

POPULISM & 2024

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Trends

April 22, 2024
Princeton University

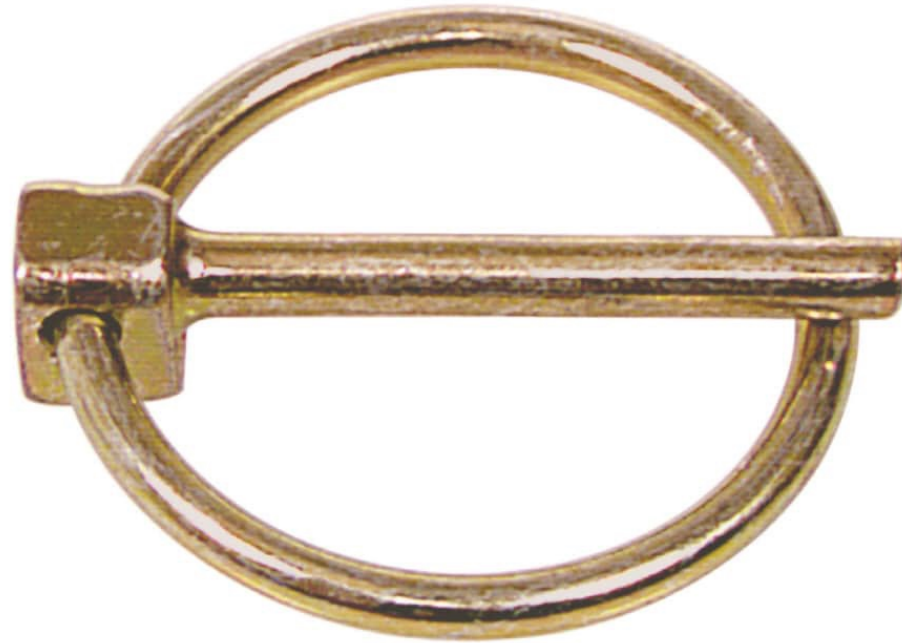
GAME CHANGERS



Ipsos

What is a Pollster?

Bringing voice to people for decision-makers



Link between those who govern & those who are governed

The Three-Hatted Pollster



The Three-Hatted Pollster

	Part II	Part III	Part IV
	The data scientist (to assess)	The fortune teller (to predict)	The spin doctor (to convince)
Primary client type	Media and all other clients	Private sector and financial sector	Politicians, governments, and private sector
Analytical focus	Maximizing accuracy	Forecasting outcomes	Developing the most convincing message
Typical question	Is my public opinion data bias?	Who will win the next presidential election?	What is the winning message?

Source: Polls, Pollsters, and Public Opinion forthcoming

How we define populism

CONDITIONS FOR POPULISM

By [populism](#), we mean a political strategy, often harnessing anti-elite sentiment, employed by a political entrepreneur with some specific aim, usually electoral, in mind.

Any successful political entrepreneur depends on two additional pillars: (1) popular support for **anti-establishment actions**, and (2) a **structural opportunity**, such as economic pressures or changing demography, that makes taking political risks palatable.



Varying flavors of anti-system politicians

Anti-institutional Actors

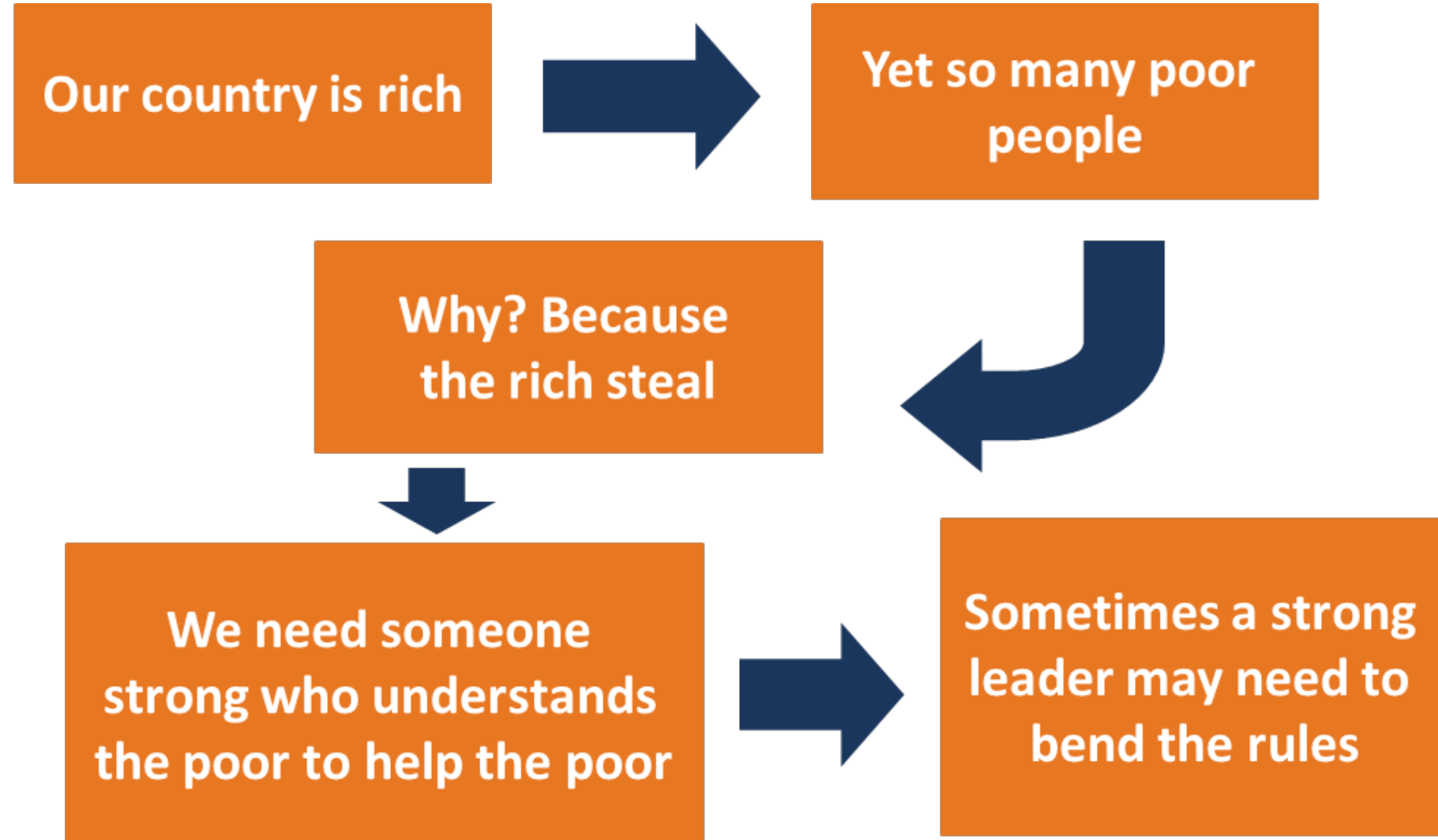


Marcon/Lula

Milei / Chavez

“System is Broken” as a global belief system

Caudillo Syndrome: System is Broken

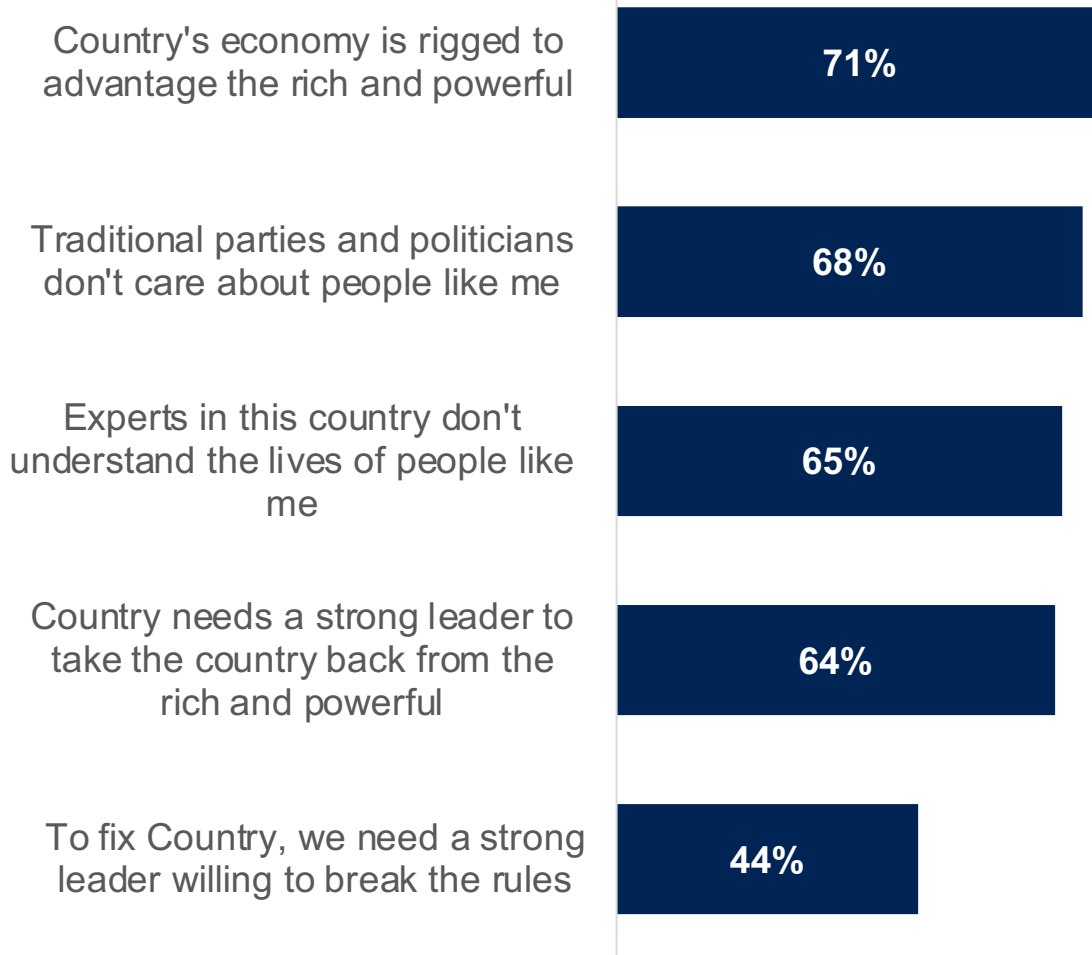


Are we measuring what we want to measure?

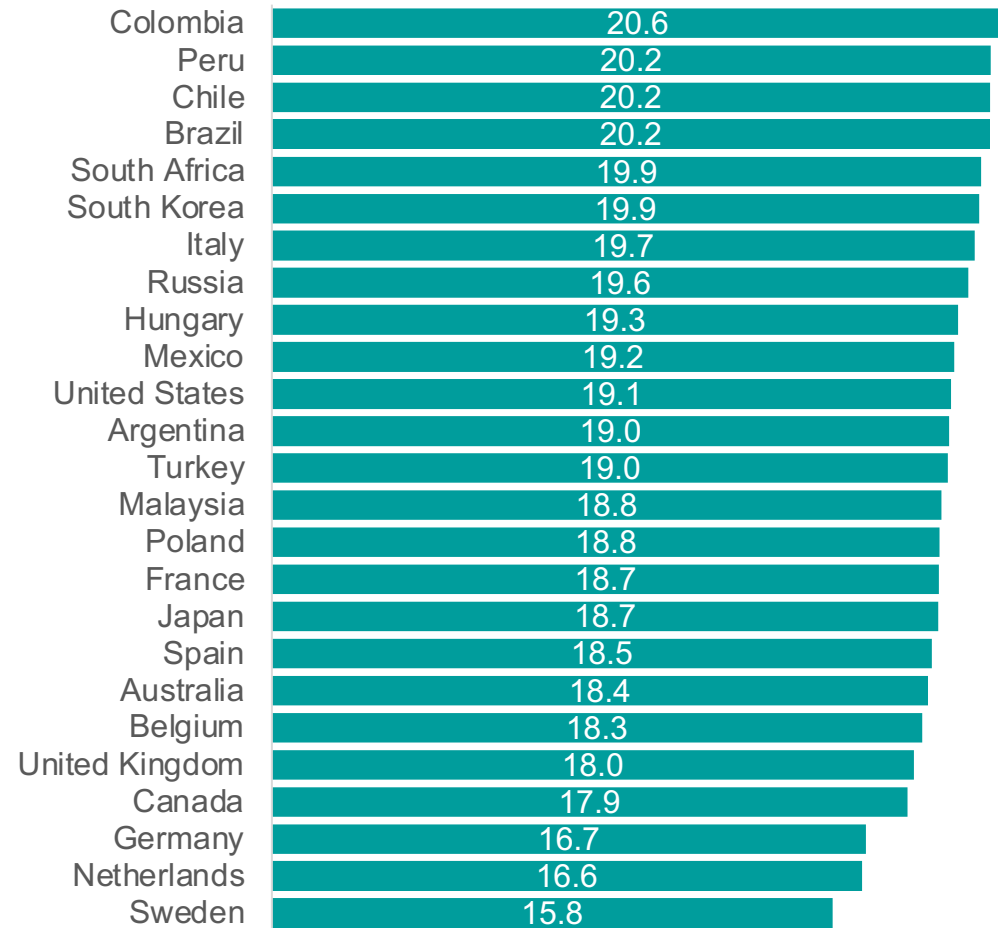
Are our measures stable?

