

IPP Arbën Xhaferi poll among Albanians in North Macedonia found very strong support for Ukraine and negative perception of Russia, realistic views on EU membership, strong support for constitutional changes and co-official status of the Albanian language, as well as an important shifts among political parties

A new poll by the Institute of Public Policy (IPP) Arbën Xhaferi has measured Albanian public opinion in North Macedonia on relevant political topics.

This unique survey specifically looks at the Albanians' perceptions on the war in Ukraine and its implications on North Macedonia's strategic alliances, the government's capacity to make progress on EU membership, support for constitutional changes and the constitutional status of the Albanian language. In addition, the survey measures Albanians' attitudes towards political leaders and support to political parties, including factions within those, where relevant.

Key points

When asked who is to blame for the Russia-Ukraine war, two thirds of Albanians (64%) indicate Russia. Only 2.7% blame Ukraine. Albanians demonstrate unambiguous support for Ukraine (67.8%), with only 4% supporting Russia.

When it comes to North Macedonia's strategic allies, half of respondents mention the EU (49.7%) and the US (49.1%). Turkey ranks third, mentioned by 11.4% of respondents. Russia and China are not popular among Albanians, with only 0.2% seeing the both of them as strategic allies.

The poll also found realistic views on EU membership, with a relative majority of respondents (43.3%) who believe the country does not have the capacity to join the EU in the next 10 years. A bit more than one third of Albanians (38%) believe that North Macedonia could join the EU in the next 10 years.

The majority of Albanians (55.3%) are in favour of constitutional amendments as a condition for starting EU accession talks, with only 29.8% who believe North Macedonia should not change its Constitution.



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Regarding North Macedonia's official languages, the huge majority of Albanians (89.1%) believe constitutional changes should lead to an upgraded status for the Albanian language, which should be defined as a co-official language, at the same level as the Macedonian language. Only 6.4% of respondents are in favour of keeping the current definition, i.e. Albanian as an official language spoken by at least 20% of the population.

When it comes to public opinion on political leaders, Ali Ahmeti (DUI) is the most popular, with a net trustworthiness of zero (neutral) and 49.7% of positive opinions. Arben Taravari (AfA) comes closely behind as second, with a net trustworthiness of -9.4 and 45% of positive opinions. Following internal tensions in DUI, Izet Mexhiti, the leader of the "Fire group" faction is the third most popular political leader with a net trustworthiness of -28.8% and 35.3% of positive opinions. Bilall Kasami (Movement Besa) is ranked fourth, with a net trustworthiness of -43% and 28.2% of positive opinions. The least popular party leader is Afrim Gashi (Alternativa), with a net trustworthiness of -74.6% and only 12.4% of positive opinions.

30.8% of Albanians said they would vote for DUI if parliamentary elections were to be held tomorrow. AfA ranks second with 14.9%, followed by Movement Besa with 9.6%. Alternativa would receive only 2% of votes, while DPA is close to zero (0.3%). Among Macedonian parties, 1.6% of Albanians would vote for SDSM and only 0.1% for VMRO-DPMNE.

Interestingly, among those who said they would vote DUI, one third (31.7%) would choose to vote for the "Fire group" in case this faction would run independently. This would significantly impact the Albanian political scene, bringing down the vote share of DUI to 19.5%, with the "Fire group" ranking as fourth political force with 9.3%.

Methodology

A nationally representative sample of 1,000 respondents aged 18 and over was surveyed between 15 and 21 March through telephone interviews. The research was carried out using the random selection methodology, while ensuring a comprehensive representation of the Albanian population in North Macedonia, based on demographic characteristics such as gender, age, education, and the electoral unit and municipality where they live. The margin of error was 3.1 points at a 95 percent confidence level.

The research was carried out for and financed by Institute of Public Policy Arbën Xhaferi.



