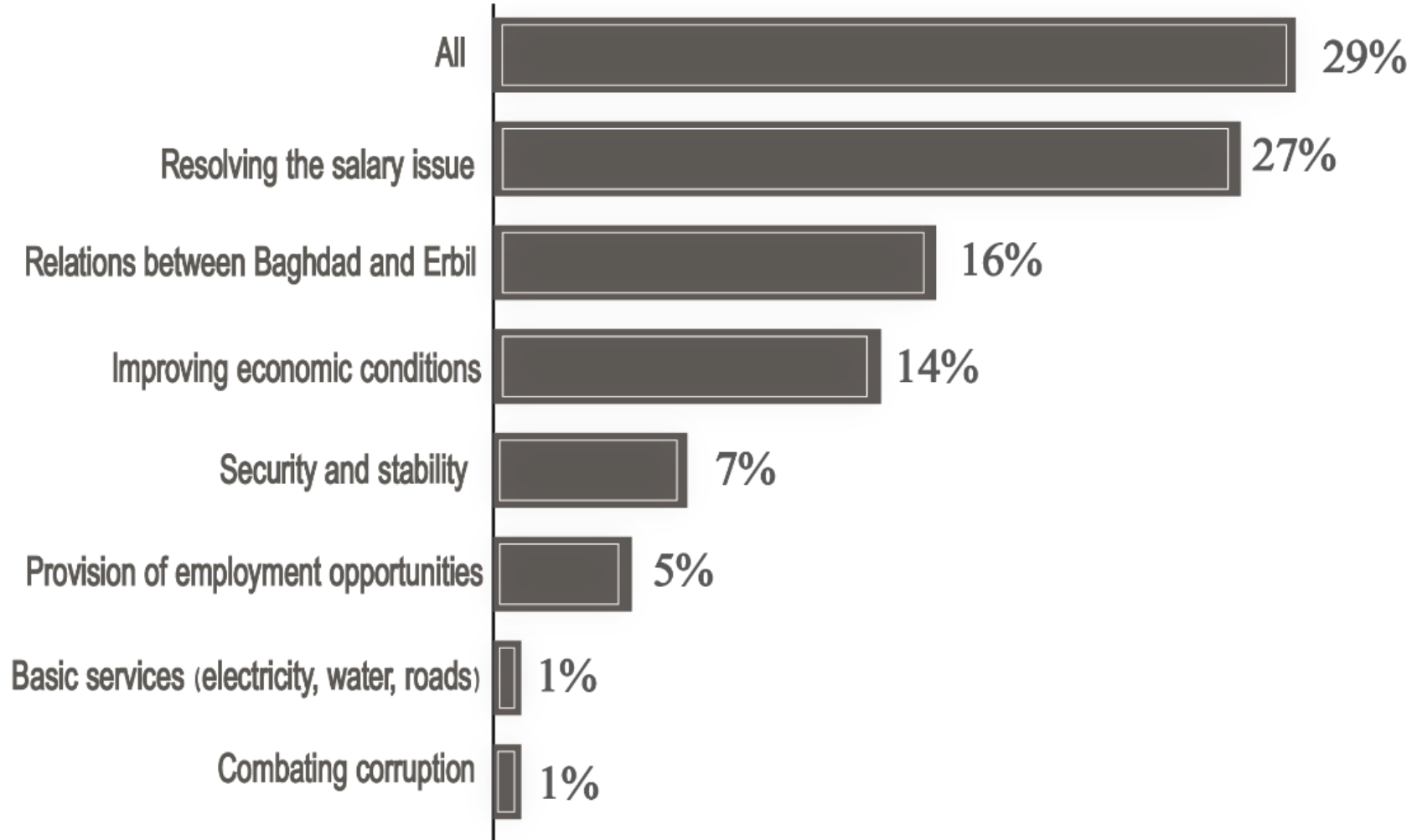
If three of your close family members or friends vote, how many of them do you think would vote for the ruling parties?



