

Public perception of Serbia's foreign policy

Belgrade Centre for Security Policy

www.bezbednost.org

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Content

What do citizens think of major powers and their influence on Serbia?

Milos Popovic, Researcher, Belgrade Centre for Security Policy

What kind of relations should be developed toward major powers, and should Serbia engage outside its borders

Sonja Stojanovic Gajic, Director, Belgrade Centre for Security Policy



The scope of the project

- To examine public attitude about personal and national security, foreign policy and important answers on security challenges, threats and potential alliances
- To provide a template for discussion about new National security strategy of Serbia



About examination of public opinion

- **Questionnaire:** contains 135 questions conceived by BCSP
- **Methodology:** face to face poll on random sample, terrain research done by CESID
- **Timeframe:** from 26 December 2016 to 14 January 2017
- **Representative sample:** 1.403 adult citizens of Serbia (without Kosovo and Metohija)



Sample

- **Sex** : 52% of women and 48% of men.
- **Age**: 18-29 26%, 30-39 17%, 40-49 16%, 50-59 16%, 60-69 14% and over 70 years 11%
- **Educational structure**: elementary school and less 12% examinees, two years/three years high school 8% examinees, four years high school 44% examinees, higher school/faculty 28% examinees, pupil/student 8%
- **Employment status**: self-employed 9%, employed 34%, pupil/student 9%, unemployed 22%, pensioner 21%, housewife 4%, Other 1%
- **Nationality**: Serbian 89%, Hungarian 2%, Bosnian 3%, Romany 2%, Others 3%, do not want to declare 1%
- **Religious preferences**: Orthodox 86%, Islamic 3%, Catholic 4%, Atheists 4%, Others 1%, do not want to declare 2%
- **Regional distribution**: Belgrade 22%, Central Serbia 51%, Vojvodina 27%
- **Residence**: big city 38%, a suburb of big city 8%, small town 27%, village 27%
- **Average income per member of household***** (in households whose examinees were included by research): less than 100 € 22%, 100-200 € 30%, 200-400 € 23%, 400-600 € 5%, 60-1000 € 2%, over 1000 € 1%, can not calculate/do not want to say 17%



Major findings

- The majority is still in favor of EU membership, against NATO membership, and satisfied with the existing level of cooperation with Russia
- Perception of EU has recently deteriorated; it remains authority only in the domain of democracy and rule of law, and membership is expected to further economic benefits and international standing
- The majority demands a better definition of the policy of neutrality in Serbia's foreign and security policy



Perception of power and influence of major powers

Dr Milos Popovic

Researcher

Belgrade Centre for Security Policy

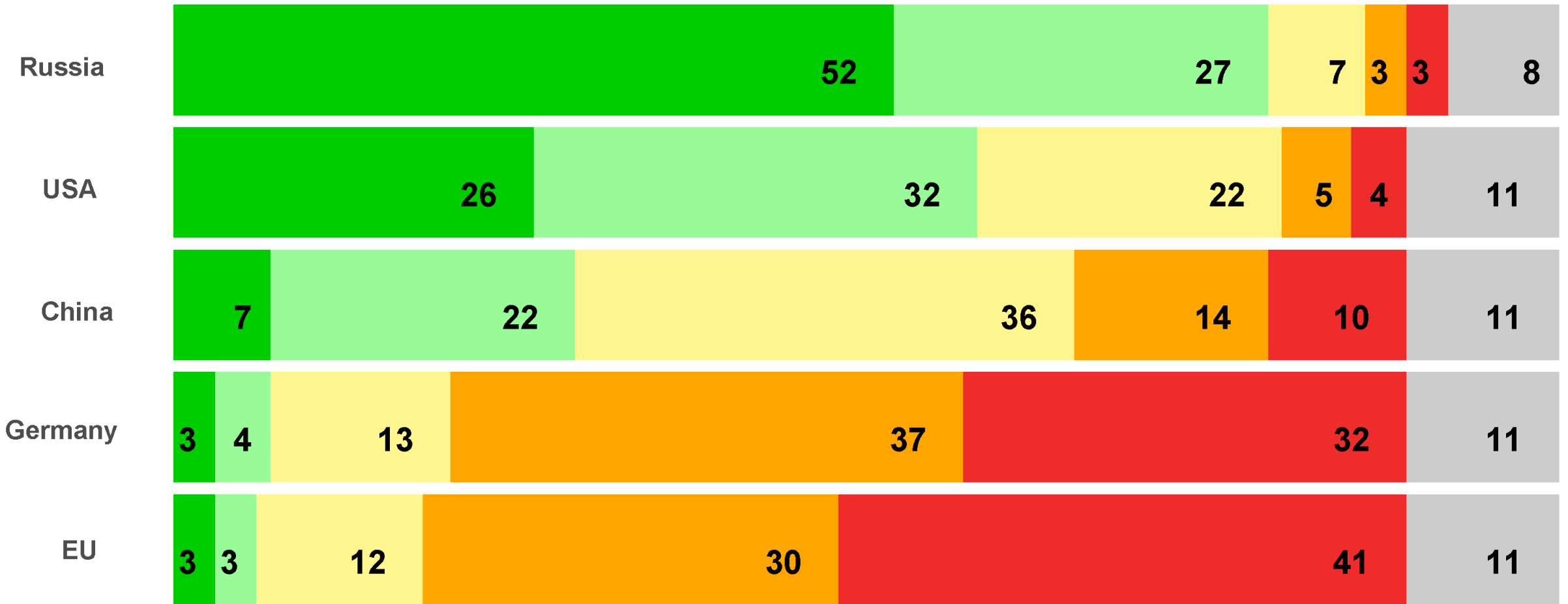


Perception of major powers

- The majority views Russia as a political and military power, while USA as an economic and technological giant
- EU & Germany are successful in democracy, human rights, and rule of law, and have credible investors
- Citizens believe that China is a successful economic and political power



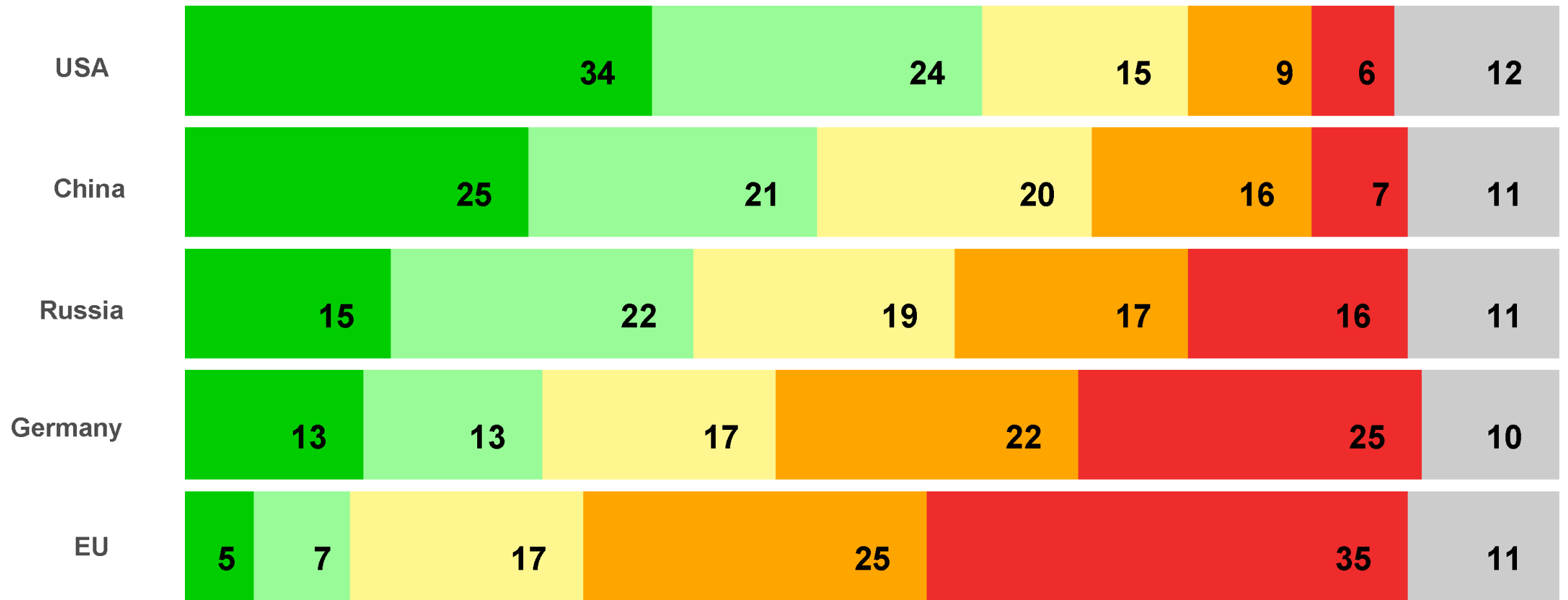
PLEASE EVALUATE THE MILITARY POWER OF THE FOLLOWING ACTORS
FROM 5 (SUCCESSFUL) TO 1 (UNSUCCESSFUL)



%



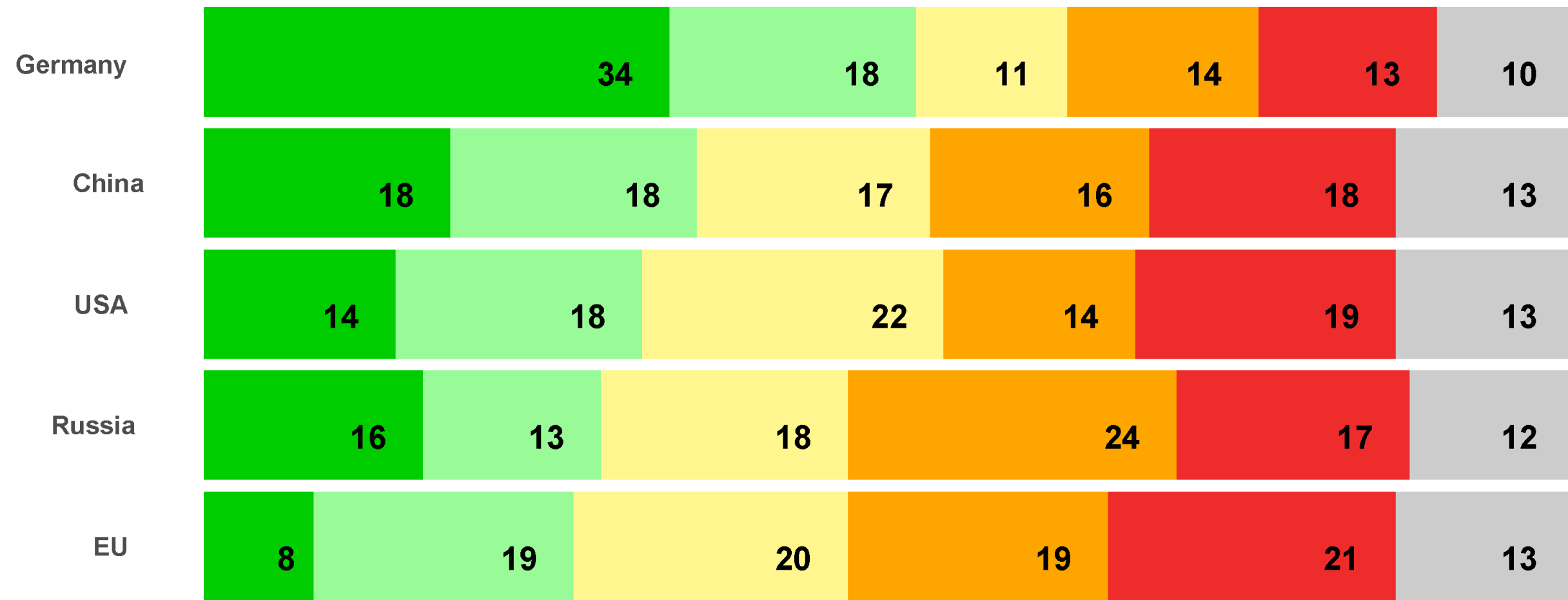
PLEASE EVALUATE THE ECONOMIC POWER OF THE FOLLOWING ACTORS FROM 5 (SUCCESSFUL) TO 1 (UNSUCCESSFUL)



