

VIOLENCE IN DEMOCRACIES

The role of fake news, disinformation and social media

Didier Truchot,
Chairman and Founder, Ipsos

MARCH 16, 2023



© IPSOS Analysis for Les Entretiens de New York





Conspiracy, disinformation, social networks, the new fabric of violence in democracy?

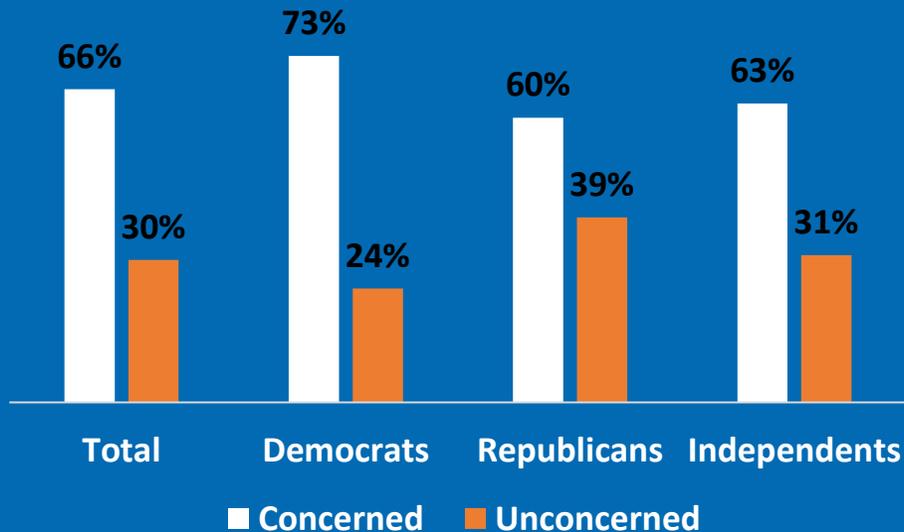
How has violence invaded democracies in recent decades? Has digital become the ultimate mobilization weapon for disinformation and conspiracy? Can we act to combat violence in our democracies? How far can scientific and political discourse be questioned?

VIOLENCE IN DEMOCRACIES: A SOURCE OF CONCERN FOR MOST CITIZENS



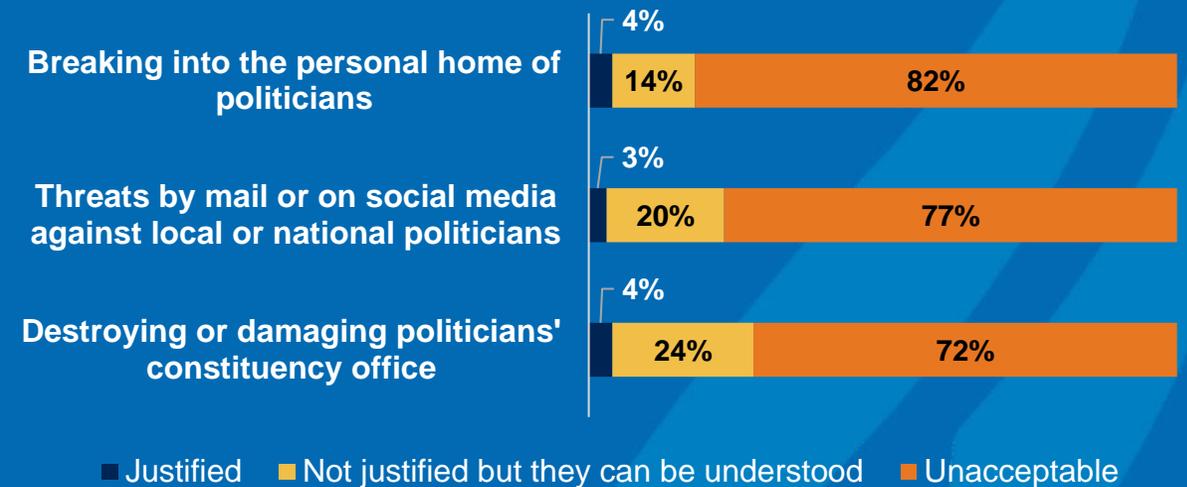
- Both a majority of Democrats (73%) and Republicans (60%) are concerned about acts of violence for political beliefs

Question: Please indicate how concerned you are, if at all, about acts of violence committed against people in your community because of their political beliefs.



- Over three-quarters of people in France say they condemn physical violence targeting elected officials

Question: Would you say the following types of violent acts are ...

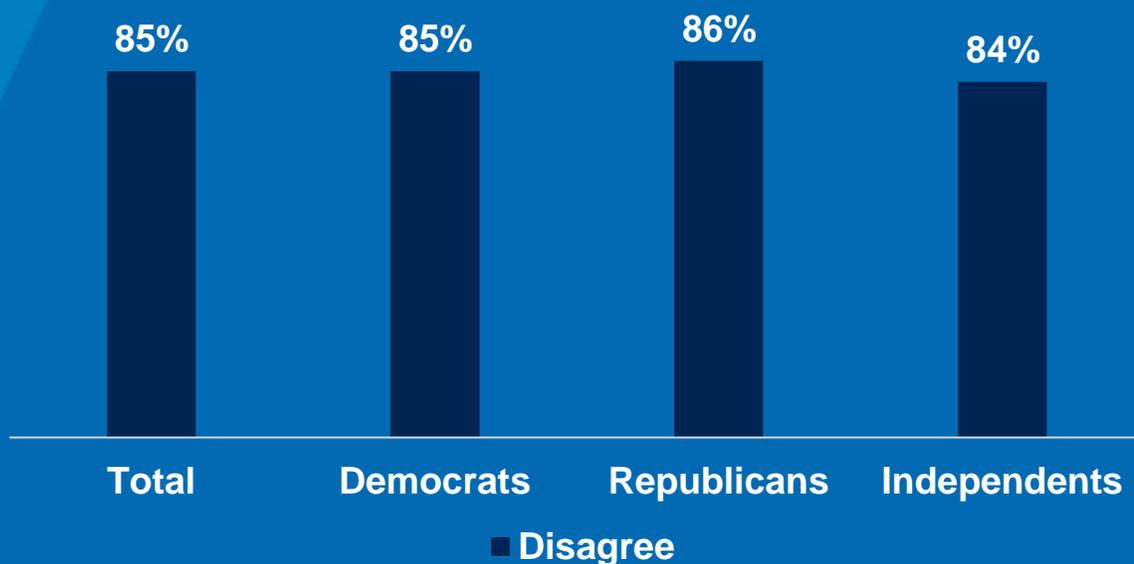


FEW AMERICANS SAY POLITICAL VIOLENCE IS ACCEPTABLE



- 86% consider it is not acceptable for someone in their political party to commit violence to achieve a political goal
- 83% disagree that violent acts are acceptable in order to achieve their idea of a better society
- These are bipartisan views

Question: Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following: It is acceptable for someone in my political party to commit violence to achieve a political goal.



... but are they speaking their minds to pollsters?

FOR THREE-QUARTERS OF FRENCH PEOPLE, VIOLENCE HAS NO PLACE IN THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DEBATE

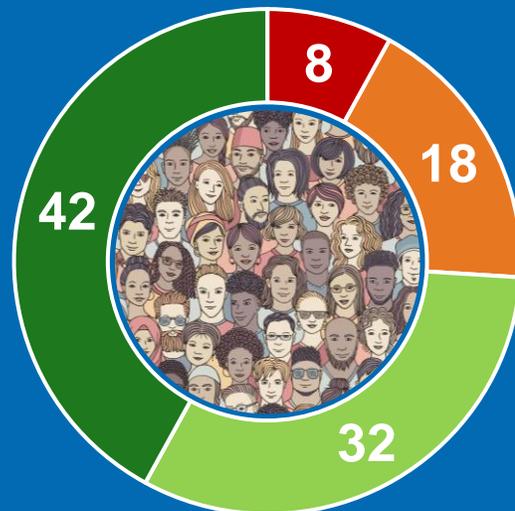


- 74% consider people should not use violence to defend their interests in society

Question: Do you find it acceptable for some people to use violence in order to defend their interests?

