

**National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
Montenegro**

**Key Findings
Tracking Poll – May/June 2007**

June 21, 2007

INTRODUCTION

The following report is a presentation and analysis of key findings from NDI's first tracking poll of 2007, a follow-up effort to a baseline poll conducted in February. The report represents the second in a series of NDI political research in Montenegro in 2007 that follows on from a series of 12 polls conducted by NDI between March 2001 and March 2004. The current series uses a substantially changed questionnaire that reflects current issues in society and will continue with the conduct of additional tracking polls throughout the year.

The current research is the property of the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and is supported financially by the U.S.-based National Endowment for Democracy (NED). Its primary purpose is to assist NDI's partners – the political parties in Montenegro – to improve their ability to represent the interests of and communicate with the people of Montenegro in new political circumstances resulting from the referendum on state status and last year's parliamentary elections. The research project is part of a political party assistance program conducted by NDI whose goal is to support the development of a democratic multi-party political system.

Between 24 May and 4 June, 1,250 residents in Montenegro participated in face-to-face interviews designed to measure their attitudes about current government institutions, the political situation, reform initiatives, Montenegro's European future, and other issues of importance to voters. The interviews were conducted in 17 of Montenegro's 21 municipalities. Excluded from the sample were the municipalities of Andrijevica, Mojkovac, Šavnik, and Žabljak. Prism Research, a polling firm established in Australia with offices throughout the former Yugoslavia, conducted the fieldwork.

The margin of error on a sample of 1,200 is +/- 3 percent.

In the United States, Canada and Western Europe, political parties conduct public opinion surveys in order to test the public attitudes regarding topical issues of the day. Results are then used to develop plans to communicate with the public. If the planning is done effectively and implemented properly, a political party can successfully compete in elections. In this context, public opinion surveys are not used as a means of predicting the outcome of upcoming elections. **This report should equally be viewed as an assessment of public attitudes in Montenegro at the moment and not as a predictor of the outcome of any future elections.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After Six Months in Office, a Majority is Satisfied with Government

After six months in office, 53 percent of respondents are satisfied with the current government and believe it works to establish consensus on issues important to citizens, which represents a small increase since February and reflects the overall increased optimism among the population as summer begins. Only three in 10, which is 10 percent less than in February, say that their economic situation is worse, and one-quarter (27 percent) say that their economic situation is better, than it was two years ago. Compared to February, when only 42 percent believed that the present government could secure a European quality of life for its citizens, the current 47 percent of respondents that believe in the government's capacity is greater than those who do not (41 percent). Trust in the municipal government and satisfaction with its work has declined, especially in the south where dissatisfaction has increased 9 percent with the start of the tourist season.

Respondent's Choice of Priorities for Government Initiatives

Almost one-third of respondents (31 percent) think the government's focus should be on ensuring equality for all before the law, while another quarter (25 percent) think the focus should be on increasing efforts against crime and corruption. Still, narrowing the focus to the economy exclusively, a majority of respondents (54 percent) want the government's highest economic priority to be on reducing unemployment. Asked specifically about the current situation in the health sector, 52 percent are dissatisfied.

In terms of the topical issues of privatization and the Infrastructure Development and Land Use Plan, 79 percent of respondents think the state should continue to manage – rather than privatize – the most important national resources. Twenty-eight (28) percent of respondents identify preservation of Montenegro as an ecological state as the most important goal of the Land Use Plan. A full 70 percent express concern about the sale of land to foreigners, especially on the coast, and 41 percent consider the simplest solution would be to ban the practice. Building highways is considered by 43 percent to be the most important priority for infrastructure investment.

Increasing Administrative Capacity and Reducing Corruption

Almost half of respondents (49 percent) think the government can build strong state institutions, and 52 percent (a 7 percent increase since February) identify the biggest obstacle to that goal as inexperienced people in state jobs because of family or party connections. Another quarter think low salaries in the public sector blocks the building of strong state institutions. Trust in state institutions assigned the task of dealing with

corruption is below 50 percent in all cases – although trust in the court system increased 6 percent since February. The ‘traditional’ institutions – customs, police, and courts – enjoy the highest levels of trust, while new institutions such as those working in the field of money laundering, anti-corruption initiatives, conflicts of interest, and public procurement enjoy the least confidence. As was seen in February, 28 percent of respondents – a 5 percent increase – think that NGOs can do the most to solve the problem of corruption; and, respondents identify fear of social and economic repercussions (26 percent) and the sense that it will have no effect (23 percent) as the primary reasons why people do not report cases of corruption.

Euro-Atlantic Integration

Two-thirds of respondents (67 percent) are more interested in the implementation of European standards than joining the European Union as soon as possible. Almost half (45 percent) identify European salary levels as the definition of a European quality of life. One-third of respondents (32 percent) do not know what NATO membership will bring to Montenegro, while 39 percent are able to identify positive outcomes, such as a step toward the EU. More than half of respondents (52 and 53 percent) think that the decision for EU and NATO membership should be taken in a referendum, while only 38 and 36 percent, respectively, believe it should be adopted in parliament by a wide consensus. One in 10 do not know which is best.

Indecision and Uncertainty: Defining Divisions and Political Choices

Over the years, most public opinion research has shown that differences in opinion are most pronounced among Montenegro’s ethnic groups. This poll continues to support this finding: self-identified Montenegrins, Bosniaks and Muslims tend to trust the government, the parties that make up the government, and its reform initiatives, while self-identified Serbs are distrustful of ruling bodies and their initiatives. The interesting change in this poll is that Bosniaks and Muslims exhibit an increasing sense of uncertainty rather than wholehearted support of the government or governing party initiatives, as has been the case in the past.

