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REPORT

Public Opinion Perception on European Integration

Pristina, November 2016

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The findings and opinions expressed in this document do not reflect the official stands of either organisation.

List of Acronyms

EU	European Union
NPISAA	National Programme for Implementation of the SAA
SAA	Stabilization and Association Agreement

Executive Summary

This report reflects the results of the poll: Public Opinion Perception on the European integration that was carried out during the period from 22 August to 15 September 2016, in 7 main Kosovo regions: Prishtine/Priština, Peje/Peć, Gjakove/Đakovica, Prizren, Mitrovice/Mitrovica, Gjilan/Gnjilane and Ferizaj/Uroševac. The aim of this survey is to: a) identify the perception of the public opinion on the European integration process; b) identify the perception of the public opinion on the SAA (the Stability Association Agreement) and c) identify the perception of the public opinion on the visa liberalization process.

The survey was conducted on a sample of 1000 respondents. The sample was chosen through the simple proportional sampling. The survey design was based on the administered questionnaire, which was administered in respondents' houses and apartments, and comprised of 16 questions in the following sections: demographic data about the participants, their knowledge on and understanding of the European integration process, their knowledge on the SAA and their knowledge and perception of the process of visa liberalization. Initially, the survey team administered the questionnaire within a pilot group of 30 respondents. The questionnaire's coefficient of reliability is 82. 53% of the respondents were male; whereas 47% of the respondents were female. The average age of the sample respondents is 36.4 years.

This survey shows that the concept of the European integration is well-known to the majority of the respondents, respectively, to 84.6% of them. It also shows that the majority of the respondents, i.e. inhabitants of Kosovo, receive information about the European integration through TV news, portals and other written media. This survey shows there is a variation in understanding the concept of the European integration. 33.5% of the respondents understand the European integration as: *a union, organization that represents the most developed Western democracies*; 29.6% of them understand the European integration as: *an*

entity that avoids conflicts between countries that are members of the Union and promotes peace and good relations among neighbouring countries; and 25.9% of them understand the European integration as: an integration of Kosovar society in a union that consists of values completely different from our traditional values.

Furthermore, this survey shows that the majority of the respondents perceive that Kosovo will benefit from the European integration process. They express the following benefits: *economic development; free movement; easier trade; employment in the EU; exchange in education, youth development and cultural development.* Additionally, the moderate number of the respondents from 6 regions of Kosovo have expressed that the European integration can be seen as a method to normalize relations between Kosovo and the neighbouring country Serbia. In contrary, in the Mitrovica Region, the large number of the Albanian ethnicity respondents perceives that the European integration process will not lead to Kosovo's economic development. Across all regions in Kosovo, the respondents have expressed that the process of the European integration is being developed at a slow pace of development. Moreover, Kosovo's membership in the EU is moderately perceived as a method to overcome Kosovo's economic and, less than moderately, its political challenges.

On the one hand, a moderate number of respondents are aware that Kosovo has signed the Stabilization Association Agreement (SAA). However, only more than 30% of respondents, aware of the conclusion of the SAA, can state the SAA's benefits to Kosovo. Yet again, TV news appears as the main tool of receiving information on the SAA.

Furthermore, more than 60% of the respondents correctly perceive the visa liberalization process; and still; 78.9% correctly perceive the duration of stay in the Schengen Zone countries through the visa liberalization process. Nevertheless, 20% of the unemployed respondents, in comparison to 8% of the employed respondents, perceive the visa liberalization process as a method of finding employment in the EU countries.

In general, this survey has shown that the Kosovo public is aware of the concept of the European integration. Nevertheless, there are differences in understanding and interpreting it. Moreover, it also shows that the respondents perceive that Kosovo's European integration process positively associated with its economic development. Additionally, Kosovo's membership in the EU is perceived to be more related to economic development, rather than to overcoming Kosovo's current political challenges.

TV news appears to be one of the methods through which the respondents receive information on the European integration and the SAA. This survey also shows that the process of the visa liberalization and its components are well-perceived. Nevertheless, there is a slightly different perception towards the visa liberalization of the unemployed respondents; who tend to see it as an opportunity to become employed in the EU countries.

Finally, within this report, the survey team has provided the detailed data analysis, main conclusions of the study and recommendations for further steps.

1. Context

The survey was carried out between 22 August and 15 September 2016. The overall objective of the project “SAA and Visa Liberalization Public Awareness” is to promote the European integration and to raise awareness amongst citizens and Kosovo institutions on different aspects of the process, particularly on the visa liberalization process.

Kosovo is in the process of consolidating its internal systems, structures and institutions of governance. It has undergone a series of processes that are fundamental to all of its people and their future. These processes are not only correlated with the proper design and effective functioning of the structures of authority and control, but also with the system of desired values or outcomes, in particular those pertaining to the welfare system and to the regional and/or international cooperation, safety and stability. The ever growing interconnectedness or inter-determination among people and problems demands particular actions and attention to affairs that transcend national boundaries.

In this context, the completion of negotiations on the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) between the European Union (EU) and Kosovo in July 2014, and the its signing in November 2015, marked a milestone in Kosovo’s European Integration path, representing the first comprehensive agreement between the EU and Kosovo, anchoring Kosovo into the mainstream of EU relations with the Western Balkans countries and confirming Kosovo’s European perspective in the context of the 1993 Copenhagen criteria. In preparation for the formal entry into force of the SAA, in December 2015, Kosovo also adopted the National Programme for Implementation of the SAA (NPISAA).

The EU Commission's proposal of 4 May 2016 to lift the visa regime for the citizens of Kosovo so as to be able to travel freely within Europe's borderless Schengen zone is another positive step for Kosovo. This is a direct result of Kosovo’s commitment to meet all recommendations for the visa liberalization and includes improved border controls, introduction of biometric passports, and

implementation of a return and reintegration programme. Advantages of visa liberalization involve free movement of people, which offers access to knowledge, exchange of experience and practices, both within the region and in the EU, directly shaping cooperation in all segments of South East European (SEE) societies.

While the SAA and visa liberalization are not new processes, they are new for Kosovo. Both touch upon the society, either at individual or organizational level, including governing structures. As such, there is a need to provide timely and clear information to the citizens, the business community, civil society including the academia on requirements and benefits from both processes. By all accounts, there is limited awareness of businesses on requirements and benefits of SAA provisions in areas related to trade and internal market, including of public institutions, civil society, media and other stakeholders on requirements and benefits of SAA provisions in areas of EU standards / cooperation policies.

Hence, the objectives of the poll: the Public Opinion Perceptions on the European integration were:

1. Identify the perception of the public opinion on the European integration process
2. Identify the perception of the public opinion on the SAA (the Stability Association Agreement)
3. Identify the perception of the public opinion on the visa liberalization process

2. Methodology

2.1. Survey Design

The survey design is based on the administered questionnaire in the field. The questionnaire consisted of 16 questions and the following sections: demographic data about the participants, their knowledge on and understanding of the European integration process, their knowledge on the SAA and their knowledge

and perception of the process of visa liberalization. The questionnaire consisted of both open-ended and closed-ended questions. The administered questionnaire has measured participants' opinions and perceptions, whereas they also had the opportunity to openly express their perceptions through open-ended questions.

Primarily, the questionnaire had been applied to a *pilot group* of 30 respondents. The questionnaire's coefficient of reliability is 82. After the analysis of the data collected through the pilot group, the survey team made no change in the final version of the questionnaire.

2.2. Survey Procedure

The survey team consisted of 14-18 field interviewers and 3 researchers, Key Expert and Associate Researchers, who conducted a data analysis and survey process. The survey team within RIDEA Institute initially trained the field interviewers on: the aim of the study, content of the questionnaire and means of administering the questionnaire in the field. The questionnaire was not self-administered, however the field interviewers filled in it. This ensured that there were no missing data, specifically since the sample consisted of various population categories in terms of the level of education.

In order to check the correctness of interviewers during data collection, around 20% (a total of 200) of respondents were re-interviewed. This back-check was done through field visits (30%), respectively 60 field visits, and 140 telephone interviews conducted (70%). The second interview was conducted according to the checklist and it contained a minimum of 5 questions of the original interview. The checklist served as a tool of compliance review with the random principles of locality, starting point, house unit, and the principle of selection of the respondent. Responses from the first and the second interview were compared. In addition to the usual screening process, a logical control of filled-in questionnaires was carried out.

2.3 Sampling

The survey was carried out in 38 Kosovo municipalities of the 7 main regions in Kosovo: Prishtina/Priština, Ferizaj/Uroševac, Gjilan/Gnjilane, Prizren, Peja/Peć, Gjakova/Đakovica and Mitrovica (North and South). Kosovo has a population of 1.739.825 inhabitants. In this survey, the simple proportional sampling is used for each municipality being based on municipality population size. The proportional number of population per each age group is calculated for each municipality. The calculation of the percentage of participation consists of the ratio of the number of registered population in a certain municipality and the total number of registered inhabitants in Kosovo. The above given percentage determines the weight of each municipality in the sample. The reference of the registered population has been the data derived from the Kosovo Statistical Agency. However, the reference related to the number of inhabitants in Northern Kosovo is based on the OSCE data (Elections, 2014).

The questionnaires were administered in respondents' houses and apartments. Every third house on the left side was chosen within the randomly selected streets. Every third entrance of the building complex was selected; and then an apartment on every second floor, within the respective entrance, was selected.

The questionnaire was administered with only 1 family member. This was done as such, in order to avoid weighting bias of the respondents in the sample.

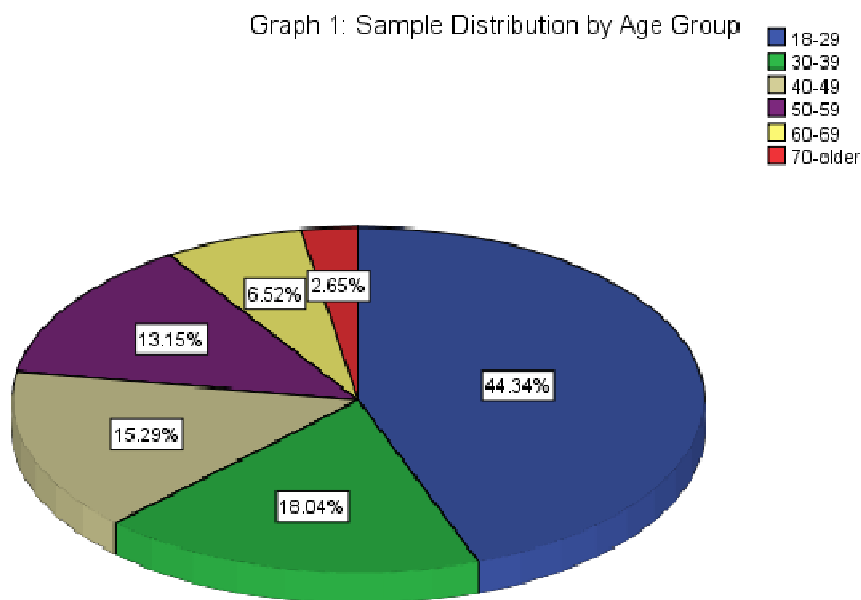
2.4. Data Analysis and Presentation

All collected data have been entered into the SPSS and the analyses have been derived. This report consists of descriptive statistics, cross-tabulation between the variables: age; gender; region; ethnicity and the questionnaire items (knowledge on the European integration process, understanding of the European integration process, perception of the European integration process as a tool to generate economic development in Kosovo, perception of Kosovo's membership

in the EU and of overcoming its political and economic challenges, perception of the SAA conclusion, perception of the visa liberalization process). It also contains the qualitative analysis of respondents' responses provided during the research.

2.5. Sample Features

The sample size is 1000 respondents. The response rate of respondents has been 100%. 53% of the respondents are male; whereas 47% of the respondents female. The average age of the sample respondents is 36.4 years. The distribution of sample across age groups is shown as following:



46% of the sample respondents are employed; out of which, 62 % are employed in the private sector.

