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This survey and report were undertaken as part of an American University project supported by the Institute for War and Peace Reporting and the U.S. Department of State.

I. Introduction

As part of a multi-

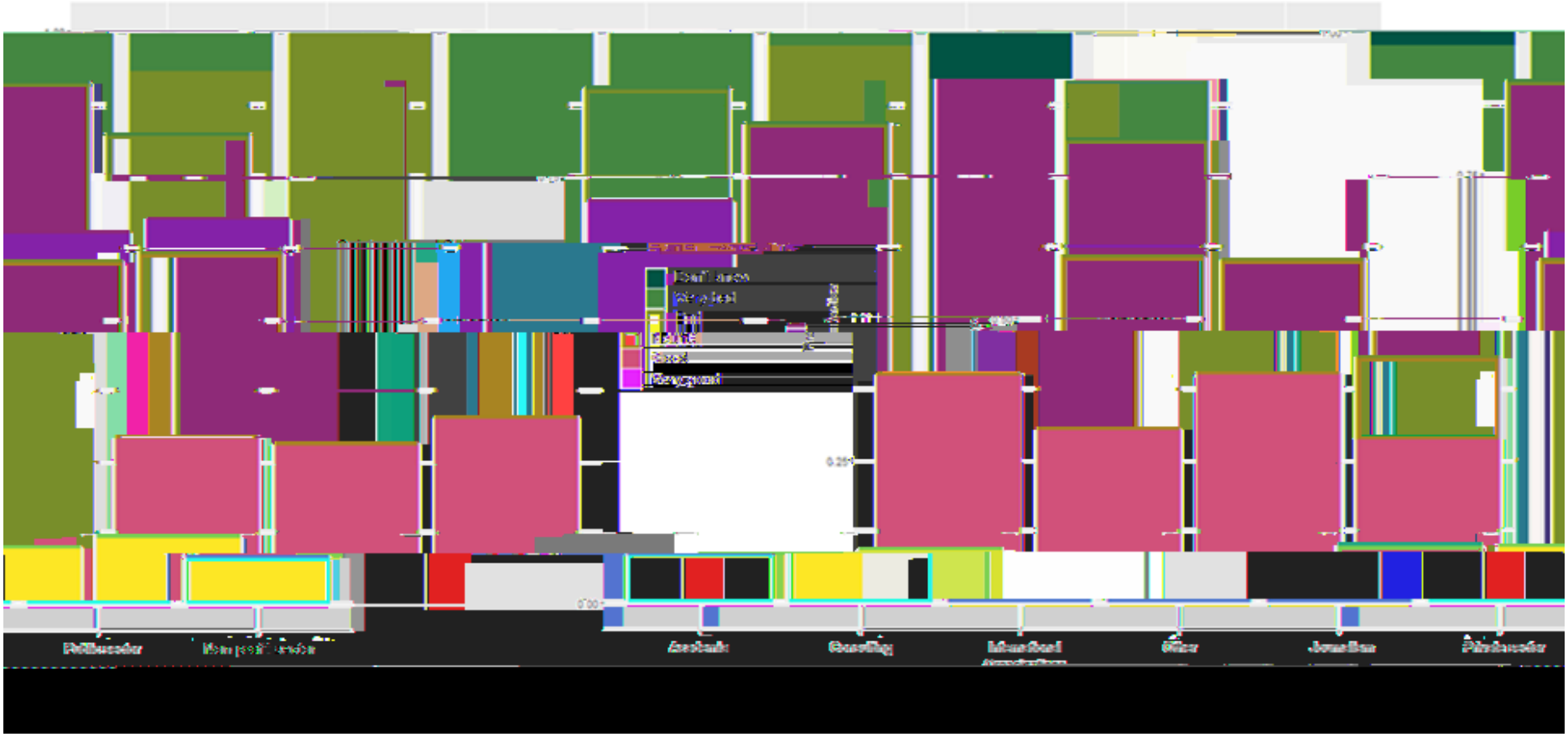
American and Latino Studies, the Coordinadora Regional de Investigaciones Economicas y Sociales (CRIES) conducted an online survey of opinion leaders to gauge sentiment in the region toward China and to place this in comparative perspective. The survey, fielded between May and July 2021,

II.

However, opinion towards China varies along socio-demographic lines. In terms of age, those over 66 years old express a more positive opinion about Beijing than their younger counterparts, while those between 36 and 45 years old have the lowest proportion of good or very good opinions about China. Interestingly, the youngest respondents (age between18 and 25) represent the group with both the highest proportion of positive and negative opinions about China. If we look instead at the occupation of the respondents, professionals working in consulting and the private sector represent the highest percentage of "very bad" opinions about China, while more than 37% of scholars have a good or very good opinion about Beijing, the highest alongside professionals from international organizations.

