

JANUARY 15, 2014



CENTER FOR CIVIL SOCIETY
AND DEMOCRACY IN SYRIA

The Negotiations Survey
Total Participants: 1037

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Out of our belief in the necessity for all the Syrian people of different affiliations, nationalities, religions, sects, and political affiliations, to be involved in the peace building process and negotiations that are shaping the future of the Syrians, we produced this paper. We believe that a solution to the conflict will be found in political negotiations and we therefore want to give these the best chance of success. As such, we launched a campaign called **Join Us**. Our campaign aimed to:

1. Identify the views of all Syrians regarding their outlook toward the future;
2. Break the widening divisions in society;
3. Make heard the voice of those people who are separated from the decision-makers and whose opinions are silenced and thus do not reach those who are involved;
4. Try to compel the decision makers to find a solution that will end the Syrian crisis; and
5. Participate with the decision makers as an organization that knows and understands the ordinary concerns and needs of the Syrian civilian population.

The campaign launched many initiatives with one of these being to issue a questionnaire to get feedback from the Syrians about their vision to resolve and end the current crisis. The eighteen question questionnaire asked the participants about what they believed to be the best solution to end the crisis. It also covered several other issues of concern to the Syrian street. Our methodology consisted of targeting specific people on social networks as well as having our field officers distributed among the nine provinces meet with activists and civilians.

In total, 1037 Syrians participated in the questionnaire. They were divided between those inside Syria and those abroad (especially in Turkey). As a preliminary analysis of the aggregated answers, it has been observed that the majority of the targeted Syrians were supporting negotiations in Syria, while only a small percentage refused to start any dialogue between the conflicting parties. It has also been noticed that the tendency of the female participants who wished to start negotiations and stop the fighting, was higher than the proportion of like-minded males – thus demonstrating the importance of female participation in the decision-making process in Syria. The questionnaire also asked for opinions on the likelihood of the conflicting parties to end the fighting. The majority believed these parties to have no such will to end the violence. They further believed that these parties are following agendas that serve the interests of regional and international powers and this is the greatest factor which prevents an end to the conflict. Similarly, participants believed that only a tiny percentage of the international community had any interest in making peace in Syria (on the basis of their interests and the desire to create a stable Middle East). Civil society is thus concerned about the spread of extremist organizations that could threaten world peace and stability for the region.

As part of gathering opinions regarding the peace process, the survey sought to gage Syrian public opinion in the Geneva 1 statement and how much they know about the summit. It has been observed that the ratio of those who have some idea about Geneva I is larger than those who are not interested. In another question about the for pre-conditions before starting negotiations, the ratio of those who saw such pre-conditions as important was more than the half. Although these conditions varied, there were some that were widely shared:

1. The departure of Bashar al-Assad from power;
2. A cessation of all military operations;
3. A stop to arbitrary and political arrests ;
4. The release of all political detainees;
5. Breaking the siege on besieged areas and allowing the introduction of humanitarian aid;
6. Dissolving the security apparatus, including the army, and reconstructing them.

In the case of negotiations failing to reach an end to the Syrian crisis, a percentage of more than the half supported a military intervention to end the crisis by force. The remainder rejected any external interference in any form.

Regarding Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), the survey confirmed a large proportion of the participants believed in the importance of the participation of CSOs in the negotiations. This was to place the utmost pressure on the parties of the conflict to reach an agreement and to convince them of the need to do so. However, other respondents viewed the task of CSOs as limited to monitoring and evaluating, acting as consultants rather than full participating members. A third percentage believed that the CSOs were too weak and were not influential enough to participate. They further expressed concern with the lack of sufficient experience in the field of civil work.

The questionnaire tried to find the opinion of the participants regarding any hope of the convergence of goals and hopes among supporters of the regime and its opponents on the future of Syria. The largest proportion of them believed there to be little hope of such mutual hopes and visions and that the state of retrenchment did not leave any opportunities for dialogue as a result of escalating violence in Syria.

However, the rest of our respondents did not deny that Syrians of different opinions and attitudes were equally entitled to hold different hopes and goals about the future of Syria.

Most of the participants have contributed, through their answers, to finding the best means and methods that may stimulate the parties of the conflict to begin the negotiation process. Although opinion has not been unanimous, varying in their opinion of the importance of international pressure and stopping international support in all its forms, there are some points that we can take away as largely universal. One important point is the need for the inclusion CSOs in the peace process. They will act as guarantors and real supporters of the peace process and in building civil peace. It is upon their insistent and these opinions that we shall build a new and peaceful Syria.

Diagram (1)

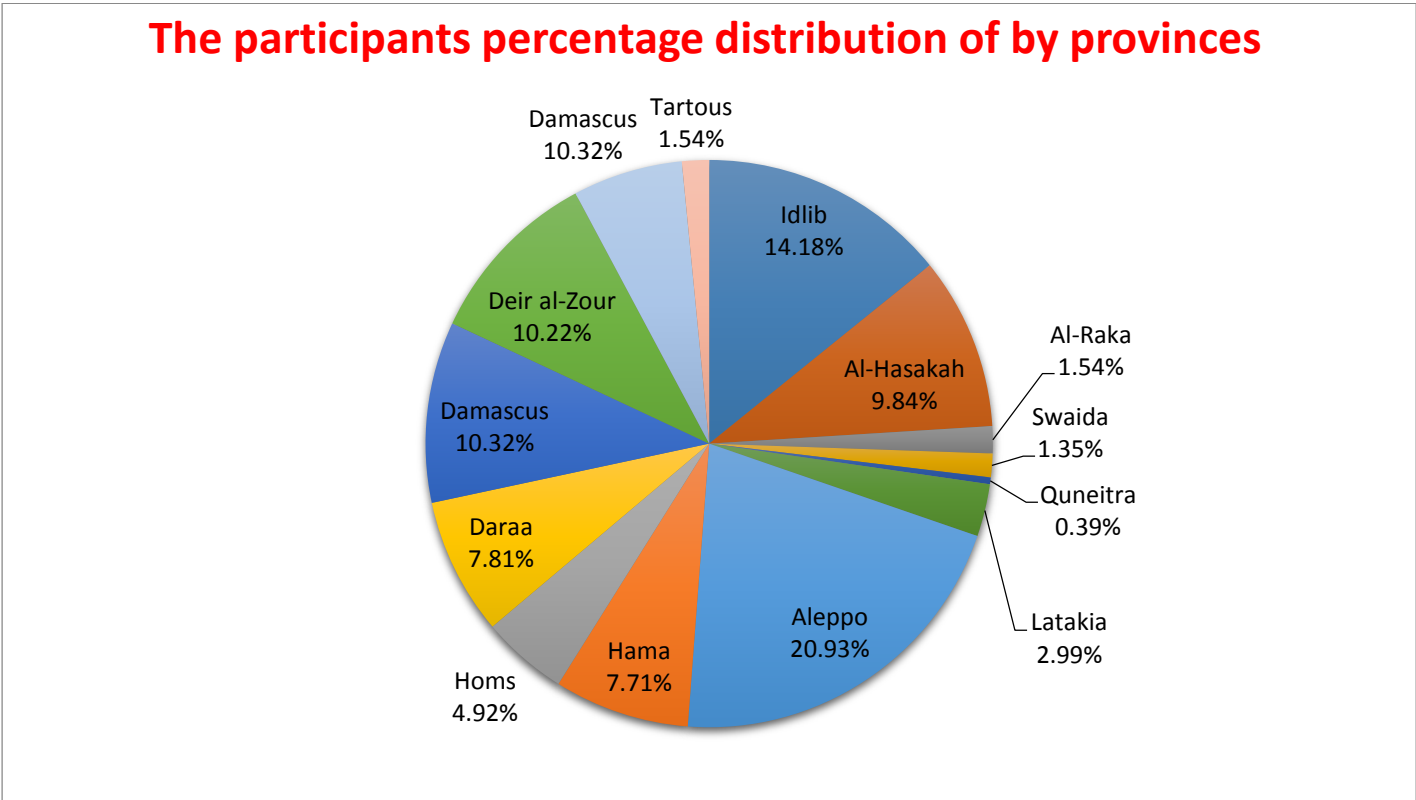


Diagram (2)

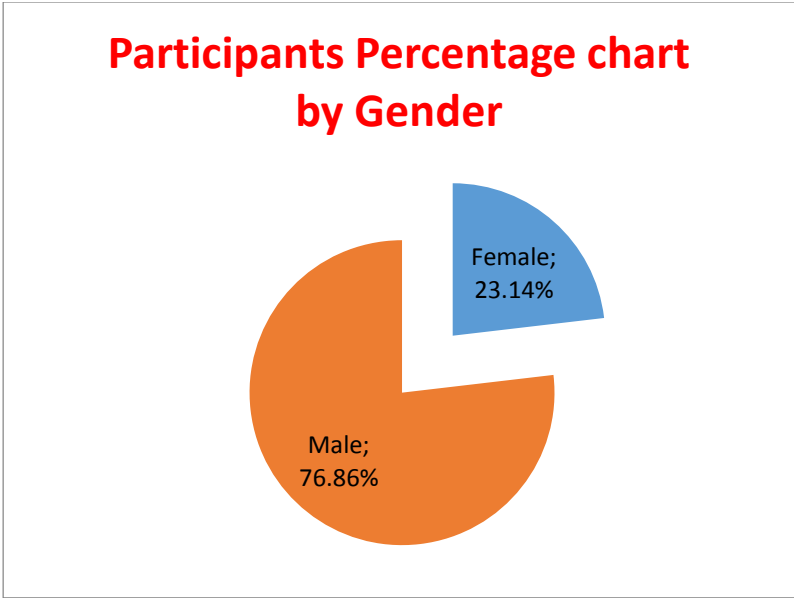
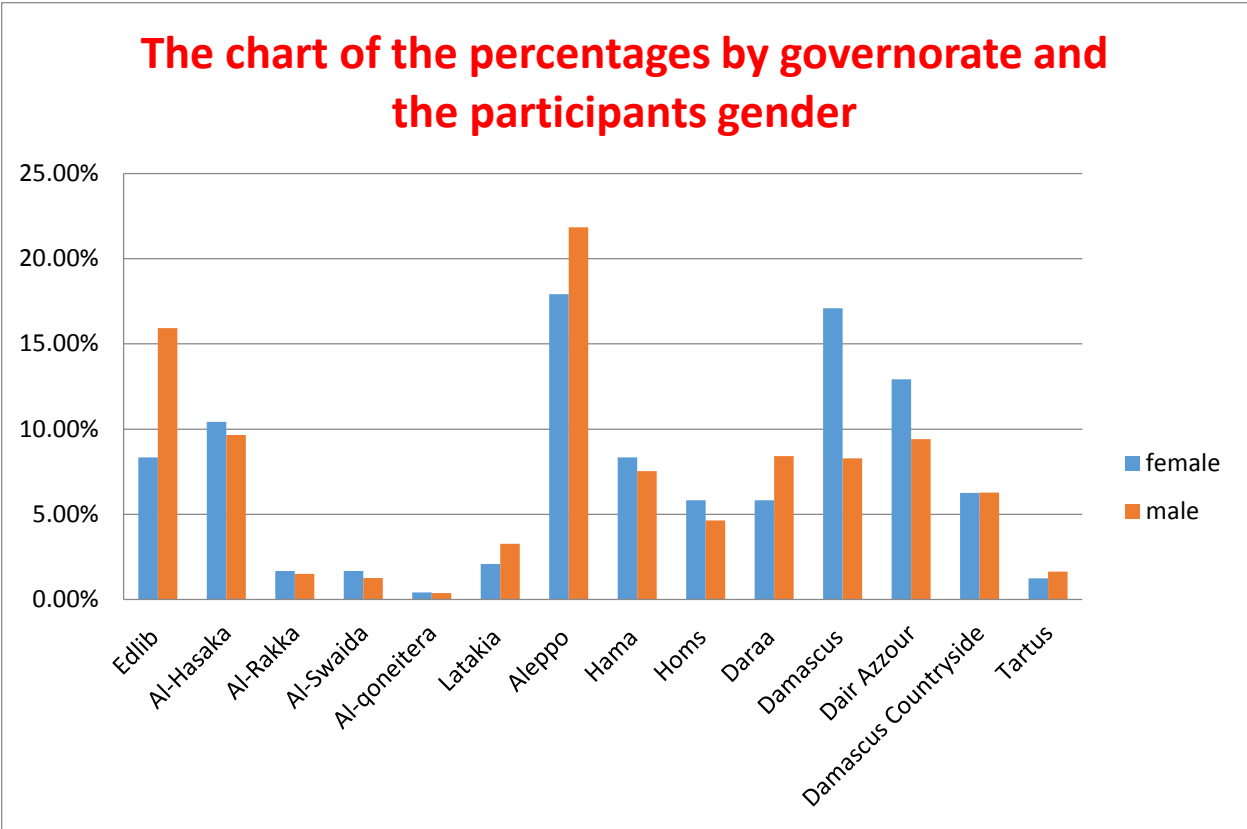


Diagram (3)



Do you support the beginning of the peace negotiations in Syria?

