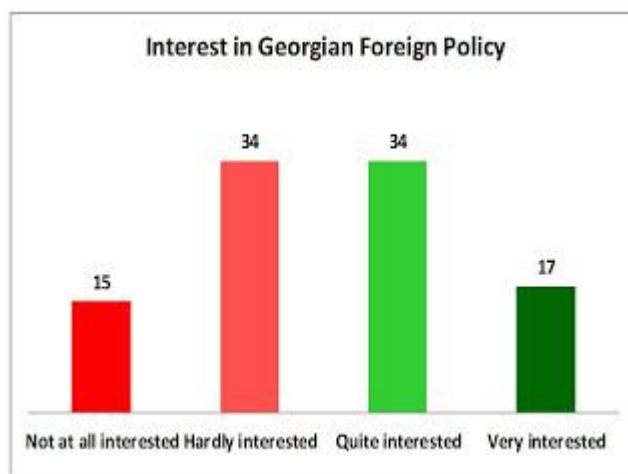


Tuesday, October 09, 2012

[Georgian Foreign Policy: Continuity or Change?](#)

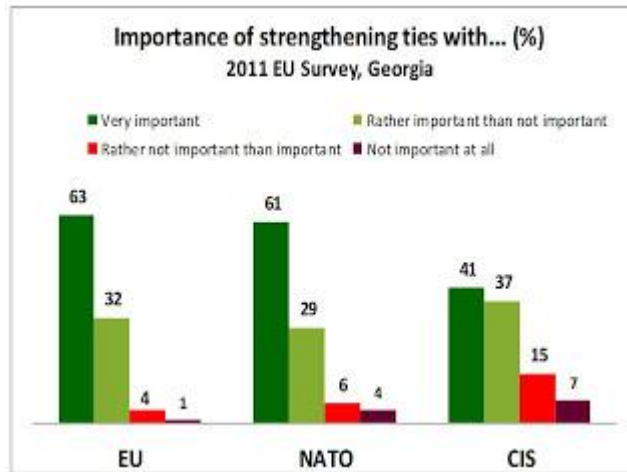
The results of the October parliamentary elections in Georgia have raised questions regarding the future trajectory of Georgian foreign policy. One of the priorities of Georgian foreign policy has been European and Euro-Atlantic integration. Will the new Georgian government initiate major changes and redirect Georgia's foreign policy that has been supported by the National United Movement? Will Georgia promote closer cooperation with Russia? What do Georgians think about the direction of the country's foreign relations in general? This blog specifically explores Georgians' attitudes toward the importance of strengthening ties with the EU, NATO, Russia, and the US using data from [CRRC's 2011 survey on Attitudes towards the European Union in Georgia](#). As the CRRC data show, half of Georgia's population is interested in the country's foreign policy. Moreover, Georgians support closer cooperation with the EU, NATO, CIS, the US, and Russia.

The EU survey reveals that 51% of Georgians show an interest in the country's foreign policy. Similarly, half of the Georgian population is interested in Georgian domestic policy.

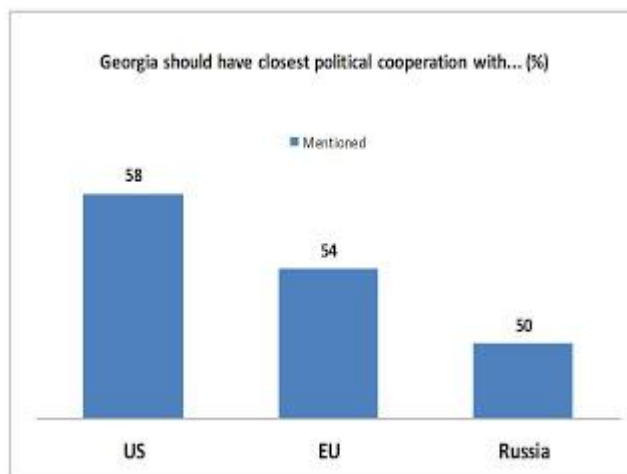


When split by age groups, about 31% of Georgians aged 18 to 35 show interest in Georgian foreign affairs. Up to 54% of the Georgian population between 36 and 55 years old tend to be interested in these matters. Finally, Georgians aged 56 or more seem to be most interested (56%) in Georgian foreign policy.

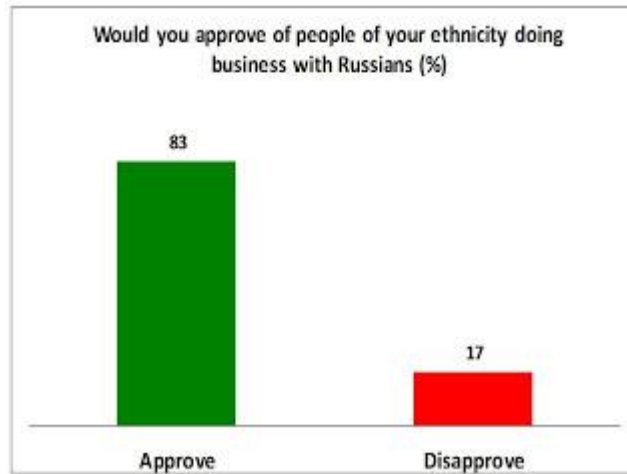
When asked about the importance of strengthening ties between Georgia and a number of political, economic, and intergovernmental organizations, 95% of Georgians believe that it is important to promote closer cooperation with the EU. The majority of Georgians (90%) also think that Georgia should strengthen ties with NATO, and although Georgia withdrew from the CIS in 2008, over half of the population (78%) thinks that Georgia should strengthen ties with the CIS.



Georgian attitudes about political and economic cooperation between Georgia, the EU, the US, and Russia is also noteworthy. Over half of the adult population thinks Georgia should have closest political cooperation with the US (58%) and the EU (54%). In addition, 50% believe Georgia should have closest political cooperation with Russia.



With respect to economic relations, a high percentage of the population thinks that the country should establish closest economic cooperation with the US (71%), the EU (66%), and Russia (47%). Many Georgians are also open to the prospect of having business relations with Russians. In this regard, 81% of the Georgians note that they would approve of people of their ethnicity doing business with Russians.



In sum, data from the 2011 EU survey reveals that many Georgians show an interest in the country's foreign policy, and consider the US, Russia, EU, NATO, and the CIS to be important to Georgia's political and economic development.