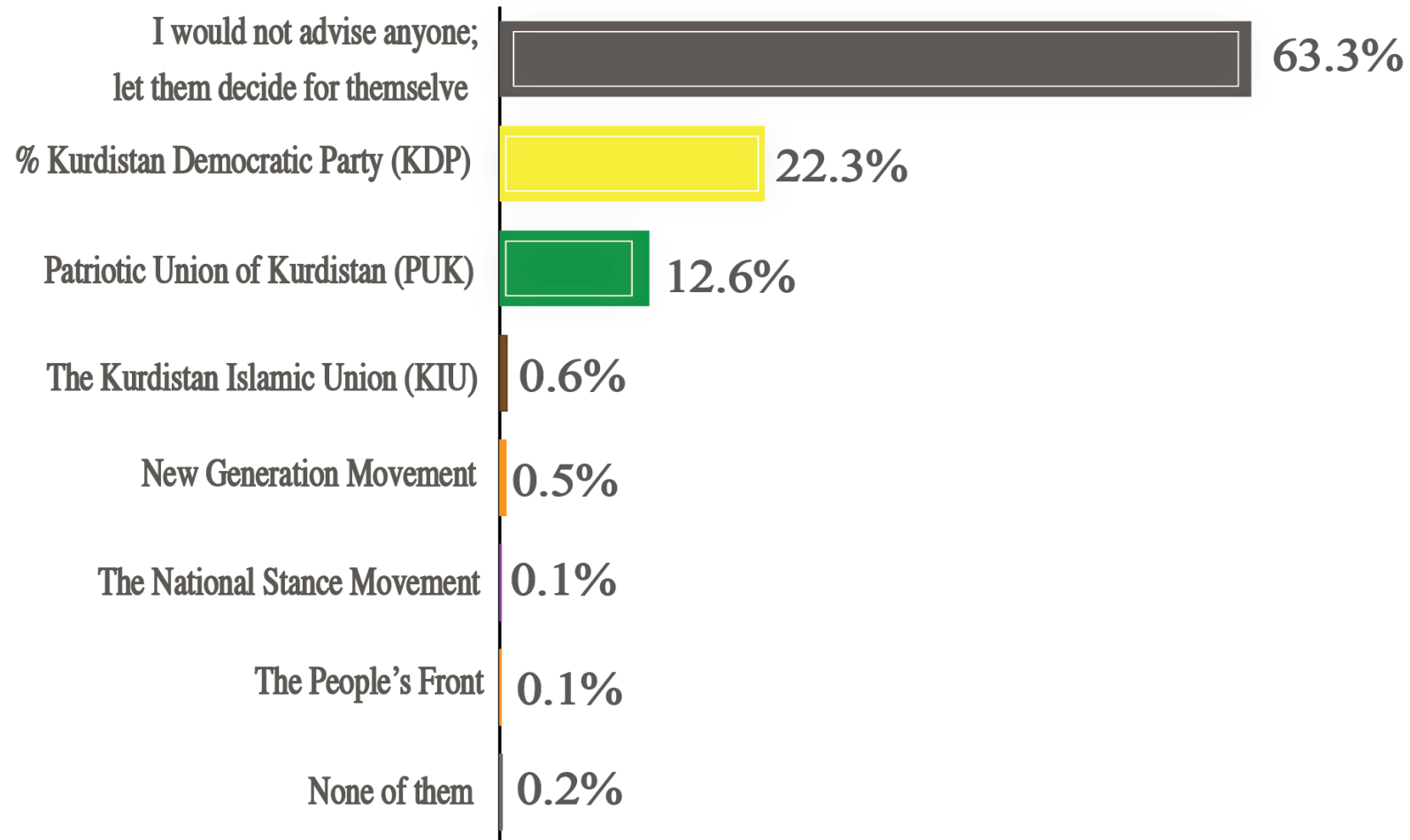
If a party that you previously supported does not participate in the upcoming election, what would your position be?



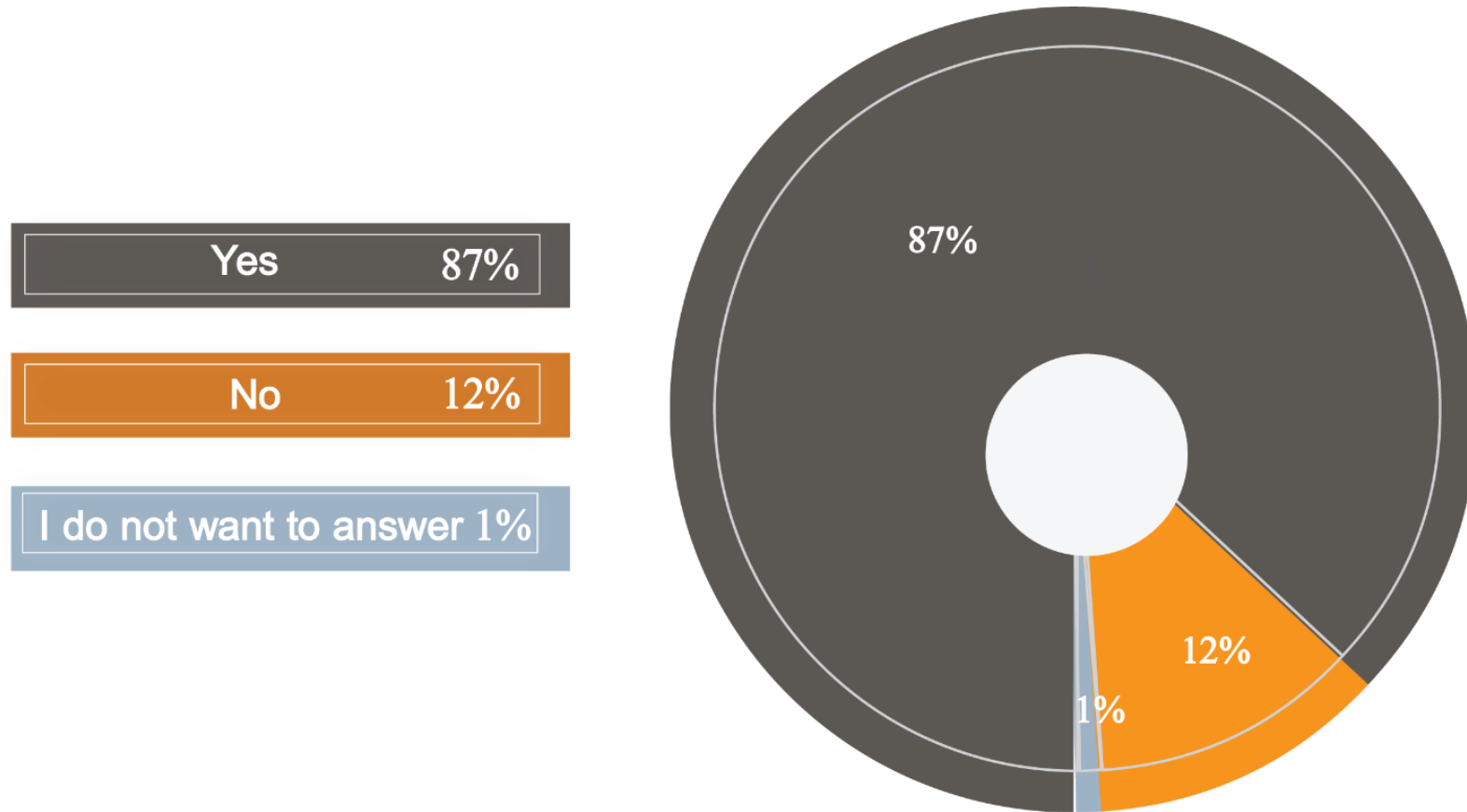
In the upcoming election, which of these issues is the most important to voters?



