

The Great Game in a Small Space

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South Caucasus and its challenges for regional security

- Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, South Caucasus – focus of the considerable international attention.
- Center of the post Cold War geopolitical rivalries.

The South Caucasus

- All three are small,
- located in the same geopolitical space
- in all three countries are unresolved regional conflicts,
- All were part of the Soviet Union during the same period,
- are currently countries in transformation.
- -significant differences in the development of these countries' attitudes towards the transatlantic alliance.

Russia

- From a weak and nearly “failed state” after the demise of Soviet Union, Russia has emerged and recovered its power which can defend its international prestige using different tools.
- Those tools include energy policy, military power, historical and cultural capital, diplomatic and economic means are used to carry out Russia’s offensive and defensive strategies.

Russia's main strategic international objectives

- First, re-gaining and preservation *of great power status* and global influence by building flexible coalitions and persuading “balanced multi-vector approach”.
- Second, defending its national interest in its “sphere of influence” in post-Soviet regions.
- *Russia seeks to re-gain and maintain its status as a great power and to have a decisive role in structuring security architecture in these regions.*

- At the Munich Conference in Security Policy, Putin demonstrated his aggressiveness towards United States and its presence in Soviet region.
- Putin stated his skepticism about the actions of U.S. administration, as “re-arming” of Georgia and its unchanged intent to deploy Missile Defence System in Europe.

Russian interests

- *The Foreign Policy Concept* underlined the threat of “a unipolar structure of the world under the economic and military domination of the United States”.
- *The Foreign Ministry report* calls for multipolarity and “a more equitable distribution of resources for influence and economic growth”.
- *The National Security Strategy in 2008* aspires “to defend national interests as a subject of a multipolar international relations”.
- In the same spirit, the *Military Doctrine* perceives NATO enlargement as an external danger. Russia is afraid to be isolated from participation and having influence in NATO-centric system of European security.

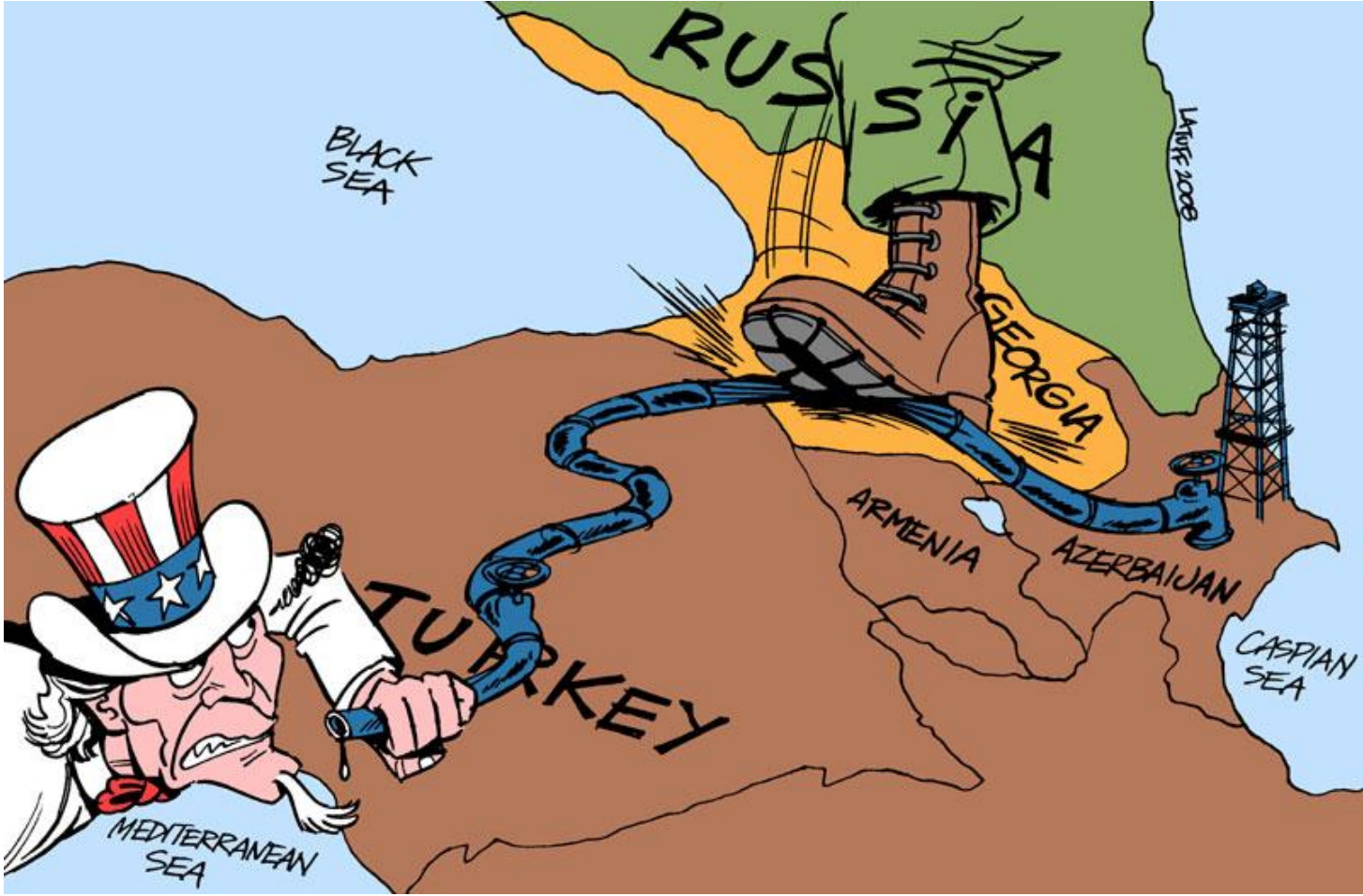
- Key official documents of Russian federation emphasize the need to preserve global influence and support a “balanced multi-vector approach” and strengthening Russia’s economic position.

