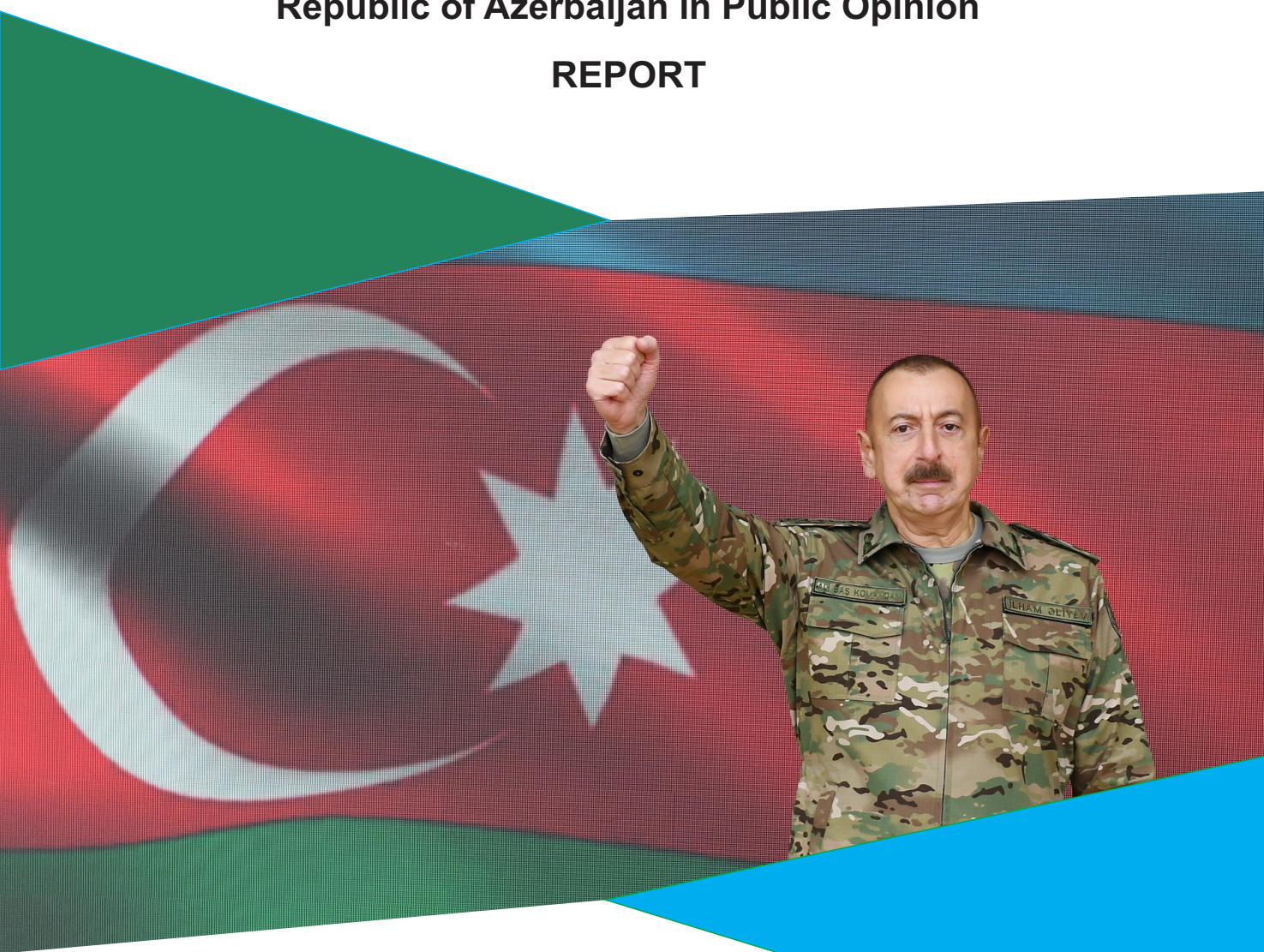




**Attitude to the National Flag of the  
Republic of Azerbaijan in Public Opinion**

**REPORT**



**SOCIAL  
RESEARCH  
CENTER**



## About the Social Research Center

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



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CENTER**

November 2020

**Attitude to the National Flag  
of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
in Public Opinion**

**REPORT**

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## REVIEW

- 81.3% of respondents feel proud when they see the national flag. About one in ten people (10.7%) experience a feeling of victory, and 14.8% feel joy.

