



**PERFORMANCE OF SUPREME
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF DURING
THE WAR IN PUBLIC OPINION
ANALYTIC REPORT**





About the Social Research Center

The Social Research Center (SRC) was established by Decree No. 525 of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated February 8, 2019. It operates as a public legal entity, systematically analyzing the development dynamics of social relations. The SRC identifies current trends, forecasts changes in this field, and investigates their potential impact on society. Applying modern information technologies and scientific approaches, the SRC conducts social research and surveys public opinion. Its findings are then provided to governmental bodies for consideration and action.

SOCIAL RESEARCH CENTER

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**PERFORMANCE OF SUPREME
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF DURING
THE WAR IN PUBLIC OPINION**

Prepared based on a sociological survey
ANALYTICAL REPORT

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"The source of our policy is the Azerbaijani people. The very reason for this victory is the Azerbaijani people. We have fulfilled our historic mission by showing unity, resolve, determination, and national spirit."

*From the speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan,
the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces
Ilham Aliyev in a Victory Parade dedicated to Victory in
the Patriotic War at the Azadlig Square.*

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INTRODUCTION

Since the establishment of the Social Research Center (SRC), President Ilham Aliyev has submitted analytical reports on his activity in domestic and foreign policy, based on public opinion surveys.

For the first time in Azerbaijan, the surveys are being performed continuously using scientific methods applied in the world practice to define ratings of confidence in and support for the heads of state such as The Trust Index and Performance in public opinion. The key objective of this series of research is to operatively study and promptly assess the attitude toward the President's activity in public opinion and monitor the public opinion dynamics and trends through the comparative analysis of the quarterly monitoring results.

This survey aims to study the public's attitude towards the actions of President Ilham Aliyev, who served as the Supreme Commander-in-Chief during the Patriotic War in the last quarter of 2020. The Azerbaijani leader's decisions, based on national interests and political will, have written a new chapter of glorious victory in the history of our independent state. Consequently, the public's confidence and trust in the President's activity has increased. The Chronicle of Victory in our modern history accurately documented the period.

The victory in the Patriotic War holds immense historical, political, and ideological significance for our national statehood. Its international impact on the local, regional, and global levels, Azerbaijan's new military-geopolitical superiority and status, and the new paradigm known as 'Azerbaijan's War Model' or 'Formula of Victory' by some analysts will continue to be the subject of research and discussion for a long time.

Continuing the 'Trust Index' series, this report by SRC presents the survey results of the public's attitude towards President Ilham Aliyev's activities in the last quarter of 2020. On September 27, 2020, the II Karabakh Patriotic War began. On that day, the President ended his first appeal to the people with the words, "Our cause is just. We will win!"

The liberation of Karabakh lands from occupation, one by one, has led to regional geopolitical transformations and global significant events. Azerbaijan's Patriotic War caused an

'earthquake effect' on the international military and geopolitical agenda. The Global Expert Society characterized implementing the achievements of the recent military-technical revolution in military operations in Karabakh as 'the 5th Generation War,' 'War of the 21st century.' The hot news became an epicentre of headlines in the world media and the topic of red-hot discussions among military analysts.

The 'Patriotic War, Victory Day' pages were indelibly engraved in the politico-military calendar of our modern statehood history.

In this survey, the respondents were polled in the following areas:

- *Assessing the efficiency of the President's activity in various fields;*
- *Studying factors forming the basis of confidence in the liberation of Karabakh under military duress;*
- *Assessing the key factors that have ensured our Victory in the Patriotic War;*
- *More and less appreciated aspects of the President's performance in 2020;*
- *Studying the major threats the population felt during the war and pandemic period.*

Victory in the Patriotic War became the moment of historical truth, which has materialized the goal of the Grand Strategy, pursued since 2003. Today, the president's ability to maintain internal sociopolitical stability in our nation is one of the crucial factors that unlocks the door to Victory History. This, in turn, testifies to the leading status of army building in the Grand Strategy and indicates the great importance the President attaches to the history-tested imperative 'When I have an army, then I have a Motherland!' Due to this policy, the Azerbaijani Army, which was ranked as the strongest one in the region in global indexes, turned into a victorious army under the leadership of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, a brave army that won the 21st-century 5th generation war.

Due to the President's military policy, our army became a symbol of unshakeable national unity, our flag going up after each victory in Karabakh, a demonstration of international sympathy and respect for Azerbaijan, loyalty to Azerbaijanism values of our multi-ethnic and multi-confessional people, and undestroyable solidarity. A victory event took place that has occurred during the last two centuries in the his-

tory of neither our statehood nor, one can say, any country in the world - the return of the occupied lands under military duress. It is no coincidence that 96.4% of respondents assessed the return of lost lands by the Supreme Commander-in-Chief for the first time over the last 200 years as the most successful result of the President's activity in 2020. Quote: "Each of the 44 days is our glorious history. Over these 44 days, there was no one on which we retreated. Azerbaijani soldiers and officers fulfilled their glorious mission with great heroism and courage and liberated our native lands from invaders" (President Ilham Aliyev).

In the survey, in the respondents' answers to the question, "What did the Supreme Commander-in-Chief rely on most when deciding to start large-scale military operations?", the army and the people rank first. Answering the question, "Which factors stand behind our victory in the Patriotic War?", 64.1% of the respondents indicated a 'modern military technology-supported army.'

□ 'Appeals to the people' and public opinion: A call to unshakable national unity, mobilization, and announcement of new victories

In the polling of the public's opinion relating to the actions of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief during the Patriotic War, the evaluation of the President's appeals to the populace also holds a significant position. 65.6% of those polled said they valued Supreme Commander-in-Chief Ilham Aliyev's frequent calls to the populace for victory. Beginning on September 27, the respondents gave the President's calls and speeches a lot of credit for promoting national unity and for their political, historical, moral, and ideological significance.

The good news of urging them to mobilize was the President's first plea to the Azerbaijani people on September 27 on the current situation. The soul uplifts these appeals have caused in our people, who have been waiting for the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's order for almost thirty years, can hardly be expressed in words. The declaration of the start of the Holy Patriotic War encouraged thousands of volunteers to join the call for military mobilization.

Subsequent appeals, paradoxically, only turned into anticipation of new victories. The phrase 'appeal to the people' became synonymous with the good news of the next victory in public opinion. Waiting for these appeals with

a heartbeat by every citizen at home or work, on the street or in public transport, was reflected in the respondents' answers as the absolute trust in the Supreme Commander-in-Chief and our victory. The source of this trust, which would be considered paradoxical, was also the survey subject. The main line of these appeals was the idea, "Everything for the Motherland! Everything for Victory! We are strong together!"

It is important to note that the appeals made by the Supreme Commander-in-Chief were not only directed towards the national audience but also became the focus of influential foreign media outlets. The enemy country's media closely monitored every word of these appeals.

When commenting on the President's appeals to the people during the 44-day war, the respondents emphasized the Supreme Commander's unwavering selflessness and sincerity. They praised his tireless efforts in leading the battles day and night, as well as his transparency and accountability in sharing the government's position on the war's progress with the people. Another crucial point was the information on villages, settlements, and cities liberated from occupation, which the President posted on his social network sites. This information greatly boosted public morale and uplifted public opinion. The transformation of phrases in the appeals into new idioms in our people's language, the recitation of speeches from children to adults, and their mass sharing on social networks demonstrated sincere feelings toward the President and ensured great enthusiasm during the war.

□ Azerbaijan's foreign policy that has led to the Karabakh Victory in public opinion

We see the way our country has passed from 'information blockade to information attack' over the last 17 years in foreign policy and conveying the truth about Karabakh to the world. Our people have witnessed dozens of unjust resolutions adopted over these years. The biased position of the Minsk Group member countries, which presented themselves to the world as a party to resolve the conflict, in the Patriotic War exceeded all frameworks of political morality and international law. Quote: "We have closely monitored the global processes and have seen the gross violation of international law and principles in recent years. Some countries achieve their goals by force, international law remains on paper, and UN Security Council resolutions remain on paper. In such a case, resolving the

conflict under military duress was inevitable." (President Ilham Aliyev)

Thanks to military-strategic thinking, our government managed to turn the rare historical opportunity that was being formed into the glory of national victory.

□ Interviews that shook the global media agenda became the 'special target force' of the information war

The President's interviews with several foreign media outlets during the month-and-a-half-long Patriotic War thwarted all efforts by the global Armenian and anti-Azerbaijani network in the information war. Due to his bright personal qualities, consistent interviews with Ilham Aliyev created the effect of an 'information bomb' and disarmed the enemy in this field. The interviews became a special-purpose force of the information front and turned into a declaration that Azerbaijan would not back down from the thirty-year-old righteous struggle, and the extraordinary aggressive foreign pressure on the President since September 27 would be repelled. The study looked at the thoughts of the respondents regarding these interviews. When asked, "Which matters in the President's activity do you admire most?" 61.2% of the respondents said the President's interviews with foreign media and his diplomatic offensive were among the most laudable aspects of his work this year. The interviews have also revealed new changes and qualities in the President's political leadership after the II Karabakh War compared to previous years according to public opinion. The President's new qualities such as 'refusal to compromise and adherence to principles in diplomacy,' 'adherence to acute and smart logic, especially in the interviews with foreign TV channels,' 'being a national leader like Heydar Aliyev,' 'closeness to the people and listening to their opinion' were voiced in the answers.

The triumph of the President's diplomatic and military strategic genius became the surrender of Armenia and signing of the ceasefire agreement on November 10, and taking the Aghdam, Lachin, and Kalbajar regions back without firing a shot. The most famous of the 36 military stratagems in Sun Tzu's 'The Art of War,' which is considered the primary global-scale source in this field, - 'Defeat the enemy without fighting' occurred after November 10. This raised Azerbaijan's status and international reputation in the Patriotic War as a reliable strategic partner to a higher level. Ilham Aliyev's diplomacy

model gave impetus to changing not only the region's image but also the global geopolitical configuration - the balance of forces. Thus, after the I Karabakh War, which caused the collapse of the bipolar world, the II Karabakh War, which started on September 27, would act as the onset of a radical geopolitical transformation and the trigger of geopolitical perturbations. Azerbaijan is the epicentre of the new geopolitical configuration to be formed.

The international geopolitical significance of our foreign policy, which has brought victory in the Patriotic War, has not yet been deeply understood. The President defended Azerbaijan's rights cause on the battlefield, implemented UN resolutions, and restored justice. The Karabakh victory became an exemplary precedent, a way out of long-lasting unresolved conflicts in the world.

□ The political leader of the people who won two wars in 2020

The said point was reflected in the respondents' answer to the question, "How do you assess the President's activity in various fields over the last 6 months?" 60.1% of the respondents appreciated the social support packages launched by the President.

58.8% of the respondents appreciated the President's strategic decisions in combating the pandemic. During the pandemic, the President's initiatives to create a global platform for fighting against the 'invisible enemy' - the coronavirus attracted particular attention.

Thus, the comparative analysis of this poll performed by the Social Research Center with the previous ones showed that until now, the dynamics of trust in the President in public opinion has never been so high. This report once again confirms the sociological regularity, according to which the trust in political leaders grows proportionally to the success of the state.

METHODOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES OF SURVEY

The Survey Coverage

The survey covered the urban, regional, and rural population of Baku, Absheron, and 7 economic regions (Ganja-Gazakh, Shaki-Zagatala, Lankaran, Guba-Khachmaz, Aran, Daghligh Shirvan, and Upper Karabakh).

Selection of Respondents

A survey was conducted with 1217 respondents who were randomly selected. In the first stage of selection, the number of participants was determined for each economic region. In the next stage, stationary phone numbers were selected randomly in a quantity equal to 10 times the number of respondents in each population cluster. For the selected clusters, every third number in the general set of phone numbers was dialled. If a refusal was encountered, the next-third number was contacted.

The Survey Approach and Method

A repeated survey design was chosen as a research approach. In methodological science, a repeated survey design is used to monitor trends over a long period. Thus, the current survey was the third in number among those that started at the beginning of 2020 and already performed twice.

A questionnaire poll was used as part of the quantitative methodology during the survey. Considering the quarantine regime restrictions and the health of the survey parties, a telephone interview and the SurveyToGo software were used in the survey. Fieldwork was performed on December 6-13, 2020. Phone calls were made between 10 a.m.-9 p.m. The average poll time was 23 min and 17 s.

Ethical Principles

Anonymity was strictly ensured in all the interviews. Respondents were made sure that their answers would only be used in a generalized way. This factor ensured the high reliability of the survey data.

Instructions

Before starting the work, the interviewers were trained by the Center employees. Here-with, during the training, interviewers were provided with questionnaires and instructions. Ultimately, the interviewers received extensive explanations for each question in the questionnaire and performed the test survey.

Data processing and analysis

After the completion of the survey, the data collected for each profile was entered into the database and analyzed using a special software SPSS - Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. Along with descriptive analysis, some correlations (relationships) between variables were defined, and the X^2 test was used.

Based on the number of respondents, the statistical error was 2.8%, and the confidence interval was 95%.

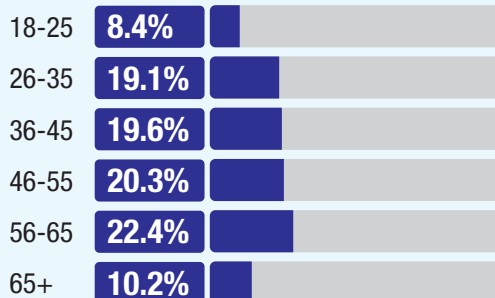
SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION OF RESPONDENTS



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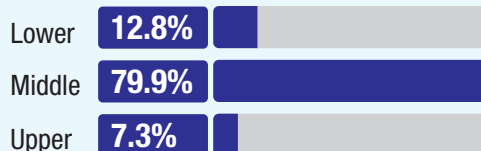
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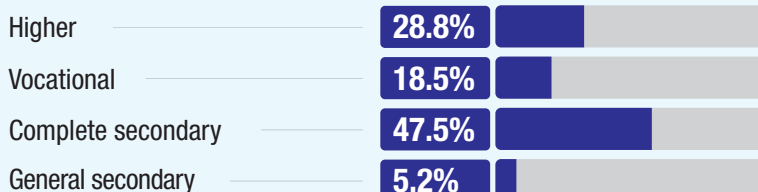
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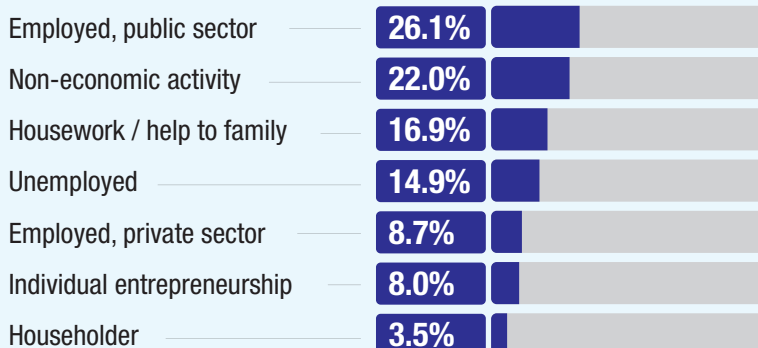
SOCIAL STRATA



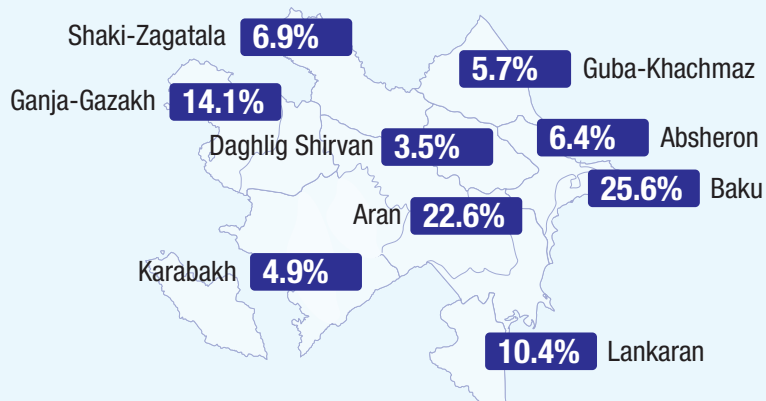
LEVEL OF EDUCATION



OCCUPATION



ECONOMIC DISTRICTS



SECTION I. The President's Performance 2020 in Public Opinion

1.1. Assessing the President's Performance 2020 in Public Opinion

The analysis of the results of other surveys performed by the Social Research Center (SRC) allows for stating that the population welcomed the President's activity in various fields over the last year at appropriate times. In particular, the views on Karabakh, expressed by the President from the international arena, were welcomed by the country's population with confidence that our lands will be returned. Returning the lost lands by Supreme Commander-in-Chief Ilham Aliyev for the first time in the last 200 years has caused a positive reaction in public opinion. 96.4% of the respondents assessed the liberation of our lands from occupation during the Patriotic War as the most successful result of the President's activity in 2020.

