



The Program on Governance
and Local Development

The Tunisian Local Governance Performance Index: Selected Findings on Participation

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The Tunisian Local Governance Performance Index:
Selected Findings on Political Participation

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1. Introduction: Political Participation in Tunisia

Political participation has become increasingly important in Tunisia following the Arab uprisings of 2011. Tunisia has taken significant steps toward democracy and done so in a relatively peaceful manner, avoiding the violent chaos and authoritarian resurrection seen in other Arab Spring countries. In October 2011, a Constituent Assembly election was held, and the new Tunisian constitution was passed in January 2014. In 2014, the parliamentary election was held in October, and two rounds of presidential elections were held in November and December, marking the completion of a four-year transitional period.

This report examines political participation in post-revolutionary Tunisia. The report displays selected findings from the Local Governance Performance Index (LGPI) Tunisia 2015 survey implemented in February–March 2015, described below. It covers various aspects of formal political participation, including voting, joining political organizations, and contacting local leaders, as well as political participation in the shape of activism, such as protests and boycotts. The report also examines latent political participation, including knowledge of local leaders and meetings with non-state actors (e.g., friends, family members) to discuss community needs.

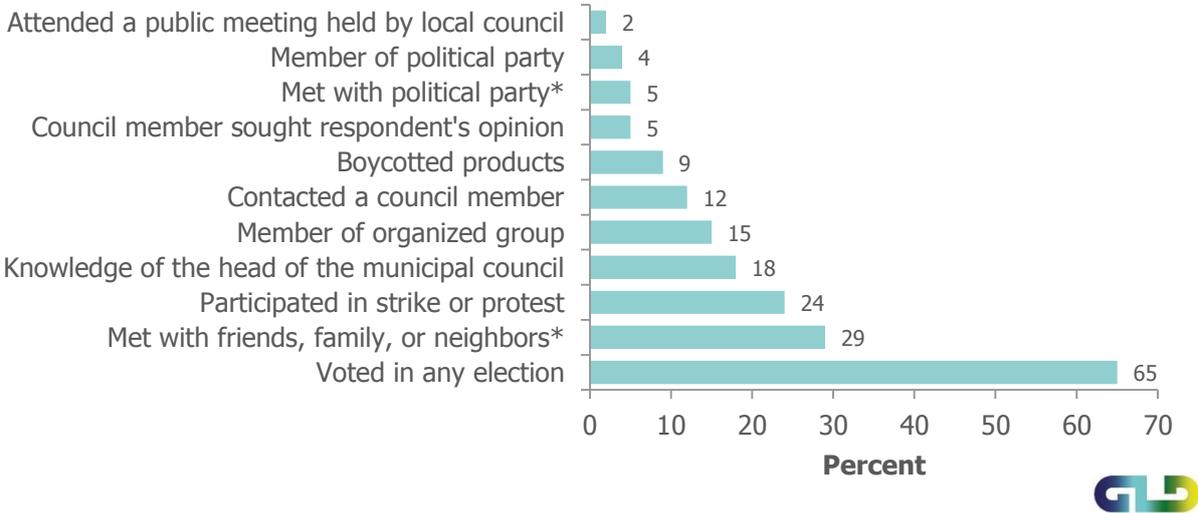


Figure 1. Overview of Political Participation Findings¹

*Meeting to determine community needs and plan services.

¹ All figures, charts, and percentages from the LGPI in this report are calculated with the answer options “don’t know” and “refuse to answer” included; hence, the percentages does not always add up to 100. Tables underlying the figures and charts, including the distribution of all responses, are found in the appendix. Where the narrative discusses percentages that are not displayed in a chart or graph, item non-response is negligible unless otherwise noted (less than one percent). Analyses presented take into account survey design weights, but do not include population-based, post-stratification weights.

Before examining the findings in more detail, we should note that there is considerable variation in the extent to which citizens engage in political participation. At the national level, we find that most people voted in the elections, but few attended meetings with political parties and organizations, or held by the local council (see Figure 1). When it comes to political activism, few boycotted products in the last five years, but many participated in a strike or protest. About one out of five knew the name of the head of the municipal council, and 29 percent reported having met with friends, family, or neighbors to determine community needs and plan services.²

Local variations can also be found. In Siliana governorate, Tunisians are unlikely to vote in elections but quite likely to attend a political-party meeting or boycott products. In Monastir governorate, citizens are likely to be members of organized groups and meet with friends, family, and neighbors to determine community needs. Bizerte and Mahdia governorates stand out with relatively low levels of participation in protests and boycotts, and low levels of membership in organized groups. Of the governorates included in the LGPI, Tunis and Sfax display the highest rates of participation in protests.

Drawing from the LGPI further reveals important differences in political participation in terms of gender, age, and social class. In Tunisia as a whole, no difference can be found between genders when looking at electoral participation, but the results indicate slightly more participation from men when it comes to protests, participating in meetings, and interacting with local council members. The LGPI shows further that young people are less likely than older citizens to report that they voted but more likely to have engaged in protest. Older people are more likely to contact local council members. People who identify as belonging to the lower class are found to have voted, protested, and reported membership in organized groups to a lesser extent than people who identify as belonging to a high social class. However, the lower class interacts with

² We advise readers to interpret differences between groups presented in the report with caution. Percentages for health indicators across demographic and geographic groups are reported if a Pearson's chi-squared test of their cross-tabulation suggests that the two variables may be associated ($p < 0.10$). Differences between specific subgroups (e.g., between the 18–30 and over-50 age groups) and associated tests of statistical significance of such differences using t-tests or regression analysis are not always presented. This largely descriptive report of preliminary findings is intended to draw attention to general trends that require further investigation. These would be best conducted using multivariate techniques. The narrative makes note of places where the relationships between variables might have been expected, but the bivariate distributions do not differ (e.g., gender differences in rates of reported voting). Again, we caution that this does not mean that there is no relationship between the variables; a multivariate analysis controlling for other factors (e.g., employment status, education, etc.) could still uncover such a relationship."

local council members to a greater extent than other class groups, perhaps because they seek assistance from them.

In the remainder of this report, we investigate in more detail the political behavior of the Tunisian citizens, both nationally and locally. We begin with a short description of the LGPI, from which these findings are drawn. We then address political participation in terms of voting, protests and boycotts, membership in organized groups, meetings, and local council interaction. We present all of these political participation measures by district, gender, age, and social class. We conclude by considering the implications of these findings for Tunisians, as they continue to shape their democracy.

2. The Local Governance Performance Index

The analysis presented in this report draws from the Local Governance Performance Index (LGPI), implemented in Tunisia in February-March 2015. The LGPI provides a new approach to the measurement, analysis, and improvement of local governances. The tool aims to help countries collect, assess, and benchmark detailed information concerning issues of local and public-sector performance and service delivery to citizens and businesses. The methodology uses heavily clustered surveys to uncover important local-level variation in governance and service provision. The goal is to provide information that helps to pinpoint, diagnose, and foster discussion regarding areas of need; formulate policy recommendations; provide a benchmark for assessing policy implementation; and allow us to examine the factors driving good governance and quality service provision.

The Program on Governance and Local Development (GLD) designed and implemented the LGPI. Generous funding from the Moulay Hicham Foundation and Yale University supported the development and implementation of the survey, and the Swedish Research Council and World Bank have supported the analysis and dissemination of results. The survey was fielded in six of Tunisia's 24 governorates, focusing on three municipalities in each governorate (see Table 1). Households within each governorate were randomly sampled using probability proportional to size (PPS) sampling, and respondents within households were chosen randomly from among those over 18 years old using the Kish selection grid. There were 3,659 complete interviews in 18 municipalities, approximately 200 in each municipality.³ The pilot study illustrates the ways in which this tool can help provide a comprehensive picture of service delivery and governance at

³ We use the term "municipality" throughout, but note that in Tunisia these local units are technically called "delegations."

the municipal level, identifying key areas of need, highlighting significant inequalities, and shedding light on the relationship between governance and service delivery. The survey was implemented under the supervision of Professor Dhafer Malouche, at the University of Carthage, by interviewers who were trained by the GLD team in conjunction with MAZAM.

Governorate	Municipality		
Bizerte	Bizerte Nord	Bizerte Sud	Menzal Jemil
Mahdia	Mahdia	Ksour Essaf	Souassi
Monastir	Monastir	Taboulba	Moknine
Sfax	Sfax Sud	Sfax Ville	Sakiet Eddair
Siliana	Siliana Ville	Bouarada	Gaafour
Tunis	La Marsa	Cité El Khadra	Jebel Jloud

Table 1. Municipalities included in the LGPI survey, Tunisia 2015

The LGPI citizen–state module captures respondents’ political participation at the national and local level. It comprises experiential questions that examine an individual’s participation in elections, engagement in meetings with local council members or others to discuss needs, and engagement in political parties and other organizations. The Tunisia 2015 survey collects data of how respondents voted and for whom, whether they have been in contact with a local council member, whether they are members of any organization, whether they have knowledge of the head of the local council, and whether they have participated in any strike or protest. This individual-level investigation of each respondent’s activities allows us to do a local-level comparison of political participation behavior across municipalities.

3. Electoral Participation

The LGPI data show little variation in reported voting across the four elections. There is a slightly larger reported voter turnout among the respondents in the second presidential election; 56 percent, compared to 53 percent in the first election ($p < 0.00$).⁴ The official voting-age population (VAP) turnout was 42 percent in the first round and 40 percent in the second.⁵ The survey data further show that 54 percent of the respondents reported voting in the parliamentary election, and 54 percent of those entitled to vote in 2011 stated that they voted in the Constituent Assembly election. The official VAP turnout was 45 percent in the parliamentary election and 54 percent in the Constituent Assembly election.⁶

Around 65 percent of the respondents reported that they voted in at least one of the four elections. Reported electoral participation is lowest in Siliana, where only 49 percent of respondents reported having voted in any of the elections. Within Siliana, in the municipality of Bourada, only 27 percent stated that they voted in an election. It is noteworthy that Siliana is a governorate with a high level of frustration with the central government. It is part of an area in the inner region of the country where many feel themselves to be victims of discrimination in such vital areas as employment, housing, health care, and transportation and communications infrastructure.⁷ Monastir and Jebel Jloud had the highest reported voter turnout of municipalities surveyed, with 77 percent reporting that they had voted in an election.

⁴ P-values presented in this report are from two-tailed t-tests.

⁵ ISIE Statistiques. July 29, 2016. <http://www.isie.tn/statistiques/>.

⁶ ISIE Statistiques . 2016: total number of votes, including blank and invalid votes, divided by VAP numbers from IDEA. See <http://www.idea.int/vt/countryview.cfm?CountryCode=TN> (accessed July 28, 2016).

⁷ Jdey, A., M. S. Omri, and R. A. Judy. "A History of Tunisia, January 14, 2011: The End of a Dictator and the Beginning of Democratic Construction." *Boundary 2* 39.1 (2012): 69-86.

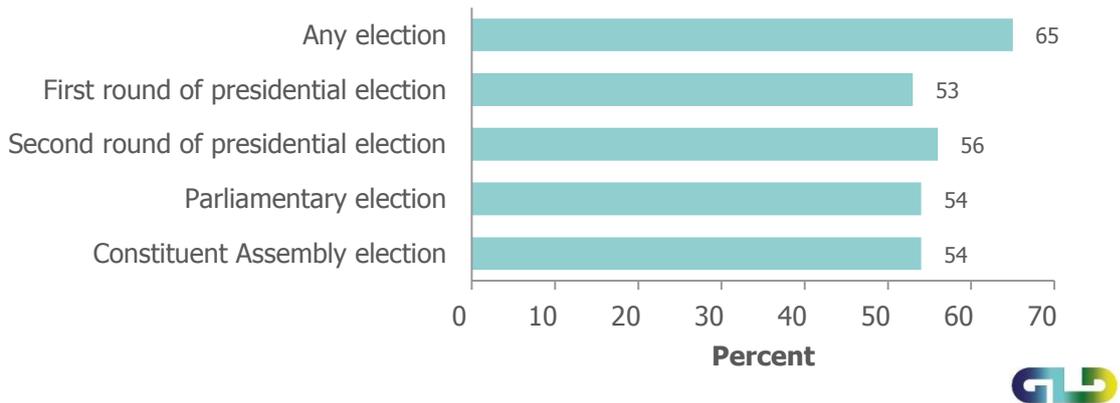


Figure 2. Reported voter turnout by election

3.1. Gender

With regard to voting, the LGPI reveals little difference between men and women on the national level. As seen in Figure 3, none of the gender gaps of reported voting in any of the elections is larger than 1 percentage point.

