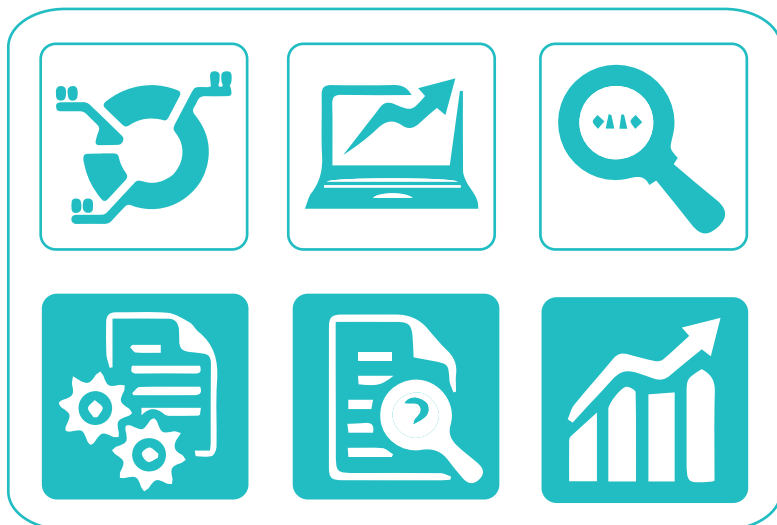


BETWEEN

FREEDOM AND SECURITY

RESEARCH ANALYSIS



THE CURRENT RESEARCH HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED BY PEACE DIALOGUE NGO IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE PROJECT SAFE SOLDIERS FOR A SAFE ARMENIA, WHICH IS SUPPORTED BY THE DUTCH ORGANIZATION PAX.

AUTHORS:

DIANA TER-STEPANYAN
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VAHAGN ANTONYAN
STEVEN M. GREENBERG

TRANSLATION:

ANI DERDZYAN
LUSINE POGHOSYAN



PEACE DIALOGUE

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VANADZOR, ARMENIA

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AUTHORS' NOTES

For nearly eight years now, Peace Dialogue (PD NGO) an Armenian non-governmental organization has been working in the fields of peacebuilding and the protection of human rights. They are led by the principle that a person is a responsible citizen fully endowed with his or her rights, PD NGO highlights the importance of the consciousness that recognizes citizen and human rights as the highest of values and therefore, shaping attitudes towards human rights, diversity and democracy is one of the organization's key strategic directions.

In Armenia when pursuing the rule of law, social justice and active civic participation we have oftentimes faced a problem: **the citizen does not realize how important their role is in the state's ongoing political and civic processes.** The general impression is that people are mostly discouraged, disappointed and are waiting to rely on some power that one day will, as a gesture of goodwill, bring about positive changes in their lives. Apparently, many occurrences particularly among young people who have a more acute sense of what freedom and independence are in terms of their lives, these should have caused resistance and intolerance, however in the eyes of many, such occurrences of injustice and violence, lawlessness and corruption within the atmosphere of fear and impunity have become all too common.

What are the roots of such a manifestation and what social, economic and political processes have had an impact on the formation of this indifferent and fatalistic approach? We tried to reveal the answers to some of these questions through a research study carried out amongst young people living in Armenia.

This survey provides insight into the perception of youth on the country's development priorities, its primary socio-economic issues, security-related and legal protection problems, and others.

The study also made it possible to determine the respondents' level of trust towards the country's main institutions, outlooks on Armenia's choice of a geopolitical course, and their opinions on authoritarian and democratic values.

INTRODUCTION

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union the post Soviet Union countries have been going through a very difficult transition period and many still have unresolved issues and conflicts. From 1990 until now, there are still many unsettled conflicts between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Georgia and Russia, internal conflicts in the North-Caucasian region of Russia and most recently a violent conflict between Ukraine and Russia.

Following the signing of a ceasefire agreement in 1994, the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh between Armenian and Azerbaijan is now considered to be “frozen,” however the increase in tension and violence on the Karabakh-Azerbaijan contact line and Armenian-Azerbaijani borderline (including targeted killings of civilians) are of serious concern and certainly leave their mark on domestic and foreign political developments of Armenia, as well as in Azerbaijan.

The Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC) has published its annual Global Militarization Index¹ (GMI) for 2014. The Global Militarization Index (GMI) depicts the relative weight and importance of the military apparatus of one state upon its society as a whole. This year the Global Militarization Index again pointed to the protracted Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. According to BICC, the neighboring states of Armenia and Azerbaijan both show very high levels of militarization and are constantly increasing their military spending. Armenia’s military expenditures reached 427 million US dollars in 2013 while in Azerbaijan - 3.4 billion US dollars. In Armenia, the share of military expenditures of the GDP is 4 percent; in Azerbaijan it is 4.7 percent - compared to other European countries, they are clearly in the lead.

BICC’s report illustrates that due to the boom in oil production, the government of Azerbaijan has enormous financial resources to pay for the recent growth of their defense budget. As a result of the drastic increase its gross domestic product, the Azerbaijani government has become more confident over the years. From this position of strength, the country is able to try harder to influence the course of the conflict to its advantage. Meanwhile, Armenia has adopted the same strategy as its closest ally Russia and has copied the

1. See Global Militarization Index by the Bonn International Center for Conversion

Russian federation's desires to renew its military forces. It should be noted that even if Armenia desires to expand military cooperation with other countries, it will not be able to eliminate the dependence on Russia in the short to medium term.

In the report BICC expresses its concern over the recent developments on the Armenian-Azerbaijani contact line. The year 2014 was marked by an increase in ceasefire violations. Quite often, civilians as well as members of the military, suffer during incidents at the contact line. In November, the Azerbaijani armed forces shot down an Armenian combat helicopter. This incident started more sabre rattling and accusations from both sides. Another such event could trigger a dangerous escalation of hostility between the two countries that will be difficult to stop.

According to the preliminary data, for 2014 there have already been **46 fatalities in the RA armed forces reported. Only 26 of these fatalities happened during ceasefire violations.** In the other situations, the deaths were caused by murders, suicides, health problems or other causes. As reported in Human Rights Annual Report of 2013² by the US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, **“substandard living conditions, corruption and lack of accountability of commanders continue to contribute to the mistreatment and noncombat injuries within the armed forces.”** The report further stated that, **“Although no reliable statistics on the prevalence of military hazing are available, soldiers have reported to human rights organizations that abuses continue.”**

Soldiers' families claim that corrupt officials control military units, while human rights monitors and the Republic of Armenia (RA) ombudsman report that soldiers have been drafted into the army with serious health problems, in such cases they should have been deemed unfit for service and not have been recruited.

In recent years the relationship between the armed forces and the citizens has become one of the most openly discussed topics in Armenia. Over these years one of the main mottos of the armed forces has been **“The army is our home and castle.”** Within this motto we always say that the unit is our family, where our soldiers build harmonious cooperation, and the military base is our home,” says³ the RA Defense Minister of. In recent years various projects have been carried out by the RA Ministry of Defense (or with their direct

2. See Human Rights Report of 2013 by US Department, Bureau of Democracy, Human rights and Labor.

3. See the article “Around 600 soldiers serving in Yerevan were awarded with a 5-day vacation” Civilnet, 2014.

involvement) aimed at strengthening the citizen-army relationship and increasing the level of trust the citizens have in the armed forces. In spite of these efforts local and international human rights organizations are the ones that have alerted citizens about the numerous cases of human rights violations.

Amnesty International, in one of its human rights reports of 2013 particularly mentions ***“There is no room for dissent. Activists and journalists, who raise any doubt about the adopted perspectives on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with Azerbaijan, are pursued and persecuted. The ones who raise the issues in the army are similarly persecuted since in the context of this unsolved conflict the army is perceived as a pillar for protection of the nation⁴.”***

In addition, security-related issues are regularly raised by people throughout the country in one way or another in any discussion on the state’s important decisions or in parallel to making a new law.

In 2014 Armenian authorities made a strategic decision that displays Armenia’s geopolitical choice when they completed the negotiations and signed a membership agreement to join the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU). This treaty contains political and social elements that will undoubtedly lead to modifications regarding Armenia’s future in regards to internal and foreign relations, defense and social and economic conditions.

4. See Amnesty International “Armenia must protect all forms of free expression”

METHODOLOGY

The current research has been implemented by Peace Dialogue NGO in the framework of the project Safe Soldiers for a Safe Armenia, which is supported by the Dutch organization PAX.

The research aims at studying the perceptions of youth on political developments, foreign policy, safety and a number of other issues in Armenia. The goal of the study was to examine the following questions:

1. *What is youth's perspective on current domestic and foreign policy issues in Armenia?*
2. *What attitudes do the respondents have towards the country's primary state institutions and non-governmental organizations?*
3. *What perceptions do young people have on human rights, including their perceptions on human rights restrictions and human rights assurances?*
4. *What is young people's understanding of state level security and what challenges do they see?*
5. *How do they envision developing a powerful army and what are the means to resist the challenges related to safety in the army?*
6. *How does the need for protection or security influence their perspective on human rights?*

TO ACHIEVE THE GOAL OF THE STUDY, THE FOLLOWING TOOLS HAVE BEEN USED FOR DATA COLLECTION.

METHODS	TOOLS
Standardized face to face interviews	A standardized questionnaire
Focus group (FG) discussions	A focus group questionnaire/guide

The study was conducted during the period of July through September 2014. The respondents were young people aged 18-25 who resided in Armenia, many were from the capital City of Yerevan as well as from several urban and



rural communities of the Provinces of Tavush, Lori, Gegharkunik and Syunik; in the Towns of Vanadzor, Ijevan, Gavar, Goris, Achajur, Sarigyux, Sevqar, Margahovit, Saral, Noratus, Gandzak and Shinuhayr.

THE SURVEY HAS BEEN CONDUCTED USING THE METHODS OF FACE TO FACE INTERVIEWS AND A STANDARDIZED QUESTIONNAIRE.

THE STUDY SAMPLE

The **quantitative data** was collected through face to face interviews with a sample size set of 480 persons. This number was chosen due to resource restrictions. A quota sampling approach was employed. Quotas were set by residence area type (capital-city-town-village), gender, age and student, non-student quotas. The sampling error is 4.4 percent. The degree of reliability is 95 percent.

	RESPONDENTS	%
CITY/TOWN	320	66.7
VILLAGE	160	33.3
TOTAL	480	100.0

The **qualitative** component of the study was conducted through focus group discussions. The selection of focus group participants was done by the *typical sampling* principle taking into consideration such factors as gender, age and education. Overall, 14 Focus groups were formed - one focus group from each community and two groups from Yerevan. The average number of focus group participants was 8-12 people.

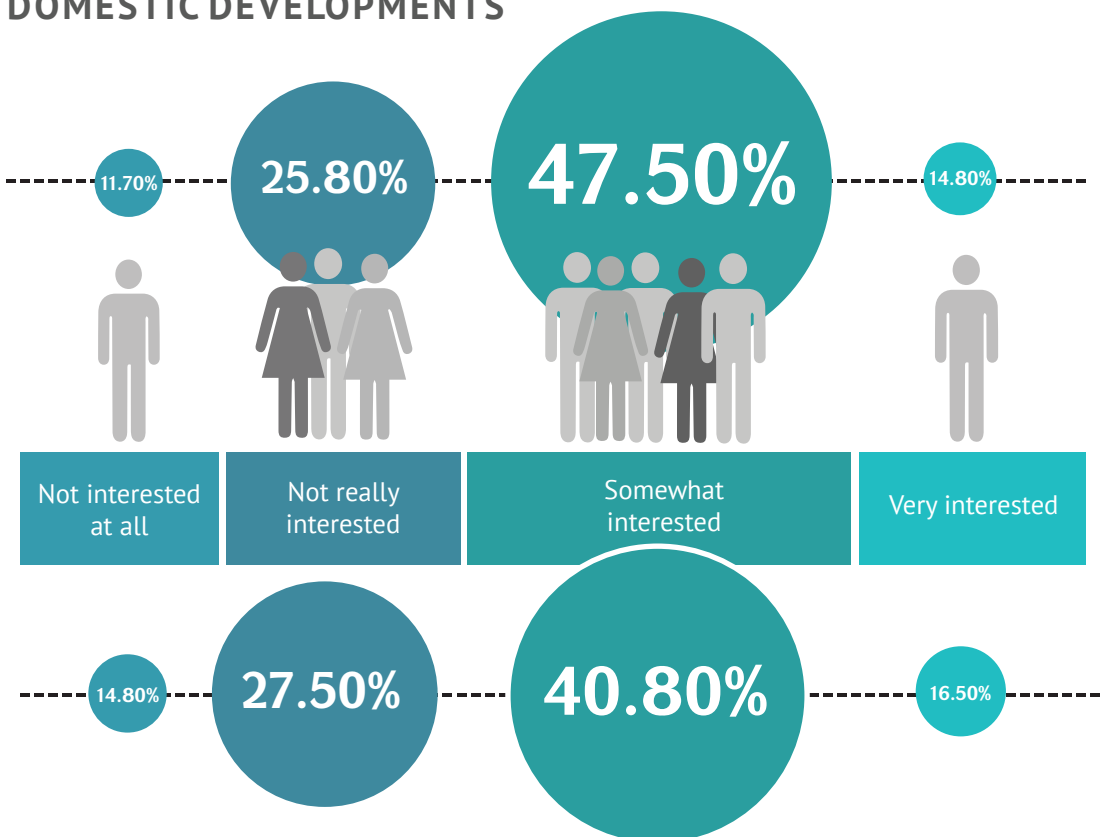
1. ARMENIA'S PRIORITIES THROUGH THE EYES OF THEIR YOUTH

Prior to our analysis of young people's perceptions on urgent issues in Armenia, we first consider how they evaluate their interest level with regards to the country's domestic and foreign policy issues. In infographic 1.1 no significant difference between these two is observed. Domestic developments concern young people more, but not to a significant extent.

HOW MUCH ARE YOU INTERESTED IN ARMENIA'S...?

Infographic 1.1

DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENTS



FOREIGN POLICY

During the discussions young people justify their interests in politics (or their indifference) in numerous ways. They highlight that domestic developments are of little interest as they do not lead to developments and changes in society unlike recent events in the foreign policy sphere.



“We do not demand protection for our rights. People do not know what rights they have. They live like victims in daily life and they do not try to fight against it. (Female, 19 years old, Province of Lori, City of Vanadzor)

“I am not interested in politics. I learn about some news only on Facebook. We do not fight for our problems. Mainly activists do and others are just watching.” (Male, 21 years old, Province of Lori, City of Vanadzor)

“In general, I am interested in politics. I live here and if I am not the one who is concerned, who else should be - if I am the one who is making a choice tomorrow. For instance, -whom I will elect? I should be informed in order to know.” (Male, 18 years old, City of Yerevan)

“In the case of Armenia I am interested in foreign policy. There are not many developments in domestic politics because it (all) has a criminal nature.” (Male, 19 years old, City of Yerevan)

“Since last year I have a lot of interest in foreign policy. Domestic policy does not attract me. It is on a very low level of political maturity. Our politicians are unable to make any major changes in the state. Among foreign policy challenges, for me it’s important that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is solved as well as RA’s membership to such big institutions as the Euro Union (EU), which will bring tax (revenue) and price reductions; it will contribute to the country’s development. (Male, 19 years old, City of Yerevan)

It is noteworthy that even though young people recognize their indifference towards domestic developments, they still have a critical attitude and consider their indifference as an inappropriate civil position.

Apart from a general assessment of their interest in politics, the participants of the survey singled out 3 vital domestic and foreign policy issues out of 22, these were classified according to their importance. Table 1.1 represents the top ten issues by the percentage of votes given by the respondents (Appendix #1 for the complete list). As you can see in the Table there are significantly more votes for the first four issues than the others.

TABLE 1.1 'WHAT ARE THE MAIN ISSUES IN ARMENIA AT THIS MOMENT?'

	1st	2nd	3rd	TOTAL %
HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	13.3	10	10	33.3
HIGH POVERTY LEVEL	10.2	12.3	9	31.5
MIGRATION VOLUME	12.3	8.8	9	30.1
DEATHS OF SOLDIERS IN NON-COMBAT CONDITIONS	9	8.8	9.2	27
HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS	6.7	4.2	7.3	18.2
INFLATION	3.8	5.6	7.1	16.5
PROBABILITY OF RE-ESCALATION OF THE WAR	5.2	5	4.8	15
NAGORNO-KARABAKH ISSUE	5.4	5.2	2.7	13.3
LOW LEVEL OF EDUCATION	3.8	3.5	5.4	12.7
CORRUPTION	2.9	5.4	4.2	12.5

The two most crucial issues are related to the economic and social sectors. One of the issues is the high unemployment rate (33.3%) and the other comes as a consequence – a high level of poverty (31.5%).

“For me, the “job” problem is important; many young people graduate from university but cannot find a job. A job is important from the point of not leaving the country. The Karabakh and genocide issues are essential. If it is recognized, they will give back our territories. (Female, 25 years old, City of Yerevan)

“If there are available jobs, the youth employment issue will be solved? So, they won’t leave the country. Everyone is leaving... (Male, 25 years old, Gegharkunik, Village of Noratus)

“Armenia’s most important issue is the social condition of people; as a result emigration has grown. Emigration is an issue for the whole nation. If there is no nation, our state will no longer exist. (Male, 20 years old, City of Yerevan)

“The emigration number is very big. We see more foreigners than Armenians. It seems I am not in Armenia. (Male, 20 years old, City of Yerevan)

“The number one problem is emigration, the cause is unemployment. In our Village there is no life at all. (Female, 22 years old, City of Yerevan)

The cumulative ratio percentage indicates that these problems are crucial to 65% of the respondents.

The high emigration rate is mentioned by 30.1% of respondents. They believe it is closely tied to poor social and economic conditions and security. These topics were touched upon in focus group discussions as well. The statements below, made during discussions show how young people perceive emigration, the reasons behind it and the vital issue related to its consequences.

Within the focus groups and as the results of the questionnaire shows, the safety-related issues of the military were brought up very frequently. Thus, the issue of soldiers' deaths in non-combat conditions is the 4th most significant issue (27%). The importance of this issue may be seen in the emphasis given to re-escalation of the war (15%) and the Karabakh issue (13.3%).

Cumulatively military safety concerns 55% of respondents.

The relevance of human rights violations in Armenia is in 5th place, only 18.2% finds it relevant. The issue of corruption is in 10th place (12.5%).

The young people's perception, although not widespread, on economic issues is remarkable. The unfavorable conditions of Armenia's economy and a lack of justice are considered to be the basis for economic issues. In this regard, the quote of one of the young people is relevant.

“Emigration exists in all countries. I think the problem is that young people do not see any prospect in their country. Emigration comes as a consequence. (Male, 19 years old, City of Yerevan)

“The Karabakh issue is very important after Nazarbaev's speech. After fighting for that country for 20 years, now we are going to give it to the Russians. The second issue is emigration. We are afraid of war, but Russia creates certain provocation through selling weapons both to Azerbaijan and Armenians. If the Russians do not get a benefit from us, they will not protect us. History indicates it. We must quit the Russianism (the phenomenon observed among some Armenians, who claim to be friends with Russia, no matter what happens), we must rely on ourselves. And the laws shall be for how we act and how we live. (Male, 18 years old, Province of Gegharkunik, Town of Gavar)

“The unsolved Karabakh conflict is an issue; we are neither in war nor in a peaceful condition. We are being used by big countries. If they need us, they help us, if not the problem is exploited against us. (Male, 20 years old, City of Yerevan.”

“Most people avoid the army. It means something is wrong with the army. If we solve these problems, there will be no safety issue. (Female, 18 years old, City of Yerevan)

“The other problem is the country’s safety issue, the military condition. If you do not feel safe in your country, if you cannot sleep without thinking that something bad will happen... This is the problem.” (Female, 22 years old, City of Yerevan)

Summarizing the above many conclusions can be made. First, it should be stated that today socio-economic issues are the top concerns of young people. According to very optimistic statistics put out by RA, (in reality the number is much higher) the state has an unemployment rate of around 15%.

With this rate Armenia takes the absolute lead in the whole post-Soviet area. Today 80% of respondents are concerned with the high rate of unemployment and poverty, as well as inflation and find that these issues need an urgent solution.

The urgency of the socio-economic issues is highlighted by the fact that even the security issue (a more relevant issue that is associated with the physical existence) is in second place in terms of importance.

Fatalities in non-combat conditions and the probability of restarting a war with Karabakh are issues that concern about 55% of the respondents.

The growing rate of migration is of special importance and is a great concern for young people. The issue is illustrated even by the official statistics. A full third of young respondents is concerned with the issue.

