

**ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS OF THE POLITICAL PUBLIC OPINION IN
MONTENEGRO**

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KEY FINDINGS

- **The citizens of Montenegro have the most confidence in the education system: 59.3% of citizens have confidence in this institution.** The next institution, according to the percentage of citizens' trust, is the Serbian Orthodox Church; more than half of respondents (55.5%) trust this institution.
- **The Montenegrin Orthodox Church, which is trusted by 14.4% of citizens, has the worst results, that is, 85.6% of the Montenegrin citizens do not trust this institution.**
- **The best rated politician is Jakov Milatović with 16 percent. After him is Milo Đukanović, who is rated the highest by 15.5% of citizens.**
- **A third of the Montenegrin citizens would, if parliamentary elections were held next week, vote for the Evropa sad party.**
- **According to Graph 14, the best-ranked party is Evropa sad with a rating of 29.1%. The next highest ranked party is DPS which has a rating of 24.1%. SPP has the worst rating: 1.1%.**
- **The largest percentage of the Montenegrin citizens believe that Montenegro should rely on the EU - entirely (15.9%) and to a large extent (28.2%).**
- **A constant increase in the western orientation of citizens was recorded in the period from June 2021 to May 2023.**
- **The largest percentage of citizens are concerned about economic instability (32.4%), followed by threats to Montenegrin independence (27.8%).**
- **A convincing majority of citizens (59%) believe that the Government's priority should be the country's membership in the EU (Graph 28).** Then, a quarter of the respondents marked the rapprochement of Montenegro with Serbia as the first priority of the future government.

INTRODUCTION

The Presidential Elections were held recently in Montenegro, which resulted in significant changes in the political landscape of the country. Milo Đukanović, the long-time president and leader of the Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS), is now giving way to Jakov Milatović. The change of Government was expected, and this transition caused a lot of public attention.

This change of government is extremely significant, as it marks the end of an era that lasted almost 30 years. Milo Đukanović, as the long-time leader of DPS, was a key figure in Montenegrin politics since the breakup of the former Yugoslavia and during the period of Montenegrin independence in 2006. His party dominated the political scene, and Đukanović served as the President or the Prime Minister several times.

The meaning and significance of this change lies not only in the fact that political leaders have been replaced, but also in the wider context of the political democratization of Montenegro. This transition is a test for political stability and democratic institutions.

The research was conducted in the period between the Presidential and Parliamentary elections, while Montenegro was facing a technical mandate of the Government. In that period, the Government was facing with a limited capacity to make long-term decisions and implement changes.

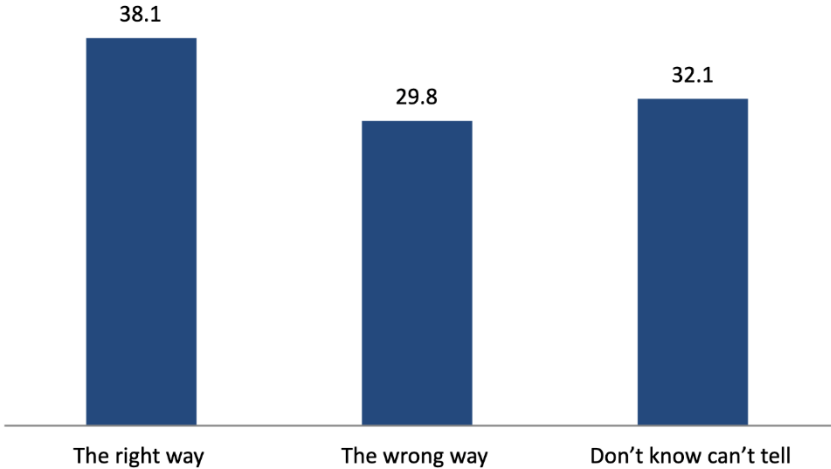
Jakov Milatović, the new President of Montenegro, comes from a pro-European political party. This fact affects the political atmosphere in the country and the return of European enthusiasm among citizens.

After years of pursuing a policy aimed at integration into the European Union, Montenegro is faced with challenges and setbacks in the accession process. However, the coming to power of representatives of the pro-European party gives hope that reforms and efforts for EU membership will intensify.

SOCIO-POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT, INSTITUTIONS AND POLITICAL FUNCTIONARIES

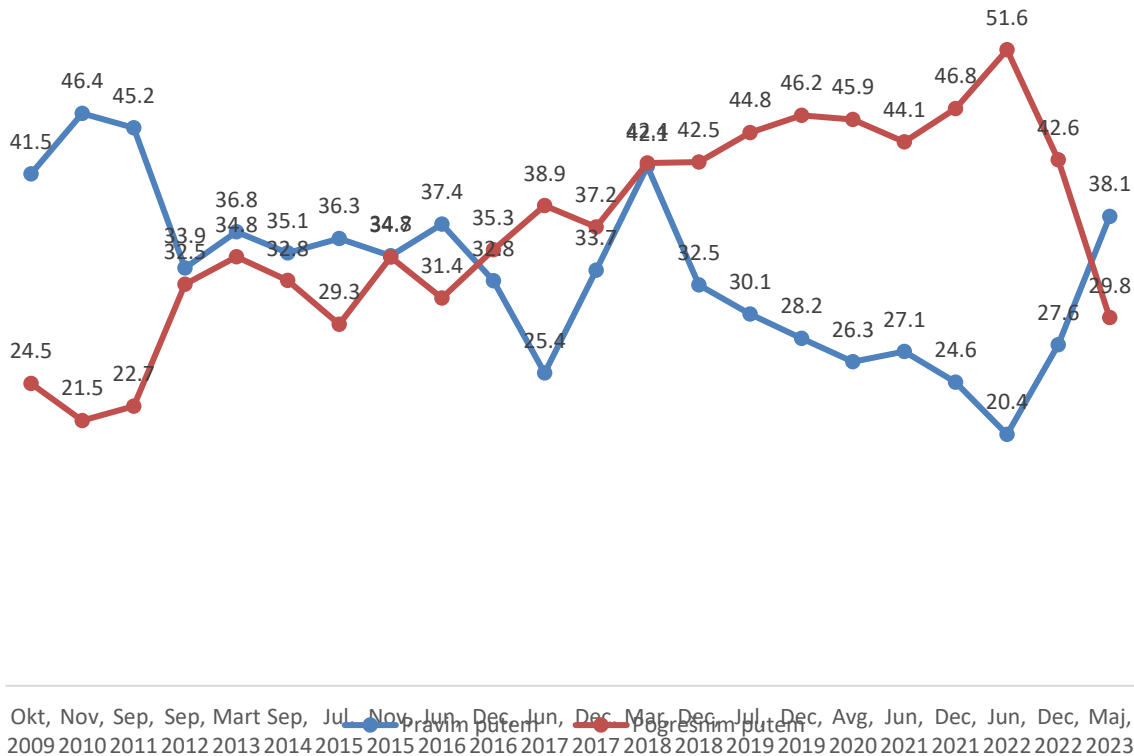
On **Graph 1** data show that the **majority of respondents (38.1%) believe that Montenegro is moving in the right direction**. Slightly less than a third of respondents (29.8%) believe that Montenegro is moving in the wrong direction, while a third of respondents are undecided regarding this assessment.

Graph 1 – Which way is Montenegro moving (%)



The percentage of citizens who believe that Montenegro is moving in the wrong direction (**Graph 1**) has been on the rise almost continuously since 2010, when every third citizen believed that Montenegro is not on the right path, so that in July 2022, over half citizens said that Montenegro is on the wrong path. Despite all the challenges that Montenegro is facing, since

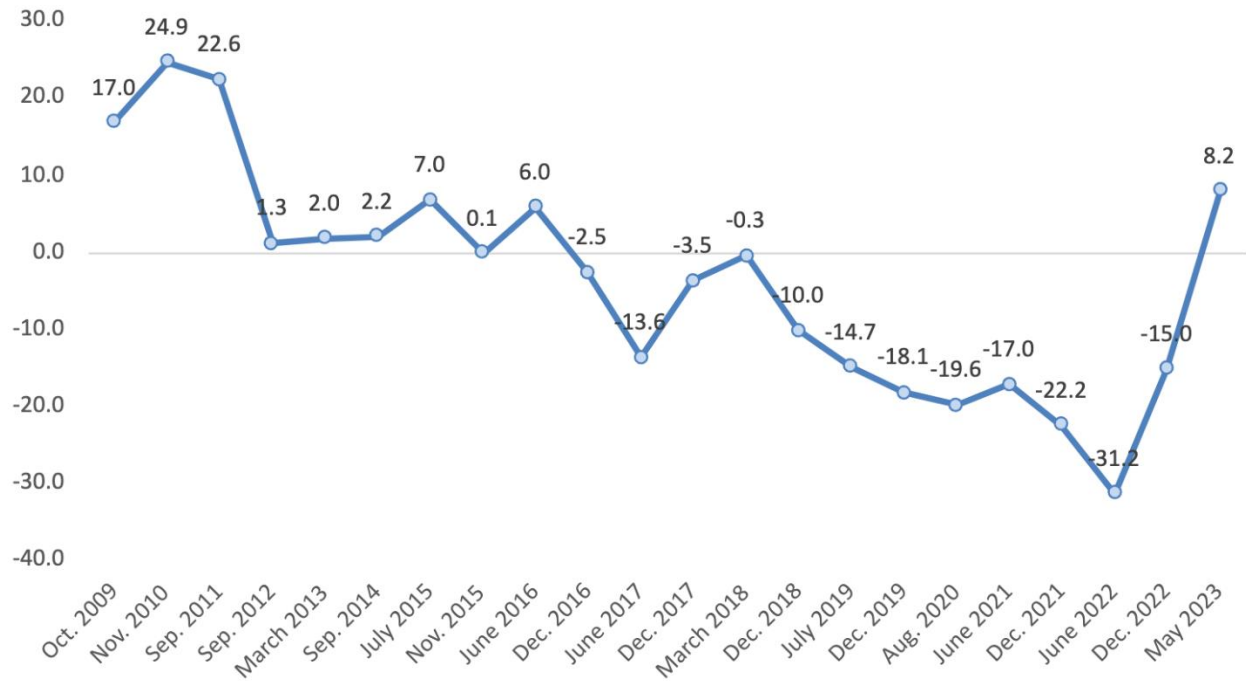
June 2022, there has been a trend of decreasing the number of citizens who believe that the country is moving in the wrong direction, i.e. increasing the number of citizens who appreciate that this is the right path that Montenegro is moving on. **In May 2023, a reversed trend was recorded, where for the first time after 7 years, a larger percentage of citizens believe that Montenegro is moving in the right direction - 38.1% of them.**