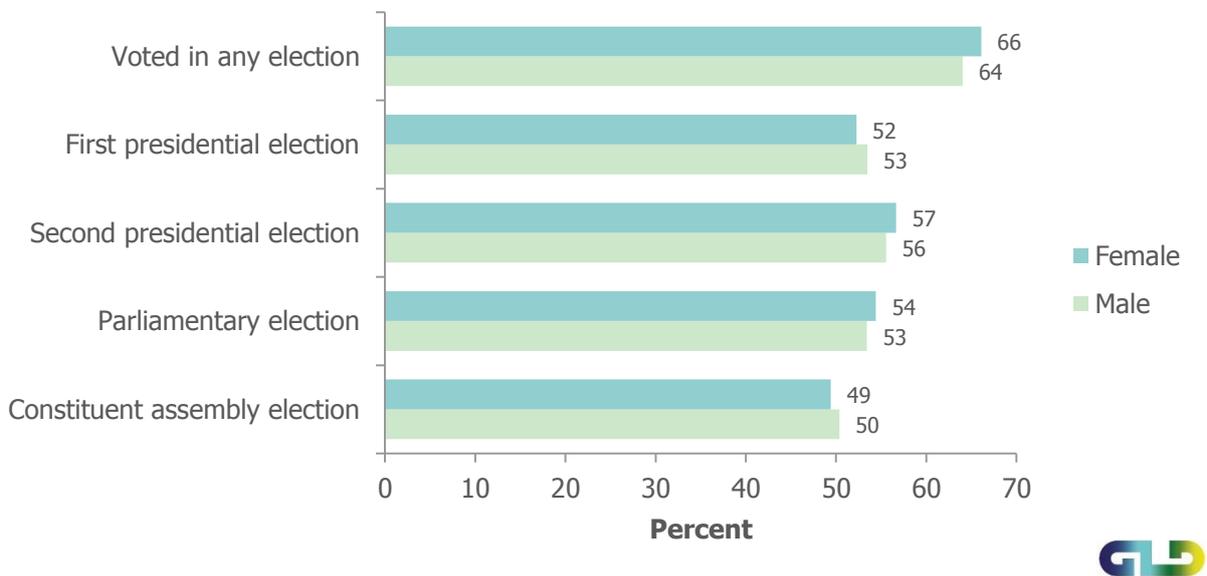


Figure 3. Reported voter turnout by election and gender

Local variations between genders can be found, however. Men are 7 percentage points more likely than women to report having voted in Mahdia governorate, but the opposite holds true in the governorate of Tunis, where women are 8 percentage points more likely to report having voted than men. Inside the governorate of Tunis, in the

municipality Cité El Khadra, women are very likely to vote; 91 percent of the women voted in at least one of the elections, while only 47 percent of the men did. Within the governorate Siliana there are also important findings at the municipal level. Three municipalities in Siliana are included in the Tunisia 2015 survey: Bouarada, Gaafour, and Siliana Ville. Bouarada, which has the lowest reported voter turnout of all LGPI municipalities, has relatively little gender difference in voting behavior. Gaafour however, has the largest gender gap between voters: men are 26 percentage points more likely to state that they have voted than are women. Siliana Ville has quite the opposite gender gap, with women 20 percentage points more likely to report having voted than men.

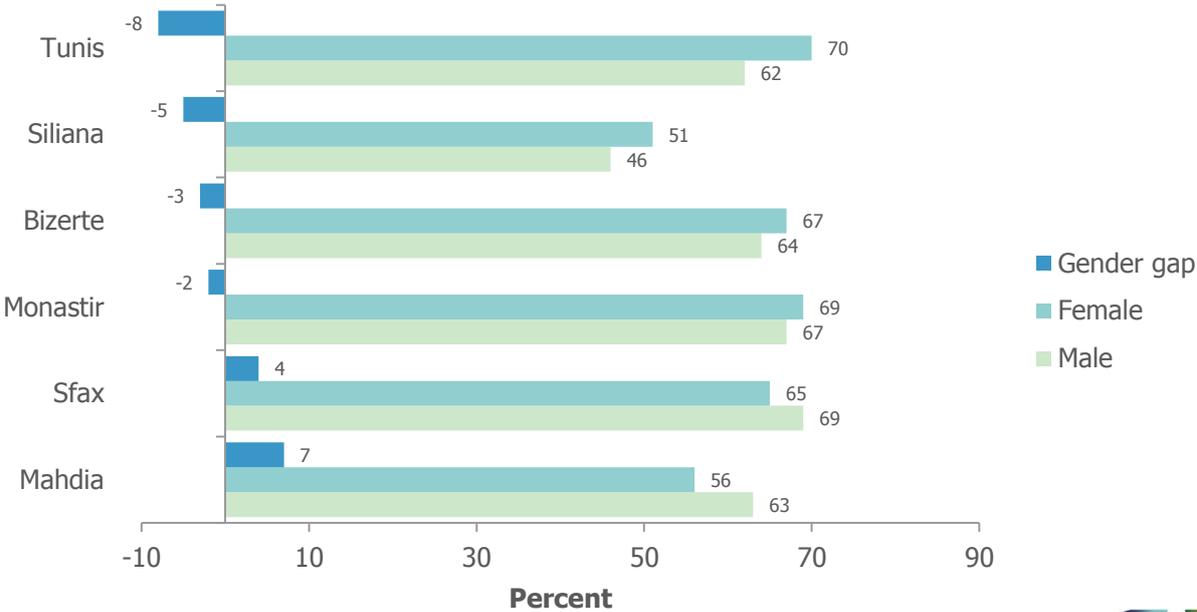


Figure 4. Reported voting in any election by governorate and gender⁸



⁸ Don't know/Refuse to answer accounts for 15 percent of the answers from male respondents in Siliana.

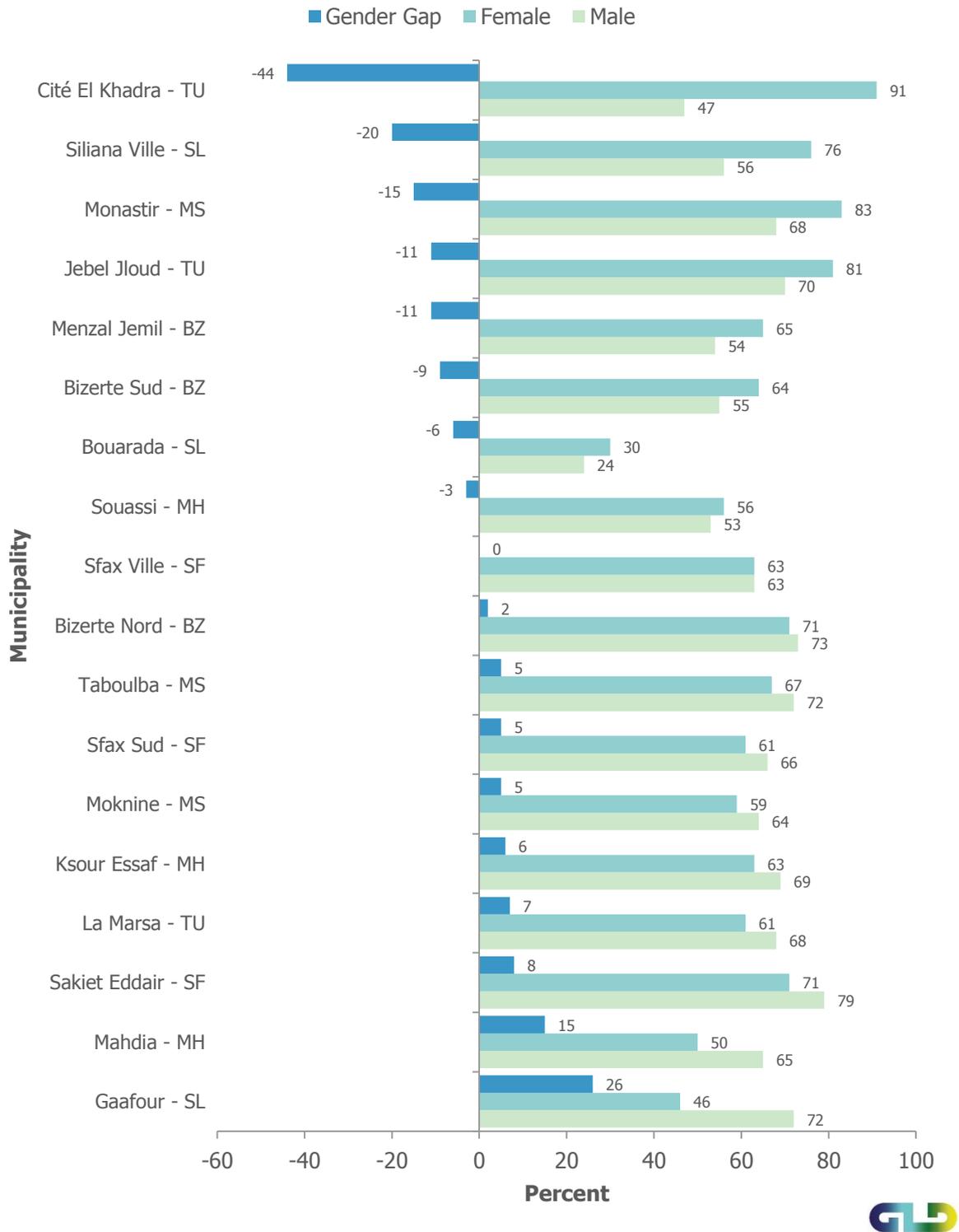


Figure 5. Reported voting in any election by municipality and gender⁹

⁹ Law, Gwillim.. *Administrative Subdivisions of Countries*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co. 1999. Municipality data is presented with two-letter abbreviations for the corresponding governorate using hierarchical administrative subdivision codes (HASC) developed by Gwillim Law (1999) and used frequently in geographic data analysis. Abbreviations for the governorates included in the sample are: BZ (Bizerte), SL (Siliana), MS (Monastir), MH (Mahdia), TU (Tunis), and SF (Sfax). For a list of abbreviations for all

3.2. Age

According to the LGPI, Tunisians are more likely to have voted in the 2014 elections if they are over 40 years old ($p=0.03$). Nationally, 55 percent of respondents 18 to 40 years old reported voting in any of the three elections in 2014, compared to 65 percent of respondents between 40 and 60 years old and 75 percent of those older than 60 years. As can be seen in Figure 6, almost all respondents over 60 years old in Tunis governorate reported voting, driving up the national numbers in that age group.

Furthermore, Siliana governorate displays the lowest proportion, 42 percent, of respondents 18 to 40 years old who reported voting. The proportion of people in the 18- to 40-year-old age group who voted in any of the 2014 elections is lower than the same proportion for the age group 40 to 60 years old in all LGPI governorates. This is also true for all LGPI municipalities except for Jebel Jloud, Sakiet Eddair, and Menzal Jemil. Sakiet Eddair stands out as the one municipality in which younger respondents are more likely to vote: 78 percent of respondents between 18 to 40 years old reported voting (the largest proportion of reported voting for this age group of all LGPI municipalities) compared to 62 percent of those 40 to 60 years old.

