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CENTRE OF EUROPEAN LAW AND INTEGRATION

**Attitude of Yerevan citizens toward the process of European
Integration**

(Analysis of the sociological survey results)

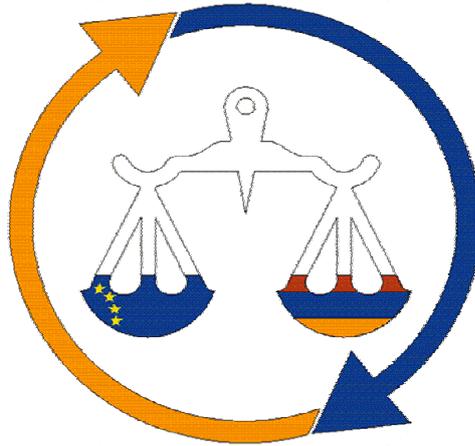


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Center of European Law and Integration



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Attitude of Yerevan citizens toward the process of European Integration (Analysis of the sociological survey results)

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Introduction

Europeanization is the objective reality of the present times that consists of all the political, economic, and social spheres of our life. Armenia-Azerbaijan negotiations on resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict are conducted within the framework of *Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe* (OSCE) Minsk Group, through the mediation of three co-chairmen of the group (representatives of USA, Russia, and France).

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe was officially (re)established in January 1995 (in 1972 it was created as a *Conference of Security and Cooperation in Europe* (CSCE)). Until 1990 *the Conference* functioned as a forum ensuring the dialogue between the capitalist West and the communist East by means of a series of meetings on the security issues. The Paris Summit held in November 1990 brought forward new issues for *the Conference*. Soon a new international organization named OSCE was established, of which the Paris Charter expected an adequate reaction to the new conflicts threatening the New Europe. Therefore, during both the cold war and post-war period the main objective of OSCE was to guarantee peace by building and developing the collective security system in Europe.

The organization carries out conflict resolution following the Helsinki process which was initiated by the OSCE Final Act signed in Helsinki on August 1, 1975. While solving the issues for guaranteeing peace and stability, OSCE conforms *with the principles of mutual understanding and co-operation, non-use of force and peaceful resolution of the disputes, respect for state sovereignty and territorial integrity, guaranteeing human rights*, and other principles by applying such mechanisms as the control of armament, monitoring of political processes, preventive diplomacy, ensuring an atmosphere of the mutual respect.

The Republic of Armenia became a member of OSCE on January 30, 1992. OSCE office has been working in Armenia since February 16, 2000. The major areas of concern in the Office are: protection of human rights, support to democratization in the country (particularly supporting political elections, war against corruption), reforming the legal sphere, protection of environment, and of course, security issues. As a rule, OSCE Observation Mission is always present in different political elections.

On January 25, 2001 Armenia became a member of the *Council of Europe* founded on May 5, 1949 in London, headquarters at Strasbourg, France. Article 1(a) of the Statute states that “The aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve a greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and realizing the ideals and principles which are their common heritage and facilitating their economic and social-economic progress”. The Council of Europe is a forum of

consultations, legal and political discussions, where democracy, human rights and protection of fundamental freedoms, the rule of law is considered to be the principle issue. By means of collating national approaches, a common opinion on solution of the European co-operation issues is formed. The Council of Europe emphasizes rule of law and political stability in all the Member States, supports their integration process, intended legislation reforms, strengthening of the social amity, and development of cultural diversity.

Membership of Armenia in the above mentioned European organizations supposes introduction of European values in all the spheres of public relations. Still, traditions formed and having deep roots for centuries in Armenia often contradict some of the elements of the system of values dominating in Europe for centuries, thus, making the Europeanization process in RA considerably complicated. In addition, it must be mentioned that certain powers of Armenian realities make the spread of such values questionable by asking whether the Armenian society is a bearer of the European culture or not? In such circumstances of mutually contradicting opinions it is difficult for the civil society of RA to elaborate a clear position on the process of Europeanization in Armenia. Center for European Law and Integration has been granted the status of “EU information center” by Delegation of the European Commission to Armenia aiming at increasing the Armenian public awareness on current co-operation with RA and European integration structures, and implementing the dissemination of information on these processes. For the implementation of this objective the Center has elaborated “Information Dissemination Strategy Aimed at Increasing Public Awareness about the European Union”. For the implementation of the strategy and preparation of the action plan it was necessary to reveal the thoughts of Armenian public on the processes of the European integration. For this purpose in November 2008 *the Center for European Law and Integration* in co-operation with “*Demos*” NGO, which is conducting sociological surveys in Armenia, have surveyed citizens of the capital.

603 people (18 years and older) participated in the sociological survey carried out by the method of standardized interview. The respondents have been proportionally distributed between all the communities of Yerevan city on the basis of population number in various communities:

Ajapnyak -	57 (respondents)	Malatya -	76 (--)
Avan -	27 (--)	Nor Nork -	76 (--)
Arabkir -	74 (--)	Nork-Marash -	6 (--)
Davtashen -	21 (--)	Nubarashen -	5 (--)
Erebuny -	63 (--)	Shengavit -	83 (--)
Kentron -	73 (--)	Qanaqer-Zeytun-	4 (--)

Multi stage sample was composed based on equal opportunity principle (each observation unit has the same opportunity to be selected). Database was analyzed by statistical package for social sciences (SPSS ver. 17).