The sample distribution by region is presented in the following Graph 1.1

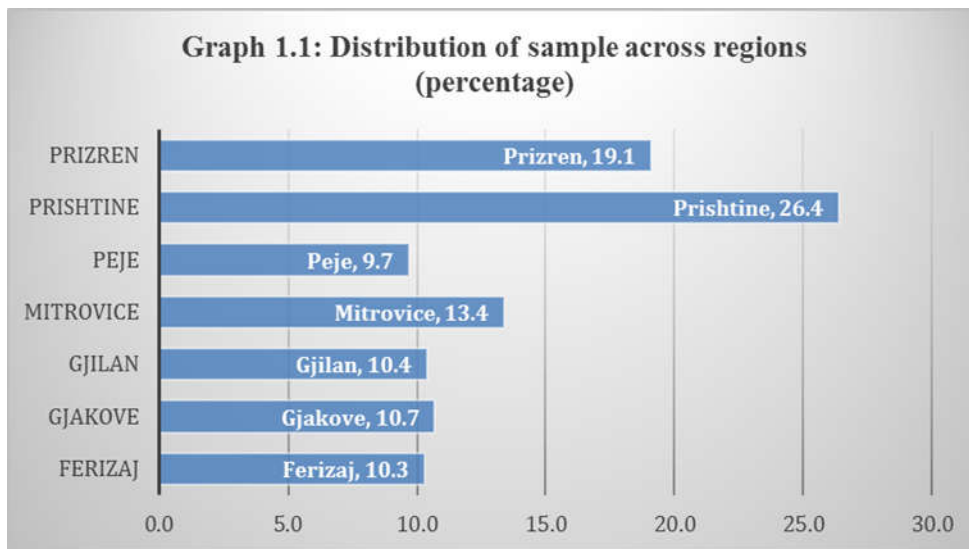


Table 1 represents the population size per municipality and the number of respondents per municipality.

Table 1: Population Size & No. of Interviews per Municipality

No.	Municipality	Population	No. of Interviews
1	Deçan/Deçani	40,404	22
2	Dragash/Dragaš	34,350	19
3	Ferizaj/Uroševac	109,659	60
4	Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje	35,222	19
5	Gjakovë/Đakovica	95,388	53
6	Gjilan/Gnjilane	90,882	50
7	Glogoc/Glogovac	59,278	33
8	Gračanicë/Grčanica	10,655	6
9	Hani i Elezit/Elez Han	9,498	5
10	Istog/Istok	39,089	22
11	Junik	6,134	3
12	Kaçanik/Kaçanik	33,780	19
13	Kamenicë/Kamenica	36,178	20
14	Klinë/Klina	38,993	22
15	Kllokot/Klokot	2,550	2
16	Leposaviq/Leposavić	13682	8
17	Lipjan/Lipljan	58,173	32
18	Malishevë/Mališevo	55,552	31
19	Mamushë/Mamuša	5,586	3
20	Mitrovicë*/Mitrovica	72,748	40
21	Novobërdë/Novo Brdo	6,751	4
22	Obiliq/Obilić	21,782	12
23	Partesh/Parteš	1,783	1
24	Pejë/Peć	97,282	54
25	Podujevë/Podujevo	89,420	50
26	Prishtinë/Priština	200,838	111
27	Prizren	179,494	100
28	Rahovec/Orahovac	56,926	32
29	Ranillug/Ranilug	3,852	2
30	Shtërpcë/Štrpce	6,972	4
31	Shtime/Štimlje	27,515	15
32	Skenderaj/Srbica	51,480	29
33	Suharekë/Suva Reka	60,572	34
34	Viti/Vitina	47,433	26
35	Vushtrri/Vučitrn	70,536	39
36	Zveçan/Zvečan	7421.00	4
37	Zubin Potok	14900.00	8
38	Northern	12303.00	6

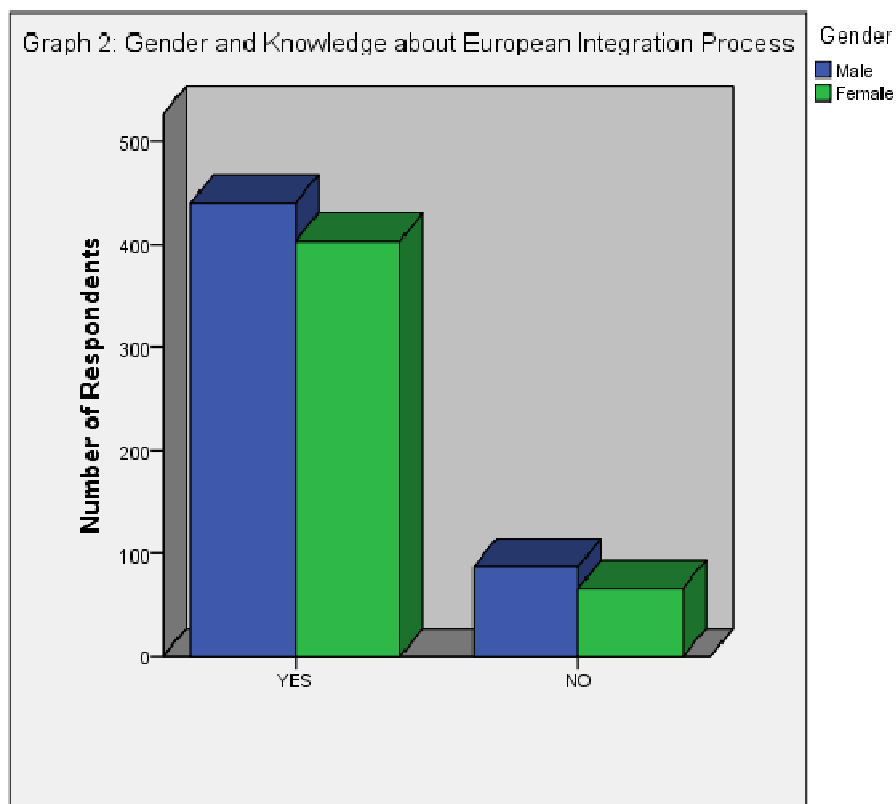
	Mitrovica/Severna Mitrovica		
	TOTAL		1000

3. Findings

The following section represents the respondents' opinion related to the European integration process, the SAA and the visa liberalization.

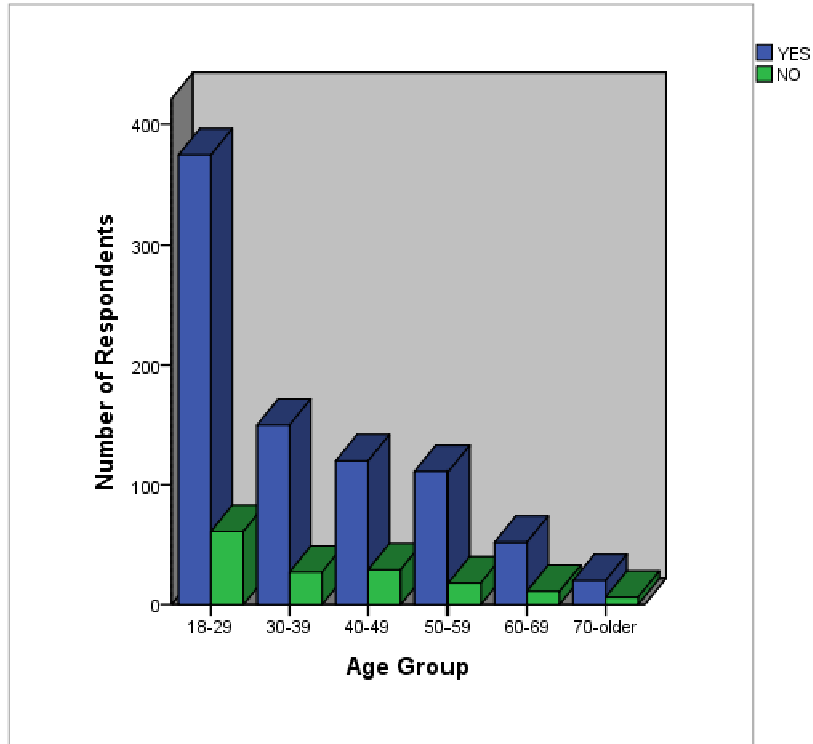
Knowledge about the concept: European integration process

84.6% of all respondents have heard of the concept of the European integration process. More than 80% of male respondents have heard about the notion of the European integration process; whereas more than 70% of the female respondents have heard about the notion of the European integration process.



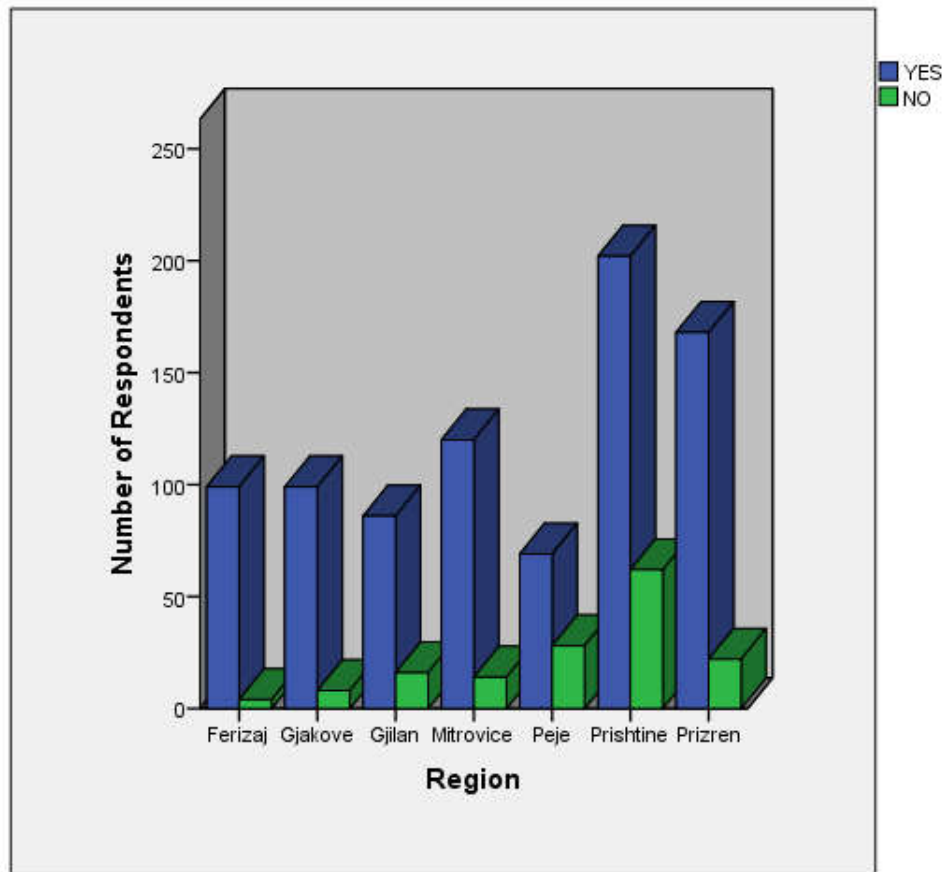
Across all age groups, the majority of the respondents are aware of the European integration concept. More than 80% of all age groups of the sample are aware of the European integration process concept.

Graph 3: Age Group and Knowledge about European Integration



Additionally, across all regions, the respondents are aware of the concept of the European integration. Graph 4 shows that more than 75% of respondents per region are aware of the respective concept.

Graph 4: Knowledge about European Integration across Regions



In general, this survey shows that there is a greater percentage of Kosovo citizens across 7 regions of Kosovo, of different age groups (age range: 18-75) and gender, have knowledge on the concept of the European integration process.

Understanding the European integration process

Furthermore, the respondents were asked to define the concept of the European integration process using the following options:

- a) Integration of Kosovar society in a union that consists of values completely different from our traditional values
- b) A union, organization that represents the most developed Western democracies
- c) An entity that avoids conflicts between countries that are members of the Union and promotes peace and good relations among neighbouring countries
- d) An institution, which generates prosperity, social welfare for its members
- e) Other

The data show that the majority of the respondents understand the European integration process either as: a) Integration of Kosovar society in a union that consists of values completely different from our traditional values; or b) a union, organization that represents the most developed Western democracies; or; c) as an entity that avoids conflicts between countries that are members of the Union and promotes peace and good relations among neighbouring countries.