US interests in the South Caucasus

- 1. perceived role of energy production in strengthening the sovereignty of the regional states;
- 2. support for US corporate interests;
- 3. the role of Caspian resources as an important source of non-Middle Eastern energy, and therefore in global energy security.

US interests in the South Caucasus

- After September 2011, the South Caucasus and Central Asia appeared indispensable for the successful prosecution of war in the heart of Asia.
- US landing rights, refueling facilities, or over-flight rights.
- The South Caucasus states, chiefly Georgia and Azerbaijan, were equally vital for logistical reasons. Transporting troops and heavy materiel from NATO territory or the mainland United States to Central Asia posed additional political challenges.
- Their airspace was the only realistic route through which military aircraft could be deployed from NATO territory to Afghanistan.



- Soaring oil prices, decreasing stockpiles, the strengthening of hardliner power in Iran, unrest in Iraq and instability in Saudi Arabia have all contributed to making the Caspian region seem increasingly attractive as an oil supplier.

US strategic interests

- Proximity to Russia, Iran and the Middle East is the primary facet
- Energy security
- Symbolic (Islam)

NATO and the South Caucasus

History of Mutual relations

- North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC).
- Partnership for Peace
- first dividing line in the region:
- Tashkent agreement
- Organization of the Collective Security Treaty 2002.

Armenia

- 1994 - PfP
- 2002 - PARP
- In 2003 - the military exercise "Cooperative Best Effort".
- 2008 on the territory of Armenia was held exercises "Cooperative Longbow" and the command staff exercises "Cooperative Lancer.
- Individual Partnership Plan (IPP) - exercises, peacekeeping missions, various educational programs, logistical support, budget planning, operational capabilities and increase public awareness.
- Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) was between NATO and Armenia signed on 16 December 2005.

Azerbaijan

- Azerbaijan acceded to the Individual Partnership Action Plan in May 2004.
- IPAP become a major tool for strengthening political dialogue with NATO and implementing reforms throughout the defense and security sector of Azerbaijan.
- Since 2010 Third IPAP.

