

WHAT MATTERS TO BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA'S CITIZENS?

Public Opinion Poll

December 2021



METHODOLOGY

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DATA COLLECTION

- **December 2 – 29, 2021**

METHOD

- **Quantitative face-to-face survey within households**
- **Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI method)**

POPULATION

- **Population of Bosnia and Herzegovina aged 18+**

SAMPLE FRAME

- **Address registry**

SAMPLE SIZE

- **N=2,518 (1,564 in FBiH including oversample in Croat majority areas, 894 in RS)**
- **Data are weighted where necessary to reflect the true population allocation according to the 2013 census**

SAMPLING ERROR

- **+/- 2% on full sample**
- **+/- 2.5% on FBiH sample**
- **+/- 3.2% on RS sample**

SAMPLE TYPE

- **Stratified sample**

STRATIFICATION

- **Within each entity the sample was stratified by region and settlement type**

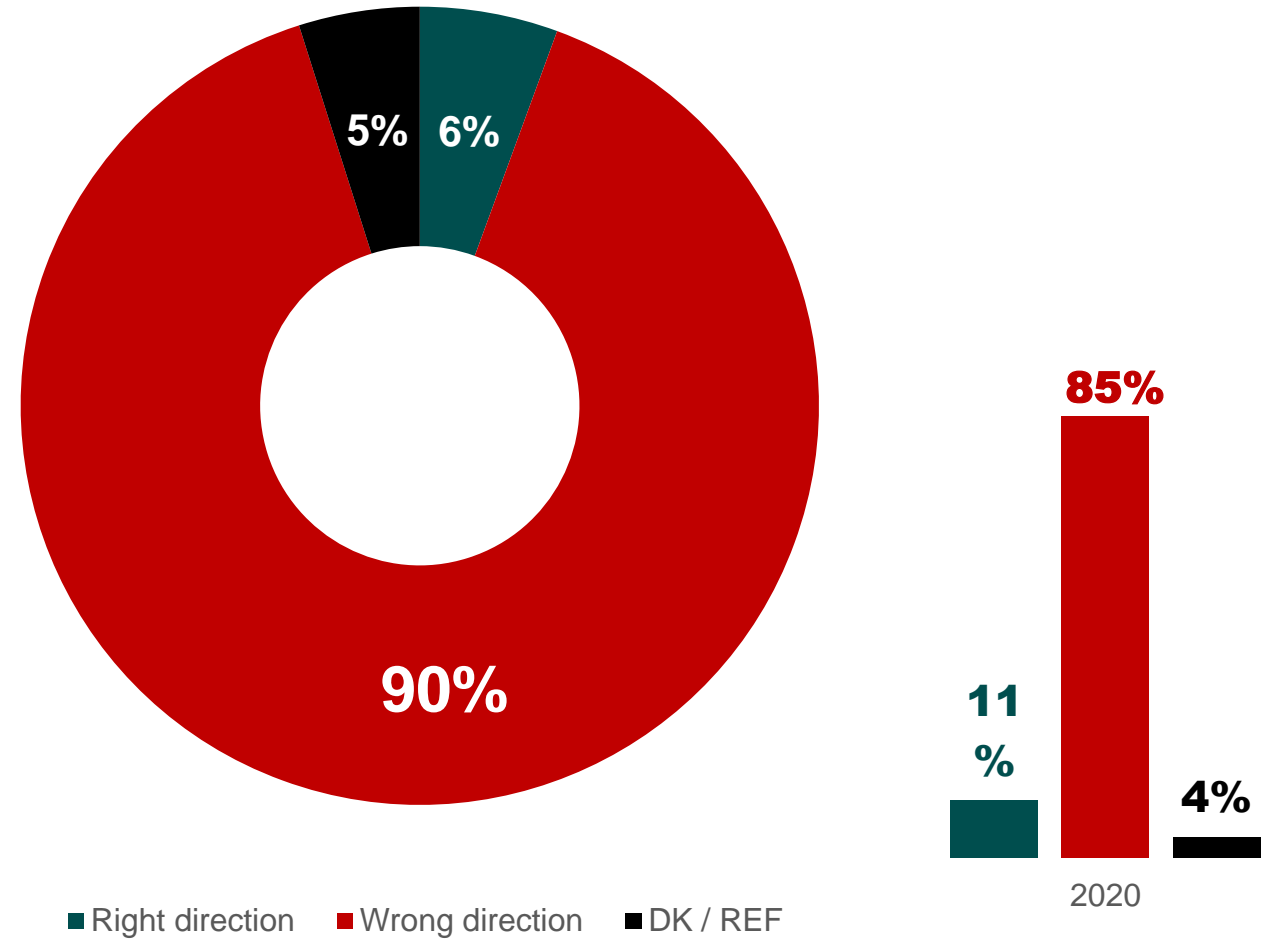
STEPS OF RANDOM SELECTION

- **Step 1: Random selection of polling stations**
- **Step 2: Random selection of households (random route technique)**
- **Step 3: Random selection of respondents within HH**

PUBLIC MOOD & PRIORITIES

Citizens are more likely than ever to see BiH moving in the wrong direction, with decline across all major groups since 2020.

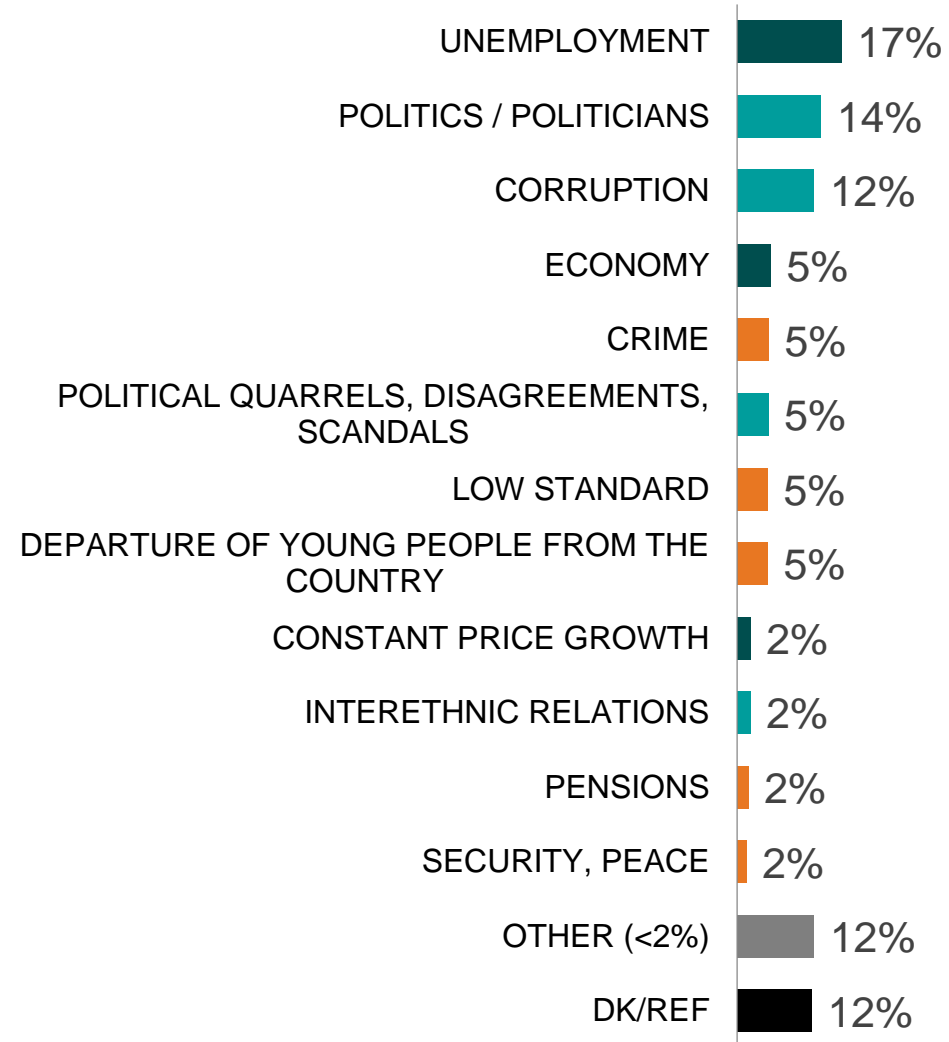
Is Bosnia and Herzegovina moving in the right or wrong direction?