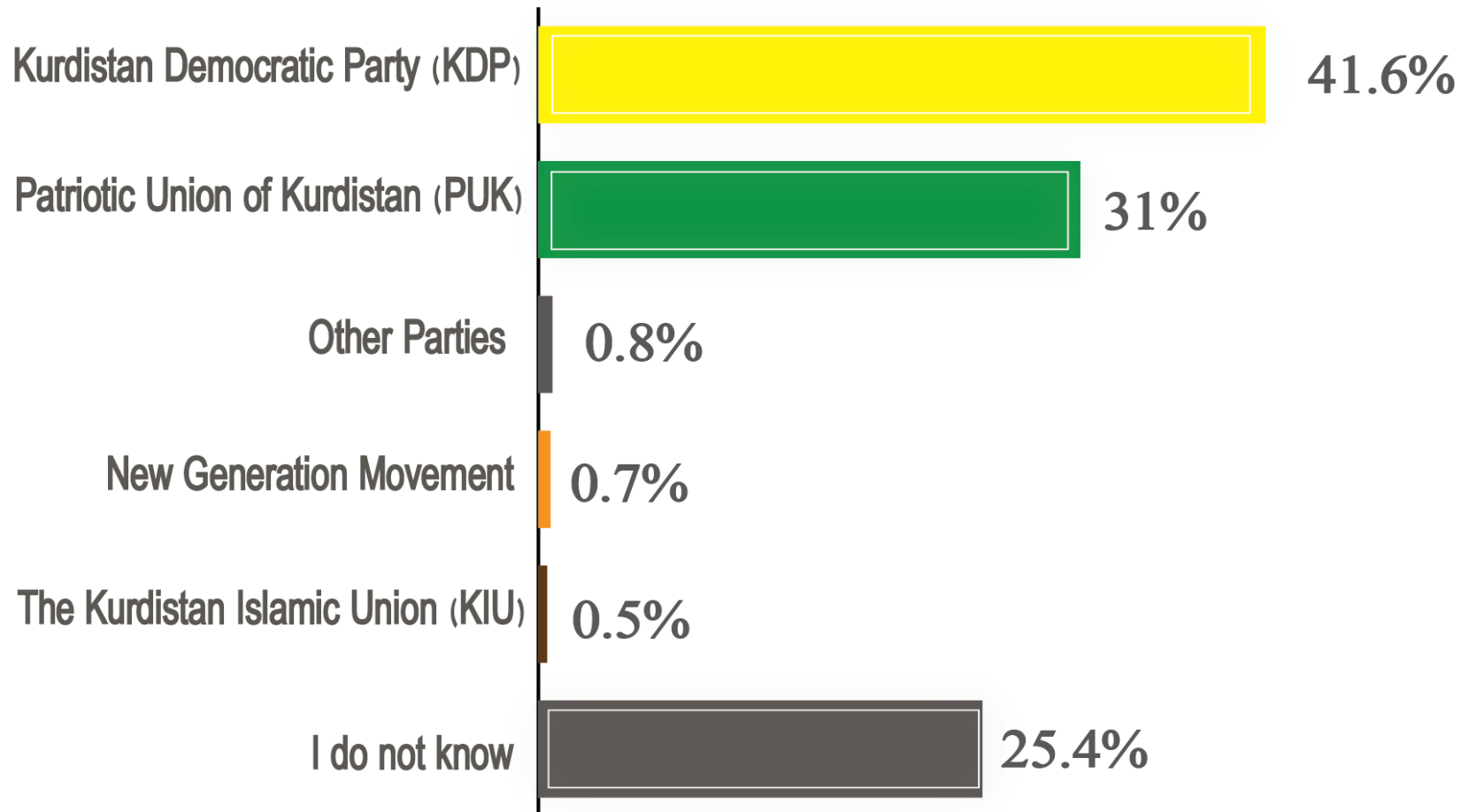
If someone close to you asked for your advice regarding voting, which party would you recommend?



