



## ALBANIA-SERBIA RELATIONS IN THE EYES OF THE ALBANIAN PUBLIC 2015

Alba Cela



# **Albania-Serbia relations in the eyes of the Albanian Public 2015**

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## INTRODUCTION

The soccer match between Serbia and Albania in October of 2014 where the famous drone incident unleashed violence towards the Albanian players has already entered the list of most famous sports events. It illustrates the already known logic that soccer still harbors the most aggressive nationalistic sentiments. Albania was initially condemned from UEFA as losing the game only to be rewarded later by a decision of the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) which gave the victory to the Albanian team and stripped Serbia of three points. The rollercoaster of nationalistic rhetoric and soccer matches went on with the following game played in Albania where Serbia this time scored twice leaving Albanian fans mourning. The game had been highly securitized as the Albanians government took almost draconian security measures to make sure that not the smallest incident would happen to the Serbian team while in Albania. A few days later winning a striking 3-0 match with Armenia, Albania secured its historical entry into the European Soccer Championship to be held next year in France.

However one would be mistaken to think that bilateral relations between Albania and Serbia recently are just bad. The incidents and events occurring during this year were not primarily negative and were not limited to the sports events. Albanian and Serbian Prime Ministers involved as main players in the Berlin and Vienna summits have flanked Chancellor Merkel in regional and EU events displaying unusual potential for dialogue and even camaraderie. Youth exchanges which will lead to a regional youth center coordinated both in Tirana and Belgrade have produced some positive media

coverage and warm social reaction after so much negativity that poured in TV s and newspapers in 2014.

It is an important step for respective governments to take such a commitment of normalizing bilateral relations in the face of difficult pasts. However for the effort to be successful more society segments need to be involved. Much more needs to be done with the media which often perpetuates myths and controversial topics despite their relevant lack of importance for current challenges faced by both countries.

Albania and Serbia share a difficult historic baggage. The dissolution of Yugoslavia and conflict in Kosovo and the subsequent independence of Kosova have been a powerful rollercoaster for the two countries which claim to be home-seat to the largest ethnic groups in the Balkans. However even between Serbia and Kosova some signs of normalization due to the EU sponsored dialogue are starting to materialize beyond symbolical handshakes and right into important bilateral deals.

Most importantly collaboration projects between some actors which have known each other for a longer time and which have found ways to cooperate in the past despite differences have matured into more serious and sustainable joint initiatives.

Civil society organizations, have once again taken the lead to strengthen their bonds and include other actors in the hope that the maxim *“to know each other is to stop hating each”* other will work. In this context the Albanian Institute for International Studies and the Forum for International Relations of the European Movement of Serbia have joined hands in establishing the first joint Centre for Albanian-Serbian relations to promote the normalization of bilateral relations, encourage cooperation and interaction among youth, media and business community and keep the integration impetus

for better regional cooperation strong.

This survey, which has also served to launch our center, is the first step in assessing the current state of relations *as perceived by citizens of Albania*. The photography of citizens' perceptions is valuable not only as a window to more information about evaluations, myths and misunderstandings but also as a way to measure what expectations about the future of these relations are. Knowing the public opinion pulse and the general level of support for better relations (or lack of thereof) will assist decision makers and policy makers in designing the most effective course for foreign policy, collaboration projects and agreements in the field of economic and cultural cooperation. However the survey is intended also as a tool for other entities such as civil society and cultural actors to seek ways in which to expand the possibilities to interact.

The results of the survey which you can access in this publication portray a lot of positive potential for improvement of the bilateral relations more likely starting with the 'easy parts': cultural cooperation and getting to know more about each other. Most important citizens seem fully aware of the importance that these relations have for the future of the entire region as well as for the European integration project that the region also shares.

The Albanian Institute for International Studies hopes that the publication will serve the best interest of those who are working for the normalization of the relations between Albania and Serbia and their development into fully fledged good neighborly relations for a common future within the EU.



*Notes about survey:*

This survey was carried out in 2014 with 1200 Albanian citizens from all the 12 administrative regions of Albania. The method employed was face-to-face interviews.

Data about the profile of the respondents can be found in the section ‘Demographic data of the sample’.

## 1. Executive summary

- The majority of Albanian citizens believe that bilateral relations between Albania and Serbia are normal, with answers choosing this option at around 46 percent, followed by a second group that believes relations are bad or very bad at 34 percent. A smaller group of 16 percent believes the relations are good or really good.
- The group of people who believe relations between governments are normal is higher at 55 percent than those who believe relations between respective peoples, Serb and Albanian citizens, are normal at 42.5 percent.
- A third of all respondents (67.4 percent) believe Albanian-Serbian relations are important. 86 percent of Albanians, the overwhelming majority, believe that relations between Albania and Serbia are key to the stability and security in the entire region of the Balkans
- Most Albanians expect that relations with Serbia will improve in the future while a third does not think they will change. 50 percent of Albanians believe the countries are ready to build a friendly relation while 30 percent disagree.
- Only 5 percent of Albanians say that Serbia constitutes a threat to Albania. More than 60 percent of citizens do not feel any country to be a threat to Albania.
- 37.4 percent of Albanians believe their government should pay considerable attention to the relation with Serbia while half of

the sample follows with saying it should pay adequate or average attention.

- The overwhelming majority of Albanians, around 90 percent believe that Albania and Serbia should improve relations for their own sake, a percentage much larger than those who assess that the improvement of relations should happen per request of Brussels and Berlin. More than 60 percent of Albanians also say that the two countries should develop a relation despite the relation of Kosova with Serbia.
- Albanians consider the '*Historical Hostility between the two nations*' and the past '*oppression of Kosovo Albanians and criminal heritage of the Milosevic regime in Kosovo*' as the two key major obstacles in developing a bilateral relation. More than 80 percent of them in each case have mentioned these issues as first or second most important factors to be overcome in order to improve relations. Other obstacles which are mentioned by the respondents but placed as less relevant are '*Lack of communication for a long time between citizens of Serbia and Albania*' and the '*level of economic relations between both countries and societies.*' About 41 percent and 13 percent of the answers place the two factors (respectively) as standing issues in the third place of importance.
- Only 17 percent of Albanians have ever travelled to Serbia, a fourth of this have been there only transiting.
- Only 18 percent of Albanians have read books from Serbian authors while 30 percent have watched movies from well-known Serbian directors.
- The majority of Albanians, slightly over 80 percent, are in favor of having more joint cultural events with Serbia.
- Half of the sample responded that Albania and Serbia have

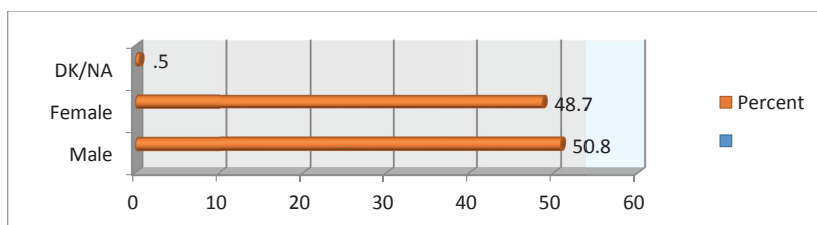
normal economic relations while 21 percent said the economic relations were either good or very good. 12 percent of respondents claimed economic relations between the two countries were bad or very bad.

