

Anwar Sadat Chair for Peace and Development

University of Maryland

2011

Annual Arab Public Opinion Survey

Survey conducted October 2011 in

Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and UAE

Sample size: 3000

Margin of error: +/- 1.8%

Professor Shibley Telhami, Principal Investigator

Mike Lebson, Evan Lewis and Abe Medoff assisted in preparation of this study

Key Findings

The Arab Spring

- Turkey is the biggest winner of the Arab Spring. In the five countries polled, Turkey is seen to have played the "most constructive" role in the Arab events. It's Prime Minister, Recep Erdogan, is the most admired among world leaders, and those who envision a new President for Egypt want the new President to look most like Erdogan. Egyptians want their country to look more like Turkey than any of the other Muslim, Arab and other choices provided.
 - Iran suffered mixed results. More people in 2011 identify Iran as one of the two biggest threats they face than ever before (18%), and, in contrast with 2010, a plurality (35%) of those polled now believe that if Iran acquires weapons of mass destruction it would be negative for the Middle East. On the other hand, Iran's President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad remains relatively popular, and most (64%) Arabs still feel that Iran has the right to its nuclear program and should not be pressured by the international community to halt it.
 - Although France remains relatively popular, it has suffered a major setback in Arab public opinion in comparison with the past several years. While 23% said they preferred France if there were only one superpower in 2009, this has dropped to only 10% .
- This was also matched by a decline of the number of people who want to live in France (from 36% in 2009 to 28% in 2011). This appears to be related to the fact that Arabs are divided on the issue of the international intervention in Libya: A plurality of Arabs in the five countries polled (46%) say that, in retrospect, the international intervention was a mistake, although there is variation from country to country.
- Overall, Arabs polled strongly take the sides of the rebels against the government in Yemen (89%), Syria (86%), and Bahrain (64%). But there are regional differences: Those polled in the UAE mostly favor the government of Bahrain. The Lebanese are divided on Syria, the Jordanians are divided on Bahrain, and the Egyptians' support for the rebels in Bahrain is weaker than their support for the rebels in Yemen and Syria.
 - A majority of those polled (55%) are more optimistic about the future of the Arab world in light of the Arab Spring, 16% are pessimistic and 23% feel no change. A majority feel that the Arab Spring is mostly about "ordinary people seeking dignity, freedom and a better life," while 19% believe it is about foreign powers trying to stir trouble in the region and 16% feel it is about opposition parties or sects seeking to control governments.

Key Findings

The United States

- While a majority of Arabs polled continue to express unfavorable views of the United States (59%) the number of those who have favorable views of the US has increased from 10% in 2010 to 26% in 2011. This improvement could be related to the perception of the American handling of the Arab Spring, as 24% of those polled identified the US as one of the two countries they believe played the most constructive role in the Arab Spring.
- A majority of Arabs polled (52%) remain discouraged by the Obama administration policy in the Middle East, though this is down from 65% in 2010 and up from only 15% in 2009. A plurality of those polled (43%) have negative views of President Obama while 34% have positive views. This constitutes an improvement from 2010 for Obama, but a decline from 2009.
- When asked about the two steps by the United States that would improve their views of the US the most, 55% said an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement and 42% said stopping aid to Israel.

The Egyptian Elections*

- A plurality of Egyptians (43%) believe that the military rulers are working to slow or reverse the gains of the revolution, while only 21% believe that they are working to advance these gains, and 14% believe that the military authorities are indifferent.
- Roughly a third of Egyptians say they are likely to vote for an Islamic party in the Parliamentary elections.
- Of the Egyptian Presidential candidates, Amr Mousa receives the support of 21% of those polled, followed by Muhammad ElBaradei and Ahmad Shafiq.

**Note that these polls measure trends but not necessarily likely voting behavior. There is little information on the central issue of likely voters and little precedence. At the local level, Egyptians vote often on the basis of family/clan loyalty, personality, or other factors that trump ideology.*

Key Findings

The Arab-Israeli Issue

- A majority of Arabs polled (67%) continue to say that they're prepared for peace with Israel based on a two state solution along the 1967 borders. At the same time, a majority (53%) say that such a solution will never happen. Yet a majority (54%) also believes that if the two state solution is no longer on the table, this will lead to a state of intense conflict for years to come.
- Only 20% of those polled believe that a solution to the conflict will come through negotiations (down from 40% in 2010). While 39% believe it will come by being imposed by either the United Nations or the United States and 20% say it will come through another war.
- Egyptians are divided on the peace treaty with Israel, with 37% supporting maintaining it, while 35% support cancelling it. The number of supporters increases to 41% if Israel agrees to a Palestinian state.

Media

- Aljazeera Television continues to be identified as the number one source of international news among those polled (43%) followed by Al-Arabiya (14%) and MBC (12%).
- There is a marked increase in the percentage of Arabs who identify the internet as their main source of international news with 20% saying that the internet is their primary source of international news, in contrast to 8% in 2009.
- The use of the internet continues to expand rapidly, with over a quarter of users saying they acquired access only in the past year, while a total of over 40% say they've acquired use over the past three years.

Samples and Polling Dates

Country	Sample Size	Margin of Error	Start Date	End Date
Egypt	750	+/- 3.7%	10/22	10/30
UAE	500	+/- 4.5%	10/20	10/31
Morocco	750	+/- 3.7%	10/20	10/31
Lebanon	500	+/- 4.5%	10/20	10/27
Jordan	500	+/- 4.5%	10/20	10/30

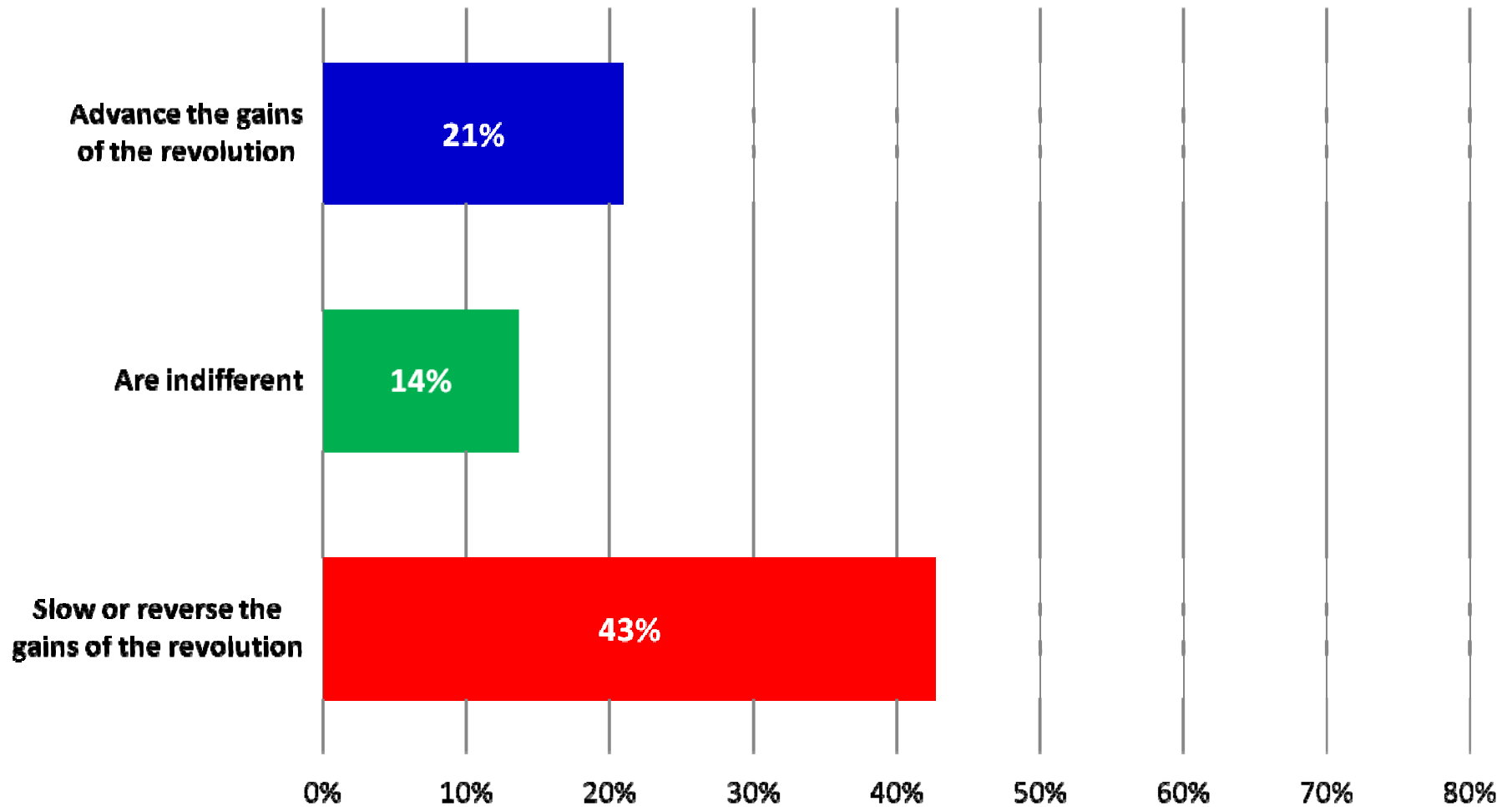
Polling Cities

COUNTRY	CITIES
Egypt	Giza, Cairo, Qaliubiya, Alexandria, Al Minia (Upper Egypt), Al Ismailiyah (Suez Canal)
UAE	Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah
Morocco	Casablanca, Rabat
Lebanon	Beirut, Aley, Metn, Baabda, Tripoli, Shouf
Jordan	Amman, Irbid, Zarqa

Arab Awakening

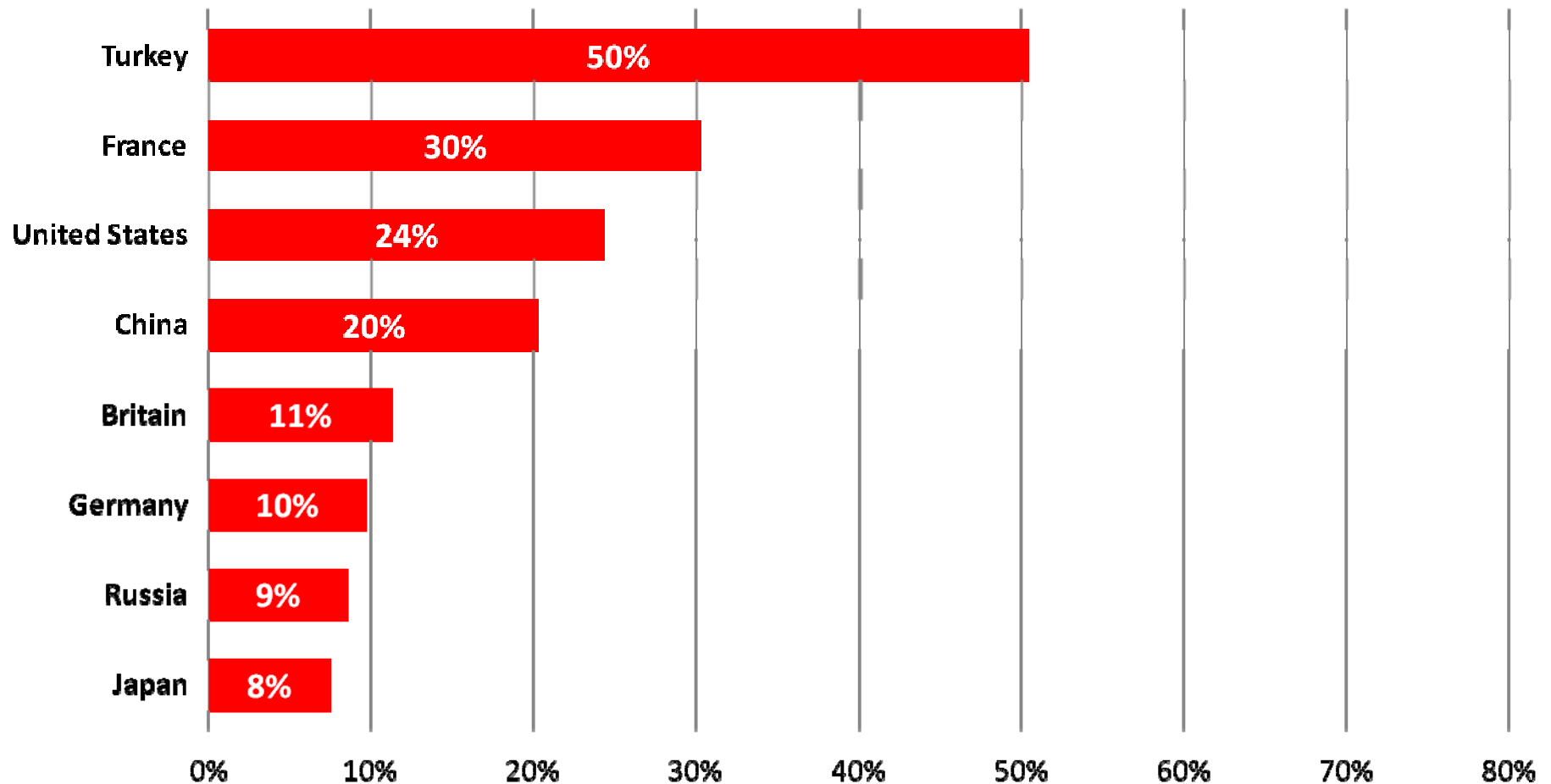
Arab Awakening

Do you believe that the military authorities in Egypt are working to:
(EGYPT ONLY)



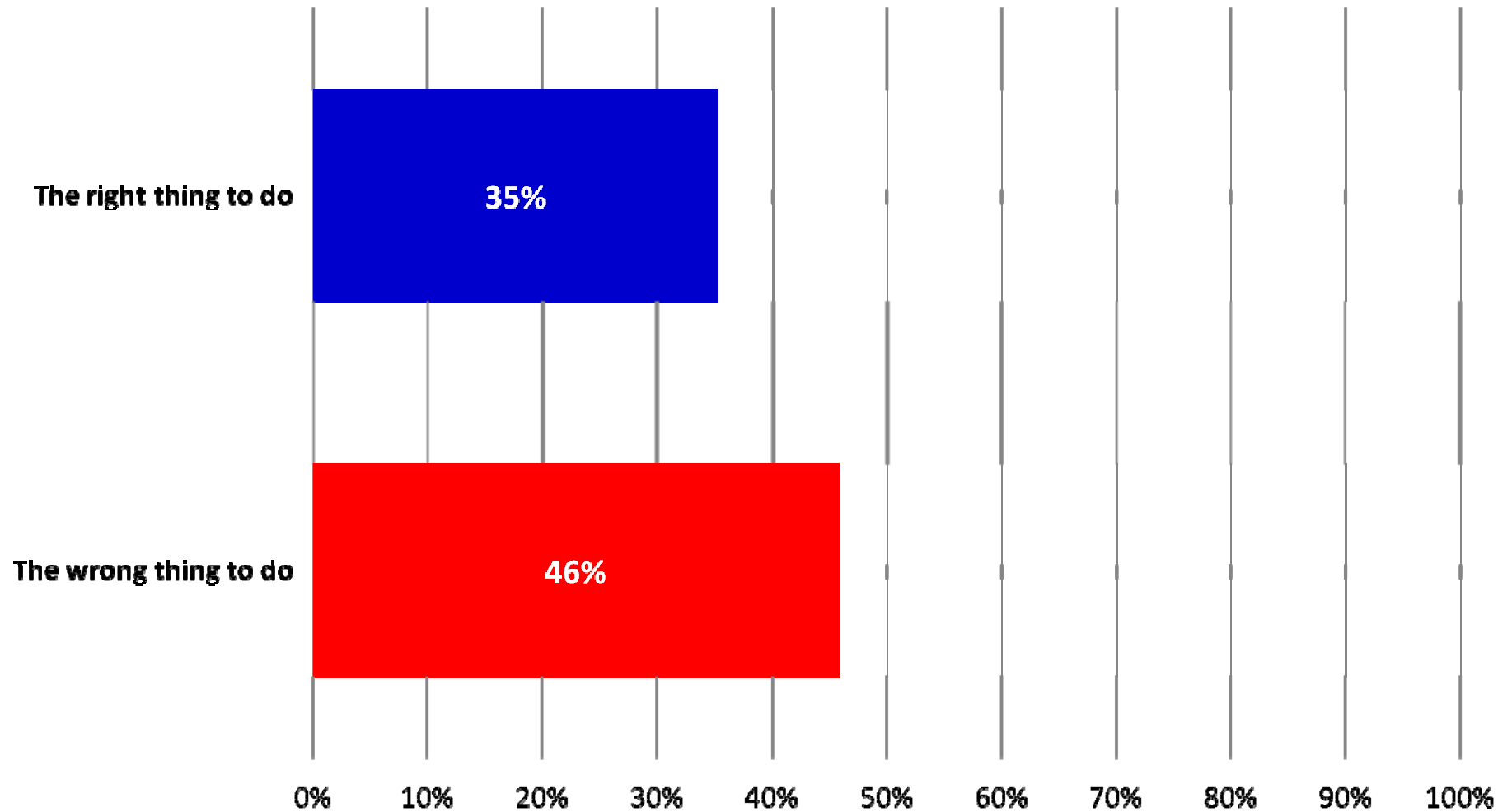
Arab Awakening

Looking at the international reaction to the events in the Arab world in the past few months, which TWO countries do you believe played the most constructive role?