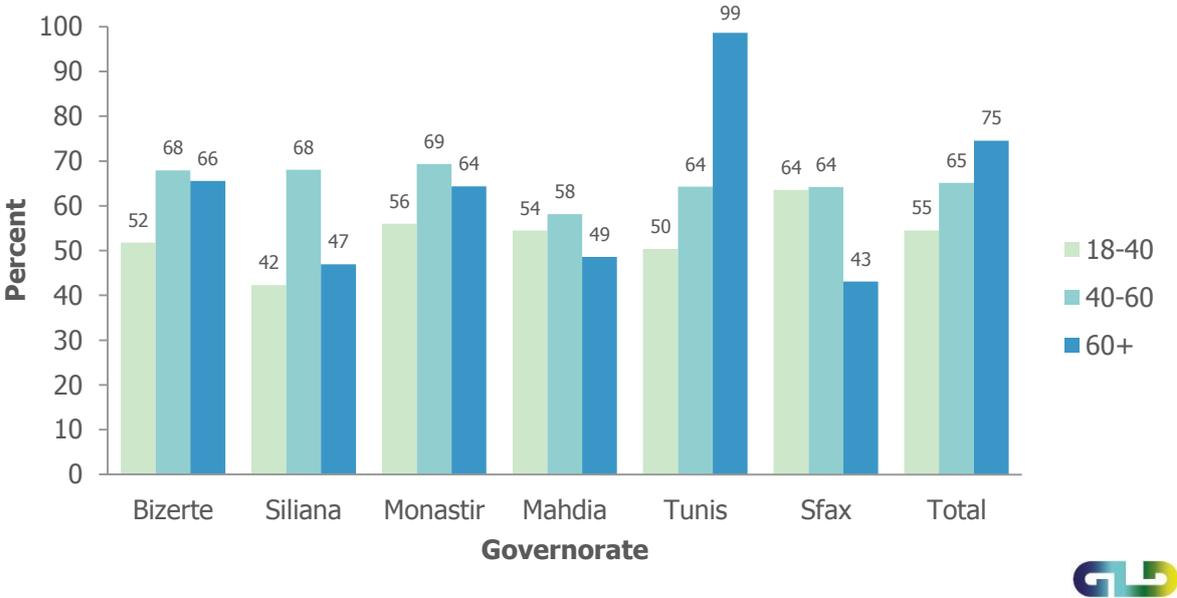


Figure 6. Reported voting in any 2014 election by governorate and age

The survey results show similar findings regarding the 2011 Constituent Assembly election; respondents who were 18 to 40 years old at the time of the election reported voting to a lesser extent than did people over 40 ($p=0.01$). As in the 2014 elections, people over 60 reported voting to the highest extent in Tunis governorate. In Bouarada municipality, only two out of 29 respondents in the 18- to 40-year-old age group reported voting.

governorates and information about HASC, see Gwillim Law's Statoids page (<http://www.statoids.com/utn.html> and <http://www.statoids.com/ihasc.html>), which provides ongoing updates to his 1999 book.

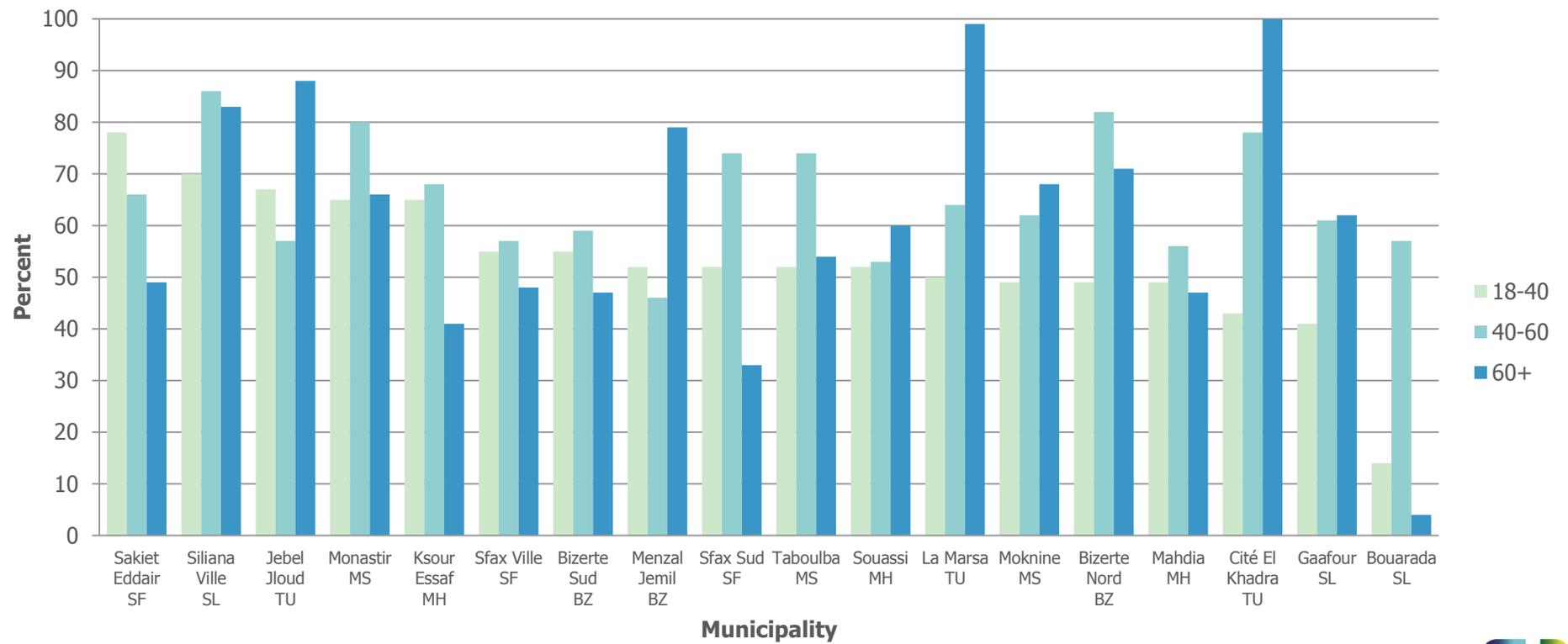


Figure 7. Reported voting in any 2014 election by municipality and age

3.3. Social Class

Tunisians who self-identify as middle or upper class are more likely to report voting than those from the lower class ($p=0.01$). About half of the respondents who identify as lower class or lower-middle class reported voting in any of the four elections, while over two-thirds of the respondents who identify as middle class, upper-middle class, or upper class did. Note that most respondents identify as middle class, and 56 percent of the reported votes came from this group.

The level of voter participation across classes varies by governorate. In Siliana governorate, only 37 percent of those who self-identify as lower class reported voting. In Bizerte governorate this rate is the highest among the LGPI governorates, with 62 percent voting.

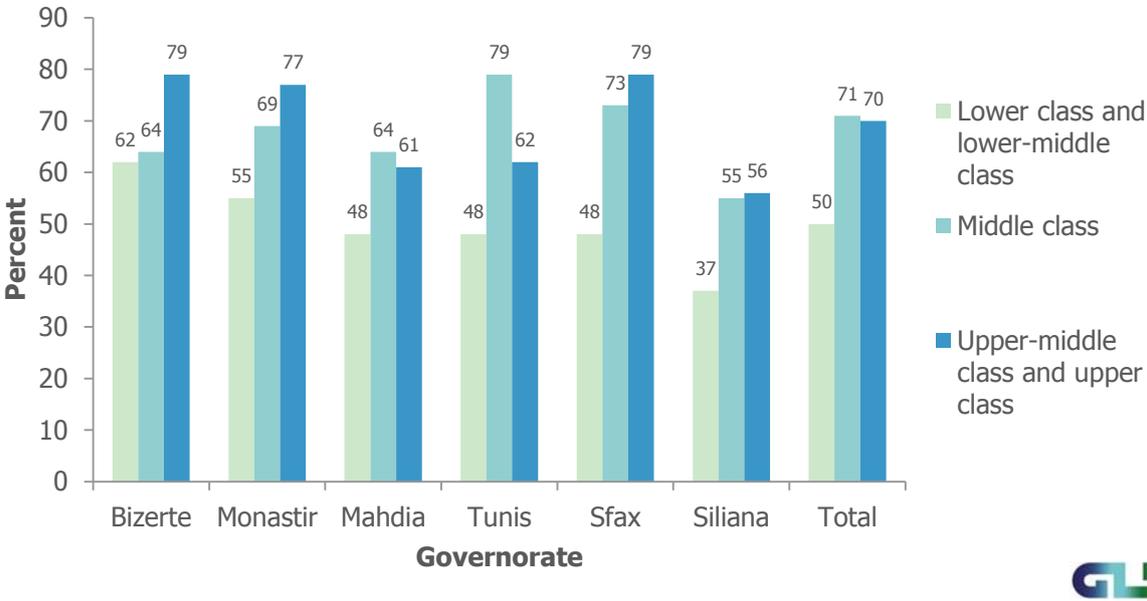


Figure 8. Reported voting in any election by governorate and class

Some interesting variations are once again apparent within the governorate Siliana. In Siliana Ville, contrary to the general pattern noted above, the lower and lower-middle classes are the *most* likely socioeconomic groups to report voting. Eighty-two percent of the respondents from the lower and lower-middle class voted in at least one of the four elections, while only 64 percent of the higher classes reported voting. In Gaafour, which is also located in Siliana governorate, people from the lower and lower-middle class were more likely to report voting than respondents from the higher classes. Finally, Bouarada—the third municipality in Siliana included in the study—stands out in the LGPI data as the municipality with the lowest rate of participation and a

large proportion of people with low socioeconomic status: 57 percent self-identify as lower class, and 43 percent have no formal education. (This can be compared to the sample average of 11 percent who self-identify as lower class and 9 percent who have no formal education.) In Bouarada, only 15 percent of the people who identify as lower or lower-middle class reported voting.

We also see important variations within Bizerte governorate; Bizerte Nord municipality displays relatively equal voting participation rates across classes, but the other two LGPI municipalities in Bizerte, Bizerte Sud and Menzal Jemil, are among the most unequal municipalities when it comes to social class and voting (see Figure 9).

