



Survey on Turkish Elites' Perceptions on Turkish Foreign Policy and Greek-Turkish Relations

Dimitrios Triantaphyllou
14 December 2016

A survey hosted by





HOW DOES THE SURVEY DEFINE ELITES?

- In this research, Turkish elites are grouped within six categories as follows:
 - **Businessmen:** Members of TUSIAD, TOBB, MUSIAD, and TUSKON
 - **Journalists:** Diplomatic correspondents, senior editors, commentators in major dailies, TV and radio stations as well as news websites
 - **Diplomats:** Directorate heads, deputy heads and senior Embassy staff as well as retired ambassadors
 - **Military:** Officers ranking brigadier general and higher as well as retired senior officers
 - **Politicians:** Members of the Committee on National Defence; the Committee on Foreign Affairs; the Committee on EU harmonization; and the Committee on Security and Intelligence of related ministries
 - **Academics/Think-tanks representatives:** IR and politics faculty members as well as representatives from think-tanks





TIME FRAME & NUMBERS

- The questionnaire was hosted by **Infakto Research Workshop**.
- **First Launch:** 2 March 2016 (*eight weeks*)
- **Second Launch:** 17 November 2016 (*four weeks*)
- **Research Team:** Dimitrios Triantaphyllou (*Project Manager*) & Cihan Dizdaroğlu (*Project Assistant*)

CATEGORY	NUMBER OF PEOPLE	RESPONSES	RESPONSE RATE
Academics/think-tank	304	99	32,5%
Military	150	33	22%
Diplomats	196	39	7%
Journalists	208		
Businessmen	143		
Politicians	149	1	-





ABOUT THE GREEK SURVEY (1)

- The first survey focused on **National Role and Foreign Policy: A Descriptive Study of Greek Elites' Perceptions towards Turkey**
- Conducted by **Dimitrios Triantaphyllou & Kostas Ifantis** for the **Hellenic Observatory**, part of the European Institute at the London School of Economics.
- **Dates:** 1 October 2013-17 November 2014 (the survey was conducted in 2014)
- The questionnaire was hosted by **Kapa Research** (Athens)





ABOUT THE GREEK SURVEY (2)

CATEGORY	NUMBER OF PEOPLE	RESPONSES	RESPONSE RATE
Academics	102	53	51,9%
Press	90	40	41,6%
Diplomats	88	26	29,5%
Politicians	66	25	37,8%
Military	96	45	46,8%
Business	80	30	37,6%





QUESTIONS

Three Sets of Questions

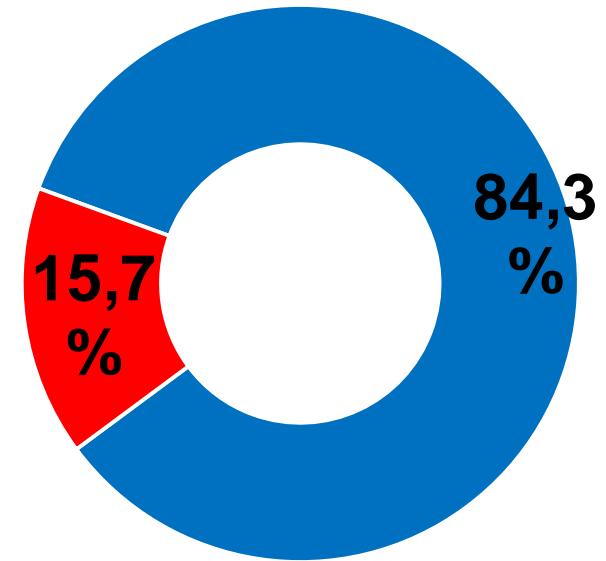
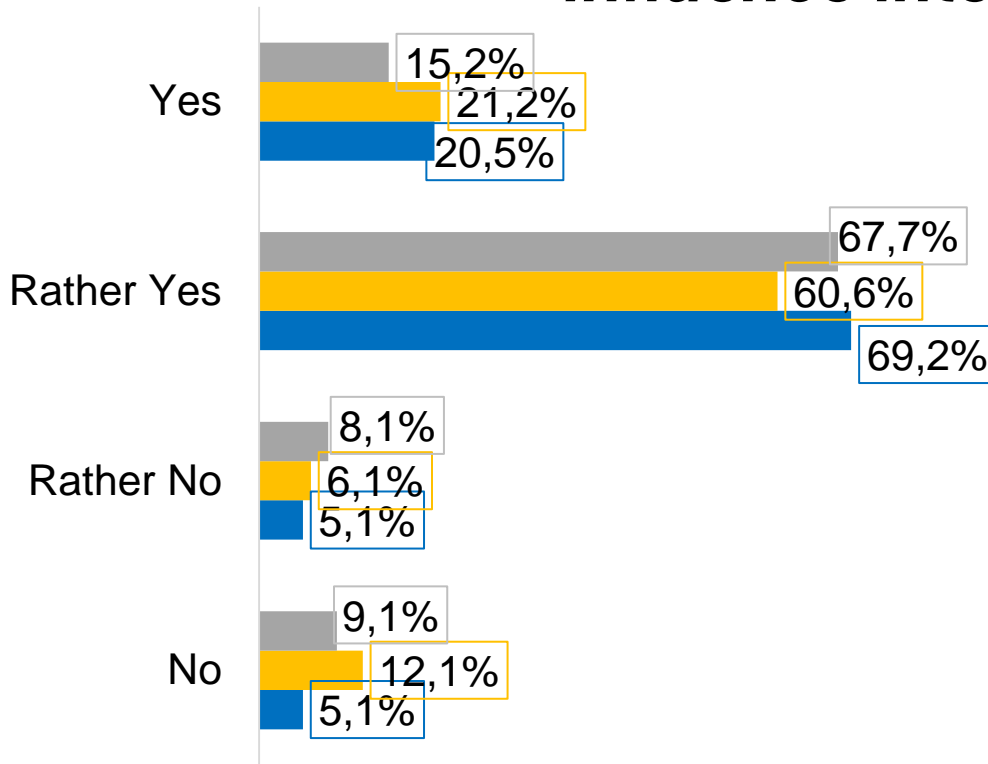
- Turkey's position in the world, its influence on the regional developments and/or global politics (Q 1-13)
- Greece's foreign policy, its internal affairs, and its role in world politics (Q 14-25)
- Greek-Turkish Relations (Q 26-41)





TURKEY'S ROLE IN THE WORLD (1)

Q2: *Do you believe that Turkish foreign policy can influence international politics?*



■ Affirmative ■ Negative

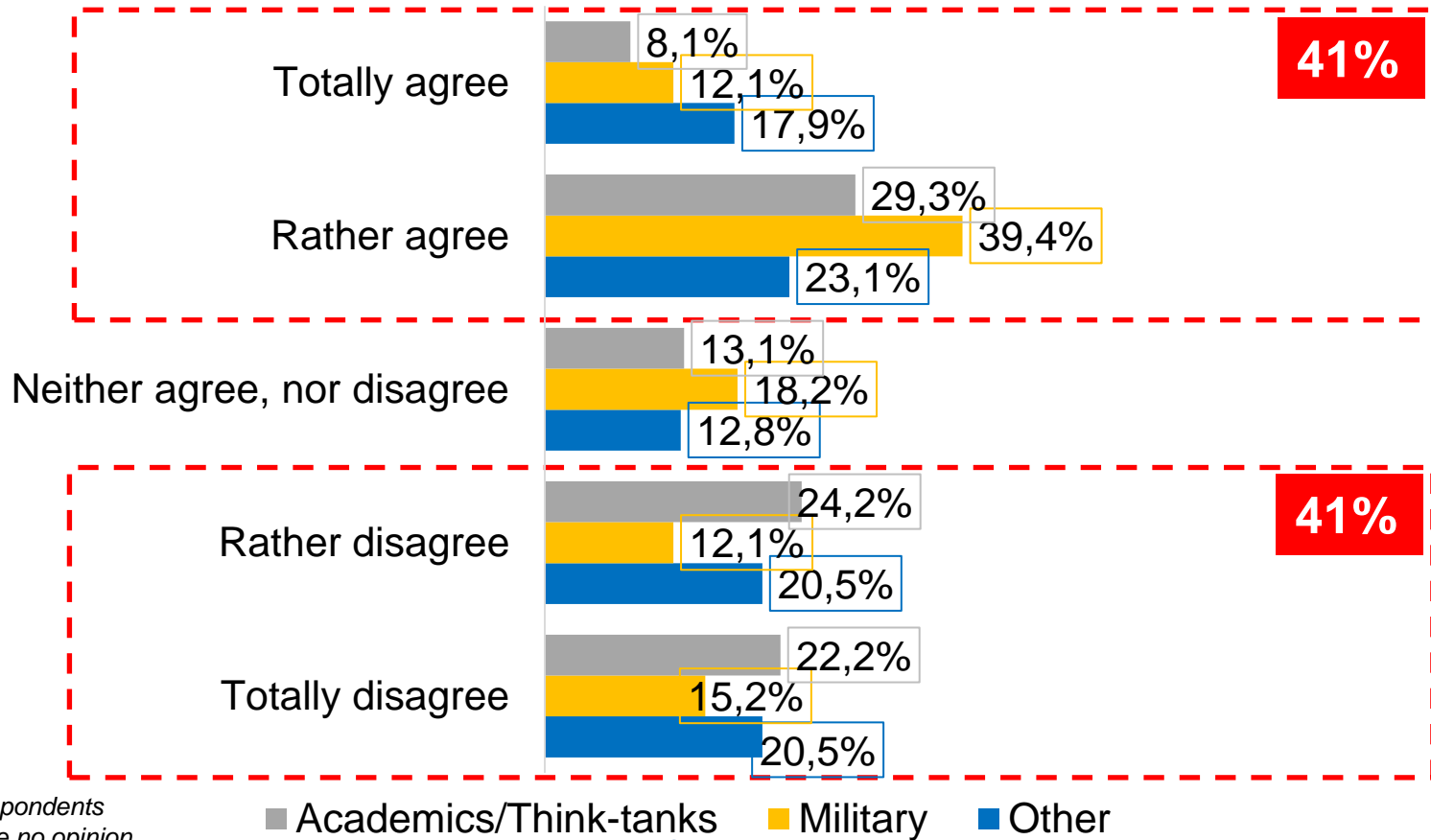
■ Academics/Think-tanks ■ Military ■ Other





TURKEY'S ROLE IN THE WORLD (2)

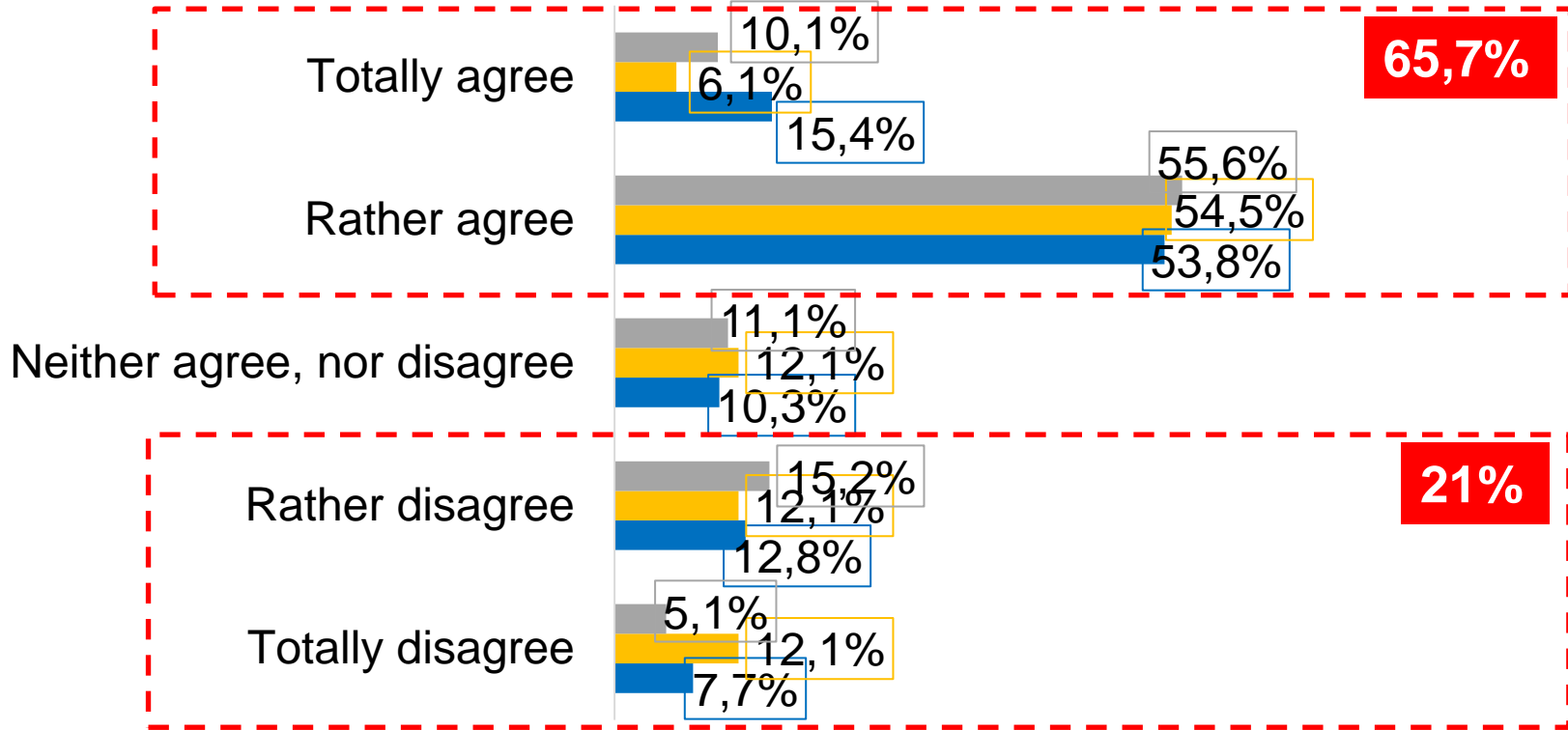
Q3: Turkey can influence international politics with the quality of its ideas and its commitment to International Law





TURKEY'S ROLE IN THE WORLD (3)

Q4: Turkey can influence international politics because of its memberships in several international organizations



3 per cent of the respondents stated that they have no opinion.

