



INTERNATIONAL POLITICS AND KOSOVO-SERBIA DIALOGUE

Citizen Perception Survey

30 January 2023



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DATA ANALYST

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The survey is designed by PIPS in conjunction with Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS). The role of the author, Dr Gëzim Visoka, has been primarily in interpreting and summarizing the survey data.

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The Foreign Policy Analysis Program was founded by Prishtina Institute for Political Studies in 2014. The program aims to analyse and support Kosovo's Euro-Atlantic integration, by initiating public debate and producing research on regional, European and global developments, as well as their effects on Kosovo's international position.

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Executive Summary

Kosovo is going through a challenging time. High inflation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine, along with mounting local socio-economic challenges, such as migration, slow economic development, and political uncertainty have been some of the major worrisome issues for Kosovo society. Despite these challenges, Kosovo's relationship with its international partners and the dialogue with Serbia for normalization of relations are dominating political agenda in Kosovo. In particular, the rise of tensions between Serbia and Kosovo over the implementation of technical and political agreements have not only contributed negatively to the normalization of relations between two countries and societies, but also have impacted Kosovo's relations with its international partners. While we have more knowledge about the views of key stakeholders on global and national developments, we do not know much how these dynamics have affected the views of Kosovo citizens on a wide range of rapidly changing international and national issues.

This report outlines the key findings of a citizen survey conducted during November 2022 with 1056 respondents in Kosovo (see Annex 1 for research methodology). The survey is divided into two sections. First, it surveys citizen views and perceptions on a wide range of topics that concern Kosovo's international affairs and its relationship with dominant regional and global powers. Second, the survey explores citizens' views and perceptions on the most sensitive matters concerning Kosovo's international position, including the dialogue for normalization of relations with Serbia. Overall, the

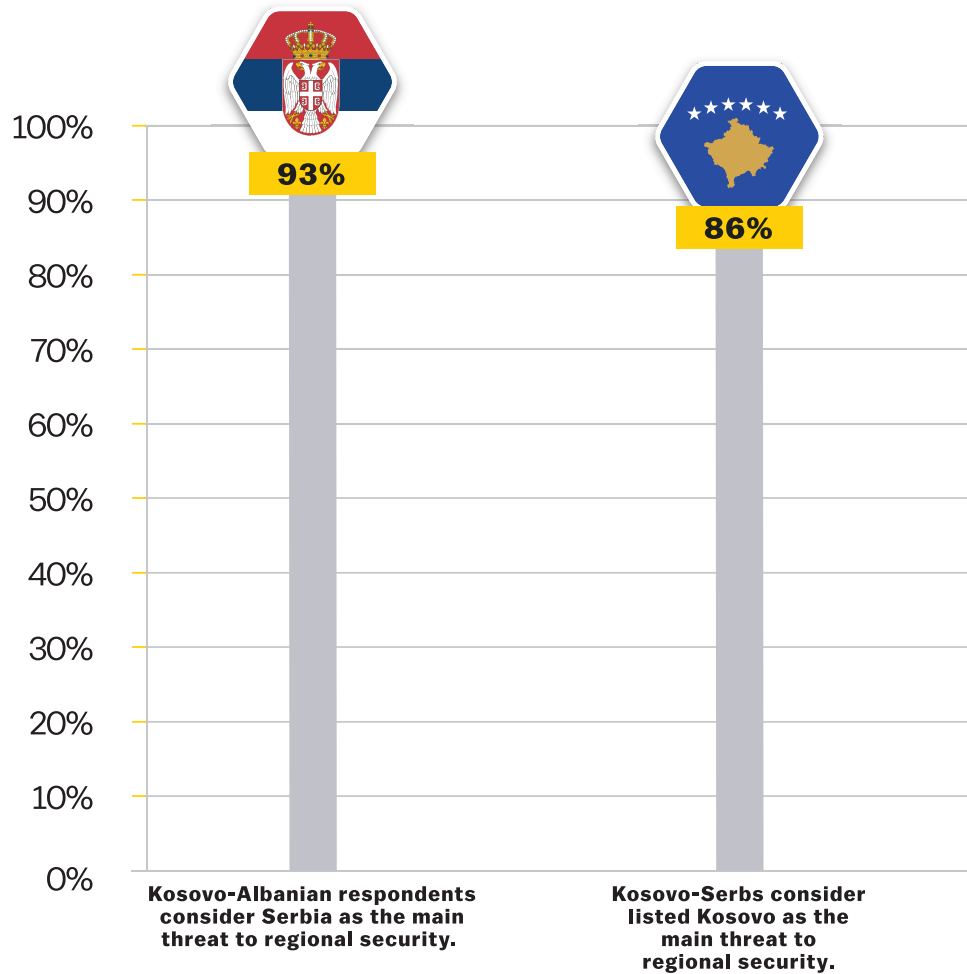
survey results show that the citizens of Kosovo have a fairly clear opinion on global leadership, international politics, and security. The survey reveals that Kosovo citizens have a clear preference for countries that are seen as promoters of world peace and are supportive of Kosovo's independence and sovereignty. Concerning Kosovo's diplomacy and international standing, the survey revealed that while the majority of respondents are satisfied with Kosovo's foreign policy and diplomacy, there is still a significant portion of the population who are not as satisfied. Moreover, the survey also reveals that citizens attribute the improvement of Kosovo's international standing to a variety of factors, such as the governance of Kosovar institutions and changes in international politics. Additionally, the survey highlights the lack of public information on the EU-led talks for normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia and the 'Open Balkan' initiative and the need for more credible and well-informed media coverage, public forums, or other forms of public engagement to ensure that citizens are better informed on these issues. Finally, the survey reveals that Kosovo citizens do not support the Open Balkan initiative and do not believe that Kosovo will benefit from its implementation and that they consider the Association of Municipalities with a Serbian majority as a significant risk to Kosovo's statehood. Despite these concerns, the survey indicates that a majority of people in Kosovo are hopeful that the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia will result in a final agreement, although there is uncertainty on when it might be reached.

*Citizen Perception on International and Regional Affairs***Closest Allies****USA****68.5%****Germany****15.8%****Great Britain****6.1%**

The USA remains Kosovo's most precious international ally and the majority of respondents consider it as the global leader in promoting world peace, followed by Germany, and the United Kingdom. Respondents believe that these three countries will remain the most powerful actors in the world for the next two decades, while they do not expect China or India to overtake the world powers of today in the near future.

*Citizen Perception on International and Regional Affairs***Best Global Leaders**

Joseph Biden is confirmed as the most preferred world leader in Kosovo, followed by Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and German Chancellor. Among Kosovo Serbs, Vladimir Putin remains their most preferred world leader with 90%. French President Emmanuel Macron enjoys very low admiration in Kosovo, likely because he is not as involved in Kosovo's politics as Biden, Erdogan, and Putin.

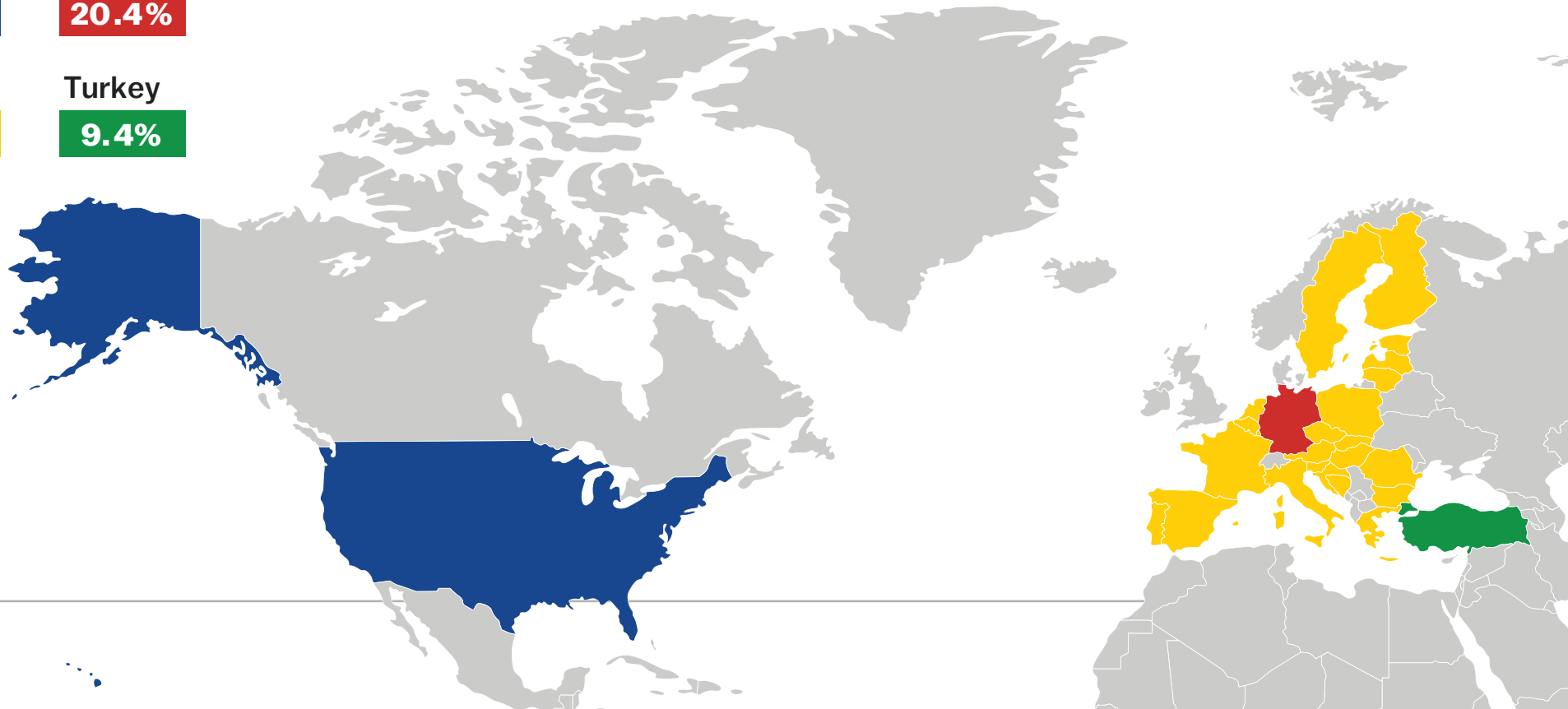
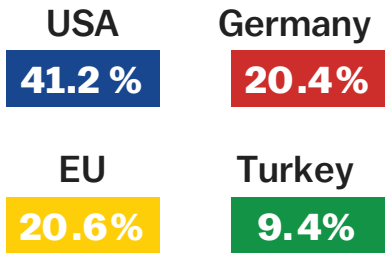
*Citizen Perception on International and Regional Affairs***Main Security Threats**

The overwhelming majority of Kosovo-Albanian respondents, namely 93%, consider Serbia as the main threat to regional security.

However, 86% of Kosovo-Serbs consider listed Kosovo as the main threat to regional security. Croatia is listed as the main proponent to become the most powerful country in the Western Balkans in the next ten years.

Key Economic Partners

The majority of respondents (41.2%) consider that the USA should be Kosovo’s main economic partner followed by Germany (20.4%), the EU and its member countries (20.6%), and Turkey (9.4%). Majority of respondents (36.7%) believe that Kosovo should ask China to recognize Kosovo before they invest, while remaining respondents are open to Chinese investment in Kosovo (17.7%) or believe that investments from China should be accepted, but with suitable conditions (20.6%).



The War in Ukraine

Majority of Kosovo citizens are aware of the implications of the war in Ukraine and Russia's role in escalating the conflict.

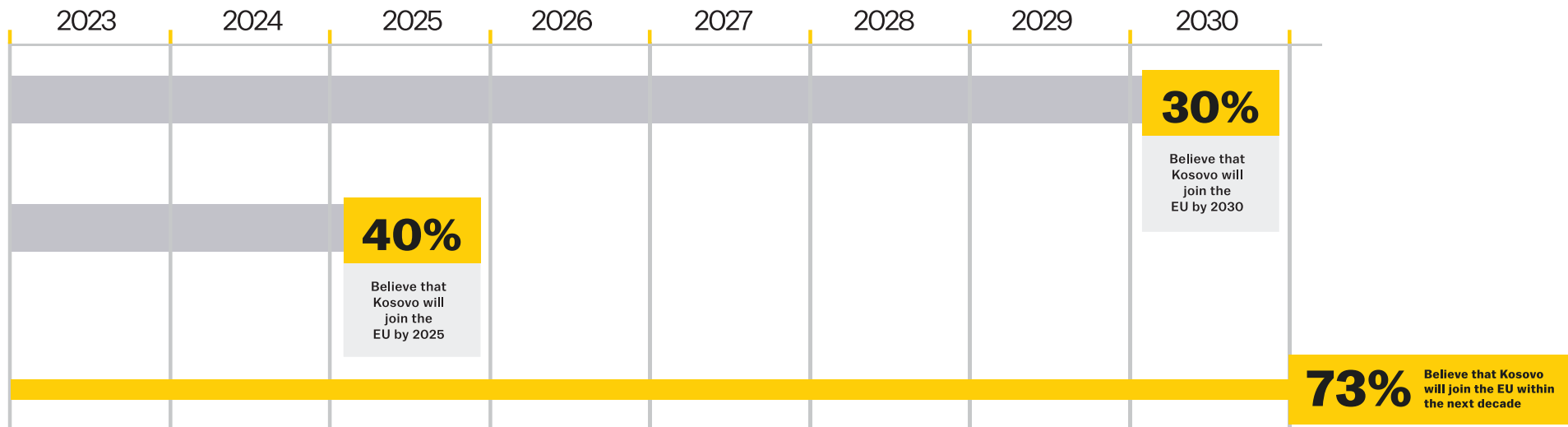
91.6% of respondents consider Vladimir Putin is the most responsible for the escalation of the war in Ukraine.



*Citizen Perception on International and Regional Affairs***Most Helpful International Organization**

Around 70% of the respondents listed NATO as the international organization that has helped Kosovo the most since 1999.

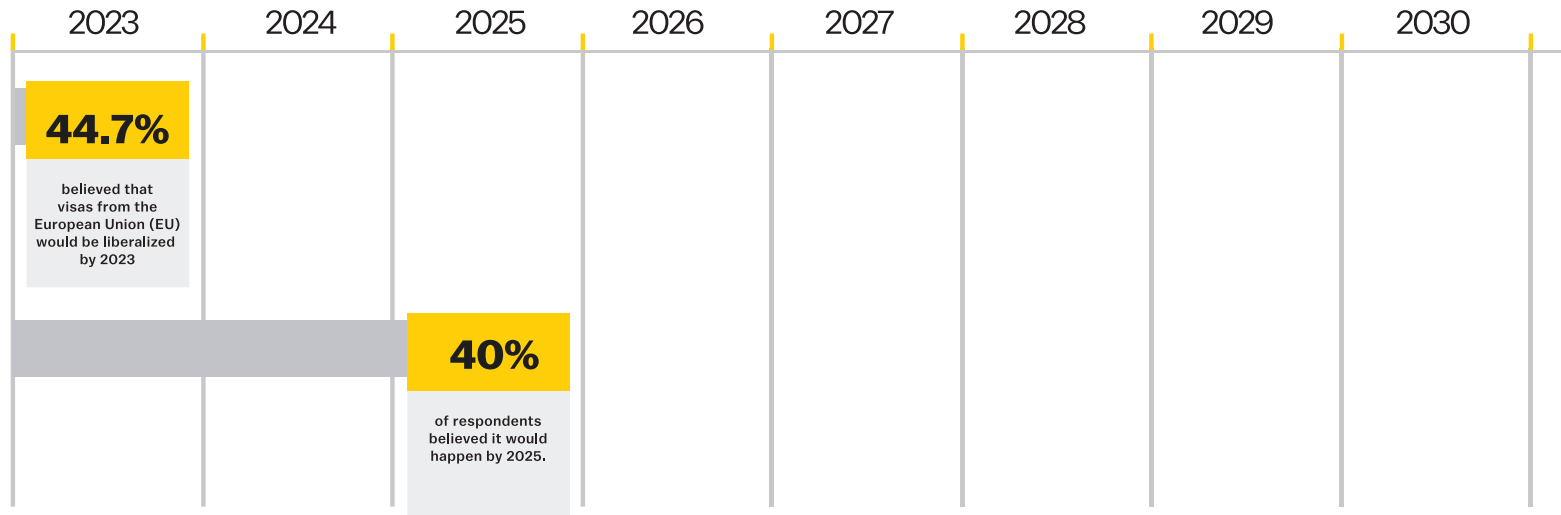
Also, around 90% of respondents consider NATO as a strong contributor to international peace and security in the world. Over 80% of respondents view positively the European Union too.

*Citizen Perception on International and Regional Affairs***Join the EU**

Most respondents believe that Kosovo will join the EU within the next decade: over 40% believe that Kosovo will join the European Union by 2025, while around 30% of respondents believe that Kosovo will join the EU by 2030.

Citizen Perception on International and Regional Affairs

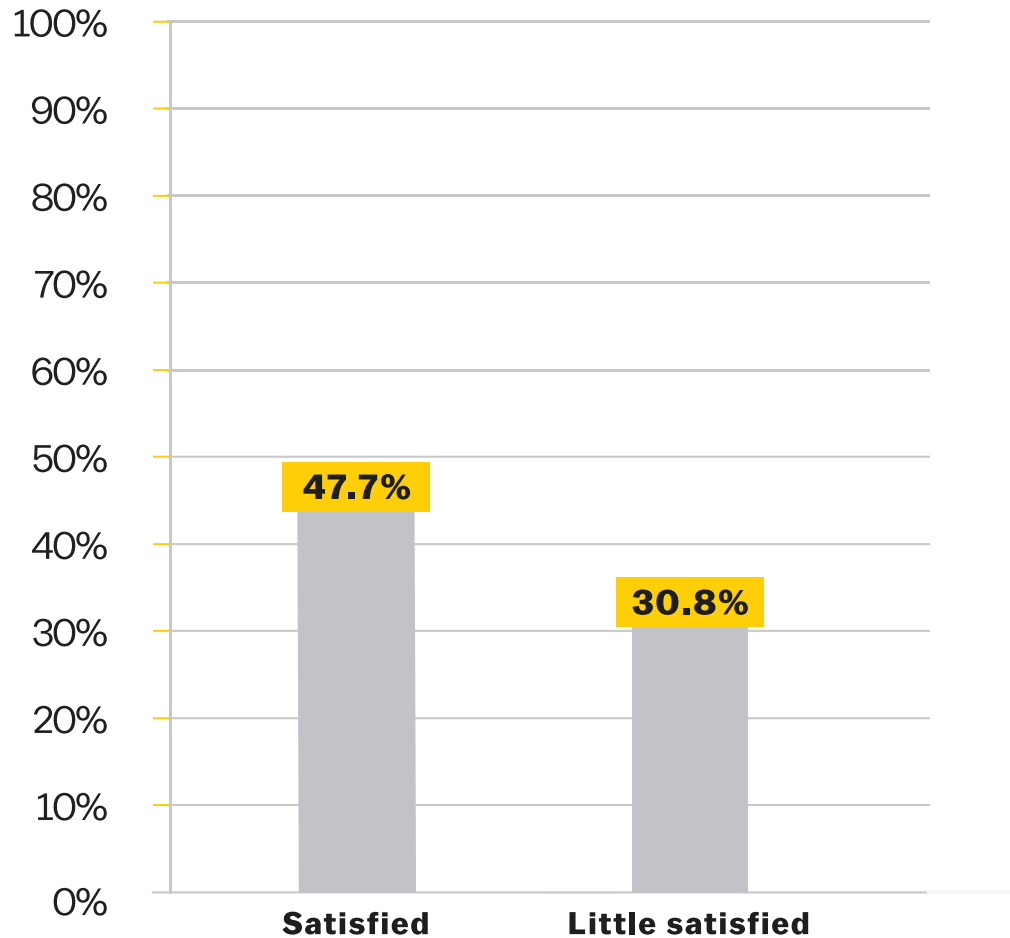
Visa Liberalization



The majority of respondents (44.7%) believed that visas from the European Union (EU) would be liberalized by 2023, while another 40% of respondents believed it would happen by 2025.

