

# Responding to COVID-19 in African Countries:

Executive Summary of Polling Results: Tunisia

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August 2020



# INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact societies across health, financial and day to day life.

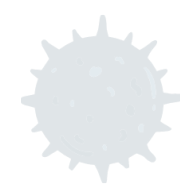
This document provides the findings from public opinion polls in Tunisia to understand the public's knowledge, risk perception, attitudes, access to information, reactions, behaviors and practices related to COVID-19.

This Executive Summary is supplemented by an Appendix with the results should readers require additional detail.

# METHODOLOGY

The public opinion poll was conducted in Tunisia from 3 August to 12 August 2020. The polling was conducted by telephone.

Samples were drawn to be nationally representative of each Member State; weighting was applied by gender and region to align the final data with the population. The unweighted national sample size in Tunisia is 1,218 interviews.



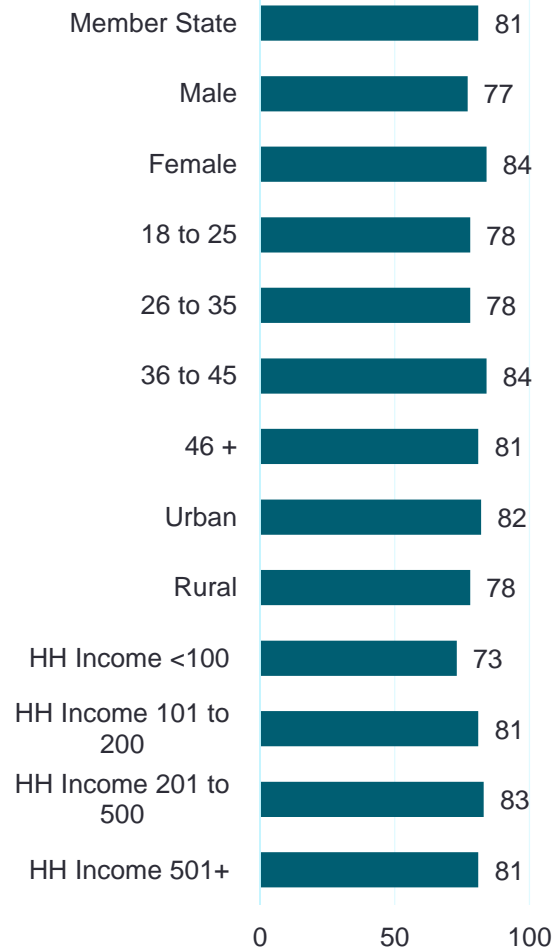
## Key Findings

- **PHSM support and adherence:** While a majority of respondents support most PHSMs, self-reported adherence for personal preventive measures (such as washing hands, wearing a mask, and avoiding physical greetings) is among the lowest of all African Union (AU) Member States surveyed (66% reported adhering to all three measures compared to 86% across all Member States). Support and self-reported adherence were also lower for staying at home and avoiding places of worship.
- **Risk perceptions and information:** Fewer than one in five Tunisian respondents believe they are at risk for contracting COVID-19 despite the growing epidemic, a lower proportion than other AU Member States surveyed. In addition, many Tunisian respondents hold misconceptions or believe rumors or myths that could undermine adherence to PHSMs.
- **Essential health services:** A majority of Tunisian respondents who needed medical care have reported difficulty accessing health care visits (83%) or medicines (59%) during the COVID-19 crisis.
- **Economic burden and food security:** Around half of respondents report having lost income and are facing difficulty accessing food. Fewer than one in five respondents report receiving additional aid from the government in the previous month.

# Information, Perception & Misinformation

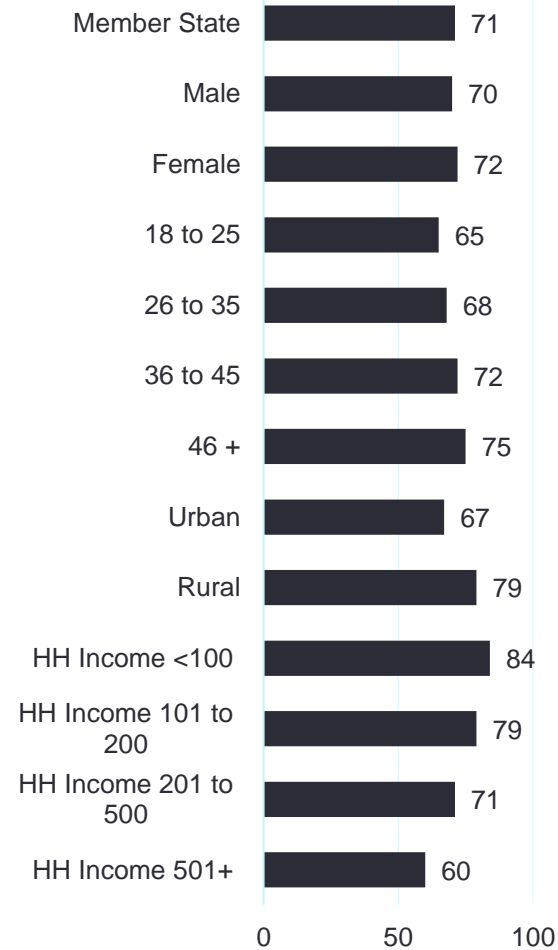
## Preventive Measures

- % True for ALL three statements:**
- Washing hands helps prevent getting COVID-19
  - Infected people may not show symptoms for 5 to 14 days
  - Wearing a face mask when around other people prevents the spread of COVID-19



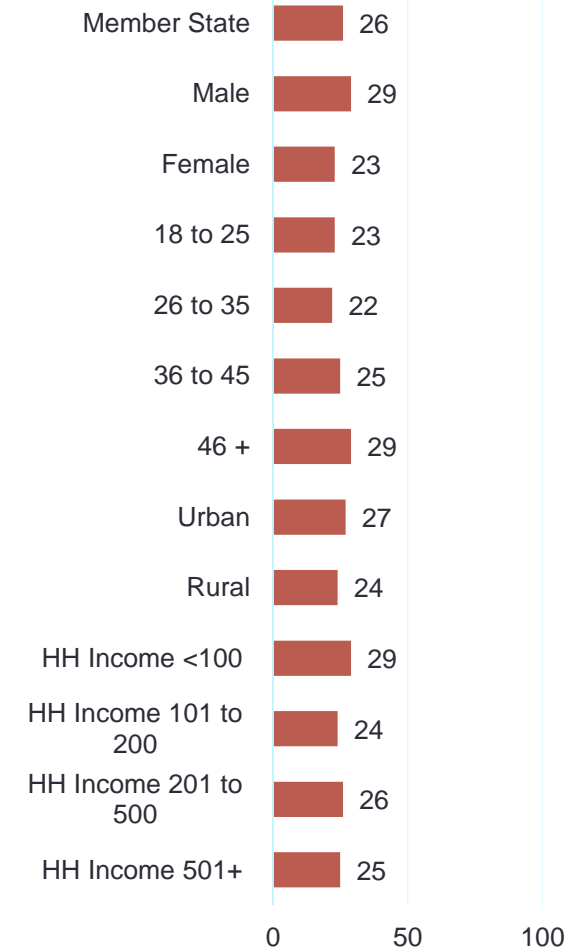
## Reaction to Recovered Patients

- % True (one statement):**
- People who have recovered from COVID-19 should be avoided to prevent spreading it.



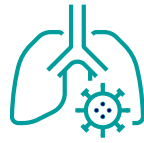
## Misinformation

- % True for BOTH statements:**
- Foreigners are discrediting African medicines which could cure COVID-19
  - Foreigners are trying to test vaccines on us

