

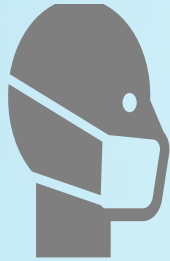


# Public Perception Survey on Local Safety and Security in Iraq



January 2021 Survey Findings  
REPORT

# Background and Context

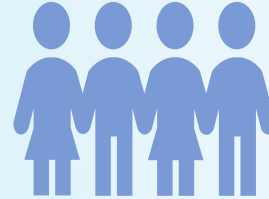


## COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic situation in Iraq continues to be of concern, with a sustained increase in the number of reported cases since January 2021.

According to the World Health Organisation, Iraq had 932,899 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 14,757 deaths as of 14 April 2021.<sup>1</sup>

Iraq has commenced its COVID-19 mass vaccination campaign in all governorates, with over 90,000 people being immunized since 2 March 2021.<sup>2</sup>



## Civil action

Popular protest movements continued into 2021, with protests focusing on deteriorating public services, demanding an end to corruption, more employment opportunities, and a reform of the political system. Protests have primarily affected Baghdad, Basra, and Karbala and have continued despite COVID-19 restrictions.



## Counter insurgency operations against ISIL

The Iraqi Security Forces continued counter insurgency operations against ISIL. ISIL carried out an estimated 211 attacks between 1 January – 31 March 2021, with the majority of these attacks in Diyala, followed by Salah al-Din, North Baghdad, Kirkuk, Anbar and Ninewa. Rugged terrain and mountain ranges in Diyala provides a haven for ISIL fighters and complicates ISF counter insurgency operations.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See WHO Health Emergency Dashboard for Iraq <https://covid19.who.int/region/emro/country/iq>.

<sup>2</sup> See WHO Iraq Coronavirus Disease 2021 (COVID-19) Weekly Situation Report (Week 13) 29 March to 04 April 2021.

<sup>3</sup> Joint Analysis Unit of UN Mission in Iraq, Bi-Weekly update 22 March – 6 April 2021.

## Purpose of Report

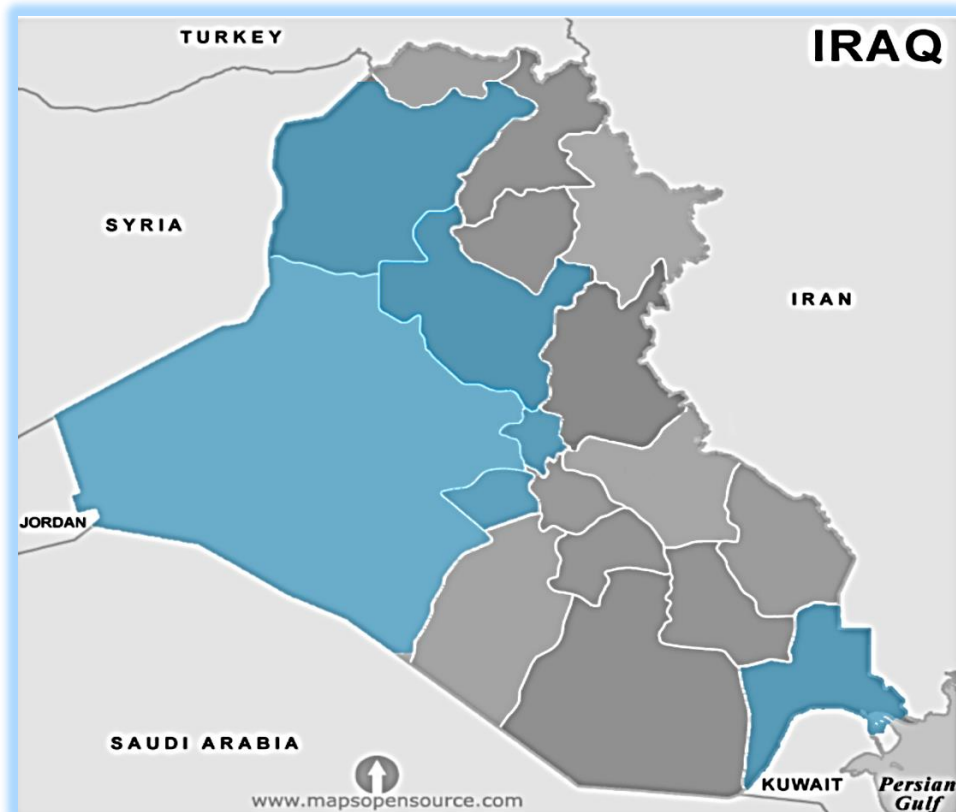
Presents findings of a survey undertaken on public perceptions of safety and security in Iraq

Intended to inform the Government of Iraq's implementation of the Security Sector Reform Programme (SSRP)

Survey was conducted by Stars Orbit Consultants and Management Development

Follow up from surveys undertaken in 2018 and 2016 to allow for comparison and assessment of changes on the ground

# Methodology: Overview

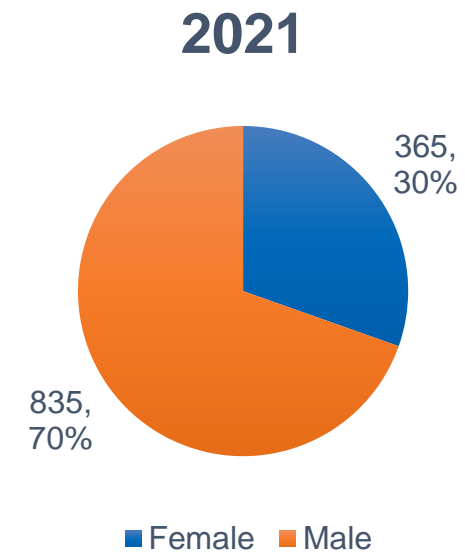
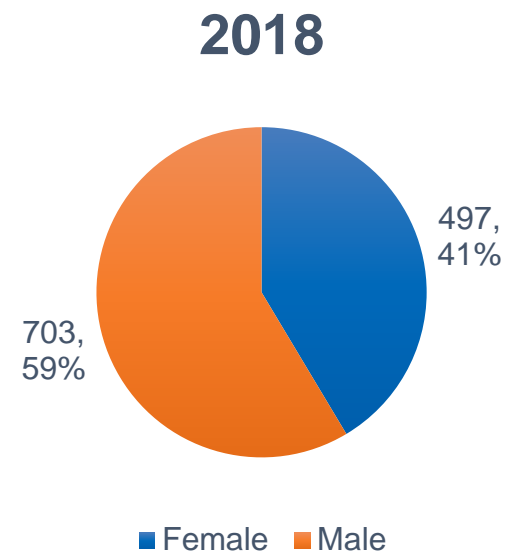
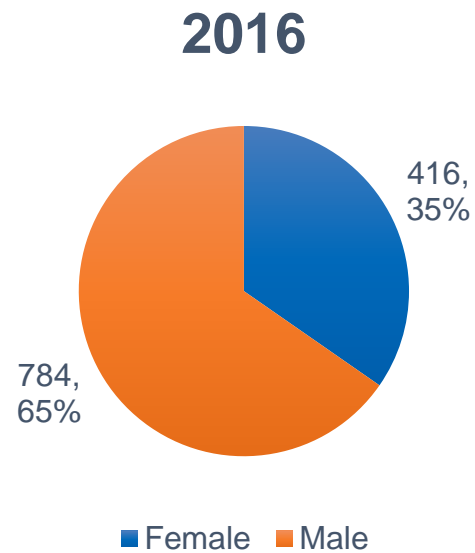


- Data collection began in January 2021
- 1,200 interviews – 200 from each governorate
- Six governorates (Anbar, Basra, Baghdad, Karbala, Ninewa and Salah al-Din)
- Representative by province, gender, age, education, urban/rural
- Random sample that was representative of community members in the target locations
- Follow-up survey to the Public Safety and Security Perception Surveys undertaken in 2018 and 2016 (Diyala and Erbil were replaced in the 2018 survey with Ninewa and Basra)
- Survey questionnaire was constructed around 10 main questions

# Methodology: Demographics

**Total number of respondents (2016, 2018, 2021):** 1,200 (200 from each governorate)

## Gender breakdown



# Methodology: Survey Questions



1. Do you feel safe in your locality? If yes, why? If no, why?
2. What do you want the government to prioritize to improve safety and security in your locality?
3. As a member of the public/ local community what can you do to improve safety and security in your locality?
4. Whom do you trust most from the following to enable safer communities in your locality?
5. To what extent would a safe and secure locality increase you and your family's well-being/quality of life?
6. In your opinion what can be done to improve public confidence and trust in the Iraqi Security Sector Service Providers?
7. Do you Agree or Disagree with the following statement:

*All firearms control and regulation must be under the government and immediate government action to remove all armed manifestations in public spaces is a priority.*

Do you want your locality free from firearms?

8. Has the COVID-19 health pandemic negatively impacted you and your families feeling of security? If yes, what was the impact and what was your level of satisfaction in terms of the service received in relation to the issue?
9. During the COVID-19 health pandemic, did you seek any services from the courts/justice sector? If yes, what kind of service and what was your level of satisfaction?
10. Was your locality affected by the recent wave of popular protests? If yes, how did it affect the service delivery of the local police and the justice sector?

# Key findings



Strong majority (90%) across the country felt safe in 2021.



Main factors contributing to feelings of safety include people living peacefully (32%), strong civilian/ local police services (17%) and no presence of ISIL (15%).



People feel unsafe primarily due to the presence of armed groups (35%), absence of community cohesion (26%), as well as the spread of armed factions, militias, gangs and tribal conflicts (14%).



Respondents want the government to prioritize improving local police services (38%), supporting community security interventions at the local level (26%) and improving access to security and justice services for the local population (17%).



Having a safe and secure locality would increase the majority of respondents' sense of well-being and quality of life to a high degree.



The main actions that members of the community can take to improve safety and security in their locality is to support government efforts to reform the security and justice sector (32%), advocate for social cohesion/ conflict prevention at the local level (29%) and support local police to increase safety and security (23%).



Local police are the most trusted security service provider in Anbar, Karbala, Salah al-Din, and Ninewa, whilst the ISF are the most trusted provider in Basra.



Public trust in security sector service providers can be increased through eradicating corruption in the sector, providing more training on democratic governance and accountability, and ensuring that selections in the sector are made strictly on merit.

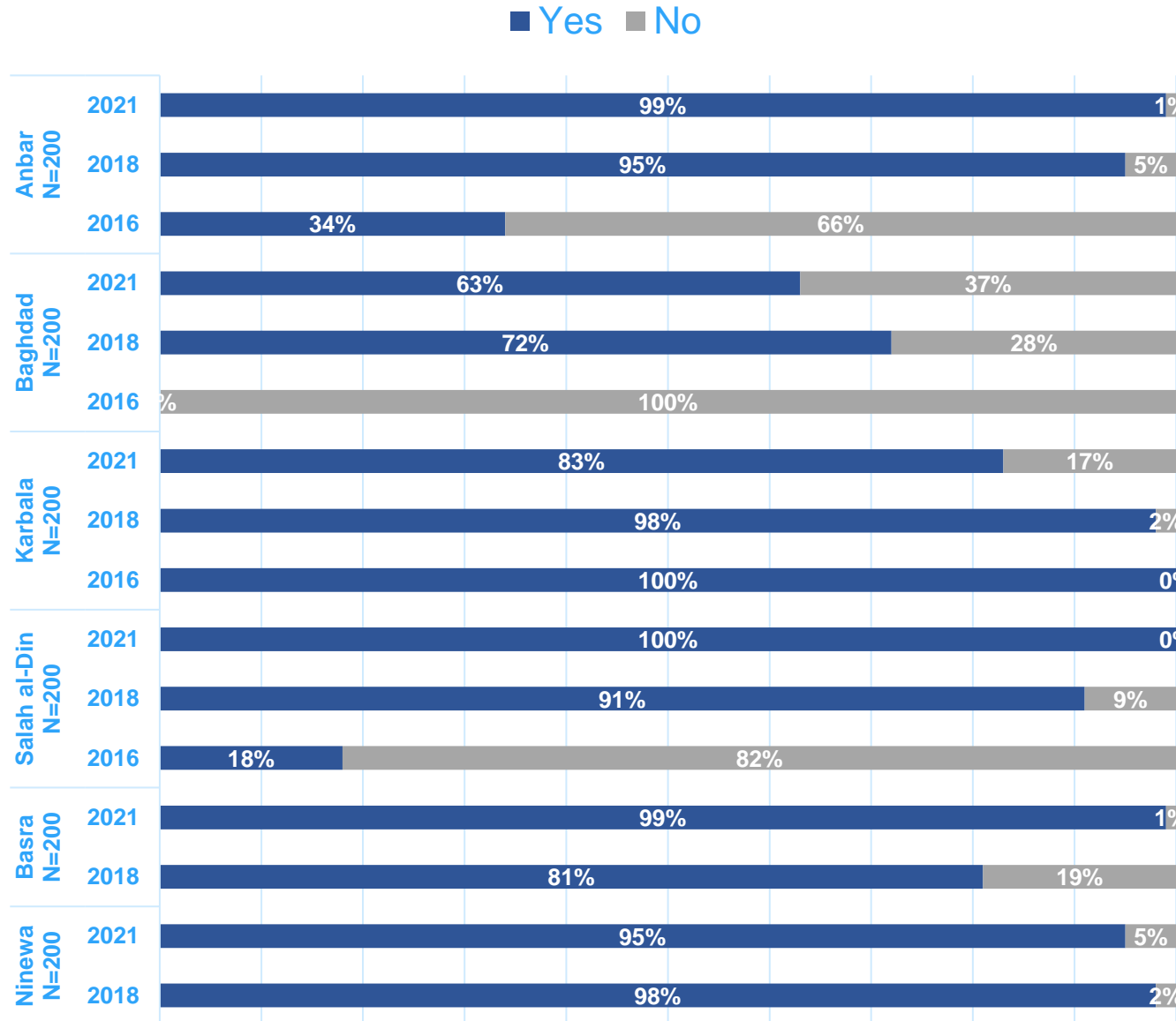


Strong majority agree that the government should control and regulate all firearms and that immediate action to remove all armed manifestations in public spaces is a priority.



# General Perception of Safety and Security





*Do you feel safe in your locality?*

**Strong majority across the country felt safe in 2021**

# *A strong majority (90%) across the country felt safe in 2021, compared to 89% in 2018 and 48% in 2016.*

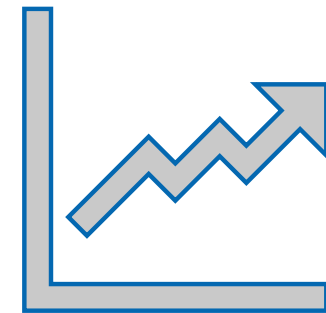


## Feelings of safety:

- **increased** in **Anbar** (95% in 2018 to 99% in 2021), **Salah al-Din** (91% in 2018 to 100% in 2021) and **Basra** (81% in 2018 to 99% in 2021); and
- **decreased** in **Baghdad** (72% in 2018 to 63% in 2021), **Karbala** (98% in 2018 to 83% in 2021) and **Ninewa** (98% in 2018 to 95% in 2021).

In **2021**, the **main factors** contributing to **feelings of safety** were:

- **people living peacefully** (32%)
- **strong civilian/local police services** (17%)
- **No presence of ISIL** (14%)



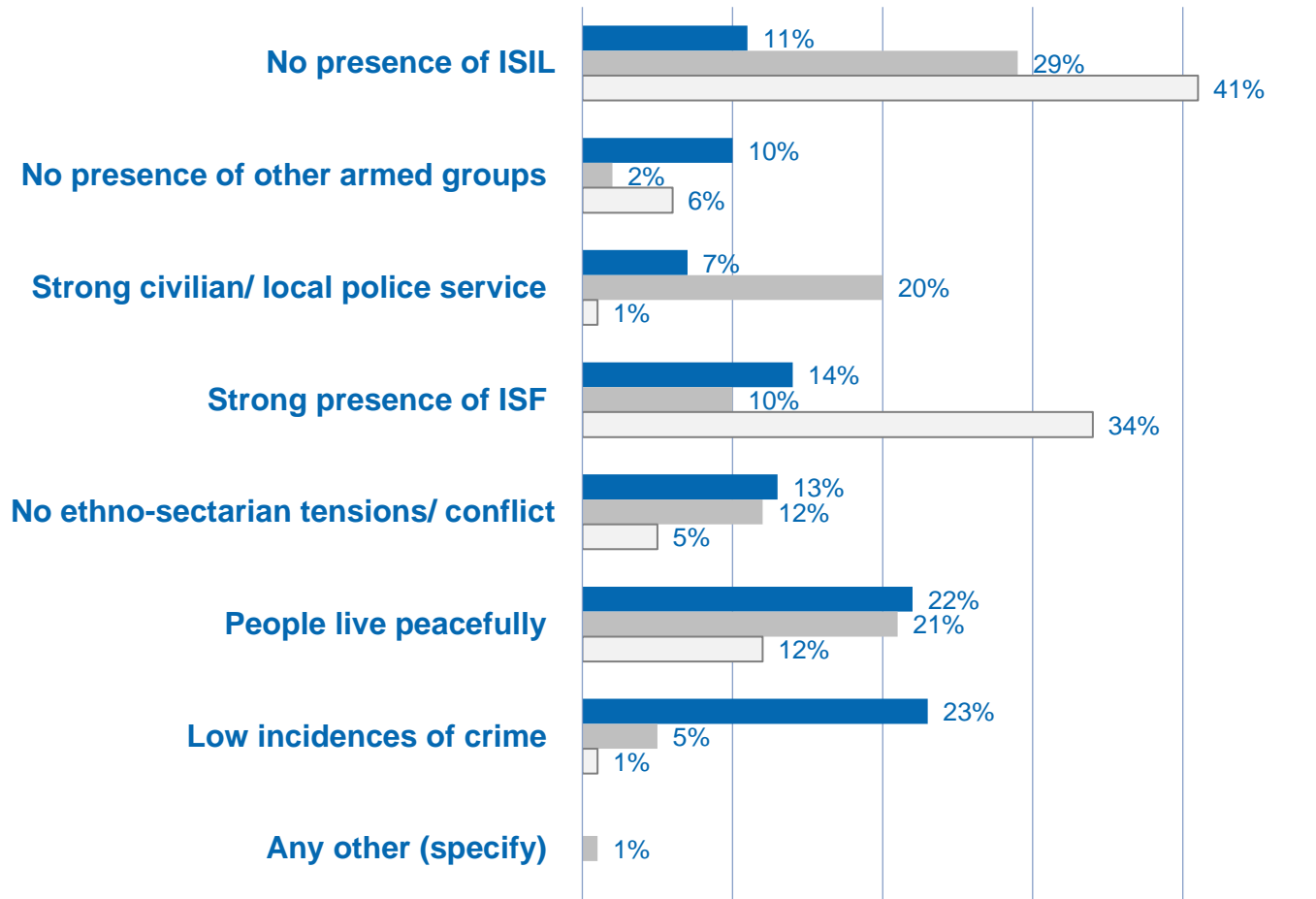
These **main factors were the same in 2018** and **similar in 2016**, with the exception of the fact that feelings of security were attributed to the strong presence of security forces, rather than local police services.

# Why do you feel safe in your locality?



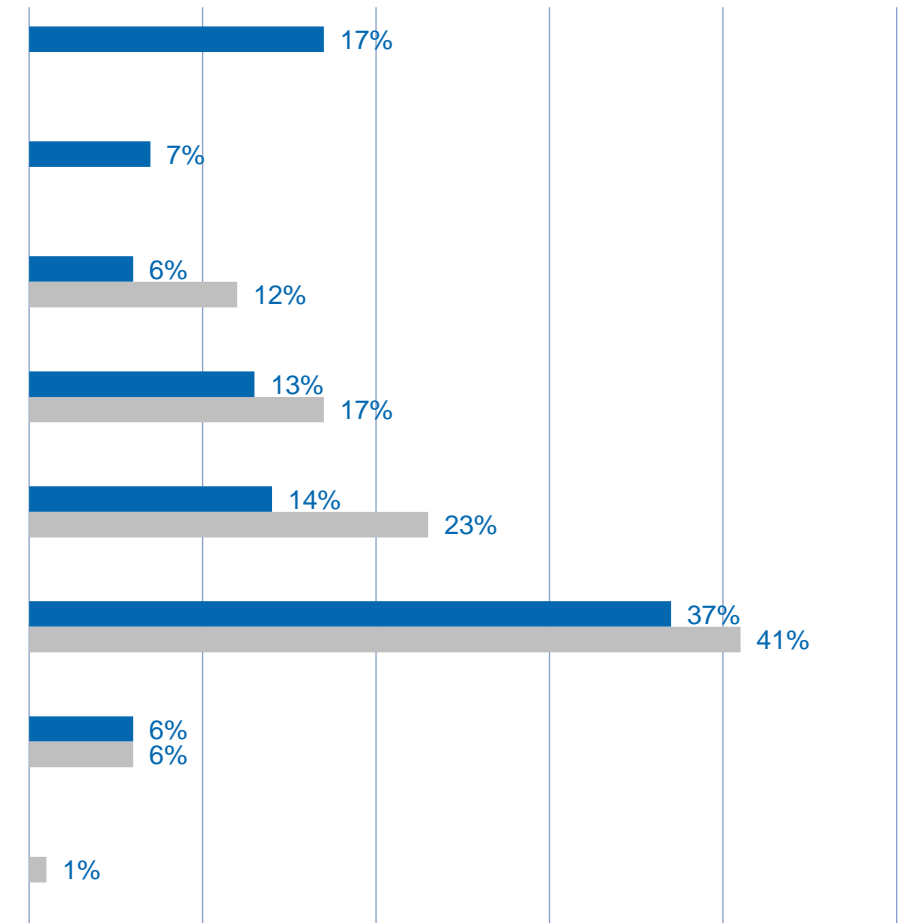
## Anbar

■ 2021 (N=199) ■ 2018 (N=189) □ 2016 (N=68)



## Baghdad

■ 2021 (N=127) ■ 2018 (N=143) □ 2016 (N=0)



