



An Opinion Poll On Peace

Peace Confidence Index (PCI)

TOP-LINE RESULTS

Social Indicator

September 2002

While many studies have been conducted on various aspects of this conflict, none have attempted to capture the changes in public perception over a period of time. The lack of such a study was identified as a significant void by Social Indicator (SI), the social research unit of the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA). The Peace Confidence Index study (PCI) seeks to fill this lacuna. The study, funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) under the Governance and Institutional Strengthening Project, (GISP) Sri Lanka, will be conducted bi-monthly to gauge the impact of local and international political developments on public attitudes towards the peace process.

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INTRODUCTION

OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this study is two-fold. One is to develop a numerical indicator of the level of public confidence in the peace process using a set of standardised questions which will remain unchanged with each wave. The other is to use a set of questions related to recent social, economic and political developments in order to gauge public opinion in the peace process, which by definition will change from one wave to another.

Such information, collected over a period of time, will provide civil society and policy makers a useful barometer of the opinions of the Sri Lankan polity, and ensure that the collective opinions of the masses are given due importance and incorporated into the policy debate.

SCOPE & METHODOLOGY

The study is carried out using a structured questionnaire administered through face-to-face interviews amongst a 1,524 respondent sample. The 17 administrative districts of the seven provinces, excluding the Northern and the Eastern provinces, and areas under Government control of the Amparai, Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Vavuniya and Mannar were surveyed. Data is weighted to reflect the actual ethnographic composition of the districts in which the sample was surveyed.

Eight waves of the PCI study were conducted in May, June, September and November 2001 and January, March, May and July 2002. The latest wave was conducted in September 2002. This publication presents only the top-line results of the September 2002 survey.

The results of these nine waves offer us data for a comparative study on changing public opinion regarding key issues, ranging from perceptions of war and peace to the proscription of the LTTE. The results are subject to a 3% margin of error.



KEY NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS AUGUST – SEPTEMBER 2002

- Addressing a national protest day campaign gathering at Lipton Circus, Propaganda Secretary of the JVP urges the President to use her powers to prevent the creation of a separate state in the northeast and topple the UNF Government. *(1st August 2002)*
- The United States of America reviews the ban on the LTTE as a foreign terrorist organisation. *(5th August 2002)*
- Business leaders urge the Government and the President to arrive at a compromise and avoid an election. *(8th August 2002)*
- LTTE political wing leader Thamilselvan, speaking to visiting journalists in the Vanni, expresses satisfaction with the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement and says that the LTTE was looking forward to the start of the peace talks. *(8th August 2002)*
- The Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) insists that local government elections be held in the North and East as scheduled on the 25th of September 2002, while the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) wants it postponed until the interim administration for the North and East is in place. *(14th August 2002)*
- Presidential spokesman, Harim Pieris, at a press conference says that the President welcomes the announcement that peace talks in Thailand are to commence on the 16th of September 2002. *(14th August 2002)*
- Minister Milinda Moragoda and Director General of the Peace Secretariat Bernard Goonetilleke hold 'talks on talks' with LTTE chief negotiator Dr. Anton Balasingham in Oslo, Norway. Norwegian Deputy Foreign Minister Vidar Helgesen, special envoy Erik Solheim and Norwegian Ambassador to Colombo Jon Westborg were also present. *(15th August 2002)*
- The Government deproscribes the LTTE. *(4th September 2002)*
- The Cabinet at a special meeting unanimously approves and decides to gazette the 19th Amendment to the Constitution. *(7th September 2002)*
- The Prime Minister pledges at the 'Janabala Meheyuma', organized by the Government, to forge ahead with the peace process whatever the obstacles or difficulties. *(9th September 2002)*
- The Prime Minister visits New York to brief political and business leaders on the peace process and to highlight investment opportunities in Sri Lanka. *(13th September 2002)*
- Peace talks begin in Sattahip, Thailand between the Government and the LTTE. *(16th September 2002)*
- In his opening speech at the official talks between the Government and LTTE, in Sattahip, Thailand, Constitutional Affairs Minister G.L. Peiris declares that the Government stood for maximum devolution of power for the Tamils in the North and East provided the unity and territorial integrity of the country was ensured. *(16th September 2002)*
- During peace talks the Government and the LTTE agree to establish a Joint Committee and a Joint Task Force to look into High Security Zones, return of IDPs and relief and rehabilitation. *(17th September 2002)*
- The Norwegian facilitators and the chief negotiator of the LTTE in separate statements appeal to the international community for substantial funding to rebuild Sri Lanka's war-ravaged North and East saying the peace process was linked to restoring normalcy in the area. *(17th September 2002)*
- Chief LTTE negotiator Dr. Anton Balasingham, at the closing press conference in Thailand, states in response to a question that the LTTE deals with categories and concepts of "homeland" and "self-determination", not secession or a separate state. The latter would apply as a last resort if the aspirations of the Tamil people were not met, he added. *(18th September 2002)*
- The Prime Minister addresses the United Nations General Assembly in New York. *(18th September 2002)*

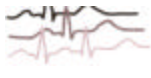


- At the end of the Sattahip talks, the Norwegian facilitators announce that the next three rounds of negotiations between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE will take place on the 31st of October to the 3rd of November 2002, the 2nd to the 5th of December 2002 and the 6th to the 9th of January 2003. *(19th September 2002)*
- The United States welcomes the successful outcome of the first round of talks between the Government and the LTTE and pledges full support for the peace process and the relief, resettlement and the rehabilitation efforts. *(19th September 2002)*
- The 19th Amendment to the Constitution is presented to Parliament by Justice Minister W. J. M. Lokubandara. *(19th September 2002)*
- The Tamil National Alliance and civic action groups urge the Government to immediately repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Act and release all suspects held under it. *(24th September 2002)*
- The Government announces that the 2003 defence budget will reflect a reduction from Rs 51 billion to Rs 35.6 billion. *(26th September 2002)*
- The government exchanges 13 LTTE cadres for 7 forces personnel with the LTTE at Omanthai as a confidence building measure. *(28th September 2002)*



FINDINGS AT A GLANCE OF THE POLL CONDUCTED FROM 30TH SEPTEMBER TO 10TH OCTOBER 2002

- ◆ The declining trend of people who say that peace will be established soon in Sri Lanka is reversed in September 2002. A majority of the Sinhala community however, is skeptical.
- ◆ The overwhelming support for peace talks remains unchanged.
- ◆ While the belief that “the Government is committed to find peace through talks” has reduced, the percentage of people who do not believe that “the LTTE is committed to find peace through talks” has decreased in September 2002. At the same time, the belief that “the LTTE is committed to find peace through talks” is held by the minority communities.
- ◆ Since May 2002 there is a steady decline in the belief that the LTTE “goes in for talks to fool the people”. On the other hand, the common belief that the war cannot be won being cited as a reason for both parties “to go in for talks”, shows a steady increase.
- ◆ There is a decline in the opinion that only the Government, LTTE and an international third party should be involved in negotiations. The widest spectrum of involvement is advocated mainly by the Muslim and Up-Country Tamil communities.
- ◆ Opinion of the belief that an international third party is “essential”, shows a steady decline since January 2002. However those who believe it would have a “positive impact” has increased since March 2002.
- ◆ The steadily declining trend in approval for Norwegian assistance in the Sri Lankan peace process is reversed in September 2002.
- ◆ A majority of Sri Lankans approve of Norway continuing to facilitate talks. This opinion is held mainly by the Tamils.
- ◆ Since July 2002, opinion has changed - from the SLMM being “essential” to the SLMM adding a “positive impact”.
- ◆ A growing trend is observed in people who do not believe that the SLMM is “impartial” in its monitoring of the Ceasefire Agreement (CFA). However, a notable majority amongst the Tamil and Up-country Tamil communities believe the contrary.
- ◆ There is a steady increase in opinion since May 2002 that the SLMM’s monitoring of the Ceasefire Agreement (CFA) is not “effective”. This opinion is held mainly by the Sinhala community, while many amongst the Muslim community are uncertain.
- ◆ There is an overwhelming disapproval for the establishment of an interim administration under the control of the LTTE amongst the Sinhalese, whilst there is overwhelming approval amongst the Tamils. However, the people who approve of such a proposal prefer Sinhala and Muslim participation in it, rather than solely LTTE or Tamil representation.



- ◆ In September 2002, most Tamils (77.5%) believe the LTTE is the sole representative of the Tamil people. Muslims (38.7%) and Up-country Tamils (39.8%) concur.
- ◆ 80.3% of the Sri Lankans are aware of the peace talks held in Thailand. However, the majority (83.6%) is not aware of the decisions taken at the talks.
- ◆ More than half (52.1%) of those who are aware of the decisions at the talks approve of the setting up of the Joint Committee and the Joint Task Force (JTF). This opinion is held mainly by the Tamil community (80.2%).
- ◆ 44.2% of the Sri Lankans are aware of Dr Anton Balasingham's statement that Eelam does not connote a separate, independent state and that the LTTE would settle for regional autonomy. However, only 17.3% believe that it is a credible statement (Sinhala – 11.3%, Tamil – 61.6%, Muslim – 29.9%, Up-country Tamil – 30.4%).
- ◆ A majority (70.1%) agrees with the President's request that her representative take part in the talks (Sinhala – 75.8%, Tamil – 31.8%, Muslim – 70%, Up-country Tamil – 17.6%).
- ◆ Among the people who are aware of the 19th Amendment, a majority has no understanding of it (43.9%).
- ◆ 46% of the people, who have some understanding of the 19th Amendment, approve of it. This approval comes mainly from the minority communities (Tamil – 86.3%, Muslim – 66.4%, Up-country Tamil – 75.4%, Sinhala – 39.9%).

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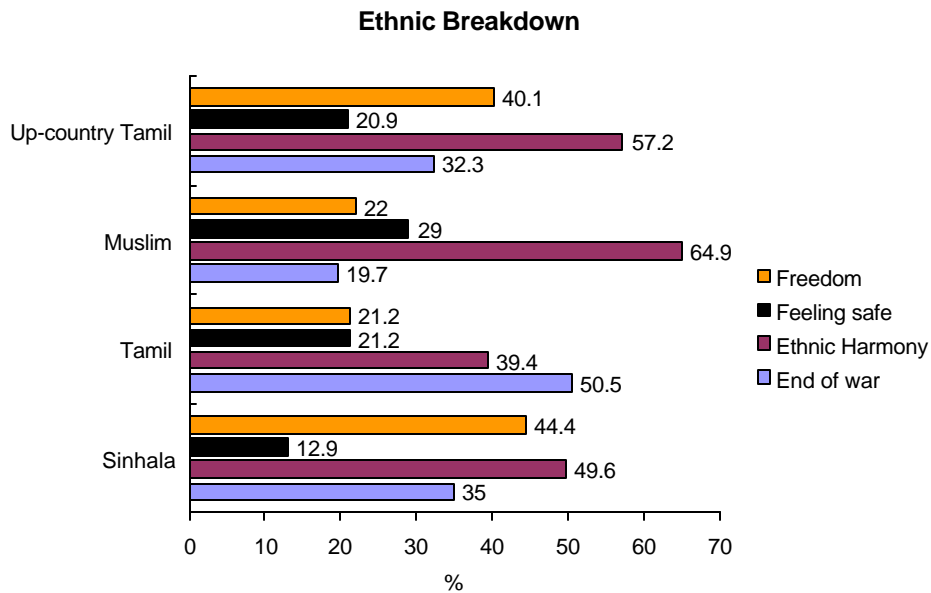
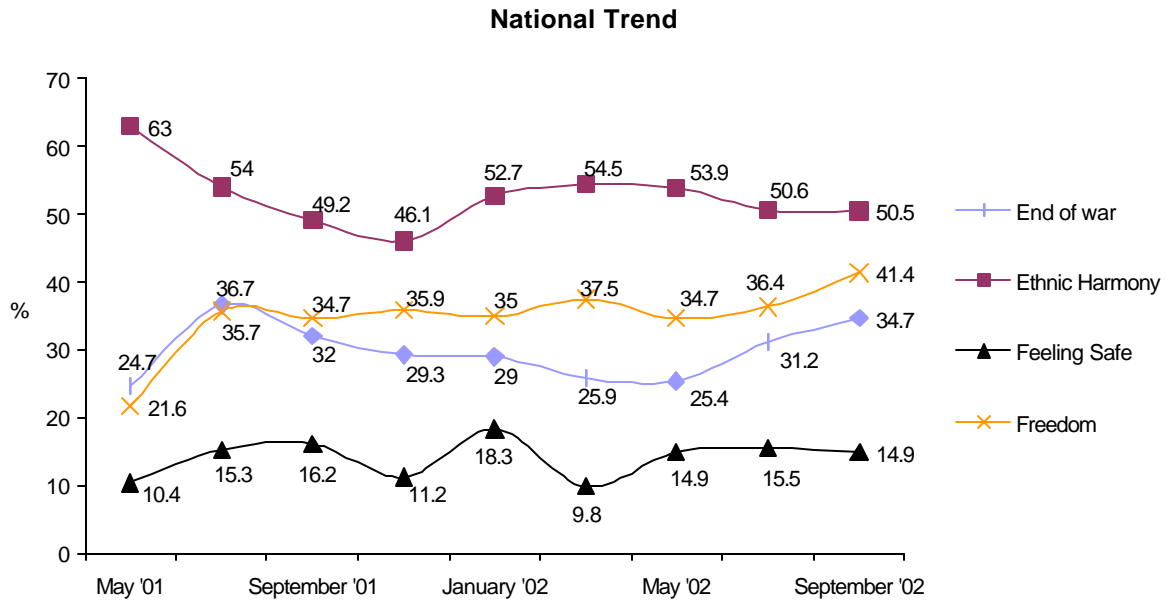
Tel: 370472 **Email:** cpapoll@diamond.lanka.net