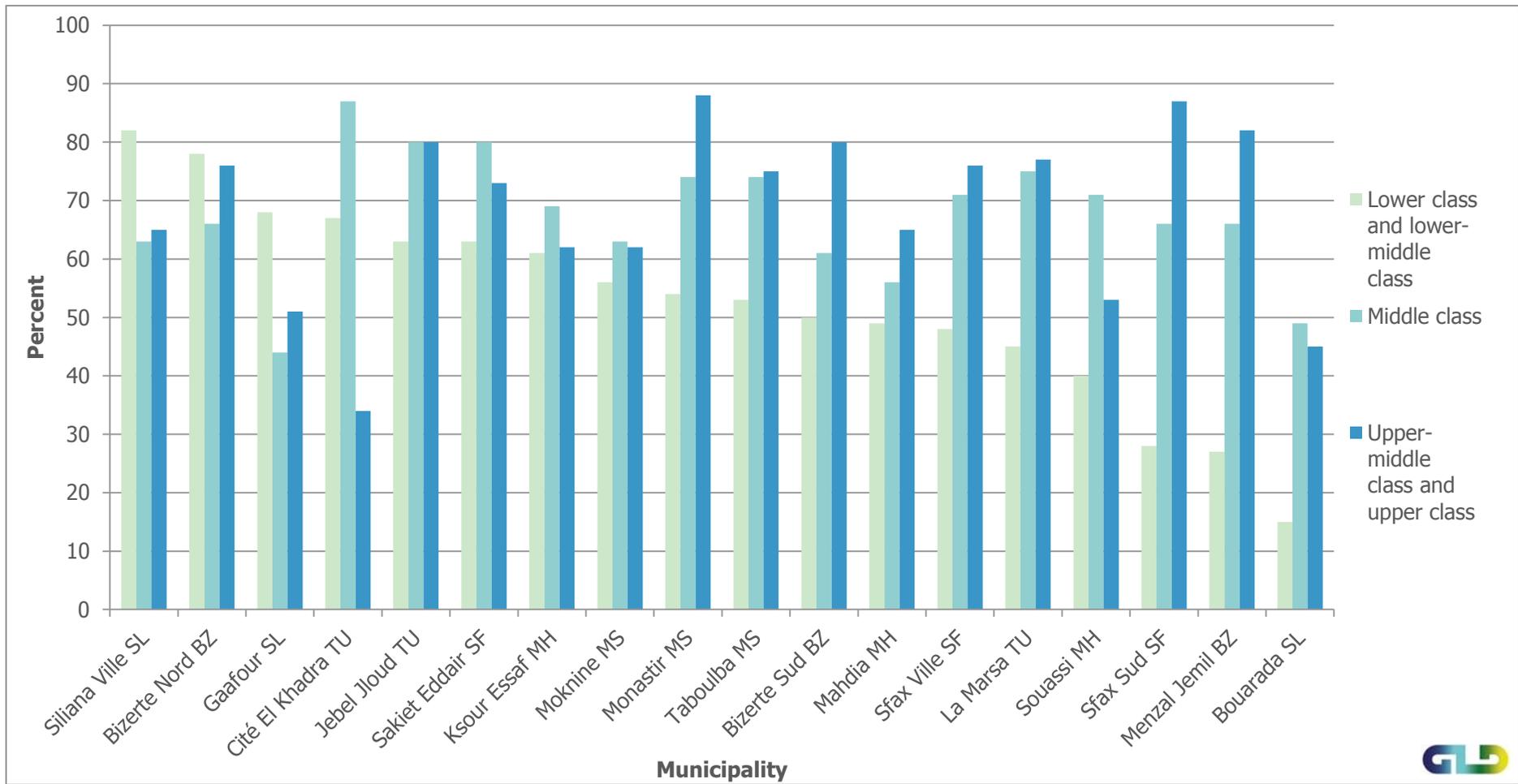


Figure 9. Reported voting in any election by municipality and class



4. Protests and Boycotts

Perhaps not surprisingly, Tunisians are less likely to report engaging in protests and boycotts: 24 percent of the respondents reported having participated in a strike or protest in the last five years, and 9 percent reported having boycotted products. Tunis and Sfax are the governorates where the highest proportion of the respondents, about one-third, reported having participated in a strike or protest. Siliana is the LGPI governorate with the largest proportion of citizens reporting boycotting; about one-third of the respondents in Siliana reported having done so in the last five years. Mahdia is the governorate where the least people have participated in strikes, protests, or boycotts; 6 percent reported having participated in a strike or protest and 4 percent reported boycotting products.

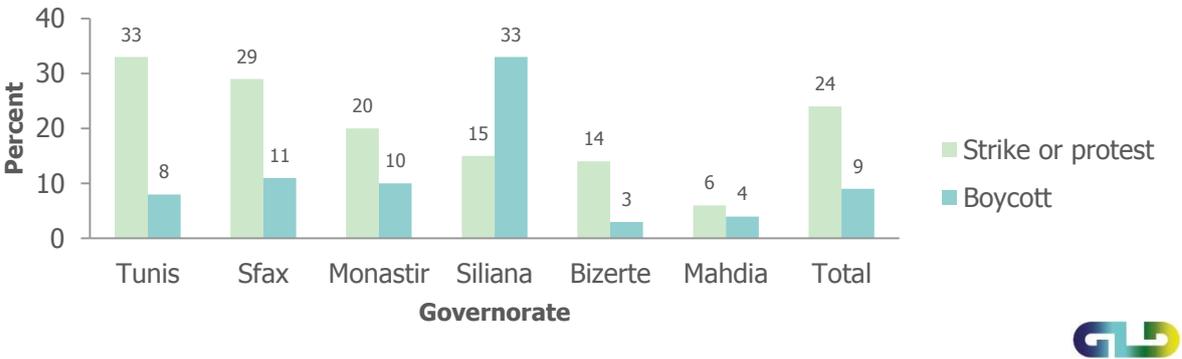


Figure 10. Protest and boycott participation the last five years, by governorate

In Tunis governorate, the municipalities of Cité El Khadra and Jebel Jloud have high participation rates. About half of the respondents in these municipalities reported having participated in a strike or protest. In Siliana governorate, it is the municipality Bouarada that is driving up the boycott rate. Bouarada has the highest boycott rate of the LGPI municipalities by far; 83 percent of the respondents report having boycotted products in the last five years. Cité El Khadra municipality has the second highest boycott rate at 18 percent, or twice the sample average.

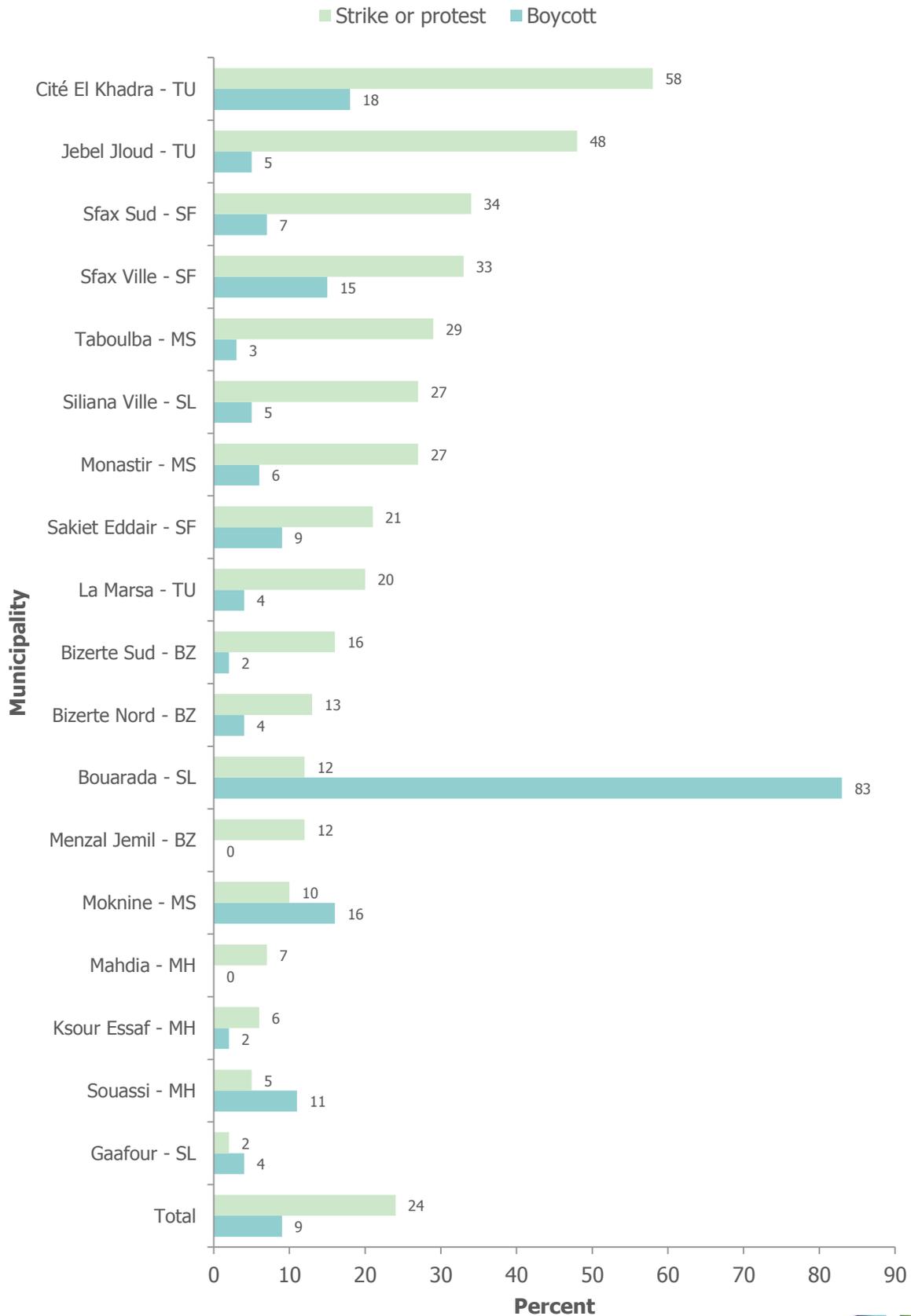


Figure 11. Protest and boycott participation in the last five years, by municipality

4.1. Gender

Men are more likely to report having participated in a strike or protest than women; 27 percent of the male respondents reported participation in a strike or protest in the last five years, and 22 percent of the female respondents did (p=0.06). The gender effect is consistent throughout all LGPI governorates and is the largest in Monastir governorate, where men are 13 percentage points more likely to report participation in a strike or a protest than women (p<0.00).

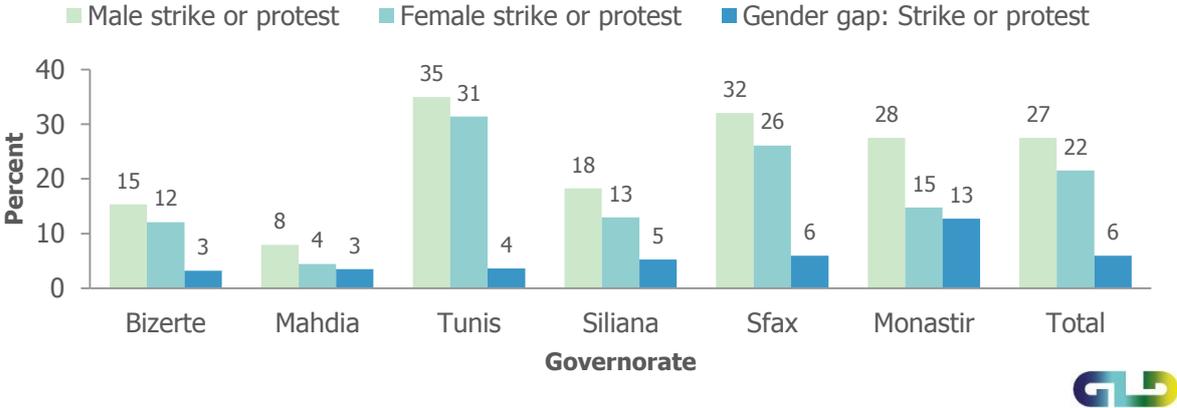


Figure 12. Strike or protest participation by governorate and gender

In Cité El Khadra municipality, where a majority of the people report participating in a strike or protest in the last five years, the gender differences are even clearer; about 64 percent of male respondents in Cité El Khadra participated in a strike or protest, and 49 percent of female respondents did. However, the largest gender gap is found in Monastir, where 48 percent of the male respondents claimed to have participated in a strike or protest but only 15 percent of the female respondents did. Bizerte Sud is one of a few municipalities where it was more common for a female than male respondent to report participation in a strike or protest; 15 percent of the women reported participation and 8 percent of the men did.

The gender gap is narrower when it comes to boycotts. Nationally, the LGPI finds no statistically significant difference between genders in boycotting products. However, in Siliana governorate, there is a 10-percentage-point gender gap. The gap is driven by the gender gap in Bouarada municipality, where 90 percent of male respondents reported boycotting products and 77 percent of female respondents did. In Cité El Khadra, a reversed gender gap of 19 percentage points can be found: only 11 percent of the men reported boycotting, and 30 percent of the women did.

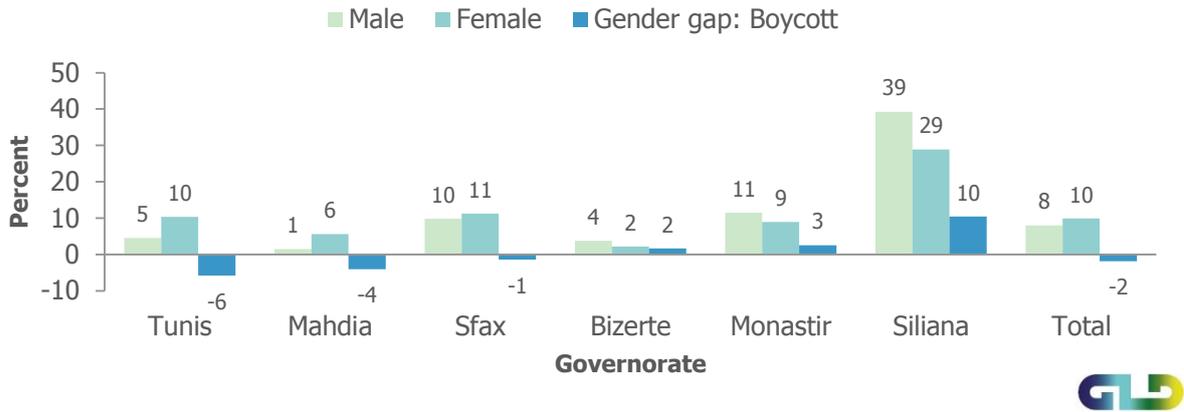


Figure 13. Boycott participation by governorate and gender

4.2. Age

Age plays a significant role regarding participation in strikes, protests, and boycotts. There is a statistically significant negative relationship between age and participation in a strike or protest ($p=0.01$); however, people who are over 60 years old are more likely than younger people to have reported boycotting. It could be argued that younger people tend to protest “loudly,” while older people tend to protest “quietly.”