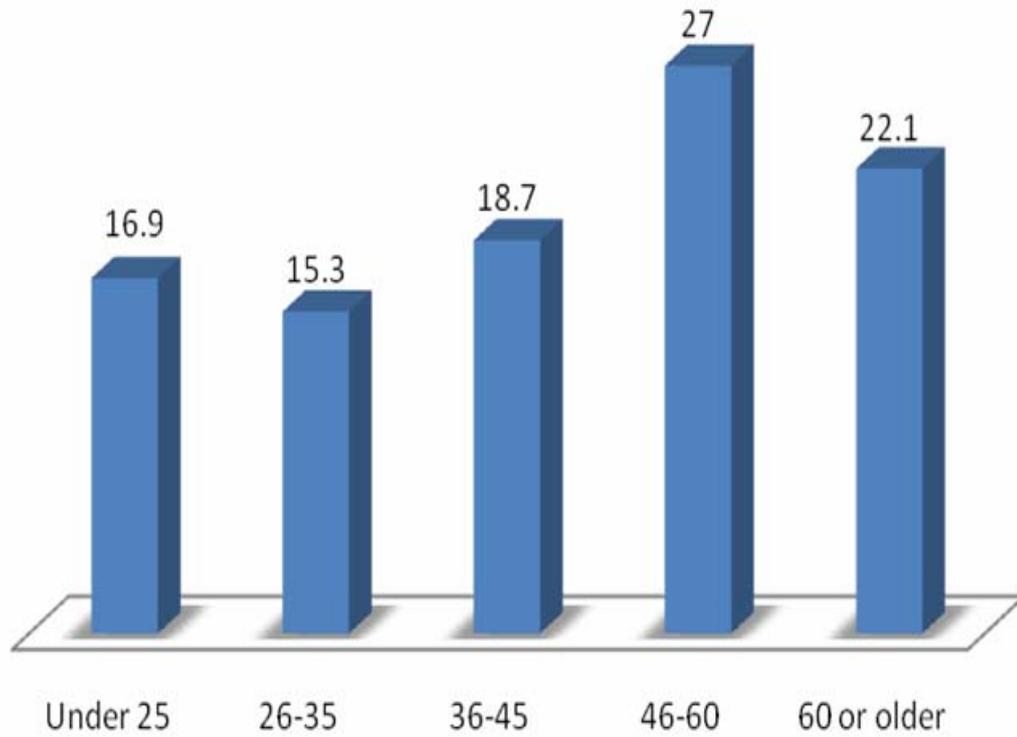
The Process of European Integration in the Answers of the citizens of Yerevan

It should be mentioned that according to the employment sphere those surveyed have been distributed in the following way: 10.3% service sphere employees, 4.5% healthcare sphere employees, 9.3% students, 8% education sphere employees, 2% constructors, 2.2% art sphere employees, 2.8% said they are workers of production, 1.7% work in the sphere of information, 3.2% are state officials. The number of pensioners is big- 16,1%, while 3,6% of the surveyed are entrepreneurs, 7,6% are unemployed. Representatives of the military bodies constitute only 1%. The representatives of the other spheres of employment and housewives constitute 27,9% of the respondents.

As we can see in graphic A the overwhelming majority (27%) of the surveyed are adults (belonging to the age group of 46-60 years old). 22,1% of the respondents are older than 60, while those respondents younger than 25 years old constitute 16.9% and those of 26-35 years old constitute the 15.3%. 18,7% of the surveyed are of 36-45 years old.

Graphic A. Distribution of the respondents by age groups in percentage

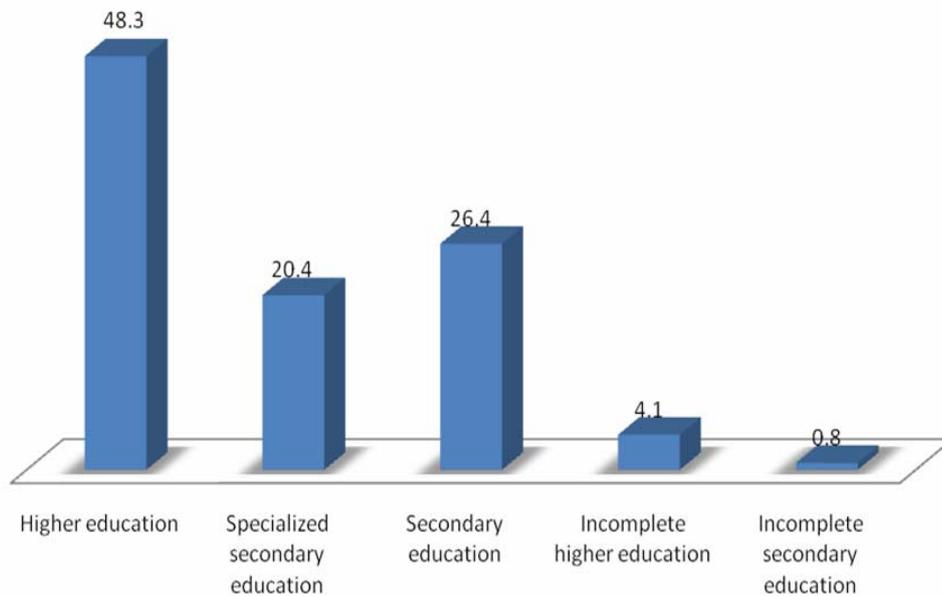
(1st column – under 25 years old, 2nd – from 26 to 35 years old, 3rd from 36 to 45 years old, 4th from 46 to 60 years old, 5th column 60 or older).



Distribution of the respondents in accordance with their level of education

Understanding of the international processes in general and awareness of the European integration and position of values in particular, much depend on the level of education of the respondents. And indeed, only the 16.1% of the surveyed who are undecided on the question of ties between the RA and European structures, have higher education, while those having secondary and specialized secondary education constitute 35,5% and 41.9% accordingly. While academic standings of our respondents are quite high - 48,3% of the surveyed have higher education, 4,1% have incomplete higher education, 20,4% have specialized secondary education, 26,4% secondary and only 0,8% have incomplete secondary education (See Graphic B):

Graphic B



Role of the factor of educational level can be seen in the answers to the question on the Armenia-EU cooperation format.¹

¹ *The European Union is the result of integration processes in Europe.* On 18 April 1951, in Paris, Robert Schuman, French Foreign Minister, signs *the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC)*, which the following six countries are member of: Belgium, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Luxembourg and France. As a result of treaties signed in Rome on 1 January 1958 *European Economic Community* and *the European Community for Atomic Energy* international organizations were founded. By the unification of those three organizations the *European Community* was established in 1967. In December 1991 in Maastricht it was decided by the heads of the member states and on 7 February 1992 the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Finance of the twelve member states signed *the Treaty on European Union*. *The European Union* was established and after the ratification of the Treaty it came into force in November 1993. The three pillars of *the European Union* are:

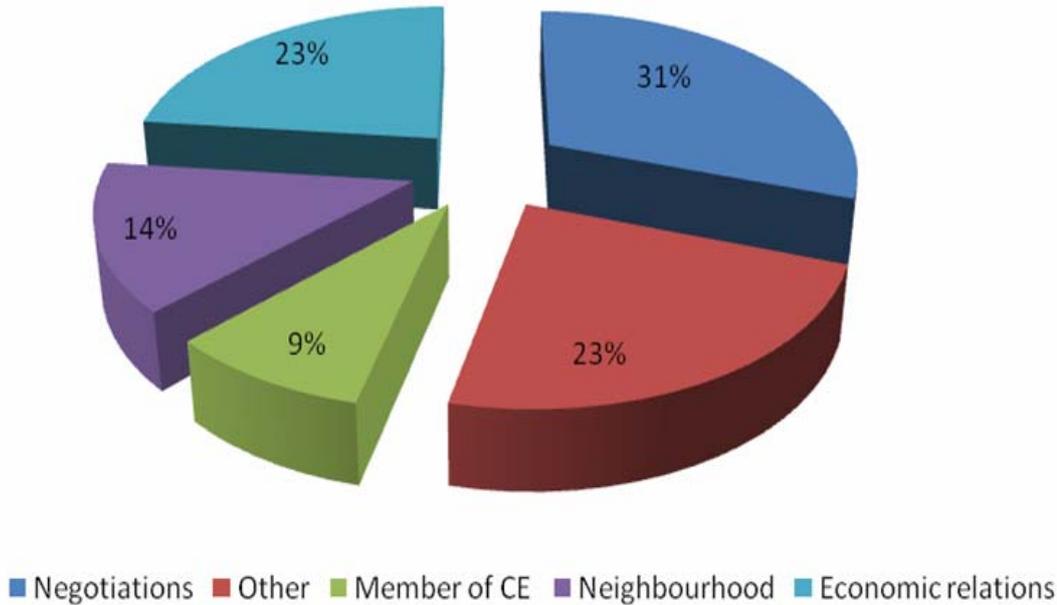
- the Treaty of the European Community (together with the economic and foreign exchange union),
- General External and Security Policy
- Co-operation in the spheres of internal and judicial policies

These three pillars were finally justified in October 1997 when the Treaty of Amsterdam was signed and which also set up the basis for further enlargement of the European Union. According to the Union Treaty the main objective of the European Union is to establish peaceful relations between its member states. By investment of the institute of European Union citizenship citizens of the European Union are given the right to live and work in any of European Union member states. *Euro*, the official currency of the European Union is in circulation since 1 January 2002.

Understanding of Armenia- EU cooperation format

Armenia- EU ties are regulated by the Partnership and Co-operation Agreement which entered into force in 1999. The Republic of Armenia was included into the EU New Neighborhood Programme, and is cooperating with the European Union in accordance with that format by increasing the annual amount of export of its economic products to Europe. Only 14.3% of the respondents have proper understanding of the format, and 75.0% of the respondents, who gave correct answers, have higher education, while 12.5% have incomplete education. 30.4% of the total surveyed are convinced that Armenia is cooperating with the European Union in accordance with the format of negotiations, 23.2% state the economic ties as such (See Graphic C).

Graphic C



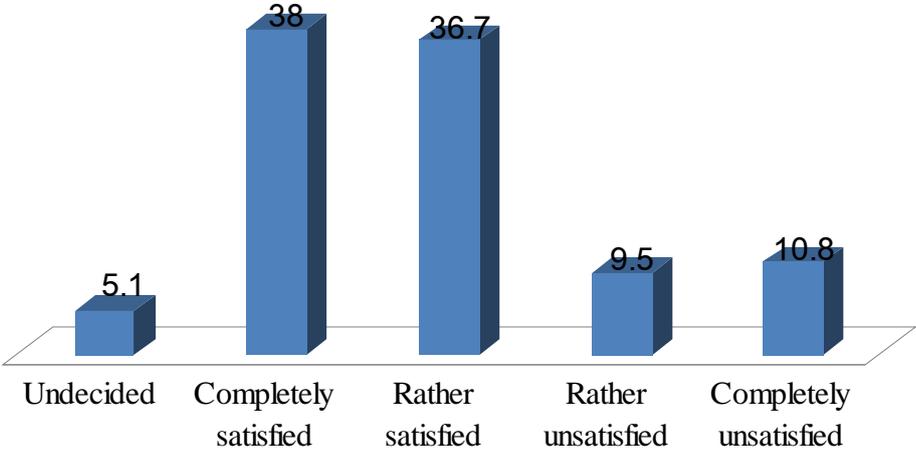
The answers much depend on the fact that Armenia is having active ties with a number of Member States of the European Union by increasing the annual amount of export of its economic products to Europe. Yet, our citizens are not well informed of the EU and its New Neighborhood Programme, because of the lack of proper coverage of the theme by the public and private representatives of the mass media. This can be seen in the answers of the majority of surveyed (90.4%), who are not informed of the co-operation format of the European Union and the Republic of Armenia.

Furthermore, those respondents up to 25 years old, who are aware of the “New Neighbourhood”, constitute 25%, while in the groups of up to 26-35 and 36-45 years old the indicator is the same and is 12.5%. The rest, representatives of 46-60 years old constitute 50%. This can be explained as a lack of proper explanation of the process of European integration to the Armenian population, which is the result of insufficient coverage of the theme by local mass media. The only structures providing information are the universities².

Contentment with the present interrelation of Armenia with the European structures and activities of the later

Such a situation does not correspond to the fact that our citizens are mostly in favor of the process of European integration. While 74.7% of the total surveyed are *satisfied with the fact that RA and some of the European structures are in close interrelation*, which testifies to the fact that they are for the process of the European integration.

Graphic D



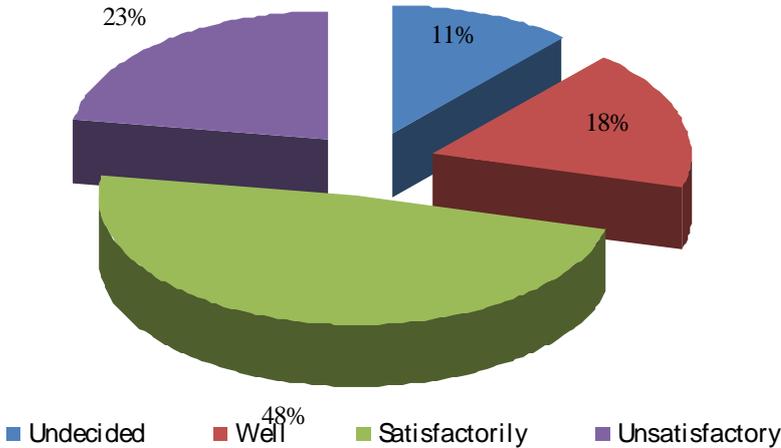
The situation does not correspond to the regular official statements that European integration is one of the primary priorities of RA foreign policy.