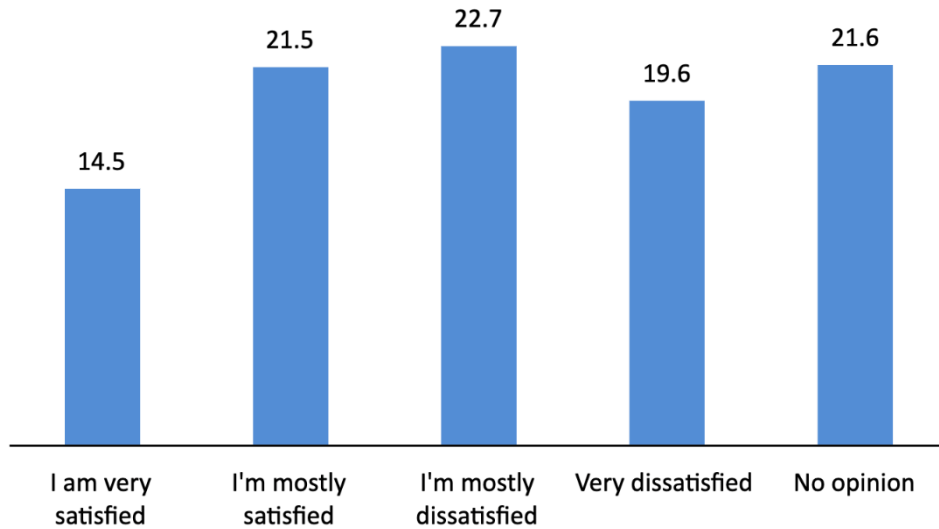
Graph 2 - Which way is Montenegro moving - trend (%)

Graph 2 clearly shows the **exponential growth of the index of assessment of the direction of Montenegro from -31.2 to 8.2 in the period from June 2022 to May 2023.** It is the first recorded positive value after June 2016.

Graph 2 - Which way is Montenegro moving - trend INDEX

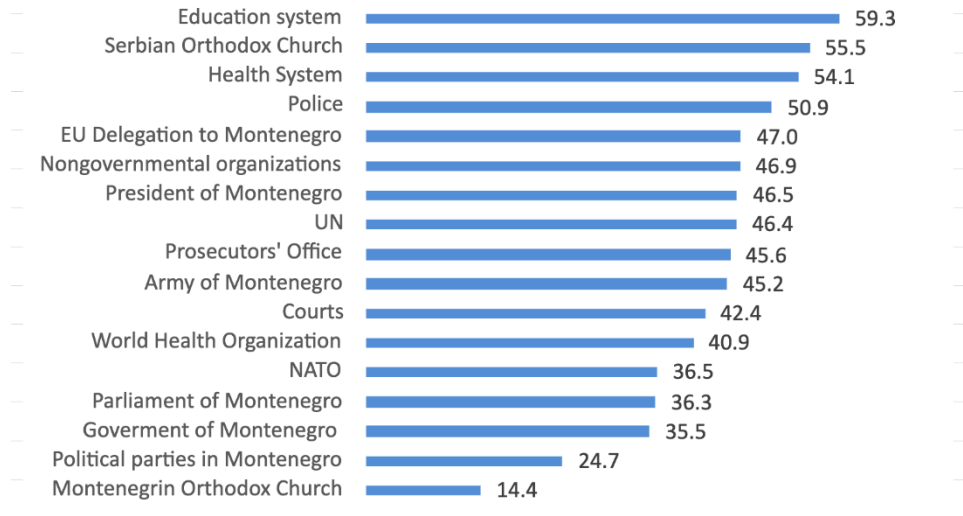


Graph 3 – Satisfaction with the work of the Government (%)



Graph 3 shows data where a **little more than a fifth of citizens declare themselves "mostly satisfied" with the work of the Government in Montenegro**. The percentage of very satisfied respondents is **14.5 percent**. The sum of very dissatisfied and mostly dissatisfied amounts to 42.3%, which is slightly less than half of the respondents. One fifth of citizens do not have an opinion on this issue.

Graph 4 - Trust in institutions (%)

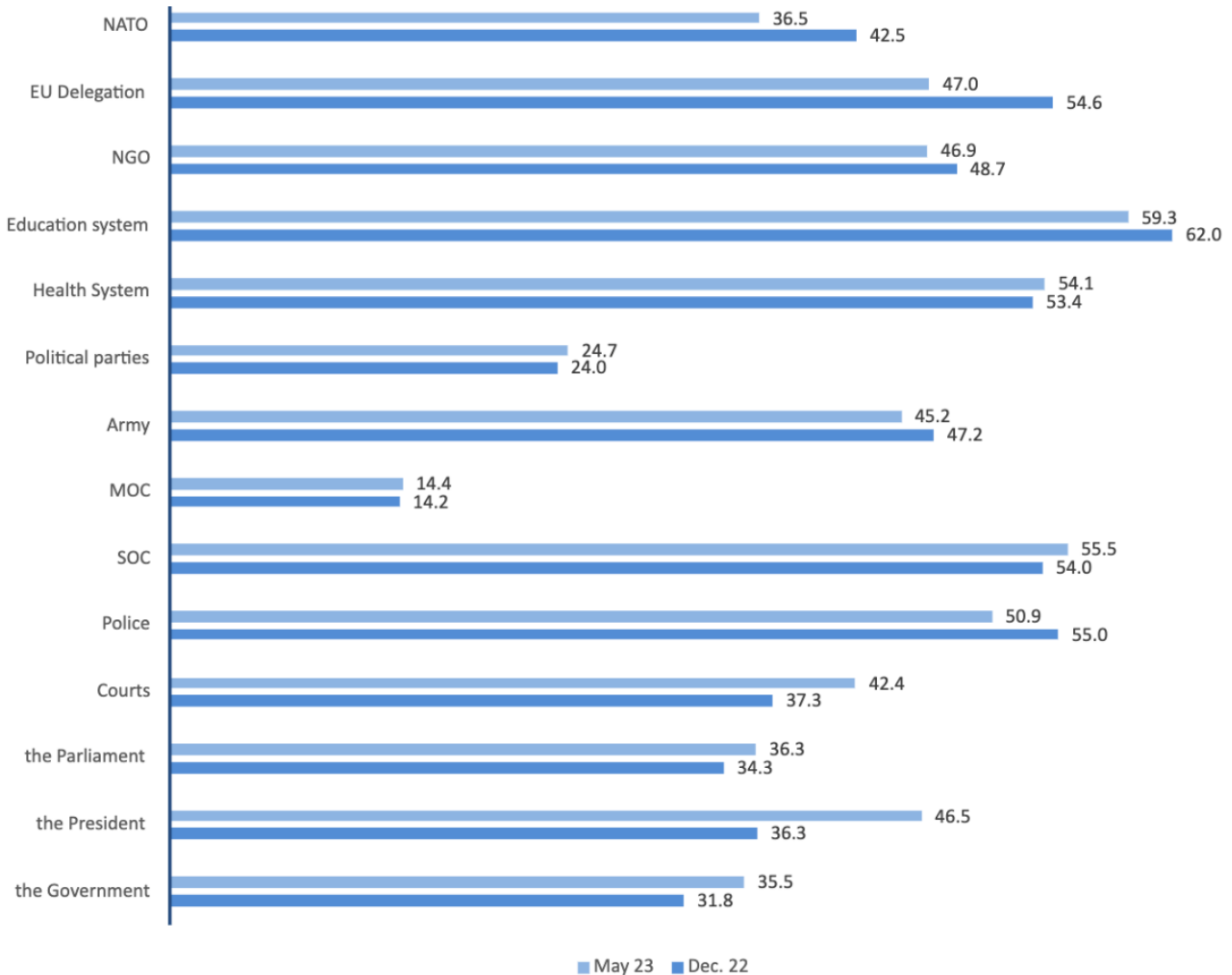


As seen in Graph 4, the citizens of Montenegro have the most confidence in the education system: 59.3% of citizens have confidence in this institution. The next institution, according to the percentage of citizens' trust, is the Serbian Orthodox Church; more than half of respondents (55.5%) trust this institution. The next institution is the health system, which is trusted by 54.1% of the citizens of Montenegro.

The Montenegrin Orthodox Church, which is trusted by 14.4% of citizens, has the worst results, that is, 85.6% of the Montenegrin citizens do not trust this institution.

Next, Montenegrins do not trust the political parties in the country, less than a quarter of citizens trust the parties.

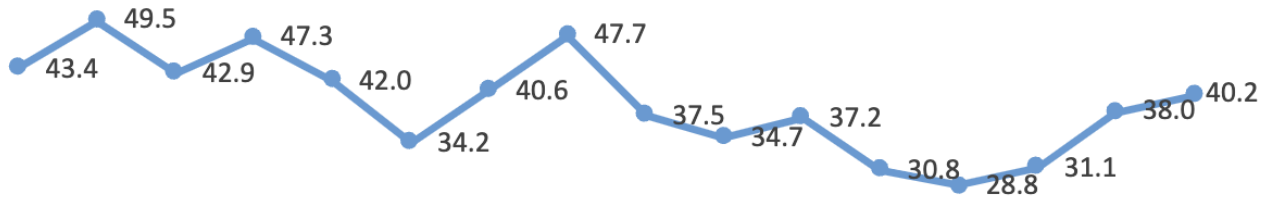
Graph 5 - Trust in institutions Comparison of May 2023 and December 2022 (%)



The biggest change in May 2023 compared to December 2022 is the change in trust in the police. **Trust in the police increased by 10.2 percentage points, from 36.3% to 46.5%. The next significant change is the drop in trust in non-governmental organizations: from 54.6% to 47%.**

Confidence in the Serbian Orthodox Church increased significantly (by 5.1 percentage points), while confidence in the Montenegrin Orthodox Church decreased by 6 percentage points.

