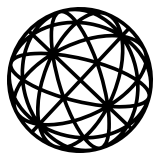


Public opinion in times of war: Political preferences, trust and ideological orientations of Ukrainians

27–31 July 2025



WFD

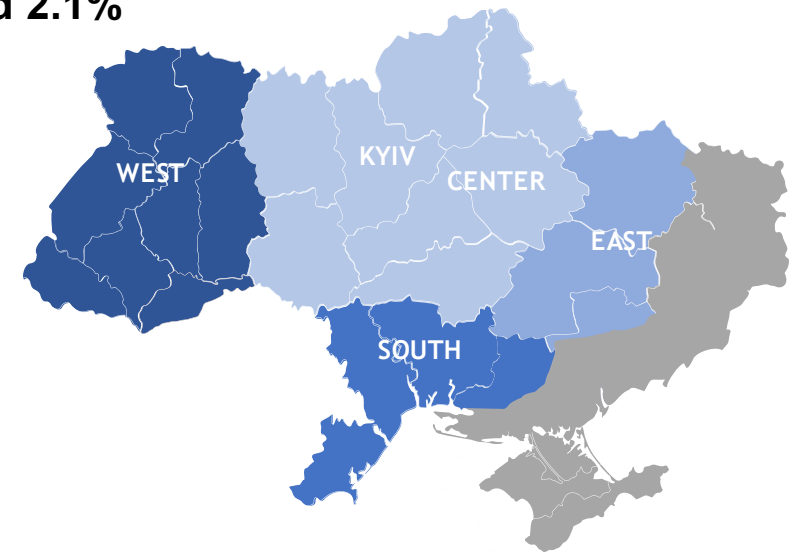


Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office



Methodology

- Audience: Ukrainian population aged 18 and older in all regions, except for the temporarily occupied territories of Crimea and Donbas, as well as territories where there is no Ukrainian mobile communication at the time of the survey
- Results are weighted using current data from the State Statistics Service of Ukraine
- The sample is representative by age, gender and type of settlement
- Sample population: **2100 respondents**
- Survey method: CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing). Based on a random sample of mobile phone numbers
- The survey's margin of error, at a 95% confidence level, **does not exceed 2.1%**
- Date of conduct: **July 27-31, 2025**
- **Two focus group discussions**
- Fieldwork dates: August 7, 2025
- The poll was conducted by the Rating Group at WFD's request.
- Some columns may show results of 99-101% due to rounding numbers to whole values (0.5 and above rounded up, below 0.5 rounded down)



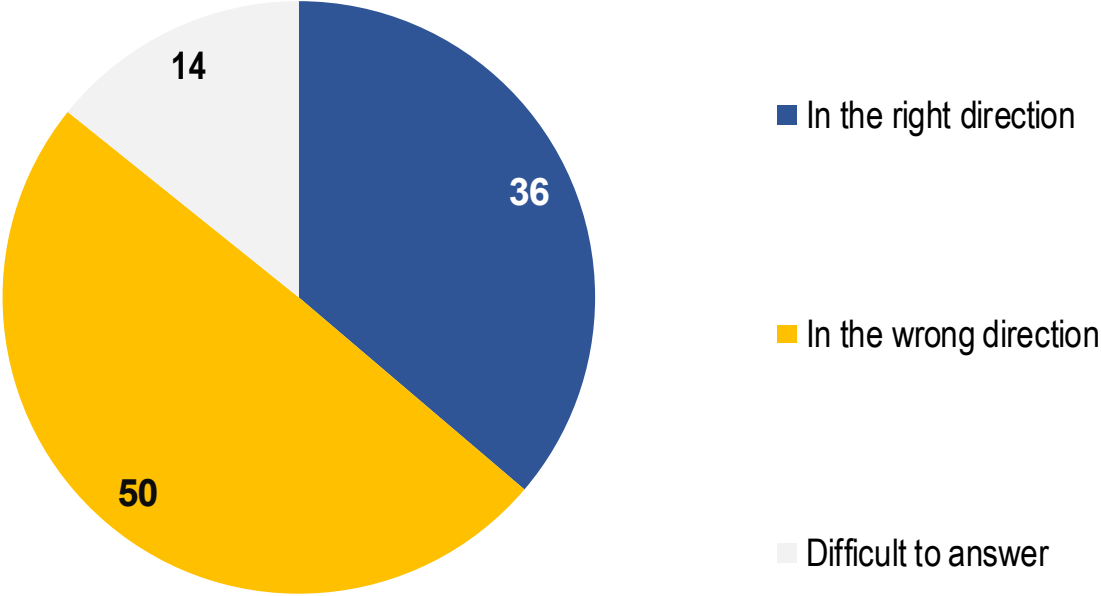
Executive Summary

1. Protecting democracy in Ukraine is a very sensitive issue. While there is clear demand for political change, society largely agrees this should take place only after the war. Ukrainians continue to demonstrate resilience and democratic maturity under wartime conditions. Trust remains highest in institutions and individuals directly connected to national defence, with the Armed Forces and wartime leadership figures holding the strongest positions.
2. While trust in government and parliament remains low, President Zelensky maintains control over the political situation, benefiting from his wartime role as Commander-in-Chief and international representative of Ukraine.
3. Society increasingly values leaders who can represent the country effectively on the international stage — a standard set high by Zelensky's wartime diplomacy. The public also shows strong support for the participation of military personnel and veterans in politics, but not unconditionally: voters expect candidates to combine military service with integrity, education, and relevant experience. At the same time, Ukrainians remain firmly opposed to any drift toward military dictatorship.

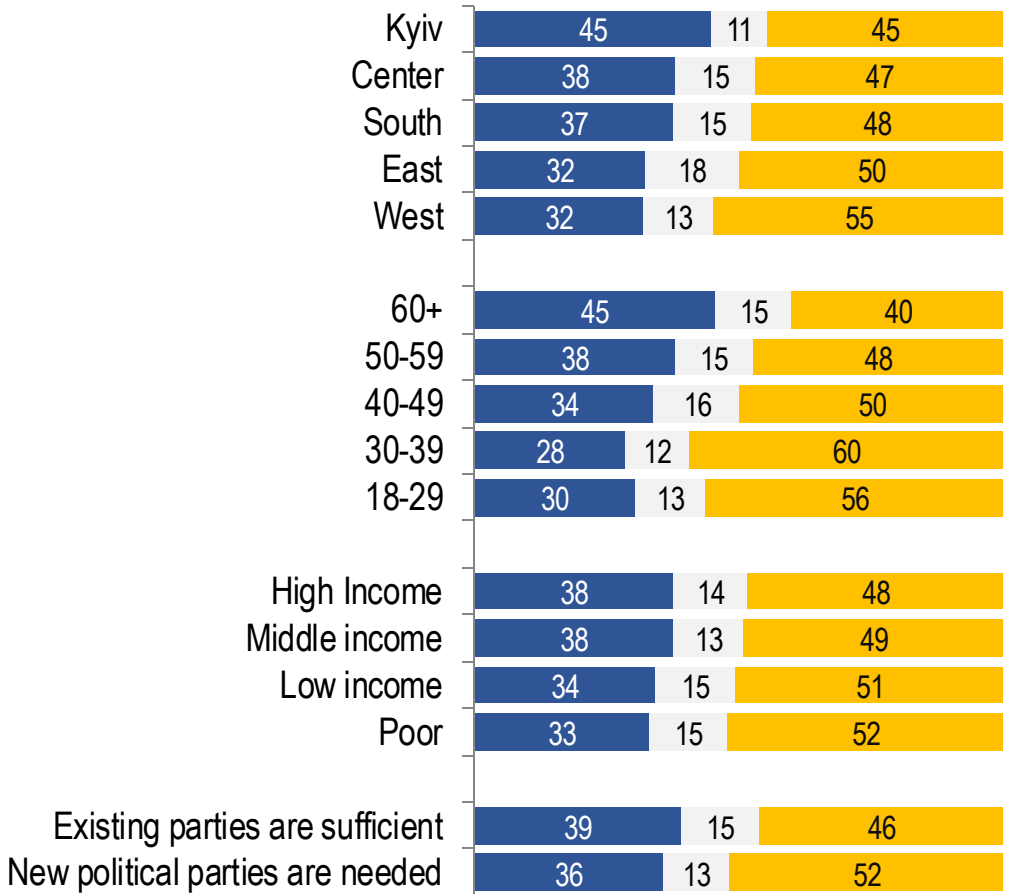
Key Findings

- 1. Growing Pessimism and Protest Potential:** Over the past year, optimism about Ukraine's development has continued to decline (36% consider Ukraine to be developing in the right direction, down from highs of 73-81% in 2022), particularly among young people (who even support holding elections during wartime). This has fuelled protest sentiment and a stronger desire for political change, but currently such demands are constrained by wartime unity and martial law restrictions.
- 2. Request for Justice and Veterans' Role in politics:** In the context of wartime losses, society demonstrates a strong demand for justice. Ukrainians are ready to support veterans in politics, viewing their sacrifice as proof of loyalty to the country. However, support is conditional — military service alone is not enough; voters also expect education, integrity, and relevant experience.
- 3. No preconditions for military dictatorship:** Despite broad support for military involvement in politics, there is little public backing for military dictatorship. In addition, there is no chance for a single party to form a majority in parliament. Hence electoral competition, coalition governments and the presence of opposition forces are institutional checks and balances that further reduce the risk of authoritarian drift.
- 4. Demand for Political Renewal:** Ukrainians want leadership change and political renewal (70% support new political initiatives that are not institutionalised in political parties), but the majority support postponing elections until after the war.

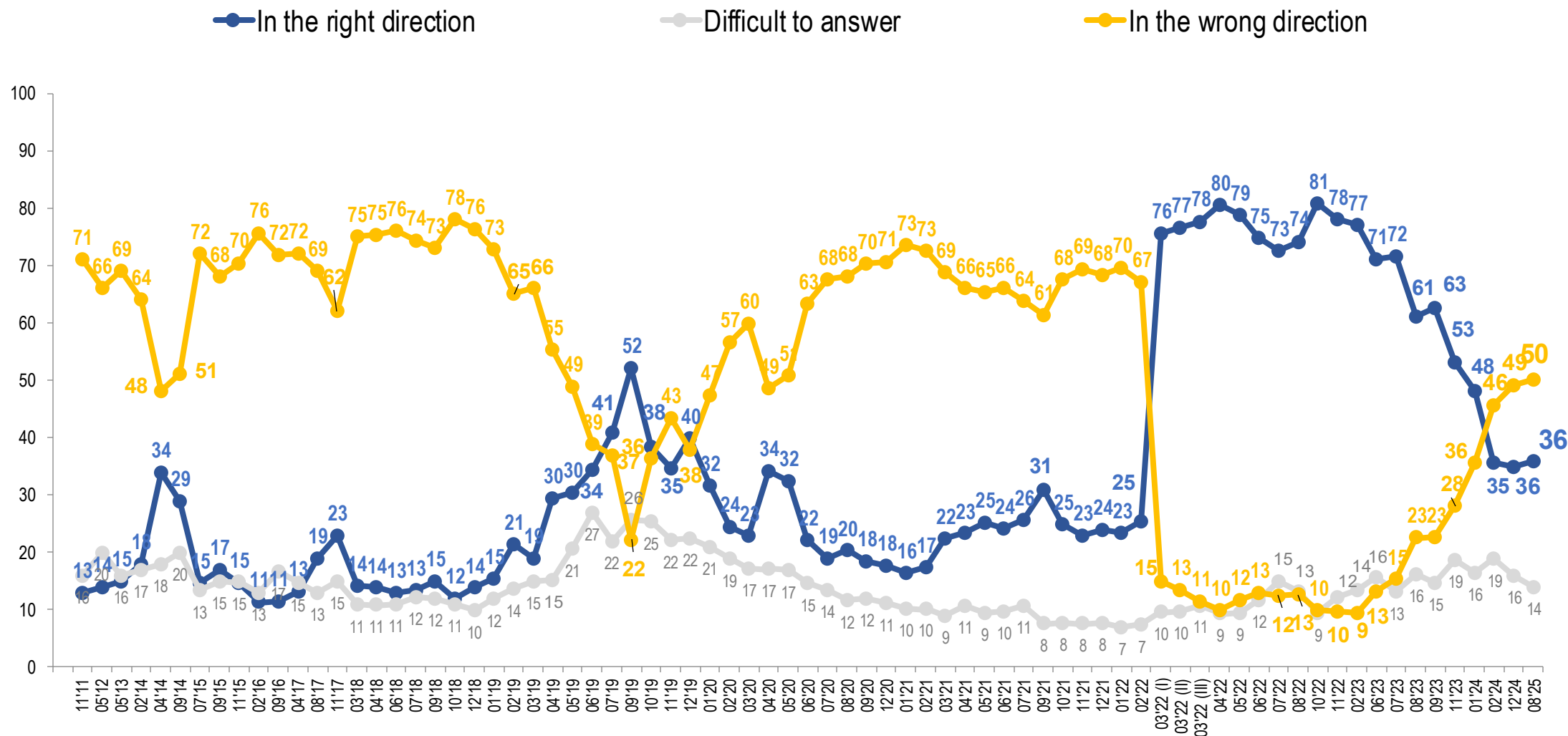
Do you think that Ukraine is developing in the right or wrong direction?