Georgia

- Between 1999-2003 the Georgian territory held various educational programs, including Medceur-00, Coop, Partner-01, Best Effort-02-02 Eternity, Medceur/Rescuer-03, Medceur/Recuer-05 and Eternity-05 .
- Involved in the fight against terrorism by the Partnership Action Plan on Combating Terrorism (PAP-T) and the Partnership Action Plan for Defence Institution Building (PAP-DIP).

Georgia

- Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) for Georgia was adopted at the NATO summit in Prague on the 21st November 2002.
- New York - 21st September 2006 - ID
- Summit in Bucharest - 2008.

NATO-Georgia Commission (NGC)

- First deepen political dialogue and cooperation between NATO and Georgia,
- Second control the process, which was initiated at the Summit in Bucharest
- 3rd coordinate assistance for the rehabilitation of the Alliance of Georgia after the August events and
- 4th strengthen political and economic reforms in the aspect of Euro-Atlantic integration

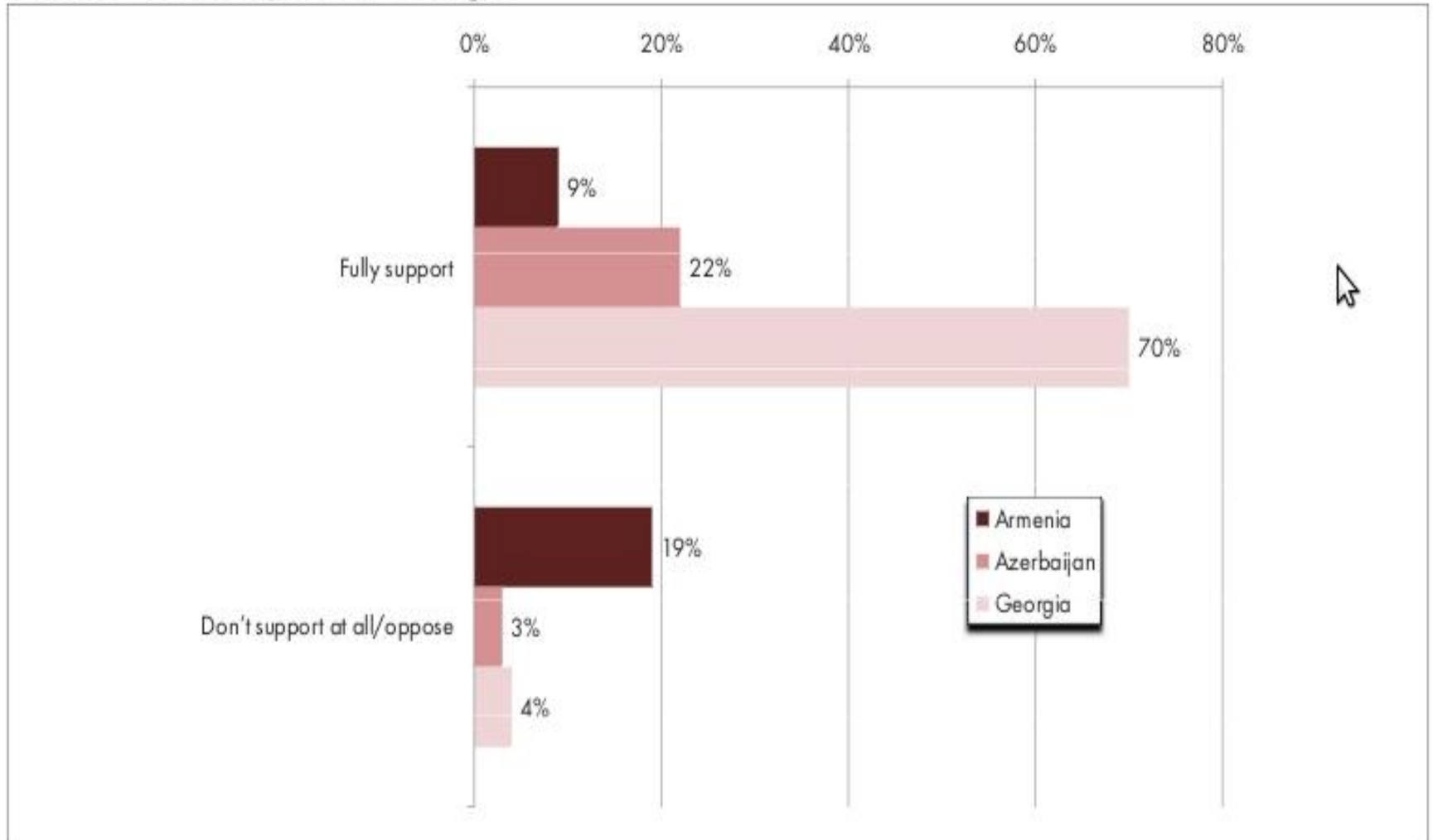
NATO's Secretary General visited the South Caucasus 2012