For the second year in a row, politicians are ranked high as a problem.

Other social problems emanate from these two core issues.

What are the biggest problems facing BiH?

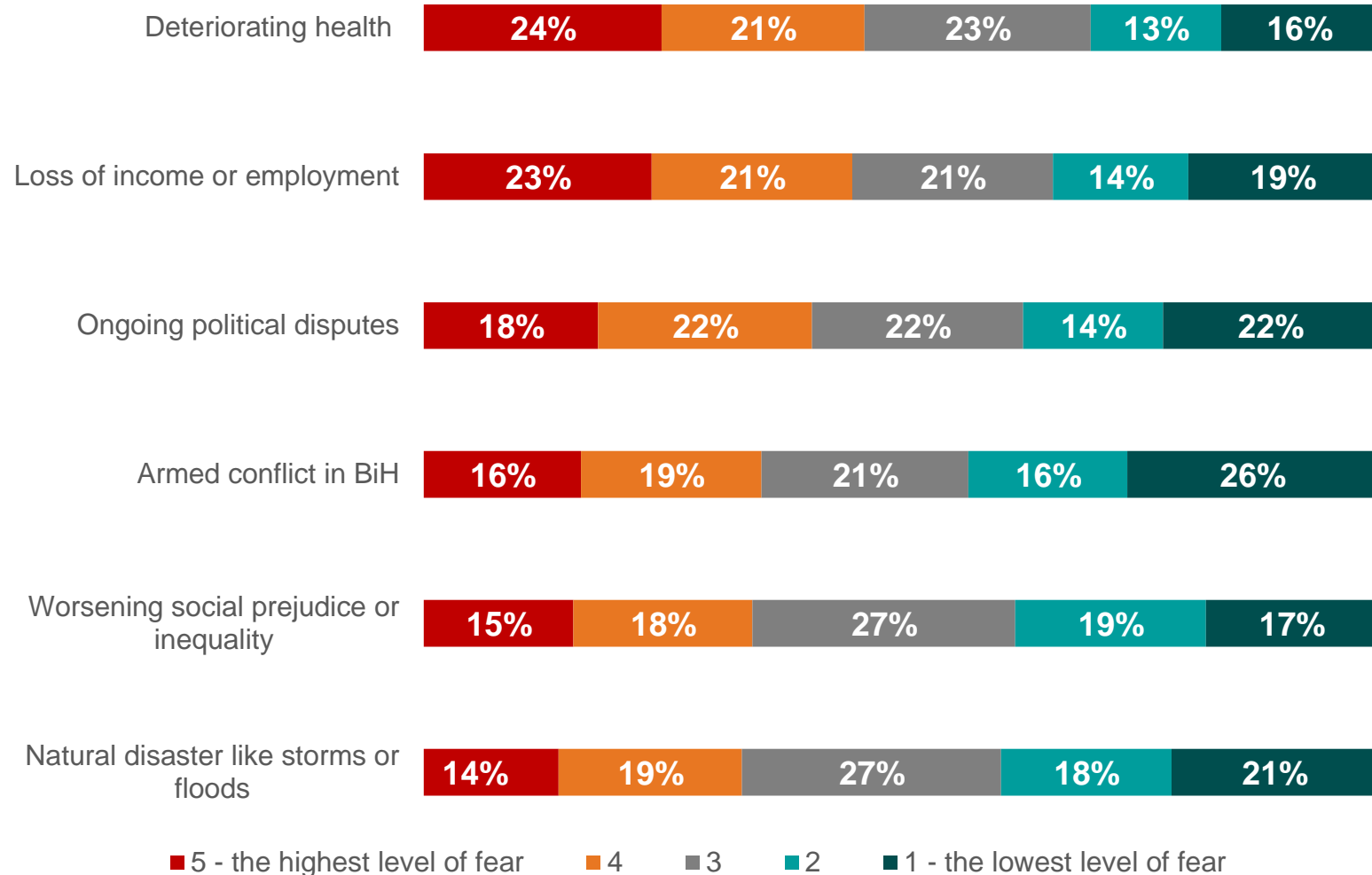


Base: Total N=2518

Respondents do not react strongly when asked to rate specific sources of personal fear.

- Deteriorating health and loss of income or employment seem most real to people.
- The political crisis, armed conflict, social issues, and natural disasters are less likely to provoke anxiety.

Rate the level of fear that you or your family will be directly impacted by the following:

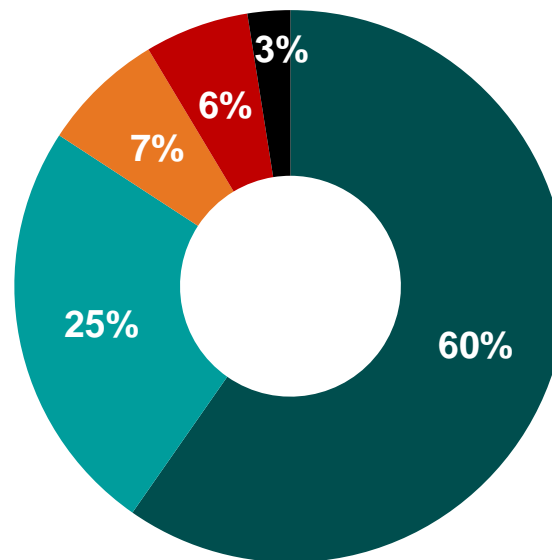


Base: Total N=2518

Support for EU accession is the most broad and intense that we have seen in years.

- Most importantly, Serb support is up sharply from one year earlier, from 55% to 64%.

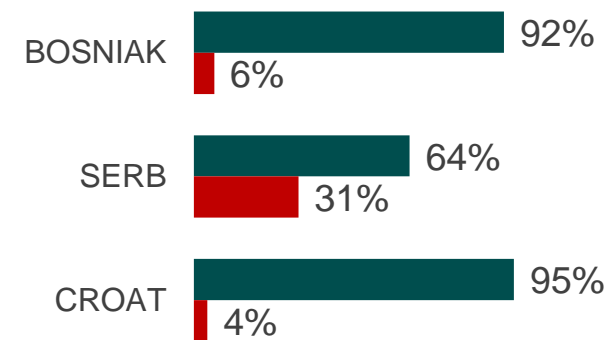
Do you support or oppose BiH accession to the EU?