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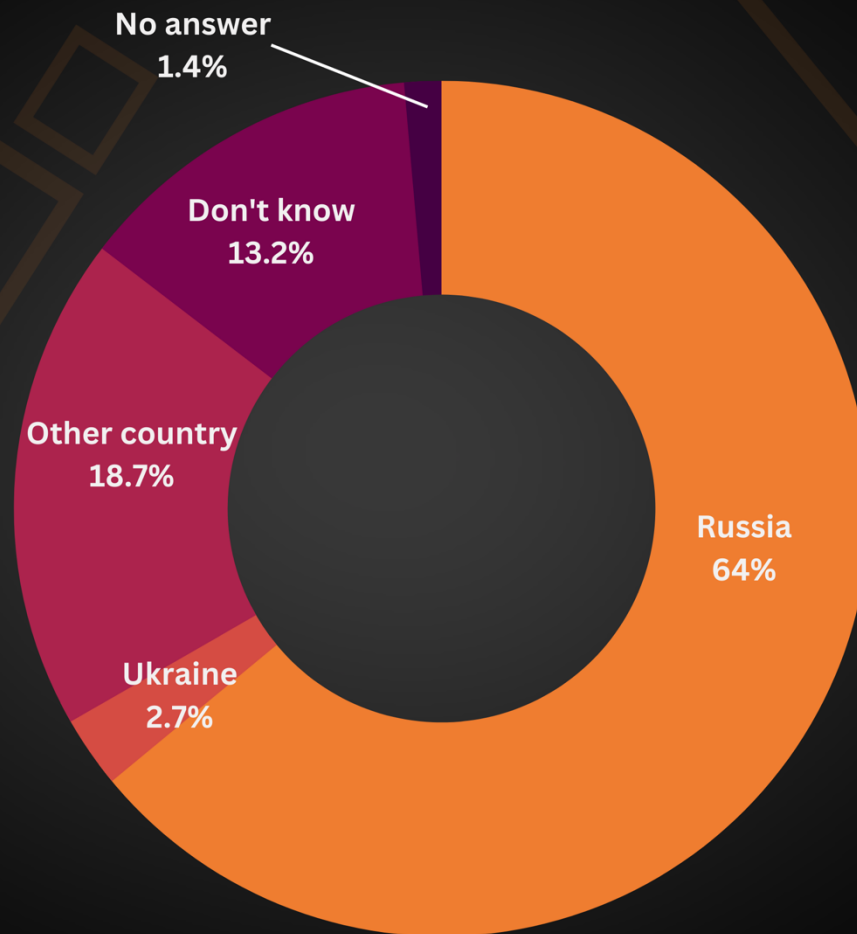
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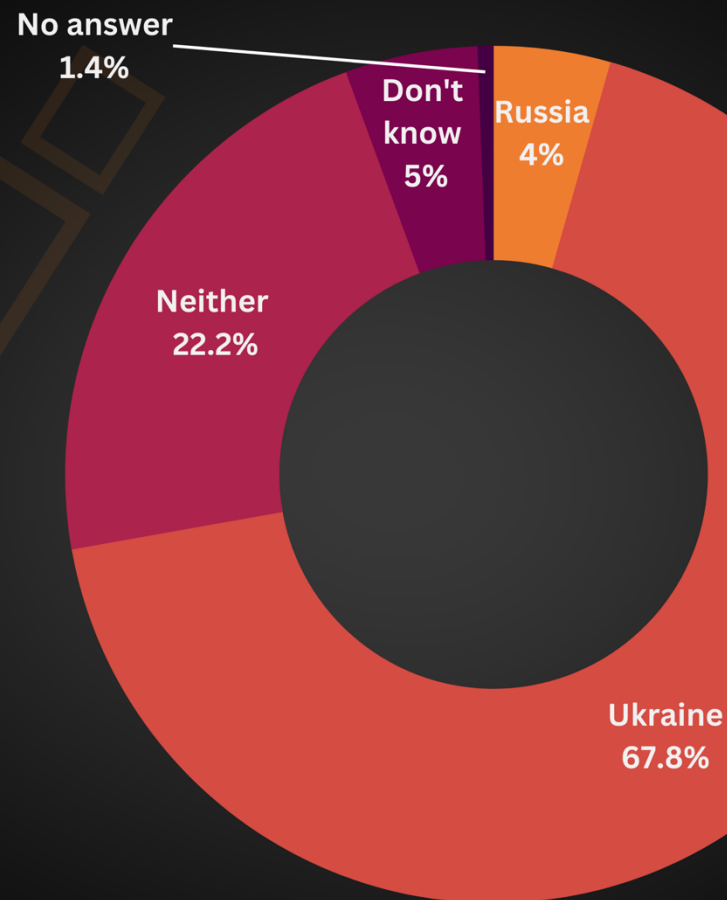