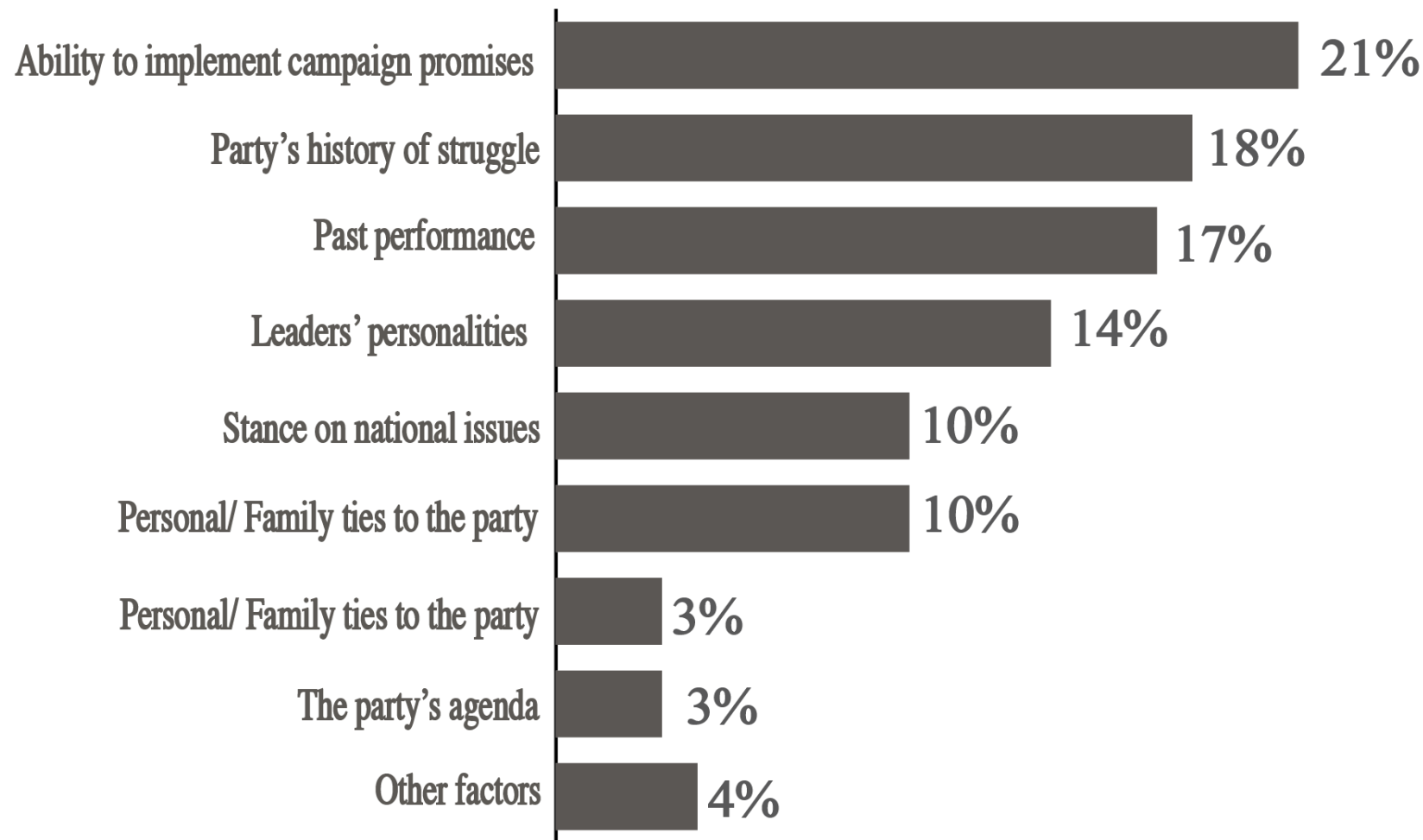
Did you participate in the previous Iraqi parliamentary elections (2021)?



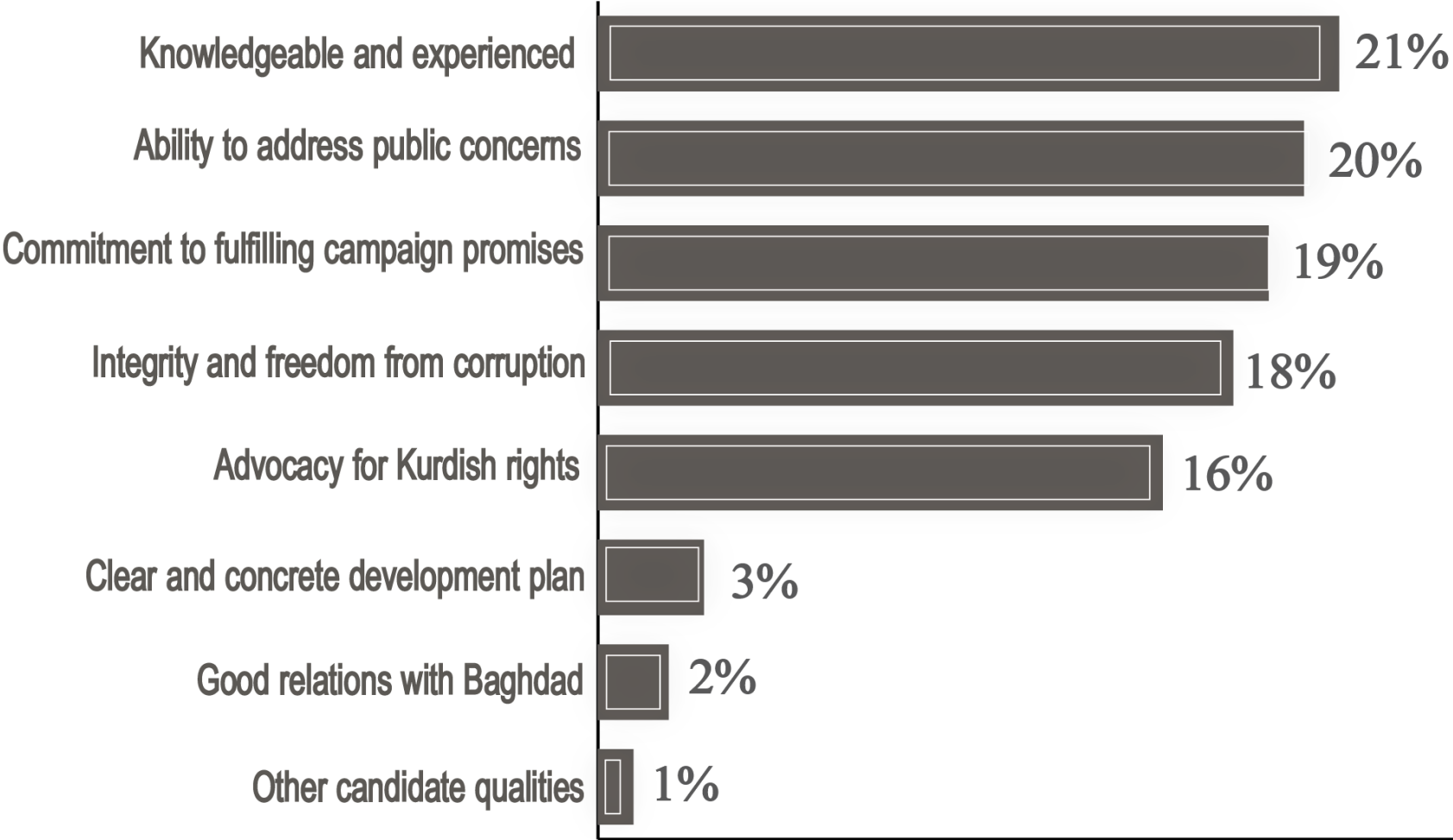
In your opinion, which one of these parties would receive the most votes in your area?



