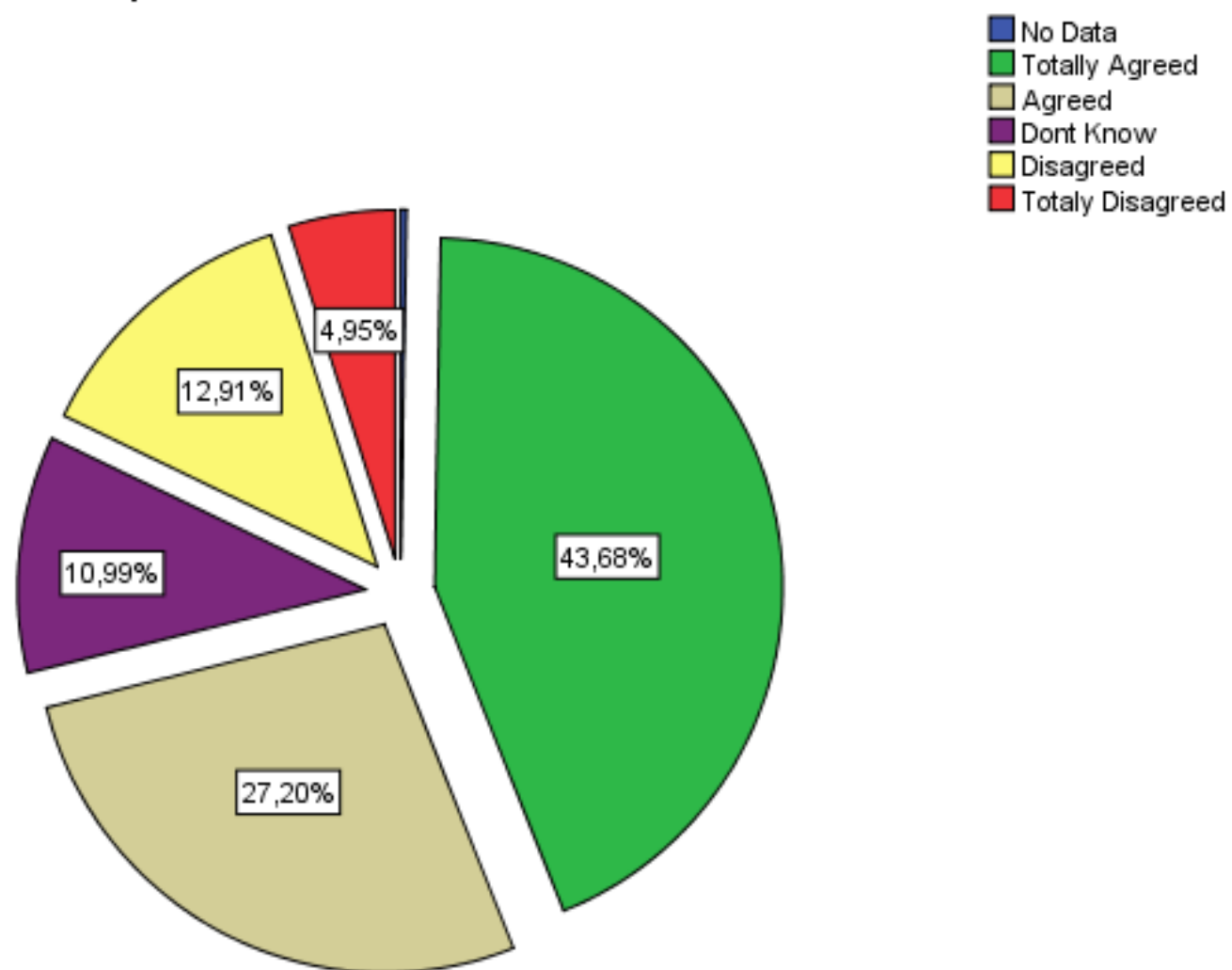


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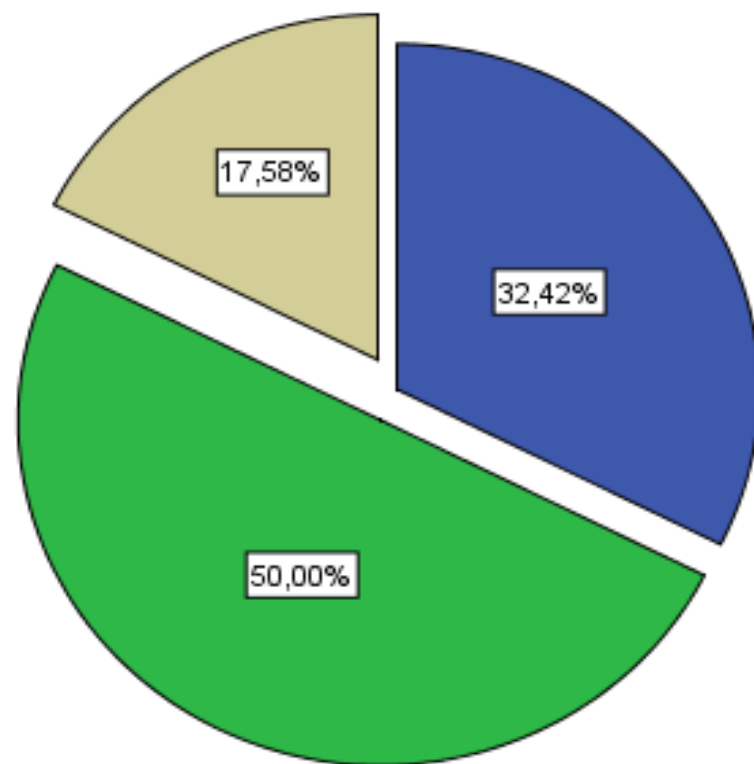
The research was conducted in 2017 by survey on 364 persons, representative in gender, age, education, profession and social status. The research was focused on several aspects on Republic of Macedonia's Euro-Atlantic perspectives, but also and some issues regarded migration crisis, economic aspects of investments and attitudes toward regional and global foreign politics. In this paper we are focused on NATO integrations. Some aspects also, like the name dispute with Republic of Greece are included and perceptions toward regional and global political influence.