Growing indecision also marks voter intent. After the 34 percent who intend to vote for the Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS), the next highest vote getters are the “won’t vote” and “no answer” categories at 14 percent each, followed by the Movement for Changes (PzP) at 11 percent, Serbian List (SL) at 8 percent, and Socialist People’s Party (SNP) at 4 percent. The result may be because there is no actual election on the horizon, or it may be an indication of some other emerging trend.

ASSESSMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT

Satisfaction with government performance rose above 50 percent for the first time since April 2003, with 27 percent of respondents claiming that their economic situation is better than it was two years ago, 43 percent saying it is the same, and 30 percent saying it is worse.

Optimism about the economic situation is higher among those between the age of 18 and 40 years, and it increases with higher income and education levels.

Self-identified Montenegrins, Muslims, and Bosniaks are 18, 20 and 20 percent more likely to be satisfied with the government, respectively, while self-identified Serbs are 32 percent more dissatisfied. The latter are most likely to be among the 47 percent that do not think that government has really worked to establish consensus, while Montenegrins and Bosniaks are much more likely to be among the 53 percent of respondents that consider the government is doing a lot or quite a bit to establish consensus on issues important to citizens.

Asked whether they think there is an anti-European lobby within the current government, 32 percent of respondents disagreed with this oft-repeated expression that is heard from the opposition, while 28 percent agree, and 40 percent do not know. Self-identified Muslims and Bosniaks, those living in northern municipalities and those with the lowest levels of education and income are most likely to not know, but also less likely to disagree with the claim.



VOTERS' CHOICE OF GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

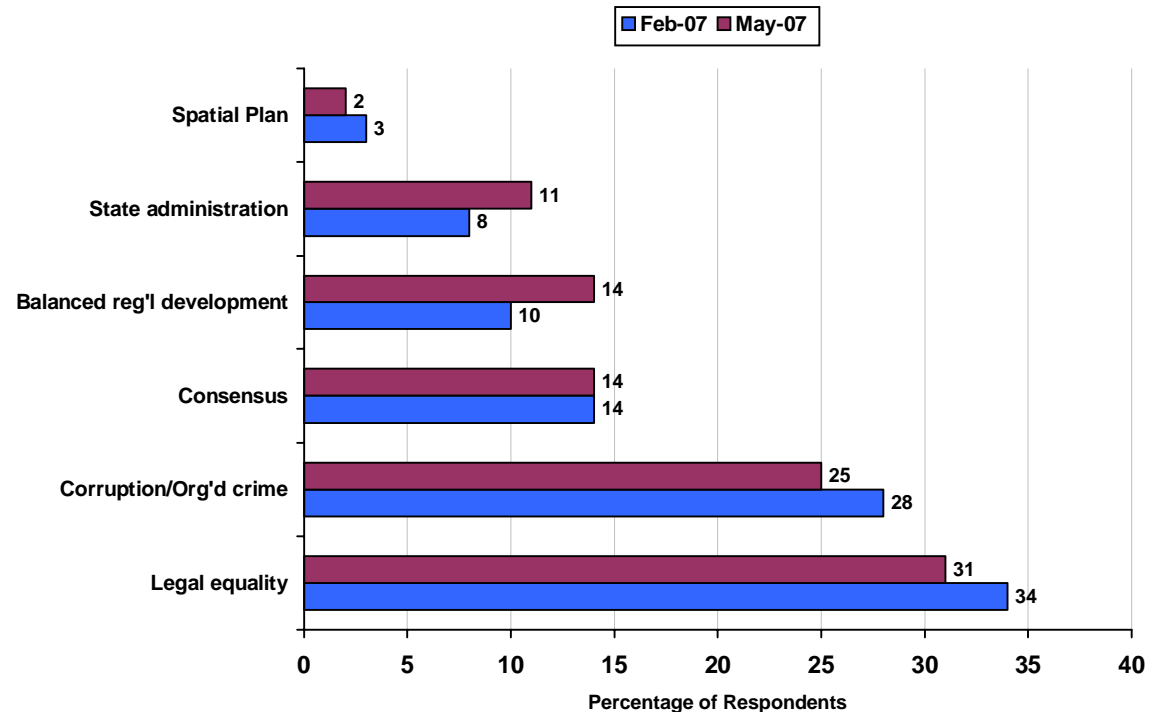
From two closed lists, respondents were asked to identify what they thought should be the highest government priority and the highest government economic priority.

Highest Government Priority

The choices included:

- § Equality of all before the law;
- § Measures in the fight against corruption and organized crime;
- § Consensus about important issues for citizens;
- § Balanced regional development;
- § Reform of state administration; and,
- § Infrastructure Development and Land Use Plan for Montenegro.

Voters' Choice for Highest Government Priority



Those living in the northern municipalities and rural areas, as well as self-identified Muslims, are more interested in balanced regional development. Self-identified Bosniaks are 15 percent more likely to identify equality for all before the law, while self-identified Albanians and Croats are 11 percent more likely to prioritize establishing consensus. Respondents living in cities are more concerned than villagers about reform of state administration. Concern over the fight against corruption and organized crime declines with educational levels.