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Citizen Perception on International and Regional Affairs

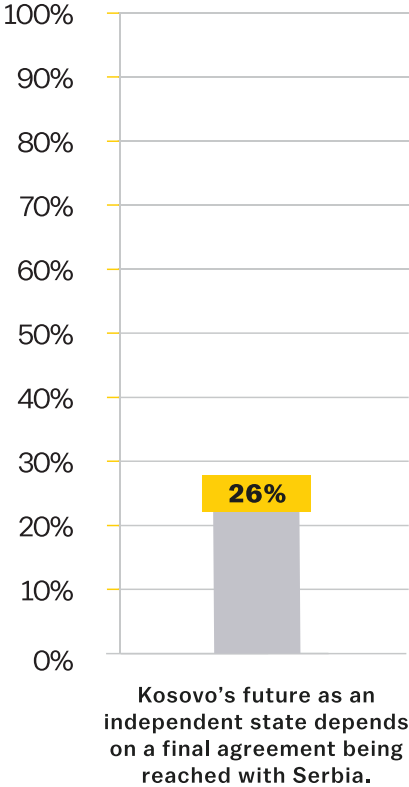
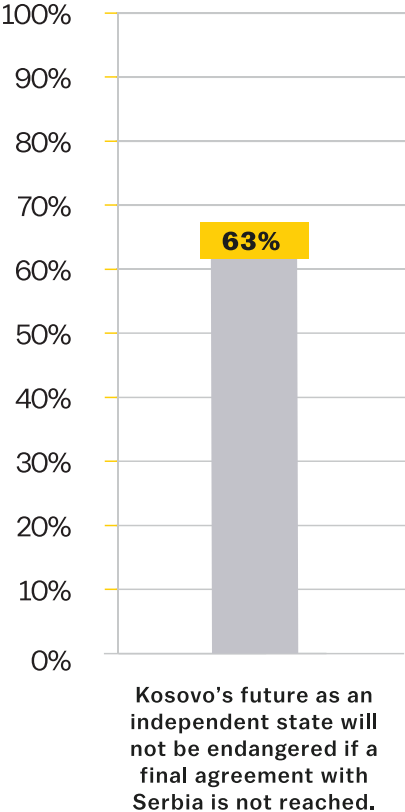
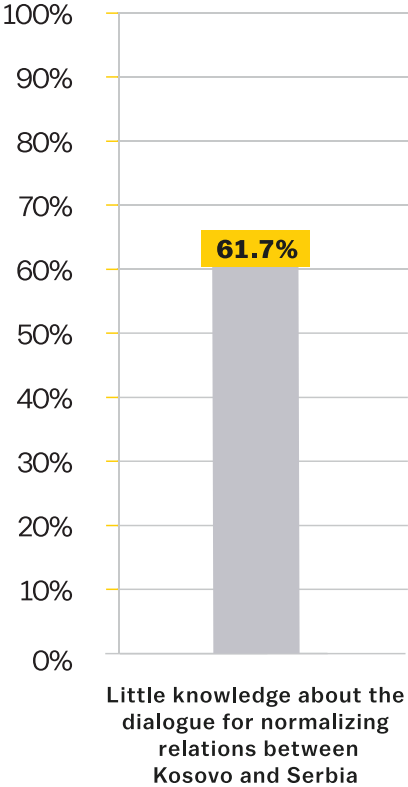
Kosovo's diplomacy and its international position.



Approximately 47.7% of respondents indicated that they were satisfied with Kosovo's foreign policy and diplomacy, while 30.8% indicated that they were only a little satisfied. Despite many challenges and setbacks, the majority of respondents (60.8%) believe that the position of Kosovo in the international arena has enhanced in the last five years thanks to improved governance of Kosovo institutions.

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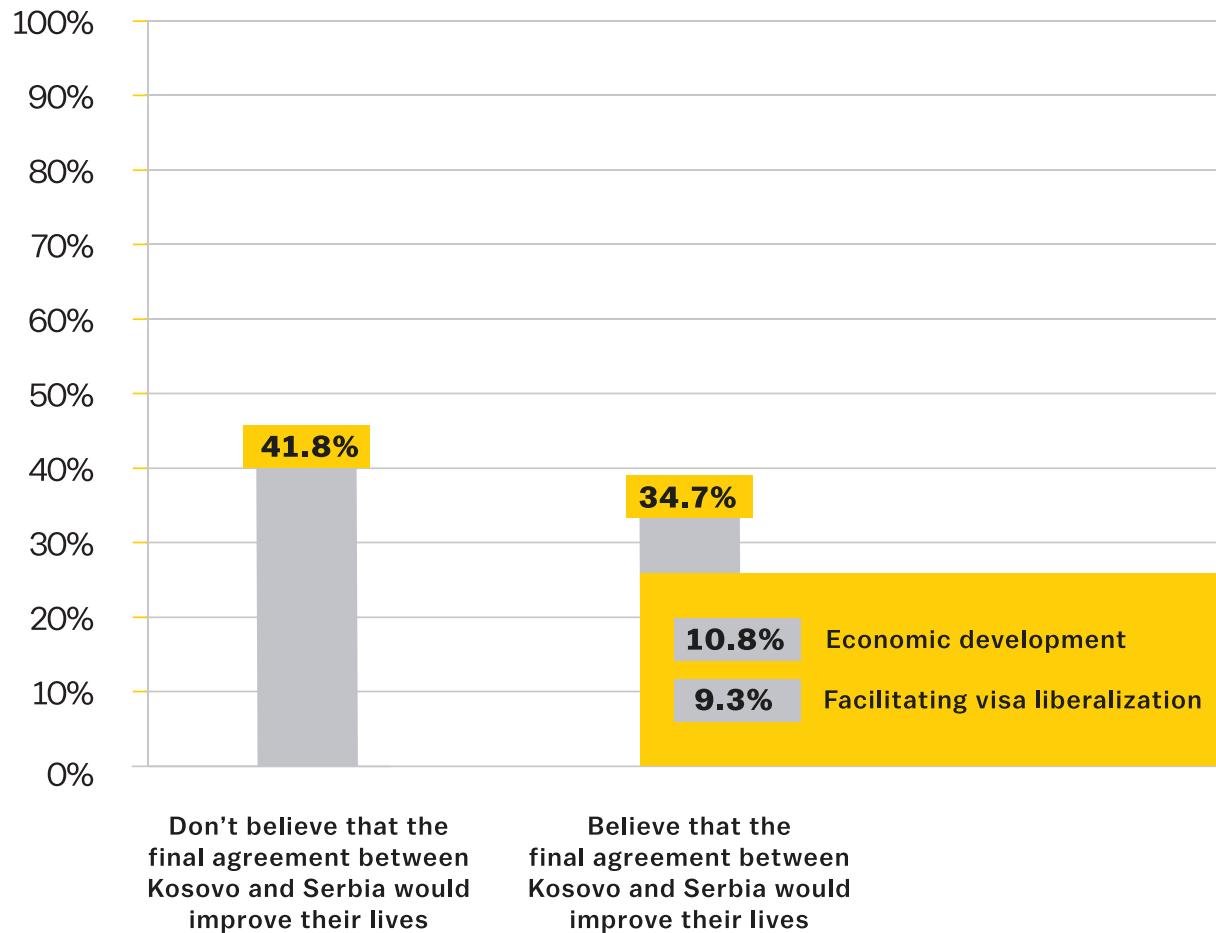
Knowledge about the dialogue with Serbia.



The majority of citizens had little knowledge about the dialogue for normalizing relations between Kosovo and Serbia. Overall, the majority of respondents believe that Kosovo's future as an independent state will not be endangered if a final agreement with Serbia is not reached. Yet, some of the respondents believe that Kosovo's future as an independent state depends on a final agreement being reached with Serbia.

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Benefits from a deal with Serbia.

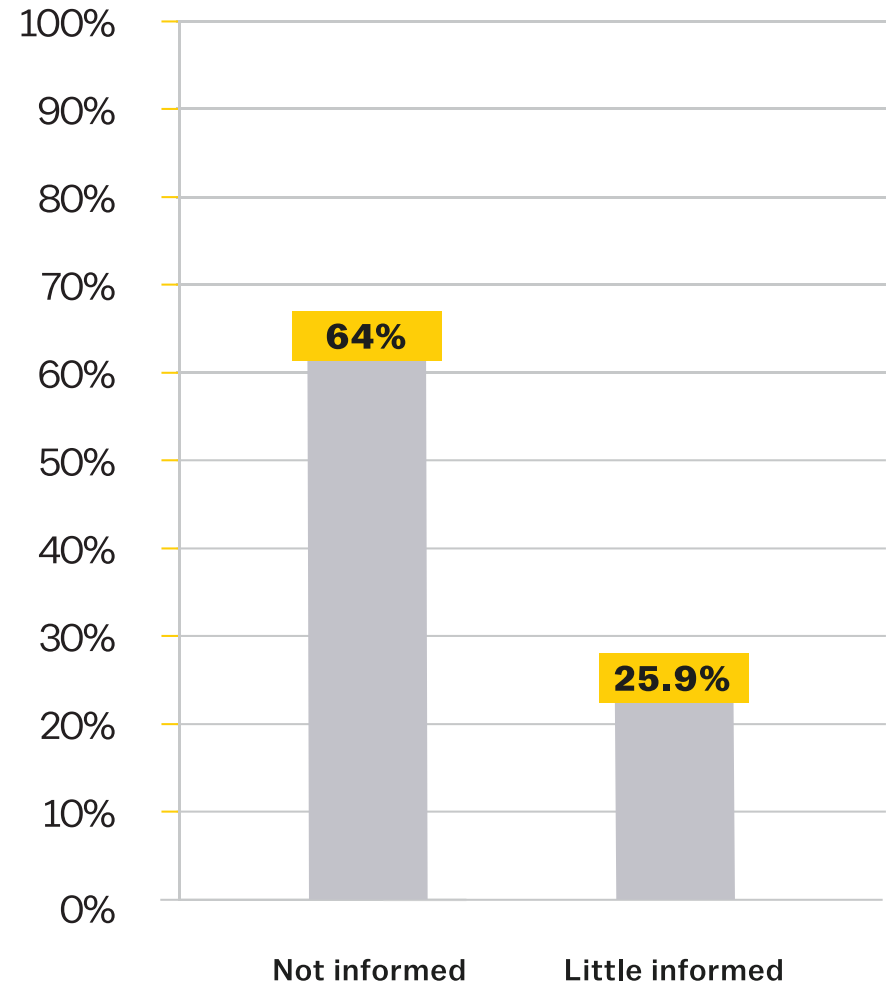


Most of the respondents did not believe that the final agreement between Kosovo and Serbia would improve their lives, indicating a lack of public confidence in the process and its outcomes. Among the respondents who responded positively, considered that the final agreement between Kosovo and Serbia would improve their lives by providing economic development and facilitating visa liberalization.

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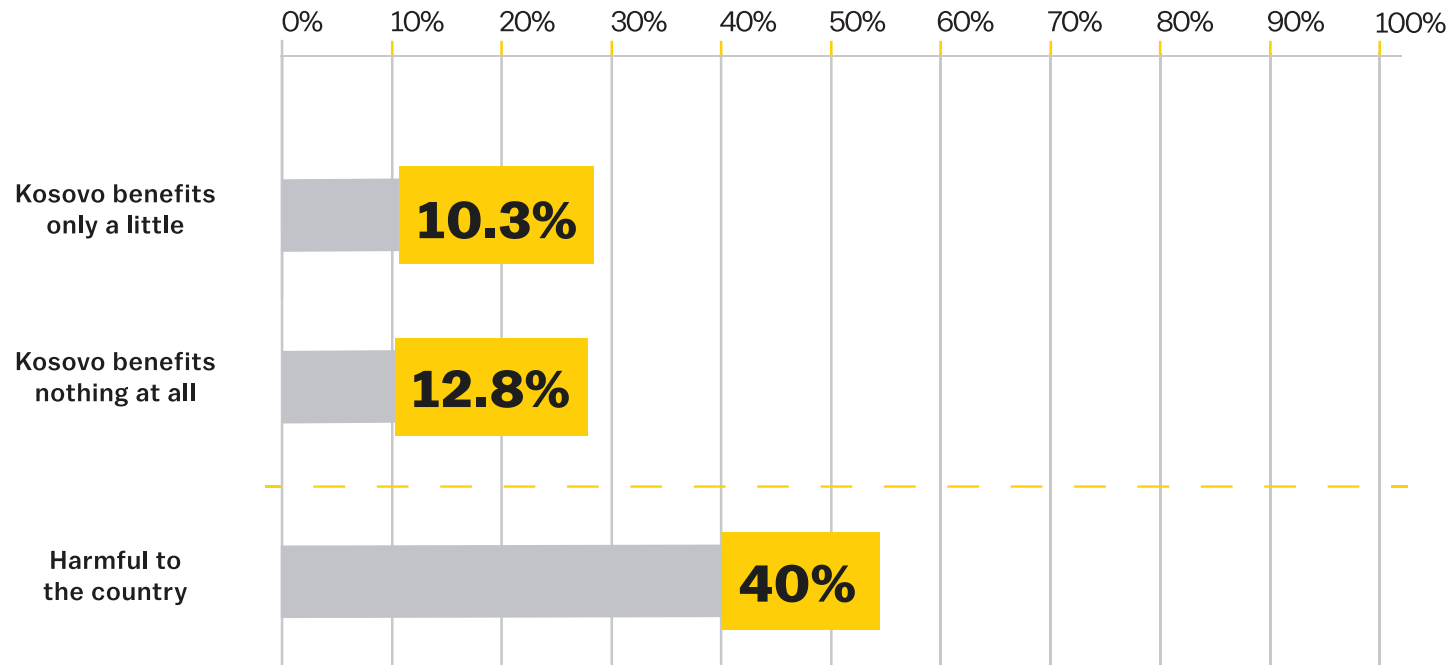
Knowledge about the Franco-German proposal.

The majority of respondents (64.0%) indicate that they are not informed at all about the content of the new proposal (Franco-German), while only 25.9% of respondents indicated that they are a little informed.



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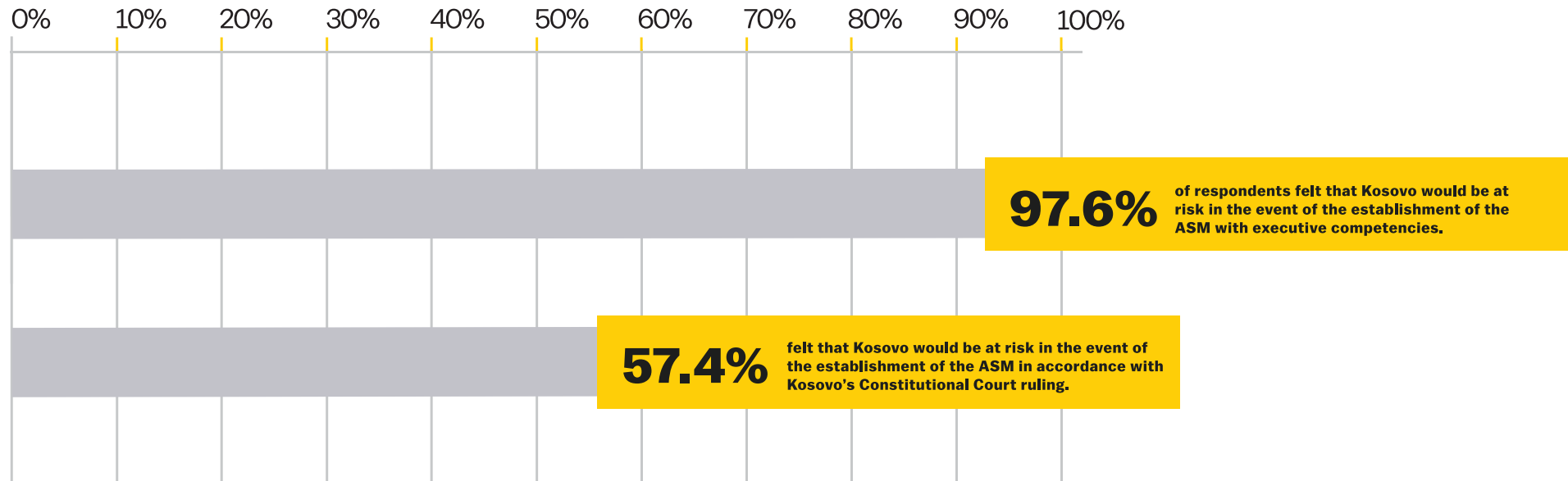
The 'Open Balkan' initiative.



Most respondents believe Kosovo benefits only a little (10.3%) or not at all (12.8%) from the implementation of the 'Open Balkan' initiative, while over 40% believe that it will be harmful to the country.

Citizen Perception on Kosovo's International Standing and the Dialogue with Serbia Citizen Perception on International and Regional Affairs

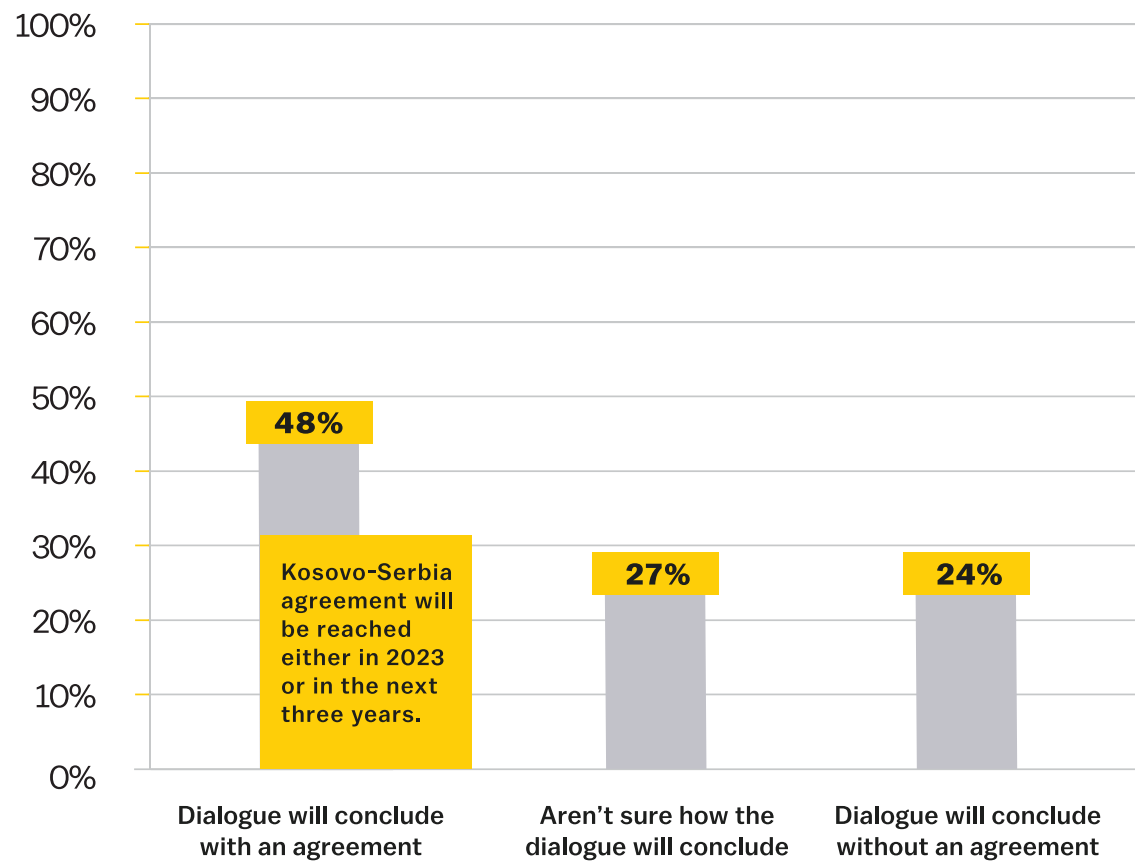
The Association of Municipalities with Serb majority (ASM).