Three-quarters of the population (75.2%) welcomed meetings of Supreme Commander-in-Chief Ilham Aliyev and First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva with servicemen who were wounded in the battles for the Motherland and treated at the Central Military Clinical Hospital of the Ministry of Defense on September 30, and those treated at Clinical Medical Center No. 1 on November 11, and their further visits to the Fuzuli and Jabrayil regions and the city of Aghdam.

The SRC's regular surveys have shown that the population welcomes the Personnel reforms initiated by the President in 2019 and continued in 2020, and the harsh punitive measures taken against officials who commit illegal actions as part of combating corruption. According to the results, another President's activity appreciated more by people (68.5%) in 2020 was the dismissal of some executive leaders and high-ranking officials with histories of illegal actions.

Most of those who appreciated the dismissal of some executive leaders and high-ranking officials with histories of illegal actions belong to the middle and older age groups. This figure is higher than 47.1 and 60.0% for, respectively, the 18-25 and 36-45+ age groups. 50.0 and 77.0% of, respectively, those with complete secondary and vocational education/college graduates appreciated the said activity more. By region, the lowest and the highest indicators were recorded, respectively, in Shaki-Zagatala (32.1%) and Aran (88.0%).

The news of victories won on the front and the names of the villages, settlements, and cities liberated from occupation, personally reported by the President to the people via the social network cau-

sed great enthusiasm in the community. Note that about two of three respondents (65.6%) appreciated Supreme Commander-in-Chief Ilham Aliyev's regular victory-related appeals to the people.

62.1% of the respondents appreciated the President's interviews with foreign media and attacking diplomacy. Note that President Ilham Aliyev has been interviewed by the world's leading media agencies 27 times during the 44-day Patriotic War. Despite some provocative and disinformation-based questions in the interviews, President Ilham Aliyev, who defended our national interests, strengthened our position in the media war.

According to the survey, 60.2% of the respondents showed support for the strengthened anti-corruption measures and the tough stance taken by the President in this fight. However, the number of young people who appreciate the President's activities is at least 20% lower than those in other age groups, with only 41.2% of 18-25 year-olds expressing their appreciation. Nevertheless, the survey also revealed that the appreciation for the President's activity increases with age.

To mitigate the negative impact of the pandemic and maintain the stable social welfare of the population, the President implemented a specific social assistance policy and took various measures based on the tasks given to appropriate institutions. 60.1% of the respondents appreciated the social assistance policy implemented by the President to reduce the negative impact of the pandemic. 77.6% of those who appreciated this President's activity felt safe from the standpoint of loss of income during the pandemic.

62.8% of those working in the public sector appreciated the social assistance policy implemented to mitigate the negative impact of the pandemic while this figure is relatively low for those working in the private sector (48.1%), unemployed (59.7%), and students (44.1%). While 42.2% of respondents aged 18-25 appreciate the implemented policy, this figure increases with age.

Herewith, 3.9% of the respondents consider that the damage caused to the population by the pandemic has not been adequately compensated.

58.8% of the respondents appreciated the strategic decisions adopted by President Ilham Aliyev in the management of combating the pandemic. Note that despite the difficulties observed in some areas in the early days, along with the provision of medical masks, certain results were gradually achieved in combating the pandemic as a result of increasing the number of beds in hospitals, ar-

ranging large-scale disinfection measures, and implementing the quarantine regime. However, the figure of 58.8% shows that there are many dissatisfied with measures taken in this field among the population.

According to the survey, 57.1% of the participants approve of the President's effort to organize international events. As an example of international events, we can indicate the Extraordinary Turkic Council Summit held via a video conference on the initiative under the leadership of President Ilham Aliyev and the special session of the UN General Assembly at the level of heads of state and government in New York on December 3, dedicated to combating the COVID-19 pandemic.

Note that in 2020, 55.0% of the respondents appreciated publicizing the meetings held by the President with the central and local executive leaders. The vast majority of the respondents high-

ly appreciated the President's activity in various fields while stating that there were no matters in his activity they did not appreciate. Thus, the vast majority (83.3%) of the survey participants noted that there was no matter in the President's activity in 2020 they did not appreciate. Herewith, 16.7% of the respondents, in other words, 203 believed that in 2020, the President did not take a firm stance in some areas. 42.1 and 13.2% of the same respondent segment (203 persons) did not appreciate, respectively, the fact that the President failed to punish some officials who committed illegal actions, and not all of our lost lands were returned. Thereat, note that numerous criminal cases have been initiated and necessary operative investigative measures have been taken against some former officials. These figures may show that in some regions, negative situations remain in the executive power and other structures.



DIAGRAM 1.

AS A CITIZEN, WHICH MATTERS IN THE PRESIDENT'S ACTIVITY IN 2020 DID YOU APPRECIATE THE MOST?

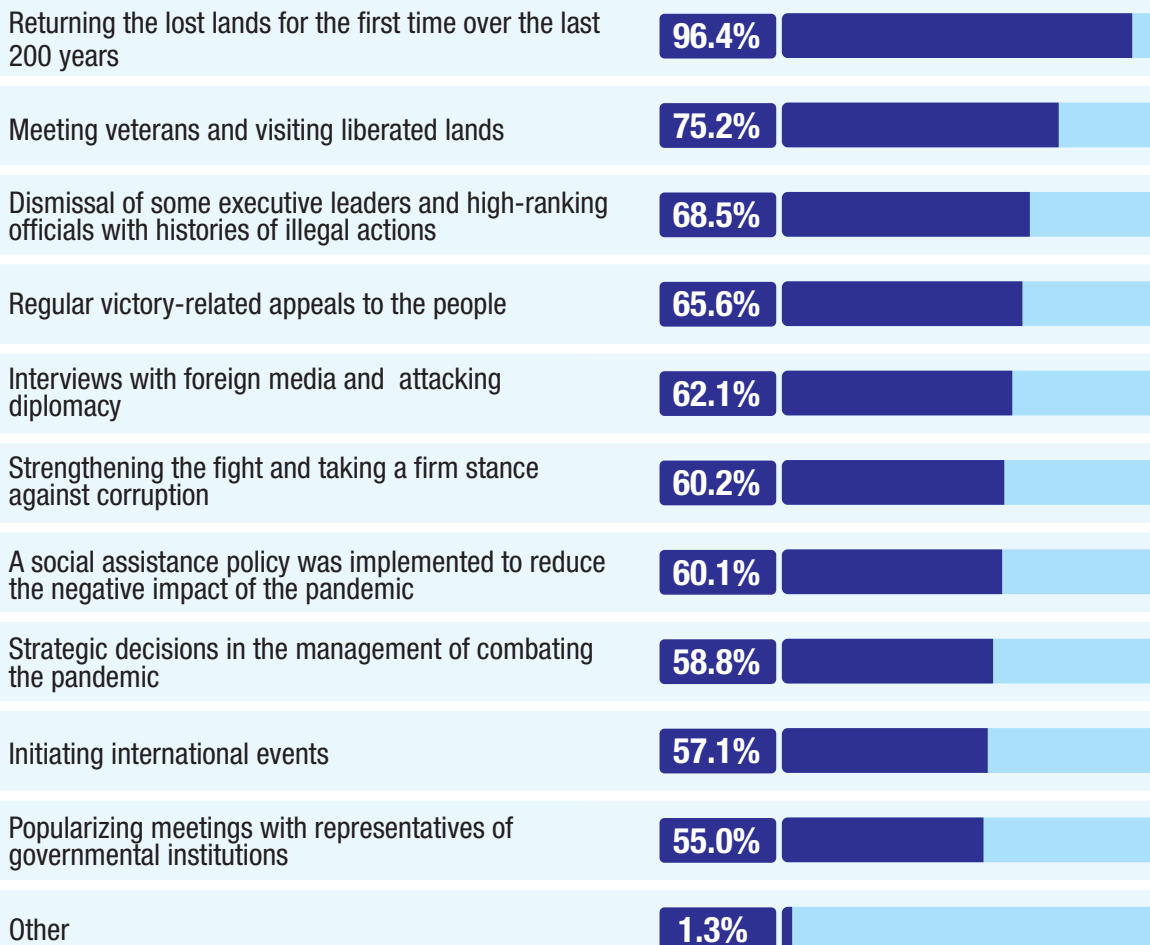
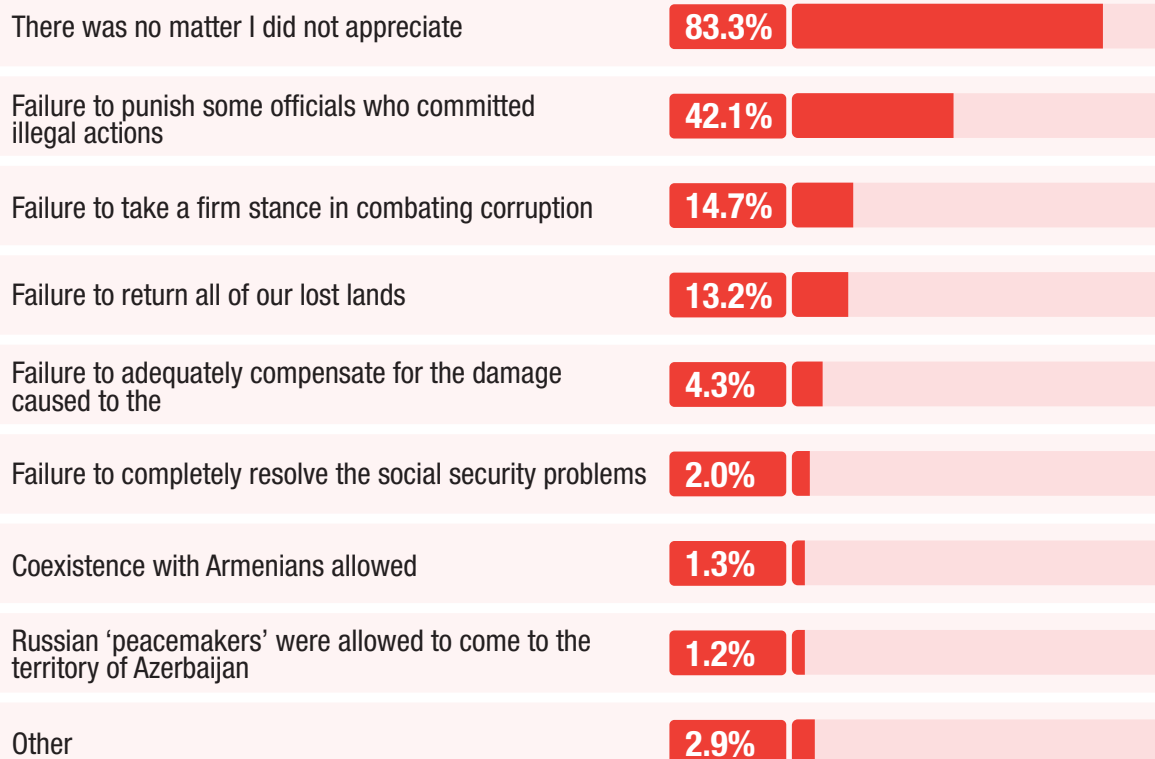




DIAGRAM 2.

AS A CITIZEN, WHICH MATTERS IN THE PRESIDENT'S ACTIVITY IN 2020 DID NOT YOU APPRECIATE THE MOST?



1.2. Comparative Analysis of the President's Activity in Various Fields during the Relevant Periods

In 2019, President Ilham Aliyev initiated radical reforms in the country in several fields, including the governmental branches. The President demonstrates a strong will to make the reforms more successful, consistent, and sustainable. Studying the dynamics of the public attitude toward the President's activity, in the surveys performed by the Social Research Center at appropriate time intervals, the respondents also answered questions about this activity in relevant areas.

We can say that the absolute majority of the population assesses the work done in the fields of army building and improving under the leadership of the President as 'very effective' (94.6%) or 'mostly effective' (5.0%), which is understandable considering the results of the 44-day Patriotic War. In a similar survey conducted in June, the results were about 5% lower on this question. Summarizing all the survey results, we can state that the President's activity in the fields of army

building and improvement was highly appreciated by the absolute majority of the population.

One of the key factors determining the development and success of our country is the President's foreign policy. The President's activity in the field of foreign policy is among the areas highly appreciated by the majority of the population in both this and other polls. According to the current survey results, the absolute majority of the population assesses the President's foreign policy as effective to one degree or another (85.1% 'very effective,' 10.4% 'mostly effective').

It is noteworthy that the public's positive attitude towards the ongoing Personnel reforms has remained almost unchanged. In the previous survey conducted in June, only 53.9% of the respondents found it to be 'very efficient,' while in the latest one, the percentage increased to 65.4%. Likewise, only 8.2% of the respondents perceived the Personnel reforms as ineffective in the previous survey. However, it is interesting to note that individuals with higher education levels were more likely to rate the work done in the field of Personnel reforms as ineffective ($F=9.889(2)$, $p<0.01$).

One of the major concerns of 2020 was the protection of public health against the background of the new generation of coronavirus. 89.9% of the respondents assessed the President's work in protecting public health as effective in one degree or another (70.5% 'very effective,' 19.4% 'mostly effective'). 9.0% of the respondents took the opposite position. In the June survey, this question was asked in a relatively different form (about modernizing the healthcare system), and the results differed to some extent. Thus, 46.7 and 32.6% of the respondents assessed the performed work as, respectively, 'very efficient' and 'mostly efficient.' Unlike this survey, in that one, 17.1% of the re-

spondents expressed a negative attitude.

Although 91.4% of the respondents consider the President's activity in ensuring the social protection of the population to be effective to one degree or another, the weight of those who take the opposite position makes up 5.7%. It is interesting that the results obtained in the June survey almost coincide with the current ones.

87.3% of the respondents appreciated the development of the non-oil sector. Respondents with higher education rate the development of the non-oil sector lower than others ($F=15.048$ (2), $p<0.01$).

The respondents belonging to the lower social strata assess the President's activity in the fields of protecting public health ($F=13.198$ (2),

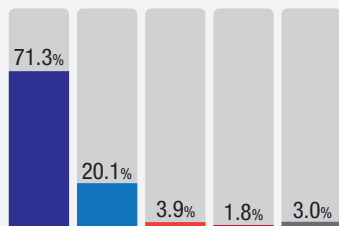


DIAGRAM 3.