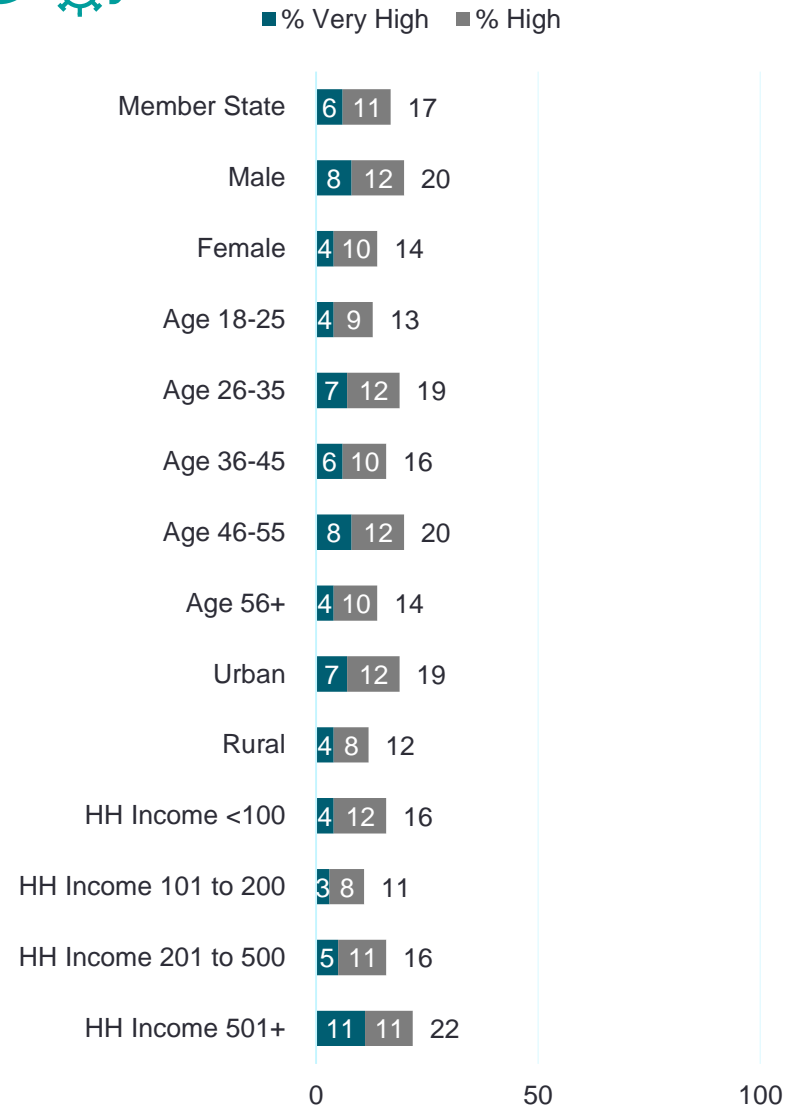


Q2. I'm going to read things people have said about coronavirus or COVID-19. Please tell me if you think each is definitely true, probably true, probably false, or definitely false. If you don't know, say so. (True = Definitely + Probably True)

# Risk Perceptions



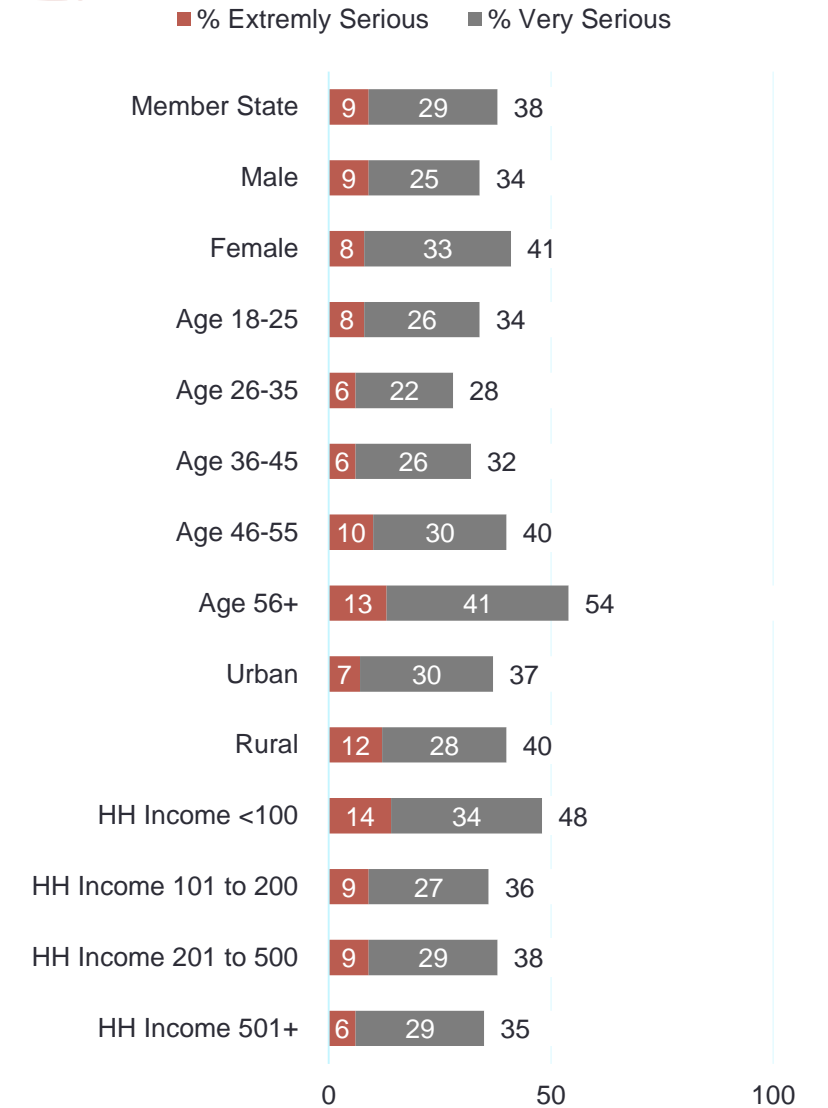
## Perceived risk of catching COVID-19:



Q8. Please indicate what you think your level of risk of catching coronavirus or COVID-19 is: Very high, High, Medium, Low, Very Low, Don't know



## Perceived severity of COVID-19 on health:



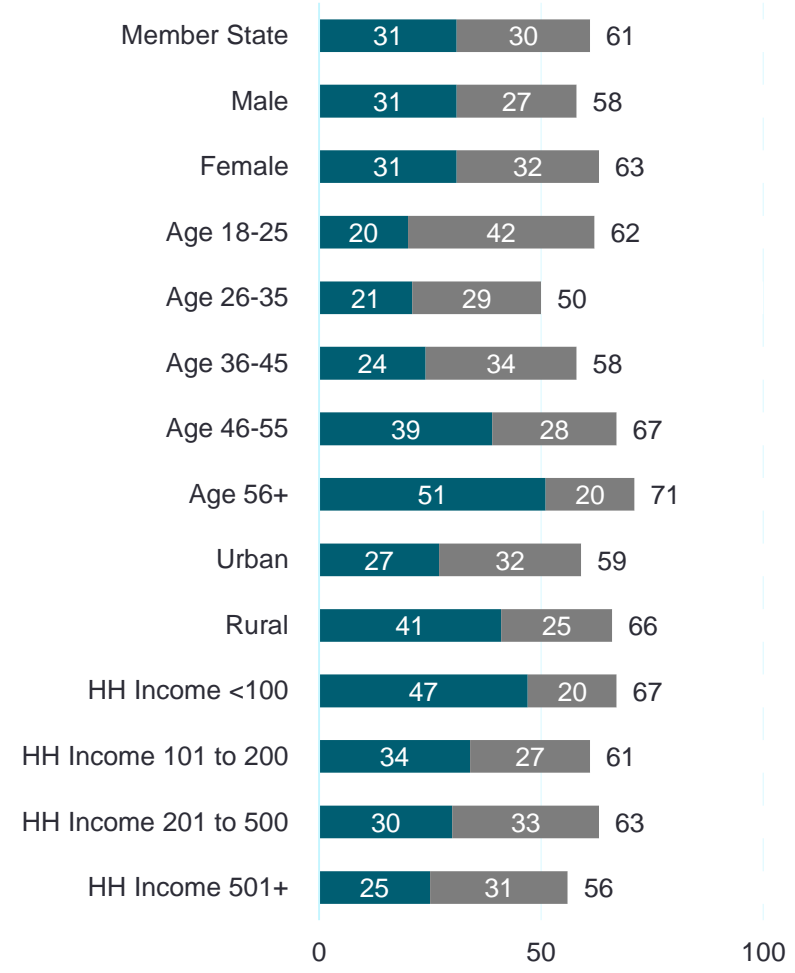
Q9. If you were infected by coronavirus or COVID-19, how seriously do you think it would affect your health? Not at all seriously, Somewhat seriously, Very seriously, Extremely seriously, Don't know / no response

