

ONLINE SURVEY REPORT

KOSOVO CITIZENS' PERSPECTIVE ON EUROPEAN INTE-
GRATION AND THE EU



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CONTENT

INTRODUCTION.....	6
METODOLOGJIA.....	7
CITIZENS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN IDENTITY.....	8
CITIZENS' PERSPECTIVE ON EU PROMOTED VALUES.....	10
ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF EU MEMBERSHIP	12
EU APPROACH TO KOSOVO ON THE ROAD TO MEMBERSHIP	14
CITIZENS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS EU PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT SEVEN YEARS	16
THE ROLE OF EU INSTITUTIONS IN PREVENTING CORRUPTION IN COUNTRIES ASPIRING MEM- BERSHIP	18
ATTITUDES ABOUT THE REFERENDUM ON EU MEMBERSHIP	21

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For any comments, remarks, criticisms or suggestions, please contact us through the options provided below:

Address: Rr. Bajram Kelmendi, Nr. 237
10 000, Prishtinë, Kosovë.
Tel: +383 (0) 38 248 038
E-mail: info@kdi-kosova.org
Web: www.kdi-kosova.org

Prepared by: Agnesa Haxhiu

Design and layout: Envinion

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INTRODUCTION

The project entitled 'Common European Values' aims to initiate a discussion on issues related to European integration and the European Union. Funded by the European Commission under the Europe for Citizens Program, the project is a collaboration between the Kosovo Democratic Institute, Transparency International in Hungary, the Romanian Forum of Experts and Transparency International in Macedonia. To this end, the four organizations have for the first time introduced an online survey, to assess citizen's attitudes in these four countries towards European integration and in particular about the European Union.

Given the fact that the four countries where the survey was conducted operate in different EU integration contexts - with Hungary and Bulgaria already being EU members, Macedonia under the status of candidate country and Kosovo in the pre-accession phase - the survey questions have been formulated to adopt to individual integration contexts for each country.

This questionnaire aims to get the perspective of the citizens of Kosovo regarding the European integration process, to what extent the citizens are informed about what the EU offers in economic, social, political and cultural terms and their opinion on the principles and the core values on which the European Union is built and operates.



METHODOLOGY

Regarding the research methodology, the quantitative type of research was selected, namely a questionnaire in online format. The survey included 500 respondents, of whom 56.6 percent were men and 40.6 percent women, while about 3 percent preferred not to disclose their gender. Referring to the education level, 41 percent of respondents stated that they hold bachelor's or equivalent level; 28.2 % master's or equivalent

level, 10.6 percent have vocational education and high school equivalent, 6.4 percent have postgraduate degree and 3.2 percent hold primary education level. As for the variables of residency status, 78 percent of respondents stated that they live in urban areas and 22 percent in rural areas. The survey was conducted during the period April 29 to May 26, 2021.





CITIZENS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN IDENTITY

The citizens of Kosovo are more inclined towards national identity than the European identity. When given options regarding the most important identity for them - national or European, about half of the respondents, or expressed in percentage, about 50% of them, con-

sidered the national identity as most important to them. On the other hand, a significant part of the citizens, 40%, stated that both national and European identities are of equal importance to them. Only 10% of respondents considered European identity as the most important.