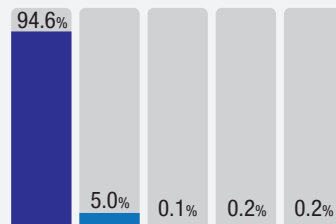
HOW DO YOU ASSESS THE PRESIDENT'S ACTIVITY IN VARIOUS FIELDS OVER THE LAST 6 MONTHS?



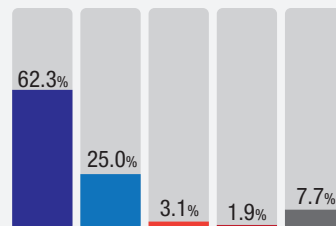
Social protection



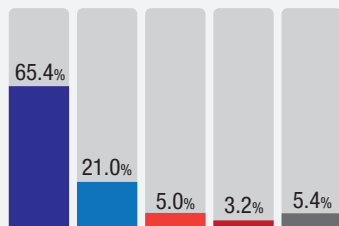
Army building and its improvement



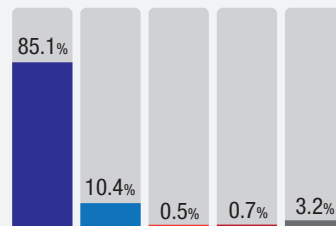
Developing the non-oil sector



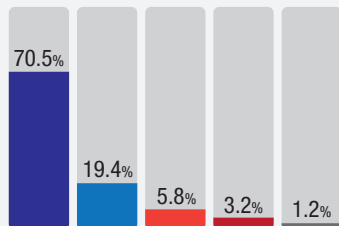
Personnel reforms



Foreign policy



Protecting public health



Ensuring the physical and civil security of the population

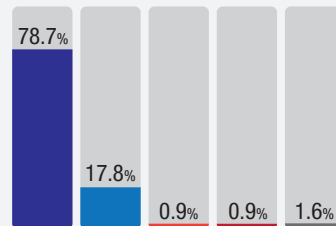
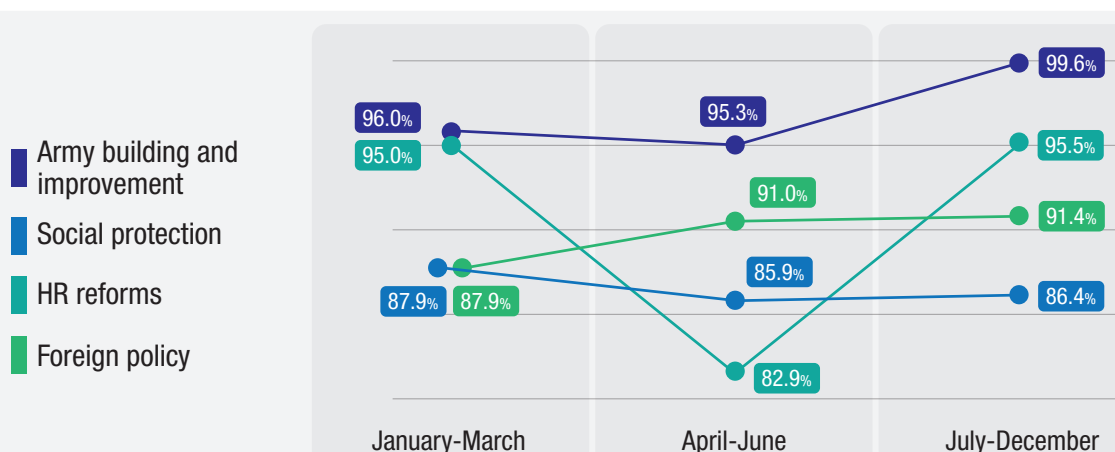




DIAGRAM 4.
**THE DYNAMICS OF THE PRESIDENT'S ACTIVITY
IN THE APPROPRIATE FIELDS**



$p < 0.01$); developing the non-oil sector ($F = 5.499$ (2), $p < 0.05$); Personnel reforms ($F = 10.337$ (2), $p < 0.01$); ensuring social protection of the population ($F = 14.156$ (2), $p < 0.01$) as ineffective more compared to others.

The next diagram shows the comparative analysis of the field of activity based on the results of three surveys performed by the Social Research Center in different periods of 2020 to study the public attitude toward the President's activity.

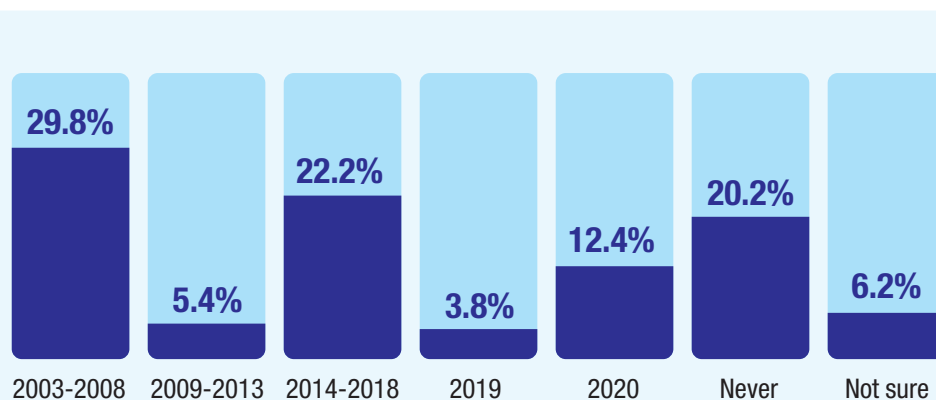
SECTION II. Politico-Military Strategy of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief

2.1. Preparation of Ilham Aliyev for a Large-Scale War During His Presidency

The occupation of 20% of our lands has caused Ilham Aliyev, as a President, to pay special attention to the army building and im-



DIAGRAM 5.
**IF WE LOOK AT ILHAM ALIYEV'S PRESIDENCY PERIOD, SINCE WHEN HE
STARTED PREPARING FOR A LARGE-SCALE WAR, ACCORDING TO YOU?**



provement. 29.8% of the respondents believe that President Ilham Aliyev has been preparing for a large-scale war since the first years of his presidency. Note that President Ilham Aliyev has been leading the Republic for 17 years.

12.4% of the survey participants consider that Ilham Aliyev has been preparing for a large-scale war since 2020. This could be related to the Tovuz events that took place in July 2020. Thus, a certain part of people consider that the events that occurred a few months before the 44-day Patriotic War might create the possibility of a bigger war soon.

As for sociodemographic characteristics, those belonging to the 46-55 and 56-65 age groups chose the 2003-2008 option more often - 19.8 and 26.2%, respectively. Those who believed that Ilham Aliyev was preparing for a large-scale war during 2009-2013 were mainly concentrated in the 46-55 age group. 24% of those who chose the 2019-2020 option when answering this question, belong to the 26-35 age group. 20.2% of the respondents stated that they have never felt President Ilham Aliyev was prepared for a large-scale war during the years of his presidency. Those who expressed this opinion were almost equally distributed among the 26-65 age groups. It is notable to mention that, the President's important thesis about the war was that only he knew what, how, and when to do it.

2.2. The Factors Determining the Large-Scale War and Our Victory

During the 44-day war, there was a significant boost in the unity of the nation, the people, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, and the army. The people showed their support and unity in various ways, which were conveyed to the Supreme Commander-in-Chief. Based on the opinion of the public, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief relied heavily on two forces: the army (67.2%) and the people (54.8%) during the large-scale war. This result is in line with the high appreciation of the President's efforts towards building a strong army.

71.7% of those who stated that the President relied on the army in waging a large-scale war, also believed that the latest military technology-supported army played a key role in our victory.

Despite Azerbaijan's almost 30-year expectation for a fair position of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs, their influence and pressure on the occupier, and practical actions to end the occupa-

tion, none of those has been provided. As a result, Azerbaijan solved this problem in a politico-military way with its forces.

59.3% of those who stated that the President relied on the people in waging a large-scale war, also believed that the Azerbaijani people's support for the government and the army was among the key factors in our victory in the Patriotic War. The crowded march after the events in July of this year showed that Azerbaijani people do not accept the occupation or wish to reconcile with it. This march became a turning point in liberating our lands from occupation.

34.9% of the respondents believed that the Supreme Commander-in-Chief relied on his determination and strategic thinking in waging a large-scale war. In his interviews during the Patriotic War, the President has proven himself as a trained politician with excellent knowledge of the history of international relations.

32.2% of the respondents believed that the Supreme Commander-in-Chief relied on the political support of Turkey and Pakistan in waging a large-scale war. Turkey demonstrated its political and moral support for Azerbaijan during both the events of July this year and the 44-day peace enforcement operation from September 27. Pakistan's political and moral support to our country in the Patriotic War has also increased our strength.

Based on both the military achievements and people's opinions, we can state that the key guarantors of our victory in the II Karabakh War are our Army and the Supreme Commander-in-Chief.

64.1% of the respondents believe that our victory in the Patriotic War is based on the latest military technology-supported army. The role of the latest technologies in army building is undeniable. The 44-day Patriotic War showed that along with the professionalism of our soldiers and officers, one of the factors determining the absolute superiority of the Azerbaijani Army over the Armenian one was military technological support.

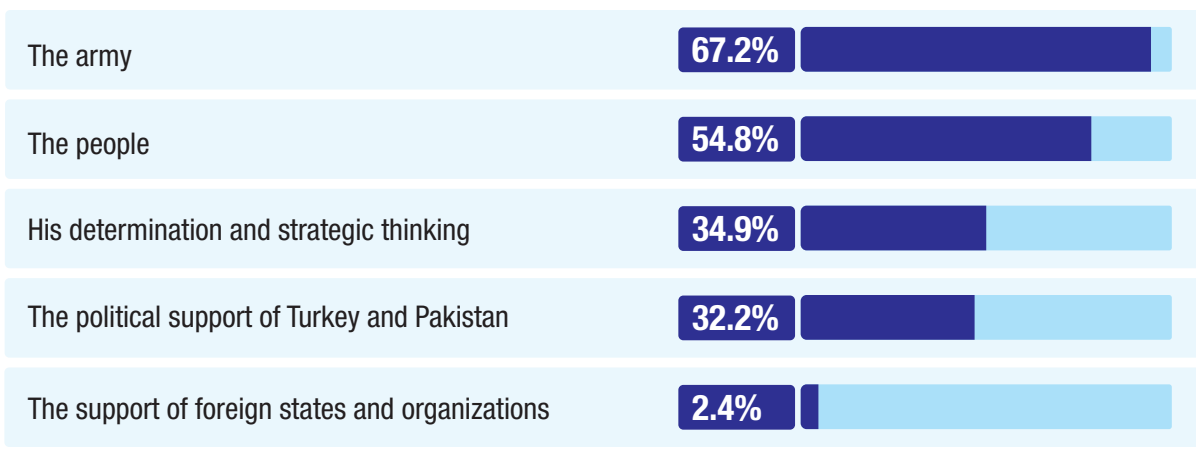
63.2% of the respondents mentioned the President's successful foreign policy among the factors underlying our victory in the Patriotic War. Comparing the answers of the respondents by age, we received an interesting result: respondents aged 18-35 indicated the Army as the key factor in our victory in the Patriotic War. while respondents over 36 specified the President's successful foreign policy as the key decisive factor.

The people were not left out of the 44-day fight waged by the Army and the Supreme Commander-in-Chief on the front. During this period,



DIAGRAM 6.

ACCORDING TO YOU, WHAT THE SUPREME COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF RELIED ON MOST IN WAGING A LARGE-SCALE WAR?



every Azerbaijani demonstrated support for the Army and the government in various forms within his or her opportunities and abilities. Half of the population (50.5%) consider that our victory in the Patriotic War is based on the Azerbaijani peo-

ple's support for the government and the Army. In particular, note that during the Patriotic War, important steps were taken from the standpoint of statehood, and large-scale consolidation was observed.



DIAGRAM 7.

WHAT ARE THE FACTORS BEHIND OUR VICTORY IN THE PATRIOTIC WAR?

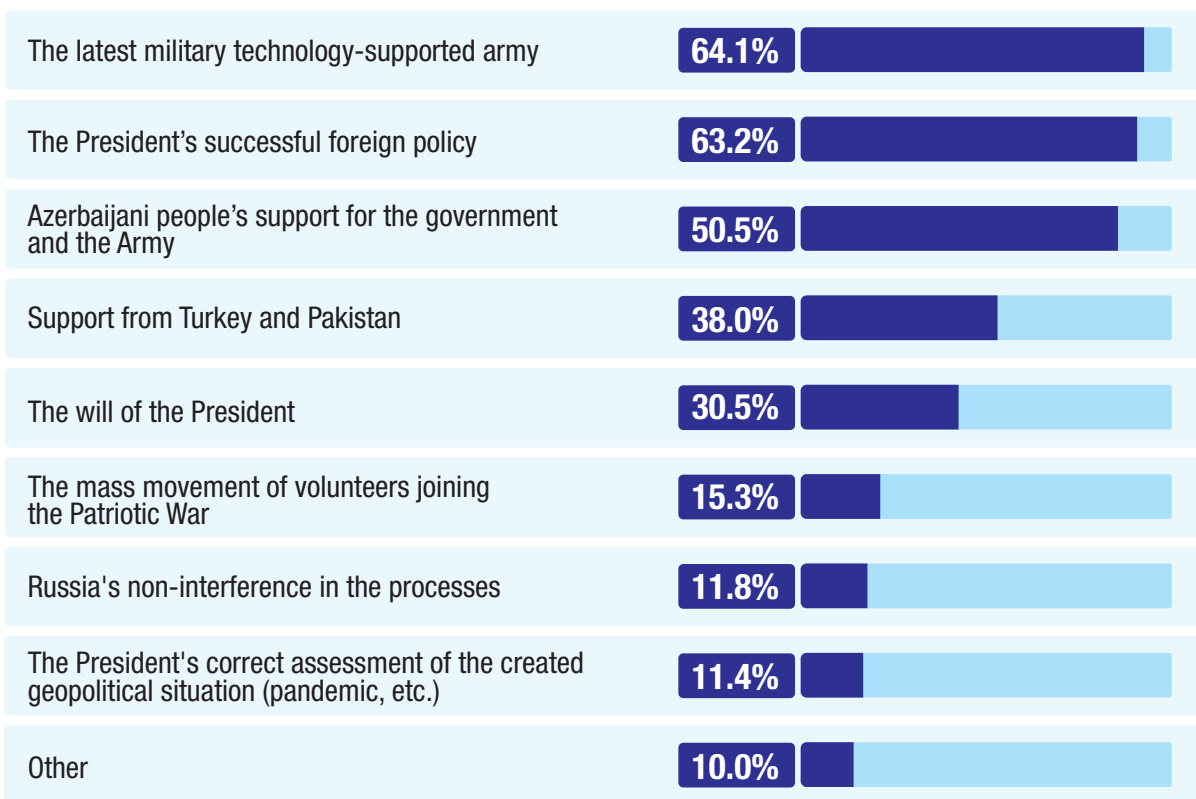
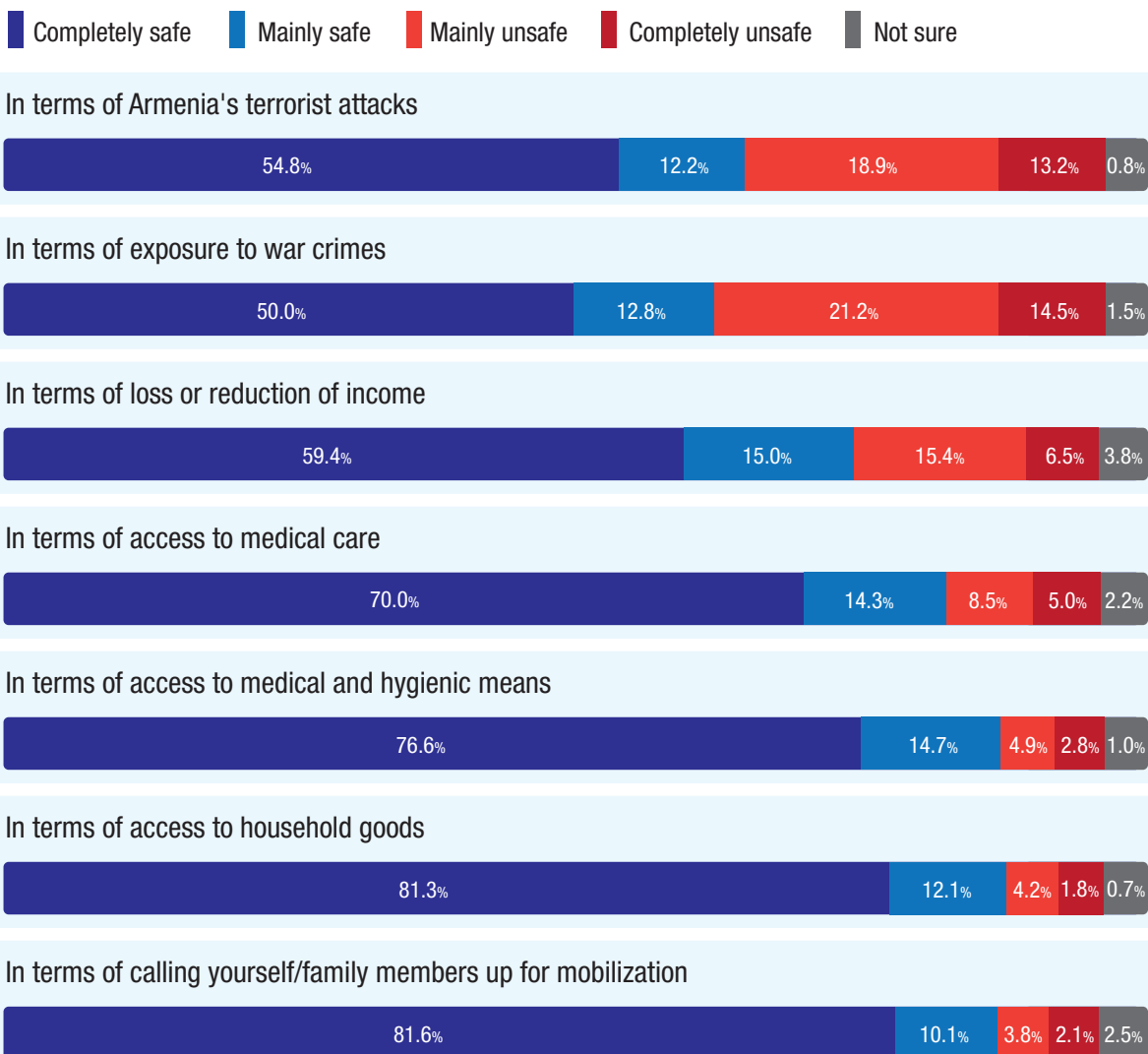