Fax: 370475 **Web:** <http://www.cpalanka.org>

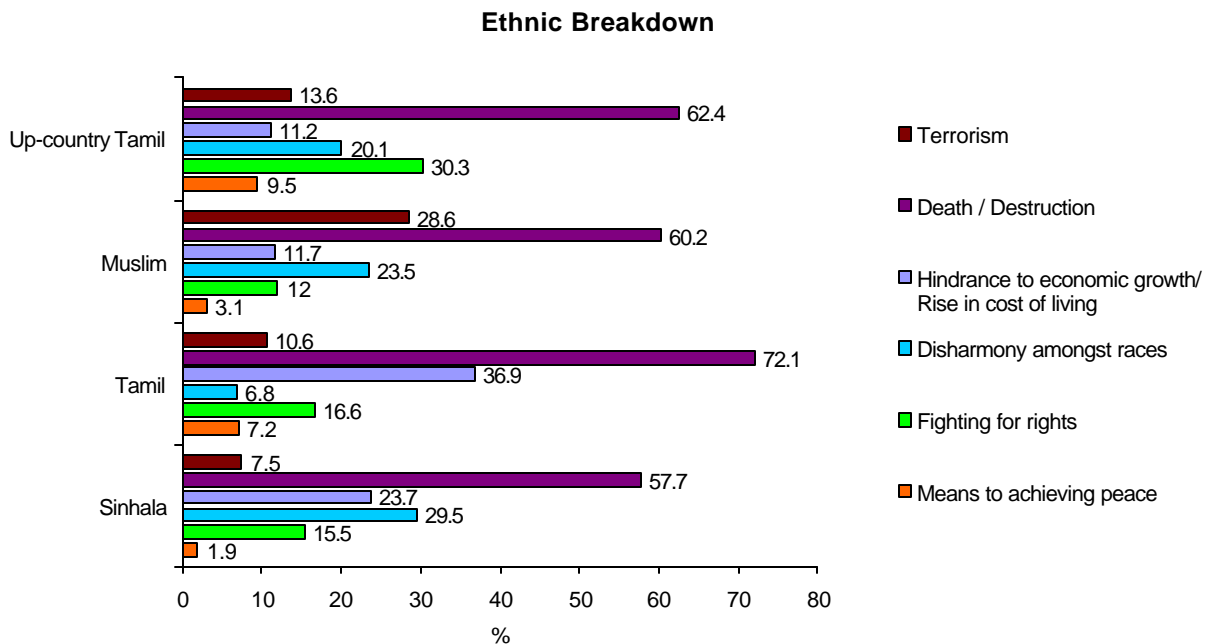
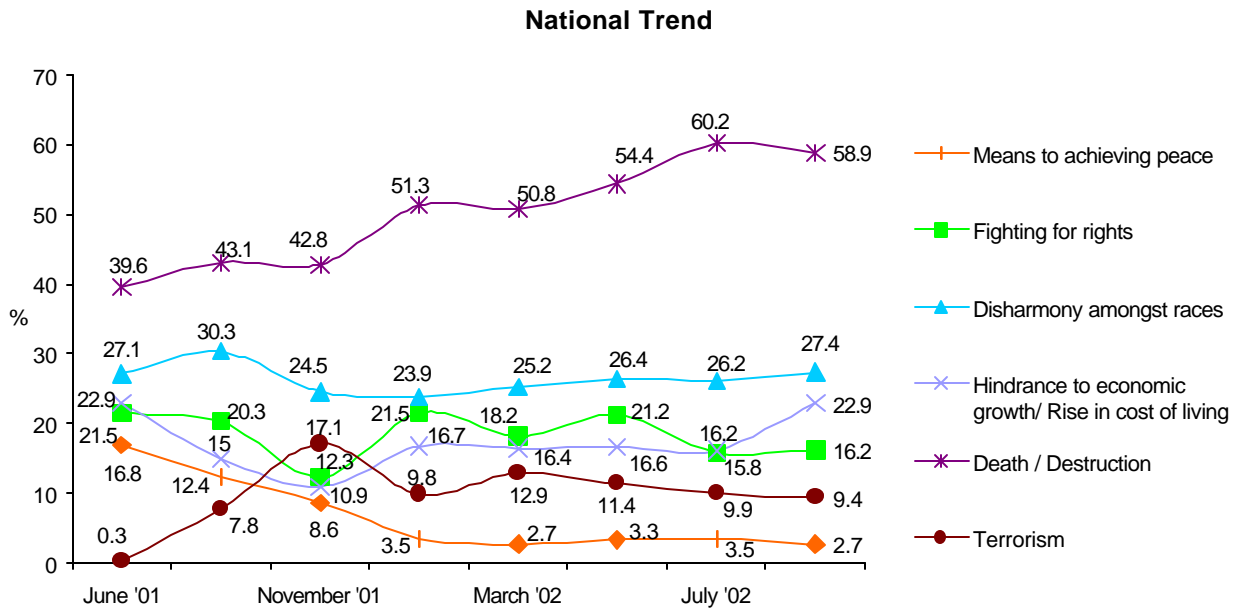
PEACE CONFIDENCE INDEX (PCI) MAY 2001 - SEPTEMBER 2002

THE PERCEPTION OF WAR AND PEACE

What does 'peace' mean to you? [Multiple Answers]

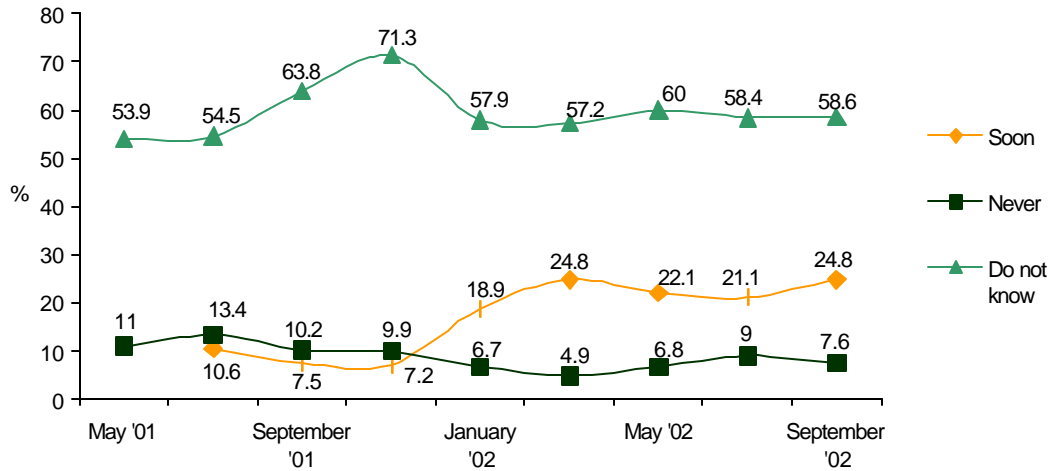


What does 'war' mean to you? [Multiple Answers]

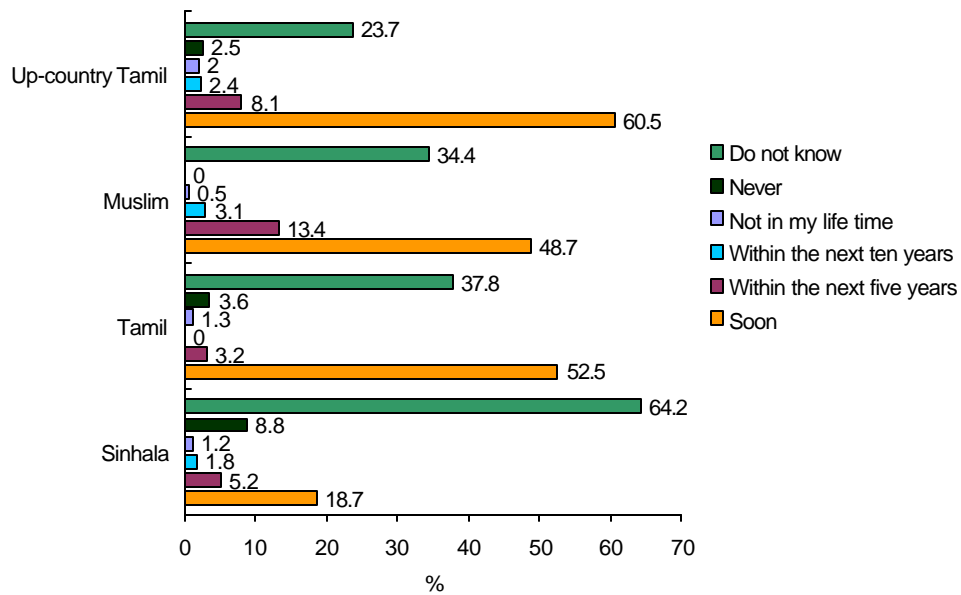


When will there be peace in Sri Lanka?

National Trend



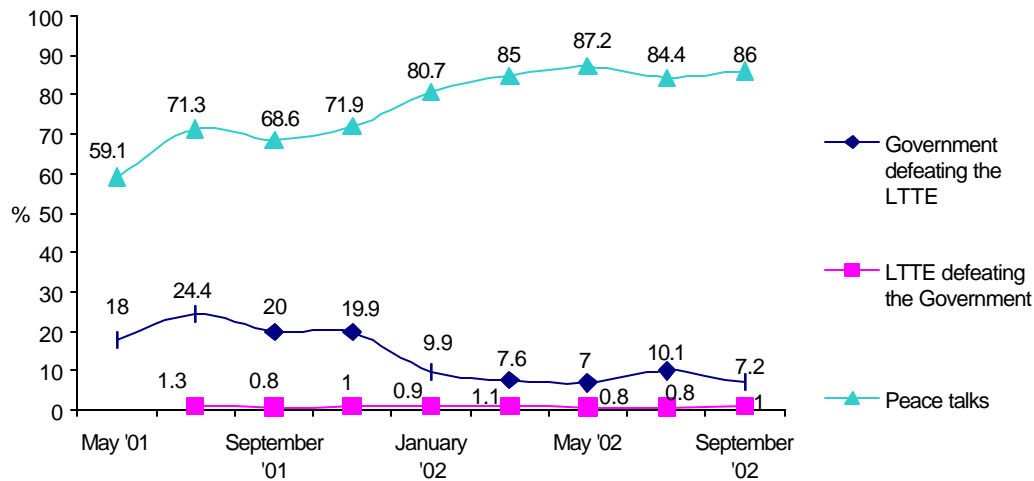
Ethnic Breakdown



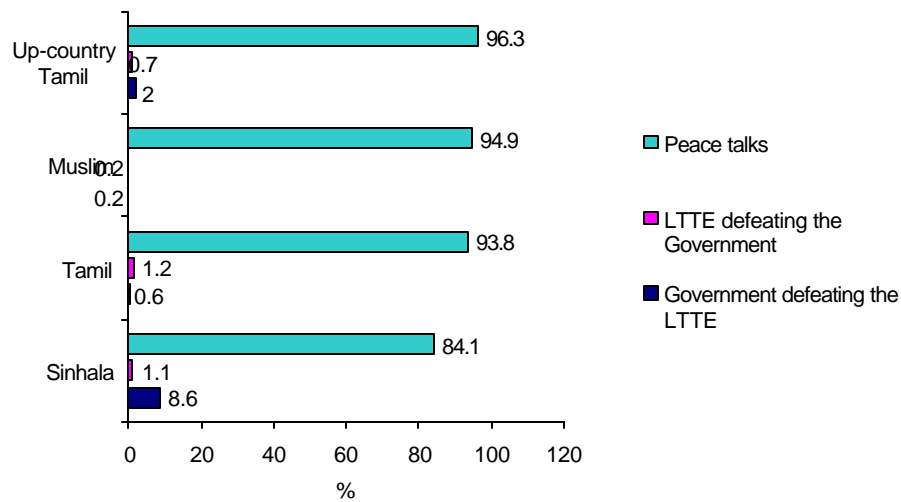
SOLUTIONS TO THE CONFLICT

How do you think we can end the war and have peace in Sri Lanka?
[Multiple Answers]

National Trend



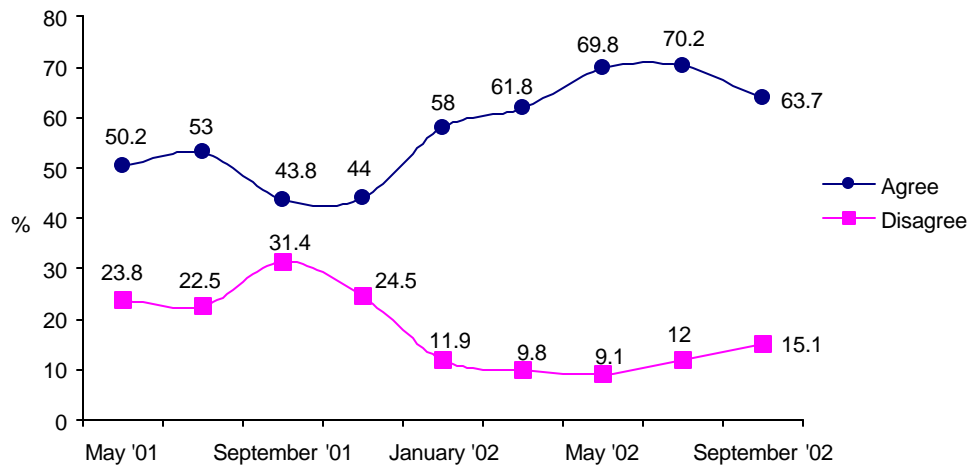
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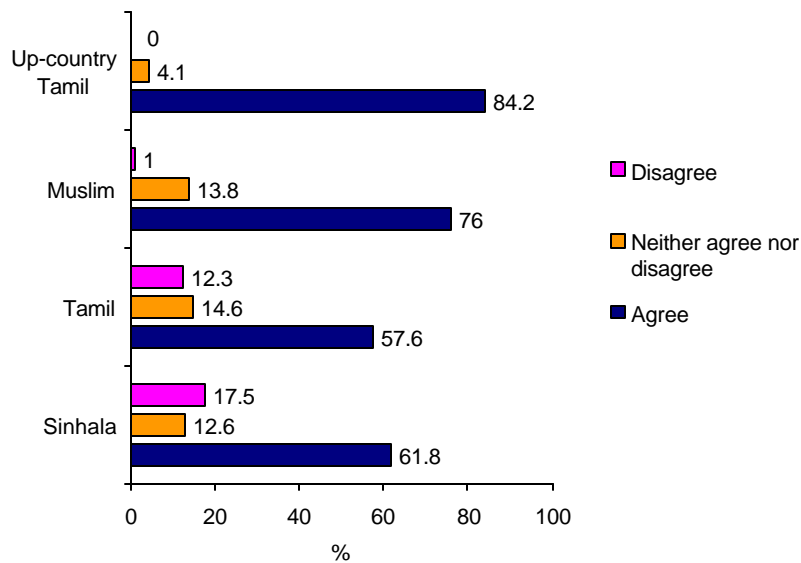
CONFIDENCE

I think the Government is committed to find peace through talks.