This can explain why at about 10% of the respondents are undecided and cannot assess productiveness of the activities of the European structures operating in RA, while 24.5% are not satisfied with the work of European structures operating in Armenia. Probably, people are not

² 14.3% of the students mention that they are informed of the co-operation format

aware that the European Union has been providing grants to Armenia within the framework of TACIS, Food Programme and Exceptional Financial Aid, and other projects, thus supporting to the implementation of the State Poverty Reduction Programme. As far as the Council of Europe and OSCE structures are concerned, answers of the 23% of the respondents were negative (See Graphic E).

Graphic E



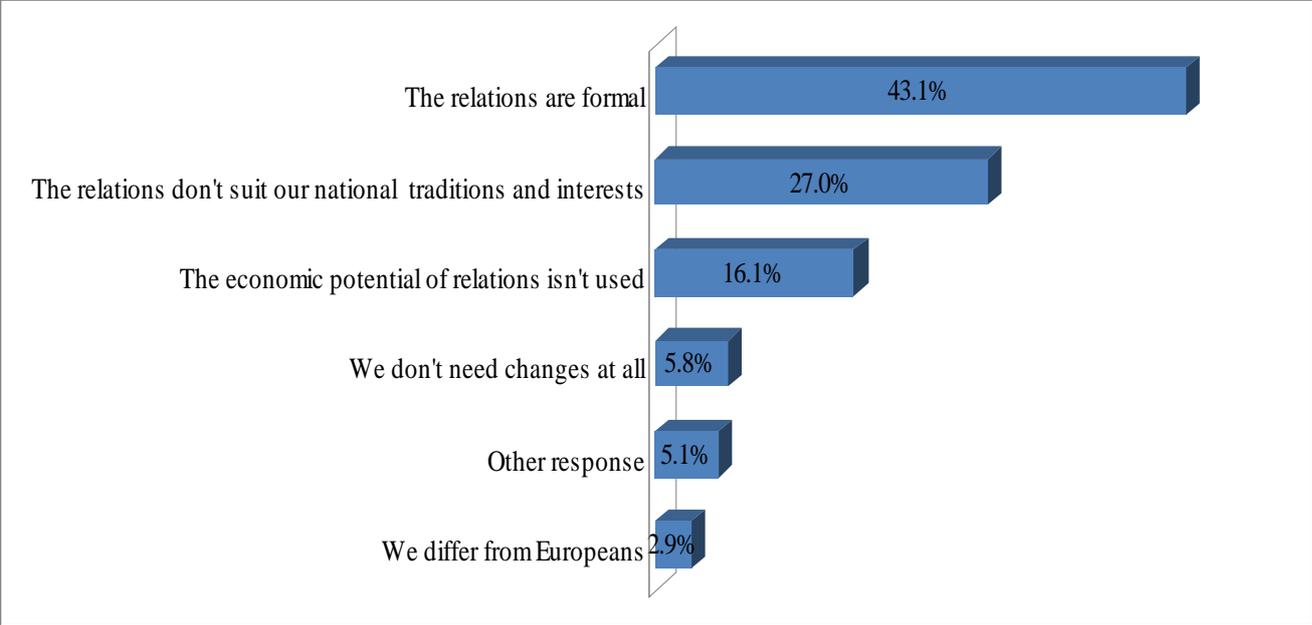
Taking into account the responses, it is becoming clear that the pressures on Armenia expressed in the resolution of the Council of Europe can have negative outcome by increasing the number of those who are against the European integration in Armenia.

This is due to the fact that assistance for the further development of the civil society is expected from the European structures and not sanctions imposed because democracy is still in its formation stage.

As far as the 20.3% of the surveyed (See Graphic D), who are not satisfied with the present interrelations with the European structures, are concerned ³ only 27% of them (6.1% of the total surveyed) think that these interrelations do not conform with our national interests and traditions, 5.8% (1.3% of the total surveyed) think that there is no need to have those. Rest of the respondents is not pleased with the quality of interrelations and is for shifting them into a new stage of development (See Graphic F).

³ By the way, 24.1% of male respondents are included in the group, while female respondents constitute 18.2%

Graphic F

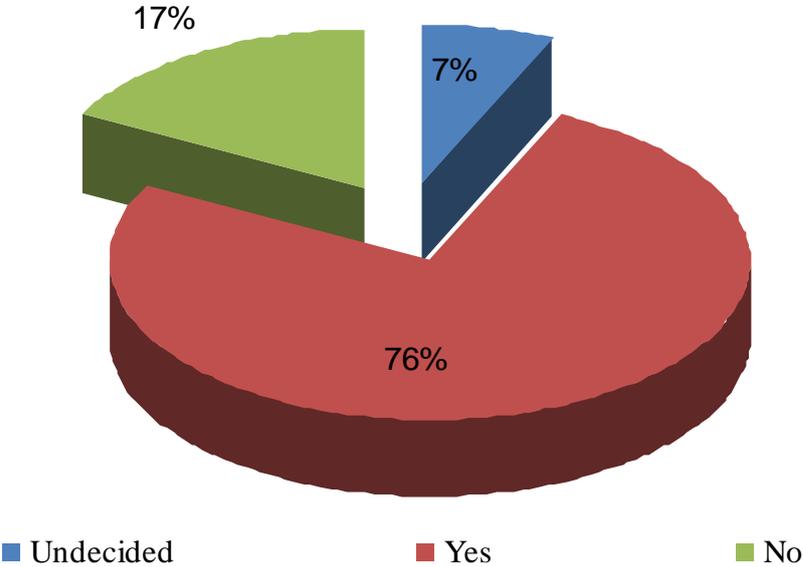


Willingness of the citizens of Yerevan to vote for the membership of Armenia to the European Union

The analysis of the survey testifies that the absolute majority of the citizens of Yerevan seek to be a part of the united Europe. Thus, it is not accidental that the overwhelming majority of the respondents (76.1%) gave a positive answer to the question of whether they are ready to vote for the membership of Armenia to the European Union (See Graphic G).

Graphic G

Would you vote “Yes” if there was a referendum held in the coming Sunday on the membership of Armenia to the European Union?