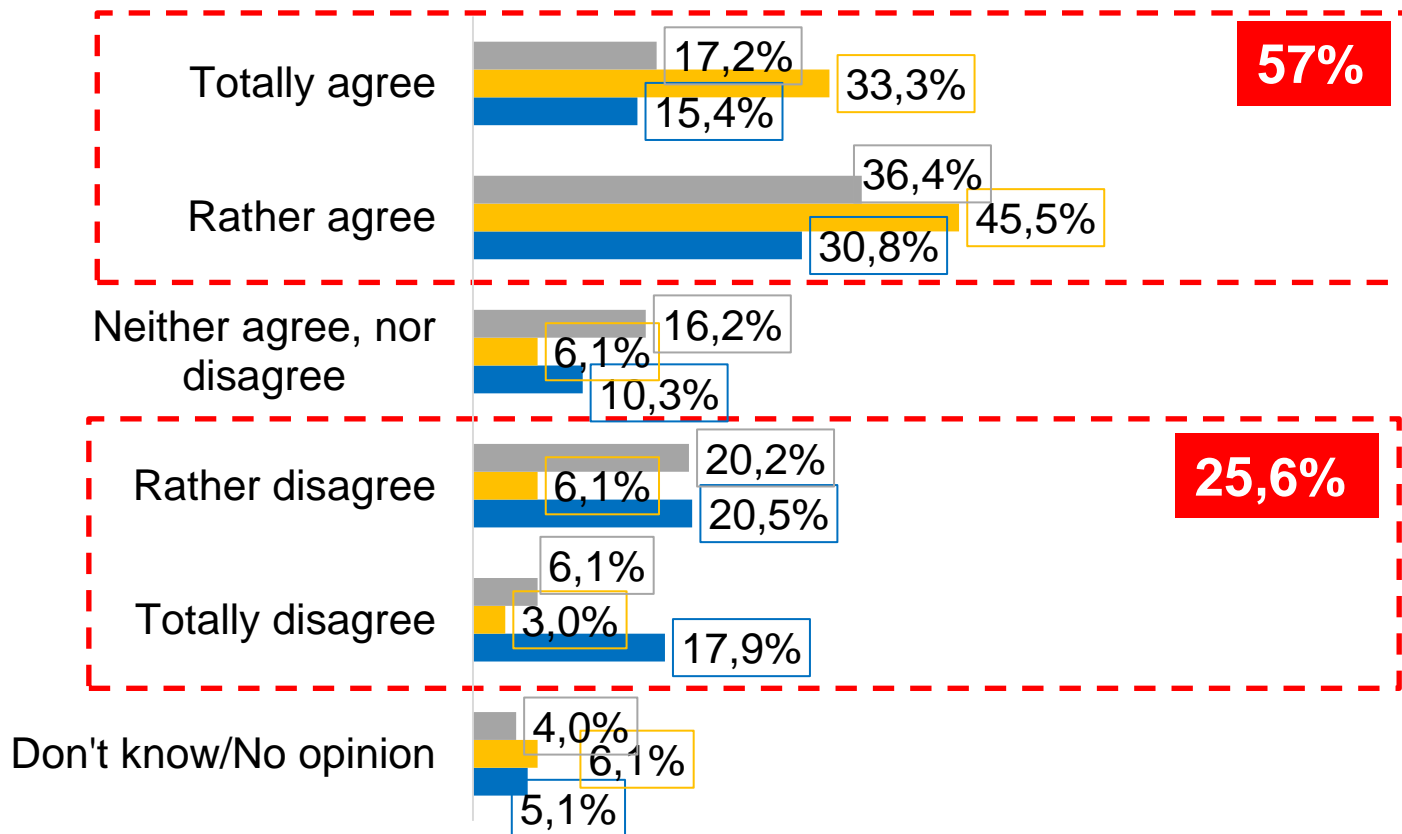
■ Academics/Think-tanks ■ Military ■ Other





TURKEY'S ROLE IN THE WORLD (4)

Q5: *Turkey meets the international obligations deriving from its participation in the UN, NATO, and other organizations.*



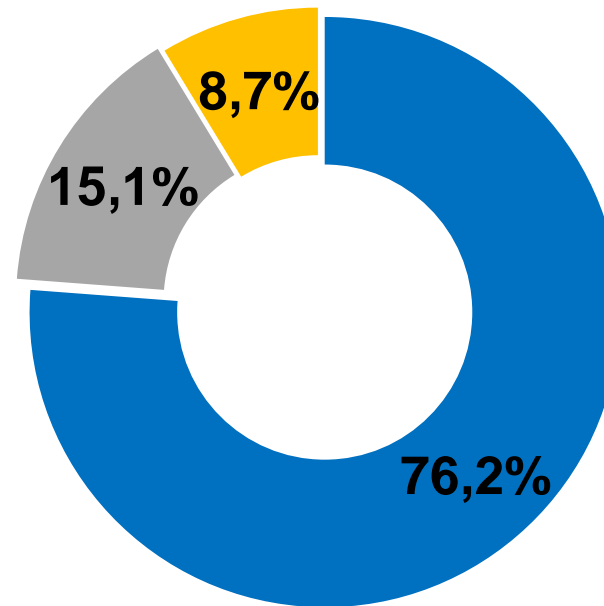
■ Academics/Think-tanks ■ Military ■ Other





TURKEY'S ROLE IN THE WORLD (5)

Q6: To what degree do you believe that **global concerns** (Afghanistan, Syria, sub-Saharan Africa, Ukraine, international terrorism, global warming, etc.) concern Turkish foreign policy?



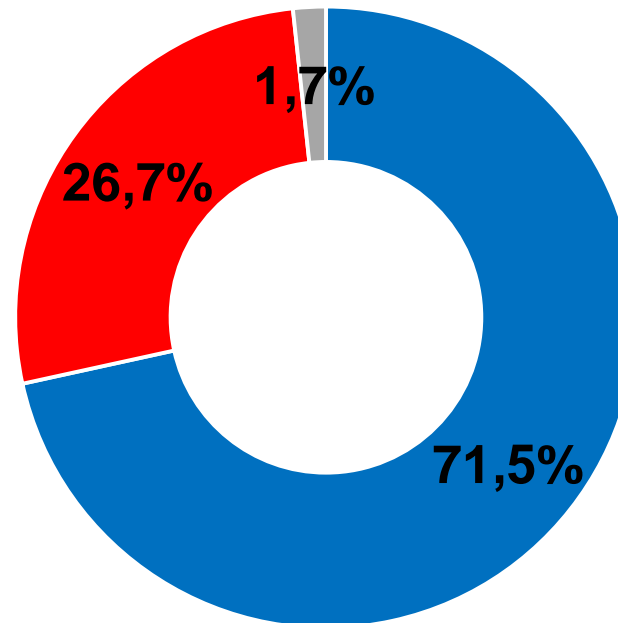
■ Too much/much ■ Somewhat ■ Little/minimally





TURKEY'S ROLE IN THE WORLD (6)

Q7: In your opinion, do the Turkish citizens **support a more active foreign policy** that is not limited to the 'traditional' (Greek-Turkish relations, Cyprus issue, controversy between Turkey and Armenia about the events of 1915, etc.) foreign policy issues?



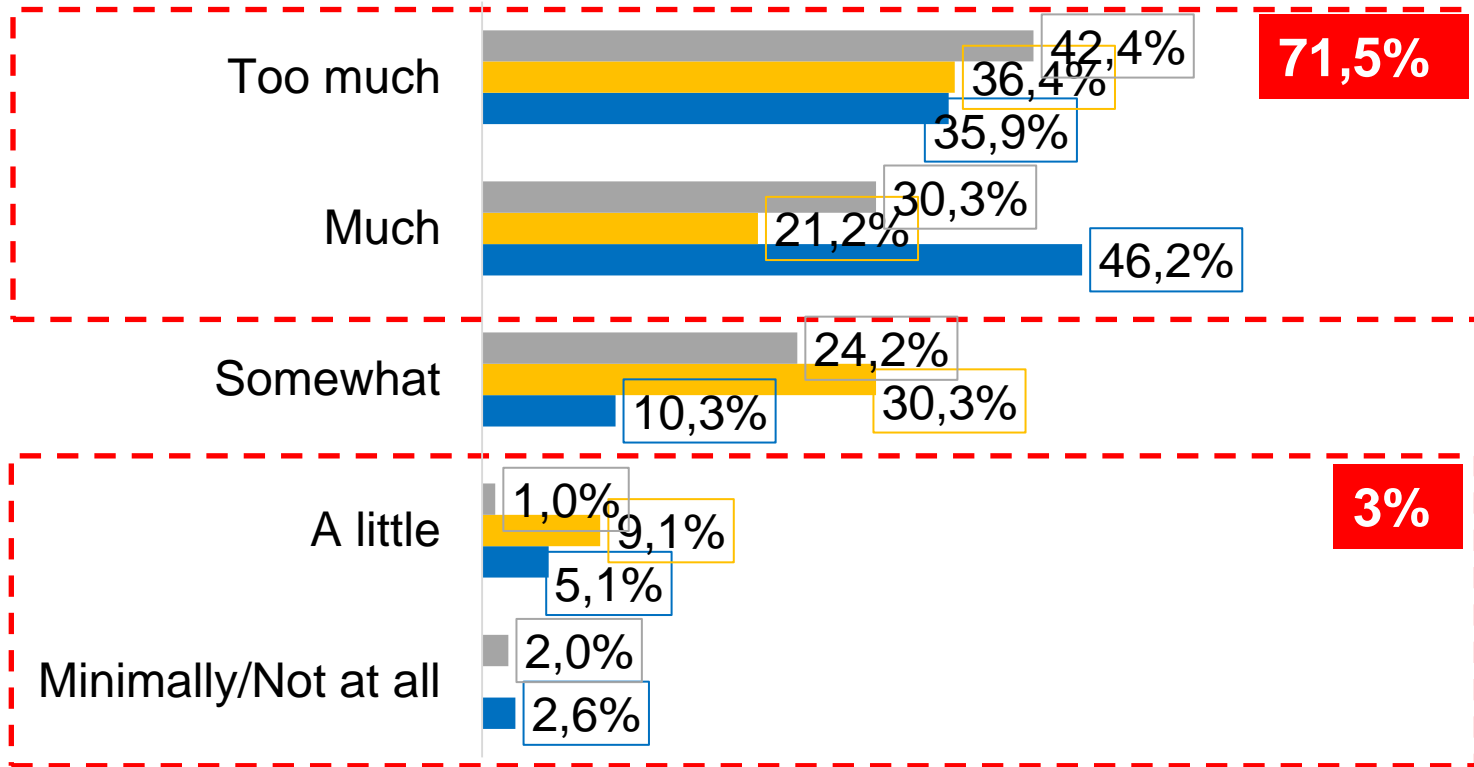
■ Affirmative ■ Negative ■ Don't know/No opinion





TURKEY'S ROLE IN THE WORLD (7)

Q8: Have principles of Turkish foreign policy and the influence of the country been influenced due to the **Arab Spring** and to what degree?



3 per cent of the military officers stated that they have no opinion.

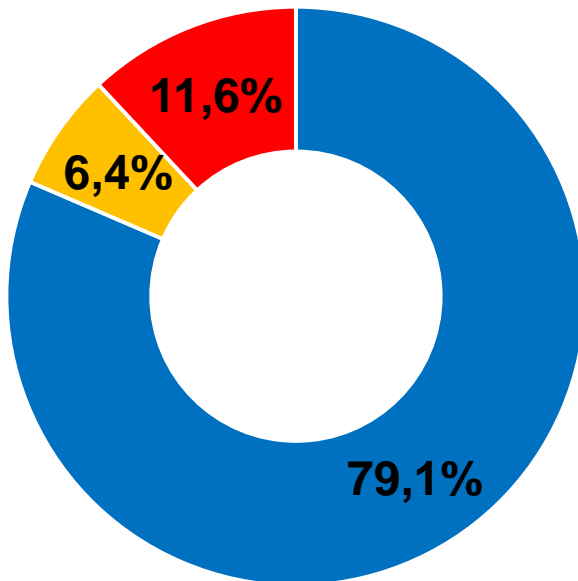
■ Academics/Think-tanks ■ Military ■ Other





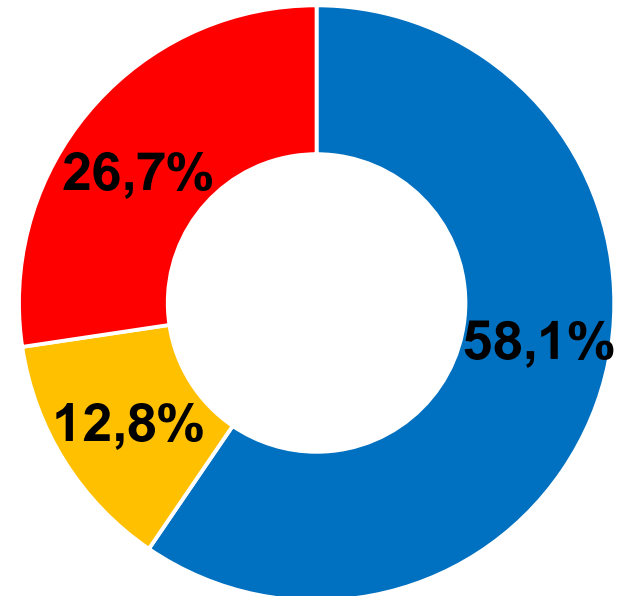
TURKEY'S ROLE IN THE WORLD (8)

Q9: **Distancing from the West and moving towards the Muslim world**



- Totally/Rather Agree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Totally/Rather Disagree

Q10: The **bridge** role between the West and the Muslim world



- Totally/Rather Agree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Totally/Rather Disagree

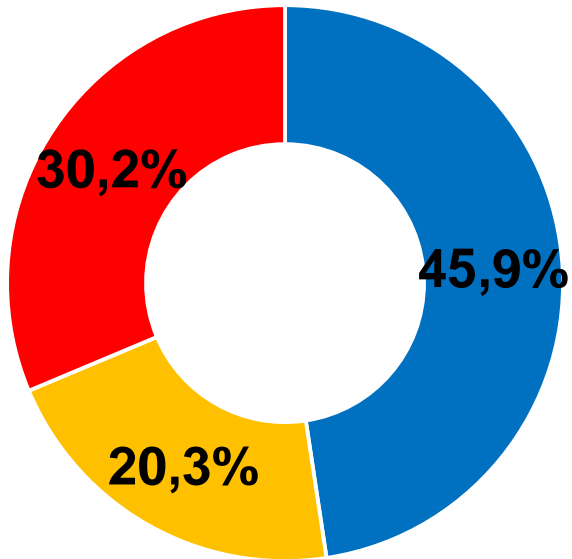
3 per cent of the respondents in both questions stated that they have no opinion.





GREECE'S FOREIGN POLICY (1)

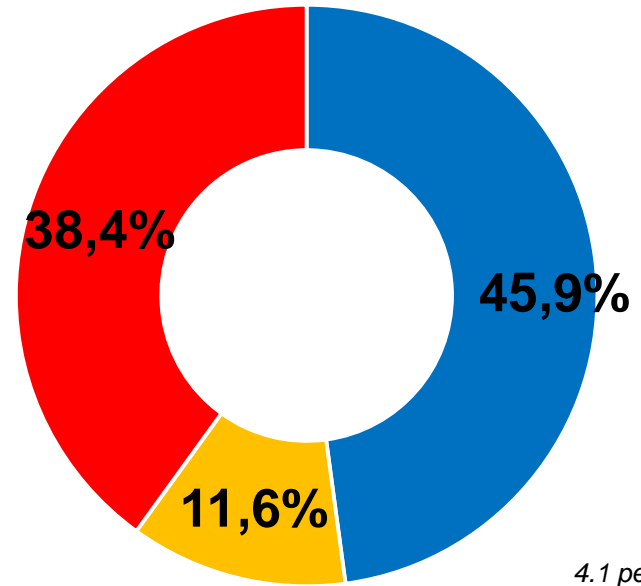
Q14: Greece is a **strategic partner of the US**



3.5 per cent of the respondents stated that they have no opinion.

- Totally/Rather Agree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Totally/Rather Disagree

Q16: Even though Greece is a small nation, it can influence international politics



4.1 per cent of the respondents stated that they have no opinion.

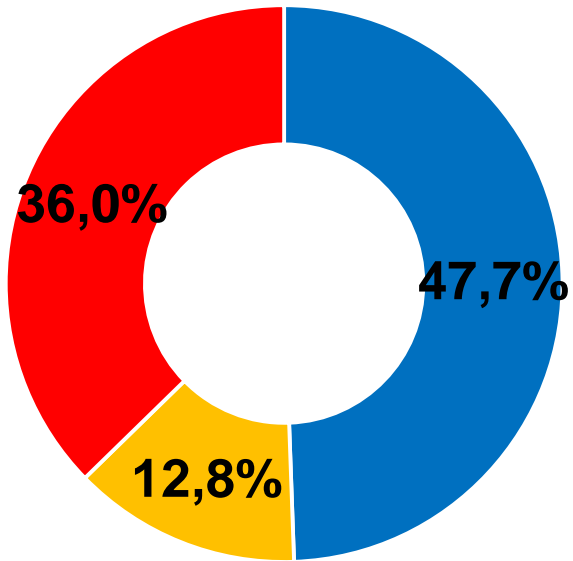
- Totally/Rather Agree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Totally/Rather Disagree





GREECE'S FOREIGN POLICY (2)

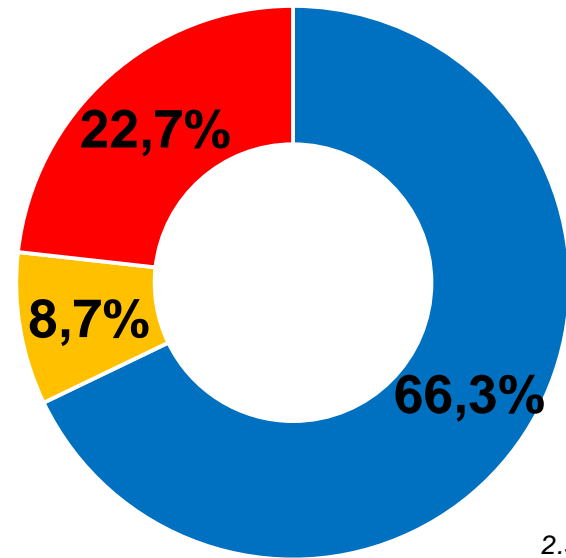
Q15: Greece is an **important EU member state**



3.5 per cent of the respondents stated that they have no opinion.

