



This project is funded by the European Union



FROM BASIC SERVICES

TO POLICY SHAPERS

Public opinion research on the role of civil society in the process of democratization and Europeanization of Montenegro

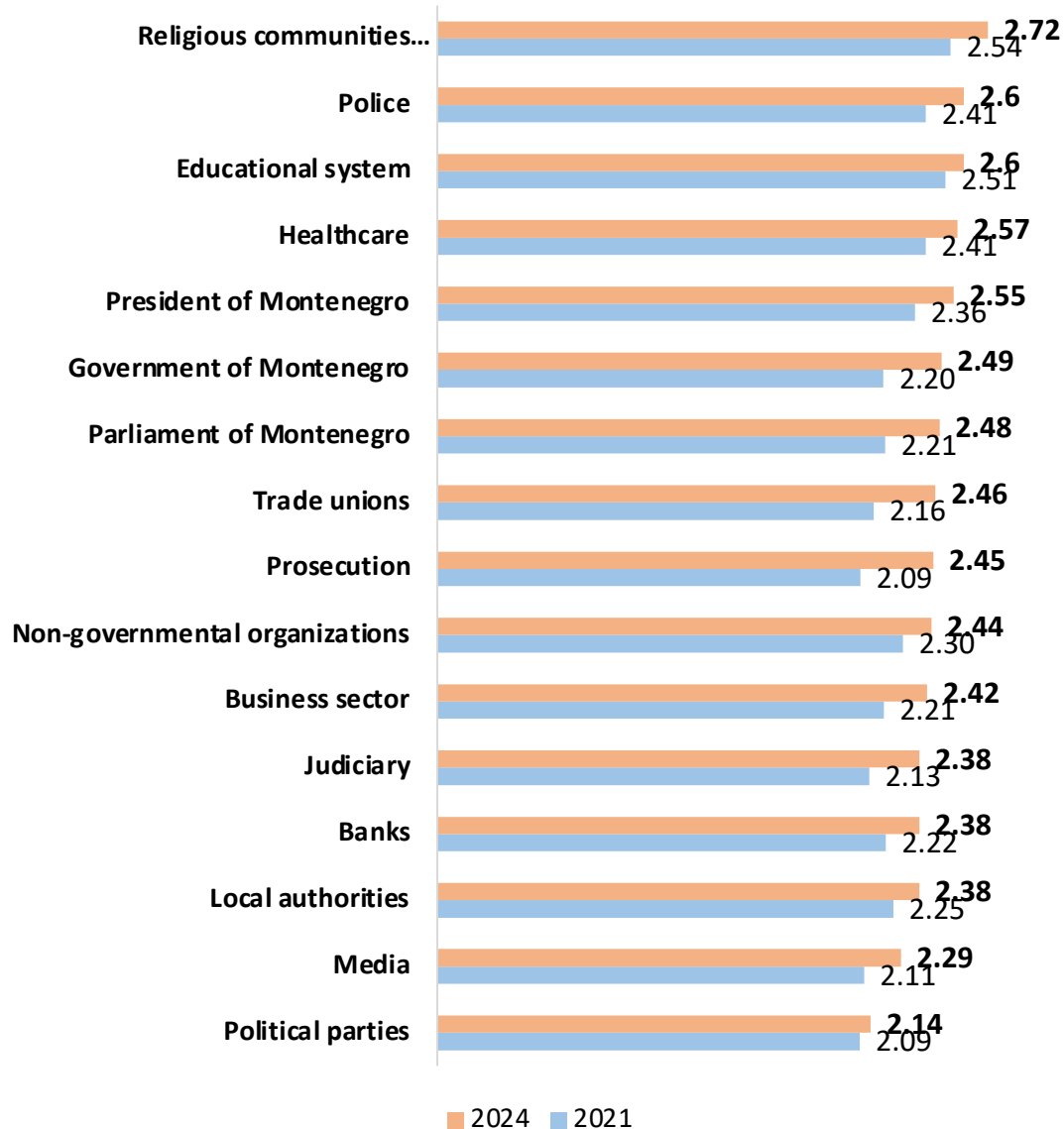
January 2024



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Implementation:	Data collection conducted from 18 to 24 January 2024
Sample frame:	Citizens of Montenegro aged 18 and older
Sample size :	1012
Sample type:	Three-stage, stratified sampling
	First stage: polling station
	Second stage: household
	Third stage: household member
Type of research:	CAPI with an average duration of 14 minutes

How much do you trust each of the listed institutions?



The growth of trust among citizens in all the listed institutions has been recorded from 2021 to 2024, although none of them enjoys the highest level of trust.

Religious communities lead with an average rating of 2.72, followed by the police and the educational system (2.6), as well as healthcare (2.57) and the President of the state (2.55).

Media and political parties are at the bottom of the list, and the most significant growth is noted in the prosecution, which was at the bottom of the list in 2021 but in 2024 in the middle.

Scale from 1 to 4 (1 - no trust at all, 2 - moderate trust, 3 - little trust, 4 - high trust)

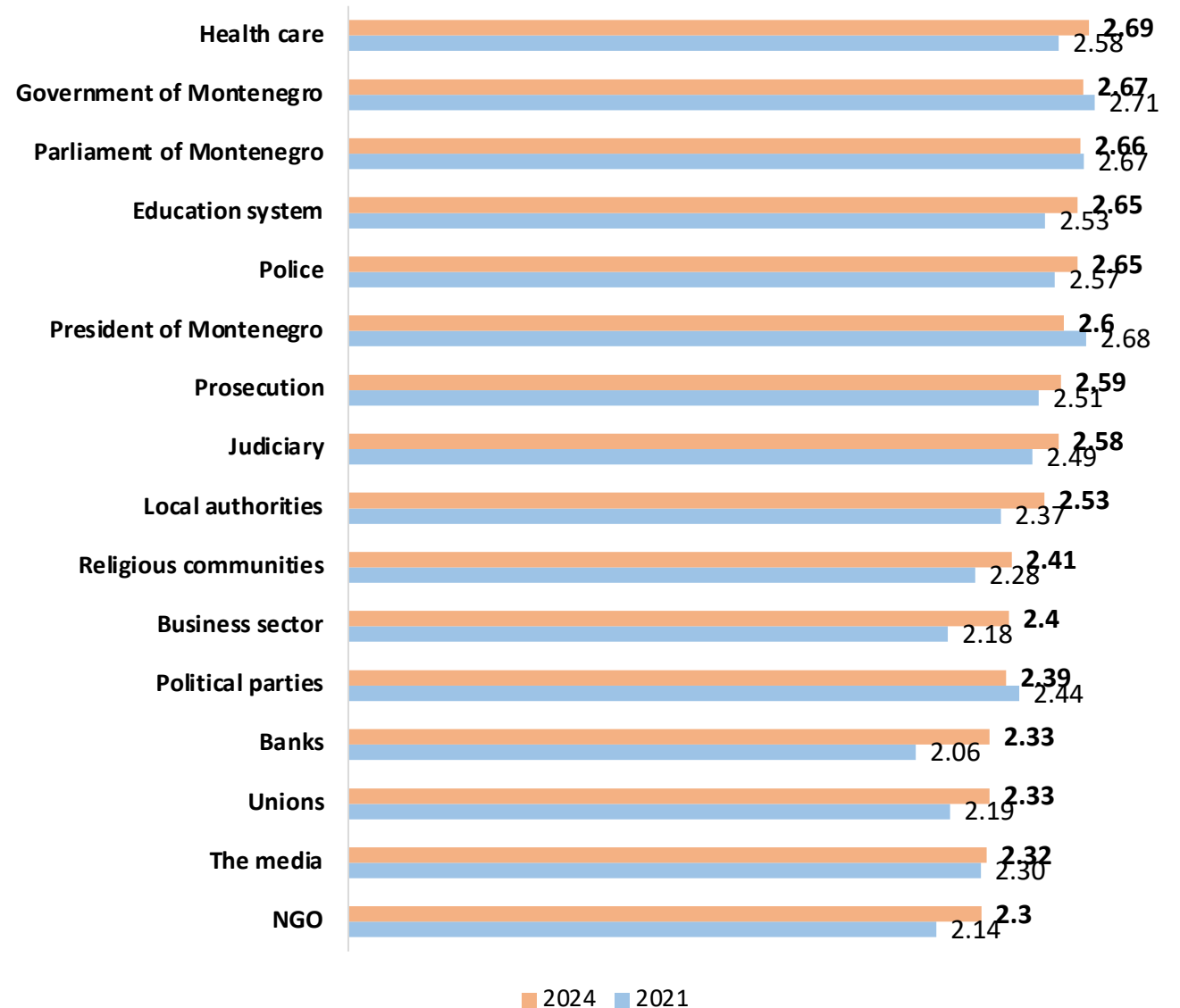
Who bears the greatest responsibility for the well-being of society?

Healthcare system is perceived as the most responsible for the well-being of society, followed by the Government, and then the Parliament of Montenegro.

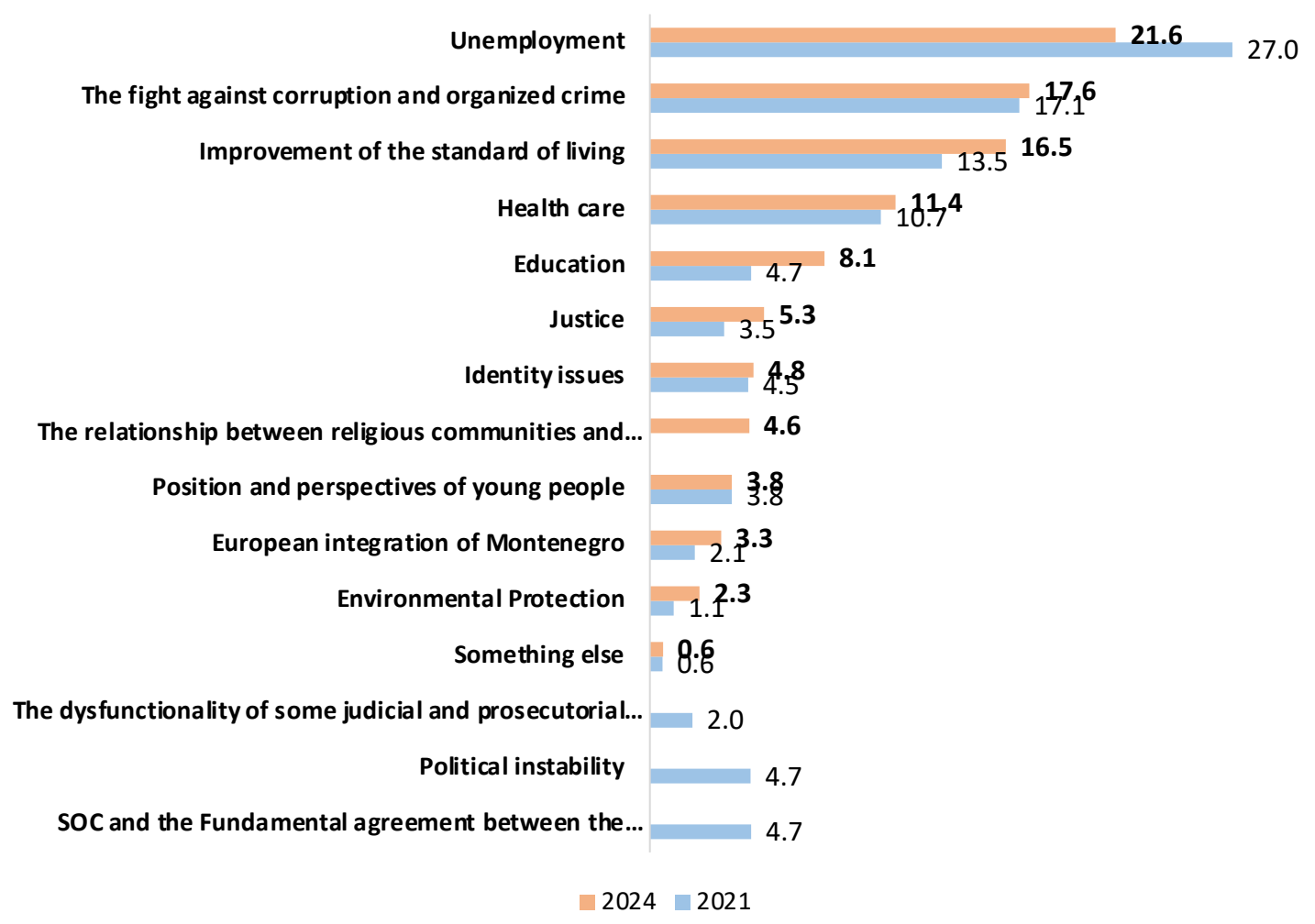
The educational system is seen as somewhat more responsible for the well-being of society compared to the previous wave.

Among the institutions with the least responsibility for the well-being are non-governmental organizations, media, trade unions, and banks.

Scale from 1 to 3 (1 - no responsibility, 2 - some responsibility, 3 - significant responsibility)



In your opinion, what are the most important issues in Montenegro today?