## Republic of Macedonia should become member of EU

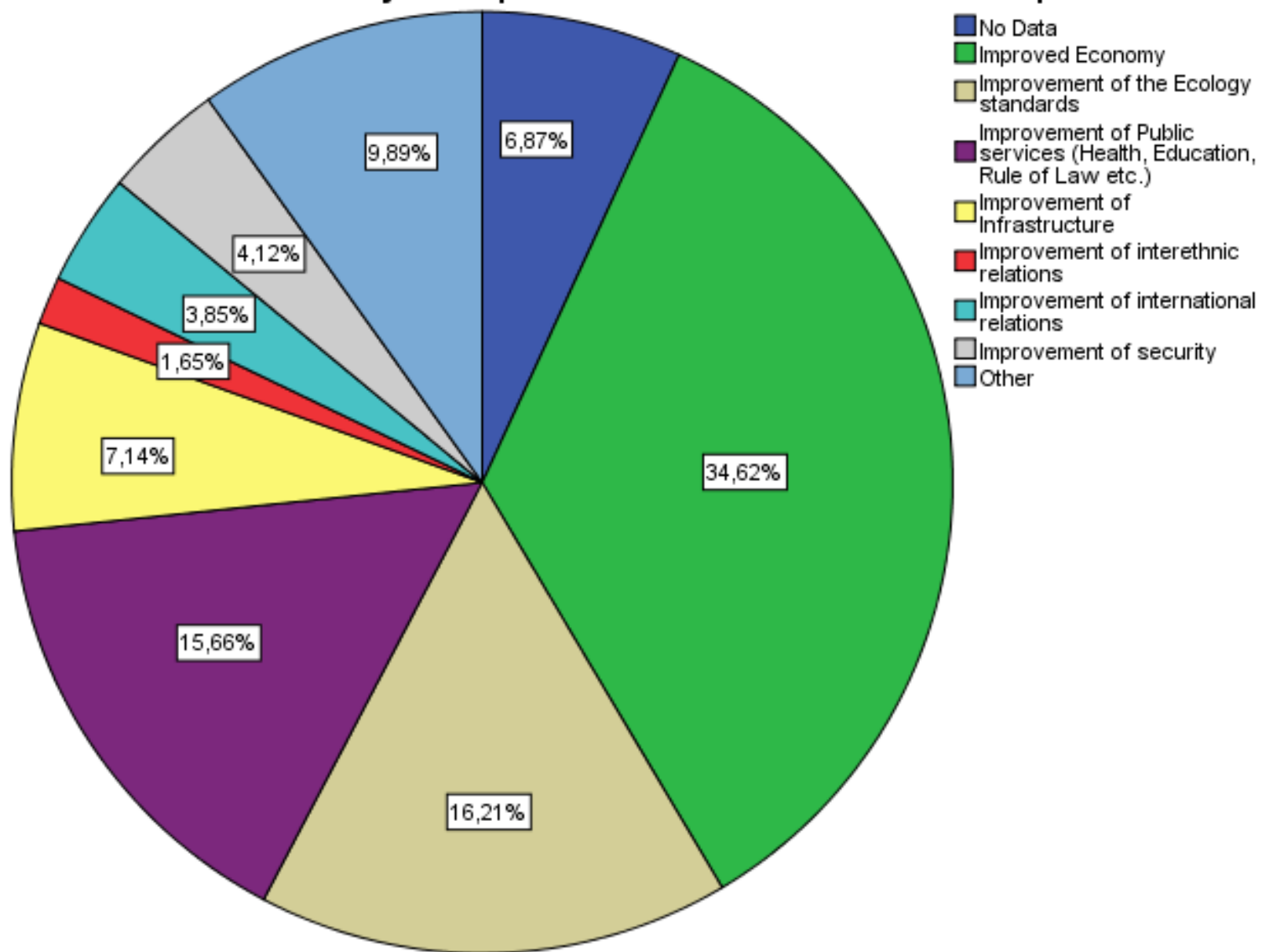


**Do you believe that Republic of Macedonia fulfills the conditions for EU