



# **The Public's Knowledge Findings Report**

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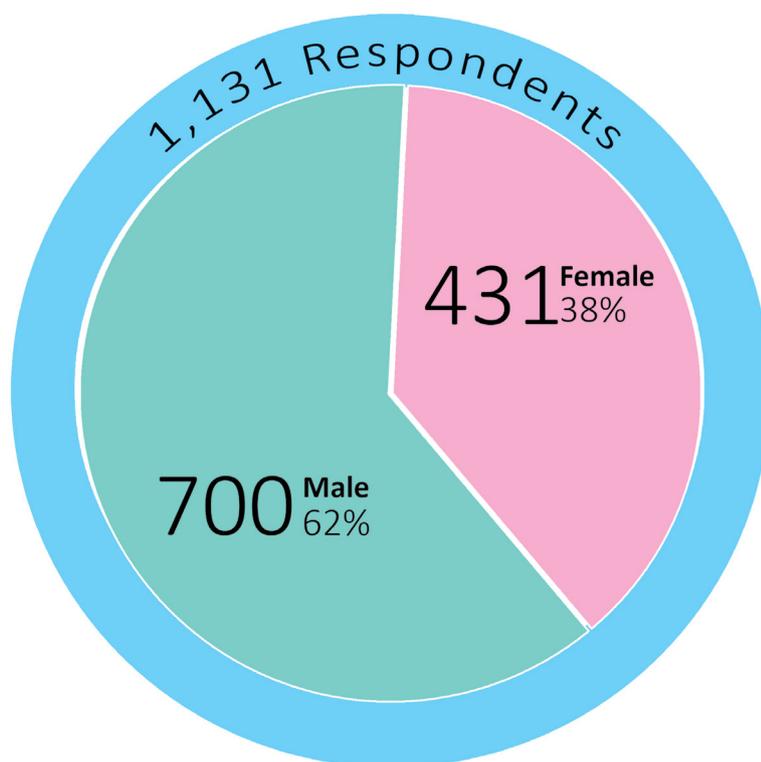
**DEMOCRACY**  
**FEDERALISM**  
**DECENTRALIZATION**  
**INTERNAL SELF-DETERMINATION**  
**SECULAR STATE**  
**GENDER EQUALITY**  
**PEACE PROCESS**

**(JUNE, 2020)**

## About The Report

This report is based on findings over two years survey, activities and experiences of Centre for Development and Ethnic Studies (CDES) in all states and regions, carried out from November 2018 – March 2020. The primary aim of this research is to understand the level of civilians’ knowledge and awareness on basic principles of democracy, characteristics of federalism, decentralization, self-determination, gender justice, secular state and the peace process in Myanmar. The facts and datas are collected from self-expressed paper based survey during trainings events. Events were conducted in 12 States/Regions and Nay Pyi Taw of Myanmar. [No respondents from Yangon Region and Rakhine States] Respondents are leaders from civil society organizations, political parties, youth networks, women unions, university students, person with disabilities (PWDs) groups and independent activists. The number of respondents for structured questionnaires employed 1,131 people.

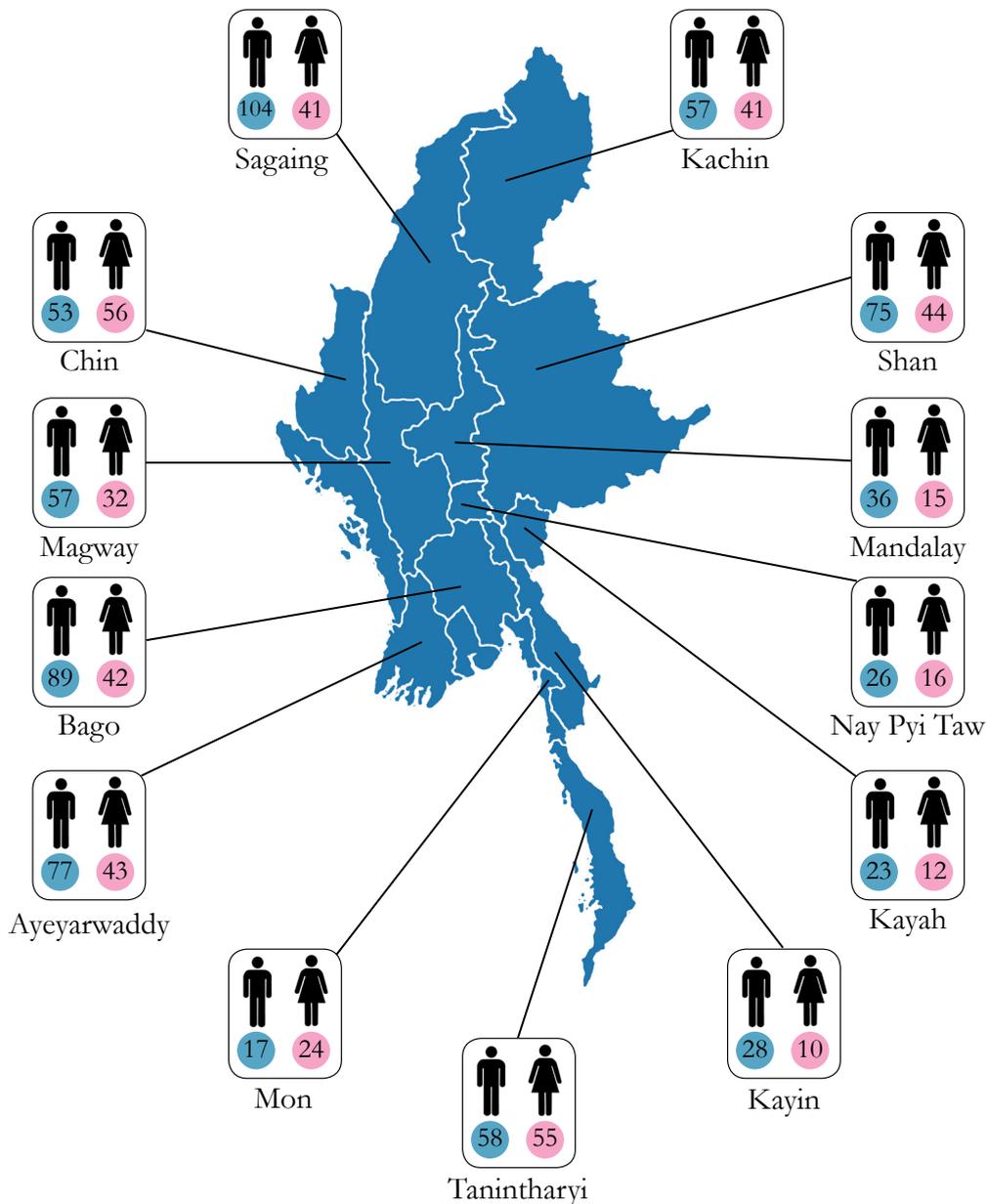
Figure 1  
Diaggregation of Male and Female Respondents