Diagram (1)

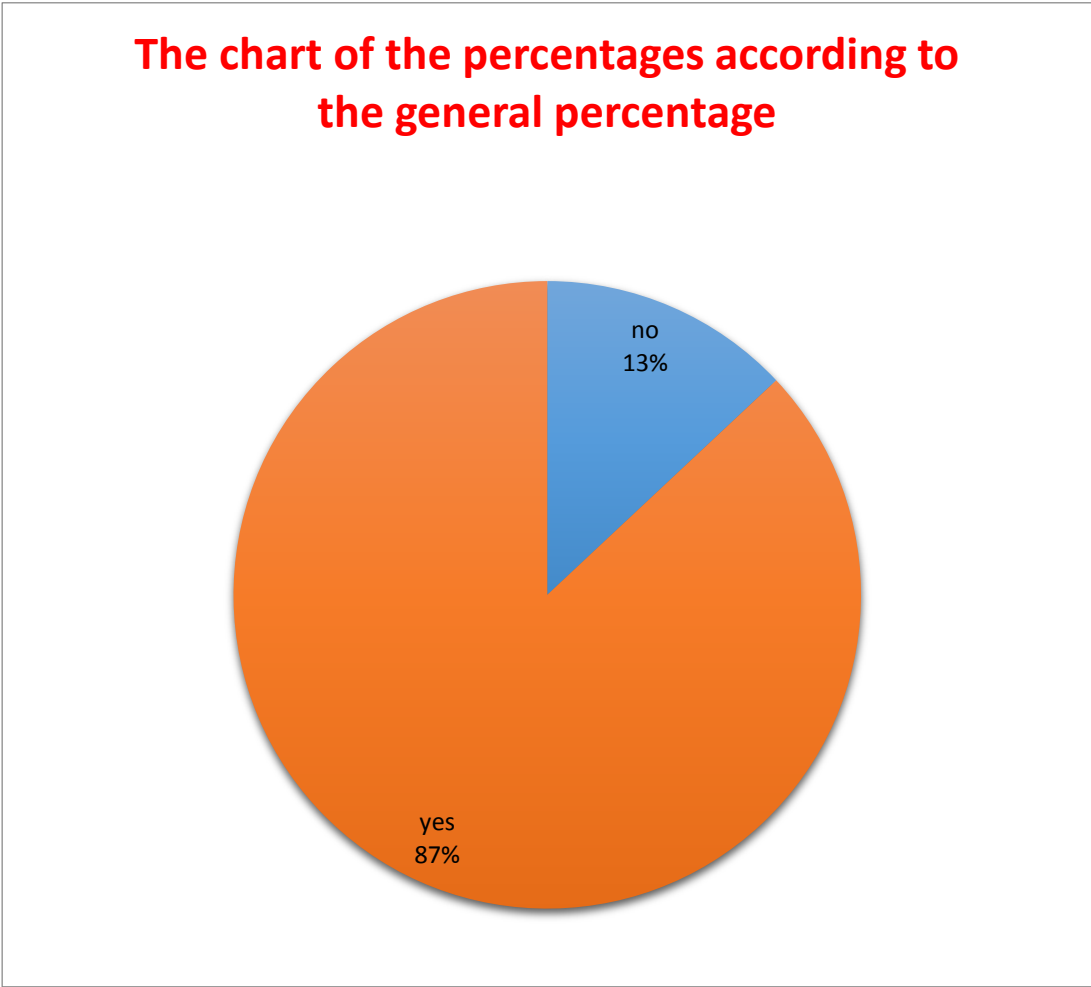


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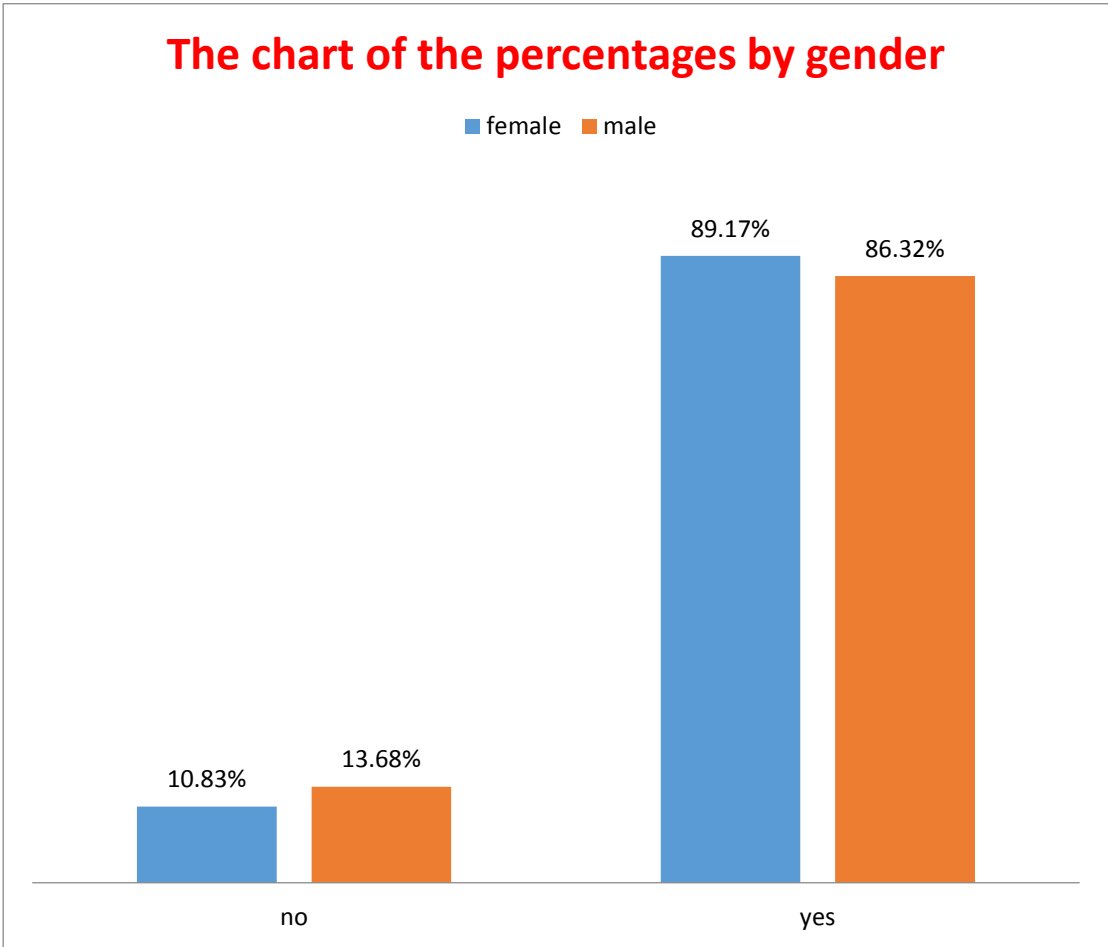
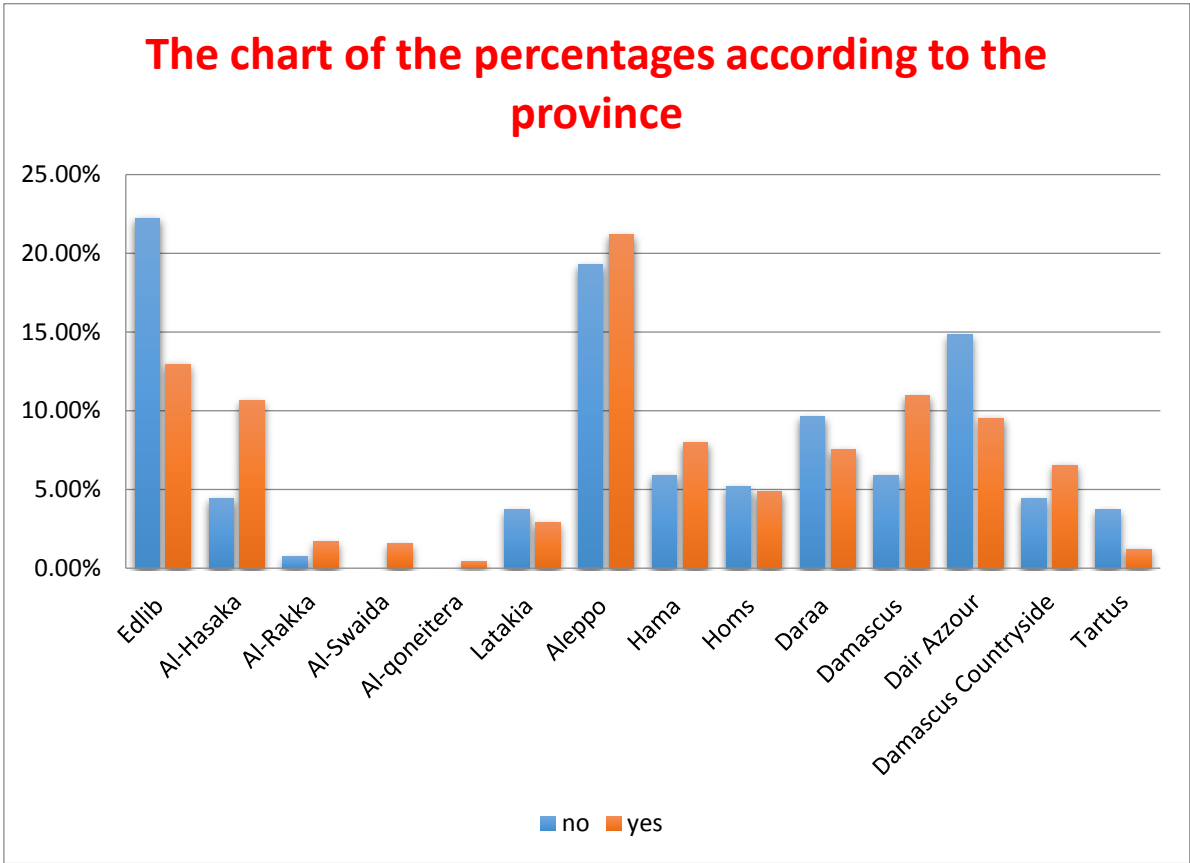


Diagram (3)



Who do you think of the following parties has the intention to resolve the dispute?

Diagram (1)