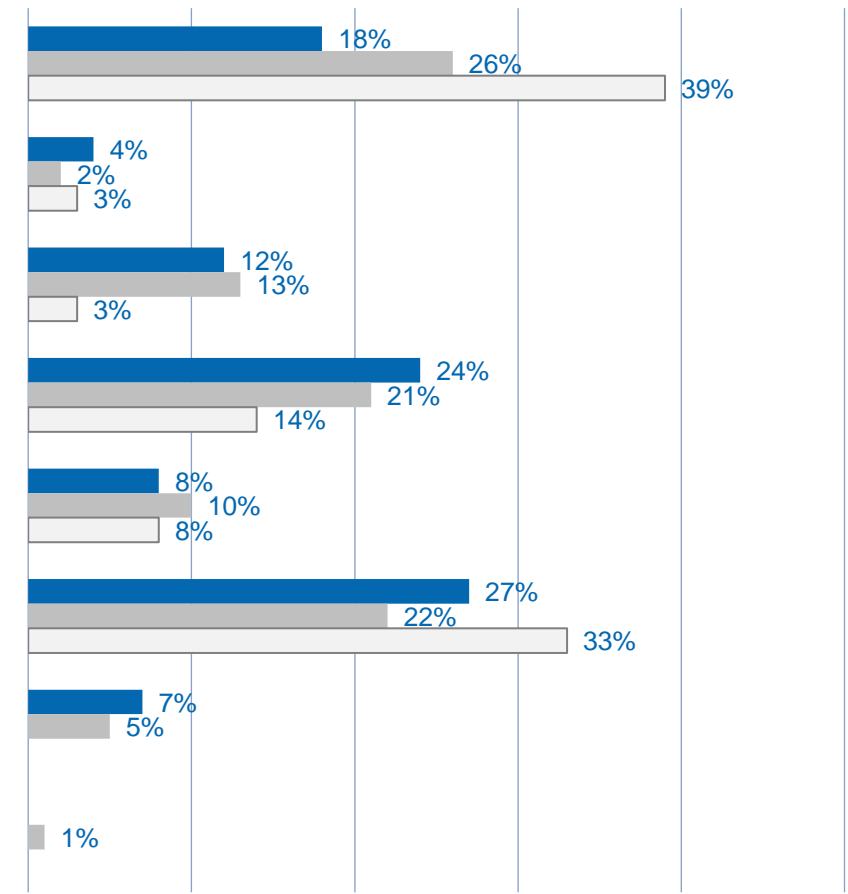
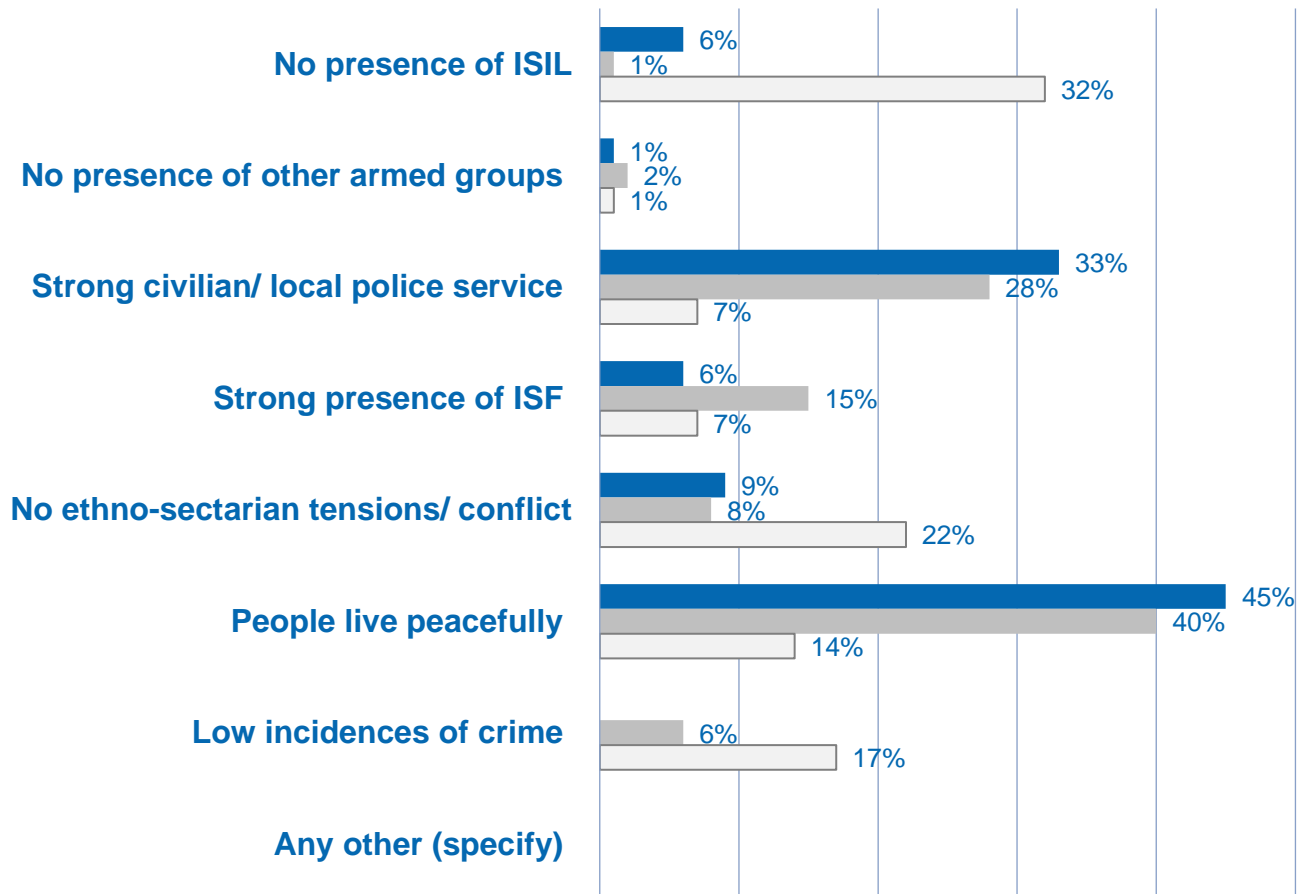
# Why do you feel safe in your locality?

## Karbala

## Salah al-Din

■ 2021 (N=199) ■ 2018 (N=197) □ 2016 (N=200)

■ 2021 (N=190) ■ 2018 (N=182) □ 2016 (N=36)

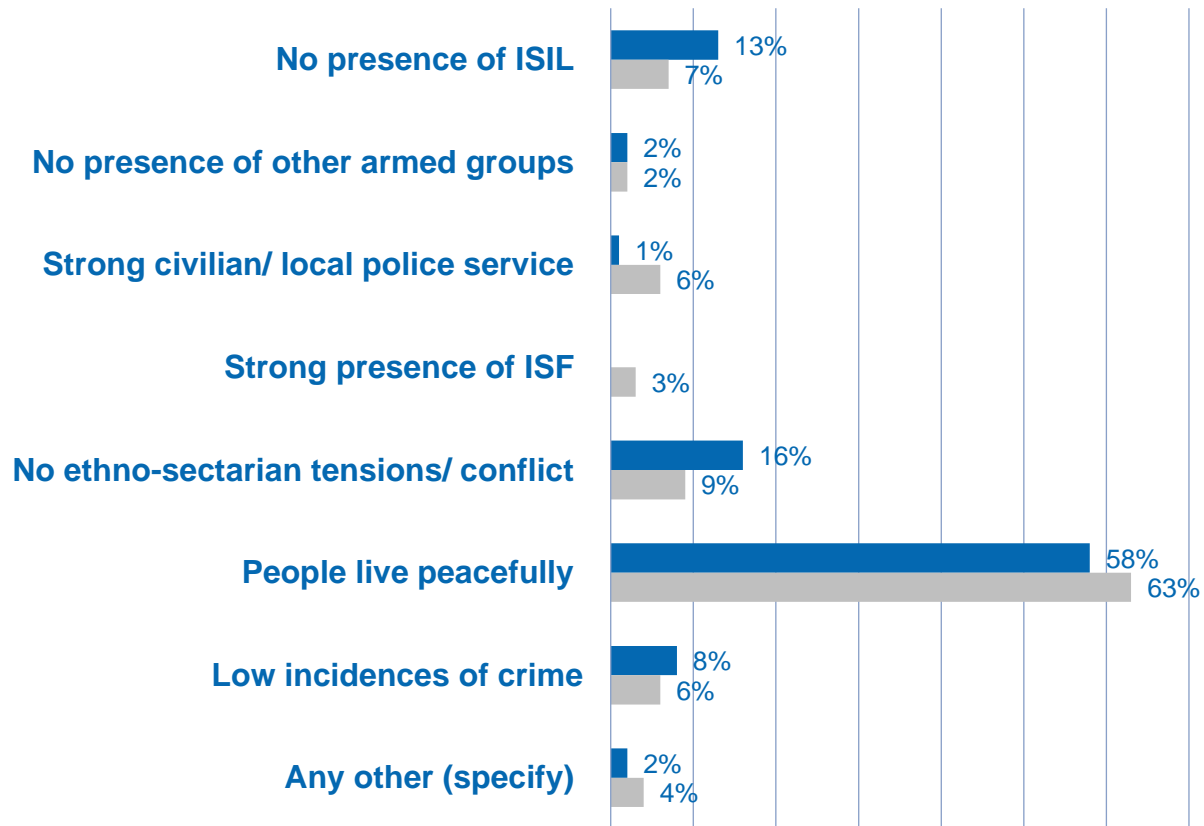


# Why do you feel safe in your locality?



## Basra

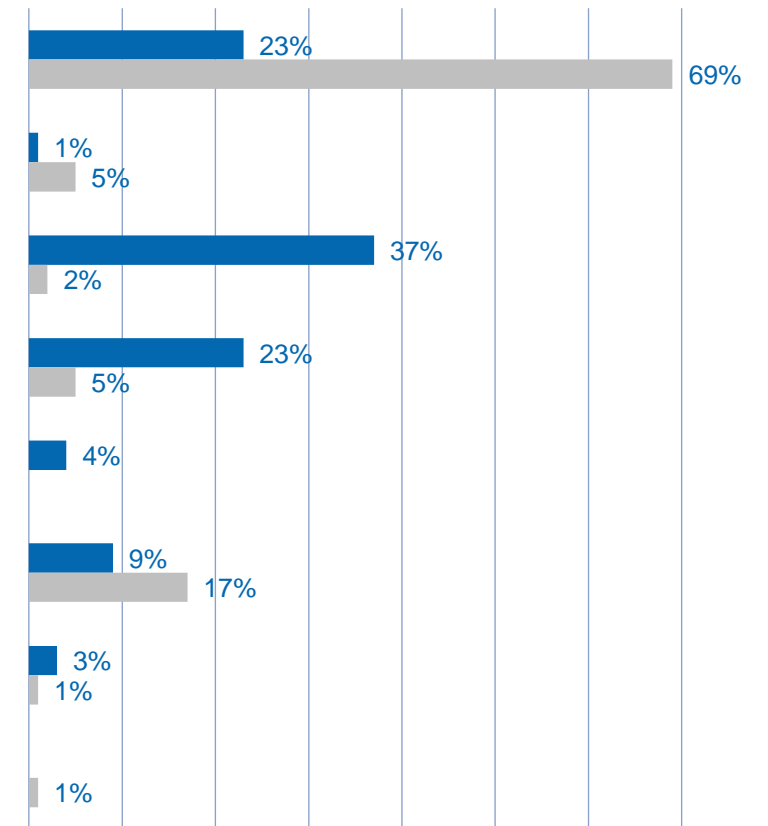
■ 2021 (N=167) ■ 2018 (N=163)



*Other responses Basra (2021): presence of security services and the protection in their areas.*

## Ninewa

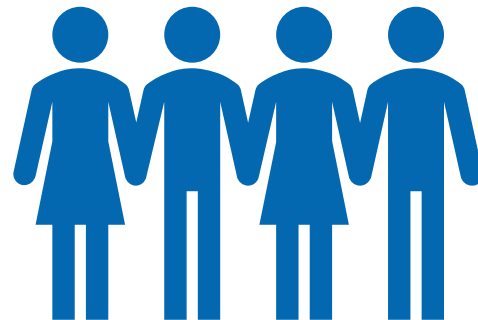
■ 2021 (N=200) ■ 2018 (N=197)



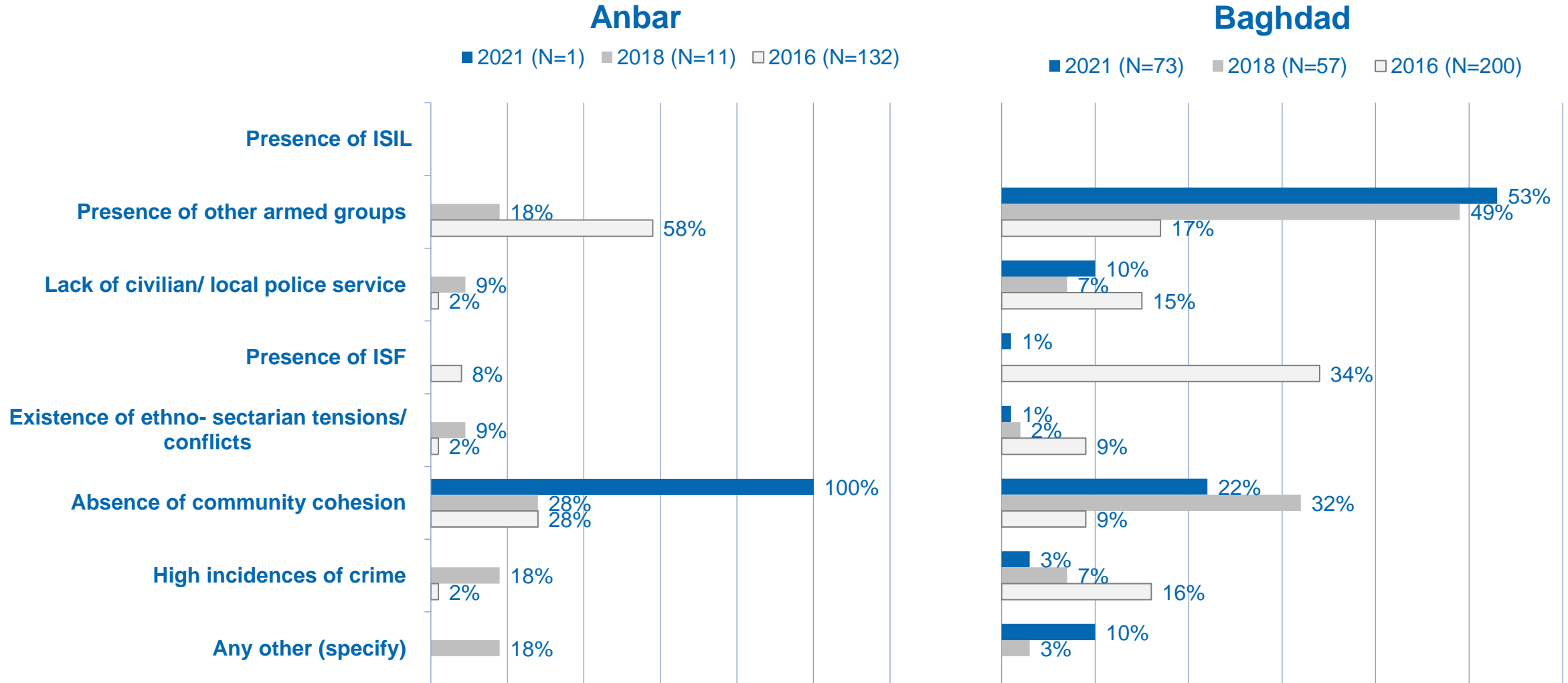
# Threats to Safety

In 2021, the main **reasons people felt unsafe in their locality** were:

- Presence of **armed groups (35%)**
- **Absence of community cohesion (26%)**
- Spread of **armed factions and militias, gangs and tribal conflicts (14%)**



# Why do you feel unsafe in your locality?



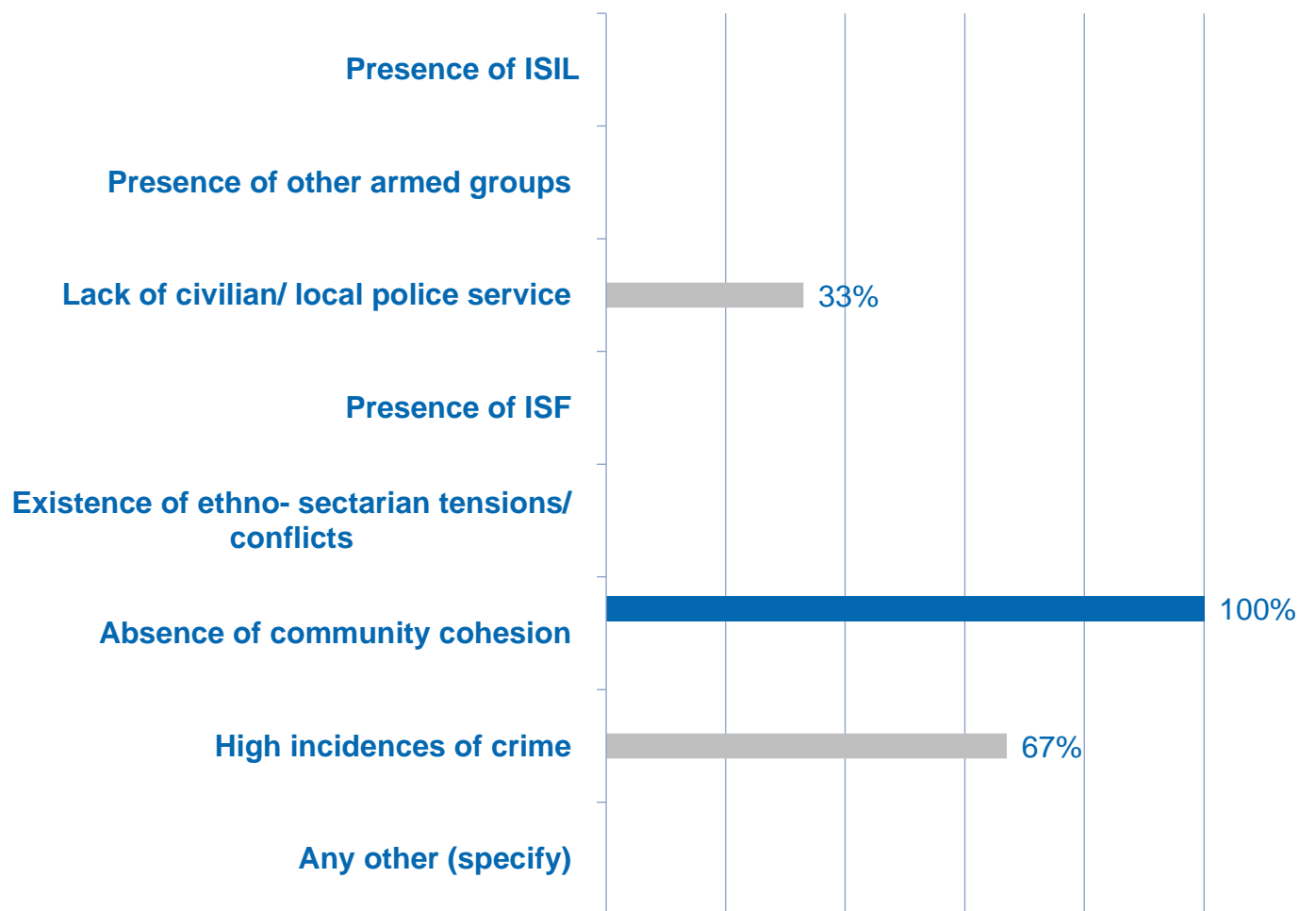
*\*In relation to why respondents feel unsafe due to the presence of the ISF, one respondent from Baghdad stated that people do not have any confidence or trust in the ISF to provide security.*

*Other responses Baghdad (2021): spread of armed factions and militias.*

# Why do you feel unsafe in your locality?

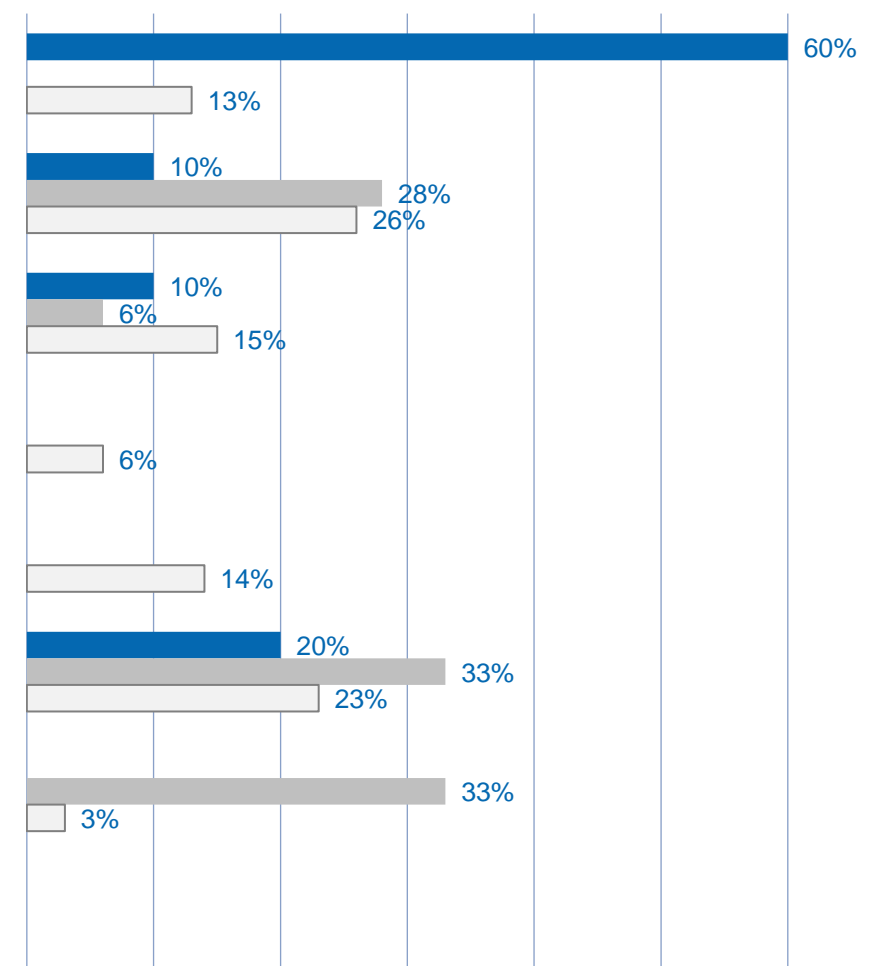
## Karbala

■ 2021 (N=1) ■ 2018 (N=3) □ 2016 (N=0)



## Salah al-Din

■ 2021 (N=10) ■ 2018 (N=18) □ 2016 (N=164)