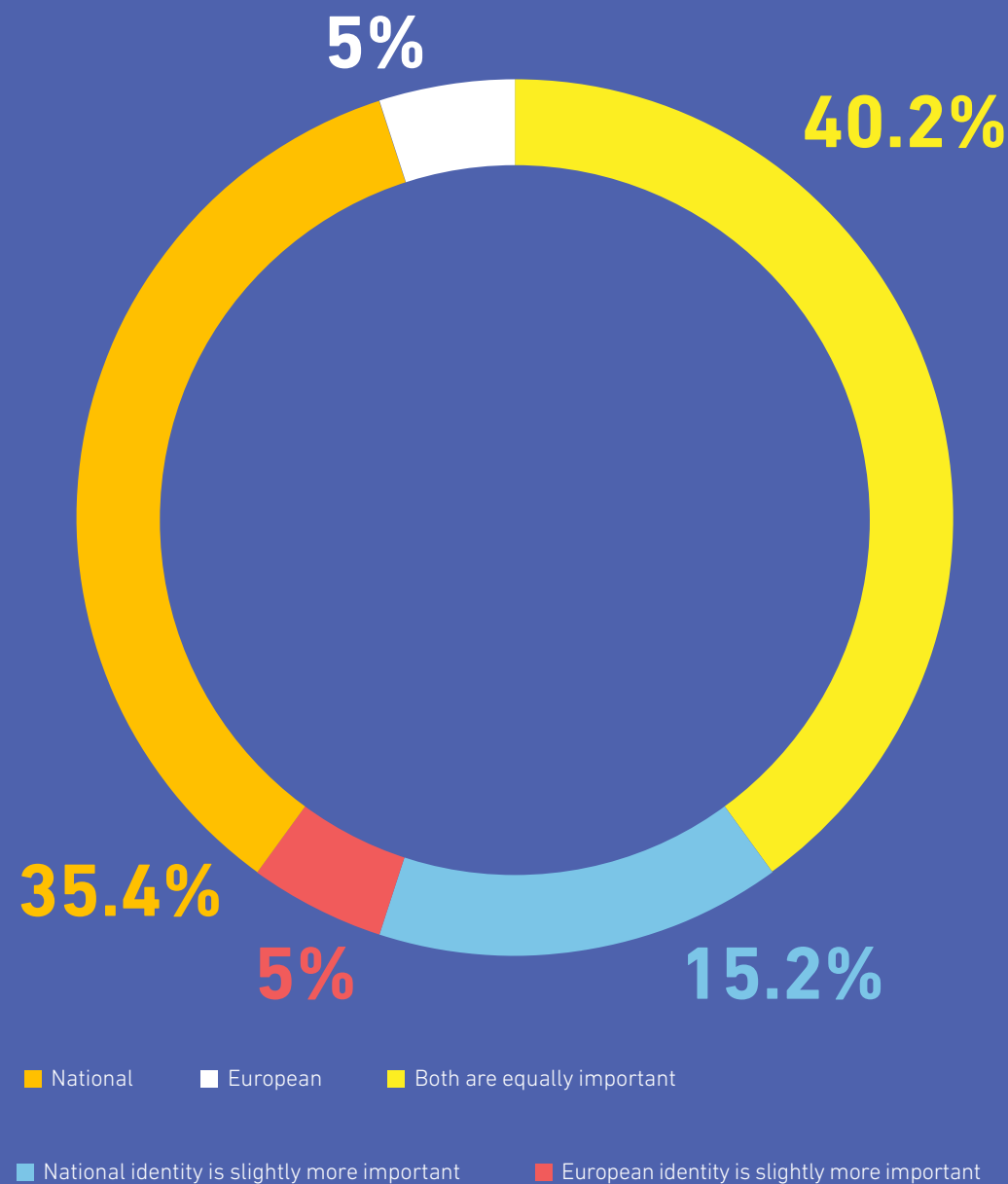


Fig.1 The significance of national identity and European identity





CITIZENS' PERSPECTIVE ON EU PROMOTED VALUES

The values of democracy, rule of law, protection of human rights, free movement of labor and capital were marked as very important by the vast majority of respondents, while media freedom was perceived as only slightly less important. However, according to the responses, this is inversely proportional to the values that the Europe-

an Union is able to guarantee. Looking at how the respondents answered the question of how well the EU is able to protect this value, the respondents have assessed as average the EU potential to protect democracy, free movement of labor and capital, freedom of the press and the rule of law (see fig.3).