NOT ACCEPTABLE: 74%

ACCEPTABLE : 26%



... but a quarter think it can be a legitimate tool

PERFECTLY ACCEPTABLE

RATHER ACCEPTABLE

RATHER NOT ACCEPTABLE

NOT ACCEPTABLE AT ALL

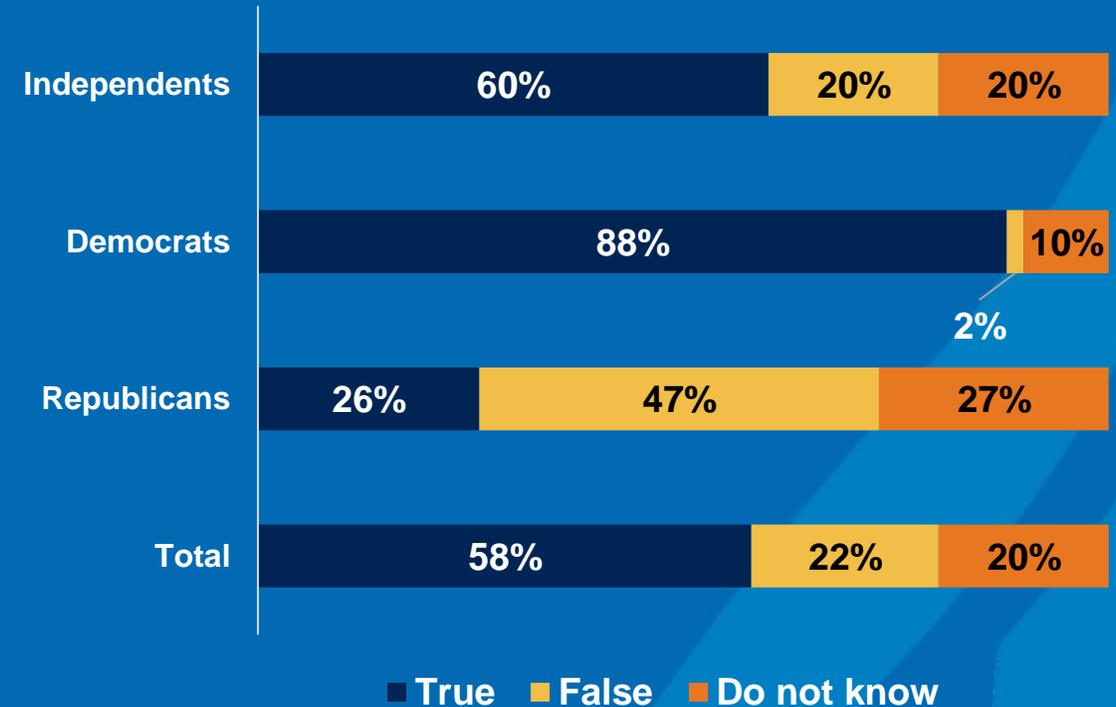
RECOGNIZING FAKE NEWS REMAINS AN ISSUE FOR SECTIONS OF THE POPULATION



Question: To the best of your knowledge, please indicate whether you believe each of the statements below are true or false.

- That's the recurring conclusion of Ipsos's "Perils of Perception" studies – typically on issues like immigration or crime rates, which are regularly misjudged by the population
- Today, significant portions of the American public believe conspiracy theories around Covid, the election, and QAnon
 - Overall, for 9 of 10 statements about widespread conspiracy theories, a majority (at least 53% or more) can identify the correct answers
 - But there is a significant number of people who believe the conspiracy theory or say they do not know (from one-sixth to one-half)

"Joe Biden legitimately won the 2020 presidential election"



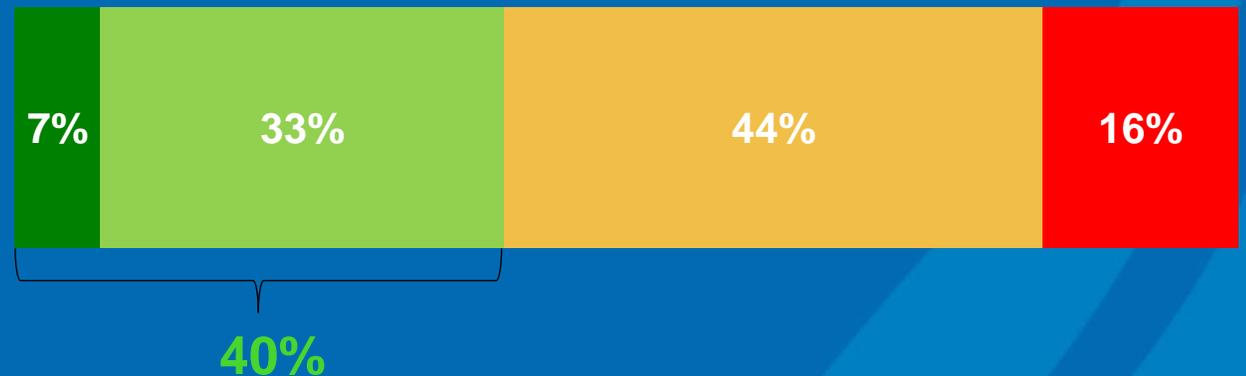
SCIENCE AND FACTS SOMETIMES HAVE A HARD TIME CONVINCING PEOPLE



- 1 person out of 2 in France considers that if a scientist specialising in a given topic demonstrates a scientific fact, this does not mean this fact is correct
- To determine whether a fact is scientifically correct or incorrect, 2 persons out of 5 (40%) trust their personal experience more than explanations from scientists

Question: Does the following statement reflect what you think personally?

When I want to know if a fact is scientifically correct, I trust my own personal experience more than the explanations of scientists.

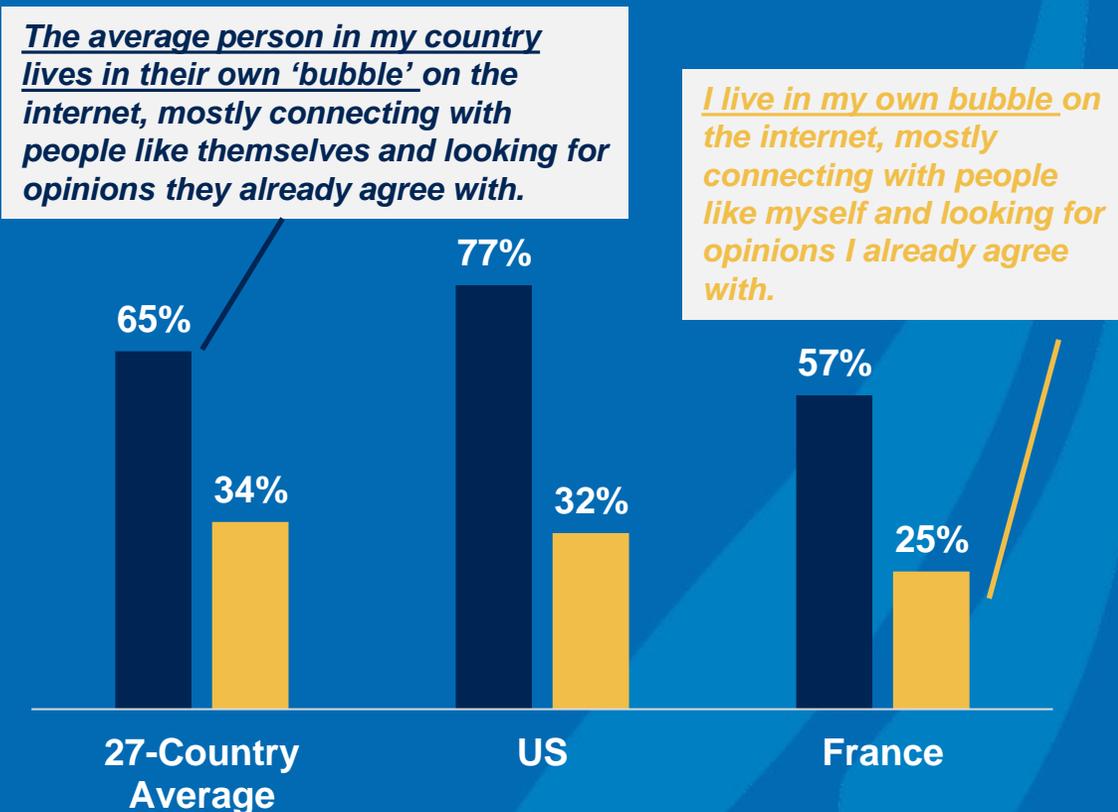


“FILTER BUBBLES” ARE A REALITY – ALL THE MORE AS MANY PEOPLE CONSIDER THEY ARE THEMSELVES IMMUNE TO THIS PHENOMENON



- The majority view is that fake news, post-truth and filter bubbles are other people’s problems, not mine
 - Two-thirds of people think other people live in a bubble on the internet, mostly looking for opinions they already agree with – BUT only one-third say they live in their own bubble (Ipsos poll across 27 countries)
 - Two-thirds are confident they can identify fake news – BUT only 40% think an average person can
 - 58% think they are better than average at spotting fake news, only 28% think they are not
- 60% think other people don’t care about facts anymore, they just believe what they want

Question: Do you agree with the following statements? % Agree.