membership**

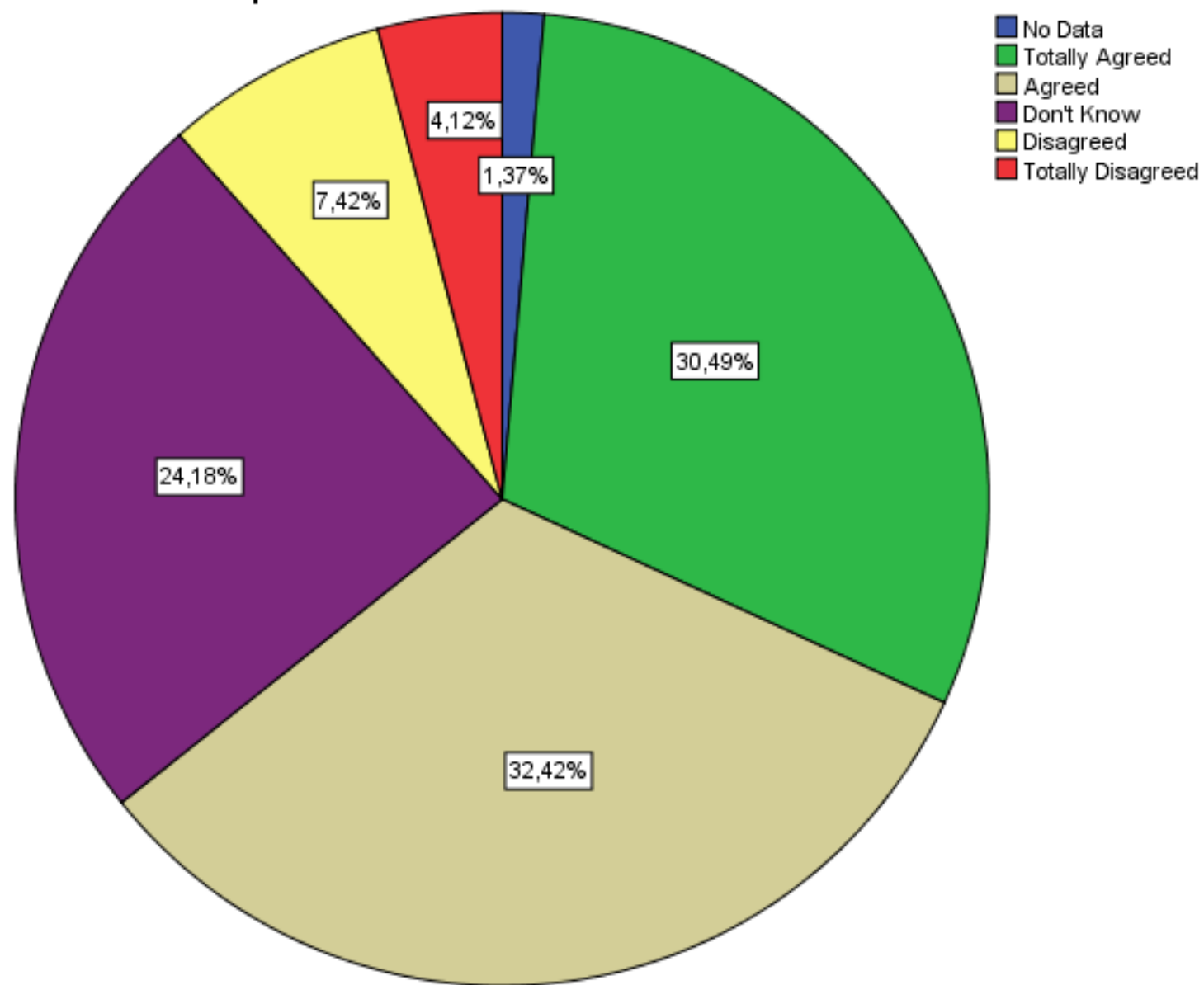
Yes  
No  
Dont Know



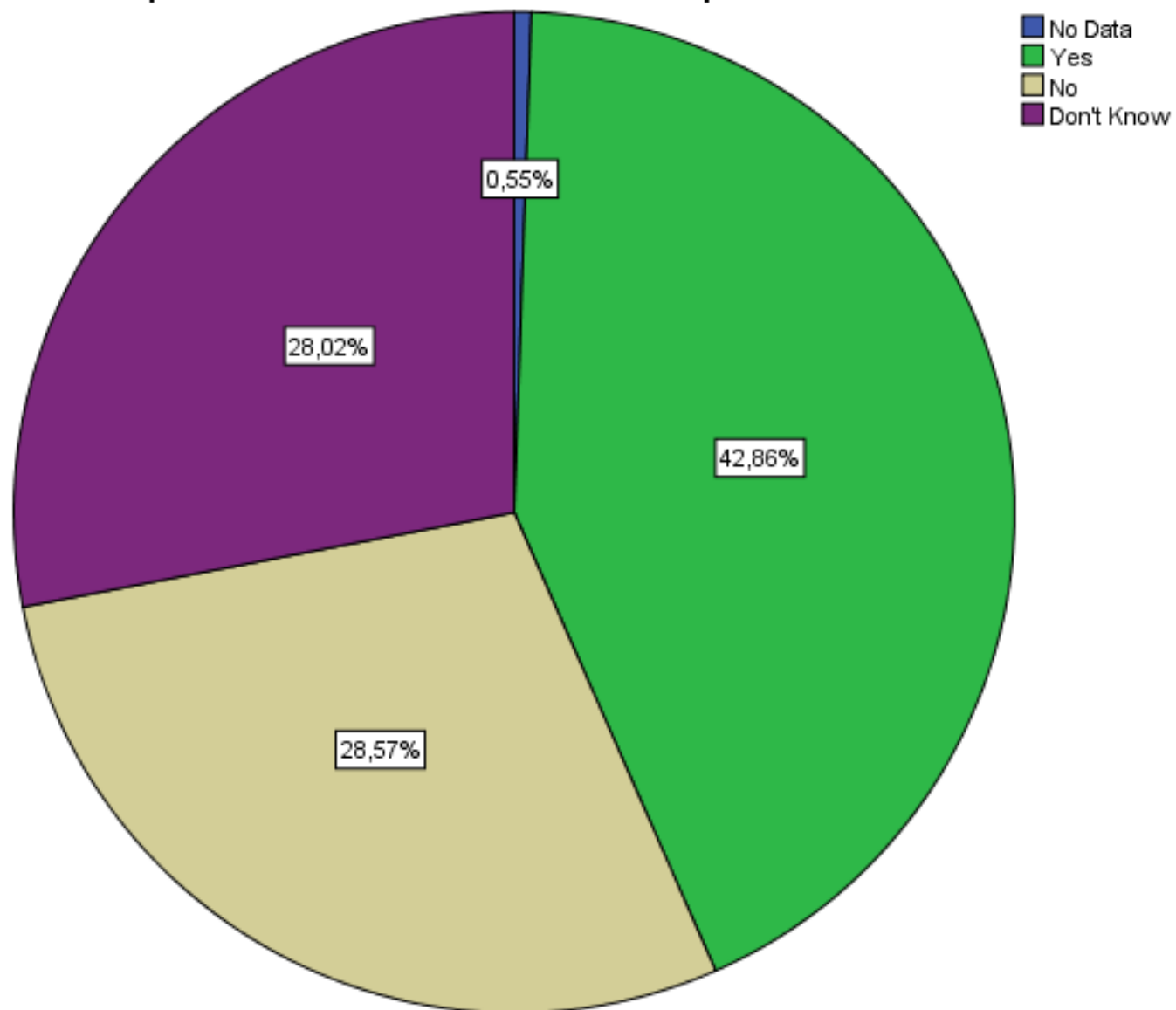
### Which are your expectations from the EU membership



