

COEXISTENCE

AND POLARISATION

IN CATALONIA

ICIP Survey

October 2020



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OBJECTIVES

- Assess the perception of coexistence in Catalonia.
- Determine the polarisation dynamics of Catalan society.
- Identify possible warning signs.
- Propose actions to tackle the problem.

The main innovation introduced by this survey is its analysis of polarisation from two perspectives:

- **Ideological** polarisation, which is a normal and necessary component of all societies.
- **Emotional** polarisation, which is dangerous when it questions the legitimacy of other people and their perspectives.

ABOUT THE ICIP

The International Catalan Institute for Peace is an independent public body that was created by the Parliament of Catalonia in 2007 with the mandate of fostering, among other issues, a culture of peace in Catalan society.

Harmonious coexistence and the social and institutional capacity to manage conflicts in a constructive manner are essential elements of a culture of peace. Catalonia's territorial conflict is testing the limits of these capacities.

This survey continues and builds on the questions asked in the ICIP's 2018 survey 'Public Perception of Coexistence and Security in Catalonia'.

COEXISTENCE

AND POLARISATION

IN CATALONIA

ICIP Survey

SUMMARY

SUMMARY

COEXISTENCE AND IDEOLOGICAL POLARISATION

- The global assessments of coexistence in Catalonia are good, producing an average score of 7.1.
- Catalonia's social trust scores are higher than the European average.
- Political parties and the media are perceived to be much more polarised than society.
- The territorial conflict generates more polarisation on the ideological level than the other issues (the economy, the response to COVID-19, feminism, language use, social class, and immigration).

SUMMARY

EMOTIONAL POLARISATION

- The predominant emotion is respect.
- The second most widespread emotion is impotence.
- 26% do not empathise with or trust those with different opinions.
- Ideological polarisation does not result in emotional polarisation: people with extreme opinions are not more inclined to have more negative emotions towards those with different opinions.

SUMMARY

EMOTIONAL POLARISATION IN THE TERRITORIAL CONFLICT

- Emotional polarisation shows a particular increase among people who perceive a threat to their way of life or culture.
- 10% of those surveyed have felt attacked by their family, 13% at work, and 16% by friends.
- The perception of aggression increases in environments without direct relationships. The perception of aggression on social media is 22%, while 46% report having felt attacked by institutions.

SUMMARY

SOCIAL DIALOGUE PERSPECTIVES

- The environments most conducive to social dialogue are family and friends, while those least favourable to it are neighbours and social media.
- The people who feel most attacked by institutions tend to be the most willing to participate in debates and therefore may create a false sense of polarisation.
- Opinions about other issues are not coloured by ideological and party political polarisation in relation to the territorial conflict. This suggests that dialogue and cross-cutting agreements are possible.

SUMMARY

POLITICAL DIALOGUE PERSPECTIVES

- There is a widespread perception that the Catalan and Spanish governments have made mistakes that have hindered, rather than facilitated, a possible solution to the territorial conflict.
- There is a major consensus in favour of political dialogue in the territorial conflict (79%) and 50% accept that this dialogue cannot be limited solely to the Constitution of Spain.
- A third of the people surveyed expressed doubts about the results of political dialogue.

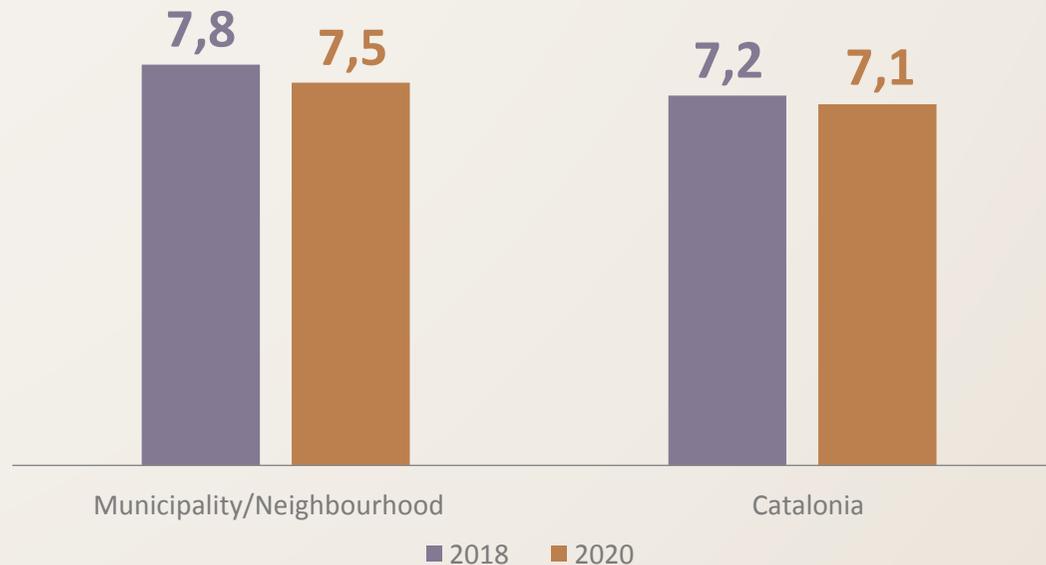
COEXISTENCE



ASSESSMENT OF COEXISTENCE ON THE MUNICIPAL/NEIGHBOURHOOD LEVEL IN CATALONIA

i

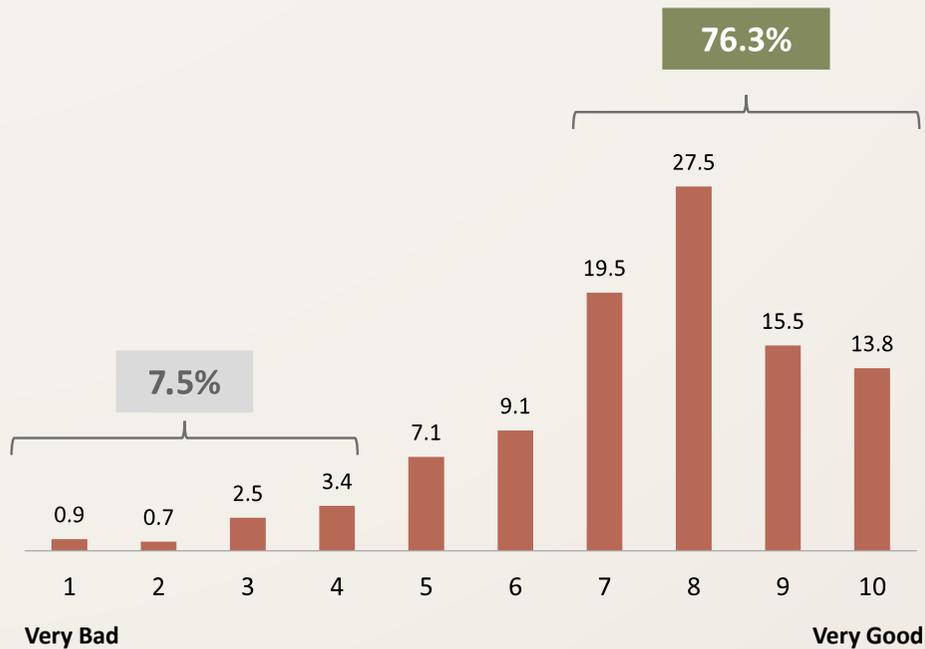
The scores are **very high**, achieving values higher than 7 on a scale of 1 to 10. People rate the level of coexistence in their immediate environment higher than in Catalonia as a whole.