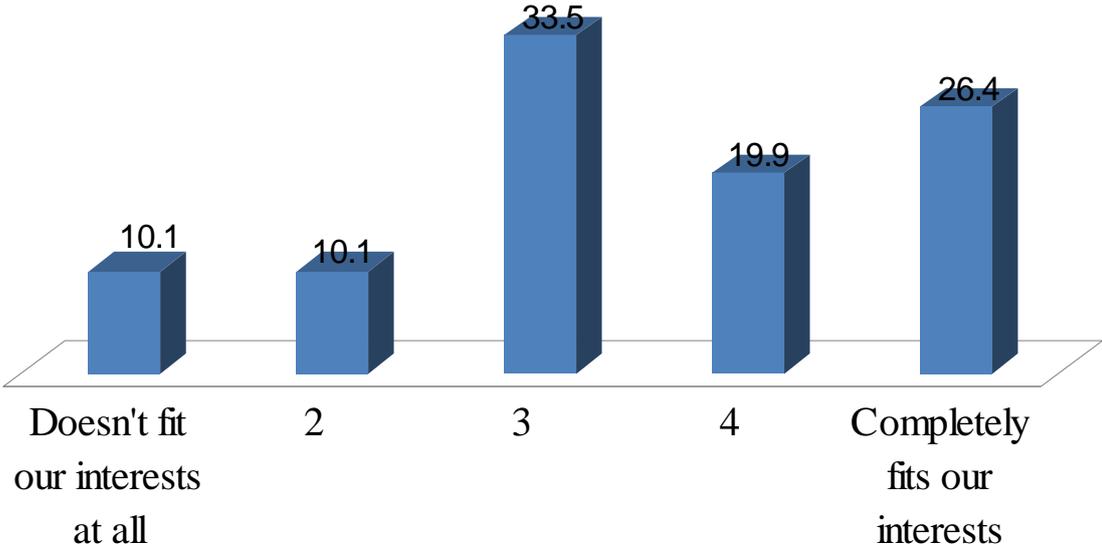


It should be also mentioned that male respondents showed more tendency to vote against the membership than the females. 22.7% of them are against the membership; 14.1% are females. Probably, this is due to the fact that most of the Armenian females are less informed of the happenings in the country, as well as, have imprecise understanding of the European integration. Because of the work circumstances males have more to do with the real processes, while women have to be satisfied with the information which is not often the true one⁴.

Still, 20% of the surveyed think that the process of European integration is of no interest of Armenia, and 26% mention that it is of complete interest of Armenia (See Graphic H). Furthermore, the percentage is almost equally distributed in genders and various age groups.

⁴ Considerable part of the female respondents are housewives

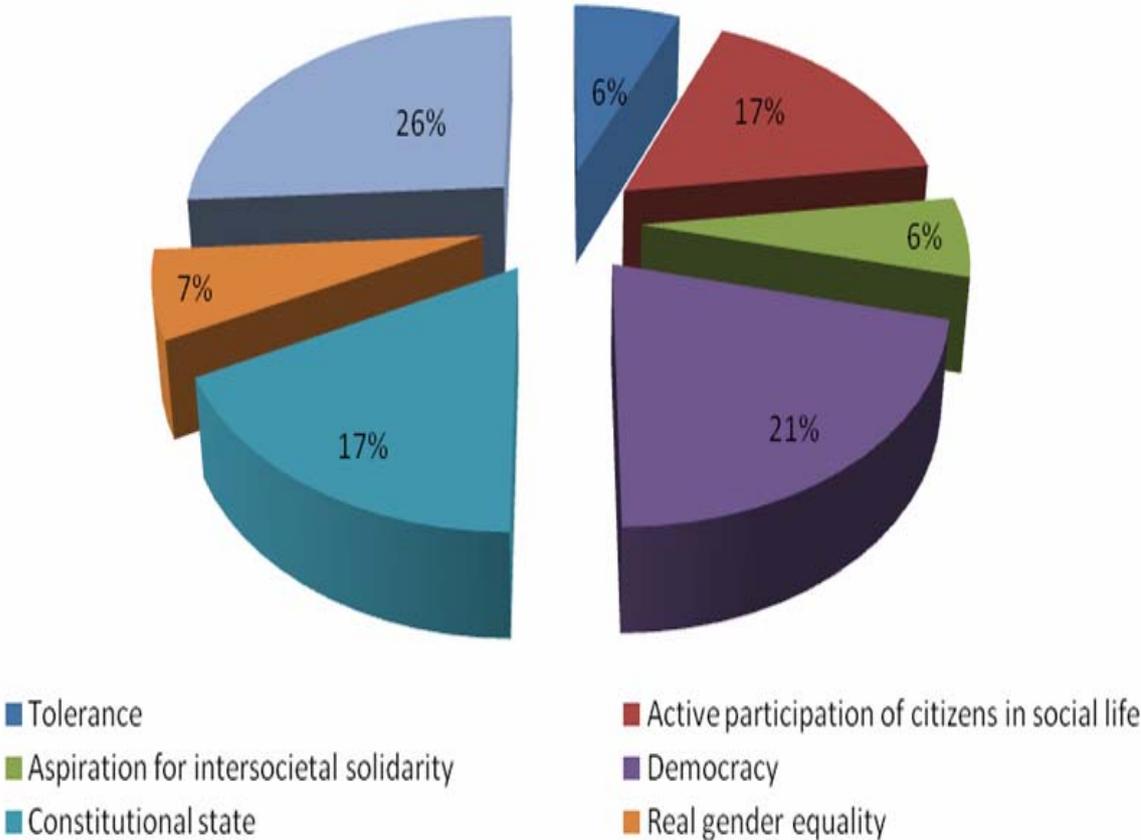
Graphic H How would you assess (mark the numbers) impact of the European integration on the interests of Armenia?



Evaluation of the European values

The reasons of such a positive attitude are seen in the evaluation of European values. The question which values give more positive explanation of the general European culture was answered in the following way: 26% of the respondents emphasize freedom of speech, 21.1% democracy, 17.4% rule of law, 16.6% active participation of citizens in public life, 6.6% gender equality, 6.3% tolerance, 6% seeking inter- social solidarity (See Graphic I). Yerevan citizens think Europe will carry out their wishes and want to have in Armenia a modern civil system shaped on the basis of the mentioned values. This aspiration brings them to the process of European integration. Thus, they have a positive attitude towards the process of European integration and are confirmed that it is of the interest of Armenia.