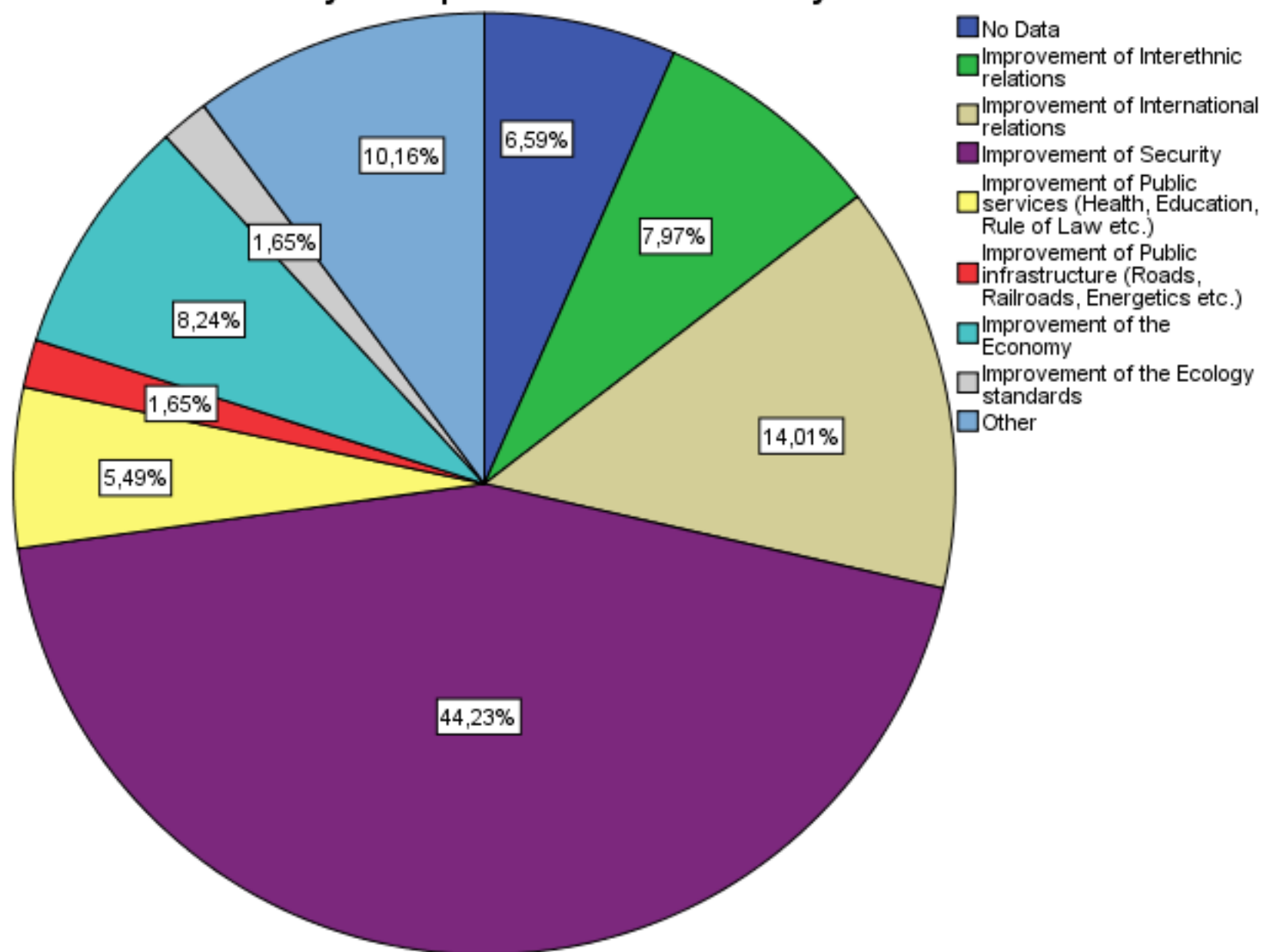
# Republic of Macedonia should become member of NATO



### Republic of Macedonia fulfills the requirements for NATO membership



## Which are your expectations from the entry in NATO Alliance?

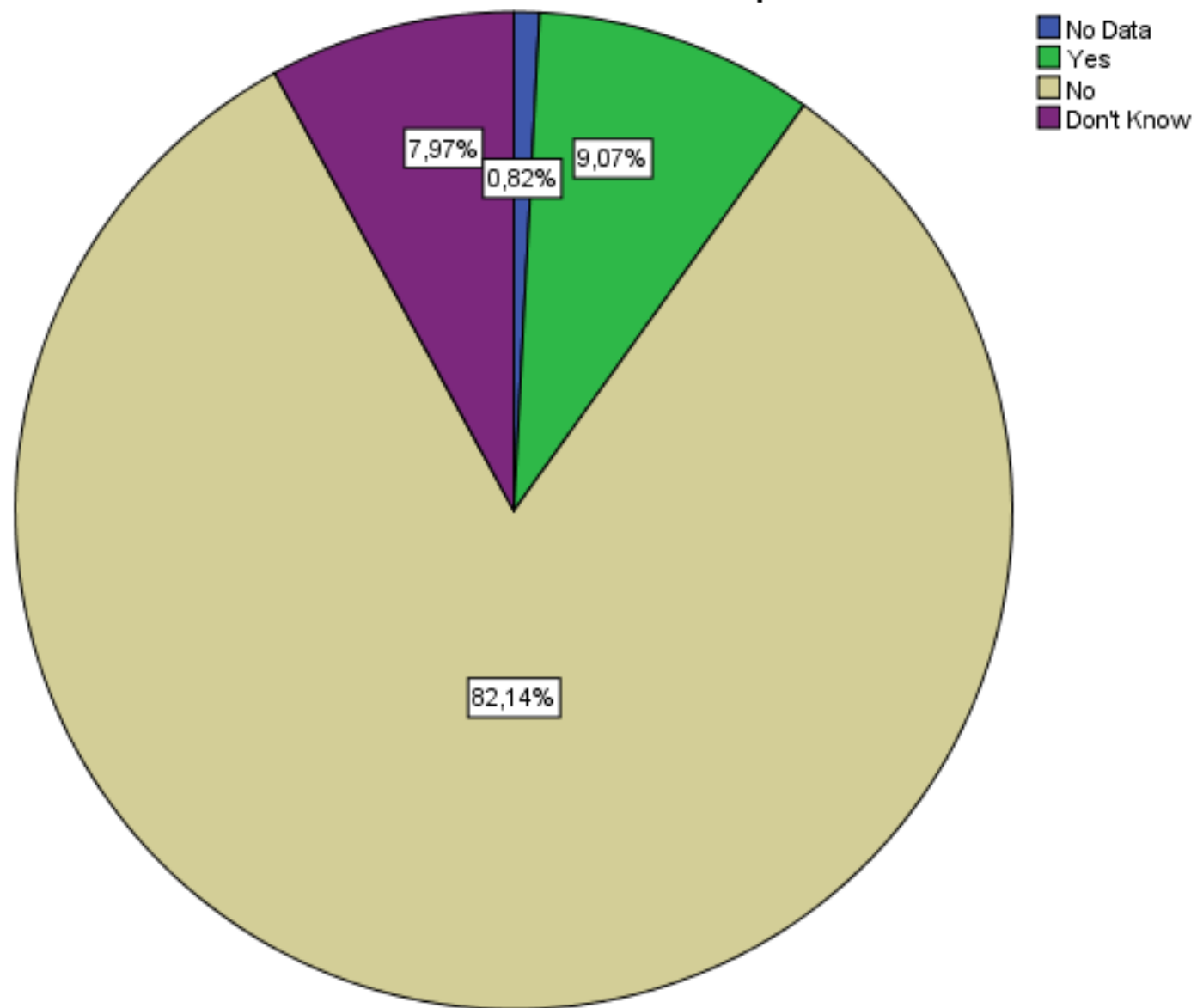


42,9 % of Macedonian citizens think that Republic of Macedonia fulfills the requirements necessary for NATO membership, 28, 6 % believe that those requirements are not fulfilled and 28 % don't know (Graphics 2). Even Republic of Macedonia had fulfill great deal of the requirements for NATO membership with professionalization of the army and active participation in NATO missions (Bosnia and Herzegovina and Afghanistan) and active support of US intervention in Iraq, yet there are issues of modernization of the Macedonian army directly connected with the lower percentage of GDP for defense (NATO required 2 % from national GDP, and Republic of Macedonia has less than 1 %). Regarding the political criteria, Macedonia had accomplished required standards at least a decade ago, but the open name dispute with Greece prevented the possibility for membership.

