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DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION’S POPULARITY GROWS IN ADVANCE OF SERBIAN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

Despite economic crisis, majority of voters believe Serbia is headed in the right direction

WASHINGTON DC – The National Democratic Institute (NDI) today released its latest Serbian public opinion poll, conducted by the U.S. polling firm of Penn, Schoen and Berland, in advance of Serbian parliamentary elections scheduled for December 23. These elections will take place three months after the September 24th federal Yugoslav elections precipitated the resignation of Slobodan Milosevic from his position as federal president.

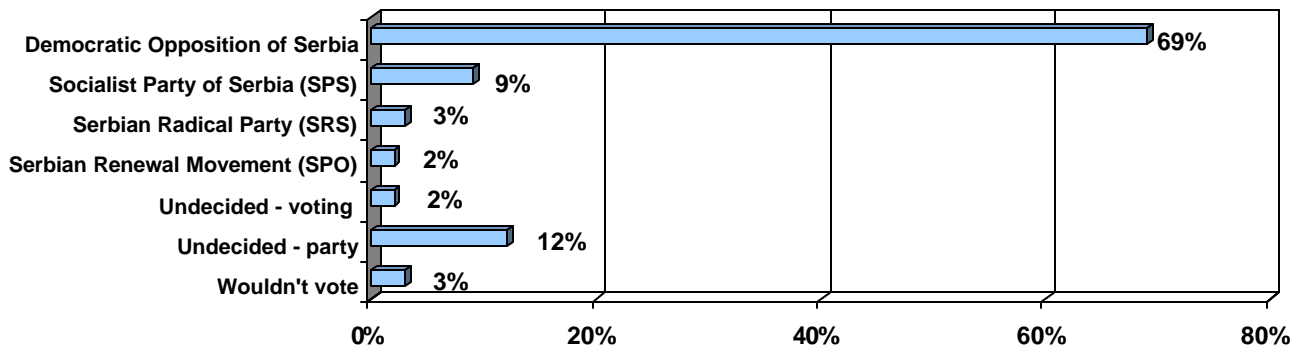
Fielded in early November, the poll canvassed 1,088 voters in Serbia. It shows the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS) coalition, led by Federal Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica, with a commanding lead over the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS), led by former president Slobodan Milosevic.

This and previous polls may be viewed on the NDI website at www.ndi.org

Despite current power shortages and rising inflation in Serbia, the favorability ratings of President Kostunica (86%) and DOS (74%) are extremely high. The favorability ratings of Milosevic (13%) and his SPS (13%) are substantially lower than before the September elections and the ensuing public uprising in October that forced Milosevic out of office. The beleaguered Serbian Renewal Movement and its leader, Vuk Draskovic suffer low ratings of 9% and 12%, respectively.

In the upcoming parliamentary elections, 89% of voters said that they are absolutely certain or likely to vote. More than two thirds (69%) plan to support DOS, and of this group, 90% are definite supporters. The SPS has 9% support, and 12% of voters are undecided. Sixty-five percent of voters believe that DOS should remain a coalition for as long as possible.

For which party or coalition would you vote in the December elections?

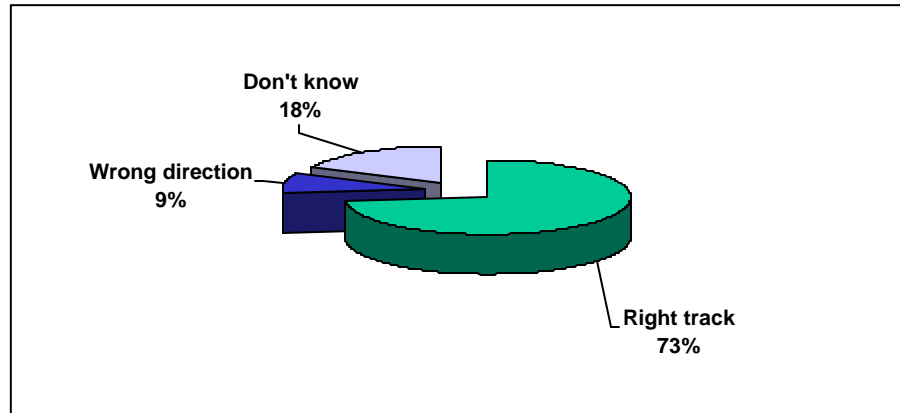


Poverty and related social ills rank foremost among voters as the most critical problem (27%), with Serbia’s long-term economic deterioration and more immediate shortages of power and basic foodstuffs polling at

13%. Nearly two-thirds of respondents blame the Milosevic regime for these problems. Eighty-one percent of respondents believe the new federal government deserves six months to start solving Serbia's economic problems.

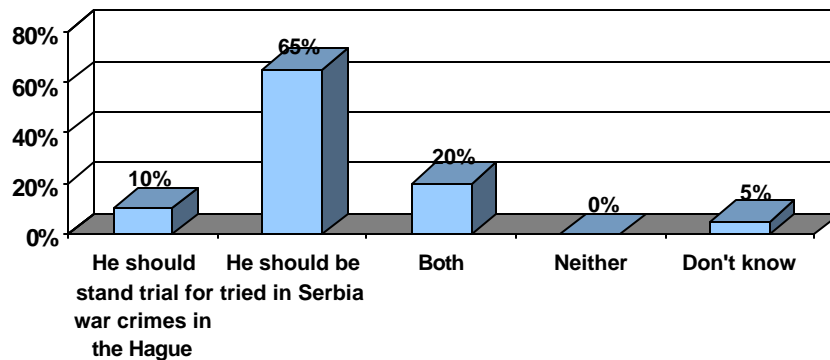
Almost three-fourths of Serbian voters think things in Serbia are on the right track.

Since Vojislav Kostunica has taken office do you think things in Serbia have been on the right track or moving in the wrong direction?



Two-thirds of respondents say that Milosevic should be put on trial. Of those, a majority would have Milosevic tried in Serbia for corruption and other crimes rather than in an international court for war crimes.

Should Milosevic be sent to The Hague to stand trial for war crimes or should he be tried in Serbia for corruption and other crimes?



In addition, voters overwhelmingly oppose (98%) full independence for Kosovo; they split between complete Serbian sovereignty over Kosovo versus Kosovar autonomy within Serbia. Voters strongly believe (65%) that the people of Montenegro should be allowed to decide their own future in a referendum.

NDI is a nonprofit organization working to strengthen and expand democracy worldwide. NDI works with democrats in every region of the world to build political and civic organizations, safeguard elections, and to promote citizen participation, openness and accountability in government.