%



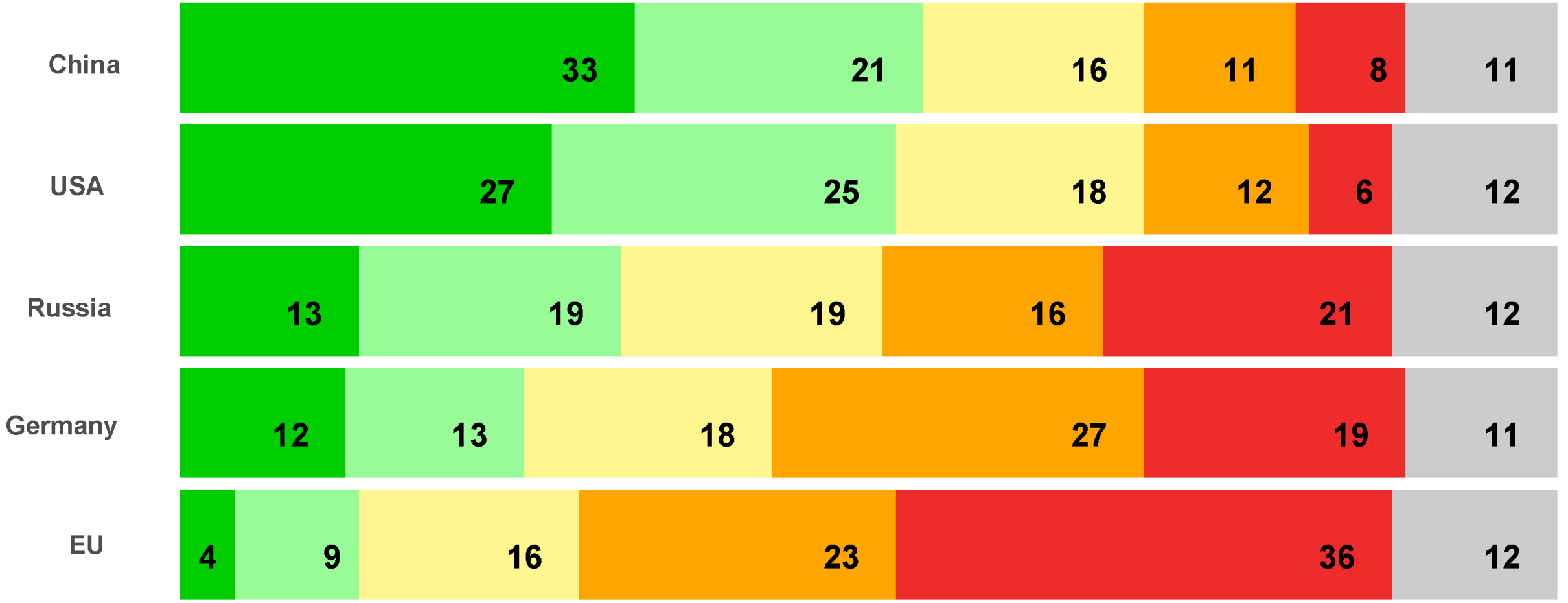
PLEASE EVALUATE THE CREDIBILITY OF INVESTORS FOR THE FOLLOWING ACTORS FROM 5 (SUCCESSFUL) TO 1 (UNSUCCESSFUL)



%



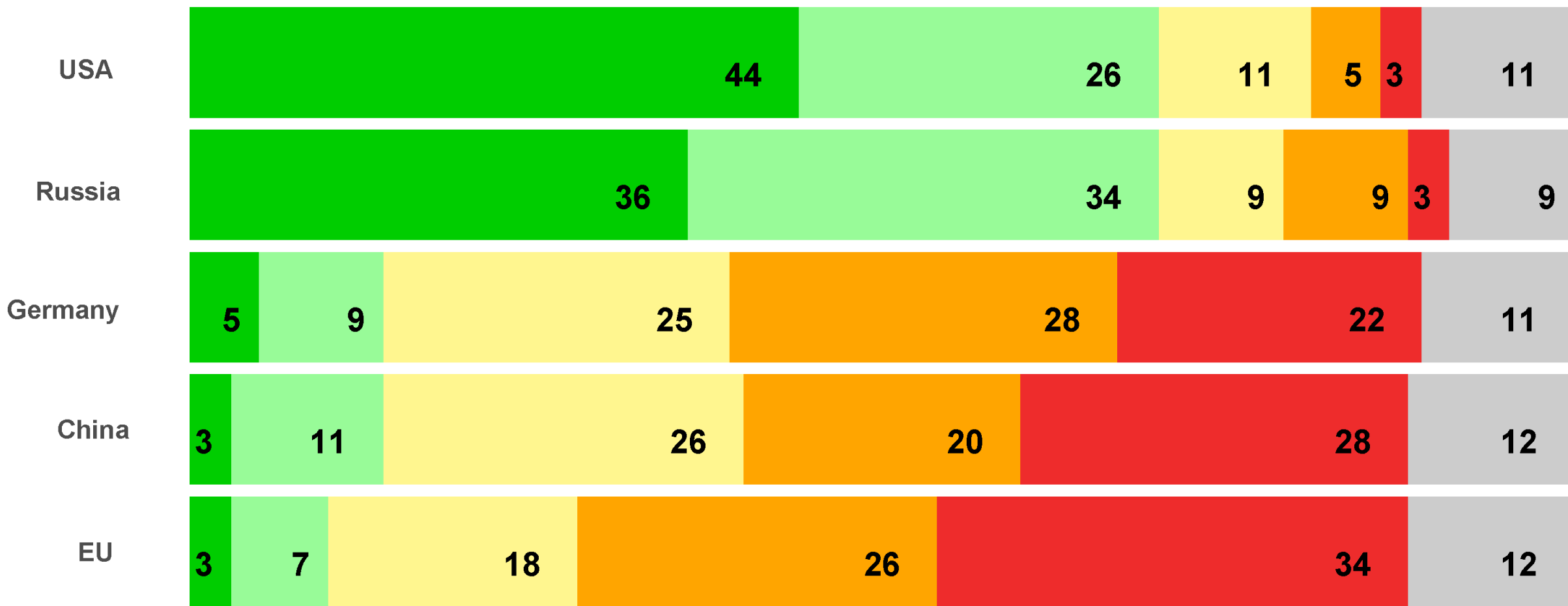
PLEASE EVALUATE THE TECHNOLOGICAL POWER OF THE FOLLOWING ACTORS
FROM 5 (SUCCESSFUL) TO 1 (UNSUCCESSFUL)



%
 5 3 1
 4 2 Don't know



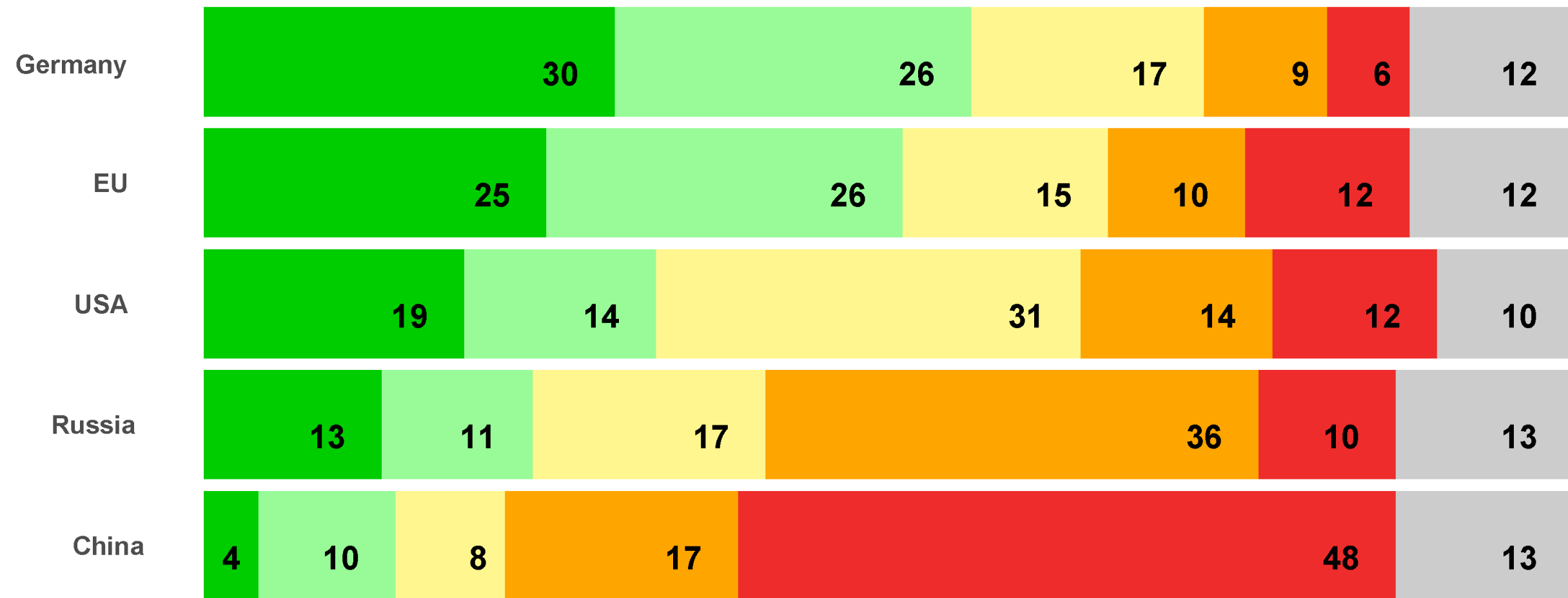
PLEASE EVALUATE THE POLITICAL POWER OF THE FOLLOWING ACTORS
FROM 5 (SUCCESSFUL) TO 1(UNSUCCESSFUL)



%



PLEASE EVALUATE THE DEMOCRACY, RULE OF LAW & HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE FOLLOWING ACTORS FROM 5 (SUCCESSFUL) TO 1 (UNSUCCESSFUL)



%

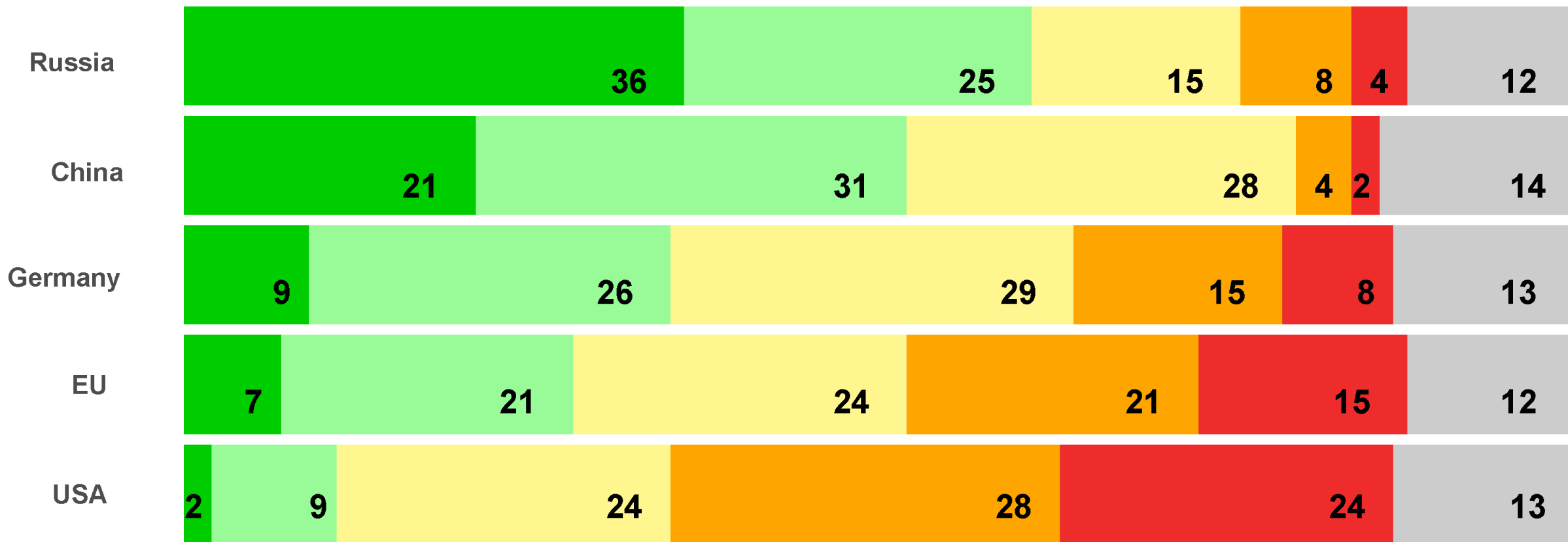


Perception of the major power influence

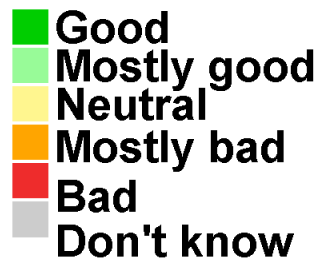
- Influence of Germany, China and Russia is regarded as **positive**, while the influence of EU and USA is seen as mostly **negative**
- Citizens do not expect a change in American foreign policy toward Serbia
- Membership in the EU would attract foreign investment and increase employment, while alliance with Russia would enhance security