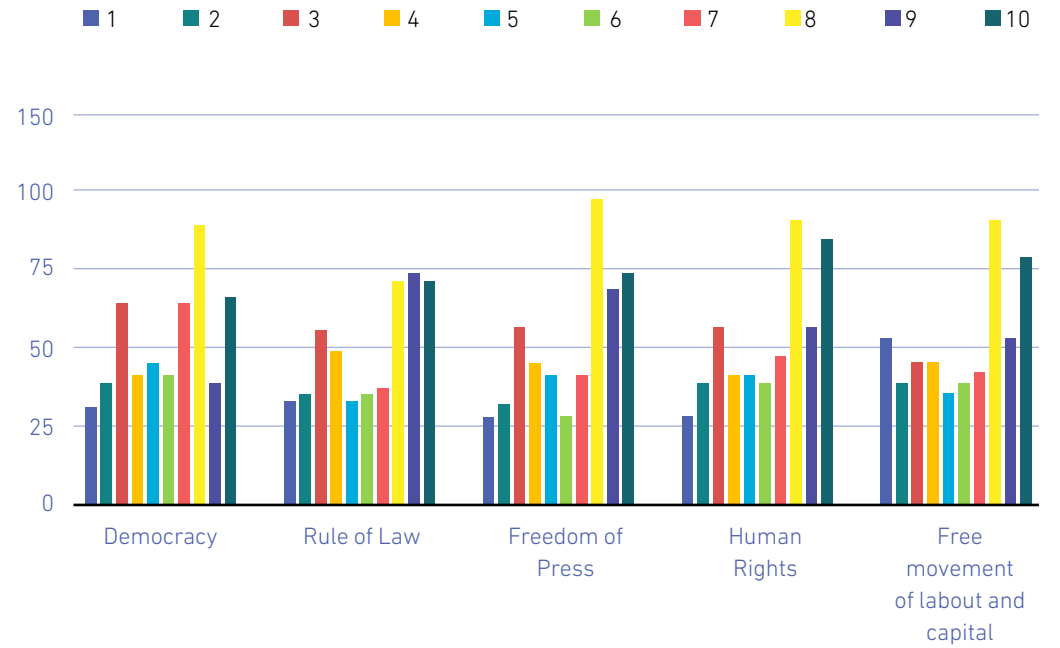
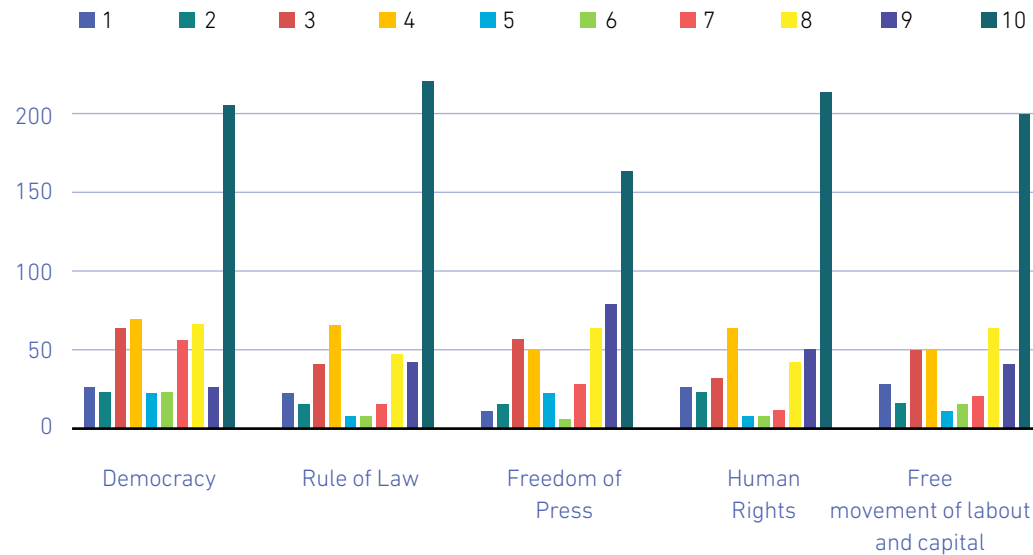


Fig.2 The significance and implementation of EU values





ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF EU MEMBERSHIP

Through this questionnaire, citizens were asked about their perspective on the advantages and disadvantages that Kosovo's potential membership in the EU may impose. When asked to what extent they thought Kosovo would benefit from EU membership on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means nothing and 5 a lot, over 67% of respondents con-

sider that Kosovo would benefit greatly from this membership by assessing with degrees 4 and 5. Meanwhile, about 23% of them think that to some extent there would be benefits, and only about 9% consider that Kosovo's EU membership would bring little or no benefits.