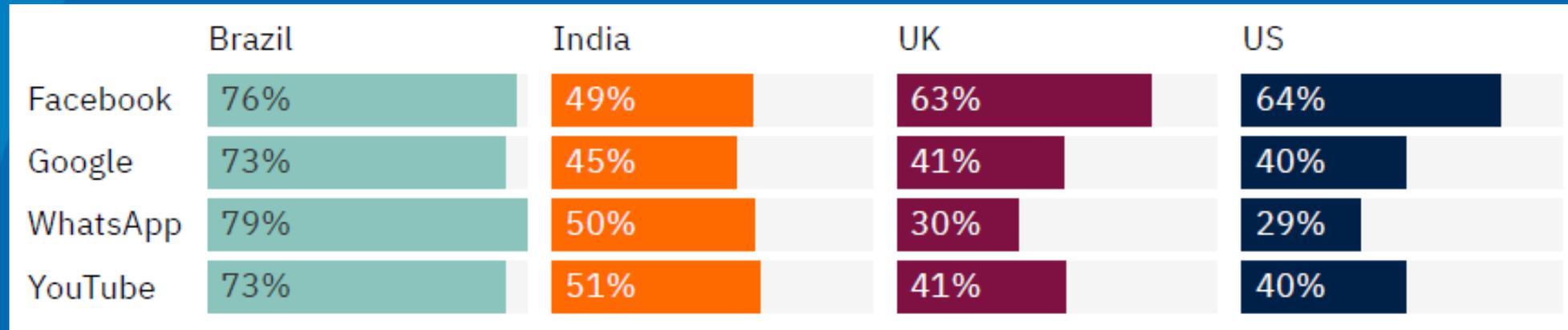
THE MAIN SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS ARE CLEARLY SEEN AS A BREEDING GROUND FOR DISINFORMATION



People agree false or misleading information is a ‘big problem’ across many platforms

Question: How much of a problem, if at all, do you think false or misleading information is when it comes to [Facebook/Google/WhatsApp/YouTube]?

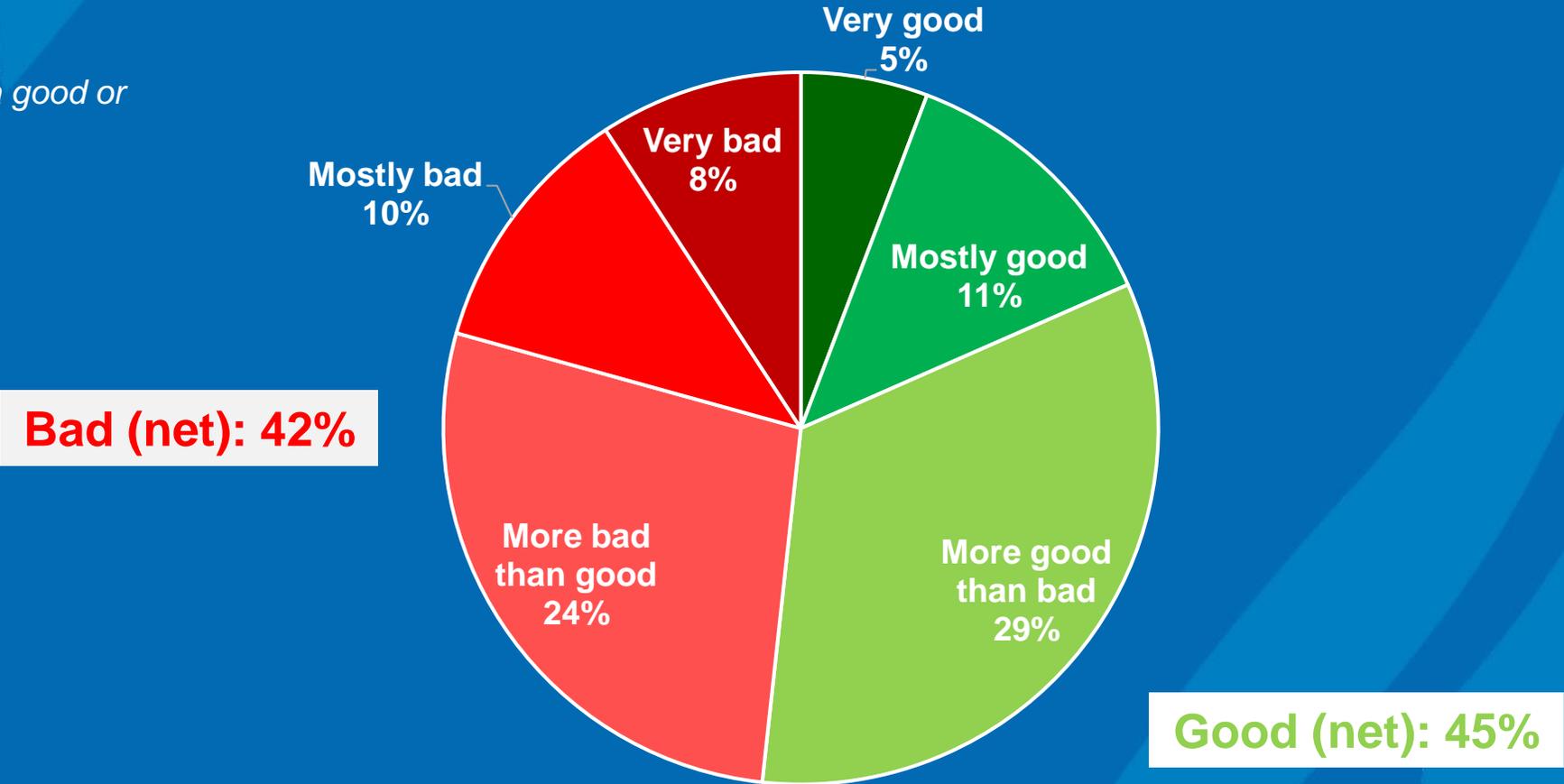
Note: Includes those who said these are ‘A big problem’



... EVEN IF CLOSE TO 1 AMERICAN IN 2 ALSO THINKS SOCIAL MEDIA HAS A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THEIR LIVES



Question: Has social media had a good or bad impact on your life?



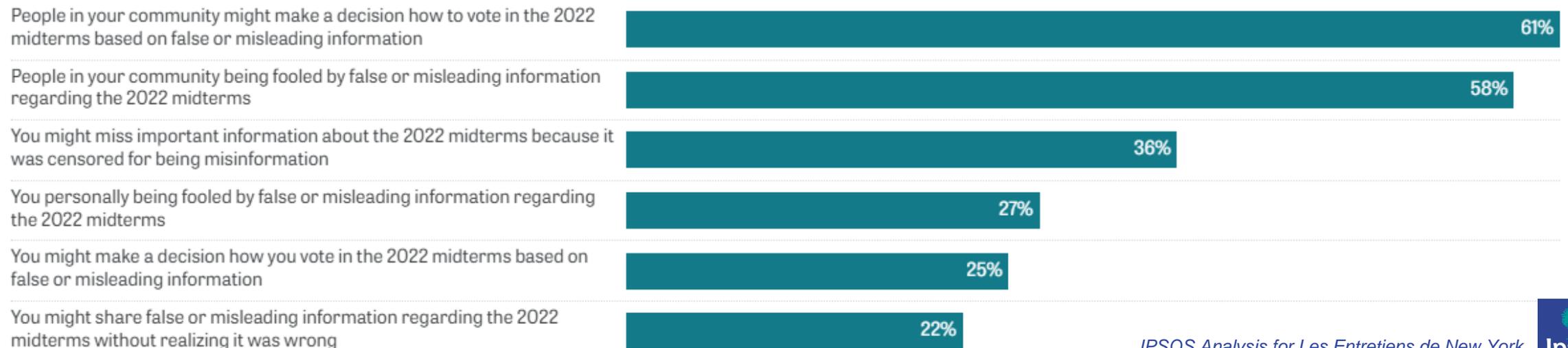
THE POTENTIAL THREAT OF FAKE NEWS TO DEMOCRACY IS CLEAR TO A MAJORITY OF US CITIZENS – BUT NOT TO ALL



- Before the last midterms, **61% of Americans were worried people in their community might decide how to vote based on fake news**
- But fake news remained seen as **other people's problem**: only one in four (25%) felt that they themselves might make a decision on how to vote based on false or misleading information.
- **And there is a significant gap between Democrat and Republican voters**
 - 72% of Democrats and 60% of Independents vs. only 52% of Republicans were worried that people in their community might decide on how to vote based on false or misleading information

Q: How concerned, if at all, about each of the following...