DIAGRAM 8.
HOW SAFE DID YOU FEEL DURING THE WAR?



All political parties put aside their political positions and supported President Ilham Aliyev, expressing confidence in him. 38.0 and 30.5% of the respondents stated that our victory in the Patriotic War was based on, respectively, the political support of Turkey and Pakistan and the President's will. The support factor of Turkey and Pakistan was chosen more by the private sector workers (48.1%).

2.3. The Security of the Population During the War

During the war, there were two threats expected by the population - Armenia's terrorist

attacks (32.1%) and war crimes (35.7%). The fear of Armenia's terrorist attack was observed most in Upper Karabakh (54.2%), Absheron (47.5%), and Aran (45%). By age group, fear was most prevalent among respondents aged 36-45. As for the fear of being exposed to war crimes, slightly more than half of the respondents from Upper Karabakh were worried about this issue, which was the highest figure in the distribution by region.

As expected, the fear of being exposed to war crimes was common among the population of the Ganja-Gazakh (48.2%) and Aran (47%) regions due to their geographical location. In terms of gender, fear was more common among women (41.2%) rather than men (30.1%).

2.4. Public Attitude Toward the Joint Statement

The joint statement on the results of the Patriotic War, signed between Azerbaijan, Russia, and Armenia on November 10, 2020, reflected Azerbaijan's both militarily and politically rightful position in this conflict. Referring to the survey of 'Public Attitudes to the Patriotic War Outcomes,' performed by the Social Research Center on December 1-4, 2020, we can state that the people's attitude toward this statement is fairly positive. Thus, according to that survey, the vast majority of the respondents (85.9%) expressed a positive attitude toward the joint statement signed between Azerbaijan, Russia, and Armenia (54.2% 'completely positive,' 31.7% 'mostly positive').

Based on the recent survey, 66.8% of the participants believed that the statement signed on November 10th indicated the liberation of 3 regions without any loss. 61.5% of these respondents considered the tripartite statement

as a symbol of Azerbaijan's military and political victory. Additionally, almost half of the participants (49.9%) believe that the tripartite statement signed by Azerbaijan, Russia, and Armenia means Armenia's complete defeat.

11.2% of the respondents are worried about the remaining uncertainties regarding the future of Karabakh while 5.2% and 5.8% of those believe that we could not achieve a complete victory over Armenia and the desired results. The respondents aged 18-25 characterize the statement negatively at least 2 times more compared to other age groups. Similar figures were observed by education levels. Thus, 15% of those with higher education are worried about the remaining uncertainties regarding the future of Karabakh. This figure is around 10% for each group of respondents with vocational/college and completed secondary education. Similarly, about 10% of the respondents with higher education believe that we have not fully achieved the desired results while for other groups, this figure is less than 3.5%.

SECTION III. The President's Information Policy During the Patriotic War

3.1. The Factors Determining Our Position in the International Information Space

Securing national interests against unfair and unequal international information space requires a comprehensive approach. The regular, systematic, and comprehensive presentation of the rightful position of our country in the international information space is among the key priorities of the information policy and is of serious strategic importance. Therefore, the hybrid nature of the II Karabakh war is supposed to open up the information front as well.

Based on the analysis, it appears that the strategy we applied was intended to maintain our geopolitical advantage during the pre-war, war, and post-war periods. The main argument in the international arena can be summarized as follows: "The II Karabakh (Patriotic) War was a necessary step to achieve justice and eliminate existing unfairness."

During the said period, the international 'aggressive media' chosen as one of the major tools of the media war was neutralized with substantiated facts with the direct participation

of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief. As a result, the enemy's actions to disseminate information based on 'great lie art' failed.

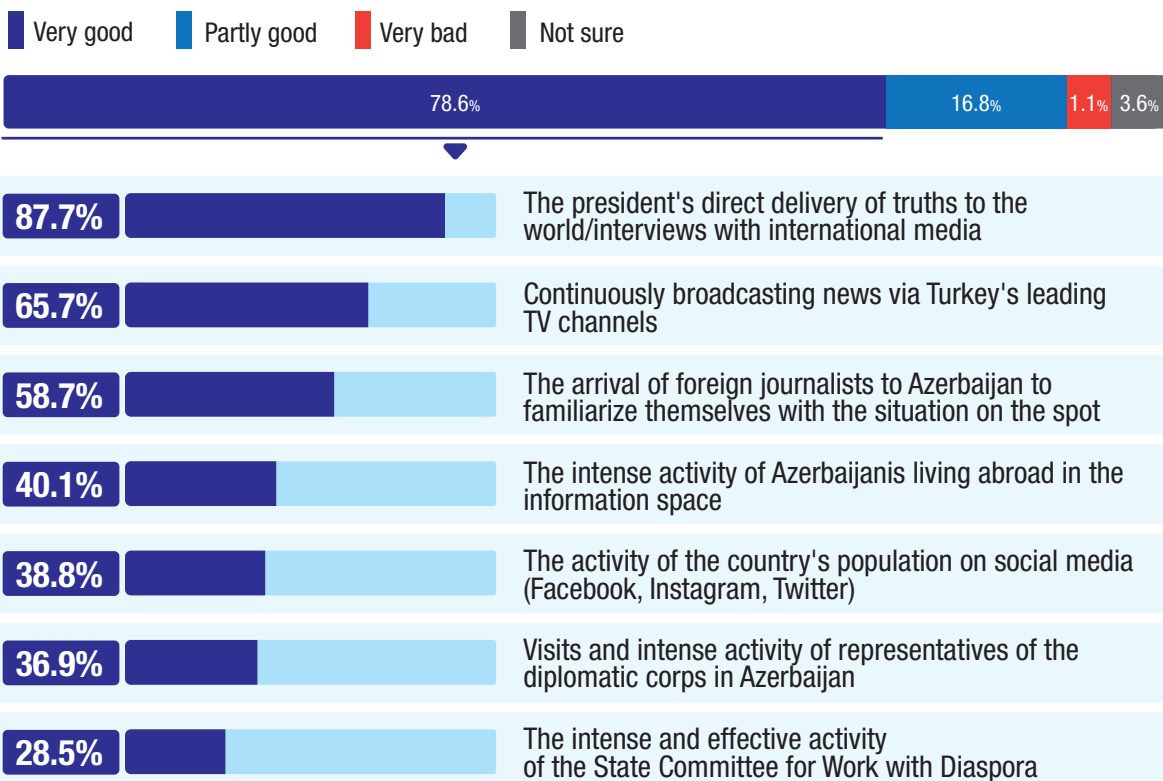
In general, a significant part of the respondents assessed our country's position in the international information space during the war more positively compared to previous periods (78.6% 'very good' and 16.8% 'partly good'). 29.5% of those who express a positive opinion have higher education while 70.5% have secondary and vocational education. On the other hand, 66.5% of 78.6% of the respondents who assess the position of our country in the international information space as 'very good,' also state that they regularly watch the President's interviews with foreign media while 24.7, 6.7, and 2.1% state that they do it, respectively, often, rarely, and never.

87.7% of the respondents associate our strong position in the international information space with the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's ability to frame war and peace in his intensive interviews with the international media. 43.9% of those who made this conclusion were aged 46-65. When considering the education level, 28.9% of those who express this opinion have higher education, and 71.1% have secondary and vocational education.



DIAGRAM 9.

HOW DO YOU ASSESS OUR POSITION IN THE INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION SPACE



Other factors determining this advantage are the continuous coverage of the process by the leading media agencies of the Republic of Turkey (65.7%) and, no doubt, the fact that media representatives of other foreign countries come to Azerbaijan to familiarize themselves with the situation on the spot (58.7%). 24.4% of those who stress the activity of the Turkish media are young and middle-generation respondents.

According to the respondents' opinions (38.8%), the organized actions of the country's population on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) are also an important factor. 38.0% of the youth representatives share this opinion.

3.2. The President's Interviews with International Media and Appeals to the People in Public Opinion

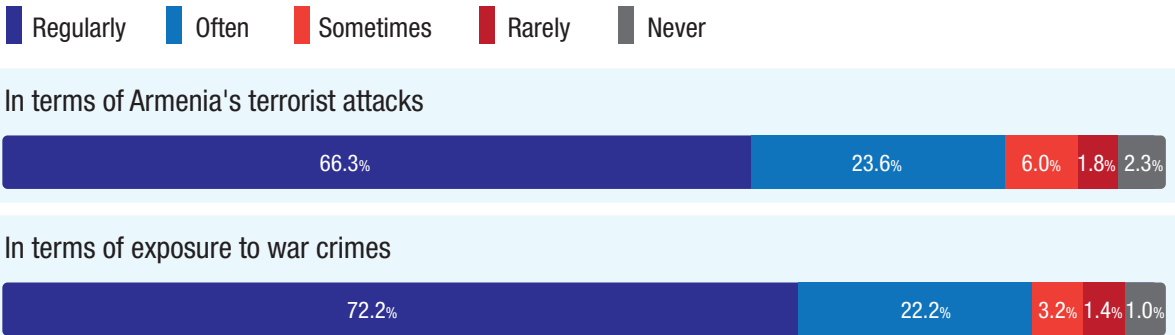
In modern warfare tactics, media warfare is considered a crucial form of combat that sets the stage for military actions. During times of emergency, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's interviews with

foreign media outlets and appeals to the public have been selected as the main components of the political communication strategy, designed to prevent the spread of inaccurate and false news.

Commander-in-Chief's ability to skillfully answer all provocative questions and put his 66.3 and 23.6% of the respondents, respectively, regularly and often watched the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's interviews with foreign media while only 1.8% rarely watched them. According to preliminary estimates, we could also note that the respondents preferred comparatively more the President's appeals to the people (72.2% watched them 'regularly' and 22.2% 'often'). Respondents who stated that they rarely follow this area made up only 1.4% of the general opinion studied. About 2.3 and 1.0% of the respondents state that they do not follow, respectively, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's interviews with the international media and appeals to the people at all. Considering the distribution profile of this respondent group, we can note that 79.3% belong to the middle social strata, 75.9% have secondary education, and 31.0% are between 26-35. If we assess these re-



DIAGRAM 10.
HOW OFTEN DID YOU WATCH THE PRESIDENT'S INTERVIEWS WITH FOREIGN MEDIA AND APPEALS TO THE PEOPLE?



spondents from the employment perspective, we can see that 51.7% of them are employed.

As for the matters assessed by the respondents as the key advantages in interviews with foreign media, 85.3 and 82.8% appreciated, respectively, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's ability to skillfully answer all provocative questions and put his interlocutors in an awkward position with professionalism, and 79.4% appreciated the President's high foreign language skills.

56.0% of the respondents expressed the opinion that the Supreme Commander-in-Chief re-

mained cool during these interviews and managed his emotions professionally.

Herewith, 2.8% of the respondents took the position of failure to give full answers to provocative questions. When considering these respondents' education levels, we can see that 30.3% have higher education, 69.7% have secondary and vocational education, and 78.7% belong to the middle social strata. On the other hand, 75.8 and 24.2% of the respondents who express the aforementioned opinion state that they watch the interviews regularly and often, respectively.



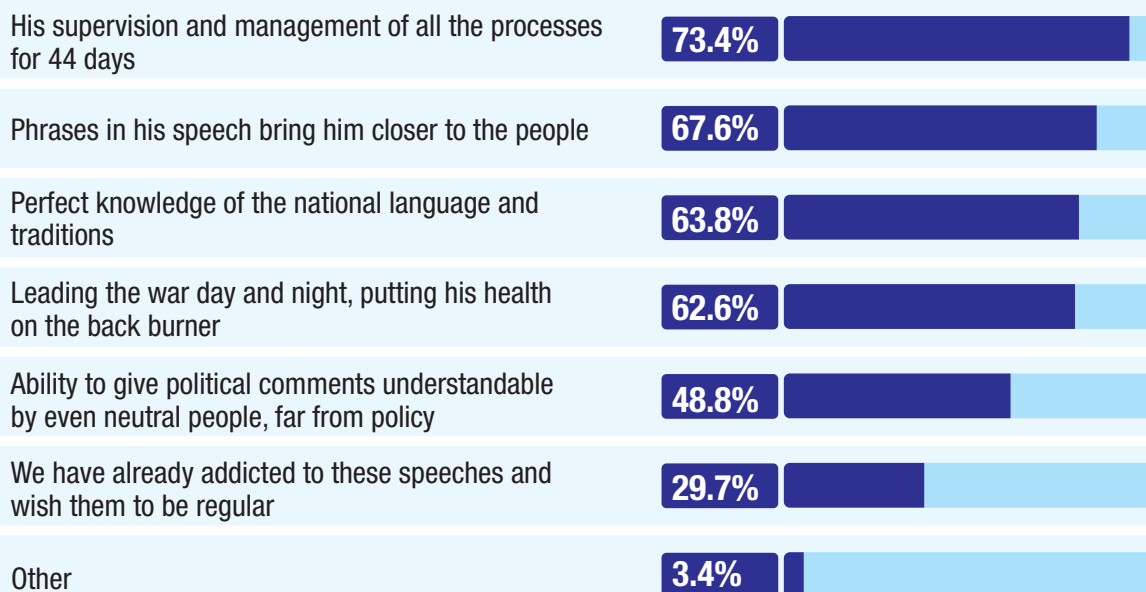
DIAGRAM 11.
WHAT DID YOU OBSERVE IN THE PRESIDENT'S INTERVIEWS WITH FOREIGN MEDIA?





