

MESSAGES OF VOTERS' DECISION:
**WHAT DO CITIZENS
PERCEIVE AS
PUBLIC INTEREST?**



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AS PUBLIC INTEREST?**

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Key Findings

- Twice as high is the number of citizens who think that Montenegro is moving in wrong direction as compared to those who think that it is moving in the right direction. More than every second respondent supports pro-Serbian parties think that Montenegro is moving in the right direction. Most of DPS supporters, as well as those supporting civic and minority parties think the contrary. The people from the northern region of Montenegro think that Montenegro is moving in the right direction, as well as people who live in rural areas. Although less than every third respondent, those with university or college degree agree more that Montenegro is moving in the right direction than those with lower education level.
- Only six institutions, namely: Serbian Orthodox Church, education system, EU Delegation to Montenegro, the United Nations, healthcare system and the Armed Forces of Montenegro score higher degree of trust than the one of distrust, whilst the Montenegrin Orthodox Church and the political parties score the highest degree of distrust.
- When it comes to the inter-personal trust as an indicator of citizens' trust in words, actions and decisions of others, but also their readiness to act on the basis of such opinions of the citizens there is very pronounced lack of inter-personal trust.
- Over 80 % of citizens think that the focus of the Government and government institutions should be on the fight for better living standard and fight against crime and corruption. Almost as many citizens think that depoliticization and "departyzation" of public administration and fight against discrimination are important for the progress of Montenegro. Two out of three citizens estimate that the reform of judiciary and of the electoral system should be high on the agenda of any political structure. Almost 60% of citizens think that the compliance with the requirements for the full EU membership of Montenegro is a key priority for the progress of the country.
- According to the opinion of the supporters of all political parties and nonvoters, economic issues should be a key priority of the Government. Conversely, insignificant number of the supporters of DPS, minority and civic parties think that the Government should focus its activities on democracy and solving of inter-ethnic issues.
- Reform of electoral legislation, reform of judiciary, as well as fight against organized crime and corruption as the key or very important priority of domestic policy are largely supported by the supporters of pro-Serbian and civic parties. These issues are considered least important for the progress of the country by the supporters of DPS, minority parties and nonvoters. These priorities are of utmost importance from the point of view of the citizens holding university degrees, those with higher income, younger or middle-aged citizens, as well as those living in urban areas. To the greatest extent, Montenegrins and Serbs consider these reforms

and fight against organized crime and corruption equally important, contrary to Bosniacs, Muslims and Albanians who consider them less important as compared to Serbs and Montenegrins.

- The supporters of civic parties largely perceive fight against discrimination as important for the improvement of Montenegro. Bosniacs and Muslims support fight against discrimination to the greatest extent. Citizens with higher income consider the fight against discrimination important in a greater extent in comparison with citizens with low incomes.
- Irrespective of political belief, citizens largely believe that the issue of public administration reform, in particular with depolitisation and departyzation, is important for the progress of Montenegro. The supporters of civic parties lead the way in that, followed by people who support pro-Serbian parties and DPS. The supporters of minority parties and the nonvoters are those who are least in favour of depoliticization and departyzation. Public administration reform is mostly supported by the holders of university degrees and by those who live in the north. There are almost 20% more Bosniacs, Muslims, Montenegrins and Serbs than Albanians who consider this issue crucial or important for Montenegro's progress.
- The voters or supporters of pro-Serbian parties and nonvoters support significantly less the compliance with the Montenegrin EU membership requirements as compared to the others. The supporters of civic parties largely support the compliance with the requirements, followed by those who support minority parties, finally come DPS voters

but with a significant percentage. The level of education and income level are positively correlated with the support to the compliance with membership requirements. People beyond the age of 55 are the ones who think to a smaller extent that the compliance with the requirements is crucial or important for the progress of the country. Bosniacs, Muslims, then Montenegrins and Albanians largely support the compliance with the requirements, as compared to Serbs, who consider the compliance with the full membership requirements as least crucial or important.

- Almost two thirds of citizens of Montenegro choose Montenegrin EU membership as the first choice in the foreign policy, whilst there is insignificant number of those who consider that foreign policy should focus on the rapprochement with Serbia and/or Russia. There is a larger number of citizens who think that Montenegro should entirely or to a large extent on the EU, as well as those who believe that Montenegro should rely little or not at all on China, Russia, the United States and Serbia.
- Citizens are largely westerly oriented, i.e. citizens express clear determination that Montenegro should rely on the EU in its foreign policy, when it comes to foreign policy determination of the country.
- The supporters of pro-Serbian parties are non-westerly oriented, whilst the supporters of other political parties and nonvoters are of pro-western political orientation.
- Almost every citizen who supports DPS, civic or minority parties also supports Montenegrin EU membership. Majority of those who

vote pro-Serbian parties support Montenegrin EU membership, but there is substantially less support in comparison with others.

- The supporters of DPS, civic and minority parties strongly support NATO membership. Every fifth nonvoter or supporter of pro-Serbian parties supports membership of Montenegro to this Alliance. Serbs are those who give least support to the membership, whilst more than every other Montenegrin supports the membership, followed by three quarters of Albanians. Almost every Bosniac or Albanian is in favour of Montenegrin membership to NATO. The lowest support to Montenegrin NATO membership comes from the citizens who live in the central region.

INTRODUCTION

In the parliamentary election held in August 2020, after thirty years of the rule of the Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS), Montenegro obtained a new ruling majority composed of ideologically very diverging parties and coalitions.

Despite the signing of an Agreement on fundamental principles, the new parliamentary majority begun soon to meet internally with difficulties and differences and was not capable of starting any political dialogue with the oppositions for resolving key priorities relating to the reform of judiciary, public administration and electoral legislation. Polarization of the society on identity issues rocketed also high, bringing Montenegro back to the pre-referendum period.

After the electoral results and the formation of a new “Government of Experts”, for the first time in decades with the DPS at the opposition, citizens’ expectations were exceptionally high, especially in the area of depoliticization and departyzation of public administration, improvement of the system of education and health-care system, non-selective application of law and strengthening of the rule of law, fight against corruption, and implementation of key reforms as required for the European path, following clear indications emerging from the progress report for Montenegro from the European Commission.

The “Government of Experts” has proved to be an unsatisfactory solution from the point of view of achieved results and their sustainability. Moreover, there was no chemistry and coordination between this Government of Experts and its own parliamentary majority; one of the largest party of this majority even started a boycott to block any adoption of the measures submitted by the Executive, in order to force a political reshuffle or “reconstruction” of the Government.

Heated relations and mistrust fed frequent escalations and further exacerbated political divisions, including within the ruling majority. Friction between the executive and legislative powers has slowed down reform work. On the other hand, parliamentary majority composed of three coalitions - “Crno na bijelo” (Black on White), “Mir je naša nacija” (Peace is Our Nation) and “Za budućnost Crne Gore” (For the Future of Montenegro) got the opportunity for the first time to “steer” legislative and executive branches in the direction of the results and outcomes which they, as the opposition, had advocated for years reproaching and criticizing DPS and its coalition partners.

Just after 14 months since its establishment, the Government of the Prime Minister Zdravko Krivokapić lost a confidence vote: only 11 MPs supported, whilst 43 MPs voted against. Montenegro has found itself again in specific political circumstances, where even issues of constitutionality on a formation of a new Government with a different majority were raised following the no-confidence vote. In the evolution of all these difficult circumstances, CEDEM, as a think-tank organization, which has for more than two decades been following, analysing and giving recommendations in relation to socio-political developments, has developed this analysis aimed at presenting the attitudes and perceptions of citizens in relation to the key concerns in the area of domestic and foreign policy of Montenegro.

In support of that, CEDEM has conducted comprehensive socio-political survey one year after the formation of Zdravko Krivokapić's Government. The aim of this survey is to present citizens' aspirations and expectations when it comes to the activities of all political entities as the basis for further operation of the executive and legislative branches. Most questions were analysed from the aspect of political preference, as well as demographic features like sex/gender, age, nationality, level of income and level of education so as to give a clear overview in relation to all survey questions.

For party classification, we used the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) with Promax rotation. DPS was excluded from the Analysis because the extraction indicates that it is not discriminatory. In other words, as a long-standing catch all ruling party, its voters are heterogeneous. Therefore, DPS was coded separately. All other parties were classified on the basis of EFA. Categorization was necessary since there is a series of different parties in Montenegro. First of all, for DPS we included all the respondents who claim to be its voters. "Pro-Serbian parties" is a joint name for Democratic Front (DF), Socialist People's Party (SNP), Democratic Montenegro, Real Montenegro, "some others" which include the voters of pro-Serbian parties, predominantly those who would vote for the party formed around Zdravko Krivokapić. Minority parties are Bosniac Party (BS) and Albanian parties - Albanian Alternative (AA), Democratic Union of Albanians (DUA) and Croatian Civic Initiative (HGI). Finally, the last group of parties was termed civic parties, which have a clear civic agenda and support Montenegrin independence and western identification. The following parties belong to this group: Social Democratic Party (SDP), United Reform Action (URA), CIVIS, Liberal Party of Montenegro (LPCG) and Social Democrats (SD). Lastly, those who declared that they did not vote, are presented as a category of nonvoters.

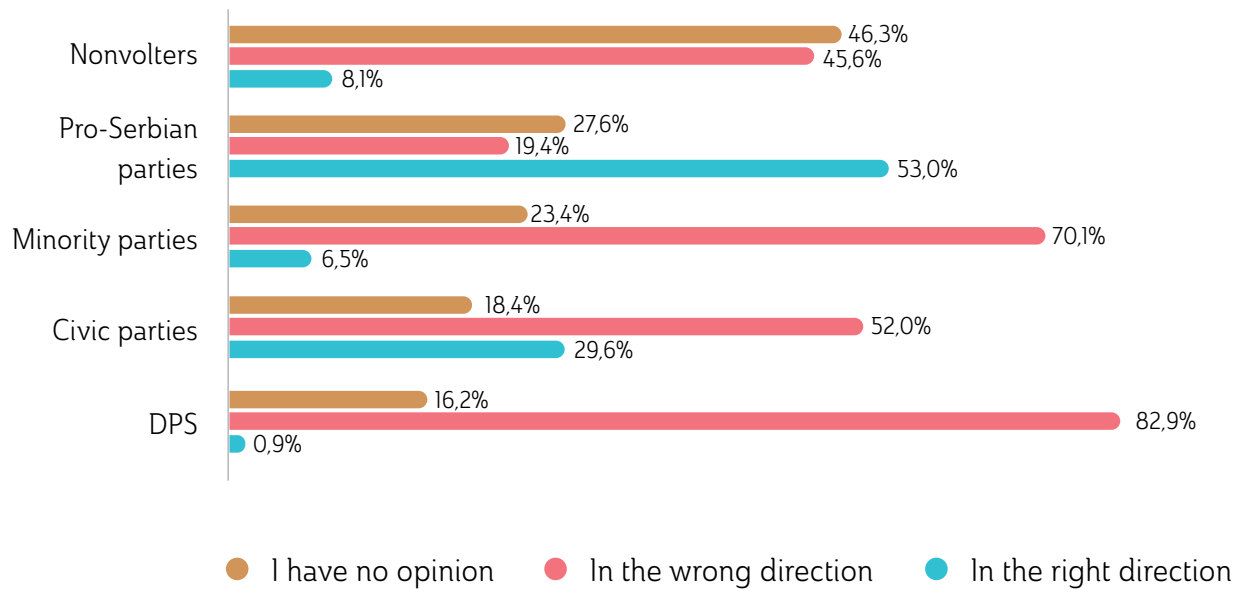
The survey was conducted in December, on a sample of 1022 respondents, and it is a part of the project "Vox Populi – Implementation of better choices" supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Italy within the framework of the call "Bando Balcani".

STANCES AND PERCEPTIONS OF CITIZENS RELATING TO SOCIO-POLITICAL SETTING

According to half the citizens, Montenegro has continued moving in the wrong direction even one year following the election of the new government and/or 18 months as of the constituting of the new Parliament. Only one in four citizens estimates that Montenegro is moving in the right direction.

