

Albanian Institute for International Studies (AIIS)

**Albania and European Union:
Perceptions and Realities**

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Executive Summary

Albanian Institute for International Studies (AIIS) conducted a survey with Public Administration, Media, Local NGOs and Business groups in Tirana. The aim of the survey was to assess perceptions of and knowledge on European Union and EU integration for Albania. These groups were chosen because they are both immediately responsible for and directly affected by the integration process.

The most obvious finding of the survey was the overwhelming support for Albania's membership into EU in all the above-mentioned categories. The support levels were very close to 100 % with almost all respondents answering that they would vote for Albania's membership into EU in a referendum on this issue. The figures speak for themselves; 96.43% in the Media Category, 96.91 % in Businesses and 99.38 % and 100 % in Public Administration and Local NGOs respectively. The high level of support for Albania's EU membership was also reflected in the fact that respondents in all categories thought that strengthening relations with EU should be the most important priority of the Albanian Government.

Such exceptionally high level of support for EU membership is very encouraging and should be exploited accordingly while it lasts. However the very magnitude of this support level raises important doubts on the understanding of the integration process as a whole. It begs the question: Does such support result from ignorance on or knowledge of the benefits and drawbacks of integration process as a whole? Our findings suggest the exceedingly high levels of support are combined with some disturbing misunderstandings of the efforts required to integrate Albania into EU. Misunderstanding with regard to integration benefits might be another source of the overwhelming support for Albania's membership into EU.

Thus, a considerable number of respondents seem to think that EU should admit Albania even before she is ready to become a member of the EU. The answers among the categories varied considerably. In two of them, Public Administration and Local NGOs, the majority of respondents, 52% and 47.06% respectively, answered that European Union should admit Albania even before the country is prepared to become a EU member. In the business category the responses were more evenly distributed since 46.84% answered "Yes" and 50.63% answered "No". Media was the only category where a substantial majority of 73.47% answered "No" to the question.

The fact that most respondents in Public Administration thought that EU should admit Albania even before she is prepared to become a EU member reflects a major misconception on this process. Integration seems to be perceived as a decision to be taken in Brussels rather than an ongoing effort on the Albanian side raise, its economic, political and social standards. Such attitude was most pronounced in the Public Administration category since respondents thought that EU stand towards Albania is more important than the Albanian economy, and almost as important as Albanian Politics for our country's integration into EU. Although this was not the case in the other three categories even their respondents marked

EU stand towards Albania as a very important factor in Albania's road towards EU, almost as important as the economy and politics.

The above attitudes seem to indicate that among certain groups, most remarkably in Public Administration, integration has become an end in itself. The attempts of Albania to conduct reforms and join EU are meant to produce economic development, democratization and not simply EU membership. Such outcomes cannot and should not be less desirable than EU membership. Thus, integration has to be understood as a means towards democratization and economic development and not vice versa, otherwise integration will not be sought at home but only abroad.

Another important finding that reflects the narrow understanding of the integration process and its benefits was the fact that most respondents marked free movement into other EU countries as the most important benefit from EU membership. In Public Administration, Media and Local NGO categories free movement received the highest score, and was valued more than economic development, strengthening the rule of law, democratization and well being in general. The misunderstanding here seems to be twofold. First of all free movement is understood simply as the possibility to travel without visas, rather than in its broader sense as free movement of capital and businesses. Secondly, and partly as a consequence of the first misunderstanding, there seems to be little awareness that free movement will be only a corollary of EU membership and it will be of little use without economic development, democratization and well being in general. Yet more than achieving these goals people seem interested to leave the country and integration into EU seems to be perceived as a means to this end, which is especially discouraging among Public Administration respondents.

Related to the narrow understanding of EU integration and integration benefits were also some serious misconceptions regarding the timeframe of the integration process. The first major misperception concerned the speed of the integration process. Most respondents thought Albania would join EU somewhere between 5 to 10 years while at the same time the majority of respondents thought that the integration process was moving slowly. Business and Public Administration were the two most optimistic categories. They had the largest percentages of respondents who thought that Albania will join EU in 5 or 10 years, and the lowest percentages that marked 15 or more than 15 years as the time period in which Albania will join EU. The two categories that were less optimistic in this regard were Media and Local NGOs. Of the two Media had the largest percentage of those who thought Albania would join EU in 15 or more than 15 years, i.e. it was the least optimistic

While it is impossible to accurately quantify in terms of years Albania's integration into EU, especially since after all integration is a process and not a fixed date, it is safe to say that if Albania joins EU in 5 or 10 years, the integration process has been quite fast by any standards. The Stabilization – Association process alone lasts 10 years, while Albania has not yet signed the SAA Agreement with EU. Here it must be emphasised that the contradictory responses were indicative not only of a lack of information on the integration process but also of the desire of respondents for Albania to join EU as soon as possible.

Such desire was reflected both in the high support levels for EU membership and in the importance that respondents attached to strengthening relations with EU.

It is difficult to find the source of such a high level of optimism regarding Albania's EU integration process, besides lack of information and/or political propaganda on the process. No matter what the source of respondent's optimism it is important to note that there was a correlation between such optimism and the way in which respondents perceived EU and Albania's benefits from EU membership. The more optimistic they were on speed of the integration process the more positively they perceived EU and Albania's benefits from EU membership. Therefore once the membership timetable for Albania becomes clear it is very probable that perceptions on EU might deteriorate and expectations of membership benefits drop.

In the near future as respondents familiarize themselves with the intricacies of the process it will seem to them that the more Albania moves towards EU the further away EU moves from Albania which might give rise to frustration and resignation. This will become even more obvious after the first wave of EU enlargement, which will leave Albania out while presenting new challenges for its integration process. Any feelings of frustration with the process might give rise to resignation and apathy that will be particularly dangerous in categories such as the Public Administration one, which is directly responsible for the integration process. Therefore it is important to raise awareness on the real efforts and time needed in order to haul Albania into EU. The sooner this is done the better since the greater the misperceptions of today the bigger the frustrations of tomorrow.

It is important to emphasize that the above-mentioned misconceptions and misunderstandings are not simply the result of limited information but also the outcome of political manipulation of the integration process for propagandistic ends. Disinformation in order to gain political leverage is as dangerous as, if not more than, limited information. So as our findings indicate some of the above misperceptions were most pronounced in comparatively well-informed categories such as Public Administration. This category was relatively informed on EU institutions; in this aspect it came second only to Media. The level of familiarity respondents in this category had with regard to Stabilization – Association Agreement, on conditions to join EU as well as on EU and NATO integration came second only to that of the respondents in the Media category.

Nevertheless, misconceptions and misunderstandings in the Public Administration category with regard to the integration process were more pronounced than in any of the other categories, and at times even more than in the Business category that was the least informed group. Thus, by far the largest percentage of respondents in Public Administration, 42 %, thought that Albania was prepared enough to become a EU member. It was in this category where a considerable percentage, 38 %, of respondents, thought that Albania would join EU in five years. This percentage was second only to that of the Business category, which along with Local NGOs was the least informed group. While it is impossible to accurately assess the degree to which responses have been conditioned by the position of respondents in this category, it is also safe to conclude that respondents in the Public Administration group are

most exposed to, as well as part of, the political propaganda, which in turn might account for some of the major misconceptions they have developed.

This is not to say that limited information does not breed misunderstandings. As the above example shows limited information on EU, its institutions and on membership requirements produces unrealistic expectations (in the Business category 52 % of respondents thought Albania would join EU in five years). Yet even in this case such highly unrealistic expectations can be blamed on political propaganda as much as on limited information. Thus, information on EU, its institution and on the integration process will not suffice without increased awareness on domestic efforts needed for integration to take place. This awareness should be raised away from narrow political ends, especially in groups such as the Business one that will be the first to bear integration costs. Unless domestic actors become aware of such efforts and assume their responsibilities accordingly integration will remain a cliché and a never-ending process, distant in time and lacking in benefits. Of course information and awareness campaigns should be an important element in this respect, which is why we identified the main sources of information on EU and EU integration.

The main source of information for the respondents on EU and the EU integration process was Television. Here the Public Administration and Media were the exception since most respondents in the first category received information mostly from Internet, whereas respondents from the second category received most of their information from Newspapers.

Among the categories there were high levels of interest for more information on EU. There were however differences from one category to the other, some were more interested to receive more information on EU and others less. Thus, the most interested category was the Media, which is to be expected. Yet even in this case, some 10.71 % of the interviewed journalists were not interested to receive more information on EU. Public Administration was the next category with highest percentage of respondents, 86.71 %, interested to receive more information on EU. Business and Local NGO respondents were least interested in this respect, although in both groups there is limited information on EU.

Those interested to receive more information on EU were also asked in what areas they would like to receive more information. The area in which respondents were more interested in was EU enlargement. The score of EU Enlargement, 8.93 out of 10, is very indicative of the great interest respondents have on such a process. The interest of the respondents to learn more on EU Enlargement was also reflected across all four categories. In each of them EU Enlargement received the highest score, despite variations in the level of interest in other areas. This once more confirms the importance that the respondents attach to Albania's EU membership

RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the survey show that the public administration, media, NGOs, and business groups should be more informed on Albania's EU integration process. It is important that the information available be free of political propaganda that aims to use the integration process for narrow political motives. An awareness and information campaign should be launched towards this end. We recommend that the information campaign should be focused on the following:

- The speed of the integration process depends on Albania and not on the EU. Therefore, the campaign ought to focus on the economic, political, judicial and other reforms that must be carried out by the government in order to prepare the country for integration in EU. It is important to emphasise that integration begins in Albania and ends in Brussels, and not vice versa.
- Albania's benefits from this process must be clearly spelled out. The fact that the overwhelming majority of the interviewees declared that the greatest benefit will be free movement means that most people are interested in leaving the country. They see the integration process as a means towards this end rather than positive thing in itself.
- A cost-benefit analysis on the positive and negative effects of the Association and Stabilisation Agreement for Albanian economy ought to be carried out. The results of this analysis ought to be made public.
- The results of a cost-benefit analysis should be made known especially to the business group since this community will be the first to bear integration costs, especially regarding trade liberalization after the signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreement.
- The timeline of the integration process must be made clearer. Although it is impossible to pinpoint the actual date in which Albania will gain EU membership, the length of the process may be estimated more realistically. For example, the process of stabilisation and association lasts about ten years, although this process may be lengthened or shortened in time depending on the speed with which reforms will be carried out. Thus, we can be sure that the integration process will not be complete within 5 to 10 years, as most interviewees think.
- The integration process should be explained according to its phases; opening SAA negotiation to signing SAA, the stabilization and association process, i.e., the implementation phase of the SAA, the candidacy phase and finally full membership. General requirements and approximate timelines can be outlined in order to have a clearer understanding of the process.

- Besides clarifying the timeline of the integration process it is also important to shed some light on the implications of EU enlargement for Albania especially for categories such as Public Administration. EU is not a static organism. Its enlargement will have immediate consequences on Albania's membership.
- More information is needed to update these 4 focus groups on the progress made in the process in which Albania finds itself. People must be clear on how much has been accomplished, and how much more remains to be done.
- More information is needed on Albania's integration into NATO and its importance for Albania's EU integration process.

The means that will be used to conduct such a campaign will depend on the target groups as well as on the issues that will be highlighted. Nevertheless some of the methods that can be used are as follows:

- TV Programs and documentaries
- Newsletters, Pamphlets and Brochures
- Lectures, workshops, round tables and trainings.

TV programs and documentaries can be used in order to address a larger audience. Pamphlets and brochures can be used in order to reach categories such as Business and Local NGOs and they can contain simplified information on EU and EU integration. Lectures, workshops, round tables and trainings on the other hand can address the needs of more specialized groups within the Public Administration and/or the Media.

Nevertheless, an awareness campaign would not be sufficient in order to address all the shortcomings identified in the survey. As it has been already argued not all of the shortcomings are due to lack of information. A great deal is due to perceptions and expectation. Part of the misperceptions has been as a result of political manipulation of the integration process. Governments and political parties have often used the process in order to gain political leverage, thus at times raising expectations unrealistically, or at other times hindering the process itself. Therefore, political will is important not only to move this process forward but also to portray it realistically, away from propaganda considerations

Introduction

Integration has become one of the buzzwords of Albanian political life. Politicians, artists, intellectuals, all talk about political, economic, regional, cultural and even spiritual integration. The word is being used so frequently that it has been seldom defined and rarely understood by the public at large beyond the vague notion that integration is a positive thing, especially if it takes one West. Among different types of integration the Euro Atlantic one remains the most crucial since it will be the generator of other integration drives. Albania has been one of the first countries in the region to seek NATO membership. Every Albanian government since 1992 has unequivocally professed its Euro Atlantic orientation.

Thus, one of the things that everyone seems to agree on in Albania is that joining the EU remains both the short and long -term priority of Albanian politics. EU is present in almost every aspect of Albanian life: observing elections, providing economic and development aid, and actively participating in the reform and institution building processes. EU integration is viewed as a panacea for the Albanian problems and is high on the agenda of every major political party. In this context the Association and Stabilization Agreement has also been in the spotlight of the media, and a short-term objective for all the political parties.

Yet, despite the wide media coverage and frequent political rhetoric there seems to be little knowledge in Albania about EU as an organization, its institutions, the implications of EU integration for Albania, Albania's chances to join EU and the terms and implications of the Association and Stabilization Agreement of Albania with EU. Empirical evidence indicates that there is little awareness on the efforts needed to haul Albania into EU. Moreover, it seems to be the case that such awareness is absent even among those categories that are responsible for and will be most immediately affected by this process.

For these reasons we thought it necessary to conduct a survey in order to assess the knowledge, expectations and opinion of certain groups in Albania regarding the EU and Albania's integration in it. Our survey focused on the Businesses, Public Administration, Media and local NGOs. The reason why we focused on these groups was because they are both directly involved in and to a certain extent responsible for Albania's integration into EU structures and those that will be immediately affected by Albania's membership into EU, although it is impossible to draw a clear line between the two. There are other groups that are important to Albania's integration into EU and that will be immediately affected by the process. Farmers are the most conspicuous group here. However, given the limited time and resources we could not survey all of them. In future similar projects other groups such as farmers, politicians and students should be included.

Besides assessing the level of knowledge on and perceptions of EU among the above mentioned categories, we are hopeful that the results of this survey could be useful in preparing a campaign of awareness and education on EU and EU integration for the surveyed categories and beyond. More research and work will be needed in this respect.

METHODOLOGY

The goal of this study was to assess the level of knowledge and perceptions on EU and Albania's integration into EU in the public administration, media, local NGOs and businesses. In order to achieve the above-mentioned goal the following objectives were set:

- Assess the familiarity of the chosen categories with international organizations in general and EU in particular.
- Assess perceptions and attitudes towards EU.
- Evaluate the familiarity and perceptions of the chosen groups with the process of integration into EU for Albania.
- Identify the main sources of information on EU for the chosen categories.

Survey Design

The survey was based on a questionnaire prepared by the survey team of the Albanian Institute for International Studies (AIIS). The questionnaire contained four main sections: General Information on the Interviewee, General Information on EU, The Process of EU Integration, and Sources of Information (see Annex 1). The questionnaire was not self administered but it was filled in each case by a trained interviewer. Our choice was dictated by logistical as well as methodological considerations. Logistically we could not in any of the categories gather all the interviewees in one auditorium where they could fill in self-administered questionnaires. This was both due to the nature of the chosen categories as well as due to the sample size in each case. Under these conditions our best option was to conduct interviews on an individual bases in each case. For this reason the survey was designed and the interviewers trained so as to minimize interviewer bias. While interviewer bias has not been eliminated completely, we believe that individual interviews have produced more candid responses than those that would have been given under a collective setting. Individual interviews are relatively free of the distorted answers due to 'group pressure'.

During the July - August 2002 period AIIS research team prepared and tested continuously the questionnaire that was used in the survey. The questionnaire was finalized, after three consecutive rounds of testing in a pilot group of 30 people across all four categories. Final revisions and organizations of the questions resulted in a 11 page, 26 questions and 76 variables questionnaire. In order to achieve accurate as well as unbiased responses the questionnaire contained both closed ended and open-ended questions (SEE Annex 1).

Once the questionnaire was prepared, thirteen interviewers were selected in order to implement the survey. They were first introduced to and familiarized with the questionnaire and the purpose of the survey. Then they were trained in interviewing techniques so as to minimize as much as possible interviewer bias. The survey was implemented during the September 1st - September 7th 2002 time period. The two categories that were completed first were Public Administration and Media.

Sampling Procedures and Justification

Initially the survey was intended to target the public at large on a nation-wide scale. Such a lofty objective was not realized due to limited financial resources, time constraints and methodological complications. To begin with the last one, in order to choose a representative sample on a nation wide scale we had to possess reliable demographic information which is not yet available in Albania. Furthermore with a nation wide randomly selected sample the questionnaire would have to be simplified to such an extent as to provide us with little information beyond "yes" and "no" questions. The survey team assumed the Albanian public had a very limited knowledge of EU. This would have produced uninformed answers to the extent that they could not be used analytically. A nation-wide survey would also require more time and entail greater financial resources than those at our disposal.

Therefore, the Survey Team decided to limit the survey in Tirana and on the following categories:

- Public Administration
- Media
- Local NGOs
- Local Businesses

Tirana was chosen not only due to considerations of expediency but also because it is a city that reflects well the diversity of the country as a whole. The above categories were chosen for mainly two reasons. First, they provide an audience whose knowledge on EU is above that of the average citizen, which allows for more qualified answers. This gave us more room to explore the level of knowledge and perceptions on EU and EU integration for Albania. Secondly, these categories and especially Public Administration are both immediately responsible for and directly affected by Albania's EU integration process. Furthermore, categories such as the Media, but also local NGOs and government agencies, are sources of information on EU and Albania's EU integration. Therefore, their answers were of greater interest than those of the average man in the street even if only for the mere fact that these categories to a large extent shape the knowledge and perceptions of the public at large.

The absence of accurate statistics prevented a rigorous random probability sample throughout the chosen categories. Stratified sampling was used in two of the categories, Public administration and Media in order to have a representative sample and data that could be analyzed according to each of the specific categories. In both cases randomization techniques were built into the sampling in order to increase the representativeness of the sample. In the case of businesses and local NGOs purely random probability techniques were initially employed.

Public Administration

The first challenge we had to face when selecting a representative sample for the public administration in Tirana was the very definition of the public administration. First, we had to decide on the institutions that were to be listed and then on their employees. The institutions we decided upon were all the government departments, the Premier's Office, the Parliament, the Presidency and the Central Elections Committee. Local government institutions, such as the municipality, were not included in the Public Administration category partly because of their specific nature and partly due to methodological considerations. Within each of the enlisted institutions the people that were interviewed were only those that enjoyed the civil servant status.

Initially, a list of all of the above mentioned institutions and their civil servant personnel was computed. The data was taken from the Department of Public Administration (DPA) near the Premier's office. Then a sample of 200 respondents was selected with a weighted number of respondents in each institution proportional to its ratio of civil servants in relation to the total number of civil servants.

Media

A similar methodology was pursued in sampling the media. The media outlets that were chosen were: TV stations, daily newspapers and radio stations. A list of these outlets was compiled with the number of journalists working in each of them. In the case of media the respondent category consisted of journalists. Besides the number of journalists working at each media outlet, another consideration was also the audience of each outlet. The larger the audience the more the number of journalists interviewed. Due to the patchy information we had on the size of each outlet audience we did not use this factor as a primary consideration, which should have been the case under ideal conditions.

Businesses

In the case of the Business category the survey team compiled a list of some 1444 businesses either locally owned or with mixed ownership (Albanian & foreign ownership) located in Tirana or its immediate surroundings. Out of this list 100 businesses were randomly selected. This choice was dictated by the goal of our survey which was to assess Albanian perceptions only. The list of businesses was compiled using the data available at Tirana Chamber of Commerce. The list of enlisted businesses was not exhaustive, i.e. it did not include all the Tirana based businesses. However, the list was representative of medium and large Tirana based businesses. Our bias towards medium and large businesses was justified mainly on methodological grounds for two reasons. First, medium and large businesses have larger stakes in Albania's integration towards EU, which might entail greater interest on such a process. Secondly these businesses are easier to define since they avoid informal sector complications and other methodological obstacles in defining small-sized enterprises.

Within this sample, we interviewed only managerial staff or where possible the owner(s) of the business. This choice was in line with our goal to gather informed responses, or at least

responses from those who had greater stakes in Albania's EU integration process. Since we did not possess prior data on the size of the business, or the number of employees it was decided that on each case the interviewer would ask for the size of the business or the number of employees and depending on this information perform more than one interview where appropriate. While this choice undermined the scientific accuracy of the sample it did ensure a more weighted sample of the businesses depending on their size.

Local NGOs

In the same fashion as with the Business sector in the case of Local NGOs a list of Tirana based Albanian NGOs was compiled and some forty NGOs were randomly selected from this list. Here again as in the case of the business category given the absence of reliable information on the number of employees in each NGO it was decided that the larger the number of employees the greater the number of interviews that were performed. This principle was pursued rigorously in each individual case. Thus, even in this case we worked with a weighted sample. Those interviewed were the employees excluding supporting staff, such as drivers or secretaries. The aim was always to increase the chances of informed responses.

Limitations and Strengths of the Survey

First of all, it is important to emphasize that the survey conducted by AIIS is not a public survey in the traditional sense of the word. The results cannot be used to show the perceptions and the level of knowledge of the Albanian public at large. These results are valid only for the chosen categories on an individual bases. They do not reflect the perceptions or the level of knowledge of the average citizen, no matter how we define him/her. Moreover, the categories are so different from each other that any analyses that group their responses together should be very cautious in drawing far reaching conclusions. Thus, the first limitation of the survey pertains to the selection of the categories.

Having said this, it is also important to mention that the data, both on an individual and group basis, does reflect the perceptions and the level of knowledge of a population group that is, or should be, better informed than the average citizen. However, even in this case the data should be used very cautiously since some important categories that belong to this group such as politicians, university students or members of the academia have not been included.

Other categories that are missing but that might have been included using the "greater stakes argument", that was used in the case of medium and large businesses, are also the farmers who will be immediately affected by the EU integration process for Albania. Yet the inclusion of this category would have required the use of a more simplified questionnaire, whose data would be then impossible to compare with that from other categories. In order to resolve this dilemma AIIS survey team decided to exclude this category from the survey, a choice that can be justified through the "more qualified responses" argument but not through the "greater stakes" one.

Another limitation of the survey relates to sampling methodology and its implementation. Sampling was conducted in the absence of accurate information. In categories such as local NGOs or locally-owned businesses we did not possess information on the number of the employees or the size of the business. In the case of the Media our information on the audience of the media outlet was patchy and often limited to only a restricted number of major TV stations or major newspapers.

Besides sampling limitations another serious drawback of our survey was the fact that it was restricted to Tirana only. Despite the fact that Tirana is a very representative city, responses from journalists, businessmen, civil servants and NGOs from other districts in Albania would have been valuable. Had the survey been extended geographically the data would have been much more representative of the given categories at a nation wide scale. Our choice to limit the survey to Tirana and its immediate surroundings was dictated by the resources we had at our disposal.

Another drawback of the survey was its timing. First since the survey was implemented during the first week of September we could not interview university students and staff, a very important category for our purposes. Secondly, the survey was immediately preceded by the Kapshtica crises at the Greek – Albanian border. This might have been reflected in our survey as Greece received the lowest ratings of all other countries and organizations.

Finally, one of the limitations of the survey relates to the Business category in particular. In this category a distinction between those businesses belonging to the services sector and the ones in the production sector would have been helpful since these sectors will be affected in very different ways by the integration process. Here again we did not apply the distinction due to methodological and logistic considerations, ranging from the very definition of the production sector in Albania to the scarcity of accurate information on size and number of employees. Nevertheless, such a shortcoming does not invalidate our findings even in this category since the questions do not particularly focus on the economic implications and prerequisites of the integration process but rather on the level of knowledge of a process as a whole. In future surveys, focusing on this category would be necessary.