■ % "Very" or "Somewhat" concerned



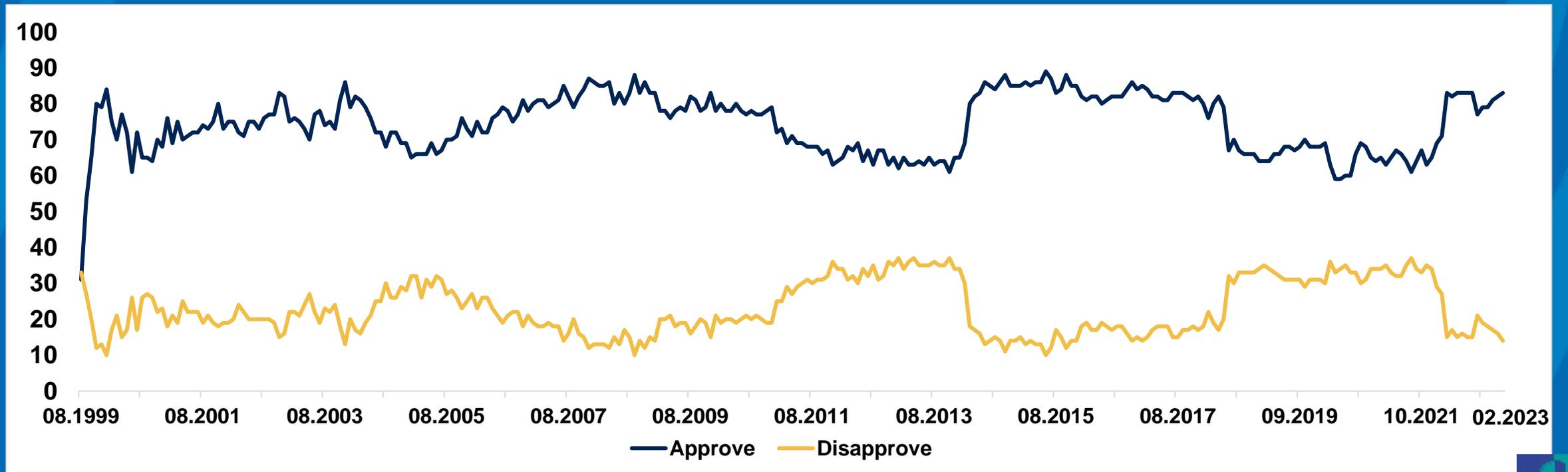
THE POWER OF THE MEDIA REMAINS STRONG



- Poll results in Russia, from relatively independent institutions (Levada Centre), show **majority support for President Putin, including since February 2022**

Vladimir Putin's Approval Ratings

Question: Do you approve the activities of Vladimir Putin as the President (Prime Minister) of Russia?



SOURCES USED IN THIS PRESENTATION

- *Fractures françaises : Vague 10* - Ipsos/Sopra Steria pour Le Monde, la Fondation Jean Jaurès et le Cevipof (France, October 2022)
- Baromètre “Science et société” - Institut Sapiens & Ipsos (France, October 2022)
- The Trust Gap: How and Why News on Digital Platforms Is Viewed More Sceptically Versus News in General - Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, Ipsos (2022)
- Knight Foundation/Ipsos Poll - Freedom of Speech. Using Ipsos’s Knowledge Panel ® (US, October 2022)
- Reuters/Ipsos Poll - Political Violence (US, August 2022)
- Ipsos Poll - Misinformation and Conspiracy Theory Poll (US, January 2022)
- Ipsos Poll - Technology and Society. Conducted on Ipsos’ KnowledgePanel ® (US, October 2021)
- Ipsos Global Advisor Poll - Fake news, filter bubbles, post-truth and trust (27 countries, 2018)
- Levada Centre, President Putin’s Approval Rating (2023)

APPENDIX

VIOLENCE IN DEMOCRACIES

**Insights
from recent Ipsos polls**

MARCH 16, 2023



© IPSOS Analysis for Les Entretiens de New York



**Violence in
democracies:
worrying for
most citizens
– but not
rejected by all**



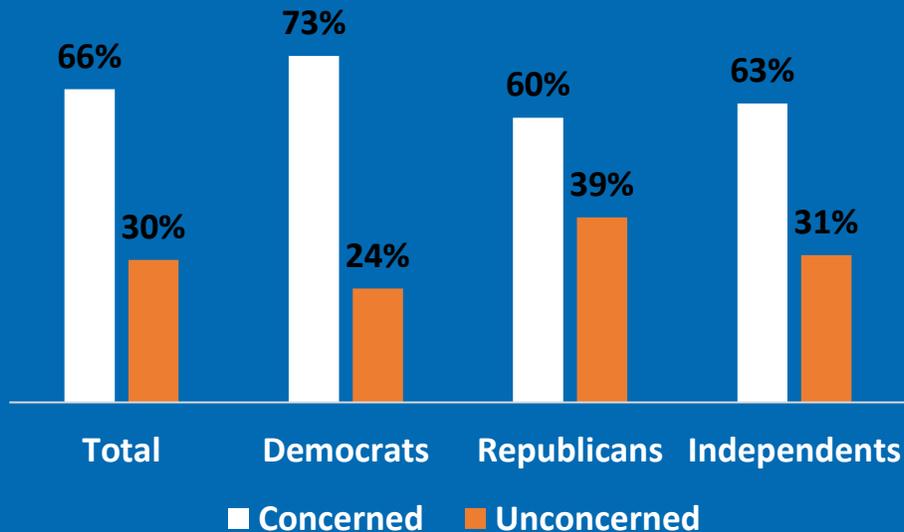
1

VIOLENCE IN DEMOCRACIES: A SOURCE OF CONCERN FOR MOST CITIZENS



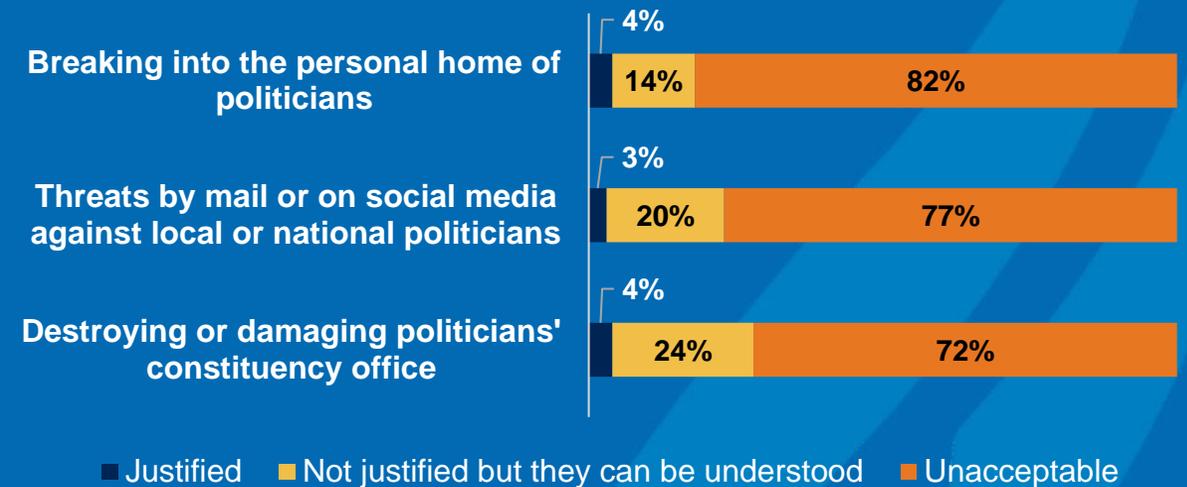
- Both a majority of Democrats (73%) and Republicans (60%) are concerned about acts of violence for political beliefs

Question: Please indicate how concerned you are, if at all, about acts of violence committed against people in your community because of their political beliefs.