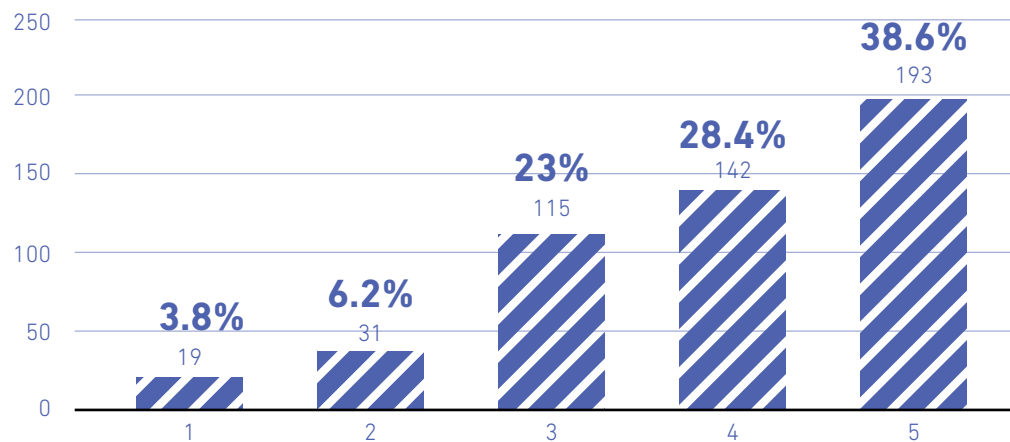


Fig.3 Assessment of results regarding Kosovo's benefits from EU membership



But when asked about possible shortcomings from EU membership, if the membership would limit Kosovo's sovereignty, about 39% of them consider that such a process would not have an impact on the country's sovereignty. Another significant part of the respondents, about 33%

of them, think that the membership would limit the sovereignty to some extent while a part of the respondents, about 28%, consider that potential membership would have an impact on the sovereignty of the country.

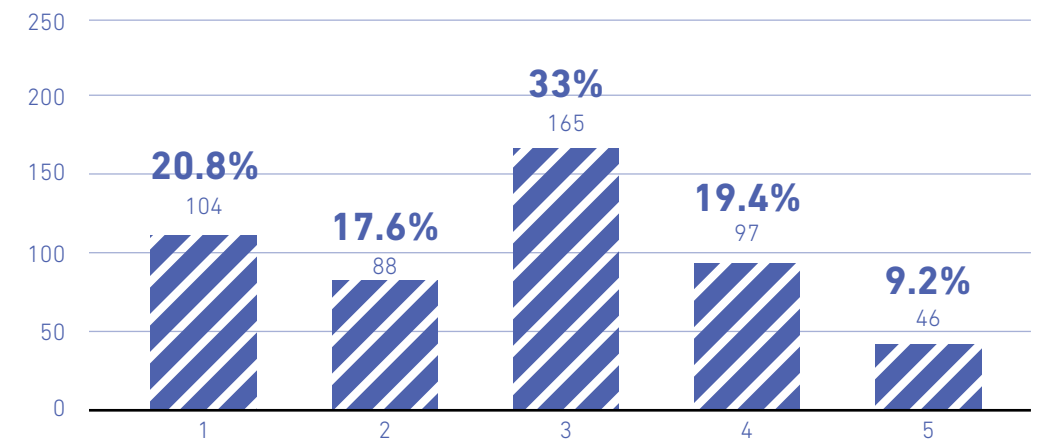


Fig.4 Assessment of results regarding the impact that membership may have on the sovereignty of the country





EU APPROACH TO KOSOVO ON THE PATH TO MEMBERSHIP

Although the citizens of Kosovo have a high level of trust in the European perspective, the results of public opinion show that EU failed to translate citizen's trust into concrete actions. When asked how much they thought the EU has done to promote Kosovo's path to EU membership, more than half of respondents, or about 52%, consider that the EU has done very little to advance Kosovo's path to EU member-

ship. Also almost one third of respondents 29%, rate the EU efforts to advance Kosovo's path to membership as average, while only 18% of respondents think that the EU has done a lot to speed up Kosovo's membership process.