Figure 14. Protest and boycott participation in the last five years, by age group

4.3. Social Class

Participation in strikes and protests varies by (self-identified) social class. The LGPI finds a positive relationship between class identification and participation in strikes and protests ($p=0.02$). The higher the class with which the respondent identifies, the more likely the respondent is to participate in a strike or protest. As seen in Figure 15, there is an exception: those who self-identify as upper class are less likely to participate in protests than those who self-identify as upper-middle class and middle class.

The relationship between class identification and boycotting products is less clear. It can, however, be noted that respondents who self-identify as lower class report the boycotting of products to the largest extent of all LGPI class groups.

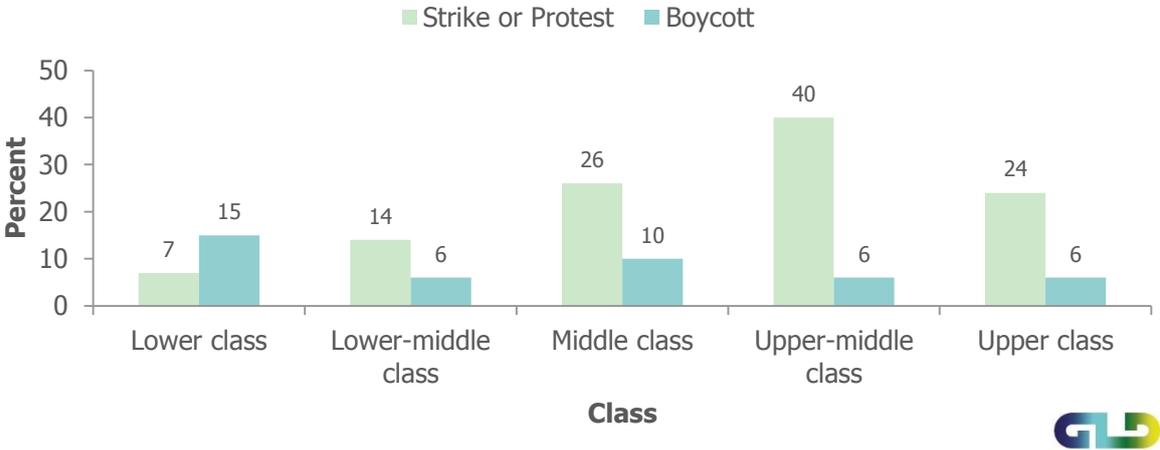


Figure 15. Protest and boycott participation in the last five years by class

Finally, we find variation in the relationship between class and rates of participation across governorates. The lower class reported participating in strikes or protests to a larger degree than the national average in the governorates Bizerte and Sfax, with 23 and 22 percent, respectively. None of the 70 respondents who identified as lower class in Mahdia and Tunis governorates reported participation in a strike or protest. Tunis further stands out in terms of being the only LGPI governorate in which the upper class is not the most active class group in terms of participating in protests. One out of four who self-identified as upper class in Tunis reported participation in a strike or protest, and more than half of the respondents who self-identified as upper-middle class did.

5. Membership

One measurement of formal political participation that the LGPI captures is membership in organized groups. The Tunisia 2015 survey captures Tunisian citizens' political behavior when it comes to being a part of political organizations, such as trade unions and civil-society organizations.

According to the LGPI, 15 percent of the population identify as members or leaders of at least one of the following organized groups: mosque or local religious organization, civil-society organization or association, trade union or professional association, clan or tribe, political party, chamber of commerce or business organization, or powerful local family. Monastir stands out as the governorate with the highest rate of participation: 22 percent of respondents reported being members of at least one of these groups. In Monastir governorate, it is the seat of the governorate that drives this number up, with 44 percent reporting membership in an organized group. The other two LGPI municipalities, Taboulba and Moknine, display significantly lower membership rates: 7 and 12 percent, respectively.

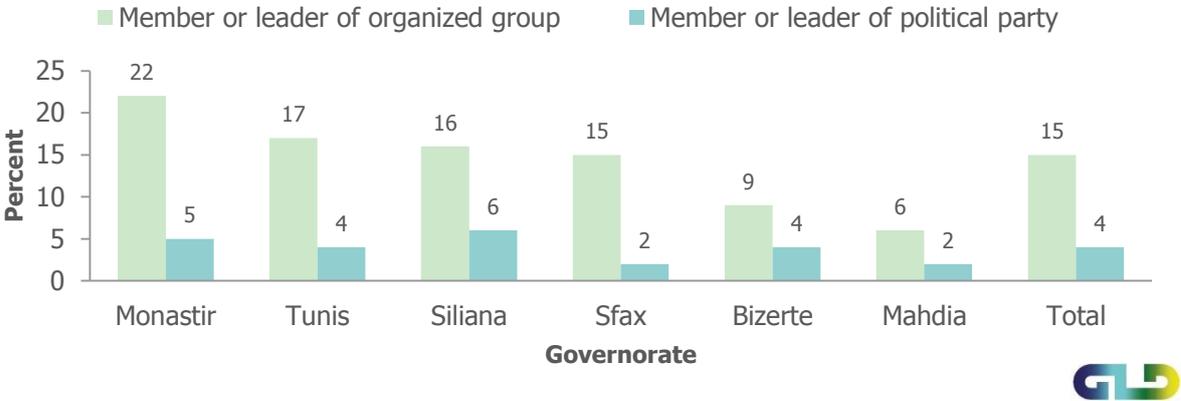


Figure 16. Member or leader of organized group, by governorate

When looking specifically at membership in political parties, we see that Siliana stands out as the governorate with the largest rate of reported membership or leadership at 6 percent; the national average is 4 percent. These numbers are driven up by the municipality Siliana Ville, where the rate is 12 percent, and down by Bouarada and Gaafour municipalities, both at 2 percent.

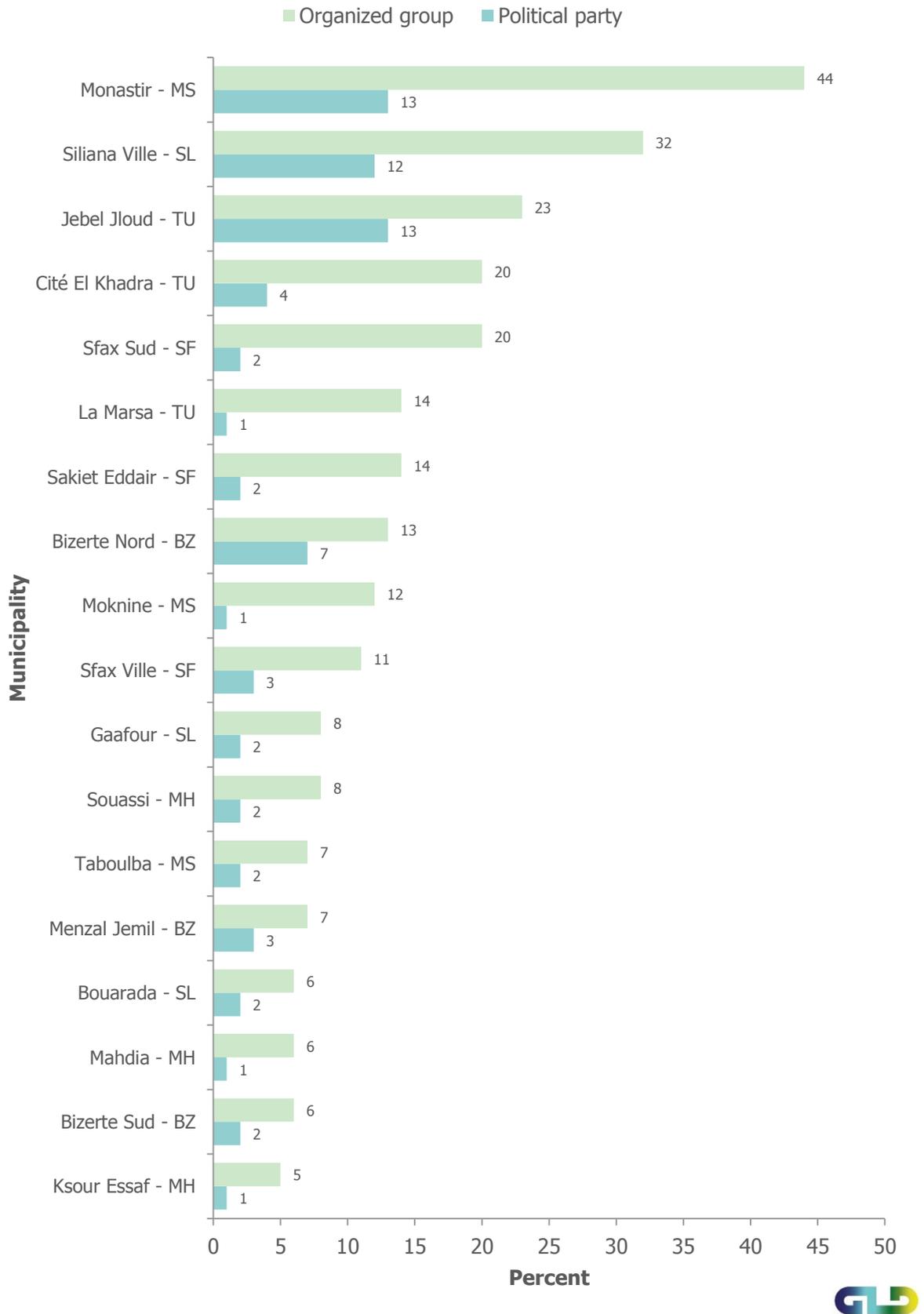


Figure 17. Member or leader of organized group, by municipality

5.1. Gender

Nationally, there is little gender difference when looking at membership in organized groups. Locally, however, gender differences can be found. In Monastir governorate, there is a clear overrepresentation of men in reporting membership in a political party, 28 percent, and only 17 percent of women reporting the same. In Siliana governorate the gender gap is equally large, and in Siliana Ville municipality it is even larger. In Siliana Ville 53 percent of the male respondents reported membership, while 17 percent of the women did. The gender gap is also evident when looking solely at party membership in Siliana Ville, where 26 percent of the men reported membership in a political party but only 2 percent of the women did.

Men are more likely than women to be members of organized groups in all governorates except Tunis. In Tunis governorate there is a small overrepresentation of women in membership, with 3 percent more women than men reporting membership. This is mostly driven by the fact that in Cité El Khadra 26 percent of female respondents reported membership and only 13 percent of the men did.

5.2. Age

The LGPI further finds that a majority of the respondents who reported to be a member of a political party or any other organized group are under 40 years of age. Over 20 percent of the respondents between 18 and 30 reported membership in an organized group, while only 8 percent of respondents age 60 to 70 reported the same. The probability of reporting membership to a political party decreases slightly with age ($p=0.08$). Four percent in the 18 to 30 age group reported membership to a political party, while 2 percent did in the 60 to 70 age group. Tunis governorate stands out, with considerably higher membership rates among 60 to 70 year olds than the state averages. There, 48 percent in this age group reported membership in an organized group and 19 percent reported membership in a political party. Also, in Siliana governorate, the membership numbers are evenly spread among the age groups compared to the national numbers.

5.3. Social Class

It is clear that membership to organized groups is connected to social class. The higher the class group a Tunisian identifies with, the more likely s/he is to report membership in any organized group (p=0.08). This is also true for membership in political parties (p=0.01).

Only 9 percent of the respondents who identify as lower class report membership in any organized group, while 29 percent from the upper-middle class and upper class do; almost none of the respondents from the lower and lower-middle classes reported membership in a political party. Only 1 percent of the reported members of a political party identify as lower class, and 50 percent identify as middle class.

