Tensions Overview – Livelihoods WG

UNDP Lebanon

October 2022

The Tensions Monitoring System

Serves to 1) **Develop better understanding** of tensions using innovative methods, and to 2) **Provide recommendations and support to UN, NGO, Government and donor partners** to ensure a conflict-sensitive response:

1. Collect quantitative and qualitative data with 8 key data sources

2. Analyze trends, impacts, and implications using an array of tools

3. Publish dashboards, reports, maps, and factsheets

4. Train, guide and support partners under the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan

5. Adapt responses and do advocacy

Data sets used for this presentation:

- UNDP/ARK Regular Perception Survey July/August 2022
- August Tension Task Forces
- Intra-Lebanese tension monitoring – January – August 2022

Four key tension trends as of July 2022

1.

Continued inter-communal tensions and scapegoating of displaced Syrians

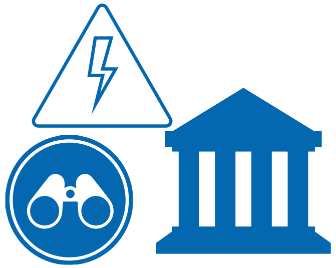
2.

Deteriorating community security with increasing use of violence & arms

3.

Tensions related to access to goods and services

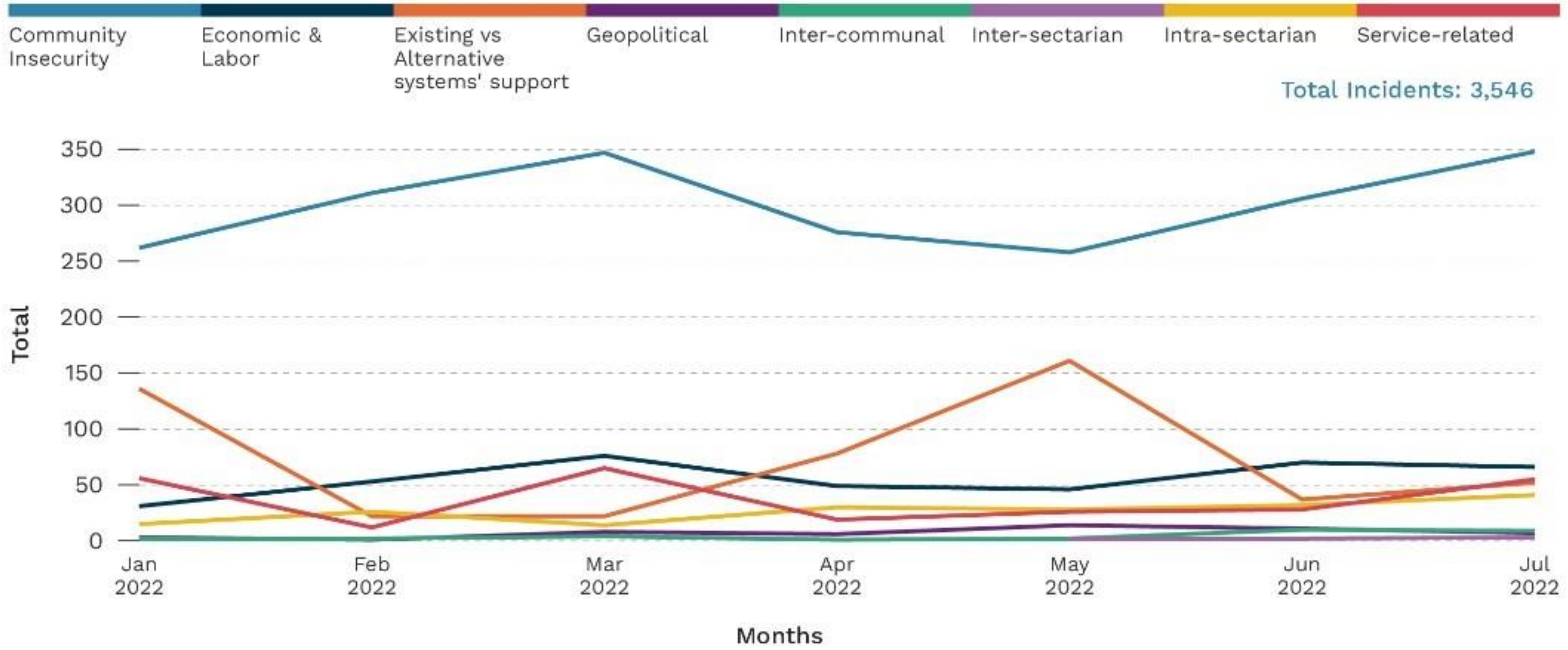
4.



Continued intra-Lebanese negative relations, increased distrust and negative outlook on the future

Deteriorating Community Security with Increasing Incidents of Theft and Crime

Across all governorates, community insecurity is the most common typology, related to economic conditions and labor



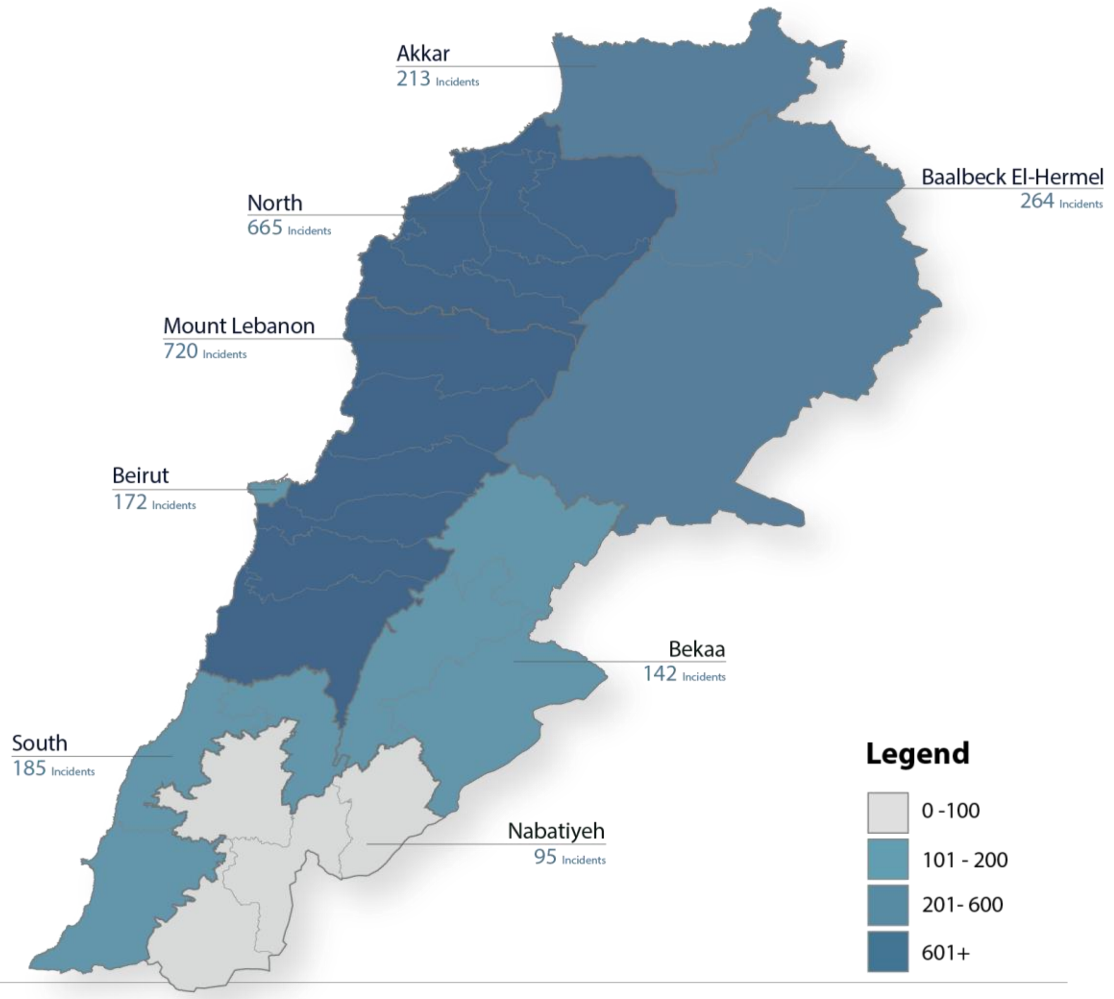
Source: UNDP COAR-LCPS Bi-Monthly Report, September 2022.