ASSESSMENT OF COEXISTENCE ON THE MUNICIPAL/NEIGHBOURHOOD LEVEL IN CATALONIA

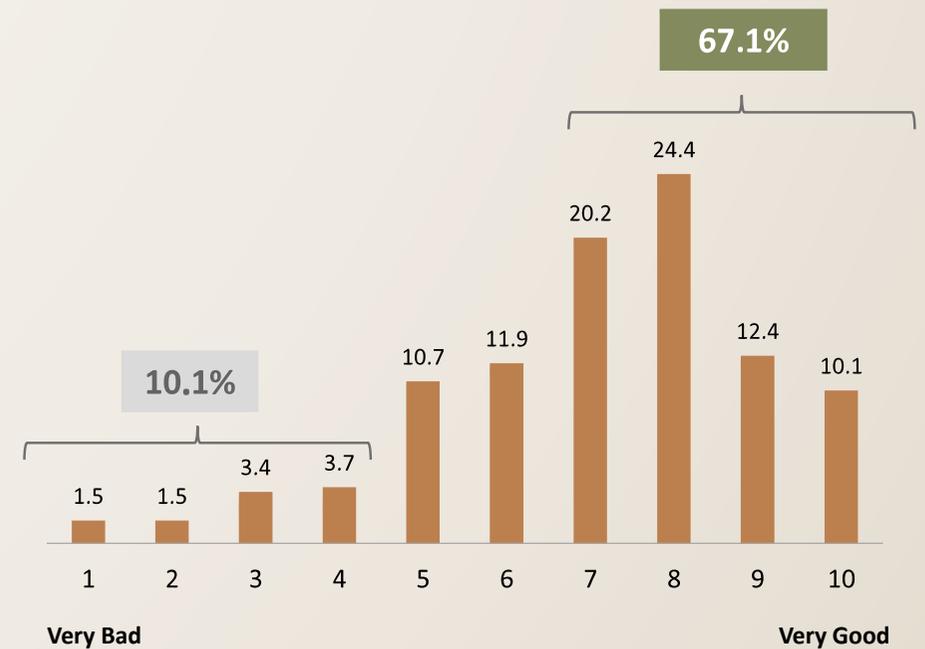
Municipality/Neighbourhood

7.5



Catalonia

7.1



PERCEPTIONS ABOUT COEXISTENCE



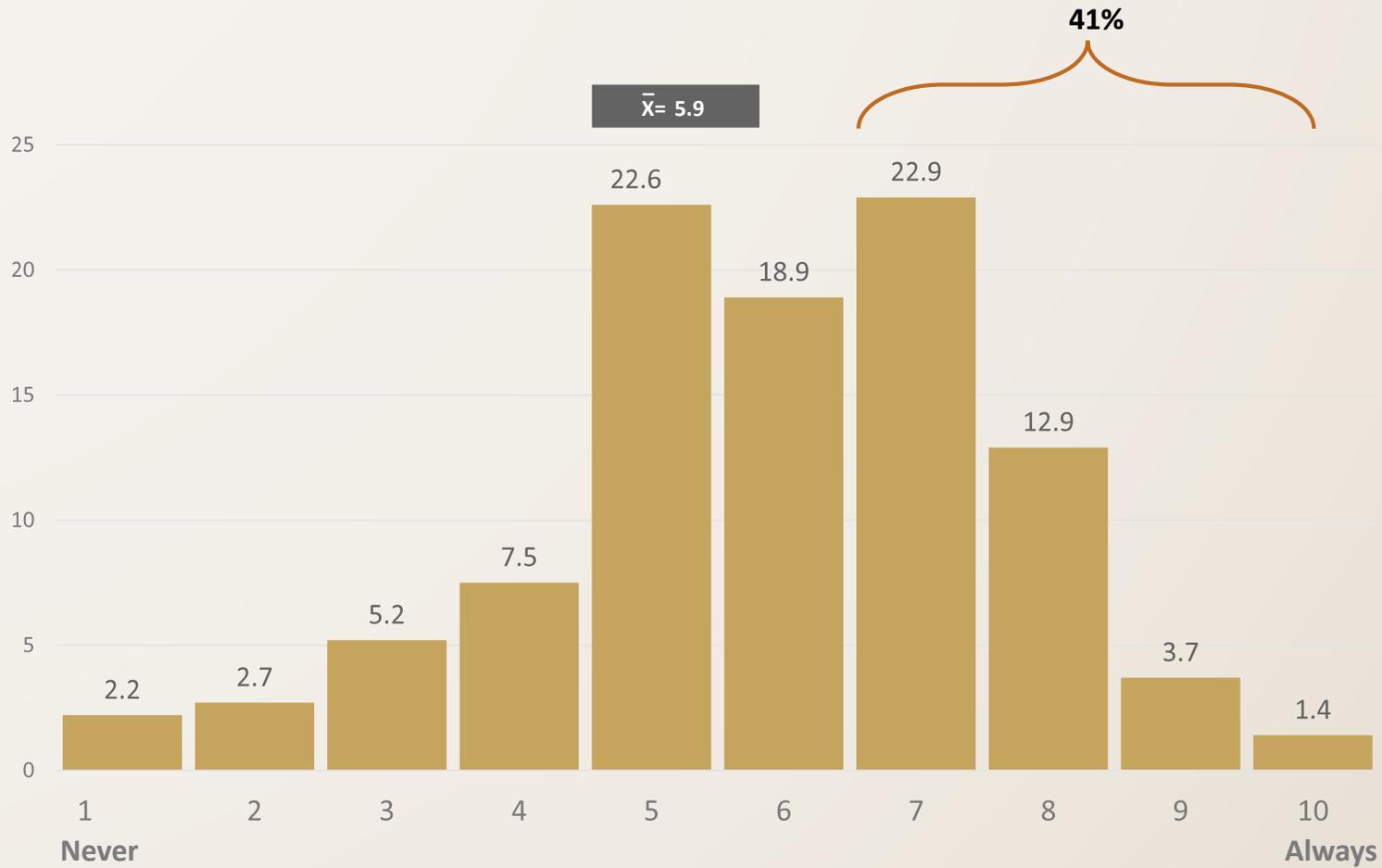
i The two surveys show **negligible differences** according to the various categories.

However, there has been a marked decrease in the perception of coexistence amongst those with the strongest Spanish identity.

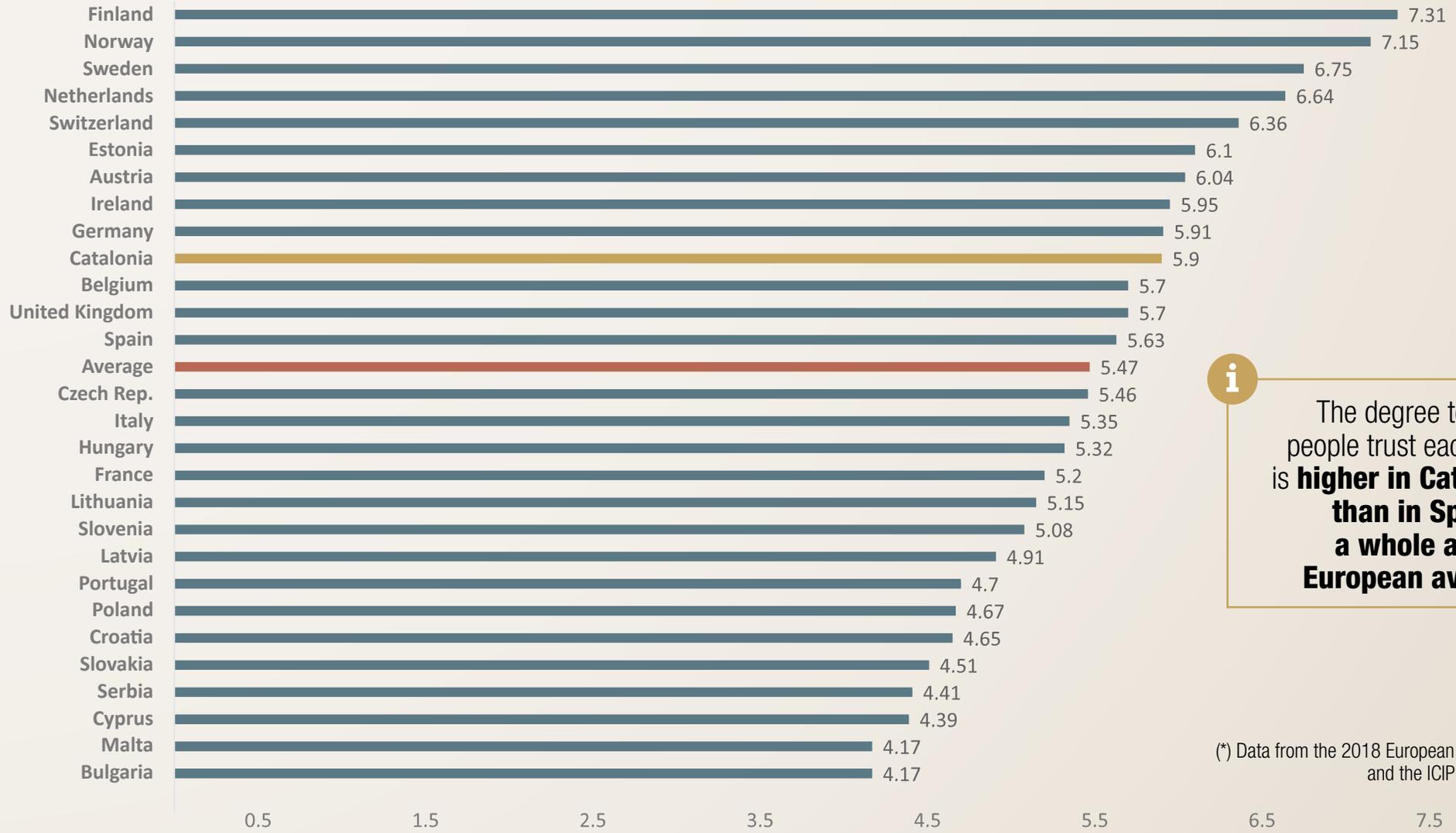
TRUST IN OTHERS

i

41% state that they can always or almost always **trust other people**.



TRUST IN OTHERS BY COUNTRY*



i The degree to which people trust each other is **higher in Catalonia than in Spain as a whole and the European average.**

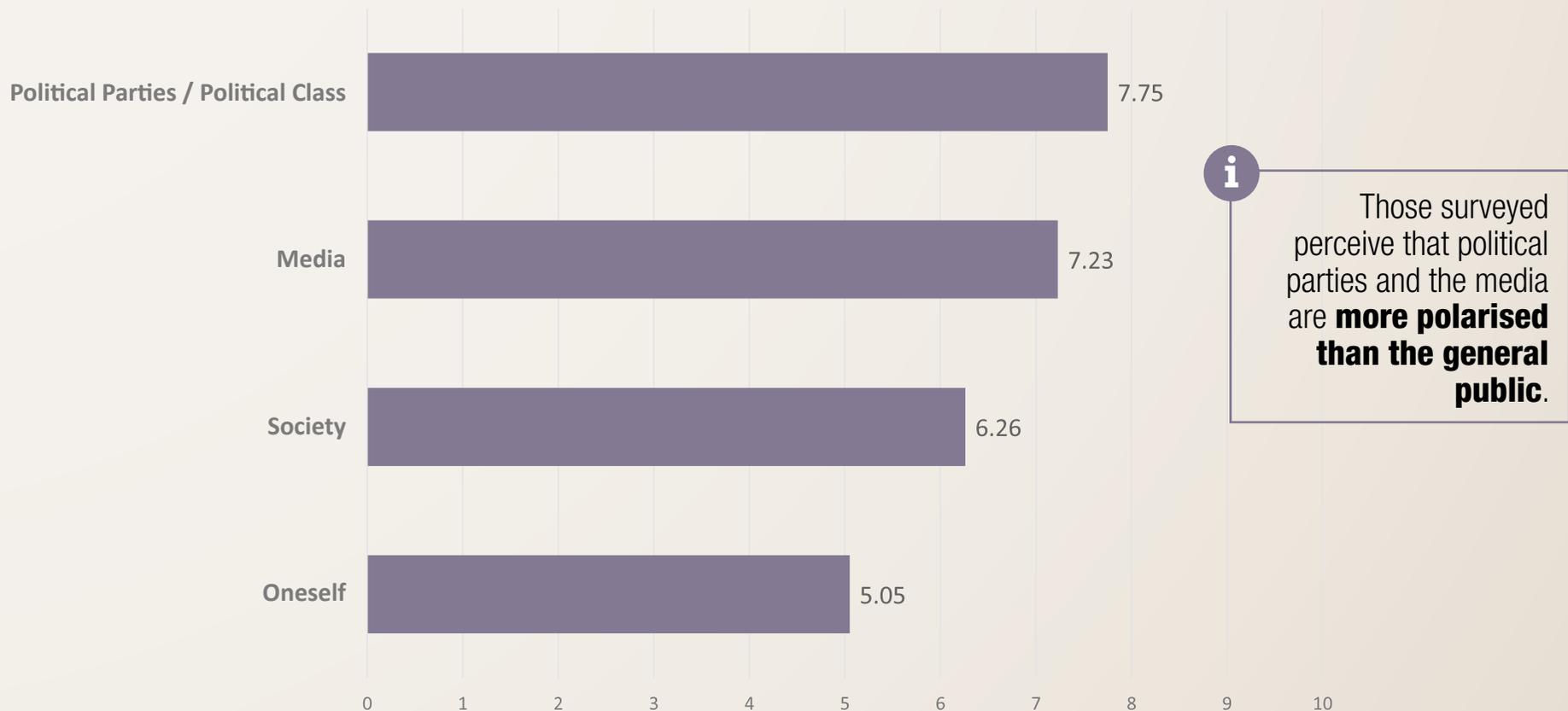
(*) Data from the 2018 European Social Survey and the ICIP 2020 Survey.

