

PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY REPORT

Serbia and the European Union

Geopolitics and EU Values – in Tension or in Tandem?

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Methodological Framework

Research objective: To explore the key factors shaping Serbian citizens' views of the European Union at a time when the balance between geopolitics and fundamental values is becoming increasingly contested.

Data collection method: TAPI, a quantitative survey conducted through face-to-face interviews in the respondents' homes, where the interviewer used a tablet device to enter participants' answers directly into the Ninamedia server.

Sample size: 1,000 respondents

Geographical scope: Republic of Serbia, excluding Kosovo*

Data collection period: 19 January – 2 February 2026

Data entry software: WARP IT, a professional, licensed programme for market research with a wide range of possibilities when setting up a project.

Post-stratification variables: gender, age, education, type of settlement and region

Control: Conducted on 20% of the sample to verify the validity of the responses

Key findings



A relative majority of citizens (**39.8%**) support Serbia's membership in the EU, while **33.8%** are opposed. Around a quarter of citizens (**26.4%**) have a neutral stance.



In the event of a referendum on EU membership, among respondents who stated that they would vote (85,3% of the sample), a majority (**41,6%**) would vote in favour of membership, **32,4%** would vote against, while slightly more than a quarter (**26%**) do not know how they would vote.



Support for EU membership is higher among highly educated citizens and declines with lower levels of education.



Support for EU membership is the highest among individuals aged 18–29, and the lowest among those over 60.



Almost a quarter of citizens (**23,9%**) believe that Serbia will never join the European Union, **21,9%** do not know how to assess the likelihood of joining, and only **6,9%** believe it will happen before 2030.



A large number of citizens view the EU primarily as a geopolitical actor rather than a values-based one, and are sceptical about the EU's intentions towards Serbia in the enlargement process.

- As many as **41,6%** of citizens believe that the EU is more interested in pursuing its own political and economic interests in the region rather than in the state of democracy and the rule of law.
- As many as **41,8%** believe that the EU is seeking to integrate Serbia in order to gain access to lithium and natural resources.
- As many as **43,9%** of citizens believe that it is more important for the EU that Serbia imposes sanctions on Russia than for it to become a developed democracy.



Citizens show low trust in the EU's impartiality in the enlargement process.

- Only **27,7%** of citizens believe that the EU applies the same rules to all candidate countries.
- Only **27,4%** of citizens consider the EU to be a reliable partner for Serbia.
- Only **25,7%** of citizens believe that the EU genuinely wants to integrate Serbia into the European community.



Citizens believe in the macroeconomic benefits of Serbia's EU membership, while remaining largely cautious regarding the personal benefits of membership.



Slightly more than half of citizens (**51,7%**) believe that democracy is the best form of governing, regardless of the circumstances.



Only **34,2%** of citizens stated that they feel European.



A relative majority of citizens (**39%**) assess the state of the rule of law as poor or very poor.

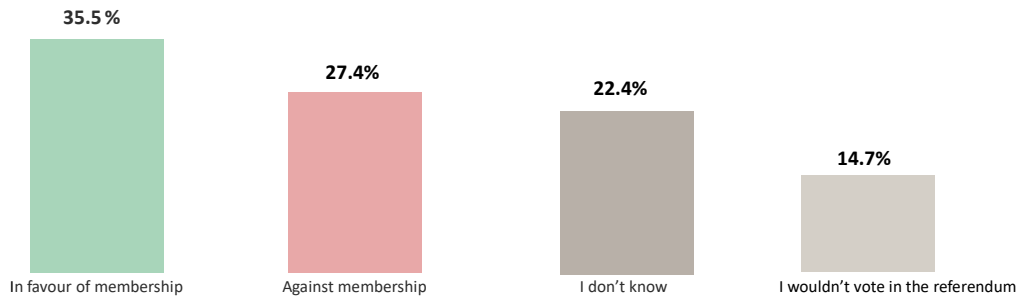


More than half of citizens (**51,7%**) stated that they rarely or never follow the news related to the EU.