# Satisfaction and Trust with the COVID-19 Response



## Satisfaction with Government response to COVID-19:

■ % Very Satisfied ■ % Somewhat Satisfied

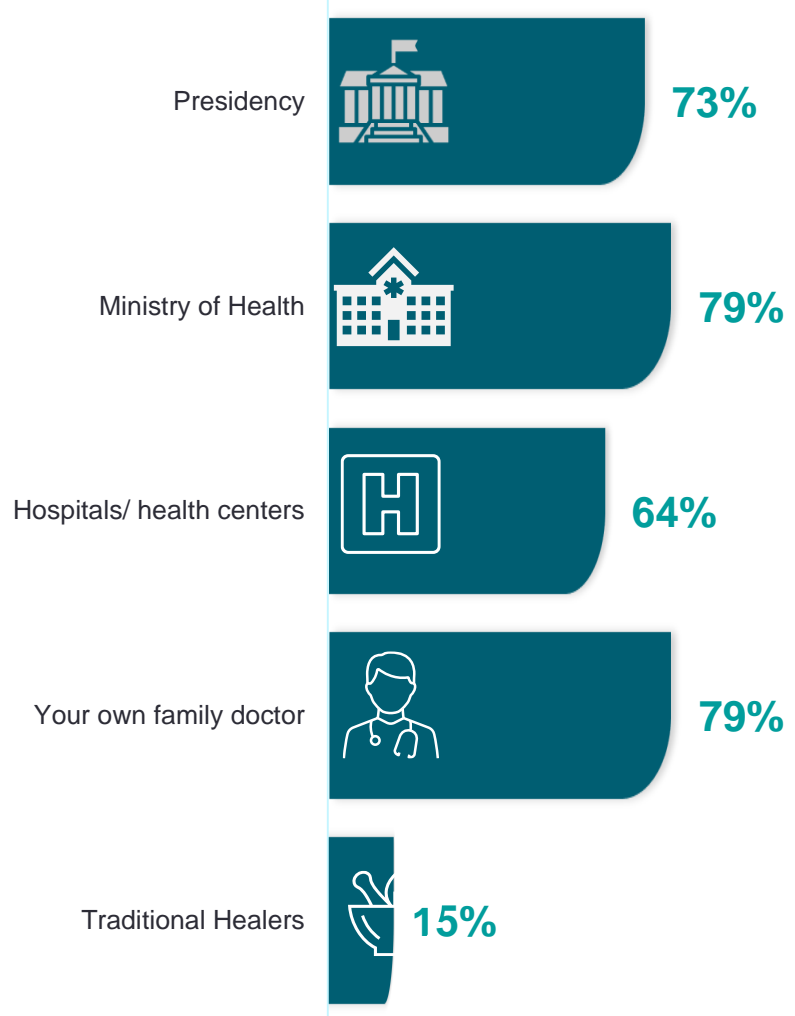


Q11. How satisfied are you with your (Tunisia) government's response to coronavirus or COVID-19? Very satisfied, Somewhat satisfied, Somewhat dissatisfied, Very dissatisfied, Don't know / not sure



## Trust in handling of COVID-19

% Trust a great deal + fair amount



Q12. To what extent, if at all, do you trust each of the following individuals and organizations' handling of the coronavirus in Tunisia? A great deal, A fair amount, Not very much, Not at all, Don't know, Not heard of organisation, Not applicable.

# SUMMARY OF Public Health and Social Measures (PHSMs)

## Public Health and Social Measures (PHSMs)

	Adherence: level to which these activities describe “you personally”				Support: perception of necessity		
	<i>Completely applies</i>	<i>Mostly applies</i>	<i>Sometimes applies</i>	<i>Does not apply to me</i>	<i>Absolutely necessary</i>	<i>Somewhat necessary</i>	<i>Not really necessary</i>
Wear a face mask in public when near others	38	9	20	32	87	6	6
Wash more often than they used to	52	21	20	21	88	5	6
Avoid handshakes and physical greetings	33	13	23	31	86	6	8
PERSONAL PHSMS: SUMMARY	41	14	21	28	87	6	7
Stop joining public gatherings and places of entertainment	56	13	13	18	69	14	16
Stop going to the church/mosque	46	7	11	36	34	18	43
PUBLIC GATHERING PHSMS: SUMMARY	51	10	12	27	52	16	30
Reduce the number of times going to the market or grocery store	41	17	20	21	62	20	18
Staying home instead of going to work, school or other regular activities	29	10	14	48	25	14	59
MOBILITY PHSMS: SUMMARY	35	14	17	35	44	17	39

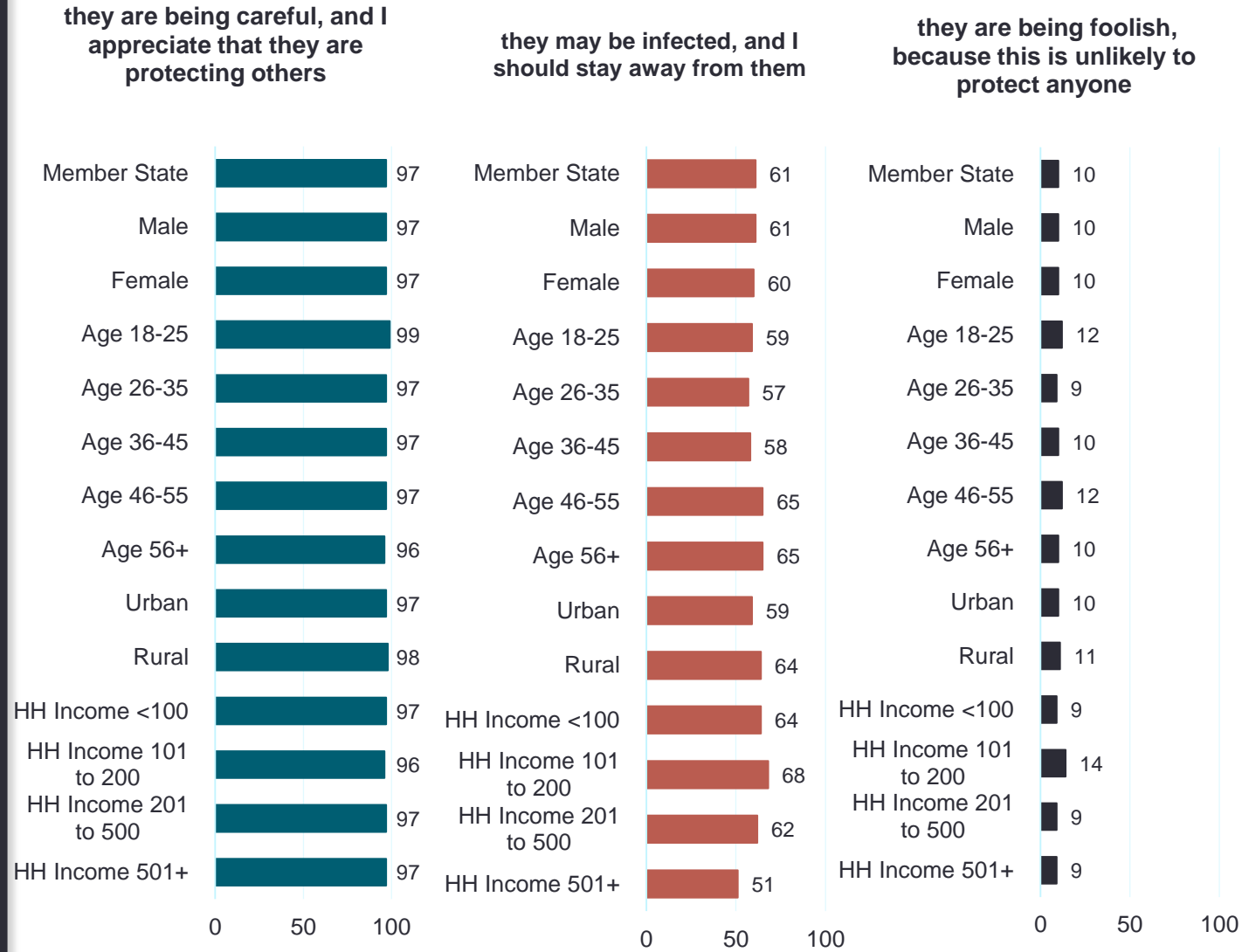
### Please see Appendix for detail by country

Q13. Over the past seven days, to what extent do each of the following describe you personally?

Q14. Thinking of the last four weeks, was asking people to do each of the following absolutely necessary, somewhat necessary, or not really necessary to limiting the spread of COVID-19 in Tunisia?

# Face masks: Perceptions, Use and Attitudes

## When other people wear face masks near me, I think...



85% have a face mask ready to wear

**Adherence:**  
**Wear a Face Mask in Public Around Others:**  
**Completely applies: 38%**  
**Mostly applies: 9%**

Q4. Do you have a face mask of any kind that is ready for you to wear?  
 Q13g. Over the past seven days, to what extent do each of the following describe you personally?: G) Wearing a face mask in public when near others

Q3. I would now like to ask your opinion about face masks, which some people are wearing at the moment. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Showing % agree (Strongly + Somewhat agree)



# Impact on Health Care Services



## Missed, Delayed or Skipped Health Care Services:

% Yes: (among those requiring services)	82%
People with longstanding illness	85%
Women	86%
Low Income (HH Income <100)	80%
High Income (HH Income 501+)	83%
Urban	82%
Rural	84%

Base = require services (71%)



## Difficulty accessing medications:

% Much More Difficult (among those requiring medications)	42%
People with longstanding illness	43%
Women	41%
Low Income (HH Income <100)	56%
High Income (HH Income 501+)	32%
Urban	41%
Rural	44%

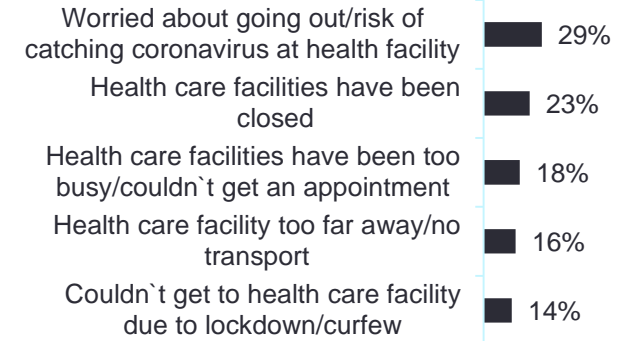
Base = require medication (76%)

Q21. Have you or any other person in your household delayed, skipped or been unable to complete health care visits since the COVID-19 crisis?