Highest Government Economic Priority

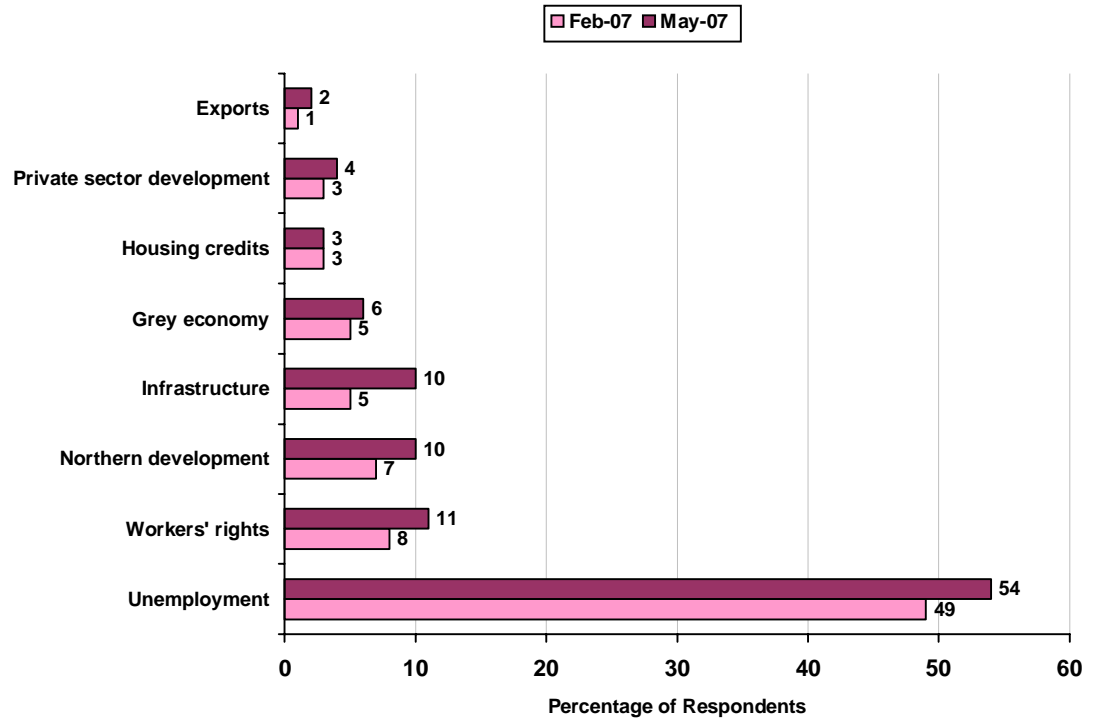
The choices included:

- § Reducing unemployment;
- § Protecting workers' rights;
- § Intensifying development in the north;
- § Investing in infrastructure;
- § Reducing the grey economy;
- § Providing affordable housing credits;
- § Providing a favorable environment for private sector development; and
- § Stimulating exports.

The goal of reducing unemployment is more important to women and those living in rural areas. But, those living at the coast are 12 percent less concerned with unemployment and 8 percent more interested in investing in infrastructure – and, their priority for infrastructure investment is water supply. In fact, 43 percent of respondents identify construction of highways as the priority, followed by water supply at 21 percent and solid waste dumps at 14 percent. Reducing unemployment is 13 and 16 percent more important to Muslims and Bosniaks, respectively.

Please note: One option offered in February – job creation – was not offered in May, making these results not perfectly comparable to February's.

Voters' Choice for Highest Government Economic Priority



More than two-thirds of respondents (69 percent) think that today’s leaders of the unions do very little or nothing at all to protect workers interests, which is especially pronounced among self-identified Serbs and those earning less. Self-identified Montenegrins, men, and those living in urban areas are willing to give the union leadership a little bit more credit.

Eight in 10 respondents (79 percent) believe that the state should manage the most important national resources, instead of privatizing them. Seventy-six percent of respondents are against the privatization of a thermo-electric plant and coal mine in Pljevlja. Those living in the coastal municipalities are more supportive of privatization than those living in northern or central municipalities who prefer state management. Students are also more in favor of privatization. Self-identified Serbs are more likely to believe that the state should continue to manage the most important resources, while Muslims are more likely to favor privatization.

As the public discussion on the Infrastructure Development and Land Use Plan was initiated at the end of May, respondents were asked to choose what they consider to be the most important goal of that document from a closed list of options. Those living in coastal municipalities are 10 percent more likely to choose ‘stopping illegal/permitless construction’ than to choose preserving Montenegro as an ecological state. One in 10 (11 percent) do not know what they believe to be the most important goal of the Plan.

Most Important Goal of Land Use Plan	Percentage of Respondents
Preserving Montenegro as an ecological state	28%
Constructing highways	24%
Resolving and improving the energy situation	20%
Stopping illegal construction or construction without a permit	18%

Seven in 10 respondents (70 percent) are very or somewhat concerned about the sale of land to foreigners, especially on the coast. Coastal respondents are least concerned (64 percent). Young people (18-30 year olds) and self-identified Muslims also register less concern. Ethnically, highest concern is among self-identified Bosniaks (75 percent) and Serbs (74 percent), and these two ethnic groups are more likely to think that