Results

01 · SIMULATION OF A REFERENDUM

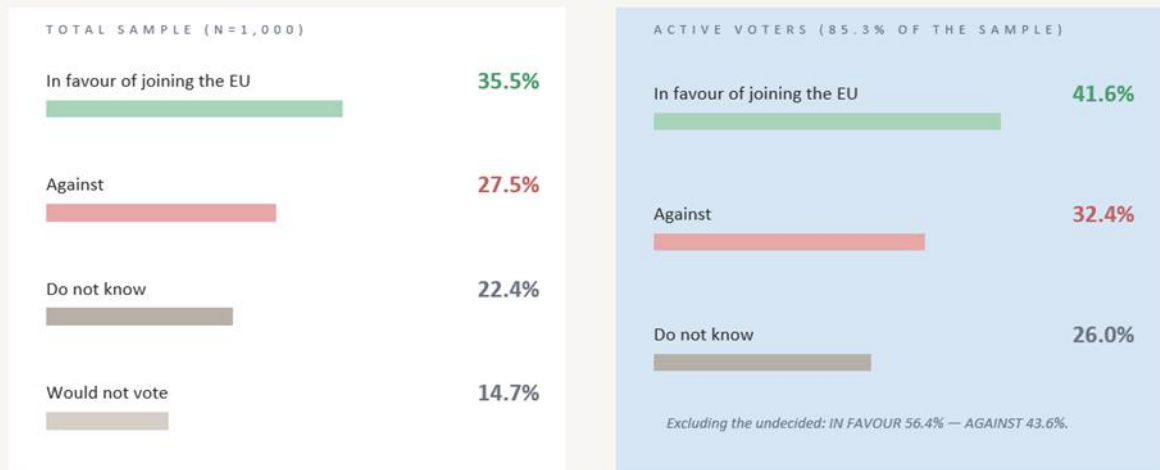
1. If a referendum on Serbia's membership in the EU were held this week, how would you vote?



If a referendum on Serbia's membership of the EU were held this week, the largest share of citizens surveyed would support EU membership (35.5%), but a significant share would vote against it (27.4%). A high percentage of citizens are undecided on how they would vote (22.4%), while 14.7% said they would not vote in the referendum. More than a third of citizens are undecided on how they would vote in the membership referendum when two categories are combined – those who do not know how they would vote (22.4%) and those who would not vote at all (14.7%).

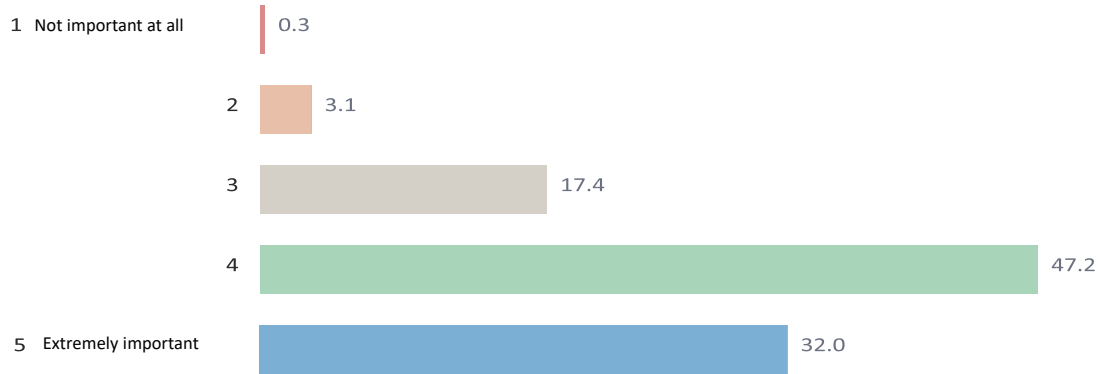
02 - EU REFERENDUM SIMULATION

How would you vote in the EU referendum?



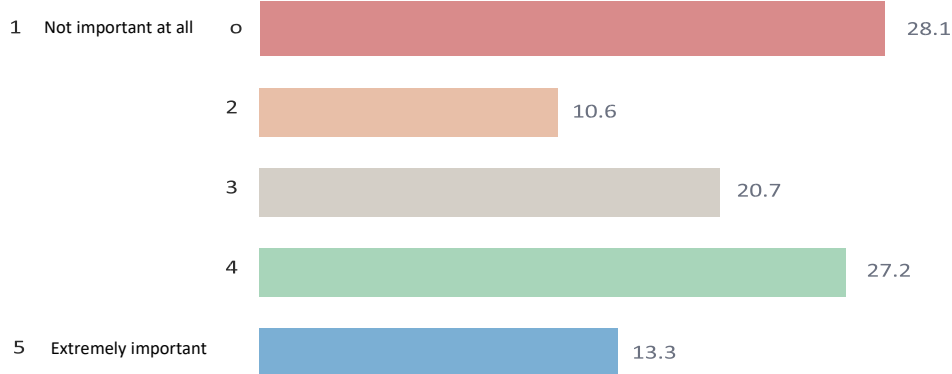
European Policy Centre (CEP) · March 2026 · N = 1,000

2a. On a scale of 1 to 5, how important is it to you that Serbia becomes a member of the European Union?