Figure 3. Opinion toward China disaggregated by age

Figure 4. Opinion toward China disaggregated by occupation



Additional variability emerges differences in opinion of their own government. To cross-check the data with the information obtained on government opinion, respondents were divided into two groups according to their country of residence. Group 1 comprises those residing in Latin American countries whose foreign policy is arguably oriented towards the "Global So

Figure 5. Opinion toward China disaggregated by opinion on government in Group 1 countries

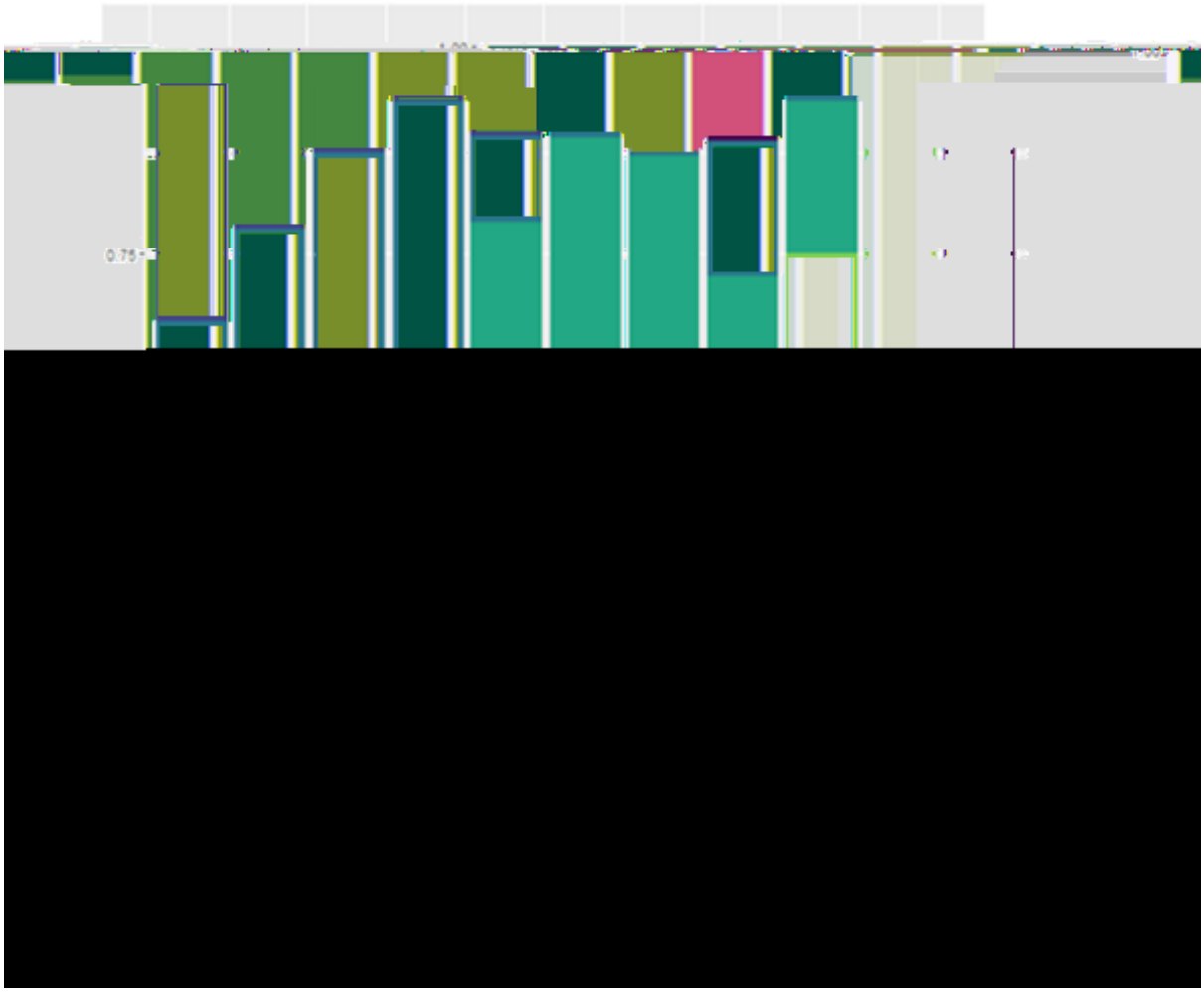
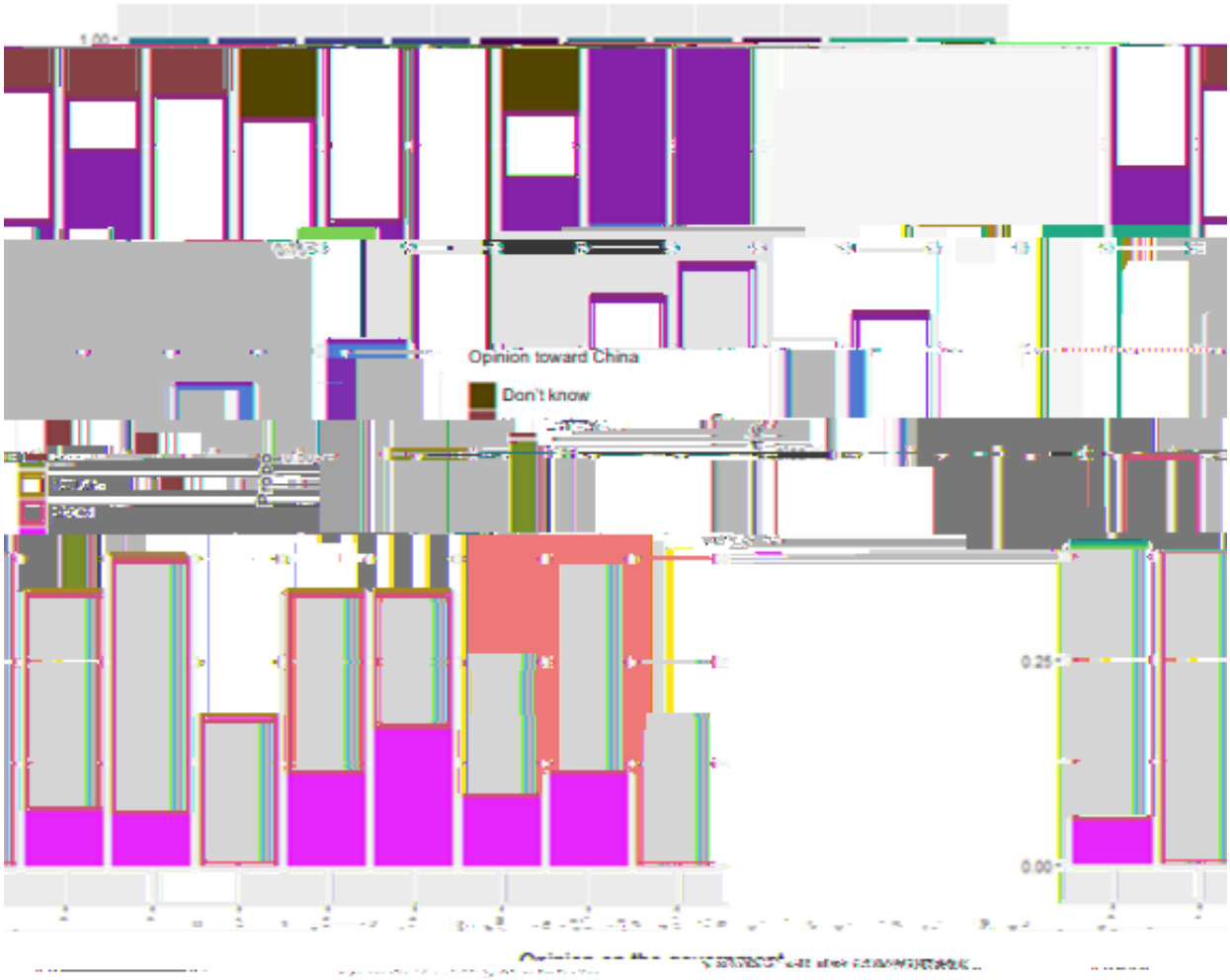