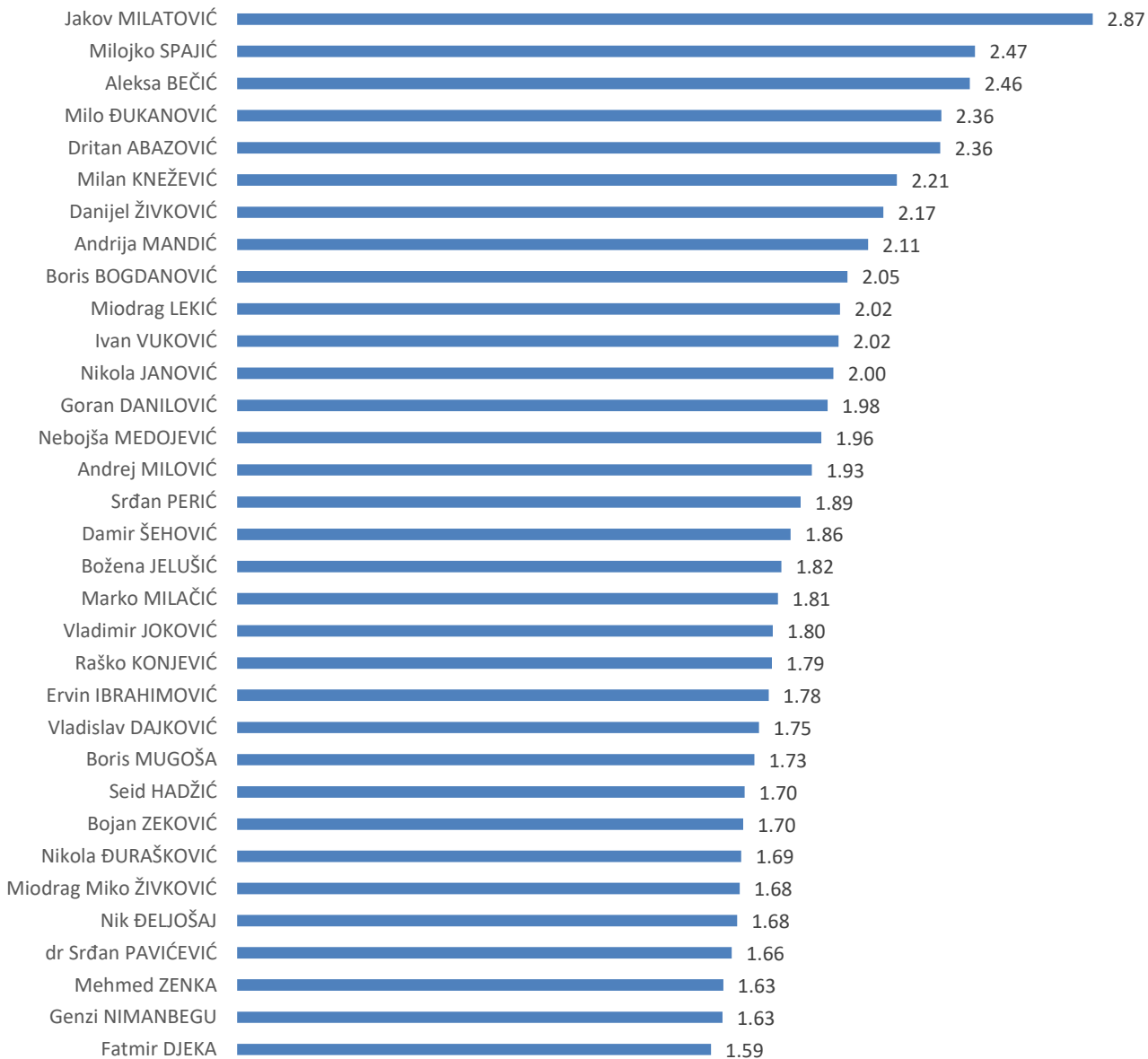
Graph 6 - Trust in institutions INDEX



| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|
| Sep. | July | Nov. | June | Dec. | June | Dec. | March | Dec. | July | Dec. | June | Dec. | June | Dec. | May |
| 14 | 15 | 15 | 16 | 16 | 17 | 17 | 2018 | 18 | 2019 | 19 | 21 | 21 | 22 | 22 | 23 |

The trend of increasing trust in political institutions in Montenegro continues (Graph 6). **Since December 2021, a constant increase has been recorded.** The confidence index in May 2023 is 40.2.

Graph 7 - Average rating of politicians in Montenegro

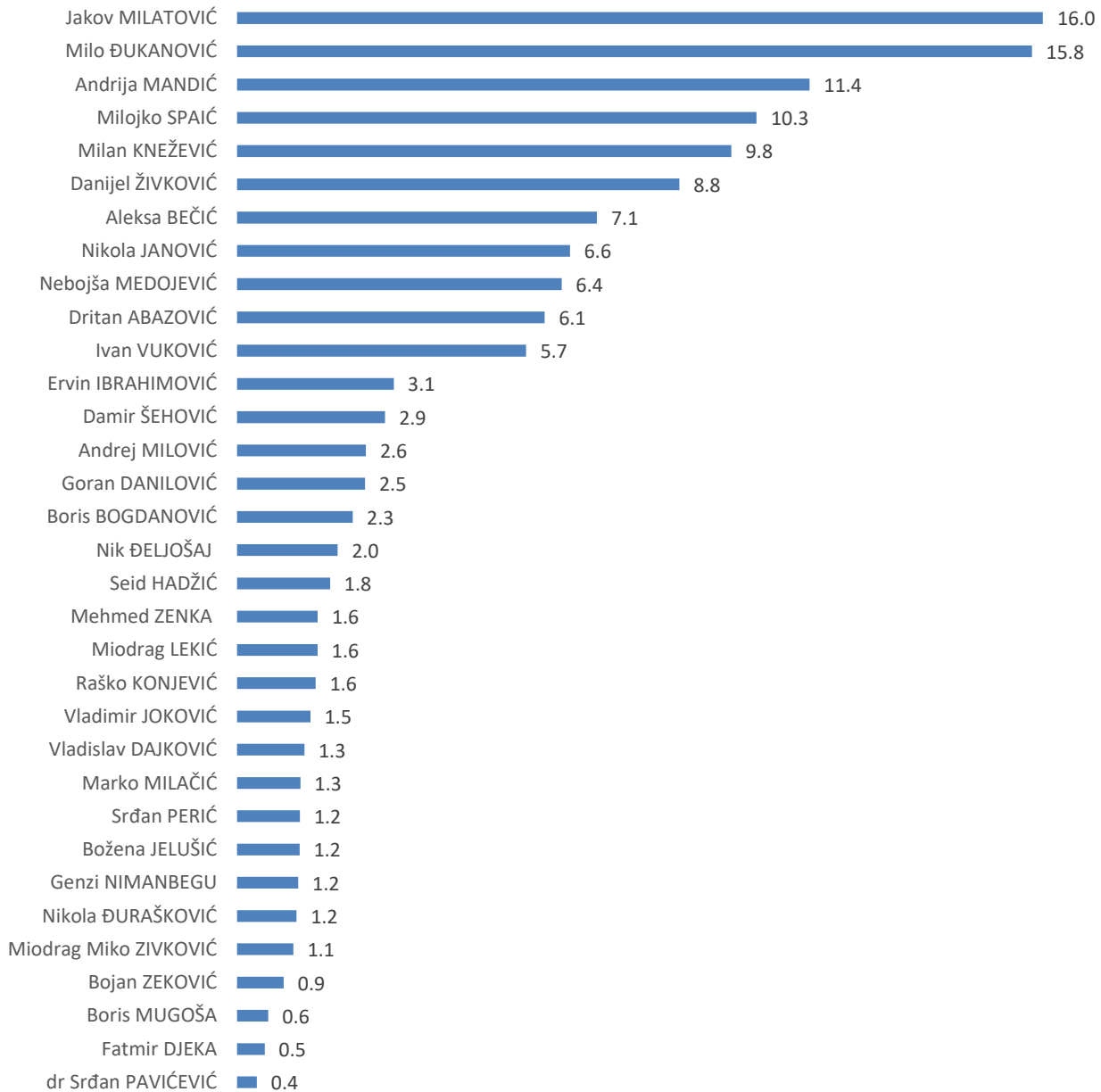


Graph 7 shows the list of holders of political positions in Montenegro, sorted by the level of the average rating. **The first on the list is Jakov Milatović with an average score of 2.87.** The next one is Milojkko Spajić with an average score of 2.47, while Aleksa Bečić is following with an average score of 2.46.

Milo Đukanović and Dritan Abazović have the same average score: 2.36.

At the bottom of the list are Fatmir Đeka, Genzi Nimanbegu and Mehmed Zenka.

Graph 8 - Rating of politicians - % of highest ratings (5)



As shown above (**Graph 8**), **16 percent of citizens rate Jakov Milatović with the highest rating. The next one is Milo Đukanović, who is rated the highest by 15.5% of citizens.** Last on the list are Srđan Pavićević MD, Fatmir Đeka and Boris Mugoša.