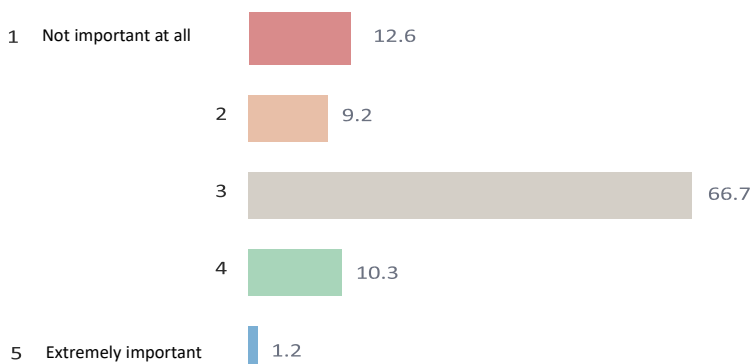
Among citizens who would vote in favour of EU membership in a referendum, 79.2% consider the issue of Serbia's EU membership to be important or extremely important.

2b. On a scale of 1 to 5, how important is it to you that Serbia remains outside the European Union?



Among citizens who would vote against EU membership in a referendum, a large number of them consider it important that Serbia remains outside the EU (40.5%), while a slightly smaller share consider it not very important or not important at all (38.7%).

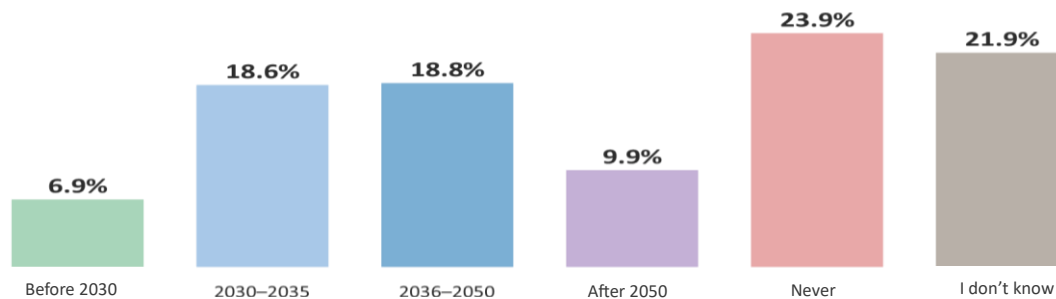
2c. On a scale of 1 to 5, how important is the issue of Serbia's EU membership to you?



Among citizens who are undecided or would not vote in a referendum, a two-thirds majority (66.7%) are indifferent, stating that the issue of Serbia's EU membership is neither important nor unimportant to them.

03 · ACCESSION PERSPECTIVE

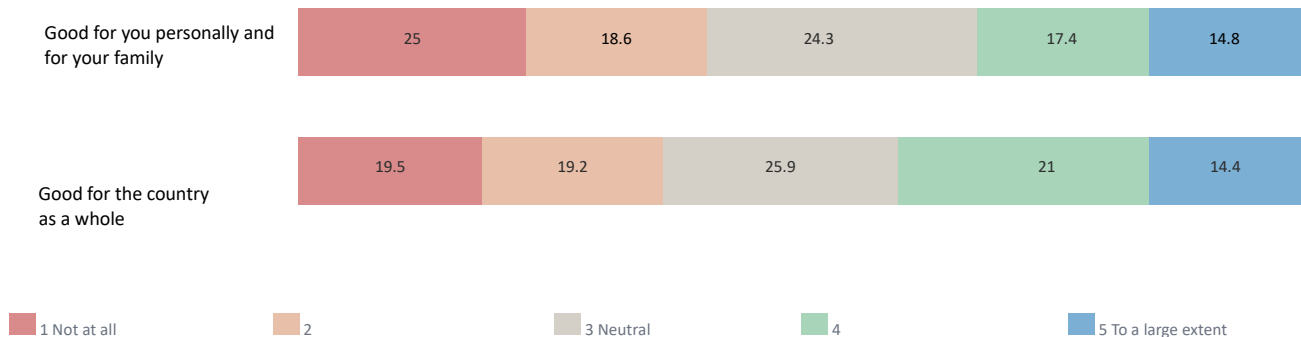
3. When do you think Serbia will become a member of the EU?



Serbian citizens are highly sceptical when it comes to the EU accession date. Nearly a quarter of respondents believe that Serbia will never become a member (23.9%), while the second most common response is "I don't know/I can't assess" (21.9%). More than a third of respondents believe that Serbia will join the EU only in the next decade (37.4%), while the smallest share believes it could happen by the end of this decade (6.9%). Such results may indicate fatigue due to the prolonged accession process, as well as scepticism regarding Serbia's readiness to become a member of the EU.