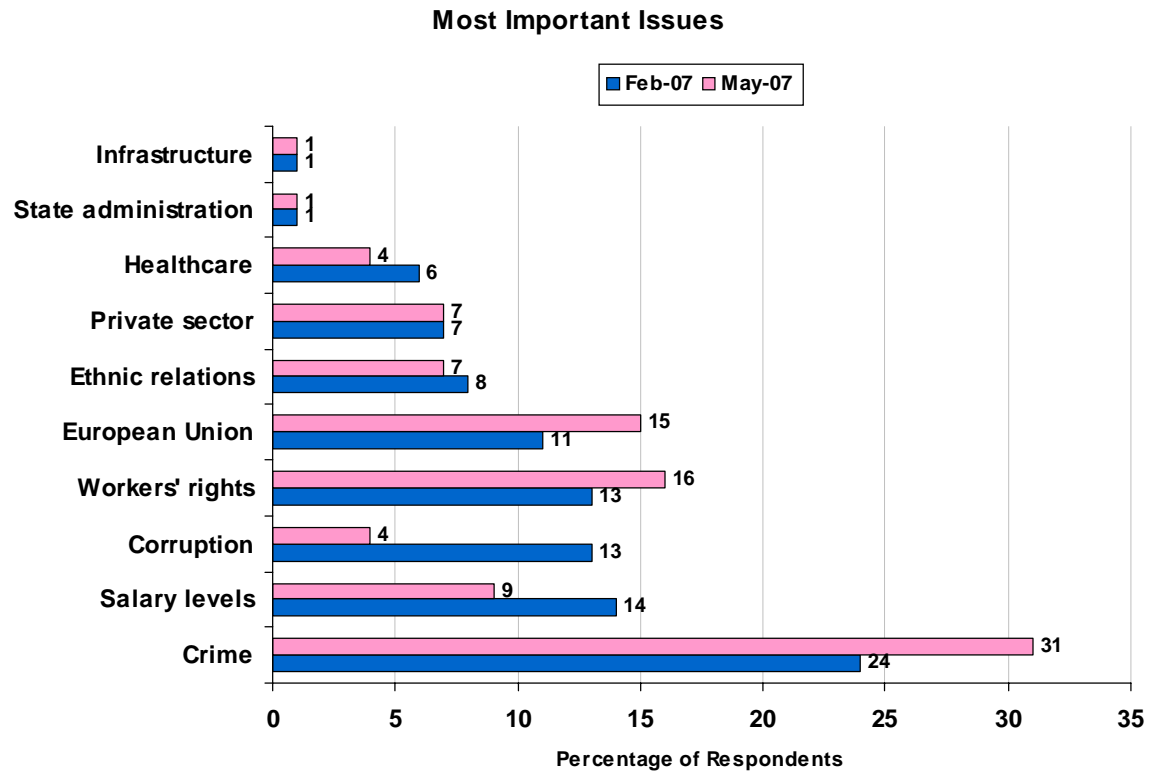
the best solution to the problem is to ban sales to foreigners. A higher proportion of respondents living at the coast, between the ages of 18 and 30 years, students, and self-identified Montenegrins supports the introduction of limitations or tax increases. Self-identified Muslims are least able to answer this question.

Best Solution to Control Land Sales to Foreigners	Percentage of Respondents
Prohibit it	41%
Introduce greater controls and limitations	25%
Increase taxes for real estate transactions	18%
Do not know/No answer	13%

MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE

From the following list, respondents were asked to name the issue they consider most important when deciding for which party to vote:

- § Fight against crime;
- § Increase of salaries;
- § Fight against corruption;
- § Protect worker's rights;
- § Joining the European Union;
- § Position of my ethnic group in Montenegro;
- § Improve the services for developing private enterprises;
- § Improve health services;
- § Advance the effectiveness of the state administration; and,
- § Improve transportation infrastructure.

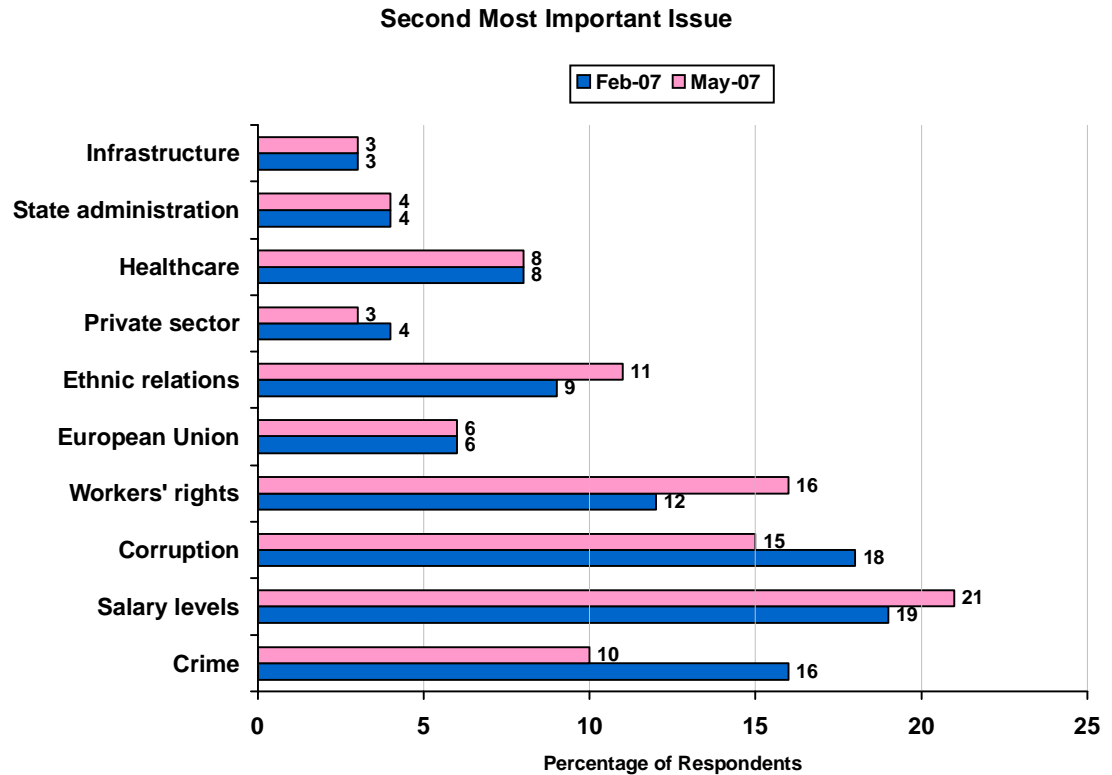


As a first choice, respondent interest in the fight against crime has increased since February, while the interest in fighting corruption has decreased. Joining the European Union and workers' rights have increased modestly since February.

SECOND MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE

From the following list, respondents were asked to name the second most important issue they consider when deciding for which party to vote:

- § Fight against crime;
- § Increase of salaries;
- § Fight against corruption;
- § Protect worker's rights;
- § Joining the European Union;
- § Position of my ethnic group in Montenegro;
- § Improve the services for developing private enterprises;
- § Improve health services;
- § Advance the effectiveness of the state administration; and,
- § Improve transportation infrastructure.