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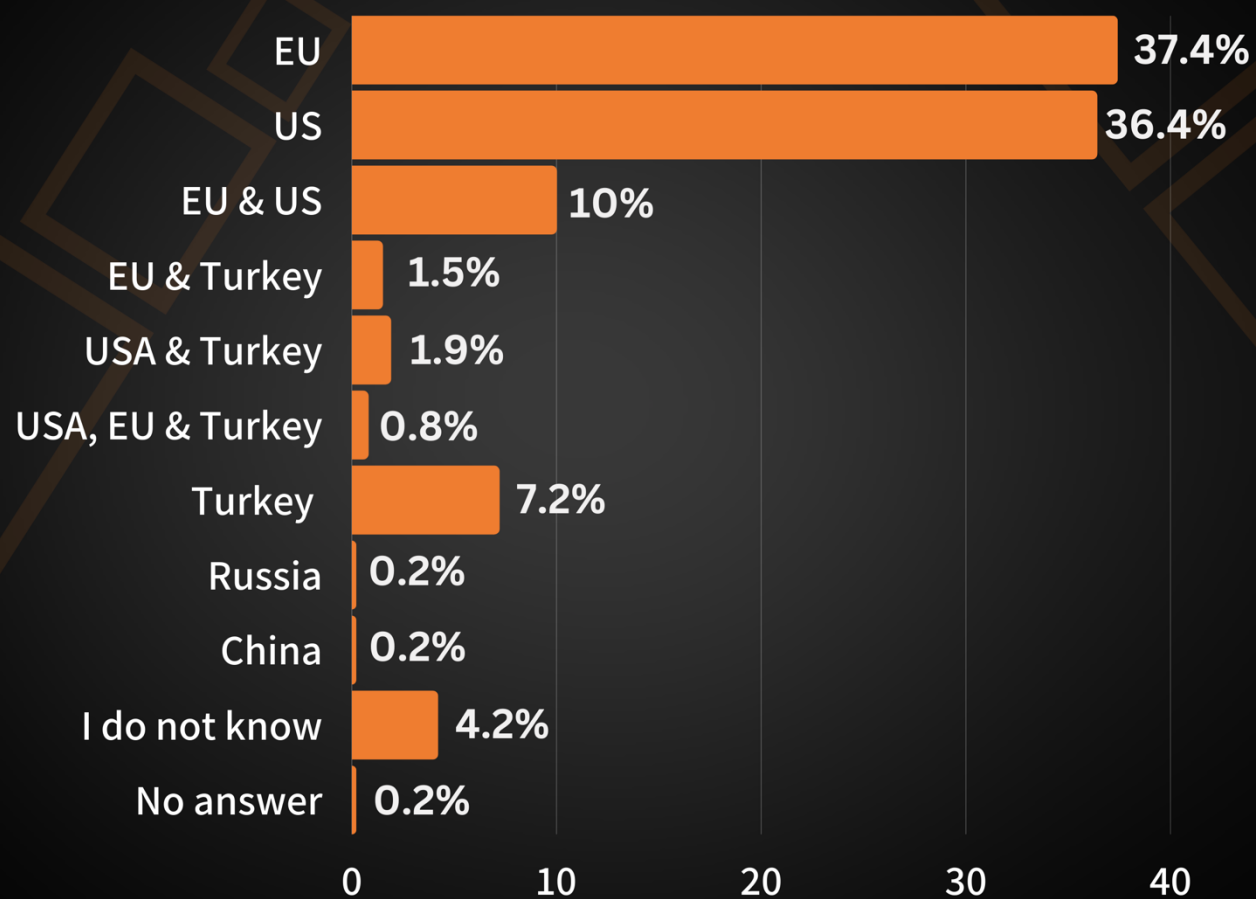
WHO IS TO BLAME FOR THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR?



