



THE INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT POLICY

and

UNIVERSUM COLLEGE

POLITICS AND ELECTIONS – A SURVEY OF VOTERS’ OPINIONS

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Kosovo's national elections in 2014 were characterized by a higher focus on political party programs in comparison to previous elections. As a result, the election debate needed to be based on accurate survey data that would quantify the voter's opinion's on major policy areas. The reasons for the selection of political parties by voters remains a crucial issue in Kosovo's electorate scene, seeing as the quantification of the motivations behind political party selection is important in drawing a priority based list of policy improvements.

Survey data clearly indicates that there is a general level of dissatisfaction with the political parties currently in the Kosovo political scene. Despite the fact that a majority of respondents declared that they would participate in the elections, general survey findings indicate they did so with some hope for change, but little belief in actual change.

Political party leaders still play a major role in securing the votes for their political parties, as stated by the respondents. This is not aided by the importance of political party candidate list, which fell considerably behind as an issue affecting the decision of the voters. Therefore, voters still rely on the perception of the strength of a political party leader in order to make the decision for their vote.

On the other, the number of respondents that declared that they would vote in the elections was considerably high, at 78%. Nonetheless, despite the survey findings, official Central Election Commission statistics claim that total voter turnout remains at approximately 42%. This indicates that the current list of voters in Kosovo still needs to be considerably updated and cleaned, and that the number of Kosovars living abroad is relatively large.

One fifth of the respondents that claimed that they would vote in the national elections of 2014, also said that they would not for their previously chosen political party. One of the main reasons stated for such an outcome is the dissatisfaction of respondents with the fact that their previously preferred political party was involved in corruptive affairs. Additionally, the lack of development of internal political party democracy was also qualified as an issue by the respondents with the intent to change their vote.

One of the major issues identified in the survey is the relatively high consistency of negative scores that respondents awarded political parties. The respondents were asked to grade the political parties that will participate in the elections in May 2014 with a score from 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest. The two largest political parties in the country, the Democratic Party of Kosovo and the Democratic League of Kosovo both fared better than the smallest ones. However, negative scoring for both were received by some 40% of the respondents. This is a trend that was consistent with all the parties in the elections indicating that despite the other issues declared, there is a relatively high level of dissatisfaction with the factions participating in the 2014 elections.

This report provides a detailed presentation of the findings of the surveys as well as an analysis of the findings and motivations of the voters.

II. METHODOLOGY

The Institute for Development Policy (INDEP) and Universum College (Universum) conducted extended field surveys in order to quantify citizen motivation behind their voting preferences. The question we have asked included modalities for the most pressing political and public policy issues discussed in the election, including the issues that drove political party preferences in voters. Additionally, the initial questions were aimed to assess general demographic information of the sample.

This report focuses on the quantification of the respondent's answers regarding the political and internal aspects of the political parties, and how it affects the voter's decision making regarding the elections. In total, 30 non-policy related political choice questions were delivered to the respondents, without the aim of assessing the political preference. Some questions were posed in affirmative and negative form in order to compensate for language bias.

The field survey was conducted between May 30 and June 4, 2014, by Universum students in master's level. The field researchers, all of which had previous experiences in conducting field surveys, were trained specifically for the purpose of this survey. The team was led by Ridvan Peshkopia, PhD, professor of political science at Universum, whereas Mr Krenar Gashi of INDEP and Mr Alejtin Berisha of Universum served as a quality assurance team.

For the purpose of this survey, a 1000-respondent stratified champion was established. All interviews were conducted face-to-face. The stratification of the champion represents age, gender and residence (city/countryside) layers according to a pre-established model focused on municipal-level representation according to demographic data. The champion was spread out throughout 25 mainly Albanian-speaking municipalities and five mixed population municipalities, while one respondent comes from a mainly Serbian-speaking municipality.

Our meticulous stratification notwithstanding, this champion remains limited when it comes to representing a probabilistic sample because the face-to-face encounter between the interviewer and potential responder allows hidden and/or unintended selection biases by the interviewer. We have managed these risks by delivering a proper and specific training, yet the reader might read the margin of error and standard errors only cautiously. The regularity of the field work was directly supervised by the team leader and the quality assurance team through the online platform which allowed us to see in real time the progress of the survey.

Municipality	Number of Respondents	Percentage	Municipality	Number of Respondents	Percentage	Municipality	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Artanë/Novobërdë ^m	11	1.15%	Junik ^a	1	0.10%	Pejë ^a	38	3.97%
Deçan ^a	19	1.99%	Kaçanik ^a	19	1.99%	Podujevë ^a	26	2.72%
Dragash ^m	26	2.72%	Kamenicë ^m	16	1.67%	Prishtinë ^a	110	11.97%
Drenas ^a	32	3.34%	Kastriot/Obiliq ^a	10	1.05%	Prizren ^a	106	11.08%
Ferizaj ^a	61	6.34%	Klinë ^a	16	1.67%	Rahovec ^a	40	4.18%
Fushë Kosovë ^a	43	4.49%	Klllokot ^m	1	0.10%	Skënderaj ^a	22	2.30%
Gjakovë ^a	70	7.31%	Lipjan ^a	32	3.34%	Shtime ^a	16	1.67%
Gjilan ^a	55	5.75%	Malishevë ^a	24	2.51%	Therandë/Suharekë ^a	16	1.67%
Hani i Elezit ^a	5	0.52%	Mamushë ^m	2	0.21%	Viti ^a	25	2.61%
Istog ^a	15	1.57%	Mitrovicë/south ^a	40	1.185	Vushtri ^a	42	4.38%
						Zubin Potok ^s	1	0.10%

NOTE

a: Albanian-speaking majority

m: Mixed population

s: Serbian-speaking majority

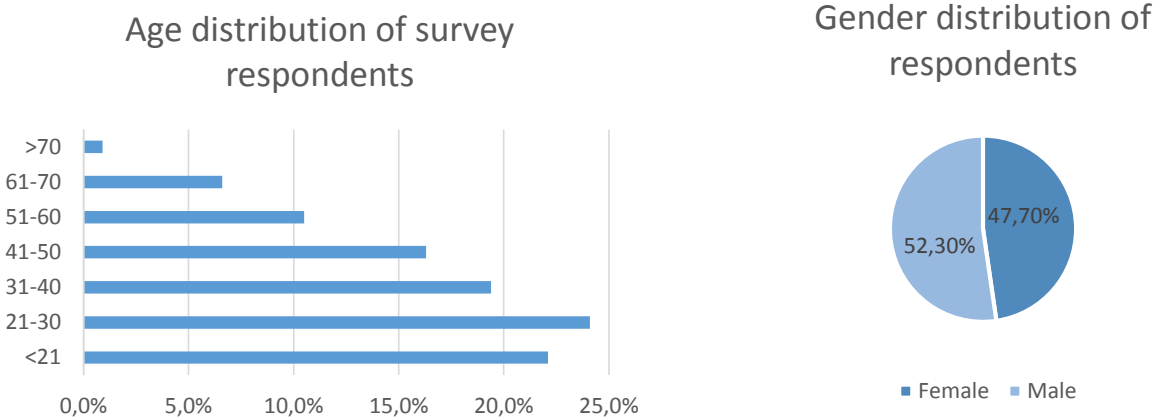
In total, 1326 people were approached for the purposes of the survey, throughout a 4-day period. Out of the 1326 people approached, 369 refused to be interviewed or otherwise answer the survey question. The questions were answered either fully or partially by 957 respondents, a sufficiently representative sample for Kosovo.

