



**Razumkov**  
centre

# **PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE'S EURO-ATLANTIC COURSE: ASSESSMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY BY THE RAZUMKOV CENTRE**



The project was implemented with the support  
of the British Embassy in Ukraine

Kyiv 2021

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## **Project Director – Oleksiy Melnyk**

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# SUMMARY

The Razumkov Centre's multi-year monitoring highlight quite significant changes in public opinion regarding various aspects of NATO-Ukraine relations, as well as the perception of the Alliance by various segments of society. In 2002, one-third of Ukrainians equally supported and opposed the idea of Ukraine's accession to NATO. Later, in 2002-2010, the share of supporters halved, while the share of opponents doubled. Since 2014, there have been dramatic – albeit not abrupt – changes in citizens' attitudes towards the prospect of Ukraine's NATO membership. In April 2014, 37% of Ukrainians were ready to vote for NATO membership and in November 2015 – 48%, exceeding the 33%-share of opponents.

A hypothetical referendum in the spring of 2021 could result in high turnout and convincing support for Ukraine's decision to join NATO. As many as 71% of respondents confirmed their readiness to go to the referendum, and 54% said they would vote for Ukraine's accession to NATO, although verbal readiness to participate is obviously not a guarantee of real turnout.

Despite overwhelming support for Euro-Atlantic and European integration, realistic assessments of threats and risks, adequate choice of national security options, perception of NATO by citizens and so on, this generally positive picture still contains important signs of both a great potential and of latent risks to further strengthening of the achieved level of public support. This primarily concerns the identified peculiarities of public opinion that depend on the region, age and established positions on Euro-Atlantic integration.

Differences in responses depending on the respondents' gender and level of education are less significant than regional or age-specific variations. The most fundamental differences are often seen between the supporters and opponents of NATO accession, although their opinions on some issues are quite similar. Most respondents view the EU and NATO integration as moving in one direction. The level of public support for European integration is traditionally higher than that of Euro-Atlantic integration, but the balance between "for" and "against" also varies considerably depending on the region.

A sense of Ukraine's vulnerability to external threats, understanding of the lack of reliable external security guarantees and search for the optimal national security model are clearly the main rational factors for supporting the country's strategic course towards Euro-Atlantic integration. According to respondents, the most relevant for Ukraine are threats from Russia and external aggression – a dual threat by both source and content. Only a small share of respondents sees a threat from NATO.

Fairly realistic assessments of threats, prospects of foreign assistance and the reliability of external security guarantees strongly influences the respondents' support for the suggested options of response to threats, security models, own involvement in defending the country and Ukraine's fulfilment of international commitments. Most respondents believe that Ukraine should primarily count on itself and its own forces and, more importantly, more than half of those surveyed expressed their readiness to defend their country, either with weapons or by providing volunteer support.

Expectation of solidarity from international partners, primarily from the EU and NATO, is quite high, just like the demonstration of readiness to support Ukraine's decision to help partners in need.

In choosing the best national security model, the respondents' preferences mostly divided between NATO (51%) and non-aligned/neutral status (29%). The CSTO as an alternative to NATO has virtually no supporters. Practically all countries that have gained the highest ratings as Ukraine's allies are NATO members. For almost half of respondents, NATO is also the leading international organisation providing the most important support in defending Ukraine's independence. Public assessment of the importance of NATO support to Ukraine could probably be even higher if respondents were better informed about it.

For most Ukrainians, NATO is primarily a defence alliance. The surveyed Ukrainians are highly appreciative and mostly positive about the Alliance's global role. They generally associate NATO with security, peace, democracy, stability and – to a lesser extent – with well-being, while NATO's associations with war, aggression, threat, world domination and cruelty predominate among opponents of accession.

Ukrainians generally believe in the reliability of collective security guarantees for NATO members, but with some reservations. The benefits of NATO membership are further confirmed by the assumption of 57% of respondents about a hypothetical possibility to avoid the annexation of Crimea and the war in the Donbas, if Ukraine was a NATO member at that time. While seeing a significant correlation between the level of protection of the Central and Eastern European countries and their NATO membership, the respondents are somewhat less likely to recognise the link between such membership and the nations' level of democracy, prosperity and stability.

It is much more difficult for Ukrainians to assess their personal gains or losses from Ukraine's accession to NATO compared to possible consequences of such a step for the country. Although the number of optimists in terms of personal gains and compliance of NATO membership with national interests generally prevails, there are striking differences in the distribution of relevant responses between supporters and opponents of accession.

Opinions about possible consequences of NATO membership and the organisation's requirements for new members equally include real facts and traditional anti-NATO myths. This applies to all categories of respondents, although pessimistic expectations clearly prevail in the responses of NATO opponents.

The Ukrainians' attitudes to practical NATO-Ukraine cooperation are mostly positive, especially as a factor in strengthening Ukraine's defence capability, improving its relations with the EU, and supporting the country's international authority. Instead, the impact of such cooperation on well-being of the population in general and on respondents' families in particular is extremely limited.

Citizens' assessment of own awareness is rather low, although not critical enough. Respondents who are better informed and have a higher level of education declare a greater interest in obtaining information than others. The main sources of information about NATO include television, social media and Ukrainian non-governmental websites. According to respondents, the nature of information about NATO in Ukraine is generally positive, balanced or neutral, but its content is limited and incomplete. The Russian-speaking segment much less generally positive compared to the Ukrainian one. Most Ukrainians, even those who are "not interested" in general information about NATO, would like to be better informed about possible benefits and potential losses from Ukraine's membership, about NATO's assistance to Ukraine, and about how new members have benefitted from joining NATO. At the same time, only one in five respondents actively searches for any NATO-related information.

It is quite encouraging that the share of citizens who acknowledged positive changes in their attitude towards NATO is three times higher than the proportion of those, whose attitudes changed "for the worse". Most likely, such changes in recent years have been shaped under the influence of objective circumstances, rather than a targeted state information policy. That is why one of more important results of this study is to identify risks of both inadequately informed choices and the dubious impact of higher awareness on public opinion.

Further existence and strengthening of social consensus will largely depend on the effectiveness of informational and promotional measures, taking into account foreign and national experience adapted to the present-day reality. Ongoing monitoring of public opinion should be one of feedback tools, a source for the prompt adjustment of plans for implementing strategic and policy decisions.





# PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE'S EURO-ATLANTIC COURSE: ASSESSMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The almost 30-year history of NATO-Ukraine relations went through dynamic developments and stagnations, common interest in deepening the partnership and mutual disappointments. Dramatic events of 2014 kicked off a new period in Ukraine's relations with NATO, which was reflected in government policy and public consciousness. The enshrinement of irreversibility of the European and Euro-Atlantic course of Ukraine in the Constitution was due to the consensus of political elites and the corresponding changes in society's foreign policy orientations.

The key to further success in implementing a historic political decision and the irreversibility of Ukraine's European and Euro-Atlantic course is not only to secure a dominant share of supporters, but also to ensure a conflict-free perception of the majority's choice by the rest of society. This would require an effective two-way communication and active involvement of government and society, firstly to clarify the positions and interests that unite or otherwise divide society. Sociological studies as an element of such communication are also an effective tool for legitimising government decisions and predicting the society's reaction.

This report presents the results of a nationwide sociological survey and expert assessments of public opinion on a wide range of issues related to Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration. The document also offers relevant conclusions and policy recommendations aimed at improving the quality of formation and implementation of the state policy of informing the public on Euro-Atlantic integration issues.

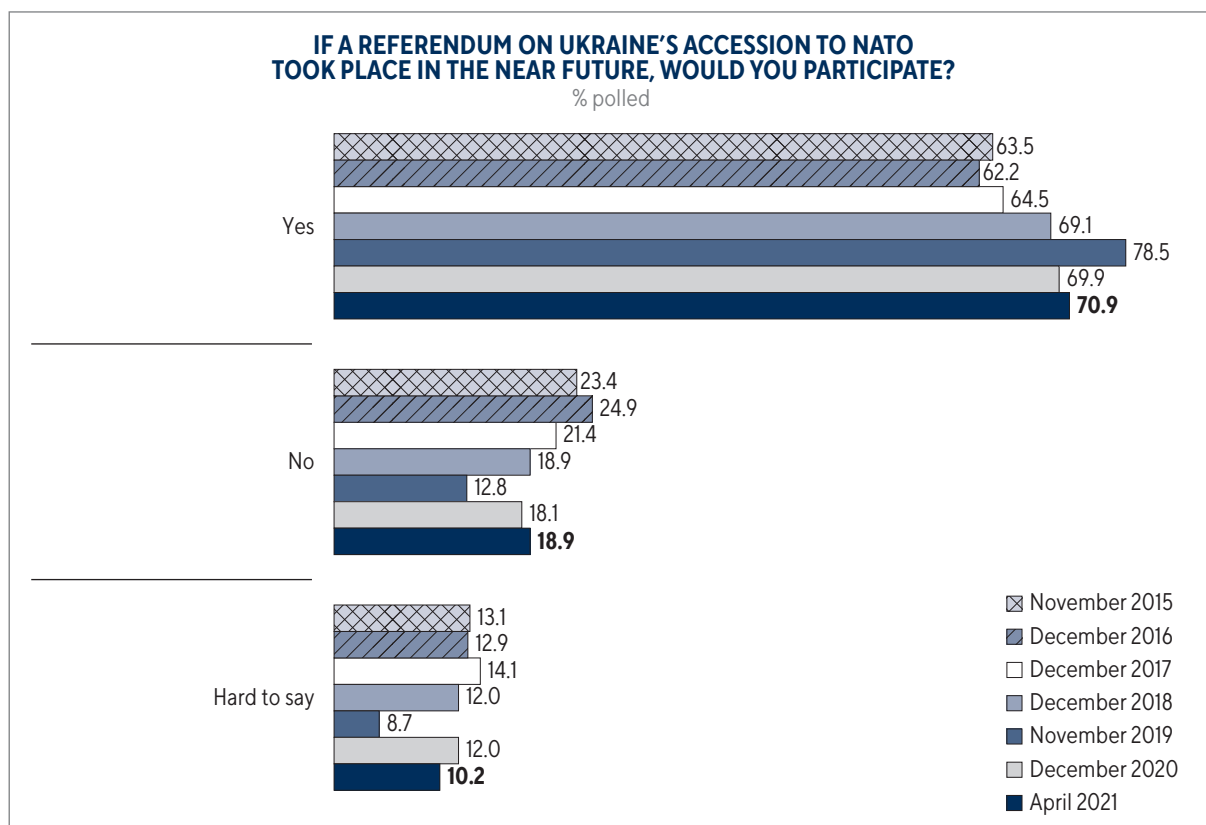
## Citizen's geopolitical orientations and potential referendum

If conducted in April 2021 (at the time of survey)<sup>1</sup>, a potential referendum on public support for Ukraine's decision to join NATO would guarantee the desired results to its organisers. This, however, by no means implies the achievement of the goal of ensuring a stable public consensus on Ukraine's strategic course. The generally positive picture includes some potential risks – important details that require careful analysis and consideration in developing and implementing public information policy. It is primarily about due consideration of captured opinion peculiarities among different respondent categories (regional, age, gender, support/opposition). Just like in Ukraine, the experience of new Alliance members shows that public opinion is inert but extremely sensitive to objective circumstances and targeted informational influence.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, if a referendum on Ukraine's accession to NATO took place in the near future, the vast majority of surveyed Ukrainians (71%) would participate in it, which signifies a substantial public interest in the country's strategic course.

54% of Ukrainians are ready to vote for Ukraine's accession to NATO, 31% are against it, and 15% are undecided. It is worth adding that the number of those who expressed their readiness to participate in the referendum is also higher among the NATO supporters compared to their opponents.

The largest share of NATO supporters (64%) was found in the age group of 18–29. The balance between supporters and opponents (decrease in support) changes with age in almost linear fashion, but even the oldest respondents aged 60+ are mostly supportive of accession (48%), compared to 37% of their opponents.

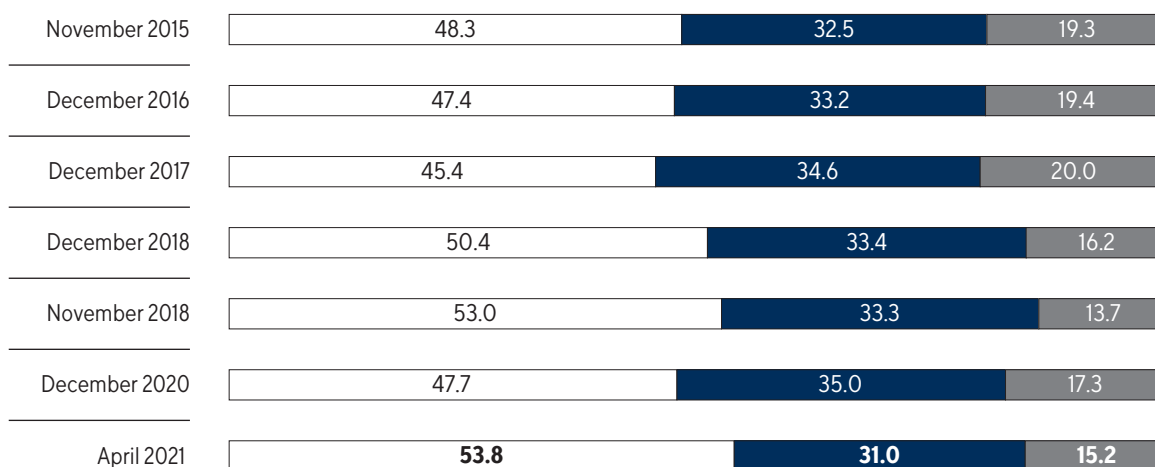


<sup>1</sup> The survey was conducted by the Sociological Service of the Razumkov Centre on 23-28 April in all regions of Ukraine excluding Crimea and occupied territories of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. The sample included 2,021 respondents aged 18+. Theoretical sampling error is 2.3%.

<sup>2</sup> The information component of European and Euro-Atlantic integration: Public opinion. – National Security and Defence, No. 1, 2008, p.59, [www.razumkov.org.ua/uploads/journal/ukr/NSD95\\_2008\\_ukr.pdf](http://www.razumkov.org.ua/uploads/journal/ukr/NSD95_2008_ukr.pdf) (in Ukrainian).

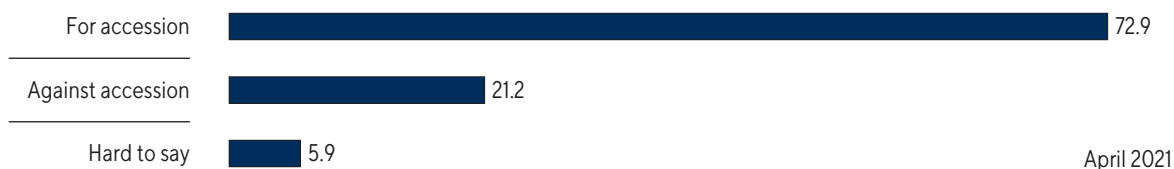
### IF YOU PARTICIPATED IN THE REFERENDUM ON UKRAINE'S ACCESSION TO NATO, HOW WOULD YOU VOTE?

% polled



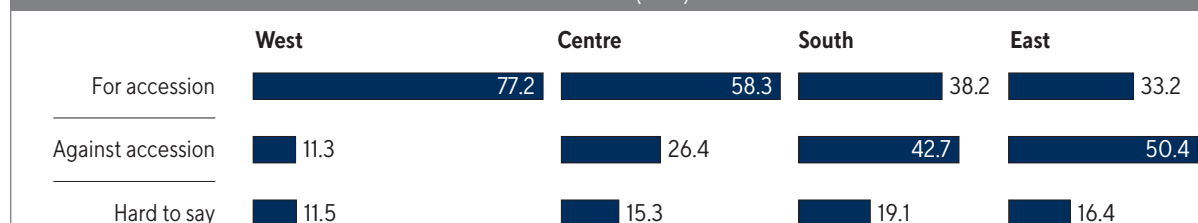
□ For accession ■ Against accession ■ Hard to say

#### % of respondents who would participate in the referendum



% polled

#### REGIONS (2021)



	AGE (2021)					GENDER (2021)	
	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	Male	Female
For accession	63.9	53.0	57.4	48.6	47.8	57.4	50.9
Against accession	18.5	30.1	32.4	35.9	37.2	31.2	30.9
Hard to say	17.6	16.9	10.3	15.5	15.1	11.4	18.2

#### % of respondents depending on region of residence and age (2021)

		18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
Western and Central regions	For accession	72.1	67.2	72.1	59.7	58.5
	Against accession	12.1	18.8	18.1	26.1	26.8
	Hard to say	15.8	14.0	9.8	14.2	14.6
Southern and Eastern regions	For accession	49.3	32.1	32.0	31.6	30.8
	Against accession	30.6	46.8	56.8	50.7	53.6
	Hard to say	20.1	21.2	11.2	17.6	15.6

Regional differences are the most noticeable.<sup>3</sup> Against almost seven-fold dominance of supporters in the West (77% for, and 11% against) and their significant lead in the Centre (58% for, and 26% against), people in the East are more likely to say «No» to NATO (33% for, and 50% against). The difference between NATO opponents (43%) and supporters (38%) in the South is less pronounced.

Particularly noteworthy are the differences between the positions of young respondents aged 18-29 and other age groups in the eastern and southern regions. Specifically, the share of NATO supporters among young people (49%) significantly exceeds the share of opponents (31%), which is fundamentally different from the distribution of opinions across other age categories.

Gender differences are less significant than regional and age variations. Men are more likely to support the idea of joining NATO (57%) than women (51%), but the shares of NATO opponents are almost even regardless of gender (31%); moreover, the share of women who found it difficult to answer the question (18%) is higher than that of men (11%) by 7%.

*Dynamics in time.* The Razumkov Centre's multi-year monitoring of public opinion points at rather significant changes in the Ukrainians' views of the idea of NATO membership. Back in 2002,<sup>4</sup> 32% of citizens equally supported and opposed the accession. During 2002-2010,<sup>5</sup> the share of supporters halved, while the share of opponents doubled.<sup>6</sup> Some periods of significant public opinion fluctuations about NATO (about 10%) did not affect the overall downward trend in support.



Since 2014, sociologists have documented radical changes in citizens' attitudes to the prospect of NATO membership. If in 2012,<sup>7</sup> only 14% of respondents intended to vote for NATO accession, and 62% opposed it, then support for NATO membership in April 2014 increased to 37% (vs 42% of opponents) and reached 48% in November 2015, exceeding the share of opponents (33%). Minor fluctuations over the next five years (2016-2021) point at stabilisation of public support (Diagram «If a referendum on Ukraine's accession to NATO took place next Sunday, how would you vote?», p.9).

It is worth noting that relative majority of those who have decided on the answer view the EU and NATO integration as moving in one direction (46%), whereas 34% consider this as different and unrelated processes (21% of «hard to say» responses) (Diagram «Which of the following statements do you agree with?», p.10).

<sup>3</sup> The following distribution of oblasts by regions is applied: **West:** Volynska, Zakarpatska, Ivano-Frankivska, Lvivska, Rivnenska, Ternopilska and Chernivetska oblasts; **Centre:** Kyiv, Vinnytska, Zhytomyrska, Kyivska, Kirovohradska, Poltavska, Sumska, Khmelnytska, Cherkaska and Chernihivska oblasts; **South:** Mykolayivska, Odeska, Khersonska oblasts; **East:** Dnipropetrovska, Zaporizhska, Kharkivska, Donetsk and Luhanska (excluding the occupied territories) oblasts.

<sup>4</sup> «2002 will go down in history as the year of proclamation of Ukraine's intention to join NATO». Speech of President Leonid Kuchma in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine during the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine «On Internal and External Situation in 2002». – Ukrayinska Pravda, 15 April 2003, [www.pravda.com.ua/news/2003/04/15/2993556/](http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2003/04/15/2993556/) (in Ukrainian).

<sup>5</sup> In 2010, the Law of Ukraine «On the Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy» established the country's non-aligned status, which basically meant the refusal of NATO integration.

<sup>6</sup> Foreign and security policy of Ukraine: Public opinion. – National Security and Defence, No.4, 2010, p.68, [www.razumkov.org.ua/uploads/journal/ukr/NSD115\\_2010\\_ukr.pdf](http://www.razumkov.org.ua/uploads/journal/ukr/NSD115_2010_ukr.pdf).

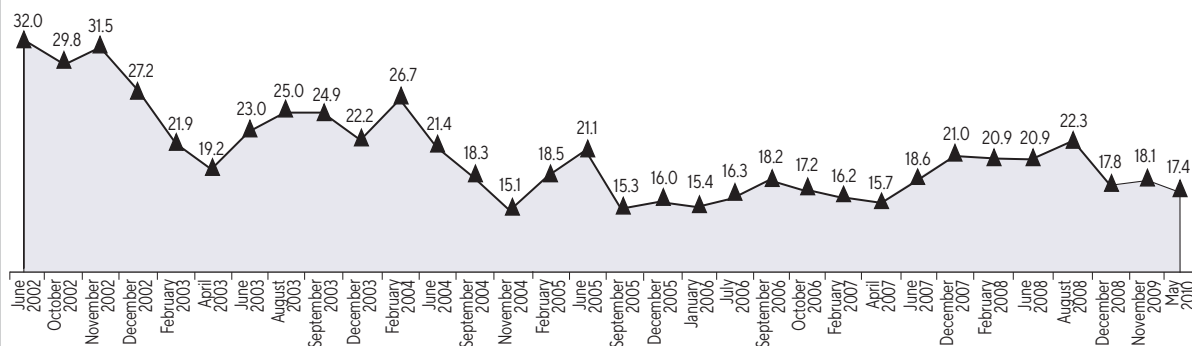
<sup>7</sup> The study was conducted by the Sociological Service of the Razumkov Centre on 30 March – 4 April 2012 in all regions of Ukraine. The survey included 2,009 respondents aged 18+, with theoretical sampling error at 2.3%.



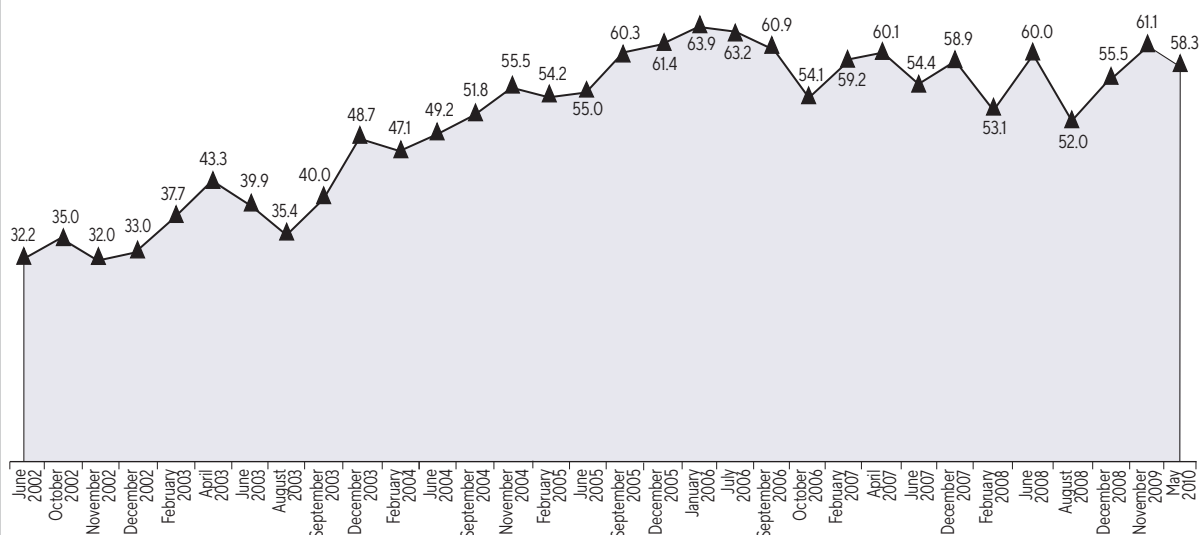
# IF A REFERENDUM ON UKRAINE'S ACCESSION TO NATO TOOK PLACE NEXT SUNDAY, HOW WOULD YOU VOTE?\*

% polled

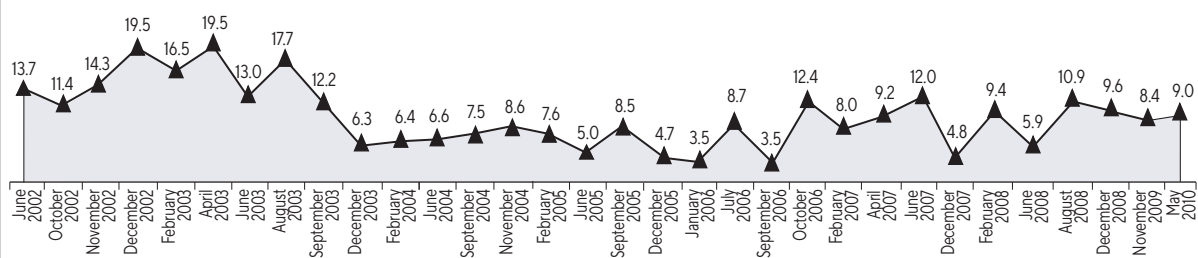
## For accession to NATO



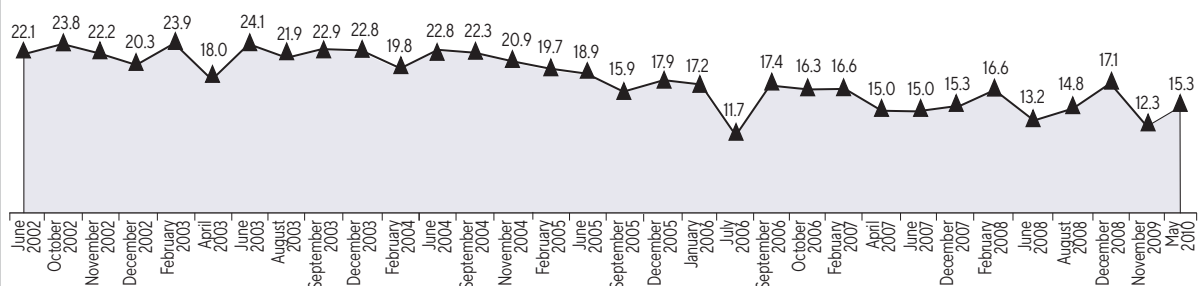
## Against accession to NATO



## I would not vote



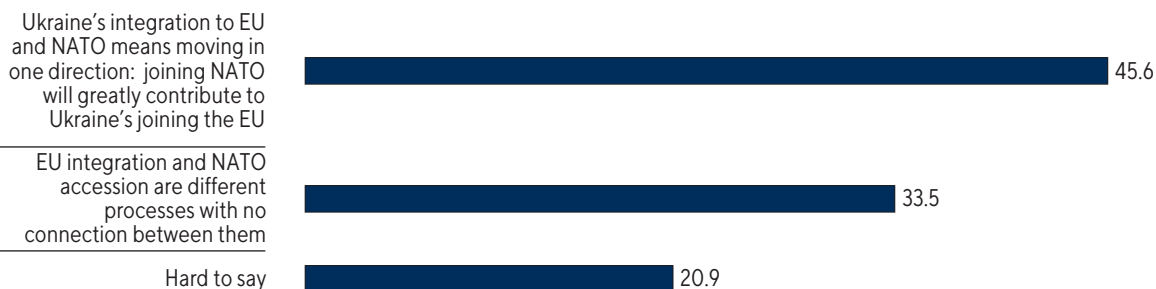
## Hard to say



\* Source: National Security and Defence, 2010, No.4, p.68.

### WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS DO YOU AGREE WITH?

% polled



### REGIONS

	West	Centre	South	East
Ukraine's integration to EU and NATO means moving in one direction: joining NATO will greatly contribute to Ukraine's joining the EU	55.8	48.6	33.2	37.7
EU integration and NATO accession are different processes with no connection between them	30.0	36.1	39.8	29.9
Hard to say	14.2	15.3	27.0	32.4

	AGE					GENDER	
	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +	Male	Female
Ukraine's integration to EU and NATO means moving in one direction: joining NATO will greatly contribute to Ukraine's joining the EU	50.7	44.2	45.3	48.0	41.4	46.8	44.6
EU integration and NATO accession are different processes with no connection between them	32.0	34.0	35.6	32.8	33.4	33.7	33.3
Hard to say	17.3	21.8	19.1	19.3	25.2	19.5	22.1

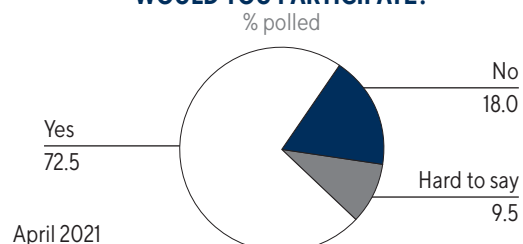
### % of polled depending on region of residence and age

		18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Western and Central regions	Ukraine's integration to EU and NATO means moving in one direction: joining NATO will greatly contribute to Ukraine's joining the EU	52.3	54.1	52.1	51.2	48.5
	EU integration and NATO accession are different processes with no connection between them	34.6	31.0	36.7	33.2	33.5
	Важко відповісти	13.2	14.8	11.2	15.6	18.0
Southern and Eastern regions	Ukraine's integration to EU and NATO means moving in one direction: joining NATO will greatly contribute to Ukraine's joining the EU	47.9	29.5	33.6	43.4	30.3
	EU integration and NATO accession are different processes with no connection between them	27.1	38.5	33.6	32.4	33.2
	Hard to say	25.0	32.1	32.8	24.3	36.5

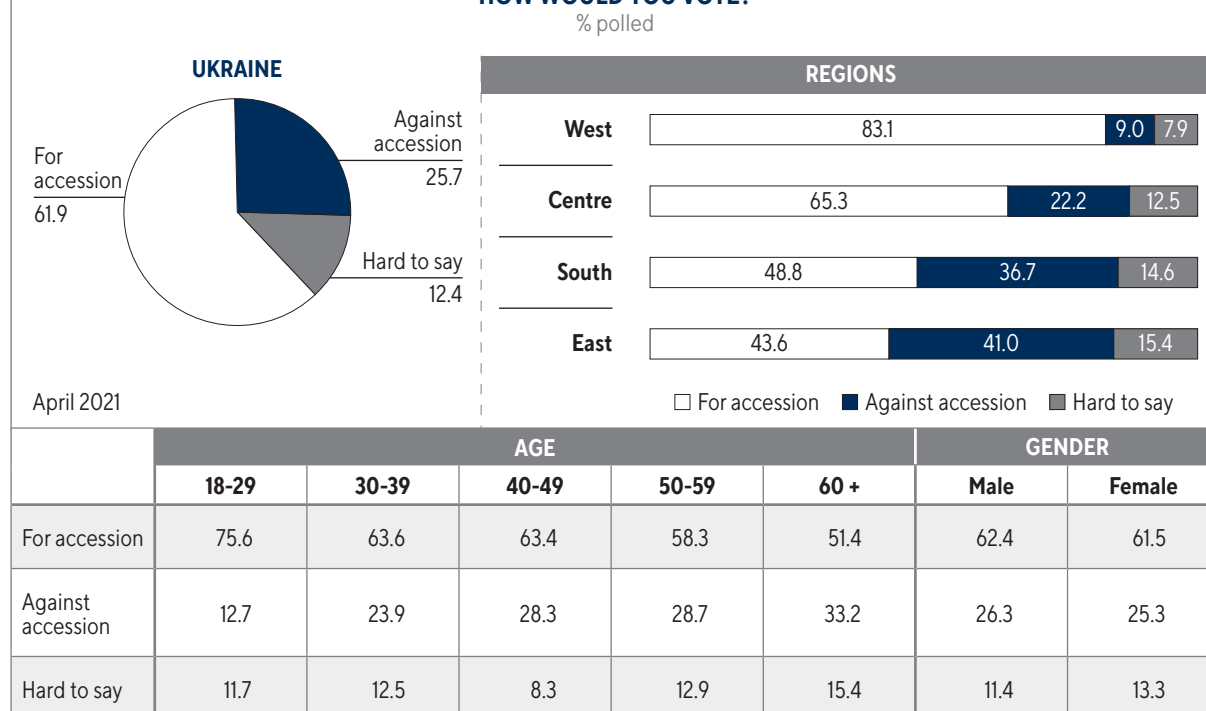
April 2021

The level of public support for European integration is traditionally slightly higher than that of Euro-Atlantic integration. 62% of all respondents would vote for Ukraine's accession to the EU, and 26% would vote against it. Moreover, the share of the EU integration supporters significantly exceeds the share of opponents across all age categories, regardless of the gender. The «for» and «against» balance varies significantly depending on the region but remains in favour of the EU accession.

**IF A REFERENDUM ON UKRAINE'S ACCESSION TO THE EU TOOK PLACE IN THE NEAR FUTURE, WOULD YOU PARTICIPATE?**



**IF YOU PARTICIPATED IN THE REFERENDUM ON UKRAINE'S ACCESSION TO THE EU, HOW WOULD YOU VOTE?**



## Positions, arguments and factors influencing public opinion

A sense of Ukraine's vulnerability to external threats, understanding of the lack of reliable external security guarantees and search for the optimal national security model are clearly the main rational factors for supporting the country's strategic course towards Euro-Atlantic integration.

Respondents feel that the most relevant threats to Ukraine are Russia (74%) and external aggression (72%). The reasons for almost identical — and the highest — assessment

of the nature and source of the threat are quite obvious, just like direct interrelations between them. Other internal and external threats are also relevant for most respondents, including separatism (63%), international terrorism (53%) and the rise of extremism in Ukraine (49%).

Responses to the parts of the list of threats containing the names of individual countries and international organisations indicate that only a small share of respondents sees a threat from the United States (16%), China (12.6%), NATO (12%) and the EU (7%) (Table «Is there a threat to Ukraine from...?», p.12-13).

IS THERE A THREAT TO UKRAINE FROM...? % polled					
	UKRAINE	REGIONS			
		West	Centre	South	East
Russia					
Yes	74.1	92.7	81.2	57.9	54.4
No	15.3	4.4	11.2	22.9	27.7
Hard to say	10.6	2.9	7.7	19.2	17.9
External armed aggression					
Yes	71.9	88.8	77.4	59.6	54.0
No	18.0	7.7	14.3	18.3	32.8
Hard to say	10.1	3.5	8.3	22.1	13.2
Separatism in Ukraine					
Yes	63.3	62.1	68.0	65.0	57.0
No	21.7	24.8	20.7	16.3	22.9
Hard to say	14.9	13.1	11.3	18.8	20.1
International terrorism					
Yes	52.8	43.3	63.1	49.8	47.8
No	29.2	35.6	22.2	23.7	35.8
Hard to say	18.0	21.0	14.7	26.6	16.4
Rise of extremism in Ukraine					
Yes	49.4	41.3	51.3	57.3	50.7
No	28.9	37.9	28.2	21.6	25.0
Hard to say	21.6	20.8	20.5	21.2	24.3
USA					
Yes	15.8	6.5	15.6	25.8	20.2
No	66.9	85.2	67.3	47.5	58.8
Hard to say	17.2	8.4	17.1	26.7	21.1
China					
Yes	12.6	9.0	16.6	13.8	9.4
No	63.0	71.7	57.5	53.8	67.2
Hard to say	24.4	19.4	25.8	32.5	23.4
NATO					
Yes	12.3	3.5	12.6	22.0	15.3
No	68.7	87.3	69.7	47.7	59.7
Hard to say	19.1	9.2	17.7	30.3	25.0
EU					
Yes	7.4	2.7	8.8	7.1	9.4
No	76.5	88.7	76.9	67.5	69.3
Hard to say	16.1	8.6	14.3	25.4	21.3



IS THERE A THREAT TO UKRAINE FROM...?							
% polled							
(continued)							
	AGE					GENDER	
	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +	Male	Female
Russia							
Yes	82.0	75.4	74.1	70.4	69.5	74.5	73.9
No	9.3	13.5	17.1	18.1	18.2	16.3	14.4
Hard to say	8.8	11.1	8.8	11.5	12.3	9.2	11.7
External armed aggression							
Yes	71.7	73.0	71.5	70.7	72.4	71.1	72.5
No	16.6	18.2	19.7	18.7	17.4	19.3	17.0
Hard to say	11.7	8.8	8.8	10.6	10.2	9.6	10.6
Separatism in Ukraine							
Yes	61.6	61.4	66.8	63.4	63.9	64.6	62.4
No	24.7	22.5	20.6	21.6	19.7	22.5	21.0
Hard to say	13.7	16.1	12.6	15.0	16.4	12.9	16.5
International terrorism							
Yes	51.5	50.8	50.3	53.0	56.6	53.4	52.3
No	30.0	31.3	32.9	27.7	25.6	30.9	27.8
Hard to say	18.5	17.9	16.8	19.3	17.8	15.8	19.9
Rise of extremism in Ukraine							
Yes	42.2	49.1	53.2	50.0	52.4	49.2	49.6
No	33.9	27.5	29.7	27.6	26.6	31.8	26.5
Hard to say	23.9	23.4	17.1	22.4	21.0	18.9	23.8
USA							
Yes	13.7	17.4	15.0	15.8	16.9	15.9	15.8
No	71.9	65.2	70.0	66.2	63.0	68.9	65.3
Hard to say	14.4	17.4	15.0	18.1	20.1	15.2	19.0
China							
Yes	14.1	11.7	11.8	12.9	12.3	12.5	12.7
No	62.2	63.4	66.7	62.4	61.5	65.0	61.4
Hard to say	23.7	24.9	21.5	24.7	26.2	22.5	25.9
NATO							
Yes	8.8	11.9	10.3	13.5	15.6	12.0	12.5
No	74.4	67.8	73.2	67.8	62.6	71.3	66.4
Hard to say	16.8	20.3	16.5	18.7	21.7	16.6	21.1
EU							
Yes	6.3	6.7	5.9	7.8	9.1	7.4	7.3
No	81.7	76.2	78.5	75.3	72.4	78.1	75.2
Hard to say	12.0	17.1	15.6	17.0	18.6	14.5	17.5

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Regional and age differences in the perception of specific threats are rather substantial, but do not affect the final balance of national assessments. There are no significant differences between respondents of both genders on any issues related to threat assessment. In other words, responses confirm commonality of opinions in the perception of threats, rather than their radical differences depending on age, gender and region.

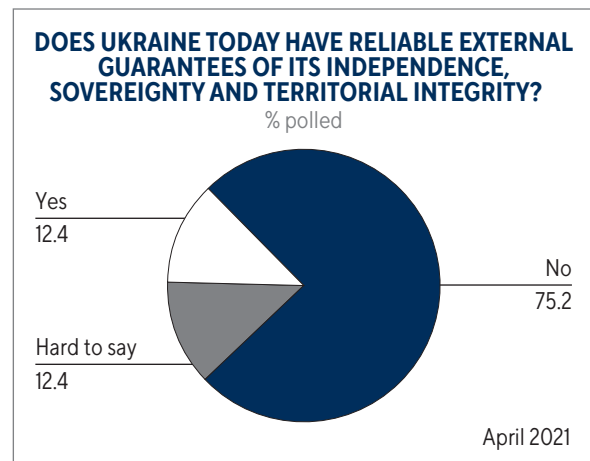
Meanwhile, regional and age differences in assessments of threats from external armed aggression and from Russia are noticeable. For example, the threat of external aggression is more relevant for those living in the West (89%) and the Centre (77%), than for respondents in the South (60%) and in the East (54%). Similar trends can be observed in the assessments of the Russian threat, which can be explained by the dependence of respondents' positions on their views of the Donbas conflict and their own understanding of links between the nature of the threat and its source. Anyway, despite these regional differences, the supporters of the opposite viewpoint make the minority. Specifically, 33% and 18% of respondents in the East and the South, respectively, do not consider external armed aggression a threat. Similarly, 28% and 23% of respondents in the East and the South do not see any threat from Russia.

To some extent, conclusions on commonality also relate to regional differences in the assessment of threats from NATO and the United States (as a key NATO member). Regardless of the region, most surveyed Ukrainians do not perceive NATO and the United States as a threat. Although some of those living in the South consider NATO (22%) and the United States (26%) a threat, the vast majority of the regions' population see no danger from either NATO (48%) or the United States (59%). It is noteworthy that in the South and East there is a high proportion of respondents (30% and 25%, respectively) who have not yet decided whether NATO poses any threat to Ukraine.

Most respondents are quite realistic in assessing the prospects of foreign assistance in the event of a military threat and the reliability of external guarantees of independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. It is obvious that realism in such assessments strongly

influences the respondents' support for the suggested options of response to threats, security models, own involvement in defending the country and Ukraine's fulfilment of international obligations.

Three quarters of Ukrainians (75%) answered negatively to the question on the existence of reliable external guarantees of independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and only 12% shared the opposite view.



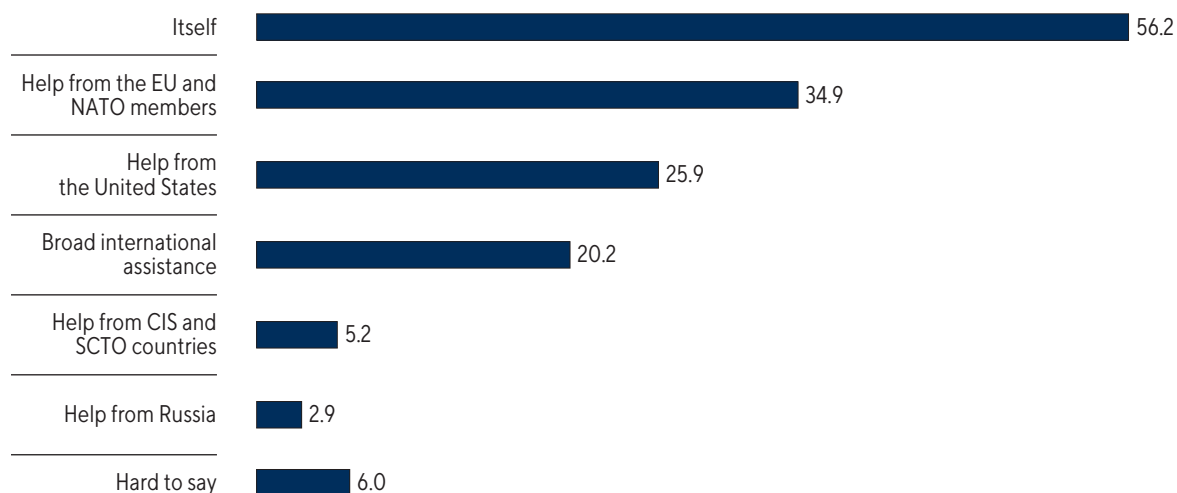
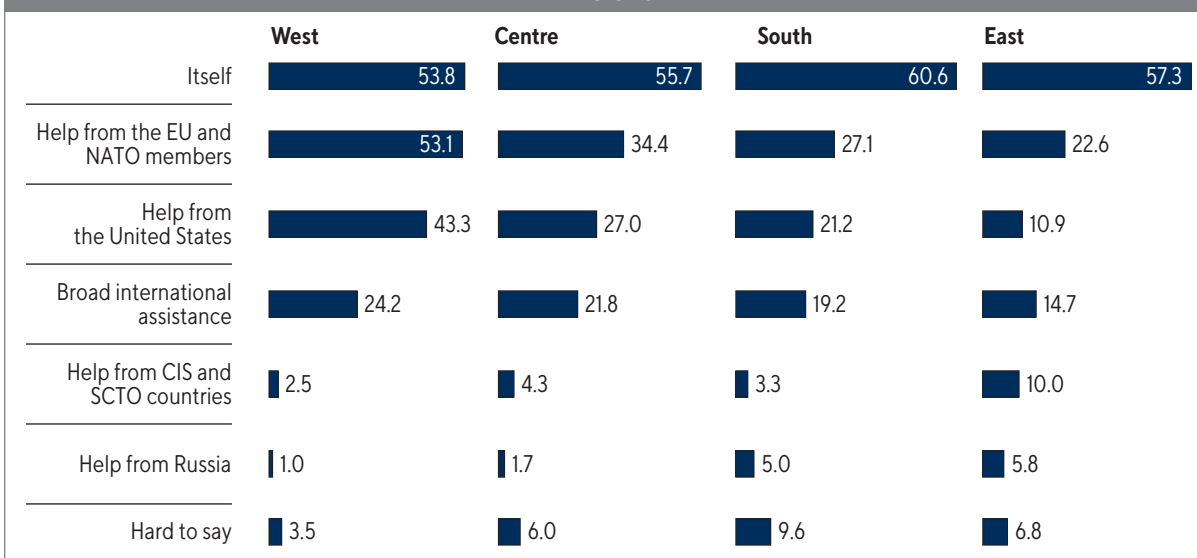
Being largely pessimistic about external guarantees, Ukrainians share higher expectations of assistance from the EU and NATO (35%), the United States (26%) and broader international assistance (20%) in the event of a military threat (armed aggression). Most of respondents (56%) believe that Ukraine should primarily count on itself. The share of those who still count on help from Russia and CIS/CSTO countries is miniscule at 3% and 5%, respectively (Diagram «*In the event of a military threat (armed aggression), Ukraine can primarily count on...*», p.15).

Opinion about the need to count on itself is almost equally shared by respondents across all regions of Ukraine. Meanwhile, people's expectations of external assistance differ significantly depending on the region. The highest hopes for the EU and NATO support are observed in the West (53%) and in the Centre (34%). In the South and East, much fewer respondents (27% and 23%, respectively) count on the EU and NATO.

Supporters and opponents of NATO membership demonstrate the most distinct difference in views on foreign assistance. Therefore, as many as 58% of NATO

**IN THE EVENT OF A MILITARY THREAT (ARMED AGGRESSION), UKRAINE CAN PRIMARILY COUNT ON...\***

% polled


**REGIONS**


	AGE					ATTITUDE TOWARDS NATO	
	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +	Supporters	Opponents
Itself	51.2	57.3	55.0	59.5	58.1	43.9	73.4
Help from the EU and NATO members	41.5	33.5	36.5	33.3	31.0	58.4	3.5
Help from the United States	24.9	25.6	31.2	27.4	22.7	41.1	3.8
Broad international assistance	23.9	22.1	21.8	19.0	16.0	26.1	10.5
Help from CIS and SCTO countries	2.0	3.1	5.9	7.2	7.6	1.8	12.1
Help from Russia	1.0	2.3	3.2	2.9	4.8	0.4	8.1
Hard to say	6.6	5.2	5.3	4.6	7.6	3.4	7.5

\* No more than three options.

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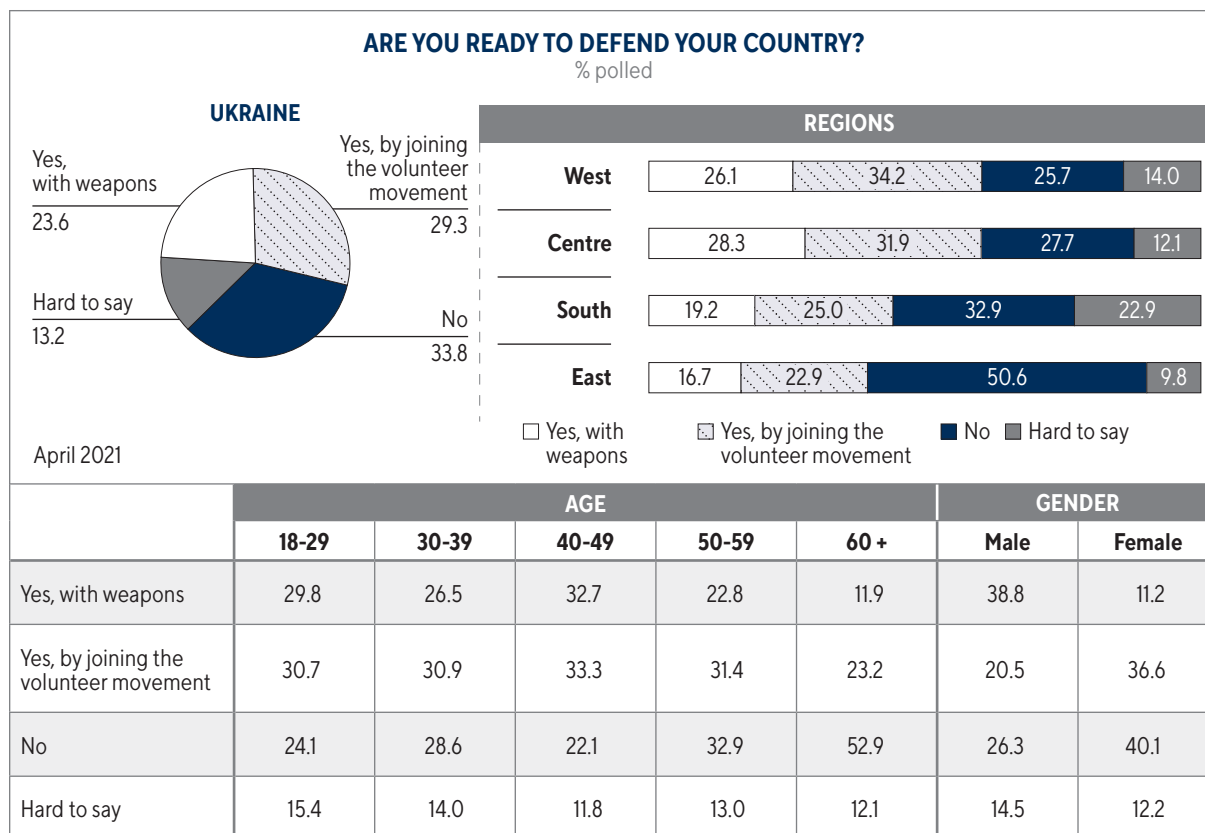
supporters count on the EU and NATO assistance, whereas only 4% of their opponents share the same expectations. Similarly, the opponents of NATO membership are very pessimistic about the assistance from the United States (4%) and broad international community (11%). It should be noted, however, that these pessimists largely prefer the «itself» option (73%) rather than other alternatives such as help from Russia (8%) or help from CIS and CSTO countries (12%).

It is likely that such assessments have somewhat influenced the respondents' responses about their willingness to defend the country. More than half of respondents confirmed their readiness to defend Ukraine either with weapons (24% in total, including 39% of men and 11% of women) or by providing volunteer support (29%, including 21% of men and 37% of women). Readiness to defend the country is high even among senior citizens. The only exception are respondents' answers from the eastern region, where the share of people who are ready to defend the country (17% with weapons, and 23% as

volunteers) is lower than the total of those who answered «No» (51%), although 57% of respondents in the region believe that Ukraine should count on itself in the event of a military threat.