Crime highest in poor areas with limited security capacity

- **Surge in crimes and clashes**
- Most incidents related to services and economic and labor conditions -for example over the availability and accessibility of subsidised bread. A total of 45 bread-related incidents were recorded
- **Crime highest in areas with high poverty** and unemployment as well as limited security
- Most affected areas: North and Mount Lebanon
- Most common incidents: theft, roadblocks, demonstrations and armed clashes

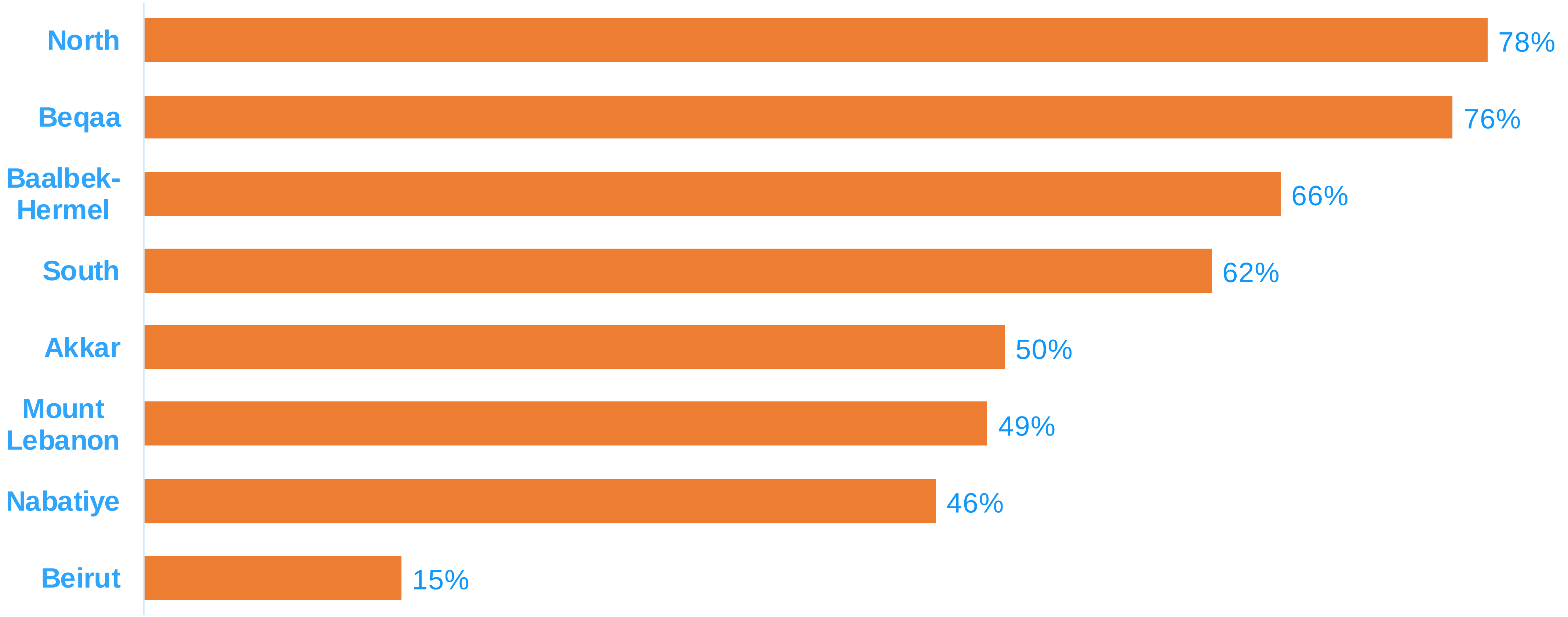
- *74.8% of respondents worry about the threat of crime sometimes, often, or all the time (⇗ from 57.1% in 2017)*

Community Insecurity Incidents
2456 **Incidents**



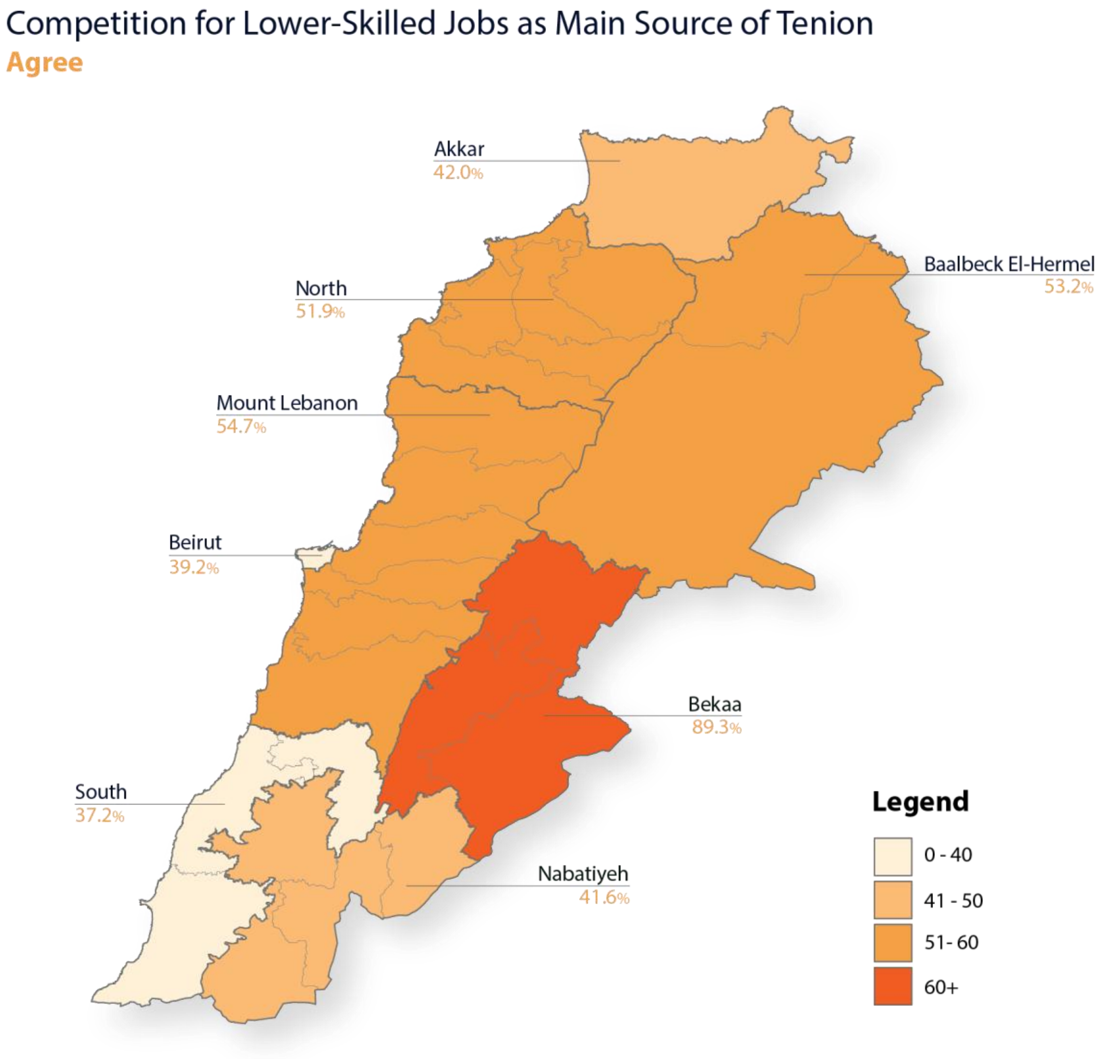
Inter-communal Tensions and Scapegoating of Displaced Syrians