TOTAL SUPPORT 85%

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- Somewhat oppose
- Strongly oppose
- DK / REF

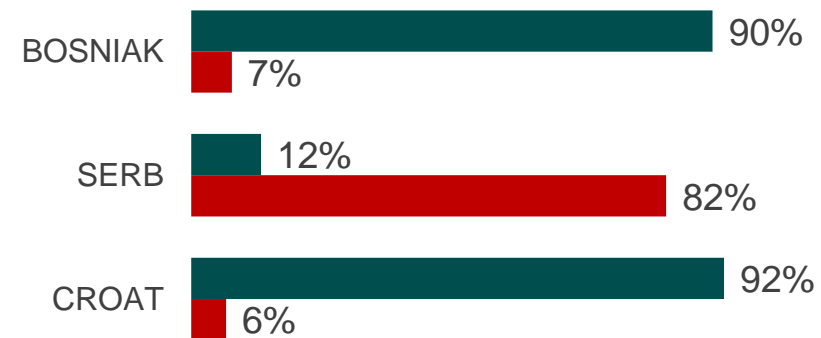
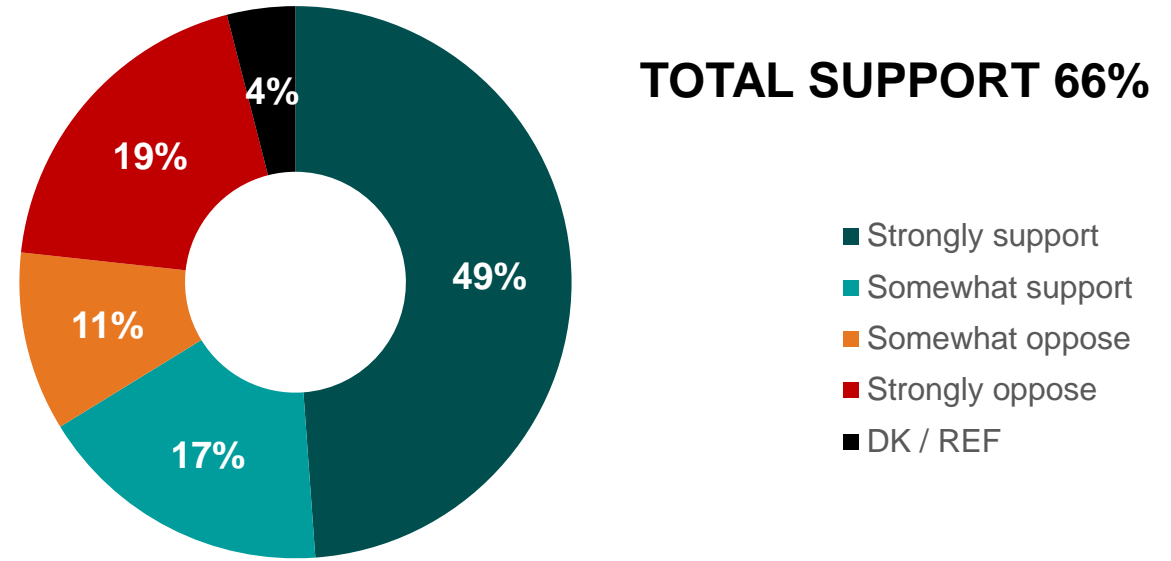
2020 **76% Support** 21% Oppose
 2019 **75% Support** 21% Oppose
 2018 **77% Support** 17% Oppose
 2017 **75% Support** 21% Oppose
 2016 **72% Support** 23% Oppose
 2015 **73% Support** 24% Oppose



Base: Total N=2518

Movement toward NATO membership is much more divisive, with strong support from Bosniaks and Croats, and firm opposition among Serbs

Do you support or oppose BiH accession to NATO?

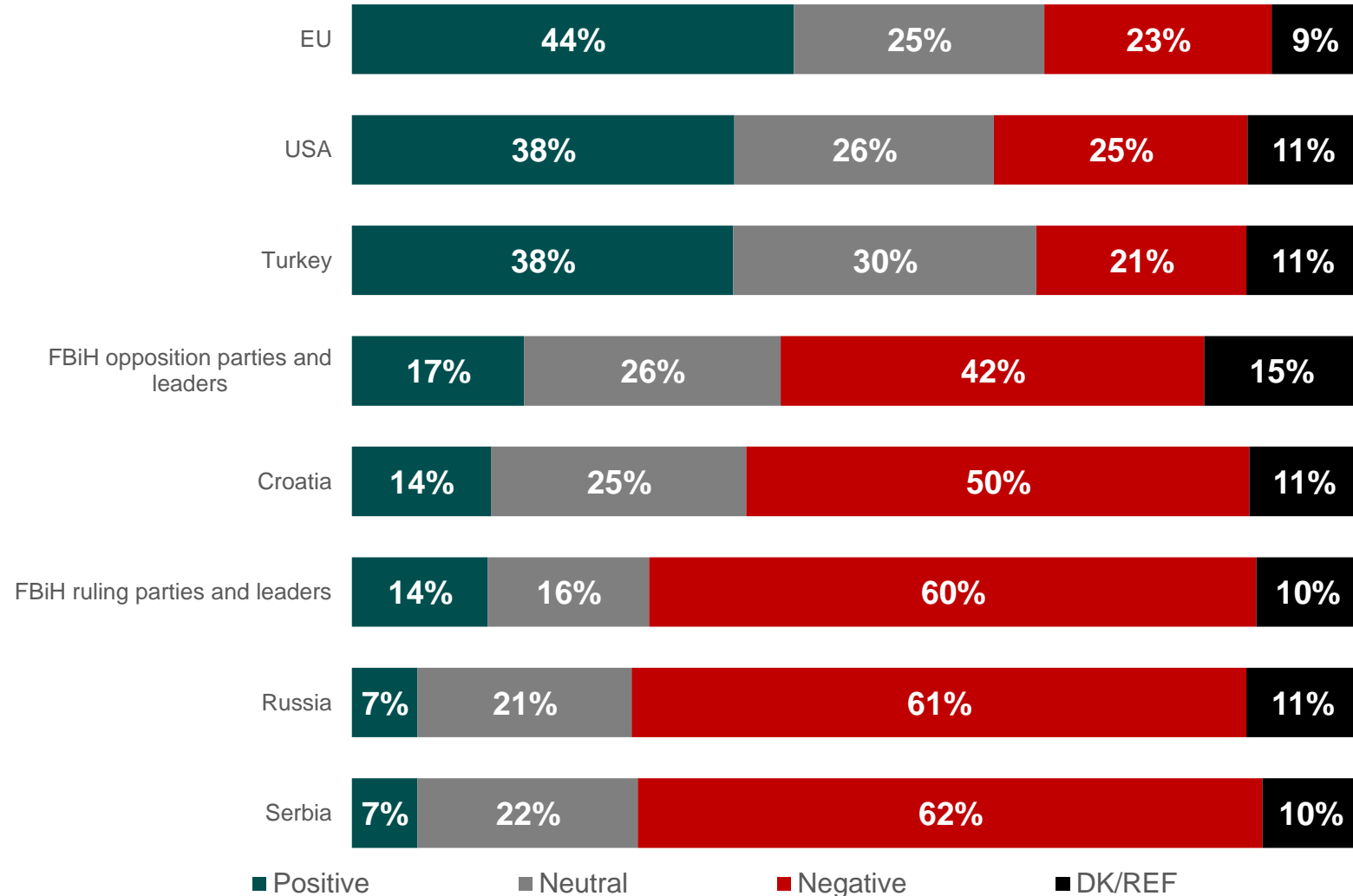


Base: Total N=2518

The influence of the EU, USA, and Turkey are perceived as more positive than domestic and regional actors, but this is driven by Bosniaks.

- Croats agree that the EU plays a constructive role and are unexpectedly segregated on Croatia's role (Positive: 61%, Neutral: 16%, Negative: 5%, DK/REF: 18%).
- Parties are not seen as a positive influence, but the opposition are not as bad as ruling parties.