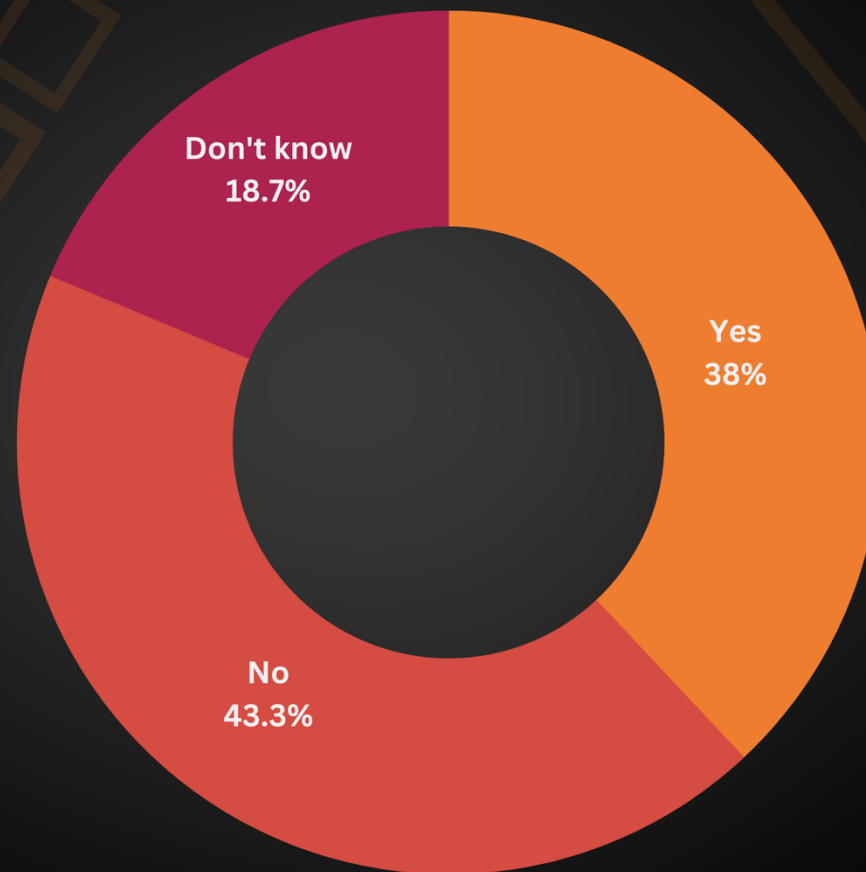
WHICH ONE DO YOU PERSONALLY SUPPORT BETWEEN RUSSIA AND UKRAINE?



