

IPP Arbën Xhaferi: Albanian Barometer shows that DUI would lose the elections against a EMC-AA coalition

The Institute of Public Policy (IPP) Arbën Xhaferi has published the results of its Albanian Barometer in North Macedonia, a now traditional survey of Albanian public opinion in the country on current political topics.

IPP Arbën Xhaferi's Albanian Barometer was carried out in December and looks specifically at Albanians' perceptions of North Macedonia's strategic alliances, the government's capacity to achieve progress in EU membership, the likelihood of constitutional changes and the constitutional status of the Albanian language. In addition, the survey measures the mood of Albanians for going to the polls and towards candidacies in the first round of presidential elections, but also their level of confidence in political leaders and voting intentions for the parliamentary elections of May 8, 2024.

Key messages

When asked who North Macedonia's main strategic ally is, most respondents identify the U.S. (36.3%), followed by the EU (34.5%). Turkey ranks third, mentioned by 19.2% of respondents. Albanians hardly see Russia (1.1%) and China (0.1%) are hardly seen as allies of North Macedonia.

The survey also found unrealistic views on EU membership, with a relative majority of respondents (42%) believing the country has the capacity to join the EU in the next 10 years. A little more than a third of Albanians (34.6%) believe that North Macedonia does not have the capacity to join the EU in the next decade, while 23.4% have no opinion or do not want to share it.

Asked if they believe constitutional changes will happen before the next parliamentary elections, a relative majority of Albanians (43.3%) are optimistic and answer positively. On the more pessimistic side, 35.6% of the respondents believe that constitutional amendments will not be passed in this legislature. 21.1% have no clear opinion.

As for the official languages of North Macedonia, an overwhelming majority of Albanians (81.1%) believe that constitutional changes should lead to an advanced status for the Albanian language, defined as an official language, on the same level as Macedonian. Only 1.4% of respondents believe that the current definition should be preserved, according to which the Albanian language is the official language spoken by at least 20% of the population. 17.5% didn't respond to this question.

When it comes to public opinion on party leaders, Arben Taravari (ASh), enjoys the highest confidence level for the first time with 50.3% of positive opinions and a net confidence of +16.1%. Bilall Kasami (Besa) is second with 48.6% of positive opinions and a net confidence of +16.7%. Ali Ahmeti (BDI) does not top this list for the first time, ranking third with a net confidence of +8.4% and only 44.2% of positive opinions. Izet Mexhiti (Democratic Movement) is the fourth most popular leader with a net confidence of +2.2% and 39.2% of positive opinions. At the very end, comes Afrim Gashi (Alternative), with a net confidence of +1.3% and only 39.1% of positive opinions.

If the parliamentary elections were to be held next week, 45.1% of the respondents would definitely go out to vote, while 11.7% answered they probably would. 22.5% of the respondents are certain that they will abstain, while 2.1% probably wouldn't vote. 18.6% of respondents are undecided or do not answer.

Asked which candidate they would vote for in the first round of the presidential elections of April 24, 2024, the vast majority of respondents (68.7%) would vote for an Albanian candidate. Although second at the marginal level, the candidate of VMRO-DPMNE with 0.5%, would enjoy higher support than that of SDSM (0.3%). 16.4% are undecided or do not want to answer, while 14.1% said they would not vote at all.

Finally, the Albanian Barometer measures voting intentions for the parliamentary elections of May 8, 2024, against the possible offers and combinations.

In case where the three main blocs, i.e. the Democratic Union for Integration (BDI), the Alliance for the Albanians (AA) and the European Movement for Change (EMC) would run separately, DUI would emerge as the winner of the election with 29% support, followed by EMC with 16.6% and AA with 12.2%. ADP and SDSM would receive only 0.2% of the votes each. Almost a fifth of respondents (19.6%) are undecided or do not answer.

