

NESA Center Alumni Survey Results
with Regional Perspectives

Russian Invasion of Ukraine Regional Survey Report (April 2022)

NEAR EAST SOUTH ASIA CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

Letter from the Director

Dear Colleagues,

While we continue to grapple with the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has dealt us yet another challenge with global economic and humanitarian repercussions.

At NESAC, our global alumni network of security professionals are at the core of what we do. We are very proud of the relationships with our nearly 12,000 alumni, and the valuable perspectives they offer.



As such, we tapped our alumni network in April 2022, distributing a survey with a set of twenty questions about the Russia-Ukraine War.

We were very impressed by the interest the survey garnered. I am proud to say the survey received nearly 450 responses from more than 50 countries. The vast majority of responses were thoughtful, insightful and have given us many critical data points to consider.

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to all the NESAC Alumni who took time from their busy schedules to complete this survey, as well as previous surveys from the last two years.

The many valuable insights collected from our alumni will be communicated to the leadership of the United States Department of Defense and throughout the United States Government, and will help to shape our program curricula in the years to come.

We invite you to peruse the findings of the survey in the following report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terry A. Wolff". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Terry A. Wolff
LTG, USA (Ret.)
Director, NESAC Center

About the Report

In April 2022, the NESACenter reached out to its global alumni network with a set of twenty questions about the ongoing Russia-Ukraine War. This was the fourth survey sent to NESACenter alumni under the Covid-19 pandemic work environment. The questions were translated into Arabic, Dari, French, and Russian. **Nearly 450 responses were received** from all over NESACenter's Area of Responsibility (AOR), as well as a considerable number from outside the NESACenter region, including Europe, the United States (U.S.), sub-Saharan Africa, and Southeast Asia.

The findings of the survey have been compiled into the following report. The results are accompanied by graphs for visual aid.

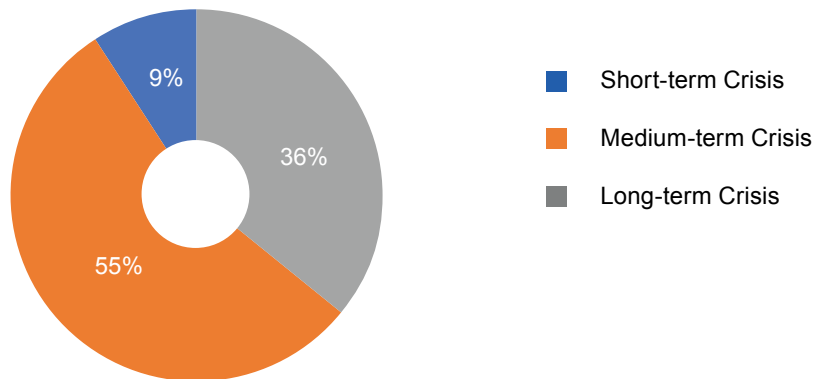
1 What are your thoughts on the longevity of the Russia-Ukraine War?

Response options: Short-term Crisis, Medium-term Crisis, or Long-term Crisis.

OVERALL ANALYSIS:

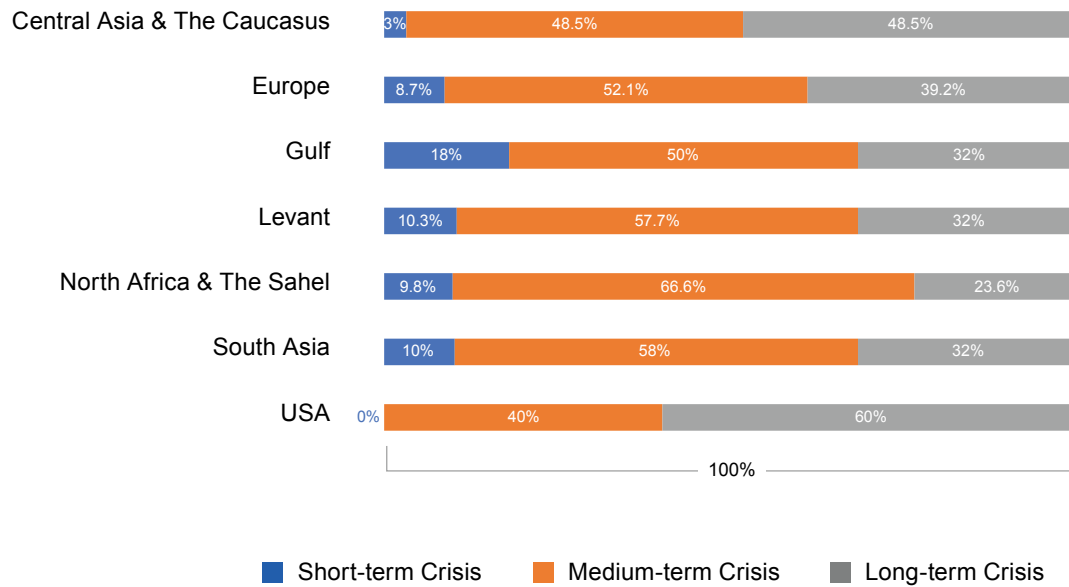
A little over half of overall respondents (55%) answered that the Russia-Ukraine War is a medium-term crisis. 36% answered that it is a long-term crisis, while only 9% answered that it is a short-term crisis. Similar results were reflected among the various NESAs sub-regions, apart from the Central Asia and the Caucasus sub-region, where those who argued that it is a long-term crisis (48.5%) were evenly split with those who argued that it is a medium-term crisis (48.5%). Three-fifths (60%) of U.S. respondents answered that it is a long-term crisis.

OVERALL DATA:



1 What are your thoughts on the longevity of the Russia-Ukraine War?

REGIONAL DATA:



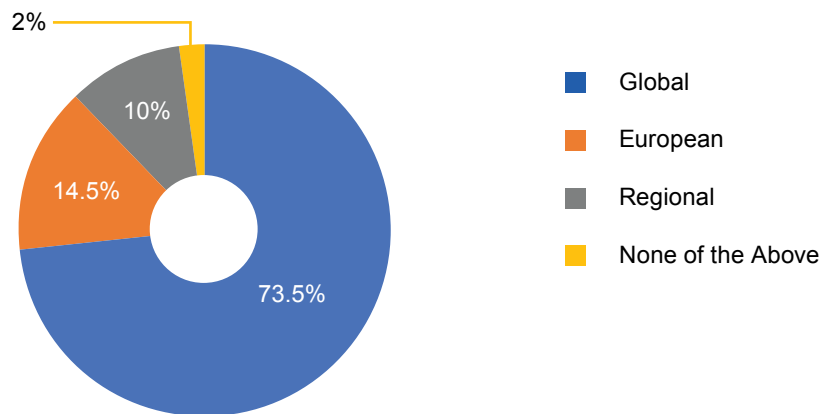
2 What do you think is the best characterization of the Russia-Ukraine War?

Response options: Global, European, Regional, or None of the Above.

OVERALL ANALYSIS:

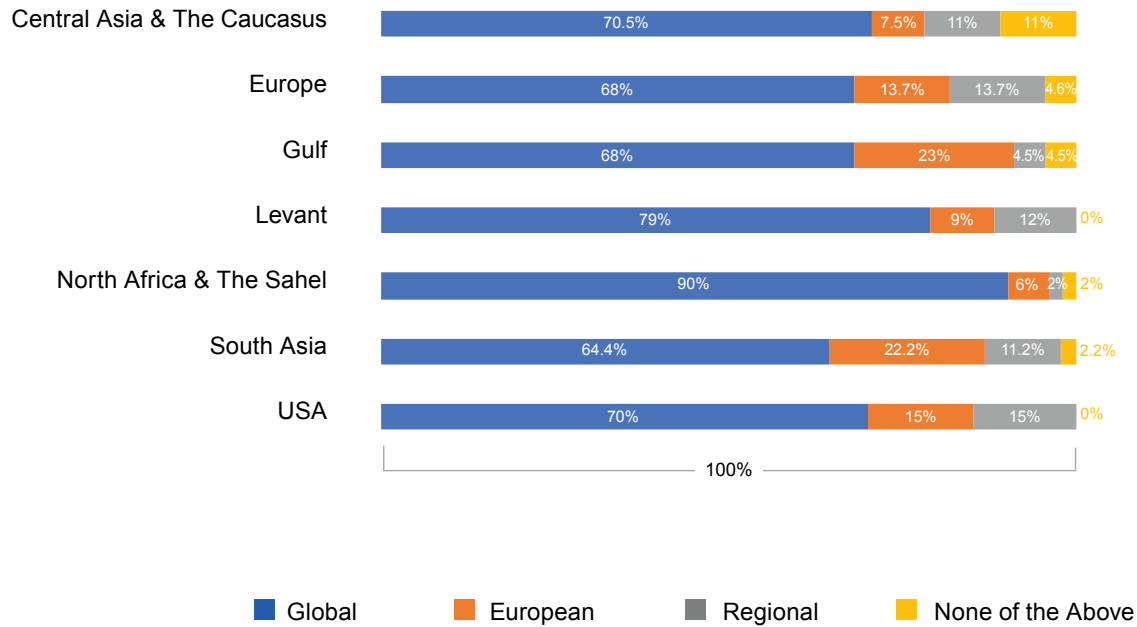
A clear majority (73.5%) of overall respondents argued that the Russia-Ukraine War is a crisis of global proportions. 14.5% answered that it is a European crisis and 10% that it is a regional crisis. The overall results were mostly reflected among the NESAs sub-regions, with the exception of South Asia, where over 22% answered that it is a European-centric crisis. Many respondents answered that the crisis is of global proportions due to its affect on food and energy prices, which some argued may have second-tier reverberations in the form of social unrest in their respective countries and regions.

OVERALL DATA:



2 What do you think is the best characterization of the Russia-Ukraine War?

REGIONAL DATA:



3

How do you view Russia in relation to your country?

Response options: Enemy, Competitor, Partner, or Ally.

OVERALL ANALYSIS:

A plurality of overall respondents answered that they view Russia as a partner (42%), followed by those who answered as an enemy (26%). 20.5% answered that they view Russia as a competitor and 11% answered ally. There were strong variations among and within the various sub-regions. Although unclear why, this question received the fewest responses, with only 354 opting to answer.

There were some nuances within South Asia, where most argued that they see Russia as a partner (43.5%) or an ally (26%). However, not all respondents were comfortable with their governments' positions towards Russia or the invasion. 20.5% answered that they view Russia as an enemy.

Respondents from the Levant tended to answer that Russia was either a partner (43%) or a competitor (35%).

Respondents from Central Asia and the Caucasus tended to answer that Russia was either an enemy (44.5%) or a partner (37%).

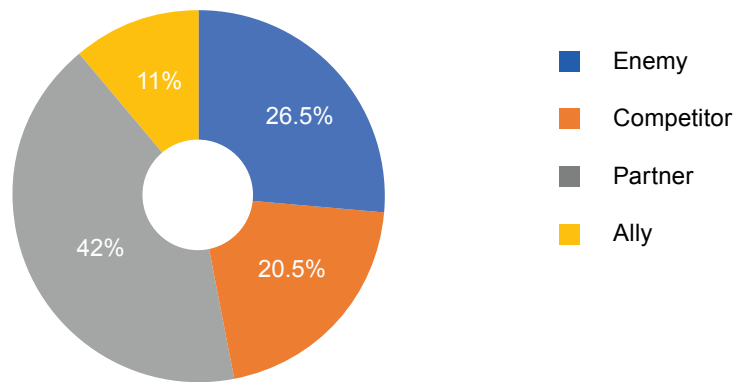
A majority of North African (61%) respondents answered that they view Russia as a partner, whether due to economic reasons (tourism and food imports) or so as not to upset a "major power", particularly in light of what some view as the U.S. withdrawal from the region. A majority (69%) of respondents from the Gulf sub-region answered that they view Russia as a partner.