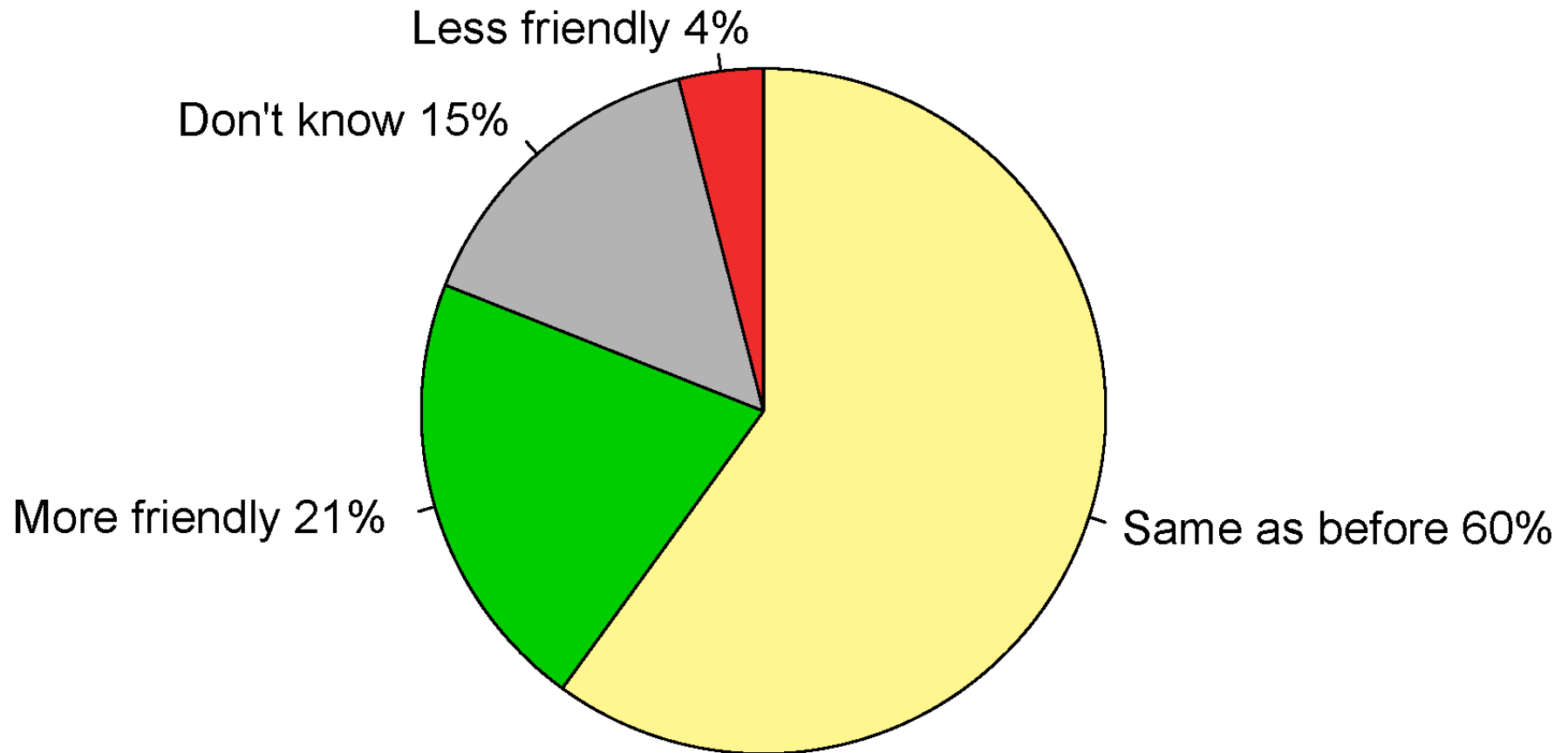
ASSESS THE INFLUENCE OF THE FOLLOWING ACTORS ON SERBIAN FOREIGN POLICY



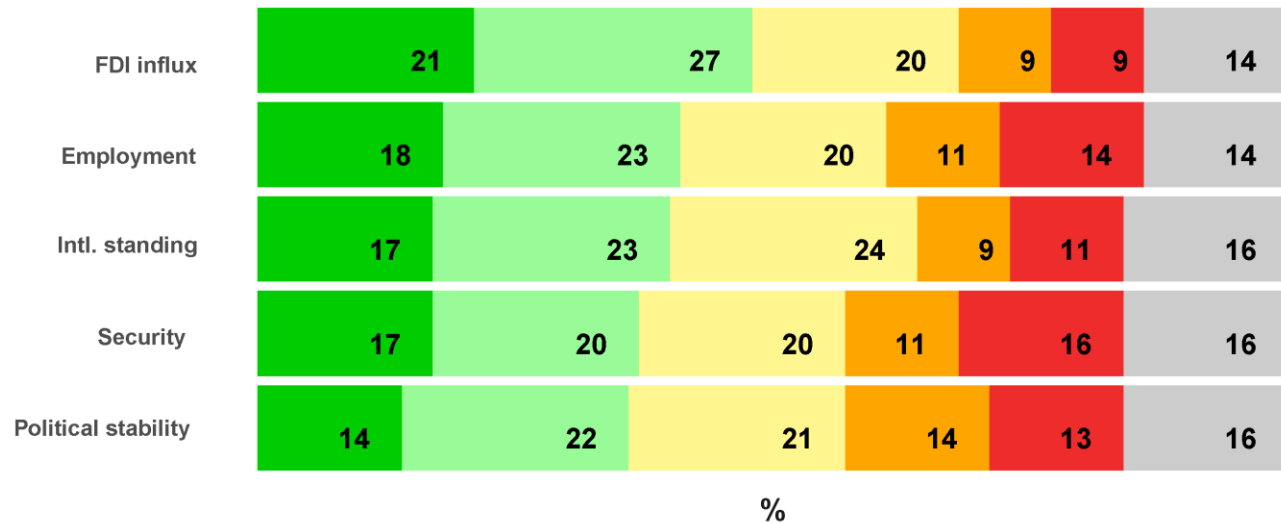
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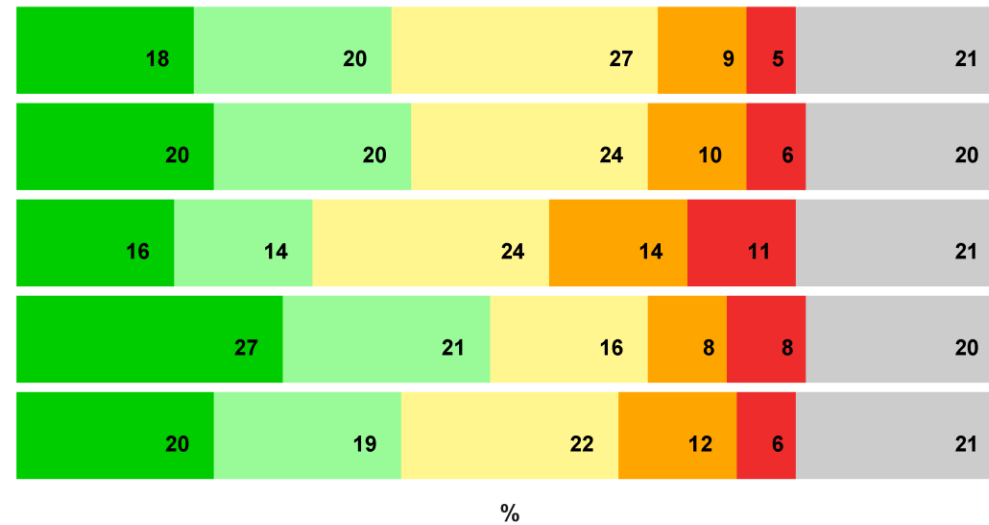
As Donald Trump assumes U.S. Presidency, the American foreign policy toward Serbia will be:



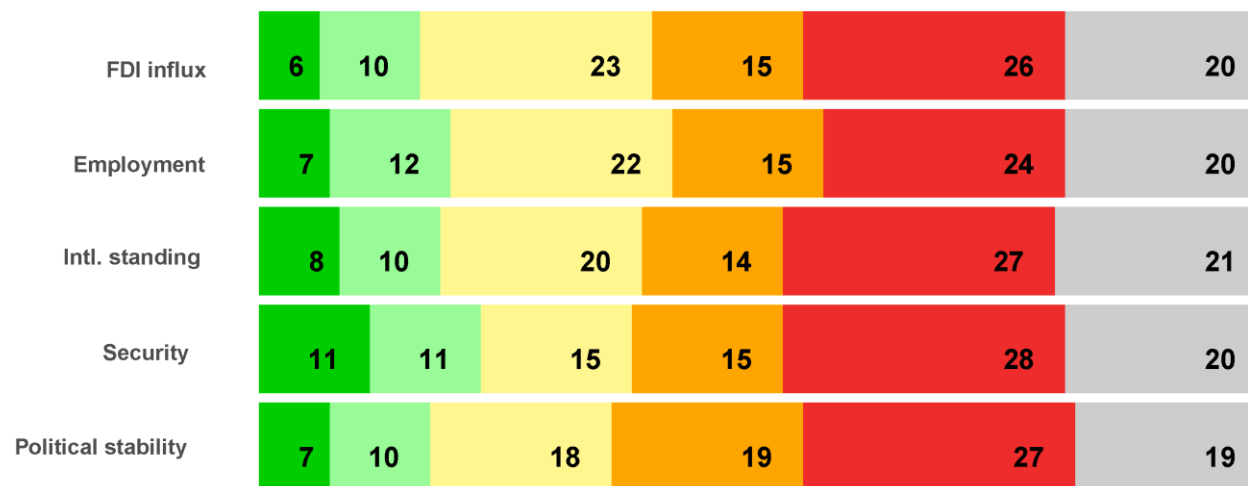
WHAT INFLUENCE WOULD EU MEMBERSHIP HAVE ON:



WHAT INFLUENCE WOULD ALLIANCE WITH RUSSIA HAVE ON:



■ Good
■ Mostly good
■ Neutral
■ Mostly bad
■ Bad
■ Don't know



WHAT EFFECT WOULD NATO MEMBERSHIP HAVE ON:



Perception of Relations with Major Powers & participation in peacekeeping operations

Sonja Stojanovic Gajic

Director

Belgrade Centre for Security Policy

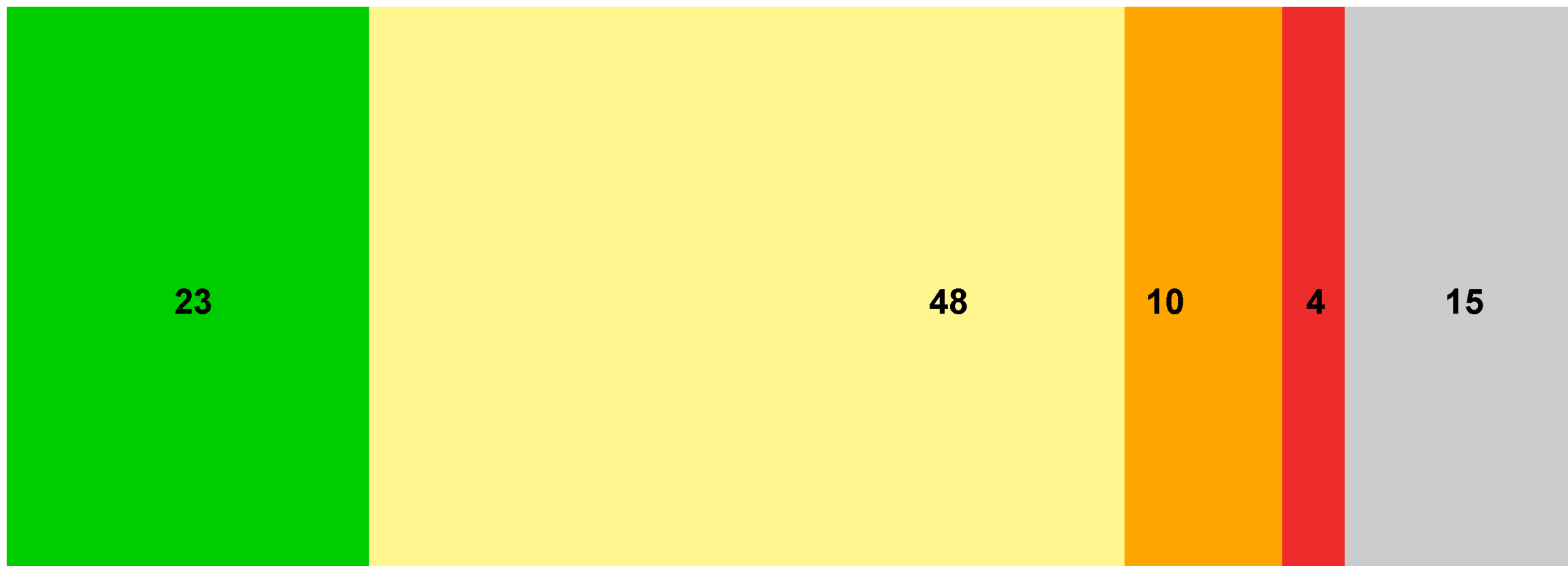


Relations with Russia






- The majority satisfied with the current level of cooperation with Russia
- One-third desires Serbia's integration into a Russia-led Eurasian Union, one-fifth is against, and the majority has no opinion
- The majority has no opinion on the Crimea issue and believes that Serbia should remain neutral regarding the Ukraine conflict



HOW DO YOU SEE POLITICAL COOPERATION BETWEEN SERBIA AND RUSSIA?