04 · PERCEPTION OF BENEFITS

4. To what extent would you say that Serbia's EU membership would be:

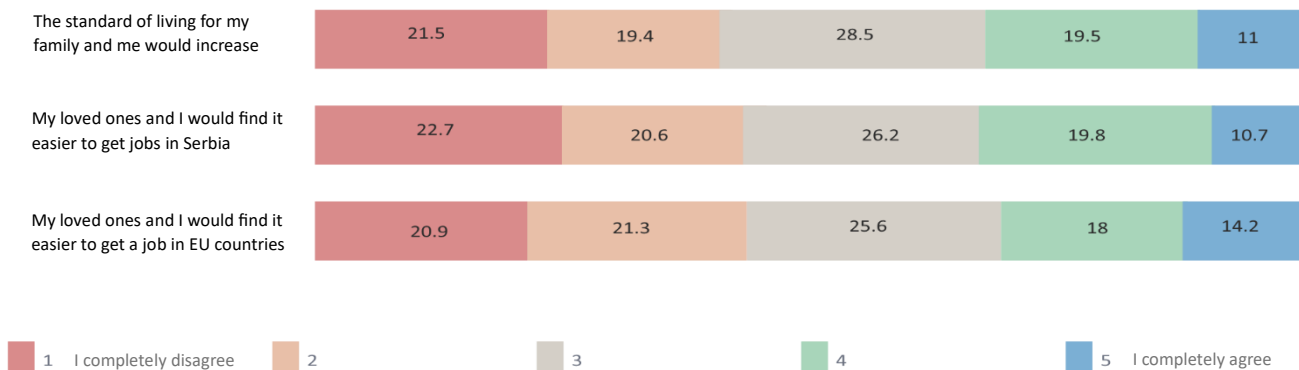


A narrow relative majority (38.7%) of respondents believe that Serbia's EU membership would not be good at all or mostly not good for Serbia, while 35.4% think it would be mostly or largely beneficial. Slightly more than a quarter of respondents (25.9%) view membership as neither good nor bad.

When asked about the perceived personal benefits of EU membership, the share of those who believe that Serbia's EU membership would not be good at all or mostly not good for them and their families increases (43.6%), while almost a third (32.2%) still think it would be mostly or largely beneficial. Almost a quarter (24.3%) assess that Serbia's EU membership would be neither good nor bad for them and their families.

05 · ECONOMIC EFFECTS

5. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the effects of Serbia's EU membership on your and your family's economic situation?

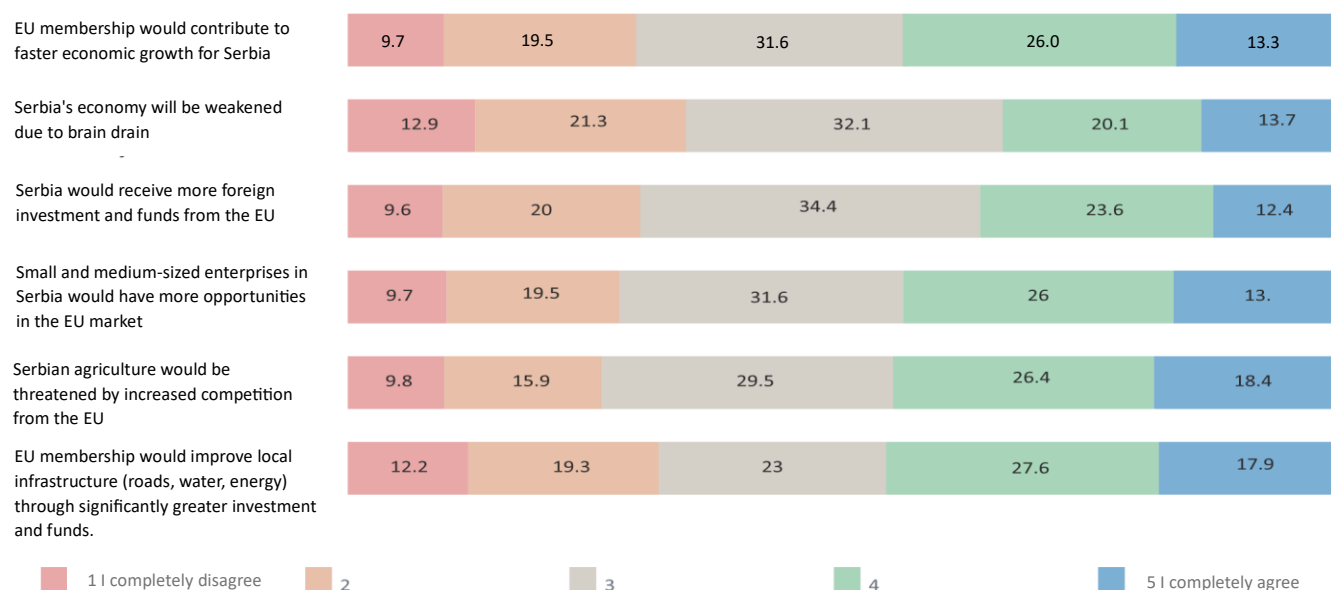


A relative majority of citizens believe that the standard of living for them and their families would not increase if Serbia joined the EU (40.9%), while almost a third (30.5%) think the opposite, i.e., that the standard of living would increase. A significant share is undecided (28.5%).