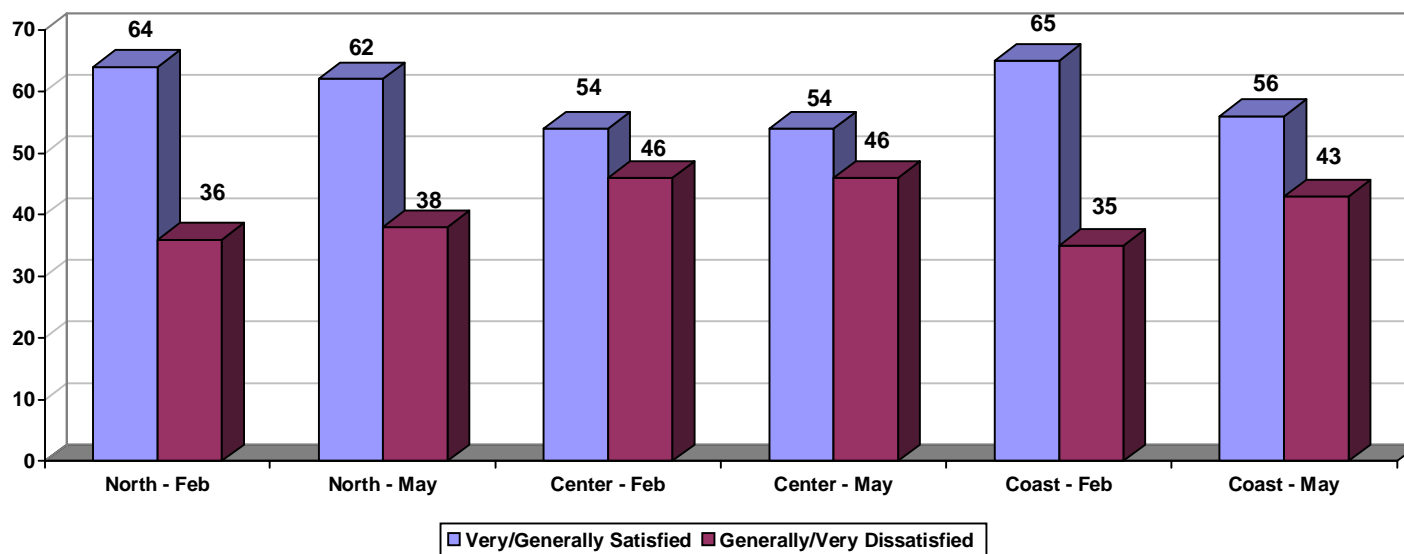


As a second choice, respondents are most interested in increased salaries and workers' rights. Despite the fact that only 12 percent of respondents choose healthcare as a first or second choice in choosing for whom to vote, 52 percent of respondents express dissatisfaction with the health sector, which includes a higher proportion of those living in central municipalities, those between the age of 41-50, those who are employed, and those living in urban areas. Pensioners and those living in northern municipalities are most satisfied with health services.

ATTITUDES TOWARD MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Nationwide, satisfaction with the work of the current municipal government stands at 57 percent, and all regions register more than 50 percent satisfaction. However, satisfaction with municipal government in coastal municipalities has dropped 9 percent since February. Most satisfied are self-identified Montenegrins and Muslims and those with salaries of 300€ or more, while people with lower incomes, self-identified Serbs, Albanians, and Croats are least satisfied.

Assessment of Current Municipal Government



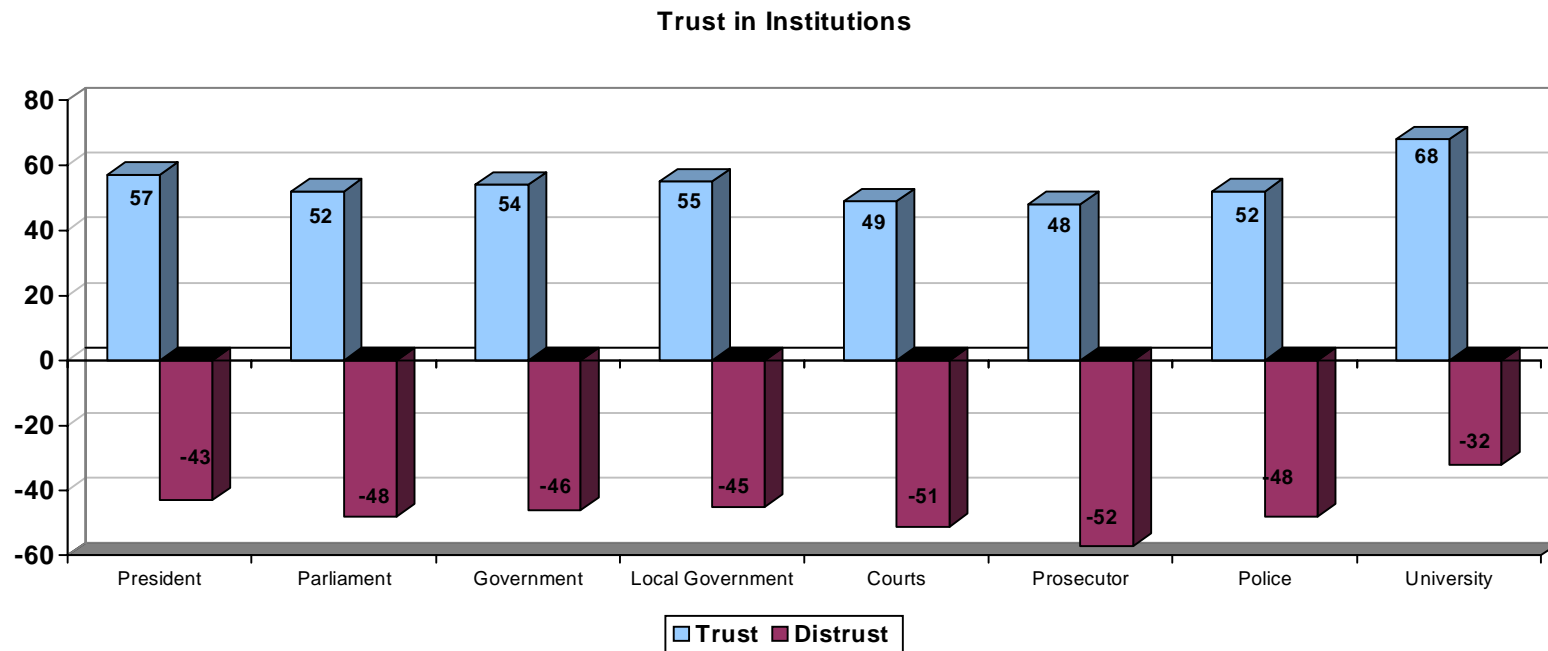
§ **North:** Berane, Bijelo Polje, Kolašin, Plav, Pljevlja, and Rožaje