97.6% of respondents felt that Kosovo would be at risk in the event of the establishment of the ASM with executive competencies. The main risks are associated with the functioning of Kosovo state institutions and the Government of Kosovo's inability to extend its authority to all the municipalities in the country. However, only 57.4% felt that Kosovo would be at risk in the event of the establishment of the ASM in accordance with Kosovo's Constitutional Court ruling.

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The endgame of dialogue with Serbia.



48% of respondents, who are predominantly Kosovo-Albanians, believe that the dialogue will conclude with an agreement, whereas 27% aren't sure, and 24% think there won't be an agreement in the end. The majority of those who are optimistic about a settlement, consider that the Kosovo-Serbia agreement will be reached either in 2023 or in the next three years.



Citizen Perception on International and Regional Affairs

This section provides an overview of Kosovo citizen perception on key international and regional issues. The survey results reveal that Kosovo citizens have some knowledge of the international political landscape and global issues. Respondents have strong opinions on who should be considered a promoter or abuser of world peace and who should be Kosovo's key partners in international politics. They also have a very clear opinion on who is responsible for the war in Ukraine and what should be done if China offers investments in Kosovo.

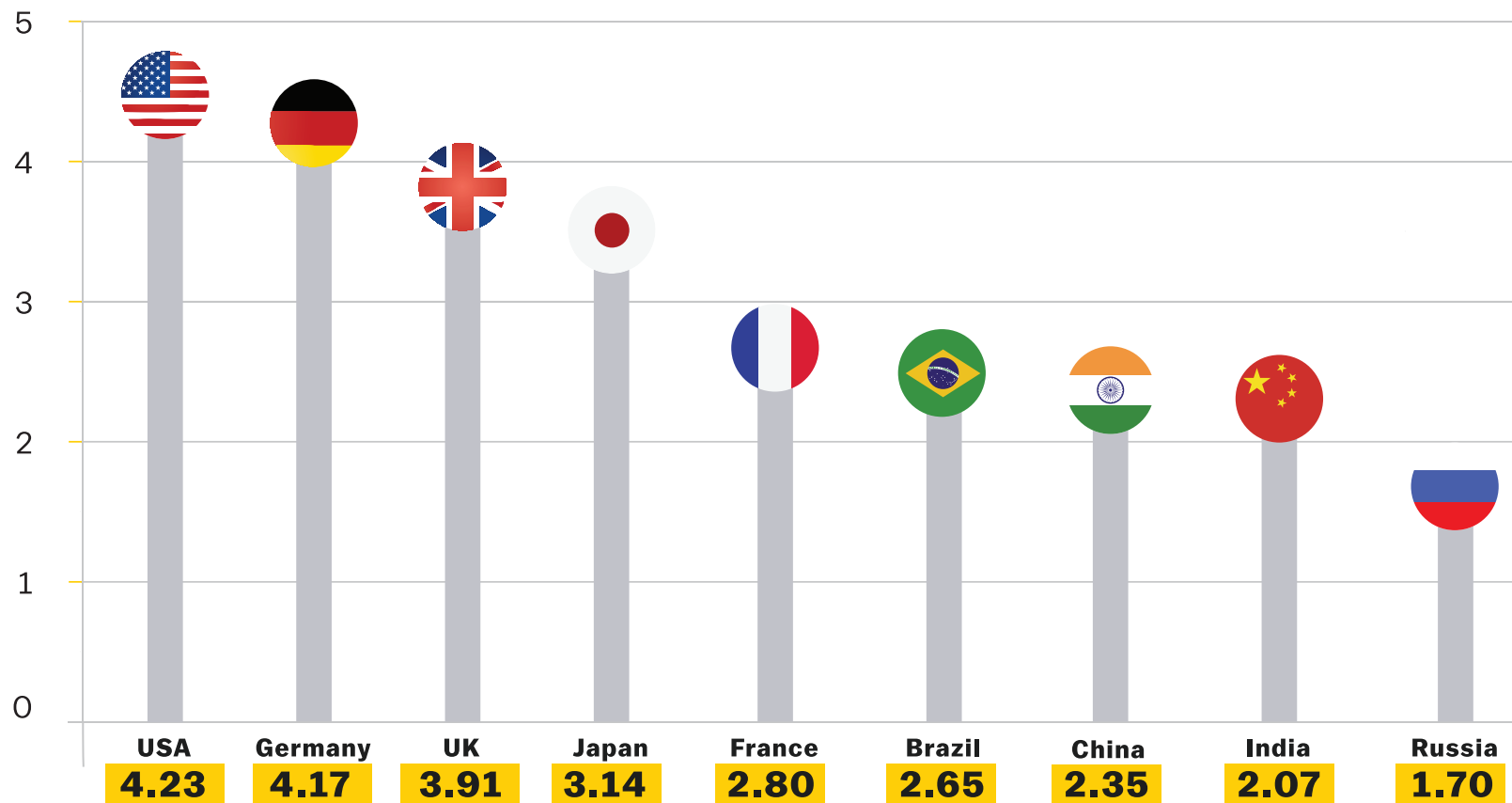
Despite the fact that Kosovo's international position is still fragile, the survey results show that Kosovo citizens have a clear idea of who their partners should be and what their role should be in the region. It is clear from the survey that Kosovo citizens have a strong preference for the U.S., Germany, and the United Kingdom (U.K.) as the main global powers and Kosovo's main diplomatic and economic partners. The affection of Kosovo citizens for certain states is also translated into sympathy for their political leaders. The findings of the survey suggest that Joseph Biden is the most preferred world leader among Kosovo Albanians, while Vladimir Putin remains the most preferred world leader among Kosovo Serbs.

The survey also reveals that Kosovo citizens are aware of the potential threats posed by Serbia and Russia to regional security and place the blame for the war in Ukraine on Russian President Vladimir Putin. Moreover, the survey results have demonstrated that Kosovo citizens are well aware of the role of international organizations in Kosovo's post-war recovery, and recognize the important role that NATO has played in liberating Kosovo and providing security during the state-building and state consolidation period. The survey also shows that the European Union is viewed positively by the people of Kosovo, despite some of the issues that have arisen in their relations.

Finally, the survey results suggest that Kosovo citizens are optimistic about the prospect of visa liberalization with the EU, and are expecting the visa liberalization process to be completed in the near future.

1

On a scale of 1-not at all to 5-very much, rate each of the following countries based on how well they behave WITH OTHER COUNTRIES and contribute to world peace.

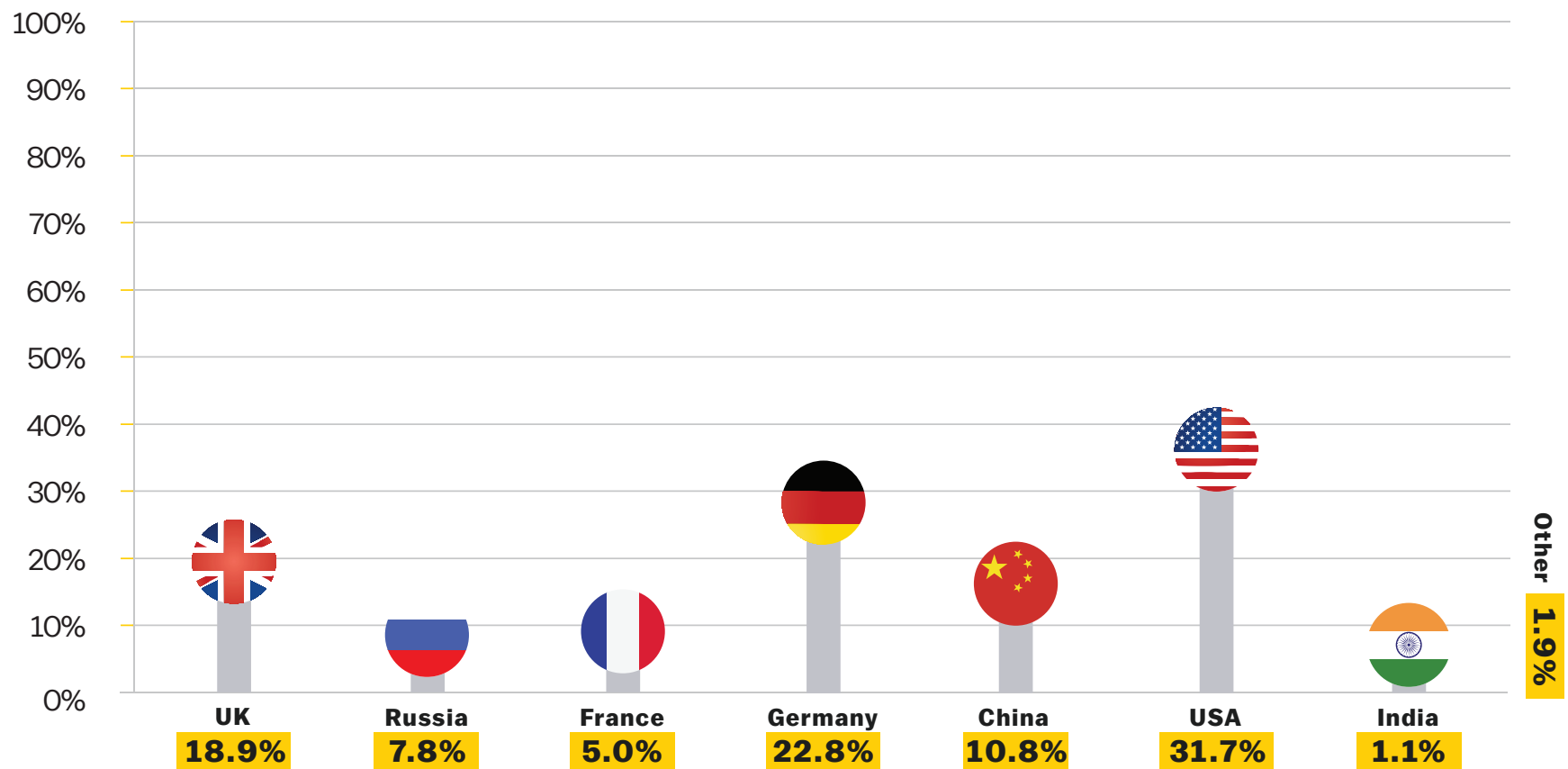


The capacity of states to promote international peace and security and pursue friendly relations with other countries is a defining feature of responsible statehood in world politics. However, world peace is increasingly entering an uncertain and fragile stage evident with the U.S. and EU's strong objection to Russia's war on Ukraine and China's heightened tensions over Taiwan.

Thus, it is crucial to understand how public opinion in Kosovo perceives these global developments and who is considered a promoter or abuser of world peace. Similar to previous editions, we asked the respondents to rank each of these countries from 1-5 (1 being the lowest and 5 the highest) on how well they behave towards other states and how much they contribute to world peace. As expected, the U.S. is considered the main global leader in promoting peace (4.2 out of 5) followed very closely by Germany (4.1 out of 5) and the United Kingdom (3.9). Meanwhile, the Russian Federation (1.7 out of 5) and the People's Republic of China (2 out of 5) are considered the least promoters of world peace. While these findings are broadly within the remit of most recent citizen perception polls conducted in 2019, there are some slight changes. Compared to this year's results, in 2019 Germany was considered the main global peace promoter with a very small margin over the USA.

This slight change in ranking is caused by the end of Angela Merkel's term as German Chancellor, who has enjoyed wide support in Kosovo, and the replacement of controversial President Donald Trump with incumbent Joseph Biden who enjoys strong sympathy among Kosovo citizens.

2 Which will be the three most powerful countries in international politics within the next 20 years?



While contributing to world peace is one of the indicators of how states are viewed globally, there are other determinants of international status, such as military, economic, and demographic strength. As we are currently experiencing an expeditious transformation of the international order, including the rise of China, it is crucial to understand the perception of Kosovo citizens on future global leaders.

We asked respondents which of the three countries would be the most powerful in international politics within the next 20 years. The results of this survey suggest that the citizens of Kosovo believe that the U.S., Germany, and the United Kingdom will remain the most powerful countries in the world for the next two decades. This is unsurprising, given the current status of these countries as major global powers. 32% of respondents consider the U.S. will remain the most powerful country in the world in the next 20 years, followed by Germany (23%) and the United Kingdom (19%). However, the survey also reveals that the citizens of Kosovo are not expecting China or Russia to overtake the world powers of today in the near future.

Only 11% of respondents consider China as the most powerful country in international politics within the next 20 years, followed by the Russian Federation (8%). Only 1% of respondents expect India to be a major global power in the upcoming years. The fact that China and India scored so low could be due to a lack of understanding of the current and future projects of global rise or a lack of faith in their ability to become major players in the international arena.

3 Which of these world leaders do you admire the most?

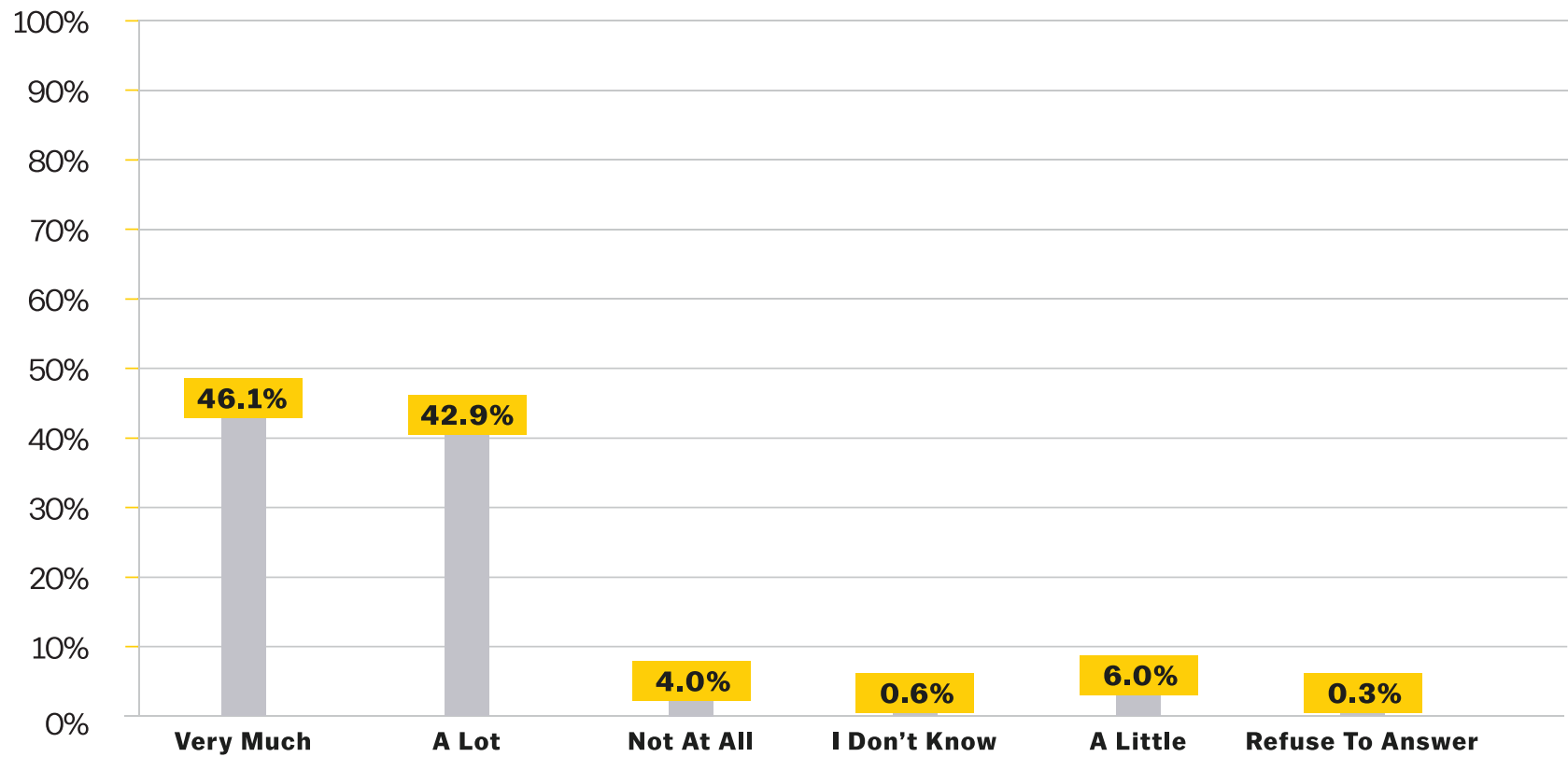


Similar to previous editions, we asked the respondents to choose one option from a list of the most prominent world leaders while also leaving open the option for adding other names. This year, U.S. President Joseph Biden is confirmed as the most preferred world leader in Kosovo with over 63%, followed by Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan with 13% and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz with 11%. The survey also showed that world leaders were considered differently by different ethnic groups in Kosovo. While Joseph Biden is the most preferred world leader for Kosovo Albanians, the most preferred world leader for Kosovo Serbs is Russian President Vladimir Putin. Among Kosovo Serbs, Vladimir Putin remained their most preferred world leader with 90%. This is likely due to the fact that Kosovo Serbs are influenced by Serbia's close political, economic, and religious ties with Russia and the latter's objection to Kosovo's independence.

On the other hand, Kosovo Albanians are more likely to sympathize with the Western states, which have been more supportive of Kosovo's independence and sovereignty. In the 2019 edition of this report, German Chancellor Angela Merkel enjoyed slightly higher sympathy compared to U.S. President Donald Trump. In this edition, the positions have changed, most likely because Joseph Biden is widely respected in Kosovo for his decades-long involvement in resolving the conflicts in the Balkans, while incumbent German Chancellor Scholz is a new face in European politics and not widely known in Kosovo. There is also a slight increase in the popularity of Turkey's President Erdogan in Kosovo (from 10 to 13%). This could be attributed to Erdogan's strong economic and political ties with Kosovo and his support for Kosovo's independence. Lastly, French President Emmanuel Macron enjoys very low admiration in Kosovo, likely because he is not as involved in Kosovo's politics as Biden, Erdogan, and Scholtz.