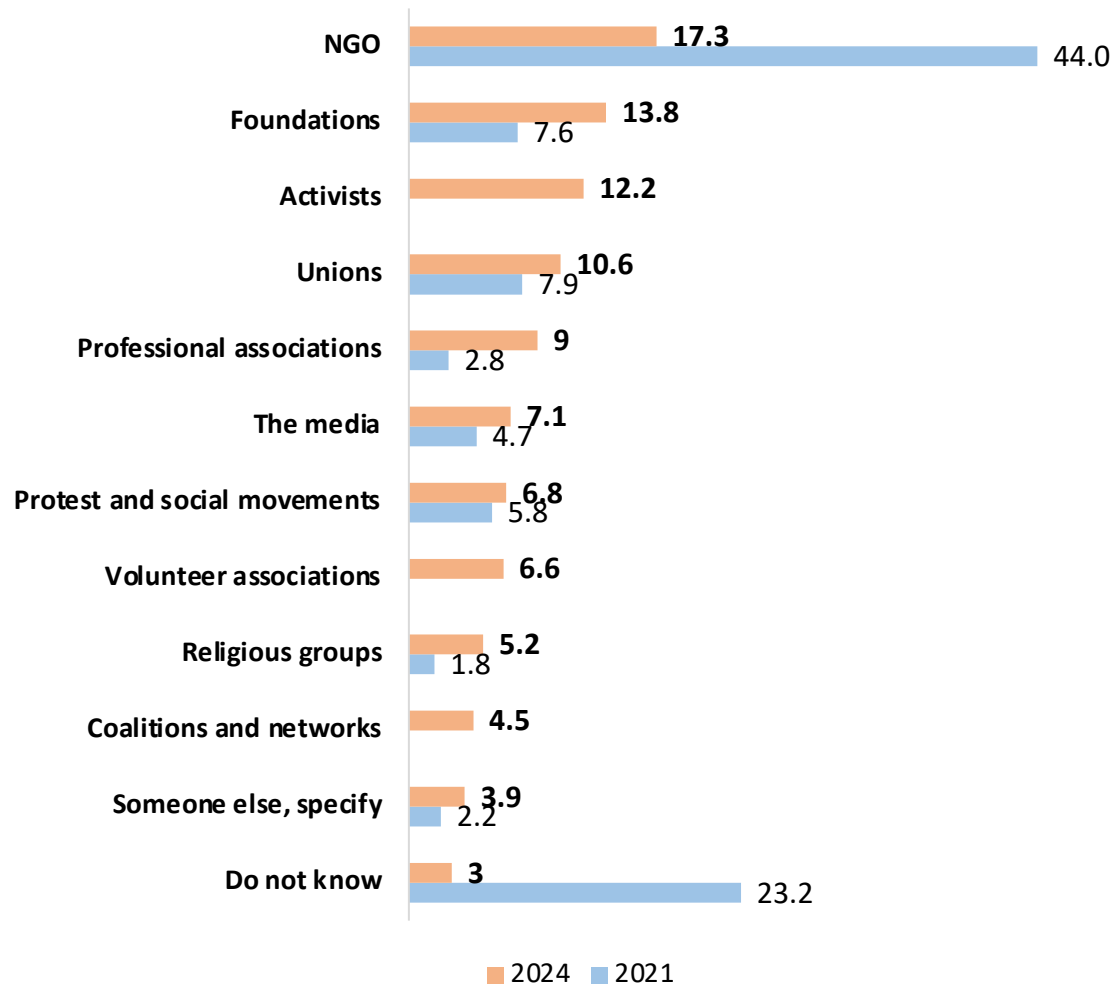
Unemployment is perceived as the most significant issue, despite decreasing from 27% in 2021 to 21.6% in 2024.

The fight against corruption and organized crime remains a major problem, as well as the improvement of the standard of living.

The most significant increase in the perception of problems is recorded in the field of education, rising from 4.7% in 2021 to 8.1% in 2024.

Note: it was possible to list up to three most important problems

In your opinion, who constitutes civil society?



In 2021, non-governmental organizations were recognized as the main actors in civil society, comprising 44.0%, but this perception has changed significantly, with a much smaller percentage of people now viewing civil society solely through NGOs - 17.3%.

Foundations, trade unions, media, and professional associations are now more prominently seen as integral parts of civil society. New actors included in this year's research have gained recognition within this framework as well - **activists** - 12.2%, **coalitions** and **networks** - 4.5%, and **volunteer associations** - 6.6%.

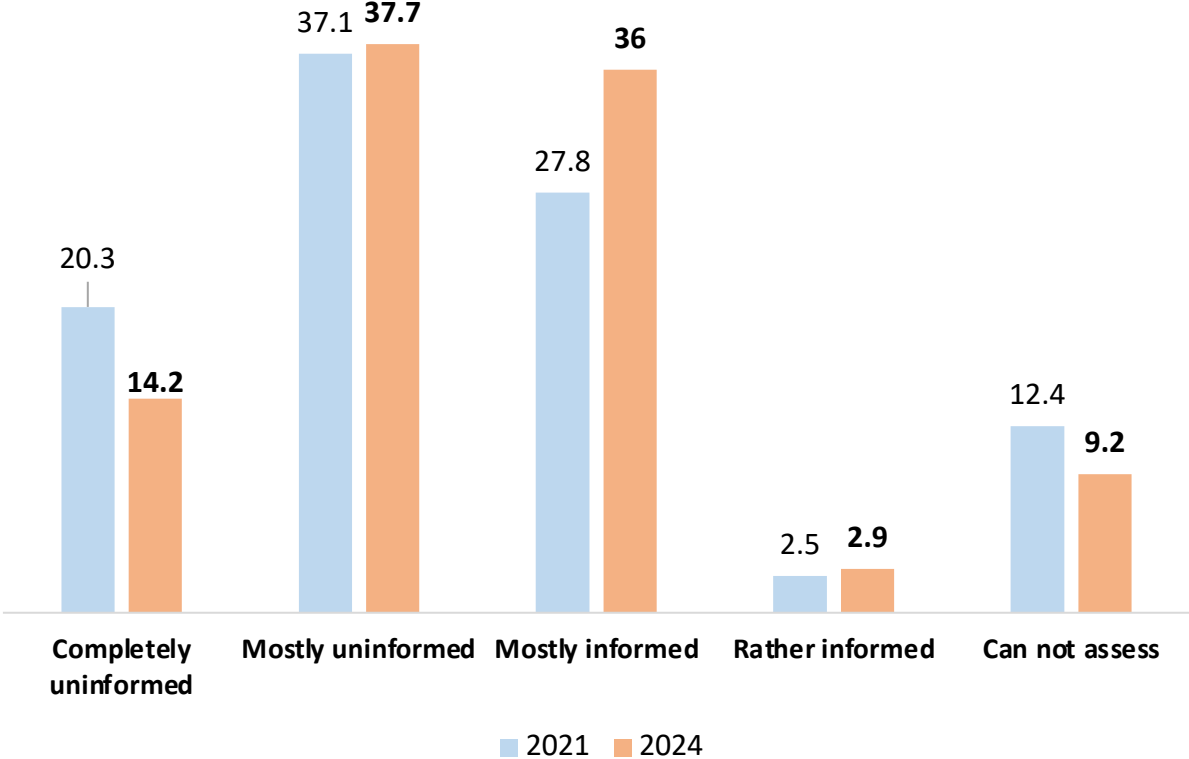
This indicates a **broader recognition of a spectrum of groups contributing to civil society.**

The significant decrease in the category of undecided individuals (from 23.2% to 3%) is a sign of **better awareness and understanding among citizens about the scope of civil society.**

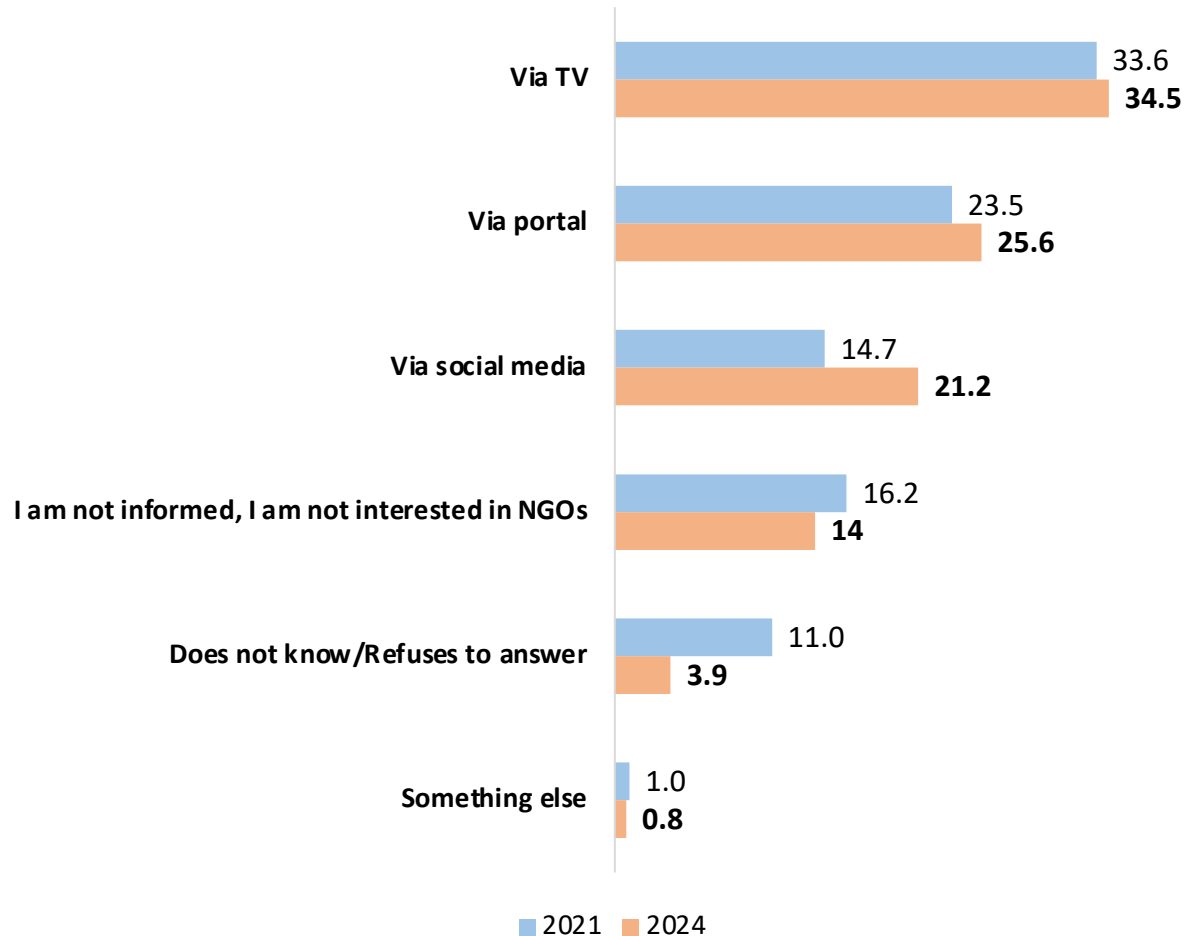
How informed are you about the work of the civil sector in Montenegro?

There is also a noticeable progress in the awareness of citizens about the civil sector.

Between 2021 and 2024, the percentage of those who identified themselves as *completely uninformed* decreased from 20.3% to 14.2%, indicating an improvement in the availability of information about the civil sector or increased public attention to the activities of this sector. A significant increase is observed among those who identified themselves as *mostly informed*, rising from 27.8% to 36%.



How do you get information about the activities of the civil sector in Montenegro?



Similar to the previous research wave, **one-third of respondents get information about the work of the civil sector via television, a quarter via online portals, and one-fifth use social media as their source** (a growth of 6.5% compared to 2021).

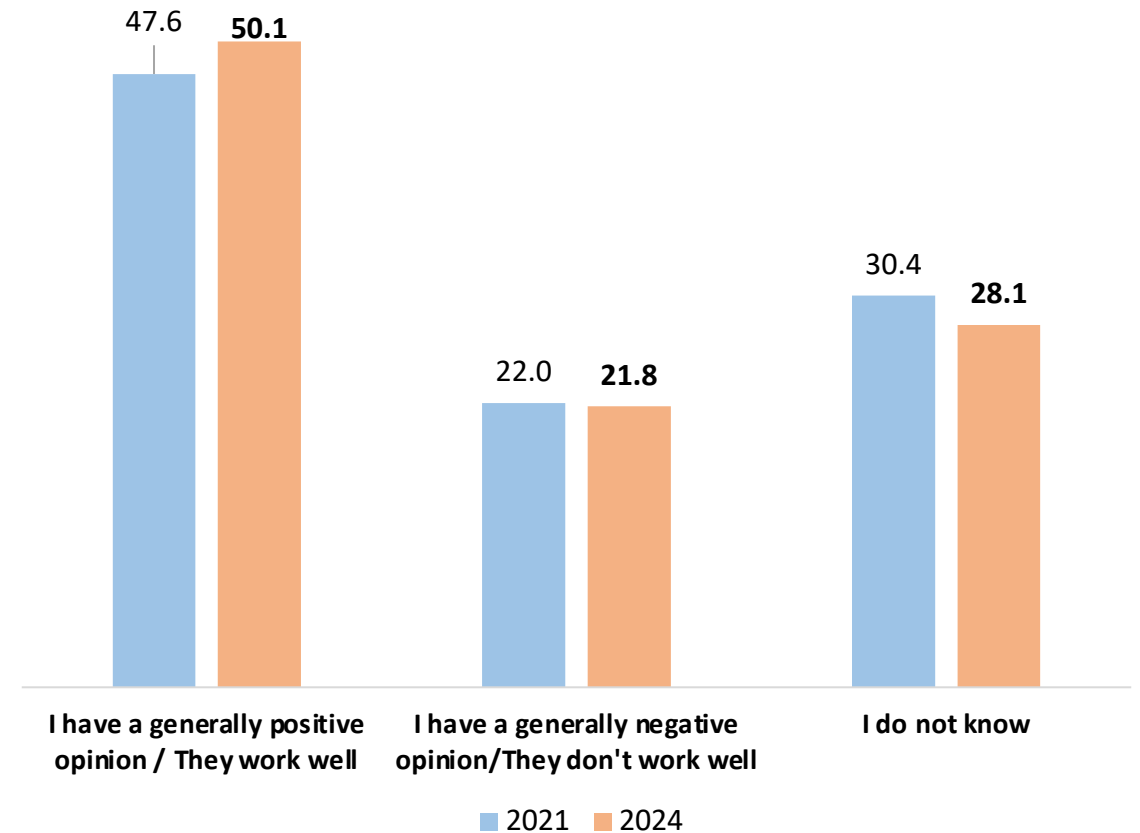
Additionally, 14% of citizens stated that they do not get informed because they are not interested in NGOs, while less than 4% did not express a preference on this matter.

What is your opinion about non-governmental organizations?