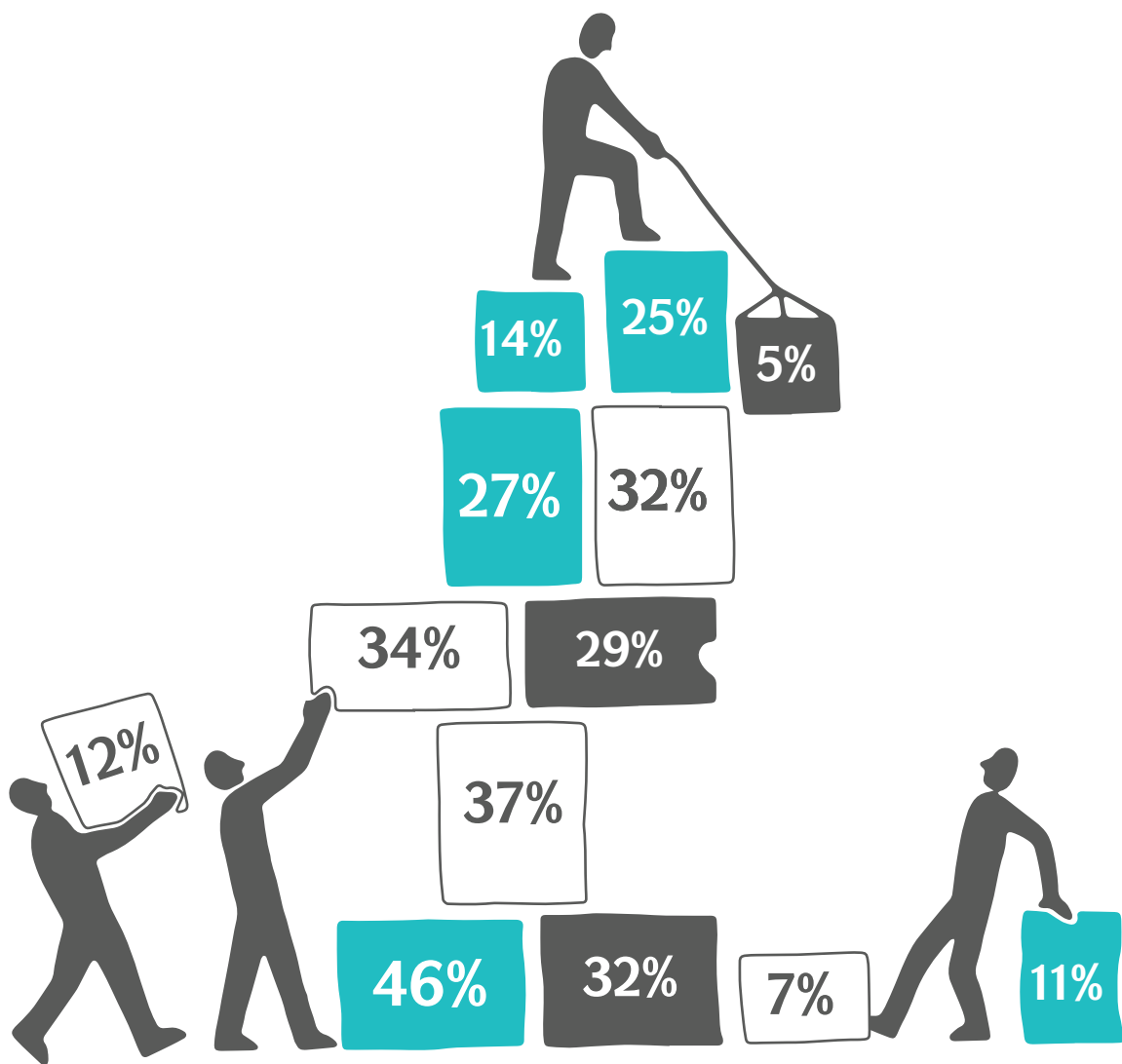
On the one hand emigration is a natural consequence of the socio-economic crisis, and on the other hand it is a serious threat to military safety. This is what young people perceive as well.

Prioritization of right and just laws and the demand for them, are comparably weaker manifestations of concern for young people it appears. According to the survey, human rights violations in Armenia are important for only 18.2% of respondents and corruption for 12.5%.

It can be concluded that these issues are pushed out of the public consciousness by seemingly more vital issues, for instance the threat to physical existence.

“The economic issues are also connected with justice, because... for example, most foreign investors are mainly interested whether there is justice, whether it is practiced or to what extent if it is practiced. (Male, 20 years old, City of Yerevan)

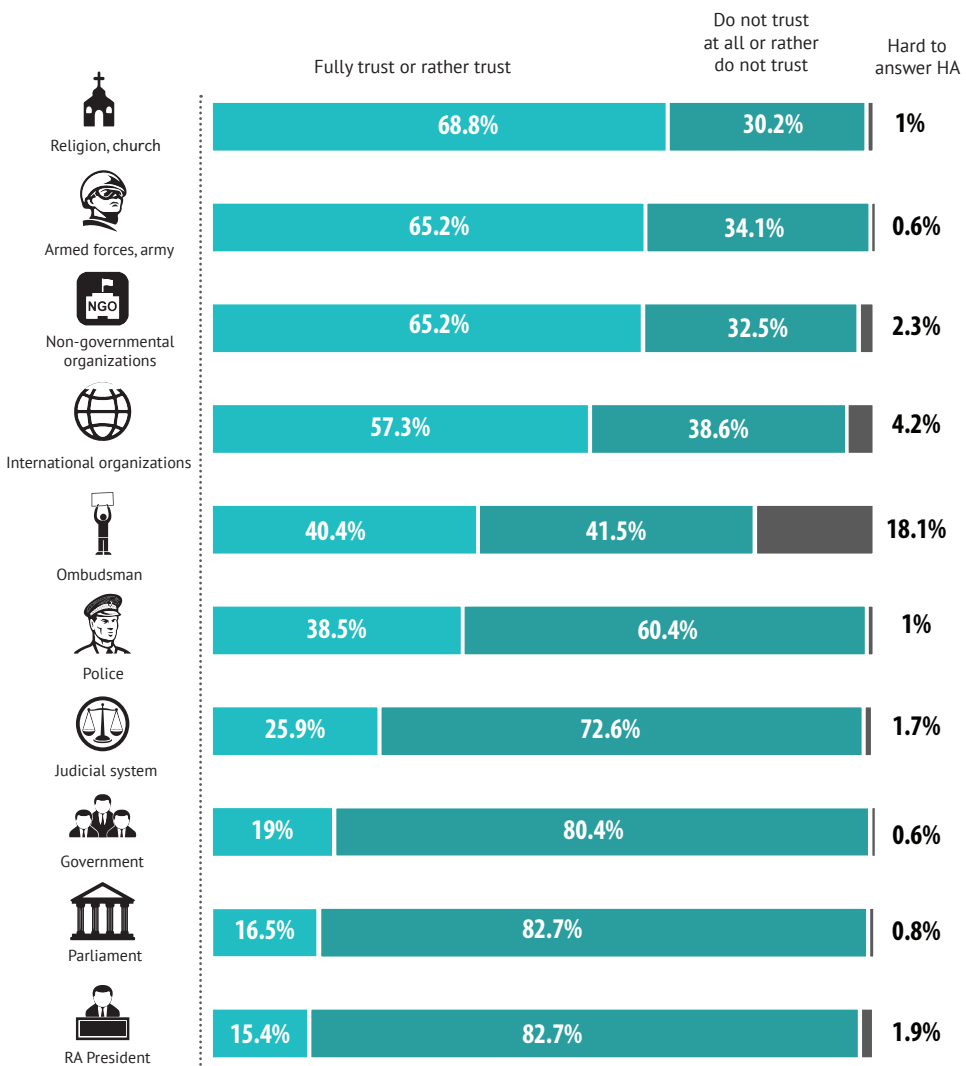
For instance, recently the US ambassador said that American investors are primarily concerned with local justice and when we show them the real image, they do not want to make investments here. (Male, 18 years old, City of Yerevan)



2. TRUST IN GOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS

To understand the image of young people’s political and civic perceptions, it is important to look at their attitude towards various political and social institutions. Therefore, in the survey, the participants were asked to evaluate their level of trust towards ten important institutions. The assessment was done through a four-level scale with the maximum trust level being “fully trust” and the minimal trust level as “do not trust at all”.

THE LEVEL OF TRUST OR DISTRUST IN PRIMARY INSTITUTIONS



Infographic 2.1



To make it easier to understand, the positive answers are aligned in one group and the negative ones with another. The summarized data in Infographic 2.1 illustrates that all state institutions, led by the RA President, have the lowest level of trust among young people. The army is the only exception.

The president is fully or partially trusted by only 15.4% of respondents, this is the lowest rate in comparison with all other listed institutions. With little variance, all the other governmental institutions such as legislative, executive, judicial and enforcement bodies enjoy a low level of trust.

The Office of the Ombudsman was designed to support and defend the interests of citizens' from the abuses of government officials. Interestingly, it has the same trust level as the police.

Moreover, 18.1% of respondents found it difficult to express any attitude towards the Ombudsman presumably not knowing anything about the institution.

Among these young people, both international and non-governmental organizations (NGO) enjoy a fairly high level of trust - 57.3% and 65.2% respectively, this is interesting despite the fact that disparaging (formulated in a mild way) comments such as "a grant eater" and other such characterizations are constantly addressed to the non-governmental organizations.

The high level of trust in NGOs may be explained by the fact that many young people, in one way or another, are related to NGOs through volunteering and/or participation in various events or initiatives.

The church and army enjoy the highest levels of trust - 68.8% and 65.2% respectively. The church enjoys an explicit confidence seemingly as it has been the major component of our national identity throughout history.

In terms of trust the attitudes towards the army and church are very similar.

The army is the symbol that embodies the country's power and the past as in the Artsakh war. It is also perceived as an necessary part of RA society.

To understand a partial basis for their sense of trust and distrust, the par-

ticipants were asked to assess the transparency of the same institutions in relation to the common citizen.

The president's work is considered to be the most non-transparent. 85.5% of respondents find that it is "completely" or "rather non-transparent". The same attitude is observed in regards to transparency and trust in other state institutions.

Young people characterize those institutions as "rather non-transparent". As in the previous question, the ombudsman is again a difficult institution to assess for 17.3% of respondents. Only 47.1%, of the ones who expressed their opinion, considered this institution an open one. By law it should be completely open.

The activity of the international and social institutions is seen to be quite transparent (58.4% and 71.7%). This has a logical link with other answers.

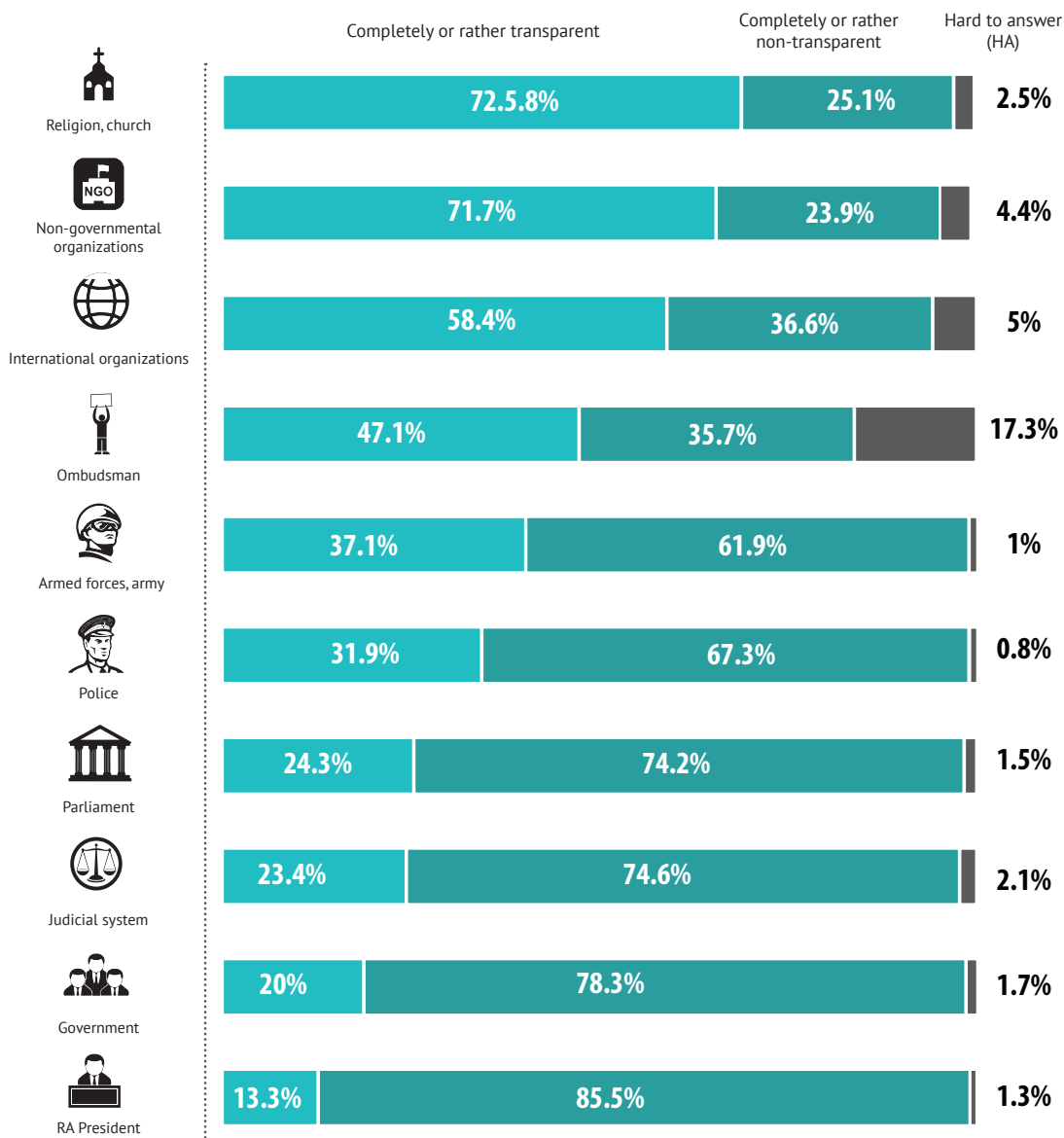
In terms of the alignment of trust and transparency the church ranks the highest. The armed forces is the only institution that has a significant difference and discrepancy regarding trust and transparency.

To this point, 65.2% of respondents "completely" or "rather trust" the army, while 61.9% believes that the army is "completely" or "rather non-transparent". It is noteworthy that such an illogical image is observed only in the matter of the armed forces (Infographic 2.2).

Summarizing this section of the report, participants have definite attitudes towards the state's fundamental structures. In regards to the office of the RA President, one could interpret the attitudes and trust as some assessment of the work of a particular official. However, in the matter of the church and army, the attitude appears to be different. The public perceives these institutions to be held on a different level and appear to be beyond reproach. It can be concluded that initially the public perceives the church and army as being given special priority because of their status. Hence, these institutions have enjoyed the respect and trust regardless of the work they have done.

THE DEGREE OF TRANSPARENCY FOR THE COMMON CITIZEN

Infographic 2.2



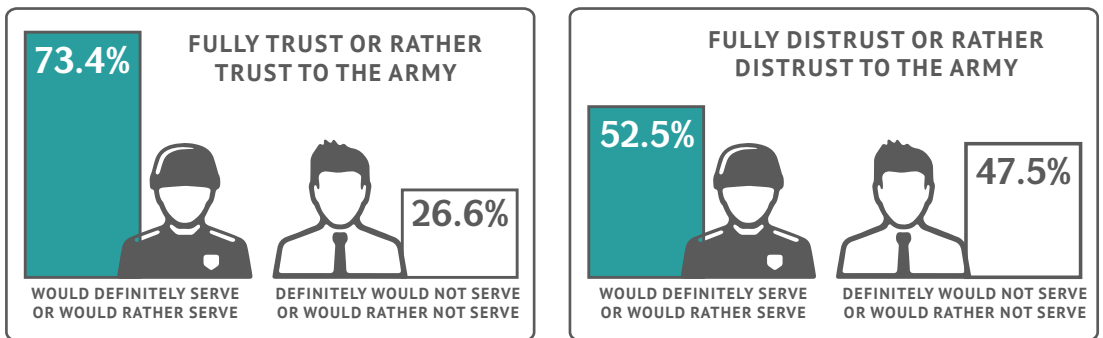
2.1 ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE ARMED FORCES AND ITS RELATION WITH OTHER ISSUES

Having reviewed the findings and the goal of the research, it is interesting to do a comparative observation of the following two groups; the group who considers the army trustworthy and the group which does not trust the army. The comparison is particularly interesting when viewed in combination with other issues.

For instance, we get one image when comparing the level of trust-vs-distrust in the army with the willingness to actually serve in the army. 73.4% of respondents, who trust the army, are willing to serve in the army. 52.5% of the group that does not trust the army still has a willingness to serve, which can be considered a high rate (Infographic 2.3). The results support the logic that the attitude one has towards the army has some impact on the willingness to actually serve in the army.

IN CASE YOU HAVE THE CHANCE TO CHOOSE WHETHER TO SERVE IN THE ARMY, WHAT WOULD YOUR CHOICE WOULD BE?

Infographic 2.3



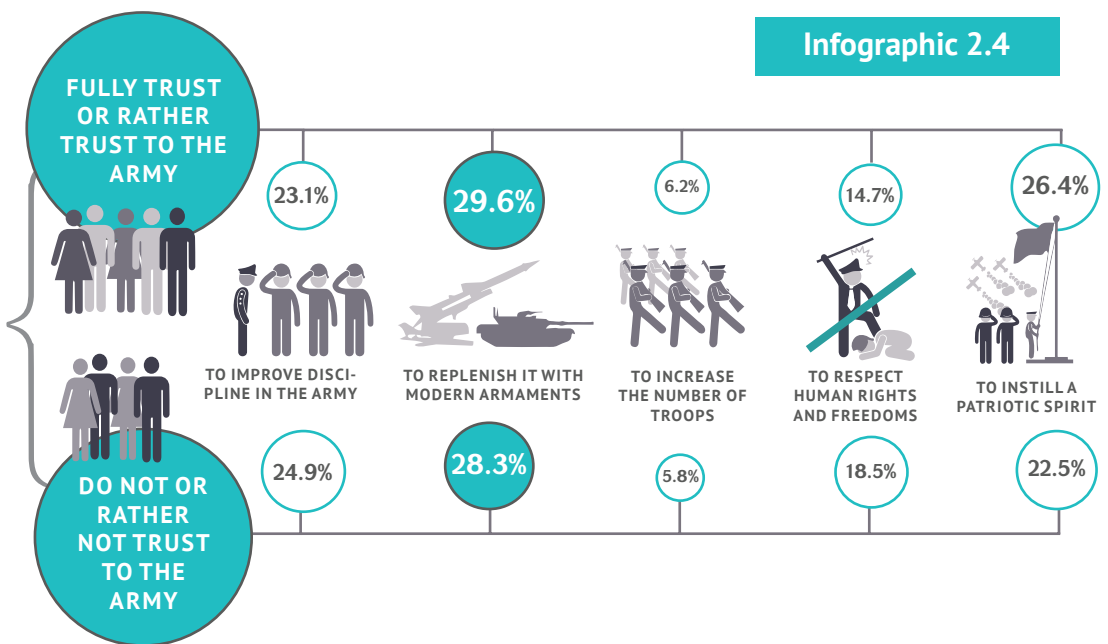
These two groups have similar attitudes towards how to strengthen the army as can be seen from Infographic 2.4; the approaches of these two groups are more or less identical. The exceptions are the weight given to the establishment of human rights and the development of a more patriotic spirit within the armed services. Thus, regarding the army, people, who do not trust the army, are more inclined to highlight the importance of human rights, while the ones who trust it are in favor of instilling a more patriotic spirit.



The rates for the other means to achieve greater strength in the army are almost equal. In both groups participants believe that the army can be strengthened through increasing the number of military weapons (Infographic 2.4).

WHAT SHOULD BE THE FIRST THING TO CONSIDER IN MAKING THE ARMY BETTER?

Infographic 2.4



The last question that is directly related to the armed forces is about the means of adding people to the army. It can be seen from the combination of these two variables, there are more people (70.5%) who are in favor of mandatory service in the “trusting” group than in the “non-trusting” group (62.3%). The preference by people, who prefer a contract-based military service, is about 8% higher amongst the group that does not trust the army (Infographic 2.5).

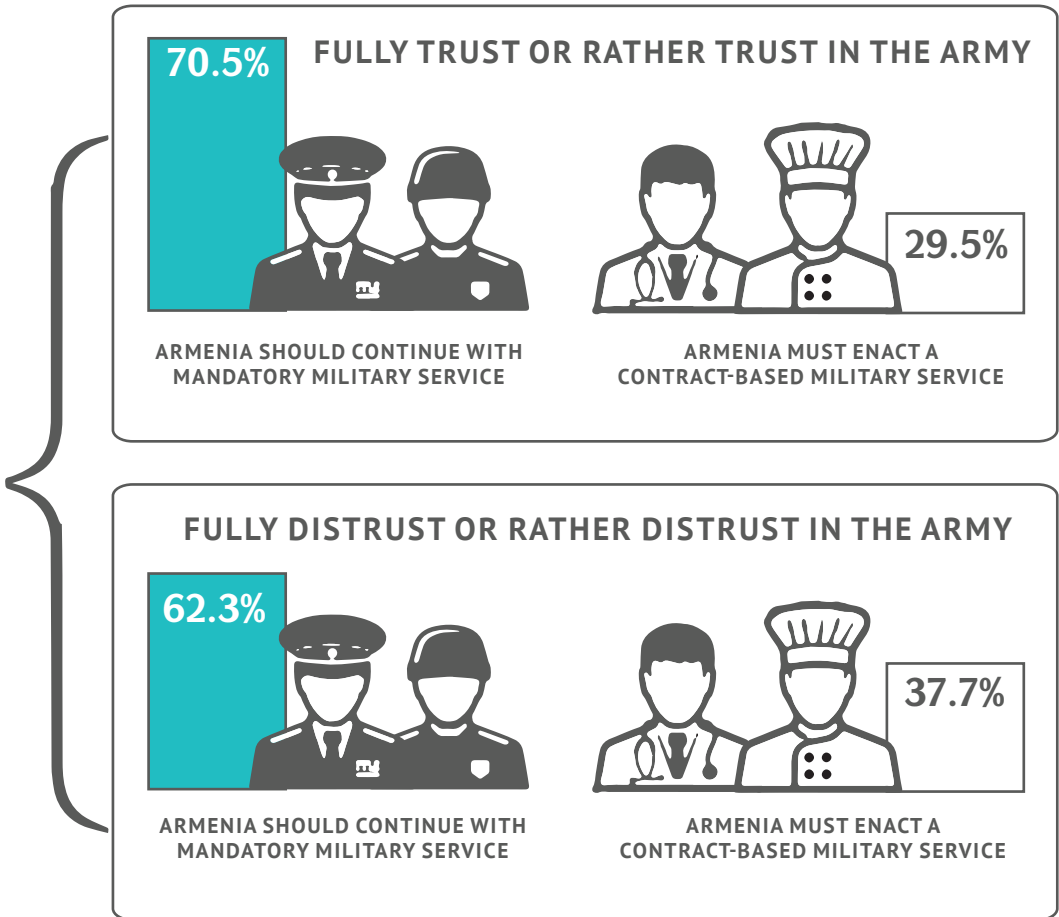
The inquiry into the geopolitical choice between the EEU and EU exposed fundamental differences. This topic is discussed in detail in unit 3.1.