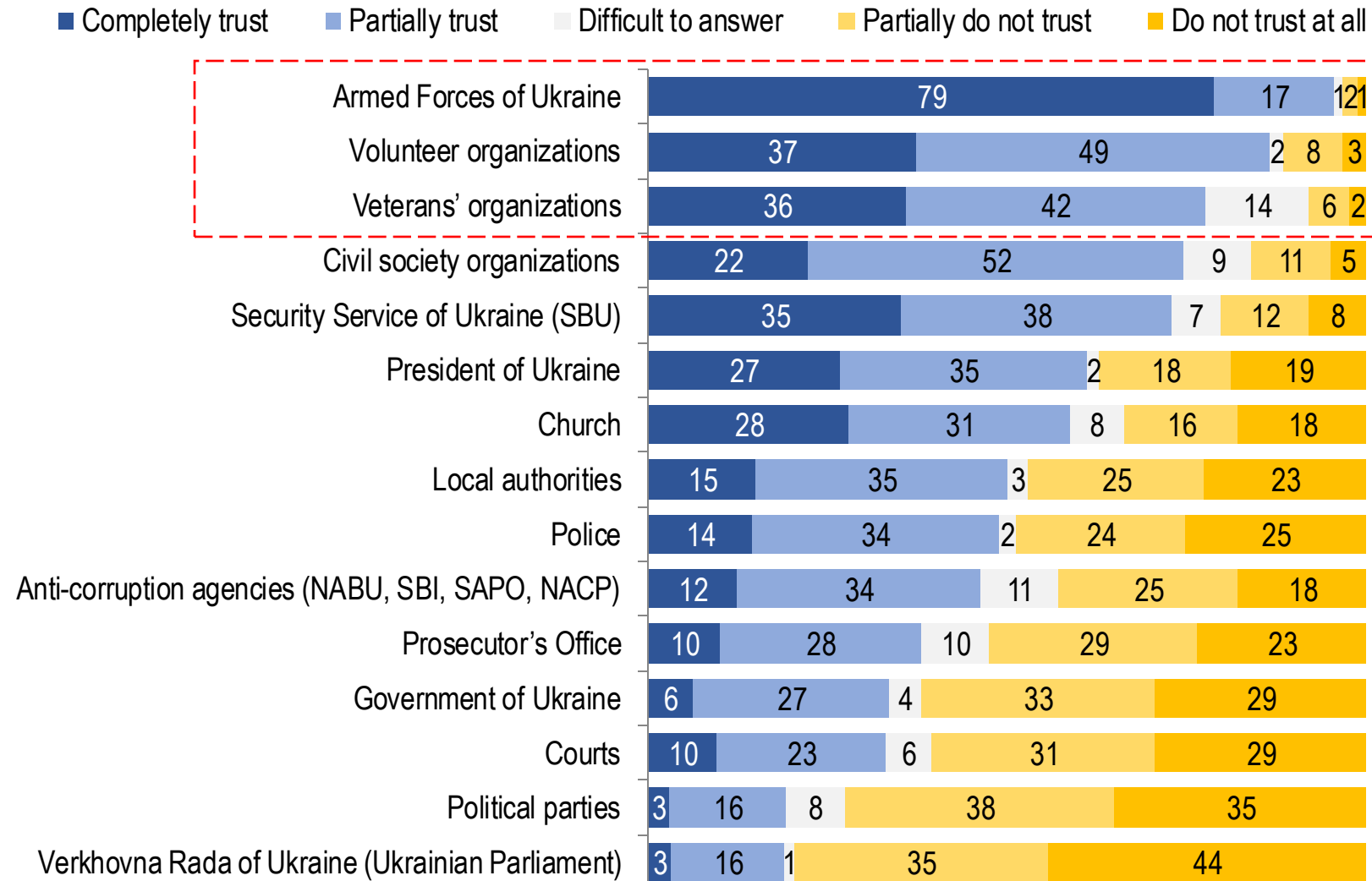
Region. Age. Income. Support for the creation of new parties



Do you think that Ukraine is developing in the right or wrong direction?

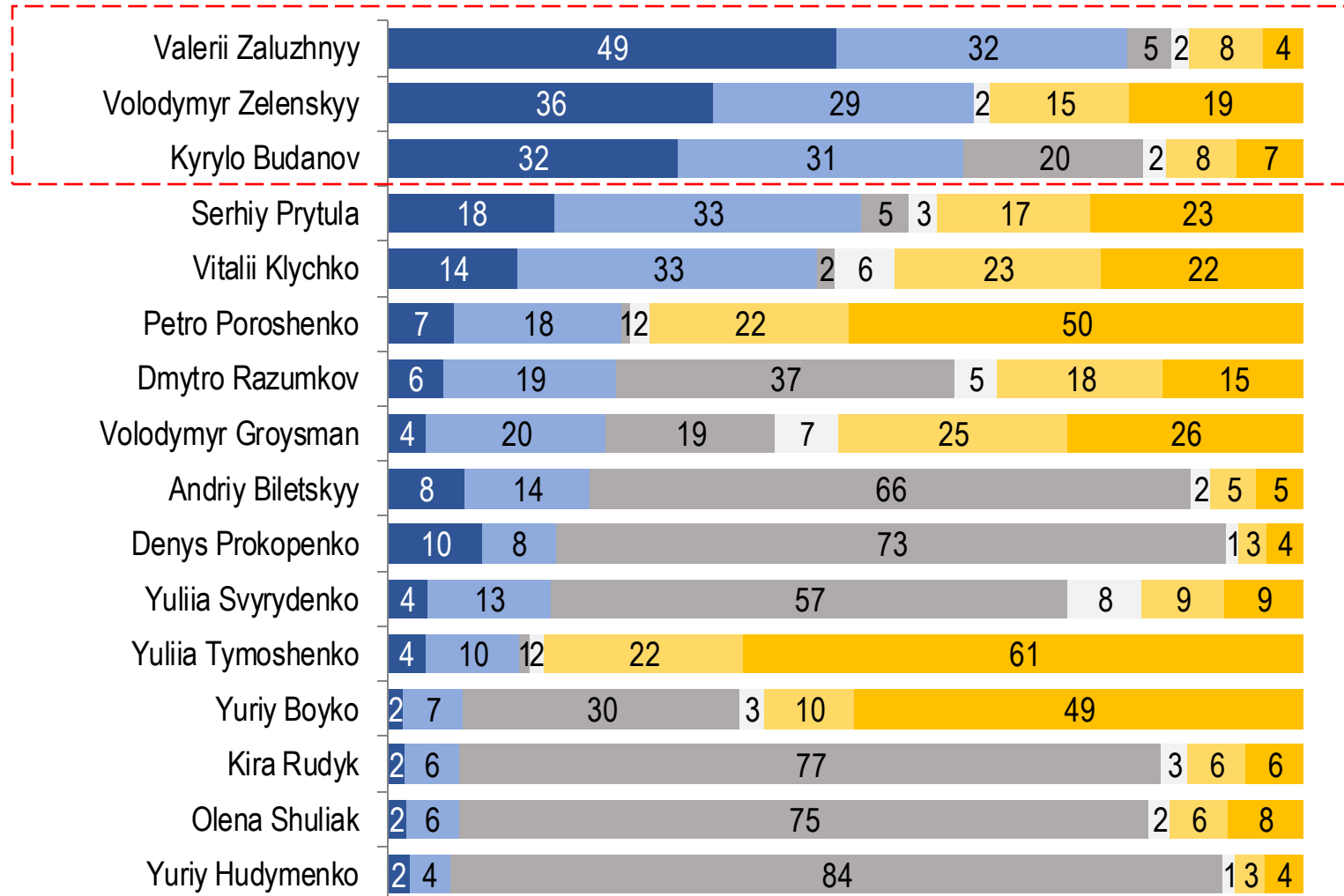


To what extent do you trust the following social institutions?

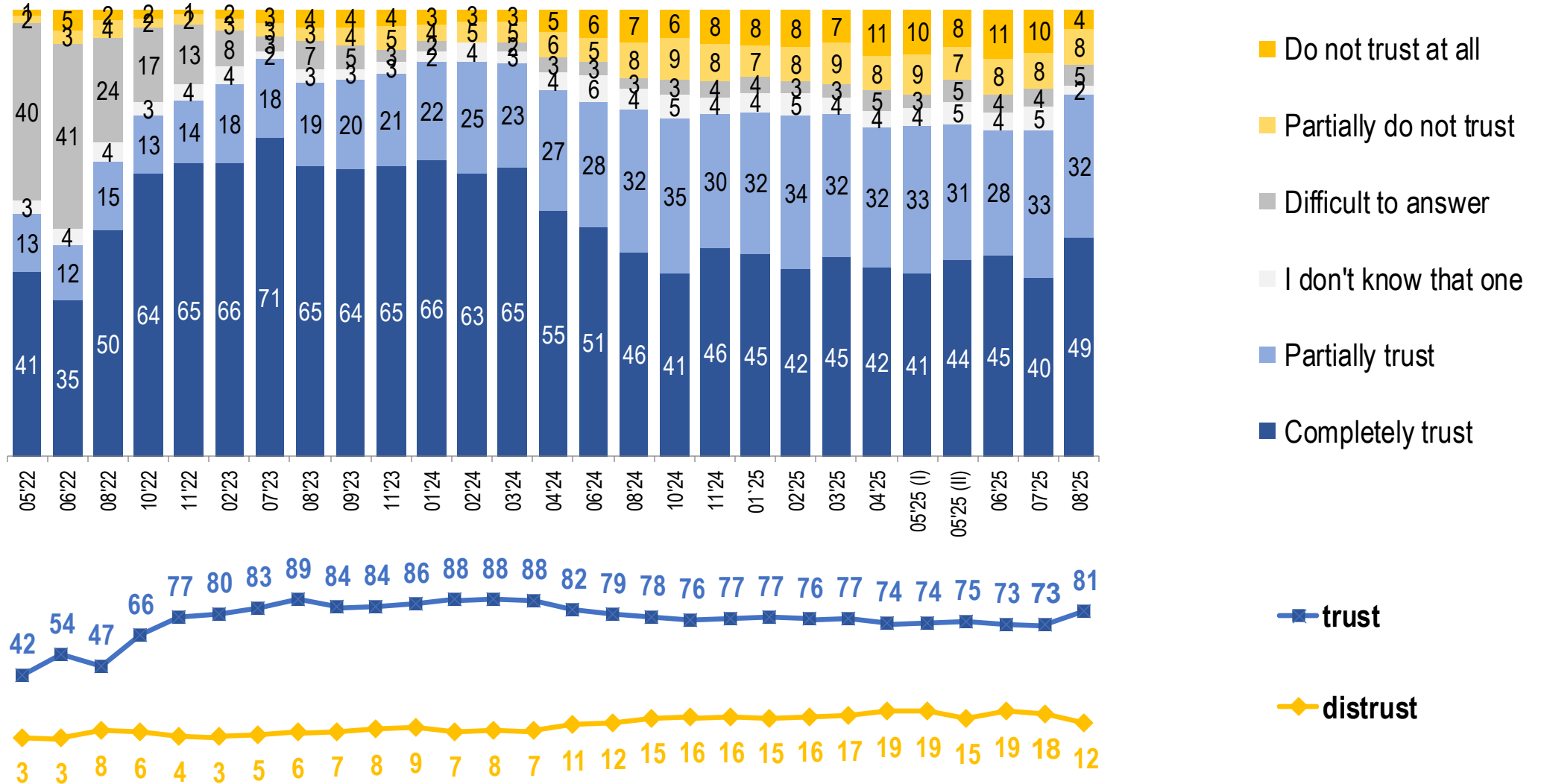


To what extent do you trust the following politicians, public officials, and public figures?

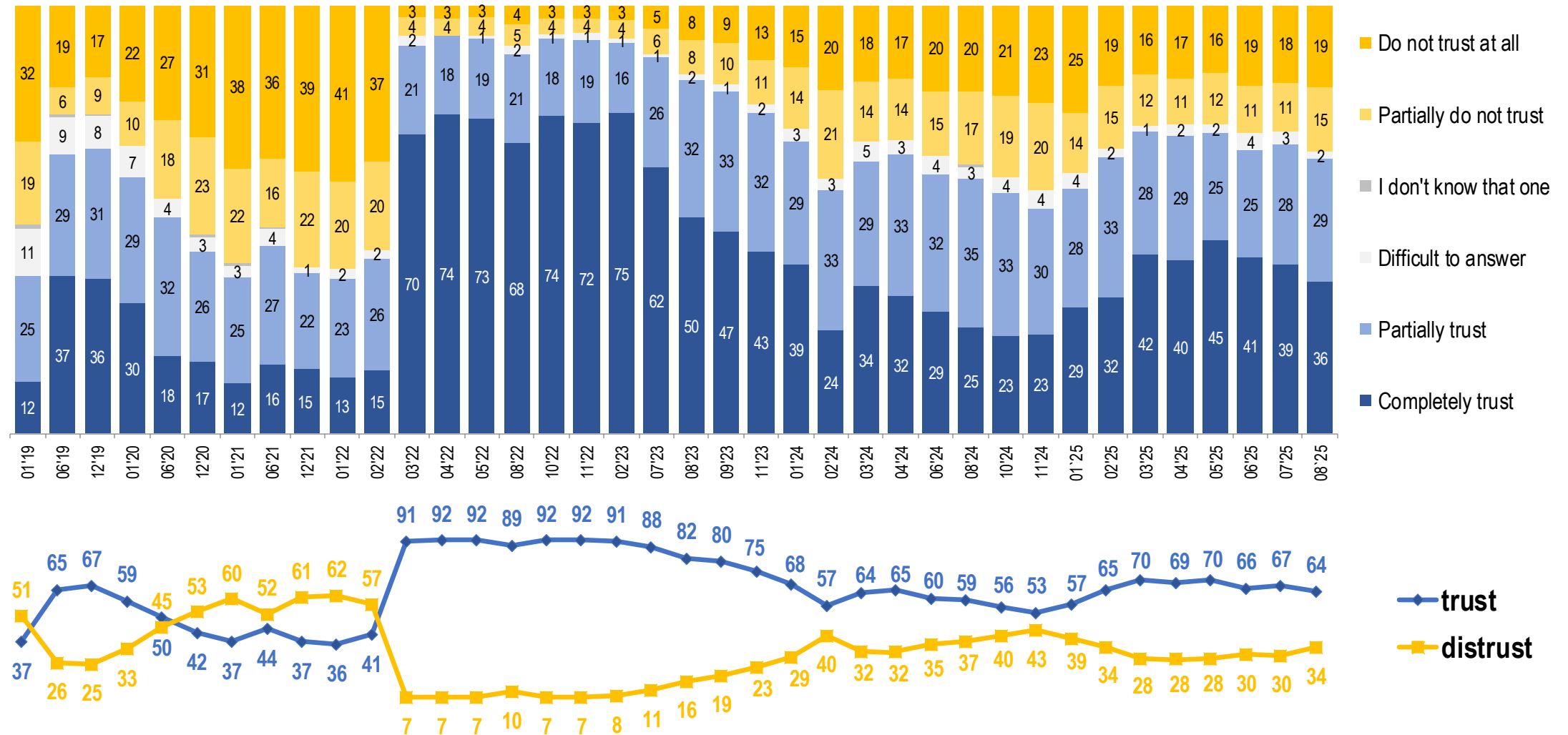
■ Completely trust ■ Partially trust ■ I don't know that one ■ Difficult to answer ■ Partially do not trust ■ Do not trust at all