Agreement with statement, 'The presence of many Syrian refugees in this community has contributed to more incidents of crime and violence'

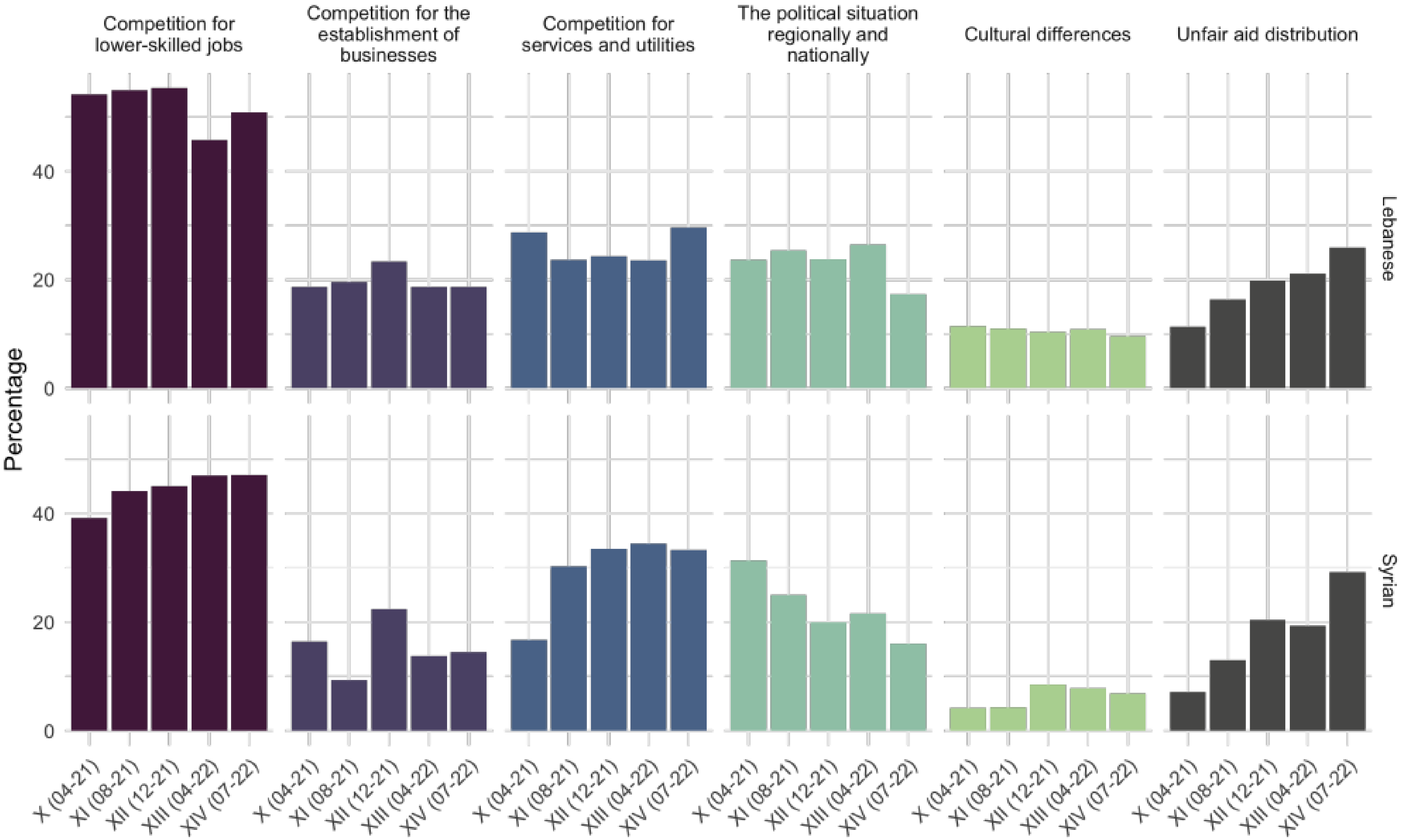


Continued negative inter-communal relations

- **Inter-communal relations increasingly polarized**
  - **37% of respondents** perceive relations as negative or very negative, an increase from 24% in January 2021
  - Positive perceptions on inter-communal relations also increased from 26% to 33%
- Primary reason for tensions: **competition over lower-skilled jobs (50%)**
- *87% of respondents couldn't think of anything that might have facilitated good relations between Syrians and Lebanese in their area*
- *42% agree that the **return of refugees** to Syria would improve relations between Syrians and Lebanese in their area*
- Surge in negative rhetoric and restrictive measures



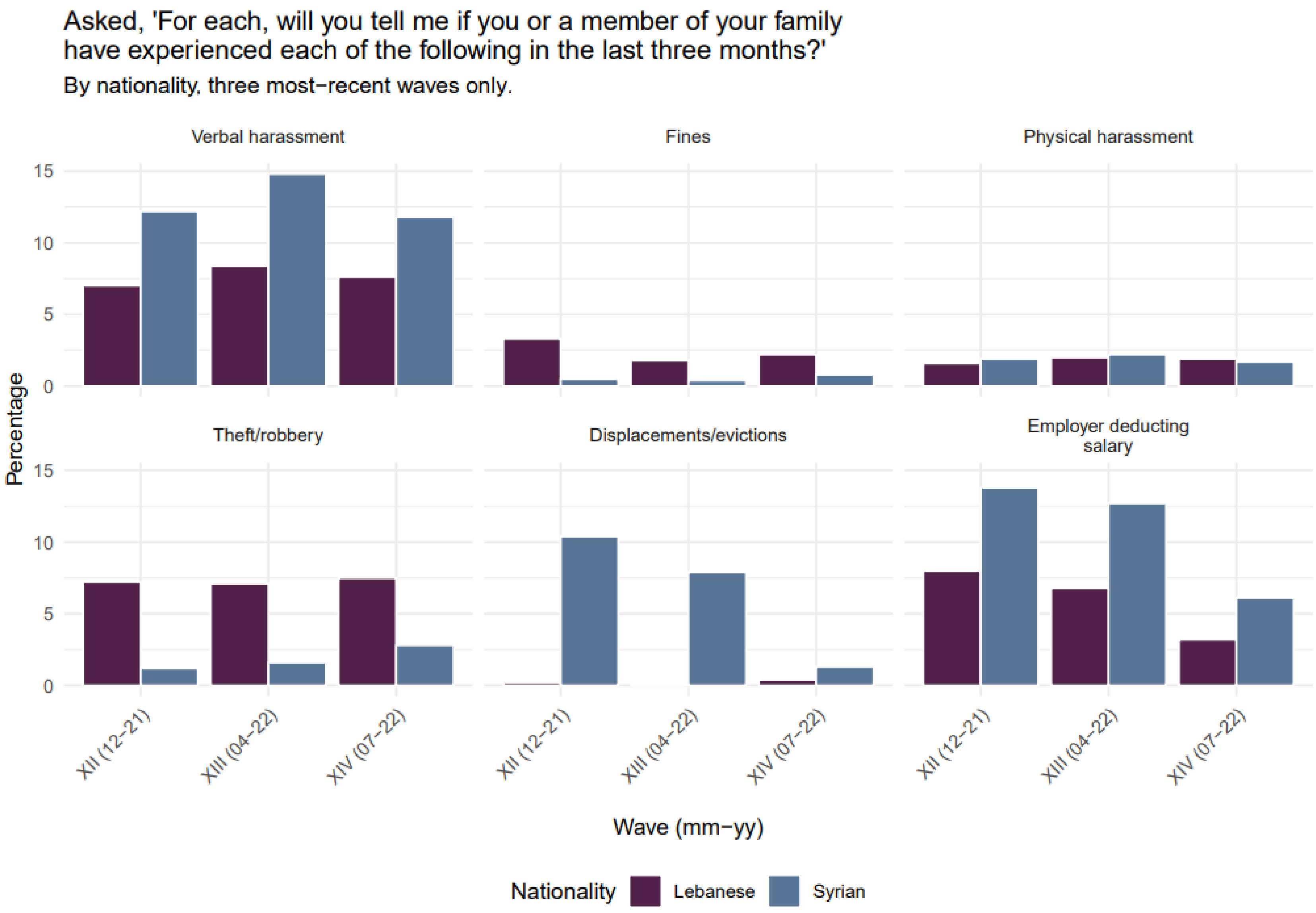
Main sources of inter-communal relations