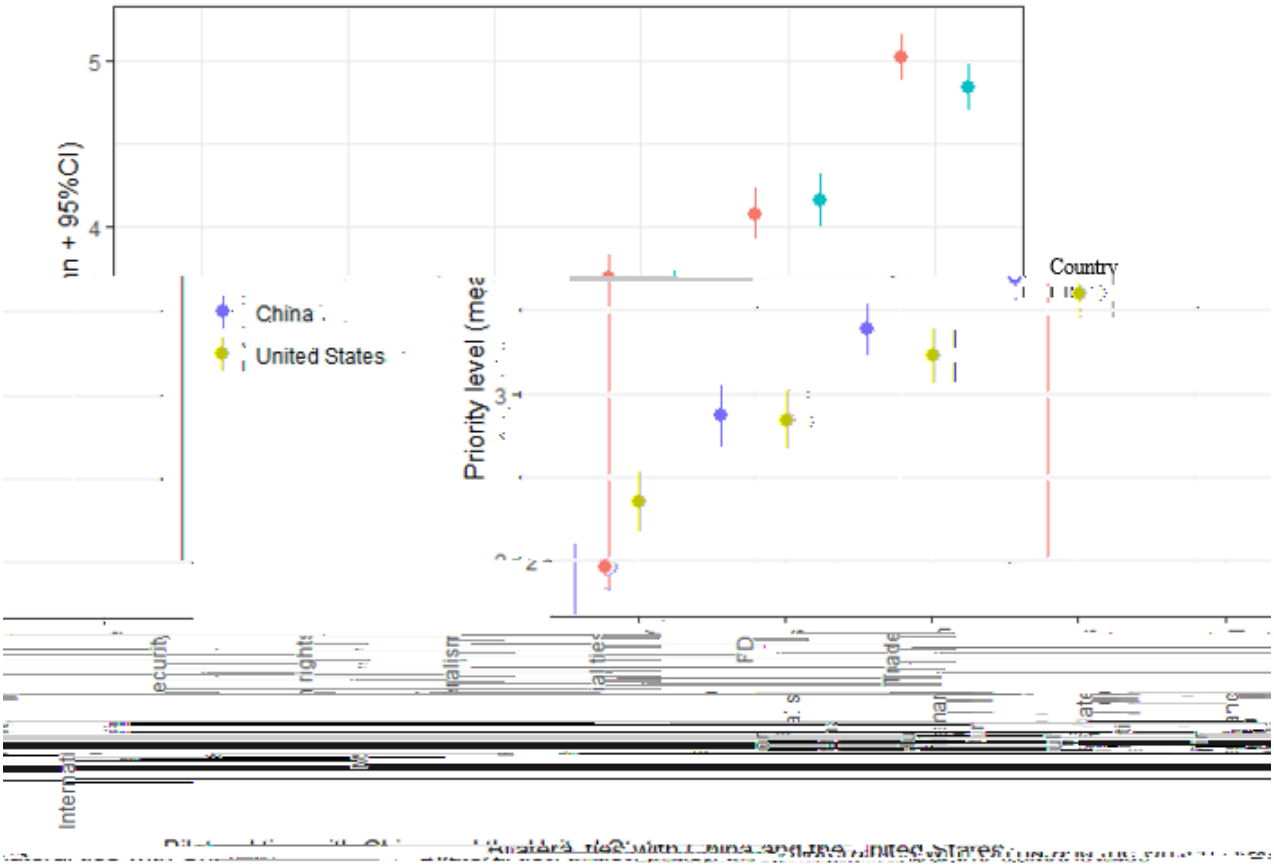
Figure 6. Opinion toward China disaggregated by opinion on government in Group 2