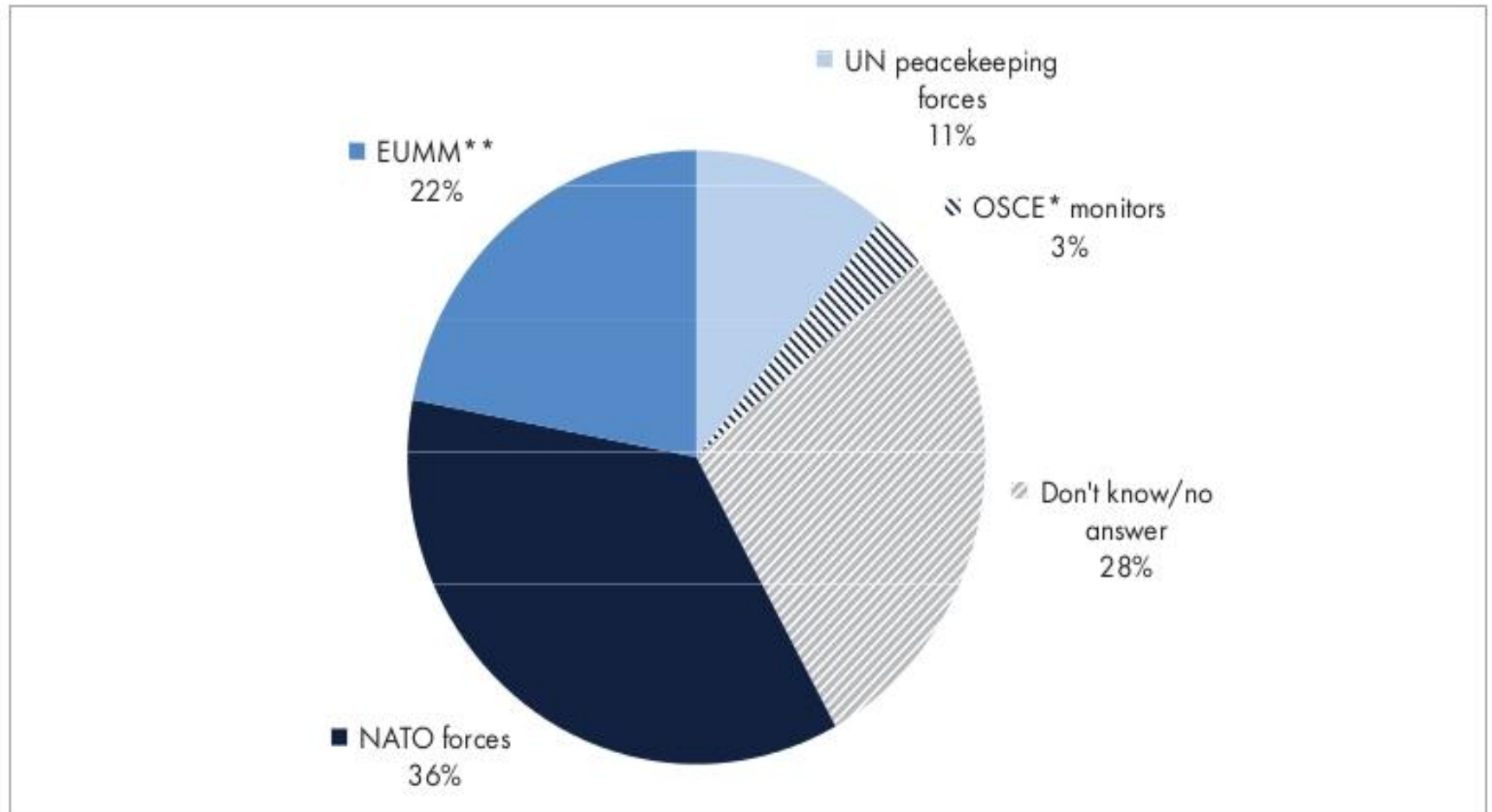
MAP in 2014?