## Thematic Issues

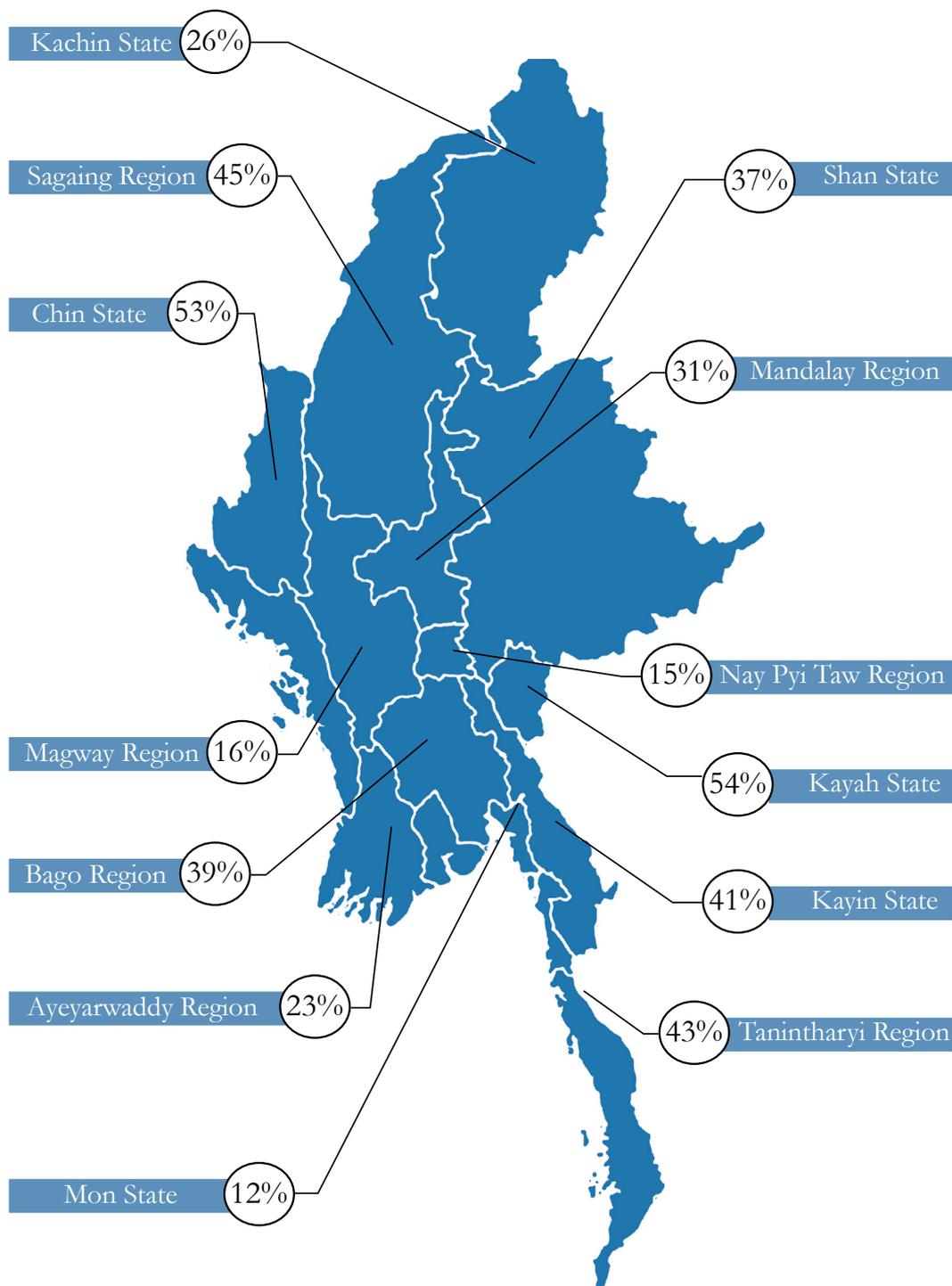
Eight questions were determined to measure participants’ political knowledge. This political knowledge measures contributors’ knowledge and familiarity with basic principles of democracy, characteristics of federalism, decentralization, self-determination, gender equality, secular state, awareness on peace process and prospect on the peace process of Myanmar. CDES sets its own standard definition for each of these terms. A rating scale of 1 to 5, developed according to CDES’s standard, is used to assess the knowledge level of each respondent.

Figure 2  
Disaggregation of male and female respondents from different States/Regions



Understanding on separation of powers, representations, elections, freedom of expression.