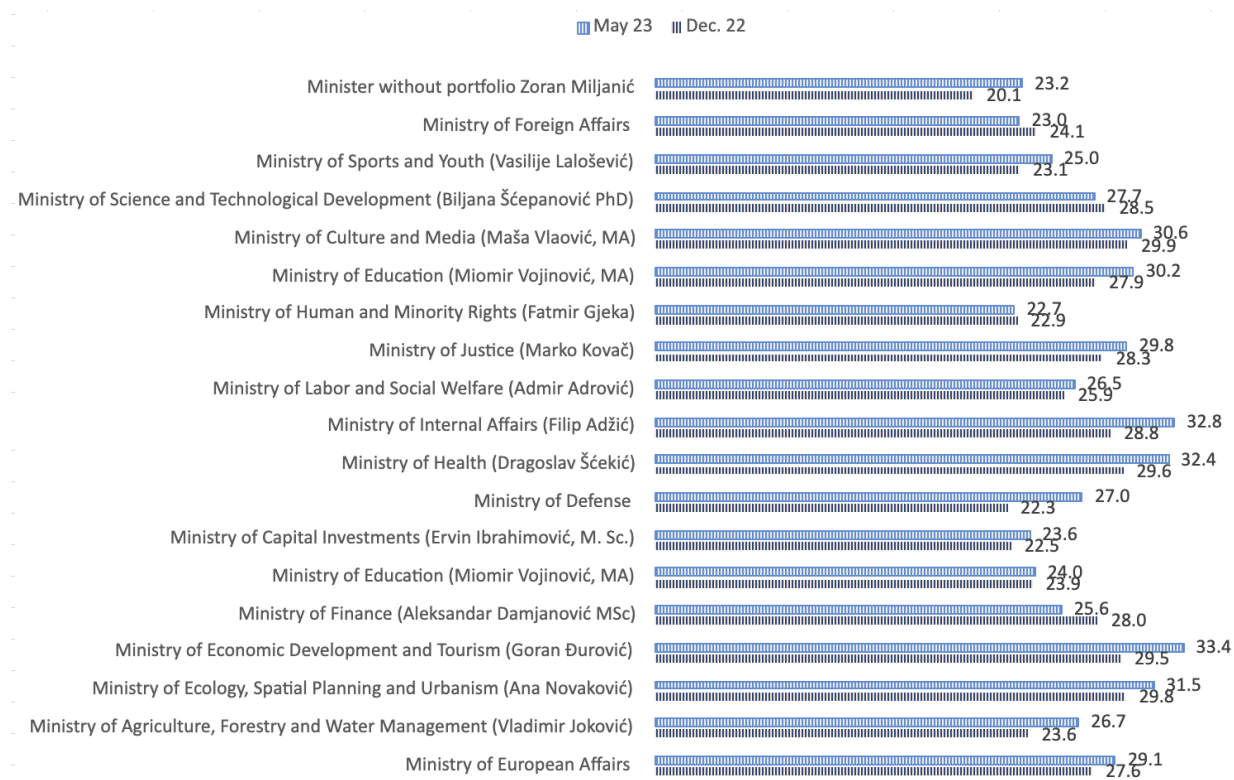
Graph 9 - Evaluation of work of ministries - % SUM The ministry works well and very good



According to the data from Graph 10, the Ministry of Economic Development and Tourism is the best-rated ministry by the citizens of Montenegro with a rating of 33.4%. The Ministry of Internal Affairs is the next best-rated ministry with a rating of 32.8%. Near the top of the list are the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism and the Ministry of Culture and Media.

The worst-rated ministry is the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, which has a rating of 22.7%. At the bottom of the list are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Minister without portfolio Zoran Miljanić.

Graph 10 - Evaluation of the work of the ministry, comparison between December 2022 and May 2023 (%)



Significant increases in the evaluation of the work of the ministries are recorded in the case of the Ministry of Economic Development and Tourism (increase from 29.5% to 33.4%), in the case of the Ministry of Defence (increase from 22.3% to 27%) and in the case of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (increase from 28.8% to 32.8%).

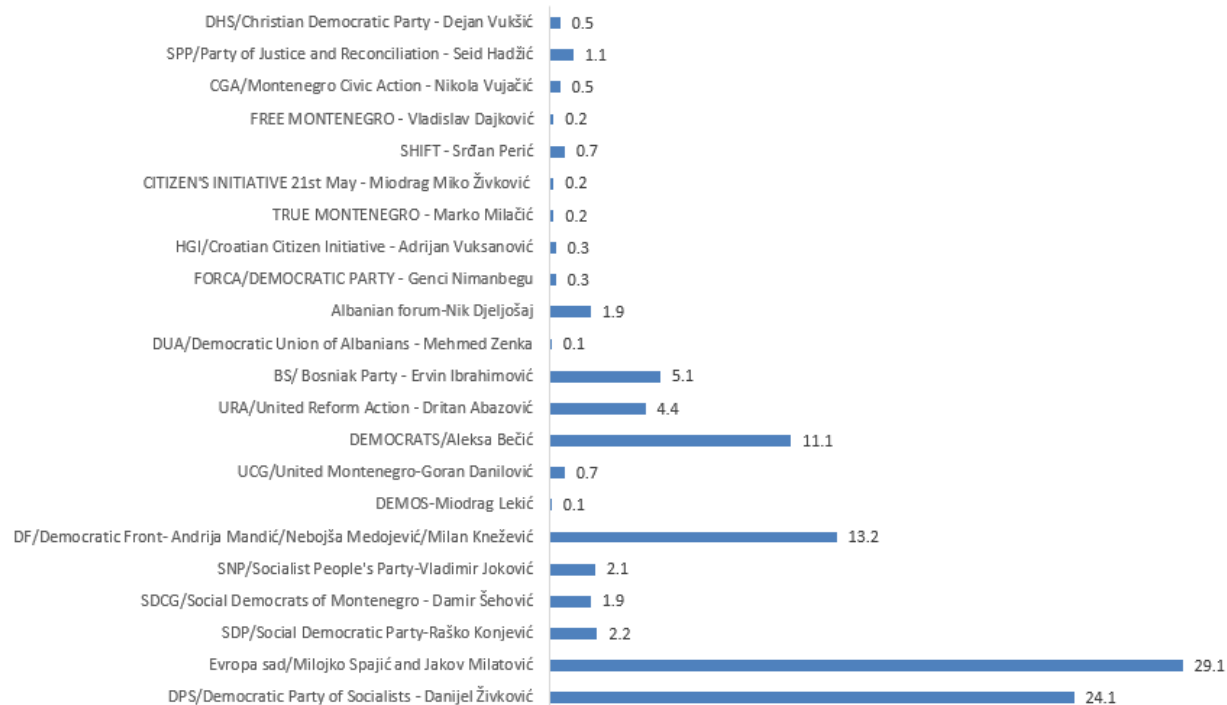
The biggest drop in the evaluation of the work of the ministry was recorded in the case of the Ministry of Finance: a drop from 28% to 25.6%. A very small drop in the evaluation of the work of the ministries can be seen only in the case of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (from 24.1% to 23%), the Ministry of Science and Technological Development (fall from 28.5% to 27.7%) and the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights (drop from 22.9% to 22.7%).

Graph 11 - Rating of all ministries, comparison by year (%)



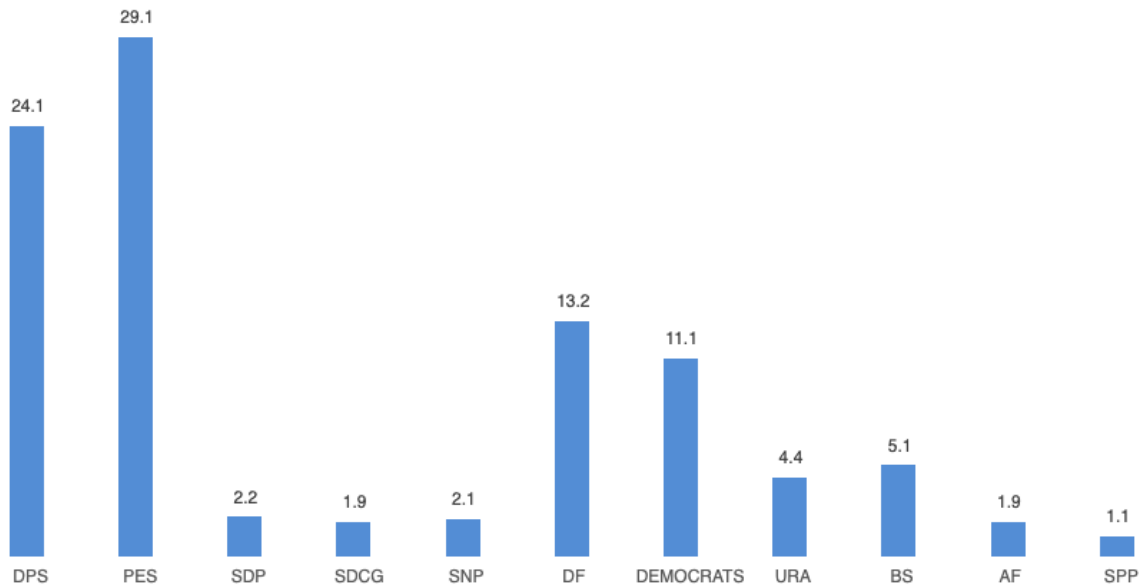
After a constant downward trend in the ratings of all ministries in the period from December 2018 to June 2022, **Graph 11 shows a constant upward trend in the rating of all ministries in the period June 2022 - May 2023, when the rating of the work of all ministries is 27.6%.**

Graph 12 - If parliamentary elections were held next week, which party would you vote for? (%)



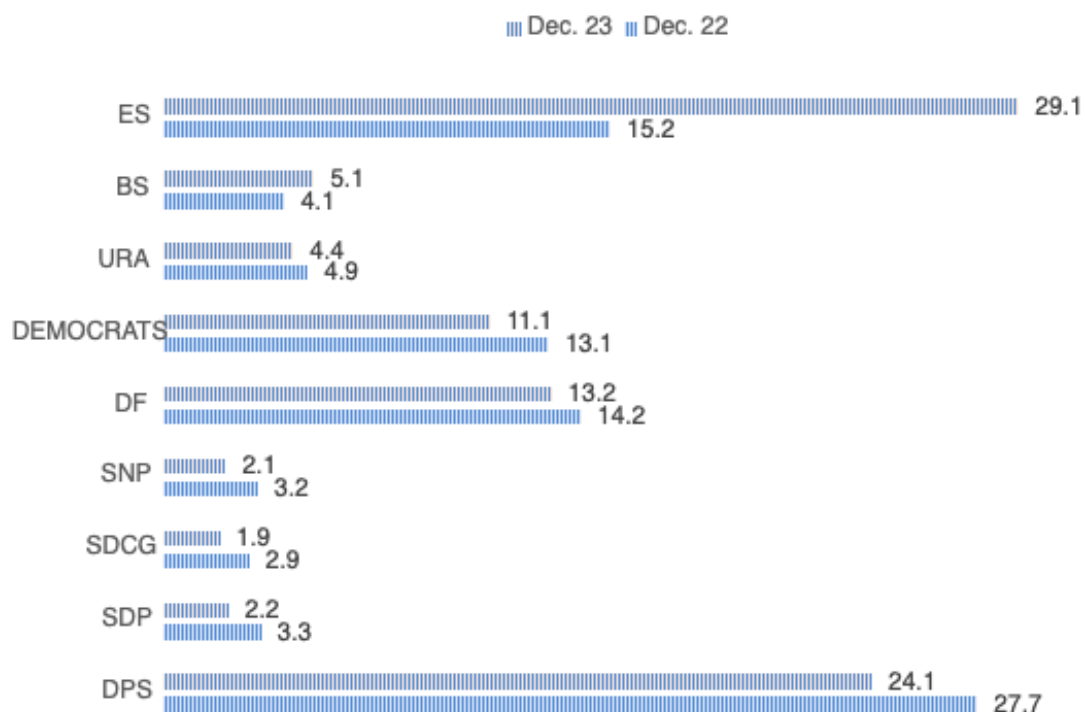
If parliamentary elections were held next week, a third of Montenegrin citizens would vote for the Evropa sad party (Graph 12). A quarter of citizens would vote with the DPS, while 13.2% of respondents would vote for the Democratic Front.