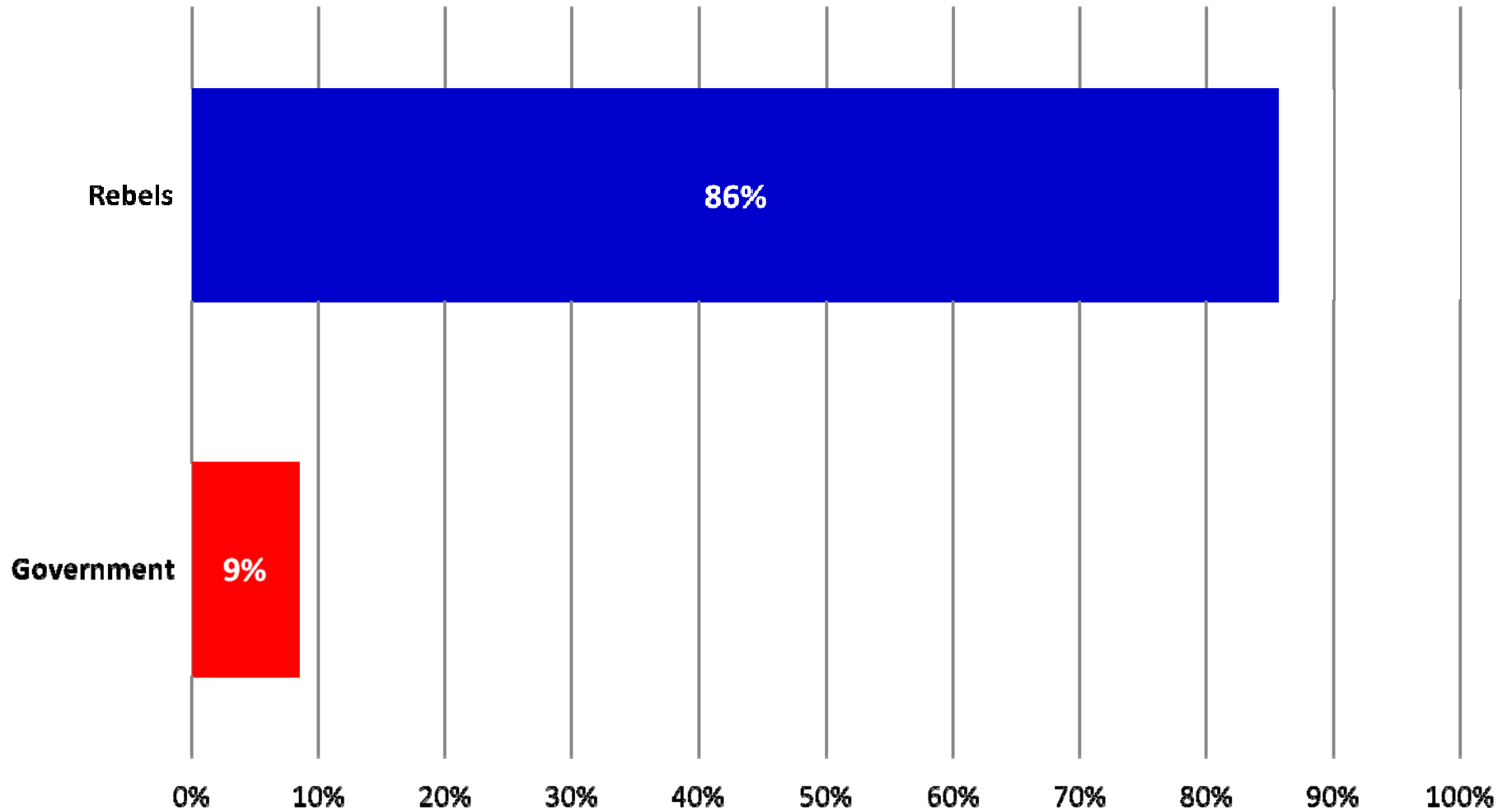
Arab Awakening

In retrospect, do you believe that the international intervention in Libya was:



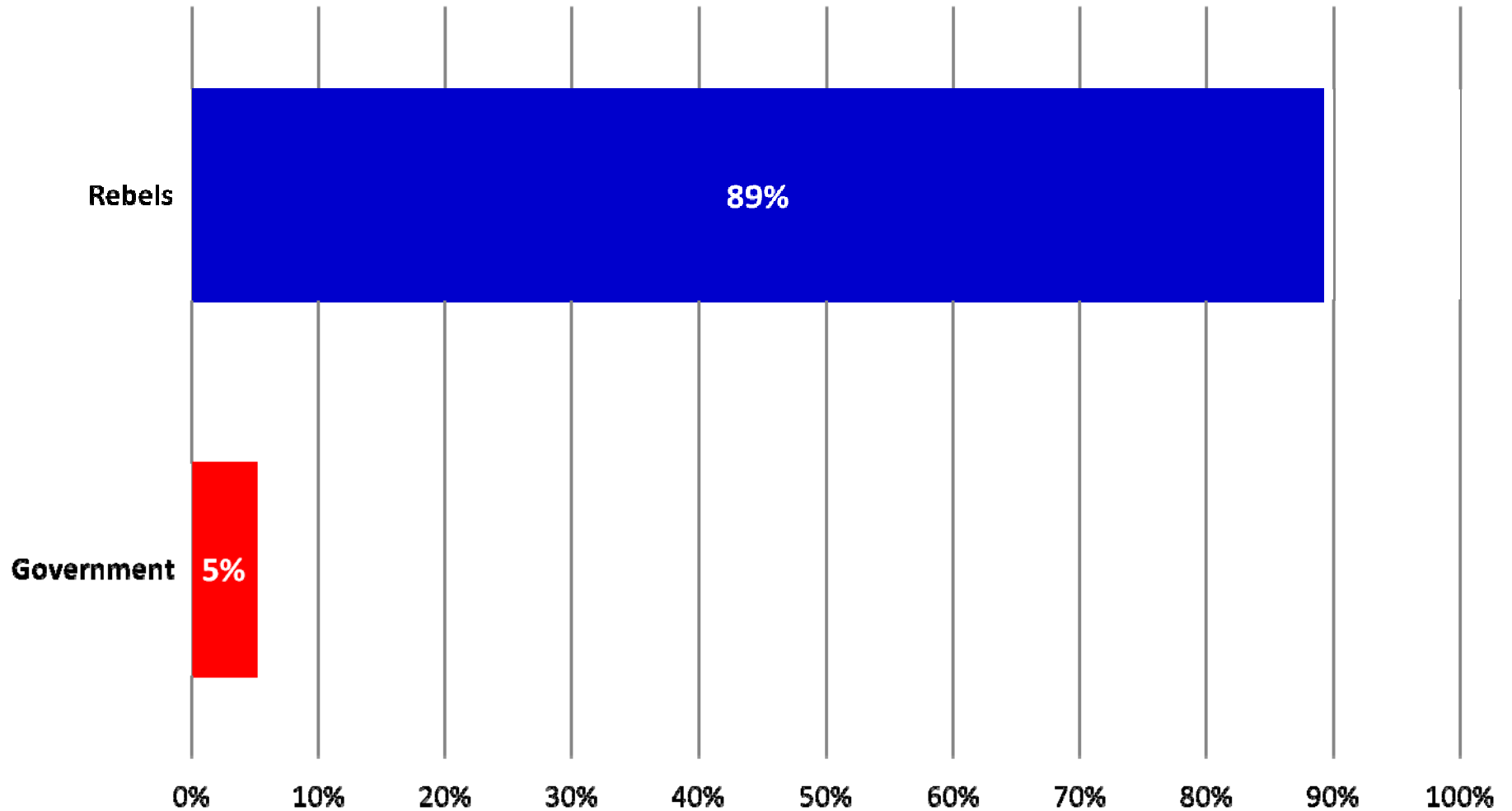
Arab Awakening

When you watch events in Syria, are your sympathies mostly with the government or the rebels seeking government change?



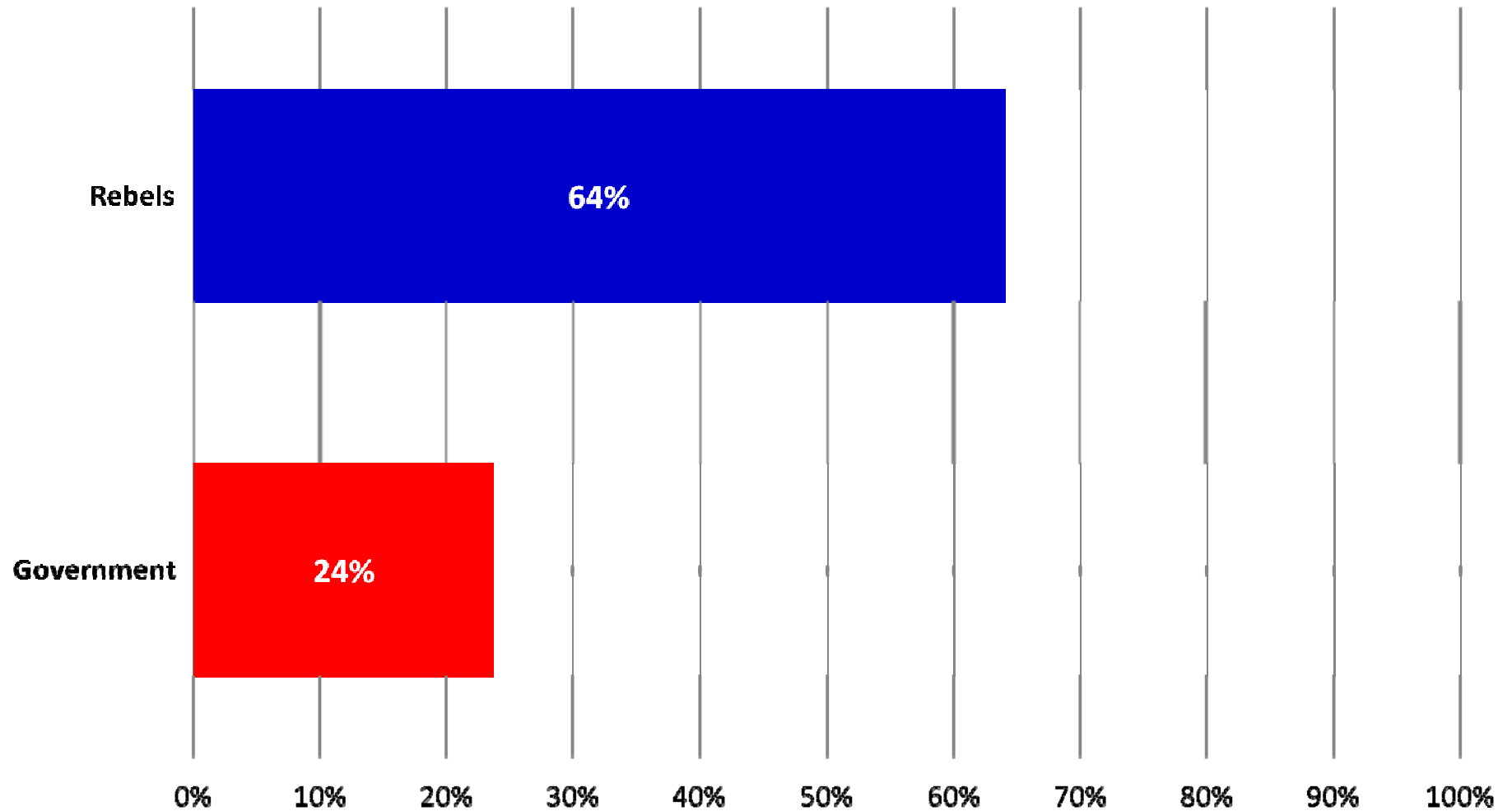
Arab Awakening

When you watch events in Yemen, are your sympathies mostly with the government or the rebels seeking government change?



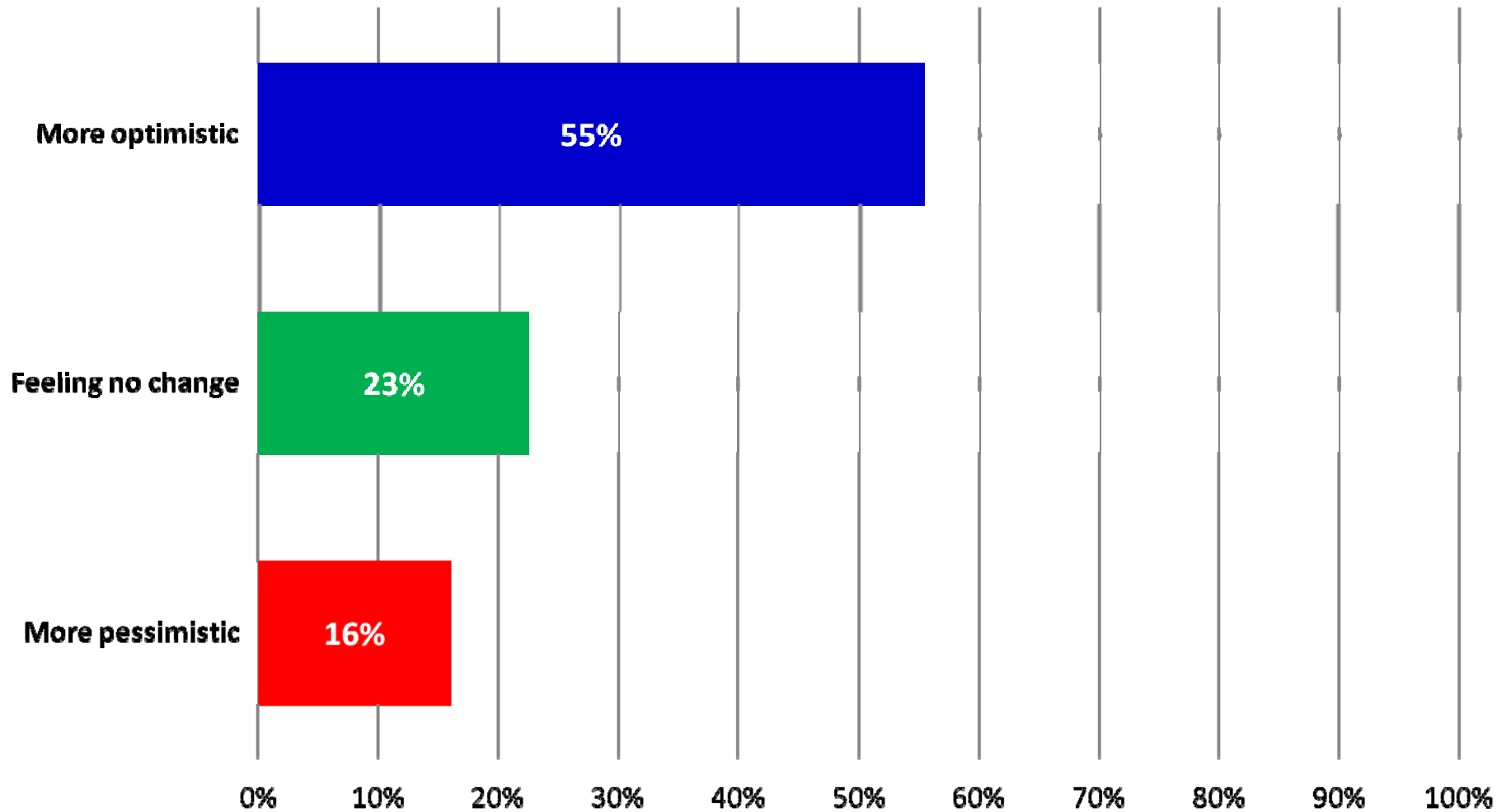
Arab Awakening

When you watch events in Bahrain, are your sympathies mostly with the government or the rebels seeking government change?



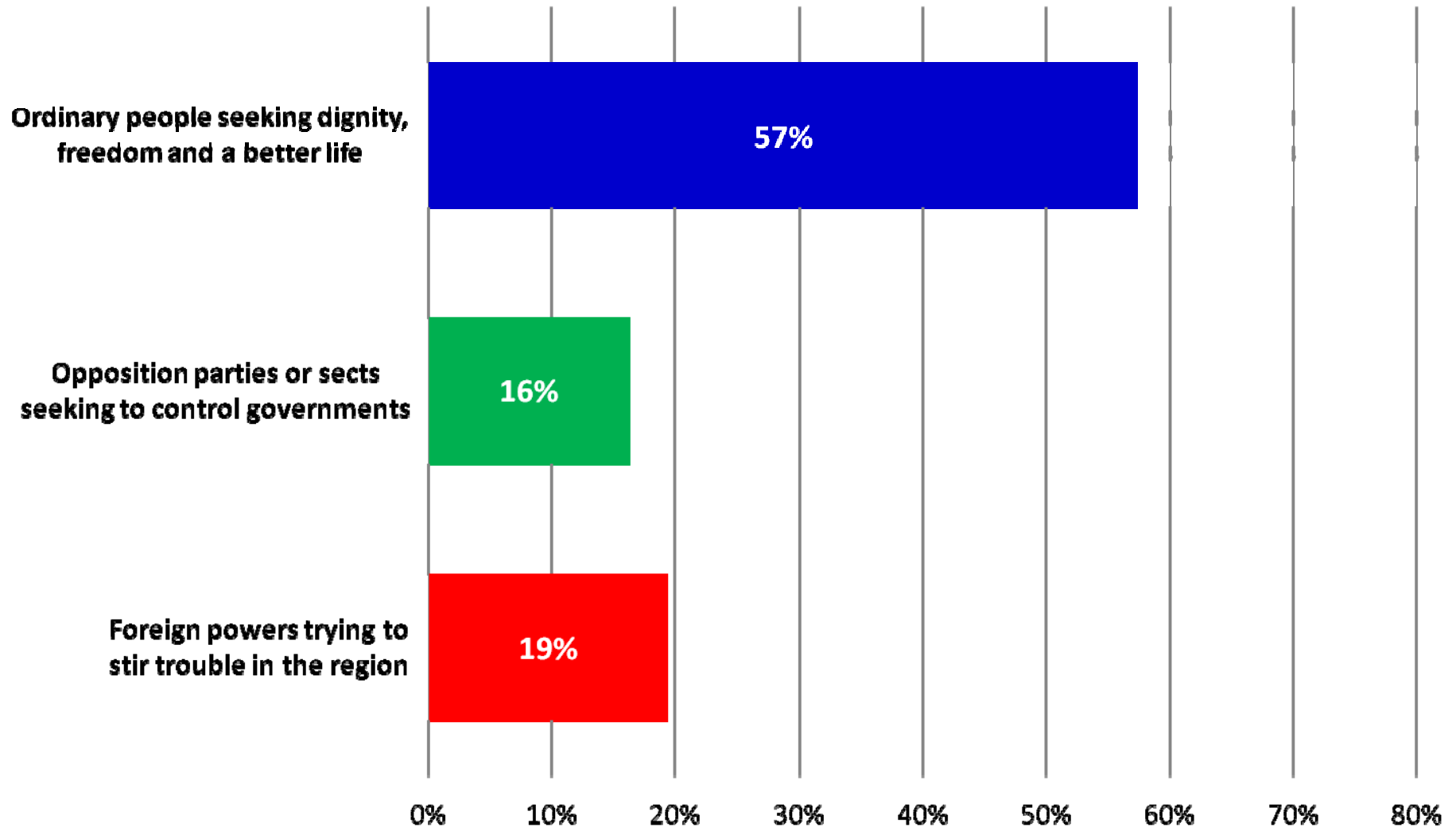
Arab Awakening

When you reflect on the Arab Spring, are you more optimistic or more pessimistic than before about the future of the Arab world?