With regard to employment opportunities in the EU, a relative majority of citizens believe that Serbia's membership would not make it easier for them and their relatives to find work in EU countries (42.2%), while almost a third (32.2%) think it would. 25.6% are undecided.

06 · PERCEPTION OF THE EU

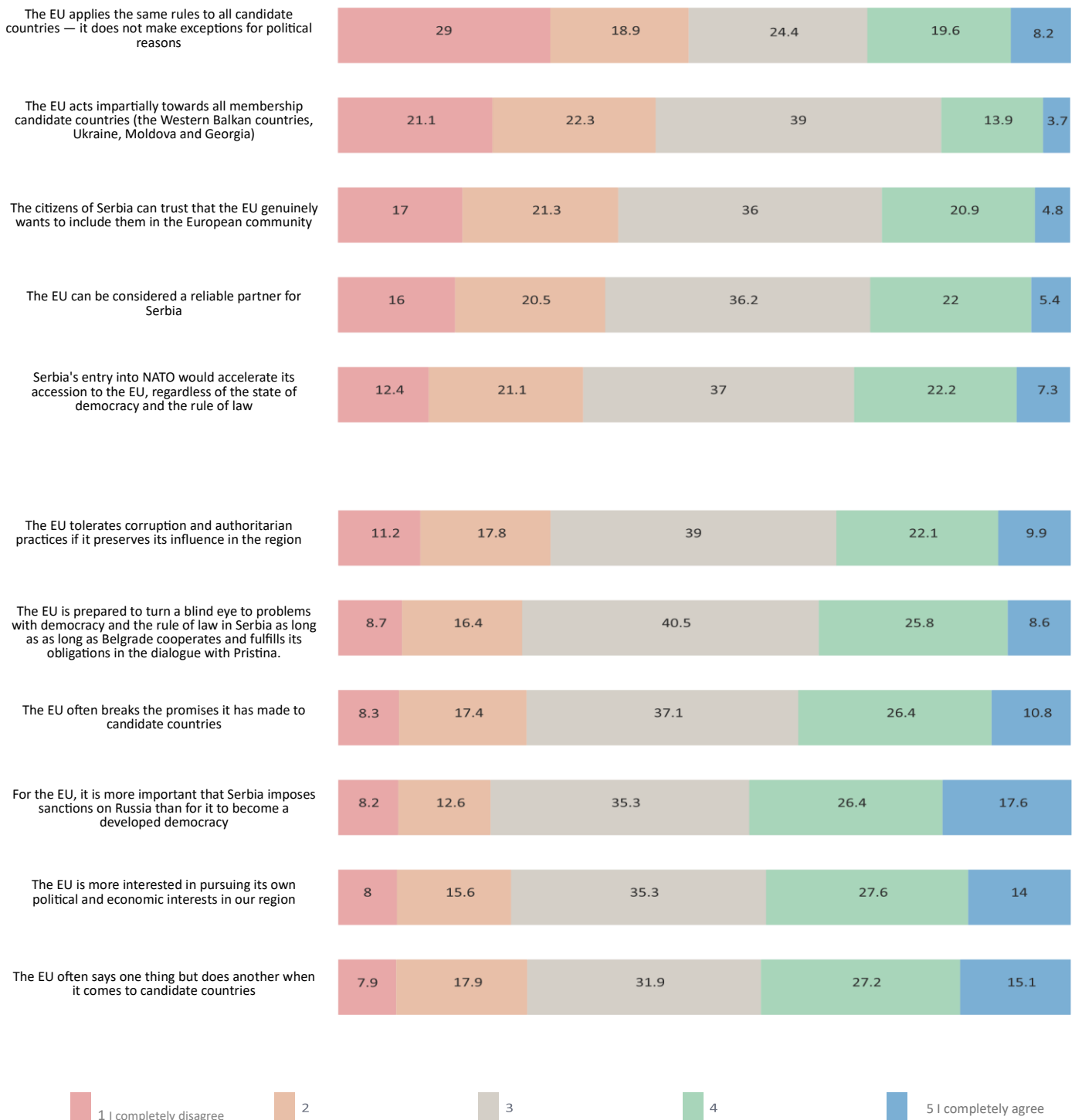
6. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the effects of Serbia's EU membership on the economy as a whole?



With regard to the economic effects of Serbia's EU membership, respondents are divided into three main groups. The largest group consists of those who expect positive effects from membership (ranging between 33.8% and 45.5%, depending on the question). A substantial share expects no positive effects (between 25.7% and 34.2%), while a significant proportion remains unsure (between 23% and 34.4%).