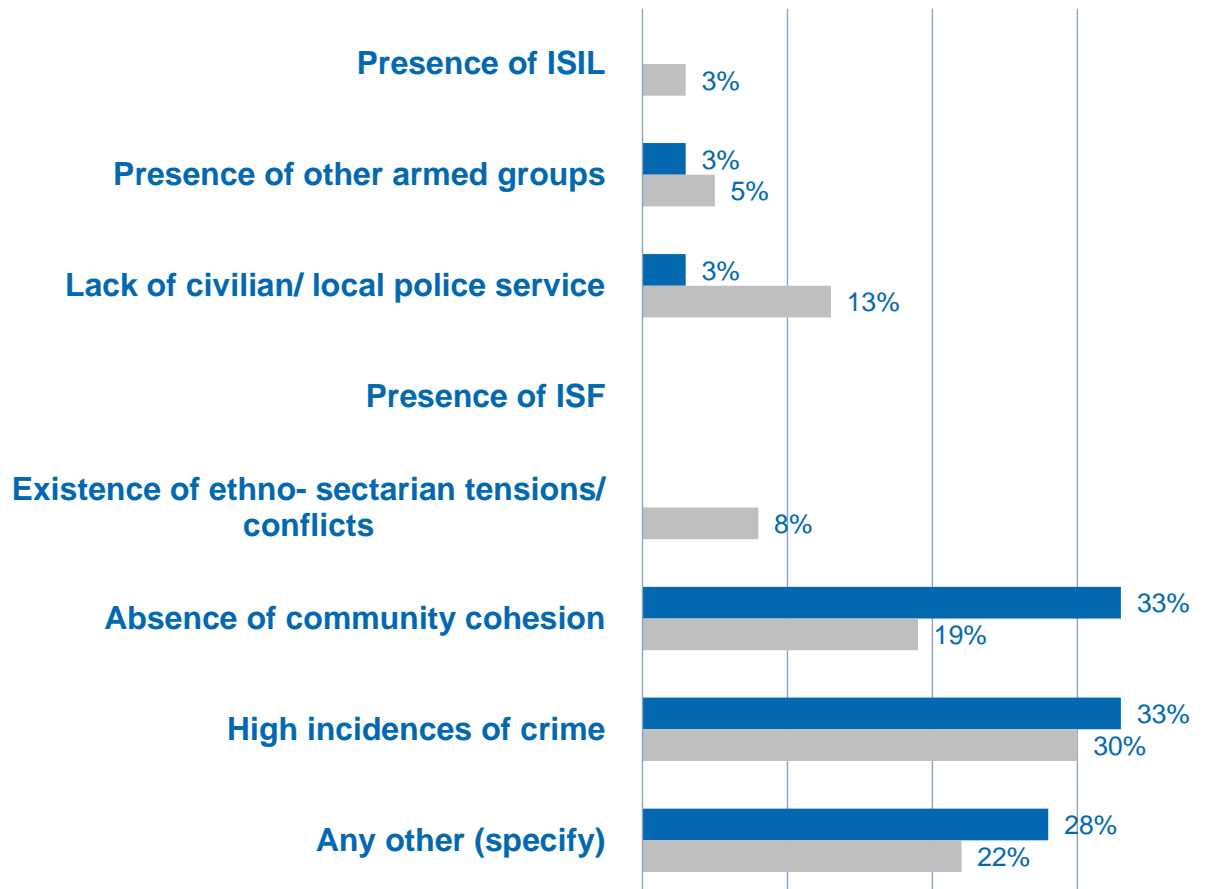


# Why do you feel unsafe in your locality?



## Basra

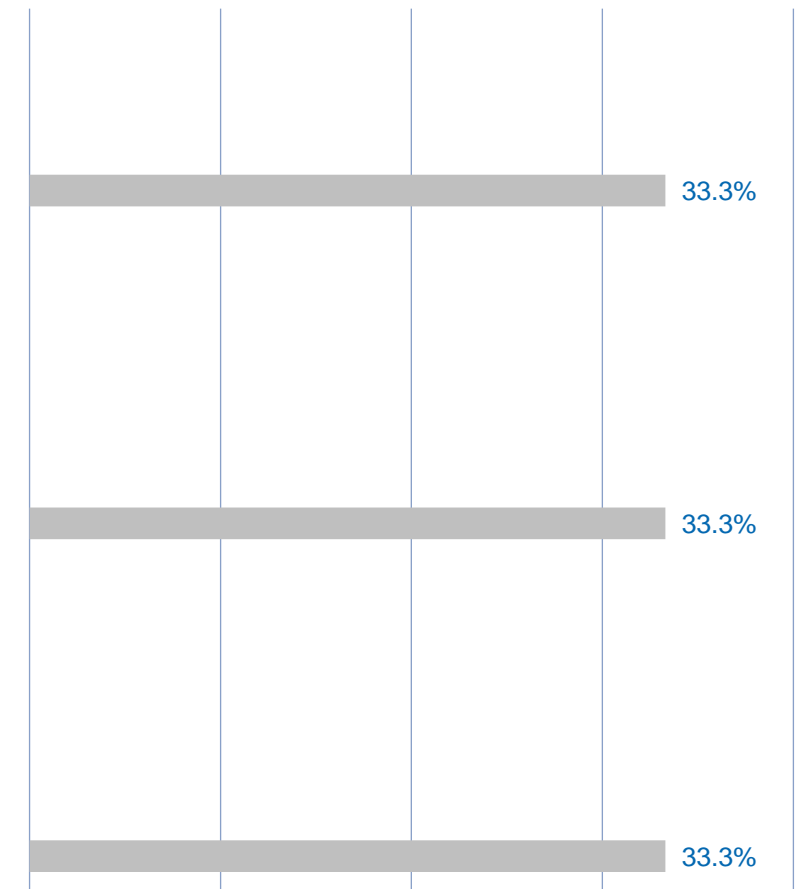
■ 2021 (N=33) ■ 2018 (N=37)



Other responses Basra (2021): tribal conflicts, the presence of gangs that conduct acts of murder and theft.

## Ninewa

■ 2021 (N=0) ■ 2018 (N=3)



In 2021, 5% (10) respondents in Ninewa responded that they do not feel safe in their locality but no reasons were provided as to why they feel unsafe.



# Improving Safety and Security at the Local Level

# Government Priorities



In **2021**, respondents want the **government to prioritize** the following areas to strengthen safety and security in their locality:

- Improving **local police services** (38%), especially in **Karbala** (82%)
- Supporting **community security interventions** at the local level (26%), especially in **Ninewa** (80%)
- Improving **access to security and justice services** for the local population (17%)

The **same priority areas were identified in 2018** and **similar areas in 2016**, except that fighting ISIL away from the locality was also a top priority.

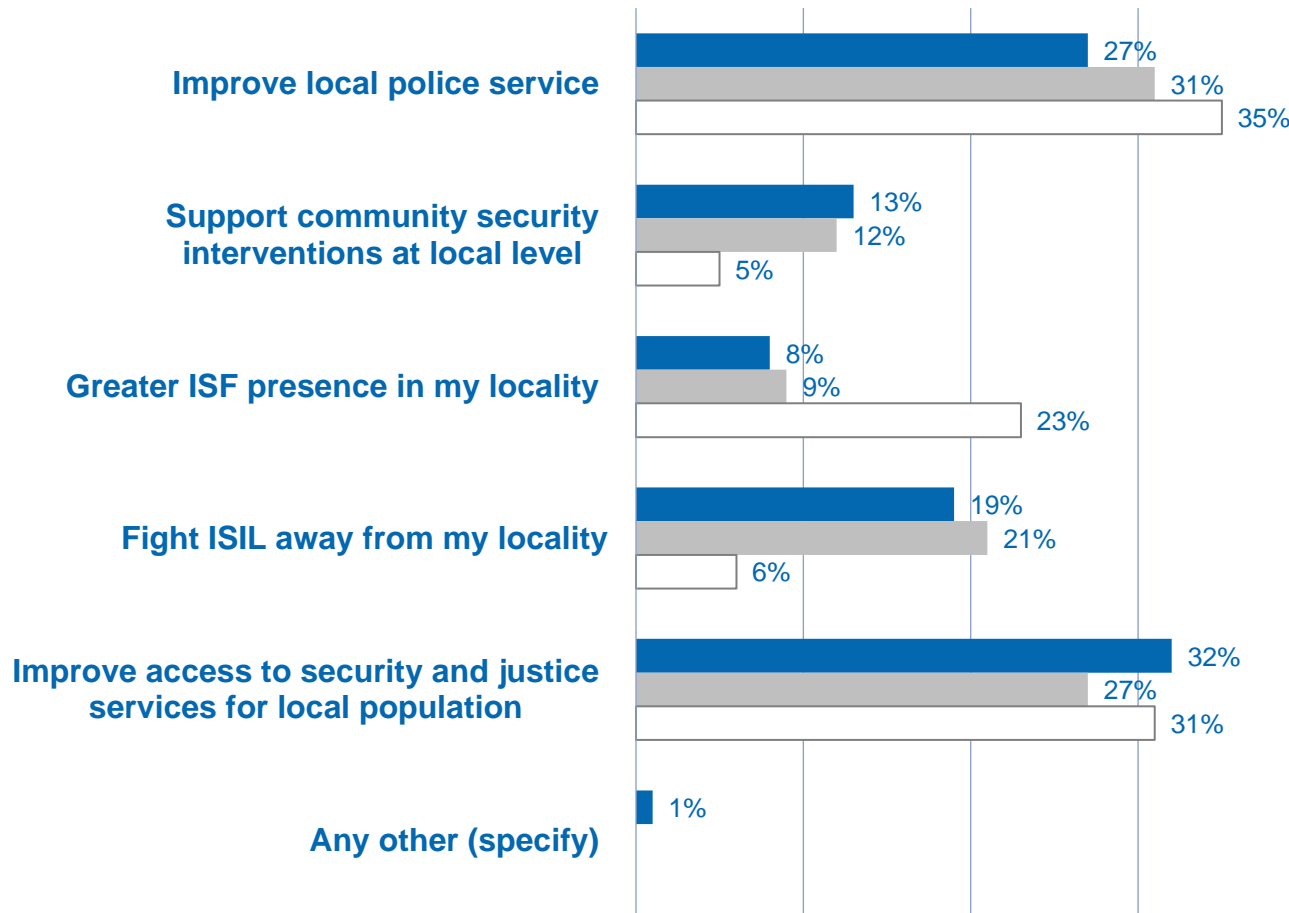


# What do you want the government to prioritize to improve safety and security in your locality?



## Anbar

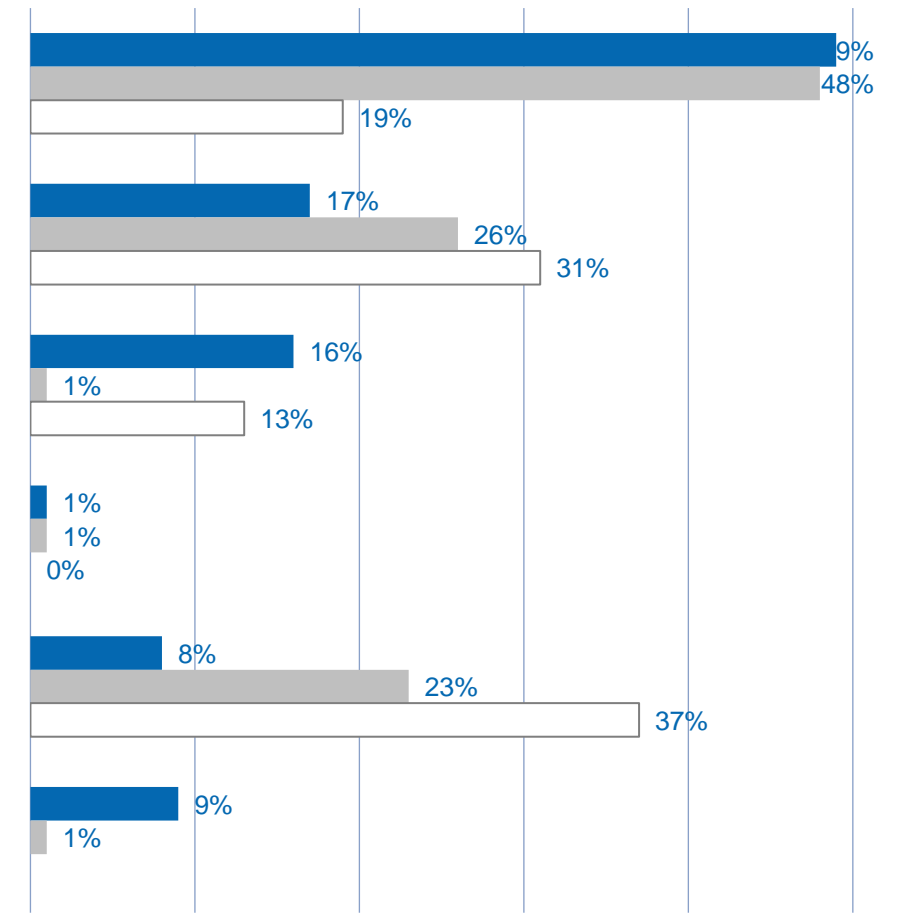
■ 2021 (N=200) ■ 2018 (N=200) □ 2016 (N=200)



Other responses Anbar (2021): activating the role of the security services.

## Baghdad

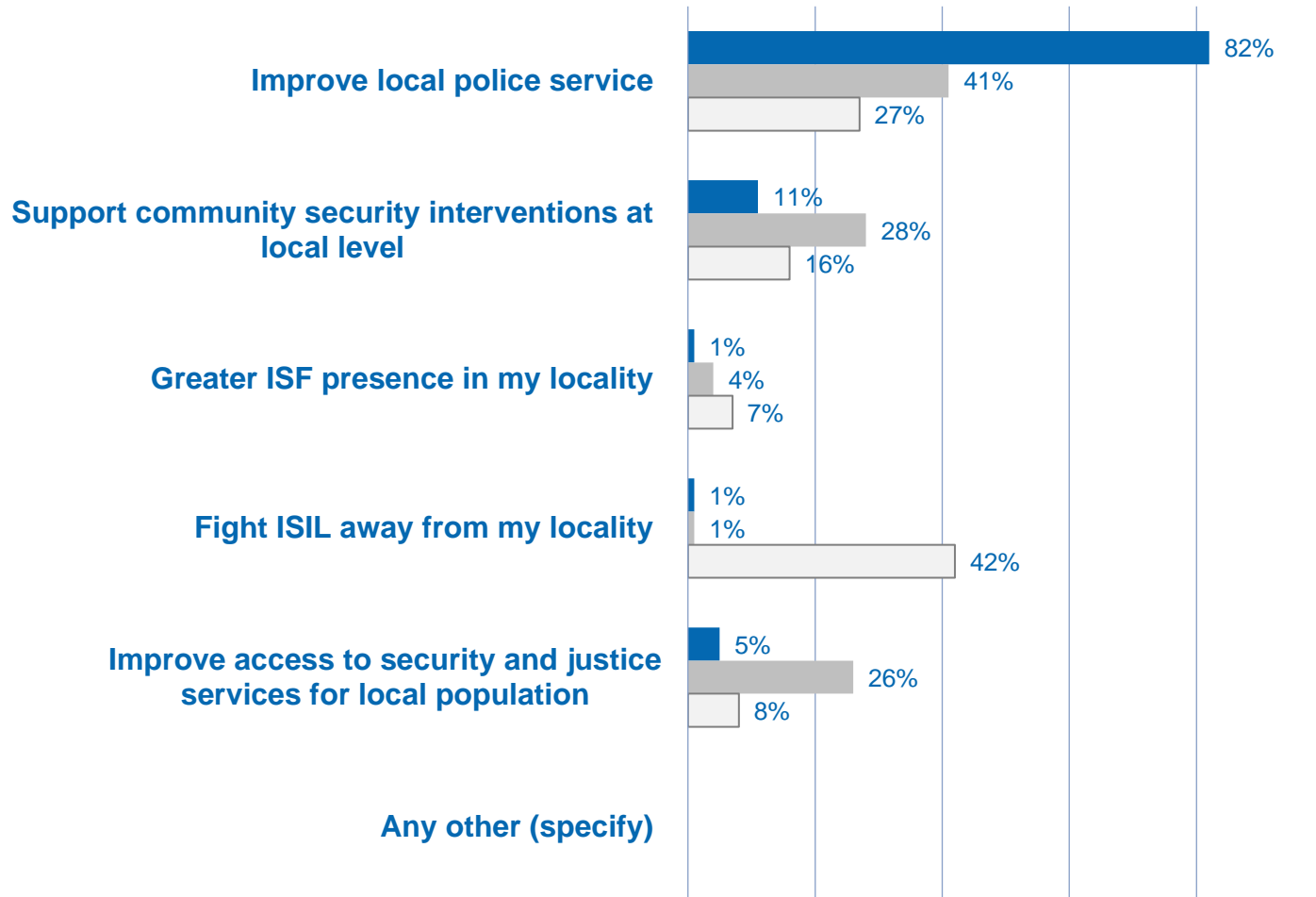
■ 2021 (N=200) ■ 2018 (N=200) □ 2016 (N=200)



Other responses Baghdad (2021): activating the role of the security services, seize firearms from militias.

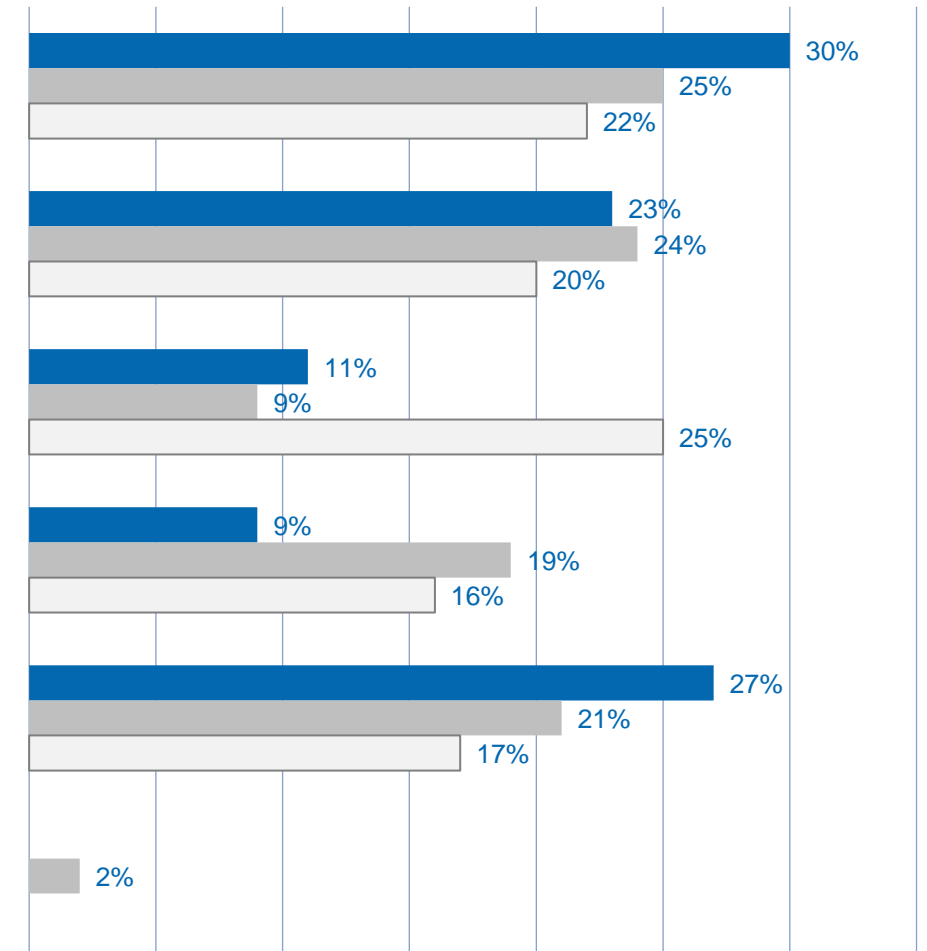
## Karbala

■ 2021 (N=200) ■ 2018 (N=200) □ 2016 (N=200)



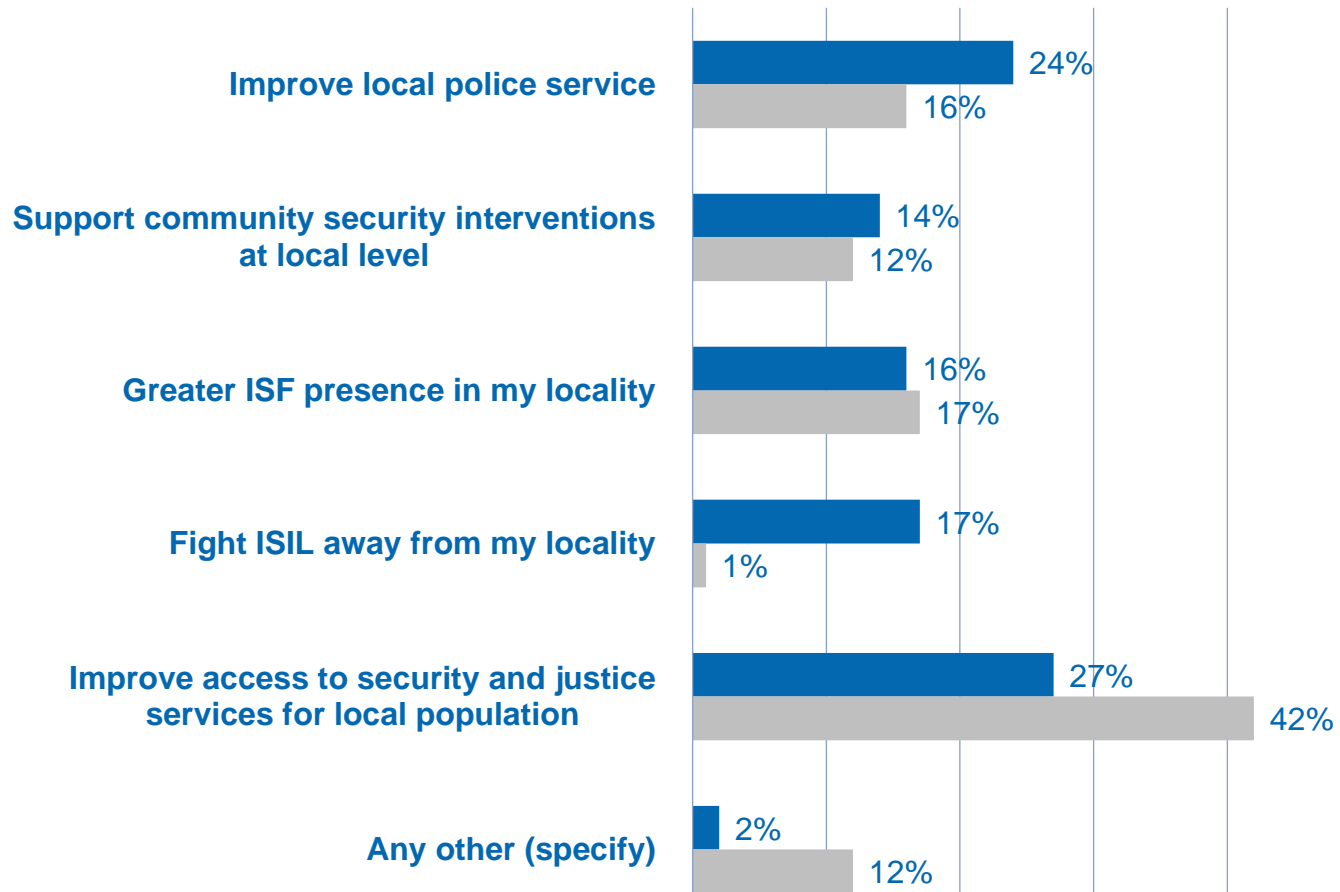
## Salah al-Din

■ 2021 (N=200) ■ 2018 (N=200) □ 2016 (N=200)



## Basra

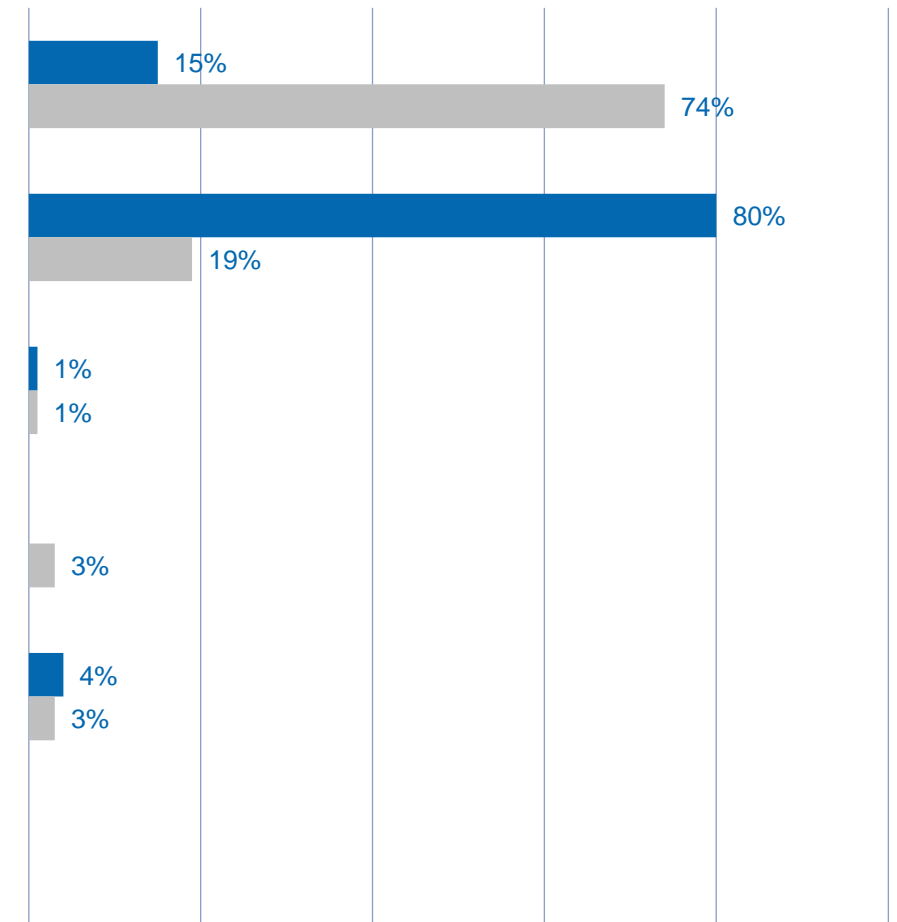
■ 2021 (N=200) ■ 2018 (N=200)



Other responses Basra (2021): activating the role of the security services, seize firearms from militias.