Arab Awakening

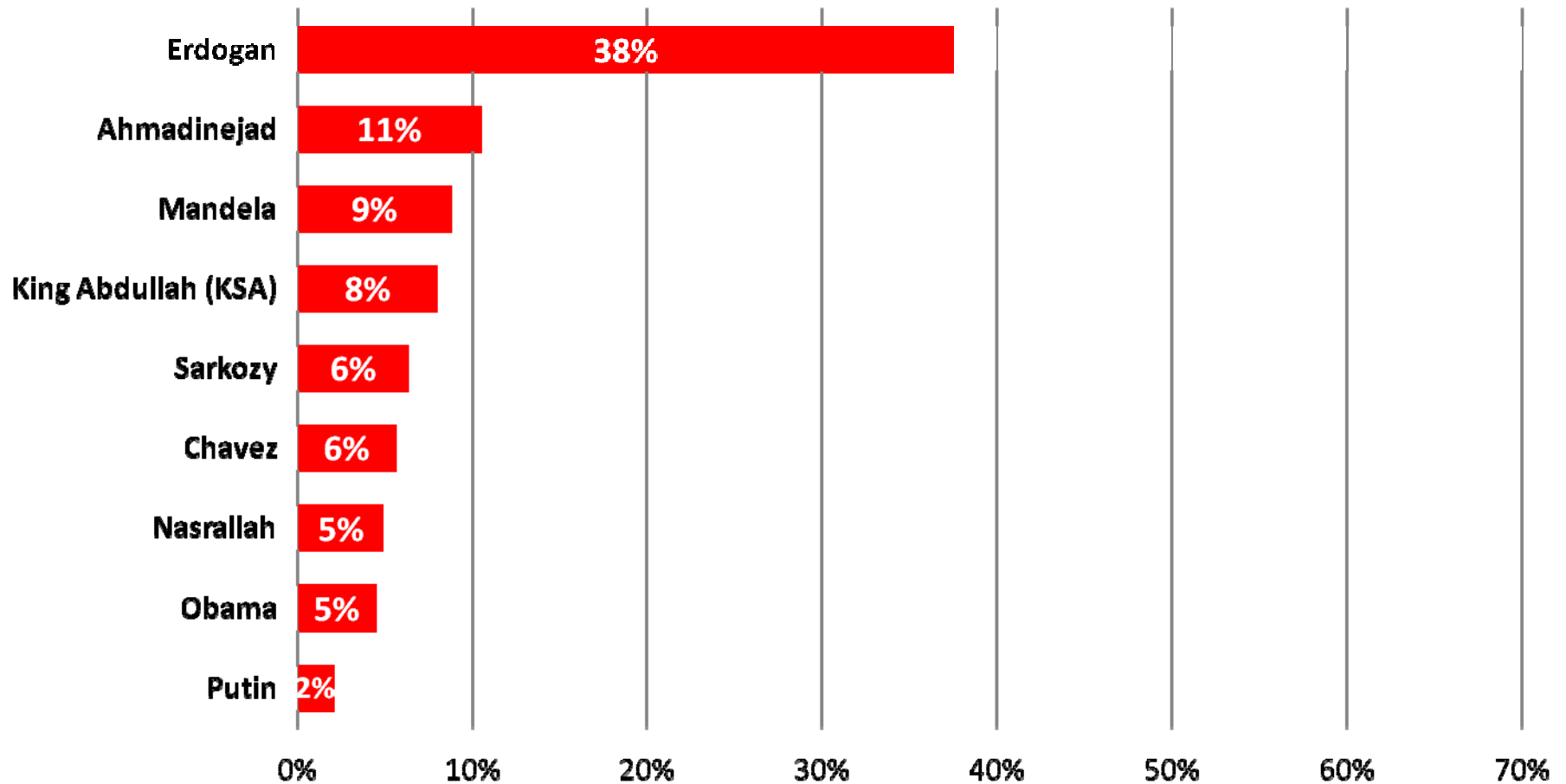
Thinking about the Arab Spring, is it mostly:



Egyptian Elections

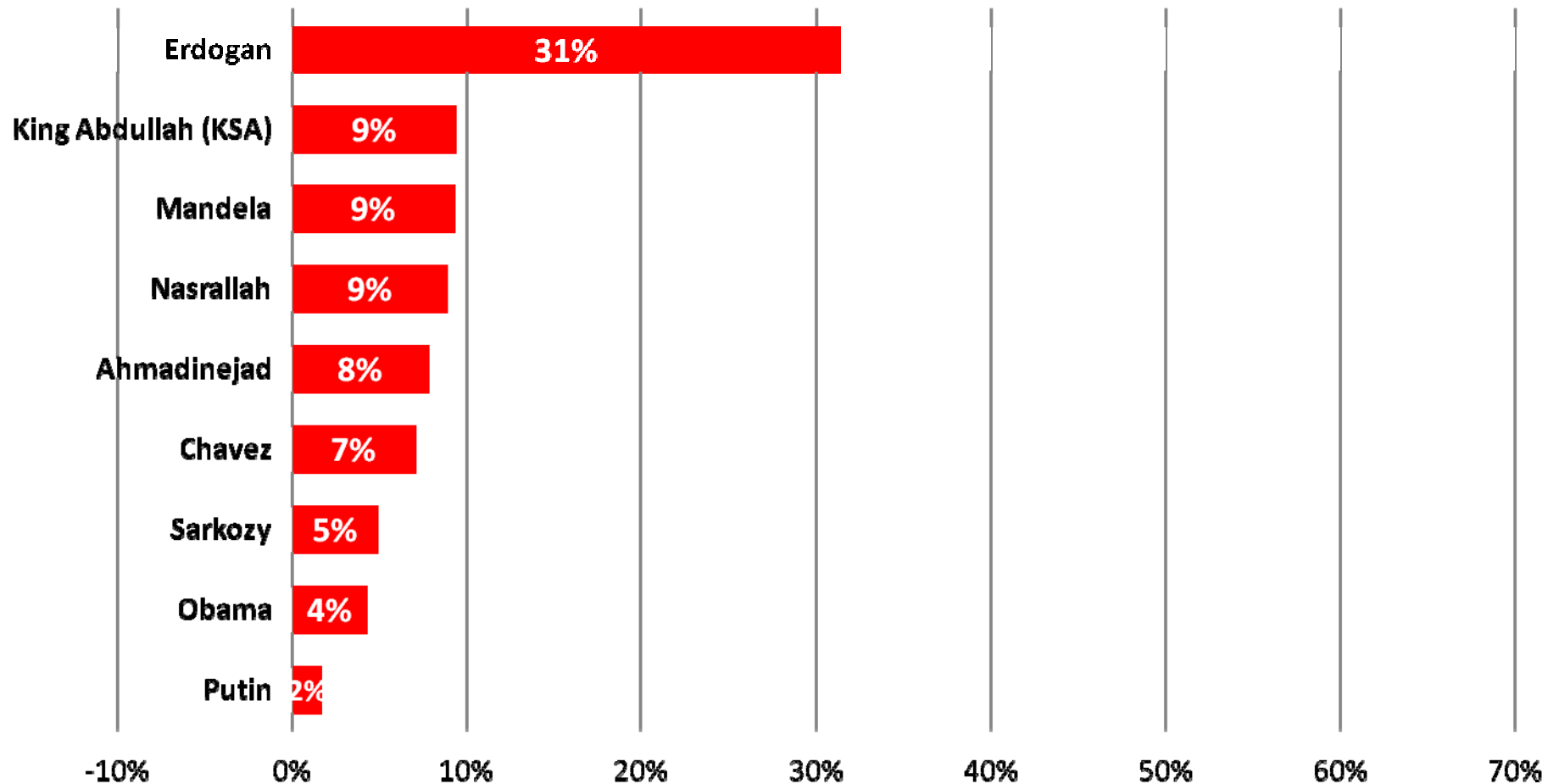
Egyptian Elections

As you look ahead toward the Presidential elections in Egypt, which of the following leaders would you like the next President to look like?
(EGYPT ONLY)



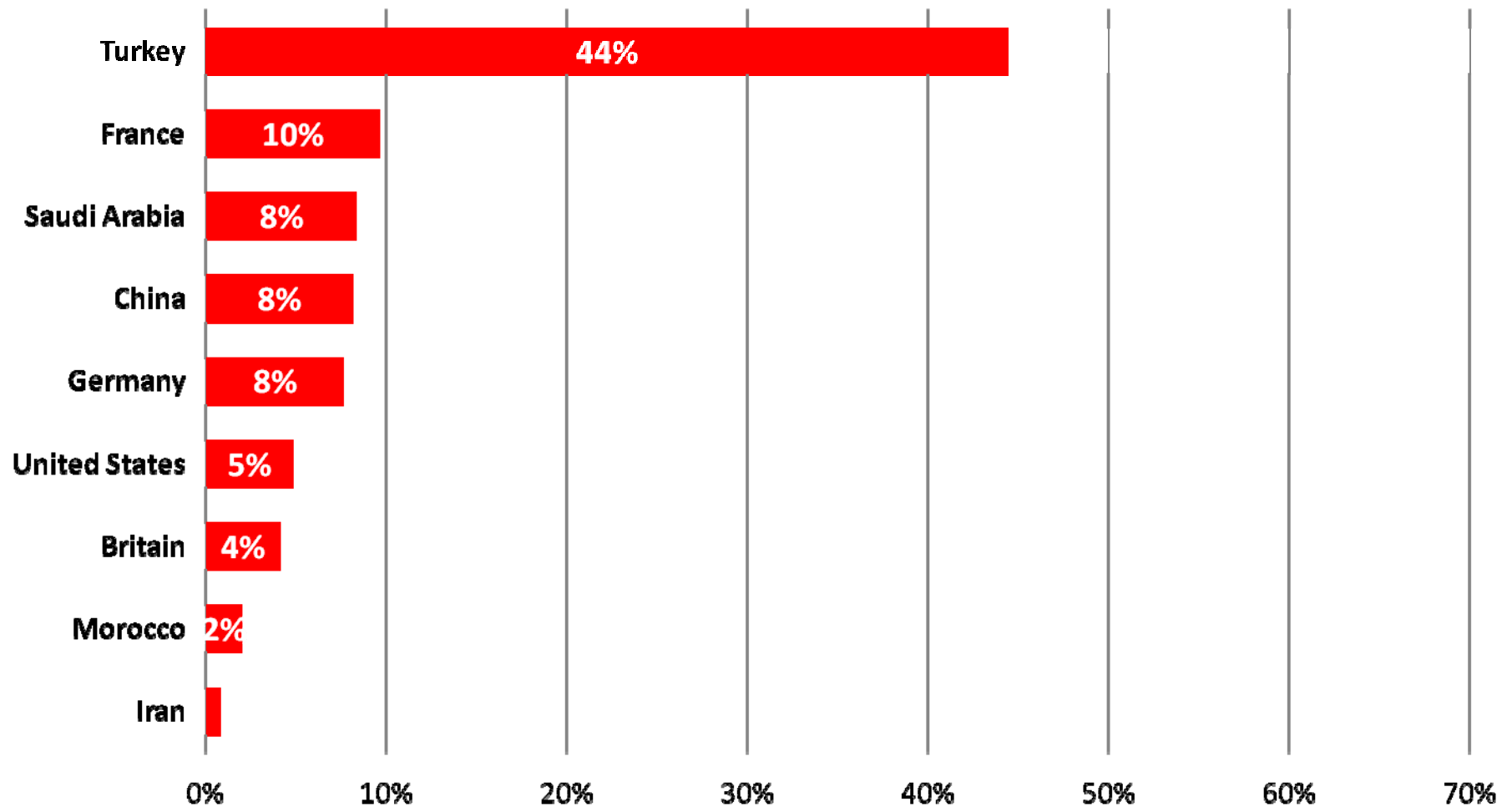
Egyptian Elections

As you look ahead toward the Presidential elections in Egypt, which of the following leaders would you like the next President to look like?
(FIVE COUNTRIES)



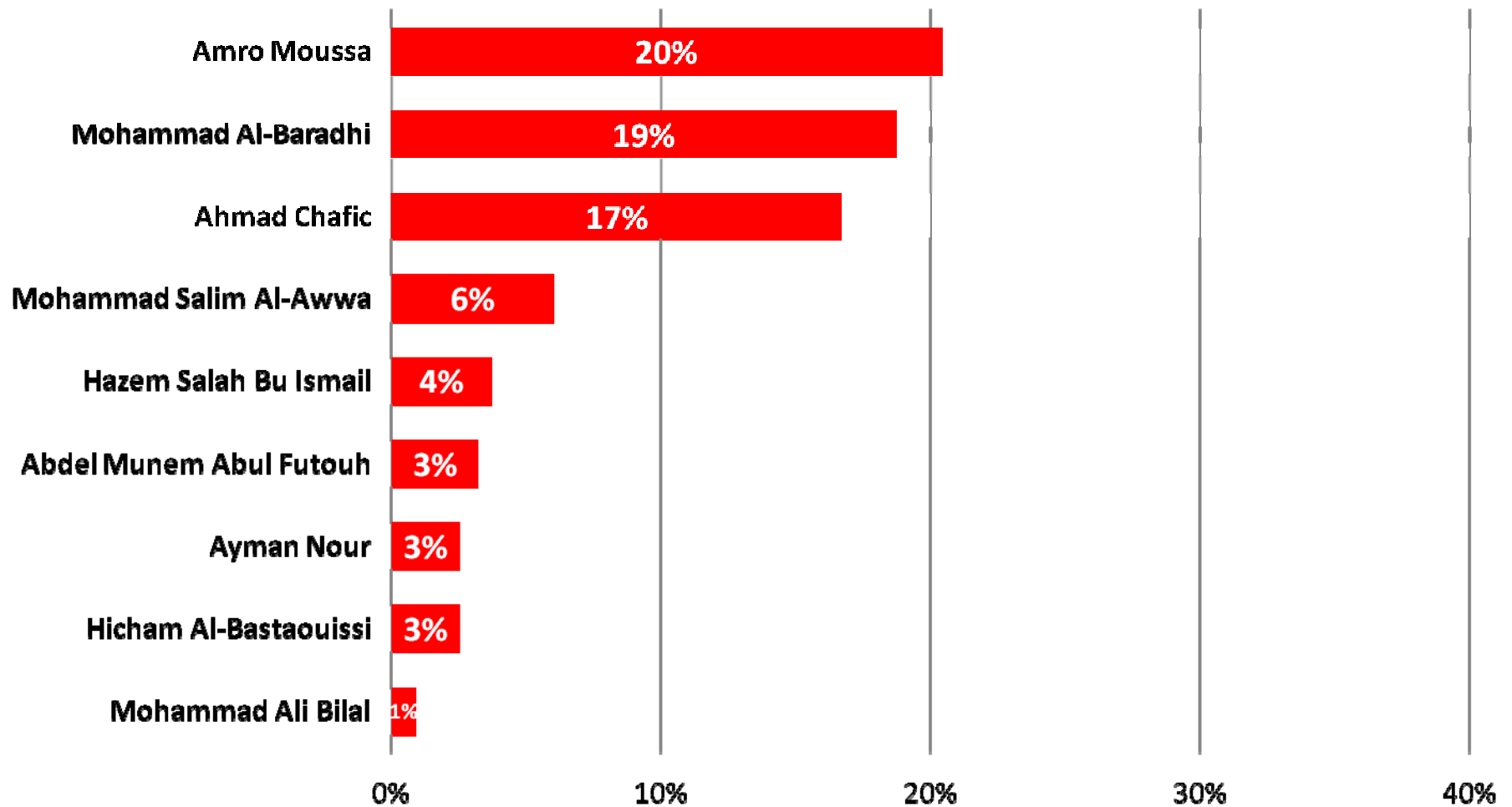
Egyptian Elections

If Egypt's political system looked like that of one of the following countries, which one would you prefer it to be? (EGYPT ONLY)



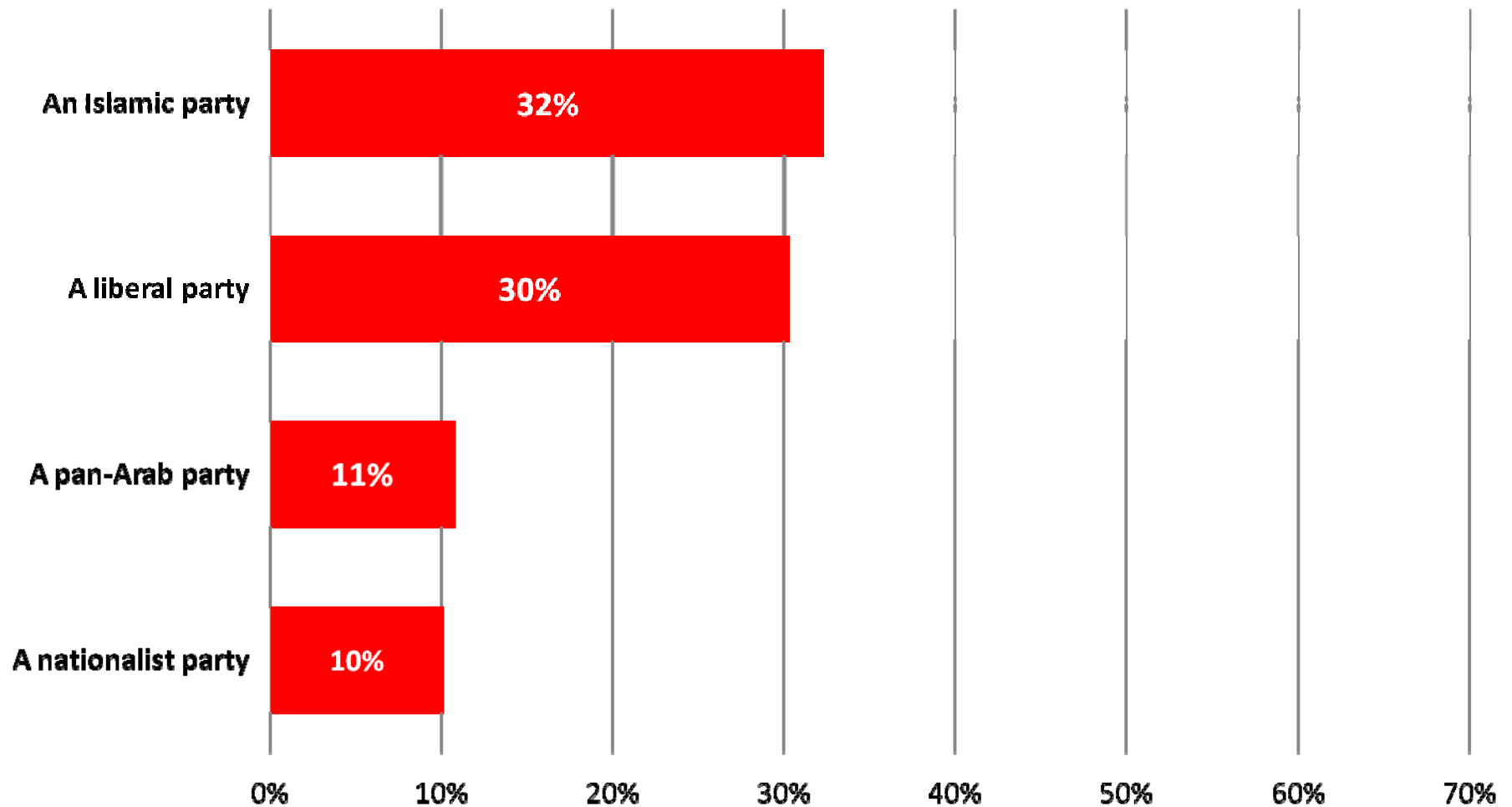
Egyptian Elections

If the Presidential elections were held today, for whom would you vote for President? (EGYPT ONLY)



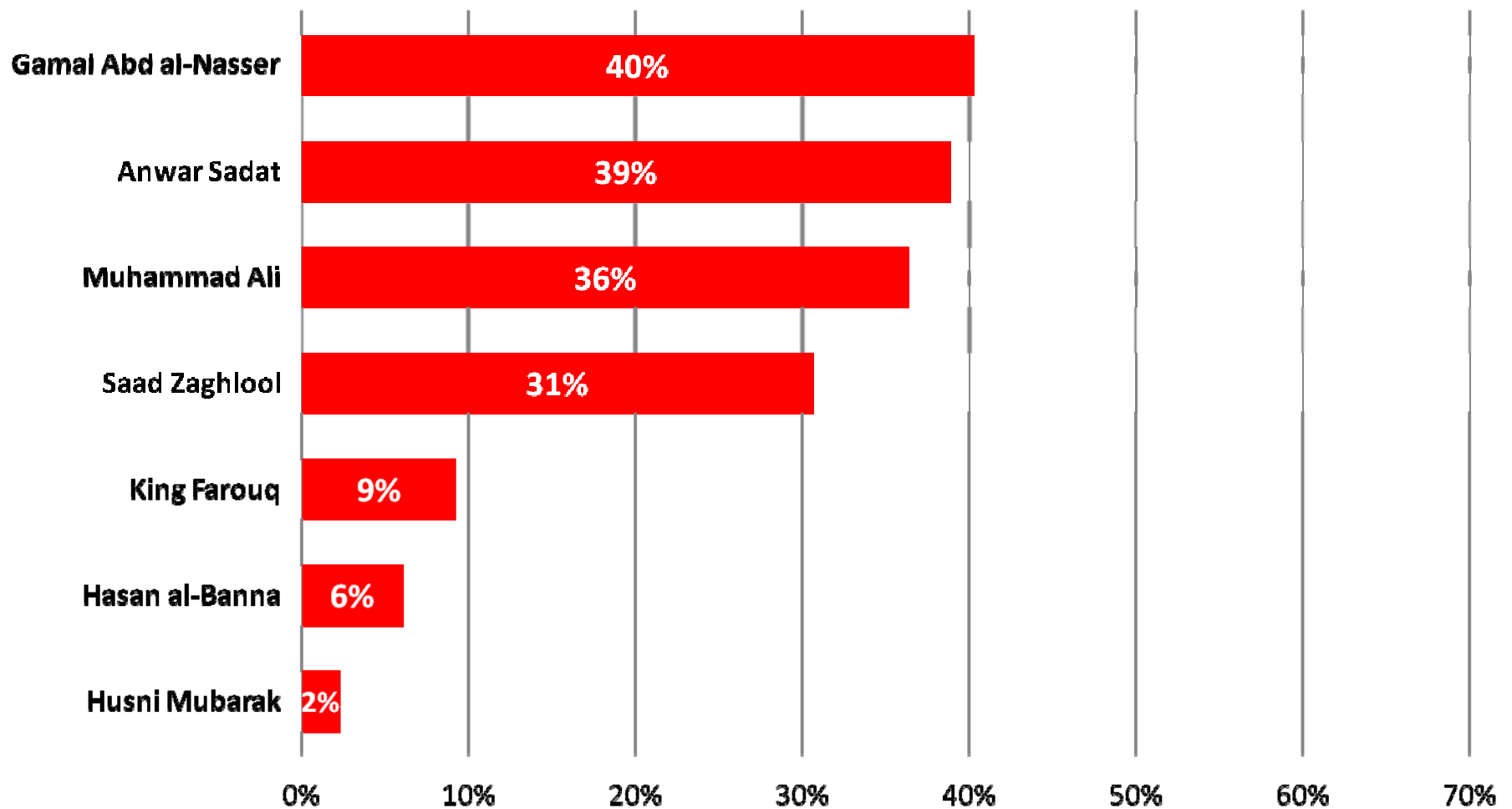
Egyptian Elections

If the parliamentary elections were held today, what type of party would you be likely to vote for? (EGYPT ONLY)