Graph 13 - Rating of political parties (%)



According to **Graph 13**, the best-ranked party is Evropa sad with a rating of 29.1%. The next highest ranked party is DPS which has a rating of 24.1%. SPP has the worst rating: 1.1%.

Graph 14 - Rating of political parties Comparison December 2022 and May 2023 (%)



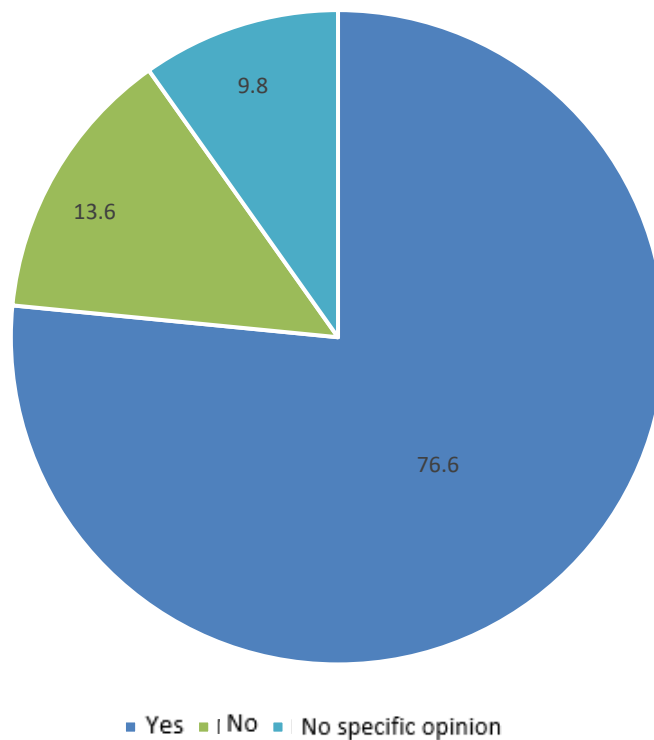
Compared to December 2022, in May 2023, the rating of the Evropa sad increased from 15.2% to 29.1% (Graph 14). We also see an increase in the rating in the case of the Bosniak Party (from 4.1% to 5.1%). In all other cases, downward rating is recorded, and the biggest downward rating is in the case of DPS: from 27.7% to 24.1%.

FOREIGN POLICY

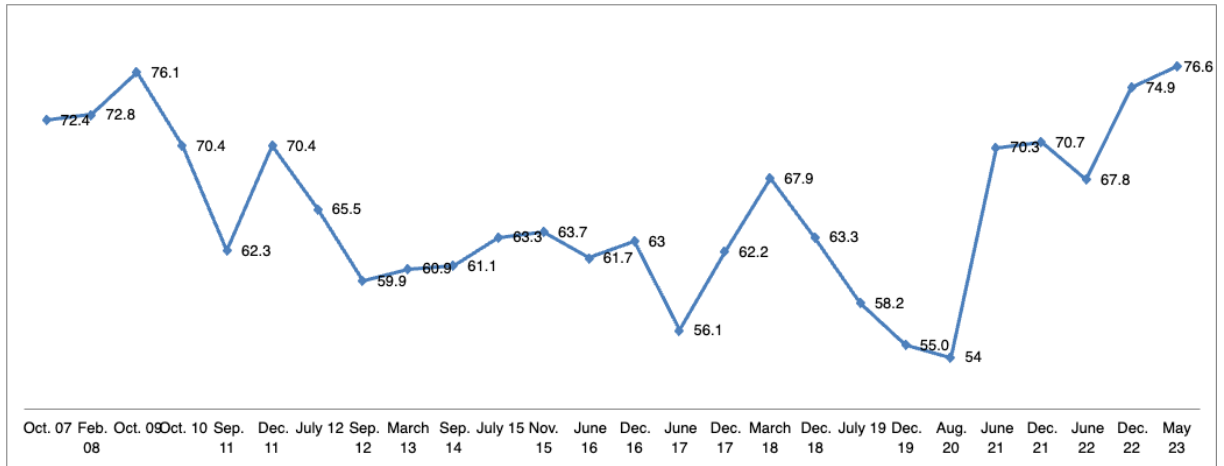
When it comes to orientation towards the European Union within the foreign policy of Montenegro, the largest percentage of respondents believe that Montenegro should be a member of the EU (Graph 16), 76.6% of them.

13.6% of citizens believe that Montenegro should not join the EU, while 9.8% of respondents are undecided.

Graph 15 - In your opinion, should Montenegro be a member of the EU (%)

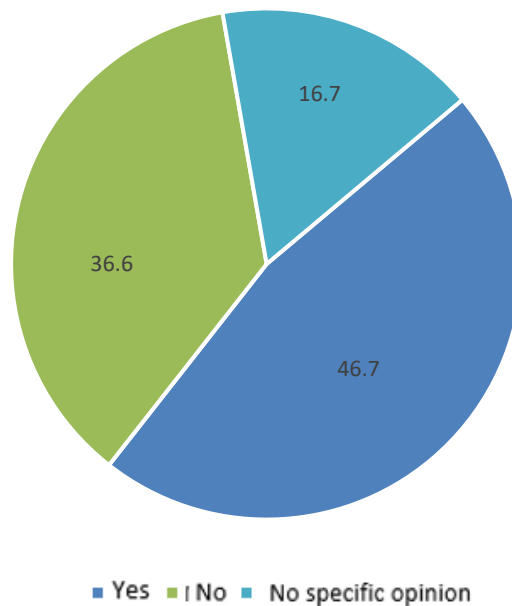


Graph 16 - Montenegro should be a member of the EU (%)



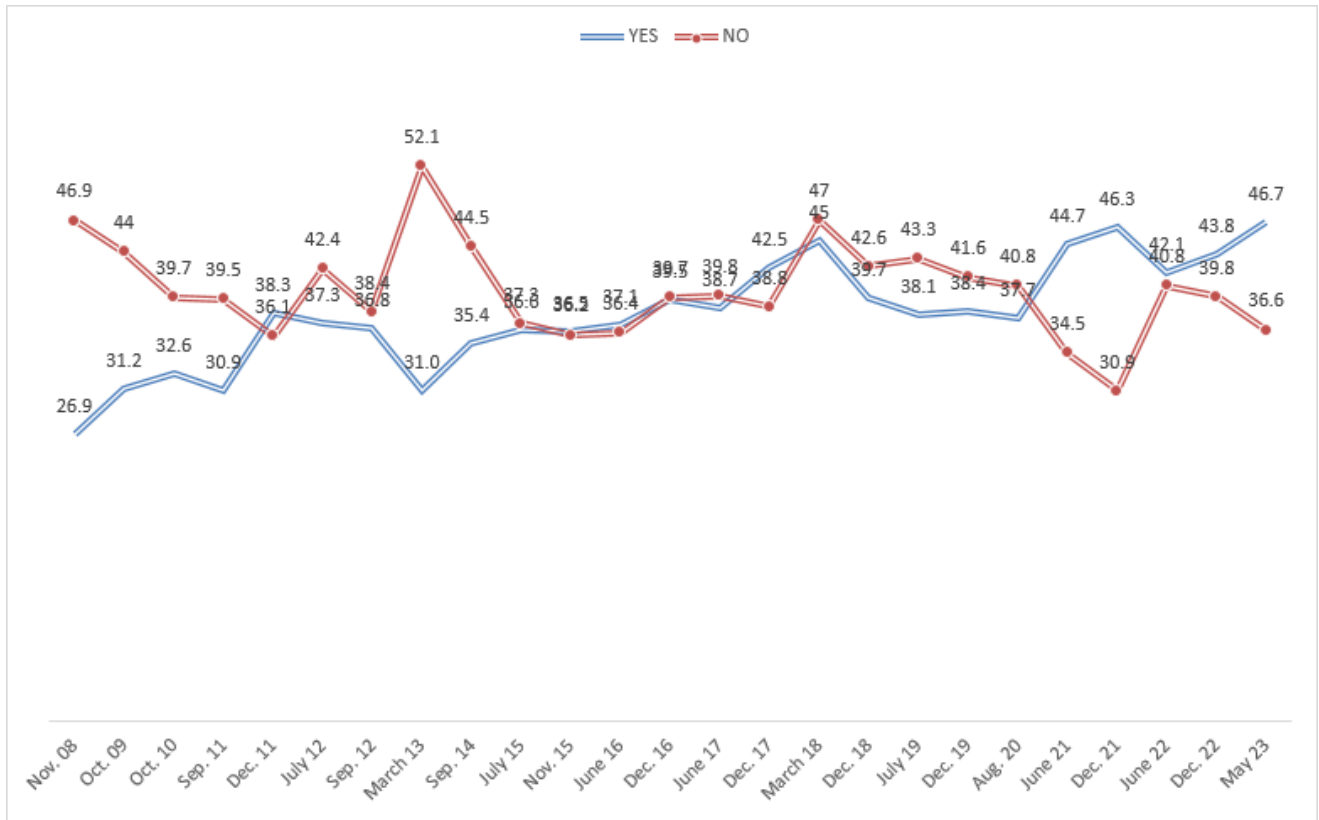
Graph 16 shows the trend of change in the opinion of the citizens of Montenegro that this country should be a member of the European Union. **In this case, we cannot talk about any constant trend except for an increase in support in the period from June 2022 to May 2023.**

Graph 17 - Do you support Montenegro's membership in NATO (%)