- For the vast majority of respondents (86%), the national flag is a symbol of victory in Karabakh, for one in three (35.7%), it is a symbol of independence, and for another third of the sample (31.5%) - a symbol of statehood. Only 25.5% of respondents see the flag as a symbol of national unity.

- It's an undeniable fact that the overwhelming majority (90.1%) of respondents take pride in the National Flag for two main reasons - seeing it proudly flying in the recently liberated lands and seeing it in the background as the Supreme Commander declares a resounding victory (90%).

- Half of the sample (56.3%) feels proud when our flag flies alongside the flags of other countries. One in three people (35.7%) feel proud when they see our flag at international sports events and in different places in the city/region (32.3%).

- The absolute majority of respondents (98.2%) fully agree with the structure of the current national flag of the independent Republic of Azerbaijan and this form fully satisfies them.

- 79.2% of respondents were able to list the colours of the national flag in sequence. Thus, compared to the elderly, those who know the colours of the national flag in the correct sequence prevail among young people.

- 55.2% of respondents correctly know the date of the State Flag Day. 44.8% of respondents do not know that the State Flag Day is held on November 9th. As for the age factor, with increasing age, the number of people who correctly know the date when the State Flag Day is celebrated decreases.

- The absolute majority of respondents (97.7%) think that our citizens respect our national flag.

- Attitude to the usage of the national flag on household items and clothing is ambiguous. So, the attitude of two-thirds of the sample (66.6%) was good to varying degrees (38.5% "very good", 28.1% "mostly good").

- One in five respondents (20.1%) has a very bad attitude to the usage of the national flag on household items and clothing.

- However, the public attitude to the usage

of the national flag on various buildings is significantly better (97.9%).

- The vast majority of respondents (77.6%) believe that as a result of the Second Karabakh War, citizens began to perceive the National Flag as a symbol of victory.

- The survey found that more than half of the sample (53.1%) bought flags after the start of the Karabakh War.

- And one in three (35.2%) has already owned the flag, so they did not need to buy it.

- It is alarming to a certain extent that about 6.8% of respondents could not buy a flag because of its high price or because they could not find it on sale.

- Thus, a substantial part of 41.9% of respondents who observed the change in the price of flags (96.3%) said that there was an increase.

- Most of the respondents (95.1%) sympathize with the flag of Turkey, and half (47.9%) with the flag of Pakistan.

## INTRODUCTION

**A**mong the political power, territorial, economic potential, armed forces, religious-philosophical, as well as ideological elements characterizing the state, the symbols of statehood are also of exceptional importance. One of the presentation cards of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the number one document confirming the existence of the nation and state is the symbol of its sovereignty - the National Flag.

The flag is an embodiment of our political, ideological, and spiritual existence. It represents our commitment to national and spiritual values, modern cultural development, and independence. Most importantly, it is a symbol of our national self-esteem and our aspirations towards holiness, independence, the beginning of the land, and the Holy oath of martyrs.

The author of the ideological basis of the flag of Azerbaijan, the ideologist of the three main factors meaning it, is an outstanding personality, the great thinker Ali Bey Huseynzade. The three colours of the national flag of Azerbaijan are the epitome of "Turkification, Islamization and Europeanization", which constitutes the fundamental principles of our ideology of national independence.

The national flag of the Republic of Azerbaijan was adopted in 1918, November 9, at a meeting of the Government of Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (ADR) and had "national" status until April 1920.