Egyptian Elections

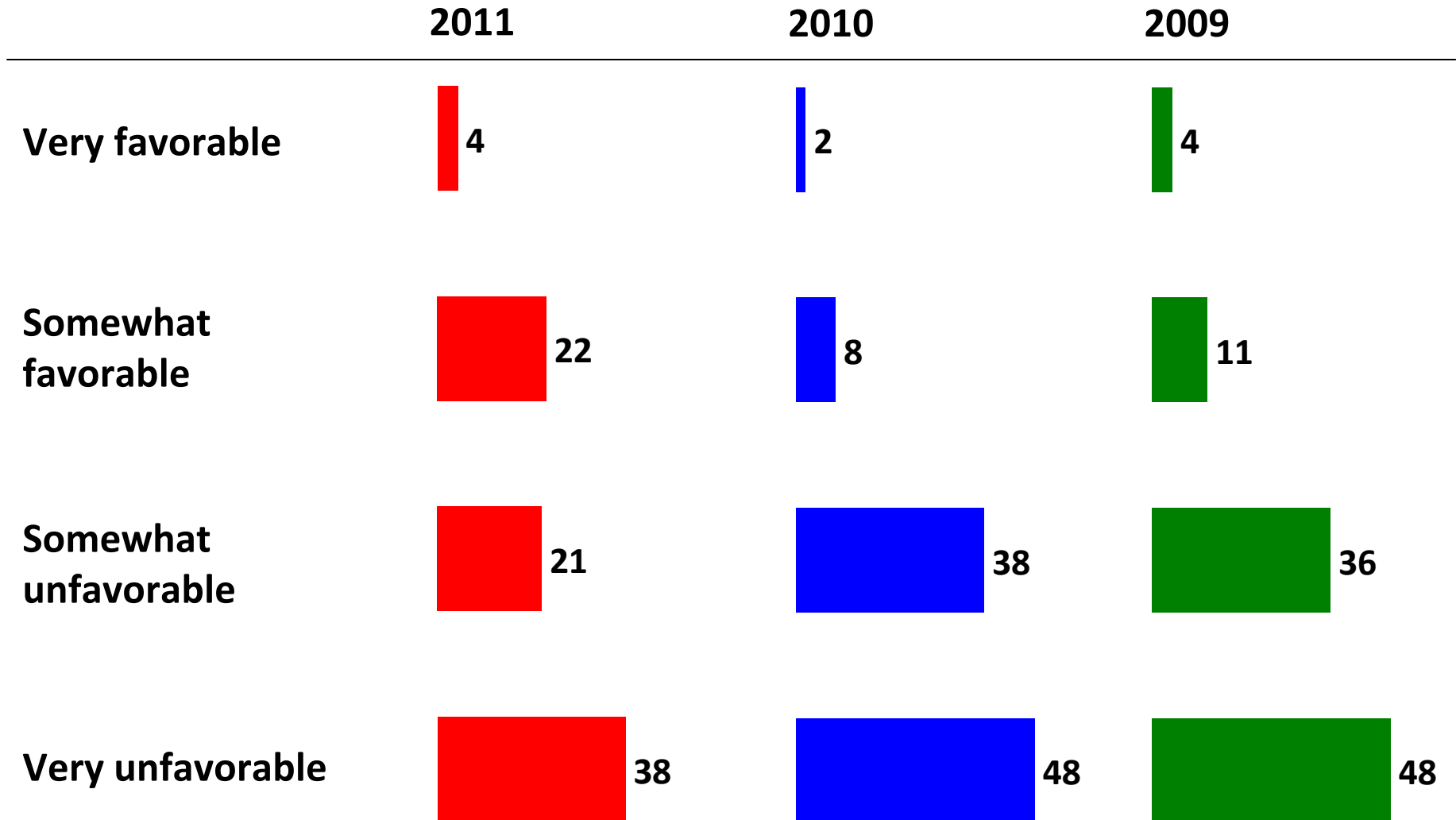
Which TWO of the following figures in Egyptian history do you admire most? (EGYPT ONLY)



United States & the Middle East

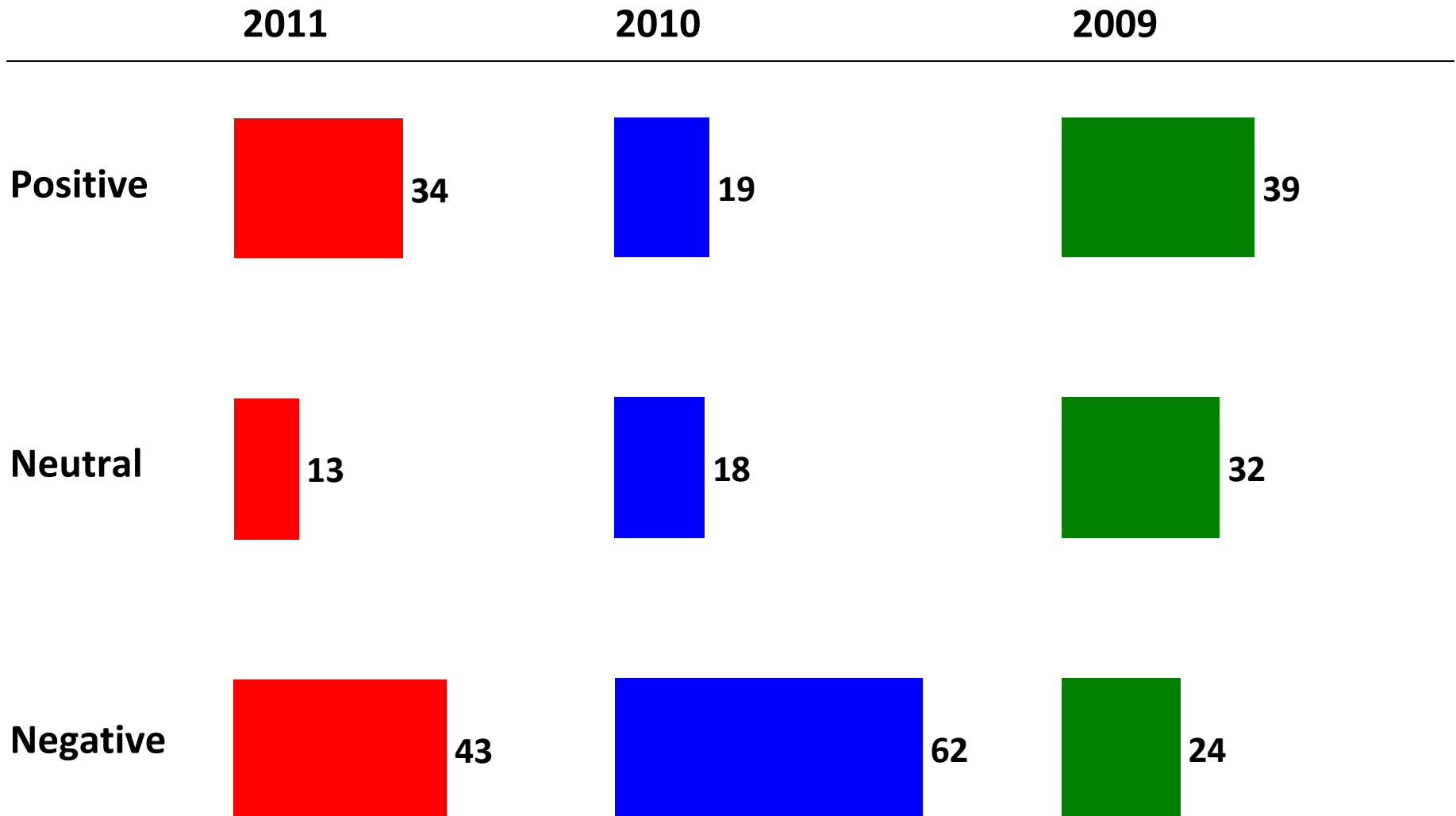
United States & the Middle East

Generally speaking, is your attitude toward the United States...



United States & the Middle East

How would you describe your views of President Barack Obama of the United States?



United States & the Middle East

Which of the following is closest to your views in describing US
President Barack Obama?

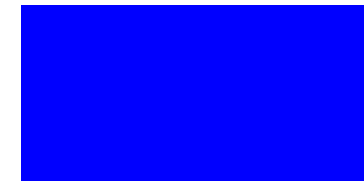
2011

2010

Unfavorable view of him and I am
pessimistic about his foreign policy



36

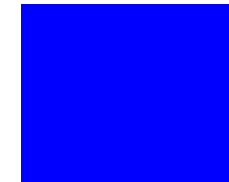


55

Favorable personal view of him, but I
don't think the American system will
allow him to have a successful foreign
policy



41



35

Favorable personal view of him and I
am hopeful about his foreign policy



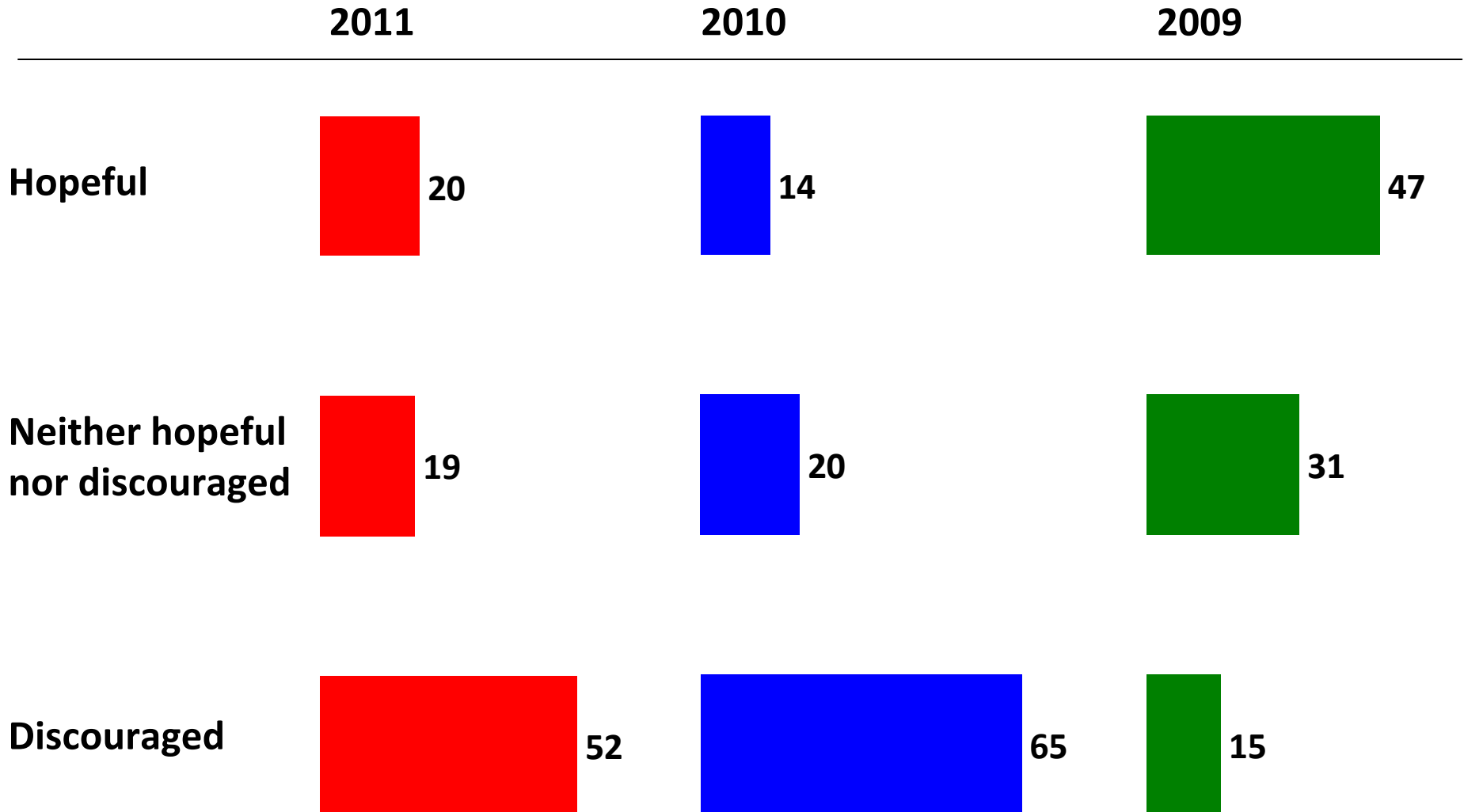
8



3

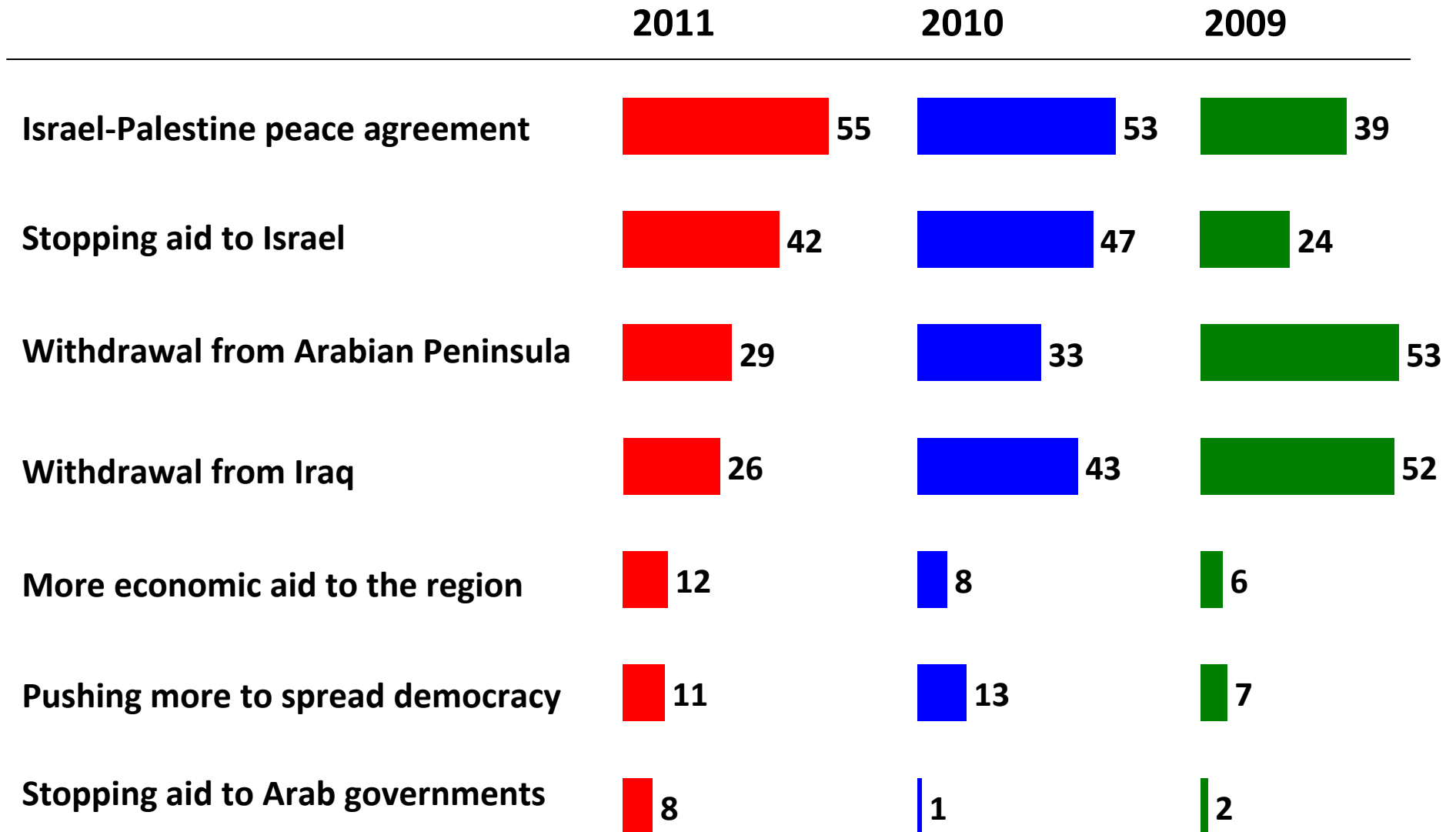
United States & the Middle East

How would you describe your attitudes toward the Obama Administration policy in the Middle East?



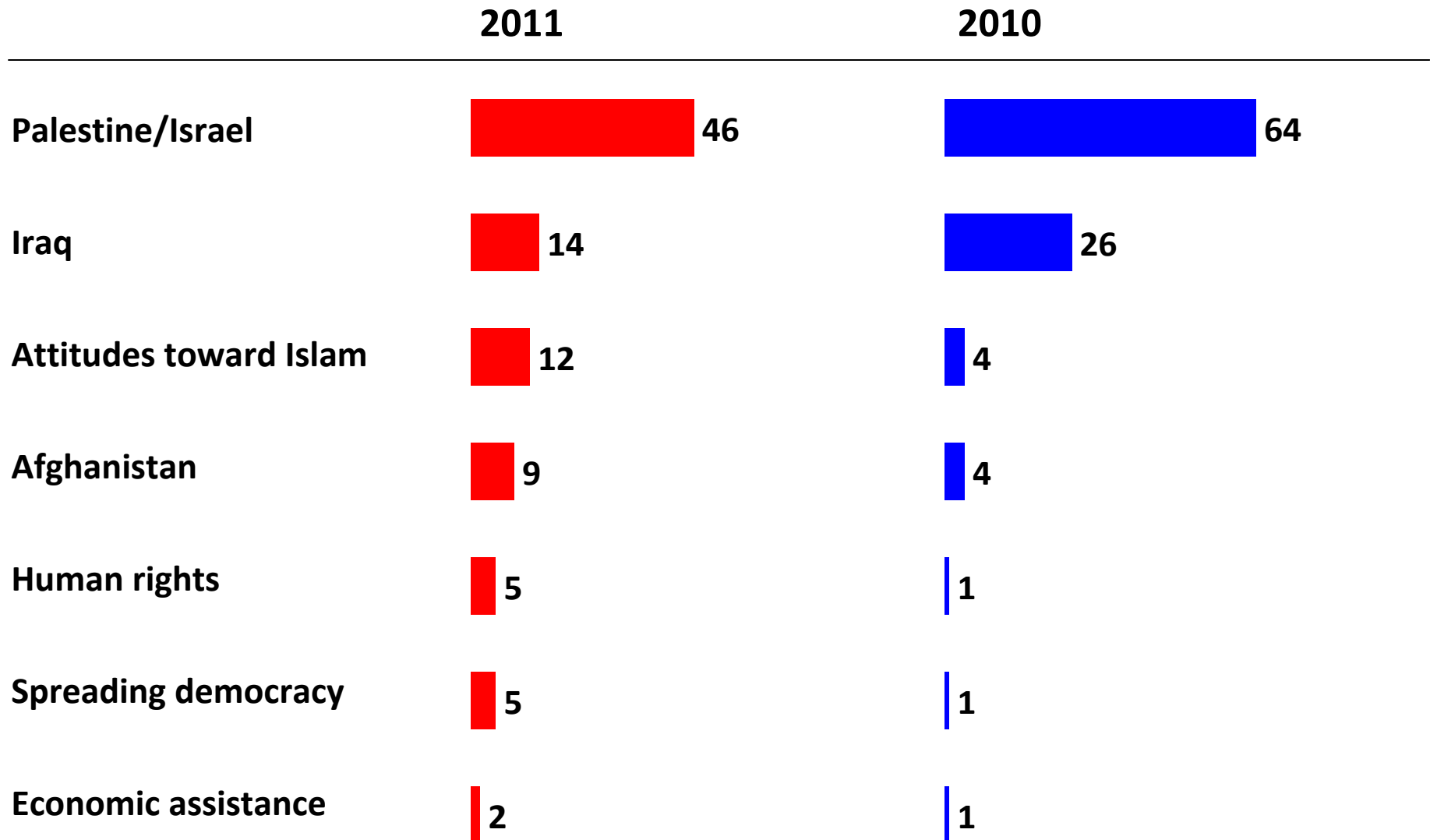
United States & the Middle East

What TWO steps by the United States would improve your views of the United States the most?