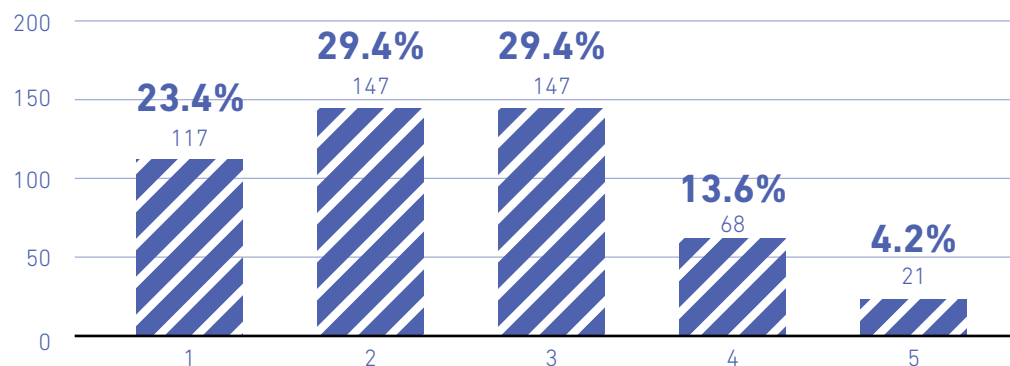


Fig.5 Assessment of the results regarding the work of the EU in accelerating the process of Kosovo's membership



Despite the fact that the citizens of Kosovo think that the EU has not done much to advance the process of Kosovo's membership, they still estimate that its impact on shaping policies in Kosovo has been high. About 47% of respondents think that the EU influence in policy shaping in Kosovo has been large, a significant part of respondents,

about 30%, assess the EU impact as average and a smaller percentage of 21% of respondents consider that the EU has had little or no impact at all.

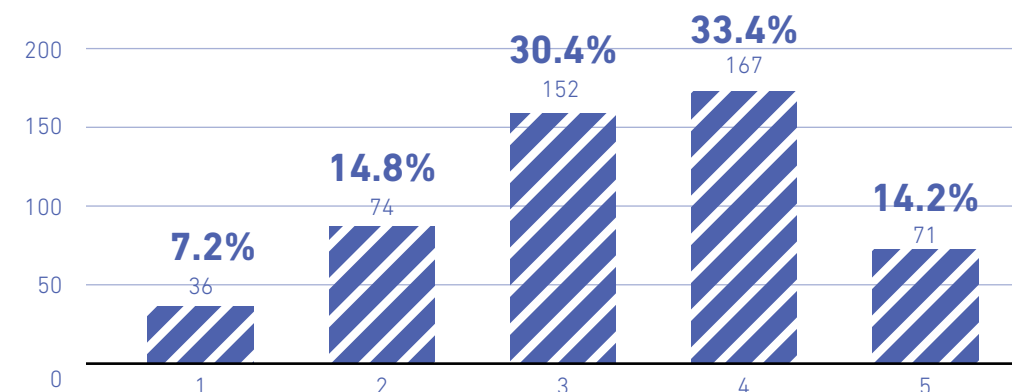


Fig.6 Assessments of the results regarding EU's influence on Kosovo's policies





CITIZENS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS EU PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT SEVEN YEARS

Through this questionnaire, respondents had the opportunity to express their views on EU priorities for the years 2021 - 2027, choosing single or multiple options. The answers received from the respondent's show that two-thirds of respondents 70% prefer a "More Social Europe" and around 56% of them prefer the fulfillment of climate and environmental objectives as the most important

among the EU priorities in the next seven years. Meanwhile, other priorities such as innovation and digitalization, strategic transport and sustainable urban development have also support from respondents (see fig.8).