National Trend

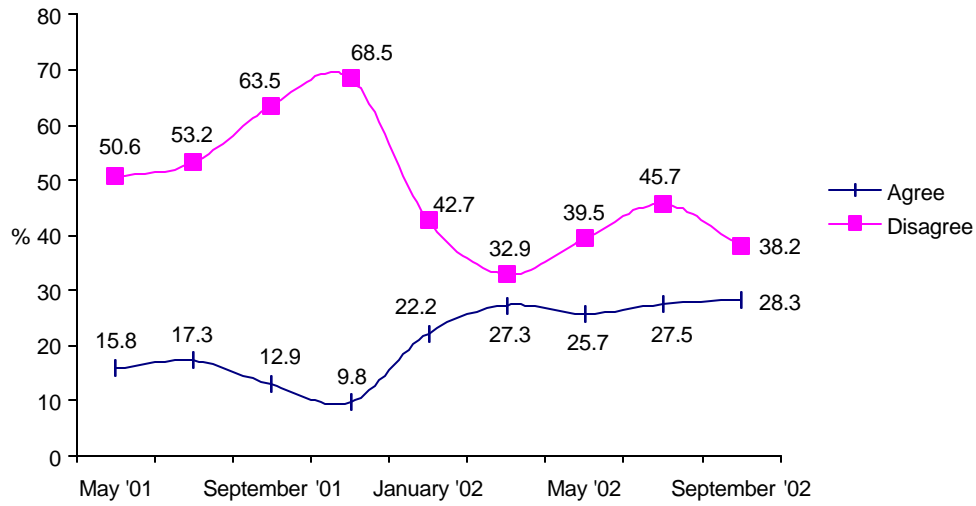


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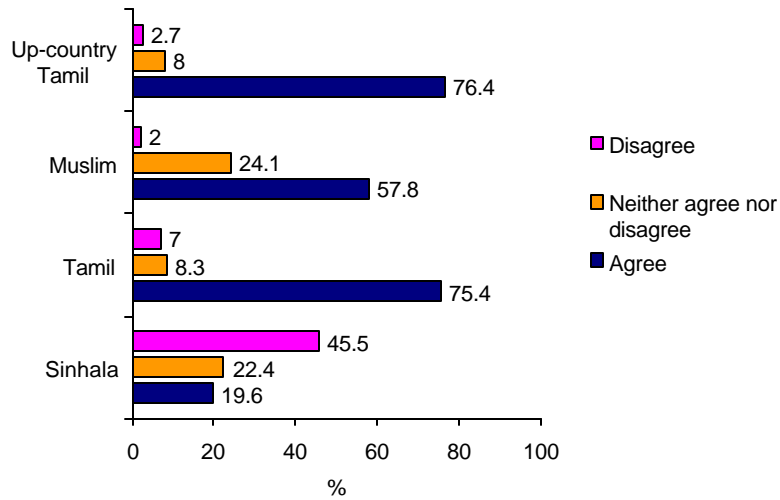


I think the LTTE is committed to find peace through talks.

National Trend

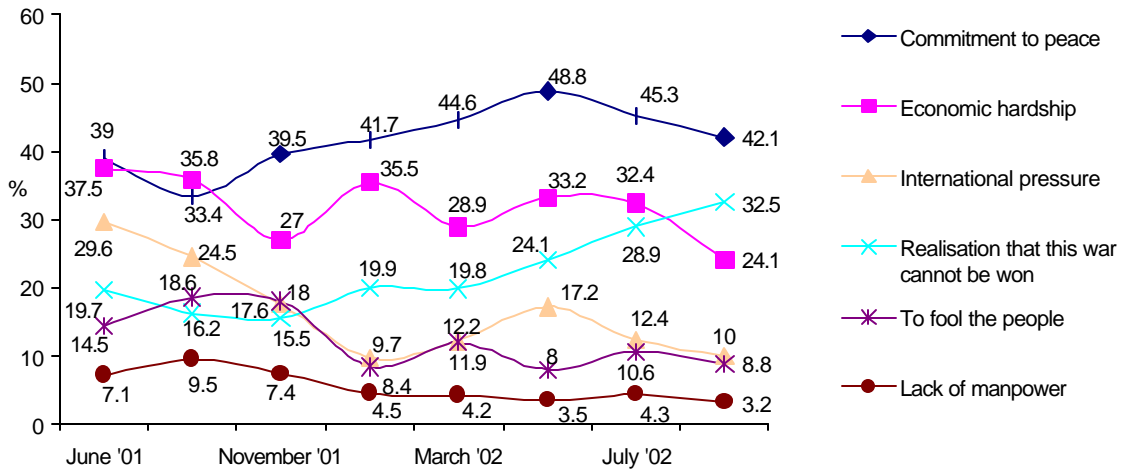


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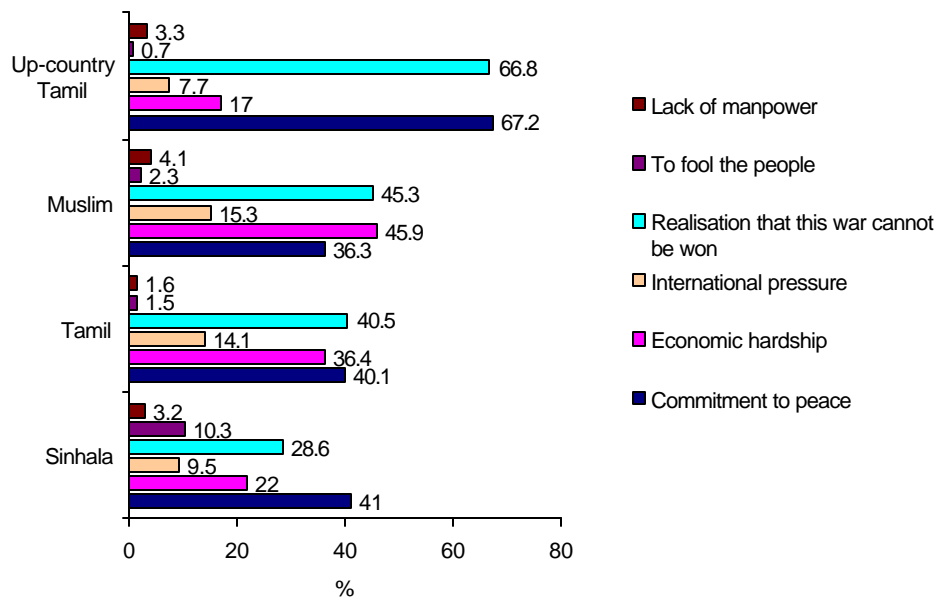


Why do you think that the Government goes in for talks? [Multiple Answers]

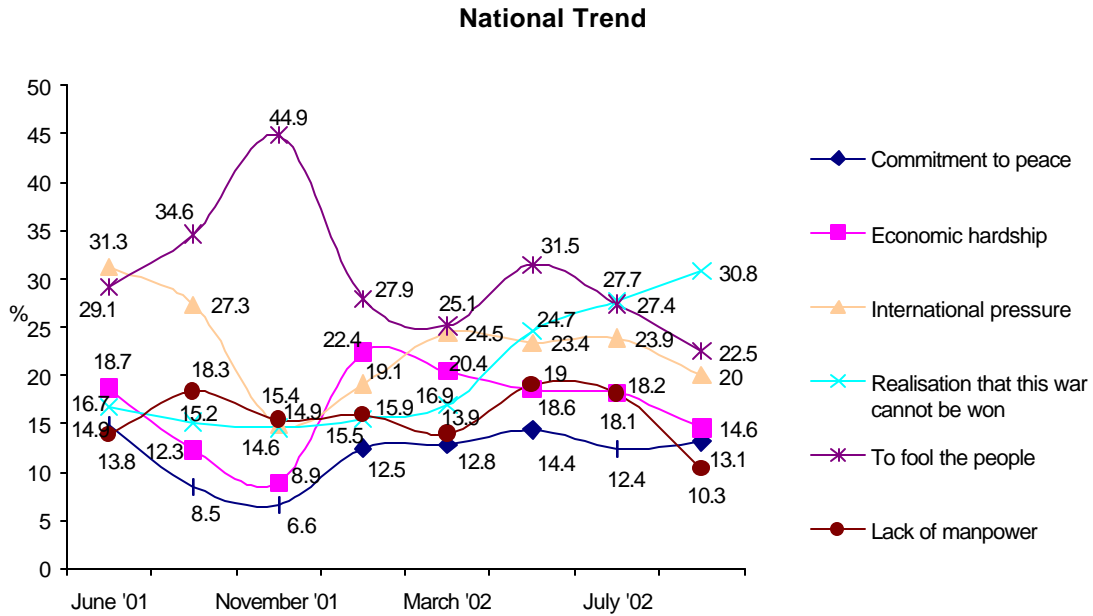
National Trend



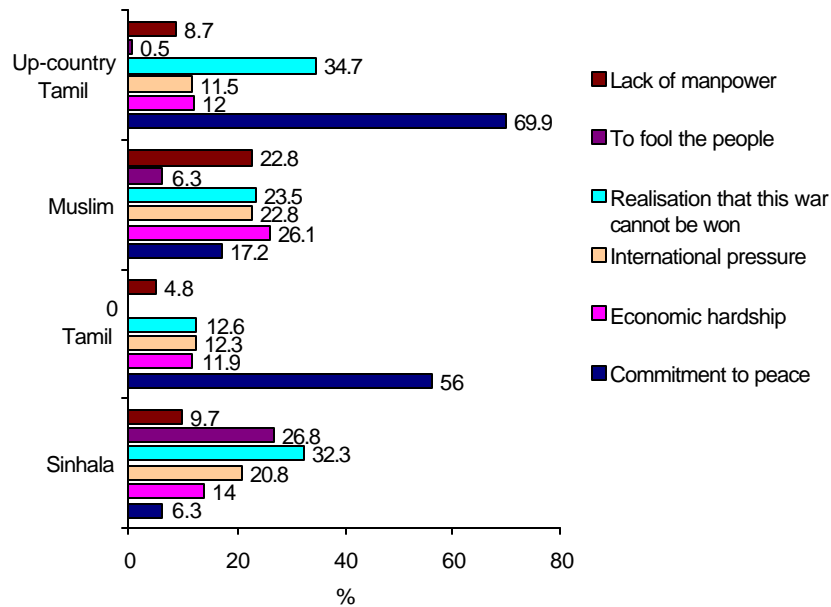
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Why do you think that the LTTE goes in for talks? [Multiple Answers]



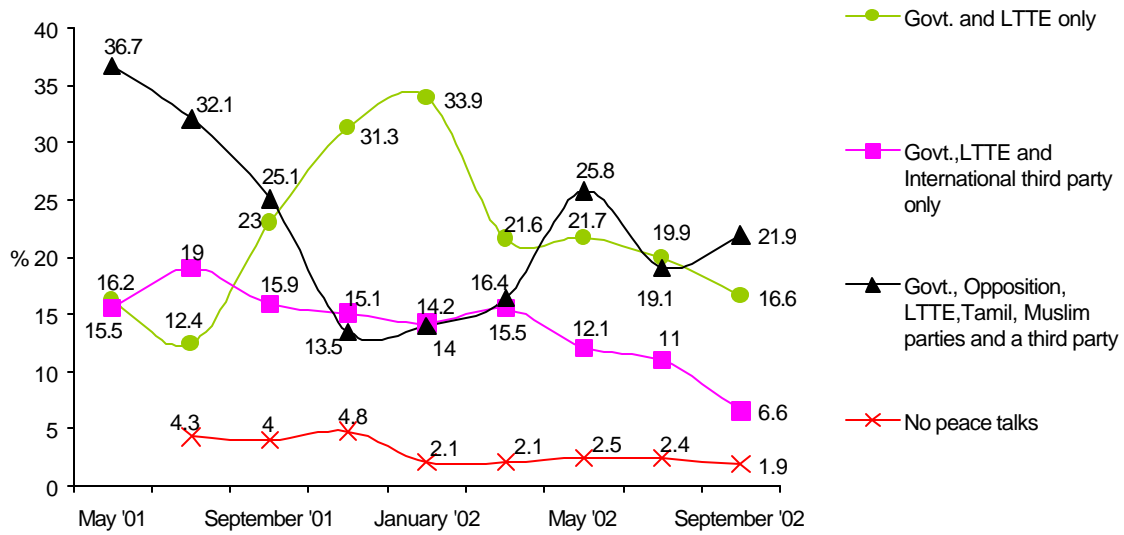
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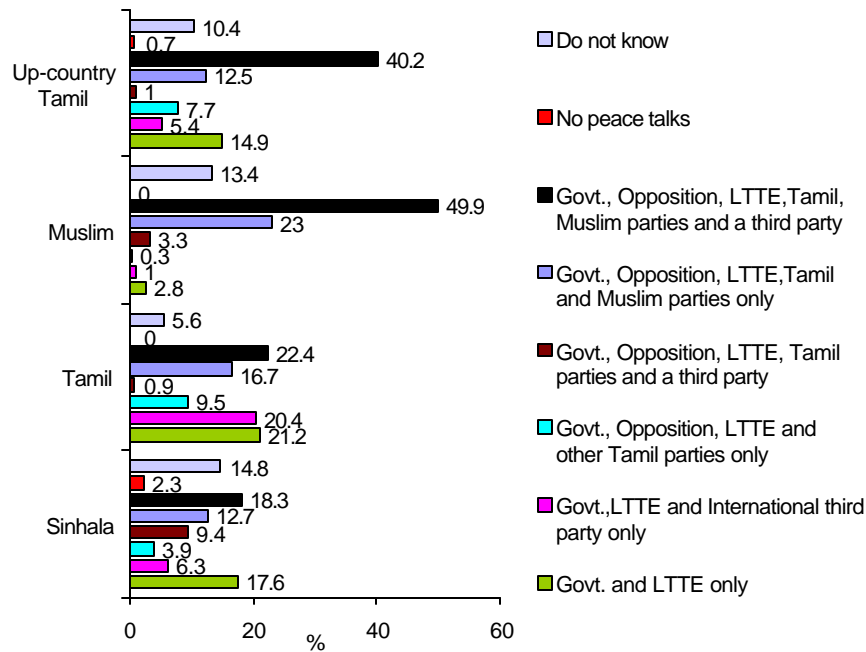
THE PEACE PROCESS

Who should be involved in negotiations?

National Trend



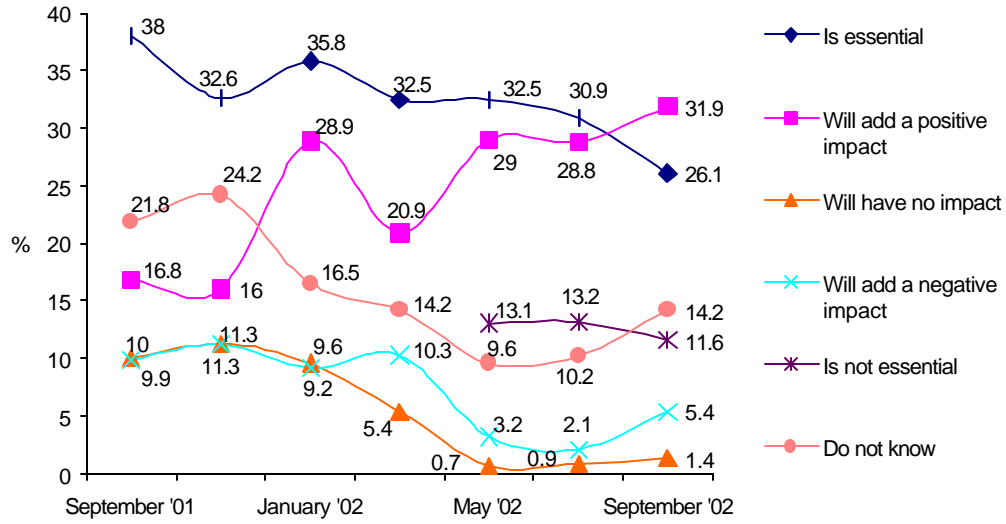
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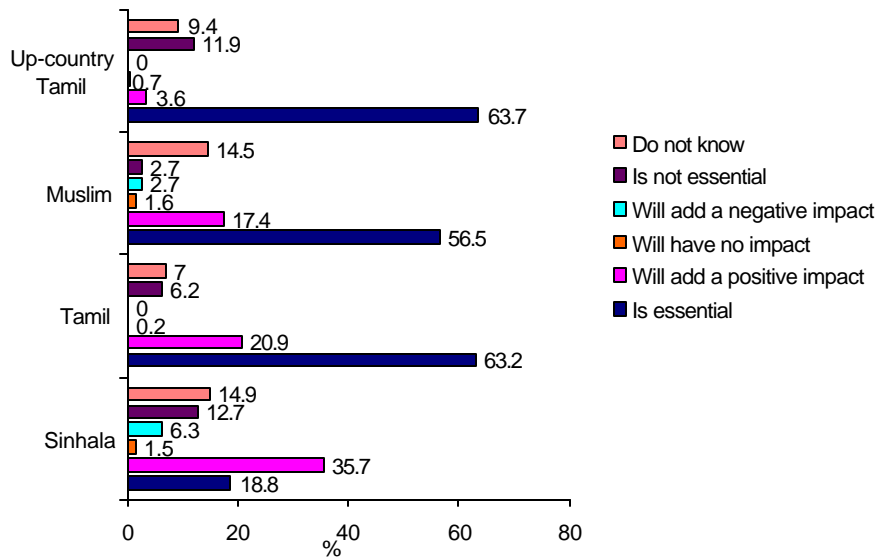
INTERNATIONAL THIRD PARTY FACILITATION

What is your opinion of the need for an international third party's involvement to solve the North East war in Sri Lanka?