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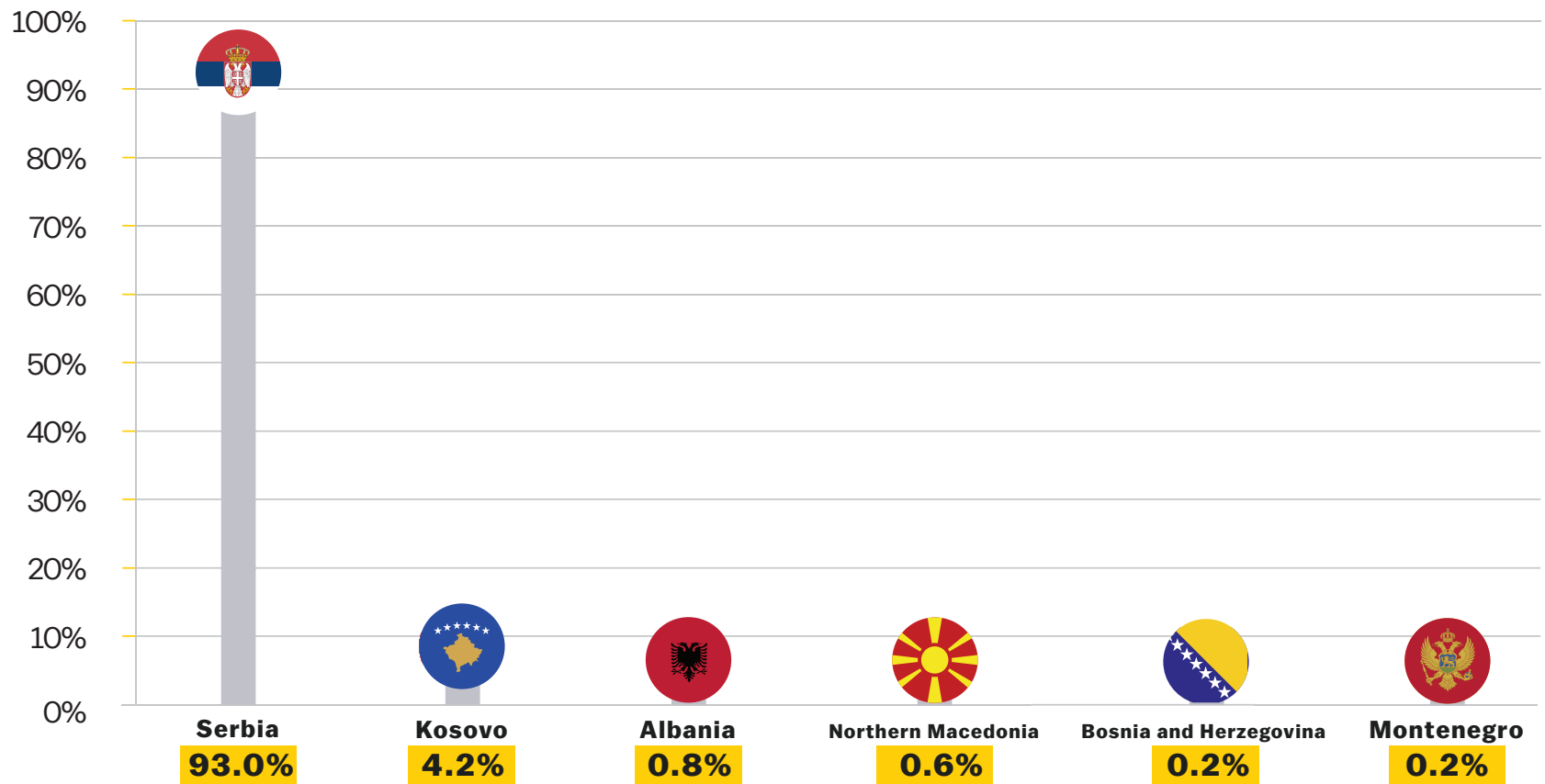
How much do you think NATO contributes to security and peace in the world today?



NATO continues to play a major role in the Balkans and acts as a key guarantor of peace and security in Europe. Although NATO is a defensive alliance and its primary mission is defending its member states from external threats, it has expanded its peacekeeping role beyond the Euro-Atlantic region. Its presence in the Balkans and other regions is seen as a stabilizing force, and its commitment to supporting democratic values is seen as an important contribution to global peace and security. In light of this, we asked the respondents to comment on how much they think NATO contributes to security and peace in the world today. The overwhelming majority of respondents (90%) consider NATO as a strong contributor to international peace and security in the world. This positive outlook of NATO derives first and foremost comes from the historical role that NATO peacekeepers have played in liberating Kosovo and serving as the main security guarantor in the two decades of Kosovo's path to independent statehood.

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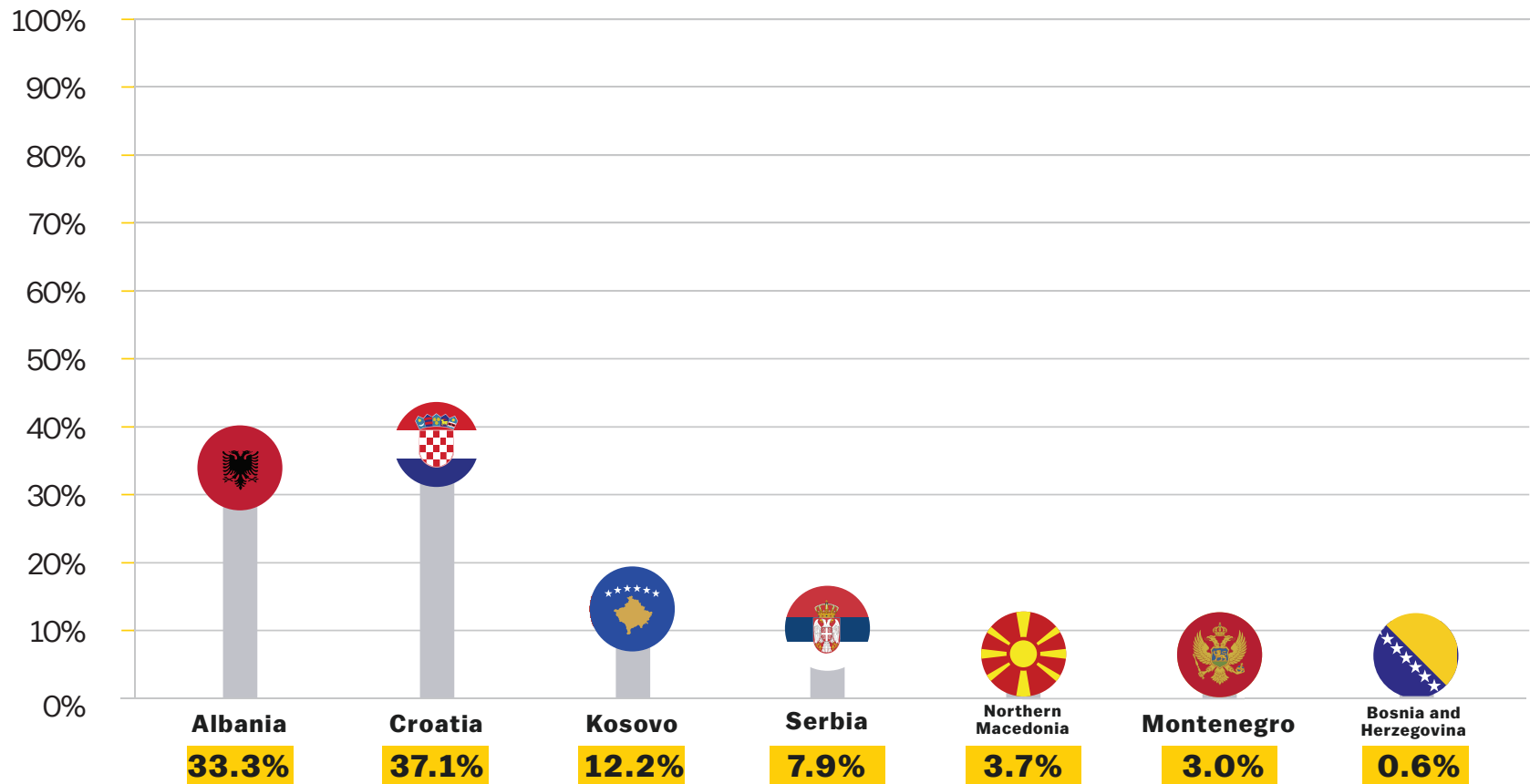
Which of the states in the region is the most threatening to the security of the Western Balkans?



In the past two decades, the Balkans region has experienced relative stability; however, several outstanding disputes in the region, coupled with malign foreign interference have emerged as major regional threats. For instance, dysfunctional power-sharing in Bosnia and Herzegovina and threats for recursive secession by Republika Srpska, along with the stalled process of normalization of relations between Serbia and Kosovo, and other pending issues in North Macedonia and Montenegro, represent some of the key hotspots for instability in the region. Moreover, clashes between the EU and NATO, on the one hand, and Russia and other Middle Eastern powers, on the other, for controlling the region tend to fuel further regional conflicts. In particular, the recent tensions and blockades in the northern part of Kosovo and Serbia's threat of using military force, with strong backing from Russia, have renewed fears of an escalation of the conflict in Kosovo. As a result of these developments, we asked the respondents which of the states in the region is the most threatening to the security of the Western Balkans. The overwhelming majority of respondents, namely 93%, and most Kosovo-Albanians, consider Serbia as the main threat to regional security. Those who listed Kosovo as a threat (with just over 4%) were 86% from the Kosovo-Serb community. Other countries in the region are not seen as security threats to Kosovo citizens.

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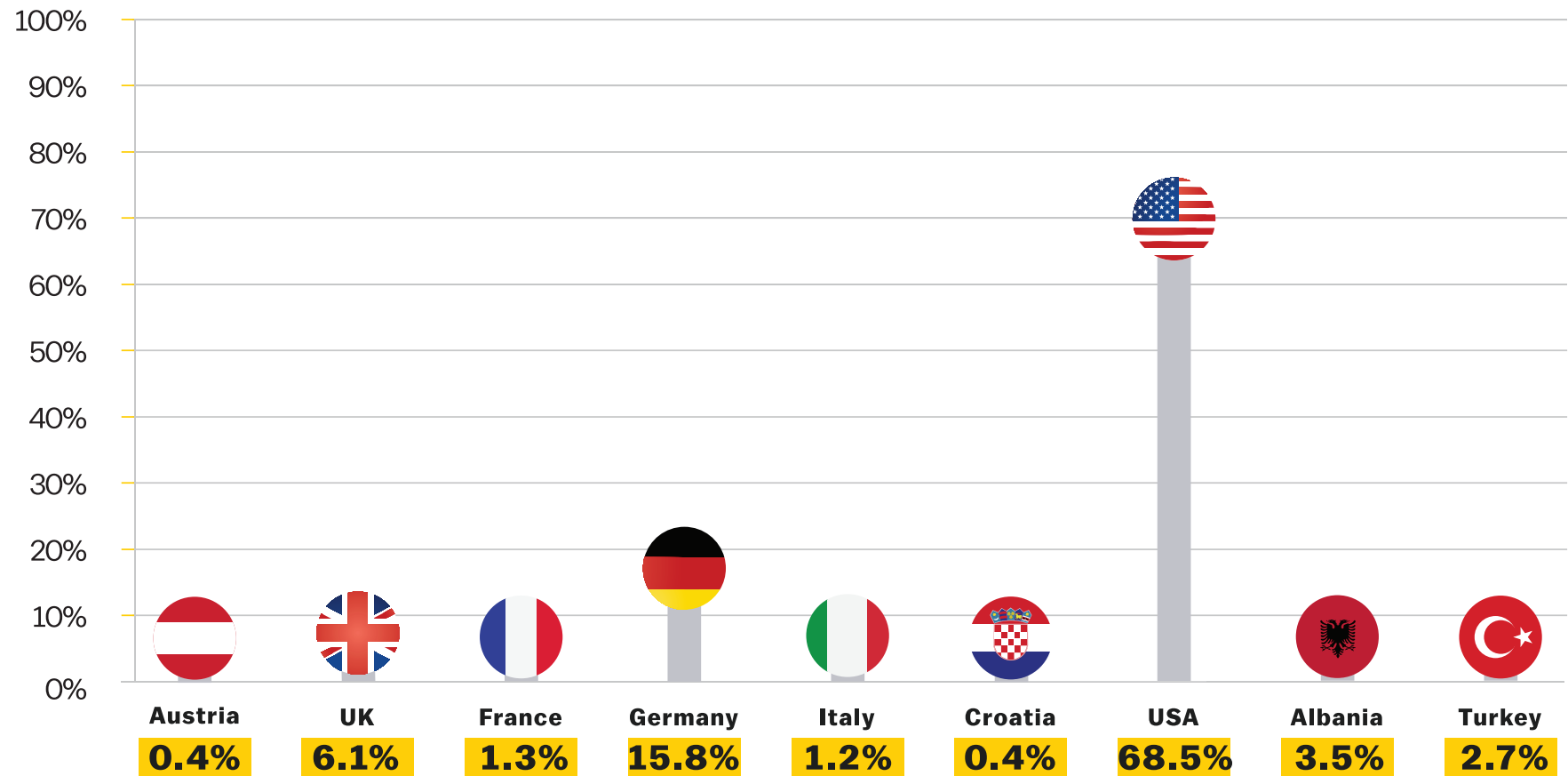
Which do you think will be the most powerful country in the Western Balkans in ten years?



Related to the previous question, we also asked the respondents to identify which countries in the Western Balkans will be the most powerful in the next ten years. 37.1% of respondents considered Croatia as most likely to be the most powerful country in the region. Croatia's economic and military strength is already evident, with a strong and modernized military that is growing in capability and capacity. Additionally, Croatia has strong ties with the EU and the U.S., which gives it additional leverage in regional relations. Albania follows with 33.3%, while Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia follow with much lower percentages.

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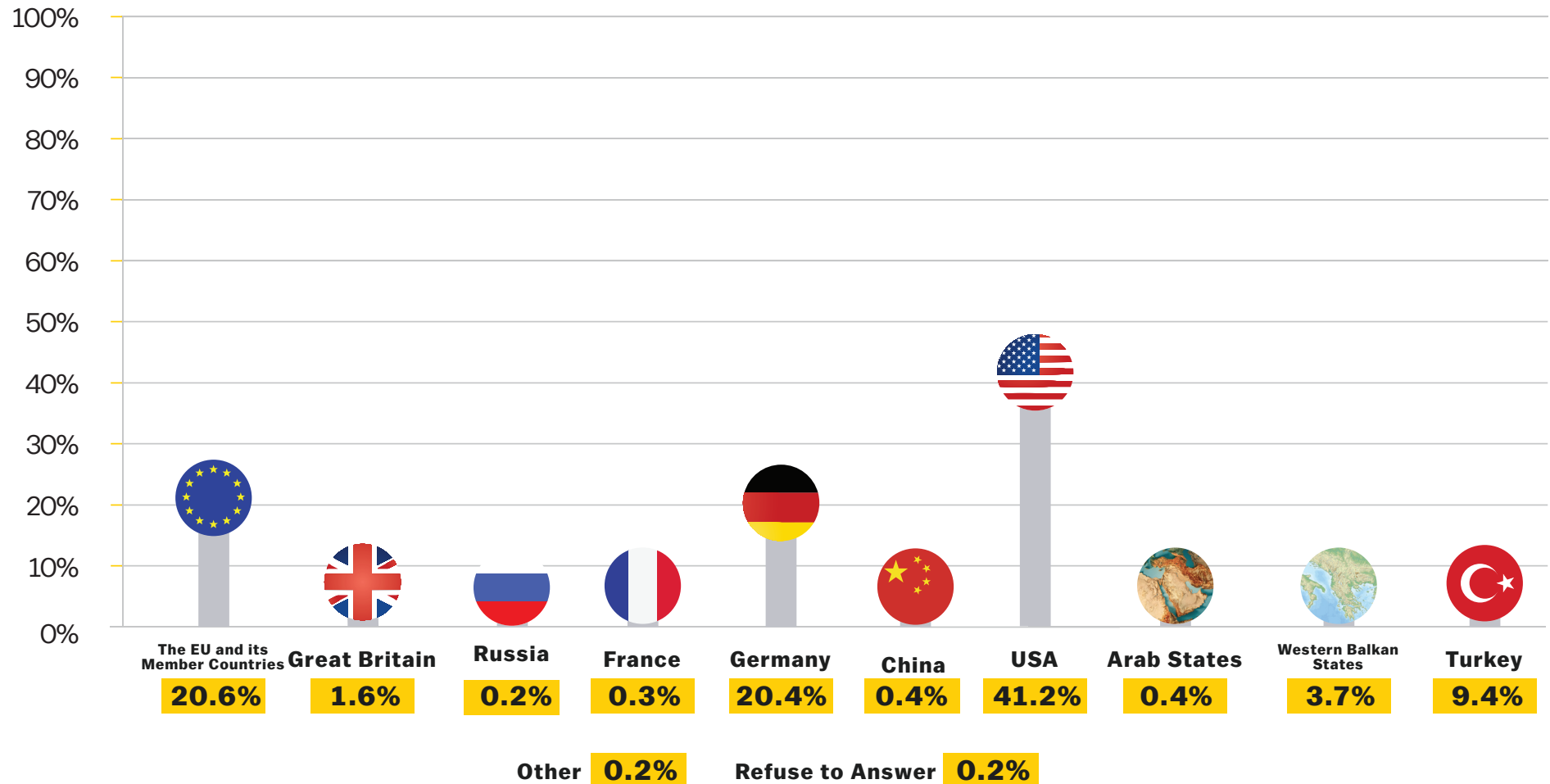
Which will be the three most powerful countries in international politics within the next 20 years?



Kosovo's pathway to independent statehood and state-building has taken place in close coordination with international partners. Since Kosovo's statehood is still fragile and its international position not yet fully consolidated, the country relies heavily on international support. Similar to previous editions, respondents were asked to select and rate three countries they consider to be Kosovo's main partner countries in international politics. The survey data show that the three main partner countries of Kosovo in international politics are the United States (68.5%), Germany (15.8%), and the United Kingdom (6.1%). The kin-state of Albania is rated very poorly, as is Turkey, which is one of the main non-Western economic partners of Kosovo. Notably, the U.S. has been a key partner for Kosovo, providing military and financial assistance, including support for Kosovo's security forces, and backing Kosovo's efforts to join international organizations. Germany and the UK have also been important partners for Kosovo, providing financial and political support, as well as backing Kosovo's efforts to join international organizations.