The combination of these two variables gives a particularly interesting image; EEU supporters dominate by almost 15% in the group of “army trustors”,

and vice versa, most EU supporters are in the group that has no confidence in the army (Infographic 2.6). The ratio of this correlation is another piece of evidence of the relationship between these two variables⁵.

Infographic 2.5

WHICH MEANS IS PREFERABLE FOR ADDING PEOPLE TO THE ARMY?

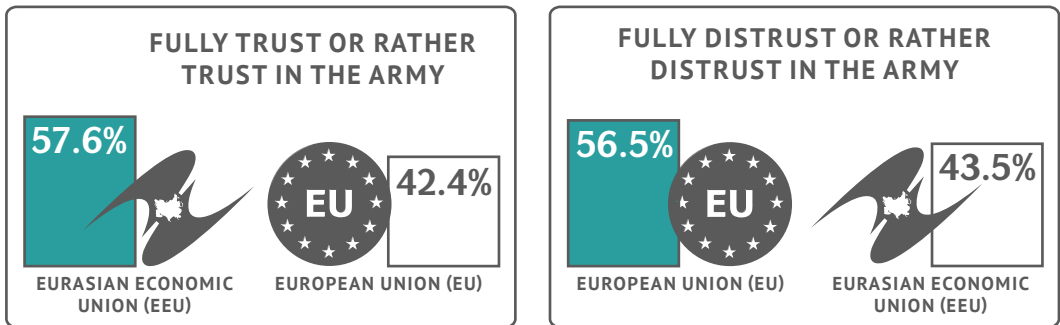


There are also remarkable differences regarding the question on feeling protected by the law. Yet again, people who feel legally protected dominate by over 15% in the group having confidence in the army; in contrast the participants who feel either completely or rather unprotected is greater by the same amount as the group that does not have confidence in the army (Infographic 2.7). The ratio¹ of the link shows a correlation between these two variables⁶.

5. Pearson Chi-Square value =7.727, assumption significance =0.005
 6. Pearson Chi-Square value =9.972, assumption significance =0.002

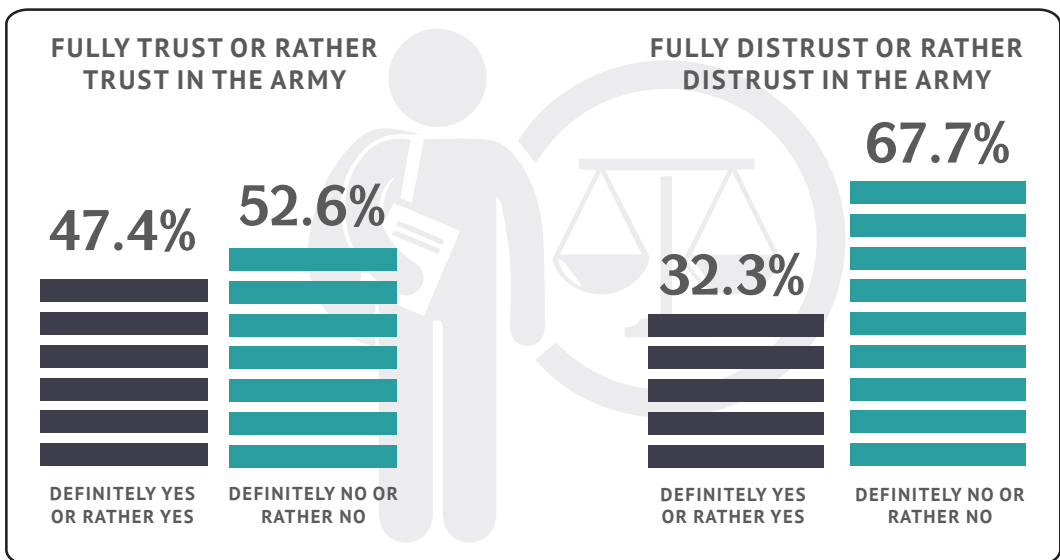
WHICH OF THESE TWO INSTITUTIONS WOULD BE MOST APPROPRIATE FOR ARMENIA TO JOIN/ASSOCIATE WITH?

Infographic 2.6



DO YOU FEEL PROTECTED BY THE LAW?

Infographic 2.7

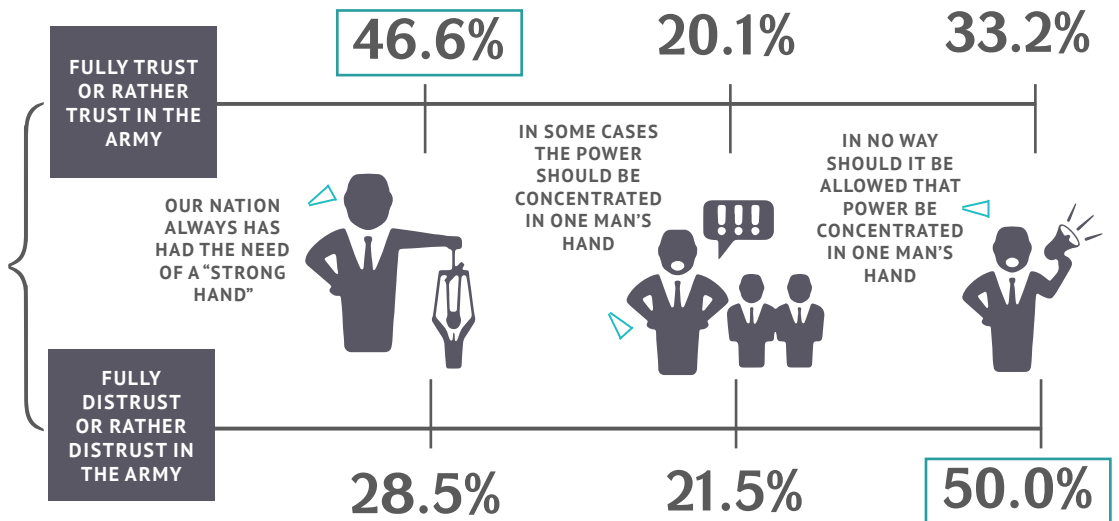


The last substantive issue that shall be observed in combination with the issue of trust or distrust in the army is the distribution and concentration of power. The combination of these two variables creates an interesting picture. The respondents of the two groups decided on one statement out of three. Their choices were distributed into two groups. Nearly half of the group, the one that trusts the army, prefers the power be concentrated in the hands of one man thus preferring a strong authoritarian leader, while half of the other group finds the power concentration unacceptable. Considering the link ratio the correlation of these two issues is very strong⁷.

7. Pearson Chi-Square value =15.985, assumption significance =0.000

CHOOSE THE ONE STATEMENT THAT ALIGNS WITH YOUR PERCEPTION

Infographic 2.8



To summarize the data in this section, we can surmise that there are major differences in attitudes to other key issues as well between people who trust the army and the ones who do not. It can be stated that the participants who trust the army, have more of an idealized attitude towards the army.

There are facts that reveal their idealized attitude; they are more willing to serve in the army, they see mandatory service as a means of forming the army and also they have specific perceptions on the ways needed to strengthen the army, among those looking for a more patriotic spirit.

Looked at in these terms this group has an approach typical of people who favor a more militarized society. The ones who do not trust the army, highlight the importance of human rights protection, it is no coincidence that this group considers itself less protected by the law.

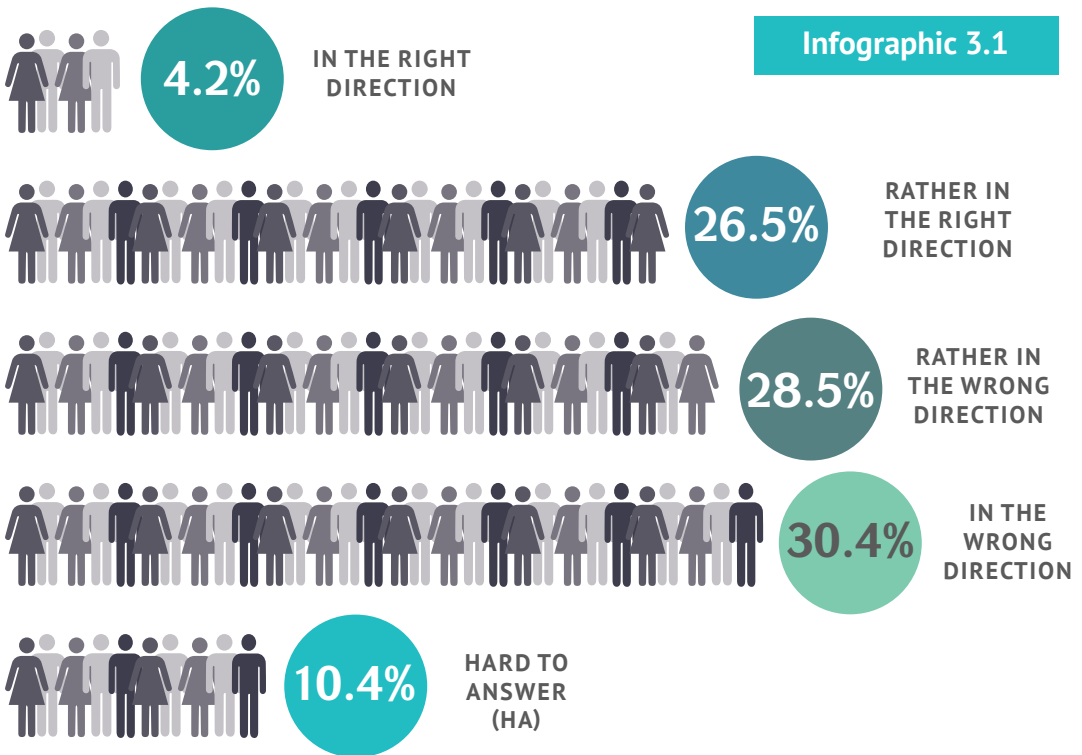
These two groups have also different approaches regarding Armenia's geopolitical preference. Most of those who trust the military tend to think that the country should go towards the EEU thus sharing the military intentions of Armenia's main ally Russia. "Distrustors" are more inclined to an association with the EU.

Finally, the "trust" group has confidence in the authoritarian way of power distribution. In contrast the "non-trust" group finds power concentration unacceptable.

3. GEOPOLITICAL PREFERENCES: SECURITY OR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT?

“He who sacrifices freedom for security deserves neither.”
Benjamin Franklin

ARMENIA’S FOREIGN POLICY DEVELOPMENTS



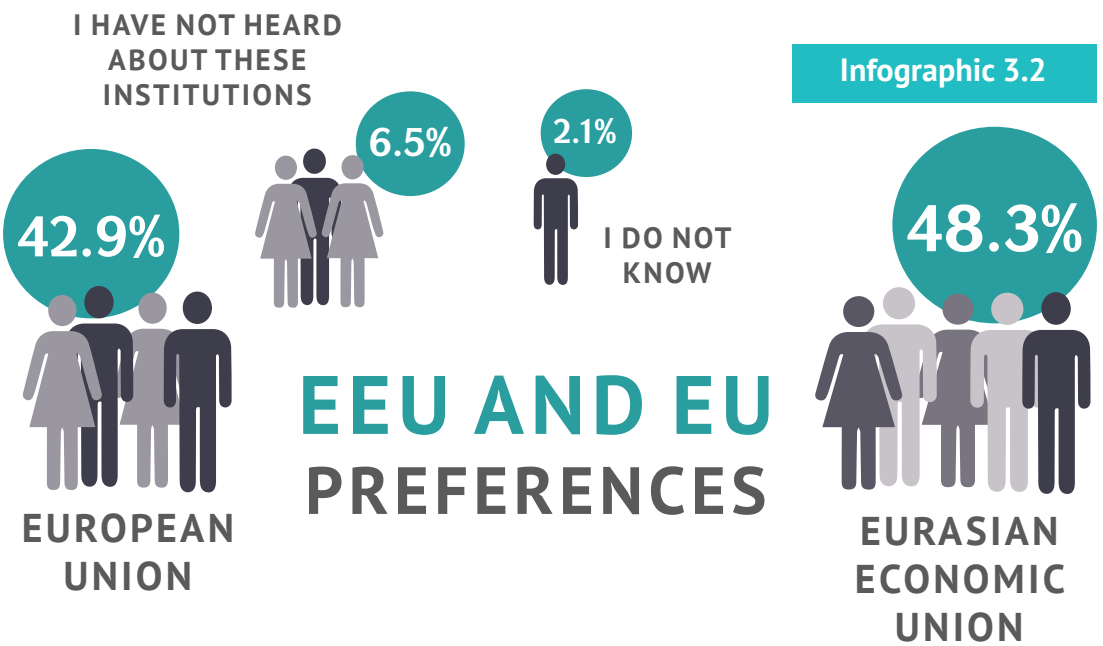
The research also examined the perceptions of Armenian youth on the course of foreign policy, particularly Armenia’s choice between the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU⁸) and the European Union (EU). This issue has been actively discussed within the society.

The first question in this section is related to the general course of foreign policy. When answering the question “How do you assess Armenia’s political developments?” only 4.2% saw them going in the right direction, whereas, 30.4% believes that Armenia’s foreign policy is headed in the wrong-direction. The numbers of respondents who consider it “rather right” and “rather wrong” are almost equal (26.5% and 28.5% respectively). The participants, who find it difficult to answer this question, is 10.4% (Infographic 3.1).

8. In the text the term Customs Union (CU) is also used

Young people were asked to express the relevance of Armenia’s integration into either the EEU or the EU by answering the question “Which of the following two structures would be more appropriate for Armenia to join or associate with?” leaving aside in what direction the foreign political process is currently going. Interestingly, the number of supporters for the EU and EEU are almost equal. 48.3% of respondents are in favor of joining the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and 42.9% are in favor of joining the European Union (EU) (Infographic 3.2).

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING TWO STRUCTURES WOULD BE MORE APPROPRIATE FOR ARMENIA TO JOIN OR ASSOCIATE WITH?



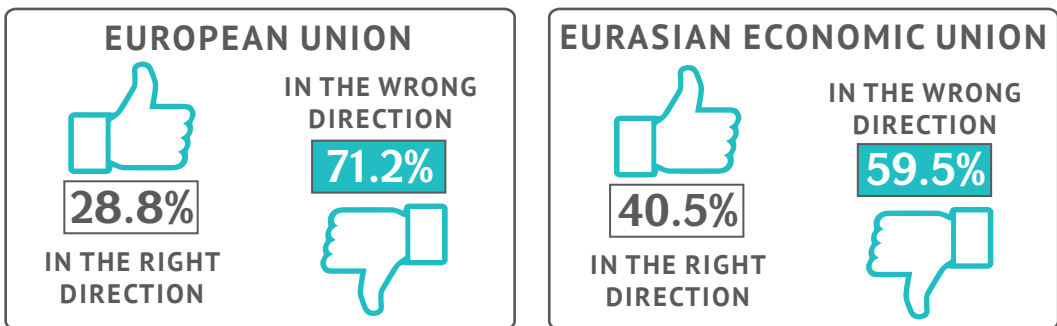
We get an interesting image from the combination of these two questions. It should be noted that the two positive responses, "right" and "rather true", are merged, and, respectively, the same was done with the answers - "wrong" and "rather wrong." It was done to make the comparison easier and clearer. As shown in the infographic, two-thirds of those who are in favor of integrating with the EU find the foreign political course wrong.

However, it is also interesting that 59.5% of those who are in favor of integrating with the EEU find that foreign policy is going in the wrong direction (Infographic 3.3). The data shows a distinct and strong correlation between these two variables⁹.

9. Pearson Chi-Square value =6.005, assumption significance =0.014

IN WHAT DIRECTION ARMENIA'S DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENTS GO?

Infographic 3.3



It is interesting to observe how young people express their preferences towards these two economic groups. Respondents were asked to choose one of the arguments listed, which we will use to represent a proxy for the reason behind their choices. The numbers of supporters of the two institutions is almost equal but the reasons are considerably different.

Among the EU supporters, the most decisive factor is the guarantees for the protection of human rights (43.2%), while among those who are in favor of the EEU five times fewer respondents consider this pre-requisite relevant (9.1%). In this group the pre-requisite of protection of human rights is in last place among of all listed reasons. (Table 3.1).

TABLE 3.1 REASONS BEHIND PREFERENCES OF EEU AND EU

EURASIAN ECONOMIC UNION	REASONS BEHIND THE CHOICE	EUROPEAN UNION
27.6	THE INSTITUTION WILL CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	30.1
25.0	THE INSTITUTION WILL ENSURE THE SECURITY FOR OUR COUNTRY	12.1
24.1	ARMENIA'S GEOPOLITICAL POSITION DICTATES THE CHOICE	6.8
11.2	THE VALUES OF THE INSTITUTION DO NOT CONTRADICT THE NATIONAL ONES	2.4
9.1	HUMAN RIGHTS ARE MORE PROTECTED IN THE MEMBER STATES OF THE INSTITUTION	43.2
2.6	OTHER	3.4
0.4	HARD TO ANSWER	1.9
100%	TOTAL	100%

"I'd rather we joined the European Union, as we can learn from European countries more. For example, human rights are not only written down but are also practiced." (Female, 20 years old, Province of Tavush, Town of Ijevan)

"I am not against the Customs Union (EEU) however I favor the European Union(EU) more. In short - just for the protection of human rights. And I am also not against the Customs Union (EEU) as the Armenian-Russian relationship is great." (Male, 26 years old, Province of Tavush, Town of Ijevan)

"First of all, the economic point must be taken into account because they are economic unions. The EU is a market of 500 million people. If such a large market opens its doors to us without customs fees and duties, then we must surely choose it instead of choosing a market of 200 million. In particular, our entry to the EEU and the EU will only be through Georgia, which is already an associated member of the EU." (Male, 19 years old, City of Yerevan)

"If we do not discuss the military aspects and reflect only on the economic one, we can realize much from the numbers; three developing countries versus twenty-eight developed ones. Europe would be profitable for us. Our developing country would also be able to consider and learn from the European experience. And there is a regional problem; we have no border with any member of the Customs Union (EEU)." (Male, 18 years old, City of Yerevan)

"I am in favor of joining the EU association, as more developed countries are included. Many products could be imported with a lower price. Young people can get an education in Europe." (Female, 25 years old, City of Yerevan)

Young people who are EU supporters considered the protection of human rights relevant during focus group discussions as well.

An almost equal numbers of respondents highlighted perspectives on Armenia's economic development in these two associations; 30.1% - in the European Union and 27.6% - in the Eurasian Economic Union. Considering that these two unions are economic ones, the number of those who consider the economic development perspectives as a pre-requisite is rather low. If we look at the outlook on economic development that the young people had during the focus group discussions, we can observe fundamental differences between people who prefer each of these two unions. For those in favor of the EU, economic development is linked to the development of the Armenian economy, experience and the larger market that exists in EU states.

"There will be no progress with the Customs Union (EEU), everything will remain as it is now or it will get even worse. All European countries are highly-developed and they will help more than Russia." (Male, 22 years old, Province of Tavush, Village of Sevqar)

"I am in favor of the Customs Union (EEU), as we have always been connected to Russia; our support has always been from there. It is Russia that gives us jobs. Our migrant workers are mainly in Russia." (Female, 20 years old, Province of Tavush, Village of Sevqar)

"We'd better join the Customs Union (EEU). Armenia's poor and vulnerable class gets their "daily bread" from Russia. If something is built in Armenia, it is built mostly with money that comes from Russia. We received help from Europe as well but very little, we cannot even compare it with the aid we get from Russia. There is no guarantee that Europe will help." (Male, 20 years old, Province of Tavush, Town of Sevqar)

"Russia is such a good country that there are more Armenians living there than in Armenia. They are so nice that they give jobs to other people." (Male, 18 years old, Province of Lori, Village of Margahovit)

"It would be preferable to just join the Russian Federation (EEU) as our compatriots go to work in Russia. Our "bread" is dependent on Russia." (Female, 22 years, Province of Lori, Village of Margahovit)

"Of course it is good to gain European experience and so on, but Russia can put pressure on us." (Male, 19 years old, City of Yerevan)

The ones, who are in favor of the Eurasian Economic Union, see a completely different perspective on the economic development of Armenia. First, the economic advantage of joining the EEU is in not losing the money that is sent to Armenia by a large number of migrant workers in Russia which lets many people "earn their daily bread." Many respondents did note these reasons will not enable Armenia to develop but to remain in the current condition.

During discussions among the reasons behind choosing the EEU, there is one connected with the fear that Russia might apply economic sanctions towards Armenia (such as increasing the price of gas or expelling Armenian workers). From this point of view, it is not about the development but about not worsening Armenia's economic situation.

For some participants, when choosing the EEU, the security-related reasons are more significant and compelling than the economic ones. Yet again, it should be noted that these institutions are economic associations.

However, 25% think that membership to the EEU provides security guarantees.

"Armenia's geographic allocation dictates the choice"- this statement also seems to relate to the security issue, since Armenia has no common border with any member state of EEU, instead it has unresolved conflicts and disputes with its neighboring countries.

The statement was mentioned by 24.1% of EU supporters. In other words, for the ones who prefer EEU cumulative (25% and 24.1%) the security factor is almost twice as important as the possibility of economic development (27.6%) (Table 3.1).

The results of the discussions' were similar to the quantitative results. One observation is that the security factor was significant in all focus group discussions on the EEU versus the EU.

For many, it was the fundamental factor in their choice. Secondly, we must

"If we don't join Russia, Azerbaijan will put pressure on us. Since Russia has troops in Armenia, they will protect us and there will be no war." (Female, 22 years old, Province of Lori, Village of Margahovit)

"Some borders are protected by Russian troops, it is no little thing. If we take the EU route, then our protection will decrease. / ... / If we don't choose the Customs (EEU), we will find ourselves in the same condition as Syria and Egypt. We would be surrounded by enemies." (Male, 24 years old, Province of Lori, City of Vanadzor)

"If the Russian troops withdraw from here, maybe we cannot protect ourselves. If there is a war with Azerbaijan, which European country will help us? None of them. But Russia will help. However it will be difficult to be independent, maybe our state will lose its independence." (Female, 21 years old, Province of Gegharkunik, Village of Noratus)

"Armenia cannot confront Azerbaijan alone. Taking this into account there are some prospects for development in Armenia if it joins the EEU. We need someone to protect us now! Europe cannot do much. And the Armenian nation has always been linked to Russia in terms of culture and value system." (Female, 24 years old, Province of Lori, Village of Margahovit)

conclude that the respondents perceive EEU membership as “*an association with Russia.*”

Interestingly, the participants, who favor the EEU over the EU, comprise two different groups. One group prefers EEU membership unconditionally, and the other would prefer EU membership but for some reason chooses the EEU. The reasons are considered below.