## Ninewa

■ 2021 (N=200) ■ 2018 (N=200)



# Community contributions to improve security



There are differing opinions across governorates about what community members can do to improve security in their localities. Prominent responses include:

- **Support government efforts** to reform the security and justice sector (32%)
- Advocate for **social cohesion/conflict prevention** at local level (29%)
- **Support local police** to increase local safety and security (23%)



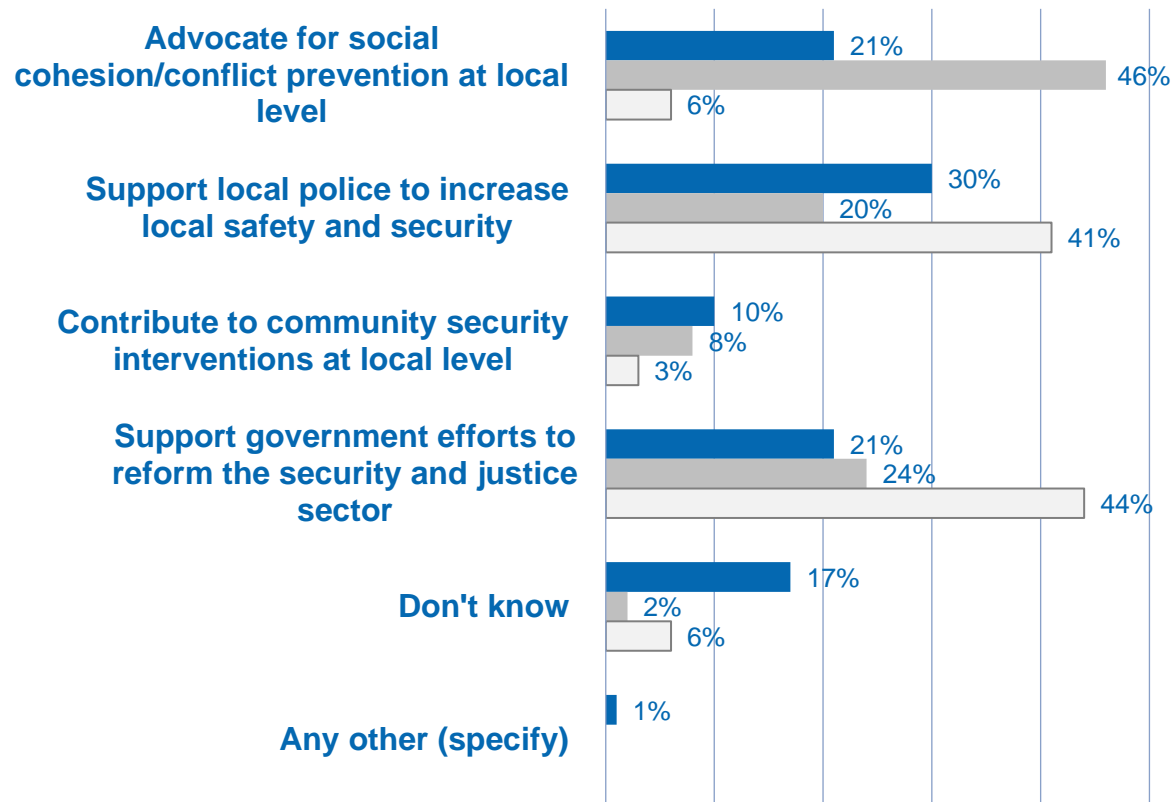
The **same contributions were identified in 2018.**

# As a member of the public/ local community what can you do to improve safety and security in your locality?



## Anbar

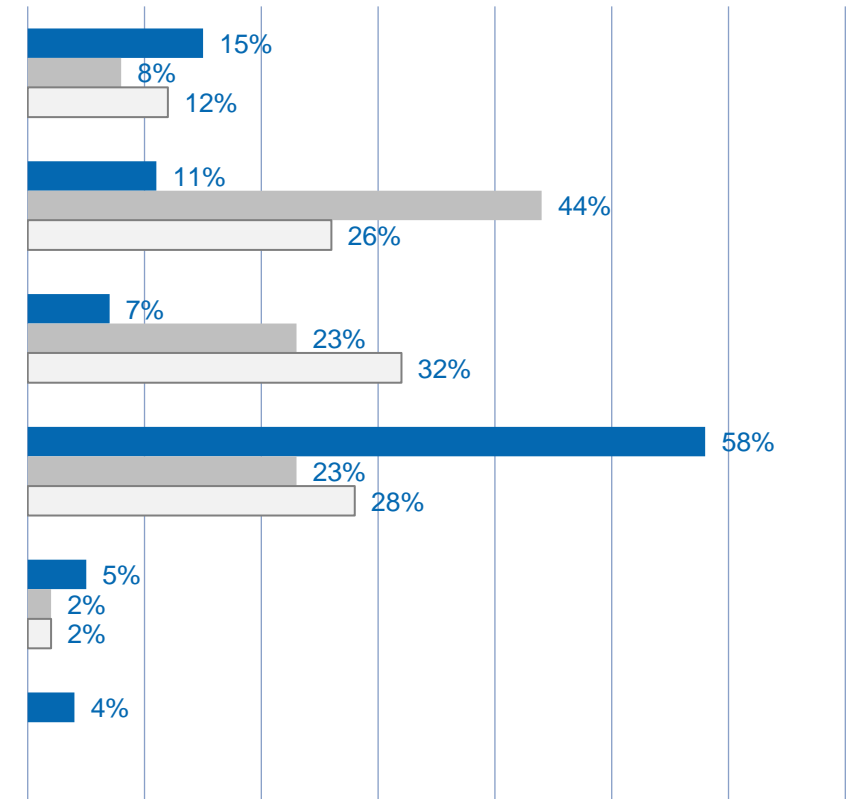
■ 2021 (N=200) ■ 2018 (N=200)



Other responses Anbar (2021): install surveillance cameras in the area.

## Baghdad

■ 2021 (N=200) ■ 2018 (N=200) □ 2016 (N=200)

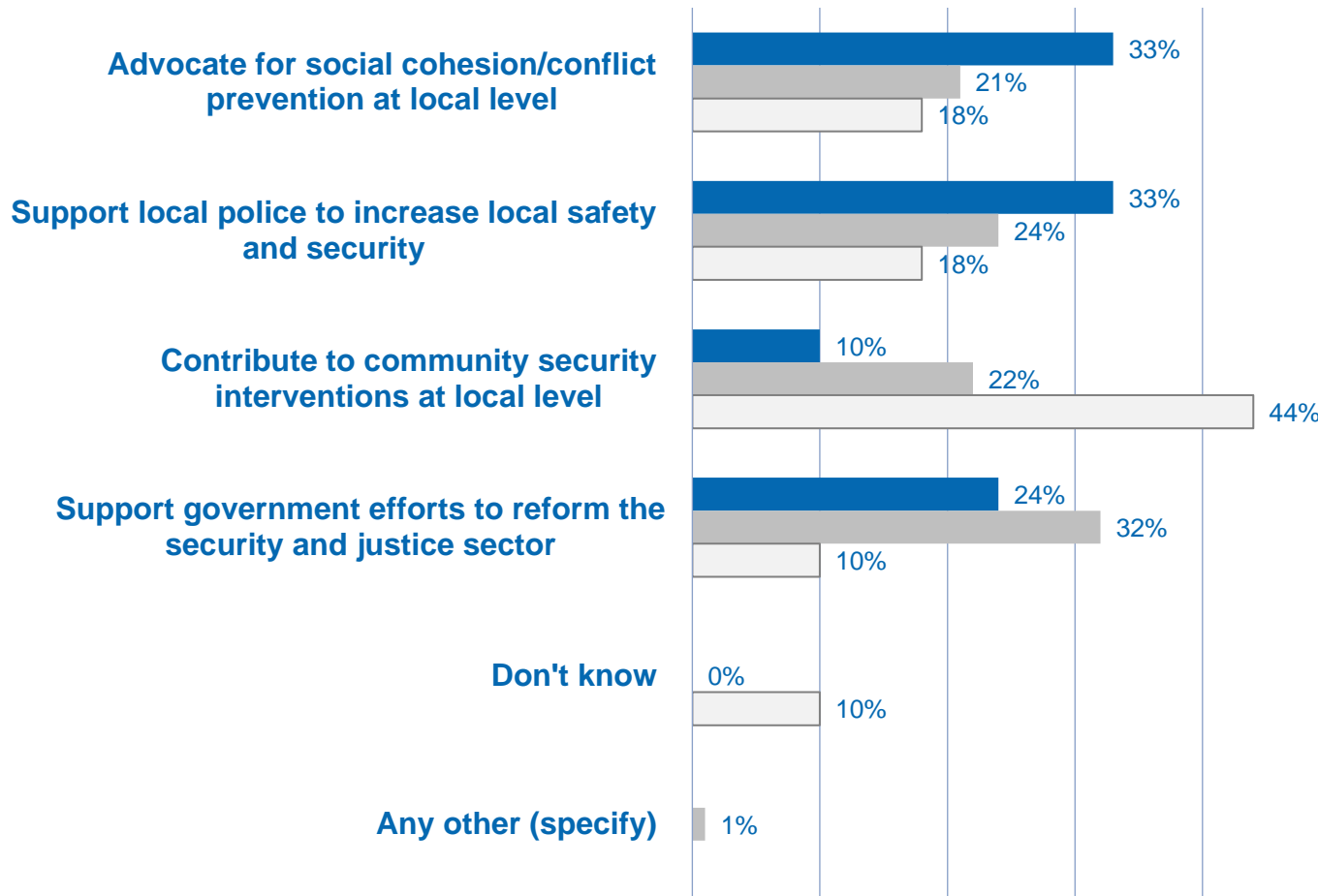


Other responses Baghdad (2021): seize firearms from militias.



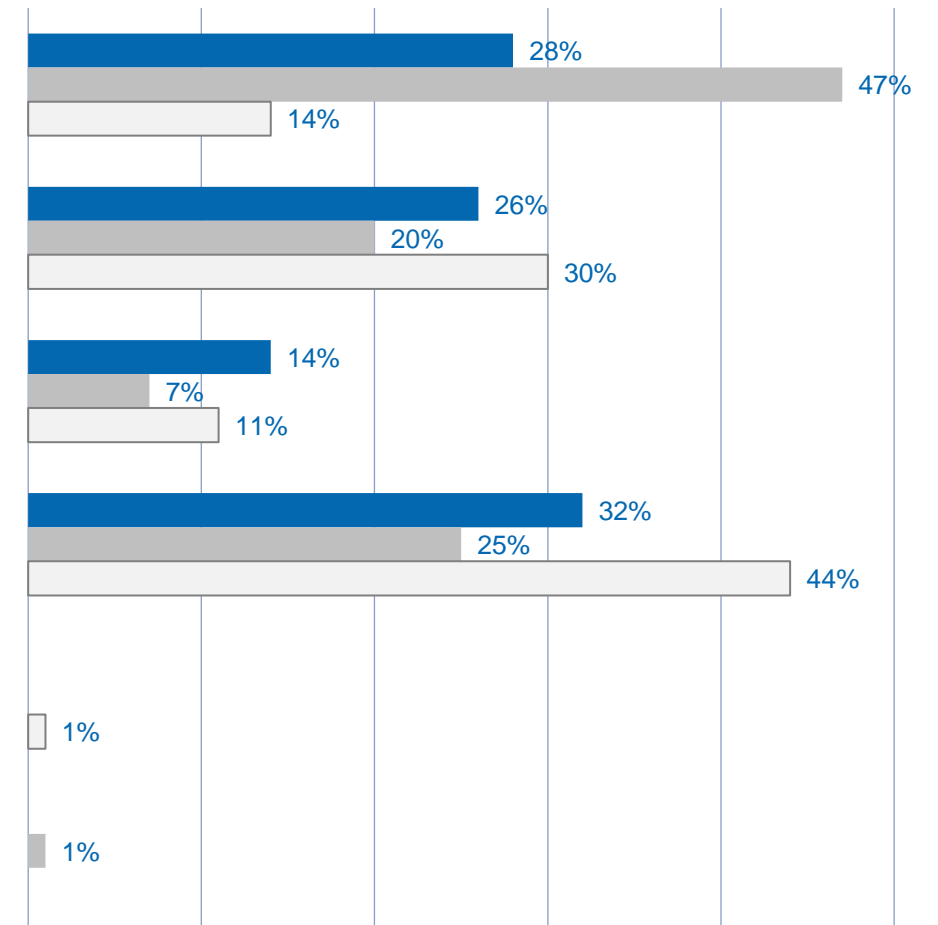
## Karbala

■ 2021 (N=200) ■ 2018 (N=200)



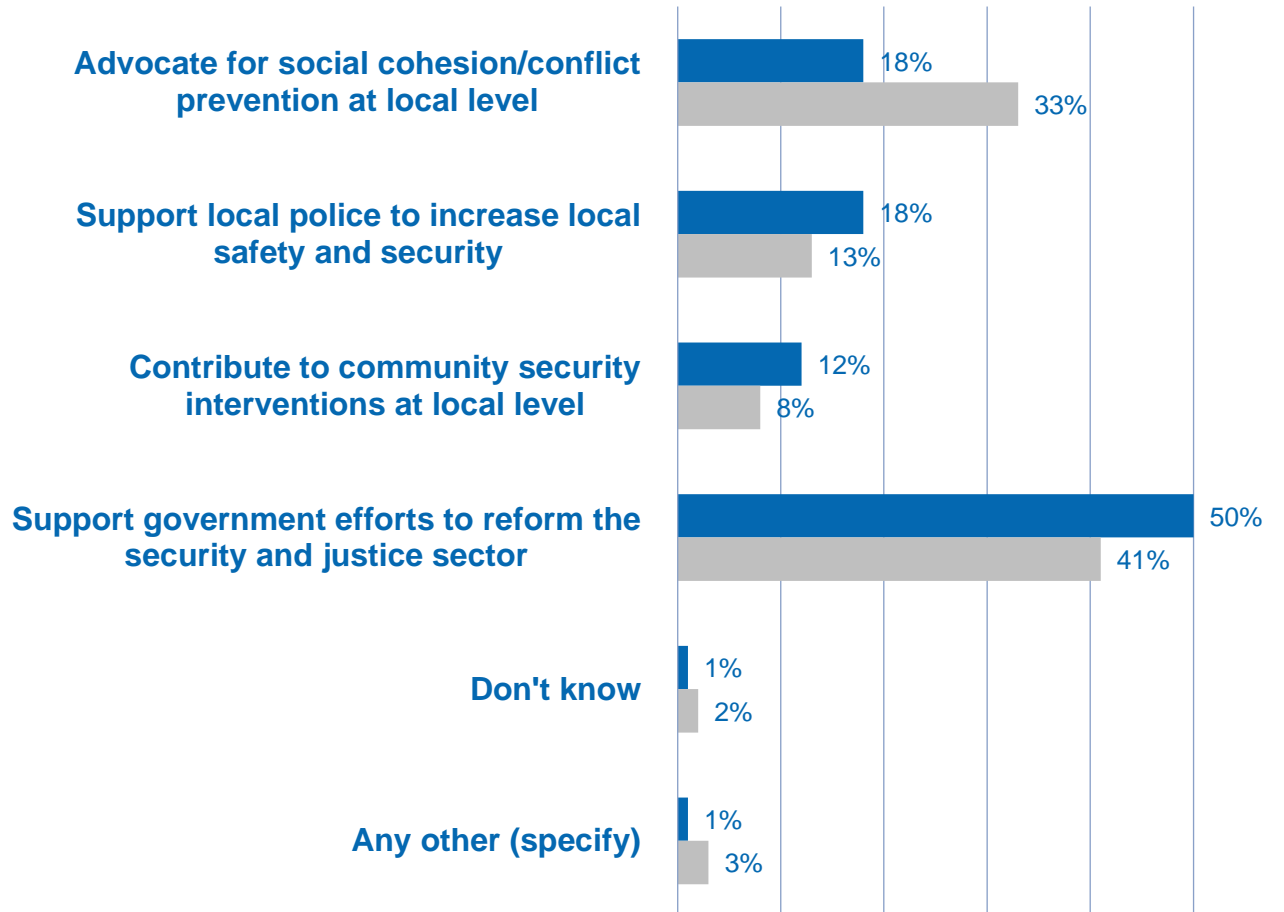
## Salah al Din

■ 2021 (N=200) ■ 2018 (N=200) □ 2016 (N=200)



## Basra

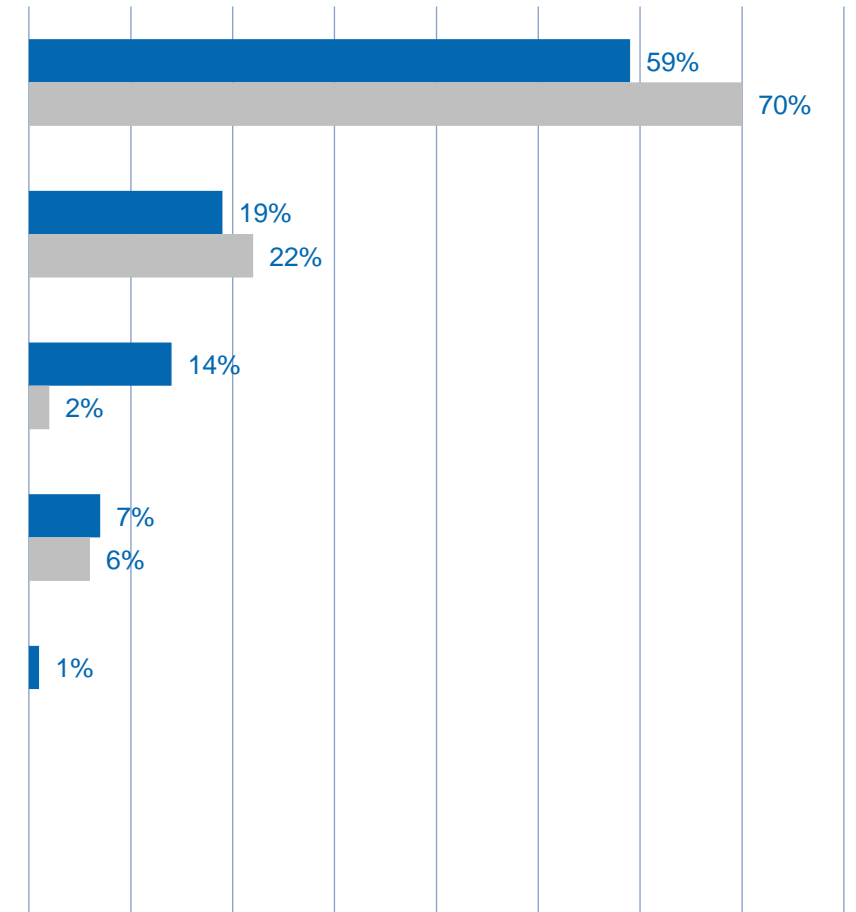
■ 2021 (N=200) ■ 2018 (N=200)



Other responses Basra (2021): cooperating with the security services.

## Ninewa

■ 2021 (N=200) ■ 2018 (N=200)





# Public Perception of Security Service Providers

# Trust in Security Sector Providers



Similar to 2018, in 2021, the **Local Police** were the **most trusted security service provider** in **Anbar** (73%), **Karbala** (94%), **Salah al-Din** (55%), and **Ninewa** (85%).



