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ATTITUDES TOWARD SYRIANS
IN TURKEY
MARCH, 2020



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People assess major conflict areas in current society is in between Turks and Syrians which also shown a slight increase compare to the last year. Conflicts between social levels become more visible while political tensions decline after the election year. It is interesting to observe that higher social classes and higher education levels perceive Turk-Syrian tension more than any other group. Lower classes pay less attention to such relations.

The survey reveals that there are many false facts that majority believing true which might be a reason for such level of tension. Surprisingly, those who know Syrian refugees personally display higher social affinity while keep assessing the issue as a major conflict area stronger than others.

People may differentiate their overall assessment of the issue with their daily personal relations. Parents are slightly softer to their children having friends with Syrian kids despite still 48% would not want.



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OFFICIAL STATISTICS ABOUT SYRIAN REFUGEES



Demographic Structure

- As of April 17, 2020, Turkey has 3 million 583 thousand 584 registered Syrian nationals under temporary protection.
- 53,8% of Syrian nationals in Turkey are male and 46,2% female.
- The rate of Syrian nationals under the age of 10 is 29%.
- While the proportion of the Turkish population between the ages of 15-24 is 15.6%, the Syrian nationals' rate for the same age group is 20.9%.
- The average age of the population of Turkey 32,4 and the Syrian population's average age is 22.7.

Rate of Syrians to the Turkish Population

- The ratio of registered Syrians under temporary protection to the Turkish population is 4.3% across the country.
- The number of Syrians granted Turkish citizenship is 110 thousand. 48% of these people are adults and 52% are children (*Source: The Ministry of Interior – as of December 30th, 2019*).



Accommodation

- The number of Syrian nationals living in temporary accommodation/ shelter centers: 63 thousand 518 people.
- Only 1,8% of Syrian nationals are living in camps.
- 98,2% of Syrian nationals are living in cities.
- Syrian nationals mostly live in İstanbul (496 thousand 365 people) and least in Bayburt (24 people).
- Kilis is the province where Syrians live the most compared to the local population, with 77.6%. The city with the lowest frequency of Syrians compared to the Turkish population is Artvin with 0.02%.

(Source: Directorate General of Migration Management – as of April 17th, 2020)

Work-Life

- The number of Syrians granted work permits: 31 thousand 185 people (Source: The Ministry of Family, Labor, and Social Services – as of March 31st, 2019).
- The number of companies with at least one partner of Syrian nationality: 15 thousand 159 (Source: The Ministry of Commerce – as of February 26th, 2019).





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ABOUT THE STUDY



- HUMAN DEVELOPMENT MONITOR / İNSANİ GELİŞME MONİTÖRÜ (IGM)
periodically tracks the progress of human development in Turkey regarding various topics;
 - Social Cohesion (Attitudes Toward Syrians in Turkey)
 - Gender Equality
 - TV Series
 - Trust in Social Media

STUDY OBJECTIVE

INGEV aims to

- provide a summary of the key metrics that quantify the attitudes of host community members toward Syrians in Turkey.
- conduct the survey periodically in order to track public mood.

INGEV Studies on Syrians in Turkey

- Human Development Index
- Refugee Livelihood Monitor
- Refugee Capacity Building Survey
- Syrian-owned SMEs Needs Assessment
- Social Cohesion in Turkey Report
- Studies on Entrepreneurship

Main Barriers to Social Cohesion

- *Economic Concerns-
Unemployment*
- *Security Concerns*
- *Adaptation to Laws &
Regulations*
- *Cultural Barriers*

- INGEV conducted a nation-wide survey representative of Turkey.
- Surveys were conducted in 26 cities utilizing a stratified sample in line with NUTS Level-2 Criteria.
- Data is gathered via computer aided telephone interview (CATI).

	May '19	Mar '20
Questionnaire pilots and interviewer trainings	May 8 th , 2019	February 12 th , 2020
Fieldwork	May 1 st – 31 st 2019	Feb 15 th – March 6 th , 2020
Sample size	1358	1555
Margin of error in 95% confidence interval	±2.7	±2.5



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CORE FINDINGS

1. CONFLICT/TENSION AMONG SOCIAL GROUPS:
 - Perceived attitudes of **social groups** toward each other (**beyond individual's own personal attitudes**)
2. SOCIAL GROUP AFFINITY:
 - **Individual** attitudes toward various social groups in Turkey
3. ATTITUDES TOWARD SYRIANS IN TURKEY:
 - **Beliefs** and **perceptions** related to Syrians in Turkey
4. MYTH vs. TRUTH



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CONFLICT/TENSION AMONG SOCIAL GROUPS



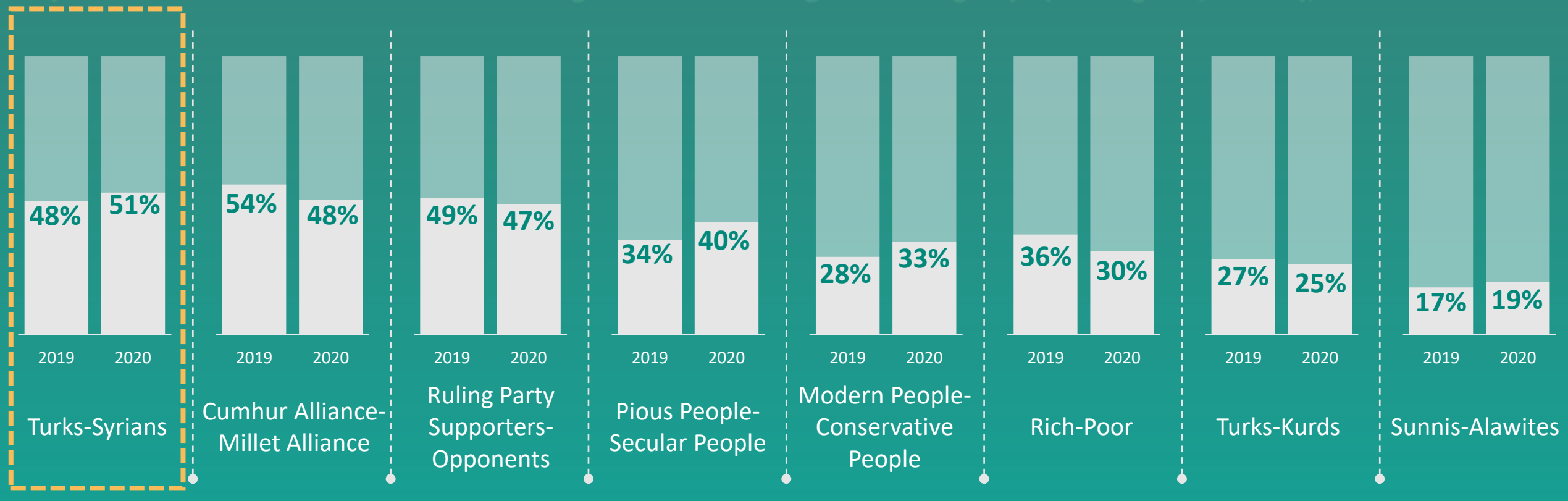


- The relationship between Turks and Syrians still stands out as the tensest relationship in society. Those who know a Syrian person feel the tension more.
- As the level of education increases, the perception of tension between Turks & Syrians increases. Compared to the previous year, tension arises especially from those who have university degree or higher, while the perception of other education levels is constant. Similarly, as the socio-economic level decreases, the tension between these groups weaken. It can be said that the increase in tension is coming from all SES Groups compared to the previous year.
- Although the young people's tension perception is higher compared to the elderly, it increases slightly in all age groups. In terms of gender, women perceive the tension more.

There is no significant change in terms of tension among social groups compared to the previous wave. Relations between Turks & Syrians in Turkey are still the tensest according to public perceptions.

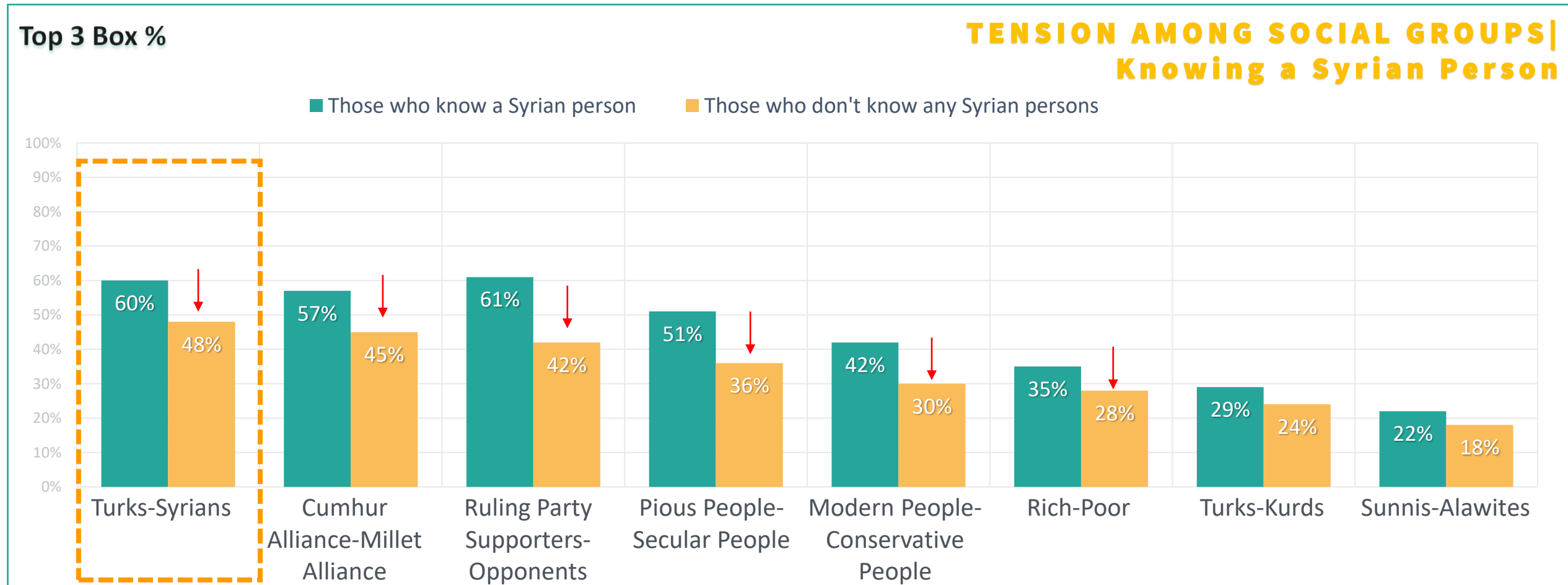
TENSION AMONG SOCIAL GROUPS IN TURKEY

Top-3-Box: % of those who feel there is strong tension between given social groups (a rating of 8, 9 or 10);



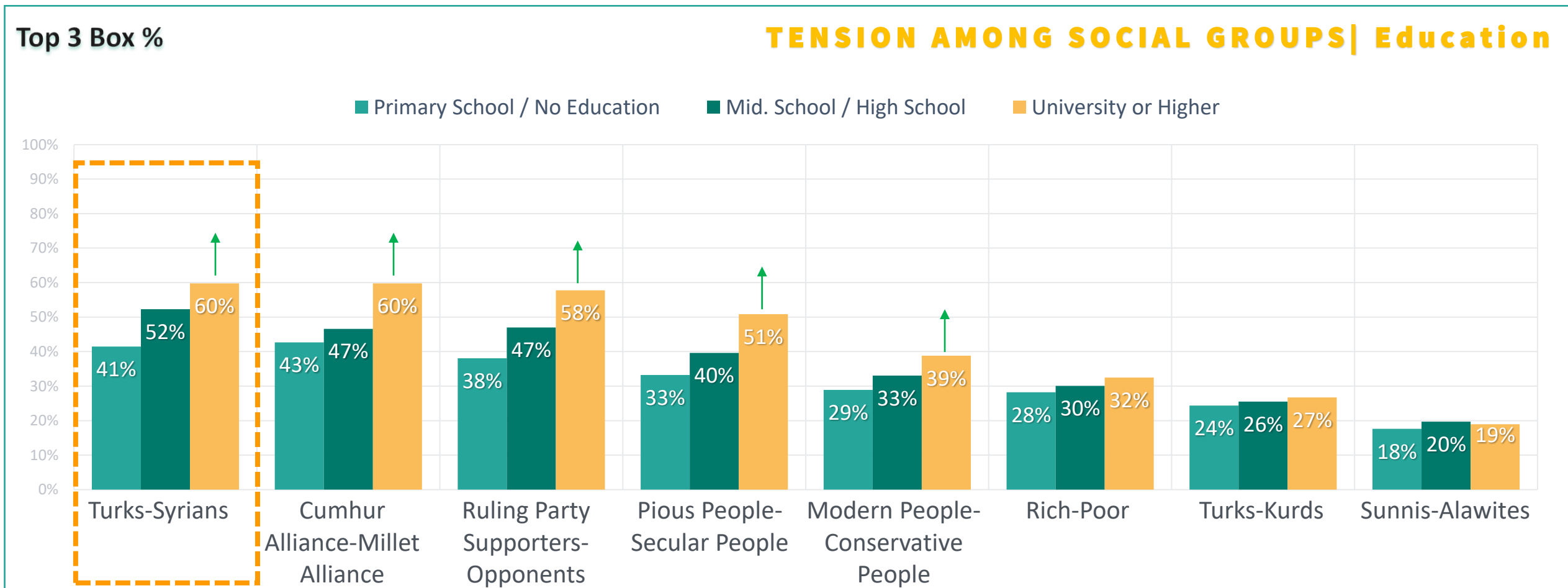
People who know a Syrian person tend to perceive higher tension between Syrians and Turks as well as between other social groups.

Mar '20



Those with primary school education or no education tend to perceive less social conflict among different social groups compared to those with higher levels of education. This also applies to the relation between Turks & Syrians.