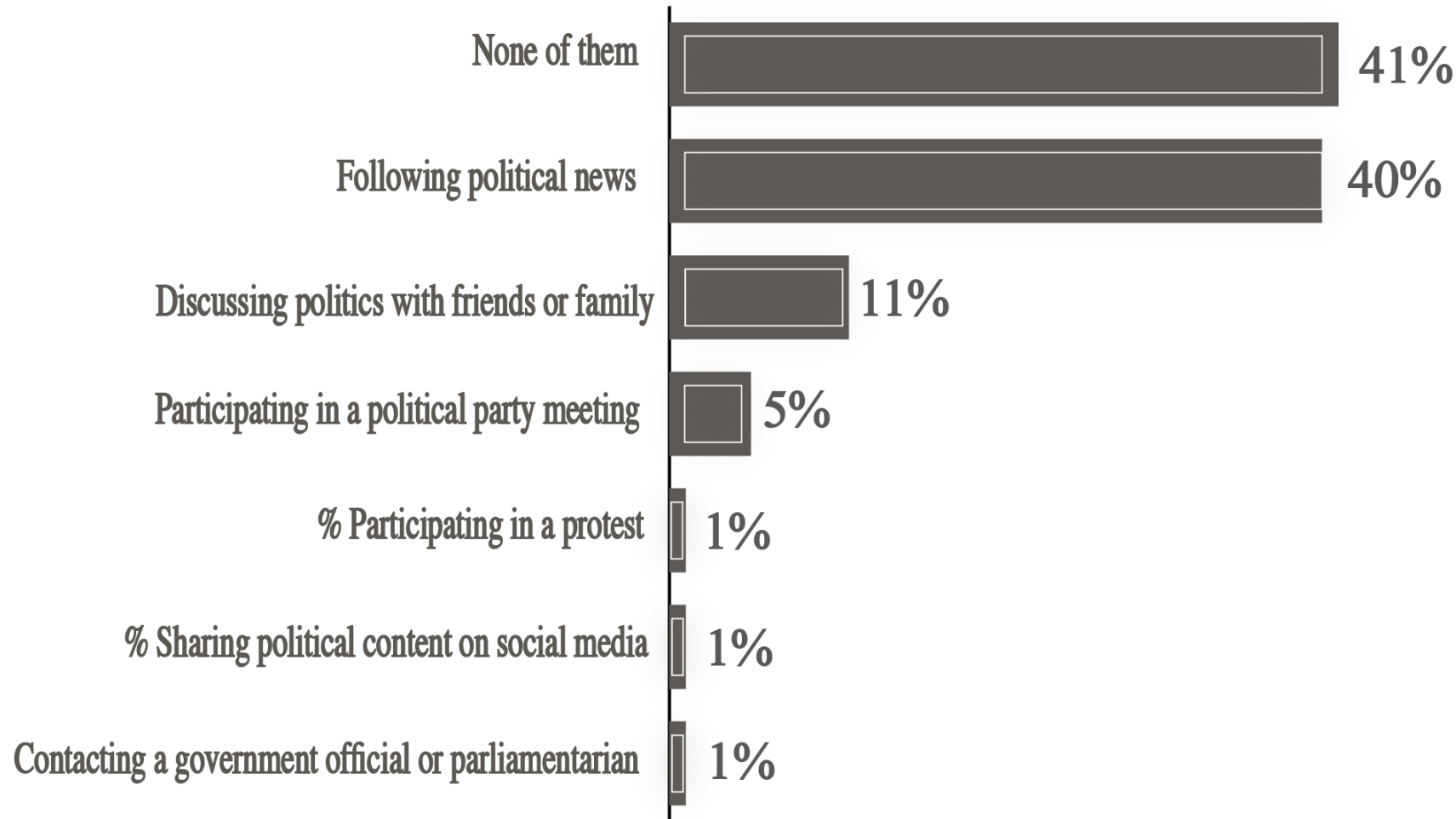
Below is a list of reasons for voting for a party. Please select the three reasons that are most important to you.