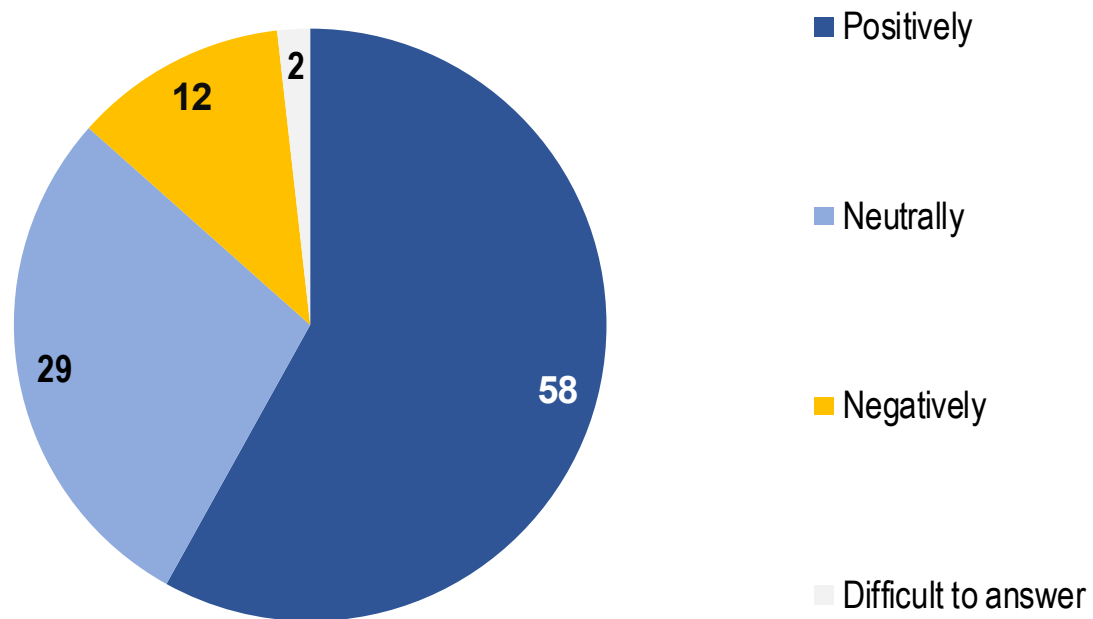
Trust in dynamics: Valery ZALUZHNY



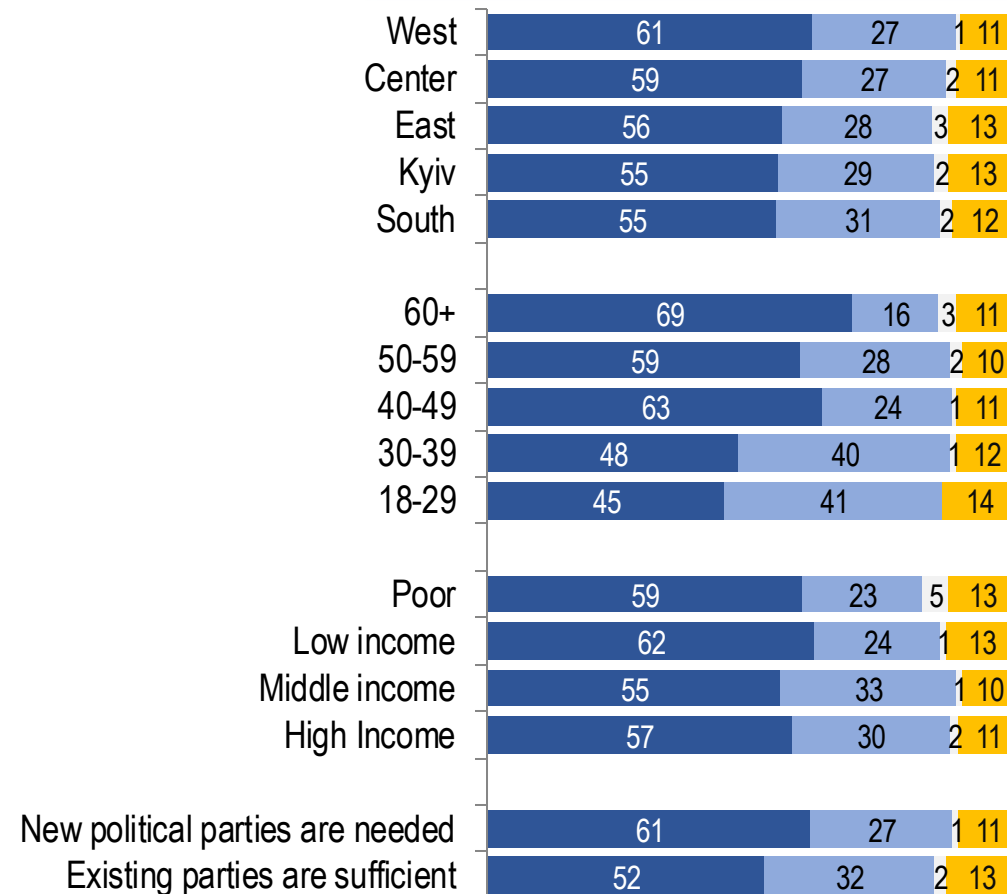
Trust in dynamics: Volodymyr ZELENSKYI



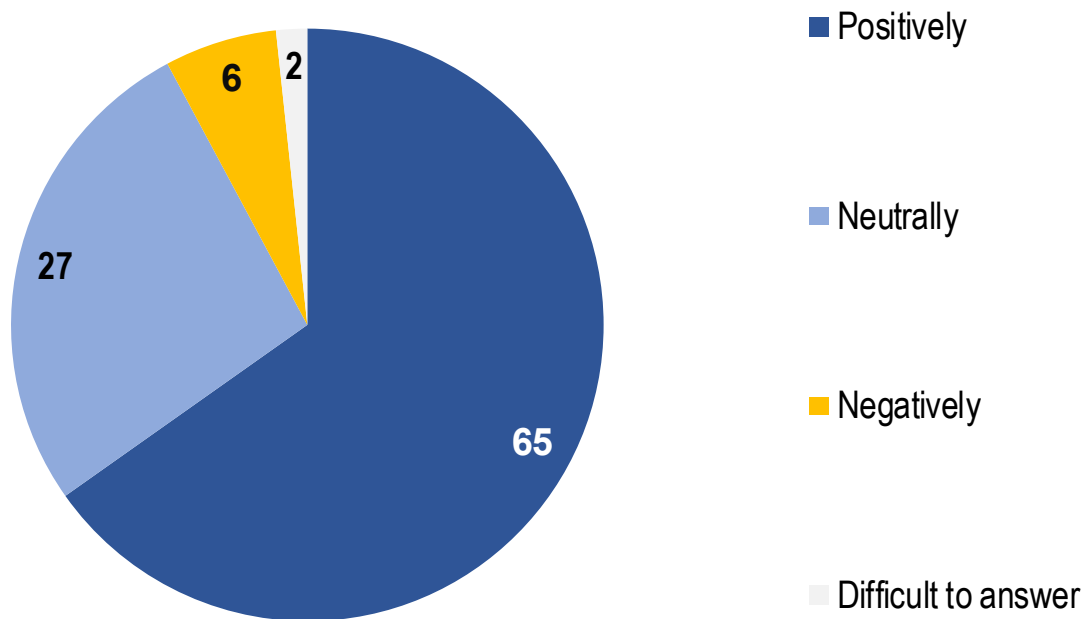
How do you feel about veterans of the Russian-Ukrainian war running for elections?



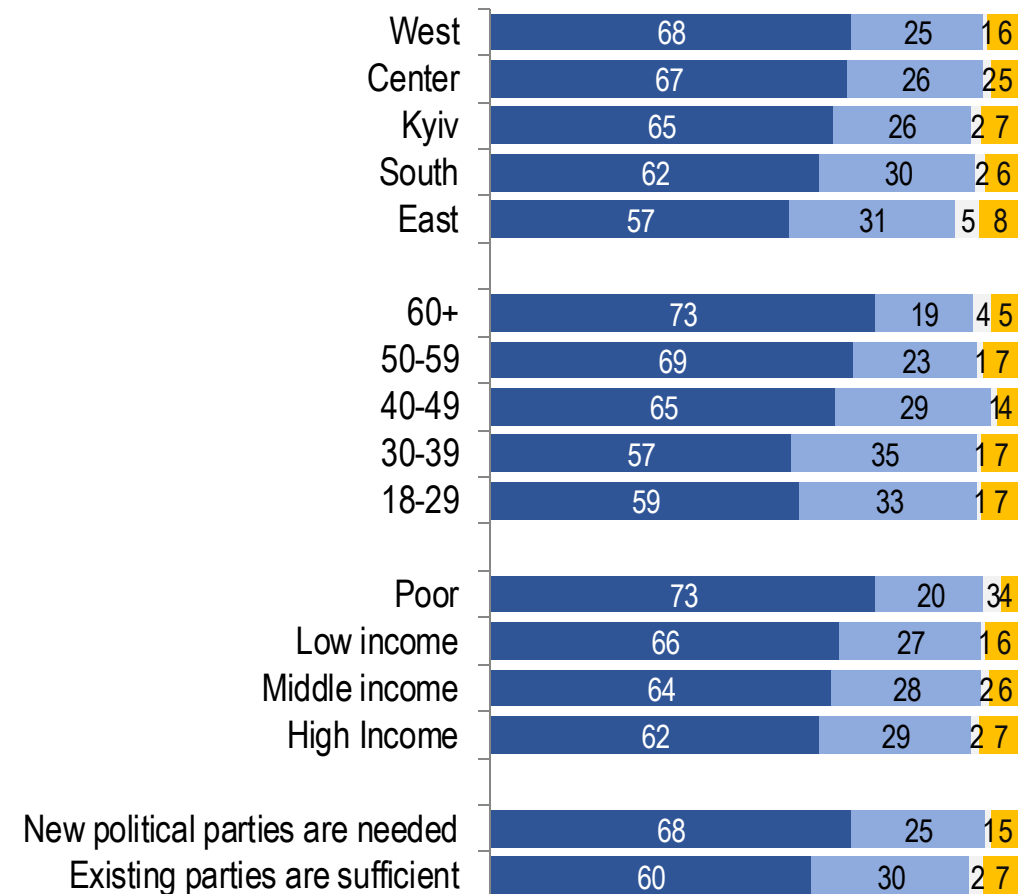
Region. Age. Income. Support for the creation of new parties



What is your opinion on the establishment of a political force led by veterans or members of the military?



Region. Age. Income. Support for the creation of new parties



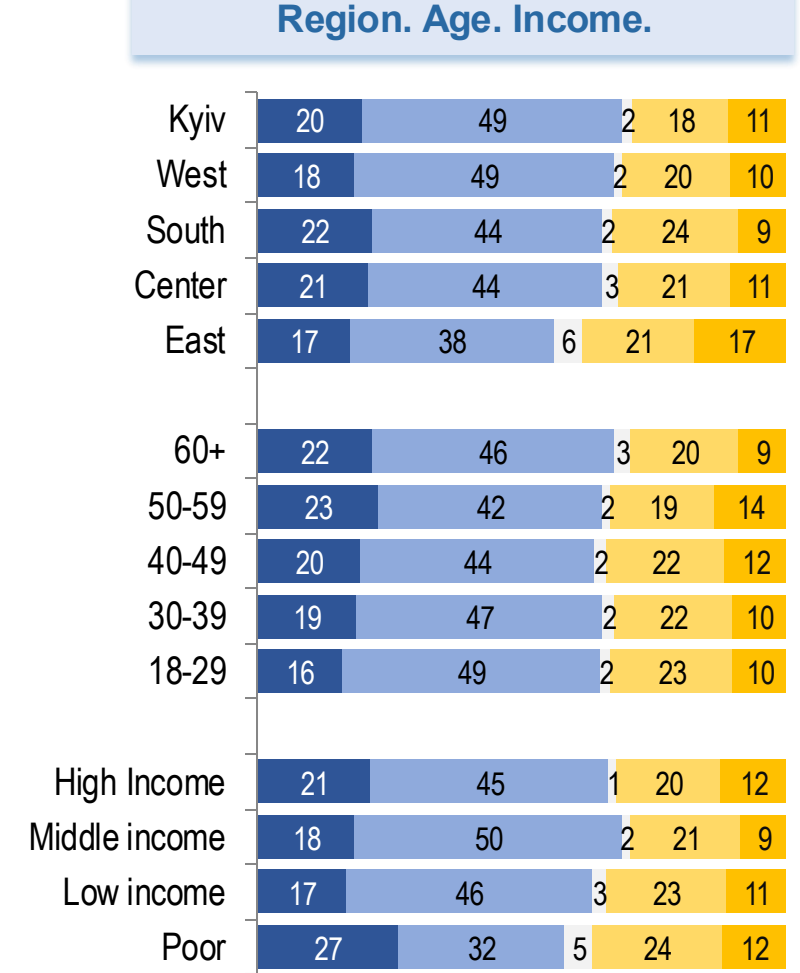
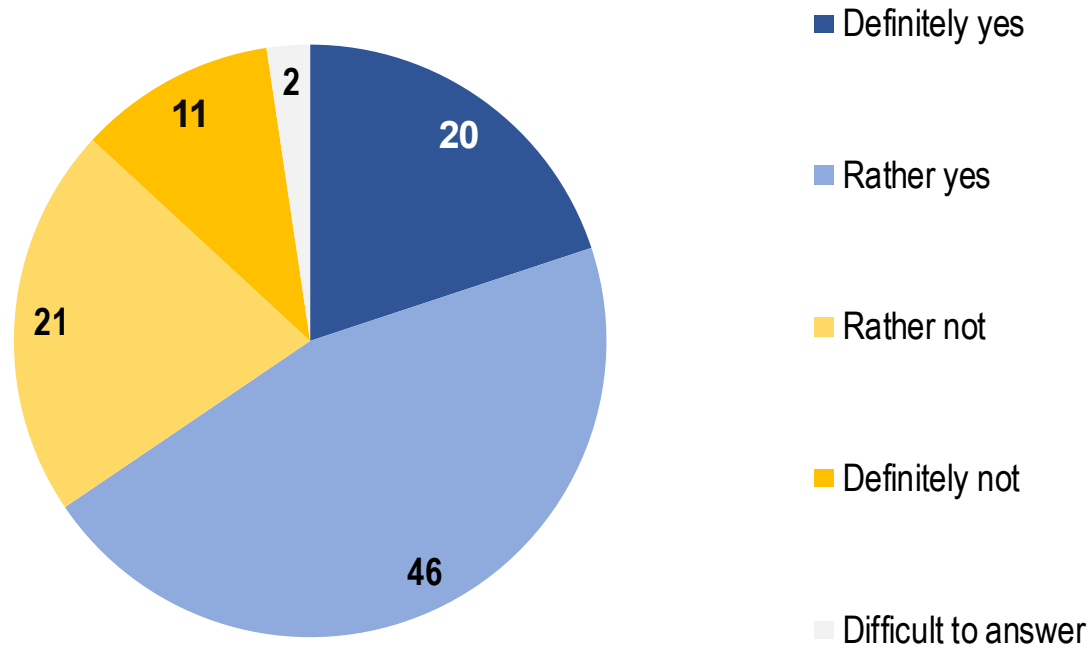
Attitudes toward Veterans' Participation in Politics: Focus Group Results