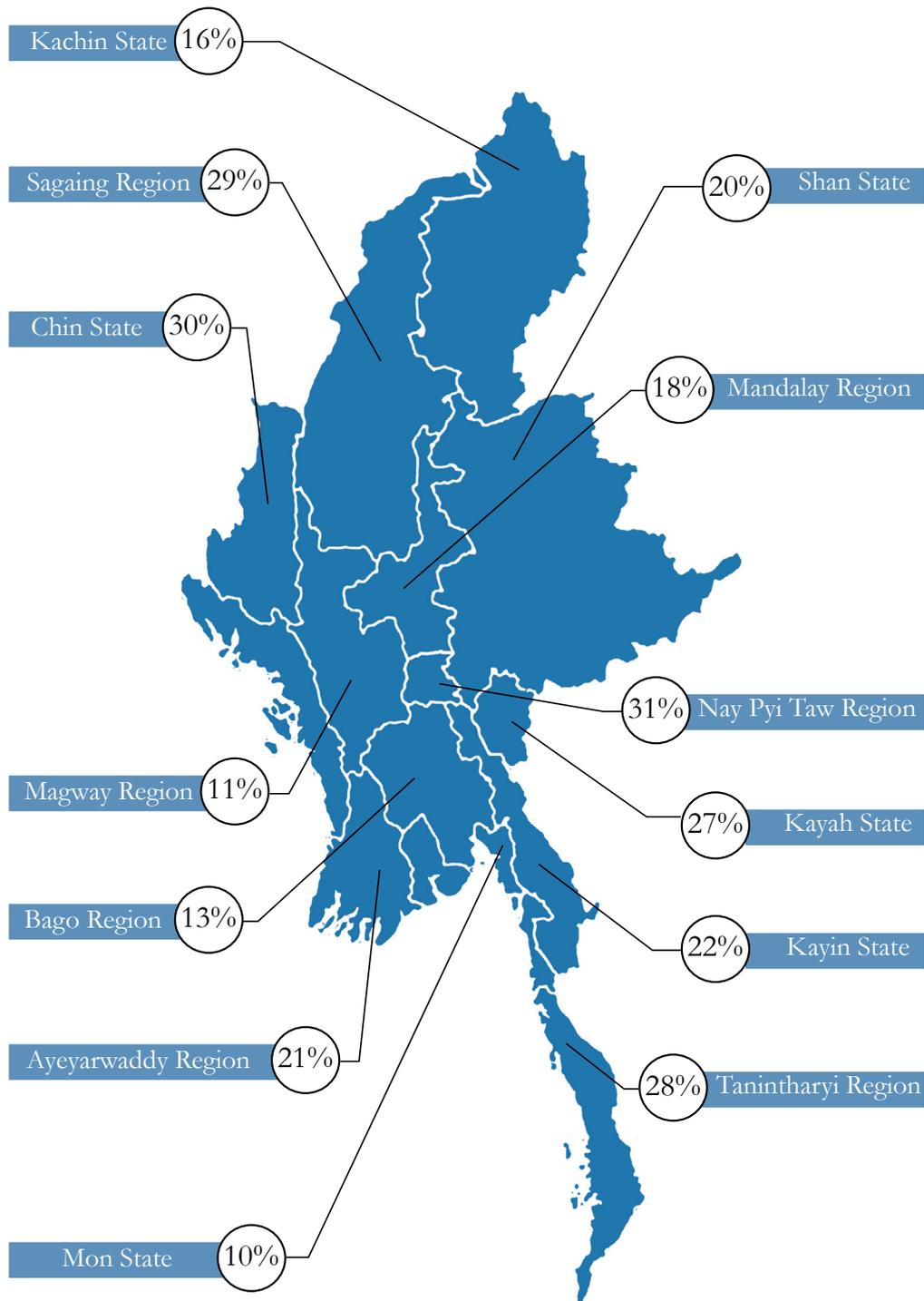
Figure 3  
Knowledge level of Democracy by States/Regions.



# Federalism

Understanding on self-rule, shared rule, constitutional division of powers between union and its member units

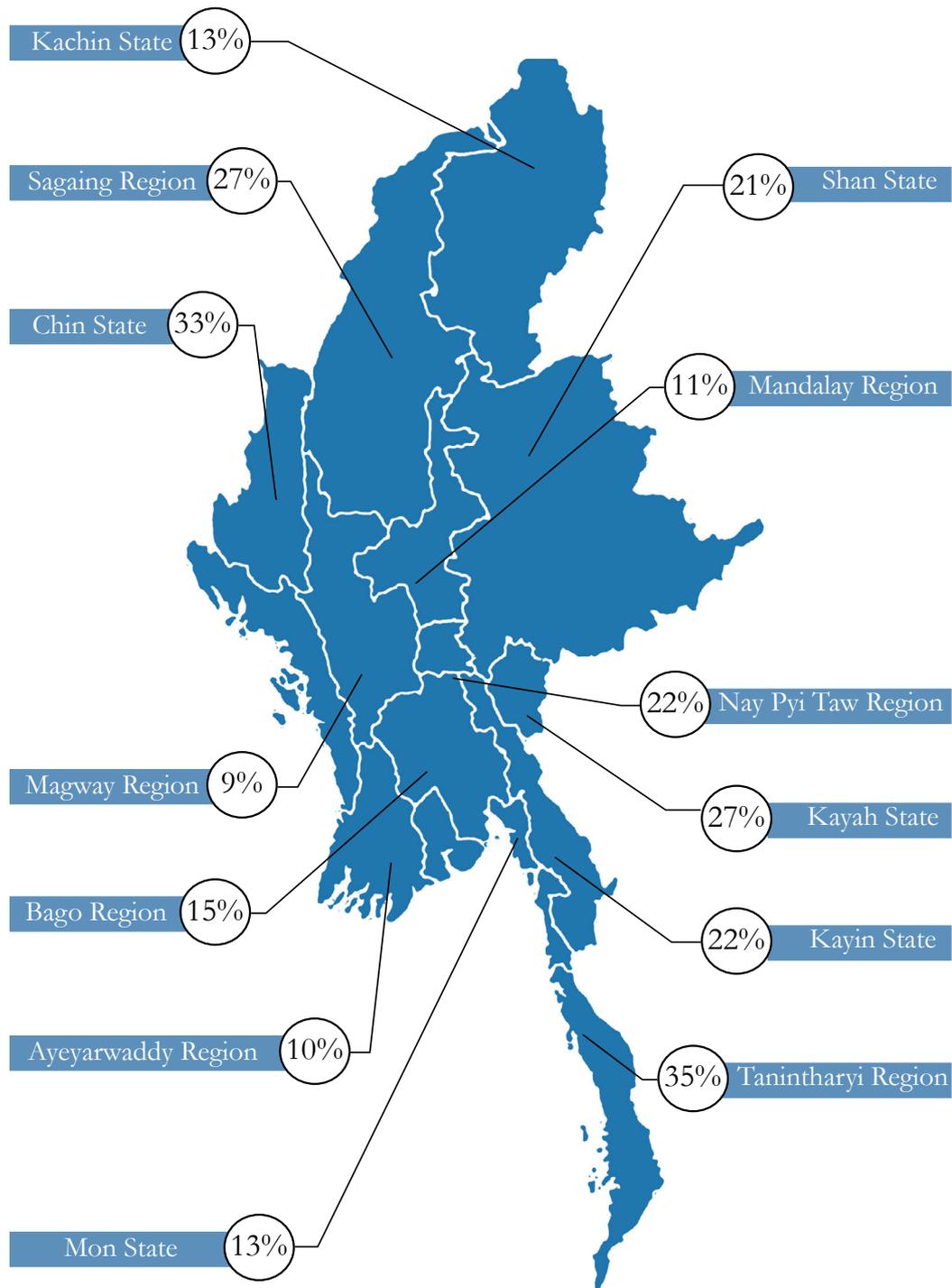
Figure 4  
Knowledge level of Federalism by States/Regions.