- Totally/Rather Agree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Totally/Rather Disagree

Q17: Greece **can influence international politics** because it is a member of the EU and NATO



2.3 per cent of the respondents stated that they have no opinion.

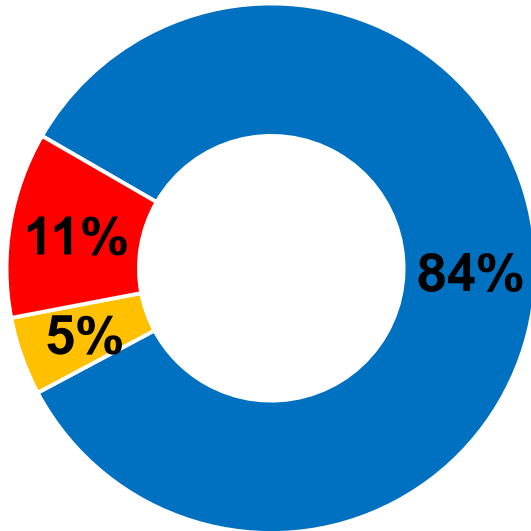
- Totally/Rather Agree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Totally/Rather Disagree





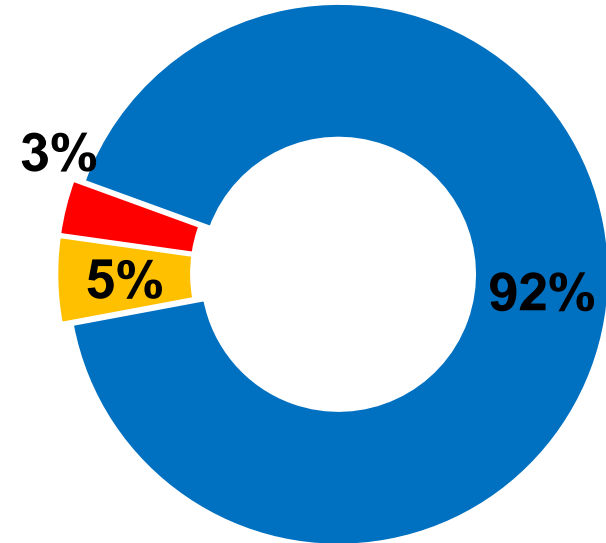
GREECE'S FOREIGN POLICY (3)

Q18: The **economic crisis** in Greece has impacted its foreign policy.



- Totally/Rather Agree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Totally/Rather Disagree

Q19: Has the **prestige and the influence of the country** been influenced due to the economic crisis and what degree?



- Too Much/Much
- Somewhat
- Little/Minimally

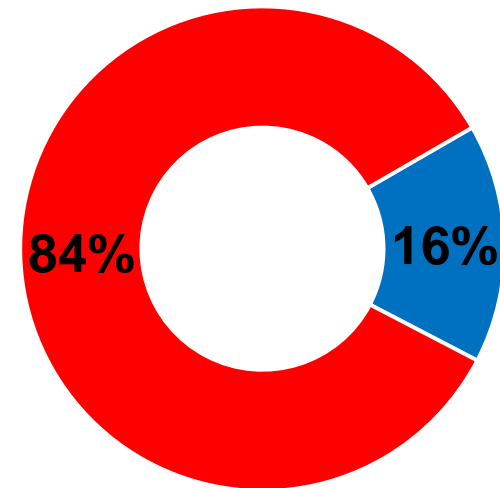
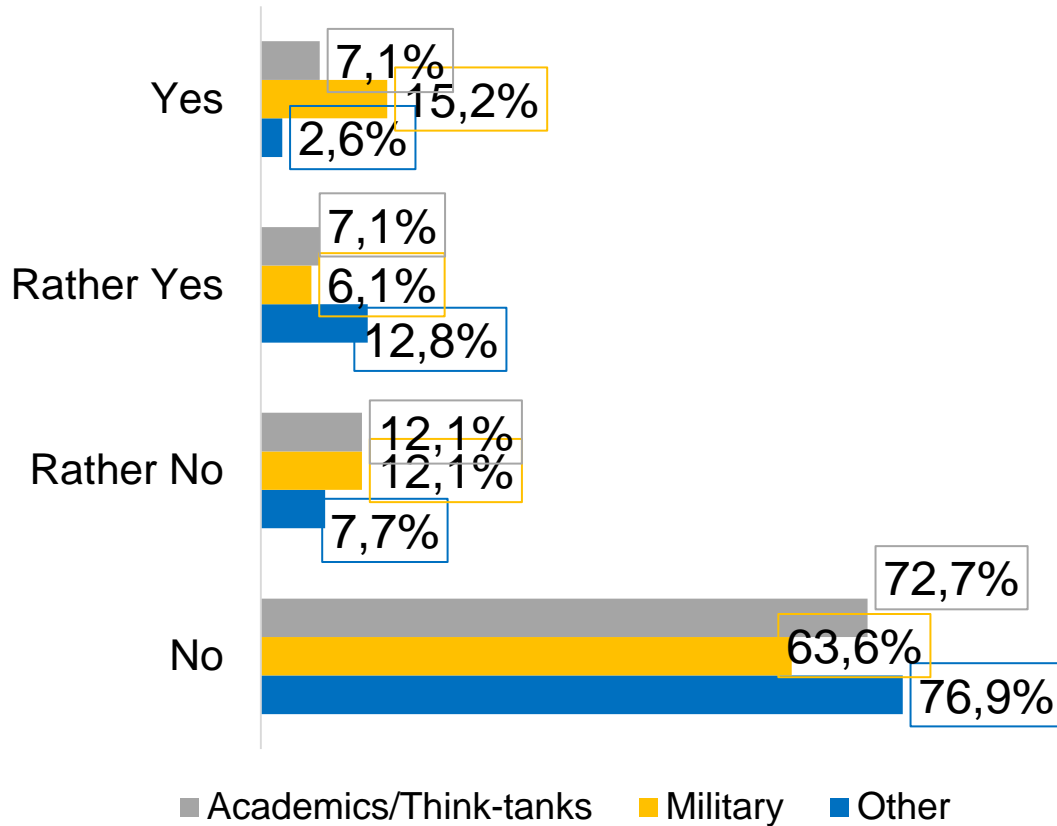
2.9 per cent of the respondents stated that they have no opinion.





GREECE'S FOREIGN POLICY (4)

Q20: Does Greece have any alternatives other than the EU?



■ Affirmative ■ Negative

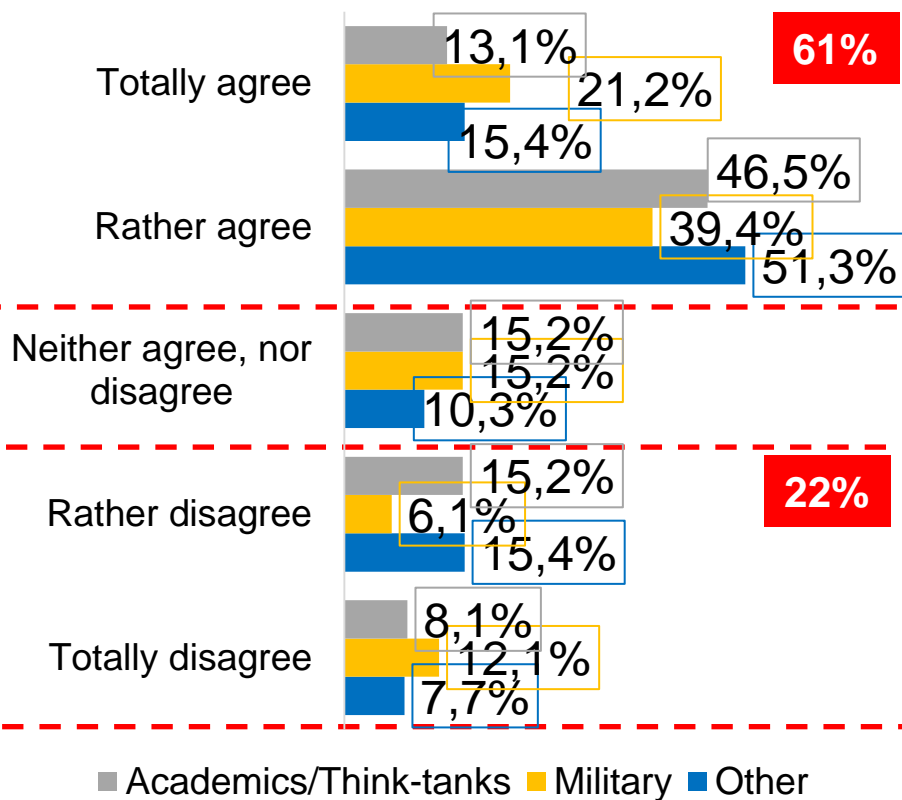
1.7 per cent of the respondents stated that they have no opinion.



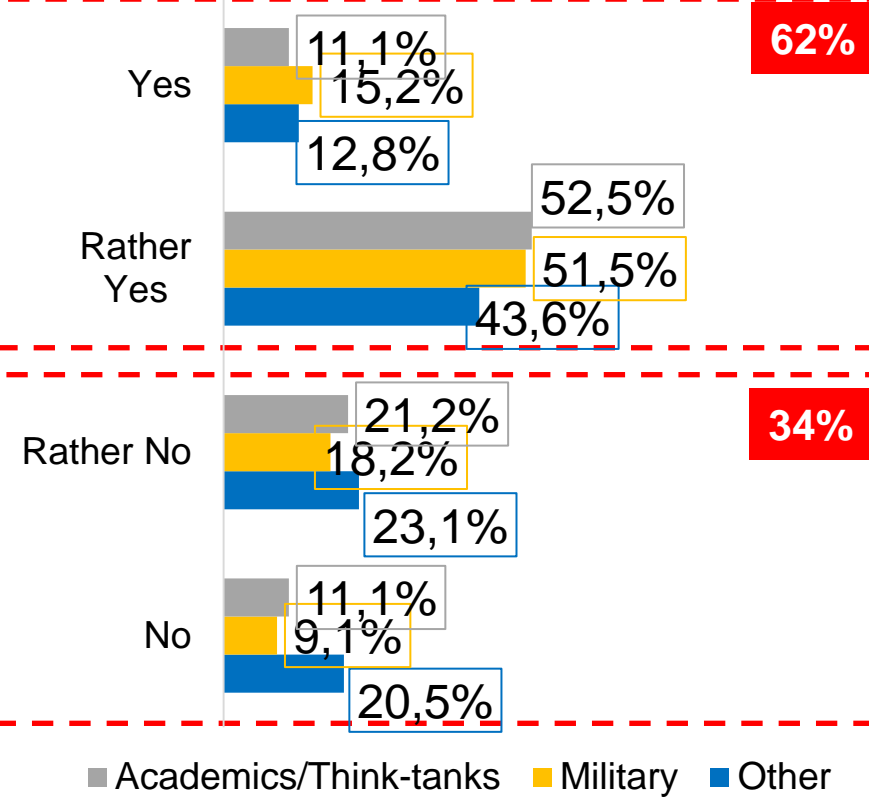


EU'S ENERGY DEPENDENCE

Q11: Turkey can play an active role in reducing the **EU's energy dependence**



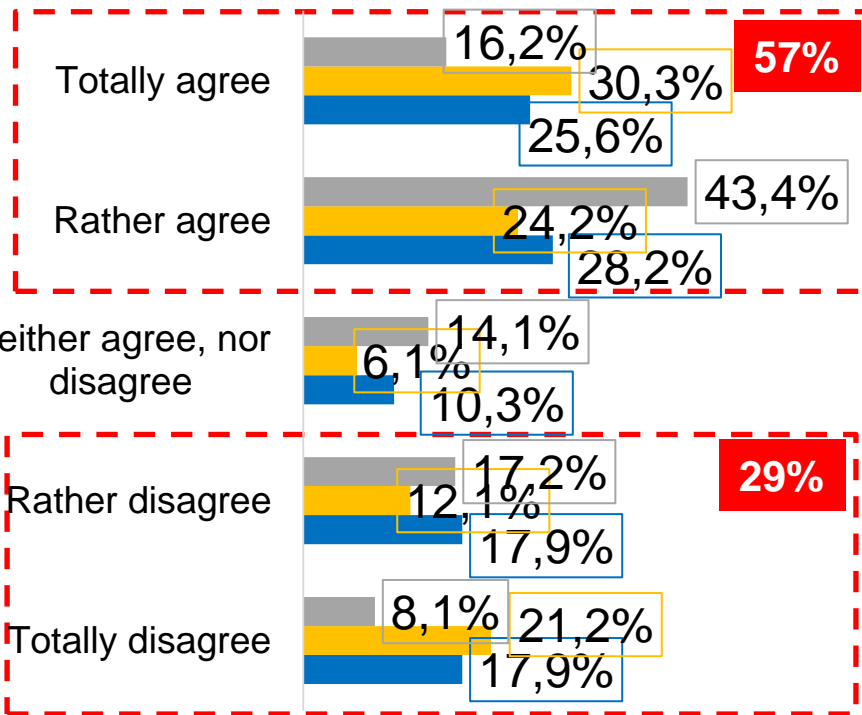
Q22: Greece can play an active role in reducing the **EU's energy dependence**





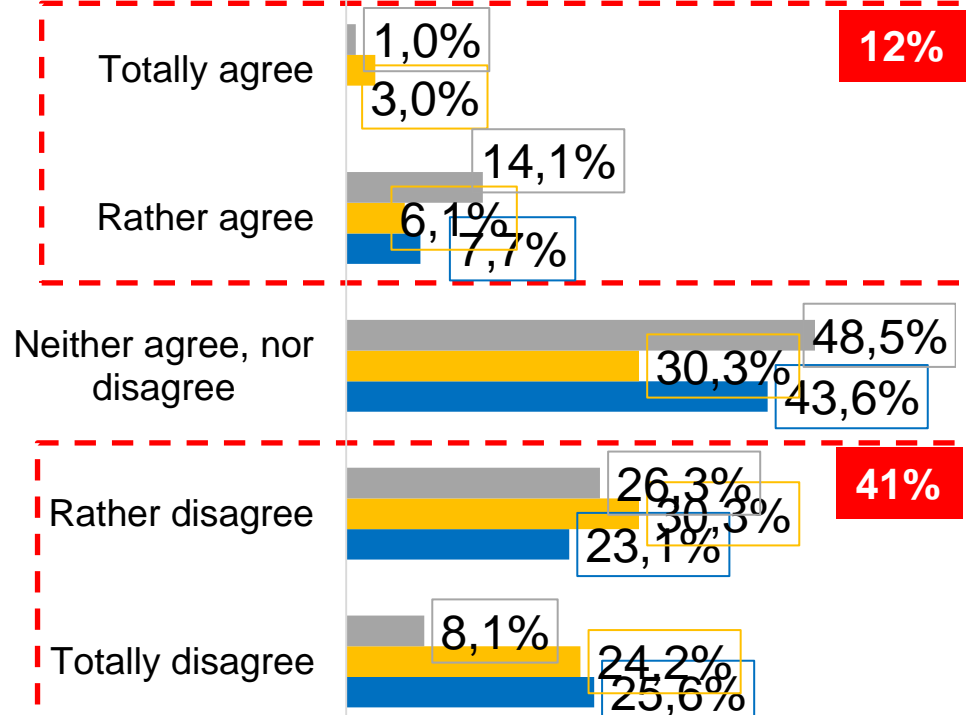
THE REFUGEE CRISIS

Q12: Turkey is playing an active role in the resolution of the **refugee crisis**?



■ Academics/Think-tanks ■ Military ■ Other

Q21: Greece is playing an active role in the resolution of the **refugee crisis**?