8

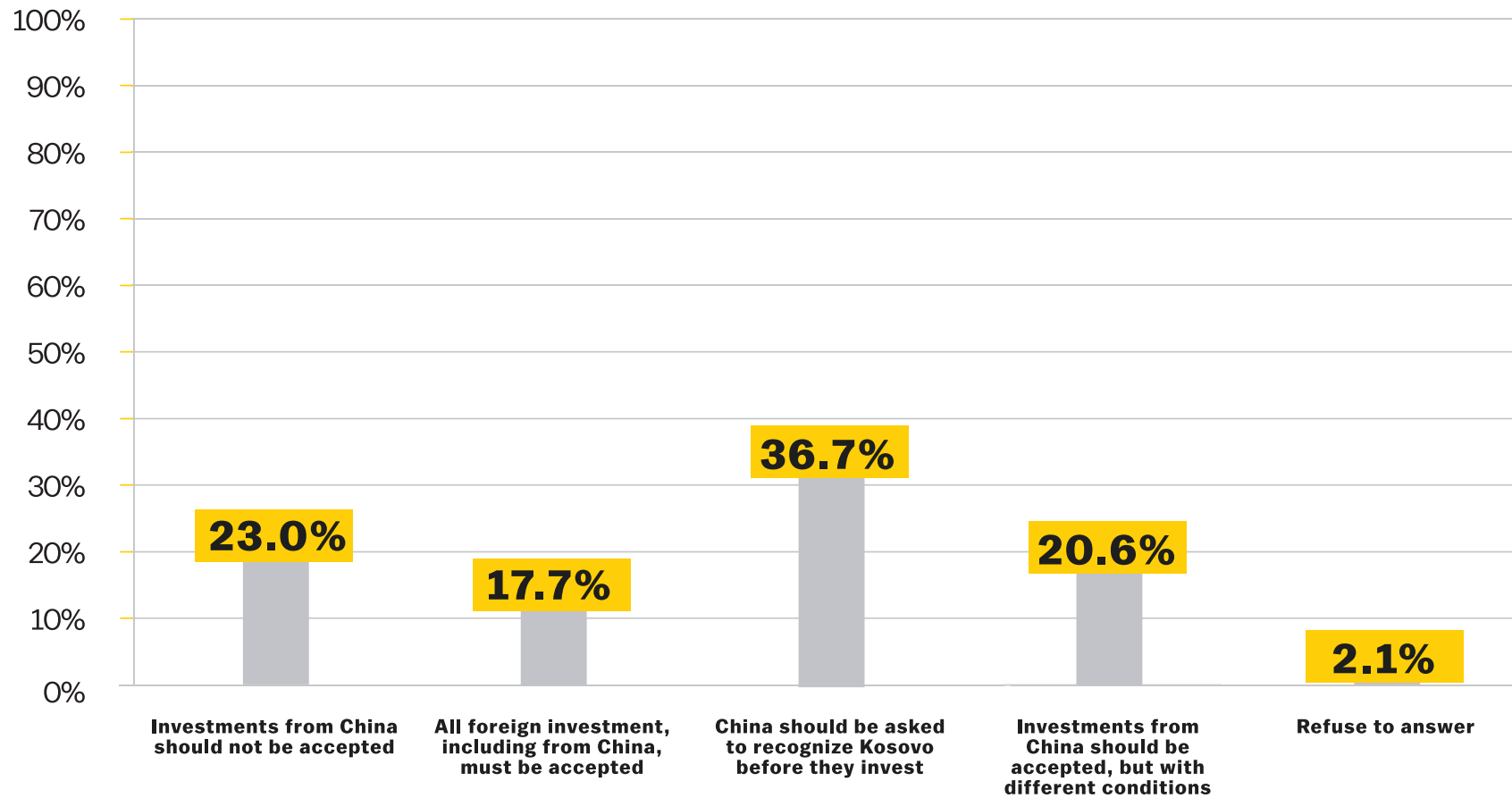
Which of the following actors or states should be the main economic partner of Kosovo?



The economy represents a key segment of Kosovo's bilateral relations with other countries, and regional and international organizations. However, Kosovo suffers from a significant trade deficit. Data from the Kosovo Agency of Statistics issued in November 2022 show that Kosovo exported only around 70 million Euros in goods during 2021-2022, whereas it imported a staggering value of over 475 million Euros. Kosovo's main export partners are within the EU, where Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands are the three main partners. Similarly, around half of Kosovo's imports come from the EU, namely Germany, Italy, Greece, and Slovenia. Outside the EU, Kosovo mostly imports goods from Serbia and other CEFTA countries, as well as Turkey, which is a major trading partner. The large trade deficit is partially a by-product of Kosovo's limited economic production and reliance on foreign markets, but also as a result of limited access and barriers set on the country for over a decade now. Respondents were asked which actor they believe should be Kosovo's key economic partner. According to respondents, the main economic partner of Kosovo should be the United States, with 41.2% of respondents selecting it as the primary partner. This is followed by Germany (20.4%), the EU and its member countries (20.6%), and Turkey (9.4%). Although currently, Kosovo's trade with the U.S. is very symbolic, respondents' clear choice of the U.S. as Kosovo's main economic partner reflects the fact that the U.S. has been a key supporter of Kosovo since its independence in 2008 and has provided key security and diplomatic assistance to the country over the years. These results suggest that the respondents have a strong preference for Kosovo to deepen its economic partnership with the U.S. and strongly believe that the US should play a more active role in Kosovo's economic development. There is also strong support for continued trading relations with Germany, the EU member states, and Turkey. Although Kosovo relies heavily on imports from Serbia, respondents have not considered it as an economic partner for Kosovo. This dissociation is influenced by hostile political relations and mounting tensions due to many unresolved disputes.

9

What should Kosovar institutions do if Chinese companies offer investments in Kosovo, as in the countries of the region?



Although the regional market in the Western Balkans is dominated by EU and western states, China has increased its investment and trade in the region. Kosovo's trade relations with China are largely symbolic due to the lack of bilateral diplomatic relations and the dominance of Kosovo's market by western markets and suppliers. Aware of the increasing global and regional influence of China, we asked the respondents what Kosovar institutions should do if Chinese companies offer investments in Kosovo, as in the countries of the region. Overall, the majority of respondents (36.7%) believe that China should be asked to recognize Kosovo before they invest in the country. A further 20.6% believe that investments from China should be accepted, but with different conditions. Only 23% of respondents believe that investments from China should not be accepted. This sentiment is likely due to the lack of diplomatic relations between Kosovo and China, as well as the desire to ensure that Chinese investments are beneficial to the people of Kosovo and are made in an ethical manner. This notwithstanding, the results suggest that the majority of respondents would be open to Chinese investment in Kosovo but would like the government to make sure that it is done in a way that respects Kosovo's sovereignty and is beneficial to the people of Kosovo.

10

Who is responsible for the escalation of the war in Ukraine?



VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY 1.9%



VLADIMIR PUTIN 91.6%



EU 2.5%



USA 4.0%

In February 2022, Russia launched an unprovoked war against Ukraine, which has been widely condemned as an act of aggression and a serious threat to European and international security. Despite this condemnation, the conflict remains unresolved without prospects for a peace process in the near future. The war has had a devastating effect not only on the Ukrainian population and their economy, but has also triggered global fuel and food crises, as well as intensifying tensions in other protracted conflicts across and beyond Europe. The recent tensions and blockades in the north of Kosovo have been partially attributed to Russian-backed groups, who are implicated in launching hybrid warfare in the region to undermine the EU's and NATO's credibility and distract from the ongoing war in Ukraine. While the Government of Kosovo has taken a clear stance and has strongly condemned Russia's war on Ukraine, we wanted to explore the views of Kosovo citizens on this matter. According to the respondents, Russian President Vladimir Putin is most responsible for the escalation of the war in Ukraine. 91.6% of respondents attributed the escalation of the war to Putin, while 1.9% attributed it to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, 2.5% to the EU, and 4.0% to the USA. These results show that an overwhelming majority of Kosovo citizens support the Ukrainian people and have condemned the unprovoked Russian war. The views of Kosovo citizens on the war in Ukraine reflect the opinion of the international community: that Russia's war in Ukraine is an act of aggression and a serious threat to European and international security. While the majority of Kosovo Albanian respondents attributed the blame to Russian President Putin for escalating the war in Ukraine, Kosovo-Serbs mostly attributed responsibility to Ukraine President Zelensky (81%) and U.S. administration (57%). The survey results show that there is a clear divide among citizens of Kosovo in terms of who they believe is responsible for the escalation of the war in Ukraine. The majority of Kosovo Albanians are united in pointing the finger at Russian President Vladimir Putin, while Kosovo-Serbs are more divided, with some attributing responsibility to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and some to the U.S. administration.

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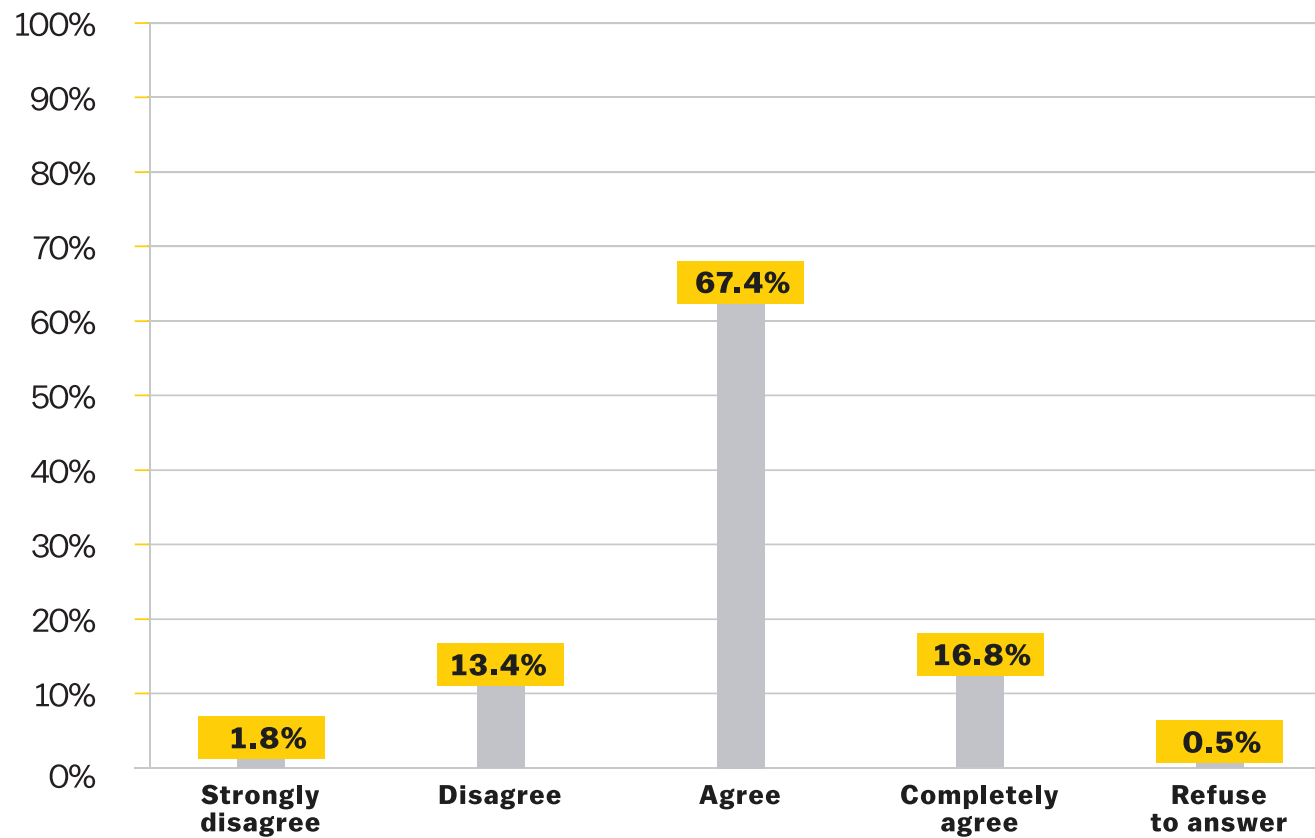
Which international organization has helped Kosovo the most since 1999?



Kosovo's post-war recovery has happened thanks to extensive assistance provided by regional and international organizations. That support has spanned from assisting in the reconstruction of basic infrastructure and public services to building political and economic institutions, and supporting the development of new governance laws and policies. Despite providing Kosovo with support for state-building and peacebuilding, the main international organizations present in Kosovo have remained status-neutral, implying they have avoided taking a position on Kosovo's independent statehood. Since Kosovo's political status remained unresolved between 1999 and 2008 and then not fully recognized after the declaration of independence, the public perception of international missions in Kosovo has changed over time. In light of the changing nature and roles of international organizations in Kosovo, we asked the respondents to list which international organization has helped Kosovo the most since 1999. Overall, around 70% of the respondents listed NATO as the international organization that has helped Kosovo the most since 1999, followed by the United Nations (12.6%), the European Union (7.6%), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (9.7%), and the Council of Europe (0.5%). The results of this survey demonstrate that the majority of the respondents recognize the important role that NATO has played in liberating Kosovo and providing security during the state-building and state consolidation period. NATO's KFOR mission has been instrumental in providing security and stability in the region, and has been a key factor in preventing and managing major inter-ethnic or cross-border tensions in Kosovo. The UN, EU, and OSCE have also played important roles in Kosovo's post-war recovery, providing support for economic development, institutional reforms, and the normalization of relations. However, the survey results suggest that the public perception of these organizations is not as strong as that of NATO.

12

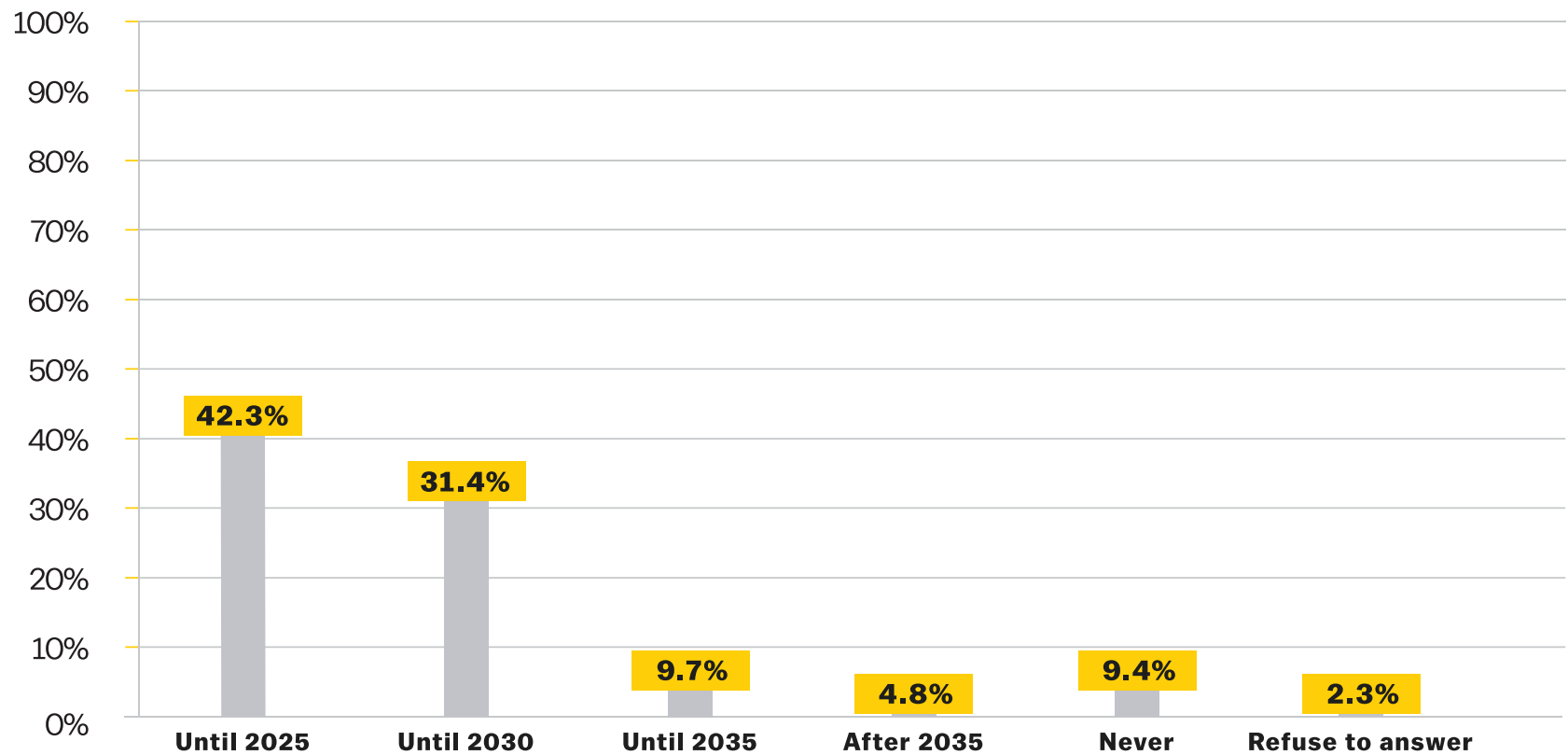
How much do you agree with the statement that “the European Union (EU) is a friendly organization of Kosovo today”?



The European Union has supported Kosovo in many ways since the end of the war in 1999 and the declaration of independence in 2008. It has provided financial assistance, political support, and trade deals, making it the main donor in Kosovo and providing funds for infrastructure and other development projects. As a result, the European Union is a major international stakeholder in Kosovo, and membership in the EU remains one of the main national priorities for Kosovo. However, the complex membership criteria and extensive required institutional reforms, as well as unequal treatment of Kosovo due to a lack of internal unity on Kosovo independence, have been subject to regular political and societal debate in Kosovo. In particular, the discriminatory policies and decade-long delays in visa liberalization for Kosovo citizens have often raised doubts and questions about Kosovo's relations with the EU and its prospects for eventual membership. In light of this, we asked the respondents to assess if the EU is considered a friendly organization towards Kosovo today. The results of this survey indicate that the European Union is viewed positively by the respondents, with 67.4% of them agreeing and 16.8% completely agreeing, despite some of the issues that have arisen in their relations. Only 13.4% of respondents disagreed, and only 0.5% of respondents refused to answer. This positive outlook is likely due to the EU's financial and political support for Kosovo, as well as its trade deals and other development projects. However, the lack of visa liberalization and the unequal treatment of Kosovo due to the lack of internal unity on Kosovo independence remain major issues that undermine public support for the EU in Kosovo.

13

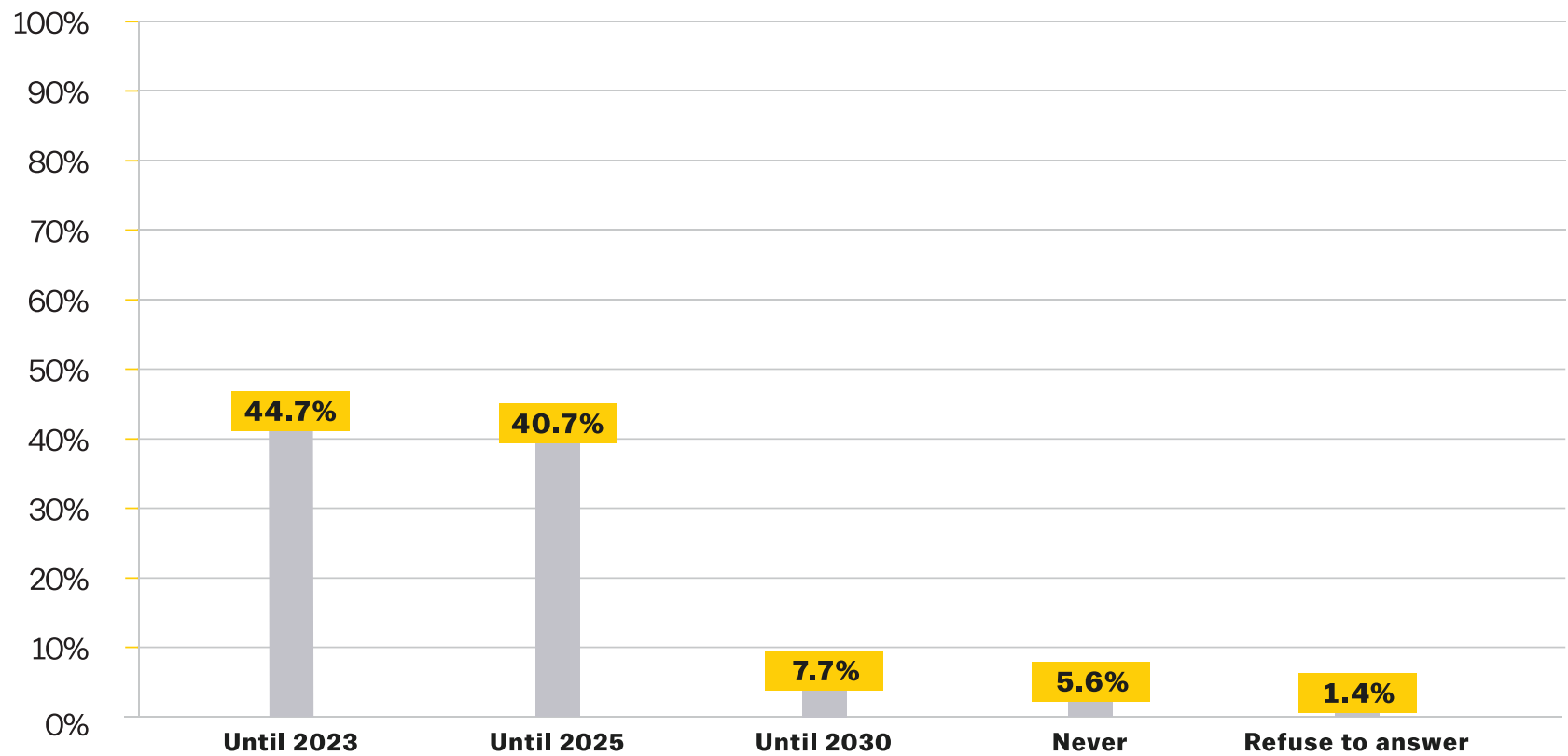
When do you think Kosovo will join the European Union (EU)?