DIAGRAM 12.

WHAT DID YOU OBSERVE IN THE PRESIDENT'S APPEALS TO THE PEOPLE?



Pointing their position on the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's appeals to the people, the respondents mainly stressed his strict control over the processes during the 44-day war (73.4%) and the ability to preferably express political rhetoric in simple language (63.8%).

Based on the survey results, in the example of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, we can note the trend of sensitive implementation of 3 key political communication functions in the course of the (44-day) media war: firstly, directly participate in the identification of emerging politico-military problems (politicians and media); secondly, ensure the legal framework in the environment of political problem discussion (domestic and foreign public discussions); and thirdly, remove the topics that have ceased to be the subject of controversy, on which a common agreement has been reached, from the agenda.

3.3. Sources of Information on the President's Sociopolitical Activity

According to the respondents, TV channels and social media platforms are the key sources of information on the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's interviews with foreign media and appeals to the people. Accordingly, 91.3 and 29.3% of the respondents state that they

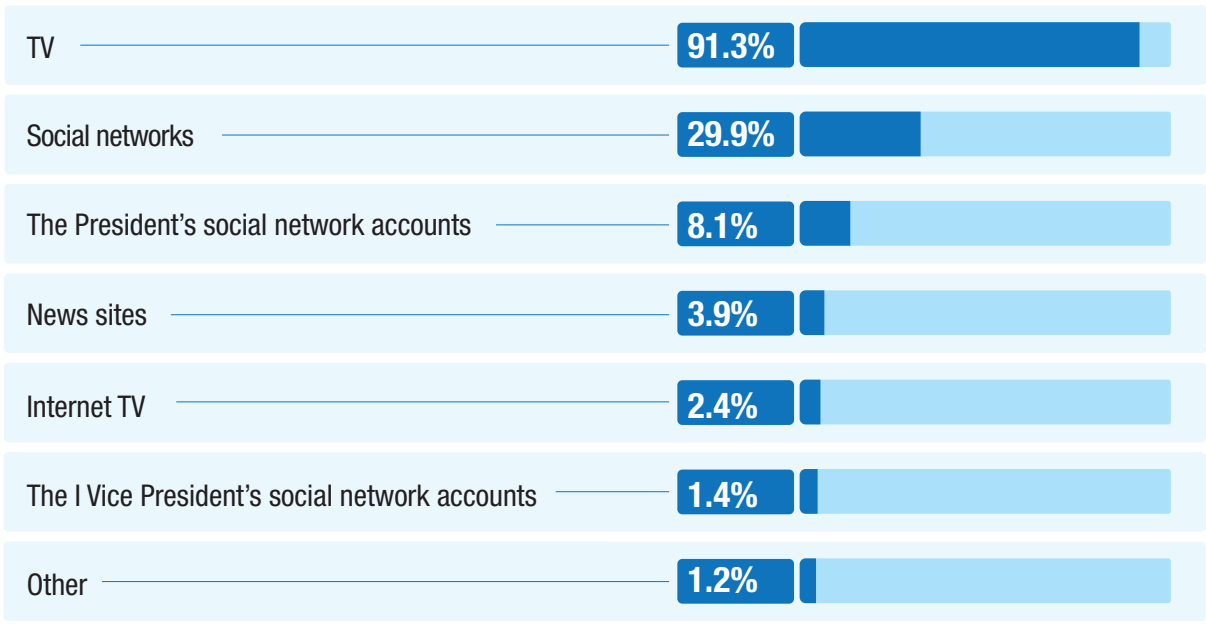
get information mainly from, respectively, TV channels and social media platforms. 8.1% of the respondents consider the President's social network accounts to be the next popular source of information on his interviews with local and foreign channels, appeals to the people, and visits.

Only 3.9 and 2.4% of the respondents get information on the President's activity in this field from, respectively, news websites and Internet TV. A positive correlation was observed between the respondents who specified TV channels as the key source of information and their age. Instead, in parallel, among the youth, social media platforms act as the key information source. In particular, 32.3% of the respondents between 18-25 state that they get information on the President's activity in the said field from his social network accounts. The analysis of the survey results shows a positive correlation between the growth in the respondents' education level and the use of the President's social network accounts to get information on his social and political activity.



DIAGRAM 13.

WHERE DO YOU MOSTLY FOLLOW THE PRESIDENT'S INTERVIEWS, APPEALS TO THE PEOPLE, AND VISITS?



During the war, the number of views on TV channels has increased, considering the restriction applied to Internet resources to ensure information security.

Just during the 44-day war period, 67.6, 57.3, and 56.0% of the respondents stated that they got information mainly from Azerbaijan TV (AzTV), Khazar TV, and ATV channels. ITV,

Real TV, and ARB channels with, respectively, 36.6, 35.8, and 35.2% ranked next. Note that these results do not reflect the general rating of TV channels as a media barometer, the media landscape is determined as part of specific studies and are limited to the war period. The number of views of television channels and their monthly and annual ratings may be differ-



DIAGRAM 14.

THE LIST OF TV CHANNELS

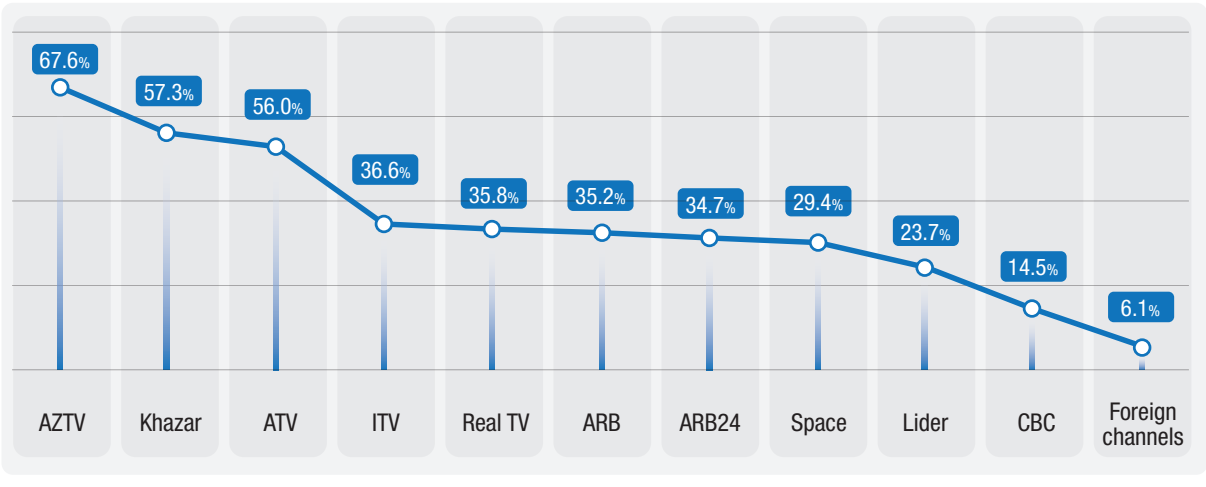




DIAGRAM 15.
THE LIST OF SOCIAL NETWORKS

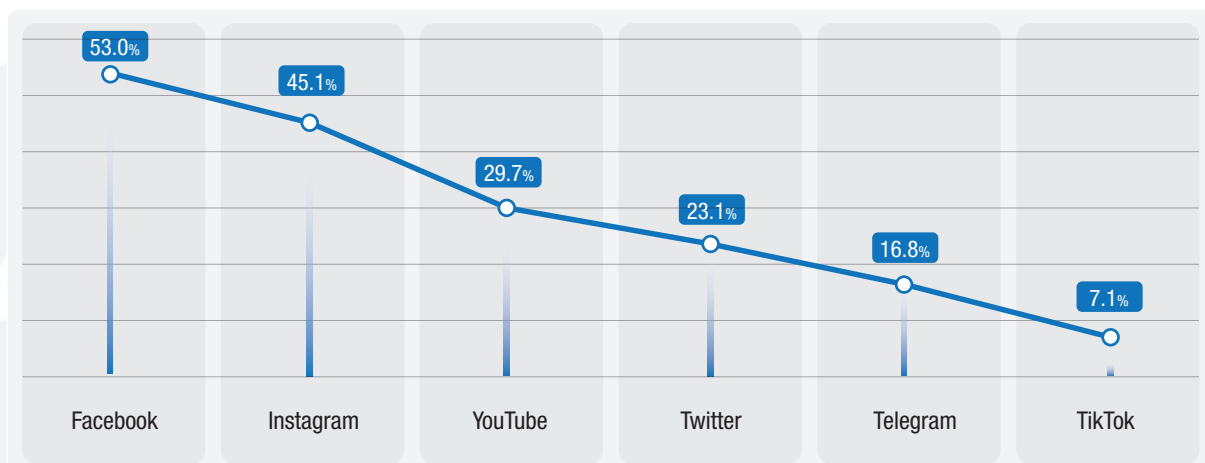
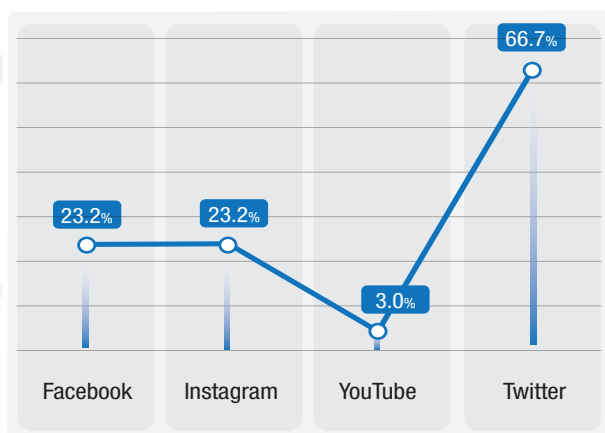


DIAGRAM 16.
**THE LIST OF THE PRESIDENT'S
SOCIAL NETWORK ACCOUNTS**



ent in different periods.

The fact that the victorious news of the territories liberated from occupation were personally delivered by the President to the public via the Twitter social network causing the population to use this platform more. Thus, 66.7% of social network users follow the President's interviews, appeals to the people, and visits via his Twitter account. In this field, the respondents who applied to the President's Facebook and Instagram accounts make up 23.2% of both.



DIAGRAM 17.
THE LIST OF INTERNET TV/YOUTUBE CHANNELS

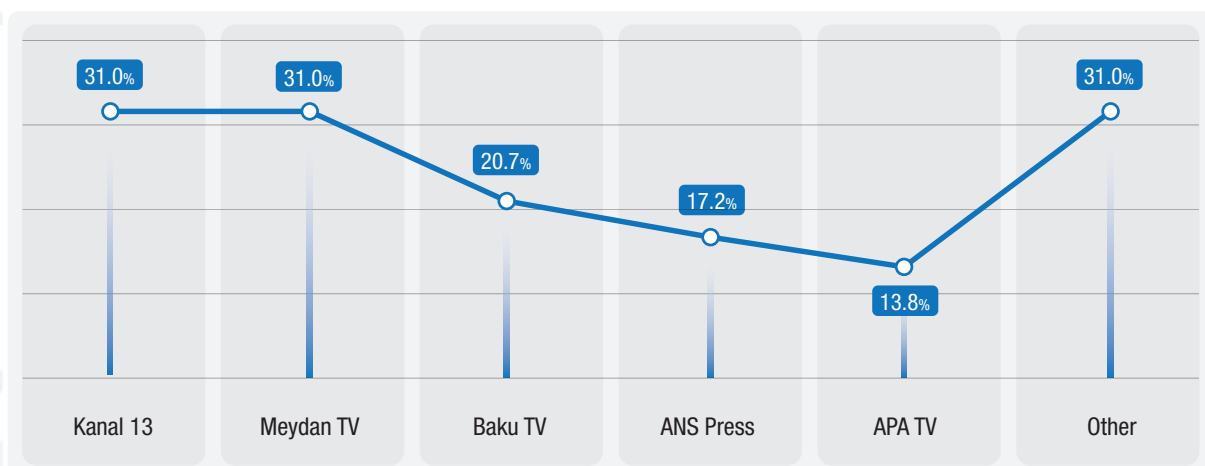
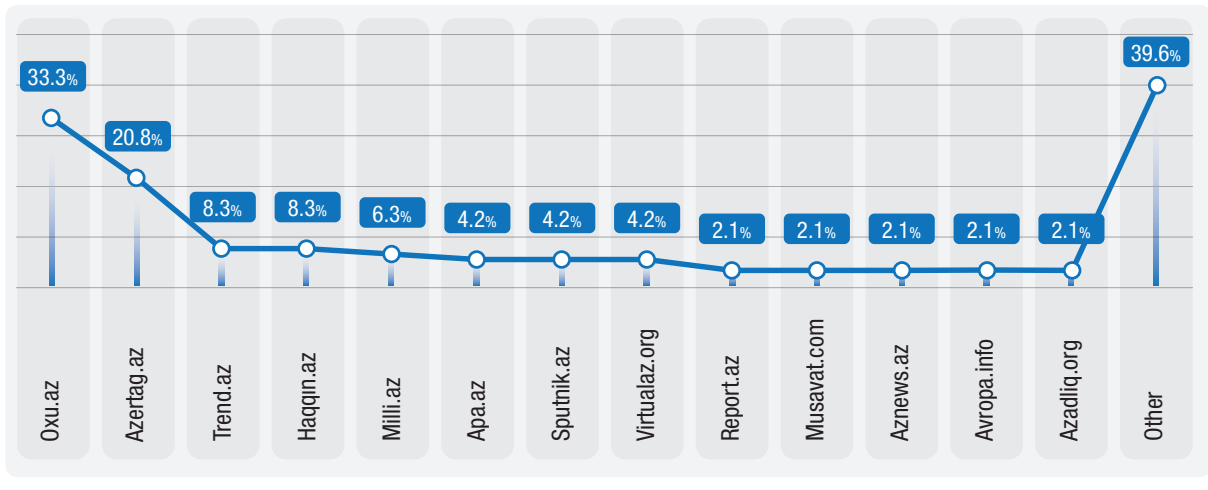




DIAGRAM 18.
THE LIST OF NEWS SITES



SECTION IV. Specifics of the President's Appeals to the People

4.1. The Effect of the President's Appeals to the People

According to a significant part of the respondents - 79.7%, the major impact of phrases used by the President in his political speech on the population is that people start using them in their daily communication. 61.1% of the respondents believe that the phrases used by the President in his speech have become aph-

orisms since they are close to the vernacular. Almost half of the respondents (48.8%) state that people started sharing the phrases used by the President in his political speech on social networks. The comparative analysis of opinions by occupation shows that students stand out as the group taking this position - 82.4%.

According to the opinion of 35.5% of the population, surrounding writings and posters with these phrases are among the impressions created by



DIAGRAM 19.
HOW DOES THE IMPRESSION FROM THE PHRASES USED BY THE PRESIDENT IN HIS SPEECHES MANIFEST ITSELF?