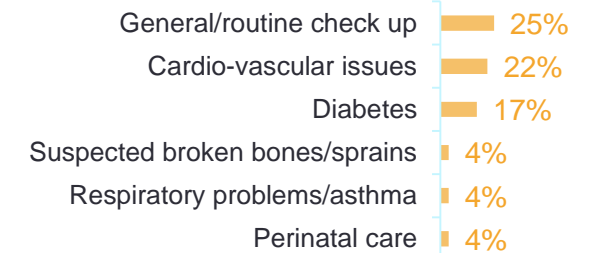
Q24. Has the COVID-19 crisis made it more difficult to obtain medications you need for you or your household or has it had no impact? If you do not need medications, please say so.



## Reason for Missed, Delayed or Skipped Services:



## Types of services missed, delayed or skipped:



Q22. Why have you or another person in your household delayed, skipped or been unable to complete health care visits since the COVID-19 crisis?

Q23. And do you mind if I ask what those delayed, missed or not completed health care visits were for?

# Economic and Food Relief Measures



## Barriers and Difficulties Purchasing Food

	Total	Male	Female	Urban	Rural	HH income < 100USD	HH income 500+
EXPERIENCED 'ANY' BARRIER ONE DAY OR MORE:	56	56	56	54	60	73	45
<i>Experienced 1 day or more:</i>							
...had difficulties in going to food markets due to restrictions imposed	32	40	28	30	46	38	32
...had difficulties in buying food due to most food markets being closed?	38	44	31	35	45	50	35
...been unable to buy the amount of food you usually buy because of shortages in the markets	49	53	43	49	56	60	41
...been unable to buy the amount of food you usually buy because the price was too high?	63	63	59	62	64	69	51
...been unable to buy the amount of food you usually buy because your income has dropped?	63	67	64	62	68	85	49

Q17. In the past 7 days, how many days have you or someone in your household experienced any of the following?



Impact on Income: % Reporting Income is Smaller than last year	48%
Women	47%
Men	50%
Low Income (HH Income <100)	53%
High Income (HH Income 501+)	36%
Urban	48%
Rural	49%

Q18. How does the amount of money you made in the past 7 days compare to the amount you made this time last year? Is it... Bigger, Smaller, Stayed the Same, Don't make any, Don't know.



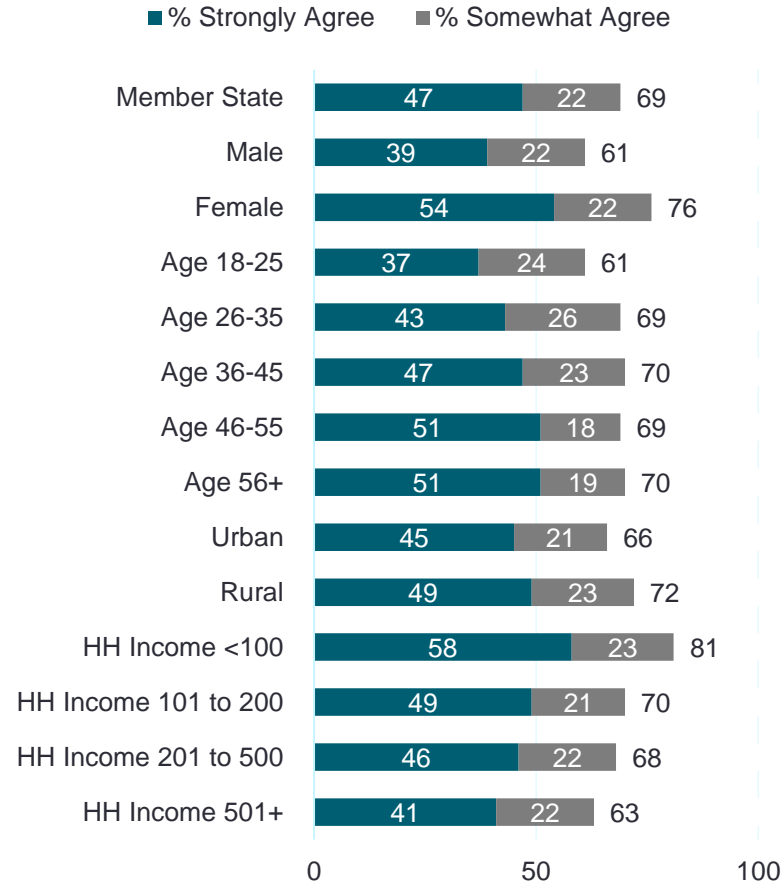
Impact on Unpaid work: % Reporting More Hours on Unpaid Work	49%
Women	47%
Men	51%
Low Income (HH Income <100)	45%
High Income (HH Income 501+)	53%
Urban	51%
Rural	44%

Q19. Since the crisis began, have you had a change in your hours spent on unpaid work, such as childcare, care of the elderly and housework? More hours, less hours, no change in hours, don't know.

# Concerns about resuming normal activities



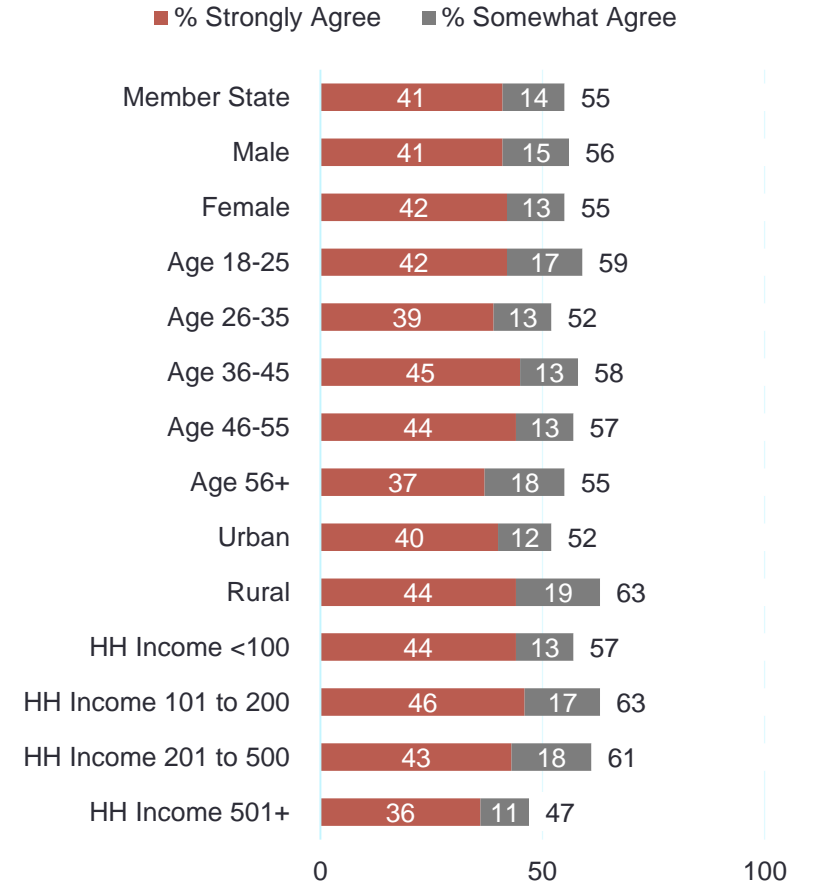
Thinking about resuming normal activities after the lockdown makes me feel very anxious



Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



I would feel comfortable taking public transportation such as local buses or trains if it was not too busy