Wages and disputes

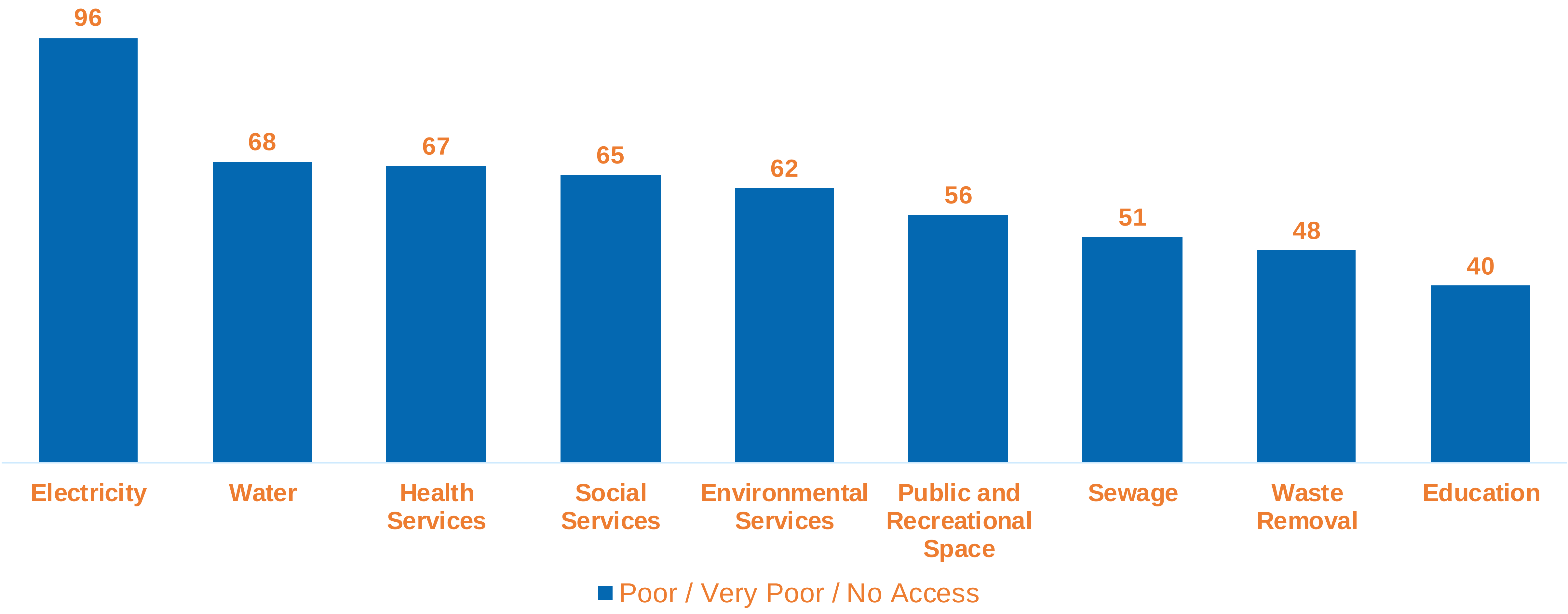
Both Lebanese and Syrians were significantly less likely to report wage disputes or an incident of ‘employer deducting salary’ in July 2022. The per cent of Lebanese reporting such an incident declined to 3.2% in Wave XIV (July 2022), compared to 6.8% in Wave XIII (April 2022). The per cent of Syrians reporting such an incident declined to 6.1% in Wave XIV (July 2022), compared to 12.7% in Wave XIII (April 2022).

Over all waves of the survey, persons with less than a high school education (Lebanese and Syrian) have been much more likely to report an incident of ‘employer reducing salary’.