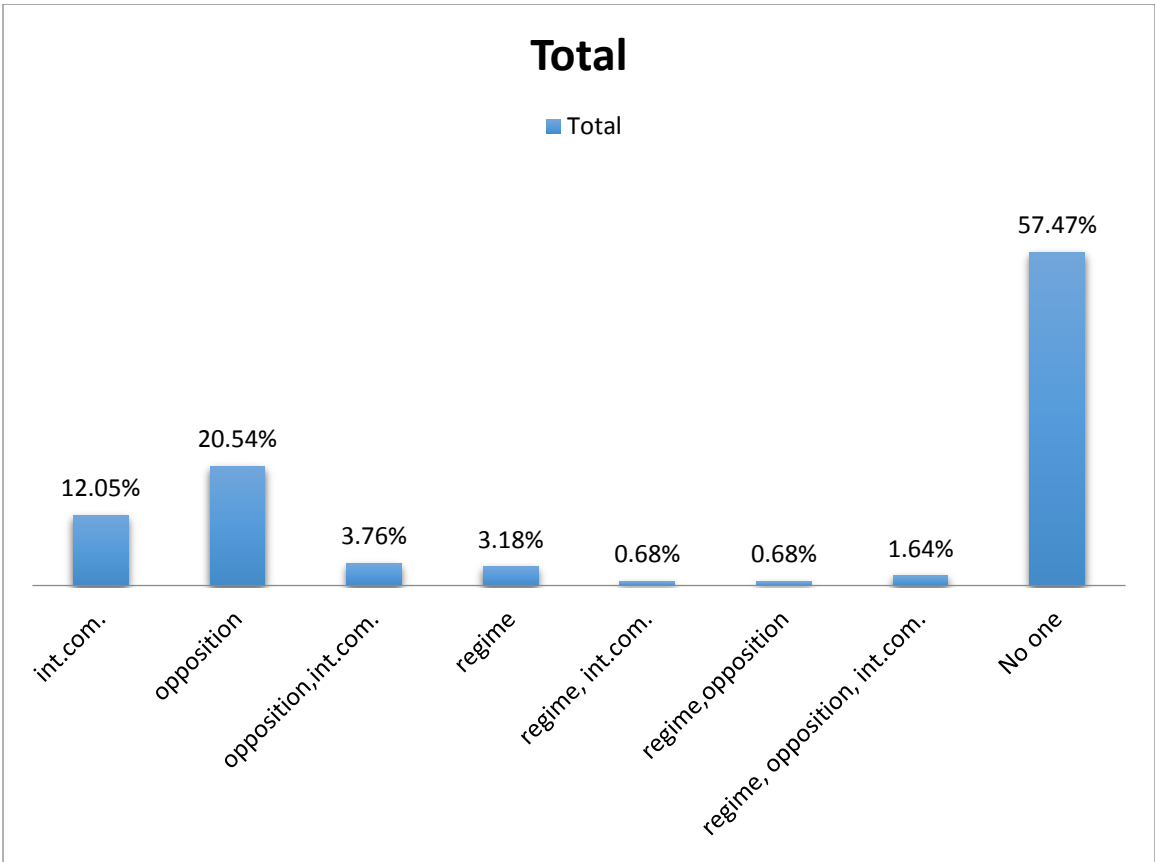
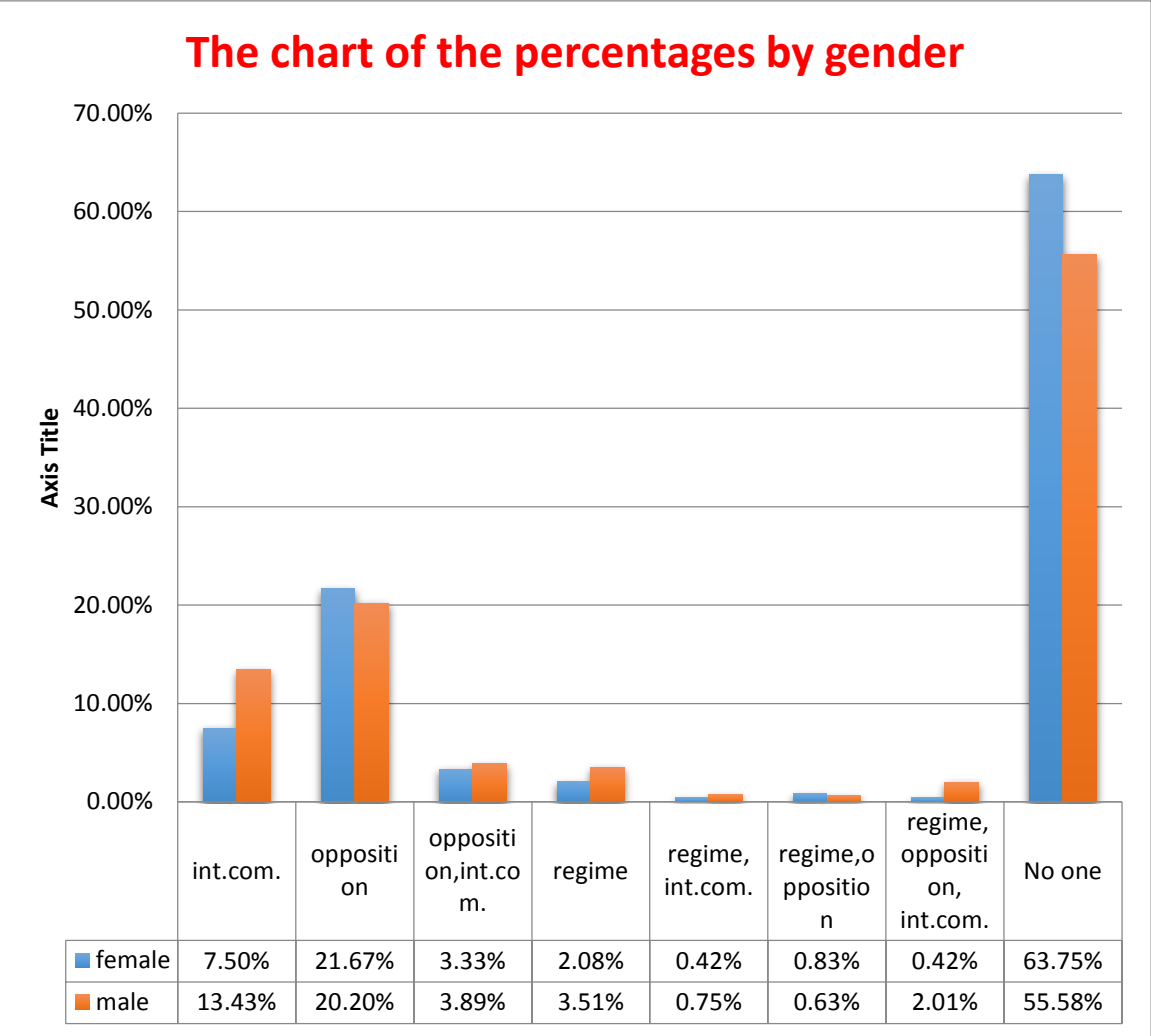


Diagram (2)



Have you read Geneva 1?

Diagram (1)

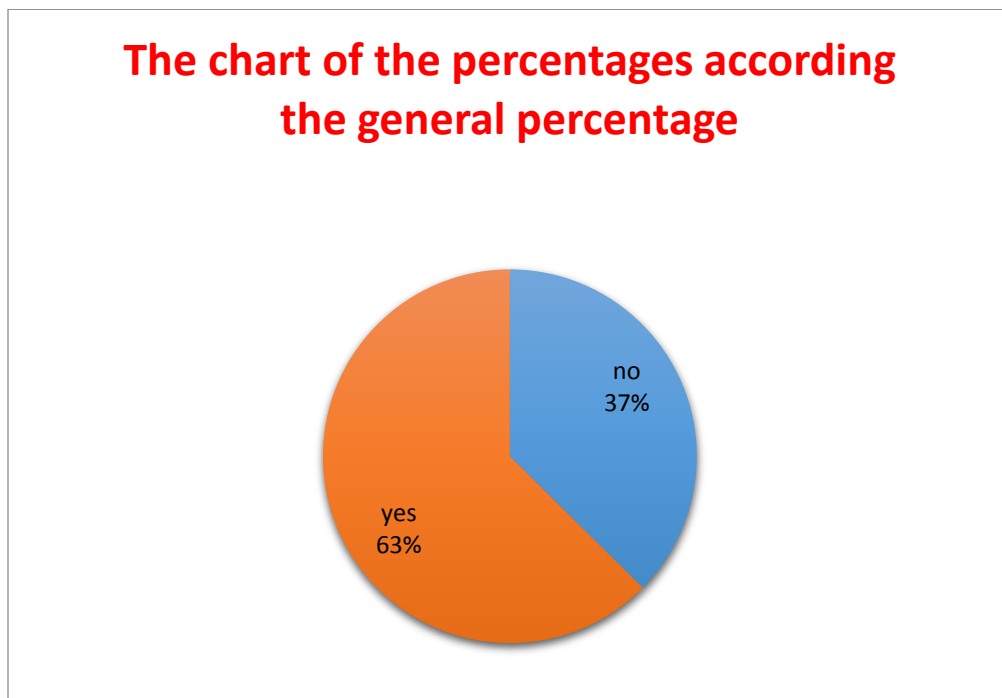


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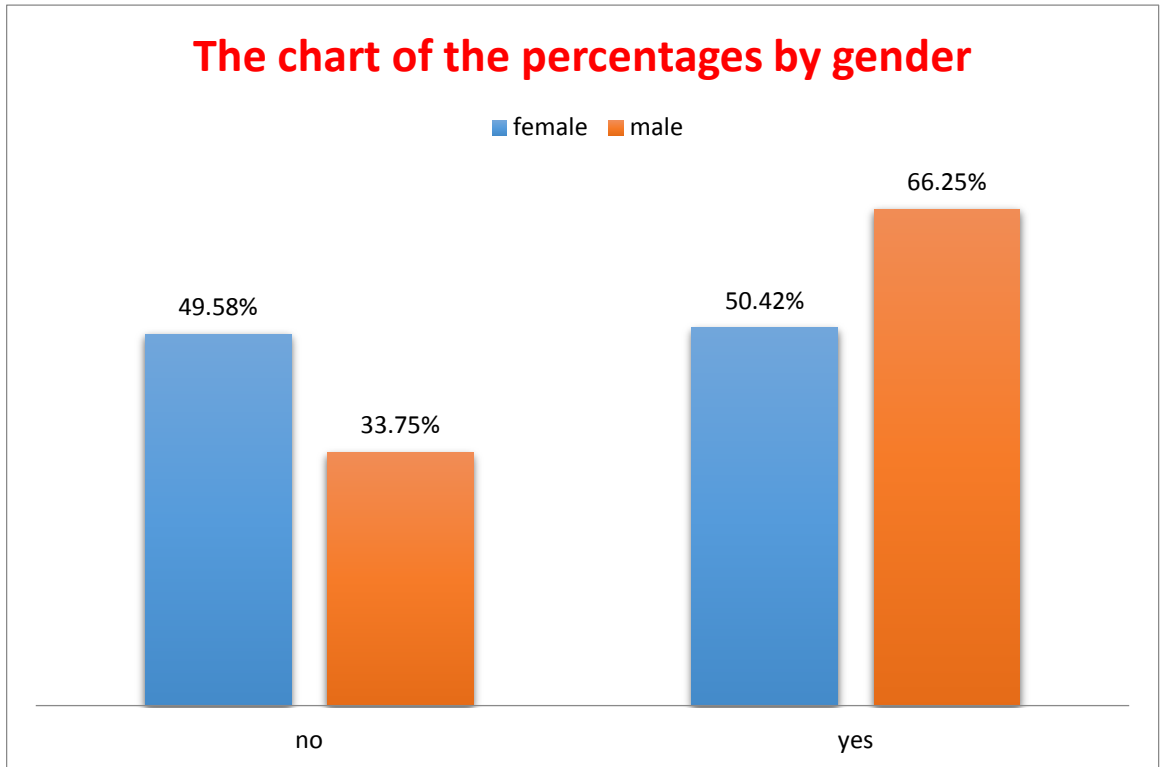
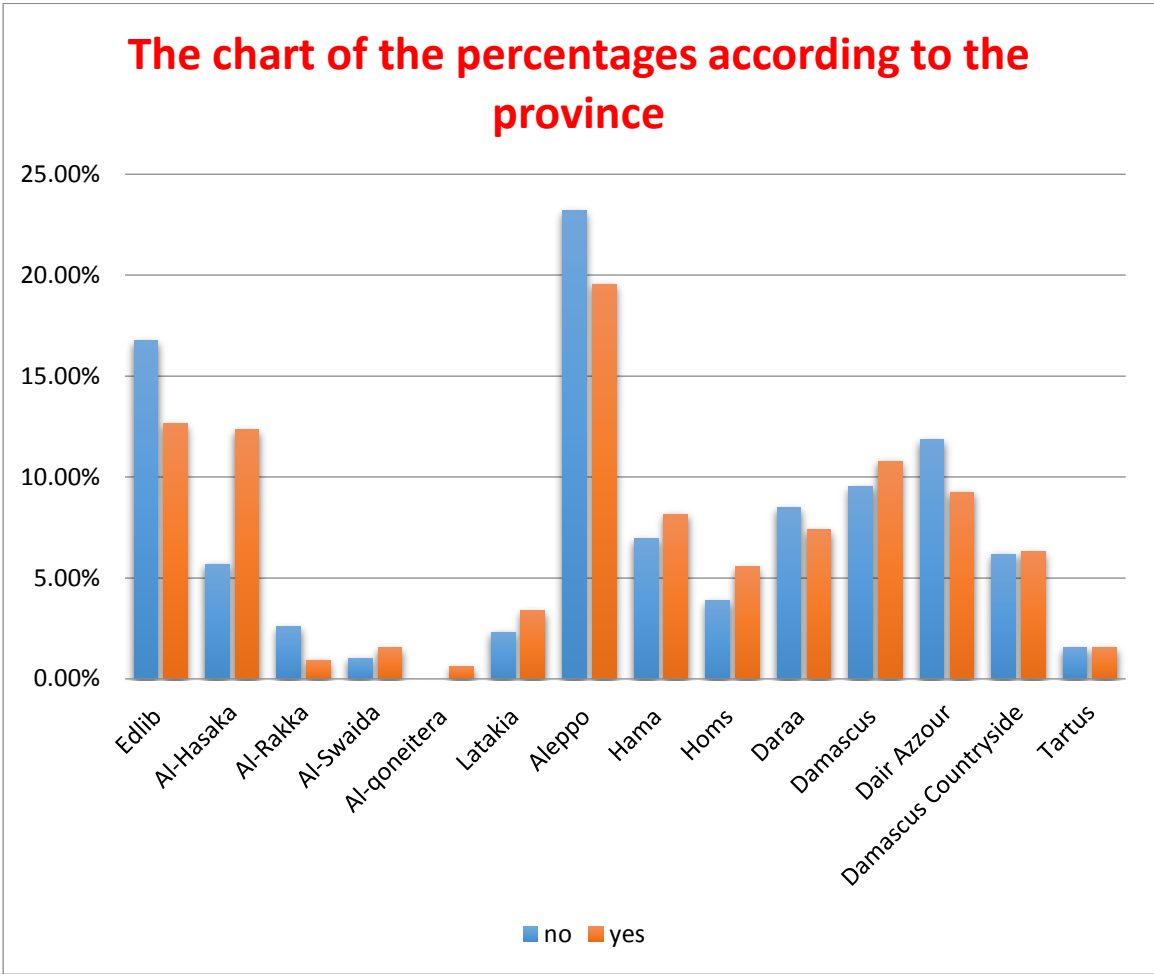


Diagram (3)



Do you support preconditions for the negotiations?