As you can see, the reasoning is all grounded by the security issue which is perceived sharply by the young people involved in the study. Eurasian Union (EEU) membership is put on the same line as military security and protection by Russia, and vice versa, a war is inevitable in case we refuse to join.

Although many believed that joining the EEU was a security guarantee, there were also some concerns about Russia selling weapons to Azerbaijan, as a result of this, many felt that those actions undermined the military partnership and disrupted Armenia’s security.

Interestingly, similar judgments such as that Russia is only guided by its own interests and uses the conflict as a playing card, were made in discussions conducted with young people, and in only two or three cases did participants try to justify this approach.

“First of all, Russia is the security guarantor in our region. Russia is also an interested party in the unresolved Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. It sells weapons to both sides. They use it like a club for leading us in the direction they want us to go.” (Male, 22 years old, City of Yerevan)

“In all terms we are more related to Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus than EU countries. We become one part of Russia, and in this case Russia will not let Azerbaijan harass us. Now, Azerbaijan and Turkey do not do things because they fear Russia. We have knocked on the doors of the EU, it hasn’t helped us. Russia has helped more.” (Male, 25 years old, Province of Syunik, Town of Goris)

“Russia has the benefit of keeping us under its power, as it implements arms sales, it will sell weapons to Armenia saying that Azerbaijan will soon start a war, and vice versa.” (Male, 18 years old, City of Yerevan)

“Russia sells weapons to both sides and does business with both sides. It keeps the border with Turkey. We do not have enough resources to assure the security of the whole of Armenia.” (Male, 22 years old, City of Yerevan)

“Russia influences the whole of Armenia and is going to decide what we will do.” (Male, 24 years old, Province of Lori, City of Vanadzor)

"Our country, roughly speaking, is governed by Putin." (Female, 19 years old, City of Yerevan)

"Now Armenia should join with Russia, as it depends on it, and political problems may arise if we do not join Russia. Armenia has more connections with Russia and is dependent on Russia. Russia has political influence on Armenia's government." (Female, 27 years old, City of Yerevan)

"We are governed by five people. Russia will put pressure on them and they cannot resist. I cannot say the same about Europe's pressure." (Male, 23 years old, Province of Gegharkuniq, Village of Noraduz)

"In my understanding, Putin has taken over the whole Customs Union (EEU) and wants to govern all, like Stalin once did." (Male, 21 years old, Province of Tavush, Town of Ijevan)

"Our geographical position makes us important for Russia. It does not even look to see if we need help or not, it just says that we have always been and always will be in their region. (Male, 19 years old, Province of Tavush, Town of Ijevan)

Russia's policy makes us take the EEU route. They will make us, whether we like it or not." (Female, 20 years old, Province of Syunik, Town of Goris)

"Armeni is under Russia's domination and it still will be if we join the European Union (EU). Our authoroities cannot make decisions without Russia's interference." (Female, 25 years old, provionce of Lori, City of Vanadzor)

"The very first dependence is on security and it is the main issue for me. We are very dependent on Russia. Our officials are dependent on Russia, in particular the president of Russia." (Female, 19 years old, Province of Syunik, Town of Goris)

The other subgroup of Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) supporters, as already mentioned, prefers the European Union (EU), however they choose the path to EEU. Their choice is driven by security issues. The quotes above illustrate this position.

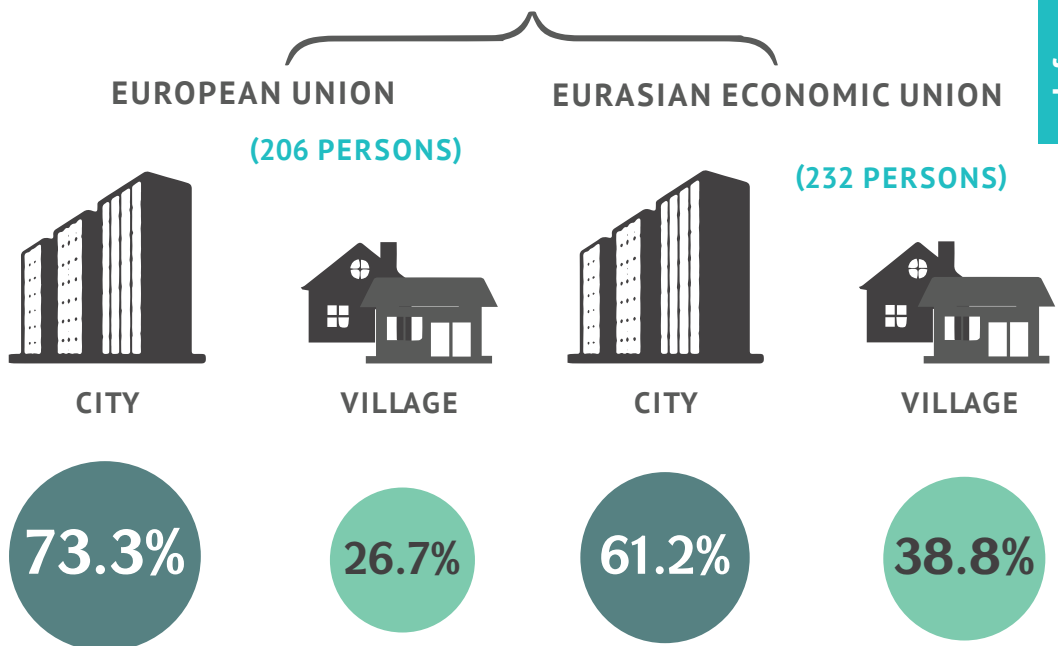
To complete the idea of an imposed joining of one organization or another, we cannot overlook such concerns as Armenia's sovereignty and the lack of domestic political resources which was frequently raised during discussions.

3.1

EEU AND EU PREFERENCES AND THE LINK TO OTHER ISSUES

Considering the ideological nature of the EEU or EU preferences of young people, we also examine some statistically significant relationships. First, we consider the relationship between demographic indicators; settlement type, gender, age and education. As shown in the infographic, there is an obvious relationship between the settlement type and EEU/EU preferences¹⁰. Urban youth are more inclined to the integration into the EU than are young people residing in rural areas (Infographic 3.4).

CUSTOMS UNION AND EUROPEAN UNION PREFERENCES ACCORDING TO SETTLEMENT TYPE



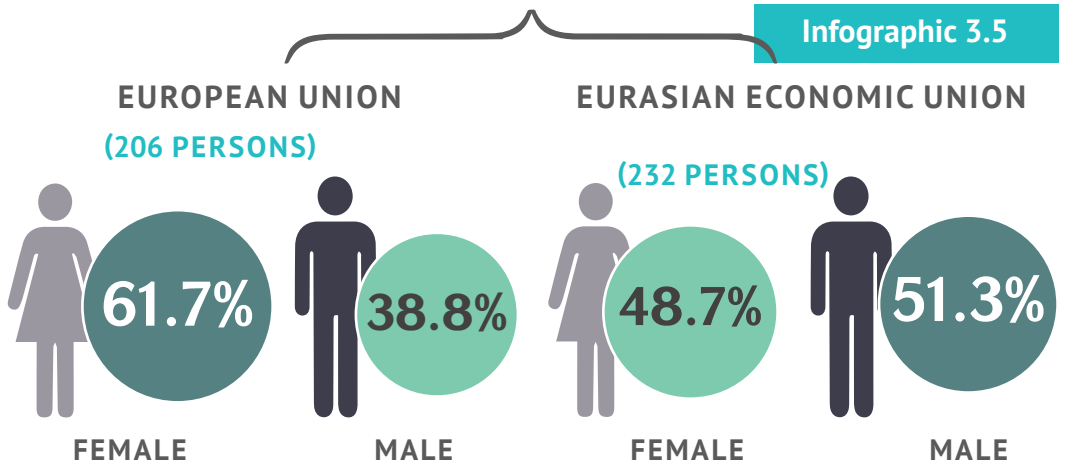
Infographic 3.4

The relationship between the preference towards the EEU or the EU and gender distribution of the respondents gives one much food for thought. The next infographic clearly shows that females are more inclined to join the European Union (EU), while males prefer the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU).

10. Pearson Chi-Square value =7.207, assumption significance =0.007

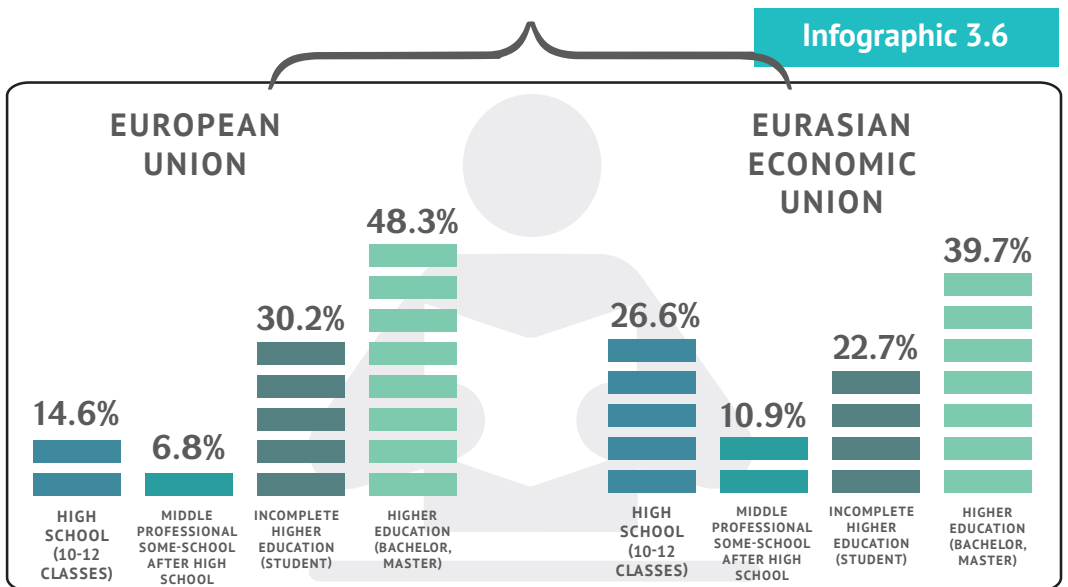
This becomes more evident when we compare it with the overall gender distribution. The correlation ratio is evidence of the strength of this relationship¹¹ (Infographic 3.5).

REPRESENTATIVES OF DIFFERENT GENDERS IN FAVOR OF EITHER THE CUSTOMS UNION (EEU) OR EUROPEAN UNION (EU)



The other variable, that shows a significant correlation¹², is the level of education. The higher the education level is the more young people are inclined towards the EU, and vice versa (Infographic 3.6).

PEOPLE WITH DIFFERENT EDUCATION BACKGROUND IN FAVOR OF INTEGRATING EITHER WITH THE EEU OR EU



11. Pearson Chi-Square value =7.38 assumption significance =0.007
 12. Pearson Chi-Square value =13.59 assumption significance =0.004

There is no statistically significant correlation between the demographic indicators and EEU /EU preferences. Thus, the preference is not due to age.

We shall also study a few relationships in light of the initial hypothesis and approaches expressed during the focus group discussions.

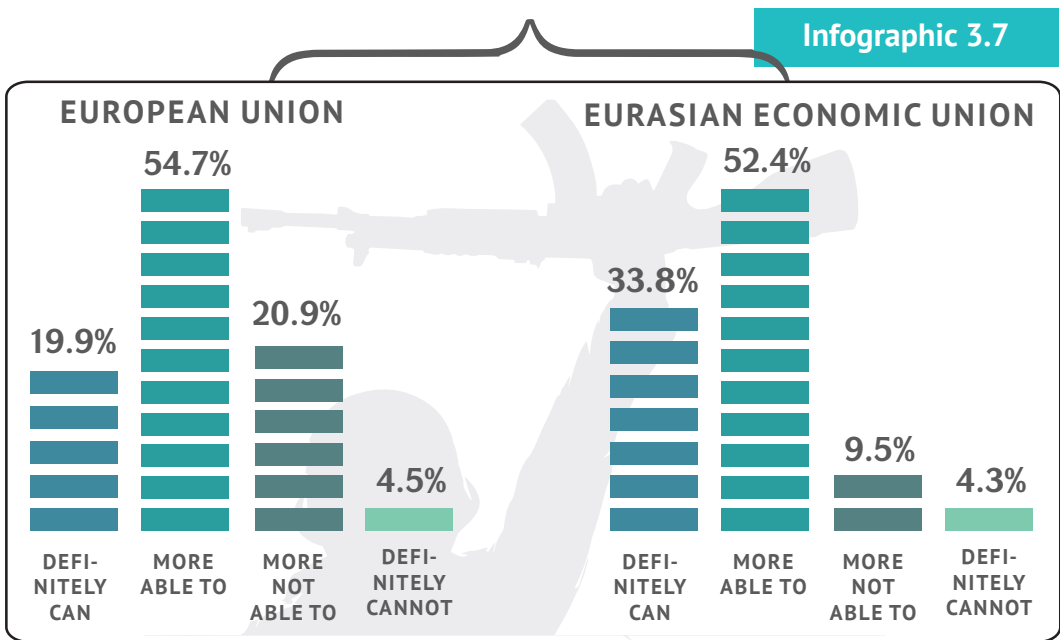
Both the quantitative data and discussion results suggest that the concern about military security affects the choices young people make. It is interesting to observe how each of the two groups, EEU versus EU supporter, evaluates the operational level of the army.

The participants were asked this question - "Is our army able to protect the state in case of any military threat by other countries?"

As seen in the infographic, there are substantial differences between the responses of the two groups. EEU supporters are more confident in the power of the army (33.8%) than EU supporters (19.9%) (Infographic 3.7). The correlation ratio¹³ is high, thus showing the strong relationship between these two issues.

The link with the other issues is interesting and logically follows the previous one – In answering the question; "How probable is the settlement of the Karabakh conflict through force? As seen from infographic 3.8, the partici-

IS OUR ARMY ABLE TO PROTECT THE STATE IN CASE OF ANY MILITARY THREAT BY OTHER COUNTRIES?

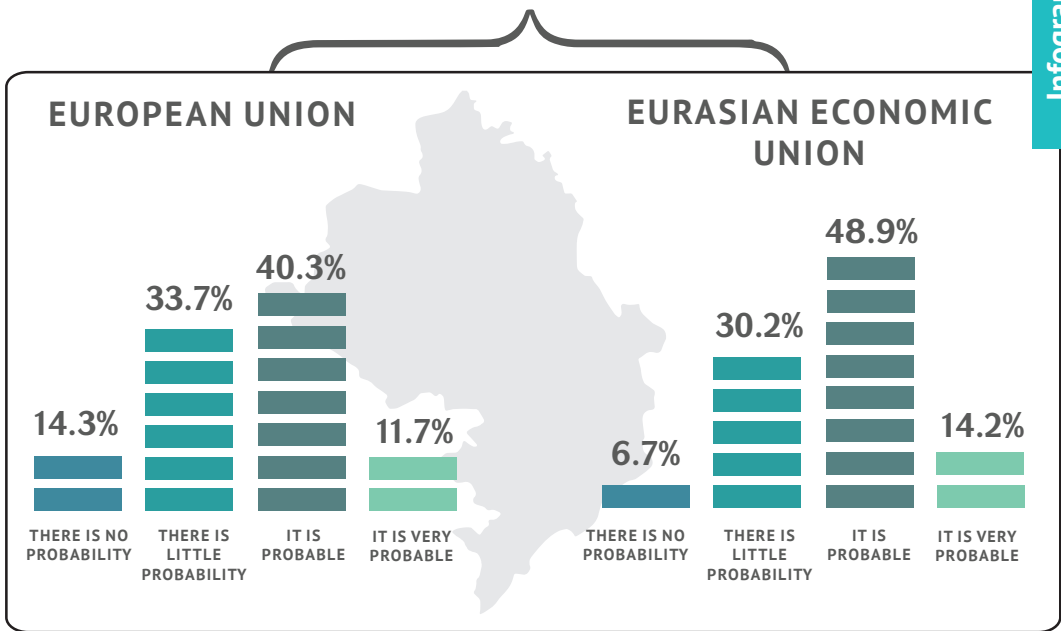


13. Pearson Chi-Square value =17.063 assumption significance =0.001

participants who predict that the conflict will be resolved through force or consider it likely to be resolved by force, is greater among EEU supporters than among EU supporters (48.9% and 40.3%, respectively). In contrast, the number of participants, who consider the military solution implausible, is twice that in the group of EU supporters than in the group of EEU supporters (14.3% and 6.7% respectively). This correlation ratio¹⁴ also confirms the connection between these two questions.

EEU AND EU PREFERENCES AND THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH CONFLICT SETTLEMENT THROUGH FORCE

Infographic 3.8



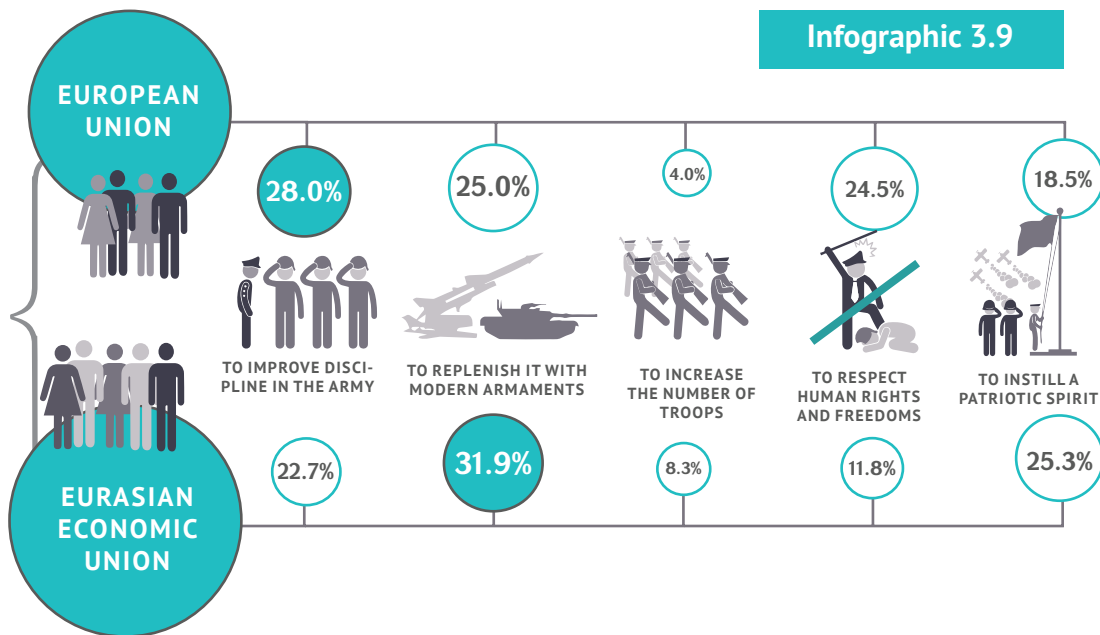
It should be noted that the combination of this question with the evaluation on the peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict did not bring forth a statistically significant correlation.

These series of interdependencies is summed up by the last question - "In your opinion, what is needed for strengthening the army in Armenia?" The answers are interesting to review. The infographic clearly shows that perceptions on the question of empowering the army are significantly different among the EEU and EU supporters. For instance, EEU supporters see empowerment primarily through replenishing it with modern armaments (31.9%), whereas EU supporters see it through the increase in discipline (28.0%) and respect for human rights within the army (24.5%). And only 11.8% of EEU

14. Pearson Chi-Square value =8.560 assumption significance =0.036

supporters highlight the importance of human rights in the army (Infographic 3.9). The high correlation ratio¹⁵ shows the connection between these two issues.

EEU AND EU PREFERENCES AND PRIORITIES FOR STRENGTHENING THE ARMY



Thus, the EEU/EU preferences in combination with these three issues gives us grounds to state that the EEU supporters have more of a militarized approach; they believe in the power of the army and use of force for conflict resolution. Also, they see more arms as the primary means to strengthen the army.

Among these two groups the next correlation is significant and derives from the initial assumption, of "feeling legally protected or unprotected." This correlation, however, does not show a statistically significant relationship. In other words, the answers to these questions have no statistically valid connection.

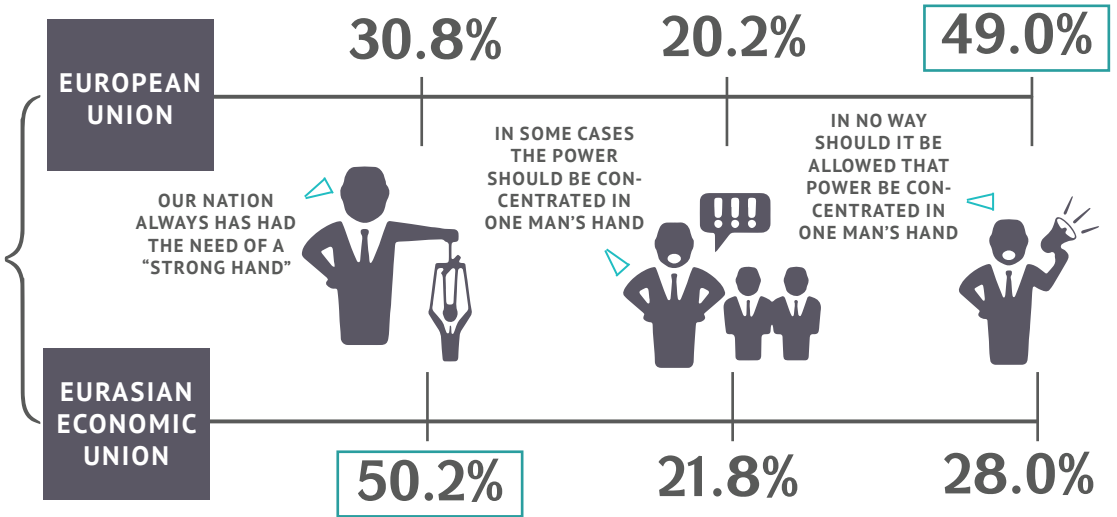
The strongest link was recorded in connection with the perceptions of youth on the distribution of power¹⁶. As it is illustrated in the infographic, half of the EEU supporters find that there has always been the need of a "strong hand", thus the concentration of power in one man's hand is acceptable, whereas half of the EU supporters believe that in no way should it be allowed that power be concentrated in one man's hand.