A majority of Europeans (68.5%) and an overwhelming majority of U.S. respondents (80%) answered that they view Russia as an enemy.

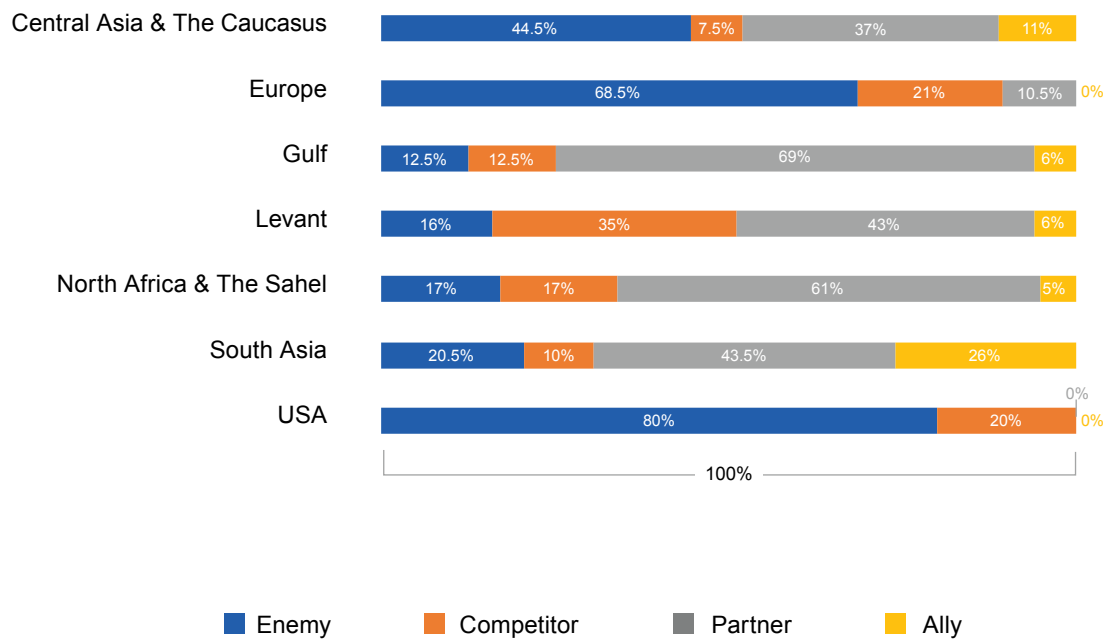
3

How do you view Russia in relation to your country?

OVERALL DATA:



REGIONAL DATA:



4 Was Russia justified in invading Ukraine?

Response options: Yes or No.

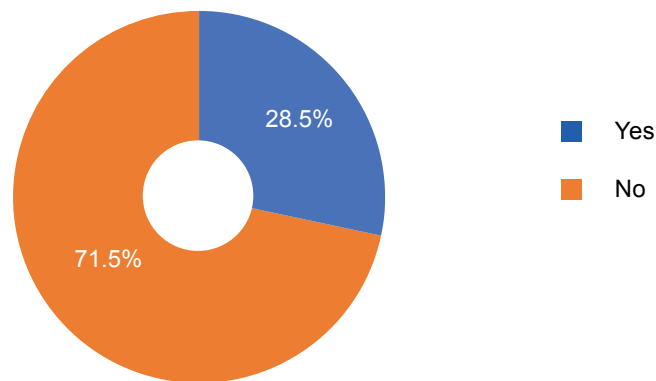
OVERALL ANALYSIS:

A majority (71.5%) of overall respondents answered that Russia was not justified in invading Ukraine, but there were significant differences in responses among the sub-regions.

In general, South Asians answered that Russia was not justified (75.5%), but some answered that Russia was justified in its invasions due to NATO expansion or because it was “rightly” challenging U.S. hegemony.

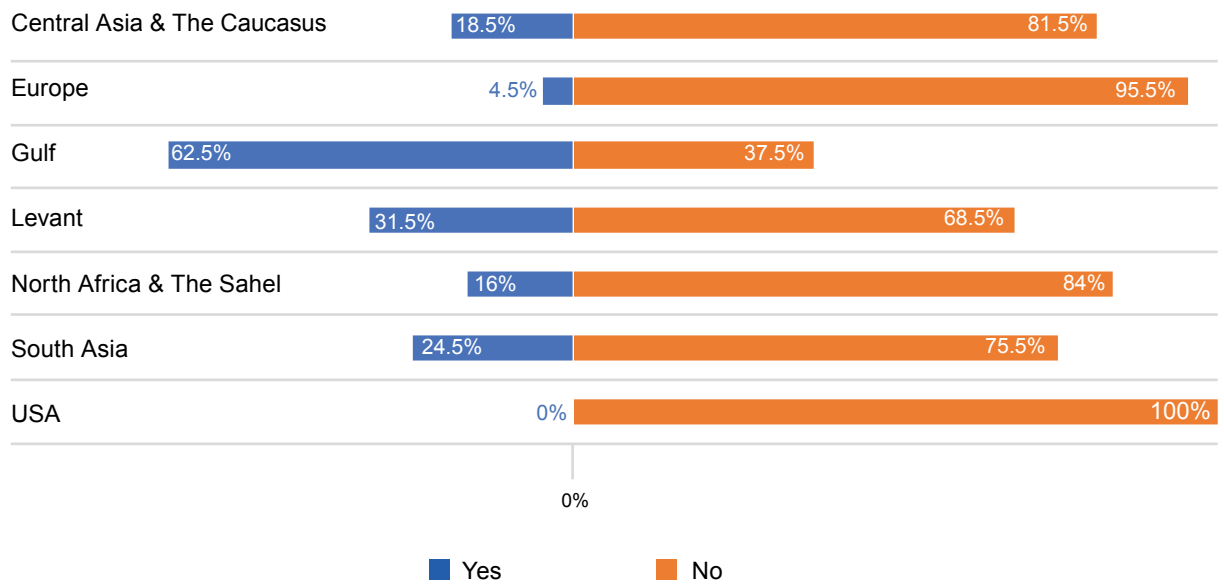
Taking the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region as a whole, a majority of respondents from North Africa (84%) and the Levant (68.5%) answered that Russia was not justified in invading Ukraine, while a majority of respondents from the Gulf (62.5%; Yemen, in particular) answered that Russia was justified in its invasion. Compared to all other survey respondents, a much higher percentage of respondents who answered in the Arabic language and who did not identify their country of origin answered that Russia was justified in invading Ukraine.

OVERALL DATA:



4 Was Russia justified in invading Ukraine?

REGIONAL DATA:



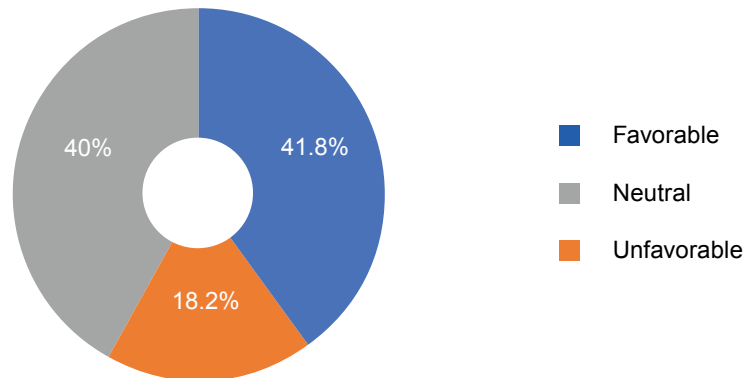
5 What is your view of NATO?

Response options: Favorable, Neutral, or Unfavorable

OVERALL ANALYSIS:

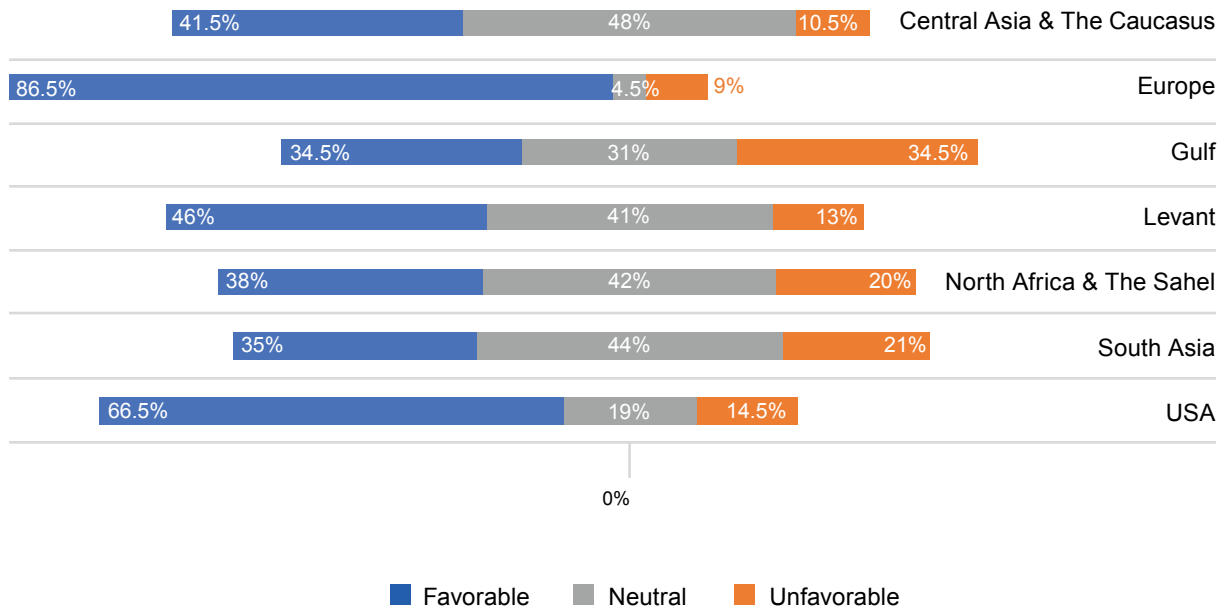
Overall, respondents were almost evenly split in their views of NATO between favorable (41.8%) and neutral (40%). The most favorable attitudes were seen among Europeans (86.5%), Americans (66.5%), and Levantines (46%). Other sub-regions generally had a mostly neutral view. Many respondents were neutral or unfavorable in their attitudes in light of what they viewed as NATO “inaction” or “impotence” towards the conflict.

OVERALL DATA:



5 What is your view of NATO?

REGIONAL DATA:



6

Which of the following actions do you think will most help to end the Russia-Ukraine War?