National Trend



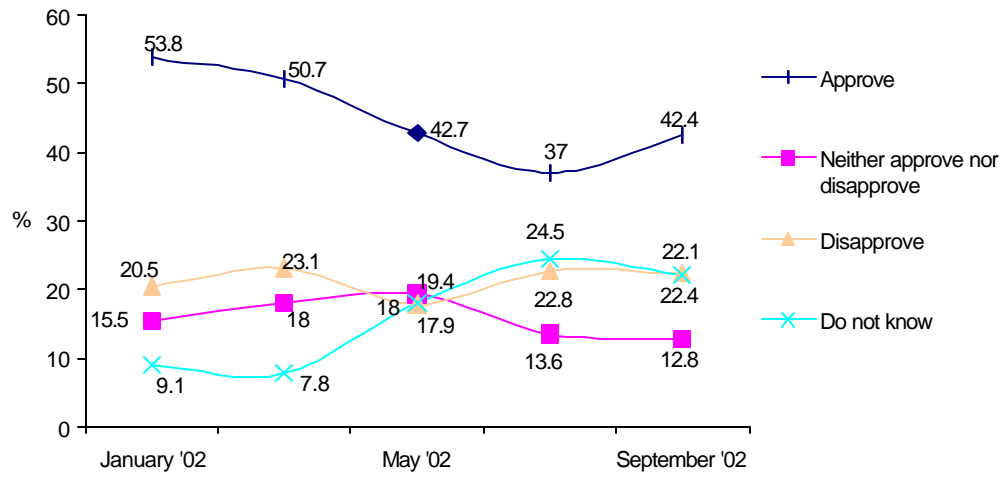
Ethnic Breakdown



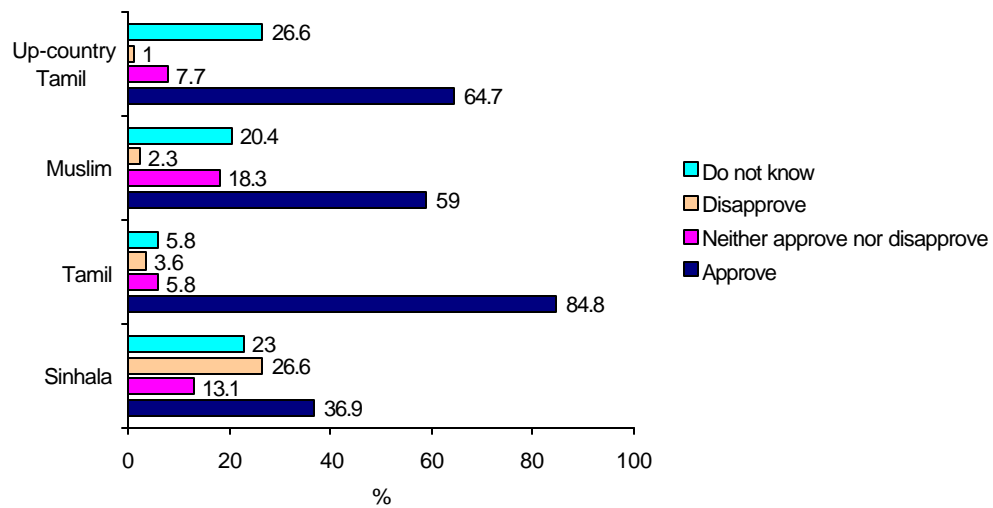
NORWEGIAN FACILITATION

Norway assisting in the Sri Lankan peace process

National Trend

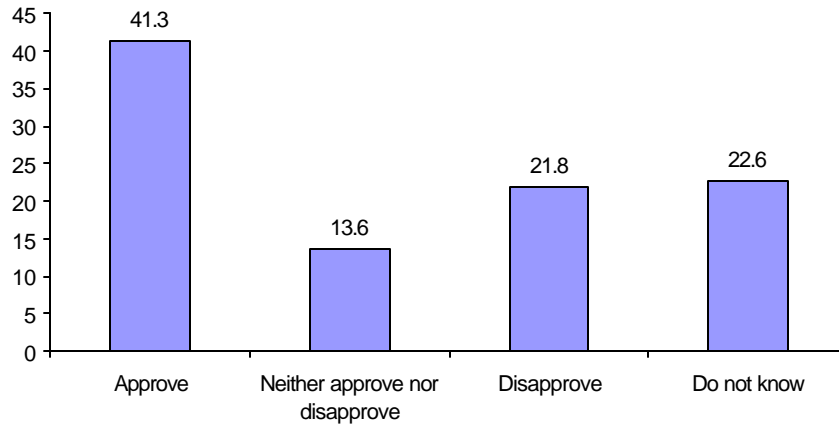


Ethnic Breakdown

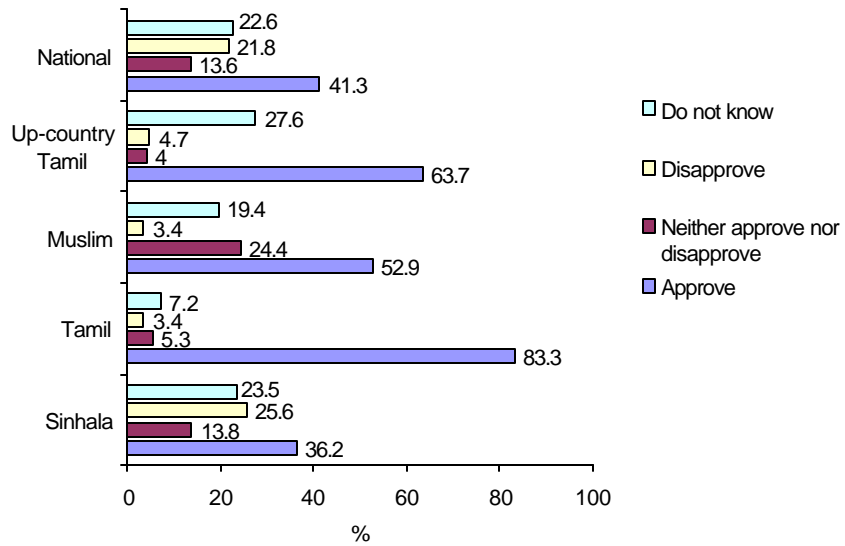


Norway continuing to facilitate talks.

National Breakdown

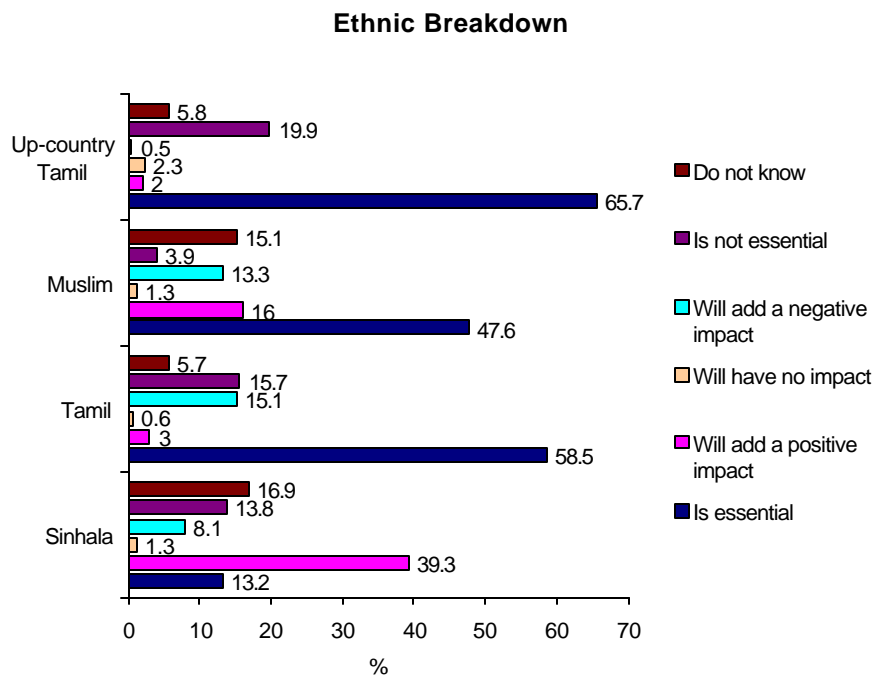
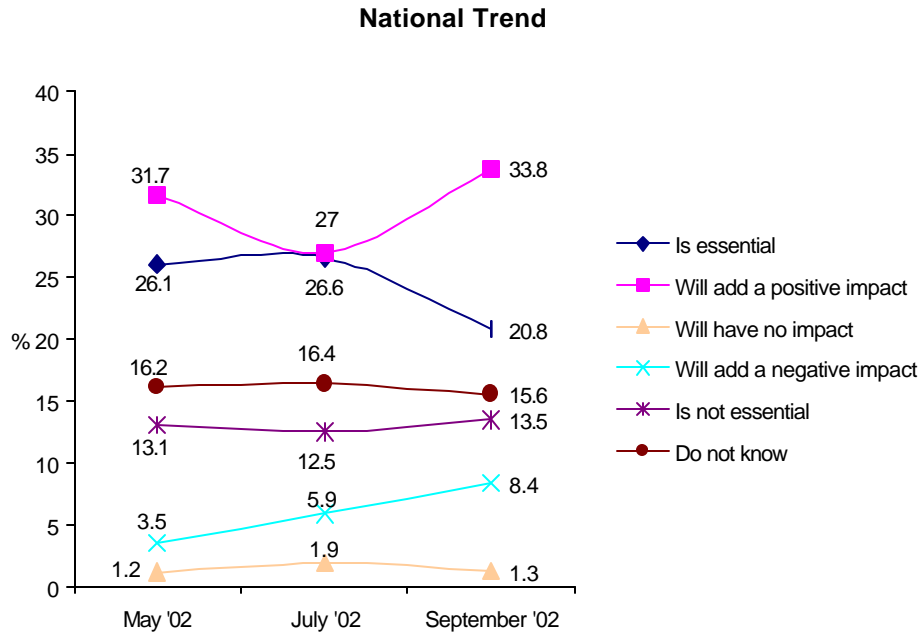


Ethnic Breakdown



INDIA'S INVOLVEMENT

What is your opinion of the need for India's involvement in the Sri Lankan peace process?

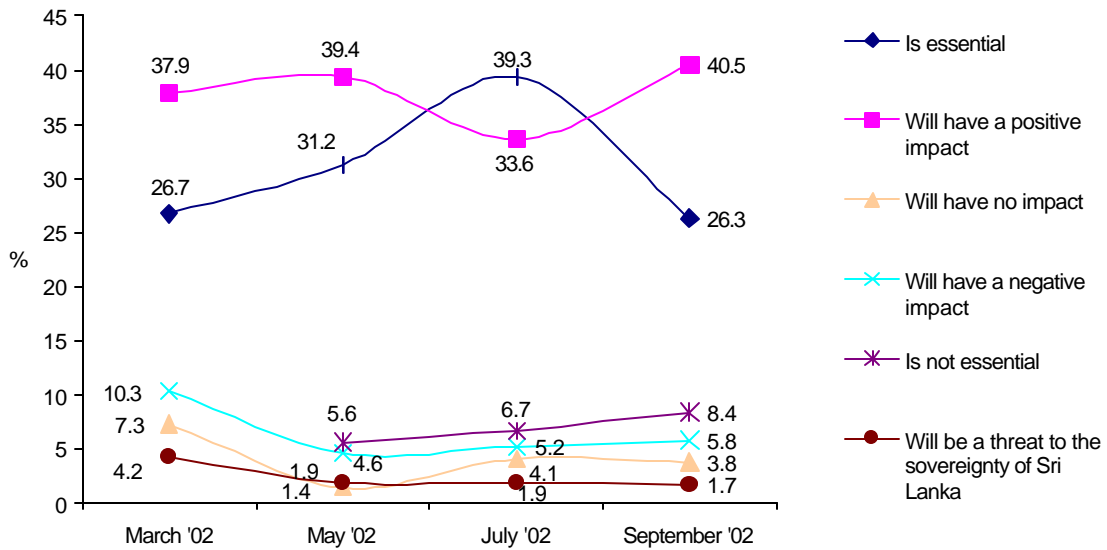


RECENT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

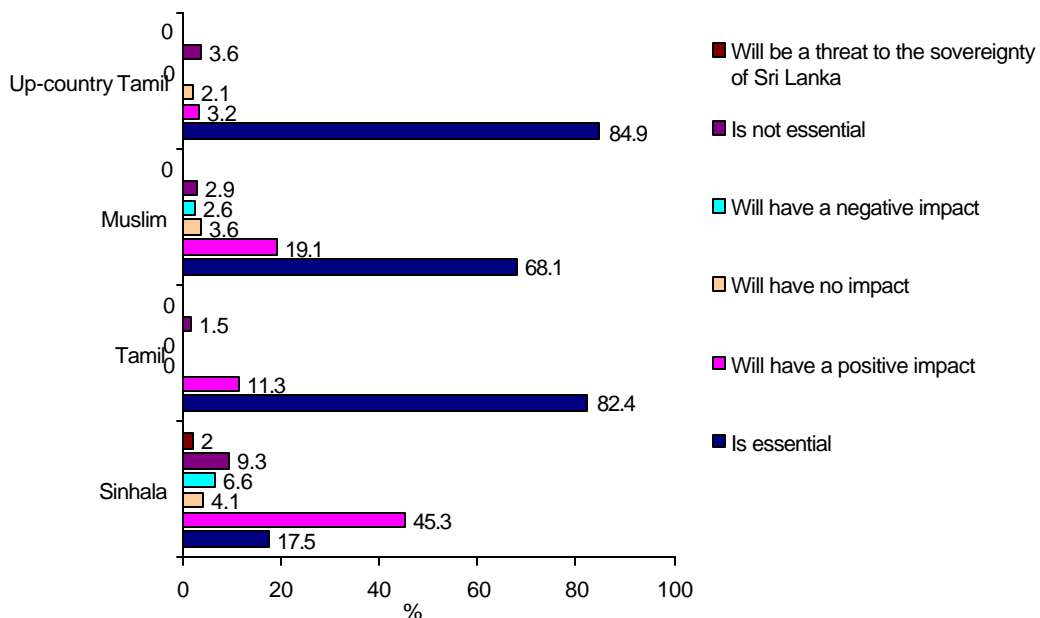
SRI LANKA MONITORING MISSION

If aware of the involvement of foreign monitors in monitoring the ceasefire, what is your opinion of the need for such a monitoring mission for the ceasefire agreement to succeed?