Five Item System is System is Broken Index

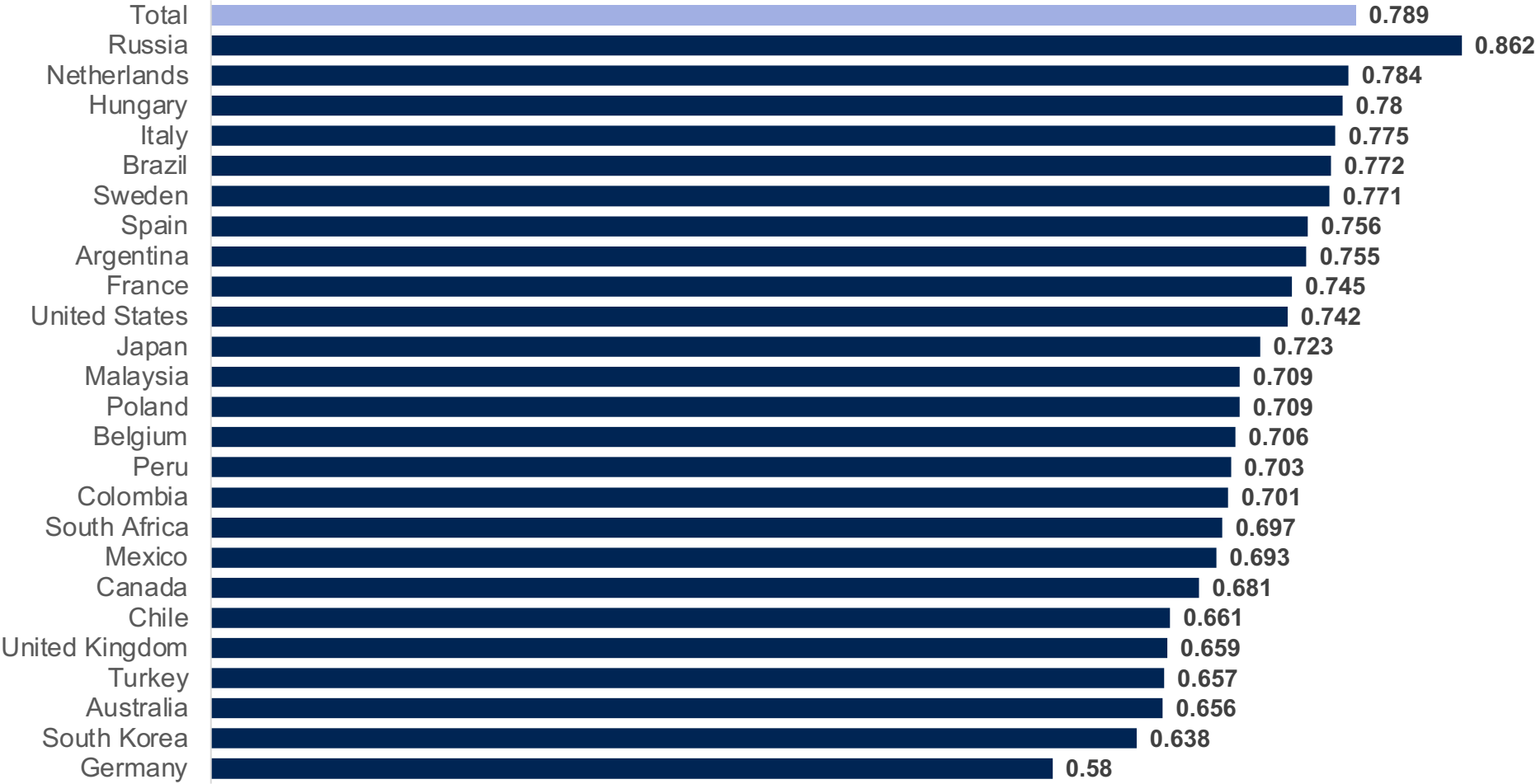
Global Averages



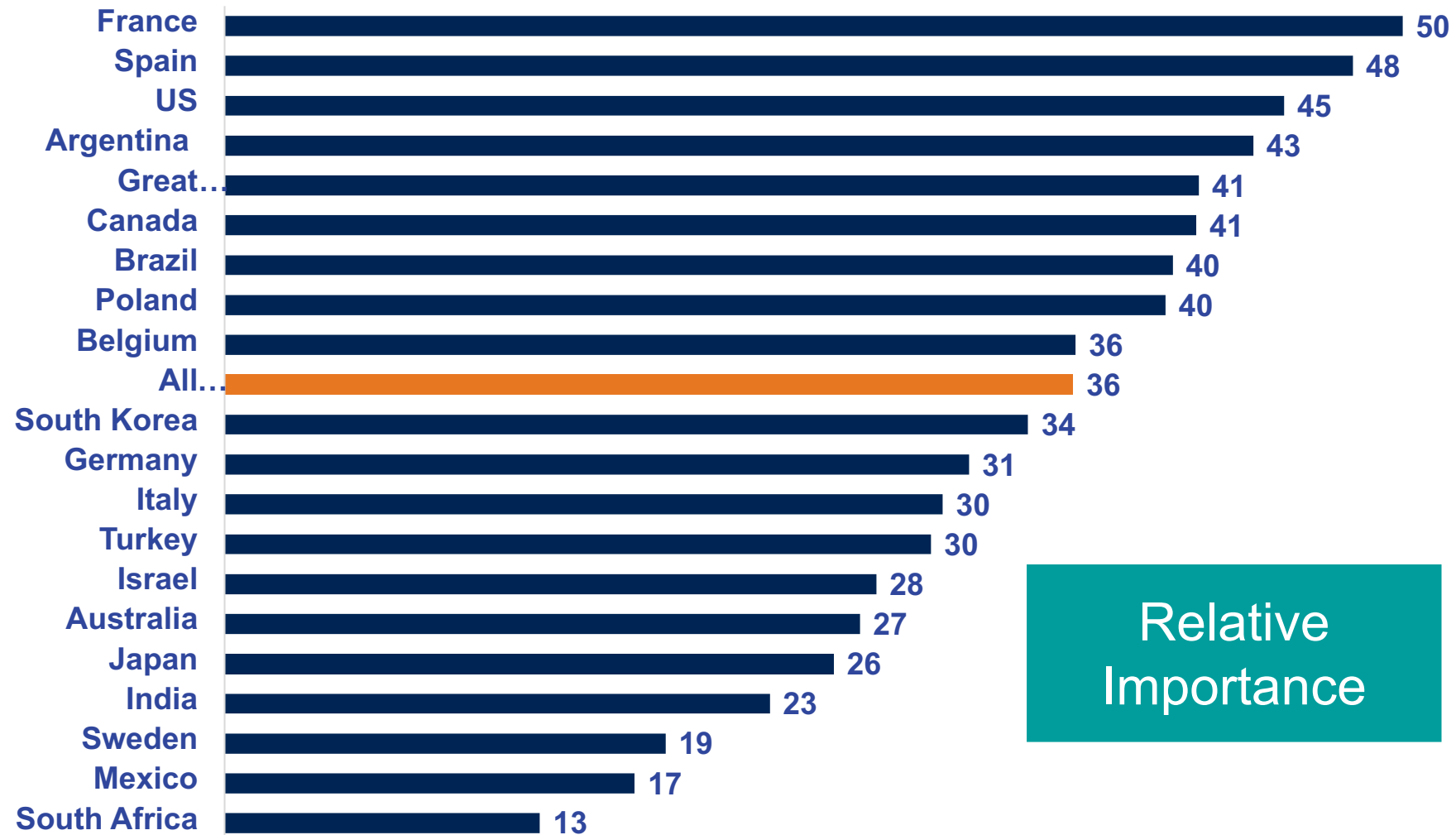
Country Index Averages



System is Broken: Reliability via Cronbach's Alpha, 2021



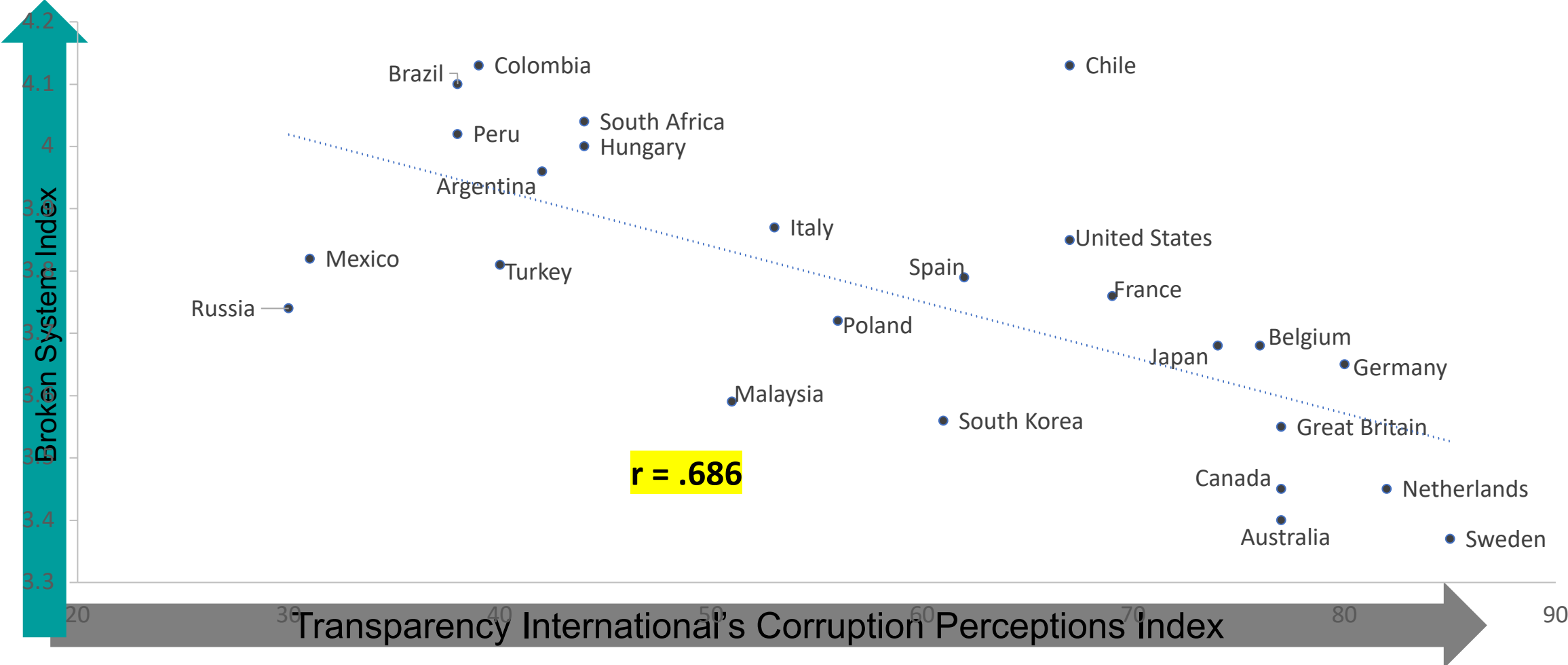
Key Drivers: Nativism + System is Broken