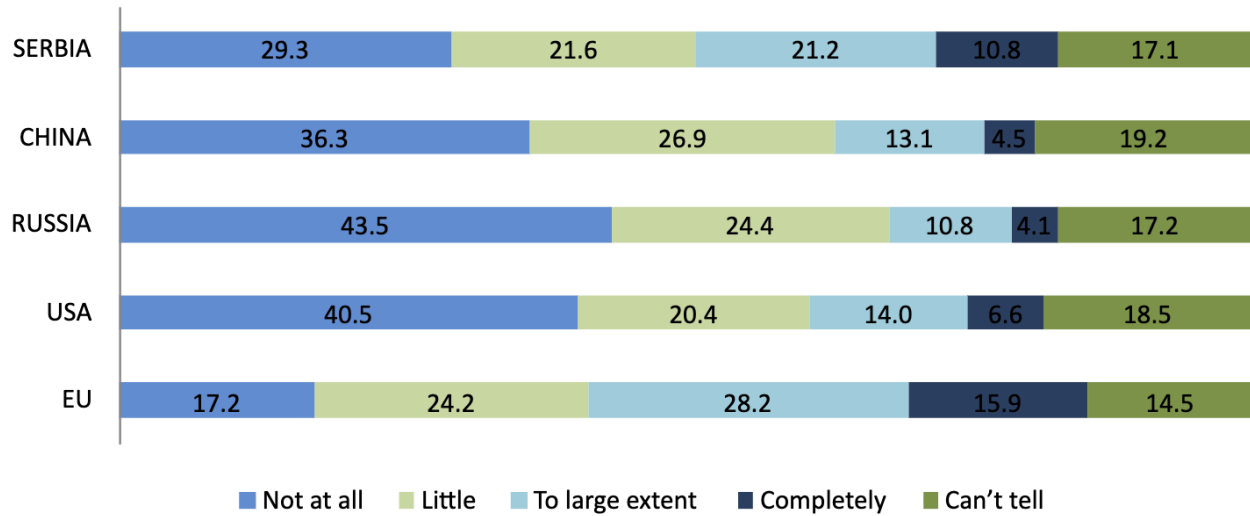
The data on Graph 17 show that almost half of Montenegrin citizens support NATO membership (46.7%). Slightly more than a third of citizens do not support membership in NATO, while 16.7% of citizens are undecided on this issue.

Graph 18 - Do you support Montenegro's membership in NATO (%)



On **Graph 18**, it can be seen that the growing trend of support for Montenegro's membership in NATO starts again from June 2022, while from August 2020 to May 2023, the percentage of those who support membership is higher than those who do not.

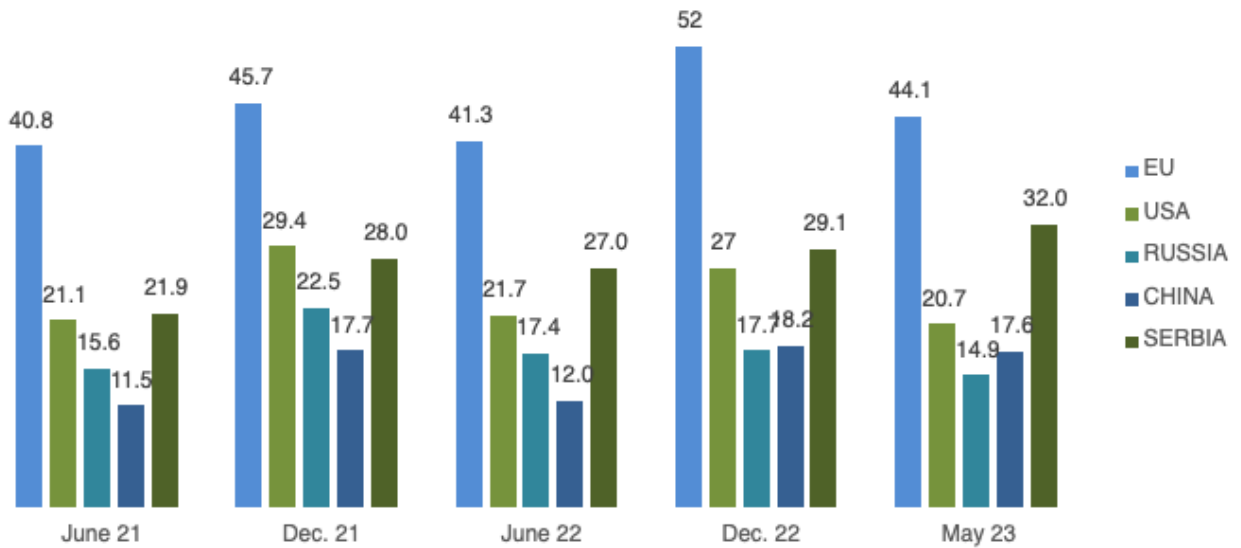
Graph 19 - Who should Montenegro rely on in foreign policy? (%)



The largest percentage of the Montenegrin citizens believe that Montenegro should rely on the EU - entirely (15.9%) and to a large extent (28.2%).

Almost half of the citizens believe that Montenegro should not rely primarily on Russia. Also, 40.5% of respondents believe that their country should not rely on the United States of America at all.

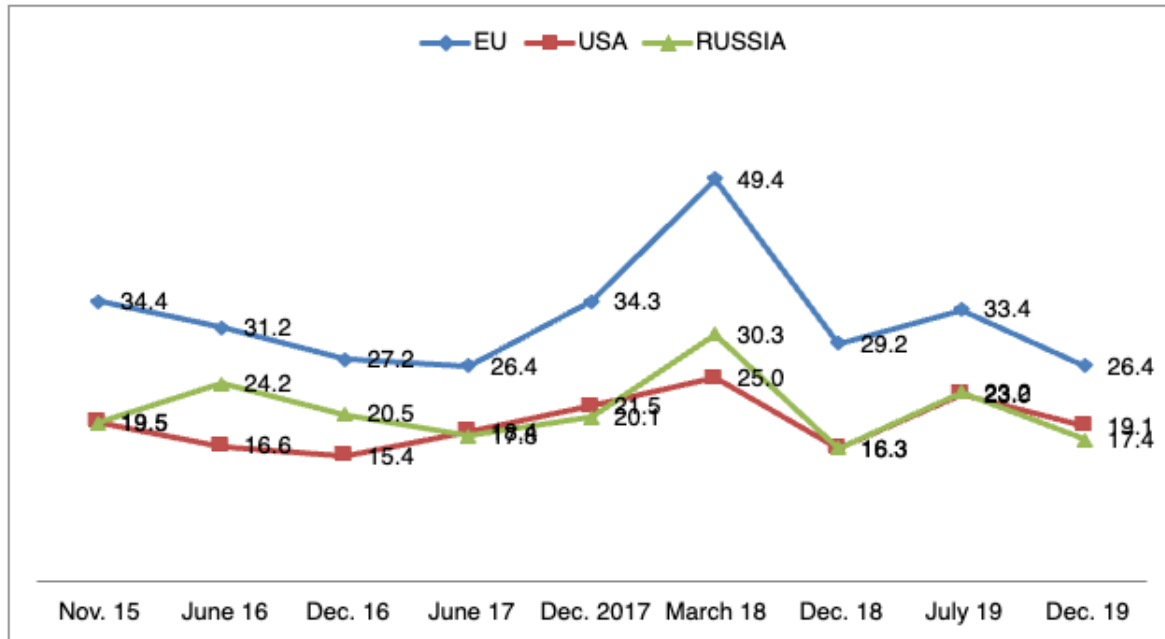
Graph 20 - Who should Montenegro rely on in foreign policy? Comparison across intervals (%)



In May 2023, the percentage of those who believe that Montenegro should rely on the EU in its foreign policy decreased compared to December 2022, from 52% to 44.1% (**Graph 20**).

Compared to December 2022, the only recorded increase refers to citizens who believe that Montenegro should rely on Serbia, from 29.1% to 32%

Graph 21 - Who should Montenegro rely on in foreign policy? Comparison across intervals (%)



Graph 21 shows the trend of foreign policy orientation of citizens of Montenegro. **In all three cases (EU, USA and RUSSIA) we cannot talk about constant decline or growth.** In all three cases (EU, USA and RUSSIA) we cannot talk about constant decline or growth.

Graph 22 - External political orientation of the citizens of Montenegro (%)



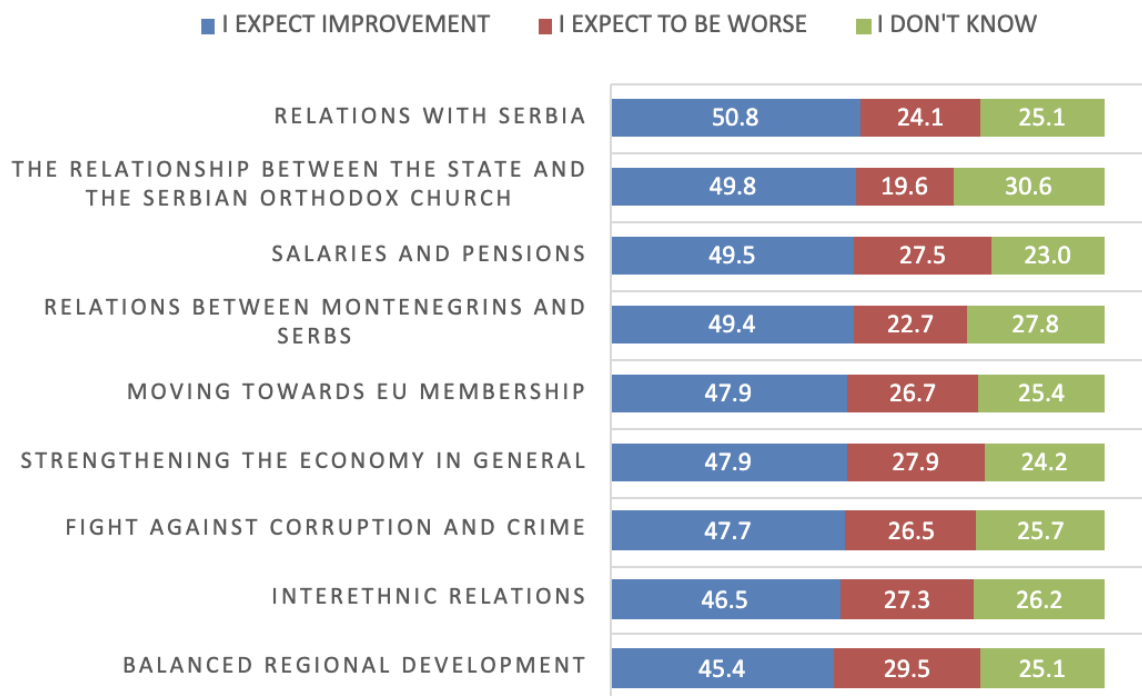
Graph 22 shows data showing a constant increase in the western orientation of citizens in the period from June 2021 to May 2023.