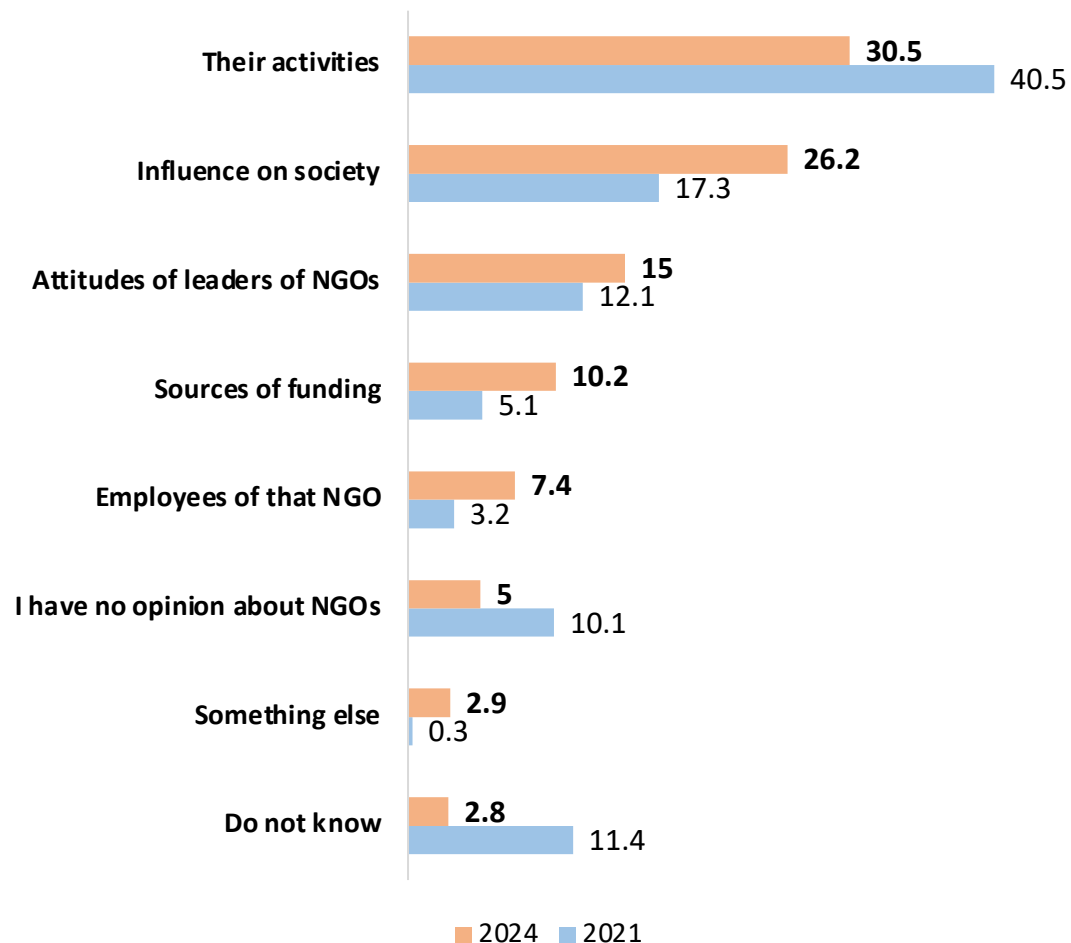
The majority of citizens generally have a positive opinion about the work of NGOs, with an increase to 50.1% in 2024 compared to 47.6% who held a positive attitude in 2021.

The percentage of those who have a negative opinion about NGOs remains unchanged in these two waves.

28% of respondents have opinion on this issue, which is less than in 2021.



What shapes your opinion about a particular NGO the most?



The most crucial factor influencing the formation of attitudes towards NGOs is *their activities*, which is common to both waves of research. However, there is a noticeable decline in the positioning of this factor (from 40.5% to 30.5%), and a parallel significant increase in the factor of influence on society (from 17.3% to 26.2%).

The views of the leaders of certain NGOs have also become more significant (increase from 12.1% to 15%).

There is a notable jump in the *funding sources* (from 5.1% to 10.2%).

Employees of a certain NGO have become important in shaping the attitude about a certain NGO, that is, that influence increased from 3.2% to 7.4%.

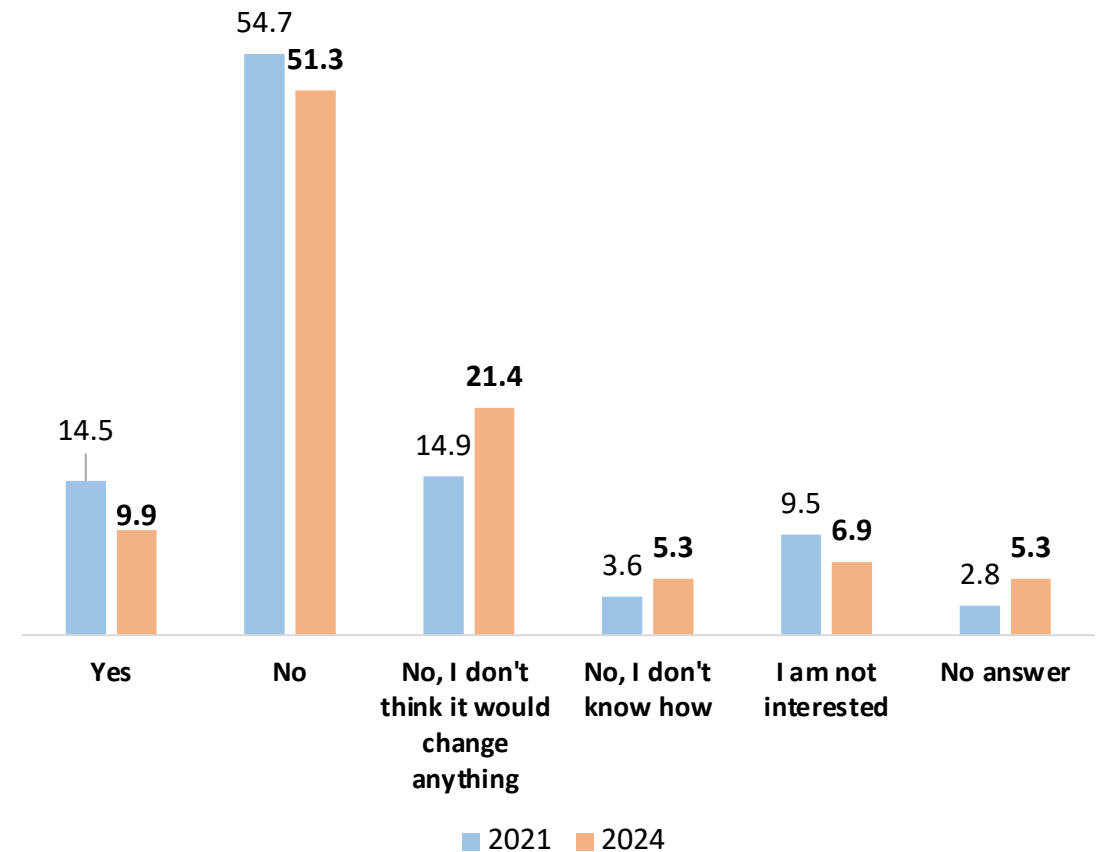
In the past 12 months, have you personally taken any action aimed at addressing a specific issue in your community?

Civil activism is declining (from 14.5% in 2021 to 9.9% in 2024), with a **significant increase among those who *do not believe it would make any difference*** (from 14.9% to 21.4%).

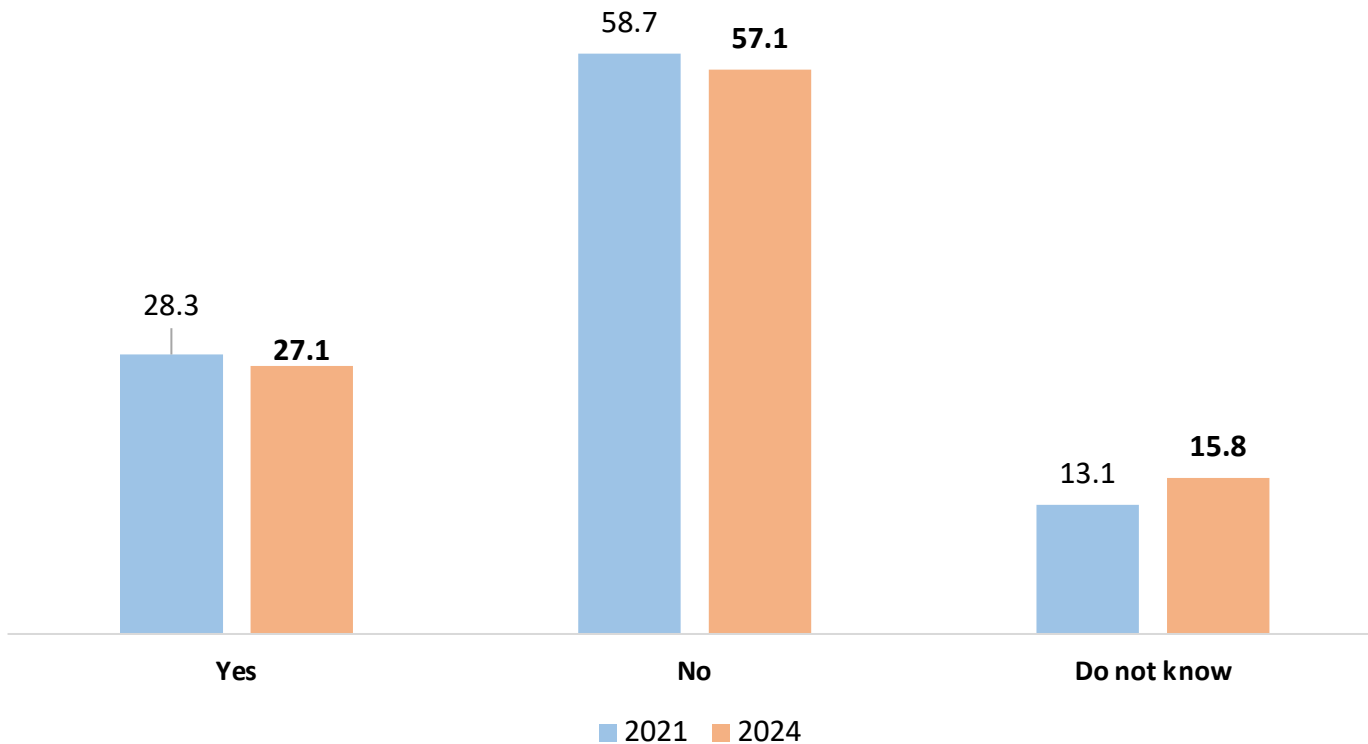
The number of those who have not taken any action is slightly lower (from 54.7% to 51.3%).

There is a small increase in the categories *don't know how* and among those undecided on this issue.

The percentage of citizens who stated that they are *not interested* in taking action has decreased (from 9.5% to 6.9%).



Would you consider getting involved in the activities of an NGO that promotes the goals, activities or changes that you advocate for?



More than a quarter of citizens would consider engaging in activities of an NGO that promotes goals, activities, or changes they advocate for, while 57.1% would not, which is similar to the data from the previous wave.

The number of those who have no opinion on this issue has increased.

NVOs in relation to various actors, interests and goals

	I totally disagree	I partially disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I partially agree	I totally agree
NGOs are independent from the government	11.1	19.2	49.5	13.2	7
Non-governmental organizations are independent from political parties	12.6	21.6	45.3	13.1	7.3
NGOs attempt to serve as a corrective to the government.	6.9	14.4	40.8	26.4	11.5
NGOs were very critical of the previous Government, but now they have become dominantly silent in their criticism, although many old problems remain.	8.7	17.2	49.9	18.3	5.9
NGO fight for justice and human rights of all, especially the marginalized and vulnerable people.	7.3	13.6	46.7	23.1	9.3

The opinion that NGOs are independent from the government, either partially or totally, have one-fifth of citizens (20.2%), indicating a decline from 2021 when nearly a third (32.5%) shared this view. A similar trend is noted concerning independence from political parties (20.4% in 2024 compared to 30.2% in 2021). In 2024, there is a significant increase in the number of individuals who do not have opinion on these issues.

However, the perception that NGOs attempt to serve as a corrective to the government remains stable (37.9% in 2024 compared to 36.3% in 2021), with a slight increase in those who believe otherwise (21.3% in 2024 compared to 18.8% in 2021).

There is a perception that NGOs were critical of the previous government, but this is now less the case (24.2% in 2024 compared to 31% in 2021). However, there is an increase in the number of those who disagree with this statement (22.9% in 2021 to 25.9% in 2024), as well as those who cannot decide (from 46.1% in 2021 to 49.9% in 2024).

As in the previous wave, the majority agrees that NGOs fight for justice and human rights, but there is also an increase in the number of undecided individuals.

NVOs in relation to various actors, interests, and goals

	I totally disagree	I partially disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I partially agree	I totally agree
NGOs advocate for European values and standards	4.8	12.2	48.6	25.7	8.7
NGOs mainly serve the personal interests of individuals	8.9	20.1	46.7	17.8	6.5
The real goals of NGOs depend on who finances them	6.4	11.9	44.2	22.1	15.5
NGOs have an important role in highlighting and solving problems in society	6.6	15.9	49	23.1	5.4

The percentage of citizens who believe that NGOs advocate for European values and standards has decreased (from 40.5% in 2021 to 34.4% in 2024), **with an increased number being undecided on this issue** (from 40.7% in 2021 to 48.6% in 2024).

The percentage of those who think that NGOs primarily serve personal interests of individuals has also decreased (from 29.5% in 2021 to 24.3% in 2024), while there is a rise in those who do not believe that NGOs are primarily driven by individual interests (29% in 2024 vs. 24.8% in 2021).

There is a smaller number of those who link NGO goals exclusively to sources (from 41.7% in 2021, that number drops to 37.6% in 2024).