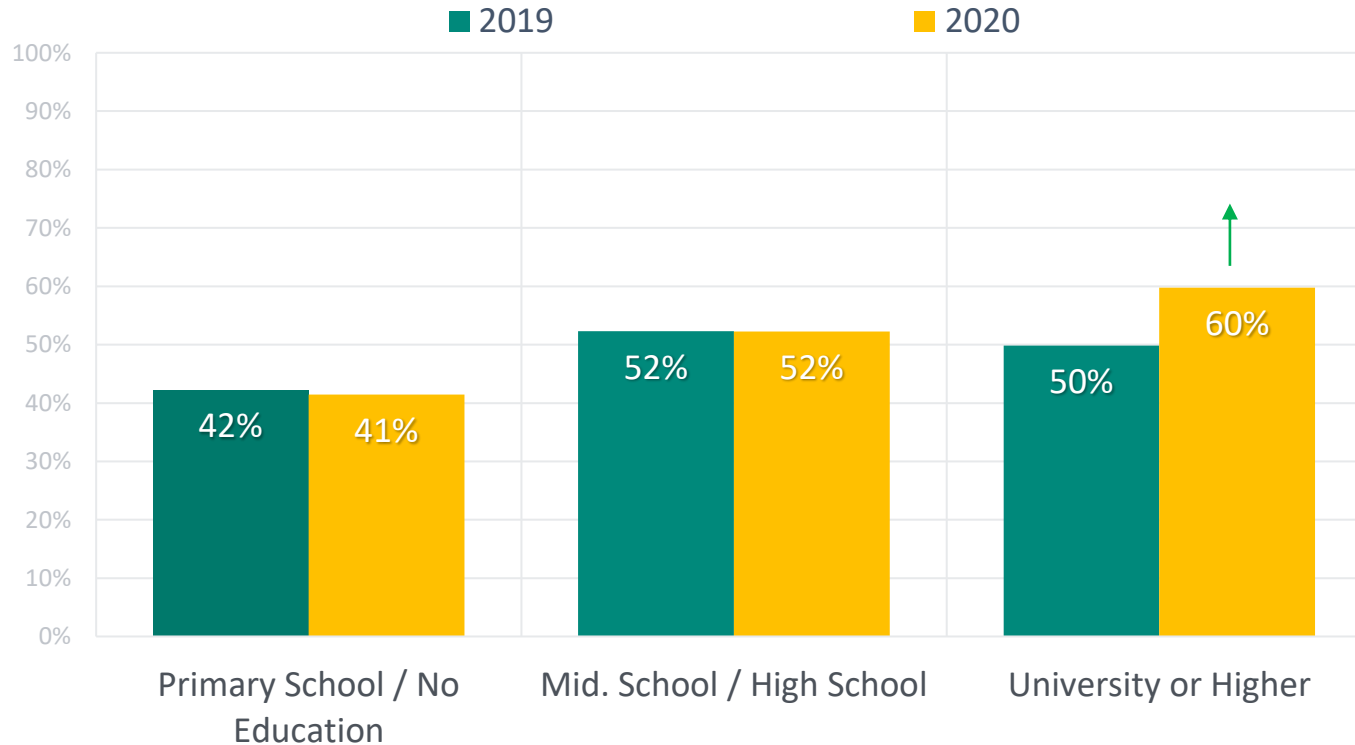
Mar '20



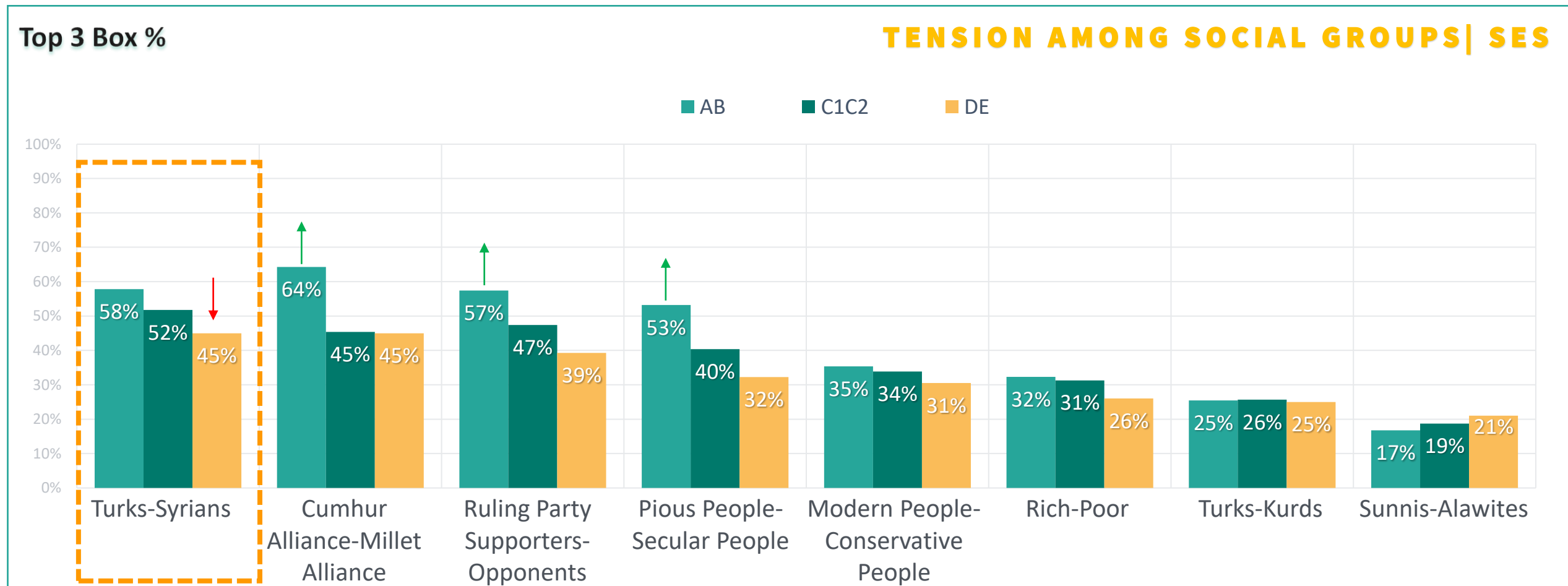
The perception of tension among those who have higher education levels has gone up since last year while for others it has remained stable.

May'19 vs Mar '20

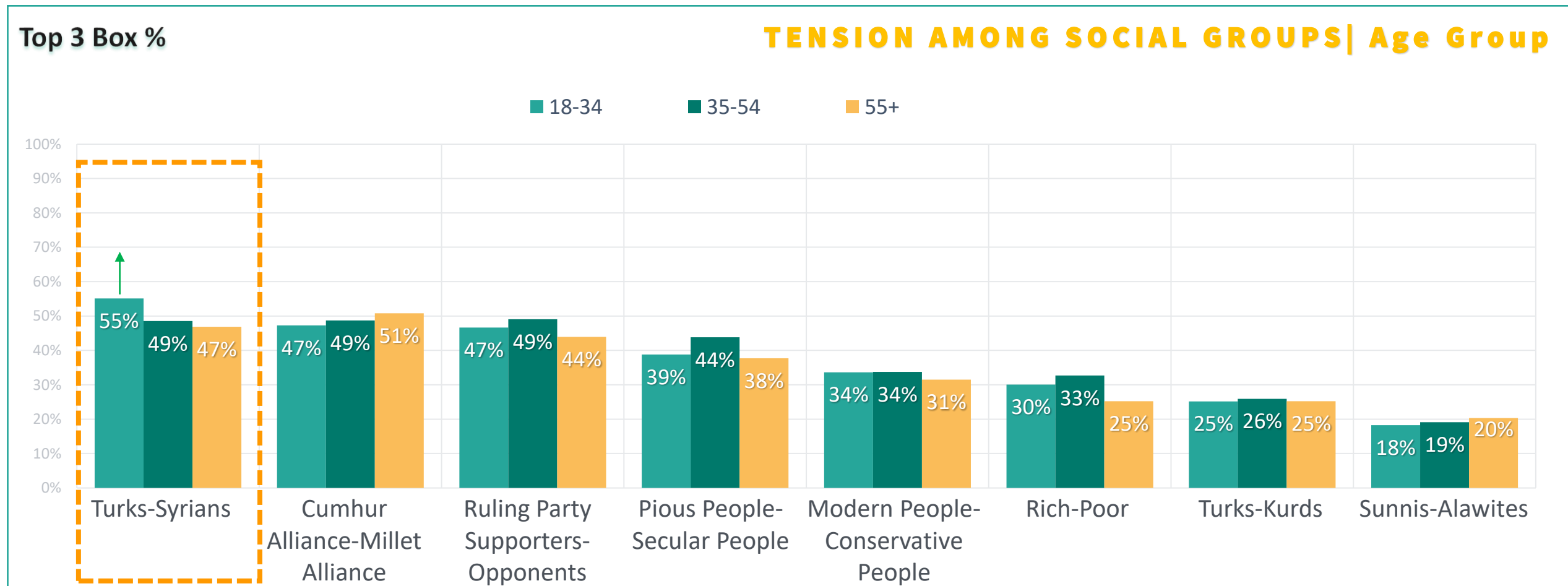
Top 3 Box % **Turks & Syrians**



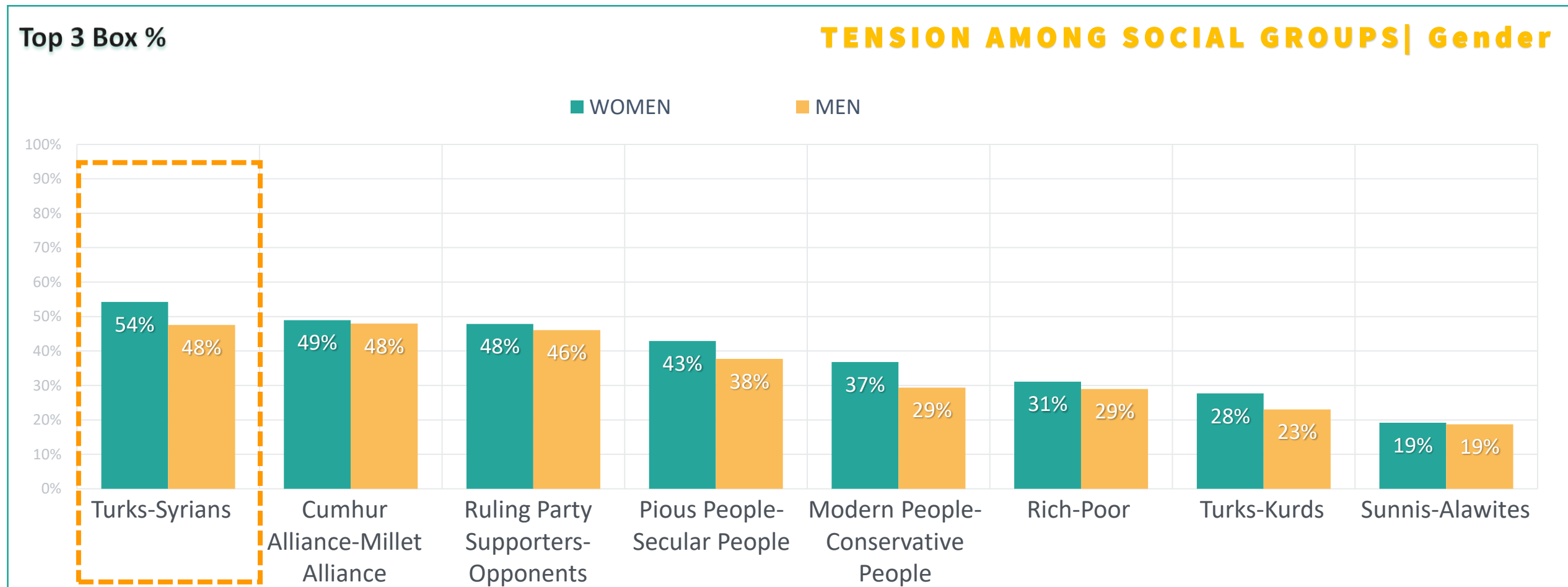
Mar '20



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SOCIAL GROUP AFFINITY





The first period of the research, May 19, coincided with the local government election period. For this reason, we see that identity elements such as sexual preference and political perspective, which distinguish between conservative and progressive views, are lagging in terms of tension.

- Three of every ten people in the society know a Syrian person. The profile of those is mostly men, between the ages of 18-54, are belong to the C1C2 socio-economic group, have a middle or high school degree.
- Nearly half of the society does not want their children to be friends with Syrians. Compared to the previous year, there is a slight improvement in social affinity towards refugees. As expected, those who know a Syrian people are less likely to react to their children being friends with someone who is Syrian, but even among them, 2 out of

every 5 people display a lower social affinity.