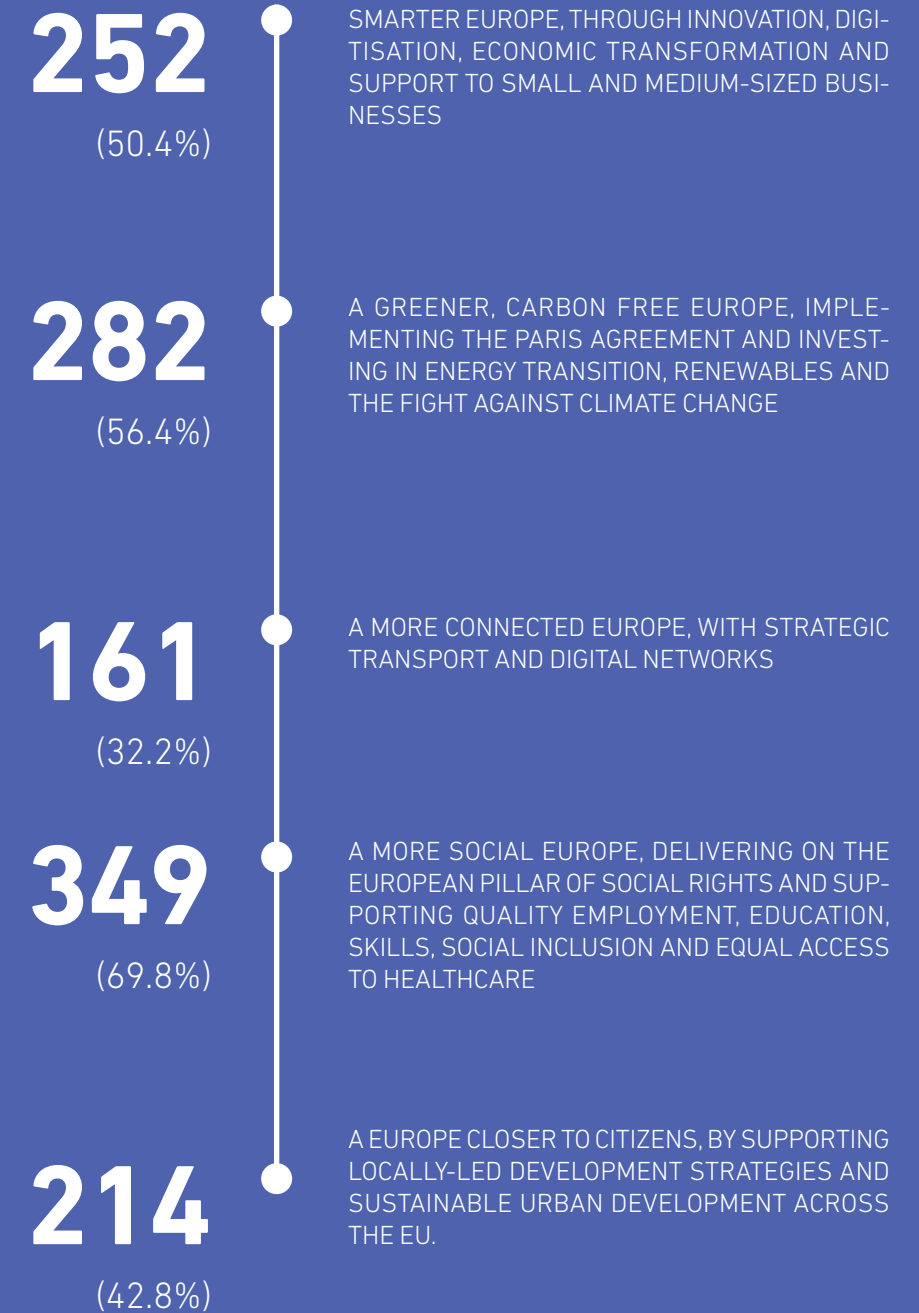


Fig.7 The significance of EU priorities in the period between 2021-2027





THE ROLE OF EU INSTITUTIONS IN PREVENTING CORRUPTION IN COUNTRIES ASPIRING MEMBERSHIP

Through this questionnaire, respondents had the opportunity to assess the role of the European Union from several different aspects, one of which was related to how much the European Union institutions can do to prevent corruption in countries aspiring to membership. A high percentage of respondents, about 46%, consider that the EU institutions have the potential to do a lot to help

countries aspiring membership, such as Kosovo, in the fight against corruption. About 30% of respondents assess as average the impact that the EU can have in the fight against corruption in Kosovo, while another part, about 24%, think that the EU can do little or nothing in this direction.