Table 3

Categories	Number	Percentage
People who refused to be interviewed	369	27.82%
People who actually finished the survey	957	72.18%
Total	1326	100%

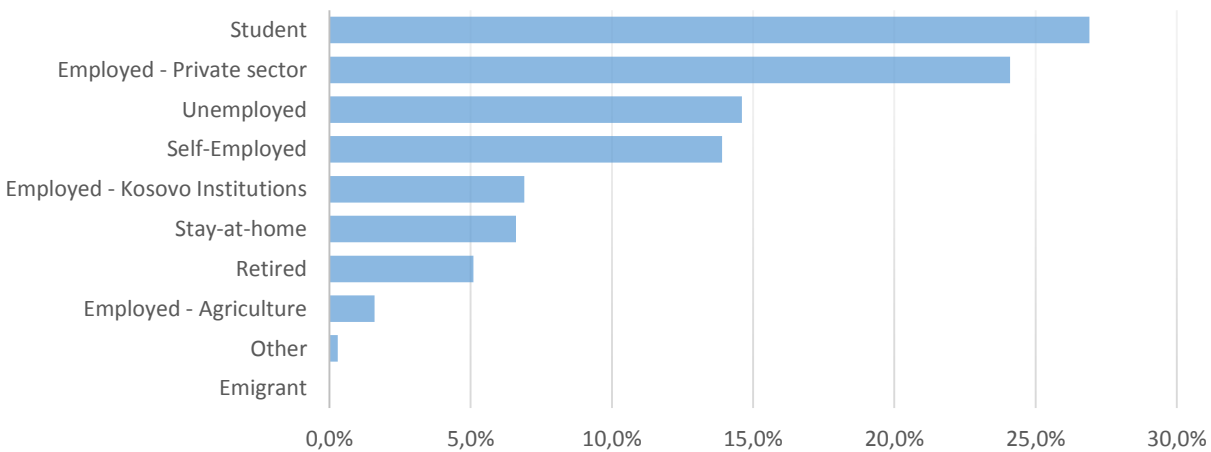
III. SURVEY FINDINGS

The majority of the respondents, or 58.9% of them fell between 21 and 50 years of age, an indicative sample for Kosovo’s general population. Nonetheless, there was a considerable 22.1% presence of participants under 21 years of age. The general lack of representation of age groups 51+ is largely attributed to Kosovo’s demographics and also the fact that the survey was conducted in the field during work days, which is usually characterized by a lower presence of that age group. Simultaneously, the gender representation of respondents was very balanced and generally reflective of Kosovo demographic groups. This ensures a good representation of opinions, especially considering the random polling.



The respondents were also disaggregated by employment status, in order to gauge the accuracy and reliability of survey findings. Generally speaking, the representation remained restively accurate. Students

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

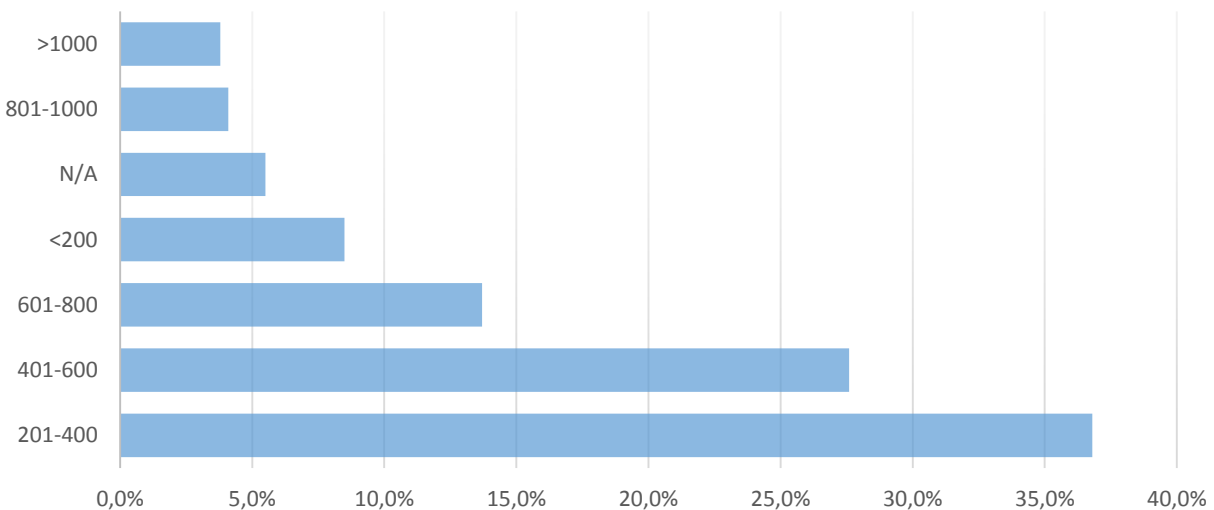


remained the most largely represented group, however, it is important to consider that Kosovo is characterized by a large portion of a population sitting in the 19-35 years of age. The student data has not been divided according to school level. As a result, we see that 46.5% have declared a directly verifiable

source of employment (private sector, government institutions, self-employed or agriculture) with the other part being students or other brackets. This is generally in line with official Kosovo statistics on employment in the country.

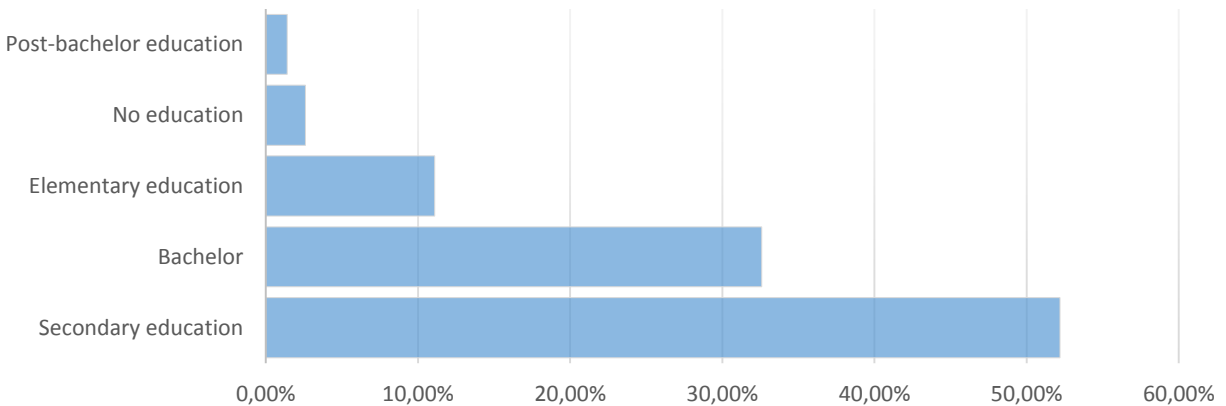
Additionally, income brackets for each of the respondents have been also gathered. According to the declared income brackets, the considerable majority of the respondents, or 36,8% earn between 201-400 euros a month, with an additional 27.6 % earning 401-600 euros per month. Only 21,6% of the respondents earn more than 601 euros a month, with half of these respondents being placed in the 601-800 euro bracket. These data reflect the responses of the employed respondents, and therefore not the whole sample.

DECLARED INCOME OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS



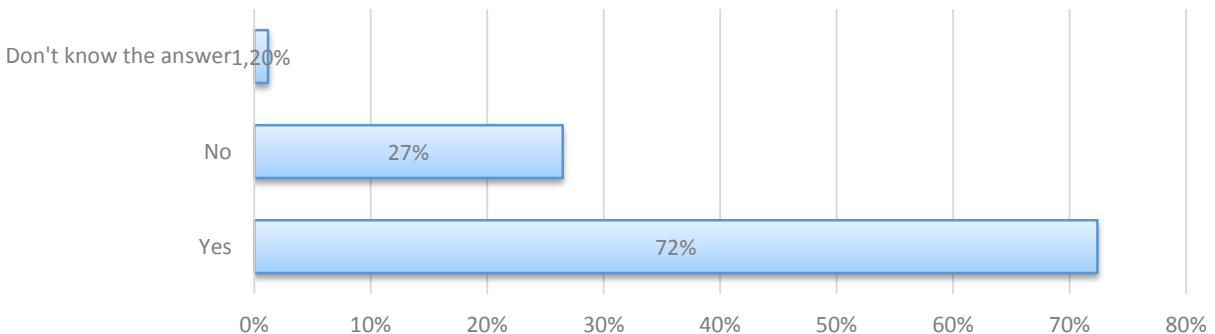
Finally, education levels of the respondents were assessed. Slightly over 50% of the respondents had secondary, or high school level education completed. On the other hand, 32.6% of the respondents had finished a degree equal to the undergraduate or bachelor level studies. Only 1.4% of the survey respondents a post-tertiary education degree, such as a masters or PHD.