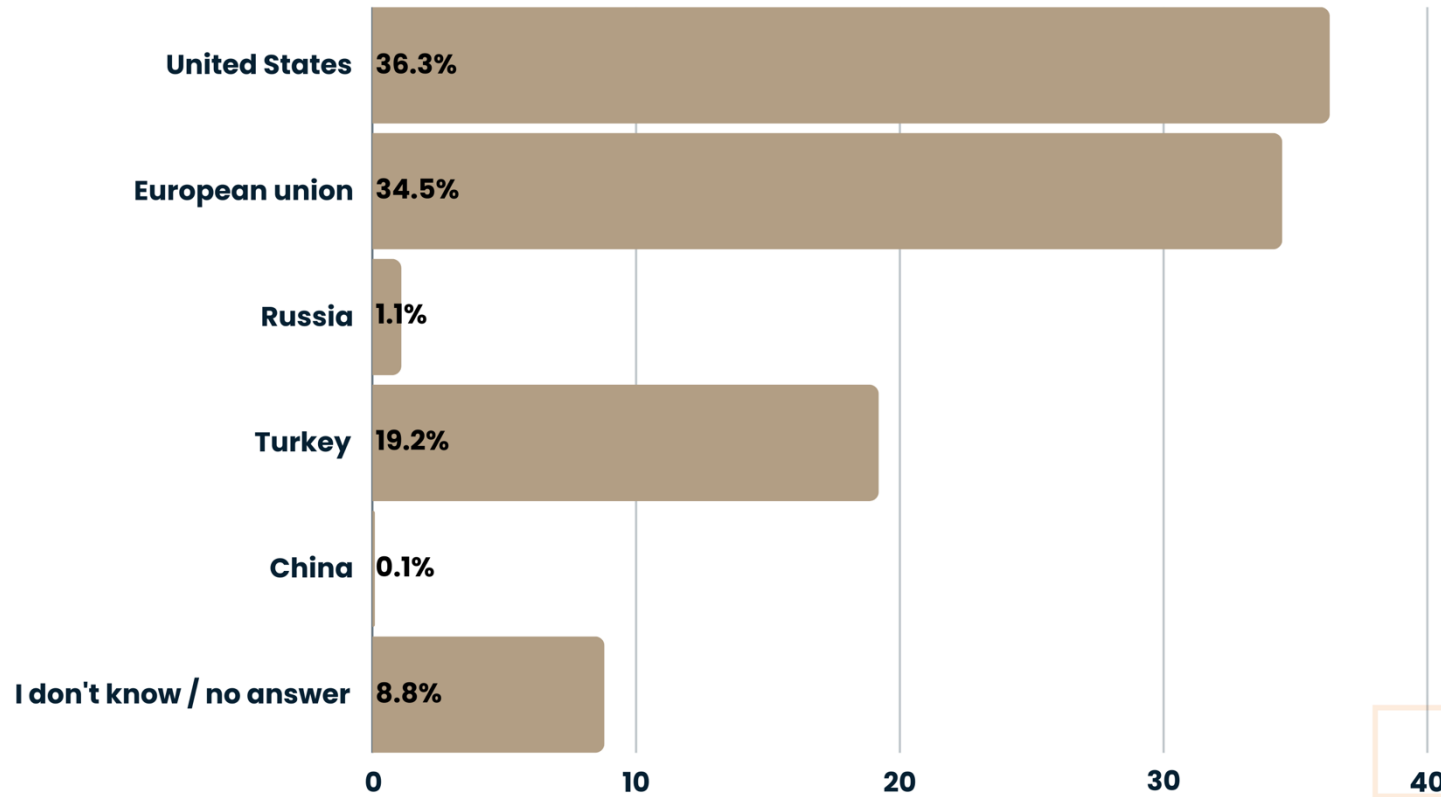
However, in the event that AA and EMC would join forces and run as a coalition, this bloc would win the elections against DUI. The AA-EMC coalition would come first with 34.8%, 8 points ahead of DUI, which would win 26.8% of the vote according to the Albanian Barometer of IPP Arbën Xhaferi. ADP and SDSM would receive only 0.1% and 0.4% of the votes respectively. 18.2% of respondents are undecided or do not answer.