Overall, Table 2 shows percentage of the respondents and their understanding of the concept of the European integration within the sample.

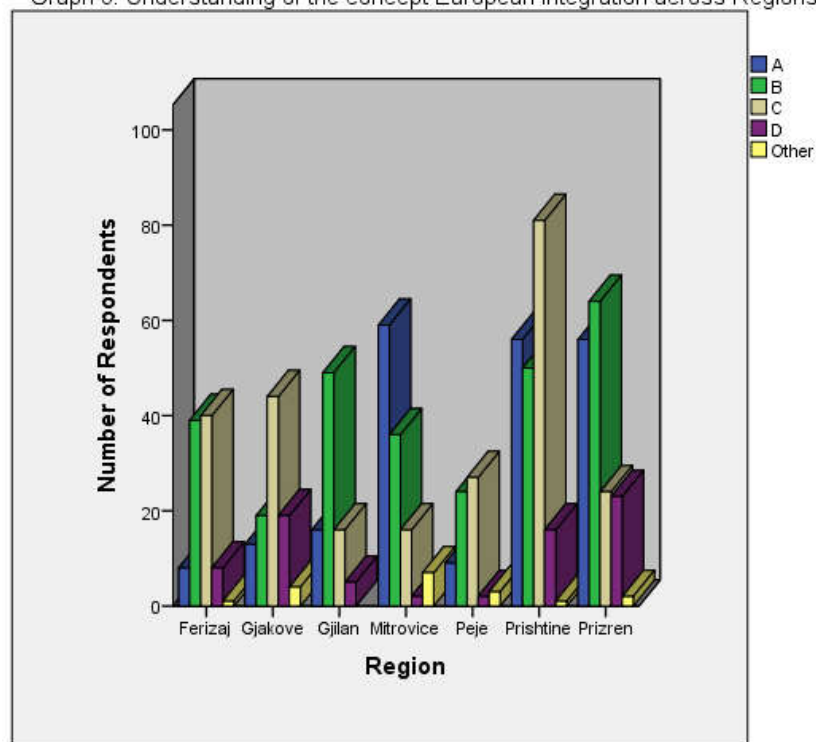
Table 2: Understanding the Concept: European Integration

Answer	Percentage
Integration of Kosovar society in a union that consists of values completely different from our traditional values	25.9
A union, organization that represents the most developed Western democracies	33.5
An entity that avoids conflicts between countries that are members of the Union and promotes peace and good relations among neighbouring countries	29.6

An institution, which generates prosperity, social welfare for its members	8.9
Other	2.1

Graph 5 represents the understanding of the concept of the European Integration across the regions. The results show that inhabitants of Prishtina/Priština region mostly understand the concept of the European integration as *an entity that avoids conflicts between countries that are members of the Union and promotes peace and good relations among neighbouring countries*; whereas the inhabitants of Mitrovica region understand the concept of the European integration as *an integration of Kosovar society in an Union that consists of values completely different from our traditional values*.

Graph 5: Understanding of the concept European Integration across Regions

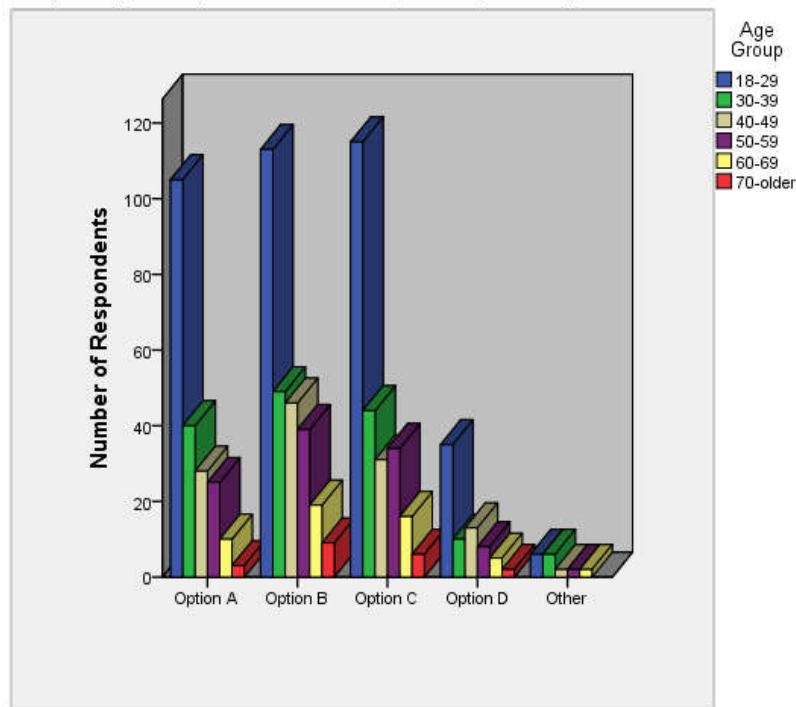


Graph 6 represents the perception of the respondents of the European integration process across different age groups. 25% of the respondents of the 18-29 age group; 22.5% of the respondents of the 30-39 age group; 20% of the respondents of the 40-49 age group; 21.7% of the respondents of the 50-59 age group; 15.6% of the respondents of the 60-69 age group and 15.38% of the

respondents of the 70 and older age group understand the concept of the European integration process as: *Integration of Kosovar society in a union that consists of values completely different from our traditional values.*

Additionally, 27.5% of the respondents of the 18-29 age group; 28.2% of the respondents of the 30-39 age group; 31.3% of the respondents of the 40-49 age group; 31% of the respondents of the 50-59 age group; 31.2% of the respondents of the 60-69 age group and 38.4% of the respondents of the 70 and older age group understand the concept of the European integration process as *a union, organization that represents the most developed Western democracies.*

Graph 6: Age Group and Understanding of European Integration Process



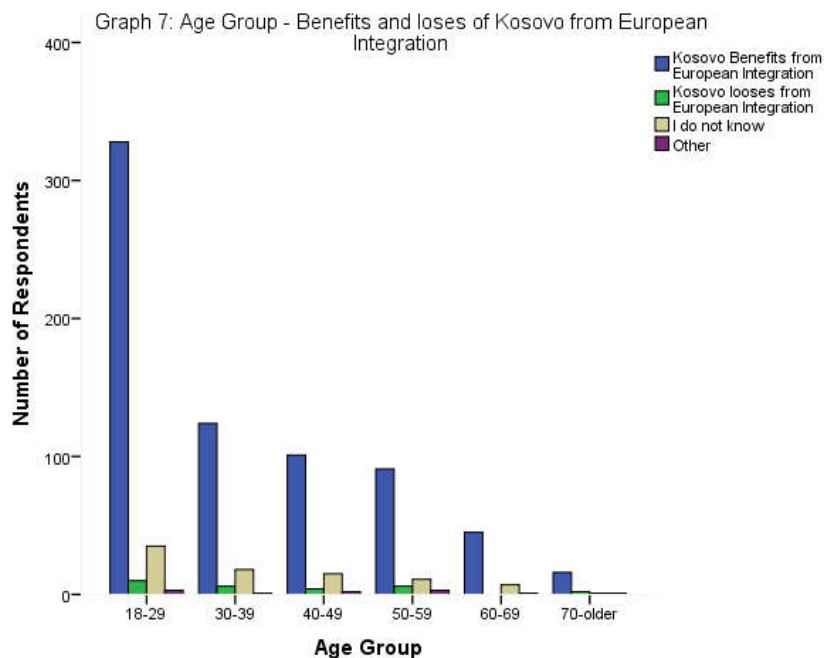
Moreover, 27.5% of the respondents of the 18-29 age group; 27.1% of the respondents of the 30-39 age group; 20% of the respondents of the 40-49 age group; 31% of the respondents of the 50-59 age group; 31.25% of the respondents of the 60-69 age group and 38% of the respondents of the 70 and older age group understand the European integration process as: *An entity that avoids conflicts between countries that are members of the Union and promotes peace and good relations among neighbouring countries.*

Furthermore, 19.2% of the respondents of the 70 and older age group responded to the respective question as a category *other*. They did not understand and define the European integration as the provided options. However, they did not provide any definition of the concept of the European integration process.

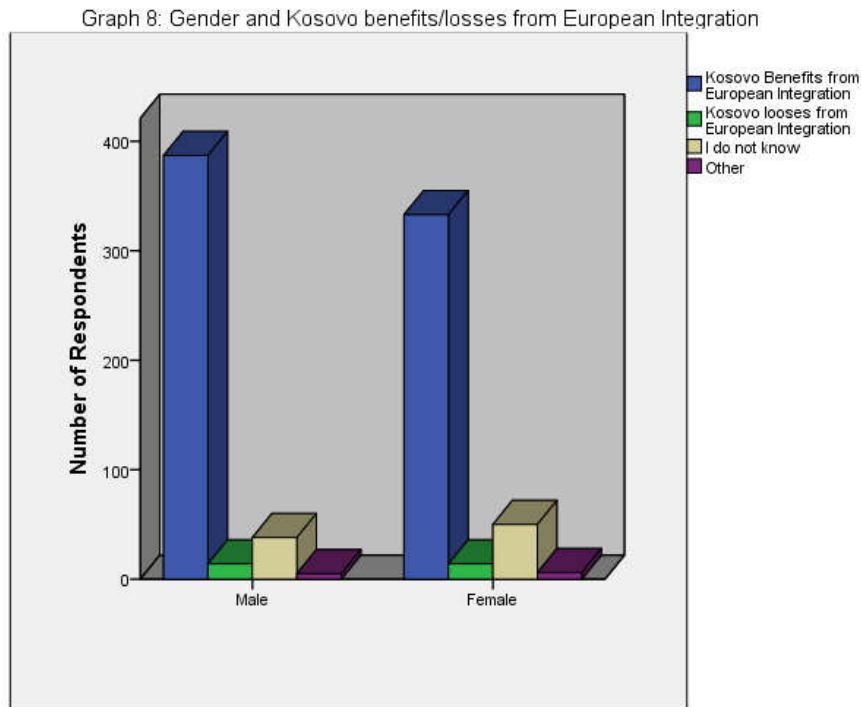
Additionally, the data show that male respondents of the sample perceive the European integration process more as a union, organization that represents the most developed Western democracies; whereas female respondents perceive the European integration process equally as both: a union, organization that represents the most developed Western democracies; and; as an entity that avoids conflicts between countries that are members of the Union and promotes peace and good relations among neighbouring countries.

Benefits of the European Integration Process

84.9% of the respondents perceive that Kosovo benefits from the European integration process. Graph 7 shows that the majority of respondents of all age groups perceive that Kosovo benefits from the European integration process.

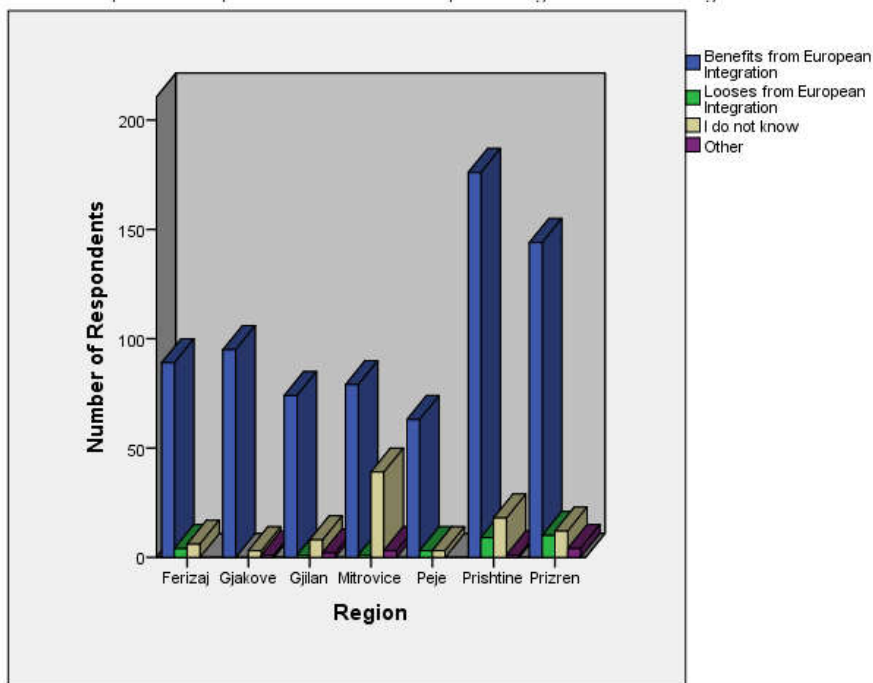


However, 3.3% of the respondents perceive that Kosovo loses from the European integration process. 10.5% of the respondents do not know if Kosovo benefits or loses from the European integration process. Moreover, 1.3% of the respondents consider that Kosovo has both benefits and losses from the European integration process.