WHO YOU THINK SHOULD BE THE MAIN STRATEGIC ALLY OF NORTH MACEDONIA?

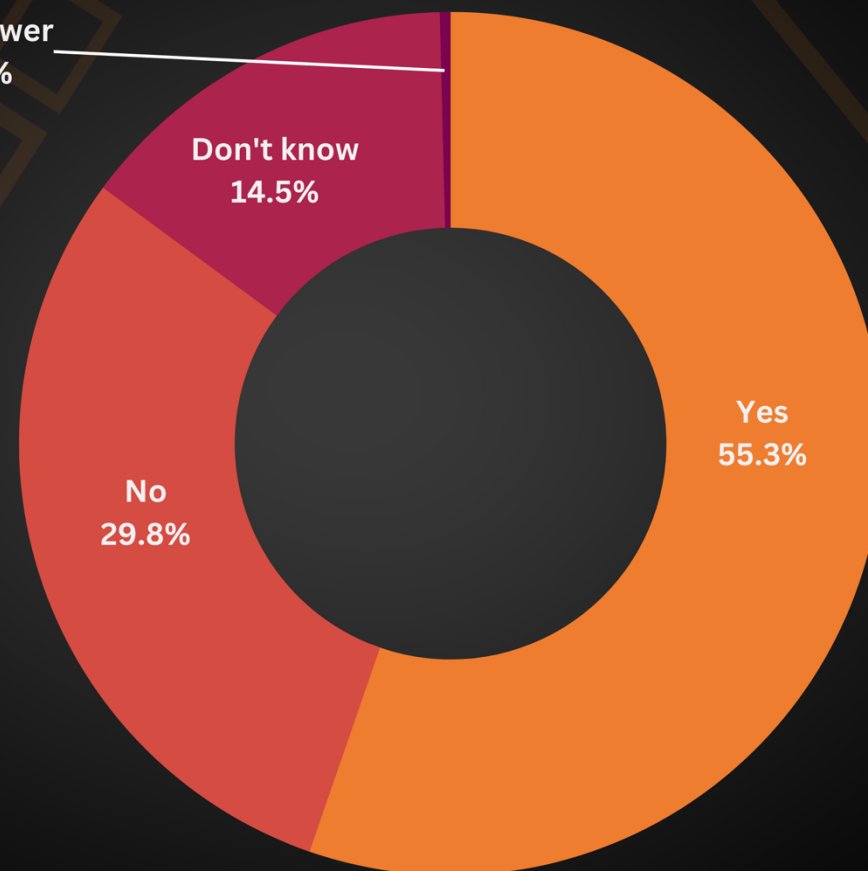


**DO YOU THINK THAT NORTH MACEDONIA HAS THE CAPACITY TO
JOIN THE EU IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS?**

