Syrian Religiosity Patterns And Civil and Political Matters

اليـــوم التالـــي
لدعم الانتقال الديمقراطي في سوريا

THE DAY AFTER
Supporting Democratic Transition In Syria

Syrian Religiosity Patterns And Civil and Political Matters

The Day After Association (TDA) is a Syrian organization that works to support democratic transition in Syria, and its scope of work is focused on the following areas: Rule of law, transitional justice, security sector reform, electoral system design and Constituent Assembly election, constitutional design, economic reform and social policies.

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The Day After thanks all the Syrians who responded to the researchers and facilitated the data collection process with their cooperation and appreciates the reasons for some of those who did not cooperate with us because of their own justifications.

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Executive Summary

After over a decade since the start of the Syrian Revolution of 2011, the political discussion has increased between conflicting ideologies regarding their respective perception of what the Syria of the future should look like. One of the most relevant discussions was on the relation between religion and politics, and the position and role of the prior in society and in the policy of the Syrian government. This discussion is still ongoing in light of the "uncertainty" that engulfs all attempts at finding ways to political resolution through conferences, the Constitutional Commission, or other solutions that have not yet resulted in any concrete change.

Due to the lack of civil political authorities, the field was left empty for religious figures and religious speech to establish a notable presence in the Syrian social and political scenes, allowing some parties to rely on them to gain a form of popular consensus.

Therefore, in light of the intermingling of politics, religion, and society, and within the Syrian scene riddled with contradictions, this study aims to discover the relation between religiosity patterns among Syrians and civil and political life, as well as uncover which authorities are most widely accepted.

By following the methodology of social studies, i.e. defining the study variables, sample, and tools, the following main conclusions were reached:

1. A "moderately religious pattern" was dominant within the regions of the study, in the exception of European countries and Turkey where a "slightly religious pattern" was observed at high rates.

2. The choices of legal authorities among the study sample differed, "particularly when it came to authorities on civil status and social life" in Syria. Positions varied between support for religious authorities and support for civil authorities, depending on the pattern and level of religiosity.

3. There were apparent differences in the way the participants perceived the legislations governing social life as opposed to special legislations for certain religions and sects, which was mainly caused by a biased attitude towards civil patterns, religious authorities, or other forms of authority that combine both religious and civil aspects

4. The study sample refused the application of a “religious or sectarian quota” in political practices.

5. The sample agreed on a law under which everyone is equal.

6. The study sample affirmed the high level of religious freedom among Syrians, as well as the patterns and levels of religiosity, the freedom of religious belief, and for all religions and sects to practice their respective traditions and rituals.

7. There is a positive trend towards supporting causes related to the position of women and their role in the public Syrian life, specifically when it comes to achieving equality under the rule of law without any gender discrimination, as well as their participation in political leadership positions and even in official religious bodies.

8. The main affiliation of the participants was Syrian nationalism, followed by religious affiliation and then familial affiliation.

9. The interest to keep up with political developments in Syria has decreased among Syrians.

10. There is no authority or body, be it political or religious, that the participants commonly regard as a political authority they can refer to.

11. There was a regression in the tendency of “primary” authorities to understand the Syrian political context.

12. There was a clear need for a common national Syrian identity that could unite all Syrians.

Theoretical Introduction.. Syrian Religiosity and Social and Political Life

The role of "religion" in government and society is a main aspect of the political conflict that Syria witnessed ever since the independence phase of the 1940s when, following a series of political events, the rule eventually settled within the hands of the Ba'ath Party which ended up controlling both government and society.

Before it became the sole authority in Syria, the Ba'ath Party's ruling period was marked at first by the emergence of a number of religious movements, the most prominent of which "on the political level" being the Society of Muslim Brothers that gained visibility by the ends of the 1970s and the beginnings of the 1980s. This was in addition to the emergence of radical movements "due to the increasing political injustice", such as the "Fighting Vanguard", which took violence against authority a step further, as made evident by the "Artillery School incident".

In 1980, the Defense Brigades committed the Tadmor Prison Massacre which resulted in the arrest of around 1,000 victims from all political movements under the claim of a "failed assassination attempt" of Hafez Al-Assad by the "Muslim Brothers". Following this event, a law was issued declaring any association with the "Muslim Brothers" [1] a crime punishable by death, and thus paving the way for the Father Assad regime to commit massacres against Syrians, the most notable and severe of which being the famous Hama Massacre and the Mashariqa Massacre in Aleppo.

At the beginning of the 90s, the Syrian religious speech underwent a "domestication" process, particularly in Damascus and Aleppo, as it adhered, both socially and politically, to the demands of the Ba'ath Party, which was controlling all aspects of Syrian religious life, "alternating between lenience and severity", depending on its local and regional benefits.

For instance, the regime utilized Syrian and Arab Islamic movements to serve its own benefits and strengthen its grip on political life, particularly at the beginning of the "abortive" Damascus Spring. This was made especially apparent through the religious Tehrani ideol-

[1] -Syrian Arab Republic, People's Assembly, Law No. 49 of the year 1980 on the Muslim Brothers (anyone who joins the Muslim Brothers is considered a criminal and subject to punishment by death). https://bit.ly/3AD0xAs

ogy adopted by the “Iran-affiliated Lebanese Hezbollah Party” and its populist speech in Arab neighboring countries.

The Regime also utilized the “Hamas” experience in its search for a level of Arab support that would contribute to the achievement of its objectives in reaching a new form of pragmatism in its conflict against Israel. Later on, it made use of religious platforms with a Jihadist inclination, or figures that had been arrested under the terrorist rule, particularly in the Saidanya prison, which pushed a number of groups to move to Iraq at the time of the American invasion of 2003. Some of these groups later went back and were again imprisoned by the regime. As for individuals who undertook independent religious political projects, regardless of the benefits and security forces of the regime, they were also eliminated in an attempt to stop any political religious movement, as they represented, according to the regime, the most dangerous form of opposing ideologies considering its reliance in its structure on religion and “sect” to establish control over the country, and its fear of the appearance of a religious political project that would receive popular appeal among Syrians.

In all cases, there was no clear relation between the political religious speech and popular opinion. Although there was a lot of compassion and anger towards the massacres and alienation practiced against those parties and movements, the popular movement was not accounted for once the regime rendered the Syrian social body a helpless murder victim.

Perhaps due to the lack of connection between politics and religion, especially among the elite in Damascus and Aleppo, the most common religiosity pattern was the “moderate” category, which mainly manifested in the refusal to engage with politics and the tendency to serve both parties, all under the Syrian religious authorities that moved away from political affairs and prohibited, “in many schools and teachings”, disobeying authorities.

In all cases, and following the violence that took place in the 1980s, the political regime ended up controling the religious scene in Syria. In fact, during, and following, the big fuss that took place at the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s, and under the pressure of the regime’s military grip, religious groups crumbled. The opening times for mosques were “restricted to prayer times only”, and some religious schools in mosques

belonging to certain religious groups were shut down.

The regime also maintained close ties with another group of sheikhs (and their surroundings) that opposed the approach of violence and disobedience and expressed a willingness to collaborate with it to calm the situation. The political regime also elected a number of sheikh scholars to form religious institutions that developed, during the 1990s and the first decade of the 2000s, into massive educational associations (and social and religious networks as well). [2]

Hence, a new religious political map was forming in Syria, which included a mix of religious figures and groups who started forming and reforming new religious entities, changing their means and tactics, and adopting a silent form of religious and educational religiosity that stayed away from politics. They also started spreading religiosity through popular or educational means, or through mosques, in a way that matched the social and political factors in their surrounding environment. The Syrian regime embraced with open arms that form of religiosity, through its investigative instruments and bodies, as well as its executive government bodies, such as the "Ministries of endowment, higher education and education", and ended up controlling its leaders, and therefore controlling the communities surrounding them who were influenced by their statements and actions. [3]

Later on, the Bachar Al-Assad era witnessed a different transformation, where Assad Junior faced a variety of challenges that pushed him towards sheikh-led groups and religious figures who had been marginalized during the 1990s, to try and reach a balance between the groups that appeared during his father's era, and face alongside them challenges like open-mindedness, the ramifications of the 9-11 attacks, the American invasion of Iraq, the Hariri assassination, and the expulsion of Syrian forces from Lebanon. Although these new groups expanded in a way that the regime had not expected and exposed it to a lot of pressure, it managed to play its old trick with them by making use of their internal struggles. [4]

Alternatively, and in light of the Sunni religious scene and its relation to politics, the regime managed to maintain sole control over the influential figures of each religion or sect, and tie

[2] - View: Religion and State in Syria: The Sunni Ulama from Coup to Revolution, an interpretation of the Belgian researcher Thomas Pierret's writings by the World Institute, 1/7/2016. https://bit.ly/3AD9Sbu
[3] - View: Al-Qubaysiat, a religious organization with no men allowed, Leila al Rifai, Aljazeera.net, 8/5/2017. https://bit.ly/3ceiPi
[4] - View: Religion and State in Syria: The Sunni Ulama from Coup to Revolution

the benefits of their followers to the benefits of the regime itself via a strategy that relied on distancing them from engaging in political work and limiting their roles to religious figures, bodies or authorities that provided the regime with functional services it can make use of whenever needed, all while allowing the freedom of performing familial, social, service or developmental work, and all relevant matters, "for certain sects", so long as that work stayed detached from political life and from influencing it. This is what was done with Christian scholars and churches, including the various religious and social associations affiliated with them, as well as religious figures from each sect, i.e. "Druze, Murshidis, Ismailis, etc."

The popular movement had unveiled the "sectarian division" mechanics applied by the regime to the majority of military and security bodies of the major sect, as well as the existence of constant "connection points from the major component" with government institutions and departments that undertook the role of maintaining a certain atmosphere of fear and terror within Syria all throughout the decades of the family rule. Due to this firm grip that it was able to maintain, the regime was not willing to take a risk by highlighting political religious scholars from its own sect.

With the beginning of the popular movement in Syria in 2011, religion, as "a variable and way of life, or a political project" was not one of its main causes or catalysts. However, the desire for dignity and freedom was overwhelming at the beginning of the revolution, and the main discourse of the revolution among its leaders only changed following the sectarian behavior exhibited by the regime towards the popular movement, which paved the way for the emergence of religious ideologies of varying degrees of radicalization.

An important thing to note here is the fact that the protests starting in mosques every Friday were not related to a general religious inclination that characterized the popular movement, so much as to the mosques being an accessible "meeting point" for protesters under the prohibition of gatherings among Syrians by virtue of a security resolution put forth by the regime. Therefore, mosques, in spite of their religious symbolism, were a location that allowed for a group of individuals to get together and go out to protest, regardless of whether the protesters themselves were religious or not, and regardless of the presence of some religious ideological backgrounds belonging to a certain sect among the protesters.

A series of rapid events led to the resurgence of a number of questions that had been previously buried, such as “the authority of sharia, ISIS, the identity of state and society, social, religious and political freedoms, etc.”; questions that became permitted in light of real and concrete events witnessed by Syrians, like “ISIS”, religious courts in most of the areas outside of the regime’s jurisdiction, and even the Salvation Government in areas under the control of the Tahrir Al-Sham Organization in northwestern Syria.

The discussion on the relation of religion and its role in society and “government”, in particular, became one of the matters that caused a lot of agreement and disagreement in the Syrian “social and political” scene after 2011. This came in parallel with the experiences that Syria went through during the last decade, from the emergence of a number of radical movements to the wide spread of religious speech from the Syrian opposition, both “political and militant”.

The divergence, divisiveness, and variety of religious speech on the social level was “necessarily” reliant on the political speech, as well as the political inclination of Syrians wherever they are. Consequently, this was the basis for a space in which the discussion on “the identity of society and government” and its relation to religion became heard, read, and accepted within social norms.

In spite of the real-life attempts at establishing an “Islamic Caliphate”, such as the case of “ISIS” and the “Tahrir Al-Sham”, which resulted in a government that facilitated civil, service-related, and economic matters as the “Salvation Government” in Idleb, the negative positions towards these attempts, “in their majority”, indicated the presence of different understandings of the concept of religion, and particularly its political aspect, as well as its concrete efficiency on both the social and political levels.

Part I: the Methodology of the Study

1. The Main Study Question

The general "religiosity pattern" in Syria has always been "moderate", particularly when it came to the relation between religious actors and public life away from private personal matters. For decades, but especially in recent history, this pattern marked the Syrian identity.

Local environments in Syria "surely" differ from one another, just like any other society made up of multiple components and under a political exclusive dictatorship. Therefore, the social and political role of religion is as diverse as the individuals following it and the cultural structure of the local environment within one society. Therefore, we are able to address the religiosity patterns of each local culture individually, all while pointing out that some patterns are more common than others.

With the beginning of the popular movement in Syria in 2011, religion, as "a variable and way of life, or a political project" was not one of its main causes or catalysts. However, the desire for dignity and freedom was overwhelming at the beginning of the revolution, and the main discourse of the revolution among its leaders only changed following the sectarian behavior exhibited by the regime towards the popular movement, which paved the way for the emergence of religious ideologies of varying degrees of radicalization. Perhaps, these emerging movements had underlying religious inclinations of varying degrees, but these inclinations were made worse due to the display of an opposing religious/sectarian response by the regime.

Prior to that, "faulty" developmental operations did their "preplanned" job perfectly and brought local societies back to their original loyalties and traditional social interpretations of religion, along with a regression in political work by Syrian religious authorities who kept away from political matters and prohibited disobedience "in many of their schools and teachings".

Later on, as the years passed and the confusion about the Syrian political situation increased, Syrians lost their "already minimal" trust in political authorities and their repre-

sentatives therein, in hopes of reaching political compromises that shaped the Syria of the future. The discussion on the relation of religion and its role in society and "government", in particular, became one of the matters that caused a lot of agreements and disagreements in the Syrian "social and political" scene after 2011. This came in parallel with the experiences that Syria went through during the last decade, from the emergence of a number of radical movements to the dominance of religious speech from the Syrian opposition, both "political and militant". This is in addition to the dispersion and displacement experienced by Syrians, and the return to original affiliations that ensured security and individual protection.

The divergence, divisiveness, and variety of religious speech on the social level was "necessarily" reliant on the political speech, as well as the political inclination of Syrians wherever they are. This was the basis for a space in which the discussion on "the identity of society and government" and its relation to religion became heard, read, and accepted within social norms.

In spite of the real-life attempts of establishing an "Islamic Caliphate", such as "ISIS" and the "Tahrir Al-Sham", which resulted in a government that facilitated civil, service-related, and economic matters as the "Salvation Government" in Idleb, the negative positions towards these experiments, "in their majority", indicated the presence of different understandings of the concept of religion, and particularly its political aspect, as well as its concrete efficiency on both the social and political levels.

What is most notable here is the existence of a common discourse among all parties on the concept of "sharia and Islamic legislation". However, each party addresses this discourse in its own way, which, in most cases, opposes that of the other parties. This method increases the validity of one party over others, especially where it receives support from "groups", supporters, religious institutions, authorities, etc.

Circling back to the beginning, Syrians have been displaced and forced to move to neighboring countries, Europe and other states, and they took with them their everyday behaviors and social lifestyle, as well as their religion. Syrians were differently impacted by their integration in their respective welcoming societies or the surroundings they found themselves in. Syria was divided into area "states" that each cancelled out the legitimacy of the

other (like the Damascus government, the temporary Syrian Government, the Salvation Government, The Democratic Syrian Forces Government).

Based on the above, this study aims to explore the relation between religiosity among Syrians (both on the personal and institutional level), as well as its effects on the adoption of some political ideologies over others and the reasons behind it, and the leanings towards some political choices and the reasons behind them. Our observations were based on the following:

1. The increasing importance of the role of religion in the personal and familial lives of Syrians.

2. The emergence of a pattern of religious "group representations" among Syrians and their impact on public life.

3. The impact of some religious figures and institutions on the tendencies of Syrians regarding public life, including political life.

2. The Importance of the Study

Based on intersecting field studies[5], two general observations were made:

1. The loss of trust in the political elite, particularly the one representing Syrians on the official level, i.e. "the opposition", and the lack of faith in its ability to reach political solutions that meet the ambitions of Syrians, "particularly the youth", and their perception of the Syria of the future.

2. The increase in the return to the religious system in its populist form, and its effects on the general tendencies in the perception of the political status of the Syria of the future through the connection of the governmental and societal identity with religion.

[5] - Reference was made to a lot of studies and field research published in Syrian research centers on the positions of Syrians from the political situation in Syria in all its complexities, and the general results of these studies and research were taken into consideration.

It is true that most studies did not delve into the relation between religion and politics and did not adopt it as its main research topic, but a part of their examination of the Syrian situation focused on some details of this variable.

Therefore, and based on the common discourse taking place, and in particular the one addressing the relation between the tendencies of Syrians towards the current and future political status, and the emergence of voices discussing the relation between religion and societal and governmental identity, the study of this relationship seemed important in the current atmosphere, as it could shed light on the common perceptions of public life in the Syria of the future. This, in addition to the following:

1. The increasing prevalence of the "religious perspective" in the everyday life of Syrians, which could be considered a "life philosophy", "in contrasting ways depending on their location", in a way that frames political choices within this perspective

2. The emergence of some influential Syrian religious figures and institutions, in parallel with the decrease in the common trust in political representatives and their efficiency in putting forth political solutions for the Syria of the future within Syrian communities, regardless of their location

3. Some religious movements undertaking an institutional format, made up of "schools and teachings", which indicates the existence of ideological projects as a result of the political vacuum

3. The Objectives of the Study

First and foremost, the study aims to examine the following:

1. The acting religious parties, from "figures to institutions", influencing the Syrian public opinion.

2. The "most influential" areas of political tension and polarization with a religious background impacting Syrians ideologically.

3. Religious inclination as a deciding factor in the political tendencies of Syrians.

4. The Study Questions

The study started from one main question that asked: does an individual's religiosity pattern and level impact the choices of Syrians in civil and political life?

It was then divided into a number of sub-questions, as follows:

1. What are the religiosity patterns among Syrians
2. What are the personality patterns among Syrians
3. What is the relation between religiosity patterns and personality patterns with the legislative and civil life in the Syria of the future
4. What is the relation between religiosity patterns, personality patterns, and the level of religious commitment with the choices relating to political life in the Syria of the future
5. What are the acting religious figures and institutions that make up an authority for the religiosity and personality patterns
6. What are the political figures and institutions that make up an authority for the religiosity and personality patterns
7. What is the position of Syrians towards different affiliations in Syria
8. What is the position of religiosity and personality patterns on the roles of women in political and religious institutions

5. The Concepts and Terms of the Study

1. Religiosity patterns: the degree at which individuals commit to the teachings, traditions, and practices of religious rituals
2. Commitment to religious ethical principles: the degree at which individuals commit to the system of principles coming from religious teachings

3. Separated: an official or psychological divorce, or a separation of two individuals within one household or within respective independent households without the existence of an official divorce

4. Original place of residence in Syria: the location in which an individual lived most of their life, and not their place of birth

5. Freedom of religious belief: an individual's choice to be religious or not to be

6. The Methodology of the Study

The study relies on a "descriptive analytical methodology" that aims to describe and explain the phenomenon examined by the study. This methodology relies on explaining the current situation and defining the current relations between variables. It also goes further into analyzing, linking, explaining, categorizing and measuring this data, and drawing conclusions from it.

The study uses a "survey" as its primary method of data collection, and it was designed based on the visual framework to cover all study variables. It aims to provide data and indicators on the different tendencies regarding the matters in question, and the relation with the interpreted "independent" variables.

a- Study Sample

In light of the absence of a clear and comprehensive "sample framework", the research still lacks accurate data on the multiple Syrian variables, particularly due to the constant geographical displacements that keep happening within short periods of time. Therefore, and in order to define the sample of the current study, we decided to resort to scientific methods of choosing the sample, and considered each area as its own research group, which leads us to one of the most scientific methods of choosing a sample, the Stephen Thompson [6] equation, which indicates the number represented per individual group at (384) units.

[6] - Hind Abou Hatab, Research Methodologies in Sociology, Dar Al Fajr, Cairo, 1997, page 195.

In fact, there is a number of equations to choose the size of the represented sample, such as the Robert Mason equation, the Richard Geiger equation, and the Herbert Arken equation, but the acceptable sample size for all these methods ranges from 1,300 to infinity. However, our sample consists of 300-385 individuals, and in order to avoid any confusion in calculation, we can indicate the sample at 400 units in each area. The total size of the sample in all seven areas of the study was 2,860 individuals.

We then relied on "quota sampling" for the study samples in the simulated distribution while taking into consideration some key independent variables, such as gender, educational level, professional status, social status, and original place of residence.

It should be noted here that the main variable of this study is (religion/sect), and this was what pushed us to change the balance value of the sample, due to study-specific scientific reasons. The locations under the control of the Syrian government (Damascus) had the biggest sample size in the study due to two main reasons: that the displacement and refugee movement of Syrians mainly affected the (Sunni) population, which meant that populations from other sects remained centered in areas under the control of the Damascus government; and seeing that faith is the main variable here, the representation of populations from other religious sects was taken into consideration, which resulted in the statistical distribution being unclear for the reader, thus prompting the need for this explanation.

Concerning the numbers related to the diversity of sects in Syria, we were only able to find one recent source that cited approximate numbers on the website of the "United States Embassy in Syria". Based on its "international report" on "religious freedom in Syria in 2020" [7], the percentages of religious components in Syria was as follows: 74% Sunnis, 13% Alawites, Shiites, Murshidis and Ismailis, 10% Christians, and 3% Druze.

As for the distribution of these religious groups within the current study, it was as follows: 65% Sunnis, 10% Christians, 10% Alawites, 10% Murshidis, Ismailis and Shiites, 3% Druze and 2% Yazidis.

[7] -Syria 2020 International Religious Freedom Report, United States Embassy in Syria. https://bit.ly/37DuCo0

b- Areas of the Study

The areas under the control of the Syrian regime, areas in northwestern Syria (Idleb and its suburbs), areas under the temporary Syrian government, areas in northeastern Syria (Syrian Democratic Forces), Turkey, Europe and neighboring countries.

c- Survey and Data Collection

The survey consisted of (23) questions categorized in sections as follows: (general data, i.e. “independent variables”, religion and personal status, religiosity and civil life, religiosity and political life).

As for the data collection process, it included (45) data collectors, made up of 24 women and 21 men in all areas of the study between May 25 and June 30, 2022. Data collectors received training for the survey and the survey-specific details and guidelines were explained to them.

d- Data Analysis

After the study data was collected, coded and unloaded, it was processed and analyzed to withdraw statistical conclusions using the “Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)”.

A number of statistical processes, tests, procedures, and relativity factors were referenced, according to what was required for the data and its analysis.

This was followed by a social analysis of the data based on the relativity factors it provided and on the social, cultural, and political interpretation of the relation between the study variables.

7- The Sociology of the Analysis

Data analysis here is based on the specific social analysis. For decades, Syrian social field studies, particularly those tackling the current life of Syrians of their future perceptions, focused on mere analytical statistical interpretations of the "dependent, independent, intermediate" and other variables. This analysis tendency was adequate for a number of phenomena, and was used to reach a lot of important conclusions that helped explain the situation in Syria. However, certain other phenomena needed interpretation and analysis in a more varied way, according to the nature of the phenomenon in question in the study.

Relying on a statistical "vertical" analysis in some studies that require a deeper look into the subject phenomenon, as well as taking the statistical number as a standard without discussing it or comparing it to other numbers that may be slightly less, makes for an incomplete analysis that is "at best" unable to prioritize some variables during the analysis process, and which is ultimately "correct" on the statistical level, but confusing on the interpretive sociological level.

The analysis in this study makes use of theoretical and analytical approaches of the French philosopher Louis Althusser who attempted to develop a way to analyze social, economic, and political structures through an interpretation that would allow the verticals to align and therefore permit their horizontal analysis. The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, who looked into the concepts of social fields and their contrasting "spaces" that have their own mechanisms independently of other fields and in parallel with the intersections of structures specific to each field. This means that, generally, the major and minor elements will be analyzed based on horizontal views to analyze field-specific relevant factors and phenomena.

Part II: Results of the Field Study

1- General Characteristics of the Study Sample

In what follows, we will view the general characteristics of the field study sample, divided by the main independent variables

1- Gender

The study sample was divided by gender as follows: 51.7% women and 48.3% men, as shown in Figure 1.

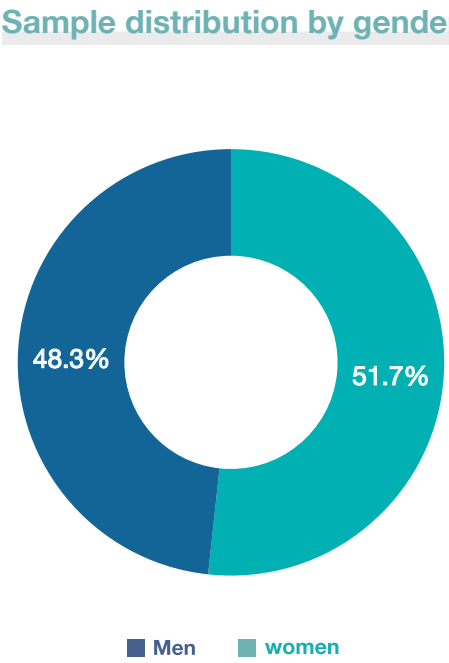

Figure 1 showing the distribution of the study sample by gender

2- Age group

The study sample was divided into multiple age groups, as shown in Figure 2.

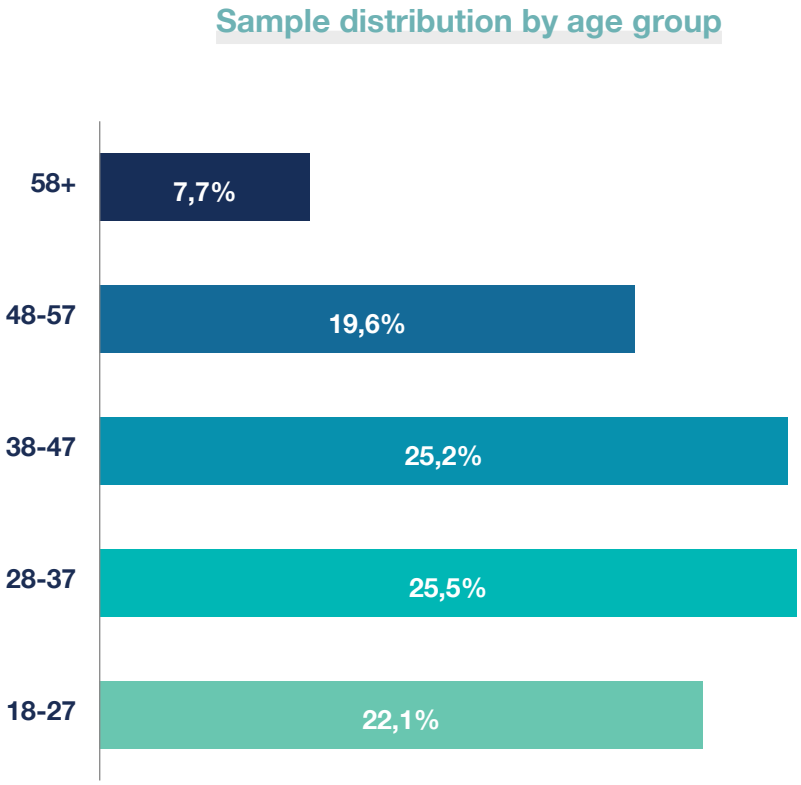

Figure 2 showing the distribution of the study sample by age group

3- Educational Level

The study sample was divided to multiple educational levels, as shown in Figure 3:

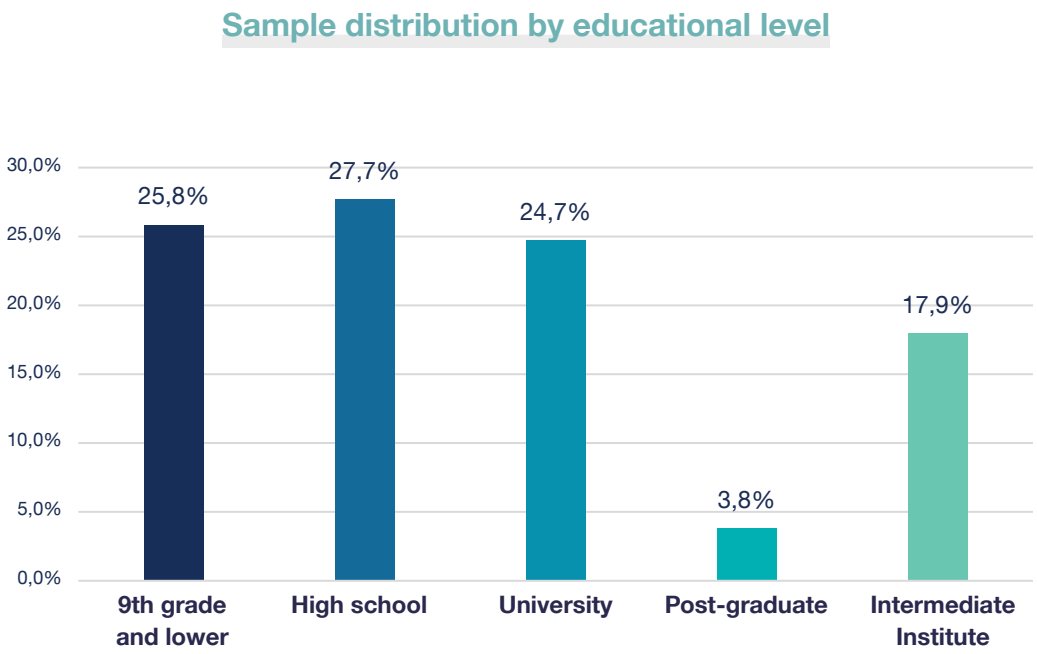

Figure 3 showing the distribution of the study sample by educational level

4- Social Status

Figure 4 showing the distribution of the study sample by social status

5- Current Place of Residence

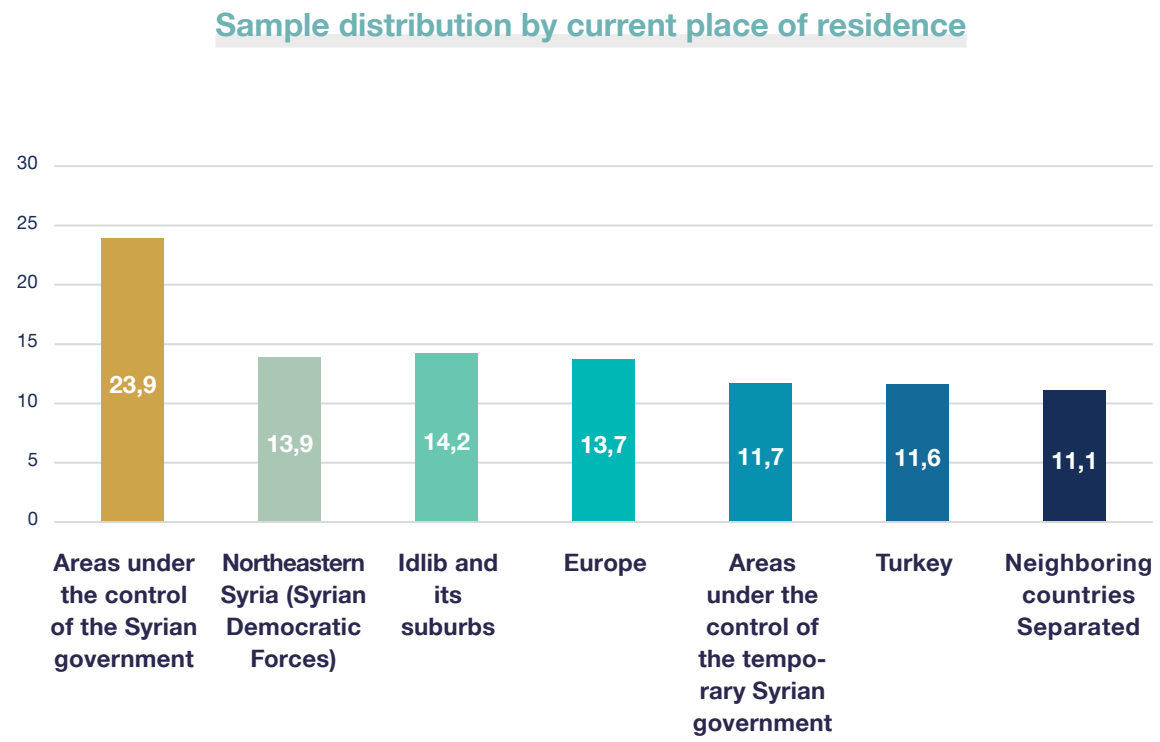

Figure 5 showing the distribution of the study sample by current place of residence

The study sample was distributed over multiple areas where Syrians are located, as is shown in the figure above. The biggest percentage of the sample was living in the areas under the control of the Syrian government in Damascus (view the study sample paragraph).