SURVEY RESPONDENT EDUCATION LEVEL



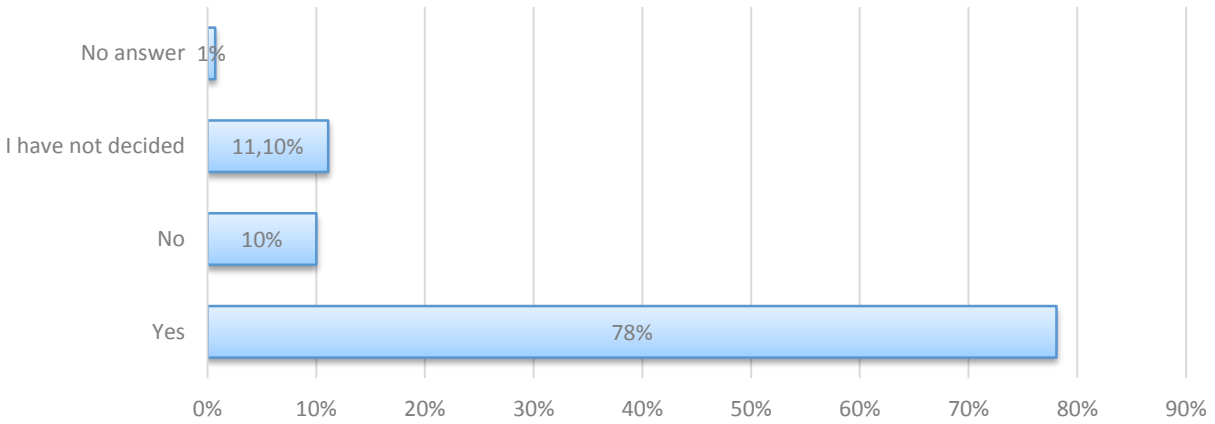
In general, 72% of the respondents claimed that they voted in the last elections in the country, which provides a considerable contrast to the final voter turnout declared by the Central Election Commission. 27% claimed that they did not participate in the last elections, whereas there was 1% of the respondents who either didn't know, or did not answer to the question.

Did you vote in the past elections?



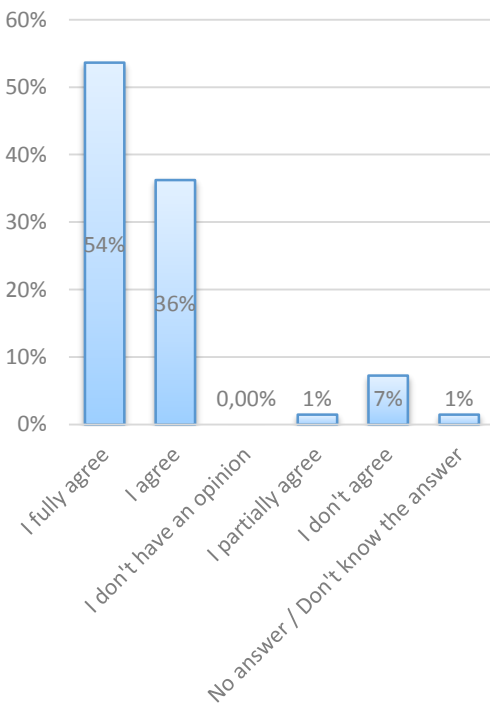
78% of the respondents also claimed that they intended to vote on the 8 June 2014 Parliamentary elections in Kosovo, with another 10% claiming they wouldn't vote. Only 11% were undecided in this answer.

Are you going to vote in the upcoming elections?

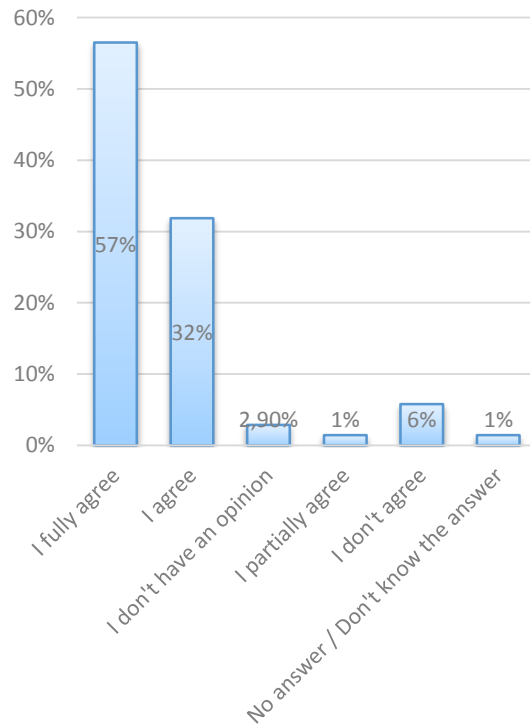


The respondents that specified that they would not vote in the June 8 elections were asked regarding the reasons behind their decision. When asked if they would not vote because they were disappointed with the offers from political parties, 90% agreed. Additionally, 89% of the respondents from the same category stipulated that they did not think anything would change after the new elections.

Why do you choose not to vote: I am disappointed with the offers of the political parties

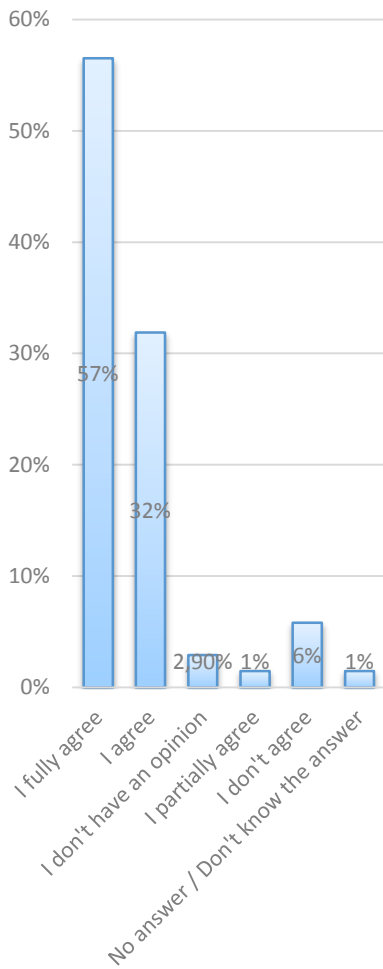


Why do you choose not to vote : I have no hope that anything would change

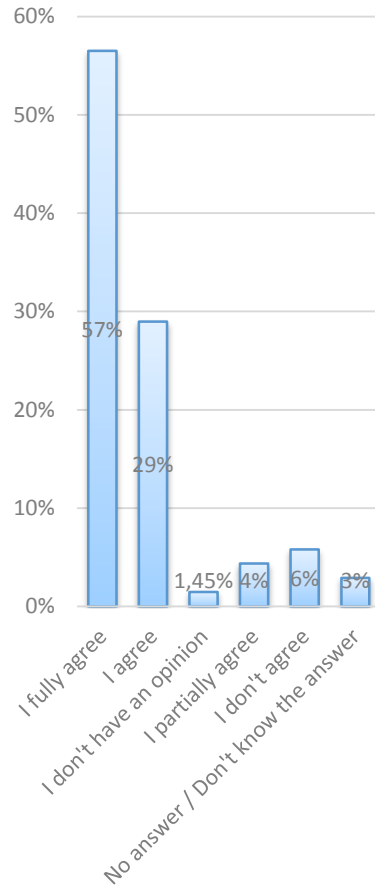


84% of the respondents that would declared that they would not vote in the upcoming elections, agreed with the statement that they would not do so because there isn't a new alternative among political parties. Additionally, another 87% said that they would not vote because they thought that whichever party won will continue to uphold the current status quo. 40% of the respondents from these categories also stipulated that they have other reasons for their decisions.