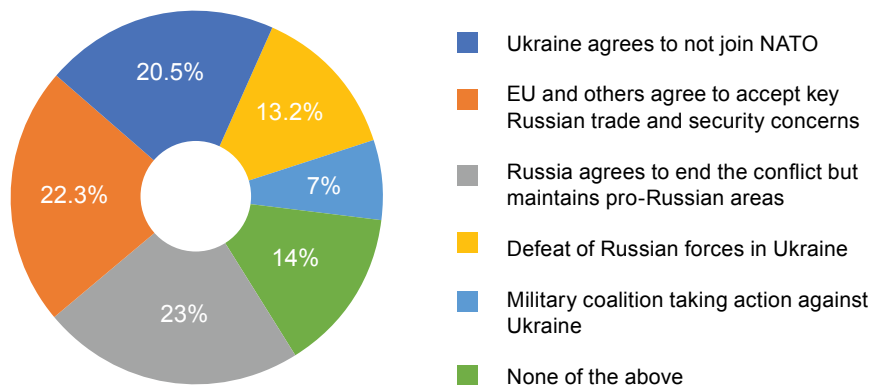
Response options: Ukraine agrees to not join NATO, EU and others agree to accept key Russian trade and security concerns , Russia agrees to end the conflict but maintains pro-Russian areas, Defeat of Russian forces in Ukraine, Military coalition taking action against Ukraine, or None of the above.

OVERALL ANALYSIS:

Overall responses to this question ran the gamut, with a slight plurality (23%) answering that “Russia agrees to end the conflict but maintains pro-Russian areas.” Those who answered “None of the above” tended to explain that the conflict would be ended through a combination of the various actions.

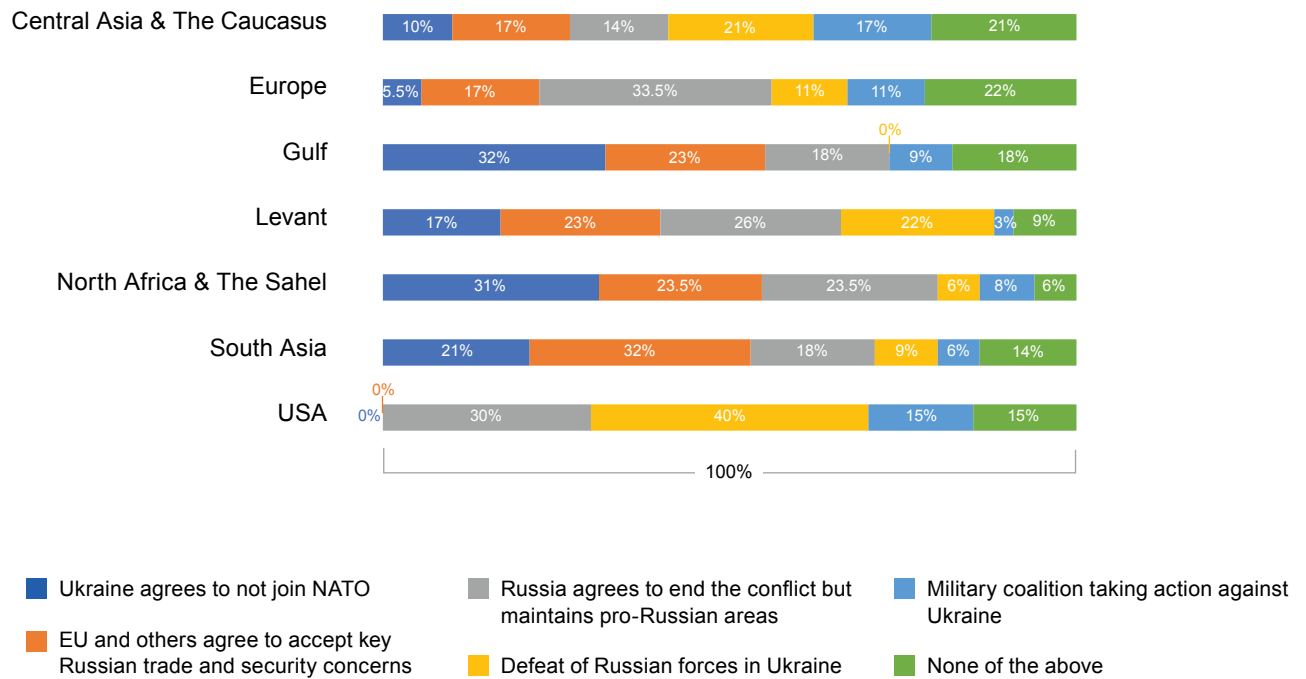
Results were slightly different among two of the NESAs sub-regions. A plurality of South Asians (32%) answered that the most likely action to end the war would be that the “EU and others agree to accept key Russian trade and security concerns,” while a plurality (21%) of those from Central Asia and the Caucasus as well as the U.S. (40%) answered that the “Defeat of Russian forces in Ukraine” would most likely end the conflict.

OVERALL DATA:



6 Which of the following actions do you think will most help to end the Russia-Ukraine War?

REGIONAL DATA:



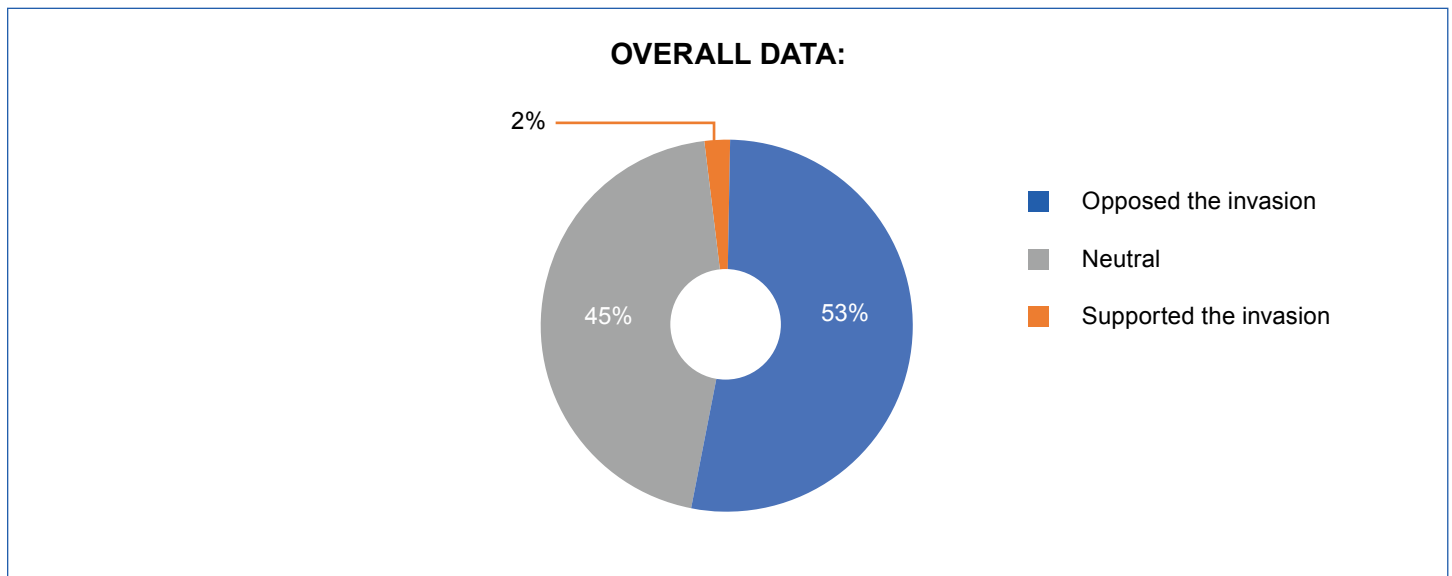
7 What was your country's/government's response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine?

Response options: Opposed the invasion. Neutral, or Supported the invasion.

OVERALL ANALYSIS:

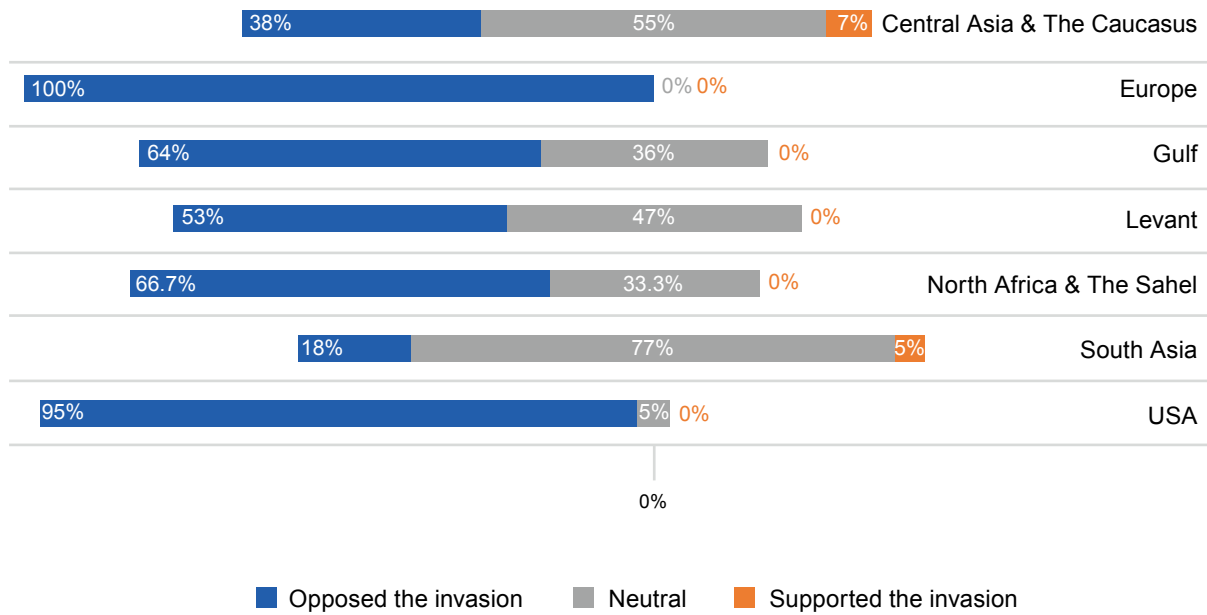
A majority (53%) of overall respondents answered that their governments "Opposed the Invasion" while 45% answered that their governments were "Neutral." Only 2% answered that their governments "Supported the Invasion."

Neutrality was most pronounced in South Asia (77%) and Central Asia and the Caucasus (55%).



7 What was your country's/government's response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine?

REGIONAL DATA:



8

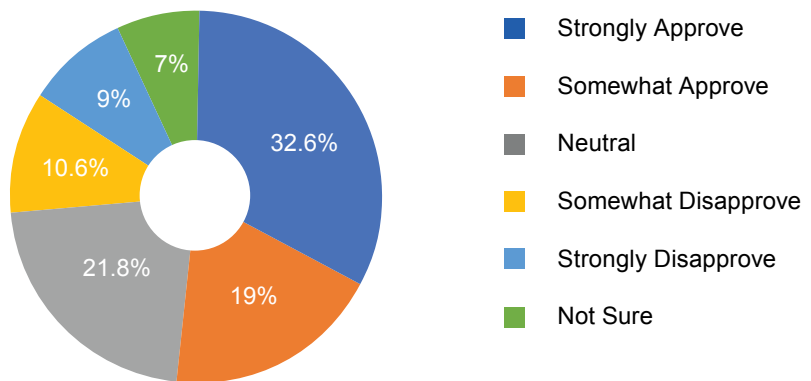
What do you think of your country's/government's response to the Russia-Ukraine War?