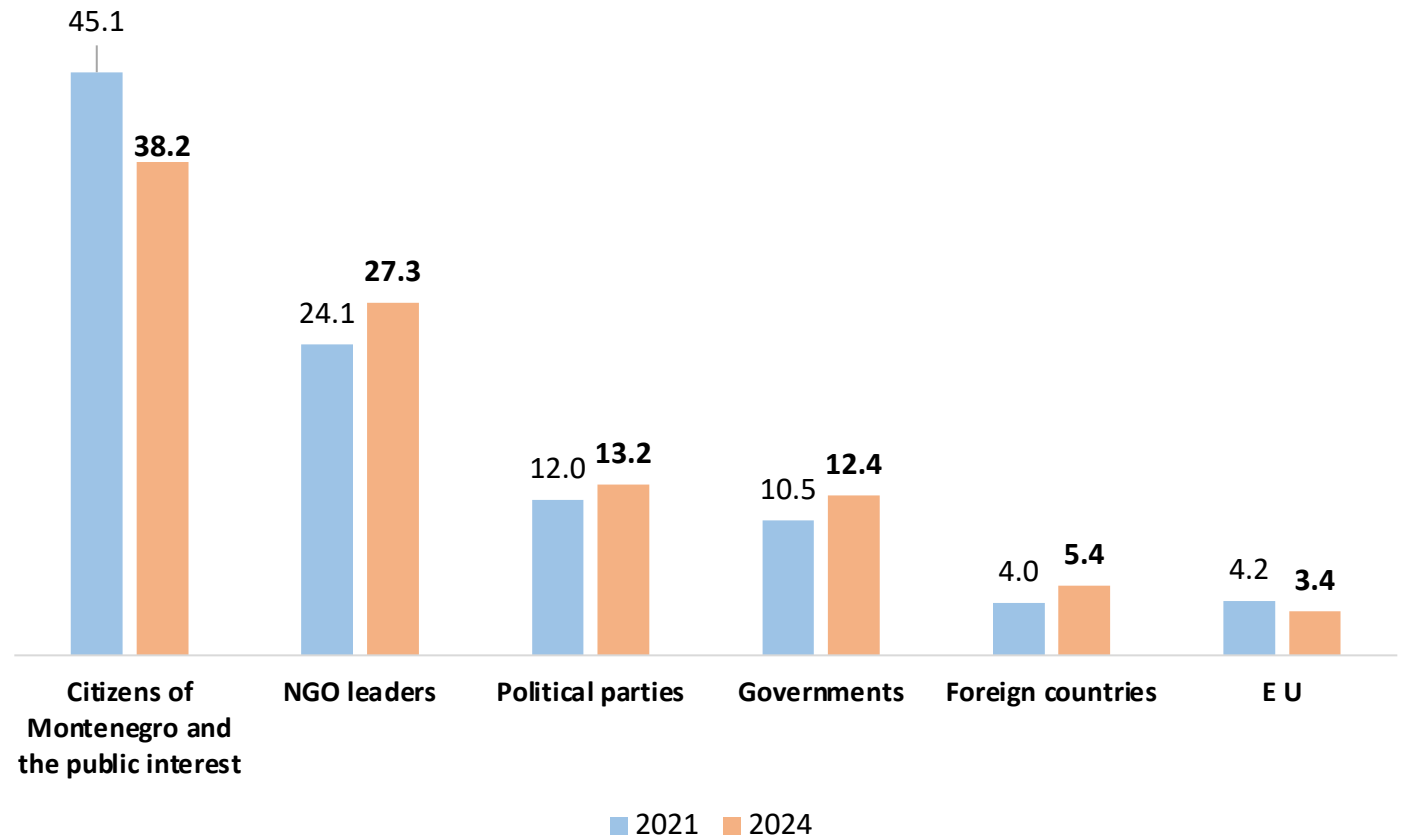
The perception of the importance of the role of NGOs in society is decreasing (from 38.7% in 2021 to 28.5% in 2024, although the number of those who are against such a perception is smaller and the number of those who are undecided about this issue is also increasing in 2024).

Whose interests do NGOs work in?

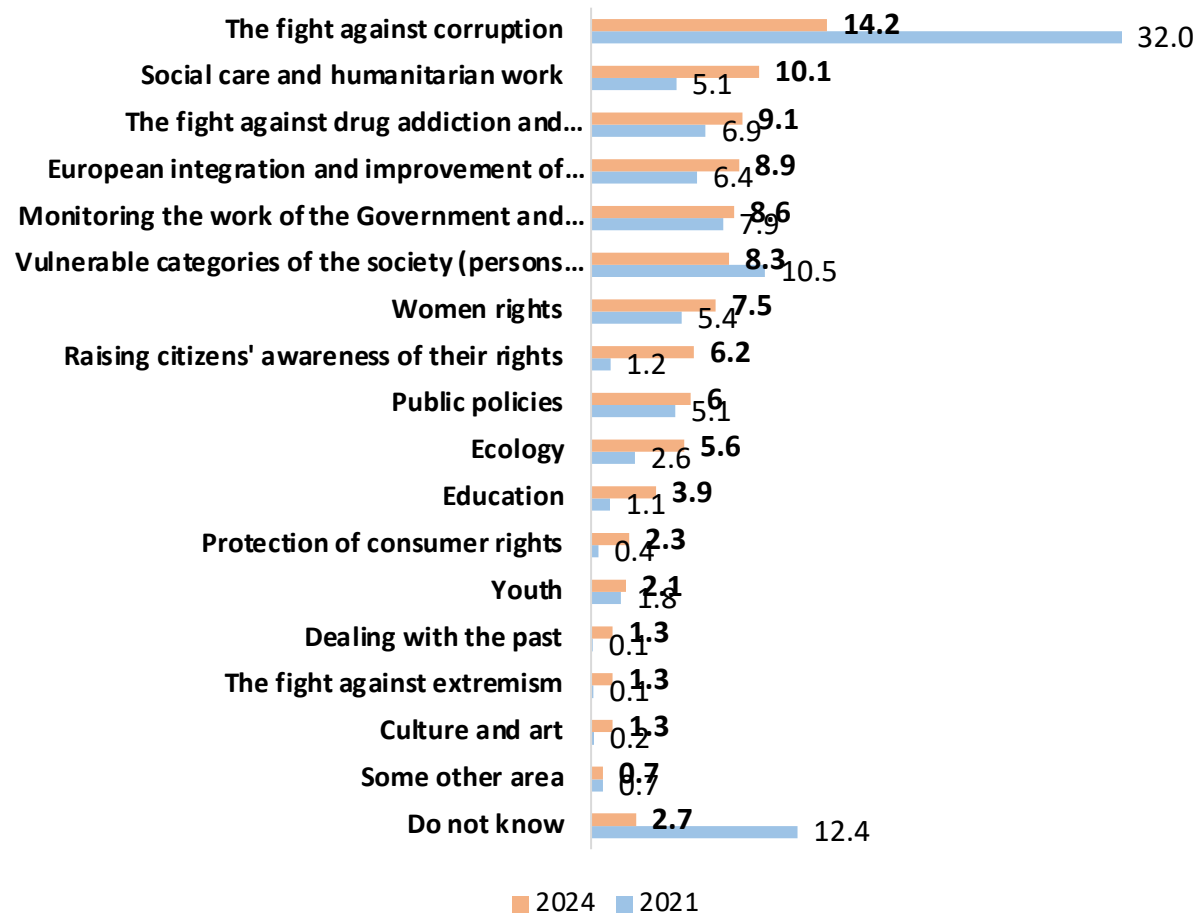
Today, **38.2%** believe that NGOs work in the public and citizens' interest, which is less than in the previous wave from 2021 (45.1%).

There has been an approximately 3% increase in the number of those who believe that NGOs work in the interest of their leaders compared to 2021.

There is also a slight increase in the perception that NGOs work in the interest of political parties or the Government.



In which areas are NGOs in Montenegro most active?

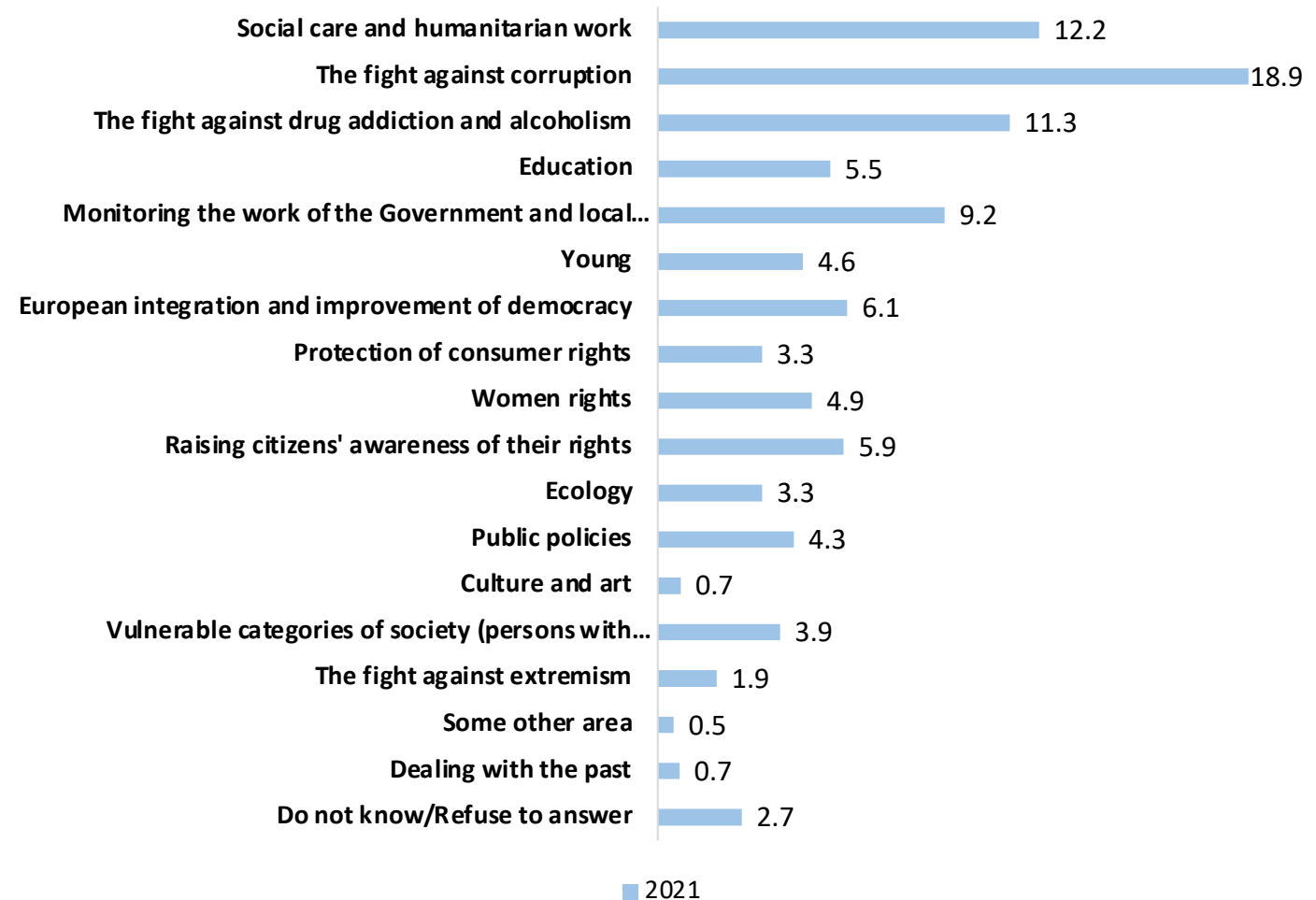


Although the **fight against corruption remains the most recognizable area of NGO activities**, there is a **significant decrease in the perception of this activity** - from 32% in 2021 to 14.2% in 2024.

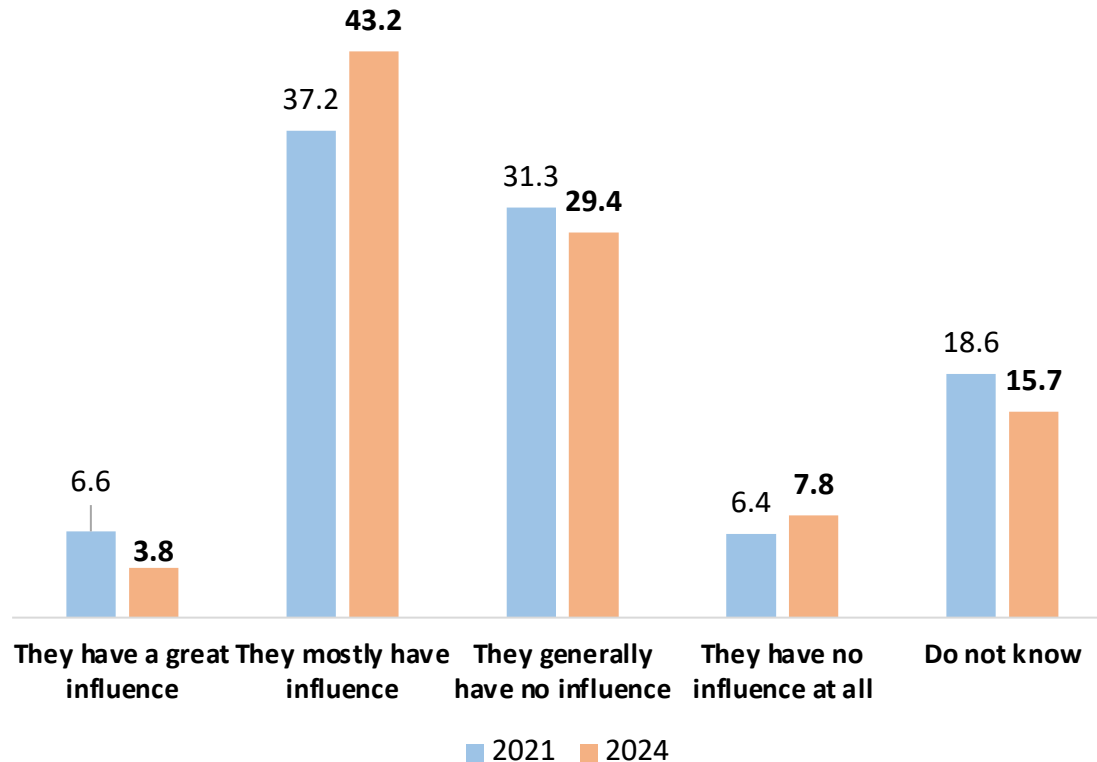
Social care and humanitarian work are becoming much more visible NGO activities (growth from 5.1% in 2021 to 10.1% in 2024), as well as the **fight against drug addiction and alcoholism, European integration and the promotion of democracy, monitoring the work of the Government and local authorities, and considerable growth in recognition activities in raising awareness about citizens' rights, women's rights, ecology, education...**

In which areas should NGOs in Montenegro be more engaged?

Citizens believe that **NGOs should be more involved in social care and humanitarian work (11.5%), the fight against corruption (10.3%), the fight against drug addiction and alcoholism (9.9%), while the need for education is growing.**



How much influence do NGOs have in improving the state of Montenegrin society?