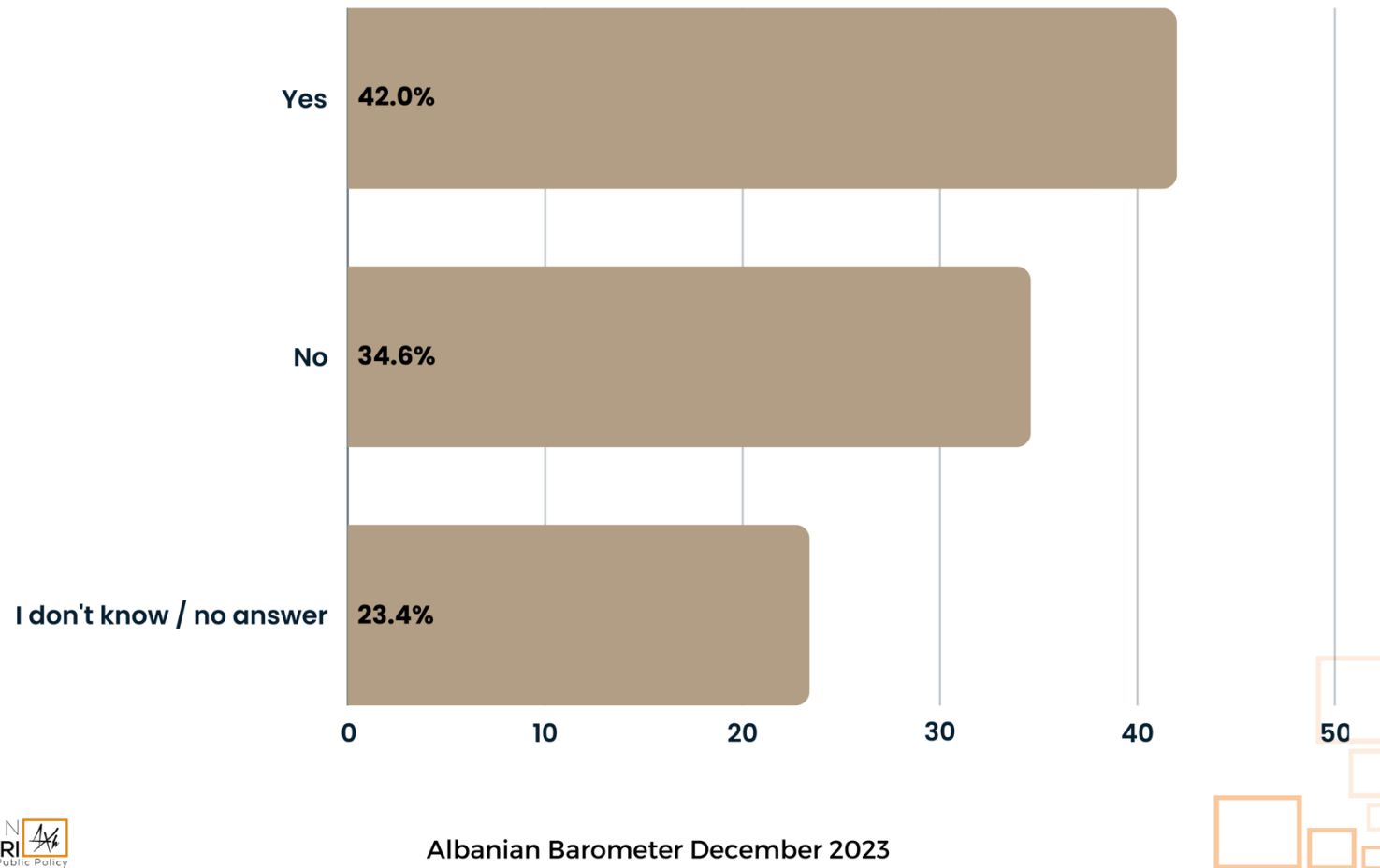
Methodology

A state-wide representative sample of 1,015 respondents age 18 and older was surveyed via telephone interviews between December 9 and 14, 2023. The research was conducted using the random selection methodology, ensuring a comprehensive representation of the Albanian population in North Macedonia, based on demographic characteristics such as gender, age, education, as well as the electoral unit and municipality where they live. The margin of error is 3 points, with a 95 percent confidence level. The research was carried out and financed by the Institute for Public Policy Arbën Xhaferi.