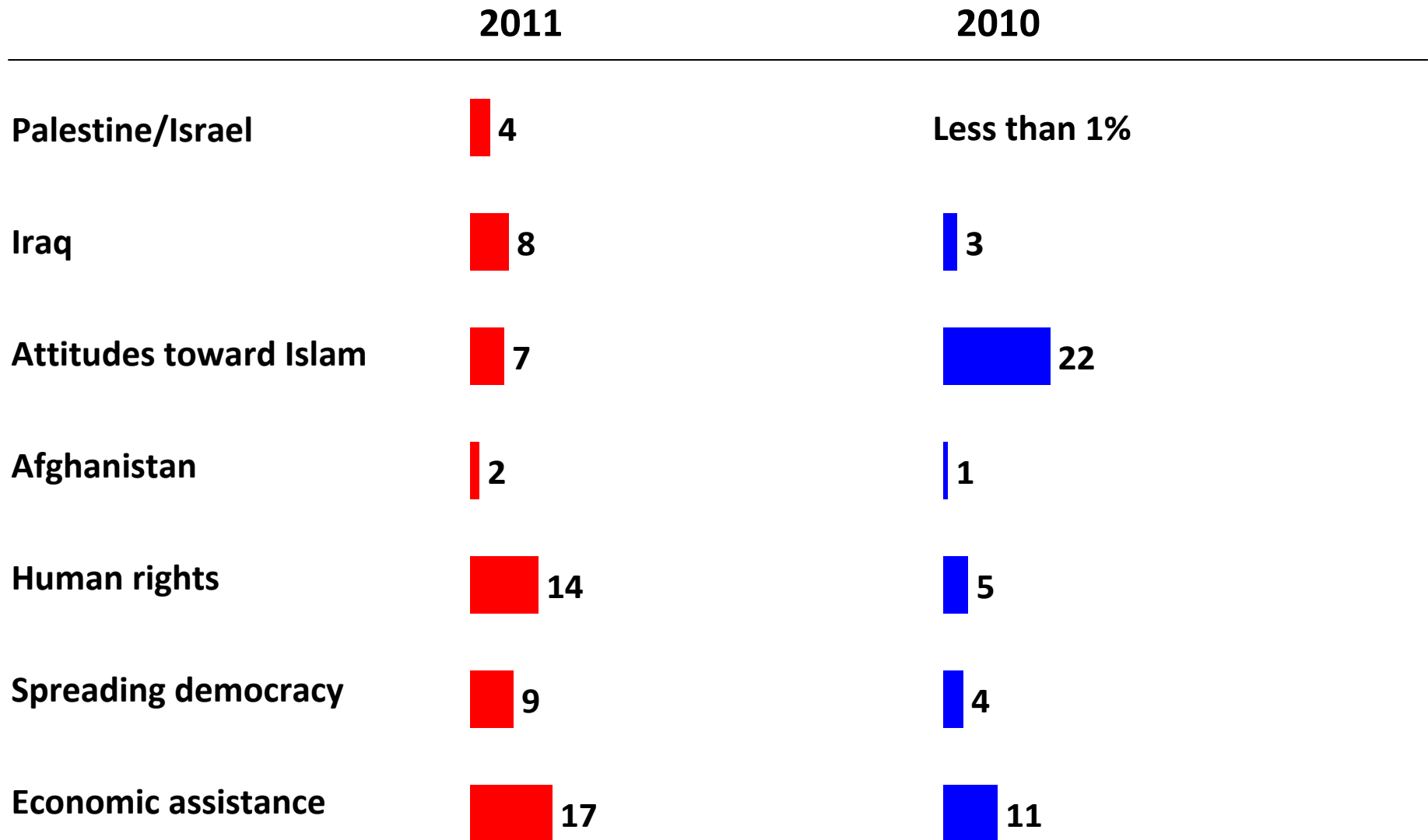
United States & the Middle East

When you look back at the past year of the Obama Administration, which one of the following policies are you most disappointed with?



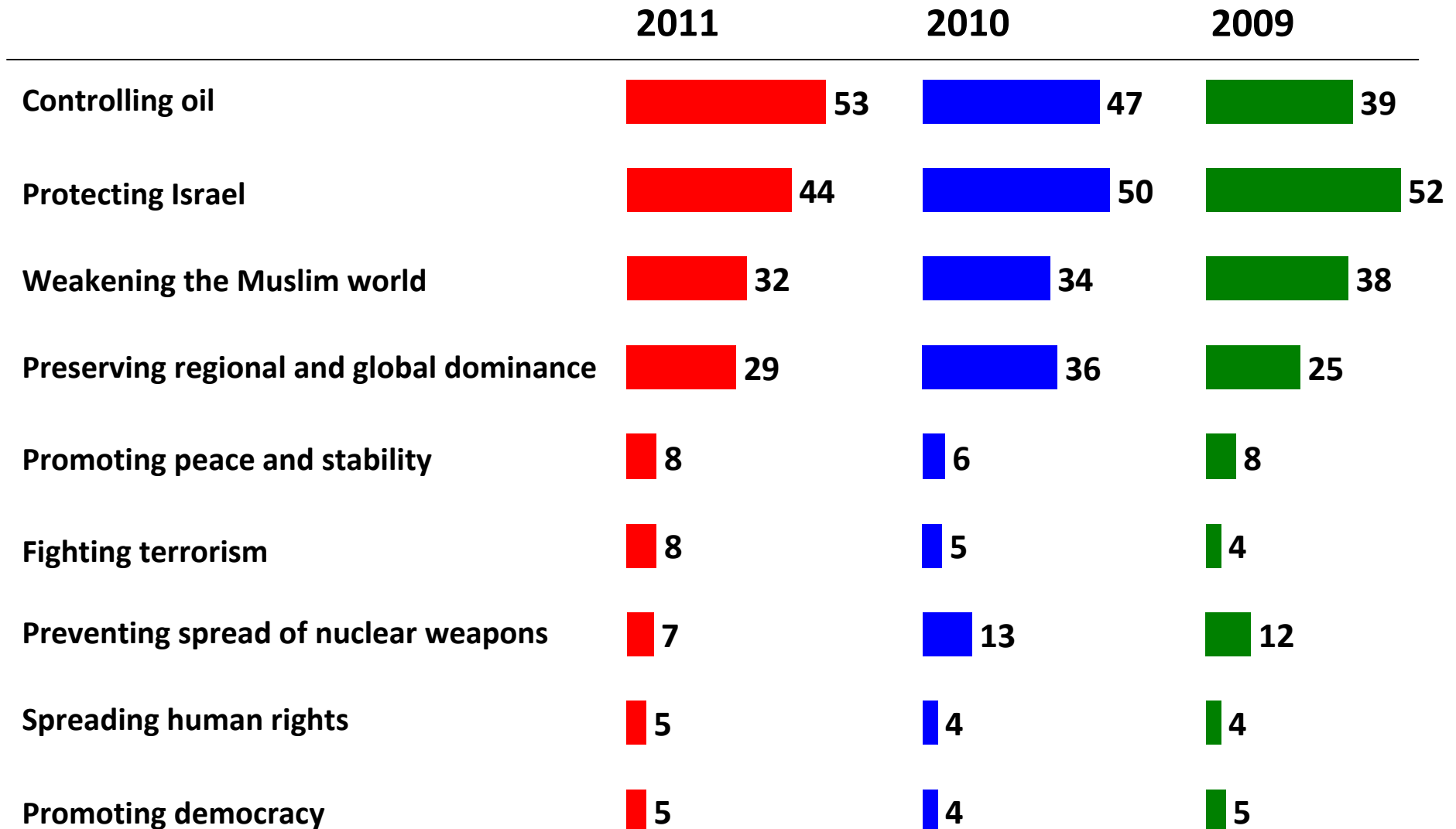
United States & the Middle East

When you look back at the past year of the Obama Administration, which one of the following policies are you most pleased with?



United States & the Middle East

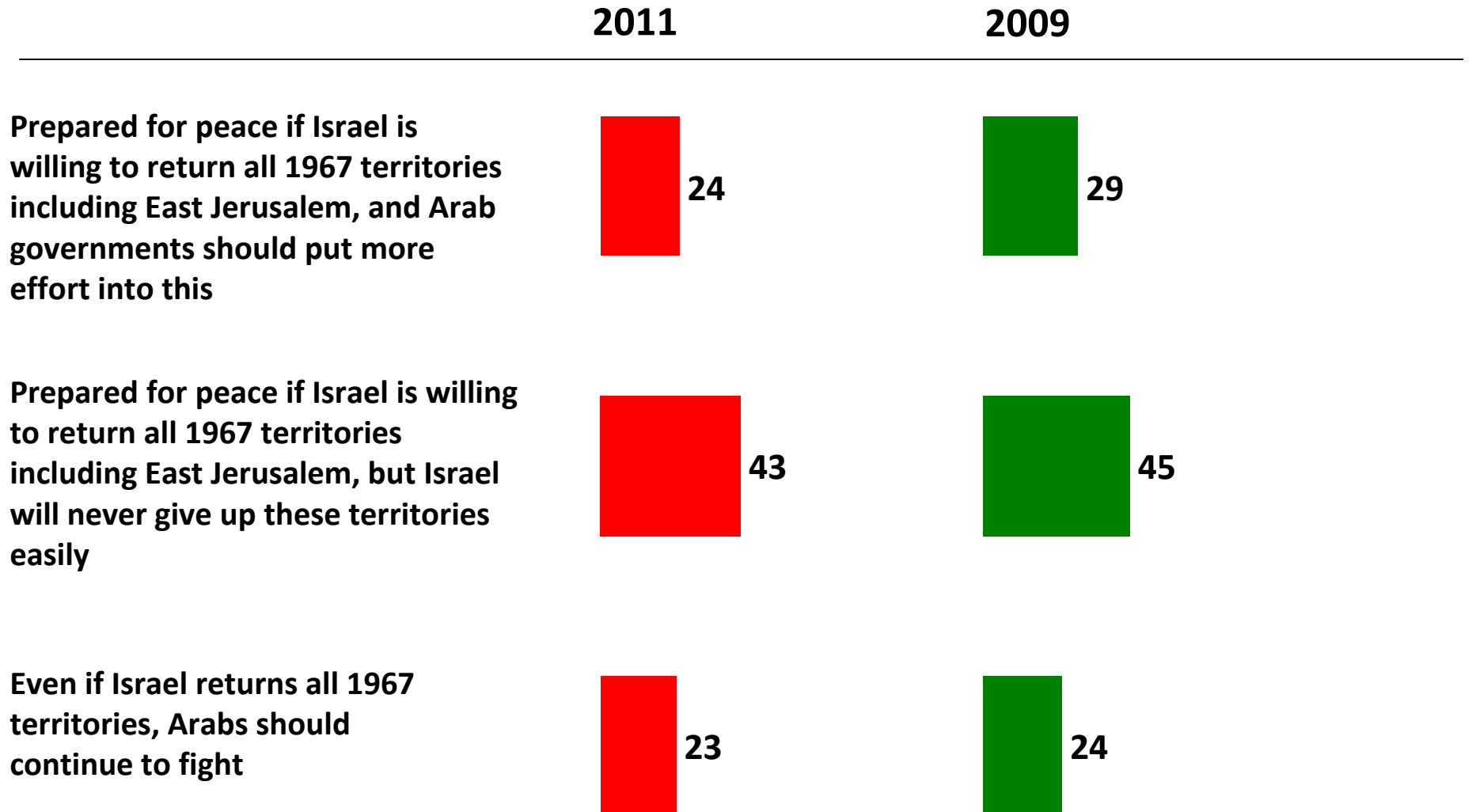
Which TWO of the following factors do you believe are most important in driving American policy in the Middle East?



Arab-Israeli Conflict

Arab-Israeli Conflict

Which of the following statements is closer to your view?



Arab-Israeli Conflict

Which of the following statements is closest to your view about the prospects of lasting peace between Israel and the Palestinians?

2011

2009

Will happen in the next five years



Inevitable, but it will take more time

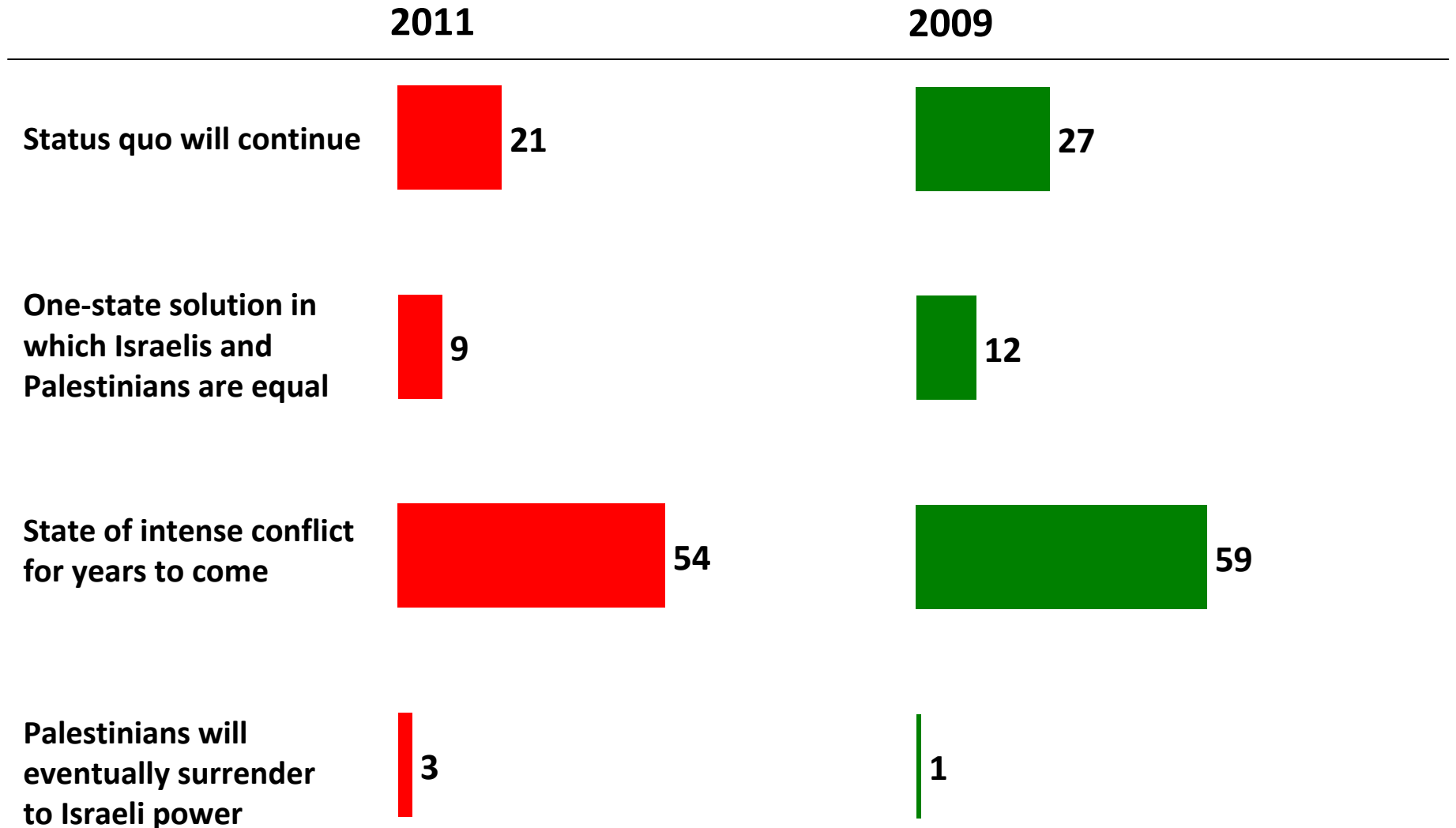


Don't believe it will ever happen



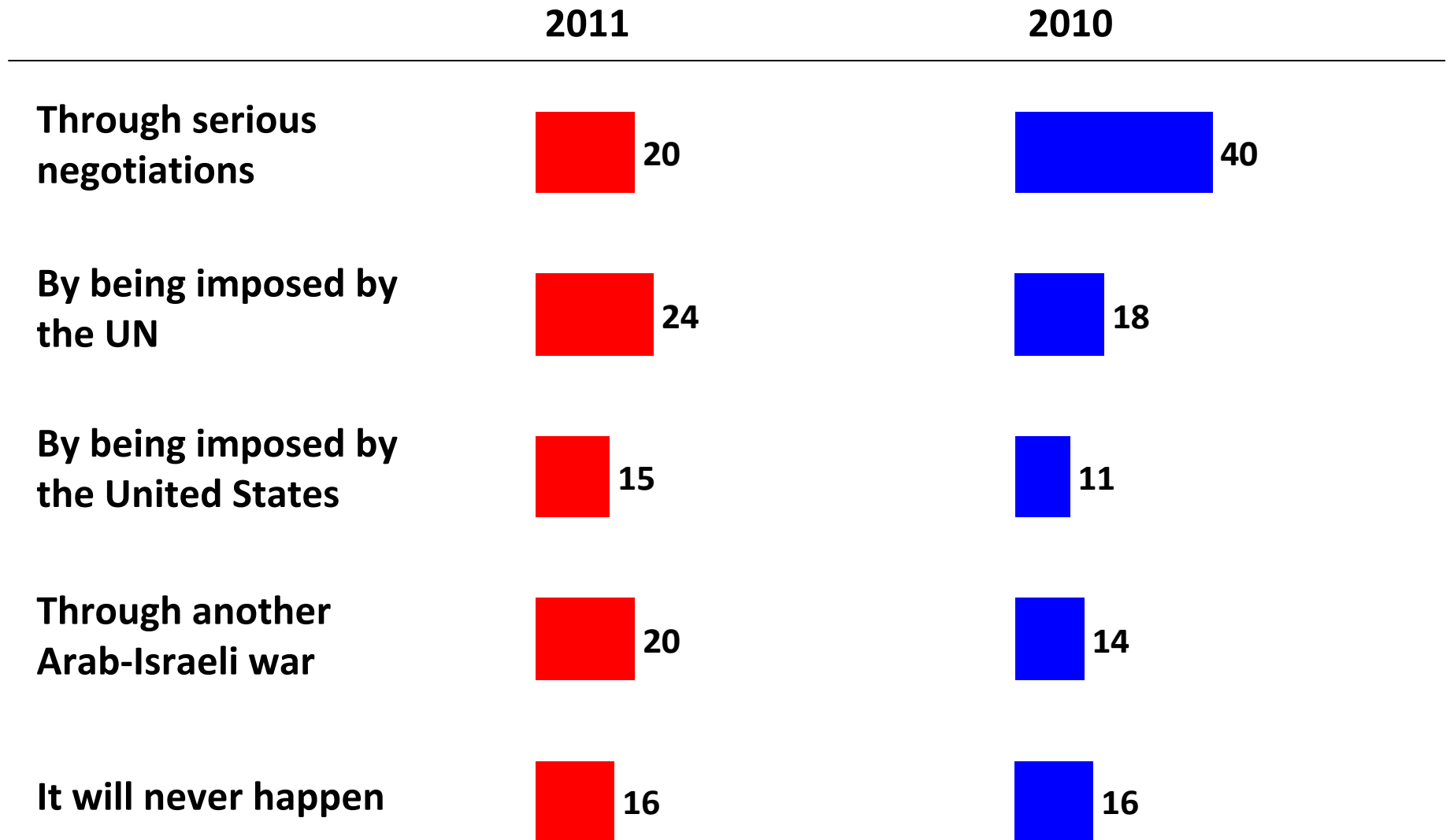
Arab-Israeli Conflict

What do you believe is the likely outcome if the prospects of a two-state solution in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict collapse?