§ **Center:** Cetinje, Danilovgrad, Plužine, Podgorica, and Nikšić

§ **Coast:** Bar, Budva, Herceg Novi, Kotor, Tivat, and Ulcinj

TRUST IN STATE INSTITUTIONS

Respondents were asked how much confidence they had in the following state institutions. The University of Montenegro enjoys the most trust. Because of a 6 and 4 percent increase, the government and parliament, respectively, now enjoy more than 50 percent confidence of respondents. Only the courts and prosecutor have less than a majority of trust from respondents, although the courts gained 6 percent trust since February. Those living in urban areas exhibit higher levels of distrust than those living in villages.



STRENGTHENING STATE INSTITUTIONS

Respondents are divided in their opinion about whether the government is capable of building strong state institutions in Montenegro. Some 49 percent believe that it is capable, while 38 percent believe that it is not capable. In February, there were another 5 percent who did not think the government was capable. Self-identified Muslims, Bosniaks, and Montenegrins judge this government to be capable.

Respondents identify the biggest obstacle to the development of Montenegro's state capacity as follows:

Obstacle to Development of Montenegro's State Capacity	Percentage of Respondents
Unskilled people in important positions through family, friendship or party connections.	52%
Low salaries in the public sector	25%
Lack of political will on the part of the governing coalition.	10%
A judiciary that is not sufficiently professional and effective.	5%

Self-identified Serbs, Albanians and Croats, as well as those living at the coast, are more likely to choose unskilled people, while self-identified Bosniaks are more likely to choose low salaries.

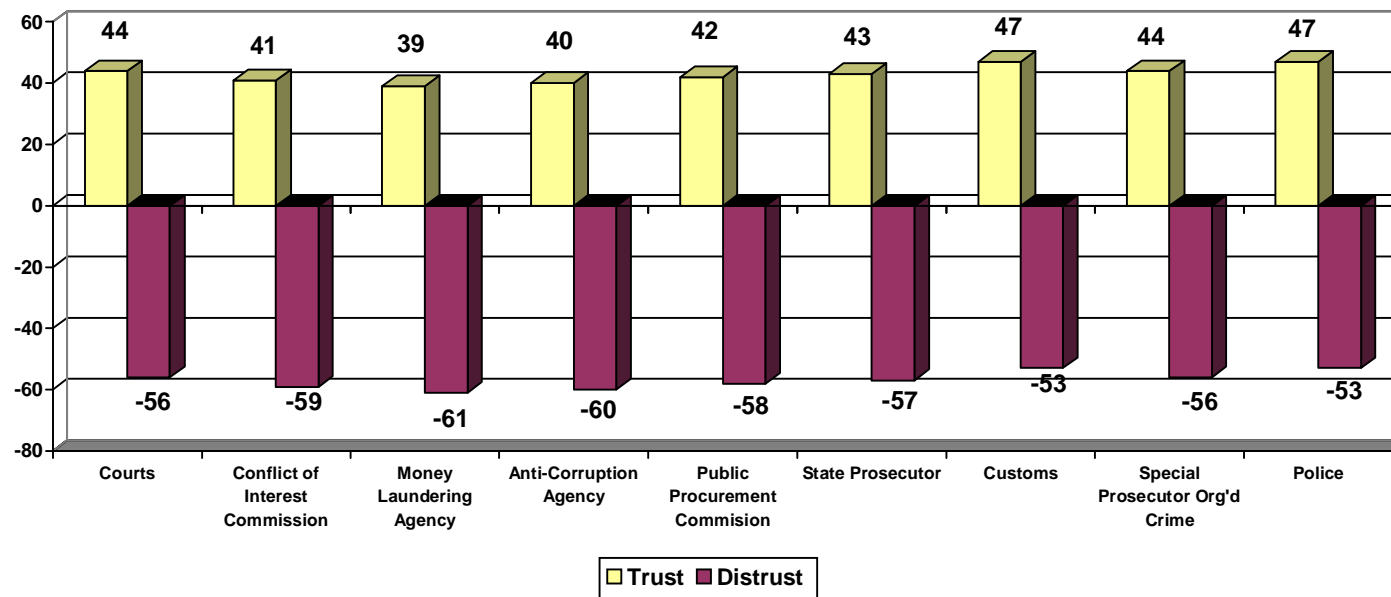
Since February, more respondents choose nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) as a group that can solve the problem of corruption, while 11 percent fewer people chose citizens.

Who Can Do the Most to Solve Corruption?	Percentage of Respondents	
	February 2007	May 2007
Citizens	30%	19%
Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)	23%	28%
Police	11%	10%
State Prosecutor	11%	10%
Courts	10%	10%
No one/Don't Know/No Answer	14%	23%

Those living at the coast and students have the most faith in NGOs, while those living in the north prefer citizens over NGOs. Self-identified Muslims put less faith in NGOs and more in the police to solve the problem of corruption. Self-identified Serbs are less likely to believe that established state institutions can do anything to solve corruption. The higher respondents' income and educational levels, the lower is their faith in the ability of the police to solve the problem of corruption.