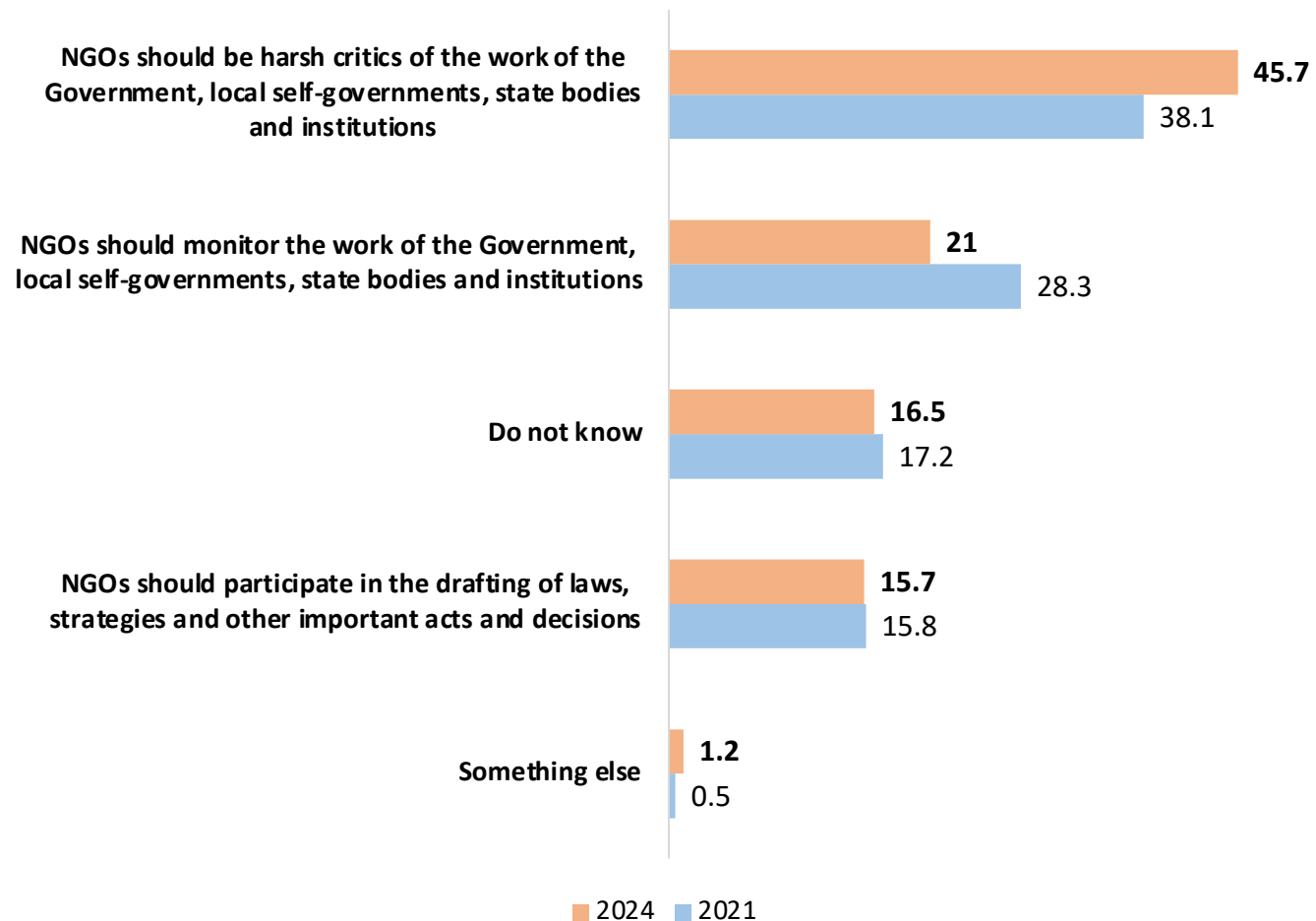
In 2024, 47% believe that NGOs mostly have an impact or a significant impact, marking an increase from 43.8% in 2021, with a note that there is a smaller number of individuals today who see this influence as huge.

Similarly, the opinion that NGOs mostly do not have an impact has slightly decreased - from 31.3% in 2021 to 29.4% in 2024.

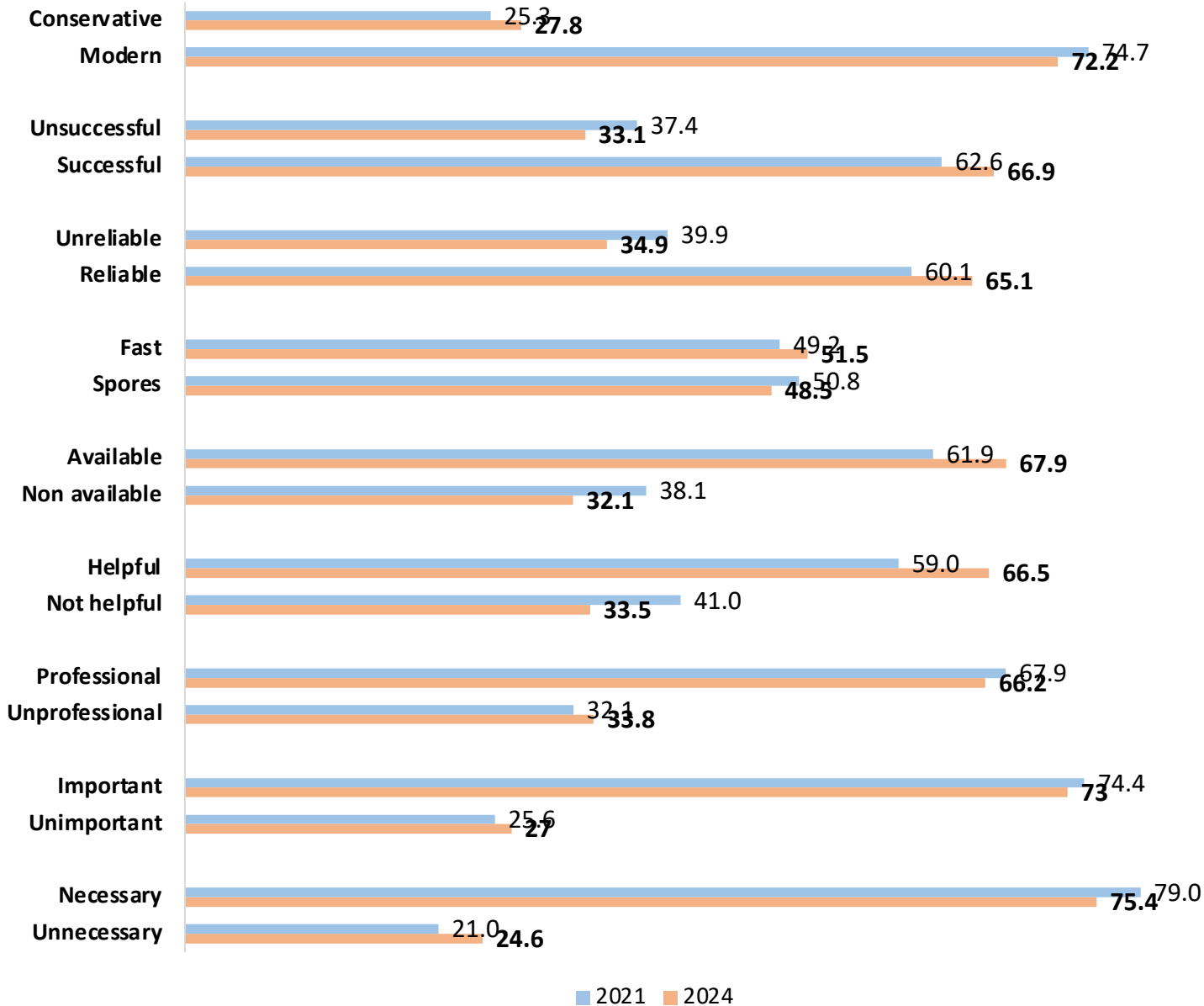
What is the most important role that NGOs should have in Montenegro?

There is a significant increase in the opinion that NGOs should be sharp critics of the Government and state authorities – from 38.1% in 2021 to 45.7% in 2024.

The number of those who see the most important role of NGOs in monitoring the work of the Government and state authorities has decreased (from 28.3% in 2021 to 21% in 2024), while the percentage of those who think that NGOs should participate in the drafting of laws and strategies has remained at the same level.



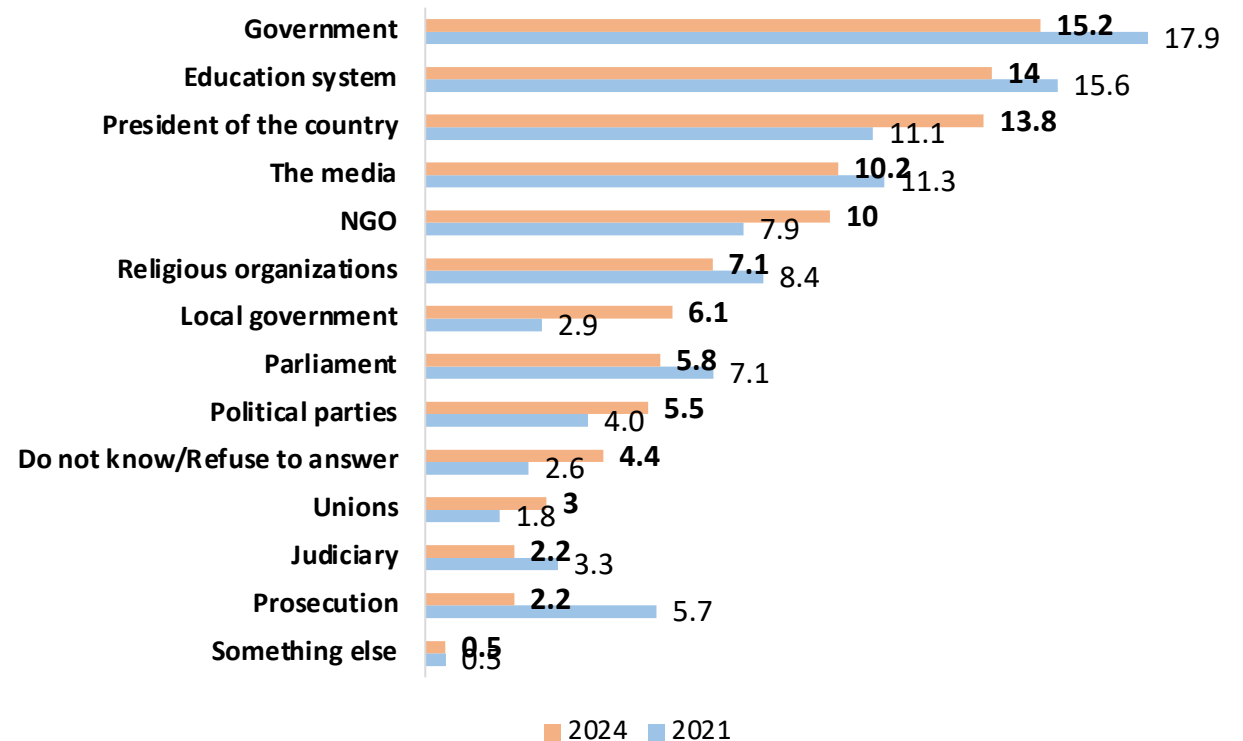
How would you characterize NGOs?



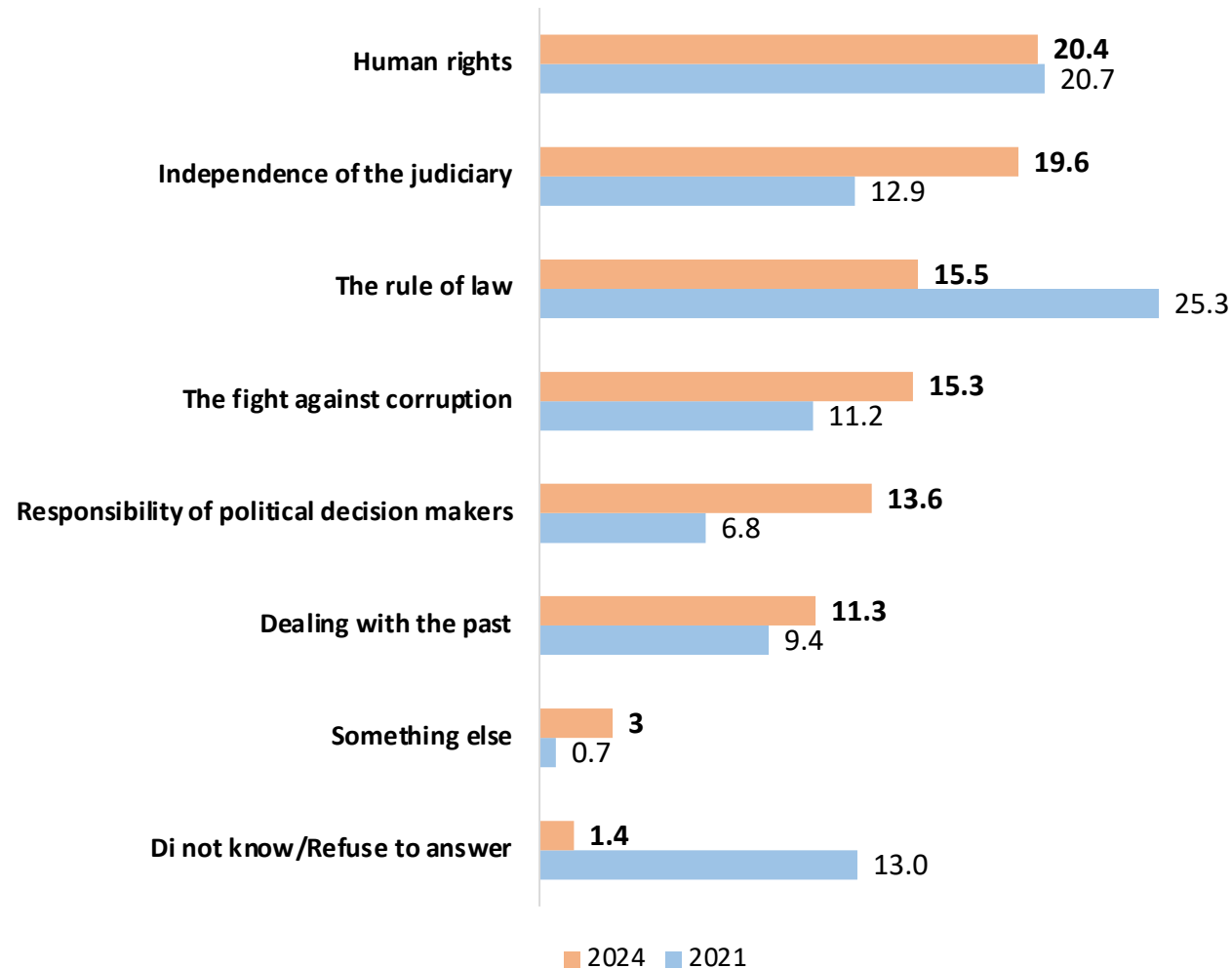
In both waves, **NGOs are predominantly seen as modern, successful, reliable, fast, accessible, helpful, expert, important, and necessary, with a growth in positive characteristics of NGOs recorded in almost all of these categories from 2021 to 2024.**

Among the listed social actors, who is crucial in promoting democracy in our society?