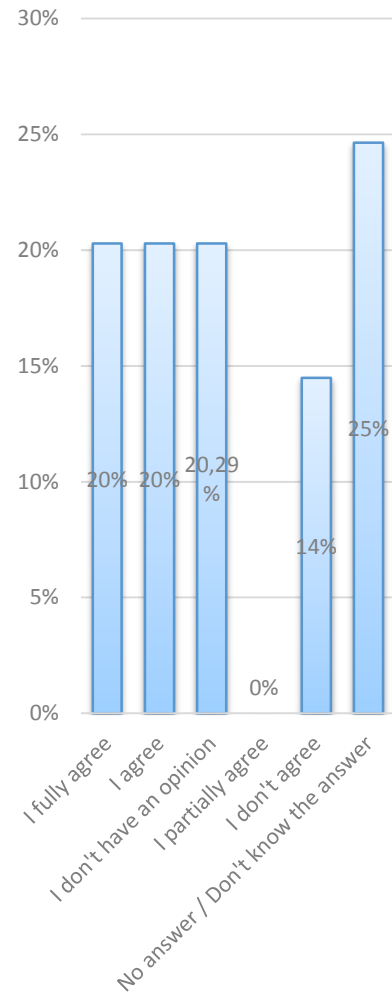
Why do you choose not to vote: There is no new alternative



Why do you choose not to vote: Whichever party wins will maintain the status quo

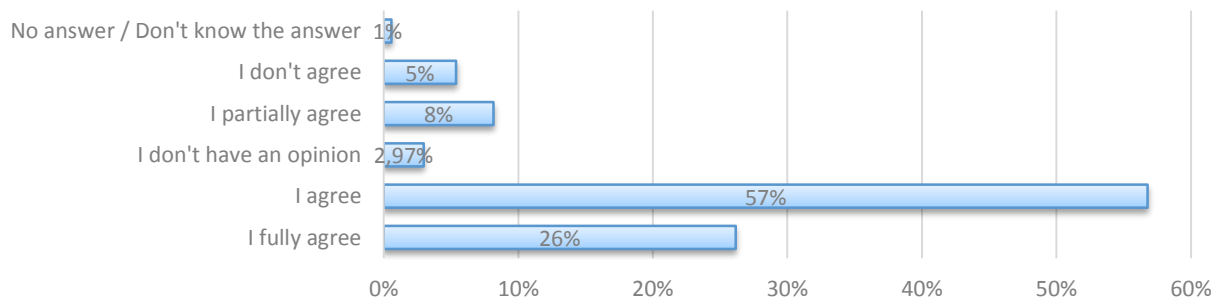


Why do you choose not to vote: Other reasons



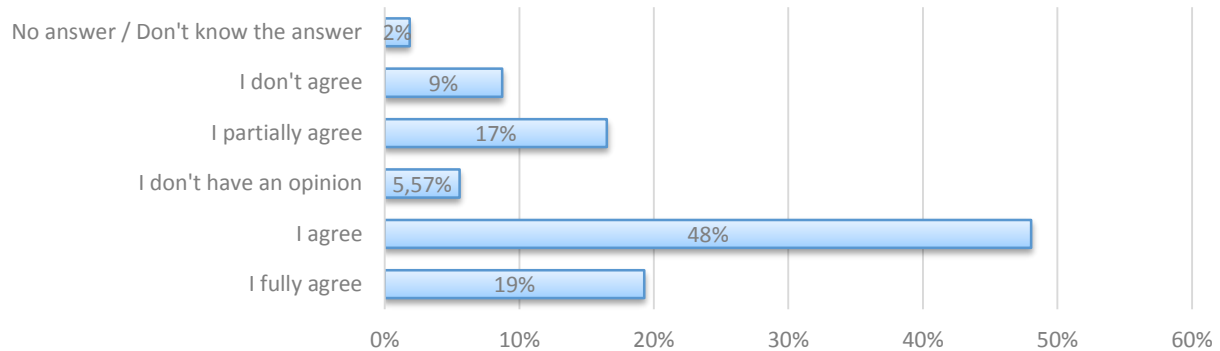
The respondents that claim that they would vote in the elections of 8 June 2014 were asked to provide the reasoning behind their decisions. 73% of the respondents in this subgroup claimed that they would vote in the next elections in the hope that there will be changes for the better. However, only 67% agreed

What convinced you to vote: Hope that things will change for the better



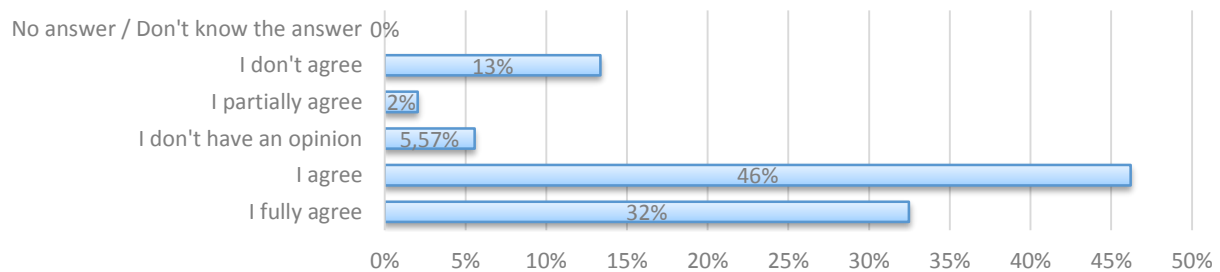
with the statement that political parties offer concrete alternatives for specific issues, while 9% of the respondents in this subgroup disagreed with this statement.

What convinced you to vote: Political parties offer concrete alternatives for certain subjects

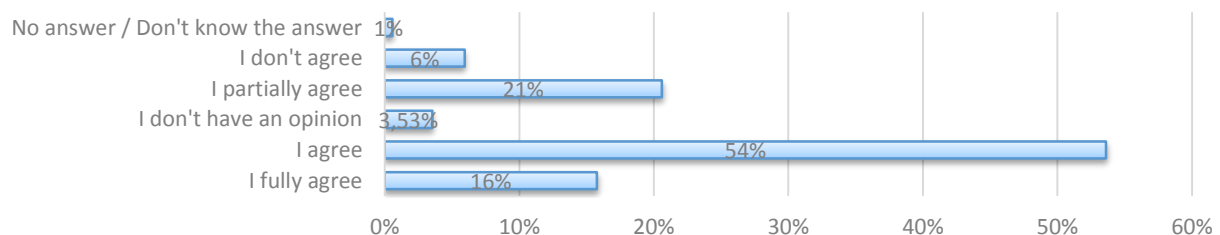


79% of the respondents agreed with the statement that they would vote in the upcoming elections because they believed in the leader of their preferred political party, with 6% claiming the contrary. In contrast, 70% of the respondents thought that political parties had offered qualified candidates, with another 6% disagreeing with this statement. This clearly shows the persistence of strong man political decision making in Kosovo, although a trend in decline. However, the increased investment in political party based programs might be an indicator of the awareness of political parties that the electorate is shifting from one-man political party leadership.