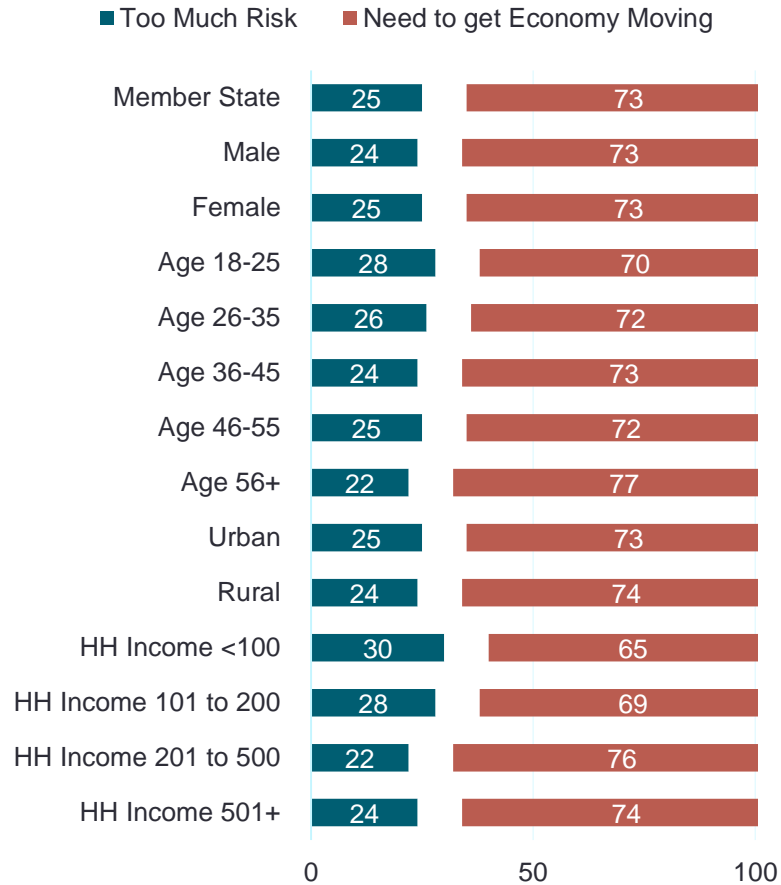


Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

# Expectations about COVID-19



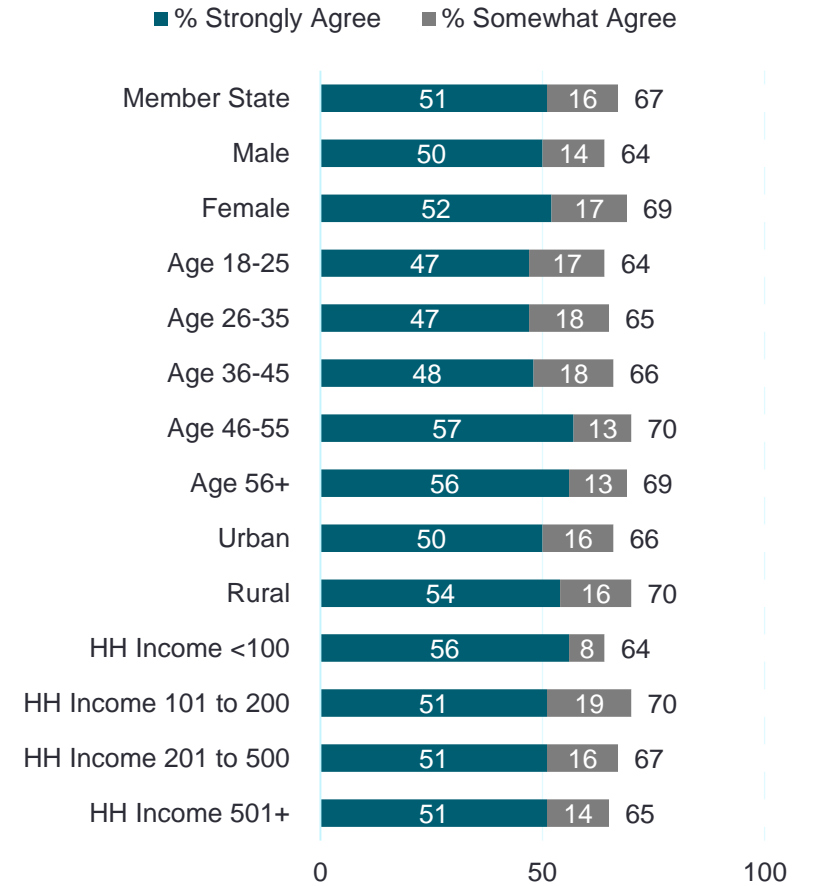
**Loosening Restrictions: “too risky to loosen restrictions” versus “there is a low risk and need to get economy moving”**



Q16. Some people say that loosening restrictions now puts too many people at risk of contracting COVID-19 and we need to wait at least a few more weeks. Other people say that the health risk is minimal if people follow social distancing rules and we need to get the economy moving again. Which is closer to your point of view?



**It will be at least six months before COVID-19 is contained**



Q15. To what extent to you agree or disagree with the following statements?

# For more information, contact:

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Partnership for Evidence-Based  
Response to COVID-19

# Additional Methodology Details

- The public opinion polling was conducted using a telephone interviewing methodology.
- The questionnaire was developed by Resolve to Save Lives, Ipsos and members of the PERC consortium.
- The polling program was approved by local review boards and all respondents gave explicit permission to participate in the polling.
- Note that where referenced, income categories should be interpreted as indicative as sample sizes vary and income reporting can be subject to bias.
- The weighted sample sizes for the demographic breaks in this report are as follows:

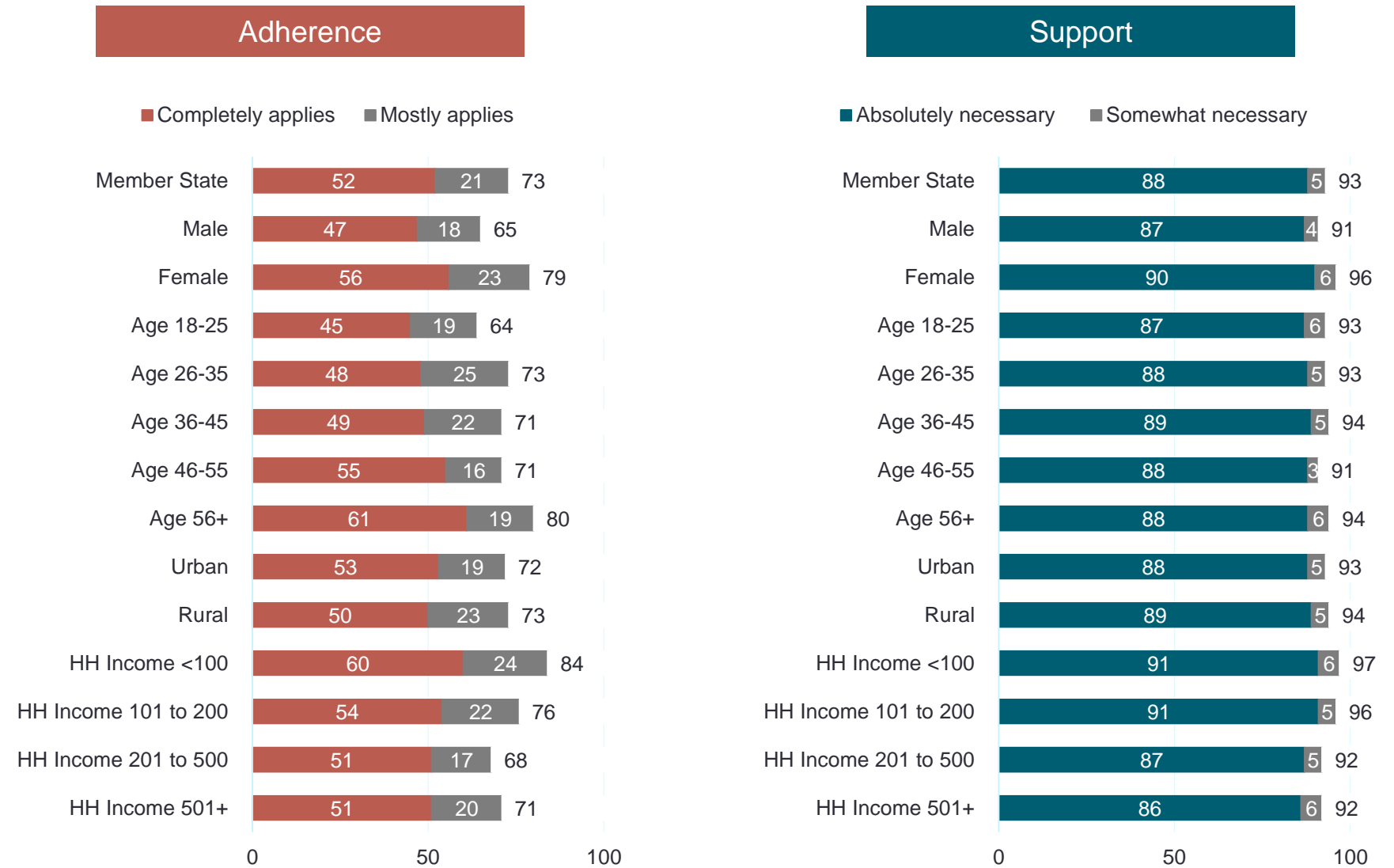
	Total	Male	Female	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56+	Urban	Rural	Under 100	101 - 200	201 - 500	501+
Base: All	1200	590	610	154	273	305	211	258	813	387	104	242	446	317

- The percentages reported in this document may be different from percentages reported in other PERC products and communication of this data. Differences may be reconciled by investigating the denominator used, as indicated in each instance of use.