Citizens, as in the previous wave, have identified the government as a key actor in promoting democracy in our society, with a decline in expectations (from 17.9% in 2021 to 15.2% in 2024), followed by the educational system, the president of the country, the media, and NGOs, with an increase in this aspect compared to 2021.



Which questions raised by NGOs are important for the democratization and Europeanization of society?



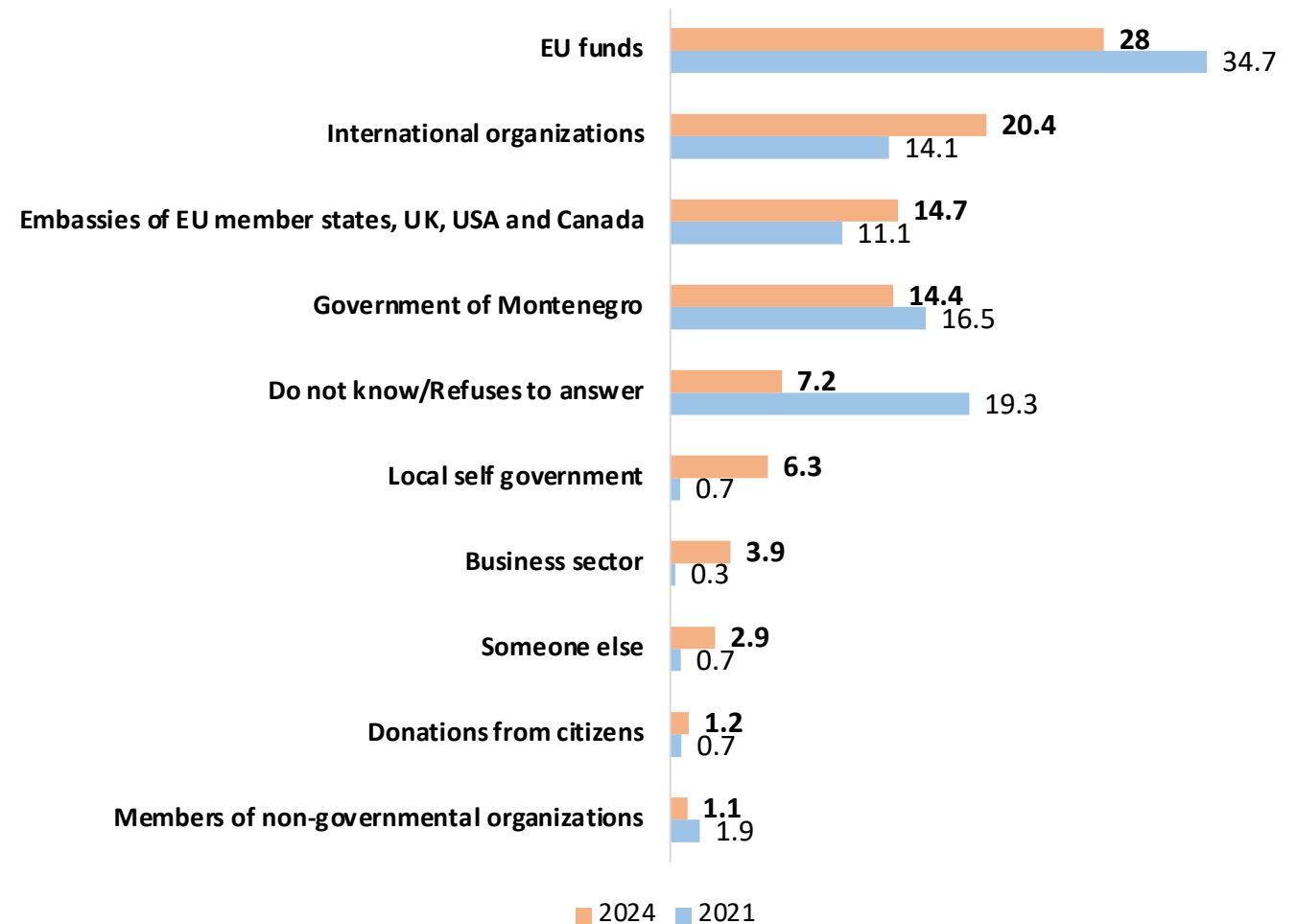
The most important issues that NGOs address in the democratization and Europeanization of society are **human rights, independence of the judiciary and the rule of law**, with the percentages of importance of these topics varying compared to the previous wave.

The fight against corruption is also included, and **there is a significant increase in the perception of the responsibility of political decision-makers**, while there is growth in addressing issues related to **dealing with the past**.

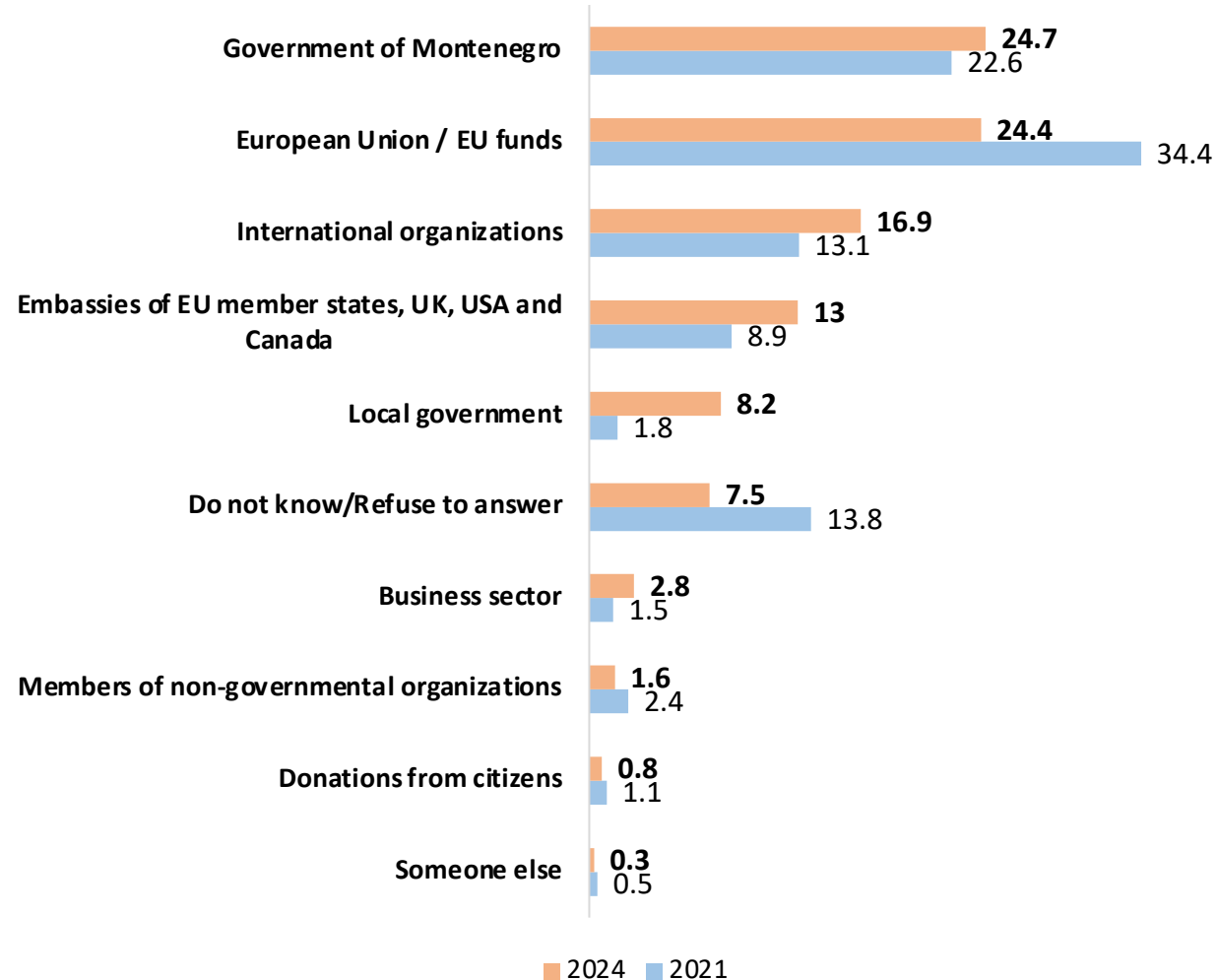
In your opinion, who are the main donors to NGOs in Montenegro?

International donors are recognized as the main source of funding for NGOs, primarily through EU funds, followed by international organizations and embassies of EU member states, the UK, the USA, and Canada.

There is a decline in the perception of the government as the main donor, while the number of those who see more involvement from local self-governments, the business sector, etc., has increased.



In your opinion, who should support NGOs the most in Montenegro?



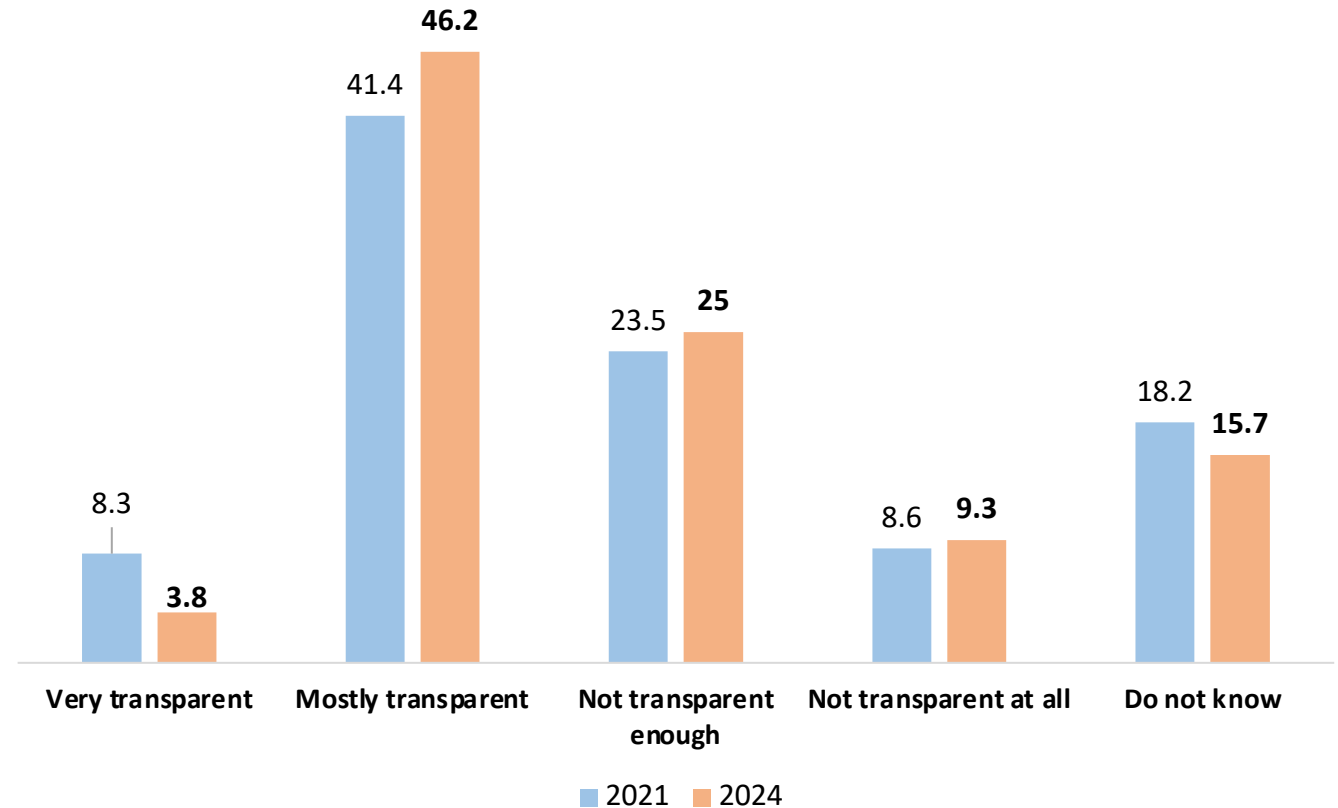
Approximately 24% of citizens believe that the European Union/EU funds and the Government of Montenegro should support non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Montenegro.

They are followed by international organizations, embassies of EU member states, the UK, the US, and Canada, as well as local self-governments.

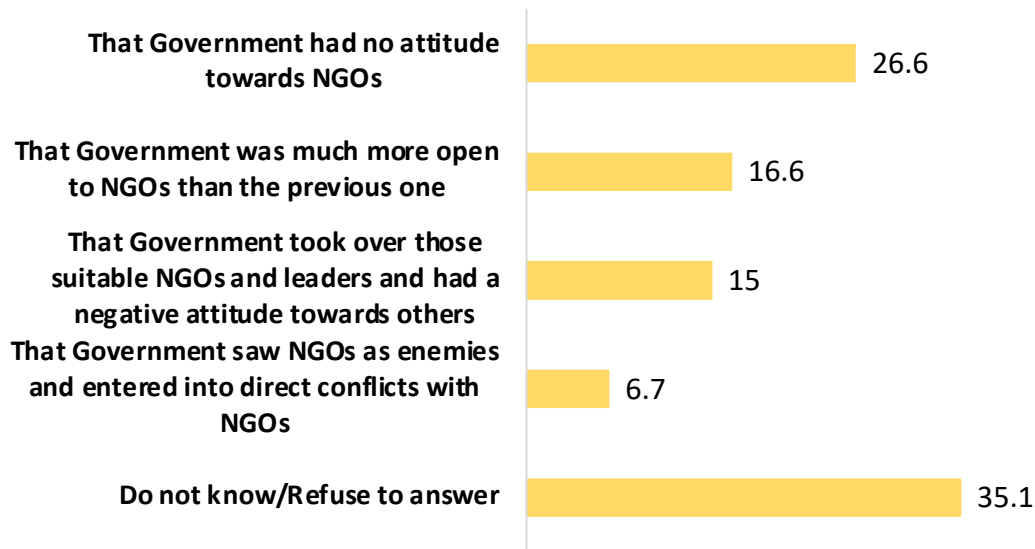
How transparent are NGOs in their work?