Expectation of solidarity from international partners certainly implies mutual readiness to help partners in need. A relative majority of respondents (46%) support the possibility of Ukraine providing military assistance (in line with the international law) to other countries that have suffered armed aggression. This sense of solidarity shared by a larger part of society is an important condition for possible political decisions on Ukraine's fulfilment of allied (partner) obligations. It should be borne in mind that 35% of respondents support conditional neutrality; moreover, most respondents in the East (47%) reject the idea of providing military assistance to other countries in the case of aggression.

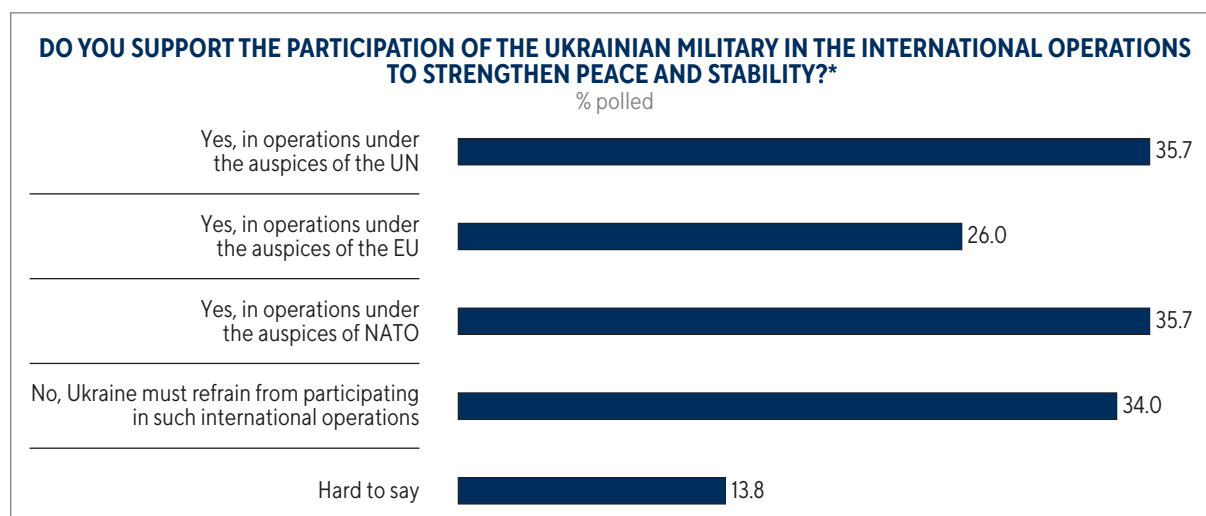
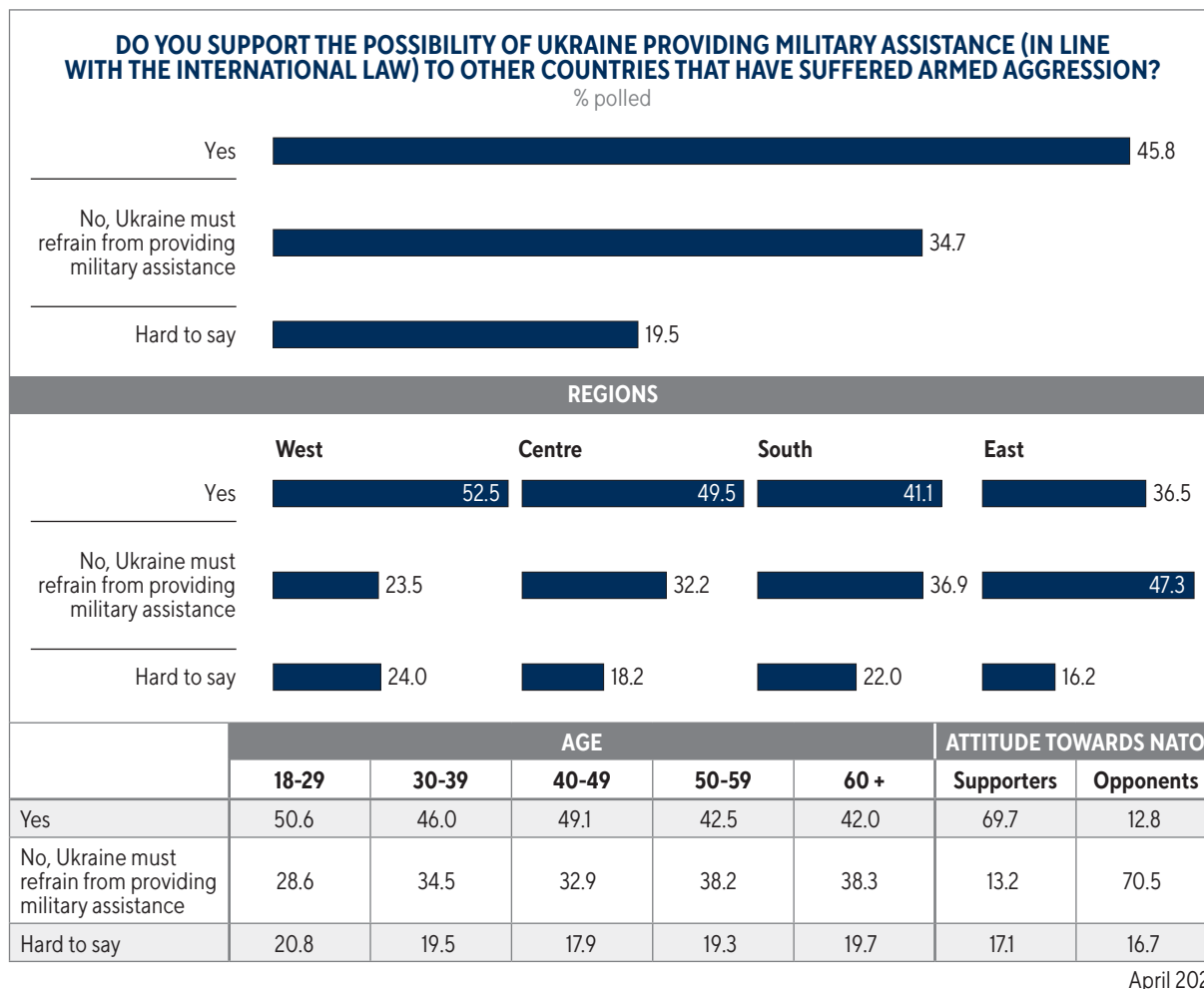
Across all age categories, the share of positive responses generally prevails and is highest among respondents aged 18-29 (51%).





In this regard, supporters and opponents of joining NATO take radically opposite positions. The possibility of providing military assistance to other countries is widely supported by 70% of NATO supporters and only by 13% of opponents.

Most respondents also support the participation of the Ukrainian military in international operations to strengthen peace and stability under the auspices of the UN or NATO (36%) and under the EU leadership (26%). One in three Ukrainians (34%)



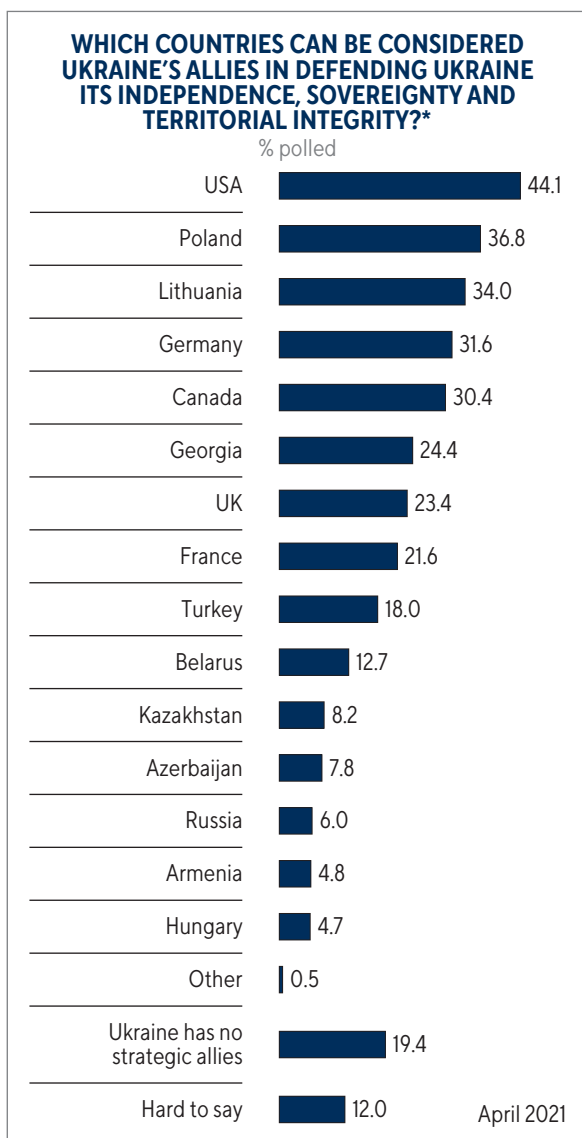
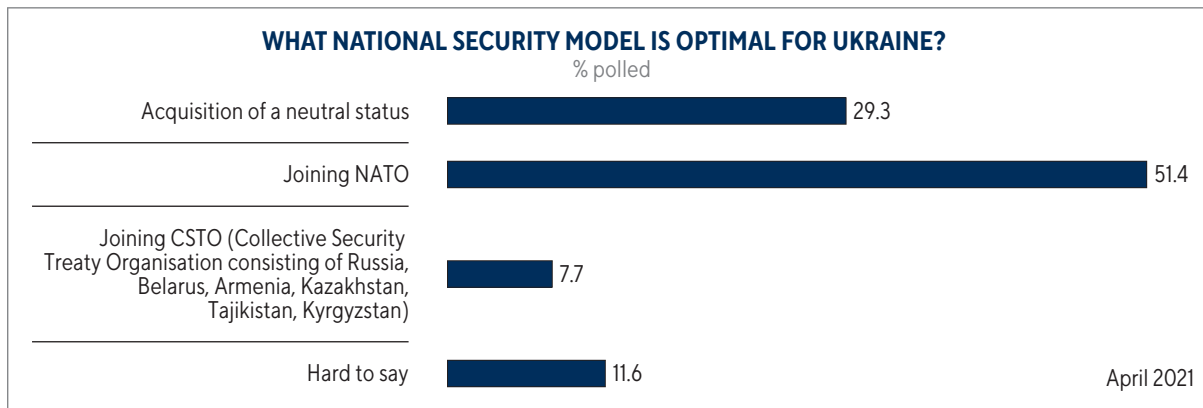
\* All relevant options.

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believes that Ukraine should refrain from participating in such international missions and operations.

Speaking of the optimal national security model for Ukraine, most respondents (51%)

opt to join NATO and slightly less than one-third (29%) prefer non-aligned status. The CSTO (Russia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan) as an alternative to NATO has only 8% of supporters.



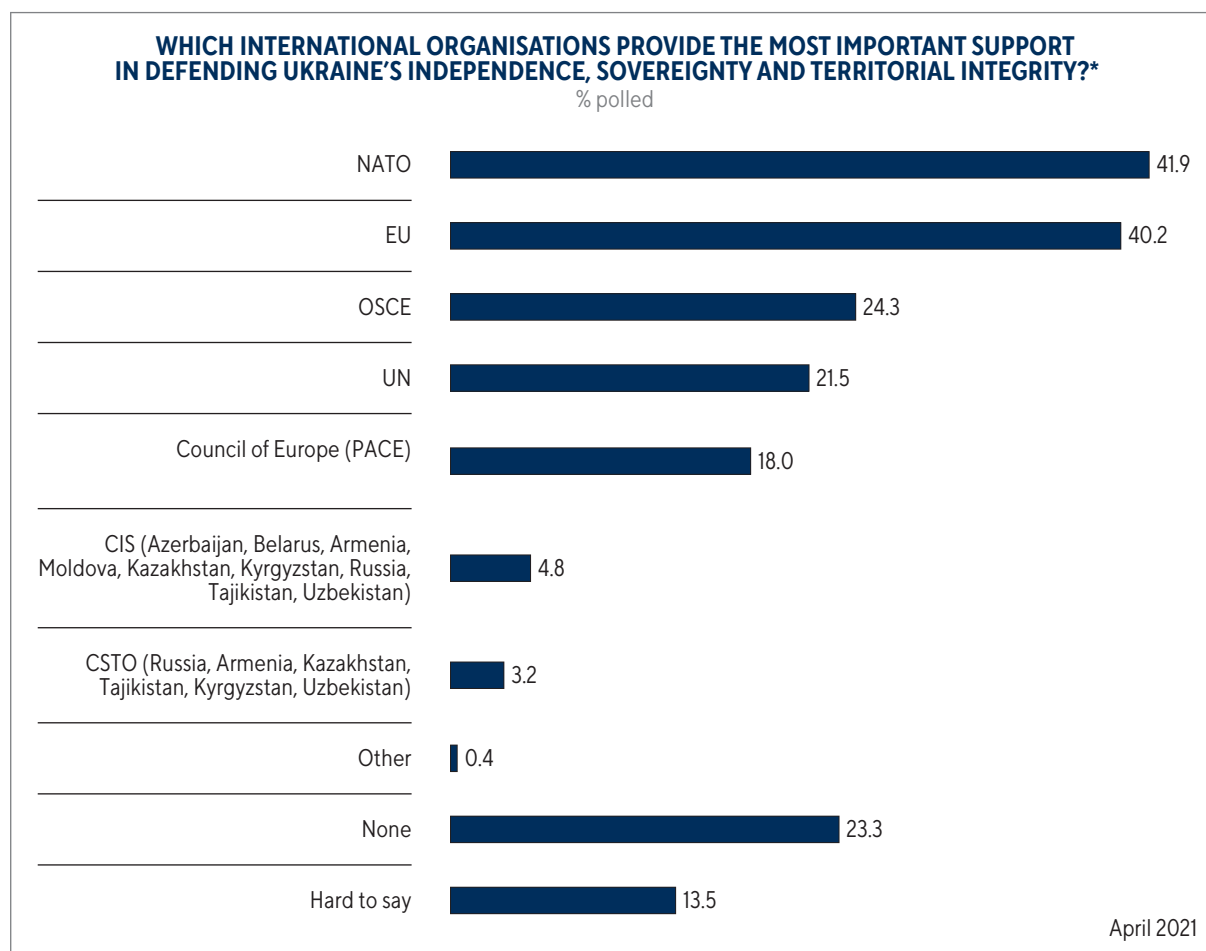
\* All relevant options.

The choice in favour of a particular alliance is apparently explained by citizen's attitude to its individual members and their perception as allies of Ukraine. Virtually all countries that have gained the highest ratings as Ukraine's allies are NATO members. The top three include the United States (44%), Poland (37%) and Lithuania (34%). Meanwhile, only 5% of respondents consider Hungary an ally, despite its NATO membership.

NATO (42%) and the EU (40%) are the leaders of the popular rating of international organisations providing the most important support in defending Ukraine's independence. Public appreciation of the OSCE (24%), the UN (22%) and the Council of Europe/PACE (18%) support is notably lower, whereas the assessment of support from the CIS (5%) and the CSTO (3%) countries is basically a recognition of its absence (Diagram «Which international organisations provide the most important support in defending Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity?», p.19).

Assessment of the importance of NATO support to Ukraine could probably be higher if respondents were better informed about it.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> NATO's Support to Ukraine: Brief Guide, East European Security Research Initiative, 2020p., [https://eesri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/NATO\\_Support\\_Ukraine\\_2020\\_brochure\\_EESRI\\_UKR\\_web.pdf](https://eesri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/NATO_Support_Ukraine_2020_brochure_EESRI_UKR_web.pdf). Comprehensive assistance package for Ukraine, NATO Public Diplomacy Division – press and media service, October 2016, [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2016\\_10/20161017\\_1610-compreh-ass-package-ukrain.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2016_10/20161017_1610-compreh-ass-package-ukrain.pdf).



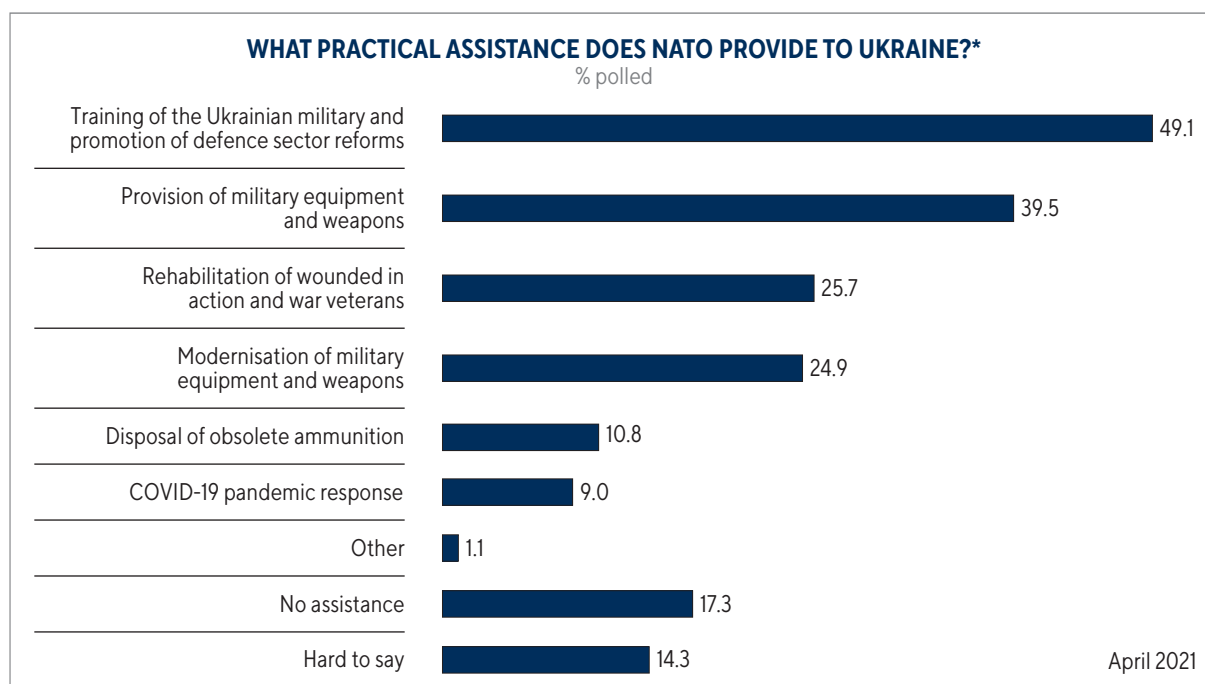
\*All relevant options.

Judging from responses on specific areas of assistance, about half of the respondents know about NATO's assistance in training the Ukrainian military and promoting defence sector reforms (49%). Somewhat fewer respondents are aware of the provision of military equipment and weapons (40%); rehabilitation of wounded in action and war veterans (26%); assistance in modernisation of military equipment and weapons (25%). At the same time, only one in ten respondents knows about the Alliance's practical assistance in disposal of obsolete ammunition (11%) and in COVID-19 pandemic response (9%). 14.3% of respondents could not answer the question, and 17% stated about the absence of any practical assistance (Diagram «*What practical assistance does NATO provide to Ukraine?*», p.20).

To sum up, the fact that 48% of respondents consider NATO an ally is a kind of recognition of the importance of the Alliance's support for Ukraine. For 38% of respondents, NATO is neither ally nor enemy, and only 7% view NATO as an enemy (Diagram «*For Ukraine, NATO is...*», p.20).

For most Ukrainians, NATO is either a defence bloc (48%) or a peacekeeping organisation (17%) in the first place, and only 22.4% consider the Alliance an aggressive military bloc.<sup>9</sup> The biggest differences between the shares of positive (defence alliance, peacekeeping organisation) and negative (aggressive military bloc) opinions are regional, but the number of NATO critics even in the East and South (34% and 32.4% respectively) is still lower than the number of those

<sup>9</sup> It should be added that in 2002-2008, the share of Ukrainians who viewed NATO as an aggressive military bloc was 2-3 times higher, and the percentage of those considering it a defence alliance was 2-3 times lower. See: The information component of European and Euro-Atlantic integration: Public opinion. – National Security and Defence, No.1, 2008, p.59, [www.razumkov.org.ua/uploads/journal/ukr/NSD95\\_2008\\_ukr.pdf](http://www.razumkov.org.ua/uploads/journal/ukr/NSD95_2008_ukr.pdf).



\*All relevant options.



sharing positive view of the Alliance. Positive assessments of NATO's nature also dominate across all age groups. Even senior respondents aged 60+ are more likely to view NATO as a defence alliance (44%) and a peacekeeping organisation (14%) than as an aggressive military bloc (27%). Differences in the views of women and men in this regard are insignificant (Diagram «*What is NATO in the first place?*», p.21).

Ukrainians highly appreciate NATO's global role. More specifically, 45% of respondents assess NATO's influence on the political situation in the world as positive, and 19% as negative (Diagram «*Is NATO's influence on the political situation in the world positive or negative?*», p.21).

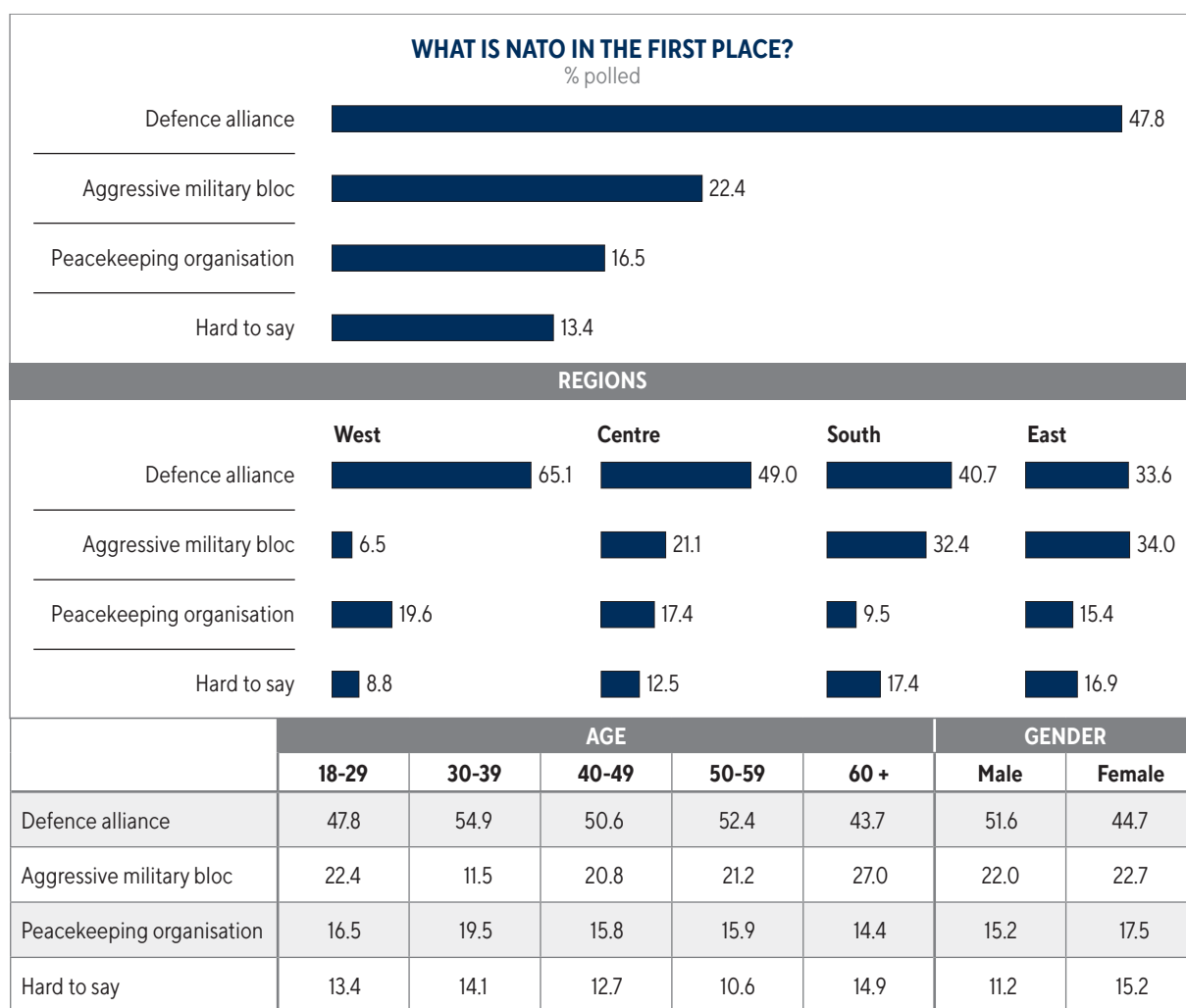
Ukrainians mostly associate NATO with security (6.6 points on a 10-point scale),

peace (6.32), democracy (5.86), stability (5.84) and well-being (5.28).<sup>10</sup> Regardless of the respondents' age, «security» ranks first in the conditional rating of associations. The rating of other concepts remains virtually unchanged in different age categories. Respondents in the South are more likely to associate NATO with war (5.9), peace (5.8) and security (5.7), and in the East – with world domination (5.7), war (5.3), security and democracy (5.1 points each). NATO's association with well-being is the lowest in both regions (4.4 and 4.2, respectively).