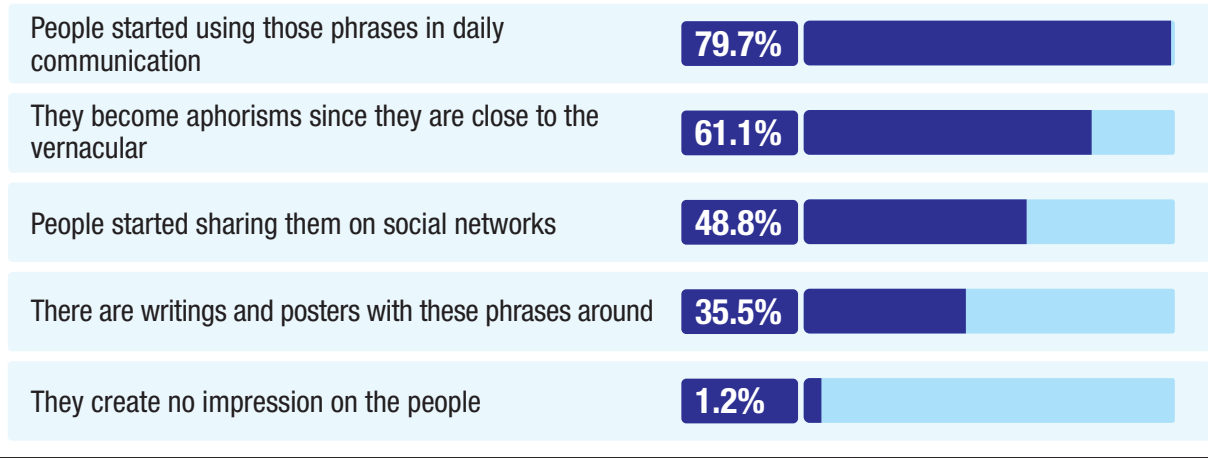
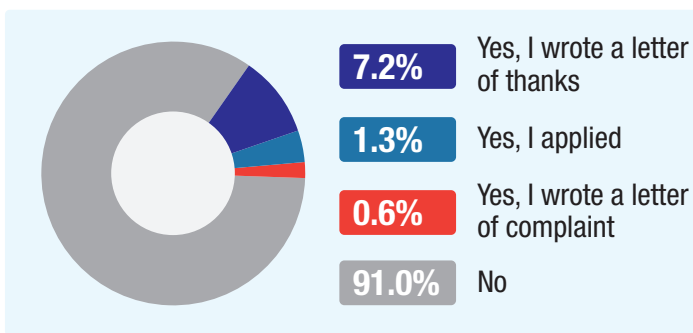




DIAGRAM 20.

HAVE YOU APPLIED/ WRITTEN A LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT DURING THIS PERIOD?



the President's speeches. This was especially observed during the period of the news of victory. The comparative analysis of the distribution of the opinion that these phrases create no impression on the people by region shows that the Aran (80.4%) and Guba-Khachmaz (72.5%) economic regions are distinguished by the highest figures.

During the 44-day Patriotic War, 7.2% of the respondents expressed their attitudes toward the President by writing a letter of thanks to him. Among the respondents who wrote a letter of thanks to the President, those between 56-65 made up the majority compared to other age groups. 54.7% of those who wrote a letter to the President are the respondents with higher education, which shows that this category dominates compared to other education levels. In terms of occupation, the public sector workers (35.6%) expressed their gratitude more than others. When considering the distribution of those who wrote a letter of thanks to the President by region, we see the domination of Baku is more dominant: Baku 41.4%, Aran 12.6%, Lankaran 11.5%, Ganja-Gazakh 10.3%.

4.2. Memorable Phrases in the President's Speeches and Appeals to the People

A considerable part of the President's appeals to the people comprises many of his phrases. Along with using popular language, these speeches formed new ideas about the President's character in general.

The slogan 'Karabakh is ours, Karabakh is Azerbaijan!' was the most remembered phrase in the President's speeches during the Patriotic War. In response to the statement of the Prime Minister of Armenia, "Karabakh is Azerbaijan, end of story!", Ilham Aliyev's phrase 'Karabakh is Azerbaijan, exclamation mark!' at the Valday discussion club created a great mood in the people and be-

came a working term starting from that time. In the Trust Index 2019 survey (1st issue) performed by the Social Research Center, 80% of the respondents stated that this speech will lead to progress in solving the Karabakh problem. As a result, that phrase became the slogan of our victories in the Patriotic War. 66.8% of the respondents stated that the slogan 'Karabakh is ours, Karabakh is Azerbaijan!' was the most memorable phrase in the President's speeches in this field. 48.9% of the respondents assessed the slogan 'Iron Fist' symbolizing the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's steel political will in ensuring the victory of Azerbaijan as one of the most memorable phrases. A lot of the respondents remembered also other phrases in the President's speeches.

4.3. Public Attitude Toward the President after the Patriotic War

The 44-day II Karabakh War caused a positive change in the attitude of the absolute majority of the population (81.6%) toward the President. Compared to men, women prevailed among those who stated that their attitudes changed positively. Respectively, this figure is 83.7% for women and 79.4% for men. The trust in the President of 87.3% of those who stated that their opinion of the President's character has changed positively increased. About one in 5 respondents stated no change in their attitude toward the President. Herewith, 74.8% of those who stated no change in their opinion (18.2%) increased their trust in the President.

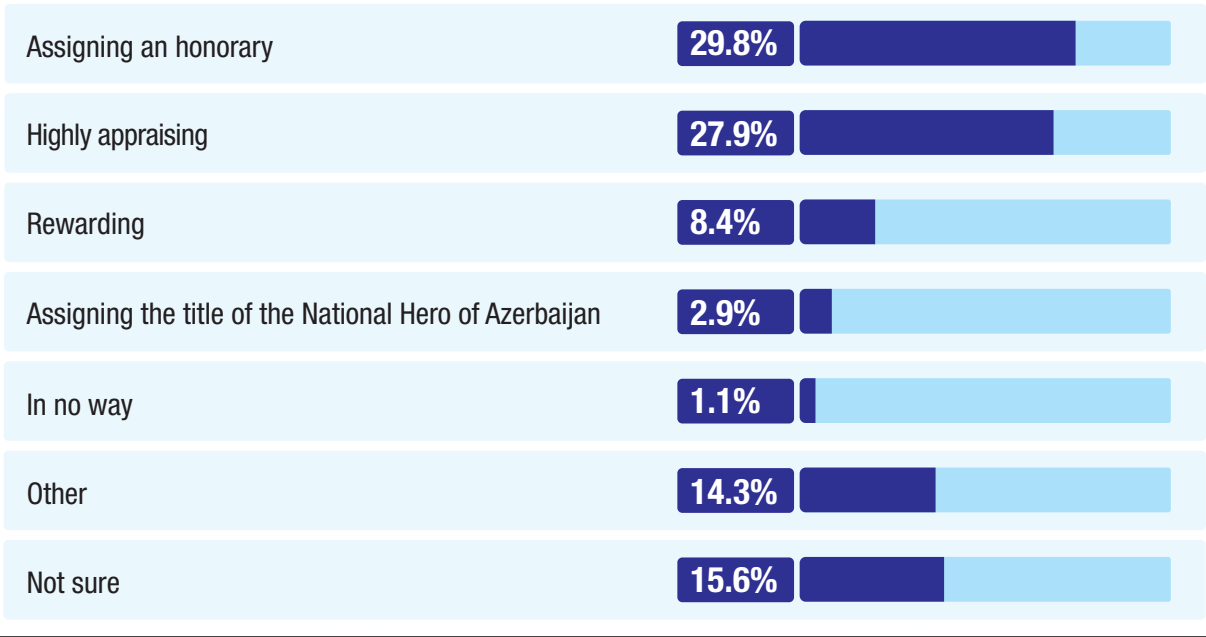
In the eyes of 81.6% of the respondents, two changes stand out. Thus, approximately 70.0% of the respondents stated that as a result of the war, they recognized the President as a person close to the people, whose opinions are important to him. 67.3% of the respondents stated that they saw in the President an example of a national leader like Heydar Aliyev.

SECTION V. Public Attitude Toward the Activity of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief Against the Background of the Patriotic War



DIAGRAM 21.

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE THE SUPREME COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF'S MERITS IN THE PATRIOTIC WAR TO BE APPRECIATED?



5.1. Assessing the Merits of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief in the Patriotic War in Public Opinion

The Supreme Commander-in-Chief's merits in the Patriotic War were greatly appreciated by the population. People expressed different opinions in this context. 29.8% of the respondents state that they support appreciating the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's merits in the Patriotic War with an honorary title. The fact that 1/3 of the respondents take this position shows that there are many supporters of assigning an honorary title to the Supreme Commander-in-Chief among the people.

18.9% of the respondents state that they wish the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's merits in the Patriotic War to be highly appreciated. However, these respondents have not made any proposal on how to do this.

5.2. Karabakh War: Policy Decisions on Establishing Victory and Commemoration Days, the Award and Social Security of War Participants in Public Opinion

Note that on November 20, 2020, upon amending the Law On Establishment of Orders and Medals of the Republic of Azerbaijan in connection with the establishment of orders and medals of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the occasion of the victory in the Patriotic War, the 'Victory' and 'Karabakh' orders and 'Hero of the Patriotic War,' 'Brave Warrior,' 'For Distinction in Battle', "For the Liberation of Sugovushan," 'For the Liberation of Jabrayil,' 'For the Liberation of Khojavand,' 'For the Liberation of Fuzuli,' 'For the Liberation of Zangilan,' 'For the Liberation of Gubadli,' 'For the Liberation of Shusha,' 'For the Liberation of Kalbajar,' 'For the Liberation of Aghdam,' 'For the Liberation of Lachin,' 'Patriot-

ic War Participant,' and 'For Merits in the Rear in the Patriotic War' medals were established. Several military servants who have shown valour in the Patriotic War have already been awarded orders and medals by the President's appropriate orders.

At the initial stage, the absolute majority of the respondents - 93.7% (84.9% 'very good' and 8.8% 'mostly good') positively assessed the awarding of officers and soldiers for their merits in the war. An interesting point is that 5.6% of the respondents stated they were not aware of the awards. In terms of the education level and social strata of this 5.6% respondent segment, the majority of them, respectively, 63.2 and 73.5%, have secondary education and belong to the middle social strata. On the other hand, 25.1% of the total respondents were not aware of the forms and titles of established orders and medals. 30.4% of this group of respondents have higher education, and 69.6% have secondary and vocational education. Also, we see that 79.4% of the respondents belong to the middle social strata.

On the other hand, 5.6 and 3.3% of the respondents taking this position state that they watch the President's appeals to the people, respectively, sometimes and rarely.

As for the attitude toward the decision to establish respective commemoration days, it was highly appreciated by the absolute majority of the respondents. Thus, 96.7 and around 99.0% of the respondents state that they support celebrating, respectively, September 27 as Remembrance Day and November 8 as Victory Day. Only 2.8% stated they were not aware of the decision to celebrate September 27 as Remembrance Day.

As for the benefits established to improve the social well-being of and provide state support for martyrs' families and war veterans, we can say that 64.2% of the respondents have a positive attitude toward this (46.2% 'very good' and 18.0% 'mostly good').

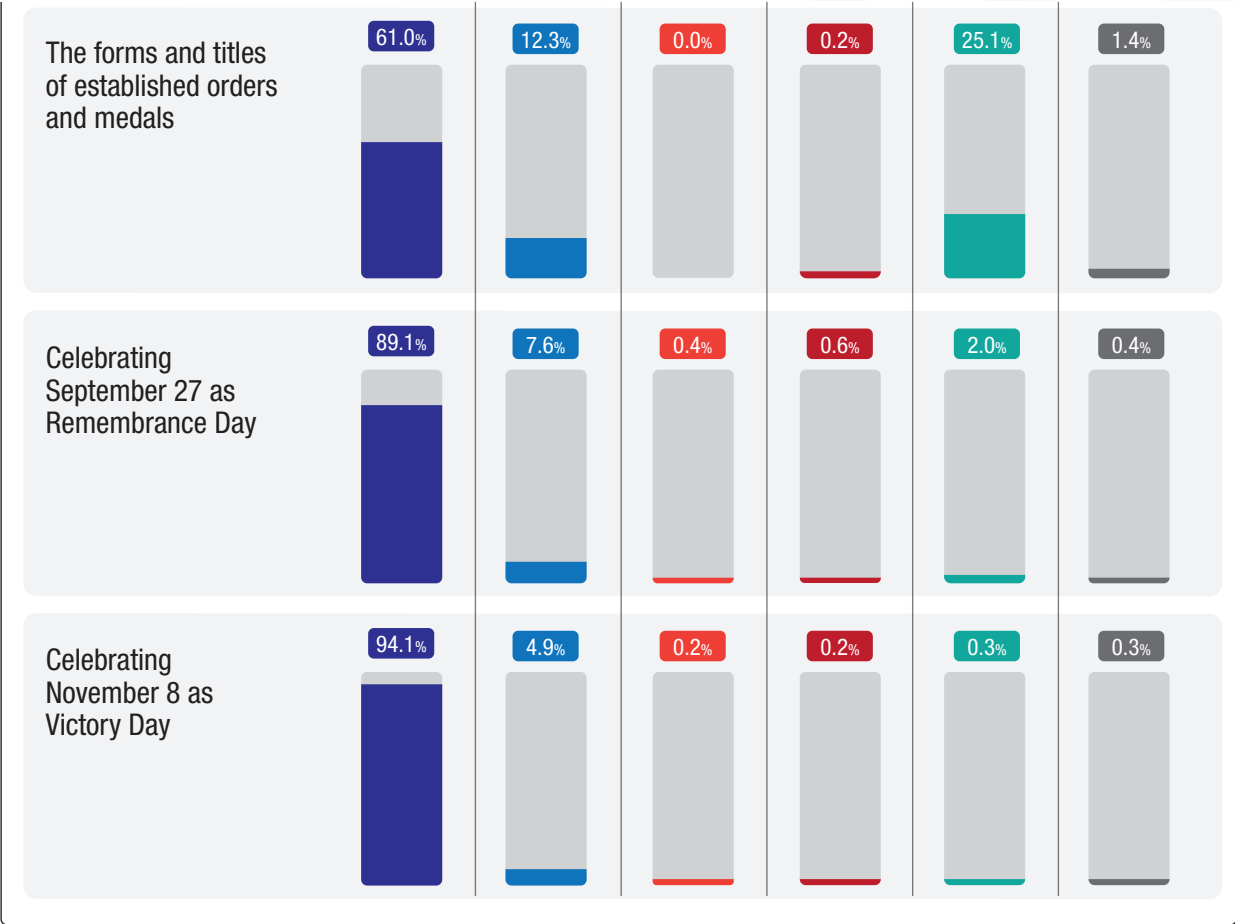
However, 16.4% of the respondents (9.2% 'mostly bad' and 7.2% 'very bad') take the opposite position. 24.1, 71.9, and 4.0% of this segment are represented by respondents from, respectively, lower, middle, and upper social strata, 48.2 of them have higher education, and 51.8% have secondary and vocational education. An interesting point is that 17.5% of the total respondents stated that they were not aware of that. 2.0% had difficulty expressing their opinions on this issue.



DIAGRAM 22.

WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE FOLLOWING?