What have convinced you to vote: I believe in the leader of the party I support

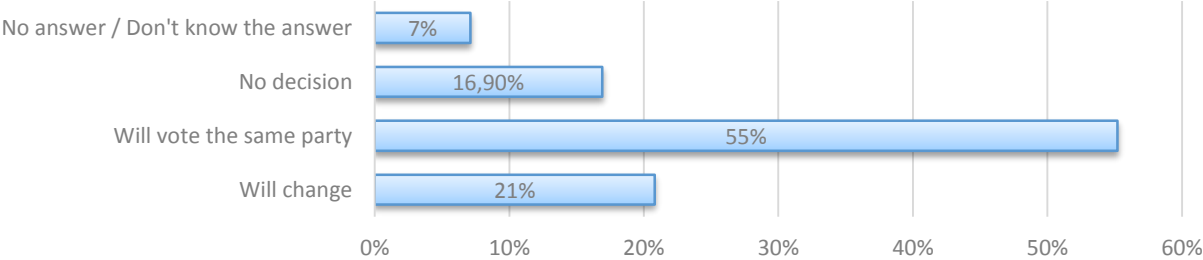


What convinced you to vote: Party candidate lists offer better options

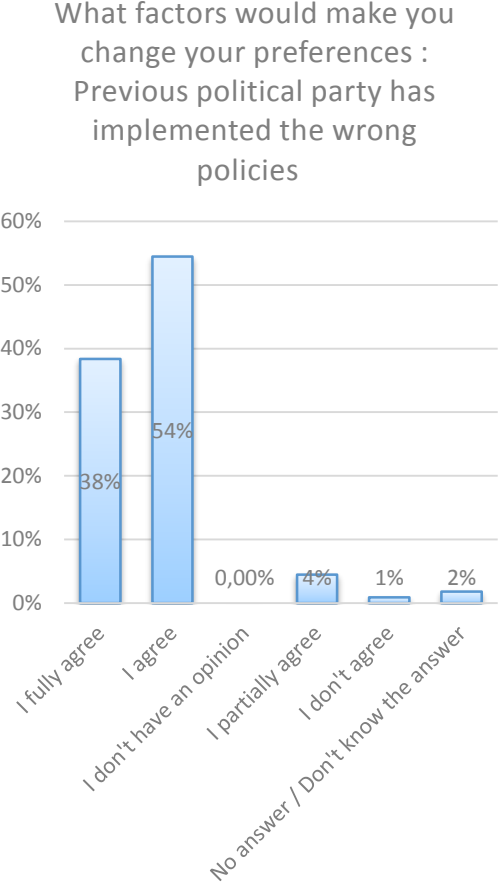
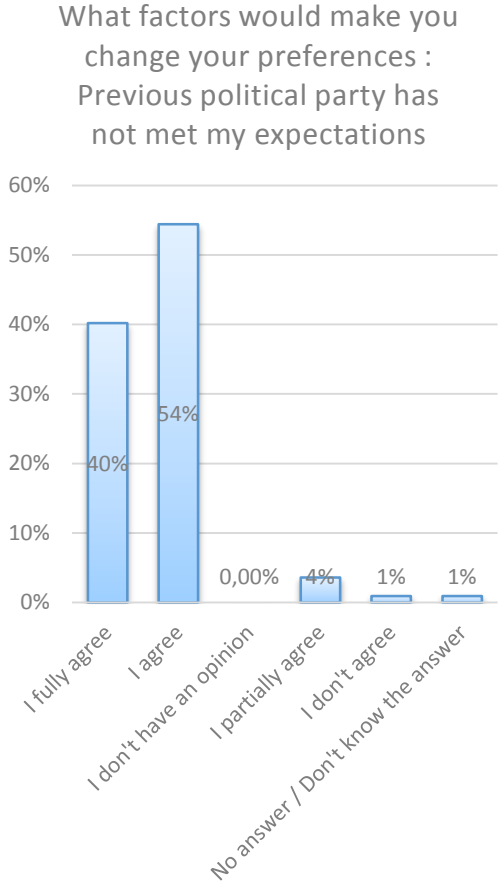


The respondents were also asked if they planned to vote for the same political party or whether they would change vote as compared to the last time they voted. 21% of the respondents claimed that they intend to change the vote, which provides for a considerable number of swing votes. 55% of the respondents claimed that they would vote for the same political party, with another 17% still undecided. 7.1% of the respondents did not answer this question.

Will you vote same as in the previous elections or have you
Changed preferences ?

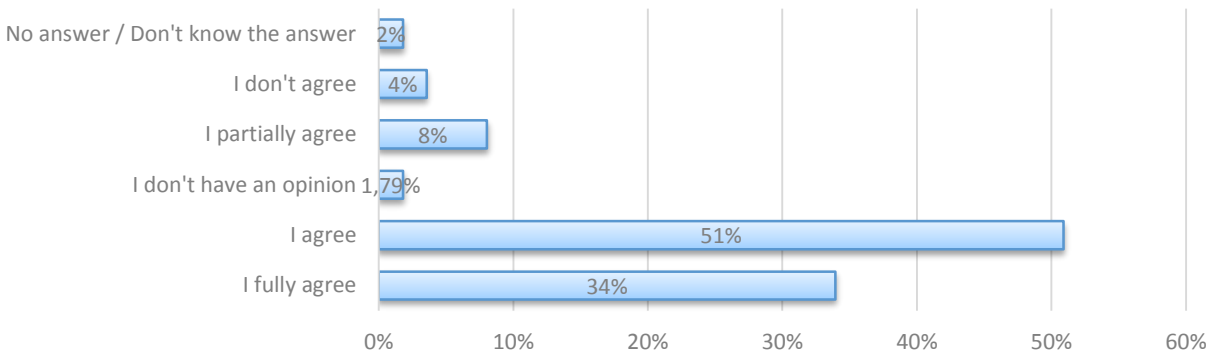


When asked the reasons for the change of their vote, 95% of the respondents from this category agreed to the statement that their previously chosen party did not meet their expectations. Additionally, 93% of the respondents thought their previously preferred political party developed wrong policies.



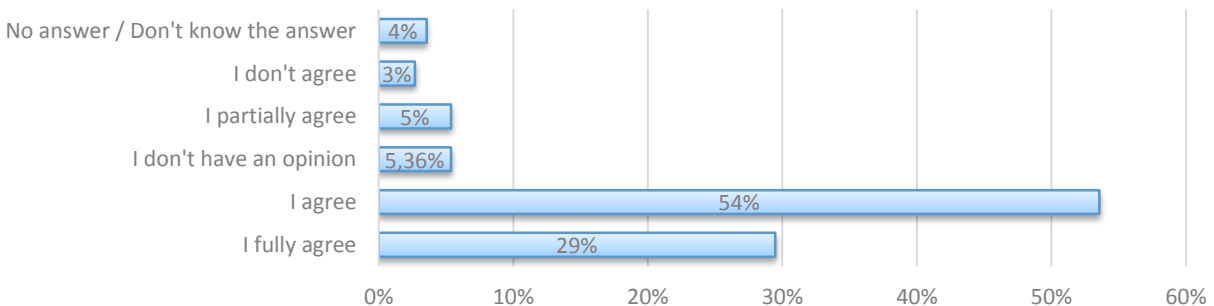
More surprisingly, however, 85% of the respondents that claimed that they will change their vote in the parliamentary elections, also agreed that they would do so because their previous political parties were involved in corruptive affairs. Another 8% partially agreed with this statement, with only 4% disagreement among the respondents.

What reasons would make you change your preferences:
Previous political party has been involved in corruptive affairs



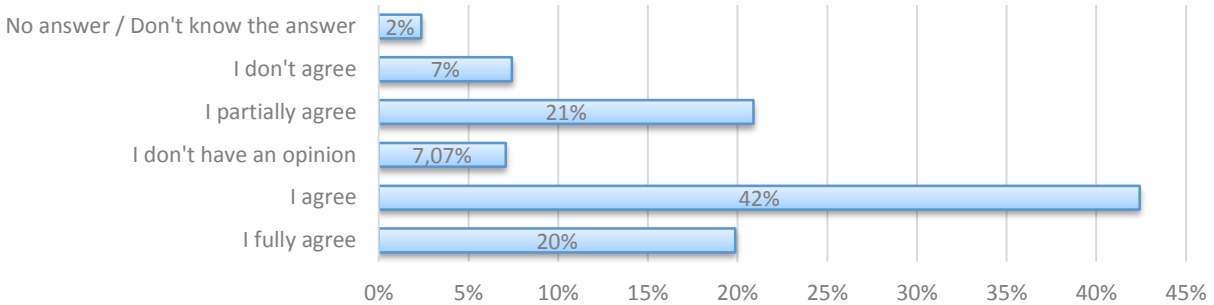
Additionally, the respondents within the aforementioned group also overwhelmingly agreed to the statement that their previously preferred political party did not develop internal party democracy. 84% of the respondents agreed to this statement, versus only 3% who categorically disagreed to such a statement.