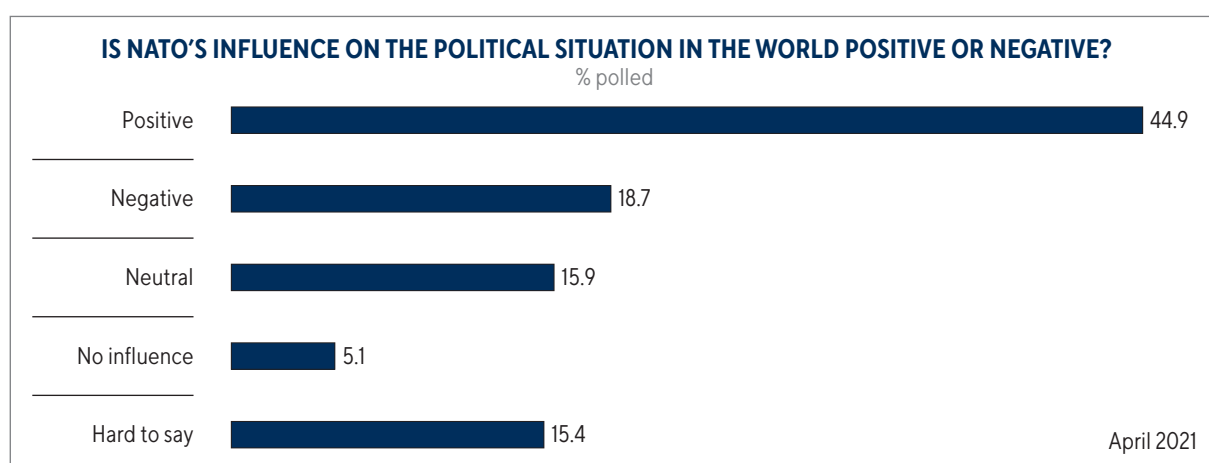
Associations with the Alliance are the most contrasting among supporters and opponents of NATO accession. Polarisation and strength of relevant associations between supporters and opponents point at the impact of emotional factors on their views. Supporters strongly associate NATO with security, peace,

<sup>10</sup> Based on a scale from 0 to 10, where «0» means «not associated at all», and «10» means «strongly associated».



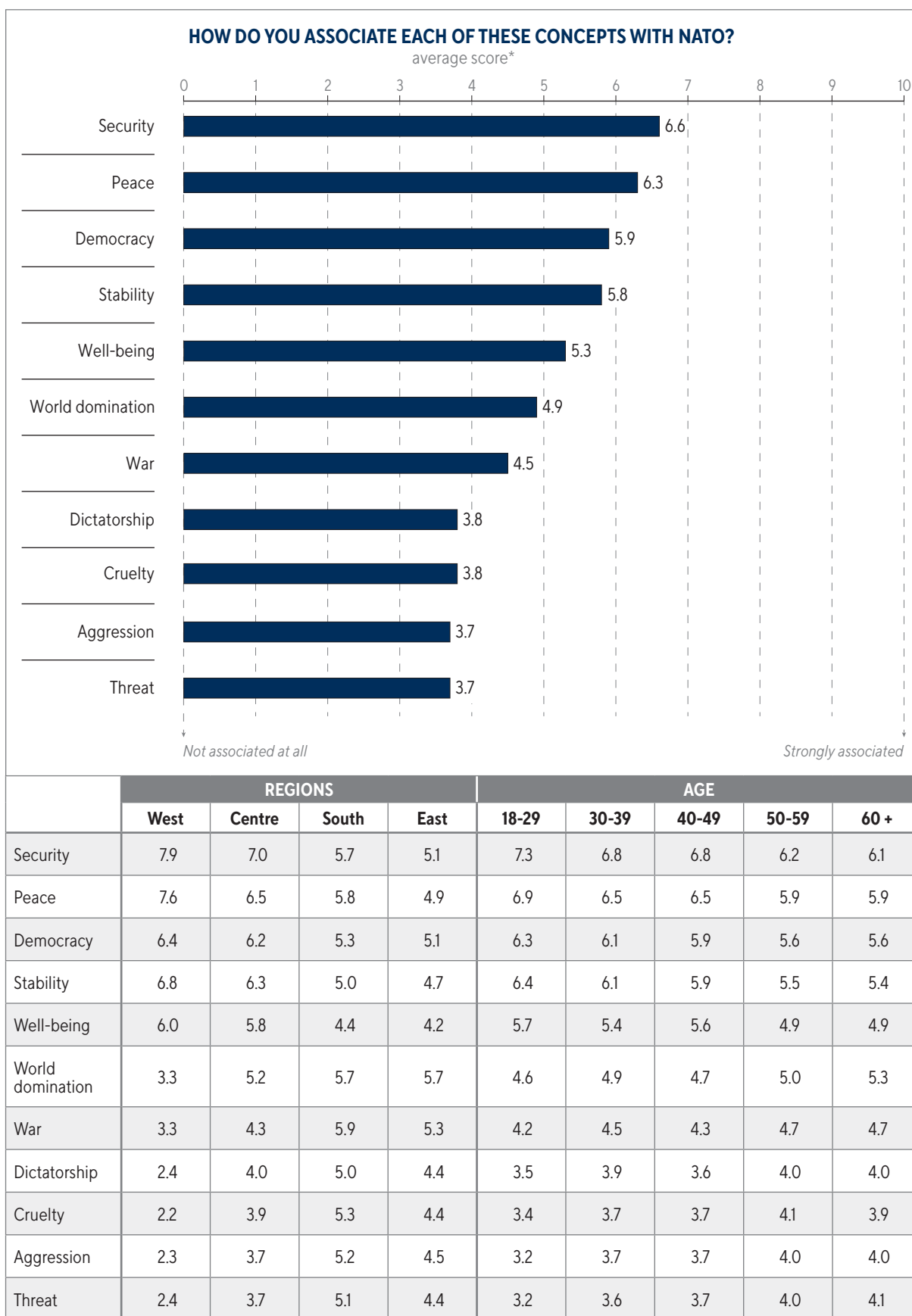


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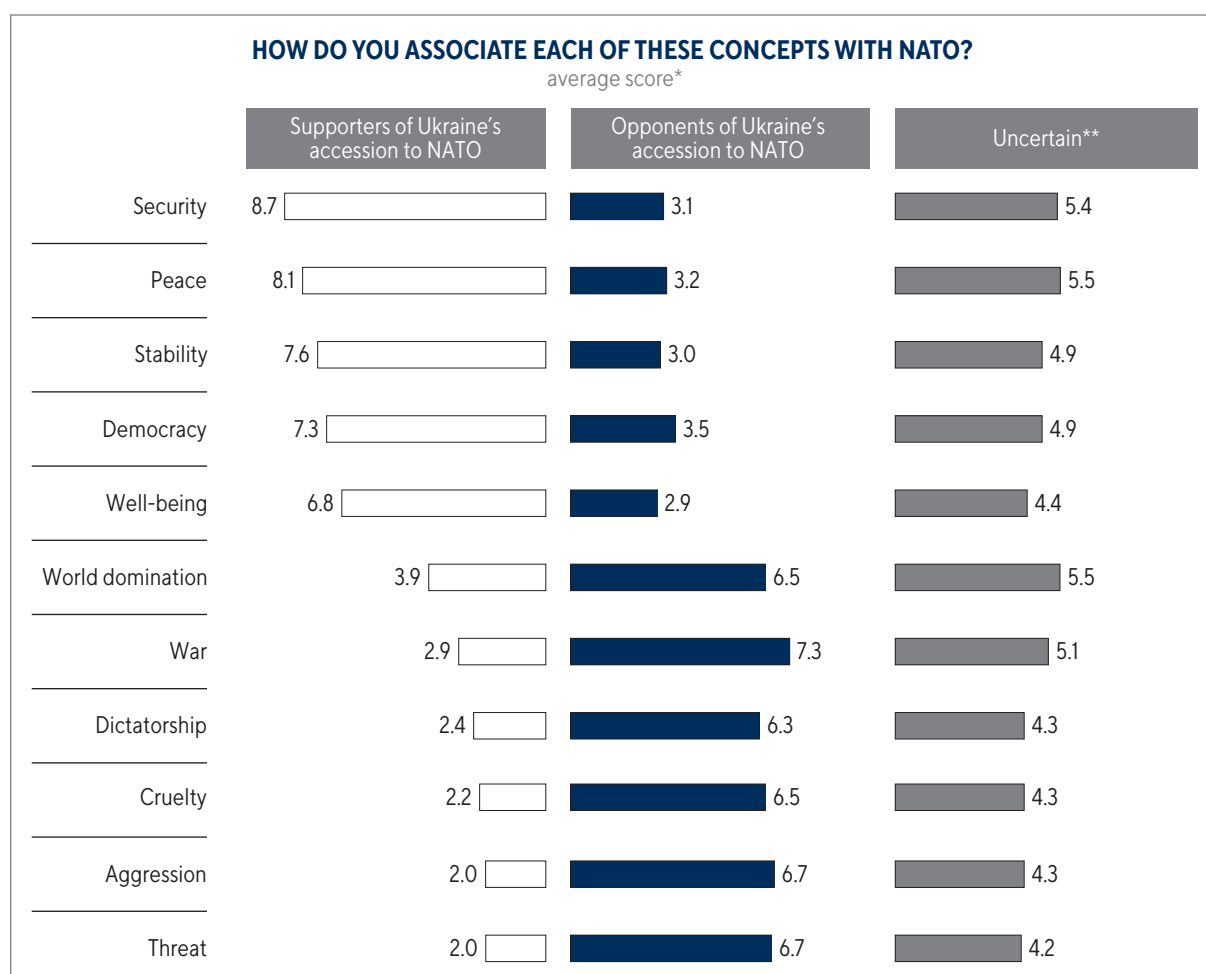
stability, democracy, and well-being (8.7 to 6.8 points). Instead, opponents associate the Alliance with war (7.3 points), aggression and threat (6.7 points each), world domination and cruelty (6.5 points each). Respondents with no distinct position on NATO accession

demonstrate less strong and more diverse associations with the Alliance, such as peace and world domination (5.5 points each), security (5.4) and war (5.1) (Diagram «How do you associate each of these concepts with NATO?», p.22-23).



\* Based on a scale from 0 to 10, where «0» means «not associated at all», and «10» means «strongly associated».

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\* Based on a scale from 0 to 10, where «0» means «not associated at all», and «10» means «strongly associated».

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\*\* Respondents who answered «hard to say» when asked «If a referendum on Ukraine's accession to NATO took place in the near future, would you participate?»

Ukrainians generally believe in the reliability of collective security guarantees for NATO members, but with some reservations. So, 30% of respondents think that in the event of an attack on one member, all NATO members will immediately come to the rescue, and another 31% believe that this is likely to be the case, but national governments should bear the primary responsibility for security and defence. The remaining respondents either think that NATO members will not risk the lives of their citizens for the security of Allies (28%) or find it difficult to answer (11%) (Diagram «Do you believe in the reliability of collective security guarantees for NATO members?», p.24).

When sharing their views on the level of protection of Central and Eastern European countries from external aggression, 47% of respondents consider it higher for NATO members, and 26% consider it the same

regardless of membership. Only 5% of respondents believe that the level of protection of non-NATO countries is higher compared to NATO members. Supporters of this view are in the absolute minority, regardless of age and region (Diagram «In Central and Eastern Europe, there are states that are both NATO members and non-NATO countries. Which countries offer higher level of protection from external aggression?», p.24).

For surveyed Ukrainians, the link between NATO membership of Central and Eastern European countries and the level of democracy (38%), quality of life (38%) and socio-political stability (40.3%) is slightly weaker. This primarily concerns responses collected in the South and East of Ukraine. Instead, about half of those surveyed in western Ukraine recognise the link between NATO membership and a higher level of democracy,

### DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE RELIABILITY OF COLLECTIVE SECURITY GUARANTEES FOR NATO MEMBERS?

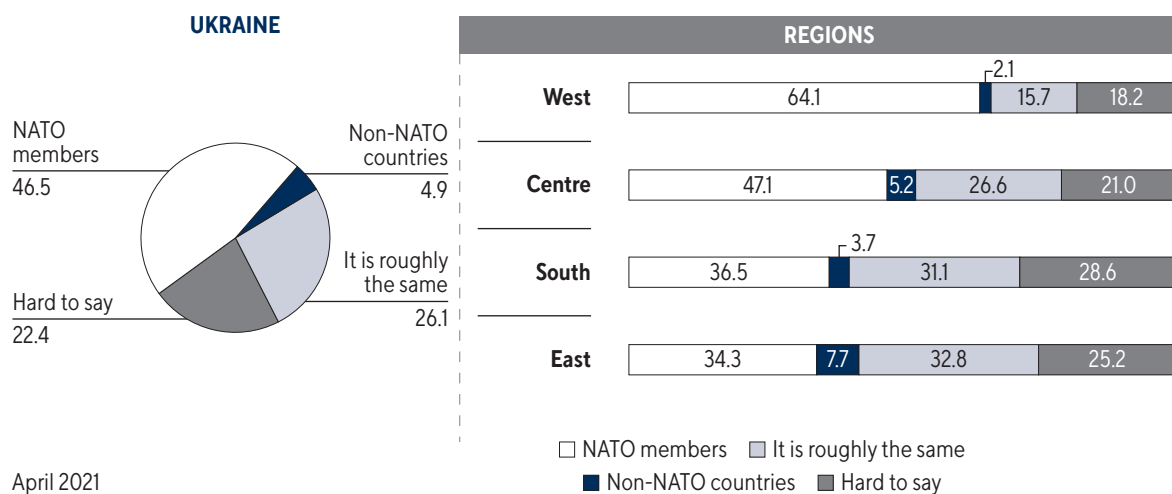
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### IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE, THERE ARE STATES THAT ARE BOTH NATO MEMBERS AND NON-NATO COUNTRIES. IN YOUR OPINION, WHICH COUNTRIES OFFER HIGHER LEVEL OF PROTECTION FROM EXTERNAL AGGRESSION?

% polled



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	AGE				
	18-29	30-39B	40-49	50-59	60 +
NATO members	51.8	45.9	50.0	43.4	42.7
Non-NATO countries	2.7	6.5	5.6	5.2	5.0
It is roughly the same	22.7	26.9	27.4	29.0	25.6
Hard to say	22.7	20.7	17.1	22.4	26.7

life and stability. Only a very small proportion of respondents (4-7%) believe that non-aligned countries of Central and Eastern Europe are more democratic, prosperous and stable

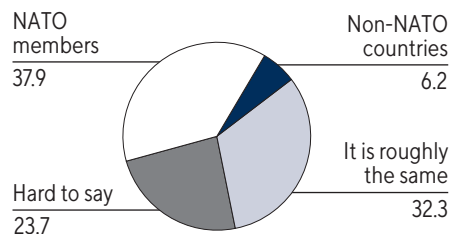
than NATO members (Diagram «Which Central and Eastern European countries have higher level of democracy/higher quality of life / better socio-political stability?», p.25-26).



### WHICH CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES HAVE HIGHER LEVEL OF DEMOCRACY?

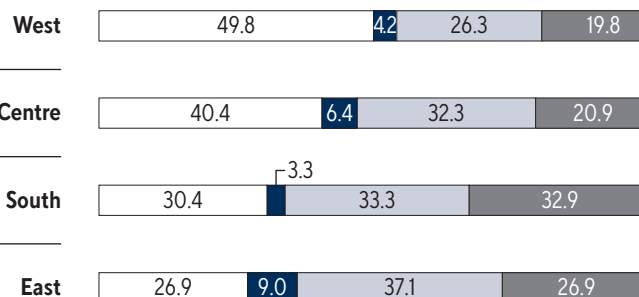
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#### REGIONS



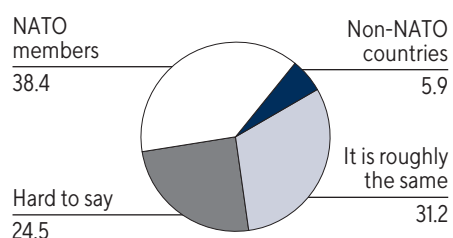
□ NATO members    □ It is roughly the same  
■ Non-NATO countries    ■ Hard to say

	AGE				
	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
NATO members	42.0	37.7	42.2	33.9	34.5
Non-NATO countries	4.4	6.2	5.3	8.3	6.9
It is roughly the same	28.3	35.6	34.2	33.3	31.2
Hard to say	25.4	20.5	18.3	24.4	27.5

### WHICH CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES HAVE HIGHER QUALITY OF LIFE?

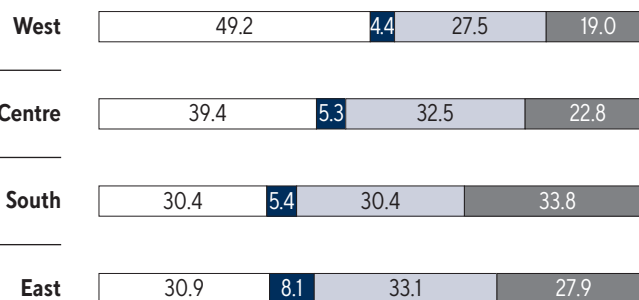
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#### UKRAINE



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#### REGIONS



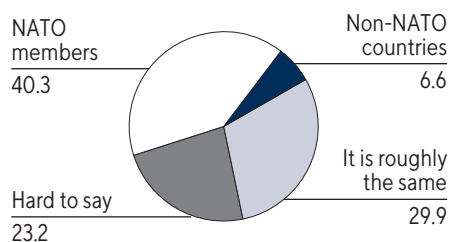
□ NATO members    □ It is roughly the same  
■ Non-NATO countries    ■ Hard to say

	AGE				
	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
NATO members	44.1	37.6	42.4	34.5	34.7
Non-NATO countries	3.9	6.2	4.7	7.8	6.7
It is roughly the same	25.9	33.9	35.0	31.6	30.6
Hard to say	26.1	22.3	17.9	26.1	28.0

### WHICH CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES HAVE BETTER SOCIO-POLITICAL STABILITY?

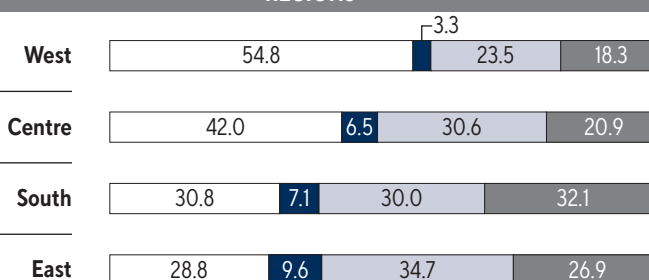
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#### UKRAINE



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#### REGIONS



□ NATO members    □ It is roughly the same  
■ Non-NATO countries    ■ Hard to say

	AGE				
	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
NATO members	43.2	41.3	44.7	36.8	36.6
Non-NATO countries	5.1	7.8	4.1	8.6	7.2
It is roughly the same	26.3	31.4	35.0	27.3	29.9
Hard to say	25.4	19.5	16.2	27.3	26.2

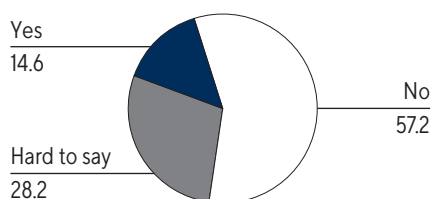
People's confidence in the presence of a direct link between NATO membership and the country's protection from external aggression is further confirmed by the assumption of

a hypothetical possibility to avoid the annexation of Crimea (57% of respondents) and the war in the Donbas (57%) if Ukraine was a NATO member at that time.

### IF UKRAINE WAS A NATO MEMBER IN 2014, WOULD RUSSIA HAVE ANNEXED CRIMEA?

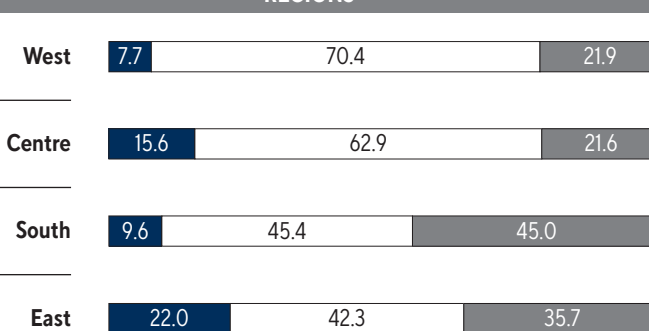
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#### UKRAINE



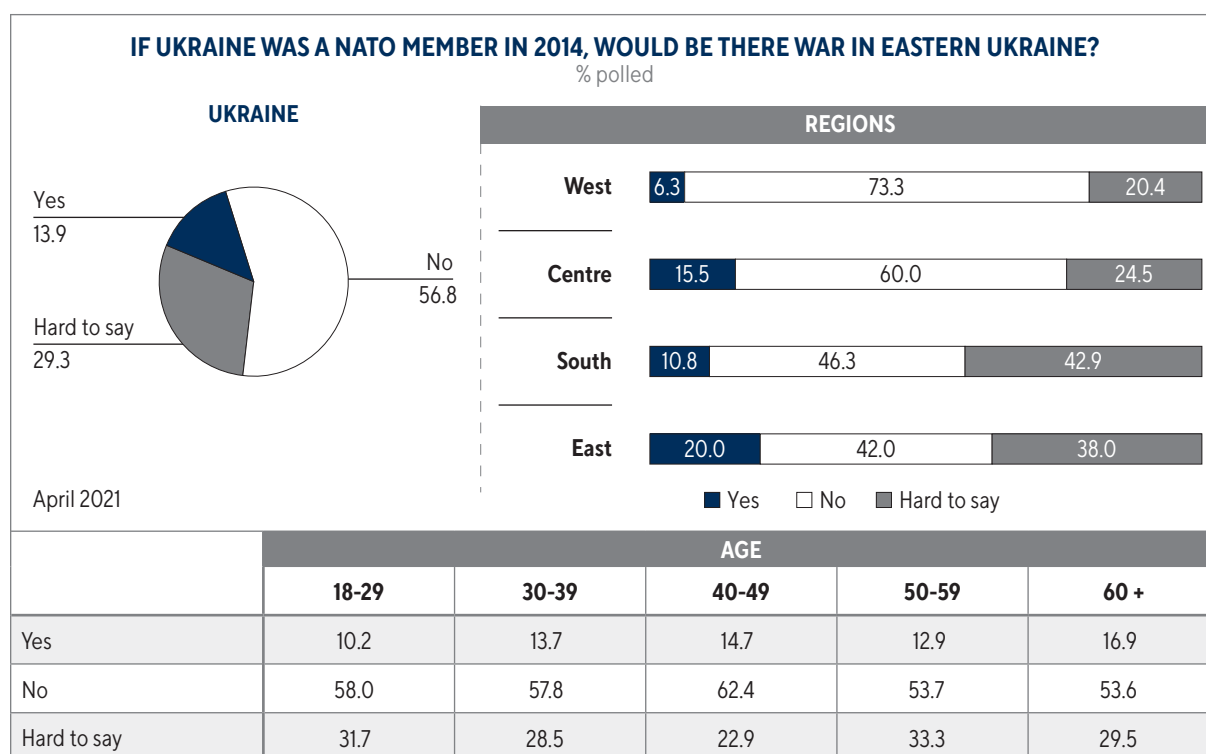
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#### REGIONS



■ Yes    □ No    ■ Hard to say

	AGE				
	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Yes	9.3	13.7	15.2	14.7	19.1
No	61.0	59.6	63.0	52.6	51.7
Hard to say	29.8	26.7	21.7	32.8	29.2



Despite significant regional and age variations, it is necessary to note the prevalence of those who actually acknowledged the likely benefits of NATO membership. This question was particularly difficult for respondents living in the South and East, as 40% of them could not answer it. Close to 20% of respondents in the East and about 10% in the South believe that those events were inevitable. However, more than 40% of residents of these regions think that both annexation and war could be avoided if Ukraine was a NATO member back in 2014.

The motives of personal gain or loss from joining NATO play an important but somewhat smaller role for Ukrainians, compared to the country's potential benefits. The number of those expecting personal gains from NATO membership (37%) is slightly higher than the number of those fearing losses (25%). Regional differences seem to reflect NATO-specific trends in each region. Comparison of responses in different age categories shows the most pessimistic expectations among respondents aged 60+. It is noteworthy that many respondents (38%) could not assess own potential gains or losses at all. Probably, most respondents have never thought

about it (Diagram «Are you personally likely to win or lose if Ukraine joins NATO?», p.28).

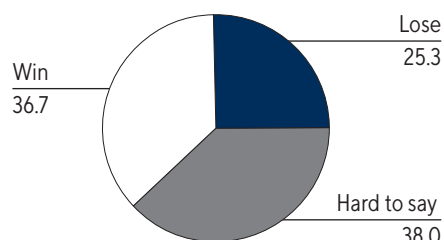
The positions of supporters and opponents of NATO accession are polar opposite, as 64% of supporters and 4% of opponents answered positively about personal win. A significant share of those who could not answer this question (32%) is something common for both categories.