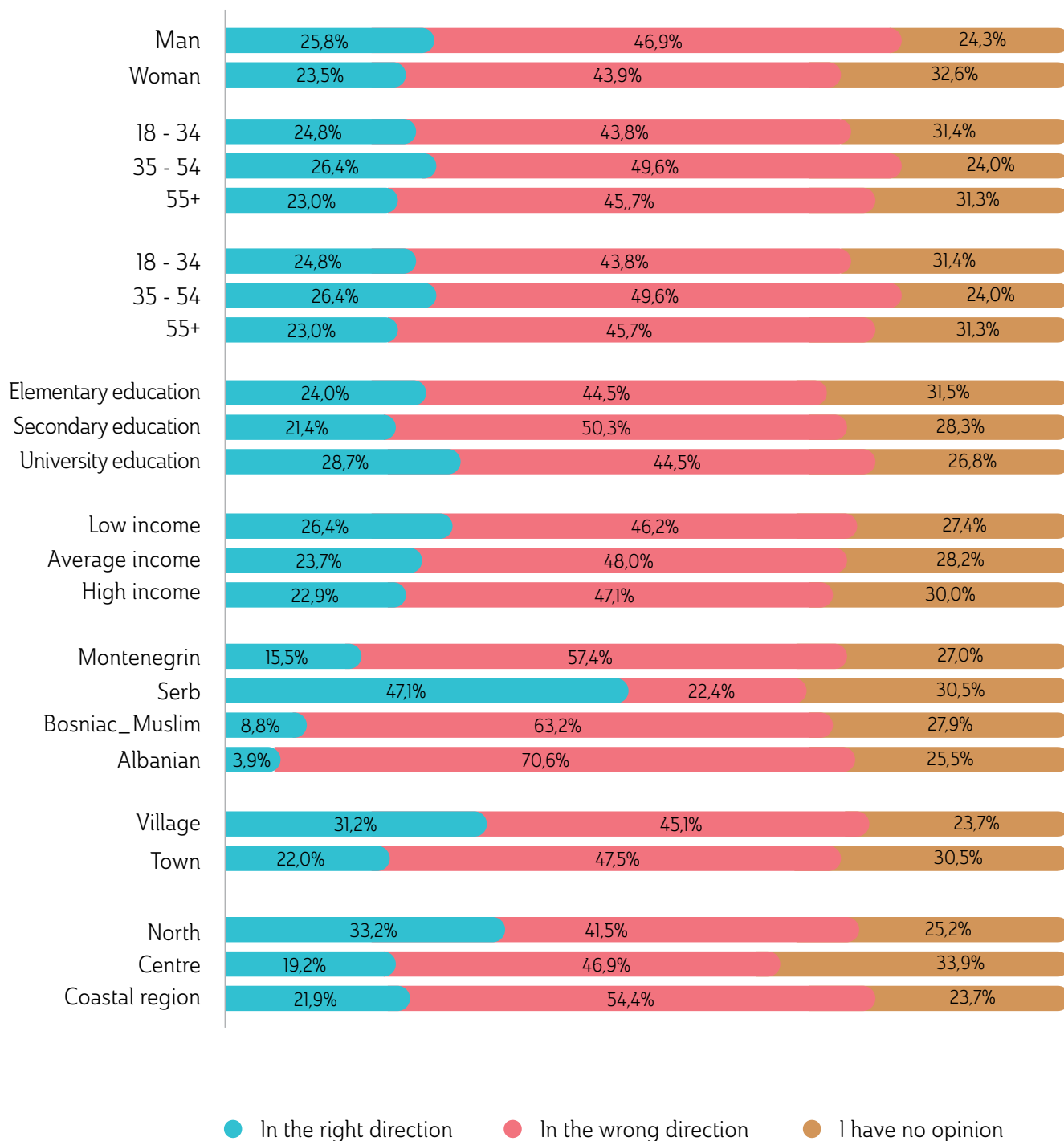
The data on the CHART 1 below are very indicative when speaking about the structures of those who think that Montenegro is moving in the right direction and/or wrong direction. **More than every other respondent who supports pro-Serbian parties, and almost every third supporter of civic parties think that Montenegro is moving in the right direction.** Contrary to them, negligible is the number of those who share this stance and who support minority parties and DPS, including the nonvoters. **Vast majority of supporters of DPS, civic and minority parties state that Montenegro is moving in the wrong direction, whilst almost half the nonvoters has either no opinion or is of the same opinion of the supporters of the stated parties. Certainly, twice as many citizens think that Montenegro is moving in the wrong direction as compared to the number of those who think that Montenegro is moving in the right direction.**

CHART 1 – Which way is Montenegro moving?



Generally speaking, **smaller number of women than men think that Montenegro is moving in the wrong direction, whilst somewhat greater number of middle-aged citizens as compared to those younger or older ones** think the same. Significant feature of the respondents is their national affiliation. More precisely, the data in the CHART 2, indicate that significantly greater number of citizens, **more than half of whom citizens of Serbian nationality, think that Montenegro is moving in the right direction in relation to the citizens of other nationality.** The effect of the region and place of living is significant since it indicates that **people from the northern region of Montenegro and those who live in the rural area think that Montenegro is moving in the right direction.** Although less than every third respondent, **those with university or college degree agree more that Montenegro is moving in the right direction than those with lower education level.**

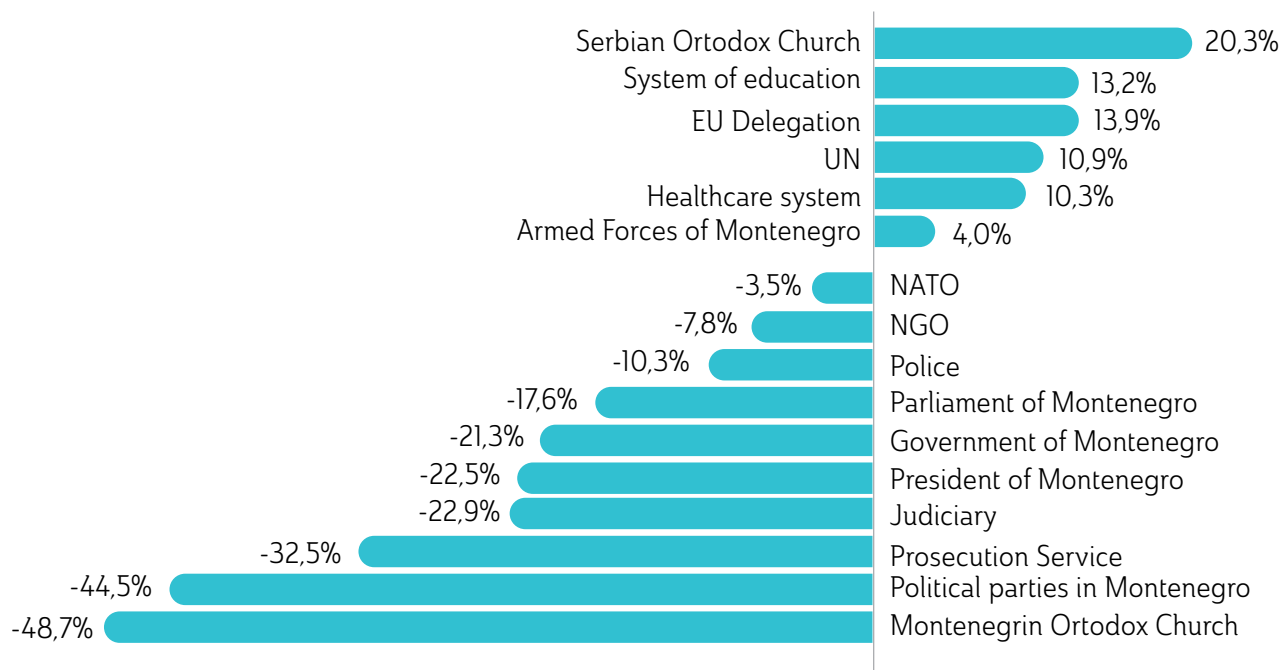
CHART 2 - Which way is Montenegro moving and demographic features



The issue of trust in institutions is very important, especially bearing in mind that the data of the trend analysis show that from one research cycle to another we record ever declining level of trust in institutions, political one in particular – Government, President of Montenegro, Parliament of Montenegro, Judiciary, Police, Armed forces of Montenegro and political parties.

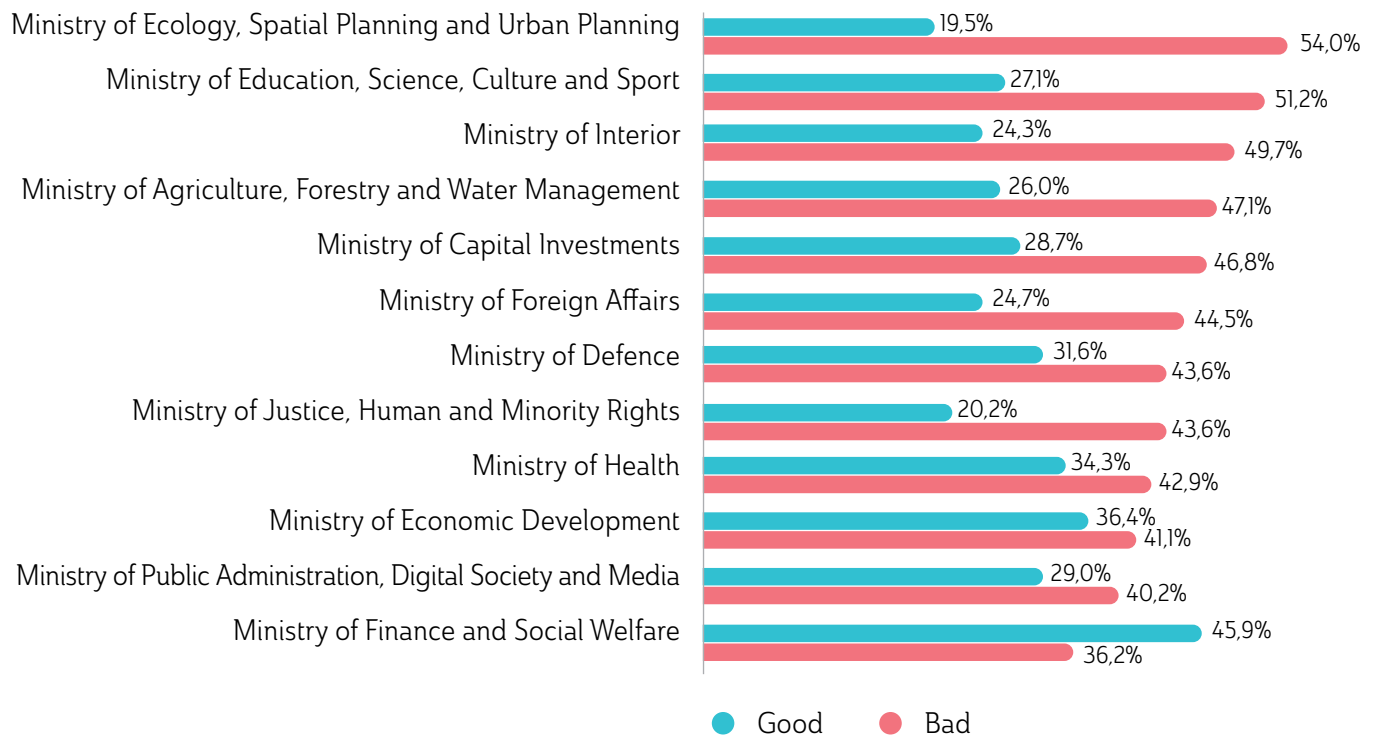
By comparing the totality of trust (high and general trust) and the totality of distrust (high and general distrust) the data in the CHART 3 show that **only six institutions – Serbian Orthodox Church, system of education, EU Delegation to Montenegro, United Nations, healthcare system and Armed forces of Montenegro record higher degree of trust than distrust.** Contrary to these, **the highest degree of distrust is recorded with the Montenegrin Orthodox Church and political parties.** Somewhat lower degree of distrust in relation to the previous two institutions is scored by prosecution service, and then with other institutions – judiciary, President of Montenegro, Government of Montenegro, Parliament of Montenegro, Police, NGOs and NATO.

CHART 3 – Index (dis)trust in institutions (SUM high degree of trust and general trust minus SUM high degree of distrust and general distrust)



Montenegrin society got the opportunity for the first time, despite their political preference which they expressed at the 2020 Parliamentary election, to have non-party figures as Government representatives, so called **Government of Experts**. According to citizens' opinion, **that model has not proved successful since only 23.3% expressed satisfaction with the performance of this Government, which is the lowest level since 2007. On the other hand, such solution for executive authority was supported by only 18% of citizens.** Observed individually by sectors CHART 4 presents the data for the SUM "very good and generally good" and the SUM "very bad and generally bad".

CHART 4 – Assessment of the work of the Ministries – SUM good and SUM bad

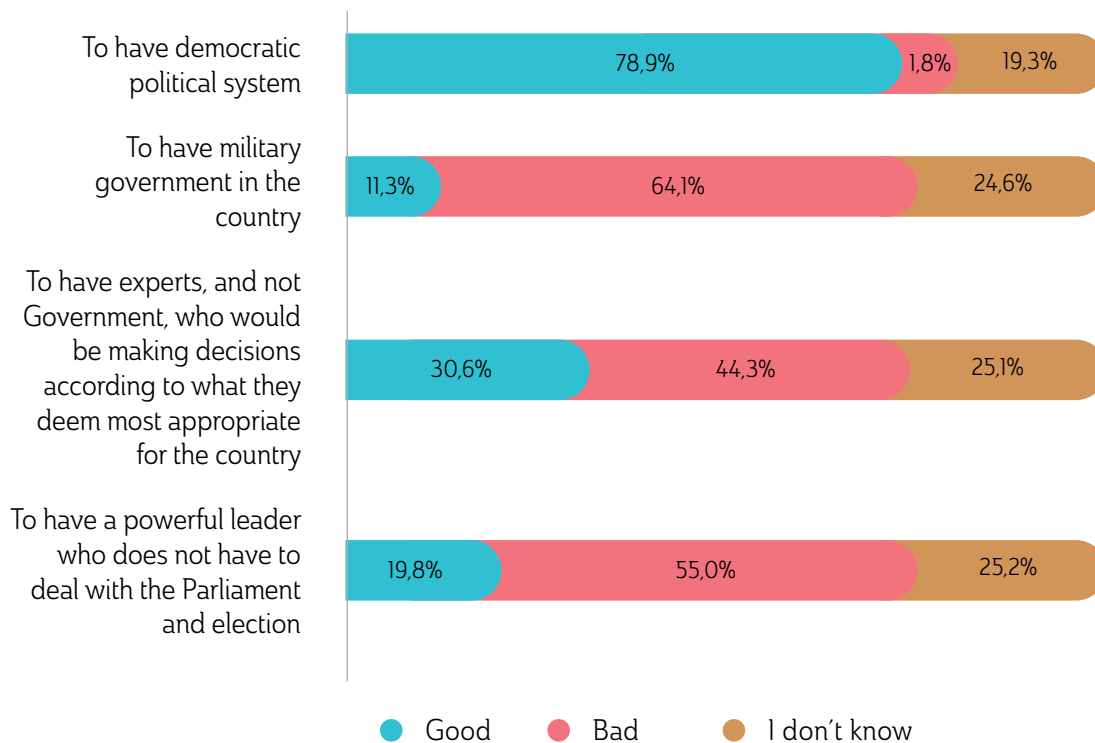


The data indicate that 11 out of 12 ministries of the outgoing Government of Montenegro, according to the opinion of a considerable number of citizens, work very bad or mainly bad. Almost three times more people assessed the work of the Ministry of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urban Planning as very bad or generally bad in relation to 19% of those who think that this department is doing well. Contrary to more than half of the citizens who assess the operation of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Sport as very bad or generally bad, 27.1% rate its operation as good. Almost twice as many, or twice as many citizens think that the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, Human and Minority Rights, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management work poorly than good. Similar data are shown for other ministries, too, with the exception of the

Ministry of Finance and Social Welfare which is thought to be working very well or generally well by around 10% of the citizens.