# PERSONAL Public health and social measure (PHSM)

## Washing my hands many times per day

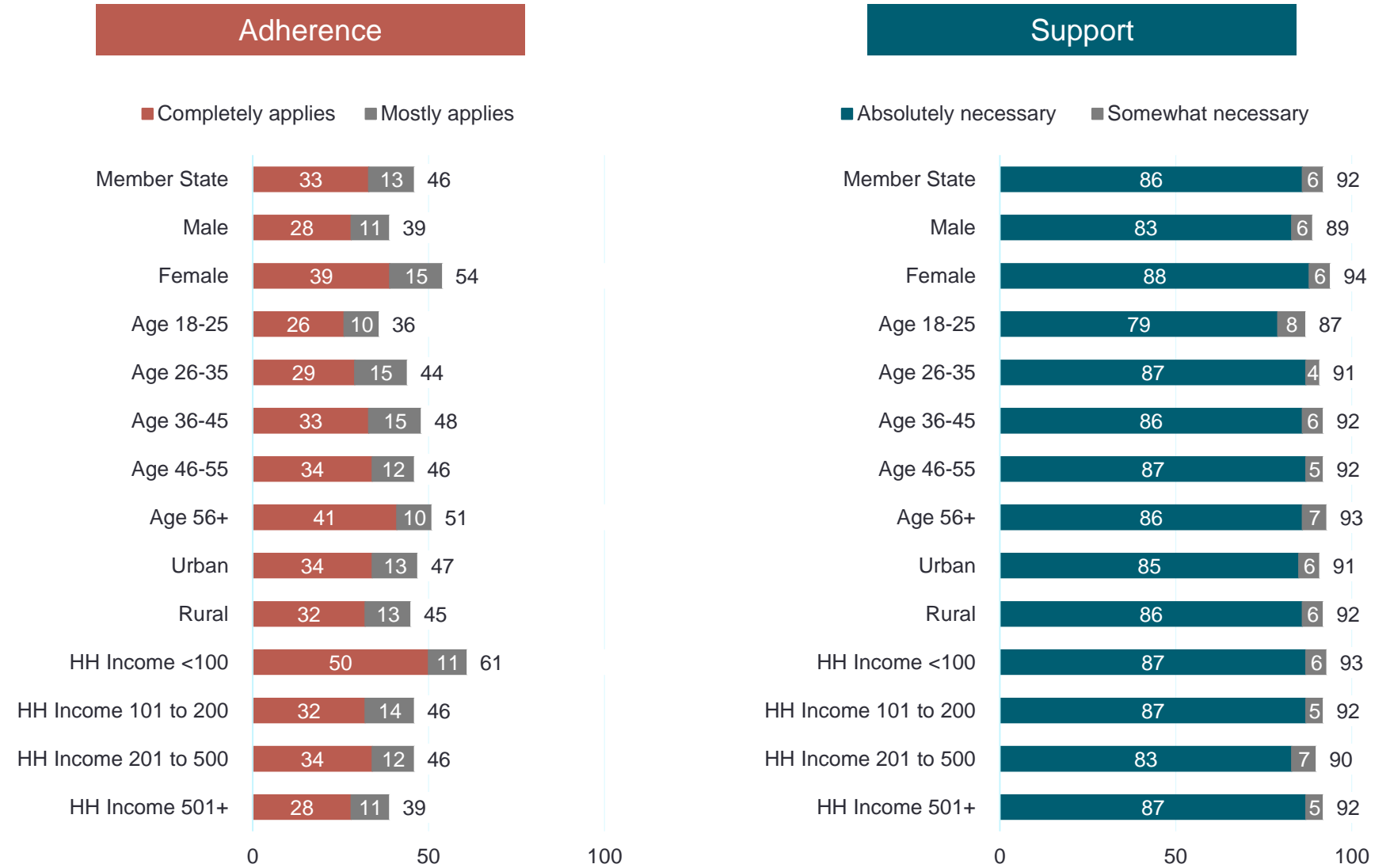


Q13. Over the past seven days, to what extent do each of the following describe you personally?: Washing my hands with soap or using hand sanitizer many times per day

Q14. Thinking of the last four weeks, was asking people to do each of the following absolutely necessary, somewhat necessary, or not really necessary to limiting the spread of COVID-19 in Tunisia?: ...wash their hands with soap or use hand sanitizer more often than they used to

# PERSONAL Public health and social measure (PHSM)

## Avoiding handshakes and physical greetings



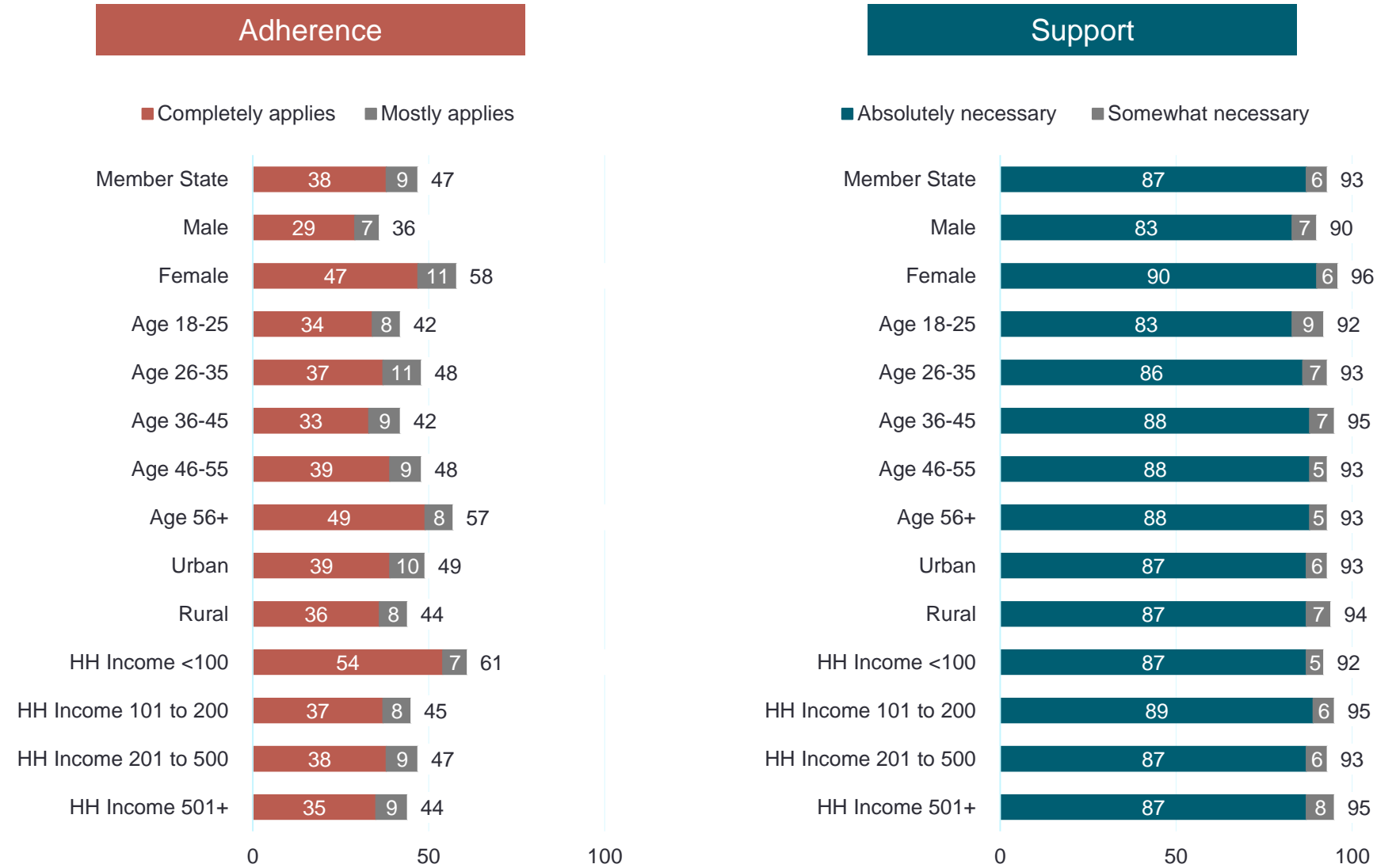
Q13. Over the past seven days, to what extent do each of the following describe you personally?: Avoiding handshakes and physical greetings

Q14. Thinking of the last four weeks, was asking people to do each of the following absolutely necessary, somewhat necessary, or not really necessary to limiting the spread of COVID-19 in Tunisia?: Avoiding handshakes and physical greetings