INTERNAL POLICY

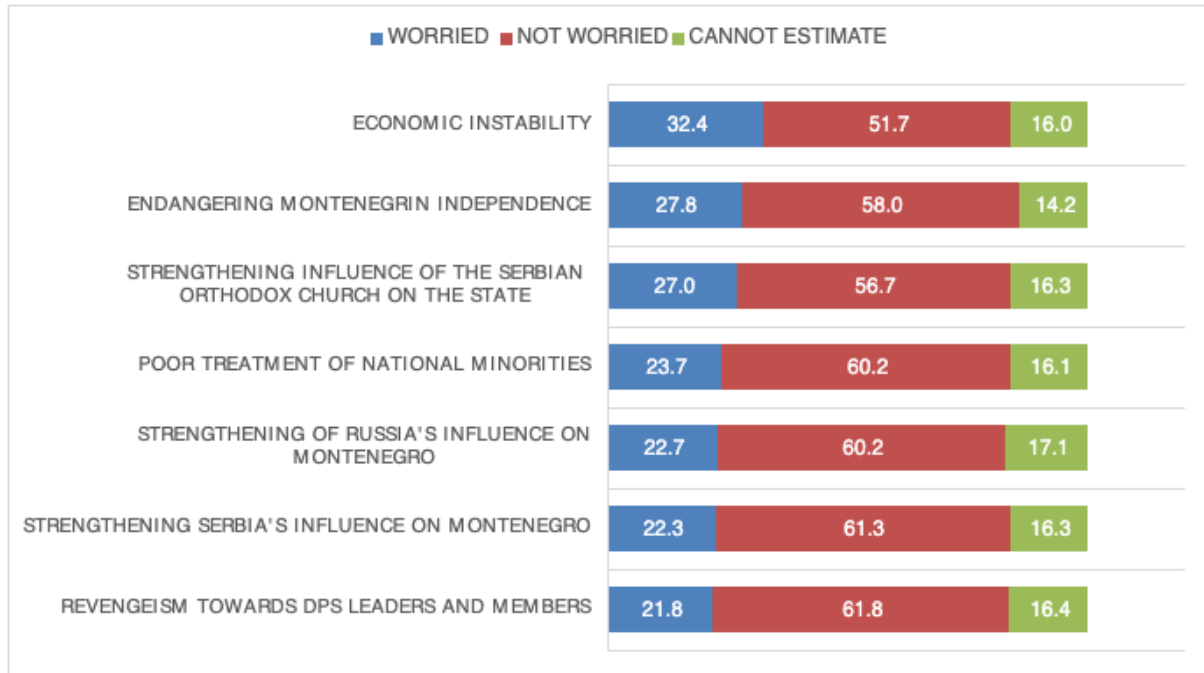
The largest number of respondents, half of them, expect an improvement in relations with Serbia (Graph 23). Also, half of the respondents expect an improvement in relations between the state and the Serbian Orthodox Church.

The largest percentage (29.5%) of the citizens of Montenegro expect deterioration in the area of balanced regional development.

Graph 23 - Do you expect improvement or deterioration in the mentioned areas? (%)



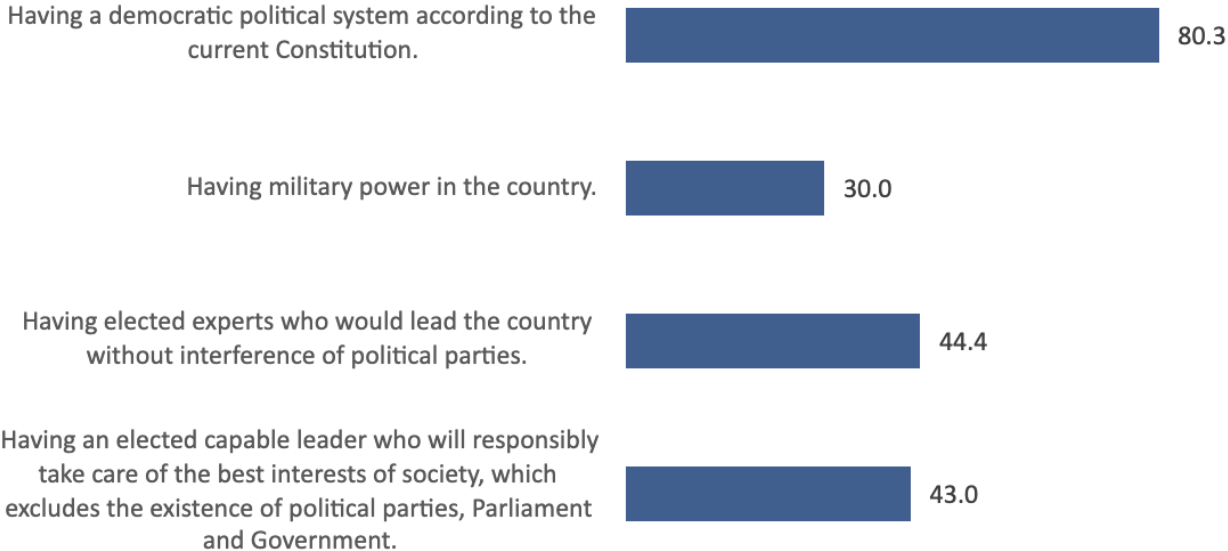
Graph 24 - Which of the listed worries you? (%)



As shown in Graph 24, citizens are mostly concerned about economic instability (32.4%), followed by threats to Montenegrin independence (27.8%).

The citizens of Montenegro are least concerned about revenge against the DPS leaders and members, as well as the strengthening of Serbia's influence on Montenegro.

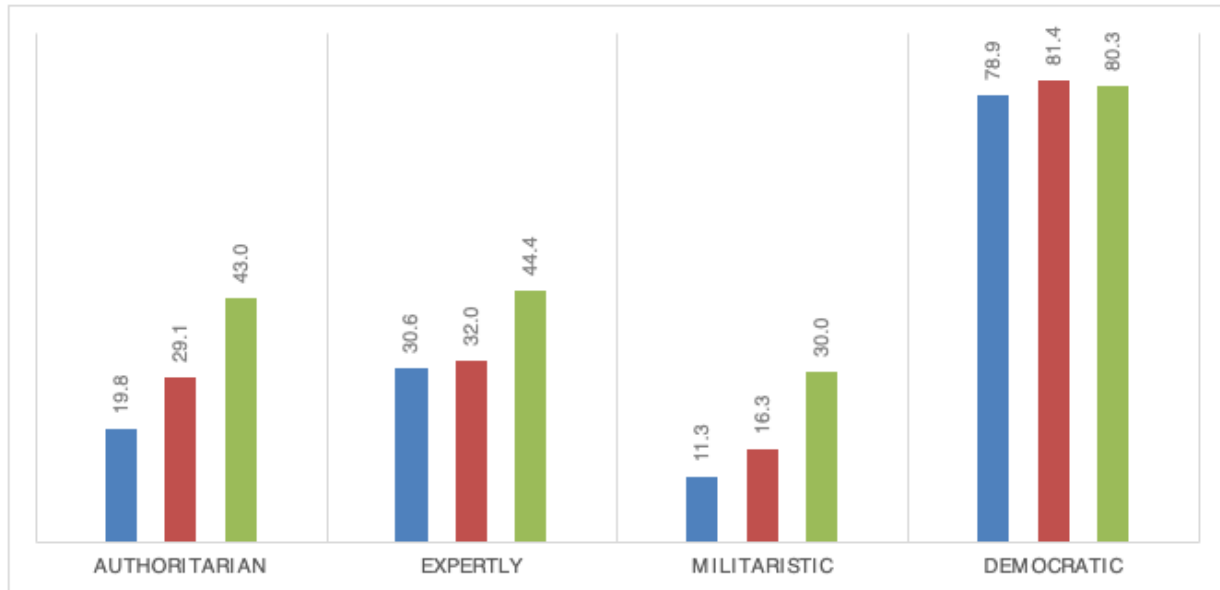
Graph 25 - Preference for the type of political system % sum very good and good



The highest percentage of citizens believe that we should have a democratic political system according to the current Constitution. It is followed to having elected experts who would lead the country without interference of political parties.

The lowest number of citizens believe that there should be military power in the country.

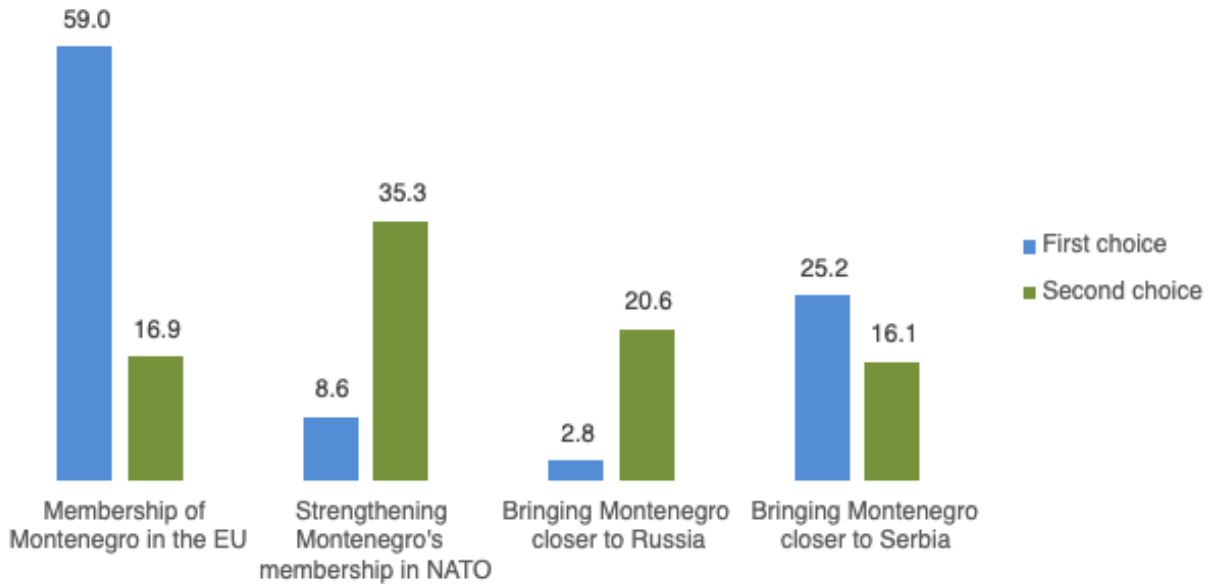
Graph 26 - Preference of type of political system % of sum very good and good - intervals



When it comes to the democratic orientation of the citizens of Montenegro, there is a fairly stable trend in the period from December 2021 to May 2023.