Having in mind the tendencies of various political structures when it comes to control and directing of political apparatus, as well as to the influence on social processes, we asked the citizens about different ways of running the country and presented the results in the CHART 5.

CHART 5 – Political system type preference

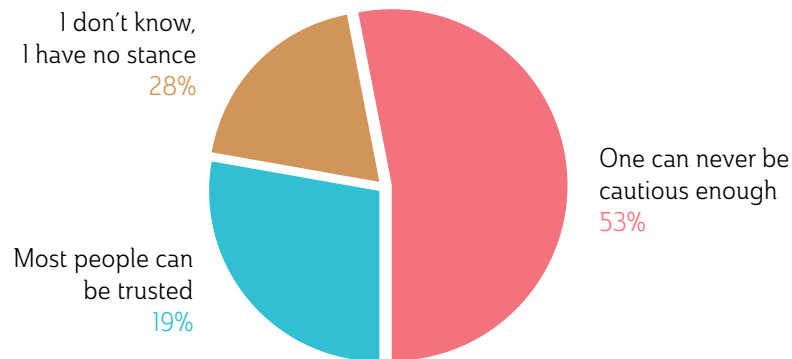


Therefore, when it comes to the preference of the type of political system, **democratic orientation is predominant, whilst less than a third of citizens support the political system where experts would make decisions according to what they assess as the best for the country. Authoritarian political system is supported by almost 20%, whilst militarist method of government is supported by 11.3%. On the other hand, most citizens think that either militarist or autocratic regime is a bad model of government.**

Taking into account permanent downward trend of the trust in institutions, distrust which prevails among political entities, increasing social polarization, as well as overall social context, in the CHART 6 we present the result of citizens' responses to the question on inter-personal trust as an indicator

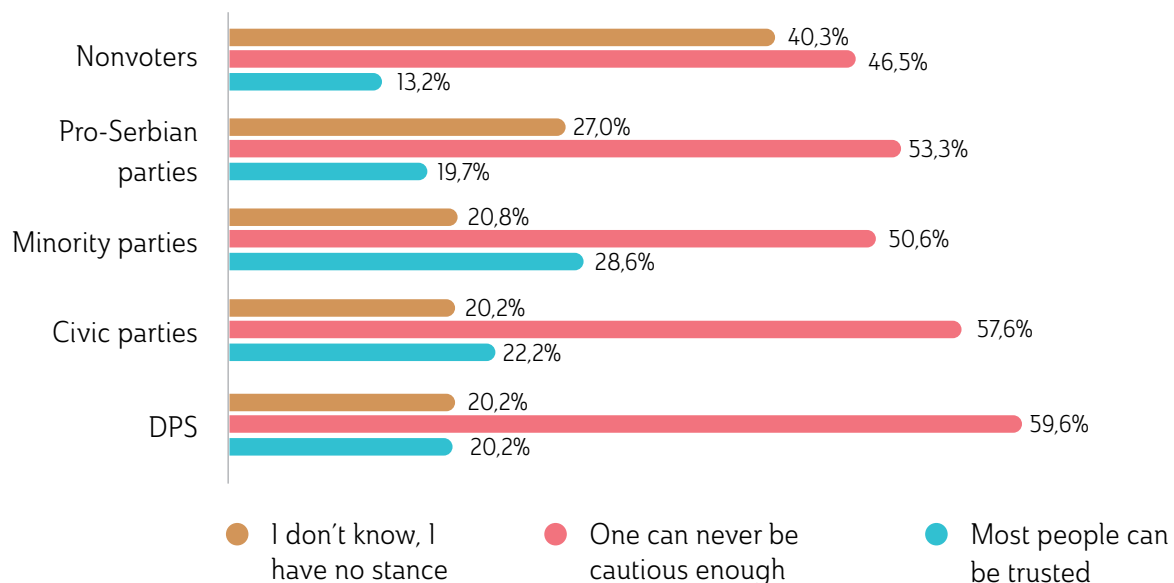
of citizens' trust in words, actions and decisions of others, but also their readiness to act on the basis of such opinions of the citizens. In fact, every other citizen thinks that one can never be sufficiently cautious, whilst almost every fifth thinks that people can be trusted. Almost one third has no opinion concerning this issue. Therefore, **there is very pronounced lack of inter-personal trust.**

CHART 6 – Inter-personal trust



The analysis of the data related to citizens' party preference shows that a little bit more than every fourth voter of the minority parties, and only every fifth supporter of DPS, civic and pro-Serbian parties thinks that most people can be trusted. Nonvoters, 13.2% of them think that people can be trusted the least. Generally speaking, **in all party categories, inter-personal distrust is predominant.**

CHART 7 - Inter-personal trust and party preference

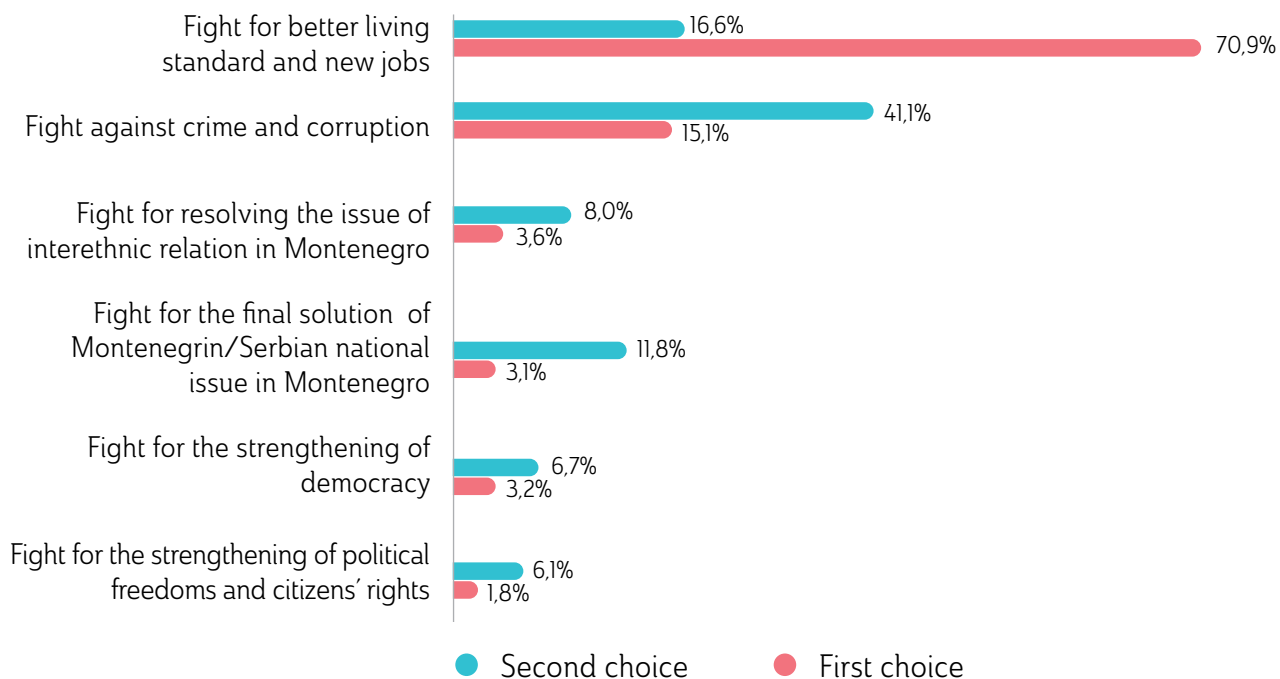


STANCES AND PERCEPTIONS OF CITIZENS RELATING TO THE AREA OF DOMESTIC POLICY

Citizens had mostly critical view of the achievement of results in the domain of domestic policy when it comes to the Government formed by DPS and its coalition partners. The change of Government also meant the increase in expectations related to resolving crucial economic and social issues in Montenegro. In specific terms, citizens expected better standard of living and implementation of key reforms the outcome of which would be Montenegrin EU membership. Nevertheless, the data presented in the previous section show that citizens are dissatisfied with the achieved results, thus we dedicated this segment to citizens' stances and perceptions in relation to the issues concerning Montenegrin domestic policy, irrespective of the personal composition of the Government.

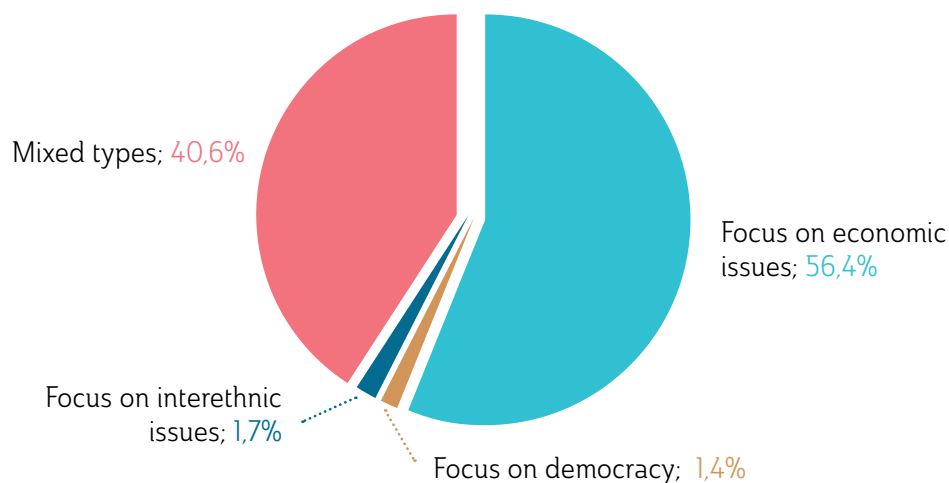
Observed in a cumulative sense, the data in the CHART 8 show that **more than 80% of citizens think that the focus of the Government and governmental institutions should be on the fight for better standard of living and fight against organized crime and corruption as the first choice, and/or almost 60% of citizens list the same as the second choice.** According to their opinion, resolving interethnic relations and Montenegrin/Serbian national issue should not be in the forefront since only about 11% of citizens chooses these as the first or second choice for priorities at the domestic level. Their stance is similar when it comes to the fight for the strengthening of democracy, political freedoms and citizens' rights where only 5% come as the first choice and about 12% as the second choice.

CHART 8 – Priorities of domestic policy



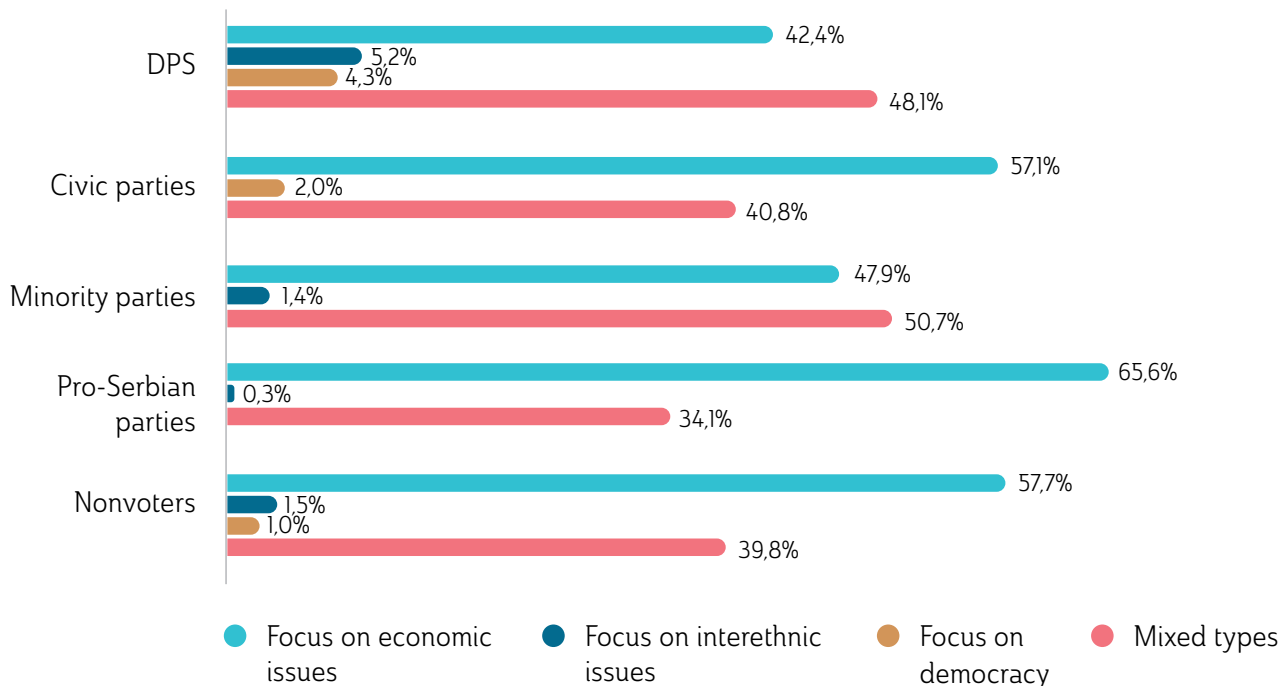
In summary, when analysing the data concerning domestic political orientation and/or domestic policy priority index, the data indicate that economic issues should be key priorities, followed by mixed types and finally, in a negligible percentage, focus on priorities related to democracy and interethnic issues (CHART 9).