Moreover, both male and female have significantly expressed that Kosovo benefits from the European integration process. Less than 2% of both male and female respondents have responded as *other*; whereas they have considered that Kosovo will have both benefits and losses from the European integration process. Moreover, Graph 9 shows that across all regions in Kosovo, there is a perception that Kosovo will benefit from the European integration process.

Graph 9: Perception of Benefits of European Integration across Region



Benefits and losses from the European integration process

Respondents have been asked to express their perception of Kosovo benefits prior and post European integration process. The following table shows the categories of the answers:

Table 3: Benefits during and after the European integration process

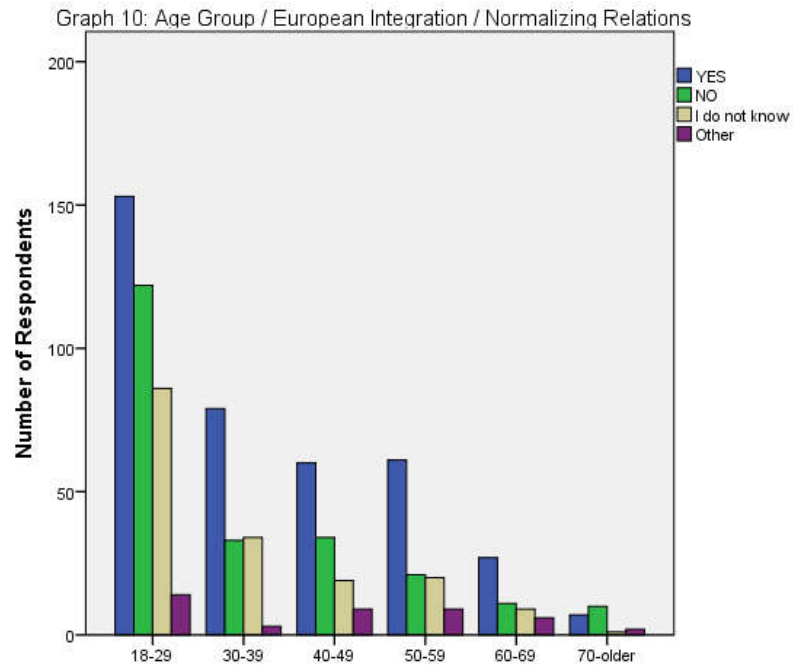
Category of the Answer	Benefits during the European Integration Process	Benefits after the European Integration Process
Economic Development	40%	30%
Free Movement / Visa Liberalization	40%	35%
Exchange in Education	//	2%
Youth Development	//	2%
Easier Trade	20%	15%
Cultural Exchange /	//	1%

Development		
Employment in EU	//	15%

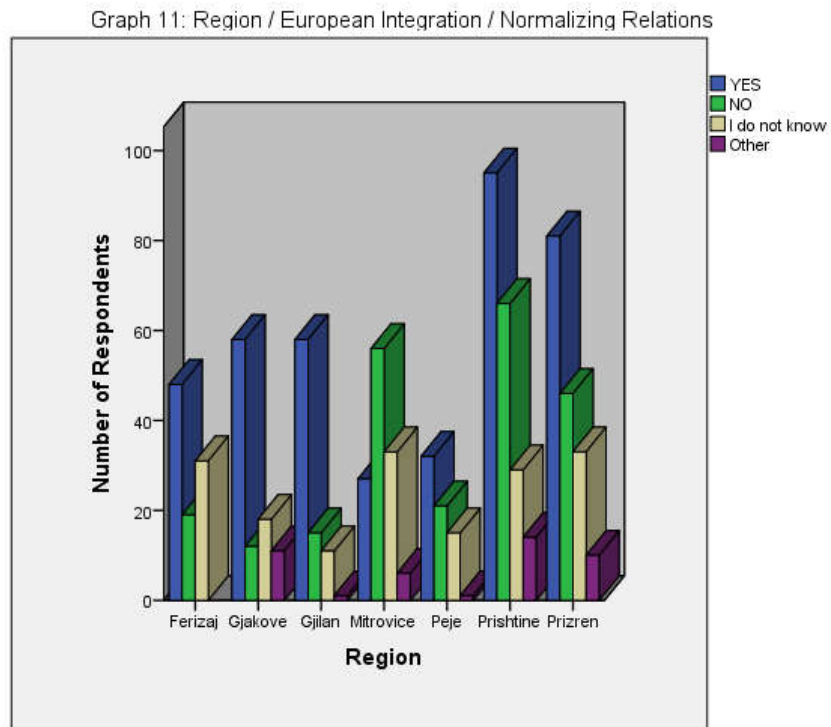
Mostly, this survey has shown that the greatest number of Kosovo citizens perceives that Kosovo will benefit from the European integration process. Concretely, this survey shows that Kosovo citizens across different age groups (age range: 18-75), 7 regions and both genders, perceive that Kosovo will benefit from the European integration. Yet, there is a difference in perception of benefits that Kosovo will have *during* and *after* the European integration process. The perceived benefits *during* the European integration process are clustered into the following fields: economic development; free movement/visa liberalization and more favourable conditions for trade. Though, the perceived benefits *after* the European integration have been shared into a greater number of clusters, such as: economic development, free movement/visa liberalization; more favourable conditions for trade; employment in EU; exchange in education, youth development and cultural exchange/development.

European Integration Process as a method of normalizing relations with neighbouring country

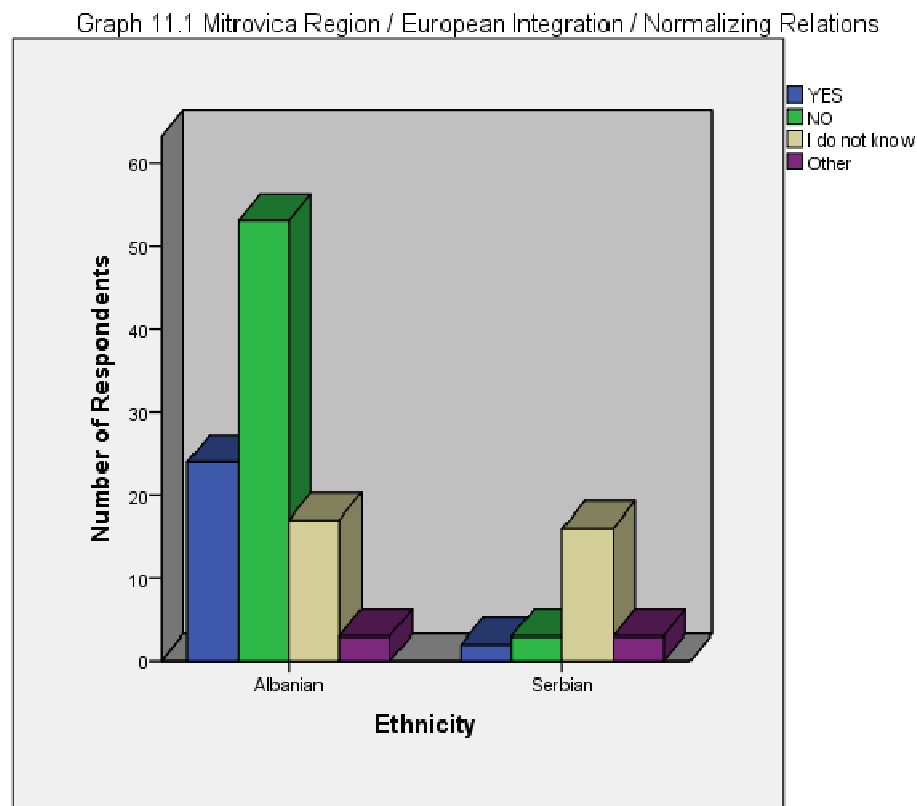
Furthermore, the survey has measured the perceptions of Kosovo citizens related to the European integration process, as a method to normalize relations with the neighbouring country Serbia. Less than half of the sample, respectively, 47.1% of all respondents perceive that Kosovo *can* normalize relations with Serbia through the European integration process. Additionally, 27% of the respondents have stated that Kosovo *cannot* normalize relations with Serbia through the European integration process. And 20.1% of the respondents *do not know* if Kosovo can normalize relations with Serbia through the European integration process. The respective range of percentages can be noted across all age groups, *see Graph 10*.



Similarly, this study shows that around 45% of male respondents and around 35% of female respondents perceive that Kosovo *can* normalize relations with Serbia through the European integration process. Moreover, Graph 11 shows the respondents' perception of the European integration process as a tool for Kosovo to normalize relations with Serbia.



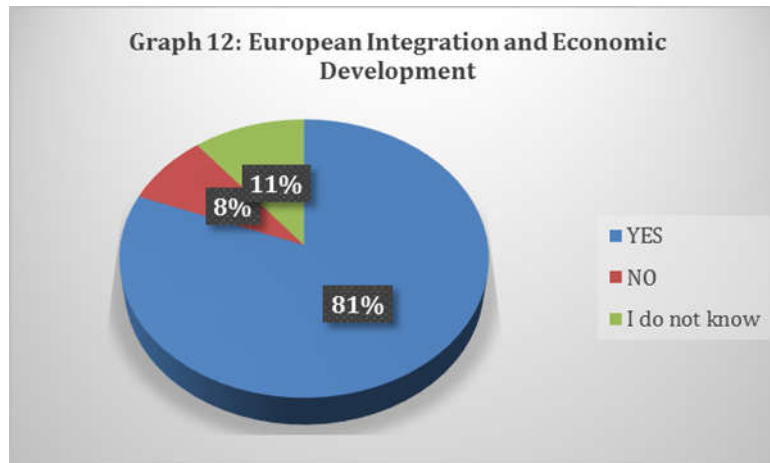
It can be noted in Graph 11 that an above-average number of respondents of 6 regions of Kosovo, such as: Prishtine/Priština, Peje/Peć, Ferizaj/Uroševac, Gjilan/Gnjilane, Gjakove/Đakovica and Prizren, perceive that Kosovo can normalize relations with Serbia through the European integration Process. In contrary, the respondents from the Mitrovica Region perceive that Kosovo *cannot* normalize relations with Serbia through the European integration process. Hence, a more detailed analysis shows the ethnicity difference in perception of the European integration as a tool for Kosovo to normalize relations with Serbia. Graph 11.1 shows that the Albanian ethnicity in the Mitrovica region perceives Kosovo *cannot* normalize relations with Serbia through the European integration process.



Overall, there are an above-average number of Kosovo citizens across its 6 regions who perceive that Kosovo can normalize relations with Serbia. However, the Albanian ethnicity in the Mitrovica region perceives that Kosovo *cannot* normalize relations with Serbia through the European integration process.