It was much easier for respondents to assess the consequences of NATO membership for Ukraine in general, as evidenced by half as many answers «hard to say» (21%) compared to the previous question. The share of those believing that Ukraine will win from joining NATO (50%) significantly exceeds the share of those holding the opposite view (30%) and is much higher than the assessment of expected personal gain (37%). Absolutely opposite and even more pronounced are the differences in the positions of supporters and opponents of NATO accession. The vast majority of NATO supporters (87%) are confident in Ukraine's win, and 76% of their opponents think otherwise (Diagram «Is Ukraine likely to win or lose from joining NATO?», p.28).

### ARE YOU PERSONALLY LIKELY TO WIN OR LOSE IF UKRAINE JOINS NATO?

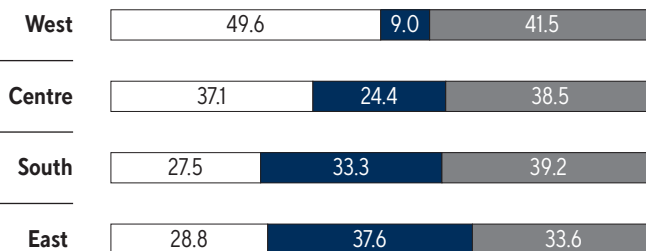
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#### UKRAINE



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#### REGIONS



□ Win ■ Lose ■ Hard to say

	AGE					GENDER		ATTITUDE TOWARDS NATO	
	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +	Male	Female	Supporters	Opponents
Win	42.0	36.3	40.6	37.1	30.2	39.3	34.5	64.1	4.1
Lose	17.8	23.6	24.7	27.3	31.4	25.5	25.2	4.0	63.3
Hard to say	40.2	40.2	34.7	35.6	38.4	35.2	40.3	31.8	32.5

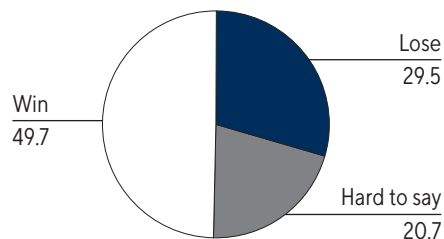
% of respondents depending on region of residence and age

		18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Western and Central regions	Win	45.5	44.3	45.8	41.5	34.8
	Lose	12.8	17.4	15.3	23.6	23.2
	Hard to say	41.7	38.3	38.9	34.9	42.1
Southern and Eastern regions	Win	35.4	24.4	31.2	30.1	23.2
	Lose	27.1	32.7	41.6	33.1	44.5
	Hard to say	37.5	42.9	27.2	36.8	32.2

### IS UKRAINE LIKELY TO WIN OR LOSE FROM JOINING NATO?

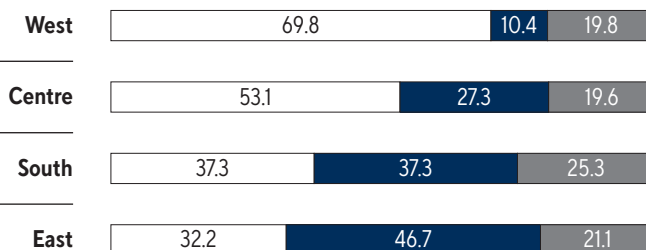
% polled

#### UKRAINE



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#### REGIONS



□ Win ■ Lose ■ Hard to say

	AGE					GENDER		ATTITUDE TOWARDS NATO	
	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +	Male	Female	Supporters	Opponents
Win	58.0	49.5	53.5	48.0	42.2	51.8	48.0	86.9	2.4
Lose	20.5	27.5	30.6	31.3	36.1	30.5	28.7	3.5	75.9
Hard to say	21.5	23.1	15.9	20.7	21.7	17.7	23.3	9.6	21.7

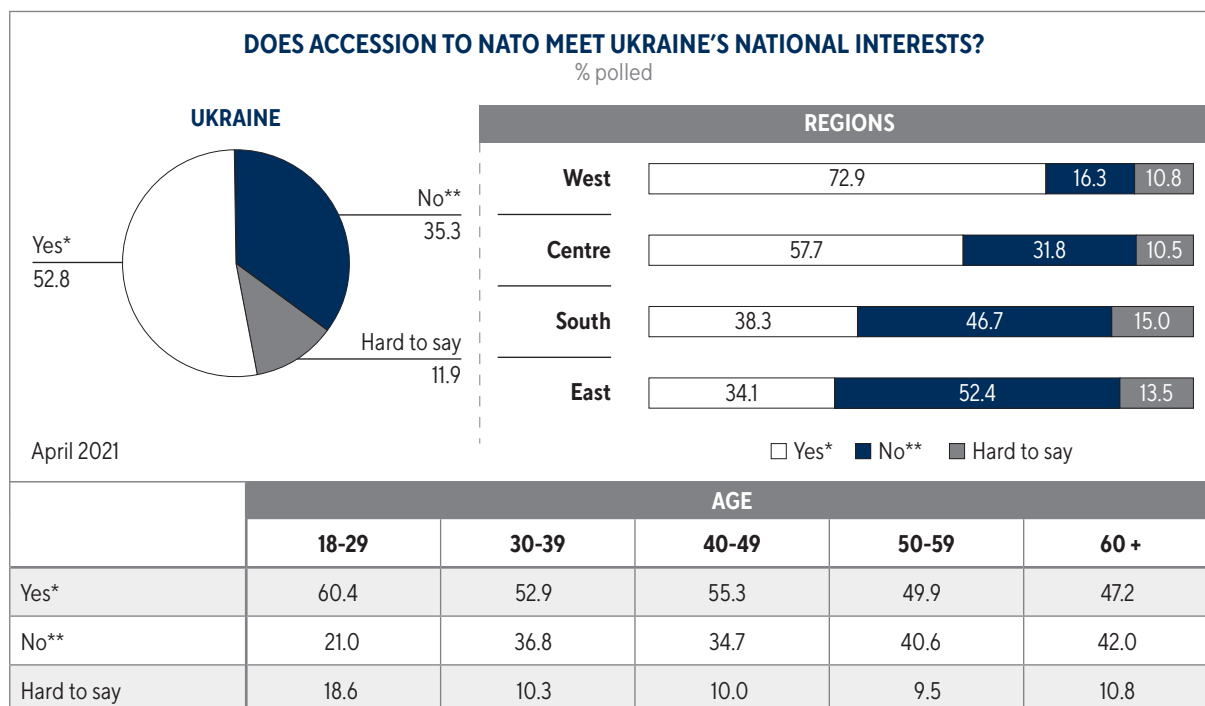
For the vast majority of Ukrainians (53%), accession to NATO meets Ukraine's national interests (31% – yes, 22% – rather yes than no), whereas 35% hold the opposite view (18% – no, 17% – rather no than yes). Even greater division is observed across the regions. If the share of positive responses dominates in the West and in the Centre (73% and 58%, respectively), then people in the East (34% – yes and rather yes than no; 52% – no and rather no than yes) and in the South (38% – yes and rather yes than no; 47% – no and rather no than yes) are likely to support the opposite viewpoint. Meanwhile, the dominance of those agreeing that NATO membership meets Ukraine's national interests is observed in all age categories

Respondents' selection of all relevant options from the list of possible consequences of Ukraine's accession to NATO demonstrates a significant understanding of both possible risks and positive expectations by the public. Some indicators also confirm the persistence of myths of anti-NATO propaganda (such as increased defence spending and forced participation in military operations in the interests of the West).

According to most respondents, NATO membership may worsen Ukraine's relations

with Russia and other CIS countries (71%), increase defence spending (70%) and force Ukrainian soldiers to participate in West's military operations (65%). This view clearly goes beyond the group of NATO opponents. However, expectations of positive consequences are also quite high, as accession to NATO should contribute to the national security and defence reform (65% of respondents), promote the development of Ukraine's defence industry (62%), provide security guarantees (59%) and increase Ukraine's international authority (56%). About half of respondents believe that NATO membership will accelerate Ukraine's integration into the EU (48%) and attract foreign investors (46%) (Diagram «What will be the consequences of accession to NATO for Ukraine?», p.30).

If the previous questions are mostly hypothetical, then responses on NATO's requirements for a new member are intended to test the respondents' knowledge. It should be noted that some suggested answers are indeed membership requirements, while others are imaginary problems of NATO membership. So, according to the vast majority of respondents, in the event of Ukraine's accession, NATO will bring forward the following demands: full transfer of armaments to NATO standards (79%), mandatory



\* Sum of answers «yes» and «rather yes than no».

\*\* Sum of answers «no» and «rather no than yes».

## WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF ACCESSION TO NATO FOR UKRAINE?

% polled

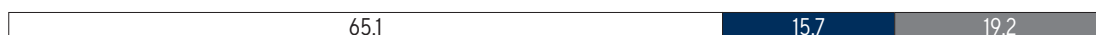
**Worsen Ukraine's relations with Russia and other CIS countries**



**Increase defence spending**



**Force Ukrainian soldiers to participate in military operations in the interests of the West**



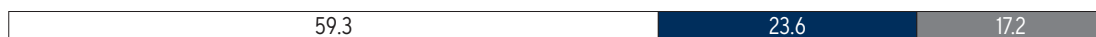
**Contribute to the national security and defence reform**



**Promote the development of Ukraine's defence and industrial complex**



**Provide security guarantees for Ukraine**



**Increase Ukraine's international authority**



**Accelerate Ukraine's integration into the EU**



**Attract foreign investors to the country**



**Promote the development of democracy, rights and freedoms of citizens**



**Exacerbate tensions in Ukrainian society**



**Lead to the loss of Ukraine's political independence**



**Make Ukraine a target for terrorists**



**Damage Ukraine's defence capabilities**



□ Yes   ■ No   ■ Hard to say

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participation of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in NATO military operations (75%), deployment of NATO military bases on the territory of Ukraine (74%), adherence to principles of democracy, rule of law, human rights and social justice (51%), adherence to principles of economic freedom and market economy (50%) (Diagram «*What requirements will NATO have for Ukraine in the event of its accession?*», p.32-34).

One can observe some similarity between NATO supporters and opponents in giving wrong answers, although opponents are much more likely to answer incorrectly. On average, 10% more opponents believe that NATO will require mandatory participation in its military operations (84% of opponents, 71% of supporters), deployment of NATO military bases on the territory of Ukraine (82% of opponents, 70% of supporters) and significant increase in defence spending (80% of opponents, 69% of supporters). At the same time, there is a much smaller share of opponents who believe (know about NATO's requirements for new members) that the Alliance will demand adherence to principles of economic freedom and market economy (37% of opponents, 65% of supporters), adherence to principles of democracy, rule of law, human rights and social justice (30% of opponents, 71% of supporters), peaceful settlement of international, interethnic and regional conflicts (35% of opponents, 73% of supporters) and introduction of democratic civilian control over the Armed Forces (43% of opponents, 72% of supporters).

Differences in answers of respondents with varying assessment of their own awareness of certain issues are mostly insignificant, and

in some cases unfavourable for those who consider their level of knowledge high or average. For example, these respondents are more confident that NATO will require the deployment of military bases in Ukraine (82% with high and 77% with average level of knowledge) compared to those who have no such information (59%).

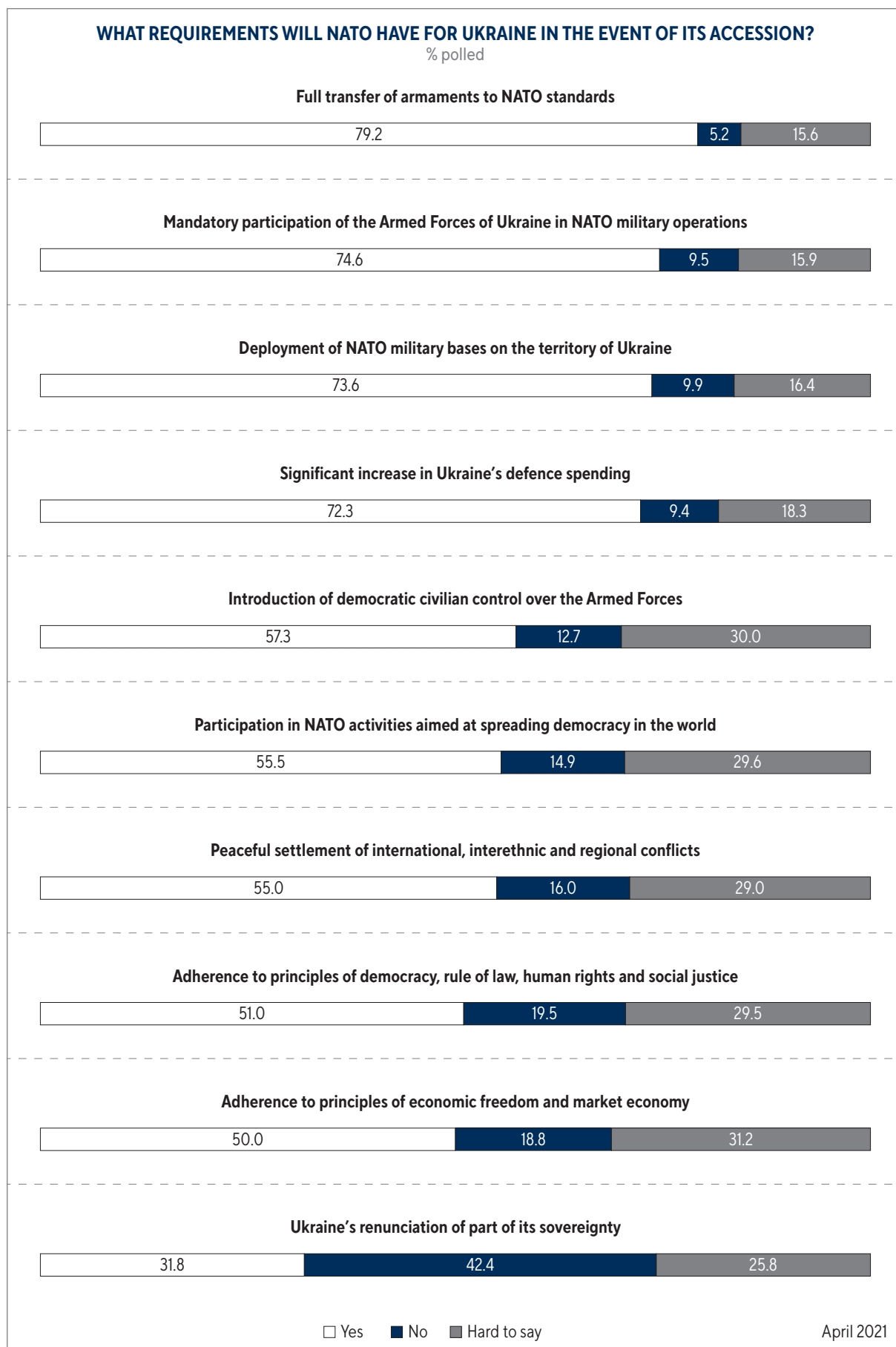
Arguments supporting the opposing views are largely explained by people's responses to the list of possible consequences of Ukraine joining NATO, separately developed by sociologists for each of these groups. NATO supporters believe that such a step will, above all, strengthen Ukraine's security (79%), help resist Russian aggression (63%) and enable modernisation of the Ukrainian army (38%). Therefore, supporters justify the importance of NATO membership mostly on the grounds of improving security (Diagram «*If you believe that Ukraine should join NATO, then why?*», p.35).

Interestingly, NATO opponents also explain their position by security reasons. They believe that joining NATO will further deepen the conflict with Russia (52%) and may drag Ukraine in NATO operations (43%). The next two reasons for Ukraine to refrain from joining NATO include the perception of NATO as an aggressive military bloc (35%) and the expediency of Ukraine's neutral/non-aligned status (Diagram «*If you are against Ukraine's accession to NATO, then why?*», p.35).

25% of surveyed Ukrainians believe that NATO should have a strong interest in Ukraine's membership, and another 39% consider such interest uncertain or partial, 18% of respondents feel that Alliance has no such interest (Diagram «*Do you think NATO is interested in Ukraine's accession?*», p.36).

NATO supporters and opponents have radical differences in opinions about the Alliance's interest in Ukraine as a potential member. Almost one-third of supporters (30%) believe that NATO does have such an interest (21% of opponents), and some 48% feel that NATO has «partial interest» (28% of opponents). And finally, 5% of supporters and 37% of opponents think that NATO is not interested in Ukraine's accession.

The attitude of Ukrainians to practical NATO-Ukraine cooperation irrespective of

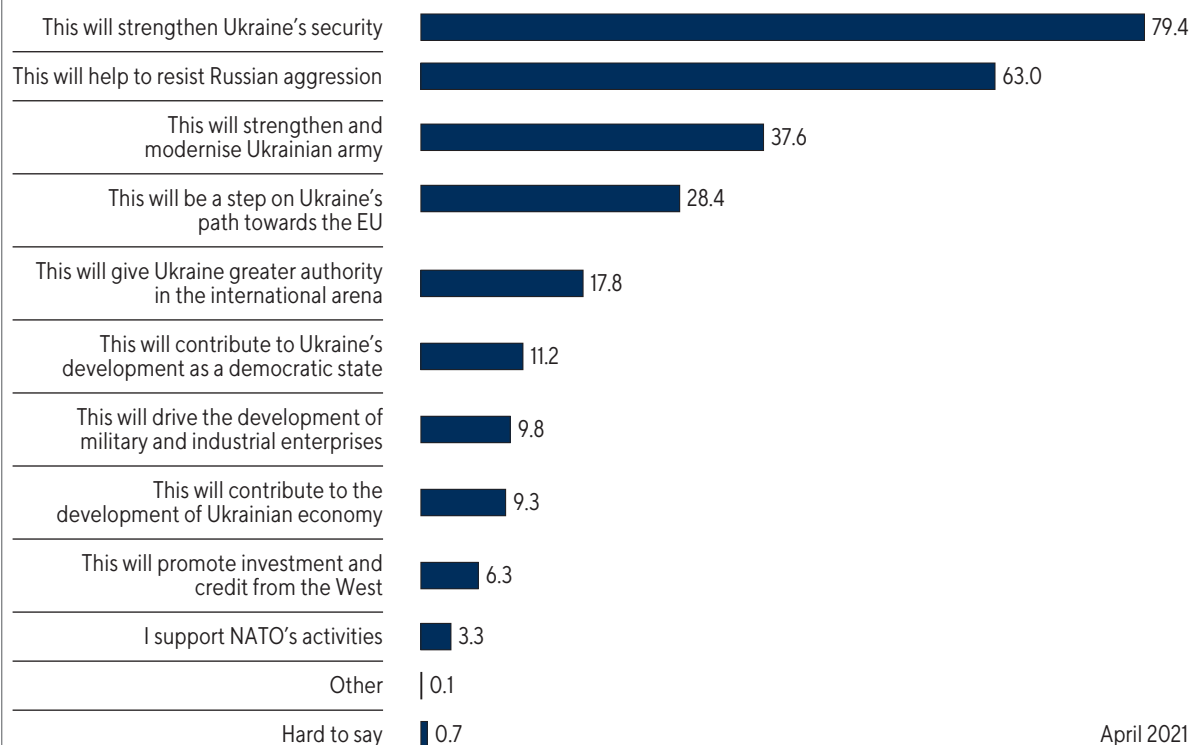


<b>WHAT REQUIREMENTS WILL NATO HAVE FOR UKRAINE IN THE EVENT OF ITS ACCESSION?</b>		
% polled depending on attitude towards NATO <span style="float: right;">(continued)</span>		
	<b>ATTITUDE TOWARDS NATO</b>	
	<b>Supporters of accession</b>	<b>Opponents of accession</b>
<b>Full transfer of armaments to NATO standards</b>		
Yes	84.4	76.6
No	4.3	7.0
Hard to say	11.2	16.4
<b>Mandatory participation of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in NATO military operations</b>		
Yes	71.1	83.9
No	12.5	6.8
Hard to say	16.4	9.2
<b>Deployment of NATO military bases on the territory of Ukraine</b>		
Yes	70.3	82.3
No	12.6	7.6
Hard to say	17.1	10.0
<b>Significant increase in Ukraine's defence spending</b>		
Yes	68.8	80.4
No	11.8	7.0
Hard to say	19.4	12.6
<b>Introduction of democratic civilian control over the Armed Forces</b>		
Yes	72.0	42.8
No	8.2	22.8
Hard to say	19.8	34.4
<b>Participation in NATO activities aimed at spreading democracy in the world</b>		
Yes	70.1	42.3
No	10.3	23.8
Hard to say	19.6	34.0
<b>Peaceful settlement of international, interethnic and regional conflicts</b>		
Yes	73.1	34.9
No	8.3	30.3
Hard to say	18.7	34.9
<b>Adherence to principles of democracy, rule of law, human rights and social justice</b>		
Yes	70.8	30.4
No	10.8	34.9
Hard to say	18.4	34.7
<b>Adherence to principles of economic freedom and market economy</b>		
Yes	64.9	37.1
No	12.2	30.4
Hard to say	22.8	32.5
<b>Ukraine's renunciation of part of its sovereignty</b>		
Yes	15.8	61.8
No	65.7	13.5
Hard to say	18.5	24.7

<b>WHAT REQUIREMENTS WILL NATO HAVE FOR UKRAINE IN THE EVENT OF ITS ACCESSION?</b>				
% polled depending on level of awareness about NATO <span style="float: right;">(continued)</span>				
	LEVEL OF AWARENESS			
	High	Average	Low	I have no information
Full transfer of armaments to NATO standards				
Yes	89.3	86.0	79.0	52.6
No	2.7	4.6	5.6	8.5
Hard to say	8.0	9.4	15.4	38.9
Mandatory participation of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in NATO military operations				
Yes	76.8	79.1	75.5	55.9
No	7.1	9.5	9.9	11.8
Hard to say	16.1	11.4	14.7	32.2
Deployment of NATO military bases on the territory of Ukraine				
Yes	82.0	76.7	74.7	58.8
No	4.5	9.8	10.5	11.8
Hard to say	13.5	13.4	14.8	29.4
Significant increase in Ukraine's defence spending				
Yes	67.6	74.6	75.3	59.2
No	12.6	11.4	7.3	10.0
Hard to say	19.8	14.0	17.4	30.8
Introduction of democratic civilian control over the Armed Forces				
Yes	65.8	65.1	55.9	35.1
No	17.1	12.9	11.0	16.6
Hard to say	17.1	21.9	33.1	48.3
Participation in NATO activities aimed at spreading democracy in the world				
Yes	66.7	63.2	53.2	35.8
No	15.3	13.6	16.4	16.0
Hard to say	18.0	23.2	30.4	48.1
Peaceful settlement of international, interethnic and regional conflicts				
Yes	63.1	61.1	54.9	32.2
No	18.9	16.6	15.0	18.5
Hard to say	18.0	22.3	30.2	49.3
Adherence to principles of democracy, rule of law, human rights and social justice				
Yes	64.9	56.4	50.1	31.8
No	21.6	20.4	17.9	22.3
Hard to say	13.5	23.2	31.9	46.0
Adherence to principles of economic freedom and market economy				
Yes	67.0	56.6	47.8	28.1
No	18.8	18.5	18.4	22.9
Hard to say	14.3	24.9	33.8	49.0
Ukraine's renunciation of part of its sovereignty				
Yes	40.5	28.9	34.7	31.3
No	45.0	53.9	36.8	19.9
Hard to say	14.4	17.2	28.6	48.8

### IF YOU BELIEVE THAT UKRAINE SHOULD JOIN NATO, THEN WHY?\*

% of respondents who fully or rather support Ukraine's accession to NATO

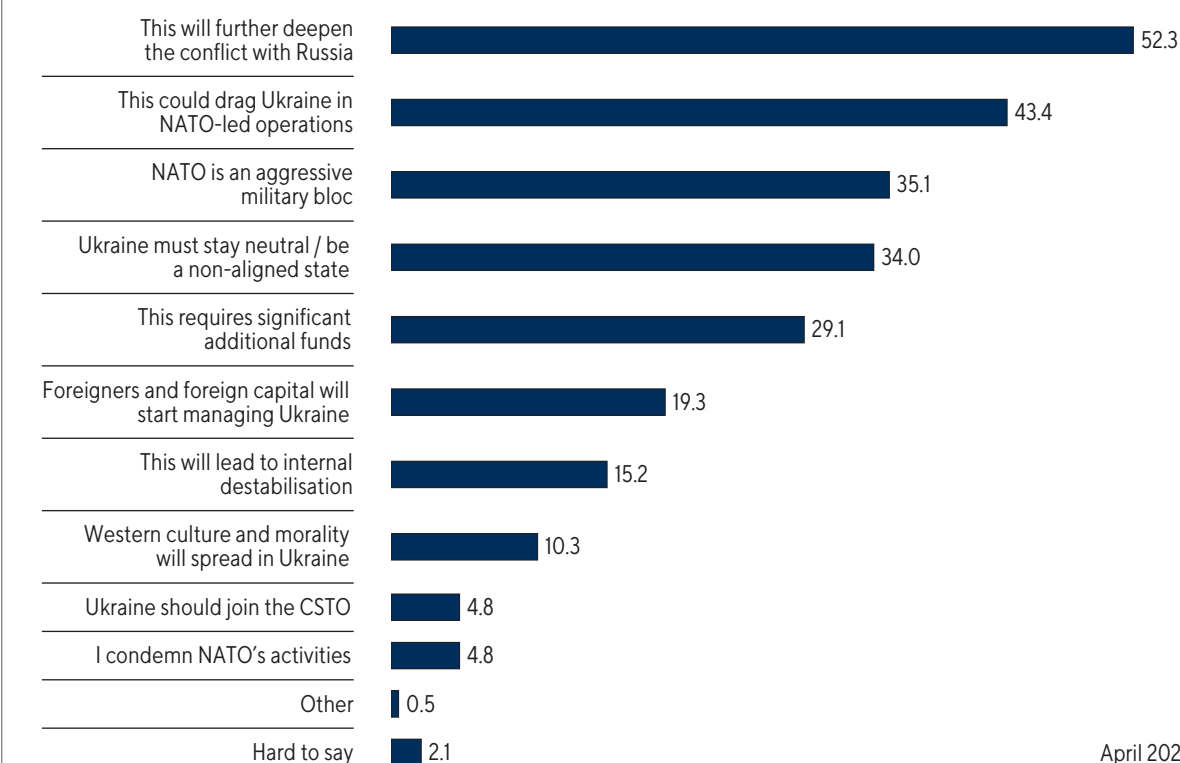


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\* No more than 3 options.