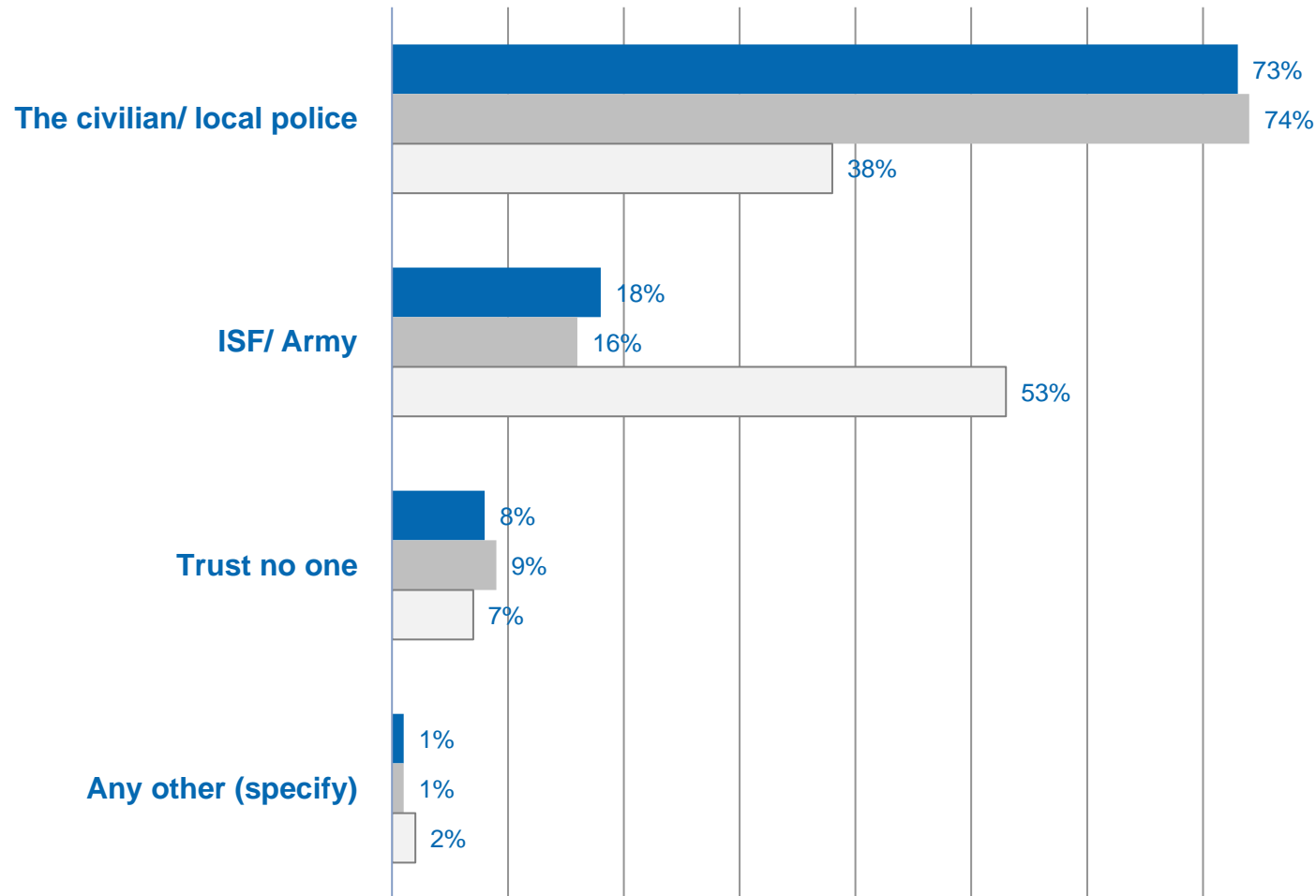
The **Iraqi Security Forces** were the **most trusted provider** in **Basra** (60%), while in **Baghdad**, the highest percentage of respondents (**33%**) **trusted no one**.



***Whom do you trust most  
from the following to enable  
safer communities in your  
locality?***

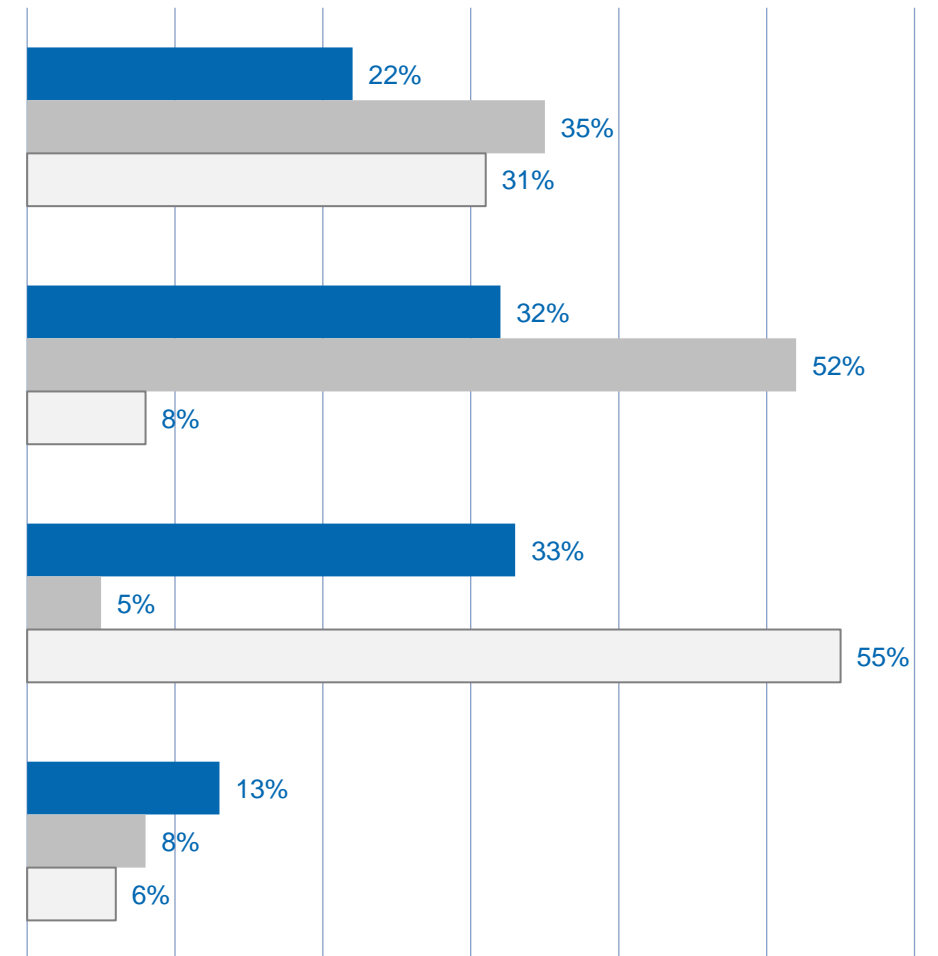
## Anbar

■ 2021 (N=200) ■ 2018 (N=200) □ 2016 (N=200)



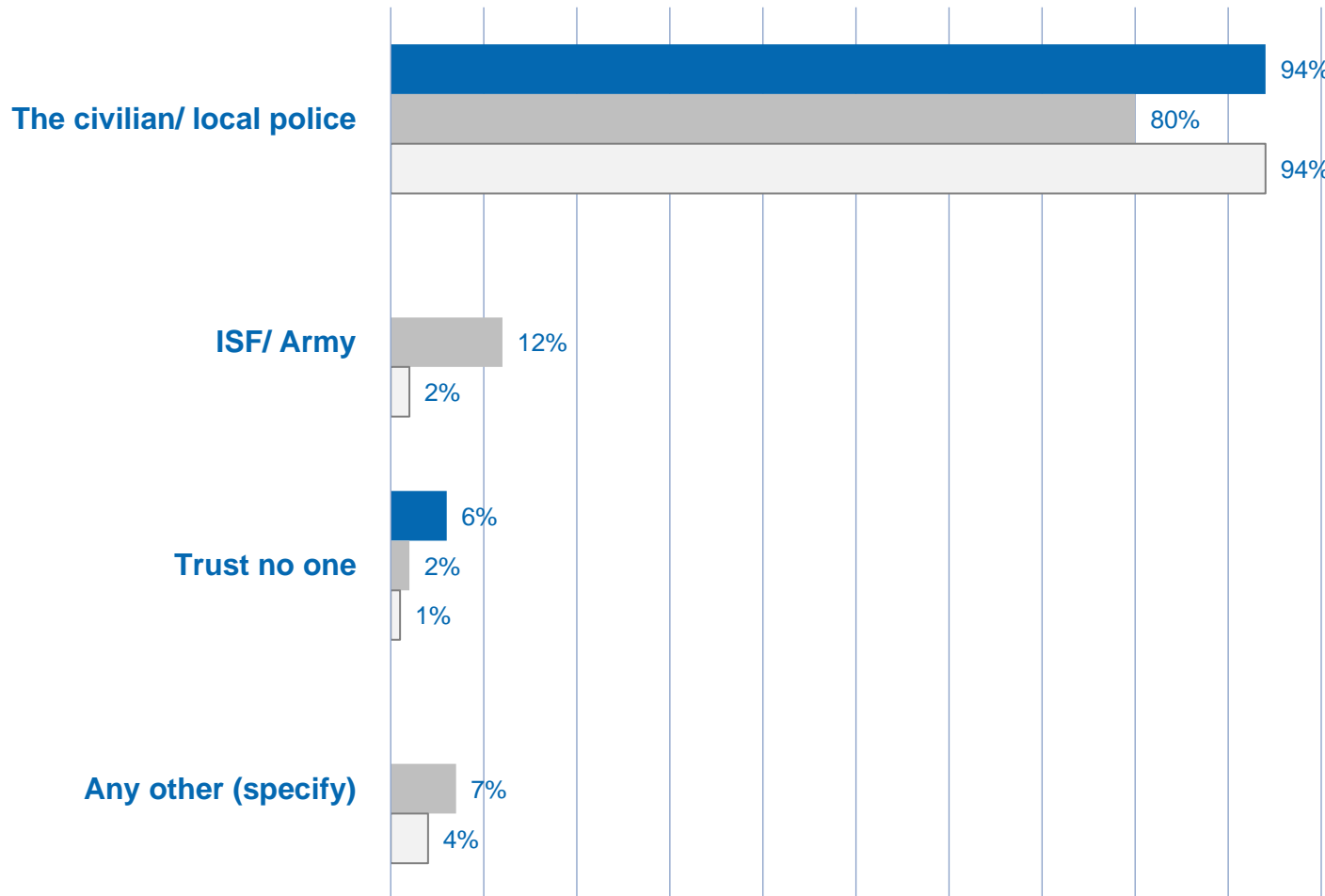
## Baghdad

■ 2021 (N=200) ■ 2018 (N=200) □ 2016 (N=200)



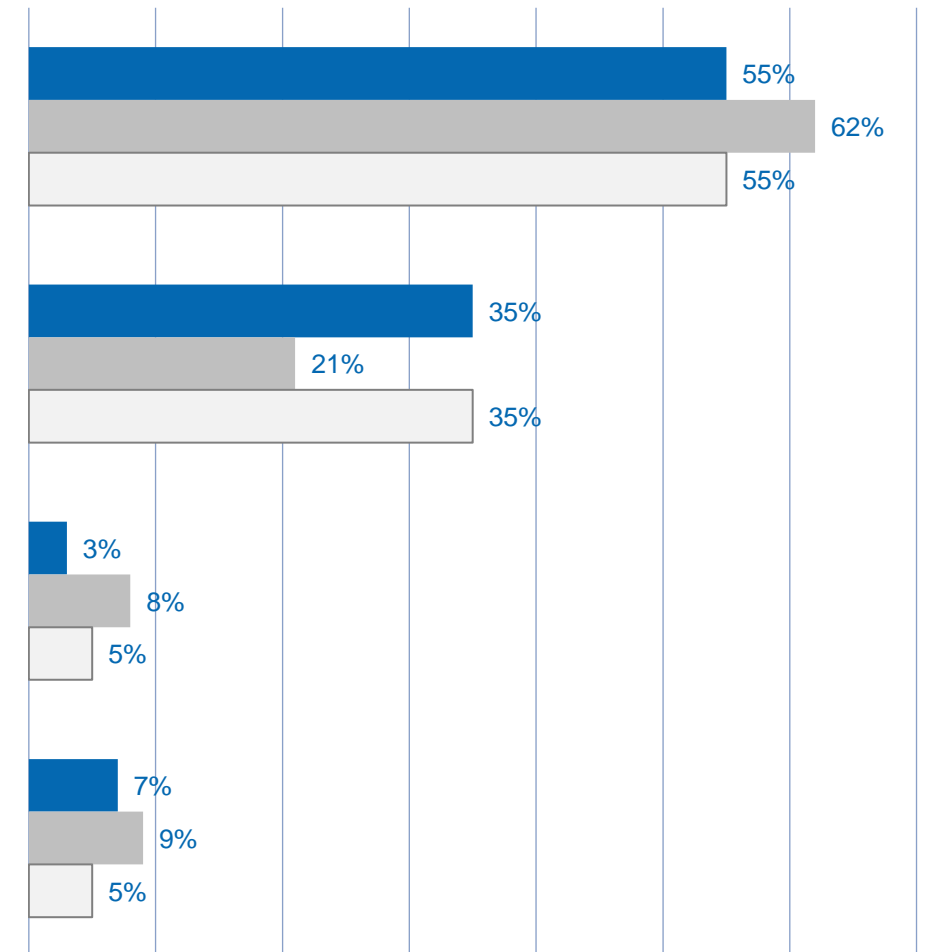
## Karbala

■ 2021 (N=200) ■ 2018 (N=200) □ 2016 (N=200)



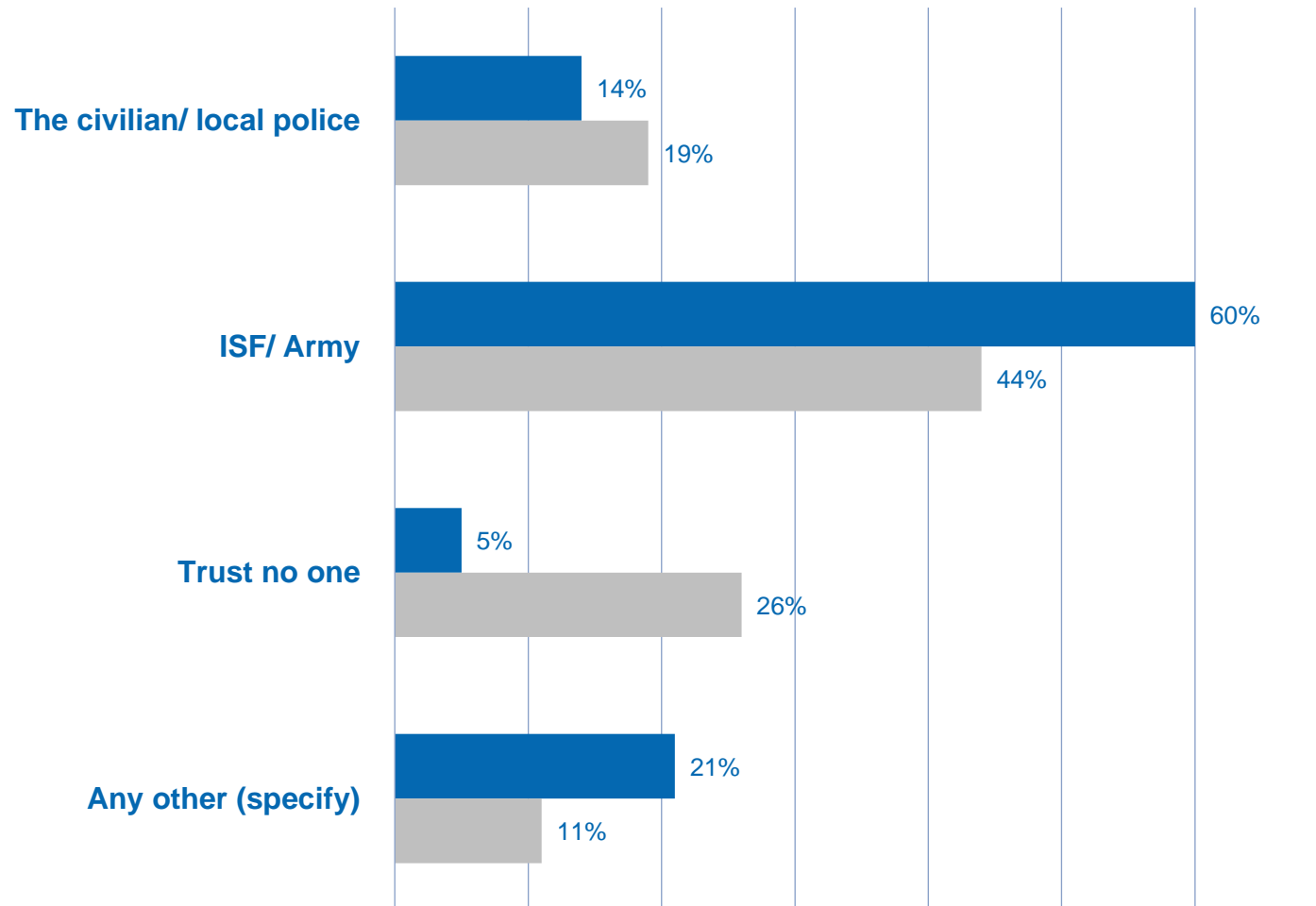
## Salah al-Din

■ 2021 (N=200) ■ 2018 (N=200) □ 2016 (N=200)



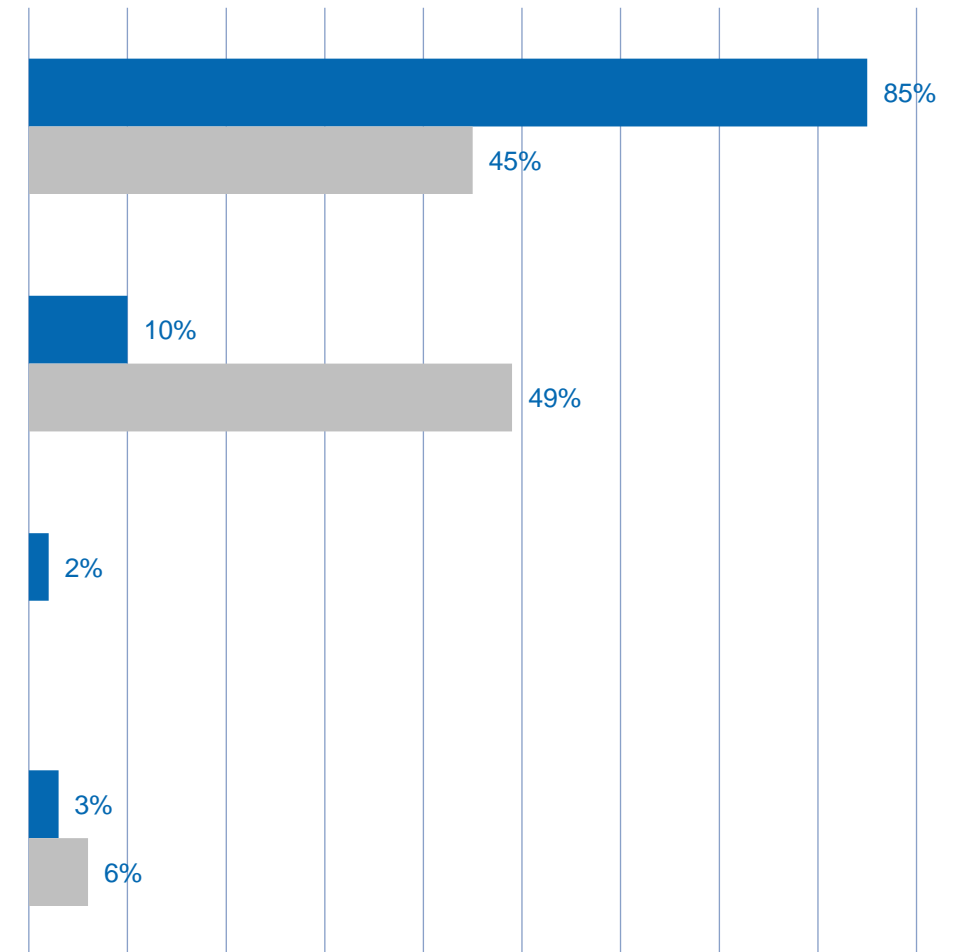
## Basra

■ 2021 (N=200) ■ 2018 (N=200)



## Ninewa

■ 2021 (N=200) ■ 2018 (N=200)







# Impact of Safety and Security on Well-Being and Quality of Life

# Well-being and quality of life

In 2021, **45% of respondents** felt that **having a safe and secure locality would increase their sense of well-being and quality of life** to a **very high degree**, which is the same as in 2018, and compared to just 24% in 2016.

The **highest impact was noted in Karbala** (94% very high extent), while **the lowest impact was noted in Ninewa** (67% moderately).