Relative
Importance

Ipsos Global @dvisor poll conducted among 16,597 global respondents. Importance weights derived from Logistic Regression Logics

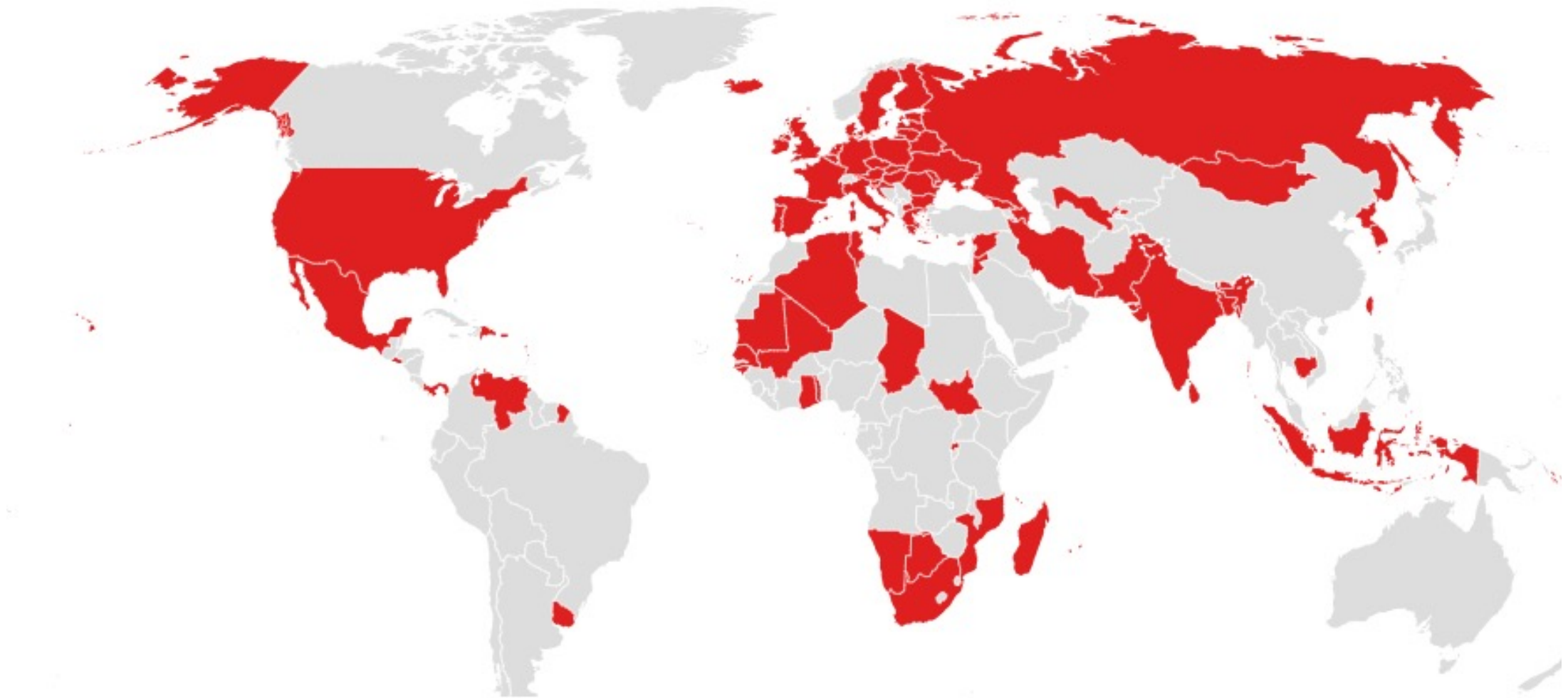
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index vs System is Broken Index



Category	Q. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about [Country] today?	2023	2021	2020	2019	2018	2016
General	[Country's] society is broken	X	X	X	X		X
General	[Country] is in decline	X	X	X		X	X
Broken System	The [Country's] economy is rigged to advantage the rich and powerful	X	X	X	X	X	X
Broken System	Traditional parties and politicians don't care about people like me	X	X	X	X	X	X
Broken System	To fix [Country], we need a strong leader willing to break the rules	X	X	X	X	X	X
Broken System	[Country] needs a strong leader to take the country back from the rich & powerful	X	X	X	X	X	X
Broken System	Experts in this country don't understand the lives of people like me	X	X	X	X		X
Populism	Politicians should be able to say what's on their minds regardless of what anyone else thinks about their views		X	X		X	X
Populism	The most important political issues in Country should be decided directly by the people through referendums, not by the elected officials		X				
Populism	The political and economic elite don't care about hard-working people		X				
Populism	Politicians always end up finding ways to protect their privileges		X				
Populism	The main divide in our society is between ordinary citizens and the political and economic elite		X				
Nativism	[Country] would be stronger if we stopped immigration	X	X	X			X
Nativism	When jobs are scarce, employers should prioritize hiring people of this country over immigrants	X	X	X	X		X
Nativism	Immigrants take jobs away from real [Country nationals]	X	X	X			X

Elections 2024

Half of the world's population will vote in 2024 in 70+ elections



Source: [Time Magazine](#)

SPOTLIGHT ON some key 2024 elections

Country	Date	Type	Broken System (28-country average 61%)
Indonesia	February 14	Presidential	62%
India	April to May	Parliamentary	73%
South Africa	May to August	Parliamentary	73%
Mexico	June 2	Presidential	62%
United States	November 5	Presidential	60%
United Kingdom	Latest January 2025	Parliamentary	64%

Citizens in our 28-country survey are **strongly predisposed** to populist and anti-establishment solutions. This sentiment has had a majority leaning in a number of key countries since 2016.

The building blocks of populism are alive and well in 2024. When it comes to select elections this year our survey shows similarly strong tendencies towards populist and anti-system attitudes. [Our populism survey](#) points to a loss in faith in many political systems.

“Traditional parties & politicians don’t care about people like me” is a case in point. Large majorities in Indonesia, Mexico, South Africa, India, the U.S., and the UK all agree with this statement. Many also believe there is a need for a strong leader to fix their country. Furthermore, large swaths of populations similarly agree that the “system is rigged.”



Ipsos' system is broken index

Global Country Average

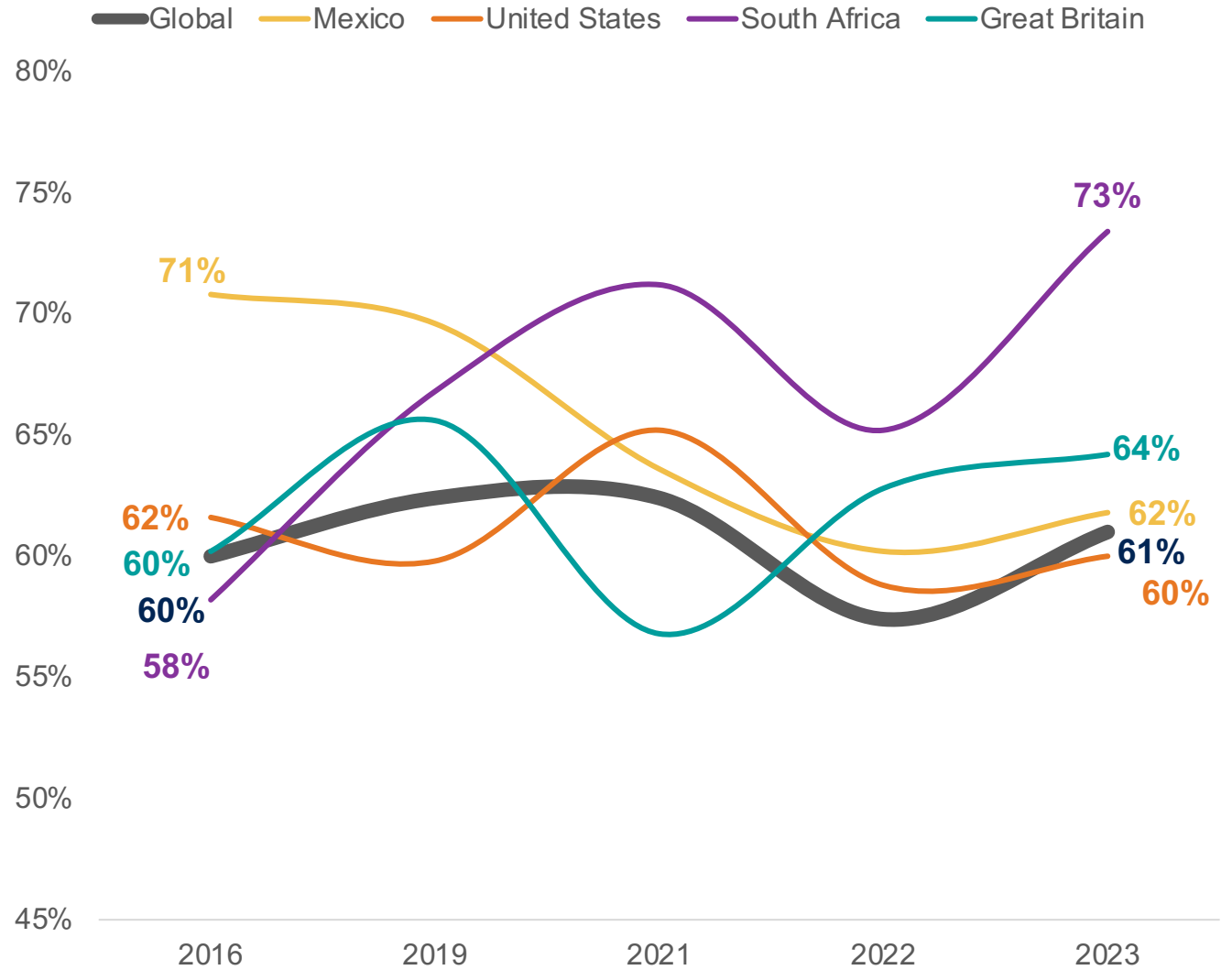
61% agree

Base: 20,630 online adults under age 75 across 28 countries, interviewed November 22-December 6, 2023

The "Global Country Average" reflects the average result for all the countries and markets where the survey was conducted. It has not been adjusted to the population size of each country or market and is not intended to suggest a total result. Samples in Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand, and Turkey are more urban, more educated, and/or more affluent than the general population.