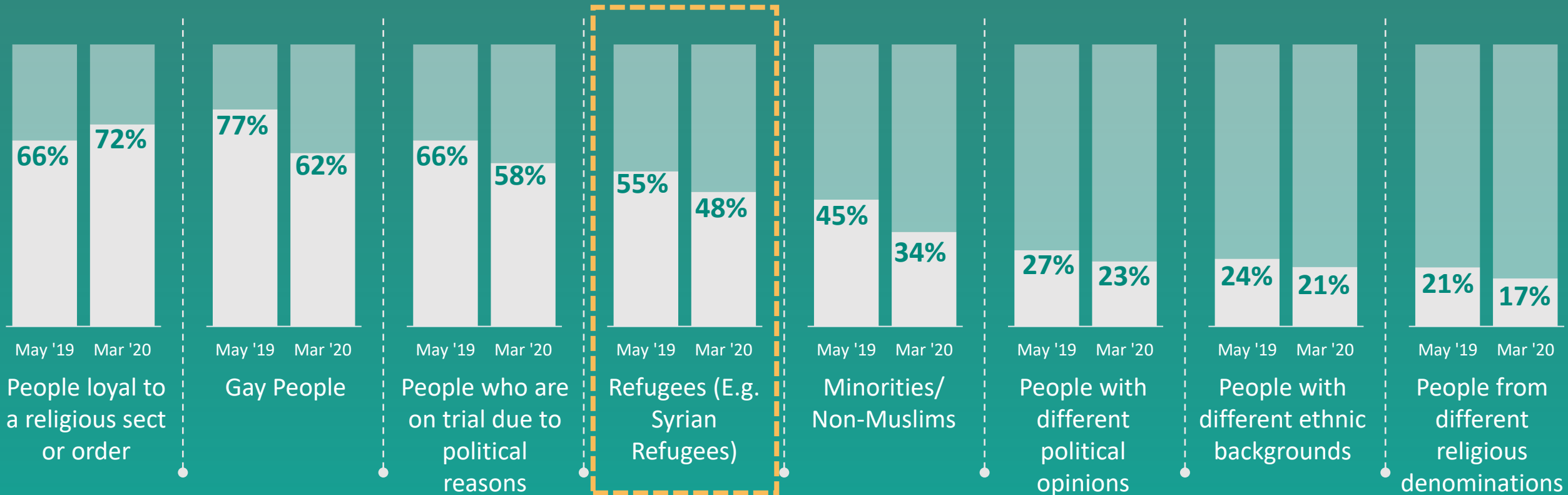
- As the education level decreases, social affinity toward the Syrian nationals increases. Compared to the previous year, there is a positive increase in the attitudes of all education levels towards refugees. In parallel with the education level, lower socio-economic levels associate with relatively higher aversion against the Syrians.
- On the other hand, young age groups are relatively mild towards Syrians, while 55 and over are more responsive. Compared to the previous year, people aged 55 and over show a steady social affinity towards refugees while the perception of younger age groups improves significantly.

Refugees are mentioned by less than half of the society as a social group whom they wouldn't want their children to be friends with. There is a slight improvement in perception of refugees among society since last year.

SOCIAL GROUP AFFINITY

In Mar '20, it is observed that the tensions related to sexual preference and political views have relieved by the effect of the elections being left behind.

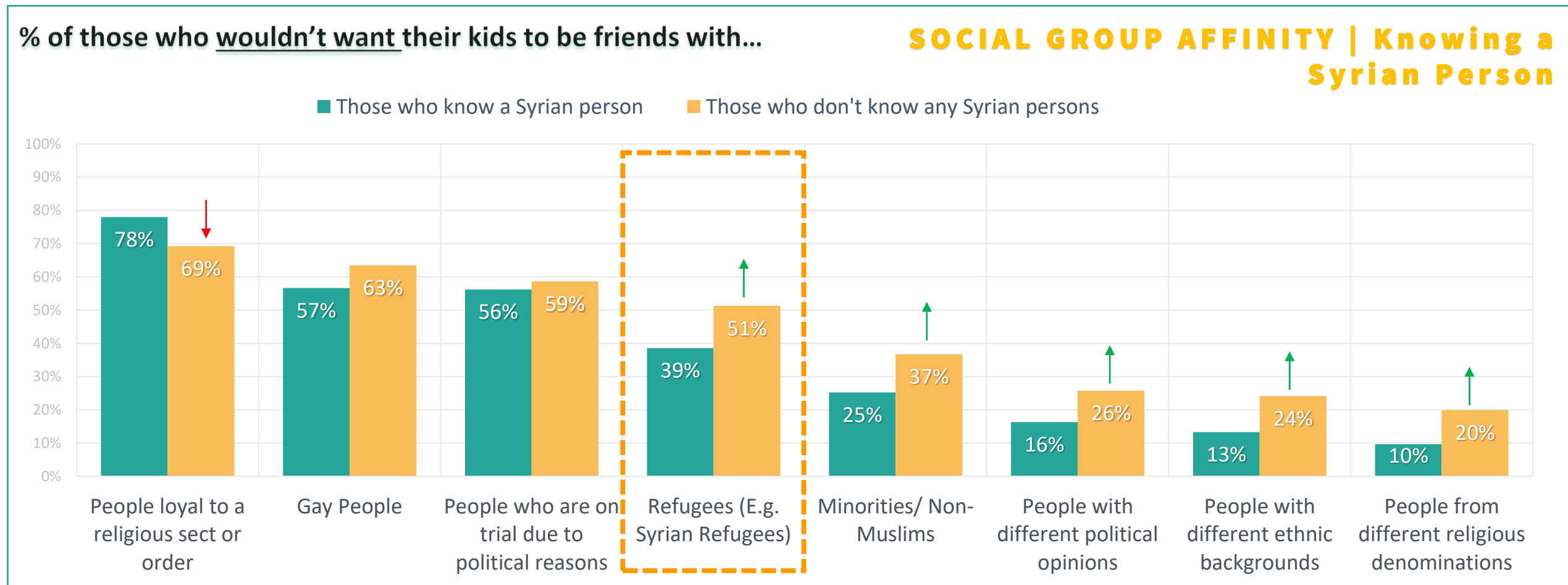
% of those who wouldn't want their kids to be friends with...



Question: Please select one of the following two options for each social group I'll read out to you;

- 1) I wouldn't want my children to be friends with people in this group
- 2) I would be OK with my children being friends with people in this group

Mar '20

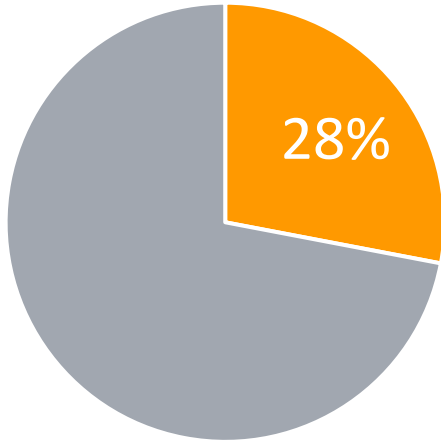


Question: Please select one of the following two options for each social group I'll read out to you;

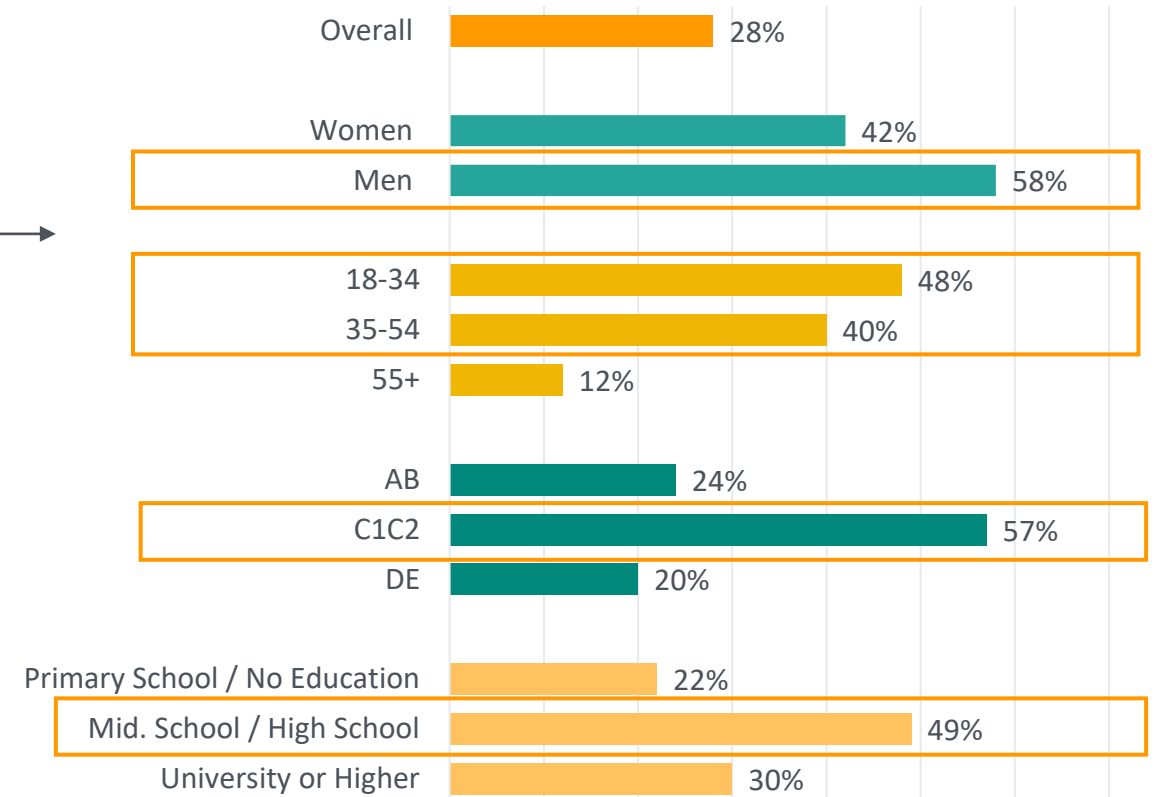
- 1) I wouldn't want my children to be friends with people in this group
- 2) I would be OK with my children being friends with people in this group

The profile of those who know a Syrian is mostly men, between the ages of 18-54, are belong to the C1C2 socio-economic group and have a middle or high school degree.

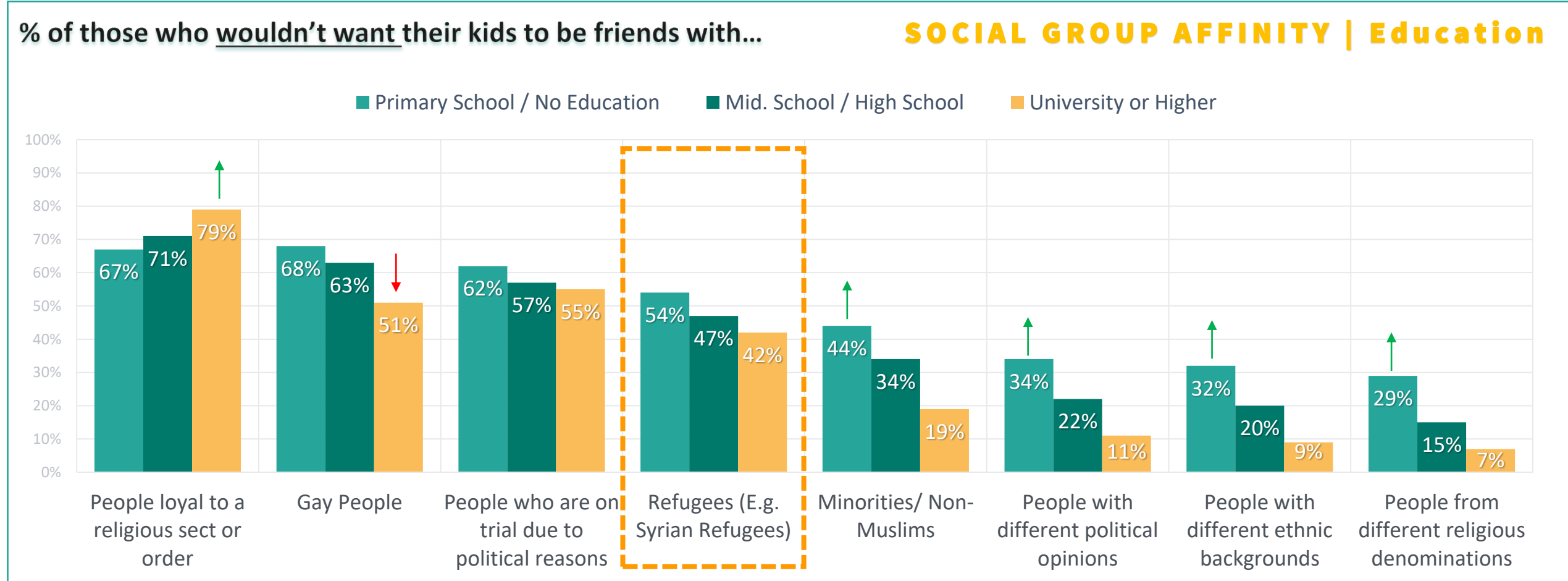
Those who know a Syrian person



Profile of those who know a Syrian person



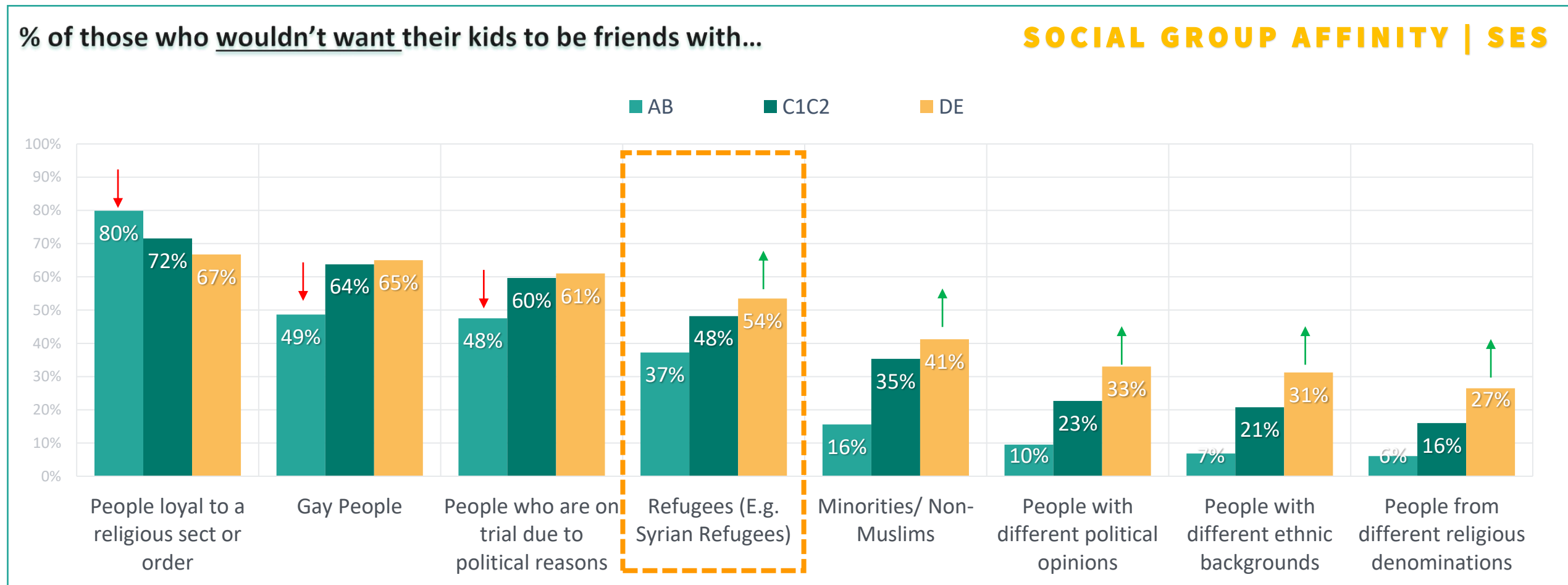
Mar '20



Question: Please select one of the following two options for each social group I'll read out to you;