Graphic I The most positive values according to the answers of the respondents



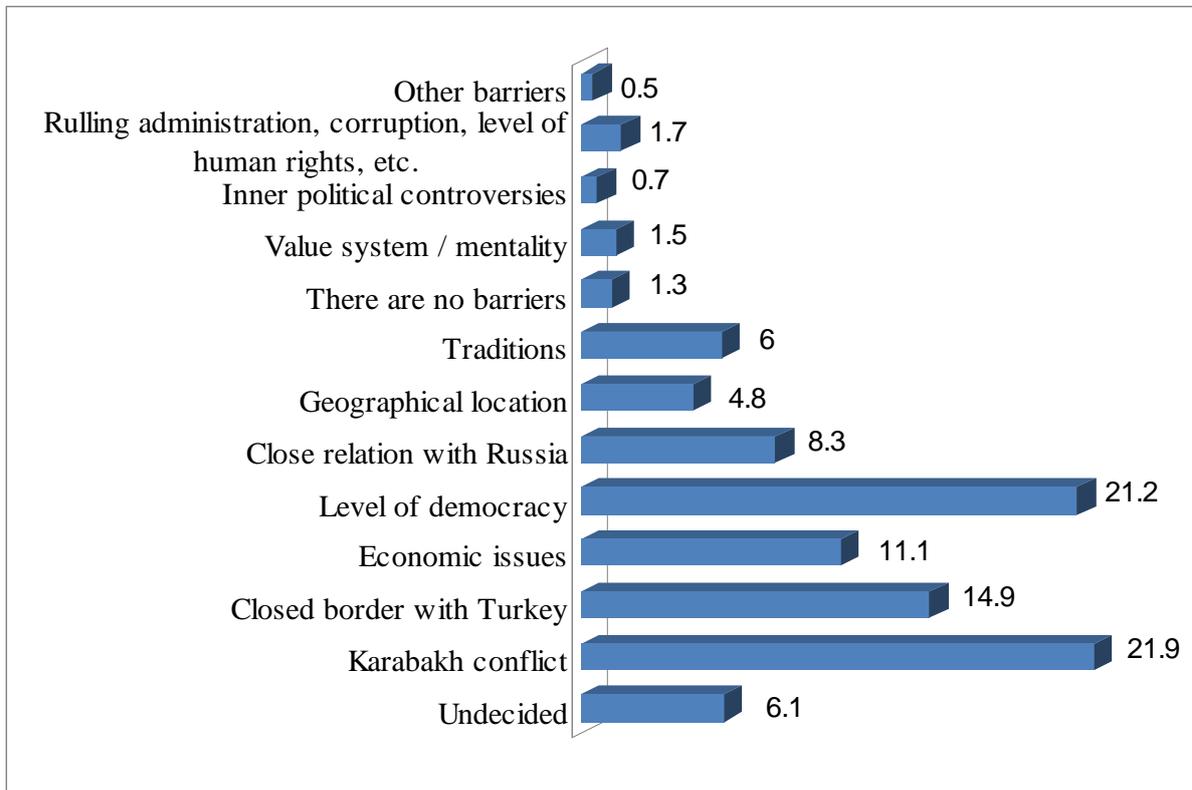
Of course, opinions of the respondents on the content of the process of European integration much depend on local circumstances. 30.4% of the surveyed want the European Union to be enlarged towards the East. There is an evident hope here that the enlargement will reach the borders of Armenia as well. It is worth mentioning that the 15.8% think that Turkey must become a full member of the European Union. 57.4% of the citizens of Yerevan want the European Union to be a guarantee of the European peace which is governed by a common Constitution and has a united army (57.5%).

Factors impeding the process of European Integration in Armenia in accordance with the answers of the respondents

As can be seen in the Graphic J, overwhelming majority of the respondents think that the primary factors impeding to the process of European integration in Armenia are the Karabakh conflict and low level of democracy in Armenia (21.9% and 21.2% accordingly). 14.9% think that the factor is the closed border with Turkey, 11.1% consider economic issues to be the primary

one, 8.3% close ties with Russia, 7.5% traditions and the system of values, 4.8% geographical location. 1.3% of the total surveyed think there is no impeding factor (See Graphic J).

Graphic J Which is the primary factor impeding to the process of European integration in Armenia?



People do know that no war is acceptable in the territory of the European Union. Thus, Karabakh conflict is considered to be the primary factor impeding to the process of European Integration in Armenia. The overwhelming majority of the respondents are also well aware that the democracy level in our country does not correspond to the European standards, which is a serious factor in this process. Still, a society in a state of "neither war nor peace" cannot have a democracy level that conforms to the European standards, because it has to solve certain mobilization issues. The situation is different in the European Union and South Caucasus, thus, opinions must differ.

Characteristic features of the social life in the South Caucasus are expressed in "neither war nor peace" conception. These countries have relatively high level of militarization on the one hand and managed to overcome the demands of military state of emergency on the other, and are trying to solve the issues of social- economic development. However, because of the "frozen" military conflicts there is stable tension in the society, as well as possibility of resumption of the military conflicts.

From the point of view of sociology, there is lack of sufficient conditions in South Caucasus societies for having productive horizontal interrelations between individuals, which forms "neither war nor peace" one of the main distinguishing features: *frustrated conversion from dominating direct interrelation into preference of the horizontal ones*. In the "neither war nor peace" societies exclusiveness of the horizontal structure is dissolved in the direct structure. Principles of governing characteristic to these societies impede the formation of a civil society. As a rule, the level of personal safety in "neither war nor peace" societies is particularly low; exclusiveness of an individual and one's true worth is rarely estimated. The citizens have no sense of psychological trust, thus, daily civic activity is low.

In "neither war nor peace" societies the establishment of public opinion is in a regime of chaos and is characterized by immense mobility. In the public life of the South Caucasian countries old, "military" values and norms no more conform to the social reality, while the public awareness on the new democratic preferences is poor. The result of this is anomie, which debars people from making political decisions.

Politicizing of the "neither war nor peace" society goes with its inevitable militarization, when in the framework of internal self-organization of the society the recovery of social relations is conducted on the example of hierarchy of military ranks. Social-political ties are formed in accordance with the objective conditions of the "neither war nor peace" societies, which are characterized by the expectations of possible military-mobilization uptight problems. Mobilization becomes a distinguishing feature for the "neither war nor peace" societies and their development towards a democratic society is not implemented by creation of the democracy of participation but by creation of the democracy of mobilization. The institutions in such societies are formed on the basis of military-mobilization expectations. Furthermore, the crisis, as a characteristic feature of the "neither war nor peace" society, and the globalization work against the principles of local self-government and democracy by reducing the level of social trust towards the democratic institutes.