# Decentralization

Understanding on the sovereign power of the central government, the procedures of decentralization.

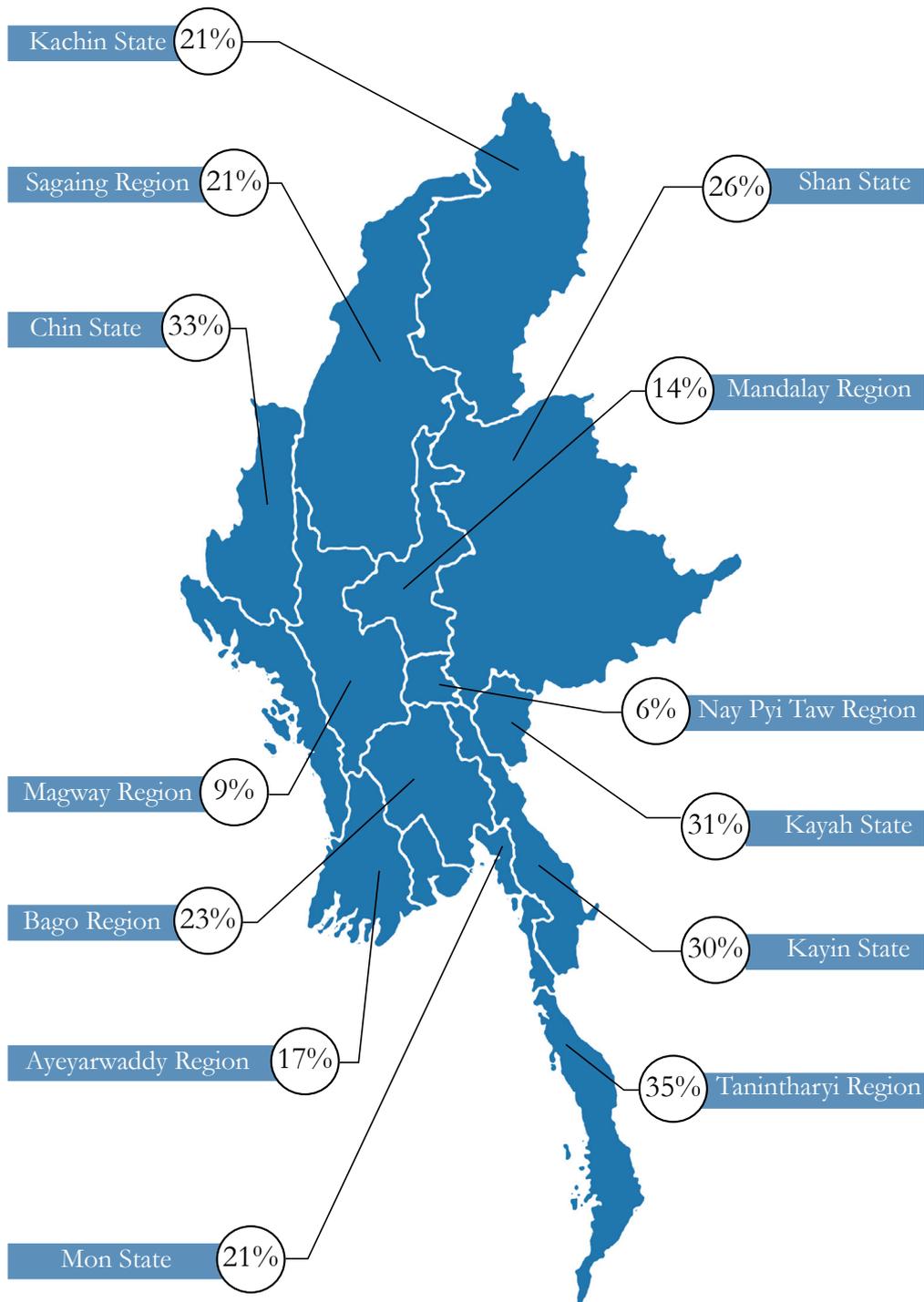
Figure 5  
Knowledge level of Decentralization by States/Regions.



