

Eastern Chessboard

Geopolitical Determinants and Challenges in Eastern Europe and the South Causes

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Kraków

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How to Deal with Armenia's Geopolitical Trilemma? Examining Public Opinion

In 2014, a joint Armenian-Georgian team from the Yerevan State University and Tbilisi State University – as a part of an ASCN regional programme – began to study the influence of norms and beliefs on the foreign policy of Armenia and Georgia. Experts correlate official policy, positions of ruling and political elites in general and public opinion. This article is a summary of public opinion survey conducted in Armenia in the framework of the mentioned regional project.

Armenia claims to have a foreign policy complementary with the dominant direction towards Russia. A large set of geopolitical conditions influences the country's foreign policy: Armenia as a small and land-locked country with complex and troubled neighbourhood in a region that is a subject to competition between regional and world power centres. In fact, this is not conducive to creating optimum conditions to carry out complementary foreign policy, yet this option seems to have no alternative for Armenia.

Indeed, in this situation, public opinion cannot have an essential influence on the foreign policy decision-making process. However, it is always interesting academically and important practically to get a grasp of public attitudes towards a country's official foreign policy course. In addition, it is also a specific indicator which may be used to evaluate decisions in the sense of how much the society supports or accepts proposed solutions. This, in its turn, can be the basis or one of the ways to legitimize the policy of the authorities.

General Geopolitical Orientation

Officially, Armenia carries out a complementary foreign policy. The National Security Strategy¹ highlights the main objectives, principles and threats to Armenia's foreign security policy. Accordingly, Armenia's external security strategy is based on the two basic principles: *complementarity*, which commits Armenia to have effective relations with all interested actors in the region, and *participation* (engagement) in those processes on international arena which are consistent with its core objectives. As a platform for a complementarity, strategic relations with Russia, the European way of the development, mutually beneficial cooperation with the USA and with Iran, membership in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and in the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), development of cooperation with the NATO are considered.

The public opinion in Armenia on country's foreign policy is almost identical to the above-mentioned provisions of the National Security Strategy. According to "Integration Barometer – 2014"², as regards the **socio-cultural dimension**, Armenia's society is mainly "*self-sufficient*" (see **Table 1**): a relative majority is not interested in the main components of the foreign socio-cultural attraction: history, culture, geography, modern show business (39% – the most uninterested country in this category) and the educational system (36% – the fifth most uninterested country) of any country/area. However, a relative majority (45%) prefers vacation in Europe (25% in Post-Soviet countries, 22% in other countries and 28% do not prefer any country). This is true even considering the fact that the absolute majority (52%) of respondents did not visit other countries over last 5 years, and the vast majority (82%, second place after Tajikistan) has permanent social contacts in former USSR (mainly in Russia), but also in the European countries (25% – mainly in France and Germany).

However, it is also noteworthy that Armenians prefer tourists from European countries (50%), than those from post-Soviet (37%) or other countries (39%). It is very remarkable if we compare these data with the "Caucasus Barometer – 2013" data, according to which 60% of respondents had an intermediate and 25% an advanced level of knowledge of the Russian language³, while only 14% of them had an intermediate and only 4% had an advanced level of knowledge of

¹ "The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia", *Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Armenia*. Adopted on January 26, 2007. At http://www.mfa.am/u_files/file/doctrine/Doctrineeng.pdf, 14 July 2015

² "Integratsionnyy barometr YEABR — 2014". *Tsentr integratsionnykh issledovaniy. Yevraziyskiy bank razvitiya*. Sankt-Peterburg, pp. 24-46.

³ "Knowledge of Russian". *Caucasus Barometer 2013 Armenia*. Generated since Feb 27, 2013 <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2013am/KNOWRUS/> 15 July 2015.

English⁴. Moreover, only 7% of them had an intermediate and only 2% had advanced level of knowledge of another foreign language⁵. It means that comparatively low level of knowledge any European language knowledge does not affect Armenians' preference over tourists from Europe.

Table 1. Interest in History, Culture and Geography (%)

	Post-Soviet countries	EU countries	Other countries	None/DK
Tajikistan	74	19	27	?
Ukraine	25	57	49	47
Uzbekistan	48	36	61	10
Armenia	42	34	37	44

In the **economic dimension**, Armenia's population has a *multi-vector orientation*, with some *predominance of attraction to the post-Soviet space* in general⁶. For 38% of respondents the post-Soviet (mainly Russian) market of temporary workers is more preferable, than European (23%) or other countries' (12%) markets. Nevertheless, the same percent of respondents does not prefer any foreign labour market at all. Post-Soviet space (mainly Russia) is attractive for 38% of respondents as a possible place of permanent residence. However, in this case, too, the relative majority (41%) does not prefer any foreign country.