National Trend

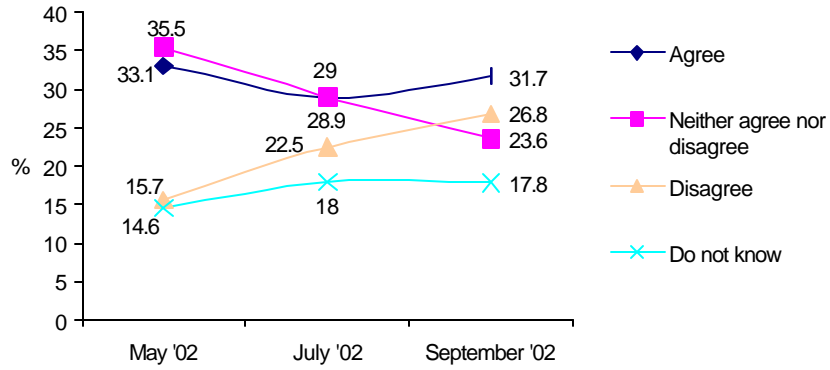


Ethnic Trend

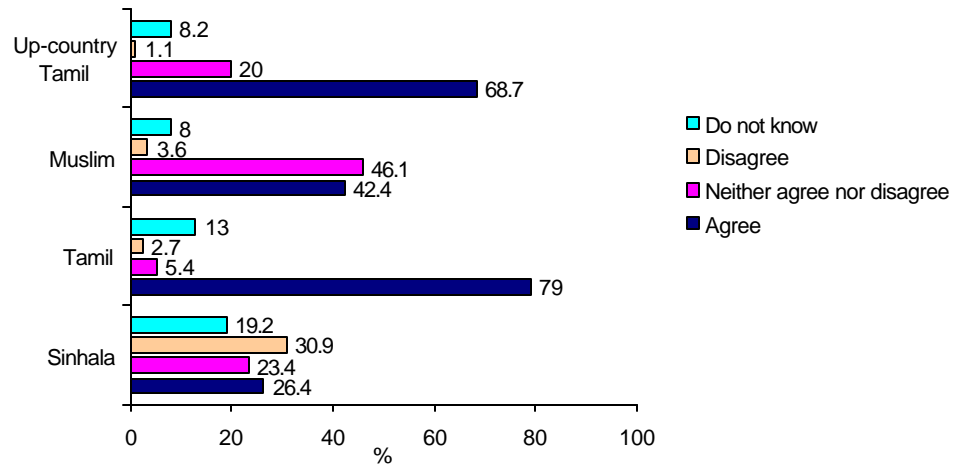


I think the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission is impartial in its monitoring of the ceasefire agreement.

National Trend

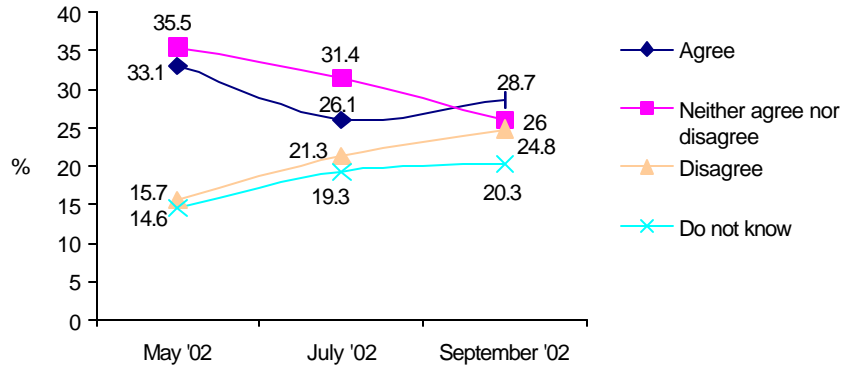


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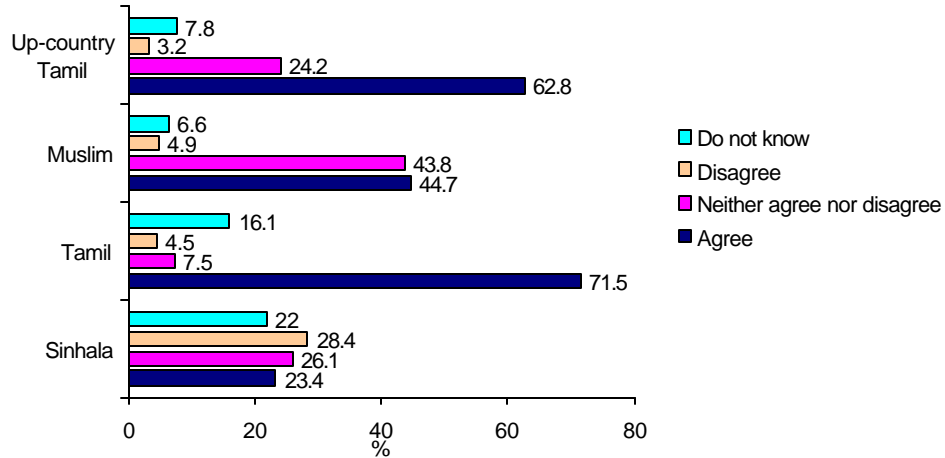


I think the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission is effective in its monitoring of the ceasefire agreement.

National Trend

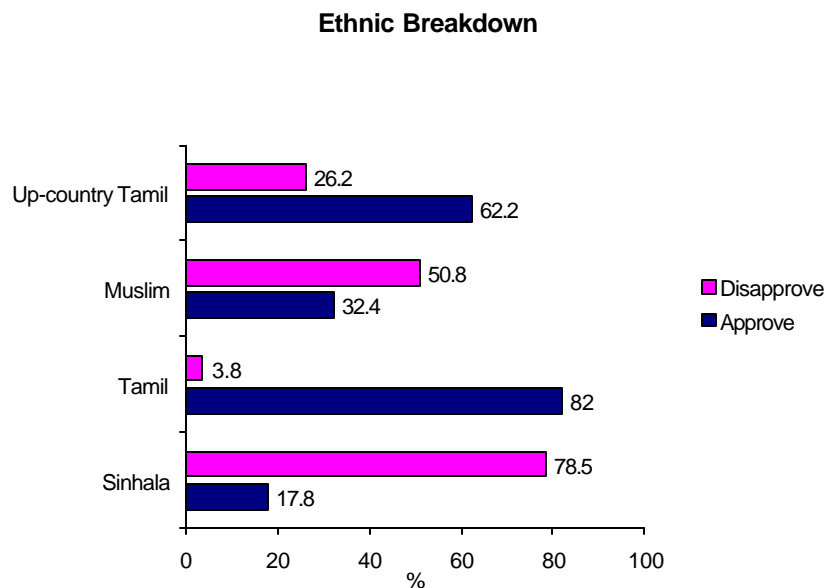
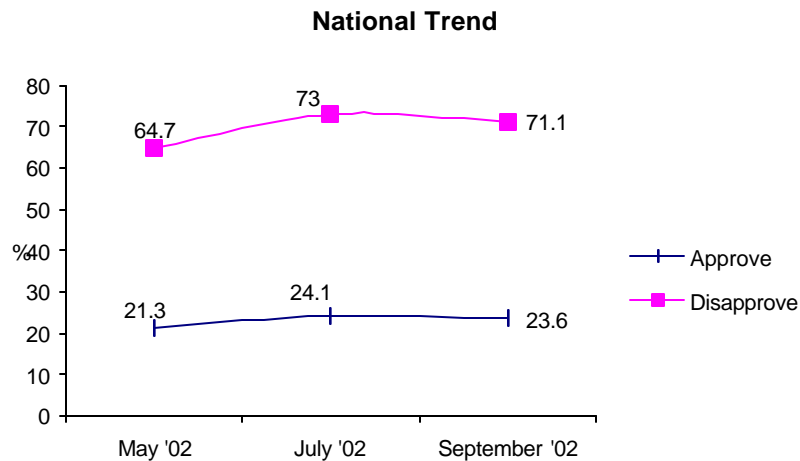


Ethnic Breakdown



INTERIM ADMINISTRATION

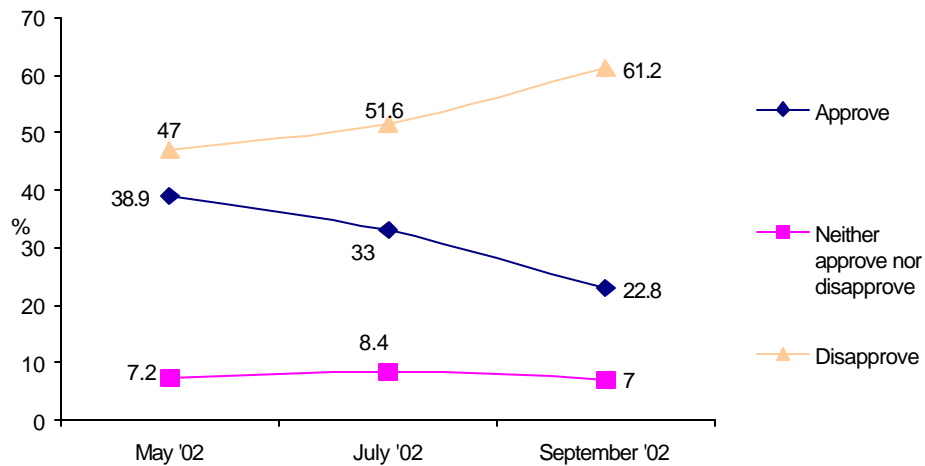
If you have heard of the proposal, do you approve or disapprove of the proposal to set up an interim administration under LTTE control in the North East?



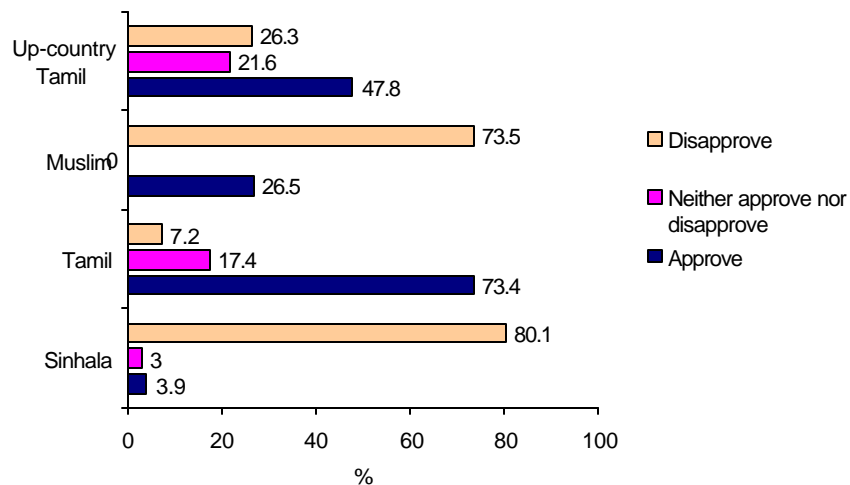
If you approve of such a proposal...

The LTTE should have complete control of the proposed North East interim administration.

National Trend



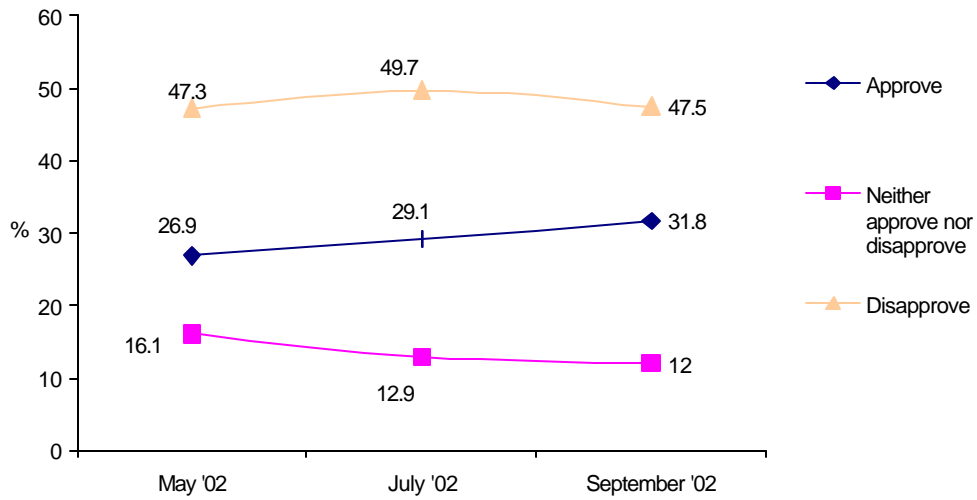
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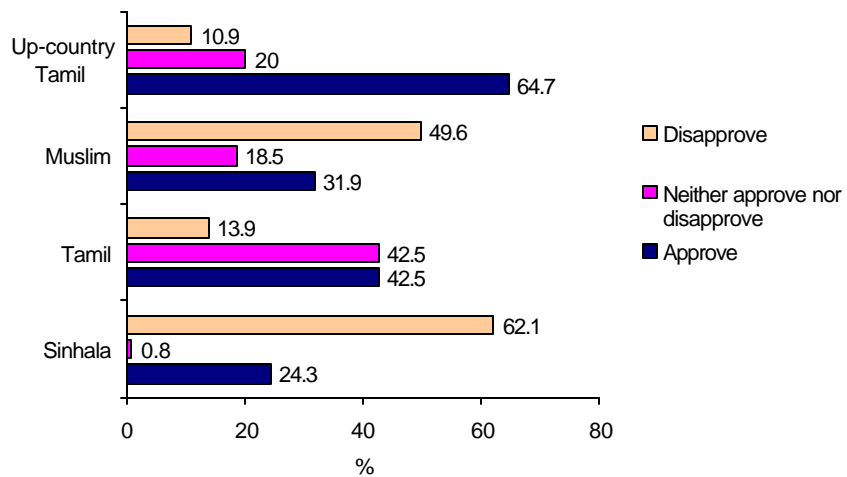
If you approve of such a proposal...

Other Tamil political parties should be included in the proposed North East interim administration.