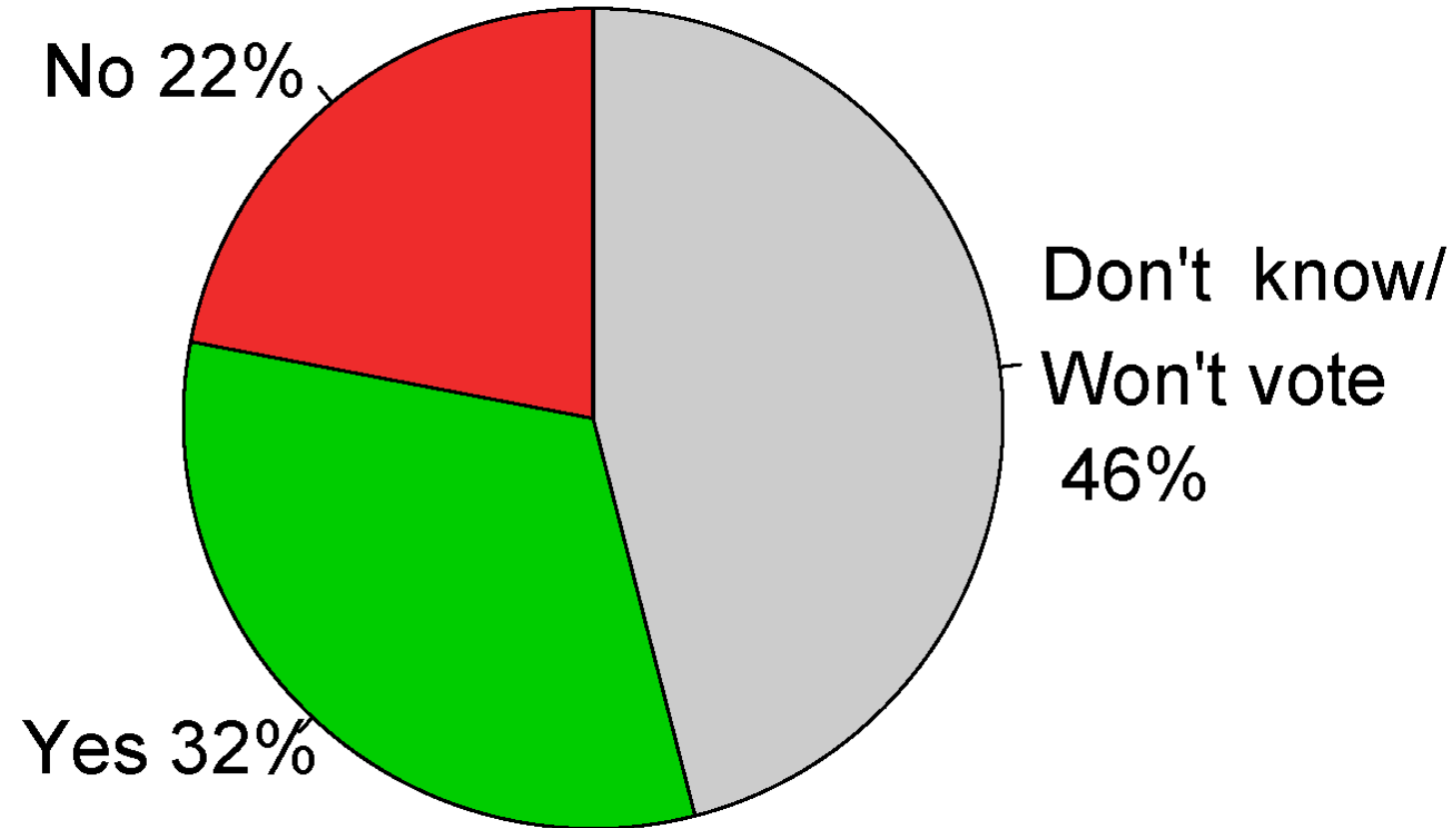


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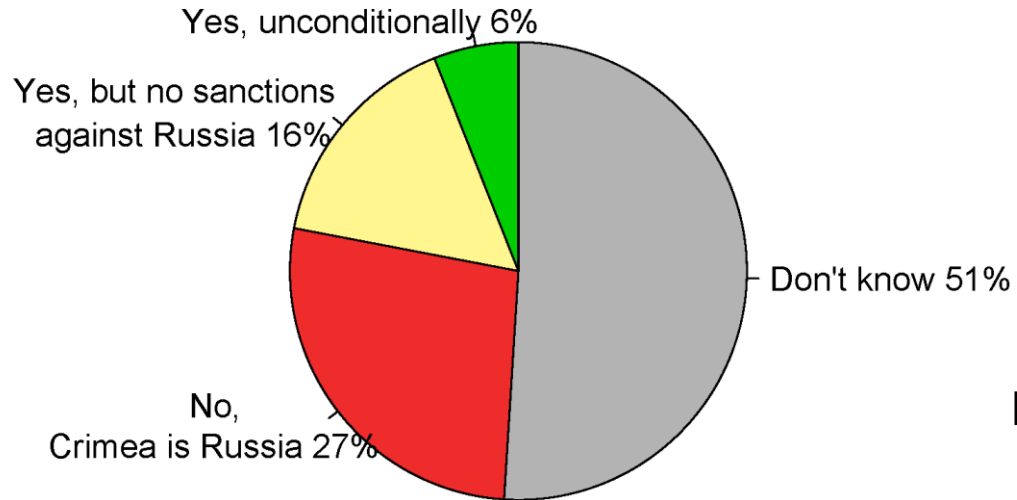
-  They should form a political alliance
-  Existing cooperation is satisfactory
-  Serbia is Russia's puppet
-  Russia's influence is bad
-  Don't know



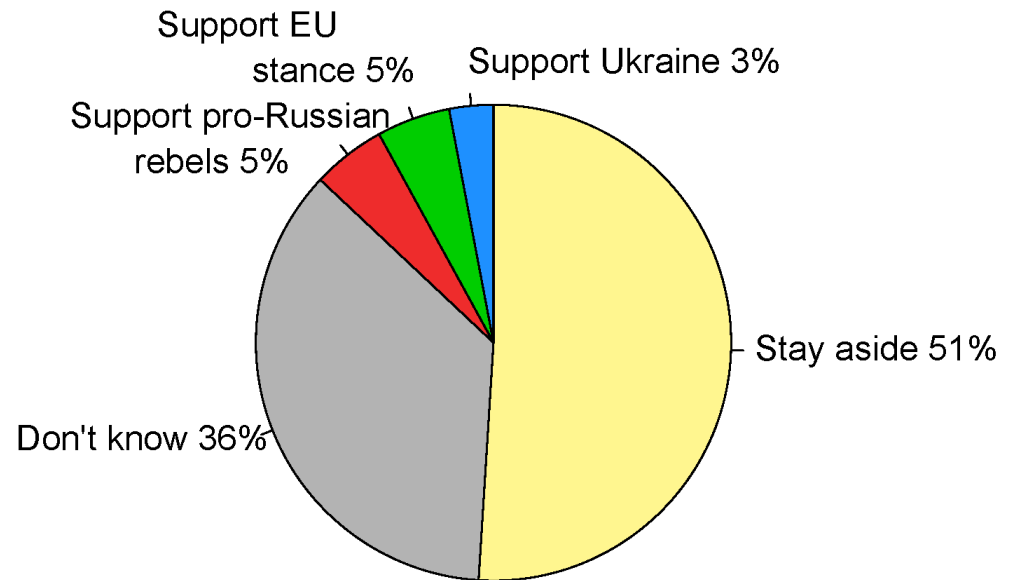
HOW WOULD YOU VOTE IN A REFERENDUM ON SERBIA'S MEMBERSHIP IN RUSSIA-LED EURASIAN UNION?



Should Serbia support the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine regarding Crimea?



Regarding the Ukraine conflict, Serbia should:

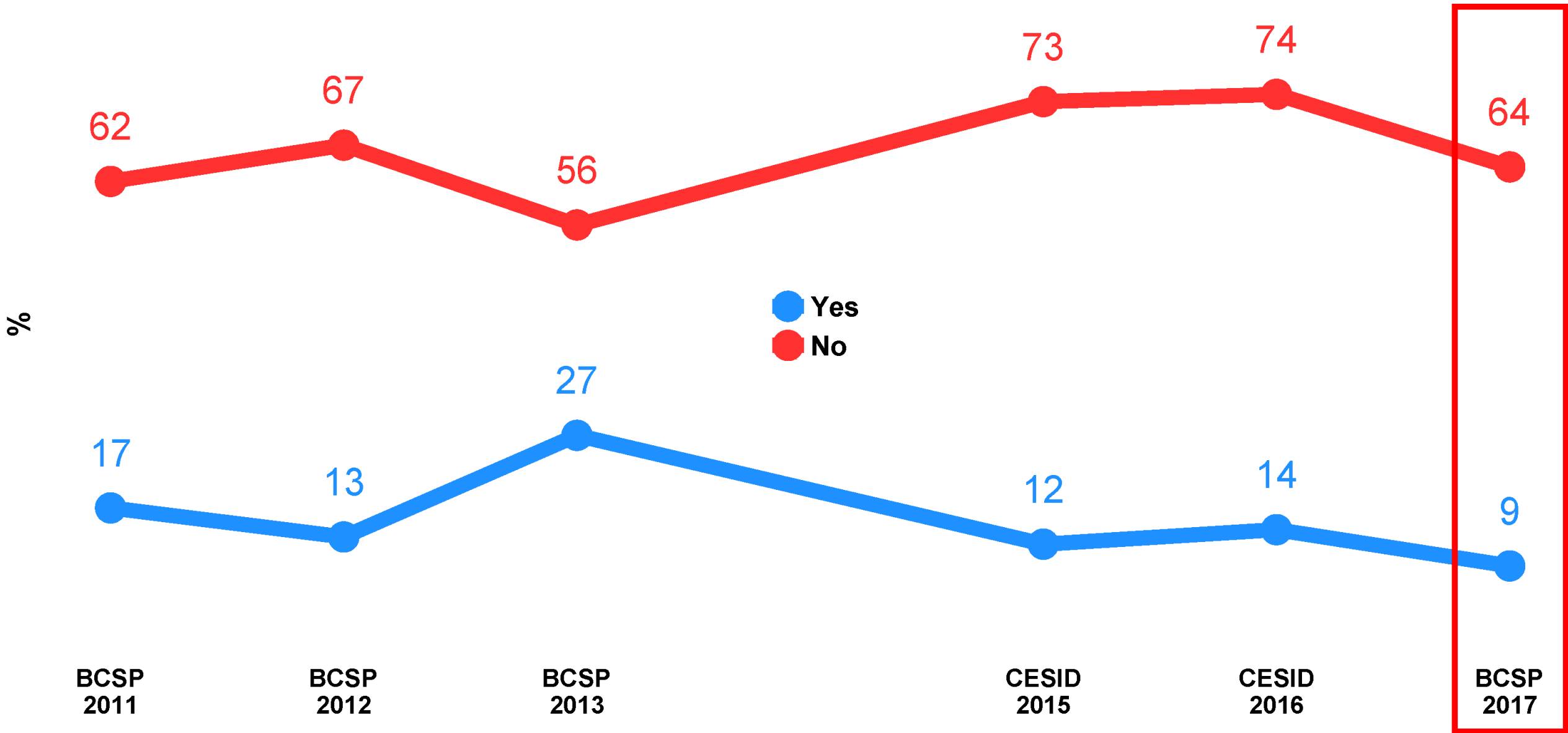


Relations with NATO

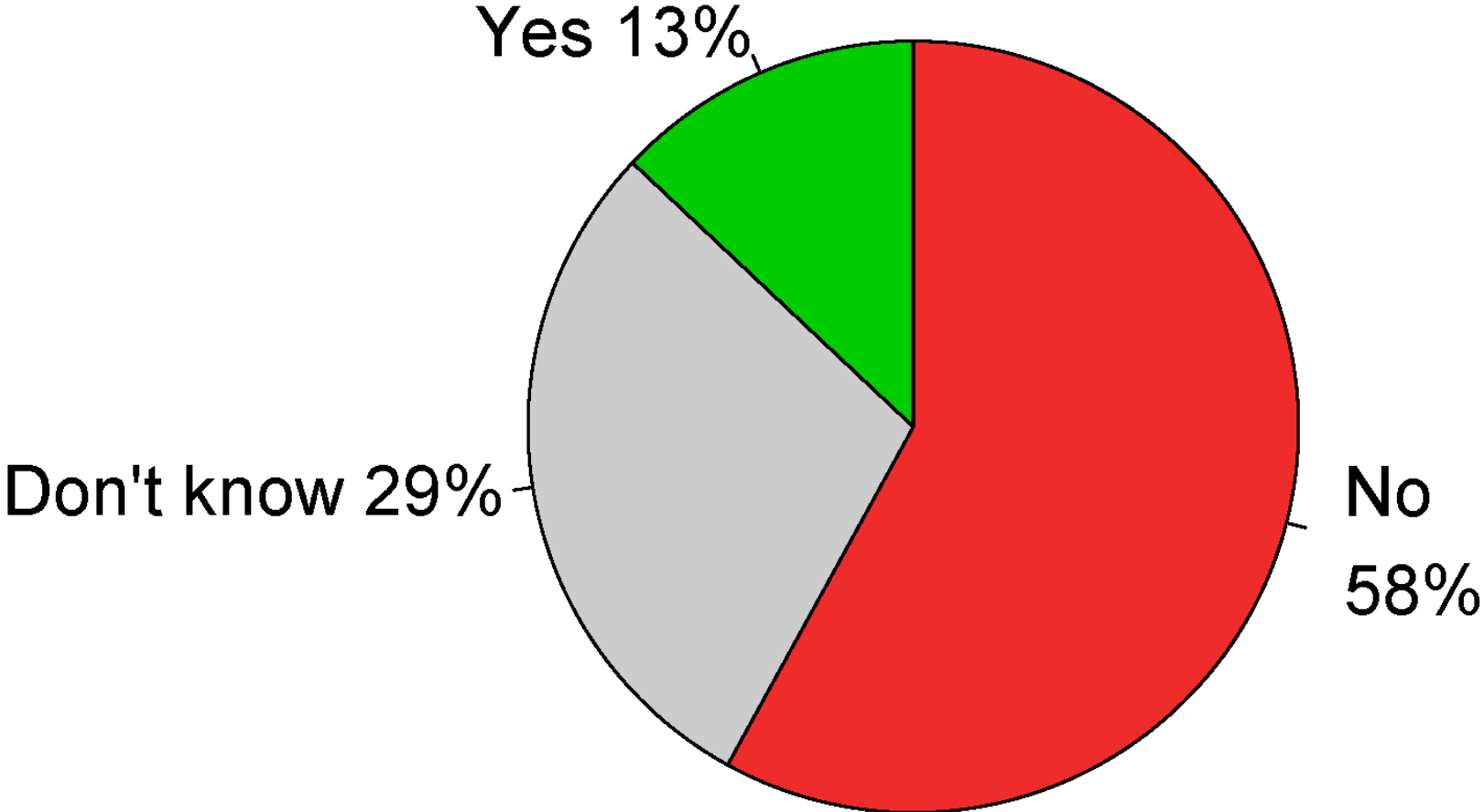
- The majority remains opposed to NATO membership and does not expect the membership; there is more negative than positive sentiments regarding a potential membership
- Every eleventh respondent in favor of NATO membership, one-fifth expects membership to have positive influence on security and FDI influx
- One-third is in favor of cooperation through the Partnership for Peace, among them are those who prefer more intensive cooperation



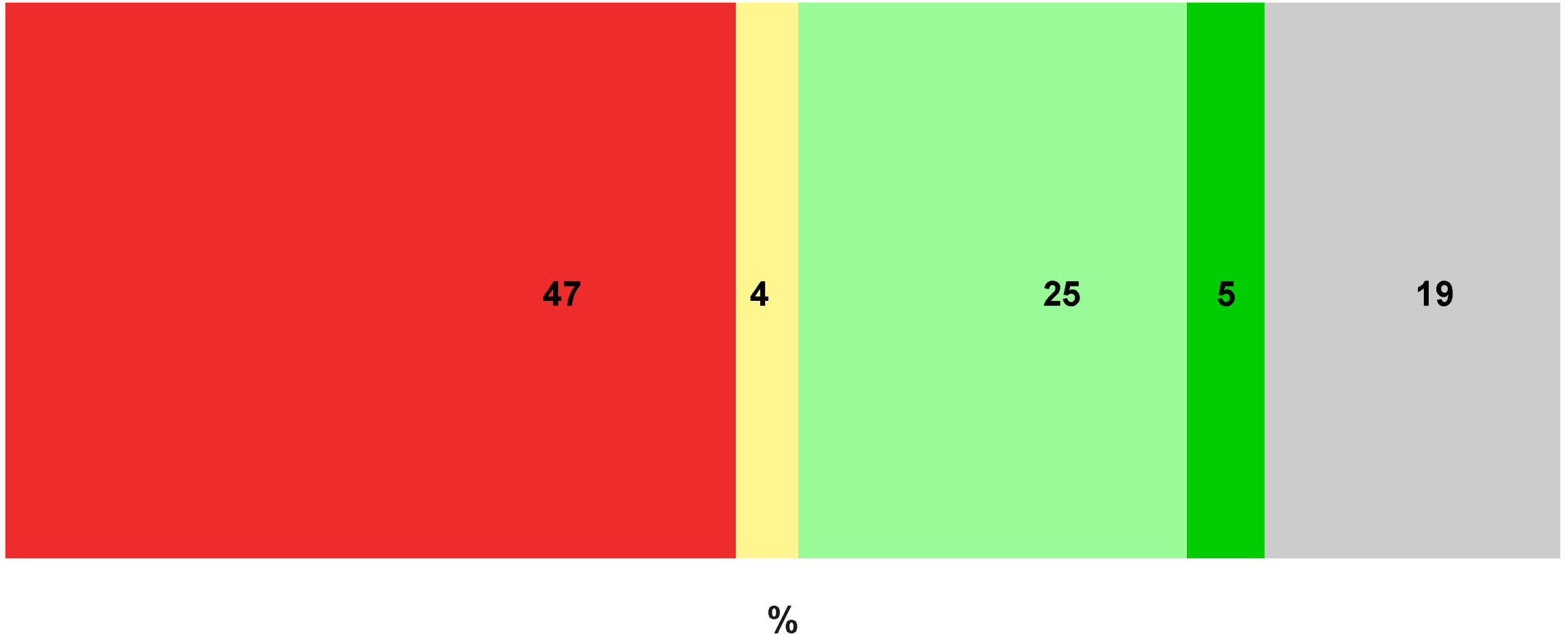
HOW WOULD YOU VOTE IN A REFERENDUM ON NATO MEMBERSHIP?



DO YOU BELIEVE THAT SERBIA WILL BECOME NATO MEMBER?



WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE REGARDING THE COOPERATION WITH NATO?



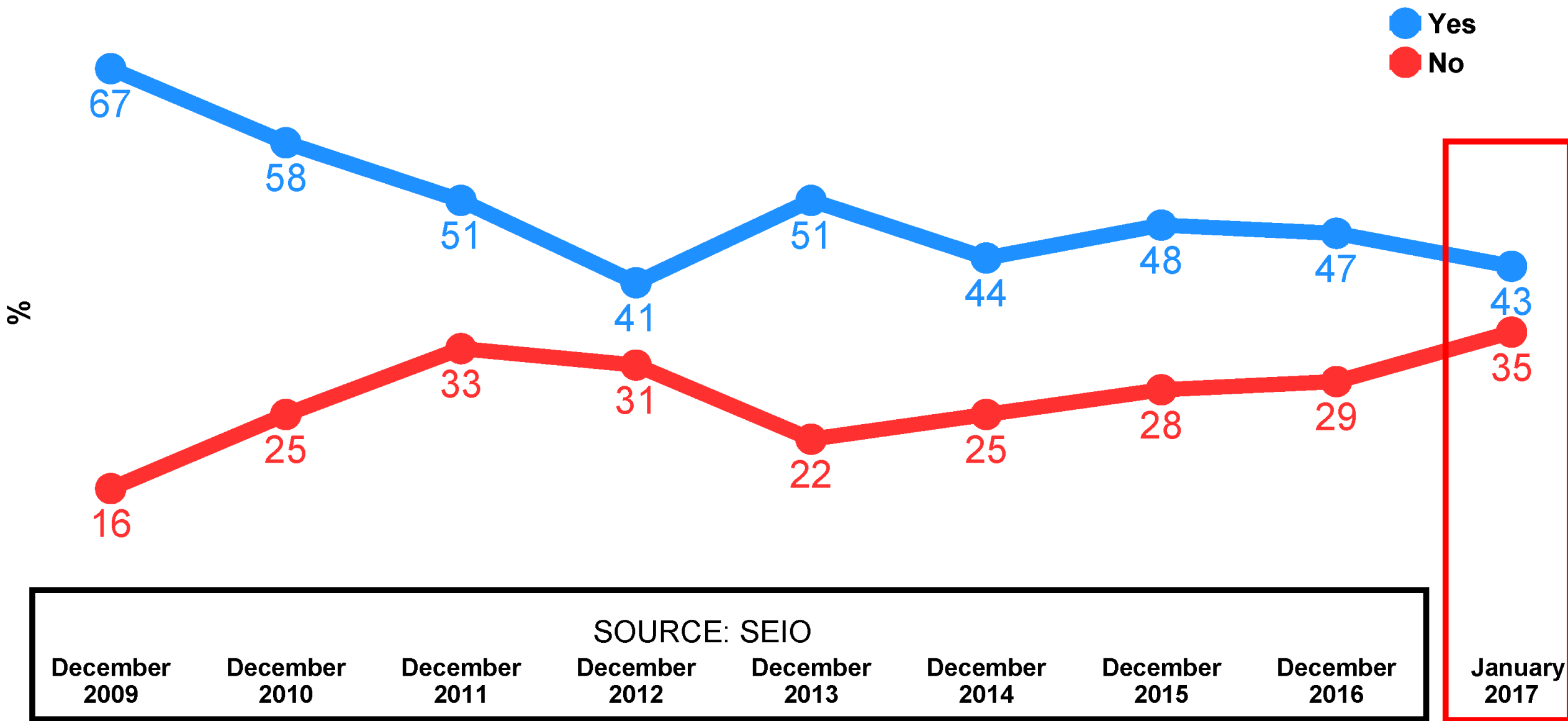
- I object to any kind of cooperation with NATO**
- I support greater cooperation with NATO, including joint activity under UN mandate**
- I support existing cooperation within Partnership for Peace, including neutrality**
- I support NATO membership**
- Don't know**



Relations with EU

- More citizens in favor than against EU membership, if recognition of Kosovo were a requirement the majority would give up on EU accession
- The length of accession affects the public perception so that the majority believes Serbia will never become EU member
- Although the majority is indifferent regarding a EU disintegration, there are more positive than negative associations and especially regarding peace, democracy, human rights and economic benefits

HOW WOULD YOU VOTE IN A REFERENDUM ON EU MEMBERSHIP?