As with class, respondents with higher levels of education are more likely to report membership in an organized group (p=0.02) or political party (p=0.01). Just over 5 percent of the respondents with less than a secondary education reported membership in an organized group, and only 1 percent with this educational level reported membership in a political party. This can be compared to 21 percent of the respondents with an educational level of secondary school or higher reporting membership in an organized group and 6 percent in a political party.

A majority of the respondents who reported membership in a political party have finished secondary school. Perhaps not surprisingly, the typical party member appears to be a well-educated young man who belongs to the middle class. Approximately one of every three reported party members is a man younger than 40 years old who has finished secondary school and self-identifies as middle or upper-middle class.

Class/Age	18-30	30-40	40-50	50-60	60-70	70+	Total
Lower class	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Lower-middle class	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Middle class	15	15	14	6	1	0	50
Upper-middle class	7	17	5	5	0	0	34
Upper class	3	2	3	3	1	0	12
Total	33	29	22	13	2	1	100



Figure 18. Probability in percent of political party members being of certain class and age

6. Local Council

Local councils do not appear to play an important role in the lives of Tunisian citizens. Nationally, 7 percent (82 respondents) reported that their local council held public meetings during the previous year. Out of these, 24 respondents (16 males and eight females) reported to have attended at least one of these meetings,

Nationally, only 5 percent of respondents said that a council member had sought their opinion in the previous year. At the governorate level, this number is highest in Tunis, where 8 percent said that a member had sought their opinion; it is lowest in Sfax governorate, where none of the 191 respondents claimed that a council member had sought their opinion. In Gaafour municipality, six out of 69 respondents reported that a council member has sought their opinion. In Jebel Jloud, La Marsa, Menzal Jemil, Sakiet Eddair, Sfax Sud, and Sfax Ville, none of the 335 respondents claimed that a council member sought their opinion.

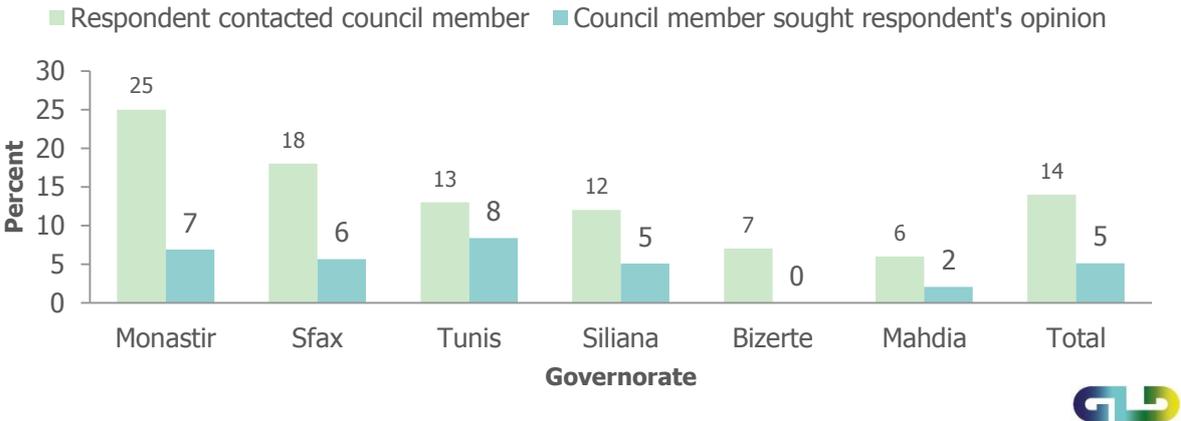


Figure 19. Council member interaction, by governorate

Tunisians are more likely to contact their local council member than they are to have their opinion sought by a council member. Overall, 14 percent contacted a council member in the last year. This number is especially high in Monastir governorate, where 25 percent contacted a council member. Monastir and Moknine municipalities are the drivers of the high contact rate in Monastir governorate. Taboulba municipality on the other hand, which is also a part of the Monastir governorate, has a contact rate of only 9 percent. As seen in Figure 20, in Gaafour municipality there is an overall high contact rate, both in terms of the local council members

contacting the respondents and respondents contacting their local council members. In Jebel Jloud the LGPI finds almost no contact between local council members and respondents.

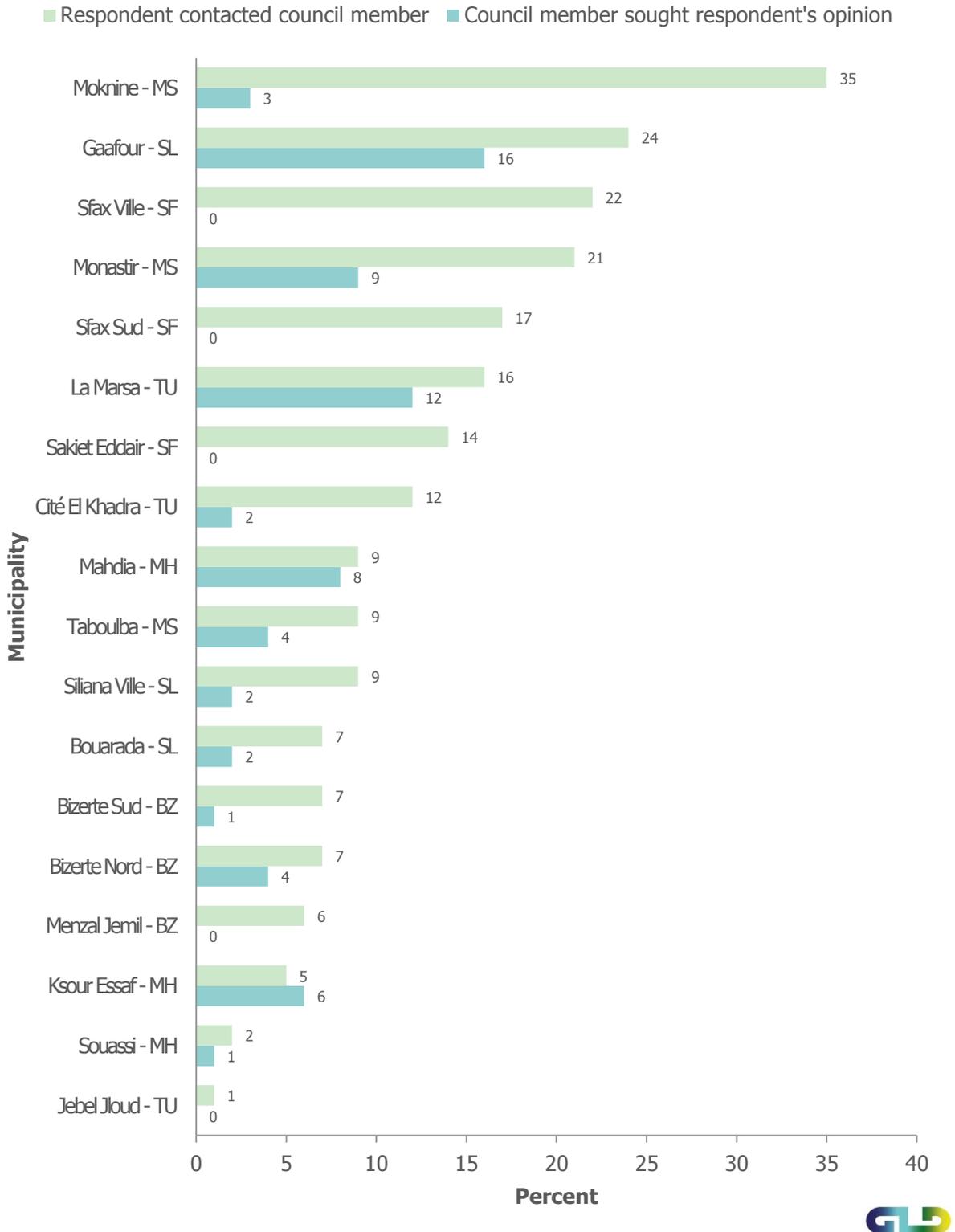


Figure 20. Council member interaction, by municipality

6.1. Gender

Nationally, local council members contact women to seek their opinion just as often as they contact men. At the governorate level, it varies: the probability of a man in Tunis governorate to have been contacted by a local council member is 11 percent, while for a woman, it is 6 percent; in Monastir, on the other hand, the probability that a woman will report having been contacted is 9 percent while for a man, it is only 1 percent.

The LGPI finds that Tunisian men are 5 percentage points more likely to contact a local council member than women ($p=0.07$). There is no gender gap in Siliana, Mahdia, and Sfax governorates, but there are clear gender gaps in Bizerte, Tunis, and Monastir. In Monastir, men are as much as 12 percentage points more likely than women to contact a local council member. In the municipalities Gaafour, Sakiet Eddair, and Sfax Sud, women reported contacting local council members more than men did.

6.2. Age

The Tunisian local council members are most likely to contact citizens between the ages of 30 and 40. Ten percent of the 30- to 40-year-old respondents in the Tunisia 2015 survey reported that a local council member had sought their opinion in the last year, and 64 percent of all reported interactions initiated by the local council member took place with people from this age group.

Little variation can be found across age. However, people between 18 and 30 years old tend to contact local council members to a lesser extent than do other people. Ten percent in this age group reported that they had contacted a council member, compared to the national average of 14 percent.

6.3. Social Class

Local council members in Tunisia appear most likely to contact people from the lower class. About 11 percent of respondents who self-identify as lower class reported having been contacted by a local council member, compared to the national average of 5 percent. In total, 37 percent of the reported times a local council member sought a citizen's opinion were with someone who

self-identified as lower class; since only 11 percent self-identify as lower class, this number is high.

The LGPI finds a relationship between social class and tendency to contact a local council member. The lower the class group you identify with, the more likely are you to contact a local council member (p=0.04). Nearly 29 percent of people who identified as lower class reported to have contacted a local council member during the previous year, while only 10 percent of the middle class did the same.

6.4. Knowledge of Local Council Member

An indicator of political awareness is knowledge of who is in power. In Tunisia as a whole, the LGPI estimates that approximately 18 percent of Tunisians can name or describe their local council head. As shown earlier, there are relatively high levels of interaction between the citizens and council members in the governorate Monastir. In Monastir and Mahdia governorates, there is also a comparatively high rate of people who can identify the head of their municipal council (34 and 30 percent, respectively). In Tunis governorate, this number is only 10 percent, and in the Tunis municipality Jebel Jloud, it is just 4 percent.



Figure 21. Knowledge of the municipal council head



Nationally, there is little difference concerning knowledge of the head of the municipal council in various demographic groups. Men are only slightly more likely to know who the head of the local council is than are women; 20 percent of male respondents answered with a name or description, and 17 percent of the female respondents did. This gender difference is more evident in Mahdia and Tunis governorates. In Mahdia, 35 percent of the men were able to name or describe the local council head, compared to 25 percent of the women ($p=0.10$). In Tunis, 14 percent of the men could but only 7 percent of the women ($p=0.02$) could. In Monastir, however there is no gender difference. Siliana Ville municipality has the largest gender difference among the LGPI municipalities; only 3 percent of the female respondents in Siliana Ville knew the municipal-council head, while 24 percent of the men did.

When looking at social class differences at the national level, we find that people who self-identify as upper class are the most likely to know of the head of their municipal council. Approximately one of every three people who identify as upper class has knowledge of their municipal council head. The difference between social classes varies widely between districts, however. In Tunis governorate the LGPI finds, surprisingly, that those who identify with a lower class are more likely to have knowledge of the municipal council ($p=0.01$). The opposite is true in Monastir and Mahdia governorates ($p<0.00$ and $p=0.03$).

7. Meetings

Political participation goes beyond elections, activism, and communicating with representatives. In this section, we examine the non-state actors Tunisian citizens discuss politics with, in order to determine community needs and plan services. Interactions such as these can create opportunities for individuals to gather information about politics that allows them to live beyond personal-resource constraints. We will look at meetings with both organized groups, such as trade unions and political parties, and informal groups, such as friends and family.