The system is broken index is made up of the average agreement to the five statements below:

- The [country's] economy is rigged to advantage the rich and powerful
- Traditional parties and politicians don't care about people like me
- To fix [COUNTRY], we need a strong leader willing to break the rules
- [COUNTRY] needs a strong leader to take the country back from the rich and powerful
- Experts in this country don't understand the lives of people like me





Ipsos' System Is Broken Index

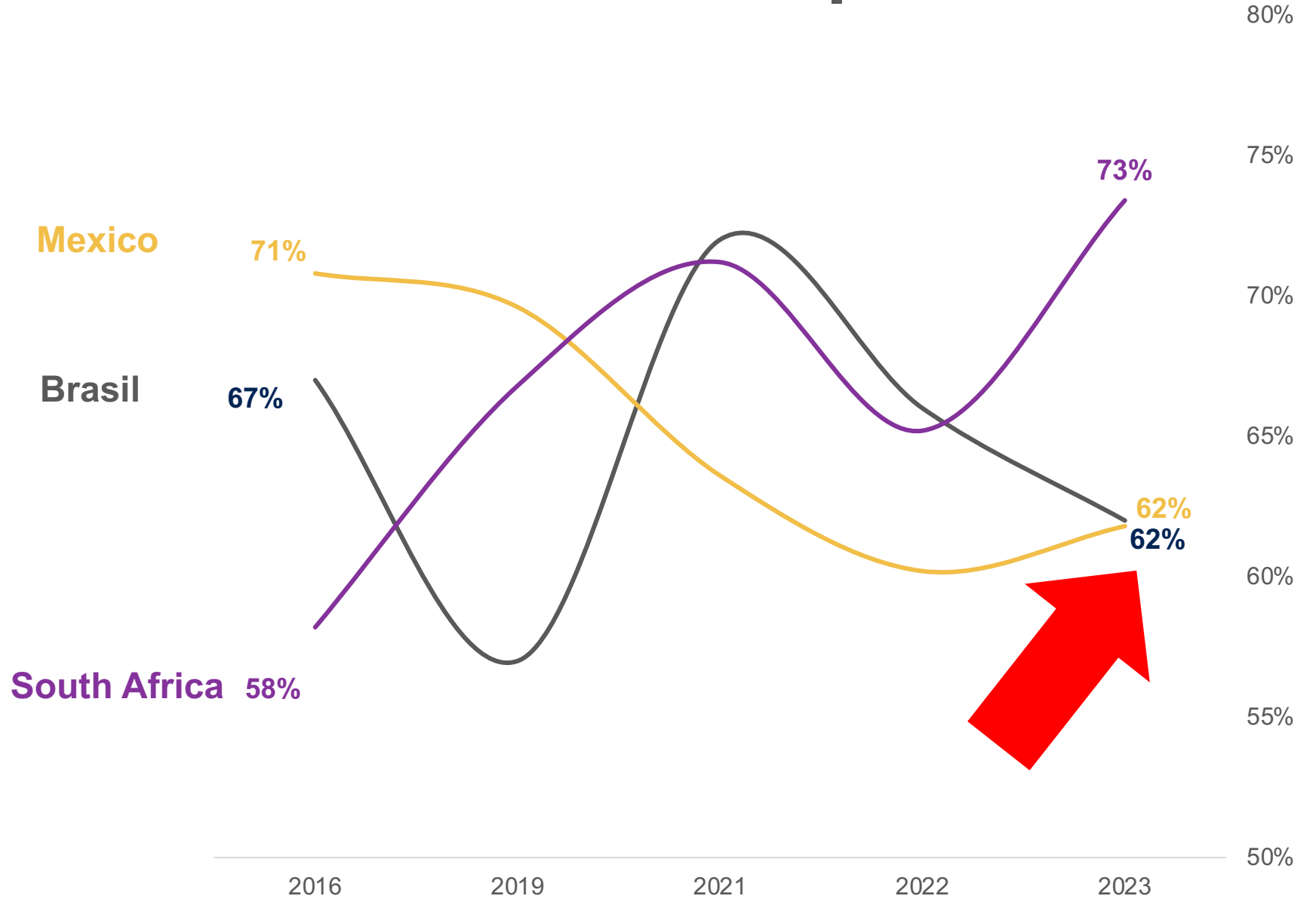
28-country average

61% agree

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But Elections can be an escape valve



Q

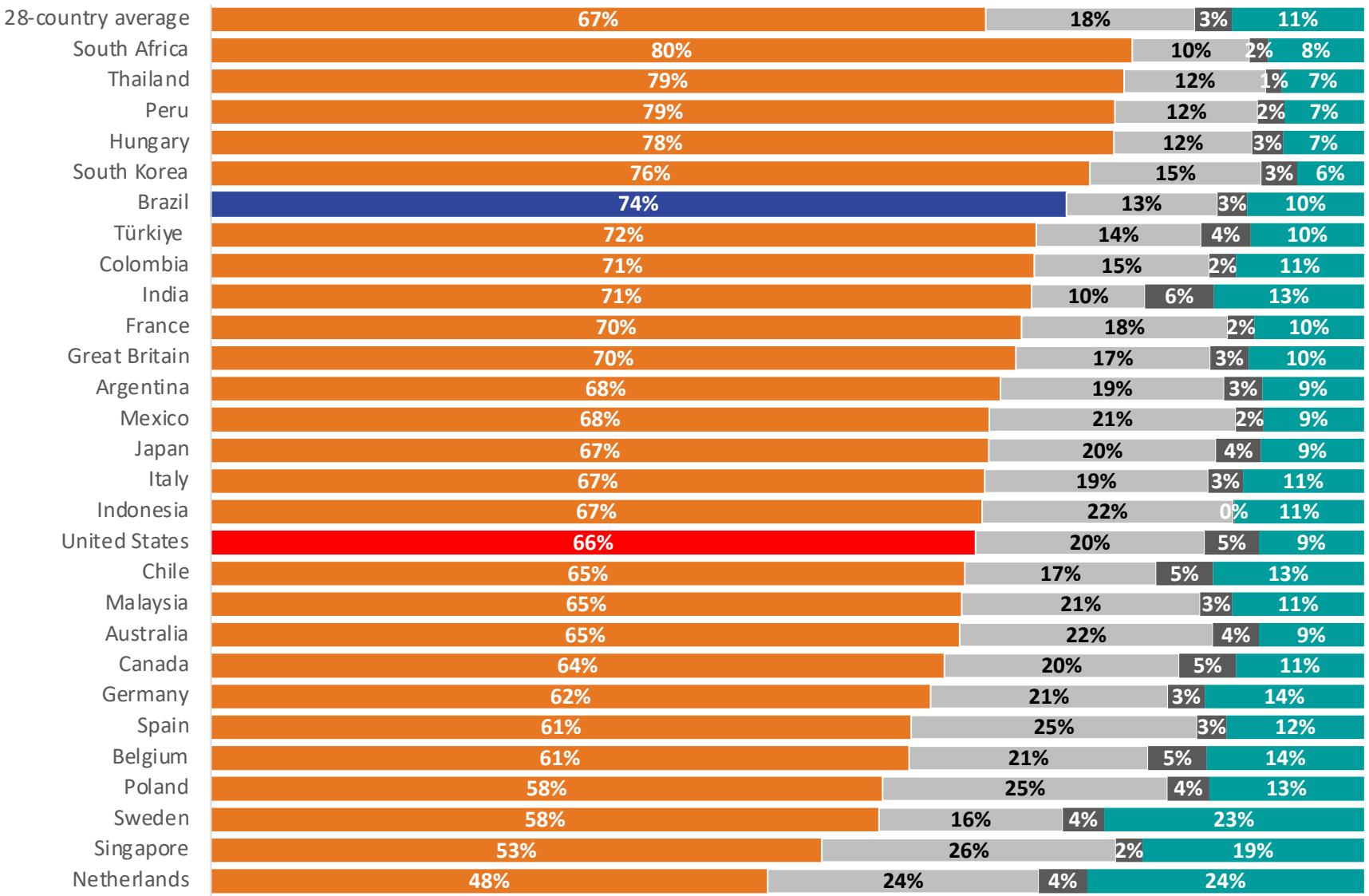
The economy is rigged to advantage the rich and powerful

28-country average

67% agree

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Agree Neither agree nor disagree Don't know Disagree



Q

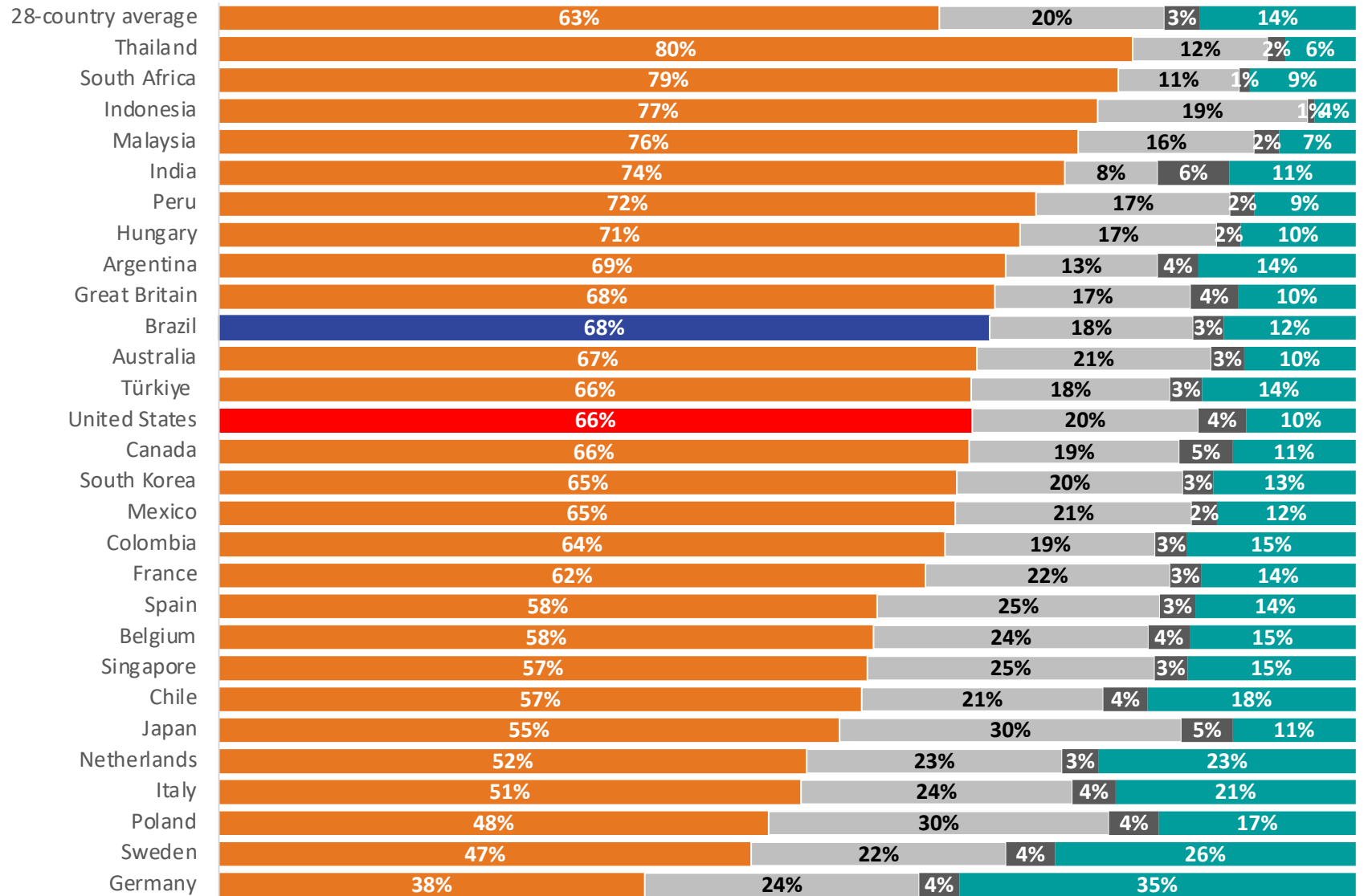
[Country] needs a strong leader to take the country back from the rich and powerful

28-country average

63% agree

Base: 20,630 online adults under age 75 across 28 countries, interviewed November 22-December 6, 2023
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■ Agree
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree
 ■ Don't know
 ■ Disagree