Please tell us the role the following actors play in the current political crisis. (Federation only)

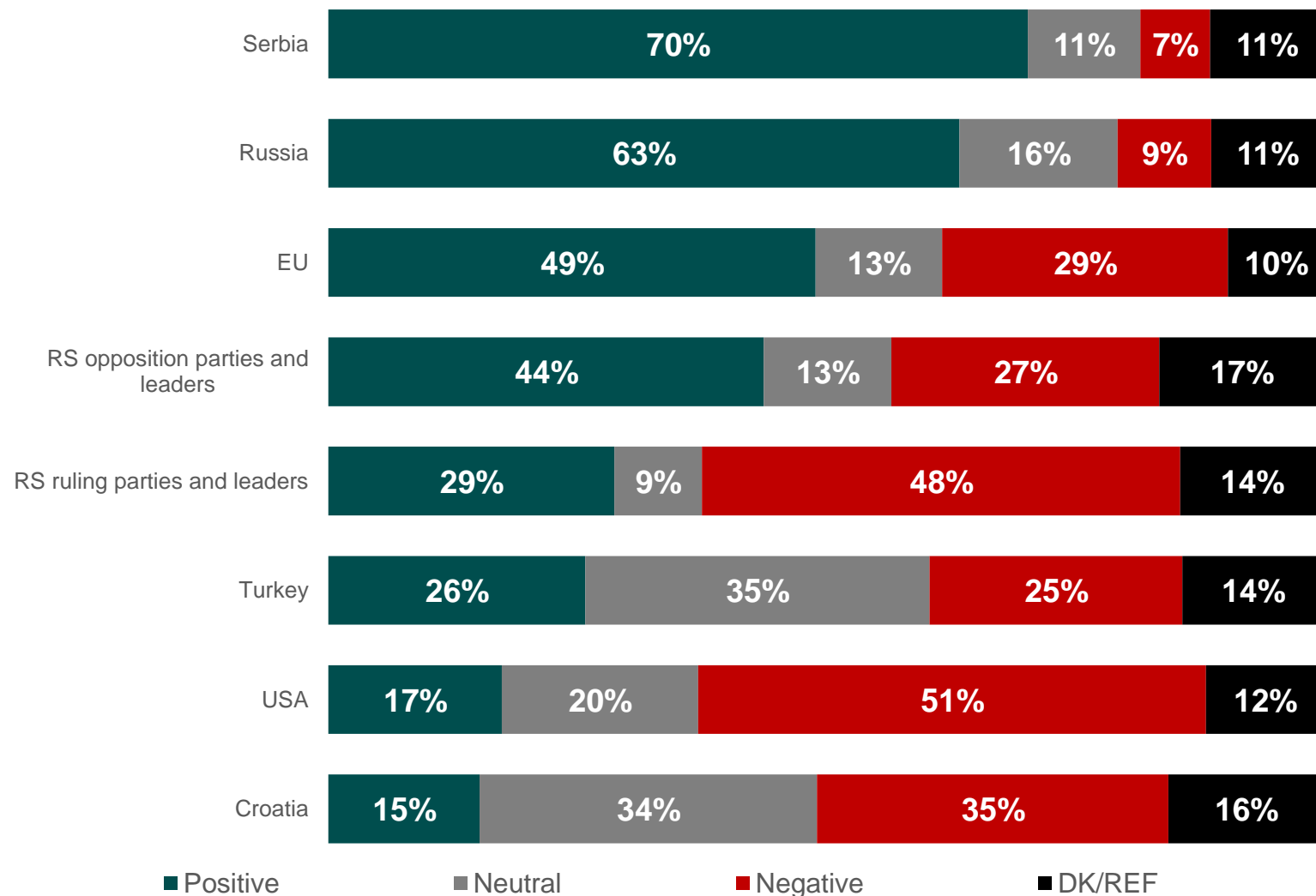


Base: Total FBiH N=1564

Most in RS view Serbia and Russia as playing positive roles in the current crisis.

- Almost half see the EU as a constructive player - though Bosniaks contribute to this, a plurality of Serbs agree.
- The RS opposition is considered more helpful than the ruling parties and leaders.
- The USA lacks credibility in RS.

Please tell us the role the following actors play in the current political crisis. (Republika Srpska only)



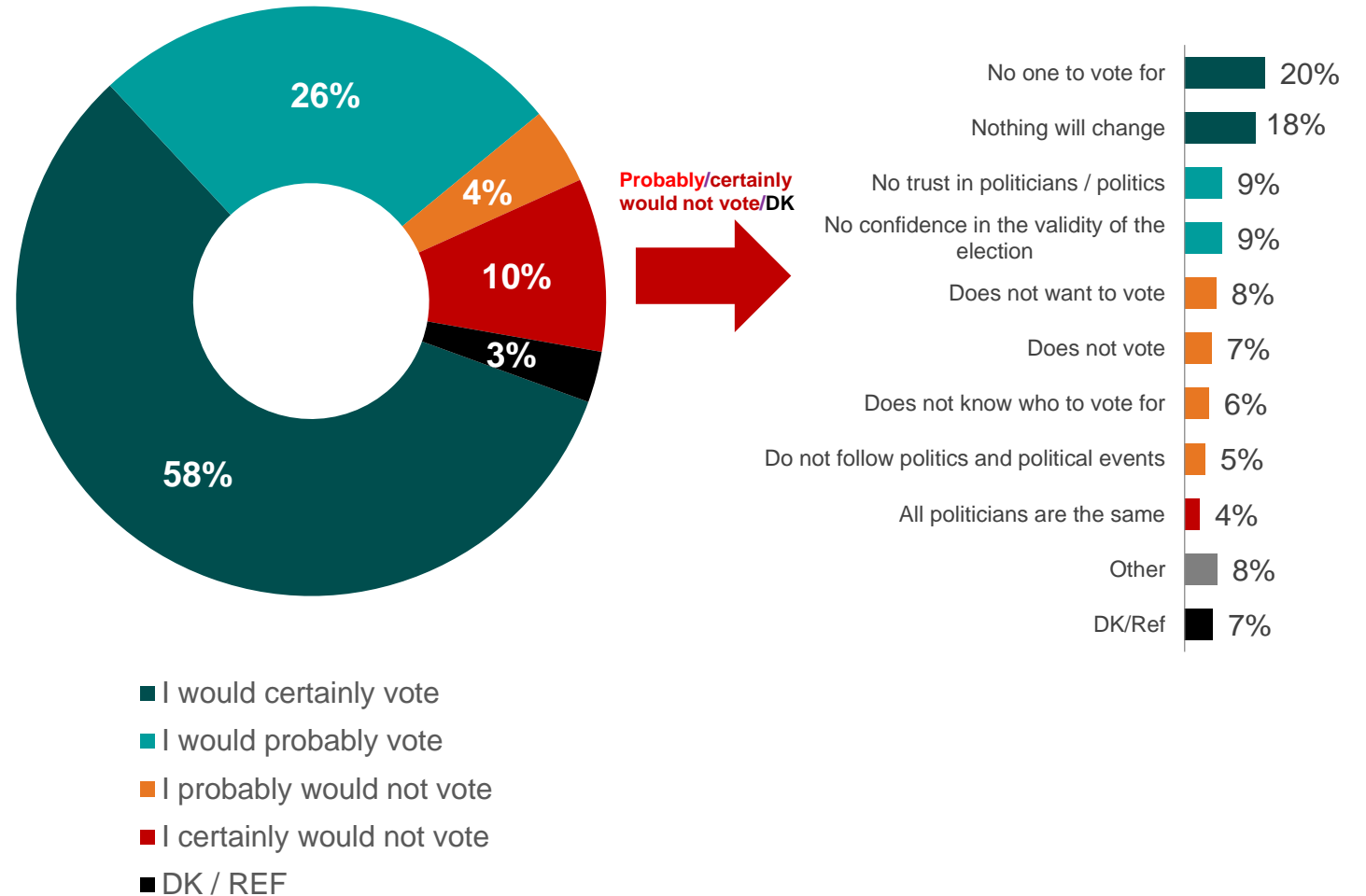
Base: Total RS N=894

Almost six-in-ten say they would certainly vote if elections are held next autumn, indicating high turnout intention.

- Those least likely to vote cite futility, apathy, and distrust.

Q3. How likely is it that you would vote if elections are held next autumn?

Q3A. If probably/certainly would note vote/DK: Why is it that you will not vote or are not sure about voting?