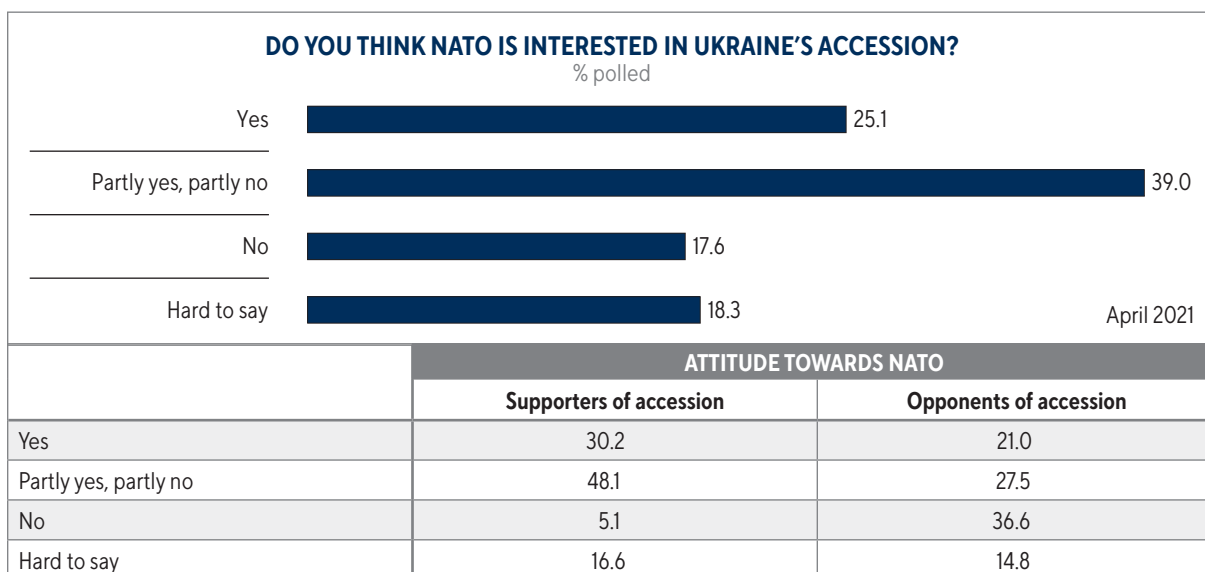
### IF YOU ARE AGAINST UKRAINE'S ACCESSION TO NATO, THEN WHY?\*

% of respondents who rather or do not support Ukraine's accession to NATO



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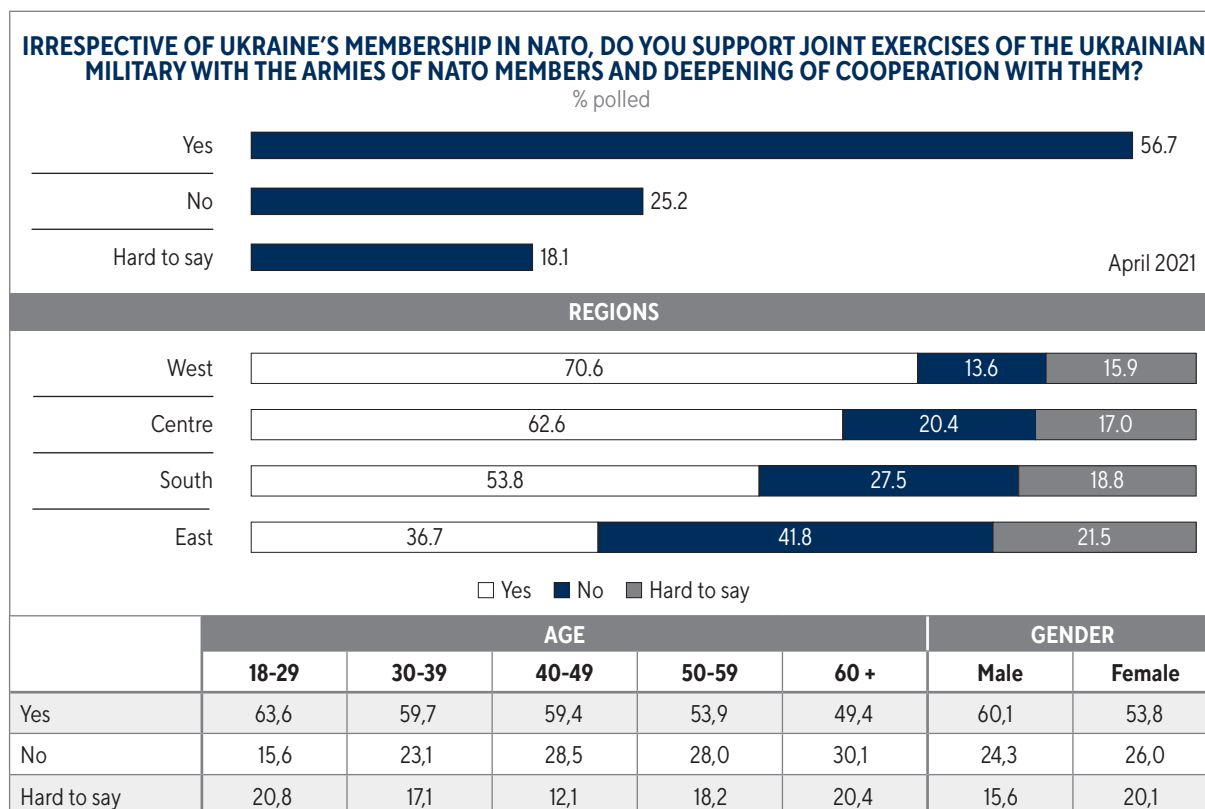
\* No more than 3 options.



membership is mostly positive. Specifically, more than half respondents (57%) welcome joint exercises of the Ukrainian military with the armies of NATO members and their deeper cooperation, and only a quarter (25%) do not support it. It is noteworthy that the share of those rejecting such cooperation is almost equal to the proportion of NATO opponents, suggesting the influence of people's basic opinion about joining NATO on their attitude to cooperation. However, if

one compares regional indicators, it becomes obvious that the level of support for cooperation with NATO by those living in the South (54%) is significantly higher than their support for the idea of NATO accession (38%).

The share of supporters of cooperation is notably higher across all age groups and regardless of gender. Men (60%) are more likely to endorse cooperation with the armies of NATO members than women (54%).

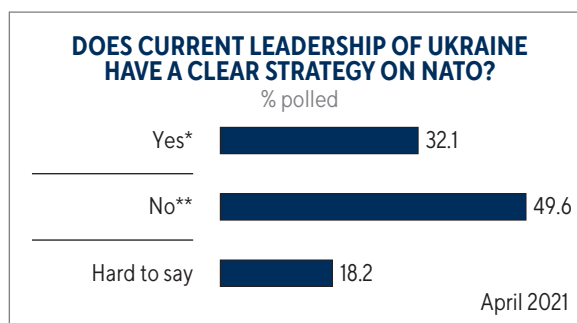




According to respondents, NATO-Ukraine cooperation has had the most positive effect on such areas as Ukraine's defence capability (60%), relations with the EU (58%), Ukraine's international security (57%), Ukraine's international authority (54%), functioning of enterprises of the defence and industrial complex (53%). Very few respondents noticed negative effects of cooperation on all areas except for relations with Russia (76%). Almost equal shares of respondents found either positive or no effect of cooperation on the level of democracy (35% – positive effect, and 37% – no effect), efficiency of government (34% and 35%) and the level of corruption (29% and 33%). Limited effect of cooperation on well-being of the population in general (25% and 42%) and on respondents' families (21% and 50%) deserves special attention (Diagram «How do you think Ukraine's cooperation with NATO affects each of these areas in Ukraine?», p.38).

Only about a third (32%) of citizens believe that current leadership of Ukraine has a clear

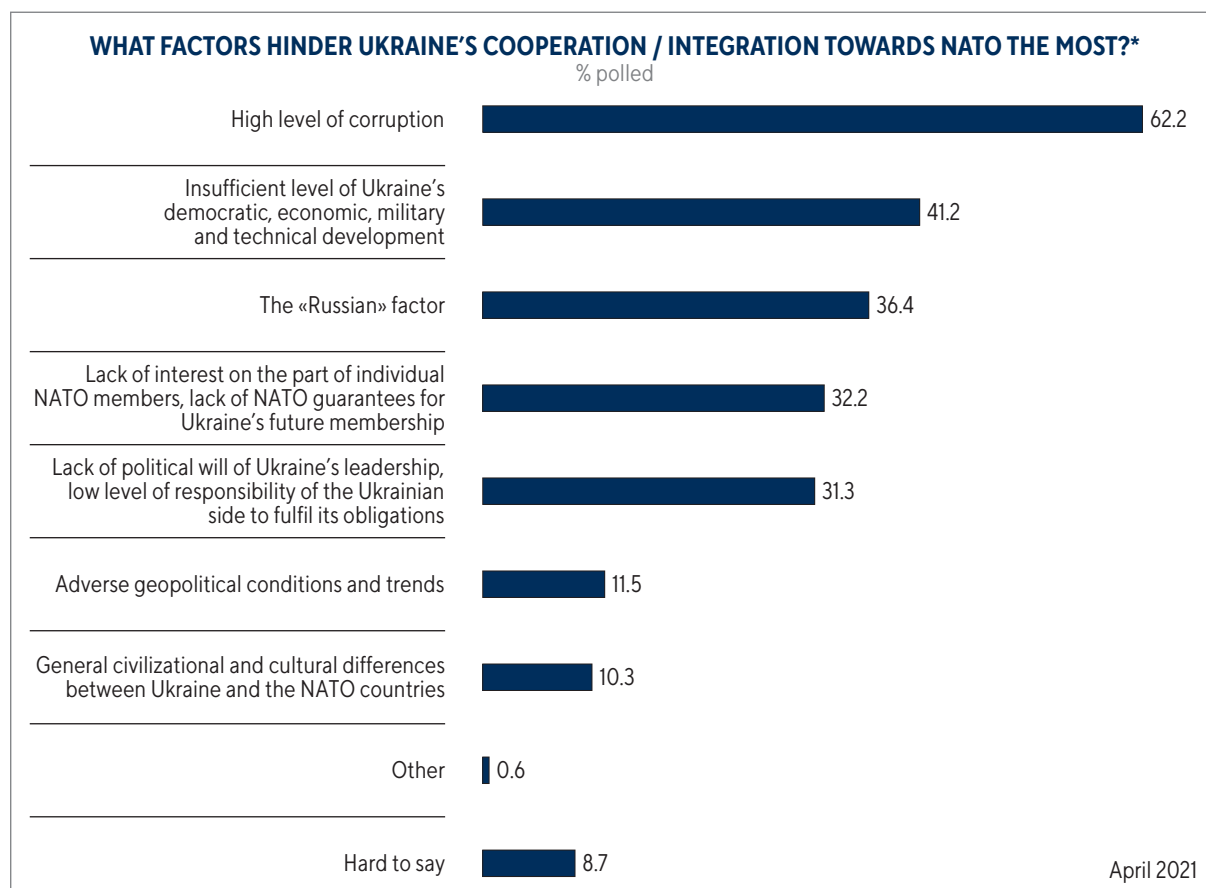
strategy on NATO, 50% respondents gave a negative response, and 18% – «hard to answer».



\* Sum of answers «yes» and «rather yes».

\*\* Sum of answers «no» and «rather no».

The biggest obstacles to Ukraine's cooperation/integration with NATO include high level of corruption (62%) and insufficient level of the country's democratic, economic, military and technical development (41%). The so-called «Russian» factor ranks third (36%). Only 10% of respondents believe that civilizational and cultural differences may be an obstacle to Ukraine's cooperation/integration with NATO.



\*No more than three options.

## HOW DO YOU THINK UKRAINE'S COOPERATION WITH NATO AFFECT EACH OF THESE AREAS IN UKRAINE?

% polled

### Ukraine's defence capability



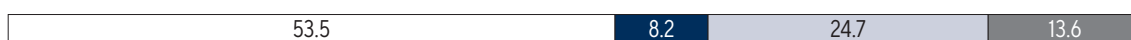
### Relations with the European Union



### Ukraine's international security



### Ukraine's international authority



### Functioning of enterprises of the defence and industrial complex



### Level of democracy in Ukraine



### Efficiency of government



### Level of corruption



### Well-being of Ukraine's population



### Well-being of your family



### Relations with Russia

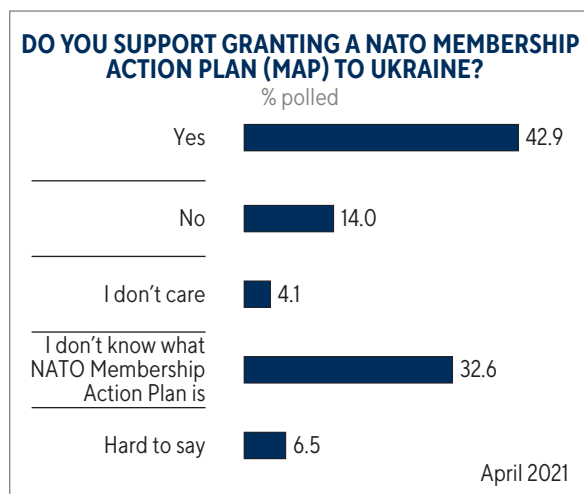


□ Positive effect ■ Negative effect □ No effect ■ Hard to say

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### Awareness: sources, public demand, like-minded people

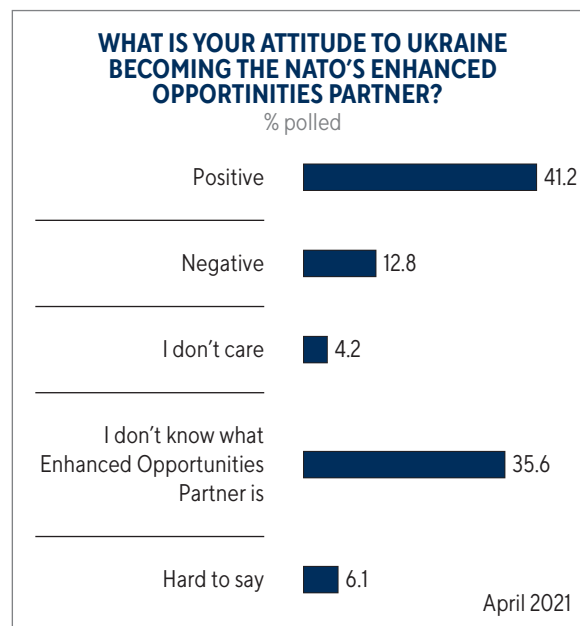
It is also interesting to study the respondent's attitude to possible granting of a NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP) to Ukraine – not so much to determine the level of people's awareness about NATO (which they admit as insufficient), but rather to demonstrate the risks of inadequately informed choice. Against the background of renewed Ukraine's attempts to mainstream this initiative and a wave of political and expert discussions in the media, 43% of respondents support granting a MAP to Ukraine, which is slightly less than the level of support for Ukraine's accession to NATO; 33% of respondents don't know what a MAP is, and 14% do not support it. The apparent lack of information about the country's NATO membership process has resulted in the «loss» of 11% of supporters.



However, despite insufficient knowledge about the MAP function, the respondents provided almost «professional» responses in terms of its content, namely the importance of achieving the goals in each of five MAP sections. Thus, according to 79% of respondents, defence and military issues are the most important for Ukraine's accession to NATO (54% – critical, 25% – important but not critical). The vast majority of respondents also recognise the importance of achieving other, «non-military» standards (Diagram «How important is it for Ukraine to achieve standards in each of the following spheres in order to join NATO?», p.40).

Analysis of answers to two separate questions regarding the NATO's Enhanced Opportunities Partnership (EOP) programme may serve as an illustration of possible

non-manipulative shaping of public opinion by providing additional information on the subject. Therefore, 41% of respondents expressed their positive attitude to Ukraine recently becoming an Enhanced Opportunities Partner; 13% were negative about it, while more than one-third of Ukrainians (37%) reported knowing nothing about this NATO programme.



The level of support for each of the opportunities received by Ukraine under EOP (included in the list) differs significantly from the level of public support for the decision itself. For example, some EOP articles gained 49% to 62% of positive responses against the overall positive assessment at 41%. At the same time, the share of negative responses also increased – from a general negative attitude at 13% to negative perceptions of individual articles (16% to 26%). Therefore, better awareness does not necessarily produce an increase in the share of supporters<sup>11</sup> (Diagram «What is your attitude to Ukraine receiving each of the following opportunities?», p.40).

<sup>11</sup> The practice of Central and Eastern Europe and the Baltics has shown that problems with public support for EU accession have increased as membership approached (referendum on accession), because most information about real or alleged problems of membership appeared in the information space in the final stages of integration, thus increasing scepticism and apathy of citizens. Therefore, the strategy and tactics of information campaigns were determined by the task of achieving a convincing victory at referendums. For more detail, see: The information component of European and Euro-Atlantic integration: Public opinion. – National Security and Defence, No. 1, 2008, p.7, [http://www.razumkov.org.ua/uploads/journal/ukr/NSD95\\_2008\\_ukr.pdf](http://www.razumkov.org.ua/uploads/journal/ukr/NSD95_2008_ukr.pdf).

### HOW IMPORTANT IS IT FOR UKRAINE TO ACHIEVE STANDARDS IN EACH OF THE FOLLOWING SPHERES IN ORDER TO JOIN NATO?

% polled

**Defence and military issues (ability to address the needs of own defence  
and participate in the collective security system)**



**Information security issues**



**Political and economic issues (compliance with  
the basic democracy principles, individual freedom and rule of law)**



**Resources issue (economic capacity of the state)**



**Legal issues (compatibility of the national legal framework with NATO regulations)**



□ Critical □ Important, but not critical ■ Not important at all ■ Hard to say

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### WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE TO UKRAINE RECEIVING EACH OF THE FOLLOWING OPPORTUNITIES?

% polled

**Joint counteraction to cyber threats, international terrorism and organised crime**



**Enhanced NATO-Ukraine cooperation to maintain security of the Black Sea region**



**Access to all NATO exercises**



**Exchange of intelligence with NATO members**



**Opportunities for Ukrainian officers to hold positions at NATO HQ and command structures**



**Participation in the planning of NATO operations**



**Access to priority certification of defence forces and equipment**



□ Positive ■ Negative □ I don't care ■ Hard to say

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Speaking of citizens' perception of their own awareness about NATO, the share of those considering it «high» is only 6% with minor variations across regions and age groups. Instead, most respondents view it as «average» and «low» (42% and 38%, respectively), with 10% admitting having no information.

The most significant differences in awareness assessments can be observed in the distribution of answers between female and male respondents and depending on respondents' education. Therefore, the total share of women with low awareness (45%) or no information (12%) is almost 20% higher than that of men (30% and 9% respectively).

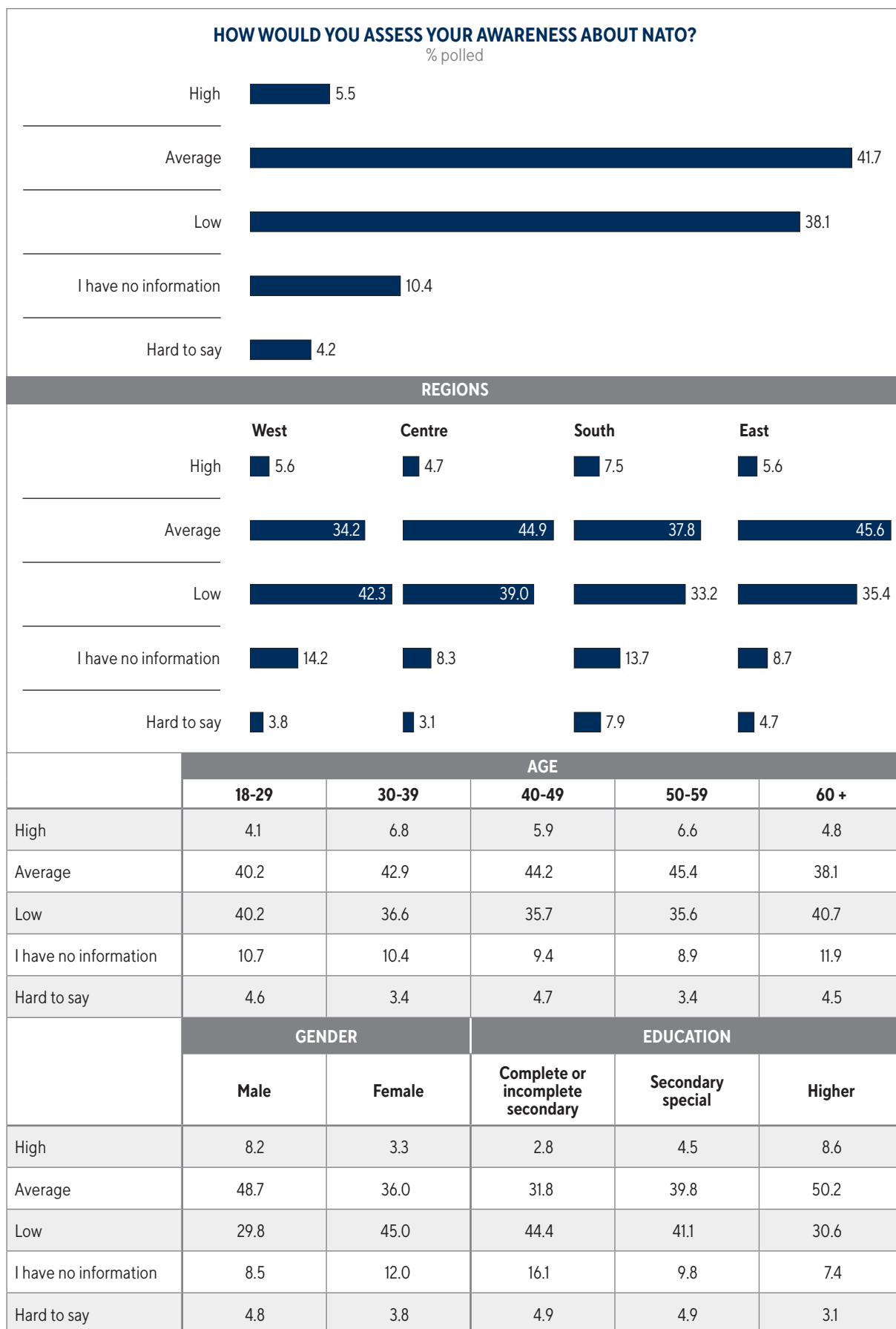
Similarly, the share of high awareness respondents with higher education (9%) is almost twice as high as among respondents with secondary special education (5%) and three times higher compared to respondents with secondary or incomplete secondary education (3%). The same correlation between education and awareness is observed in other response options (Diagram

«How would you assess your awareness about NATO?», p.42).

The «test question» regarding the decision-making processes in NATO shows a fairly objective self-assessment of respondents' knowledge. Specifically, the option «by consensus» was selected by 36% of respondents who consider their awareness high, 35% by respondents with average knowledge, and by 20% with a low level of awareness. However, it seems that most respondents, regardless of their level of knowledge, were guided by their own reflections rather than the information they had. Perhaps this explains the marked difference in responses of NATO supporters and opponents. Therefore, most opponents (35%) preferred the option «by a small group of influential, powerful countries». Instead, the number of those who picked the correct answer («by consensus» – 17% of opponents and 37% of supporters) or a more democratic option («by the majority vote» – 14% of opponents and 30% of supporters) was twice as low among NATO opponents compared to supporters.