# Internal Self-Determination

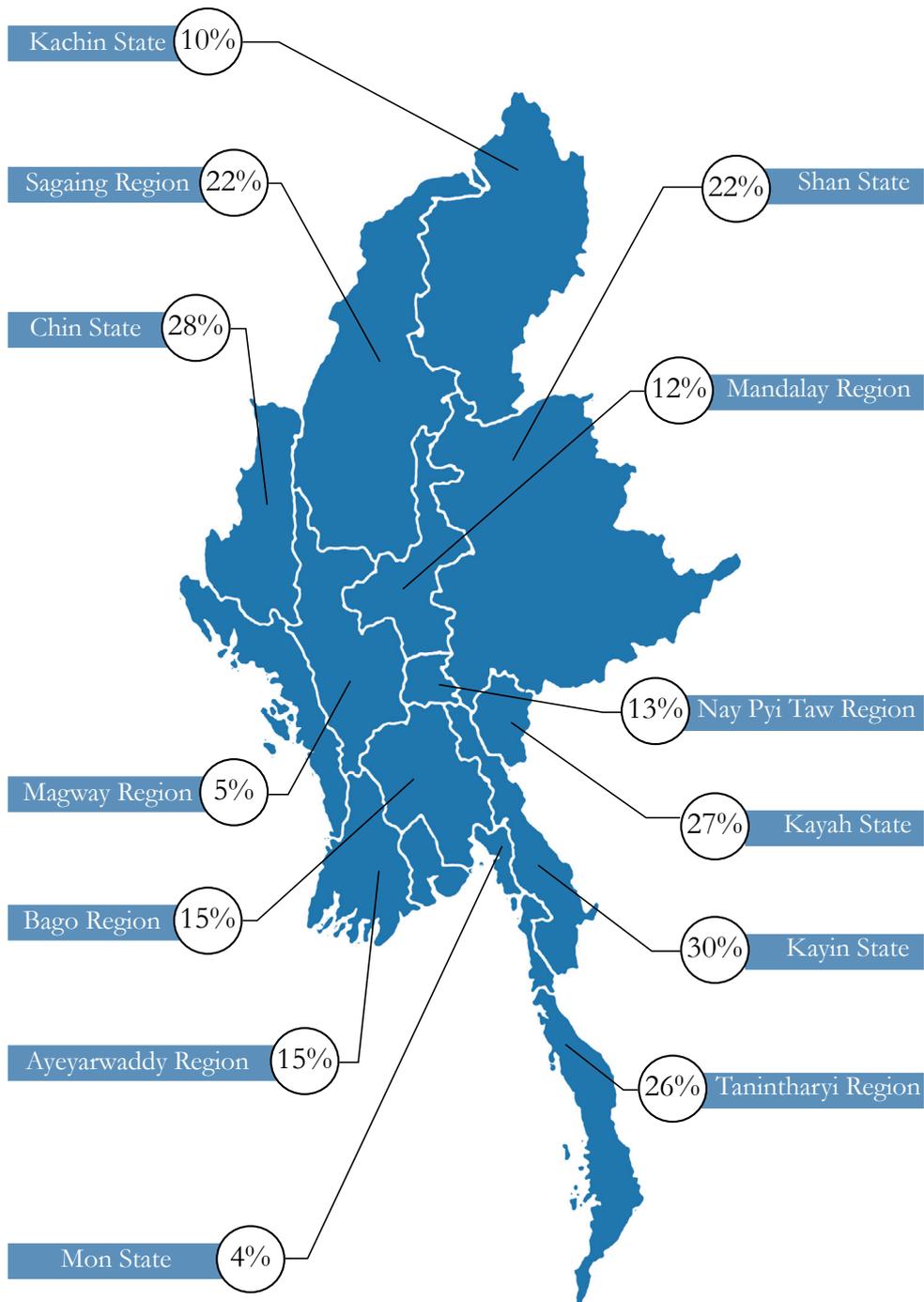
Understanding on the different concepts of internal self-determination and external self-determination, the right to state/region constitutions in the context of current political negotiations.

Figure 6  
Knowledge level of Internal self-determination by States/Regions.



Understanding on the concepts of separation between politics and religion.

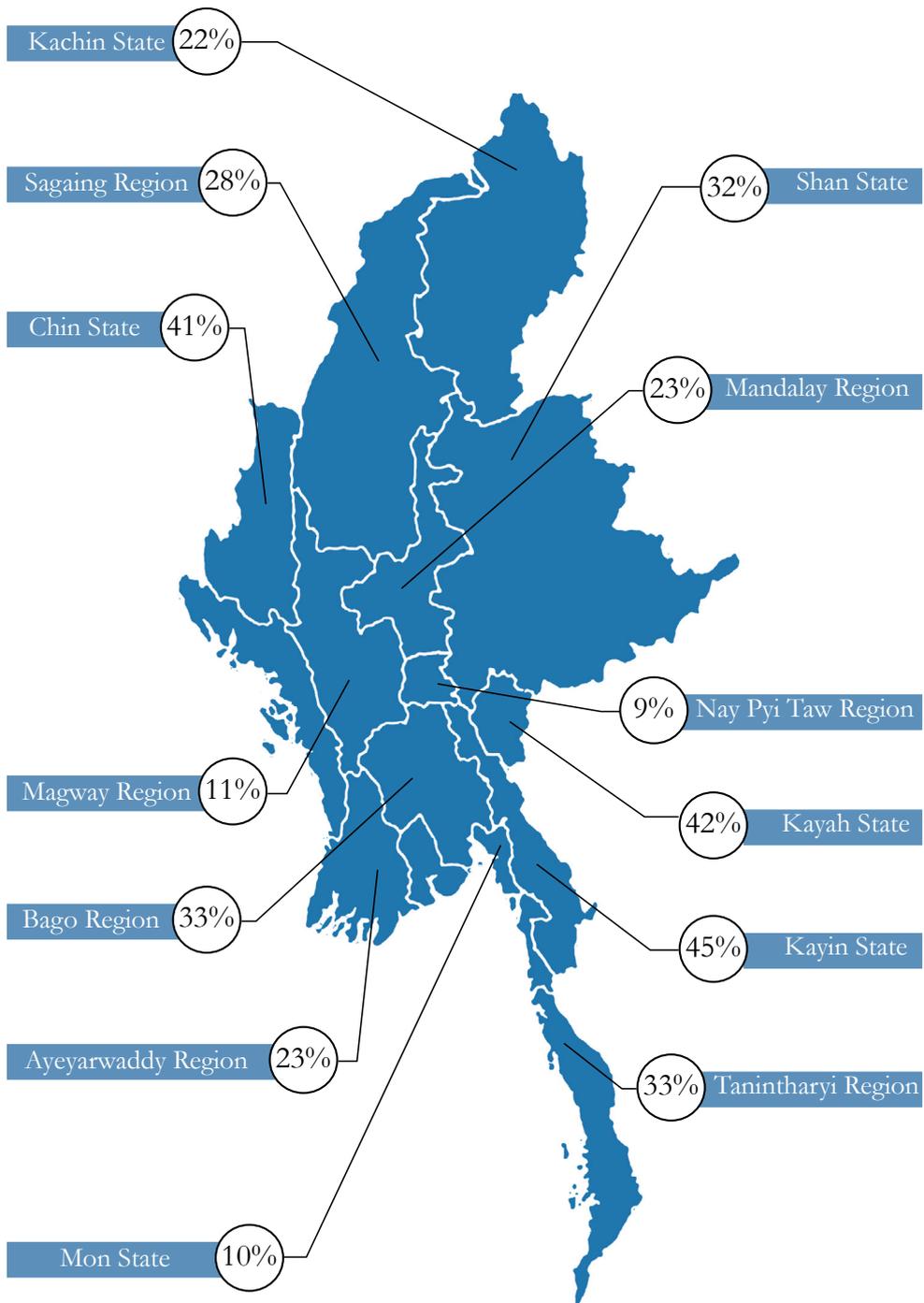
Figure 7  
Knowledge level of Secular State by States/Regions.