CHART 9 – Priorities of domestic policy - INDEX



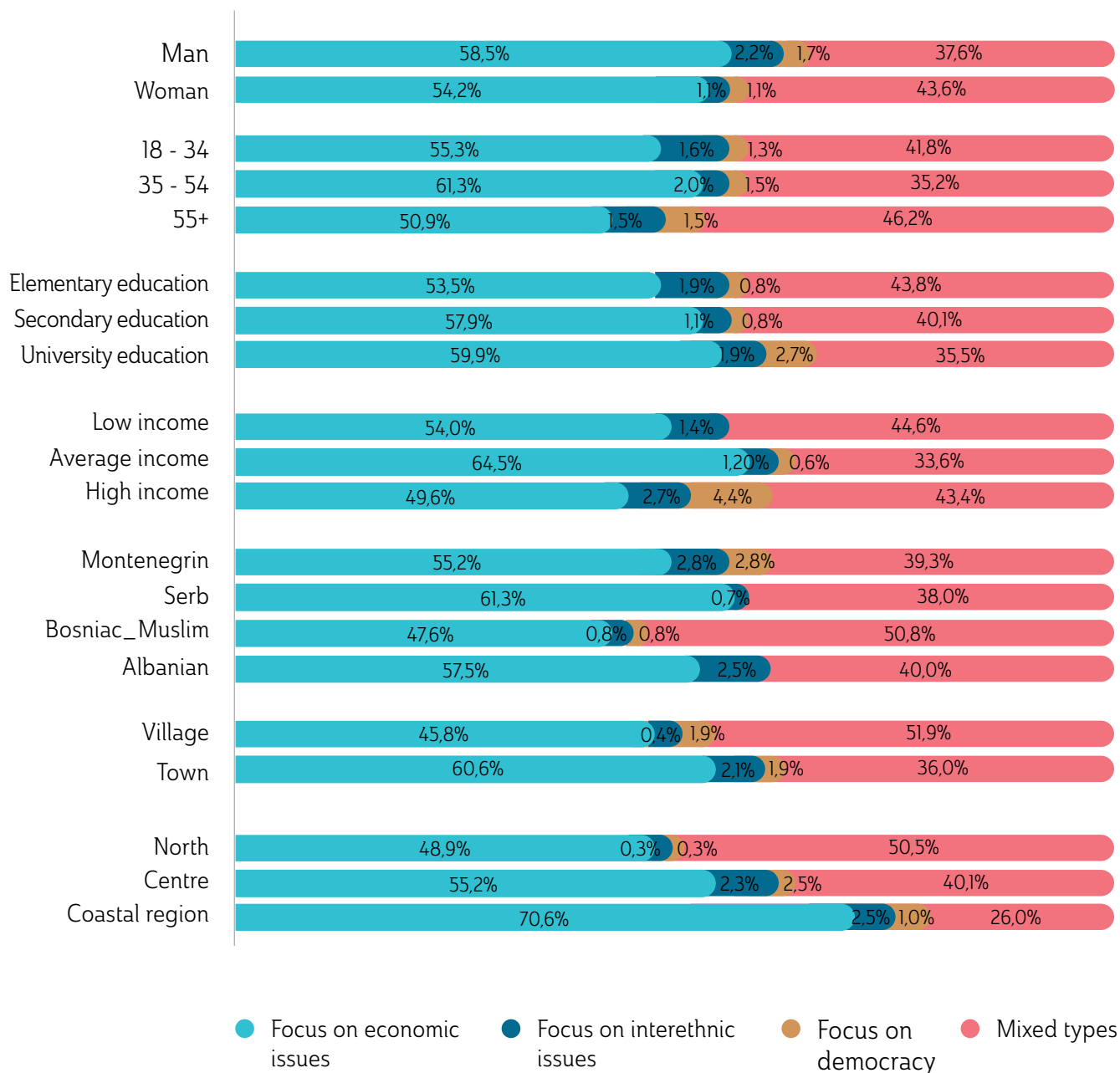
Analysing domestic policy priority index according to the views of the supporters of political entities and nonvoters, they unequivocally show that economic issues must be a key priority. Conversely, the focus on interethnic issues and democracy is perceived as negligible by the supporter of DPS, minority and civic parties. Certainly, on average, somewhat under half of the citizens belong to the mixed type of domestic political orientation.

CHART 10 – Index of the priorities of domestic policy and party preference



When speaking about the influence of demographic features of the respondents to this question, sex/gender is not particularly distinctive contrary to the place of residence which constitutes a significant feature of the respondents, which determines the attitude in relation to domestic policy priorities. **Considerable number of those who live in urban areas and those who live along the coast think that the issue of economy is the one to be addressed** as compared to those living in rural areas and in the central region. **People with higher level of education focus on economic issues, as well as those whose income levels belong to the category of average income.** Members of the Serbian, Albanian and Montenegrin nationalities are mostly focused on resolving economic issues, **whilst Bosniacs and Muslims, in comparison to others, are least focused on economic issues** and on the mixed type of domestic policy priorities most.

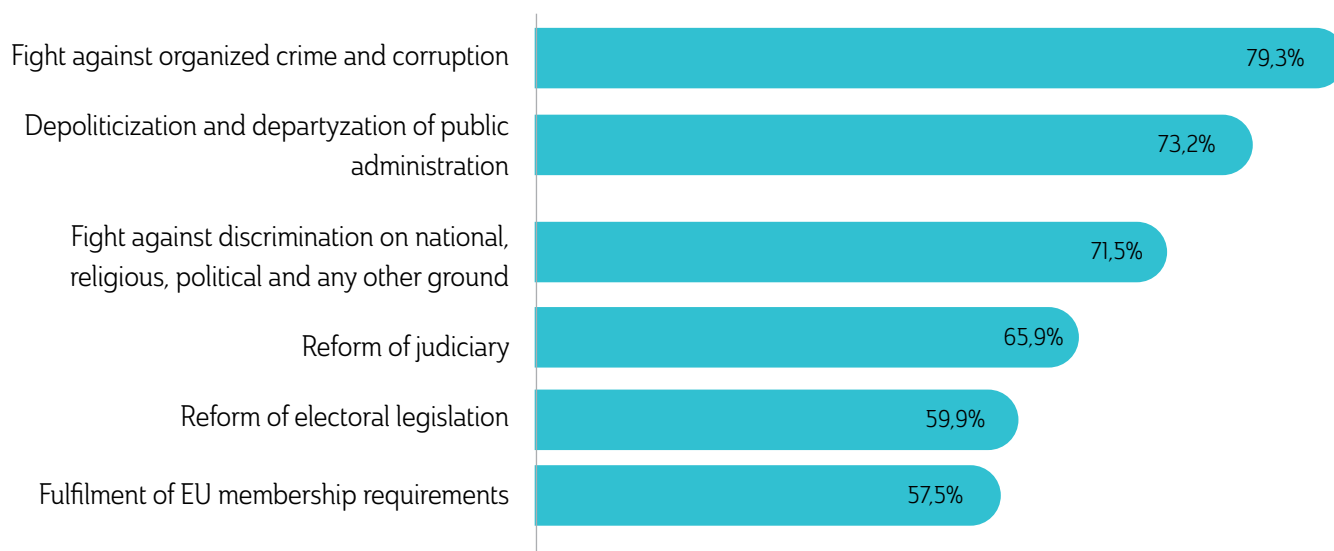
CHART II - Index of the priorities of domestic policy and demographic features



Internally, for a series of years now Montenegro has been facing the implementation of key reforms which neither the previous DPS Government nor the outgoing Government of Zdravko Krivokapić's and the Parliamentary majorities have come to grips with. As stated in the last European Commission Report for Montenegro, friction between the executive and legislative powers has slowed down reform work. These reforms, for which there is not enough political will with almost all political structures, are necessary in case Montenegro wishes to achieve the status of the full EU member state. On the other side, the data indicate that the citizens are very decisive with regards to reforms and their stance that the reforms demanded by the European Commission are crucial for the improvement of our country is unquestionable.

Consequently, for the question "Irrespective of who is currently in power, to what extent certain areas and priorities are important with regards to the prosperity and/or improvement of Montenegro", the data in the CHART 12 show that **almost 80 % of citizens insist that the fight against organized crime and corruption should be one of the key priorities. Almost the same percentage of citizens think that depoliticization and departyzation of public administration (73.2 %), as well as fight against discrimination on national, religious, political or any other ground (71.5 %) are equally important for the progress of Montenegro. Two out of three citizens of Montenegro estimate that the reform of judiciary and the reform of electoral system should be high on the agenda of any political structure. Finally, but not less importantly, according to citizens' opinion the fulfilment of requirements for the full EU membership of Montenegro is supported by almost 60% of the citizens.**

CHART 12 – Areas and priorities of importance for the progress of Montenegro – index (SUM key and very important minus SUM less important and irrelevant)



In the section below, we analyse the views of the supporters of all political structures in relation to each one of the stated priorities, as well as the impact of demographic features of the respondents.

PRIORITY:

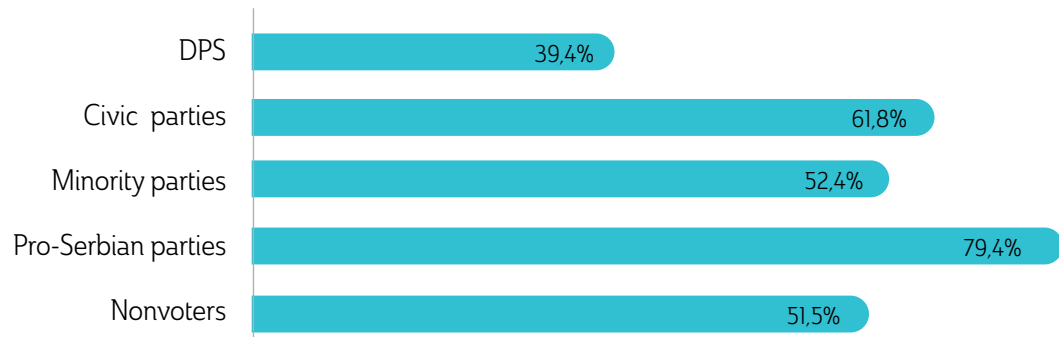
Reform of Electoral Legislation

In order to progress on the European path, Montenegro is expected to adopt all the recommendations given by the limited observation mission of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) in its reports. In its final report from the 2020 Parliamentary election, ODIHR underlines the **importance of comprehensive reform of electoral legislation in order for all key aspects of electoral process to be resolved in an inclusive process long before the future election**. The recommendations refer to the overcoming of ambiguities and inconsistencies which endanger legal certainty and render possible selective implementation of the legislative framework. In addition, the recommendations point out to the necessity of reviewing the voter lists and the implementation of measures against the abuse of state resources.

In December 2020, the Parliament established an interim working party - Committee for Comprehensive Electoral Reform tasked with the preparation of the reform of electoral legislation, besides the recommendations of ODIHR, to suggest new legislative solutions for the election of MPs and local councillors, financing of political entities and pre-election campaigns, registers of residence, decision on staging election on the same day and the Code of Ethics for pre-election campaigns. Although the original deadline for the completion of the specified mandate was the end of June 2021, then the end of 2021, the representatives of the Government and the opposition failed to complete the envisaged tasks due to the lack of political will.