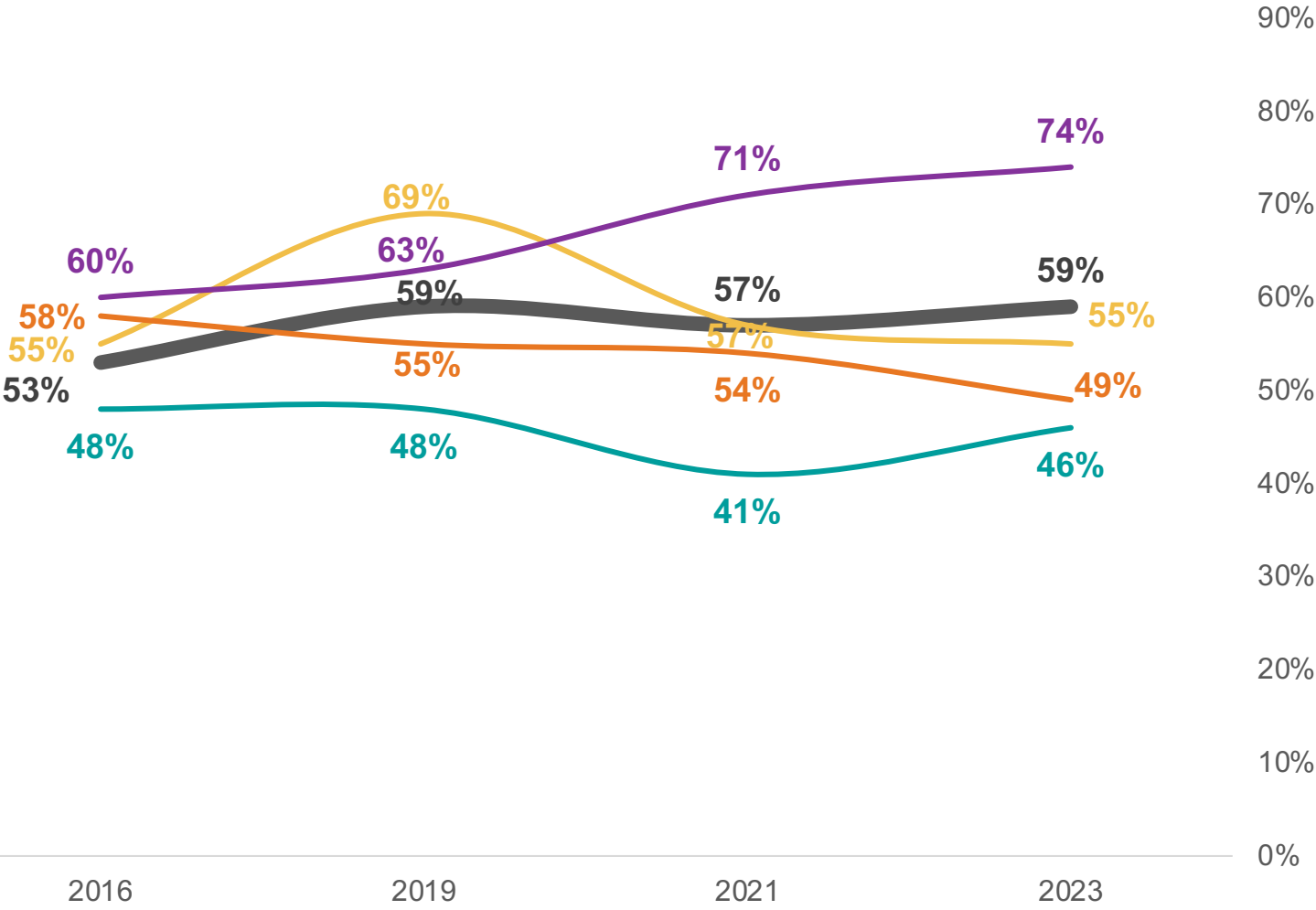


When jobs are scarce, employers should prioritize hiring people of this country over immigrants

28-country average

59% agree

South Africa
United States
Mexico
28-country average
Great Britain



Base: 20,630 online adults under age 75 across 28 countries, interviewed November 22-December 6, 2023
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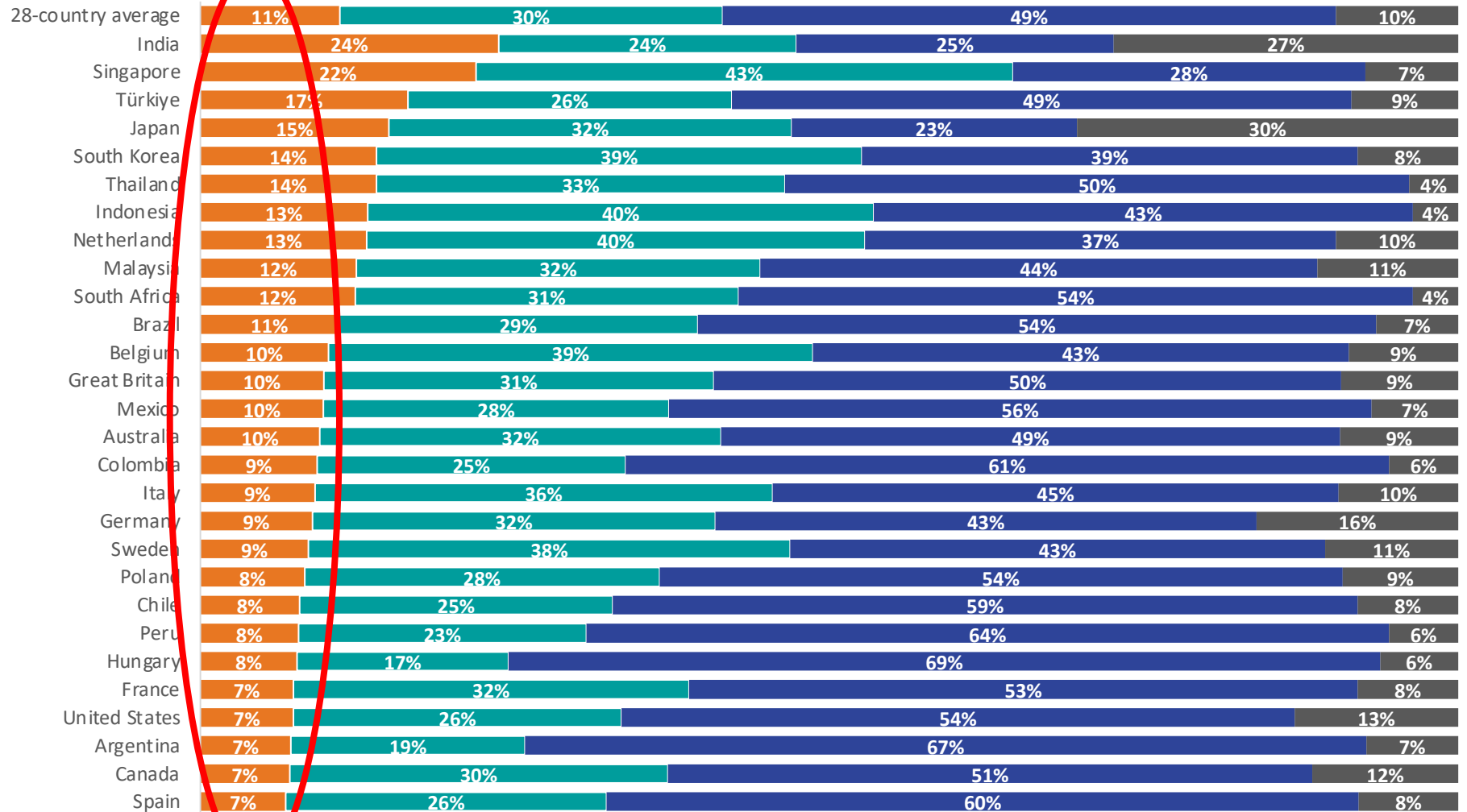
And which of these three statements is closest to your opinion of the "elite" in [Country]

28-country average

49% say the "elite" tend to make decisions based on their own interests and the needs of the rest of the people in [Country] do not matter

Base: 20,630 online adults under age 75 across 28 countries, interviewed November 22-December 6, 2023. The "28-country average" reflects the average result for all the countries and markets where the survey was conducted. It has not been adjusted to the population size of each country or market and is not intended to suggest a total result. Samples in Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand, and Turkey are more urban, more educated, and/or more affluent than the general population.

- They tend to make decisions that are in the best interest of most people in [Country]
- They sincerely believe their decisions are in the best interest of most people in [Country], but that is often not the case
- They tend to make decisions based on their own interests and the needs of the rest of the people in [Country] do not matter
- None of these





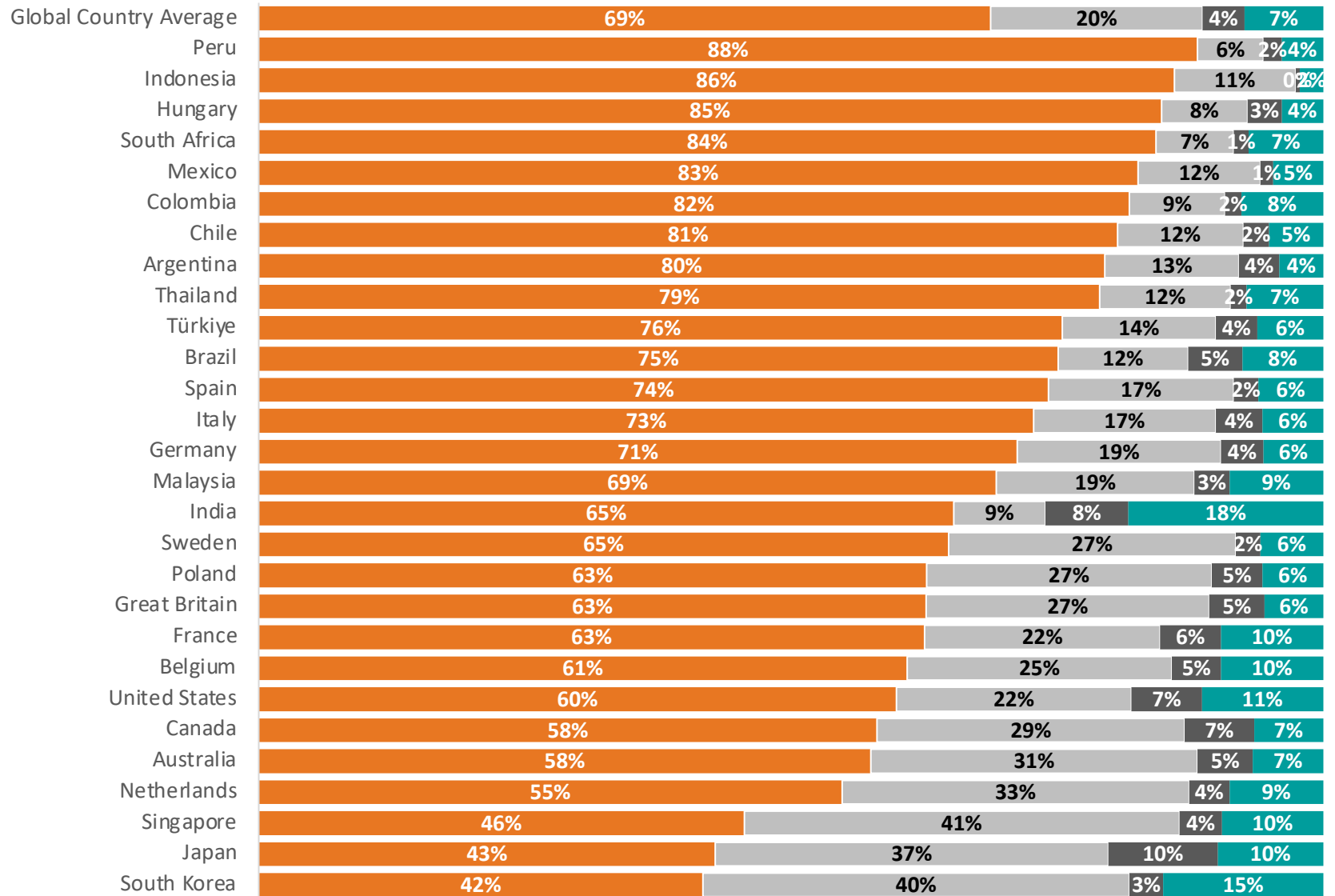
To what extent do you think the [Country] government should increase or lower its spending in each of the following: Education (e.g., schools, universities, job training)