On November 17, 1990, at the session of the Supreme Assembly of the Nakhchivan ASSR, chaired by the great leader Heydar Aliyev as an experienced statesman, as a result of his determination, the words "Soviet Socialist" were removed from the name of the Autonomous Republic. An important decision was made to restore the flag, coat of arms and national anthem adopted by the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (ADR). In this sense, the independence of Azerbaijan, the integrity of our statehood history and the national state succession were ensured by our flag, which with its blue colour expresses its loyalty to the idea of Turkification, with its red colour - its desire to build a modern society, develop democracy, and with its green colour - its belonging to the Islamic civilization.

President Ilham Aliyev has successfully carried forward the vision of national leader Heydar Aliyev regarding our flag, which symbolizes our

identity and is deeply rooted in our national interests. By emphasizing the importance of our National Flag, President Aliyev fosters a sense of allegiance to our statehood tradition and the continuity of our national values. He recognizes the National Flag as a crucial element in fostering unity among Azerbaijani citizens, promoting solidarity, and rallying around a shared ideology.

The approval of amendments and additions to the "Regulation on the State Flag of the Republic of Azerbaijan" and the "Law on Regulations governing the use of the national flag of the Azerbaijan Republic" on June 8, 2004, indicate the country's loyalty and high respect towards its statehood.

Order dated November 17, 2007, on the establishment of the National Flag Square in Baku and Order dated November 17, 2009, on the annual celebration of November 9 as the National Flag Day of the Republic of Azerbaijan signed by President Ilham Aliyev is the manifestation of the important place and role of the national flag among the state symbols, the successful policy pursued by the President for the protection and promotion of our people's ancient history, culture, national and spiritual values and hopes for future.

**Purpose of the study.** The purpose of the survey conducted by the Social Research Center is to study the attitude of citizens toward the national flag, their level of awareness of the national flag, as well as the impact of the Second Karabakh War on the people's attitude to the flag.

## I. METHODOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES OF THE RESEARCH

**Scope of the survey.** Within the survey, the opinion of 384 respondents covering Baku, Absheron, Shaki-Zagatala, Daghigh Shirvan, Lankaran, Guba-Khachmaz, Upper Karabakh, Aran, and Ganja-Gazakh economic regions was studied. 384 respondents ensure the representativeness of the sample. Based on the number of respondents covered in the survey, the error rate of the results is 5% in the 95% confidence interval.

**Sample selection.** As part of the study, a random sampling method was employed for sample selection. Initially, the number of respondents to be surveyed in each economic region was determined proportionally. Subsequently, several landline telephone numbers were randomly chosen from each settlement, with the quantity being ten times greater than the number of respondents required for the survey. Calls were made to every third number listed in the General Register containing phone numbers for the selected clusters. In instances of refusal, attempts were made to contact the next third number on the list.

**Research method and survey methodology.** A questionnaire survey was used as part of the quantitative methodology in conducting the study. Taking into account the restrictions of the quarantine regime and the health of the surveyed parties, the Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) method was used in conducting the survey. Modern technologies have been applied in conducting surveys. So, the modern survey software SurveyToGo was used.

**Field work.** The study was conducted on 5-6 November 2020. Phone calls were made between 10:00 and 21:00. The average survey time is 5 minutes 35 seconds, and the standard deviation is 2 minutes 15 seconds.

**Ethical principles.** The survey strictly adhered to ethical guidelines throughout its execution. Each respondent was provided with comprehensive information about the conducting organization, the survey's purpose, and its regulations. They were informed about the voluntary nature of their participation and had the right to withdraw at any point or decline to answer any questions they were uncomfortable with. Additionally, respondents were assured of the option to schedule interviews at a more convenient time if needed.

Confidentiality was rigorously maintained throughout the interview process, with anonymity guaranteed for all participants. Respondents were assured that their responses would be used only in aggregate form, ensuring the integrity and reliability of the data collected during the survey.

**Guidelines.** Before the start of the survey, interviewees participated in the training conducted by the staff of the Social Research Center.

The training provided a detailed explanation of the survey objectives and questions. The interviewees conducted a pilot survey during the training.