III. What type of engagement should Latin American and Caribbean countries have with China?

According to opinion leaders we surveyed, on average, the top priority Latin American and Caribbean countries should have with China

Figure 8. Prioritization of bilateral ties with China and the United States



IV. merica and the Caribbean

Although opinion leaders would privilege certain areas over others when engaging with China, this is conceptually different than perceived real influence. In other words, a person would like to engage with a given country, but the perceived influence of that country could be low as well as high. Similarly, a person could also have a bad opinion about a country but still believe that that

Regarding the perceived influence of China in Latin America and the Caribbean, almost 80% of survey respondents

Figure 9. China's influence in Latin America and the Caribbean: level of influence and assessment of its effects

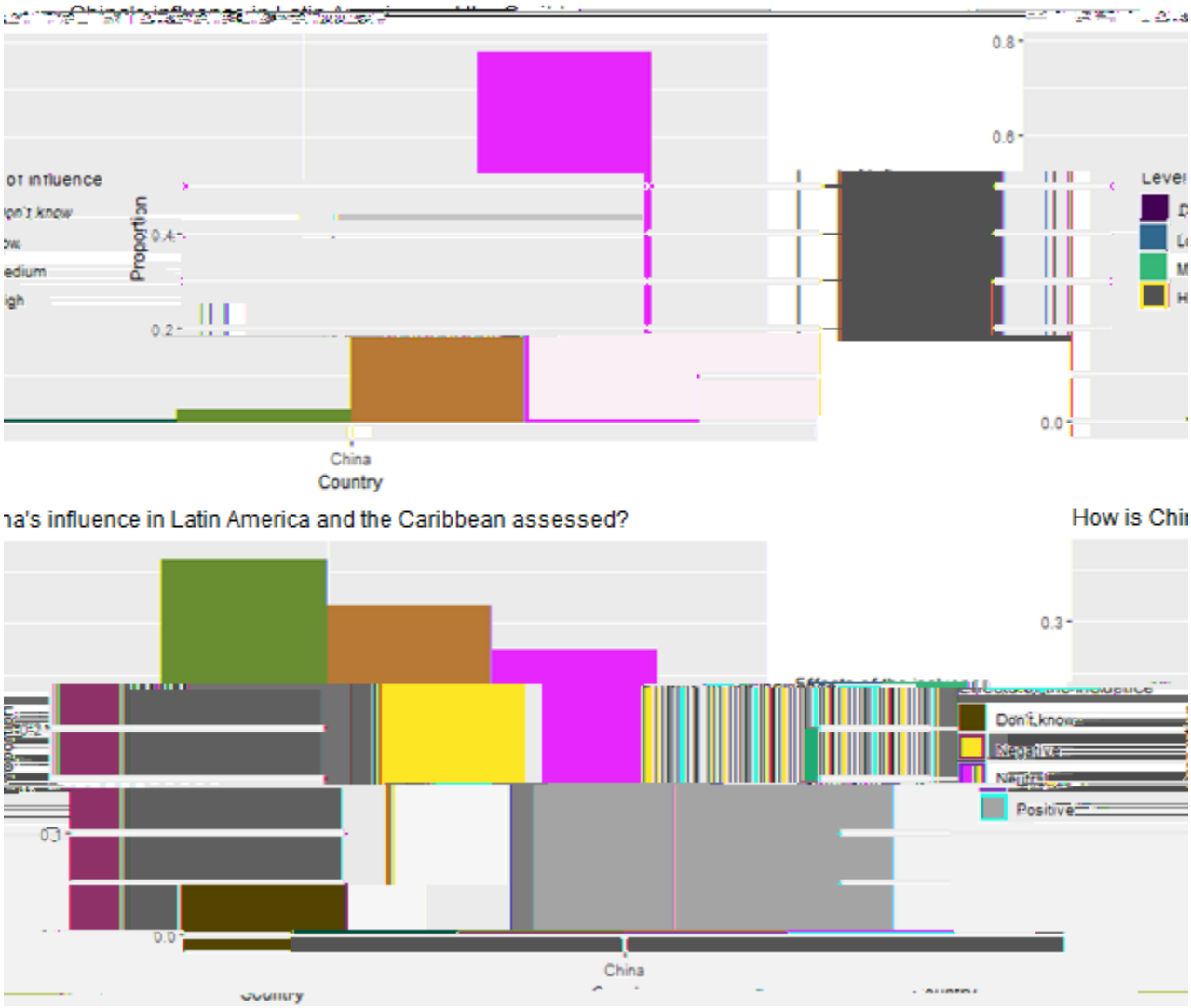


Figure 10. China's influence in Latin America and the Caribbean disaggregated by age

Figure 11. China's influence in Latin America and the Caribbean disaggregated by occupation