Diagram (1)

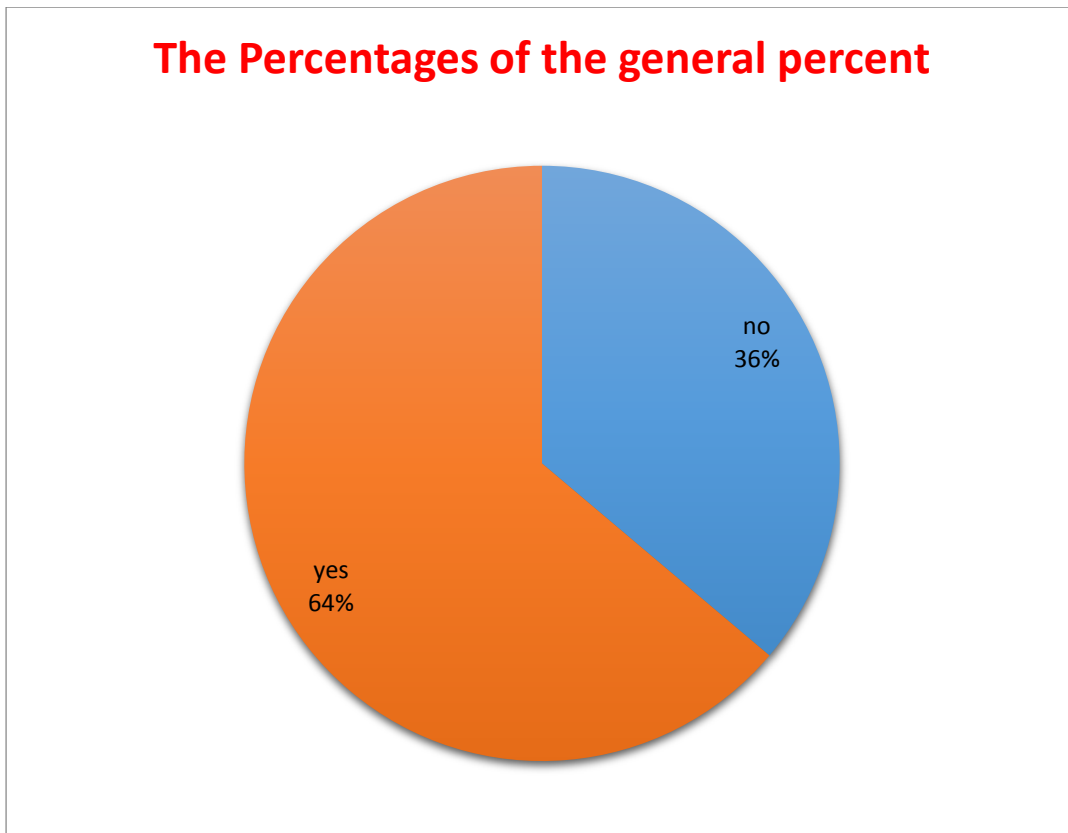


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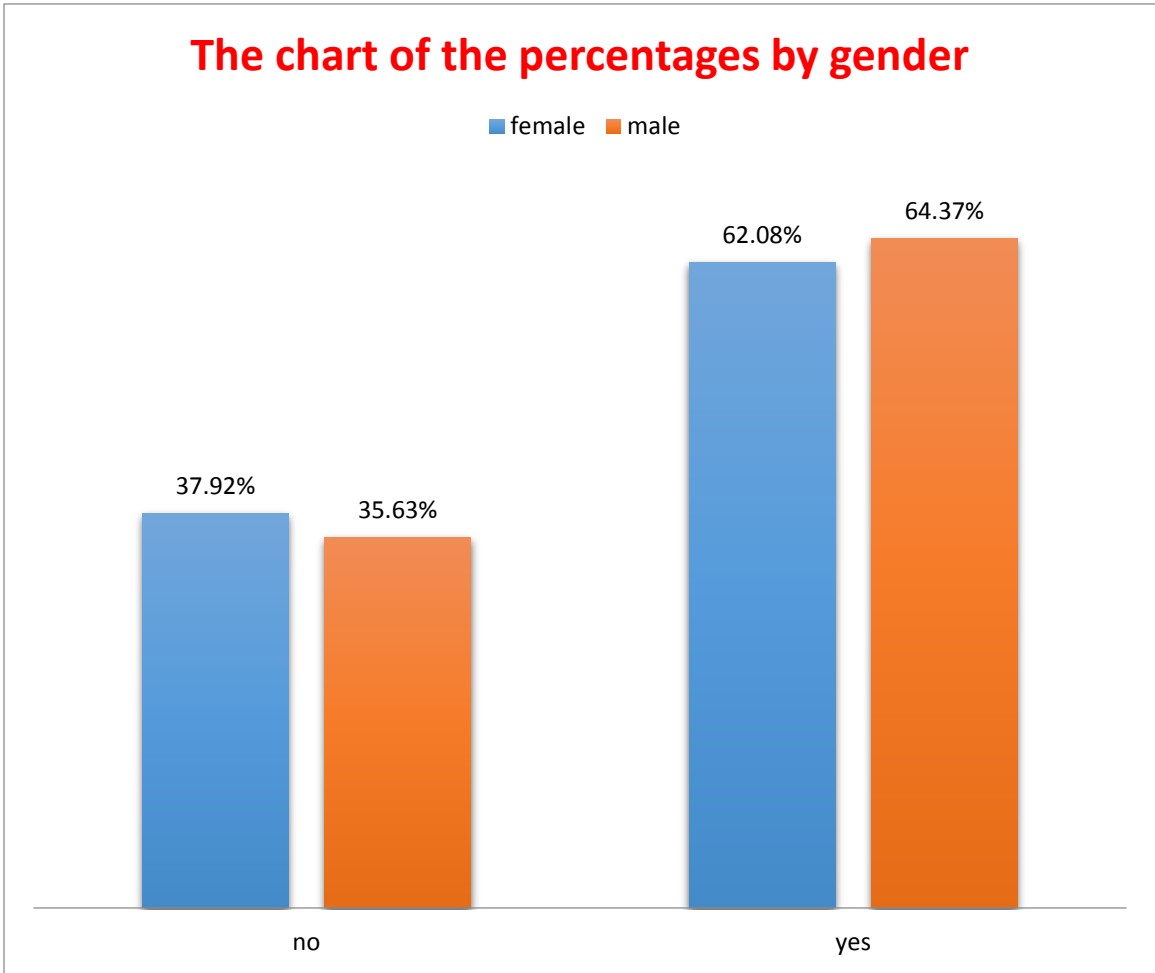
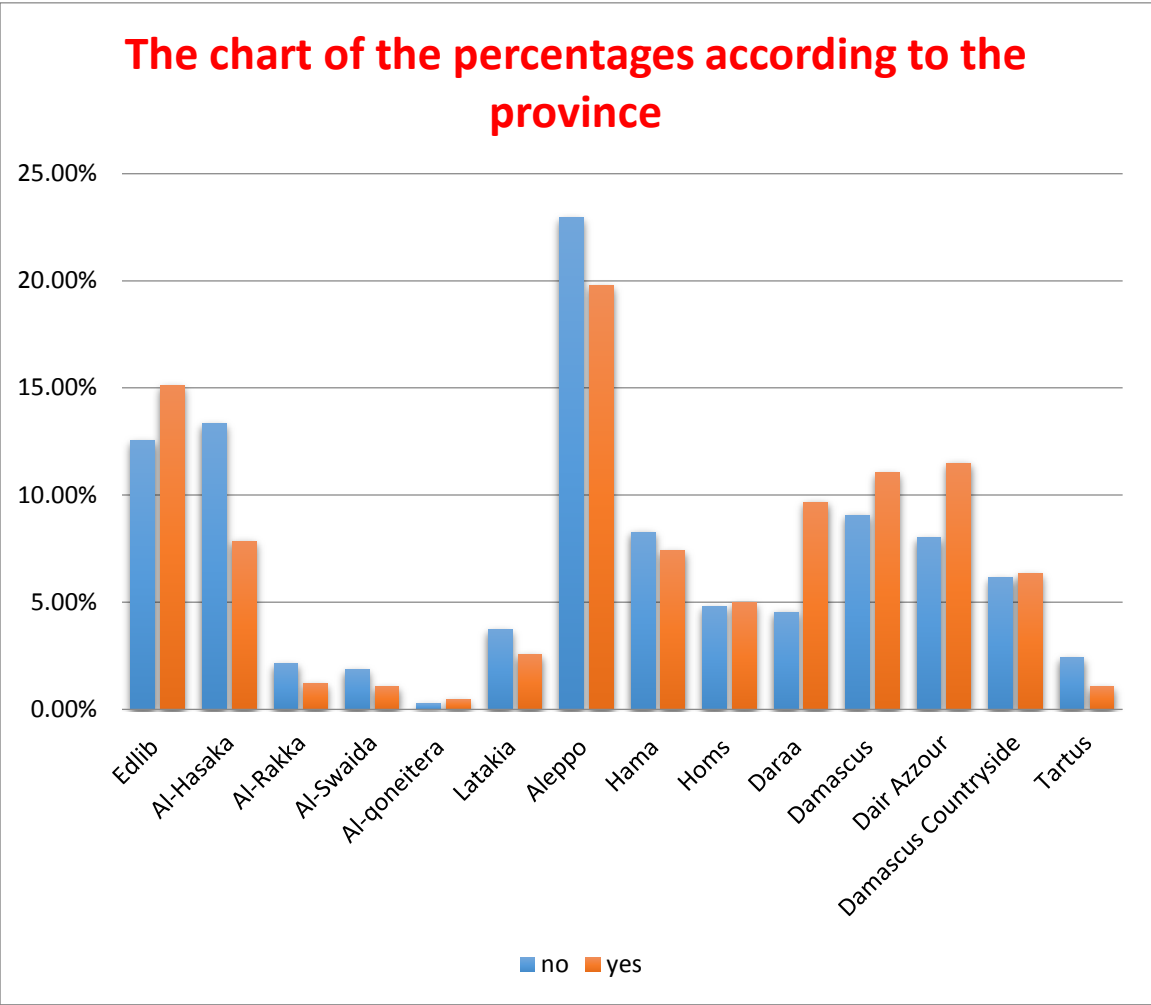


Diagram (3)



What is the minimum that Geneva 2 should achieve?

Permanent cease of armed violence in all its forms	83.5%
Increase the pace of releasing people in arbitrary detention and widening the scope of this process	68.8%
Making a list of all places, those people are detained in and presenting it without any delay through sustainable channels	47.1%
Respecting the freedom of establishing associations and peaceful demonstrations in a way guaranteed by law	52.4%
The government should facilitate, under all circumstances, an immediate and complete access for humanitarian organizations to all regions affected by the war or fighting.	65.6%
The government along with all parties, should facilitate also the evacuation of wounded people and all civilians who want to leave.	56.8%
Establishing a transitional governing body with all executive authorities from both parties on the base on mutual agreement	49.8%
To guarantee the representation of all components of Syrian society in the national dialogue process	53%
Reviewing the constitutional system and the legal structure, and put the constitutional draft under referendum.	46.7%
Developing a free, honest and multiple elections to fill all the alternative and new established institutions and bodies	62.4%
To guarantee a full representation of women in all practical transitional aspects	46.9%

What is the role that should be played by the international community to make this process successful?