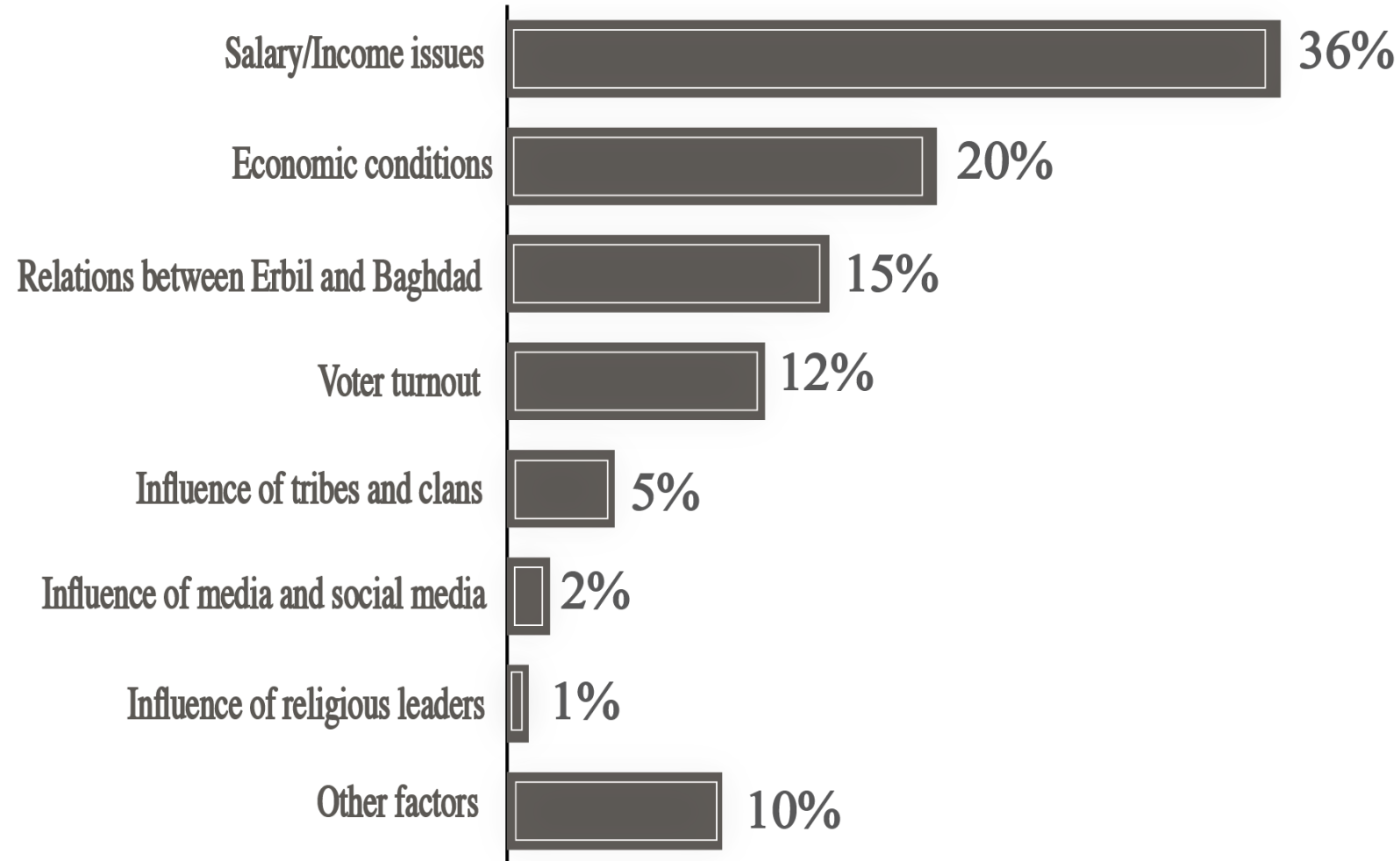
In the ranking below, please select the three qualities that you consider most important for a parliamentary candidate: (Choose only three)

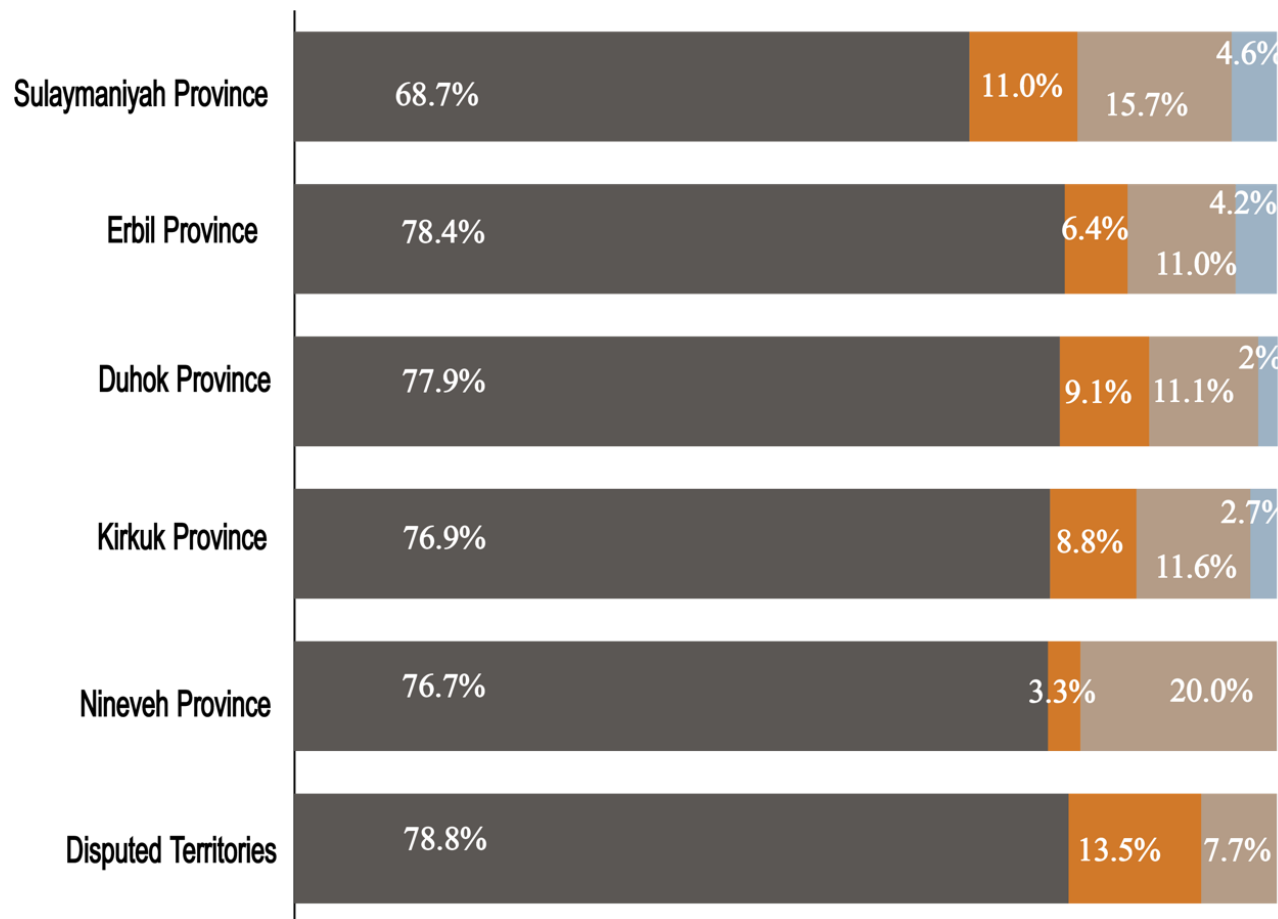


In the list below, there are several activities that people may engage in. Please indicate which ones you have participated in during the past six months.