As for the areas outside of Syria, the sample in Europe was distributed as follows: 3.9% in Germany and France, 2.9% in Sweden, 2.7% in the Netherlands, 0.2% in Austria, and 0.1% in Belgium. As for the areas in neighboring countries, the sample was distributed as follows: 11.6% in Turkey, 7% in Lebanon, 2.1% in Jordan, 2% in Iraq (Kurdistan Region).

6- Original Place of Residence

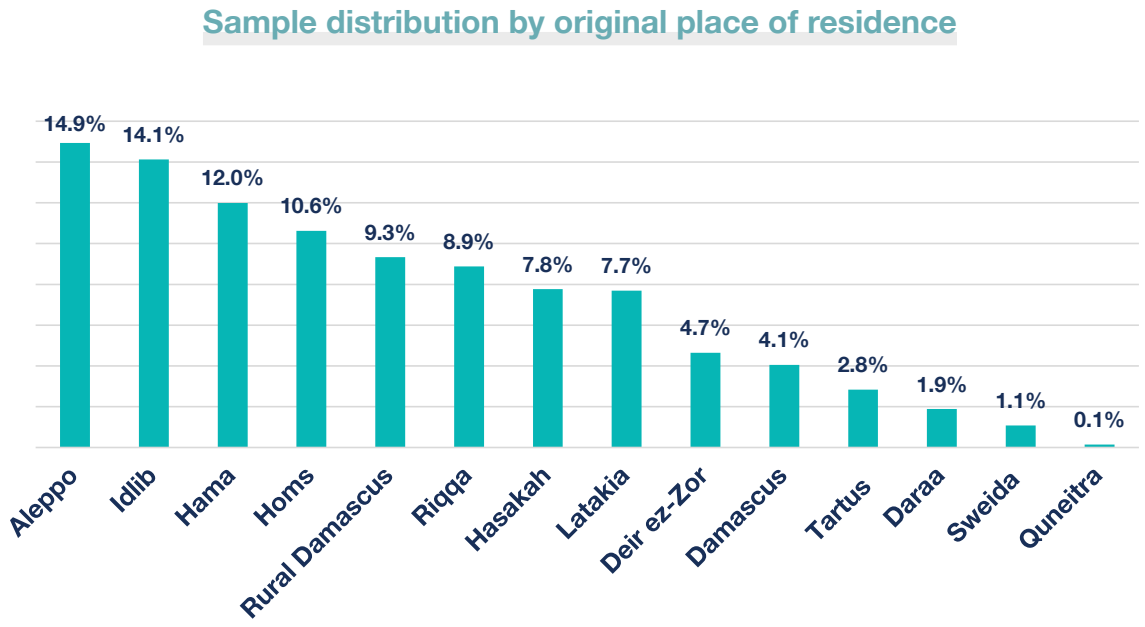

Figure 6 showing the distribution of the study sample by original place of residence

7- Professional Status

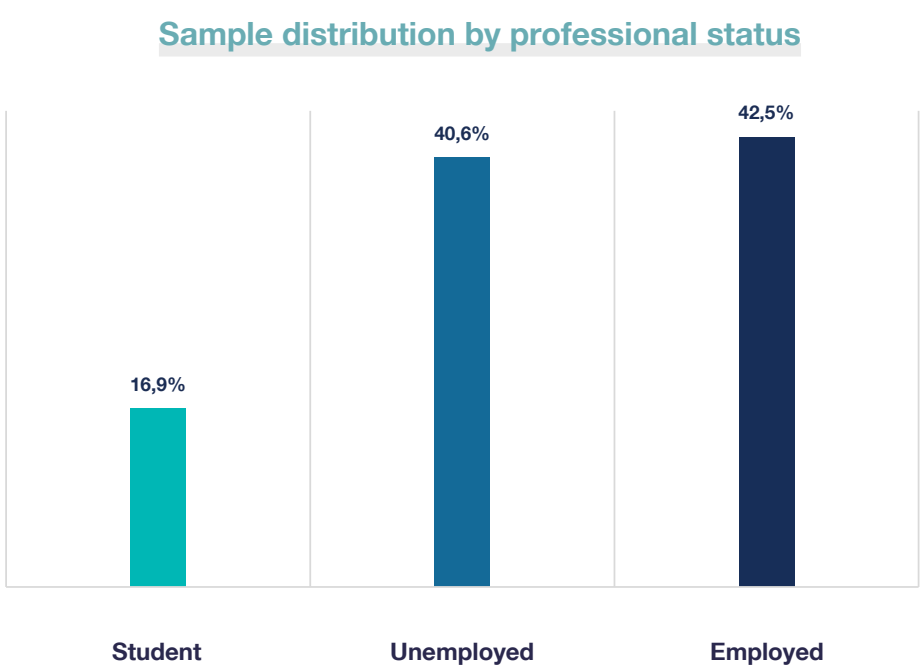

Figure 7 showing the distribution of the study sample by professional status

8- Religion and Sect

The balanced representation of religions and sects in Syria[8] was taken into consideration, based on formal data "available" on the percentage of sects in the Syrian religious composition, based on which the respective representation of those religions and sects was calculated. This is shown in figure 8:

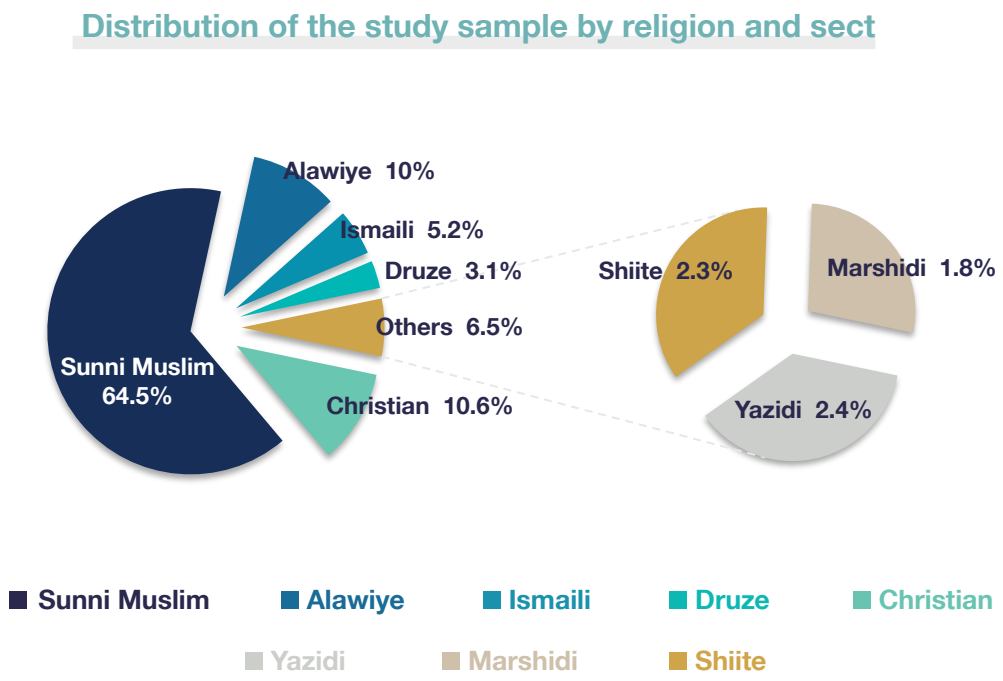

Figure 8 showing the distribution of the study sample by religion and sect

The result tool attached to the report can be reviewed through The Day After's website to view the most relevant results and their intersection with the main study variables.

[8] - The study relied on the representation of religious sects only, whereas patterns that refuse religiosity or religious sects were not taken into consideration, in order to avoid any confusion resulting from semantics or structure, as is the case for terms like (atheism and agnosticism). The non-religious pattern was represented as one of the available options that were extracted from the scale we designed.

2- Different Religiosity Patterns... Mostly Moderate

Based on a scale of 4 units (values) related to: religious practices and traditions, teachings of religions and sects, and their relevance in the sample's behavior, and starting at 0 on a four-part scale, the religiosity patterns of the study sample were extracted statistically "based on a weighting process".

Values or religious expressions mentioned herein express a pattern of commitment to, and practice of, religious teachings and traditions of a certain religion or religious sect that the participant belongs to in their daily life.

Religiosity patterns were divided into the four following patterns: non-religious, slightly religious, moderately religious and «highly» religious.

Through a statistical "weighting" process, the level of practice of religious traditions and norms for each religion or sect was defined in numeric values. Four religiosity patterns emerged, as mentioned in the text.

It is important to note that the different religiosity patterns here indicate the "level" at which an individual commits to the practice of the traditions of their respective religion or sect, while a low level of commitment does not indicate flexibility nor does a high level indicate extremism. We are strictly speaking of a "pattern" of personal commitment to religious teachings, and therefore we have added a "non-religious" category to include the lowest level of commitment to religious teachings.

The scale results were as follows:

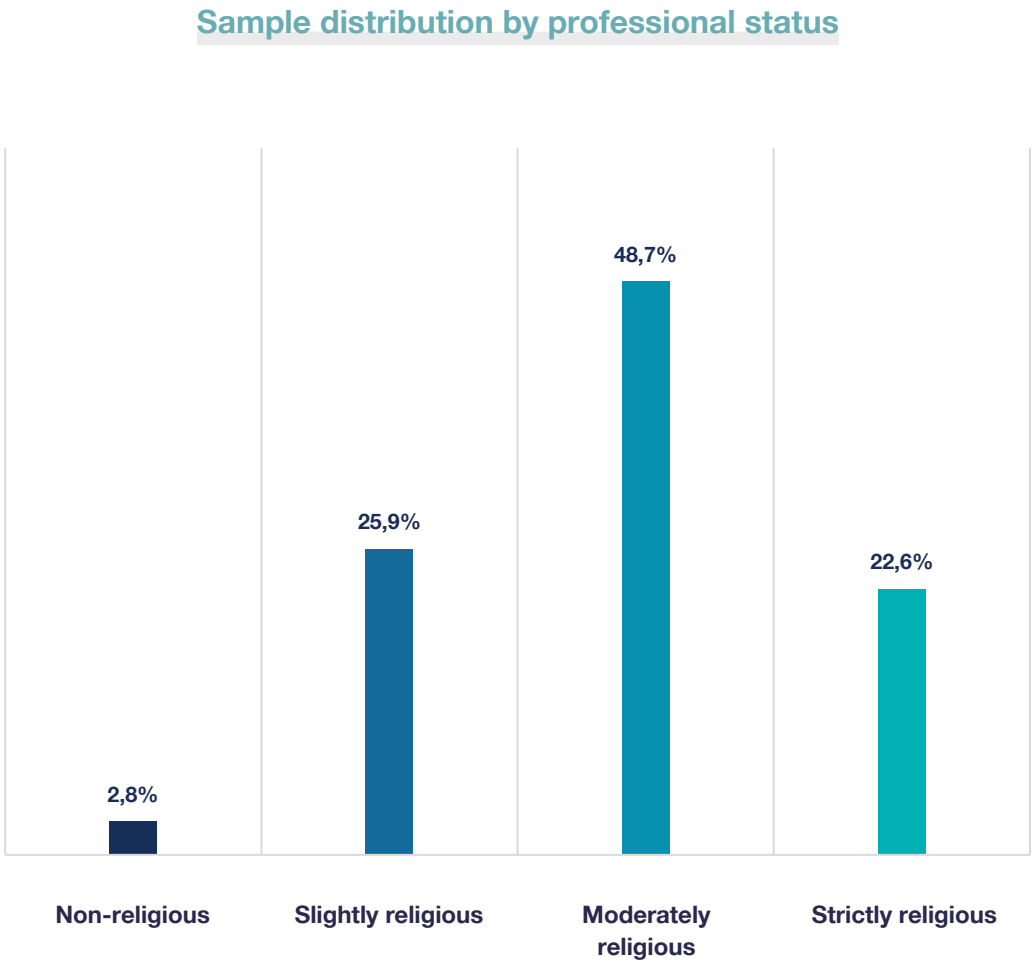

Figure 9 showing the distribution of the study sample by religiosity patterns

As is shown in figure 9, the study results showed a dominance of the moderately religious pattern, reaching 48.7% of the total number of Syrians in the study sample, and the smallest percentage was for the non-religious pattern at 2.8%.

As for the relation between religiosity patterns and gender, field results showed the dominance of the moderately religious pattern for both genders, with a slight increase in the percentage of the “non-religious” pattern among men over women, as shown in figure 10.

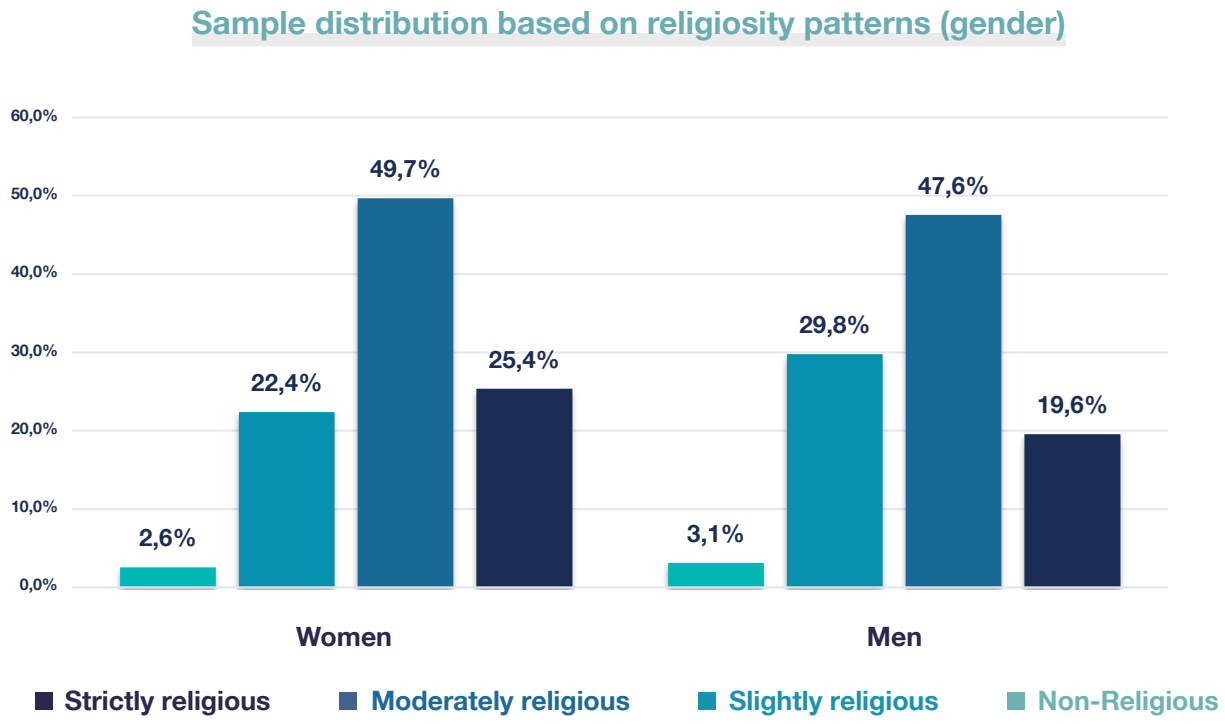

Figure 10 showing the relation between religiosity patterns and gender

As for the relation between religiosity patterns and age groups, field results showed a dominance of the moderately religious pattern for all age groups. The 18-27 age group uniquely showed a high percentage in the slightly religious category at 32.5%, with this being the highest percentage for this pattern across all age groups. As for the strictly religious pattern, it was highest among the age group ranging from 58 years and older, and the non-religious category was the highest in the 18-27 and 58 years and older age ranges, respectively at 3.5% and 3.6%, as shown in table 1 and figure 11.

Table 1 showing religiosity patterns in relation to age groups

Religiosity pattern	18-27	28-37	38-47	48-57	58+
Non-religious	3.5%	2.2%	2.9%	2.5%	3.6%
Slightly religious	32.5%	28.7%	25.8%	18.6%	17.3%
Moderately religious	49.3%	51.7%	48.9%	46.6%	41.4%
Strictly religious	14.7%	17.4%	22.4%	32.3%	37.7%
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

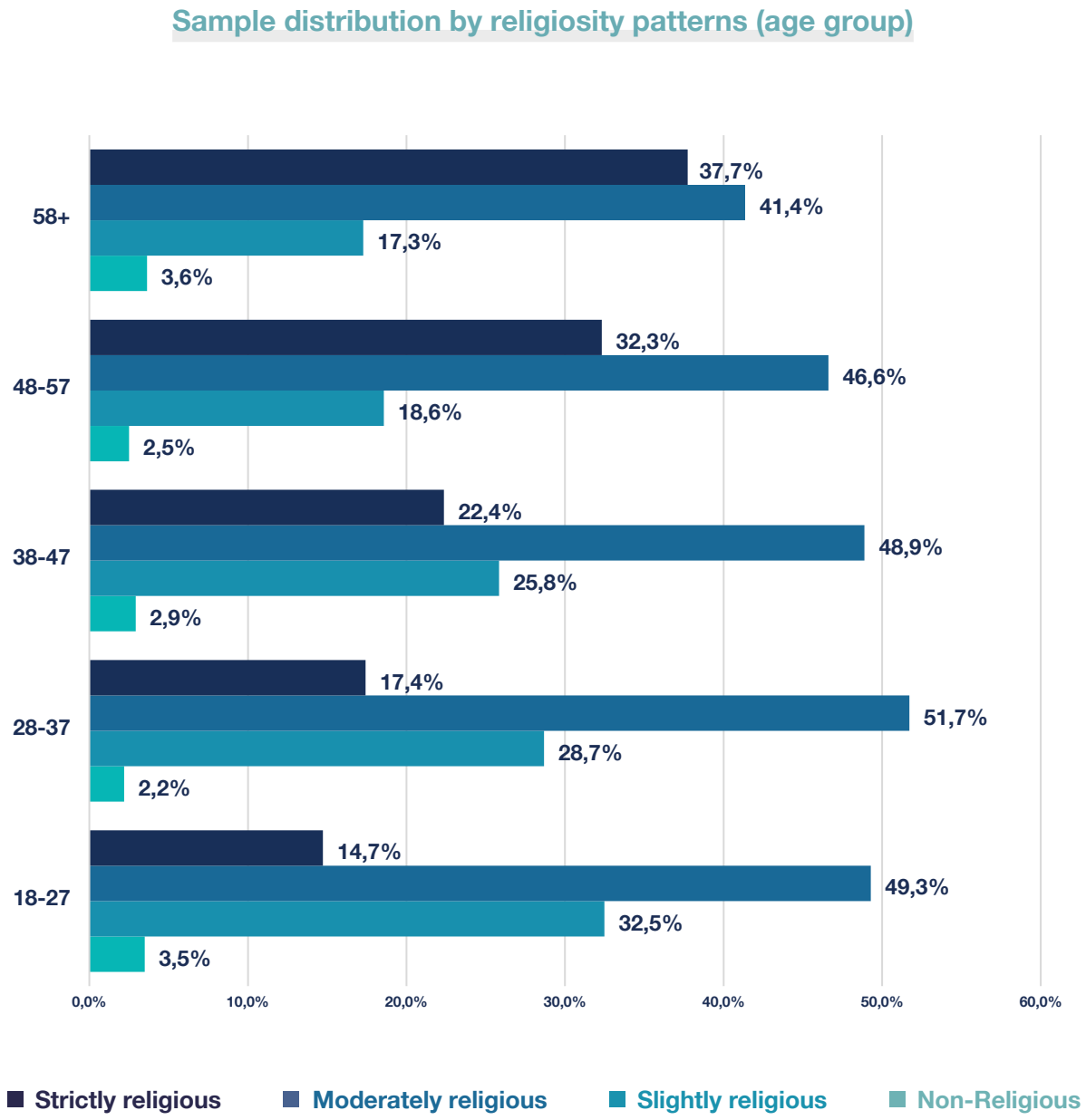

Figure 11 showing the relation between religiosity patterns and age groups

As for the relation between religiosity patterns and religion and religious sect, the results of the scale showed the religiosity patterns for each specific religion or sect, as shown in figure (12).

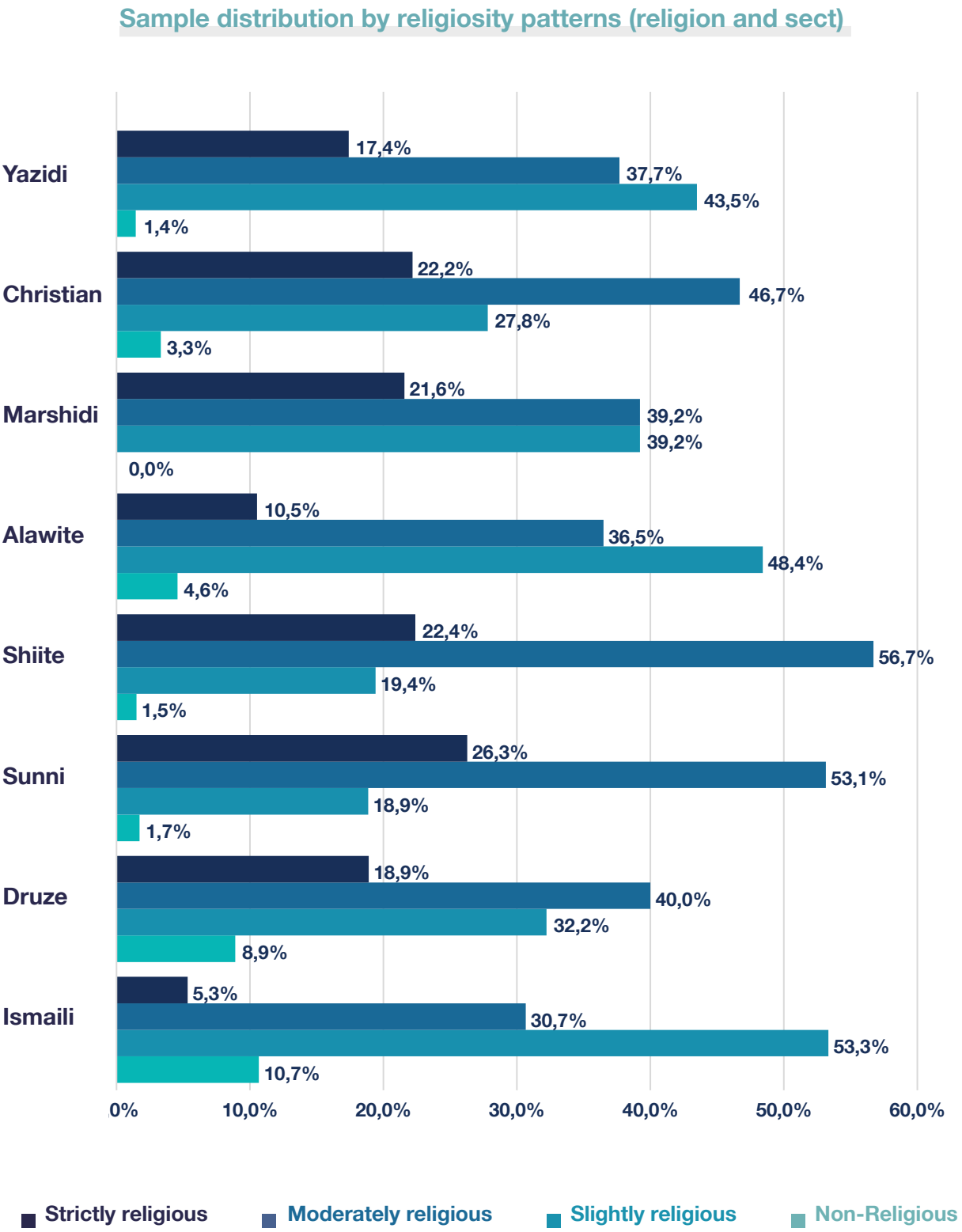

Figure 12 showing the relation between religiosity patterns and religious sects

In detail, the rate of the strictly religious category for all religions and sects was “generally” low, in exception of the “Ismaili” category where its percentage was very low at only 5.3%, as shown in figure 13.

However, although these rates are considered statistically low, they do indicate a clear increase “on the religious and social level”, particularly when it comes to the relation between religious traditions and practices and the values and positioning in some cases within the framework of religion and sect.

In all cases, it is not possible to describe the increase of one religiosity pattern here over another as a “positive or negative”, especially if it is not related to a political ideology or methodology that comes into play in the “etiquette of daily life” and civil and political positions, meaning that we can see the possibility to separate the religious aspect as “values, teachings, and spiritual and psychological values” from the «humanitarian” aspect, which is what historically characterizes Syrian religiosity in general.

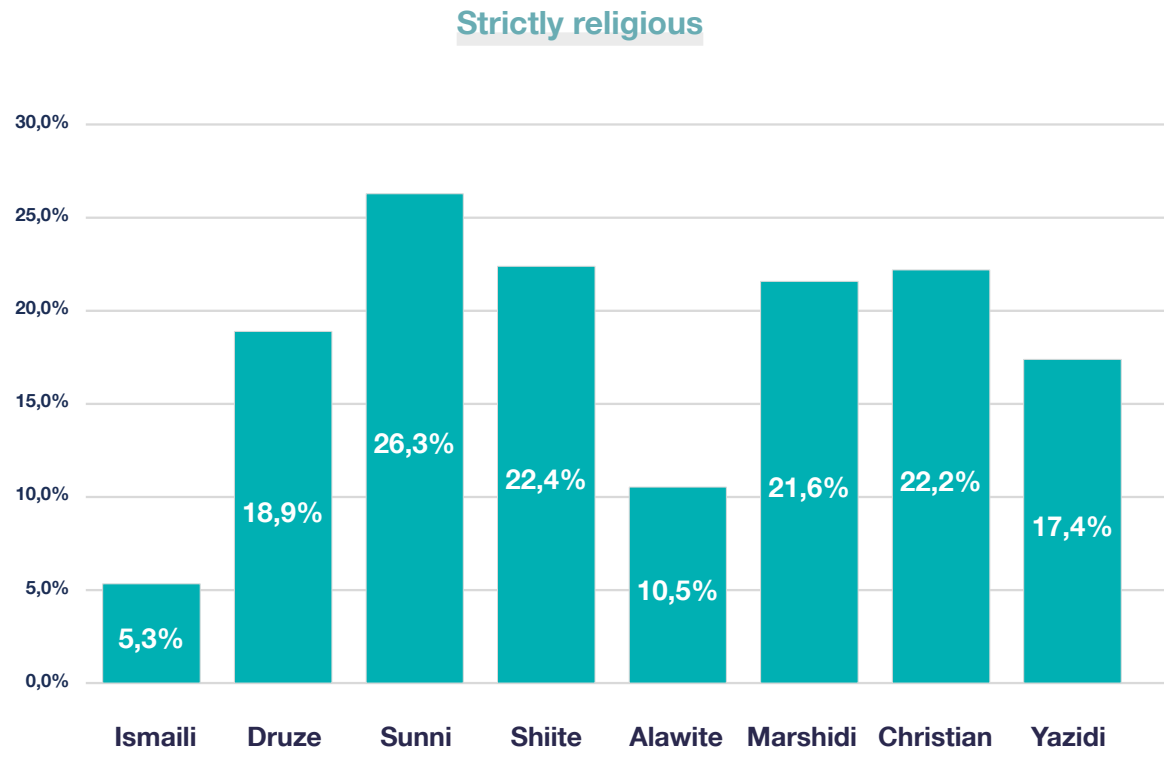

Figure 13 showing the relation between the strictly religious pattern and religion and sect

Alternatively, figure 14 shows that the dominant religiosity pattern for all religious components is the moderately religious pattern, which was high for Sunnis, known “in Syria’s recent history at least” for their flexibility and separation between religious and economic matters, as described by “Sadeq Jalal Al-Athm” as the “Islam of business”. Surely, this is not the case for their relation with politics, which is the main issue of Syrian religiosity, especially “in Damascus and, at a lesser degree, Aleppo”, as it tries to align the power of religion with political authority. This problem became especially clear because of the interference of the familial system in ruling Syria during the time of Hafez Al Assad.

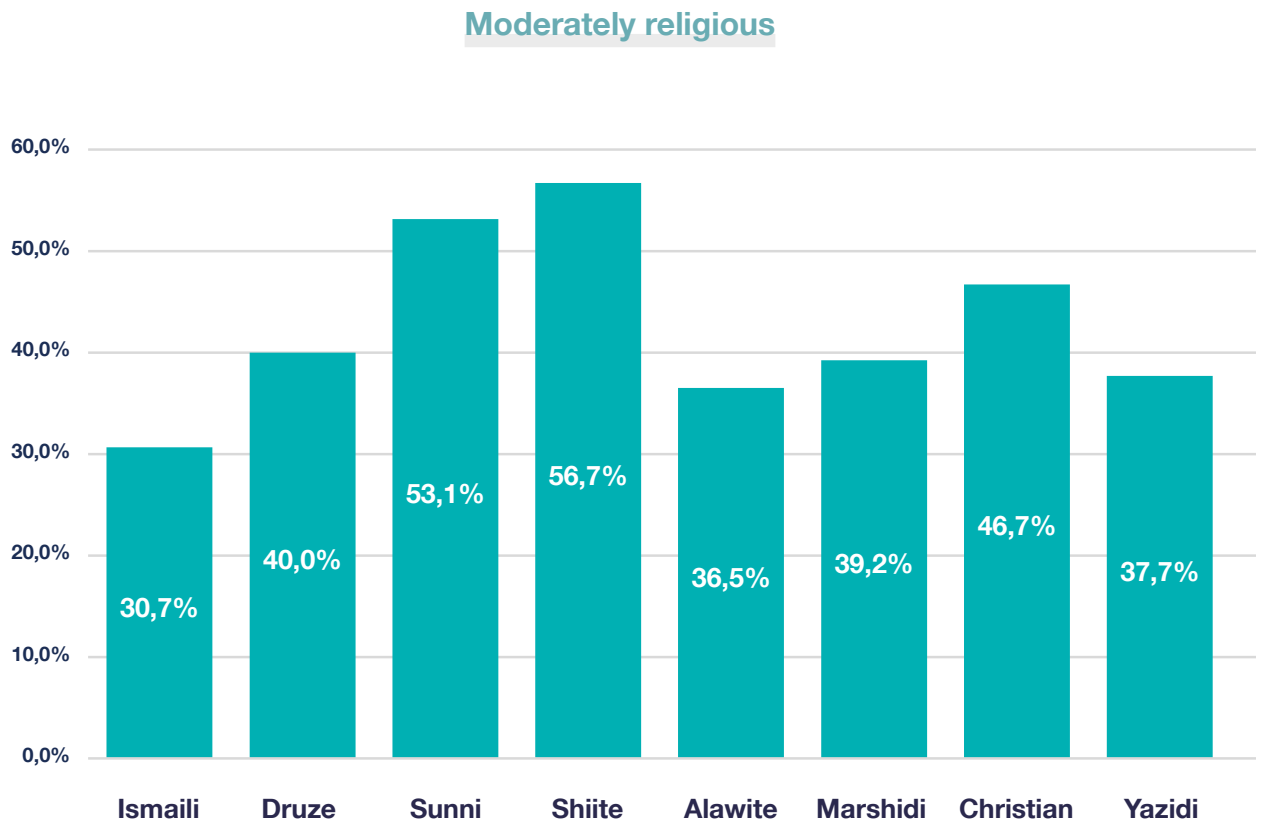

Figure 14 showing the relation between the moderately religious pattern and religious sects

“According to the scale”, rates decreased for the slightly religious category, while the highest rate was reflected among Ismailis, followed by Alawites and Yazidis, as shown in figure 15.