- Most Albanian citizens don't know what Albania imports from Serbia while a large group, about a third of the sample, claim the imports are mainly wheat and flour. 60 percent of Albanians believe their country is a touristic destination for Serbian people.

## 2. Demographic data of the sample

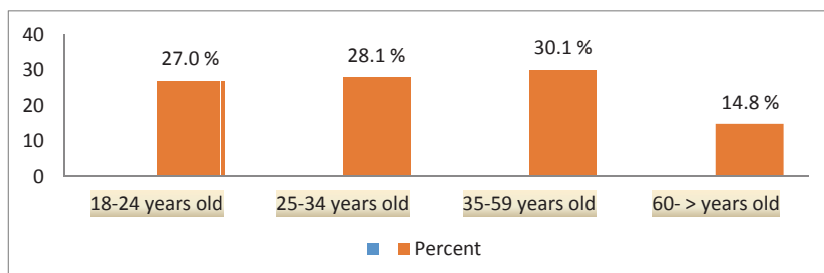
Gender statistics reveal that 50.8% of the people who took this survey are males and 48.7% of them, females, while 0.5% preferred to not answer this question at all.

### *Gender*



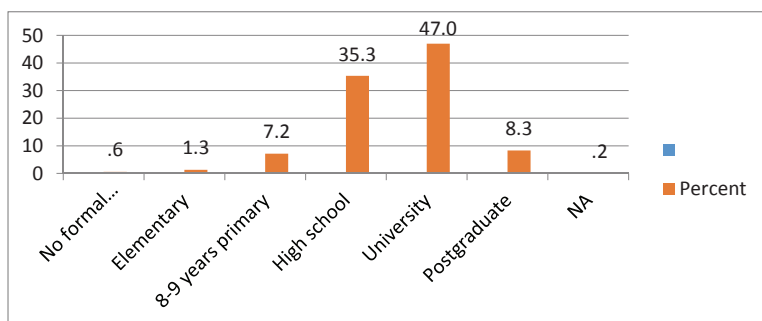
As for the age groups of the people who took this survey: 30.1% of them belong to the 35-59 age group which marks the highest frequency of survey-takers. With 28.1% participation, people who belong to the age group of 25-34 are ranked as the second age-group. Whereas people who belong to the age group of 18-24 are ranked the third with only 27.0% of them taking this survey. The lowest frequency is seen in the 60 → age group with only 14.8% of people who participated.

### *Age groups*



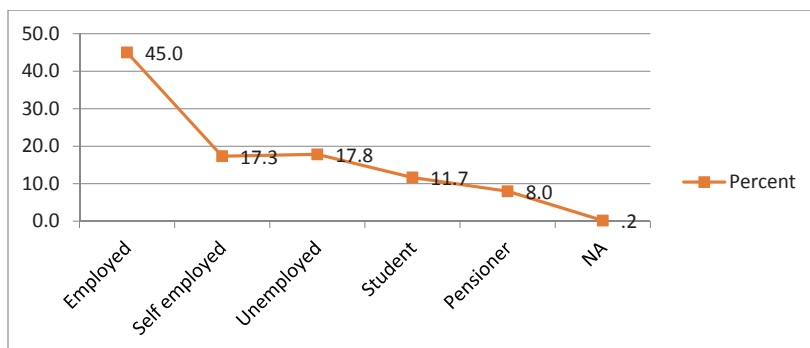
The collection of data on the survey-takers' academic background shows that 47.0% of them are university graduates. People who graduated high-school are ranked the second after the university graduates, with 35.3% of them. The percentage of postgraduates taking this survey is 8.3. 7.2% of the people who participated in our survey had only finished secondary school and 0.2% of them refused to answer. Whereas the lowest frequency of survey-takers is marked on uneducated people with only 0.6% of them taking this survey and 1.3% having finished only the primary school.

### *Education level*



The final graph shows the employment status of the interviewees. Roughly 45% of them are employed as opposed to 17.8% of them being unemployed. 17.3% of them are self-employed whereas 11.7% of them are students. Only 0.2% of the people who took this survey refused to answer this question and 8% claimed they were retired.

## *Employment status*

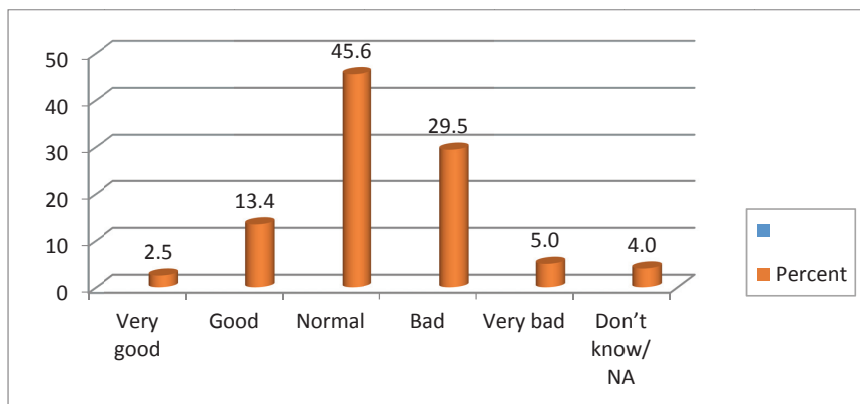


### 3. Findings and analysis

#### 3.1 General evaluations

Despite witnessing and experiencing an intensive year full of incidents and high level visits between Albania and Serbia, the majority of the citizens resented by almost half of the sample asked in our poll believe that relations between two countries are normal. 45.6 percent chose this option. A considerable group representing a third of the sample however thinks relations are not normal, with 29.5 percent choosing they are bad and 5 percent very bad. Around 16 percent of citizens are on the other spectrum of the answers with 13.4 percent saying relations are good and slightly under 3 percent very good.