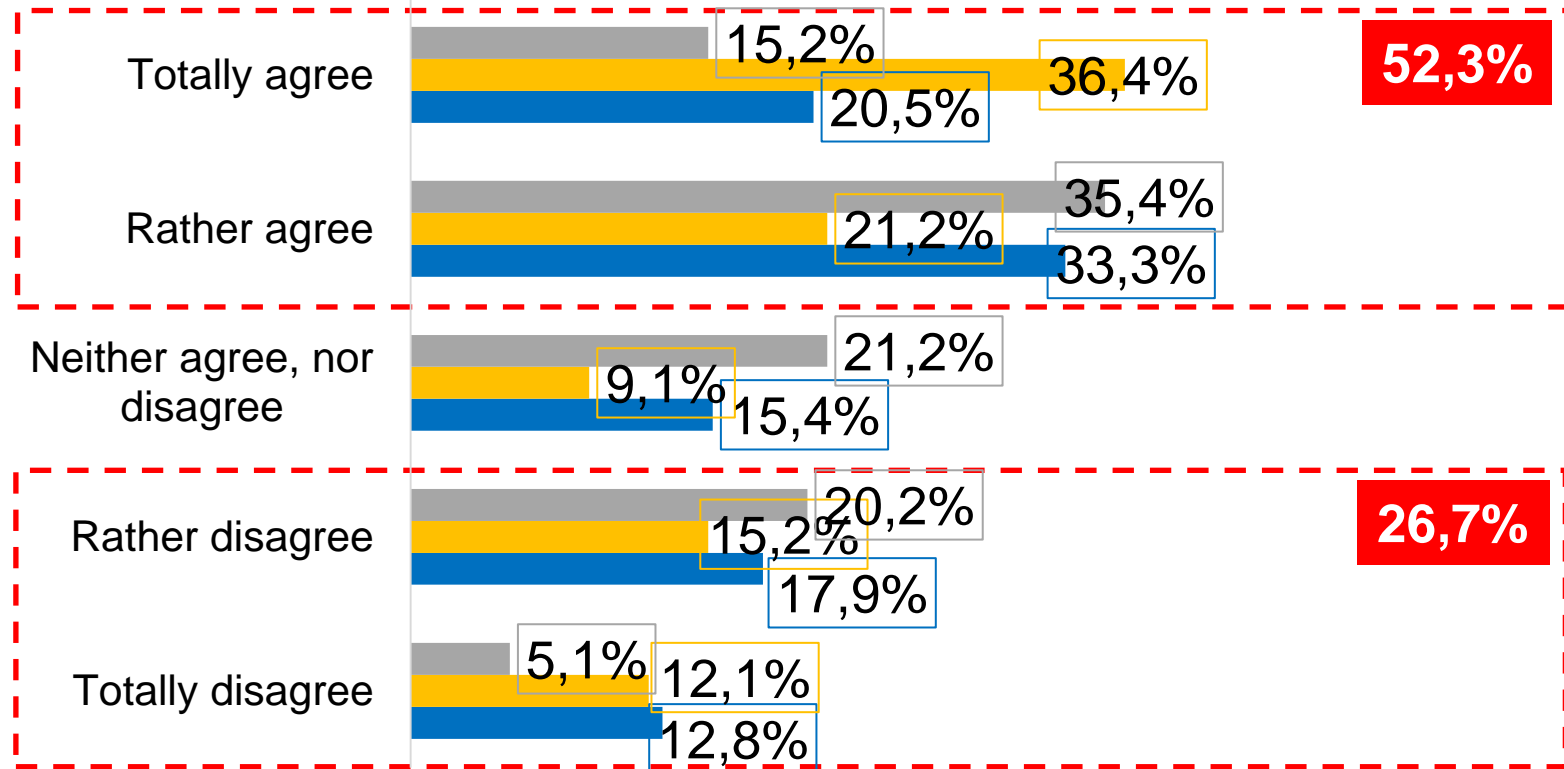
■ Academics/Think-tanks ■ Military ■ Other





THE CYPRUS ISSUE (1)

Q13: Turkey is a **constructive player** in the resolution of the Cyprus issue?



3.5 per cent of the respondents stated that they have no opinion.

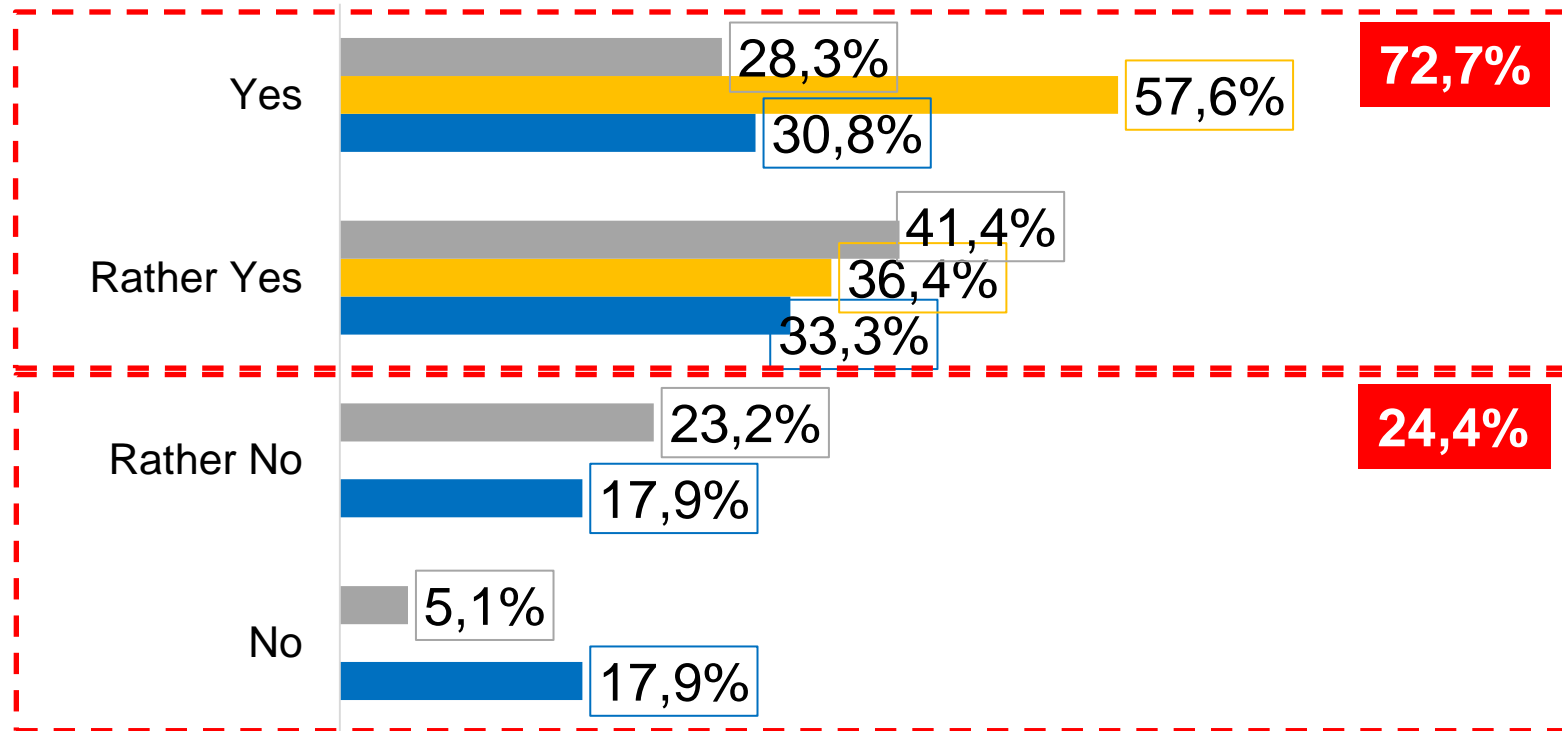
■ Academics/Think-tanks ■ Military ■ Other





THE CYPRUS ISSUE (2)

Q25: Greece is **obstructing** the resolution of the Cyprus issue?



2.9 per cent of the respondents stated that they have no opinion.

■ Academics/Think-tanks ■ Military ■ Other



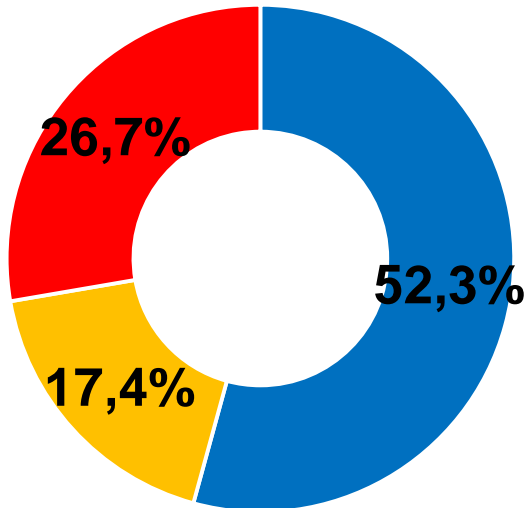


THE CYPRUS ISSUE (3)

According to Turkish elites, the roles in the resolution of the Cyprus issue are considered as follows,

TURKISH ELITES

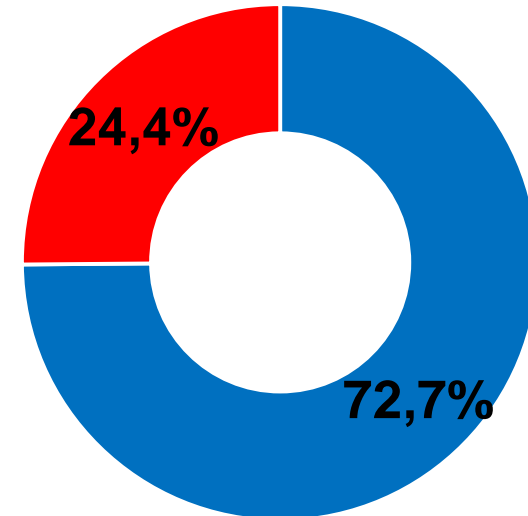
Supportive



- Rather/Totally agree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Rather/Totally disagree

GREEK ELITES

Obstacle



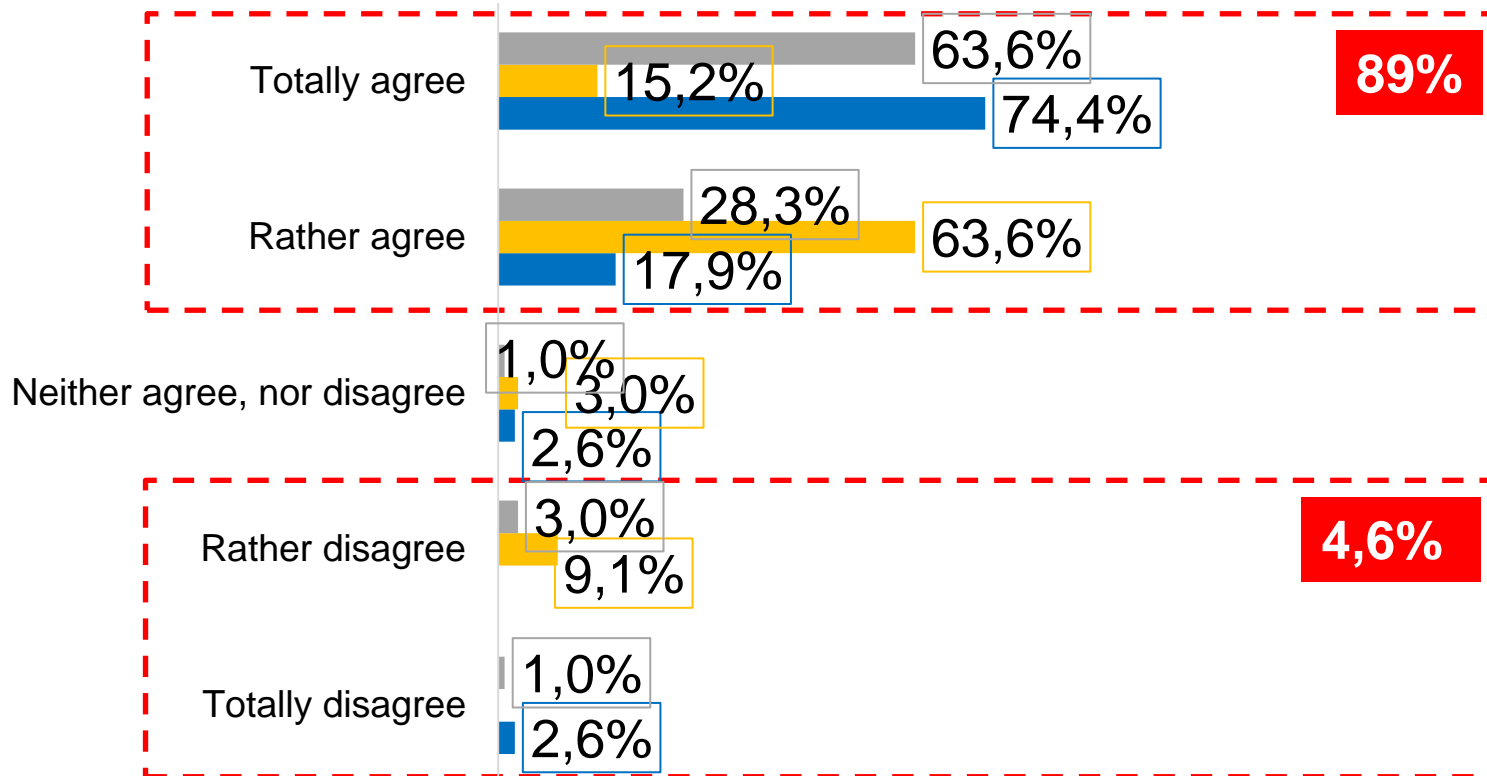
- Affirmative
- Negative





GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS (1) **TURKISH ELITES**

Q26: Do you agree with **the rapprochement strategy** Turkey is implementing towards Greece since 1999?



4.7 per cent of the respondents stated that they have no opinion.

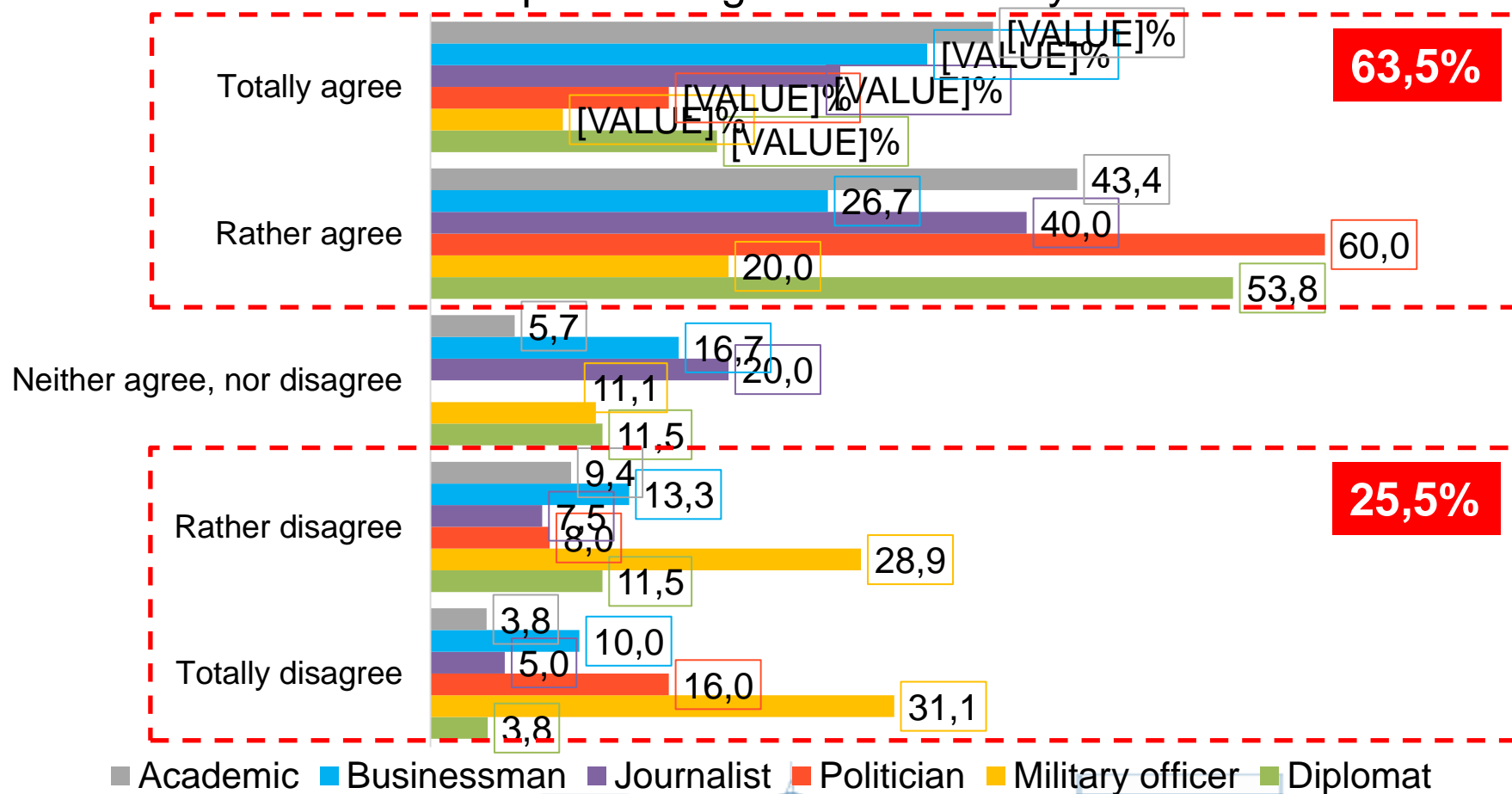
■ Academics/Think-tanks ■ Military ■ Other





GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS (2) GREEK ELITES

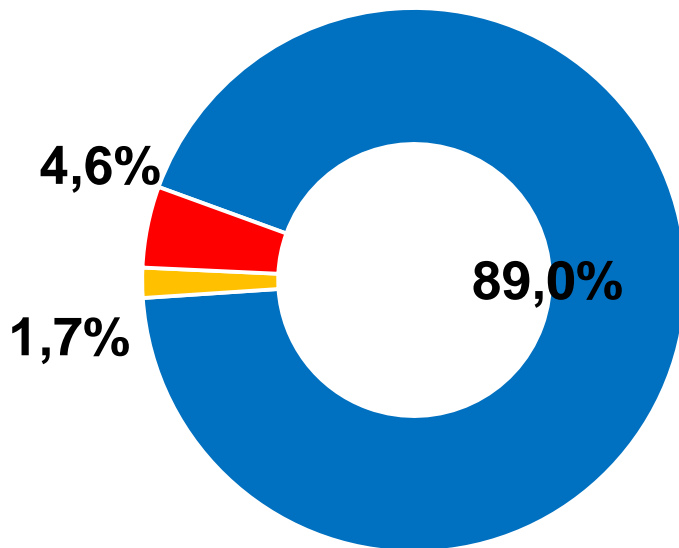
Q26: Do you agree with **the rapprochement strategy** Greece is implementing towards Turkey since 1999?





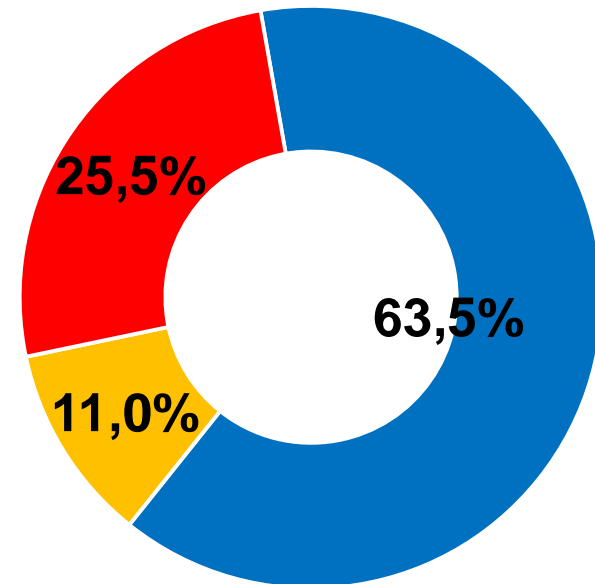
Support for the rapprochement strategy

TURKISH ELITES



- Rather/Totally Agree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Rather/Totally Disagree

GREEK ELITES



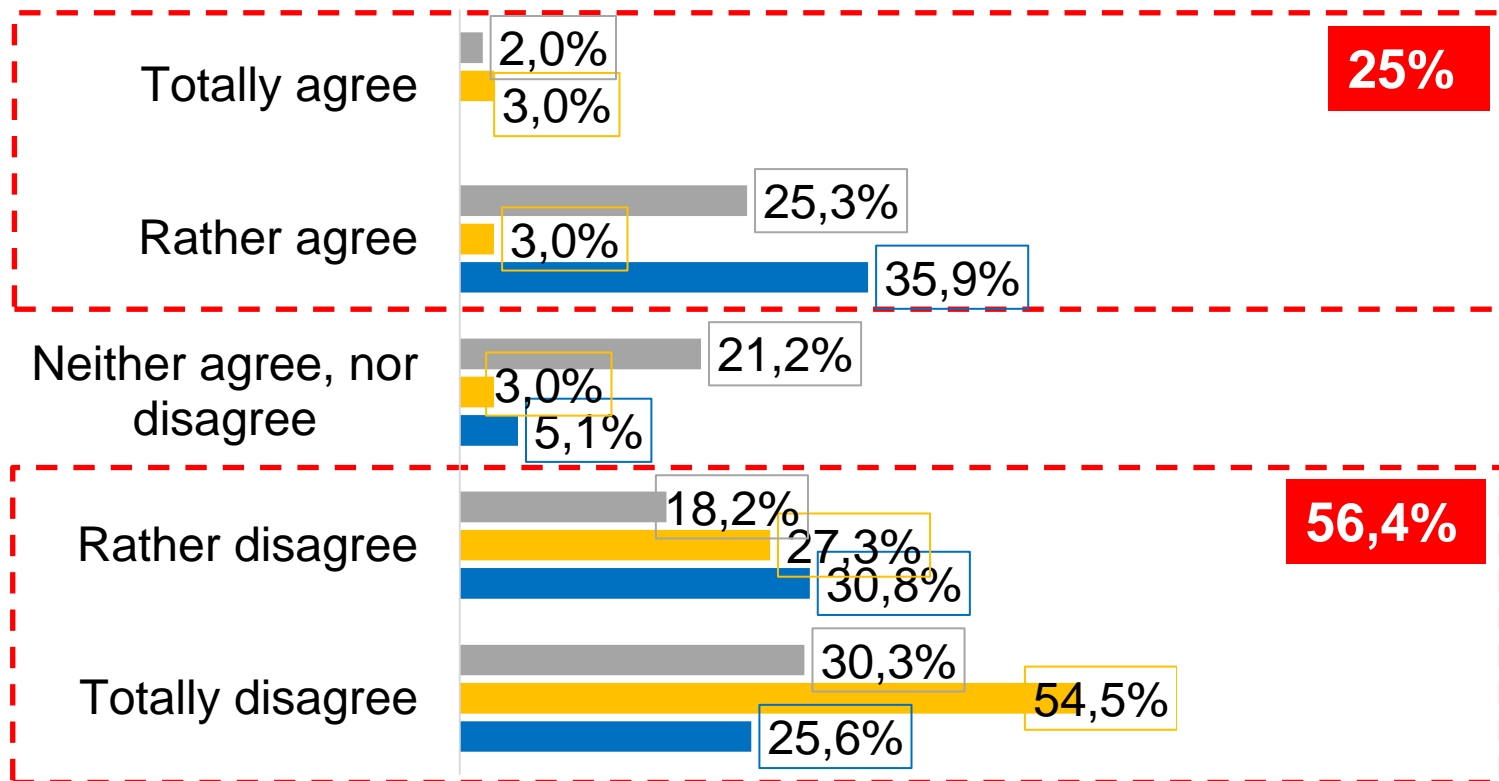
- Rather/Totally agree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Rather/Totally disagree





GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS (3) **TURKISH ELITES**

Q27: Greece is **steadily supporting** Turkey's **accession to the EU**



4.7 per cent of the respondents stated that they have no opinion.

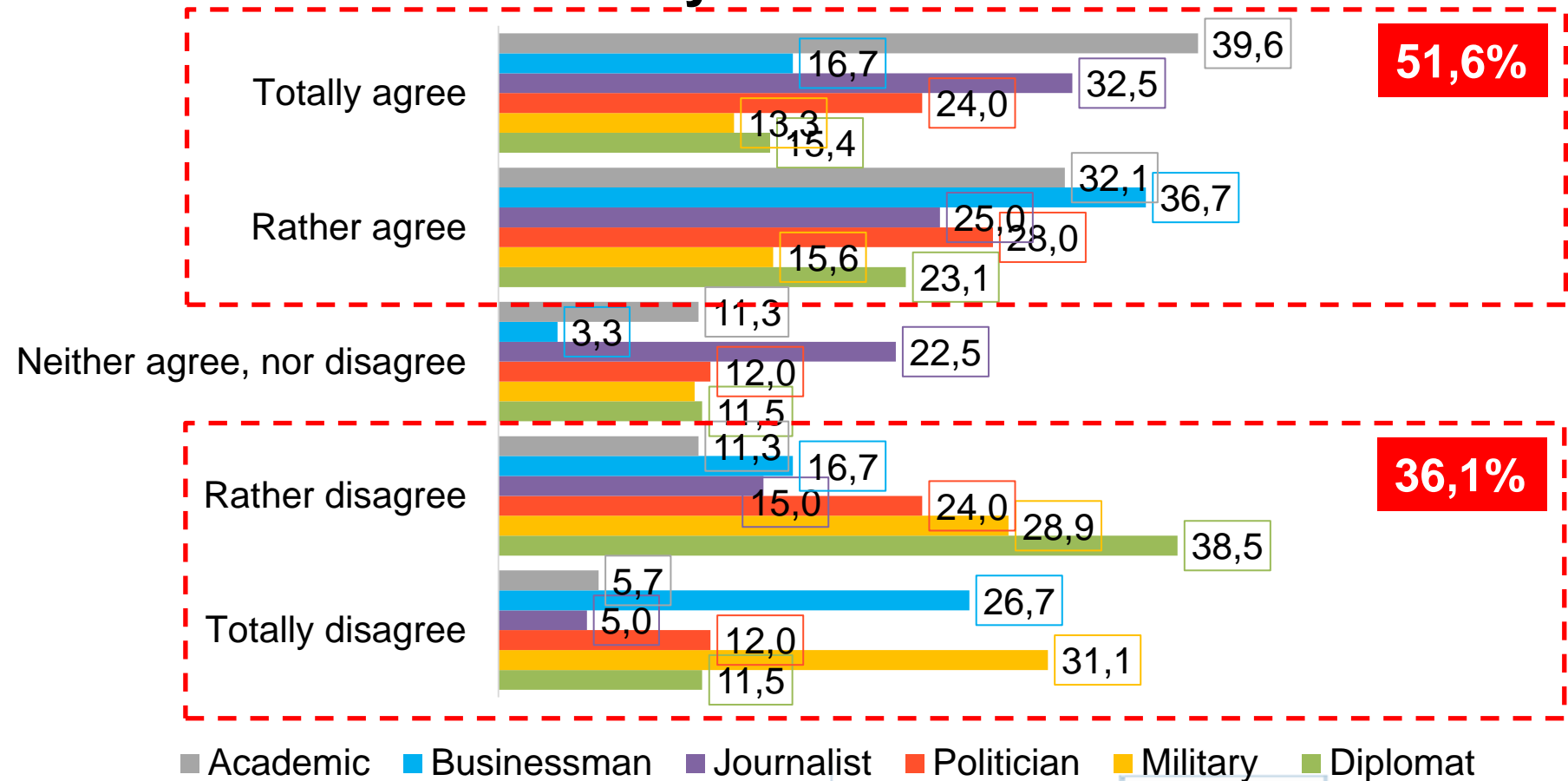
■ Academics/Think-tanks ■ Military ■ Other





GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS (4) GREEK ELITES

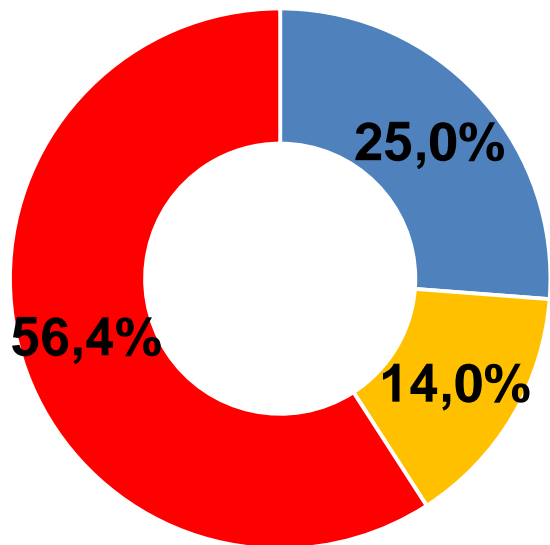
Greece should continue **steadily supporting**
Turkey's accession to the EU?





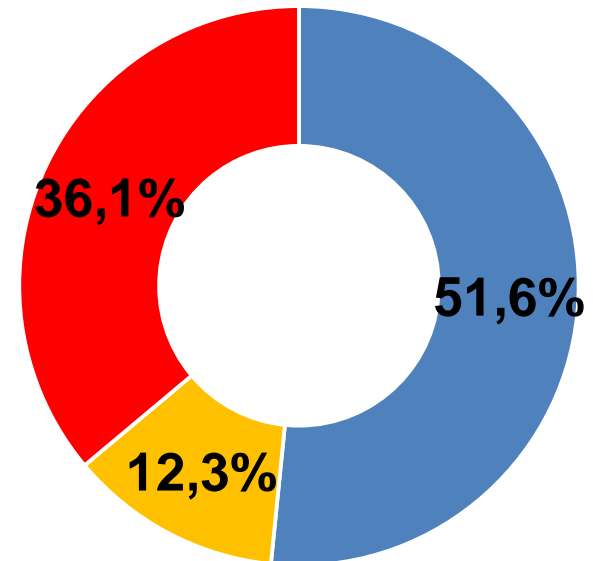
Support for the Turkey's accession to the EU

TURKISH ELITES



- Rather/Totally Agree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Rather/Totally Disagree

GREEK ELITES



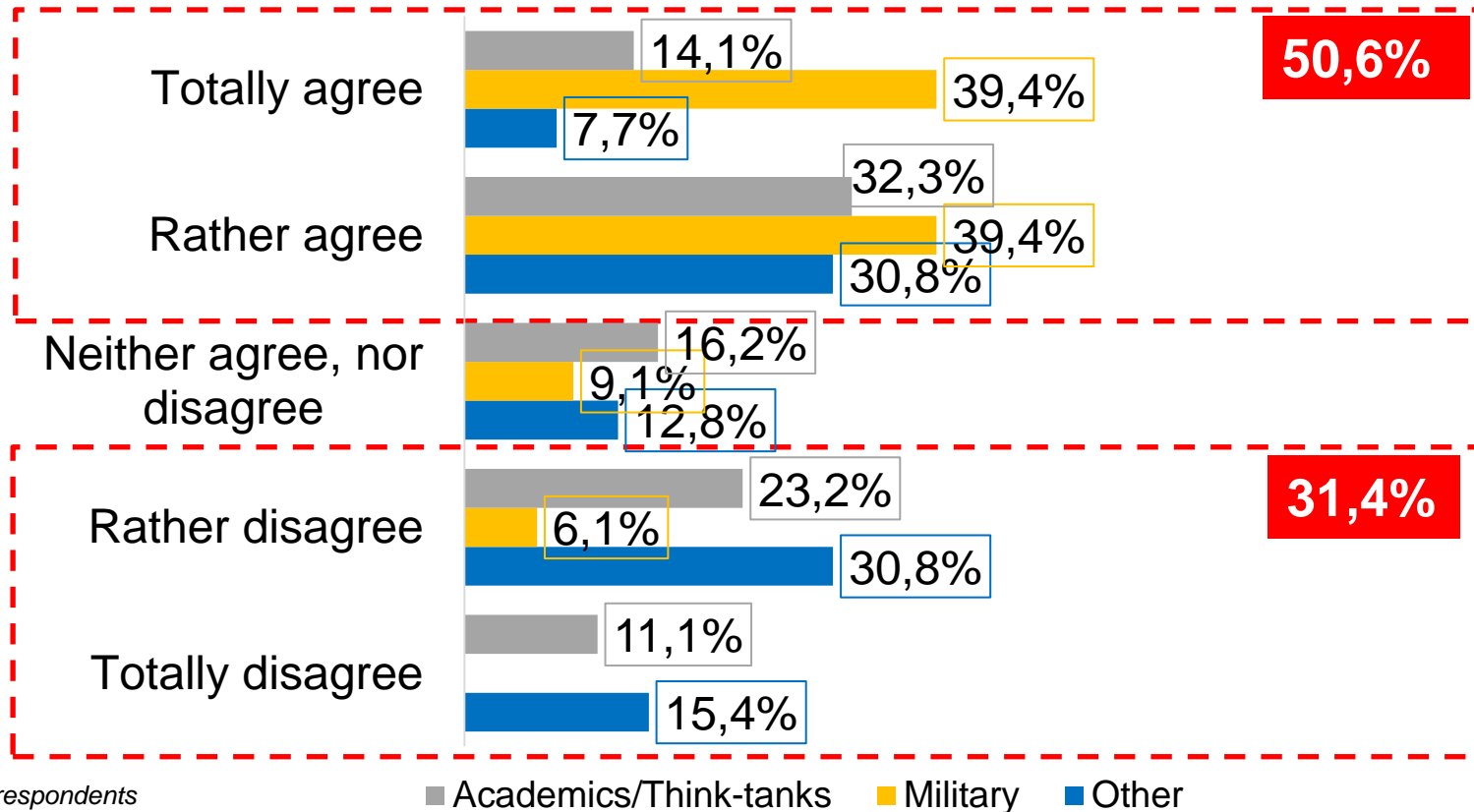
- Rather/Totally agree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Rather/Totally disagree





GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS (5)

Q28: Greece's membership in the EU
constitutes a threat for Turkey's accession

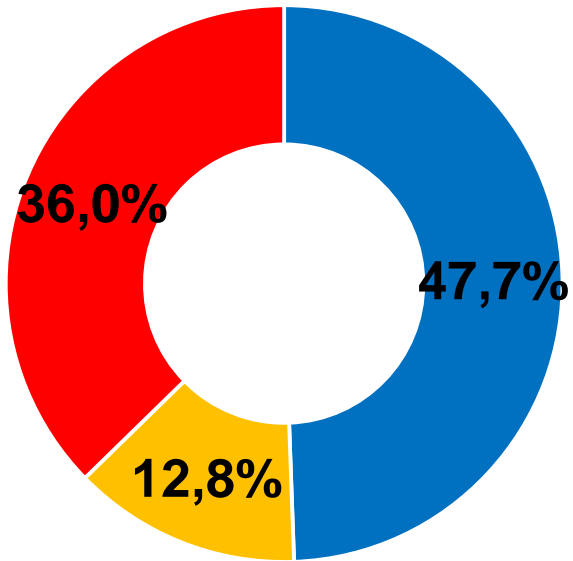


4.1 per cent of the respondents stated that they have no opinion.



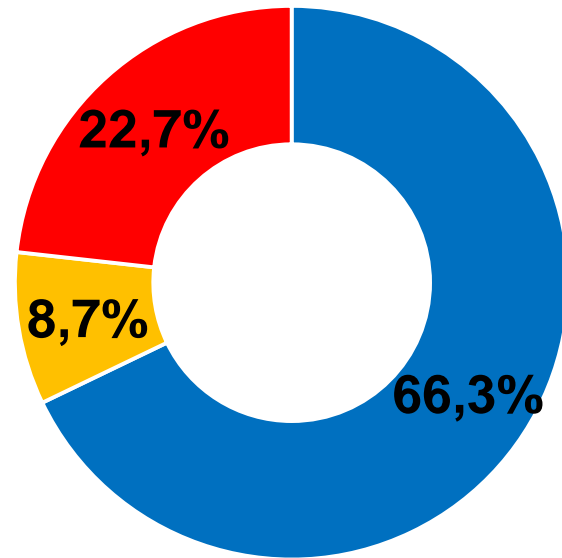


Q15: Greece is an **important EU member state**



- Totally/Rather Agree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Totally/Rather Disagree

Q17: Greece **can influence international politics** because it is a member of the EU and NATO



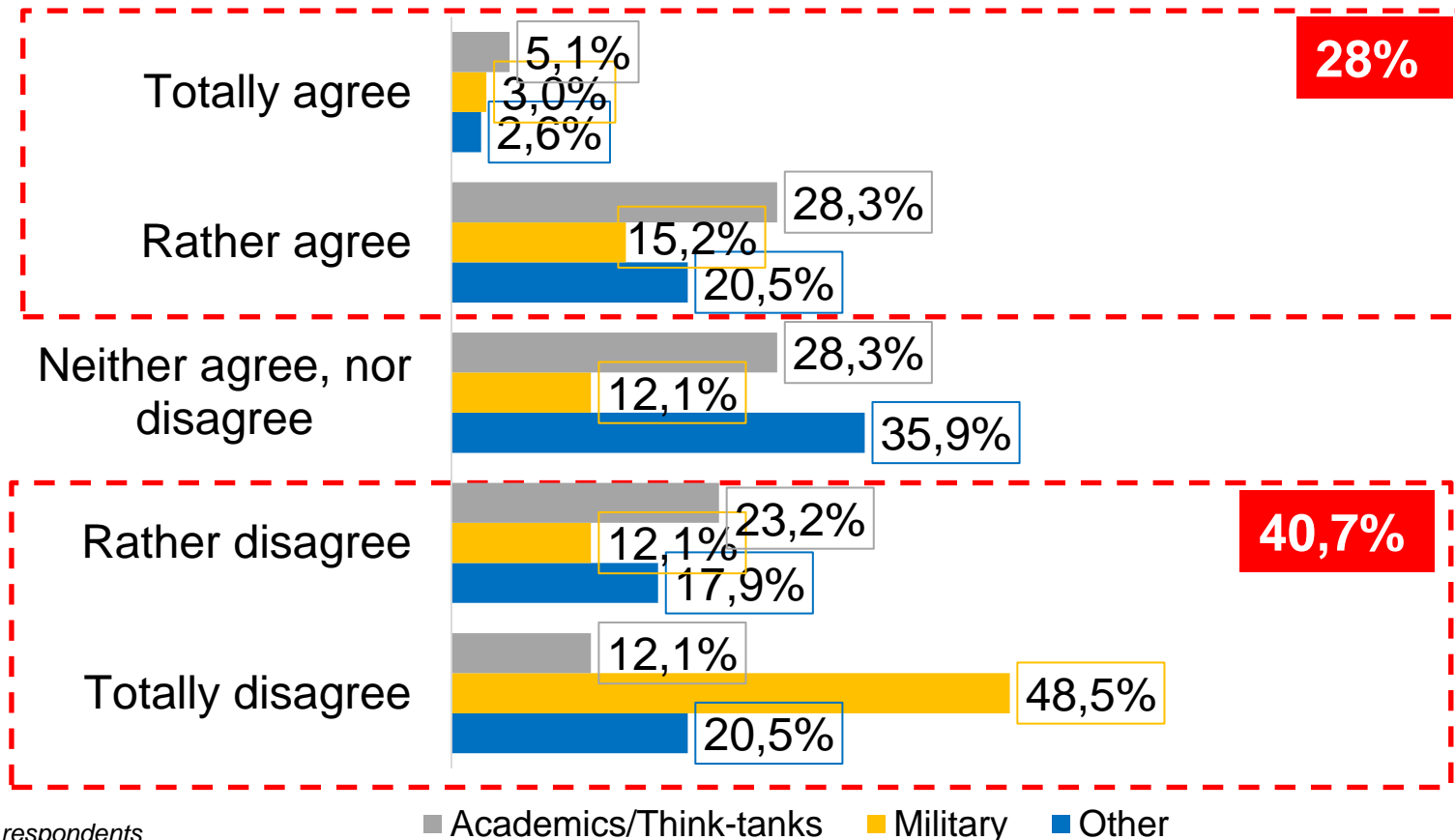
- Totally/Rather Agree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Totally/Rather Disagree





GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS (6) **TURKISH ELITES**

Q29: Turkey can trust Greece



4.7 per cent of the respondents stated that they have no opinion.

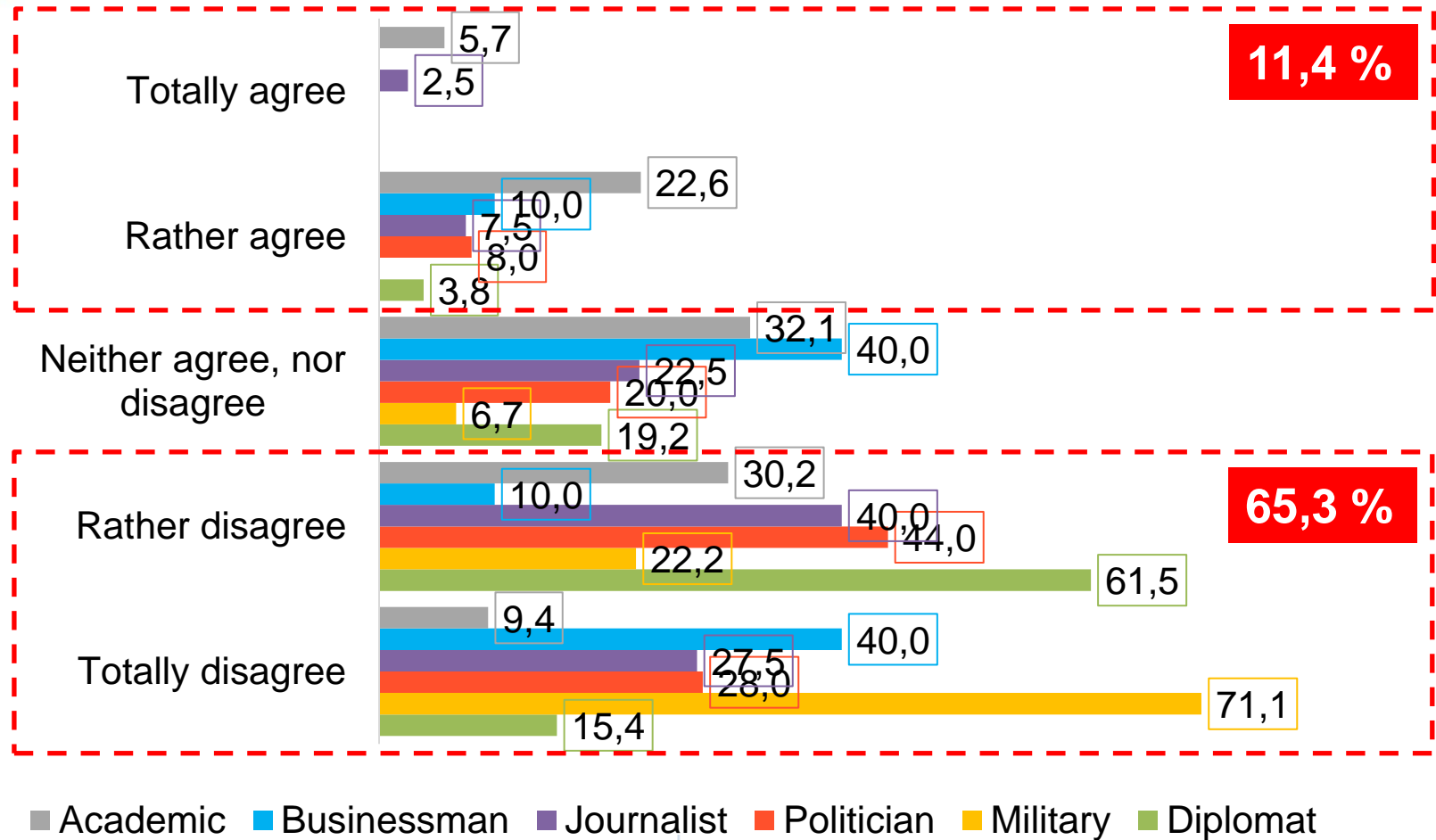




GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS (7)

GREEK ELITES

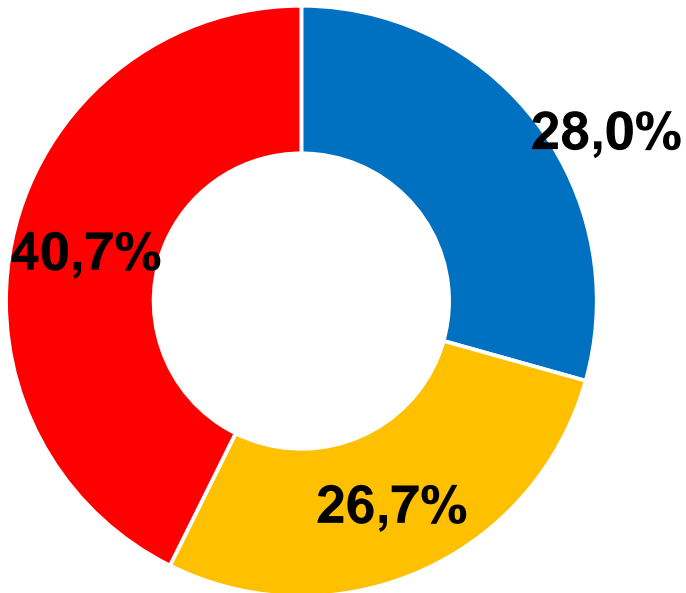
Greece can trust Turkey





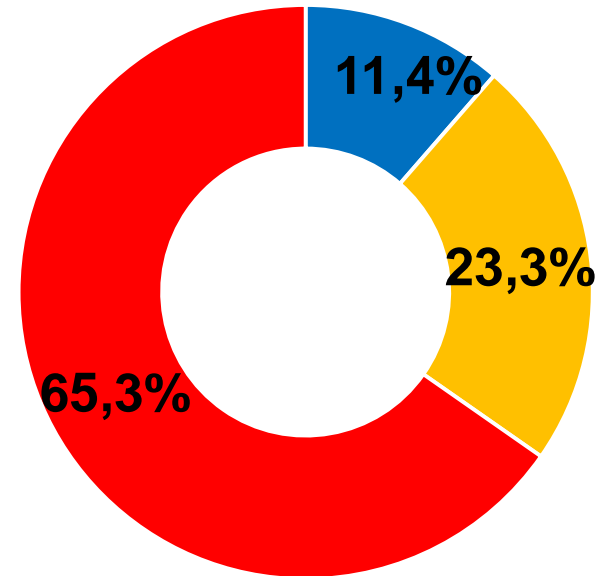
Mutual trust

TURKISH ELITES



- Rather/Totally Agree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Rather/Totally Disagree

GREEK ELITES



- Rather/Totally agree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Rather/Totally disagree