Global Country Average

69% say should increase spending on education

Base: 20,630 online adults under age 75 across 28 countries, interviewed November 22-December 6, 2023
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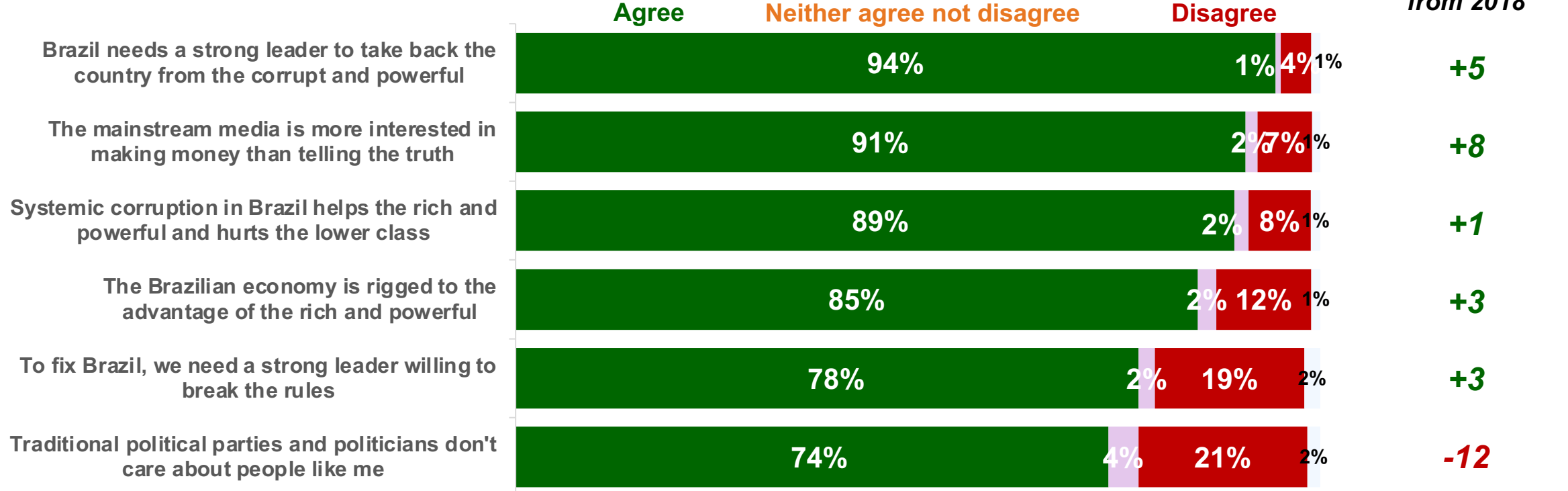
Should increase Should keep at its current level Not sure Should Lower



Brazil & the 2022 Elections

Brazilians feel the current system is not working for them, and many want a strong leader who will fix these systemic problems

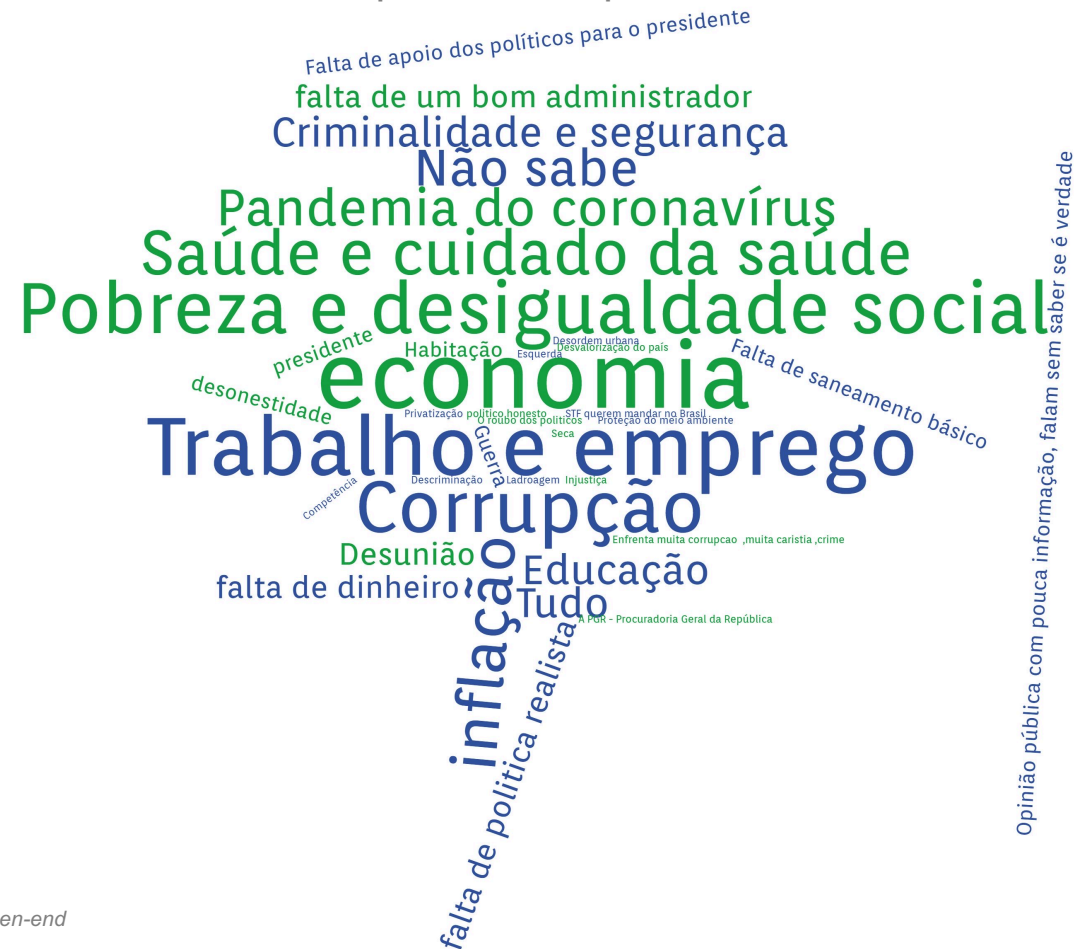
Do you agree or disagree with these statements?



Q. Do you agree or disagree with these statements? *Compared to Ipsos Pulso Brasil March 2018

Unprompted, issues related to the inequality and economy are top of mind for Brazilians, followed by healthcare and corruption

In your opinion, what is the main problem facing Brazil today?
Open-end response



Opinião pública com pouca informação, falam sem saber se é verdade

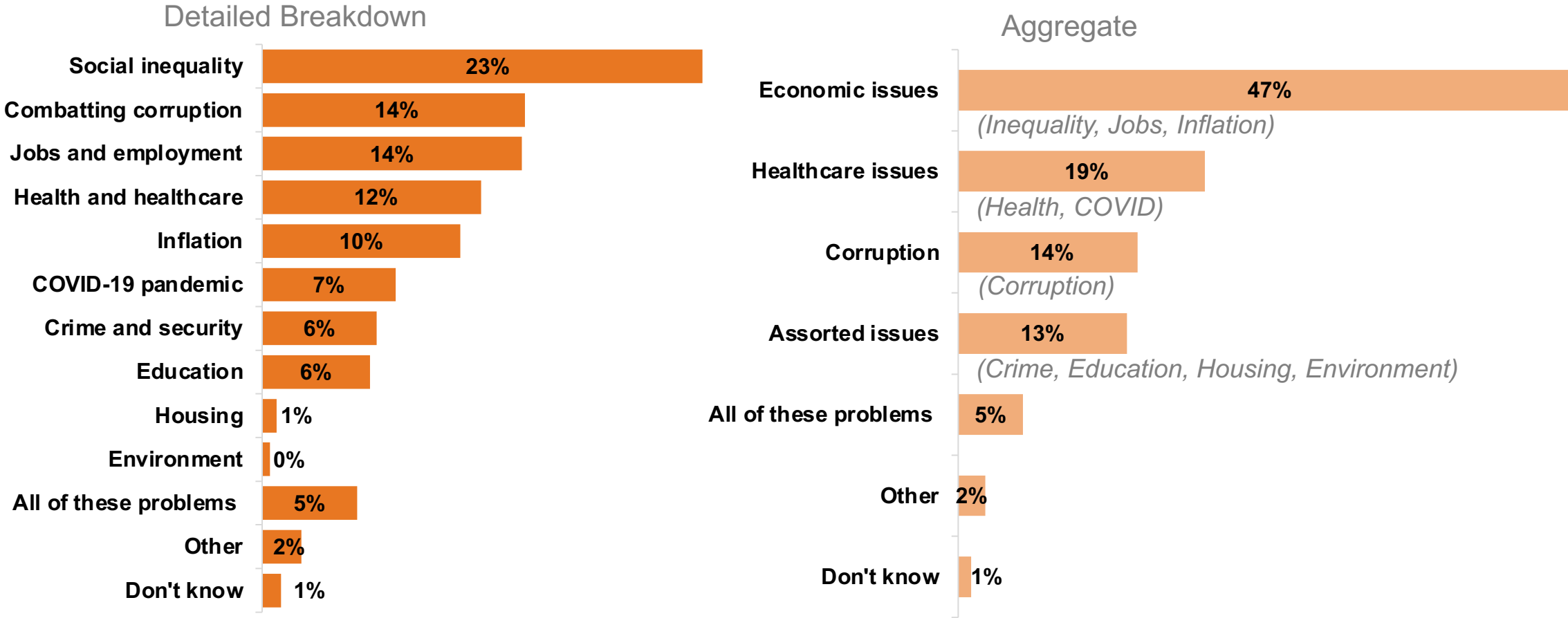
Q. In your opinion, what is the main problem facing Brazil today? Open-end



85% Rule

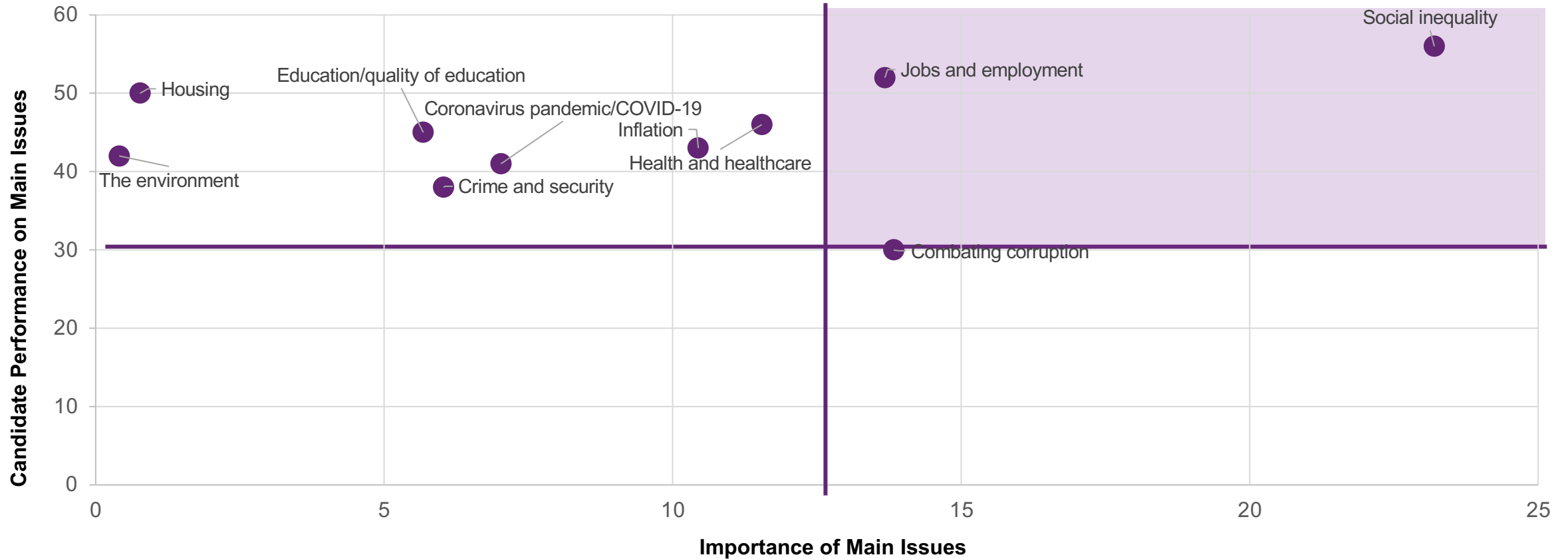
Candidates who are strongest on the main issue win their election

Social and Economic issues are the top concerns for Brazilians, followed by healthcare and corruption



Q. In your opinion, what is the main problem facing Brazil today? Q. Which of the following characteristics is the most important for a president to have? Q. And which of these characteristics is the second most important for a president to have?