Besides the above-mentioned limitations the survey also had some major strengths. The questionnaire that was used, after consecutive rounds of testing, was designed to be simple, easy to use as well as informative. Thus, the interviews were designed to be short and conversational, lasting 10 minutes on average, which meant that in most cases the responses were candid and well thought through. This was also made possible by the rating scale that we used, which was from 1 to 10, a scale that replicates the Albanian grading system so all respondents were familiar with it from their school years. During the interview phase, none of the respondents had difficulties in understanding the rating scale.

Since the questionnaire was not self-administered and in order to reduce as much as possible interviewer bias, besides close ended questions there were also open ended ones. Qualitative questions were combined with quantitative ones in a complementary fashion. The respondents were asked for their opinion on a specific issue, for example the speed of EU integration for Albania, and then asked to quantify that opinion, in terms of years in the

present example. This makes the interpretation of the data more accurate as qualitative answers can be now quantified.

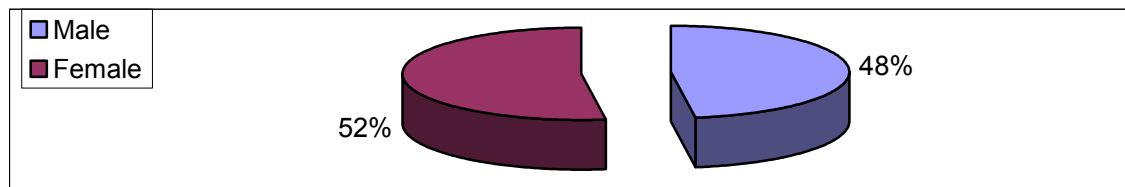
The two categories that were most rigorously surveyed were the public administration and media. In both cases, the sample was very representative and carefully selected. In both categories the respondents were quite collaborative which made the implementation of the survey easier. Furthermore, these two categories were surveyed within a very short period of time, 3 days, so that the influence of external factors was minimized. In all cases the sample size was large enough to allow statistical analyses for the given category.

SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

I. General Sample

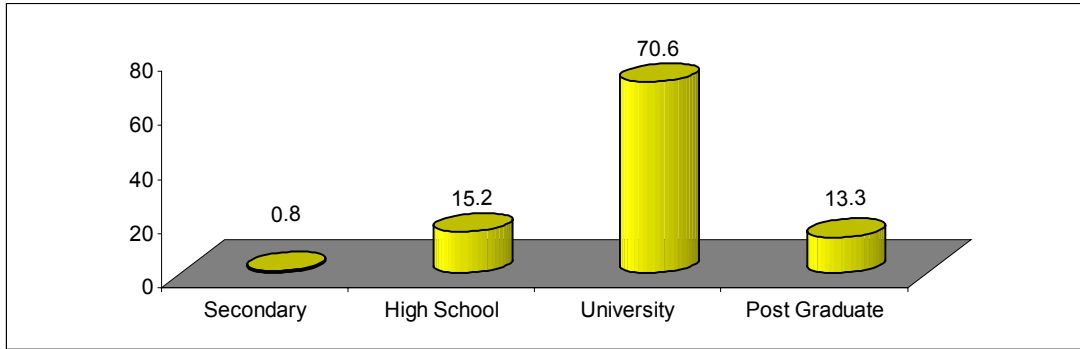
The non-response rate was 17.1 % and it was highest at the Business and Local NGOs category. This is quite satisfactory given that participation into the survey was completely voluntary and without any financial rewards. Males and females were more or less equally represented in the survey, although there was a slight preponderance of female respondents. With the exception of the Media category, where the majority of the respondents were male, 59 %, in the other categories the majority of the respondents were females, 57% for local NGOs, 54% for the Public Administration and 53 % for the Businesses. This happened mainly due to the fact that, generally speaking the female population was far more cooperative than the male one. See Figure 1.

Figure 1: Gender Representation in Total



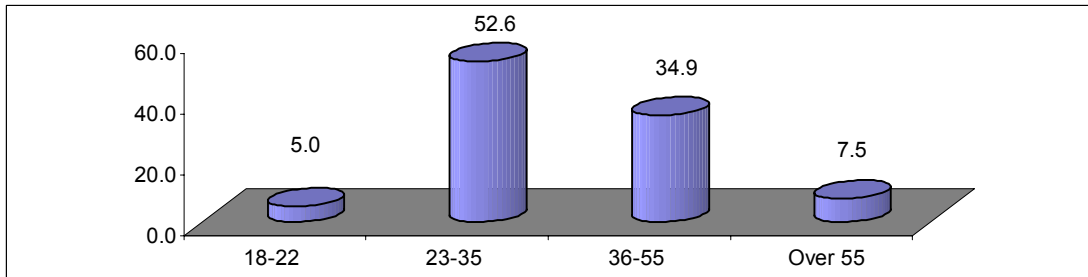
In line with our objective to receive qualified answers most of the respondents had a university degree, and a considerable portion had also been to graduate school. The best qualified category was the Public administration one, where 98.2% of the respondents had a university degree, and of these 24.4 % had completed post graduate studies. This was also reflected also in the general sample where by far the majority of respondents, 70.6% had a university degree and 13.3% had completed post graduate studies. See Figure 2.

Figure 2. Educational Background of the Respondents



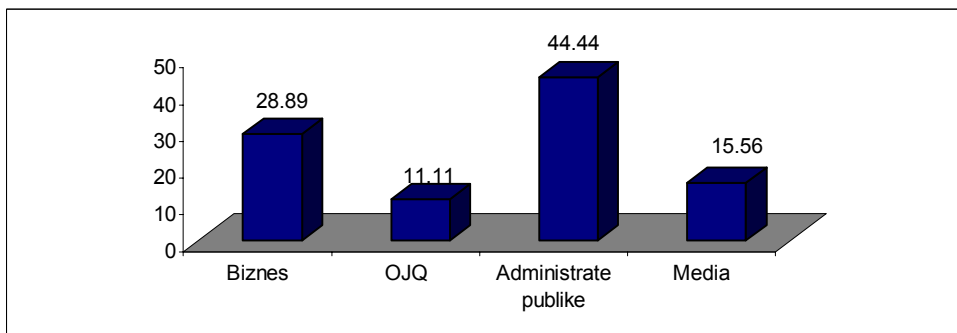
The majority of the respondents, 52.6% were young, falling in the 23 to 35 age group. The next biggest age group was 36-55 years old, with 34.9 % of the respondents. Only 7.5 % were above 55 years old, and only 5 % were in the 18-22 age group. The preponderance of this age group is reflective of the fact that Albania has a very young population. See Figure 3.

Figure 3. Age Distribution of the Respondents



The Public Administration category had the greatest percentage of respondents in the sample, 44.44 %. Although this category did not contain the largest population it contained a larger number of respondents due to the stratified sampling methodology applied to it. Therefore, the business category which has a much larger population had a smaller sample, 28.89 % of the total, since in this case we applied random sampling. The other two categories, local NGOs and Media comprised 11.11 % and 15.56 % of the total sample respectively. See Figure 4.

Figure 4. Sample Percentages According to Categories



II. Sample Description for Each Category

Table I.

Category Percentage	Businesses	Local NGO	Public Administration	Media	Total
Female	52.0	57.0	54.0	41.0	52.0
Male	48.0	43.0	46.0	59.0	48.0
Secondary Education	1.9	0.0	0.0	1.8	0.8
High School Diploma	37.5	32.5	1.9	0.0	15.2
University Diploma	56.7	62.5	73.8	94.6	70.6
Post-Graduate Studies	3.8	5.0	24.4	3.6	13.3
18-22 Years Old	7.7	7.5	1.3	8.9	5.0
23-35 Years Old	51.9	60.0	47.5	62.5	51.9
36-35 Years Old	31.7	25.0	43.1	25.0	31.7
Over 55 Years Old	8.7	7.5	8.1	3.6	8.7
Respondents	28.89	11.11	44.44	15.56	100.0

As the table indicates all categories shared some common characteristics. In all of them most of the respondents were very well educated possessing in most cases a university degree. Also in each of the categories the respondents were relatively young, falling mainly in the 23 – 35 years old age group. With the exception of the Media category, in all the other ones the majority of the respondents were female. As it can be seen from the table the composition of each category is not necessarily representative of the entire population, especially in the case of Businesses. However, the sample composition in each case is in line with our objective to survey a relatively more qualified group in each of the categories.

FINDINGS

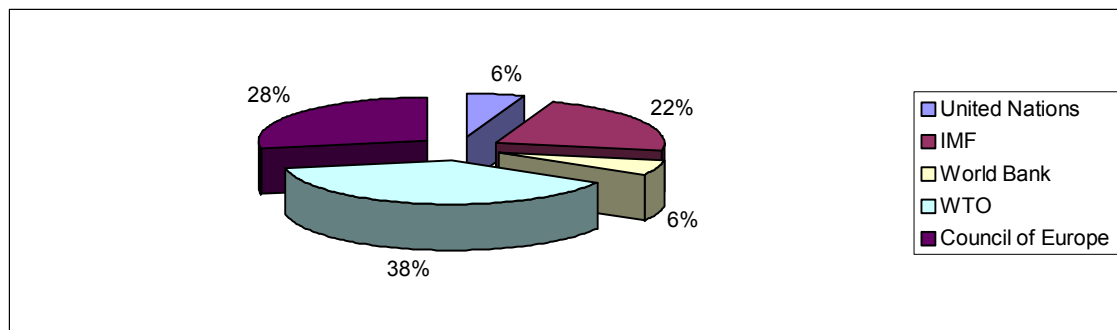
I. GENERAL INFORMATION ON EUROPEAN UNION (EU)

The questions were designed so as to explore the level of knowledge of respondents step by step. First the respondents were asked general questions on international organizations in general in order to compare their level of familiarity and knowledge with these organizations against their level of familiarity and knowledge with the European Union. Then they were asked about Albania's membership in specific organizations, and on Albania's relations with them. Finally, in this section the respondents were asked specific questions on EU as an organization and its institutions.

International Organizations and EU

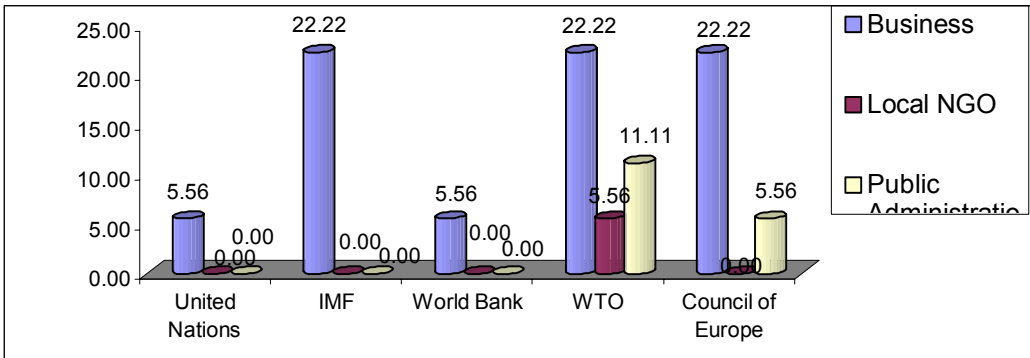
Almost 100% of the respondents had heard of the major international organizations/institutions such as NATO, OSCE, UN, IMF, World Bank, EU, WTO and Council of Europe. Such a response made it difficult to compare the level of familiarity of these groups with EU against other organizations. The answers show that the respondents have heard of international organizations in general and of EU in particular. The three organizations every respondent had heard of were; EU, OSCE and NATO. The fact that all of the respondents had heard of EU made it possible to further explore their familiarity with its institutions and activities. Only 0.28 % of the respondents had not heard of the World Bank and the UN and 1.11 %, 1.94% and 1.39% had not heard of the IMF, World Trade Organization (WTO) and Council of Europe respectively. See Figure 5 for a distribution of the negative answers.

Figure 5. Total of “No” Answers According to Organization



Although by far the majority of respondents in each category had heard of the international organizations they were presented with, there were some differences among the categories. Thus, the category with the highest number of respondents that had not heard of certain international organizations was the Business category. Yet, even in this case the percentages were very small. See Figure 6.

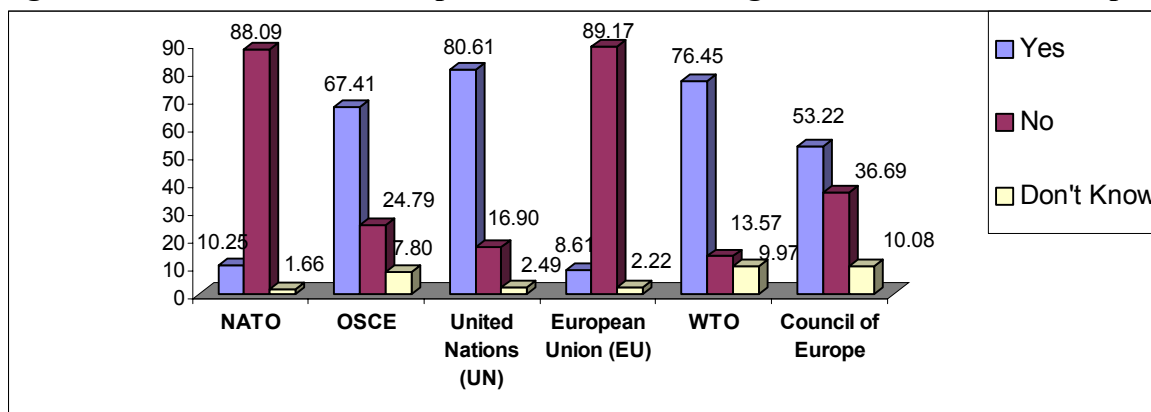
Figure 6. “No” Answerers According to Organization and Category.



The fact that most of the respondents had a high degree of familiarity with international organizations was also reflected when they were asked whether Albania was a member of a given organization or not. Most of the respondents gave correct answers as it was expected given the level of education of the sample. However, the percentage of wrong answers, were quite high in the case of the Council of Europe although the majority responded correctly. A slim majority of 53.22 % knew that Albania is a member of the Council of Europe. In a similar fashion some 32.59 % were not aware that Albania is a member of OSCE. Another 19.39 % of the respondents were not aware that Albania is a member of the United Nations. While these figures are not great in absolute value they may arise concern given the level of education of the chosen sample, and in view of the pronounced presence of these organizations, and especially OSCE, in Albania. Nevertheless, most respondents knew that Albania is not a member of EU, and only 10.83 % were not aware of this fact. This indicates a greater familiarity of the chosen population with regard to EU as compared to other international organisations.

See Figure, 7.

Figure 7. Albania’s Membership into International Organizations – General Sample



Although the respondents in general seemed familiar with international organizations and Albania’s membership in them the answers varied from one category to the other,

demonstrating different levels of familiarity among the different categories. The two categories that were better informed regarding Albania’s membership into the given international organizations were; Public Administration and Media. Local NGOs and Businesses were less informed in this regard, and of these two categories Local NGOs was the better informed one since the total of wrong answers from the Business category was higher than that from the Local NGOs one. See Table II.

Table II: Question: Is Albania a Member of...?

Category Organization	Answer	Business	NGO	Public Administration	Media	Total
		P E R C E N T A G E S				
NATO	Yes	14.42	10.10	9.36	3.57	10.25
	No	83.65	82.50	90.00	96.43	88.09
	Don't Know	1.92	7.5	0.63	0.00	1.66
OSCE	Yes	63.46	60.00	72.96	63.64	24.79
	No	30.77	22.50	19.50	30.91	7.80
	Don't Know	5.77	17.50	7.55	5.45	67.41
United Nations (UN)	Yes	66.35	75.00	89.38	85.71	80.61
	No	31.73	15.00	8.75	14.29	16.90
	Don't Know	1.92	10.00	1.88	0.00	2.49
European Union (EU)	Yes	80.77	80.00	5.66	96.43	89.17
	No	16.35	10.00	94.34	1.79	9.61
	Don't Know	2.88	10.00	0.00	1.79	2.22
World Trade Organization (WTO)	Yes	72.12	60.00	81.88	82.14	76.45
	No	18.27	17.50	11.88	7.14	13.57
	Don't Know	9.62	22.50	6.25	10.71	9.97
Council of Europe	Yes	57.43	45.00	53.46	51.79	53.22
	No	33.66	35.00	38.99	37.50	36.69
	Don't Know	8.91	20.00	7.55	10.71	10.08

However, the answers in Table II, besides reflecting on the level of knowledge of the general population of each category also reflect the education level of each focus group. Thus, the two categories, Public Administration and Media were the ones with the highest percentage of respondents with university degree and/or post-graduate degrees (See Table I). This might explain why these two categories were relatively better informed.

Familiarity with and Perceptions on EU

As indicated by Table II, the level of familiarity of the respondents with European Union seems to be greater than that with other international organizations. Thus, the percentage of correct answers to the question “Is Albania a member of EU” was larger than the percentage of correct answers to any of the other questions. This was true especially for the total sample, where the percentage of correct answers the highest one at 89.17 %.

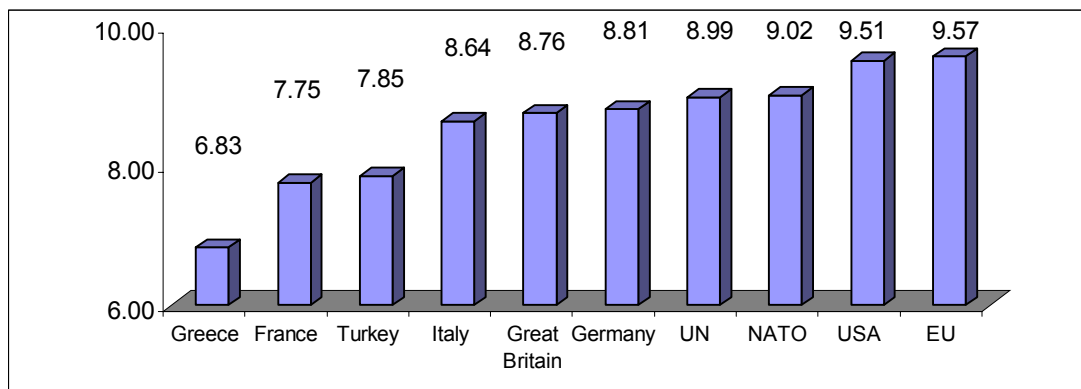
Given the satisfactory level of familiarity of the respondents with international organizations it was possible for us to contrast and compare the perceptions of the respondents on Albanian – EU relations against relations between Albania and other organizations/states. Besides being more familiar with EU than with other organizations, the respondents in general also placed more emphasis on Albania’s relations with EU as compared to Albania’s relations with other states or organizations. When asked to evaluate on a scale from 1 to 10 the importance that the Government should pay to strengthening Albania’s relations with some 10 states/organizations, EU scored the highest, 9.57 out of 10. USA followed close behind at 9.51. Greece scored the lowest at 6.83 out of 10. See Table III and Figure 8.

Question: In your opinion how much importance should Government place to strengthening Albania’s relations with the following states/organizations? Please evaluate in a scale from 1 to 10, bearing in mind that the higher the number the more importance should, in your opinion, pay the Albanian government to strengthening the ties with the given State/Organization.

Table III. Mean and Standard Deviation for the General Sample

State/ Organization	EU	NATO	UN	Italy	Greece	Germany	France	GB	USA	Turkey
Mean	9.57	9.02	8.99	8.64	6.83	8.81	7.75	9.51	8.76	7.85
Standard deviation	1.06	1.74	1.64	1.91	3.03	1.52	2.04	1.18	1.70	2.47

Figure 8. The General Sample



Not only did EU score the highest it also had the lowest standard deviation which means that the answers on EU varied very little, i.e., most respondents placed very high value on the importance that Government should pay to strengthening Albania’s relations with EU. In fact EU scored highest in each of the categories with the exception of the Local

NGOs category in which the respondents prioritized on Albania's relations with the United States of America and than with EU.

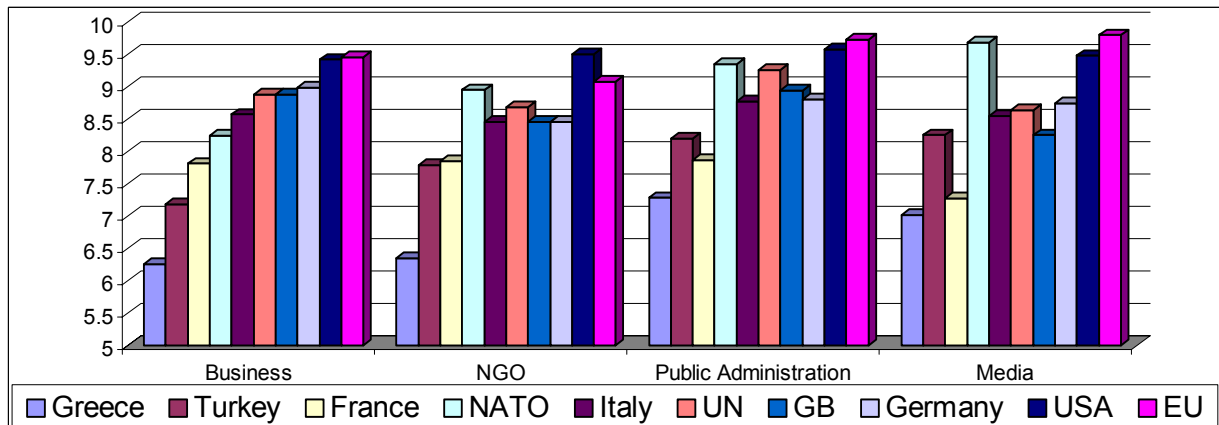
The other characteristic that all categories shared was that Greece scored the lowest. This might also be a reflection of the recent refugee crisis that happened at the Greek – Albanian border and that was widely covered by the media. Our survey took place immediately after that crisis. See Table IV and Figure 9.

Question: In your opinion how much importance should Government place to strengthening Albania's relations with the following states/organizations? Please evaluate in a scale from 1 to 10, bearing in mind that the higher the number the more importance should, in your opinion, pay the Albanian government to strengthening the ties with the given State/Organization.

Table IV. Mean and Standard Deviation for Each Category

Categories	Business		Local NGOs		Public Administration		Media	
	Mean	St. Dev.	Mean	St. Dev.	Mean	St. Dev.	Mean	St. Dev.
European Union (EU)	9.46	1.07	9.08	1.42	9.73	0.78	9.80	0.82
NATO	8.24	2.26	8.95	1.45	9.35	1.35	9.68	0.86
United Nations (UN)	8.88	1.88	8.68	1.90	9.26	1.19	8.64	1.95
Italy	8.57	2.00	8.45	2.21	8.78	1.67	8.55	2.15
Greece	6.26	3.37	6.35	2.90	7.28	2.61	7.02	3.35
Germany	8.99	1.42	8.45	2.10	8.81	1.37	8.75	1.58
France	7.81	2.02	7.85	2.26	7.87	1.88	7.27	2.35
USA	9.42	1.35	9.50	0.99	9.58	0.93	9.48	1.56
Great Britain	8.88	1.90	8.45	1.81	8.94	1.38	8.25	1.99
Turkey	7.18	3.07	7.79	2.27	8.20	1.99	8.25	2.17

Figure 9. Answers According to Each Category



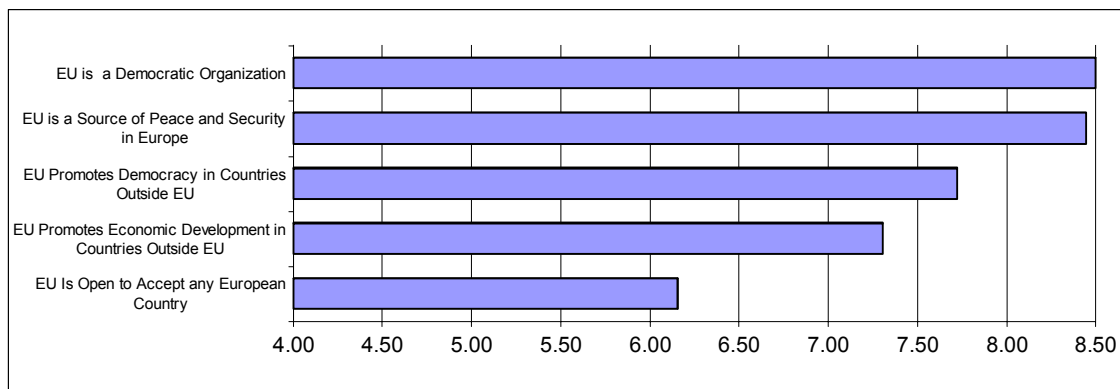
The importance that respondents placed on Albanian – EU relations seemed justified by the general perception they had on EU. In order to assess such a perception the respondents were read five statements on EU and asked to evaluate them on an increasing scale of 1 to 10, where the higher the number the more they agreed with the statement. There were five statements on EU in total. The first two statements pertain strictly to EU as an organization, and they attempt to assess to what extent is EU viewed as a democratic organization and to what extent it is seen as a source of peace and security in Europe. The other three deal with EU and its impact on the economy and democracy of countries outside EU. Of particular interest here is also the degree to which respondents see EU as an open organization for other European countries. See Table V and Figure 10.