IDEOLOGICAL

POLARISATION

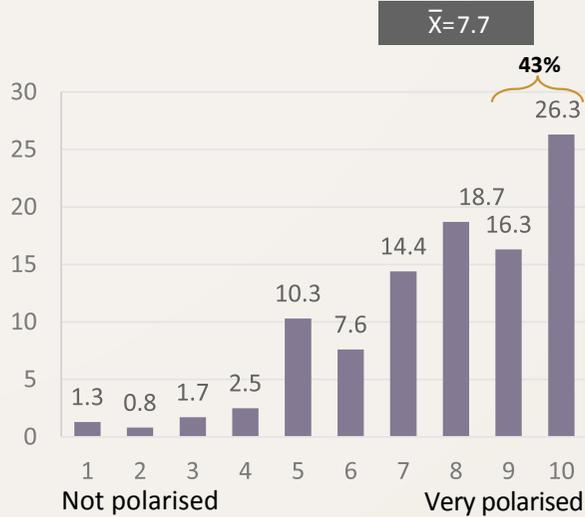


PERCEPTION OF THE DEGREE OF POLARISATION IN DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS

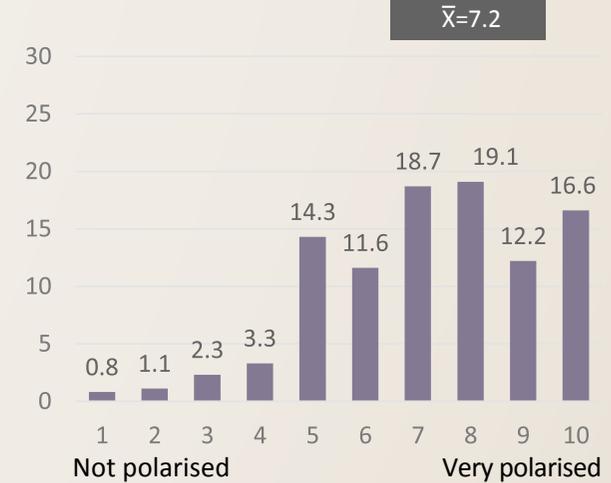


PERCEPTION OF THE DEGREE OF POLARISATION IN DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS

Political Parties / Political Class

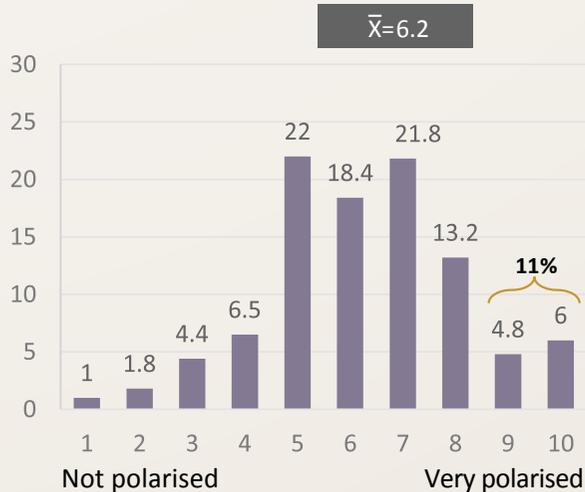


Media

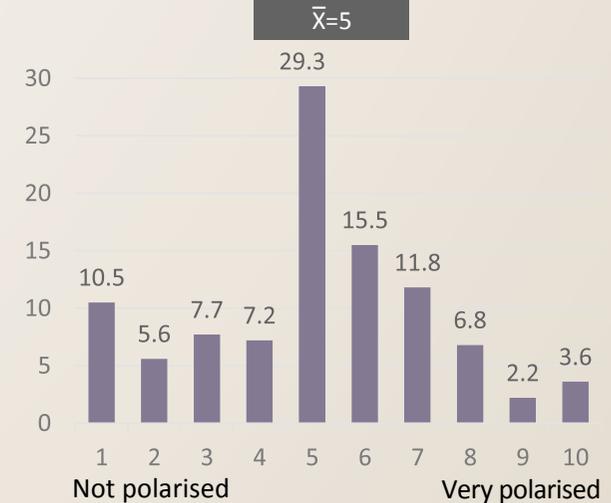


i Un **43%** of those surveyed think that political parties are **very polarised**, whereas **only 11%** consider **society** to be very polarised.

Society



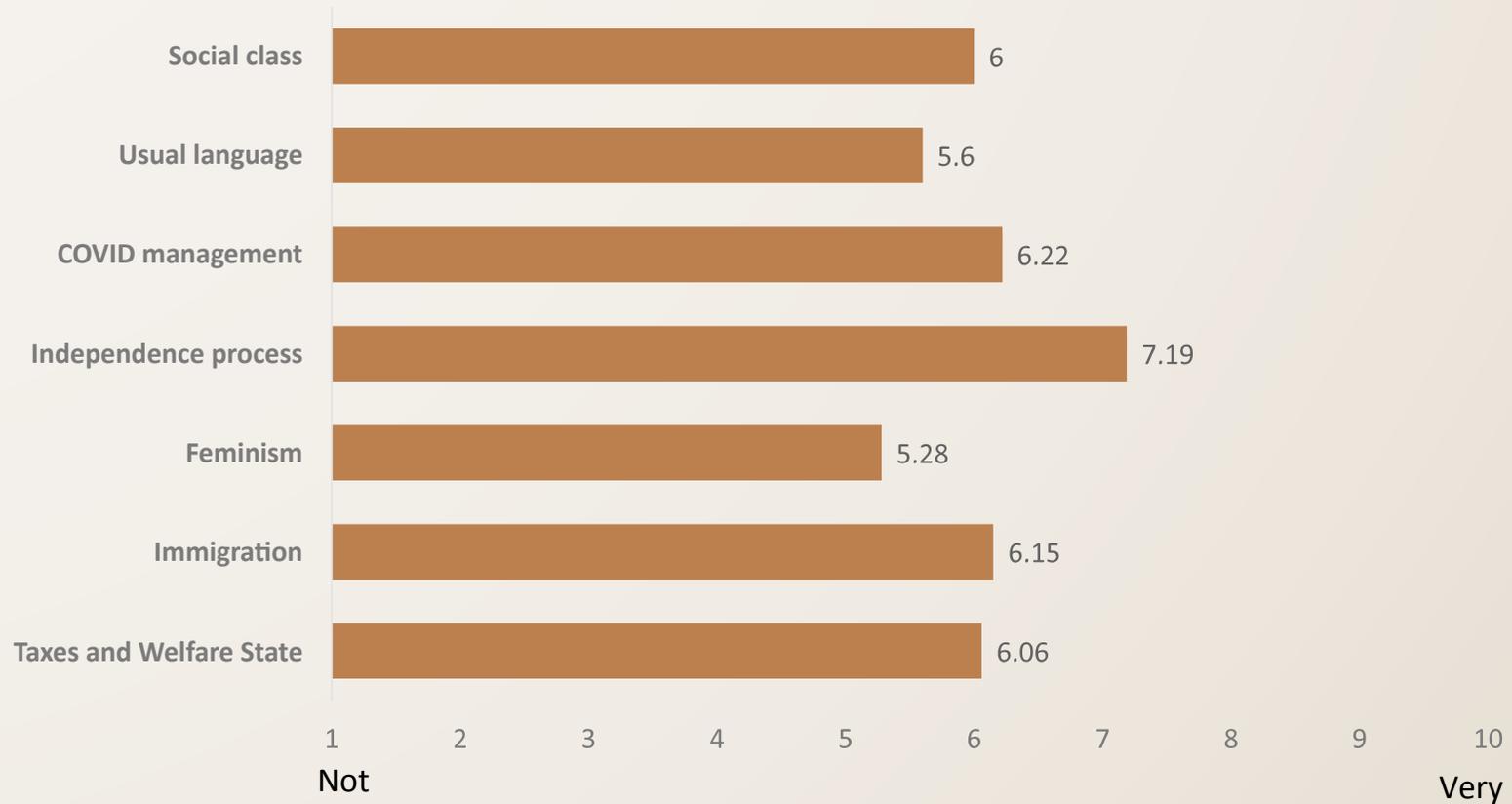
Oneself



PERCEPTION OF THE DEGREE OF POLARISATION ABOUT DIFFERENT ISSUES



There are various topics of discussion that the public find polarising. The **territorial conflict** is the **most polarising issue**, with an average score of 7.2 out of 10. **Feminism** is perceived to be the issue that generates the **least polarisation**.

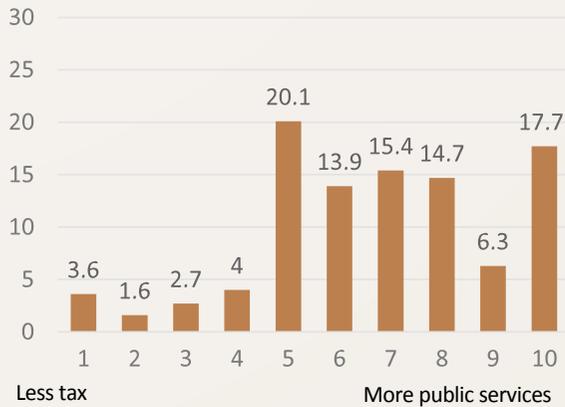


DISTRIBUTION OF POSITIONS ON THE VARIOUS ISSUES

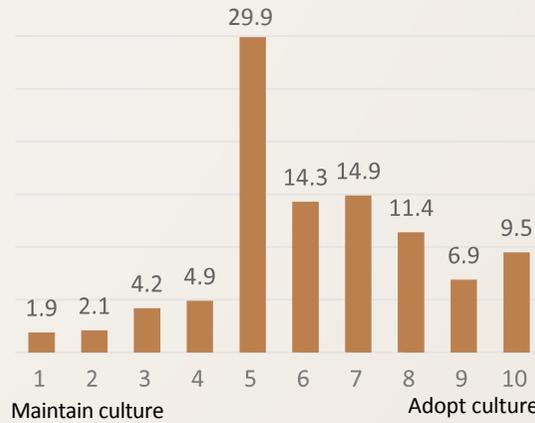


The **territorial conflict** is the only issue that generates **significant values at both extremes** (together they add up to 44%). A distinct third block is also present in the intermediate position.

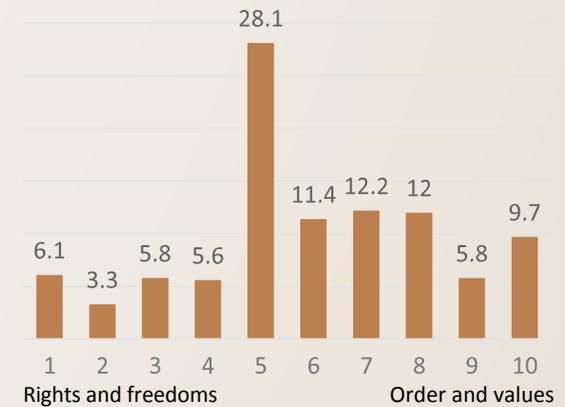
**Pay less tax vs.
More public services**



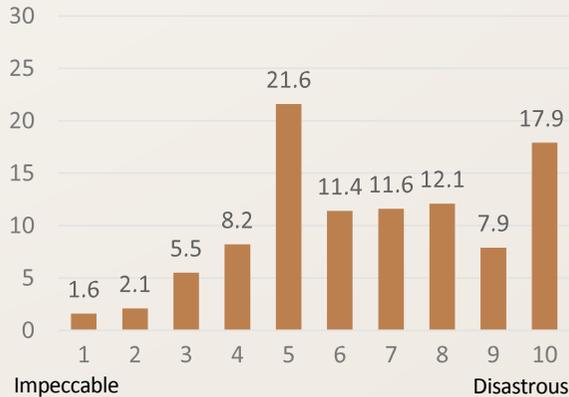
**Immigrants maintain culture vs.
Immigrants adopt culture**