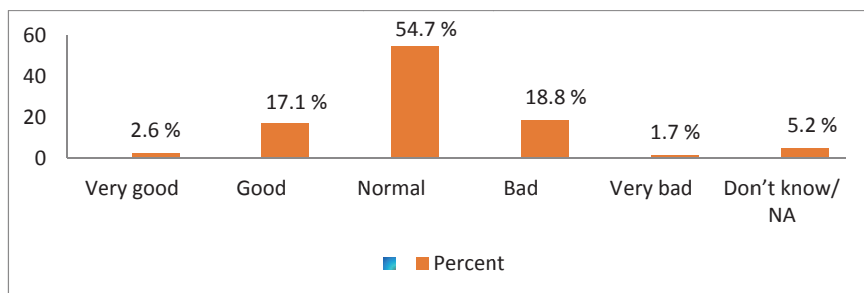
***How would you generally evaluate relations between Albania and Serbia?***





When asked more specifically about the relations that exist between the respective governments of the two countries the answers shift a bit more towards the normal assessment. 54.7 percent say that the relations between the executive branches of Albania and Serbia are normal followed by 20.5 percent that say bad or very bad. 13.7 percent of those asked said governments share a good or very good relation.

***How would you evaluate relations between the governments of the two countries, Albania and Serbia?***

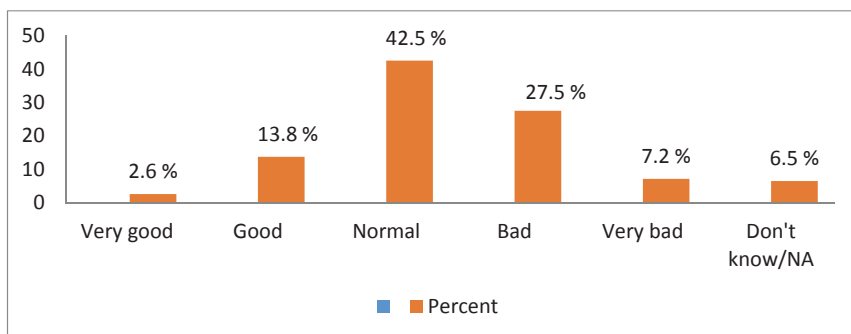


When asked though about perceived relations between two peoples. The citizens of Albania and Serbia the assessment cools off with only 42.5 percent saying these relations are normal followed by 27.5 percent that say relations are bad and 7 percent who say they are really bad. Around 14 percent of those asked perceive relations to be good and only percent really good.

Comparing the two results it is obvious that the general perception among citizens is that governments share a better relations than ordinary citizens themselves. This difference in perception is also affected form the high level meetings and visits that both prime Ministers have carried out in both Albania and Serbia as well as

their joint meetings in EU events. Additionally in general citizens perceive their governments to share better relations with neighbors than themselves as demonstrated also in the poll that AIIS has done in 2013 about Greek-Albanian relations.<sup>1</sup>

***Based on your experience and the community, how would you evaluate relations between citizens of Albania and citizens of Serbia today?***

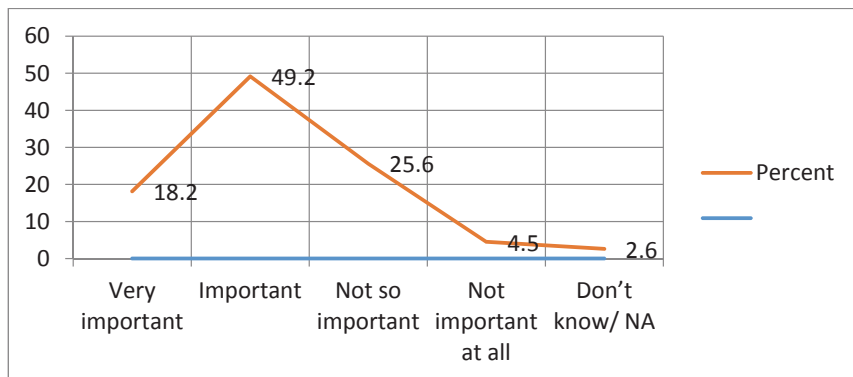


Two thirds of the Albanian citizens asked believe Albanian Serbian relations carry importance with 49.2 percent saying these relations are importance and 18.2 percent saying that they are very important. In comparison only a fourth of the sample, 25.6 percent believe they are not so important and a very small group of 4.5 percent say they don't have any importance at all.

***In your judgment, how important are relations between Albania and Serbia?***

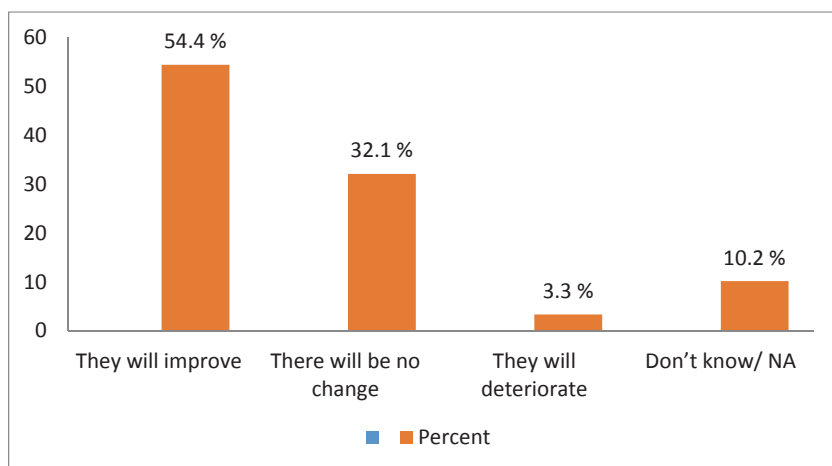
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1. 'Albanian-Greek relations from the eyes of the Albanian Public 2013' Albanian Institute for International Studies, <http://www.aiis-albania.org/?q=reports>



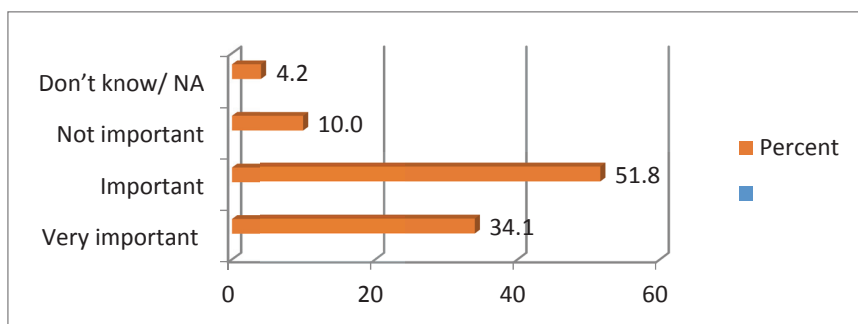
Asked about their future expectations the majority of the respondents believe relations between Albania and Serbia will improve. 54.4 percent say that improvement will be the trend compared to 32.1 percent that say they will remain the same and a mere 3.3 percent that expect deterioration. A considerable number of respondents however, around 10 percent, do not answer the question with a valid option.