Respondents were asked how much they trusted the following state institutions to solve the problem of corruption. No institution received the trust of a majority of respondents, although trust in the courts increased by 6 percent since February. The newer institutions result in higher numbers of “Don’t Know” and “No Answer.” The highest levels of uncertainty continue to be for the Commission for Public Procurement, followed by the Agency for Anti-Corruption Initiatives, the Commission for Determining Conflict of Interests, and the Agency for Preventing Money Laundering. Self-identified Muslims and Bosniaks and those living in the north are particularly lacking in knowledge of the newer institutions.

Trust in Anti-Corruption Institutions



A final set of questions on corruption explored why more people do not report corruption. Given the following reasons why more people do not report cases of corruption, respondents answered in the following manner:

Reason for Not Reporting Corruption	Percentage of Respondents	
	February 2007	May 2007
Fear of social and economic repercussions (job loss, other family members or friends punished)	23%	26%
Do not think it will make a difference (no one will do anything about it)	20%	23%
Fear of violent repercussions (someone will come and physically attack them)	18%	17%
Do not want to expose themselves publicly	18%	18%
No proof/Rumor or hearsay	19%	11%

Self-identified Serbs and Muslims are most likely to believe that people fear social and economic repercussions and that there is no use reporting corruption since it will have no effect. On the other hand, self-identified Bosniaks, those living in the north and those living in rural areas are most likely to choose – above all other options – only fear of social and economic repercussions above other options. Those living in central and coastal municipalities, young people, women, and those with more than an elementary education are likely to give some credit to the notion that people fear public exposure.

Given the discussion in the media and parliament about the notion of lustration as a way to clean the slate in Montenegro, respondents were asked which of two opinions better reflected their opinion about this issue.

Opinion about Lustration	Percentage of Respondents
One more effort intended to divide the people	18%
An attempt to face the past at last	33%
Neither/Do not know/No answer	49%

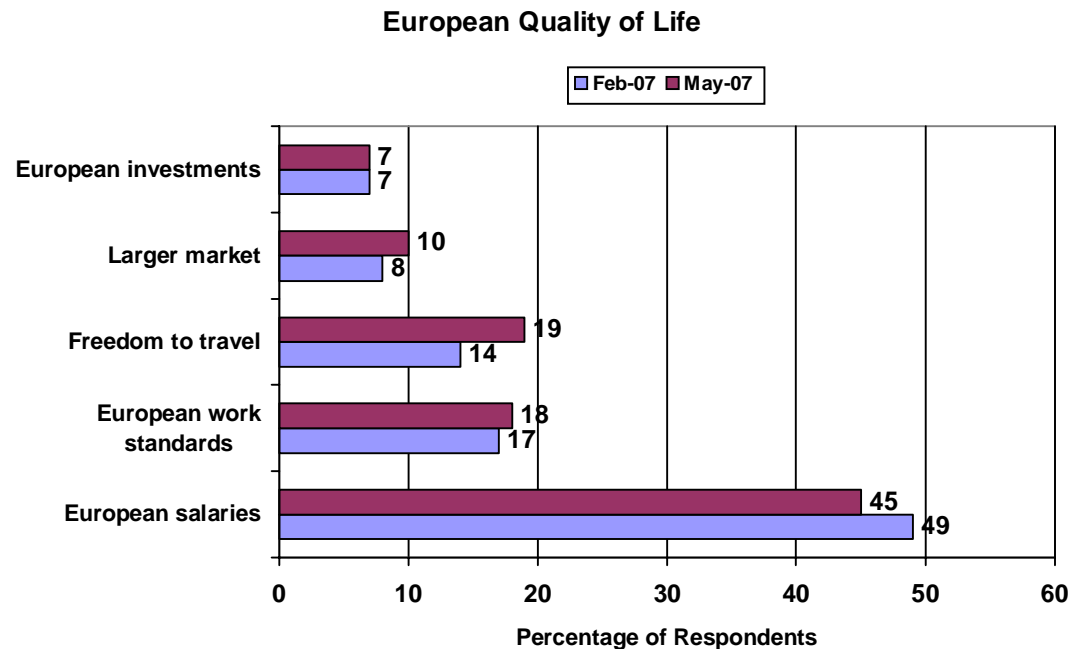
Self-identified Muslims, Bosniaks, Albanians and Croats, as well as those living in the north and with the lowest incomes and education, are most uncertain about lustration. Self-identified Serbs are 12 percent more likely to say that lustration is just another effort to divide people, while students are 13 percent more likely to say that it will help Montenegro deal with its past.

ATTITUDES TOWARD EURO-ATLANTIC INTEGRATION

More than two-thirds of respondents (67 percent) say that it is more important for Montenegro to apply European standards even if it does not become a member of the European Union. EU standards are especially important to those living at the coast, working people, and self-identified Serbs. Self-identified Muslims and Bosniaks are more likely to want to become an EU member as soon as possible.