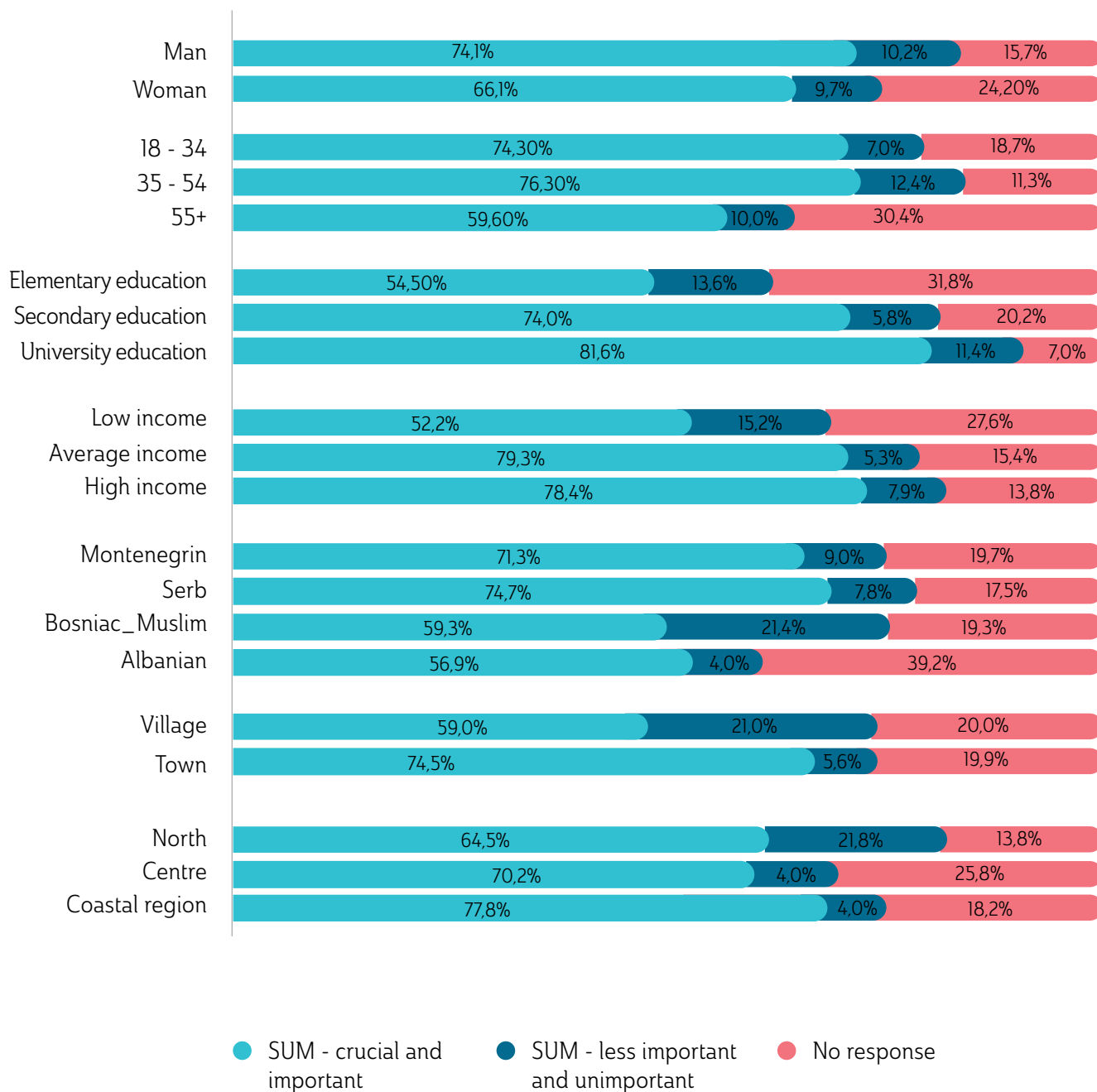
According to citizens' opinion, this issue should be at the top of the Government agenda. Analysing citizens' views on the reform of electoral legislation in relation to political belief, it is very indicative that **DPS supporters consider this issue least important. Most of the supporters of pro-Serbian parties, almost 80% of them, think that the reform of electoral legislation is one of the key priorities, followed by the supporters of civic parties, while more than every other supporter of minority parties and nonvoters think that this priority is important for the progress of Montenegro (CHART 13).**

CHART 13 - Reform of electoral legislation and party preference – INDEX



Generally speaking, almost every demographic feature of the respondents is of importance in relation to this issue. In fact, **men consider more important the issue of the reform of electoral legislation than women do. Citizens beyond the age of 55 consider this issue less important, as compared to the young and the middle-aged.** When it comes to the level of education and the level of income, **the citizens with higher level of education and higher level of income think that this is exceptionally important priority as compared to those with lower level of education and lower level of income. Montenegrins and Serbs equally, consider the issue of the reform of electoral legislation crucial or important, contrary to Bosniacs, Muslims and Albanians who consider this reform less important by about 15%. The greatest extent of citizens living along the coast and those living in urban areas perceive this reform as crucial or important.**

CHART 14 - Reform of electoral legislation and demographic features



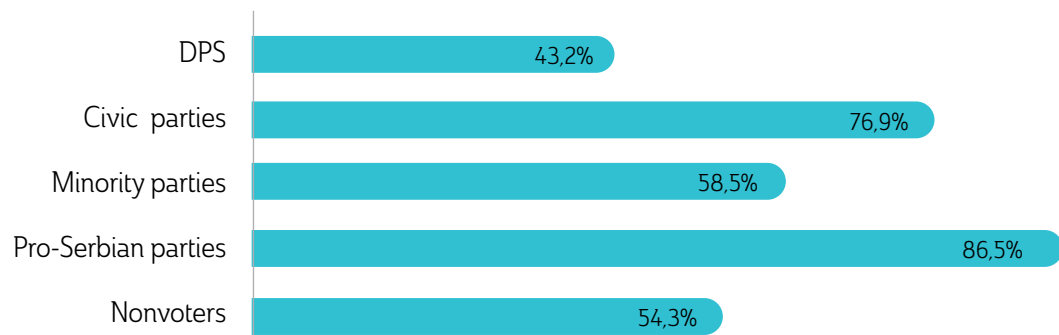
PRIORITY:

Reform Of Judiciary

The reform of judiciary is another key strategic priority on the Montenegrin path to the EU. It implies the strengthening of independence, impartiality and responsibility of judiciary, improving the efficiency of judiciary, its availability, transparency and trust in judiciary, development of regional and international cooperation, especially in institutional sense, as well as the development of judicial institutions. As stated in the latest European Commission Report for Montenegro No progress has been made in the area of the judiciary and the implementation of key judicial reforms is stagnating with *ad hoc* decision-making and without strategic approach to this issue. Since it constitutes the core of the chapter 23, stagnation on this issue implies also stagnation of the European process of Montenegro.

The data in the CHART 15 show that **the supporters of pro-Serbian and civic parties overwhelmingly consider this issue important for the wellbeing of Montenegro**. Furthermore, the data show that to a lesser degree, but **more than every other supporter of minority parties shares the same view when it comes to the reform of judiciary, almost in equal number as nonvoters**. That the reform of judiciary should be a crucial or important issue for the progress of Montenegro is considered by **less than every other supporter of DPS, which is the least when compared to other political entities**.

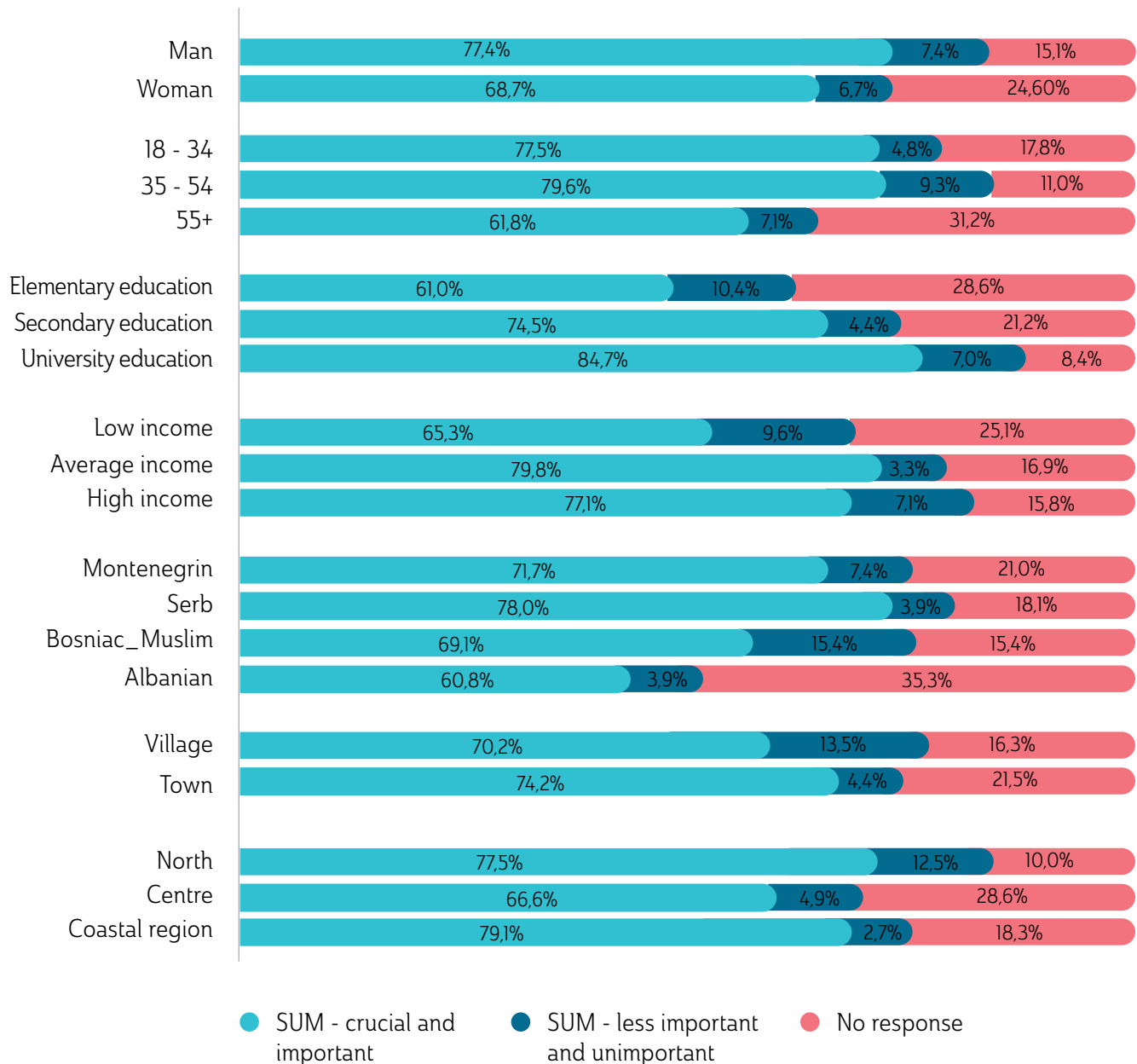
CHART 15 – Reform of judiciary and party preference – INDEX



Women in relation to men, when it comes to gender, as well as elderly citizens of Montenegro unlike younger citizens and those middle-aged, when it comes to age, consider judicial reform less crucial or important for further progress of our country. When speaking about the influence of the level of education, the data indicate **that the citizens with higher level of education value to a greater extent**

the importance of this issue as being crucial or important. Analysing the effect of national affiliation, Serbs and Montenegrins are mostly supportive of the necessity of the implementation of this reform, with smaller percentage of Bosniacs, Muslims and Albanians. The citizens who live in the central region, in relation to those who live down the coast or in the north, consider this issue least crucial or important for the progress of Montenegro.

CHART 16 - Reform of judiciary and demographic features



PRIORITY: Fight Against Organized Crime and Corruption

High degree of corruption and organized crime in Montenegro has been identified by domestic and international public as a big barrier for its further socio-economic development and significant cause of problems in the functioning of the society. Curbing corruption and organized crime are key prerequisites for Montenegrin EU accession, and in this fight, there is still no sufficient political will and efficient implementation of anti-corruption policy measures. Consequently, fight against organized crime and corruption is one of the issues that has to be high on Government agenda on the European path, which is also assessed by the citizens (CHART 17).

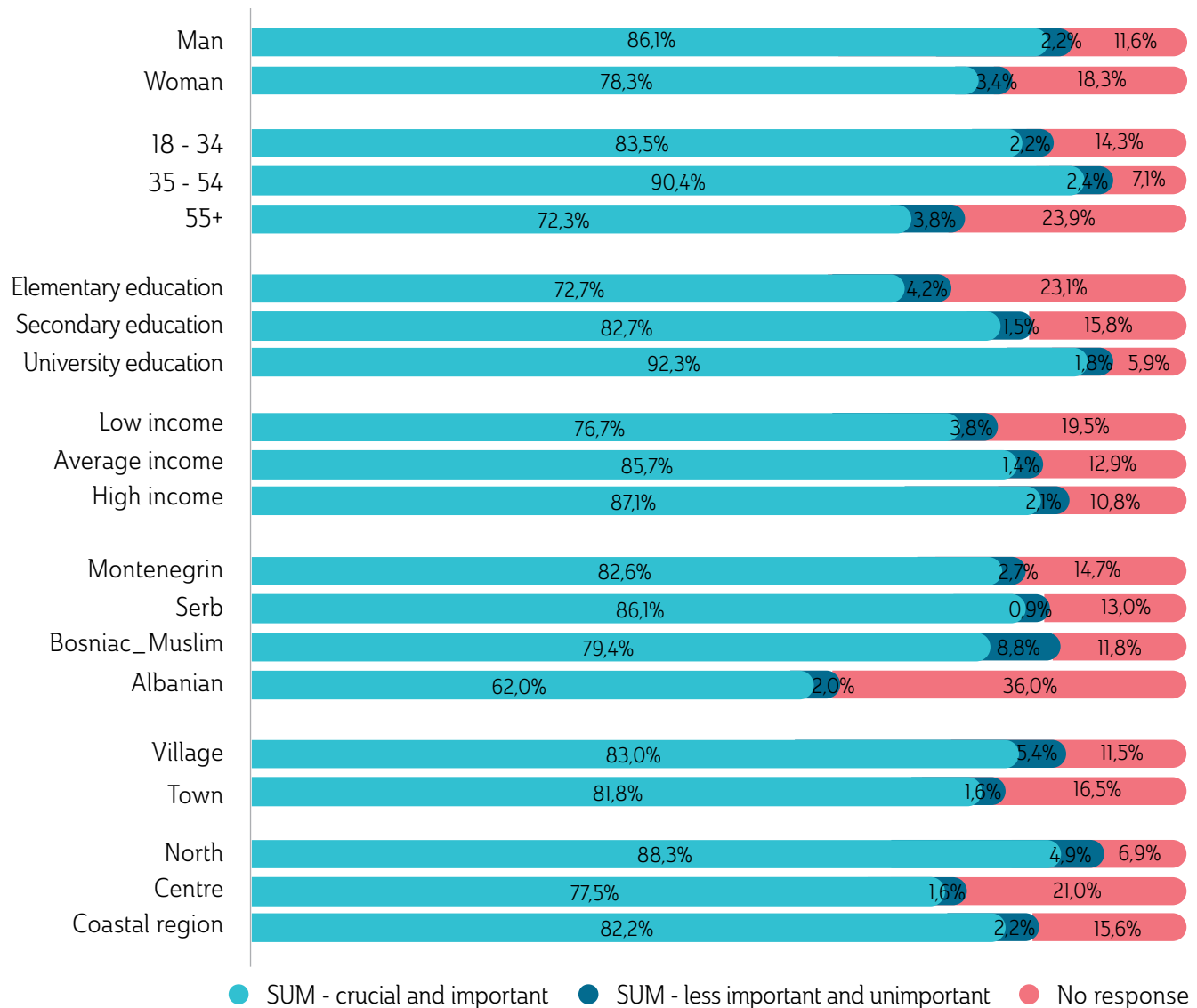
The supporters of pro-Serbian and civic parties consider to a significant extent that this priority is crucial for the progress of Montenegro as follows: those who vote pro-Serbian parties express the support of 91.6 %, with 88.5 % support expressed by the voters of civic parties. After them come the supporters of minority parties (73.7 %), and finally come nonvoters and DPS supporters, almost at the equal extent (around 69 %) supporting the fight against organized crime and corruption as a priority that would lead to the betterment of Montenegro.