SOURCE: SEIO

December
2009

December
2010

December
2011

December
2012

December
2013

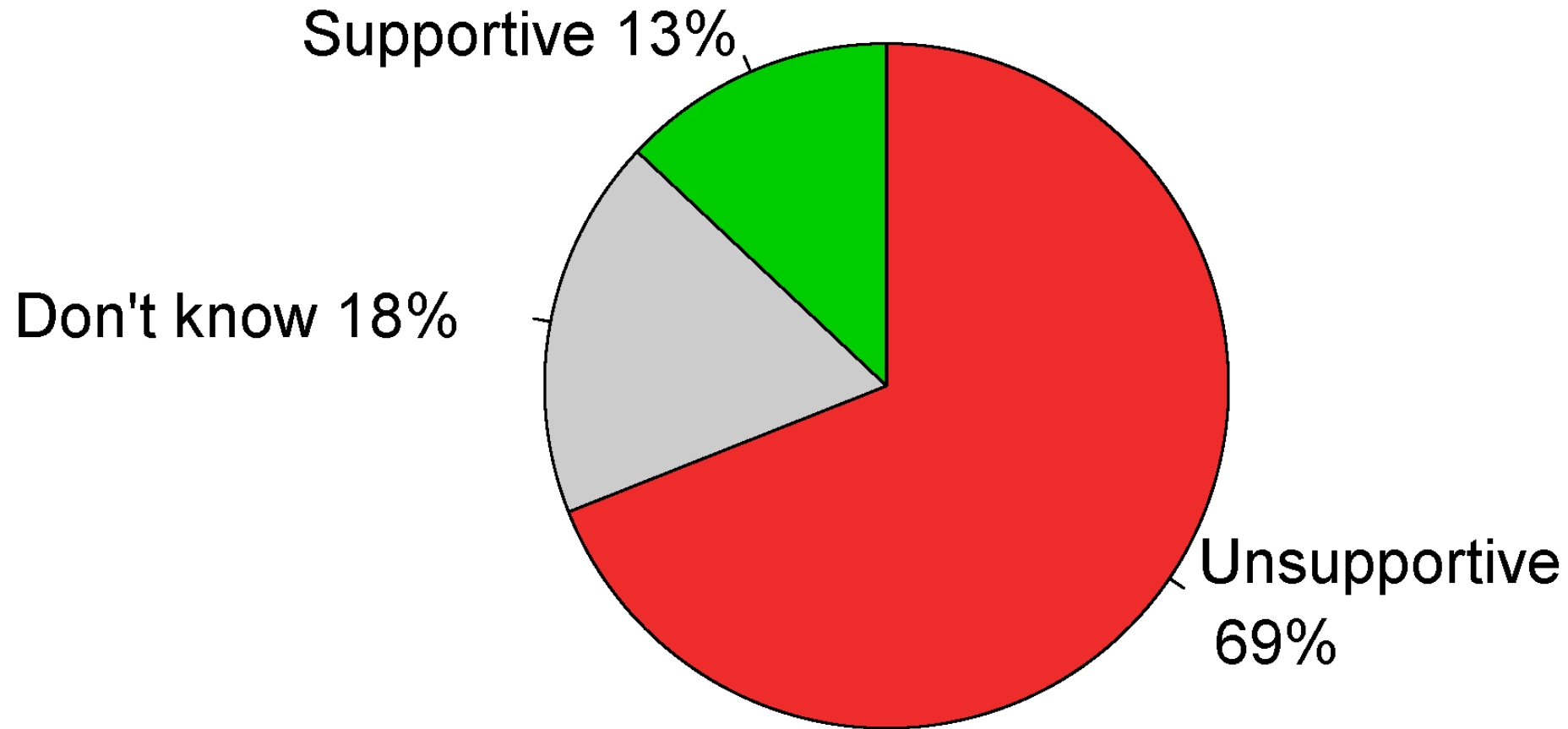
December
2014

December
2015

December
2016

January
2017

WHAT WOULD BE YOUR ATTITUDE TO EU ACCESSION IF IT REQUIRED RECOGNITION OF KOSOVO?

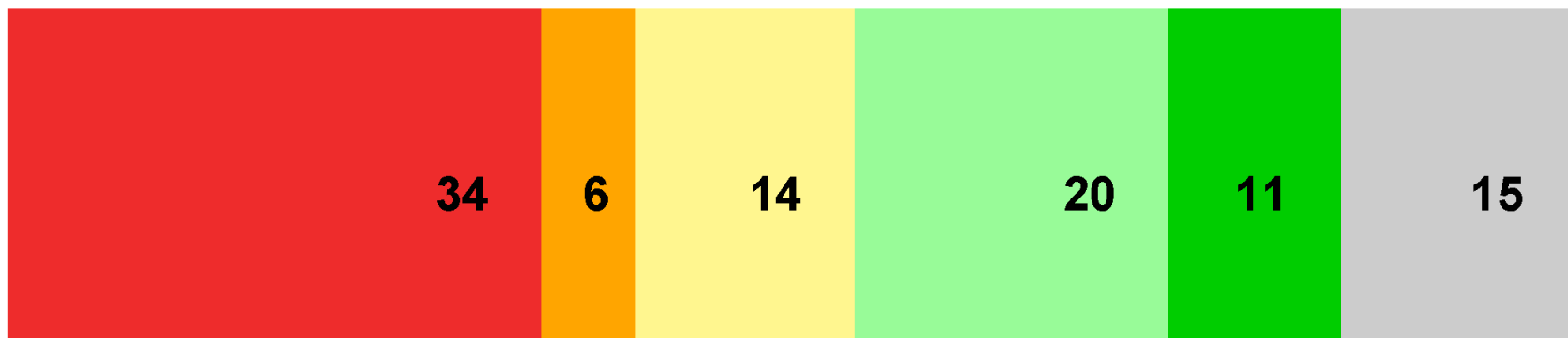


EU ACCESSION SPEED

PLEASE ASSESS THE CURRENT EU ACCESSION SPEED



HOW FAST WOULD YOU LIKE SERBIA TO APPROACH THE EU MEMBERSHIP?

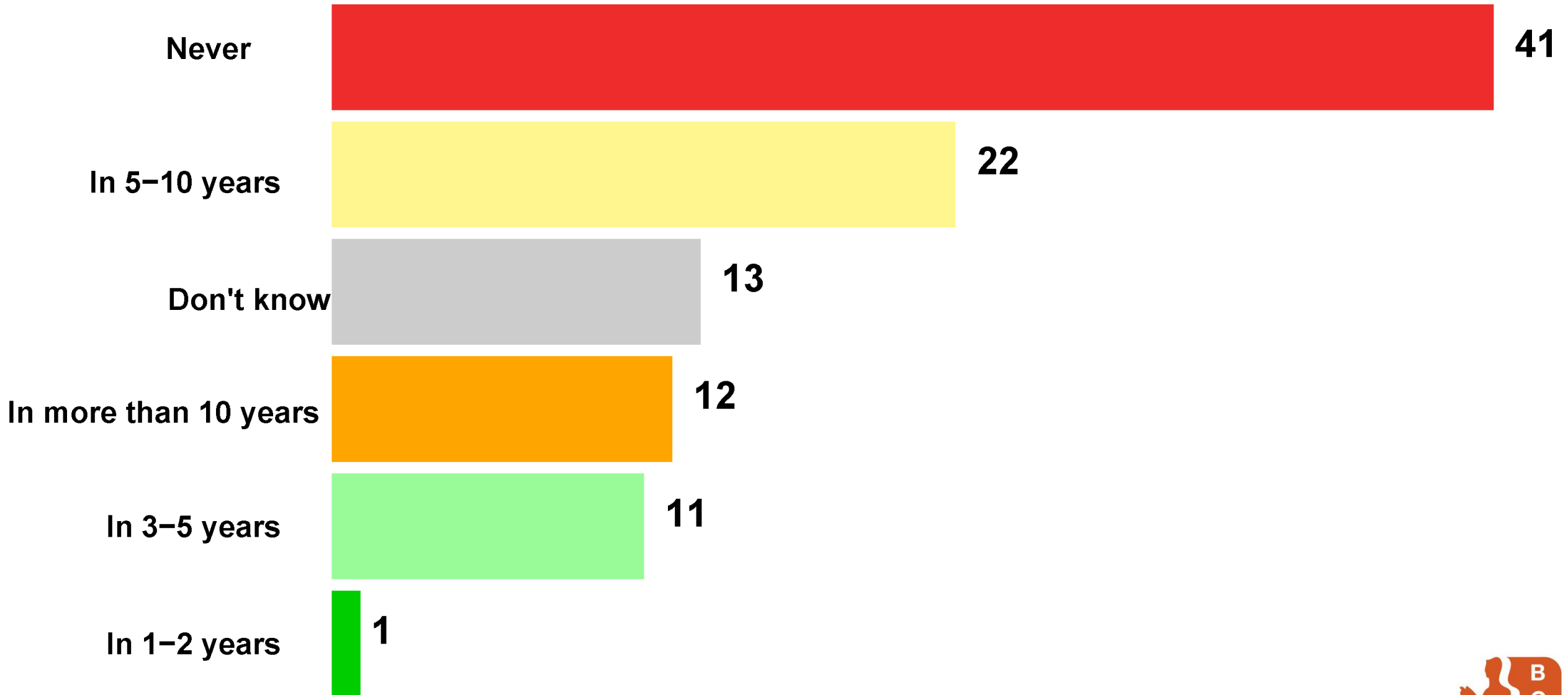


%

- Stand still
- Slow
- Mediocre
- Fast
- Fastest possible
- Don't know



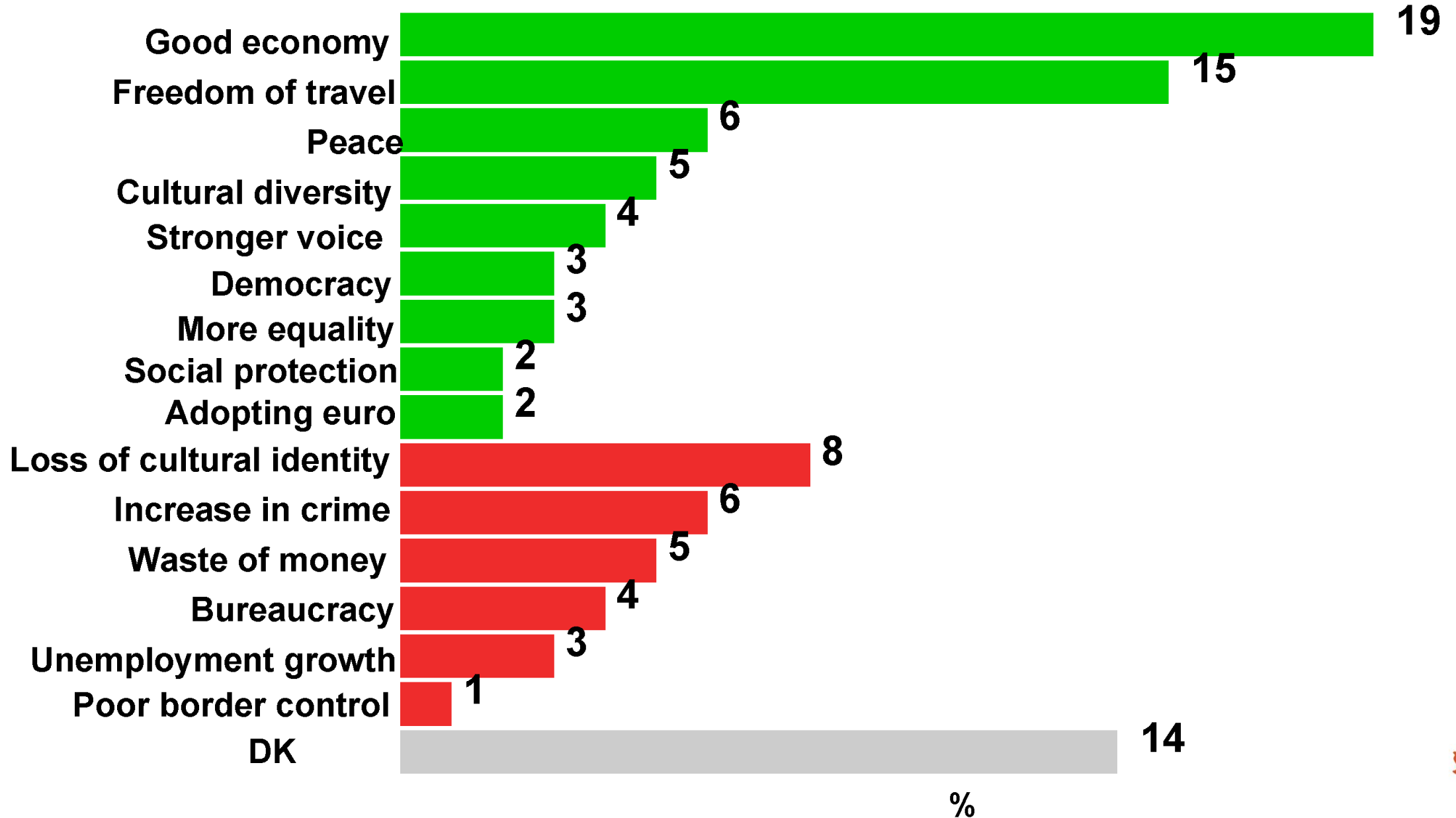
WHEN WILL SERBIA BECOME EU MEMBER?