- Respondents generally **view positively the idea of veterans participating in political processes**, but they express several reservations.
- The main concerns relate to the potential for **the establishment of a military dictatorship, restrictions on rights and freedoms, and excessive radicalism**.
- Among the key requirements for veterans with political ambitions, respondents highlight **education, integrity, and honesty**.

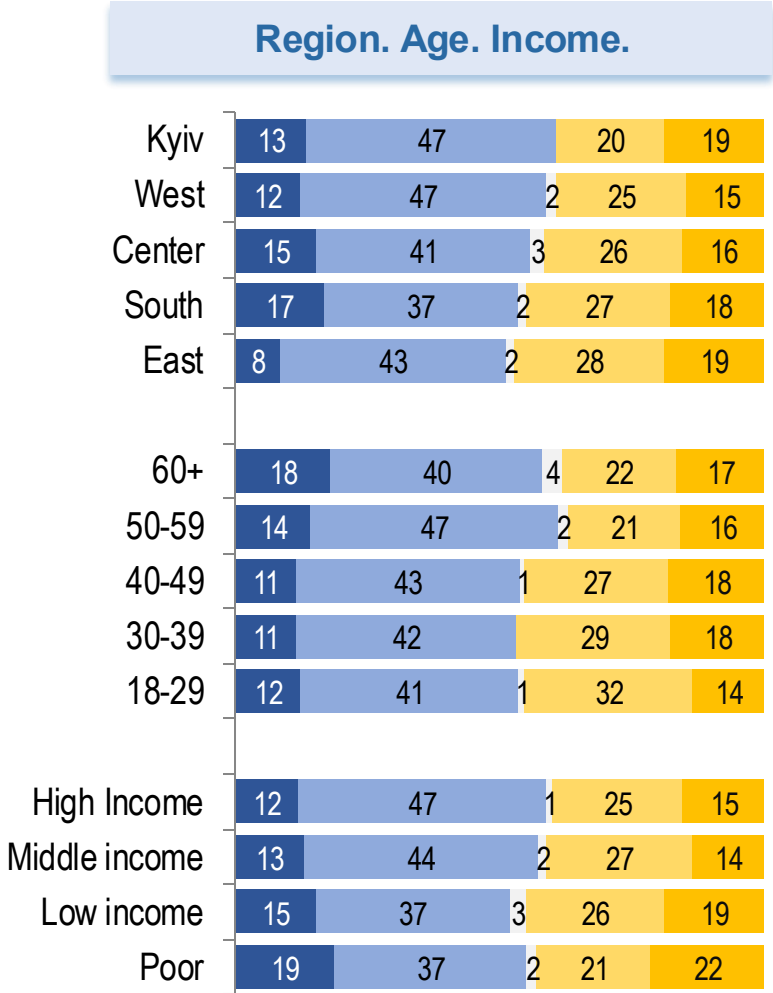
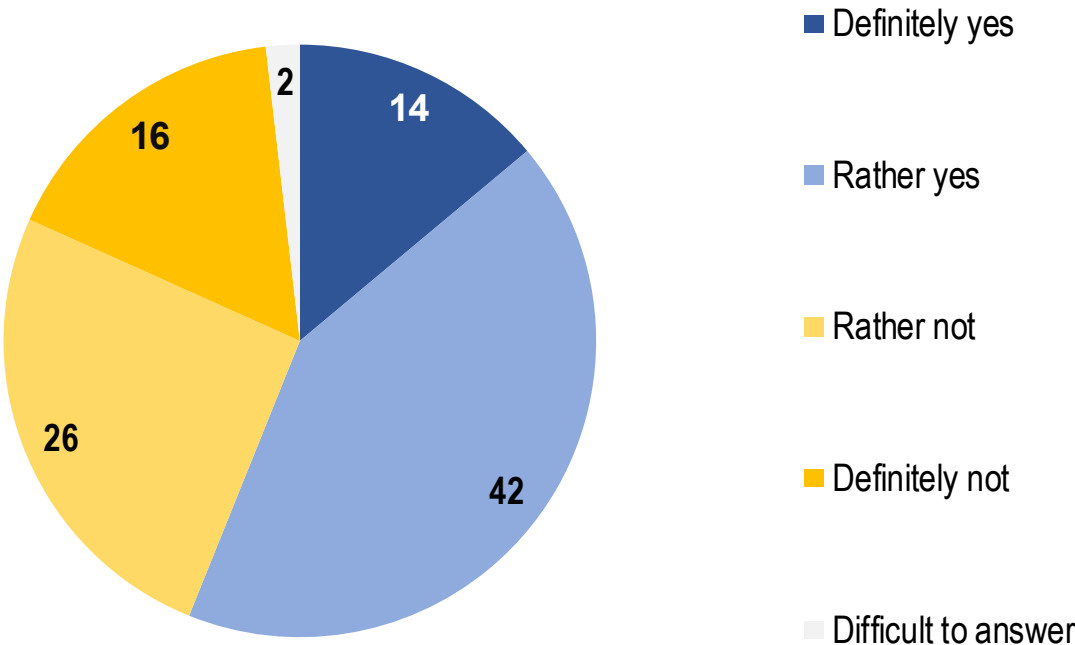
«They may take part in certain social activities, and they deserve gratitude and recognition. But that does not mean they will become competent politicians»

Male, 33 years old, Odesa region (FGD 2)

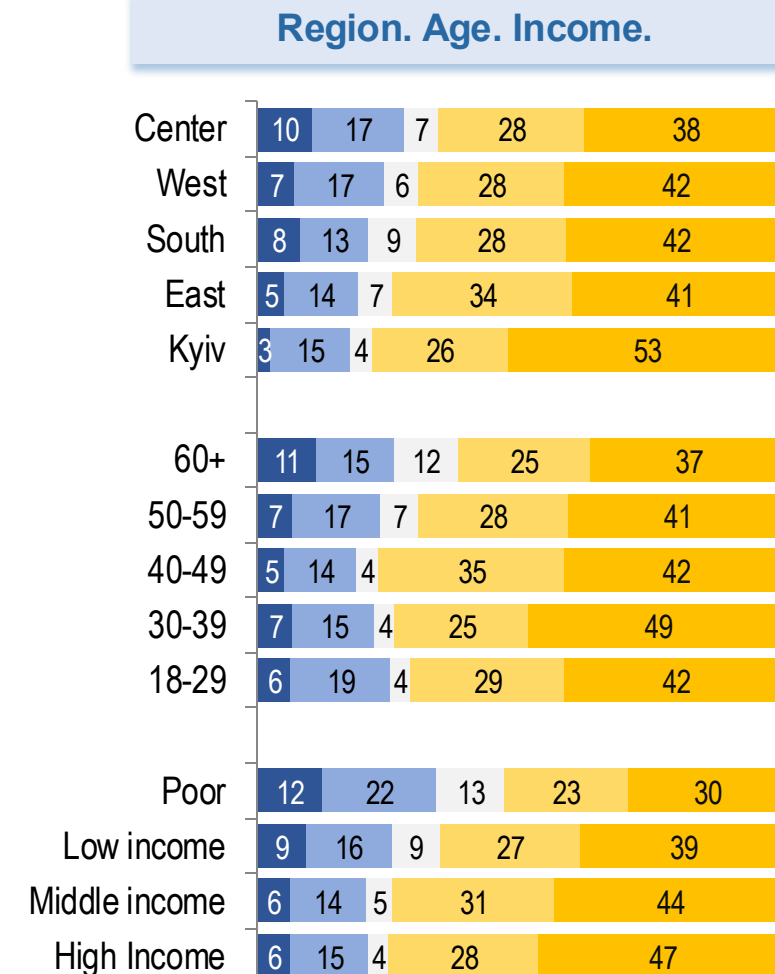
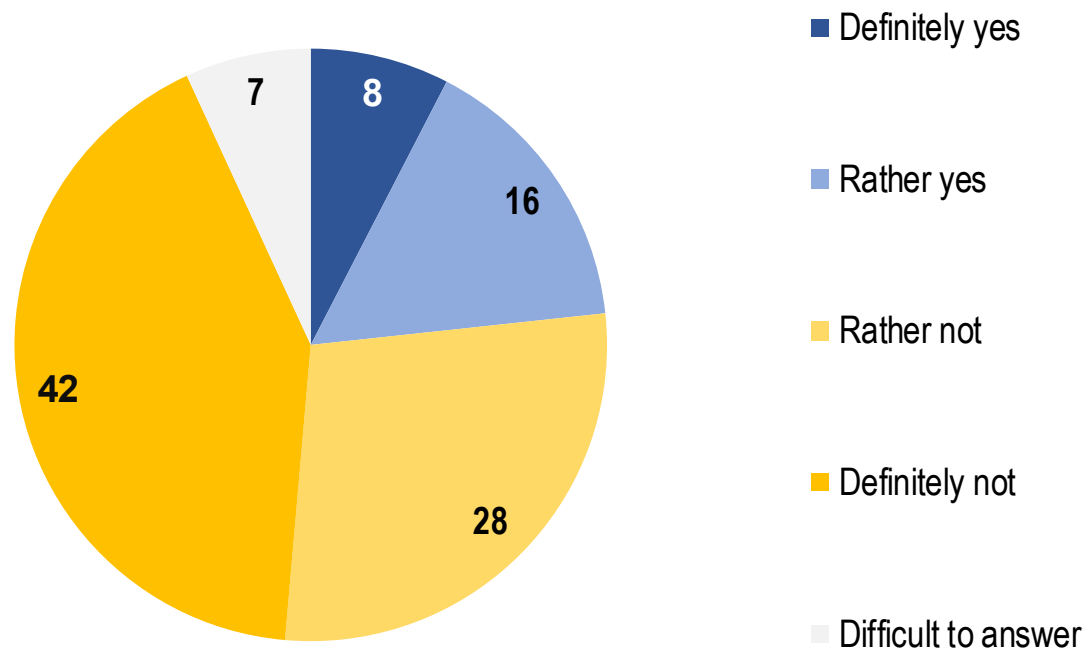
In your opinion, is Ukraine a democratic state?