CHART 17 – Fight against organized crime and corruption and party preference - INDEX



When speaking about the perception of the importance of the fight against organized crime and corruption, differences are negligible whether the respondents live in the rural or urban areas. When it comes to gender, **more men than women consider fight against organized crime and corruption as being crucial or important, whilst middle-aged citizens in relation to the young and especially the elderly emphasize the importance of this issue.** Although they support the fight against organized crime and corruption to a high extent, **the citizens with elementary level education support it by 20% less than those holding university degrees.** It is similar with the income effect, i.e. those with lower incomes consider these issues less important than the ones with high incomes. Furthermore, the effect of national affiliation is very indicative taking into account that the data in the CHART 19 indicate that **the fight against organized crime and corruption is considered least important by the Albanians (62 %), then Bosniacs and Muslims (79.4 %), Montenegrins (82.6 %) and finally by Serbs who consider this issue a crucial one to the highest extent, namely 86.1% of them.** Finally, the influence of the region is not insignificant, since most citizens of the northern region (88.3 %) emphasize the importance of this issue to the highest extent.

CHART 18 - Fight against organized crime and corruption and demographic features



PRIORITY: Fight Against Discrimination

According to the data presented in the last CEDEM's Democracy Index for Montenegro, very little progress has been made in the past ten years, and citizens are still not familiar with their own rights, guaranteed by the Constitution and laws, should they fall victim to discrimination. On the other hand, the most recent survey on the extent and patterns of discrimination, conducted by CEDEM in 2020, tells us that there is an increase in the number of citizens who believe that the state will protect them from discrimination, but there is still a significant number of those who lack this trust. The change of Government has brought almost no change with regards to the issue of the fight against discrimination as stated in the European Commission Report for Montenegro. Unlike them, citizens rank this issue highly and as a priority for the improvement of Montenegro (CHART 19).

When speaking about the importance of the fight against discrimination on national, religious, political or any other ground, the supporters, **nonvoters and minority parties consider the fight against discrimination least important for the improvement of Montenegro, when compared to the others.** Then come **the supporter of DPS and pro-Serbian parties, to a somewhat higher extent**, whilst it is **supported the highest extent by those who are voters of civic parties**, almost 80% of them.

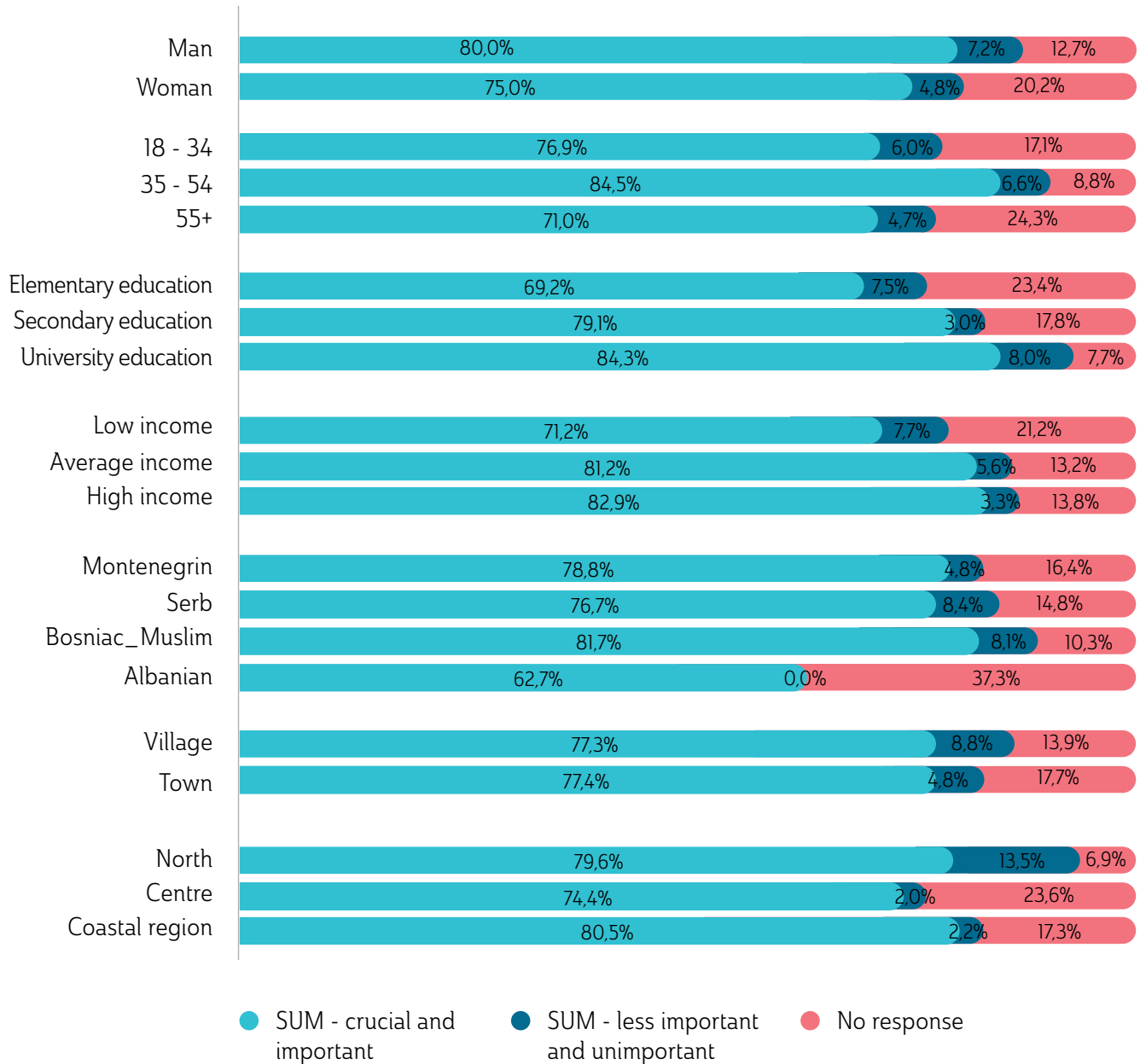
CHART 19 – Fight against discrimination and party preference – INDEX



More men than women consider fight against discrimination crucial or important, st like the middle-aged do as compared to the younger ones and the elderly. When it comes to the influence of demographic features - place of living, i.e. whether the respondents live in the rural or urban areas, and whether they live in the north, centre or down the coast, the **differences are almost non-existent. Bosniacs and Muslims, to the highest extent, think the Issue of the fight against discrimination crucial**

or important for the betterment of Montenegro, followed by Montenegrins and Serbs, and Albanians to the smallest extent. Just as in the case of previous priorities, the higher the level of education the higher the issue of the fight against discrimination is on the agenda for the progress of our country. The effect of income is important, having in mind that those with lower incomes consider this issue least crucial or important, unlike those with higher incomes (CHART 20).

CHART 20 - Fight against discrimination and demographic features



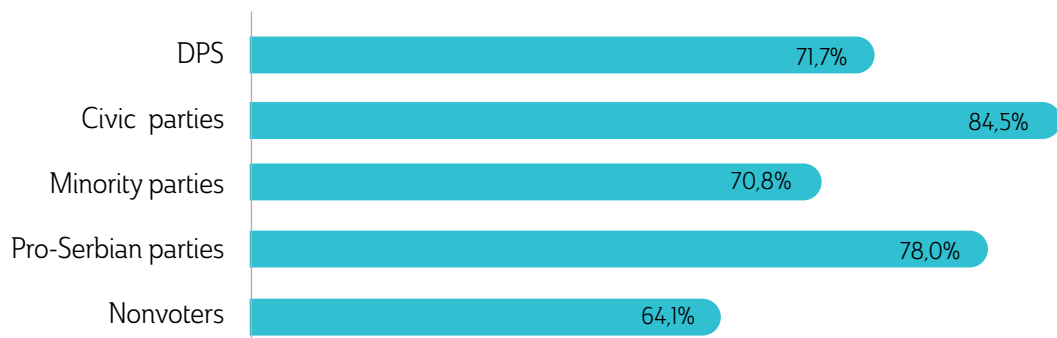
PRIORITY:

Reform of Public Administration

When it comes to the reform of public administration the first association of the citizens is depoliticization and departyzation. Although citizens' expectations were exceptionally high when it comes to this issue, unfortunately, even after the change of Government in the opinion of citizens political belief is one of the main recruitment criteria in the public administration. Certainly, it should be said that this reform constitutes one of the three pillars in the EU enlargement process.

Consequently, irrespective of their political belief, **citizens mostly think that this issue is important for the progress of Montenegro. The supporters of civic parties come at the forefront, followed by, to somewhat smaller extent, those who support pro-Serbian parties and DPS.** The data in the CHART 21 indicate that the supporters of minority parties and nonvoters are those who advocate least public administration in particular with depoliticisation and departyzation, which is rather indicative.

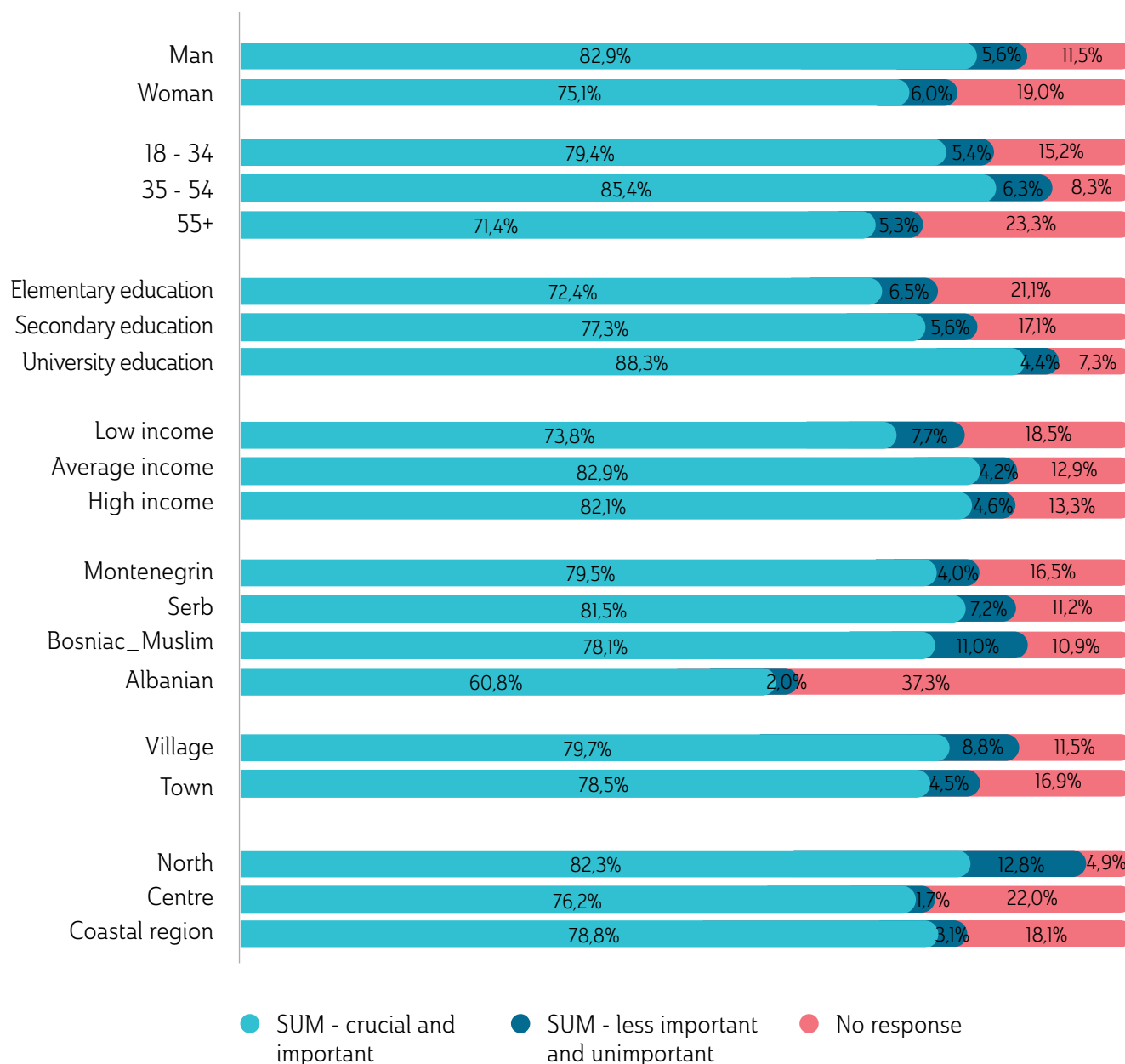
CHART 21 – Reform of public administration and party preference – INDEX



Generally speaking, the data show that **more men than women, as well as middle-aged citizens to a greater extent, consider the issue of the reform of public administration as crucial or important.** When it comes to education, the **highly educated emphasize the importance of this issue by 15% more in relation to those with only elementary level education.** Unlike the Albanians, who consider depoliticization and departyzation of public administration least crucial or important internal priority, the data show that **Bosniacs and Muslims, Montenegrins and Serbs, by almost 20% more, consider this issue crucial or important for the progress of Montenegro.** When it comes to regions, **the citizens who live in the north of Montenegro, to a somewhat greater extent, deem this issue crucial or important, contrary**

to those who live in the central region or along the coast (CHART 22).