**Guarantee rights and freedoms vs.
Maintain order and values**



**Impeccable COVID management vs.
Disastrous COVID management**



Territorial Conflict

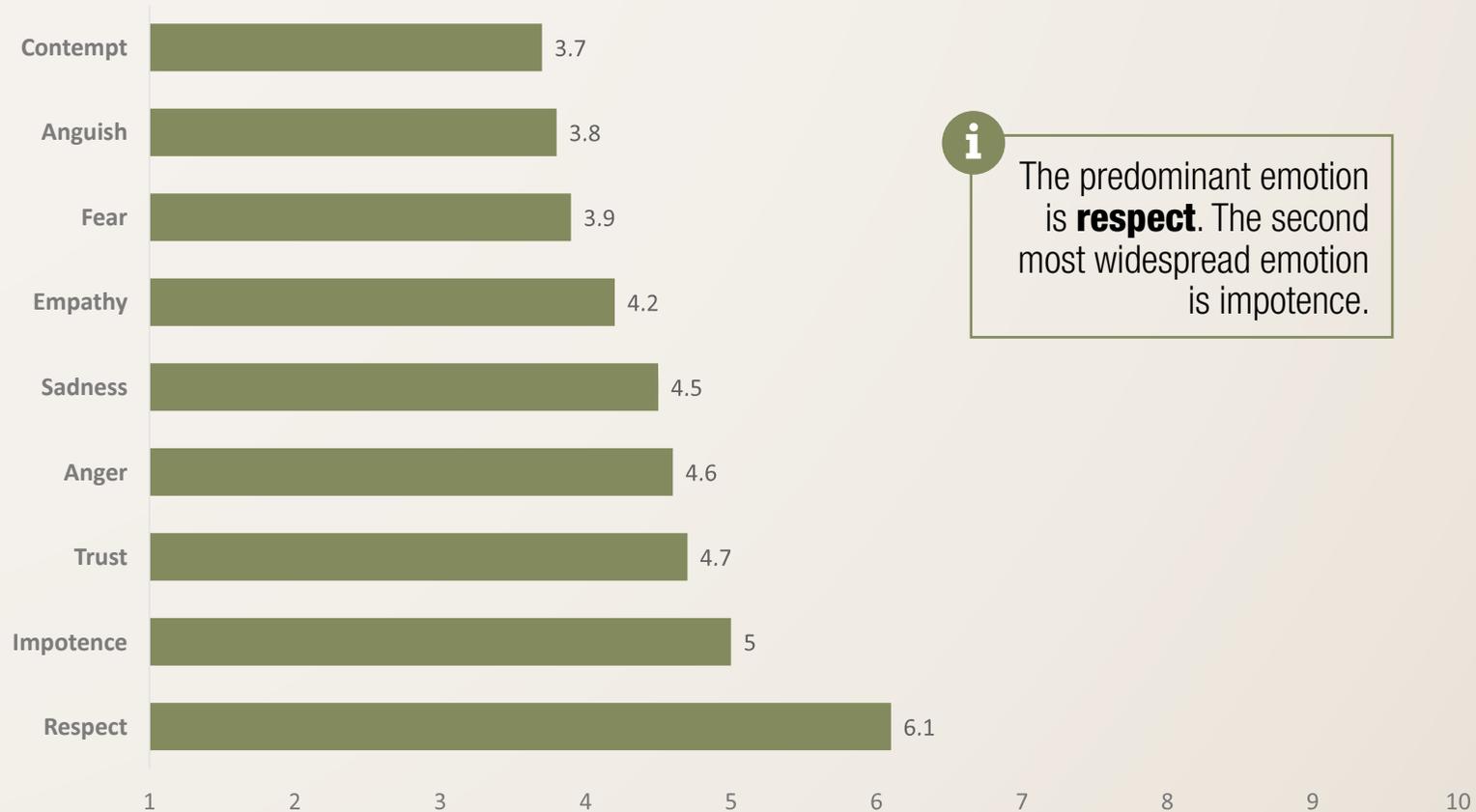


EMOTIONAL

POLARISATION



EMOTIONS REGARDING THOSE WITH A DIFFERENT OPINION



EMOTIONS REGARDING THOSE WITH A DIFFERENT OPINION

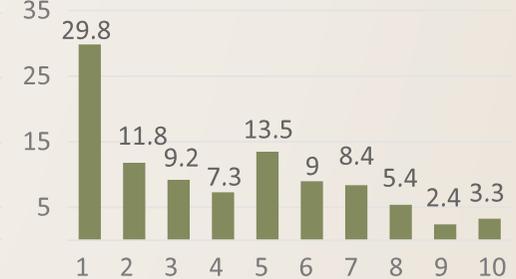
CONTEMPT (3.7)



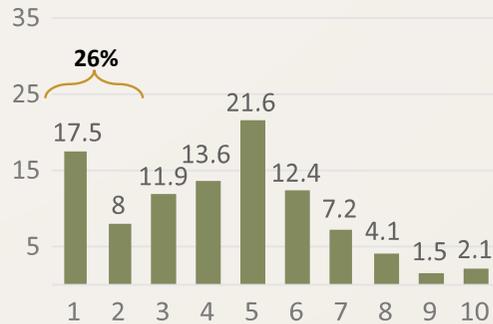
ANGUISH (3.8)



FEAR (3.9)



EMPATHY (4.2)



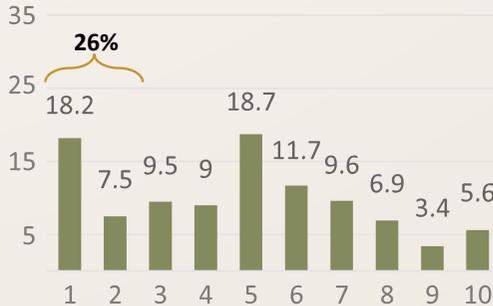
SADNESS (4.5)



ANGER (4.6)



TRUST (4.7)



IMPOTENCE (5.0)

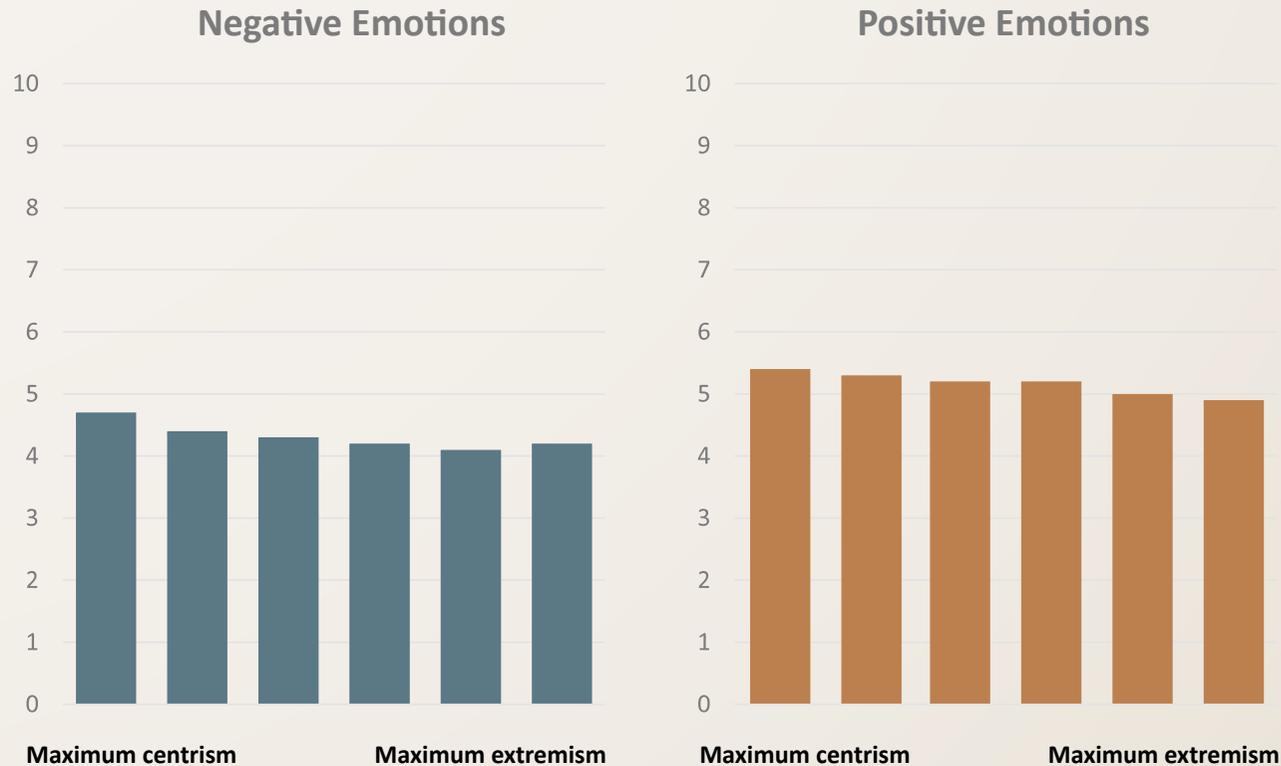


RESPECT (6.1)



LEVEL OF EMOTIONS REGARDING THOSE WITH A DIFFERENT OPINION

Predicted level of emotions regarding those with a different opinion by ideological extremism.



i **Significant differences are not perceived** in relation to emotions between people who adopt more extremist or more centrist stances.

Emotional

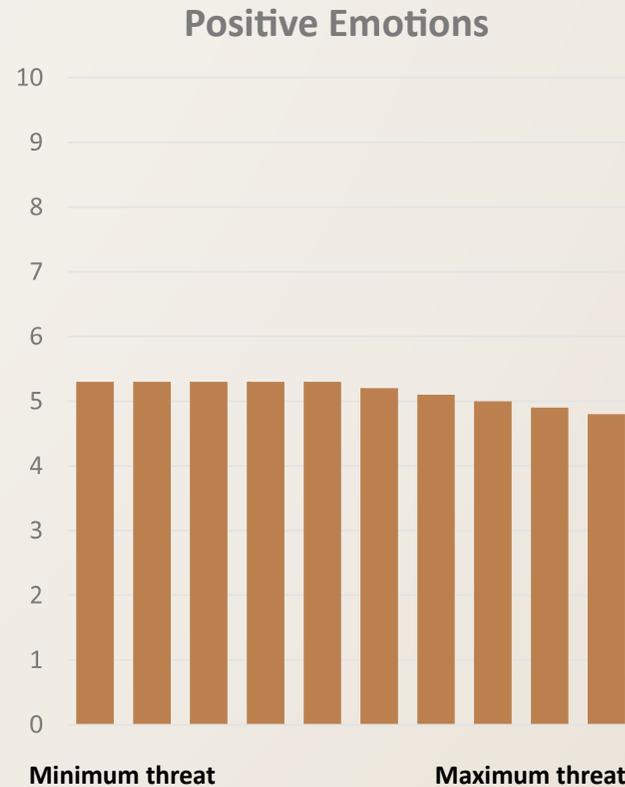
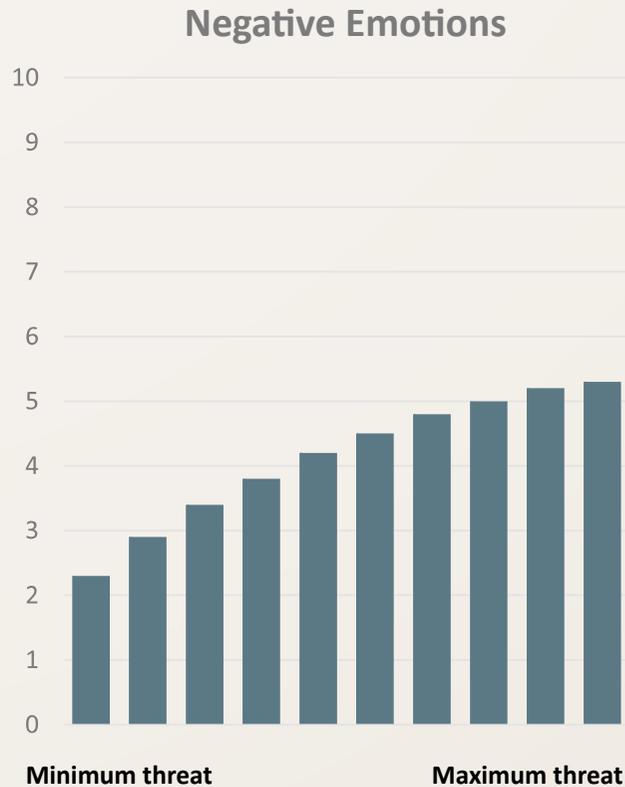
polarisation in relation

to the territorial conflict



WHAT GENERATES THE MOST EMOTIONAL POLARISATION?