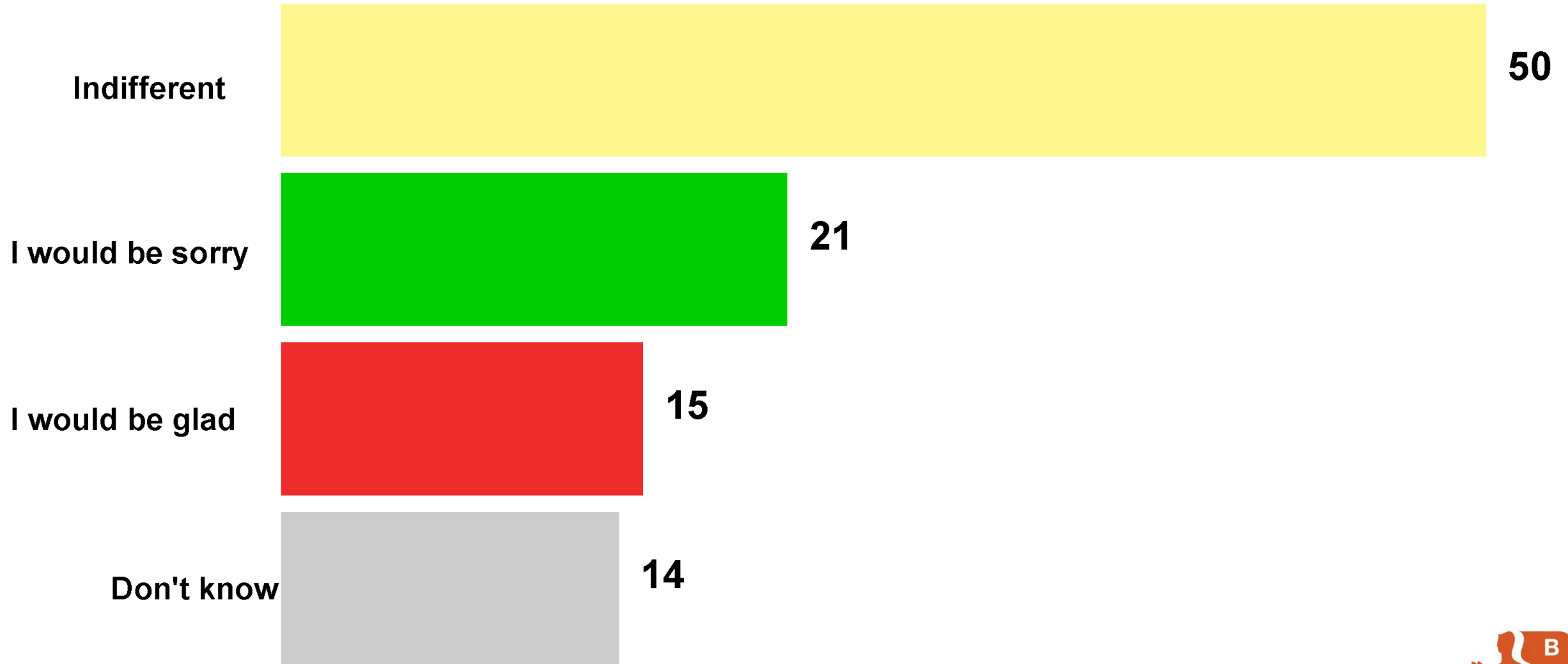
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WHAT DOES EU MEAN TO YOU PERSONALLY?



HOW WOULD YOU FEEL IF EU CEASED TO EXIST?



%

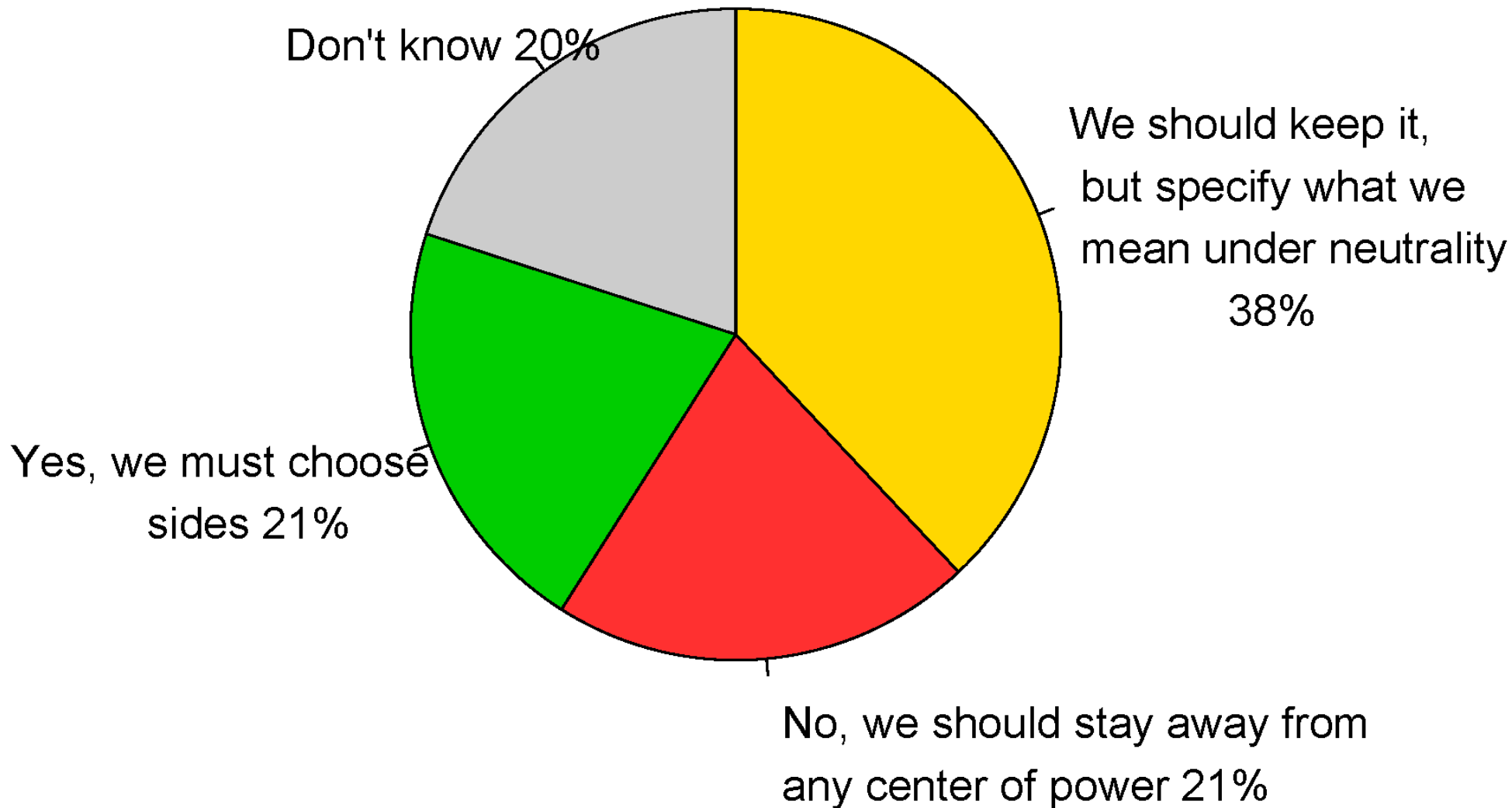


Relations toward the policy of neutrality

- The majority supports the policy of neutrality
- Among the supporters of neutrality, the most numerous are those who demand better specification of the policy of neutrality
- Among those in favor of “choosing sides”, the majority are the supporters of Dveri, DSS, SRS, DJB and LDP



SHOULD SERBIA CHANGE ITS POLICY OF NEUTRALITY IN THE FOLLOWING PERIOD?