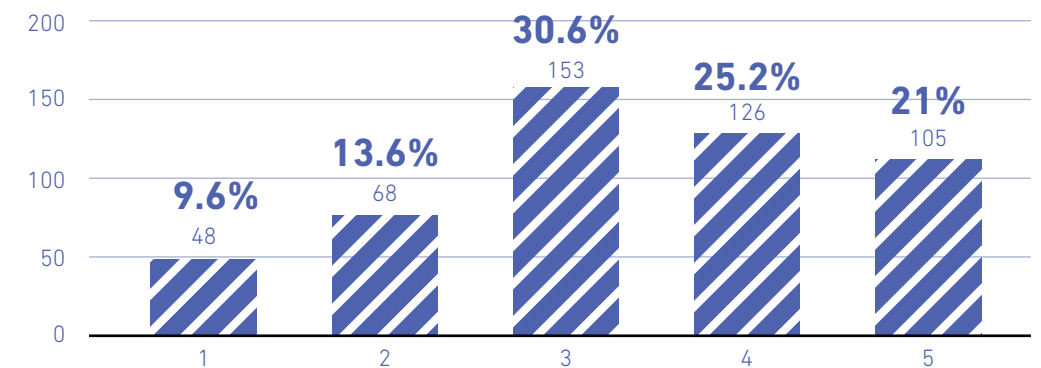


Fig.8 Assessments of the results about the role that the EU can play in fighting corruption in the countries aiming for membership

When asked about their position on Kosovo's membership in the European Public Prosecutor's Office, the vast majority of respondents, or about 74%, supported such an action. Whereas a small percentage of about 10% consider that Kosovo

should not join this Office, while about 15% of respondents do not have an opinion on this issue.





ATTITUDES ABOUT THE REFERENDUM ON EU MEMBERSHIP

There is a general consensus that the citizens of the Western Balkans continue to show overwhelming support for membership in the European Union, where in almost every public opinion poll over 50% of citizens support their country's goal of EU membership.

In terms of EU membership, among the peoples of the Western Balkans, Kosovars continue to be among the biggest supporters in the Western

Balkans. Data from this questionnaire show that about 78% of respondents stated that they would vote positively in case of a possible referendum on EU membership. It is a very small percentage, only 10%, who stated that in case of a referendum on EU integration they would vote negatively, while about 11% did not answer this question.