During the training, the interviewers were informed about the rules of calling the numbers provided to them, as well as the sampling method. During the training, the interviewers got acquainted with the questionnaires and instructions and were fully prepared for conducting the survey.

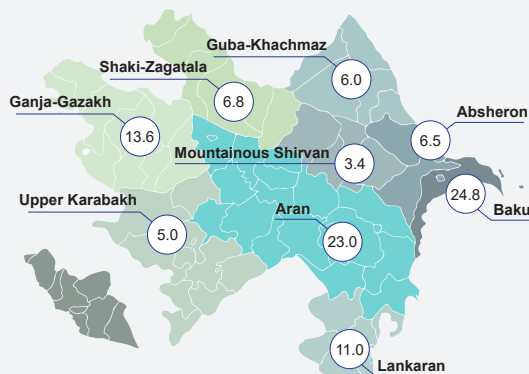
**Data processing and analysis.** After the survey was completed, the data collected in the database for each survey was analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences.

**Note:** Due to rounding, the sum of the percentages on the charts may differ from 100%.

**Process control.** To control the quality of the surveys conducted, five respondents who participated in the surveys conducted by each interviewer during the day were randomly selected and contacted back to check whether the survey was conducted. In addition, the respondent was contacted back if the duration of the time spent on each survey and all questions in the survey separately was doubtful.



**Economic regions where the survey was conducted (in %)**







### Demographic variables (in %)

#### Gender structure



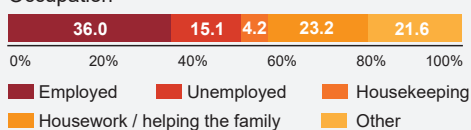
#### Age



#### Education level



#### Occupation



## II. STATISTICAL AND ANALYTICAL STUDY OF SURVEY FINDINGS

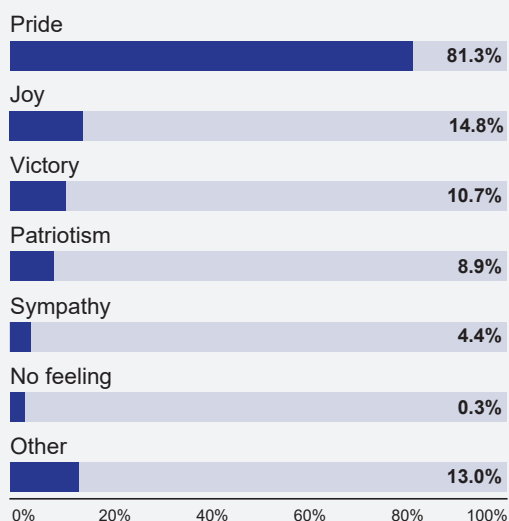
### Attitude to the National Flag

If 81.3% of respondents in the sample feel pride at the sight of the national flag, then about one in ten people (10.7%) experience a feeling of victory, and 14.8% feel joy.

Chart 1.



#### What do you feel when you see the flag of Azerbaijan?



Respondents who are proud of our flag dominate on all socio-demographic indicators.

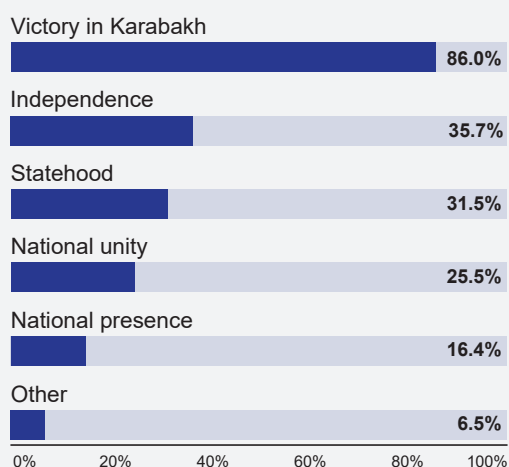
There were different findings for the question "What does the national flag symbolize for you now?". Thus, for the vast majority of the sample (86%), the national flag is a symbol of victory in Karabakh, for one in three people (35.7%) - independence, and for another third (31.5%) - statehood. Only 25.5% of respondents see the flag as a symbol of national unity. Certain differences were observed in the responses on socio-demographic indicators. Thus, when considered by age, the national unity option was selected mainly in the age groups of 18-25 and 46-55 years.