Percentage of Respondents Who Fully Support And Who Fully Oppose NATO Membership in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia

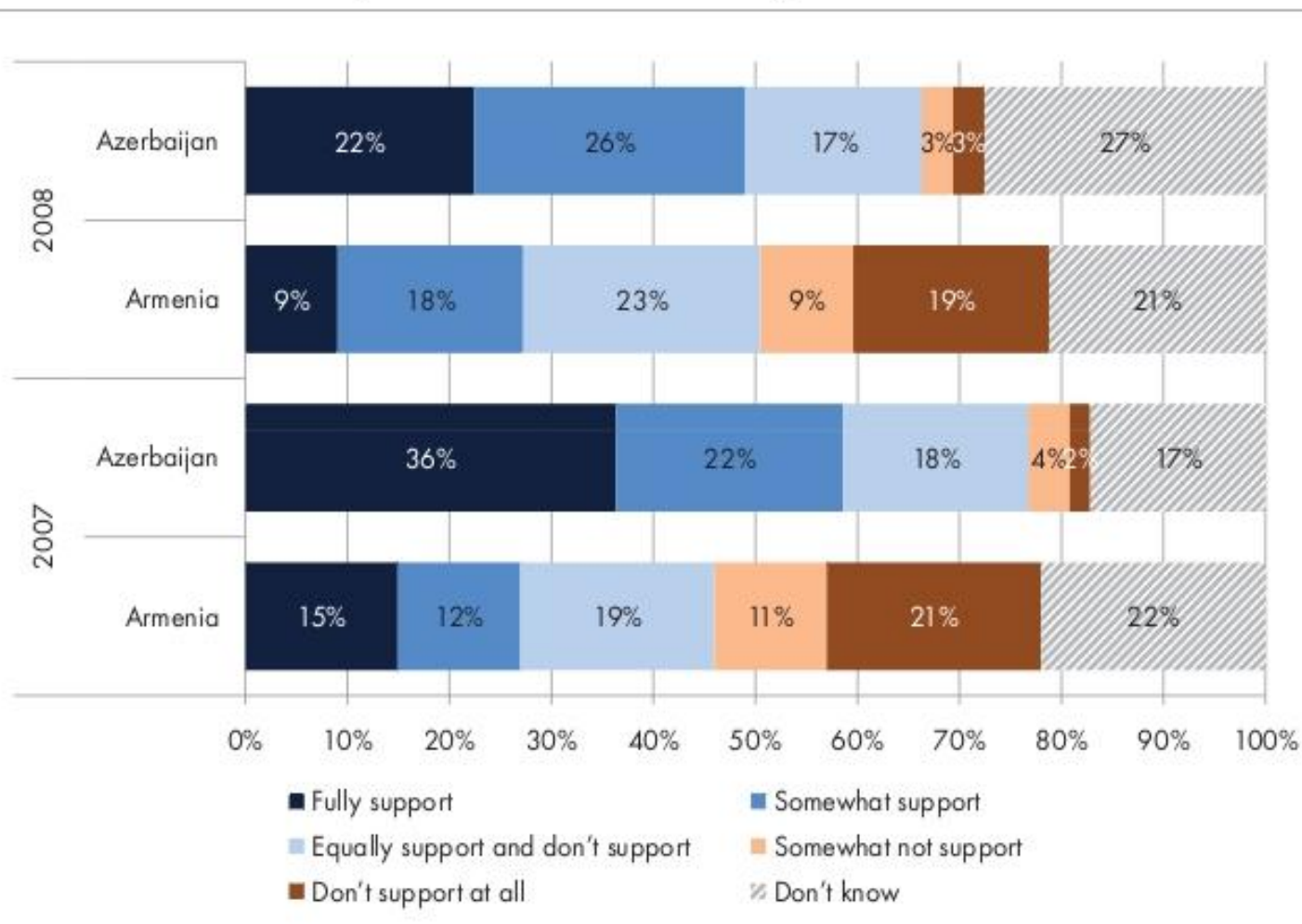


Who Can Best Provide Security for Georgia in Conflict Areas?