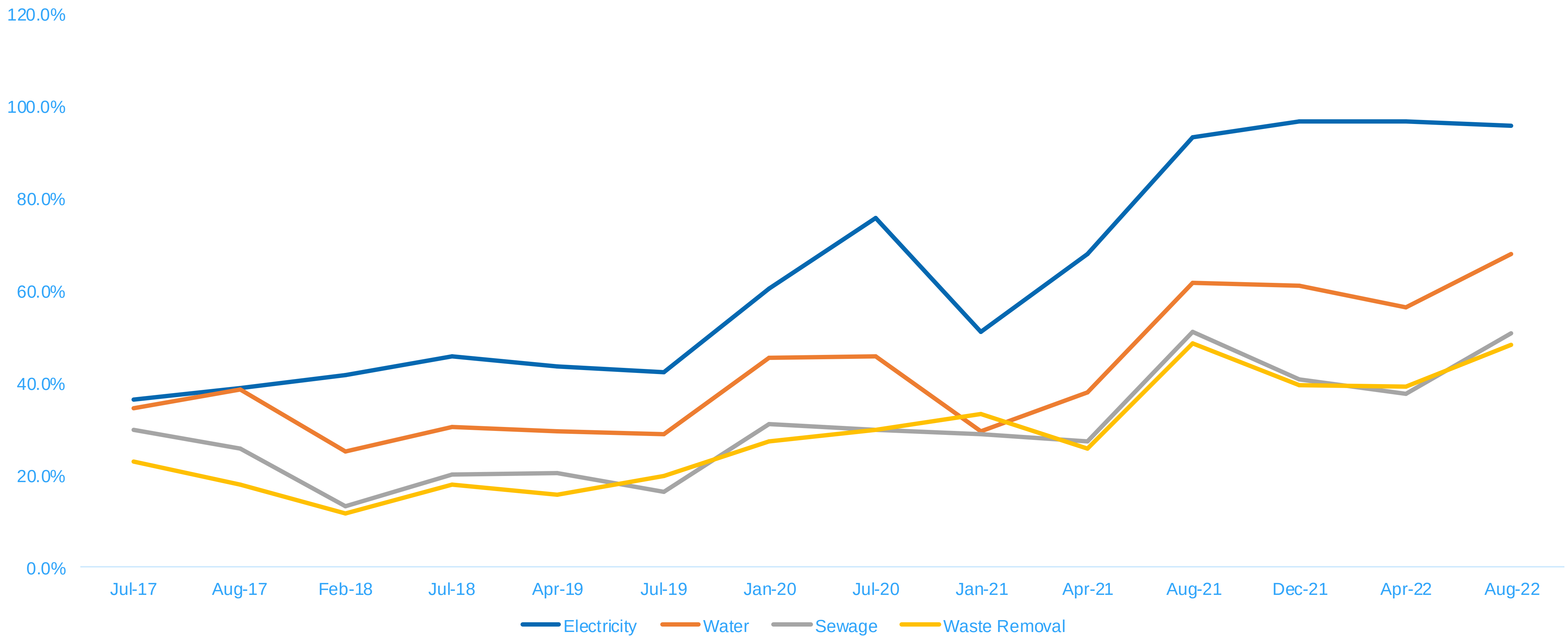


Tensions Related to Pressure on and Access to Resources and Services

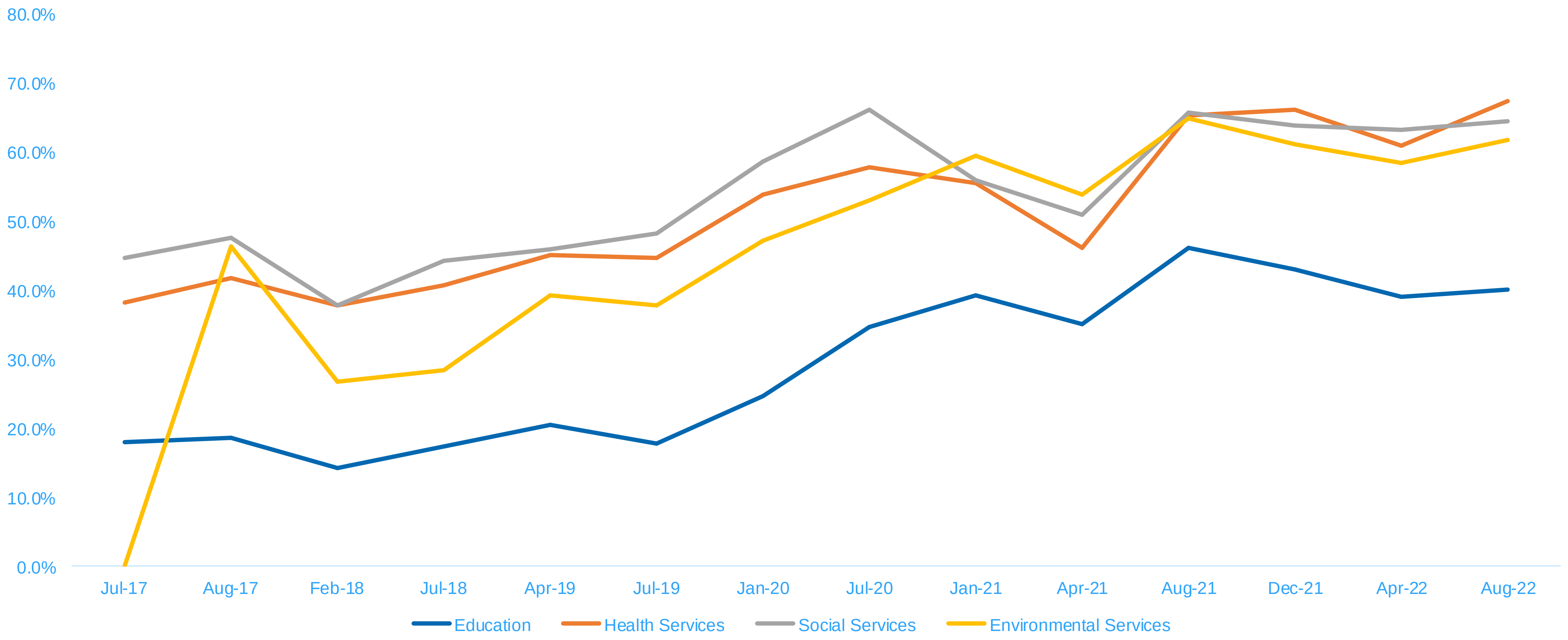
Population is increasingly dissatisfied with the quality of services across all regions (%)



% Rating Services as Poor/Very Poor/No access over time

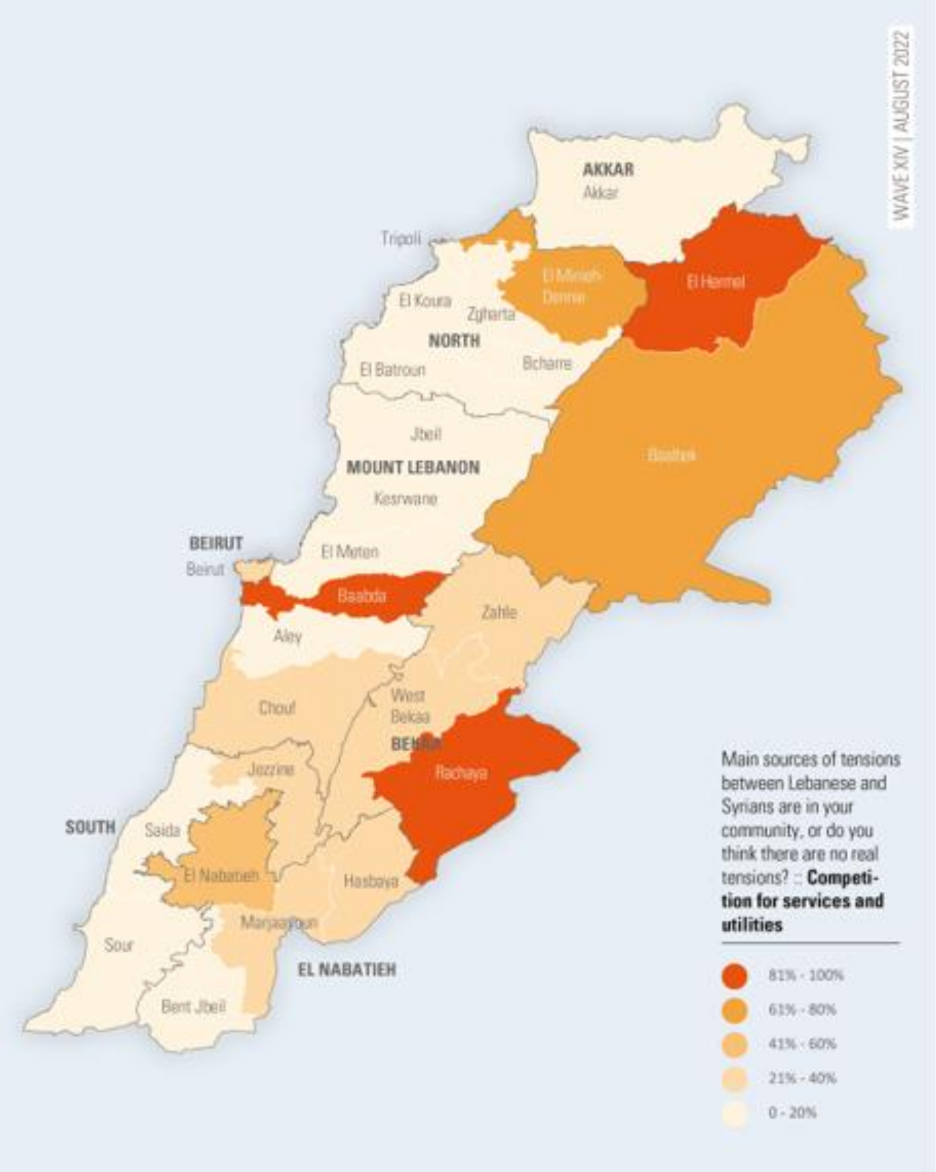


% Rating Services as Poor/Very Poor/No access over time



Increased competition for resources is leading to tensions

- **Competition for access to services leading to increased social tensions (both intra- and inter-communal)**- in August 2022, some 29.6% of Lebanese and 33.3% of Syrians cited ‘competition for services and utilities’ as a tension factor - this is an increase from previous waves (23.7% for Lebanese and 30.3% for Syrians in August 2021).
- Competition for services is particularly high in Baalbek el-Hermel (69%), Mount Lebanon (40.5%) and Beirut (34.9%)
- Key pressure points: water, solid waste, electricity and health
- 80% agree or strongly agree that Syrians are placing too much strain on Lebanon’s resources such as water and electricity