The percentage indicators of those who see the The National Flag as a symbol of victory in Karabakh are similar for all age groups. There is no significant difference in terms of gender. Thus, the vast majority of male and female respondents see the National Flag as a symbol of victory in Karabakh. A gender gap was observed on another item. Thus, 25% of women and 38% of men perceive the National Flag as a symbol of statehood.

Chart 2.



#### What does the National Flag symbolize for you now?



**Note:** Since respondents were allowed to choose several answer options, the total percentage of answers received is different from 100%.

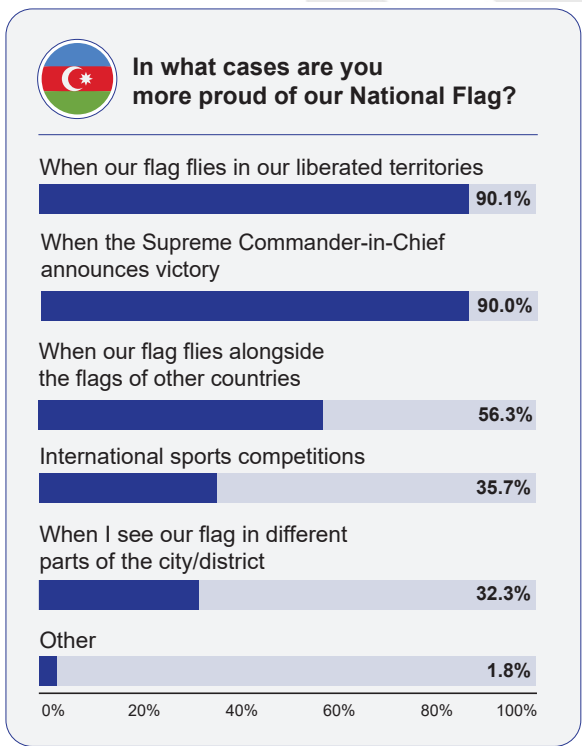
Notable differences were observed between people with secondary education and higher education on all answer items. For example, 32% and 46.6% of people with higher education

perceive the National Flag as a symbol of national unity and statehood.

Those who see the National Flag as a symbol of victory in Karabakh are about 2 times more likely among those with secondary education than among those with higher education.

The main reasons cited by the absolute majority of respondents for feeling proud of the National Flag include seeing it flying in the lands liberated from occupation (90.1%) and witnessing it against the backdrop of the Supreme Commander announcing the victory (90%). Additionally, half of the sample (56.3%) expressed pride when our flag is displayed alongside the flags of other countries. Furthermore, one in three people (35.7%) reported feeling proud when they see our flag at international sports events, and a similar proportion (32.3%) experience pride when encountering it in various locations throughout the city or region.

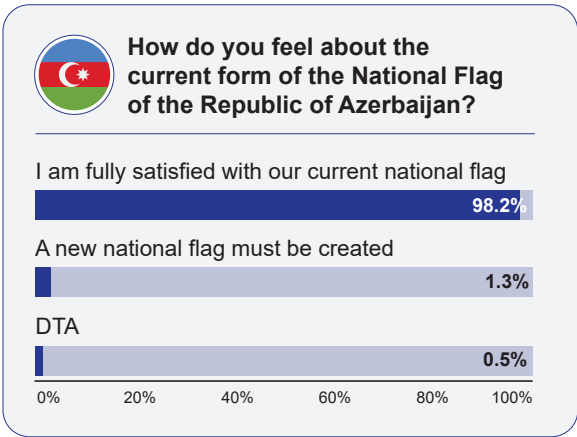
Chart 3.



**Note:** “Since the respondents were allowed to choose several options, the total percentage of responses received is different from 100%.”

The absolute majority of the sample (98.2%) fully agree with the structure of the

Chart 4.