07 · DEMOCRACY AND VALUES

7. To what extent do you agree with the following statements concerning the EU?

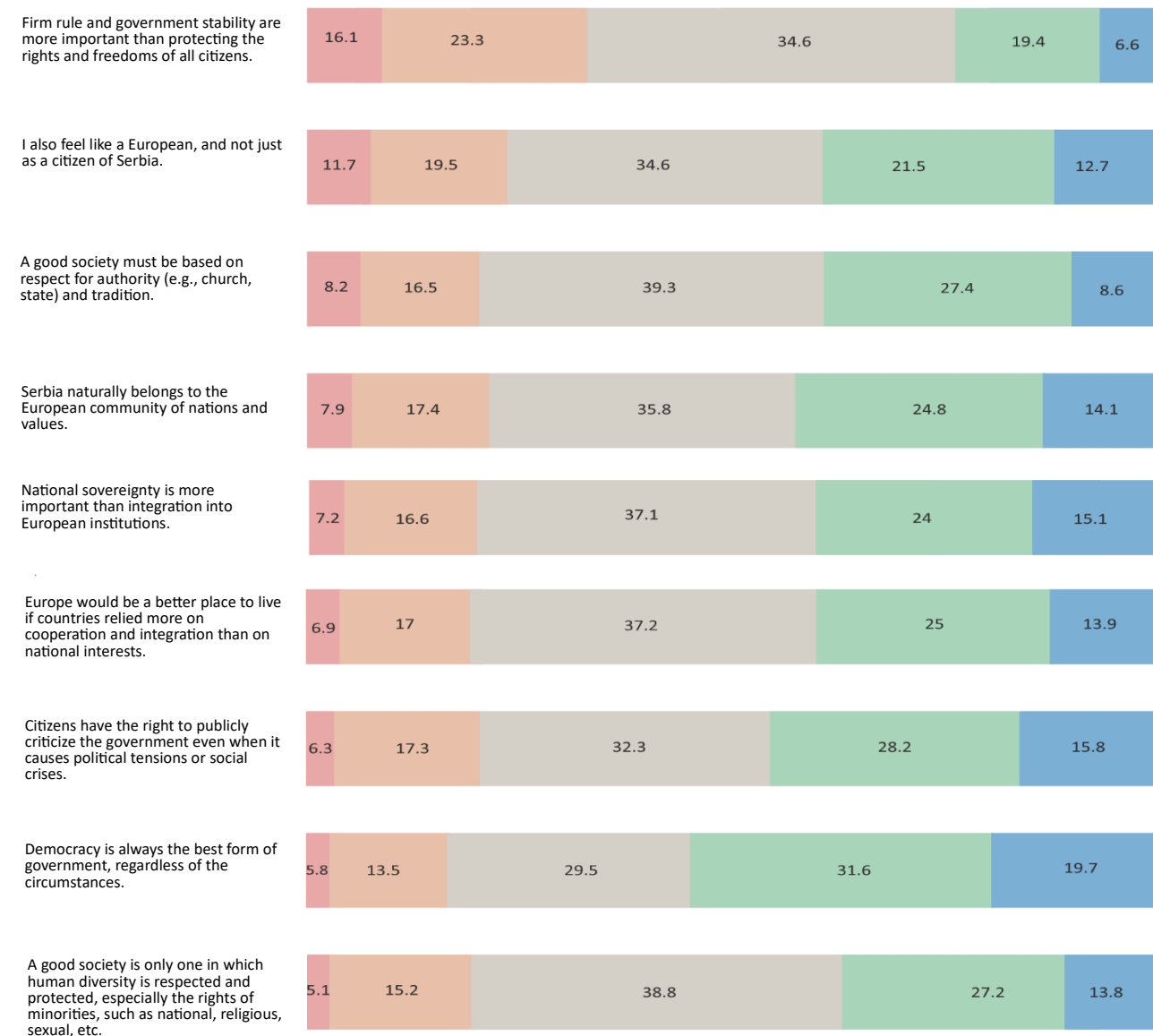


The findings indicate low levels of trust in the EU's credibility. For instance, the largest share of respondents (47.9%) believe that the EU does not apply the same rules to all candidate countries and that the EU is not impartial towards candidates (43.4%). Similarly, 38.3% of respondents do not believe that the EU genuinely wants to include Serbia in the European community, and 36.5% do not consider the EU to be a reliable partner for Serbia.

More than a third of respondents (34.4%) believe that the EU is prepared to turn a blind eye to problems regarding democracy and the rule of law in Serbia, as long as Belgrade cooperates and fulfils its obligations in the dialogue with Pristina. A relative majority of respondents (44%) believe that it is more important for the EU that Serbia imposes sanctions on Russia than for it to become a developed democracy. Similarly, 41.6% of respondents believe that the EU is more interested in pursuing its own political and economic interests in the region than in democracy and the rule of law.