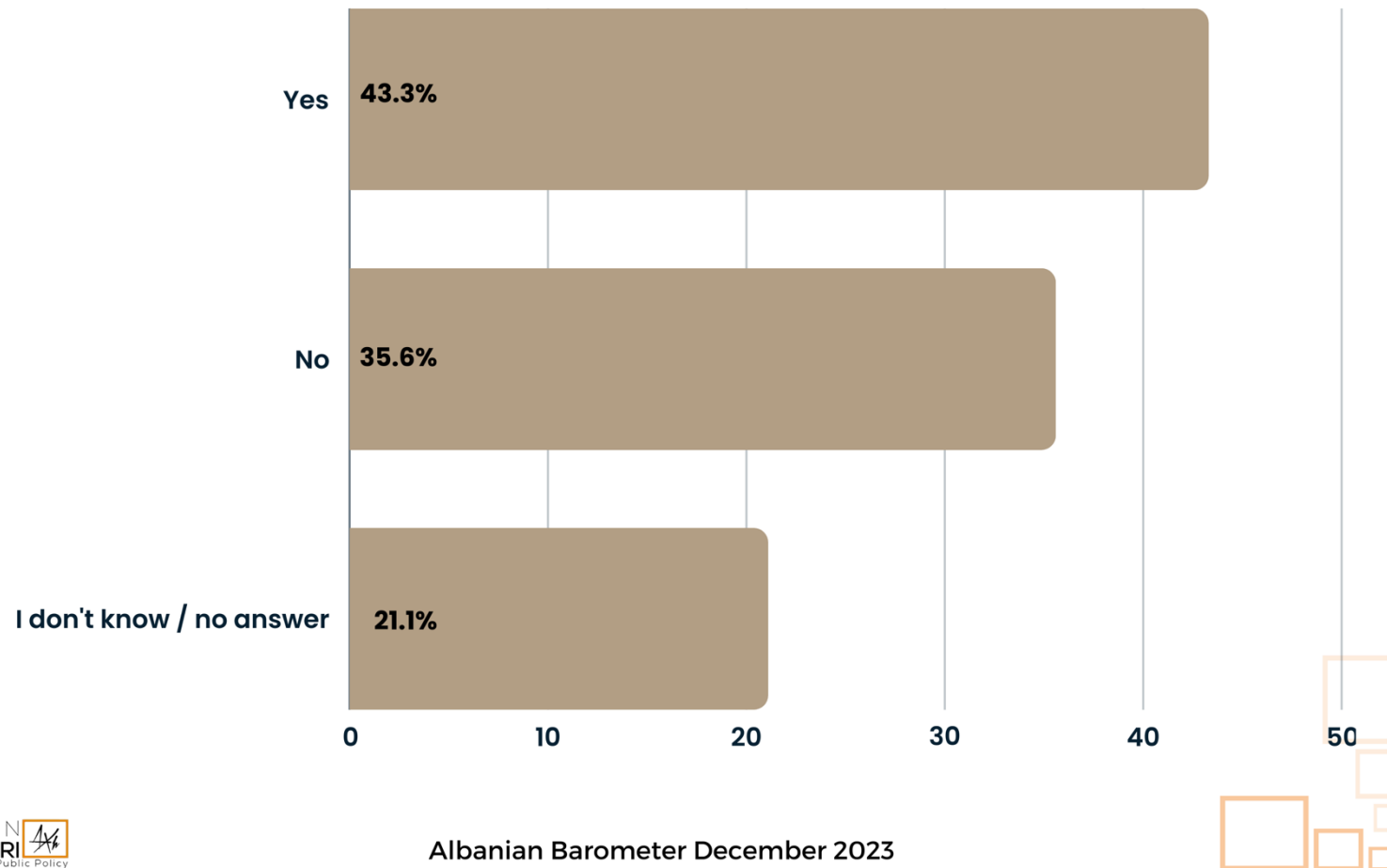
Who is North Macedonia's main strategic ally?