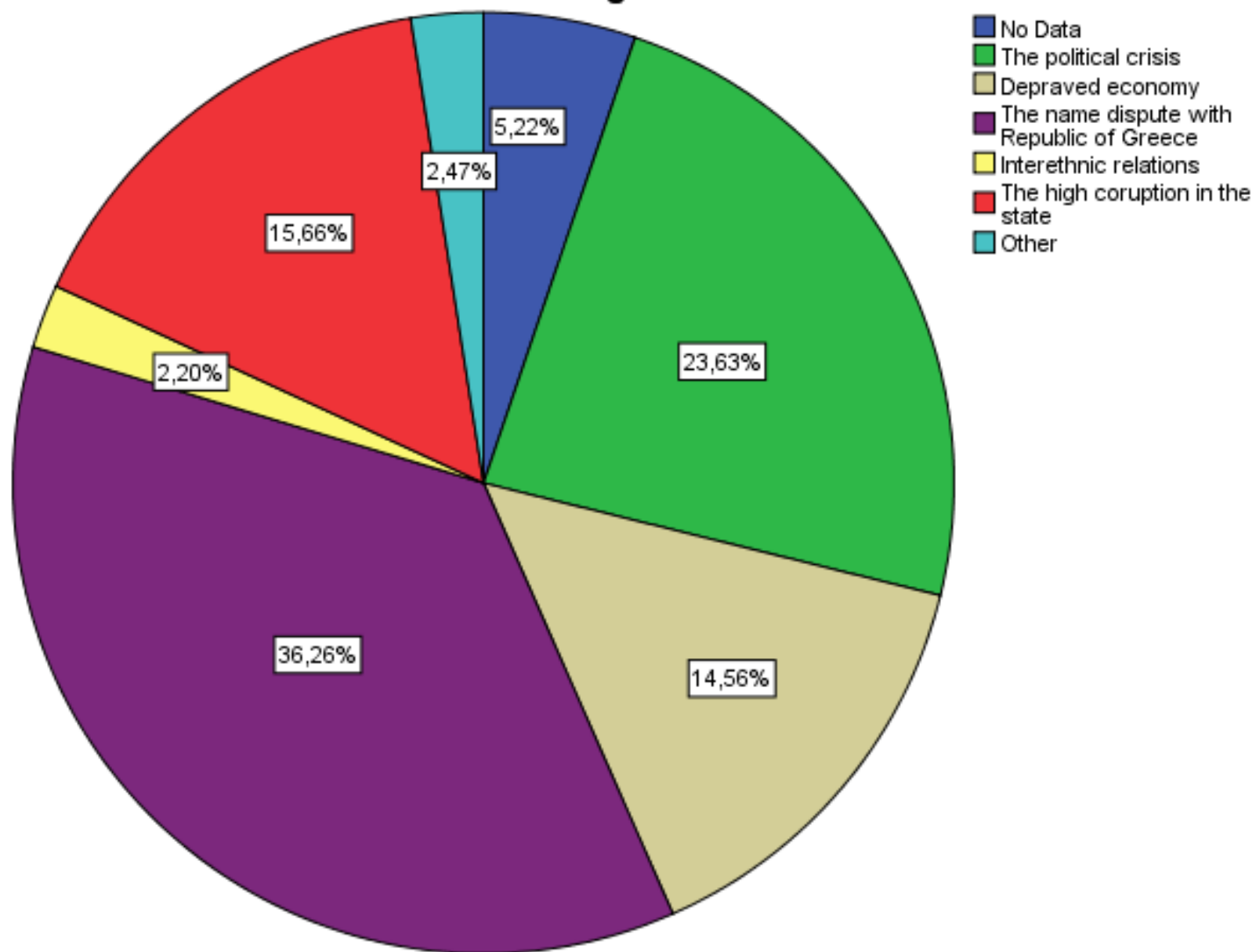
The main expectations from membership in NATO alliance are related with Improvement of security (44, 2 %) and Improvement of international relations (14 %). Those attitudes are related with rational expectations of NATO membership as a form of confirmation of Macedonia's sovereignty in turbulent region of South East Europe where some of the dark dreams of expansionist nationalism still exist. Also in the last few years, the Balkans become once more place for clash of the world and regional powers for political influence and control. The last one is strongly connected with the desire of Russia to recapture some of the spheres of interest, but also and the real treat from international terrorism regarding the migration crisis and the new destabilization of the Near East. In this sense the perception for NATO membership as a security shield is expected. The improvement of international relations of the county is related with the possibility for active participation on decision making process in NATO. Surprising, there are low expectations from NATO membership regarding Improvement of interethnic relations (8 %) and Improvement of the Economy (8, 2 %). The fact that the interethnic relation questions in the last 15 years are solved by institutional means, and orientation on NATO alliance exclusively for protection of foreign treats, lower this expectation from the Macedonian citizens. The question of the Economy is for certain the biggest problem for all citizens in Republic of Macedonia. But, even is well known that NATO membership can create climate for increased economic development of the new member countries, yet the biggest economic expectations are related with the possibility of EU membership



Would you support constitutional name change as a condition for EU and NATO membership?