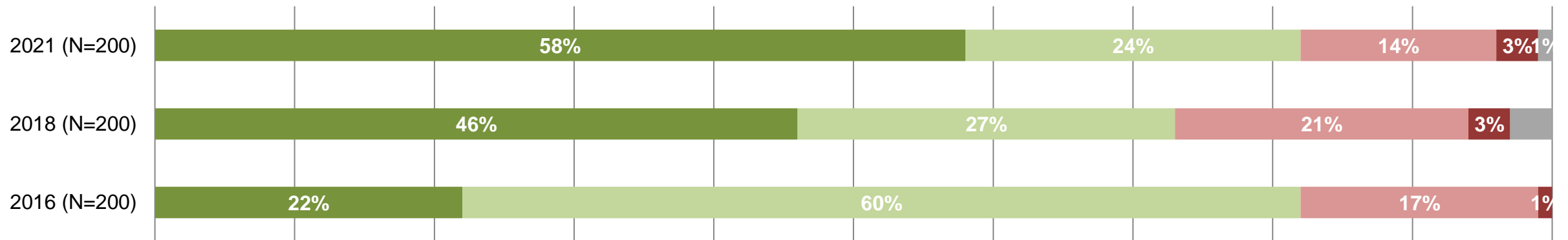


# To what extent would a safe and secure locality increase your and your family's well-being/ quality of life?

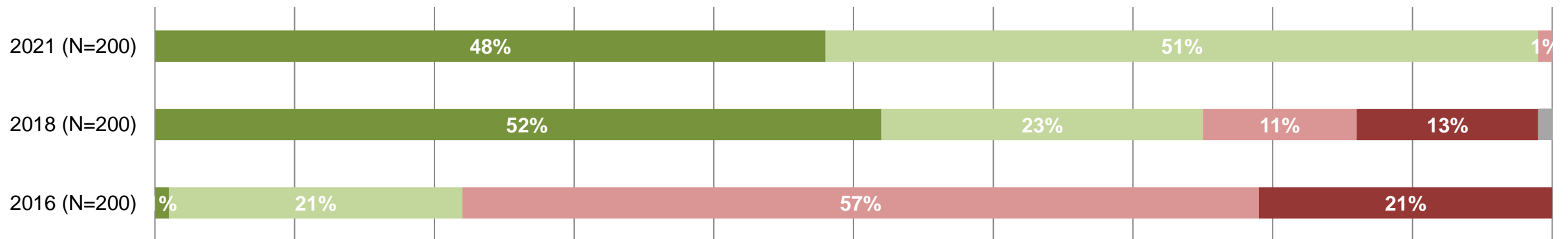


■ Very high   
 ■ Somewhat high   
 ■ Moderately   
 ■ Not much at all   
 ■ Don't know

## Anbar



## Baghdad

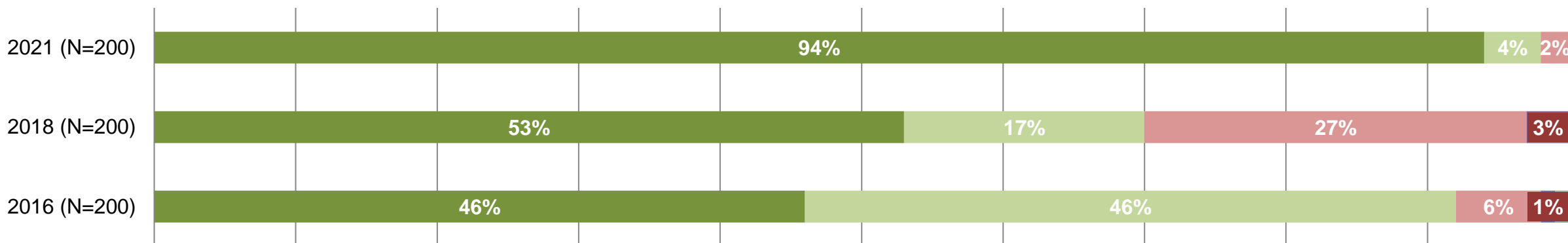


# To what extent would a safe and secure locality increase your and your family's well-being/ quality of life?

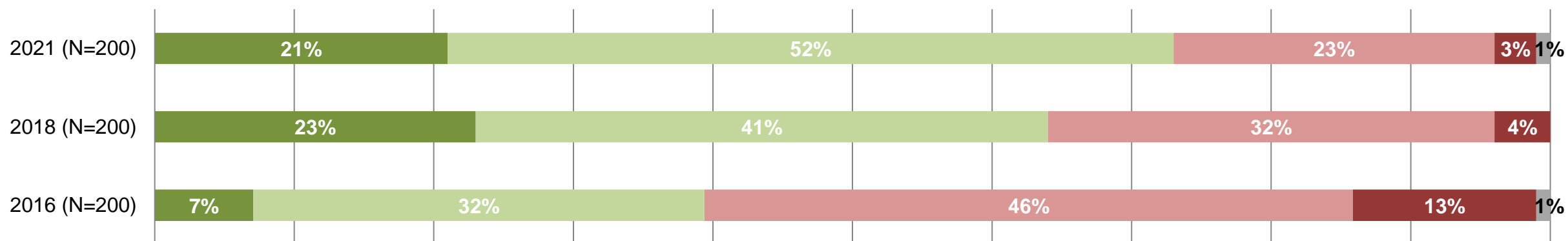


■ Very high   
 ■ Somewhat high   
 ■ Moderately   
 ■ Not much at all   
 ■ Don't know

## Karbala



## Salah al-Din

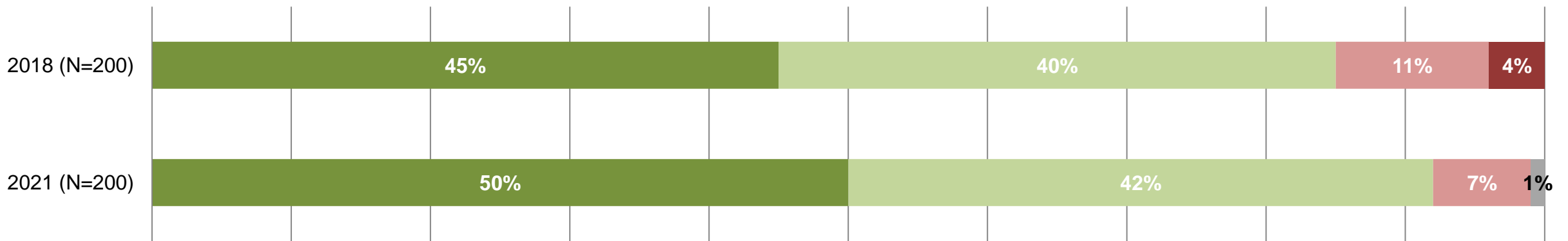


# To what extent would a safe and secure locality increase your and your family's well-being/ quality of life?

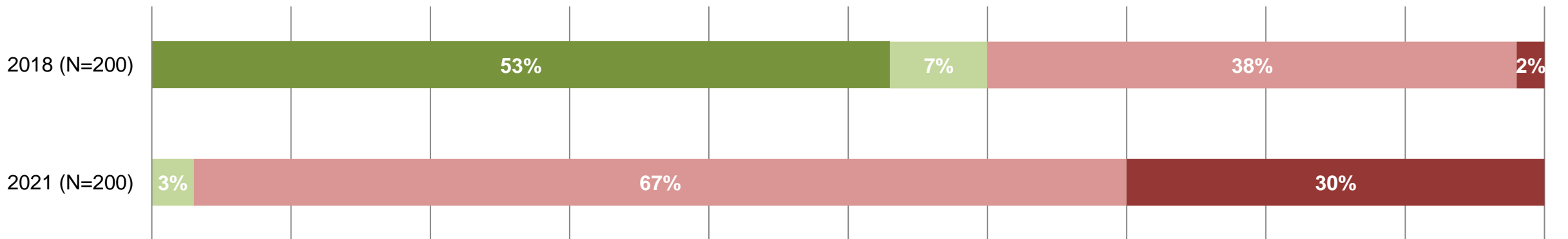


■ Very high   ■ Somewhat high   ■ Moderately   ■ Not much at all   ■ Don't know

## Basra



## Ninewa





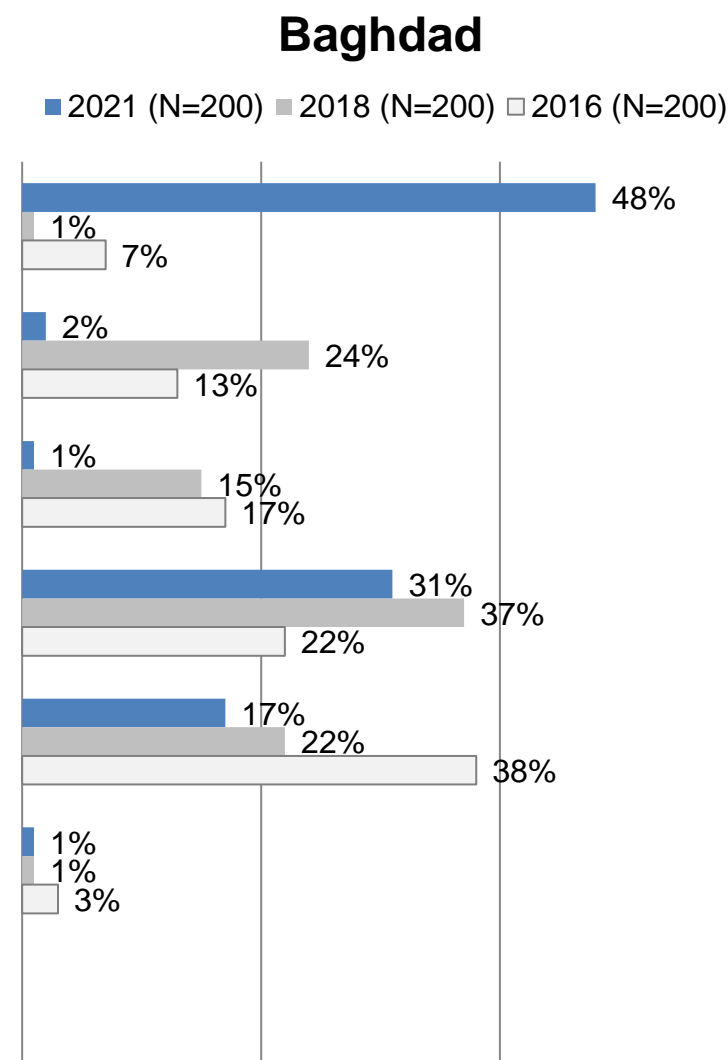
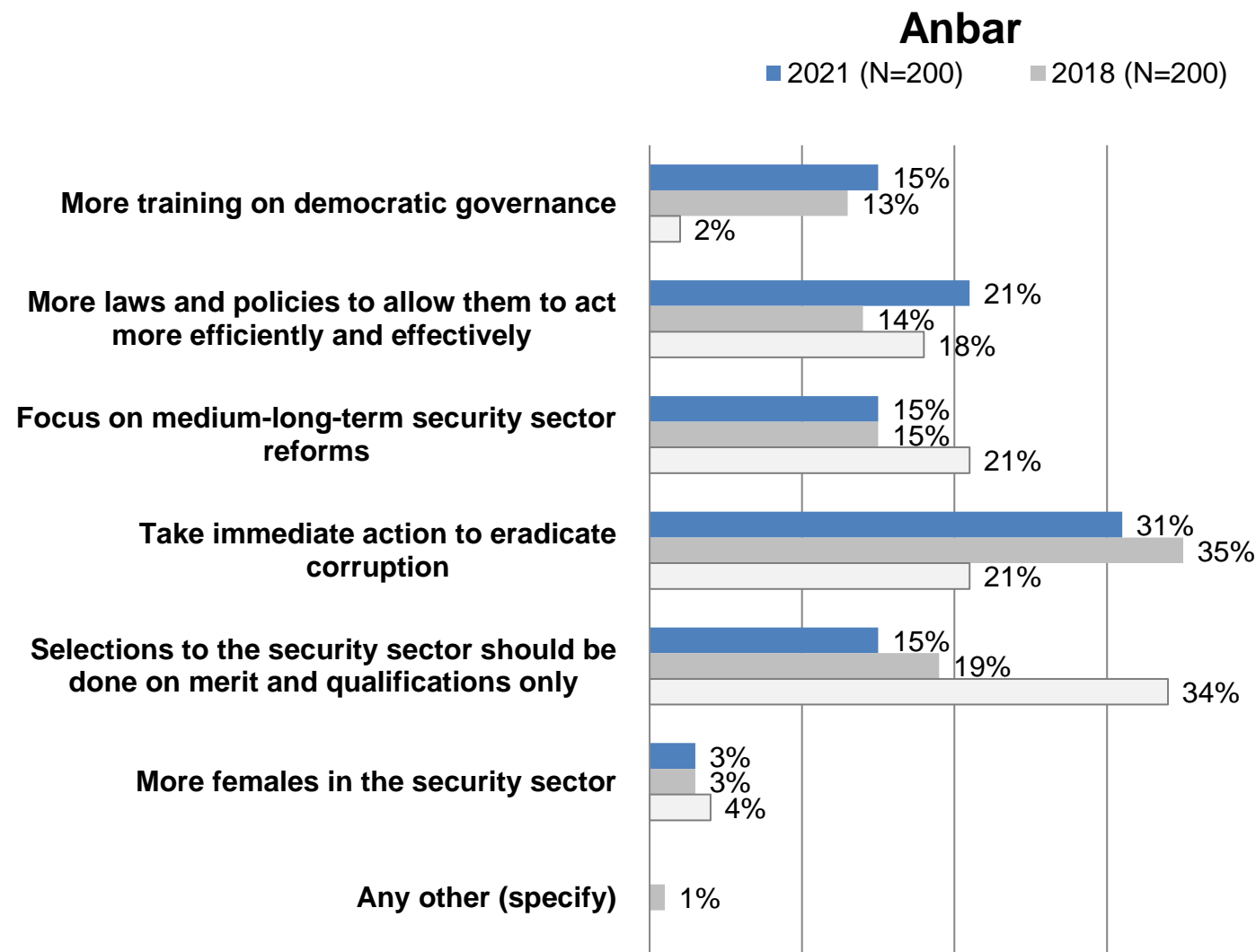
# Improving Public Confidence and Trust in Security Sector Providers

# Improving trust in Security Sector Providers

Similar to in 2018, there is a strong sentiment that public trust in security sector service providers can be increased through the eradication of corruption in the sector (38%), the provision of more training on democratic governance and accountability (20%), and by ensuring that selections in the sector are made strictly on a merit basis (17%).



# In your opinion what can be done to improve public confidence and trust in the Iraqi Security Sector Service Providers?



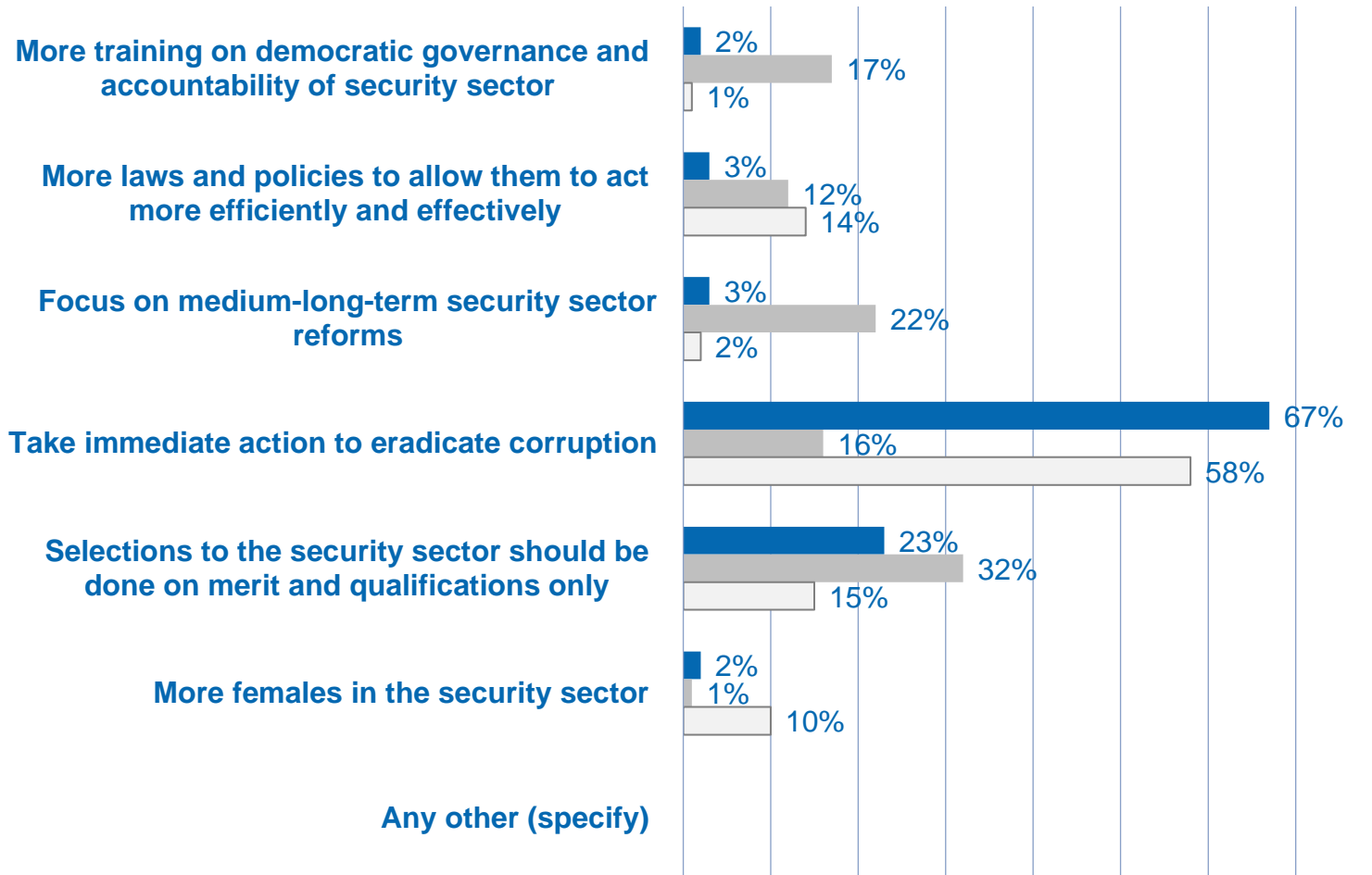


# In your opinion what can be done to improve public confidence and trust in the Iraqi Security Sector Service Providers?



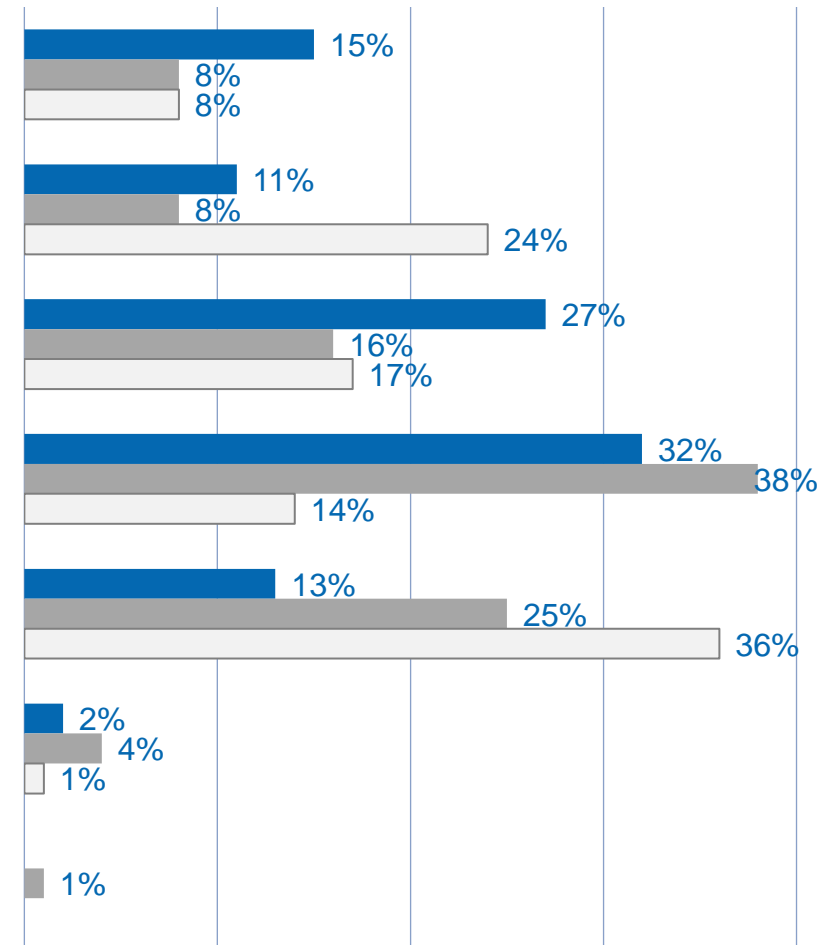
## Karbala

■ 2021 (N=200) ■ 2018 (N=200) □ 2016 (N=200)

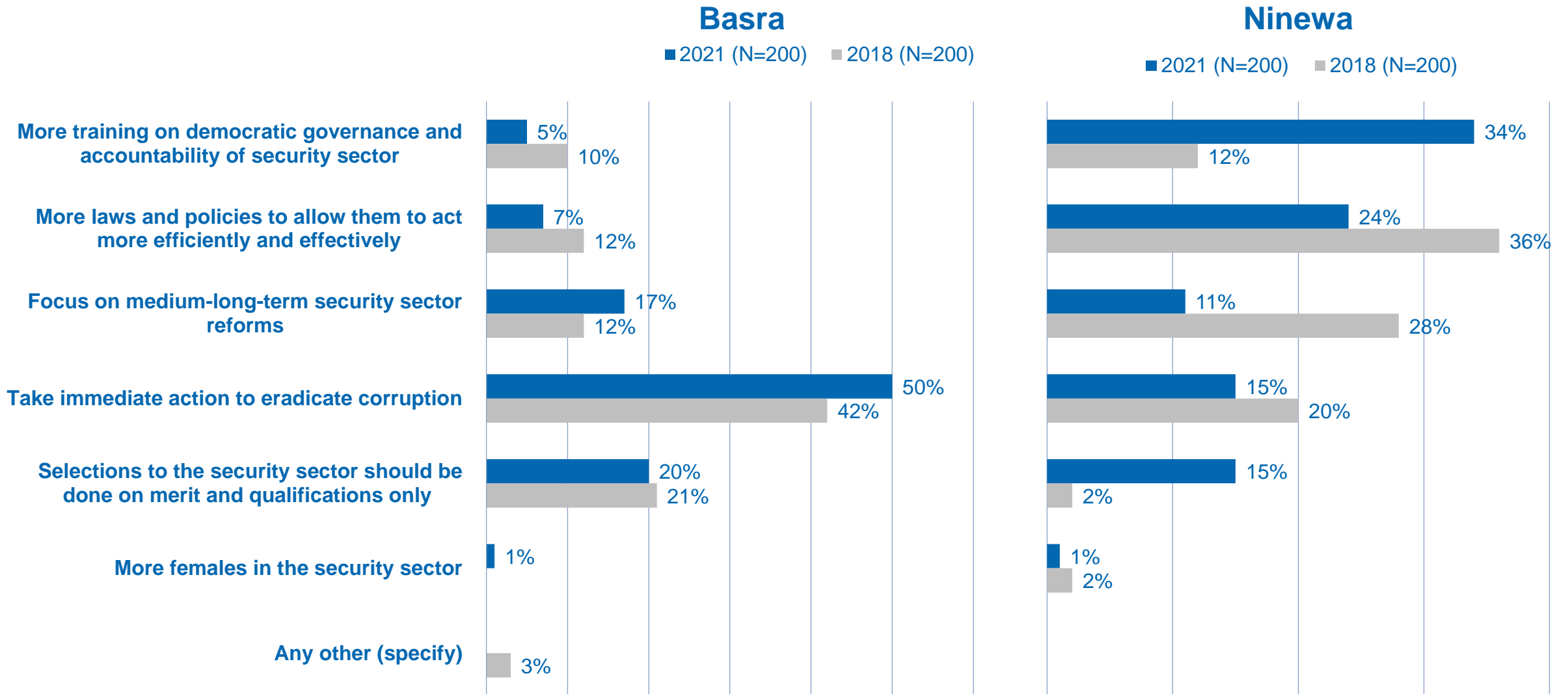


## Salah al-Din

■ 2021 (N=200) ■ 2018 (N=200) □ 2016 (N=200)



# In your opinion what can be done to improve public confidence and trust in the Iraqi Security Sector Service Providers?