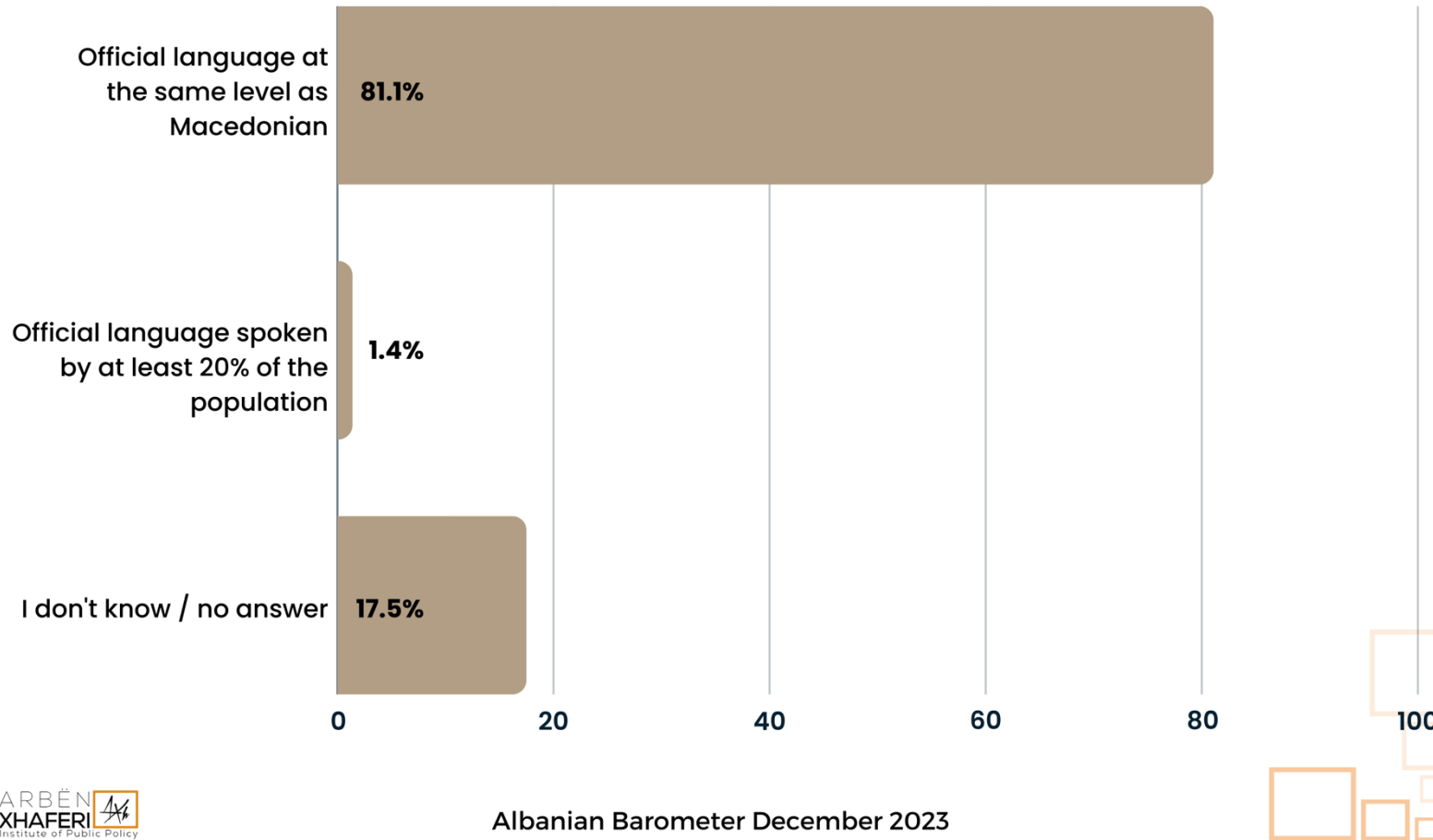
Do you think that our country has the capacity to become part of the European Union in the next 10 years?



Do you think that constitutional changes will take place before the next parliamentary elections, as a condition for opening negotiations for EU membership?