National Trend



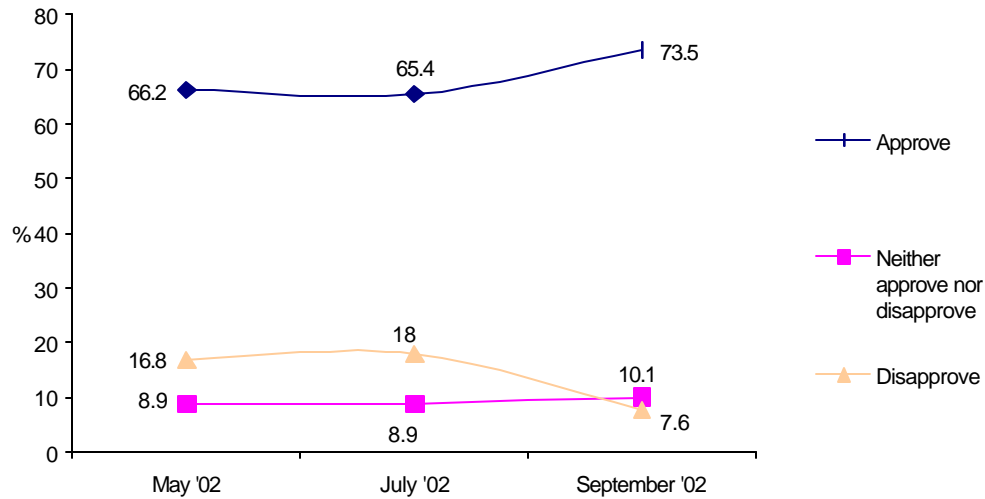
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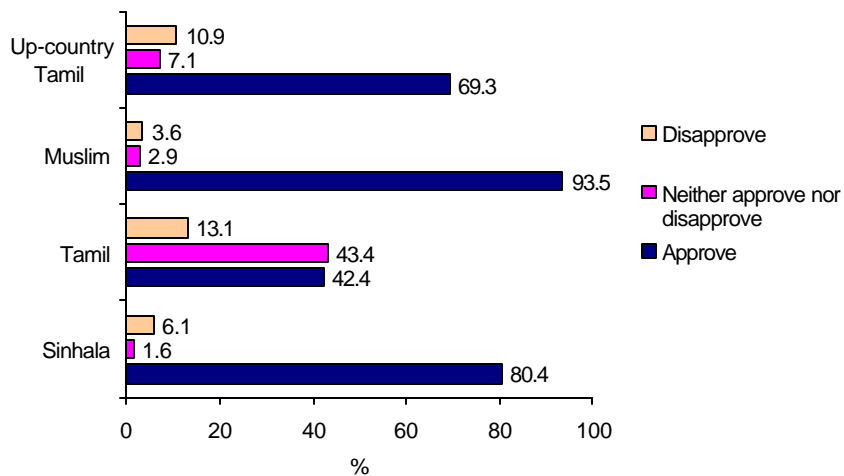
If you approve of such a proposal...

The Muslim and Sinhalese communities should be represented in the proposed North East interim administration.

National Trend

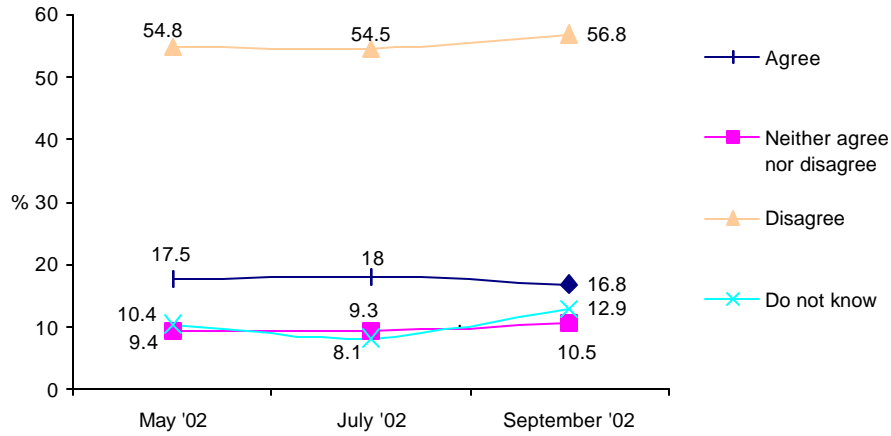


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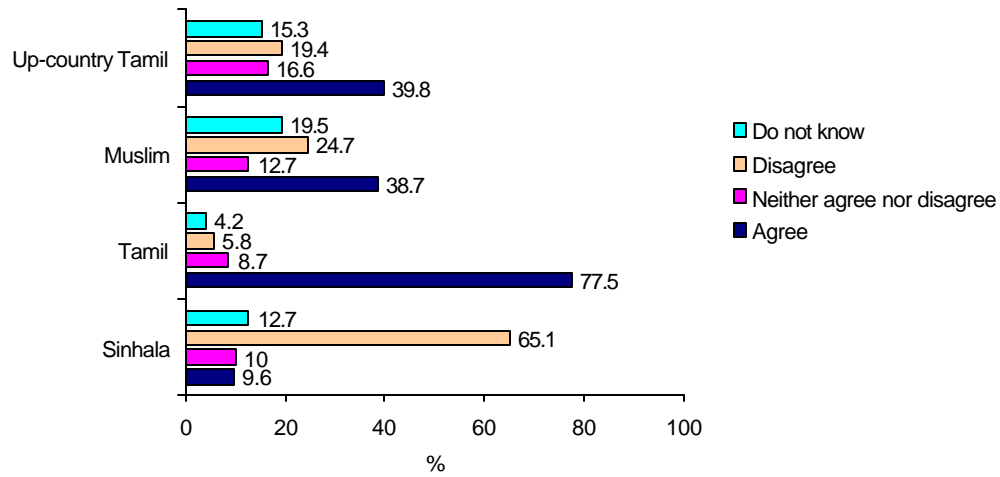


I think the LTTE is the sole representative of the Tamil community.

National Trend

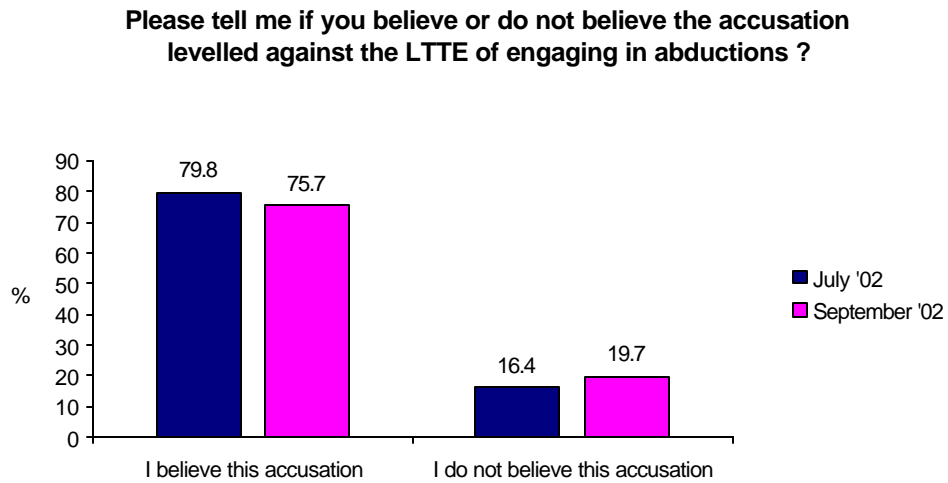


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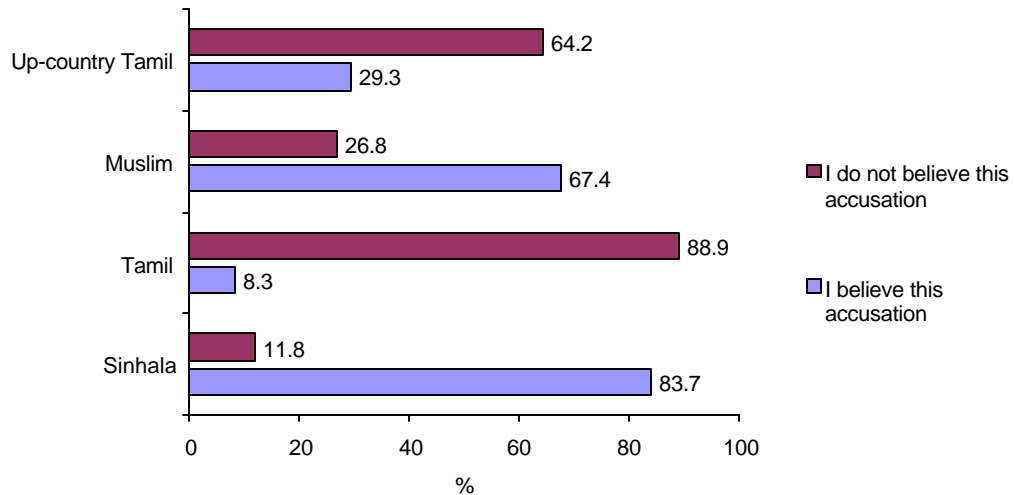


LTTE ABDUCTION, EXTORTION & TAXATION

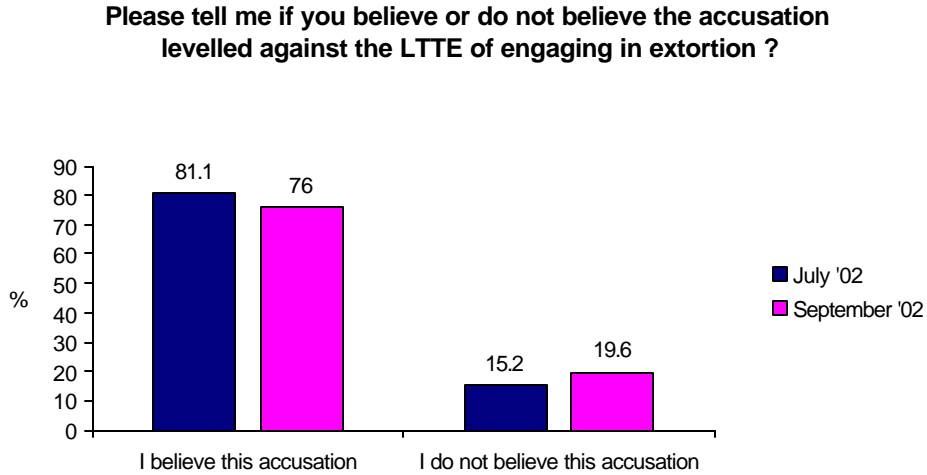
Please tell me if you believe or do not believe the accusation levelled against the LTTE of engaging in abductions?



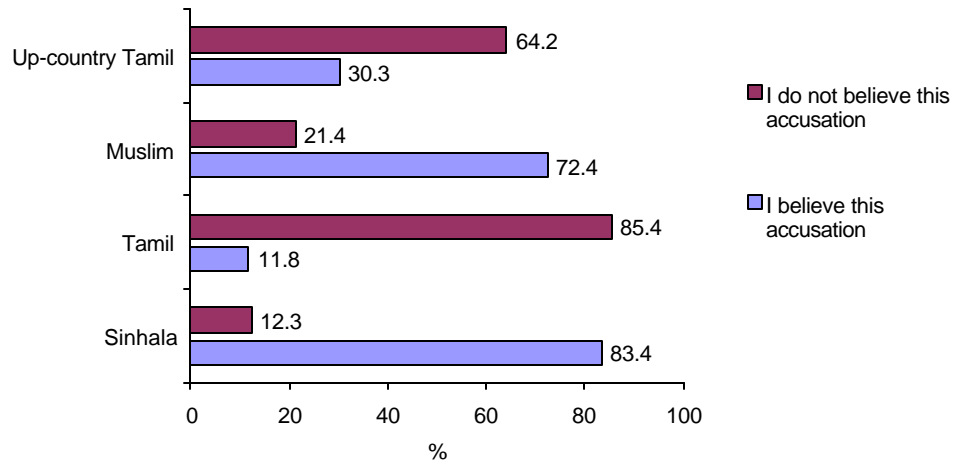
Ethnic Breakdown



Please tell me if you believe or do not believe the accusation levelled against the LTTE of engaging in extortion?

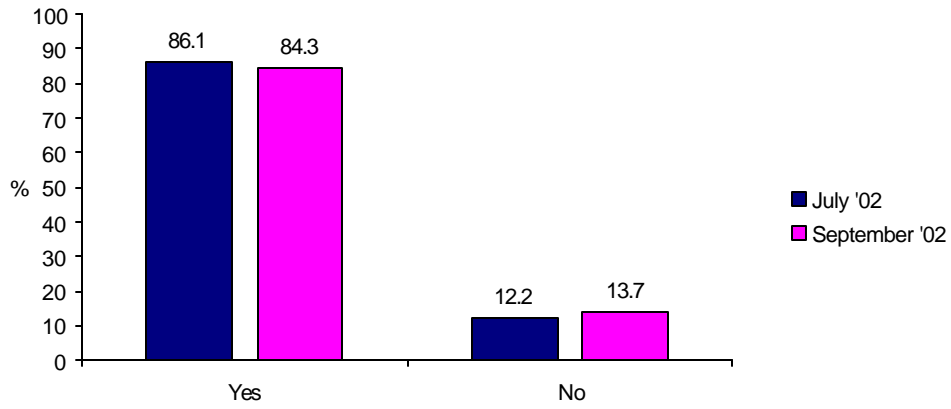


Ethnic Breakdown

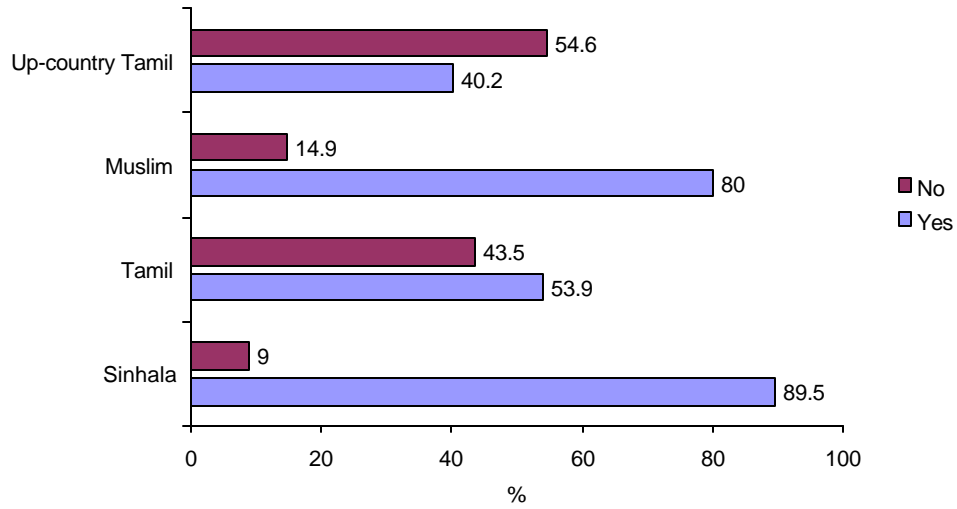


Are you aware that the LTTE levies taxes in the North and East?