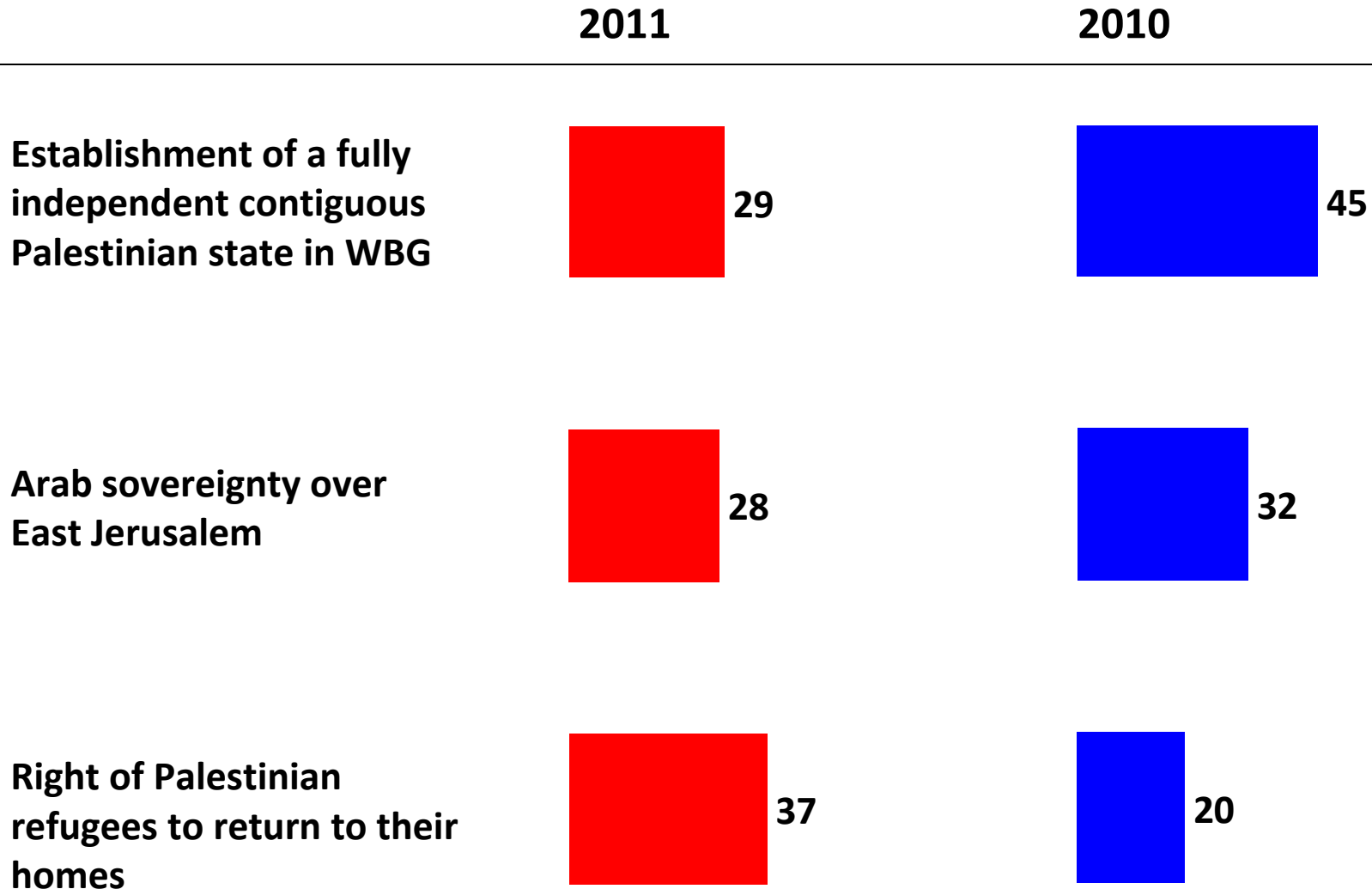
Arab-Israeli Conflict

A solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict that leads to the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza, with East Jerusalem as its capital, will happen only:



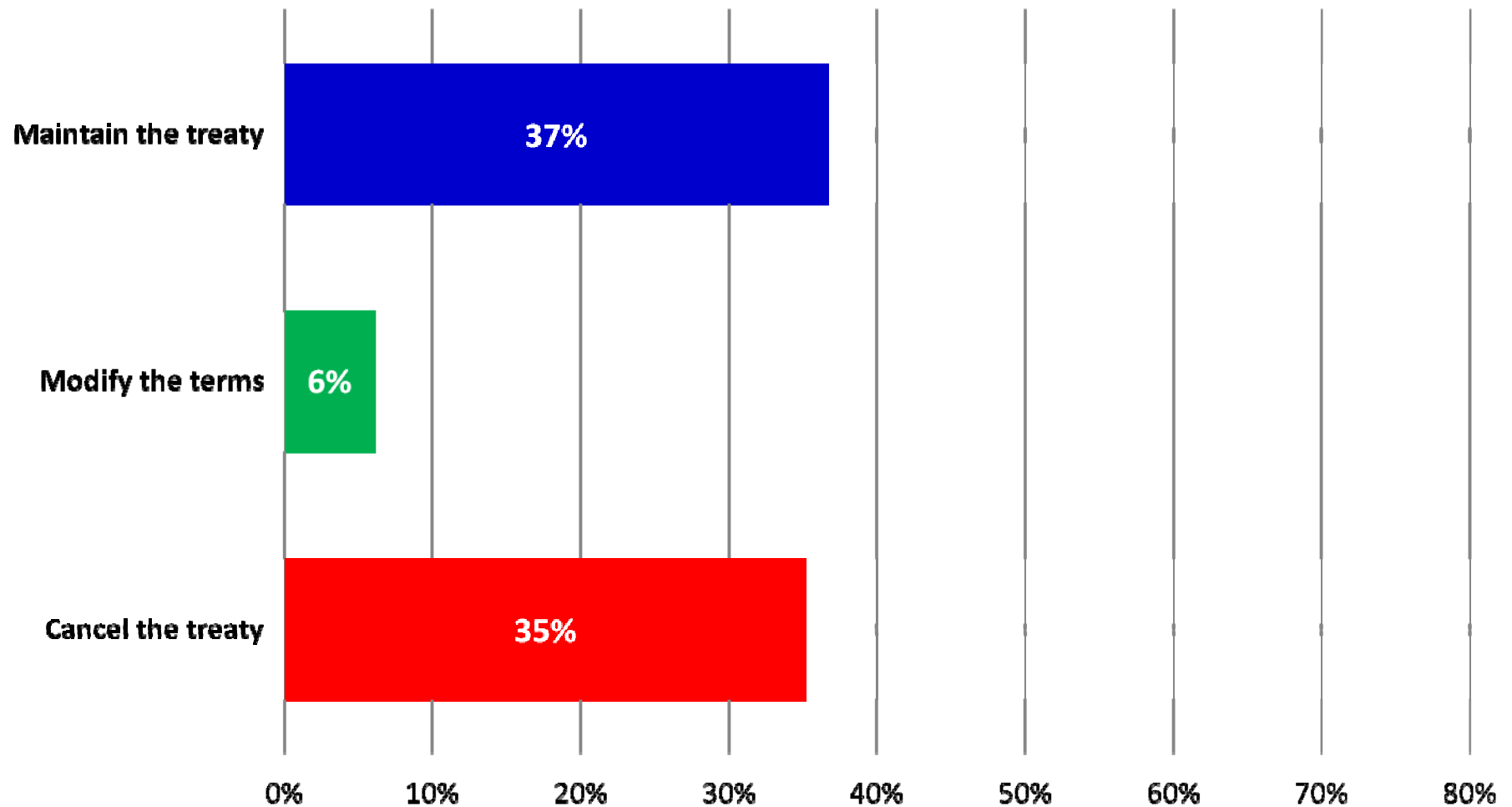
Arab-Israeli Conflict

When you look at the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which of the following issues is the most central to you, assuming that they may all be important:



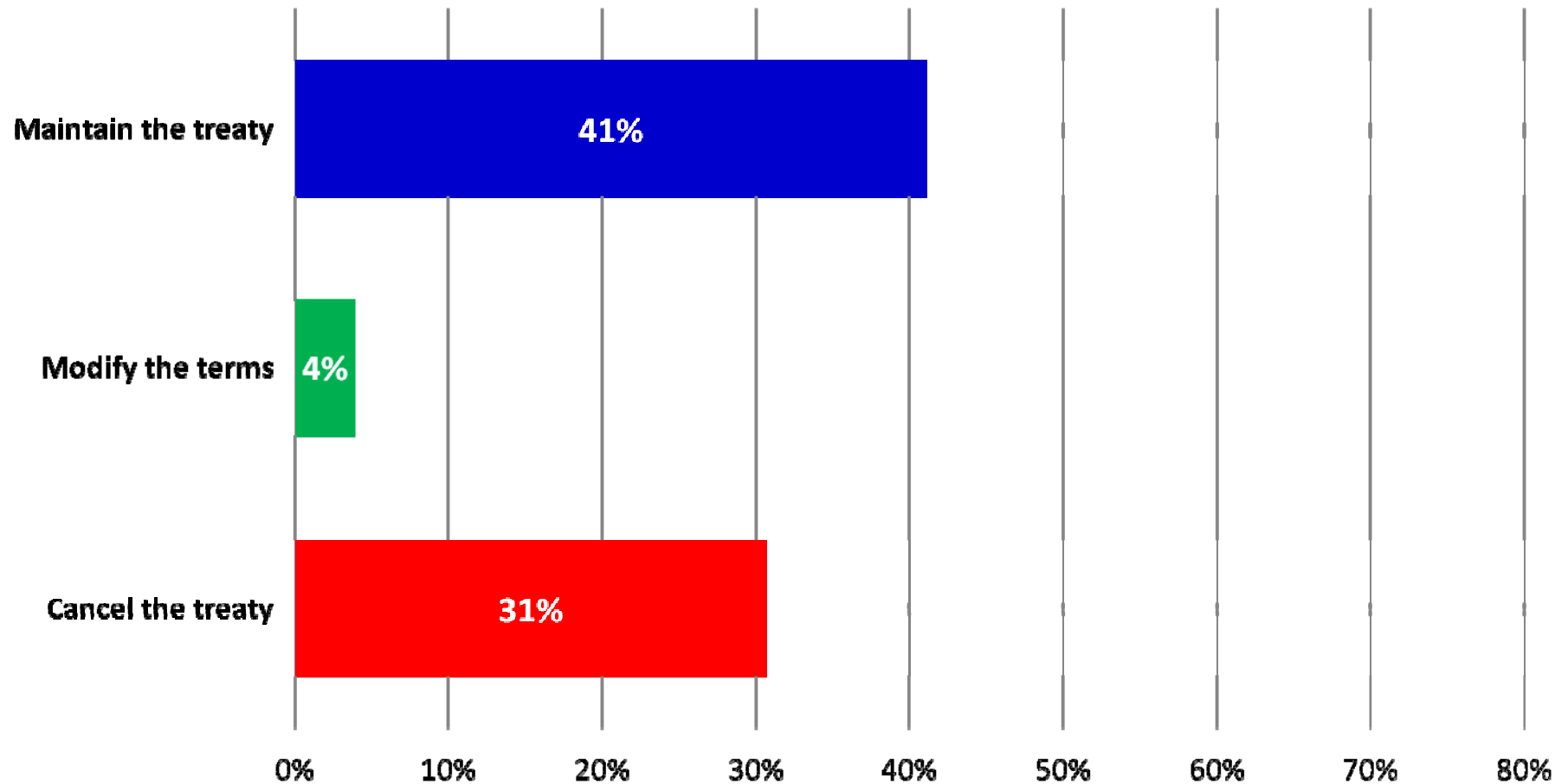
Arab-Israeli Conflict

With regard to the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, would you like to see
Egypt: (EGYPT ONLY)



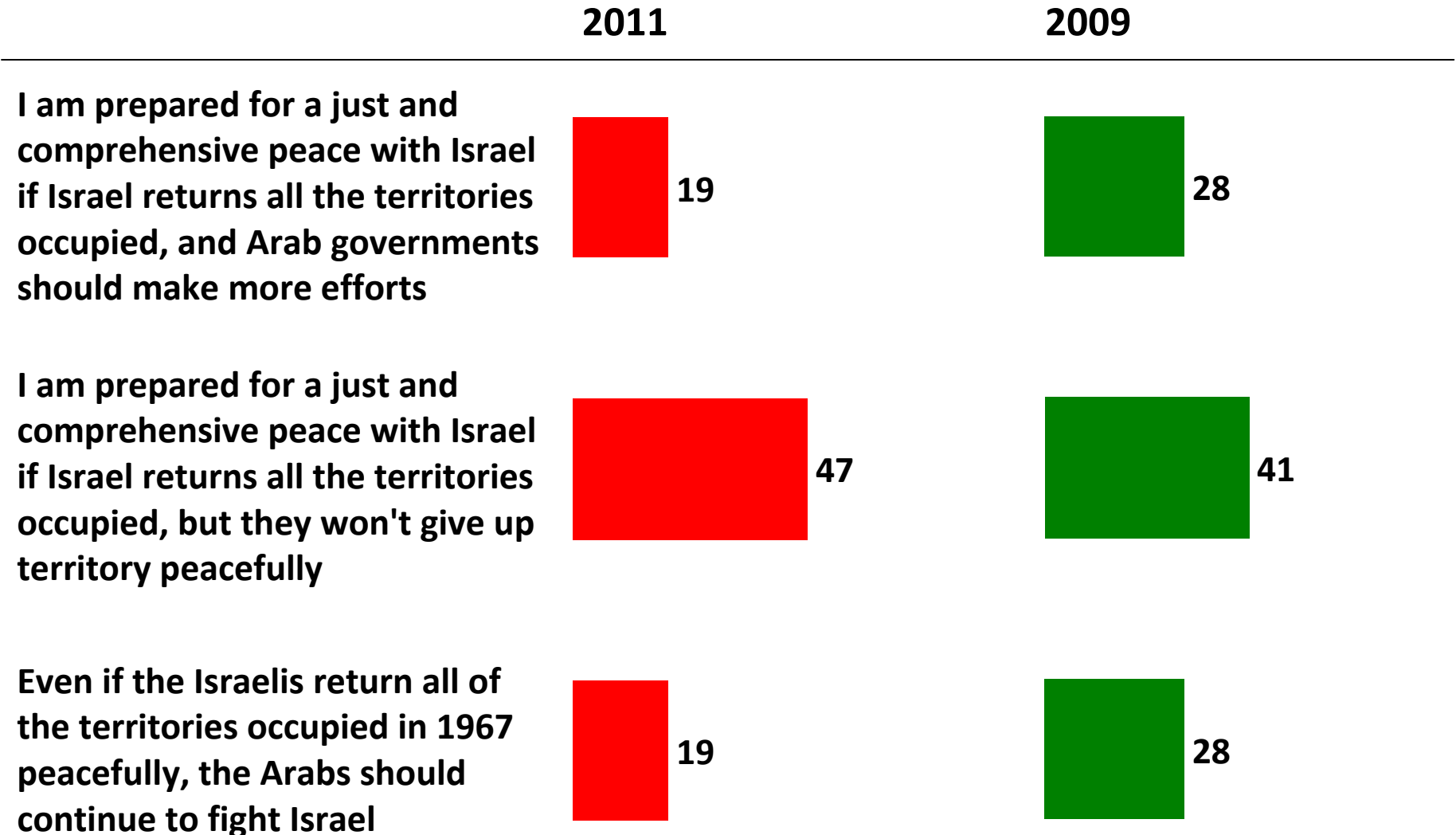
Arab-Israeli Conflict

If Israel agrees to a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza, based on the 1967 border, with East Jerusalem as the capital, what would your position be on the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty? (EGYPT ONLY)



Arab-Israeli Conflict

Which of the following statements is closer to your view: (EGYPT ONLY)



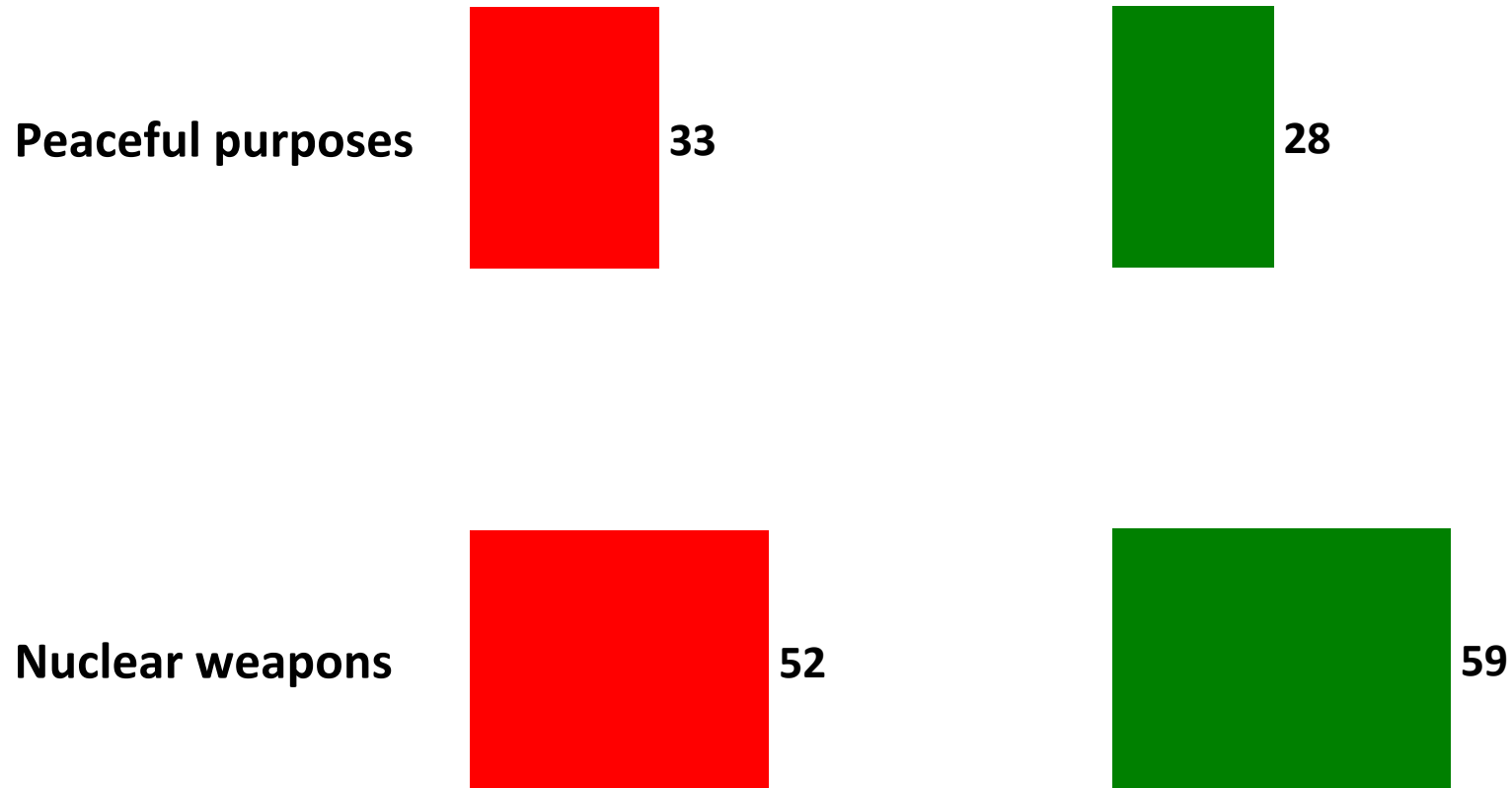
Iran

Iran

Do you believe that Iran is merely conducting research for peaceful purposes, or trying to develop nuclear weapons?