- Over three-quarters of people in France say they condemn physical violence targeting elected officials

Question: Would you say the following types of violent acts are ...

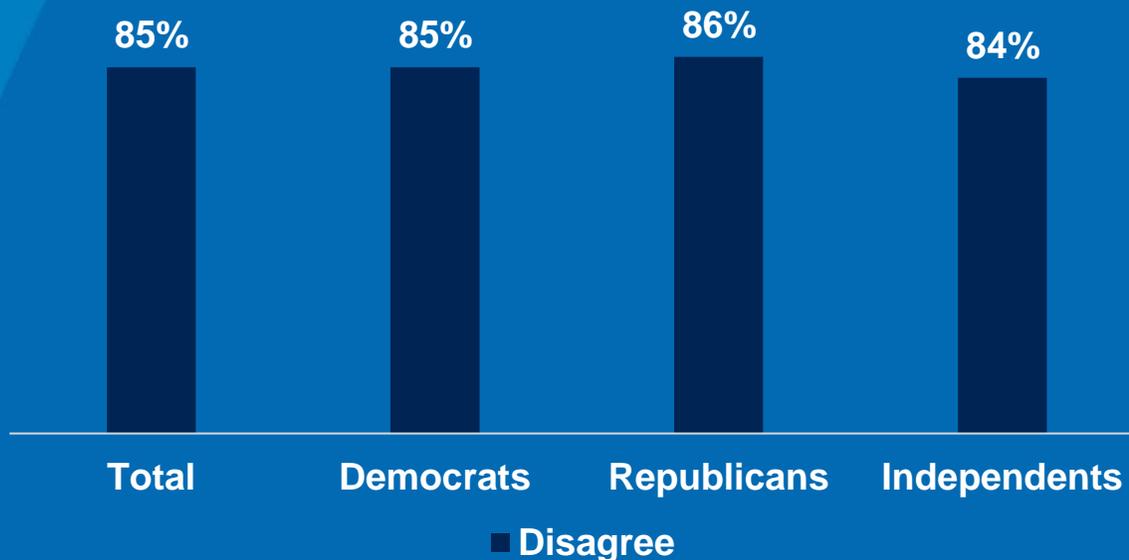


FEW AMERICANS SAY POLITICAL VIOLENCE IS ACCEPTABLE



- 86% consider it is not acceptable for someone in their political party to commit violence to achieve a political goal
- 83% disagree that violent acts are acceptable in order to achieve their idea of a better society
- These are bipartisan views

Question: Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following: It is acceptable for someone in my political party to commit violence to achieve a political goal.



... but are they speaking their minds to pollsters?

FOR THREE-QUARTERS OF FRENCH PEOPLE, VIOLENCE HAS NO PLACE IN THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DEBATE

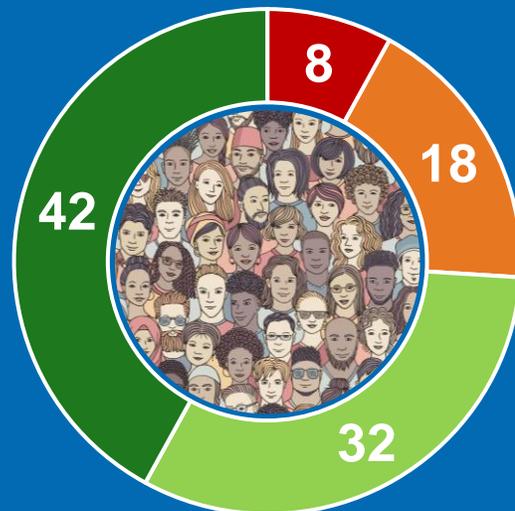


- 74% consider people should not use violence to defend their interests in society

Question: Do you find it acceptable for some people to use violence in order to defend their interests?

NOT ACCEPTABLE: 74%

ACCEPTABLE : 26%



... but a quarter think it can be a legitimate tool

PERFECTLY ACCEPTABLE

RATHER ACCEPTABLE

RATHER NOT ACCEPTABLE

NOT ACCEPTABLE AT ALL

PEOPLE IN FRANCE SAY VIOLENCE LINKED TO SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ISSUES CAN SOMETIMES BE UNDERSTOOD



Would you say the following acts of violence are...



VIOLENCE AGAINST ELECTED OFFICIALS IS SEEN AS UNACCEPTABLE – IN ALL MAIN FRENCH POLITICAL MOVEMENTS



Would you say that the following acts of violence are...

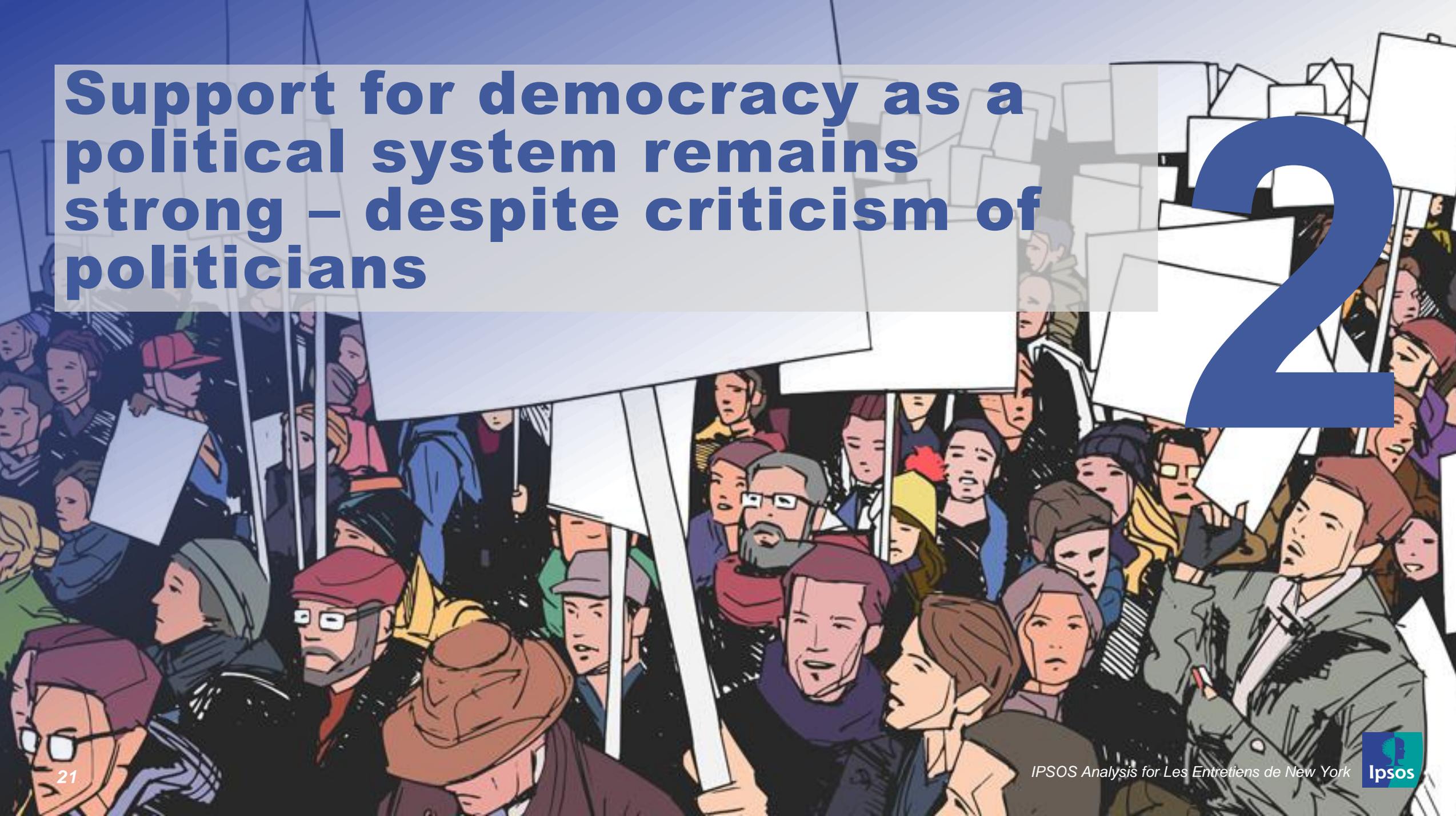
IPSOS Analysis for Les Entretiens de New York