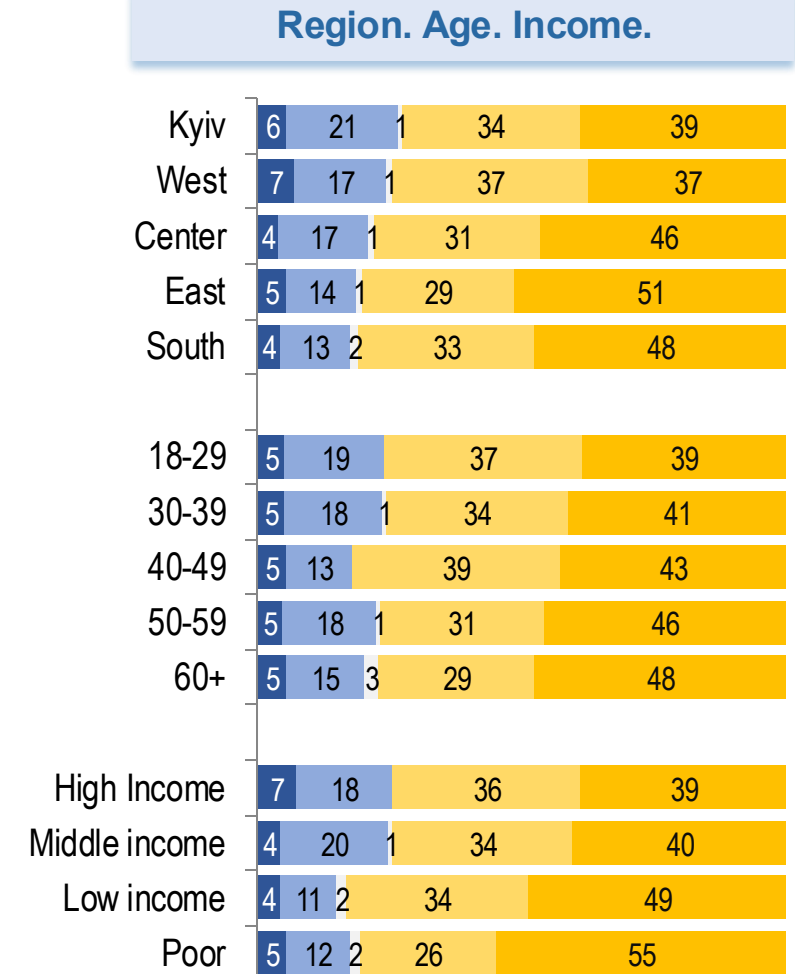
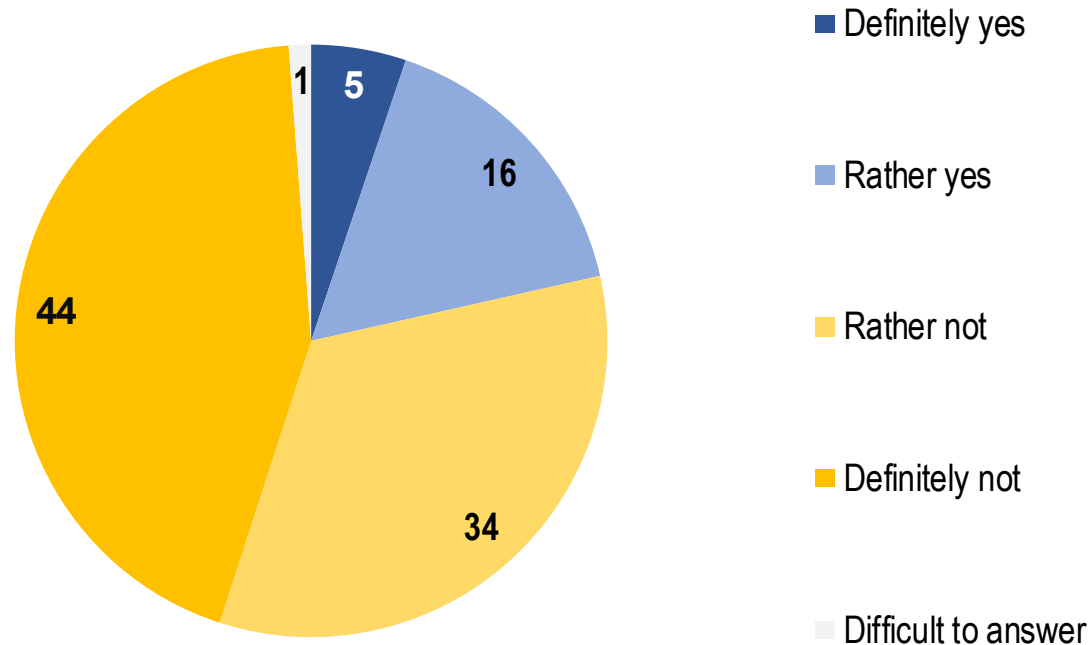
In your opinion, are the principles of freedom of speech respected in Ukraine today?



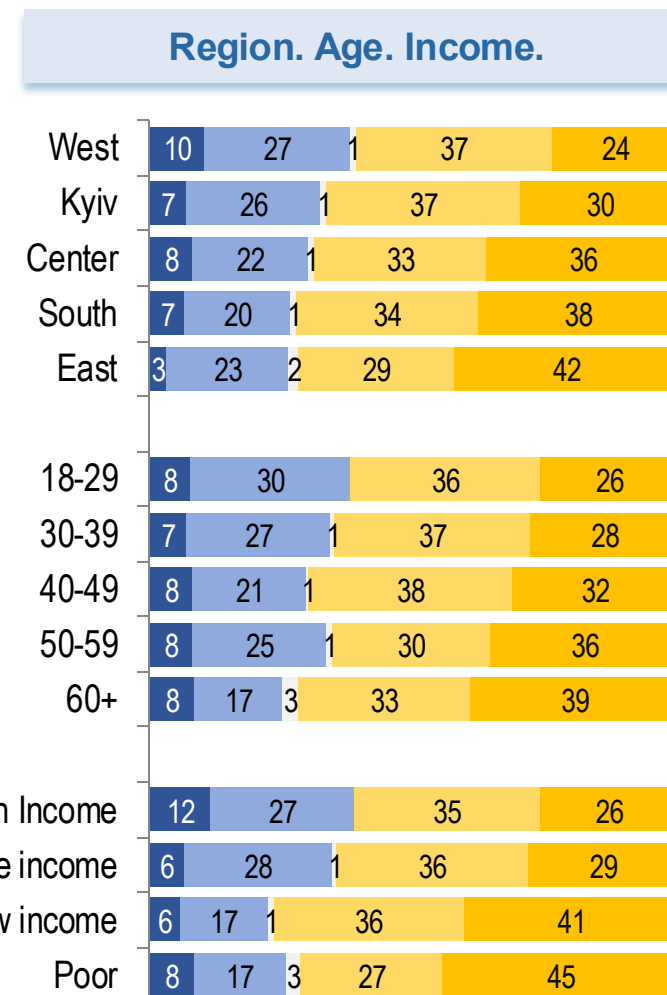
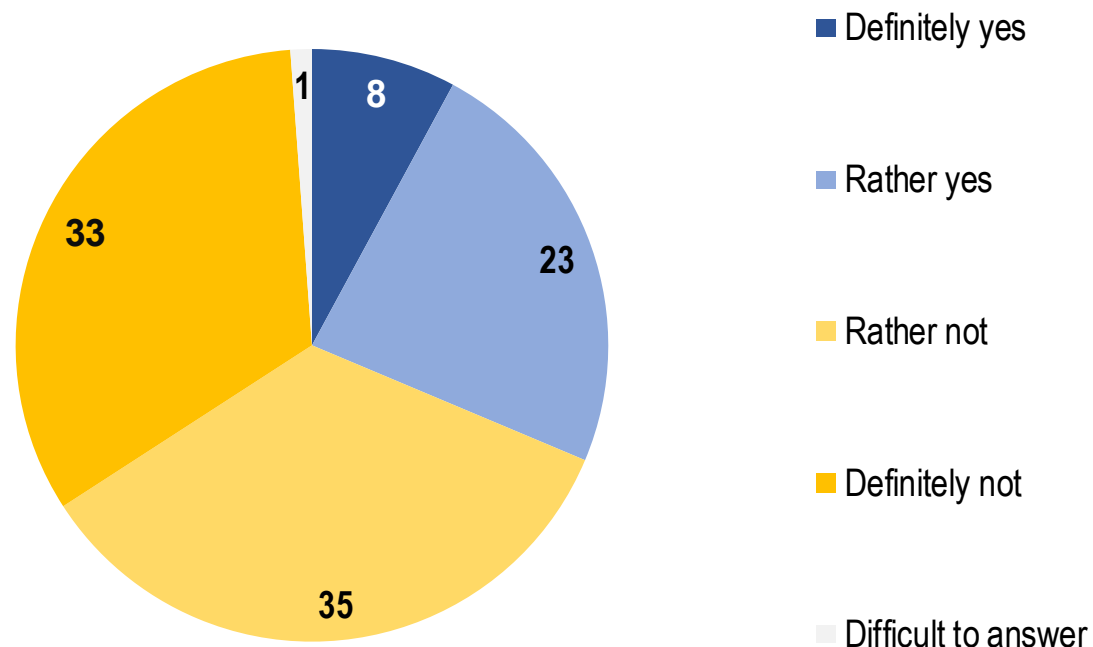
Do you support the establishment of a military dictatorship in Ukraine today?



Do you feel that you have influence over political decision-making in Ukraine?



Do you feel that you have influence over political decision-making in your local community?



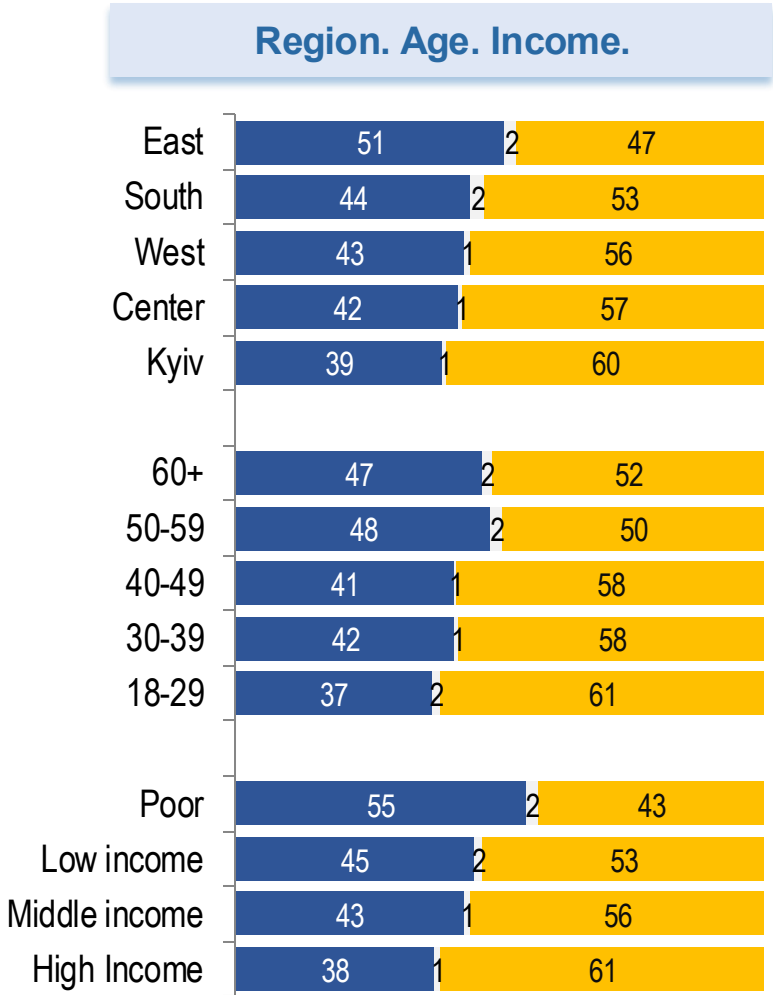
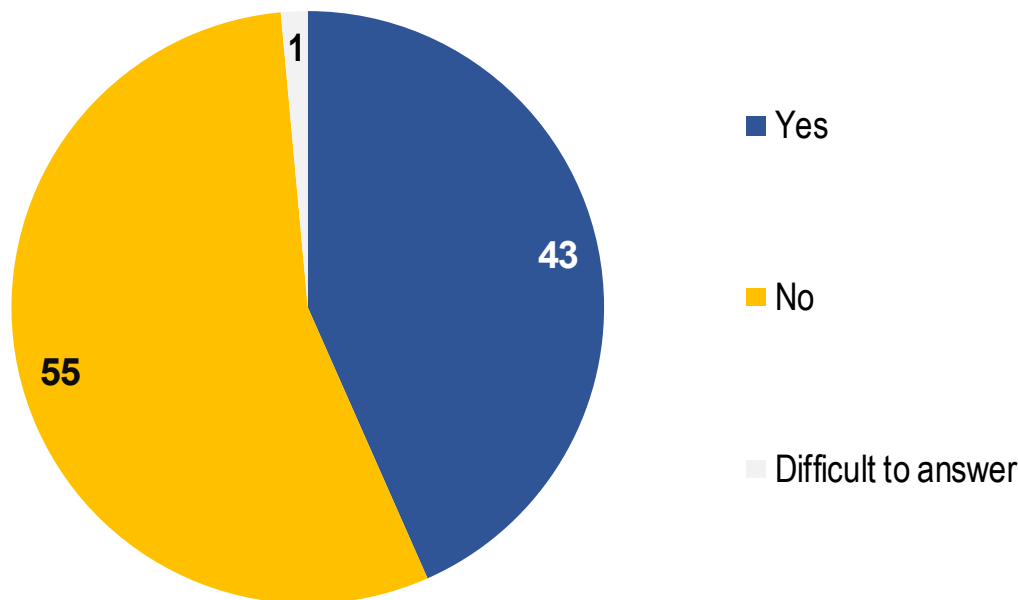
State of Democracy and Freedoms in the Country: Focus Group Results

- Overall, respondents **perceive Ukraine as a democratic state**, but note that during the years of war people have **experienced restrictions on their rights and freedoms**.
- Perceptions of democracy are shaped by **constant underlying tension** as well as **objective restrictions imposed by martial law**.
- Citizens do not feel **involved in political decision-making** at either the central or local level. An important reason for this sense of “detachment” is seen in **people’s own passivity** — they do not engage with surrounding processes and justify themselves with the traditional argument that *“nothing depends on us.”*

«I can express my opinion within my circle of communication, in the family, with friends. I can say something at some meetings. And that’s it. It won’t reach the authorities any further»

Female, 31 years old, Kharkiv region (FGD 1)

Do you believe a peace agreement between Ukraine and Russia will be signed within the next year?



If the presidential election in Ukraine were held in the near future, which of the following candidates would you vote for?

	Among all%	Among those who intend to vote and have decided, %
Valerii Zaluzhnyy	29,5	33,4
Volodymyr Zelenskyy	25,2	28,5
Petro Poroshenko	5,7	6,4
Kyrylo Budanov	5,1	5,8
Oleksandr Usyk	4,7	5,3
Dmytro Razumkov	3,8	4,2
Andriy Biletskyy	3,0	3,4
Serhiy Prytula	2,8	3,2
Yuliia Tymoshenko	2,7	3,0
Vitalii Klychko	1,1	1,2
Yuriy Boyko	1,0	1,1
Another candidate	3,8	4,3
I would not vote	3,7	
Difficult to answer	7,9	

If the presidential election in Ukraine were held in the near future, which of the following candidates would you vote for?