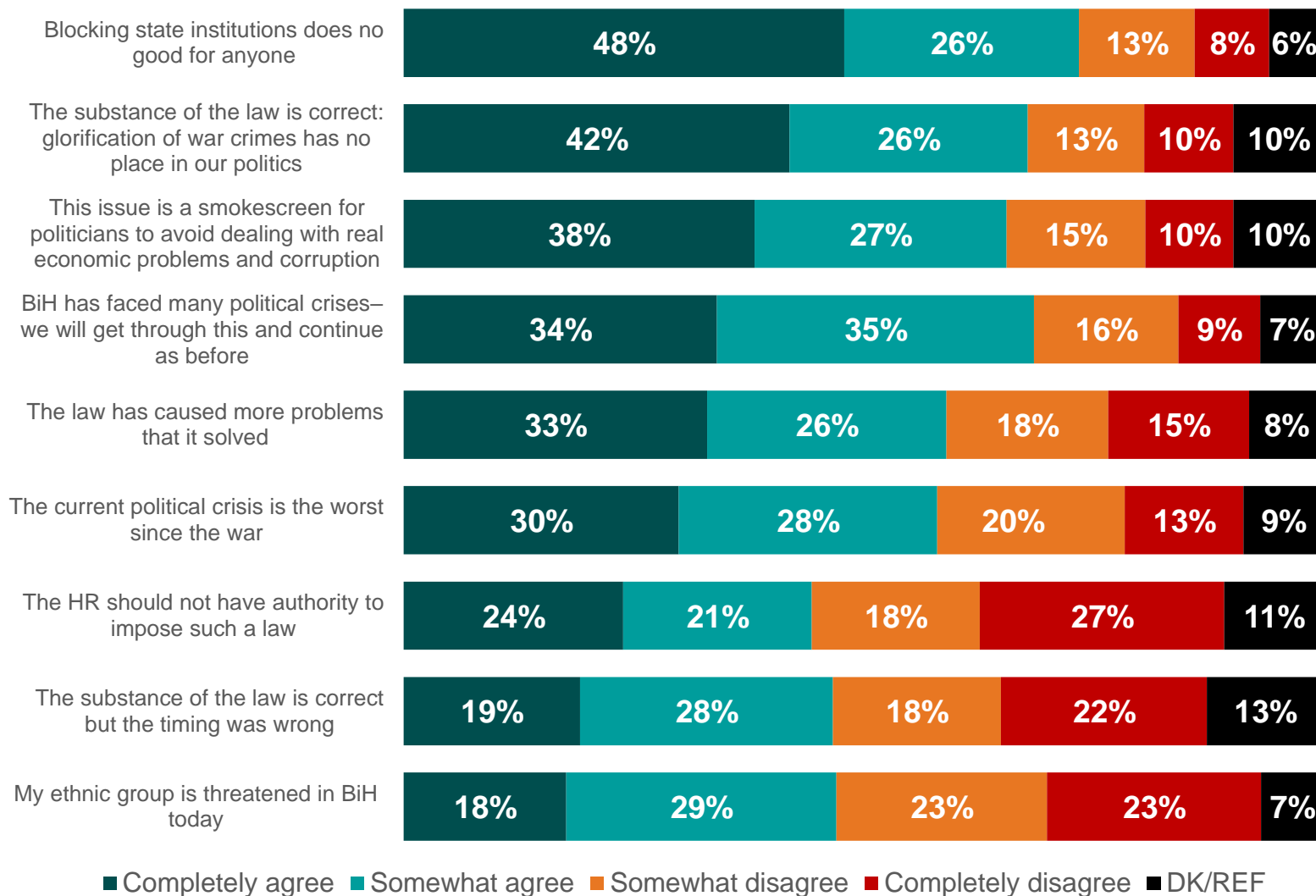


POLITICAL CRISIS & ETHNIC STRIFE

There is general agreement that the substance of the law on genocide denial was right and Dodik's reaction is wrong.

- People see Dodik's reaction as a convenient way to dodge responsibility for poor performance and corruption.
- Bosniaks agree most strongly with these statements.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the law promulgated by the High Representative?

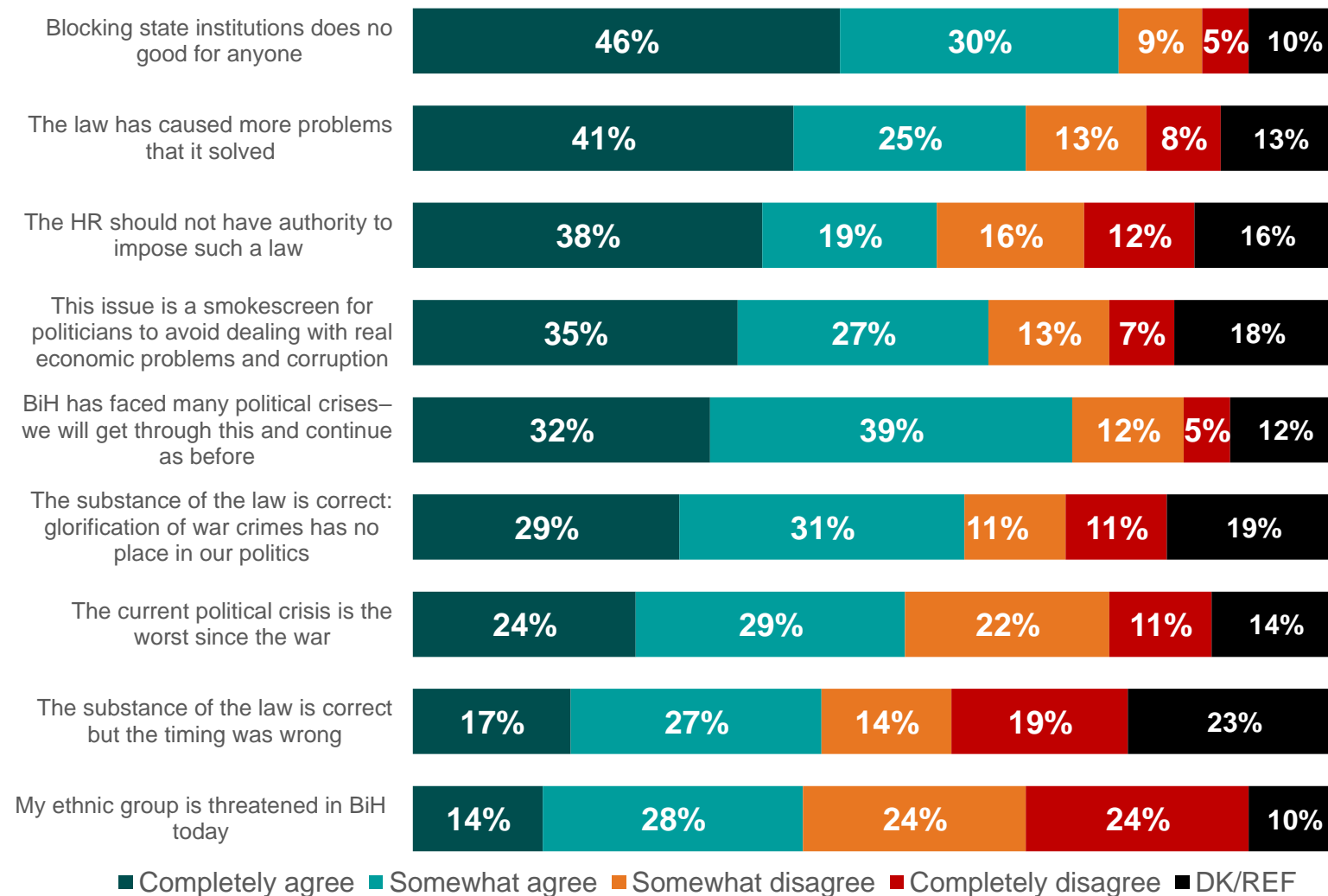


Base: Total N=2518

There is general agreement that the substance of the law on genocide denial was right and Dodik's reaction is wrong.

- People see Dodik's reaction as a convenient way to dodge responsibility for poor performance and corruption.
- Clear majorities of Serbs agree as well.

...Republika Srpska only.