- 1) I wouldn't want my children to be friends with people in this group
- 2) I would be OK with my children being friends with people in this group

Mar '20



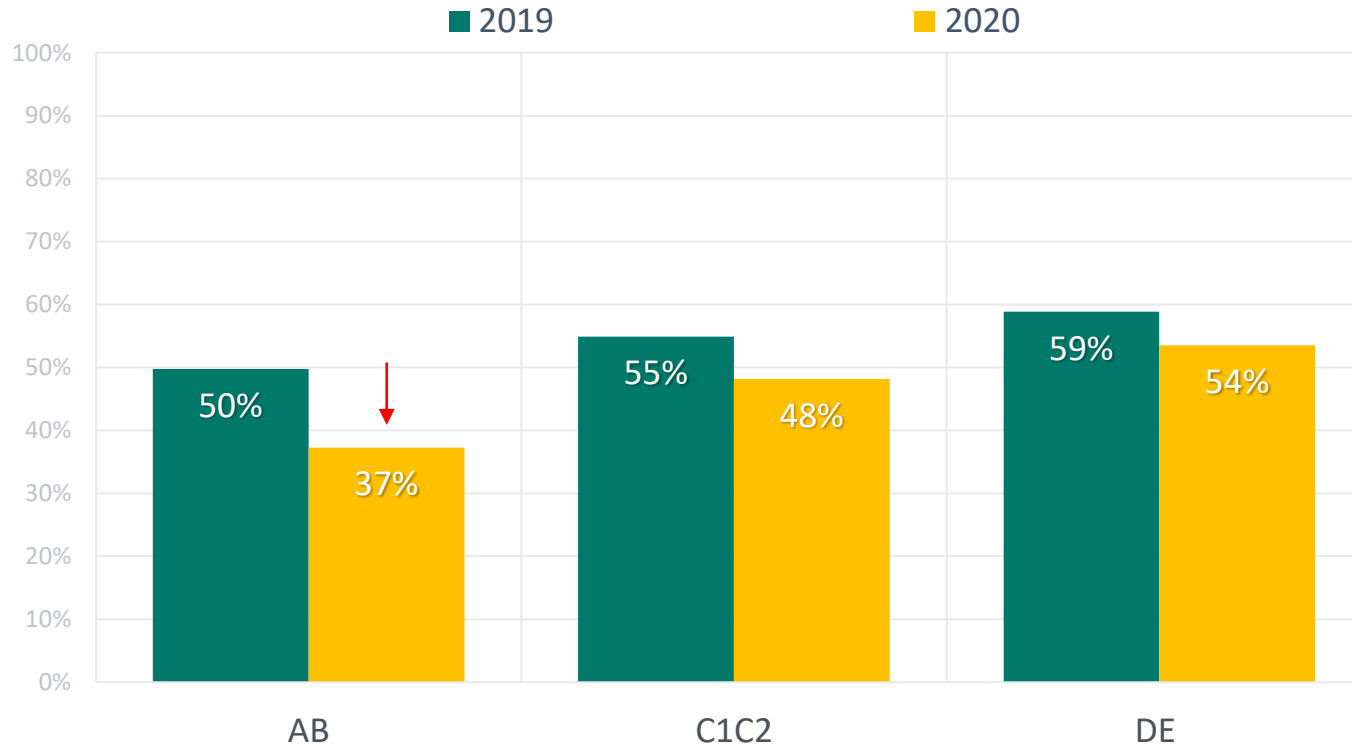
Question: Please select one of the following two options for each social group I'll read out to you;

- 1) I wouldn't want my children to be friends with people in this group
- 2) I would be OK with my children being friends with people in this group

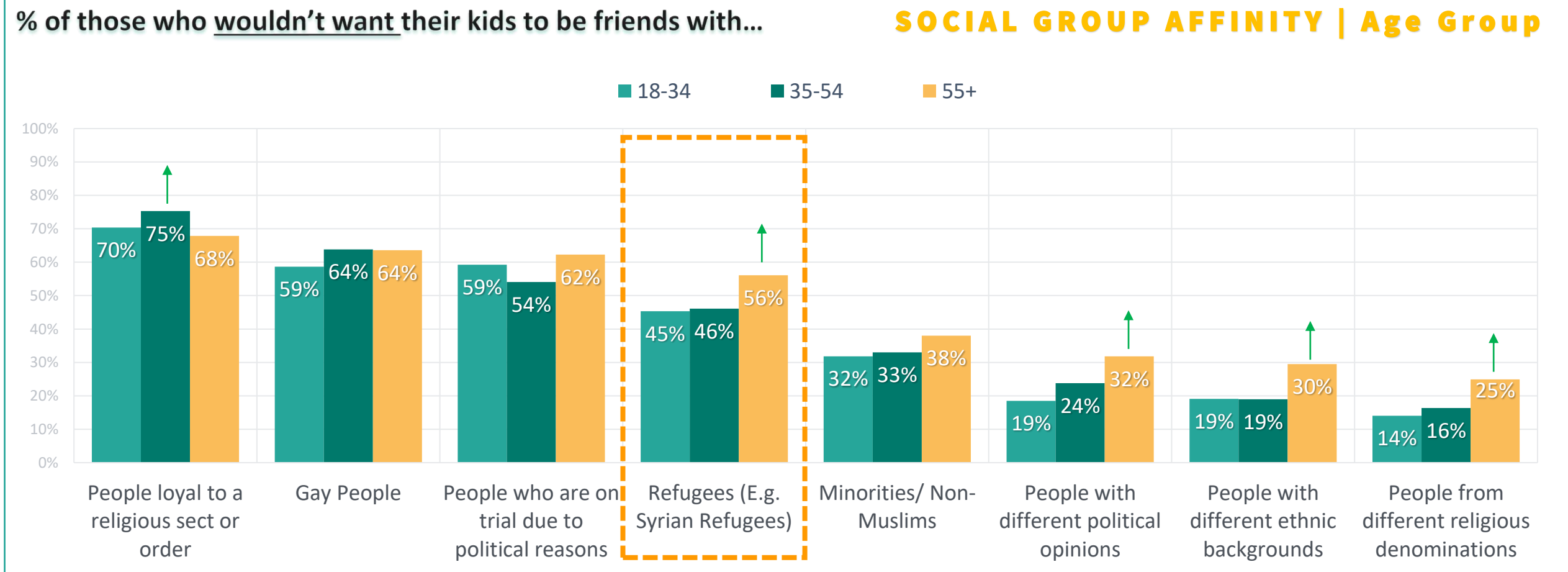
Negative perceptions of all SES groups have gone down since last year but the greatest change is in the AB SES group.

May'19 vs Mar '20

% of those who wouldn't want their kids to be friends with **REFUGEES**



Mar '20



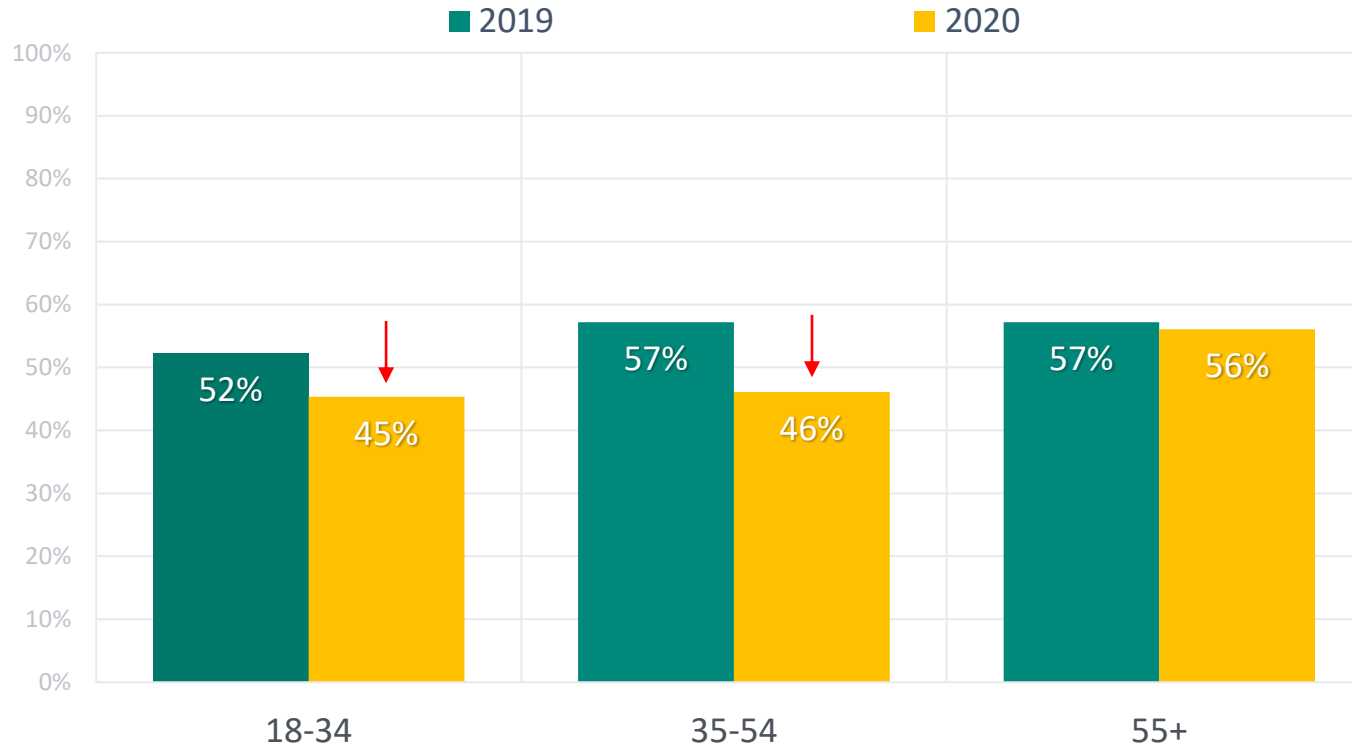
Question: Please select one of the following two options for each social group I'll read out to you;

- 1) I wouldn't want my children to be friends with people in this group
- 2) I would be OK with my children being friends with people in this group

Perception toward refugees remained stable among older people yet it improved in the 18-34 and 35-54 age groups.

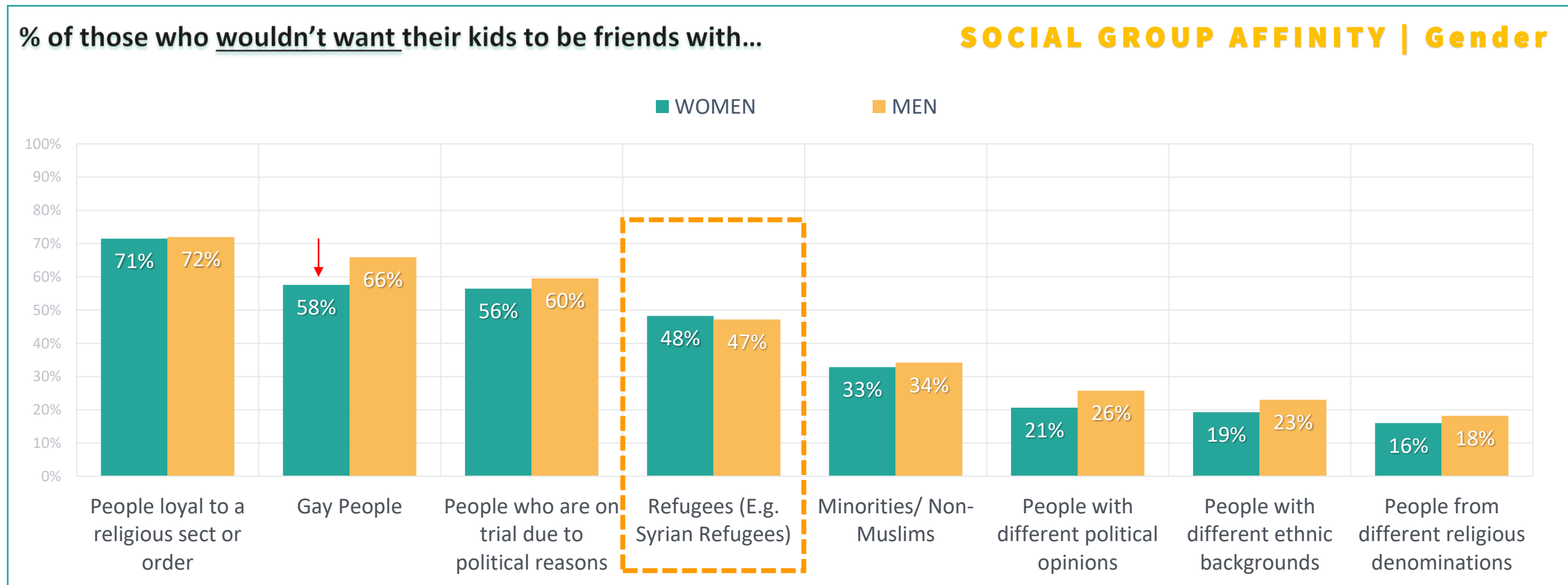
May'19 vs Mar '20

% of those who wouldn't want their kids to be friends with **REFUGEES**



There is no differentiation between women and men with respect to their perceptions of refugees.