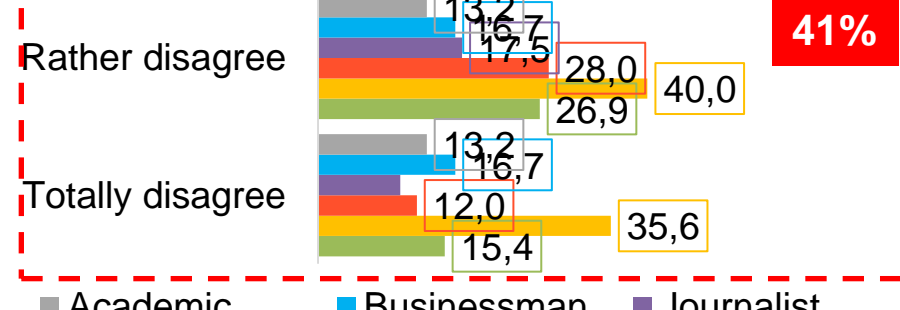
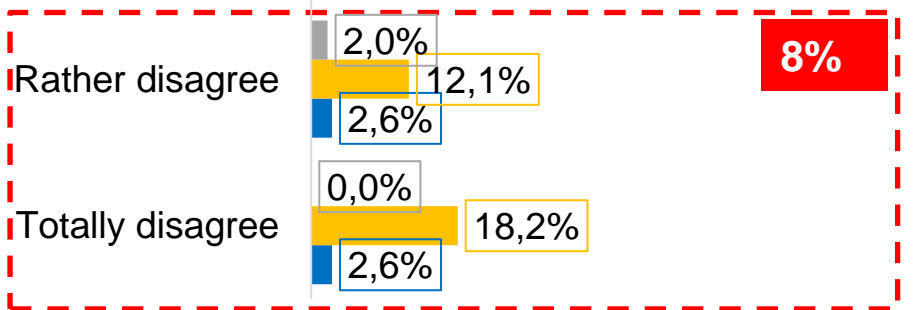
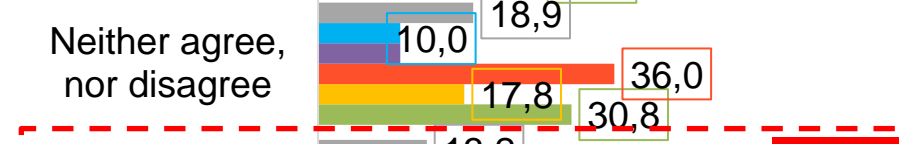
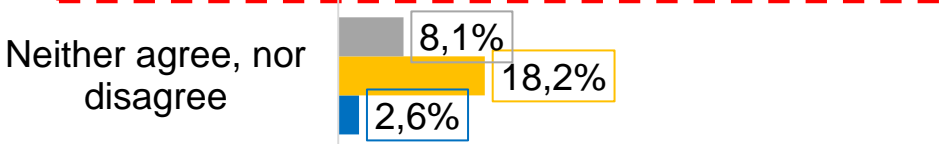
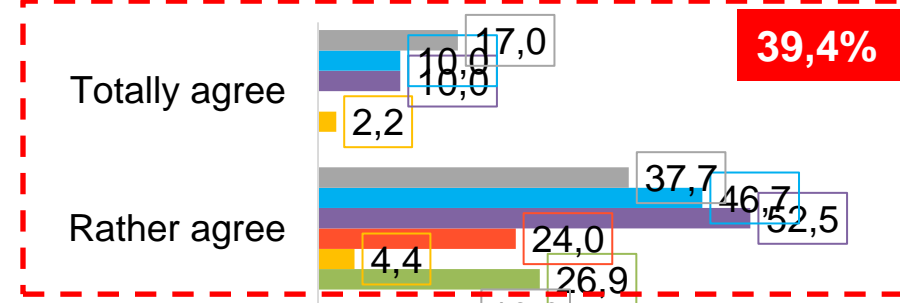
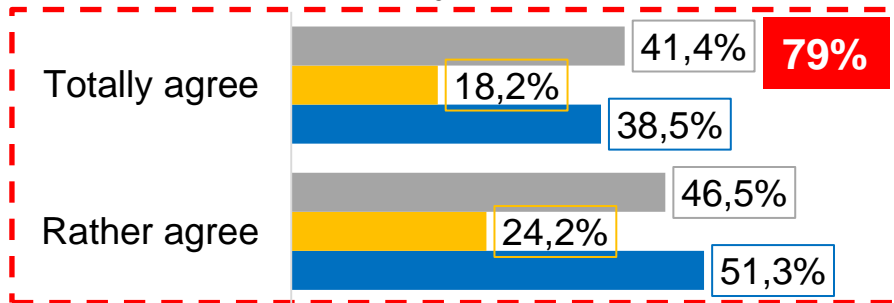
GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS (8)

TURKISH ELITES

GREEK ELITES

Q30: An improvement in Greece's economy is in Turkey's interest

Turkey's vast economic growth is in Greece's interest



Academics/Think-tanks Military Other

Academic Businessman Journalist
Politician Military Diplomat

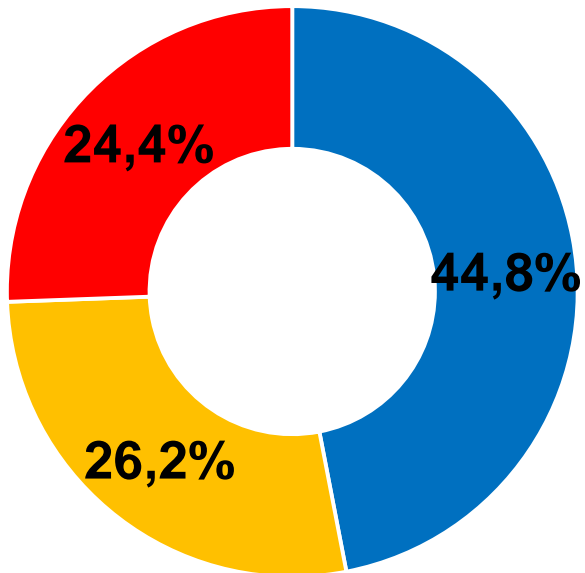




GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS (9)

TURKISH ELITES

Q31: Economic crisis in Greece constitutes a threat for Turkey

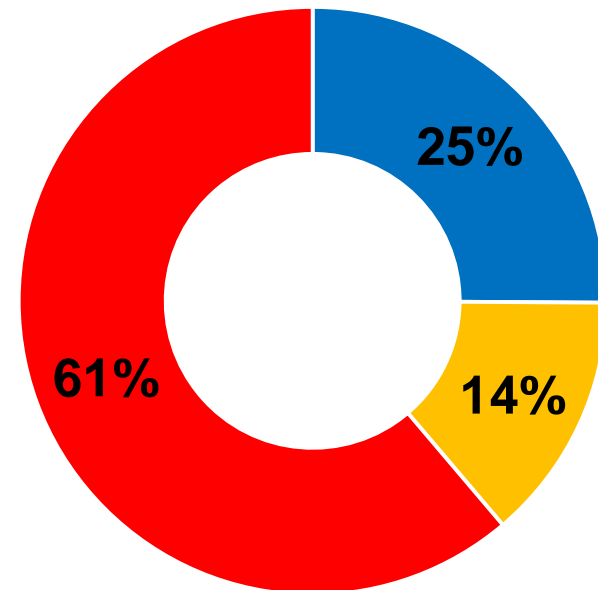


4.1 per cent of the respondents stated that they have no opinion.

- Totally/Rather Agree
- Totally/Rather Disagree
- Neither agree, nor disagree

GREEK ELITES

Turkish direct investments to Greece are a threat to Greek national interests



- Totally/rather agree
- Neither agree, nor disagree
- Totally/rather disagree

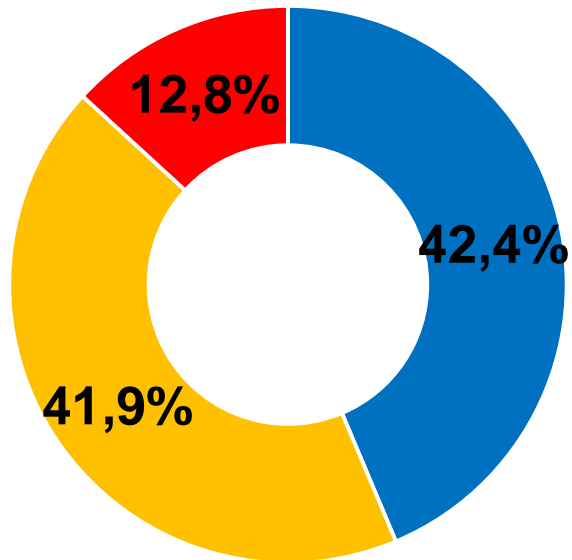




GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS (10)

TURKISH ELITES

Q32: How would you evaluate the current state of Turkish-Greek relations?

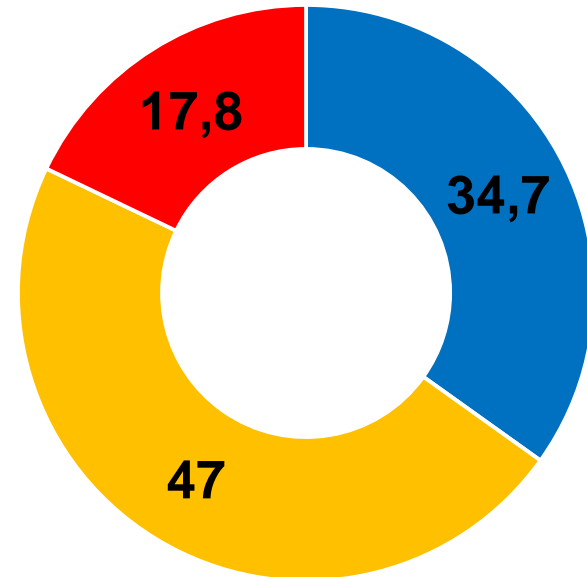


2.9 per cent of the respondents stated that they have no opinion.

- Good/rather good
- Neither good nor bad
- Bad/rather bad

GREEK ELITES

How would you characterize the current state of Greek-Turkish relations?



- Good/rather good
- Neither good nor bad
- Bad/rather bad





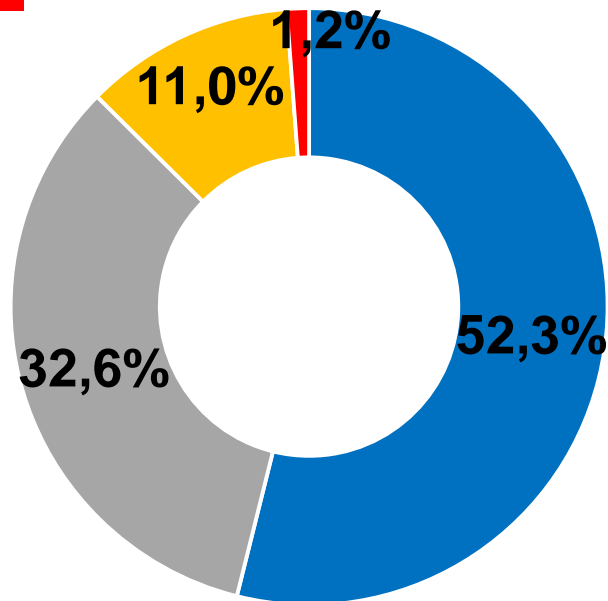
GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS (11)

TURKISH ELITES

GREEK ELITES

Q33: How important is **the resolution of the Cyprus issue** for the improvement of bilateral relations?

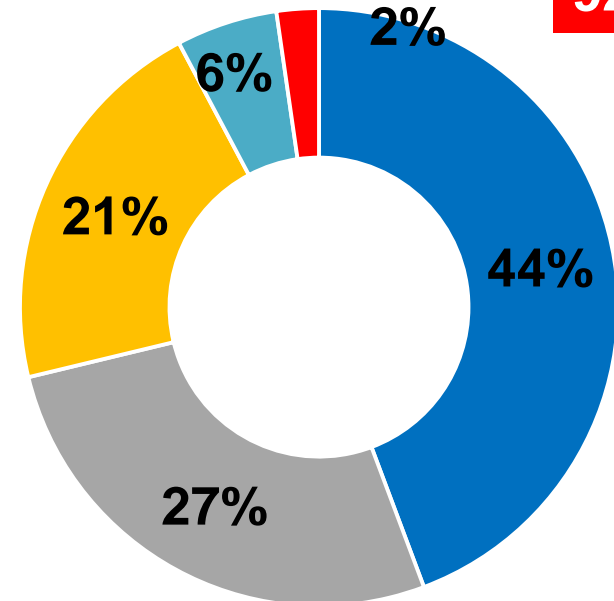
95,9%



- Extremely important
- Rather important
- Very important
- Not at all important

2.9 per cent of the respondents stated that they have no opinion.

92,4%



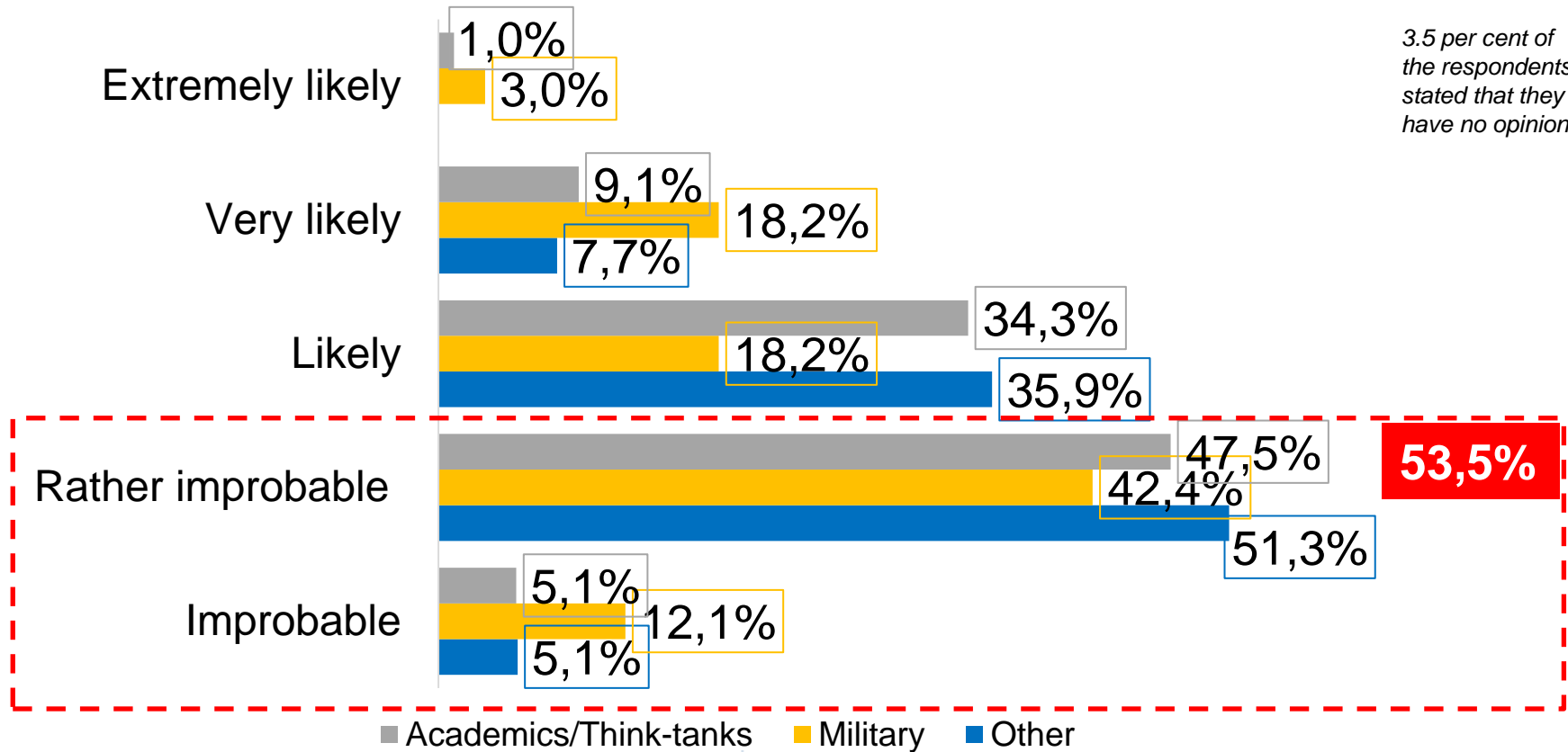
- Extremely important
- Rather important
- Very important
- Little or not at all important
- Not at all important





GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS (12) **TURKISH ELITES**

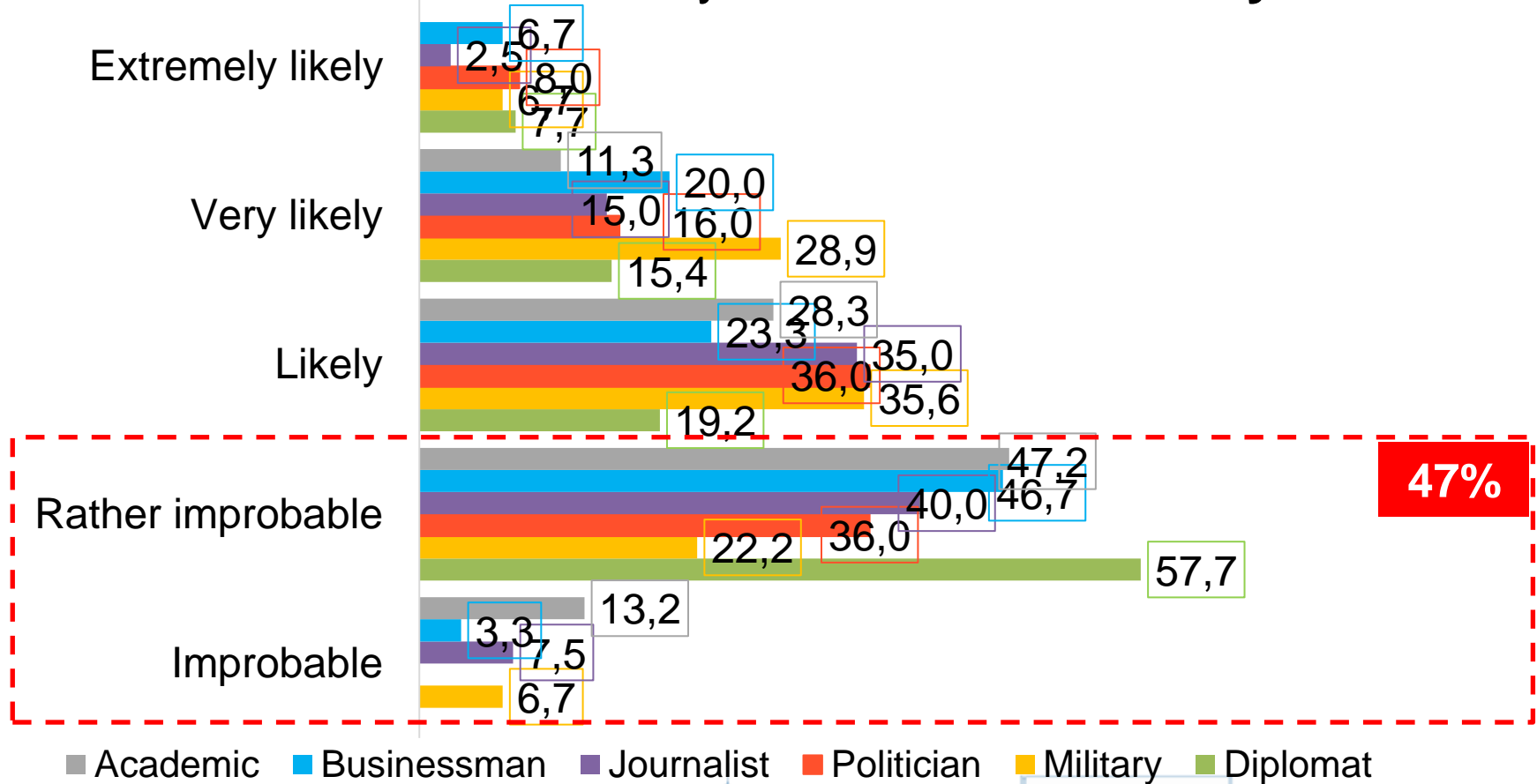
Q34: Do you think there would be **any crisis** between Greece and Turkey within **the next five years**?





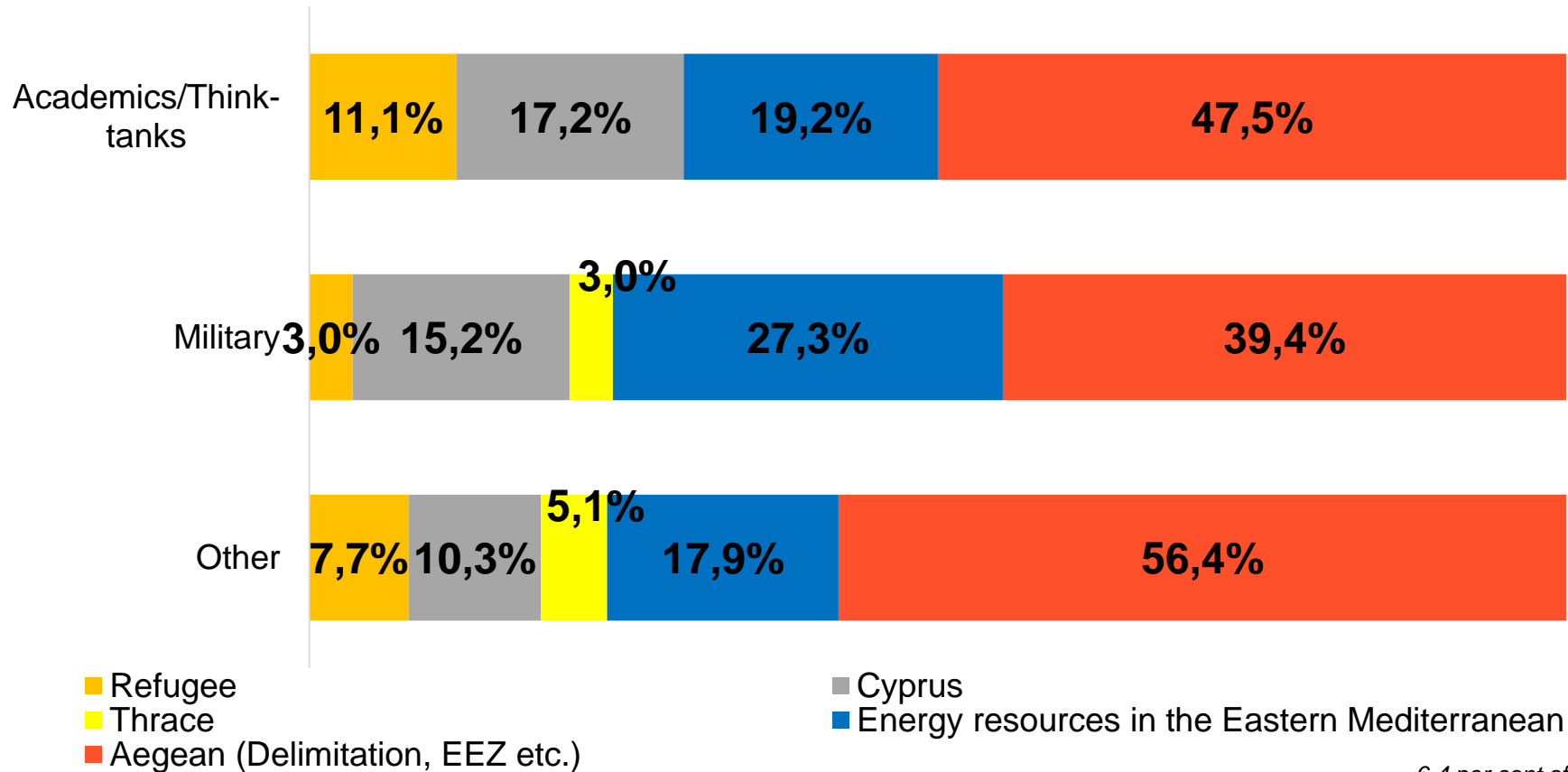
GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS (13) GREEK ELITES

How likely do you consider **any crisis** between Greece and Turkey within **the next five years**?



GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS (14) **TURKISH ELITES**

Q41: Which of the following is the most likely cause for a 'hot' crisis?

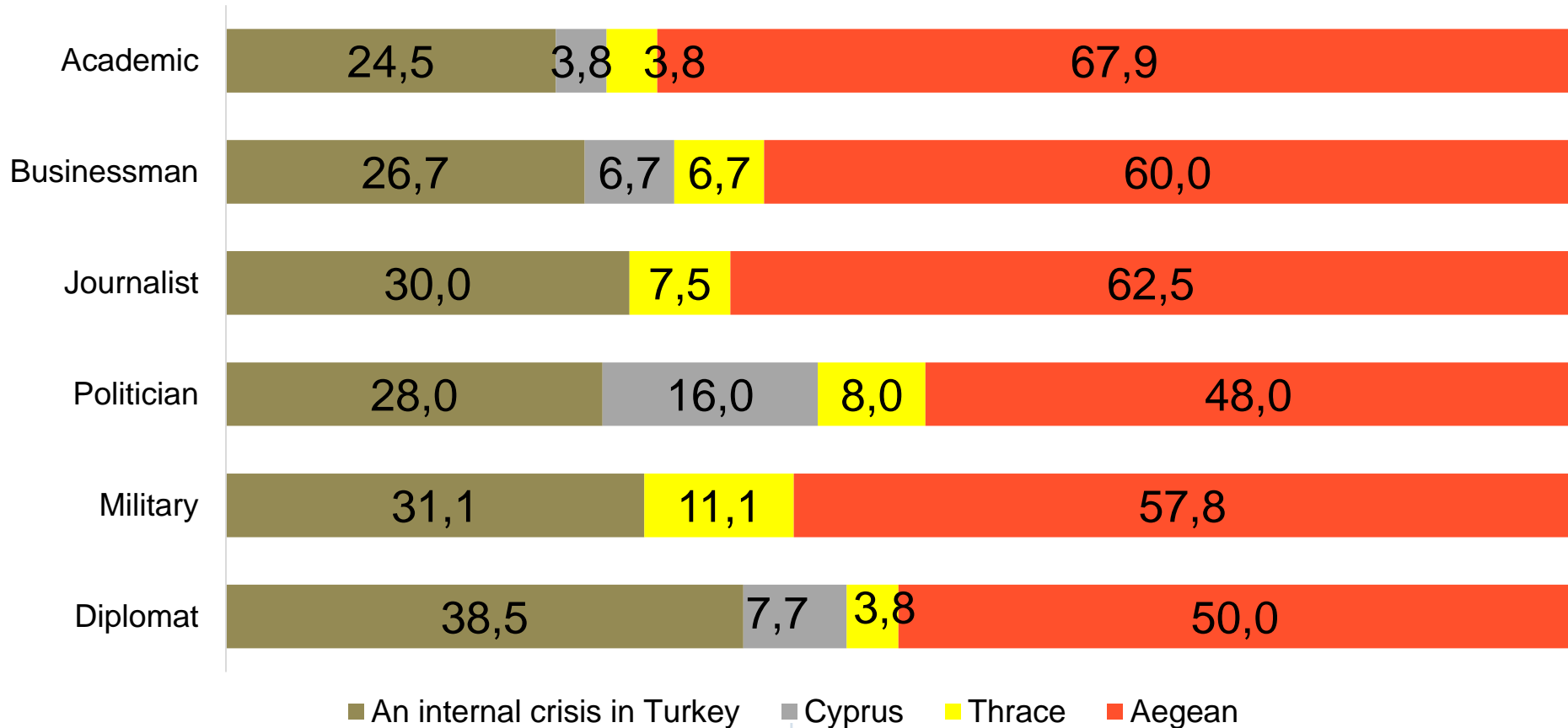


6.4 per cent of the respondents stated that they have no opinion.



GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS (15) GREEK ELITES

Which of the following is the most likely cause for a 'hot' crisis?

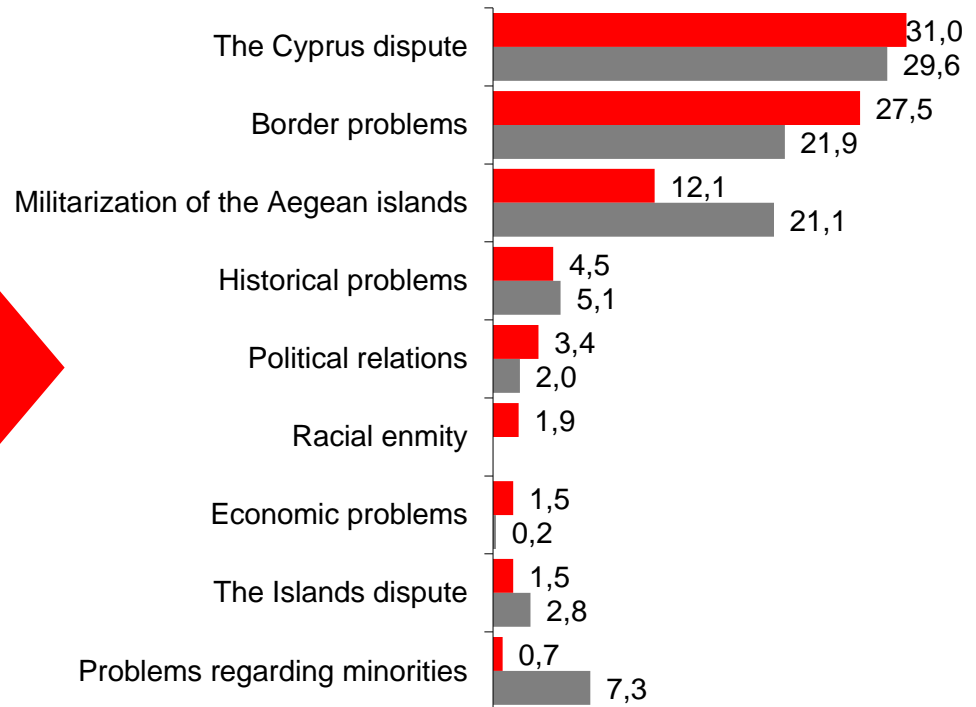
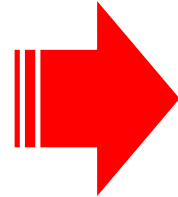
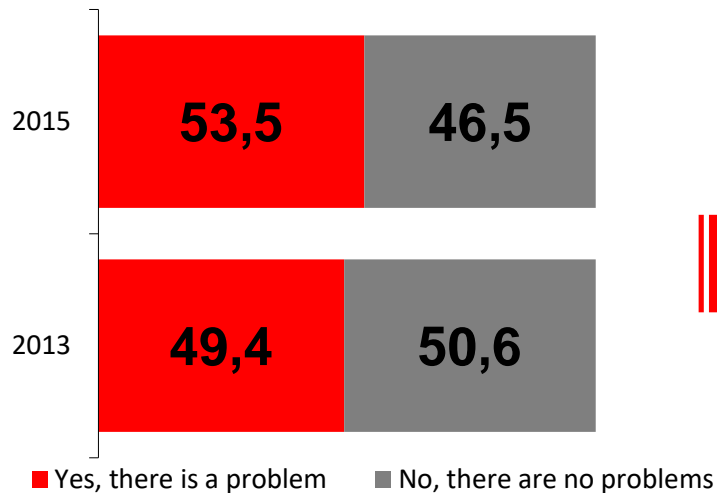




According to another survey on “*the Public Perceptions of the Turkish Foreign Policy*” conducted by Kadir Has University in 2015

What is the most important problem between Turkey and Greece?

Is there a problem between Turkey and Greece?



■ 2015 ■ 2013





SOME CONCLUSIONS – FOOD FOR THOUGHT (1)

- How to explain the greater **reticence of the Turkish Elites to respond to survey**? Political climate in country? Need for different approach to reach out to them?
- **The two surveys were conducted at slightly different times (between 16 to 25 months difference) yet they are almost parallel.** But no questions about the refugee issue in Greek Elite Survey; no distinction between Aegean and Eastern Med in Greek Survey, reflecting the Greek approach; no questions regarding who is constructive or not regarding Cyprus?





SOME CONCLUSIONS – FOOD FOR THOUGHT (2)

- Low levels of **trust**
- Strong support for the **rapprochement** process
- Overwhelming importance of **Cyprus** issue for both sides for the resolution of bilateral issues
- Potential of the **energy** issue as an area of cooperation (according to Turkish Elites) (Q. 11, 22)
- Potential of **refugee crisis** to be a disruptive factor in Turkish-Greek relations (according to Turkish Elites)
- Potential of **internal crisis in Turkey** to be a disruptive factor in Greek-Turkish relations (according to Greek Elites)





SOME CONCLUSION – FOOD FOR THOUGHT (3)

- Suspicion among Turkish Elites regarding **Greek membership in EU** and Greek support to Turkey's accession bid (Q. 27-28)
- In fact, almost direct correlation between the perceived role of **Greece in the EU** (Q.14-20) and its lack of alternatives and Turkey's need for a greater international role and distancing from West (Q. 6-10)
- Also, regarding the resolution of the **Cyprus issue**, Turkish Elites perceive Turkey to be a constructive player (52,3%) while Greece is not (72,7%).





SOME CONCLUSION – FOOD FOR THOUGHT (4)

- If there were to be a **crisis** between the two countries, the **main reasons** for Turkish Elites are (similar to Greek Elites):
 - The Aegean disputes (delimitation, EEZ etc.)
 - Newly discoveries in the Eastern Mediterranean
 - The Cyprus issue
- Both Turkish and Greek consider that **Greek-Turkish relations** are predominantly neither good, nor bad (41.9% - 47%) while a minority on both sides consider them to be bad or rather bad (12.8% - 17.8%)
- This encapsulates the **Cold Peace** the two countries have been experiencing since 1999 – not rapprochement, some potential interdependence, unwillingness or inability to resolve outstanding issues, resolution of Cyprus as trigger.





Thank you...