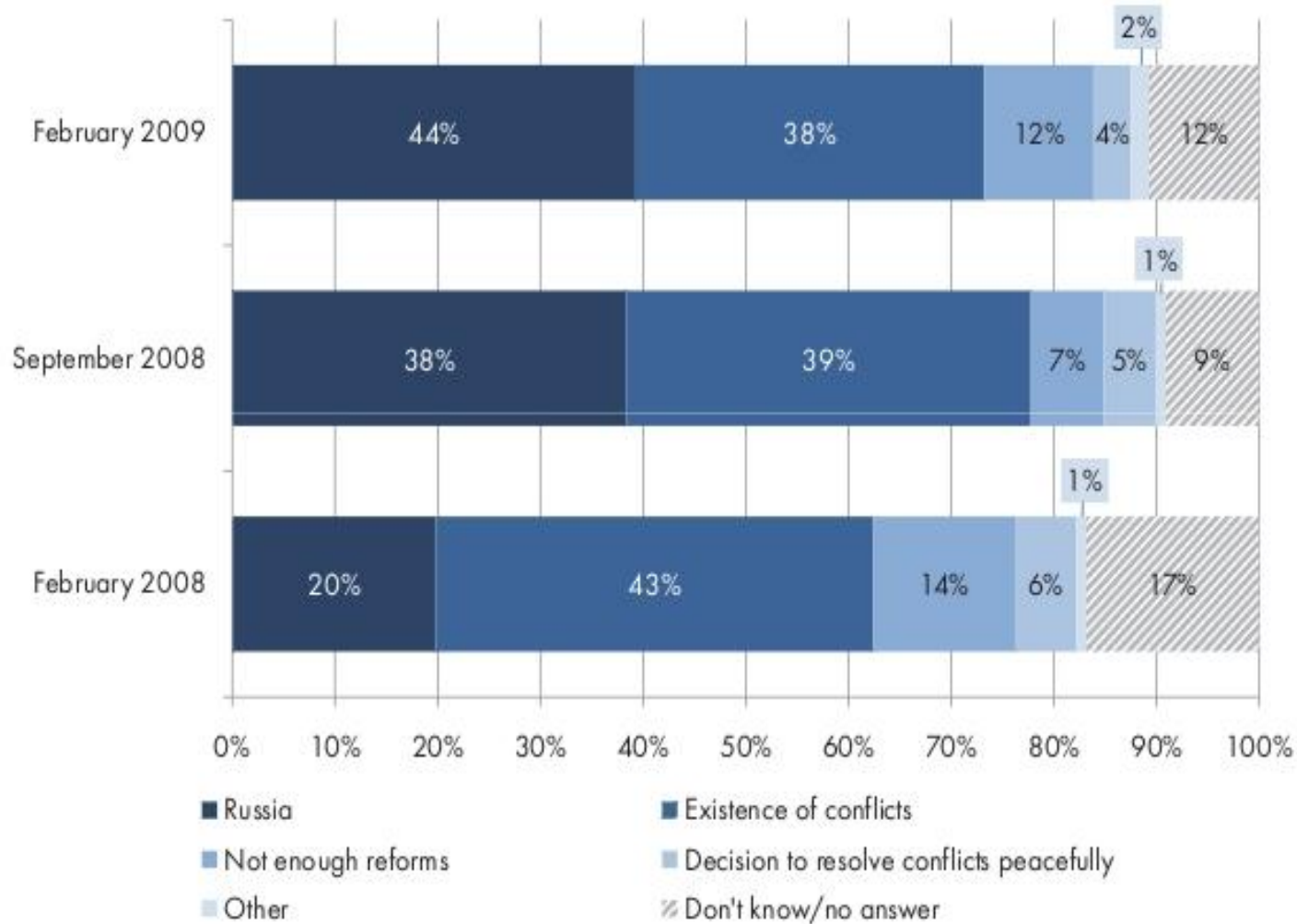


Extent of Popular Support for NATO Membership in the South Caucasus

Support for NATO Membership in Armenia and Azerbaijan 2007–2008

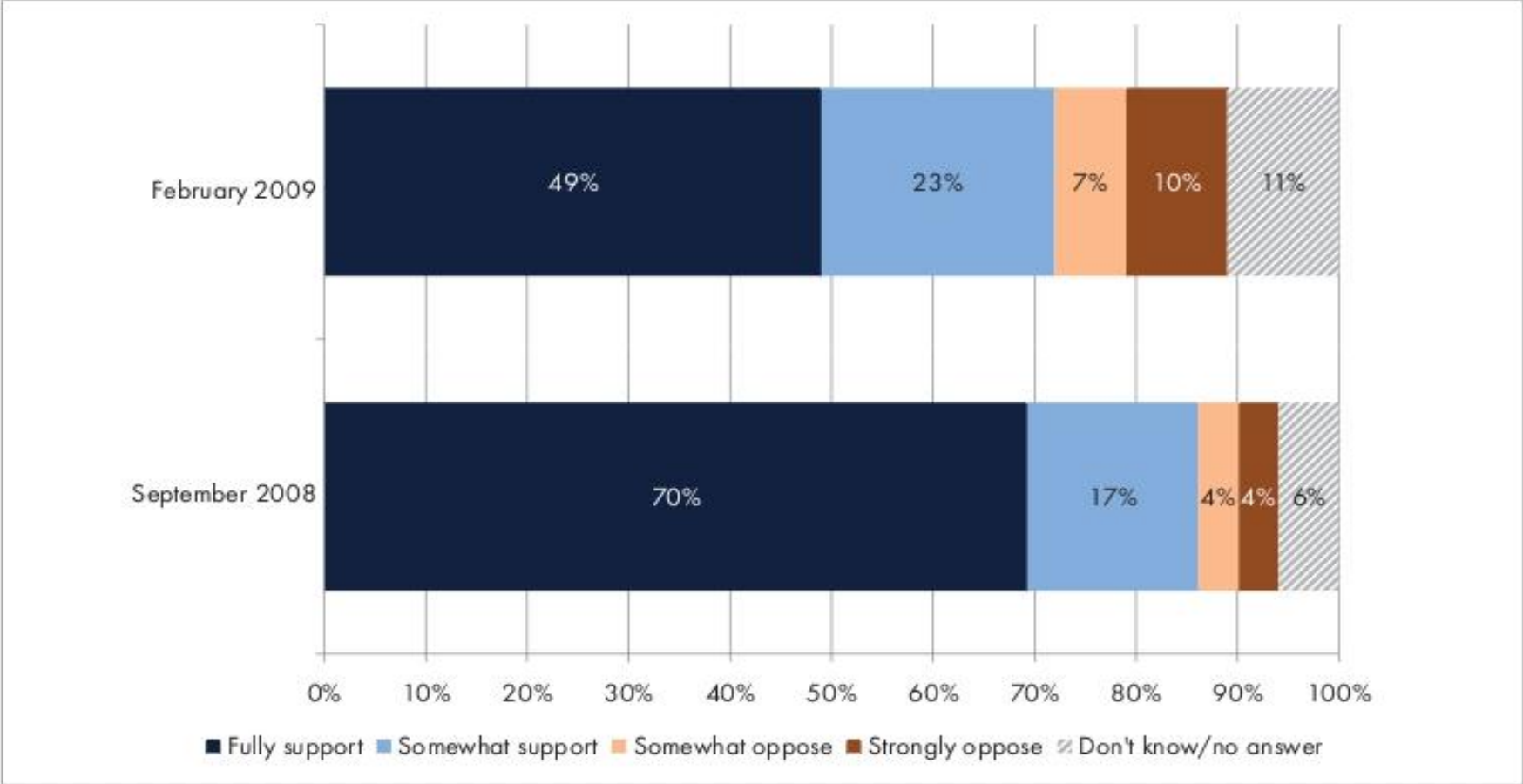


What Hinders Georgia's Membership in NATO?



Georgian Popular Opinion on NATO Membership and the Relationship with the West

Support for NATO Membership in Georgia 2008–2009



EU's role in the South Caucasus

- In 90, the South Caucasus was a “distant neighbour for the EU.
- 2003 – year when EU thinking towards the region began to change:
 - appointment of Special Representative to the region
 - inception of the Wider Europe Initiative
 - prospect and process of EU enlargement towards the Central and Eastern Europe.

EU – more powerful security actor – direct role in the regional conflict.

EU' s role in the South Caucasus

- EU – “silent disciplining” power
- To provide security – employing the “stabilization/cooperation/partnership” formula.
- EU-as-a-framework – export models of governance, law and policies to its periphery
or
EU-as-an-actor – exert its influence through negotiation and creating incentives for the peaceful resolutions of conflict.

EU' s role in the South Caucasus

- 1989 Trade and Cooperation Agreement with the former Soviet Union.
- EU's policy – aid and assistance for post-war reconstruction (aid for physical survival of the population, humanitarian and food aid – 84% of total grants in 1996).