Response options: Strongly Approve, Somewhat Approve, Neutral, Somewhat Disapprove, Strongly Disapprove, or Not Sure.

OVERALL ANALYSIS:

A plurality (32.6%) of overall respondents strongly approved of their governments' response, while 21.8% were neutral. A plurality from South Asia and the Levant slightly leaned towards neutral, while those from Central Asia and the Caucasus (41%), North Africa and the Sahel (40%), the Gulf (47.5%), and Europe (55%) leaned towards strongly approve. U.S. respondents were more extremely split in their answers, with zero neutral responses, which may be indicative of partisan lines. Some respondents were surprisingly candid in opposing their governments' stance on the war.

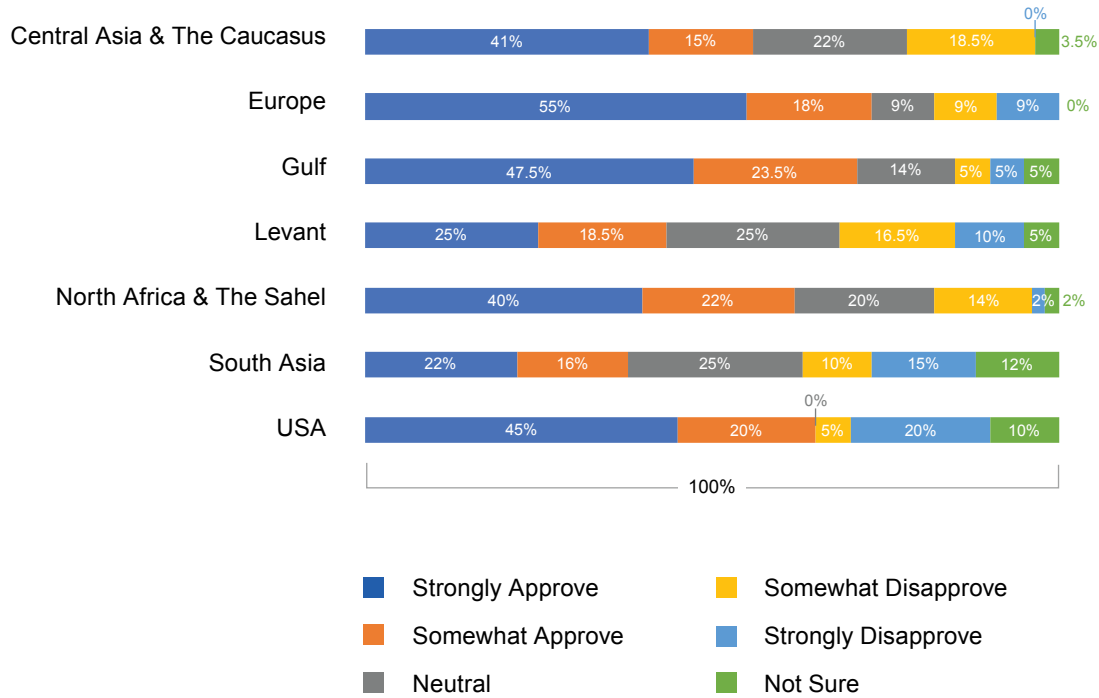
OVERALL DATA:



8

What do you think of your country's/government's response to the Russia-Ukraine War?

REGIONAL DATA:



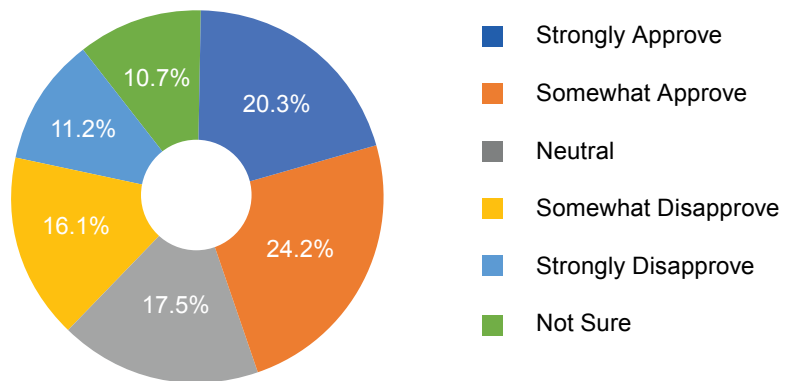
9 What do you think of the Biden Administration’s (U.S.) response to the Russia-Ukraine War?

Response options: Strongly Approve, Somewhat Approve, Neutral, Somewhat Disapprove, Strongly Disapprove, or Not Sure.

OVERALL ANALYSIS:

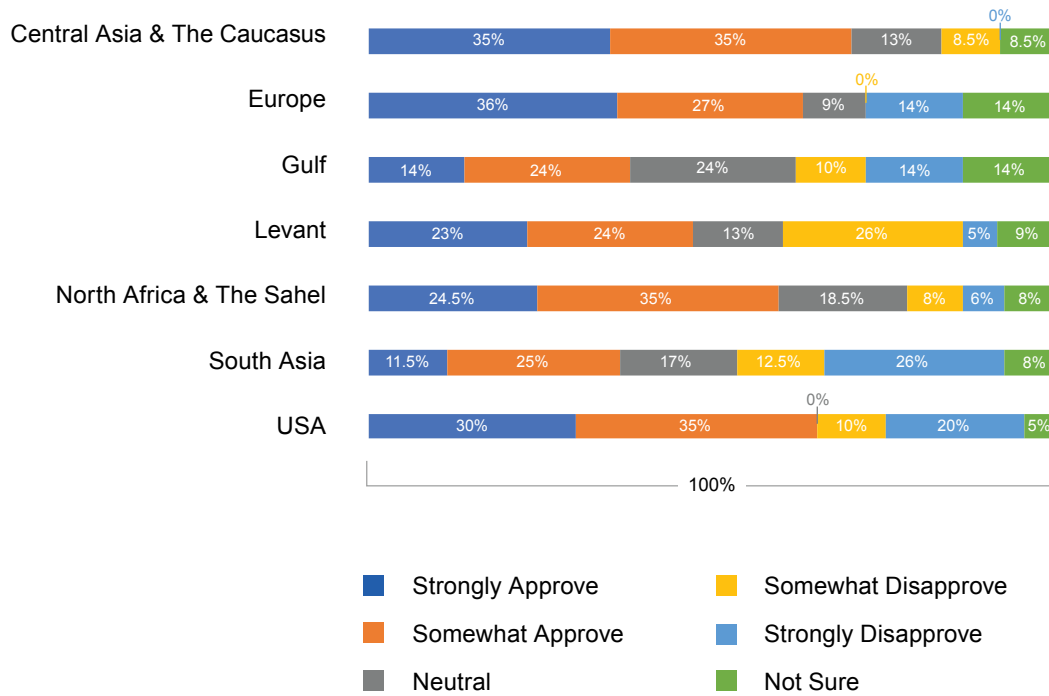
Overall respondents leaned towards Somewhat Approve (24.2%) or Neutral (17.5%). Disapproval was strongest amongst South Asians (26% Strongly Disapprove) and Levantines (26% Somewhat Disapprove). Approval was highest among those from Central Asia and the Caucasus (35% Strongly Approve and 35% Somewhat Approve), North Africa and the Sahel (24.5% Strongly Approve and 35% Somewhat Approve), the Gulf (24% Somewhat Approve), and Europe (26% Strongly Approve and 27% Somewhat Approve). This was a redundant question for American respondents who answered along the same lines as the previous question.

OVERALL DATA:



9 What do you think of the Biden Administration’s (U.S.) response to the Russia-Ukraine War?

REGIONAL DATA:

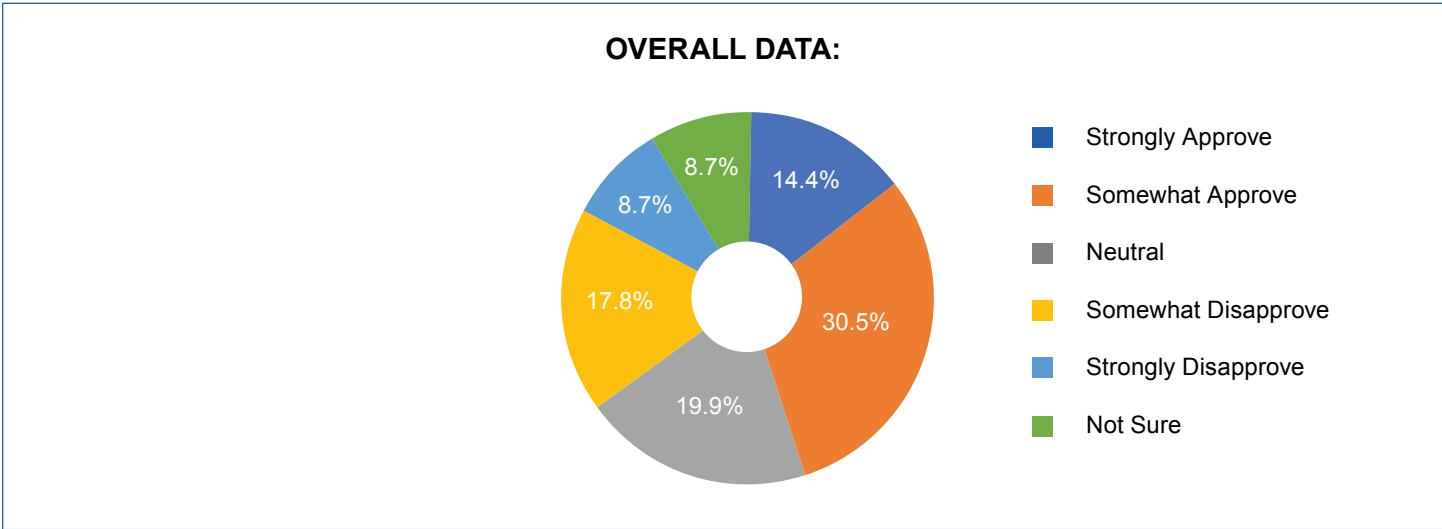


10 What do you think of the EU response to the Russia-Ukraine War?

Response options: Strongly Approve, Somewhat Approve, Neutral, Somewhat Disapprove, Strongly Disapprove, or Not Sure.