***How will relations between Albania and Serbia be in the future?***



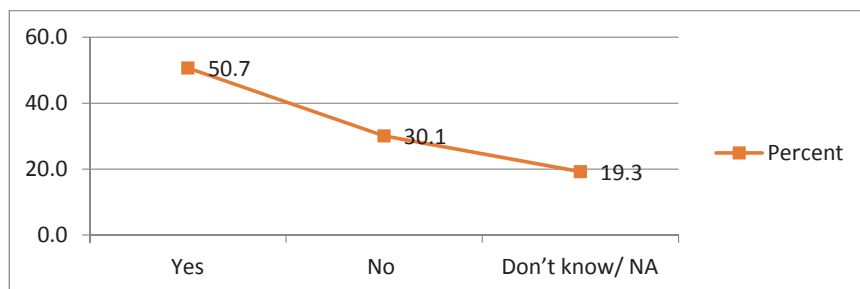
Citizens in Albania are quite aware of the significance that bilateral relations with Serbia have on the overall stability in the entire region. Hence an overwhelming majority indicate that these relations are key to security and peace in the Western Balkans. 34 percent of citizens say that relations are very important in this context followed by 52 percent which say that they are important. Only one in en respondents (10 percent) does not believe that bilateral relations with Serbia are important to stability in the region.

***How important are relations between Albania and Serbia for security and stability in the Balkans?***



Asked on their perceptions about readiness to move beyond history and prepare a better relation in the future Albanian citizens are split, 50.7 percent seem to believe that the two countries are ready to build friendly relations followed by 30.1 percent who say that they are not. The number of citizens that cannot give an answer to the question is quite high at above 19 percent. This is a signal that they are confused about the level of readiness to build a better future relation.

*Do you think the two countries are prepared to build friendly relations?*



### 3.2 Political relations and European context

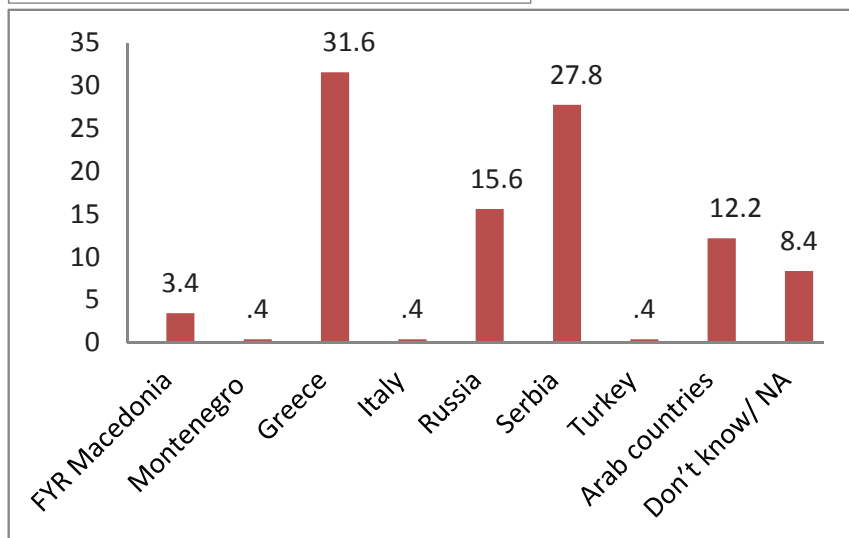
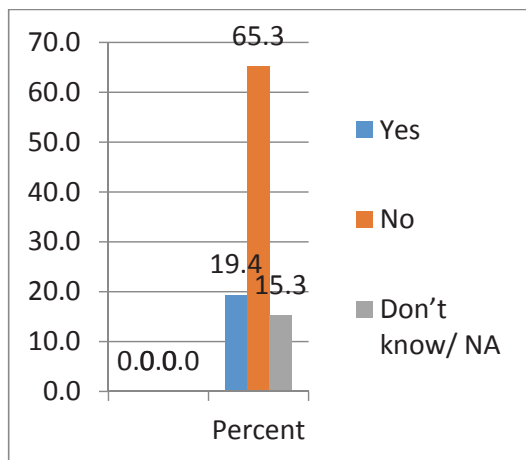
Most Albanians 65.3 percent think that Albania is not threatened by any other country. Those who believe that such a risk exists make up less than 20 percent of the sample. A considerable share of the answers, 15.3 percent indicate that citizens don't have an answer to this question. Out of the 19.4 percent that seem to believe that Albania is threatened the evaluations about which country specifically poses a threat to Albania are various. Out of this subgroup, 31.6 percent (of 19.4) indicate as a major threat the southern neighbor state of Greece followed by 27.8 percent who indicate this threat to be Serbia. The other figures are lower with Russia picked by slightly more than 15 percent and the Arab countries by 12 percent. Combining the two graph results, a total of 5.4 percent of the entire respondents indicate Serbia to be a threat for Albania. The prevalence of Greece above Serbia as a perceived threat, (although chosen by a total number of respondents typically low) is consistent with the results of the AIIS poll of 2013.<sup>2</sup>

***Do you think Albania is threatened by another country? If yes, which of the following states poses the most threat to Albania (Please select only one):***

Albanian citizens believe that their government should pay attention to the relations with Serbia as one of the neighboring region countries. As yearly polls of AIIS show traditionally Albanians reserve most of their desired attention for neighbors such as Italy,

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2. 'Albanian-Greek relations from the eyes of the Albanian Public 2013' Albanian Institute for International Studies, <http://www.aiis-albania.org/?q=reports>



Kosova and Greece. This is natural given the existing bonds that remains strong between Albania and these countries. In the case of Serbia very little numbers of people believe that the Albanian government should pay no attention or very little attention to developing relations with Serbia the blue highlighted figures which correspond to a degree of 1-3 (minimal or zero attention)

total to a sum of 13 percent. On the other side the number of people who seek large to maximum attention (level 8-10) for relations with Serbia is much higher at a total of 37.4 percent. Most of the citizens asked have preferred the level of attention to be paid to relations with Serbia to be average to considerable (degrees 4-7), with total answers in that range at 49.5 percent.

**Table 1 : In a scale from one to ten how much attention should the Albanian government pay to relations with neighboring and countries from the region?**

attention				Yugoslav Republic of Macedoni a		ro	
1	3.3	1.5	6.9	2.2	2.0	1.2	2.5
2	2.3	1.0	3.1	2.5	.8	1.7	2.1
3	2.4	.9	3.0	2.7	.8	2.4	2.1
4	2.5	1.3	6.9	4.2	1.1	4.0	3.1
5	7.2	2.6	12.0	14.4	2.3	9.1	5.7
6	7.6	2.5	13.3	11.8	2.4	13.2	5.9
7	17.1	9.5	17.3	21.9	3.6	19.4	10.1
8	20.8	17.1	16.4	16.7	8.2	23.1	16.9
9	12.8	22.6	8.2	11.0	15.8	11.8	23.4
10	24.0	41.0	12.8	12.6	63.1	14.2	28.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Respondents were presented with a lost of potential issues that might constitute obstacles and challenges in the building of a normal relation between Albania and Serbia and asked to rank them in terms of perceived importance.