Despite comprehensive reforms, Kosovo is still in the early stage of implementing the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA), which was signed in 2015, and of meeting the political and economic criteria for advancing the EU integration process. The Government of Kosovo has made it clear that it is committed to achieving the necessary reforms and fulfilling its obligations under the SAA in order to meet the criteria for EU membership. While Kosovo's progress towards Euro-Atlantic integration has been slow, in 2022 the Government has taken several important steps to advance the Euro-Atlantic integration process; such as officially applying for EU candidate status as well as applying for membership in the Council of Europe. Both processes complement one another as they are considered crucial for enhancing democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, which are crucial political criteria for EU membership. EU's latest reports on Kosovo also acknowledge that Kosovo institutions have made progress in organizing democratic elections, public administration reform, improving the judicial system, and fighting corruption, organized crime, and terrorism. Moreover, since the EU has adopted a more political methodology for the enlargement process, it should not be ruled out that if Kosovo and Serbia sign a legally binding agreement to normalize their relations, the EU accession path could be accelerated. Finally, Kosovo citizens are expected to travel without a visa to the EU's Schengen zone at the beginning of 2024 after long delays. Considering these developments, we asked the respondents to share their views on when Kosovo is likely to join the EU. The majority of people surveyed (42.3%) believe that Kosovo will join the European Union by 2025. 31.4% of respondents believe that Kosovo will join the EU by 2030, 9.7% believe it will join by 2035, 4.8% believe it will join after 2035, 9.4% do not think it will ever join, and 2.3% refused to answer. While most respondents (over 73%) believe that Kosovo will join the EU within the next decade, this timeline is likely unrealistic given the current state of enlargement fatigue and the mounting criteria for EU membership. Despite the long road ahead, Kosovo has a no better alternative but to remain committed to the reform process and continue to advance its progress toward EU integration. The Government must continue to address the political and socio-economic issues in order to ensure the country is ready for membership. Similarly, the international community and the EU itself must also remain committed to supporting Kosovo's Euro-Atlantic integration process, and work towards helping the country meet the criteria for accession.

14

When do you think that visas from the European Union (EU) will be liberalized in Kosovo?



The visa regime for traveling to the EU has been very rigid for Kosovo citizens. Although Kosovo had to fulfill a disproportionately higher number of criteria compared to the rest of the Western Balkans countries, and the European Commission concluded in 2018 that Kosovo had successfully met the visa-free travel criteria, but the Council of the EU has delayed the process for internal political reasons. It appears that, finally, in early 2024, Kosovo citizens will be permitted to travel to the EU's Schengen zone without visas, thanks to Czechia's active lobbying during their EU presidency during the second half of 2022. Since Kosovo citizens have been promised multiple timelines to travel visa-free within the EU by both local and EU politicians, we asked the respondents when they thought such a process would take place. The majority of respondents (44.7%) believed that visas from the European Union (EU) would be liberalized by 2023. 40.7% of respondents believed it would happen by 2025, 7.7% believed it would happen by 2030, 5.6% believed it would never happen, and 1.4% refused to answer. The results of this survey indicate that many Kosovo citizens are optimistic about the prospect of visa liberalization with the EU. This is likely due to the fact that the European Commission has already concluded that Kosovo has met the criteria for visa-free travel, and the Council of the EU has delayed the process for internal political reasons. The survey results also suggest that most Kosovo citizens are expecting the visa liberalization process to be completed in the near future (between 2023 and 2025), which is in line with the timeline proposed by Czechia during their EU presidency in 2022.

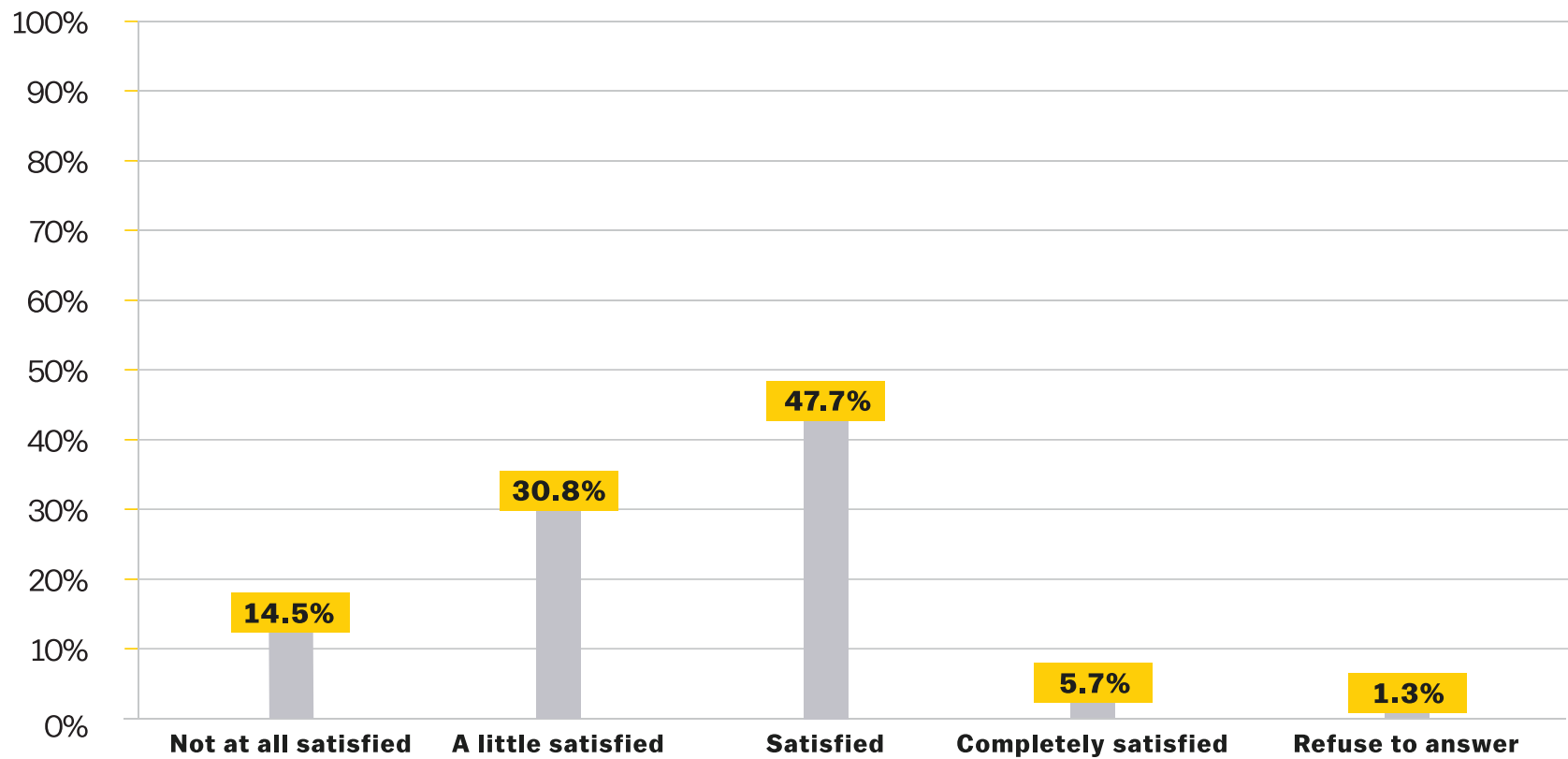
3

Citizen Perception on Kosovo's International Standing and the Dialogue with Serbia

This section explores citizen perception of Kosovo's international position and the benefits and risks associated with the EU-facilitated dialogue for normalization of relations with Serbia. The survey below reveals that while a majority of citizens have been either very or sufficiently satisfied with Kosovo's foreign policy, it is clear that Kosovo needs to take steps to improve its foreign policy and diplomacy in order to ensure that it is able to achieve its strategic objectives. Contrary to dominant views, the survey shows that a majority of citizens believe that Kosovo's future as an independent state will not be endangered if a final agreement with Serbia is not reached. Moreover, the findings also demonstrate that citizens do not support the 'Open Balkan' initiative and do not believe that Kosovo will benefit from its implementation. Finally, the survey indicates that most Kosovo citizens are hopeful that the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia will result in a final agreement. However, the timeline for a possible agreement remains uncertain.

15

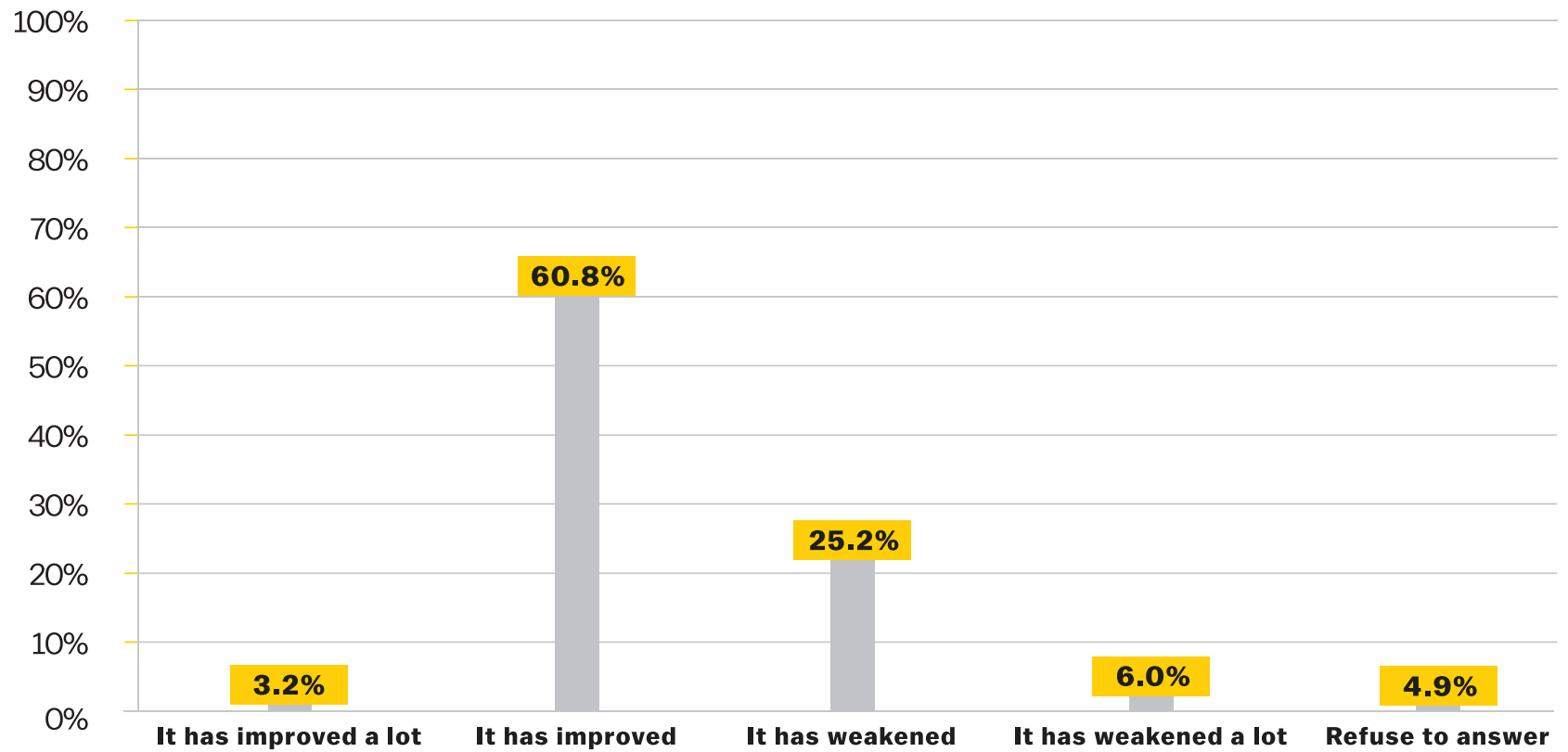
How satisfied are you with the foreign policy and diplomacy of the Republic of Kosovo?



In recent years, Kosovo's foreign policy and diplomacy have experienced multiple constraints. Serbia's aggressive counter-recognition and derecognition campaign, as well as rapid international and geopolitical changes, including the entanglement of Kosovo's international integration with normalization, have undermined Kosovo's foreign policy objectives. In such a constrained environment, Kosovo's foreign policy has focused on deepening bilateral relations with existing Euro-Atlantic allies. Domestically, the much-needed institutional and legal reforms of Kosovo's foreign service have also disrupted diplomatic activity and derailed efforts to consolidate further Kosovo's international subjectivity and access to multilateral bodies. We asked the respondents on how satisfied they are with Kosovo's foreign policy and diplomacy. The overall satisfaction with the foreign policy and diplomacy of Kosovo appears to be mixed. Approximately 47.7% of respondents indicated that they were satisfied with Kosovo's foreign policy and diplomacy, while 30.8% indicated that they were only a little satisfied. 14.5% of respondents indicated that they were not at all satisfied, and 5.7% indicated that they were completely satisfied. While over 50% of respondents have been either very or sufficiently satisfied with Kosovo's foreign policy, it is clear that Kosovo needs to take steps to improve its foreign policy and diplomacy in order to ensure that it is able to achieve its international objectives.

16

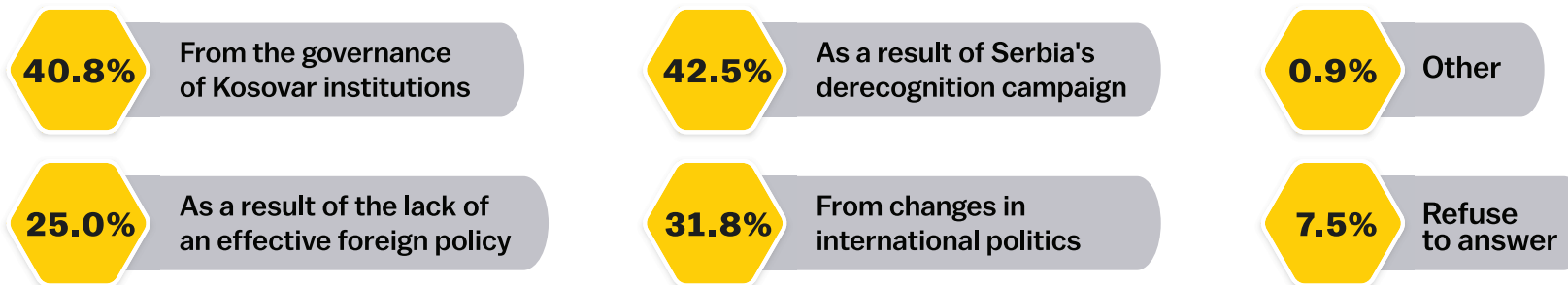
In your opinion, in the last five years, the position of Kosovo in the international arena



Related to the previous question, we asked the respondents to share their opinion on whether Kosovo's international position has improved in the last five years. The majority of respondents (60.8%) believe that the position of Kosovo in the international arena has improved in the last five years. However, 25.2% believe it has weakened, 6.0% believe it has weakened a lot, and 4.9% refused to answer. These results suggest that although most citizens are content with the efforts of the Kosovo Government to advance the country's international position, there is still a significant portion of the population who are not as satisfied. In a follow-up question, respondents were asked to clarify what explains the improvement or weakening of Kosovo's international position. The most prominent factor weakening of Kosovo's international standing appears to be Serbia's derecognition campaign, which accounted for 42.5% of the responses. This was likely due to Serbia's opposition to Kosovo's independence and its attempts to undermine the legitimacy of the Government of Kosovo. Additionally, 40.8% of respondents attributed the improvement of situation to the governance of Kosovar institutions, indicating that there were issues with the way the government was structured and managed. Changes in international politics were also a factor that has shaped Kosovo's international position, accounting for 31.8% of the responses. Finally, other factors, such as economic or social issues, may have also played a role in the situation

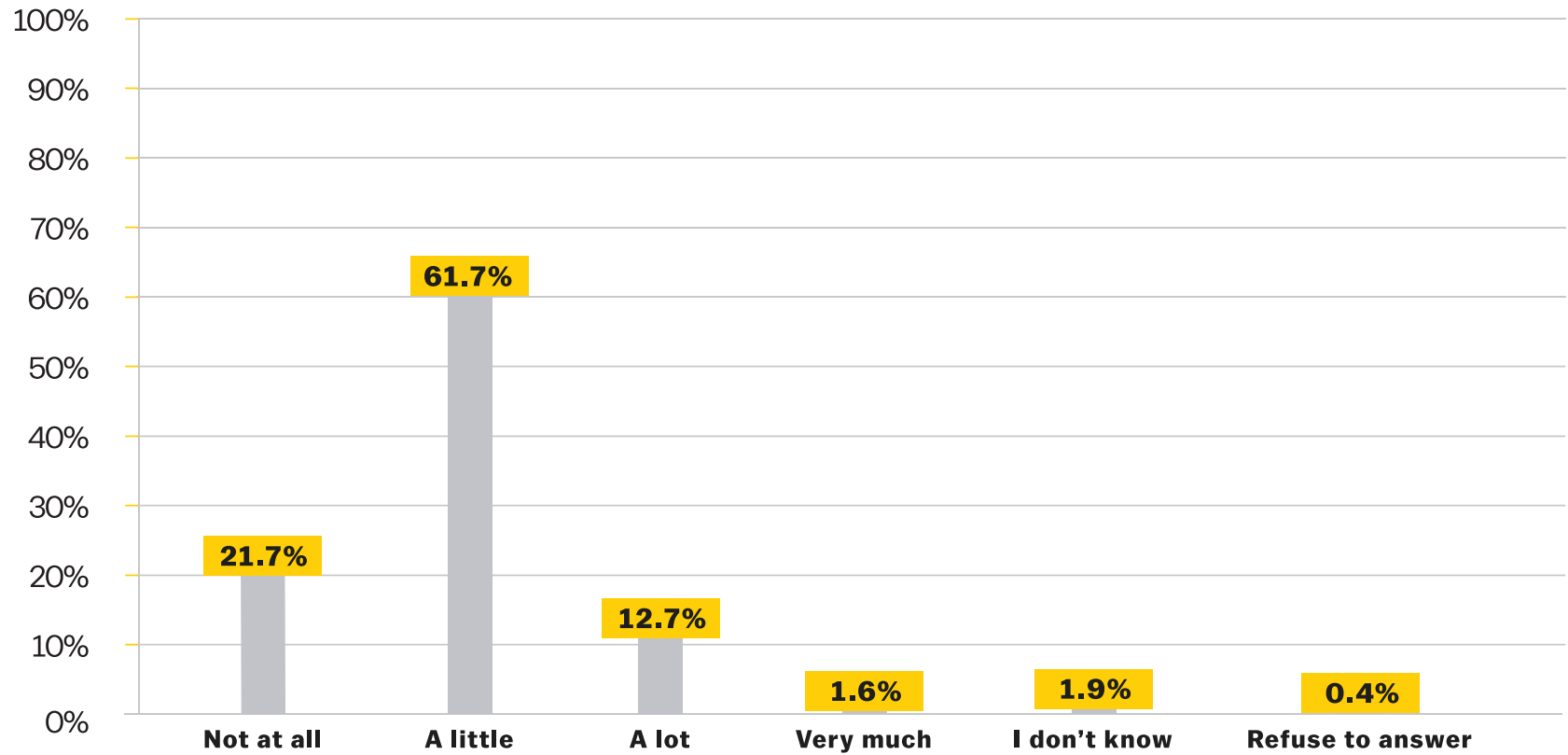
16.1

Why do you think this happened?