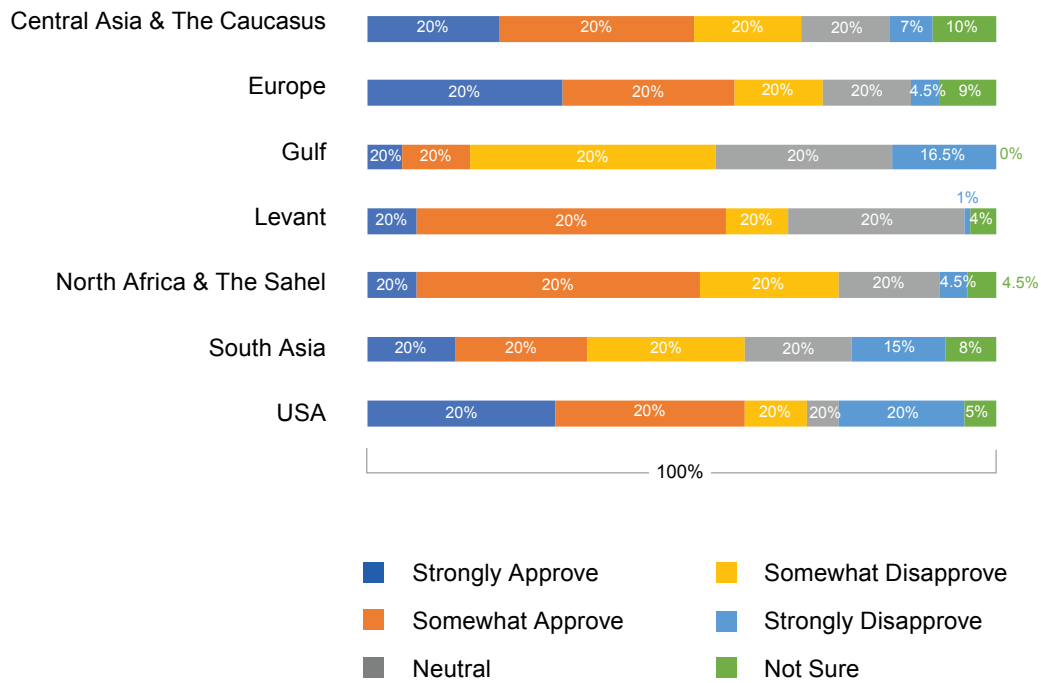
OVERALL ANALYSIS:

Overall answers to this question leaned towards the middle of the spectrum as opposed to strong approval or strong disapproval, although a plurality (31%) of European respondents strongly approved.



10 What do you think of the EU response to the Russia-Ukraine War?

REGIONAL DATA:



11

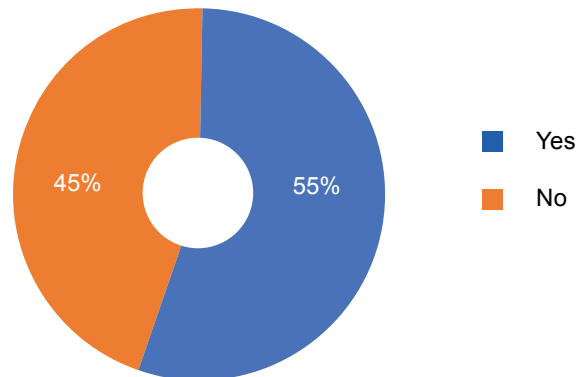
Is the United States providing enough support to Ukraine?

Response options: Yes or No.

OVERALL ANALYSIS:

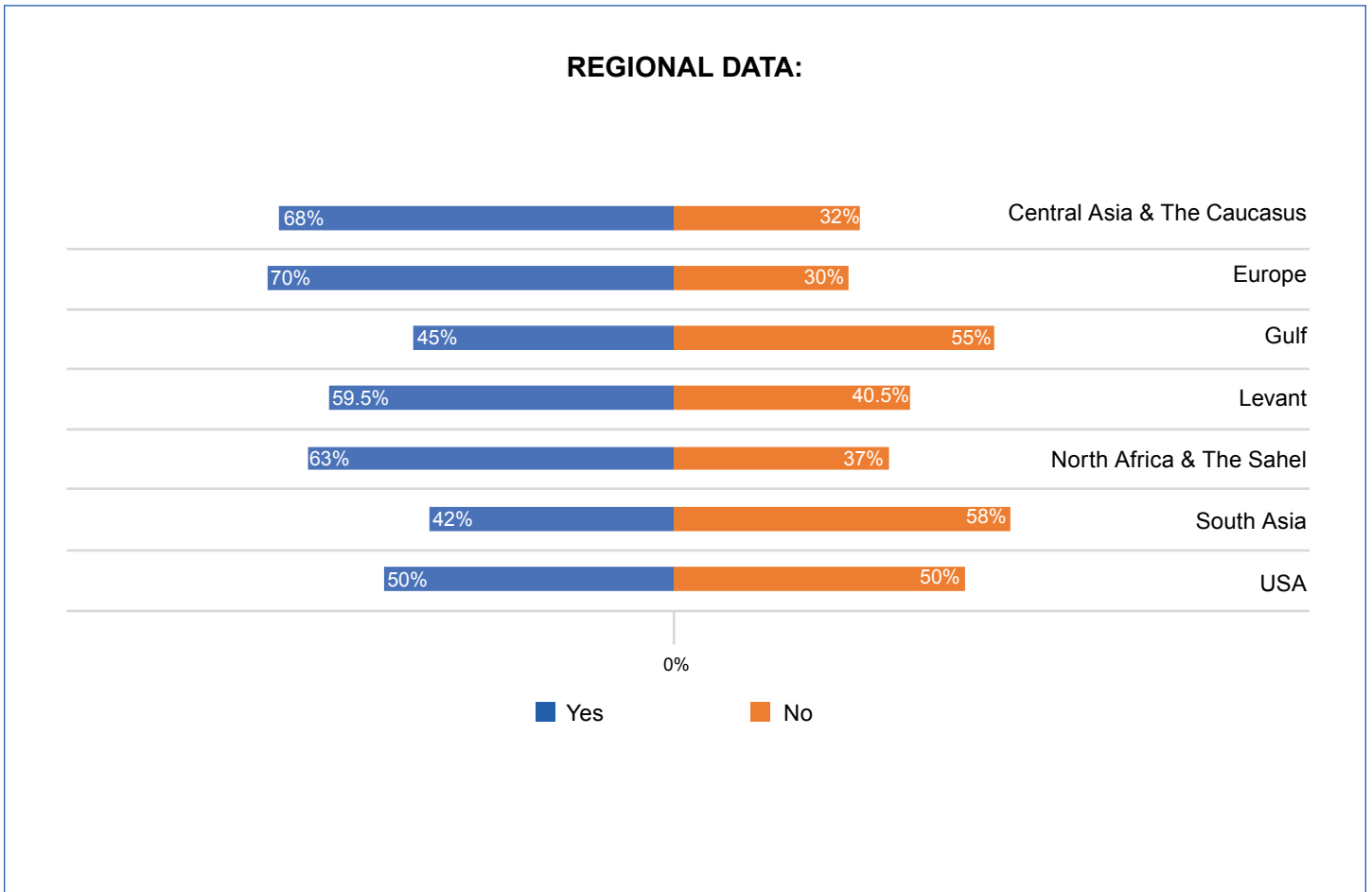
55% of overall respondents answered that the U.S. is providing enough support to Ukraine. However, over half of respondents from South Asia (58%) and the Gulf (55%) answered “No”, while American respondents were evenly split in their assessment.

OVERALL DATA:



11

Is the United States providing enough support to Ukraine?



12

Should your country provide more support to Ukraine?

Response options: Yes or No.

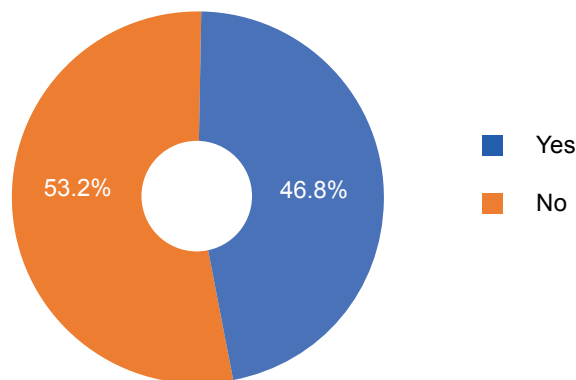
OVERALL ANALYSIS:

A little over half (53.2%) of overall respondents answered “No”. Most respondents were not keen to see their countries get more involved in the conflict in any manner, except for respondents from Central Asia and the Caucasus (69%), Europe (76%), and the U.S. (75%). Some answered that their countries did not need to provide more support because the U.S. and Europe were more than capable of handling the crisis on their own.

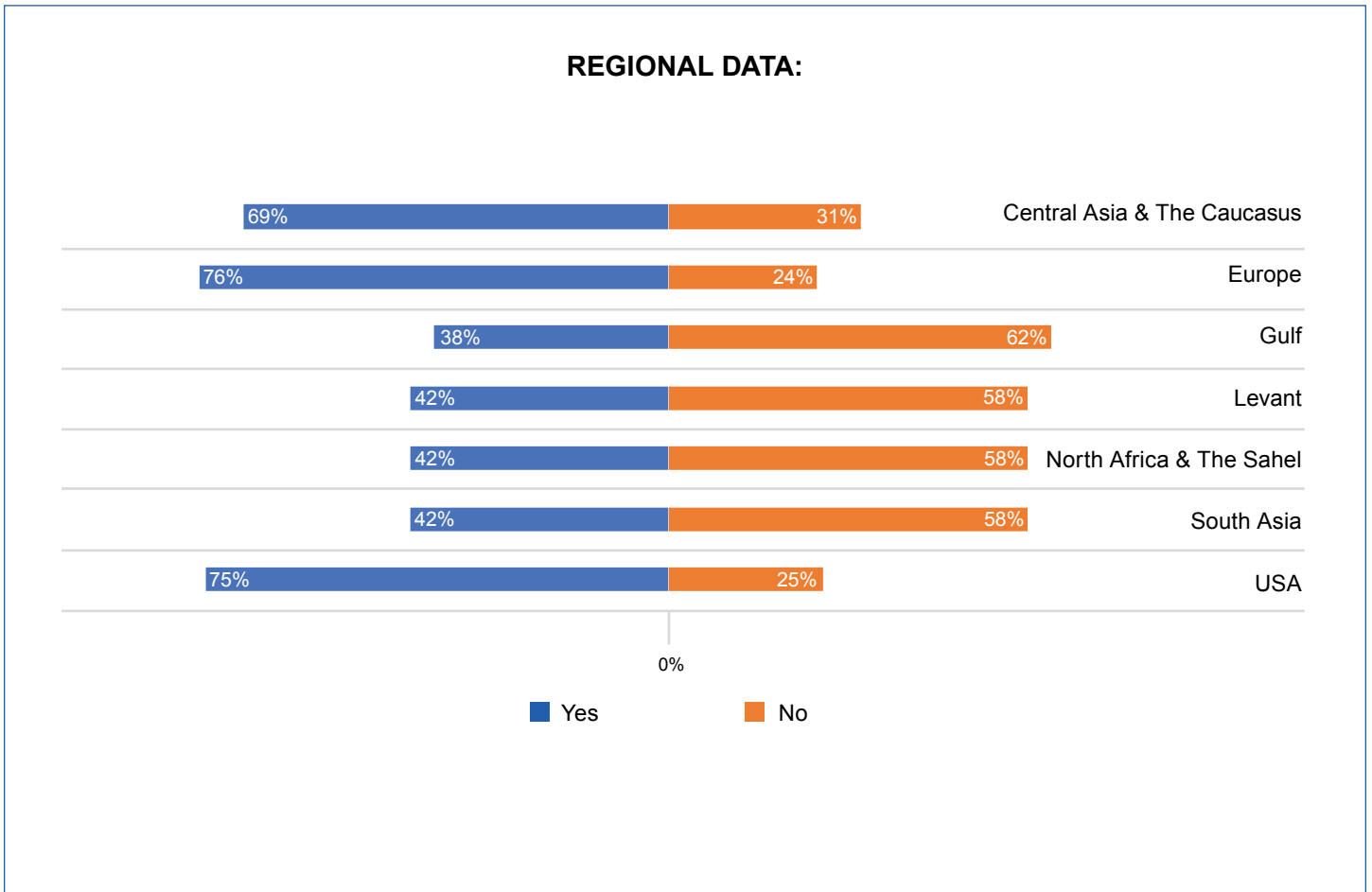
Other respondents from both South Asia as well as the Levant answered that their countries were either unable to provide further assistance or should maintain a neutral stance under what they viewed as a great power conflict. Many respondents from the MENA region answered that their countries were already in a conflict-prone region and thus could not afford to get involved on either side.