What reasons would make you change your preferences:
Previous political party has not developed internal party democracy



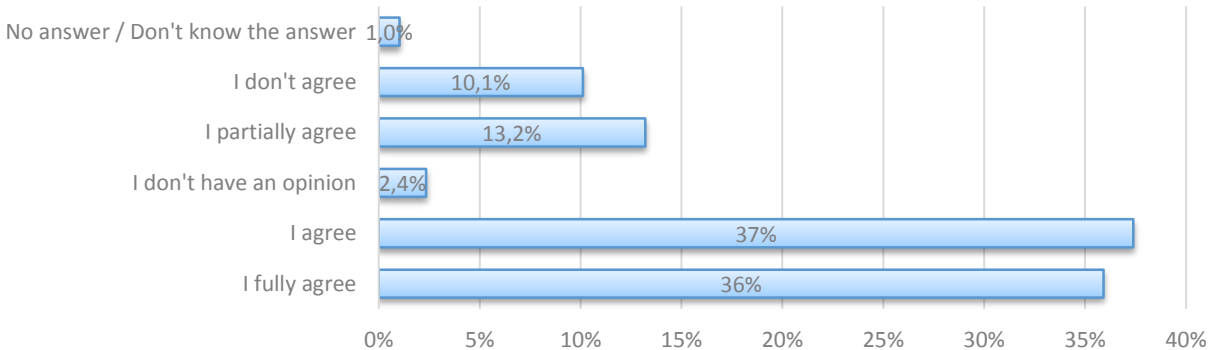
On the other hand, from the respondents that stated that they would vote for the political party for which they voted in the last elections, 62% agreed to the statement that they would do so because said party will exclude candidates who were involved in scandals and corruptive affairs. Another 21% partially agreed to this statement, with 7% of the respondents disagreeing.

For which reasons would you vote for your preferred political party: The party has expelled politicians who have been involved in scandals and corruption



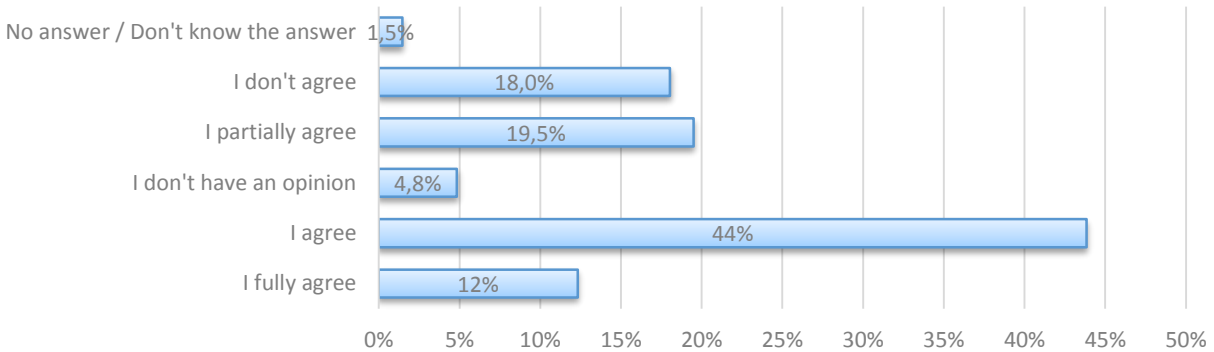
Respondents were also asked to state their agreement with a number of statements intended to assess key issues included in political party offers that would be a determinant of their decision to vote for a party. The political party leader remains a relatively important factor, with 73% of the respondents agreeing that the political party leader was an important determinant factor for their vote. However, 13% of the respondents only partially agreed, with another 10% completely disagreeing with the statement.

Which issues involved in the political parties programs would be decisive factors for your vote: Party leader



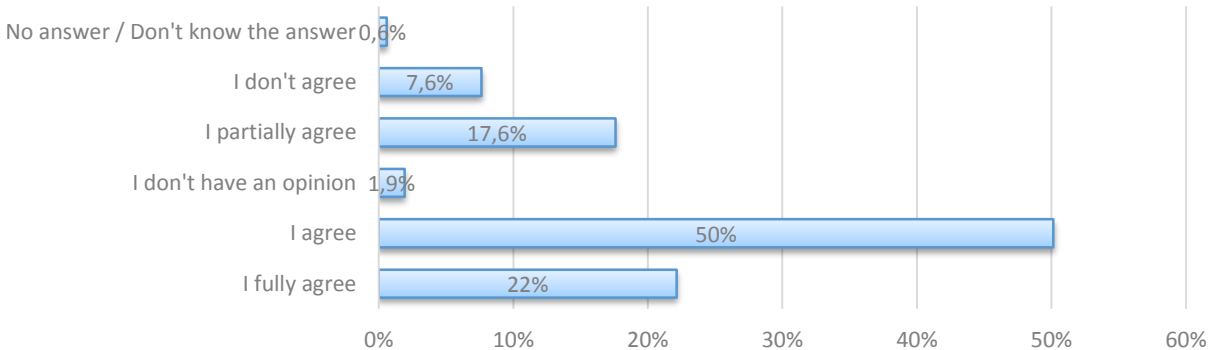
Campaign style also played a partial role in determining the final political party choice. 56% of the respondents agreed that the style of the campaign is a key issue of the political party offer that would affect their decision. However, 20% only partially agreed, with another 18% disagreeing to such a statement, indicating that campaign style doesn't have the expected weight on a voter's decision.

Which issues involved in the political parties programs would be decisive factors for your vote: Campaign style



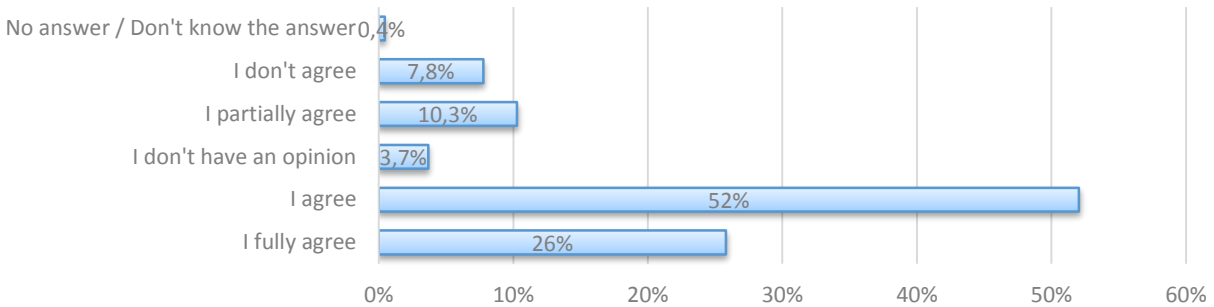
Surprisingly, the list of candidates of the political party is not as overwhelmingly qualified as an important factor as would be expected. 22% of the respondents fully agreed that the list was important, with another 50% selecting the “agree” answer. 18% of the respondents only partially agreed to this statement, with another 8% completely disagreeing. This is a surprising finding, considering the importance of the legislative branch in a parliamentary democracy such as Kosovo.

Which issues involved in the political parties programs would be decisive factors for your vote: List of candidates



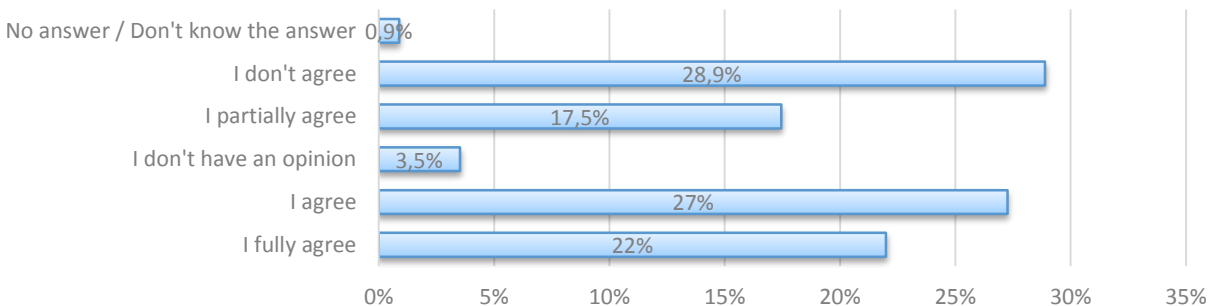
Political party reputation in previous years also plays an important role in helping the voters determine their vote according to political party offers. 78% of the respondents agreed to this statement, with 8% of the respondents disagreeing.