Mar '20



Question: Please select one of the following two options for each social group I'll read out to you;

- 1) I wouldn't want my children to be friends with people in this group
- 2) I would be OK with my children being friends with people in this group



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ATTITUDES TOWARDS SYRIANS





While reading the findings of this study, it would also be appropriate to remember that the Mar'20 fieldwork of the research has coincided with the timing of Operation Spring Shield which took place in Feb-March 2020.

- Although a decrease compared to the previous year, a significant part of the society still thinks that Syrians should return to Syria. Surprisingly, those who agreed more were those who knew a Syrian person. As the level of education increases, the rate of those who think that Syrians should return to their homeland increases. In parallel with the education level, the AB SES Group supports the return of Syrians to their home country more.
- On the other hand, the perception of Syrians are more prone to crime than others drop, which could be said to be a positive improvement. Yet, the perception of Turkey's

“welcoming stance is an exemplary humanitarian stand” is significantly weakening.

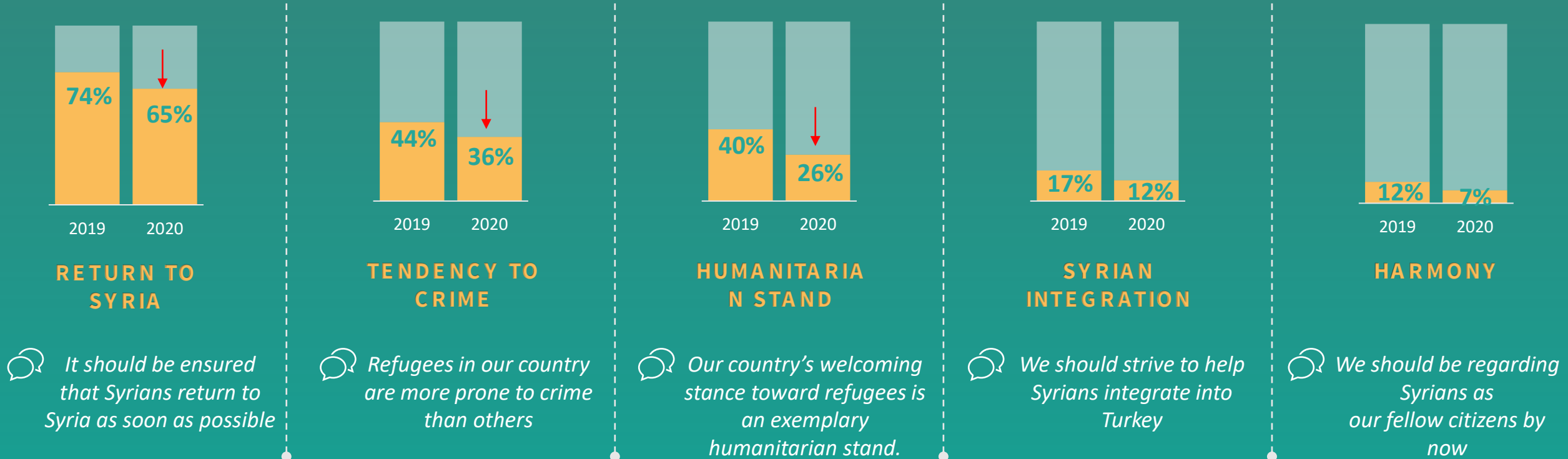
- In parallel, the majority of society disagrees with the statement that “we should strive to help Syrians integrate into Turkey” and “we should be regarding Syrians as our fellow citizens by now”.
- Although the overall approach of the society to Syrian people is more positive than the previous year, it can be said that society is still resistant to being in harmony with Syrians and accepting their presence. The discourse changes in the policies that the government has applied regarding the Syrians at the time of the research may also have an impact on this.

Despite a decline since last year, there is still strong agreement with the statement that Syrians should return to Syria. Agreement with the statements, «Syrians are more prone to crime» and «Turkey's welcoming stance is exemplary» have also declined significantly.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS SYRIANS

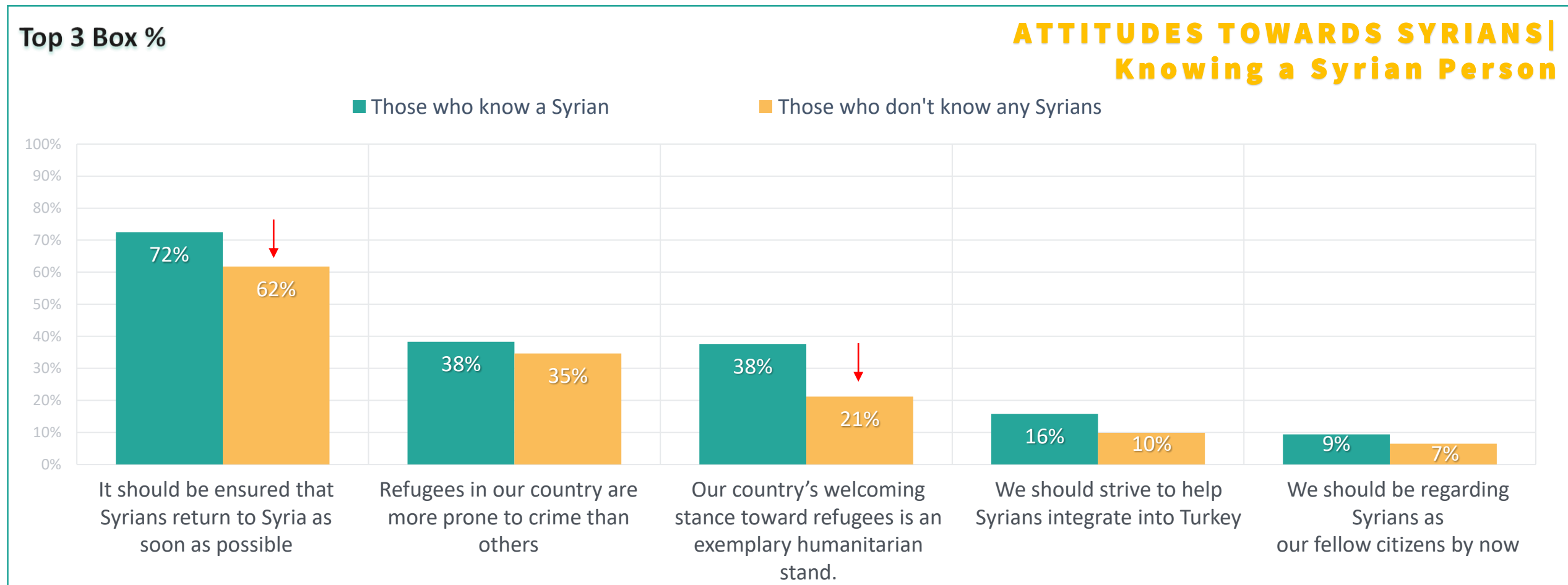
The fieldwork period coincided with the timing of Operation Spring Shield which took place in Feb-March 2020.

Top-3-Box: % of those who strongly agree with the statement (a rating of 8, 9 or 10);



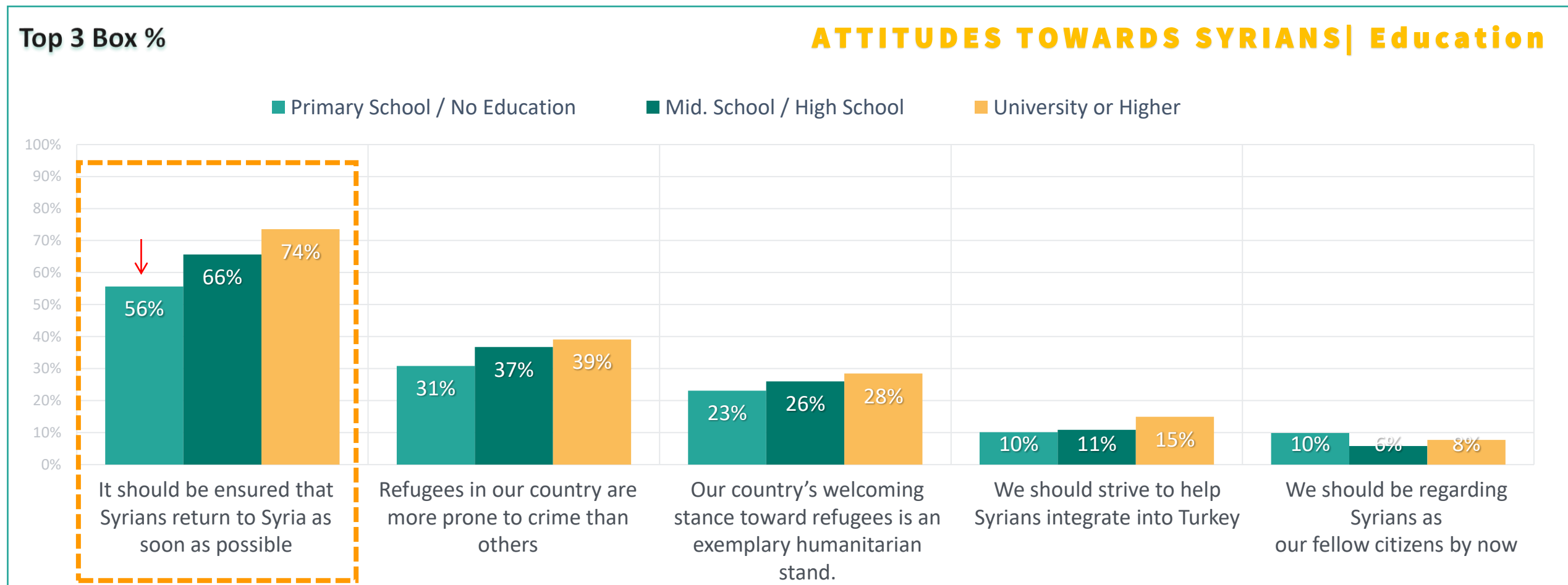
Those who know at least one Syrian person tend to view "return of Syrians to Syria" and "Turkey's welcoming stance toward refugees" more positively.

Mar '20



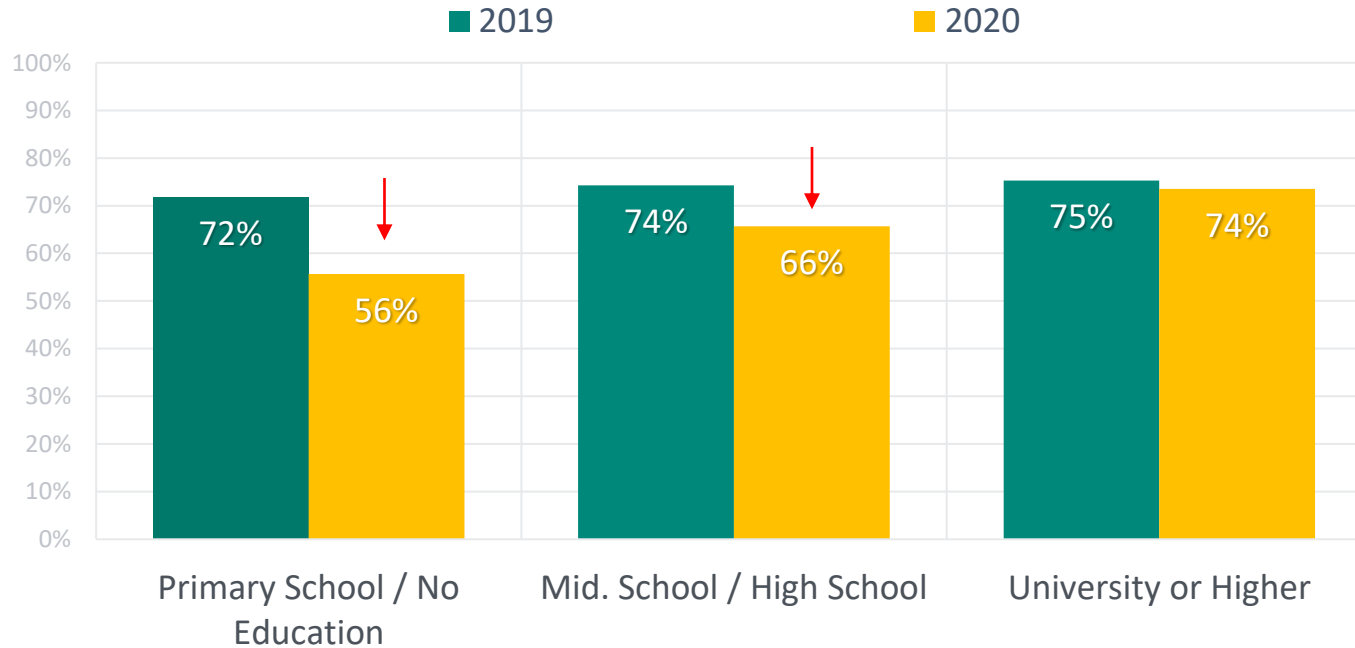
Those with university degrees or higher have higher agreement with the statement that Syrians should return to Syria. Otherwise no significant differences with respect to education.