For relative majority (36%) of respondents migrant workers and students from European countries are more preferable than from post-Soviet (32%) and other countries (28%), but 35% of respondents does not have any preference on this issue.

Unlike the case of foreign tourists, Armenia's society prefers post-Soviet countries as a source for the flow of capital, investment, and business companies. For a relative majority (42%) of respondents the post-Soviet space is more preferable as a geographic source for FDI, capital and business, than the European (34%) or other (37%) countries. In addition, the post-Soviet countries are also more attractive in terms of main business partners, and, according to the "Caucasus Barometer 2013"⁷, the Russians occupy the first position (after Armenians themselves) in terms of preferred business nationality. Nevertheless, Europeans, Americans, Georgians and Iranians are also preferable for the majority of the Armenia's population.

⁴ "Knowledge of English". *Caucasus Barometer 2013 Armenia*. Generated since Feb 27, 2013 <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2013am/KNOWENG/> 15 July 2015.

⁵ "Knowledge of other foreign language". *Caucasus Barometer 2013 Armenia*. Generated since Feb 27, 2013 <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2013am/KNOWOTH/> 15 July 2015.

⁶ "Integratsionnyy barometr YEABR — 2014", pp. 47-66.

⁷ „Oum het en naxy'ntrowm „gorts brnel" hayery". *Barometer.am*. February 16, 2015 at <http://www.barometer.am/news/business/20150216/419/> 15 July 2015.

Surprisingly, according to “Integration Barometer – 2014”, the products made in post-Soviet countries (mostly Russian), too, are more preferable (50%) for respondents, than products made in Europe (37%) or other countries (29%).

However, the most interesting element is the orientation of respondents in case of scientific and technical cooperation. In this sphere respondents prefer other countries (40%, mainly USA, Japan, China), but Armenia has the highest percentage of answer “No one/Don’t know” (see *Table 2*).

Table 2. Preferred Countries for Scientific and Technical Cooperation (%)

	Post-Soviet	EU	Other	None/DK
Tajikistan	68	20	33	3
Moldova	46	51	38	20
Azerbaijan	26	35	67	26
Armenia	31	31	40	27

Not surprisingly, in the **political dimension**⁸, Armenia’s society is categorically focused on *the post-Soviet space*. In the matter of military-political cooperation for the majority of the population the preferable option is the post-Soviet area. Exactly in this space the Armenians see their main ally and friend. More specifically, for 87% respondents from Armenia (the fourth place after Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan) consider Russia a friendly country who will be helpful in difficult times. Only for a minority of respondents, this friendly country is a European (16%) or another (7%) country. These findings are consistent with the results of “Caucasus Barometer – 2013”⁹ survey, according to which Russia is considered to be the country’s main friend by 80% of respondents from Armenia, when France got the votes of only 5% of respondents¹⁰.

Moreover, according to "Integration Barometer – 2014", with its 81%, Armenia is in the first place among 12 post-Soviet countries to expect a military-political support from Russia in the case of war. In this regard, European and other countries got the trust of 13% and 12% respondents respectively. Interestingly, only 48% of respondents conceive that Armenia is committed to providing tantamount military-political support for Russia. Georgia (15%) is in the second place with its public support from Armenia, and Ukraine (3%) is in the third place. Moreover, 40% of respondents do not think that any foreign country merits Armenia’s political and military support. It

⁸ “Integratsionnyy barometr YEABR — 2014”, pp. 67-79.

⁹ “Main friend of the country”. *Caucasus Barometer 2013 Armenia*. Generated since Feb 27, 2013 <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2013am/MAINFRN/> 15 July 2015.

¹⁰ * Must be highlighted that “Integration-Barometer” permits simultaneously multiple answers, and “Caucasus-Barometer” registers only one answer.

means that the vast majority of respondents is expecting a military-political support from Russia in case of military conflict, but only about half of them is ready to support Russia in the same way (see **Table 3**). In addition, the number of respondents who are for Armenia's support to Georgia and Ukraine is much higher than those respondents who expect support from these countries.