Continued negative intra-communal relations, distrust and negative outlook on the future

Continued negative intra-communal relations

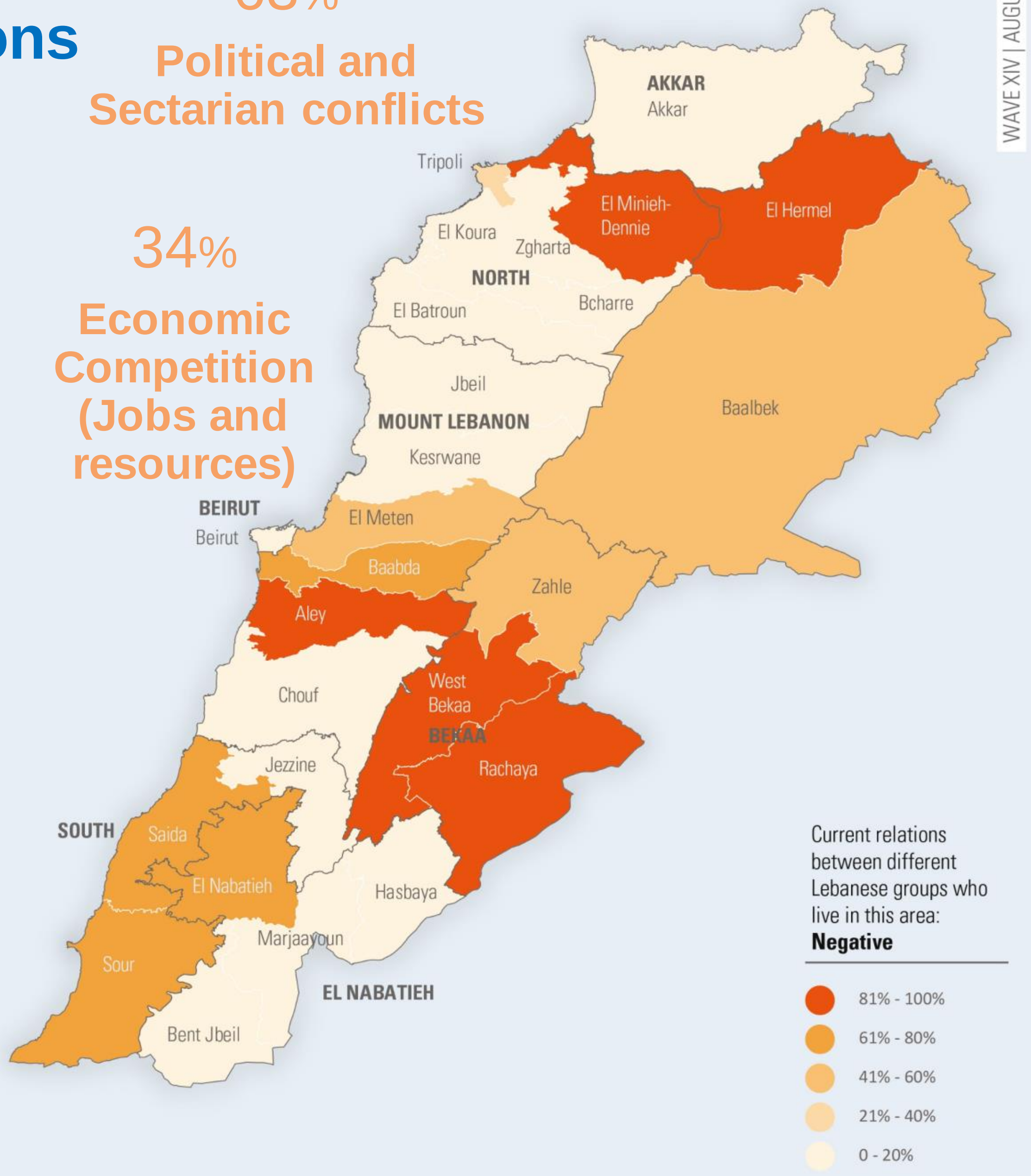
- As of August 2022, 39% cited negative intra-communal relations, compared to just 4% in 2018
- Declining trust in institutions with decreased confidence in the integrity of elections
- NGOs & UN are highly trusted, but this comes with high levels of expectations
- High risk of sectarian/political strife leading to confrontations
- Risk of further escalations and political instrumentalization marked with hate speech

63%

Political and Sectarian conflicts

34%

Economic Competition (Jobs and resources)



Increase in Labour Strikes

- Public sector employees launched an open-ended strike on June 13, protesting low wages and poor working conditions. Striking public sector employees included workers in public hospitals, vehicle registration offices, municipalities, ministries of finance and information, courthouses, and state-owned entities, such as Tele Liban, National News Agency, Ogero and Banque du Liban.

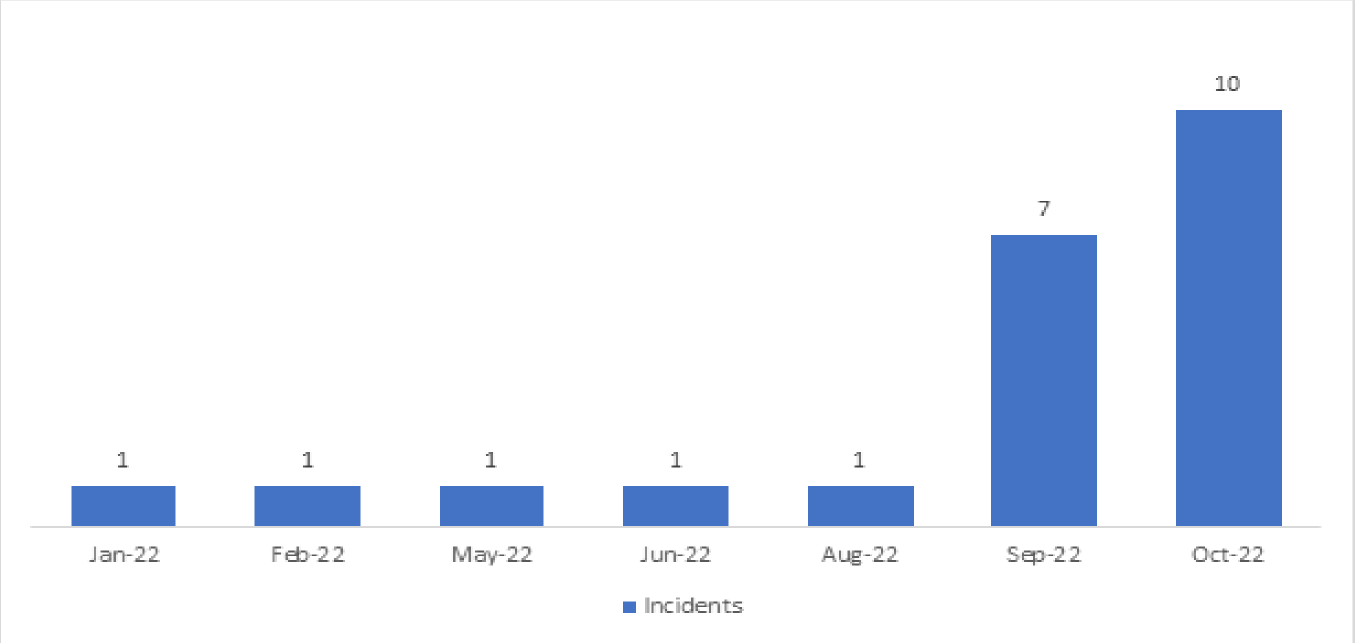
- **Impact:** delays in processes such as car registration and obtaining key civil documentation as well as protests. Extended phone and Internet outages potentially related to telecoms employee strikes also led to protests in affected areas.