Half of the citizens (50%) believe that NGOs are mostly or very transparent in their work, which is at the same level as in 2021 (49.7%).

There has been an increase in the number of those who have a clear stance on this issue and those who are not of the opinion that NGOs are transparent (34.3% in 2024 compared to 32.1% in 2021).



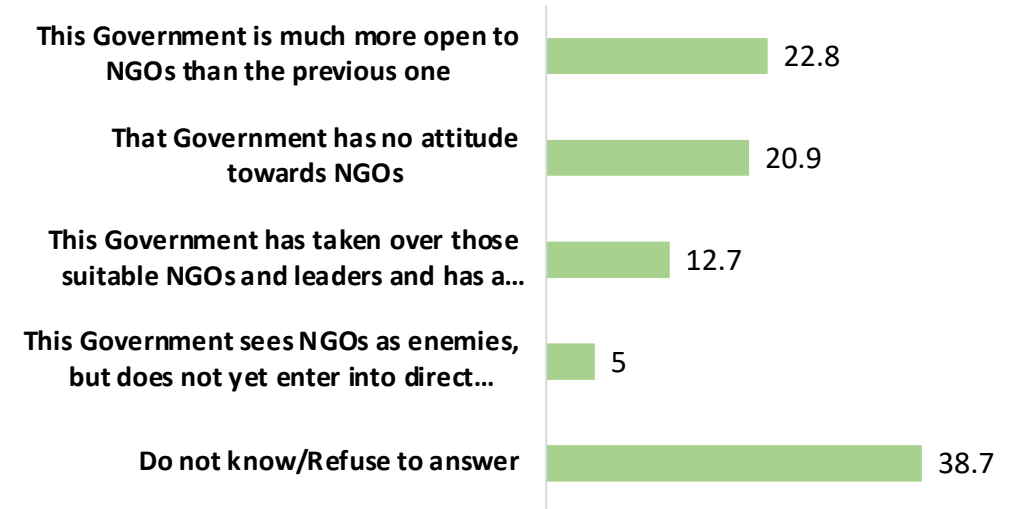
In your opinion, what was the attitude of the Government of Dritan Abazović towards NGOs?



A significant percentage (26.6%) perceives that the Abazović's Government did not have a clearly defined attitude towards NGOs, and 16.6% believe that the government was more open to NGOs compared to previous administrations.

Approximately 15% of respondents saw that Government as selective in its collaboration, favoring NGOs and leaders that aligned with its interests, while adopting a negative stance towards others, while 6.7% believed that this Government viewed NGOs as enemies and engaged in direct conflicts with them.

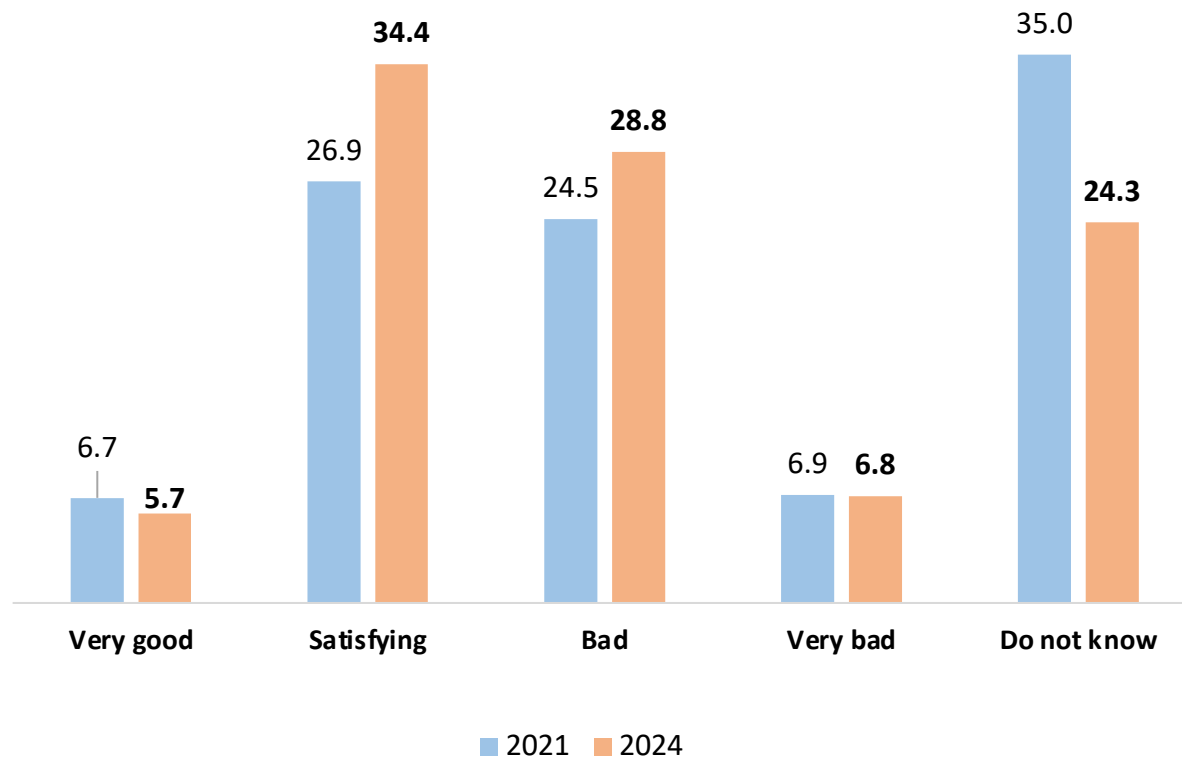
In your opinion, what was the attitude of the Government of Milojko Spajić towards NGOs?



At this stage, 22.8% of respondents believe that the government is much more open to NGOs compared to previous ones, while 20.9% think that the Government does not have a clearly defined stance towards NGOs.

Approximately 13% perceive this Government as selective in its collaboration with NGOs, favoring those that are deemed suitable, while maintaining a negative stance towards others. Additionally, 5% believe that this Government sees NGOs as enemies but has not yet entered into direct conflicts with them.

What is the cooperation between the Government and NGOs in Montenegro?



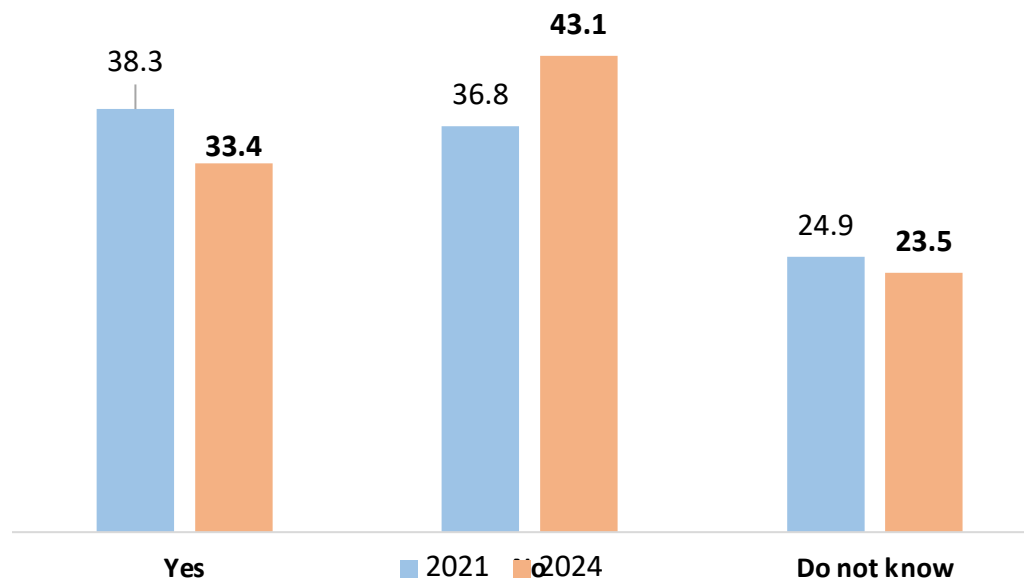
The general perception of collaboration between the Government and NGOs is mostly divided, with an increased number of citizens considering the cooperation satisfactory (from 26.9% to 34.4%) and a growing number of people who view it as poor (from 24.5% to 28.8%).

The number of individuals undecided on this issue significantly decreases.

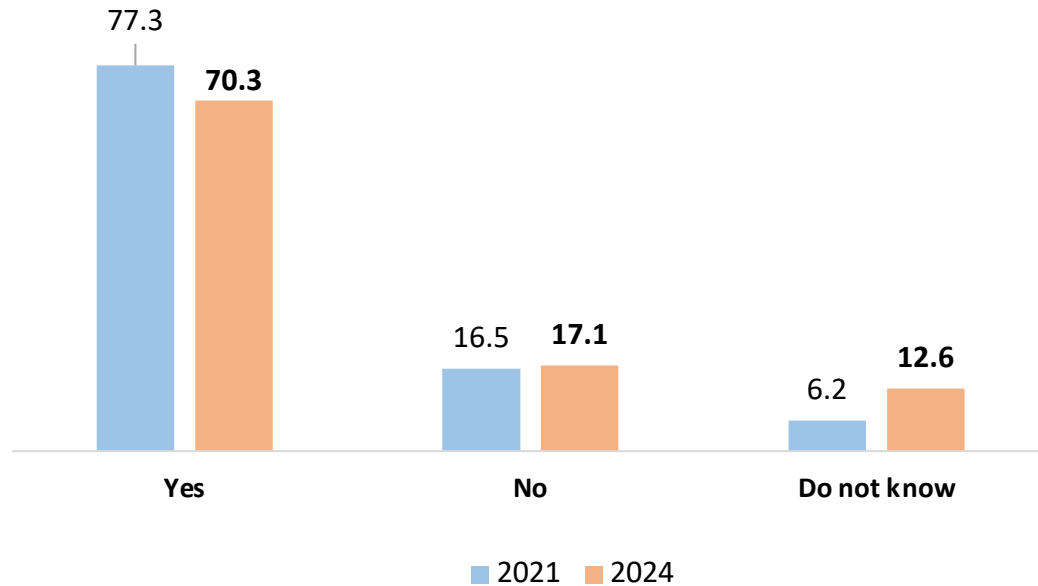
Are there conditions in Montenegro for the development of NGOs that can freely criticize and limit the government when necessary?

The number of those who believe that there are no conditions for the development of NGOs that can freely criticize and limit the government when necessary has significantly increased, from 36.8% in 2021 to 43.1% in 2024.

At the same time, the number of those who think that this freedom is not endangered has decreased, from 38.3% in 2021 to 33.4% in 2024.

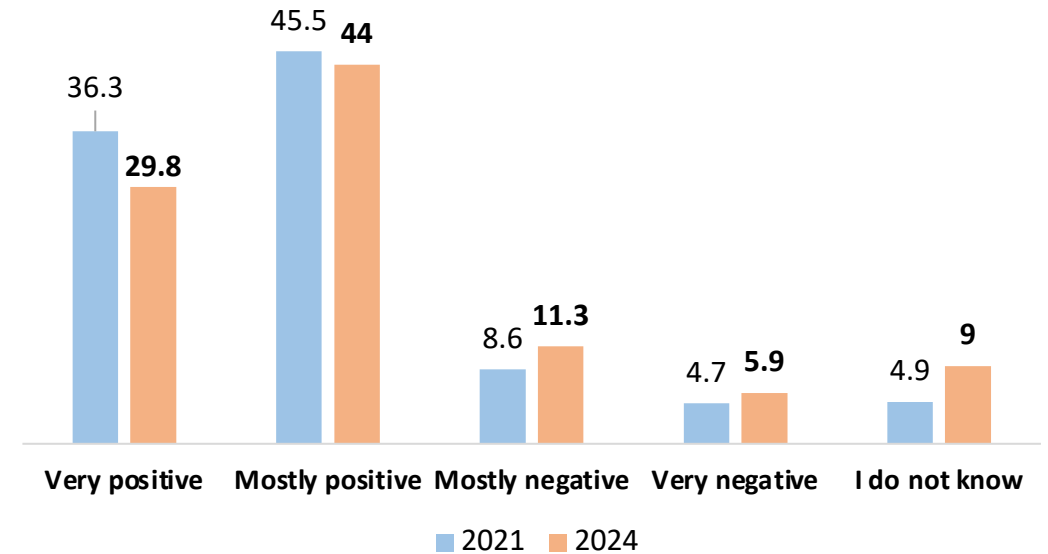


Do you support Montenegro's EU Membership?



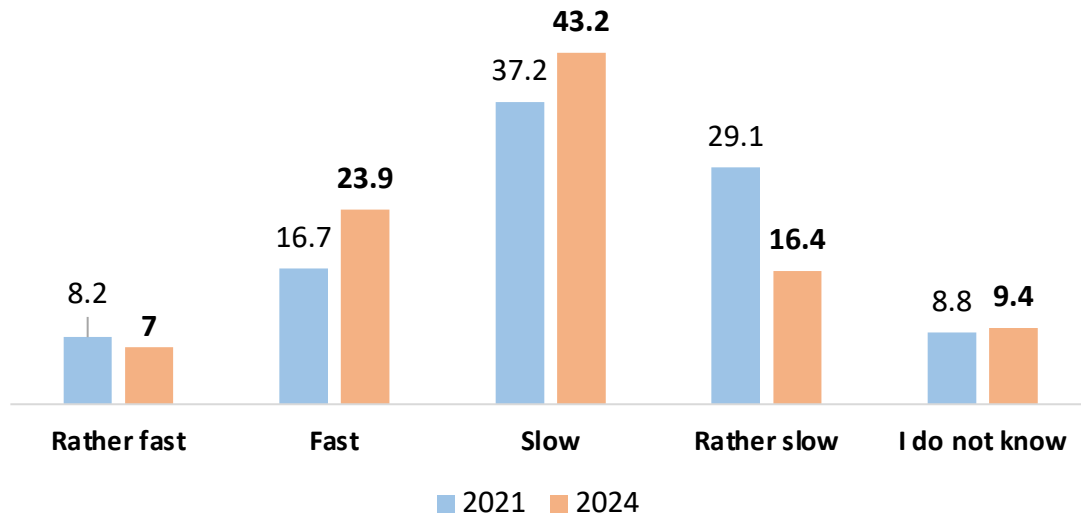
Compared to the 2021 research, **there is a decrease in support for Montenegro's membership in the EU - from 77.3% to 70.3%**. Membership is opposed by 17.1%, which is approximately consistent with the earlier percentage, while there is an **increasing number of individuals who are undecided on this issue**.