Mar '20



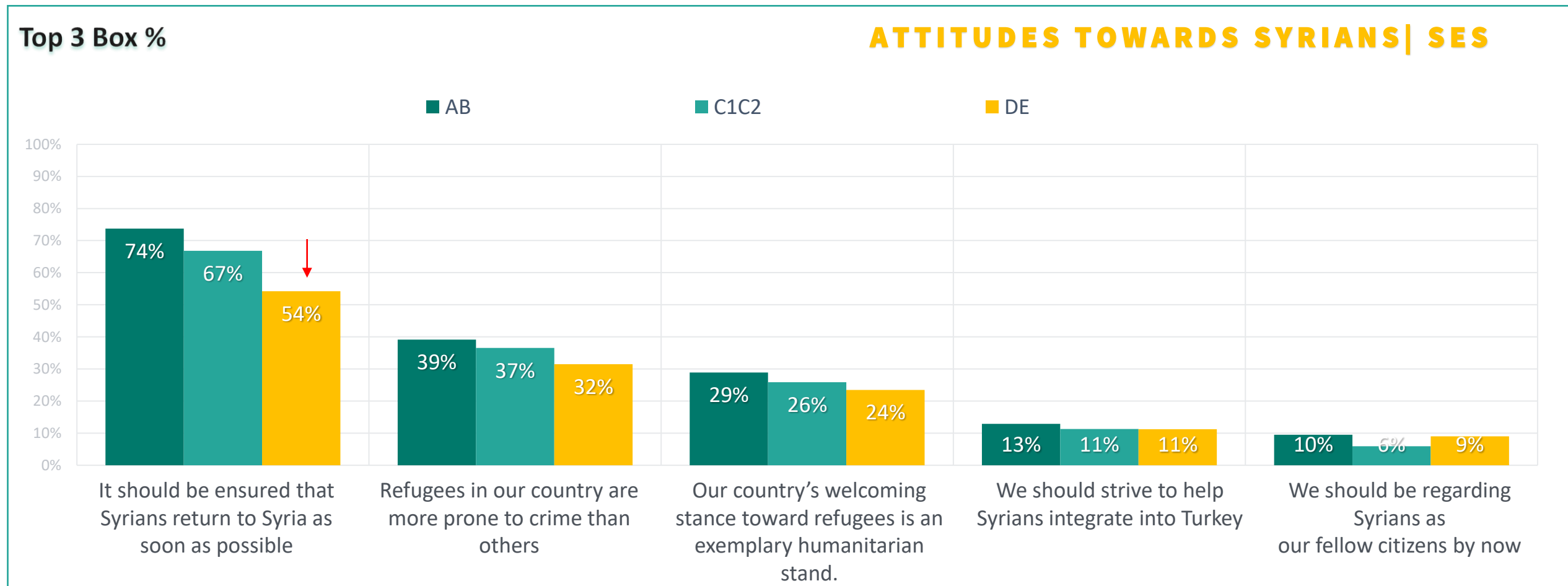
May'19 vs Mar '20

Top 3 Box % *"It should be ensured that Syrians return to Syria as soon as possible"*



Higher SES Groups have higher tendency to agree with the statement Syrians should return to Syria. Otherwise no significant differences with respect to SES Groups.

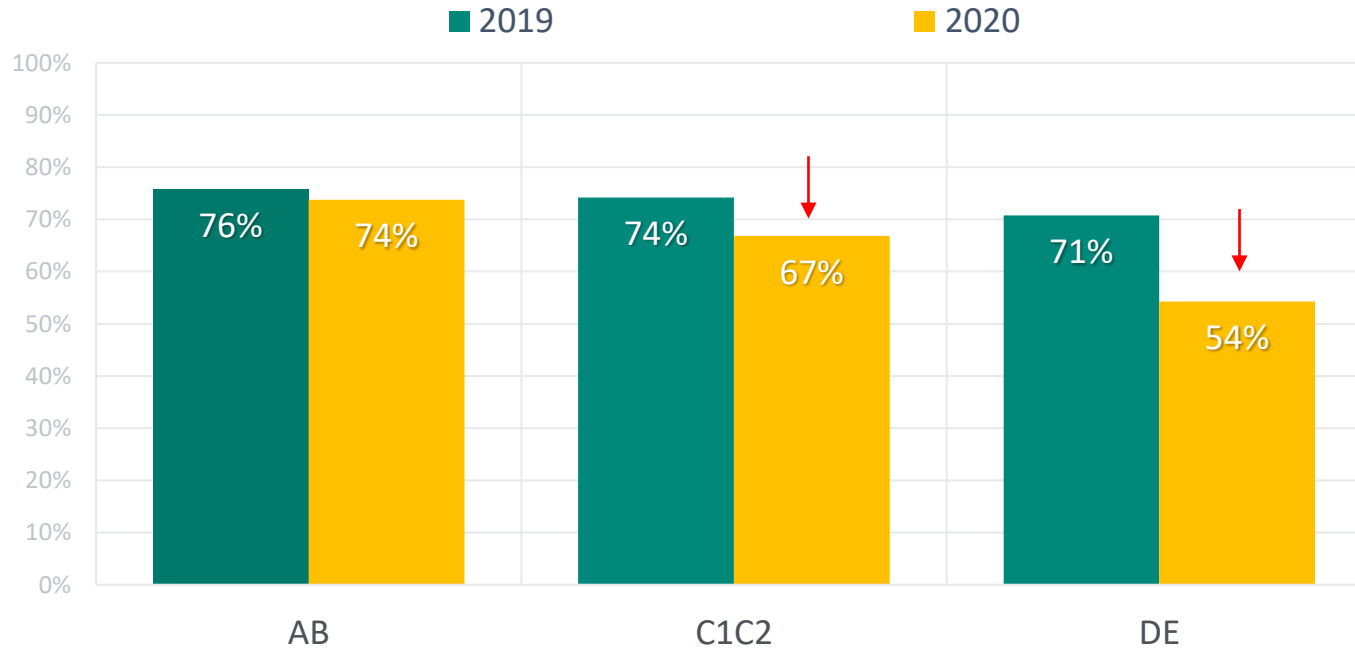
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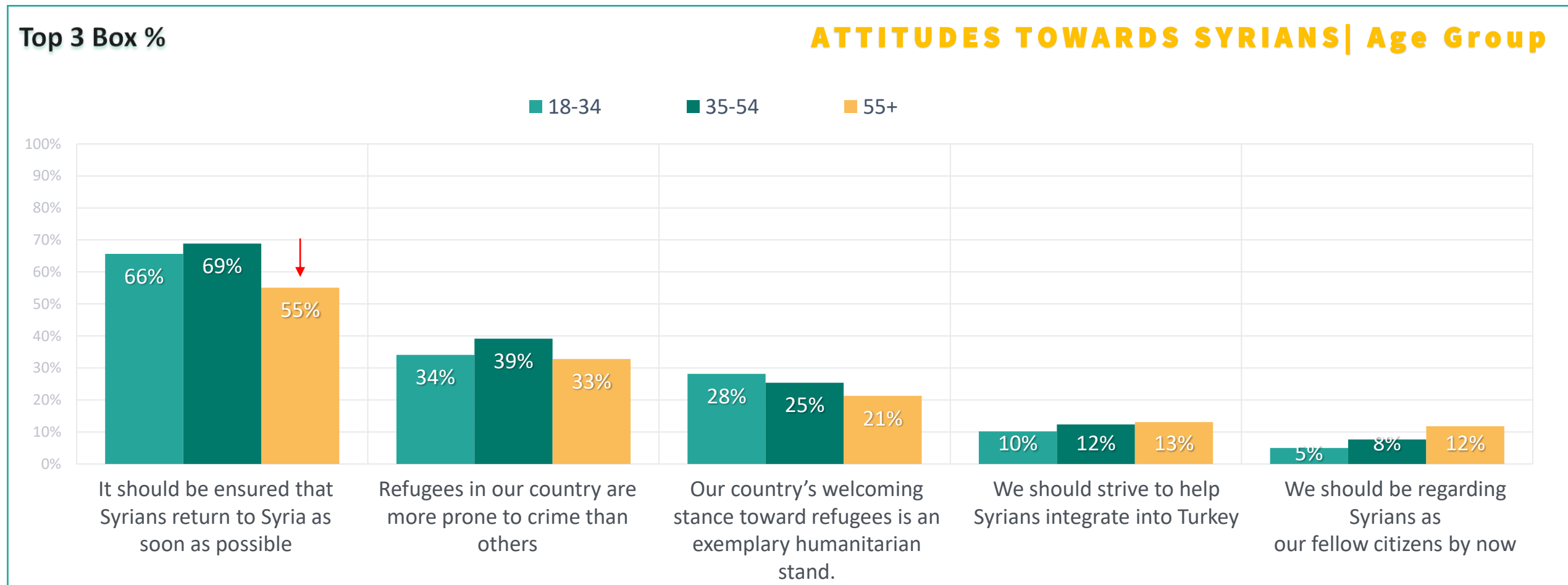
The perception among lower SES groups that Syrians should return to Syria is weakening compared to the previous wave.

May'19 vs Mar '20

Top 3 Box % *"It should be ensured that Syrians return to Syria as soon as possible"*

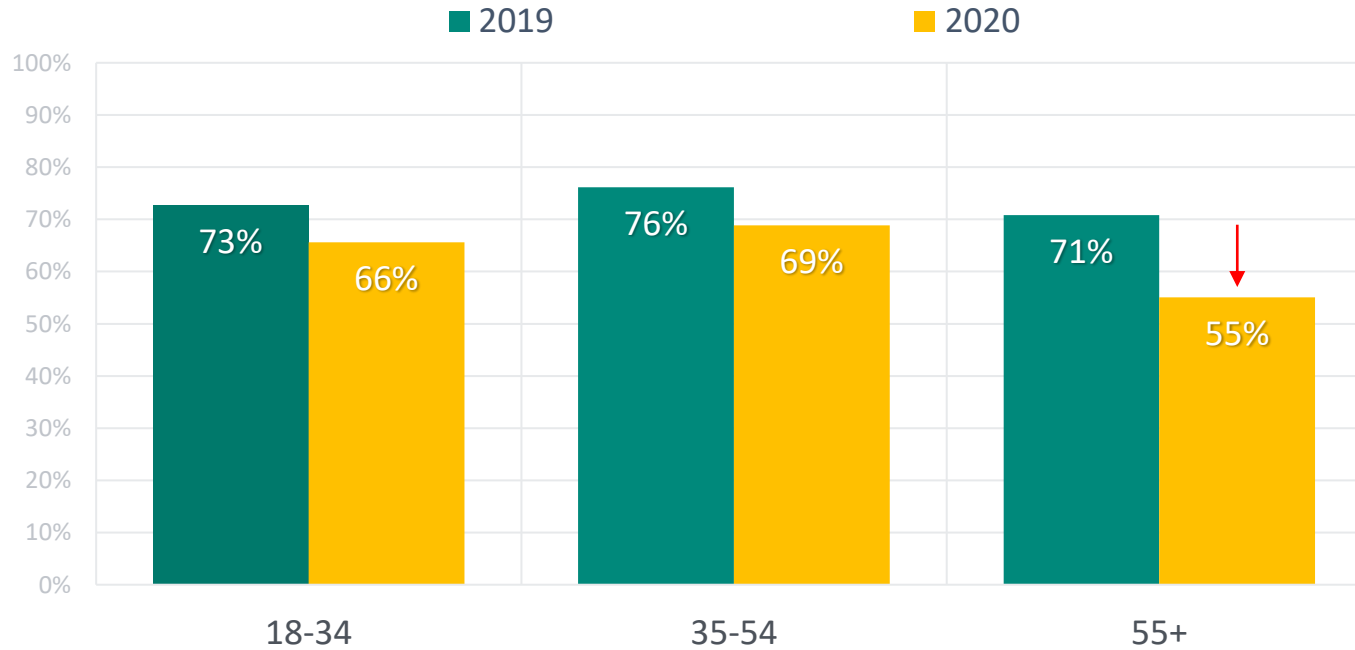


Mar '20

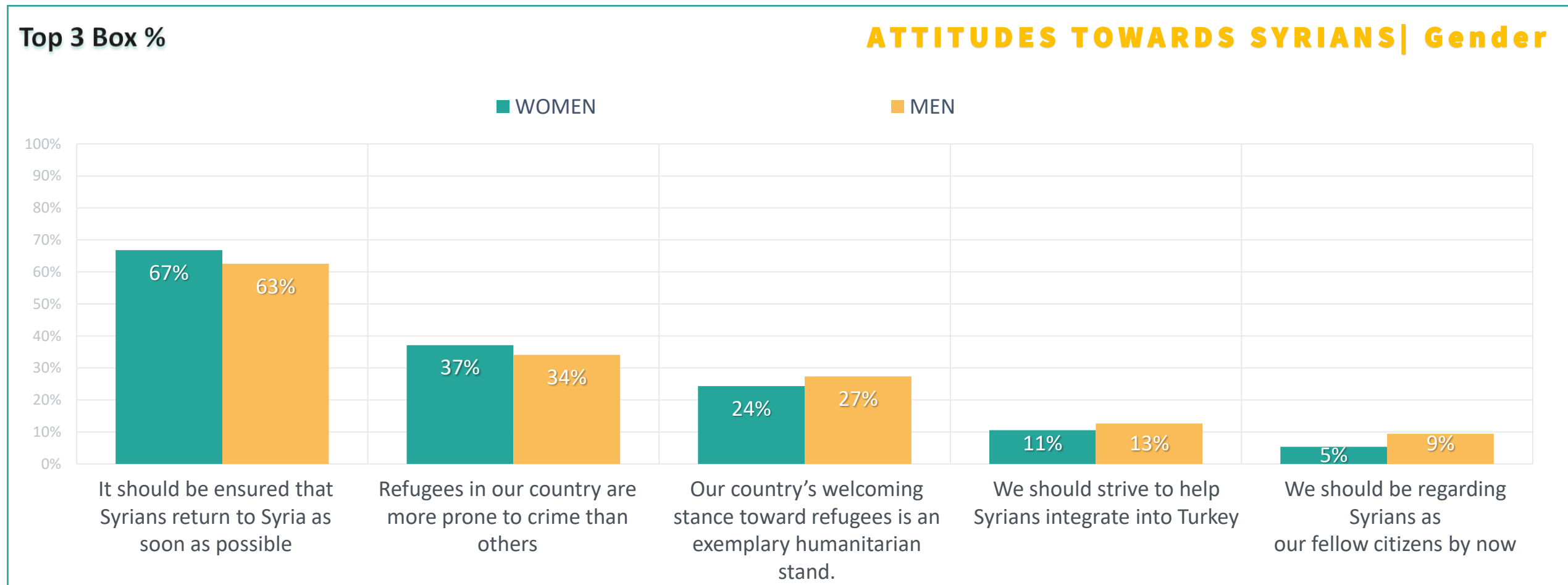


May'19 vs Mar '20

Top 3 Box % *"It should be ensured that Syrians return to Syria as soon as possible"*