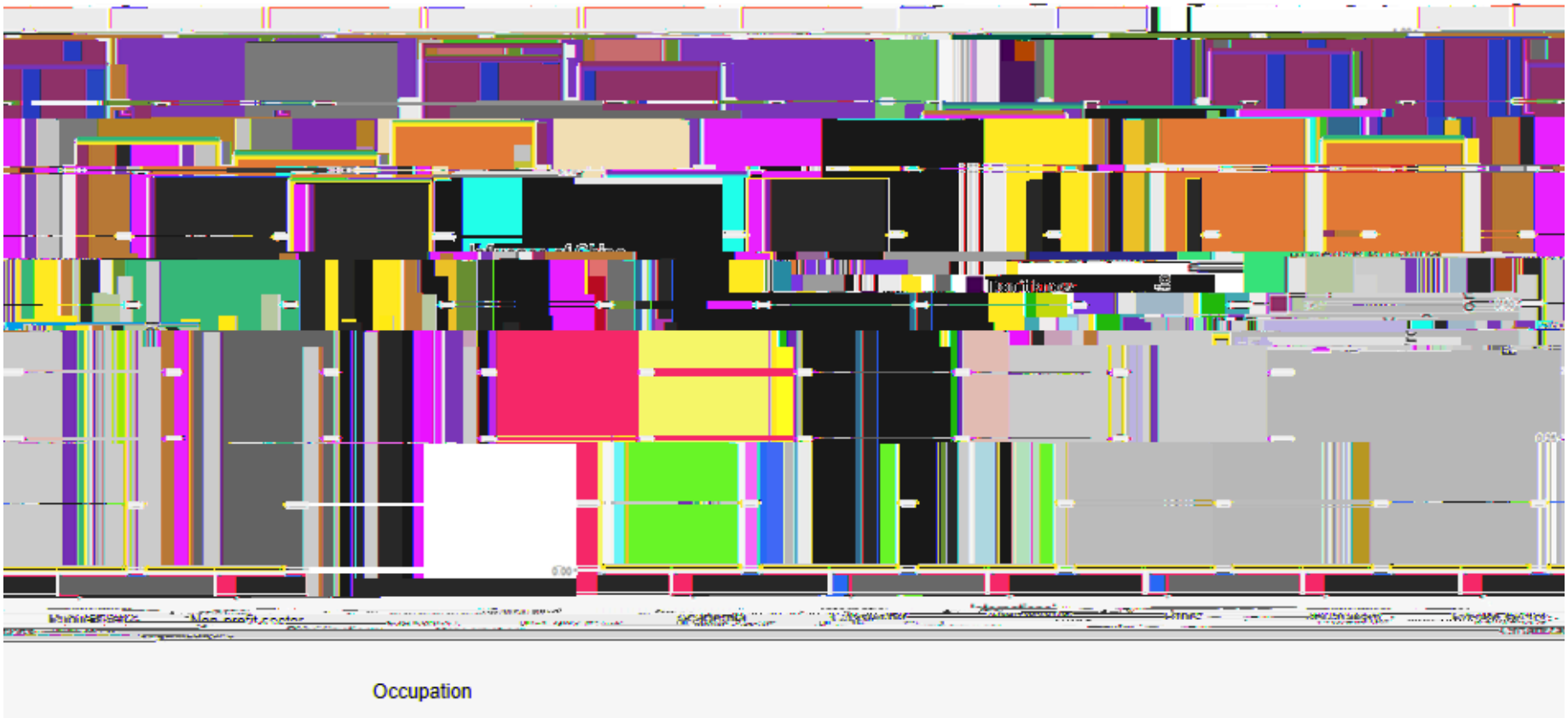
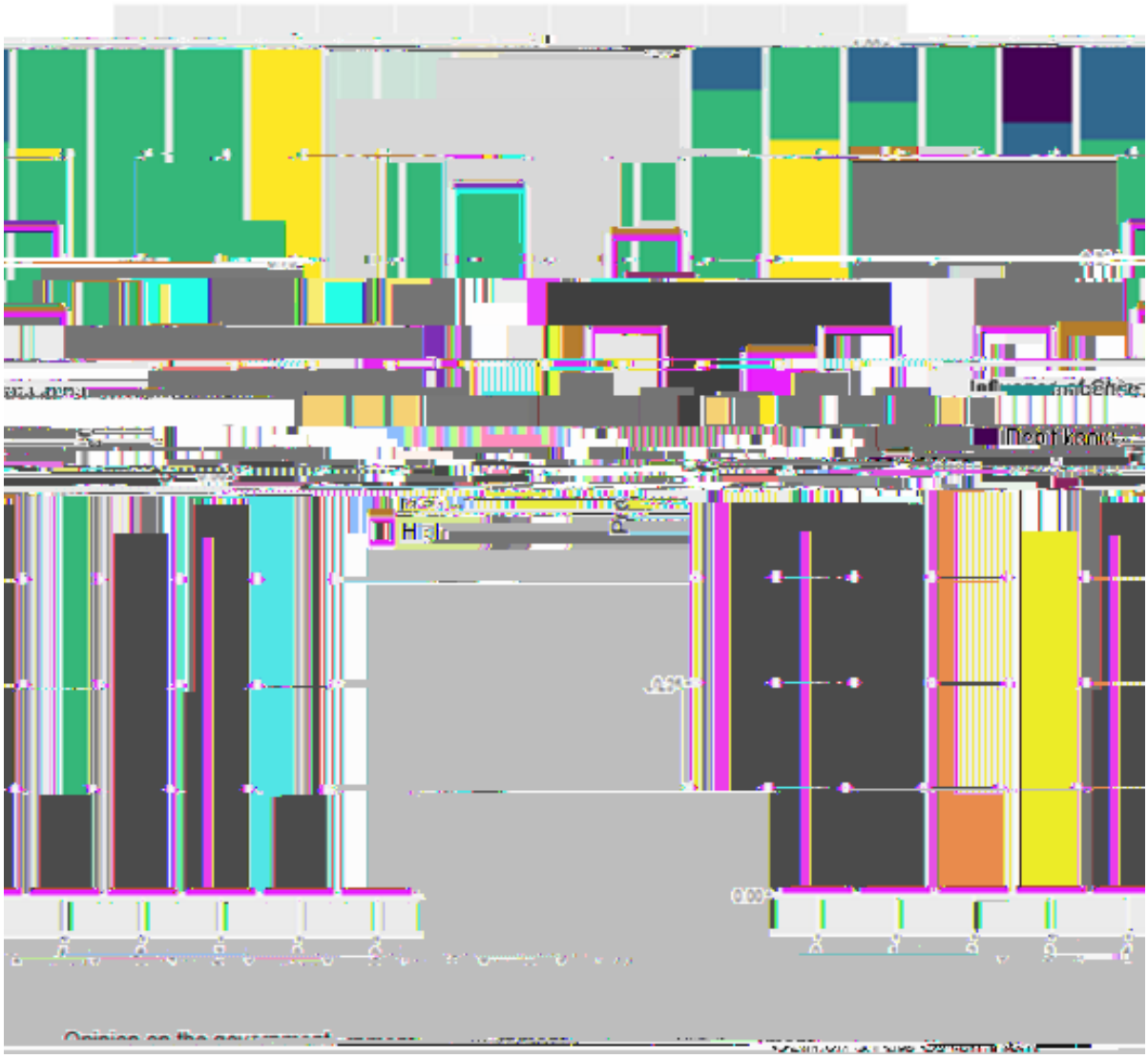