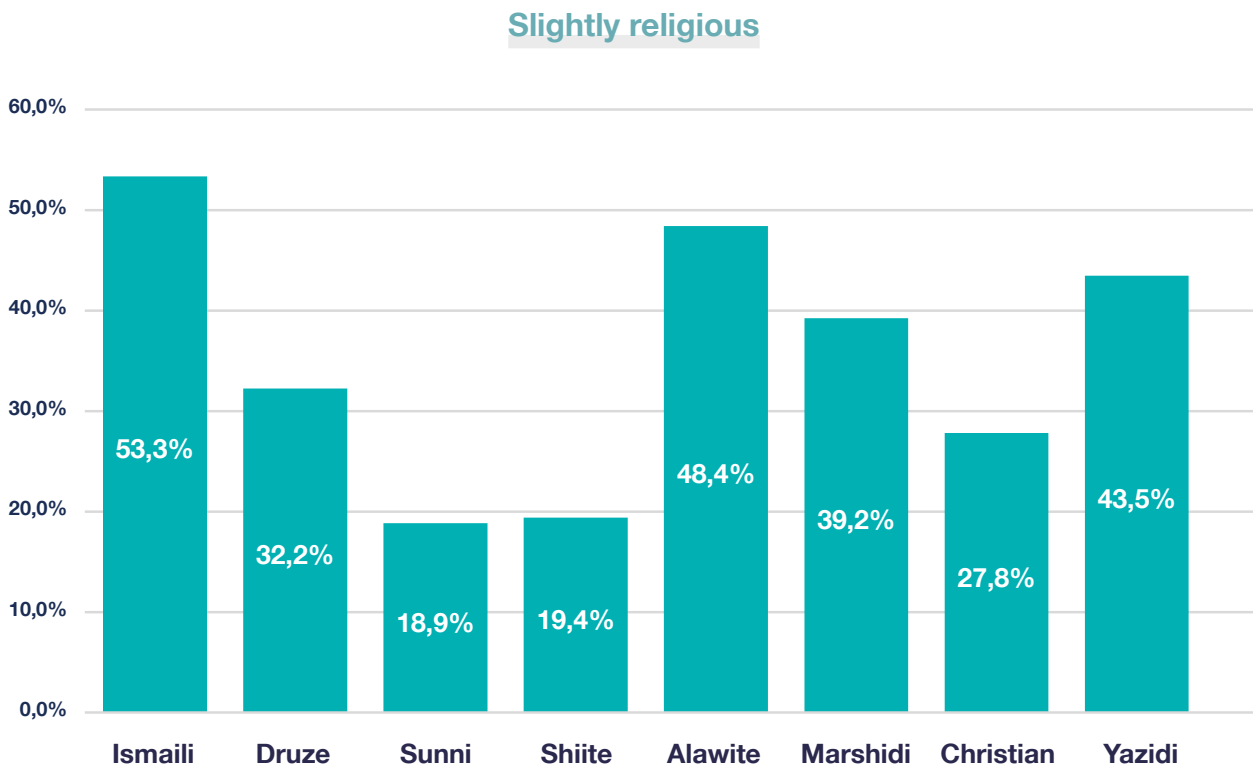

Figure 15 showing the relation between the slightly religious pattern and religious sects

Ismailis also maintained the lead for the "non-religious" pattern, followed by the Druze. As for the rest of the religions and sects, they showed low levels of this pattern, in exception of the Murshidis where the rate was actually 0%, as shown in figure 16.

Multiple factors intermingle in the representation of a Syrian religiosity pattern, especially that it has been over a decade since the Syrian revolution started and Syria entered an internal armed conflict. Perhaps the particularity of Ismailis in their lack of commitment to religion in the daily life of the "study sample" could be attributed to their obvious lack of contact, or their "conflict", with other religions and sects when it comes to religious matters, which is a question that still has current consequences, as is the case for Shiites and Alawites for example.

In spite of some incidents of sectarian/class conflicts in Syria's recent history between Ismailis and Alawites in particular, the distance that Ismailis tend to keep between themselves and all other religions has rendered their relation with "other" Syrians flexible.

That is in addition to the political activism in their main city “Salamiyah”, especially due to the presence of the leftist movement and many opposing parties to the political regime on the level of the dominant atmosphere in the region.

Another contributing factor is the tendency of the sect’s mawla/imam, i.e. its highest figure, to encourage coexistence and integration with other religious groups, noting here the important role of the lack of “explicit and implicit” religious political projects by Ismailis.

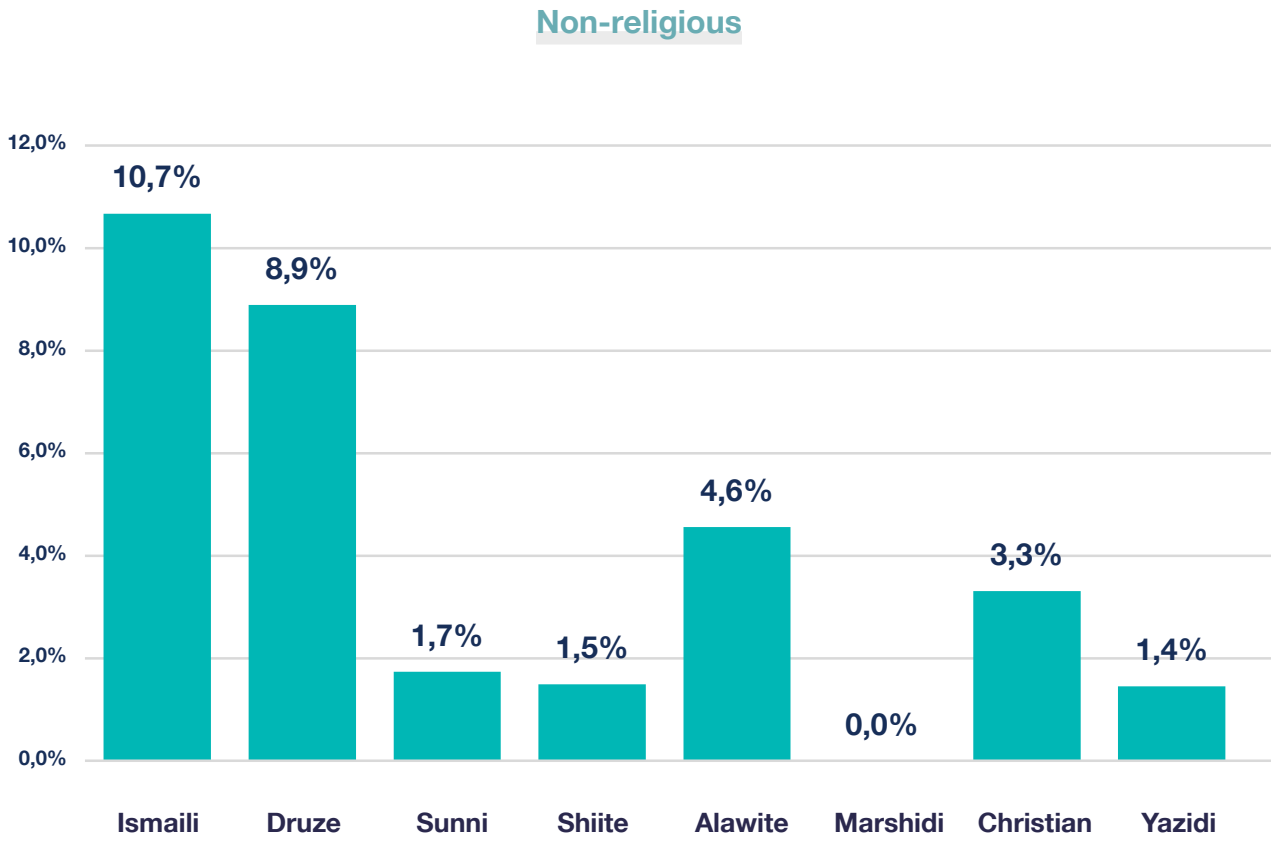

Figure 16 showing the relation between the non-religious pattern and religious sects

As for the relation with the educational level, the most dominant pattern across all educational levels was the moderately religious pattern, whereas the strictly religious pattern appeared in its highest rate in the category of 9th grade or lower, with high levels in other categories, particularly the category of university and post-graduate levels. The post-graduate category showed the highest rates of a slightly religious pattern, whereas the non-religious pattern had its highest rate among the university and post-graduate levels, as shown in figure 17.

Table 2 showing the relation between religiosity patterns and educational levels

Religiosity pattern	9th grade and lower	High school	Intermediate Institute	University	Post-graduate
Non-religious	1.1%	2.9%	2.9%	4.4%	3.7%
Slightly religious	18.1%	28.7%	26.7%	28.7%	37.6%
Moderately religious	48.2%	49.5%	51.9%	47.4%	39.4%
Strictly religious	32.6%	18.9%	18.5%	19.5%	19.3%
	100	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

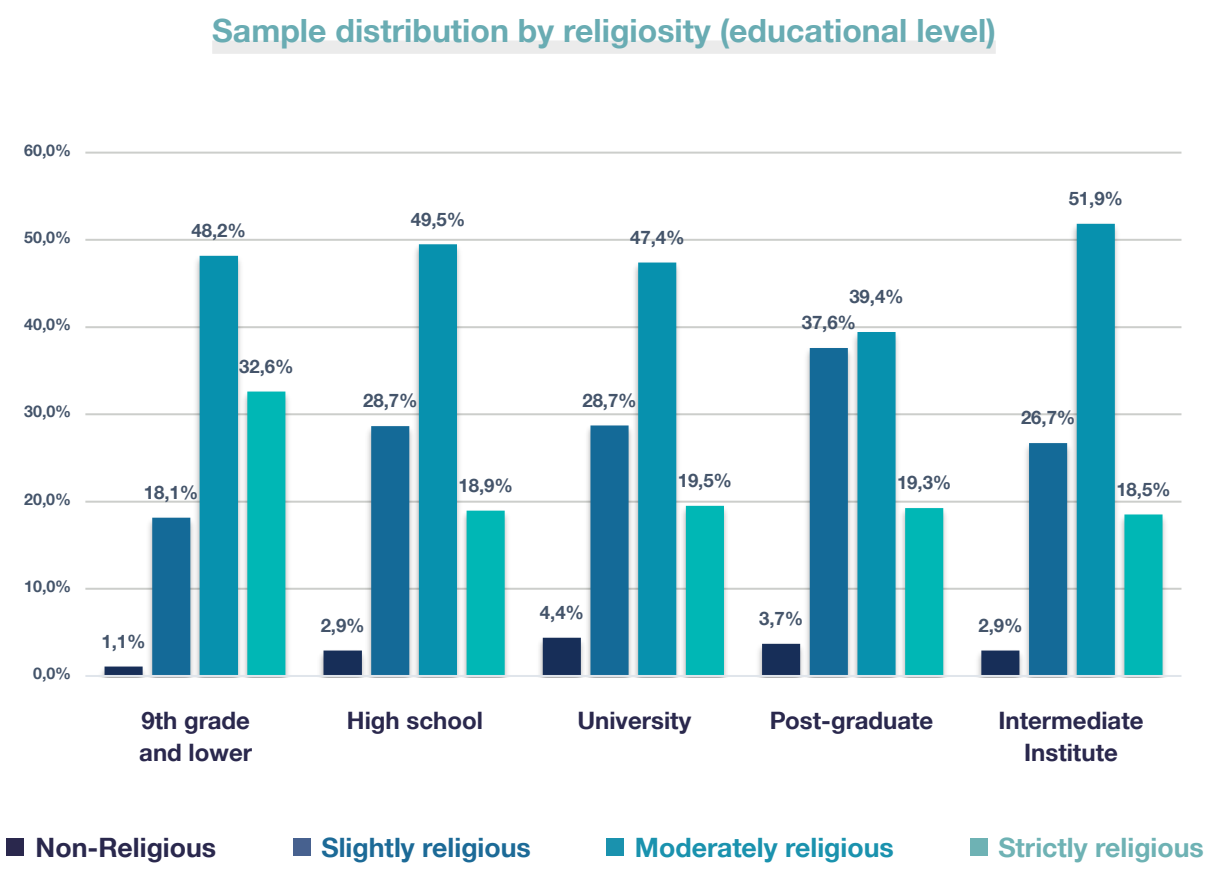

Figure 17 showing the relation between religiosity patterns and educational levels

As a general note, the educational level variable seems to play a deciding role in the link between religiosity patterns and low or high educational levels. In fact, linking both variables with a directly proportional relation is often a preconception that tends to portray religion as "strictly" opposed to education, which is generally true in practice.

For instance, many individuals in higher education are able to separate their knowledge and professions from the religious and sentimental aspects of their lives. However, them exhibiting moderately or strictly religious patterns is not a negative indicator, "if religiosity were considered negative by some individuals", considering that the tendency to describe religiosity and education as "two opposing matters" stems from a political and ideological conception, enforced by the calls to separate religion from one's daily lifestyle.

As for the relation between religiosity patterns and the current place of residence of study participants, the scale results were as follows:

Table 3 showing the relation between religiosity patterns and current places of residence

Religiosity pattern	Syrian government (Damascus)	Temporary government	Idleb and its suburbs	North-western Syria	Arab neighboring countries	Turkey	Europe
Non-religious	2.8%	-	-	-	0.3%	4.2%	12.0%
Slightly religious	36.3%	19.8%	8.6%	19.6%	16.0%	26.9%	44.6%
Moderately religious	42.3%	53.9%	64.7%	49.4%	52.5%	47.7%	35.7%
Strictly religious	18.6%	26.3%	26.7%	31.0%	31.1%	21.1%	7.7%
	100	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Sample distribution by religiosity patterns (current place of residence)

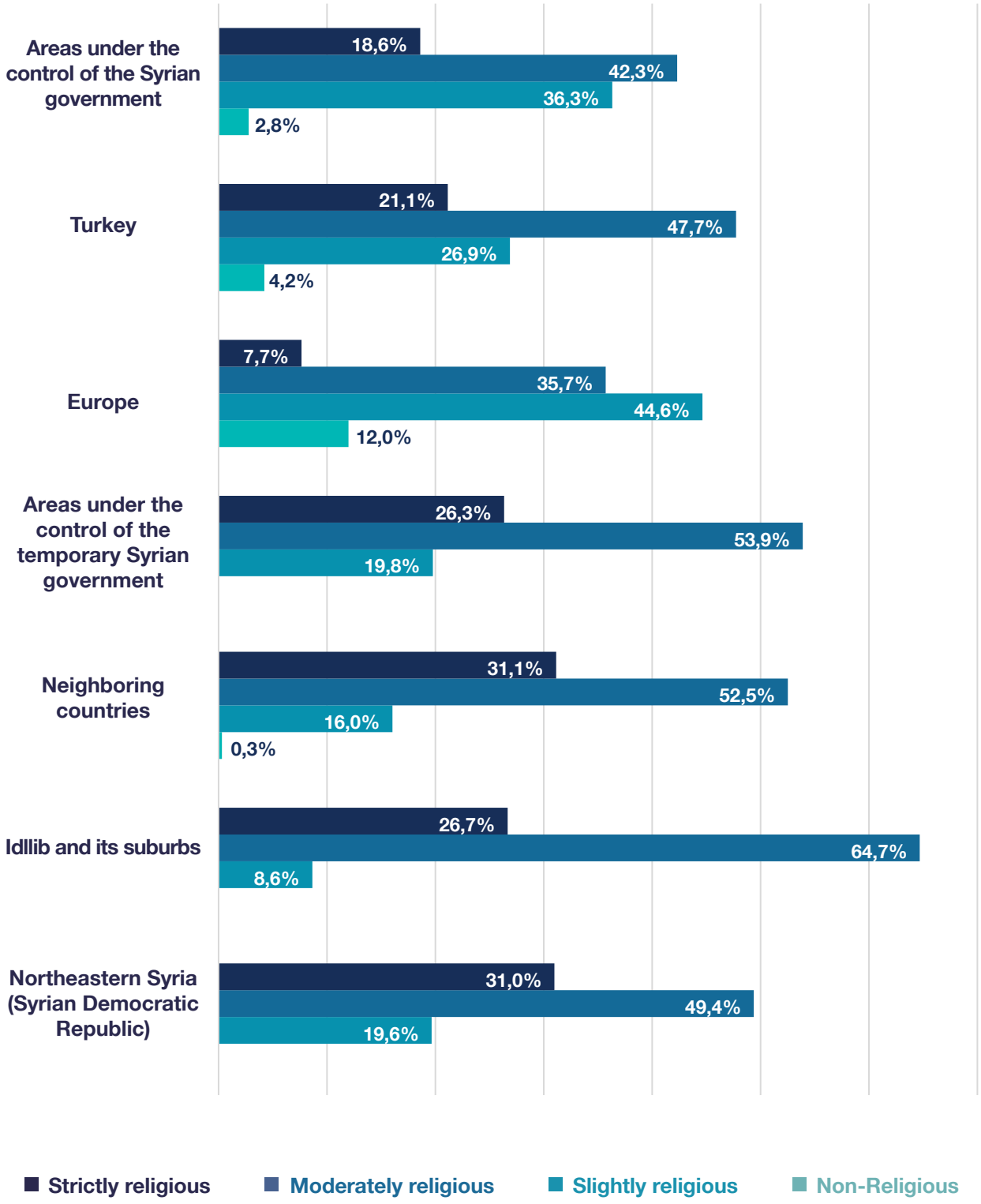

Figure 18 showing the relation between religiosity patterns and current places of residence

The moderately religious pattern was dominant in the study regions, in exception of Europe first, and the areas under the control of the Syrian government (Damascus) and Turkey second. The non-religious pattern was at its highest in Europe, and this may be due to the existence of personal freedom to adopt any religiosity pattern without the existence of social or cultural pressure that forces an individual to exhibit certain religious behaviors to appease their surroundings.

This perception is emphasized by the appearance of this pattern, albeit to a lower degree, in Turkey and areas under the control of the Syrian government (Damascus), as well as by its very low rates in the Arab neighboring countries, and its total absence in the areas under the control of the temporary government, Idleb and its suburbs, and northeastern Syria, which are generally dominated by traditional social patterns where social solidarity is mainly driven by religiosity on one hand, and through imposing religious traditions that individuals regularly commit to on the other.

Furthermore, the strictly religious pattern also appeared in a high rate in the areas under the control of the temporary government, northeastern Syria, and neighboring countries (Lebanon, Jordan, and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq).

However, it is not possible to always rely on numbers and take them as constants. For instance, there appears to be a significant rate of the strictly religious pattern in Europe at 7.7% and in areas under the control of the Syrian government (Damascus) at 18.6%, as shown in figure 18.

These numbers and rates reflect the general relation of religion to the daily life of Syrians. Alternatively, considering that this is a sensitive topic where sentimentalism comes into play in people's beliefs, and along with all the political and social variables and the relation with welcoming societies, it is not possible to solely rely on higher rates and analyze them. It is important to take them into consideration, but this is in addition to the individual differences and specific factors of the appearance of varying religiosity patterns between Syrian groups in similar geographical areas.

As for the relation between religiosity patterns and professional status, the scale results shown in figure 19 reflected the dominance of a moderately religious pattern among stu-

dents, as well as employed and unemployed individuals. The rate of the slightly religious pattern reached its highest rate among students, at 33.1%, whereas the strictly religious pattern was at its highest among unemployed individuals, at 28.2%, and the non-religious pattern was at its highest among employed individuals, but at only a slight difference in comparison to the categories of students and unemployed individuals.

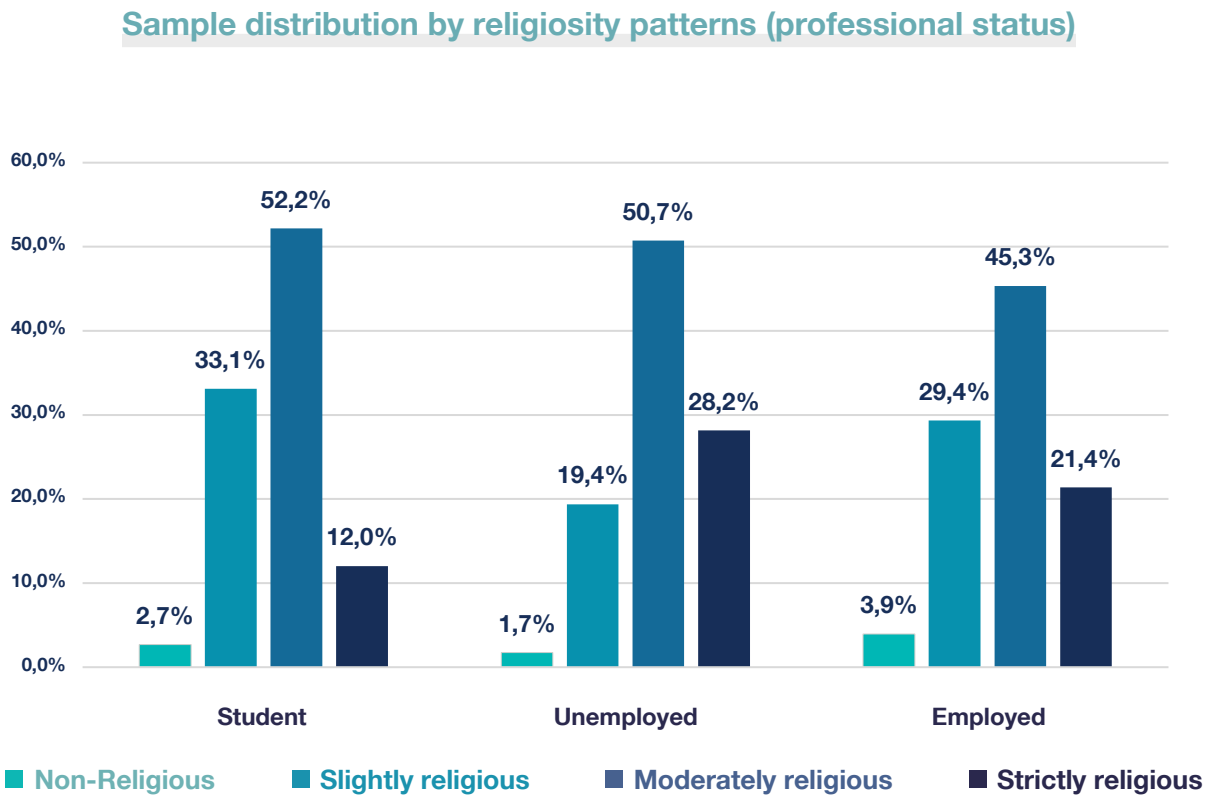

Figure 19 showing the relation between religiosity patterns and professional status

3- Syrian Personality Patterns… Positively Open-Minded

A scale of five expressions (values) relating to an individual's relation to others (religiously) on the level of social and educational relations, marriage, work (in parallel to the religious or sectarian background in making the decisions of the mentioned relations). The Syrian personality patterns of the study sample were extracted based on a statistical weighting process.

The values and expressions that play a major role in an individual's relation with others from different religions or sects express the levels of their acceptance and openness to enter into relationships with these "others" in their private life.

Personality patterns based on an individual's relationship with others were divided into the five following patterns: highly open-minded, open-minded, slightly open-minded, close-minded, highly close-minded

Through a statistical weighting process, we granted numerical scores to each level of agreement with others who are from different religions or sects than the participants. The five personality patterns mentioned in the text were hence extracted.

The scale relied on the values of the levels of open-mindedness and close-mindedness, and was labeled the "Syrian personality pattern", which covers the values we are taking into consideration and which can be summed up as: the pattern and level of open-mindedness among Syrians in their relationship with the different other when it comes to social, educational, and practical matters.

It is important to note here that personality patterns indicate the "level" of acceptance that an individual adopts in their relationships with others from different religions or sects, without generally characterizing someone's personality as open-minded or close-minded outside of this one specific variable.

The scale results were as follows:

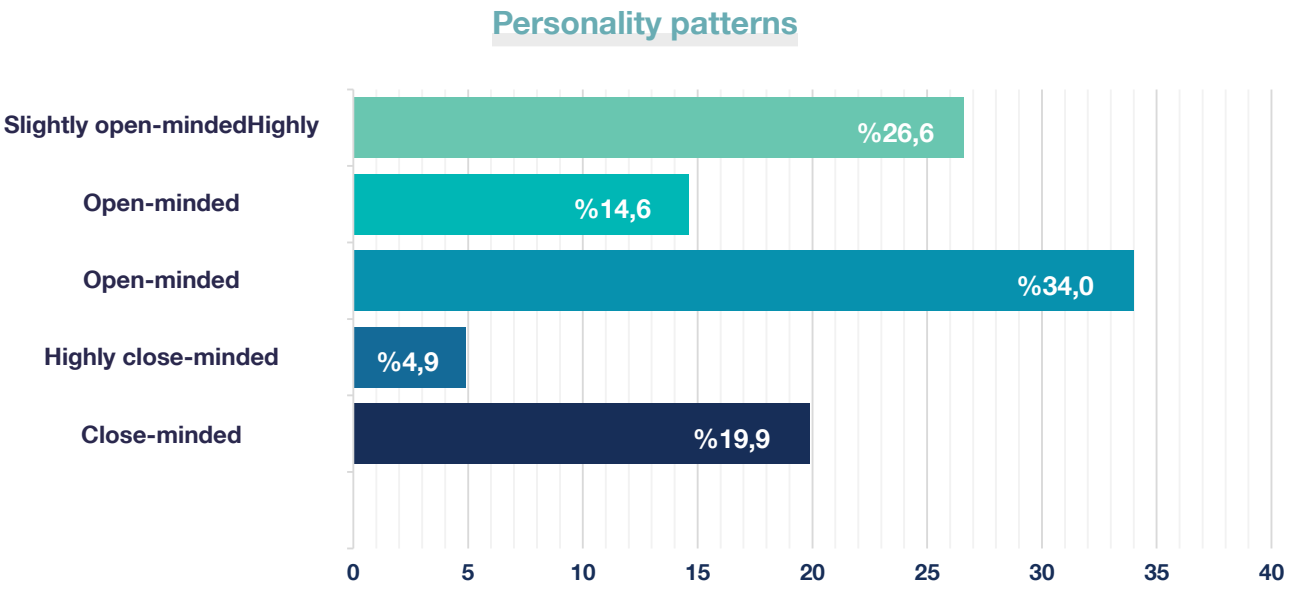

Figure 20 showing personality patterns among the study sample

The most dominant personality pattern[9] among Syrians in the "study sample", as shown in figure 20, was the open-minded category which accepts relations with others when it comes to social and economic issues and matters of daily life (highly open-minded, slightly open-minded and open-minded at 75.2%). This indicates that the religion or sect of "others" is not considered a deciding variable in the type of relationship with them, especially that the scale was based on the participants' preferences when it comes to the abovementioned relationships.

After over a decade of the existence of the "Syrian question", these "personality" results are considered a positive indicator for the Syria of the future and for achieving justice mechanisms and bridging the gap made by the displacement of the Syrian population due to mutual "exclusion" policies among all components, mainly caused by the political regime.

[9] -The scale relied on the values of open-mindedness and close-mindedness, which we will call in short terms the "Syrian personality pattern", which covers the values we are taking into consideration, which are: the level of openness among Syrians in their relationship with others on social, educational, and practical matters.

Table 4 showing the relation between religiosity patterns and personality patterns

Personality pattern	Religiosity pattern				
	Non-religious	Slightly religious	Moderately religious	Strictly religious	
Close-minded	-	7.5%	57.2%	35.3%	100
Highly close-minded	-	3.5%	39.0%	57.4%	100
Open-minded	3.4%	33.4%	48.8%	14.4%	100
Highly open-minded	11.3%	49.6%	31.9%	7.2%	100
Slightly open-minded	0.1%	21.3%	53.2%	25.4%	100

It should be noted that an individual's personality pattern is not linked to religion, at least not as a main variable, but it is determined by social and personal factors and experiences, as well as the existing local memory and community perceptions. Therefore, we will later see a difference in position between religiosity and personality patterns towards civil and political issues.

As for the relation between personality and religiosity patterns, the levels of open-mindedness and close-mindedness were aligned with the general religiosity pattern among Syrians in the "study sample", once again showing that Syrian religiosity and personality patterns are in the "moderate" category when it comes to different aspects of daily life, noting here that we have excluded the political variable for technical reasons "as its relation with religiosity and personality patterns will be detailed in later sections".

Therefore, the current discussion looks into the map of social and economic relations with others, outside of political positions and ideologies in their broad concept.

As for the relation between personality patterns and religion or religious sect, open-mindedness in its "three levels" was the dominant pattern among the study sample, with the observation of the existence of a close-minded pattern for Shiites, Murshidis, and Yazidis. Among Shiites and Murshidis, this pattern may be due to the nature of their sect and their relatively small size compared to other sects in Syria, whereas the appearance of this pattern among Yazidis may be understood due to the events they endured during the period of ISIS control of the areas where they lived, as this caused a severe friction between them and other religious components. This is shown in figure 21.