	VIOLENCE BY SOME POLICE OFFICERS DURING DEMONSTRATIONS		VIOLENCE BY SOME EMPLOYEES AGAINST THEIR BOSS		DESTRUCTION OF, OR DAMAGE TO, PROPERTY		VIOLENCE BY SOME DEMONSTRATORS DURING STRIKE ACTIONS		CERTAINS MILITANTS ÉCOLOGISTES ...	
	Justified	Unacceptable	Justified	Unacceptable	Justified	Unacceptable	Justified	Unacceptable	Justified	Unacceptable
TOTAL	11	47	4	62	4	72	4	72	4	73
  FI/PCF	5	70	8	41	7	52	9	48	10	49
 EELV	4	64	3	60	2	75	3	70	7	52
 PSPS	5	54	3	62	2	78	3	77	3	76
 LREM	13	36	3	75	3	86	3	86	2	84
 LR	19	29	2	76	3	82	3	84	2	85
 RN (ex-FN)	19	38	4	61	4	69	3	71	4	78
RECONQUÊTE! RECONQUÊTE !	29	27	3	67	3	71	2	78	2	87
SANS PROXIMITÉ POLITIQUE	8	50	3	64	3	73	3	75	3	77
Executives	14	49	7	59	7	70	6	67	6	67
Middle management	10	51	3	61	4	72	4	73	4	71
Employees	10	53	5	60	4	72	4	71	5	71
Workers	10	49	6	55	6	63	6	68	6	68
Pensioners	13	38	1	69	1	80	1	81	1	84
Under 35	12	51	9	55	9	62	9	60	8	62
35-59	10	51	4	61	3	72	4	73	4	73
Over 60	13	38	1	68	1	79	1	81	2	82

Support for democracy as a political system remains strong – despite criticism of politicians

2

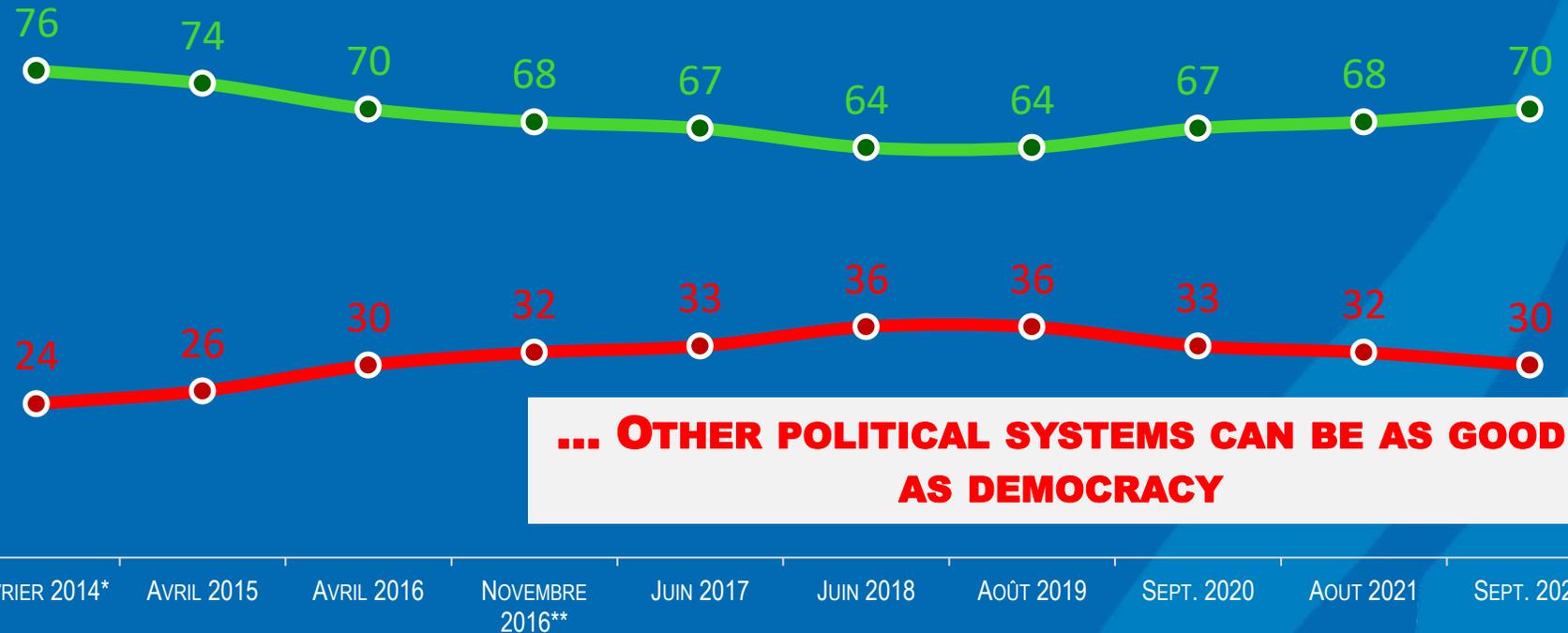


70% OF THE FRENCH SAY DEMOCRACY REMAINS THE BEST POSSIBLE POLITICAL SYSTEM



Would you say that...?

... DEMOCRACY IS IRREPLACEABLE AS A POLITICAL REGIME. IT IS THE BEST POSSIBLE POLITICAL SYSTEM



... OTHER POLITICAL SYSTEMS CAN BE AS GOOD AS DEMOCRACY

... meaning close to a third of the population is open to experimenting other regimes

ALTHOUGH ONLY 1 RASSEMBLEMENT NATIONAL SUPPORTER OUT OF 2 BELIEVES DEMOCRACY TO BE THE OPTIMAL POLITICAL SYSTEM



Would you say that...?