17

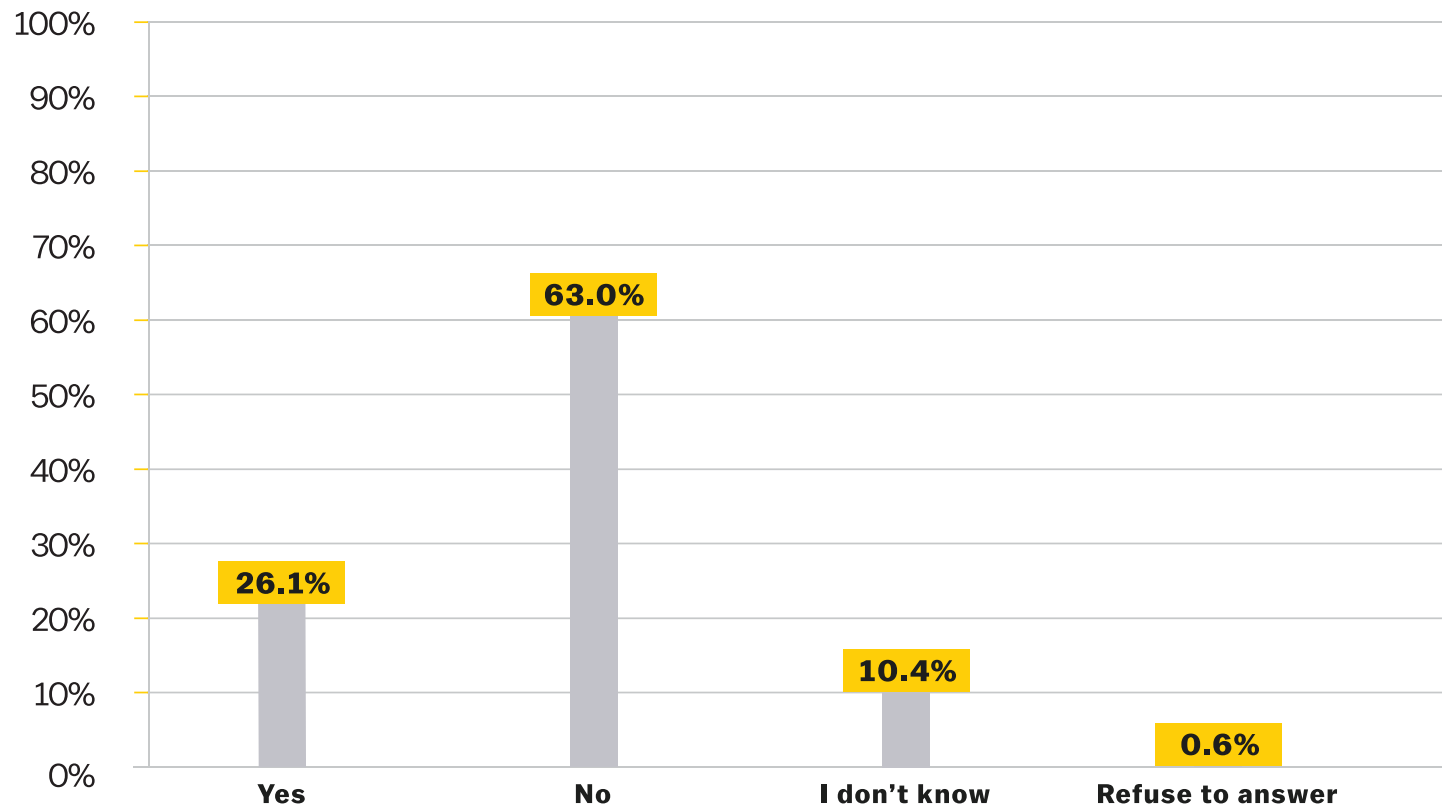
How informed do you think you are about the dialogue process between the Government of the Republic of Kosovo and the Government of Serbia facilitated by the European Union (EU)?



The EU-facilitated dialogue for normalizing relations between Kosovo and Serbia has mostly been a top-down process involving only senior government officials and experts. The dialogue is often criticized for lacking transparency, clarity, and sufficient public information. Civil society and affected communities have only been symbolically consulted and involved in the decision-making process. In particular, the role of civil society has been one-way: only promoting the importance of normalizing relations without having sufficient space in shaping the process and the outcomes. Similarly, due to limited access, online journalism and social media platforms have not been able to report in a fair and balanced manner. This has led to the dissemination of one-sided narratives and often the spread of misinformation, which has undermined public confidence in, and the credibility of, the EU-led talks for normalizing relations between Kosovo and Serbia. In light of this, we asked the respondents how informed they were about the EU-led talks for normalizing relations between Kosovo and Serbia. The majority of citizens had little knowledge about the dialogue for normalizing relations between Kosovo and Serbia (61.7%). 21.7% of citizens had no knowledge of the topic, 12.7% had a lot of knowledge, and 1.6% had extensive knowledge. Overall, it is clear that citizens are not well informed about the EU-led talks for normalizing relations between Kosovo and Serbia. To address this, it is essential that the EU, Kosovo, and Serbia increase their efforts to engage civil society, affected communities, and the media in the process and provide more clarity and information about the talks. This will ensure that citizens are better informed and can have a more informed opinion on the dialogue for normalizing relations between Kosovo and Serbia.

18

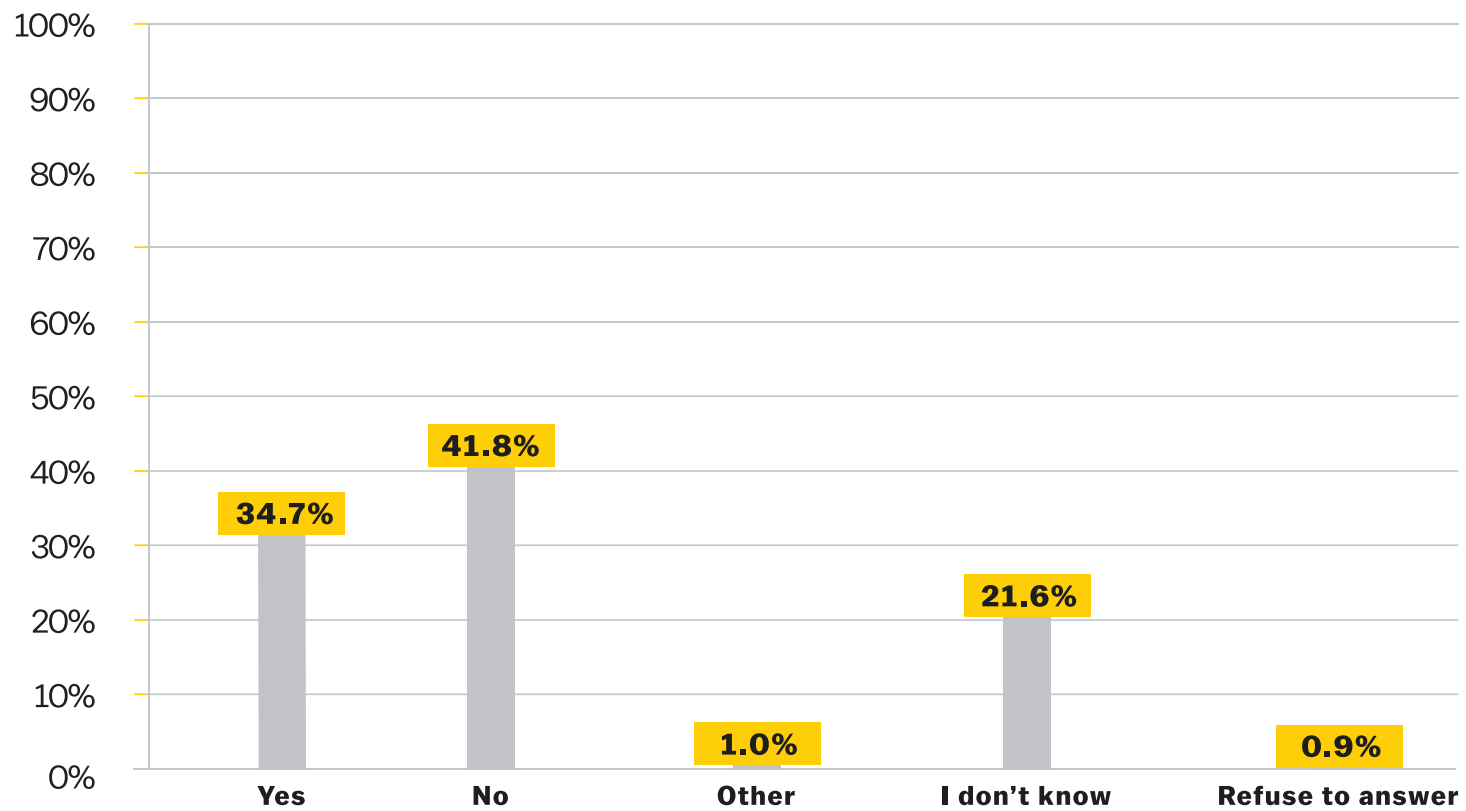
Is the existence of Kosovo as an independent state endangered in the future, if a “final agreement” with Serbia is not reached?



The full normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia through a legally binding agreement has emerged as a central process shaping Kosovo's political future. The agreement is considered central for resolving the outstanding conflict with Serbia, opening the path for socio-economic development, and unlocking Kosovo's Euro-Atlantic future. In the current state of affairs, the stalled talks for normalization of relations have resulted in deepening ethnic tensions in Kosovo; shaking international support for Kosovo; and enabling Serbia to launch an aggressive diplomatic campaign for derecognition of Kosovo and blocking the prospects for membership in regional and international organizations. Considering this pressure imposed on Kosovo by both its allies and adversaries, we asked the respondents to assess whether Kosovo's future as an independent state will be endangered if a final agreement with Serbia is not reached. Overall, the majority of respondents (63%) believe that Kosovo's future as an independent state will not be endangered if a final agreement with Serbia is not reached. However, a significant minority (26.1%) of respondents think that Kosovo's future as an independent state will be endangered if a final agreement is not reached. 10.4% of respondents said they do not know whether Kosovo's future will be endangered, and 0.6% refused to answer. This suggests that while a significant number of respondents recognize the importance of the normalization of relations with Serbia, they do not believe that their future as an independent state is dependent on it.

19

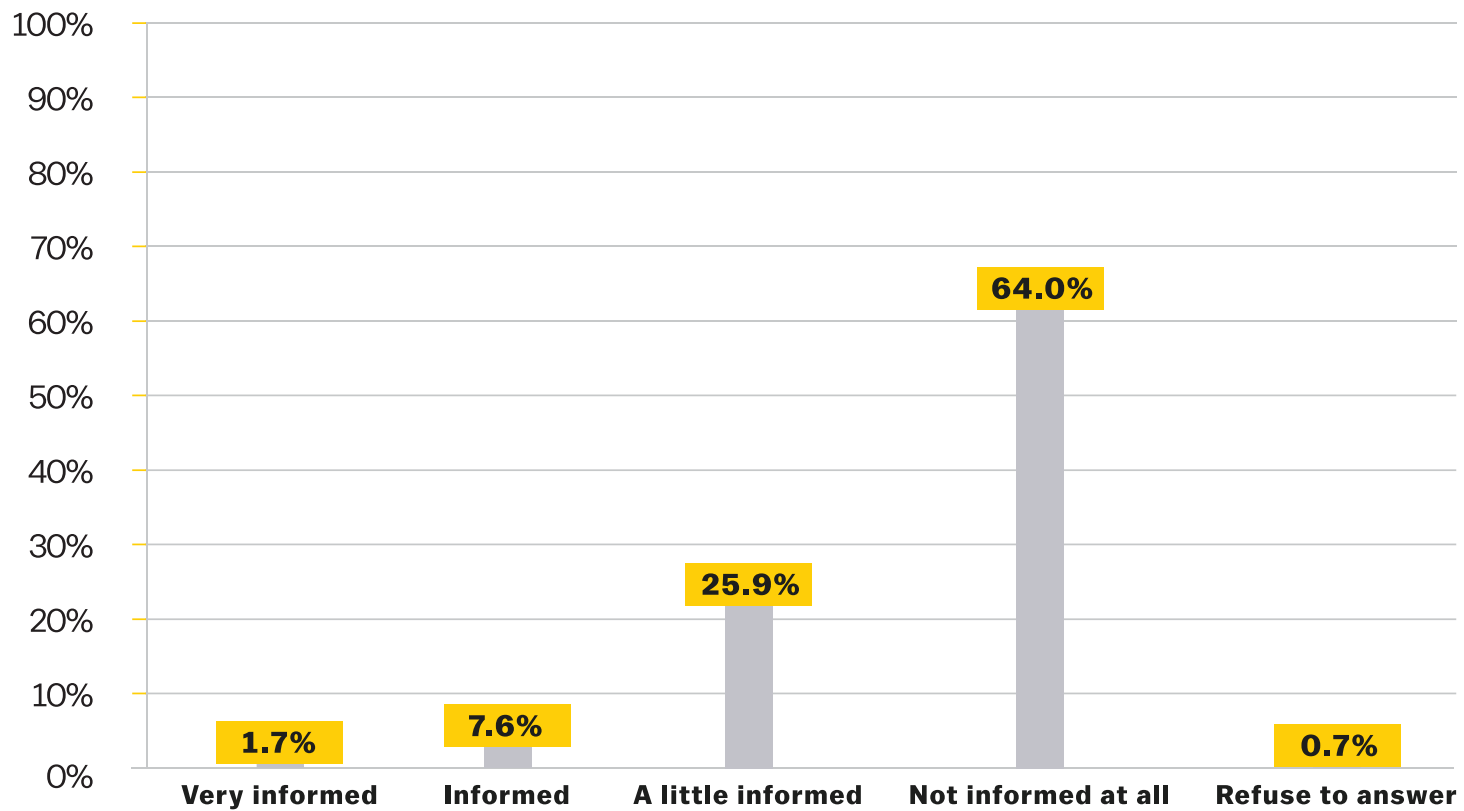
Do you believe that the “final agreement” between Kosovo and Serbia would improve your life?



The EU-led process for full normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia has emerged as a key international and national priority in Kosovo, but there is little debate on how such a final agreement would impact or improve the everyday lives of Kosovo citizens. Since 2011, Kosovo and Serbia have reached over 30 technical and political agreements, but their partial or unsatisfactory implementation has undermined public confidence in the process, as often there isn't a clear public understanding of how such arrangements improve the everyday lives of Kosovo citizens. Therefore, we asked the respondents if they believed that the final agreement between Kosovo and Serbia would improve their lives. The results showed that most of the respondents (41.8%) did not believe that the final agreement between Kosovo and Serbia would improve their lives, indicating a lack of public confidence in the process and its outcomes. However, 34.7% of the respondents considered that the final agreement would improve their lives. Among those who responded positively, they thought that the final agreement between Kosovo and Serbia would improve their lives by providing economic development (10.8%) and facilitating visa liberalization (9.3%). Others believed that the final agreement would improve security and stability in Kosovo, including mutual recognition between Kosovo and Serbia. Despite these nuances, since the majority of respondents had a negative perception of the impact of dialogue on their lives, there is a need for more information and a better understanding of how the final agreement would improve the lives of Kosovo citizens.

20

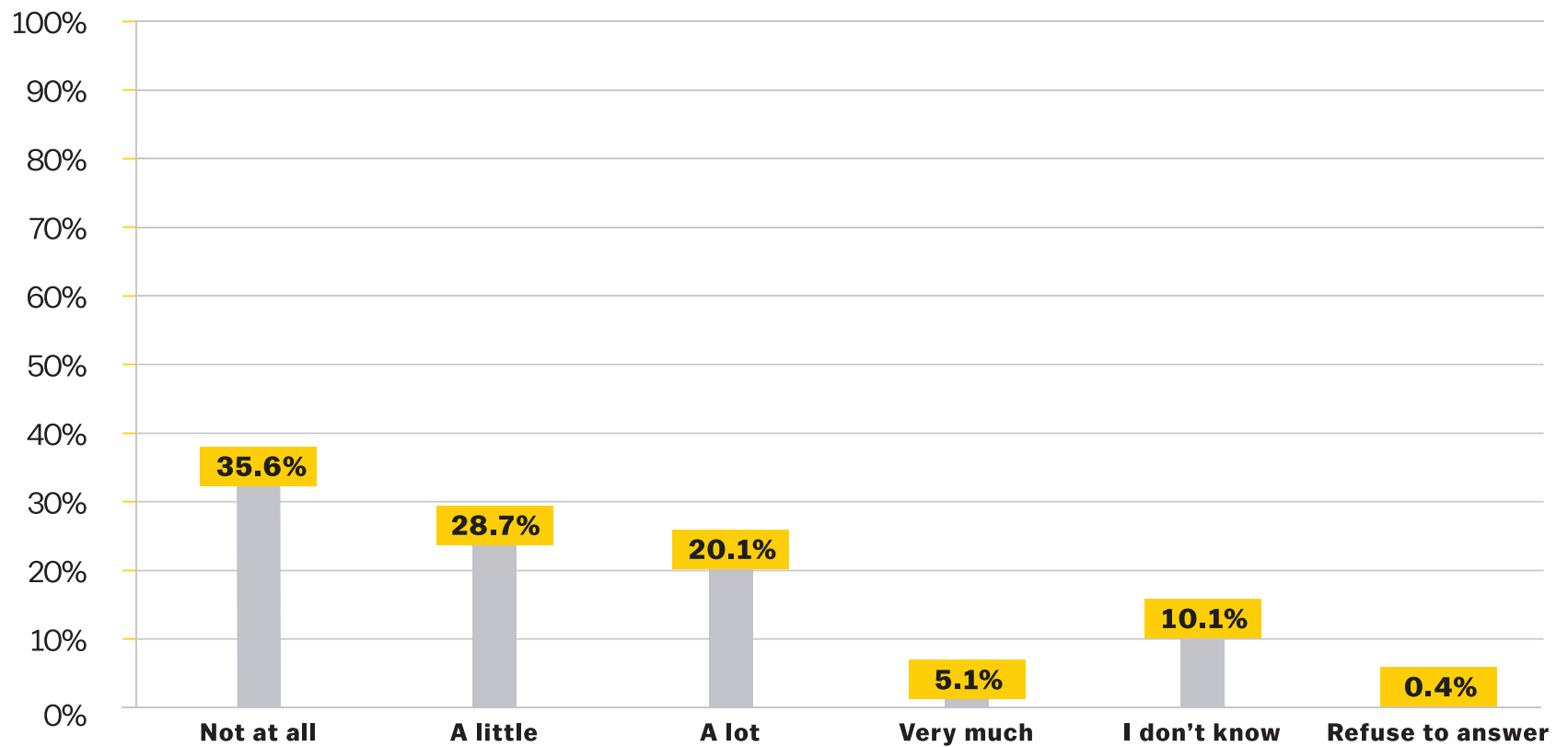
How informed are you about the content of the “New Proposal (Franco-German)”?