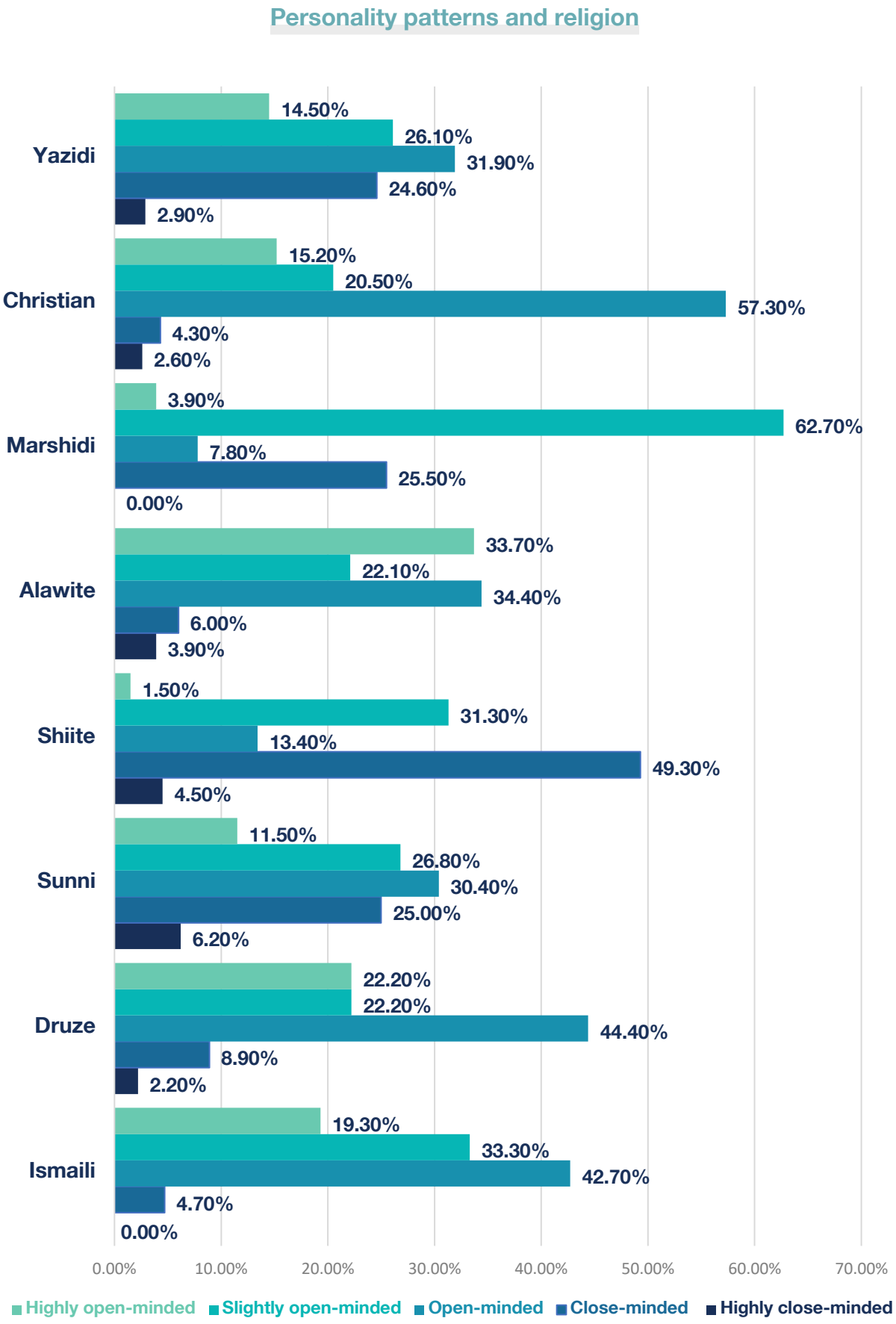

Figure 21 showing the relation between personality patterns and religion and religious sects

The educational level played a major role here, for the higher the educational level, the higher was the level of open-mindedness in an individual's relationship with others, and vis-versa. This is also the case of the professional status, where the levels of open-mindedness aligned with the professional status of the individuals. This makes sense considering that some educational and professional environments require individuals to maintain relationships with a diverse group of individuals from different religions, ethnicities, and ideologies. Men in the sample showed a clear higher level of open-mindedness than women. This is mainly due to the structure of the "general Arab" and Syrian structure, where women are allowed less initiatives than men to participate in different relations, due to an educational environment that gives men the priority to experiment over women.

The current place of residence also played a role in determining the levels of open-mindedness and close-mindedness in an individual's relationship with others. In fact, the participants living in Europe displayed the highest level of open-mindedness and lowest level of close-mindedness. Alternatively, Idleb and the areas under the control of the Syrian temporary government displayed the highest level of close-mindedness, as shown in figure 22. This may be due to the lived experiences of Syrians within European communities that are known for their diverse compositions, as opposed to the dominance of similar religions and sects in Idleb and areas under the temporary government. This is in addition to the constant level of "sensitivity and caution" in the conflict with the sectarian Syrian regime, noting here the lack of spaces that grant the freedom to move to and from these areas, thus causing them to be closed off and affecting the relation of the individuals within them with others. This is in addition to the dominance of the radical government in Idleb and the one dimensional ideologies in the areas under the control of the temporary Syrian government. Everything mentioned here aligned with the dominance of the principal relationship pattern in those areas, even during the pre-2011 phase.

Level of open-mindedness by place of residence

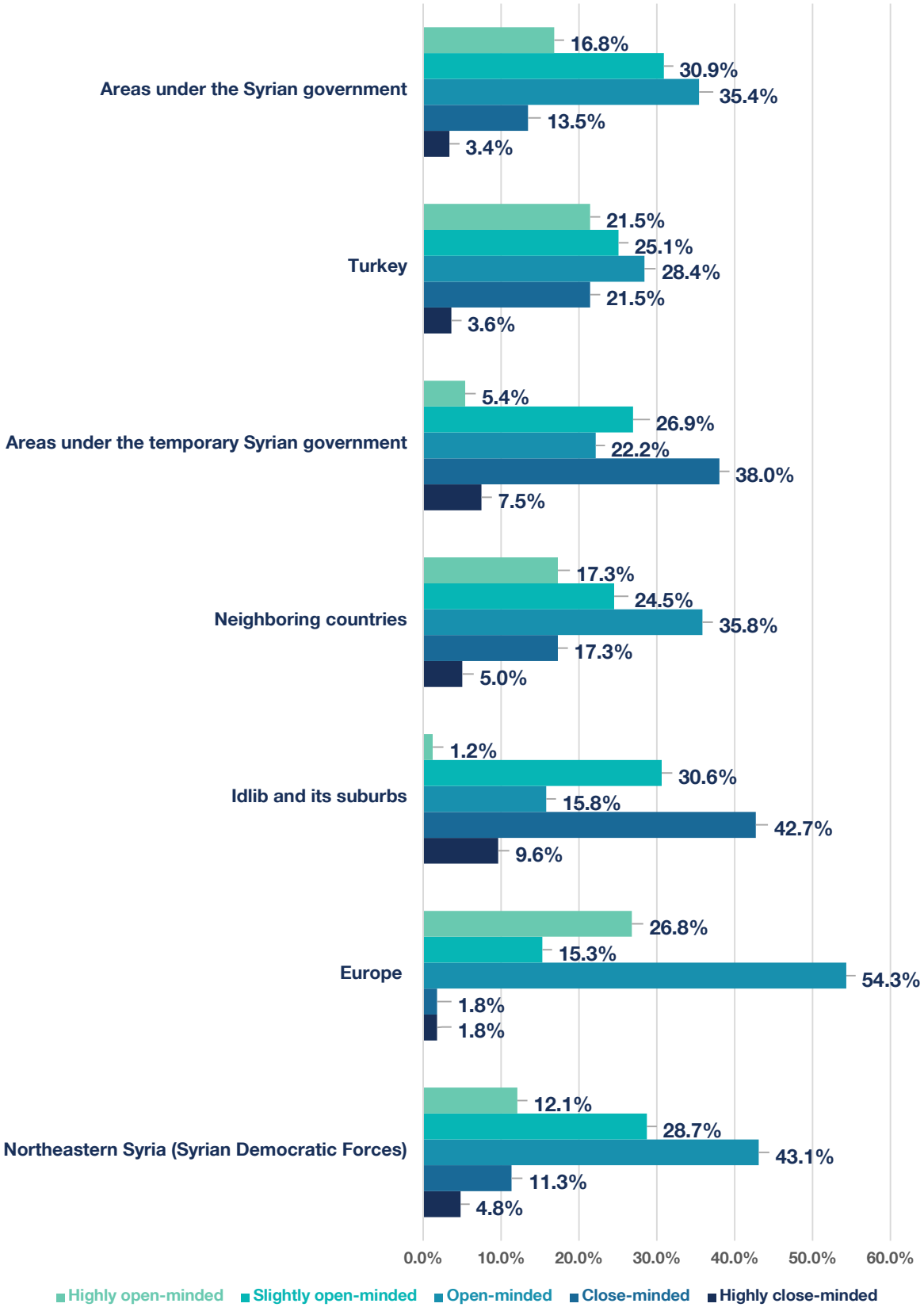

Figure 22 showing the relation between personality patterns and place of residence

4- Problems and Confusion in Understanding Social Structure

The study sample supported the options for the participation of religious and civil authorities in legislations related to personal status and social life in Syria. The differences in perceptions among participants regarding the presence of legislation controlling social life, or those specific to certain religions and sects, reflect a bias towards some civil patterns or religious authorities, or a mix of both, based on the outcomes of the legislative reality in the experience of the political regime on the legal level, or as affected by the religiosity pattern of the person or of the welcoming communities and the experience that Syrians had within them. We can also observe that the study sample had a level of understanding to allow for new options of executable legislations, in particular if they take into consideration other Syrian components. This is shown in figure 23

Table 5 showing the study sample's position regarding religious and civil legislations

Expression	Maintaining Islamic Fiqh as the main source for legislation in Syria	Establishing a unified civil/ situational legislation for social life for all Syrians	Establishing a mixed form of legislation (religious and civil) for social life	Establishing social legislations specific to people from different religions and sects
Uninterested	4.0	3.5	2.2	5.3
Disagree	29.7	31.5	28.8	18.2
Don't know	1.7	3.7	3.5	2.4
Agree	49.7	44.9	41.5	53.6
Somewhat agree	15.0	16.4	24.0	20.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

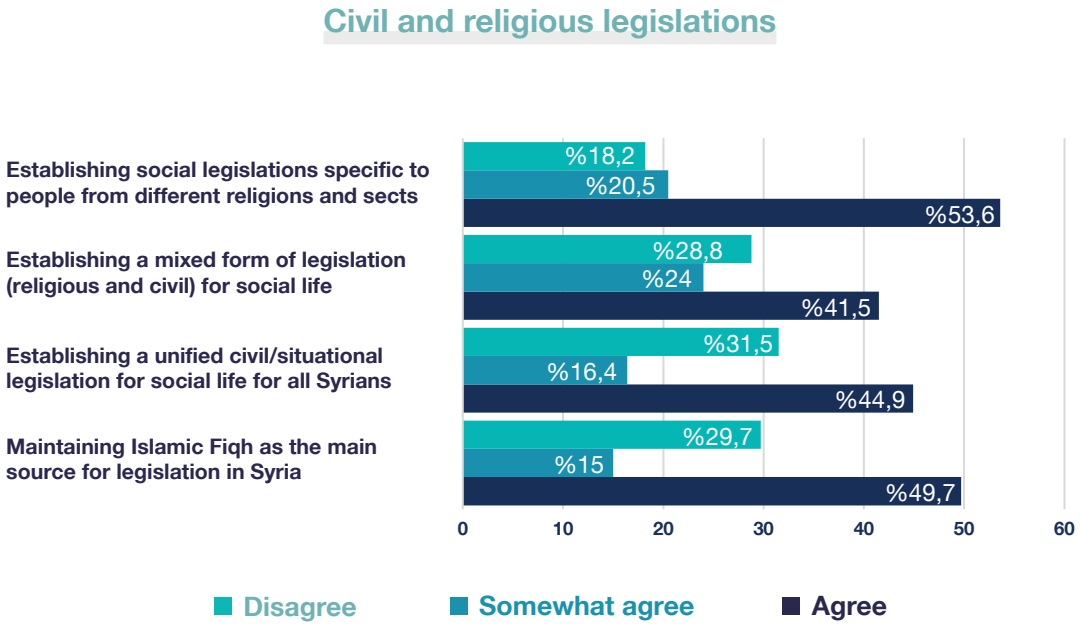

Figure 23 showing the study sample's position regarding religious and civil legislations

As for the relation with the "religiosity pattern", a general but important observation was made, as less religious patterns, and especially the "non-religious" and slightly religious categories, seemed to exhibit a confusing relation that "generally" resembled a complete disassociation from understanding social and legal components and their relation with religion as a crossing format for the structure of Syrian society, as well as the relation of religious figures from different sects and religions with the state. This manifested through a number of tendencies and positions adopted particularly by the "non-religious" category towards anything related to the presence of a religious dimension in any aspect of social or political life.

This is "most likely" due to the fact that participants in the "non-religious" category consider it important to ignore religious interpretations of social and political life, and instead rely on a positive perception for the rationale behind social contract and political life specifically.

Referring to the study results when it came to the relation of the "civil and religious legislation" to religiosity patterns, we find this obvious for the non-religious category. When it comes to the matter of "maintaining Islamic fiqh as the main source of legislation in Syria", the strictly religious and moderately religious patterns agreed to this at respective rates of 74.4% and 58%, while the slightly religious and non-religious patterns rejected it respectively at 54.4% and 91.4%, as shown in figure 24.

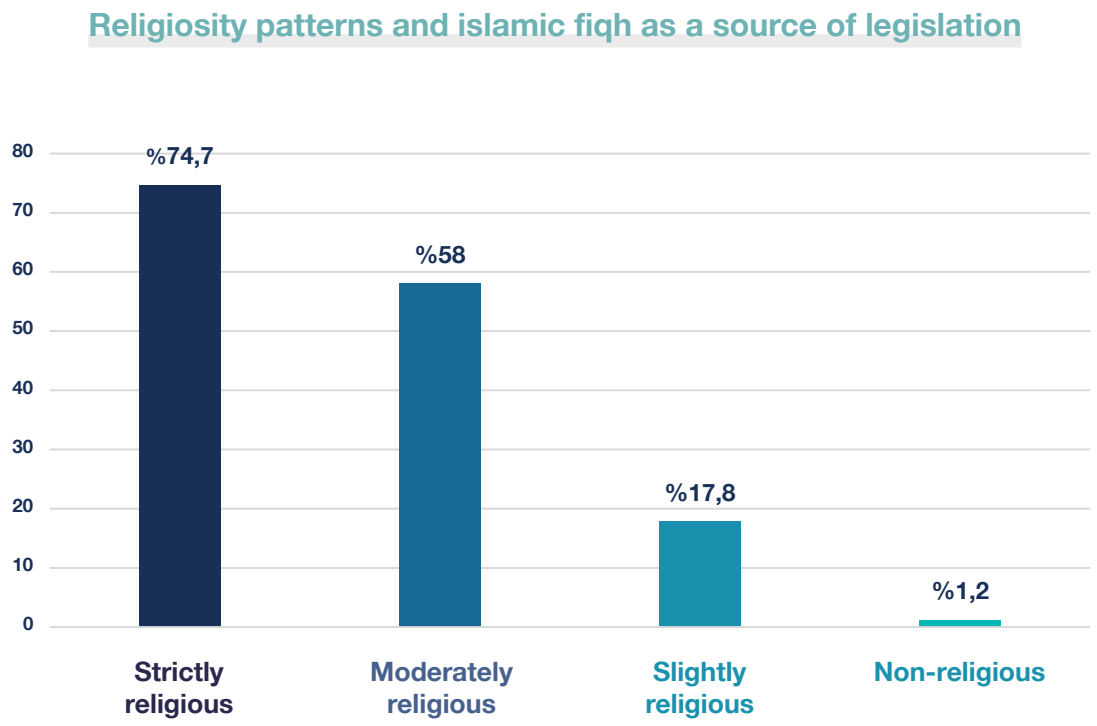

Figure 24 showing the different positions of religiosity patterns towards maintaining Islamic fiqh as a source of legislation

When it came to the matter of "Establishing a unified civil/situational legislation for social life for all Syrians", it was clearly supported by the non-religious category, as opposed to the position adopted by the strictly religious category where the rate of rejection was 45%, as shown in figure 25.

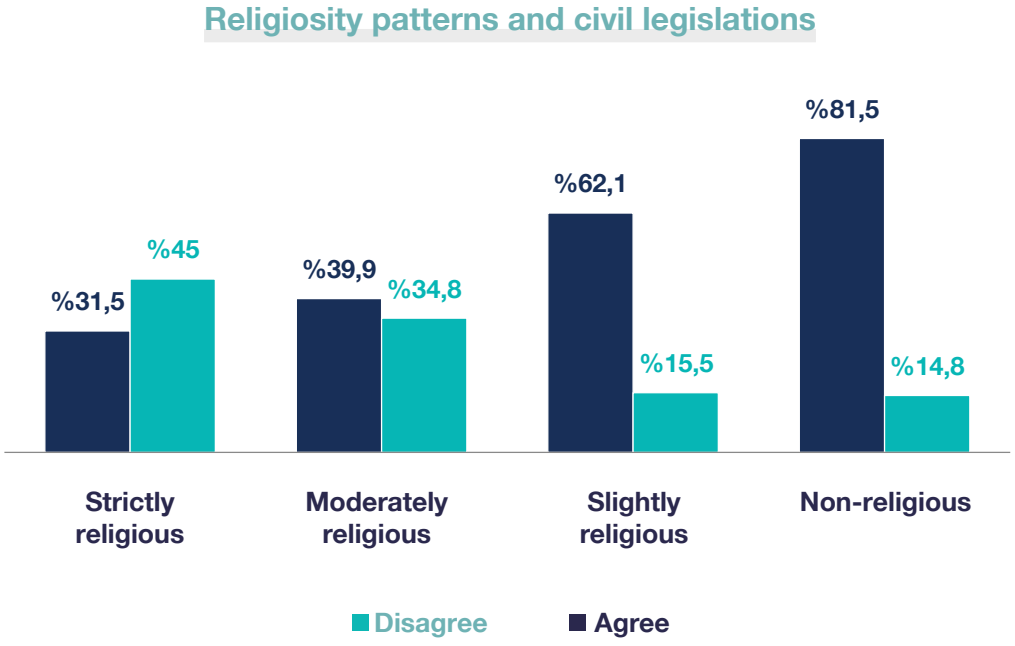

Figure 25 showing the position of religiosity patterns from civil legislation

As for the suggestion of "Establishing a mixed form of legislation (religious and civil) for social life", the highest rate of approval, at 44.5%, was among the strictly religious category, and was mostly rejected by the non-religious category at a rate of 80.2%. This is due to the existence of religious authorities here, which generally aligns with this pattern for legislative life in the Syria of the future, as shown in figure 26.

Figure 26 showing the relation between religiosity patterns and a mixed legislation

This confusion becomes clear with the fourth suggestion of “Establishing social legislations for specific people from different religions and sects”, which received the highest approval from different religiosity patterns, as it was considered an objective right for other religions and sects. The rate of approval for this suggestion from the strictly religious category was 51.8%, and its rate of rejection from the non-religious category reached 59.3%, as shown in figure 27.

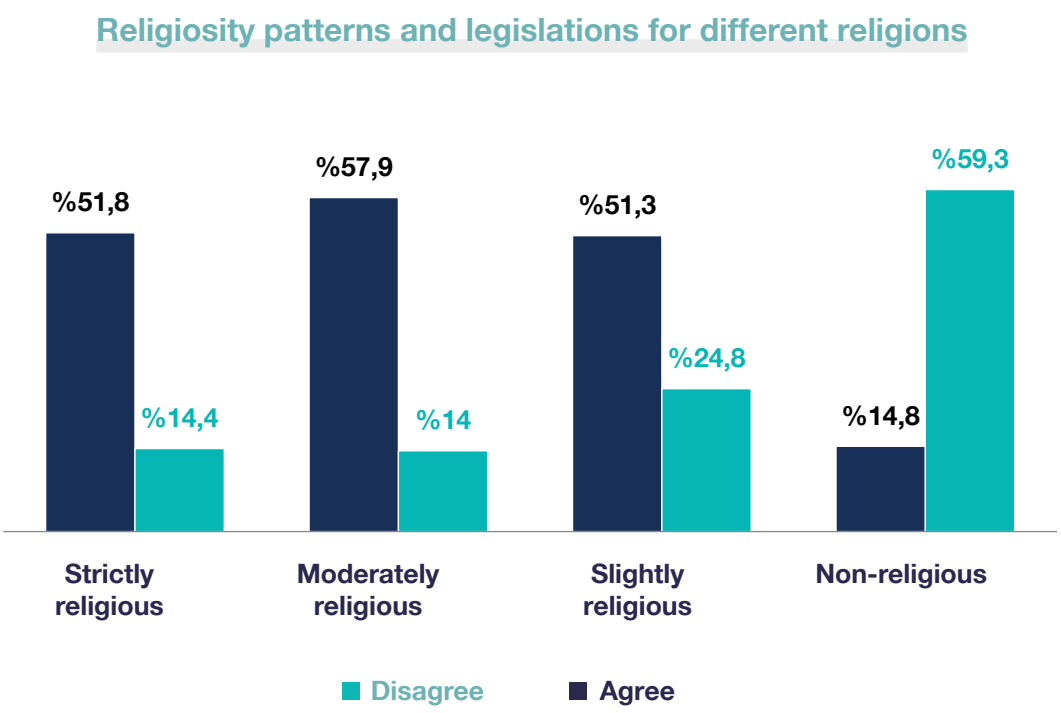

Figure 27 showing the position of religiosity patterns toward legislations for different religions and sects

It should be noted here that there are cases where participants from different patterns expressed their lack of interest in the topic or did not express their positions toward these matters. As for the relation between “personality patterns”, the results matched the relation between legislations and religiosity patterns, but the slightly open-minded pattern and the highly open-minded pattern expressed extreme disagreement at respective rates of almost 58% and 63%.

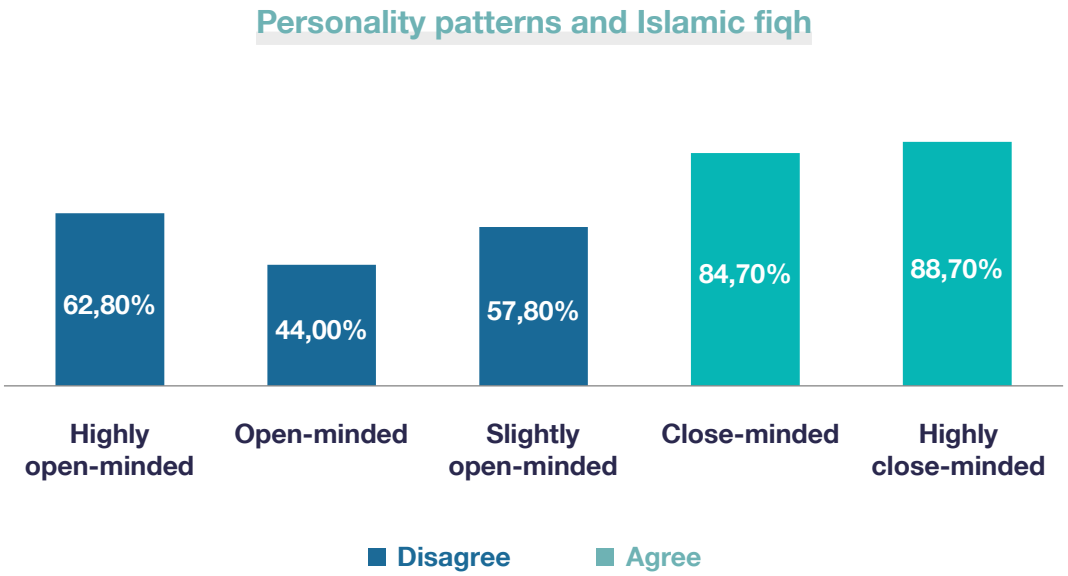

Figure 28 showing the relation between personality patterns and Islamic fiqh as a source for legislation

The confusion seemed apparent here as well, for open-mindedness in its social aspect, means gradually moving forward to understanding others and appreciating the culture and beliefs that shape their knowledge and lifestyle, and does not mean a rejection of all other patterns and giving numerical descriptions that clearly exclude them in a society as varied and diverse as the Syrian society.

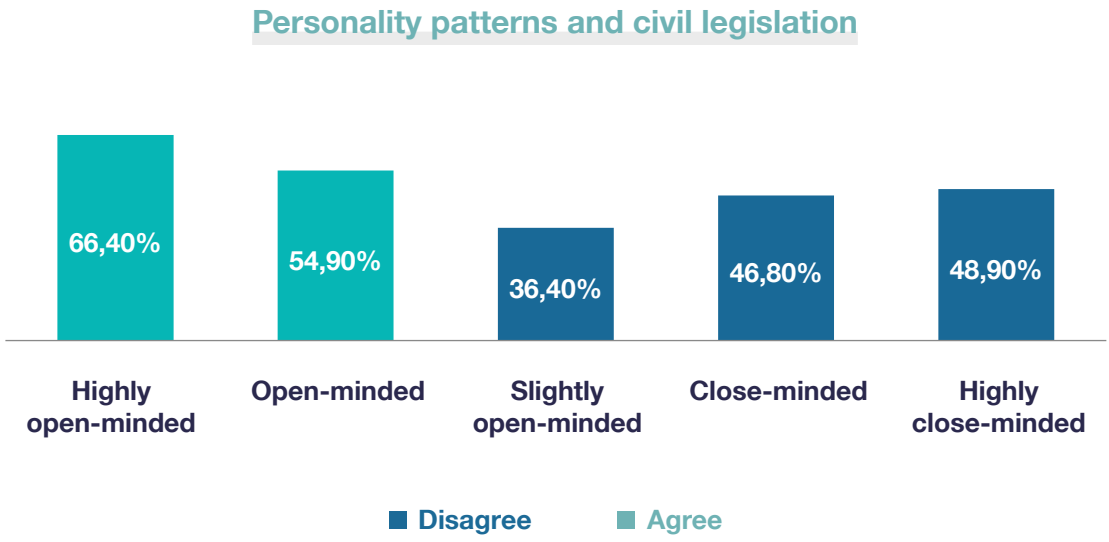

Figure 29 showing the relation between personality patterns and civil legislation

We observed here a decrease in the approval of mixed legislation from the open-minded category, as shown in figure 30. It even seems like all personality patterns had a similar position in this matter. Although it made sense to witness the reservation of the close-minded and the highly close-minded categories towards this option, the available space to understand the social/religious/legislative structure is generally more appealing to open-minded personality patterns, which leads us back to our original interpretation of the "lower agreement rates" as being a result of confusion about the concepts of open-mindedness and relationships with other components in society.

Figure 30 showing the relation between personality patterns and mixed legislation

This fuzzy perception is made clear in the results for "Establishing social legislations for specific people from different religions and sects", where the close-minded and the highly close-minded categories seemed to have a better understanding of the structure and composition of the Syrian society, and were thus more capable of valuing the religious particularity of each component, as shown in figure 31.

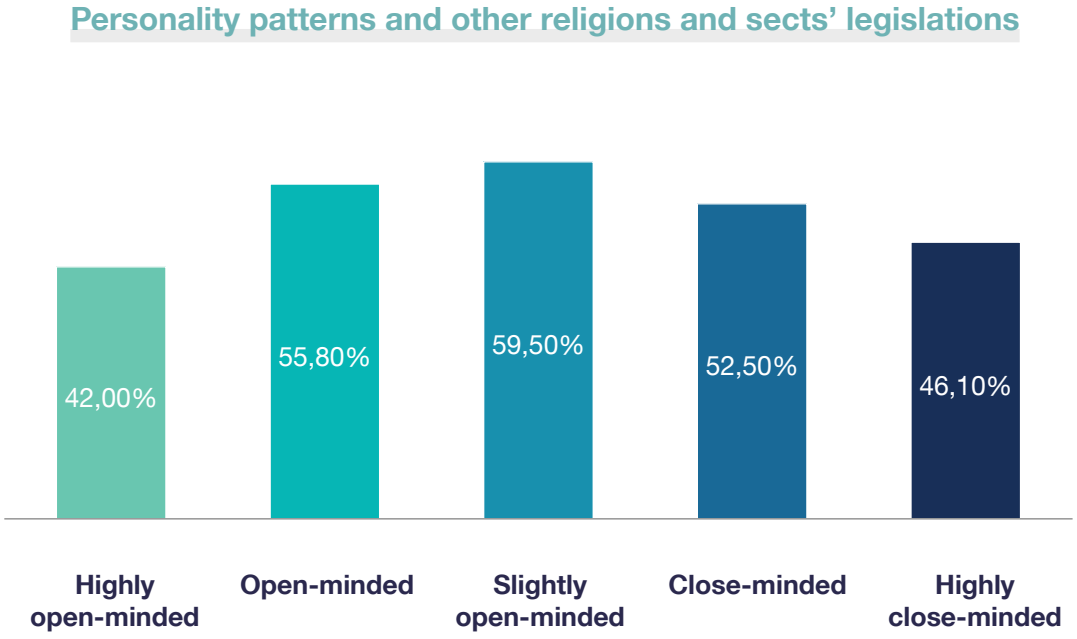

Figure 31 showing the relation between personality patterns and establishing special legislations for people from different religions and sects

5- Positive Tendencies Towards a Democratic Behavior in the Syria of the Future

Table 6 showing the study sample's position from religion and religious institutions and their relation to the state

Expression	People belonging to all religions and sects are equal under the law	Religious institutions should be independent and should not be placed under the state's observation	Religious figures are a main component in state institutions	State positions should be distributed according to the size of each religion and sect
Uninterested	0.3	3.0	4.9	3.5
Disagree	1.7	47.1	38.0	58.1
I don't know	04	4.3	3.1	3.0
Agree	91.2	29.7	36.0	22.4
Slightly agree	6.4	15.9	17.9	12.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

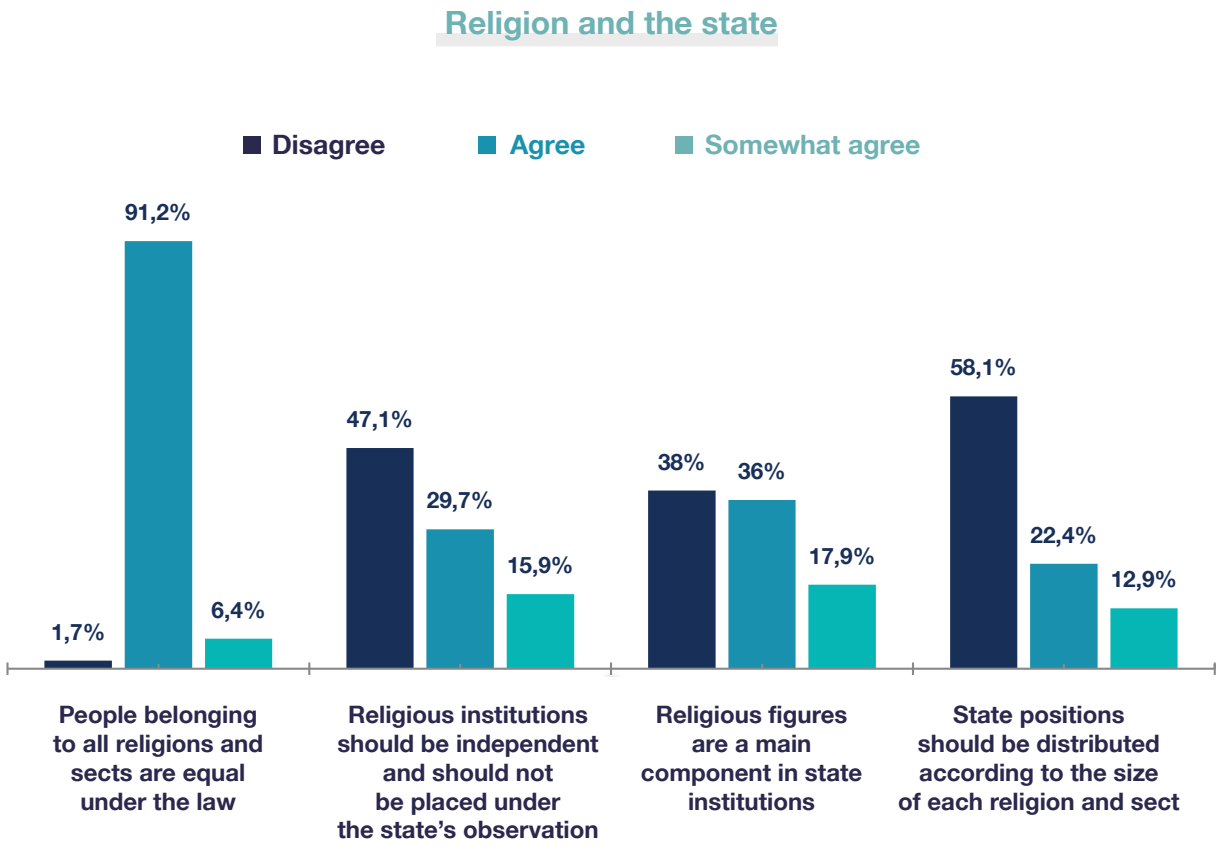

Figure 32 showing the position of the study sample from religion and religious institutes and their relation to the state

The above results relating to the nature of the organizational relation between religious institutes and the state structure (law, politics, institutions), as shown in figure 32, indicate a rejection of the application of a religious or sectarian quota in political practice from the majority of the sample, in addition to the need for religious institutes to be independent from the state and to grant them their own space to work without interfering in political matters and without needing to endure interference from the government's observation, "which was not supported by the majority of the sample". The position of "establishing a law under which everyone is equal" received the highest rate of agreement and support, thus reflecting the desire for legal justice, which was absent for decades under the rule of the Ba'ath Party and the ruling family in Syria for the sake of one specific religious sect.