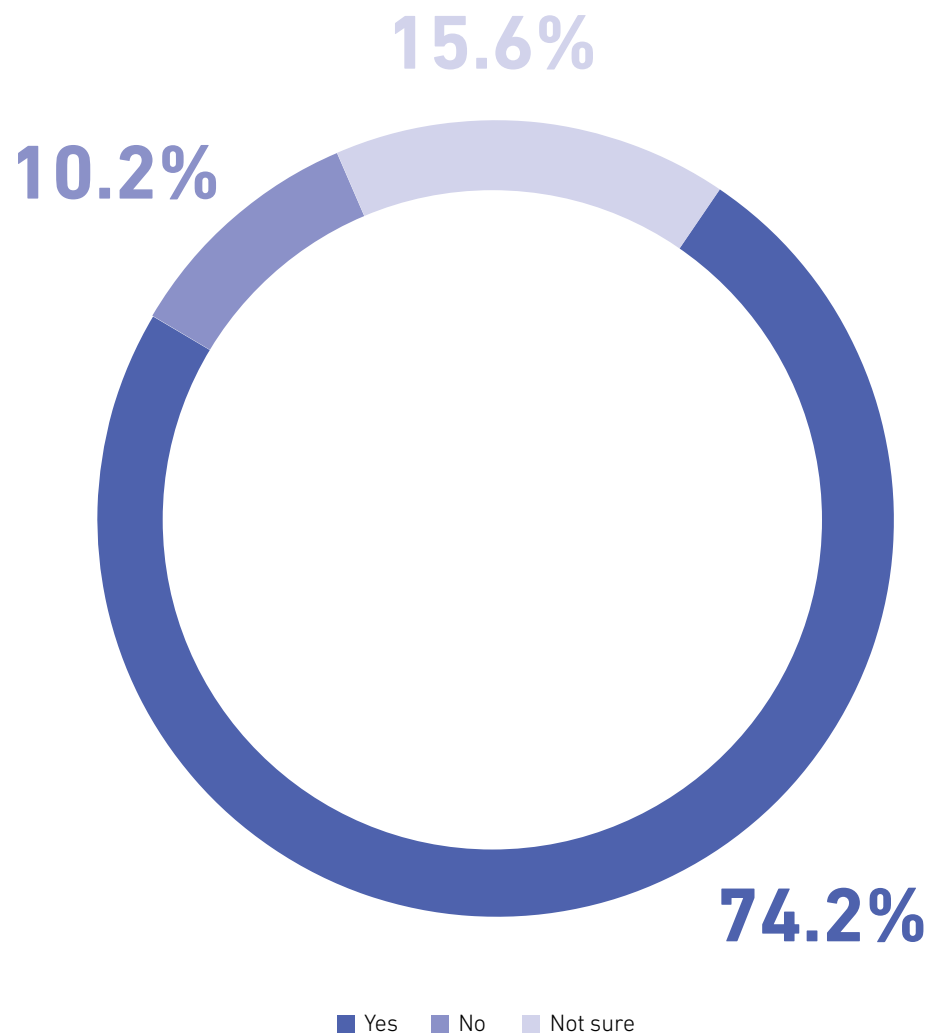


Fig.9 Assessment of the results about membership in the European Public Prosecutor's Office



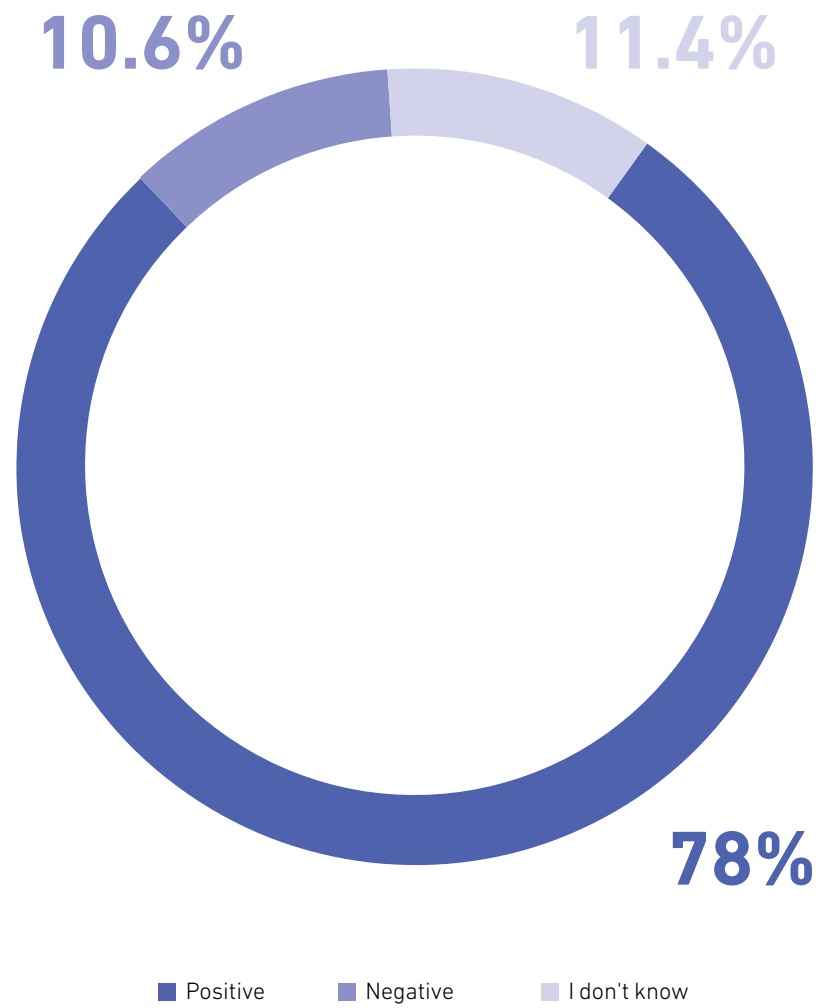


Fig.10 Attitudes towards EU membership in the event of a possible referendum