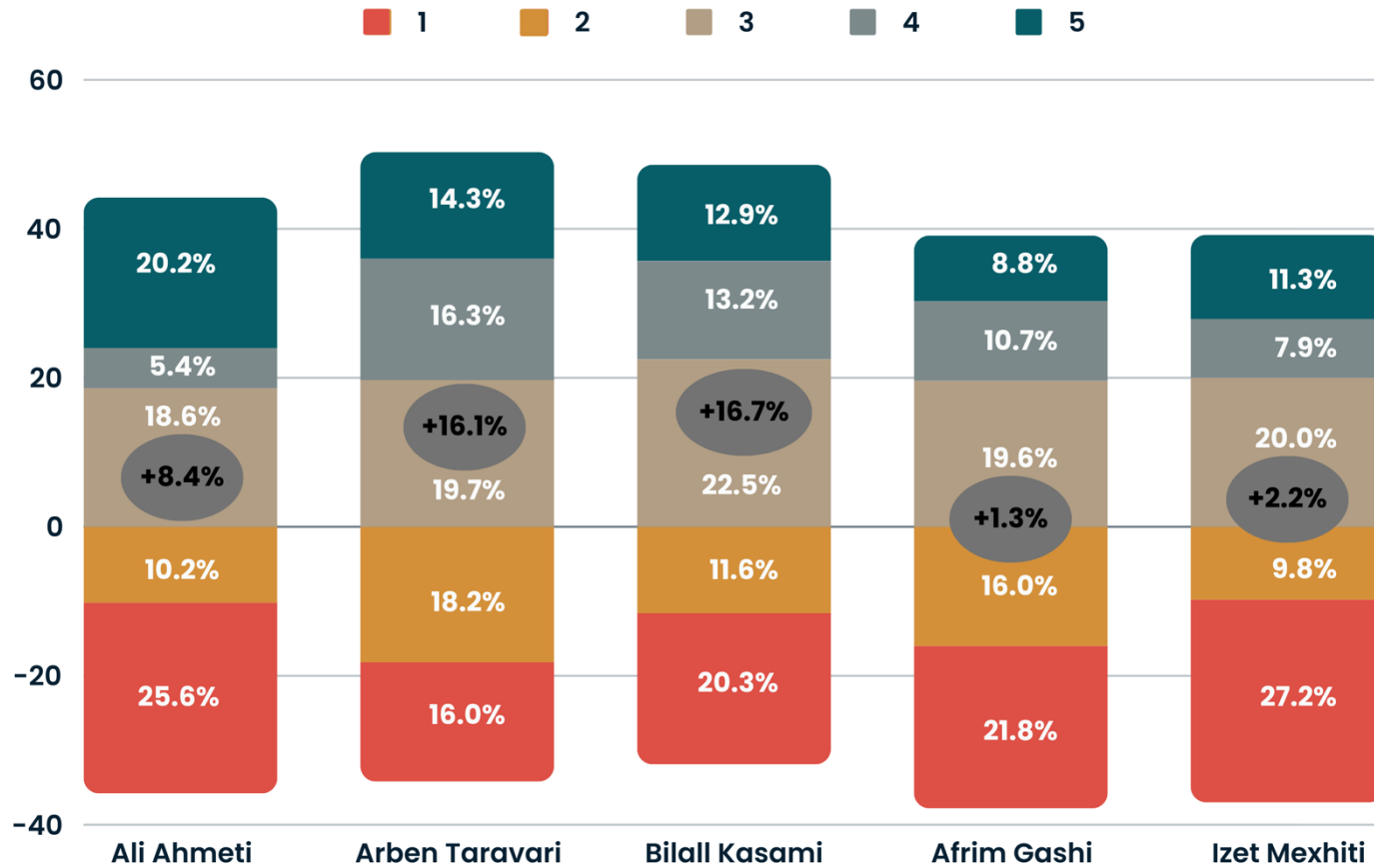


At the moment, the Albanian language is defined in the Constitution as a language spoken by at least 20% of the population. If constitutional changes are made, what status should the Albanian language have?