Figure 13. Influence of China in Latina America and the Caribbean disaggregated by opinion on government in Group 2 countries



A.

Chinese influence in the region is not considered homogeneous across different policy areas. When opinion leaders were asked about Beijing s influence in culture, economic affairs, health and technology, almost 90% of those surveyed indicated that China

B. and the Caribbean

China s influence appears not to be the result of the media diplomacy. Indeed, people we surveyed consider the Asian giant's media influence in the region, measured by to be very low. Fewer than 4% consider this influence to be high or very high, while 41% consider it to be low and 31% very low. Thus, nearly three quarters of survey respondents consider the Chinese media to have a low or very low influence in the region.

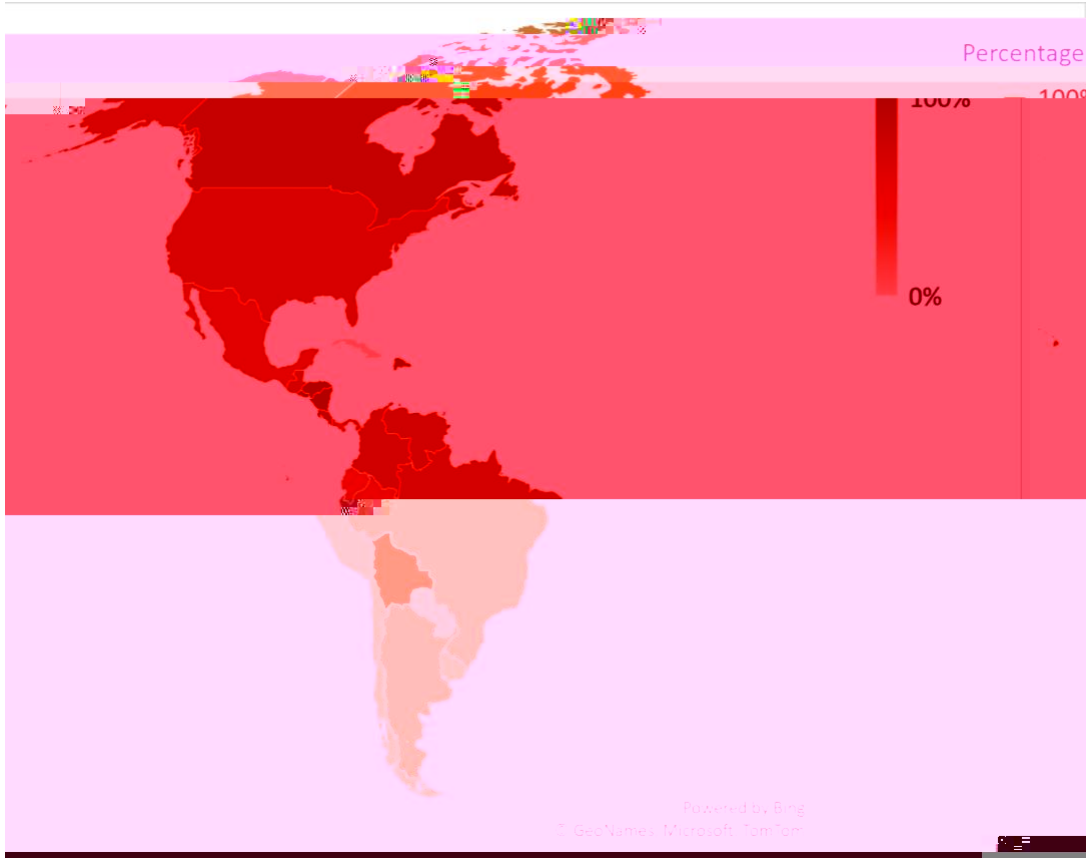
Figure 17. China's media influence exerted through CGTN

The above data contrasts with the perception of the influence of media diplomacy in the region, where more than 65% of the opinion leaders agree that CNN's influence is high or very high. In comparison with four other extra-regional powers and Venezuela with Telesur, Chinese media diplomacy is perceived by the opinion leaders as the one that generates the least influence in the region. Thus, CGTN is perceived as having less influence than CNN, BBC, Telesur, RT and FR24.