15. Pearson Chi-Square value =18.063 assumption significance =0.001

16. Pearson Chi-Square value =22.042 assumption significance =0.000

CHOOSE THE ONE STATEMENT THAT ALIGNS WITH YOUR PERCEPTION ON THE POWER DISTRIBUTION

Infographic 3.10



To summarize this section we illustrate some conclusions. The study showed that young people do not have a distinct preference towards joining either the EEU or EU. There is no significant difference in the numbers of participants who are in favor of one or the other of these two geopolitical entities. However, the number of EEU supporters is larger by a small amount.

Though the supporters of these structures are almost equal in numbers, there are distinct differences in the reasons behind their preferences. The EEU is preferable because it provides security guarantees. This reason dominates half of the EEU supporters. In contrast, the EU is preferable from the focus on of human rights.

In both cases, the outlook on economic development is in second place. It should also be noted that the perspective on economic development is grounded differently. In the matter of the EEU, it is a way to avoid possible economic pressures and punishments from Russia, and, thus strives to maintain the current state of the economy. In the case of the EU, it is the prospect of gaining access to a larger market.

As in the question of settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, in the context of joining or not joining the EEU there are two opposite if not extreme positions. In the case of joining the EEU, Russia is seen as the only military partner that can and does guarantee our security, on the other hand this partnership has a shaky nature. Some of the youth believe that Russia proceeds with its own interests and in case of any change within its interests, the situation may change abruptly.

4. PERCEPTION OF SECURITY AND THE CHALLENGES IT PRESENTS

Young people observe security on three levels - global, state and individual. At the global security level they see threats and possible wars across the world and in this respect people living in any corner of the world are in danger.

The state-level security is seen relative to the re-escalation of the war with Azerbaijan due to the unresolved conflict and border insecurity issue.

Moreover, they wish to eliminate the feeling of being threatened by strengthening the army. As it can be observed in other discussions (see unit 4.1), the empowerment of the army is seen through an increase in the number of troops and armaments.

While talking about security young people express contradictory outlooks on

"I don't think there is a person on the planet who feels protected; a war may start any time and none of us are insured against it. That is why I feel helpless and this feeling has no connection with the fact of where I am (in Armenia – the whole group) now." (Female, 18 years old, City of Yerevan)

"In any country, even if it is the most powerful country from the military point of view, you are not insured (security) because anything can happen." (Male, 19 years old, City of Yerevan)

"In terms of the country, I do not feel safe because more and more Armenians are killed, etc. / ... / One day I may wake up and learn that a war has started." (Male, 18 years old, City of Yerevan)

"Some time ago there were aircrafts flying over the city and they were flying over our house, I thought it was a war. We are threatened; anything may happen at any moment. Our future is uncertain and we do not know what will happen to us tomorrow." (Female, 20 years old, City of Yerevan)

"Every day, we hear gun shots. In that sense I do not feel safe." (Female, 21 years old, Province of Gegharkunik, Village of Noratus)

the army. On the one hand they find the army powerful; on the other hand they refer to the establishment of discipline and murders in non-combat conditions.

Young people connect joining the EEU with Russia as the main, if not the only means of strengthening economic institutions in Armenia. Interestingly, no one mentions the CSTO (Collective Security Treaty Organization) that the Republic of Armenia is a member of.

The fundamental principle of CSTO as stated in Article 4 is: *“in the matter of an act of aggression against any member state, all the other member countries provide the necessary assistance, including military aid, as well as support by the means they have at their disposal.”*

On the state-level emigration is another factor harming the security of the country. Many respondents underline this issue as among the most important problems of RA.

"It is better to put our efforts towards strengthening the army and having more troops on the border. It is important not to experience fear. As for the country, I do not feel threatened within the state." (Female, 22 years old, Province of Ghexarkunik, Village of Noratus)

"I feel safe. Our army is powerful. Discipline should be enforced. Soldiers should be monitored to prevent (non combat) murders." (Female, 17 years old, Province of Gegharkunik, Village of Gavar)

"I wish our military service was able to defend soldiers within Armenia and prevent soldiers from being killed not by the enemy." (Female, 18 years old, Province of Gegharkunik, Village of Gavar)

"I think if a war starts, without Russia we will not be a big problem for Azerbaijan. My sense of security depends on a war." (Male, 18 years old, City of Yerevan)

"You said safety and at once I pictured a war and the (EEU) Customs Union immediately came to my mind that ... well granddaddies say that if the Russians troops were to withdraw from here a war will break out. Now, if we do not choose the (EEU) customs union, we will immediately be in a war. All these immediately came to my mind; for to me it is all about security." (Female, 19 years old, City of Yerevan)

"The police beat people. It must not be allowed." (Female, 17 years old, Province of Gegharkunik, Village of Gavar)

The next state-level security threat has an inner character. The unpredictability of government, in other words, a form of governing that would correspond more to the European standards, causes a lack of trust towards the state/government among many young people. This result implies that the government's activity must comply with the principle of legal certainty and therefore be more predictable.

Now let's consider how they interpret security on the individual level. In contrast to the state-level, perceptions on individual security are varied. The diversity of opinions expressed during discussions can be classified as; some young people highlight the importance of economic threats and to others legal threats. Both are relevant to security at the individual level.

Young people have diverse opinions on the importance of the legal threats to security at the level of the individual. Some of them believe that the government and its relevant bodies must guarantee legal protection. Thus,

"If it goes on like this, there will be no one left in Armenia in a few years. The country will be deserted. This is the greatest threat of all. But the borders are protected, so it's ok." (Male, 18 years old, Province of Tavush, Village of Sevqar)

"I do not trust any institution. I think that everyone insures his or her own security. If a person is aware of his rights, he can protect himself. I feel safe, but not due to the state. In contrast, it is dangerous to rely on the state's security." (Male, 23 years old, Province of Tavush, Town of Ijevan)

"I do not feel safe because one doesn't know what our government will initiate in a month, there is no clear policy." (Female, 19 years, Province of Lori, City of Vanadzor)

"I feel somewhat safe from the physical point of view, but not from a social perspective. We're not safe, the state makes decisions that are arbitrary ... for example, the new pension law. (Female, 21 years old, Province of Tavush, Town of Ijevan)

"First of all, a job is important to make people feel more secure. They should feel that they also have some significance by being provided with minimum social/economic resources." (Male, 21 years old, Province of Tavush, Town of Ijevan)

"Legal security depends on one's knowledge; to what extent one will be able to protect their own rights (Male, 24 years old, Province of Lori, City of Vanadzor)

“Legal security depends on one’s knowledge; to what extent one will be able to protect their own rights (Male, 24 years old, Province of Lori, City of Vanadzor)

“Today, even if you know the law, you are not safe. If you oppose the system, the system will get rid of you. You cannot act against the system no matter what knowledge you have. Today our system is often times against the people. In this country you are not insured of anything. For example, in terms of the law, you can feel safe in America, where the President may be sentenced to jail.” (Male, 19 years old, City of Yerevan)

“In many cases even if you know your rights, you cannot protect them.” (Female, 23 years old, Province of Lori, City of Vanadzor)

according to the opinions expressed during our discussions, the police as a law enforcement body and the judicial system as a justice body were seen as not carrying out their functions as defined by the law, thereby undermining the sense of security of the individual.

Others perceive themselves, not the state, as the guarantor of their own legal protection. Even if some rights are violated, they tend to take the blame for their own ignorance or inactions.

Within the same logic, many of the young people feel safe, in the sense that, if necessary, they can achieve the application of law and can protect their rights.

There are some contradictory visions on the same question. Some young people find that being aware of their rights does not guarantee legal protection.

As we have already mentioned, summing up the perceptions on security expressed during the discussions one can distinguish three levels of security: global, state and individual. Global security is perceived and accepted as a possible threat; however it is not a matter of immediate concern for young people, because it is perceived as a phenomenon that they cannot affect. The same is not true about state level security. “The probability of war re-escalation at any time” is the main fear and threat which deteriorates the sense of security. During discussions with these young people two main threats were distinguished at the individual level; economic and legal protection issues. Interestingly, some of the young people feel more protected legally because they believe that the legal protection depends on them. The others are sure that even knowledge of ones’ rights does not guarantee protection as “the system works against the human/citizen”.

4.1 THE VISION OF A STRONG ARMY

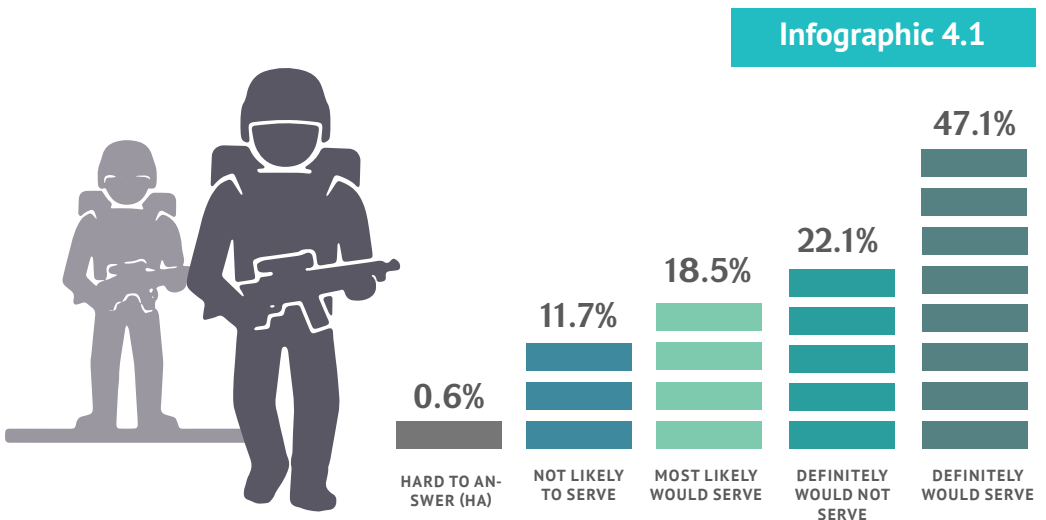
The attitudes of young people towards the armed forces are of particular interest within this research study. Before presenting our analysis of the collected data, it is important to note that 46% of the 219 male respondents did not serve in the RA or NK army, while 54% of them have already completed their service.

In order to learn about the attitudes of young people towards the army the following question was asked: “If you had the chance to choose whether to serve in the RA army or not, what would you choose?” Since the question was asked both to male and female respondents, the female respondents were asked to answer on behalf of their brothers or best friends.

Almost half (47.1%) of the respondents mentioned that they would definitely serve in the army even if they were given the chance to not do so. Despite this, 22.1% of the respondents answered that they would definitely not serve in the army. In general, if we consider the not so extreme attitudes, the attitude towards serving in the army is more positive than negative (Infographic 4.1)

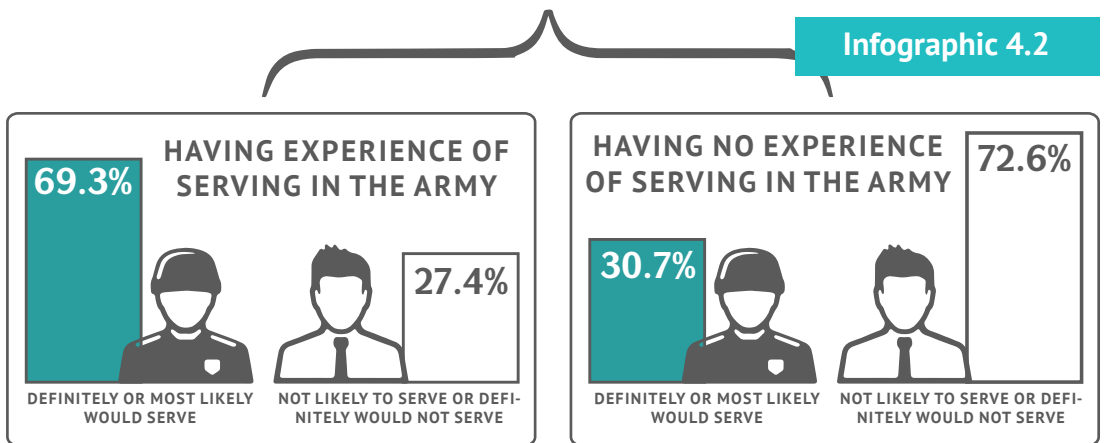
If we consider the same questions and the answers given by those who have served in the army and those who have not served, we see an interesting

IF YOU HAD THE CHANCE TO CHOOSE WHETHER TO SERVE IN THE RA ARMY OR NOT, WHAT WOULD YOU CHOOSE?



picture. In the group of respondents who have negative attitudes towards military service, the majority are those who have never served in the army (72.6%), and on the contrary, those who have positive attitudes towards military service are the ones who have already served in the army (69.3%). Thus, it can be stated that the attitude towards military service is contingent upon the actual experience of serving in the army. This is also evidenced by the high correlation coefficient¹⁷.

IF GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO CHOOSE, WOULD YOU SERVE IN THE RA ARMED FORCES?



The interesting part here is that the opinions expressed during the discussions do not reflect the final picture of the survey findings. Young people surveyed, particularly male participants, have negative attitudes towards the army and bring various reasons for that which we will examine in detail later.

Before referring to the analysis of the opinions expressed during the discussions, we will observe the way young people justify why it is necessary to serve in the army and vice versa.

In Infographic 4.1 it is clear that the most frequently mentioned option in favor of military service is the option “*To ensure the security of the state*” which received 36.2% of the votes. This is followed by the option “*To ensure the security of my family and relatives*” with 23.7% of the votes.

A considerable number of respondents, 20% of them, think that the service in the army is necessary for developing self-confidence and independence in young men.

17. Pearson Chi-Square value =33.823 assumption significance =0.00

TABLE 4.1 HOW WOULD YOU JUSTIFY THE NECESSITY OF MILITARY SERVICE?

	RESPONDENT	%
TO ENSURE STATE SECURITY	133	36.2
TO ENSURE THE SECURITY OF MY FAMILY AND RELATIVES	87	23.7
YOUNG MEN GAIN SELF-CONFIDENCE AND INDEPENDENCE IN THE ARMY	73	19.9
SERVING IN THE ARMY IS EVERY YOUNG MAN'S DUTY	39	10.6
TO EMPOWER THE ARMY	23	6.3
TO STAY IN THE ARMY AND MAKE THE MILITARY SERVICE A CAREER	6	1.6
OTHER	6	1.6
TOTAL	367	100

Analysis of the discussion results shows that the necessity of military service is seen as a duty and obligation for the sake of the state and is highlighted primarily by female respondents.

If we analyze the opinions expressed during the discussions, it becomes clear that the young people clearly differentiate the obligation of service for the sake of the state from the service for the protection of the family. The most frequently highlighted approach during the discussions was that the service in the army in non-combat situations is unnecessary, whereas the necessity of joining the army to go to war in order to protect the families is out of question.

“The boys should definitely serve in the army, otherwise who will protect their families and parents? I will urge my brother to serve in the army in order to protect us. There are many who do not want to serve, but our borders need to be protected.” (Female, 18 years old, Province of Gegharkunik, Town of Gavar)

“First of all it is necessary because we have to protect our borders and second, the army is the greatest school for men to gain confidence.” (Female, 24 years old, Province of Lori, Town of Margahovit)

“In case there is a danger that soon Armenia will be attacked, I will definitely go to war. But now in non-combat situations I will not serve in the army.” (Male, 20 years old, City of Yerevan)

TABLE 4.2 HOW WOULD YOU EXPLAIN WHY MILITARY SERVICE IS UNNECESSARY?

	RESPONDENT	%
THE SAFETY OF SERVICEMEN IS NOT GUARANTEED	117	37.3
THE ISSUES IN THE ARMY ARE SOLVED THROUGH AN ACQUAINTANCE, A FRIEND OR MONEY	52	16.6
IT IS WASTE OF TIME	45	14.3
LACK OF DISCIPLINE IN THE ARMY	32	10.2
THE SOLDIERS ARE SUBJECTED TO VIOLENCE AND MORAL HUMILIATION IN THE ARMY	32	10.2
THE SOLDIERS ARE NOT PROVIDED WITH REQUIRED MINIMUM CONDITIONS	19	6.1
OTHER	17	5.4
TOTAL	314	100

The reason why young people contrast the duty of serving in the army for the state from the duty of serving for the protection of families is clearly stated in this speech of one of the participants.

“I have never served but if there is a need to protect my family I will definitely join the army.” (Male, 23 years old, Province of Gegharkunik, Village of Noratus)

“I have never served in the army and I will not. In current situation I will not join the army. However, if it is really necessary and there is an emergency, I will join.” (Male, 26 years old, Province of Tavush, Town of Ijevan)

“I will soon join the army and I have the sense that I am going to protect not the country but my family and friends. I do not think that the state will be have my back while I will be serving.” (Male, 18 years old, Province of Lori, Village of Margahovit)

“It is necessary to serve: you gain self-confidence, make new friends, and become mature. This is important for the country because we feel secured. I have never served in the army but I think it is essential for young men.” (Male, 25 years old, Province of Gegharkunik, Village of Noratus)

“I would like young men to serve, because they become more confident and independent.” (Female, 18 years old, Province of Lori, Village of Margahovit)

“The army toughens a person. The commanders psychologically pressure the soldiers. The soldier becomes aggressive and then conflicts arise.” (Male, 24 years old, Province of Lori, City of Vanadzor)

There was another opinion frequently highlighted during the discussions according to which the military service is necessary for greater self-awareness and the development of independence in young men. It is important to note that this approach was most frequently expressed by female participants.

It is noteworthy that the view of realizing one's own potential through military service was dominant among others; nevertheless the human rights violations against the soldiers were also mentioned often.

All those that were against military service, chose only one option to support their argument. As shown in the Infographic 4.2 the prevailing answer is the issue of safety. 37.3% of the respondents mentioned that the safety of the soldiers is not guaranteed in the army. This option includes both fatalities resulting from cease-fire regime violations and those that were the result of actions that are contrary to statutory regulations in the army. However, as the discussion results show, young people are very concerned about the non-combat deaths of soldiers.

As it has already been mentioned, an analysis of the discussion results also shows that the issues of soldiers' safety and the lack of guarantees of that

“The boys do not want to serve because there are many soldiers who die in non-combat situations. I would not want my sons to serve in the army because there is an issue of survival.” (Female, 21 years old, Province of Lori, Village of Margahovit)

“The parents are not sure in what condition their child will return from the army. Soldiers die in the units not only from the bullets of the enemy. (Female, 19 years old, Province of Tavush, Village of Sevkar)

“There are some cases when the officer pours a bucket of water on the sleeping soldier, after which some blood cells turn white, and the soldier died or, in case the soldier has heart issues, he dies of a heart attack. When seeing off a conscript to the army, a toast is said wishing him to return safe and sound. There are so many negative things that there is no guarantee whether he will return or not. Thrashing is not a method to make somebody understand. People are afraid of the army.” (Male, 23 years old, Province of Gegharkunik, Village of Noratus)

“I would not join the army, because everyone who comes back is not pleased. The soldier is the protector of the homeland, thus he should be protected so he can protect the borders. I have heard that just because a soldier moves or does not stand still when ordered he can be easily beaten up. This is why nobody wants to join the army.” (Male, 18 years old, Province of Lori, Village of Margahovit)

safety are the most important causes of negative attitude towards the military service.

Actions that are contrary to statutory regulations that result in death are also convincing reasons for avoiding service in the army. What is more, the stories being told usually are not based on personal experience but are passed on by some friends who have already served in the army.

Another argument brought against military service was the violation of the principle of equality and justice and corruption in the army when “the issues in the army are solved through an acquaintance, a friend or money”. This option was mentioned by 16.6% of the respondents. (Infographic 4.2)

Those who perceive military service as a waste of time are almost the same percentage. (14.3%) (Infographic 4.2). Many would prefer only one year of military service, since they say that it separates the soldier from the everyday normal life for the shortest possible period of time, even though it gives little back in return.

The options “*Lack of discipline in the army*” and “*The soldiers are subjected to violence and moral humiliation in the army*” which were in fact very similar statements, received the same number of votes from the respondents 10.2% (Infographic 4.2).

Combining these two responses we may state that for almost 20% of the respondents that actions that are contrary to statutory regulations in the army is seen as a justifiable reason for avoiding military service.

The other issue explored during the survey was the principle of the formation of the army. 60.8% of the respondents think that it is necessary to keep the compulsory service in Armenia, while 37.1% think that Armenia should transition to contract based armed forces.

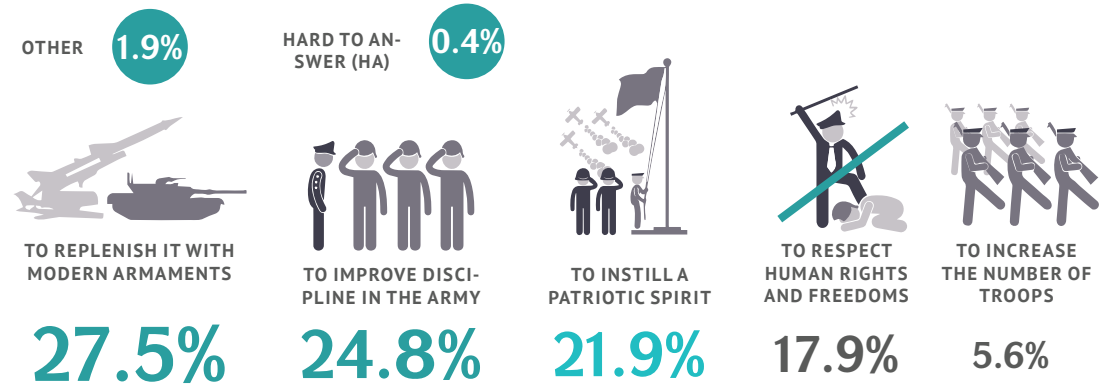
The analysis of the perceptions about the army would be incomplete without observing the ways young people see as how to strengthen the army, in other words what they understand by saying a powerful army.