What is your general attitude towards the EU?



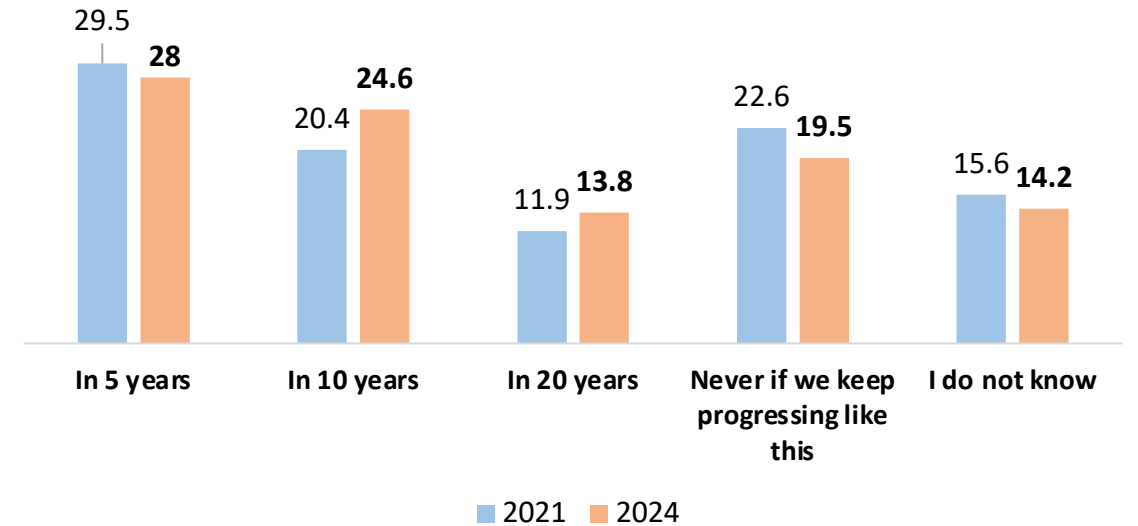
Compared to the 2021 research, **there is also a decline in the positive attitude towards the EU – (from 82% to 73.8%)**, with an increase in the number of those with a generally or very negative stance (17.2% in 2024 compared to 13.3% in 2021)

In your opinion, at what pace is Montenegro progressing in the negotiation process with the EU?



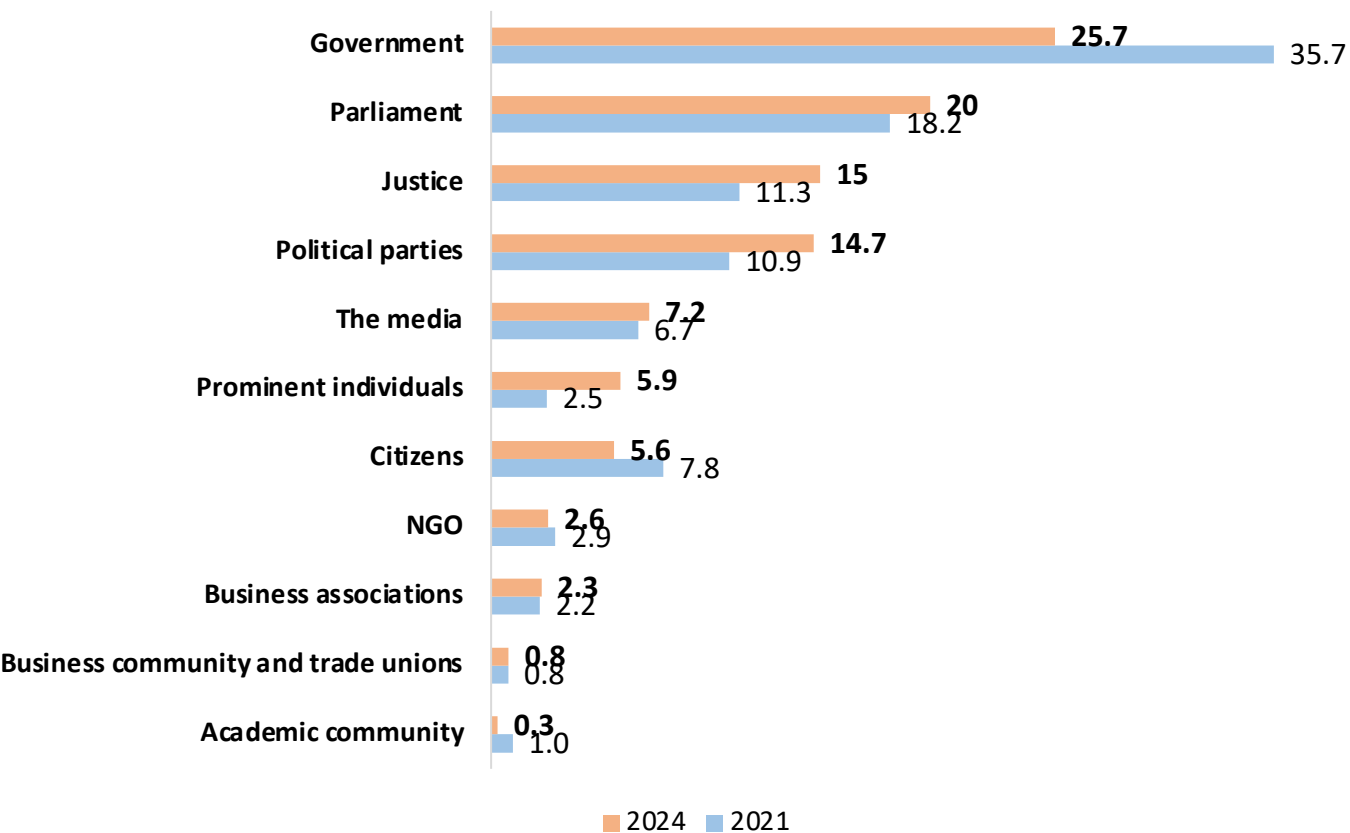
The majority, almost 60%, believe that Montenegro is progressing slowly or very slowly towards the EU. However, this percentage is still lower than in 2021. At the same time, there is a 6% increase in the percentage of those who now perceive a certain progress on that path.

What do you think, at this pace, when will Montenegro become a member of the EU?



Just over a quarter of citizens (28%) believe that Montenegro will become an EU member in 5 years, a quarter think it happening in 10 years, and 13.8% think it will take 20 years. Almost one-fifth believe that Montenegro will never become an EU member.

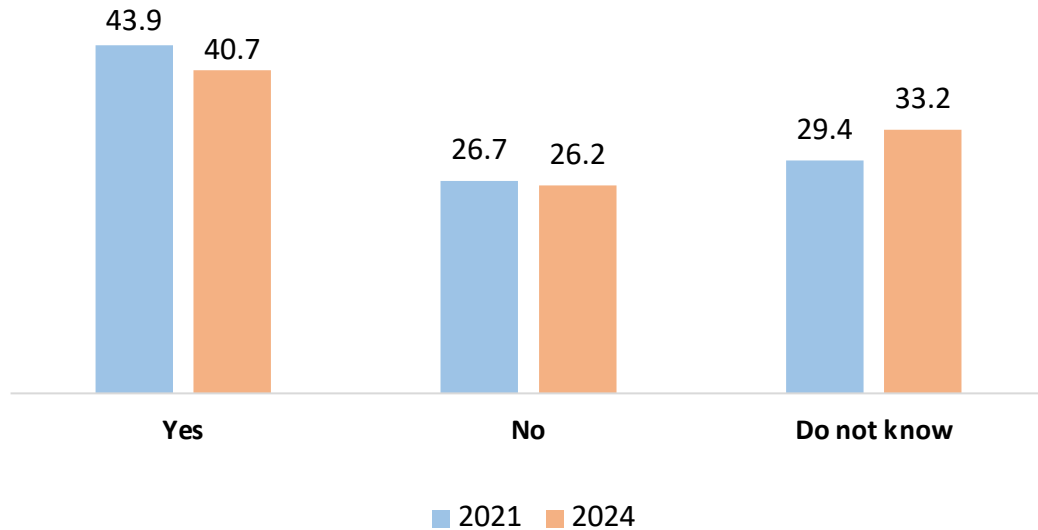
In your opinion, who is most responsible for the dynamics of the Montenegro's EU accession process?



The Government is perceived as most responsible for the dynamics of the accession process, but this percentage has dropped by 10% compared to the earlier wave in 2021.

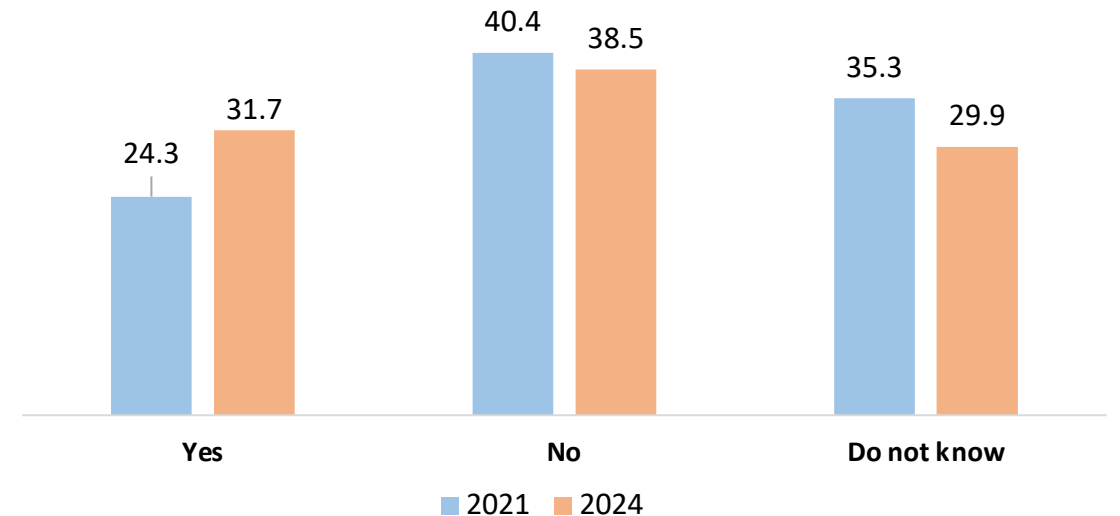
Parliament follows, then the judiciary, while there is a growth in the perception of the responsibility of political parties and prominent individuals.

Do NGOs have expertise/knowledge in the field of EU integration?



About 41% of citizens believe that NGOs have expertise/knowledge in the field of EU integration, which is a slight decrease (3.2% compared to 2021). There is an almost identical percentage in both waves of those who do not share that view (26%), while the number of those who are undecided about the issue is growing.

Do the authorities take into account the views of NGOs regarding the process of European integration and Montenegro's obligations on that path?



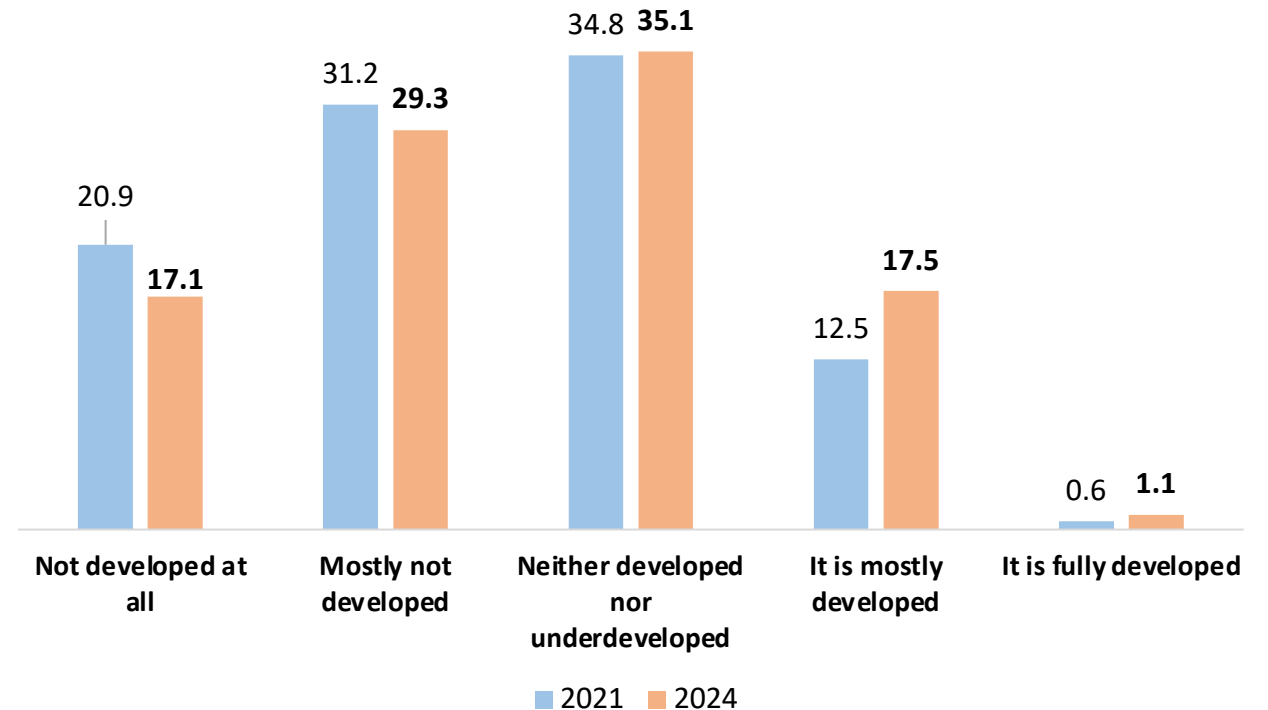
Almost two-fifths (38.5%) of respondents, similar to the previous research, believe that the authorities do not listen to the views of NGOs regarding the European integration process and Montenegro's obligations on that path.

A third (31.7%) have the opposite opinion, which is a 7.4% increase compared to 2021.

The social dialogue among unions, employers, and authorities on development, wages, employment, and decent work, as well as labor and social rights, is a fundamental democratic value and a condition for EU integration. To what extent is social dialogue developed in Montenegro?

Almost half of the citizens of Montenegro - 46.4% believe that social dialogue is mostly or not developed at all, which is a decrease of almost 6% compared to 2021.

More than a third cannot be clearly determined, and about a fifth (18%) is in the position that the social dialogue in Montenegro is developed, which is an increase of 5% compared to 2021.





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