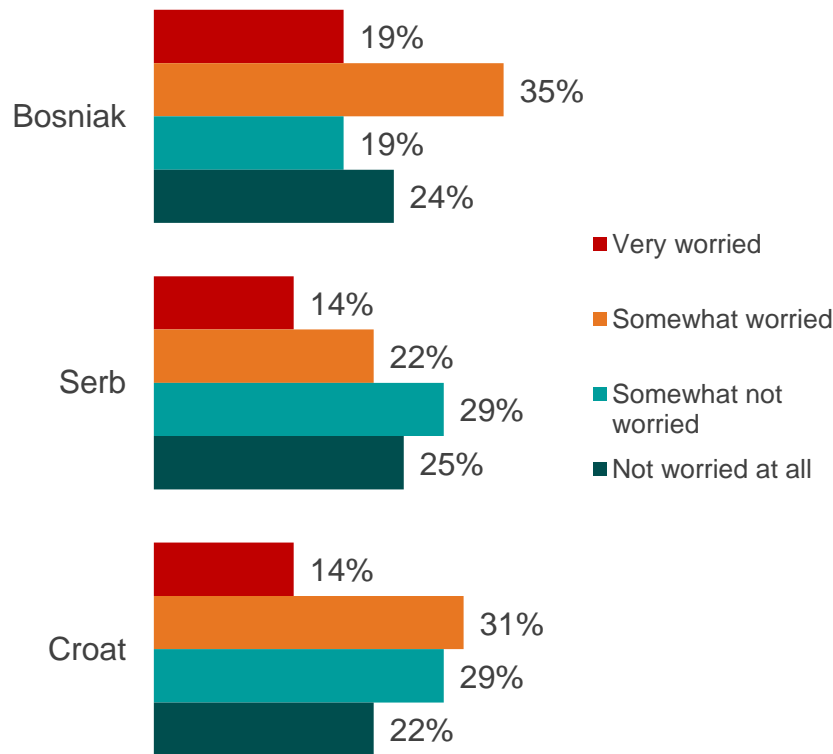
Base: Total RS&BD N=954



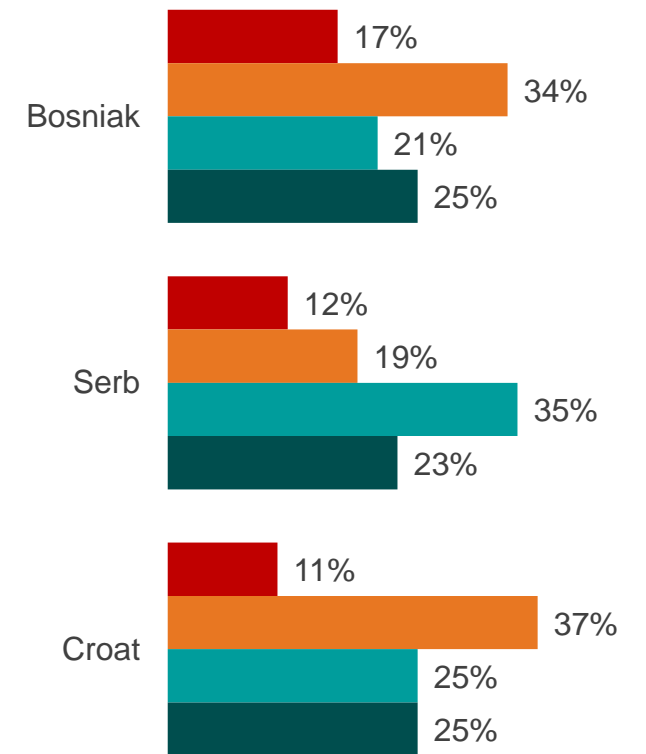
- **Bosniaks express the most worry about each of these outcomes, followed by Croats then Serbs.**
- **However, the intensity of concern is low across the board.**

How worried are you that:

The ethnic tensions facing BiH at this time might lead to armed conflict.



The ethnic tensions facing BiH at this time might lead to the dissolution of the state.

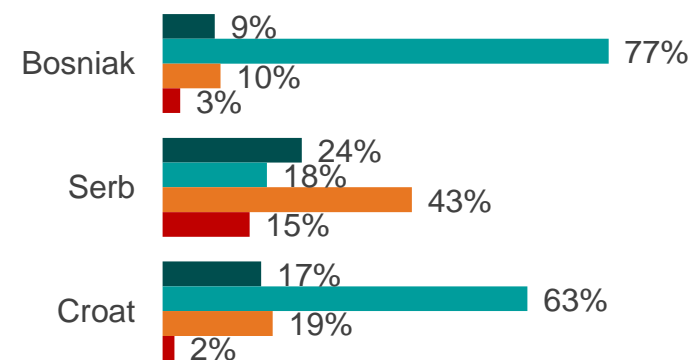
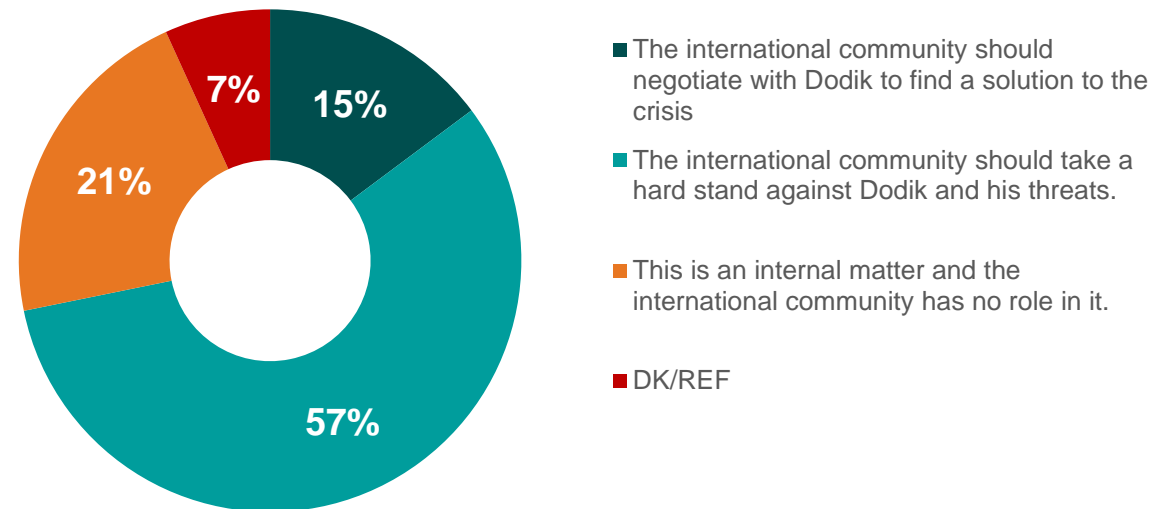


Base: Total N=2518

A majority believes that the international community should take a hard stance against Dodik and his threats, but this is driven by Bosniaks and Croats.

- Serbs are more likely to view Dodik's moves as an internal matter with no role for the international community.

What is your view of the international community response to Dodik's moves to withdraw from state institutions and transfer jurisdiction to the RS?