# Gender Equality

Understanding on difference between sex and gender. The equal rights, equal responsibilities and equal opportunities for all.

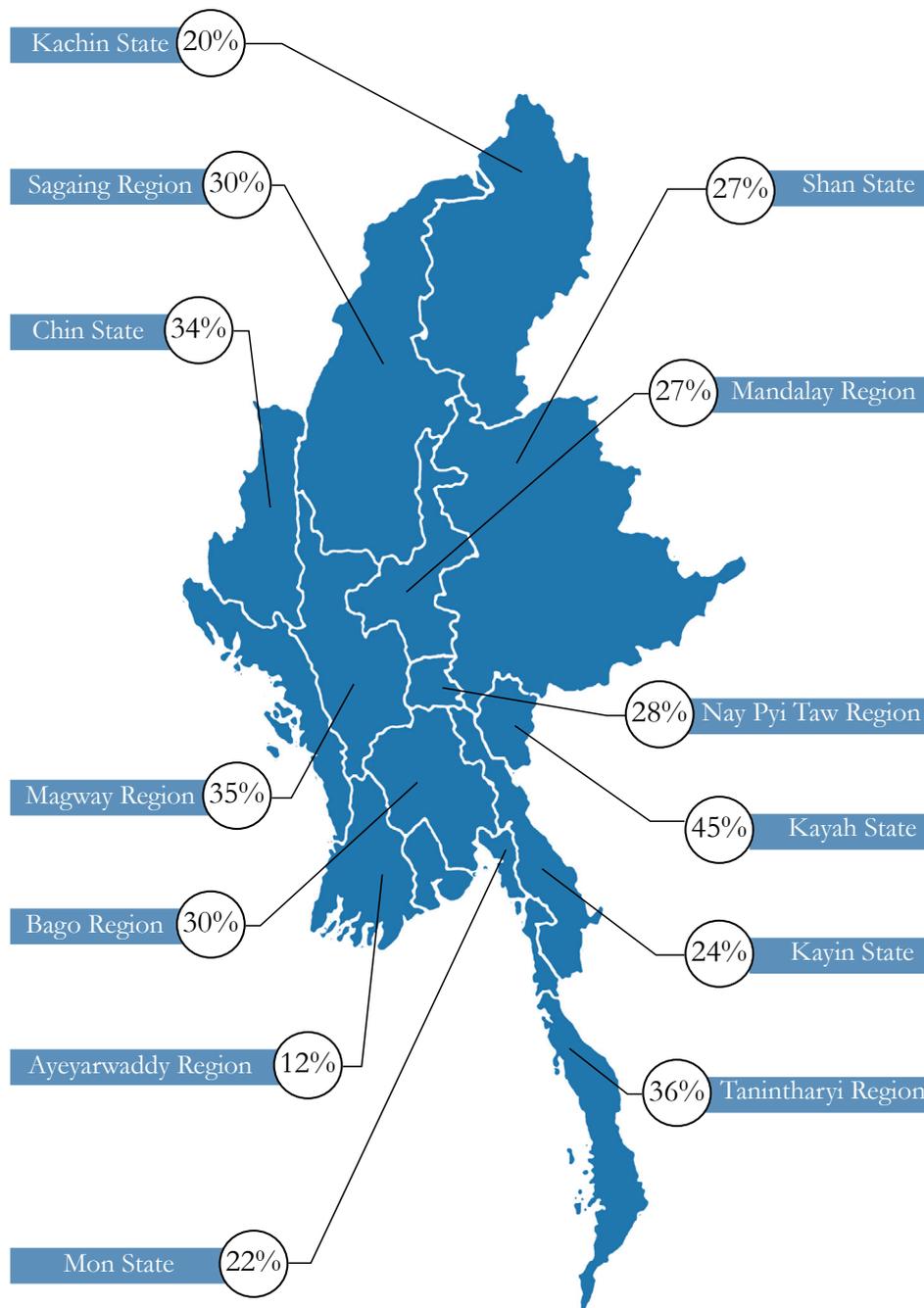
Figure 8  
Knowledge level of Gender Equality by States/Regions.



# Awareness on Peace Process

Understanding on NCA, its mechanisms, stakeholders and substantial aims of the peace process.

Figure 9  
Awareness level on peace process by States/Regions.



# Prospect on Peace Process

Self-expression on how much the current peace process will be successful.

Figure 10  
Prospect level on peace process by States/Regions.