Question: Evaluate the following statements in a 1 to 10 scale, bearing in mind that the higher the number the more you agree with the given statement.

Table V. Perceptions on EU for the General Sample

STATEMENT	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>
EU is a Democratic Organization	8.57	1.71
EU is a Source of Peace and Security in Europe	8.45	1.86
EU Promotes Democracy in Countries Outside EU	7.72	2.19
EU Promotes Economic Development in Countries Outside EU	7.30	2.29
EU Is Open to Accept any European Country	6.16	2.82

Figure 10. Perceptions on European Union (EU) for the General Sample



As the figure indicates, EU scored quite well on the two first statements and slightly worse on the other three. This means that the respondents hold EU in high regard as an organization, but, as it is to be expected, they would like to see more action on part of EU outside its borders. The fact that EU scored lowest, 6, in the last statement “EU Is Open to Accept Any European Country” might also be indicative of the desire of the respondents for EU to be open more than of their knowledge on EU accession policy. Nevertheless, this figure, 6.16 is not very low; it is after all a passing grade for EU in this respect. Furthermore, the standard deviation of 2.82, the highest for all statements, indicates that answers varied more here than in the other statements, which means that some people

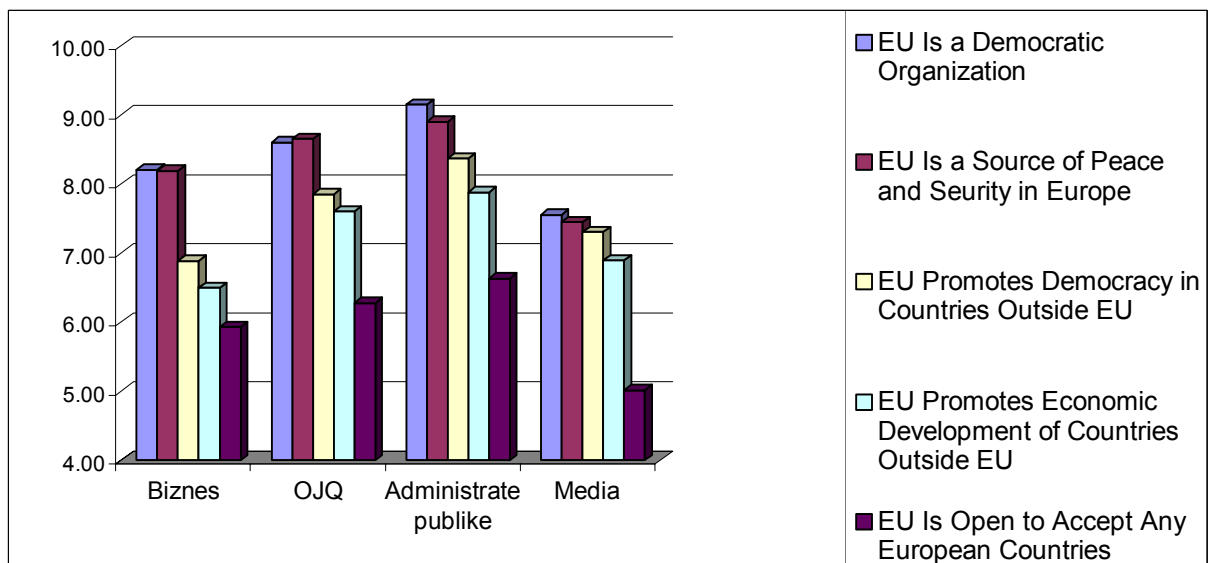
thought that EU was quite open whereas others thought that EU was quite closed to other members.

The answers of the general sample were also reflected in each of the categories. In all categories EU scored highest on the first two statements and rather lower on the other three. It is important to notice that EU scored the highest in the Public Administration category, a total of 40.92. EU received the lowest scores in the Media category 34.21¹. See Table VI and Figure 11.

Table VI. Perception on EU According to Categories.

Statement \ Category		EU is a Democratic Organization	EU is a Source of Peace and Security in Europe	EU Promotes Democracy in Countries Outside EU	EU Promotes Economic Development in Countries Outside EU	EU Is Open to Accept any European Country
Business	Mean	8.20	8.19	6.88	6.50	5.93
	Stan. Dev.	2.02	2.10	2.62	2.62	3.03
Local NGOs	Mean	8.60	8.65	7.85	7.60	6.28
	Stan. Dev.	1.61	1.63	2.03	2.15	3.02
Public Administration	Mean	9.14	8.90	8.37	7.88	6.63
	Stan. Dev.	1.31	1.61	1.73	1.96	2.61
Media	Mean	7.55	7.45	7.30	6.89	5.02
	Stan. Dev.	1.51	1.80	2.00	2.12	2.48

Figure 11. Perception on EU According to Categories



¹ These figures can be calculated if we add the mean horizontally for each category.

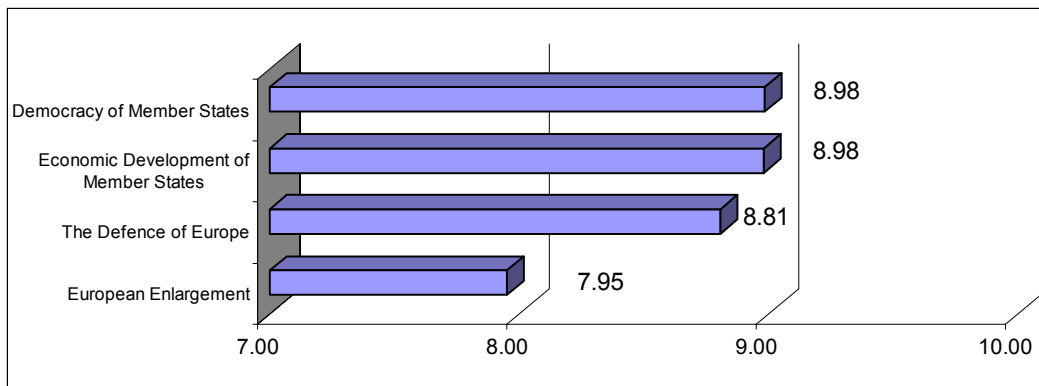
The above data reflects the perceptions of the respondents on EU as an organization and its impact on third countries. In order to assess both the perceptions and the level of knowledge of respondents on EU priorities and goals the respondents were given four goals and asked to evaluate them according to the importance that EU places on each.

Question: European Union was founded in order to attain a variety of goals. In your opinion how important are the following goals for the European Union? Please rate in a scale from 1 to 10 bearing in mind that the higher the number the more important you consider the given goal for EU.

Table VII. EU Goals for the General Sample.

GOALS	Mean	Standard Deviation
Economic Development of Member States	8.98	1.71
Democracy in Member States	8.98	1.57
European Enlargement	7.95	2.35
The Defense of Europe	8.81	1.96

Figure 12. EU Goals for the General Sample



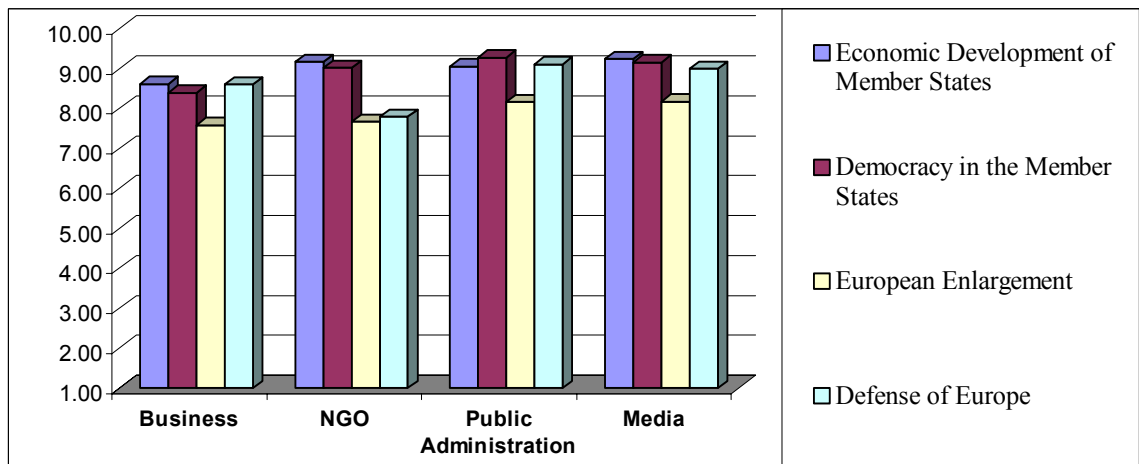
As the above figure demonstrates, the respondents perceived democracy and economic development as equally important for the EU. However, of the two, democracy in the member states had the lowest standard deviation which indicates that responses varied less on this goal as compared to the other. The Defence of Europe was rated third at 8.81. This figure is very close to the ones given for democracy and economic development. Such a high figure could be indicative of the limited familiarity of the respondents with EU as an organization. Yet it is rather difficult to conclude on this point since it is not clear what the respondents understood by the Defense of Europe. European Enlargement was rated last which concurs with the low rating EU received in the previous question on the statement “EU is Open to Accept any European Country”. Nevertheless the standard deviation in this case was the highest, (see Table VII) which might also reflect the uncertainty of the respondents on this particular goal.

Although Defense of Europe was rated third in the general sample in two of the categories, Business and Public Administration it was rated second. The Business respondents perceived this goal as more important than Democracy in the Member States, whereas Public Administration respondents perceived the defense of Europe as more important than the economic development of the member states for EU. In line with the general sample, European Enlargement was perceived as less important for EU as compared to the other three goals. See Table VIII and Figure 13.

Table VIII. EU Goals According to Each Category

GOAL \ CATEGORY	Business		Local NGO		Public Administration		Media	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Economic Development of Member States	8.62	2.11	9.18	1.30	9.06	1.47	9.25	1.70
Democracy in the Member States	8.40	1.98	9.03	1.23	9.28	1.22	9.16	1.57
European Enlargement	7.58	2.68	7.68	2.02	8.16	2.25	8.18	2.19
Defense of Europe	8.60	2.24	7.80	2.00	9.11	1.74	9.00	1.76

Figure 13. EU Goals According to Categories



The emphasis on the Defense of Europe might also be explained by the recent rhetoric on the war against terrorism that has been employed frequently by EU as well as other international actors. Another more plausible explanation would be that EU was founded after two world wars with the clear aim that in the longer run it should prevent the repetition of armed conflict in Europe.

Although the above question and the ones before it do reveal to a certain extent the level of knowledge of the respondents on EU they above all give us the perceptions of the respondents on EU more than their level of knowledge on this organism, although one could argue the two are intrinsically related. In order to achieve the latter objective the respondents were asked whether specific institutions/organizations were part of EU. Their responses to

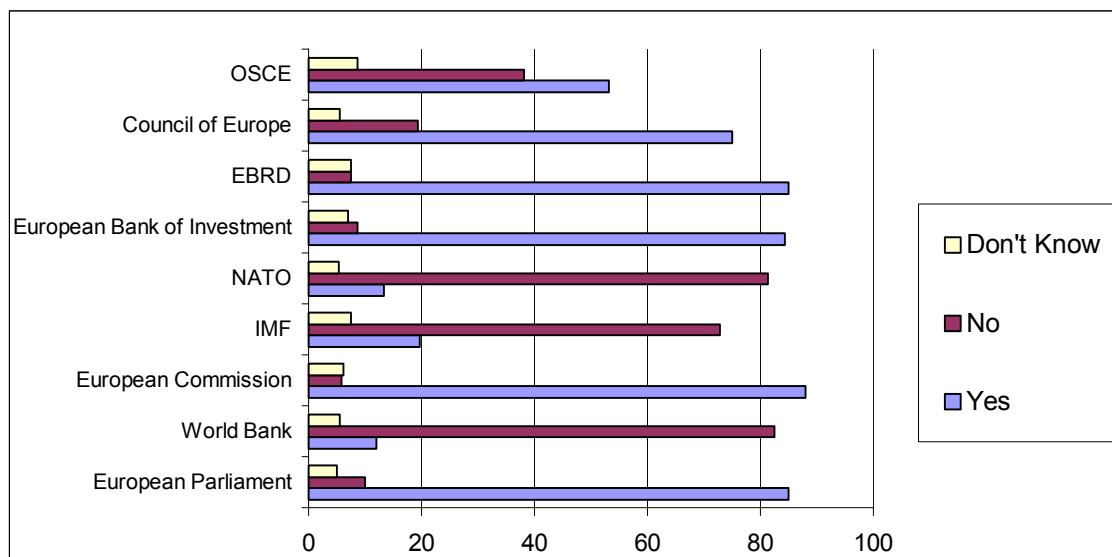
this question gave us a clearer picture on respondent's familiarity with EU and its institutions. See Table IX and Figure 14 below.

Question: From what you know which of the following are Institutions of European Union (EU).

Table IX. EU Institutions for the General Sample

Institution	Yes	No	Don't Know
European Parliament	85.04	9.97	4.99
World Bank	11.94	82.50	5.56
European Commission	88.06	5.83	6.11
IMF	19.72	72.78	7.50
NATO	13.33	81.39	5.28
European Bank of Investment	84.40	8.64	6.96
European Bank for Development and Reconstruction	84.96	7.52	7.52
Council of Europe	75.07	19.39	5.54
OSCE	53.19	38.23	8.59

Figure 14. EU Institutions for the General Sample.



As the figure shows with the exception of OSCE, Council of Europe and EBRD, respondents answered correctly in the other cases. Nevertheless we should not rush into conclusions since these three organizations are very telling examples. For most respondents the word "Europe" or "European" in the name of the institution seems to have been the determining factor in deciding on whether it was an EU institution or not. This might also explain why most people answered incorrectly on OSCE and EBRD, and why they answered correctly on the World Bank, NATO, and IMF, none of which contains the word "Europe" or "European".

It is important to point out that in the case of OSCE the number of correct answers is only 38% despite its presence in Albania during the last five years. One would have expected the respondents to be more familiar with this organization for this very reason.

The answers given in each category reflect well the answers of the general sample. The conclusions drawn from the general sample seem also valid for the categories with very few exceptions. Thus in the media category the majority of respondents answered correctly in all cases but one, EBRD. The Public Administration answered incorrectly in two cases, EBRD and OSCE. The same was true for Local NGOs and Businesses. See Table X.

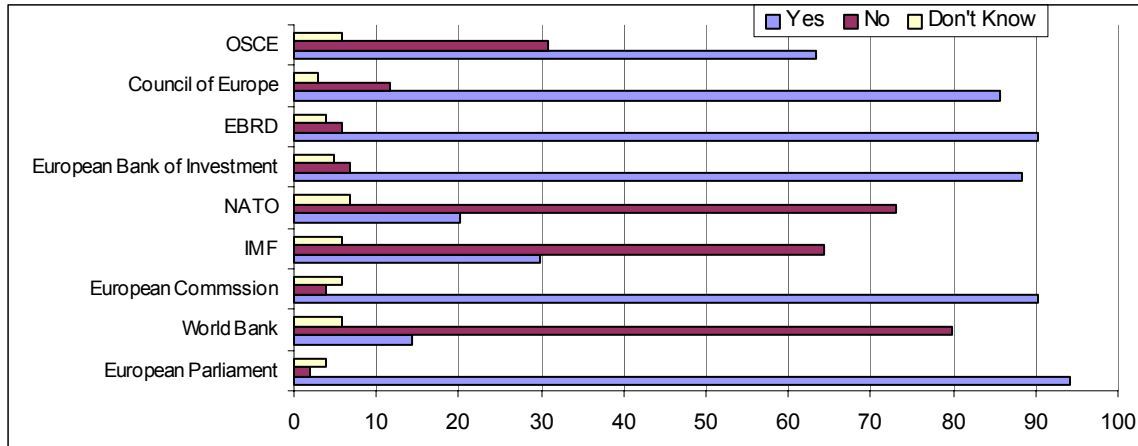
Table X. EU Institutions According to Each Category²

Institution		European Parliament	World Bank	Europe. Comm.	IMF	NATO	European Bank of Investment	EBRD	Council of Europe	OSCE
Business	Yes	94.23	14.42	90.29	29.81	20.19	88.46	90.20	85.58	63.46
	No	1.92	79.81	3.88	64.42	73.08	6.73	5.88	11.54	30.77
Local NGO	Don't Know	3.85	5.77	5.83	5.77	6.73	4.81	3.92	2.88	5.77
	Yes	77.50	12.82	85.00	15.00	12.50	62.50	67.50	62.50	37.50
	No	20.00	79.49	5.00	72.50	77.50	15.00	17.50	22.50	42.50
Public Administration	Don't Know	2.50	7.69	10.00	12.50	10.00	22.50	15.00	15.00	20.00
	Yes	82.50	13.13	88.75	15.09	10.69	85.44	86.88	75.00	54.38
	No	13.13	83.13	6.25	79.25	84.91	8.86	8.13	20.63	38.13
Media	Don't Know	4.38	3.75	5.00	5.66	4.40	5.70	5.00	4.38	7.50
	Yes	80.36	3.57	83.93	17.86	8.93	89.29	82.14	64.29	41.07
	No	8.93	87.50	8.93	71.43	91.07	7.14	1.79	28.57	50.00
	Don't Know	10.71	8.93	7.14	10.71	0.00	3.57	16.07	7.14	8.93

In order to determine which category is better informed we can add the correct answers in each case and for each category. If we do this, we shall see that Media scores highest at 583.94 percentage points, Public Administration is second at 570.87 percentage points, Business third at 538.48 and Local NGOs last with 537.99 percentage points. It is important to emphasize that these numbers are percentage point, which means that the sample size is irrelevant in this case. Otherwise the Public Administration would have the largest number of correct answers by the sheer size of its sample. Figures 15,16,17, and 18 show answers for each of the categories.

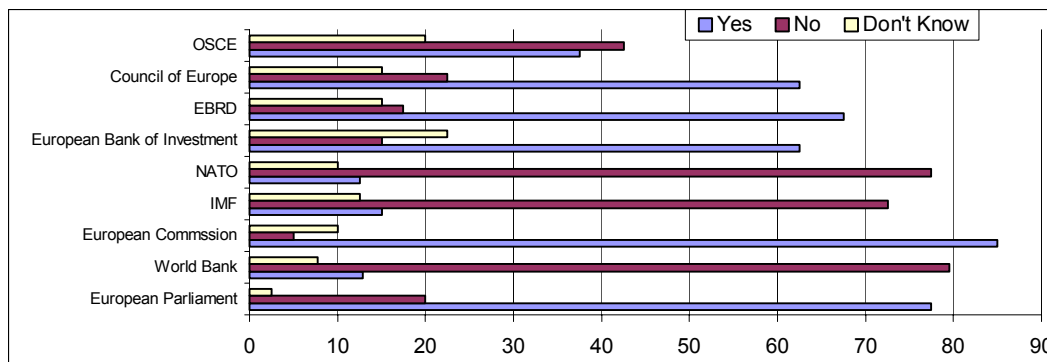
² Figures in Red are correct answers. If we add all correct answers for each category we might be able to sort the categories according to the number of correct answers and thus rate them according to their knowledge of/familiarity with EU institutions.

Figure 15. EU Institutions According to Business Category.



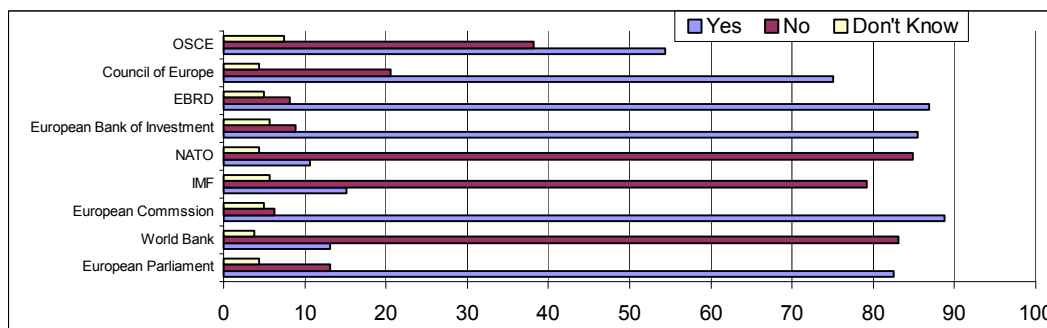
Question: From what you know which of the following are Institutions of European Union?

Figure 16. EU Institutions According to local NGO Category.



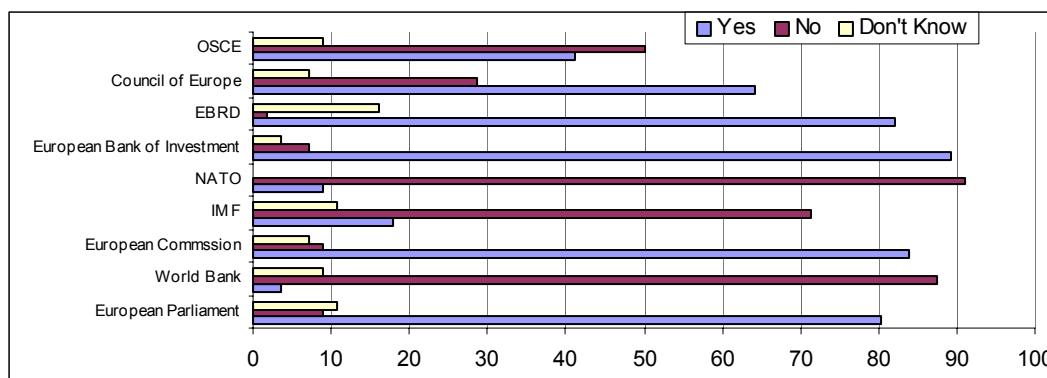
Question: From what you know which of the following are Institutions of European Union.

Figure 17. EU Institutions According to Public Administration Category.



Question: From what you know which of the following are Institutions of European Union.

Figure 18. EU Institutions According to Media Category.



Question: From what you know which of the following are Institutions of European Union?