CHART 22 – Reform of public administration and demographic features



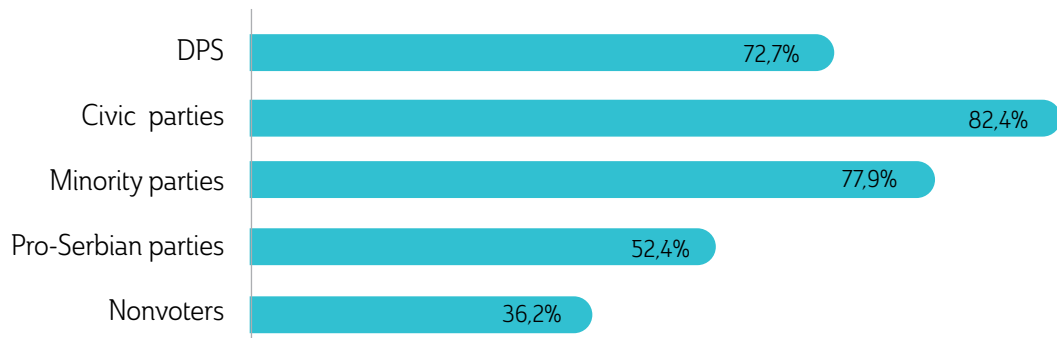
PRIORITY:

The Fulfilment of The EU Membership Requirements

Montenegrin EU integration is one of the rare issues around which there is general social consensus, which in turns gives strong backing to this process. The stance of the public, international community, ruling political elite and Parliamentary parties as of the very beginning of the process demonstrates clear support to the EU accession.

As compared to the others, the voters or supporters of pro-Serbian parties and nonvoters support the fulfilment of the EU membership requirements to a significantly lower extent. The supporters of civic parties support the fulfilment of requirement to the highest extent, followed by those who support minority parties and finally, but in a significant percentage, come the voters of DPS (CHART 23).

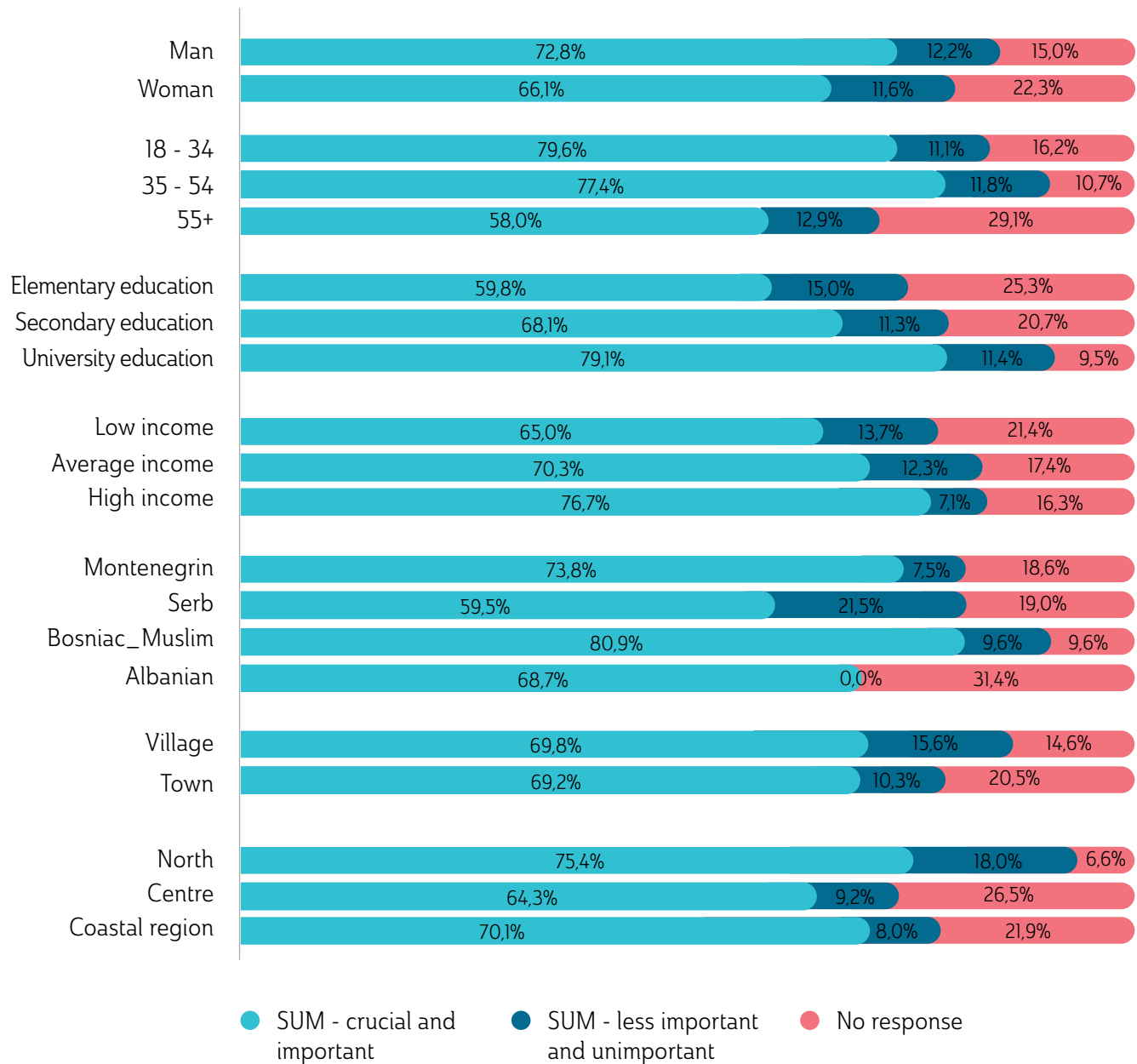
CHART 23 – Montenegrin EU membership and party preference – INDEX



According to the data in the CHART 24, education constitutes a significant feature of the respondents which determines the stance on the issue of the fulfilment of requirements for Montenegrin EU membership. In specific terms, **citizens with higher level of education are more supportive of the activities on the fulfilment of the accession requirements, unlike those with lower level of education.** When speaking about the level of income, **the citizens falling under the category of high income support the fulfilment of the requirements to the highest extent** as compared to those with lower income. **People beyond the age of 55 consider to a smaller extent that the fulfilment of the requirements is crucial or important for**

the progress of the country. Bosniacs and Muslims, then Montenegrins and Albanians support this Issue to the highest extent as being crucial or important for the betterment of the country, unlike **Serbs who consider the fulfilment of the membership requirements least crucial or important.** Finally, just as with other priorities **men appreciate the importance of this issue more than women, whilst most citizens who support the activities directed towards this priority live in the north of Montenegro.**

CHART 24 - Montenegrin EU membership and demographic features

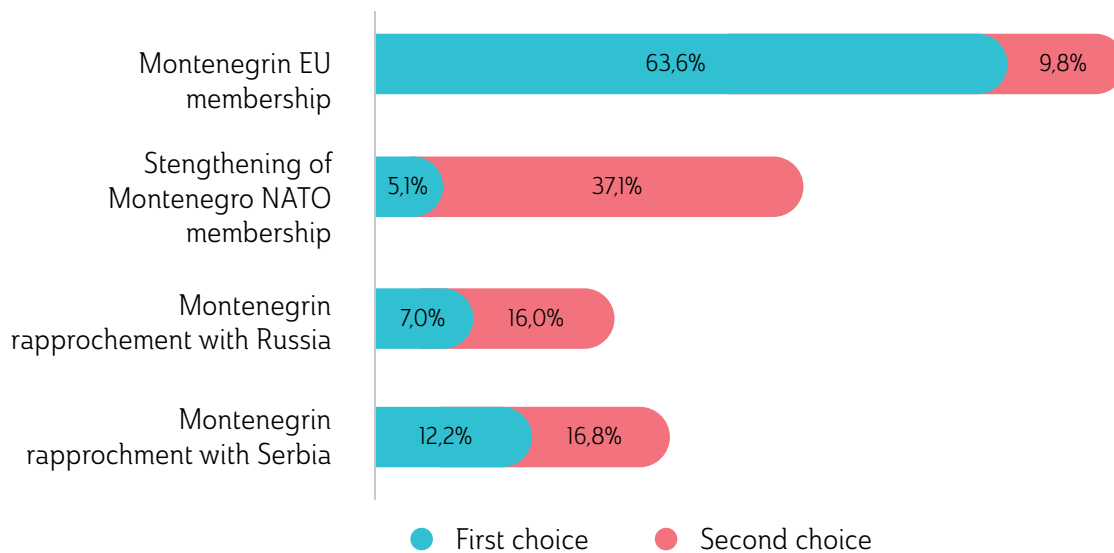


STANCES AND PERCEPTIONS OF CITIZENS RELATING TO ISSUES FROM THE AREA OF FOREIGN POLICY

Through key strategic lines of development of the geostrategic and geopolitical position Montenegro opted to base its foreign policy on Montenegrin EU accession, further NATO integration and strengthening regional cooperation. Taking into account the change of the Government and strengthening of pro-Russian political structures in Montenegro, there are different opinions as to what is the most important thing that the Government should be addressing when it comes to foreign policy.

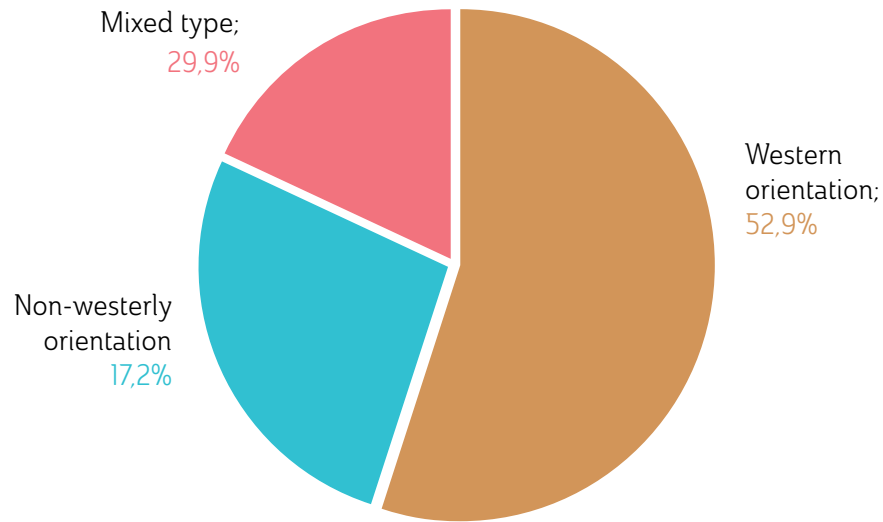
Observed cumulatively (CHART 25), **almost two thirds of citizens choose Montenegrin EU membership as the first foreign policy choice, whilst there are 12.2% of those who believe that focus should be on Montenegrin rapprochement with Serbia and/or 7% of those who choose Montenegrin rapprochement with Russia as the first choice.**

CHART 25 – Priorities of foreign policy



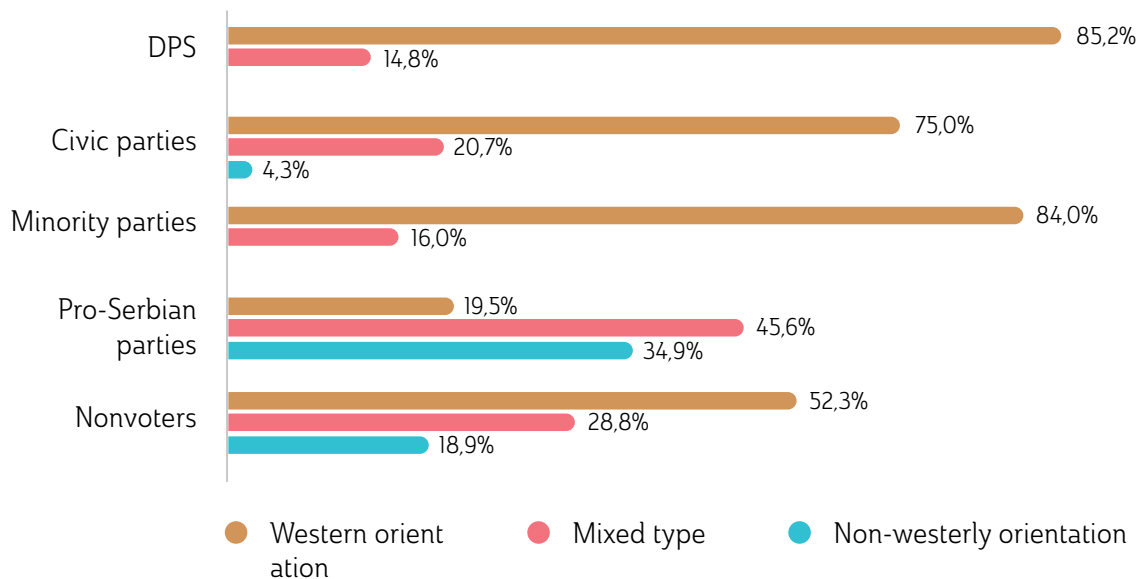
Citizens are mostly pro-westerly oriented (CHART 26), i.e. when it comes to foreign policy determination of the country, it is clear that the citizens are determined that Montenegro should rely primarily on the western partners, primarily EU in its foreign policy.