HOW DO YOU THINK DECISIONS ARE MADE IN NATO?						
% polled						
	UKRAINE	EDUCATION			ATTITUDE TOWARDS NATO	
		Complete or incomplete secondary	Secondary special	Higher	Supporters	Opponents
By consensus (when all NATO members agree with the decision)	27.2	23.2	27.7	29.3	36.6	16.9
By the majority vote	22.6	21.7	20.8	25.0	29.9	13.6
By a small group of influential, powerful countries	20.6	20.6	19.3	22.2	12.8	34.6
Hard to say	29.6	34.5	32.2	23.5	20.7	34.9
	LEVEL OF AWARENESS ABOUT NATO					
	High	Average	Low	I have no information		
By consensus (when all NATO members agree with the decision)	36.0	35.2	20.5	16.1		
By the majority vote	34.2	27.2	19.6	11.8		
By a small group of influential, powerful countries	21.6	19.3	22.4	16.6		
Hard to say	8.1	18.3	37.5	55.5		

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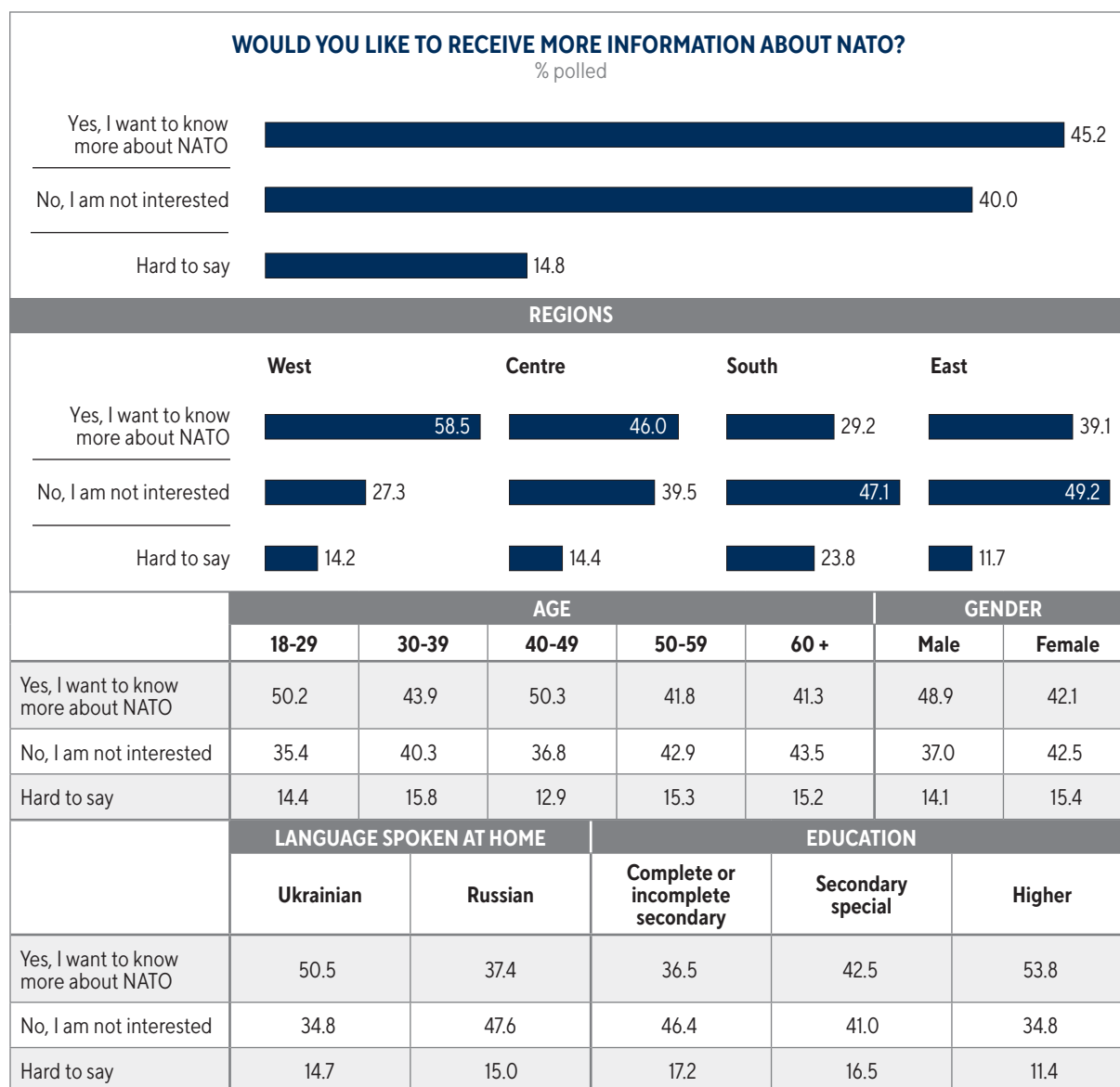


A relative majority of respondents (45%) would like to get more information about NATO, and almost 40% are not interested in it. Ukrainians living in the West and the Centre express the highest interest (59% and 46%, respectively). In other regions, the share of those who are not interested exceeds the share of those who want to know more about NATO (47% and 29% in the South; 49% and 39% in the East, respectively).

Greater interest in NATO is declared by respondents aged 18–29 and 40–49, by men (49%) compared to women (42%), and by Ukrainian-speaking (51%) compared to Russian-speaking (37%) citizens. Respondents with higher education (the most informed) also demonstrate a greater interest towards knowledge about NATO (54%) compared to

respondents with secondary special (43%) and secondary or incomplete secondary education (37%).

Ukrainians are most interested in possible benefits and probable losses from Ukraine's accession to NATO (47%), NATO's assistance to Ukraine (39%) and whether new NATO members have benefited from joining the organisation (30%). «Theoretical» matters such as the history of the organisation and the principles of its operation are of much less interest (16% of all respondents). It is noteworthy that even respondents who were not willing to receive more information about NATO in general are still interested in practical information on the specific topics. For example, 24% of those who are «not interested» in general information about NATO



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would like to be better informed about possible benefits and probable losses from Ukraine's membership; 18% - about NATO assistance to Ukraine; 14% - about how new members (former socialist countries) benefitted from joining NATO.

Although 45% of respondents would like to know more about NATO, only 21% have ever sought such information in any way. Respondents with a higher level of education (29%) are generally more active in searching for information compared to respondents with secondary special (19%) and secondary or incomplete secondary education (12%) (Diagram «Have you ever had to search for

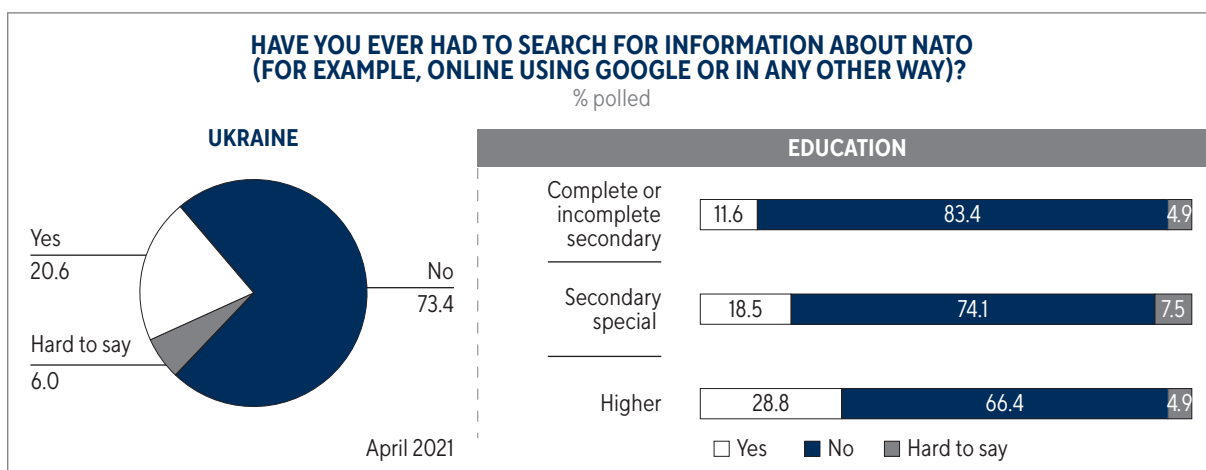
information about NATO (for example, online using Google or in any other way)?»).

Three main sources of information for Ukrainians include central Ukrainian TV channels (54%), social media (29%) and Ukrainian (non-governmental) websites (27%). The level of respondents' education slightly influences their choice of the source but does not change the overall picture. For example, even citizens who believe they have no information about NATO still mention central Ukrainian television (27%) and social media (8%) as the main sources (Table «Which media do you usually receive information about NATO from?», p.45).

WHAT INFORMATION ABOUT NATO ARE YOU MOST INTERESTED IN?*			
	% polled	% of those who want to know more about NATO	% of those who are not interested
Possible benefits and probable losses from Ukraine's accession to NATO	47.0	67.1	24.1
NATO assistance received by Ukraine	38.7	59.9	17.7
New members of NATO (former socialist countries) – whether they have benefitted from joining NATO	30.1	45.2	14.3
Ensuring the security of NATO members	28.4	46.9	8.5
Participation of the NATO countries in peacekeeping operations	26.0	44.7	8.3
NATO's non-military humanitarian programmes	22.4	37.5	7.4
The history of the organisation, the principles of its operation	16.3	29.5	4.0
Other	4.2	1.0	8.4
Hard to say	23.5	0.8	46.4

\* All relevant options.

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WHICH MEDIA DO YOU USUALLY RECEIVE INFORMATION ABOUT NATO FROM?*				
% polled				
	UKRAINE	EDUCATION		
		Complete or incomplete secondary	Secondary special	Higher
Central Ukrainian newspapers	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.4
Local newspapers	3.0	5.4	2.7	1.7
Russian newspapers	0.2	0.0	0.4	0.0
Other foreign newspapers	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.1
Central Ukrainian TV channels	53.7	54.1	57.5	49.1
Local TV channels	9.1	10.9	10.9	5.9
Russian TV channels	3.1	3.0	3.3	2.9
Other foreign TV channels	1.4	0.4	1.8	1.7
Central Ukrainian radio	4.3	5.4	3.8	4.4
Local state radio stations	0.9	1.7	0.6	0.9
FM stations	3.4	4.1	3.1	3.4
Russian radio stations	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0
Other foreign radio stations	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.3
Official websites of the Ukrainian authorities	13.8	7.9	12.3	19.2
Other Ukrainian websites	26.9	17.8	23.6	37.1
Russian websites	1.7	0.9	1.7	2.1
Other foreign websites	5.6	1.7	4.0	10.0
Social media	28.9	19.1	28.6	35.6
Other	2.4	1.9	2.6	2.4
I do not receive information about NATO	20.0	24.9	20.5	16.1

\* No more than three options.

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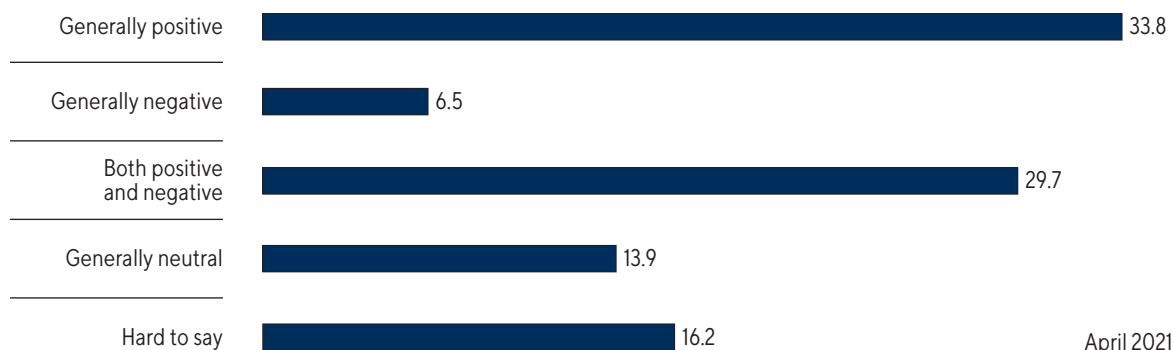
According to the vast majority of respondents, the nature of information about NATO is «generally positive» (34%), «both positive and negative» (30%) or «generally neutral» (14%). Only 7% admit that the nature of their sources' information was «generally negative». Regional assessments are somewhat different, but even people in the South and East mention predominantly positive (28% and 26%, respectively), balanced (27% and 31%) and neutral (20% and 15%) nature of information. There are also noticeable differences depending on the language mostly spoken at home. Therefore,

the Russian-speaking segment is noted for much less generally positive (only 25%) compared to the Ukrainian (40%), and more generally negative (11% and 4%, respectively) nature of information (Diagram «What is the nature of your sources' information about NATO?», p.46).

Assessment of the nature of Ukrainian media's information about NATO is largely similar to the assessment of information from all sources in general (Diagram «What is the nature of Ukrainian media's information about NATO?», p.46).

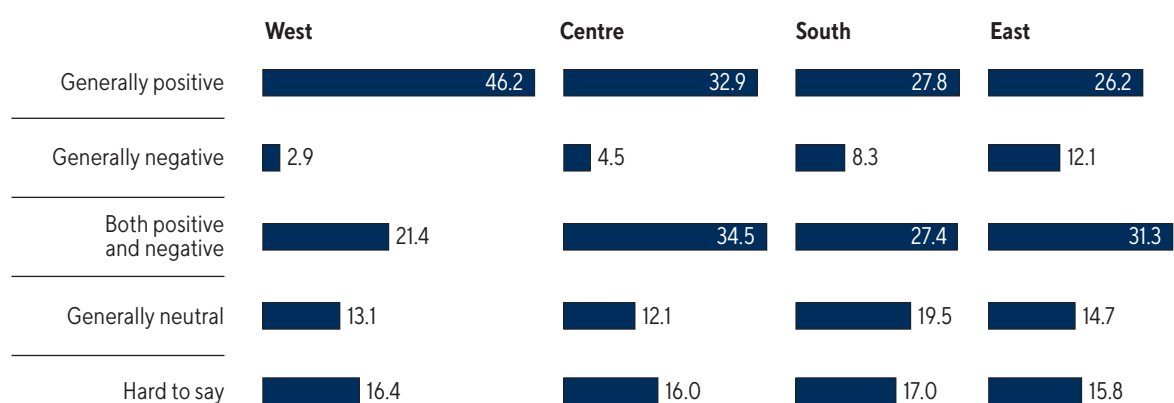
### WHAT IS THE NATURE OF YOUR SOURCES' INFORMATION ABOUT NATO?

% polled

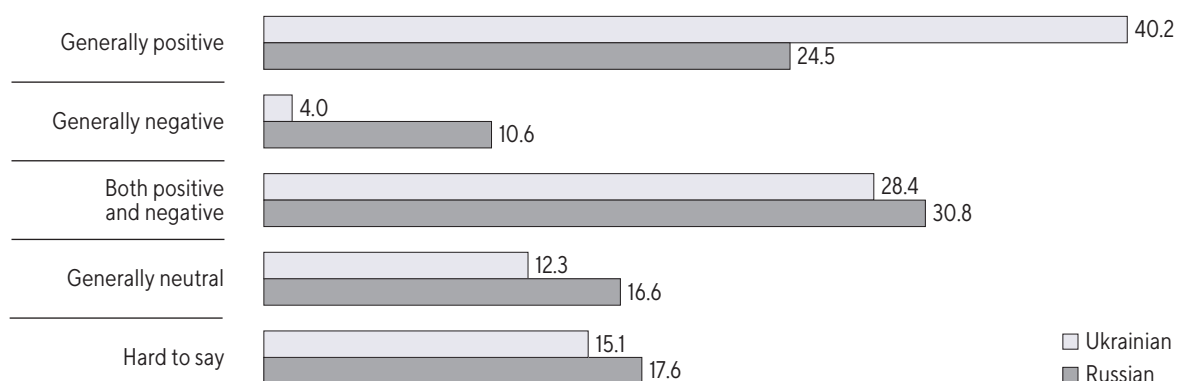


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### REGIONS



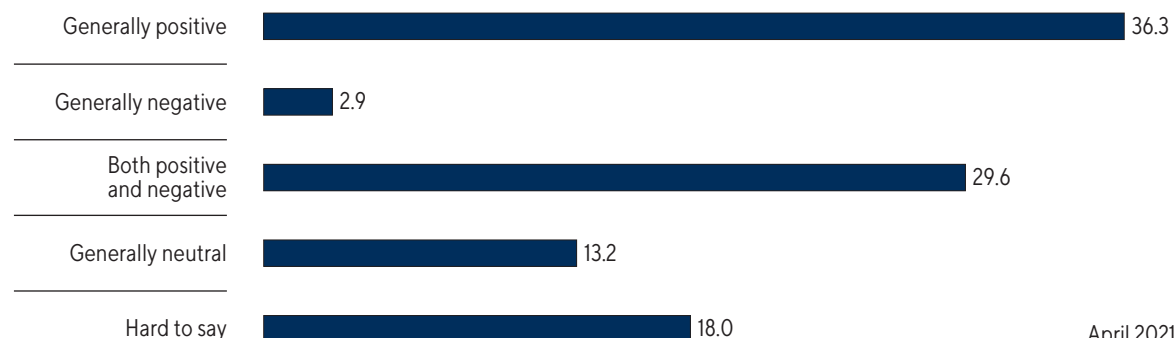
### LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME



□ Ukrainian  
■ Russian

### WHAT IS THE NATURE OF UKRAINIAN MEDIA'S INFORMATION ABOUT NATO?

% polled

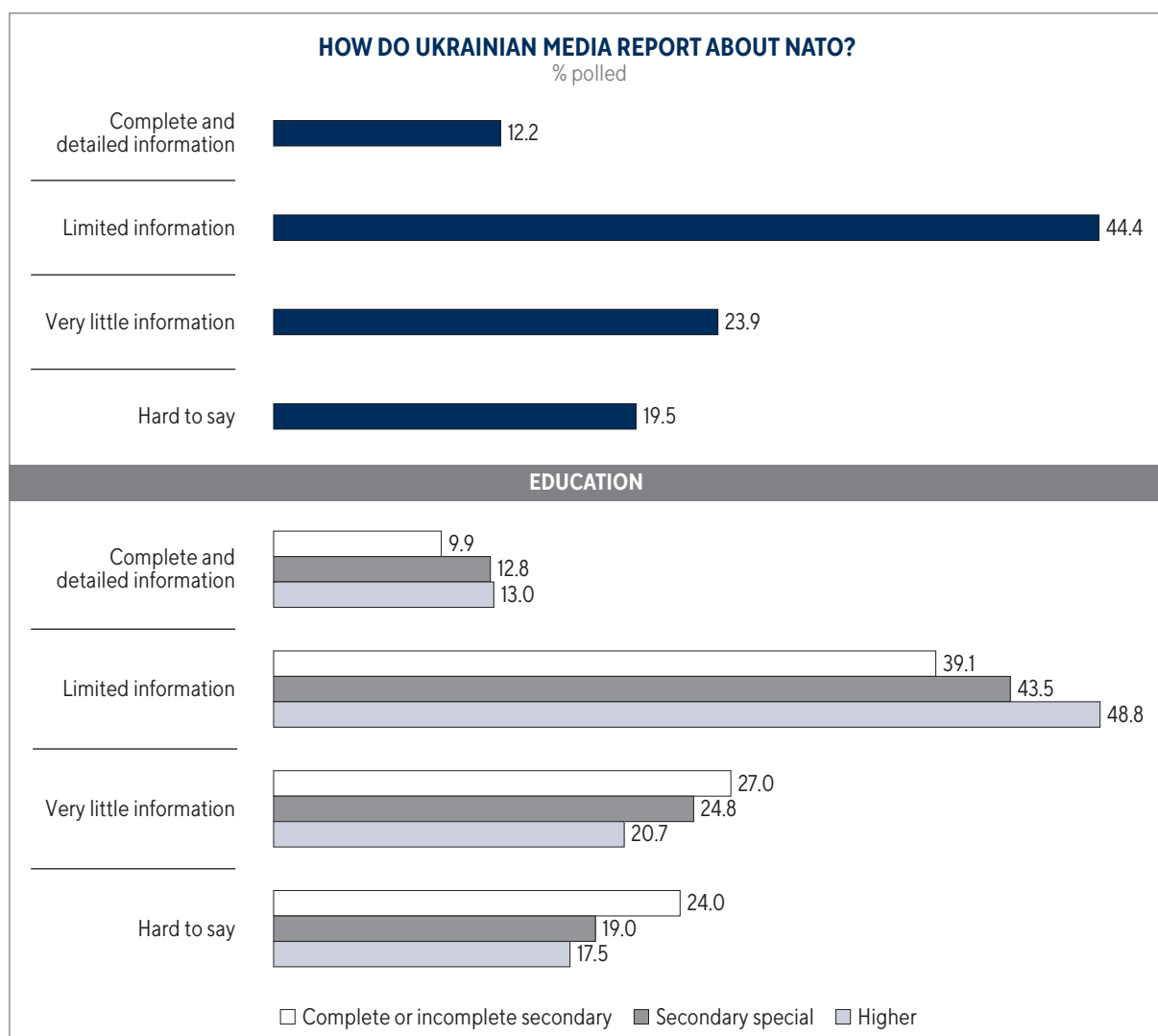


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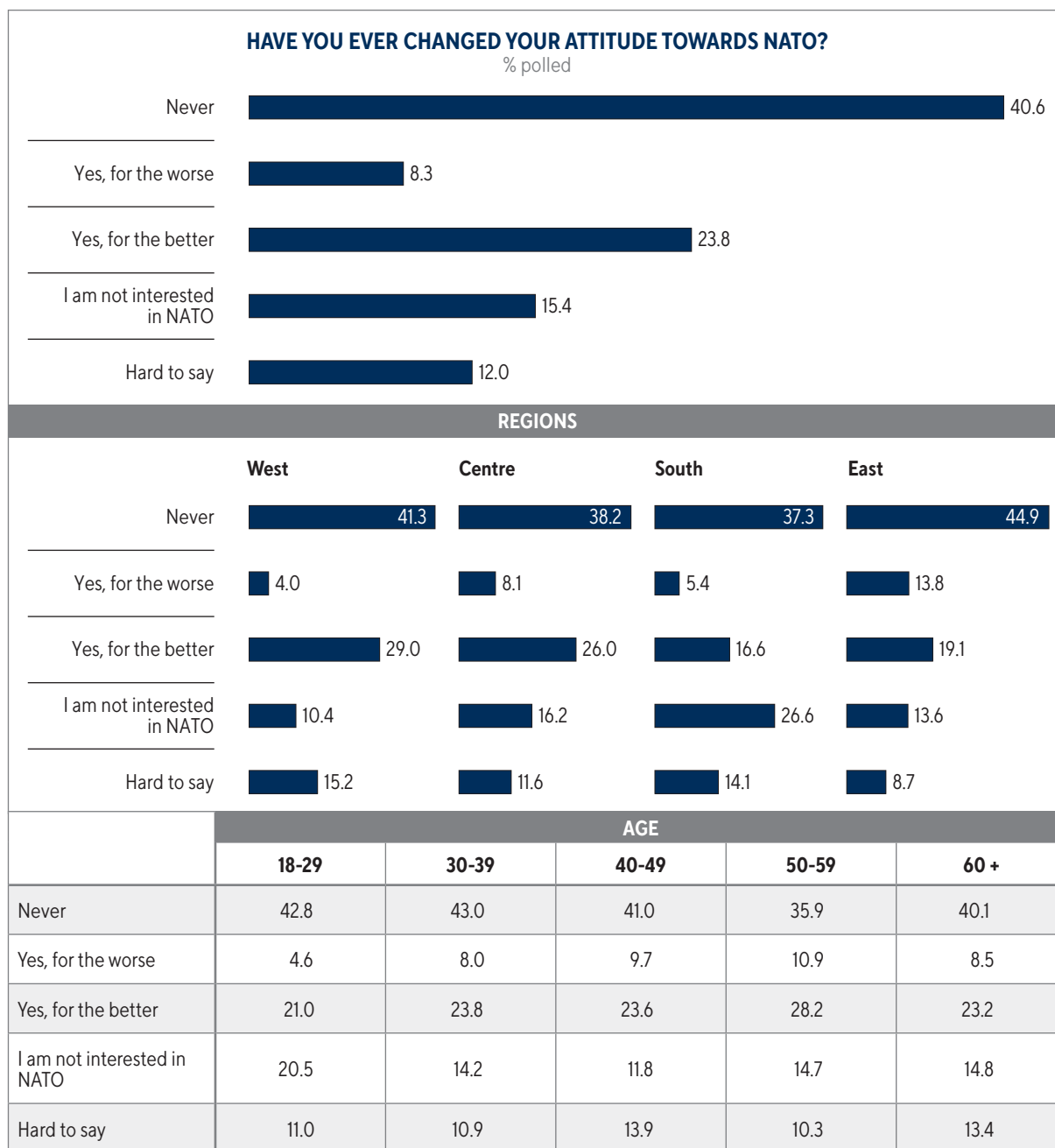
As for the public perception of the volume and content of the Ukrainian media's reports about NATO, the vast majority of respondents admit that there is very little information (24%) and that it is limited and incomplete (44%). Only 12% of respondents consider it complete and detailed. Positive assessments of completeness of information among respondents with different levels of education are almost identical (10-13%), while differences in choices «limited, incomplete» and «very little» do not affect the general criticality of their assessments.

Roughly 40% of Ukrainians of different ages and in different regions believe that their attitude towards NATO has never changed.

Almost a quarter (24%) admit a change for the better, and 8% - for the worse. Despite some regional and age variations, the share of respondents who have changed their attitude for the better outweighs the share of those who changed it for the worse. It is noteworthy that the youngest age group had the fewest number of those who changed their attitude for the worse (5%), while the age category 50-59 years had the most of those who ever changed their attitude to NATO for the better (28%). These data correspond to the general trend of society's changing attitude towards NATO, although it would be incorrect to compare them with the available sociological data in dynamics (Diagram «Have you ever changed your attitude towards NATO?», p.48).