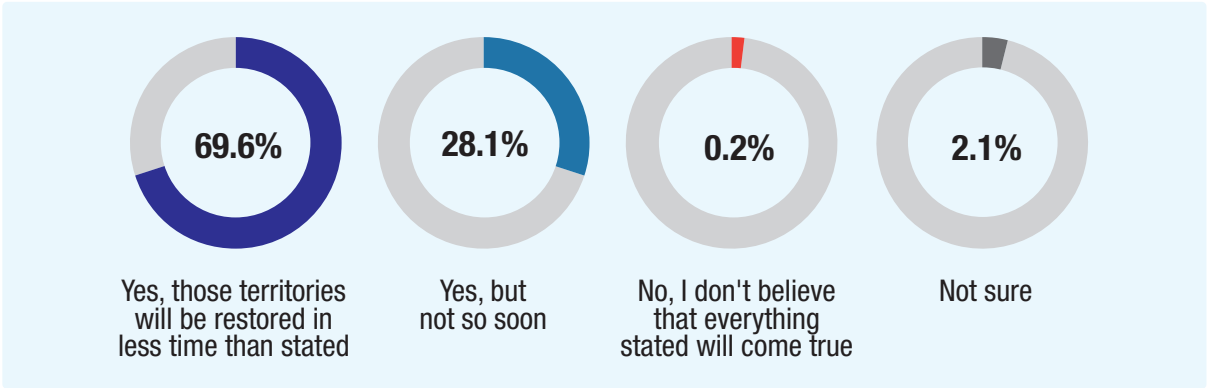
SECTION VI. Post-War Period: Reconstruction Initiatives in the Areas Liberated from Occupation in Public Opinion

6.1. The Period of Restoring the Areas Liberated from Occupation

When we refer to world military history, we see the importance of looking for the main cause of any war in previous conflicts. There-



DIAGRAM 23.
DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE SUPREME COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF WILL IMPLEMENT THE PLANS FOR THE RESTORATION OF LIBERATED CITIES OR REGIONS IN THE COMING YEARS?



fore, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief as the winner of a righteous war regularly shares information on the development of reconstruction concepts requiring extensive public debate for the post-war period with the public. As part of the study, public opinion on the President's initiatives concerning the reconstruction plans can be characterized as follows.

Most of the respondents believe in the statements about the restoration of the liberated territories shortly. Thus, 97.7% of the respondents come to this conclusion (69.6% of them believe that this work will be fulfilled within a short period while 28.1% assume that the process will take time). The fact that 2.1% of respondents had trouble answering this question while only 0.2% of respondents disagreed with it is an intriguing discovery.

15.4 and 84.6% of the respondents who have difficulty expressing their opinions on the restoration plans belong to, respectively, lower and middle social strata, 11.5% of them have higher education, and 88.5% have secondary and vocational education.

6.2. The Key Expectations from the New Stage Azerbaijan Has Passed to

The following directions were determined as the key expectations of the respondents from

the new stage for the region and our country after the completion of the restoration work.

Thus, 75% of the total respondents believe that employment and welfare will be improved, and 55.3% consider that new economic prospects will be created. 43.6% of the respondents share the opinion that the II Karabakh War will be a precedent for solving frozen conflicts.

12.6, 80.2, and 7.2% of 75% of the respondents who believe that employment and welfare will be improved belong to, respectively, the lower, middle, and upper social strata. 15.9% of the respondents taking this position are unemployed.

In the geographic structure of 55.3% of the respondents who believe that the ground for new economic perspectives will be created, the highest and the lowest expectations belong to, respectively, the Aran and Daghligh Shirvan economic regions with the figures of 70.2 and 32.6%.

In the profile of the respondents who share the conclusion that the II Karabakh war will be a precedent for solving frozen conflicts, 47.5% have secondary education and 23.4% are within 56-65.

The preliminary analysis of the public opinion survey allows for asserting that the community expects to apply a strategic rather than conventional approach to reconstruction.



DIAGRAM 24.

WHAT ARE YOUR KEY EXPECTATIONS FROM THE NEW STAGE AFTER THE RESTORATION OF OUR TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY?

Problems such as unemployment and poverty will be reduced

75.0%

The social welfare of the population will improve

74.2%

A stronger stage will start in the country's political and cultural development

56.5%

The ground for new economic prospects will emerge

55.3%

The II Karabakh war will become an example of solving frozen conflicts

43.6%

Not sure

1.6%

SECTION VII. The Confidence and Trust Dynamics

7.1. Confidence and Trust in the President

The dynamics of public trust and confidence in the President have changed to varying degrees, according to surveys conducted for almost a year between the end of 2019 and the end of 2020.

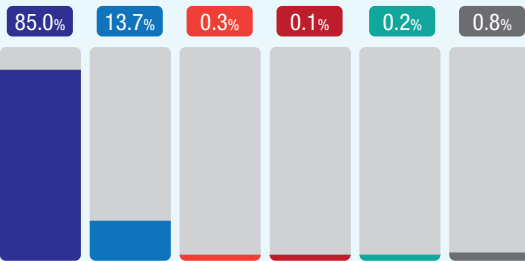
The vast majority of all respondents in the fourth quarter of the current year indicated that their confidence and trust in the president had increased. By the middle of the year, this indicator had decreased relatively, but those whose trust and confidence had not changed still outperformed others.



DIAGRAM 25.
**HOW HAVE YOUR CONFIDENCE AND TRUST
IN THE FOLLOWING PERSONS CHANGED?**

■ Increased ■ Not changed but remained high ■ Not changed but remained low ■ Decreased ■ Do not trust ■ Not sure

President



I Vice President

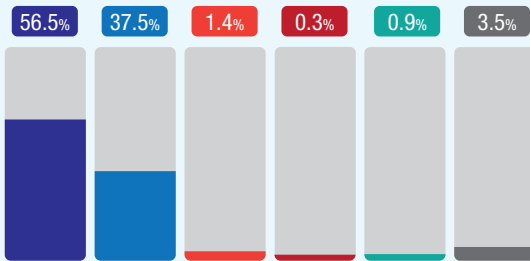


DIAGRAM 26.
THE DYNAMICS OF CONFIDENCE AND TRUST IN THE PRESIDENT

■ My trust and confidence have increased ■ My trust and confidence have not changed
■ My trust and confidence have decreased ■ Not sure

In terms of exposure to war crimes



In terms of loss or reduction of income



In terms of access to medical care



In terms of access to medical and hygienic means



In January-March and April-June 2020, the respondents who stated that their trust and confidence in the President had increased made up 58.1 and 24.6%, respectively, in the surveys performed in the last quarter of the year, this indicator reached 85.0%.

The absolute majority (97.0% on average) of the respondents who stated that their trust and confidence in the President had not changed according to the survey results for March (38.2%), June (71.7%), and December (14.0%) of 2020, reported that their trust and confidence have not changed but remained high. Accordingly, the respondents who reported a decrease in their trust and confidence made up 1.4, 0.9, 2.6, and only 0.1% at the end of 2019 and in March, June, and December 2020, respectively.

The analysis of the survey results shows that the trust and confidence of the respondents in the President and the I Vice President tend to rise. Thus, 94.0% of the respondents stated that their trust and confidence in the I Vice-President remained high or even increased. For comparison, during similar polls in June, 92.7% of total respondents stated their trust in the I Vice President.

7.2. Confidence and Trust in the Milli Majlis and Judicial Institutions

The analysis of the survey results shows that while during the year, public trust and confidence in the President and the First Vice President have increased, the level of trust and confidence in other governmental branches has changed differently.

After the elections in February 2020, 32.3% of the respondents stated that they fully trusted the newly formed parliament in March while the corresponding figure for June was 25.7%. In March, respondents who stated that they did not trust at all and mostly did not trust the parliament made up 12.3 and 8.4%, respectively, while the corresponding figures for June were 18.3 and 10%.

According to the analysis of the December poll results, 15.9% of the respondents stated that their trust and confidence in the Milli Majlis increased while 28.1% reported that they have not changed but remained high. The trust and confidence of 13.7% of the respondents in the Milli Majlis have not changed but remained low. 3.5% of the respondents stated that their trust and confidence have decreased. 22.9% of the

survey participants stated a lack of confidence and trust. The practice of Western countries shows that 40-50% of the population's general trust and confidence in the institution exercising law-making power is sufficient for social stability. However, the current trend can be interpreted as an expression of the need for the institution in question to consider public opinion in its activity and expand communication opportunities.

A similar trend is typical of judicial bodies. In March, 30.9% of the respondents stated that they fully trust the judicial bodies while in June, the corresponding figure made up 27.6%. In March and June, respectively, 24.7 and 20.5% of the respondents stated that they did not trust the activity of judicial bodies.

According to the December survey results, 14.5% of the respondents stated that their trust and confidence in the courts increased while 25.6% reported that they have not changed but remained high. 1.6% of the respondents stated that their trust and confidence decreased, while 11.6% reported that they had not changed but remained low. In total, 22.4% of the respondents shared the position of lack of trust and confidence.

The analysis of the results shows the need for additional reforms to increase public trust and confidence in judicial bodies.

7.3. Confidence and Trust in Executive Bodies

A comparison of the performed surveys shows that 24.2% of the respondents state that their trust and confidence in the Cabinet of Ministers as the highest executive body have increased while 31.3% report that they have not changed but remained high. 2.2% of the survey participants state that their confidence and trust have decreased while 10.9% report that they have not changed but remained low. 12.2% of the respondents share the position of lack of trust and confidence. 19.3% of the respondents had difficulty expressing their opinion on this issue.

Along with the Cabinet of Ministers, the activity of central and local executive bodies was also assessed in public opinion polls. Thus, during the 44-day war, the activity of the Ministry of Defense(61.5%), The Ministry of Internal Affairs (46.5%), and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (24.3%). appreciated more. For both periods,

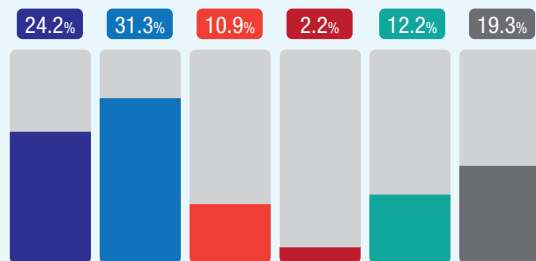


DIAGRAM 27.

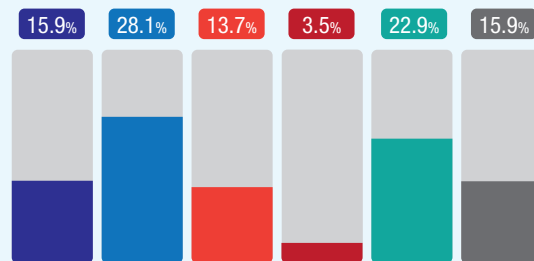
HOW HAS YOUR TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTIONS CHANGED?

■ Increased
 ■ Not changed but remained high
 ■ Not changed but remained low
 ■ Decreased
 ■ Do not trust
 ■ Not sure

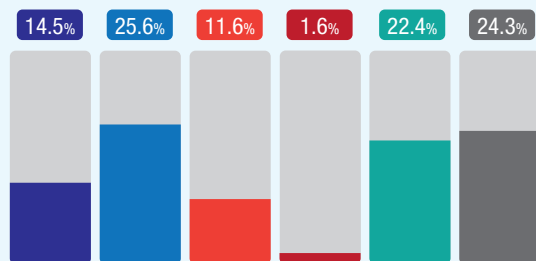
The Cabinet of Ministers



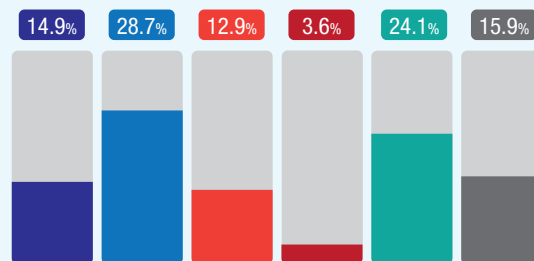
Milli Majlis



Court



Local executive power



compared to other ministries, the activity of the Ministry of Defense was more positively evaluated by the population (37.7%) compared to the Ministry of Internal Affairs (35.8%) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (14.8%). During the 44-day war and the last 6 months, the activity of the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population, TABIB, and the Ministry of Education was appreciated less. Note that the total percentage may exceed 100% due to the multivariate answers.

14.9% of the respondents state that their trust in local executive bodies has increased. The trust and confidence of 28.7% of the respondents have not changed but remained high. 3.6% of the respondents state that their trust and confidence have decreased and 12.9% report that they have not changed but remained low. 15.9% of the survey participants had difficulty expressing their opinion on this issue.

When considering the distribution of the respondents whose trust and confidence in urban

and regional executive bodies have increased or have not changed but remained high, Guba-Khachmaz, Upper Karabakh, and Daglig Shirvan economic regions differ in a relatively positive attitude compared to others. The common figure of those who state that their trust and confidence in local executive bodies have decreased or have not changed but remained low shows the need for reforms in this field.

Note that issues arising from the President's Order On Supplementary Measures to Improve the State Administration Efficiency dated March 17, 2020, and the Decree On Special Representatives of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Territories Liberated from Occupation dated January 19, 2021, can be evaluated as an alternative solution to eliminating the existing problems with local executive bodies and changing the public attitude toward the local governance structures in a positive direction.

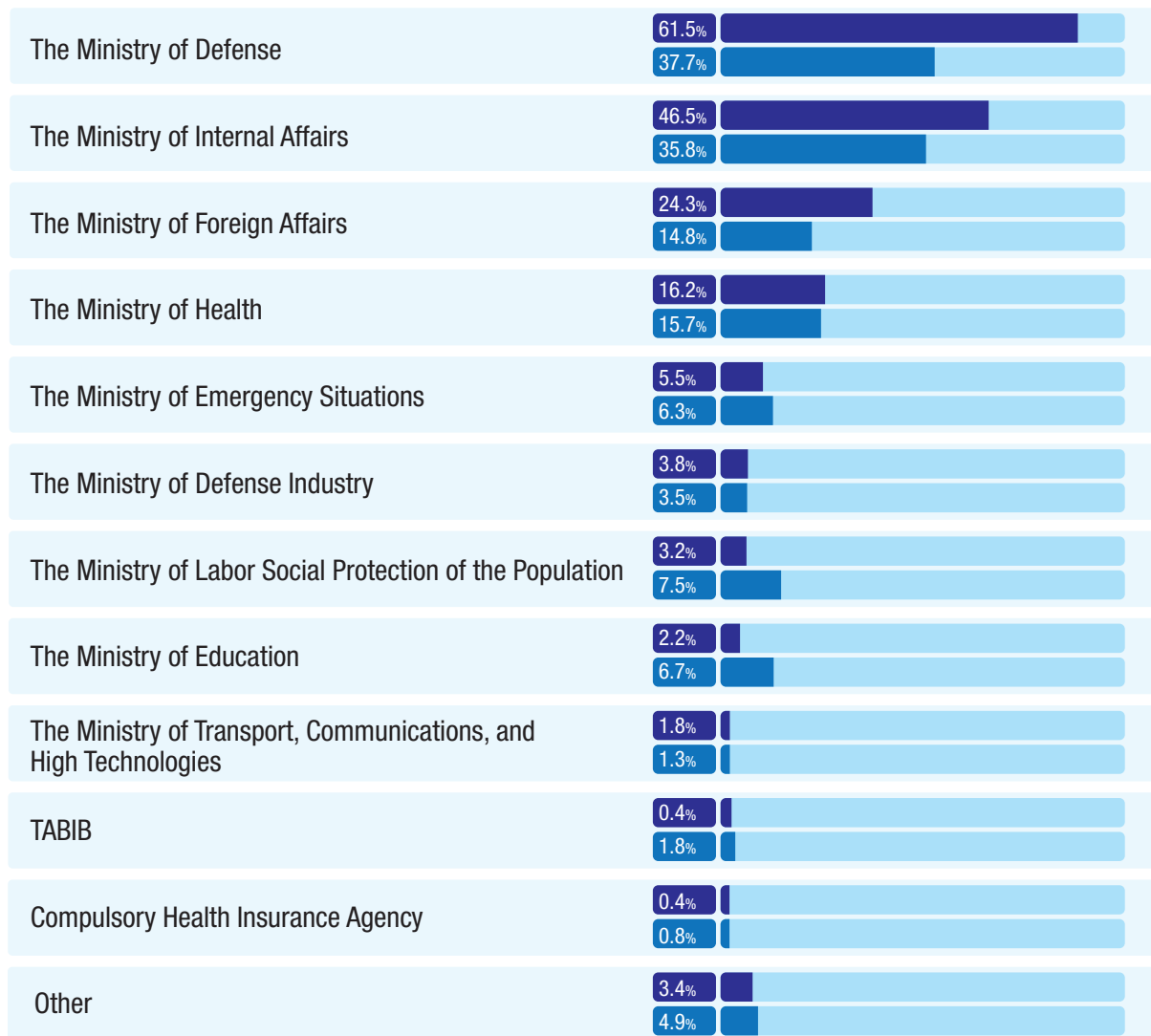
In conclusion, according to the survey results, a high increase in public trust and confi-



DIAGRAM 28.