II. THE PROCESS OF INTEGRATION INTO EUROPEAN UNION (EU)

Familiarity and Expectations

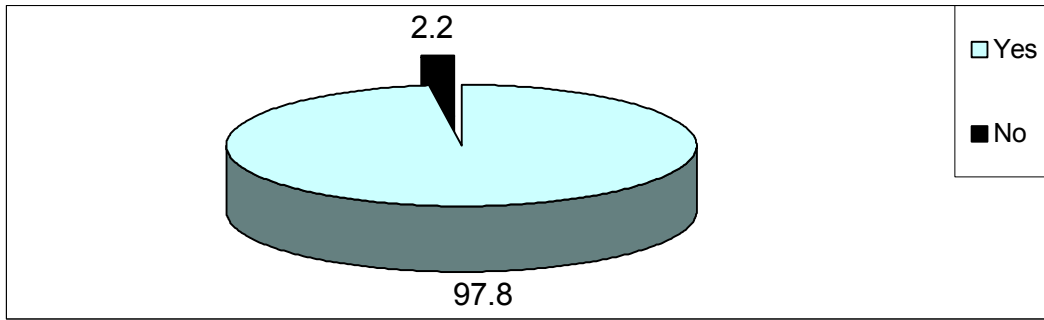
While in the previous section we tried to assess perceptions and knowledge on European Union (EU) and its institution in this section the focus is on the process of integration into EU for Albania. Just like in the previous section here too the focus is two-fold. On the one hand, we attempt to assess perceptions on the process, such as the level of support for Albania's EU membership and the speed of the process. On the other hand we also try to evaluate the level of knowledge of the respondents with regard to the process itself. Of course the two, knowledge on and perceptions of the process, are interrelated, which is why we try to assess them both.

Familiarity with EU Integration for Albania

First of all by far the majority of respondents, 97.8, answered that they had heard of Albania's efforts to become a member of EU. This was to be expected given the daily coverage in the media of Albania's Euro-Atlantic integration process and the sample composition. See Figure 19 below.

Question: Have you heard of Albania's efforts to become a member of the European Union?

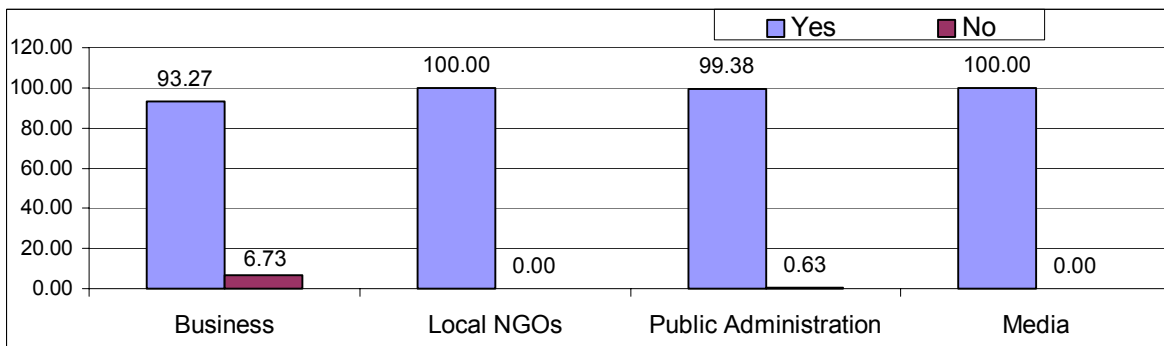
Figure 19. Albania’s Efforts to Join EU for the General Sample



Of the four categories the highest percentage of people that responded they had not heard of Albania’s efforts to become an EU member was in the Business category, with 6.73%. Next was the Public Administration category with a negligible 0.63 % of the respondents answering “No”. In the other two categories, Local NGOs and Media, 100% of the respondents said they had heard of Albania’s efforts to join EU. See Figure 20 below.

Question: Have you heard of Albania’s efforts to become a member of the European Union?

Figure 20. Albania’s Efforts to Join EU According to Categories

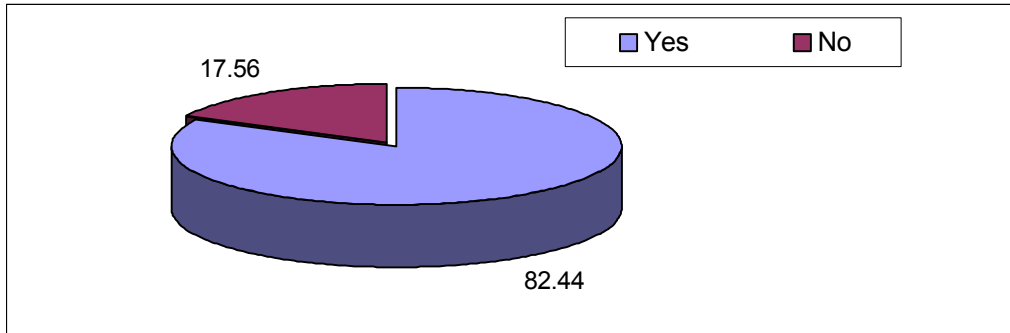


As the graph above shows, and in line with the other findings, here again the business category is the less informed one. They have the highest percentage of respondents who have not heard of Albania’s efforts to join EU. Yet, this percentage is very small in absolute terms.

A more certain way in which the level of knowledge and familiarity respondents have with the process of integration is to test their familiarity with the criterion/requirements that Albania has to fulfill in order to join EU. First the respondents were asked whether they had heard of these conditions or not. As Figure 21 demonstrates a solid majority of 82.44 % answered “Yes”.

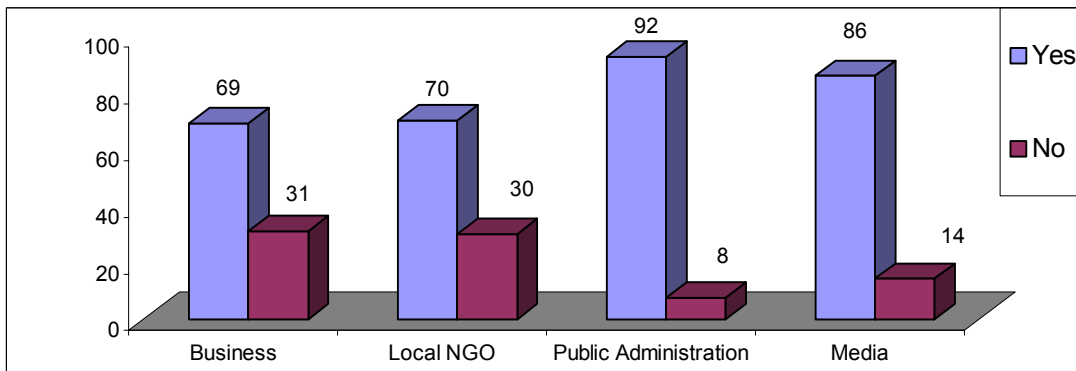
Question. In order for Albania to join EU it has to meet certain criterion/conditions, have you heard of them?

Figure 21. Familiarity with Conditions to Join EU for the General Sample.



The two categories that were most familiar with these conditions were Public Administration, with 92 % of the respondents, and than Media, with 86 % of the respondents who had heard of them. In the other two categories, there were smaller percentages of respondents who had heard of these conditions, 69 % for the Business and 70 % for the Local NGOs. Thus, these two categories seemed less informed in this respect. See Figure 22.

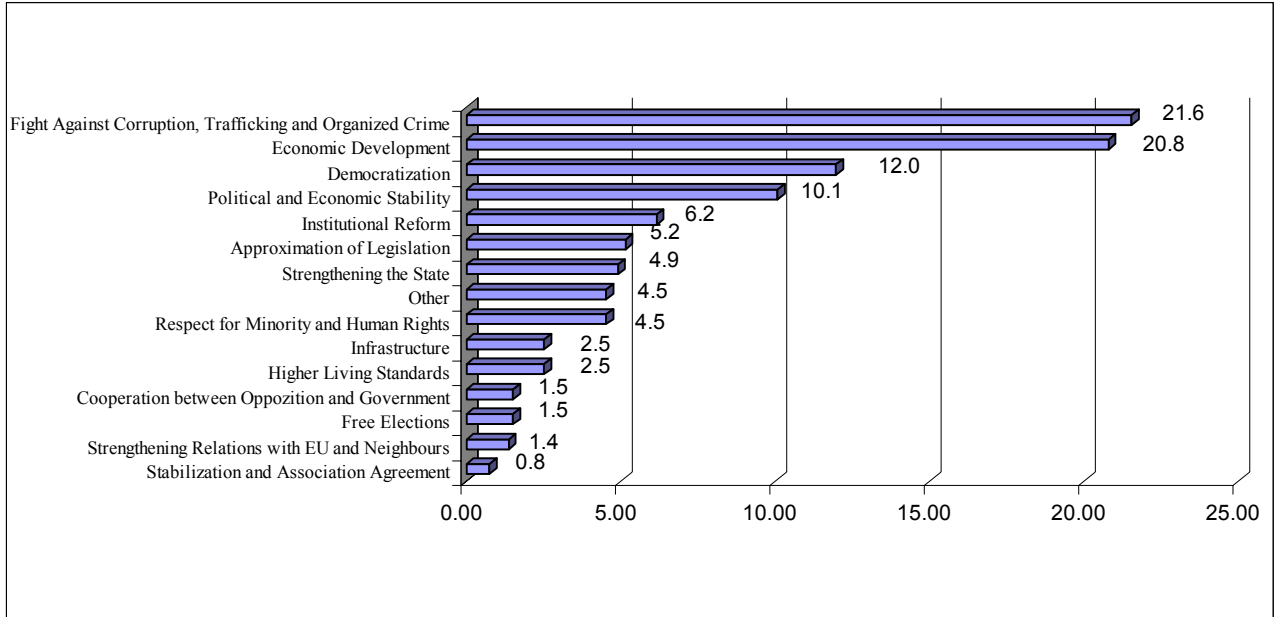
Figure 22. Familiarity with Conditions to Join EU for Each Category



In order to pinpoint the conditions the respondents were more familiar with, those who answered “Yes” to the previous question were also asked to rate some of the conditions they had heard of. See Figure 23.

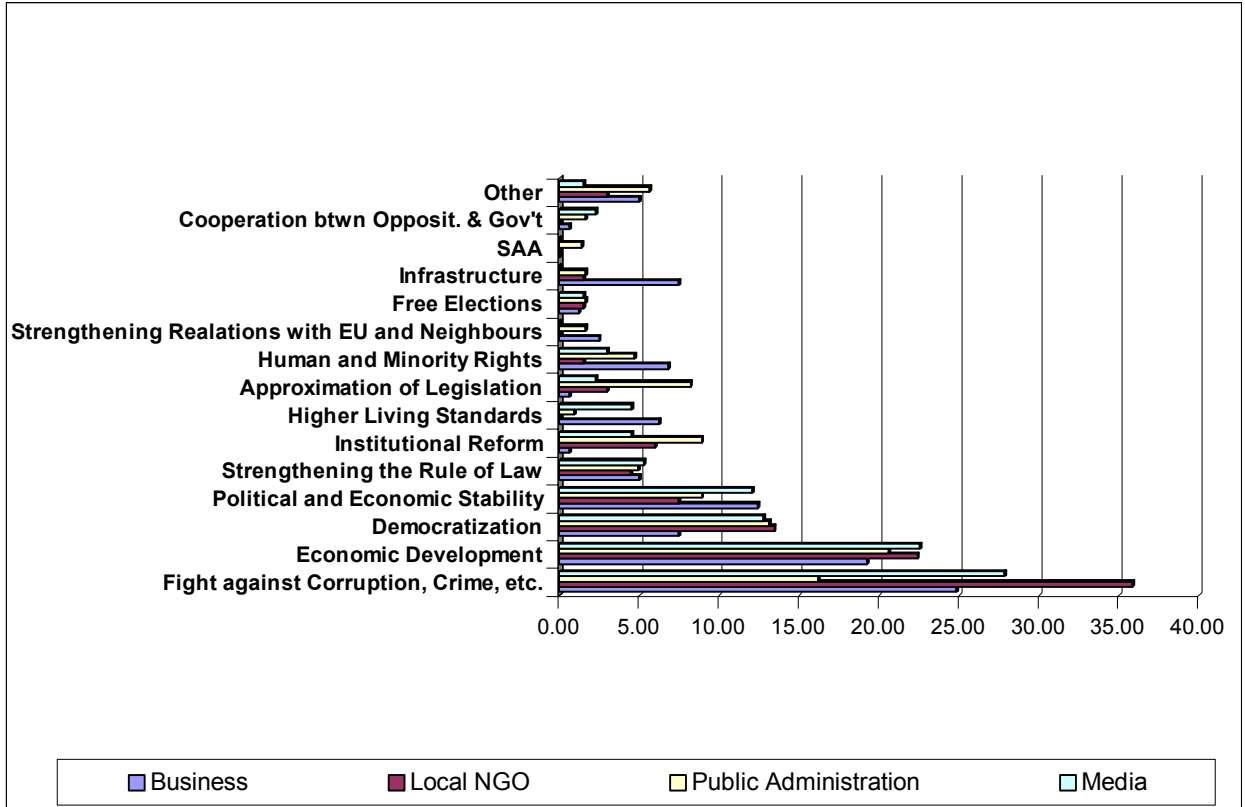
Question. Please mention some of the conditions you have heard of

Figure 23. Conditions for Albania to Join EU – General Sample



As the above figure indicates, of the numerous conditions that were mentioned, the Fight Against Corruption, Trafficking and Organized Crime, Economic Development, Democratization, were rated in the given order. As it can be seen, with few exceptions the conditions are very general. Public Administration was the one category in which specific conditions were mentioned more frequently. See Figure 24.

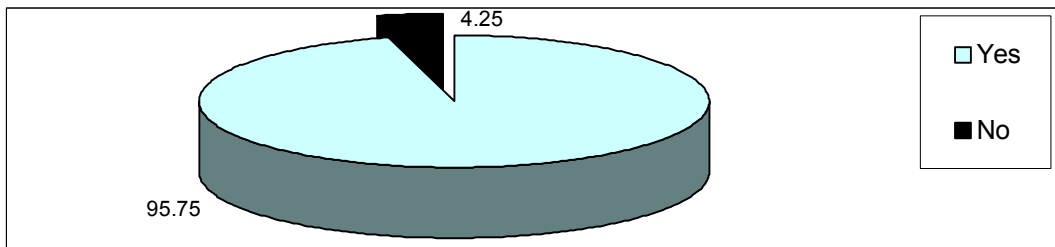
Figure 24. Conditions for Albania to Join EU – Categories



In order to further assess the familiarity of the respondents with Albania’s process of integration into EU they were also asked whether they had heard of the Stabilization and Association Agreement between EU and Albania. As Figure 34 indicates the vast majority of respondents, 95.7%, had heard of this agreement, which is not surprising given the wide media coverage it has received. See Figure 25.

Question. In its efforts to become a member of European Union Albania will sign a number of agreements with EU. Have you heard of the Stabilization and Association Agreement between Albania and European Union?

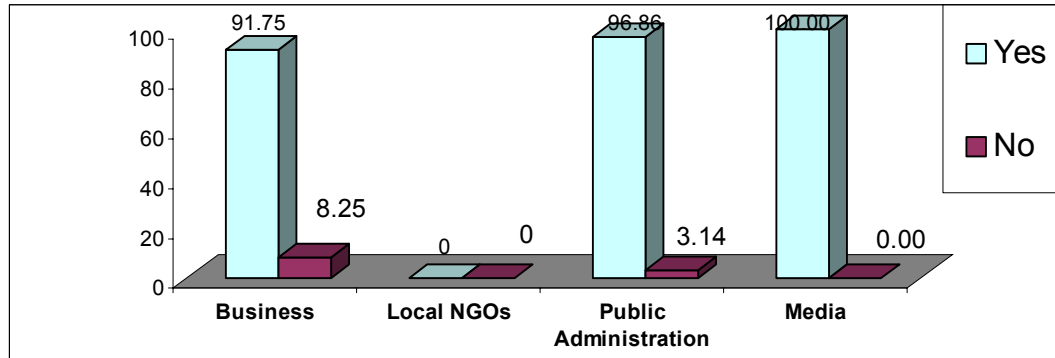
Figure 25. Stabilization and Association Agreement – General Sample



Also, in each of the categories, the vast majority of respondents had heard of the Stabilization and Association Agreement between Albania and EU. The Media respondents seemed to be the most familiar ones with this agreement, since 100 % of the respondents said they had heard of it. Next came Public Administration with 96.86 %, then Local NGOs with

95% of the respondents and last Business with 91.5 % of the respondents answering that they had heard of the agreement. See Figure 26.

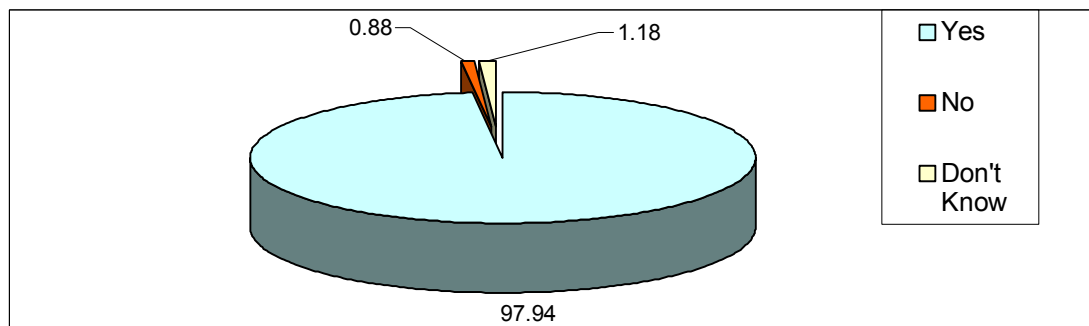
Figure 26. Stabilization and Association Agreement – Categories



Not only had most respondents heard of the Stabilization and Association Agreement, but also an even greater majority thought that this agreement was a necessary step towards EU membership for Albania. See Figure 27.

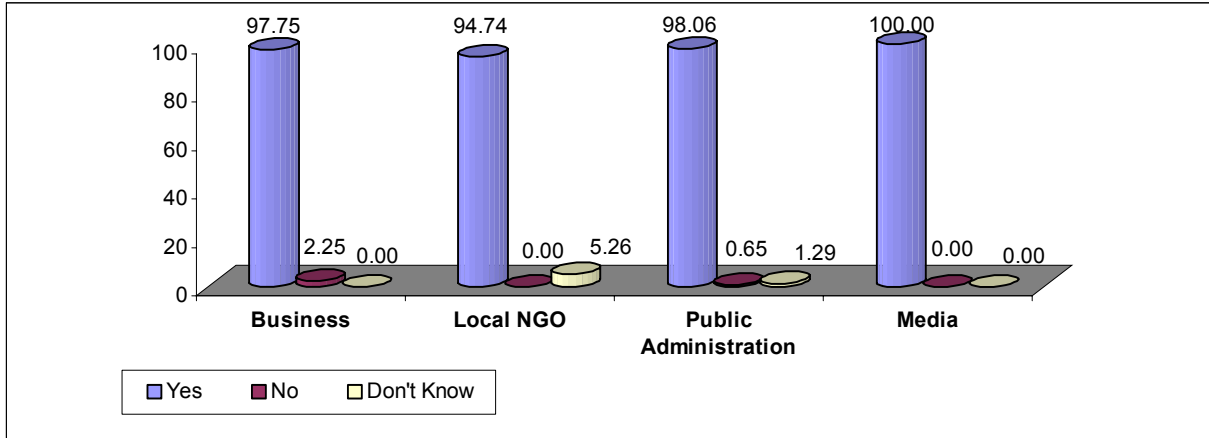
Question. In your opinion is it a very necessary step for Albania to sign the Stabilization and Association Agreement in order to join EU?

Figure 27. The Necessity of SAA for EU Membership – General Sample



In the same fashion by far the majority of the respondents within each of the categories thought that the Stabilization and Association Agreement is a necessary step towards EU membership for Albania. See Figure 28.

Figure 28. The Necessity of SAA for EU Membership - Categories.

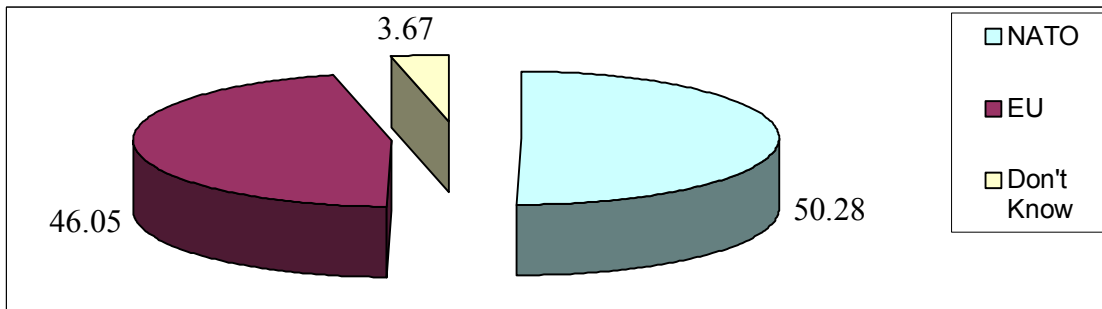


The above answers on the necessity of SAA for Albania do not give us a clear picture of the level of knowledge and familiarity of respondents with EU integration. This is indicated by the fact that even those who had not heard of SAA thought it a necessary step for EU integration.

To see how much respondents know on Albania's process of integration into EU, they were asked whether Albania would join first NATO or EU. Here only a very slim majority, 50.28%, answered that Albania will first join NATO and then EU. See Figure 29.

Question. Albania is trying to become a member of EU as well as NATO. In your opinion which of them will Albania join first NATO or EU?

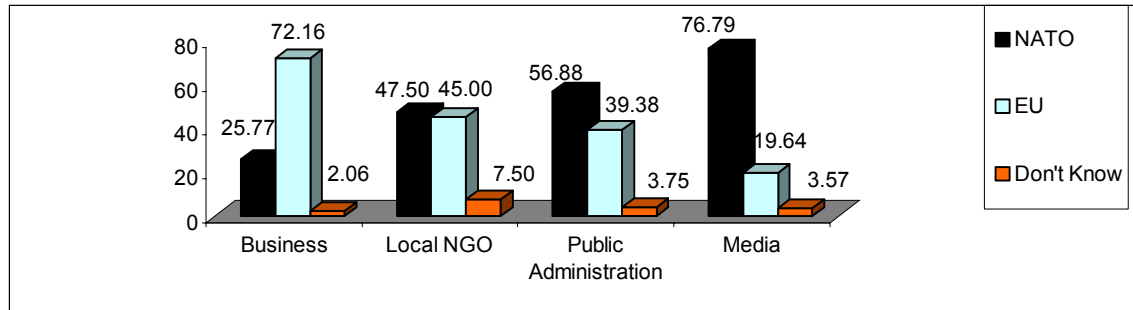
Figure 29. Albania's Membership in NATO and EU for the General Sample.



In all the categories, with the exception of Businesses, the majority of respondents answered that Albania will first join NATO and then EU. Nevertheless, there were considerable variations even among the categories where the majority marked NATO. Thus, in the Media category there was a substantial majority of 76.79% that marked NATO, whereas in the Public Administration and Local NGOs the majorities were less significant at 56.88% and 47.50% respectively. On the other hand, in the business category there was a substantial majority of 72.16% which answered that Albania will join EU and later on NATO. See Figure 30.

Question. Albania is trying to become a member of EU as well as NATO. In your opinion which of them will Albania join first NATO or EU?

Figure 30. Albania’s Prospects for Membership in NATO and EU According to Categories.

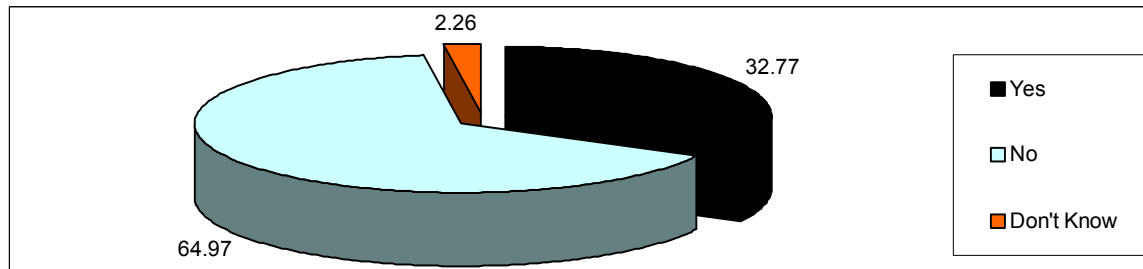


The above figure shows that Business category is the least informed on the process while the media one seems the most informed one. One difficulty with this question is the fact that it does not simply reflect on the level of knowledge of the respondents on EU but also on NATO integration. Yet, the two processes are interrelated and to a certain extent similar so knowledge of one should imply some understanding of the other.