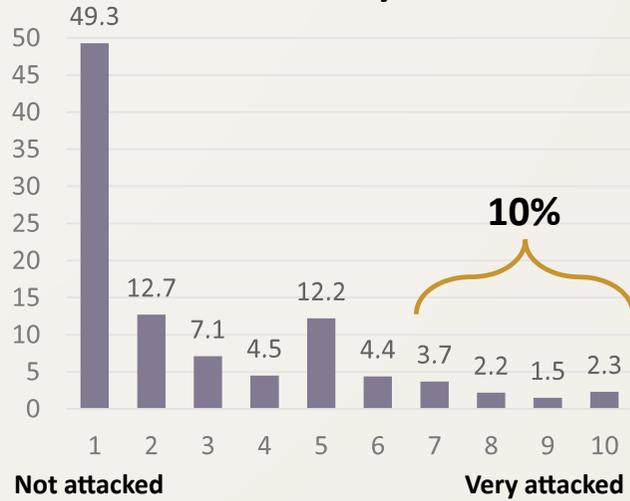
Predicted level of emotions regarding those with a different opinion by perceived level of threat.



i Emotional polarisation shows a particular increase among **people who perceive that their way of life or culture are being threatened.**

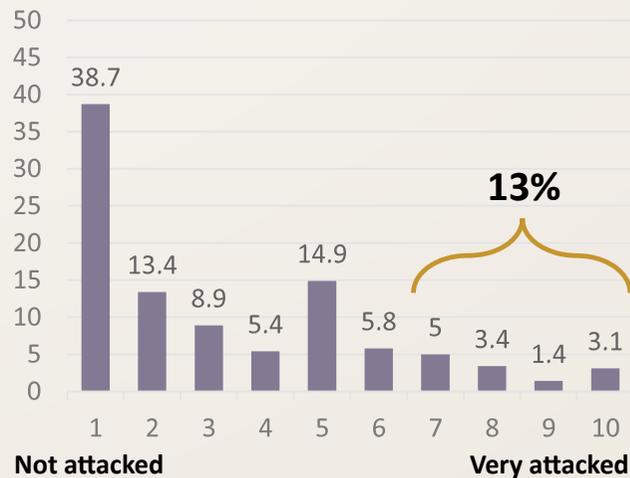
PERCEPTIONS OF AGGRESSION IN THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Family

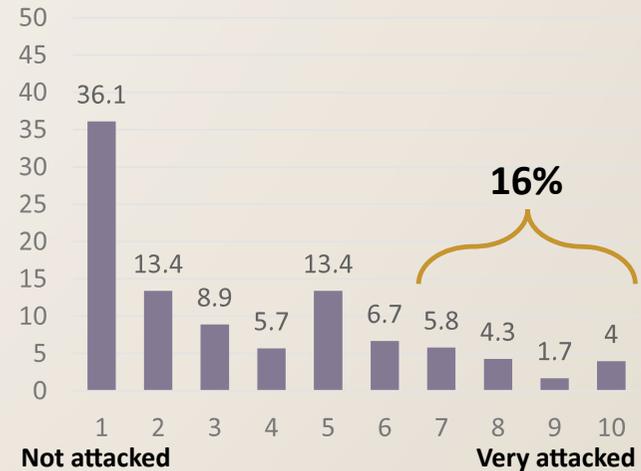


i 10% of those surveyed have felt **attacked by their family, 13% by work colleagues, and 16% by friends.**

Work



Friends

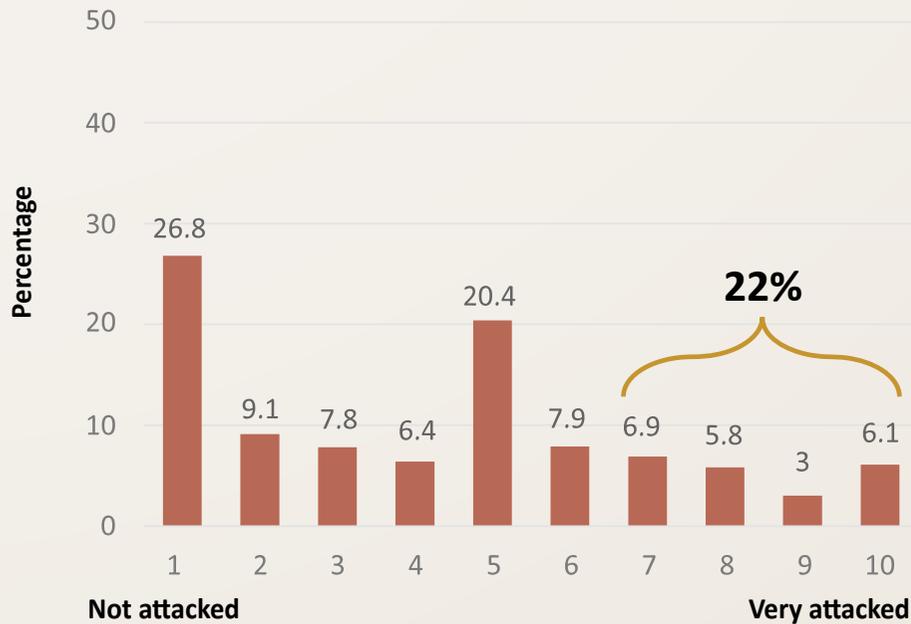


PERCEPTIONS OF AGGRESSION FROM SOCIAL MEDIA AND INSTITUTIONS

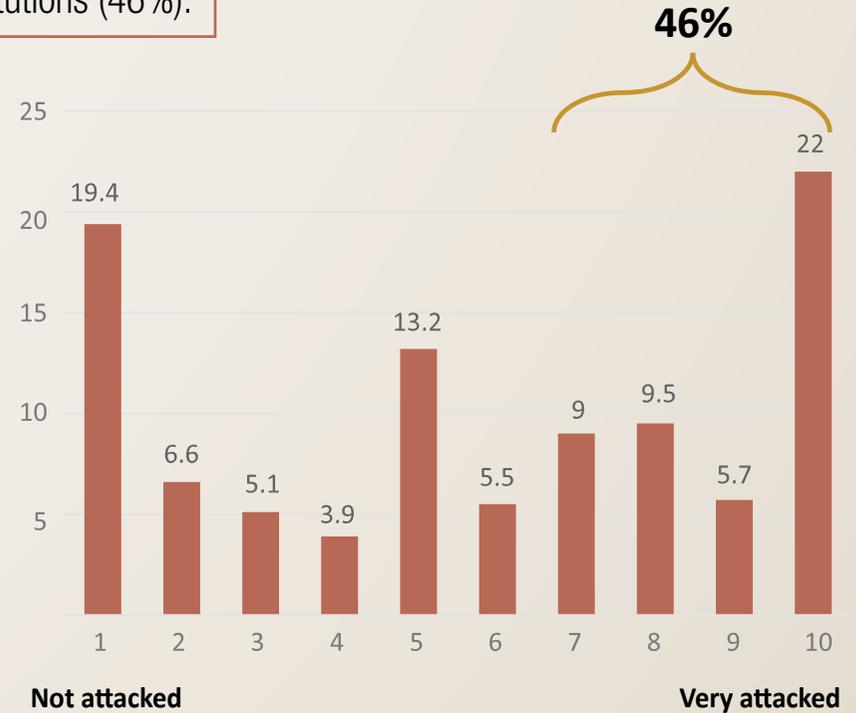
Distribution in accordance with the statement: During the Catalan Independence Process you have felt attacked by social media or an institution.

i The perception of aggression **increases in environments without direct relationships**, such as social media (22%) and institutions (46%).