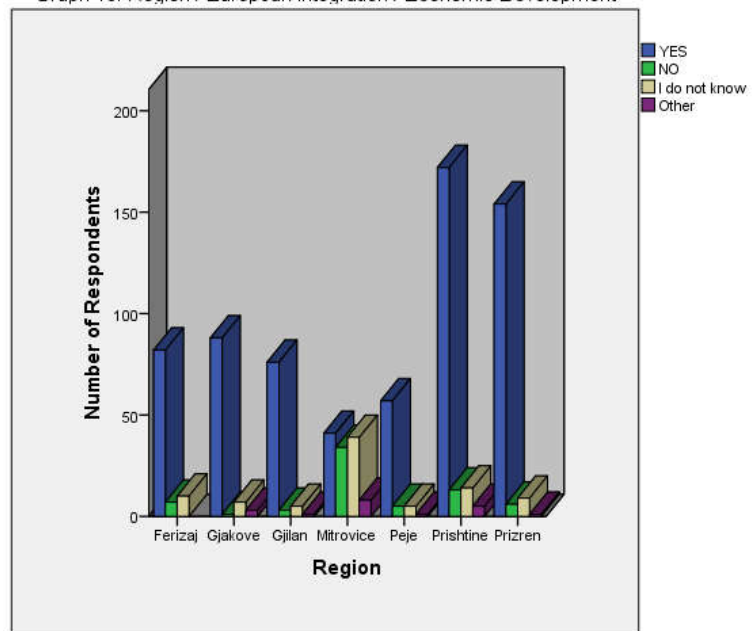
European Integration and Economic Development

Additionally, 81% of all respondents perceive that the European integration process can generate economic development for Kosovo. The greatest number of respondents (above 70%) of all age groups of the sample perceives that the European integration process can generate economic development for Kosovo.



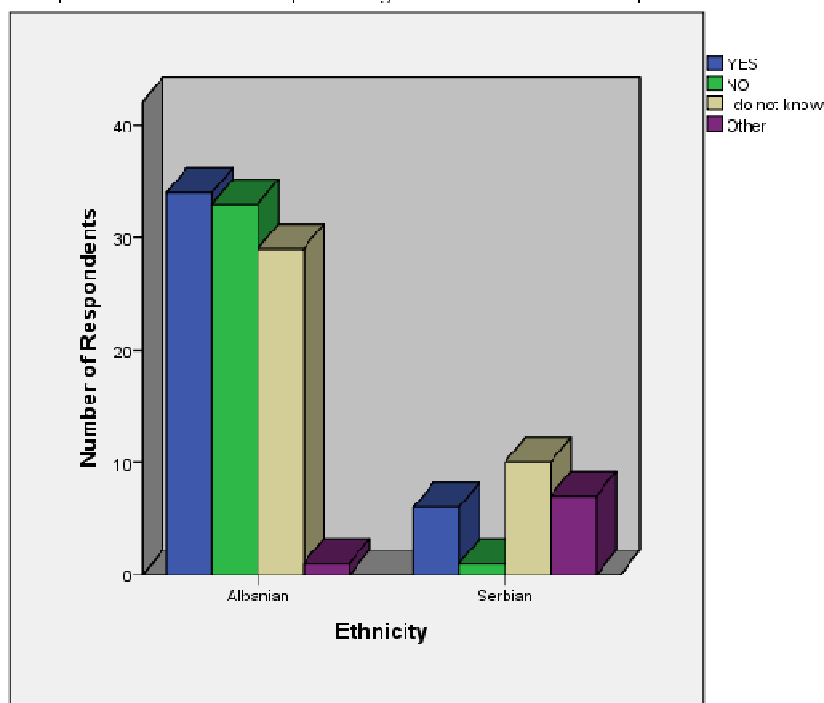
Additionally, the majority of respondents across 6 regions of Kosovo perceive that the European integration process can generate the economic development. However, Graph 13 shows that the distribution of answers/perceptions in the Mitrovica Region differs from the other 6 regions.

Graph 13: Region / European Integration / Economic Development



In the Mitrovica region, around 35% of respondents perceive that the European integration process *will not* lead to economic development; 35% perceive that the European integration process *will* lead to economic development; more than 20% *do not know*; if the European integration process will lead to economic development. A further analysis, Graph 13.1 shows the perception of the Albanian and Serbian ethnicities towards the European integration process as a method to generate economic development in Kosovo. Around 38% of the Albanian ethnicity respondents perceive that the European integration process *can* generate economic development in Kosovo whereas 34% of them perceive that the European integration process *cannot* generate economic development in Kosovo and 28% of them do not know if the European integration process can generate economic development in Kosovo. On the other hand, 27% of the Serbian ethnicity respondents perceive that the European integration process *can* generate economic development in Kosovo; around 10% perceive that the

Graph 13.1. Mitrovica / European Integration / Economic Development



European integration process *cannot* generate economic development in Kosovo; and 34% *do not know* if the European integration process *can* generate economic development to Kosovo. 29% of them have expressed their perception as *other*. The *other* reflects: that the Kosovo economic development can be generated as a

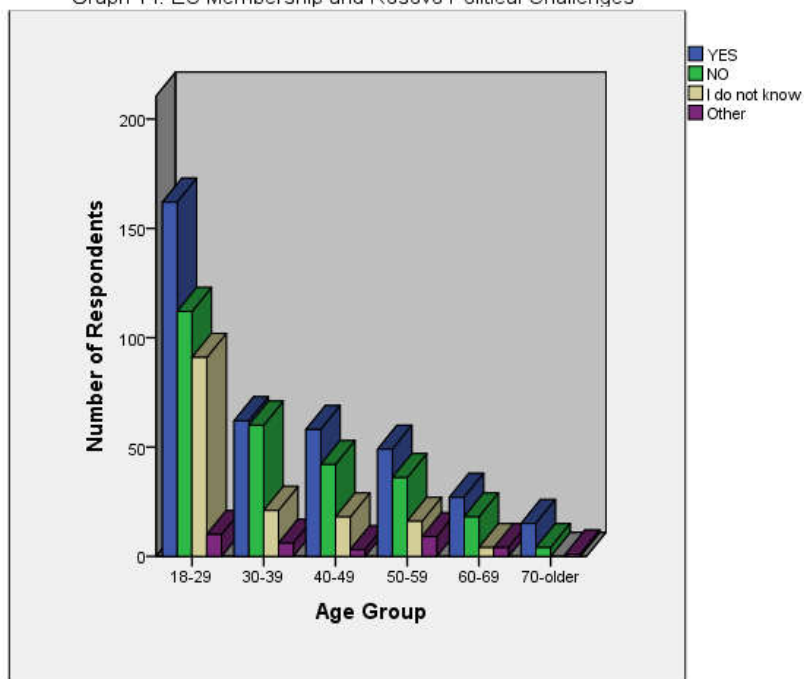
combination of local development policies and processes and the European integration process.

Overall, this survey shows that the greatest number of Kosovo citizens of the regions: Prishtina/Priština, Peje/Peć, Prizren, Gjakove/Đakovica, Gjilan/Gnjilane and Ferizaj/Uroševac perceive that the European integration process can generate economic development for Kosovo. However, in the Mitrovca region, specifically the Albanian ethnicity respondents almost equally perceive both that the European integration *can* and *cannot* generate economic development in Kosovo.

Membership in EU and Political Challenges

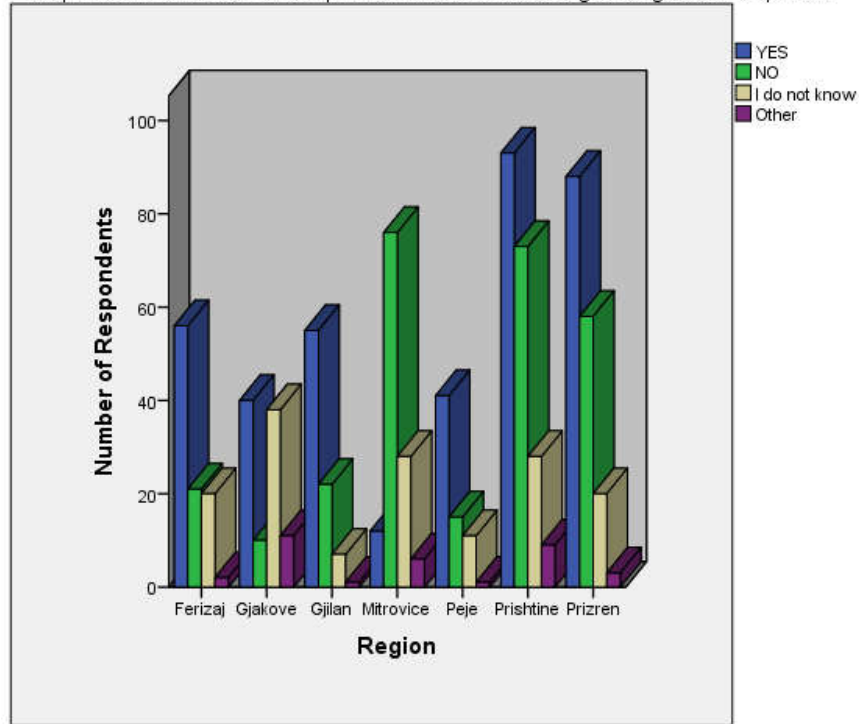
45.6% of all respondents perceive that Kosovo's membership in the European Union *can* serve as a tool to overcome Kosovo political challenges. However, 18% of all sample respondents *do not know* if Kosovo's membership in the European Union can solve Kosovo political challenges. The latter mentioned perceptions are shown across all age groups of the sample.

Graph 14: EU Membership and Kosovo Political Challenges



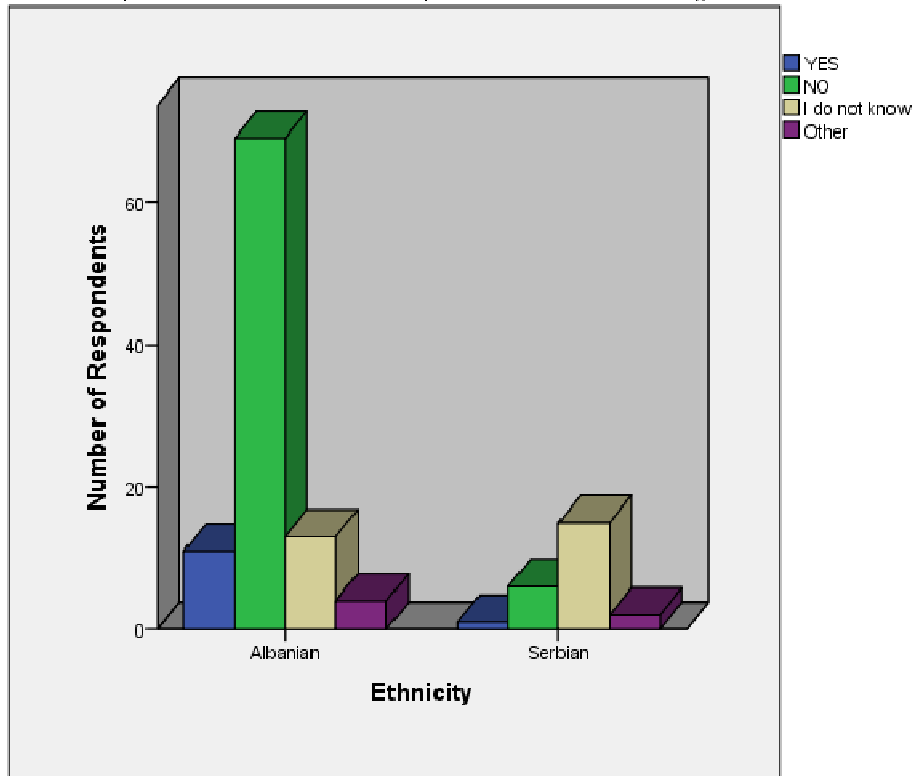
In general, across Kosovo regions except for the Mitrovica region, the majority of the respondents perceive that Kosovo’s membership will support Kosovo in overcoming political challenges. However, the majority of the respondents of the Mitrovica region perceive that Kosovo’s membership in the EU will neither support nor lead to overcoming the political challenges.

Graph 15: Kosovo Membership in EU / Political Challenge / Regional Perspective



Moreover, Graph 15.1 shows the differences in perception of the Albanian and Serbian community in the Mitrovica region towards Kosovo’s membership in the EU as a solution to Kosovo political challenges. As can be seen in Graph 15.1, a considerably greater number of the Albanian ethnicity respondents perceive that Kosovo’s membership in the EU will lead to the solution of Kosovo’s political challenges.