This is how young people’s preferences were classified in response to the question “What is the most important thing nowadays to strengthen the RA army?”

According to Infographic 4.3 the powerful army first of all should be equipped with modern weapons (27.5%), which fits into the logic of the arms race. The second most important way to increase the level of discipline is through stricter enforcement of statutory authority. (24.8%)

Infographic 4.3

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING NOWADAYS TO STRENGTHEN THE RA ARMY?



It is interesting that based on the answers given to the previous question young people do not want to serve in the army mostly due to the lack of security guarantees for the servicemen, whereas the actions contrary to statutory regulations and violations that occur in these situations fall into the fourth level of importance (17.9%). The nurturing of a spirit of patriotism is considered more important (21.9%).

Overall we can state that militaristic perceptions prevail in young people's ideas about a powerful army and that more than half of the respondents (55%) find the increase in armaments, the increase in the number of soldiers and nurturing patriotic spirit as being very important.

"I terribly regret that girls in Armenia do not serve in the army. I have a great desire to serve but my uncle does not allow me to. I want to be ready for war. My sister and I want very much to serve in the army however my brother would prefer not to serve because he needs to get deeper into science." (Female, 19 years old, City of Yerevan)

"Perhaps it would be possible for girls to serve in the army, although the society does not accept it. If it were acceptable I would definitely serve." (Female, 21 years old, Province of Gegharkunik, Village of Noratus)

"If I were a boy, I would serve because I would personally like to protect my family and friends. I would do that so at least I am doing something for my country. It would also be a way for me to mature and to gain more confidence. (Female, 22 years old, Province of Lori, Village of Margahovit)

"Any young man should serve, no matter how bad the conditions are. I would also serve. I will even be on the frontline if there is a war. (Female, 20 years old, Province of Tavush, Town of Ijevan)

Another manifestation of the extreme militaristic thinking was the great desire of female respondents to serve in the army. 62.3% of the respondents agree with the statement “*Armenia’s geographical position is such that women should learn to handle weapons*”. Both the survey results and the opinions expressed during the discussions provide evidence for this.

In order to have a complete picture of the perceptions, the respondents were asked to tell how much they agree or disagree with a certain statement. We will point out some notable figures from Infographic 4.3. 61.3% of the respondents mentioned “*Armenia has the most powerful army in the South Caucasus region.*”

Despite the difficult social-economic conditions and high rates of poverty, nevertheless, 80% of the respondents (52.5% and 28.3%) think that “*The state funds allocated for the army and armaments should be increased every year*” while almost 50% (24.8% and 25.4%) think that “*Military officers should be given considerable social benefits (housing, high salary/pension)*” which also implies additional funds from the state budget.

74.6% of young people (39.6% and 35.0%) prefer to be not informed about the situation in the army and agree to the following statement “*The problems and incidents in the army should not be publicized, because it negatively affects the reputation of the army.*”

TABLE 4.3 TELL YOUR LEVEL OF AGREEMENT OR DISAGREEMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS

	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	HA
ARMENIA HAS THE MOST POWERFUL ARMY IN SOUTH CAUCASUS	18.3	42.7	21.7	14.0	3.3
THE STATE FUNDS ALLOCATED FOR THE ARMY AND ARMAMENTS SHOULD BE INCREASED EVERY YEAR	52.5	28.3	11.7	4.2	3.3
MILITARY OFFICERS SHOULD BE GIVEN CONSIDERABLE SOCIAL BENEFITS (HOUSING, HIGH SALARY / PENSION)	24.8	25.4	20.6	27.7	1.5
THE PROBLEMS AND INCIDENTS IN THE RA ARMY SHOULD NOT BE PUBLICIZED, BECAUSE IT NEGATIVELY AFFECTS THE REPUTATION OF THE ARMY	39.6	35.0	12.9	10.8	1.7
THE SECURITY OF SMALL COUNTRIES LIKE ARMENIA MUST BE INSURED BY OTHER MORE POWERFUL COUNTRIES	25.4	37.5	19.0	16.7	1.5

“I do not want my brother to serve in the army because he will face a lot of problems. You never know whether he will survive or not, everything is possible there... such as murders. However if everyone thinks this way we will not feel safe and we will not have a secure homeland. Nevertheless, even with all the difficulties, military service is the right thing to do. (Female, 20 years old, City of Yerevan)

“The boys should serve in the army. There is a big difference between those who served and those who did not. However it is very sad that there are fatalities.” (Female, 21 years old, Province of Gegharkunik, Village of Noratus)

“It is very difficult now: the borders are not safe, the soldiers are getting thousands of diseases or return home with disabilities. Anyways they become well-rounded and become real men. (Female, 20 years old, Province of Tavush, Village of Sevkar)

“It is important to serve for the homeland. However, on the other hand their security is not insured. I would definitely not want my brother to serve, but he has to protect our homeland.” (Female, 21 years old, Province of Tavush, Town of Ijevan)

“My brother will be drafted in a few years and I am very happy for that. Unfortunately, the officers abuse their power. Of course there will be some problems in the army but the real man should overcome all that.” (Female, 20 years old, Province of Tavush, Town of Ijevan)

And finally here is a statement that appears to contradict the statements that the RA army is the most powerful in the region: 62.9% of the respondents believe that “*The security of small countries like Armenia must be insured by other more powerful countries.*”

To have a complete review of the attitudes towards the army, we must analyze the results of the discussions. It is paradoxical that with the militaristic consciousness that is exemplified by the following statement, and despite the fact that young people state a lack of security and guarantees for life in the army, nevertheless they find it necessary to serve even if it costs them their lives.

Both the analysis of quantitative data and the analysis of the discussion results allow us to make several conclusions.

The main conclusion is that the perceptions of many young people are typical to the citizens of a militarized society. This is proven by a few facts:



first of all the fact that females seem to compel young men to serve in the army, and second, their own desire to serve in the army. Another factor that defines a militarized attitude in society is the way people imagine the ways of strengthening the army: here it is through more arms and more soldiers as well as rising patriotic spirit and discipline. The respect towards human rights stands last on this list. Moreover, three-fourths of the young people believe that the problems and the incidents in the army should not be discussed or publicized. Apart from this, the conclusion proves that despite current socio-economic issues in the country, the vast majority of young people (four-fifth of the respondents) believe that the state funds allocated for the army and armaments should be increased every year. In so doing they assist the arms race approach, a phenomenon that is characteristic of militarized societies.

The analysis also brings out some contradictions and discrepancies in the perceptions and attitudes of young people. The most vivid example is that although young people mention the problems in the army, even the lack of the guarantee of respect for the life of every soldier; nevertheless two-third of the respondents is willing to serve in the army. It should be noted that the majority in this group are those who have already served in the army.

The vast majority of young people are not ready to serve in the army merely out of obligation towards the country; however, in case there is war, they are ready to go to war. In this way they oppose themselves to the government, believing that the state does not guarantee their service with safe and appropriate conditions. Thus, it can be stated that there is only a potential of negative mobilization among young people. Therefore the current sentiments among them in this regard can be described as follows: *“I am not ready to serve in the army for the sake of the state; however I will go to war against the enemy.”*

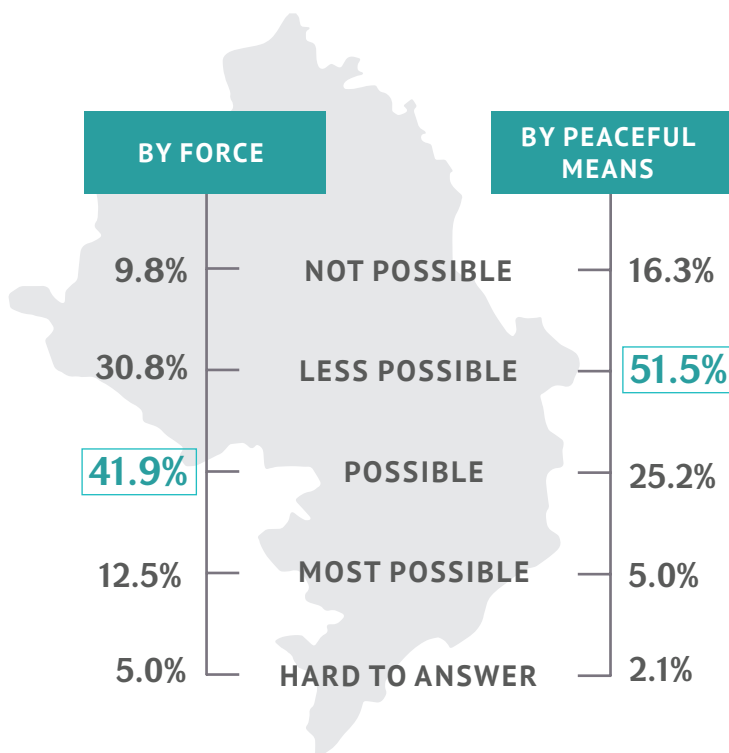
Another conclusion is that young people have rather stereotypical perceptions about a powerful army, mostly in line with the ideology of the former Soviet Army. Two thirds of the respondents support the principle of compulsory military service, while only 30% of them are in favor of a professional contractual army. Thus, not only is the army considered a hardnosed structure that is not ready for changes, it can also be stated there is a lack of demand among young people towards such changes. Among the possible explanations for this phenomenon can be an opinion that Armenia does not have enough resources for keeping a professional army.

4.2 THE ISSUE OF NAGORNO-KARABAKH CONFLICT AND THE SECURITY

Nowadays the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh as an unresolved conflict is a major factor distorting the sense of security in Armenia. Consequently, the research study also looked at the attitudes of young people towards the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and possible solutions. The reason for this is that Nagorno-Karabakh is not only a key issue in Armenia's foreign policy, but it also has a great impact on domestic socio-political developments.

First of all, young people were asked to evaluate the extent of the potential for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict either through peaceful means or by force. Almost 2/3 of the respondents do not see a potential for peaceful settlement (through negotiations) or considers it less likely (16.3 and 51.5% accordingly), while only 1/3 of the respondents forecast a resolution through negotiations (25.2% considers it "possible" and 5% considers it "most possible"). More than half of the respondents consider the solution to the conflict by force "possible" or "most possible." (41.9% and 12.5% accordingly) (Infographic 4.4)

HOW POSSIBLE IS THE RESOLUTION OF THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH CONFLICT..?

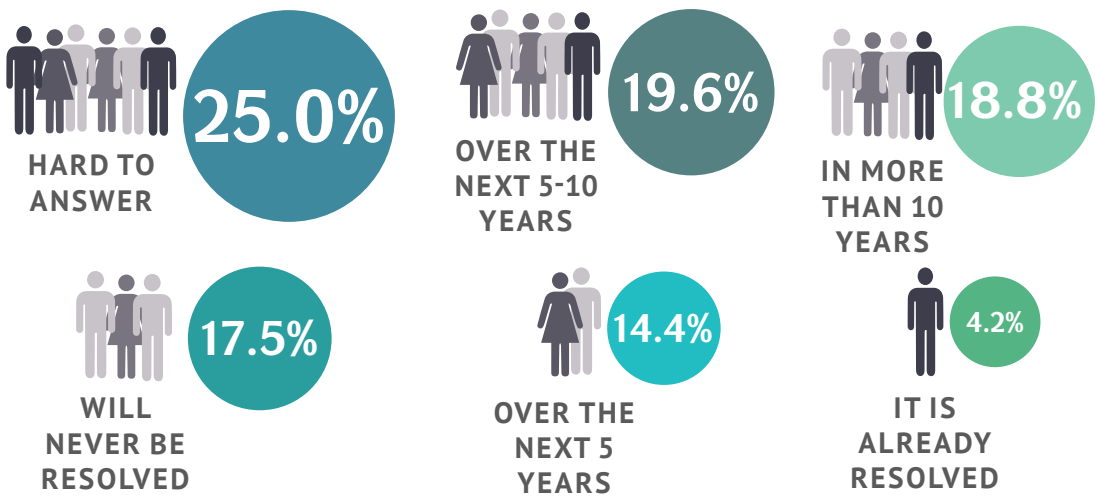


Infographic 4.4

To the question “When do you think the Nagorno Karabakh conflict will be resolved?”, One quarter of young people (25.6%) could not give an answer, while 17.5% thought that it will never be resolved. 14.4% of the respondents were more optimistic and thought that the conflict will be resolved in 5 years, while 19.6% thought that “it will be resolved over the next 5-10 years”. 18.8% of young people does not see any prospect of a solution within the next 10 years.

WHEN WILL THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH CONFLICT BE RESOLVED?

Infographic 4.5

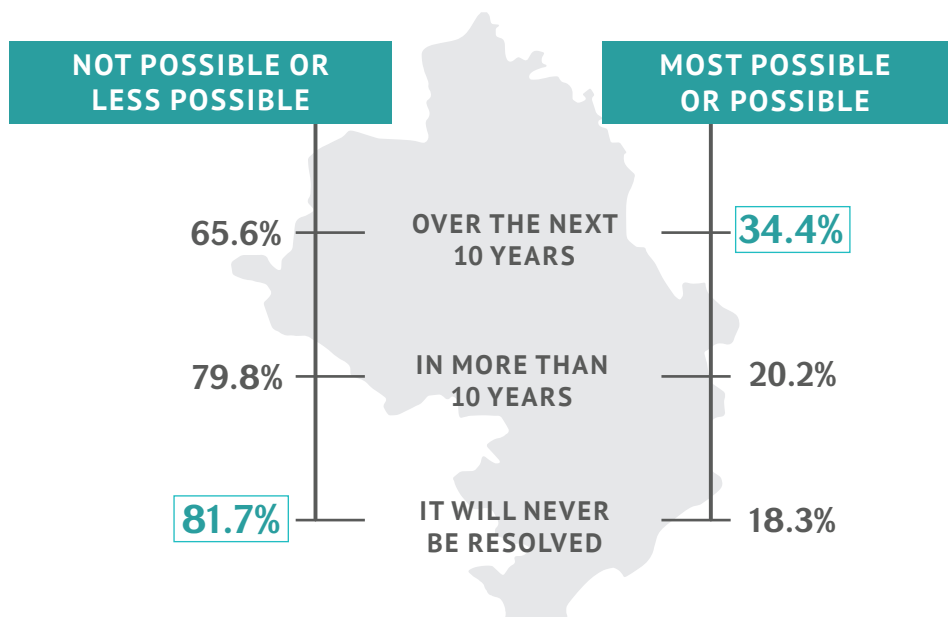


The combination of the two questions above (solutions to the conflict and the possible settlement period/perspective) provides an interesting picture. First of all we will discuss the results of the estimations for the peaceful settlement, that is to say the settlement through negotiations. As it is shown in the Infographic 4.6, among those who forecast peaceful resolution (the group that chose the options “most possible” or “possible”) optimistic perspectives fade away over time. Thus, those who forecast a settlement “over the next ten years” are 34.4% of the respondents, while in the group that mentioned “in more than ten years” they are 20.2%. The ratio between these two variables also indicates the correlation between them¹⁸.

The same combination of opinions among those who see the settlements of the conflict by force shows that in the group of respondents who forecast a settlement “over the next 10 years” the ones who expect a settlement by force are a little more in number (65.4%) compared to those who expect a settlement no earlier than 10 years (63.3%). Since we are discussing the peaceful resolution of the conflict through negotiations, it should be noted that it is impossible to imagine one without any compromise. Thus it is in-

18. Pearson Chi-Square value =9.708 assumption significance =0.08

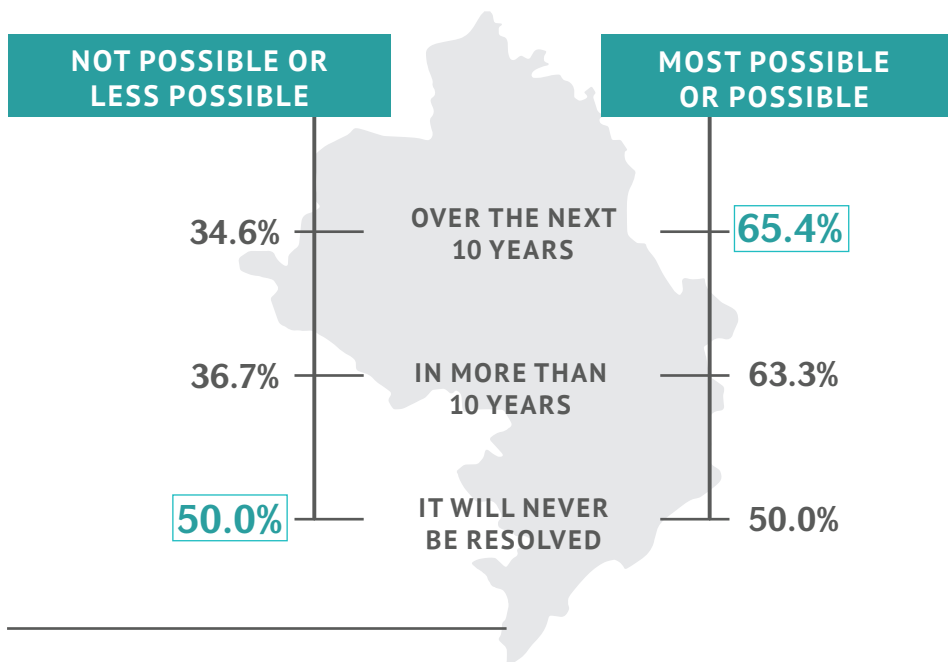
HOW POSSIBLE IS THE PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH CONFLICT?



Infographic 4.6

interesting to examine young people’s position on the potential compromises. For this reason they were asked the following question “*In your opinion is it acceptable that for the resolution of the NK conflict Armenia should hand over to Azerbaijan several territories that are currently under the control of the Armenian troops, except for Nagorno-Karabakh¹⁹?*” The analysis of the responses gave the following picture.

HOW POSSIBLE IS THE RESOLUTION OF THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH CONFLICT BY FORCE?



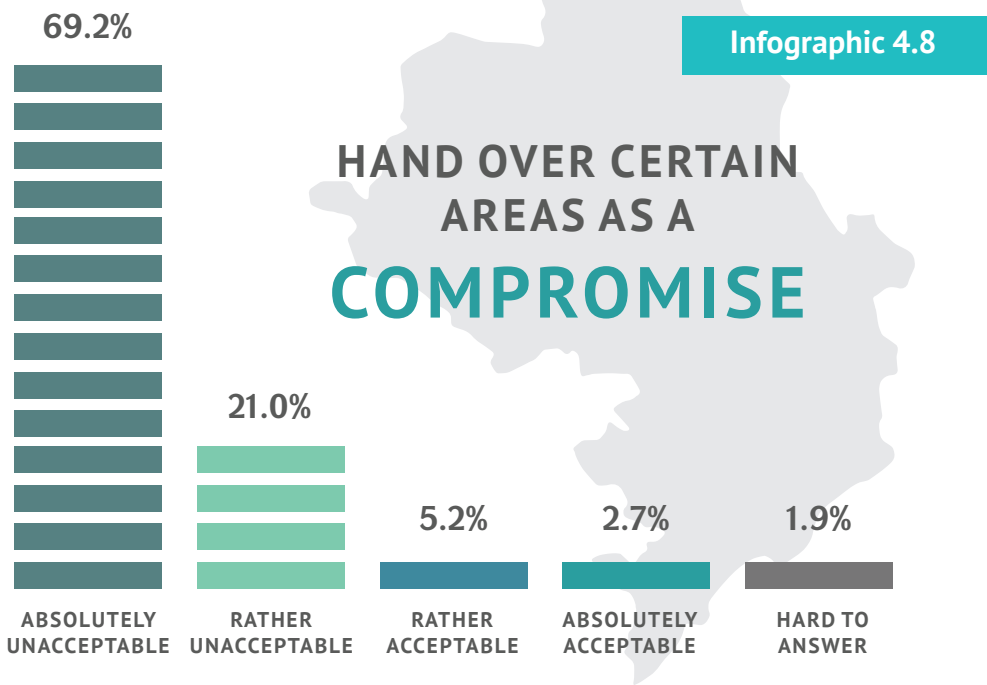
Infographic 4.7

19. It refers to the 7 territories liberated during the Karabakh war: Kashatagh (Lachin), Karvachar (Kelbajar), Akn (Aghdam), Varanda (Fizuli), Kovsakan (Zangelan), Jrakan (Jabrail), Sanasar (Kubatli).

Young people consider “absolutely unacceptable” (69.2%) and “rather unacceptable” (21%) any territorial concessions within the negotiation process. Only 5.2% of the respondents consider the possible concession “rather acceptable” and 2.7% of them consider it “absolutely acceptable”. (Infographic 4.8)

The discussions in the focus groups also indicate that young people do not imagine any kind of compromise, even if they realize the necessity of the negotiation process.

IN YOUR OPINION IS IT ACCEPTABLE THAT FOR THE RESOLUTION OF THE NK CONFLICT ARMENIA SHOULD HAND OVER TO AZERBAIJAN SEVERAL TERRITORIES THAT ARE CURRENTLY UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE ARMENIAN TROOPS, EXCEPT FOR NAGORNO-KARABAKH?



“The negotiation process requires certain compromise, however I do not imagine what compromise can be from the Armenian side.” (Male, 18 years old, City of Yerevan)

“I absolutely do not see any kind of compromise through the negotiation process...because there is an option that Karabakh can be absolutely autonomous.” (Female, 19 years old, City of Yerevan)

“I do not see the solution to this problem in the near future. The conflict can be resolved if Armenia hands over some of its areas to Azerbaijan within the negotiation process. However I do not think this is possible. If this was possible, the conflict would have already been solved.” (Female, 21 years old, Province of Lori, Village of Margahovit)

Very few young people imagine and accept the resolution of the conflict through the process of negotiation and compromises, which implies certain concessions from the Armenian side.