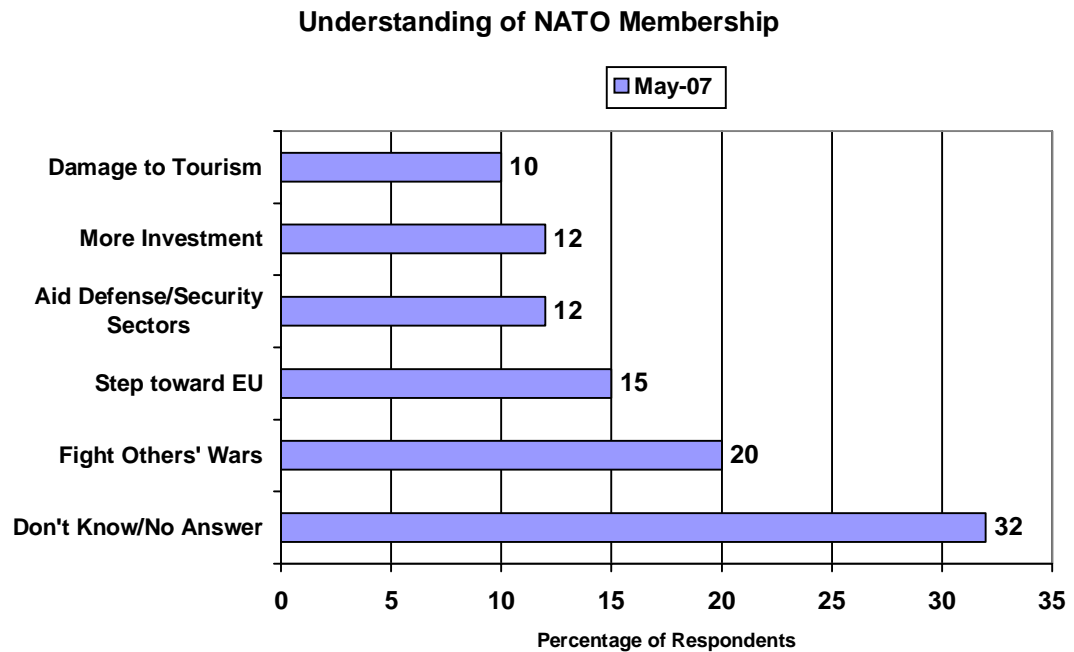
Almost half of respondents (47 percent) believe that the Montenegrin government is capable of providing a European quality of life, which is a 5 percent increase since February 2007. Similarly, the percentage of doubters in the ability of the government has fallen by 7 percent. At the same time, there are 5 percent more who do not know what the government's abilities are. Self-identified Muslims, Bosniaks and Montenegrins are 16-21 percent more certain that the government is capable to secure a European quality of life for citizens, while self-identified Serbs are 30 percent less convinced.

The table at the right shows what respondents understand to be a European quality of life. An analysis of the responses shows no significant deviations among ethnic groups. European salaries are most important to those who earn the least, have the lowest levels of education and live in villages. Those with higher incomes and higher levels of education put more value on the notion of European standards of work.



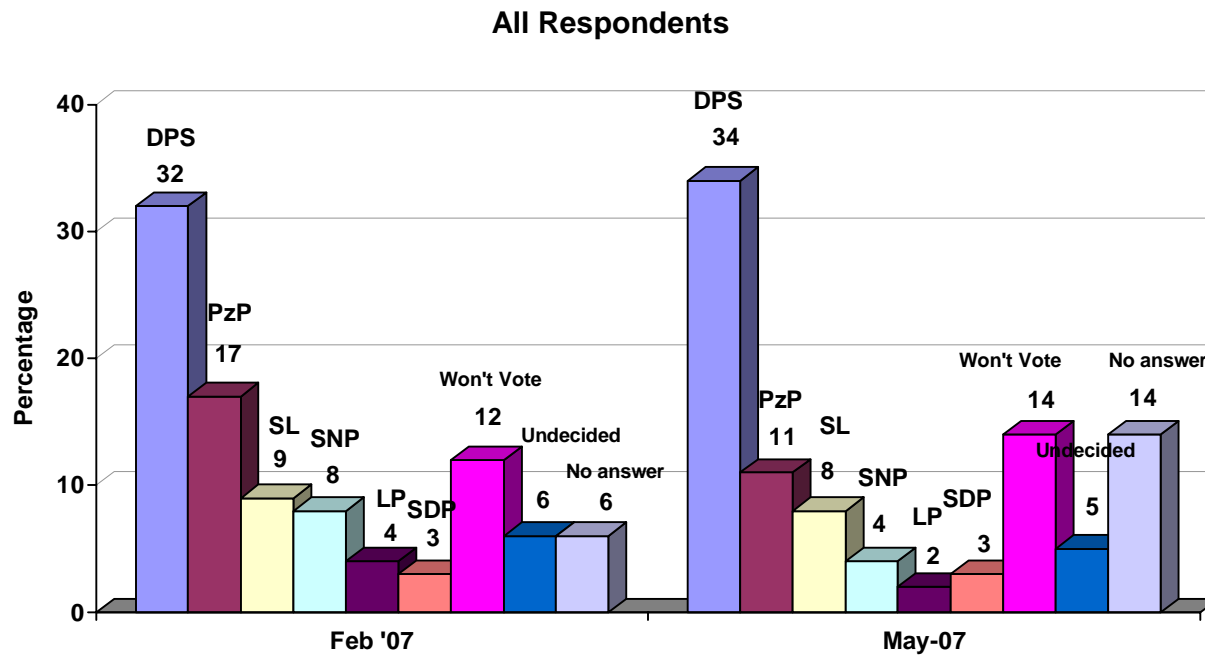
A majority of respondents believes the decision on EU and NATO membership should be taken through a public referendum and not by a wide consensus in parliament. Still, one in 10 respondents are not sure, including a higher proportion of self-identified Muslims and Bosniaks and those with low levels of income and education.

The table at the right shows what respondents consider to be the option that best represents their understanding of membership in the NATO Alliance. The most important finding is that one-third of respondents (32 percent) does not know or has no answer, another 30 percent choose negative consequences for Montenegro, and 39 percent choose positive options. Uncertainty is highest among self-identified Muslims, Bosniaks, Albanians, and Croats, as well as those living in the north and with the least amount of income and education.



VOTE INTENTION

Respondents were asked: “If parliamentary elections were held this week, for which party would you probably vote?” The chart below displays the results for those parties chosen by more than 3 percent of respondents.



* All other parties received less than 3 percent of support among respondents sampled.