# Firearms Control

# Firearms Control

In 2021, across all governorates, **95%** of respondents agree that the **government should control and regulate all firearms** and that immediate action to **remove all armed manifestations in public spaces** is a priority, with the main reasons as to why being to:

- impose **law and security** (27%)
- **eliminate illegal use of firearms** as it constitutes a danger to society (15%)
- **eliminate the spread of militias** and armed groups (11%)

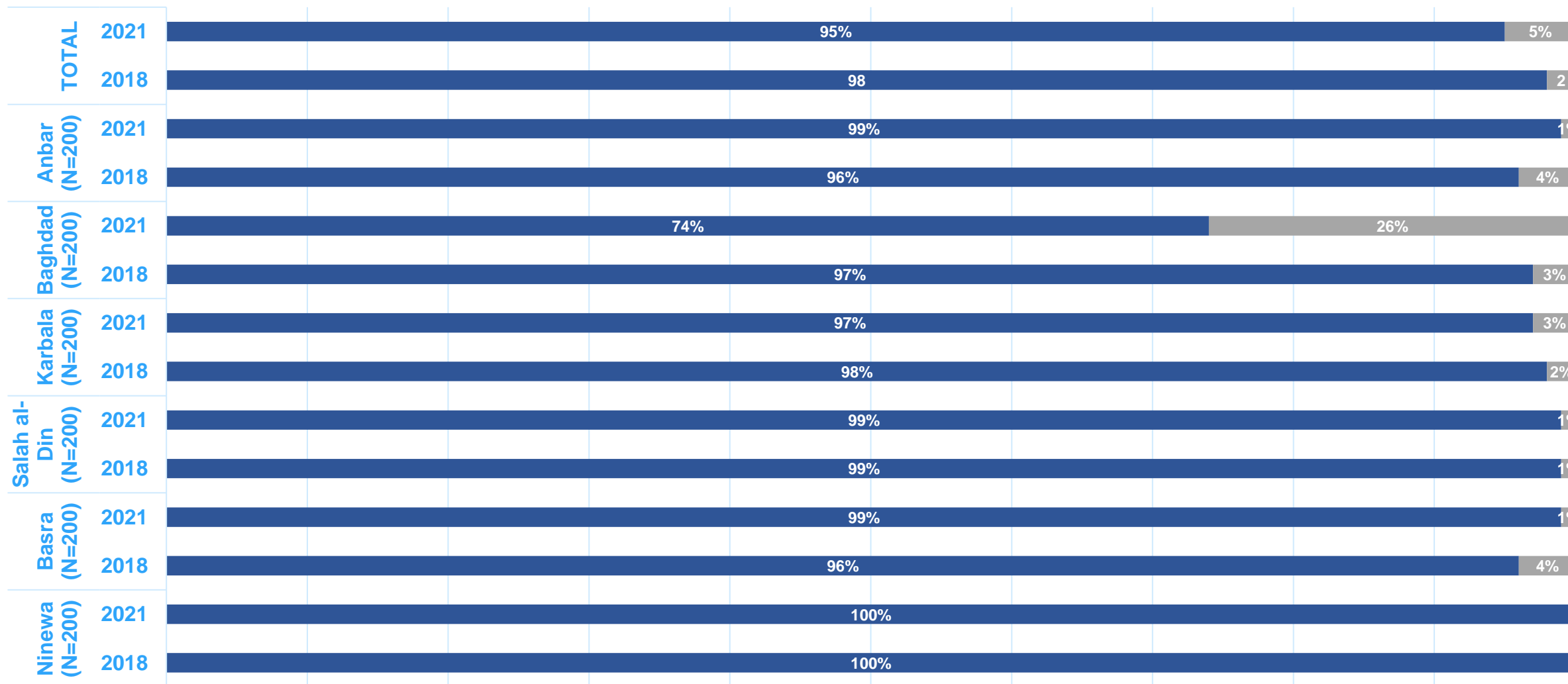
In **Baghdad**, the **highest percentage of respondents disagreed (26%)** that the **government should control firearms**, with the primary reason for disagreement being to **prevent the deterioration of the current security situation**.



**Do you Agree or Disagree with the following statement: All firearms control and regulation must be under the government and immediate government action to remove all armed manifestations in public spaces is a priority.**



■ Agree ■ Disagree



# Firearms control

In 2021, respondents were asked **in what way can local communities contribute to their locality being free from firearms**. The top responses were:

- **Spreading awareness** among members of society (19%)
- **Reporting** any manifestations of armament (18%)
- **Cooperating with security services** (15%)

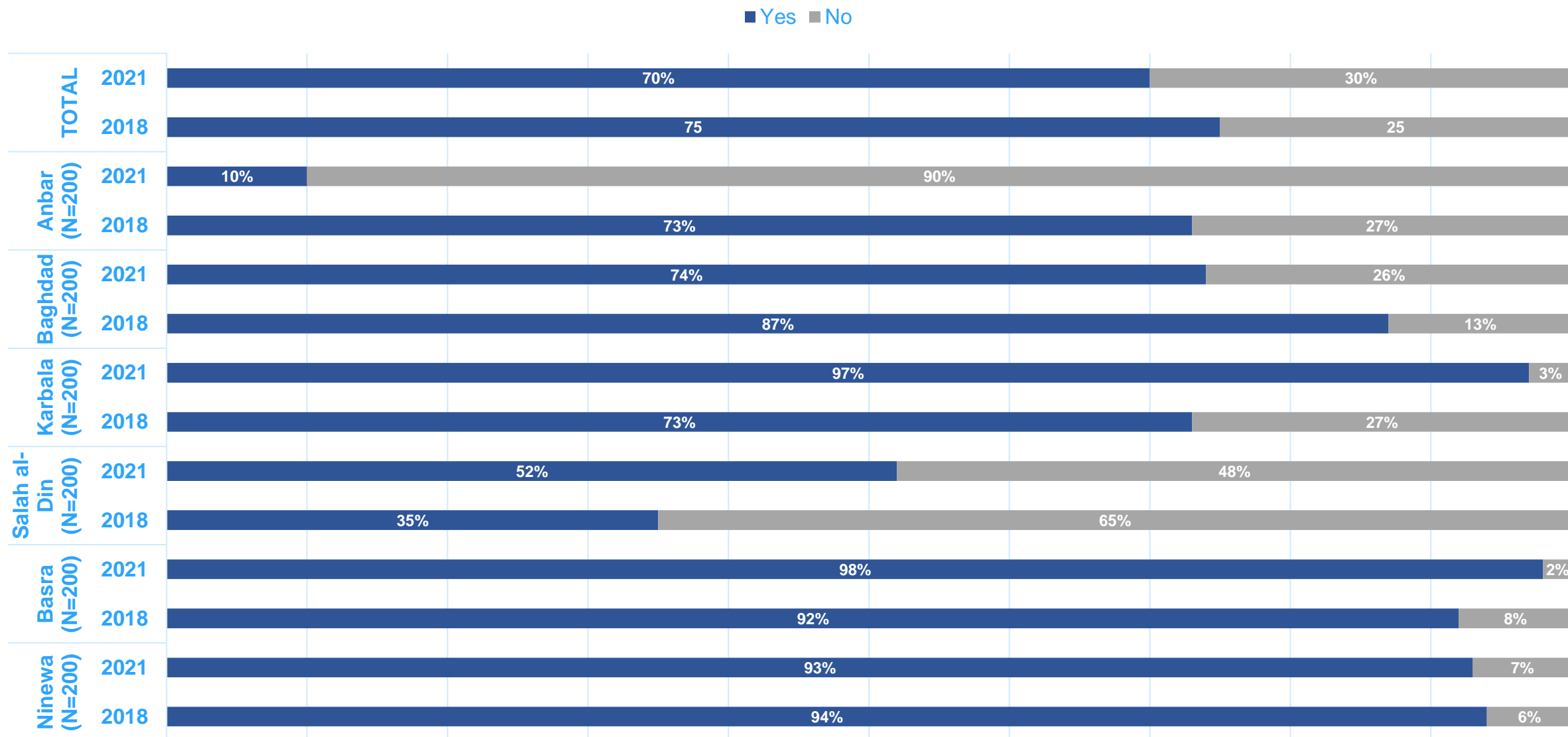
In **each province**, the **highest percentage of respondents suggested the following actions**:

- **Anbar** - imposing strict penalties on holders of unlicensed firearms (48%)
- **Baghdad** – launching campaigns to eliminate the illegal use of firearms (29%)
- **Karbala** – reporting any manifestations of armaments (61%)
- **Salah al-Din** – launching campaigns to eliminate illegal use of firearms (38%)
- **Basra** – cooperating with the security services (26%)
- **Ninewa** – spreading awareness among members of society (49%)



**70% of respondents want their locality to be free from firearms.**

# Do you want your locality free from firearms?



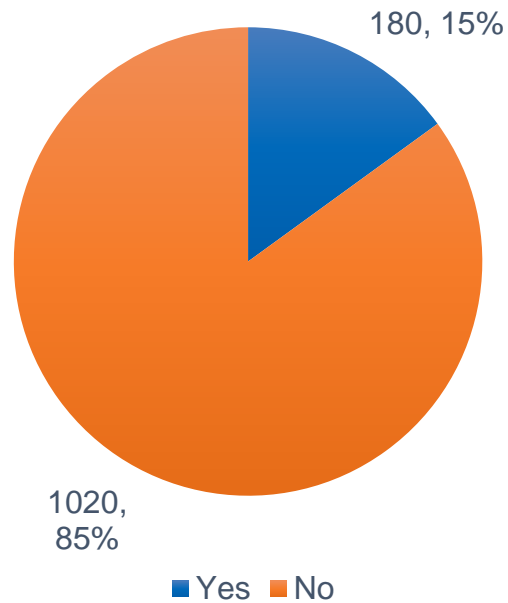


# Impact of the COVID-19 Health Pandemic

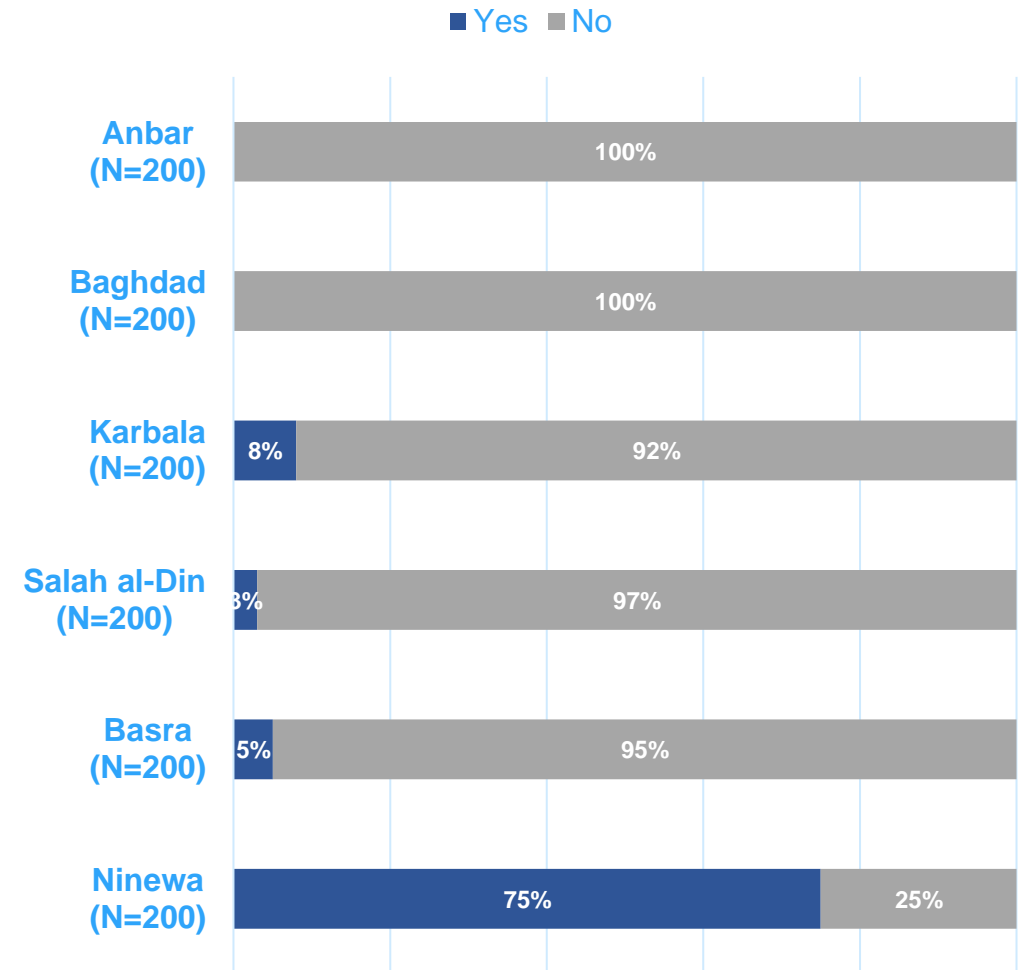




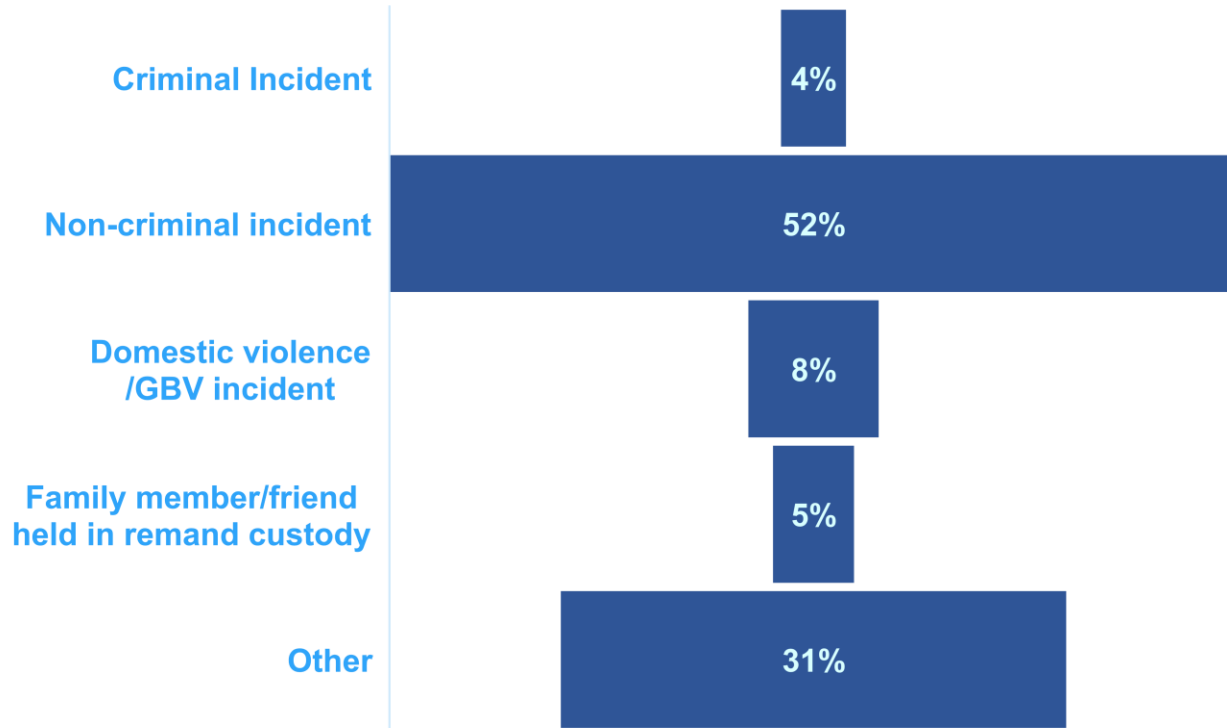
# Has the COVID-19 health pandemic negatively impacted your and your families feeling of security?



The COVID-19 health pandemic did *not* negatively impact the feelings of security of the majority of respondents and their families, with the exception of Ninewa where 75% of respondents were negatively impacted.



# If you were negatively impacted by COVID-19, what was the impact?



*Other impacts include economic incidents, and health/illness incidents.*

**The highest percentage of respondents were impacted by non-criminal incidents due to COVID-19.**

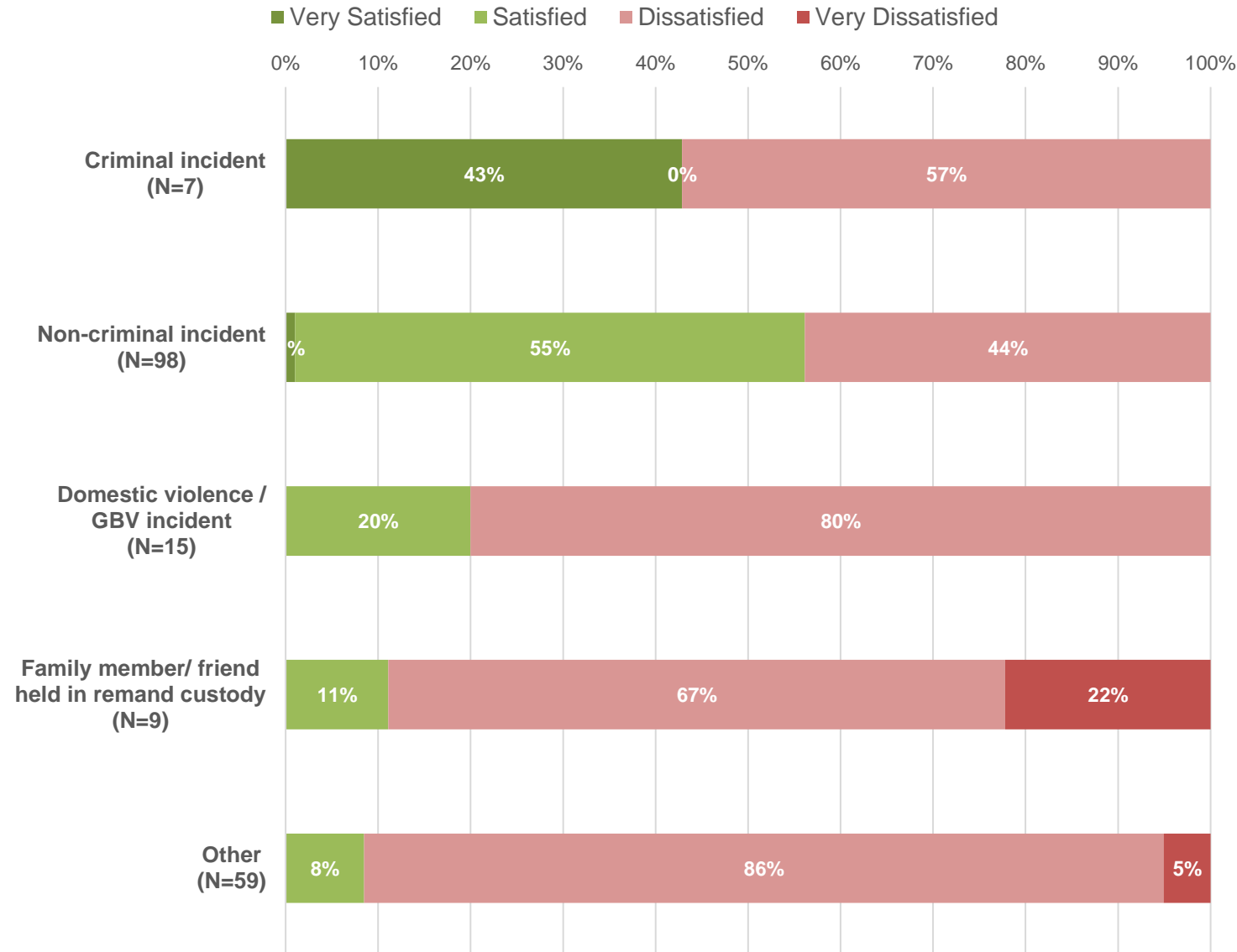
In **Salah al-Din** (40%) and **Ninewa** (56%), the highest percentage of respondents were impacted by **non-criminal incidents**.

In **Basra** (67%) and **Salah al-Din** (40%) the highest percentage of respondents (51%), were impacted because a **family member or friend was held in remand custody**.

In **Karbala**, the highest percentage of respondents (44%) were impacted by **criminal incidents**.

Respondents in **Anbar** and **Baghdad** reported that their security was **not negatively impacted by COVID-19**.

# If you were negatively impacted by COVID-19, what was your level of satisfaction with the service received for that incident?



**The majority of respondents were satisfied with services received in relation to non-criminal incidents.**

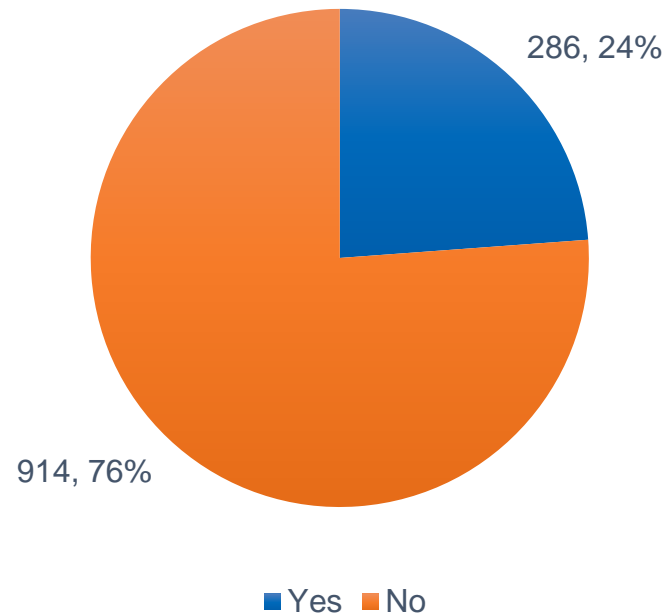
In **Karbala**, most respondents were impacted by **criminal incidents** (44%), and the **majority (57%)** were **dissatisfied** with the services received.

In **Salah-al Din**, most respondents were impacted by **non-criminal incidents** (40%) or a **family member/friend held in remand custody** (40%). In the **former case**, all respondents were **satisfied** with the services received, but in the **latter case**, all respondents were **dissatisfied** with the services received.

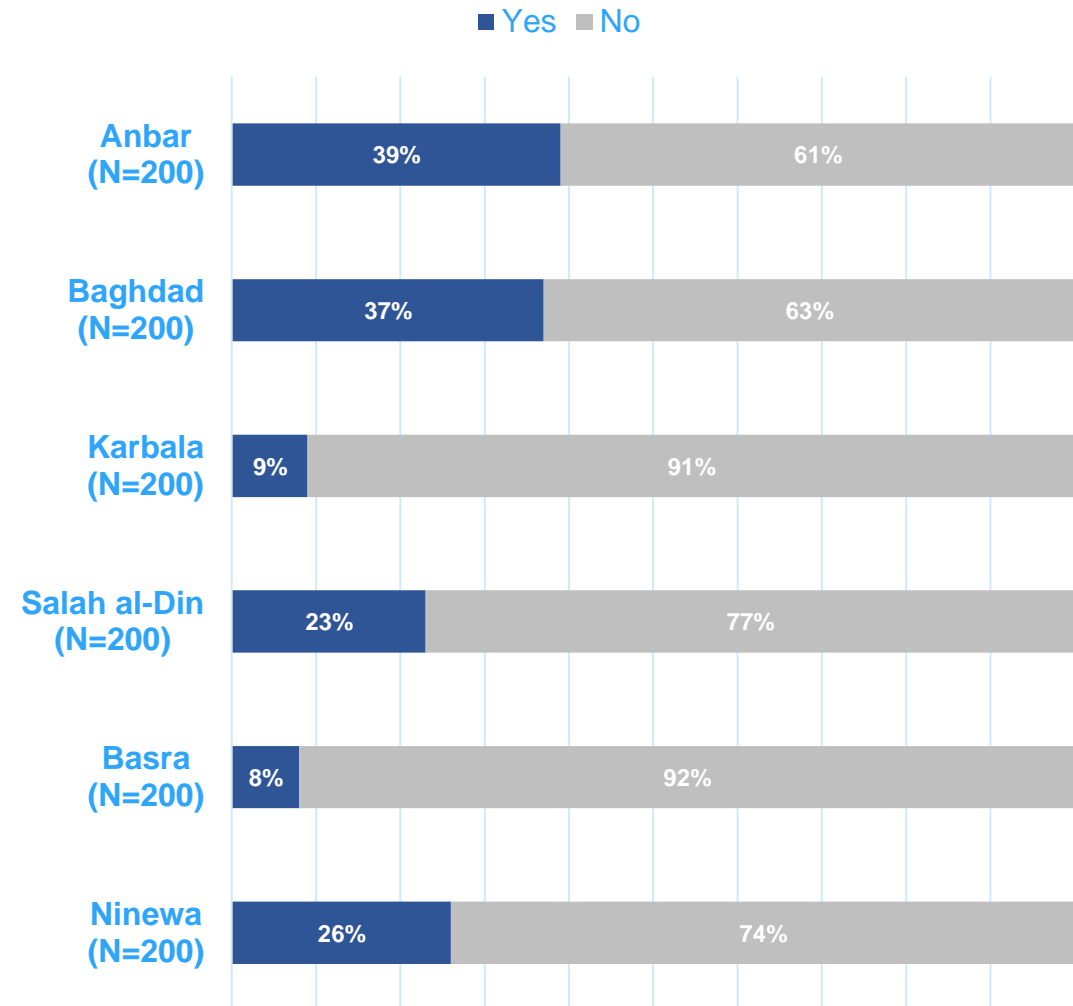
In **Basra**, most respondents were impacted by a **family member/friend held in remand custody** (67%), and **83%** of respondents were either **dissatisfied** (50%) or **very dissatisfied** (33%) with the services they received.