# PERSONAL Public health and social measure (PHSM)

## Wearing a face mask in public when near others

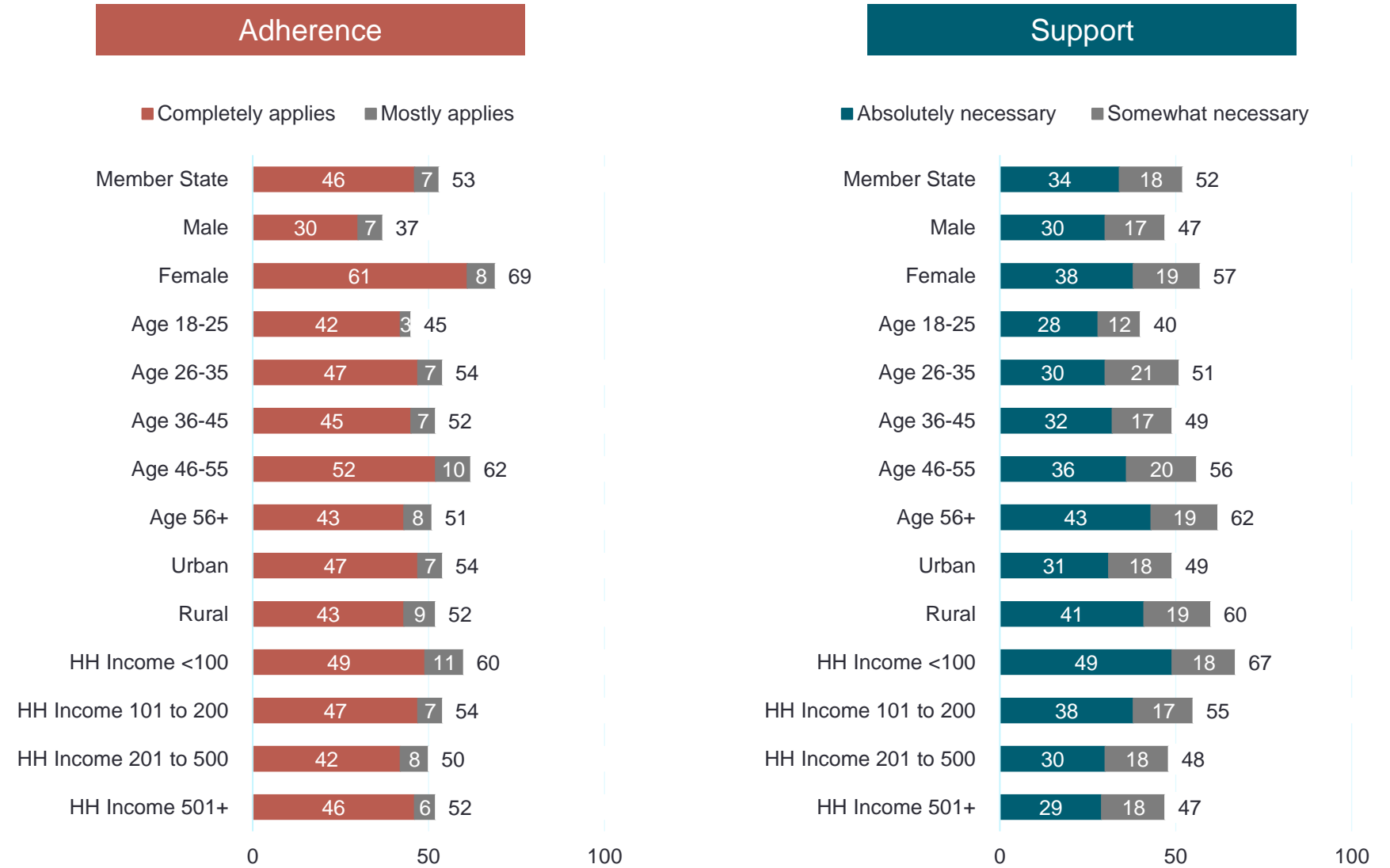


Q13. Over the past seven days, to what extent do each of the following describe you personally?: Wearing a face mask in public when near others

Q14. Thinking of the last four weeks, was asking people to do each of the following absolutely necessary, somewhat necessary, or not really necessary to limiting the spread of COVID-19 in Tunisia?: Wearing a face mask in public

# PUBLIC GATHERING Public health and social measure (PHSM)

## Avoiding the church/mosque



Q13. Over the past seven days, to what extent do each of the following describe you personally?: Avoiding the church/mosque

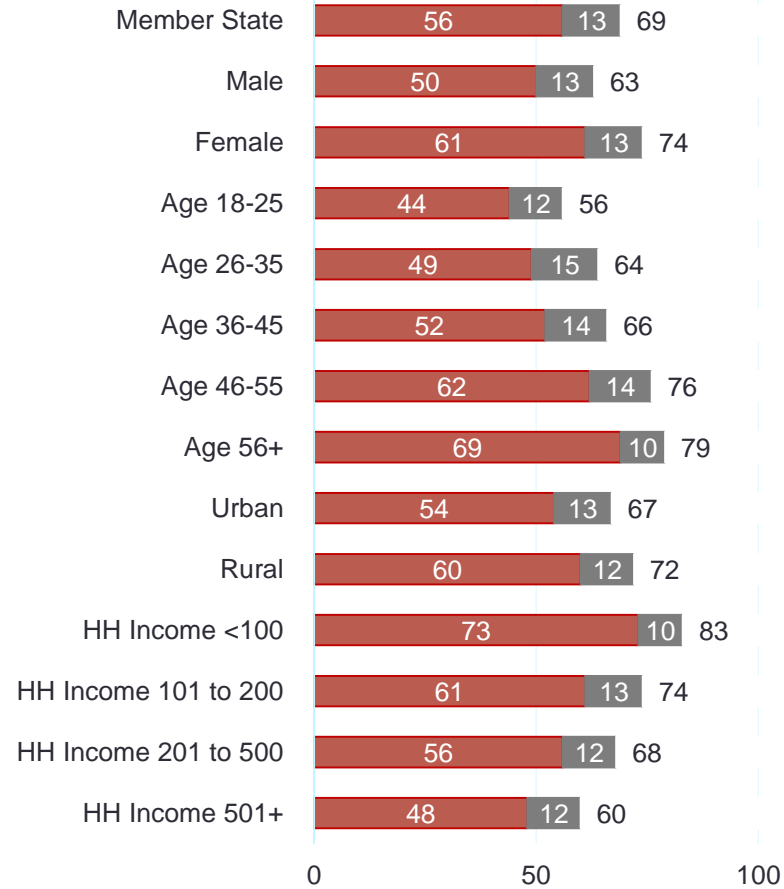
Q14. Thinking of the last four weeks, was asking people to do each of the following absolutely necessary, somewhat necessary, or not really necessary to limiting the spread of COVID-19 in Tunisia?: Avoiding the church/mosque

# PUBLIC GATHERING Public health and social measure (PHSM)

## Avoiding public gatherings and places of entertainment

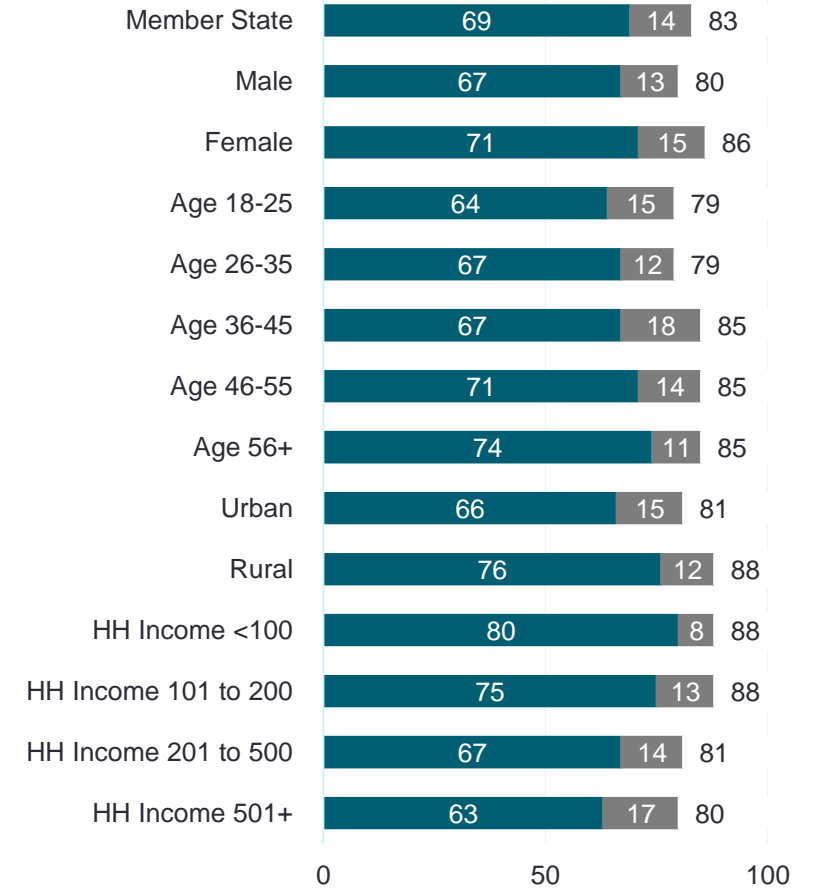
### Adherence

■ Completely applies ■ Mostly applies



### Support

■ Absolutely necessary ■ Somewhat necessary



Q13. Over the past seven days, to what extent do each of the following describe you personally?: Avoiding public gatherings and places of entertainment