2011

2009



Iran

There is international pressure on Iran to curtail its nuclear program. What is your opinion?

2011

2009

Iran has the right to its nuclear program

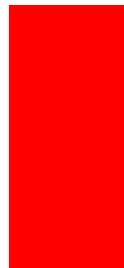


64

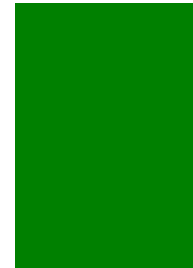


53

Iran should be pressured to stop its nuclear program



25



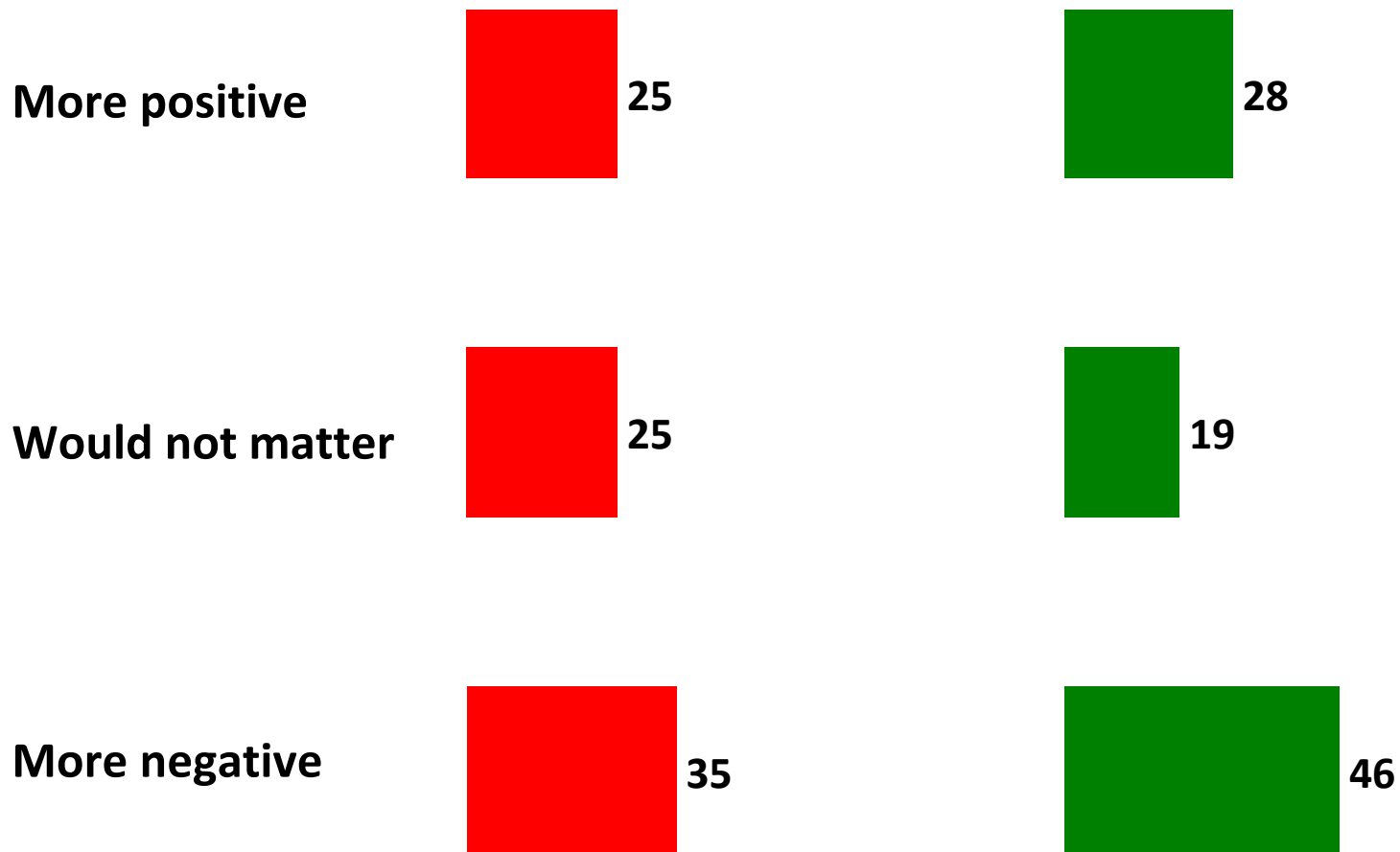
40

Iran

If Iran acquires nuclear weapons, which of the following is the likely outcome for the Middle East region?

2011

2009



Iran

Name TWO countries that you think pose the biggest threat to you.

2011

2009

Israel



United States



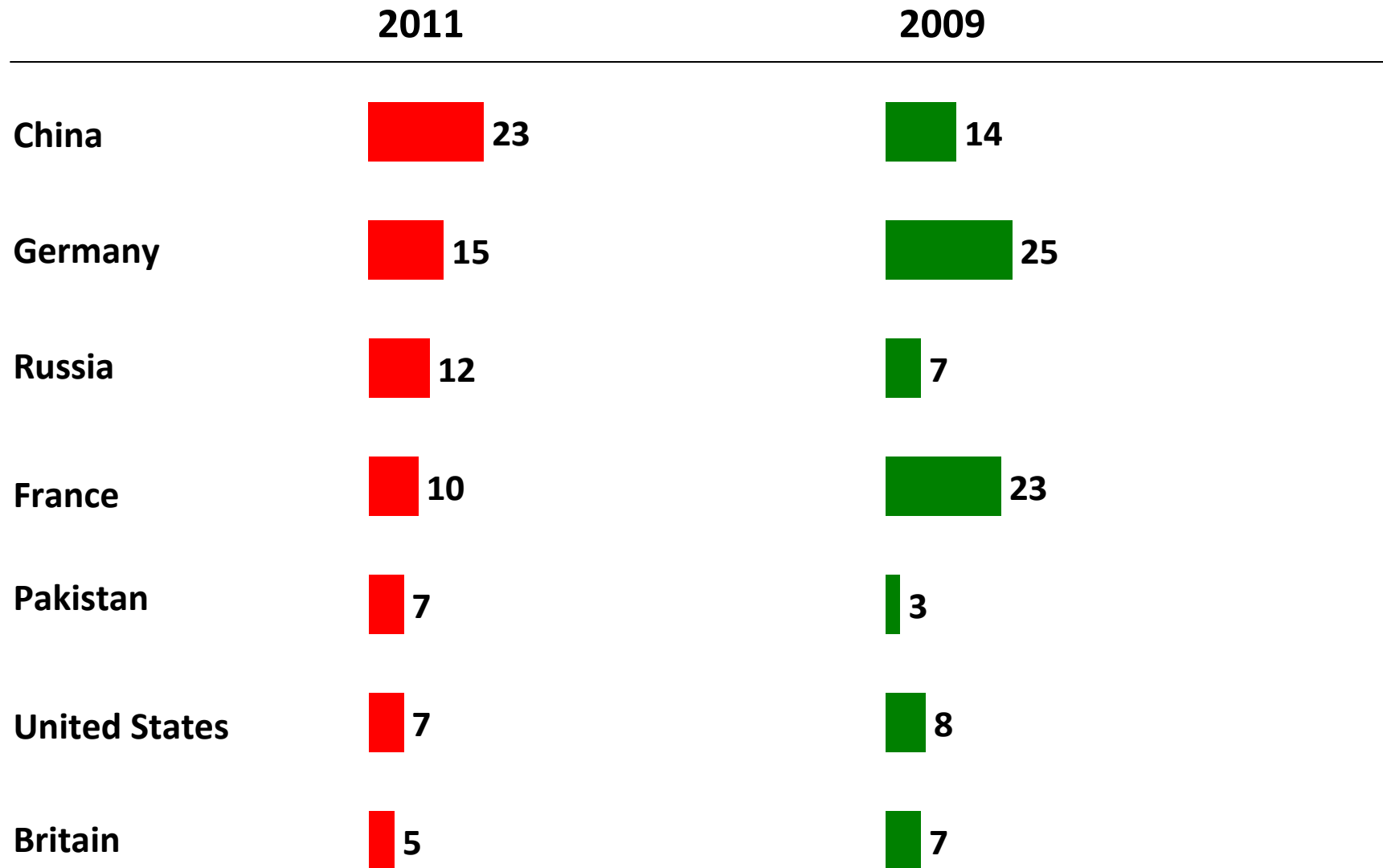
Iran



Global Perspective

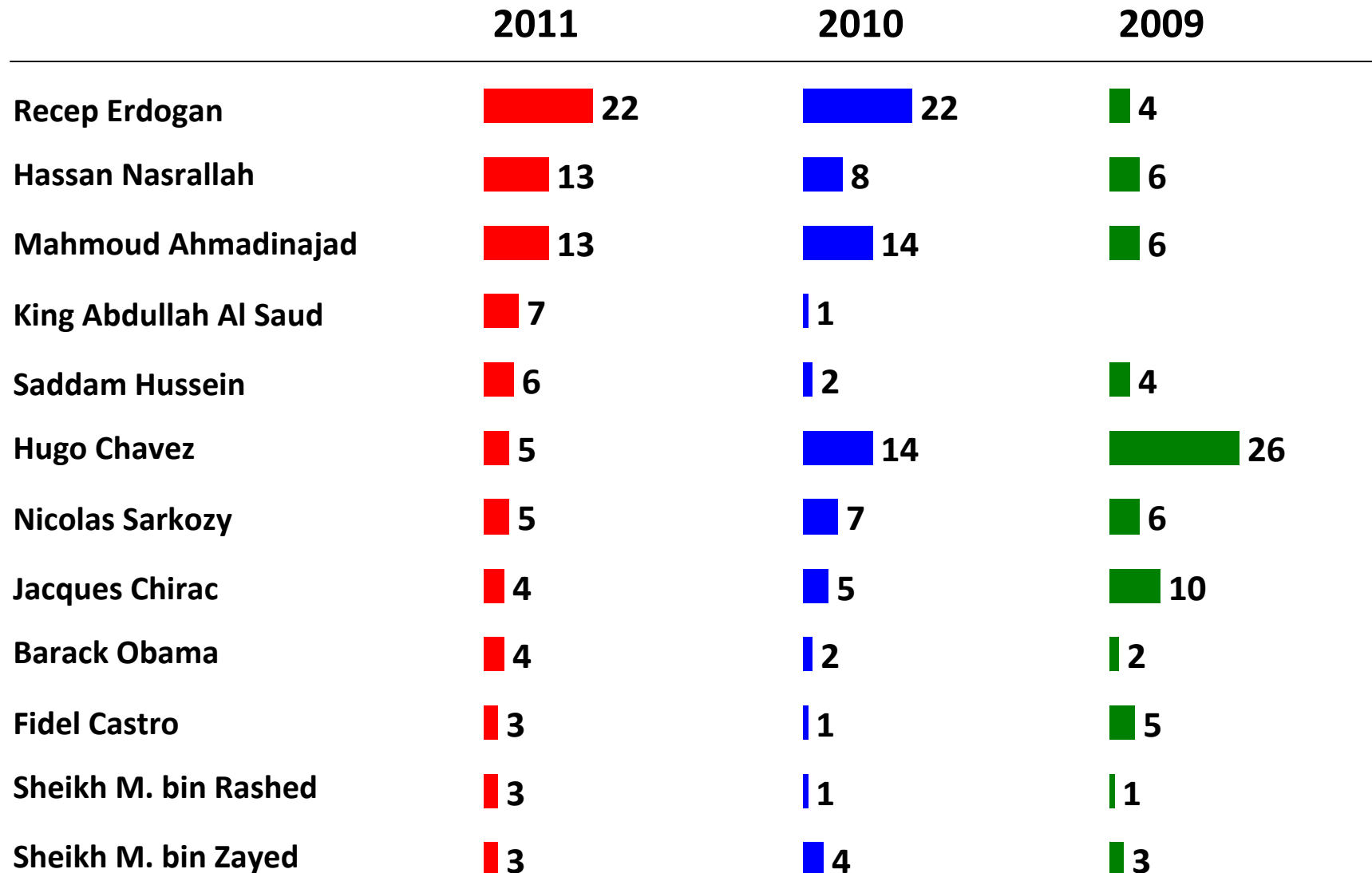
Global Perspective

In a world where there is only one superpower, which of the following countries would you prefer to be that superpower?



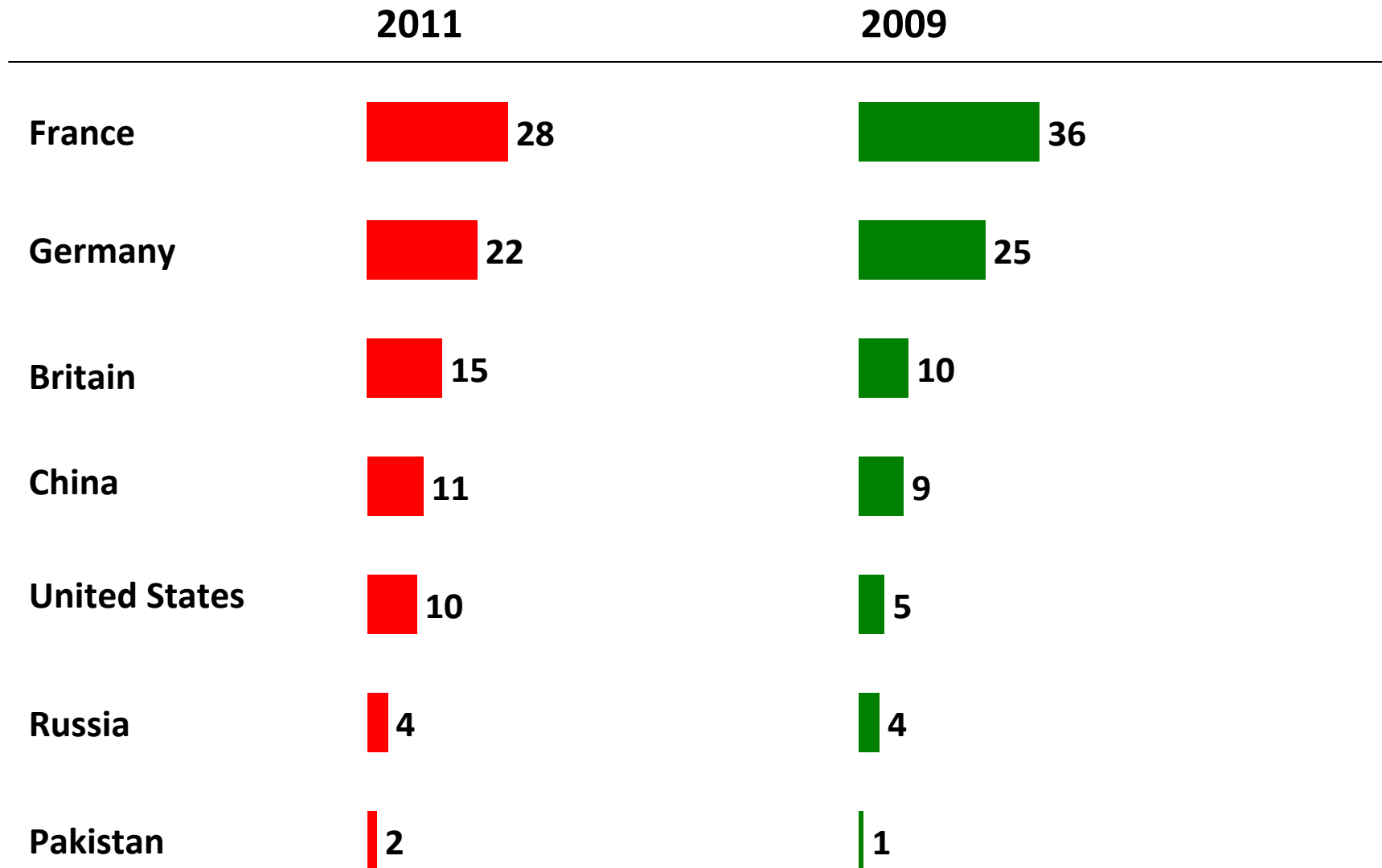
Global Perspective

Which world leader (outside your own country) do you admire most?



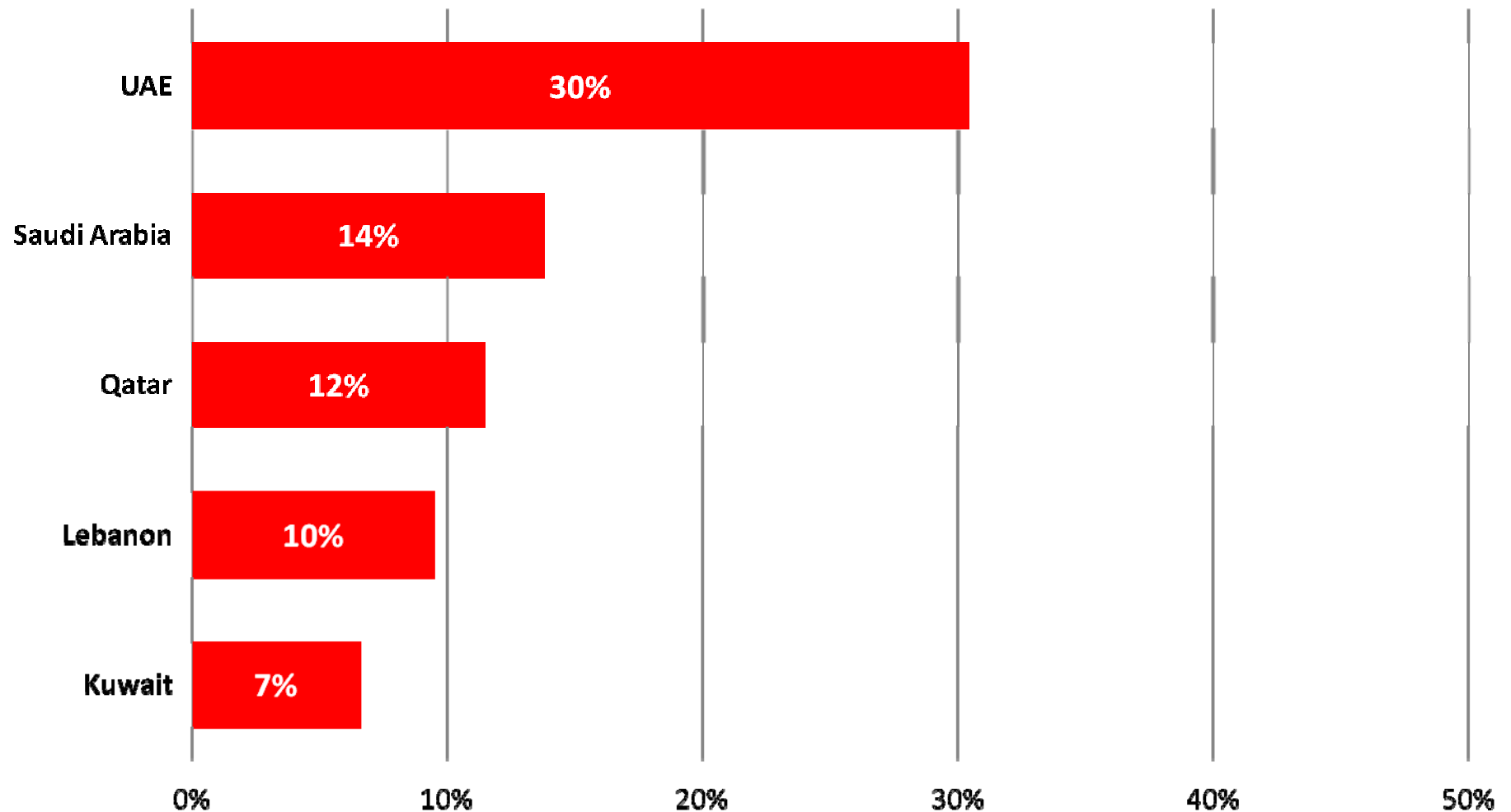
Global Perspective

If you had to live in one of the following countries, which one would you prefer most?