As for the relation between religiosity patterns and these variables, all religiosity and personality patterns supported the idea that "people belonging to all religions and sects are equal under the law", which is considered a positive tendency for the establishment of the "desired Syria under the rule of law without any discrimination on the basis of religion or sect."

As for the idea that "religious institutions should be independent and should not be placed under the state's observation", it was refused by participants from all patterns. However, we think that the common tendency to refuse this idea was due to a number of contrasting reasons, at least between the strictly religious pattern and the non-religious pattern. Furthermore, the levels of acceptance and refusal among the strictly religious pattern were almost equal, and this refusal may be due to the participants' belief in the importance of the participation of religious institutions as acting bodies in the structure of the Syrian government. Alternatively, we believe that the reason the non-religious pattern refused this idea is due to the part of the statement that says that these institutions "should not be placed under the state's observation", as this pattern believes that these institutions should actually undertake their activities within custodial frameworks under the control of the government, which in some way refers to investigative bodies, security branches, or any controlling body that imposes a level of "intimidation".

We believe here that the refusal of this idea among this pattern is due to the disbelief of its participants in the efficiency of religious institutions and their ability to achieve the expectations of the Syrian people, or to the fact that they consider them a driver of extremist patterns in the relation with the modern Syrian government.

The same thing also happened between the open-minded and close-minded personality patterns, for how could the open-minded or highly open-minded patterns exclude and alienate one of the main institutions in the country, an institution that plays the functional role in driving social rules, while "mostly" basing this opinion on typical perceptions of the roles of these institutions without taking into consideration the form of the upcoming legal and constitutional organization in the desired Syria.

Within this same context, it made sense for the non-religious and slightly religious patterns to refuse the participation of "religious figures as main components in state institutions",

while this same suggestion received support from the strictly religious and moderately religious patterns. We can see that this is relevant to the form of government and its system, as well as the beliefs of different patterns in the need for religious representation. It also allows freedom for all patterns in their desire for a form of government that aligns with their ideas without the possibility of it being hijacked by others.

These perceptions also aligned with personality patterns, with the varying degrees of open-mindedness and close-mindedness giving parallel result to those of religiosity patterns.

Religiosity and personality patterns unanimously refused the idea of “distributing state positions according to the size of each religion and sect”, which makes sense with the typical Syrian population that avoided adopting a “religious or sectarian quota” during the successive ruling periods that Syria witnessed, although some aspects of that type of quota were executed without being labelled and declared as such ever since “Hafez Al-Assad” took control and until the current regime under his son “Bachar Al-Assad”. This unanimous refusal is considered an advanced, and even constant, indicator of “Syrians who have not experienced clear sectarian tension” in the way patterns perceived the ruling system in Syria (view the attached tables).

6- Advanced Steps Towards Accepting Freedom of Religion and Belief

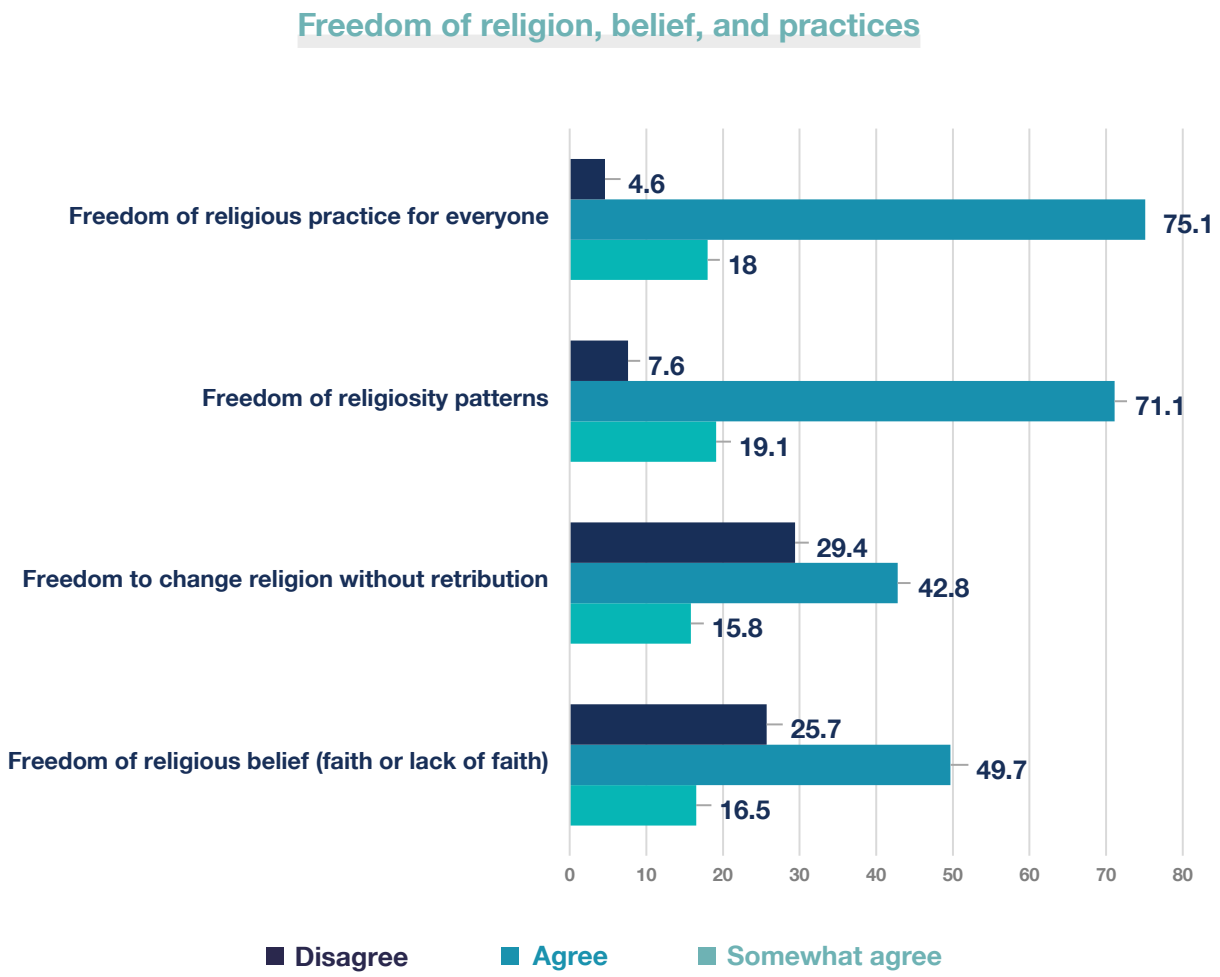

Figure 33 showing the study sample's position towards the freedom of religion, belief, and practices

The "overall" study sample supported the importance of granting wide religious freedom to Syrians, whether it was about the pattern and degree of religiosity and the freedom to practice for each individual, or the religious freedom that includes an individual's decision to believe in a religion or not, or even change their belief without any retribution. This is in addition to allowing religions and sects the freedom to perform their practices and traditions without restriction or exclusion[10], as shown in figure 33.

[10] - It should be pointed out here that there is an amount of responses in the "I don't know" or "uninterested" categories, but they haven't been taken into consideration because they do not represent a statistical value, and because our focus is on the level of agreement with these expressions.

These results reflect an advanced level of thinking in the concept of "freedom" for each individual to choose an adequate lifestyle, and not only on the religious side, since religion is the most controversial and bias-ridden aspect here as it is based on texts, interpretations, and the provisions of fiqh.

Table 7 showing the relation between religious freedoms and current place of residence

	Freedom of religious belief	Freedom to change religion	Freedom of religious practice for everyone	Freedom of religiosity patterns
Europe	84.7	73.3	94.1	84.2
Turkey	46.2	45.3	68	75.2
Areas under the Syrian Democratic Forces	40.3	29.7	75.8	59.4
Syrian Government (Damascus)	64	56.4	81.8	81.4
Arab neighboring countries	51.6	29.6	86.8	73.6
Temporary government	29.9	27.2	71.6	61.7
Idleb	18.8	18.5	44	54.8

As for the relation between the previous values and religion/sect, results have reflected the differences between some suggestions related to religion and sect.

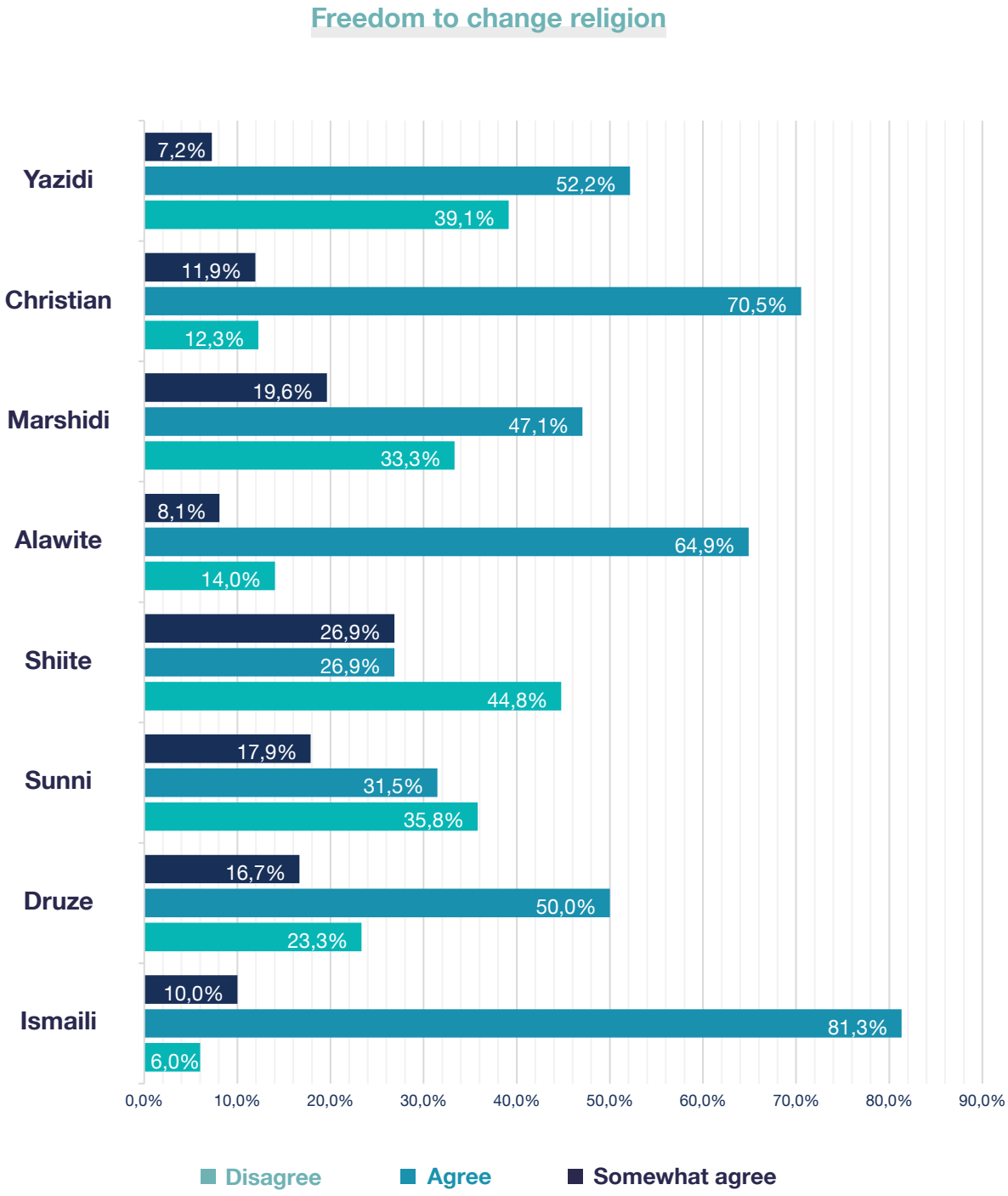

Figure 34 showing the relation between freedom to change religions and religion and sect

As for the statement on the "freedom to change religion without retribution", Shiites and Sunnis showed the lowest levels of agreement, while Christians and Ismailis showed the highest levels of agreement within the study sample, as shown in figure 34.

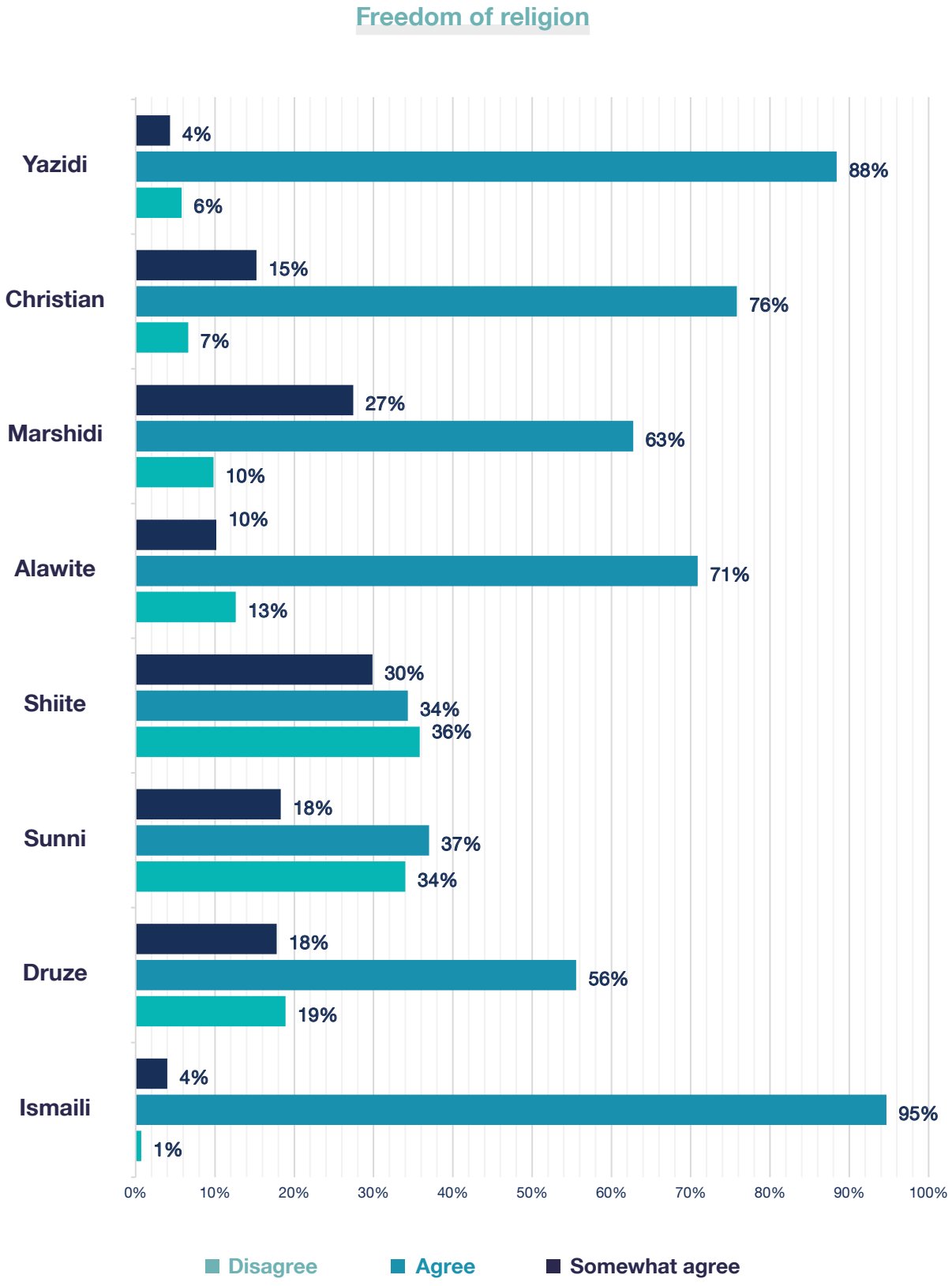

Figure 35 showing the relation between freedom of religion and religion and religious sect

As for the idea of the "freedom of religion/freedom to believe or not to", positions also differed among the study sample, where Shiites and Sunnis also showed the lowest level of agreement, as shown in figure 35.

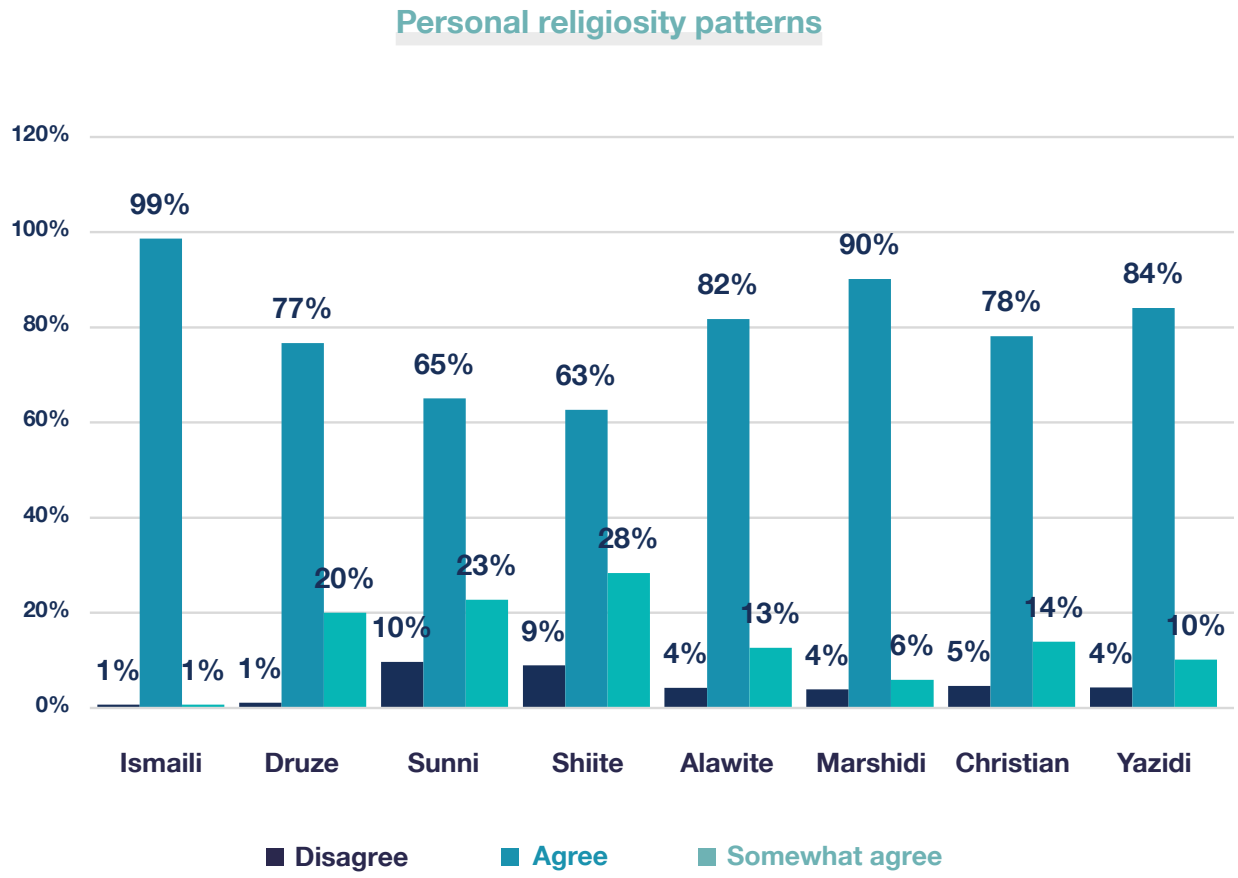

Figure 36 showing the relation between personal religiosity patterns and religion and religious sects

Results were different when it came to the idea that "the pattern and level of religiosity is a personal matter and individual lifestyle", where the levels of agreement were high among the different religious components of the study sample, as shown in figure 36. This mostly applies to the topic of "the right for all religions and sects to freely perform their practices", as shown in figure 37.

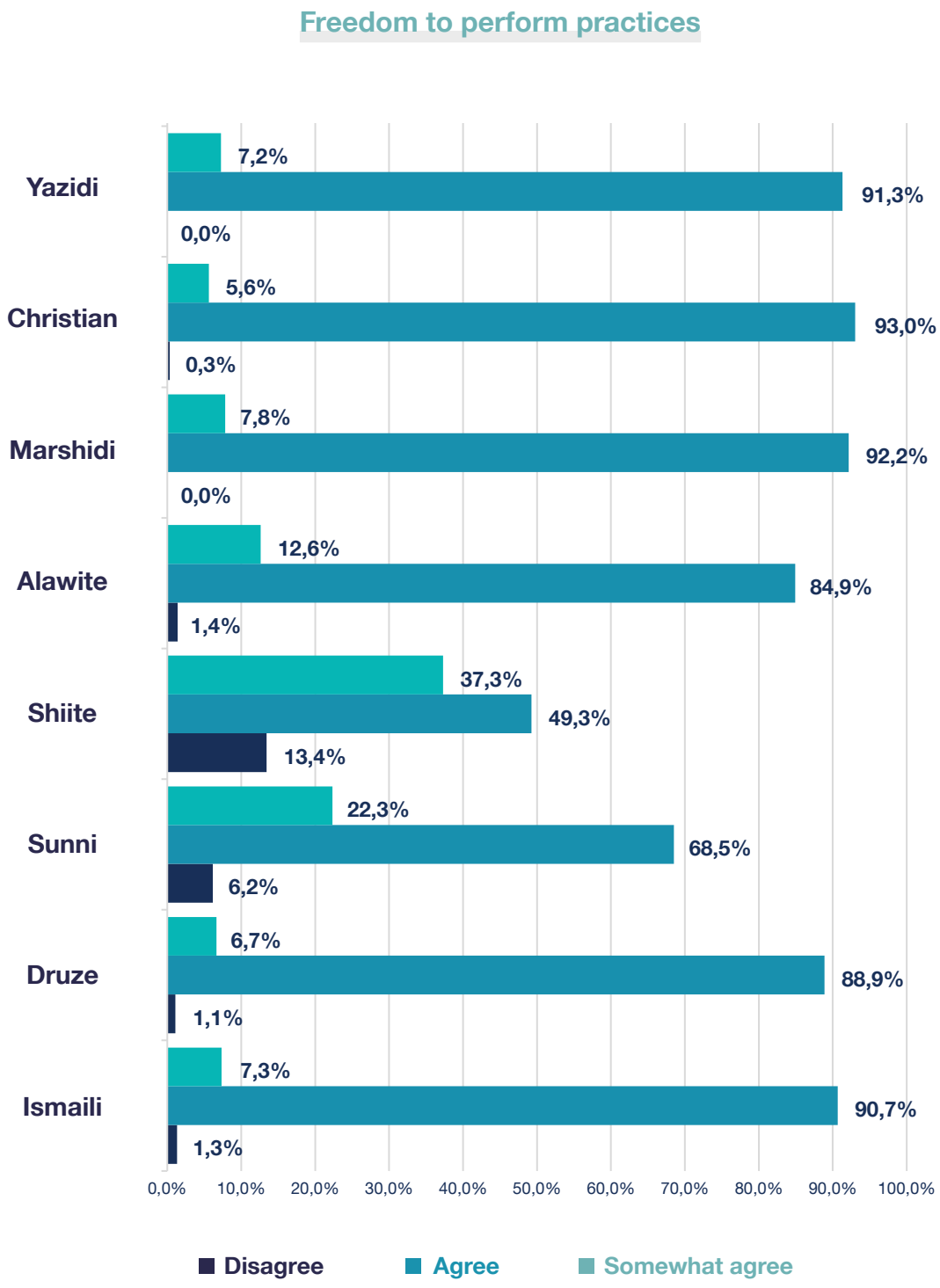

Figure 37 showing the relation between the freedom to perform religious practices and religion and religious sects

As for the relation between these values and the current place of residence, results reflected the effect of the culture of the welcoming society on the advancement towards a wide acceptance to allow individuals to make their own religious choices. This is in addition to the possibility that participants in areas under radical authorities in "Idleb" were afraid of freely expressing their opinions. Therefore, the sample that lives in Europe showed the highest level of support for freedom of religion, religious belief, practices, and religiosity pattern, as shown in table 7.

The fact of the matter is that the values and standards of social organization have a lot of influence on the tendencies of individuals towards all matters, especially sensitive matters that require big margins of acceptance of individuals adopting lifestyles that fit with their perceptions, from one place to another. This difference refers to the role of the "standards and rules of the system" that individuals adopt in every social organization.

As for the relation between religiosity patterns and freedom of religion, belief, and practices, we believe that there are positive indicators on this level. When it comes to the freedom of religious belief (i.e. to believe in a religion or not), the slightly religious and moderately religious patterns expressed their agreement, while 42.3% of the highly religious pattern participants expressed their refusal. It is necessary to point out here that 28.7% of the strictly religious participants actually supported this idea, which we consider a step forward towards achieving flexibility in respecting the personal space and religious freedom of others, even among the strictest category, and along with all it holds of interpretations related to life, religion, and fiqh. This is the opposite for personality patterns, as disagreement rates varied in parallel to the level of close-mindedness.

The "freedom to change religions without retribution" is considered one of the most controversial, and even "taboo" topics in Islam, due to the belief that Islam was the "seal of religions" in its philosophy and independence from other religions, and therefore its portrayal as the ultimate form of a divine religion.

However, this value received support from the slightly religious and moderately religious patterns, and of course the non-religious pattern. The strictly religious pattern disagreed with this idea at a rate of 48.2%, in comparison to a rate of agreement that reached 19.1%.

The focus here is on the strictly religious pattern "although other religiosity patterns are not flexible when it comes to some religious or fiqh concepts that they consider constants", but we are using it, "in this study", as an indicator of the intermingling of religion and politics among different religions, as well as the particularity of the Syrian experience on one side, and of Syrian religiosity on the other, even in its strictest form of adherence to teachings, practices, and traditions, which is what created an atmosphere of flexibility towards some issues that are considered "taboo" in religious debate.

The difference with "personality patterns" was also apparent in this regard, as the rates of agreement varied with the levels of open-mindedness and close-mindedness, thus confirming what we previously mentioned when addressing the scale on how personality patterns differ from religiosity patterns because each of them depends on different variables. Religious factors did not have a main role here in determining personality patterns and contrasting positions, which opposed religiosity patterns in most cases.

Flexibility and the tendency to appreciate other religions and sects are also apparent in the opinions regarding the "right of all religions and sects to freely perform their practices", as most patterns agreed to it at high rates. This position was common in Syria even before 2011, and it also aligned, albeit at an obviously lower rate than religiosity patterns, with the relation of personality patterns and their degrees.

As for the expression that "patterns and degrees of religiosity are a personal matter and an individual lifestyle", it also received a high rate of agreement from the three religious patterns, with lower rates from the non-religious pattern. This brings us back to our previous analysis on the mechanisms of the positions and tendencies of this pattern, as the low rate of agreement "in comparison with other patterns", seems to come from a preconceived rejection of the existence of religiosity patterns, which is what leads us to believe "without confirmation" that there is a non-religious ideology among this pattern that manifests in the form of a common "belief or religion" that looks at religion as a precursor for a "secular" public life and rejects it as such. This is different than the relation of this value with personality patterns, which expressed varying degrees of agreement towards it.

7- New Spaces for Women in the Syrian Mentality

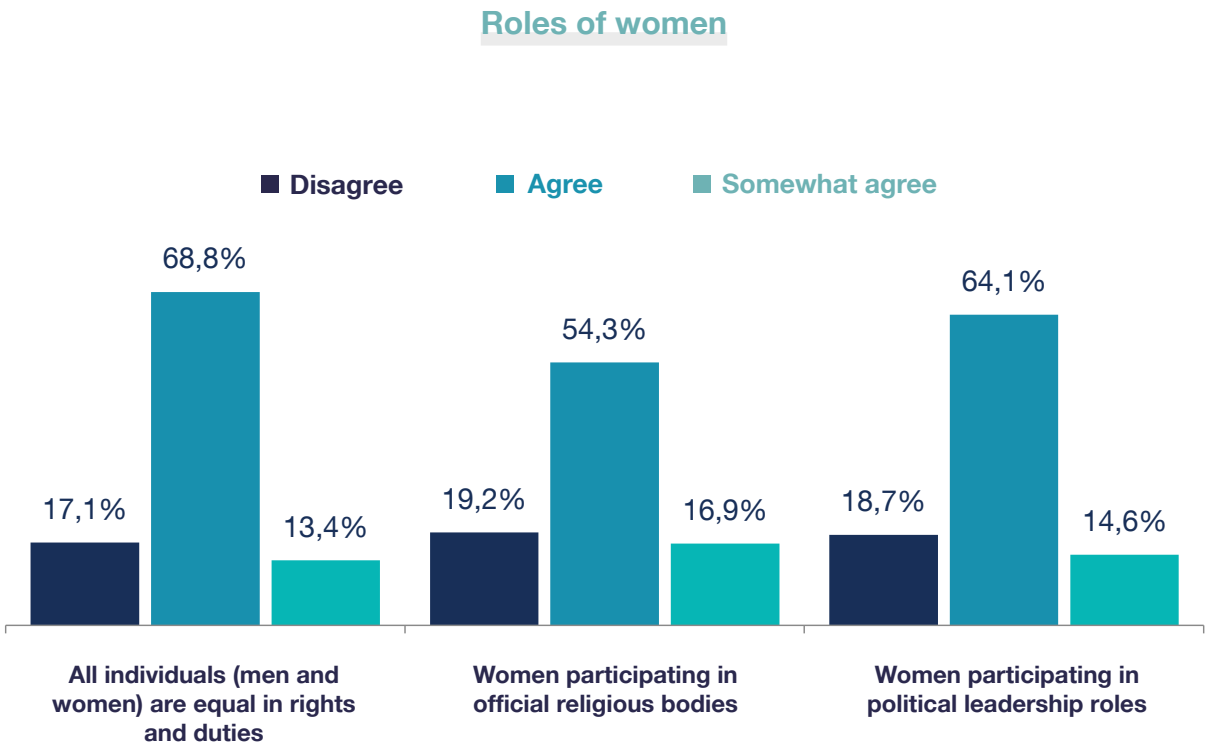

Figure 38 showing the position of the study sample towards the roles of women

Results showed a positive tendency towards causes related to the positions and roles of women in Syrian public life on several levels, particularly when it came to equality under the law without gender discrimination, and women's role in leading political roles, and even in public religious bodies. This generally aligns with the Syrian atmosphere during the 50s and 60s, before the country sunk in a whirlpool of dictatorship and before the contribution of the political system in the regression of local societies and the emergence of forms of narrow social organizations and the typical pattern of individual gender roles within them. This is shown in figure 38.