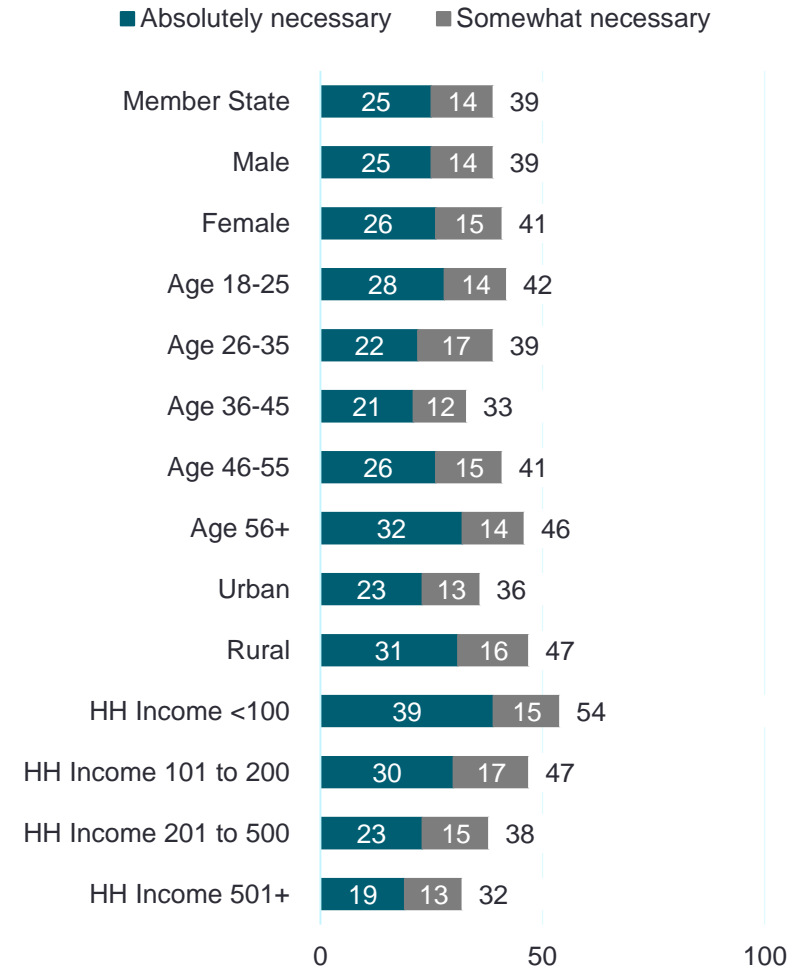
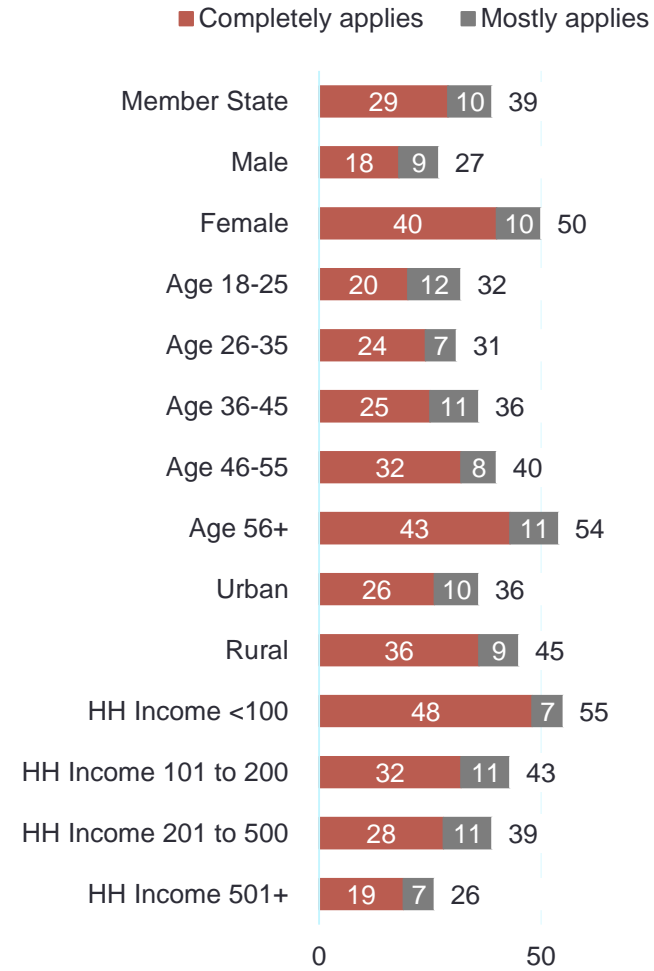
Q14. Thinking of the last four weeks, was asking people to do each of the following absolutely necessary, somewhat necessary, or not really necessary to limiting the spread of COVID-19 in Tunisia?: Avoiding public gatherings and places of entertainment

# MOBILITY Public health and social measure (PHSM)

## Staying home instead of going to work, school or other regular activities

### Adherence

### Support

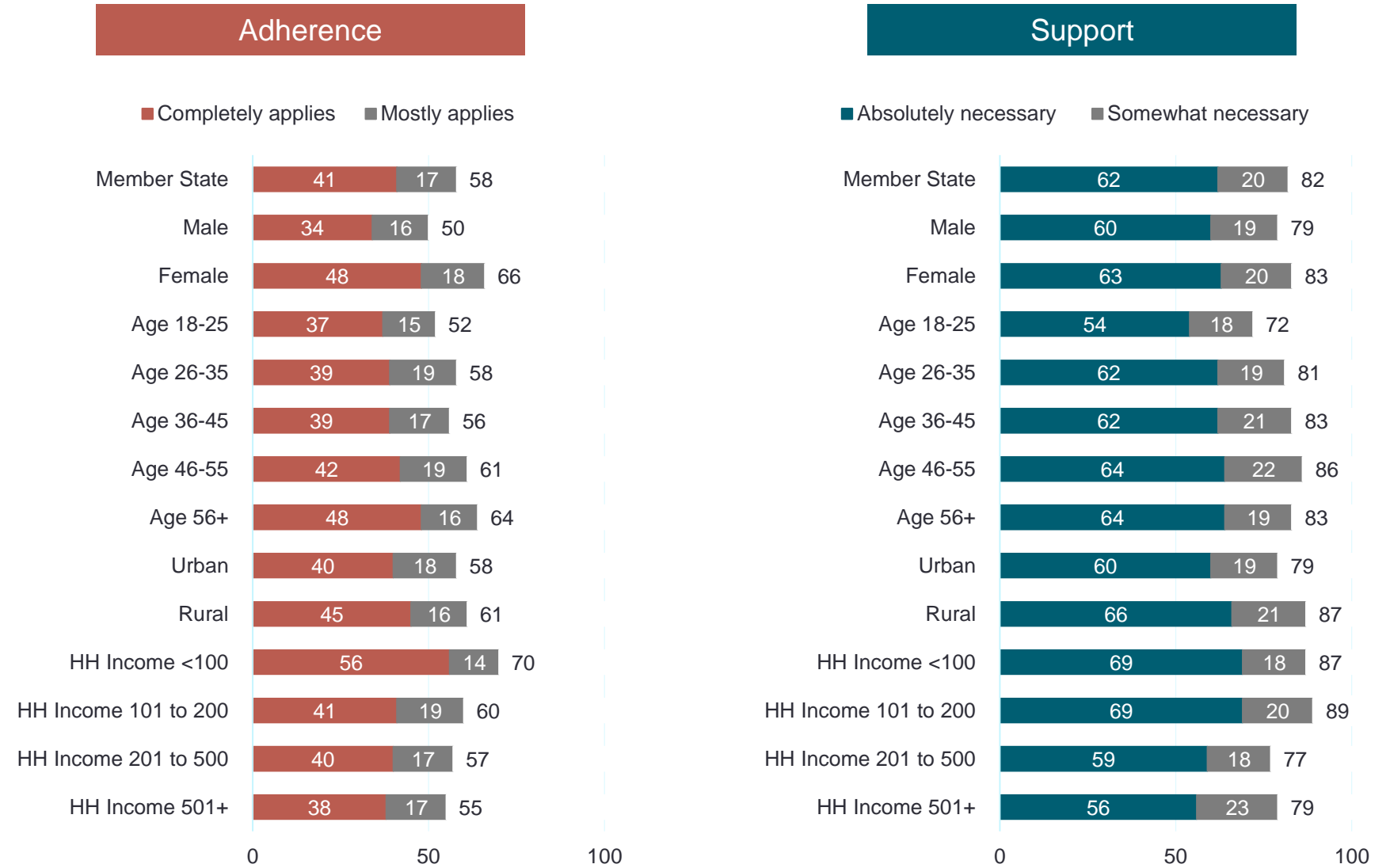


Q13. Over the past seven days, to what extent do each of the following describe you personally?: Staying home instead of going to work, school or other regular activities

Q14. Thinking of the last four weeks, was asking people to do each of the following absolutely necessary, somewhat necessary, or not really necessary to limiting the spread of COVID-19 in Tunisia?: Staying home instead of going to work, school or other regular activities

# MOBILITY Public health and social measure (PHSM)

## Reducing the number of times I go to the market or grocery store



Q13. Over the past seven days, to what extent do each of the following describe you personally?: Reducing the number of times I go to the market or grocery store

Q14. Thinking of the last four weeks, was asking people to do each of the following absolutely necessary, somewhat necessary, or not really necessary to limiting the spread of COVID-19 in Tunisia?: Reducing the number of times I go to the market or grocery store