Tunisians appear to turn to those close to them to solve community problems. To determine community needs and plan services, the survey respondents primarily report meeting with family, friends, and neighbors; 78 percent reported to have met with friends, family, or neighbors. Thirty-nine percent reported that they had attended a meeting the last year with any of the groups listed in Figure 22, and 12 percent reported having met with any of the organized groups: trade

union or professional association, CSO or association, political party or parties, and chamber of commerce or business organization (displayed outside the circle in Figure 22). Five percent reported having met with a political party.

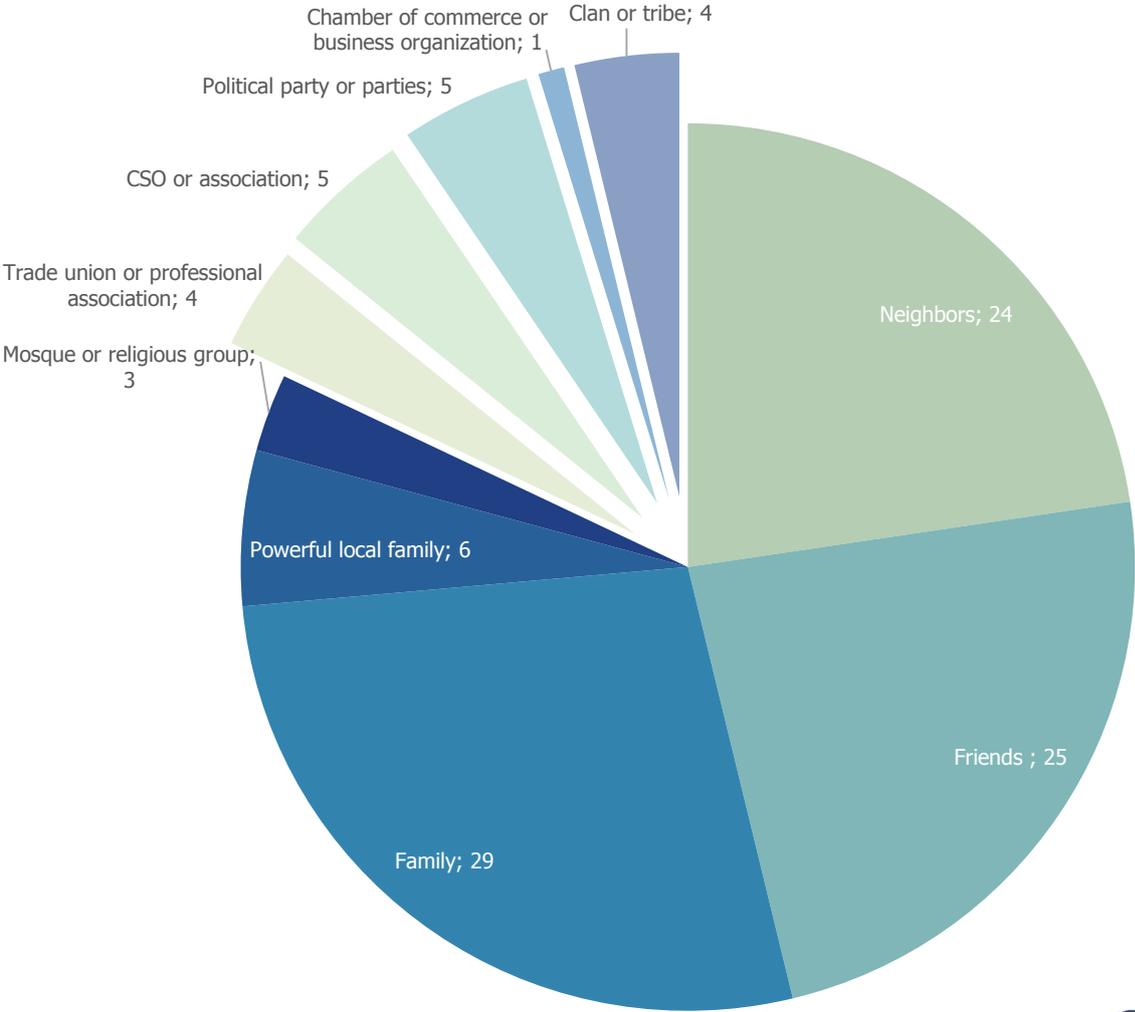


Figure 22. Participation rate of specific meeting

Note: Question formulation: Have you personally engaged in meeting with any of the following groups in order to determine the community needs and plan services?

Monastir governorate stands out when it comes to participating in meetings to determine community problems and plan services. In Monastir, 48 percent stated that they participated in at least one type of meeting with any of the groups listed in Figure 22. In Bizerte, only 29 percent did so. The percentage of respondents reporting having met with family, friends, or neighbors is especially high in Monastir, where 54 percent of the respondents met with at least one of these groups in the previous year. Siliana, on the other hand, stands out as the governorate with the

largest proportion of people engaging in meetings with political parties, with 15 percent of the respondents reporting having met with a political party to determine community needs and plan services. In Sfax governorate, only 1 percent met with a representative of a political party.

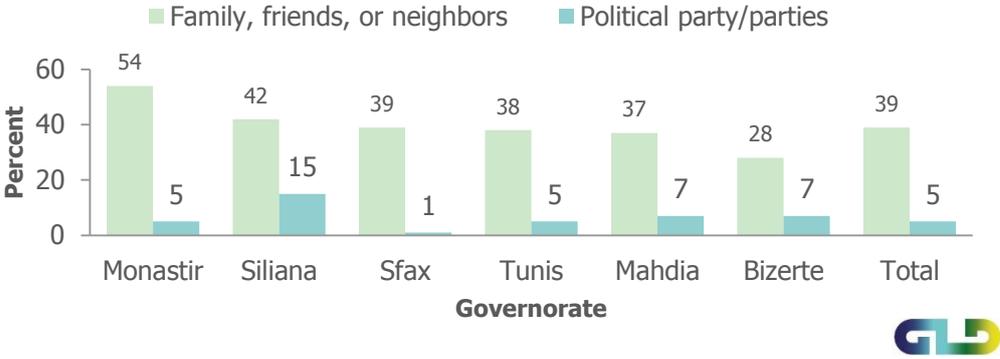


Figure 23. Meeting participation, by governorate

7.1. Gender

Overall, there is no difference in the likelihood that a man or a woman would report having attended any kind of meeting listed in Figure 22. However, there is a clear gender difference when examining meetings with only the organized groups: trade union or professional association, CSO or association, political party or parties, and chamber of commerce or business organization. Slightly over 18 percent of the men had attended a meeting with an organization, but only 8 percent of the women had (p=0.10).

The extent of gender differences also varies by governorate. For instance, in the governorates of Siliana and Mahdia, men are considerably more likely to participate than women; the gender gap is 28 percentage points in Siliana and 19 percentage points in Mahdia (p<0.00). In Monastir, however, the opposite pattern can be found; the probability of a woman attending such a meeting is 8 percentage points higher than the probability of a man attending one (p<0.00).

7.2. Age

Overall, there is little difference across age groups in meeting participation. However, people over 40 report slightly less meeting participation than people who are younger. This is especially true when looking only at meetings of organized groups, where people under 40 are the most likely to participate; 15 percent of people under 40 reported having participated in a meeting of an organized group, while 8 percent of people older than 40 years did ($p=0.10$).

7.3. Social Class

Generally, there is little difference class-wise in participation in meetings for determining community needs and planning services. But, when looking solely at meetings of organized groups, it can be seen that only ten out of 103 respondents (10 percent) who identify as lower or lower-middle class reported having participated in a meeting of an organized group, while 15 out of the 55 (27 percent) of those who identify as upper class reported having attended such a meeting.

8. Conclusion

The results indicate important variation in political participation in Tunisia, according to age and social class. Younger Tunisian citizens engage more than older ones in organized groups and protests but vote less. Eighteen- to 30-year-old respondents of the 2015 survey reported participation in a protest or strike at a slightly higher rate than they reported voting in the Constituent Assembly election. The upper and middle classes report participating to a larger extent than the lower class in voting, membership in organizations, participation in meetings, knowledge of the local council head, boycotting products, and even protesting. The lower class is more likely than the upper class to interact with local council members. In contrast, gender is not generally associated with as significant a variation in Tunisian political participation as age and class are.

The extent to which these gaps exist varies geographically. We find higher levels of participation in elections in Tunis and Sfax than in Siliana and Mahdia. At the same time, contact with local council members and knowledge of the council head is higher in Mahdia. This suggests that

political engagement, and the nature of politics, varies significantly across groups and localities. Engagement in formal political processes may be the key to influencing policies and obtaining services in some areas and for some demographic groups, while interactions with local leaders is the key in others.

Further work is needed to examine fully the drivers of political engagement and the consequences of variation in the nature and level of participation. More work needs to be done to disentangle the influence of age, class, and locality. Moreover, questions remain regarding the extent to which participation through elections, protests, or other forms of engagement is more or less likely to help individuals exercise influence and obtain resources. This overview of findings, however, suggests that the reasons individuals engage in some activities and not others, and the extent to which they do so, are related to age and class.

Appendix

Numbers are in percents and rounded to the nearest integer.

Table numbers correspond to figure numbers.

Table 1

	True	DK/RA
Voted in any election	65	3
Met with friends, family, or neighbors	29	4
Participated in strike or protest	24	0
Knowledge of the head of the municipal council	18	0
Member of organized group	15	1
Contacted a council member	12	1
Boycotted products	9	0
Council member sought respondent's opinion	5	0
Met with political party	5	5
Member of political party	4	0
Attended a public meeting held by local council	2	2

Survey questions:

(1) q308. Did you vote in the elections for the Constituent Assembly in October 2011? q304. Did you vote for the parliamentary elections that were held in November 2014? q301. Did you vote in the second round of the 2014 presidential election? q303. Did you vote in the first round of the 2014 presidential election? (Coded as important if respondent answered “yes” to any.)

(2) q415. Have you (personally) engaged in meeting with any of the following groups in order to determine the community needs and plan services?: your neighbors, your friends, family, a powerful local family.

(3) q1204_1. In the last five years, have you participated in a strike or protest?

(4) q411. Can you please tell me who the head of the municipal council is?

(5) q418. Are you a member or a leader of a mosque or local religious organization? Are you a member or a leader of a civil-society organization or association, such as a charity, women’s group, or sports club? Are you a member or a leader of a trade union or professional association? Are you a member or a leader of a powerful local family? Are you a member or a leader of a political party? Are you a member or a leader of a chamber of commerce or business organization? Are you a member or a leader of a clan or tribe? Are you a member or a leader of another type of association (please specify)? (Coded as important if respondent answered “yes” to any).

(6) q404. In the last year, have any council members sought your opinion about community needs or planning services (such as improving health care, education, or security)?

(7) q1204_2. In the last five years, have you boycotted products?

(8) q407. In the last year, have any council members sought your opinion about community needs or planning services (such as improving health care, education, or security)?

(9) q415_8. Have you (personally) engaged in meeting with [a political party] in order to determine the community needs and plan services?

(10) q418_5. Are you a member or a leader of a political party?

(11) q410. In the last year, has your local council held public meetings? If yes: when was the last time you attended such a meeting?

Table 2

	Yes	DK/RA
Constituent Assembly election	54	1
Parliamentary election	54	2
Second round of presidential election	56	1
First round of presidential election	53	1
Any election	65	3

Survey questions:

- (1) q308. Did you vote in the elections for the Constituent Assembly in October 2011?
- (2) q304. Did you vote in the parliamentary elections that were held in November 2014?
- (3) q301. Did you vote in the second round of the 2014 presidential election?
- (4) q303. Did you vote in the first round of the 2014 presidential election?

Table 3

	Male	DK/RA	Female	DK/RA
Constituent Assembly election	50	3	49	1
Parliamentary election	53	1	54	2
Second presidential election	56	1	57	1
First presidential election	53	0	52	1
Voted in any election	64	4	66	3

Survey questions: See Table 2.