Respondents from Central Asia and the Caucasus were generally keen to see their countries offer more support, whether humanitarian or moral.

OVERALL DATA:



12 Should your country provide more support to Ukraine?



13

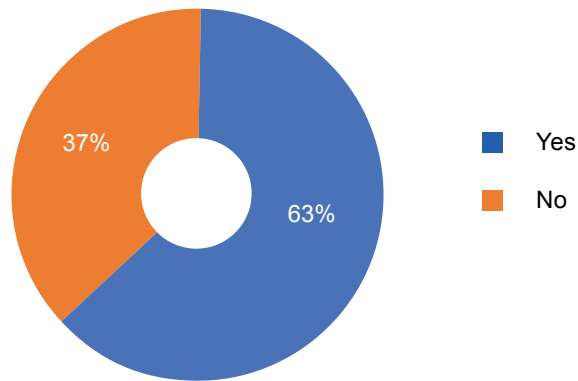
Do you agree that your country should work closely with the U.S. and its allies in responding to Russia's invasion of Ukraine?

Response options: Yes or No.

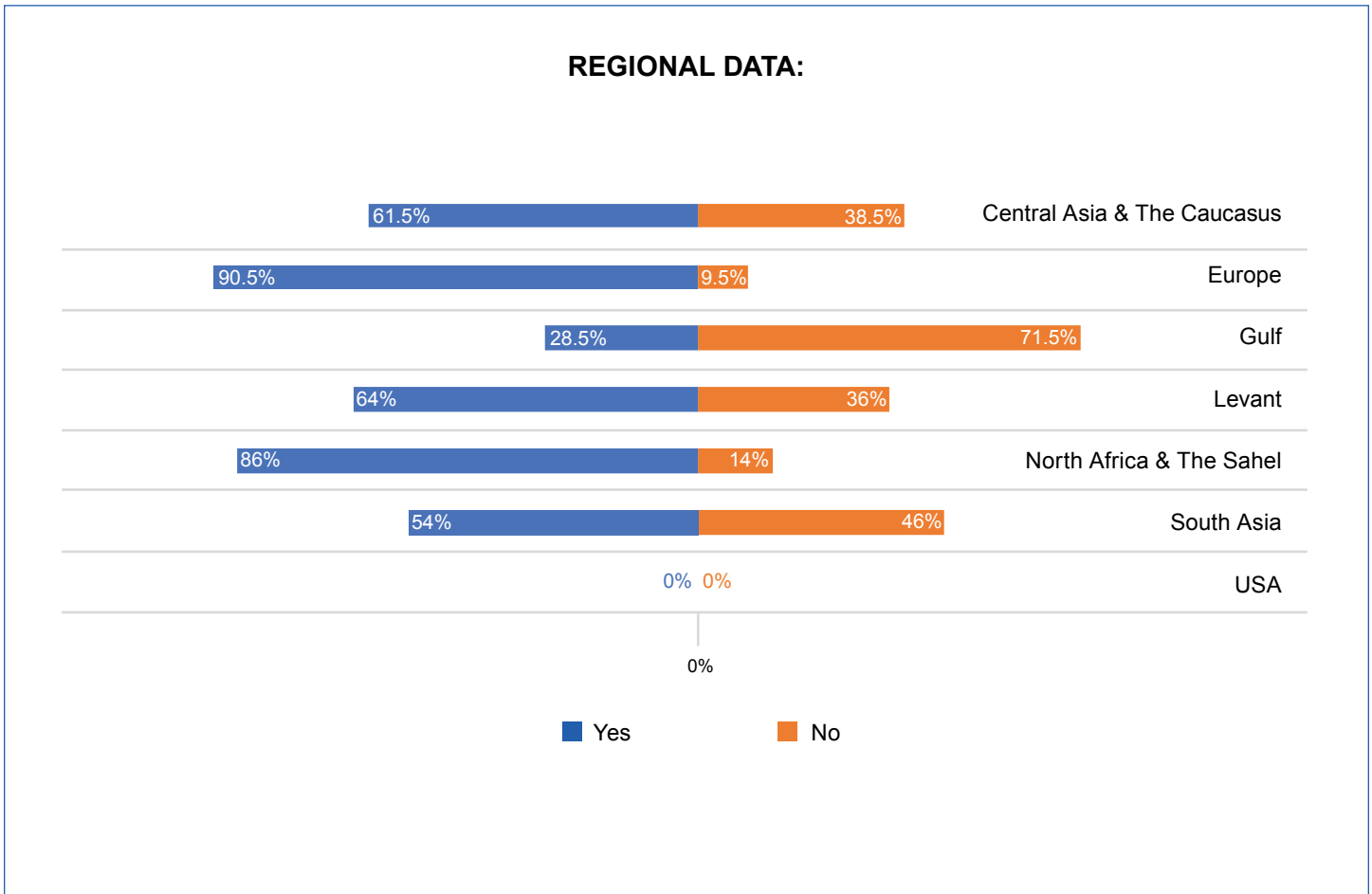
OVERALL ANALYSIS:

Respondents were more agreeable to their countries' involvement when phrased as working with the U.S. and its allies. Some stated that their countries could not act openly, however. 63% of overall respondents answered "Yes". Only those from Central Asia and the Caucasus answered "No" in the majority (71.5%), seemingly in large part because of the realities of Russian involvement in their countries.

OVERALL DATA:



13 Do you agree that your country should work closely with the U.S. and its allies in responding to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine?



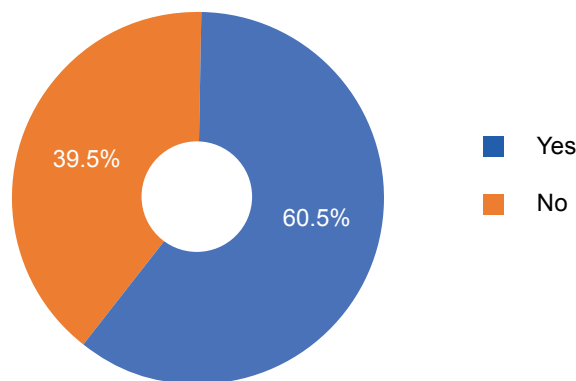
14 Do you favor maintaining strict economic sanctions on Russia?

Response options: Yes or No.

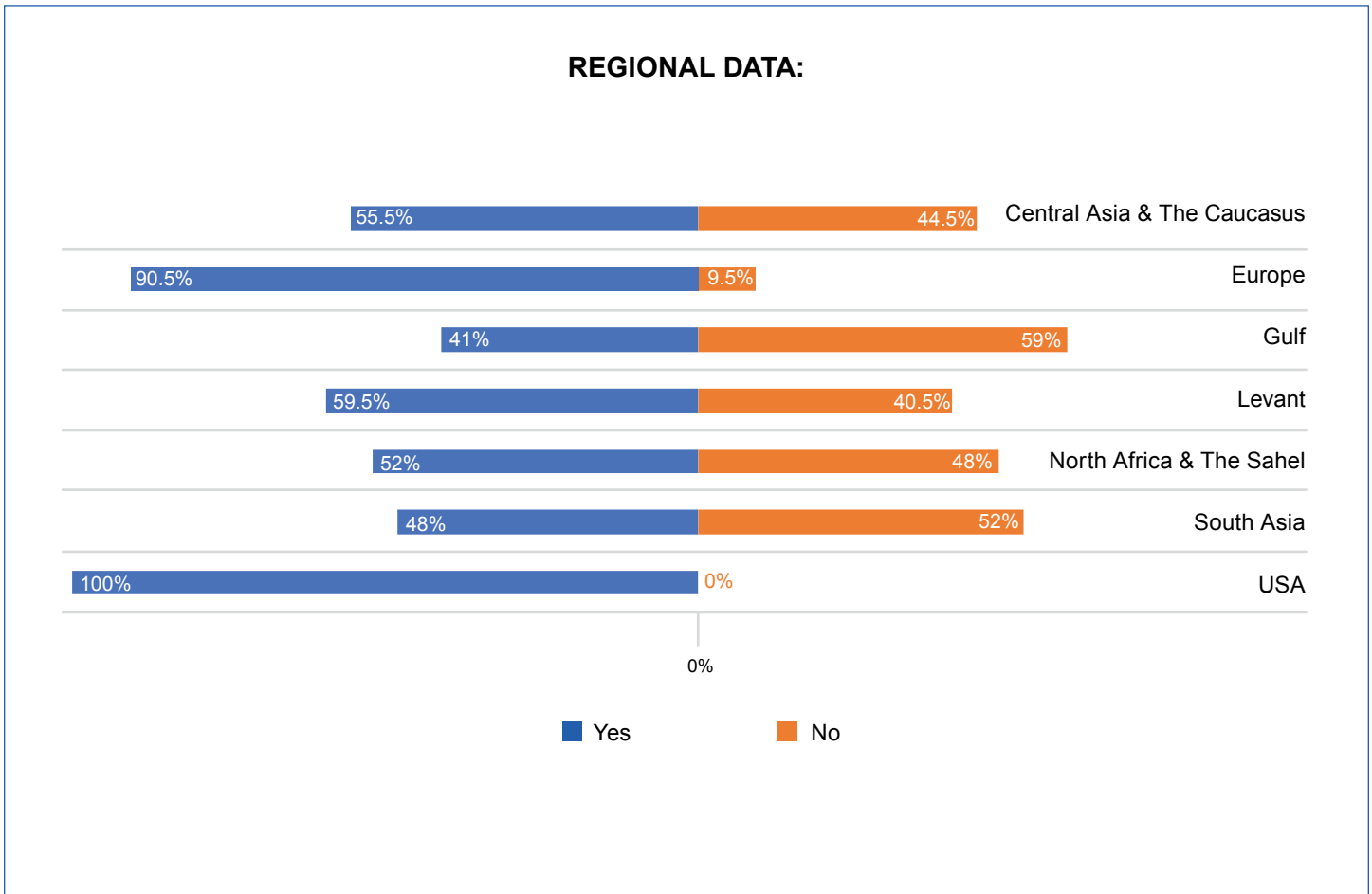
OVERALL ANALYSIS:

A majority (60.5%) of overall respondents answered “Yes”. Only a majority of those from South Asia (52%) and the Gulf (59%) answered “No”. While a majority of those from Central Asia and the Caucasus answered “Yes”, there was considerable concern over the blowback of sanctions on their own countries. Concern over the effectiveness of sanctions or the harm it would do to the “Russian people” was voiced across all sub-regions. A more targeted approach to sanctions was generally favored. All American respondents favored maintaining strict economic sanctions.