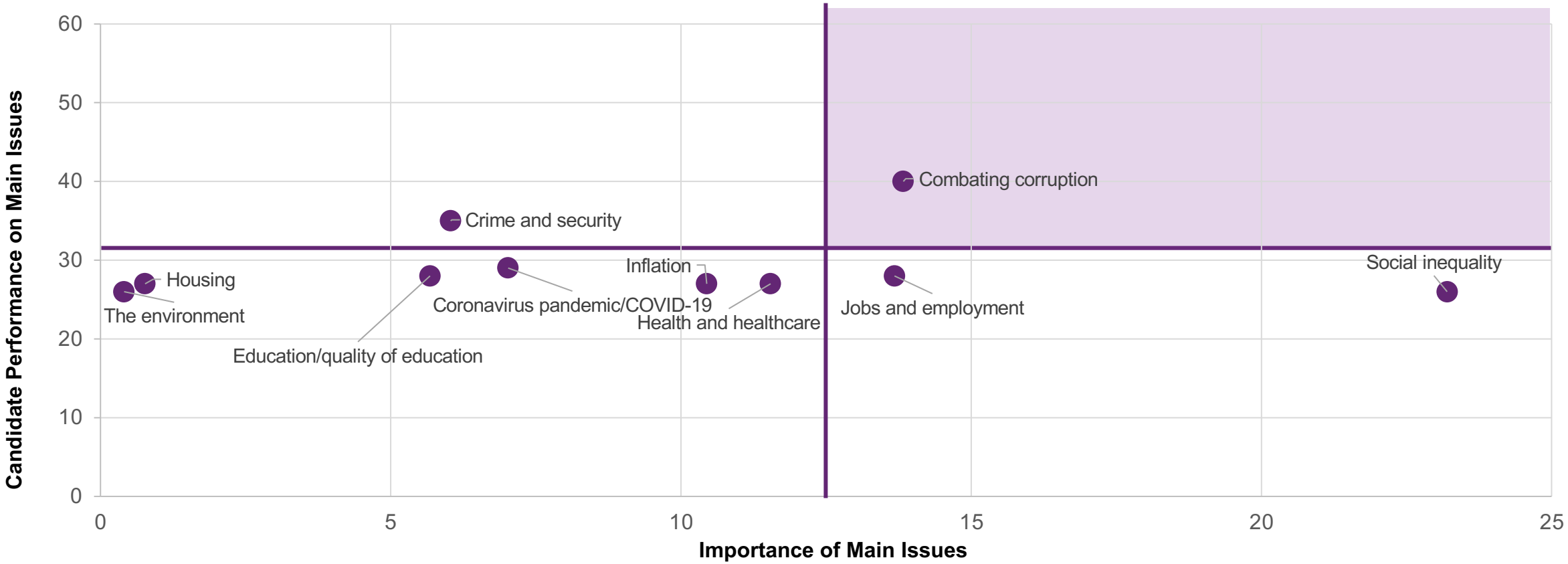
Main Issues & Candidate Performance – Lula, PT



Q. In your opinion, what is the main problem facing Brazil today? Q. Which candidate is most likely to help with each of the following?
 Q. How familiar are you with the following presidential candidates, taking into account all the ways you may have heard about them?

Quadrant 1 indicates strong candidate performance on important issues

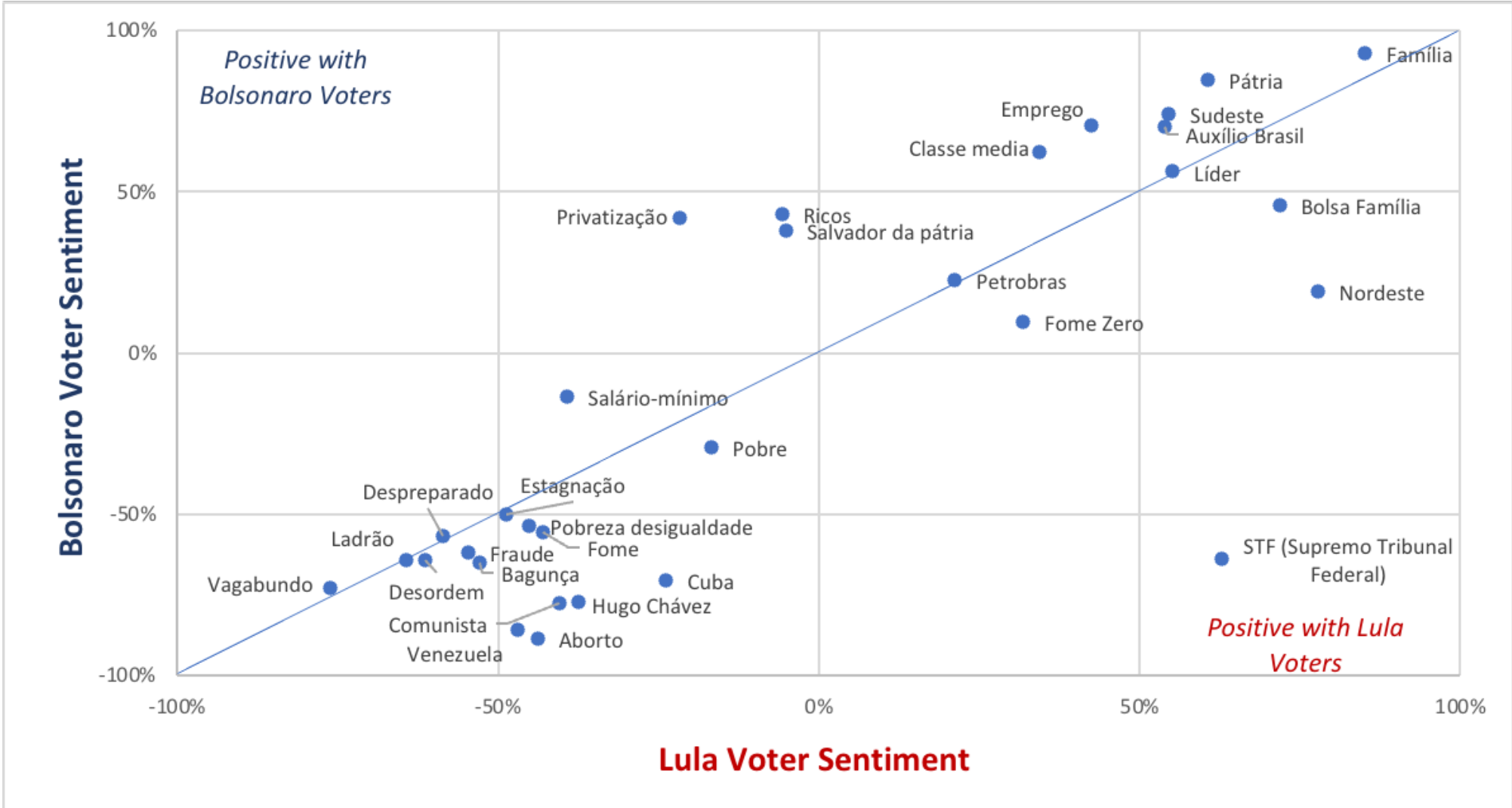
Main Issues & Candidate Performance – Bolsonaro, PL



Q. In your opinion, what is the main problem facing Brazil today? Q. Which candidate is most likely to help with each of the following?
 Q. How familiar are you with the following presidential candidates, taking into account all the ways you may have heard about them?

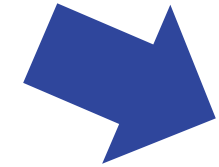
Quadrant 1 indicates strong candidate performance on important issues

Comparison of political salience of concepts post 2022 Brazilian election



US and the 2024 Election

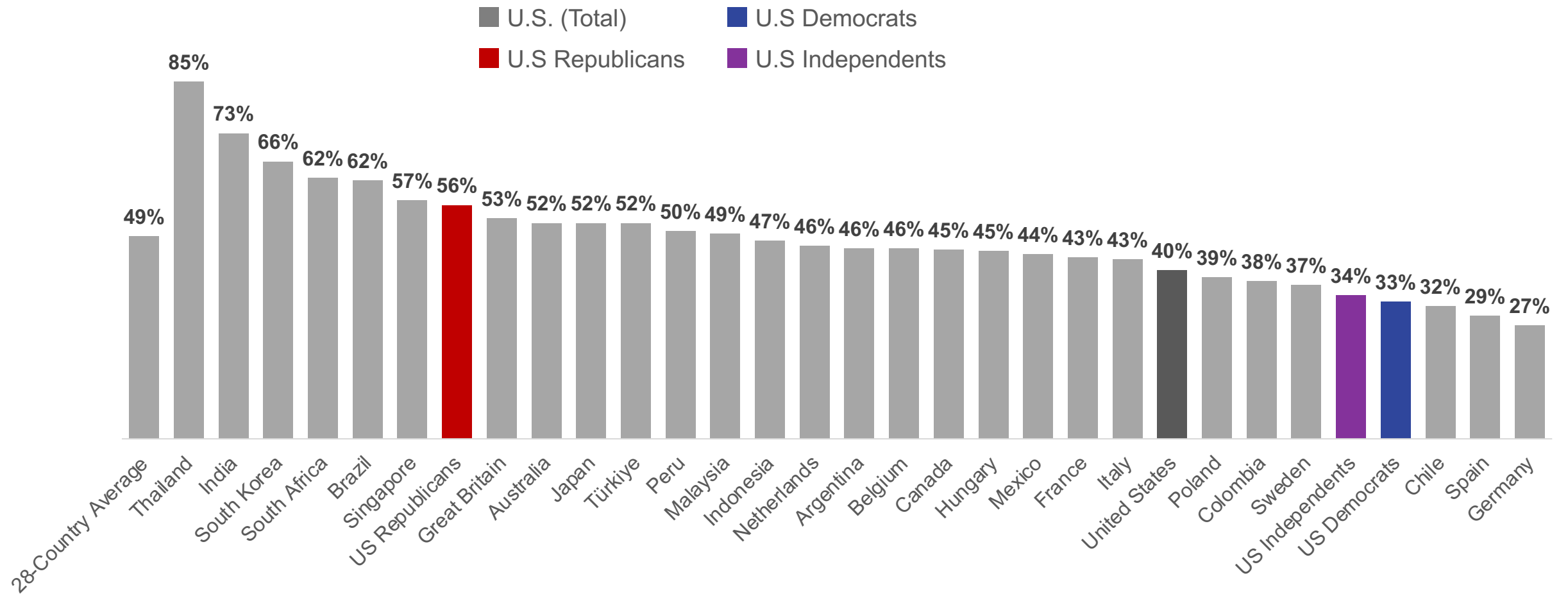
System is Broken by Partyid in the US



	Dem	Rep	Delta
America needs a strong leader to take the country back from the rich and powerful	65.0%	75.0%	-10.0%
The American economy is rigged to advantage the rich and powerful	76.0%	60.0%	16.0%
Traditional parties and politicians don't care about people like me	63.0%	74.0%	-11.0%
To fix the Country we need a strong leader who is willing to break the rules	30.0%	59.0%	-29.0%
These days I feel like a stranger in my own country	31.0%	48.0%	-17.0%

Democrats, Republicans lie on the opposite ends of the spectrum when it comes to support for strong men