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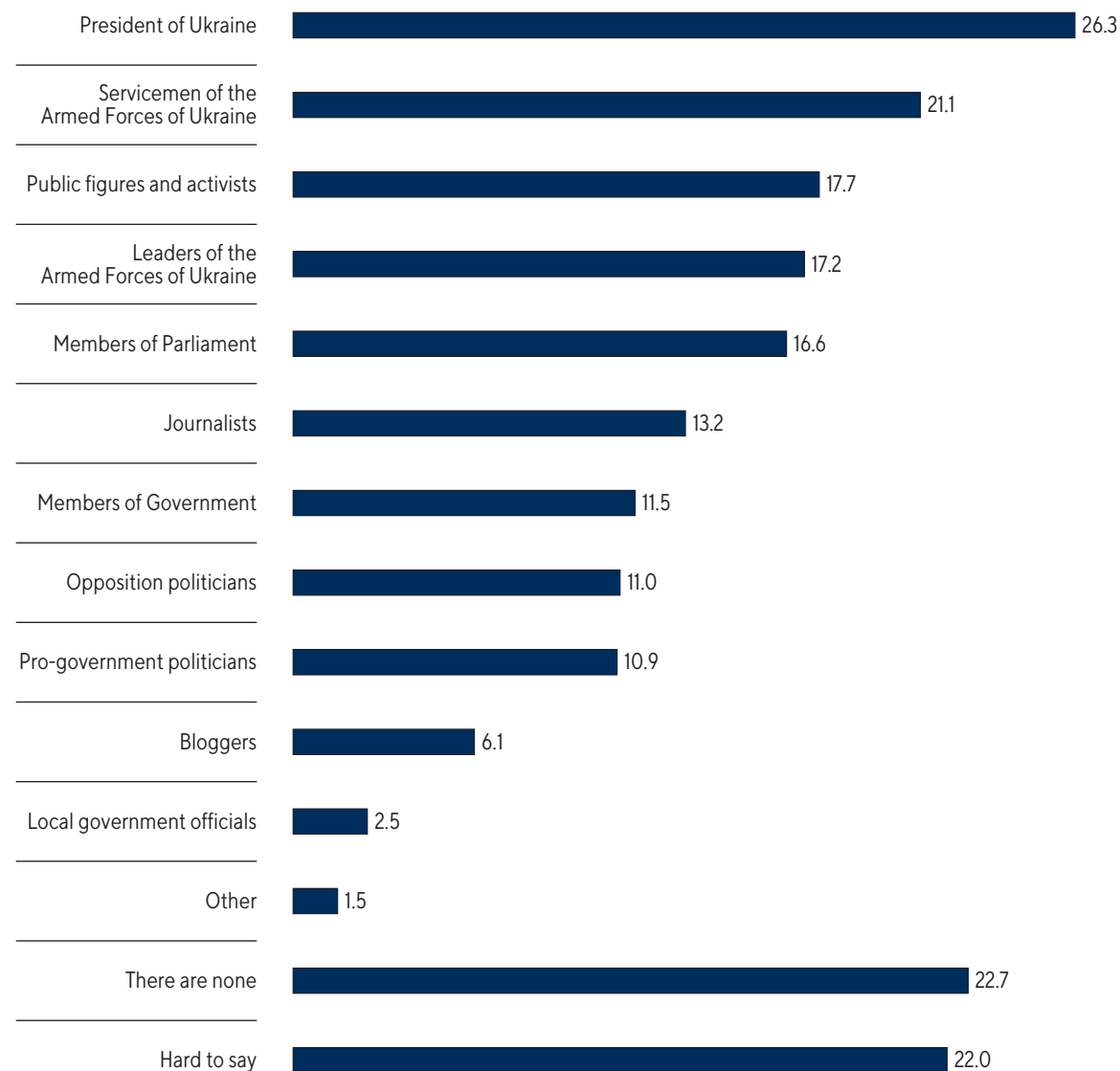
In addition to objective circumstances and effective information campaigns, there are also individuals or public institutions that citizens favour, which often become important factors influencing the attitude towards NATO. Therefore, the leaders of public support among top NATO promoters are the President (26%), servicemen of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (21%) and public figures and activists (18%). Instead, politicians (both opposition and pro-government – 11%), bloggers (6%) and local government officials (3%) are in the bottom of the list (Diagram «Among individuals and public

*institutions who you favour or favour the most, are there any that support Ukraine's rapprochement with NATO or Ukraine's accession to NATO?»*, p.49).

The vast majority of respondents (82% of supporters and 65% of opponents of NATO accession) have better understanding of those who share their views on Ukraine's NATO membership. One in three respondents (29%) could not definitely answer whether other people's attitudes towards NATO make their position and views more reasonable, while the share of those who find it difficult

**AMONG INDIVIDUALS AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS WHO YOU FAVOUR OR FAVOUR THE MOST, ARE THERE ANY THAT SUPPORT UKRAINE'S RAPPROACHMENT WITH NATO OR UKRAINE'S ACCESSION TO NATO?\***

% polled



\* All relevant options.

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to answer is twice as high among NATO opponents (31%) compared to supporters (15%) (Diagram «Which people's positions and views are more reasonable for you?», p.50).

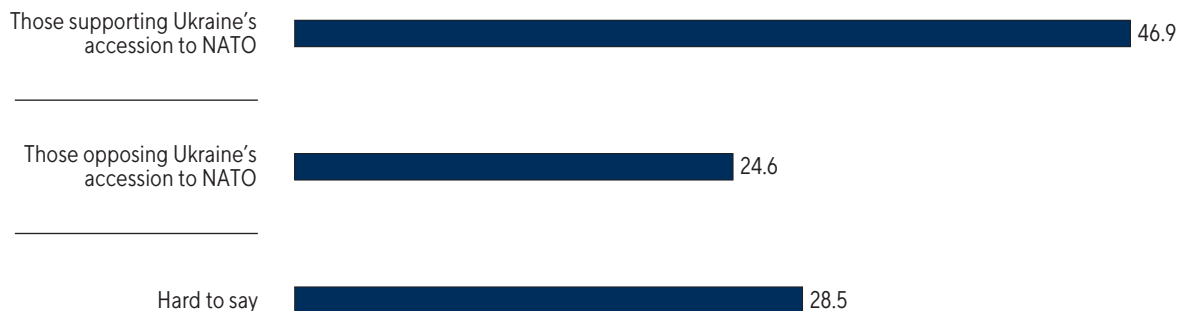
49% of all respondents have supporters of NATO integration among their relatives and friends. A quarter of respondents (25%) have personally visited a NATO country; 7% have experience of lengthy living in such country; 41% have relatives or friends with experience of visiting or living in the NATO country; 33% have relatives or friends currently living there. The difference in responses between female and male respondents is very

insignificant. Instead, there are striking differences in responses of supporters and opponents of the NATO membership. If 67% of supporters have relatives and friends who also support NATO integration, then only 28% of opponents have such contacts. Also, NATO supporters are twice as likely to have personal experience of visiting NATO countries compared to the opponents (33% and 17%, respectively), to have experience of lengthy residence in (10% and 5%, respectively), to have relatives or friends with the experience of visiting or living in NATO countries (52% and 28%, respectively), and to have relatives or friends currently living there (42% and 24%, respectively) (Diagram «Do you have...?», p.51).



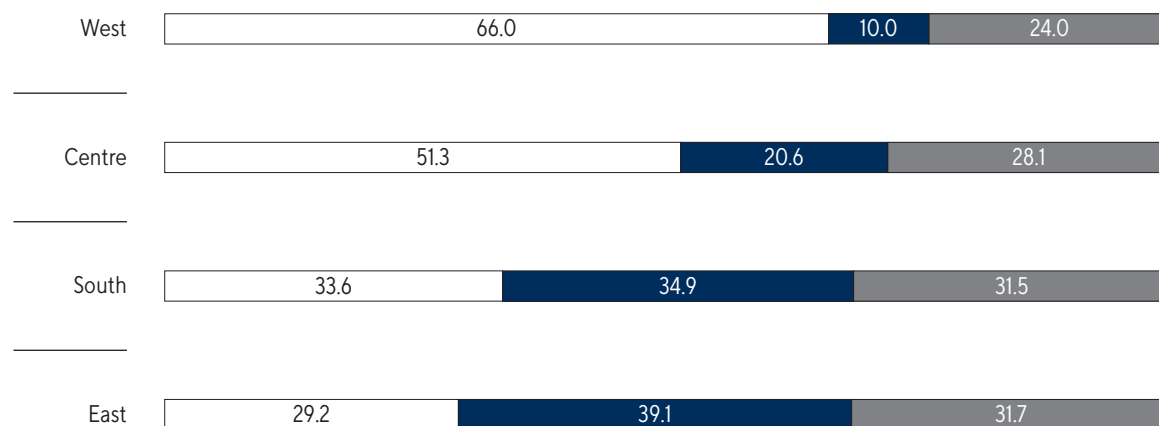
### WHICH PEOPLE'S POSITIONS AND VIEWS ARE MORE REASONABLE FOR YOU?

% polled



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#### REGIONS



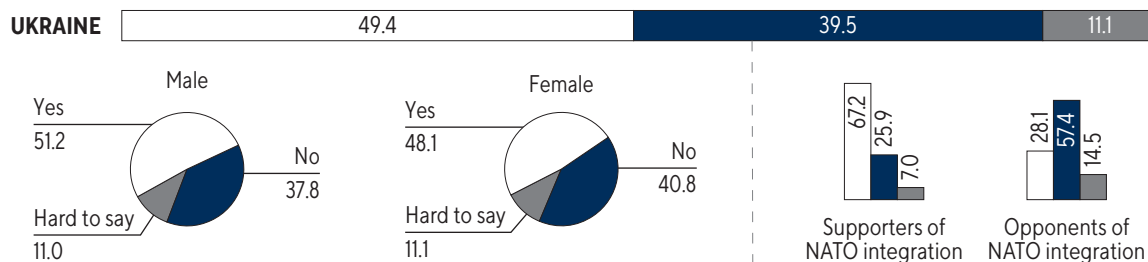
☐ Those supporting Ukraine's accession to NATO ☒ Those opposing Ukraine's accession to NATO  
☒ Hard to say

	AGE				
	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Those supporting Ukraine's accession to NATO	55.1	47.0	49.6	43.1	41.4
Those opposing Ukraine's accession to NATO	14.6	26.0	24.3	28.4	28.9
Hard to say	30.2	27.0	26.1	28.4	29.7
	GENDER		ATTITUDE TOWARDS NATO		
	Male	Female	Supporters	Opponents	
Those supporting Ukraine's accession to NATO	48.5	45.6	82.1	4.0	
Those opposing Ukraine's accession to NATO	25.3	24.1	2.8	64.8	
Hard to say	26.3	30.3	15.1	31.2	

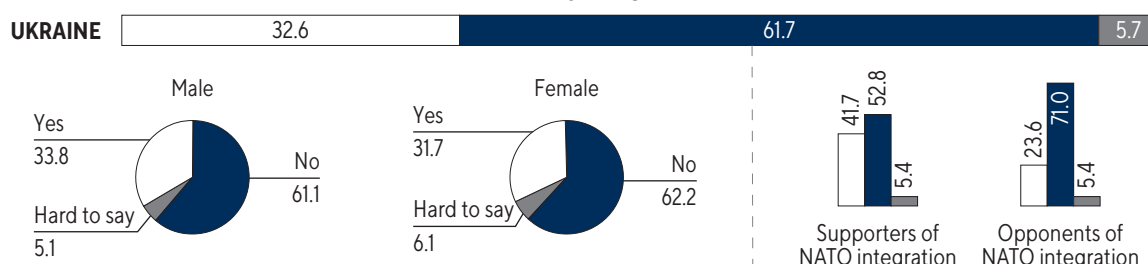
## DO YOU HAVE...?

% polled

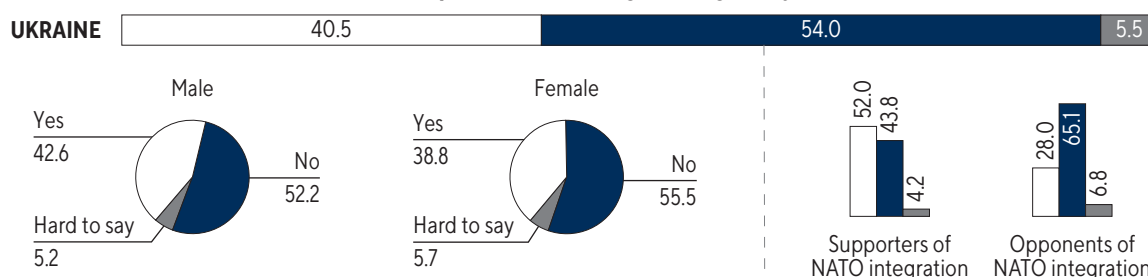
### Supporters of NATO integration among your relatives and friends?



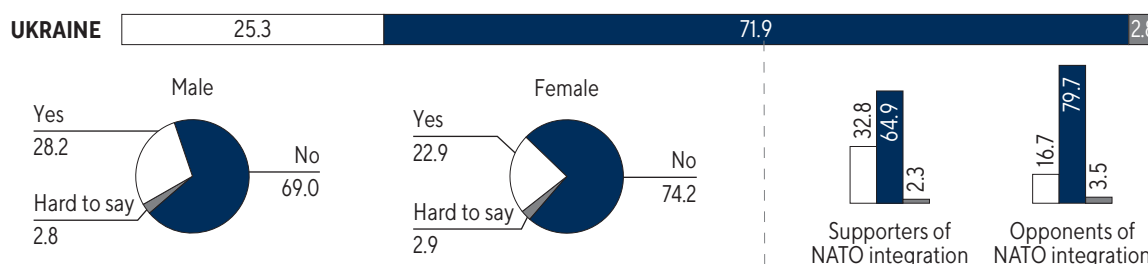
### Relatives or friends currently living in the NATO countries?



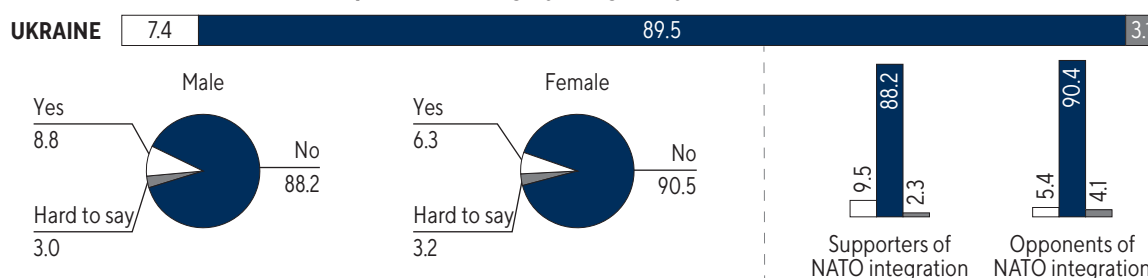
### Relatives or friends with an experience of visiting or living in any of the NATO countries?



### Personal experience of visiting any of the NATO countries?



### Personal experience of lengthy living in any of the NATO countries?



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□ Yes ■ No ■ Hard to say

## Conclusions

Findings of the Razumkov Centre's sociological study suggest the following conclusions.

- As for April 2021, Ukrainian society has formed a strong and relatively stable support for the country's Euro-Atlantic course. A potential national referendum on Ukraine's accession to NATO would result in high voter turnout and a convincing majority of votes for the country's NATO membership.
- Over the past six years, one could observe signs of public opinion stabilisation. After a period of rapid growth of public support in 2014-2015 from less than 20% to almost 50%, now there are only slight fluctuations in the level of support and distribution of votes between opponents and supporters of accession.
- Despite substantial nationwide dominance of the share of supporters of Euro-Atlantic integration, there are significant regional disparities. The share of supporters in the South has a minimal advantage over the share of opponents (43% for, and 38% against), while people living in the East mostly oppose the NATO accession (33% for, and 50% against).
- Quite notable differences on many questions are observed between respondents of different ages, and they are mostly nonlinear. Each age category requires an individual approach, but special attention should be given to the analysis of indicators of those aged 30-39 years, as their answers are often the most contrasting compared to adjacent age groups.
- There are also differences in the respondents' positions depending on gender and level of education, although they are less pronounced than regional and age-specific variations.
- The most radical differences in views are usually demonstrated by supporters and opponents of NATO accession. However, their views on some issues are quite similar, and differences between them mostly reflect different approaches to addressing common problems.
- For relative majority of Ukrainians, integration into the EU and NATO means movement in one direction, which suggests a certain interdependence between public support for Euro-Atlantic and European integration.
- A sense of Ukraine's vulnerability to external threats, understanding of the lack of reliable external security guarantees are the main rational causes for supporting the country's official course towards joining NATO as the optimal national security model.
- The motives for personal gain from joining NATO are less compelling, which may be due to rather weak association of NATO with well-being or the lack of personal awareness of the link between security and development. Similarly, respondents do not see a significant impact of NATO, including NATO-Ukraine cooperation, on the well-being of the population in general and that of their own families.
- Expectation of solidarity from the EU and NATO, demonstration of mutual readiness to help partners in need, as well as readiness to take personal responsibility for the country's security are quite high but realistic at the same time.
- Respondents confirmed their support for actual participation of the Ukrainian military in international missions and operations to strengthen peace and stability, as well as the possibility of Ukraine's military assistance to other countries, necessary for public legitimacy of political decisions to fulfil international (allied) commitments.
- Despite differences in supporting Ukraine's accession to NATO and reservations about the reliability of NATO's collective security guarantees, most respondents acknowledge the link between security and membership in the Alliance.
- There is a rather visible influence of well-known myths of anti-NATO propaganda on the answers of respondents of all categories, including supporters of NATO accession and respondents with a higher level of education and awareness. It is particularly strong among the NATO opponents.

- The level of public awareness about NATO is extremely low. According to respondents, information about NATO is generally positive, balanced or neutral, but its content is limited and incomplete. The main sources of information about NATO include television, social media and Ukrainian non-governmental websites.
- Less than one third of those surveyed admitted the presence of a clear government strategy regarding NATO. According to citizens, the biggest obstacles on Ukraine's path towards NATO include corruption and weakness of Ukraine's democracy, economy and military and technical potential. The so-called "Russian" factor ranks third. Only one in ten respondents believe that civilizational and cultural differences between Ukraine and NATO countries may be an obstacle.
- Apart from clarifying citizens' positions on a wide range of issues related to Ukraine's following its strategic course towards Euro-Atlantic integration, another key objective of this study was to identify risks of inadequately informed choices and dubious impact of higher awareness on public opinion.
- The redistribution of public opinion in favour of NATO membership was obviously influenced by an external factor (Russian aggression), rather than targeted policy of the Ukrainian government. Further existence and strengthening of social consensus will largely depend on the effectiveness of informational and promotional measures, taking into account foreign and national experience adapted to the present-day reality.
- Public opinion coupled with expert knowledge should become integral to the development of conceptual and strategic documents, implementation plans and realisation of planned activities.
- Permanent monitoring of public opinion should be one of the feedback tools, a source for the prompt adjustment of plans for implementing strategic and policy decisions.

## Recommendations

In order to increase the effectiveness of the state information policy for Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration, the authors offer the following recommendations based on findings of the national sociological study.

- Recognise the following as the main goal of the state information policy for Euro-Atlantic integration in the short term and its performance indicator:
  - consolidation of stable, broad and conscious public support for Ukraine's strategic course towards Euro-Atlantic integration;
  - formation of at least neutral attitude to NATO-Ukraine cooperation and non-antagonistic perception of NATO as an international organisation among those who oppose Ukraine's accession to the Alliance.
- Coordinate and combine planning and implementation of Euro-Atlantic information activities with the European integration efforts as interrelated processes to promote security, democracy and economic development of Ukraine.
- Make the best of the dominant position of television as the main source of information for most citizens. Based on independent ratings and content monitoring, determine the list of state-owned and private TV channels, radio stations and websites for public-private partnerships at the central and regional levels. Explore the need, feasibility and capacity of government resources to enhance the role of less popular sources of information about NATO.
- Assign the role of *primary* source of official information to printed and electronic resources of central government bodies in informing regional authorities, mass media and individual users. Ensure high-quality content and prompt updating of government information resources.

- More actively involve external communication and marketing experts in creating and disseminating less formal, more convenient and accessible information products for different population groups.
- Ensure the information products meet the following requirements, irrespective of their size and format:
  - be easily accessible (not requiring long search), both common and differentiated for different categories of users;
  - include not only information on benefits of the partnership or advantages of membership, but also about partner and allied obligations, true requirements for the Alliance's candidate countries and members;
  - perform an educational role and motivate users to independently search for additional information;
  - contribute to a positive emotional perception of NATO;
  - include thematic blocks, fully taking into account citizens' requests for the most interesting (for them) information, as well as issues on which they have minimal or false information, as indicated by public opinion surveys.
- Recognise the South and East of Ukraine as priority regions in terms of regional distribution of the intensity of informational and promotional efforts and opportunities to actively involve these regions' residents aged 18-29 as drivers of potential increase in local support for Euro-Atlantic integration.

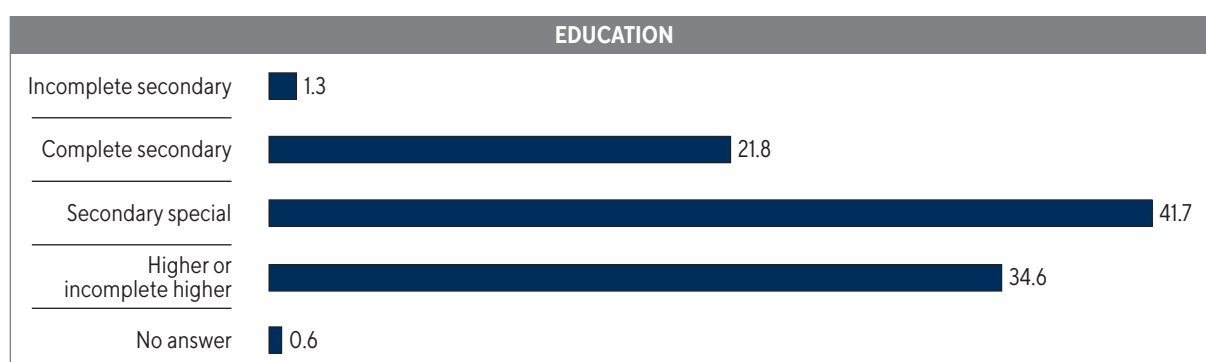
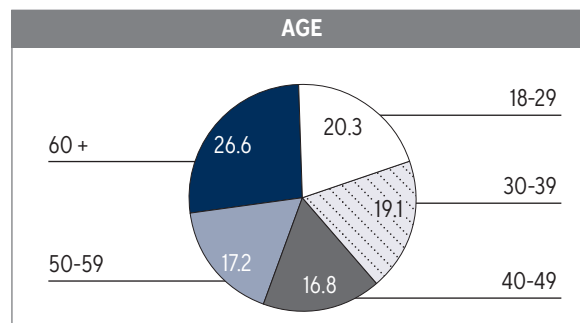
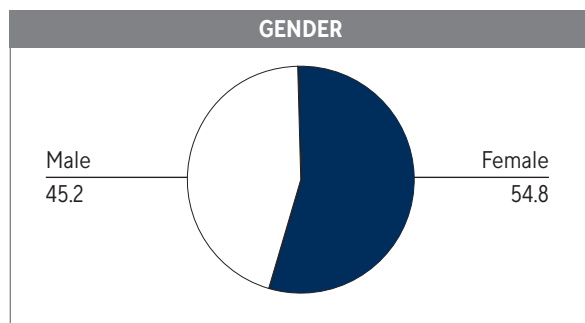
Focus on the audience that prefers Russian-language sources of information.

- Increase coverage of «life stories» of people with the experience of visiting and staying in NATO countries and their practical cooperation with citizens of NATO countries, specifically citizens of the Baltic States and Central and Eastern Europe, as well as involve the conditional categories of «relatives», «friends» in local activities.
- Based on public opinion surveys, develop messages to NATO members (specifically politicians, government officials and the general public) about Ukrainians' perceptions of NATO, their attitude to NATO-Ukraine cooperation and their vision of Ukraine's prospects for full NATO membership.

Authors of this study believe that due consideration of these recommendations will help increase the effectiveness of government's information policy and, consequently, contribute to the formation of a stable, broad and conscious public support for Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration, also neutralising the established myths and countering anti-NATO propaganda. Public opinion coupled with expert knowledge should become integral to the development of conceptual and strategic documents, implementation plans and realisation of planned activities. In order to better monitor the quality of implementation and to make necessary adjustments in information programmes, it is also expedient to introduce in-depth sociological studies on individual topics and focusing on specific target populations (socio-demographic groups), to supplement regular nationwide surveys.

## SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS POLLED UKRAINIANS (%)

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WHAT IS YOUR FAMILY'S FINANCIAL STATUS?	
We barely make both ends meet and lack money even to buy necessary products	9.0
We can afford only food and essential inexpensive goods	32.3
In general, we have enough to live on, but it is quite difficult to buy durables, such as furniture, refrigerator, TV	48.4
We live a comfortable life but still unable to make major purchases, such as an apartment or car	9.0
We can afford virtually everything we want	0.5
Hard to say	0.8