As seen from the results in the table 2 the most frequently mentioned issues and obstacles relate to the past and the history of the two countries which involves their relation to the conflict and Kosovo. The overwhelming majority of Albanians 86.2 percent believe that the oppression of Kosovo Albanians and



criminal heritage of the Milosevic regime in Kosovo represent a major obstacle in the development of bilateral relations. Moreover as the detailed breakdown of figures in table 3 reveals this factor is ranked as either first or second most difficult problem to face.

The historical hostility between the two nations, a concept largely related to Kosovo as well but extended, is also picked by 83 percent of the respondents and again ranked as mainly first or second most important issue.

The state of current relations between Albania and Serbia also does not seem to be very satisfactory for citizens since 74 percent of them believe it is an issue in the development of relations. This result is puzzling since in the beginning most of the respondents chose to describe the relations as normal. However the recent incidents connected to the soccer game might provide the context necessary to understand this controversial assessment.

Citizens perceive the lack of communication for a long time between Albanian and Serbian citizens to be a considerable obstacle chosen so by 41.2 percent of the sample. Around 13 percent of the people also mentioned the level of economic relations as an issue to be addressed. Only 0.8 percent of the sample chose to say that there are no such issues or obstacles at all.

Both the lack of communication between societies and the state of the economic relations are mainly placed in the third place of importance by citizen who chose to mention them as obstacles hence downplaying their relevance in comparison to the past legacy problems which are more pertinent.

**Table 2: What are the three most important issues that constitute obstacles and problems in the Albanian-Serbian relations (list in order of importance with the numbers 1-3)?**

Issues	Percent (of total)
Historical Hostility between the two nations	<b>82.9</b>
Oppression of Kosovo Albanians and criminal heritage of the Milosevic regime in Kosovo	<b>86.2</b>
The state of current relations between Serbia and Kosovo	<b>74.0</b>
Lack of communication for a long time between citizens of Serbia and Albania	<b>41.2</b>
The level of economic relations between both countries and societies	<b>12.8</b>
No problems	<b>0.8</b>

When ranked in terms of importance the specific results for each mentioned factor are:

Out of the total group of answers who picked the historical enmity to be an issue/obstacle, 47.1 percent think it is the 1<sup>st</sup> most important issue, 25.2 the second and 27.6 the third most important issue.

From those who mention the oppression of Kosovo Albanians and the criminal Milosevic regime, 42.1 percent see it as the first most important issue followed by 41.8 percent who consider it the second most important and finally 16.2 percent as the third.

The current state of relations between the two countries was also chosen by a considerable subgroup of the sample, out of which 23.3

percent place it in the first place of importance, 34.1 in the second place and 42.6 in the third place.

From the smaller group of citizens who mention the lack of communications only 17 percent see it as the first problem, 28 percent see it as the second and the largest group with 54 percent of the answers in that subcategory see it as the third most important obstacle to bilateral relations.

Finally out of the subgroup that mentions economic relations or lack of thereof as a potential obstacle most answers fall into categorizing this as the third most important problem with 52 percent of the answers, while those who place it first and second are respectively 25.3 percent and 22.7 percent.

**Table 3: Relative importance of perceived issues and obstacles**

<b>Importance level</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Historical Hostility between the two nations	<b>47.1</b>	25.2	27.6
Oppression of Kosovo Albanians and criminal heritage of the Milosevic regime in Kosovo	<b>42.1</b>	<b>41.8</b>	16.2
The state of current relations between Serbia and Kosovo	23.3	<b>34.1</b>	42.6
Lack of communication for a long time between citizens of Serbia and Albania	17.8	28.1	<b>54.0</b>
The level of economic relations between both countries and societies	25.3	22.7	<b>51.9</b>

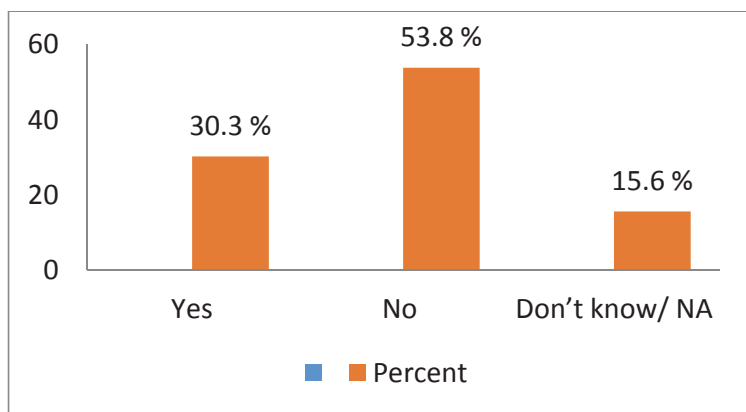
The participants in our survey were presented with a series of statements and asked whether they considered them correct or not. This experiment was done to evaluate the degree of myths, misconceptions and prejudices that exist among the Albanian public about the relations with Serbia.

When considering the history of relations Albania and Serbia as modern states have never been involved in a direct conflict. However the conflict with Albanians in Kosovo is perceived as reason for more than 50 percent of the polled citizens to disagree with the statement “*Albanians and Serbs have never fought each other.*” Only 30 percent of the respondents agree with this statement.

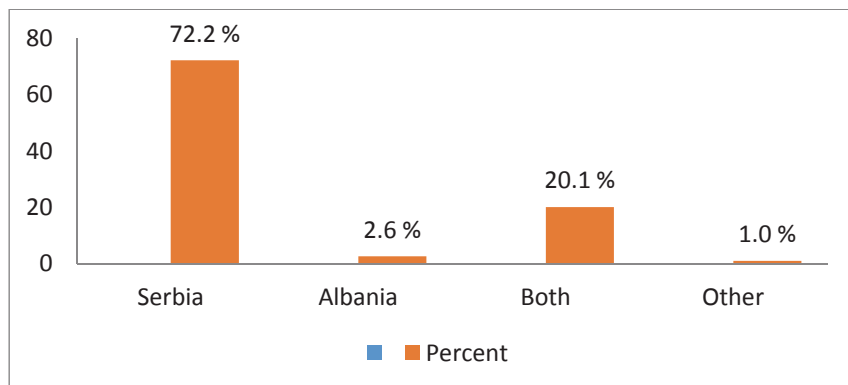
When asked about the controversial soccer game in Belgrade in October 2014 as expected the majority of the asked citizens blame Serbia, over 70 percent of Albanians place the blame on the Serb side. Less than 3 percent blame Albania while a considerable share of the answers, 20 percent blame both Albania and Serbia for what happened.