Finally, in order to test the level of knowledge and familiarity of the respondents on Albania’s EU integration they were asked their opinion whether Albania is prepared to become an EU member or not. The majority of respondents, 64.97 % of the respondents responded that Albania was not ready to become a member of the EU. However, a substantial percentage of 32.77% responded that Albania is prepared to become a EU member, and only 2.26% said, “I don’t know”. See Figure 31.

Question. In your opinion, is Albania prepared to become a EU Member?

Figure 31. Albania’s Preparedness to Become a Member of EU for the General Sample



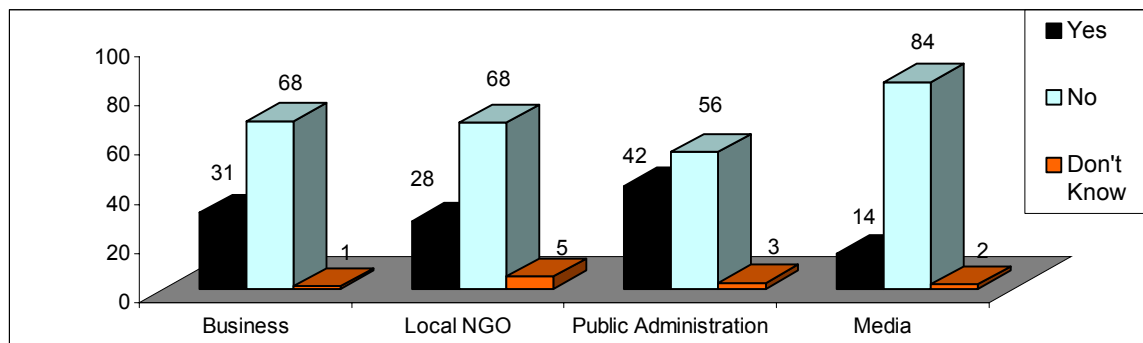
Although the responses to this question do reflect on the level of familiarity of respondents with the EU integration process the answers are to a very considerable extent also determined by the desire of the respondents for Albania to be prepared rather than their knowledge on Albania’s actual preparedness. Furthermore it is debatable what the

respondents have understood by “prepared”. These are issues that cannot be resolved statistically.

They were also reflected in the answers given in each of the categories. In all the categories the majority of the respondents answered that Albania was not yet prepared to become a member of the European Union. There were however important differences among the categories. Thus, Public Administration was the category with the highest percentage of respondents, 42 %, that thought Albania was prepared to become a member of the EU. Media on the other hand had the lowest percentage of respondents, 14%, that thought Albania was prepared to become a EU member. See Figure 32.

Question. In your opinion, is Albania prepared to become a EU Member?

Figure 32. Albania’s Preparedness to Become a Member of EU According to Categories.



It is difficult to determine from the above question where knowledge ends and where expectations begin. It is understandable why a considerable percentage of business respondents think Albania is prepared to join EU; they are the least informed group. Yet, the Public Administration category that has the highest level of knowledge on EU institutions and the process of integration into EU is the one in which the majority of respondents answered that Albania is prepared to become a member of EU. This might be because many in the Public Administration category think they have done a good job in preparing Albania for EU membership.

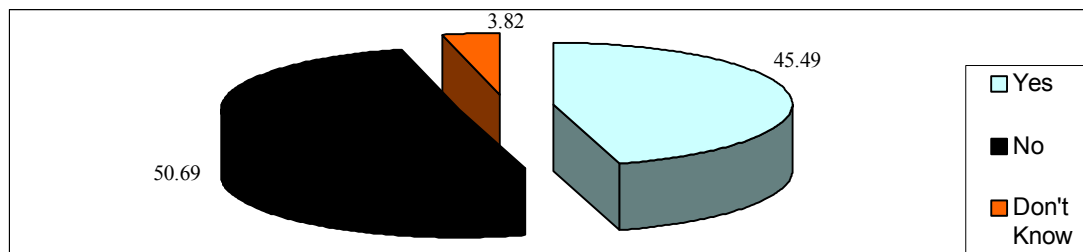
Media on the other hand, another relatively well informed category, contains the lowest percentage of those who think that Albania is prepared to become an EU member, which was to be expected given their level of knowledge and familiarity with the process. It is important to realize that we are after all dealing with perceptions and not hard facts. Thus, responses are not simply factual they also express the desires and expectations of the respondents, which is very difficult to analyze apart from their level of knowledge. It is quite likely that in this case, as in most other questions, responses are also determined by desires and expectations, which is why now we turn to them.

Expectations & Perceptions

The importance of expectations and desires was also reflected when respondents were asked whether EU should admit Albania even before the latter is prepared to join the former. A slim majority of 50.69% respondents answered “No”. A considerable percentage of 45.49% answered “Yes” which is in fact very indicative of their desire for Albania to become a EU member. See Figure 33.

Question. Do you think European Union (EU) should admit Albania into EU even before Albania is prepared to become a member of EU?

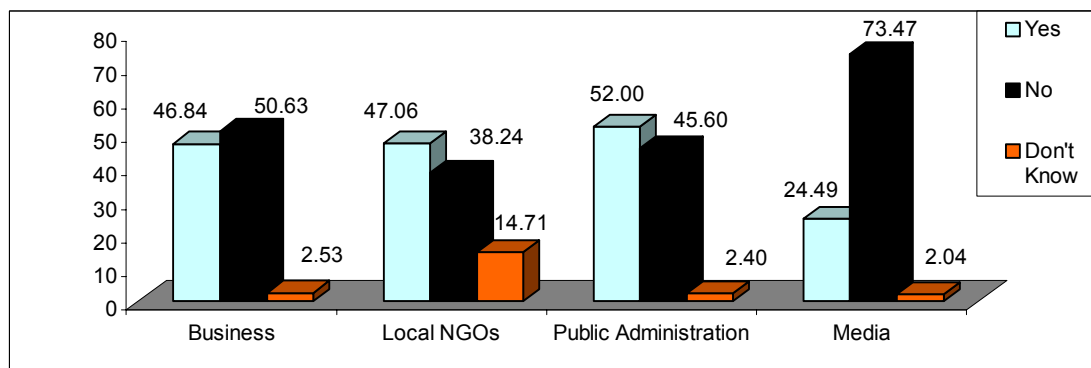
Figure 33. Should EU admit Albania Before She Is Prepared? – General Sample



The answers among the categories varied considerably. In two of them, Public Administration and Local NGOs, the majority of respondents, 52% and 47.06% respectively, answered that European Union should admit Albania even before the country is prepared to become a EU member. In the business category the responses were more evenly distributed since 46.84% answered “Yes” and 50.63% answered “No”. Media was the only category where a substantial majority of 73.47% answered “No” to the question. See Figure 34.

Question. Do you think European Union (EU) should admit Albania into EU even before Albania is prepared to become a member of EU?

Figure 34. Should EU admit Albania Before She Is Prepared? – According to Categories

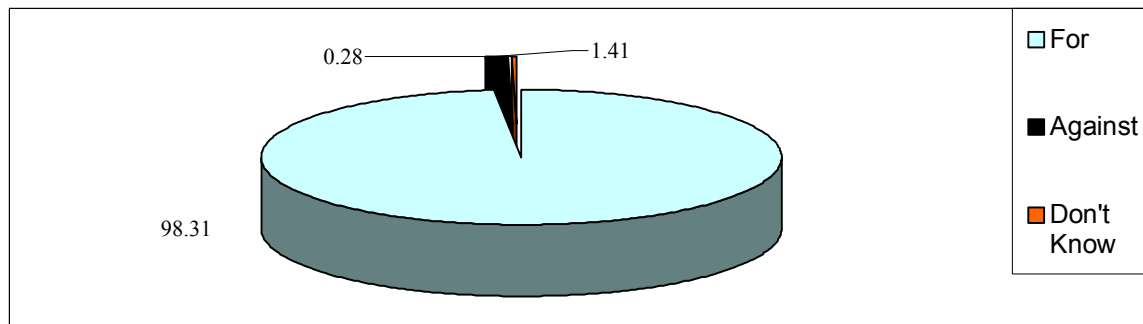


The above answers are interesting to note in relation with the previous question whether Albania was prepared to become an EU member. It was the Public Administration category that had the highest percentage of those who thought that Albania is prepared to become a member of the European Union, whereas the Media category had the lowest percentage of respondents who thought in a similar fashion. The fact that in the same category where a substantial percentage thinks Albania is prepared to join EU, the majority of the respondents also think that EU should admit Albania before she is ready to become a member could be explained in a large part by the desire of the respondents for Albania to join EU. This is indicative of their level of support for Albania's EU membership.

To determine this level the respondents were asked how they would vote on a referendum on Albania's EU membership. By far the majority, 98.3% responded that they would vote for Albania's membership into European Union if there were a referendum tomorrow on the issue. The mere figure of 98.3% indicates the level of support for Albania's EU membership in the chosen population. See Figure 35.

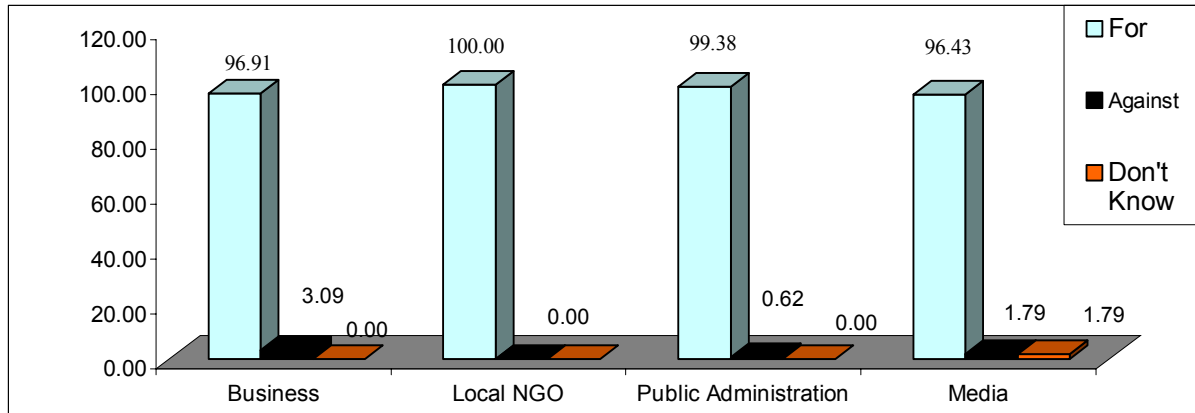
Question. Suppose tomorrow there were a referendum in order to decide whether Albania should join European Union (EU) or not, how would you vote? Would you vote for or against Albania's membership into EU?

Figure 35. Level of Support for Albania's Membership into EU for the General Sample



In a similar fashion each of the categories was very supportive of Albania's membership into EU. In each of the categories by far the majority of the respondents were for the membership. The two most supportive categories were Local NGOs and Public Administration, with 100 % and 99.38 % respectively for the membership. The category that had the highest percentage of respondents that were against EU membership for Albania was the business category, at 3.09 %. Next came Media in which 1.49 % said they would vote against. Nevertheless, in both cases the figures are very small, and what all of the categories share is massive support for Albania's EU membership. See Figure 36.

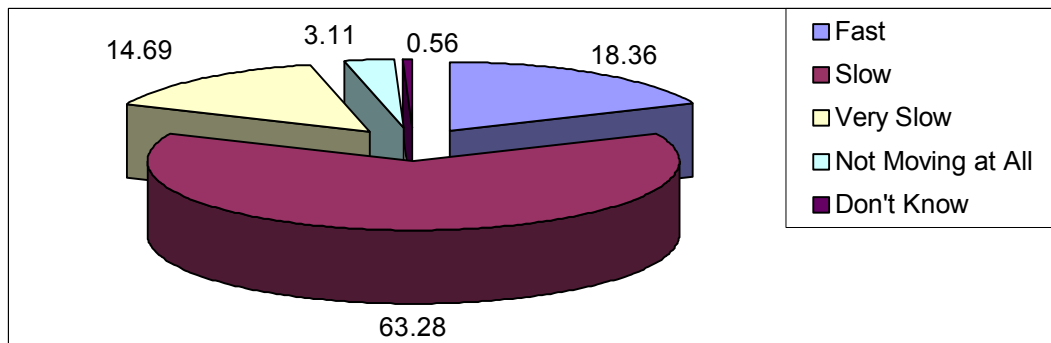
Figure 36. Level of Support for Albania’s Membership into EU for Each of the Categories.



The above question evaluates the level of support in the chosen populations on Albania’s EU membership. In order to understand this support we also have to assess perceptions and expectations regarding Albania’s EU membership amongst the respondents. Of particular importance here is the time dimension. For this reason respondents were asked their opinion on the speed of the process. As Figure 33 indicated, the majority of respondents thought that the process was moving either slowly, 63.28 %, or very slowly 14.69%. Some 18.36% thought that process was taking place fast. See Figure 37.

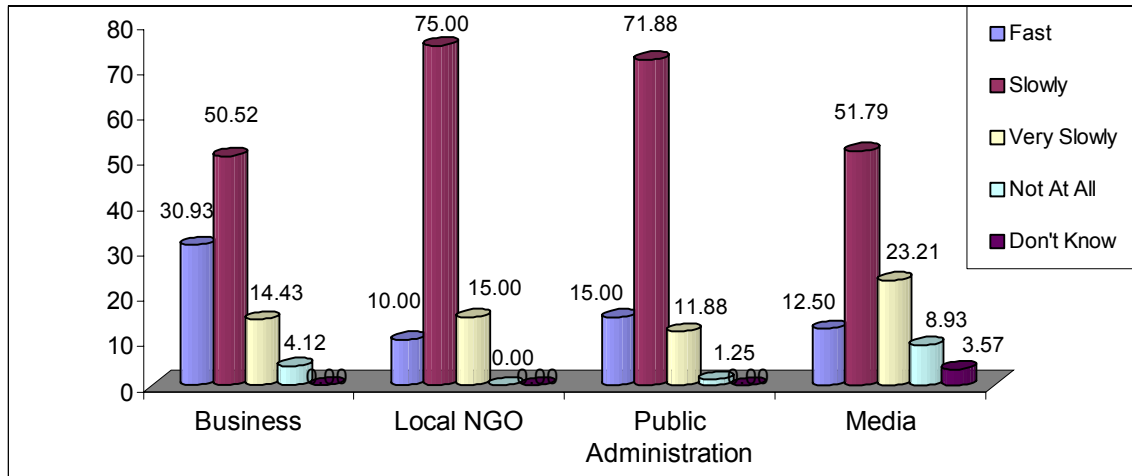
Question. Different people have different opinions regarding the speed of the process of Albanian integration into EU. In your opinion how is this process taking place? Fast, slow, very slow, not moving at all?

Figure 37. The Speed of the Integration Process – General Sample



While in each category the majority of the respondents thought that the process was taking place slowly, there were significant variations among the categories. The Business category was the most optimistic one with some 30 % of the respondent answering that the process was moving fast. Nevertheless, even here 69.07 % thought that the process was taking place-either slowly, very slowly or not at all. See Figure 38.

Figure 38. The Speed of the Integration Process – Categories

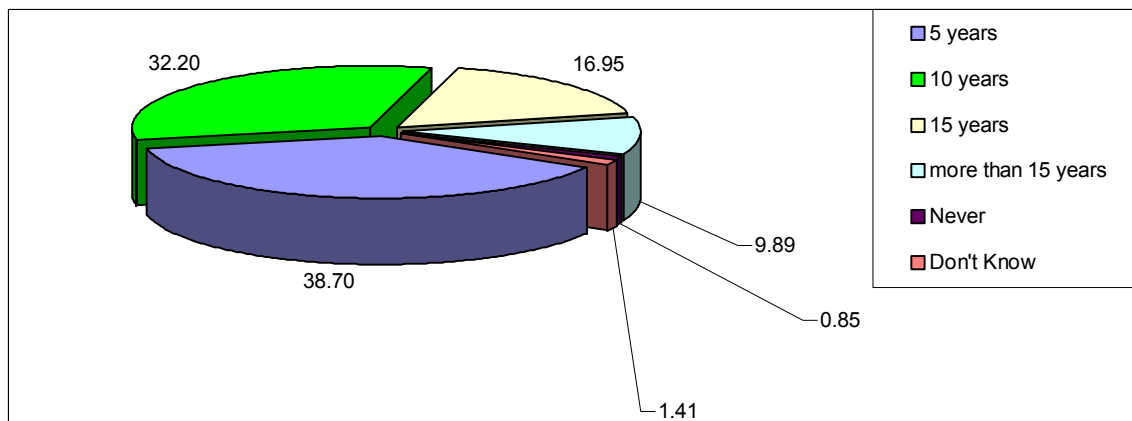


In the other three categories, substantial majorities thought that the process was moving slowly, or very slowly. However, from the above data it is difficult to understand exactly what respondents meant by fast, slowly, or very slowly, since these are all very relative concepts that most of all reflect the contrast between expectations and perceived realities.

In order to overcome this limitation the respondents were also asked to give their opinion on the number of years that it will take for Albania to become a member of the European Union. In this way the above given opinions could be quantified in terms of years. As Figure 39 shows, the largest group of respondents, 38, 70% responded that it will take Albania 5 years in order to join EU. The second largest group 32.29 % thought that it will take Albania 10 years to become an EU member. See Figure 39.

Question. There exist different opinions regarding the number of years that it will take Albania to become a member of European Union. In your opinion how long will it take for Albania to join EU? Will it take 5 years, 10 years, 15 years or do you think that Albania will never become a member of EU?

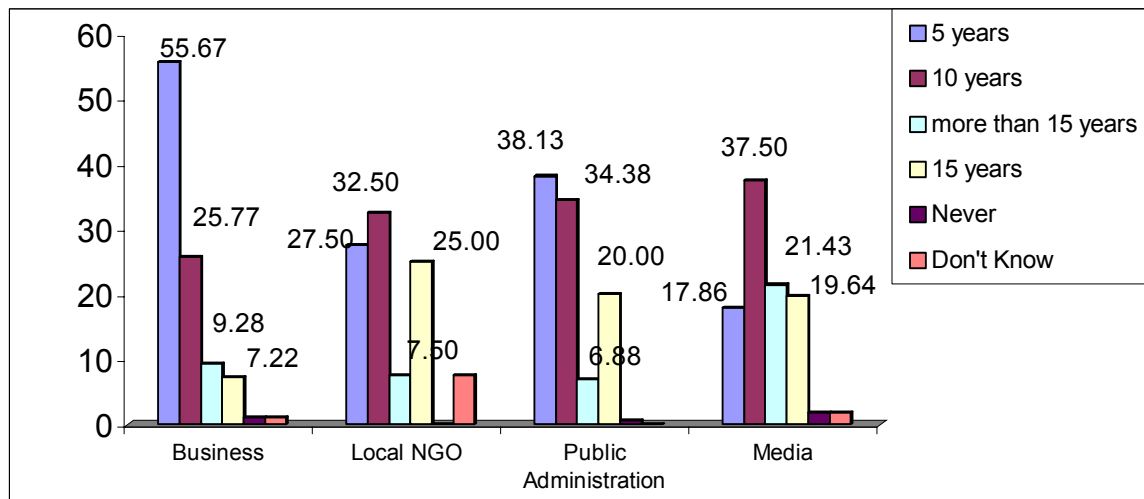
Figure 39. The Number of Years For Albania to Join EU – General Sample



It is interesting to notice from the above figure that only 0.85 % of the respondents, a very minor percentage, responded that Albania will never become a member of EU. Thus, despite the variations of responses in terms of years one thing that almost all respondents shared was the fact that they all thought that Albania will become someday a member of EU.

The same was true for each of the categories where negligible percentages of respondents doubted that Albania will ever become a member of EU. Nevertheless, there were significant variations from one category to the other. The category that seemed more optimistic regarding the number of years that it will take Albania to join EU was the Business one. The majority of respondents in this category, 55.67%, responded that it will take Albania 5 years to become a member of European Union. See Figure 40.

Figure 40. The Number of Years For Albania to Join EU – Categories

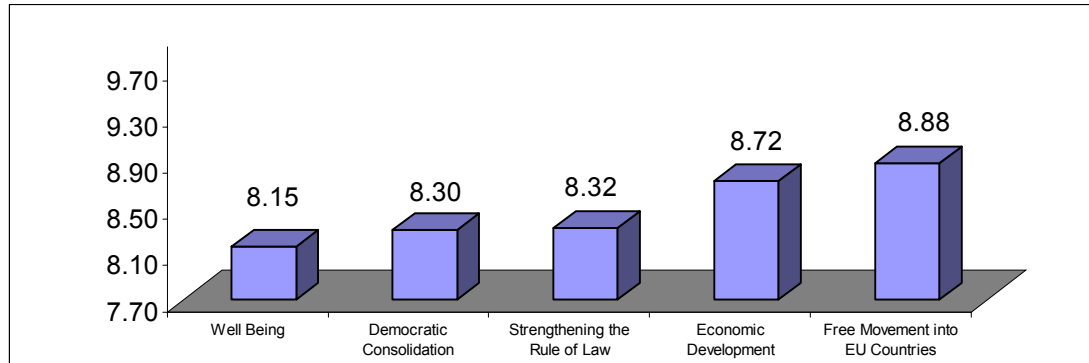


The above figure shows that Business and Public Administration are the two most optimistic categories. They have the largest percentages of respondents who think that Albania will join EU in 5 or 10 years, and the lowest percentages that marked 15 or more than 15 years as the time period in which Albania will join EU. Of these two categories the Business one is the more optimistic. The two categories that are less optimistic in this regard are Media and Local NGOs. Of the two Media had the largest percentage of those who thought Albania would join EU in 15 or more than 15 years, i.e. it was the least optimistic.

The high level of optimism seems also justified by the level of expectation of the respondents. The desire to join EU seems understandable by what the respondents expect from Albania's membership into EU. The major benefit that the respondents expect Albania to derive from EU membership is the free movement of people into EU countries; this option scored the highest at 8.88. The next most important expected benefit was economic development. It is important to note that all the expected benefits scored quite high, 8 or above, which is indicative of the high expectations that respondents have developed for Albania's EU membership. See Figure 41.

Question. People have different opinions on the benefits that Albania will derive from EU membership. In your opinion how much will Albania benefit in the following areas? Please evaluate in a 1 to 10 scale, bearing in mind that the higher the number the more you think Albania will benefit in the given area.