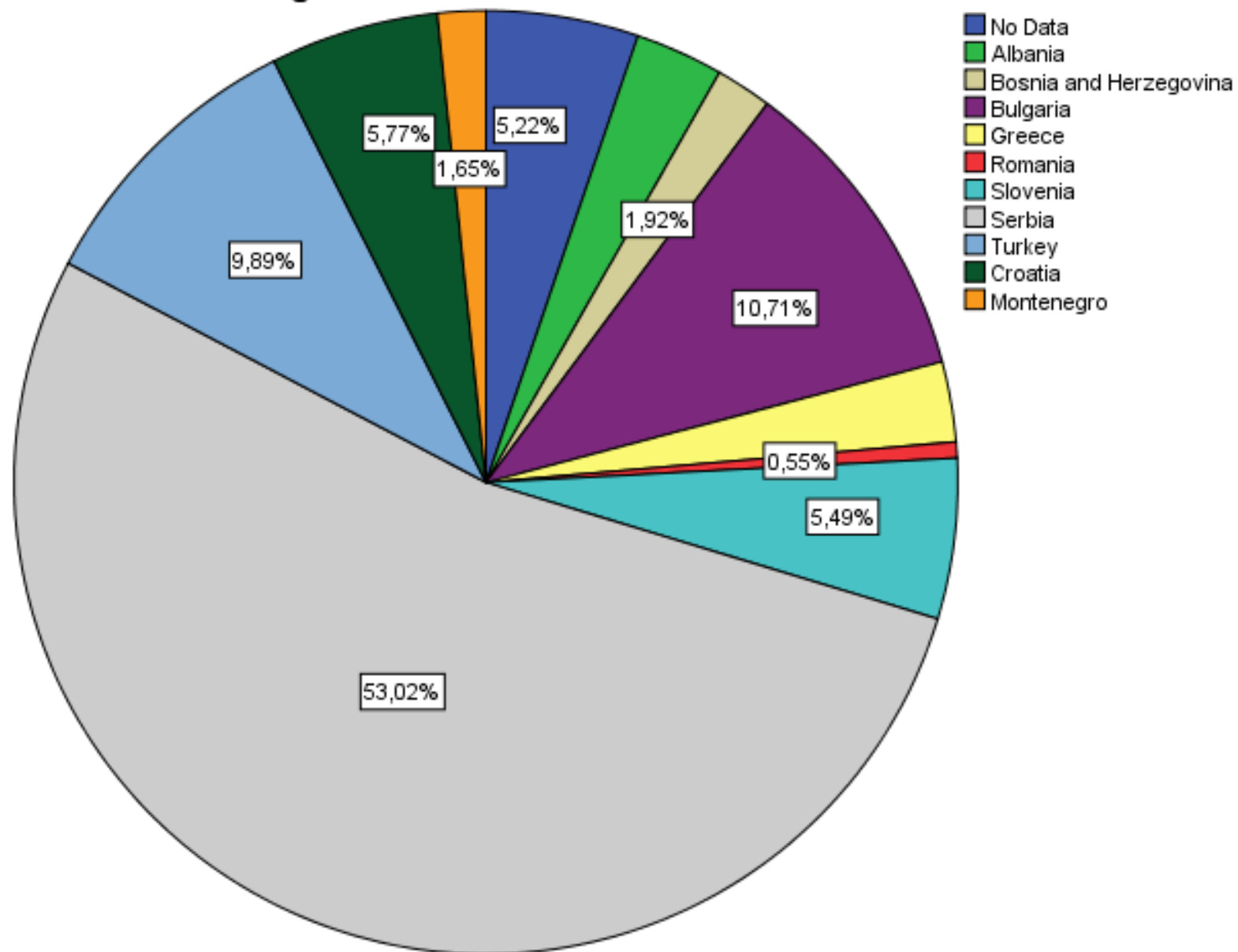
**Which obstacle you find as most significant for Macedonian's EU and NATO integration?**



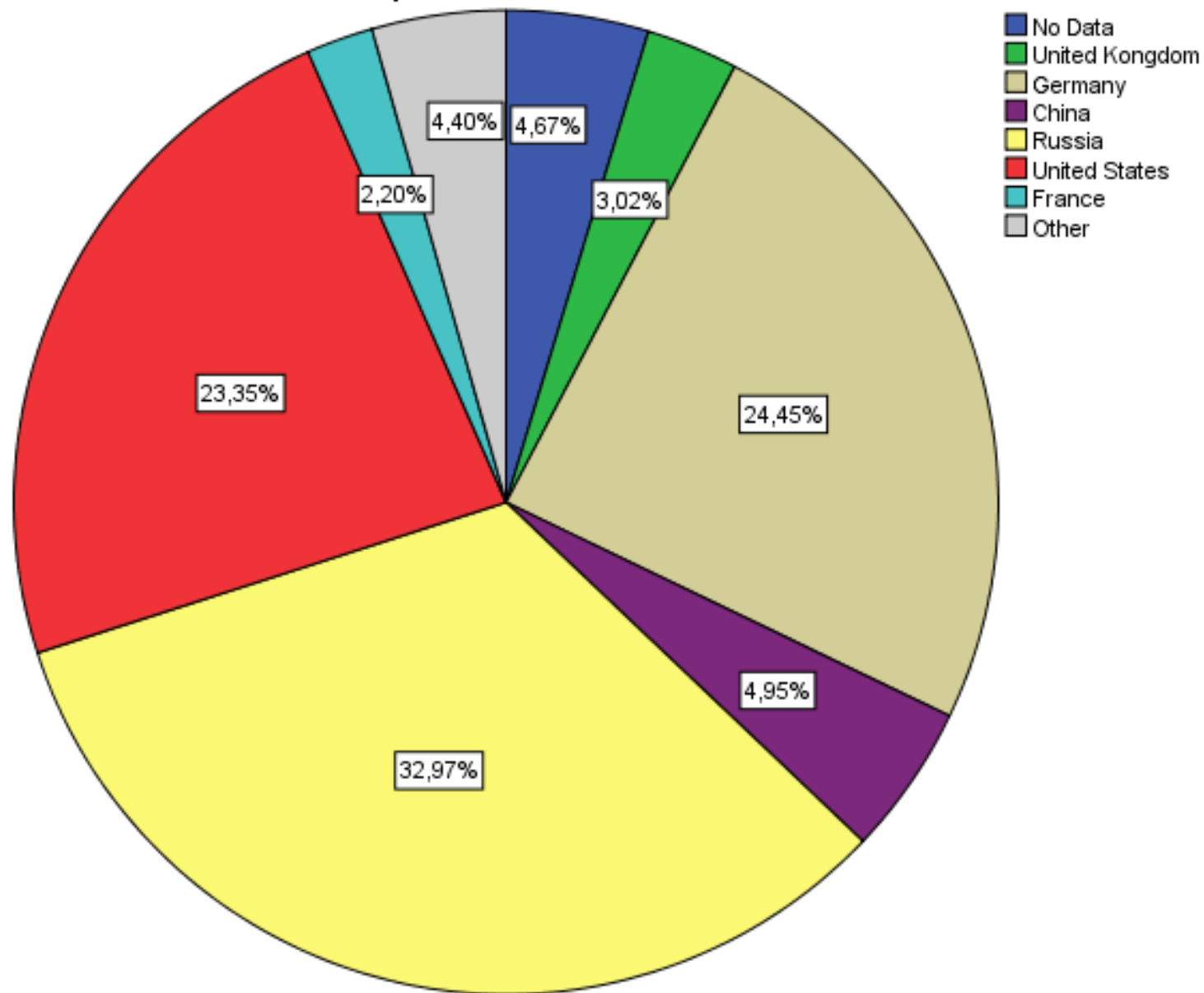
The positive attitudes for NATO and EU membership are radically changed when imposed condition for the membership is the change of the constitutional name of the country. On the question Would you support constitutional name change as a condition for EU and NATO membership?, only 9, 1 % answered with Yes, high 82, 1 % with No and 8 % with Don't know. This leads to the assumption that forced name change inside the constitution as a condition for NATO membership can be contra productive and even damaging for NATO support in the county. This can open way for influence from other countries, as Russia, and in future can become factor of destabilization in the country, but also in the wider region. The solution probably can be find in double formula where the NATO membership can be related with the usage of provisional name The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, or other name generated as a result of negotiations with Greece, but just for this purpose or international usage and not by changing of Republic of Macedonia's constitution declared by Greek erga omnes formula.