A significant number of young respondents have more radical and militaristic attitudes. Almost all those who see a solution by force are convinced in the victory of Armenia and even that other areas will be won. However, the results of the discussions show that the respondents do not imagine the victory without Russian involvement.

Again, the roles of the superpowers are often emphasized during the discussions over the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Moreover, the attitudes about Russia's role are dual: both positive and negative. On one hand Russia is perceived as a guarantee for victory, on the other hand the respondents mention the risk of Russia exploiting the conflict (for its own interests).

And finally when the resolution is discussed, it is interesting what the respondents understand about a resolution in terms of Karabakh's future status. Young people have different opinions on this issue. Some of them think that the solution to the conflict is when Karabakh will be united with Armenia; some others think that Karabakh should be an autonomous and independent state.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the perceptions among young people about the advisability of a possible war are contradictory. Some of them believe that the war is unacceptable and no territory or victory can justify the possibility of potential losses, while some others think that Karabakh should be defended by any means.

“With these negotiations we will not achieve anything. We can win only with a fight. We cannot do it on our own; Russia will help us because it is in their interest to help us.” (Male, 23 years old, Province of Tavush, Town of Ijevan)

“If the solution to this issue takes too long, it will not be solved peacefully. If there was any solution, it would not be protected. Let a war decide everything right away. (Female, 22 years old, Province of Gegharkunik, Village of Noratus)

“There were areas that belonged to Azerbaijan, but we should not hand them over. I see the solution by force but only if Russia is with us. We should conquer more territories too. (Male, 18 years old, Province of Lori, Village of Margahovit)

“The Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict is not solved because this conflict in the Caucasus is beneficial for Russia. Russia wants to have as many countries under its rule as possible. (Female, 25 years old, Province of Lori, City of Vanadzor)

“There are many countries supporting Azerbaijan, for example America. If Russia wants, it can solve this issue through a negotiation process. Azerbaijan cannot refuse to comply. Thus, Russia should come to an agreement with America. (Female, 21 years old, Province of Gegharkunik, Village of Noratus)

“The bigger states would not want this conflict to be solved because this situation is beneficial for them. It is easy to control others in chaos.” (Male, 21 years old, Province of Tavush, Town of Ijevan)

“The conflict will most likely be settled by force; in that case it will not be only Armenia and Azerbaijan: but Russia who will take one side, and not the Armenian side.” (Female, 21 years old, Province of Tavush, Town of Ijevan)

“The Karabakh conflict will never be resolved. I do not see a resolution. No matter how many times we liberate Karabakh, Russia will give it back to Azerbaijan, just like the last time when Russia just presented it to Azerbaijan. However, if there is a war, there will be many losses. Fewer Armenians are left, how can we have more losses? (Male, 21 years old, Province of Tavush, Town of Ijevan)

“I do not know when the conflict will be resolved, but I know that it will be done with a war and that Karabakh should be a part of Armenia. We should push this forward through war, negotiations will not bring agreement.” (Male, 18 years old, Province of Lori, Village of Margahovit)

Thus, summarizing the above we can make several conclusions. First of all it should be noted that young people do not consider it likely to have a resolution through the negotiation process and have no perception of what a compromise position would be. Almost 2/3 of the respondents either do not see any solution at all, any solution in the near future, or find it difficult to give any forecasts and only 1/3 of them are optimistic about it at all.

Although almost 30% of the respondents see the peaceful resolution of the NK conflict as possible, at the same time the territorial concessions are unacceptable for the vast majority of the respondents (90.2%).

Young people have very contradictory ideas about the term “resolution” and there is a debate among them over the future of Nagorno-Karabakh (NK).

“It will be good solution if Karabakh becomes autonomous, but Azerbaijan will hardly agree with it.” (Female, 19 years old, Province of Lori, City of Vanadzor)

“Karabakh has already gained its independence, so there is no need to unite with some other country. Let it remain independent. (Female, 22 years old, Province of Lori, Village of Margahovit)

“The military solution to the conflict does not depend on us, because our side says that we do not want war, however if there is a war, we will have a final blow to our country. Naturally I am for the negotiation process because nobody needs victims. No family should have a loss...” (Male, 18 years old, City of Yerevan)

“I am not sure what the solution will be to the conflict, but I prefer a settlement without a war because I am against any kind of war. Anything that I value will lose its value once human losses are demanded (Female, 18 years old, City of Yerevan)

If we hand over Karabakh, it means our losses were in vain. There is a saying: “give your son, but not your land”. (Male, 18 years old, Province of Tavush, Village of Sevkar)

“The solution is that [Karabakh] unites with Armenia because as a small country it could be easily swallowed up. (Male, 18 years old, City of Yerevan)

“I see the solution: Karabakh should be a part of Armenia. (Female, 18 years old, City of Yerevan)

Some of them see Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent republic, while others see it as part of Armenia.

The discussion results show that the radical statements about imposing the current status quo on Azerbaijan are dominant. Young people are convinced that it will be possible to resolve the issue by means of force, however only with Russian support.

The opinions over Russia’s interests in the NK conflict are also very contradictory. Some of the respondents are convinced that Russia is an ally of Armenia, while others think that Russia uses the NK conflict as a bargaining chip to keep Armenia dependent and to help Russia solve its own geo-political and regional problems.

5. VALUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THEIR LIMITS

Human rights and the fundamental freedoms of a citizen are enshrined in the RA Constitution as an important part of the legal structure of the state. However, the establishment of a truly constitutional state is possible only when citizens are the carriers of the relevant legal, knowledge, understanding and culture.

In order to have a complete picture of the perceptions about the relations between the state and its citizens, in this section we will analyze the opinions of the respondents regarding human rights. This section includes questions about knowledge, attitudes, and subjective perceptions on these issues.

First of all we will address the question which refers to how legally protected young people feel. Although this perception is very subjective it is also very vivid and principled, as it is one of the most important indicators of a rule-of-law state no matter what legal grounds there are and how they are implemented in reality.

While answering this question, the respondents avoided absolute assessments and gave qualified ones instead. Nevertheless, if we compare and evaluate their responses we will see that those who feel “totally unprotected” (19%) are twice as many as those who feel “totally protected” (8.5%). There is a slight difference between the numbers of those who gave qualified assessments as to the number of responses that were “rather unprotected” was 5.4% greater than the number of responses who felt “rather protected”. In general, the total number of young people who feel legally unprotected or insecure is 15.9% more than those who consider themselves protected. (Infographic 5.1)

The same attitudes were demonstrated during the focus group discussions. The majority of young people think that the reason for feeling unprotected is not connected with the imperfection of the legislative sector, it is rather connected with the practice of law as established in Armenia.

The responses to the basic question “*Who must guarantee the protection of human rights and freedoms?*” implies knowledge of human rights and allows us to understand on whom young people put the responsibility of their legal protection on. Choosing from the seven options given, only 36.3% of the respondents gave the right answer, which is the “state”. Although this



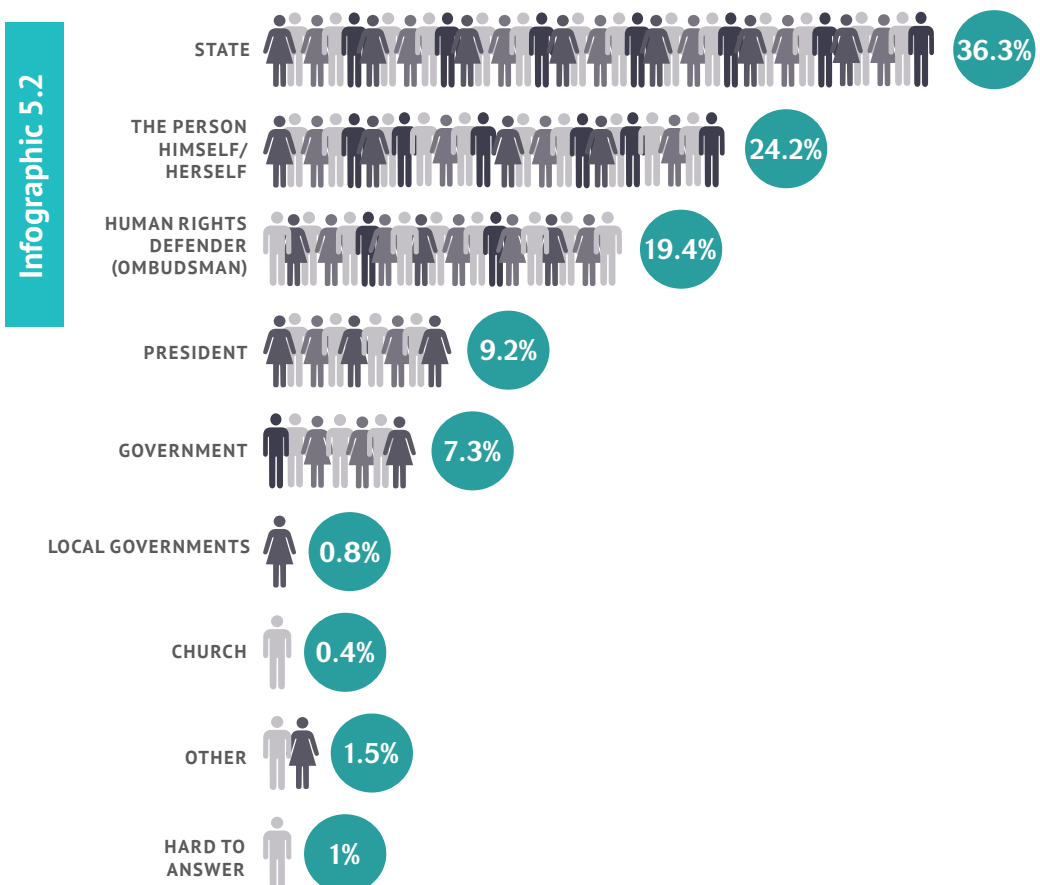
HOW LEGALLY PROTECTED YOUNG PEOPLE FEEL?

Infographic 5.1



answer had the most number of correct answers, there was a big number of unexpected answers, such as “the person himself or herself” (24.2%), “human rights defender” (19.4%). This proves that almost 2/3 of the young people surveyed do not have a proper knowledge of the legal framework of basic human rights in our society. (Infographic 5.2)

WHO MUST GUARANTEE THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS?



“I feel legally protected to some extent; however there is widespread corruption and it is impossible to do anything without money. There is no equality.” (Male, 18 years old, Province of Lori, Village of Margahovit)

“...the right to equality is violated. All are equal under the law but in practice it does not work that way. (Female, 24 years old, Province of Lori, Village of Margahovit)

“We are not aware of our rights and we do not believe that they can be protected. Even if we know about them, they are still violated.” (Male, 21 years old, Province of Lori, City of Vanadzor)

“Mostly human rights are being violated, but it is because of the people: they are very tolerant and do not turn to the relevant authorities.” (Female, 21 years old, Province of Tavush, Town of Ijevan)

The fact that one in four respondent believes that he/she is the guarantor of his or her own rights and freedoms on one hand shows there is a false perception of the real essence of human rights, and on the other hand it speaks about the distrust and understanding of the role of state institutions. The fact that young people rely on their own strength is associated with their detachment from the state and distrust towards the state. The idea that human rights are violated by the responsible bodies because people are not well aware of their rights was often mentioned during the focus group discussions.

Based on the human rights and freedoms enshrined in the Constitution, the young people surveyed were asked to assess which rights are most often violated in Armenia. It should be noted that there was an explanation given to each right in order that respondents understood them accurately and each respondent was able to choose a maximum of three options. The results show that young people surveyed most frequently state the violation of two rights: “right to a fair trial” (57.9%) and “freedom of speech” (49.8%). Only 4.4% of the respondents think that no human rights are violated in Armenia. (Infographic 5.3)

The right to a fair trial is one of the state’s principle obligations, this right enables a person to defend and restore his or her rights or freedoms which were violated. The violation of the right to a fair trial mentioned in the survey is consistent with the responses given to the next question: those who feel absolutely or partially legally unprotected have the same high percentage - 60%.

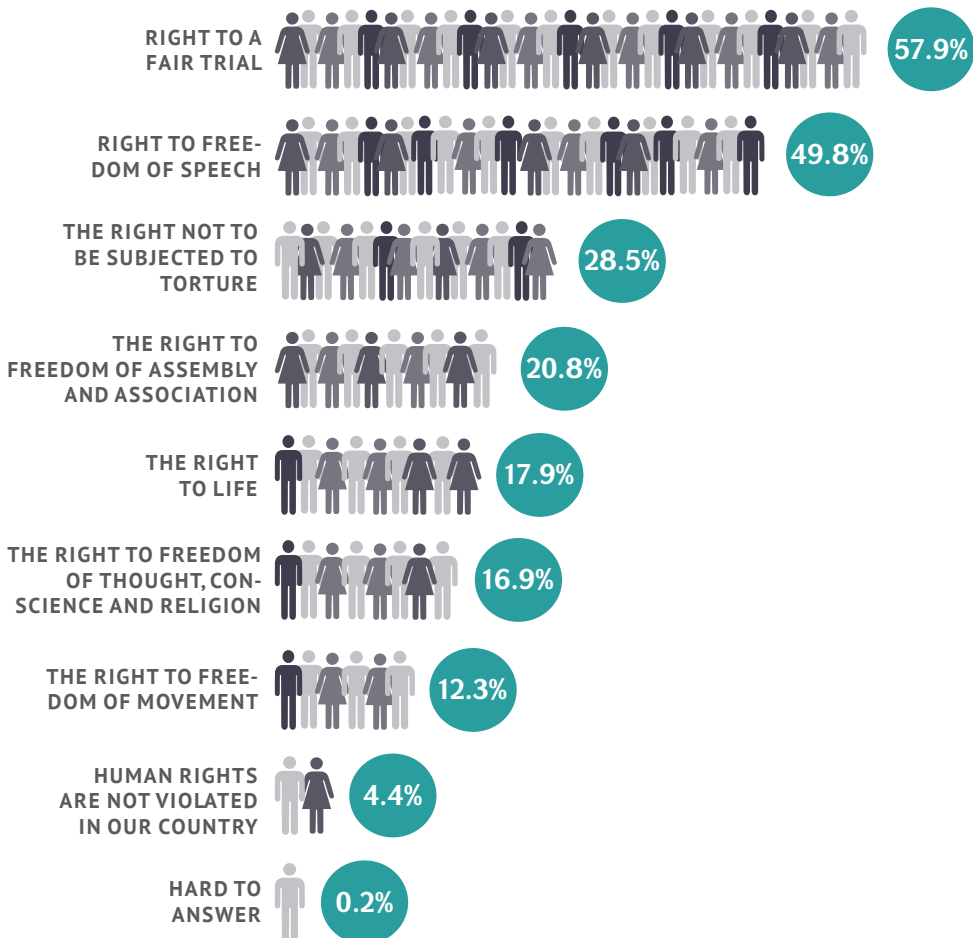
“The law enforcement bodies are the ones who violate human rights. Those who have money and an acquaintance, a relative or a friend who solves their problems have their rights protected.”(Male), 24 years old, Province of Gegharkunik, Village of Noratus)

“I feel fine with the written law, but we all know of examples where the rich can easily violate the law. I feel somehow protected but I think the most violated rights are legal rights, for example when the police arrest someone and he is some rich man’s son, his father can just take him out of all that, but someone else who is innocent but poor will be just sentenced.”(Male, 18 years old, Province of Lori, Village of Margahovit)

“The law does not apply to everyone equally. The son of an official and an ordinary person are not punished the same way.” (Male, 20 years old, Province of Tavush, Village of Sevkar)

WHAT ARE THE MOST FREQUENTLY VIOLATED RIGHTS IN ARMENIA?

Infographic 5.3



The main principle of democracy and a legal state is that all citizens are equal before the law. It is closely linked to the principle of the rule of law. Justice should not take into account the person's origin, power, wealth, social position, etc. Discrimination was highlighted during all discussions. The respondents mentioned examples of discrimination based on one's political outlook and affiliation.

The vast majority of young people do not have a clear idea of the subjects and the objects our system of human rights protection is designed to uphold, or they do not know which legal relations in a person's life are regulated under our system of human rights protection. This is evidenced by the examples brought up during the focus group discussions.

Another interesting observation is that during the focus group discussions on human rights violations held during the regional discussions, the respondents were highlighting social and economic rights, while in Yerevan the respondents mostly spoke about the violation of civil and political rights.

And finally the last question discussed in this section is on the restriction of Human Rights. According to national and international law, the restriction on human rights and freedom is possible if its goals and reasons are set out by law and it is temporary. To theoretically divide the respondents into groups "pros" and "cons", they were asked to express their agreement or disagreement with two categorical statements regarding the restriction of human rights.

"All the employees of state institutions should be Republicans. The rights of the students are frequently violated: those who do not give bribes have lower grades than those who do. In our institute for example there was an issue connected with involvement in a political party, for example if we are a member of a students' council and we want to join them in an event that they are financing, then we should be a member of the Republican Party. (Female, 21 years old, Province of Lori, Village of Margahovit)

"There are many job positions that are politicized and the employees are forced to vote for a certain candidate during the elections." (Female, 23 years old, Province of Tavush, Town of Ijevan)

"The right of a person to live a healthy life is being violated. The right to medical service is violated because the state sponsored health care is not always for free and in proper quality. (Female, 20 years old, Province of Tavush, Town of Ijevan)

As a result, 1/3 of the respondents believe that human rights should never be restricted, under any circumstances, while 2/3 of the respondents believe that there are circumstances under which human rights can be restricted. (Infographic 5.4)

TWO STATEMENTS REGARDING THE RESTRICTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Infographic 5.4



HUMAN RIGHTS SHOULD NEVER, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES BE RESTRICTED BY THE STATE



HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS CAN ONLY BE RESTRICTED UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES

“The person's rights are violated in many parts of their life. For example, a person who is dying but they take money for his medication or refuse to operate on them unless they pay money.”(Male, 25 years old, Province of Gegharkunik, Village of Noratus)

“Besides all the points mentioned, I want to also add the right to assembly, when the person has the right to hold rallies and protest against certain cases. This is the most violated right in Armenia.” (Male, 18 years old, City of Yerevan)

“The right not to be tortured: for example a person is taken to the police department where he has to confess something, however it is not done in a proper way, instead he is tortured to confess.” (Male, 18 years old, City of Yerevan)

The question of determining boundaries for state intervention in human rights is the most complex and debatable one in the human rights sphere. There are no clearly defined criteria regarding the propriety of restricting human rights and freedoms which can be enshrined in the form of legal norms. This is the reason why very often a reference is made to the cases heard by the European Court of Human Rights.

As a logical continuation to this question, it is interesting to observe what young people think about the restriction of human rights. What circumstances are acceptable to the respondents as a basis for restrictions? Answers to this question helps us to understand how important a given situation or issue is for the respondents.

As a result, almost half of the respondents mentioned two situations: “during military operations” (49.6%) and “during a state of emergency” (47.5%). Both situations are mainly for protection from an external threat. The option “to ensure the safety of the citizens” had the most significant number of votes (36.7%) which is also related to the above mentioned situations. (Infographic 5.5)

This Infographic demonstrates that protection from military aggression is a very common reason for restricting human rights among young people. Meanwhile, 23.1% of the respondents once again confirm their position expressed in the previous question: “*human rights cannot be restricted under any circumstances.*”

Thus, summarizing all the above, we can make a few key points. The majority of young people have little knowledge or a false perception about human rights. Young people do not know about the subjects and the objects of human rights protection and the legal framework that ensures the protection of human rights.

It is worth repeating the fact that one in four respondents believes that he/she is the guarantor of his/her own rights and freedoms and that this indicates that there is a false perception of the real essence of human rights. On the other hand it also speaks about distrust towards state institutions. The fact that young people rely on their own strength for the protection of human rights is associated with their detachment and distrust of the state. The idea that human rights are violated by the responsible bodies because people are not well aware of their rights is a prevailing opinion among people.

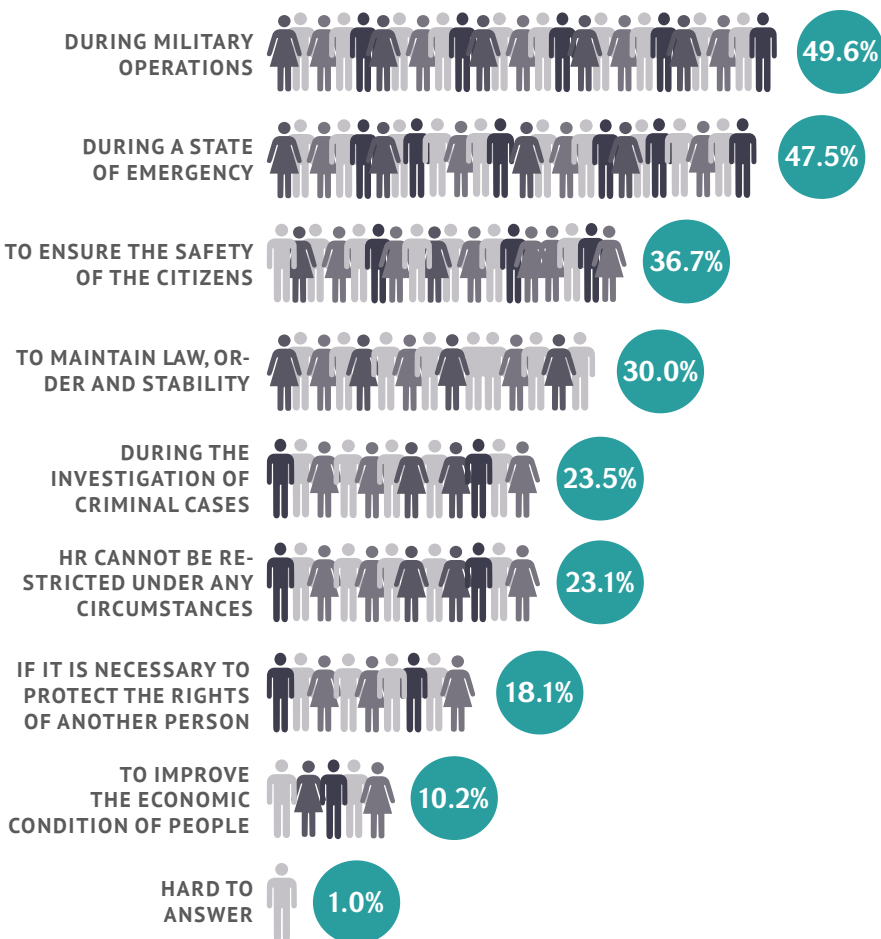
Almost 2/3 of the respondents state that the right to a fair trial is the most violated right in Armenia: this proves the demand for justice in Armenia. All human rights are based on or derived from the right to a fair trial and the

rule of law. This is one of the main reasons why the ineffectiveness of the justice system makes young people, consciously or unconsciously see themselves as the guarantor of their rights not the state.