The effect that CGTN has on Latin American and Caribbean public opinion of China is, on average, relatively similar to the effect that CNN has on the assessment of the United States. In turn, the average effect, measured in terms of whether it is positive (3), neutral (2) or negative (1), does not seem to be correlated with the perceived level of influence that these media have in the region. Thus, media that are perceived to have a similar level of influence can be seen as having a rather positive (BBC) or a rather negative (Telesur) influence on h6el of influence

Figure 21. China's media influence in Latina America

However, the landscape is heterogeneous when looking at the degree of China's media influence. In this field, the great consensus among the opinion leaders is that the Beijing influence through media is low. When asked whether they considered that the influence of CGTN, one of the main Chinese media for foreign consumption, has a high influence on the public agenda or on regional public opinion, the majority response was7(n a)7(w)-6(a)7(s)- 595.5y95.5 841**a**


Percentage
100%
0%

Annex 1: Division of opinion leaders by country of residence

Country	Group	Explanation
Argentina	1	Countries belonging to group 1

Annex 2: Questionnaire[3]

Question 1: What is your opinion about the following countries?

	Very bad (1)	Bad (2)	Neutral (3)	Good (4)	Very good (5)	(6)
China (1)	O	O	O	O	O	O
France (2)	O	O	O			

Question 2: What is, in your opinion, the influence of the following countries in Latin America?

	Level of Influence in Latin America	Assessment of the effects in the region
China (1)	Low; Medium; High; Don know	know
France (2)	Low; Medium; High; Don	know
Germany (3)	Low; Medium; High; Don	know
India (4)		

Question 3: Specifically in the Latin American context, how would you evaluate the influence of the following countries in the areas listed below?

	Economy	Culture	Health	Technology
China (1)	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;
France (2)	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;
Germany (3)	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;
India (4)	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;
Japan (5)	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;
Russia (6)	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;
Spain (7)	Low; Medium; High; Do	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;
United Kingdom (8)	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;
United States (9)	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;	Low; Medium;

Question 4: What is the relative priority the country in which you reside should give to the following options in its engagement with China? (Select the priority that each option should have: 1 being the highest priority and 6 being the lowest priority)

_____ Strengthen commercial ties (1)
_____ Strengthen financial ties (2)
_____ Promote the inflow of foreign direct investment (3)
_____ Promote human rights abroad (4)
_____ Cooperate in multilateral institutions (5)
_____ Cooperate in the field of international security (6)

Question 5: What is the relative priority the country in which you reside should give to the following options in its engagement with United States? (Select the priority that each option should have: 1 being the highest priority and 6 being the lowest priority)

_____ Strengthen commercial ties (1)
_____ Strengthen financial ties (2)
_____ Promote the inflow of foreign direct investment (3)
_____ Promote human rights abroad (4)
_____ Cooperate in multilateral institutions (5)
_____ Cooperate in the field of international security (6)

Page Break

Question 6: What level of influence do you consider the following audiovisual media to have in the Latin American public agenda?

	Very low (1)	Low (2)	Medium (3)	High (4)	Very high (5)

Question 7: How would you evaluate the influence of the following audiovisual media in Latin American public opinion towards the media's home country?

	Level of influence on Latin American public opinion		Effects on the opinion of the media's home country
British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC, United Kingdom) (1)		now	Worsening; Neutral; Improving; Don't know
China Global Television Network (CGTN, China) (2)		now	Worsening; Neutral; Improving; Don't know
Cable News Network (CNN, United States) (3)		now	Worsening; Neutral; Improving; Don't know

Question 8: In which country do you currently live?

Afghanistan (1) ... Zimbabwe (1357)

Question 9: How do you evaluate the performance of the government of the country in which you currently reside on a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 is a very bad performance and 10 is a very good performance?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Question 10: In which of the following areas do you mainly work professionally?

Foundations, Think Tanks) (5); Consulting (6); International organizations (7); Other (8)

Question 11: Please select the age range you belong to

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