OVERALL DATA:



14 Do you favor maintaining strict economic sanctions on Russia?



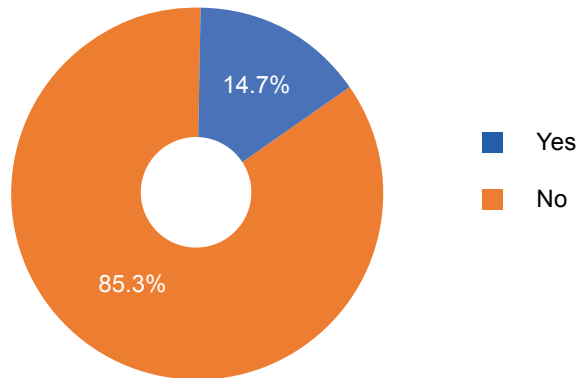
15 Do you support taking military action against Russia?

Response options: Yes or No.

OVERALL ANALYSIS:

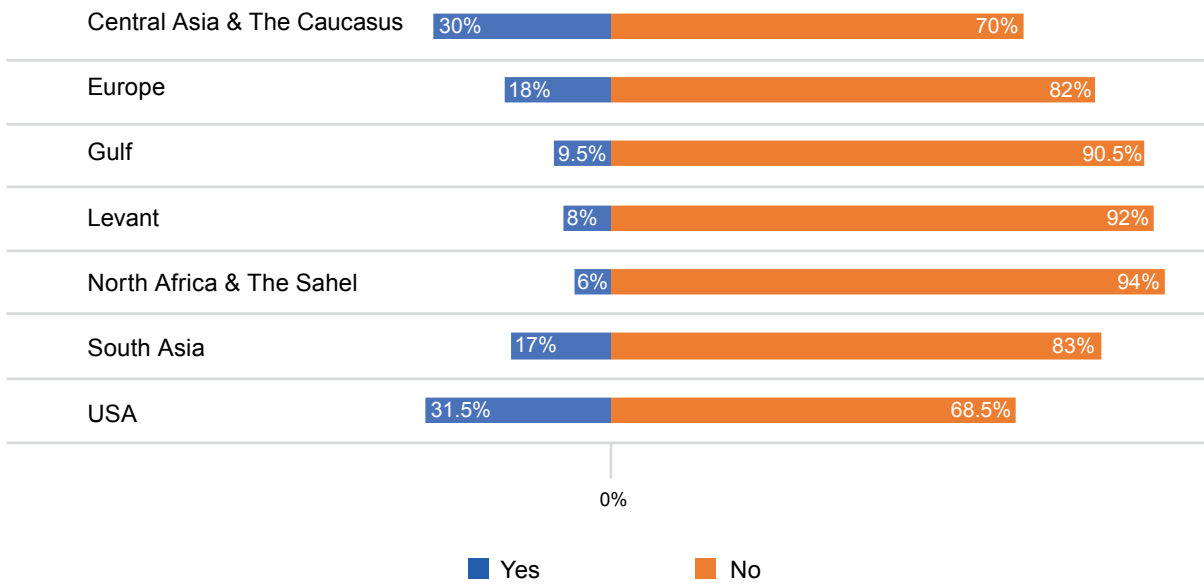
There was very low support for military action against Russia in any form. 85.3% of overall respondents answered “No”. Only respondents from the U.S. (31.5%) Central Asia and the Caucasus (32%), and to a lesser extent, Europe (24%), voiced any significant support for military action. Most respondents explained that they feared sparking a nuclear war or “World War III”.

OVERALL DATA:



15 Do you support taking military action against Russia?

REGIONAL DATA:



16 Do you support your country joining a military coalition for military action against Russia?

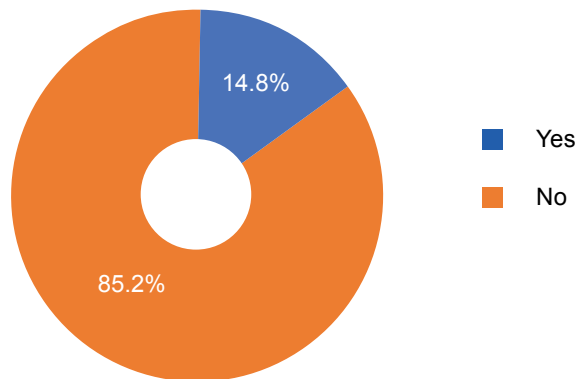
Response options: Yes or No.

OVERALL ANALYSIS:

The overall responses to this question were almost the same as the previous question, with 85.2% answering “No”. Across most sub-regions, there was very little appetite for their countries’ involvement in military action for fear of retaliation or because their countries have warm relations and various cooperative efforts with Russia.

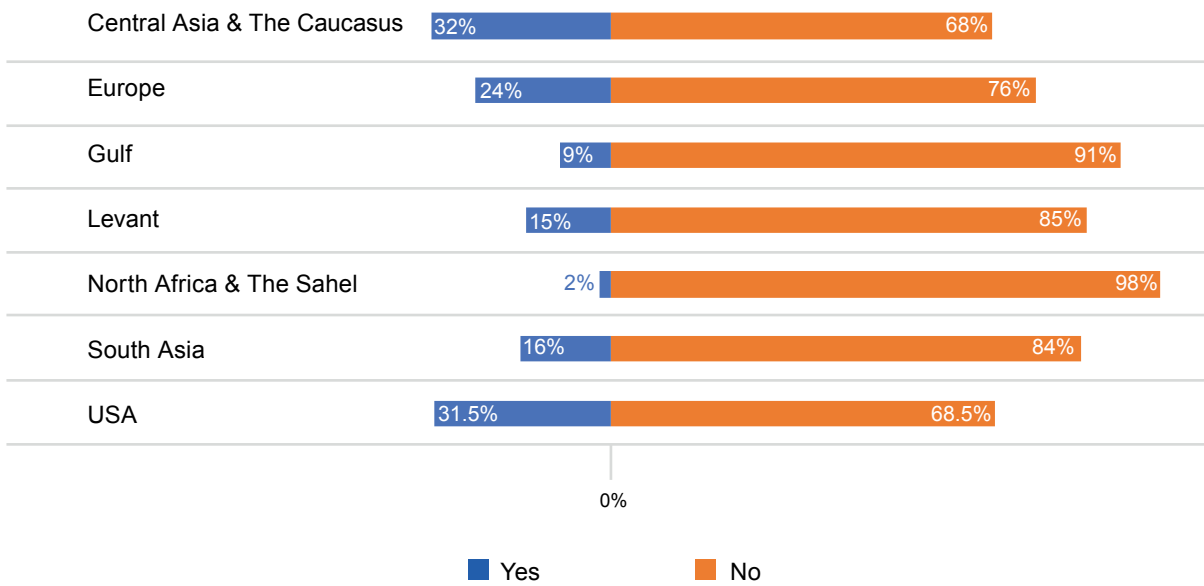
In contrast to the previous question, however, more Levantines (15% versus 8%) were supportive of taking this route if mutual defense agreements were put in place.

OVERALL DATA:



16 Do you support your country joining a military coalition for military action against Russia?

REGIONAL DATA:



17

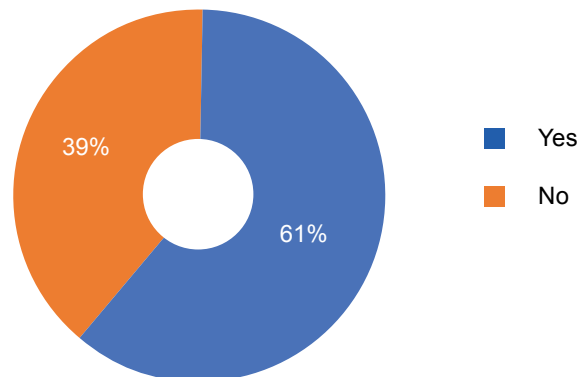
Is the Russian invasion of Ukraine a major threat to your country's interests?

Response options: Yes or No.

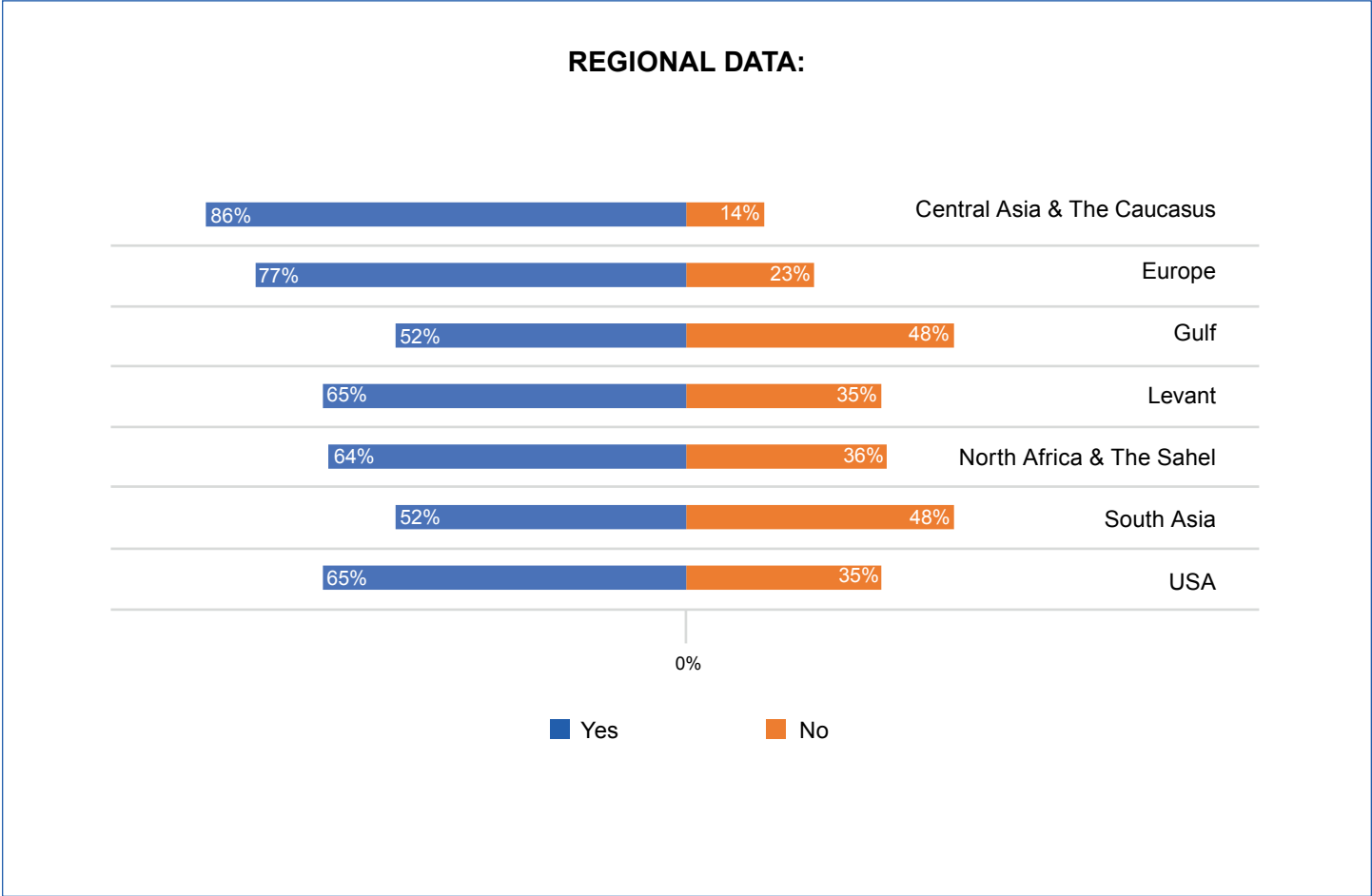
OVERALL ANALYSIS:

A majority (61%) of overall respondents answered “Yes”. Most respondents answered “Yes” across all of the sub-regions, but this was less pronounced in South Asia and North Africa and the Sahel (both at 52% Yes). Those who answered in the affirmative generally tended to answer “Yes” due to the economic effects of the war. Those who answered “No” generally answered that it was a “far-away” European crisis that did not affect their countries. There was concern from some MENA respondents, in particular, over potential social unrest and “revolution” stemming from price increases in commodities in the region.