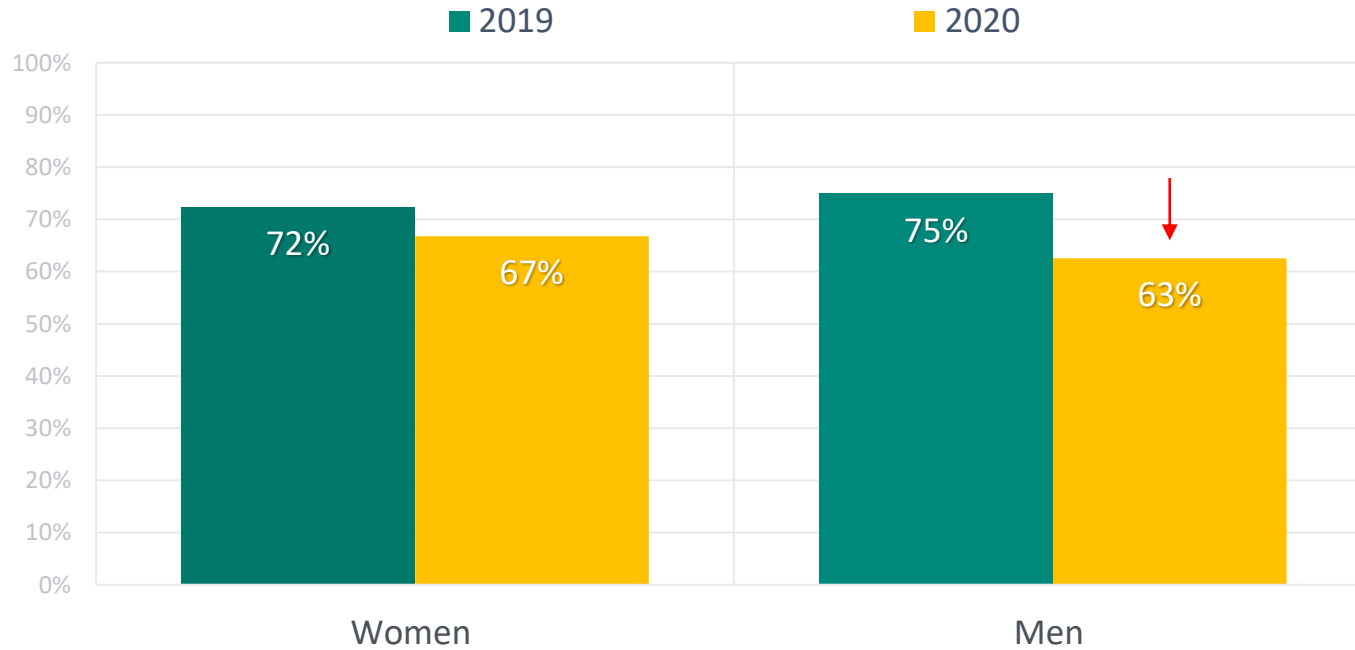


Mar '20



May'19 vs Mar '20

Top 3 Box % *"It should be ensured that Syrians return to Syria as soon as possible"*

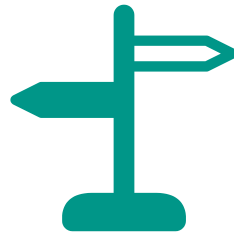




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MYTH vs. TRUTH



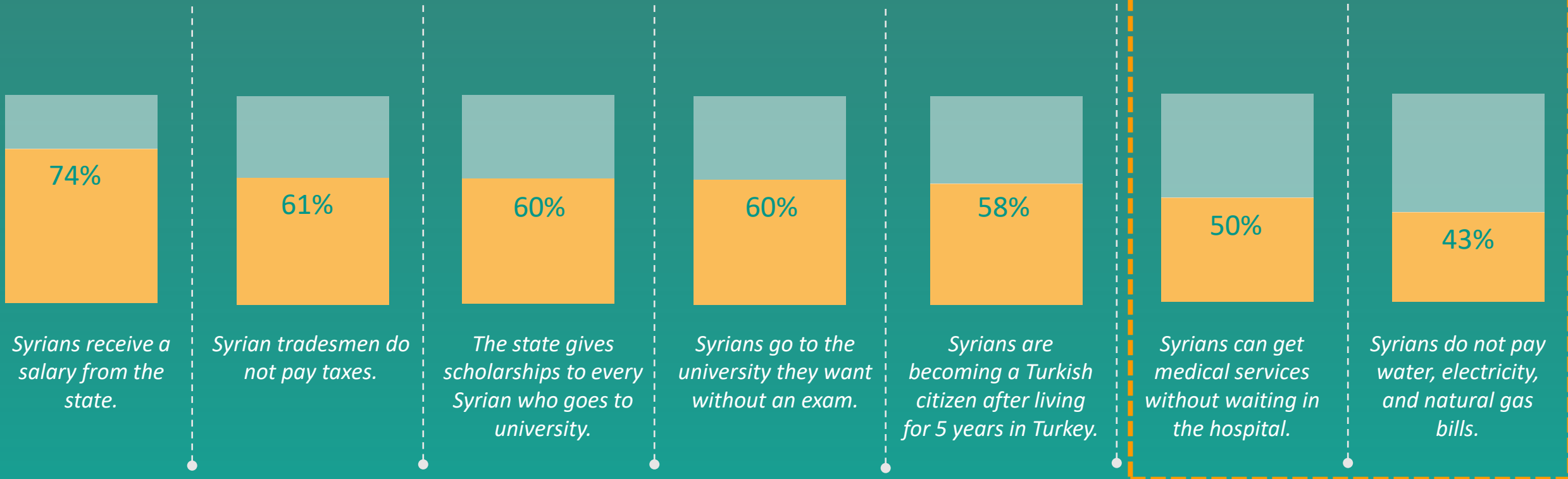


- There seems to be quite a lot and common misperceptions in the society regarding the humanitarian aid provided to refugees. Moreover, there is no difference in many issues between those who know a Syrian person and those who do not. The differentiation between these two groups shows itself only in everyday matters such as medical services and bill payment.
- The falsest notion in society is about the “Syrians getting a salary from the state”. Three out of every four people think that Syrians receive salaries from the state.
- Three out of every five people in society believe that “Syrian tradesmen do not pay taxes”, “the state gives scholarships to every Syrian who goes to university”, “Syrians go to the university they want without an exam”, and “Syrians are becoming a Turkish citizen after living for 5 years in Turkey”. Probably since these are very specific matters, misconceptions do not differ depending on whether there is a Syrian acquaintance.
- However, awareness is higher on issues that are more related to everyday life such as the “Syrians can get medical services without waiting in the hospital” and “Syrians do not pay water, electricity, and natural gas bills”. There are clear differences in these issues between those who know and do not know a Syrian person in the community.

There seems to be quite a lot and common misperceptions in the society regarding the aids provided to refugees. The falsest notion in society is about the “Syrians getting a salary from the state”.

MYTH vs. TRUTH

% of those who believe it's true that



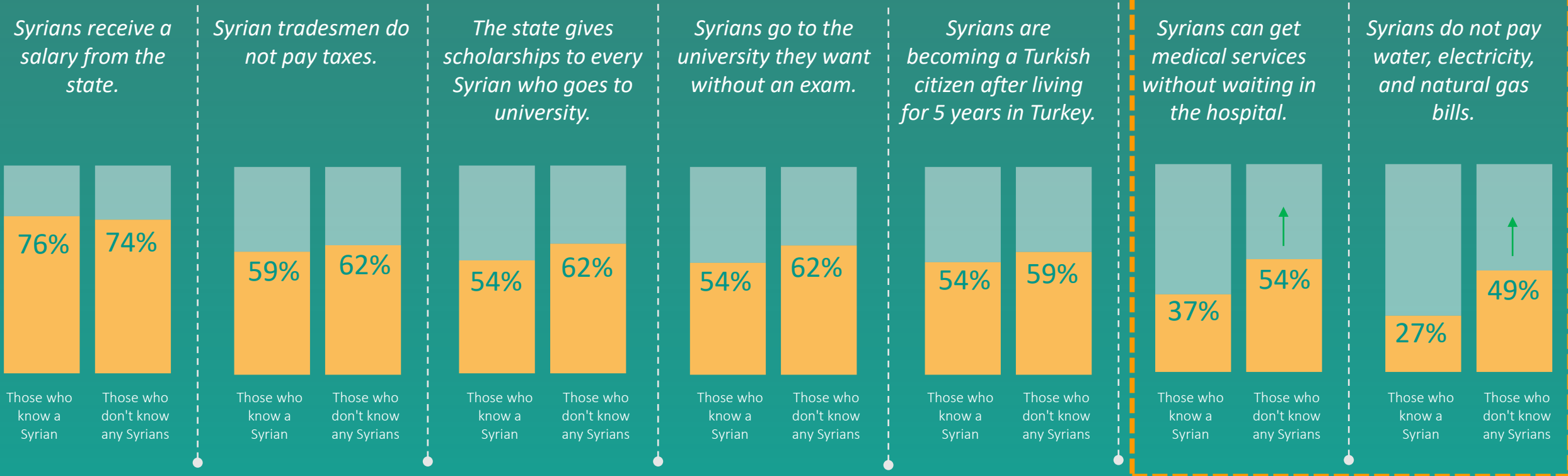
Question: Do you think these statements are true or false?

1) True / Real 2) False 3) No answer

The society tends to believe in misconceptions about Syrians, regardless of whether they have a Syrian acquaintance or not. The level of awareness of those who have Syrian acquaintance is only higher in terms of health issues and bill payments.

MYTH vs. TRUTH

% of those who believe it's true that

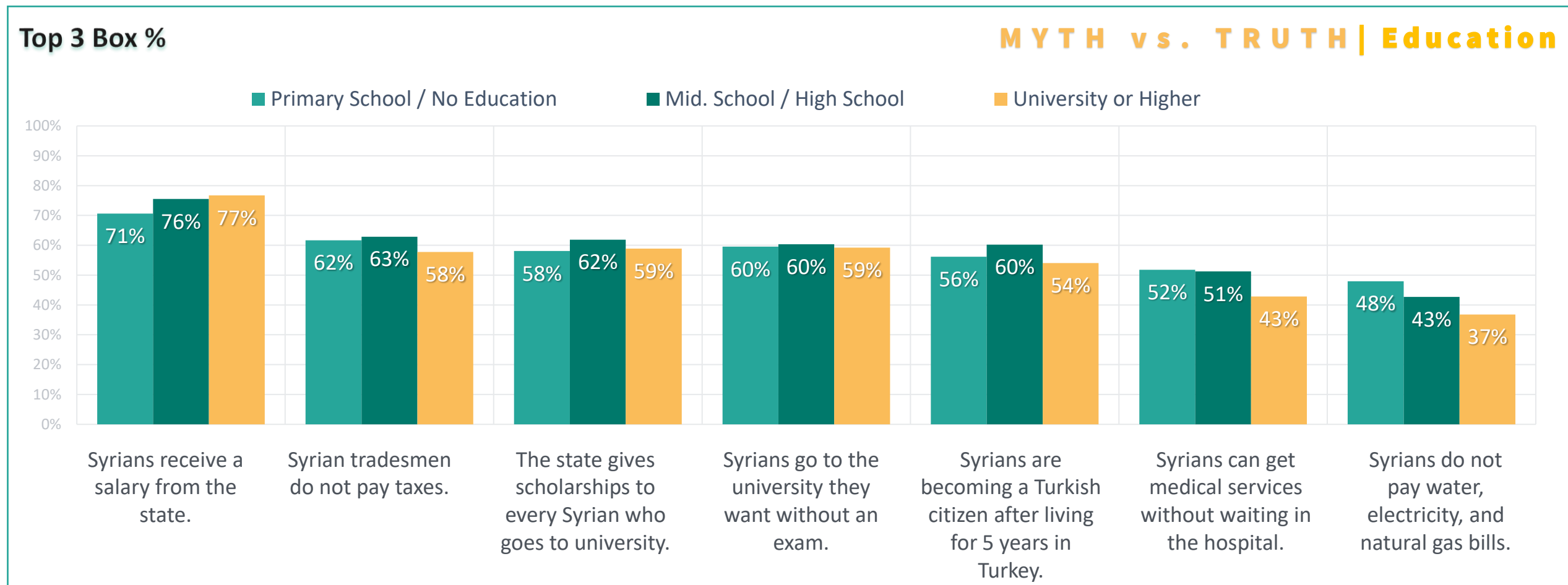


Question: Do you think these statements are true or false?