Figure 41. Benefits from EU Membership for Albania – General Sample

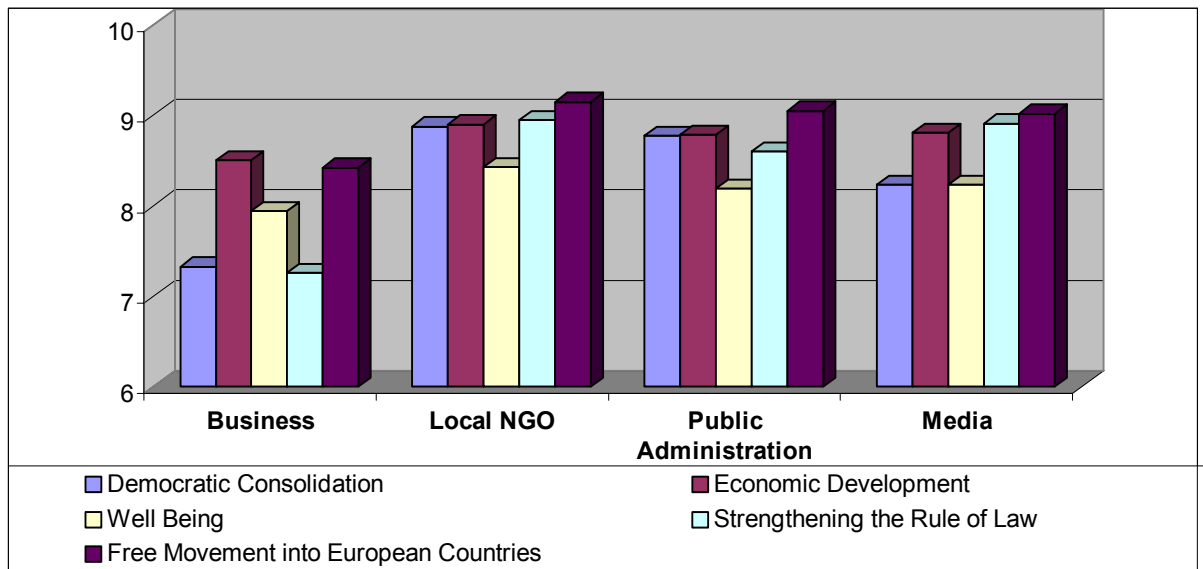


Of the four categories the Business one had the lowest scores. Thus if we add up the means for each category in Table 11, we find that the score for the Business category is 39.46, for the Public Administration one 43.4, Local NGOs 44.31 and Media 43.19. Thus expectations seem lowest in the Business category and highest in the Local NGOs one. Another interesting fact is that in the Business category Economic development scored the highest whereas in all the other three categories it was the free movement into EU countries that came first. The standard deviation in the Business group was also the highest which means that answers varied in this category more than in the other ones. See Table XI and Figure 42.

Table XI. Mean and Standard Deviation According to Categories

Area \ Category	Business		Local NGOs		Public Administration		Media	
	Mean	Std.Dev.	Mean	Std.Dev.	Mean	Std.Dev.	Mean	Std.Dev.
Democratic Consolidation	7.33	2.37	8.88	1.30	8.78	1.50	8.23	1.92
Economic Development	8.51	1.96	8.90	1.32	8.78	1.46	8.80	1.44
Well Being	7.94	2.34	8.43	1.50	8.19	1.74	8.23	1.46
Strengthening the Rule of Law	7.26	2.60	8.95	1.40	8.60	1.64	8.91	1.59
Free Movement into EU Countries	8.42	2.31	9.15	1.39	9.05	1.65	9.02	1.58

Figure 42. Benefits from EU Membership for Albania – Categories



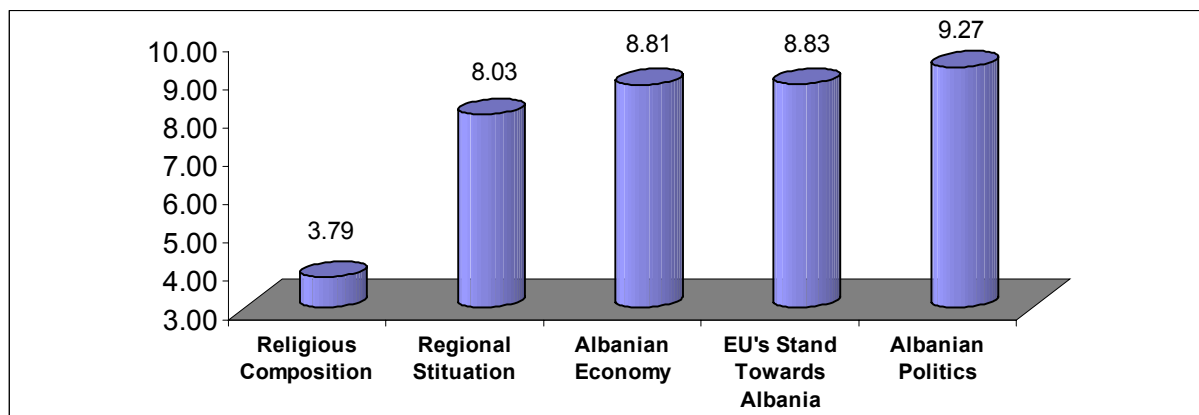
Among the factors that were perceived as important for Albania to join EU the three main factors, in order of importance were: Albanian Politics, EU Stands Towards Albania and Albanian Economy. These factors scored 9.27, 8.83, and 8.81 respectively. The Situation in the Region came fourth at 8.03. See Table XII and Figure 43.

Question. Albania's Membership into EU depends on a variety of factors. In your opinion how important are the factors below. Please evaluate in a 1 to 10 scale, bearing in mind that the higher the number the more important you consider the factor.

Table XII. Factors Important For Albania's EU Membership - General Sample

Factor	Means	Standard Deviations
Albanian Politics	9.27	1.50
Albanian Economy	8.81	1.69
Situation in the Region	8.03	2.21
EU Stand towards Albania	8.83	1.92
Religious Composition	3.79	3.07

Figure 43. Factors Important for Albania’s EU Membership – General Sample



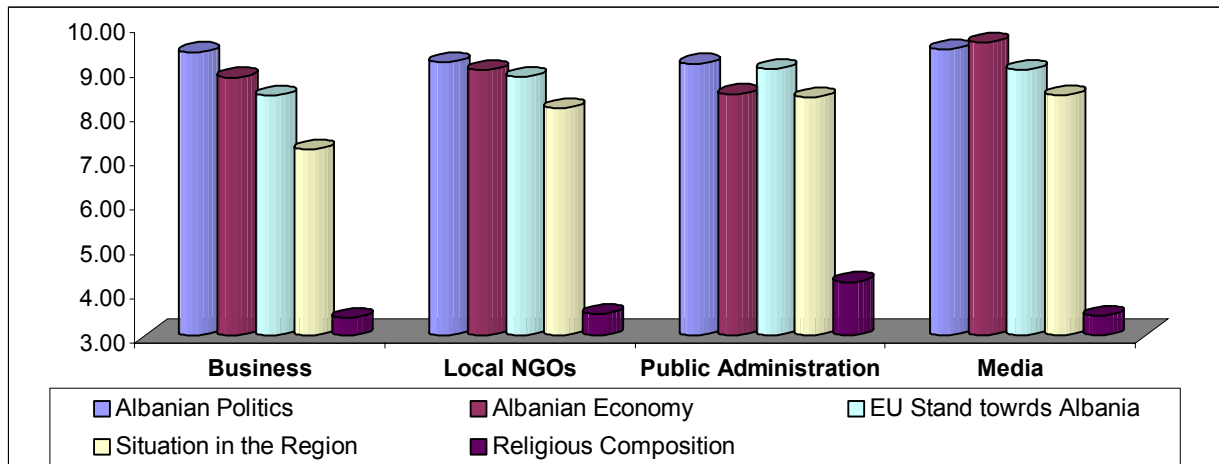
It is interesting to note that Religious Composition was perceived as the least important one scoring only 3.79, with the highest standard deviation of all at 3.07, which means that there were great variations in answers even for such a low score. Therefore this value shows that respondents attach little importance to religion, or religious composition, which might be a reflection of social attitudes towards religion in Albania.

The low score of religious composition could also be found in all the categories with little variations from one category to the other. It was the Public Administration respondents that attached greater importance to this aspect, but even in this case the score was only 4.21. In all the categories, expect for Media, Albanian Politics was perceived as the most important factor for the membership of the country into EU. The Media rated Economic Development first and Albanian Politics second, rather surprising given the immediacy of media and politics in Albania. Another interesting observation is that in all categories but the Public Administration one, EU Stands towards Albania was rated third, after Albanian Politics and Economic Development. Public Administration respondents considered EU Stands towards Albania more important than Economic Development as a factor for EU membership. In fact it was rated very close with Albanian Politics and further apart from Economic Development. See Table XIII and Figure 44.

Table XIII. Factors Important For Albania’s EU Membership-Categories

Factor \ Category	Business		Local NGO		Public Administration		Media	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Albanian Politics	9.41	1.24	9.18	1.58	9.14	1.62	9.46	1.51
Albanian Economy	8.83	1.76	9.00	1.36	8.46	1.80	9.63	1.10
Situation in the Region	7.21	2.79	8.13	1.91	8.37	1.86	8.43	1.79
EU Stand towards Albania	8.42	2.50	8.85	1.21	9.01	1.77	9.00	1.45
Religious Composition	3.41	3.00	3.50	2.85	4.21	3.04	3.45	3.35

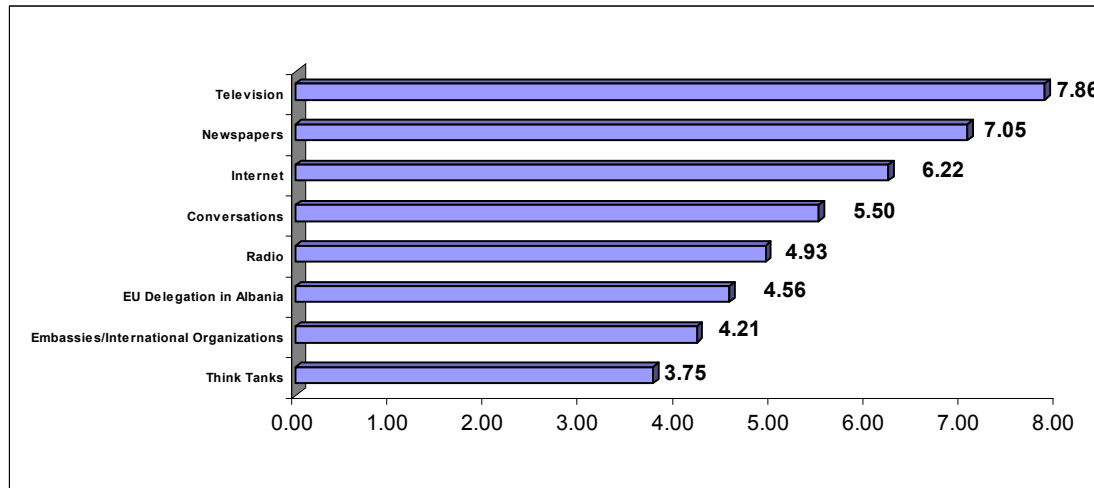
Figure 44. Factors Important for Albania's EU Membership – Categories



III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON EU

In this section we tried to identify the sources of information from where respondents receive information on EU. The two most important sources of information on EU for the general sample were Television and Newspapers that scored 7.86 and 7.05 respectively. Internet was also an important source and it came third at 6.22. See Figure 45.

Figure 45. Sources of Information on European Union (EU) – General Sample

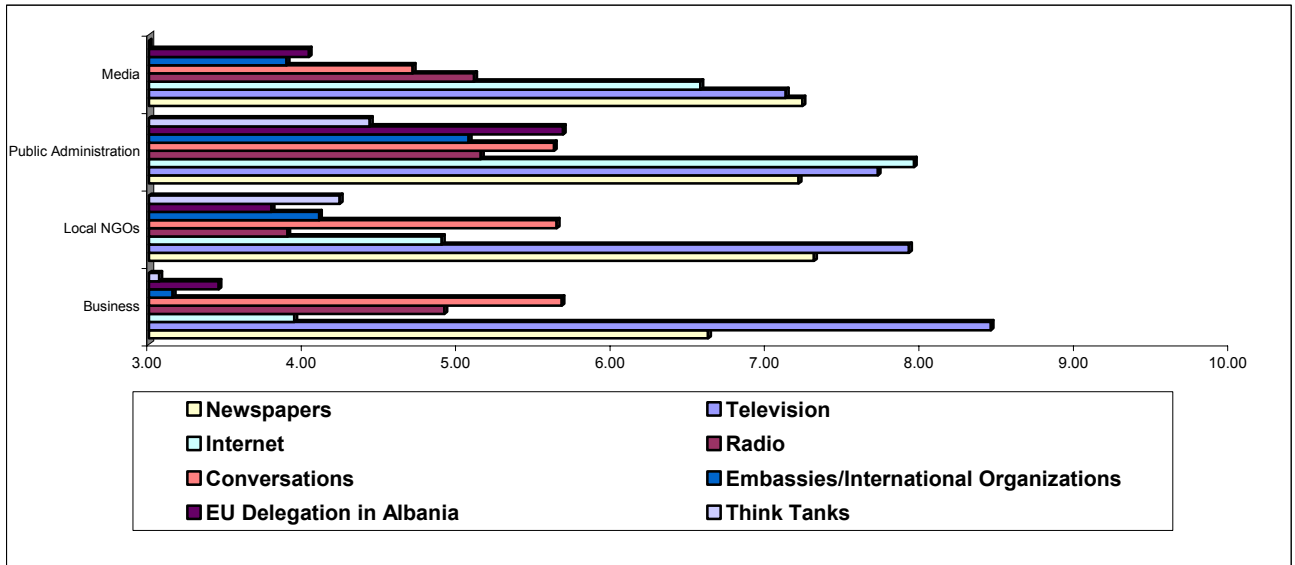


Similarly in all the categories but the Public Administration one Television and Newspapers were the main sources of information. The Public Administration respondents received their information mostly from the Internet. It is important to mention that the main sources of information, whatever they were, scored relatively high 7 or above, which means that the respondents have been exposed to information on EU to a considerable extent. See Table XIV and Figure 46 below.

Table XIV. Sources of Information on European Union (EU) - Categories

Category Source	Business		Local NGOs		Public Administration		Media	
	Mean	St. Dev..	Mean	St. Dev..	Mean	St. Dev..	Mean	St. Dev..
Television	8.45	2.38	7.92	2.46	7.72	2.15	7.13	2.14
Radio	4.91	2.81	3.90	2.96	5.15	2.65	5.11	2.53
Newspapers	6.62	3.04	7.31	2.73	7.21	2.28	7.23	2.40
Internet	3.94	3.54	4.90	3.28	7.95	2.61	6.57	2.93
EU Delegation in Albania	3.45	2.86	3.79	2.62	5.68	3.08	4.04	2.28
Conversation	5.67	2.95	5.64	2.50	5.62	2.49	4.71	2.42
Embassies/International Organizations	3.15	2.90	4.10	3.02	5.07	2.81	3.89	2.44
Think Tanks	3.07	3.02	4.24	2.88	4.43	2.75	2.84	2.22

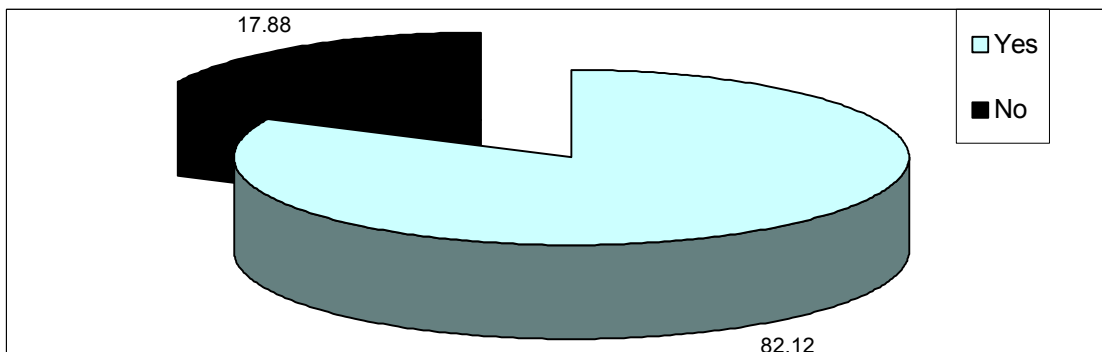
Figure 46. Sources of Information on European Union (EU) – Categories



A considerable majority of respondents, 82.12%, were also interested to receive more information on EU. This is in line with the high levels of support for Albania’s EU membership, as well as the positive perceptions respondents had on EU. See Figure 47.

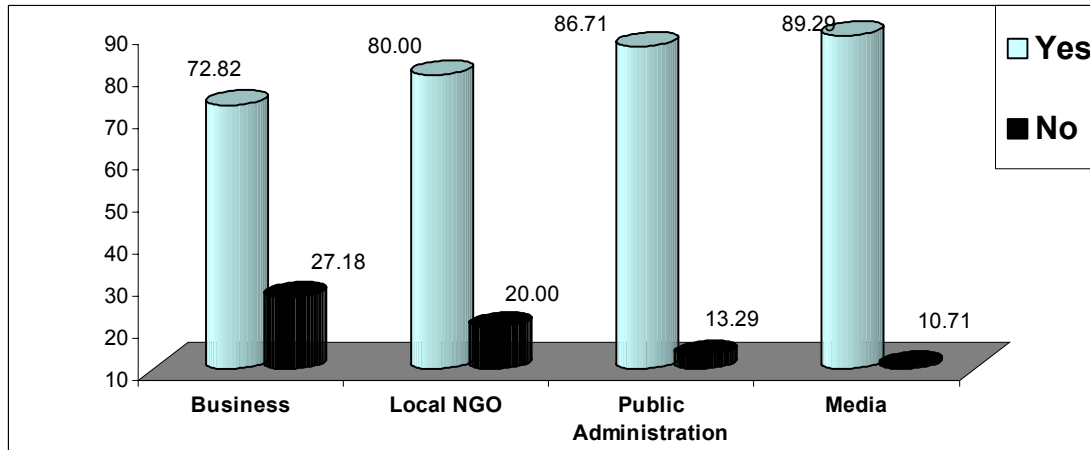
Question. Are you interested to receive more information on EU?

Figure 47. Level of Interest on EU Information – General Sample



Also among the categories there were high levels of interest for more information on EU. There were however differences from one category to the other, some were more interested to receive more information on EU and others less. Thus, the most interested category was the Media, which is to be expected. Yet even in this case, some 10.71 % of the interviewed journalists were not interested to receive more information on EU. Public Administration was the next category with highest percentage of respondents, 86.71 %, interested to receive more information on EU. Business and Local NGO respondents were least interested in this respect. See Figure 48.

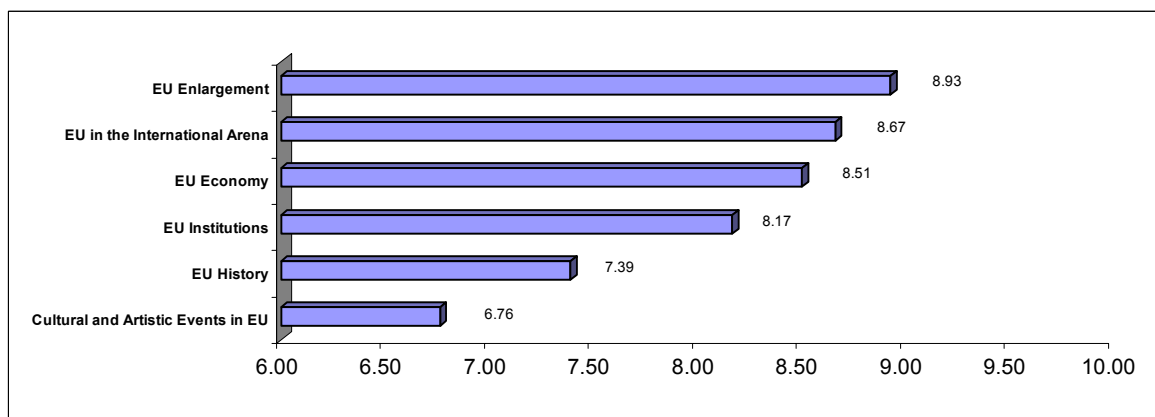
Figure 48. Level of Interest on EU Information – Categories.



Those interested to receive more information on EU were also asked in what areas they would like to receive more information. As the figure below shows the area in which respondents were more interested was EU enlargement. The score of EU Enlargement, 8.93 out of 10, is very indicative of the great interest respondents have on such a process. Such an interest does not come as a surprise given the high levels of support for Albania’s EU membership, the expectations from Albania’s EU membership and the general desire for the process to move faster. See Figure 49.

Question. The information on EU covers different areas. How interested would you be to receive information on the areas shown below? Please evaluate in a 1 to 10 scale, bearing in mind that the higher the number, the more interested would you be to receive information on the given area.

Figure 49. Level of Interest on EU According to Area – General Sample.



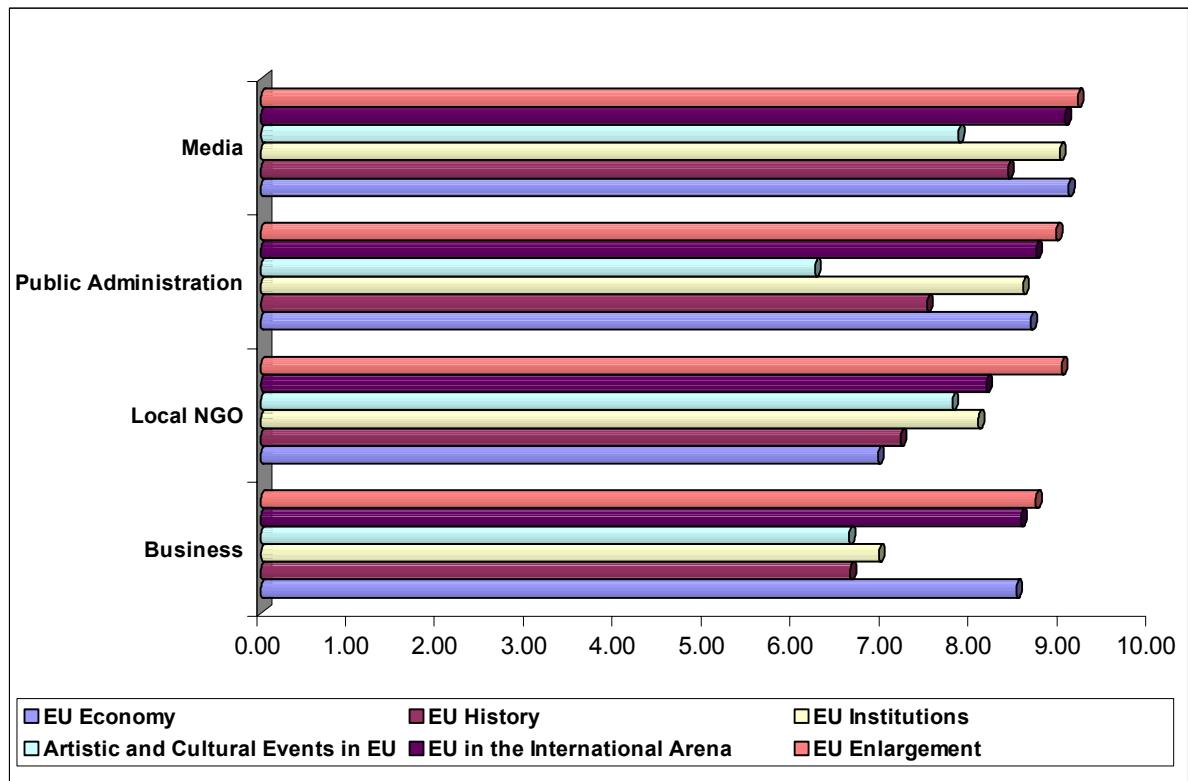
The interest of the respondents to learn more on EU Enlargement was also reflected across all four categories. In each of them EU Enlargement received the highest score, despite variations in the level of interest in other areas. This once more confirms the importance that the respondents attach to Albania’s EU membership. See Table XV and Figure 50.

Question. The information on EU covers different areas. How interested would you be to receive information on the areas shown below? Please evaluate in a 1 to 10 scale, bearing in mind that the higher the number the more would you be interested to receive information on the given area.