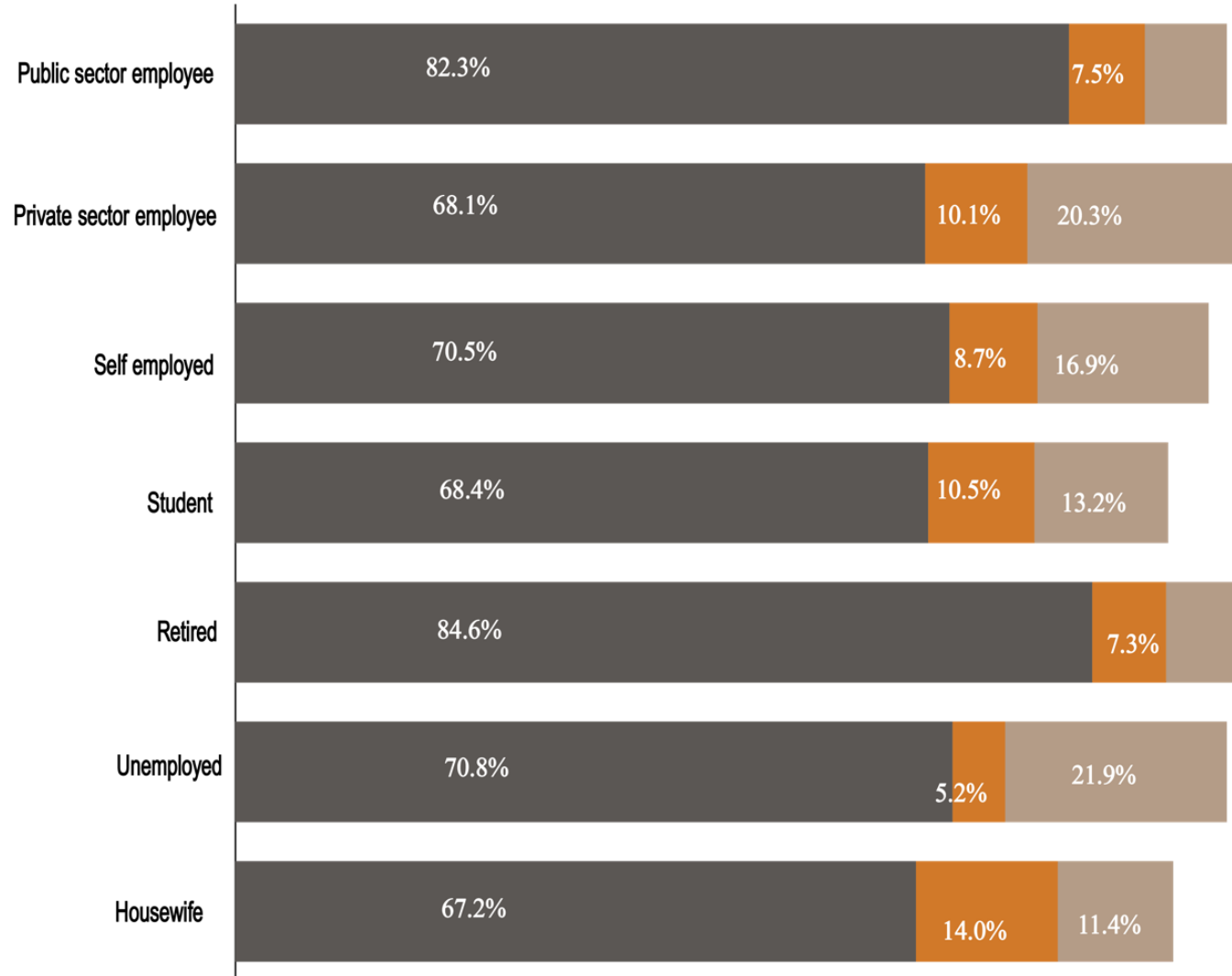


In your opinion, which of these factors will have the greatest impact on the outcome of the upcoming election?