IPSOS Analysis for Les Entretiens de New York

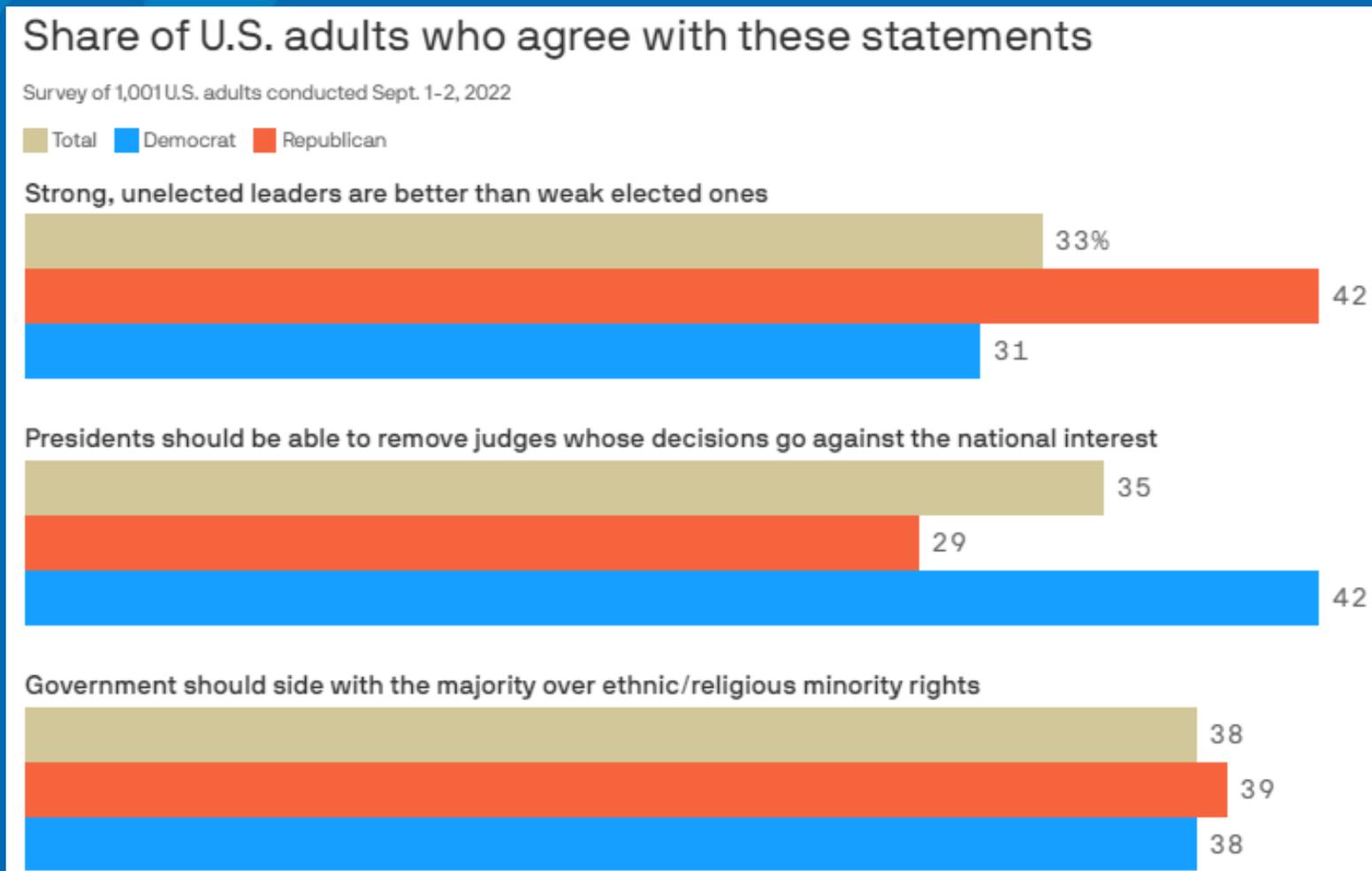
« DEMOCRACY IS IRREPLACEABLE AS A POLITICAL REGIME. IT IS THE BEST POSSIBLE POLITICAL SYSTEM »

« OTHER POLITICAL SYSTEMS CAN BE AS GOOD AS DEMOCRACY »

	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	Nov. 2016	Avril 2016	2015	Fév. 2014	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	Nov. 2016	Avril 2016	2015	Fév. 2014
TOTAL	70	68	67	64	64	67	68	70	74	76	30	32	33	36	36	33	32	30	26	24
  FI/PCF	72	66	56	72	57	75	74	79	72	83	28	34	44	28	43	25	26	21	28	17
 EELV	82	72	73	80	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	28	27	20	-	-	-	-	-	-
 PS	83	73	77	78	70	87	84	86	85	89	17	27	23	22	30	13	16	14	15	11
 LREM	89	89	85	90	88	79	-	-	-	-	11	11	15	10	12	21	-	-	-	-
 LR	78	79	71	74	80	76	72	81	82	80	22	21	29	26	20	24	28	19	18	10
 RN (ex-FN)	50	52	55	42	36	45	46	50	59	55	50	48	45	58	64	55	54	50	41	45
RECONQUÊTE! RECONQUÊTE !	58	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	42	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SANS PROXIMITÉ POLITIQUE	64	59	59	53	54	55	55	59	68	72	36	41	41	46	46	45	65	41	32	28
Executives	79	71	69	77	72	72	69	77	85	83	21	29	31	23	28	28	31	23	15	17
Middle management	75	73	71	67	73	63	75	72	74	77	25	27	29	33	27	37	25	28	26	23
Employees	63	61	54	59	59	70	60	59	74	73	37	39	46	40	41	30	40	41	26	27
Workers	56	58	59	43	51	56	62	62	65	65	44	42	41	57	49	44	38	38	35	35
Pensioners	77	75	81	78	72	76	73	79	79	81	23	25	19	22	28	24	27	21	21	19
Under 35	65	58	63	58	54	62	64	63	69	71	35	42	37	42	46	38	36	37	31	29
35-59	68	68	61	58	64	65	68	68	75	76	32	32	39	41	36	35	32	32	25	24
Over 60	76	75	80	77	72	74	73	81	76	81	24	25	20	23	28	26	27	19	24	19



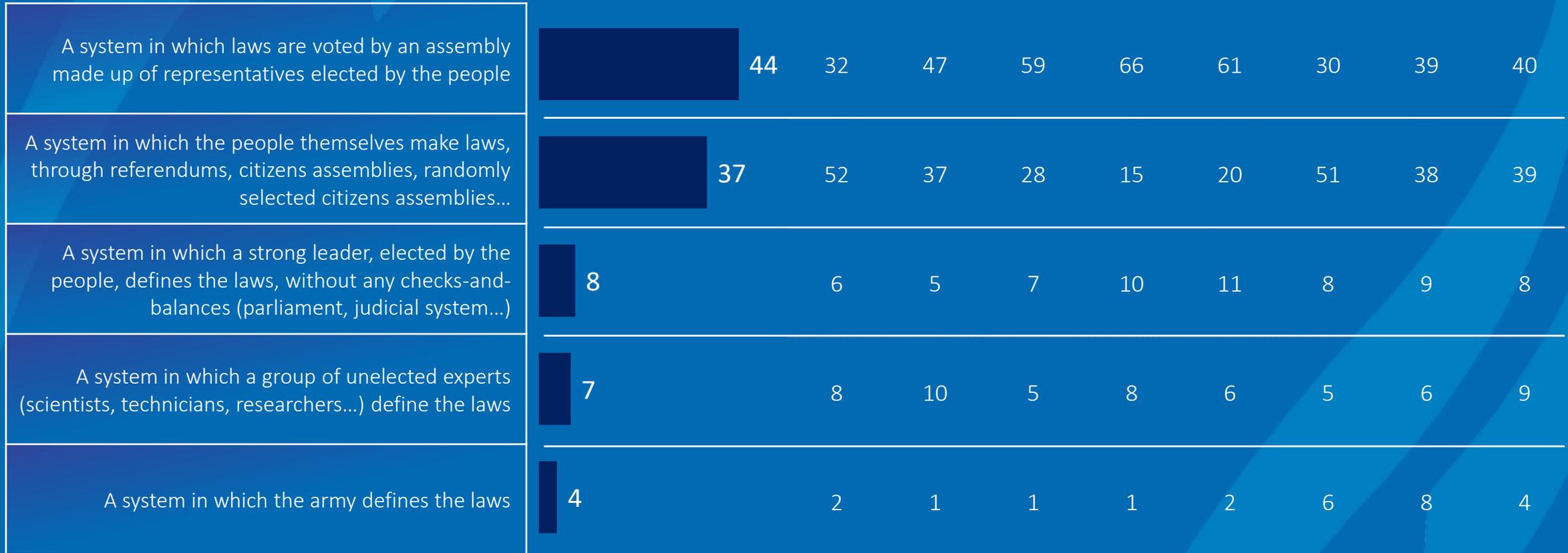
OVER ONE-THIRD OF AMERICANS SOUND READY TO SIDELINE SOME KEY DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES



OVER ONE-THIRD OF FRENCH PEOPLE WANT MORE DIRECT DEMOCRACY



Which of the following political systems do you see as the best one?



TWO-THIRDS OF PEOPLE IN FRANCE CONSIDER DEMOCRACY IS NOT WORKING WELL



Which of the following two statements best reflects your views?