Table 4

	Male	DK/RA	Female	DK/RA	Gender gap
Mahdia	63	2	56	2	7
Sfax	69	6	65	3	4
Monastir	67	6	69	5	-2
Bizerte	64	2	67	2	-3
Siliana	46	15	51	3	-5
Tunis	62	2	70	2	-8

Survey questions:

q308. Did you vote in the elections for the Constituent Assembly in October 2011? q304. Did you vote for the parliamentary elections that were held in November 2014? q301. Did you vote in the second round of the 2014 presidential election? q303. Did you vote in the first round of the 2014 presidential election? (Coded as important if respondent answered “yes” to any.)

Table 5

	Male	DK/RA	Female	DK/RA	Gender gap
Gaafour – SL	72	8	46	6	26
Mahdia – MH	65	1	50	1	15
Sakiet Eddair – SF	79	1	71	4	8
La Marsa – TU	68	2	61	3	7
Ksour Essaf – MH	69	1	63	0	6
Moknine – MS	64	2	59	8	5
Sfax Sud – SF	66	3	61	1	5
Taboulba – MS	72	11	67	5	5
Bizerte Nord – BZ	73	2	71	1	2
Sfax Ville – SF	63	12	63	3	0
Souassi – MH	53	4	56	4	-3
Bouarada – SL	24	3	30	3	-6
Bizerte Sud – BZ	55	2	64	4	-9
Menzal Jemil – BZ	54	1	65	0	-11
Jebel Jloud – TU	70	0	81	1	-11
Monastir – MS	68	8	83	3	-15
Siliana Ville – SL	56	30	76	2	-20
Cité El Khadra – TU	47	0	91	1	-44

Survey questions: See Table 4.

Table 6

	18–40	DK/RA	40–60	DK/RA	60+	DK/RA
Bizerte	52	2	68	1	66	4
Siliana	42	2	68	3	47	0
Monastir	56	4	69	4	64	2
Mahdia	54	1	58	1	49	0
Tunis	50	1	64	2	99	0
Sfax	64	2	64	2	43	1
Total	55	2	65	2	75	1

Survey questions: See Table 4.

Table 7

	18-40	DK/RA	40-60	DK/RA	60+	DK/RA
Sakiet Eddair – SF	78	3	66	0	49	3
Siliana Ville – SL	70	1	86	4	83	0
Jebel Jloud – TU	67	0	57	0	88	0
Monastir – MS	65	3	80	4	66	4
Ksour Essaf – MH	65	0	68	0	41	0
Sfax Ville – SF	55	2	57	3	48	0
Bizerte Sud – BZ	55	3	59	4	47	4
Menzal Jemil – BZ	52	0	46	1	79	1
Sfax Sud – SF	52	1	74	3	33	0
Taboulba – MS	52	9	74	7	54	1
Souassi – MH	52	4	53	1	60	0
La Marsa – TU	50	2	64	3	99	0
Moknine – MS	49	4	62	3	68	2
Bizerte Nord – BZ	49	2	82	0	71	5
Mahdia – MH	49	0	56	3	47	0
Cité El Khadra – TU	43	1	78	0	100	0
Gaafour – SL	41	0	61	2	62	0
Bouarada – SL	14	3	57	3	4	0

Survey questions: See Table 4.

Table 8

	LC & LMC	DK/RA	MC	DK/RA	UMC & UC	DK/RA
Bizerte	62	2	64	2	79	0
Monastir	55	10	69	6	77	3
Mahdia	48	2	64	1	61	5
Tunis	48	3	79	2	62	0
Sfax	48	9	73	2	79	2
Siliana	37	3	55	14	56	6
Total	50	5	71	3	70	2

Survey questions: See Table 4.

Table 9

	LC & LMC	DK/RA	MC	DK/RA	UMC & UC	DK/RA
Siliana Ville – SL	82	2	63	1	65	0
Bizerte Nord – BZ	78	4	66	4	76	3
Gaafour – SL	68	0	44	1	51	0
Cité El Khadra – TU	67	0	87	23	34	0
Jebel Jloud – TU	63	2	80	2	80	7
Sakiet Eddair – SF	63	5	80	4	73	14
Ksour Essaf – MH	61	7	69	9	62	0
Moknine – MS	56	17	63	5	62	10
Monastir – MS	54	8	74	4	88	5
Taboulba – MS	53	3	74	0	75	18
Bizerte Sud – BZ	50	0	61	0	80	0
Mahdia – MH	49	2	56	1	65	0
Sfax Ville – SF	48	0	71	2	76	0
La Marsa – TU	45	0	75	1	77	0
Souassi – MH	40	3	71	3	53	0
Sfax Sud – SF	28	5	66	2	87	2
Menzal Jemil – BZ	27	3	66	0	82	3
Bouarada – SL	15	16	49	2	45	0

Survey questions: See Table 4.

Table 10

	Strike or protest	DK/RA	Boycott	DK/RA
Tunis	33	0	8	0
Sfax	29	0	11	0
Monastir	20	0	10	1
Siliana	15	0	33	0
Bizerte	14	0	3	0
Mahdia	6	0	4	1
Total	24	0	9	0

Survey questions:

- (1) q1204_1. In the last five years, did you participate in a strike or a protest?
- (2) q1204_2. In the last five years, did you boycott products?

Table 11

	Strike or protest	DK/RA	Boycott	DK/RA
Total	24	0	9	0
Gaafour – SL	2	0	4	1
Souassi –MH	5	0	11	0
Ksour Essaf – MH	6	3	2	3
Mahdia – MH	7	0	0	0
Moknine – MS	10	0	16	1
Menzal Jemil – BZ	12	0	0	0
Bouarada – SL	12	0	83	1
Bizerte Nord – BZ	13	0	4	0
Bizerte Sud – BZ	16	0	2	0
La Marsa – TU	20	0	4	0
Sakiet Eddair – SF	21	0	9	0
Monastir – MS	27	0	6	1
Siliana Ville – SL	27	0	5	0
Taboulba – MS	29	0	3	0
Sfax Ville – SF	33	0	15	0
Sfax Sud – SF	34	0	7	0
Jebel Jloud – TU	48	0	5	0
Cité El Khadra – TU	58	0	18	1

Survey questions: See Table 10.

Table 12

	Male	DK/RA	Female	DK/RA	Gender gap
Bizerte	15	0	12	0	3
Mahdia	8	2	4	0	3
Tunis	35	1	31	0	4
Siliana	18	0	13	1	5
Sfax	32	0	26	0	6
Monastir	28	0	15	0	13
Total	27	0	22	0	6

Survey question: q1204_1. In the last five years, did you participate in a strike or protest?

Table 13

	Male	DK/RA	Female	DK/RA	Gender gap: Boycott
Tunis	5	1	10	0	-6
Mahdia	1	2	6	0	-4
Sfax	10	0	11	0	-1
Bizerte	4	0	2	0	2
Monastir	11	0	9	0	3
Siliana	39	0	29	1	10
Total	8	0	10	0	-2

Survey question: q1204_2. In the last five years, did you boycott products?

Table 14

	Strike or protest	DK/RA	Boycott	DK/RA
18–30	41	0	8	0
30–40	24	0	10	0
40–50	14	0	8	0
50–60	16	0	8	0
60–70	29	0	13	0
70+	1	0	15	0

Survey questions: See Table 10.

Table 15

	Strike or protest	Boycott
Lower class	7	15
Lower-middle class	14	6
Middle class	26	10
Upper-middle class	40	6
Upper class	24	6

Survey questions: See Table 10.

Table 16

	Political party	DK/RA	Organized group	DK/RA
Monastir	5	0	22	0
Tunis	4	2	17	4
Siliana	6	1	16	4
Sfax	2	0	15	0
Bizerte	4	0	9	0
Mahdia	2	0	6	1
Total	4	0	15	1

Survey questions:

(1) q418_5. Are you a member or a leader of a political party?

(2) q418. Are you a member or a leader of a mosque or local religious organization? Are you a member or a leader of a civil-society organization or association, such as a charity, women's group, or sports club? Are you a member or a leader of a trade union or professional association? Are you a member or a leader of a powerful local family? Are you a member or a leader of a political party? Are you a member or a leader of a chamber of commerce or business organization? Are you a member or a leader of a clan or tribe? Are you a member or a leader of another type of association (please specify)? (Coded as important if respondent answered "yes" to any.)

Table 17

	Political party	DK/RA	Organized group	DK/RA
Ksour Essaf – MH	1	0	5	0
Bizerte Sud – BZ	2	0	6	0
Mahdia – MH	1	0	6	0
Bouarada – SL	2	5	6	5
Menzal Jemil – BZ	3	0	7	0
Taboulba – MS	2	0	7	0
Souassi – MH	2	0	8	1
Gaafour – SL	2	2	8	2
Sfax Ville – SF	3	0	11	1
Moknine – MS	1	1	12	4
Bizerte Nord – BZ	7	0	13	0
Sakiet Eddair – SF	2	0	14	1
La Marsa – TU	1	0	14	0
Sfax Sud – SF	2	0	20	0
Cité El Khadra – TU	4	1	20	3
Jebel Jloud – TU	13	0	23	0
Siliana Ville – SL	12	1	32	3
Monastir – MS	13	0	44	6

Survey questions: See Table 16.

Table 19

	Respondent contacted council member	DK/RA	Council member sought respondent's opinion	DK/RA
Sfax	7	2	0	0
Mahdia	7	0	5	0
Siliana	8	6	7	0
Bizerte	10	0	2	0
Tunis	14	0	8	0
Monastir	23	2	6	0
Total	12	1	5	0

Survey questions:

(1) q404. In the last year, have you contacted a member of the municipality council (*majlis baladiyya* or *niabba kbassousiya*)?

(2) q407. In the last year, have any council members sought your opinion about community needs or planning services (such as improving health care, education, or security)?

Table 20

	Respondent contacted council member	DK/RA	Council member sought respondent's opinion	DK/RA
Jebel Jloud – TU	1	0	0	0
Souassi – MH	2	0	1	0
Ksour Essaf – MH	5	1	6	1
Menzal Jemil – BZ	6	0	0	0
Bizerte Nord – BZ	7	0	4	1
Bizerte Sud – BZ	7	0	1	0
Bouarada – SL	7	0	2	0
Siliana Ville – SL	9	3	2	15
Taboulba – MS	9	1	4	1
Mahdia – MH	9	0	8	0
Cité El Khadra – TU	12	0	2	0
Sakiet Eddair – SF	14	1	0	0
La Marsa – TU	16	1	12	0
Sfax Sud – SF	17	0	0	0
Monastir – MS	21	1	9	1
Sfax Ville – SF	22	0	0	0
Gaafour – SL	24	1	16	15
Moknine – MS	35	0	3	0

Survey questions: See Table 19.

Table 21

	Name or description	DK/RA
Mahdia – MH	44	0
Monastir – MS	40	0
Moknine – MS	36	0
Gaafour – SL	30	0
Sfax Sud – SF	26	0
Ksour Essaf – MH	22	0
Bizerte Nord – BZ	19	0
Taboulba – MS	19	0
Souassi – MH	18	0
Sakiet Eddair – SF	18	0
Bizerte Sud – BZ	17	0
Bouarada – SL	17	0
Menzal Jemil – BZ	14	0
Siliana Ville – SL	12	0
Cité El Khadra – TU	11	0
La Marsa – TU	11	0
Sfax Ville – SF	9	0
Jebel Jloud – TU	4	0
Total	18	0

Survey question: q411. Can you please tell me who the head of the municipal council is?

Table 22

	Yes	DK/RA
Neighbors	24	4
Friends	25	5
Family	29	4
Powerful local family	6	4
Mosque or religious group	3	5
Trade union or professional association	4	5
CSO or association	5	6
Political party or parties	5	5
Chamber of commerce or business organization	1	5
Clan or tribe	4	7

Survey question: q415. Have you (personally) engaged in meeting with any of the following groups in order to determine the community needs and plan services?: your neighbors, your friends, family, a powerful local family, trade union or professional association, mosque or religious group, CSO or association, a political party or parties, a chamber of commerce or business organization, your clan or tribe.

Table 23

	Family, friends, or neighbors	DK/RA	Political party/parties	DK/RA
Monastir	54	2	5	7
Siliana	42	2	15	4
Sfax	39	0	1	2
Tunis	38	8	5	9
Mahdia	37	0	7	0
Bizerte	28	0	7	0
Total	39	4	5	5

Survey question: Table 22.