The level of awareness of the National Flag

It is notable that 79.2% of respondents were able to correctly list the colours of the National Flag in order. Interestingly, as the age of the respondents increases, the percentage of those correctly identifying the colours of the flag in the right sequence decreases. Specifically, compared to the elderly, a higher proportion of young people demonstrated knowledge of the correct sequence of colours on the national flag.

55.2% of respondents correctly know the date of the State Flag Day. 44.8% of respondents do not know that the State Flag Day is held on November 9th. Differences in socio-demographic indicators were observed. 75% of respondents with higher education and 53.4% of respondents with vocational education correctly know the date of the National Flag Day. Only 32.3% of respondents with secondary education answered this question correctly. The relationship between these variables is of statistical importance ( $X^2(4), 28,051, p<0.01$ ). 67% and 66% of those engaged in individual labor and pensioners, respectively, and exactly half of the unemployed incorrectly knew the date of the National Flag Day. The relationship between these variables is of statistical importance ( $X^2(7), 50,132, p<0.01$ ). As for the age factor, with increasing age, the number of people who correctly know the date when the National Flag Day is celebrated decreases ( $(X^2(5), 15,071, p<0.05)$ ).

Chart 5.

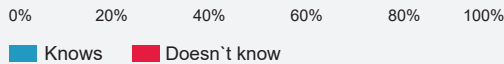


### Awareness of the National Flag

List the colours of the National Flag in order



The celebration of the National Flag Day on November 9



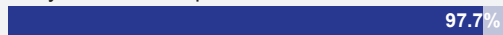
The absolute majority of the sample (97.7%) think that our citizens respect our national flag.

Chart 6.



### Awareness of the National Flag

They treat with respect



They do not respect



They show indifference



DTA



The perception of displaying the national flag on household items and clothing are ambiguous. Thus, while two-thirds of the respondents (66.6%) view it well to varying degrees (38.5% "very good", 28.1% "mostly good"), one in five respondents (20.1%) have a very bad attitude to the usage of the National Flag on household items and clothing. However, the public attitude to the usage of the national flag on various buildings is significantly better (97.9%).

In other words, almost no one treats it badly.

Chart 7.

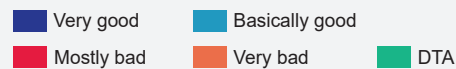
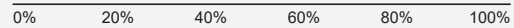
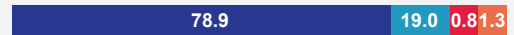


### How do you feel about the following?

The usage of the National Flag on household items and clothing



The hanging of the national flag on various buildings



## The influence of the Karabakh War on the population's attitude to the flag

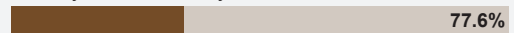
The vast majority of respondents (77.6%) believe that as a result of the Second Karabakh War, citizens began to perceive the National Flag as a symbol of victory.

Chart 8.

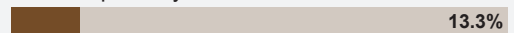


### How did the second Karabakh War affect the attitude of people to the national flag?

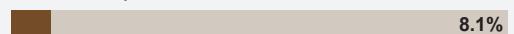
They began to perceive the National Flag as a symbol of victory



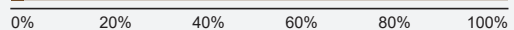
People treated our National Flag more respectfully