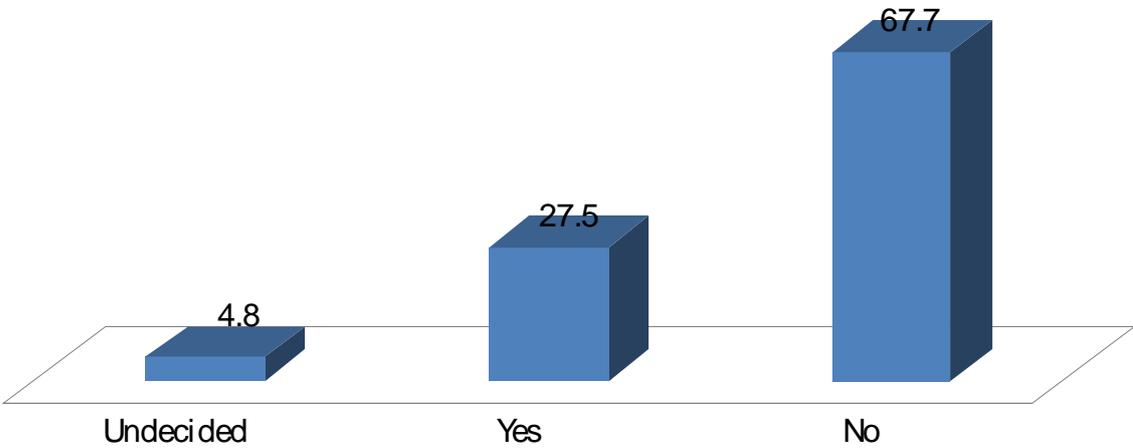
However, trust, as a social capital is the basis of social solidarity. If there is no solidarity in the society, if the citizens are not identified with the state, the national security of the country is at the risk. For this reason, our state becomes autonomous mainly as a defensive authority, which is self-privileged to resort to violence for the sake of national safety and to secure public order.

Further development prospects of the "neither war nor peace" societies much depend on the development of the corresponding identification, which will promote the development of the civic culture.

European self-identification of the citizens of Yerevan

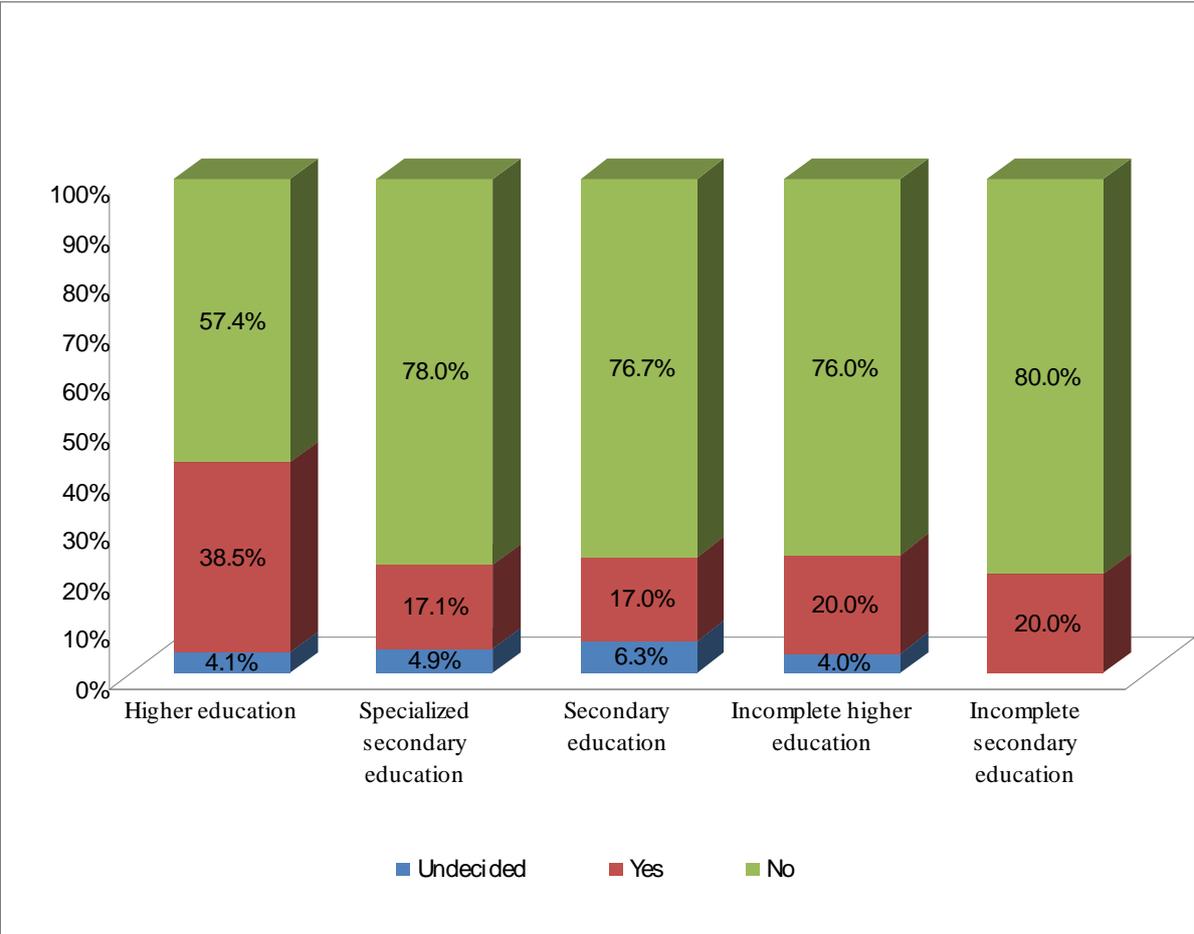
The above-mentioned explains why only 27.5% of the total respondents consider themselves to be Europeans (See Graphic K). Furthermore, answers of both male and female respondents are almost the same: 27.6% of female respondents and 27.4% of male respondents do not consider themselves to be Europeans.

Graphic K Do you consider yourself to be a European?



While studying the causes of European self-identification, the factor of the level of education should be taken into account. In general there is European basis in our educational system, thus, better educated people have disposition towards the European values. And it is not accidental that 38.5% of the respondents, who have higher education, consider themselves to be Europeans. The level of European self-identification is decreased together with the low level of education: 20% in case of the group, who have incomplete higher education, 17.1% in case of those having specialized secondary education, and 17% in case of those having secondary education (see Graphic L).