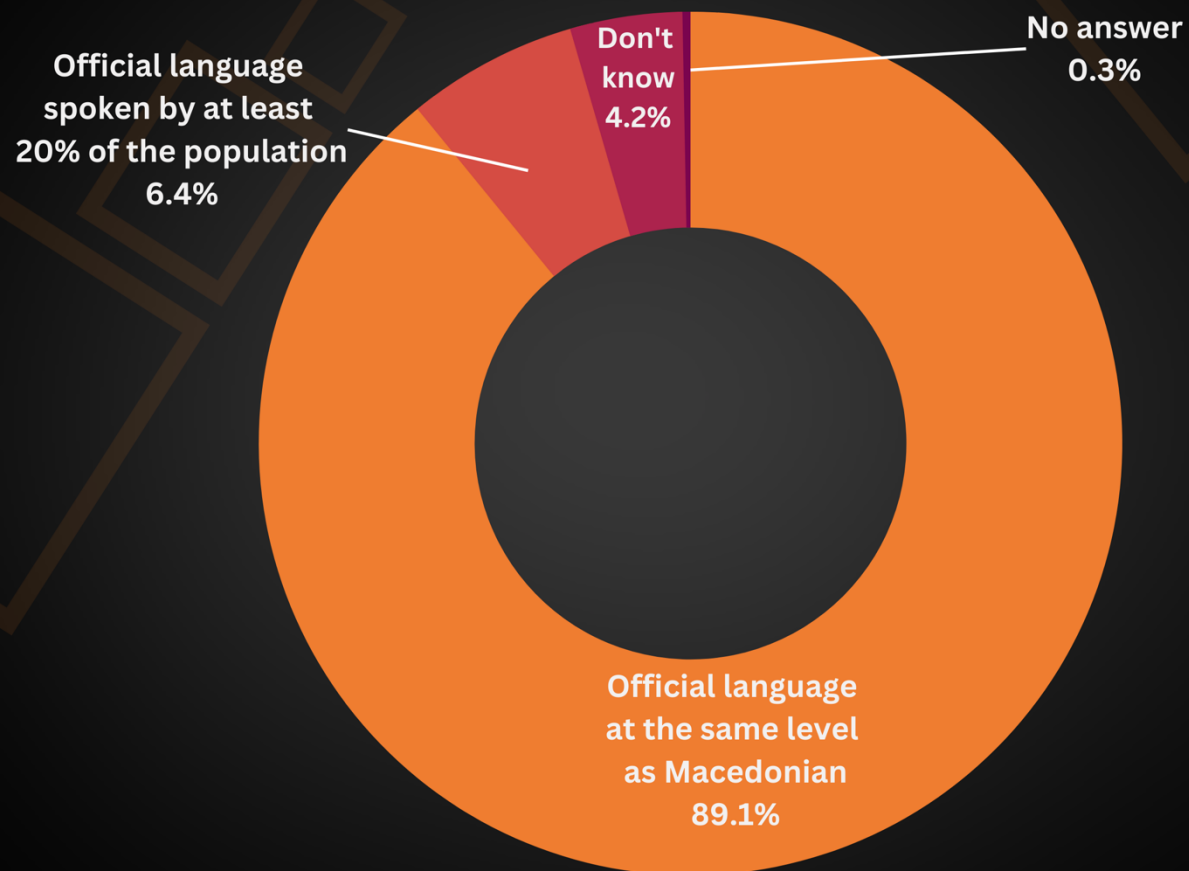


**DO YOU THINK THAT NORTH MACEDONIA SHOULD
CHANGE ITS CONSTITUTION TO INCLUDE THE BULGARIAN
MINORITY, AS A CONDITION FOR OPENING EU ACCESSION TALKS?**

No answer
0.4%

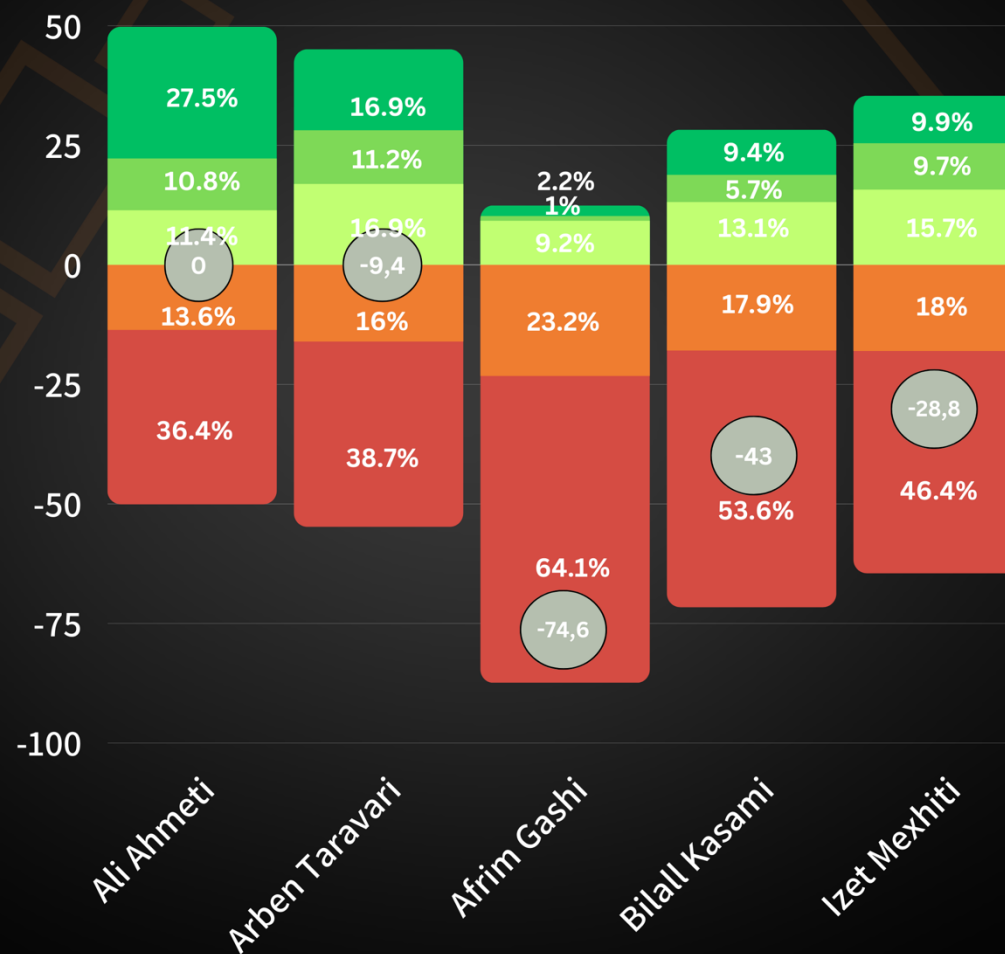


AT THE MOMENT, THE ALBANIAN LANGUAGE IS DEFINED IN THE CONSTITUTION AS AN OFFICIAL LANGUAGE SPOKEN BY AT LEAST 20% OF THE POPULATION. WHEN CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES ARE MADE, WHAT STATUS DO YOU BELIEVE THE ALBANIAN LANGUAGE SHOULD HAVE?