REGION. AGE. INCOME. GENDER	West	Center	South	East	Kyiv	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	Poor	Low income	Middle income	High income	Men	Women
Valerii Zaluzhnyy	33	32	22	27	34	21	21	30	34	36	27	34	30	26	28	31
Volodymyr Zelenskyy	21	23	35	24	19	22	21	26	26	28	30	23	26	23	21	29
Petro Poroshenko	7	5	3	7	10	6	3	6	7	7	3	4	6	9	7	5
Kyrylo Budanov	7	4	4	5	5	7	7	5	3	4	5	3	5	7	6	5
Oleksandr Usyk	4	6	6	4	1	7	9	5	4	1	5	5	4	6	5	5
Dmytro Razumkov	2	4	5	6	3	2	2	3	5	6	6	5	3	2	5	3
Andriy Biletskyy	2	3	3	2	7	5	5	4	1	2	2	2	3	5	5	2
Serhiy Prytula	4	3	2	2	3	6	4	3	2	1		3	3	4	3	3
Yuliia Tymoshenko	2	3	3	5	1	1	3	3	2	3	4	3	2	2	3	3
Vitalii Klychko	1	2	1		1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1
Yuriy Boyko	1	1	1	2	1		1		1	2	2	1		1	1	1
Another candidate	4	4	4	4	4	6	4	5	4	2	5	3	4	3	5	3
I would not vote	3	3	4	7	3	7	5	2	4	2	4	4	4	2	5	3
Difficult to answer	9	8	8	6	8	9	12	8	7	5	4	9	8	9	7	9

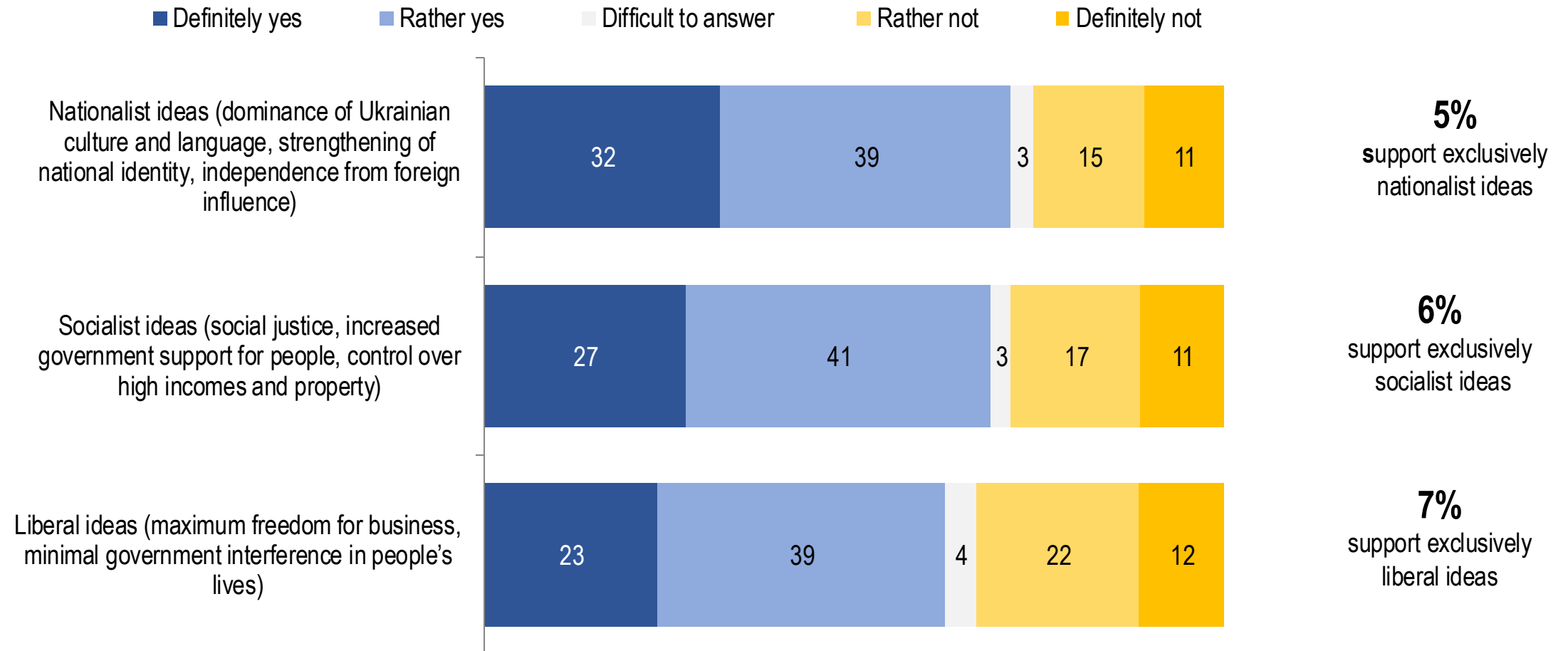
Which party (currently existing or potential) would you vote for in the elections to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine if they were held in the near future?

	Among all%	Among those who intend to vote and have decided, %
Zaluzhnyi's Party	26,6	32,1
Azov Party	9,0	10,8
Budanov's Party	7,7	9,3
European Solidarity	7,6	9,2
Servant of the People	7,2	8,7
Prytula's Party	4,8	5,8
Razumkov's Party	4,2	5,1
Batkivshchyna	3,4	4,1
Boyko's Peace Platform	2,0	2,4
Svoboda	2,0	2,4
UDAR (Vitalii Klychko's Party)	1,9	2,2
Holos	1,3	1,6
Groysman's Ukrainian Strategy	1,0	1,2
Democratic Axe	1,0	1,2
Another party	3,2	3,9
I would not vote	5,3	
Difficult to answer	11,7	

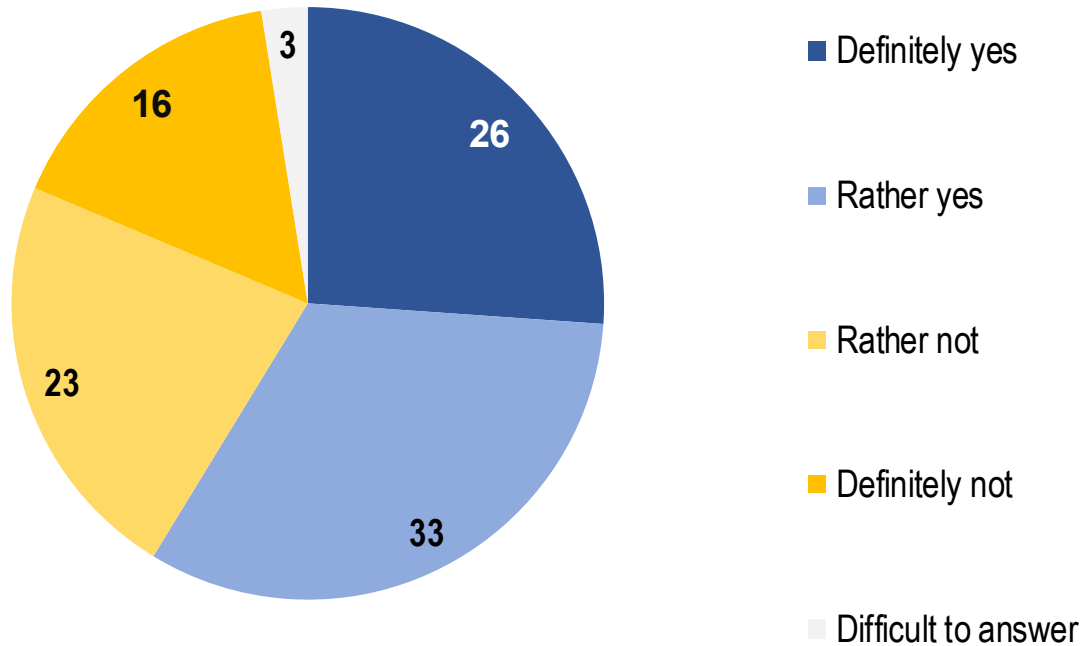
Which party (currently existing or potential) would you vote for in the elections to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine if they were held in the near future?

REGION. AGE. INCOME. SUPPORT FOR THE CREATION OF NEW PARTIES. GENDER	West	Center	South	East	Kyiv	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	Poor	Low income	Middle income	High Income	New political parties are needed	Existing parties are sufficient	Men	Women
Zaluzhnyi's Party	26	29	25	27	25	16	22	25	31	34	31	33	25	22	29	24	24	29
Azov Party	10	8	9	7	11	13	12	12	7	5	6	7	10	11	11	6	9	9
Budanov's Party	6	7	10	7	8	9	5	7	7	9	8	7	8	8	8	7	7	8
European Solidarity	10	7	5	6	11	6	4	9	9	10	7	5	8	10	5	12	9	7
Servant of the People	5	8	10	7	5	8	7	5	6	9	5	7	8	7	4	13	6	8
Prytula's Party	5	4	4	4	7	10	7	4	4	1	2	5	6	4	6	3	5	5
Razumkov's Party	3	5	5	5	3	1	3	3	4	7	6	6	4	2	4	4	5	4
Batkivshchyna	3	4	4	3	2	2	4	3	3	4	5	4	3	3	2	6	4	3
Boyko's Peace Platform	1	2	2	6	1	1	2	1	2	3	4	3	1	1	2	2	2	2
Svoboda	4		2	1	3	1	2	5	2	1	1	2	1	3	2	2	2	2
UDAR (Vitalii Klychko's Party)	2	2	2		2	3	2	2	1	1	3	1	2	1	2	3	2	2
Holos	2	1	1	1	3	2	3	1	1	1		1	2	2	2	1	1	2
Groysman's Ukrainian Strategy	1	2	1	1	1		1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Democratic Axe	2	1		1	1	1	1	2	1				1	3	1	1	2	
Another party	3	3	4	2	3	6	4	3	3	1	3	2	4	3	5	1	4	2
I would not vote	6	5	5	10	2	8	6	5	6	3	7	5	5	6	5	6	6	5
Difficult to answer	12	12	12	11	11	13	16	11	10	9	10	11	12	11	11	9	11	12

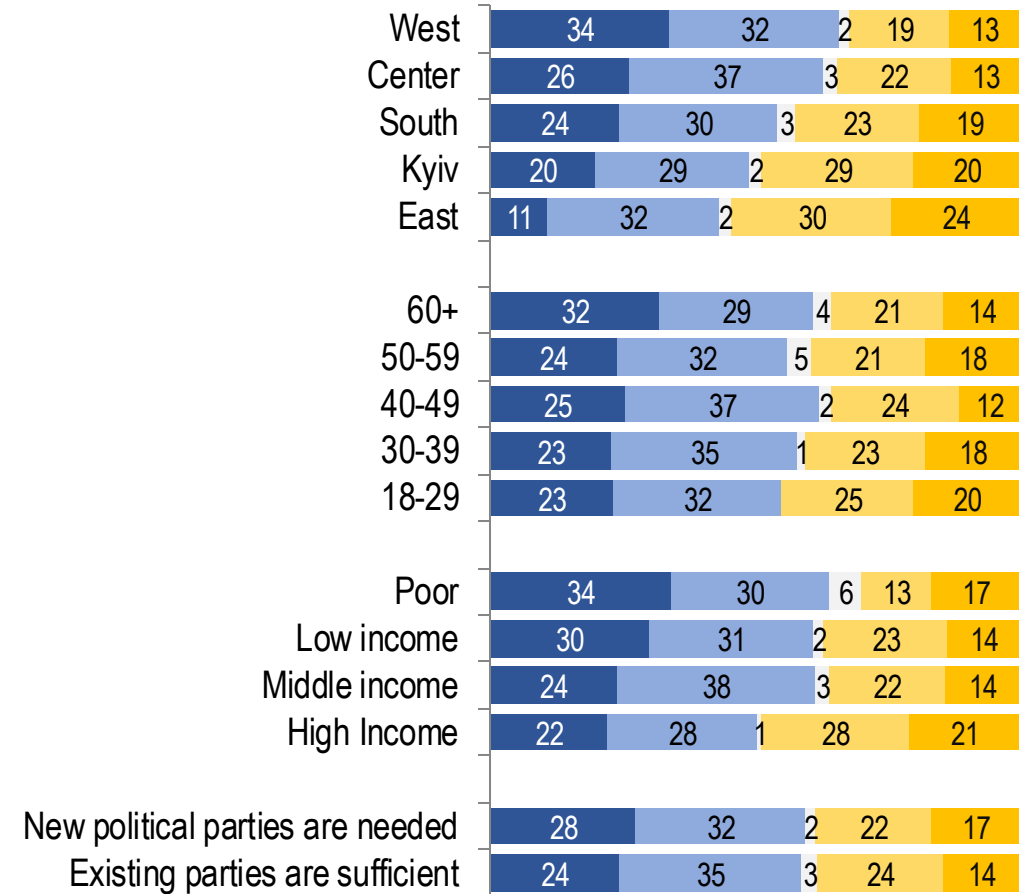
Would you be willing to support a party in the next elections that promotes the following ideas?



Would you be willing to support a party in the next elections that promotes the following ideas: life imprisonment for corruption, a ban on the public use of the Russian language, and nationalisation of large businesses?