National Trend



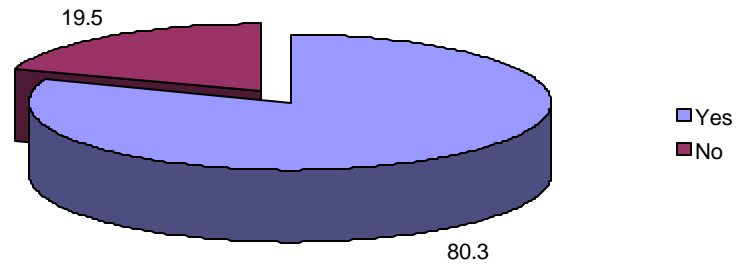
Ethnic Breakdown



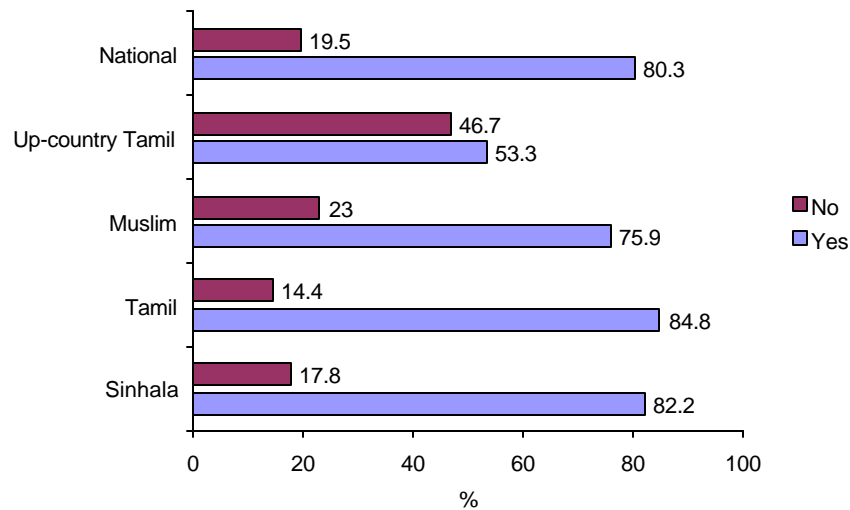
PEACE TALKS IN THAILAND

Are you aware of the talks that took place in Thailand between the Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE?

National Breakdown

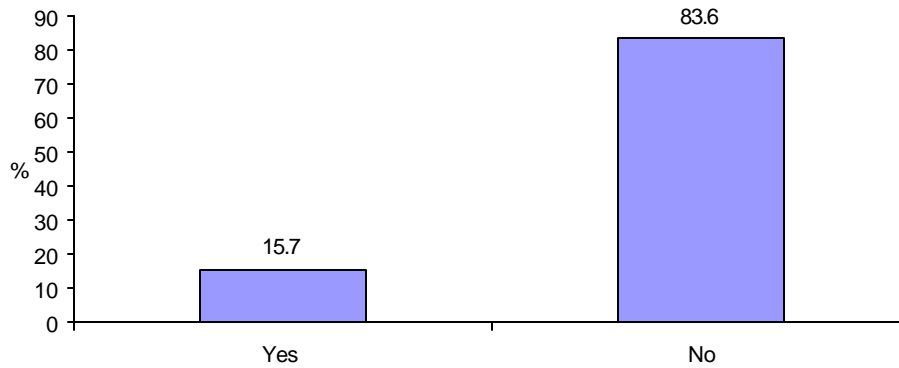


Ethnic Breakdown

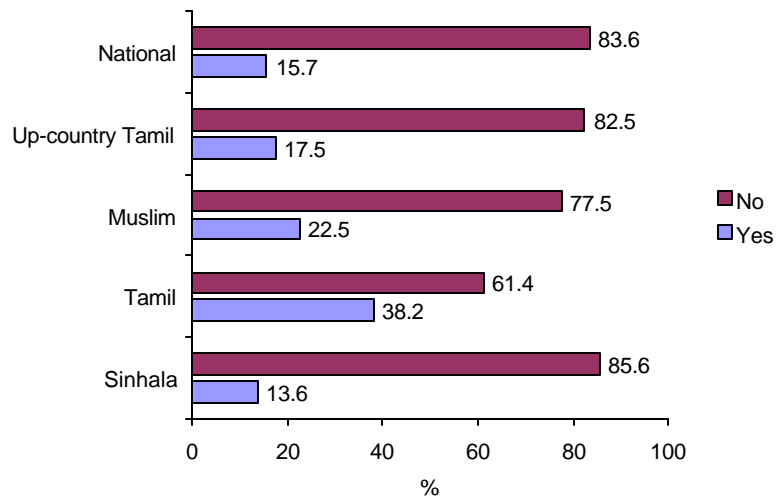


If aware of the talks that took place in Thailand between the Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE, are you aware of the decisions taken at the talks?

National Breakdown

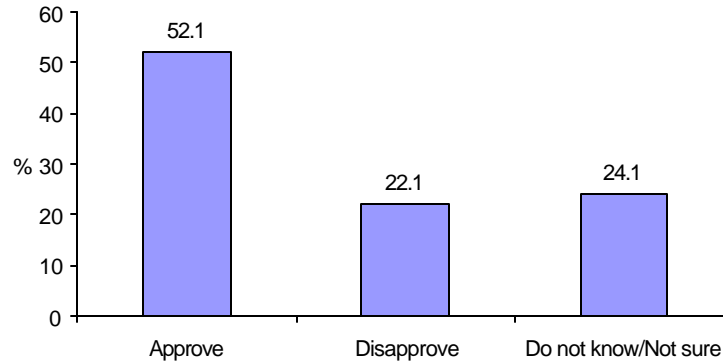


Ethnic Breakdown

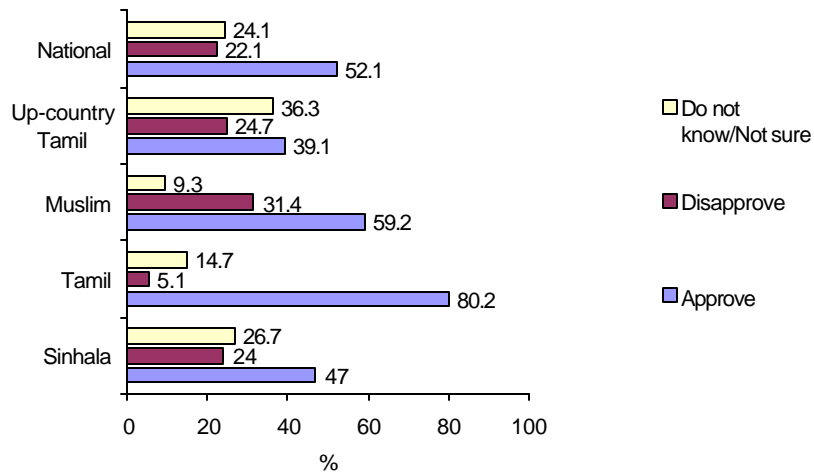


If aware of the decisions taken at the talks, do you approve of the setting up of the Joint Committee and Joint Task Force (JTF)?

National Breakdown

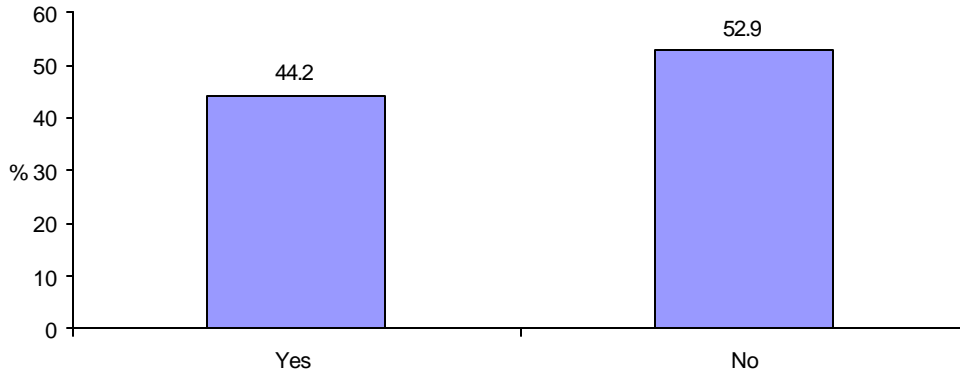


Ethnic Breakdown

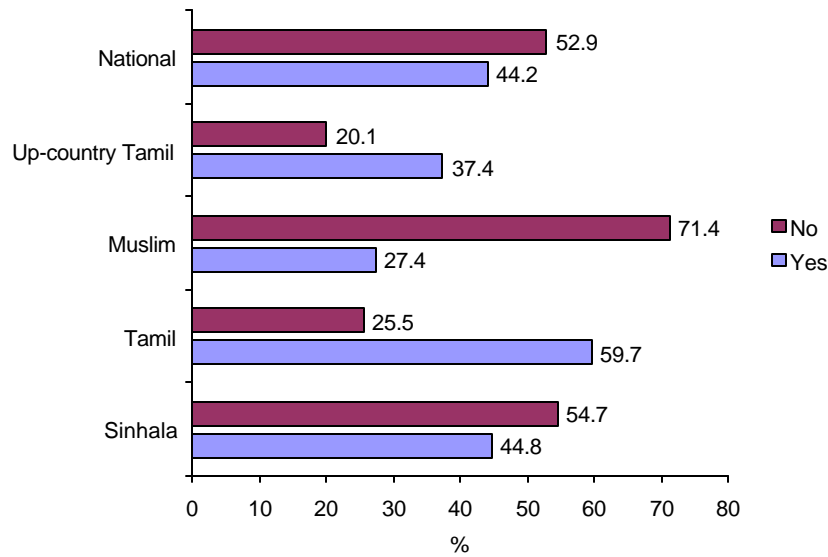


Are you aware of the statement made by Dr. Anton Balasingham that Eelam does not connote a separate state and that the LTTE would settle for regional autonomy?

National Breakdown

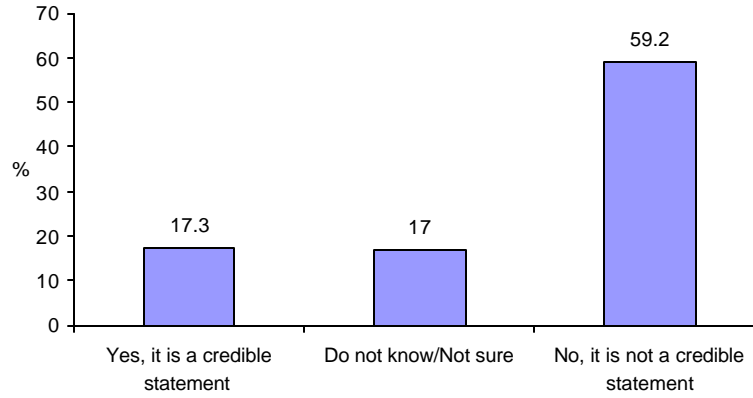


Ethnic Breakdown

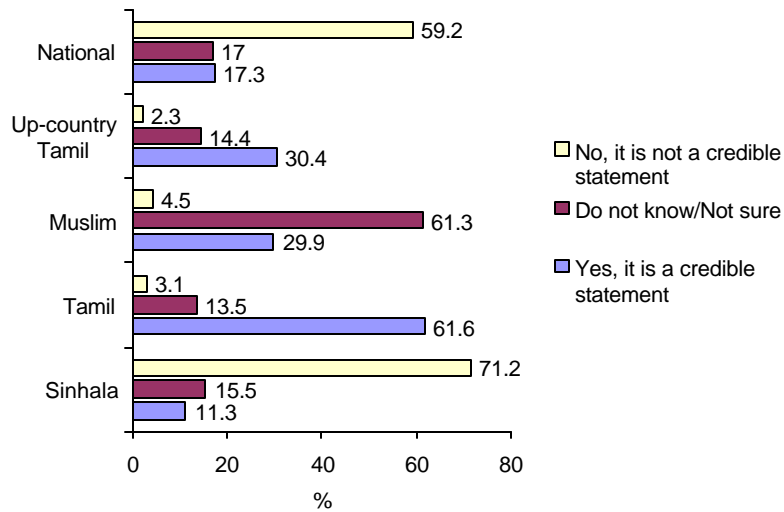


Please state your opinion on the credibility of this statement.

National Breakdown

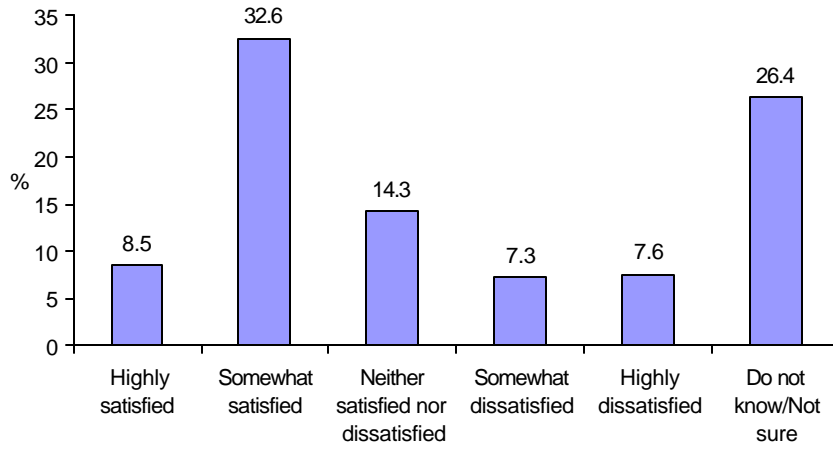


Ethnic Breakdown

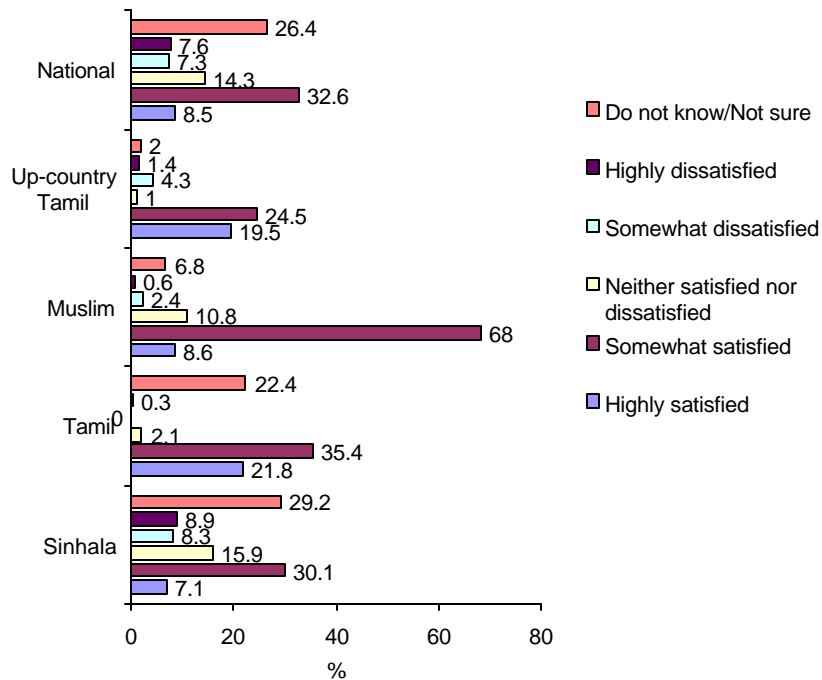


Please state your level of satisfaction with the outcome of the talks.