- A strike by judges exacerbated tensions inside overcrowded places of detention and crime outside them

- **Labour-related tensions led to 34 incidents in June and 22 incidents in July 2022; most incidents were labour strikes and protests.** Public sector employees went on strike across Lebanon, protesting low salaries, and poor living and working conditions.

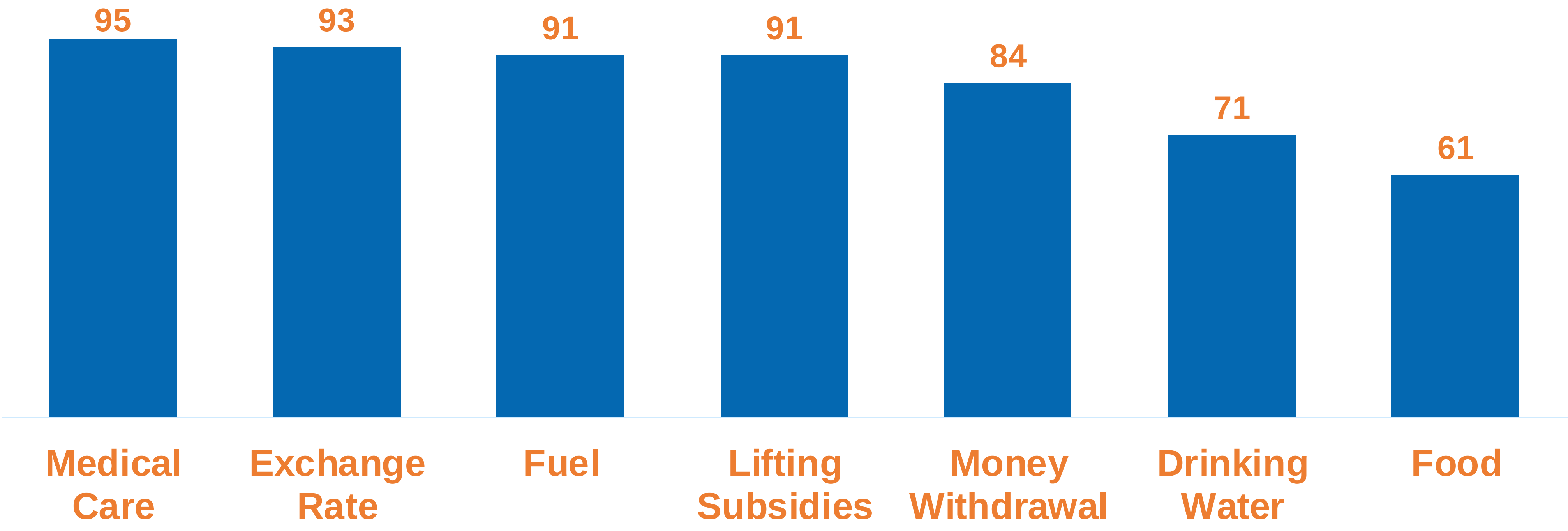
Increase in Bank Raids (Hold-ups)

- Staggering inflation and a severely deteriorating currency, coupled with unofficial capital control measures by banks, have left Lebanese depositors in dire need of cash to pay for basic needs, healthcare, and other expenses.
- Banks witnessed a series of bank hold-ups, raids, and demonstrations by frustrated depositors demanding their money.
- <u>A total of 22 raids were recorded from January until October 2022, 10 of which occurred just in October.</u>
- 73% of raids were armed with guns, gasoline, or both.
- Raids have increased rapidly over the last three months and are expected to increase further with deteriorating economic conditions.

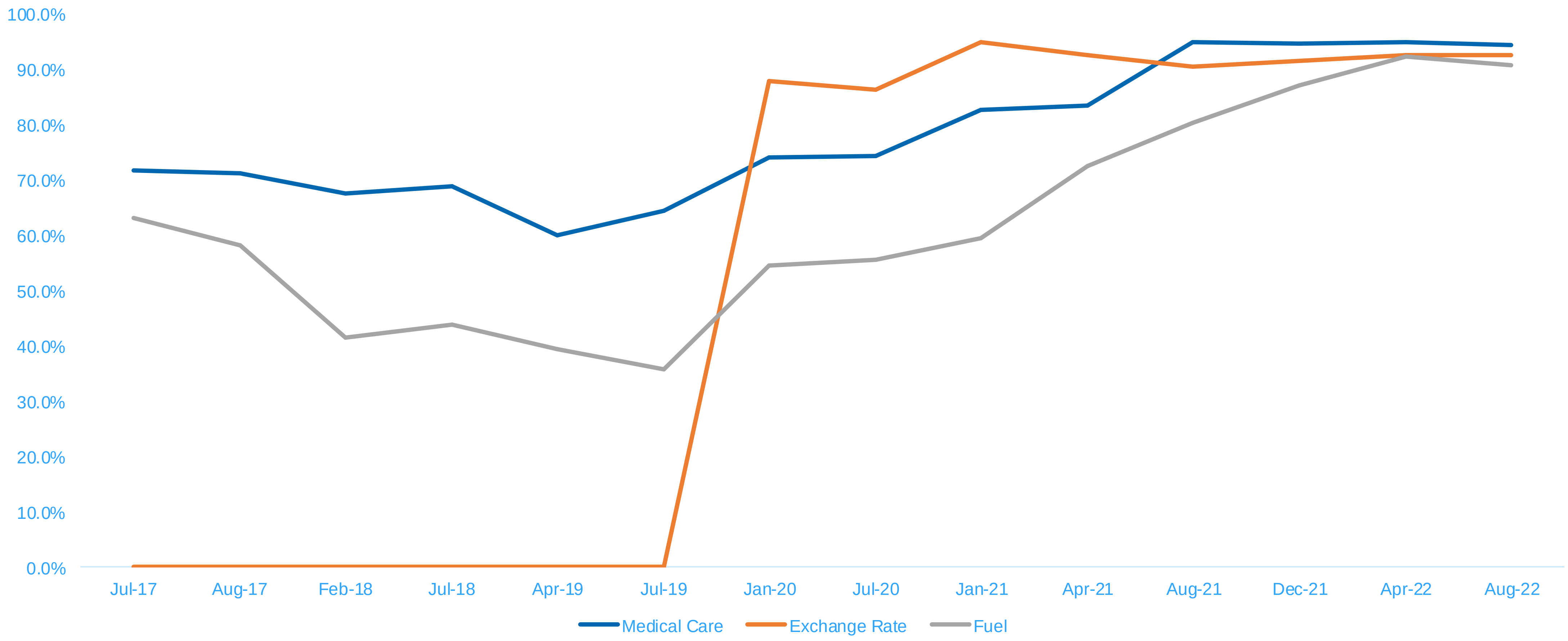


The public remains highly concerned about their ability to access cash, medical care and other services (%)