Differences start from the varying positions towards issues related to women issues according to some variables. When it comes to gender, as shown in figure 39, there was a significantly higher level of support from the women of the sample for the position of women in public life, which generally aligns with women's demands for equality in opportunities

and social roles, as opposed to men. “Although some rates are high here”, positions towards some sensitive roles are mostly due to sexist perceptions of these positions and roles as a result of a long history of excluding women, as is made evident by their participation in official religious bodies.

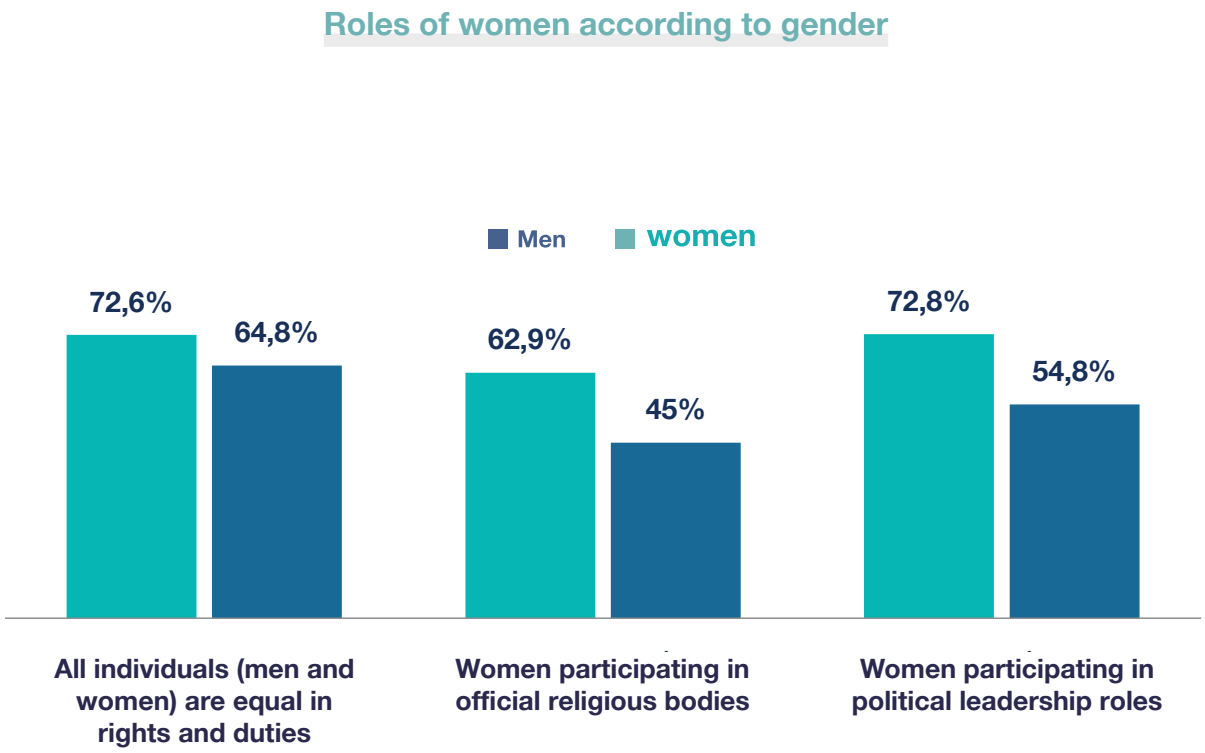

Figure 39 showing the relation between gender and women’s issues

As for the relation between the current place of residence, some clear differences were observed in the sample’s positions towards the roles of women, according to the place of residence in different geographic locations.

Table 8 showing the relation between women's roles and current place of residence

	All individuals (men and women) are equal in rights and duties	Women participating in official religious bodies	Women participating in political leadership roles
Europe	92.1	57.1	90.1
Turkey	79.5	65	71.6
Areas under the Syrian Democratic Forces	65.7	56.7	71.3
Syrian government (Damascus)	81.7	48.5	68.1
Neighboring countries	75.8	58.8	69.8
Temporary government	46.4	66.8	51.2
Idleb	32.1	36.5	25.4

Table 8 shows a variation in the degrees of acceptance of women participating in advanced roles in relation to the culture of the sample's community, where rates varied according to their relation with the place. However, this does not allow us to form advanced and constant conclusions, for when it comes to the roles of women in "official religious bodies", the variable did not play a clear role, as the sample in Europe came in fourth place in their rate of support for women in these roles. These rates increased significantly in the areas under the temporary government, where the highest rate was observed, and even in societies like Idleb, the rates were clearly higher than other roles in the community.

We believe here that the differences between positions on the role of women may be attributed to the rejection of the participation of religious entities overall in the future state institutions, or the fact that some individuals do not believe in the value of women's participation in these bodies because the decisions taken by "bodies" are based on texts and provisions of fiqh that are disconnected from the opinions of men or women.

As for the relation between the roles of women and religion and religious sects, the study samples decisions differed "by sect" in every separate role of women, as shown in table 9.

Table 9 showing the relation between the roles of women and religion and sects

	All individuals (men and women) are equal in rights and duties	Women participating in official religious bodies	Women participating in political leadership roles
Ismaili	93.3	62	85.3
Druze	81.1	33.3	61.1
Sunni	59.6	56.4	58
Shiite	29.9	41.8	37.3
Alawite	89.8	40.4	70.9
Murshidi	66.7	45.1	54.9
Christian	93.3	62	85.3
Yazidi	81.1	33.3	61.1

This is made obvious through the Shiite component whose levels of agreement towards equality and political roles were very low, as opposed to a high level of agreement with women's participation in religious bodies. In all cases, agreement rates towards the roles of women in religious bodies were significantly lower as opposed to other roles, in exception of the Christian and Sunni participants whose positions did not vary when it came to all three roles. The issue of religious roles is still highly controversial for many sects and religions, particularly among sects with an "underlying" structure that does not specifically define their provisions in these matters.

However, it is possible to say that there is a positive tendency among the study sample from all religions and sects towards the roles of women in state institutions in the Syria of the future.

As for the relation with religiosity patterns, there were high degrees of flexibility towards all three patterns mentioned above. We believe that this result is an indication that should be deeply considered, particularly on the level of the relation of religiosity patterns with the value and roles of women in public life and public and legal affairs. It can also guide us towards a new perspective of the commitment of religiosity patterns without "organically" linking them to previous positions towards public life and different components of Syrian

society, which is also the case for the roles of individuals within them, be them men or women.

The point of focus remains the non-religious pattern's position from the suggestion of "women participating in official religious bodies", for it received a low level of agreement from this pattern in comparison to other religiosity patterns, which takes us back to the previous analysis regarding the confusing and fuzzy relation of this pattern with "religiosity" in its own social atmosphere.

As for the relation of these values with personality patterns, the support rates intersected with the support rates of religiosity patterns in general. However, for the suggestion of "women participating in political leadership roles", the close-minded and highly close-minded patterns rejected it, although they accepted the suggestion of equality under the law, for instance. This may be due to the belief of these two patterns that political leadership goals are a men's specialty due to a typical perception of women and of balancing the different aspects of life.

8- Horizontally Parallel Affiliations

After over a decade since the start of the popular movement in Syria, Syrians had to test their affiliations facing all the political and military variables, as well as the regional and international interference in the "Syrian situation". This is after over a decade since the Syrian "identity" started getting lost and torn between conflicting ideologies and their "incomplete" projects in Syria. Syrians who participated in the 2011 movement had to first redefine their relation with the revolution and second, and more importantly, with their identification of the political regime as the concept of a home country; which resulted in the creation of a "Syrian personality" that is unable to tell between the concepts of a home country, regime, and its own self-defined identity. The confusion about "personality" also increased through the many changes in positions, retreat, and regression.

It seems that the tough experience that Syrians have lived through, and "are still" living through, from displacement to the loss of hope in a political solution achievement of a united Syria, pushed them back to question individuality and identity, especially in light of all the uncertainty of intermingling situations that make the Syrian situation worse.

The questions on "affiliations and self-identification" were some of the variables that we intended to test in relation to religiosity patterns among the Syrians of the study sample. The main affiliation was mainly (as concluded based on a statistical weighting process) Syrian nationalism, followed by religious affiliation, then familial affiliation, and finally other affiliations like ethnic and regional affiliations.

However, when observing the closeness in numbers and choices among the study sample, it seems that there is still a state of confusion towards the Syrian situation and the conflict between different Syrian components, who are going back to "initial" affiliations as showcased by significant statistical numbers portraying them as deciding factors in the affiliations of Syrians. This is what leads us to believe that the tough experiences that Syrians lived through better underlined the limits of their affiliation, be it before the revolution or during the revolution and the Syrian war. In addition to confirming the importance of the high level of national affiliation over other affiliations, however, the mentioned affiliations in "figure 40", and their primary position among the study sample, highly undermined national affiliation in light of the existence of similar primary affiliations for many of the sample's components.

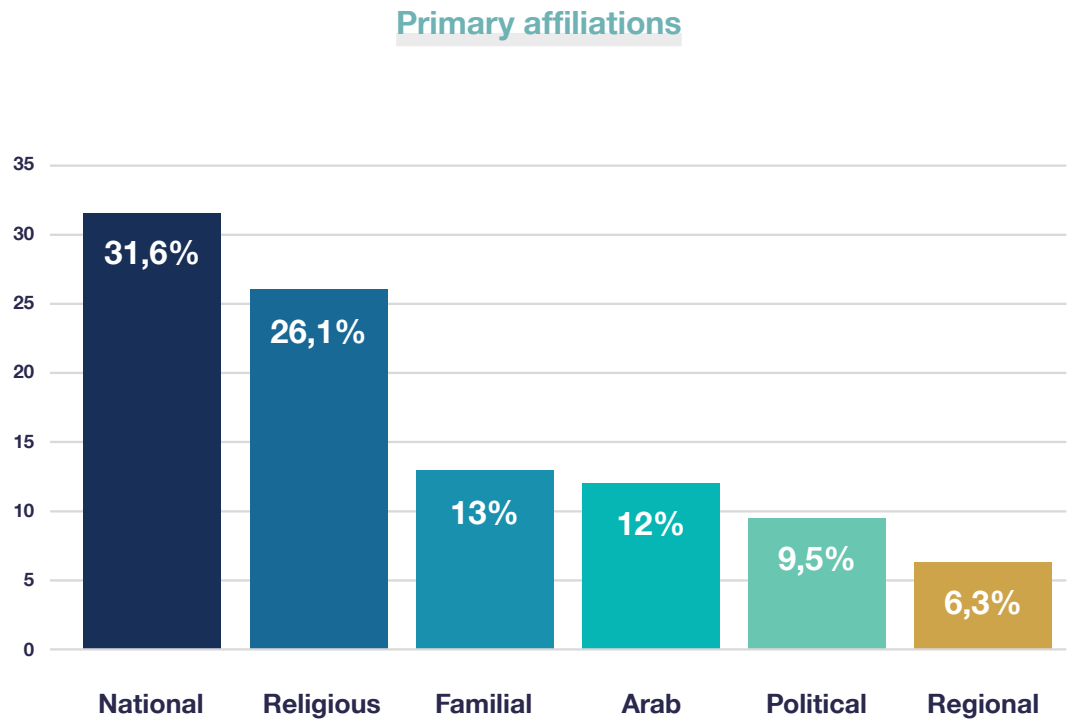

Figure 40 showing the primary affiliations of the study sample

As for the relation between primary affiliations and religiosity patterns, national affiliation was at its highest among the first three religious patterns, whereas the strictly religious pattern was mainly overtaken by religious affiliation, and even at a higher rate of national affiliation among other religiosity patterns. This is generally justified, for the strictly religious pattern prioritizes belonging to religion over other affiliations, since religion is considered a “mental and behavioral perception” that overshadows other “narrow” affiliations within a more general framework, as shown in figure 41.

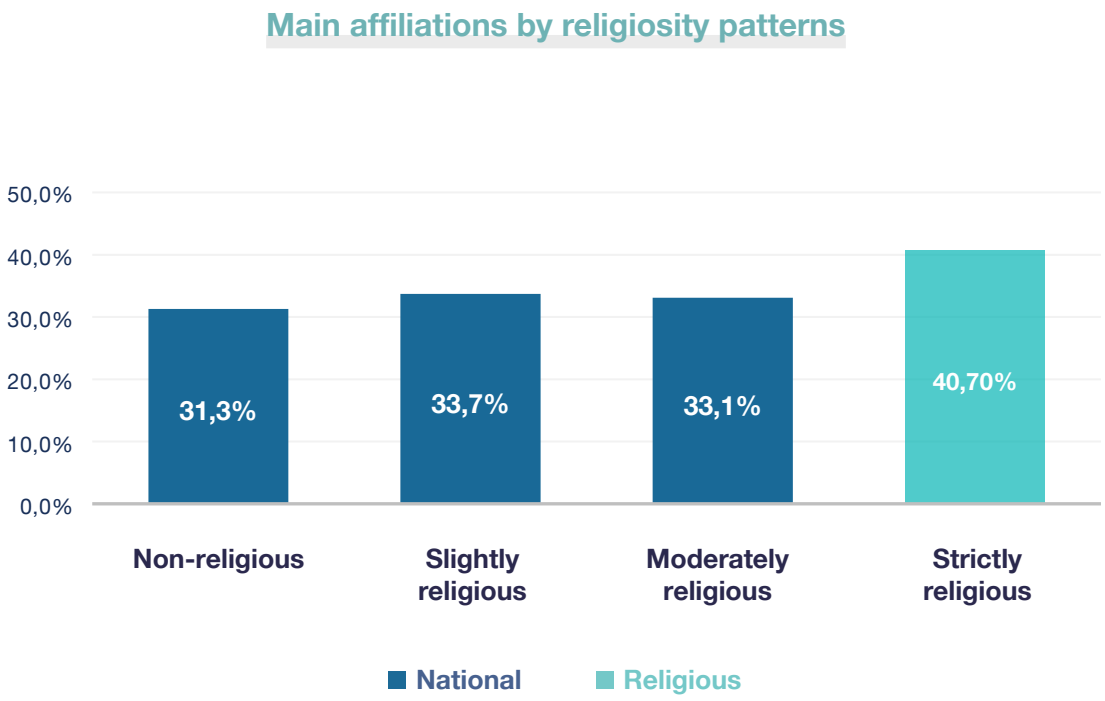

Figure 41 showing the relation between religiosity patterns and main affiliations

The previous statements confirm the existence of national affiliation in second place among the strictly religious pattern, followed by familial affiliation, and these results were expected for this pattern. Alternatively, for the “non-religious pattern”, political affiliation came in second place, followed by ethnic affiliation in third place. This is an indicator that could be used to reflect the dominance of political and national ideology for this pattern, especially with the decrease of the rate of national affiliation in comparison to the slightly religious and moderately religious patterns. This “generally” guides us towards the horizontal alignment of affiliations for this pattern, for it is not possible to neglect other affiliations in the overall conception of the relation of all patterns in general with the concepts of a home country, ethnicity, family, and region.

As for the relation between affiliation and “Syrian personality patterns”, results aligned with religiosity patterns, where the main affiliation among the close-minded and strictly close-minded categories was religious affiliation, while it was national affiliation for the other open-minded categories.

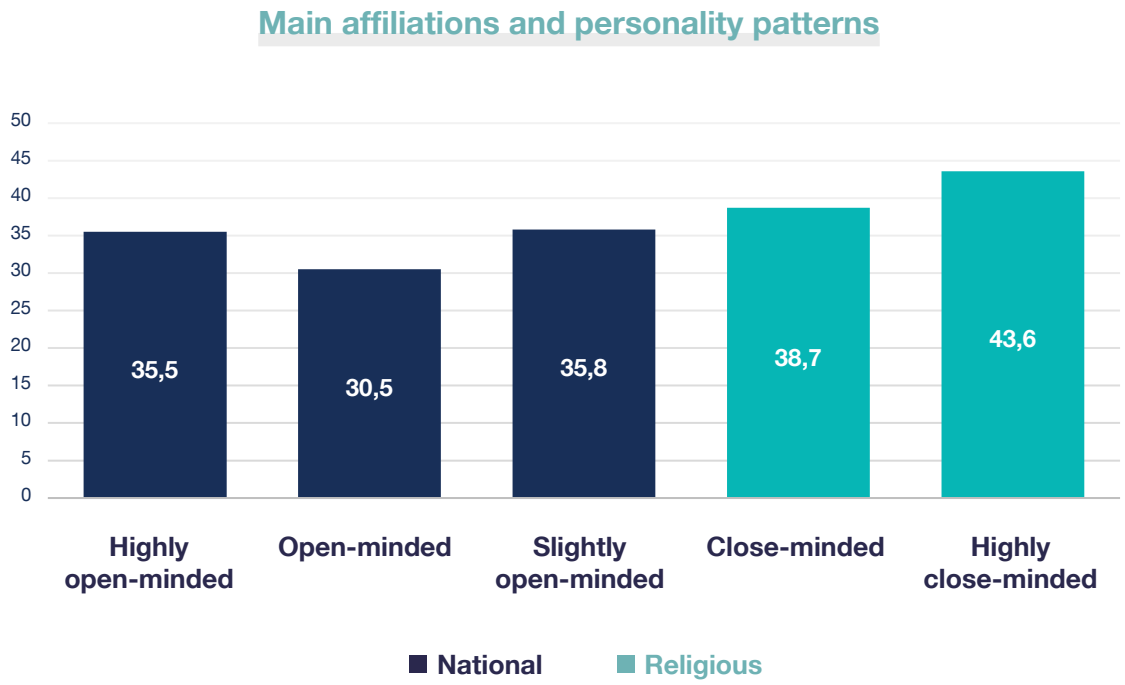

Figure 42 showing the relation between personality patterns and main affiliations

In light of the increase in the rates of religious affiliation among the close-minded and highly close-minded patterns as opposed to national affiliations among other patterns, as shown in figure 42, we can go back to a considering a broader concept of affiliation, "just like when it comes to the relation with religiosity patterns", as many primary affiliations were aligned with the main affiliation, albeit at lower rates here. For instance, the second affiliation among the open-minded pattern was religious affiliation, while it was familial affiliation among the slightly open-minded pattern; thus confirming the existence of horizontal parallel paths in affiliations that might overtake one another (familial or ethnic over national for example) according to new political changes or situations in Syria.

As for the matter of affiliation, the matter of identity and "self-identification" as showcased by answers to the question, "how do you identify yourself to others?", made the relation with religiosity patterns evident, as national identity was the main method of identification over religious or ethnic identities among all religiosity patterns, albeit at different rates, as shown in the following figure. The rate was lower among the strictly religious pattern in comparison to other patterns.[11]

[11] - Different definitions in the question were grouped in the three following categories: national, religious, and ethnic affiliations.

However, the existence of an explicit “Syrian identity” used by all “religiosity patterns” to identify themselves to others is a positive indicator that allows us to take a further step towards answering the question of “Syrian identity” in front of others.

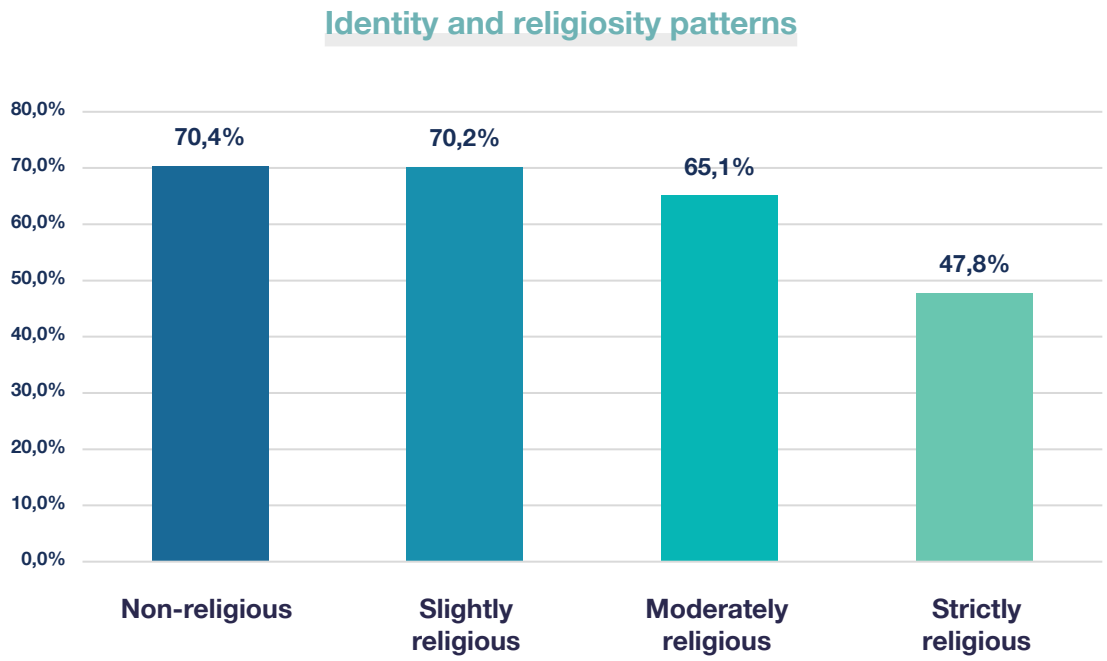

Figure 43 showing the relation between religiosity patterns and identity

In spite of the difference in the matter of identity and affiliation among religiosity patterns, the variable of the “other” as an external factor played a role in the rise of national affiliation, as opposed to affiliations where primary authorities interfere, like affiliations to “family, area, tribe”, or ethnic or ideological factors.

As for the relation with the “Syrian personality” pattern, shown in figure 44, religious identity was the main method of identification among the “highly close-minded” pattern, as opposed to national affiliation for other personality patterns. This remains the case for the highly close-minded pattern when it comes to religious identification, just like the matter in affiliation. This leads us to the increase in the desire to export the “Islamic identity” among this pattern, perhaps due to what it endures from phobia and stigma and to how it is considered a regression to those who follow it, particularly in Europe and the United States. That is in addition to the nature of understanding of religious identity that overtakes all other identities.

Identity and personality patterns

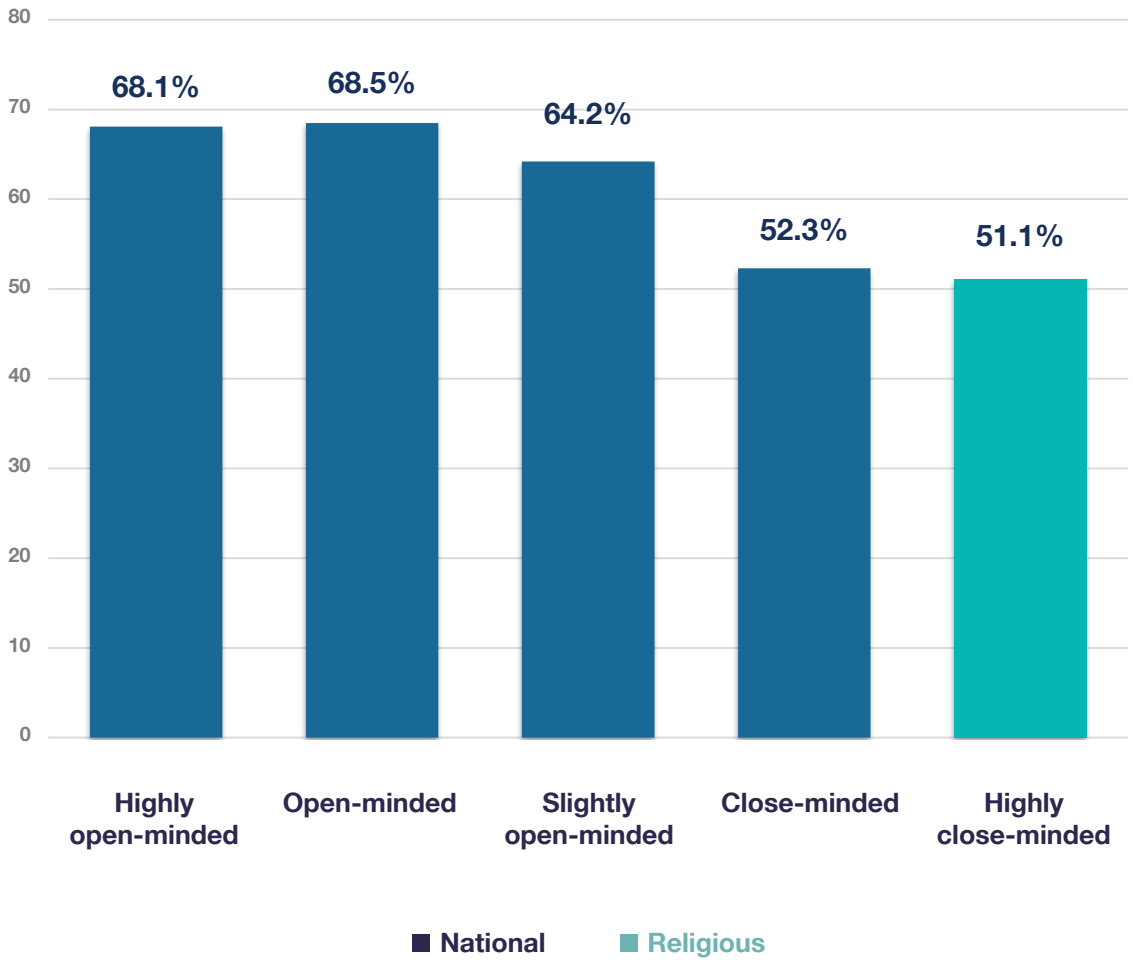

Figure 44 showing the relation between personality patterns and identity

9- Contrasting Tendencies to Follow the Political Situation in Syria

Field results shown in figure 45 reflected a decrease in the interest of Syrians to keep up with the political developments in Syria, where the rates of the people who follow them sometimes reached 39,6%, as opposed to the regular rate at 34,4% and people who do not follow them at 26%. The rates in following developments are considered positive, especially after an entire decade of successive events that took place in Syria, the loss of hope in change, and the belief of Syrians that "perhaps" Syria will not go back to the way it previously was, at least not in the foreseeable future. This is in addition to the establishment of each authority in Syria in its own regions where the possibility for an overall solution seems too out of reach, which is what caused "some individuals" to lose interest in the political events taking place, pushing them to focus on providing for themselves in areas inside Syria and attempt to build a new life in neighboring countries.

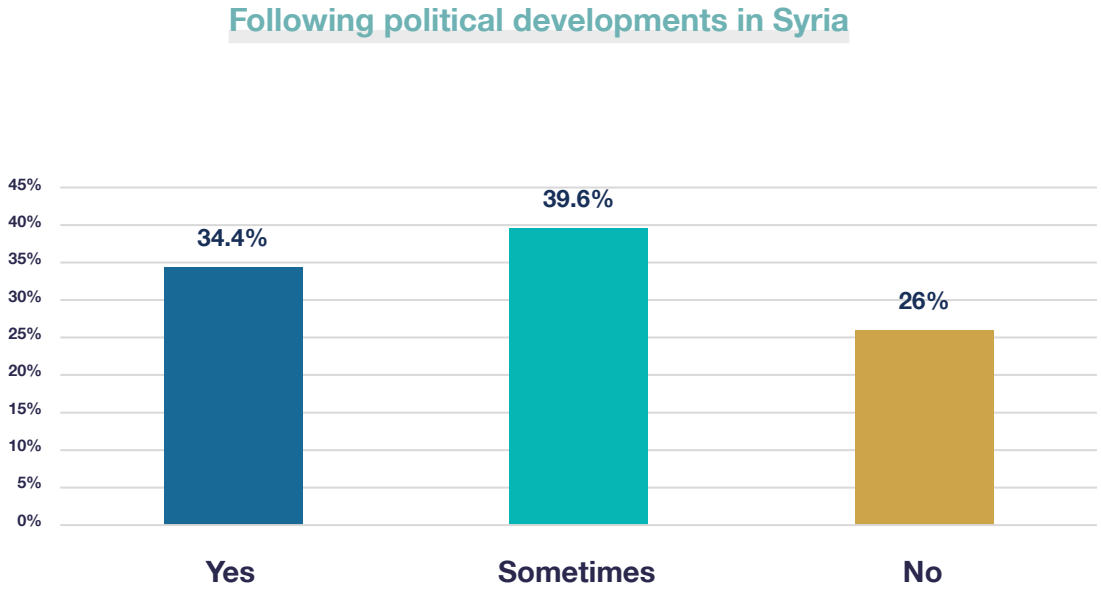

Figure 45 showing the level of following Syrian political developments among the study sample

As for the relation between religiosity patterns, the tendency to "follow" news related to Syria was highest among all religiosity patterns, and higher among the non-religious and strictly religious patterns. This indicates an uninterrupted connection with the political situation in Syria, and if we combine the rates of participants who follow the developments always and sometimes, we will observe an increase in comparison to the rates of participants who "do not follow up", which are the lowest here. This also aligns with the relation with personality patterns, as the rate of individuals following the situation was highest among the patterns and their degrees.

When it comes to keeping up with political developments in the specific areas of the participants, as shown in figure 46, an increase was observed and the number of people following developments was highest among the entire sample. This is due to the fact that some individuals focus on the military and field developments in their areas, and therefore the political developments there. This type of interest is related to the personal or communal memory of the people of the area itself.

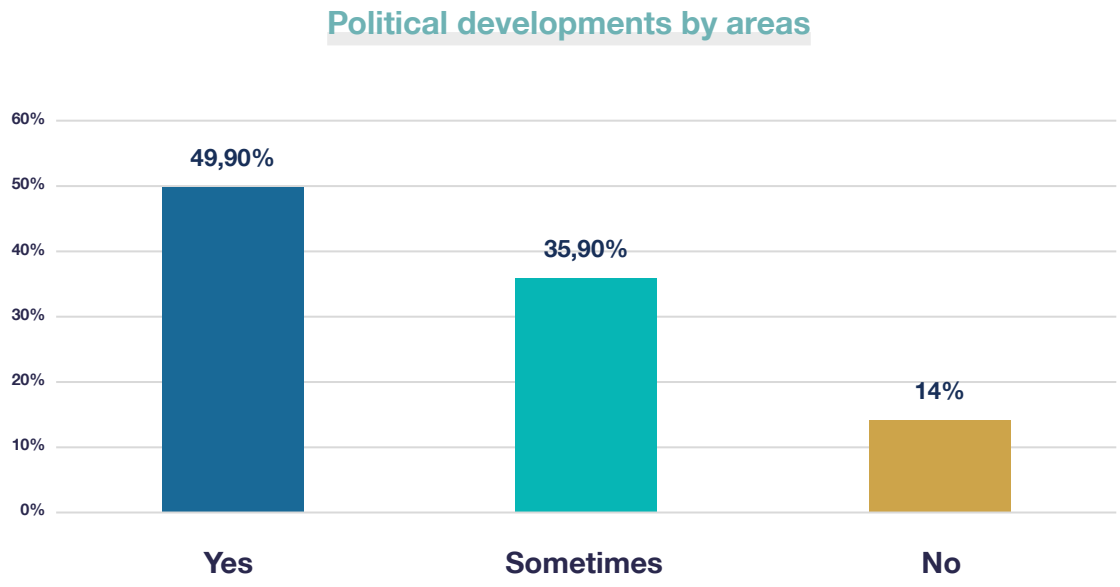

Figure 46 showing the level of following political developments in areas that the study sample belongs to

As for the relation with religiosity patterns, the rates of participants who answered "yes" was also high among all patterns. This complements our previous analysis regarding the

relation between Syrians and their place in Syria, whether they stayed there or were forced to immigrate, as it stores their own social history. This was the case for all personality patterns in all their degrees, with varying levels of following developments, just like the case of religiosity patterns.