Graphic L

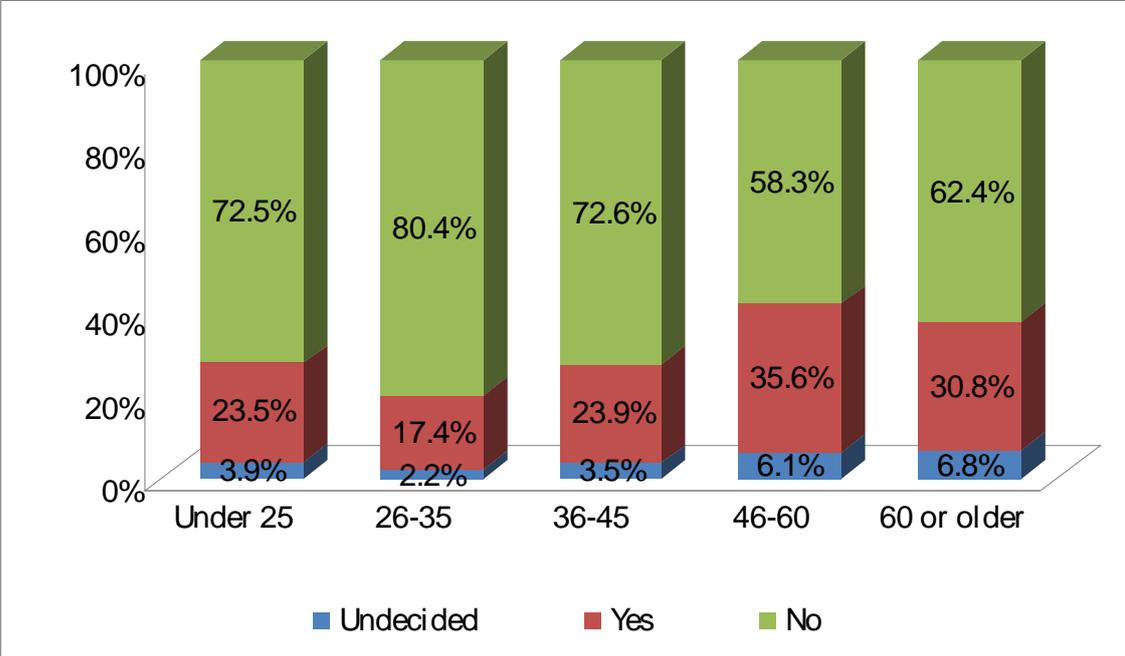


The analysis of the correlation of the self-identification issue puts forward an interesting fact: the number of younger people considering themselves to be Europeans is less than that of the elder ones.

72.5% of the respondents of the age group of 25 years old and 80.4% of the age group of 26-35 years old do not consider themselves to be Europeans. While in elder groups the answer to the same question “Do you consider yourself to be a European?” was “NO” with the following distribution of the percentages: 58.3% of the age group of 46-60 years old and 62.4% of the age group of older than 60 (See Graphic M).

The answers are due to the fact that because of the objective difficulties in transitional period the Armenian youth of the present times have worse understanding of those national cultural values, which we share with other European nations and which can be a factor for unification. If Europeanization of the country is our state priority, it is necessary to reform the policy applied in the youth sphere and the key point here must be upbringing of the European identity.

Graphic M



The factor of employment in the answers of respondents

An interesting representation of analysis of sociological survey results is formed pursuant to the factor of employment. For instance, 44,4% of the respondents working in the sphere of health care are not satisfied with the close interrelations between the Republic of Armenia and a number of European structures, while only 22.3% of the surveyed are unsatisfied with this situation. The state officials are most worried with the fact that the border with Turkey is closed (26,3%), the considerable part of whom (42,1%) assesses the effectiveness of activities of the European Union and OSCE structures working in Armenia insufficient. Despite of all the expectations, no state official selected the “New Neighbourhood” as a cooperation format for Armenia and the European Union. Compared with the employment of other groups, the students emphasize the active participation of citizens in social life, 35,7% of them think that the most positive is this very value in comparison with all the other general cultural values of European people. 31,8% of the entrepreneurs consider democracy to be the most positive value and 35,3% of workers of production emphasize the rule of law. That is due to the fact that the first mentioned group needs free conditions for enterprising depending on their employment and the workers that are of lower social status need legal protection. The influence of this factor is also

noticeable in the answers of the latter to the question on membership of Armenia to the European Union. In the group of the workers surveyed 47.1% are in favor of the issue, and constructors constitute 50%. The group of the surveyed constructors is also separated by the answers to the question on European self-identification. Only 8.3% consider themselves to be Europeans and 56.3% of the respondents working in the education sphere consider themselves to be Europeans⁵. It is obvious, that the education sphere is the more Europeanized field of social life of Armenia and European integration process has a serious basis in here.

⁵ For all the respondents the indicator is 27.5%

CONCLUSION

Therefore, the results of the sociological survey testify to the fact that majority of the citizens of the RA capital have positive attitude towards the process of European integration. Still, they are not satisfied with some formalities of the process. Being not well informed of activities of the European structures in the Republic of Armenia, citizens of Yerevan have poor attitude towards the effectiveness of the procedure. Process of the European integration is not being quite well covered by the Armenian mass media, and particularly the youth needs to be provided with appropriate information. Thus, the dissemination of appropriate information by means of the mass media on the one hand and training actions are to be taken on the other hand. The key of those events must be dissemination of the general cultural values of Armenian and European people to the Armenian youth. It is necessary to implement special educational and cultural projects covering the positive sides of the European integration.

Explanation of the process of participant selection

The number of the respondents was calculated by using the following equation

$$n = \frac{N t^2 s^2}{N \Delta^2 + t^2 s^2},$$

(where n is sample size and N is total population size - universe),

s^2 – dispersion ($s^2 = 0,2$),

$1 - \alpha = 0,90$ $t = 1,65$

$\Delta = 0,03$ (error of representation 3%),

$N = 820745$ (was decided on the basis of the results of census published in 2001 by National Statistical Service of RA)

As a result $n = 603$, afterward the following equation was applied

$$n_i = \frac{n N_i}{N},$$

(Where, N and n are the sizes of universe and sample respectively. N_i and n_i are the sizes of groups in universe and sample respectively):

In each community of Yerevan the streets were randomly chosen and the initial survey location was chosen in each street. If that location was an apartment house, the survey began from the last apartment of the 1st entrance (in the case of detached house – inhabitants of that house). The surveyor of the survey chose that member of the family whose birthday was the nearest to the day of implementation of the survey. If it was impossible to conduct the survey on the basis of the process requirements, the surveyor had to skip that apartment and conduct the survey in the next apartment. After the survey was conducted the surveyor skipped three apartments and conducted the next survey in the fourth apartment.

As a result 7-10 surveys were conducted in each street. All the surveyors filled up the itinerary form.

Verification of the conducted survey

Those responsible for the supervision of the field works took the addresses from the itinerary form and visited each of the randomly chosen apartments to verify if the survey was conducted on the basis of the requirements. 10% of the total questionnaires were checked in this way.

Graphic *Education of the surveyed*