Full support for the private commissioner and his team for the mobilization of the peace process.	30.4%
Push all parties of the conflict to sit on the negotiation table	54.5%
The commitment not to send arms for all conflicting parties	44%
Making diplomatic pressure on all parties to stop fighting	53.5%
Asserting the fact that there are real negotiators among the conflicting parties	39.7%
Agreeing on a relief aid delivery program	51.8%
Conducting directed Military attacks with definite targets	32.9%
Enforcing a no-fly zone area	53.1%
Sending peacekeepers to Syria?	36.9%
Not intervening at all?	7.9%

Which of those steps, in your opinion, will be beneficial to rebuild trust between those parties for effective negotiations?

Enrolling CSOs in order to play an active role in the peace process.	48.4%
The announcement of a long period cease-fire by both parties	40.2%
Breaking the siege of the besieged areas	76.5%
Allowing the access of relief aid	73.8%
The return of displaced people back home	61.3%
The return of the refugees to Syria	59.5%
Stop fighting	76.2%
Releasing the detainees and prisoners	77.9%

In case the peace failed to be achieved by negotiations. Do you support an external military intervention on Syria?

Diagram (1)

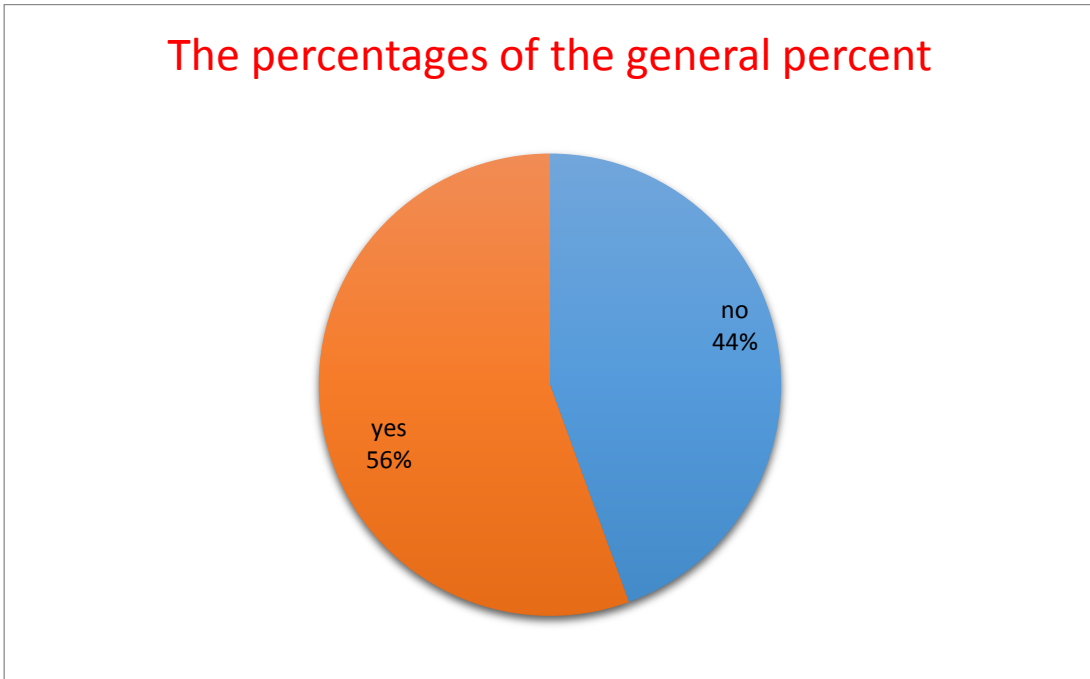


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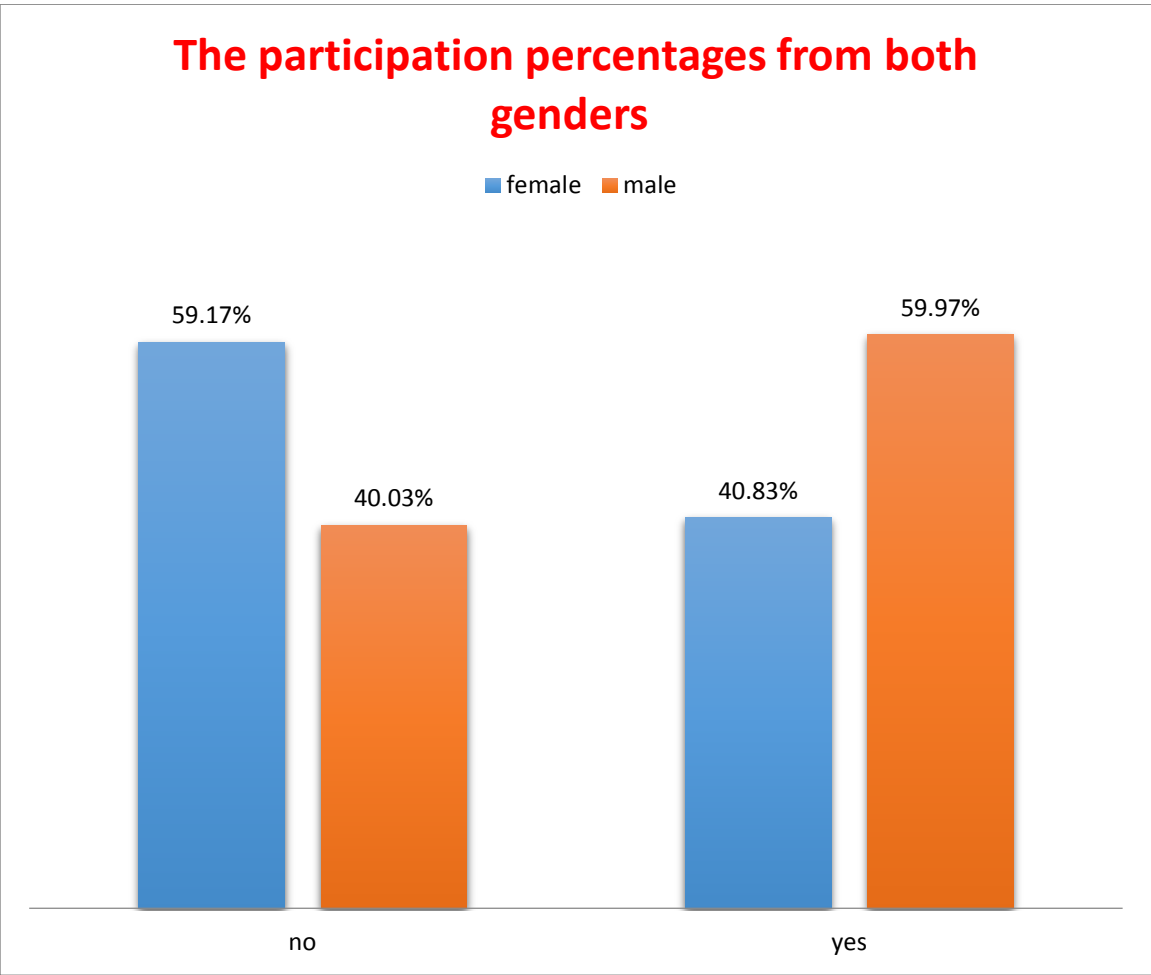
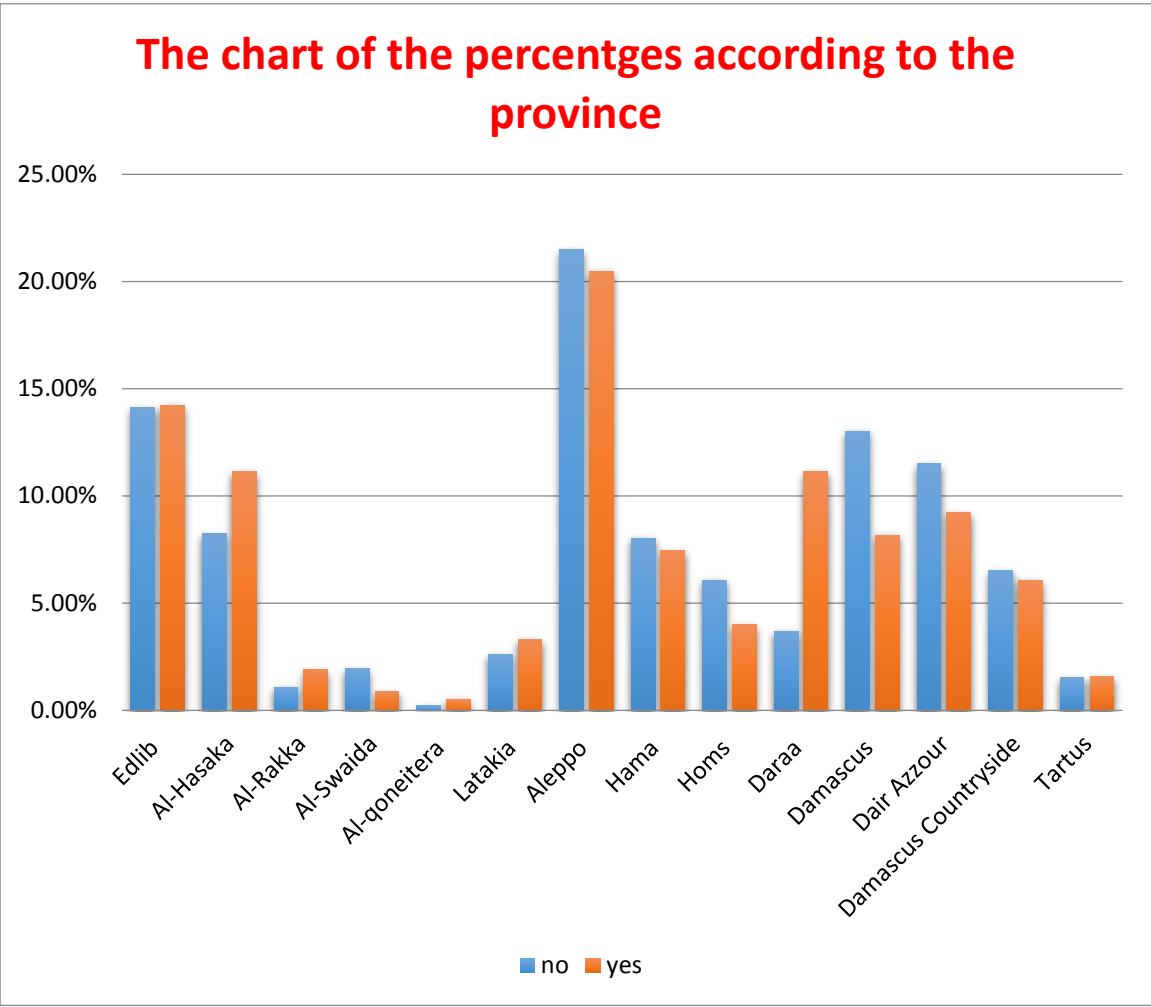


Diagram (3)



What solutions do you prefer?

The current regime to remain in power	1.7%
The opposition to get the authority	26.2%
Dividing the authority between the regime and the opposition	10.9%
Initiating democratic elections	72.9%
Division of Syria	5.9%

Do you think that the presence of military leaders from the both conflicted parties is necessary on the negotiation table?