Social media



Institutions



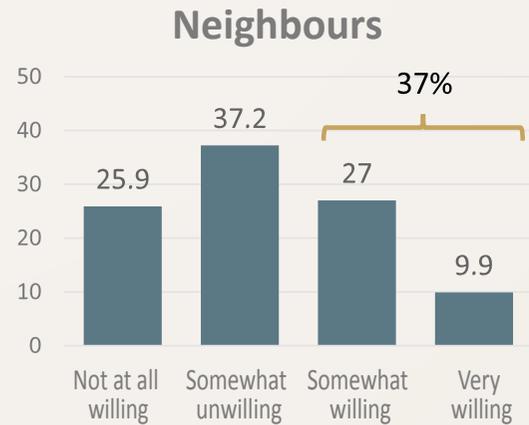
SOCIAL AND

POLITICAL DIALOGUE

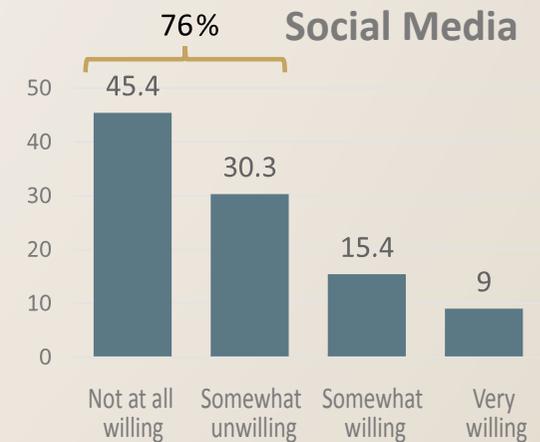
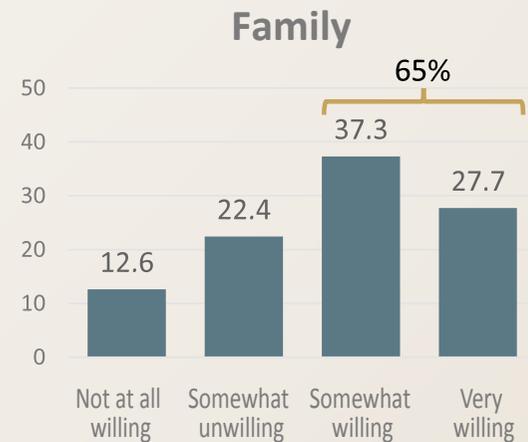
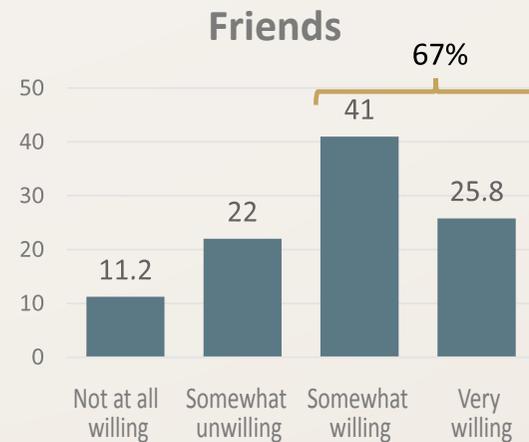
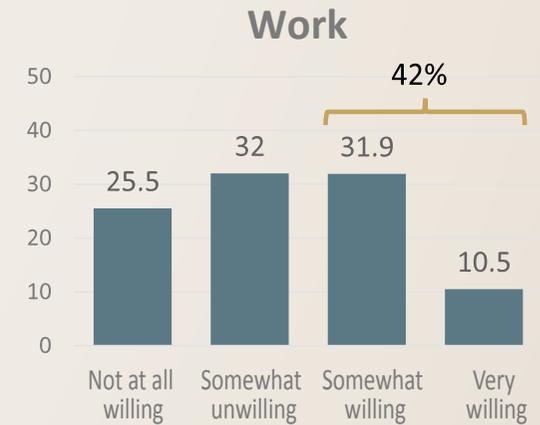
PERSPECTIVES



WILLINGNESS TO TALK ABOUT THE TERRITORIAL CONFLICT IN DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS

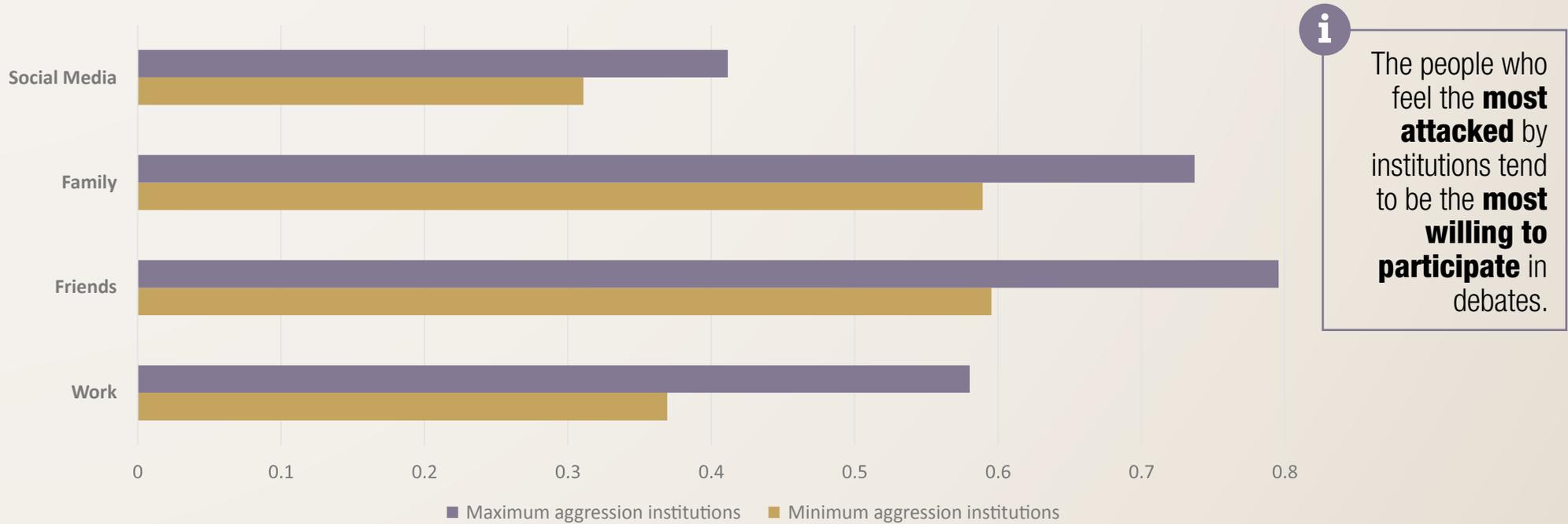


i **Friends and family** are the environments **most conducive to social dialogue**, with respectively 67% and 65% of people quite or very willing to enter into dialogue. However, on **social media** 76% are **somewhat unwilling or not at all willing to enter into dialogue**.



WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN DEBATES BY LEVEL OF AGGRESSION

Percentage predicted to be very or somewhat willing to participate in each environment.



OTHER ISSUES ARE NOT COLOURED BY IDEOLOGICAL POLARISATION ABOUT THE TERRITORIAL CONFLICT

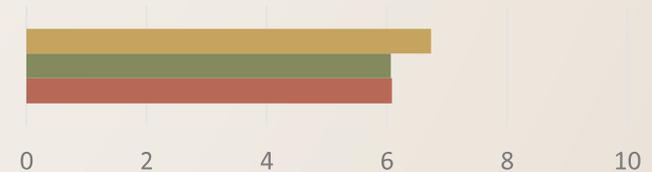


Being on one side or the other of the territorial conflict **does not noticeably affect the positions adopted** in relation to the other subjects of debate.

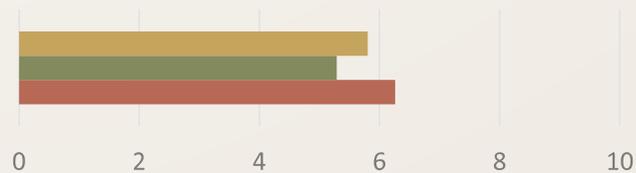
Less tax vs.
More public services



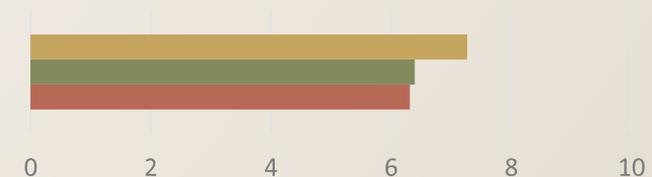
Immigrants maintain culture vs.
Immigrants adopt culture



Guarantee rights and freedoms vs.
Maintain order and values



Impeccable COVID management vs.
Disastrous COVID management



■ Prefer no self-government
■ No position
■ Prefer independence

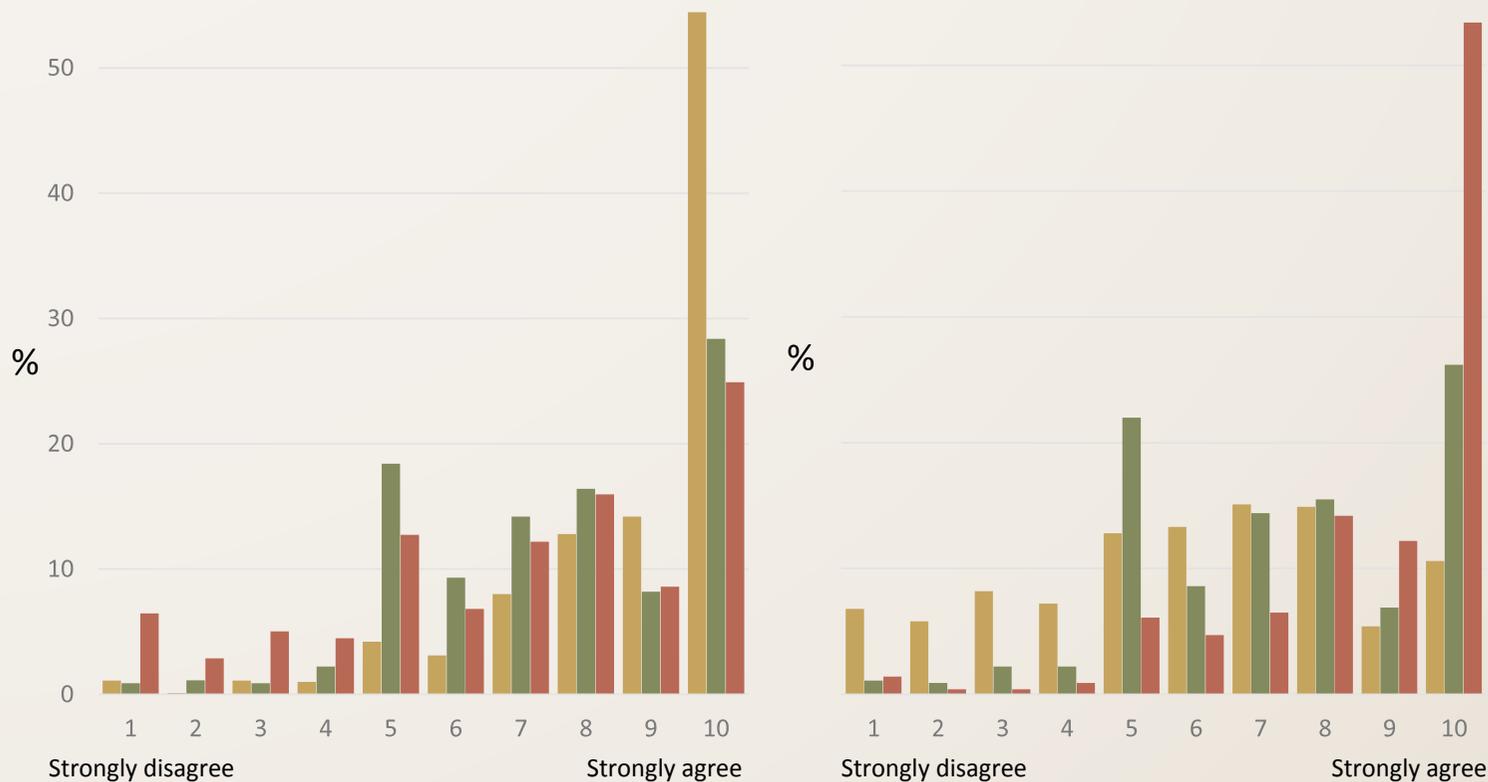
PERCEPTIONS ABOUT MISTAKES MADE BY THE CATALAN AND SPANISH GOVERNMENTS

Responses to the question: "During the Catalan Independence Process the ___ government has made mistakes that have hindered, rather than facilitated, a possible solution".