MOST POLITICIANS ARE CORRUPT

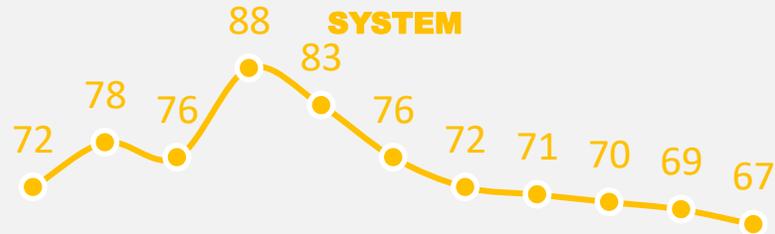


CORRUPTION AMONG POLITICIANS IS LIMITED TO A SMALL MINORITY OF INDIVIDUALS



JAN. 2013 JAN. 2014 AVR. 2015 MAR. 2016* AVR. 2016 JUI. 2017 JUI. 2018 AOÛT 2019 SEPT. 2020 AOÛT 2021 SEPT. 2022

DEMOCRACY DOES NOT WORK VERY WELL IN FRANCE. I FEEL MY IDEAS ARE NOT WELL REPRESENTED IN THE POLITICAL SYSTEM



DEMOCRACY WORKS RATHER WELL IN FRANCE. I FEEL MY IDEAS ARE WELL REPRESENTED IN THE POLITICAL SYSTEM



JAN. 2013 JAN. 2014 AVR. 2015 MAR. 2016* AVR. 2016 JUI. 2017 JUI. 2018 AOÛT 2019 SEPT. 2020 AOÛT 2021 SEPT. 2022

POLITICIANS ACT MAINLY FOR THEIR PERSONAL INTERESTS



POLITICIANS ACT MAINLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE FRENCH PEOPLE



JAN. 2013 JAN. 2014 AVR. 2015 MAR. 2016* AVR. 2016 JUI. 2017 JUI. 2018 AOÛT 2019 SEPT. 2020 AOÛT 2021 SEPT. 2022

THE “BROKEN-SYSTEM” SENTIMENT REMAINS HIGH IN 2022 IN MANY COUNTRIES



	28-country average	Highest:	Lowest:
[Country's] economy is rigged to advantage the rich and powerful	63%	Romania (78%) Hungary (74%)	Sweden (44%) Netherlands (54%)
Traditional parties and politicians don't care about people like me	62%	Romania (79%) South Africa (69%) Peru (69%)	Sweden (44%) Japan (44%)
[Country] needs a strong leader to take the country back from the rich and powerful	59%	Romania (74%) Indonesia (70%)	Germany (37%) Sweden (38%)
Experts in this country don't understand the lives of people like me	59%	Romania (70%) Peru (68%)	Sweden (43%) Netherlands (45%)
To fix [Country], we need a strong leader willing to break the rules	46%	Thailand (73%) Turkey (68%)	Sweden (28%) Germany (29%)

BUT PERCEPTIONS ARE IMPROVING IN MOST PLACES



	28-country average	Change since 2021	Steepest decrease	Steepest increase
[Country's] economy is rigged to advantage the rich and powerful	63%	-8	South Korea (-21) Chile (-19)	Great Britain (+5)
Traditional parties and politicians don't care about people like me	62%	-4	Colombia (-18) Chile (-16)	Great Britain (+7)
[Country] needs a strong leader to take the country back from the rich and powerful	59%	-5	Chile (-20) Italy (-19)	Great Britain (+5)
Experts in this country don't understand the lives of people like me	59%	-7	Italy (-19) Colombia (-17)	Great Britain (+5)
To fix [Country], we need a strong leader willing to break the rules	46%	+2	South Korea (-16) Brazil (-15)	Turkey (+24) Mexico (+8) Great Britain (+8)

... ESPECIALLY WHERE SIGNIFICANT ELECTIONS HAVE TAKEN PLACE



The six countries with the steepest index drop since April 2021 had a national election resulting in major political change; none of four countries showing an index uptick have had a national election since then

	Change since March-April 2021	National election since April 2021 (or campaign in progress)	Type of election	Change of head of government's party since then
Colombia	-0.49	Yes	Presidential	Yes
Chile	-0.49	Yes	Presidential and General	Yes
South Korea	-0.38	Yes	Presidential	Yes
Italy	-0.38	Yes	General	Yes
Brazil	-0.36	Yes	Presidential and General	Yes
Peru	-0.36	Yes	Presidential and General	Yes
Hungary	-0.21	Yes	Parliamentary	No
Argentina	-0.18	Yes	Legislative	No
Mexico	-0.17	Yes	Legislative	N/A
United States	-0.15	Yes (after survey)	Midterm	N/A
Poland	-0.13			
South Africa	-0.13			
Malaysia	-0.09	Yes (after survey)	General	N/A
Australia	-0.09	Yes	Federal	Yes
Spain	-0.07			
Germany	-0.07	Yes	Parliamentary	Yes
Japan	-0.06	Yes	General	No
Canada	-0.04	Yes	Federal	No
Sweden	-0.01	Yes	General	Yes
France	-0.01	Yes	Presidential and legislative	No
Belgium	+0.03			
Turkey	+0.07			
Netherlands	+0.08			
Great Britain	+0.19			

THE US AND FRANCE FOLLOW THIS GENERAL TREND: A HIGH “BROKEN-SYSTEM” INDEX, BUT IMPROVEMENTS SINCE 2021



Total Agree Sept-Nov 2022

	Global Country Average	Argentina	Australia	Belgium	Brazil	Canada	Chile	Colombia	France	Germany	Great Britain	Hungary	Indonesia	Ireland	Italy	Japan	Malaysia	Mexico	Netherlands	Peru	Poland	Romania	South Africa	South Korea	Spain	Sweden	Thailand	Turkey	United States
[Country's] economy is rigged to advantage the rich and powerful	63%	59%	63%	68%	64%	56%	61%	67%	63%	56%	71%	74%	64%	65%	61%	66%	58%	65%	54%	67%	56%	78%	68%	64%	61%	44%	71%	66%	66%
Traditional parties and politicians don't care about people like me	62%	68%	57%	59%	63%	58%	68%	68%	68%	49%	65%	66%	59%	64%	58%	61%	60%	67%	45%	69%	63%	79%	69%	61%	63%	44%	67%	63%	64%
[Country] needs a strong leader to take the country back from the rich and powerful	59%	57%	61%	63%	65%	56%	52%	62%	60%	37%	67%	58%	70%	64%	50%	52%	69%	65%	55%	62%	51%	73%	67%	53%	60%	38%	66%	60%	64%
Experts in this country don't understand the lives of people like me	59%	64%	58%	61%	50%	52%	68%	64%	65%	48%	61%	65%	57%	63%	52%	53%	56%	67%	45%	69%	55%	68%	63%	46%	61%	43%	62%	63%	61%
To fix [Country], we need a strong leader willing to break the rules	46%	42%	45%	46%	46%	35%	32%	34%	39%	29%	50%	37%	46%	53%	47%	47%	54%	37%	40%	47%	53%	54%	59%	55%	36%	28%	73%	68%	40%

Average 5 items: change in % points vs.

2021	-5	-5	-4	-0	-14	-3	-15	-15	-2	-4	+6	-5	NA	NA	-15	-5	-7	-3	+0	-8	-7	NA	-6	-15	-2	-3	NA	+0	-6
2019	-5	-10	-5	-1	-9	-8	-8	NA	-7	-6	-3	-3	NA	NA	-11	+4	+4	-9	NA	-5	-8	NA	-2	-8	-8	-5	NA	+1	-1
2016	-3	-1	-5	+1	-13	-6	NA	NA	-8	-1	+3	-8	NA	NA	-16	+10	NA	-10	NA	-7	-7	NA	+7	-10	-10	+5	NA	+2	-2

SOURCES USED IN THIS PRESENTATION

- *Fractures françaises : Vague 10* - Ipsos/Sopra Steria pour Le Monde, la Fondation Jean Jaurès et le Cevipof (France, October 2022)
- Baromètre “Science et société” - Institut Sapiens & Ipsos (France, October 2022)
- The Trust Gap: How and Why News on Digital Platforms Is Viewed More Sceptically Versus News in General - Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, Ipsos (2022)
- Knight Foundation/Ipsos Poll - Freedom of Speech. Using Ipsos’s Knowledge Panel ® (US, October 2022)
- Ipsos Global Advisor - “Broken-System Index” (October 2022)
- Axios/Ipsos Two Americas Index (US, September 2022)
- Reuters/Ipsos Poll - Political Violence (US, August 2022)
- Ipsos Poll - Misinformation and Conspiracy Theory Poll (US, January 2022)
- Ipsos Poll - Technology and Society. Conducted on Ipsos’ KnowledgePanel ® (US, October 2021)
- Ipsos Global Advisor Poll - Fake news, filter bubbles, post-truth and trust (27 countries, 2018)
- Levada Centre, President Putin’s Approval Rating (2023)

**BE
SURE.
ACT
SMARTER.**

GAME CHANGERS