10- No Systematic Form for Political Affiliation

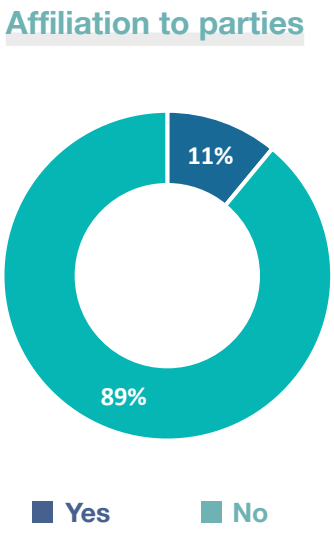

Figure 47 showing the current affiliation to parties among the sample

The results of the field study reflected a high decrease in the "current" affiliation of Syrians to political parties at 11%, as shown in figure 47. This is in comparison to the pre-2011 situation, where that rate was at 20,9%. [12] In all cases, these "previous and current" rates are considered low in general when it comes to the relation between political affiliation and structural political bodies. The low level of institutional participation in political parties during the rule period of the Ba'ath party and the ruling family, as shown in figure 48, is due to the way all political movements were financially grouped under the Ba'ath party as the "National Progressive Front" which included parties that received approval from the ruling party itself. Therefore, its main discourse supported that of the regime, whereas the existence of opposing parties was prohibited and their participants endured persecution and arrest that lasted for over a decade, in many cases.

[12] - We point out here that this level does not represent real political affiliation and therefore participation in political parties, but the desire to belong to the ruling party to gain benefits or avoiding danger

It seems that the state of the revolutionary movement was unable to create these spaces to belong to parties, which can be understood, for no new political party showed a clear program and assurance in its discourse towards the confusing uncertainty that covers the Syrian reality. Old opposing parties were able to maintain some of their “little” facilities, but they suffered from separations and were clearly absent from the Syrian political scene. This all came along with the loss of trust from Syrians in any political party that is unable to gain power to make changes or provide their requests of democratic change, add that to the conflict among old and new parties, or among new parties themselves, until they ended up being mere public names without any popular value or political effect.

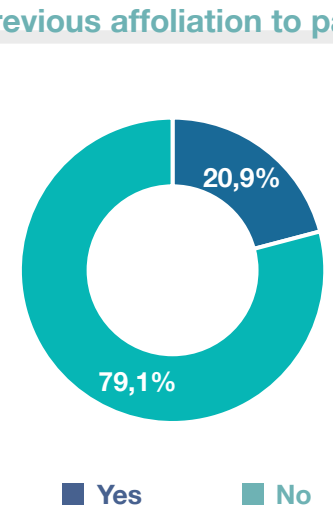

Figure 48 showing the affiliation of the sample to previous parties

As for the relation between religiosity patterns, rates kept decreasing in the same manner as personality patterns, for both these patterns did not show any relevant indicators for their current affiliation with political parties.

As for previous affiliations, they seemed to start out high and then decreased again in the current scene among the non-religious pattern at 32.1% previously and 7.4% currently, which is the case for all other patterns, albeit at different rates. This also showed a high level of similarity with previous affiliation in its relation to personality patterns and their degrees.

11- Tendencies Towards Democratic/Liberal Parties

Figure 49 shows that the sample has a leaning to parties and political movements with democratic liberal tendencies, followed by ethnic and finally religious tendencies. This was shown in the participants answer to a question inquiring about their support to parties and political movements based on their ideological identity. The number map below shows a diversity in the tendencies of Syrians on the level of political ideology, showcasing the existing of diverse backgrounds, and thus the possibility for the coexistence of all these Syrian affiliations in the intended democratic environment of Syria.

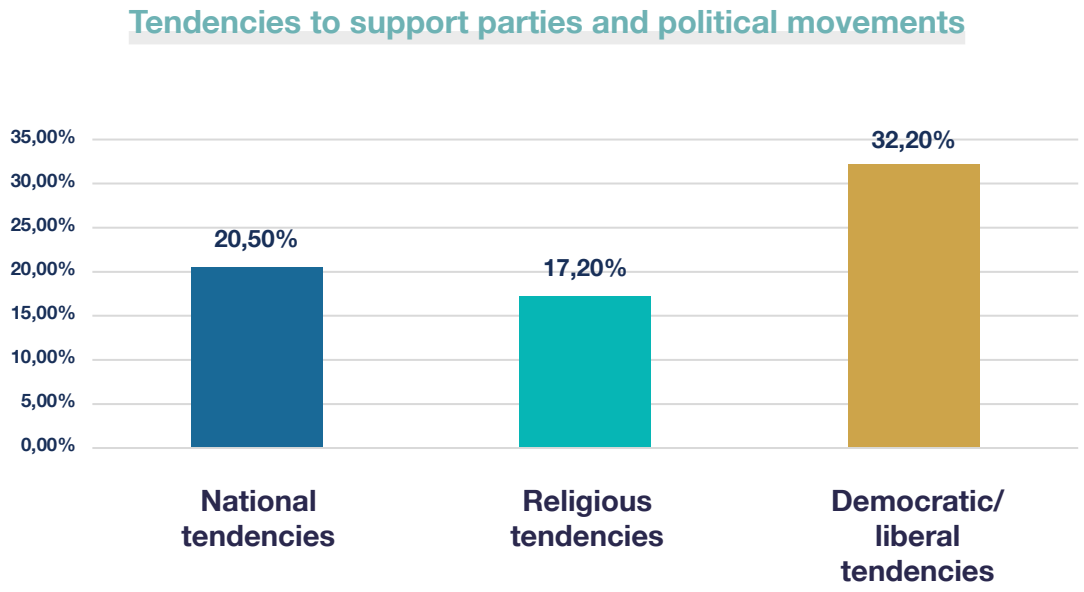

Figure 49 showing the tendency to support parties and political movements

As for the relation with religiosity patterns, results were aligned with our previous analysis, which mentioned the balance in tendencies towards political life from religious patterns, as opposed to a seemingly more balanced vision in the requirements of political life in Syria among the non-religious pattern, which relies on rejecting anything related to religion without discussion or consideration of its position in social and political life. Perhaps confirming our analysis is the existence of a 29.6% rate among the non-religious pattern that supports ethnopolitical tendencies, which is somewhat a sort of ideological belief that matches religious ideology in degree and severity.

Alternatively, we see that the three religious patterns in figure 50 have achieved a level of balance in understanding the requirements of Syrian society, and they were open to the existence of opposing parties, which is what a diverse society requires.

It is also important to mention that the religiosity pattern is the specific religiosity pattern in the relation between an individual and religious norms and traditions, which is not necessarily dependent on civic or political matters, in spite of our belief that they are linked.

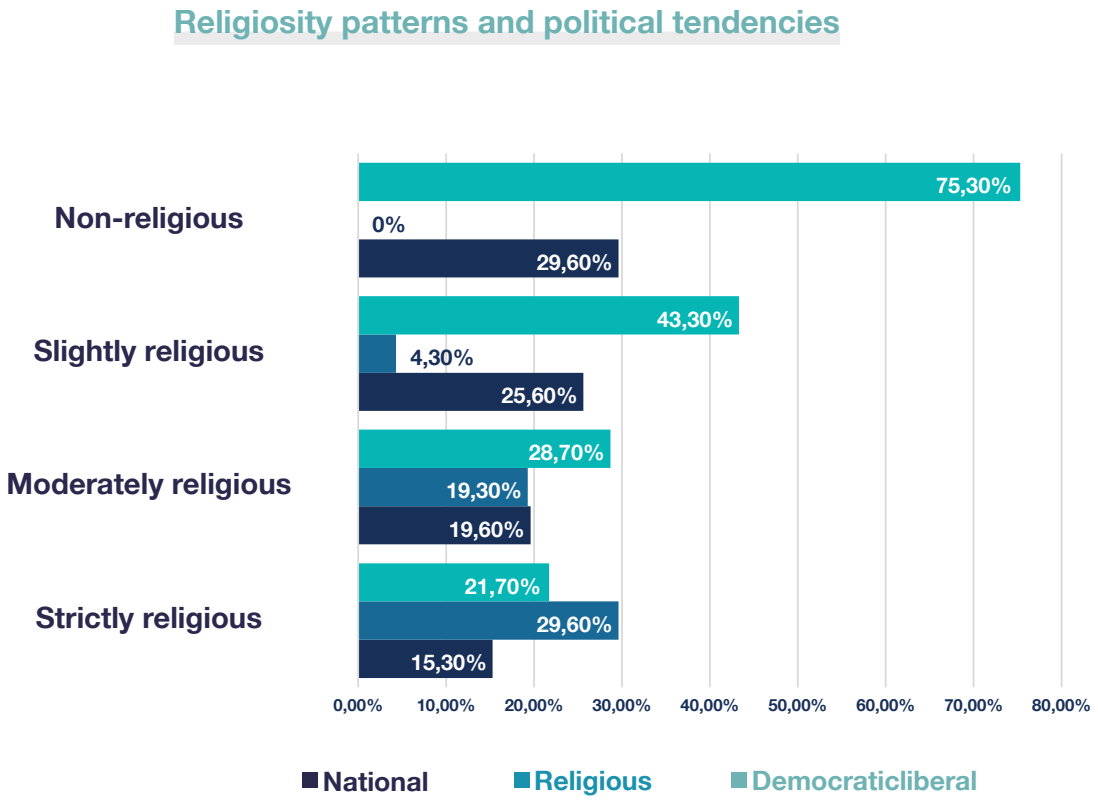

Figure 50 showing the relation between religiosity patterns and political tendencies

As for the relation between personality patterns and their degrees shown in figure 51, the role of open-mindedness and close-mindedness was made abundantly clear. Although this does not indicate a total exclusion of the close-minded and highly close-minded patterns, preferences leaned towards religious tendencies over ethnic tendencies, which confirms our previous perception on the difference between religiosity and personality patterns, thus revealing, in a lot of cases, the structure of personality and its relation to civil and political life, as made obvious here and in many of the links made above.

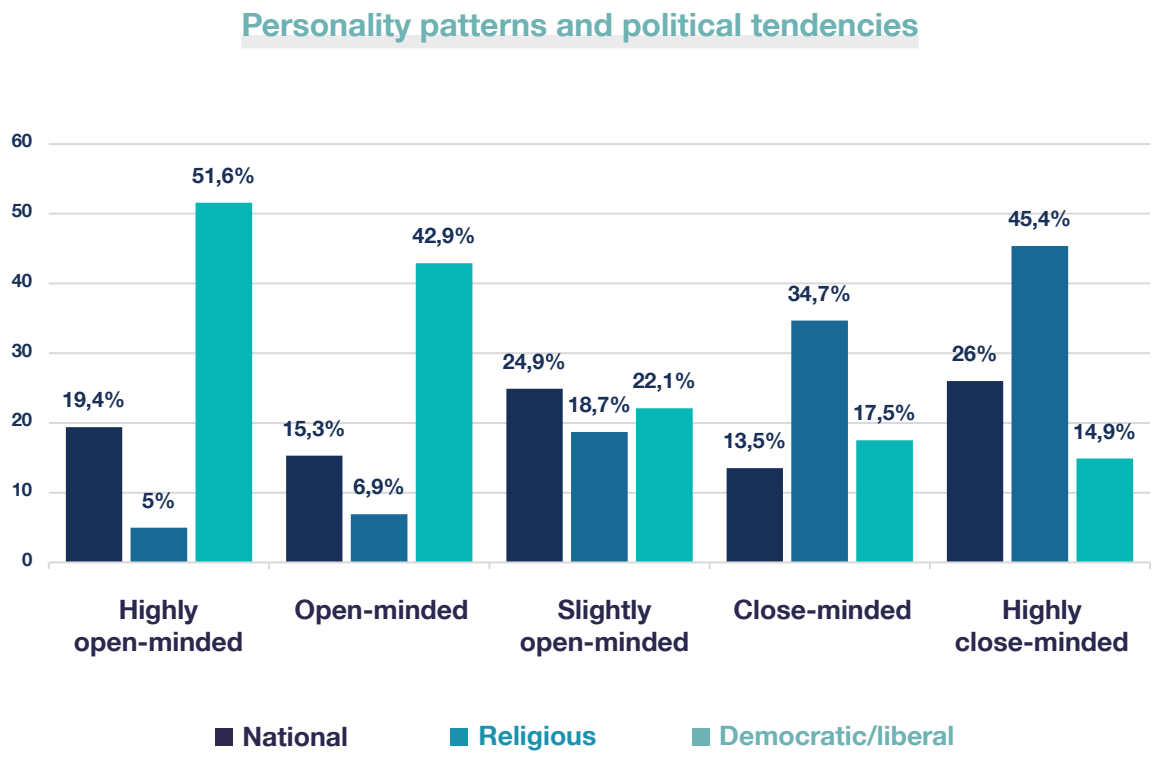

Figure 51 showing the relation between personality patterns and political tendencies

12- The Absence of Political and Religious Authorities

Ideologies are currently conflicting in Syria, and religious or political bodies may receive support from individuals with diverse tendencies, but that doesn't mean that the positions that some of these bodies may take will receive support from non-members or that their overall work approach will align with their expectations. Alternatively, religious or ethnic ideologies may come into play here in representing the positions of some "political or religious" bodies.

The main issue here was about (political or religious) bodies, which explains the political position of the participant. These bodies were analyzed based on their relation with other religiosity pattern.

The results of the field study shown in figure 52 showed the lack of trust from Syrians in the "study sample" in Syrian political/religious parties, and none of them garnered the required minimum of support from the study sample.

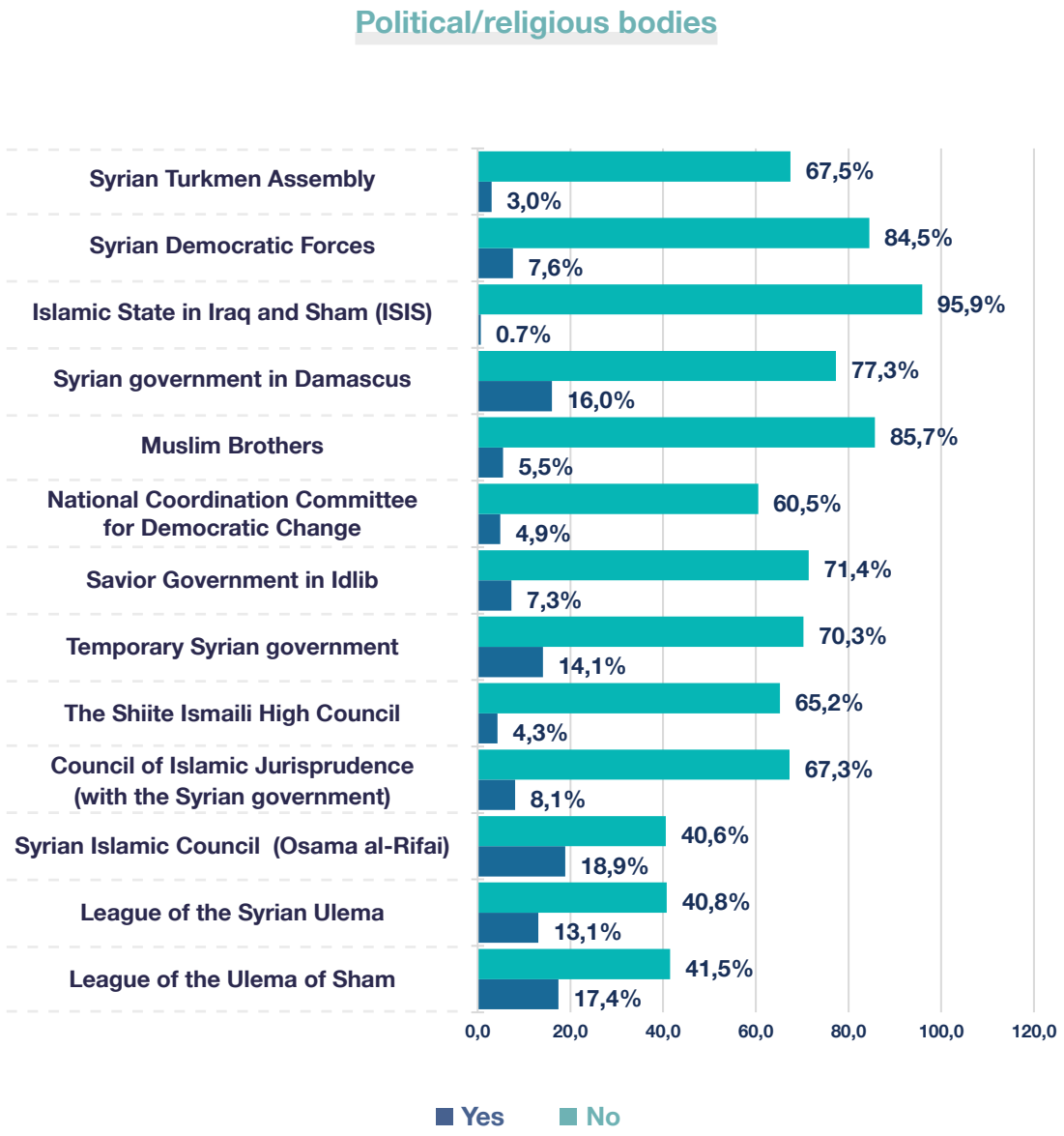

Figure 52 showing the support of the study sample for political and religious bodies

It should be noted here that there is a high number of answers that were “haven’t heard of it” and “uninterested”, and this is also considered an indicator of many people from these bodies moving away from Syrian social rules in their places of residence in Syria and outside, as shown in figure 53.

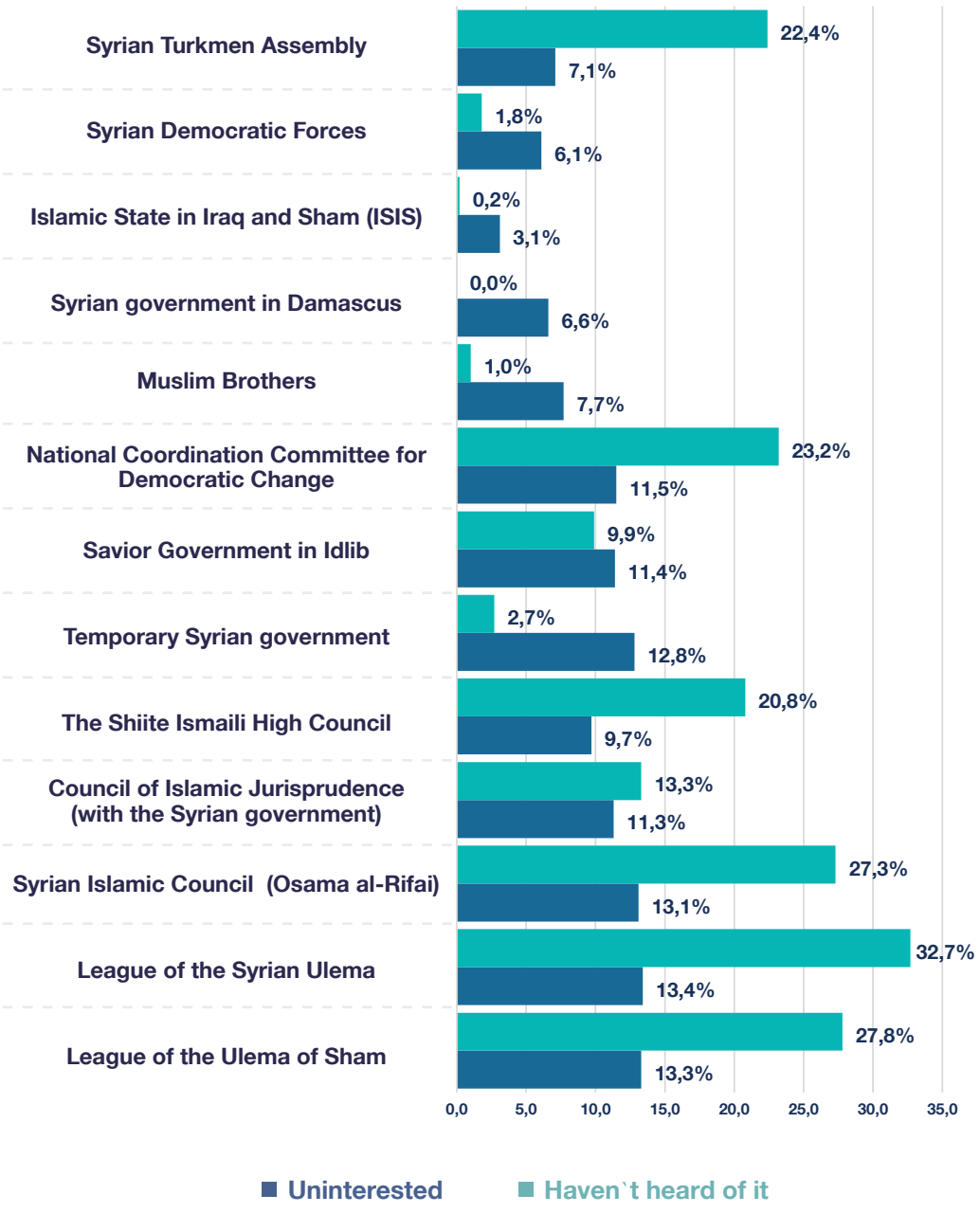

Figure 53 showing the knowledge and interest of the study sample in political and religious bodies

As for the relation with religiosity patterns, the results of the field study also revealed that there isn't any political or religious body that received the minimal level of support from any religiosity pattern in the sample, as shown in figure 54 and table 10. Also noting that there is a high number of answers saying "haven't heard of it" and "uninterested".

Religiosity patterns and the political and religious bodies

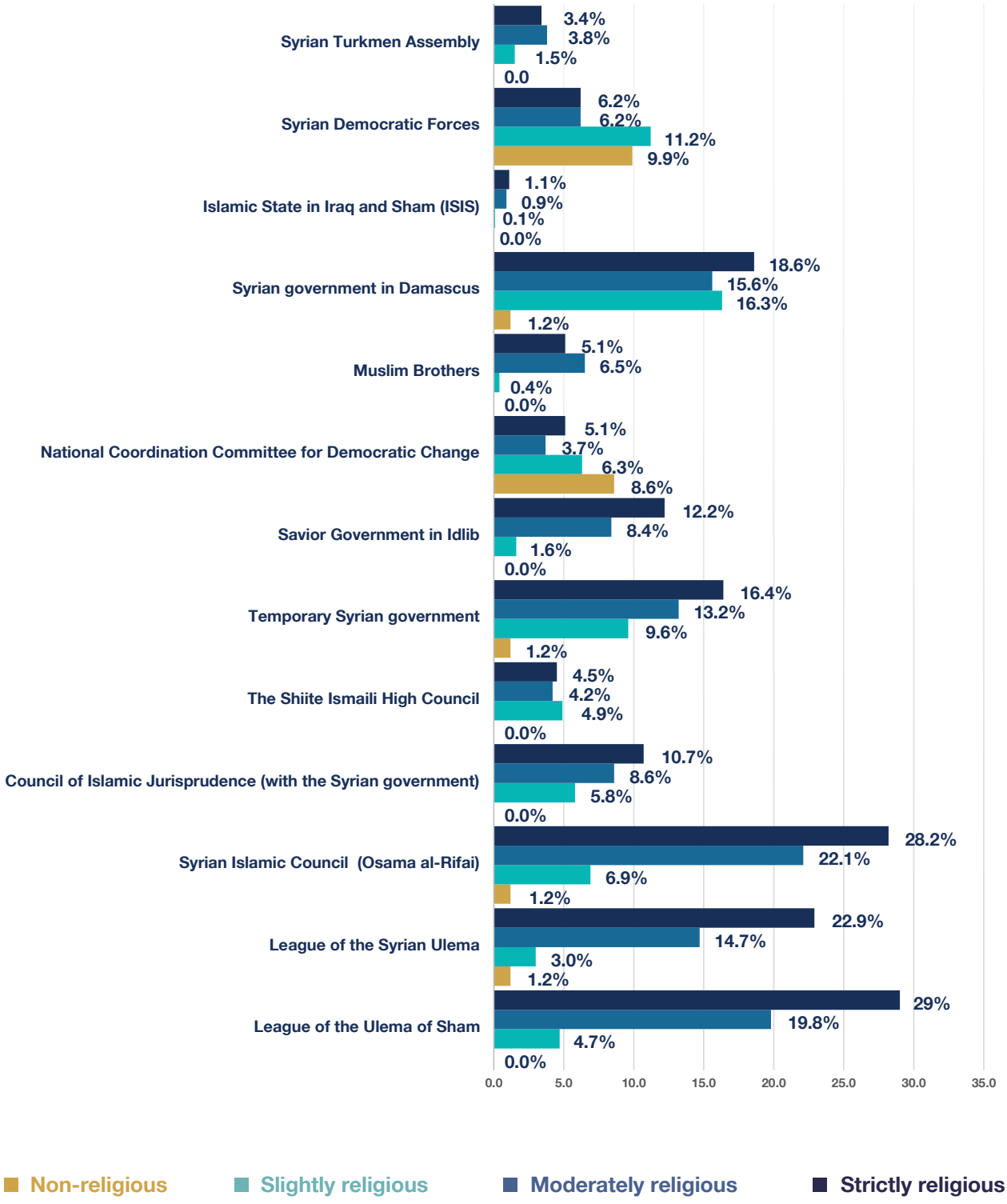

Figure 54 showing the relation between religiosity patterns and their support to political and religious bodies

Table 10 showing religiosity patterns and their support for political and religious bodies

	Political/religious patterns	Strictly religious	Moderately religious	Slightly religious	Non-religious
1	League of the Ulema of Sham	29	19.8	4.7	0
2	League of the Syrian Ulema	22.9	14.7	3	1.2
3	Syrian Islamic Council (Osama al-Rifai)	28.2	22.1	6.9	1.2
4	Council of Islamic Jurisprudence (with the Syrian government)	10.7	8.6	5.8	0
5	The Shiite Ismaili High Council	4.5	4.2	4.9	0
6	Temporary Syrian government	16.4	16.2	9.6	1.2
7	Savior Government in Idleb	12.2	8.4	1.6	0
8	National Coordination Committee for Democratic Change	5.1	3.7	6.3	8.6
9	Muslim Brothers	10.1	6.5	0.4	0
10	Syrian government in Damascus	18.6	15.6	16.3	1.2
11	Islamic State in Iraq and Sham (ISIS)	1.1	0.9	0.1	0
12	Syrian Democratic Forces	6.2	6.2	11.2	9.9
13	Syrian Turkmen Assembly	3.4	3.8	1.5	0

These results indicate a lack of trust among all religiosity patterns in any “political or religious” body in their political discourse, thus uncovering the failure of all political and religious structures in achieving a clear political or religious discourse that reaches the entire Syrian community and its hopes, and therefore in gaining the support of Syrians for its positions or discourse. This generally aligns with the main cause of the political conflict in Syria and the separation of the political discourse from social rules. Many political and religious bodies were founded during the previous decade, but they kept working within the philosophy of traditional structural bodies without having a clear political program or targeting groups of Syrians from different backgrounds, as they kept doing their political jobs virtually without gaining any advantage with Syrians. This is the case for all bodies, including the dedicated “Muslim Brothers, for instance”.

Based on the results of this study, and of many previous studies on Syrian political matters, there is one primary point of consolation, and that is the "common belief" among Syrians that there is no "body/bloc/movement" that represents their political objectives, which "may" allow us to understand that confusion and difference in opinions among Syrians when it comes to their political choices.

13- Return to Primary Organizations

The study aimed to test the most well-known political authorities among the "study sample" through the existence of options that are not just related to political authorities but that expand to contrasting and diverse authorities in order to discover which one had the biggest influence in the sample's adoption of political knowledge and positions.

Although the question asked about the three main authorities, we tried to showcase all of them to the overall sample.

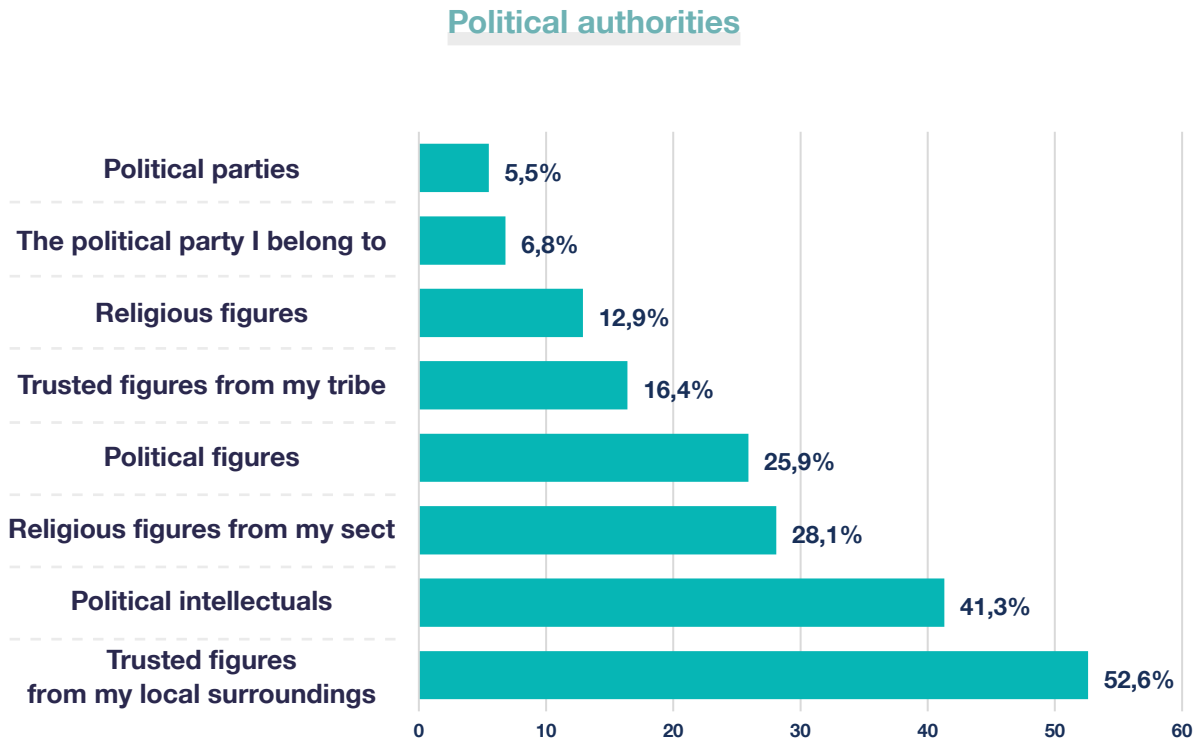

Figure 55 showing political authorities by sample participants

Figure 55 reflects a return to “primary” authorities that are trusted by individuals of a specific social structure in Syria, where the answer of a “trustworthy figure from my own surroundings” had the highest rate among the sample at 52.6%. In second place were “political thinkers” at 41.3%, followed by “religious figures from my own sect” at 28.1%. There is also a clear lack of a structural political authority reflected in all political parties that “were previously proven to be useless according to the study sample”.