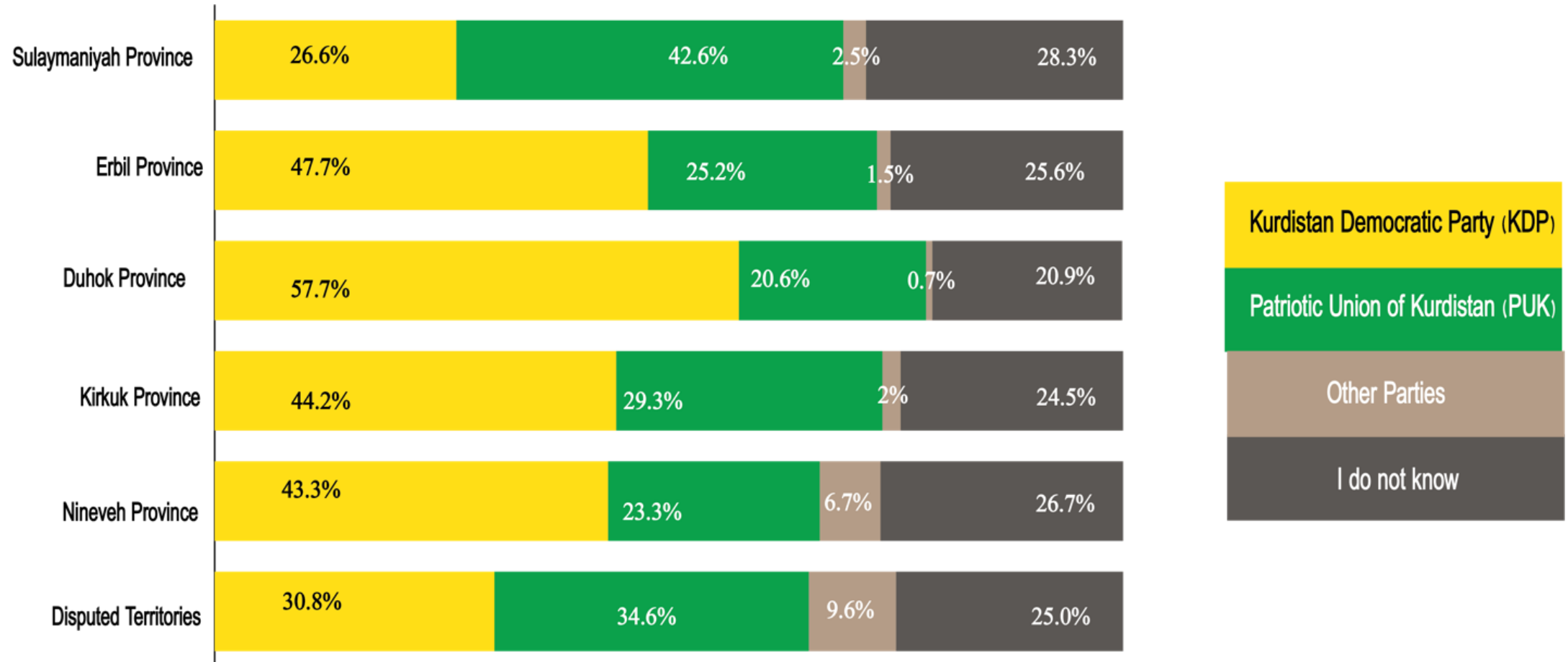


If the election were held today, how likely would you be to participate?

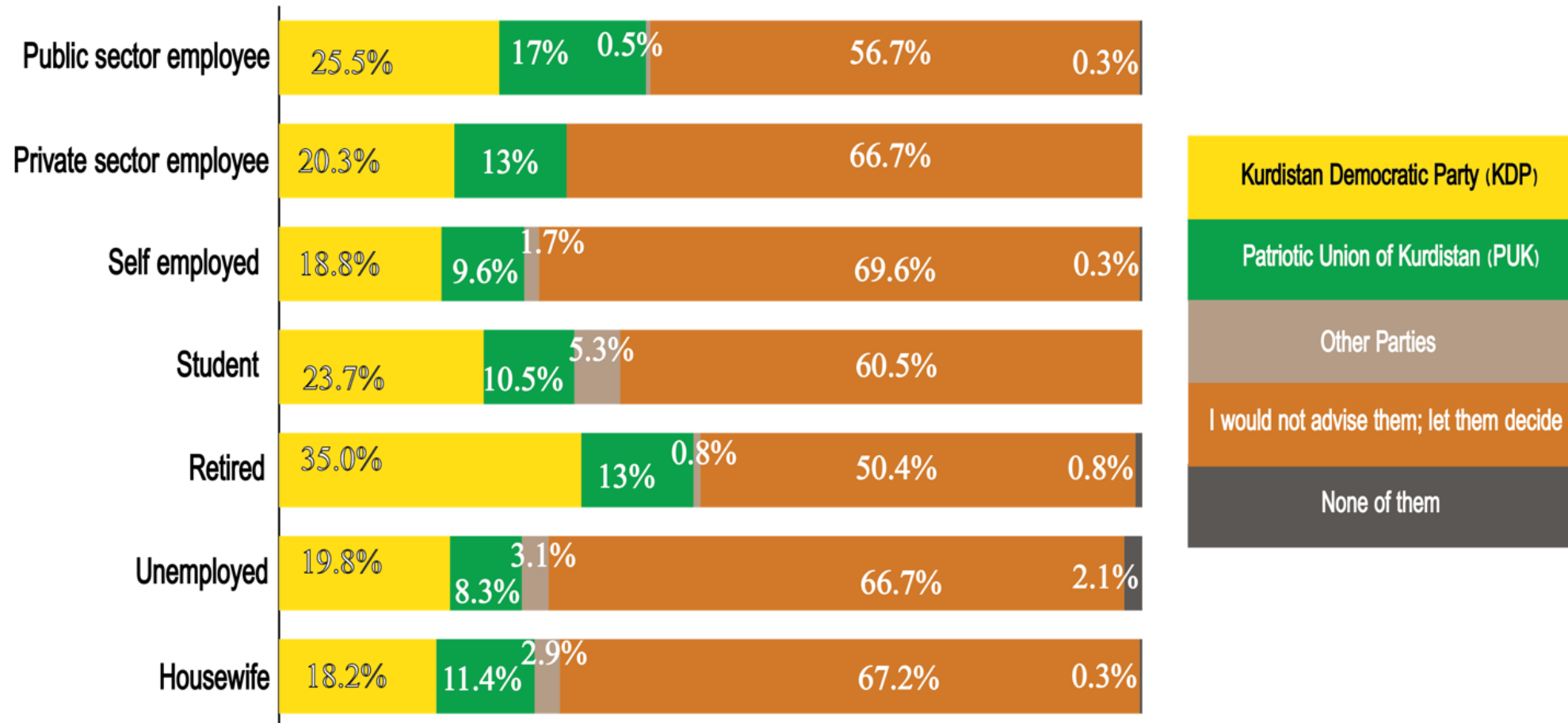


**If the election were held today, how likely would you be to participate?
Based on participant's occupations?**

In your opinion, which of these parties will receive the highest number of votes in your area?



If someone close to you asked for your advice about voting, which party would you recommend to them?



If a party you previously supported does not participate in the upcoming election, what would your position be?