Table XV. Areas of Interest on EU - Categories

Area \ Categories	Business		Local NGO		Public Administration		Media	
	Mean	St. Dev.	Mean	St. Dev.	Mean	St. Dev.	Mean	St. Dev.
EU Economy	8.49	1.70	6.94	2.78	8.66	1.77	9.08	1.45
EU History	6.63	3.18	7.19	2.17	7.49	2.63	8.40	2.27
EU Institutions	6.95	3.08	8.06	2.13	8.57	1.91	8.98	1.50
Cultural and Artistic Events in EU	6.61	2.70	7.77	2.23	6.23	2.77	7.84	2.12
EU in the International Arena	8.55	2.06	8.16	2.46	8.71	1.92	9.04	1.56
EU Enlargement	8.71	1.98	9.00	1.32	8.94	1.60	9.18	1.32

Figure 50. Areas of Interest on EU – Categories



ANALYSES

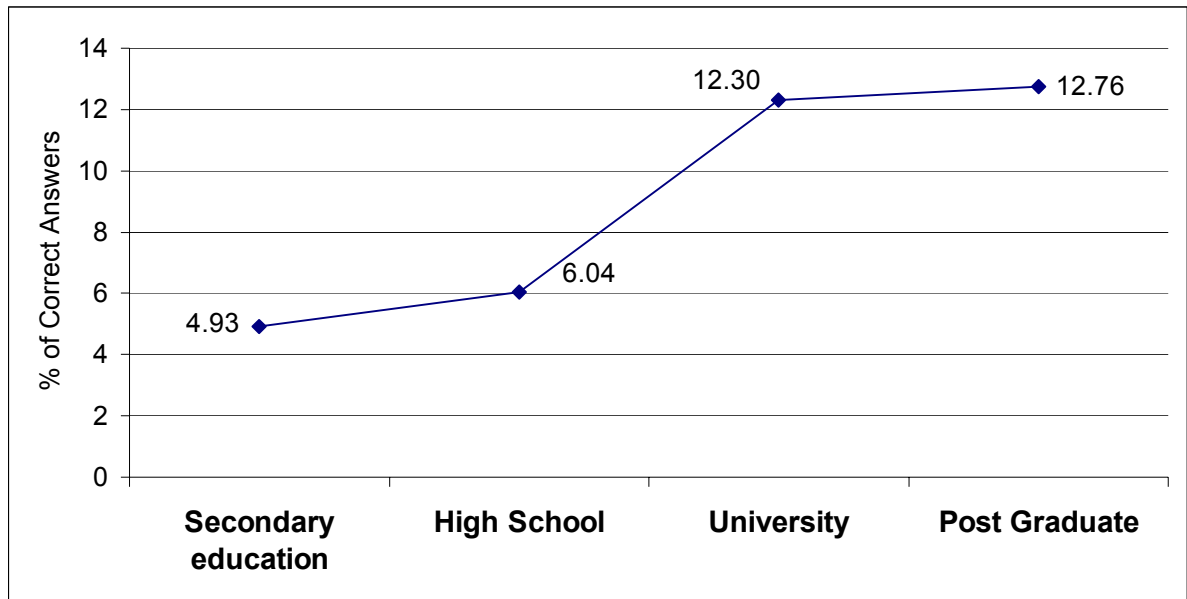
The survey was designed and based on the assumption that there is a correlation between the educational background of the respondents and their level of knowledge on EU as an organization and the process of EU integration for Albania in general. According to our assumption the higher the level of education the better informed the respondents in both areas. This assumption defined our sampling techniques and is important in drawing conclusions for populations beyond the one covered by our sample.

We tested this assumption in two areas; the level of knowledge of respondents on EU and its institutions, and knowledge on the process of Albania's integration into EU. For this reason we combined the answers of questions that tested such knowledge with the educational background of the respondents in each case.

EU And Its Institutions

Below there is the graph of the correct answers in question 6 against the educational level of the respondents in each case. The numbers in the graph show the correct answers for each educational category as a percentage of the total answers for the given category. See Graph 1.

Graph 1. Educational Background vs. Knowledge of Albania's Membership into International Organizations.

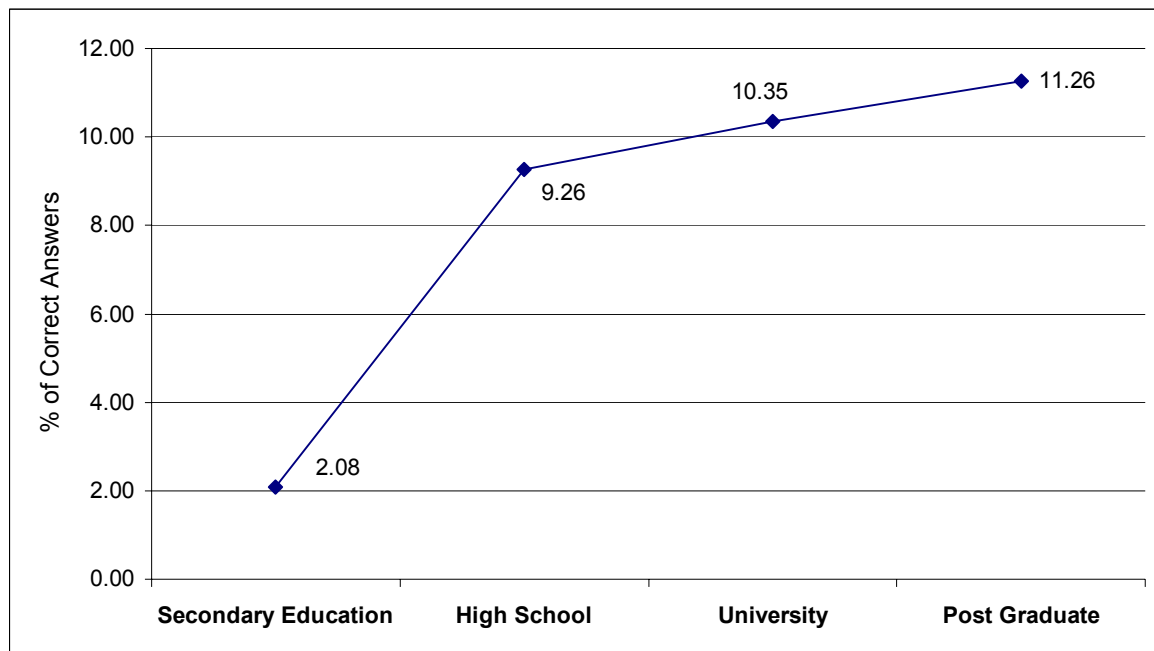


Question 6. Is Albania a Member of...?

As the above graph and table indicate there is a clear dependency between the educational background of the respondents and the percentage of correct answers they gave. The higher the educational level of the respondents the more informed they were on Albania's membership into EU institutions.

The same correlation was evident regarding responses on EU Institutions, question 10. While question 6 tested the level of knowledge of respondents on Albania's membership into certain international organisms, in question 10 respondents were asked whether certain institutions belonged to EU or not. The correct answers were combined with respondent's educational background. See Graph 2.

Graph 2. Educational Background vs. Knowledge of EU Institutions.



As the graph indicates, the higher the educational level the higher the percentage of informed responses on EU institutions. These results are important since the correlation between education and knowledge on EU allows us to generalize some of the survey findings to populations not represented by the sample.

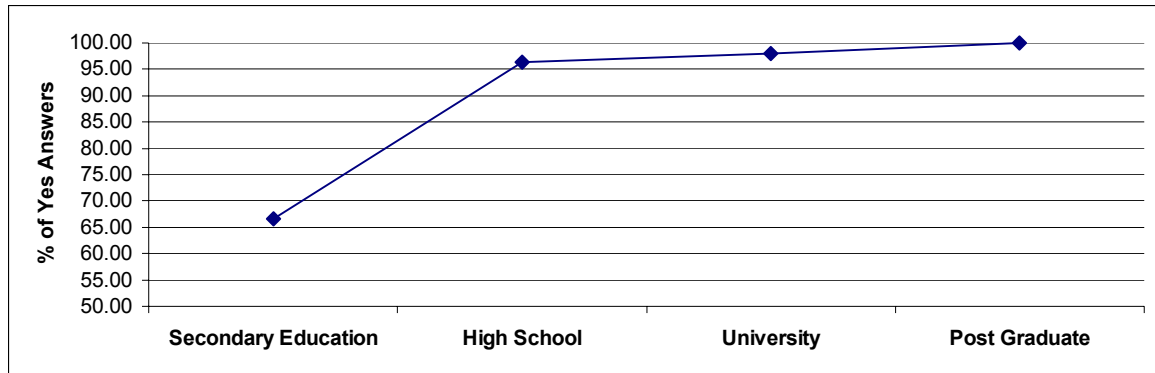
The Process of EU Integration

The above graphs show that there exists a correlation between educational background and knowledge on EU and its institutions. Now we have to determine whether such a correlation exists also for the process of Albania's integration into EU. Thus, the question is: Are people with higher educational level more informed on this process? Such a correlation might not be as obvious as it seems, since once people begin to specialize (i.e. complete

higher education or post graduate studies) they have less time and predisposition to become informed on issues outside of their area of expertise.

First of all in order to determine whether there is a correlation we combined the level of education of respondents (question 3) with the “Yes” responses of Question 11: Have you heard of the efforts Albania has undertaken in order to become a member of European Union? As Graph 3 indicates there is a clear correlation in this case.

Graph 3. Educational Background vs. Familiarity with Albania’s EU Integration.

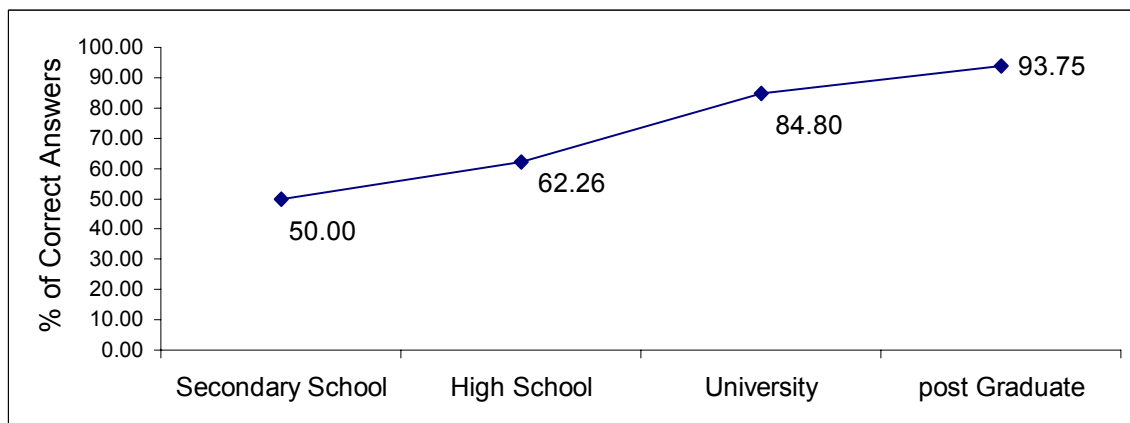


Question 11. Have you heard of Albania’s efforts to join EU?

The graph clearly shows that the higher the level of education of the respondents the higher the percentage of those who had heard of the process. This is a first step in exploring the relationship between educational background and knowledge of the integration process.

This relation is also evident with regard to the familiarity of the respondents with the conditions for Albania to join EU. Thus, when asked in Question 16 whether they had heard of these conditions the higher the educational background the higher the percentages of those who responded, “Yes”.

Graph 4. Educational Background vs. Familiarity with Albania’s Conditions to Join EU.



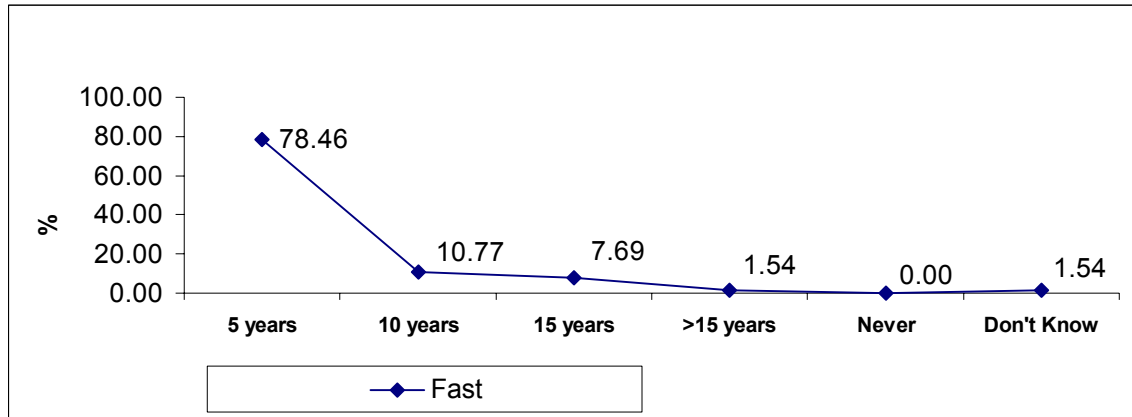
Question 16. In order to join EU Albania has to meet certain criterion. Have you heard of them?

Perceptions and Expectations on the Speed of the EU Integration Process

When asked about the speed of the process of Albania’s integration into EU most of the respondents answered that the process was moving either slowly or very slowly. When they were asked to assess the number of years that it will take Albania to join EU, the majority of respondents marked 5 and 10 years. In order to understand what respondents meant by qualitative adjectives such as “fast”, “slow” or “very slow” and quantify them in terms of years we combined questions 18 and 19.

First we combined the responses of those who thought that the process of integration was taking place fast with their responses to question 19 where they were asked about the number of years that it would take Albania to join EU. See Graph 5.

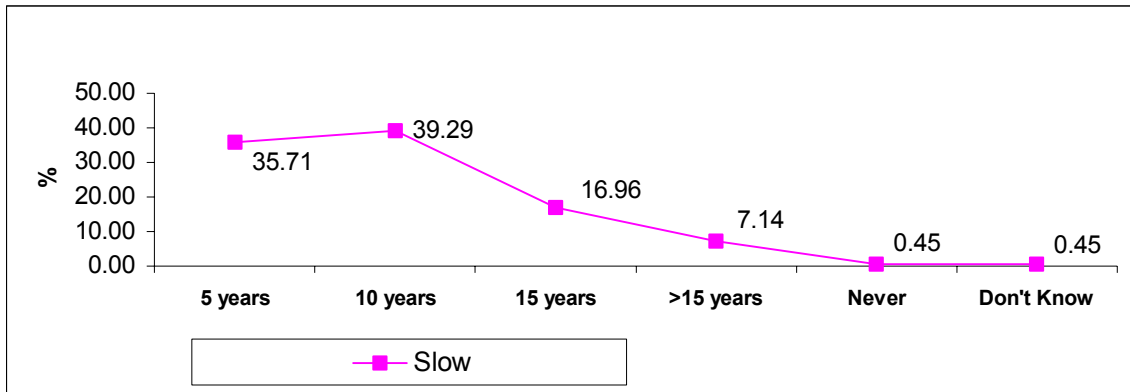
Graph 5. The speed of the integration process vs. the number of years Albania will need to integrate in EU.



Graph 6 shows that the majority, 78.46%, of those who thought that the integration process was moving fast thought that Albania will join EU in 5 years. Only 10.77% marked 10 and even less 15 years. Therefore, by fast for most of these respondents is understood a period of five years.

In a similar fashion as with the graph above, we combined the answers of those who thought that the process was moving slowly with their responses to question 19 where they were asked about the number of years that it will take for Albania to join EU. See Graph 7.

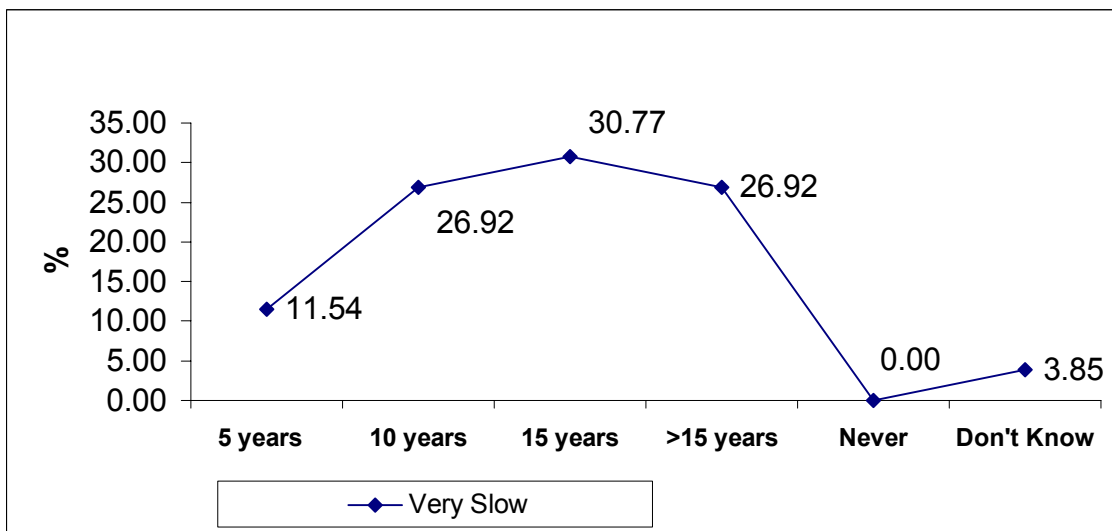
Graph 6: The answers “slow” in terms of years.



Graph 6 shows that those respondents who thought that the process of Albania’s EU integration was taking place slowly marked mostly 10 or 5 years as the time that it will take Albania to join EU. Only 16.96% marked 15 years and an even smaller 7.14 % marked more than 15 years. Therefore, by “slow” most respondents meant a period of time in the range of five to ten years.

Finally, Graph 7 shows that the majority of those who thought that the process was moving very slowly marked somewhere between ten and more than fifteen years as the number of years that it will take Albania to join EU, with the highest percentage, 30.77%, on 15 years and equal percentages on 10 and more than 15 years. However it is interesting to notice that some 11.54 % marked 5 years although they thought the process was moving very slowly. This might be indicative both of their desire for Albania to join EU as soon as possible and of a limited understanding of the length of the process. See Graph 7.

Graph 7: The answers “very slow” in terms of years.



From the graphs above it can be concluded that the majority of those respondents that think the integration process is moving fast believe that Albania will join EU in five years. Most of those who think that the process is taking place slowly fall in the 5 to 10 years range, whereas the ones that believe the process is moving very slowly envisage a 10 or more years time period in which Albania will join EU. In any case these estimates are quite optimistic in terms of years, although most respondents would like the process to move faster.

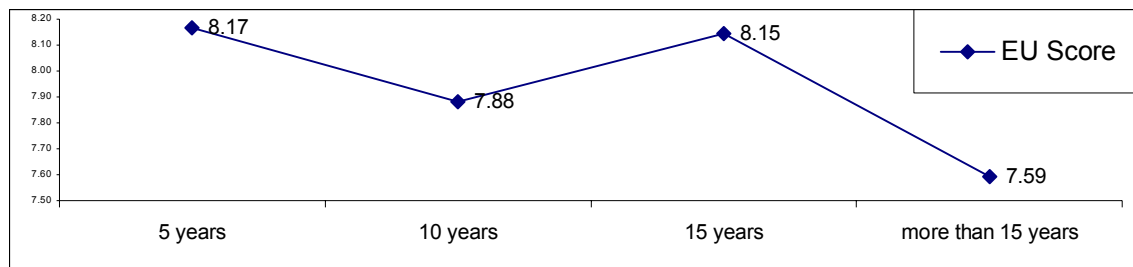
Perceptions on European Union (EU)

It has been clearly shown in the Findings section that most respondents held the European Union in very high regard. They perceived it as a democratic organization that is also a source of peace and security in Europe as well as a promoter of economic and democratic developments in the member countries and beyond. The respondents also perceived EU as a very important partner for Albania and an overwhelming majority supported Albania’s membership into EU.

While the above facts and perceptions are very obvious it is important to determine whether there is a correlation between the level of enthusiasm/optimism of the respondents and the way in which they perceive EU. It might be the case that the more hopeful the respondents towards Albania’s EU integration the more positive their assessment of EU and its importance for the country. In order to see whether such a relation exists we combined the answers to questions 18 and 19 with those given to questions that aim to assess the perceptions of EU and its importance by the respondents. Questions 18 and 19 were used to define respondents as optimistic or not in relations to Albania’s integration into EU.

As Graph 8 below indicates “the optimists”, i.e., those that thought Albania will join EU in a period of 5 to 10 years gave on average higher marks to EU than the “pessimists”, i.e., those who thought Albania will join EU at a later time, from 15 to more than 15 years. In order to compare the results the mean of the total marks that EU received in specific areas in question 8 was calculated and graphed against the answers in question 19.

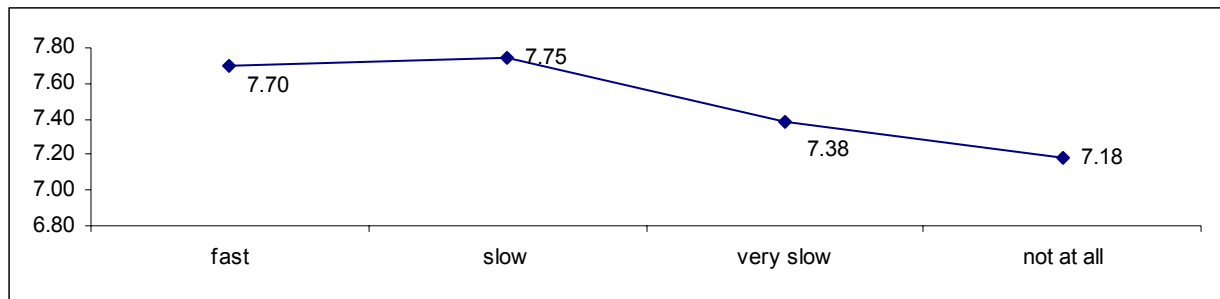
Graph 8. EU Perceptions in Relation to Membership Expectations – Question 19 vs. Question 8.



The graph above shows that the more optimistic respondents towards Albania’s EU integration had a more positive perception on EU as an organization and its role in relation to other European countries. However, it must be noticed that this correlation is not very strong. This might be in part because time perceptions vary greatly among the respondents.

The correlation is more obvious when we combine the answers to question 18 with those of question 8. Just like in the case of question 19, question 18 also shows the expectations of the respondents regarding Albania's EU integration, but not in terms of years. Respondents are asked their opinion on the speed of the process, whether it is moving fast, slowly, very slowly or not at all. This question gives more accurate since the categories here are broader and more easily comparable amongst respondents.

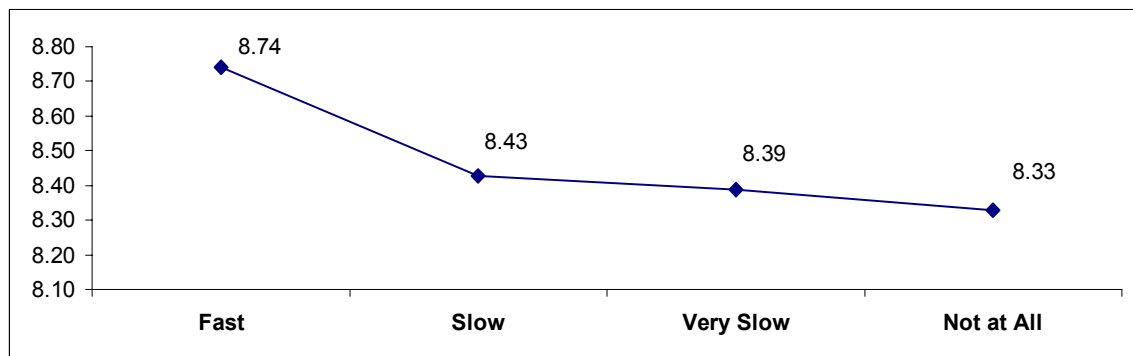
Graph 9. EU Perceptions in Relation to Membership Expectations – Question 18 vs. Question 8.



As graph 10 shows there is a clear relation between the two variables. The more positive and optimistic the perceptions of the respondents on the integration process the more positive their perceptions on EU. The correlation is clearer in this case than in the previous one..

In a similar fashion those who are more optimistic regarding the speed of the EU integration process for Albania seem also to have higher expectations from Albania's membership into EU. This conclusion can be drawn if we combine the answers to question 18 with those in question 20 where the respondents were asked to evaluate Albania's benefits from EU membership. See Graph 10.