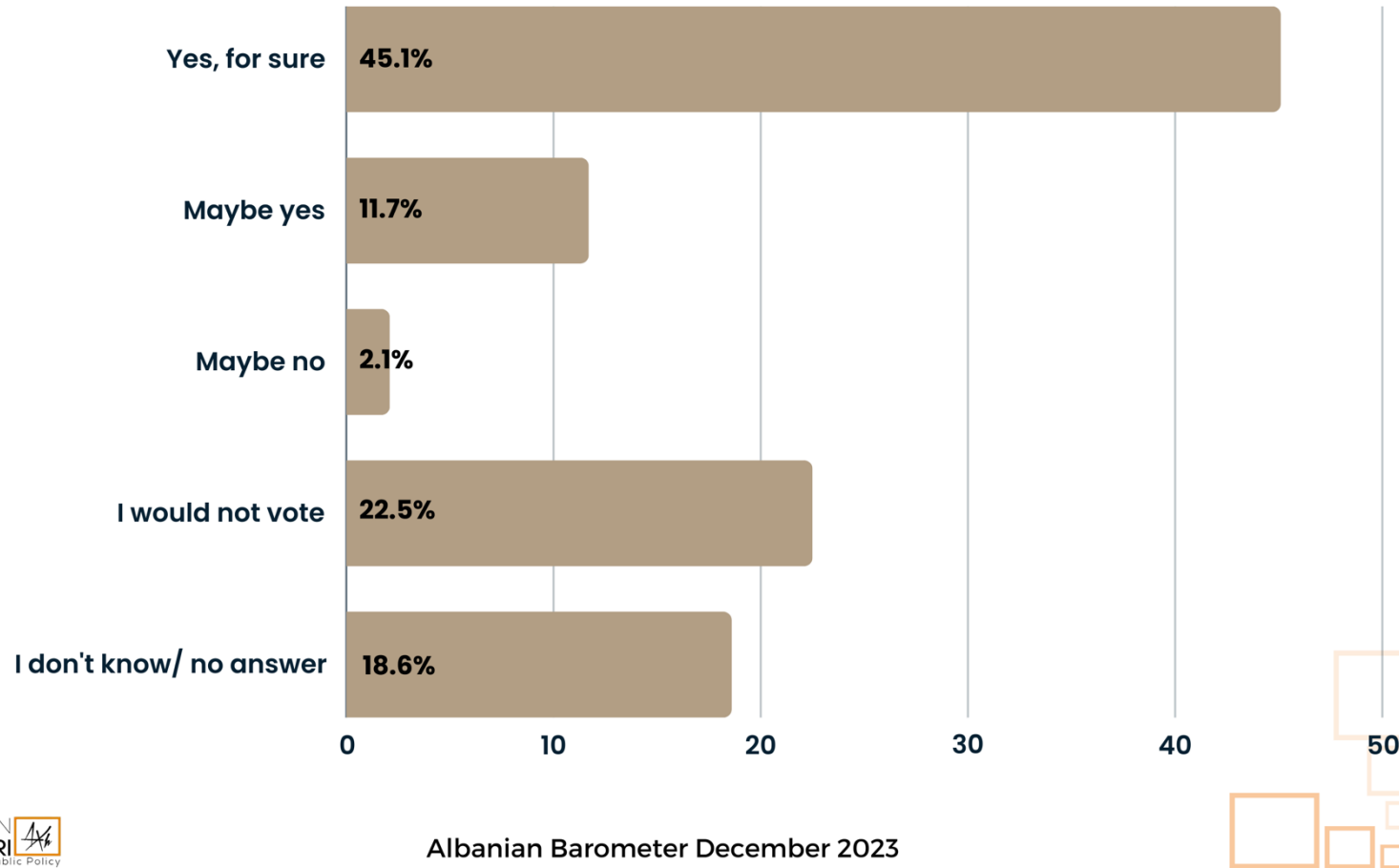


On a scale of 1 to 5, how much do you trust the following politicians (1 - the least, 5 - the most)?

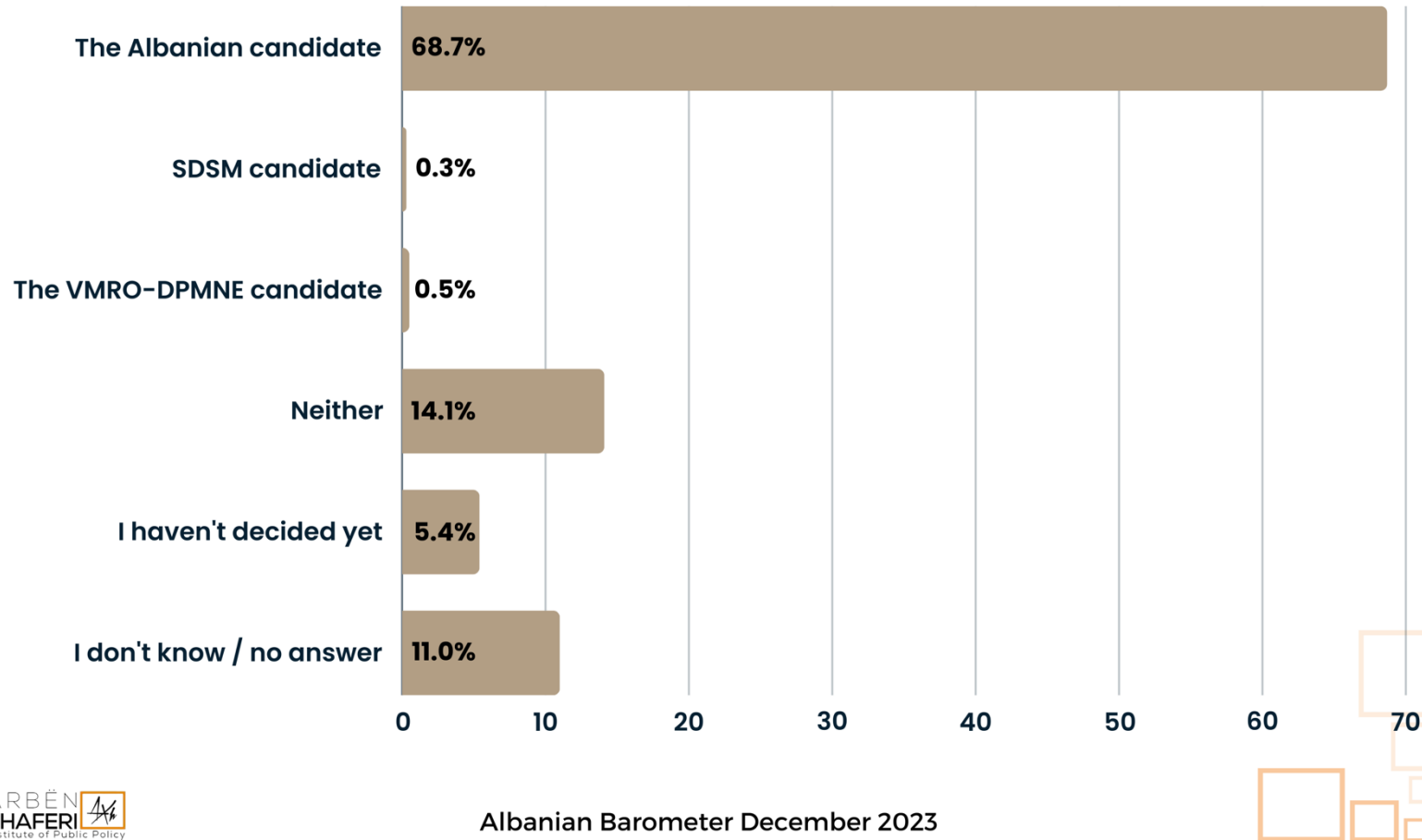
Net confidence in politicians (“I don't know / I have no answer” do not appear)