Graph 15.1. Kosovo Membership in EU / Political Challenge / Mitrovica

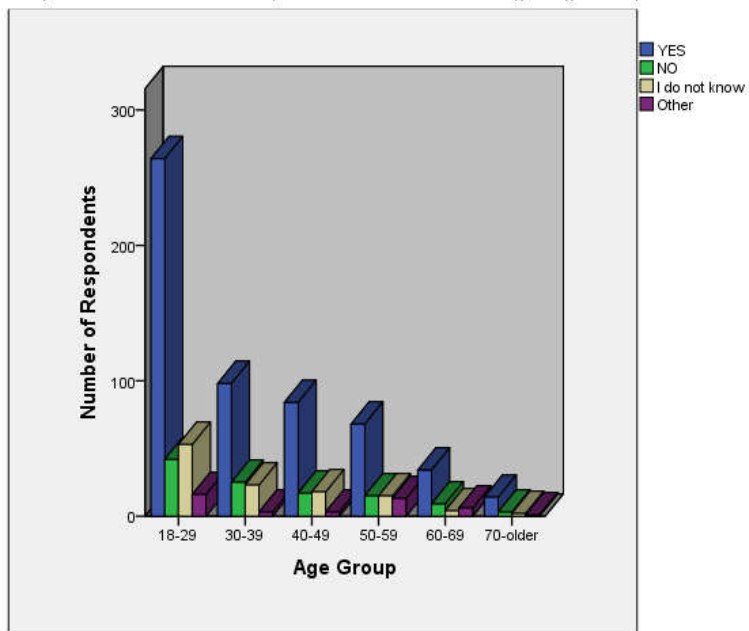


Overall, the majority of respondents from 6 regions in Kosovo, except for the Mitrovica Region, perceive that Kosovo's membership in the EU will lead to the solution of Kosovo's political challenges. There is a different perspective in the Mitrovica region, whereas the Albanian ethnicity respondents perceive that Kosovo's membership in the EU will not lead to the solution of the Kosovo's political challenges.

Membership in EU and Economic Challenges

67.5% of all sample respondents perceive that Kosovo's membership in the European Union will serve as a method to overcome Kosovo economic challenges. The given Graph 11, shows that the perception of Kosovo's membership in the EU which will serve as a tool to overcome economic challenges is spread evenly across all age groups of the sample.

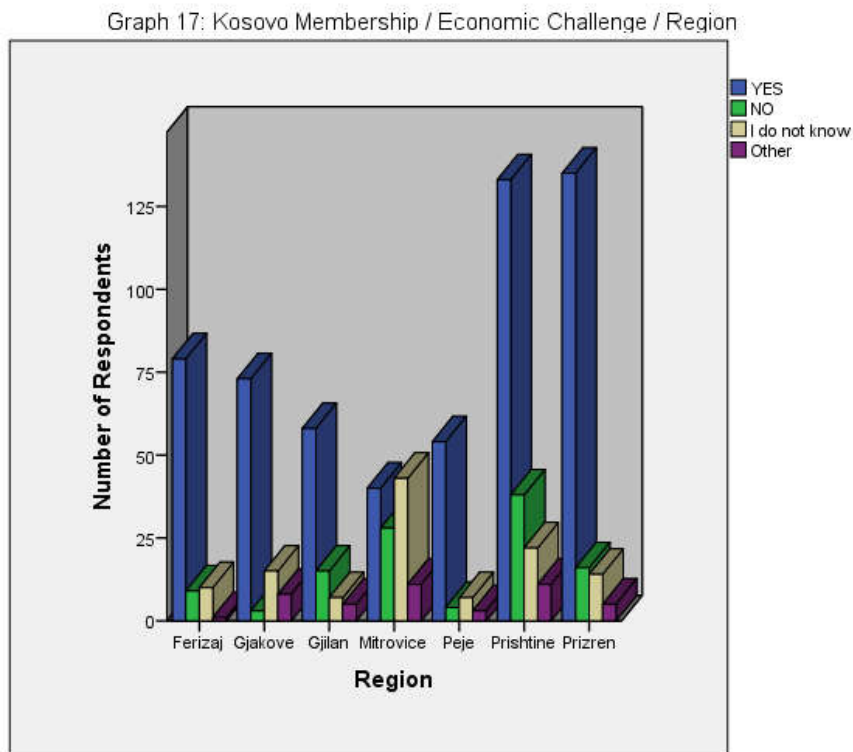
Graph 16: Kosovo Membership in EU / Economic Challenge / Age Group



However, 13.3% of the sample respondents perceive that Kosovo's membership in the European Union will not serve as a means to overcome economic challenges. However, 13.9% of the respondents *do not know* if Kosovo's membership in the European Union will serve as a tool to overcome economic challenges.

The majority of respondents across 6 regions in Kosovo have stated that they perceive that Kosovo's membership in the EU will serve as a tool to overcome Kosovo economic challenges. However, more than 20% of the respondents of the Mitrovica region perceive that Kosovo's membership in the EU will not serve as a tool to overcome economic challenges. Around 30% perceive that Kosovo's membership in the EU will support Kosovo to overcome economic challenges,

and more than 40% do not know if Kosovo’s membership in the EU will support Kosovo to overcome economic challenges.

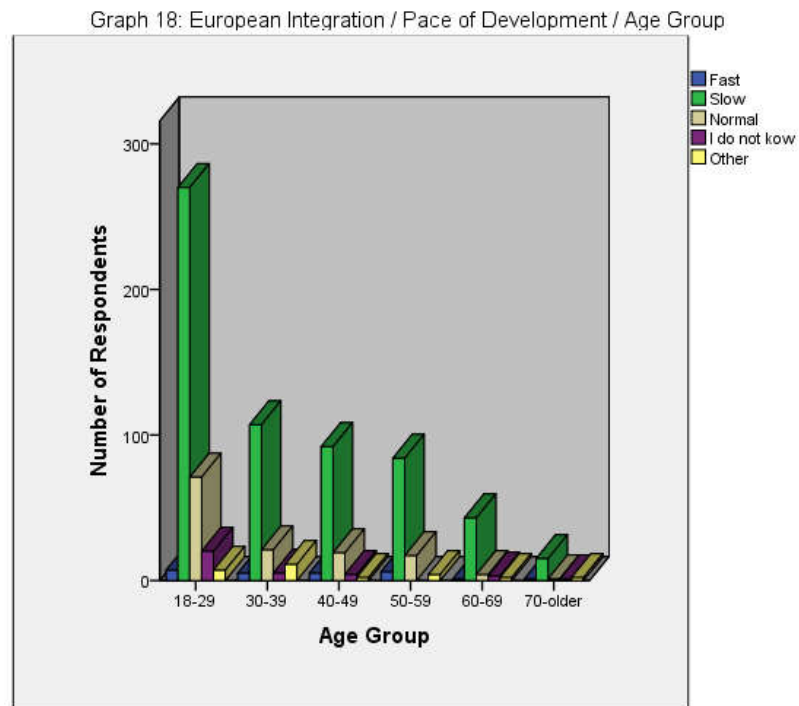


Also, 55% of the employed respondents and around 56% of the unemployed respondents perceive that Kosovo’s membership in the EU can enable Kosovo to overcome economic challenges.

Broadly, a greater number of Kosovo citizens perceive that Kosovo’s membership in the EU will support Kosovo in solving its economic challenges. In six regions, a majority of the respondents perceive that Kosovo’s membership in the EU will support it in solving its economic challenges. However, in the Mitrovica region there is an evenly spread perception that: a) Kosovo’s membership in the EU will support it in overcoming economic challenges; b) Kosovo’s membership in the EU will not support it in overcoming economic challenges; and c) do not know if Kosovo’s membership in the EU will support it in overcoming economic challenges.

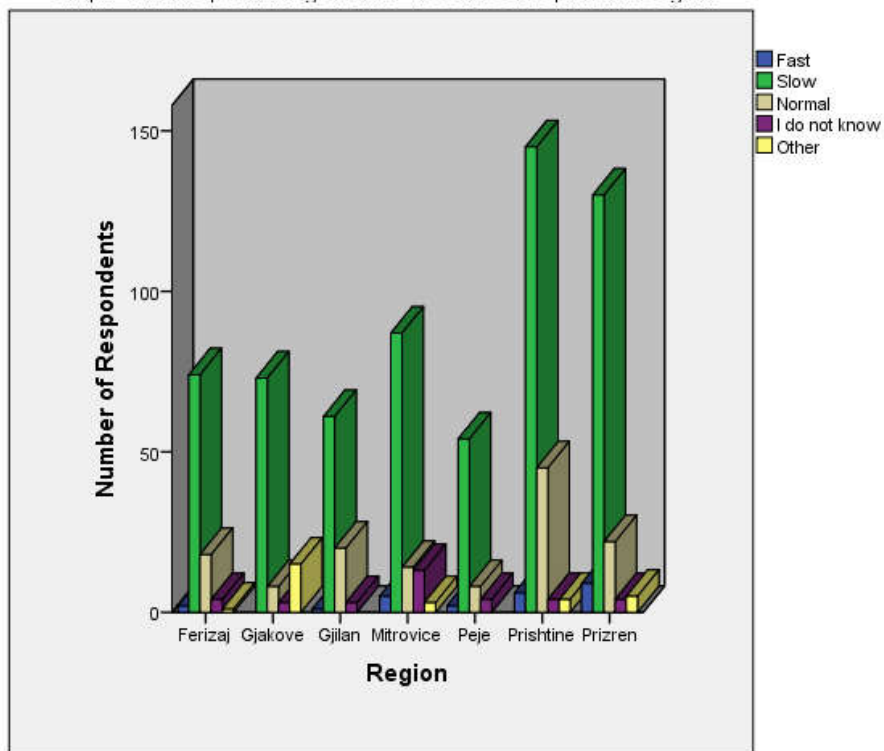
Velocity of the European Integration Process

73.6% of all respondents perceive that the process of the European integration of Kosovo is being slowly developed. 15.9% of the respondents perceive that the respective process is being developed at a normal pace. However, only 3% of the respondents perceive that the respective process is being developed at a fast pace. The respective perception is being perceived as same across all age groups; see Graph 18.



Similarly, the perception of the respondents that the European integration process is being developed at a low pace is present across all regions in Kosovo, see Graph 19.

Graph 19: European Integration / Pace of Development / Region



Overall, the majority of the respondents in Kosovo perceive that the Kosovo process of the European integration is being developed at a slow pace of development. The respective perception is noticeable across all age groups (age range: 18-75); gender and regions.

Means of Receiving Information on the European Integration Process

The below given table, Table 4, shows the distribution of tools through which the respondents receive information on the European integration process. It can be noted that news, portals and other written media are the three media tools through which respondents receive information related to the European integration process.

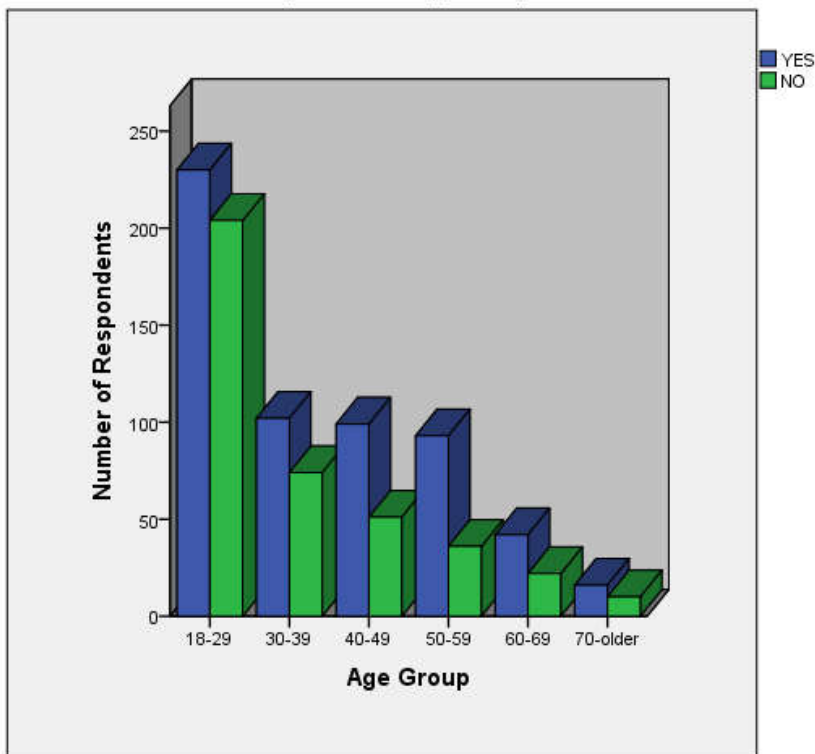
Table 4: How do you receive information on the European integration process?