***Please read the following statements and answer whether or not you agree with them:***

***Albanians and Serbs have never fought against one-another***



*Which country was according to you, most responsible for the incident that occurred in the football match in Belgrade?*



A group of statements tried also to gauge perceptions on various factors that condition the development of relations between Albania and Serbia. Media has propagated the idea that relations between the two countries are improving or will normalize because it is something requested from the European Union (or in popular jargon from Brussels) or even requested from the strong EU member state Germany (hence from Berlin). In fact these perceptions has followed also from reflecting on the Berlin and Vienna summits which have provided opportunities for the political class high representatives of both sides to meet and even apply for regional projects. Another important factor that determines the process of normalization of relations is the relation of Serbia with Kosova. From the answers given in this group of statements it becomes clear that Albanians believe that Albania and Serbia should improve and deepen their relation because it is in their own interest much more than because it is requested from the EU. Also a considerable majority of Albanians believe that relations between Serbia and Kosova should not keep the bilateral relations of Albania and Serbia hostage.

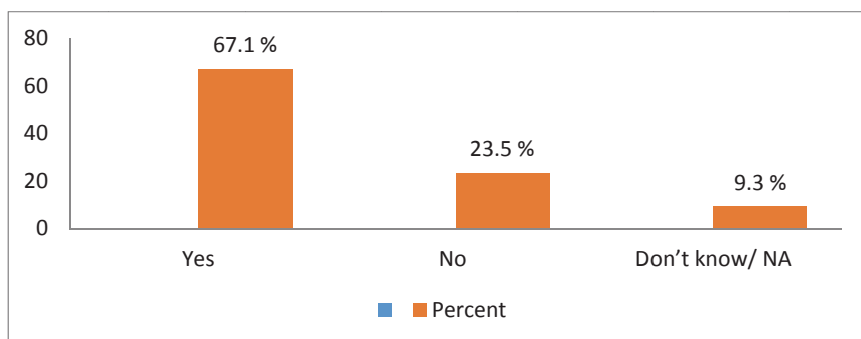
67 percent of Albanians believe that it is true that Albania and Serbia should improve their relations as a response to a request from the European Union while 23.5 disagree. A bit more than 9 percent do not comment this statement.

Only 43 percent of Albanians believe that is true that relations should ne normalized as per the request of Germany while 40 percent disagree. About 17 percent don't know or don't comet the statement. The data indicates that citizens are more inclined to believe the request for normalization can come from the EU institutions rather than from one member state such as Germany.

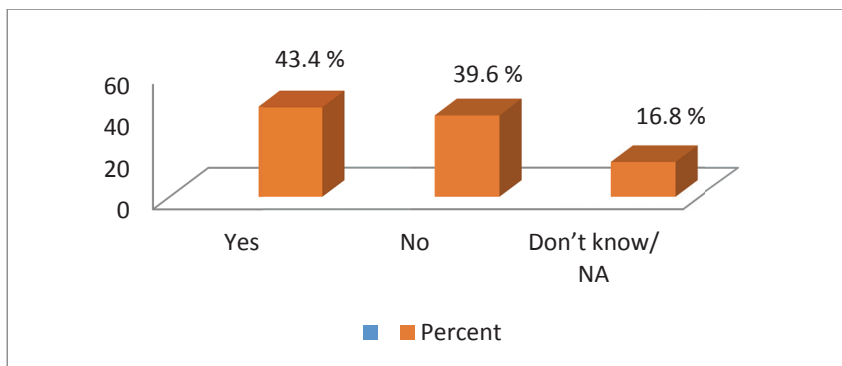
90.6 of Albanians believe that normalization is in the interest of both countries while only 5.7 percent disagree with this statement.

61.3 percent of Albanians believe that Albania and Serbia should deepen their relations, despite Serbia's relations with Kosovo, while 28.5 percent disagree with this, hence factoring in the relation with Kosova as conditional to bilateral relations with Serbia. One in ten respondents have not assessed or commented on this statement.

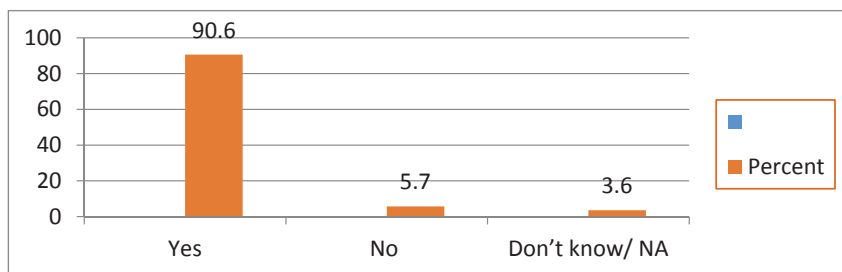
***Albania and Serbia should deepen relations because this is required by the European Union***



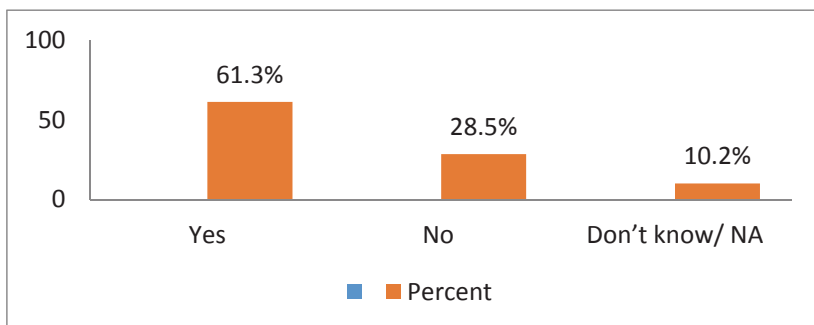
***Albania and Serbia need to improve their relations because this is required by Germany***



***Albania and Serbia should deepen their relations because it's in the interest of both countries***



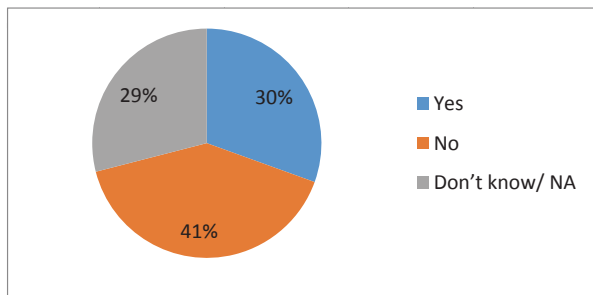
***Albania and Serbia should deepen their relations, despite Serbia's relations with Kosovo***



The platform of EU integration is not only a path towards more normalization and regional cooperation in the region. Often the regatta principle of accession yields to a competition between countries and perceptions of rivalry between citizens. At the present moment Serbia is one step ahead of Albania having opened negotiations with the EU while Albania is yet to receive a date for the opening of the negotiations. However Serbia on the other side has a difficult chapter to negotiate with the dialogue with Pristina that will be ongoing parallel to its integration efforts. Hence the dynamics of integration provides for some interesting insight on the perception level of Albanian citizens. Asked whether they believe that Serbia will join the EU before Albania 41 percent disagree hence believe Albania will make it first. However 30 percent believe that Serbia will join the EU sooner while a considerable 29 percent don't know or choose not to answer.