OVERALL DATA:



17 Is the Russian invasion of Ukraine a major threat to your country's interests?



18

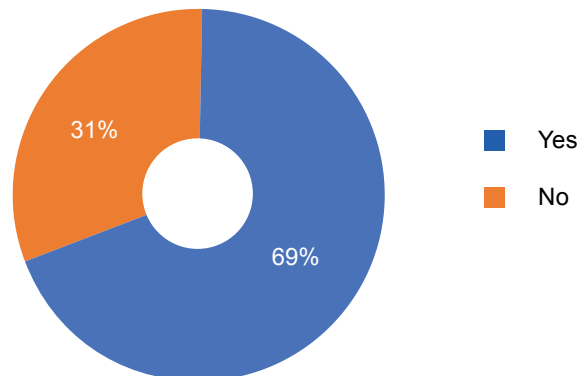
Are you supportive of admitting Ukrainian refugees into your country?

Response options: Yes or No.

OVERALL ANALYSIS:

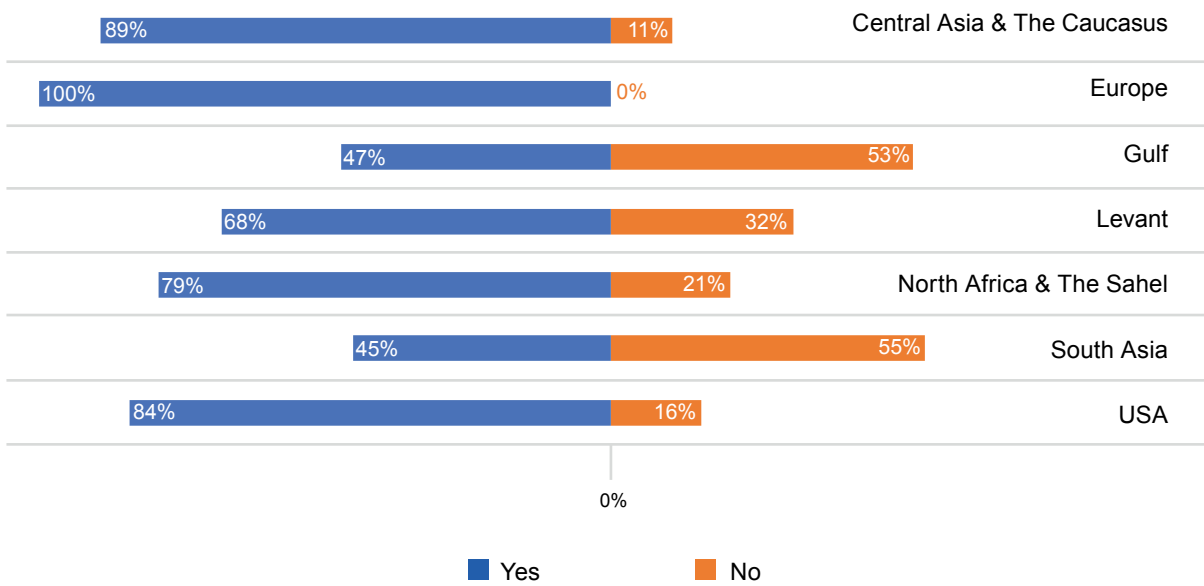
Overall, 69% of respondents answered that they were supportive of admitting Ukrainian refugees into their country. Support was most pronounced in Europe (100%), Central Asia and the Caucasus (89%), the U.S. (84%), North Africa and the Sahel (79%), and the Levant (68%). Slight majorities in the Gulf (53%) and South Asia (55%) were not supportive of admitting refugees. Some argued that the refugee burden should be taken on by the U.S. and Europe.

OVERALL DATA:



18 Are you supportive of admitting Ukrainian refugees into your country?

REGIONAL DATA:



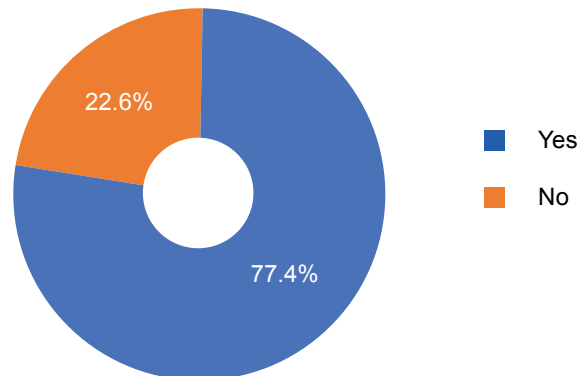
19 Do you believe that Russia's invasion of Ukraine is rewriting the international/global order?

Response options: Yes or No.

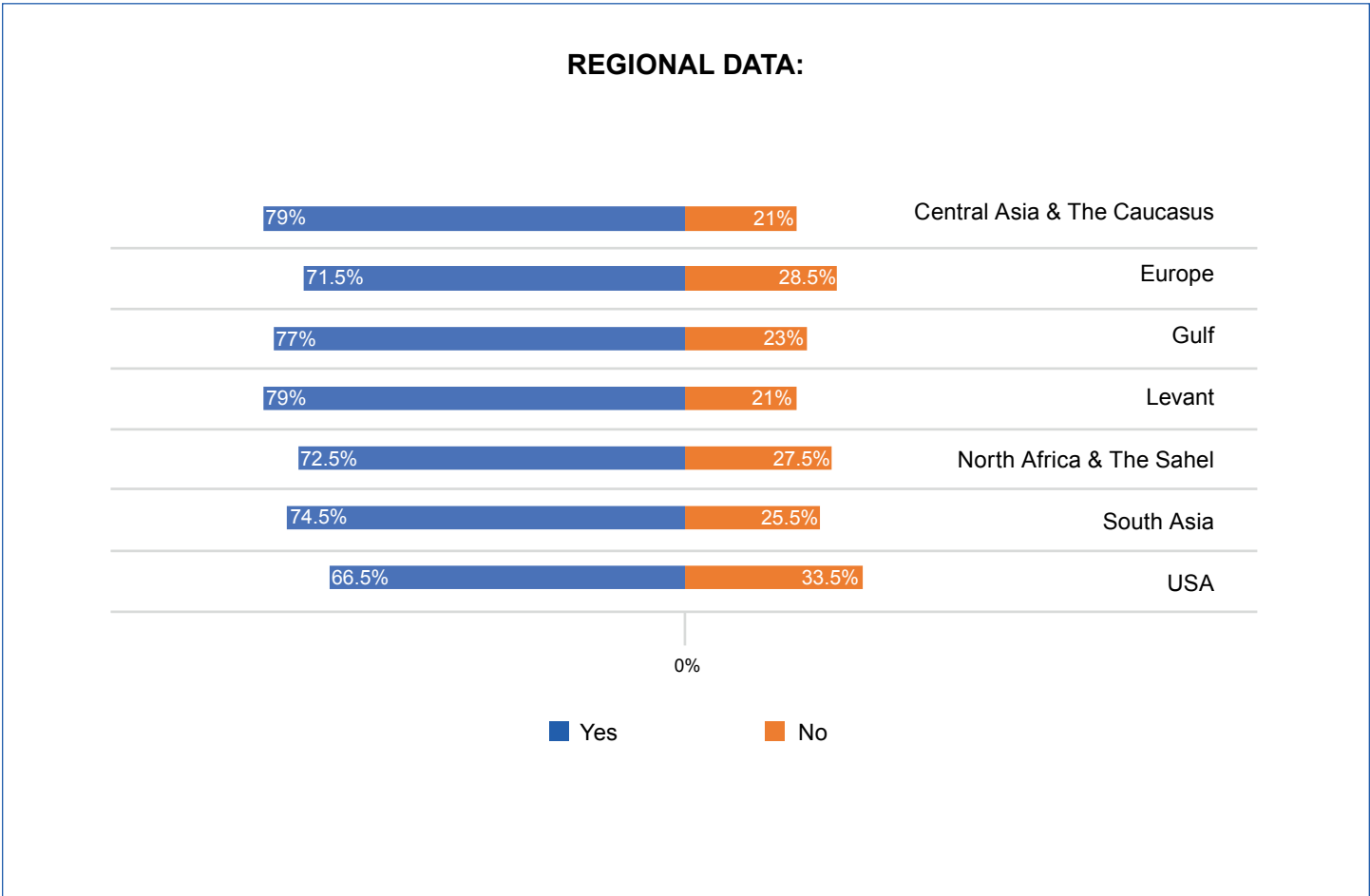
OVERALL ANALYSIS:

A solid majority (74.5%) of respondents answered "Yes". This was slightly less pronounced in the U.S., with 66.5% answering in the affirmative. Respondents who answered "No" generally answered that this was either an exaggeration or that the global order had already been rewritten with previous U.S./Western interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan. Some respondents also argued that the global order should be rewritten and that the "old" order was outdated to meet current global challenges.

OVERALL DATA:



19 Do you believe that Russia’s invasion of Ukraine is rewriting the international/global order?



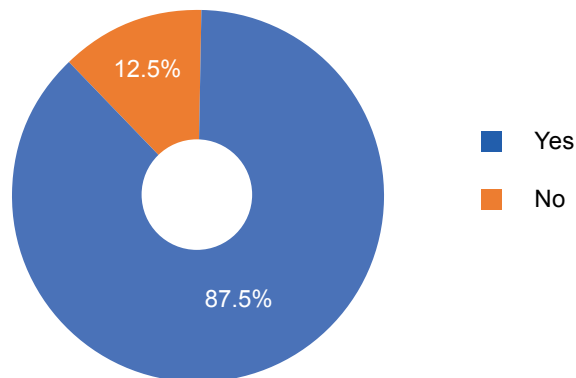
20 Do you believe that Russia's invasion of Ukraine is undermining international law and the idea of sovereignty of the State?

Response options: Yes or No.

OVERALL ANALYSIS:

A clear majority (87.5%) of overall respondents answered this question in the affirmative. As in the previous question, those who answered "Yes" were less pronounced in the U.S., where 75% answered in the affirmative. Whether they answered in the affirmative or the negative, many respondents explained that they believe that international law had already been broken many times by the U.S. and Western powers and that Russia's action were nothing new or exceptional.

OVERALL DATA:



20 Do you believe that Russia's invasion of Ukraine is undermining international law and the idea of sovereignty of the State?