Which issues involved in the political parties programs would be decisive factors for your vote: The party's reputation and image in the past



Finally, there was some spread of opinions regarding the importance of a political candidate list, 50% of which is constituted by women. Only 49% of the respondents agreed that this would be an important determinant factor for their vote, with 29% disagreeing. 18% of the respondents only partially agreed to this statement.

Which issues involved in the political parties programs would be decisive factors for your vote: If 50% of the list of candidates are women

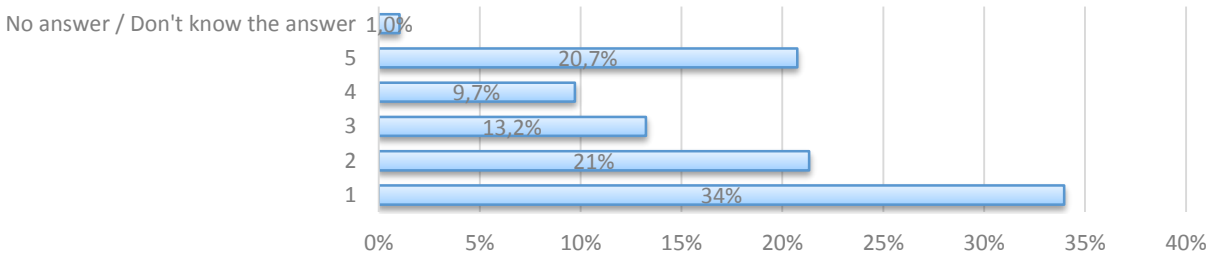


Respondents were also asked to rank political parties that participated in the 8 June 2014 elections according to how well these political parties met their expectations on the policies assessed in the survey. The ranking scaled from 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest grade.

The Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK), had one of the most prominent lowest markings, with 34% of the respondents giving them a grade of 1, and another 21% grading them with a 2. Only 10% of the respondents placed a 4 grade mark on this party, with 21% giving them the highest score, an indicator that went very close to the current election results.

Rating from 1 to 5, which of the participating parties in these elections do you think most closely adheres to your policy expectations?

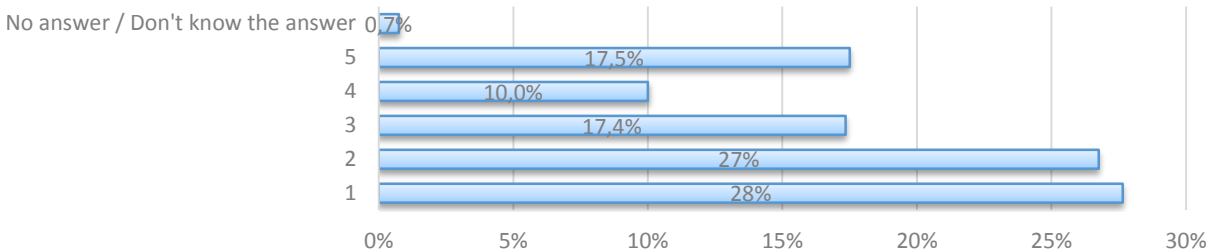
PDK



The Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), also did not score fairly higher in the poll. 28% of the respondents gave them the lowest rank, with another 27% giving them a rank of 2. Only 10% of the respondents gave them a rank of 4, with another 18% awarding the highest score.

Rating from 1 to 5, which of the participating parties in these elections do you think most closely adheres to your policy expectations?

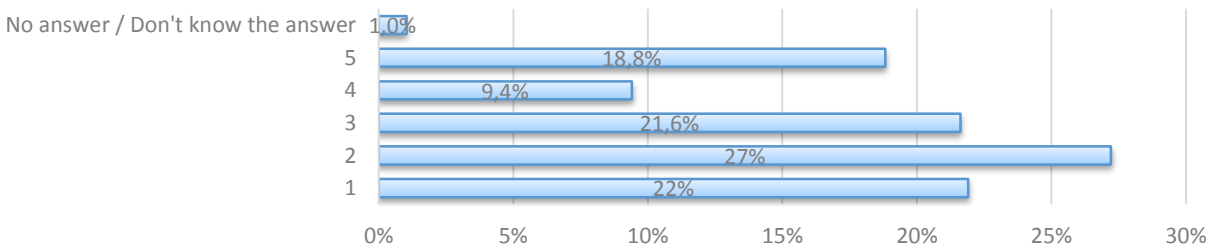
LDK



The Self Determination Movement (LVV), was also met with partial success. 22% of the respondents gave the party the lowest score, with another 27% giving it a score of 2. This party also had one of the highest medium score, with 22% of the respondents giving it a medium score of 3. Finally, 9% gave it a middle higher score of 4, with only 19% giving it the highest mark.

Rating from 1 to 5, which of the participating parties in these elections do you think most closely adheres to your policy expectations?

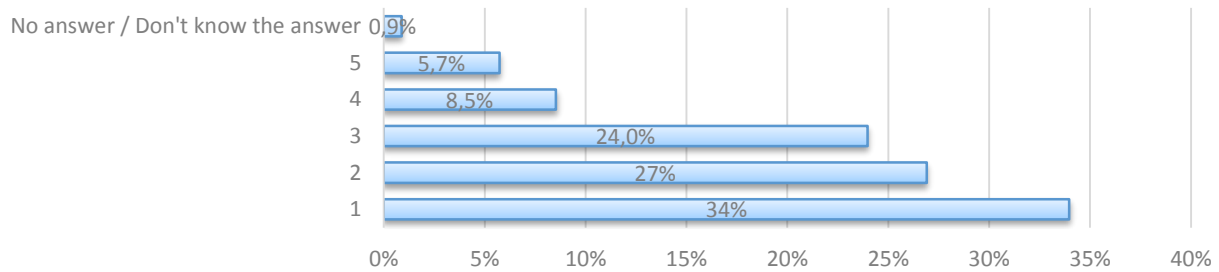
LVV



The Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK), obtained some of the lowest score of all the parties. 34% of the respondents graded the party with a score of 1, 27% with a score of 2 and another 24% with a score of 3. Only 9% awarded the party a score of 4, with the lowest percentage giving it a score of 6%.

Rating from 1 to 5, which of the participating parties in these elections do you think most closely adheres to your policy expectations?

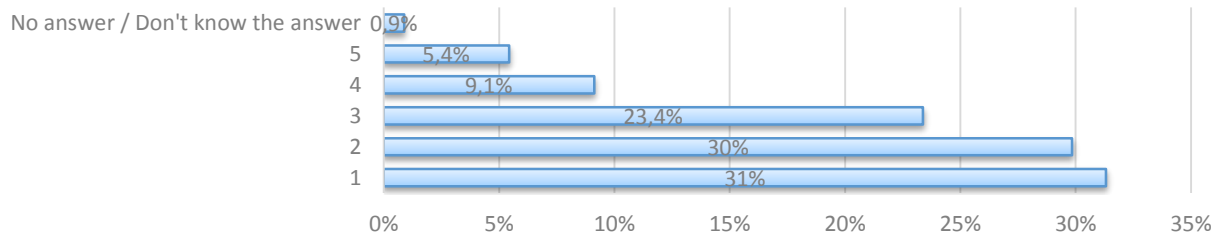
AAK



The Alliance for New Kosovo (AKR) also received similar results to AAK. 31% of the respondents gave the party a score of 1, 30% a score of 2 and another 23% a score of 3. Only 9% gave the party a high score of 4, with 5% awarding it a score of 5.

Rating from 1 to 5, which of the participating parties in these elections do you think most closely adheres to your policy expectations?