Almost half of the young people surveyed attest to the violation of the right of freedom of speech, thus we can assume that they rely on their own experience. The fact that discrimination based on ones' political positions was often discussed during the discussions is closely related to this.

3/4 of the young people surveyed are ready to accept human rights restrictions by the state. Moreover, these restrictions are acceptable mostly in the case that there is a threat to the security of people, or during military operations and state of emergency.

UNDER WHICH CIRCUMSTANCES HUMAN RIGHTS CAN BE RESTRICTED?



CONCLUSIONS

ARMENIA'S PRIORITIES THROUGH THE EYES OF THEIR YOUTH

To summarize, according to the survey, the issues, in accordance with their relevance, may be classified in the following way; economic/social issues, safety issues, legal and identity protection issues. The most significant group of issues are socio-economic issues; unemployment, inflation and poverty. Safety-related issues; fatalities of soldiers, the probability of restarting a war and NK issue, are all combined in second place. The issues related to legal protection are in third place; human rights violations, corruption, crime and falsifications of elections. The identity protection issue (loss of moral and cultural values, oblivion of national traditions, genocide recognition, and spread of other religious organizations) as a group are in fourth place²⁰.

TRUST IN GOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS

In conclusion, we note that among young people all governmental institutions, from the top down, have the lowest level of trust. In contrast to this the young see the church and the army as almost holy and their institutions as being beyond reproach. There are significant differences in the perceptions of participants in the groups of “trustors” and “distrustors” of the army. The participants, who trust, have approaches that are characteristic of authoritarian and militaristic societies.

GEOPOLITICAL PREFERENCES: SECURITY OR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT?

EEU membership is perceived as a way of preventing war and EU membership is seen as a way of improving prospects for the protection of human rights and economic development. In other words, due to the security threats facing the country, many young people find it more reasonable to have at least vague security guarantees rather than economic development as a long-term prospect of being within the EU. The logic of participants who prefer the EEU can be expressed in the following sentence – “secure survival is more preferable than the prospect of economic development in the far future.”

20. See the complete list of issues and data in appendix #1



PERCEPTION OF SECURITY AND THE CHALLENGES IT PRESENTS

The questions discussed in this section brought up more questions rather than answers. We will discuss some of them.

- The greatest security threat today's young people see is the escalation of war that can happen any moment. The second threat is the poor economic situation.
- Despite disturbing incidents in the army, there is still great trust towards this institution. At the same time young people have negative attitudes about military service (seeing it as merely an obligation towards the state); however they are ready to mobilize themselves against an enemy in case there is war.
- In regards to the resolution of the NK conflict, militaristic sentiments prevail over peaceful ones. In the perceptions of young people there is no common approach to the “resolution” of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict: they have different views about the future status of Nagorno-Karabakh. While accepting the idea of a negotiation process for a settlement, they do not accept any kind of territorial concession. Many of the respondents are in favor of the military solution to the conflict, however it still remains a question what is their level of understanding of what a possible resolution might be. There are contradictory perceptions among young people over Russia's interest and participation in this conflict.

These and many other questions remain to be unwrapped and require additional study.

VALUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THEIR LIMITS

Summarizing all of the above, we can make a few conclusions. The first is that a lack of a comprehensive understanding and basic knowledge of the concept of human rights is evident. Despite this lack of knowledge, young people are able to clearly comprehend the various forms of discrimination between many groups on many grounds. Yes, there is a false perception of the concept of human rights; however, there is also an excessive demand among young people for justice. Surprisingly, young people put the responsibility of human rights violations on themselves instead of demanding the state guarantee those rights. Finally, the attitudes towards the restrictions of human rights shows the relevance of the demand for security: the majority of the respondents are ready for human rights restrictions for the sake of physical security.



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Questionnaire

Dear young person,

In the framework of the Safe Soldiers for a Safe Armenia project of Peace Dialogue NGO a research study is being carried out aimed at studying the political and civil attitudes and values among young people.

The survey is anonymous. We expect sincere answers.

▪ How interested are you in Armenia's...?

	Not interested at all	Somewhat uninterested	Somewhat interested	Very interested	HA
...Domestic policy	11.7 %	25.8 %	47.5 %	14.8 %	0.2 %
...Foreign policy	14.8 %	27.5 %	40.8 %	16.5 %	0.4 %

▪ What do you consider is the most urgent issues for Armenia now?

(Mark 3 options according to the importance from 1 to 3)

	1st	2nd	3rd	Total %	Cumulative %
High level of unemployment	13.3	10	10	33.3	69.9
High level of poverty	10.2	12.3	9	31.5	64.2
Emigration	12.3	8.8	9	30.1	63.5
Cases of soldiers' deaths in non-combat situations	9	8.8	9.2	27	53.8
Human rights violations	6.7	4.2	7.3	18.2	35.8
Inflation	3.8	5.6	7.1	16.5	29.7
Possible escalation of war	5.2	5	4.8	15	30.4
Nagorno-Karabakh conflict	5.4	5.2	2.7	13.3	29.3
Low quality of education	3.8	3.5	5.4	12.7	23.8
Corruption	2.9	5.4	4.2	12.5	23.7

The existence of other religious organizations in Armenia, other than the Armenian Apostolic Church.	3.3	3.5	5.6	12.4	22.5
Falsification of election results.	3.5	4	4.6	12.1	23.1
Recognition of the Armenian Genocide.	4	4.6	3.1	11.7	24.3
The loss of moral values.	4	2.9	2.7	9.6	20.5
Ecological problems, pollution	2.7	2.3	4	9	16.7
High level of crime	1.7	3.3	1.7	6.7	13.4
Forgetting national traditions	1.3	2.5	2.7	6.5	11.6
Lack of competition in the economy/ Monopoly	2.5	1.7	2.3	6.5	13.2
Lack of access to quality health care.	1.9	2.7	1.5	6.1	12.6
The weakening of the RA foreign policy.	1.5	1.3	1.9	4.7	9
Blockade of the country (closed borders)	1	2.1	1	4.1	8.2
Violations of financial/economic rights	0.2	0.4	0.4	1	1.8

▪ **Please indicate your level of trust or distrust in the following institutions.**

	Absolutely trust it	Tend to trust	Tend not to trust	Absolutely distrust it	HA
RA President	2.5	12.9	37.3	45.4	1.9
National Assembly	2.1	14.4	39.8	42.9	0.8
Government	2.7	16.3	37.1	43.3	0.6
Armed forces/Army	23.5	41.7	18.3	15.8	0.6
Police	7.5	31.0	33.1	27.3	1.0
Justice System	4.2	21.7	36.3	36.3	1.7
Ombudsman	8.5	31.9	22.3	19.2	18.1
International Organizations	12.5	44.8	22.1	16.5	4.2
Non-governmental organizations	14.6	50.6	20.2	12.3	2.3
Religion/ Church	39.6	29.2	13.3	16.9	1.0

▪ **What do you think, how transparent are the following institutions for a “common” citizen?**

	Absolutely transparent	Mostly transparent	Mostly not transparent	Not transparent at all	HA
RA President	2.7	10.6	38.8	46.7	1.3
National Assembly	3.5	20.8	42.7	31.5	1.5

Government	2.7	17.3	43.1	35.2	1.7
Armed Forces/Army	7.9	29.2	35.4	26.5	1.0
Police	5.2	26.7	39.2	28.1	0.8
Justice System	4.2	19.2	41.7	32.9	2.1
Ombudsman	6.7	40.4	19.4	16.3	17.3
International Organizations	12.1	46.3	23.3	13.3	5.0
Non-governmental organizations	17.5	54.2	13.3	10.6	4.4
Religion/ Church	38.1	34.4	11.3	13.8	2.5

- **How would you assess Armenia's domestic and foreign policy developments? Are they on the right or wrong course? (%)**

	Right course	Most likely the right course	Most likely the wrong course	Wrong course	Do not know
Domestic socio-economic and political developments	1.9	15.6	39.2	34.2	9.2
Foreign policy	4.2	26.5	28.5	30.4	10.4

- **Which of the following structures would be most appropriate for Armenia to join/associate?**

	Respondent	%
Customs Union (EEU)	232	48.3
European Union (EU)	206	42.9
I do not know. I have never heard of these structures.	32	6.7
HA	10	2.1
Total	480	100

- **Which of the following statements better justify your choice? (Choose one option)**

Customs Union (EEU)	Respondent	%
RA economy has a greater prospective for development within this structure.	64	27.6
Association to this structure provides security guarantees for our country.	58	25.0
This choice is determined by Armenia's geographical position.	56	24.1
The values of this structure do not contradict with our national mentality.	26	11.2
Human rights are better protected by the member states of this union.	21	9.1
Other	6	2.6
HA	1	0.4
Total	232	100.0

European Union	Respondent	%
Human rights are better protected by the member states of this union.	89	43.2
RA economy has a greater prospective for development within this structure.	62	30.1
Association to this structure provides security guarantees for our country.	25	12.1
This choice is determined by Armenia's geographical position.	14	6.8
Other	7	3.4
The values of this structure do not contradict with our national mentality.	5	2.4
HA	4	1.9
Total	206	100.0

- **What do you think, how much influence can you have on the processes in your...? (%)**

	Absolute	To some extent	Little	Not at all	HA
...City, village, district	7.7	41.5	36.7	13.3	0.8
...Country	2.7	14.0	40.0	41.0	2.1

- **If you had an opportunity, would you leave Armenia and seek residence in another country for...? (%)**

	Definitely yes	Most likely	Not likely	Definitely not	HA
... Temporary residence	49.2	29.4	12.1	8.8	0.6
... Permanent residence	23.8	14.6	27.3	32.9	1.5

- **What do you think, which of the issues listed affect the country's security?**

	Affects	Does not affect	I do not agree	HA
Large scale emigration	89.6	9.2		1.3
Large scale unemployment/ poverty	85.2	13.5		1.3
Low-quality education and the brain drain	74.4	23.5		2.1
Spread of religious organizations, aside from the Armenian Apostolic Church	70.8	26.7		2.5
Low-quality health care	70.6	27.3		2.1
Indiscriminate exploitation of the environment. I.e. mines	72.3	24.4		3.3
Political movements/protests	52.3	44.4		3.3
Weak and inefficient army	80.8	13.3	4.2	1.7
Widespread corruption	82.3	15.8		1.9

- **Sometimes people do not like certain laws but they obey or follow these laws. What do you think, why do they obey the law? (Choose one option)**

	Respondent	%
Because they are afraid to be punished.	244	50.8
They are afraid to be criticized by the society and people in general.	74	15.4
They think that if everyone breaks the law the life will become dangerous.	56	11.7
Because it is not accepted to break the law.	41	8.5
Because they respect the law.	40	8.3
Other	21	4.4
HA	4	0.8
Total	480	100.0

- **What do you think, why are people held accountable for breaking the laws/legal norms? (Choose one option)**

	Respondent	%
Punishment serves as a warning to others.	122	25.4
Punishment re-educates the offender.	104	21.7
To nurture respect towards the law	100	20.8
Punishment is a mechanism to protect others from the offenders.	91	19.0
Punishing other people to show that they respect the law.	51	10.6
Other	9	1.9
HA	3	0.6
Total	480	100.0

- **Who do you think must guarantee the protection of human rights and freedoms? (Choose one option)**

	Respondent	%
The state	174	36.3
The person himself/herself	116	24.2
Human rights defender (Ombudsman)	93	19.4
The President	44	9.2
Government	35	7.3
Local self-governing bodies	4	0.8
Church	2	0.4
Other	7	1.5
HA	5	1.0
Total	480	100.0

- **Which of the rights listed below are most frequently violated in Armenia?**

(Mark maximum 3 options)

	Respondent	%
Right to a fair trial. Everyone is entitled to defend his or her rights and freedoms by all means not otherwise prescribed by law.	278	57.9
Right to freedom of speech. Everyone is entitled to assert his or her opinion. No one shall be forced to retract or change his or her opinion.	239	49.8
The right not to be tortured. No one may be subjected to torture and to treatment and punishment that are cruel or degrading to the individual's dignity. All arrested, detained or imprisoned persons shall be treated in a humane manner and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person.	137	28.5
The right to freedom of assembly and association. Everyone has the right to form and join associations with other persons. No one shall be compelled to join any political party or association. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of peaceful and unarmed assembly.	100	20.8
Right to life. No one shall be condemned to the death penalty or executed.	86	17.9
Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right includes freedom to change the religion or belief and freedom to either alone or in community with others manifest the religion or belief, through preaching, church ceremonies and other religious rites.	81	16.9
Right to freedom of movement and choice of residence. Everyone legally residing in the Republic Armenia shall have the right to freedom of movement and choice of residence in the territory of the Republic Armenia.	59	12.3
Human rights are not violated in our country	21	4.4
HA	1	0.2
Total	480	100.0

- **Do you feel that the law protects you?**

	Respondent	%
Relatively not	185	38.5
Relatively yes	159	33.1
Absolutely not	91	19.0
Absolutely yes	41	8.5
HA	4	0.8
Total	480	100.0

- **Express your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.**

	I agree	I do not agree	HA
There are some circumstances and cases when human rights and freedoms can be restricted	75.4	24.4	0.2
Human rights should never, by any means be restricted by the state.	24.8	74.4	0.8
If am provided with high salary from the	11.5	82.5	6.0

state, then I am ready to give up some of my rights.

- **What do you think, under which circumstances can human rights be restricted?**
(Mark as many options as you feel necessary)

	Respondent	%
During military operations	238	49.6
During a state of emergency	228	47.5
To ensure the safety of the citizens	176	36.7
To maintain law, order and stability	144	30
During the investigation of criminal cases	113	23.5
Human rights cannot be restricted under any circumstances	111	23.1
If it is necessary to protect the rights of another person	87	18.1
To improve the economic condition of people	49	10.2
HA	5	1

- **Did you serve in the RA armed forces?**

	Respondent	%
Yes	118	53.9
No	101	46.1
Total	219	100.0

- **If given an opportunity to choose, would you serve in the RA Armed Forces?**
(If female answer for your brothers or close friends)

	%
Definitely would serve	47.1
Most likely would serve	18.5

Not likely to serve	11.7
Definitely would not serve	22.1
HA	0.6

▪ **How would you justify the necessity of military service?**

(Choose one option)

	Respondent	%
To ensure the state security	133	36.2
To ensure the security of my family and relatives.	87	23.7
Young men gain self-confidence and independence in the army.	73	19.9
Military service is every young man's duty.	39	10.6
To empower the army.	23	6.3
To stay in the army and make the military service a career.	6	1.6
Other	6	1.6
Total	367	100.0

▪ **How would you justify why there is no need for military service:**

(Choose one option)

	Respondent	%
The safety of servicemen is not guaranteed.	117	37.3
The issues in the army are solved through an acquaintance, a friend or money.	52	16.6
It is waste of time	45	14.3
Lack of discipline in the army.	32	10.2
The soldiers are subjected to violence and moral humiliation in the army.	32	10.2
The soldiers are not provided with required minimum conditions.	19	6.1
Other	17	5.4
Total	314	100.0

▪ **Which of the following statements about the formation of the army do you agree with?**

	Respondent	%
Armenia should maintain the compulsory military service.	292	60.8
Armenia should transition to the formation of the contractual army.	178	37.1
HA	10	2.1
Total	480	100.0

- **In your opinion, what should be done first in order to strengthen the RA army?**

	Respondent	%
Equip the army with modern weapons.	132	27.5
Enhance discipline.	119	24.8
Nurture a spirit of patriotism	105	21.9
Increase respect for human rights and freedoms.	86	17.9
Increase the number of servicemen	27	5.6
Other	9	1.9
HA	2	0.4
Total	480	100.0

- **Tell your level of agreement or disagreement with the following assumptions.**

(Mark in the appropriate box)

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	HA
Armenia has the most powerful army in the South Caucasus region.	18.3	42.7	21.7	14.0	3.3
The unresolved conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh prevents the development of the RA economy.	32.7	36.3	19.4	9.4	2.3
The state funds allocated for the army and armaments should be increased every year.	52.5	28.3	11.7	4.2	3.3
The war with Azerbaijan can be escalated at any moment.	47.7	33.8	10.4	6.0	2.1
The problems and incidents in the RA army should not be publicized, because it negatively affects the reputation of the army	24.8	25.4	20.6	27.7	1.5
Military officers should be given considerable social benefits (housing, high salary/pension)	39.6	35.0	12.9	10.8	1.7
Armenia's geographical position demands that women also learn how to handle weapons.	26.9	35.4	17.7	19.0	1.0
The security of small countries like Armenia must be insured by other more powerful countries.	25.4	37.5	19.0	16.7	1.5

- **Do you think Armenia currently has a military threat from other countries?**

	Respondent	%
Definitely	306	63.8
Most likely	135	28.1
Not likely	24	5.0
Definitely not	10	2.1

Not sure	5	1.0
Total	480	100.0

- **If yes, then which country or countries is the threat (s)?**

	Respondent	%
Azerbaijan	390	81.3
Turkey	138	28.7
Russia	30	6.3
Georgia	7	1.5
USA	7	1.5
Other	8	1.7

- **Do you think our army can protect our country in case there is a threat from another countries?**

	Respondent	%
Most likely	244	50.8
Definitely	134	27.9
Not likely	70	14.6
Definitely not	23	4.8
HA	9	1.9
Total	480	100.0

- **In your opinion, how possible is the NK conflict resolution...? (%)**

	Not Possible	Less possible	Possible	Most possible	NS
.... By peaceful means	16.3	51.5	25.2	5.0	2.1
.... By force	9.8	30.8	41.9	12.5	5.0

- **When do you think NK conflict will be resolved?**

	Respondent	%
HA	123	25.6
Over the next 5-10 years	94	19.6
In more than 10 years	90	18.8
Never	84	17.5
Over the next 5 years	69	14.4
It is already solved	20	4.2
Total	480	100.0

- In your opinion is it acceptable that for the resolution of the NK conflict Armenia should hand over to Azerbaijan several territories that are currently under the control of the Armenian troops, except for Nagorno-Karabakh?

	Respondent	%
Absolutely unacceptable	332	69.2
Rather unacceptable	101	21.0
Rather acceptable	25	5.2
Absolutely acceptable	13	2.7
HA	9	1.9
Total	480	100.0

- In your opinion, what should the government's approach be in ensuring the well-being of the citizens? The state should...

	%
... Ensure / guarantee equal opportunities for citizens.	60.2
... Ensure equal welfare for citizens	38.7
Other	0.2
HA	0.8

- What should be the state policy in regards to the labor and employment sector?
(Choose one option)

	%
Provide everybody with work at low wages with little difference in the wages.	45.8
Leave the labor market completely free without guarantees for employments and wages.	40.4
Other	7.9
HA	5.8

- In your opinion, what should be the state's approach to ensuring the security of the citizens?
(Choose one option)

	%
The state must ensure the safety of the citizens without restricting their rights in any way.	60.2
People / citizens should be ready for certain restrictions of their rights by the state aimed at ensuring their security.	35.4
Other	0.2
HA	4.1

- In your opinion, the “good citizen is the person who....” (%)

	Very important	Somewhat important	Somewhat unimportant	Not important at all	HA
... Always obeys the laws.	31.0	45.6	16.9	6.0	0.4
... Supports all government initiatives	9.6	33.8	33.3	21.3	2.1
... Takes part in elections	44.2	34.4	12.9	8.1	0.4
...Serves in the army	49.0	27.9	16.3	5.4	1.5
...Keeps the national traditions	42.5	28.1	17.3	11.3	0.8
...Has a critical approach towards government’s activities	17.9	27.3	34.0	16.7	4.2
...Does volunteer work for his community	37.5	39.0	12.7	9.6	1.3

Express your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

	I agree	I do not agree	HA
Citizens must take part in the protests and demonstrations, as it keeps the government alert.	79.4	17.7	2.9
Citizens must not take part in the protests and demonstrations because it leads to instability in the country.	15.6	80.6	3.8

- There are situations when people need a strong and authoritative leader, a "strong hand". Chose statement from below that is closer to your outlook/perception.

	%
People always need a “strong hand”	38.3
There are situations when the power must be concentrated in one person’s hand	19.6
By no means should it be allowed to have the power centralized in one person’s hand	37.7
HA	4.4

- Demographic data

a) Gender

	Respondent	%
Female	267	55.6
Male	213	44.4
Total	480	100.0

b) Age

	%
18	13.7
19	9.6
20	9.4
21	11.7
22	15.6
23	15
24	8.7
25	16.2
Total	100%

c) Permanent residence (region/city/village)

	Respondent	%
Yerevan	160	33.3
Vanadzor	40	8.3
Ijevan	40	8.3
Gavar	40	8.3
Goris	40	8.3
Shinuhayr	40	8.3
Margahovit	31	6.5
Noratus	25	5.2
Achajur	19	4.0
Gandzak	15	3.1
Sevkar	13	2.7
Saral	9	1.9
Sarigyugh	8	1.7
Total	480	100.0

- **Education**

	Respondent	%
Basic (1-8 grades)	3	0.6
Secondary (10-12 grades)	98	20.4
Intermediate professional	43	9.0
Undergraduate (students)	123	25.6
Graduate (Bachelor's, Master's)	212	44.2
Postgraduate	1	0.2
Total	480	100.0