Asked, Which obstacle you find as most significant for Macedonian's EU and NATO integration?, Macedonian citizens as the biggest obstacle located the Name dispute with Republic of Greece (36, 3 %), then as a second factor is the Political crisis in the country (23, 6 %), but also and the High level of corruption in the state (15, 7 %) and Deprived economy (14, 6 %). The noticeable fact lays in the significance of the recent political crisis, which was not an issue before. Also we can notice that Interethnic relations, which were the one of the biggest problems are less significant in the perceptions (only 2, 2 %), and this can be seen as positive element (Graphics 5). Yet, there is necessity for the country to work on improvement on the economy, the rule of law and political stabilization via institutional solution of all political issues and strengthening of the democracy.

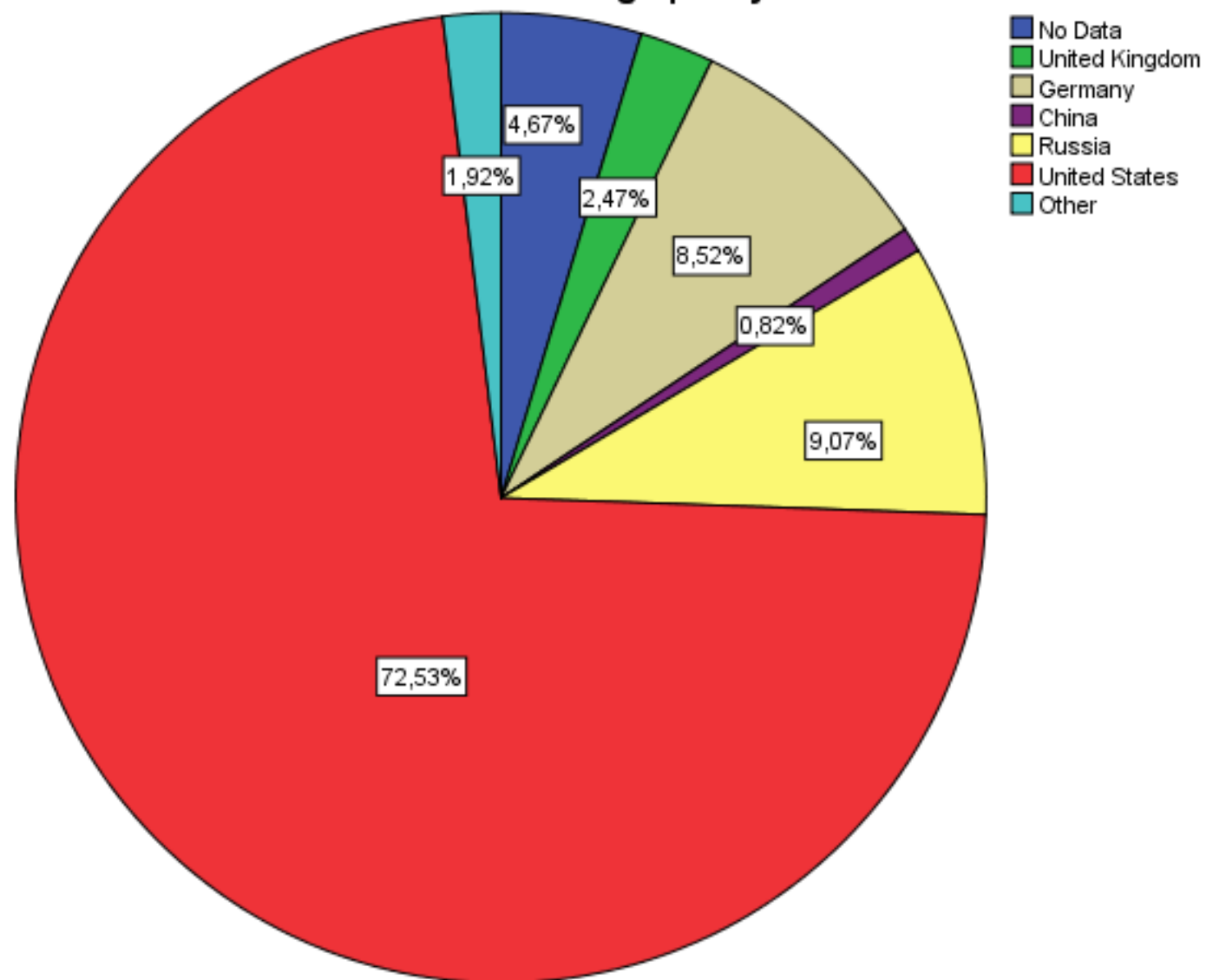
### Which of the region countries is the closest/friendliest towards Macedonia?