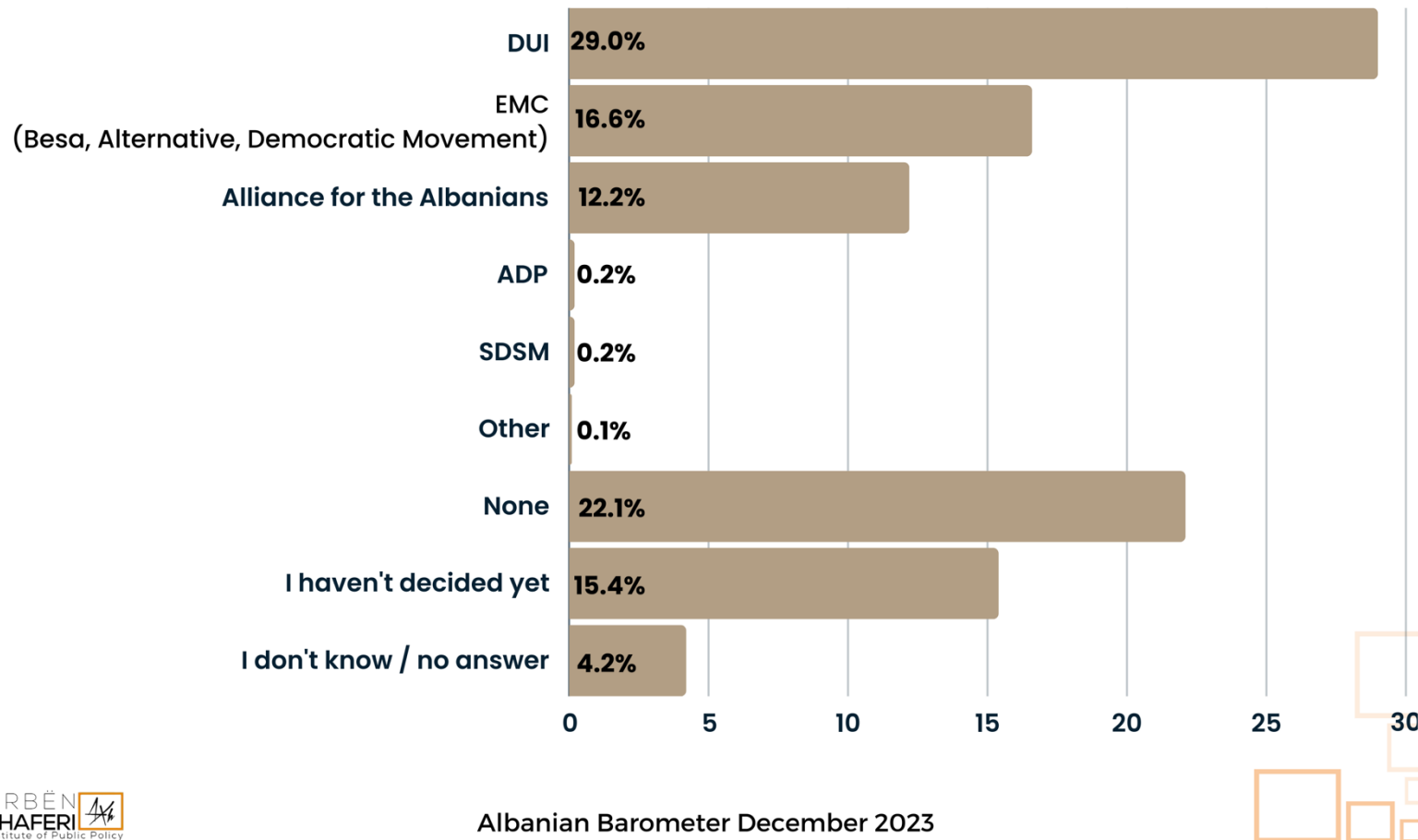
If parliamentary elections were to be held next week, would you go out to vote?



Which candidate will you vote for in the first round of the presidential elections on April 24, 2024?



Which party or list will you vote for in the parliamentary elections on May 8, 2024?



Which party or list will you vote for if the Alliance for the Albanians joins the Albanian opposition in the parliamentary elections of May 8, 2024?