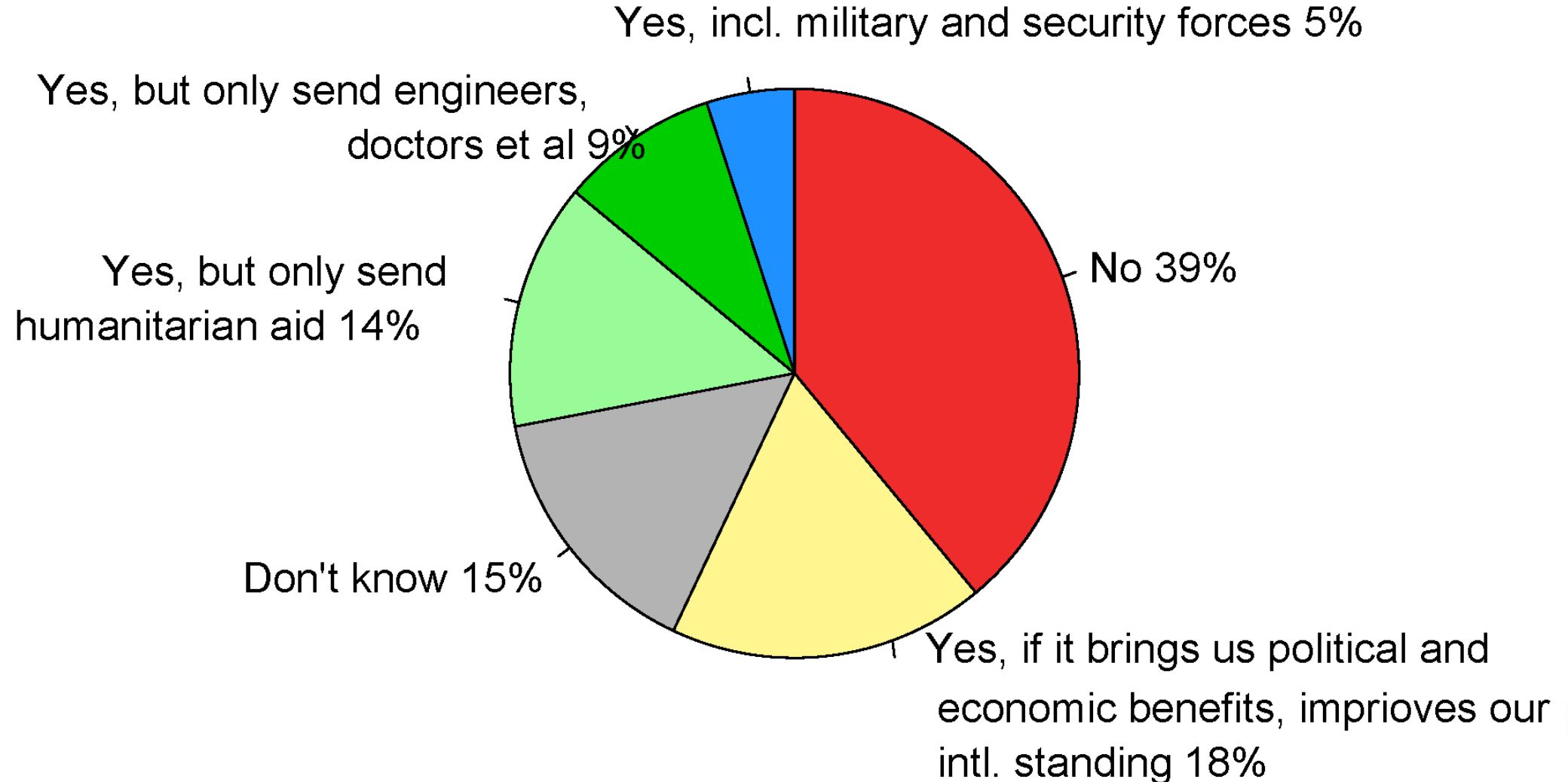


Relations toward engagement outside of borders of Serbia

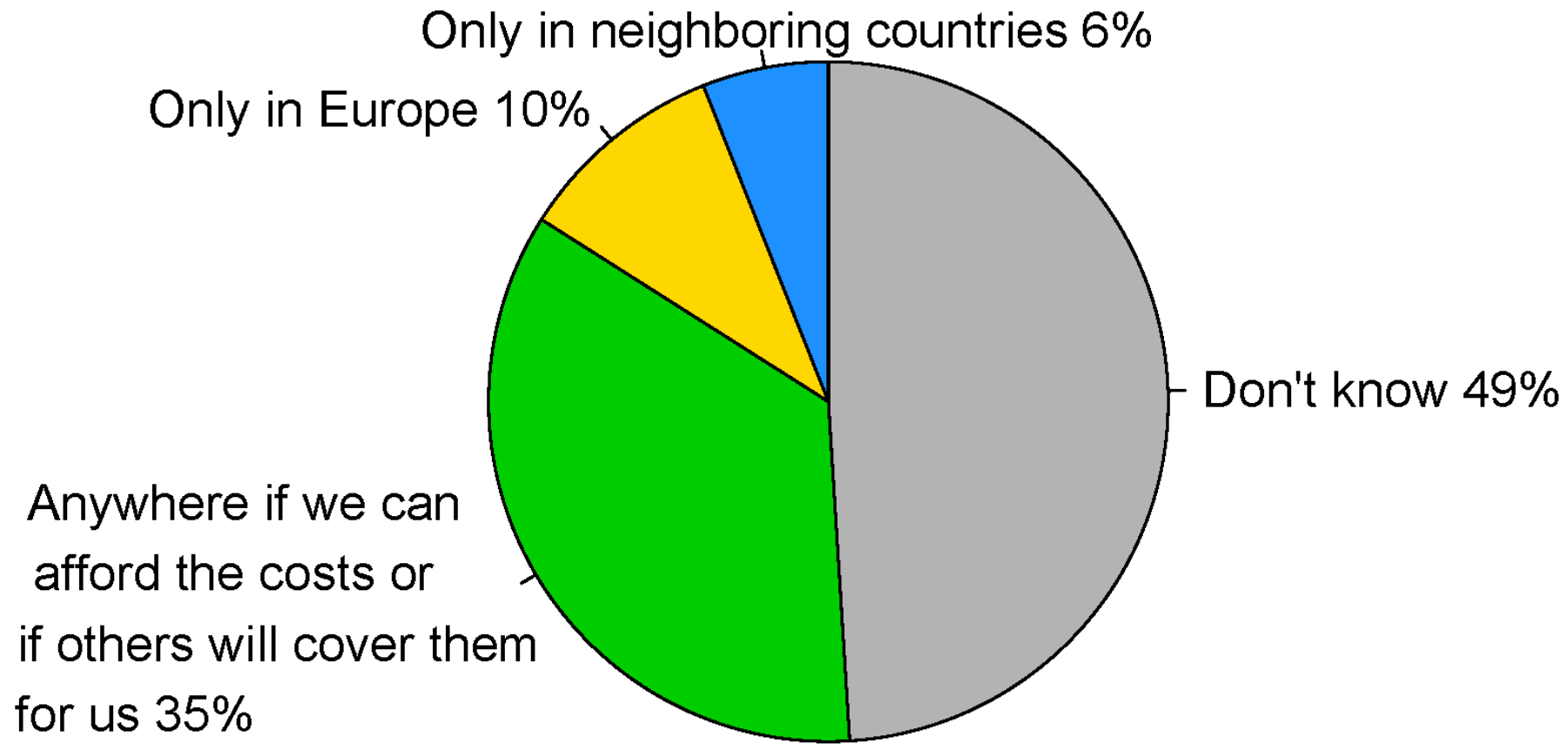
- Slightly more of those supporting involvement of Serbia beyond its borders in resolving security issues, and similar in relation to the conflict in Syria
- The costs of engagement are key criteria for selecting destinations of engagement
- Most support for the existing commitment under the UN flag, and in cooperation with Russia and the EU



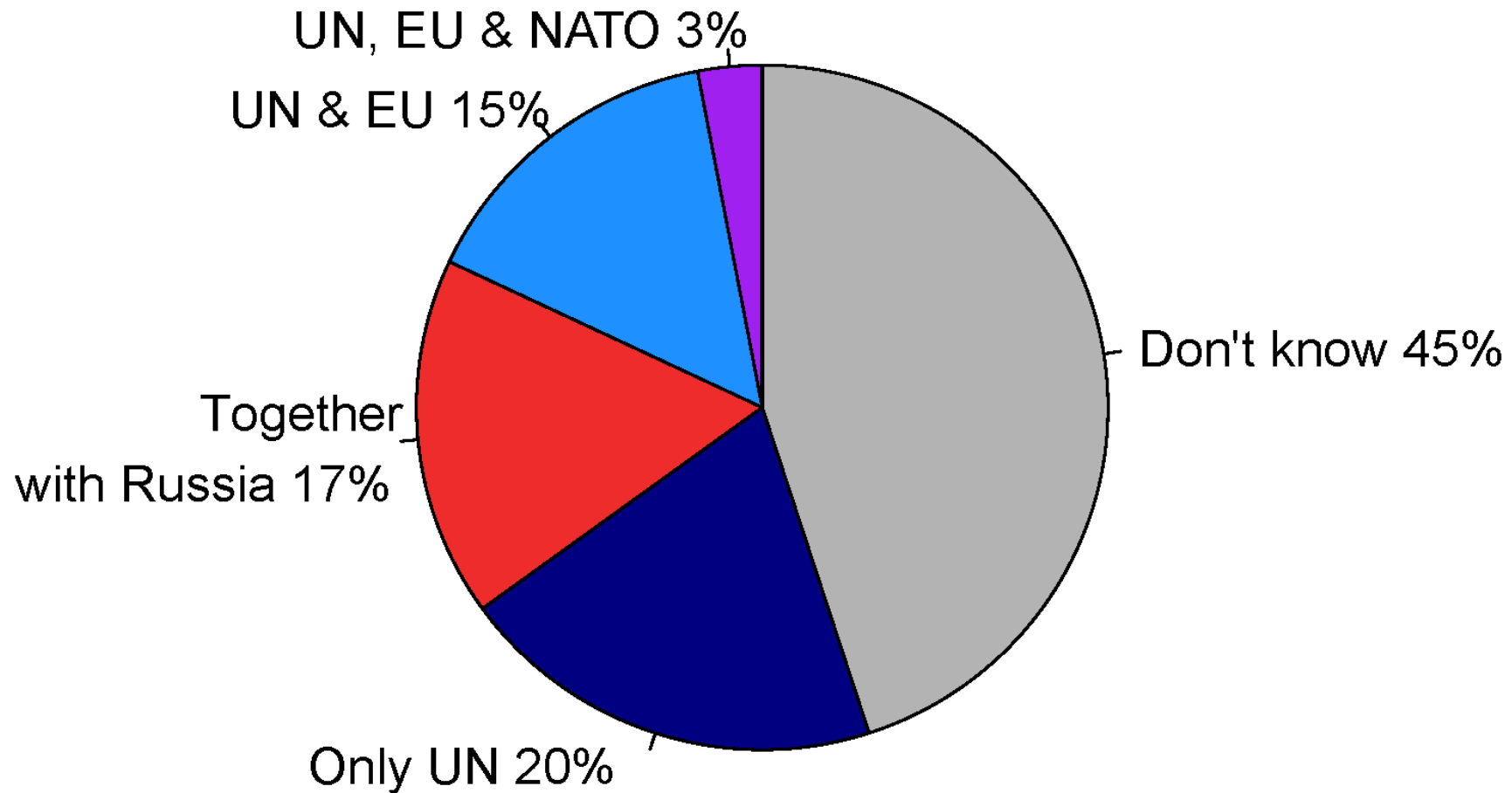
Should Serbia engage beyond its borders on solving security issues?



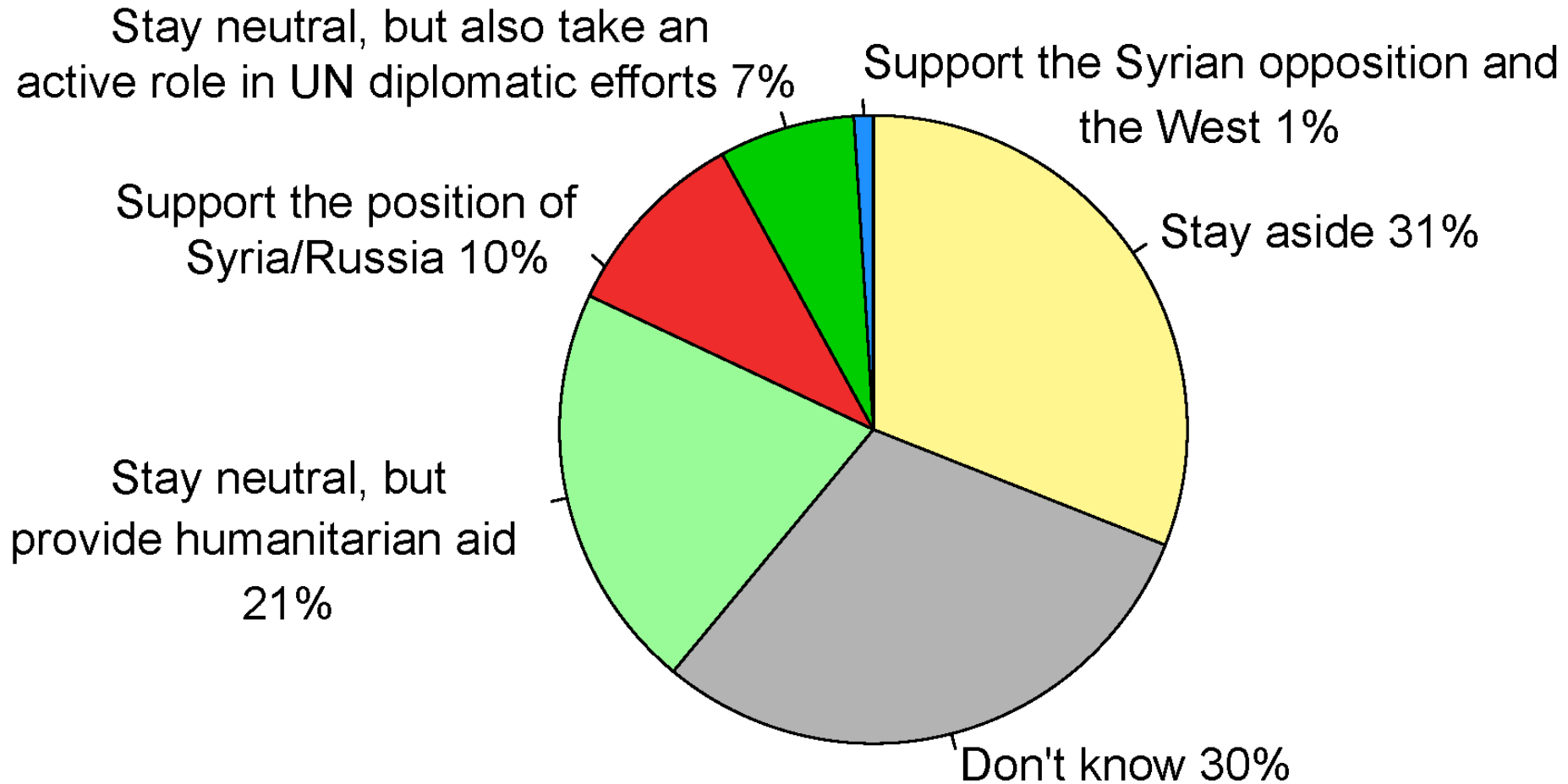
If you are in favor of Serbia's engagement beyond its borders, in which part of the world should it take place?



Under whose flag should Serbia engage abroad?



Regarding the Syrian War, Serbia should:



Propositions for the discussion on the Strategy of National Security of Serbia

- Include members of all political parties, civil society, academic community and interested citizens in the public discussion on the potential options for the Strategy: consensus through dialogue = better quality
- Better specify what neutrality means in a changing geopolitical environment
- Align the national security policy with EU policy and determine best options for the policy of neutrality and its compatibility with EU membership requirements
- Make citizens more accustomed to benefits and costs of engagement beyond Serbian borders