Tool	Percentage
TV News	50.5
Debate	5.2
Portal	14.2
Other written media	15.0
My network	3.0
Other	2.1
More than 1 tool	10.0

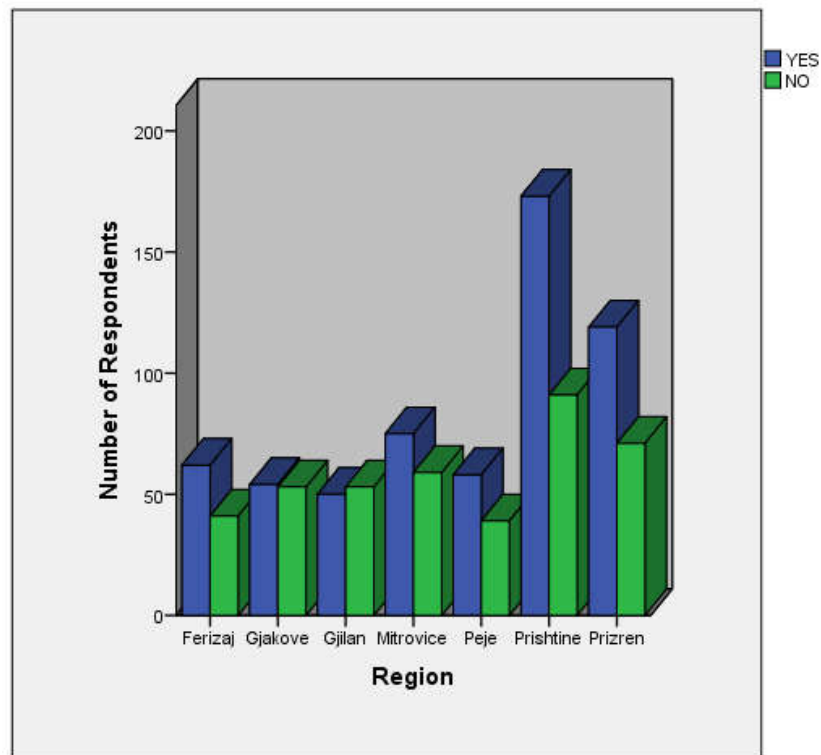
Perceptions on the Stabilization Association Agreement (SAA) and its Benefits

59.1% of the respondents have heard that Kosovo has signed the SAA (the Stabilization and Association Agreement); whereas 40.7% of the respondents have not heard about the respective agreement. The respective perception is evenly spread across all age groups and regions in Kosovo; see Graph 20 and 21.

Graph 20: SAA / Age Group



Graph 21: SAA / Region



Additionally, out of 59.1% of the respondents who are aware that Kosovo has signed the SAA, only 34.9% perceive to *know* the benefits for Kosovo from the SAA; whereas more than 60% have stated that they *do not know* if Kosovo will benefit from the SAA. The perceived SAA benefits are: economic development and b) a great potential for businesses to either collaborate with the European Union countries or outsource/export products and services to the European Union countries.

Table 5 shows means of being informed about the SAA. It can be noted that the majority of respondents have received information about the SAA through TV news.

Table 5: How did you receive information about the SAA?

Tool	Percentage
TV News	60%
Portals	25%
Other written media	10%
Network	5%

Overall, this study shows an average number of citizens are aware of the SAA conclusion and its benefits to Kosovo. It also shows that the TV news appears to be one of the most used media to receive information on the SAA; hence there are opportunities to expand the media tools, in order to increase the awareness of the SAA and its benefits among Kosovo citizens.

Visa Liberalization Process

Table 6 shows the respondents' perception about the process of visa liberalization. 60.5% of them perceive that the visa liberalization process is related to the free movement of the citizen in the Schengen Zone.

Table 6: Perception of visa liberalization

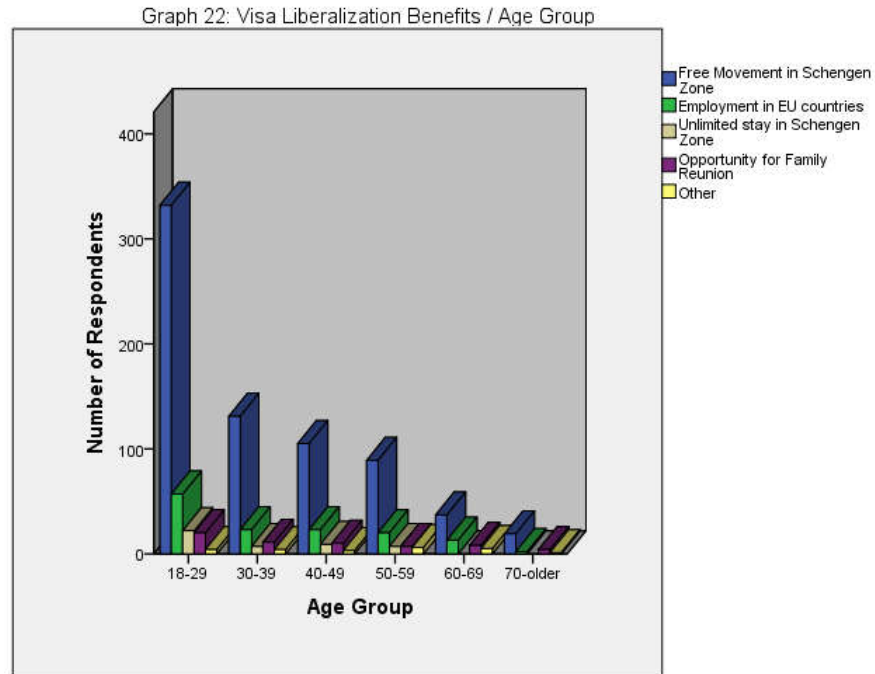
Perception	Percentage
Free Movement in all EU Countries	26.1
Free Movement in Schengen Zone	60.5
Free Movement in EU and Western Balkan	1.8
Free Movement in EU Zone	11.6

Additionally, 73% of the respondents have expressed that the free movement in the Schengen Zone is the benefit of the visa liberalization process; whereas 14% of them have expressed that the visa liberalization will enable them to become employed in the EU countries. Table 7 shows the ratio of the benefits within the sample of respondents.

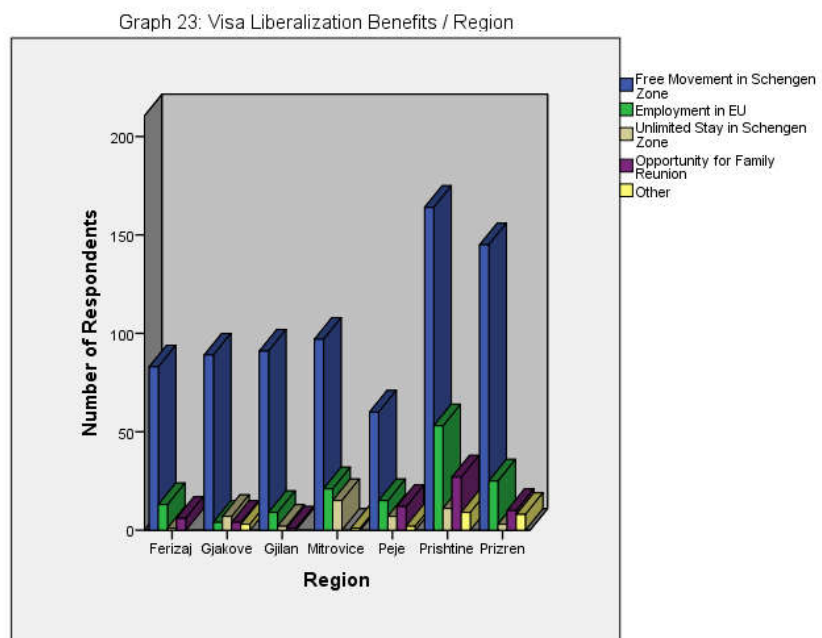
Table 7: Benefits of Visa Liberalization

Benefit	Percentage
Free Movement in Schengen Zone	73.0
Employment in EU Countries	14.0
Opportunity to stay in Schengen Zone for unlimited period of time	4.6
Opportunity for Family Reunion	6.0
Other	2.3

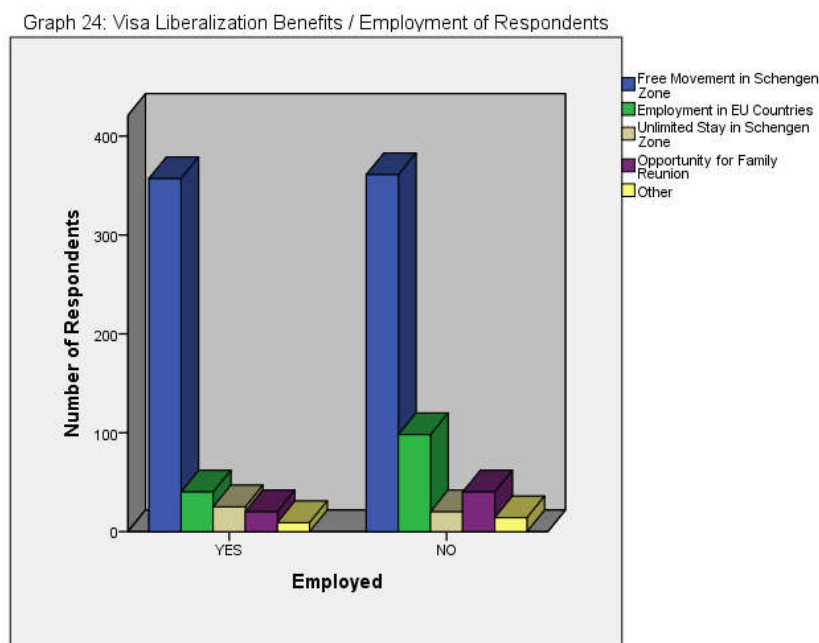
Graph 22 shows the ratio of benefits across different age groups. It can be noted that the respective perception is spread evenly across all age groups.



Furthermore, Graph 23 shows that across all regions in Kosovo, the majority of the respondents have expressed *the free movement in the Schengen Zone* as a benefit from the visa liberalization process.



In addition, the majority of the respondents correctly perceive that the visa liberalization is related to the *free movement in the Schengen Zone*. However, a greater percentage of unemployed respondents (around 20%), in comparison to the employed (around 8%) respondents, perceive the visa liberalization as a way of becoming employed in the EU countries.



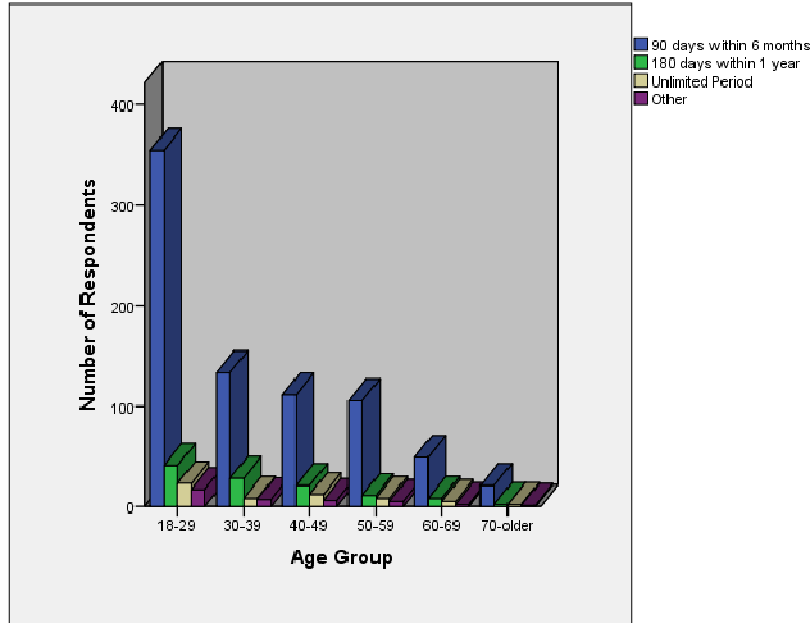
Furthermore, 78.9% of all respondents have stated that a person can stay in the Schengen Zone for 90 days within 6 months if the visa liberalization process takes place. The respective statement has been evenly stated across all age groups.