Region. Age. Income. Support for the creation of new parties



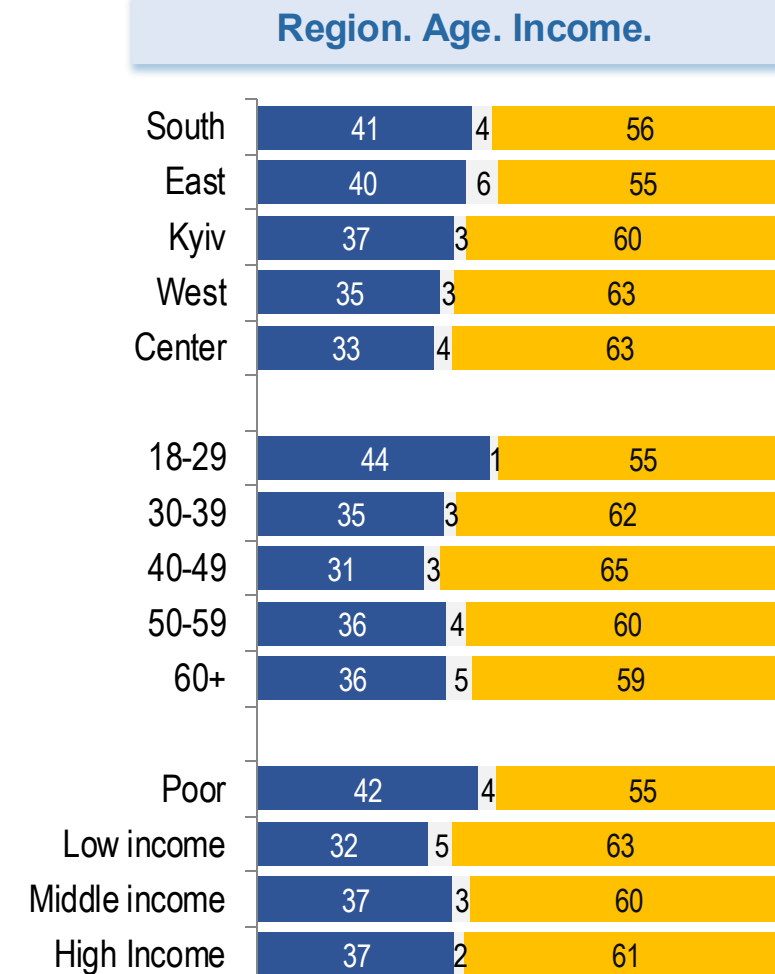
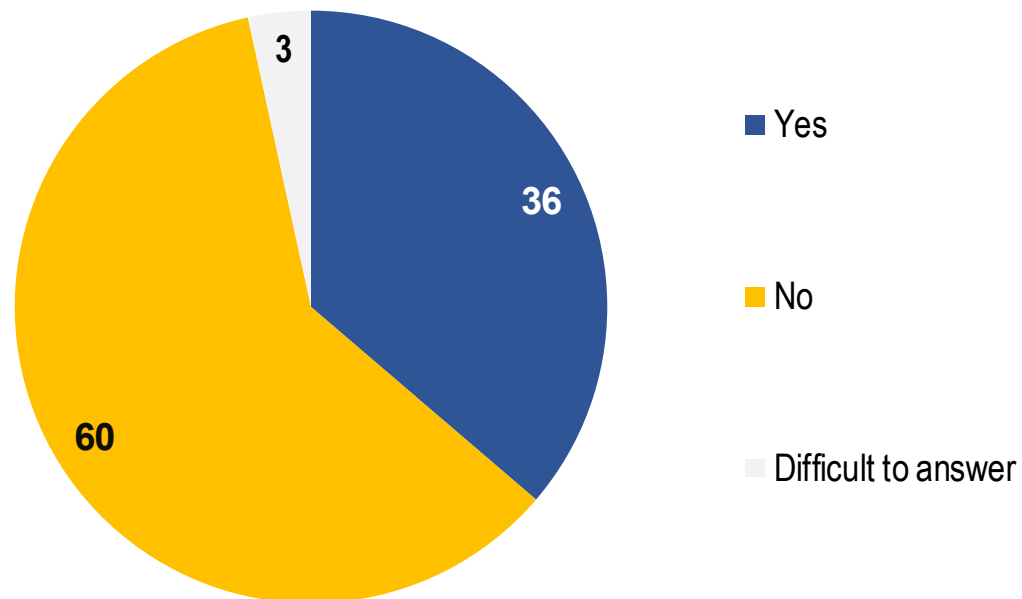
Ideological Orientations: Focus Group Results

- Among the ideas that would not be supported in the next elections are any that divide society.
- Among the parties that could gain support in the next elections are nationalist and liberal ones, while parties with socialist and radical ideas are more often considered remnants of the past.

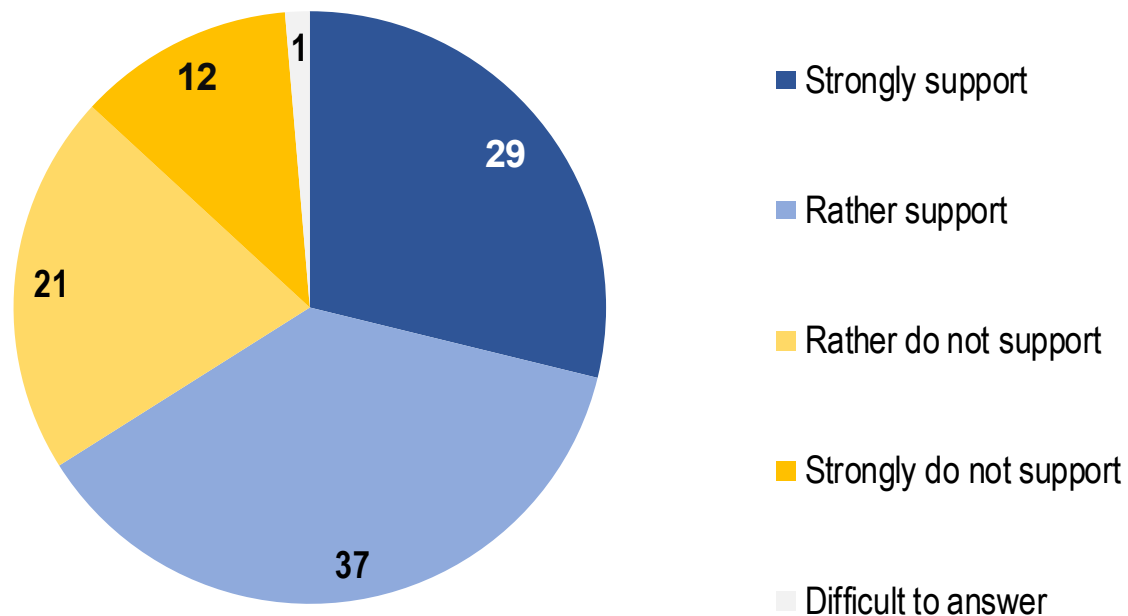
*«Should the state interfere less in people's lives?
Yes, it should.»*

*Male, 35 years old,
Dnipropetrovsk region (FGD 2)*

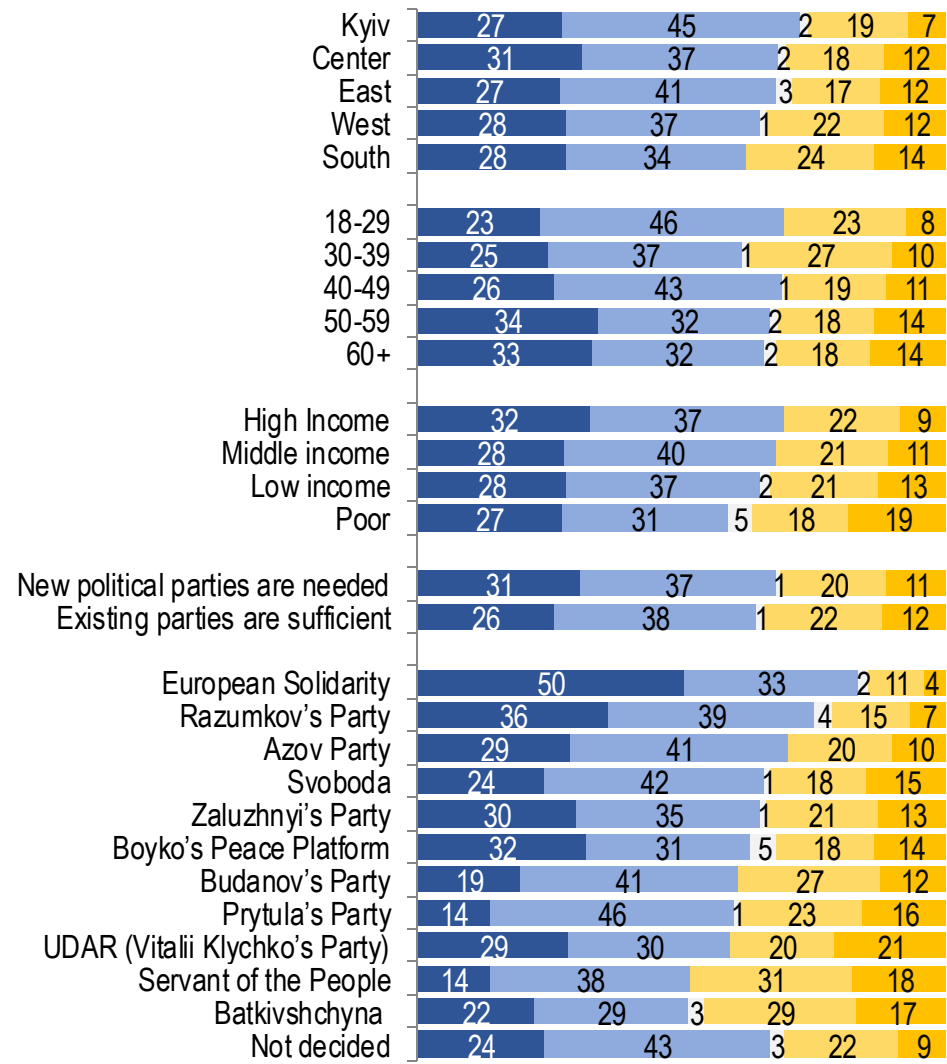
Should people who left Ukraine during the full-scale invasion have the right to run for elections after the war?



What is your attitude toward criticizing the government during wartime?

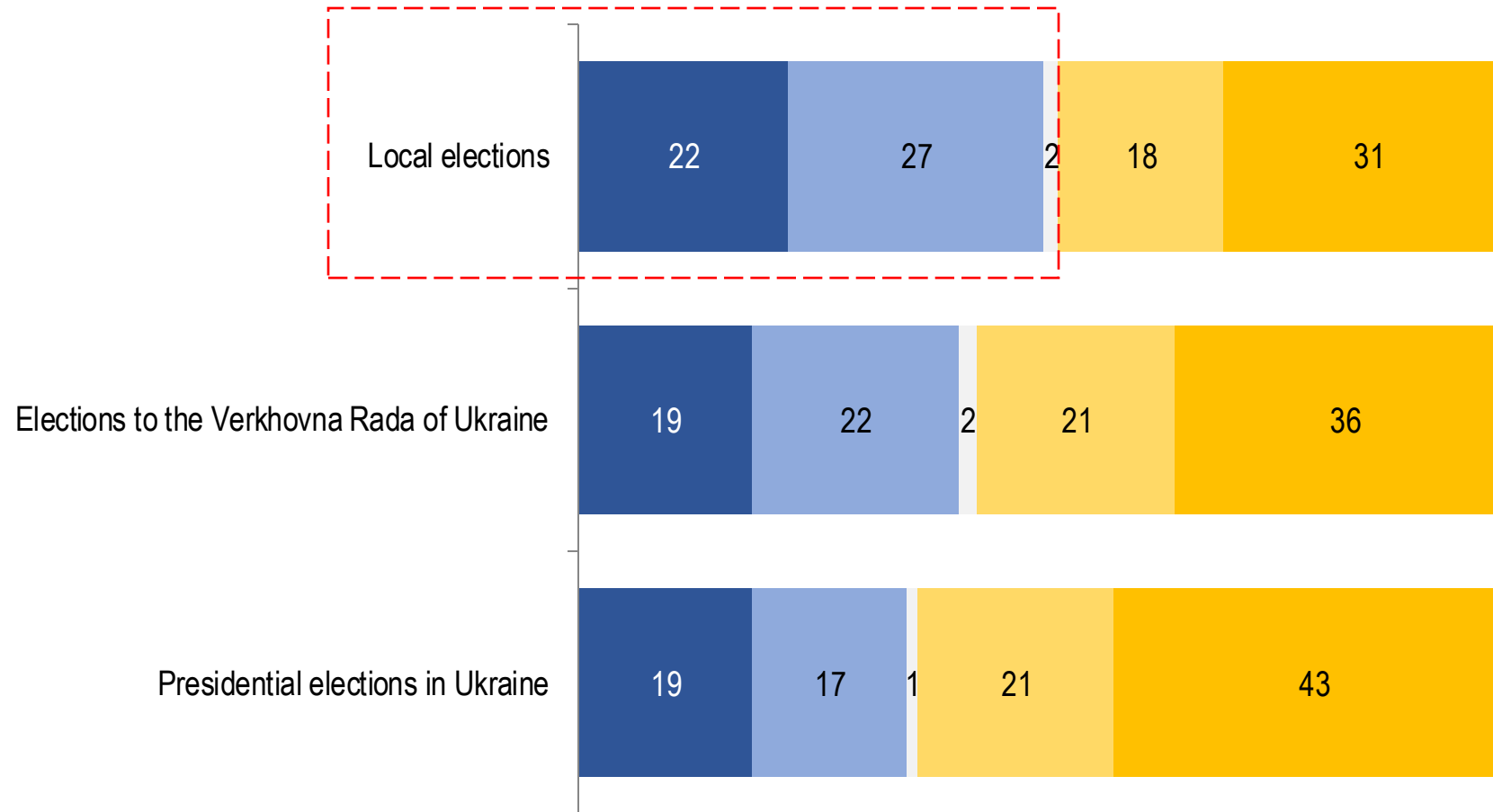


Region. Age. Income. Support for the creation of new parties. Electorates



Do you support holding the following elections during the war...?