Although there has been extensive discussion of the need for a comprehensive agreement for normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia, for a long period of time all involved parties have been unable to present such a final and legally binding agreement. In 2022, a Franco-German proposal (now referred to as the EU proposal) has been seen as a potential breakthrough in the long-standing stalemate between Kosovo and Serbia. According to reports, the proposal seems to suggest that Serbia would receive financial and political benefits, such as fast-tracked accession to the EU, in exchange for normalizing relations with Kosovo but short of formal diplomatic recognition. The proposal has been met with mixed reactions from both Kosovo and Serbia. A central aspect of this proposal that remains unknown concerns the provisions and powers of the controversial Association of Serb-majority Municipalities. Although these provisions of the Franco-German proposal have been leaked in the media, there is limited credible public information on the actual content of the proposal. Thus, we asked the respondents how informed they are on the content of the Franco-German proposal for normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia. The majority of respondents (64.0%) indicated that they are not informed at all about the content of the New Proposal (Franco-German). 25.9% of respondents indicated that they are a little informed, while 7.6% indicated that they are informed and only 1.7% indicated that they are very informed. The results of this survey clearly demonstrate that more than half of the respondents are not informed on the contents of the Franco-German proposal for the normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia. This lack of information likely stems from the limited public information on the actual content of the proposal. Although peacemaking processes are discretionary and the details are kept secret, this lack of information is worrying, given the potential implications of the proposal for both Kosovo and Serbia. For the proposal to gain public support and be successful, it is important that Kosovo citizens understand the full implications of the proposal through more credible and well-informed media coverage, public forums, or other forms of public engagement.

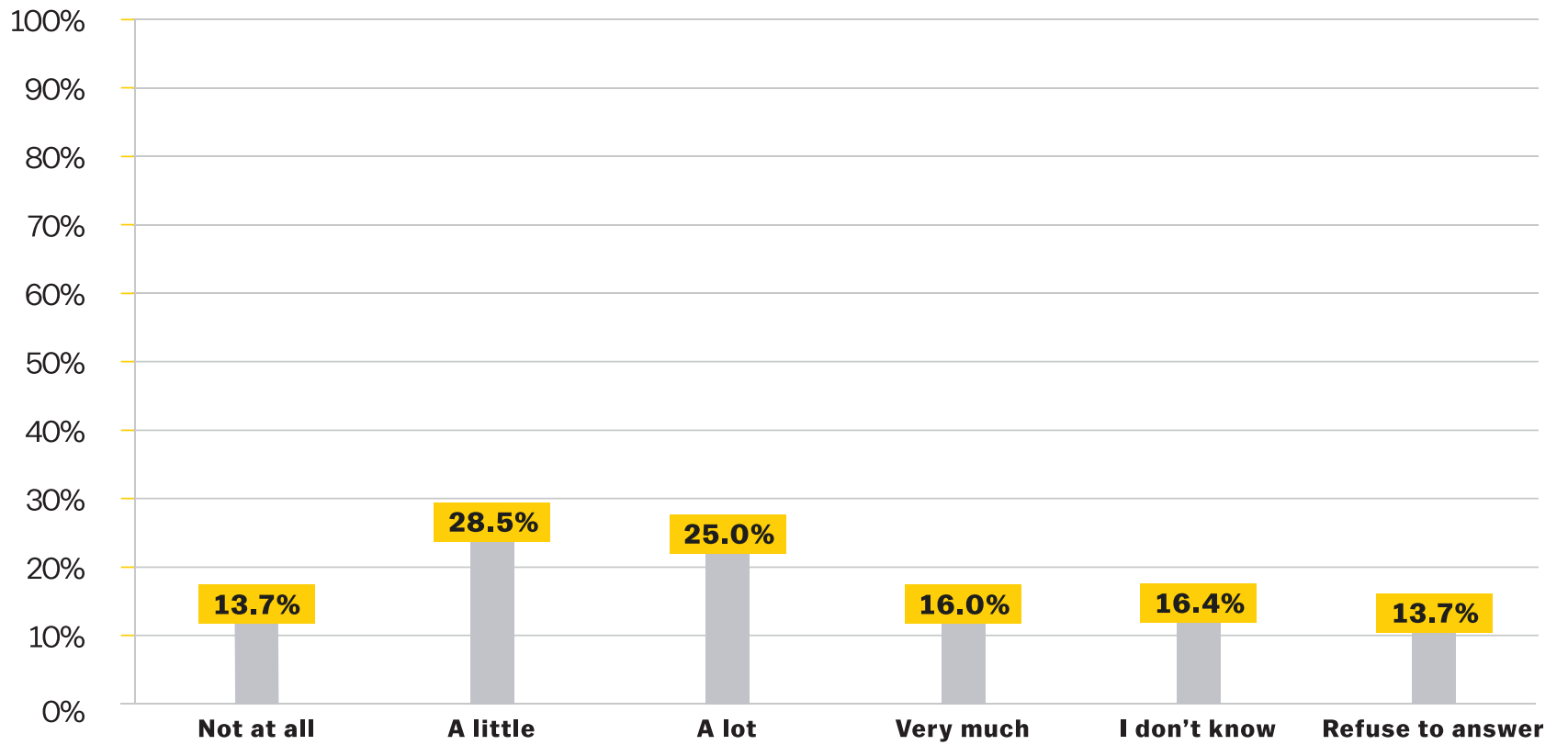
21

How much do you think Kosovo benefits from the implementation of 'Open Balkan'?



22

How much do you think Kosovo is harmed by the implementation of “Open Balkans”?



Another important regional development that has consumed significant attention in Kosovo is the controversial initiative for a regional common market and travel zone widely known as the 'Open Balkan' initiative, which is led by Serbia, Albania, and North Macedonia. The Open Balkan Initiative has been met with mixed reactions in Kosovo. On the one hand, some view the initiative as a way to create a common market, facilitate regional trade, and open up opportunities for Kosovar citizens to travel freely in the region. On the other hand, others are concerned that Kosovo's sovereignty and statehood will be undermined if it participates in the initiative, as Serbia is the initiator and main anchor of the project. The Government of Kosovo has opposed participation in this initiative arguing that it is unnecessary as there are sufficient mechanisms within the EU integration process, including the Balkan Process, which should guide regional economic cooperation and connectivity. Moreover, the Government of Kosovo has argued that as long as Serbia refuses to recognize Kosovo's equal representation and participation as a sovereign state in regional forums, this initiative will remain unacceptable. Despite these arguments, there has been insufficient and evidence-based debate in Kosovo on the costs and benefits of the Open Balkan initiative. In particular, it is unclear whether the initiative would bring tangible economic benefits to Kosovo. Accordingly, we asked the respondents how much they think Kosovo would benefit from partaking in the Open Balkan initiative. Most

respondents believe Kosovo benefits only a little (28.7%) or not at all (35.6%) from the implementation of Open Balkan initiative. Only 25.2% of respondents indicated that Kosovo benefits from the implementation of this initiative. However, when it comes to the potential harm coming from the implementation of Open Balkan initiative, the respondents were divided equally among those who thought that this initiative would harm Kosovo (41%) and those who thought otherwise (42.2%). In other words, 28.5% of respondents indicated that Kosovo would be harmed only a little, while 13.7% stated not at all from implementing the Open Balkan initiative. On the other hand, 25% indicated that Kosovo would be harmed a lot, while 16% very much from implementing this initiative. Overall, the results of this survey show that Kosovo citizens are not enthusiastic and supportive of the Open Balkan initiative and do not believe that Kosovo will benefit from its implementation.

23

Is Kosovo at risk in the event of the establishment of the Association of Municipalities with a Serbian majority with executive competencies?

97.6%

Kosovo is at risk in the event of the establishment of an ASM with executive competencies

23.1

Is Kosovo at risk in the event of the establishment of the Association of Municipalities with a Serbian majority according to the constitutional court?

57.4%

Kosovo is at risk in the event of the establishment of an ASM in accordance with the constitutional court

23.2

What is the main risk?

62.3%

The functioning of the state of Kosovo is at risk

73.0%

Municipalities with a Serbian majority demand separation from Kosovo

77.8%

Serbia will increase its influence in Kosovo

53.6%

The Government of Kosovo will not be able to extend its authority to all the municipalities of Kosovo

One of the most controversial aspects of the EU-led dialogue for normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia is the establishment of the Association of Municipalities with a Serbian majority (ASM), which was included in the agreement initialed on 19 April 2013. Since the Constitutional Court of Kosovo found in 2016 that certain provisions of this agreement run against the existing framework of rights and political order of Kosovo, the Government of Kosovo have refused to implement this provision of the Brussels agreement. Similarly, Serbia has refused to implement other provisions of the Brussels agreement. A major concern for Kosovo is the extent to which the ASM would undermine Kosovo's statehood and lead to institutional and political dysfunctionality.

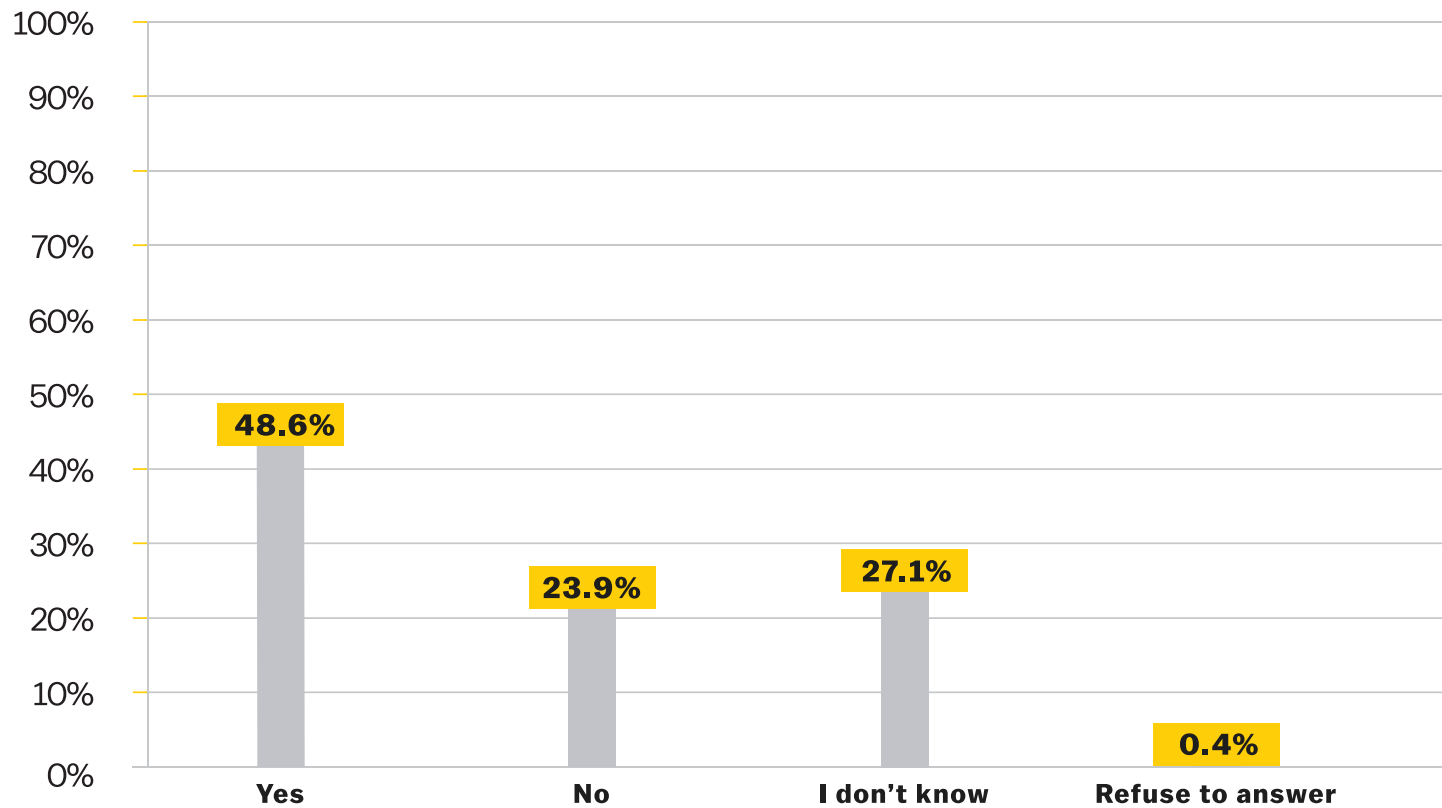
Considering this, we asked the respondents to comment on whether Kosovo is at risk in the event of the establishment of the Association of Municipalities with a Serbian majority. 97.6% of respondents felt that Kosovo would be at risk in the event of the establishment of the Association of Municipalities with a Serbian majority with executive competencies. However, only 57.4% felt that Kosovo would be at risk in the event of the establishment of the Association of Municipalities with a Serbian majority in accordance with Kosovo's Constitutional Court ruling.

When the respondents were asked to specify further their views, 77.8% of them have maintained that the main risk in the event of the establishment of the Association of Municipalities with a Serbian majority is that Serbia will increase its influence in Kosovo. Equally, a significant number of respondents (73%) have highlighted that another risk associated with the establishment of the ASM could be their demand for separation from Kosovo. Among Kosovo-Serbs respondents, 33% agree that the ASM would be a pathway for the separation of their community from Kosovo. Respondents have ranked highly also the risks associated with the functioning of Kosovo state institutions (62.3%) and the inability of the Government of Kosovo to extend its authority to all the municipalities in the country (53.6%). Thus, popular views in Kosovo on the establishment of the Association of Municipalities with a Serbian majority in Kosovo appear to be in line with Kosovo Government's position on this matter.

They consider the ASM as a significant risk to Kosovo's statehood, as well as have serious concerns over the potential increase of Serbia's influence in Kosovo, their demand for separation, and the potential implications for the functioning of Kosovo state institutions. The results of the survey suggest that the Government of Kosovo and the international community should approach the issue of the Association of Municipalities with a Serbian majority with caution and should take all the necessary measures to ensure that the asso-

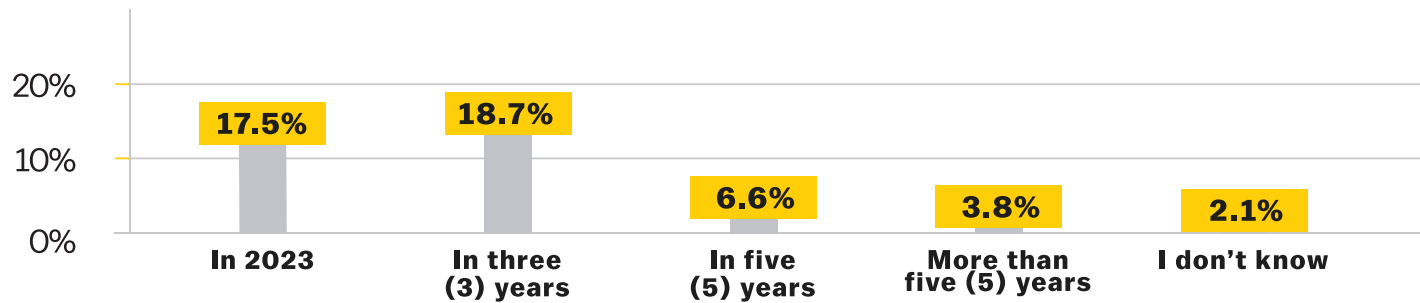
24

Will the dialogue facilitated by the European Union (EU) end with a final agreement between Kosovo and Serbia?



24.1

When do you think the Kosovo-Serbia agreement will be reached?



Finally, a puzzling question that has received wide attention recently is if the dialogue facilitated by the European Union (EU) would conclude with a final agreement between Kosovo and Serbia. Despite various deadlines set by mediators and parties, at this point, it remains uncertain whether the dialogue will conclude with a final agreement between Kosovo and Serbia. We asked the respondents to share their views whether the dialogue facilitated by the European Union (EU) is likely to conclude with a final agreement between Kosovo and Serbia. Respondents are divided when it comes to the prospects of an agreement: 48% of respondents, who are predominantly Kosovo-Albanians, believe that the dialogue will conclude with an agreement, whereas 27% aren't sure and 24% think there won't be an agreement in the end. However, the fact that most respondents are optimistic about the prospects of an agreement is encouraging and suggests that there is some public expectation in Kosovo that a resolution can be reached in the near future. In a follow-up question, we asked the respondents in sharing their views when an agreement between Kosovo and Serbia is likely to be reached. The majority of those who are optimistic about a settlement, consider that the Kosovo-Serbia agreement will be reached either in 2023 or in the next three years. Around 10% believe that it will take at least five or more years to reach an agreement. Overall, the survey indicates that a majority of people in Kosovo are hopeful that the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia will result in a final agreement. However, the timeline for a possible agreement remains uncertain, with respondents divided on when it might be reached.




Annex 1: Research Methodology

This survey was conducted by UBO Consulting during November 2022 based on questions designed by PIPS in conjunction with KAS. The survey includes views from 1065 randomly selected respondents coming all municipalities of Kosovo, genders, and affiliating with two main ethnic groups in the country. The age of respondents ranged between 18 and 65+ years old. The gender identification of respondents has been 49.9% as female and 50.1% as male. In terms of ethnicity, this edition of survey has mostly focused on two dominant ethnic groups in Kosovo, namely 865 Kosovo Albanians and 200 Kosovo Serbs, primarily as the questions of this year have been mostly on the dynamics and relations between Kosovo and Serbia. This was done without an prejudice about other minority communities in Kosovo, who are regulatorily included in different studies and surveys. The survey also has consisted of 60% of respondents coming from urban zones, whereas the other 40% from rural areas. Finally, the survey has included respondents from different socio-economic backgrounds.

Municipality	Albanian	Serb	Total
Prishtinë	96	0	96
Gjilan	47	7	54
Pejë	47	7	54
Prizren	84	0	84
Gjakovë	47	0	47
Podujevë	47	0	47
Vushtrri	37	7	44
Skenderaj	27	7	34
Leposaviq	0	26	26
Klinë	21	0	21
Mitrovicë	37	0	37
Istog	19	0	19
Deçan	21	0	21
Dragash	12	0	12
Suharekë	32	0	32
Rahovec	30	0	30
Viti	25	0	25
Kamenicë	18	11	29
Lipjan	29	0	29

Municipality	Albanian	Serb	Total
Shtime	13	0	13
Ferizaj	55	0	55
Kaçanik	18	0	18
Fushë Kosovë	15	7	22
Obiliq	11	0	11
Novobërdë	2	8	10
Zubin Potok	0	21	21
Shtërpce	2	8	10
Zveçan	0	21	21
Gillogovc	31	0	31
Malisheva	29	0	29
Junik	3	0	3
Mamushe	1	0	1
Han i Elezit	5	0	5
Gracanica	2	21	23
Ranillug	0	9	9
Partesh	0	7	7
Klllokot	0	7	7
Mitrovica e Veriu	2	26	28
	865	200	1065

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