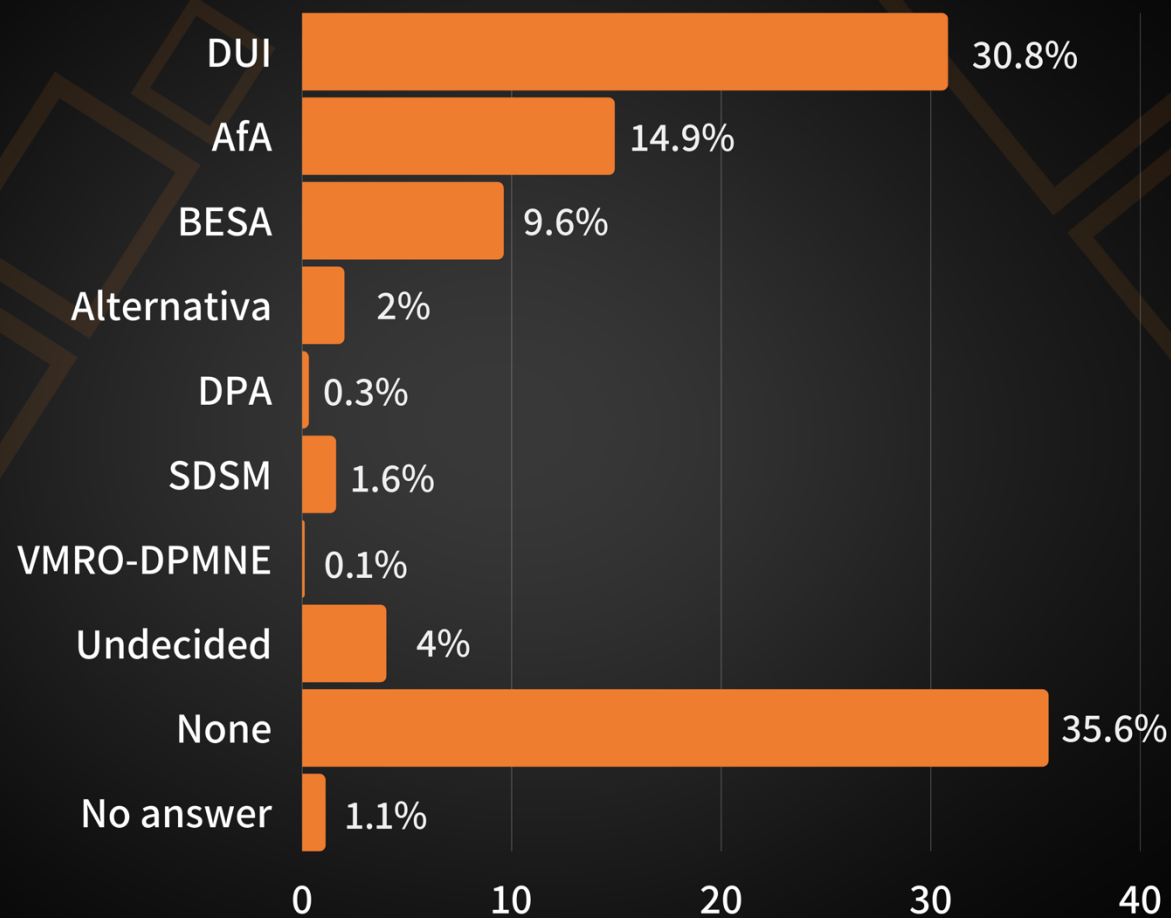
**ON A SCALE FROM 1-5 (1 BEING THE LEAST, 5 BEING THE MOST),
HOW MUCH DO YOU TRUST THESE POLITICIANS?**

(Net trustworthiness of political persons, "I don't know/No answer" are not displayed)



IF PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS WERE HELD TOMORROW WHICH PARTY, IF ANY, WOULD YOU VOTE FOR?

(State level)



WHO WOULD YOU VOTE FOR BETWEEN DUI (ALI AHMETI AND ARTAN GRUBI) AND "FIRE GROUP"?

(State level, for those who said they would vote DUI)