Table 8: Duration of Stay in the Schengen Zone – Visa Liberalization

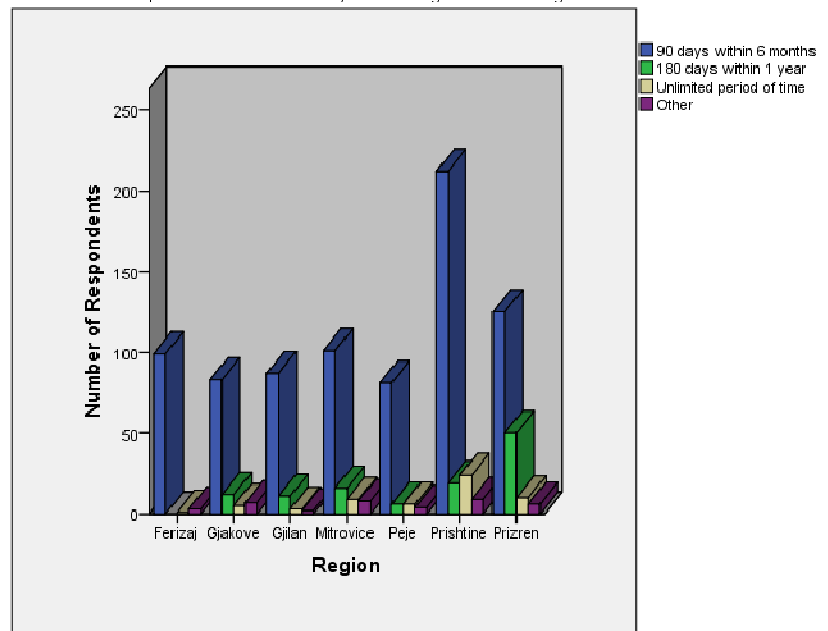
Duration	Percentage
90 days within 6 months	78.9
180 days within 1 year	11.4
Unlimited Period	5.8
Other	3.9

In addition, the majority of respondents across different age groups and regions in Kosovo (see Graph 25 and 26), correctly perceive, that the visa liberalization process enables them to stay 90 days within a period of 6 months.

Graph 25: Duration in Schengen Zone / Visa Liberalization / Age Group



Graph 26: Duration of Stay in Schengen Zone / Region



Generally, this study shows that an above average number of citizens correctly perceive the visa liberalization process. However, a considerable number correctly perceives that the benefit of the visa liberalization enables a free movement in the Schengen Zone states. The latter mentioned perception is

noticeable across all regions in Kosovo, age groups (age range: 18-75) and gender. However, a higher portion of unemployed citizens perceive the visa liberalization as a method to get employment in the EU countries.

4. Conclusions & Recommendations

The conclusions of the survey on *the Public Opinion Perception on the European Integration* are as follows:

- ❖ 84.6% of the all respondents have heard about the concept of the European integration. Hence, we can generalize that Kosovo inhabitants are aware of the concept of the European integration. This survey shows that TV news is the tool through which the majority of the inhabitants receive information about the European integration. The news is followed by the other tools such as portals and other written media.
- ❖ Nevertheless, there is a difference in understanding of what the concept of the European integration relates to.

The most chosen perceptions are:

1st most chosen: A union, organization that represents the most developed Western democracies

2nd most chosen: An entity that avoids conflicts between countries that are members of the Union and promotes peace and good relations among neighbouring countries

3rd most chosen: Integration of Kosovar society in a union that consists of values completely different from our traditional values

However, there is a difference of perception of the European integration process in the Mitrovica region. In Mitrovica, the understanding of the European integration is: *Integration of Kosovar society in a union that consists of values completely different from our traditional values*. The respective understanding in other 6 regions of Kosovo is the third most chosen definition.

- ❖ The majority of the respondents have perceived that Kosovo benefits from the European integration process. The perceived benefits *during* the European integration process are mainly related to the economic development; free movement and favourable conditions for trade. While, the perceived benefits *after* the European integration process are related to: economic development, free movement, favourable conditions for trade, employment in the EU, and exchange in education, youth development and cultural development. Nevertheless, more than 70% of the respondents across all regions perceive that the process of the European integration of Kosovo is being slowly developed.
- ❖ The European integration process is only moderately perceived across 6 regions in Kosovo as a tool to normalize relations between Kosovo and Serbia. In contrary, the citizens of Mitrovica, specifically from the Albanian community, highly perceive that the European integration process *cannot* support Kosovo in normalizing its relations with Serbia.
- ❖ Kosovo's membership in the European Union is perceived by a moderate number of the respondents (45.6%) as a tool to overcome political challenges and by greater number of respondents (67.5%) as a tool to overcome economic challenges in Kosovo. This survey shows that the membership in the EU is mostly perceived as a tool to overcome economic challenges rather than as a tool to overcome Kosovo political challenges. Worthwhile to mention that the citizens of Mitrovica region, specifically the majority of Albanian ethnicity, perceive that Kosovo's political challenges cannot be solved through Kosovo's membership in the EU.
- ❖ A slightly higher number than half of the sample (59.1% of the respondents) is aware that Kosovo has signed the SAA; but only 30% of the respondents who are aware of the SAA could relate to its benefits. The perceived benefits are in terms of trade opportunities for the business community and economic development. TV news is the leading tool to

receive information about the SAA; and then is followed by portals and other written media.

- ❖ More of 60% of the respondents perceive the concept of the visa liberalization as a method to freely move to the countries that are in the Schengen Zone. 73% perceive that one of the benefits of the visa liberalization is the free movement in the Schengen Zone countries. However, 20% of the unemployed respondents of the sample perceive the visa liberalization process as a method to become employed in the EU countries. 78.9% of the respondents correctly perceive the duration of stay in the Schengen Zone through the visa liberalization process.

Overall, this survey shows Kosovo citizens' perceptions and understanding of the European integration process and its related impacts and outputs. In general, it shows that Kosovo citizens have heard of the notion *the European integration*. However, there are differences in understanding what the concept means. Additionally, this survey shows that citizens positively perceive that the European integration can support Kosovo in generating economic development. And it shows that a moderate number of citizens across 6 regions of Kosovo, and a minor number of the Albanian ethnicity in Mitrovica, perceive that Kosovo's membership in the EU can support Kosovo in economic development. However, this survey shows that only a moderate number of citizens perceive that the European integration process can lead to the normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia. And it also shows that Kosovo's membership in the EU cannot support Kosovo in overcoming its political challenges. Thus, in general the European integration and EU membership are perceived in terms of economic development rather than overcoming political issues.

Additionally, this survey shows that only a moderate number of citizens are aware that Kosovo has signed the SAA, and a very small number of citizens are aware of its benefits. Nevertheless, a greater number of citizens correctly perceive that the visa liberalization process refers to the free movement in the Schengen Zone for a certain period of time.

Furthermore, it is apparent that the TV news is the most used media to receive information on the European integration, SAA and visa liberalization. Kosovo citizens receive information in a passive manner and are not actively engaged.

Thus, based on the conducted survey, it is recommended that:

- ❖ The Government of Kosovo should inform citizens regarding the European integration through other active communication means: conferences, active debates, awareness campaigns, and should not allow news, as a passive communication tool, to be the only tool of information;
- ❖ The Government of Kosovo should take into consideration perceptions of the Albanian ethnicity citizens of Mitrovica, whose perceptions differ from the perceptions of citizens of other regions. This survey has reflected the perceptions, doubts and insecurities that the Albanian community in Mitrovica experiences. Hence, the governmental institutions should have a more direct and open communication with the respective citizens, in order to overcome the current situation;
- ❖ The Government of Kosovo should devise an action plan that combines short-term (public information and awareness raising campaigns) and long-term measures (aiming at improving living conditions of the vulnerable groups of population and unemployed people in order for them to understand properly the visa liberalization process);
- ❖ The Government of Kosovo should include youth organizations and NGOs, as well as minority parties and leaders, from the beginning of the targeted information campaign (in particular concerning the SAA benefits and visa liberalization issue);

- ❖ Similarly, the Kosovo Government should seek additional attempt to work more closely with both ethnicities in the Mitrovica region and to convince them that the European integration is a tool that will stimulate the integration of their city, as well; and
- ❖ Finally, more work is needed in clarifying the concept of the European integration process in general, and the idea of the European Union, in particular, to the citizens.

Annex 1: Questionnaire

Date	Interviewer
Interviewer's Code	Venue

RIDEA with the support by UNDP is conducting a study in measuring public opinion perception on the European integration process. You have been randomly selected to participate. Your data will remain confidential.

Municipality
Gender M F
Age
Are you employed YES NO
If Yes: which sector:

1. Have you heard of the concept of the European integration?

YES NO

If YES, go to question 2, if NO, go to question 12

2. How do you understand the European integration process?

- a) Integration of Kosovar society in a union that consists of values completely different from our traditional values;
- b) A union, organization that represents the most developed Western democracies;
- c) An entity that avoids conflicts between countries that are members of the Union and promotes peace and good relations among neighbouring countries;
- d) An institution, which generates prosperity, social welfare for its members;
- e) Other:_____

3. What do you think the benefits for Kosovo during the process of European integration are?

4. What do you think the benefits after the European integration are?

5. Do you think that Kosovo

- a) benefits from the European integration process;
- b) loses from the European integration process;
- c) I do not know;
- d) Other _____

6. Do you think that Kosovo can normalize its relations with Serbia through the European integration?

- a) YES;
- b) NO;
- c) I do not know;
- d) Other _____

7. Do you think that the European integration process generates economic development?

- a) YES;
- b) NO;
- c) I do not know;
- d) Other _____

8. Do you think that Kosovo's membership in the EU will solve our political challenges?

- a) YES;
- b) NO;
- c) I do not know;
- d) Other _____

9. Do you think that Kosovo's membership in the EU will solve our economic challenges?

- e) YES;
- f) NO;
- g) I do not know;
- h) Other _____

10. Do you think that the process of the European integration of Kosovo is progressing:

- a) fast;
- b) slowly;
- c) normally;
- d) I do not know;
- e) Other _____

11. How do you receive information on the process of the European integration of Kosovo?

- a) News;
- b) Debate;
- c) Portals;
- d) Social Media;
- e) Press or Electronic Media;
- f) Discussions with your network (friends, colleagues, family);
- f) Other _____

12. Are you informed that Kosovo has signed the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) with the EU?

If YES, how?

13. Do you think that Kosovo benefits from the SAA?

- a) Yes. Which are the benefits? _____
- b) No;
- c) I do not know;

14. What do you think that the process of visa liberalization means?

- a) Free movement in all EU Member States;
- b) free movement within the Schengen zone;
- c) Free movement within the EU Member States and Western Balkans countries;
- d) Free movement within the European area.

15. What do you think the benefits of the visa liberalization are?

- a) Free movement within the Schengen zone
- b) Employment in EU Member States;
- c) An opportunity to stay in the Schengen zone for an unlimited period of time;
- d) A good chance for a family reunion;
- e) Other _____

16. How long can a person stay in the Schengen zone countries if the EU lifts its Schengen visas for Kosovo citizens?

- a) 90 days within a period of 6 months;
- b) 180 days within a period of 1 year;
- c) Unlimited period of time;
- d) Other _____

Please provide your information below. Your data will be used only for this study and will remain confidential.

Name	E-mail
Tel. No:	