■ Prefer independence ■ No position ■ Prefer no self-government

Spanish government

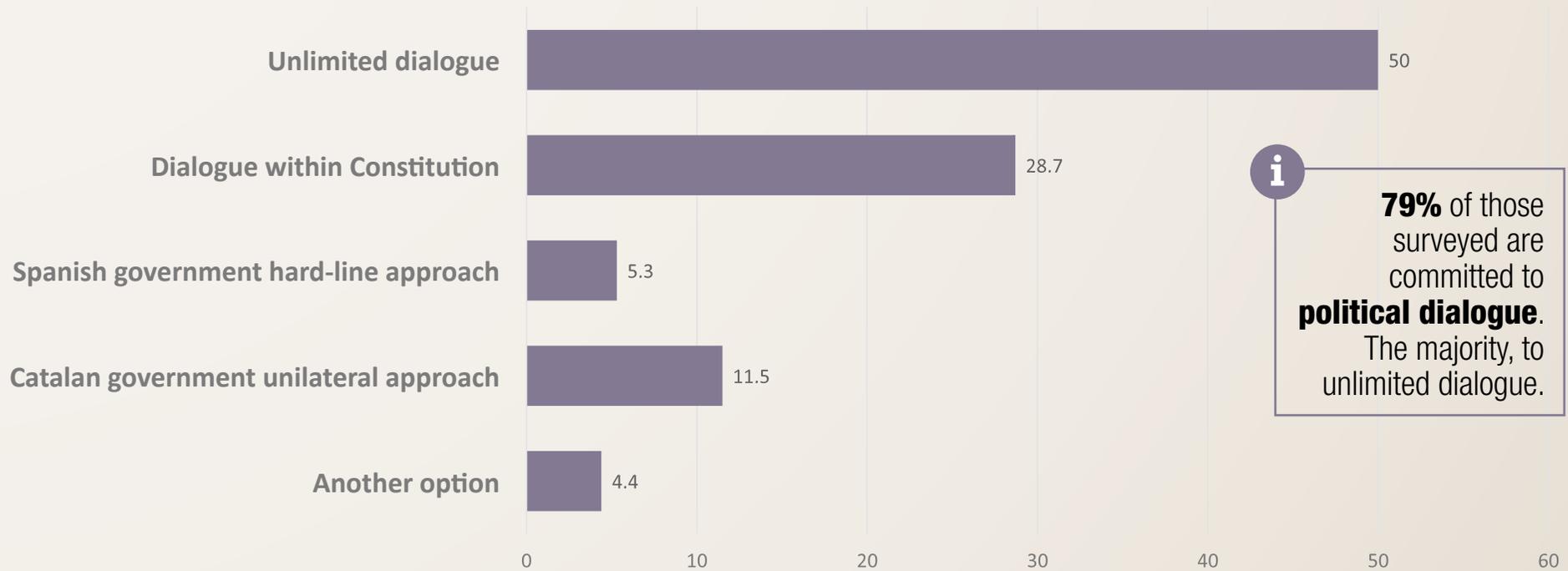
Catalan government



High level of self-criticism:

Those in favour of independence critical of the Catalan government: 5.8
Those against independence critical of the Spanish government: 6.9

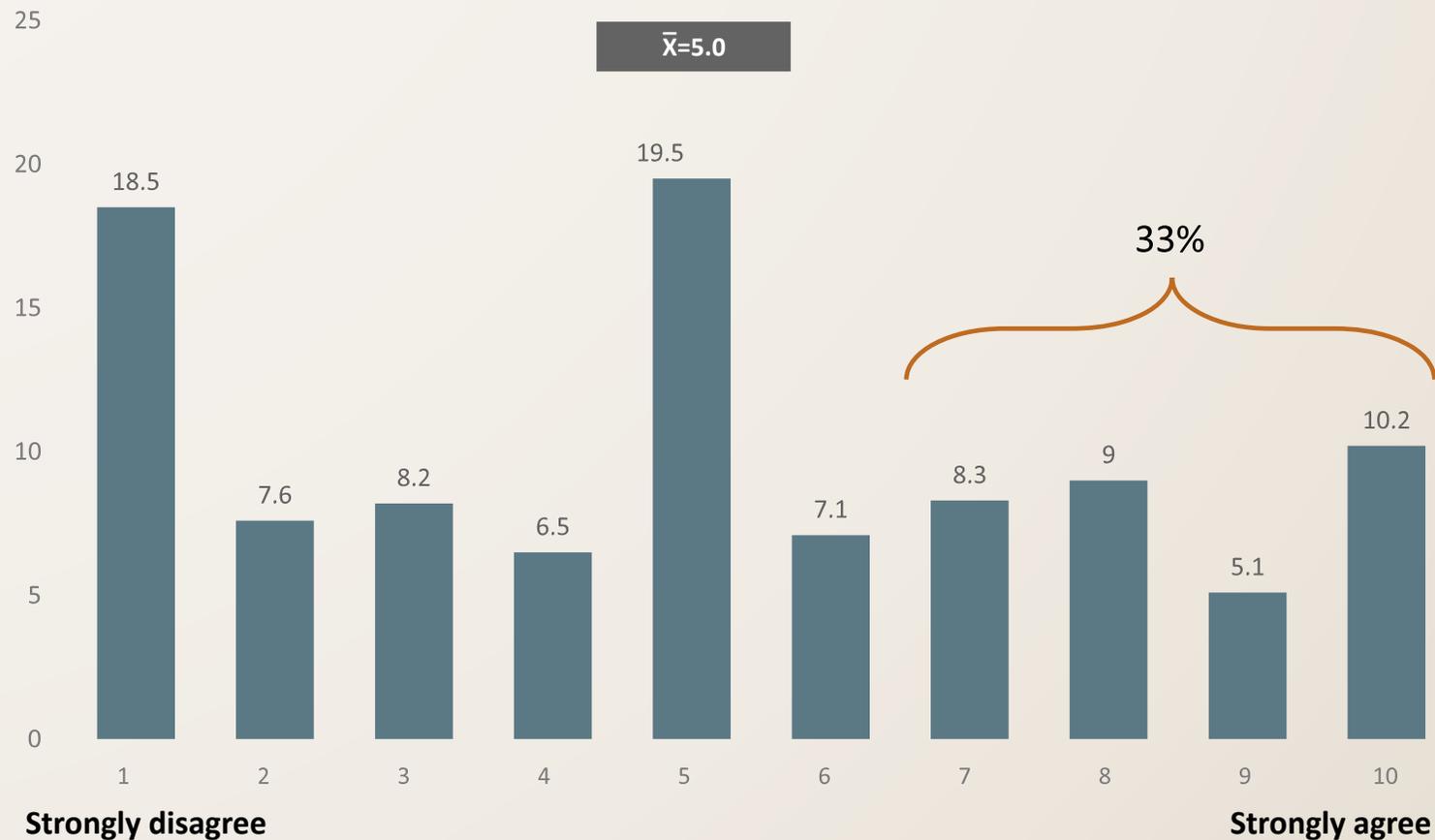
PREFERRED OUTCOMES OF THE TERRITORIAL CONFLICT



SCEPTICISM ABOUT THE POLITICAL DIALOGUE OPTION



A third of the people surveyed expressed **doubts about the results of political dialogue.**



CONCLUSIONS

AND PROPOSALS



CONCLUSIONS

- Coexistence in Catalonia is good. The level of trust in others is even higher than that of Spain as a whole and the European average.
- The term ‘divided society’ in the sense of two communities that do not interact with each other is not applicable. Positions on the main subjects of social and political debate do not correspond to positions on the territorial conflict.
- There are a large number of people who have felt attacked — mainly by institutions — or feel that their way of life and culture are under threat in relation to the territorial conflict.

PROPOSALS

- The strength of people's convictions is not at odds with respect for differing opinions. Leaders on both sides of the political debate have the responsibility to make speeches and conciliatory gestures that help people with different opinions to coexist in harmony.
- The inability of institutions to resolve the territorial conflict calls for greater involvement on the part of agents of civil society to find inclusive and creative ways out of the territorial conflict impasse.
- Attention must be paid to healing emotional wounds because they affect a lot of people and, by extension, the whole of society. We need to learn to live and let live and control our emotions to ensure that we are:
 - Curious about different opinions.
 - Respectful of people, regardless of their opinions.
 - Self-critical, because nobody is in possession of the absolute truth.

ANNEXES

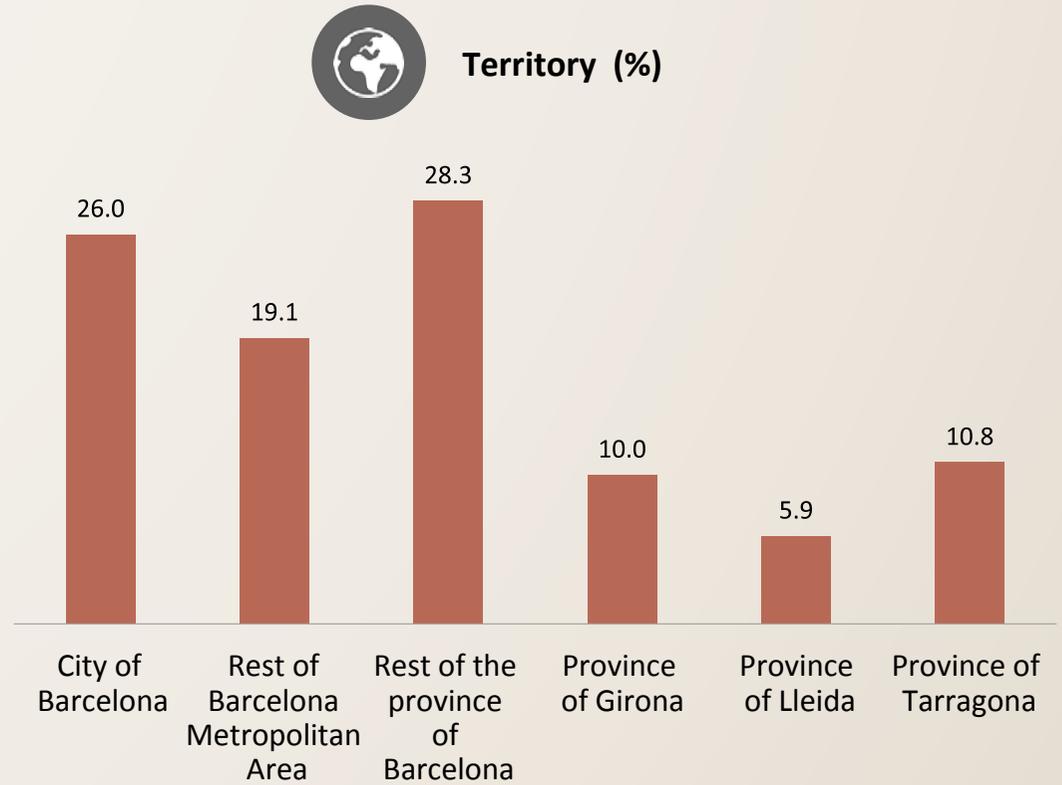


Annex 1: Datasheet and Sociodemographic Profile

- Universe: Population over 18.
- Scope: Catalonia.
- Methodology: Quantitative.
- Fieldwork dates: 27–30 July 2020.
- Information gathering: Online.
- Sample size: 2010 people.
- Sample quotas: Sex and age group (interrelated) and Territory (independent).
- Distribution: Proportional to the universe.
- Duration: 12 minutes (two languages).
- Sample error: +3.16% for the reference population, assuming maximum uncertainty ($p = q = 0.5$), and for a confidence level of 95.5% ($z = 2$).