- 1999 Partnership and Cooperation Agreement – technical areas of cooperation, funded through TACIS national projects and TRACECA and INOGATE.
- TACIS – transition towards a market economy and the building of democratic institutions.

EU' s role in the South Caucasus

2004/2007 enlargements – domino-effect on EU policies towards the South Caucasus.

By 2003 – civilian and military crisis management operations – Rapid Reaction Force, Civilian and Military Headline Goals 2008 and 2010.

South Caucasus – test-case where the EU could prove its credentials in civilian and military crisis management.

EU' s role in the South Caucasus

- Long-term stability projection through intensified financial assistance and the *European Neighbourhood Policy (Action Plan), the Black Sea Synergy and Eastern Partnership* (March 2009).
- The ENP, BSS and EaP:
 1. More enhanced relationship and contribute to the transformation to EU models of governance.
 2. Platforms of bilateral dialogue between the conflict parties and the south region.

EU's role in the South Caucasus

After 2008: EU established a monitoring mission to Georgia and launched an international fact-finding mission to investigate the origins and the course of the conflict.

Together with UN and OSCE, the EU is also hosting the peace talks between Russia and Georgia in Geneva.

Vilnius summit 28-29 November 2013

- A signed Association Agreement offers Georgia the possibility of closer economic integration provided Tbilisi adjusts its legal, judicial, and economic systems to fit certain EU norms.



Vilnius summit 28-29 November 2013

- Azerbaijan continues to negotiate for its own Association Agreement with the bloc.
- The European Union and Azerbaijan signed an agreement to facilitate the procedures for issuing short-stay visas.
- “This will allow citizens from Azerbaijan to travel more easily to the Schengen area, as well as for EU citizens to travel to Azerbaijan,” said Cecilia Malmström, the European commissioner for Home Affairs.
- “This is a very tangible result of the Eastern Partnership and will further promote interaction between citizens of the EU and Azerbaijan.”



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- What will happen to South Ossetia and Abkhazia, since they are totally dependent on Russia for their political, military, and economic survival?
- How can Tbilisi overcome the disadvantage of being a small country with a small military with 20 percent of its de jure territory garrisoned by its giant neighbor to the north, Russia?

- South Caucasus – “broken region”

The contradictions between Turkey and Armenia, between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and between Georgia and Russia – entail differing foreign-policy orientation and different systems of security.