As for the relation with religiosity patterns, as shown in figure 56, the answer of a “trustworthy figure from my own surroundings” was the primary authority of reference among both the strictly religious and moderately religious patterns at 54.9% and 54% respectively. These figures may have objective analytical views or may be a source of trust for a specific community as their political perceptions align with the perceptions of that particular group. As for the primary political authority for the non-religious and slightly religious patterns, “political thinkers” received the highest rate of support at 59.3% and 51.1% respectively. This is an understandable result, as the non-religious pattern tends to often refer to intellectual and political authorities or political parties, and stay away as much as possible from primary or religious authorities, which is also the case of the slightly religious pattern. However, we did find a significant rate of support for trustworthy figures in local surroundings as a political authority of reference at 30.9% among the non-religious pattern and 50.4% among the slightly religious pattern.

As for the other authorities, they received low rates of support among different religiosity patterns, and low rates on the statistical level when it came to the rejection of those authorities.

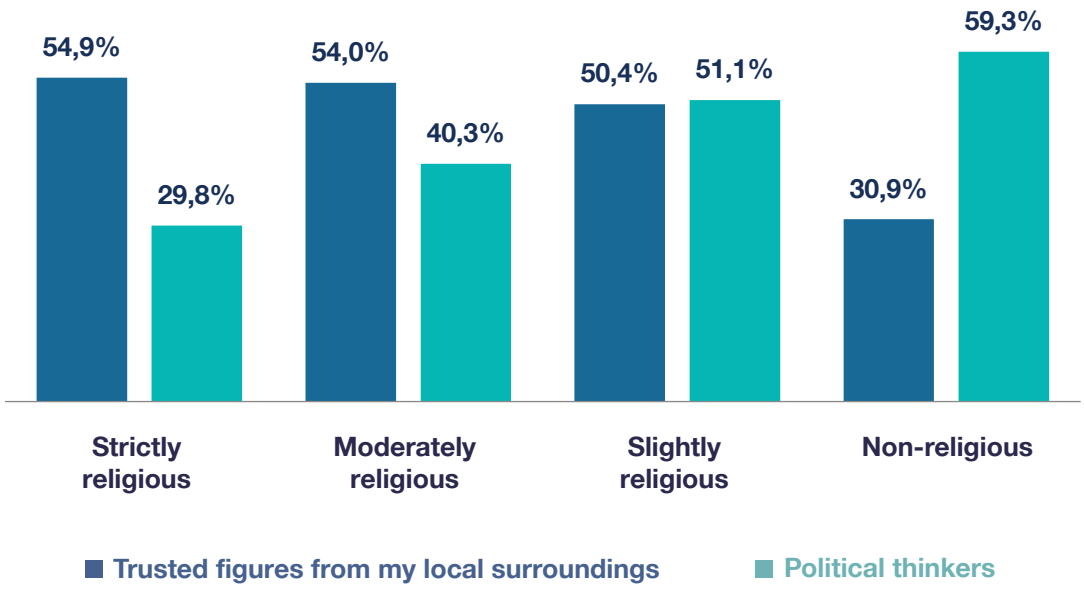

Figure 56 showing the relation between religiosity patterns and political authorities

14- An Arab Identity for Syria and an Understanding of the Diverse Syrian Components

The overall sample chose the name Syrian Arab Republic first at 53.7%, then Syria at 48.8%, followed by the Syrian Republic at 44.8% and the Arab Syrian Republic at 22.6%, as shown in figure 57.

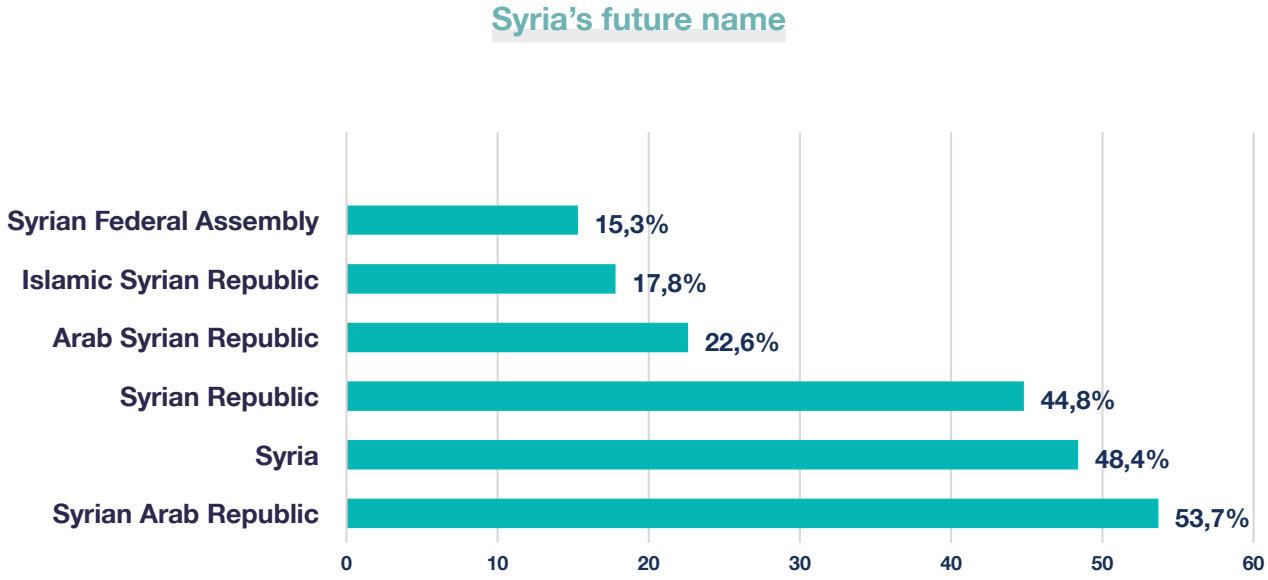

Figure 57 showing the preference of the study sample for Syria's future name

Adding the choices of "Syria" or "The Syrian Republic" in one category did not make sense concept-wise, as there is a preference for including the concept of the "republic" among 44.8% of the sample as a primary form of government in the name of the state, which is generally different than the "general" name "Syria" that may push the country towards any form of government since its name would not grant a clear indication of the form of government. This is why it was important to note this here.

The previous numbers show that the majority of the sample still desires to belong to an Arab national identity and to include it in the future name of Syria, as it is in its current name. The high rates of support to the name Syria or The Syrian Republic may be due to a **consideration of all the national and ethnic components within a diverse society**. Surely, it does not mean an agreement to a separatist policy like in the name The Syrian Federal Assembly. In contrast, it actually reflects the desire for a united Syria in which all national, racial, ethnic, and political components can coexist with all their rights and without needing to resort to a political mode that targets dividing Syria to bodies based on different components, even if the idea was that of a decentralized state and not of "separatist governments", for instance.

There was also a wide rejection of identifying Syria with a religious name as is the case in the name “Islamic Syrian Republic”, which could be considered a positive point, as religious components should not be reflected in a country’s name, be it based on a religious or ideological division. For instance, we find the “Islamic Republic of Iran” an example of “hijacking” a country’s name from all the components that form a country’s identity.

As for the relation between the future name of Syria and religiosity patterns, field results shown in figure 58 showed that the main choice among the strictly religious pattern and the moderately religious pattern was the “Syrian Arab Republic”, while the slightly religious pattern chose the name “Syria”, and the non-religious pattern chose the name “The Syrian Republic”, aligning with its rejection of religion and Arab nationalism, and its tendency to choose a general name with perhaps no consideration of the rights of the different national and ethnic components that form the structure of the Syrian state and society.

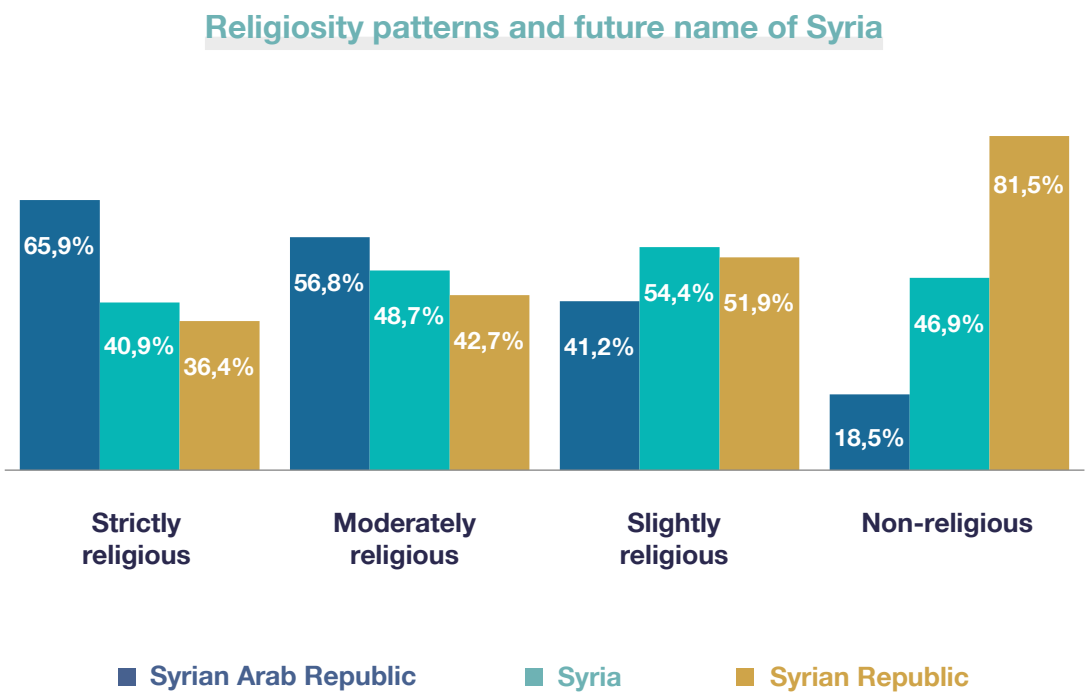

Figure 58 showing the relation between religiosity patterns and the future name of Syria

Alternatively, 41% of the sample found it important that the next president of Syria is Muslim, while 52% agreed that all religions and sects had the right to participate in the presidency in Syria and 60% found that women should have the right to run for presidency in Syria, as shown in figure 59.

Although the regime made use of sectarianism all throughout its years of ruling and at the beginning of the Syrian movement, the increase in the rate of support for the idea that "all religions and sects have the right to participate in the presidency in Syria" indicates that the regime's experience should not be considered a general representation of public Syrian political life. The future of Syria is dependent on democratic change and the establishment of a new constitution, and therefore any authority using religion or sect to serve its own benefits will be terminated. That is in addition to the increase in equality among all individuals in the political practice, which was made obvious by the high rate of support for the concept of "women's right to run for presidency".

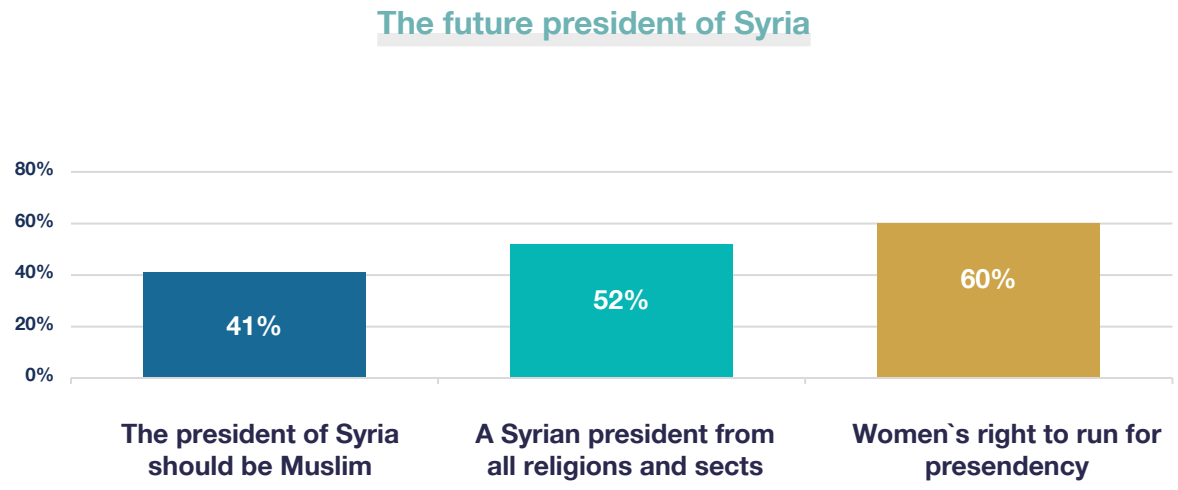

Figure 59 showing the position of the study sample towards the future president of Syria

As for the relation with religiosity patterns, the idea that "the president of Syria must be Muslim" received the highest rate of support among the strictly religious and moderately religious patterns (at 64.7% and 46.2%), while the level of agreement among the slightly religious pattern was 61.2%, and 92.6% among the non-religious pattern.

As for the idea that "all religions and sects have the right to participate in the presidency of Syria", the moderately religious and non-religious patterns agreed with this concept, while it was rejected by the strictly religious pattern. However, even the moderately religious and slightly religious patterns expressed a lower level of agreement than the non-religious pattern. This could be explained by the fear of repeating the same scenarios conducted by the ruling family's regime in Syria and its use of religious sect for its own benefit.

As for the concept of "women's rights to run for presidency in Syria", it received common support from all three religious patterns, as well as the non-religious pattern, which is a positive indicator that reflects the recognition of the role of women in politics and their treatment as equal citizens to men, also showing us that any sensitivity related to religion and sect among patterns is merely the result of what Syria went through because of the manipulation of religion to serve the regime's benefits.

In relation to sects, as shown in figure 60, all "minority" sects rejected the condition that the president of Syria must be Muslim, in exception to Sunnis and Shiites, and the highest rate of agreement was among Shiites at 77.6% as opposed to 54.7% among Sunnis. We believe that the increase of this rate among "Shiites" is due to two explanations: the first one is that "Shiites" consider that their official narrative about religion and caliphate and other historic and religious matters is the right and correct way, and the second one is that it is affected by the concept of the "Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist" as it is currently established in Iran.

They also rejected the concept that "all religions and sects have the right to participate in the presidency in Syria", while all other religions and sects expressed their agreement. That is in addition to their rejection of the concept of "women's right to run for presidency", noting here that it was the only sect that rejected it.

This religious and ideological strictness and close-mindedness among Shiites is maybe due to the radical treatment they endured in Syria with the start of the revolutionary movement, in addition to the Shiite militias that came from outside, like “Lebanon, Iraq, Iran, etc.” and the series of massacres they committed on the basis of sectarianism. This also refers to the structure of close-mindedness among this component and its consideration of “others” as enemies, which explains the “Shiite missionary” projects that are still ongoing in Syria (in the areas under the government of Damascus in particular).

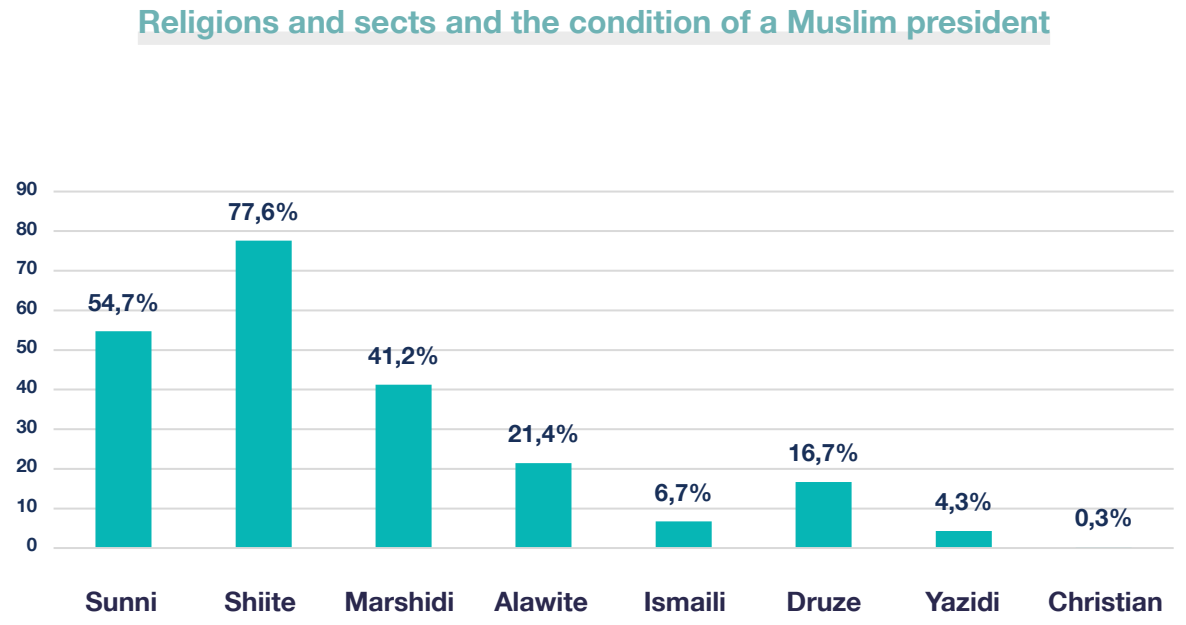

Figure 60 showing the relation between religions and sects and the condition of a Muslim president

15- War and Social Structure: Negative Impacts and Regression

The negative effects of the war are not limited to the number of individuals who died, or were lost or forcibly displaced, and not even to the destruction of the country's infrastructure and what it entails in extreme reconstruction efforts. In fact, the main impact of the war affected the Syrian society, in all its institutions and structures. It is true that, prior to 2011, there was a lot of confusion about the social structure in Syria and the reliance on primary components in some social structures, but deeply analyzing them always leads us to the Syrian government's policies and plans to make use of the regression of current communities to their primary form of relations and internal conflict. For instance, an intentional operation was conducted to derail development plans in rural Aleppo and Qamishli, which led to a big separation of those rural areas from the city and its institutions, thus closing their networks. This caused an observation of "zero outcome in development projects" as led by figures related to the intelligence system in the area whose mission was to maintain the separation between the components of local communities and thwart any economic/communal initiative that could achieve gradual, "even seasonal", development in those communities.

After 2011 and following a series of conflicts and disputes in the positions towards the popular movement, as well as the interference of the regime's military and media mechanisms, Syrians were divided into opposing groups on the political, social, and military levels. The country fell into a whirlpool of wars marked with regional and international interferences, and the issue of external and internal displacement appeared, along with that of Syrian immigration and refugees in neighboring countries, Europe, and other welcoming countries.

One fundamental variable that appeared here was the lack of trusted "authorities" for all Syrians, or their existence as specific organizations in every community of refugees or inside Syria. The lack of authorities means the lack of standards and rules that organize thinking and intellectual patterns among Syrians towards what is happening in Syria and its consequent relation to the outside world in all its complications.

There is also a lack of a Syrian political national discourse that all Syrians were able to ad-

here to. This came along with the failure of the movements that formed to solve the Syrian problem. The government of Damascus also failed in its discourse to keep its supporters following the political and economic confusion and its impact on Syrians there. The de facto regime in Idleb and rural Aleppo, as well as the areas under the Syrian Democratic Forces, also failed in providing national authorities and institutional structures to people living in these areas.

In addition to that, there was a lack of common figures and national "symbols", as no independent figures seemed to garner the support of the majority of Syrians, while the Syrian elite managed to conduct the usual approach it had followed since before 2011, pushing the figures away from the Syrian regime and social structures and making use of their failure and confusion in maintaining their own discourse.

Changes in the Syrian social structure

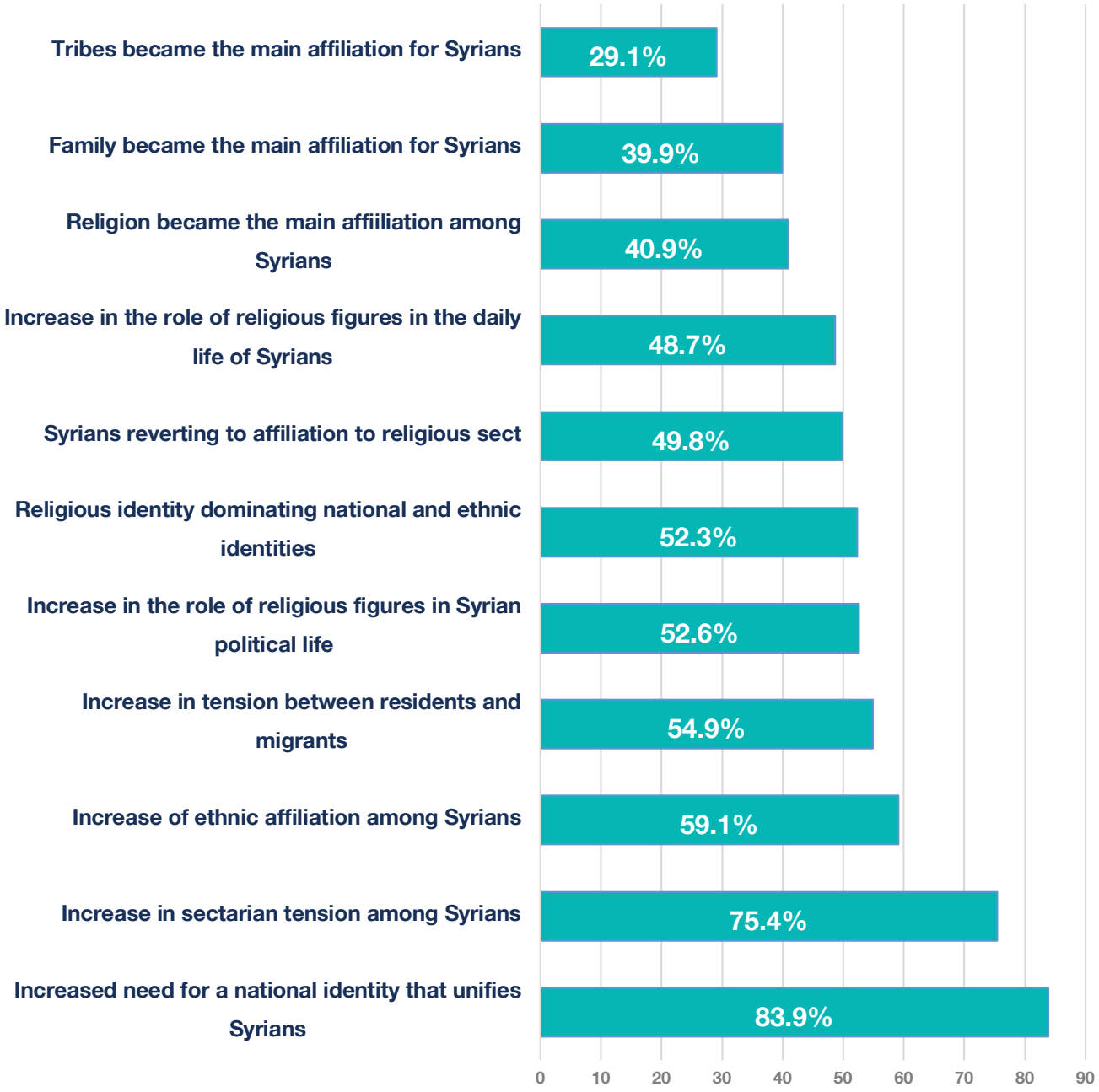

Figure 61 showing the opinion of the study sample on the changes that affected Syrian society

The results of the field study shown in figure 61 indicated that the study sample agreed that there is a number of highly complicated problems, like the return to primary authorities in the structure of old social organizations. This was highlighted by the return to familial and tribal affiliations as a main reference authority for individuals, and this is something that we can understand, especially with the absence of the role of government institutions in catering to their citizens, which was not happening, even before the revolutionary movement.

A number of phenomena also garnered support from the study sample when it came to the effect of the war on social structure, and they merit a long analysis and specific studies to address them, as they had a big effect on the structure of the Syrian social landscape, highlighting the need for a lot of effort to reengineer the Syrian social structure within the limits of its relation to its authorities.

The "matter of sectarianism" seems very relevant in the overall social scene, which is a natural result of war, due to the fact that the political regime used it to mobilize "its own sect" and gain their support against the revolutionary movement, by exporting the popular discourse against the main religious component in Syria, i.e. Sunnis, and making them believe that the movement's main aim was to exclude the regime's sect and take revenge from it. Needless to say, it managed to flawlessly achieve this goal, which led to the formation of sectarian militias that started fighting under religious names and symbols, until the conflict turned into a religious/sectarian conflict that brought many sectarian militias from outside Syria to fight against the Syrian population under the guise of the narrative that the political regime invented for its survival.

According to the sample, this was the reason why Syrians moved away from religious sects, for as long as everyone was fighting under the claim of religion, a practical and theoretical response to the radicalism of the regime and its sect in its "violence and exclusion" was to be expected through the emergence of a similar discourse within the other religious sects. This all led to the dominance of religious identity over national identity, particularly with the mutual exclusion of all the components of society towards each other. Although this was dependent at the beginning on the regime and its "political reliance" on its sect, a common discourse about a "systematic exclusion plan" by the regime emerged, which

led to the current form of the Syrian social structure in the areas under its control.

A redundant result is also showcased in the increase of the role of religious figures in the public and daily life of Syrians, where religion became the main authority of reference for a big group of them, as well as the emergence of public national conflicts. This is the case for the Kurds in Syria, as the war provided them with an opportunity to demand their own ethnic entity, as a precursor to their separation from Syria, which is what they worked towards achieving in real life. The northeastern areas of Syria became under the control of Kurd political and military leaderships who conducted their political life like they were an independent country or a recognized independent entity.

When looking at the numbers in figure 61, the effects of Syrian immigration that resulted from the lack of the state participation in the internal areas of Syria could be observed, as well as the lack of a unified Syrian identity, which, as the biggest part of the sample agreed, was deemed more necessary now than ever (the need for a Syrian unified national identity received a support rate of around 84%).

The desire for a national identity that could unify all Syrians seems to be one of the most important results that could allow us an understanding of the opinions of the Syrians participating in the study on the causes and effects of war, as well as the return of social Syrian organizations to their previous form of participation in social relations and as authorities of reference for daily life. Tribes and families went back to being a main reference authority for many local communities, while another result of the Syrian war manifested in the emergence of a number of phenomena that resulted from the mutual exclusion and alienation on all sides.

All these cracks in the Syrian social structure were, according to the study sample, an expected result of the methodology that the political regime followed for decades, which included its oppression of many Syrian components, on an ethnic, intellectual, religious basis, or on the basis of the areas they belonged to. This popular movement, “if it had succeeded in toppling the political regime”, would have been able to reengineer the social structure that the regime and its oppressive policies established, through its recognition of the diversity of the Syrian society and the necessity it entails to give all ethnic and racial

components their specific cultural rights within the general framework of a democratic state.

Therefore, all of the social effects of the war were expected to happen and result in a series of internal conflicts among Syrians. The long decades of oppression by the political regime in Syria laid the foundation for the radicalization that we are witnessing today on many levels, most importantly on the levels of identity and affiliation. However, what pushes to take a step further in developing national programs is the existence of a high level of awareness among Syrians in the "study sample" in their understanding of the current social and political conditions that resulted from the war, as well as the role of the regime in maintaining them, thus allowing us the space to work towards developing unified national policies that rely on the understanding and awareness of the political scene.

Study Conclusions

1. The most common religiosity pattern among the study sample was the “flexible” moderately religious pattern.

2. The strictly religious pattern was “generally” low among all religions and sects.

3. The study did not give religiosity indicators negative or positive values, but opted for a weighting method based on the level at which an individual adheres to their own religious norms and traditions, without letting other variables, such as politics, interfere in this scale.

4. A “moderately religious pattern” was dominant in Europe first and Turkey second, where the “slightly religious pattern” was highest.

5. The “non-religious” pattern was at its highest in Europe, and this may be due to the level of freedom that every individual has to adopt their own religiosity pattern without any social pressure or general cultural structure that would push individuals to engage in specific political behaviors in order to satisfy their general surroundings.

6. The dominant personality pattern among the Syrians of the “study sample” was the open-minded pattern, which represented the level of open-mindedness of individuals in their relation with others when it comes to social and economic matters, and other details of daily life. The highly open-minded and slightly open-minded patterns garnered together a percentage of 75. 2%, which indicated that someone else’s religion or sect did not play a deciding role in the relationship that an individual had with them, especially that the scale relied on the preferences of the participants on the basis of the variable of “religion” in the abovementioned daily relations.

7. Personality patterns (in this study) are not linked to a religious dimension, nor does it consist a main variable in them. In fact, personality patterns are mainly a result of social and personal factors and experiences, as well as a local memory and common perceptions. This is why we observed a difference in these positions between religiosity and personality patterns towards civic and political life.

8. The study sample supported the different options of the establishment of different religious and civil authorities for legislations related to personal status and social life in Syria.

9. The differences in the sample's perceptions regarding the establishment of legislations for social life or for particular religions and sects are due to biases for civil patterns, religious authorities, or other mixed religious and civil authorities, as based on the legal outcomes of the legislative reality demonstrated by the political regime or as influenced with the religiosity pattern of the individual or of their welcoming societies, as well as the experiences of Syrians within them.

10. The non-religious pattern mainly refused the relation of social and legal structures with religion, and the relation of religious authorities of specific religions and sects with state institutions. This was made evident in the relation with different legislations related to personal and civil status.

11. The study sample rejected the application of a "religious or sectarian quota" in political practice.

12. The sample agreed on the necessity of establishing a law under which everyone is equal, thus reflecting the desire for legal justice, which was absent during the decades of familial rule in Syria in favor of a specific religious sect.

13. The study sample supported the right to religious freedom for all Syrians, whether it related to religiosity patterns and their degrees, and the right for each individual to adopt the pattern that most suits them. This is in addition to the right of freedom of belief, which includes whether an individual chooses to believe in a religion or not, or even to change their religion without any retribution, in addition to the freedom of all religions and sects to practice their traditions and norms without restriction or exclusion.

14. There is a positive tendency towards causes related to the positions and roles of women in Syrian public life on several levels, when it comes to equality under the law without gender discrimination, and women's role in leading political roles, and even in public religious bodies.

15. The primary affiliation among the sample generally (as shown through a statistical weighting process) was Syrian nationalism, followed by religious affiliation, then familial affiliation, and finally a number of other affiliations like ethnic or regional.

16. Initial narrow affiliations remained with the primary affiliation to Syria.

17. There was a decrease in the interest of Syrians to keep up with the political developments in Syria.

18. There was a big decrease in the participation of Syrians in political parties in comparison to the period prior to 2011.

19. The revolutionary movement was unable to create a desire to belong to parties mainly because of the absence of any political party with a clear program and a robust discourse that Syrians unanimously support.

20. The study sample leaned towards political parties and movements with a liberal democratic tendency, followed by ones with ethnic tendencies, and finally religious tendencies.

21. There is no political or religious body that gained the approval of the study sample as a main authority of political reference.

22. There was a regression in the tendency of “primary” authorities to understand the Syrian political context.

23. The study sample chose the name “Syrian Arab Republic” as a future name for Syria.

24. There was a number of highly complicated social problems (like the return to initial familial and tribal affiliations, the increase of sectarian tension, the return to sectarian affiliations, and the dominance of religious identity over national and ethnic identity)

25. There is a clear need for the establishment of a Syrian national identity that could unite all Syrians.