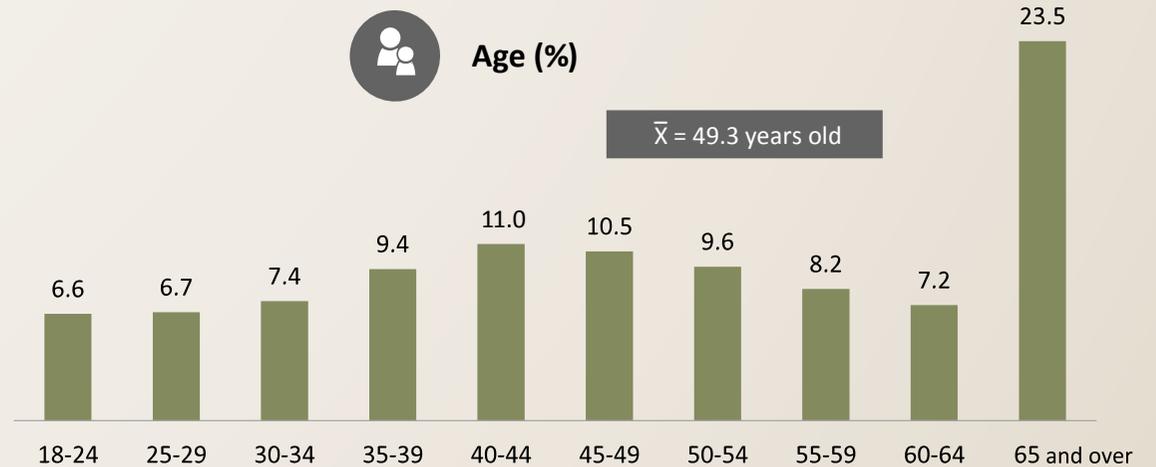
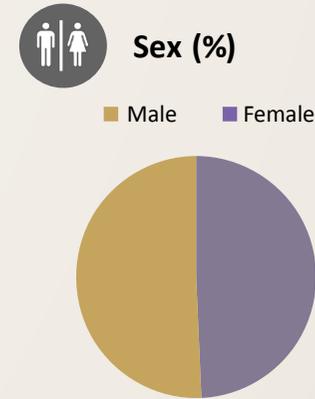
Sociodemographic profile (1)

Scope	Survey	%
City of Barcelona	523	26.0
Rest of Barcelona Metropolitan Area	384	19.1
Rest of the province of Barcelona	568	28.3
Province of Girona	200	10.0
Province of Lleida	118	5.9
Province of Tarragona	217	10.8
	2010	

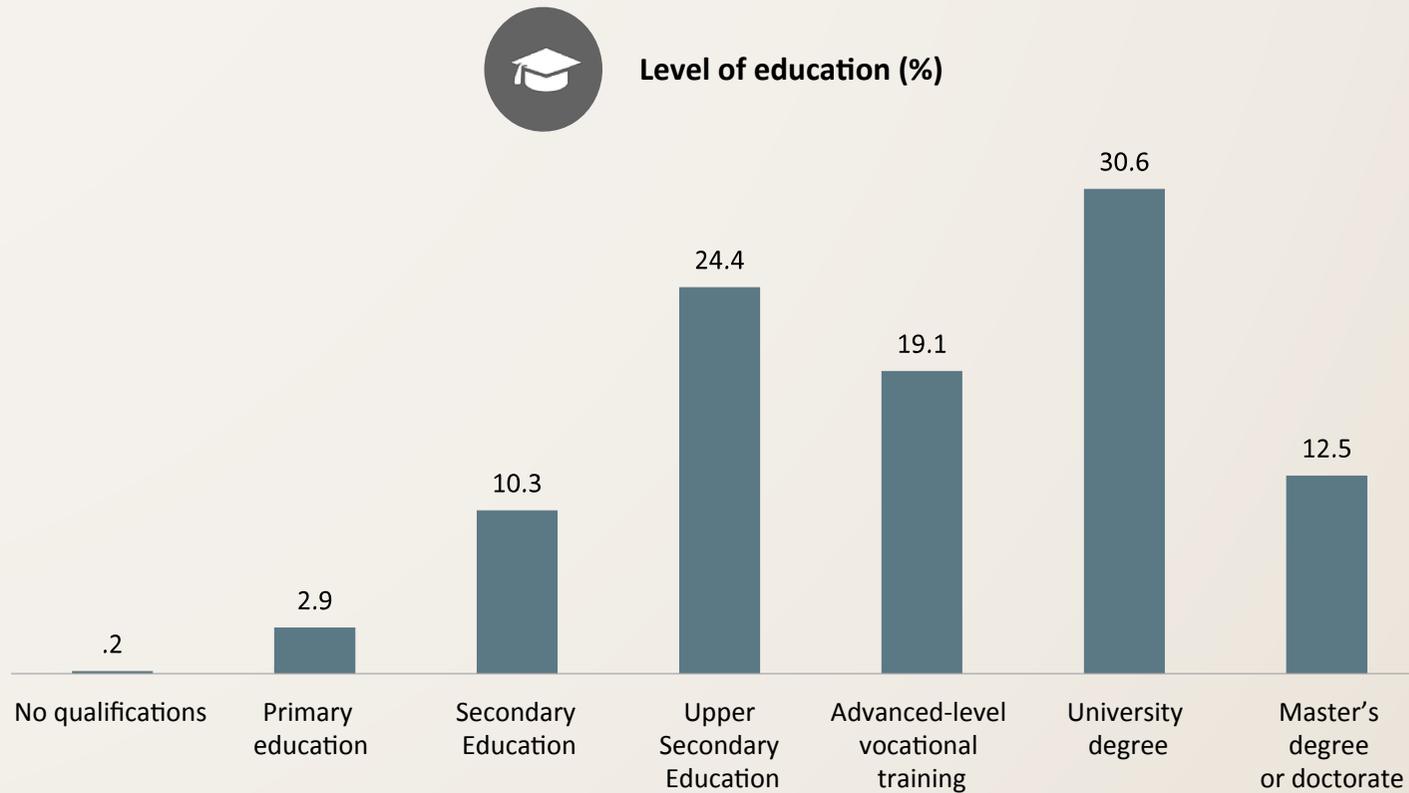


Sociodemographic profile (2)

Age	Sex		TOTAL
	Men	Women	
18-24	72	61	133
25-29	65	70	135
30-34	80	69	149
35-39	101	88	189
40-44	120	100	220
45-49	111	100	211
50-54	101	91	192
55-59	83	81	164
60-64	73	71	144
65 and over	213	260	473
TOTAL	1.019	991	2.010



Sociodemographic profile (3)



Annex 2

Questionnaire (1)

1. In which language would you prefer to complete the questionnaire?
 - Catalan
 - Spanish
2. Sex
3. What is your age?
4. And, What is your highest level of education?
5. On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is “VERY BAD” and 10 is “VERY GOOD”, how would you rate coexistence in your municipality/ neighbourhood? And in Catalonia?
6. To what extent do you find the following coexistence problems in your municipality/neighbourhood?
 - Antisocial behaviour: litter, dog faeces
 - Problems related to immigration
 - Xenophobia/discrimination
 - Delinquency, drug problems
 - Lack of public safety
7. On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means you can never be careful enough of other people and 10 means that you can trust most people, where would you place yourself?

Questionnaire (2)

- 8.** As you know, in recent years there has been a lot of talk about political polarisation in Catalonia, that is, about the increasingly bigger gap separating some people from others. To what extent do you think that Catalan society is polarised according to the following criteria?
- Usual language
 - Social class
 - Opinions about feminism
 - Opinions about immigration
 - Opinions about taxes and the welfare state
 - Political response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- 9.** In terms of polarisation, how would you rate the following scopes?
- General public
 - Political parties/Political class
 - Media
 - Yourself

Questionnaire (3)

10. With regard to people who do not share your political opinions, to what extent do they generate the following emotions?

- Anguish
- Impotence
- Fear
- Sadness
- Anger
- Contempt
- Trust
- Respect
- Empathy

11. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

- The people with whom I disagree politically are not bad people.
- The people with whom I disagree politically are merely misinformed.
- I fear that my culture and way of life may be very vulnerable at this time.
- I think a lot about the threats hanging over my culture and way of life.
- I never think about the threats hanging over my culture and way of life.
- Those who are in favour of a dialogue-based solution to the independence process are deluded and do not understand the stakes.

Questionnaire (4)

12. Where would you place yourself on the following scales?

- Paying less tax even if public services are reduced vs. Improving public services even if taxes are increased.
- Immigrants should maintain their own culture and not adopt the culture of the country where they live vs. Immigrants should abandon their own culture and adopt the culture of country where they live.
- Everyone's rights and freedoms should be guaranteed even if it means that order and traditional values are not protected vs. Order and traditional values should be protected even if it means losing rights or freedoms.

- Independence for Catalonia vs. No self-government for Catalonia.
- The political response to COVID-19 has been impeccable vs. The political response to COVID-19 has been disastrous.

13. What is your opinion about Catalan independence?

- Fully in favour
- Somewhat in favour
- Somewhat against
- Fully against
- Indifferent
- Rather not say

Questionnaire (5)

14. With regard to current relations between Catalonia and Spain, what would you say is most needed?

- Unlimited political dialogue and negotiation
- Political dialogue and negotiations within the framework of the Constitution of Spain
- A hard-line approach adopted by the Spanish government
- A unilateral policy implemented by the Government of Catalonia
- Another option

15. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

- During the Catalan Independence Process the Catalan government has made mistakes that have hindered, rather than facilitated, a possible solution
- During the Catalan Independence Process the Spanish government has made mistakes that have hindered, rather than facilitated, a possible solution

16. During the Catalan Independence Process you have felt attacked by:

- An institution
- Your social circle
- Your work environment
- Your family environment
- People you follow on social media

Questionnaire (6)

17. With which of the following do you identify most? I feel...

Choose only one answer

- Only Spanish
- More Spanish than Catalan
- As Spanish as Catalan
- More Catalan than Spanish
- Only Catalan
- Don't know/No reply

18. Political leanings are normally expressed in terms of left and right. On this scale where would you place yourself:

- Extreme left 1__10 Extreme right

19. On a scale of 0 (minimum) to 10 (maximum) how likely would you be to vote for the following parties:

- Junts x Cat
- Ciutadans
- ERC
- Partit Nacionalista de Catalunya
- PSC / PSOE
- Catalunya en Comú
- PP
- CUP
- VOX

Questionnaire (7)

20. If the subject of Catalan independence came up in the following settings would you be willing to join the conversation?

- Chat with neighbours
- At work
- Chat with friends
- Chat with family
- Social media

21. To what extent do you think the following people from your environment agree with your opinions about Catalan independence?

- Your partner
- Other family members
- Work colleagues
- Your neighbours
- Your friends
- The people you follow on social media

Questionnaire (8)

22. If the subject of feminism came up in the following settings would you be willing to join the conversation?

- Chat with neighbours
- At work
- Chat with friends
- Chat with family
- Social media

23. To what extent do you think the following people from your environment agree with your opinions about feminism?

- Your partner
- Other family members
- Work colleagues
- Your neighbours
- Your friends
- The people you follow on social media



INSTITUT CATALÀ INTERNACIONAL PER LA PAU
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