National Breakdown

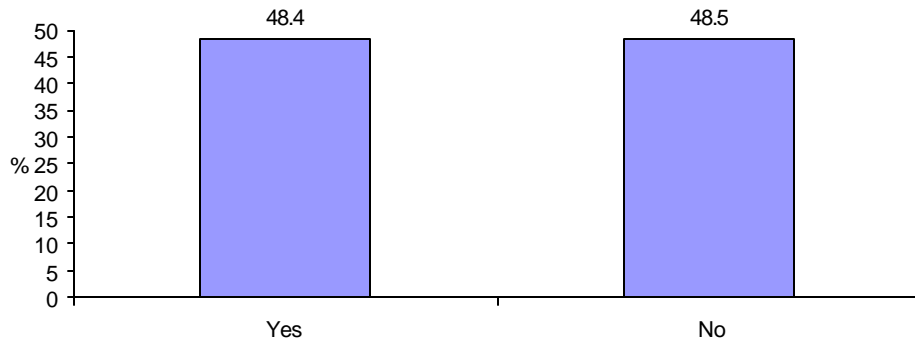


Ethnic Breakdown

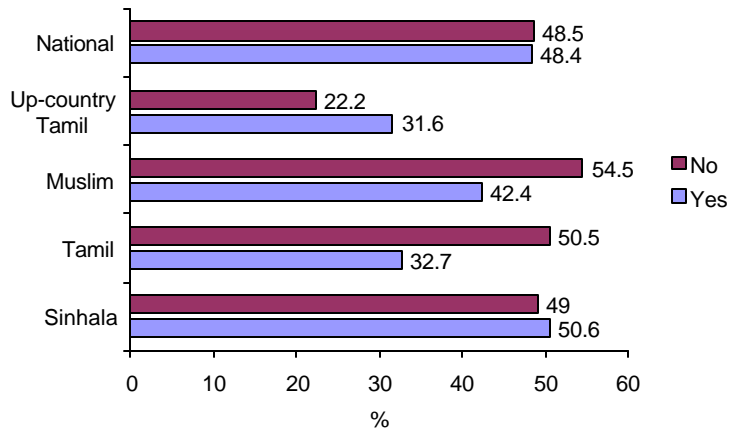


Are you aware of the President's request for her representative to take part in talks?

National Breakdown

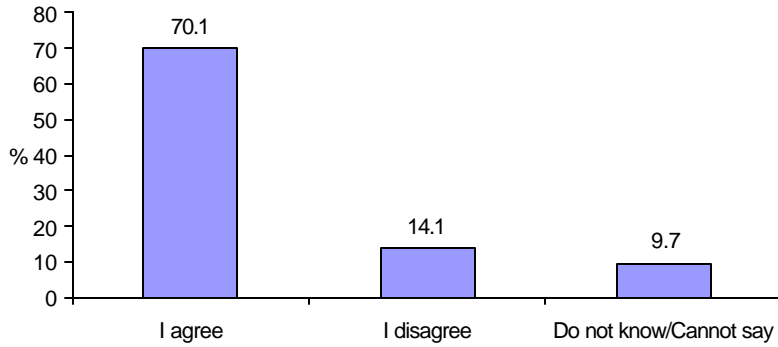


Ethnic Breakdown

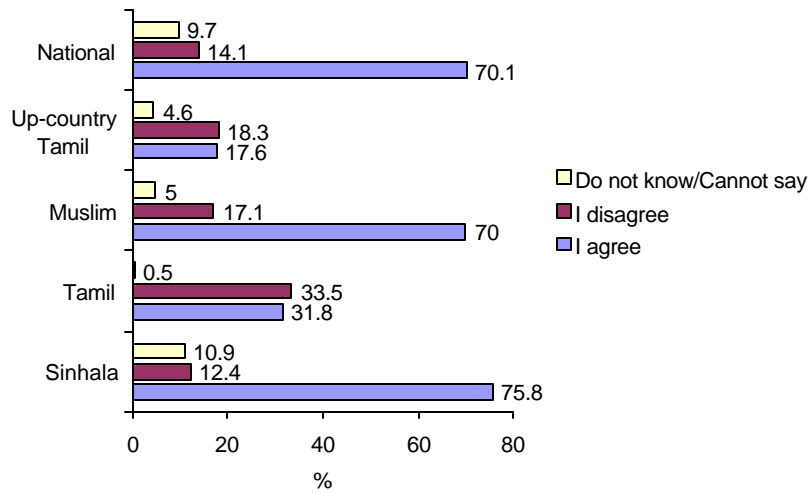


If aware of the President's request, please state your opinion with regard to her request.

National Breakdown



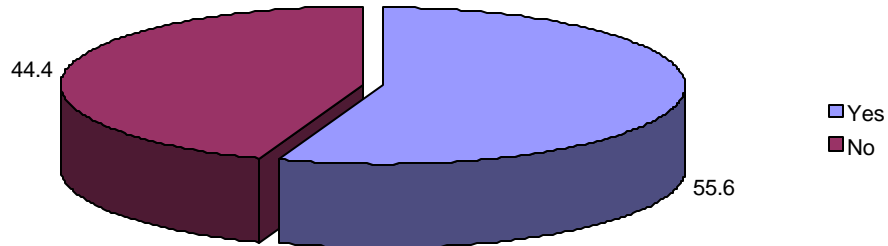
Ethnic Breakdown



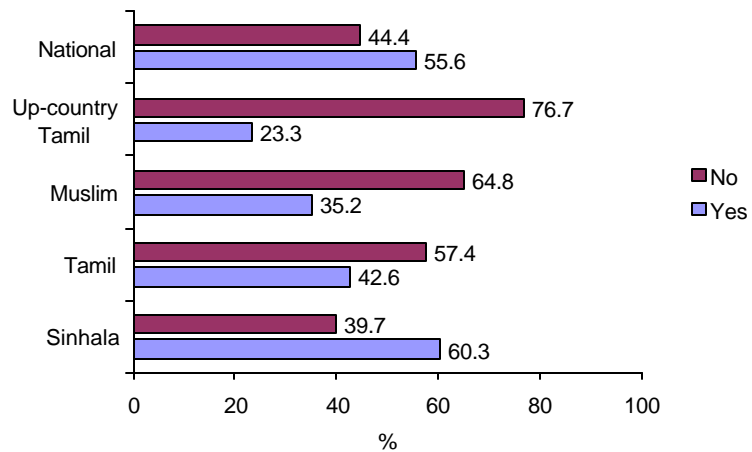
19TH AMENDMENT

Are you aware of the UNF proposed 19th Amendment to the constitution?

National Breakdown

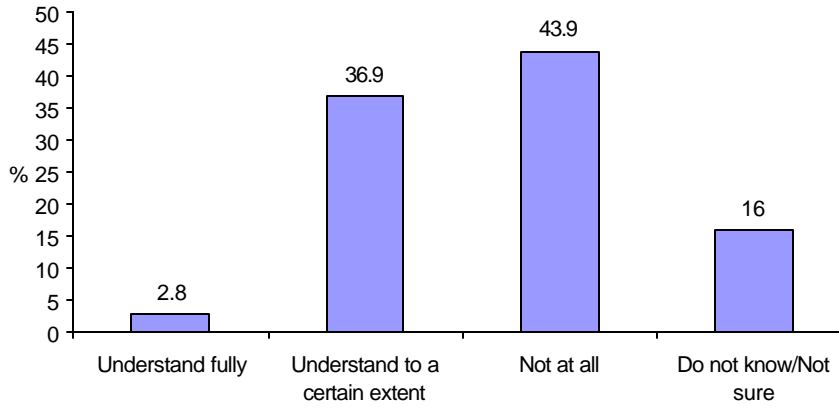


Ethnic Breakdown

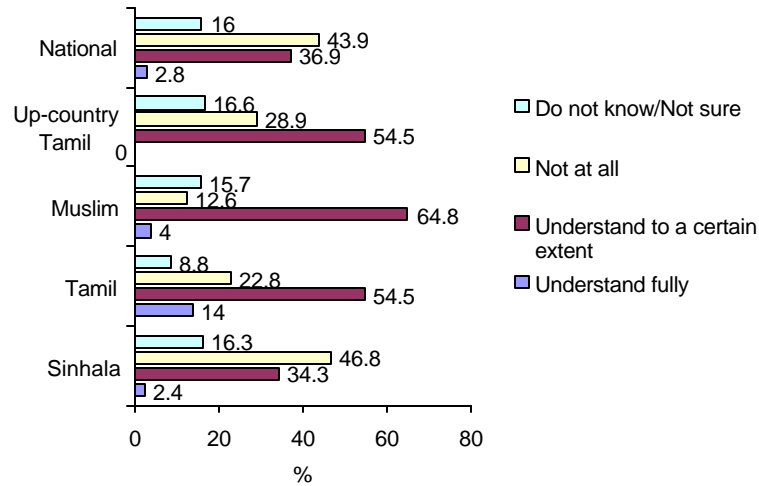


If aware of the UNF proposed 19th Amendment to the constitution, please state to what extent you understand the 19th Amendment?

National Breakdown

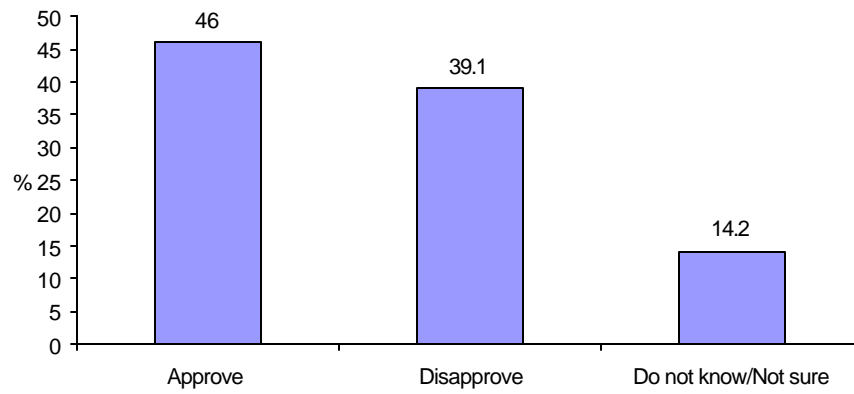


Ethnic Breakdown

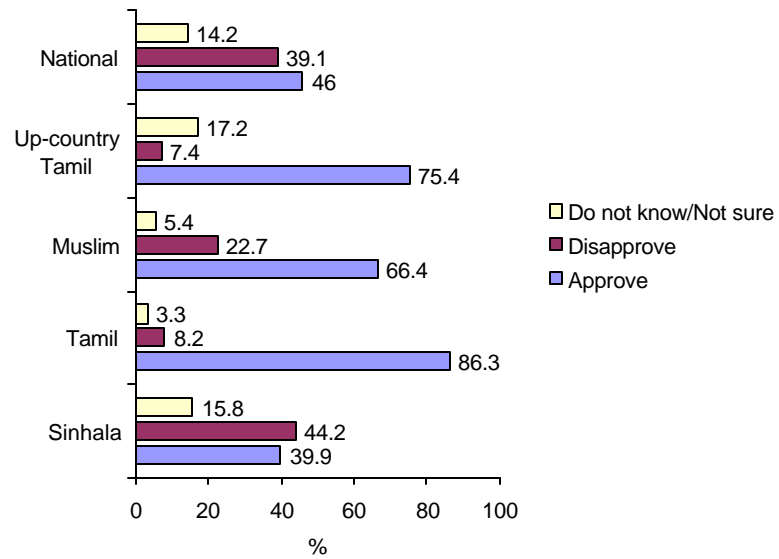


If you understand the 19th Amendment fully or to a certain extent, please state whether you approve or disapprove of the 19th Amendment?

National Breakdown



Ethnic Breakdown





Annex

District sample (weighted) distribution in September 2002

DISTRICT	TOTAL
Colombo	200
Gampaha	177
Kalutara	96
Kandy	106
Matale	38
Nuwara Eliya	55
Galle	82
Hambantota	47
Matara	68
Anuradhapura	60
Polonnaruwa	29
Kurunegala	124
Puttlam	56
Badulla	61
Monaragala	31
Ratnapura	83
Kegalle	66
Amparai	44
Batticaloa	21
Trincomalee	16
Vavuniya	64
NATIONAL	1524

Ethnic sample (weighted) distribution in September 2002

ETHNICITY	TOTAL
Sinhala	1257
Tamil	79
Muslim	103
Up-country Tamil	85
NATIONAL	1524

Social Indicator (SI) is an independent social research organisation, which conducts polls on socio-economic and political issues.

Operating under the Board of Directors of the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA), SI was established in September 1999, and filled a longstanding vacuum for a permanent, professional and independent polling facility in Sri Lanka on social and political issues.

Polling is an instrument of empowerment, a means by which the silent majority of the public can express their opinions on issues affecting them. Our mission is to conduct surveys on key social issues, thereby providing a means through which public opinion can influence the public policy debate.



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SAMPLING METHODOLOGY

Given that the goal of the Peace Confidence Index (PCI) study is to measure the fluctuations in public confidence levels towards the peace process over time it is essential that the study be conducted repetitively with equal pauses during the study. Thus conducting the study bi-monthly with the use of a clearly defined and constant sample frame during each phase of the study ensures this fact.

The study is conducted using a structured questionnaire that is administered to a sample of approximately 1600 respondents during each phase of the study. This sample is adequate to capture the minimum ethnic diversity within the span of ten days of fieldwork. Although it is undeniable that an individual's opinion on the peace process is influenced by a number of factors, however the ethnic factor, which is the most important and influential, is the sole factor that has been accommodated in this model.

The total sample is distributed among 22 administrative districts (strata) of Sri Lanka, but in the Amparai, Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Vavuniya and Mannar districts the entire area is not covered as a result of the prevailing conflict situation and logistical difficulties. The sample size is assigned to each stratum is approximately equal to the population proportions. However, some districts are over sampled due to the ethnic heterogeneity but the over sampling biases are eliminated by weighting the sample.

A sample is allocated to a particular ethnicity within a district only if the population proportion of that particular ethnicity exceeds 9%. A Divisional Secretariat (DS) is selected as the primary sampling unit using the Simple Random Sampling technique while the Grama Niladhari Divisions (GND) in a DS are selected randomly as the secondary sampling unit using the '*Grama Niladhari Divisions of Sri Lanka 1999*' published by the Department of Census and Statistics as the sample frame.

To maintain the quality of the fieldwork and ensuring a maximum dispersion of the sample within a DS, enumerators are allowed to conduct a maximum of ten interviews a day in a GND. Within a given GND the enumerator is advised to select a starting point randomly and proceed with interviews using the random walk (right hand rule) technique in order to assure the random selection of households.

In the case of urban areas the interviewer is instructed to skip a house while selecting the households, thus resulting in the interview taking place at every alternative household. As the final sampling unit, the respondent is chosen from the household using the 'KRISH' grid thus ensuring that each member of the household has an equal chance of being selected to the PCI sample.

The PCI national level estimates are subject to a 3% error margin with a .95 confidence level. It is noteworthy to mention here that the PCI model does not support the regional level analysis at the same level of precision.