■ Strongly support ■ Rather support ■ Difficult to answer ■ Rather do not support ■ Strongly do not support

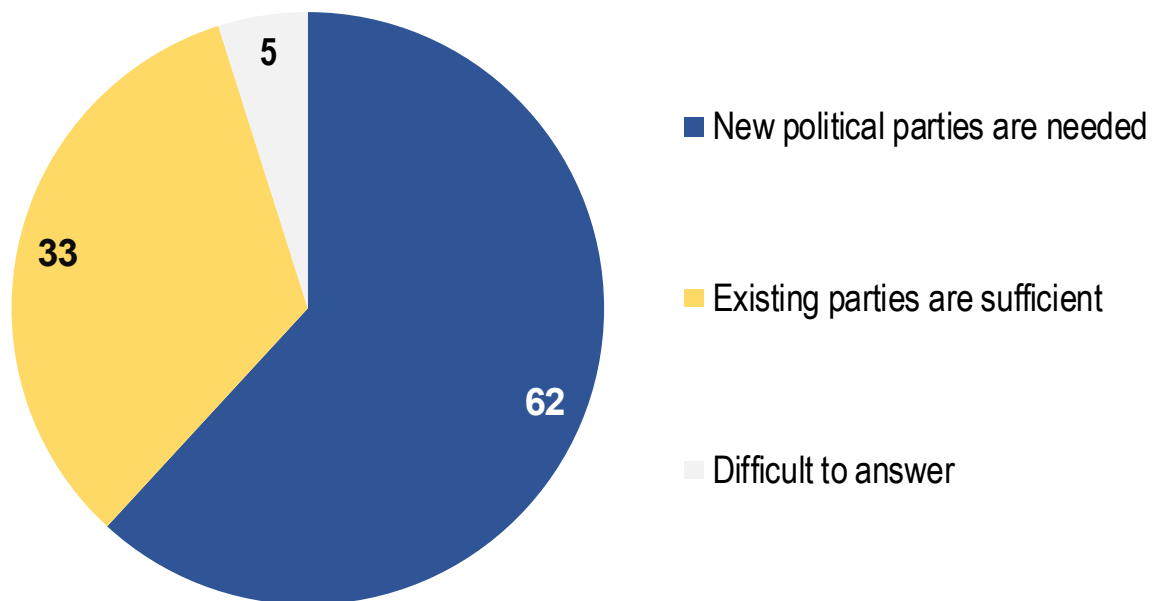


Do you support holding the following elections during the war...?

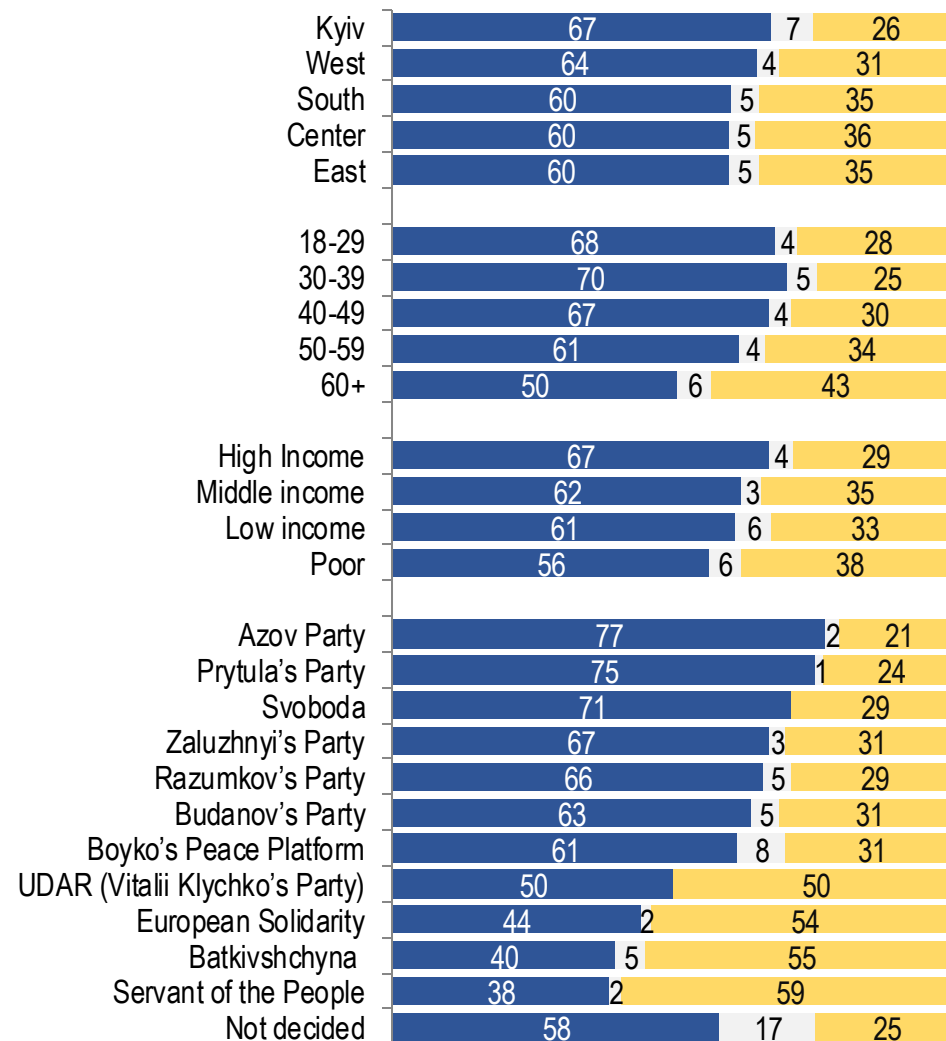
Sum of answers «Strongly support» and «Rather support» %

REGION. AGE. INCOME. SUPPORT FOR THE CREATION OF NEW PARTIES	West	Center	South	East	Kyiv	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	Poor	Low income	Middle income	High Income	New political parties are needed	Existing parties are sufficient
Local elections	50	50	53	44	46	73	58	43	45	38	46	44	53	53	53	45
Elections to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine	41	38	43	47	36	61	53	38	37	25	37	38	42	43	44	36
Presidential elections in Ukraine	36	33	38	42	26	46	44	33	35	24	36	34	35	35	37	32

In your opinion, for the next parliamentary elections, should new political parties be created, or are the existing ones sufficient?



Region. Age. Income. Electorates



Attitudes toward Elections: Focus Group Results

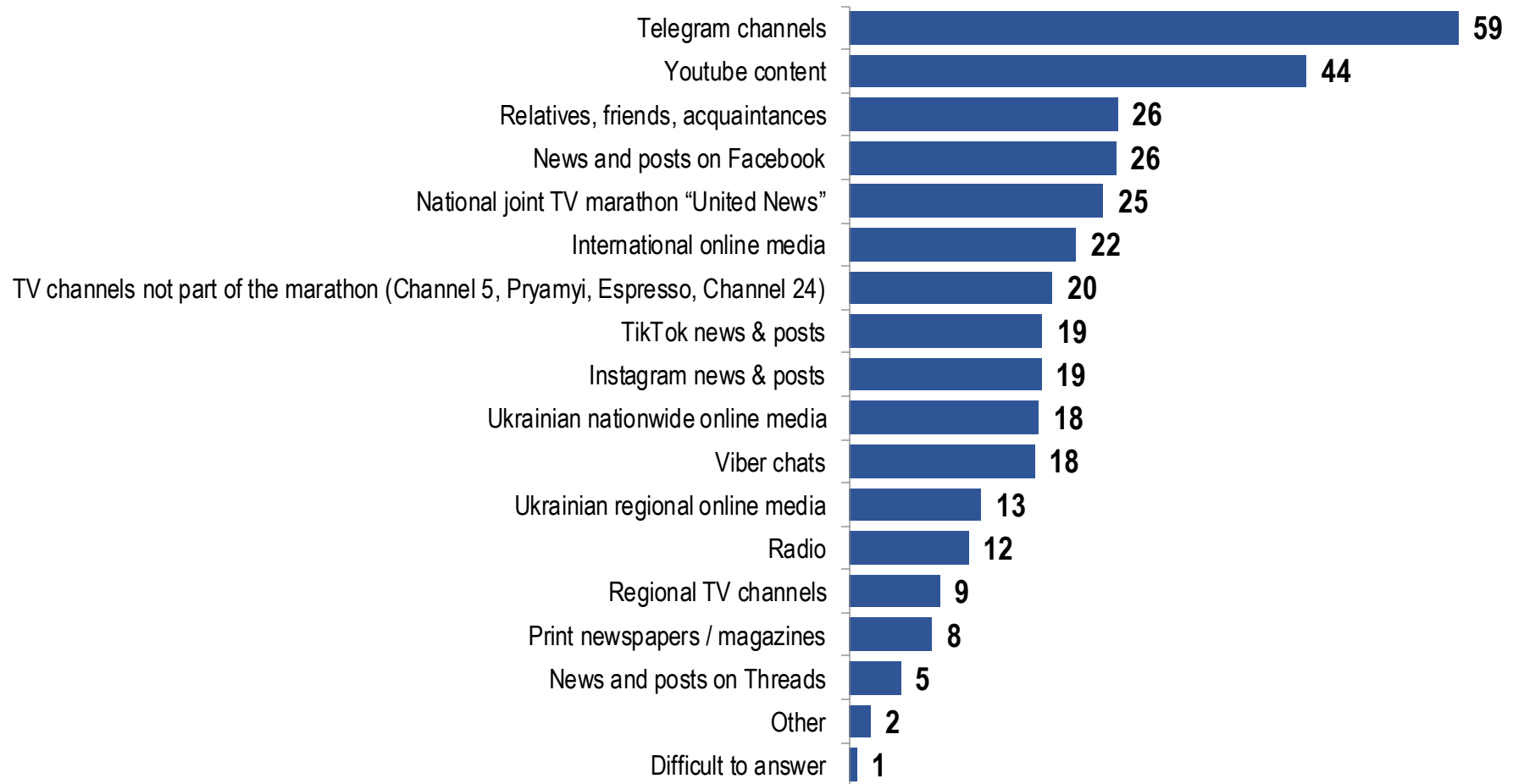
- Citizens see the necessity of elections and renewing of elected bodies. But they objectively understand that in the realities of war, elections are not timely.
- Most respondents view criticism of the authorities positively, even under wartime conditions.
- Today, they do not see worthy candidates or political forces for which holding elections would be justified. Therefore, it is necessary to “pressure” the current government more so that it works in the interests of the people. After the war, the demand for new parties is quite high.
- Among the future political elite, people want to see young, progressive, initiative-driven, and patriotic individuals.
- They are especially sceptical about presidential re-elections. There are many questions to Zelenskyy, but at the same time, Ukraine is currently associated with him around the world.

*«Of course, I would like
renewal in my heart,
but my mind says that
stability is better.»*

*Male, 31 years old, Kyiv region
(FGD 1)*

What are your main sources of information about events in Ukraine?

MULTIPLE ANSWERS



What are your main sources of information about events in Ukraine?

MULTIPLE ANSWERS

REGIONS. TYPE OF SETTLEMENT. AGE. INCOME. GENDER	West	Center	South	East	Kyiv	Administrative center	Another city/town	Village	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	Poor	Low income	Middle income	High Income	New political parties are needed	Existing parties are sufficient
Telegram channels	53	56	62	64	72	67	57	49	82	75	66	53	34	38	53	65	67	57	61
Youtube content	42	42	47	44	51	49	44	38	44	45	44	47	42	30	45	46	47	51	38
Relatives, friends, acquaintances	27	26	25	24	27	26	28	24	35	26	24	25	22	25	25	28	24	24	27
News and posts on Facebook	28	30	21	22	23	25	24	28	17	28	30	34	22	20	27	27	24	25	26
National joint TV marathon "United News"	25	25	26	24	20	21	25	28	8	14	16	29	43	45	28	22	15	20	28
International online media	24	22	18	18	30	25	22	17	27	23	23	23	16	9	19	25	27	25	19
TV channels not part of the marathon	23	21	15	19	21	19	19	21	6	7	12	25	37	26	23	19	15	18	21
TikTok news & posts	16	20	22	17	17	17	20	20	23	18	23	22	12	15	20	19	19	21	17
Instagram news & posts	19	17	18	19	22	21	17	16	31	22	17	17	11	10	18	20	22	18	19
Ukrainian nationwide online media	19	18	16	20	20	21	18	15	19	14	20	23	17	12	17	19	21	20	17
Viber chats	16	19	20	16	17	18	17	19	12	17	21	21	18	15	19	20	16	17	18
Ukrainian regional online media	13	13	12	13	14	15	12	10	11	10	16	18	11	7	13	14	13	13	12
Radio	14	12	11	8	9	11	10	14	7	7	8	13	18	11	14	12	9	14	9
Regional TV channels	10	9	8	8	6	9	9	8	4	6	7	13	12	9	9	9	8	9	8
Print newspapers / magazines	8	10	7	4	9	8	7	9	3	6	5	7	14	7	9	8	7	8	8
News and posts on Threads	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	4	5	5	7	5	4	2	5	5	5	6	4
Other	3	2	1	4		2	4	2	1	2	3	3	2	2	1	2	2	3	1
Difficult to answer		1		2		1	1	1	1	1			1	2	1		1	1	1

Key Takeaways - 1

- **Resilient but Fatigued:** Ukrainians remain committed to defending democracy and independence but are showing signs of fatigue and growing dissatisfaction with the authorities.
- **Defence Leaders in Politics:** Post-war politics will likely be dominated by figures associated with the defence of Ukraine, though public expectations extend beyond military service to competence and integrity. Strong support for veterans' participation in politics (about 90%), but clear rejection of military dictatorship.
- **Political competition:** There are two main candidates for the presidential position, and for the parliamentary elections, Zelensky and Zaluzhniy. They are currently in the lead, with all other candidates far behind.
- **Generational Dynamics:** Younger Ukrainians are more pessimistic and more demanding of political change.
- **Democratic Maturity:** Society balances acceptance of wartime restrictions with insistence on accountability, demonstrates a strong democratic culture.

Key Takeaways - 2

- **Lack of strong ideological attachment.** Many citizens are willing to support elements of different political traditions — liberal, nationalist, and socialist — reflecting a pragmatic and results-oriented political culture.
- **Future Risks:** Once martial law is lifted, protest potential could trigger stronger polarisation, making governance more challenging.
- **Stability:** Despite about one-quarter of the population expressing support for significant change, there is no appetite for destabilizing transformations. Instead, Ukrainians value stability, rule of law, and leadership renewal within democratic frameworks.
- **Sources of information for Ukrainians:** Telegram and YouTube have become the main sources of information for Ukrainians. The unified national “media marathon is still significant source of information for older population (60+) which make it a good instrument for attracting the most responsible voters for the President and his team.

Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) is the UK public body dedicated to supporting democracy around the world. Operating internationally, WFD works with parliaments, political parties, and civil society groups as well as on elections to help make countries' political systems fairer, more inclusive and accountable.

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