Graph 10. Benefits from EU Membership in Relation to Membership Expectations



Graph 10 shows that as respondents expectations for EU membership drop so do their expectations of the benefits that Albania will derive from EU membership.

The above results are important to emphasize since they show that perceptions on EU and expectations from EU membership are related to respondent's perceptions on the length of the membership process. The more optimistic they are on Albania's chances to join EU the more positive their perceptions on EU and the higher their expectations from the membership. Therefore, as the respondents familiarize themselves with the process and once they become aware of the time that it will take for Albania to join EU, which by any estimate is more than what is expected by most respondents, perceptions on EU and expectations of benefits from EU membership might also drop. This is disconcerting since these groups, and especially the Public Administration one, are to a large extent responsible for such a process so any misunderstandings on their part might further delay Albania's integration into EU.

CONCLUSIONS

Keeping in mind the relatively high levels of education of the surveyed groups, the survey shows that the interviewees enjoy limited knowledge of the European Union and Albania's integration process into EU. Media was the best-informed group on the EU and the integration process in general. Public administration, NGOs, and Business groups were further down the list. Basic misunderstandings on the integration process, and especially its benefits, were present in all groups. However, in descending order, they were most present in public administration and than in business, NGOs, and media.

The results of the survey suggest that the existing misunderstandings on the integration process are not simply a result of the lack of information. As a matter of fact, groups such as public administration were relatively well informed on the EU and its institutions. On the other hand, this group shared many misunderstandings with the business group, the least informed group on the EU. Thus, although there is a need for more information on the integration process, it is even more important that this information is given free of political propaganda.

Some of the conclusions drawn from the responses of each group are:

Media.

Media was the best informed group on EU and its institutions as well as on Albania's integration process. The majority of interviewees in this group, 96.43%, supported Albania's integration into EU structures. Furthermore, the media group had less misunderstandings on the integration process, especially as compared to public administration and business. However, misunderstandings did exist on the plausible benefits to Albania if it becomes a EU member-state. Most interviewees in this group declared free movement to be the main benefit of Albania's EU membership. Furthermore, this group gave the lowest marks to EU in the fields of democratization and on the degree of its openness towards European non-member states. Finally, this group displayed the largest degree of interest for more information on the EU.

Public Administration.

Public administration was the second most informed group on the EU and on the conditions that Albania must fulfill in order to gain EU membership. However, although this group was relatively well informed, it had some basic misunderstandings on Albania's integration process. For example, 52 % of the interviewees declared that EU should accept Albania before she has fulfilled the conditions necessary for membership and 42% thought that Albania is prepared enough to become a full EU member. Moreover, the EU stance towards Albania was more important than the Albanian economy and on a par with Albanian politics for EU membership, according to respondents from this group. Also, the majority of this

group, 72%, stated that Albania would become a EU member within 5 to 10 years. At the same time, the majority of the interviewees declared that the integration process was proceeding slowly. Finally, this group had the most positive view of the EU and its achievements.

Business.

Business was the least informed group on the institutional composition of EU and on the conditions Albania ought to fulfil in order to gain EU membership. The greatest misconception predominant in this group, a result of the absence of information, was with regard to Albania's integration timeline. A majority of the interviewees, 55.67%, answered that Albania will gain full EU membership within 5 years. However, interestingly enough, although business was the least informed group on the EU, it was the only group that declared that the main benefit of EU membership was economic development and not free movement. Also, business had the lowest expectations from the integration process. This group gave EU its lowest marks on the assistance it was giving for the democratisation and economic development of non-EU countries. Finally, this group displayed the least amount of interest on more information concerning the EU.

Local NGOs

Local NGOs were not well informed on the EU and the integration process. Basic misunderstandings distorted its view on the integration process. Thus, the majority of the interviewees declared that the EU ought to accept Albania before she is ready for membership. Local NGOs were the only group where, although support for EU membership was a solid 100%, the interviewees thought that the Albanian Government should make relations with the United States as its number one priority. At the same time, local NGOs had the highest expectations regarding Albania's integration process into EU.

ANNEX I.

QUESTIONNAIRE

ALBANIAN INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES (AIIS)

Rr "Deshmoret e 4 Shkurtit", Nr. 7/1. Tirana, Albania

Tel: +355 42 488 53 Fax +355 4 270 337

E-mail aiis@icc.al.eu.org ose aiis@albaniaonline.net

Website: <http://www.aiis-albania.org>

ID: _____

Name of the Interviewer _____

Date of the Interview _____

Questionnaire

Albanian Institute for International Studies (AIIS) is conducting an opinion in order to assess Albanian perceptions on the European Union and Albania's EU integration. You have been randomly selected for this purpose. Your participation is voluntary, your name and answers will remain anonymous. Even if you begin this interview you can stop at any time you want. The entire conversation will take approximately 10 minutes.

P1. Are you ready to begin?

- Yes GO TO THE NEXT SECTION AND BEGIN THE INTERVIEW
- No GO TO QUESTION 2

P2. If this is not the right time could I come back at a more convenient time for you?

- Yes WRITE DOWN TIME AND PLACE
- No GREET AND LEAVE

General Information

Thank you for your time.

Initially I would like to ask some general questions that will help us analyze the data according to social and age group criterion.

1. WRITE DOWN THE GENDER OF THE INTERVIEWEE

- 1. MALE
- 2. FEMALE

2. Where are you employed? Are you employed in the private business sector, Public Administration, Non Governmental Organization (NGO), in the Media, or elsewhere?

Media	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Business	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Non Governmental Organization (NGO)	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
Public Administration	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
Other, specify _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. What kind of schooling have you completed? Did you graduate from secondary school, high school, university or did you complete postgraduate studies?

Secondary School	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
------------------	----------------------------

High School	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
University	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
Post Graduate Studies	4 <input type="checkbox"/>

4. What is your age group ? Are you 18-22, 23-35, 35-55, or older than 55 years old ?

18 – 22 years old	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
23- 35 years old	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
36 – 55 years old	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
Over 55 years old	4 <input type="checkbox"/>

General Information on EU

Now I would like to talk with you generally about a number of international organizations.

5. Have you heard of the following organizations?

1	NATO	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2 <input type="checkbox"/> No
2	OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe)	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2 <input type="checkbox"/> No
3	UN (United Nations)	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2 <input type="checkbox"/> No
4	IMF (International Monetary Fund)	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2 <input type="checkbox"/> No
5	World Bank	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2 <input type="checkbox"/> No
6	European Union (EU)	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2 <input type="checkbox"/> No
7	World Trade Organization (WTO)	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2 <input type="checkbox"/> No
8	Council of Europe	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2 <input type="checkbox"/> No

6. Now I will mention a few organizations and I will ask you if Albania has become a member or not. Is Albania member of:

1	NATO	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2 <input type="checkbox"/> No	99 <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW
2	OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe)	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2 <input type="checkbox"/> No	99 <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW
3	UN (United Nations)	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2 <input type="checkbox"/> No	99 <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW
4	European Union (EU)	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2 <input type="checkbox"/> No	99 <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW
5	World Trade Organization (WTO)	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2 <input type="checkbox"/> No	99 <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW
6	Council of Europe	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2 <input type="checkbox"/> No	99 <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW

7. Different people have different opinions regarding the states/organizations with which Albania needs to strengthen its ties. In your opinion how much attention should our government pay to strengthening Albania's ties with the following states/organizations? Please evaluate in a 1 to 10 scale, bearing in mind that the higher the number the more you think our Government should pay attention to strengthening Albania's ties with the given state/organization.

SHOW CARD 1 AND REPEAT QUESTION

1	European Union (EU)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2	NATO	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3	UN (United Nations)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4	Italy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
5	Greece	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
6	Germany	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
7	France	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
8	USA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9	Great Britain	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10	Turkey	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10	Other, specify _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

8. Now I will read some statements about EU and I will ask you to what extent you agree with them. Please evaluate in a 1 to 10 scale, bearing in mind that the higher the number the more you agree with the given statement.

SHOW CARD 2 AND REPEAT QUESTION

1	EU is a democratic organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2	EU is a source of peace and security in Europe	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3	EU aids democracy in countries outside EU	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4	EU promotes the economic development of countries outside EU	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
5	EU is open to accept any European country	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

9. The European Union was established in order to achieve certain goals. In your opinion how important are the following goals for EU. Please evaluate in a 1 to 10 scale, bearing in mind that the higher the number the more you think the given goal important for EU.

SHOW CARD 3 AND REPEAT QUESTION.

1	The economic development of the member states	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2	Democracy in the member states	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3	EU Enlargement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4	The defense of Europe	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

10. From what you have heard which a\of the following is an EU institution?

1	The European Parliament	₁ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	₂ <input type="checkbox"/> No	₉₉ <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW
2	World Bank	₁ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	₂ <input type="checkbox"/> No	₉₉ <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW
3	The European Commission	₁ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	₂ <input type="checkbox"/> No	₉₉ <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW
4	IMF (International Monetary Fund)	₁ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	₂ <input type="checkbox"/> No	₉₉ <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW

5	NATO	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2 <input type="checkbox"/> No	99 <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW
6	European Bank of Investments	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2 <input type="checkbox"/> No	99 <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW
7	The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2 <input type="checkbox"/> No	99 <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW
8	Council of Europe	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2 <input type="checkbox"/> No	99 <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW
9	OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe)	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	2 <input type="checkbox"/> No	99 <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW

EU Integration

Now we will talk for a few minutes about the relations of our country with EU.

11. First of all I would like to ask you whether you have heard about Albania's attempts to become a member of EU?

1. Yes
2. No GO TO QUESTION 24

12. Suppose tomorrow there was a referendum on Albania's membership in EU? How would you vote? Would you vote for the membership or against Albania's membership in EU?

1. For
2. Against
99. DON'T KNOW

13. Do you think Albania is ready to become a member of EU?

1. Yes GO TO QUESTION 15
2. No
99. DON'T KNOW

14. Do you think EU should admit Albania even before she is ready to become a member of EU?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 99. DON'T KNOW

15. Albania is trying to become a member of NATO as well as of EU. Which of these organizations will Albania join first? Will it join first NATO or EU?

- 1. NATO
- 2. EU
- 99. DON'T KNOW

16. If Albania is to become a member of EU it has to meet certain criterion. Have you heard of these criterion?

- 1. Yes
 - 2. No
- GO TO QUESTION 18

17. Please name some of the criterion you have heard of:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

18. There exist a variety of pinions on the speed with which Albania’s integration into EU is taking place. In your opinion how is Albania’s integration into EU taking place? Is it taking place fast, slow, very slow or is it not taking place at all?

Fast	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Slow	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Very Slow	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
Not at all	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
DON’T KNOW	99 <input type="checkbox"/>

19. There also exist different opinions on the time that will be needed for Albania to become a member of EU. How long do you think it will take for Albania to become a member of EU? Will it take 5 years, 10 years, 15 years, more than 15 years or do you think that Albania will never become a member of EU?

5 years	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
10 years	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
15 years	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
More than 15 years	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
Albania will never become a member of EU	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
DON’T KNOW	99 <input type="checkbox"/>

20. People have different opinions on the benefits that Albania will derive from EU membership. In your opinion how much will Albania benefit in the following areas? Please evaluate in a 1 to 10 scale, bearing in mind that the greater the number the more you think Albania will benefit in the given area.

SHOW CARD 4 AND REPEAT QUESTION

1	Democratization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2	Economic Development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3	Higher Living Standards	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4	Strengthening of the rule of law	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
5	Freedom of movement into other EU countries	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
6	Other, specify _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

21. Albania's membership into EU depends on a variety of factors. In your opinion how important are the following factors. Please evaluate in a 1 to 10 scale, bearing in mind that the greater the number the more important you think the given factor is for Albania to become an EU member.

SHOW CARD 5 AND REPEAT QUESTION

1	Albanian Politics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2	Albanian Economy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3	The situation in the region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4	EU's stand towards Albania	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
5	Albania's religious composition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
6	Other, specify _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

22. In her attempts to become an EU member Albania has to sign a number of agreements with EU. Have you heard of the Stabilization and Association Agreement between EU and Albania?

1. Yes

2. No

GO TO QUESTION 24

23. In your opinion is the signing of the Stabilization an inevitable step for Albania to become an EU member ?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 99. DON'T KNO

Sources of Information on EU

24. A number of sources offer information on EU. How much information do you receive on EU from the following sources? Please evaluate in a 1 to 10 scale, bearing in mind that the greater the number the more information you receive from the given source. SHOW CARD 6 AND REPEAT QUESTION.

1	Television	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2	Radio	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3	Newspapers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4	Internet	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
5	EU Delegation to Albania	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
6	Conversations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
7	Embassies/International Organizations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
8	Think tanks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9	Other, specify _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

25. Are you interested to receive more information on EU?

- 1. Yes GO TO QUESTION 26
- 2. No END THE INTERVIEW.

Thank you very much for your time. If you are interested we will send you a copy of the conclusions of this survey.

26. How much would you be interested to receive information on EU in the following areas? Please evaluate in a 1 to 10 scale, bearing in mind that the greater the number the more interested you are to receive information in the given area.

SHOW CARD 7 AND REPEAT QUESTION

1	EU economy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2	EU History	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3	EU Institutions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4	Cultural and artistic activities in EU	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
5	EU in the international arena	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
6	EU enlargement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
7	Other, specify _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Thank you very much for your time. If you are interested we will send you a copy of the conclusions of this survey.

ANNEX II.

SURVEY LISTS

1. Public Administration

NR	INSTITUTION	NO CIVIL SERVANTS	NO INTERVIEWS
1.	Council of Ministers	96	13
2.	President's Office	16	2
3.	Parliament	40	5
4.	Min. of Public Order	1	1
5.	Min. of Agriculture	115	16
6.	Min. of Transport	79	11
7.	Min. of Culture	49	7
8.	Min. Health	70	10
9.	Min of Energy and Industry	95	13
10	Min of Foreign Affairs	115	16
11	Min of Finance	140	19
12	Min of Local Government	80	11
13	Min of Economy	125	17
14	Min of Education	78	11
15	Min of Justice	93	13
16	Min of Defense	54	7
17	Min of Public Works	99	14
18	Min of Labor	71	10
19	Min of Environment	29	4
20	Central Elections Committee	10	2
21	National Committee of Territory	7	1
	TOTAL	1462	203

2. Businesses

No	NAME	ADDRESS	NO TEL
1.	Shtypshkronja "Demokracia" shpk	Rr J.Misja	228478 228446
2.	ART LIGHT OSRAM	Bul Zhan D`Ark	
3.	Mavi Jeans	Rr M.Shyri Nr 35	0682136006
4.	Bar Piceri Chianti	Rr M.Shyri	
5.	Kurum International	Rr P.Bogani	246877
6.	Joer	Rr S.Kodra Nr 11	231922

7.	Ndoni	Rr F.Xhajko	236394
8.	Lael	Rr Camera	
9.	Univers IN.Tec.Co.Sa	Pallati Kongreseve	228465
10.	Volalba	Pallati I Kultures	352239
11.	Ital Shirt shpk	ish NPV	226515
12.	Dalba shpk	ish NPV	250178
13.	Monaliv	Rr M.Tutulani P 8	
14.	Bujari	Prane St "Qemal Stafa"	233852
15.	Vitrina Francese	Rr A.Kasemi P69/1 Shk2	368108
16.	Profession Klima	Rr Dibres 375	
17.	Dyqan Veshjesh	Rr 5 Maji Perballe Xhamise Ethem Beut	
18.	Albaelectrica		232721 233135
19.	Euromobilje	tek frigoriferi	0692026273
20.	Kaktus	tek drejtoria e policise	
21.	Asambleja Protestante Nderkombetare	Rr M.Matohiti nr 19	230171
22.	Tirnafarma	RR M.Peza	
23.	Eldo	Rr Brrikadave Nr 150	236077
24.	Ilen		371074
25.	Glaxowelcome		258621
26.	Eurest		0692091320
27.	Besa		0692092279
28.	Degina Shpk	Rr M.Shyri	267733
29.	Mobileri Sato	Rr M.Grameno	
30.	Infosoft Systems	Gjergji Center	247214
31.	Electronics	RrM.Shyri P54	0682129111
32.	Anjeza	Rr B.Curri P.Agimi	233403
33.	Euroalbania	Rr M.Peza Nr 98	259353
34.	Dita Group	Bul Gj. fishta	233411
35.	Atlantik	Doro Center	253586
36.	Alba Ford		
37.	Elfiore		
38.	Classic	Rr Kavajes Nr 116	233650
39.	Albklima	Rr H.Tahsim	235986
40.	Natyre lule	Rr Kavajes	233135
41.	Hotline Group	Rr Kavajes	
42.	Prizma	Shqiperia sot	
43.	Pica Agolli	Shqiperia sot	
44.	Ottica Centrale	Rr Kavajes	
45.	Blue Fox	Rr Kavajes	
46.	Videoteka Sky	Rr Kavajes	
47.	Tecom Stores	Rr Kavajes	

48.	Clinians	Rr Durresit	
49.	Futbollisti	Rr Durresit	
50.	Movie star	Rr Durresit	
51.	Shering shpk	Rr Him Kolli	
52.	Euromobil	Tek frigoriferi	0692026273
53.	Tirana Farm	Rruga "Mine Peza", Nr 4	
54.	Kaktus	Tek drejtoria e Policise	
55.	Alba elektrika		232721
56.	AlbaFord		233135
57.	Natyra Lule	Rruga e Kavajes	230616
58.	Hotline Group	Rruga e Kavajes	
59.	Mobileri 'Prizma'	Ekspozita "Shqiperia Sot"	
60.	Pica Agolli	Ekspozita "Shqiperia Sot"	
61.	Ottica Centrale	Rruga e Kavajes	
62.	Libraria Nderkombetare Adrian		235 242
63.	Movie Star	Rruga E Durresit	

3. Media

No	Institution	Nr Journalists	Nr Interviews	Address	Tel.
1.	Zeri i Popullit	20	3	Bul "Zog I"	22 92 20/22 90 77/22 45 89/ 22 70 31/22 75 32
2.	Korrieri	15	2		
3.	Gazeta Shqiptare	16	2	RR Kavajes, 17	25 79 33/34/69
4.	Shekulli	30	3	Rr. "Don Bosko"	23 35 72
5.	Ballkan	12	1		
6.	Dita	11	1		
7.	Koha Jone	40	2	Rr "Sami Frasheri" Pallatet e Aviacionit, nr 4	24 70 04
8.	Rilindja Demokratike	15	1	Prane selise se PD-se	23 23 55/57
9.	Gazeta 55	9	1	Rr "Dibres" nr. 213	23 0035
10.	Tema	9	1	Rr "Xhorxhi Martini" Nr 10	25 10 69

11.	Albania	15	2	Rr "Sami Frasheri" Nr 8	22 92 43
12.	Republika			Rr "Sami Frasheri	22 30 90 22 83 61
13.	Albanian Daily News	6	1		37 61 32
14.	Ekonomia	7	1	Rr "Luigj Gurakuqi" Pll 15/1 Shk 3 Ap 15	0682022297
15.	TVSH	130	17		
16.	TV Klan	35	3		25 19 23/24/25/26/27
17.	TV Arberia	25	3	Prapa pallatit te kultures	24 39 32 23 47 00
18.	TV Koha	15	2	Pallatet e Aviacionit	23 55 91 24 70 03
19.	Top Channel	20	3		
20.	TV 2000	8	1	Rruga Punetoret e Rilindjes	25 69 21 25 69 22
21.	Telenorba	15	1		25 76 53 25 76 54
22.	TV Teuta	13	1		
23.	TV BBF		1	Rruga Elbasanit	068 42 495
24.	Vizion TV		1	Rruga Don Bosko, Nr 5	25 84 88
25.	TV Shijak		1		
26.	Top Albania Radio		1		24 74 92/99 24 86 01/02
27.	Total	443	60		

4. Local NGOs

N0	INSTITUTION	ADDRESS	TEL
1.	Qendra Shqiptare per Kerkime Ekonomike	Rr I.Qemali 34/1 kat 5	229069
2.	Instituti I Studimeve Bashkekohore	Rr Vaso Pasha Nr 7	234868
3.	Instituti I Gjuhes dhe Letersise		235134 240461
4.	Fondacioni Zgjidhja Konflikteve dhe Mosmarveshjeve	Rr Him Kolli 23/1	232739
5.	Shoqata Tirana	Tirana Business Center	224367
6.	Qendra shqiptare per Te Drejtat e Njeriut	Rr Kont Uran Nr 17	230630

7.	Komiteti Shqiptar I Helsinkit	Rr S.Fraseri P20/1 Shk B Ap 21	240891
8.	Grupi Shqiptar per te Drejtat E Njeriut	Rr Deshmoret e 4Shkurtit P7/2	239114
9.	Shoqata Shqiptare e Atlantikut	Pallati Kongreseve K 2	364659
10.	Shoqata e Jetimeve Shqiptare	Bul D Kombit Nr 55	229184
11.	Qendra Rajonale e Mjedisit per Europen Qendrore dhe Lindore	Rr Durresit P11 Shk2 Ap12	239444
12.	Fondacioni per Zhvillim Rural		251910
13.	Conficom		
14.	Qendra Avokatore e Grave		0682031447
15.	Instituti I Edukimit Fiskal	Tirana Business Center	258171
16.	A.ZH.B.		254603
17.	Organizata "Miqte e Femijeve"	Rr Mihal Grameno Nt78	
18.	Instituti I Medias	Rr Him Kolli Nr 45	229800
19.	Human Development Promotin Center	Rr P.Bogdani Nr 5	230818
20.	ASMA	Rr D 4Shkurtit p7/1 5A	257116
21.	Shtepia e Librit Dhe Komunikimit	Piramida Kat 7	
22.	Shoqata me Aftesi te Kufizuar		
23.	Shoqata e te Persekutuarve Politike	Perballe Kuvendit Popullor	
24.	Instituti per Demokraci dhe Ndermjetesim	RR Elbasanit P2 Shk8	
25.	Qendra e Gruas	prane ish ambasades kroate	255515
26.	Qendra e Studimeve Ekonomike dhe Shoqerore	Rr M.Duri P 60 Shk 1 Ap 1	225316
27.	Fondacioni Shqiptar I Shoqerise Civile	Rr Asim Vokshi Nr 137	238056

ANNEX III.

EUROPEAN UNION AND ALBANIA

Milestones in the relations between the EU & Albania

- 1992: Trade and Co-operation Agreement between the EU and Albania. Albania becomes eligible for funding under the EU Phare programme.
- 1997: Regional Approach. The EU Council of Ministers establishes political and economic conditionality for the development of bilateral relations.
- 1999: The EU proposes a new Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) for five Countries of South-Eastern Europe, including Albania. Feasibility study on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement completed.
- 1999. Albania benefits from Autonomous Trade Preferences with the EU.
- 2000: Extension of duty-free access to EU market for products from Albania.
- 2000: Feira European Council (June 2000) states that all the SAP countries are “potential candidates” For EU membership.
- 2001: First year of the new CARDS programme specifically designed for the SAP countries.
- 2001: The Commission concludes that it is now appropriate to proceed with an Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Albania.
- 2001: The Göteborg European Council (June 2001) invites the Commission to present draft negotiating directives for the negotiation of a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Albania.
- 2002 EU Commission opens green light to starting negotiation for the signature of SAA
- 2003: EU Commission officially opens negotiations for the Stabilization and Association Agreement.

1. Main objectives of European Union assistance

The overall objective of the assistance is to support the participation of Albania in the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP), notably:

- To bring Albania closer to EU standards and principles, and to prepare the country for gradual integration into EU structures in the framework of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
- To help the Albania authorities in consolidating democracy and implementing the rule of law.
- To assist the government of Albania in its efforts to achieve a comprehensive administrative and institutional reform.
- To facilitate the process of economic and social transformation towards an efficient market economy.