SPECIFY 3 GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURES THE ACTIVITY OF WHICH YOU APPRECIATE THE MOST

■ During the war ■ Over the last 6 months



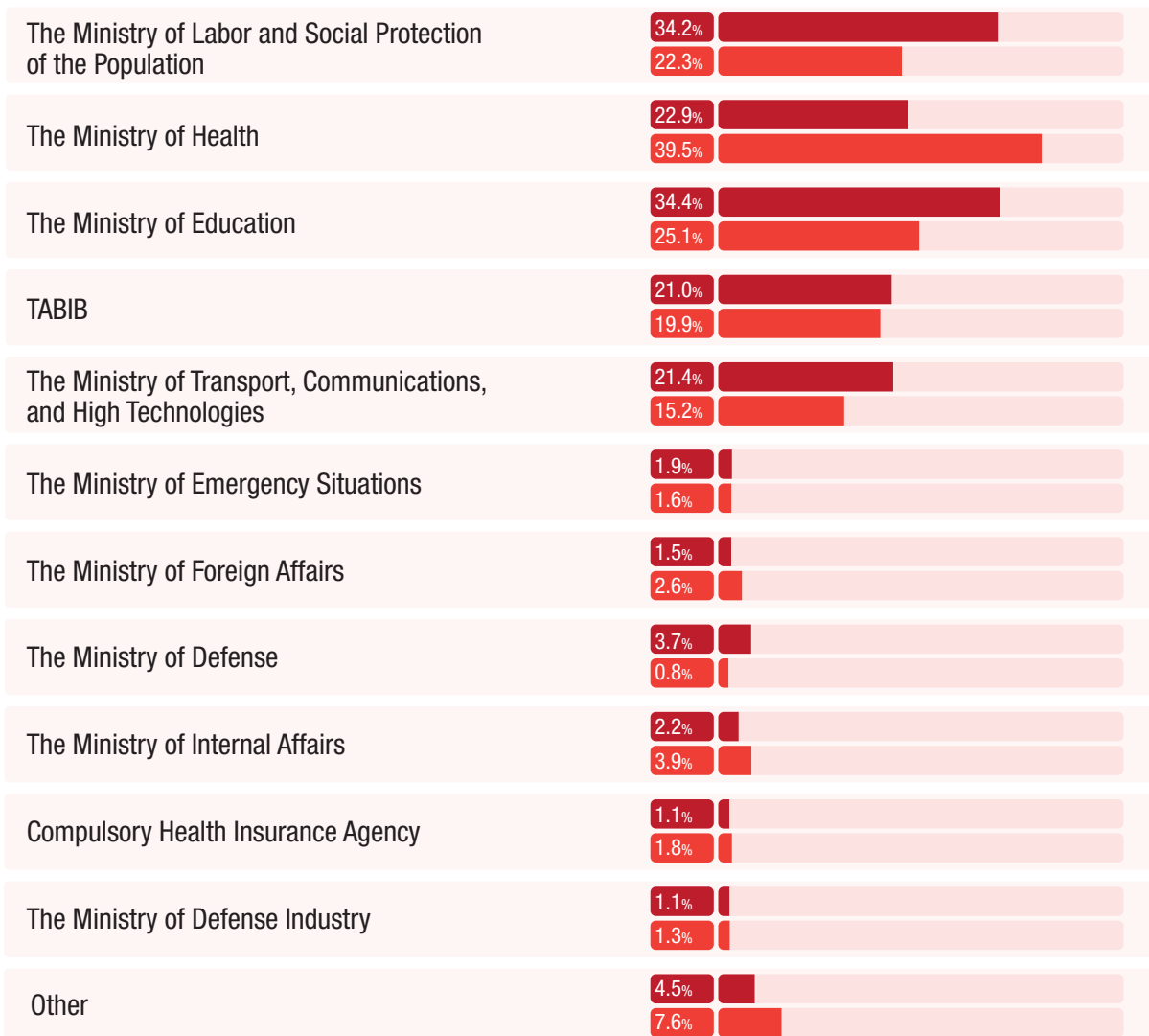
dence in the President and the Vice President was recorded from the middle to the last quarter of the current year. However, the picture of the trust and confidence in the Milli Majlis and the judiciary and local executive bodies can be interpreted as the need to reconsider the activity of these governmental structures to meet public demands and expand their opportunities for communication with the people.



DIAGRAM 29.

SPECIFY 3 GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURES THE ACTIVITY OF WHICH YOU DISLIKE THE MOST

■ During the war ■ Over the last 6 months



CONCLUSION

Overall, the populace regards President Ilham Aliyev's actions during the Patriotic War and throughout 2020 as effective. While 2020 posed significant challenges worldwide due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it marked a momentous milestone in Azerbaijan's history with the liberation of our lands from occupation. This victory stands as a testament to the President's astute geopolitical analysis, resource utilization, and diplomatic finesse. It is heartening that the country's citizens can critically assess the President's endeavors and offer positive evaluations. The liberation of our territories has also fostered new expectations among the population for the coming years.

The overwhelming majority of respondents hailed the restoration of lost lands by the Supreme Commander-in-Chief for the first time in 200 years as the most significant achievement of the President's tenure in 2020.

Three-quarters of the population welcomed meetings of President Ilham Aliyev and First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva with servicemen who were wounded in the battles for the Motherland and treated at the Central Military Clinical Hospital of the Ministry of Defense on September 30, and those treated at Clinical Medical Center No. 1 on November 11, as well as their visits to the Fuzuli and Jabrayil regions and the city of Aghdam.

A significant part of the population welcomed the Personnel reforms continued by the President in 2020, and his other commendable actions as part of the decisive fight against corruption - the dismissal of some executive leaders and high-ranking officials who committed illegal actions.

About two of three respondents appreciated the President's regular appeals to the people in connection with the victories won on the front.

Two of three respondents appreciated President Ilham Aliyev's interviews with the world's leading media agencies during the 44-day Patriotic War and attacking diplomacy based on the defense of our national interests.

A significant part of the population appreciated the strengthened anti-corruption measures and the tough stance taken by President Ilham Aliyev in this fight.

A similar conclusion emerged from the analysis of public sentiment regarding the social

assistance policy implemented by the President to alleviate the adverse effects of the pandemic and uphold stable social welfare for the population. Many who commended the President's actions felt secure in terms of income loss during the pandemic. Conversely, only a small fraction of respondents believe that the harm inflicted on the population by the pandemic has not been sufficiently mitigated.

Although more than half of the population appreciated the strategic decisions adopted by President Ilham Aliyev in the management of combating the pandemic, the obtained figure indicates that there are not a few those dissatisfied with the measures taken in this field.

More than half of the population appreciates the initiation of international events by the President.

During the survey, more than half of the population appreciated publicizing the meetings held by the President with the central and local executive leaders in 2020.

While the vast majority of the survey participants appreciated the President's activity in 2020, some considered that he failed to take a firm stance regarding some issues.

The fact that almost half of the population considers that some officials have not been punished for illegal actions committed indicates that there are still negative situations with the executive and other structures in some regions. Herewith, approximately one of ten respondents noted a firm stance taken by the President in combating corruption and a desire to return the territories under the control of the 'peacemakers' back to our control.

The absolute majority of the population highly appreciated the president's activity in the field of army building and improvement.

The vast majority of the population highly appreciated the President's foreign policy as one of the key factors determining the development and success of our country.

A significant part of the population expressed a positive attitude toward the implemented Personnel reforms.

One of the primary concerns of 2020 was safeguarding public health amid the emergence of the new generation of coronavirus, and the overwhelming majority of the population evaluated the President's efforts in this domain as

effective.

□ During the pandemic, the vast majority of the population felt completely secure in terms of access to food, medical supplies, and hygiene essentials. However, a significant portion of the respondents felt varying degrees of threat regarding their health and potential loss of income during this period.

□ The overwhelming majority of respondents evaluated the President's efforts in ensuring the social protection of the population as effective.

□ The majority of respondents appreciated the development of the non-oil sector.

□ A significant part of the survey participants assessed the measures taken to ensure the physical and civil security of the population as very efficient.

□ During the war, there were two threats expected by the population - Armenia's terrorist attacks and war crimes.

□ Looking at Ilham Aliyev's presidency period, almost one of ten survey participants believe that he has been preparing for a large-scale war since 2020, but every fifth expresses the opposite position.

□ A significant part of the population stated that the army and the people were the two forces the Supreme Commander-in-Chief relied on most in waging a large-scale war. More than half of those who stated that the President relied on the people in waging a large-scale war, also believed that the Azerbaijani people's support for the government and the army was among the key factors in our victory in the Patriotic War. A significant part of those who stated that the President relied on the army in waging a large-scale war, also believed that the latest military technology-supported army played a key role in our victory.

□ Every third respondent believed that the Supreme Commander-in-Chief relied on his determination and strategic thinking in waging a large-scale war.

□ Also, according to the same number of respondents, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief relied on the political support of Turkey and Pakistan in waging a large-scale war.

□ A significant part of the respondents believed that the statement signed on November 10 was characterized by the liberation of 3 regions from occupation without loss. On the other hand, approximately the same number of respondents confirm such opinions and believe

that the tripartite statement expresses both the military and political victory of Azerbaijan.

□ Half of the respondents believe that the tripartite statement signed by the heads of state of Azerbaijan, Russia, and Armenia signifies the complete defeat of Armenia.

□ Almost one in ten respondents are concerned about the remaining uncertainties regarding the future of Karabakh, while very few believe that we could not achieve a complete victory over Armenia and the desired results.

□ In general, a significant portion of the respondents evaluated our country's position in the international information space during the war more positively compared to previous periods. On the other hand, two-thirds of those who assess the position of our country in the international information space as very good also state that they regularly watch the President's interviews with foreign media, while every fourth person often watches them.

□ Most of the respondents attribute our strong position in the international information space to the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's ability to articulate perspectives on war and peace during his intensive interviews with international media. Other factors contributing to this advantage include continuous coverage of the process by leading media agencies of the Republic of Turkey and visits by media representatives from other foreign countries to Azerbaijan to observe the situation firsthand. According to the respondents, organized actions of the country's population on social media platforms (such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.), as well as the active engagement and visits to regions by representatives of the diplomatic corps in Azerbaijan, are also among the important factors.

□ A significant part of the population watched the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's interviews with foreign media regularly, and almost every fourth often watched them. According to the preliminary estimate, we can also note that the respondents gave more preference to appeals to the people.

□ As for the matters assessed by the respondents as the key advantages in interviews with foreign media, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's ability to skillfully answer all provocative questions and put his interlocutors in an awkward position with professionalism, and his high foreign language skills come to the

fore as the key factors. More than half of the respondents expressed the opinion that the Supreme Commander-in-Chief remained cool during these interviews and managed his emotions professionally.

□ A significant part of the respondents expressing their opinion on the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's appeals to the people mainly highlighted points such as the President's strict control over the processes during the 44-day war and the ability to preferably express political rhetoric in simple language.

□ TV and social media were identified as the primary communication channels used by respondents to access interviews of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief with foreign media and appeal to the people. During the war, viewership on TV channels surged, considering the restrictions applied to internet resources to ensure information security. Many respondents reported obtaining information from AzTV, Khazar TV, and ATV channels during this period. ITV, Real TV, and ARB channels followed closely. It's important to note that these results are specific to the war period and may not reflect overall TV channel ratings, which can vary monthly and annually.

□ Among social networks, Facebook emerged as the top source of information, followed by Instagram and YouTube. The President's social media accounts were also popular sources for updates on his interviews, appeals, and visits. Approximately two-thirds of social media users followed the President's Twitter account, while about one-fourth accessed his Facebook and Instagram profiles for updates. News websites and internet TV were also significant sources of information on the President's activities in this domain. According to a significant part of the respondents, the major impact of phrases used by the President in his political speech on the population is that people start using them in their daily communication.

□ Two out of three respondents believe that the phrases used by the President in his speeches have become aphorisms because they resonate with everyday language. Almost half of the respondents mention that people have started sharing these phrases on social networks. Additionally, the opinion of every third respondent suggests that writings and posters featuring these phrases have become common impressions created by the President's speech-

es.

□ Among the survey participants, some expressed their attitudes toward the President by writing a letter of thanks to him during the 44-day Patriotic War.

□ 'Karabakh is ours, Karabakh is Azerbaijan!' and the slogan 'Iron Fist' symbolizing the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's steel political will in ensuring the victory of our country are the most memorable phrases in the President's speeches.

□ The 44-day II Karabakh War caused a positive change in the attitude of the absolute majority of the population toward the President. This respondent segment stated that as a result of the war, they recognized the President as a person close to the people, whose opinions are important to him, and that they saw in the President an example of a national leader like Heydar Aliyev. About one in five respondents stated no change in their attitude toward the President. Herewith, a significant part of those who stated no change in their opinion increased their trust in the President.

□ The fact that 1/3 of the survey participants took the position of estimating the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's merits in the Patriotic War with an honorary title shows that there are many supporters of establishing an honorary title for the Supreme Commander-in-Chief among the public.

□ Herewith, every fifth respondent expressed a desire to highly appreciate the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's merits in the Patriotic War.

□ The absolute majority of the respondents positively assessed the awarding of officers and soldiers for their merits in the war. On the other hand, every fourth of the total respondents was not aware of the forms and titles of established orders and medals.

□ The decision to establish respective commemoration days was highly appreciated by the absolute majority of the respondents. Thus, the absolute majority of the respondents who state that they agree with celebrating September 27 as Remembrance Day, also support the decision to celebrate November 8 as Victory Day.

□ Two-thirds of respondents had a positive attitude toward the benefits established to improve the social well-being of and provide state support for martyrs' families and war veterans. However, three of twenty respondents

expressed the opposite opinion. An interesting point is that almost the same number of the respondents stated that they were not aware of that.

□ The opinion of the respondents who commented on the President's initiatives concerning the reconstruction plans allows for asserting that the absolute majority believe in the statements about the restoration of the territories liberated from occupation shortly.

□ The key expectations of the respondents from the new stage for the region and our country after the completion of the restoration work are the improvement of employment and welfare, the creation of new economic prospects, and the II Karabakh War will be a precedent for solving frozen conflicts.

□ During the 44-day war and in the months following, the activities of the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs garnered more appreciation. Conversely, during the war period, the activities of healthcare institutions, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population, and the Ministry of Transport, Communications, and High Technologies received less recognition. However, over the past six months, the activities of healthcare institutions, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population continued to receive less appreciation.

□ According to the survey results, a high increase in public trust and confidence in the President and the I Vice President was recorded from the middle to the last quarter of the current year. However, a decrease in the level of trust and confidence in the Milli Majlis and judiciary and local executive bodies has been observed to one degree or another.



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