CHART 26 - Priorities of foreign policy – INDEX



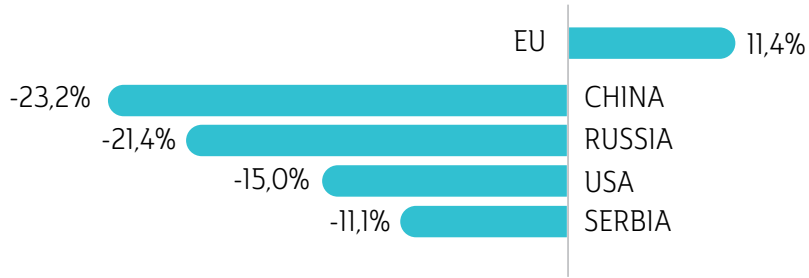
Analysing the results related to foreign policy orientation by political orientation of citizens, the data indicate that the **supporters of pro-Serbian parties are non-westerly oriented, while the supporters of other political structures and nonvoters are pro-westerly oriented.**

CHART 27 – Priorities of foreign policy and party preference - INDEX



Finally, we are bringing the index of foreign policy orientation, i.e. difference between the sum that it relies “entirely and to a great extent” and the sum “little and not at all”. The data indicate that **there is a larger number of citizens who think that Montenegro should entirely or to a large extent on the EU, as well as those who believe that Montenegro should rely little or not at all on China, Russia, the United States and Serbia.**

CHART 28 – Support in foreign policy – INDEX
(SUM full and to a large extent and SUM little and none)

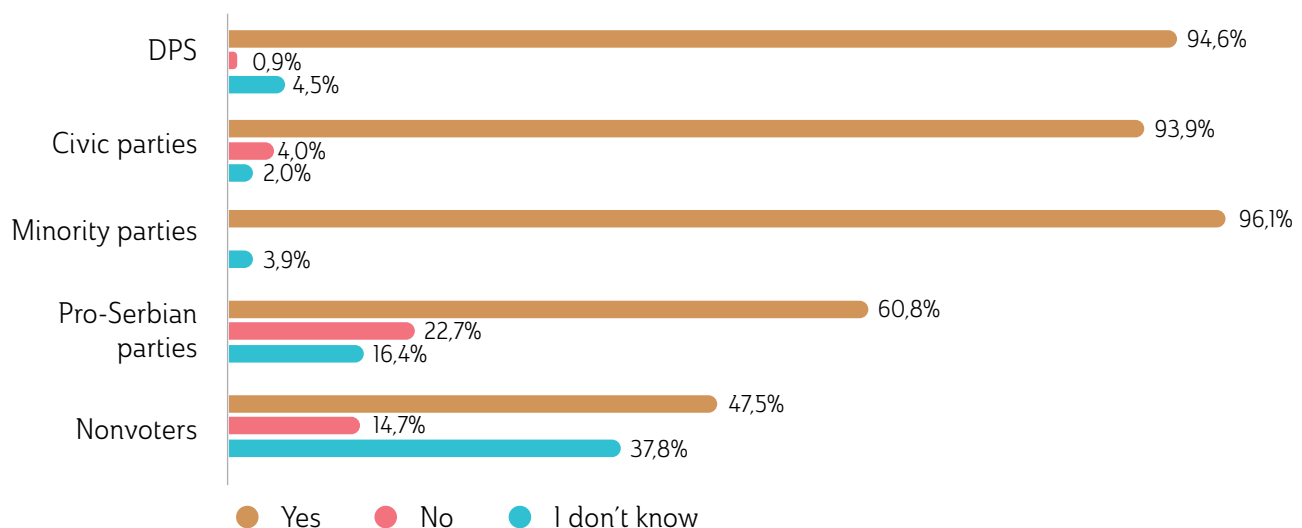


Support to Full Montenegrin EU Membership

Although in previous research cycles we measured decline in citizens' support to Montenegrin EU membership, and additionally although Montenegro is in the tenth year of the negotiation process when there is a decline in the support to this process due to saturation, with the change of Government there has been the increase in the support for membership. Currently, almost three fourths of citizens support the European path and full EU membership, which is very encouraging and sends a clear message to political structures.

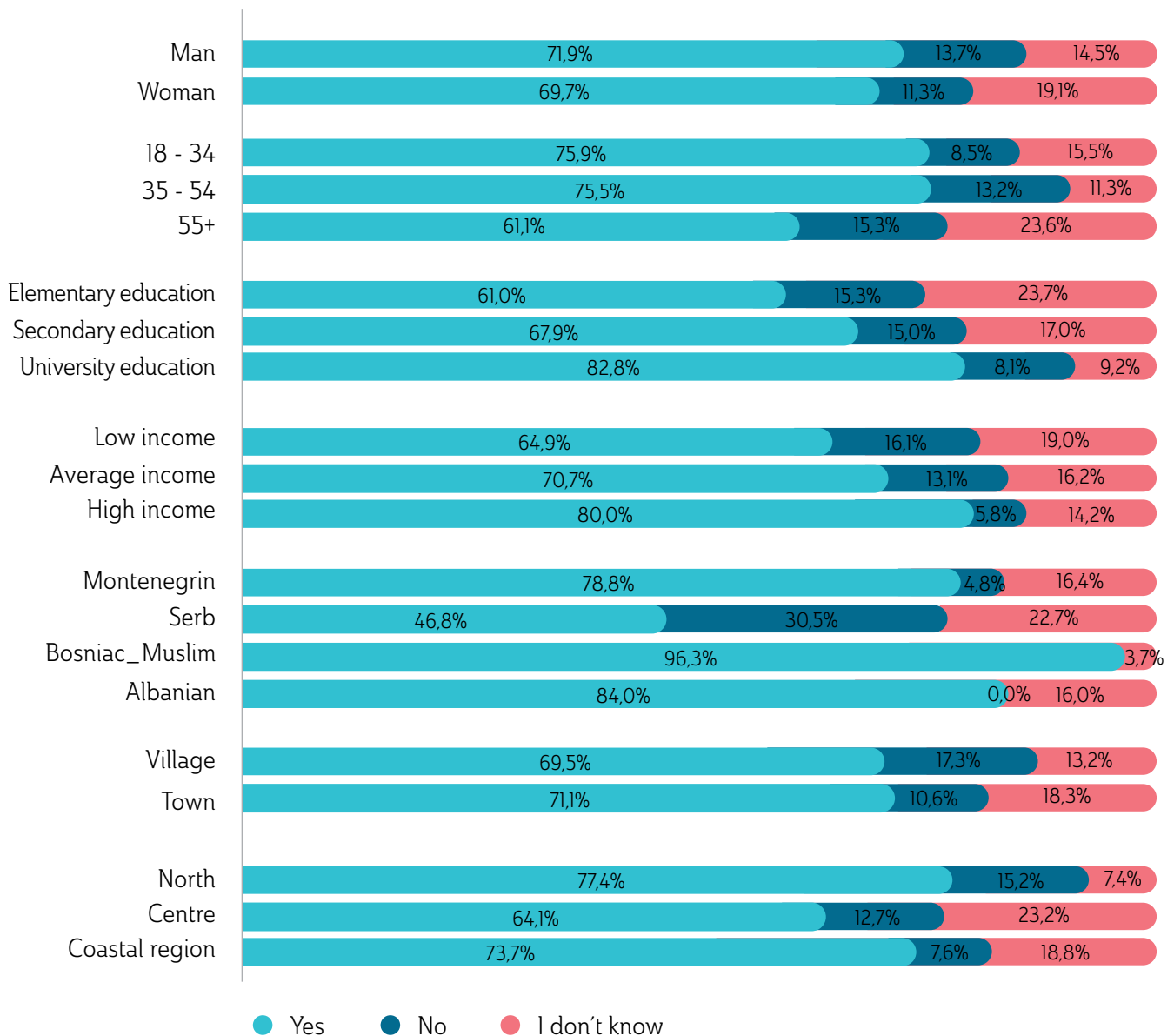
Almost every citizen who supports DPS, civic or minority parties supports also Montenegrin EU membership, while the number of the supporters of pro-Serbian parties is by one third smaller, i.e. 60.8% of the citizens of Serbian nationality are supportive of membership. Although significant number of nonvoters are supportive of Montenegrin EU membership, when compared to others, **their number turns out to be the smallest (CHART 29).**

CHART 29 – Support to full Montenegrin EU membership and party preference



The data in the CHART 30 indicate that the differences are very negligible with regards to the attitude on Montenegrin EU membership when it comes to demographic features of the respondents – sex/gender and place of residence – town/village. **Significantly higher membership support is expressed by those with university level of education and whose income levels are high.** The effect of national affiliation is also very indicative. More precisely, **the members of Bosniac and Muslim nationality support the membership most, followed by the Albanians and Montenegrins, while the citizens of Serbian nationality express least support to the membership.** The citizens who live in the north or along the coast of Montenegro offer greater support to the EU membership, unlike those who live in the central region. When it comes to age, **older citizens are significantly less supportive of the European path of Montenegro.**

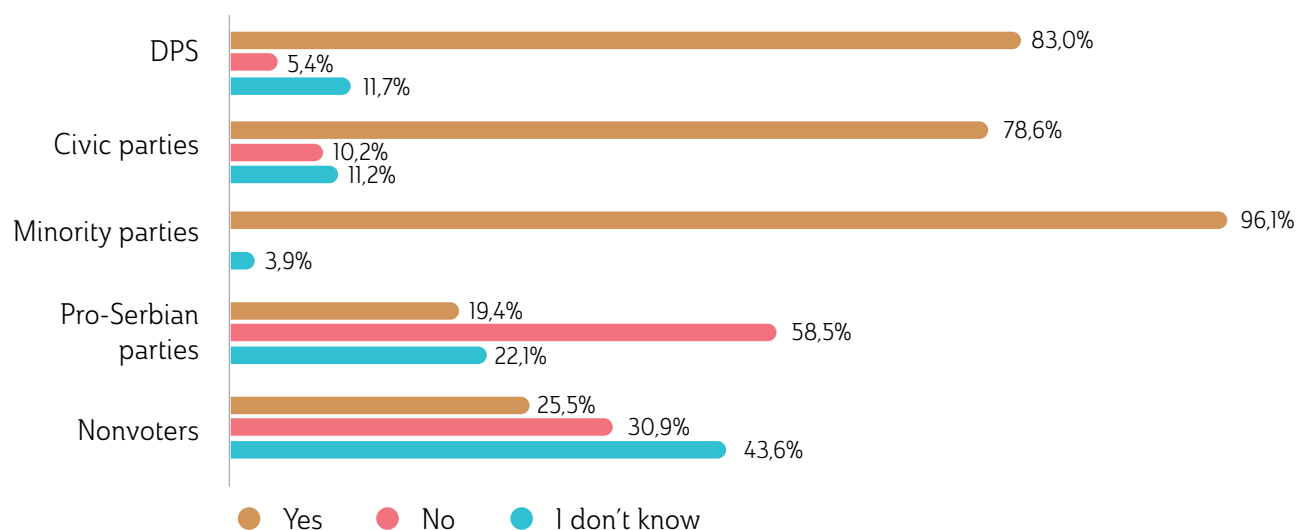
CHART 30 - Support to full Montenegrin EU membership and demographic features



Support To Montenegrin Nato Alliance Membership

When it comes to Montenegrin NATO Alliance membership, **the supporters of DPS, civic and minority parties are strongly supportive of the membership, out of whom the membership is mostly supported by the voters of minority parties. Every fifth nonvoter supports Montenegrin membership to this alliance, insignificantly more than the supporters of pro-Serbian parties.** While on the side of DPS, civic and minority parties oppose the membership in a very small number, the data show **that more than half of the voters of pro-Serbian parties are against, and somewhere below one third of nonvoters (CHART 31).**

CHART 31 - Support to Montenegrin NATO Alliance membership and party preference



When it comes to age, the data in the CHART 32 show that in **comparison to the elderly, 15% more young people and those belonging to the middle-aged are supportive of Montenegrin NATO membership.** The effect of the level of education is in positive correlation with the extent of NATO membership support. In comparative sense, **Montenegrin membership is supported by the citizens with university**

level of education in the number which is almost twice as high as those with elementary level of education. When speaking about the level of income, those citizens whose incomes belong to the category of high income are supportive of the membership to a higher extent. National affiliation is a very important demographic feature of the respondents. Serbs are least supportive of the membership, just 10.3%. More than every other Montenegrin is supportive of the membership, followed by 74.5% of Albanians. Almost every Bosniac or Albanian supports the idea of Montenegro being a part of NATO. The lowest level of membership support is offered by the citizens living in the central region.

CHART 32 - Support to Montenegrin NATO Alliance membership and demographic features