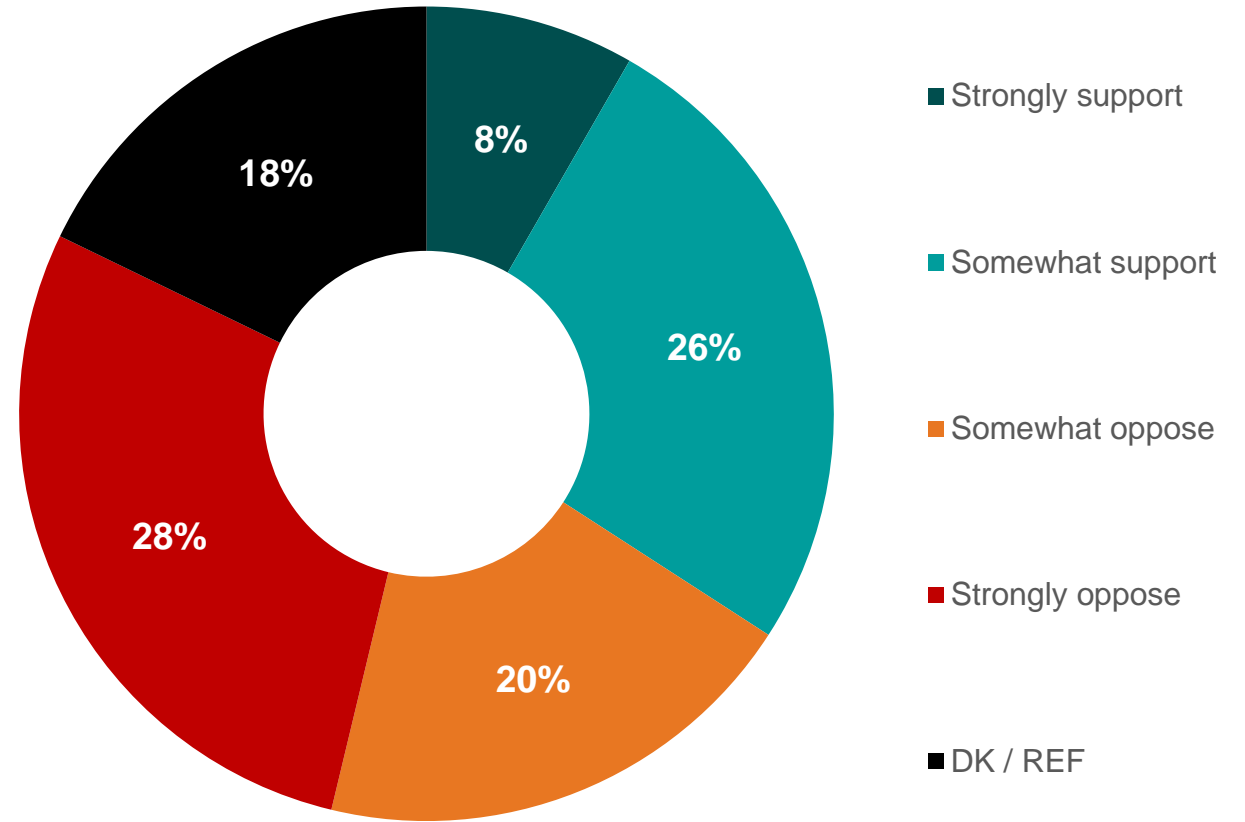
Base: Total N=2518

REPUBLIKA SRPSKA

The prospect of RS withdrawal from state institutions finds weak support across the entity.

- Support for withdrawal and transfer of competencies is a bit deeper in East RS (sum+ 40%), where Dodik is more popular than in North RS (sum+ 31%).
- But neither the population at large nor Serbs in particular rally to this position.

Do you support or oppose Dodik's announcement that RS would withdraw from state institutions and transfer competencies to the RS government? (indirect tax administration, armed forces and the high judicial and prosecutorial council)



Serbs: 42% Support sum 37% Oppose sum

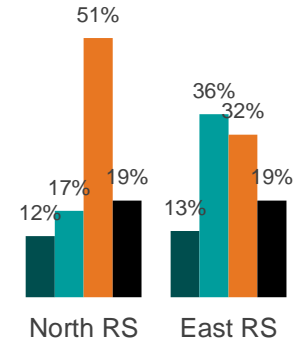
Base: Total RS N=894

Counterarguments that focus on likely job losses and possible armed conflict won't fundamentally change the debate but could blunt support for the move.

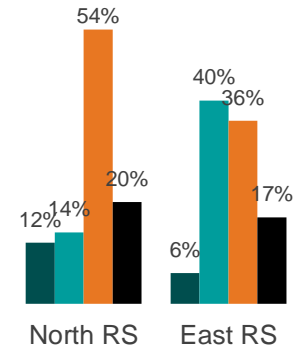
- Messages pushing back on the withdrawal and transfer are more persuasive in East RS than in North RS, suggesting a possible path to undermine support in Dodik's base.

(If Strongly/Somewhat Support): Please tell us whether the following arguments impact your support for RS withdrawal from state institutions.

A withdrawal from state institutions would further inflame the situation in BiH and might lead to armed conflict



If such a withdrawal happens, about 7,000 RS citizens would lose their jobs with state institutions

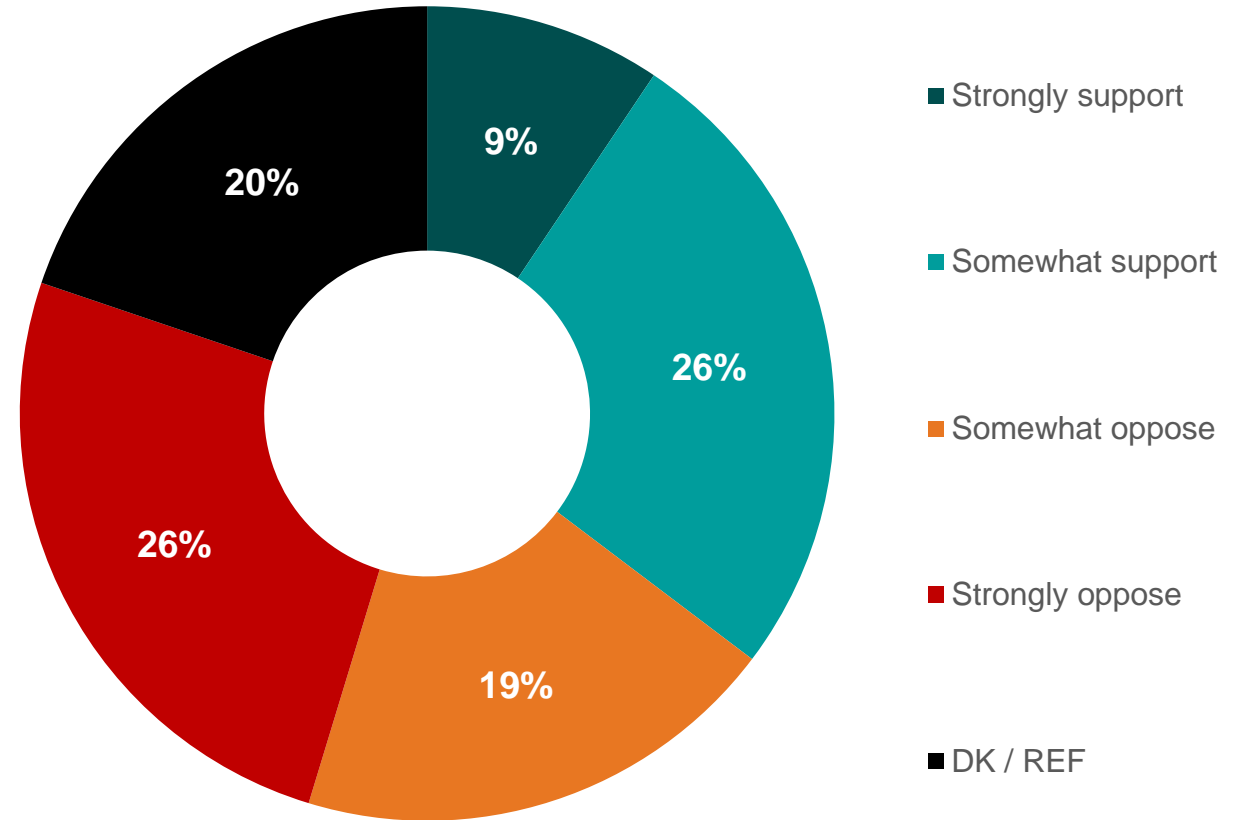


■ Much less likely to support ■ Little less likely to support
 ■ It makes no difference ■ DK/REF

Support for RS independence is fairly weak.