Diagram (1)

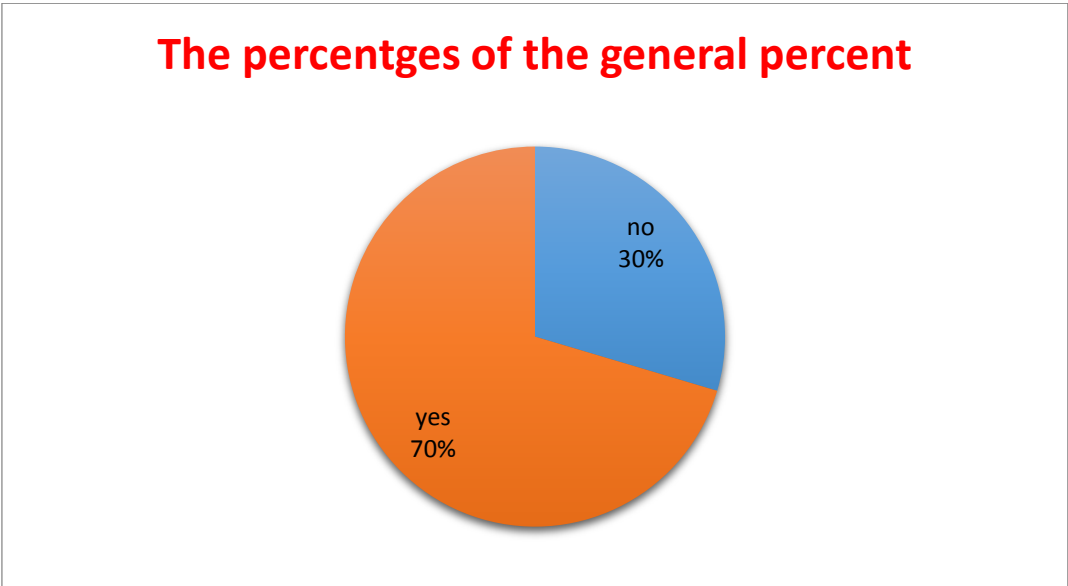


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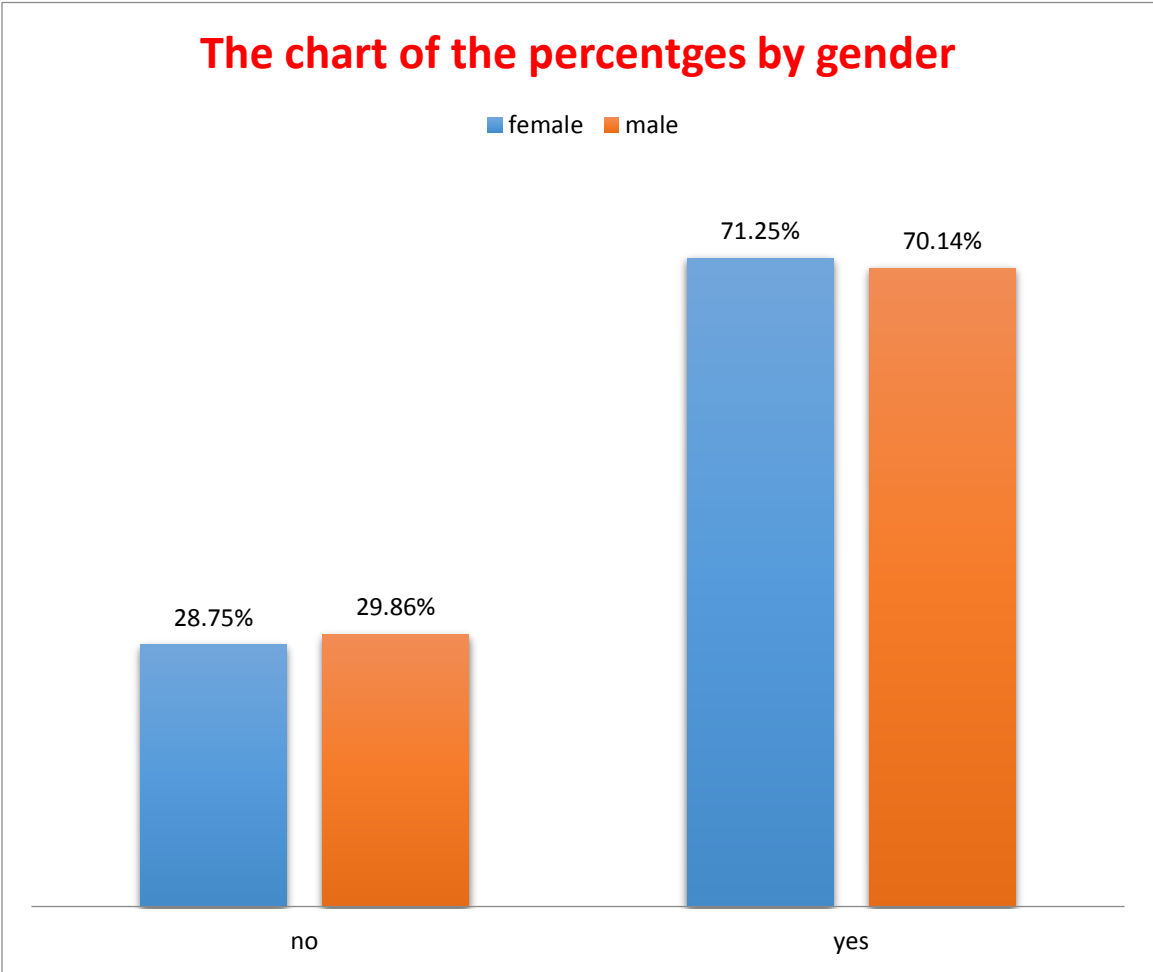
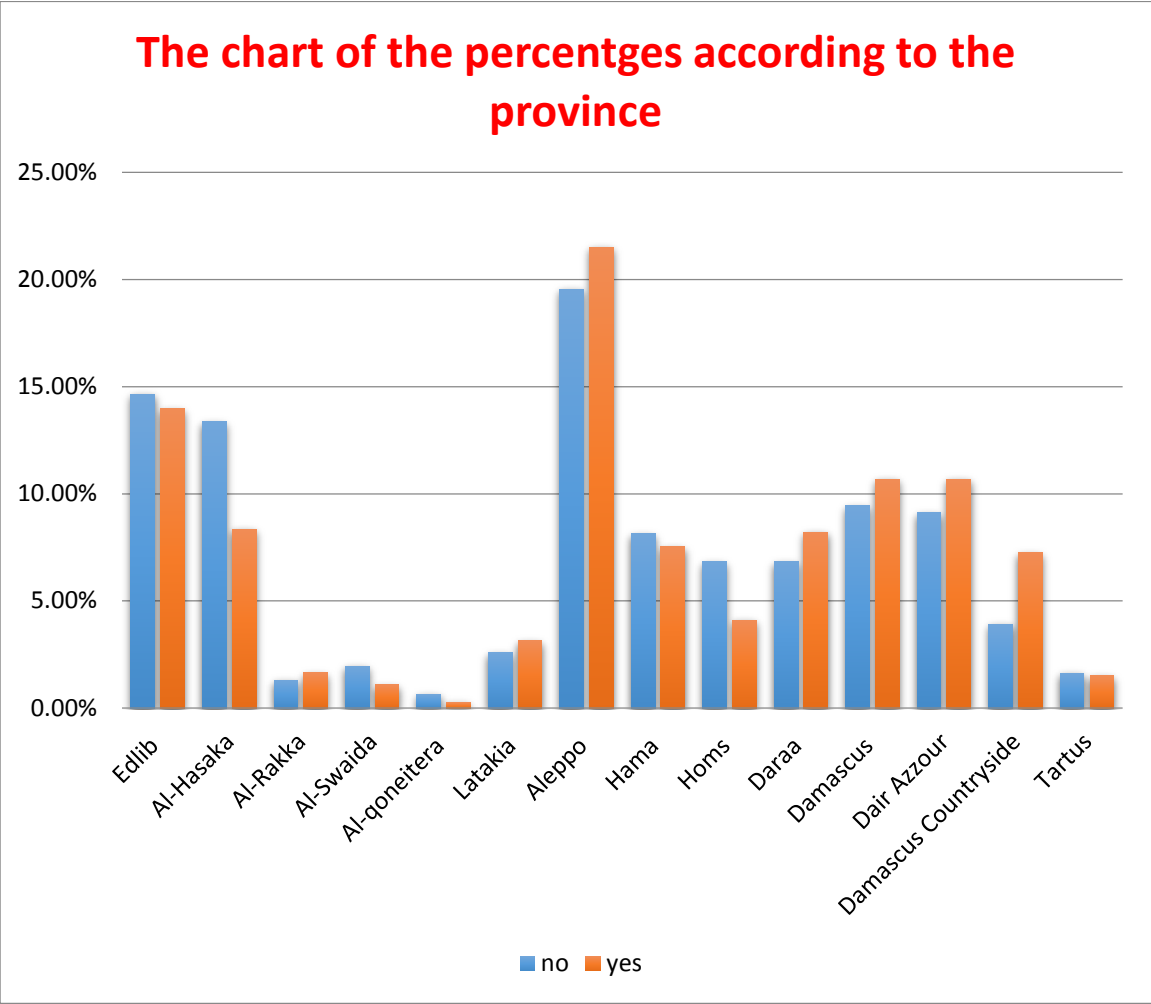


Diagram (3)



In your opinion, what is the role that should be played by CSOs in the peace process?

Pressing on the conflicting parties to convince them to negotiate	47.6%
Participating in negotiation as a third independent party	38.1%
Participating in negotiations as supervisors	28.6%
Participating in negotiations as consultants	20.8%
No participation at all	13.4%

Do you think that the presence of the public figures and local society leaders in the peace processes is necessary?

Diagram (1)