08 · POLITICAL AFFILIATION

8. To what extent do you agree with the following statements concerning attitudes towards the state, society and European identity?

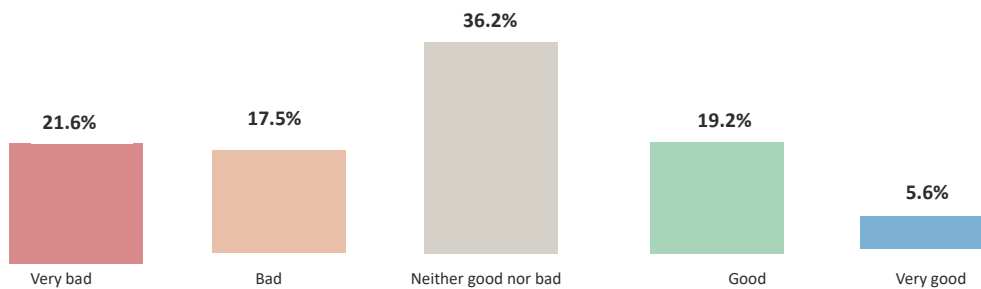


A narrow majority of citizens (51.3%) believe that democracy is the best form of government, regardless of the circumstances. Furthermore, a relative majority (44%) believe that citizens have the right to publicly criticise the government, even when it causes political tensions or social crises.

The findings indicate a strong ideological divide and a high proportion of neutral attitudes, with a slight advantage for authoritarian and sovereignist orientations over liberal-democratic and pro-European values. At the same time, support for democracy, human rights, and the right to criticise the government exists, but it remains without a strong consensus. Such results indicate an ambivalent and uncertain value framework within society.

09 · AWARENESS AND CONTEXT

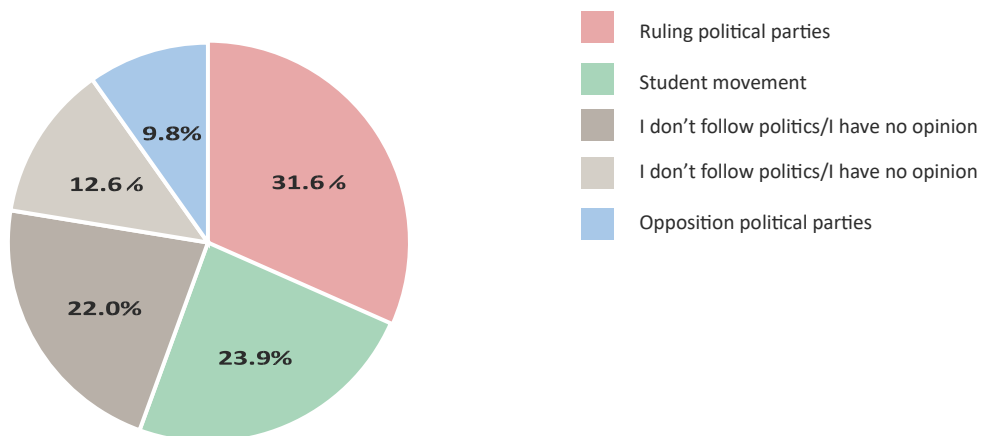
9. How would you assess the current state of democracy in Serbia?



The largest share of citizens assess the state of democracy in Serbia as poor or very poor (39.1%), while more than a third (36.2%) rate it as neither good nor poor. On the other hand, only a quarter of respondents characterise the state of democracy as good or very good (24.8%). This distribution of responses indicates a deep crisis of confidence in democratic institutions.