In **Ninewa**, most respondents were impacted by **non-criminal incidents** (56%), and the **majority (58%)** of respondents were **satisfied** with the services received.

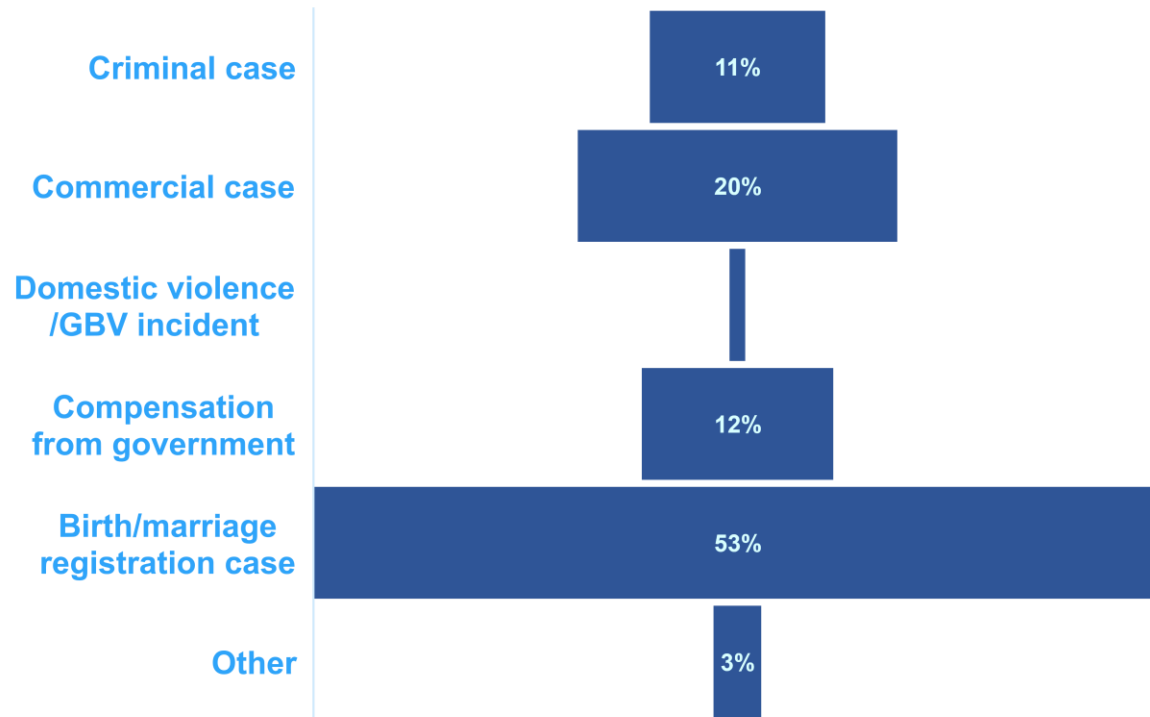
# During the COVID-19 health pandemic did you seek any services from the courts/justice sector?



The majority of respondents did *not* seek services from the courts/justice sector during the COVID-19 pandemic.



# If you did seek a service, what kind of service did you seek from the courts/justice sector?



*Other services included death certificate, power of attorney, civil status registration, issuing a legal document addressing name resemblance, updating voter ID*

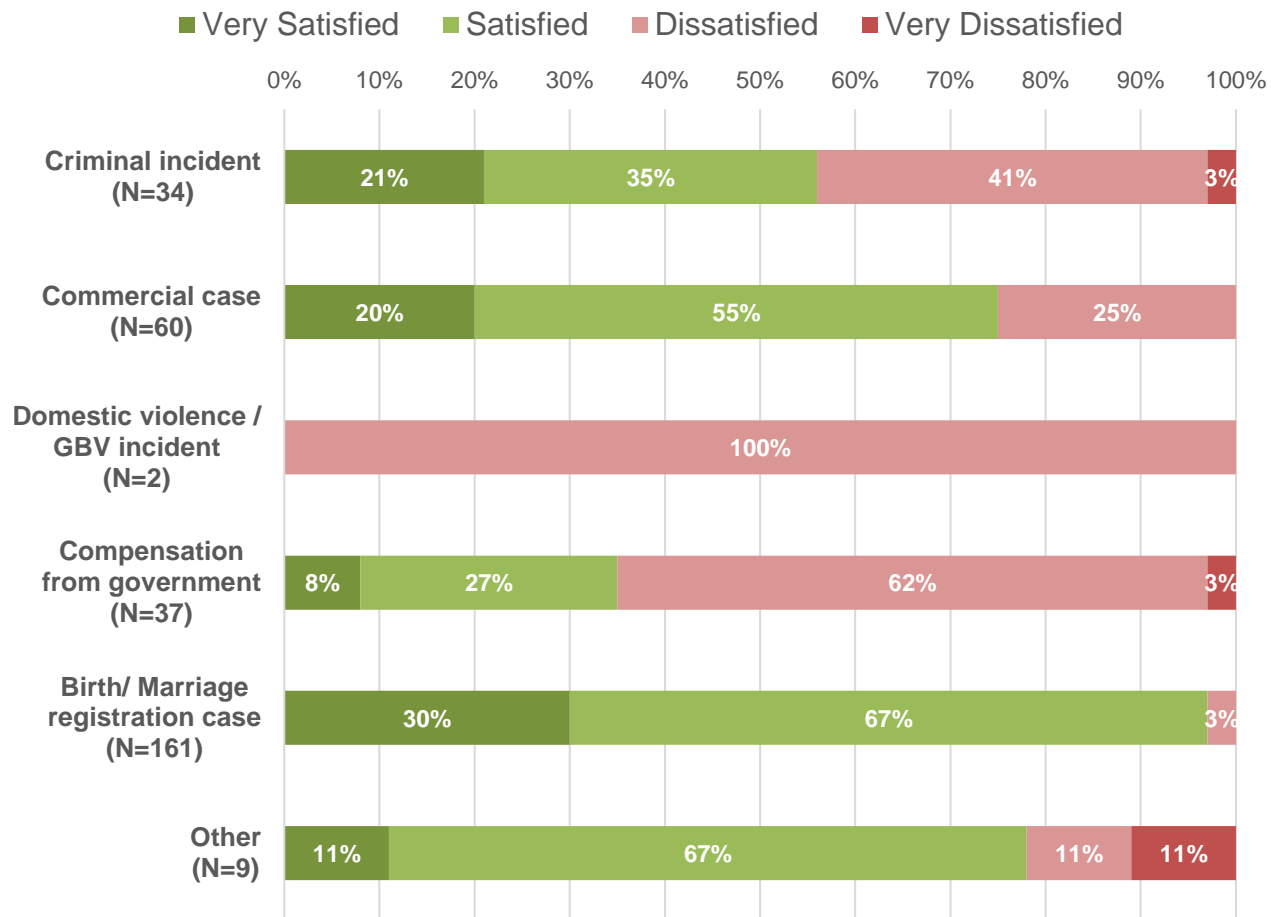
In **Anbar** (46%), **Baghdad** (66%), **Salah al-Din** (61%) and **Ninewa** (52%), the highest percentage of respondents sought court/justice sector services for **birth/marriage registration cases**.

In **Basra** (50%) and **Karbala** (42%), the highest percentage of respondents sought court/justice sector services in relation to **commercial cases**.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the **highest percentages of services sought from courts/justice sector** were:

- ❖ Criminal cases – Anbar (20 respondents)
- ❖ Commercial cases – Baghdad (19 respondents)
- ❖ Domestic violence/GBV incident – Ninewa (2 respondents)
- ❖ Compensation from government – Ninewa (15 respondents)
- ❖ Birth/ Marriage registration case – Baghdad (51 respondents)

# If you did seek a service, what was your level of satisfaction with the service received from the courts/justice sector during the COVID-19 health pandemic?



**During COVID-19, the majority respondents were satisfied with courts/justice sector services in relation to criminal incidents, commercial cases, and birth/marriage registration cases.**

In Anbar, **Baghdad and Ninewa**, most respondents sought court/justice sector services in relation to **birth/marriage registration cases** and **all were satisfied or very satisfied** with the services received, while in **Salah al-Din**, a **strong majority were satisfied or very satisfied** with services received in relation to such cases.

In **Karbala**, most respondents sought court/justice sector services in relation to **commercial cases** (42%) and **all were satisfied** (64%) or very satisfied (37%) with the services received.

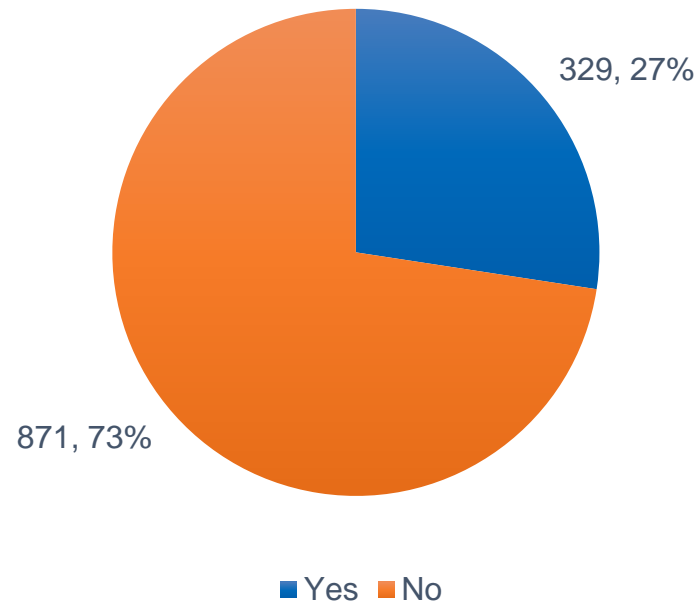
In **Basra**, most respondents sought court/justice sector services in relation to **commercial cases** (50%), with **half** of the respondents being **satisfied** and **half being dissatisfied** with the services received.



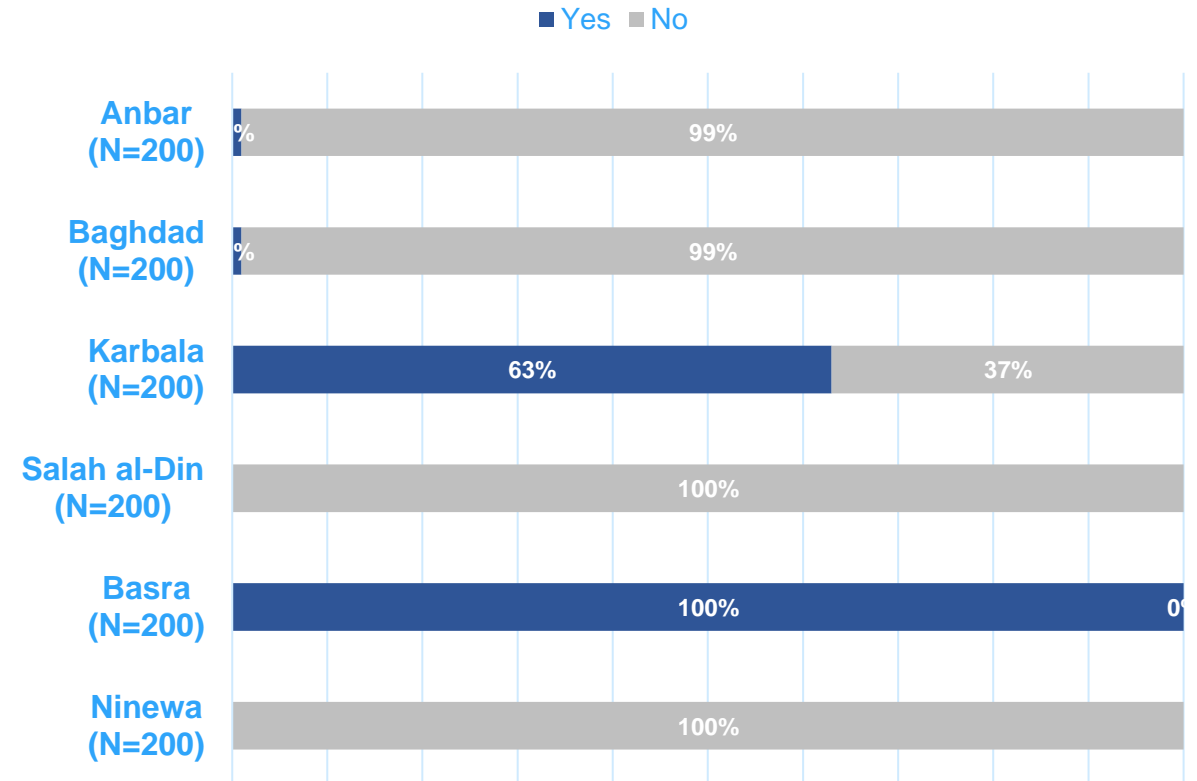
# Impact of Popular Protests



# Was your locality affected by the recent wave of popular protests?



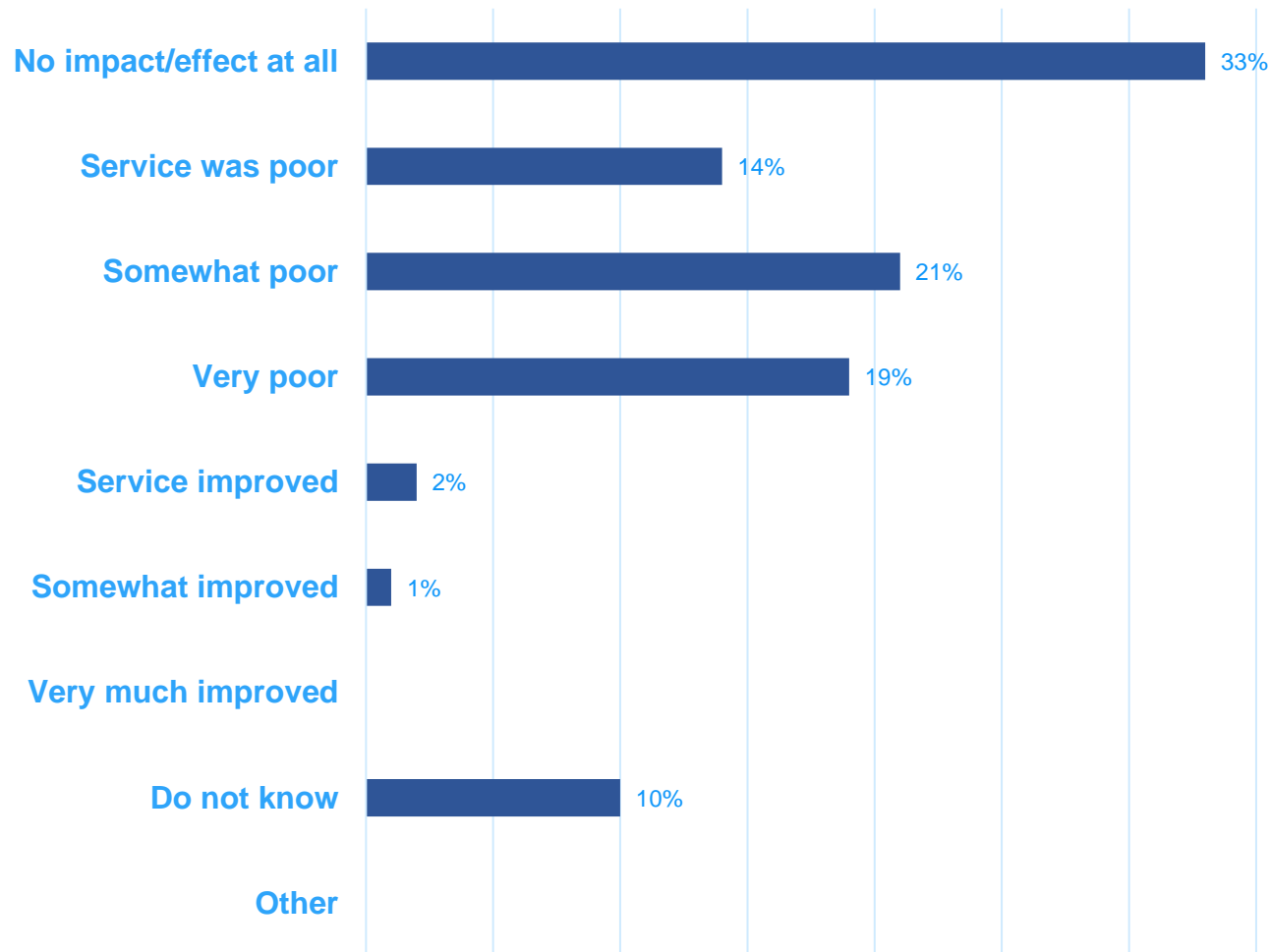
The majority of respondents reported that their locality was *not* affected by the recent wave of popular protests.



According to respondents, Basra and Karbala were the most affected localities, while Salah al-Din and Ninewa were not affected.



# If your locality was affected by the recent wave of popular protests, how did it affect the service delivery of the Local Police?

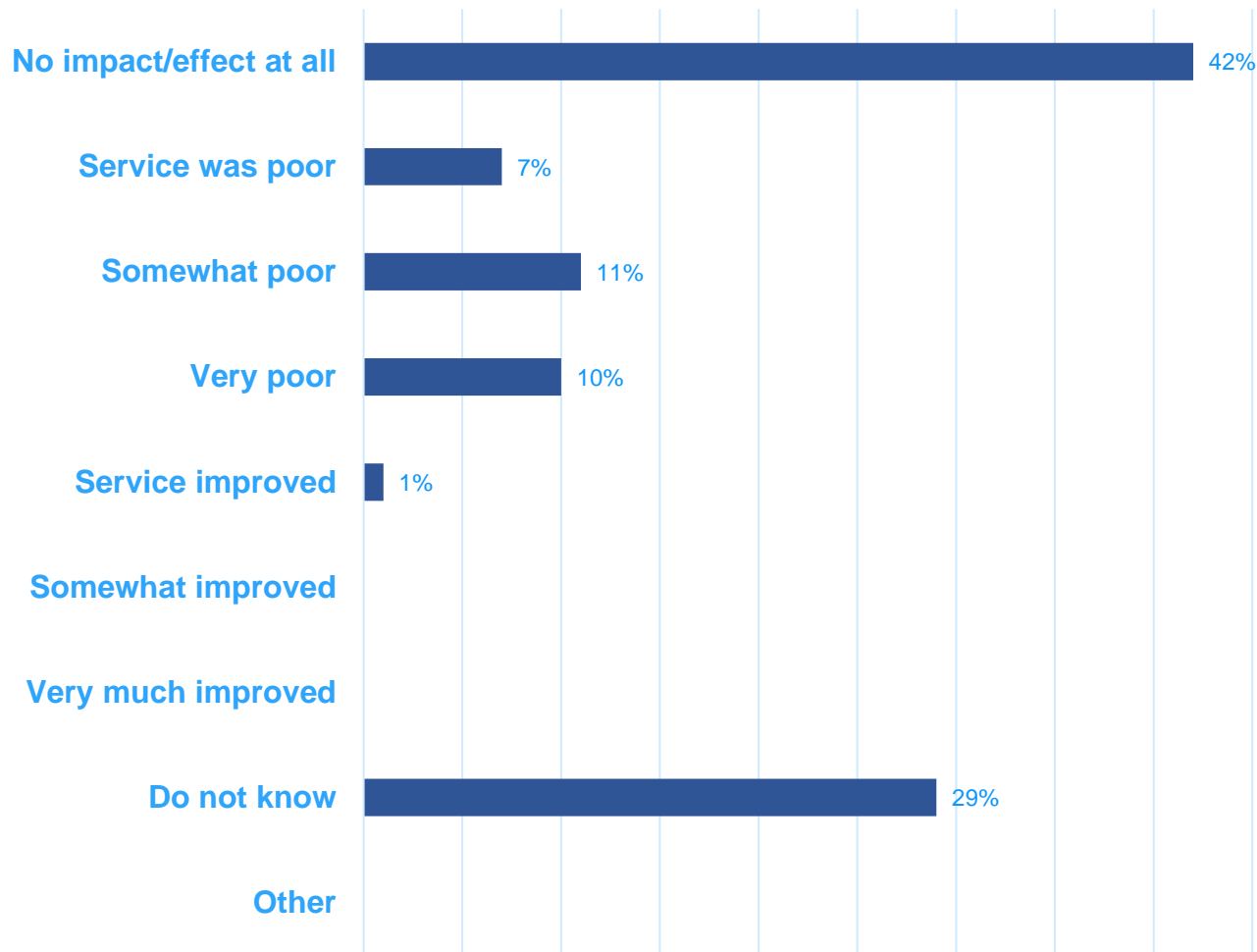


Most localities affected by popular protests reported a negative impact on the service delivery of Local Police.



The majority of respondents in **Anbar** (100%), **Baghdad** (100%), **Karbala** (50%), and **Basra** (55%) reported that **Local Police** service delivery was **negatively affected** (i.e. poor, somewhat poor or very poor) as a result of the recent wave of popular protests. **Service delivery** was reportedly the **poorest** in **Basra**.

# If your locality was affected by the recent wave of popular protests, how it affect the service delivery of the courts/justice sector?



**Most respondents (42%) reported that service delivery by courts/justice sector was not impacted by the recent wave of popular protests.**



In **Karbala**, **67%** of respondents reported **no impact** on the courts/justice sector, while **33%** reported that service delivery by the **courts/justice sector** was **negatively affected** (i.e. poor, somewhat poor or very poor) as a result of the recent wave of popular protests.

In **Basra**, **most respondents** (48%) said that they **did not know the impact** of the recent wave of popular protests on the courts/justice sector, while **26%** reported **no impact** at all and **25%** reported **negative effects**.