# Which of the world powers is the closest/friendliest towards Macedonia?



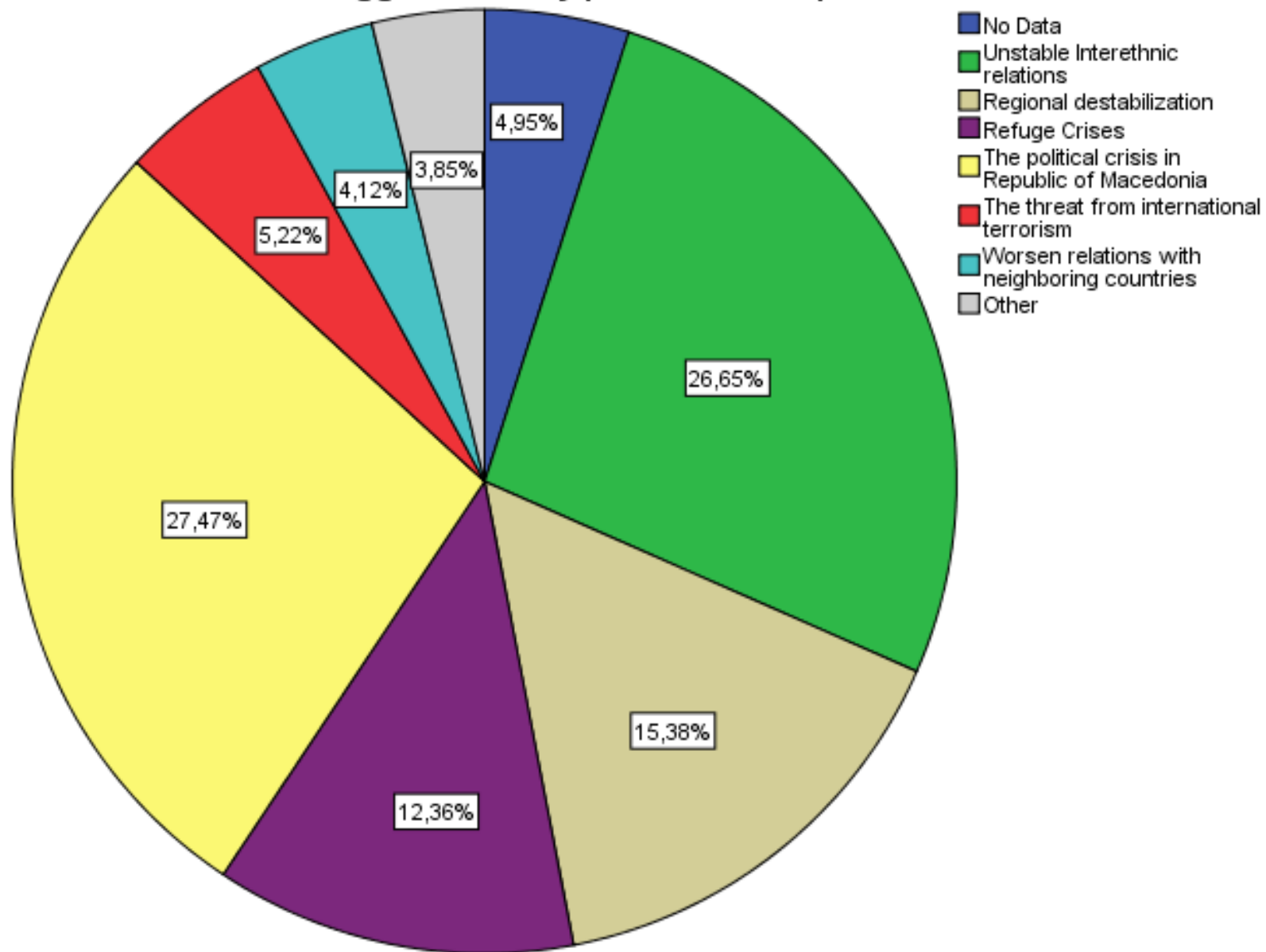
Which of the world powers is most influential towards Republic of Macedonia's foreign policy?



Even, by first look the next questions are not directly related with NATO and EU membership, indirectly they refer to significant aspects of the same. On the question Which of the region countries is the closest/friendliest towards Macedonia?, the highest percentage goes to Serbia (53 %). We have to notice that Serbia is not a NATO member state, and this is problematic regarding the fact that the combined perception toward regional NATO member states (Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Slovenia, Turkey, Croatia and Montenegro) is lower (39, 7 %). This can be explained with traditional connections with Serbia and the present Yugo-nostalgia, but also and the neutral status of Serbia.

A bit different is the position on Macedonian citizen toward the perception on world powers. On the question Which of the world powers is the closest/friendliest towards Macedonia?, there is almost equal division on the attitudes regarding Russia (33 %), Germany (24, 5 %) and United States (23, 4 %). The perceptions for Russia are related with the traditional linguistic and religious (Orthodox Christianity) connections, but also a result on the frustrations on Macedonian citizens on the lacking of perspectives for EU and NATO integrations, which are mainly based on the blockade by Greece. In this sense this perception is also stimulated by the lack of interest in Brussels's bureaucracy for expansion of the European Union, regarding other European priorities and problems, but also and more aggressive Russian propaganda and expansionist foreign policy. The perceptions toward Germany are the most puzzling. Since Germany does not have bigger visibility even in soft policy, the only argument can be referred with strong economic relations with Macedonia. The fact is that the biggest trading relations on Republic of Macedonia are with Germany, and also in this country is the biggest Macedonian emigration in Europe. The perceptions toward United States are not simple reflection on the US position in the world politics, but should be seen as sharing of the same value system, in first place democratic values. Also the strong bilateral ties between the two states (The agreement for strategic partnership), are improved with cooperation in education, economy, culture and the security. All of those factors, and other, as the more preferable foreign language in Macedonia is English, are key for the high level of empathy of Macedonian citizens toward US. On this question, differently from the previous one is significant to make a notice that Macedonian citizens are having stronger feelings of closeness toward NATO states (UK, Germany, US, France) (52, 6 %), than non NATO countries (Russia and China) (37, 9 %)

### Which is the biggest security problem for Republic of Macedonia?





Independently of the questions regarding the NATO membership of Republic of Macedonia, we imposed and the question Which is the biggest security problem for Republic of Macedonia?. We can notice certain differences from the previous answers. The biggest security problem at the moment for the Macedonian citizens is the Political crisis in Republic of Macedonia (27, 5 %), then the possibility of Unstable interethnic relations (26, 6 %), the wider Regional destabilization (15, 4 %) and Refuge crisis (12, 4 %). Less significant are the Treat from international terrorism (5, 4 %), and Worsen relations with Macedonia's relations with the neighboring countries (4, 1 %). The political crisis as a factor of security destabilization is recent, but the most threatening. Since we can notice this factor in the obstacles for NATO membership, we can assume, that the very membership, regarding NATO as a value system, can create preconditions for development of the democratic capacities in the country and political stabilization in the future. Interethnic relations are seen as a security treat but are not a problem for NATO integration. This means that the interethnic problems in Macedonia are in its latent stage at the present, but this does not means that cannot escalate in future. Even NATO can improve the stability of the county, yet, the main role of NATO is to protect the country from foreign treat of non NATO members. Interethnic relations are potential internal problem, and even involves other countries, those are already NATO member states, as Albania, or with strong NATO presence, as Kosovo. The regional destabilization was always a big issue in the Balkans. Opening on one question or problem can easily destabilize all of the region. Those open questions are mainly related with the status of Republika Srpska and the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the future of Kosovo, Interethnic relations and the future of the nature of Macedonia's unitary character, but also some issues relating the South Serbia, Croatian entity in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and even Sandzak. The refugee crisis is e novel problem. But this does not make it less significant. Only in the period of 2015/16 more than one million refugees crossed Macedonia. The fear is not related only with terrorism treats as in Western Europe, but more sensible economic issues if the refugees are forced to stay in Macedonia, and strong fear of demographic reconfiguration of the state in short time. Beside the low level of natural population growth, the last one is increased by the fact that, as in the wider region states, in Republic of Macedonia there is great mechanical depopulation caused by emigration.