Global Perspective

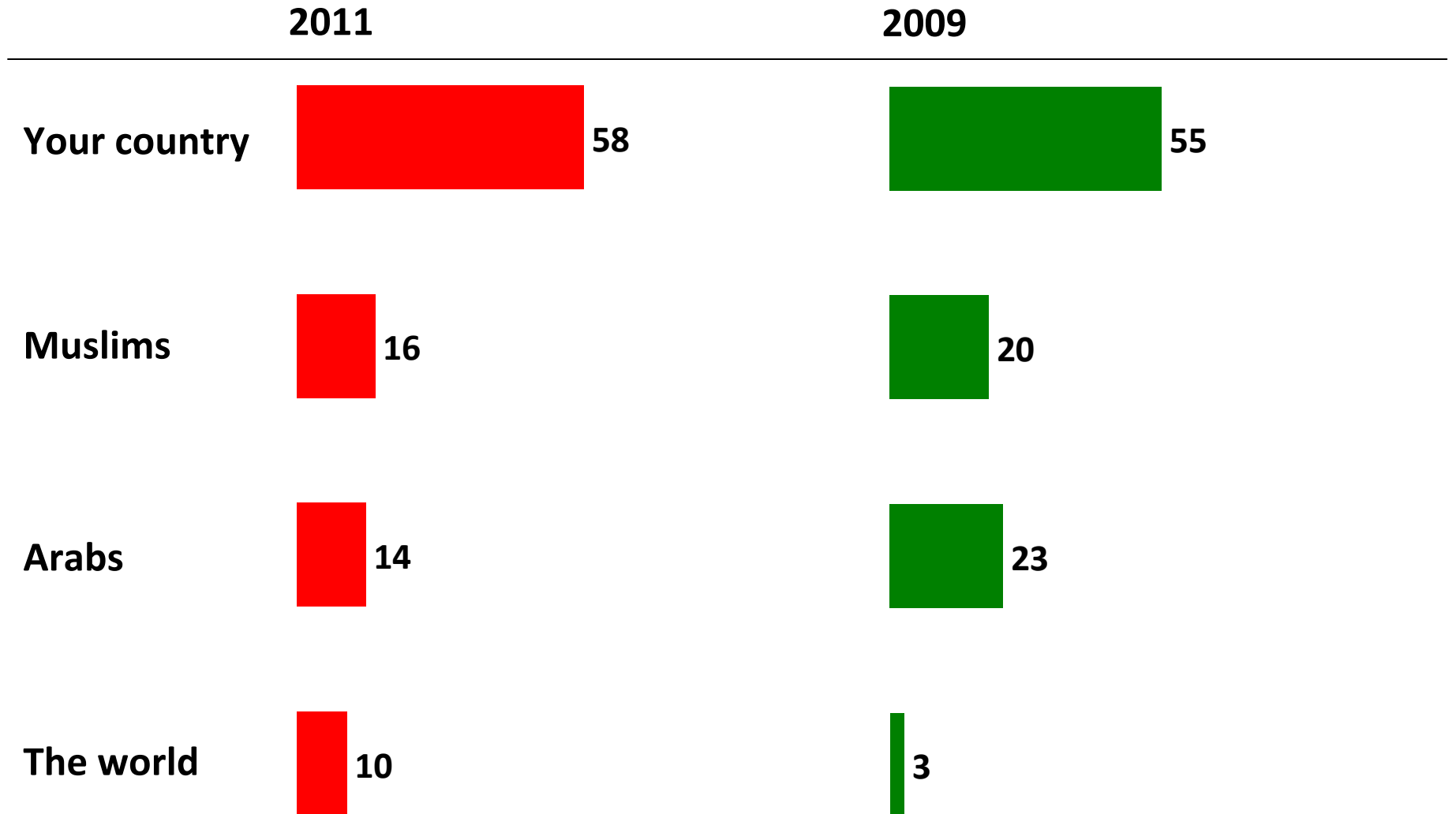
If you had to live in an Arab country outside your own, which country would you prefer?



Identity

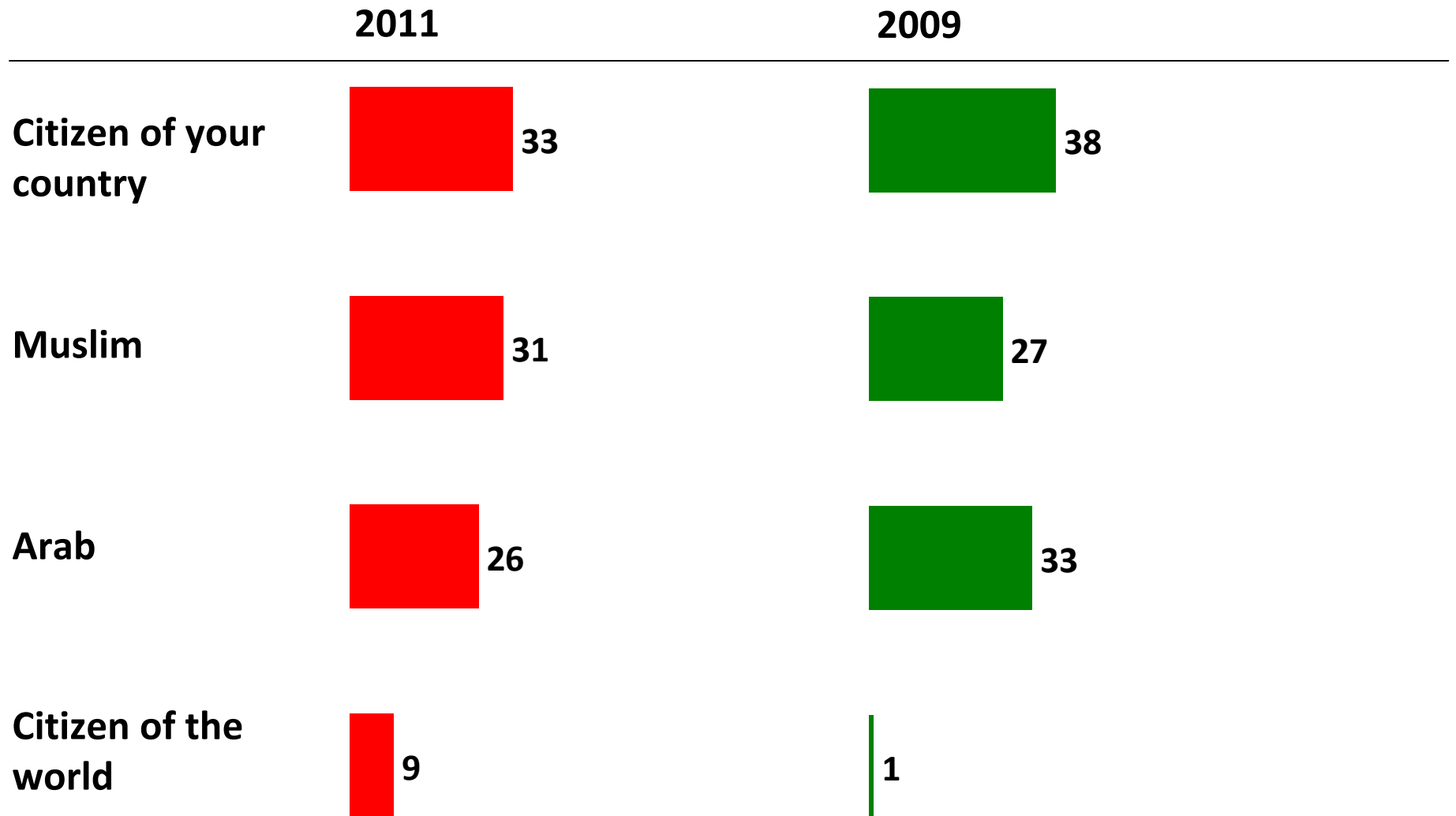
Identity

When your government makes decisions, do you think it should base its decisions mostly on what is best for...



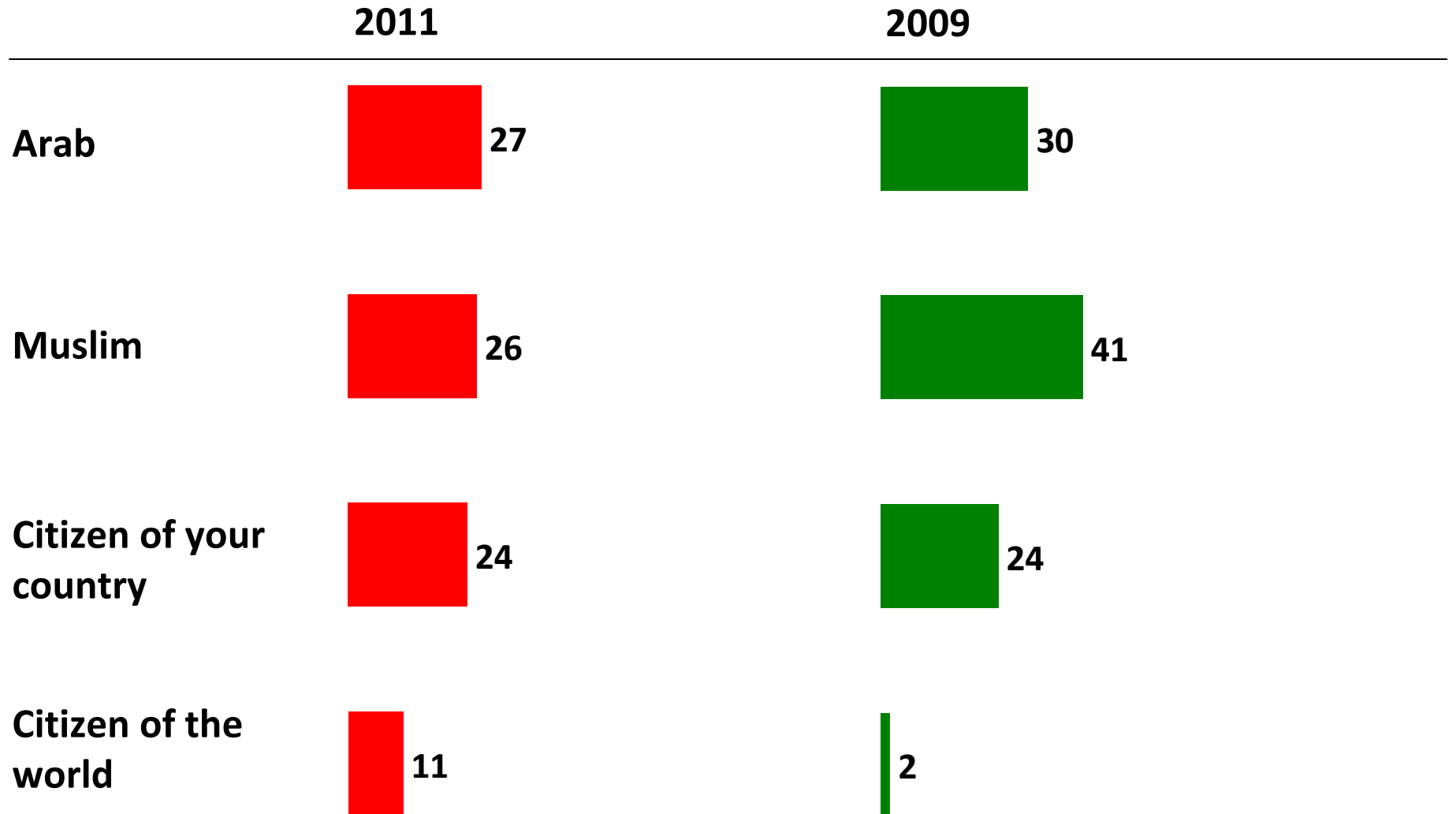
Identity

Which of the following is your most important identity?



Identity

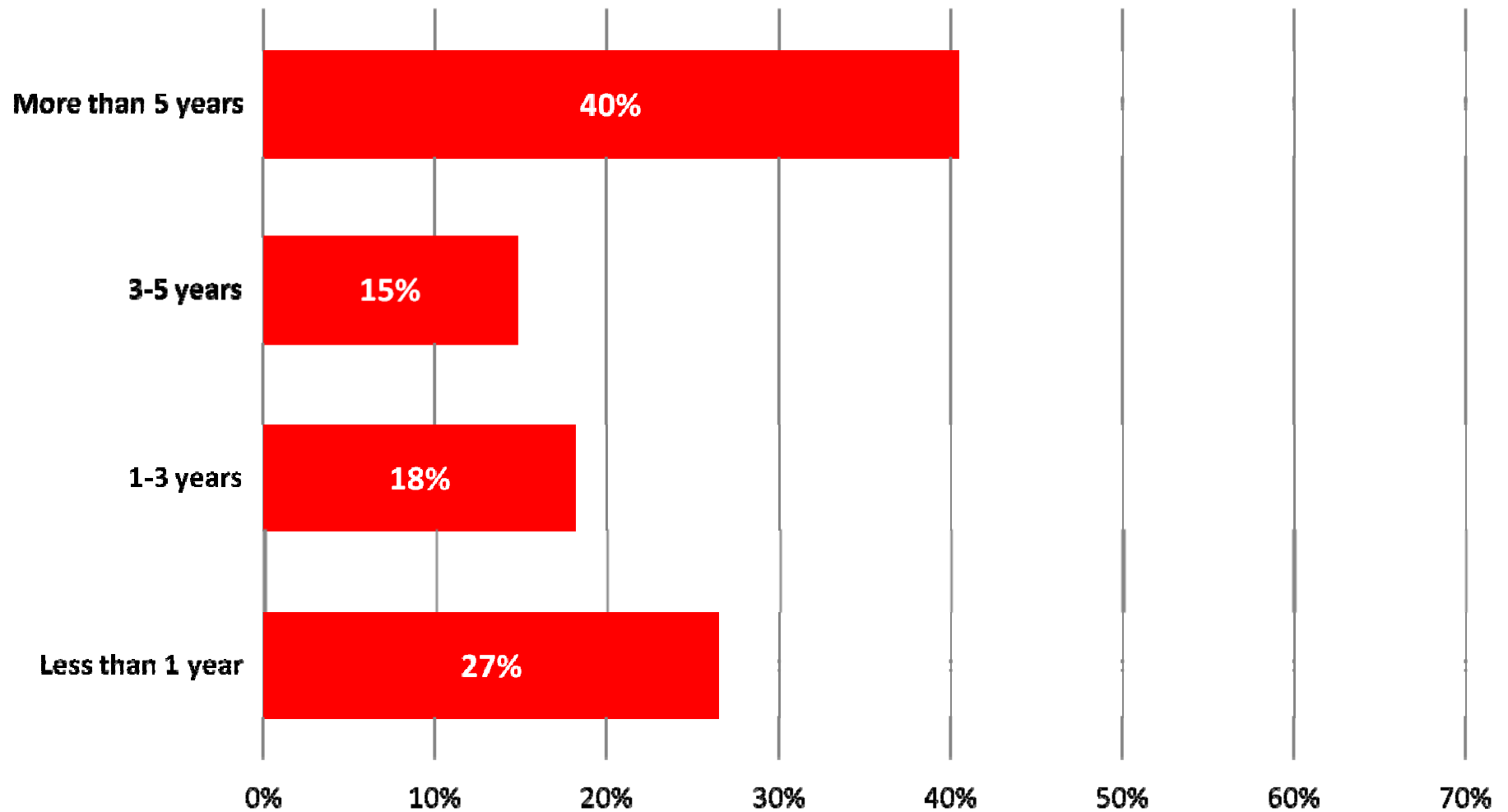
Which of the following is your second most important identity?



Media

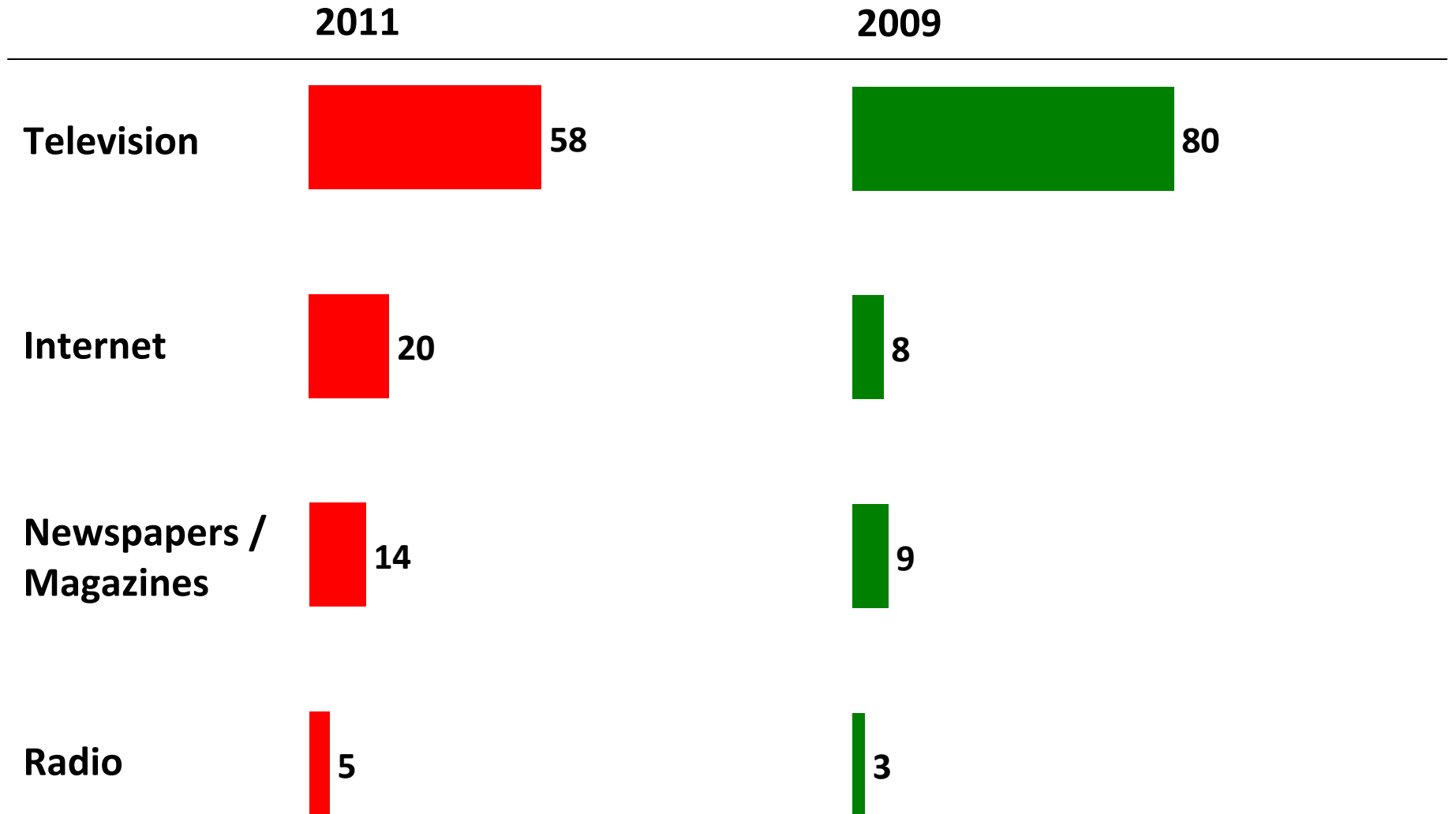
Media

(Among those with access to the internet)
How long have you had access to the internet?



Media

What's your primary source for international news?



Media

When you watch international news, which of the following network's news broadcasts do you watch most often?