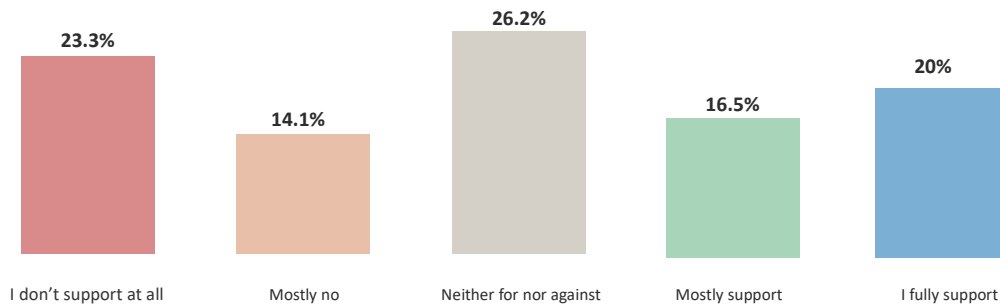
10 · GENERAL SUPPORT FOR MEMBERSHIP

10. Select the political option that is closest to you:



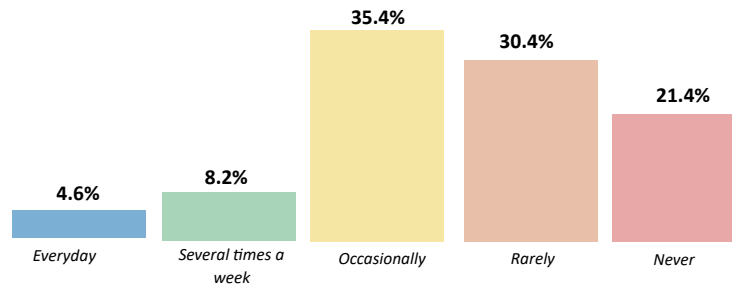
The largest share of respondents is politically undecided or has stated that they do not follow politics (a total of 34.6%). This group is followed by those who align most closely with the ruling political parties (31.6%), the student movement (23.9%) and the opposition parties (9.8%). The student movement emerges as the second strongest political force in Serbia.

11. To what extent do you support the current student protests?



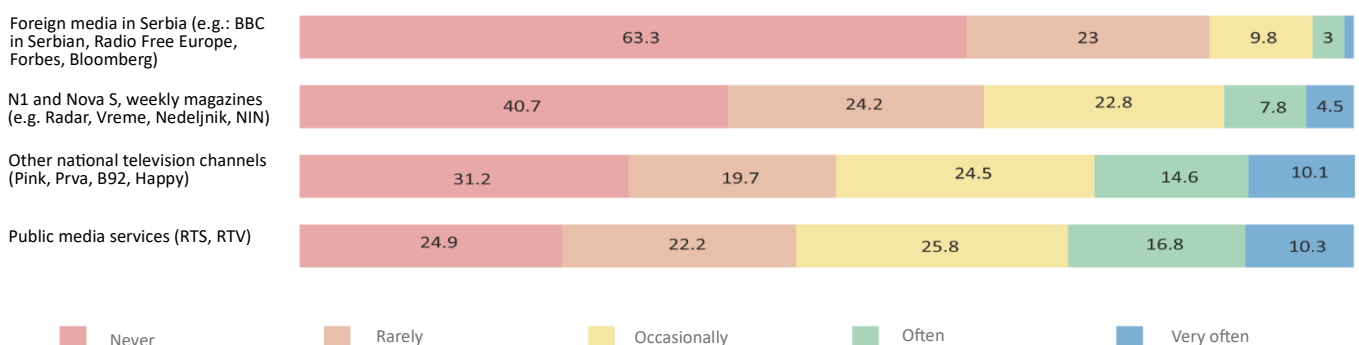
With regard to support for the current student protests, the share of supporters and opponents is almost evenly divided. A relative majority of citizens oppose the student protests (37.4%), while 36.5% express support. Slightly more than a quarter of citizens (26.2%) remain undecided on this issue. Here as well, a division into three almost equal camps is evident.

12. How often do you follow the news related to the European Union?



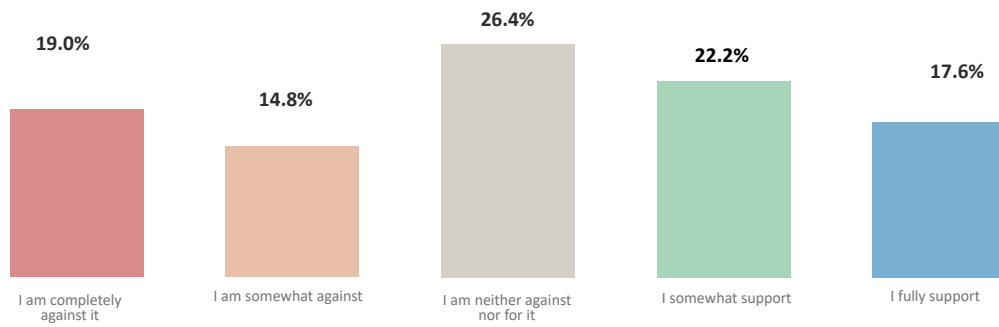
News related to the European Union receives limited attention among respondents in Serbia. Two-thirds of citizens (65.9%) follow news about the EU occasionally or rarely. Only 14.8% of respondents are regularly informed about the EU, while 21.4% never inform themselves about the EU.

13. How often do you get your information from the following media outlets, including their internet portals and social networks?



Public broadcaster/media services and national licenced television channels are the most common sources of information for Serbian citizens; however, their views may be more strongly shaped by alternative media sources.

14. To what extent do you support or oppose Serbia's membership of the EU?



The largest share of citizens fully or somewhat support Serbia's membership of the EU (39.8%), while just over a third of respondents are completely or somewhat opposed (33.8%). More than a quarter of respondents are neither for nor against EU membership (26.4%).

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