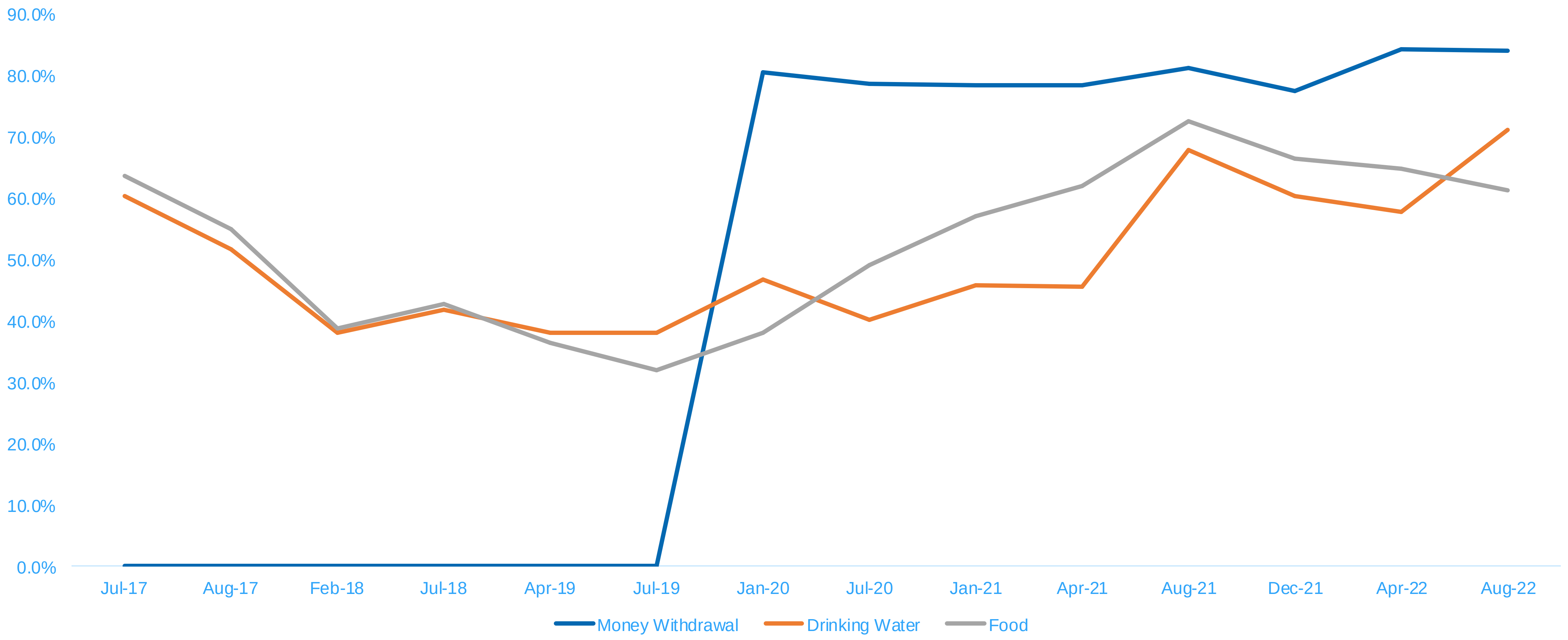
- **Concerns about access to food have increased by approximately 178%** since 2018
- **Concerns about access to safe drinking water have also surged, increasing 176%** over the same period
- **Extreme concern about volatility in the exchange rate, the security of deposits and access to bank accounts.** Four in-five (79.9%) households said they worried ’often’ or ’all the time’ about ’the exchange rate between dollars and lira’ in April 2022 which has now increased to 93%



Worries about access to goods and services

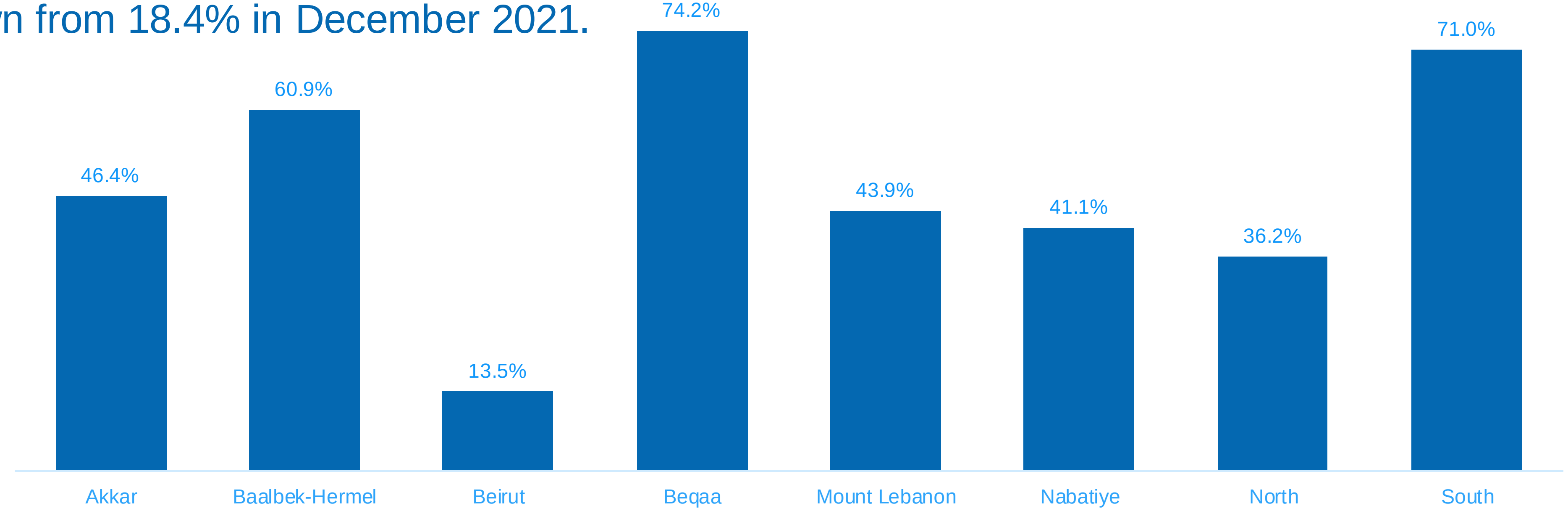


Worries about access to goods and services



Household situation slightly worsened

- Many Lebanese in July 2022, nevertheless, evaluated their socio-economic status relative to others as unchanged. Respondents were asked, ‘Compared with others in Lebanon today, would you say that your household is generally much better off, better off, about average, worse or much worse?’ To this, 38.5% of respondents said their household was doing ‘about the same as others’, up from 36.9% in December 2021. At the same time, 45.3% reported that their situation was ‘worse’ (21.6%) or ‘much worse' (23.7%) compared to others, marginally higher than December 2021 at 44.7%. Alternatively, only 16% said that they were ‘better off’ (16%) or ‘much better off’ (0.1%) than others, down from 18.4% in December 2021.



Negative outlook on the future

- In Wave XIV (July 2022), 50.0% of Lebanese said they expected the country to be a ’worse place to live’ or ’much worse place to live’ in the next five years, up from only 21.3% saying the same in 2018. Both the Lebanese and Syrian outlook on the future has continued to decline over successive waves of the survey.

- Asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the statement, ‘The next [municipal] elections will be mostly free, fair and credible’, only a third (31.1%) said they agreed
- However, the public placed somewhat greater weight on the prospects of presidential elections, scheduled for October 2022. In Wave July 2022, 41% of Lebanese said they thought the country’s situation was ‘likely’ or ‘very likely’ to improve as a result of presidential elections

Reliance on Remittances

- Nationally, 17.3% of Lebanese households but only 2.3% of Syrian households reported receiving any remittances in the previous year. Female-headed households were significantly more likely to report receiving any remittance, with 23.2% of female-headed households reporting a remittance compared to 14.6% of male-headed households in Wave XIV (July 2022).
- The majority of remittance-receiving households reported some degree of reliance on these funds to meet basic needs, with 41.7% indicating that the household would be able to cover 'some but not all basic needs' in the absence of any remittance, and 32.0% indicating that they would not be able to cover their household's expenses, because 'the remittance is the main source of household income'.
- Remittance senders were located all over the globe, with respondents naming 46 different countries or regions. The most prevalent sending countries, with more than 10% of all remittances originating in each included: Canada, Germany, the UAE and the US. Remittances from Africa also accounted for 17.2% of all remittances