However, the trend of growth of all other orientations is interesting. authoritarian, expertly and militaristic. A large increase is recorded in the period June 2022 - May 2023, in the case of militaristic orientation from **16.3% to 30%**, in the case of authoritarian orientation from **29.1% to 43%**.

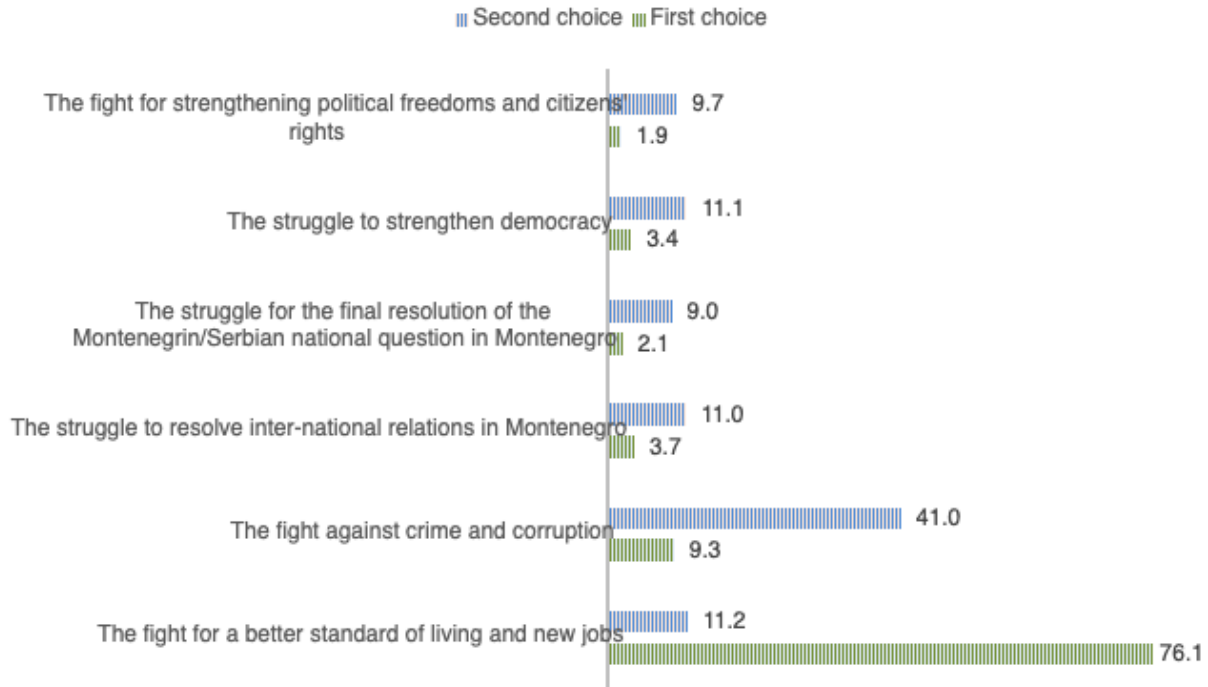
Graph 27 - There are different opinions about what is the most important, what the Government should deal with when it comes to foreign policy. List the priorities and rank them as the first and second (%)



A convincing majority of citizens (59%) believe that the Government's priority should be the country's membership in the EU (Graph 28). Then, a quarter of the respondents marked the rapprochement of Montenegro with Serbia as the first priority of the future government.

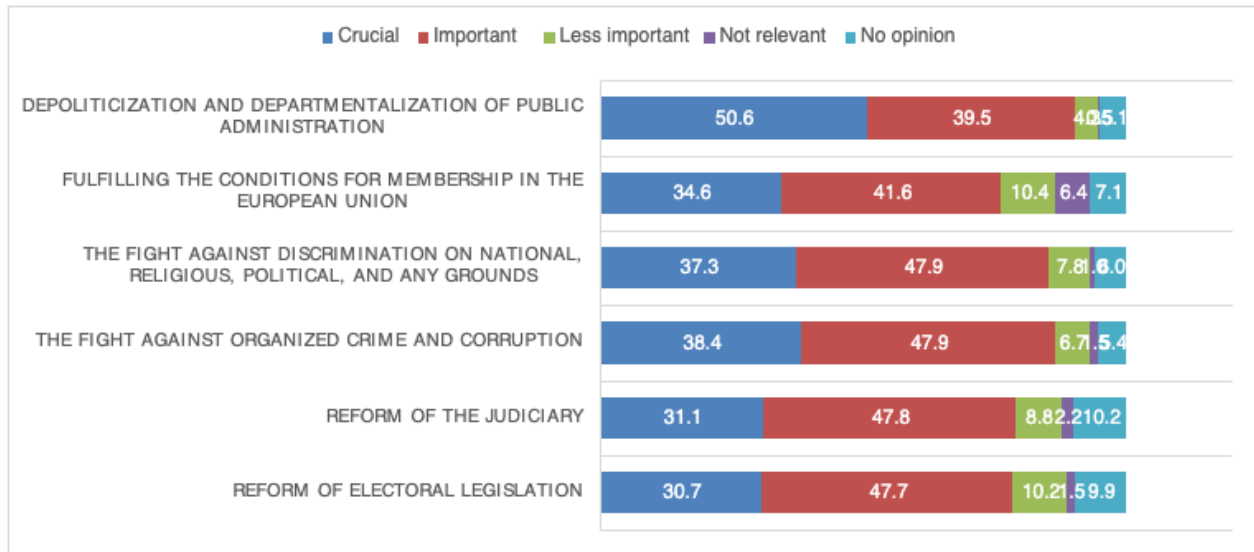
As the second priority of the Government, the largest number of citizens stated it is strengthening Montenegro's membership in NATO (35.3%).

Graph 28 - There are different opinions about what is the most important, what the Government should deal with when it comes to Rulebook. List the priorities and rank them as the first and second (%)



Graph 28 shows the data that for the largest percentage of citizens, the first choice for the Government's priority is the fight for a better standard of living and new jobs (76.1%). The second most frequent choice is the fight against crime and corruption (41%).

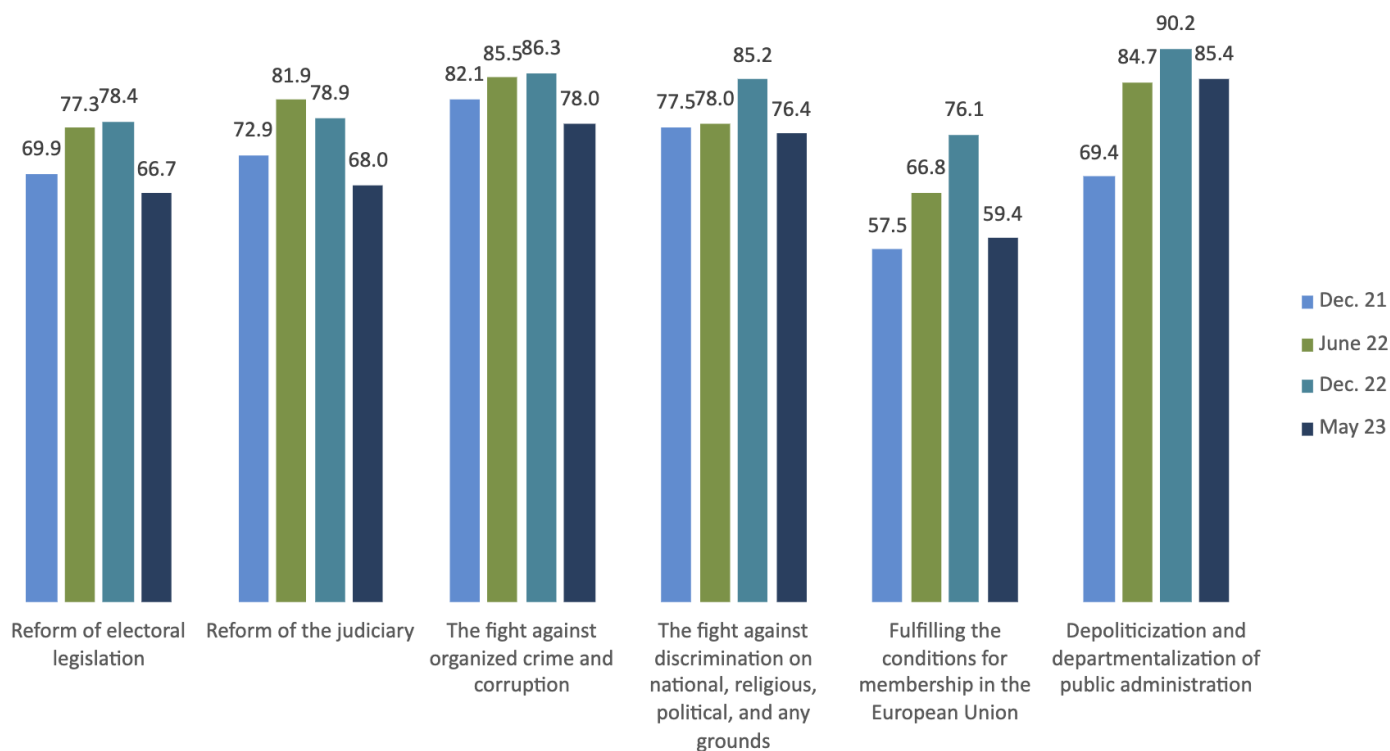
Graph 29 - Rate the importance of the following reforms (%)



The data on Graph 29 show that for every second citizen of Montenegro, the depoliticization and departmentalization of public administration is of key importance. Also, the fight against organized crime and corruption is highly ranked (38.4%).

A third of citizens believe that meeting the benchmarks for EU membership is of key importance.

Graph 30 - Rate the importance of the following reforms - intervals (%)



In May 2023, there was a decline in the assessment of the importance of all reforms compared to June and December 2022. The greatest decline decrease in importance refers to the fulfilment of benchmarks for EU membership: from 76.1% to 59.4%.

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