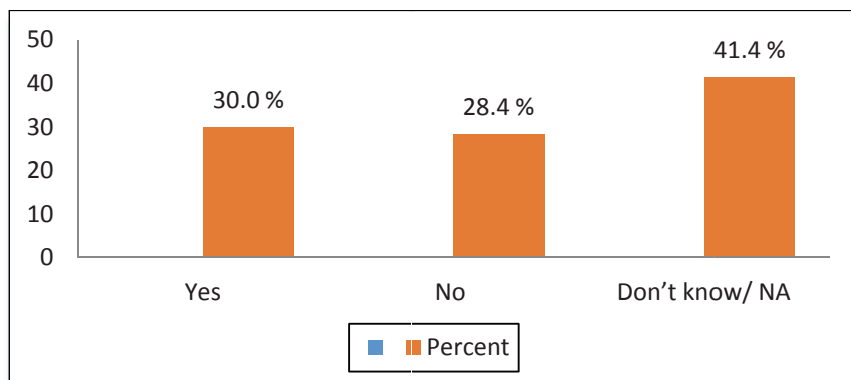
Most Albanian citizens don't know whether their Serbian counterparts would welcome or encourage or dislike the membership of Albania in the EU> hence to the statement that 'Serbian citizens don't want Albania's EU membership' the majority, 41.4 percent say that they don't know. Almost equal numbers of 30 percent and 28.4 percent respectively agree or disagree with the statement signaling a confusion regarding the perceived reaction from Serbia on the effort of Albania's EU accession.

### ***Serbia will join the EU before Albania***





*Serbian citizens don't want Albania's EU membership*



### 3.3 Direct interaction and cultural exchange

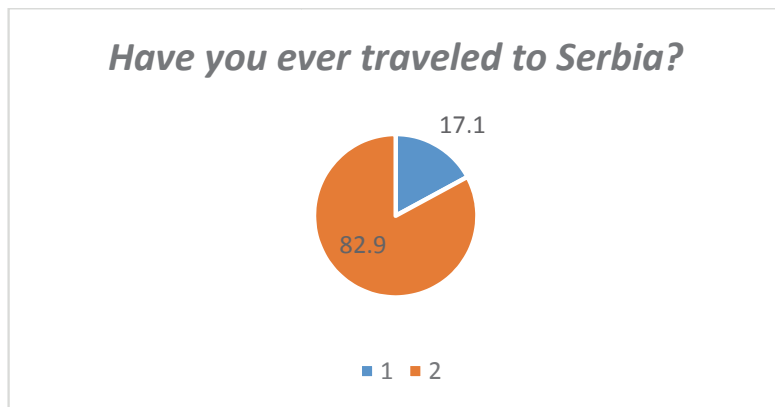
The level of interaction and knowledge about each other and especially cultural knowledge and cooperation have a large impact on perceptions of each-other and the assessment of the potential of the relations improvement. Through a group of questions the poll tries to establish an overview of how much Albanian citizens might have come into contact with Serbia through traveling or knowing its culture (literature and cinema).

Only 17 percent of those asked had ever travelled to Serbia while 83 percent had never been there. Out of the people who had travelled to Serbia most of them 29.5 percent had been there for tourism purposes while 23.8 percent had been there just transiting to another destination. 13 percent had been there on business trips while 19 percent to attend various seminars and conferences. About 12.4 percent had travelled to Serbia to meet either relatives or friends. From the data we see that very few Albanians have travelled to Serbia in such a way that have allowed them to genuinely interact with people and know the country (since those transiting cannot really count in this group). The opening of a direct flight line between Tiran and Belgrade has facilitated travel since 2014 and is expected to have a positive impact in the increase of the numbers.

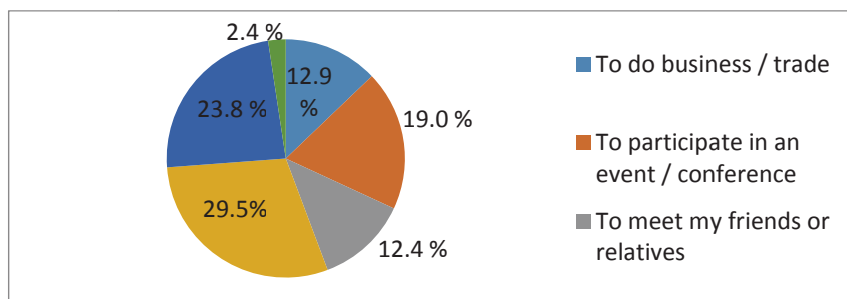
About 18 percent of Albanian citizens have read books by Serbian authors while 79 percent say that they have never read Serbian authors. As explained by writers on both sides few qualitative translations of each other's literature exist and even less so for contemporary literature, one field of intervention where more could be done by supporting the translation of some books into

Albanian and vice versa.

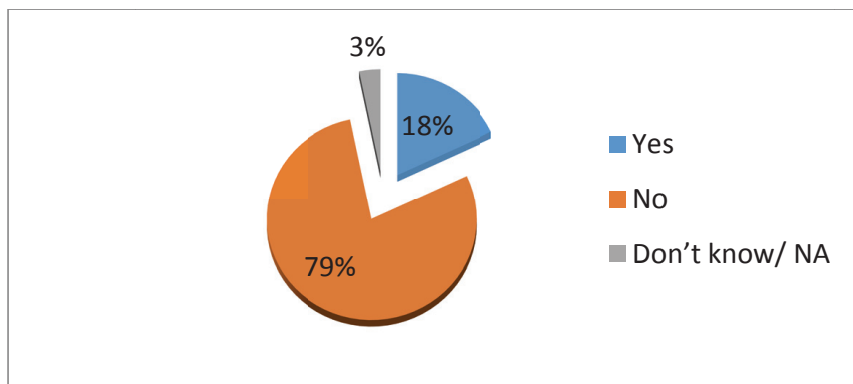
On the other side a larger percentage of citizens, 30 percent, has seen movies from Serbian directors, some of which are quiet famous in Albania as well as in the whole region. 56 percent of citizens have not watched Serbian movies.