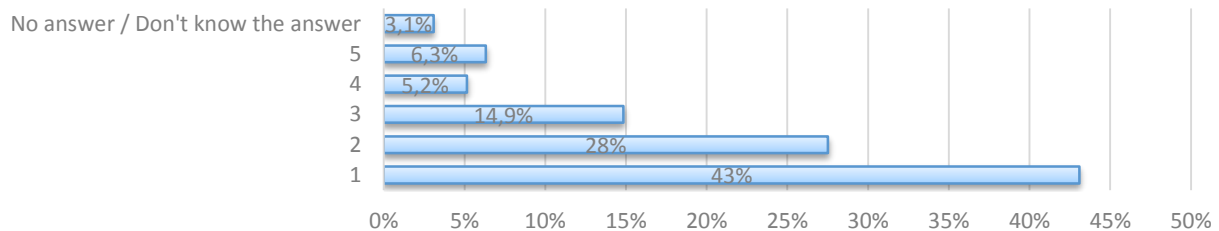
AKR



The Initiative for Kosovo (NISMA), the new party formed from PDK members, scored similarly to the last two parties. 43% of the respondents gave them a low score of 1, with another 28% marking them with a 2. Only 5% gave them a score of 4, and 6% awarded NISMA with the highest score.

Rating from 1 to 5, which of the participating parties in these elections do you think most closely adheres to your policy expectations?

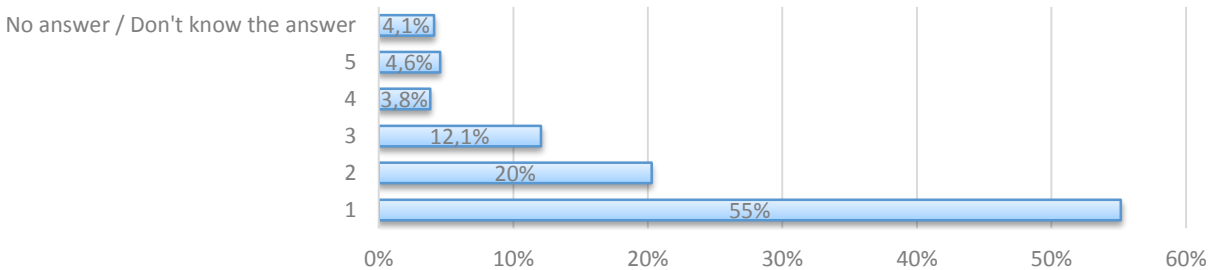
NISMA



Partia e Forte (PF) was one of the lowest marked parties, with 53% of the respondents giving it the lowest score, and another 24% marking it with a score of 2. Only 4% gave the party a score of 4, with 5% awarding it the highest score.

Rating from 1 to 5, which of the participating parties in these elections do you think most closely adheres to your policy expectations?

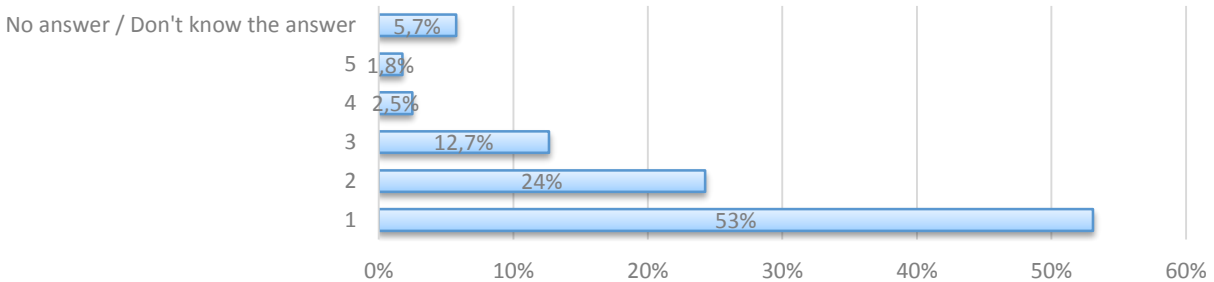
PF



Finally, the Party for Justice (PD), ranked the lowest, with 53% of the voters awarding them the lowest score, and 24% giving them the next lowest score of 2. Only 3% of the respondents awarded this party a score of 4, with only 2% awarding them the highest score of 5.

Rating from 1 to 5, which of the participating parties in these elections do you think most closely adheres to your policy expectations?

PD



The respondents' opinions clearly indicate a fragmentation of preferences concerning political parties in Kosovo. While the leader based political parties such as the PDK, LDK and AAK still maintain a generally low incidence of a score of 5, overall satisfaction with these parties is still low. AAK and AKR, from the political parties with track record of holding executive branches, also mark the highest negative scores in this category, indicating a more regional electorate. LVV, with no distinct strongholds, still enjoys the lowest incidence of low scores a possible indicator that a more nationally focused party might skew the electorate. Therefore, political party preference still remains highly fragmented between regional and leader-based parties. However, there are strong indicators of the increase of the importance of political party programs in the electorates decision making.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The primary statistic is the declaration of participation in the 2010 elections as well as the intent to participate in the national elections of 2014. In total, 78% of the respondents declared that they intended to participate in the parliamentary elections. However, official statistics by the Central Election Commission place election turnout at around 42%, almost half of what was declared. This is a clear indication of a long standing problem with the voters' lists in Kosovo, which have been subject to criticism. Currently, there are circa 1.8 million entries in the voters list for a country with the same number of inhabitants, indicating that the voter's lists have still not been properly cleaned and updated.

On the other hand, the number of respondents that claimed that categorically claimed that they would not vote on the last elections is still high. This is especially important when considering the survey provided ample positive and undecided options of response on this question. The main reasons behind their decisions not to vote according to respondents were a disappointment with their previous political parties and a belief that whatever new party won the elections wouldn't contribute to changing the situation. Most importantly, however, this category of respondents stated that they did not see an alternative that would interest them among the political parties running for office. The three main reasons stated for not voting in the elections of 2014 clearly indicate a creeping tendency of political exhaustion of a portion of the population that is key in supporting new parties. This segment of the population is usually the key target for new and young political parties, seeing as they are open to new options – however, as stated, they saw no such options in the 2014 elections for Kosovo.

Even among the respondents that claimed that they would vote in the elections, there is a lower level of belief in change. Out of these group, about three quarters claimed they would vote out of the belief that something will change for the better. Nonetheless, the fact that only 67% thought that political parties offered real solutions for specific issues is of some concern. The swaying sense of agreement between the respondents with intent to vote might be an indicator of inertial voting, which can lead to the election of officials with no track record of success in their previous positions.

However, the aforementioned is less surprising when considering that almost 80% of the respondents that said that that they would vote because they believed in the leader of the party. This is also strongly supported by the fact that 73% respondents who claimed they would vote for the same political party they voted for in the last elections, would do so because of the political party leaders. As a result, voters still rely on a main political figure in order to base their decision, and political party program based decision making has still not taken strong hold in the country. Nonetheless, the 2014 elections marked a decisive change in the direction of discussing political party programs for the first time since 1999.

The most important statistic, however, is that 21% of the respondents said that they would not vote for the party they voted for in the last elections, with another 17% still undecided. This is important, since it shows a high level of dissatisfaction among the electorate from previous elections, and accurately reflects the opinions of the respondents in the policy part of the survey. Such an outcome was also accurately portrayed in the official results of the elections, with some previously small political parties gaining respectable ground, and other main parties losing some of their votes. What is most important, however, is that the people who did claim that they would change their votes, overwhelmingly agreed that they would do so due to the involvement of their political party in corruptive affairs. This indicates that there is a decreasing level of tolerance among the electorate with political corruption and impunity, a trend that

was noticed during the local elections of 2013, and that will be important in the upcoming elections. Such a statement is also amplified by the dissatisfaction of these respondents with the political parties that did not develop internal political party democracy.

Unfortunately, only half the respondents agreed with the fact that an important factor in the decision for which political party to vote would be the inclusion of more women in the candidates list. This shows that better gender representation in political party candidate lists still is not in high priority, especially when considering that positive responses to this answer also matched the portion of the respondents that were women.

Finally, when ranking political parties, considerable shares of respondents marked badly the two largest parties. However, a trend that is important to notice is that there was a general prevalence of bad marks for all political parties that would participate in these elections. The results indicate that there is a general lack of satisfaction by the electorate with political parties in general, whether they have chosen them yet or not. This clearly indicates that the political scene in Kosovo isn't adequately addressing the public's interest, not from a programmatic or belief point of view, but from their implementation of their promises.

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