1) True / Real 2) False 3) No answer

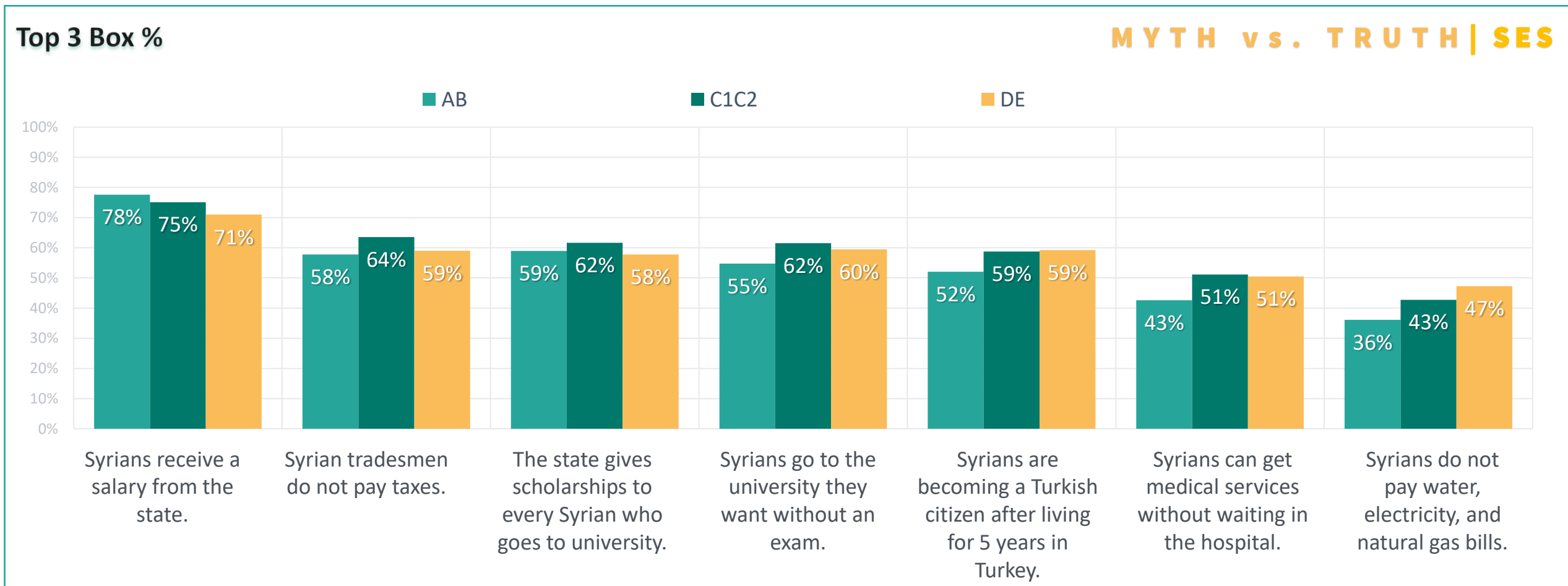
The level of awareness of those with university degrees or higher is more eminent in terms of medical services provided and bill payments.

Mar '20

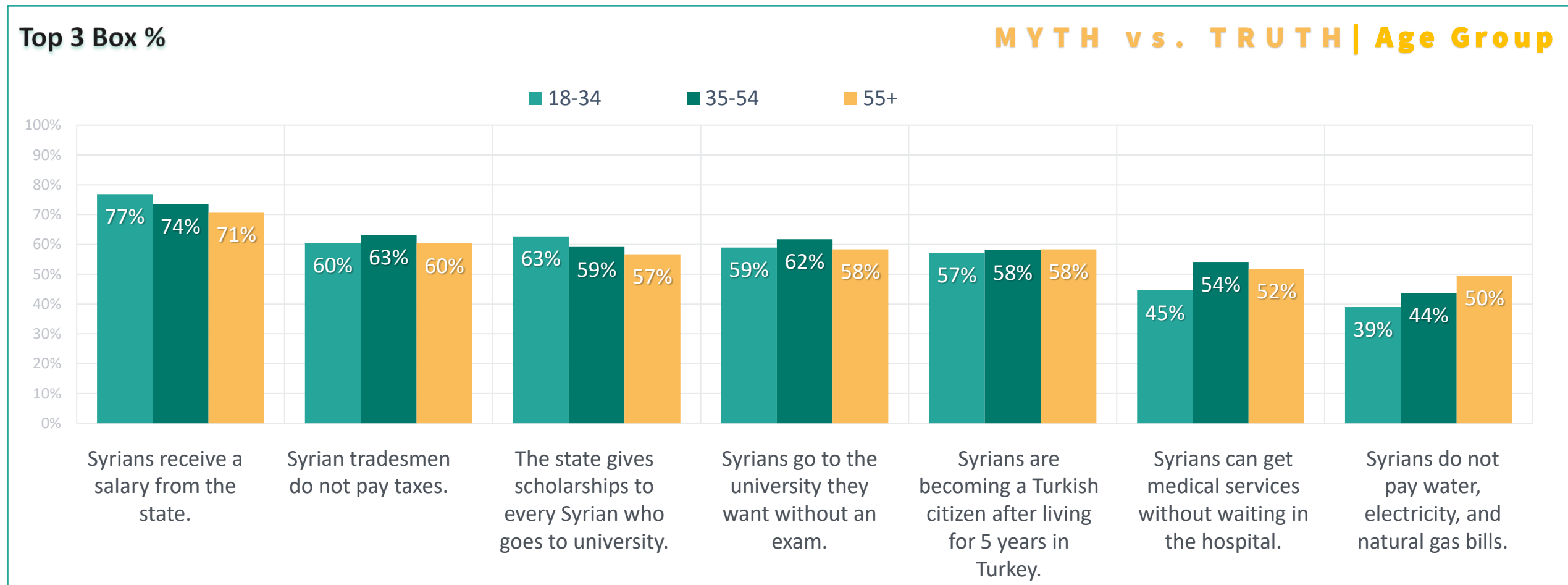


Question: Do you think these statements are true or false?
1) True / Real 2) False 3) No answer

Mar '20

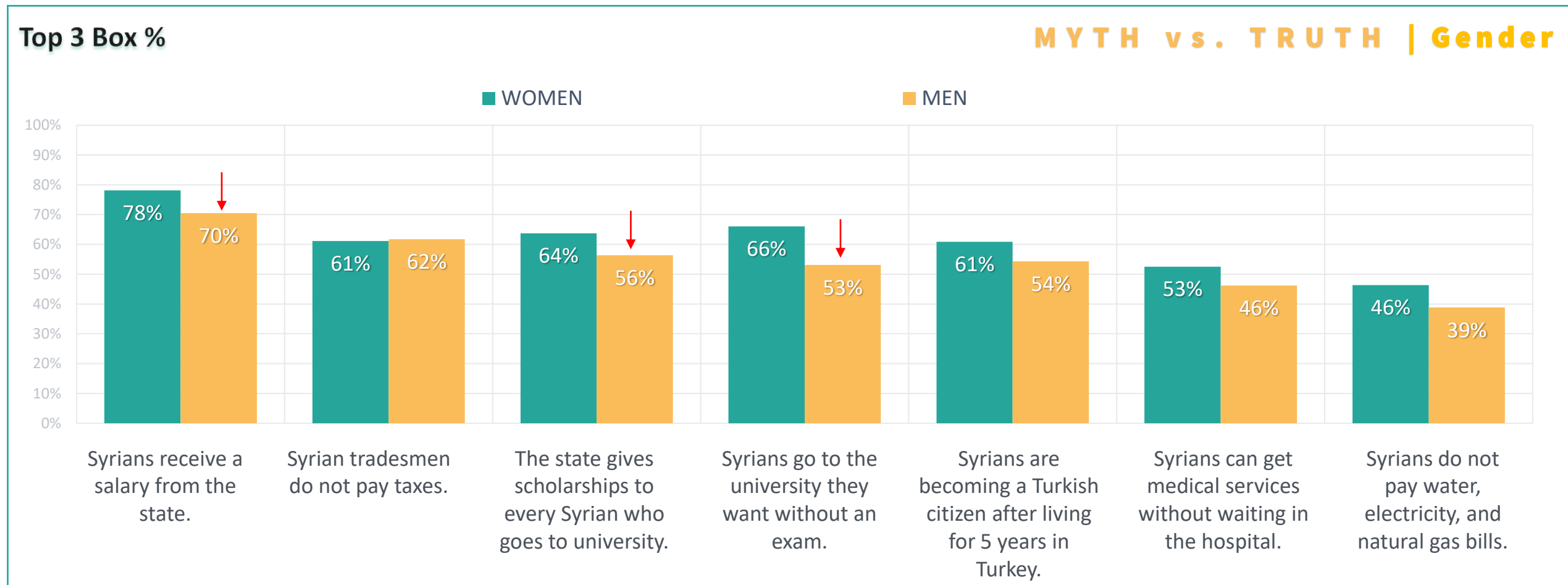


Mar '20





Mar '20



SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS



The perception of «tension» and the «social affinity» increased. The weakening of the perception of refugees are being more prone to crime may have a positive effect on the increase of social affinity between Turks and Syrians.

Furthermore, *those who know a Syrian person are more tolerant* in terms of social affinity. In this regard, it may be effective that *those are more aware of the issues which are related to everyday life* such as medical services provided to refugees and bill payments.

- ***This indicates the importance of being transparent in operating the refugee policies.***

On the other hand, when interpreting these outcomes, it would also be appropriate to remember the notable changes in the policy on Syrians pursued by Turkey. Developments such as the refugees being a subject in the EU-TR negotiations, statements regarding Syrian foreigners who are under temporary protection but not registered in the Istanbul province to return to the provinces they are registered and affirmations that illegal migrants will be deported seems to have softened the tension; especially among lower SES groups.

- *We should strive to help Syrians integrate into Turkey (17% vs 12%)*
- *We should be regarding Syrians as our fellow citizens by now (12% vs 7%)*

It needs to be kept in mind that the society shows serious resistance to the integration of Syrians with the society and regarding Syrians as our fellow citizens.

- *It is essential for all parties to develop a healthy communication strategy, which encompasses transparency, to enhance the resilience of the Turkish society.*
- *It is important for politicians and public figures to always adopt a conciliatory language on refugee-related issues to both reduce tension and increase the affinity between Turks and Syrians.*
- *To increase the effectiveness of the harmonization process CSOs and related bodies may cooperate with central and local authorities as well as opinion leaders.*

People believe it is true that:

- *“Syrians receive a salary from the state” by 76%*
- *“Syrian tradesmen do not pay taxes” by 59%*
- *“Syrians are becoming a Turkish citizen after living for 5 years in Turkey” by 54%*

Undoubtedly, the refugee question is directly related to security and economic issues. The widespread wrong perceptions of the society about the aids provided to refugees may be particularly effective in lower SES groups' views about Syrians should return to Syria as soon as possible.

- ***Applying policies in a transparent way regarding the aids provided to Syrians and especially the source of the aids can be effective in easing the tension between Turks and Syrians.***

APPENDIX



“Syrians receive a salary from the state”

People under temporary protection or international protection who meet certain conditions are given a 120 TRY monthly, financed by the European Union, called Social Cohesion Assistance (SUY). This money is delivered to those in need with the Turkish Red Crescent's KIZILAY CARD system. The claim that money is financed by the state or the Red Crescent is unfounded.

Who can get “Kızılaykart SUY”?

- 18-59 years old women who are solitary,
- Seniors 60+years old and solitary,
- Single mothers or fathers who have at least one child under the age of 18,
- Families with one or more disabled individuals with a disability level of 40% or more (the condition of the disability must be documented with a disability report from the authorized state hospital),
- Families with more than 4 children,
- Families with a large number of dependent individuals (children, elderly, disabled).



“Syrian tradersmen do not pay taxes.”

Tax audits are carried out by personnel affiliated with the tax office. Every business enterprise is obliged to pay taxes. If there is a business that runs illegally or does not pay taxes, this is not due to a right granted to them. Syrian tradersmen have neither an exemption nor a privilege regarding tax. The same is true for Syrians or other foreigners, just as a Turkish tradesman has to register in a trade / trades room when he opens a business, if he needs to buy a cash register and invoice his sales.



“Syrians go to the university they want without an exam.”

While state or private universities are recruiting students, they want separate conditions for Turkish students and for foreign students. In order for a Turkish student to go to the university, he / she must take the Higher Education Institutions Exam (YKS) and have a certain score. For foreign students to study at a public university, each university must take the Foreign Student Exam held by itself. Those who want to go to private university must comply with the conditions determined by universities.



“The state gives scholarships to every Syrian who goes to university.”

The Republic of Turkey, gives scholarships to some of the foreigners who want to study in Turkey; however, this scholarship is neither for Syrians, nor for every Syrian who goes to university. A total of 148 thousand to 25 thousand Syrian universities in Turkey are foreign students. Approximately 16.8% (25.000) of foreign students benefit from scholarship opportunities. 5.7% of Syrian students receive scholarships.



“Syrians can get medical services without waiting in the hospital.”

In-hospital outpatient services, the priority of the examination is determined with the circular of the Ministry of Health. According to this circular, Syrians have no legal priority in hospitals. Legal priority is given to emergency cases, patients with disabilities, pregnant women, military personnel in service, relatives of martyrs, veterans and relatives of veterans, patients over 65 years old, and children under seven.



“Syrians are becoming a Turkish citizen after living for 5 years in Turkey”

The conditions regarding how Turkish citizenship is acquired are specified in the Citizenship Law No. 5901. Syrians in Turkey has the status of Temporary Protection. Persons under temporary protection do not have the right to become a Turkish Citizen through 5 years of residence.



“Syrians do not pay water, electricity, and natural gas bills”

The claim that Syrians do not pay electricity, water and natural gas bills was brought forward by sharing a free invoice of a Syrian subscriber on the internet. Since the person named on the invoice was moved from the house, he did not consume water and therefore received an invoice with no amount. Although it says “it is free due to low consumption” on the invoice, this part was trimmed and shared on the internet.

ADRES NO: 2	HELVETIA ALPHATON				
18.08.2018	2018.08.2018			8	
SON OKUMA NO:	25.19.2018			1841	
OKUMA SAATI	10.22.30			598370	
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FATURA KALEMLERİ	BİREY FİYAT	TUTAR	BİREY FİYAT	TUTAR	TOPLAM Tutar
SÜ BEDELİ	3.11	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
ATILMI BEDELİ	11.78	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
K.D.V. %18	(0.00)	K.D.V. %8	(0.00)		
C.T.V. MİSALİYETİ	0.32	C.T.V. BEDELİ	(0.00)		
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SON ÖDEME TARİHİ		11.10.2018			
"SİĞİ ÖNEM BÖLÜCÜ İSTİSNA EDİLMİŞ BÖLÜCÜ 11.10.2018					

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