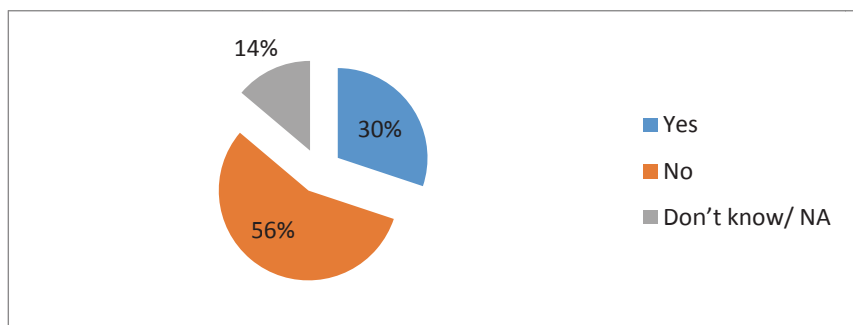
***If yes, for what reasons?***



*Have you ever read books by Serbian authors?*



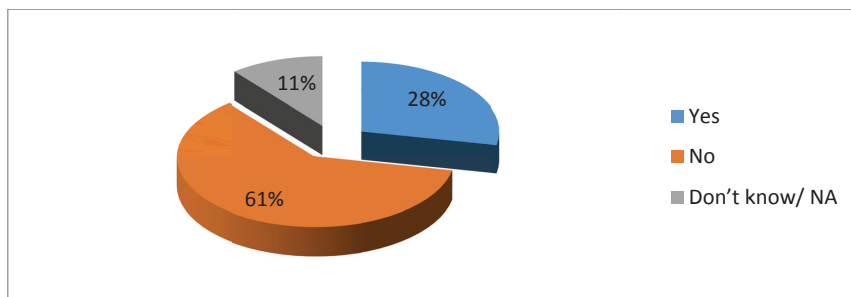
*Have you ever watched movies by Serbian film directors?*



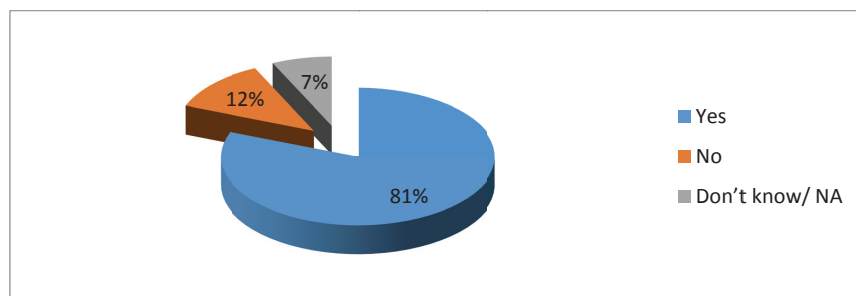
As for the cultural collaboration the potential of improvement seems at its maximum. Although several steps have been taken in establishing venues and opportunities of knowing bilateral arts and culture citizens need more information about them. A full 61 percent of those asked said they were not informed about joint cultural collaboration events. Only 28 percent said they were aware of them happening.

The overwhelming majority, 81 percent of those asked, are in favor of having more instances of cultural collaboration and only 12 percent seem not to want it.

*Are you aware of the cultural joint activities between Albania and Serbia?*



*Should both countries organize joint cultural activities?*

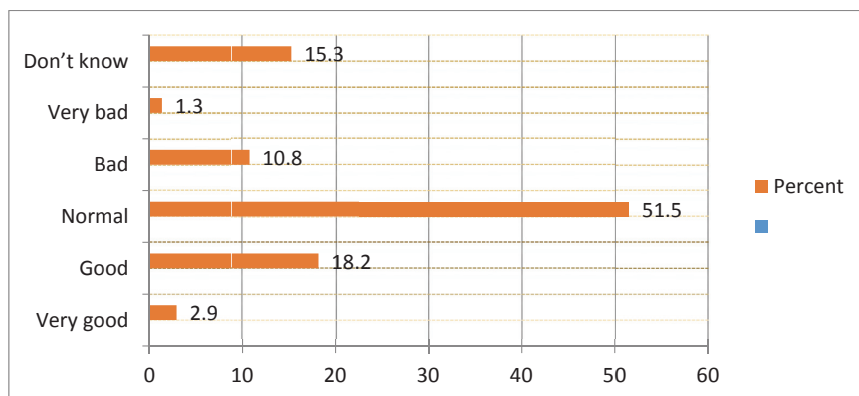


### 3.4 Economic relations

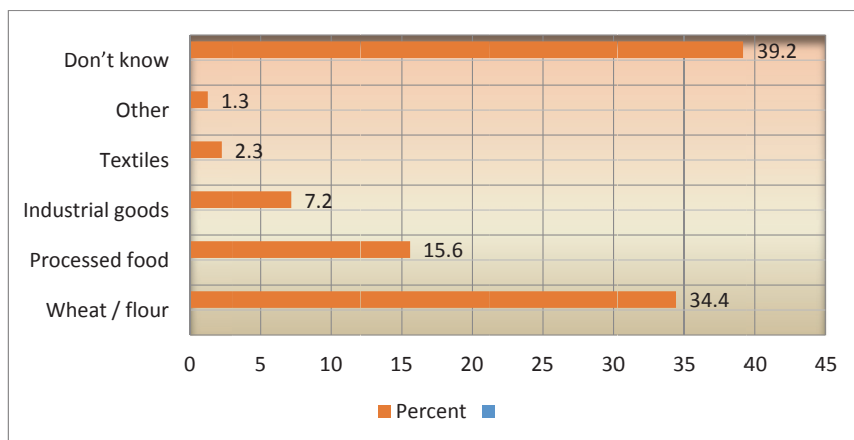
Finally economic collaboration, trade exchange and business activity are one intensive realm of interaction. Gauging citizens' perceptions on the potential of economic interaction between Albania and Serbia yields the following results: Half of the sample, about 51.5 percent of citizens believe that economic relations between the two countries are normal, 18.2 percent think they are good and 2.9 percent think they are very good. On the other side 10.8 percent think economic relations between the two are bad and 1.3 percent very bad. More than 15 percent did not answer or said they don't know.

Most Albanians when asked don't know what their country imports from Serbia, 39.2 percent of them cannot give a specific answer. The largest group of 34.4 percent believes Albania gets from Serbia wheat and flour. An additional 15.6 percent believe Albania imports processed food items while 7.2 percent think that Albania imports industrial goods. Smaller groups of 2.3 and 1.3 percent mention textiles or various other items of import.

*How would you evaluate the relations between the two countries in the economic area?*



*According to you, what does Albania import from Serbia?*



When asked about Albania itself as a potential tourist destination for Serbian citizens Albanians think that is actually the case. 60 percent believe that Albania is a tourist destination for Serbs while 20 percent think it is not. A large group of 20 percent don't know or don't answer the question.

*Is Albania, according to you, a tourist destination for visitors from Serbia?*