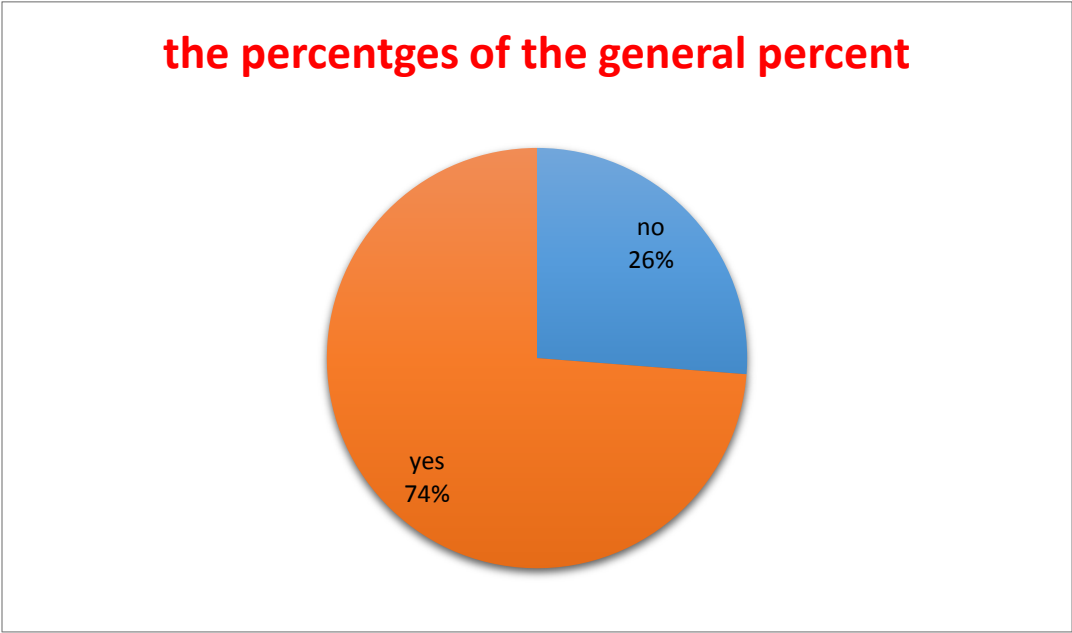


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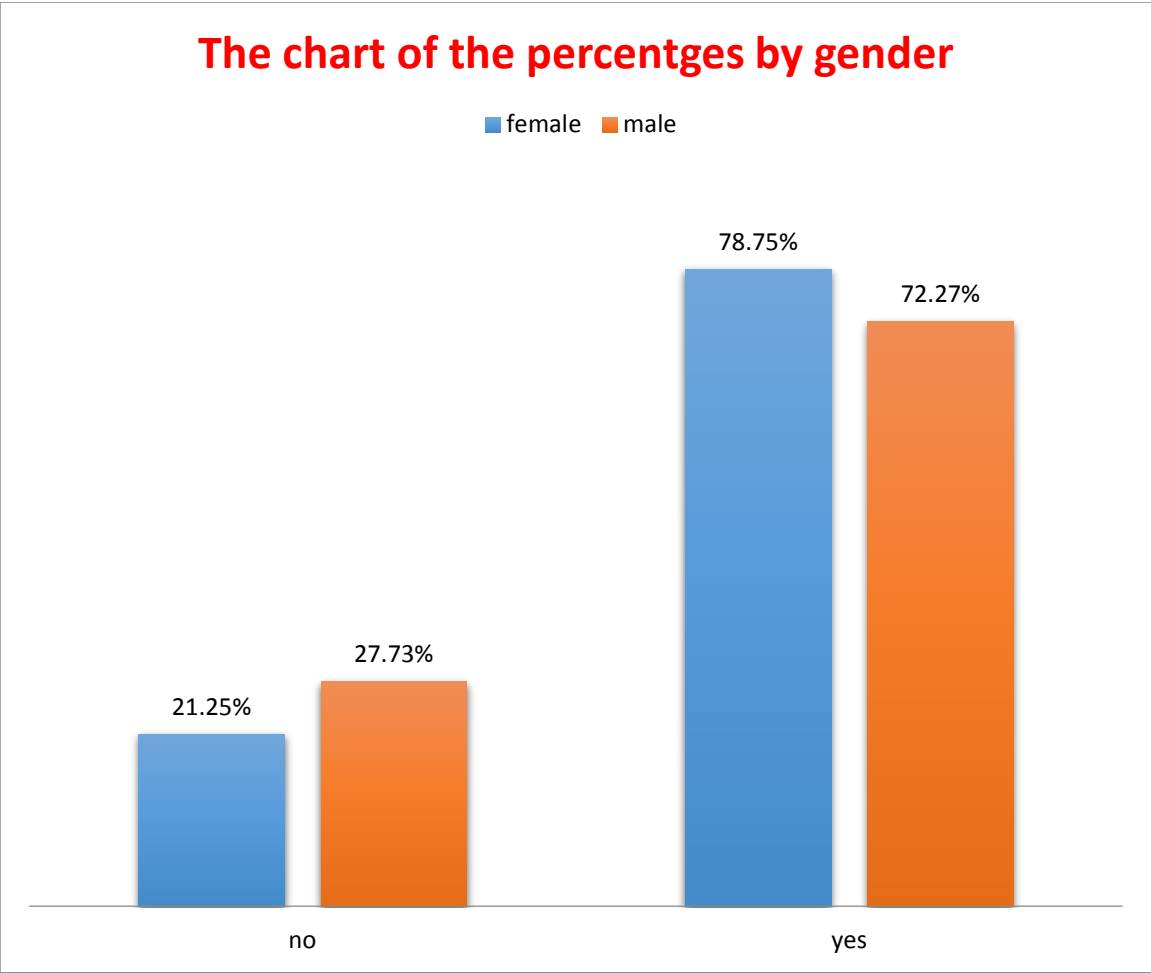
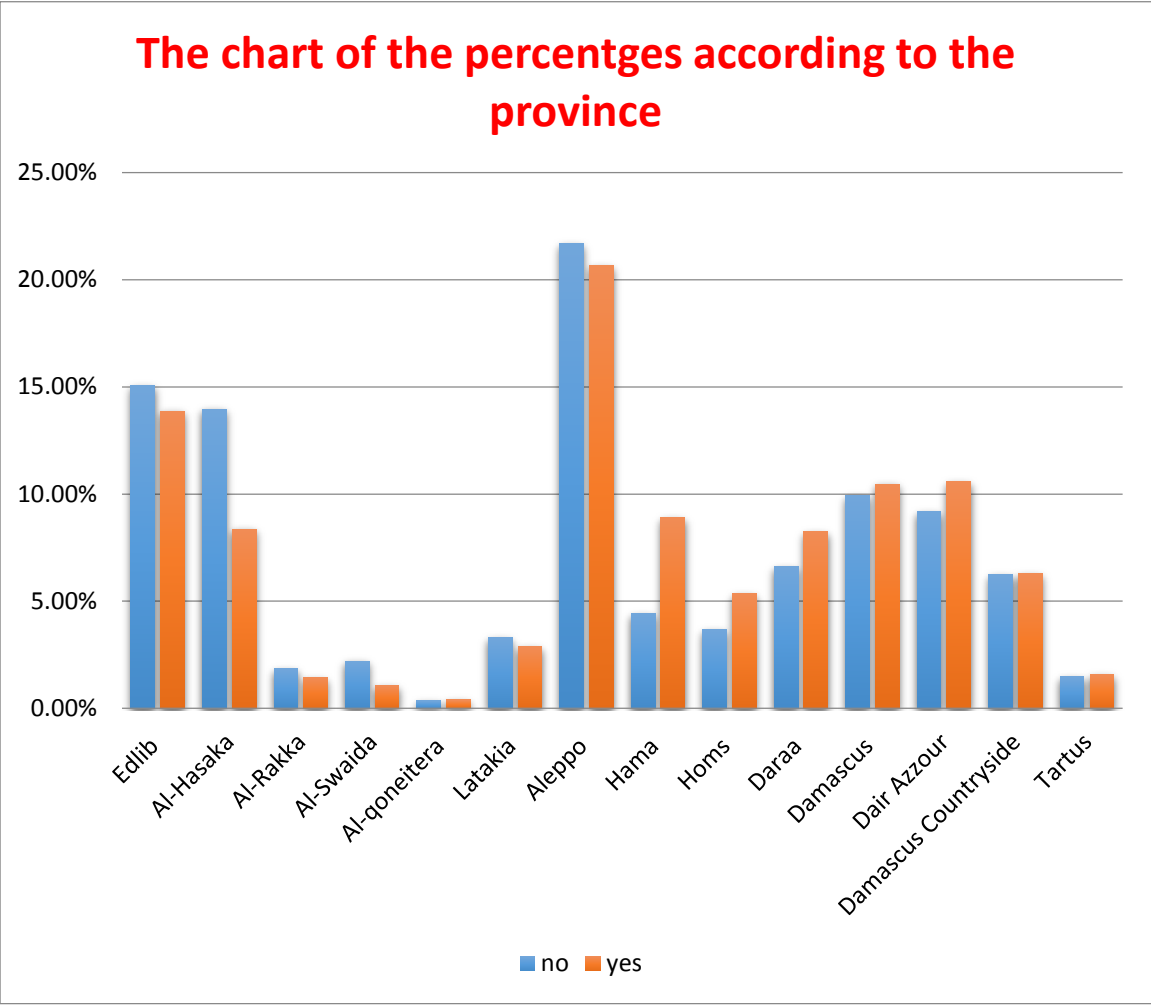


Diagram (3)



Do you think the continuity of the fighting in Syria will lead to the division of the country?

Diagram (1)

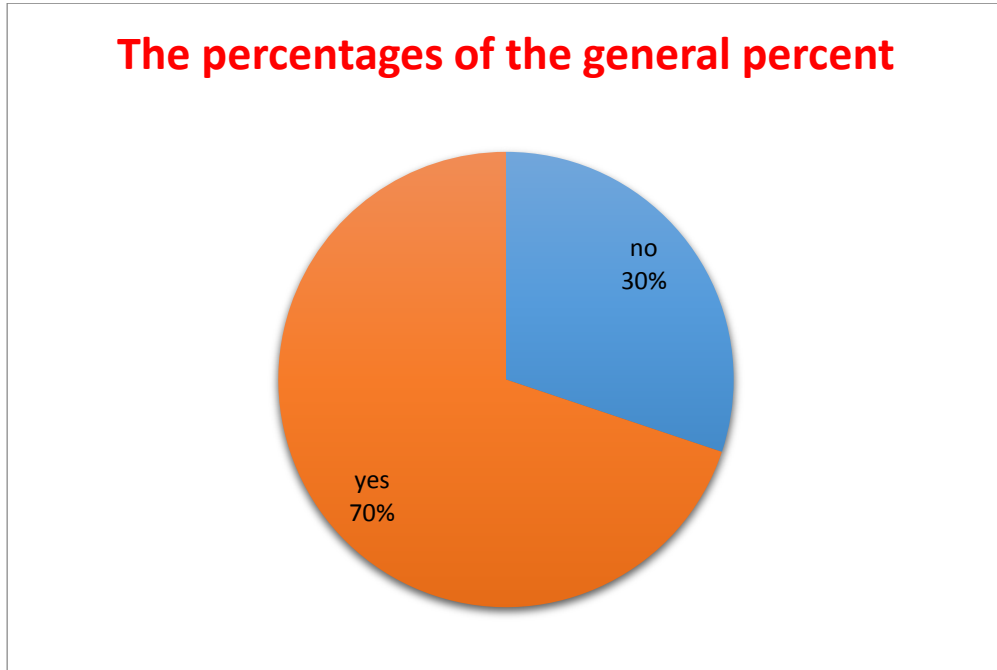


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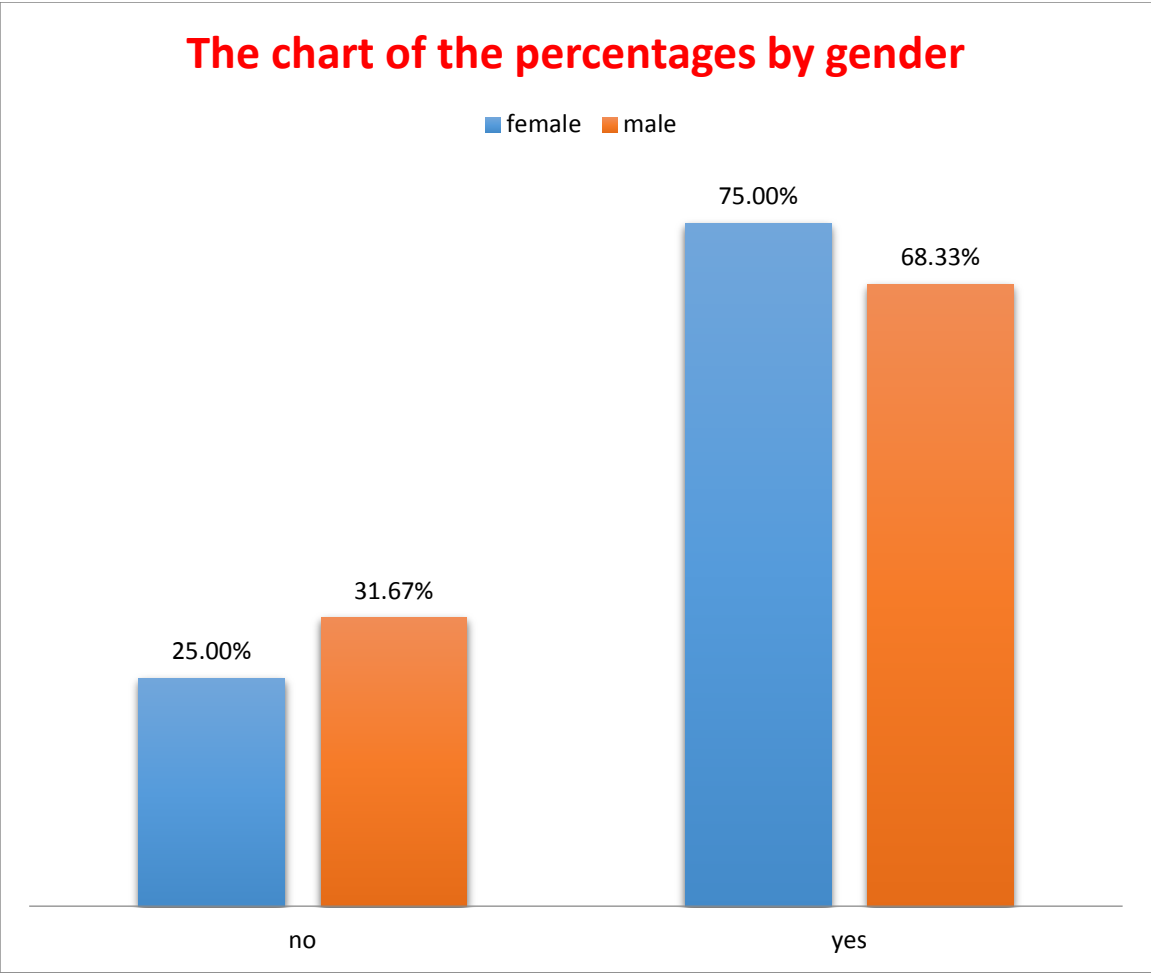
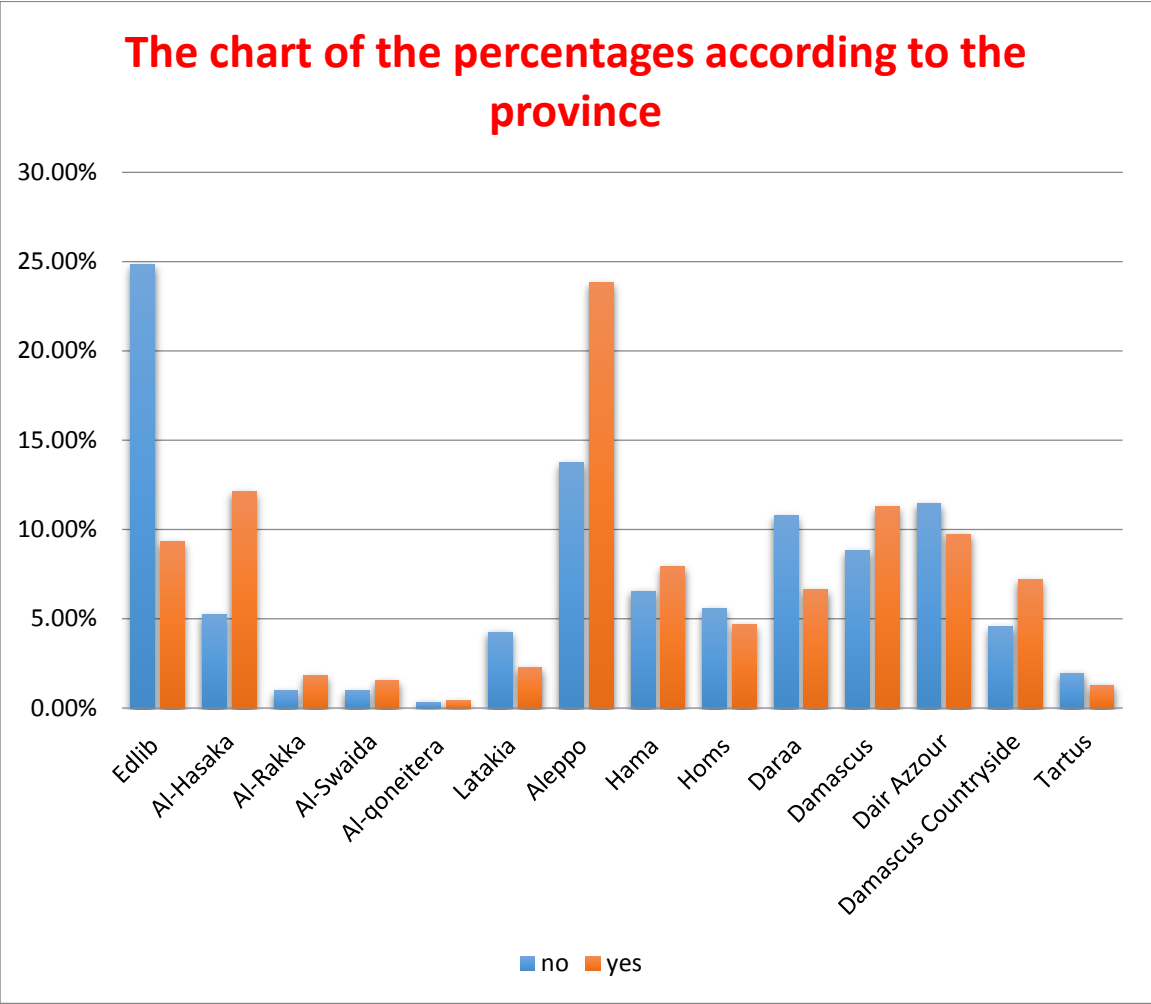