- As on the previous question, support is stronger in East RS and among Serbs than in the overall RS population, but nowhere near majorities.

Do you support or oppose RS declaring independence?



	North RS	East RS
Support	33	39
Oppose	42	49

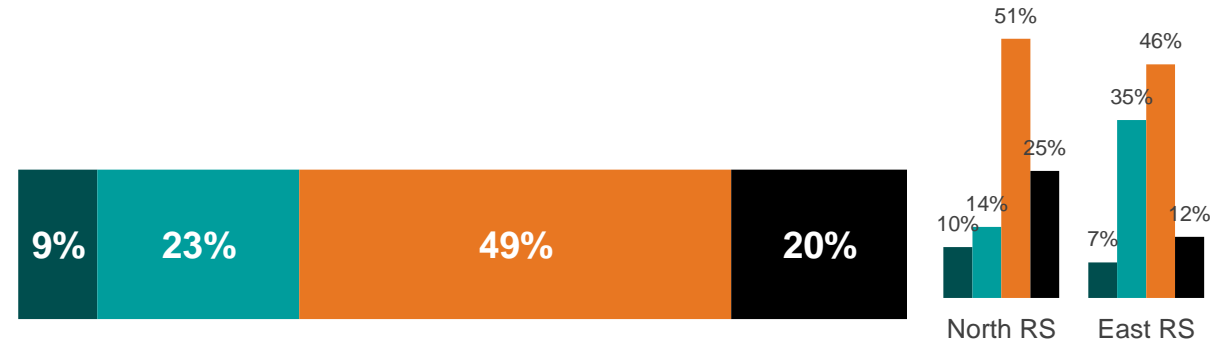
Serbs: 43% Support – sum 33% Oppose - sum

Base: Total RS N=894

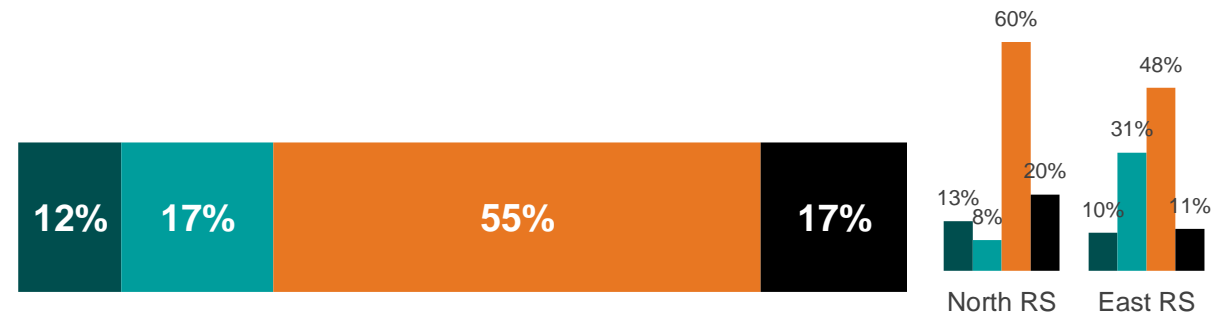
- RS independence supporters tend to turn down counter-arguments.
- Greater awareness of negative impact could dampen support somewhat.
- These messages are also significantly more impactful in East RS than in the North, providing a rhetorical touchstone in Dodik's base.

(If Strongly/Somewhat Support): Please tell us whether the following arguments impact your support for RS independence.

As an independent state, RS would be recognized by very few countries and this isolation would have a devastating impact on economic viability and travel



RS would not really be independent as it would be totally reliant on Serbia and Russia for economic and military support

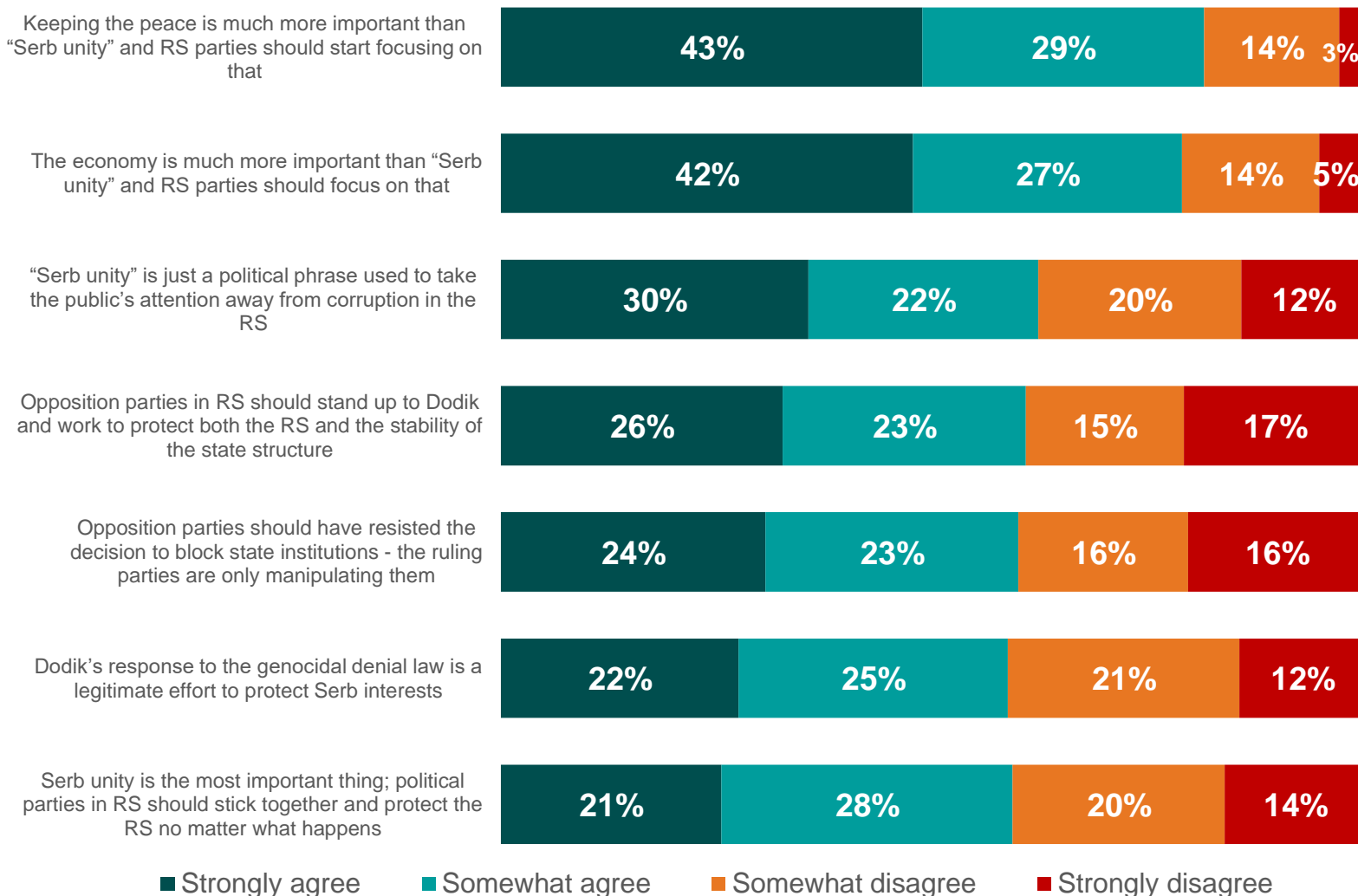


- Much less likely to support
- Little less likely to support
- It makes no difference
- DK/REF

Keeping the peace and building the economy are much more important than whatever Dodik's concept of "Serb unity" might be, and people want their parties and leaders to focus on these priorities.

- RS respondents regard peace (72%) and economy (69%) over Serb unity (49%) - though Bosniaks and Croats contribute to this.

Please tell us whether you agree/disagree with each of the following statements.



Base: Total RS N=894



THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!

February 2022