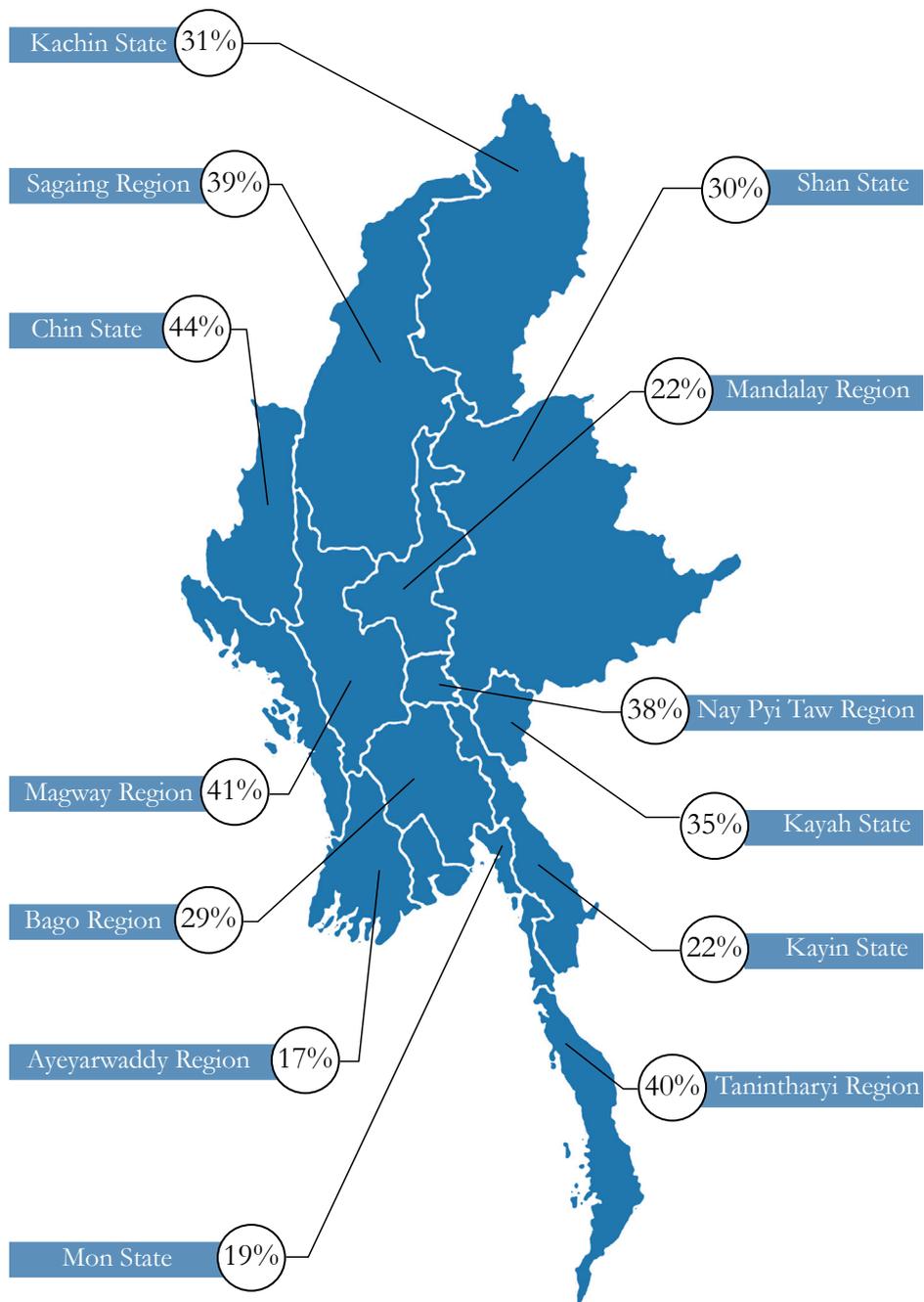


Figure 11  
Overall knowledge level of the issues in the Regions

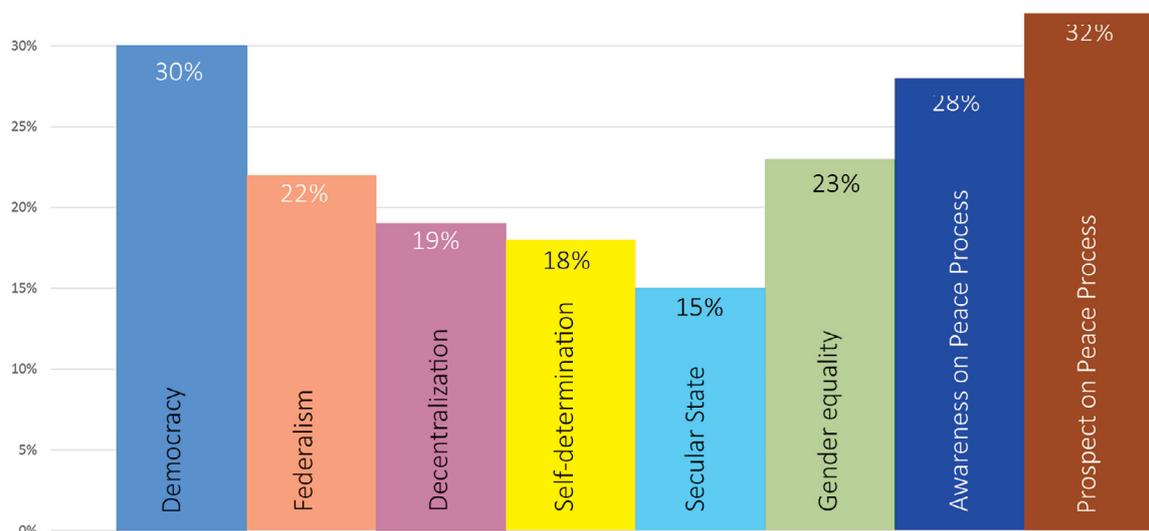


Figure 12  
Overall knowledge level of the issues in the States

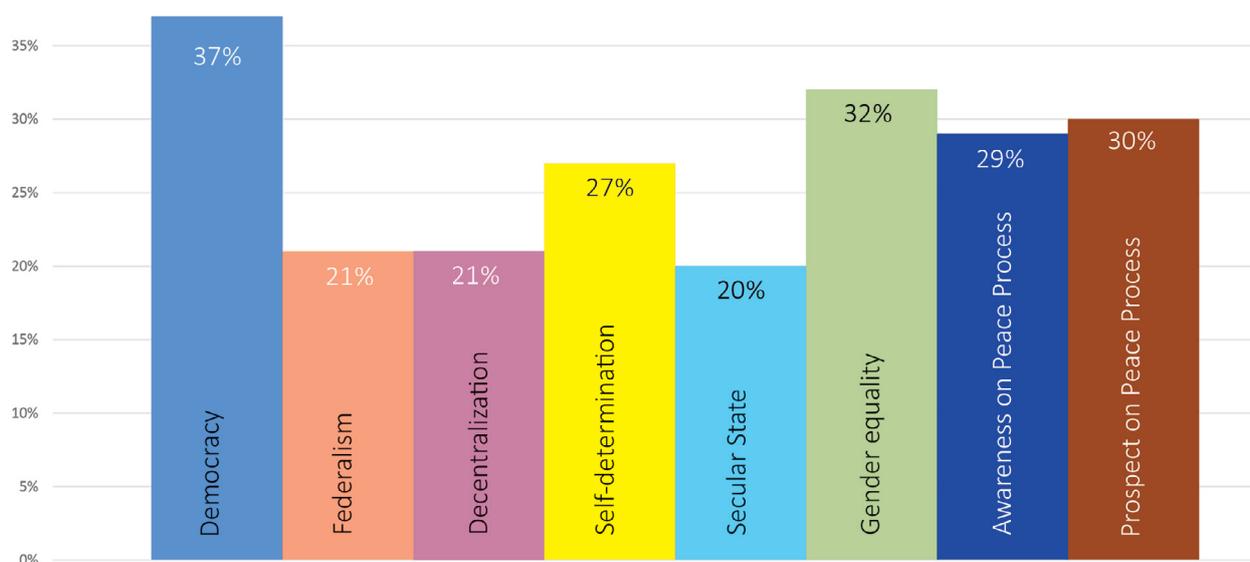
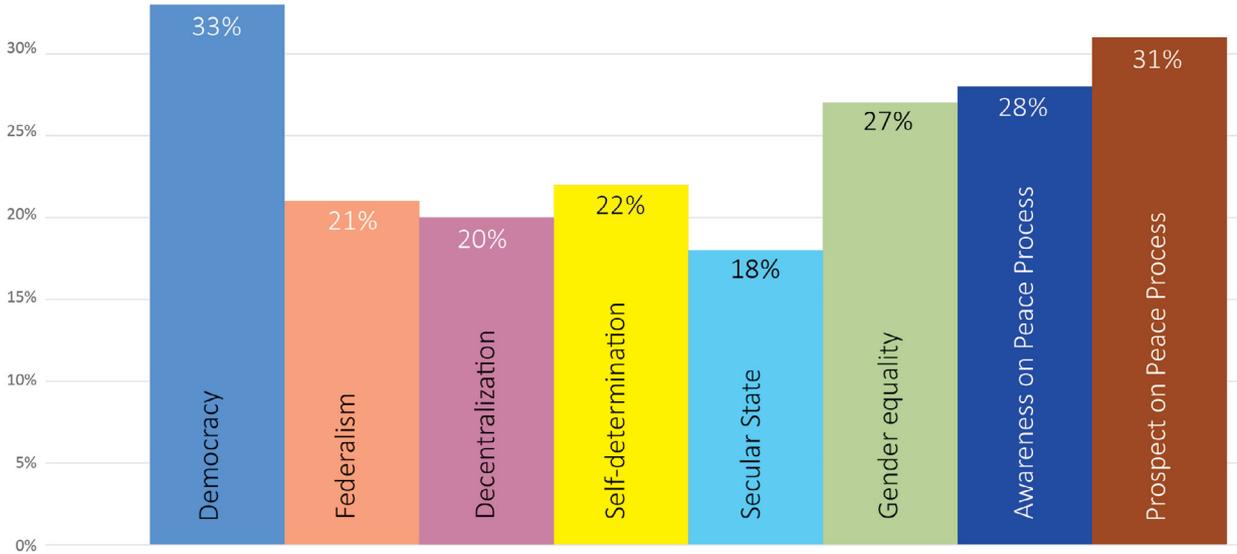


Figure 13  
Overall knowledge level in all States/Regions



## Findings

As research is conducted in all states and regions of the country except Rakhine state and Yangon region, the above percentage represents the percentile counted as a whole (states-wise/regions-wise), not individually. The knowledge level is observed to be different among states and regions; with a lower result in the region. For instant, understanding of “internal self-determination” in states shows 27% while regions stand only at 18%. This survey result indicates that awareness on political concerned topics is relatively low despite most correspondents from each state and region are professionals, experts from different fields, and experienced individuals, not ordinary citizens.

None of the eight categories is seen to cross 35% which indirectly conveys Myanmar citizens’ limited political knowledge as a whole. The term “secular state” is more understood in states than in regions. Participants from regions widely relate the term “secular state” with a country that has no religion at all or rejecting all religions. Overall, a higher number of participants from states have more knowledge on topic related awareness. The result also reveals that majority of respondents have high hopes for a brighter future; particularly on Myanmar’s ongoing peace process. Therefore, the category of peace process receives maximum number of positive responses from all interviewees. Moreover, citizens thirst for peace to reign in the country.

This report explores participants’ knowledge on the topics of democracy, federalism, decentralization, self-determination, gender equality, secular state and the future prospect on peace process in Myanmar. The results of a survey of participants from CDES’s survey regarding their political knowledge comes out with surprisingly low percentage. With the research’s respondents being most qualified and experienced individuals as representatives, the report clearly reflects limited political knowledge of ordinary citizens.

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