People began to hang the National Flag in different places



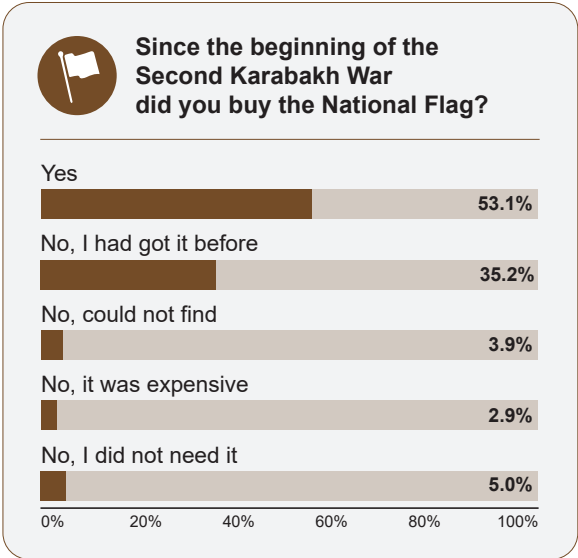
Other



In the period following the onset of the Second Karabakh War, instances of displaying our flag in settlements, apartments, and cars became widespread. The survey unveiled that over half of the respondents (53.1%) purchased the flag after the outbreak of the Second Karabakh War. Additionally, one in three (35.2%)

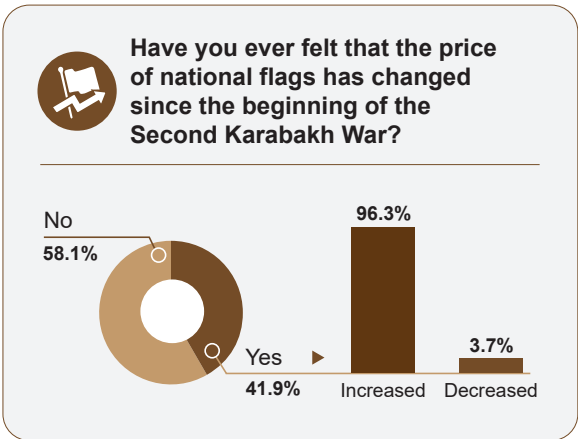
already possessed the flag, rendering the purchase unnecessary. It is concerning to note that approximately 6.8% of respondents were unable to acquire a flag due to its high price or unavailability in stores. Moreover, it is noteworthy that 5% of respondents expressed no need for the National Flag.

Chart 9.



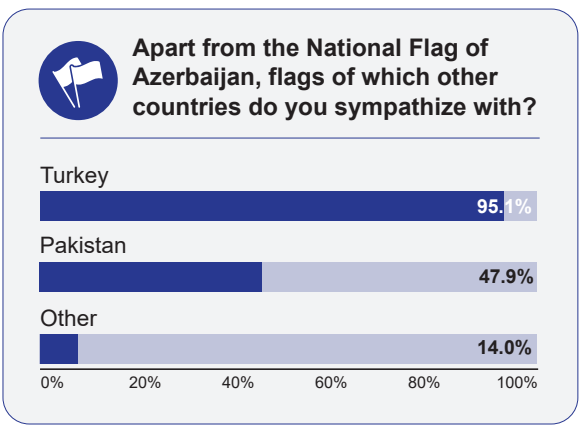
Another question about the purchase of the flag revealed that a significant part of the sample (41.9%) felt that the price of flags had changed since the beginning of the Second Karabakh War. News published on social networks and some media outlets show that there has been an increase in the price of the flag in several places. The current conclusion confirms this observation to some extent. Thus, a substantial part of 41.9% of respondents who observed the change in the price of flags (96.3%) said that there was an increase.

Chart 10.



A substantial part of the sample (95.1%) sympathizes with the Turkish flag, while half (47.9%) sympathizes with the Pakistani flag. We can confirm the visual evidence of this conclusion in reality by direct observation.

Chart 11.



*Note: Since respondents were allowed to choose several answer options, the total percentage of answers received is different from 100%.*

CONCLUSION

The attitude of our citizens towards the National Flag of the Republic of Azerbaijan is overwhelmingly positive. Respondents express clear acceptance of the current structure of our National Flag and advocate for its preservation. However, awareness among citizens regarding the sequence of colors of the National Flag and the significance of National Flag Day is not very high. This highlights the need for more robust awareness campaigns among the population.

The Second Karabakh War had an even greater impact on the positive change in the The presence of our national flag in the liberated territories has intensified the population's pride in it and reinforced its acceptance as a symbol of victory.



NOTES



NOTES

Lined area for notes.





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