Diagram (3)



What worries you mostly in the current conflict?

Military operations	34.3%
The increase of violence	58.6%
Humanitarian situation	77.9%
Detainees and prisoners destiny	53.9%
Violations from all parties	52.8%
The regional intervention in the Syrian affair	27.5%
The international intervention in the Syrian affair	26.3%
Dividing Syria	39.9%

Do you think that the regime and the opposition are sharing common goals and hopes about the future of Syria?

Diagram (1)

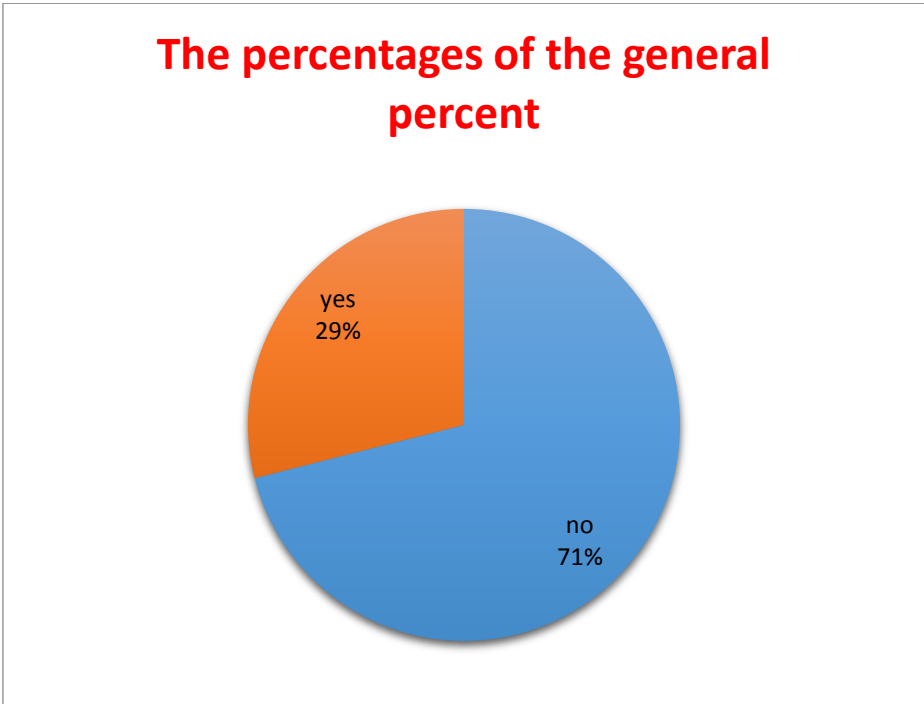


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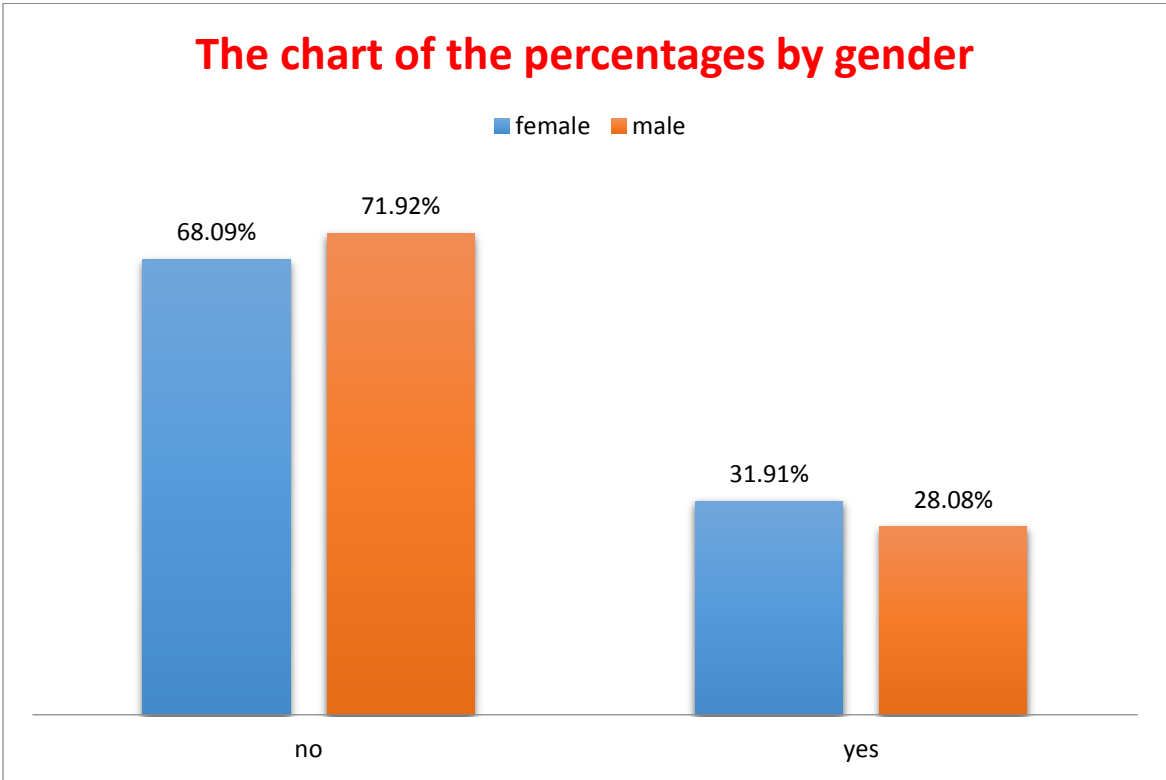
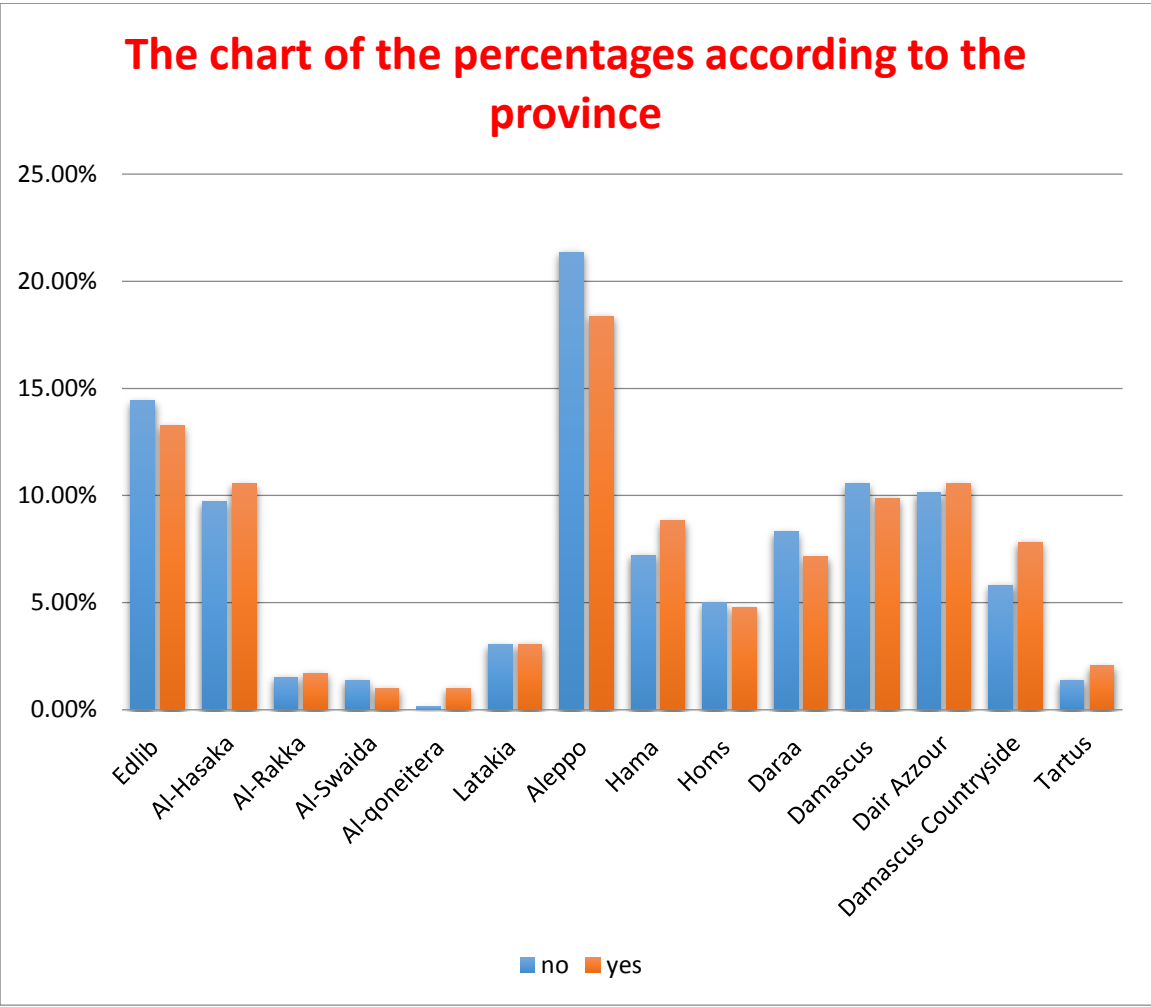


Diagram (3)



Classify your priorities regarding the future of Syria.

	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4	Priority 5	Priority 6	Priority 7	Priority 8
Peace, security and stability	68.3%	9.7%	4%	2.7%	3.1%	2.3%	2.5%	7.1%
Economic growth	15.3%	19.9%	16.9%	10.5%	8.6%	10.4%	10.2%	7.9%
Real Democratic and multiple state	27.9%	20.5%	14.5%	8.5%	7.3%	7.1%	5.7%	8.1%
Working according to the principle of the separation between religion and the state	19.8%	8.7%	10.6%	12.7%	7.5%	7.1%	8.8%	24.4%
Working according to the principle that the Islamic Sharia is the main source for legislation	20.5%	9.6%	7.8%	6%	6.2%	4.1%	5.4%	40.1%
Commitment to the international Human Rights criteria	26.4%	11.7%	10.3%	11.7%	12.3%	1.3%	8.1%	8.2%
Law sovereignty and accountability for the violators	35.8%	12%	11.5%	9.5%	11%	6.5%	5.9%	7.3%
All are equal without any ethnic, religious, lingual, sectarian or gender discrimination.	36%	10.1	8.1%	9.5%	8.1%	9.2%	7%	11.6%