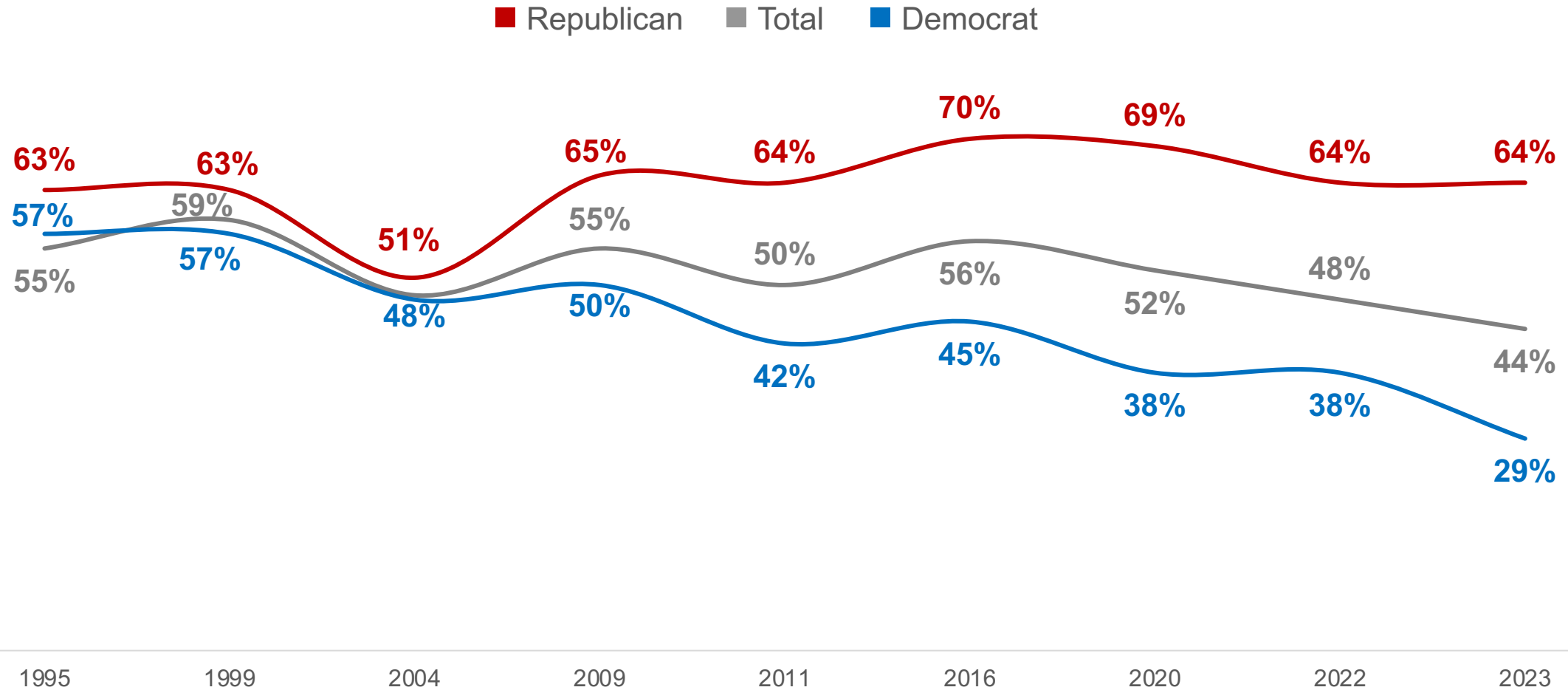
To fix [Country], we need a strong leader willing to break the rules



Nativist and Polarization

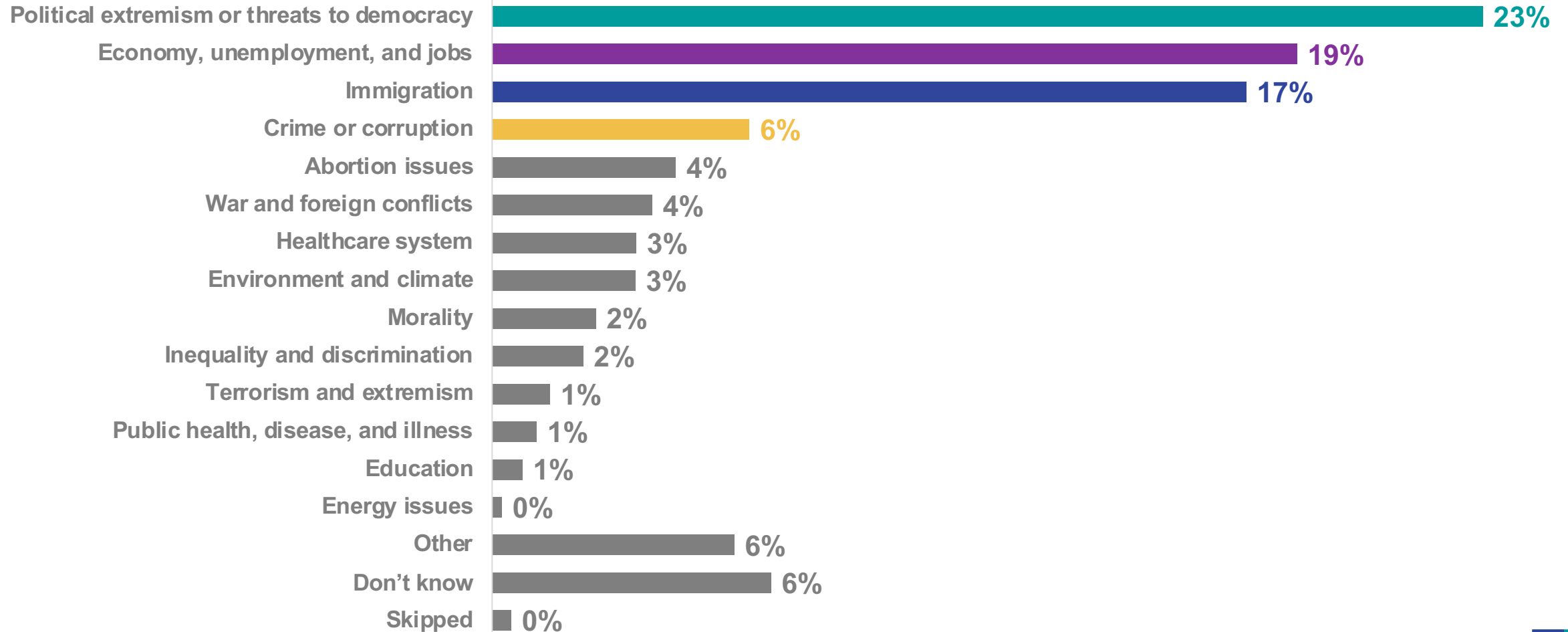
Percent who agree that

When jobs are scarce, employers should prioritize hiring people of this country over immigrants



Most Important Problem Facing America

In your opinion, what is the most important problem facing the U.S. today?



Most Important Problem Facing America

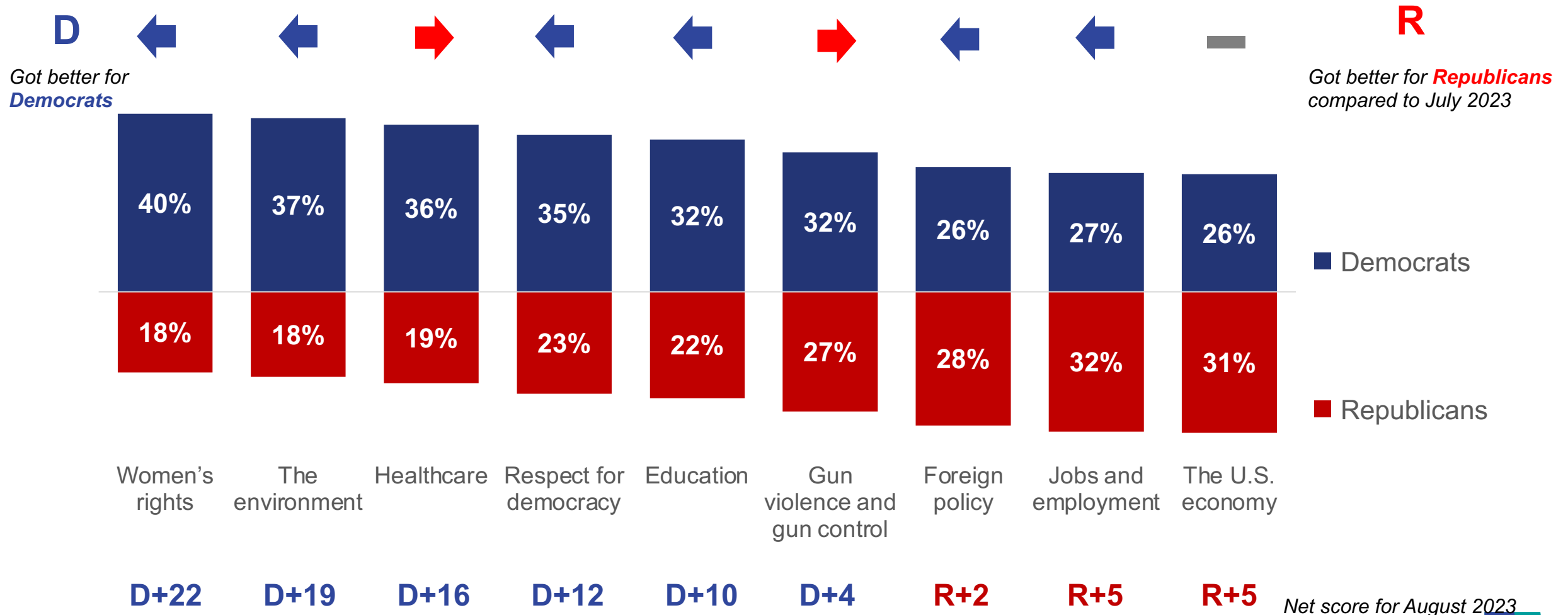
In your opinion, what is the most important problem facing the U.S. today?

	All Americans	Democrats	Republicans	Independents
Economy, unemployment, and jobs	19%	11%	23%	20%
War and foreign conflicts	4%	3%	3%	5%
Immigration	17%	8%	32%	15%
Terrorism and extremism	1%	1%	3%	1%
Healthcare system	3%	6%	1%	4%
Public health, disease, and illness	1%	0%	2%	1%
Energy issues	0%	0%	0%	0%
Morality	2%	1%	5%	2%
Education	1%	1%	0%	1%
Crime or corruption	6%	5%	7%	6%
Environment and climate	3%	7%	1%	2%
Inequality and discrimination	2%	5%	0%	1%
Abortion issues	4%	7%	2%	3%
Political extremism or threats to democracy	23%	36%	11%	25%
Other	6%	2%	7%	6%
Don't know	6%	3%	2%	8%

*Prior to February 2021, "Economy, generally" and "Unemployment/lack of jobs" were asked separately, results on chart display the sum of both issues through that date. Have since been combined to create "Economy, unemployment, and jobs". Other changes include "system" being added to "healthcare", and "Inequality and discrimination" and "Public health, disease, and illness" were added as new issues. In August 2022, "the end of national abortion rights" was added and eliminated in November 2022. In January 2023, "Abortion rights" was added. In February 2024, "Political extremism or threats to democracy" was added.

Democracy or economy?

In your opinion, which political party has a better plan, policy or approach to each of the following?



Looking Forward

Key Findings

#1 Potential for Populism.

Anti-establishment sentiment is up slightly from 2022, with many people in many countries holding these views, reflecting widespread frustration with inequality and slower growth.

#2 In a huge election year, populism is appealing.

An average of 63% across the 28 countries polled feel their country needs a strong leader to take the country back from the rich and powerful. Will autocrats and populists do well in 2024?

#3 Pessimism about their country's progress.

Fueling populist sentiment, 58% across the 28 countries polled feel that their country is in decline, and an average of 57% feel their country's society is broken. This is the case in many countries even with good GDP growth.

#4 Backlash towards immigrants.

59% of people, on average, across the 28 countries polled feel that when jobs are scarce, employers should prioritize hiring people of their country over immigrants.

#5 Suspicion of elites is widespread globally.

62% of people on average across the 28 countries polled view elites as a closely connected group of people with similar interests and views. Pluralities in almost all countries surveyed feel elites operate based on their self-interest.

#6 Populists want a different government, not a small government.

Despite support for anti-establishment politics, an average of 75% of those polled support government spending on healthcare, and 67% support spending on reducing poverty and social inequality. Some 74% of people, on average, across the 28 countries polled fear government will do too little to help them in the years ahead – most want activist government of some kind.

- Anti-establishment sentiment is a stable, global belief system. Correlated with illiberalism.
- Uncertain if increasing in levels. More ebbs and flows. It is something always with us. Public opinion is predisposed to populist orientations
 - ✓ *“Entrepreneur” & “Opportunity Structure” perhaps are more determinant*
- Takes on different forms and flavors. Outcomes depend on unique circumstances.
 - ✓ *India/Indonesia/Mexico v. UK/South Africa v. US*