Table 3. Armenia Can Expect/Needs to Provide Support From/To These Countries (%)

	Post-Soviet	European	Other	No one/ DK
Expect support from	82 (RF -81, Geo. -7, Belarus -1)	13	12	16
Provide support to	58 (RF -48, Geo. -15, Ukraine -3)	5	4	40

It is noteworthy that in the political dimension with addition of some economic aspects, Armenia (alongside with Belarus) is one of countries that is the most oriented on post-Soviet space, but mainly on Russia (see **Table 4**)¹¹. Moreover, only in the cultural dimension, Armenia is a pro-Europe oriented country, and other two dimensions make Armenia oriented towards the post-Soviet space.

Table 4. Armenia's Average Indexes of Attraction

	Economy	Culture	Politics	Overall
Post-Soviet	0.39	0.27	0.73	0.44
European	0.32	0.31	0.11	0.28
Other	0.29	0.15	0.06	0.30

However, these conclusions are not as unambiguous and final as they may seem.

Public Awareness, Trust and Support of Cooperation With the EU and CIS/EAEU.

Officially, one of the most important strategic directions of Armenia's foreign and security policy continues to be the Armenian-Russian strategic cooperation and relations within the CIS and CSTO. These multi-layer relations are considered strategic also in the National Security Strategy. Armenia views Russia as an integral part of the

¹¹ "Integratsionnyy barometr YEABR — 2014", pp. 83-86

Caucasus region. This view is conditioned by the Armenian-Russian alliance in the military security of Armenia, by the role of Russia in Artsakh (Karabakh) conflict settlement as well as by the existence of large Armenian community in Russia. The cooperation is supported by the bilateral and multilateral levels, particularly in the CIS and the CSTO framework.

According to the National Security Strategy, the development and consolidation of relations with the European structures, and with the EU above all, is a priority direction for Armenia's foreign policy, too. In this context it is considered that the Armenia-EU relations have three main components: 1. further intensification of Armenia's diverse cooperation with the EU will promote the consolidation of democracy, strengthen the rule of law, and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms. 2. The development of relations with the EU, as a major global economic and political power, broadens Armenia's trade and economic links and supports the economic development. 3. Through its regional initiatives, the EU promotes a favourable environment for the establishment of lasting stability and cooperation in the South Caucasus region¹².

Interestingly, various studies show broad public support of Armenia's multi-vector foreign policy. However, despite the fact that this support still exists, a comparison of public opinion survey data shows abrupt changes in the public's foreign policy orientation towards the "West" (EU and NATO) and "North" (the CIS and EAEU). Thus, according to "World Value Survey 2011"¹³, the EU and the CIS had comparable ratings (respectively, 43% and 46% of "confidence" and 37% and 39% of "distrust"). However, according to the "Caucasus Barometer", in 2013 the EU had only 28% confidence, 29% mistrust and 31% "indifference"¹⁴. The changes in public trust towards the EU are obvious also while comparing results of EU Neighbourhood Barometer 2012¹⁵ and 2014¹⁶ (see *Table 5*).

Table 5. Public Trust towards the EU in 2012 and 2014 (%)

	2012	2014	Difference
Tend to trust	63	45	-18
Tend not to trust	31	51	+20
DK	6	4	-2

¹² The National Security Strategy..., op. cit.

¹³ "Confidence: The European Union" and "Confidence: The CIS". *World Values Survey Wave 6: 2010-2014. Armenia 2011 (1100)* at <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSONline.jsp> 15 July 2015.

¹⁴ "Trust - EU". *Caucasus Barometer 2013 Armenia*. Generated since Feb 27, 2013 <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2013am/TRUSTEU/> 15 July 2015.

¹⁵ "Trust in Institutions". *EU Neighbourhood Barometer. Autumn 2012 wave 2* at http://eunighbourhood.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/FactsheetENPI_wave2-AM-EN.pdf 15 July 2015.

¹⁶ "Trust in Institutions". *EU Neighbourhood Barometer. Spring 2014 wave 5* <http://eunighbourhood.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/FS-ENPI-Wave-5-AM-EN.pdf> 15 July 2015.

Although the EU has traditionally a positive or neutral image across Armenian society, this positive image is gradually crumbling, giving rise to a negative one: in 2012, the EU had a “positive” image among 49% of respondents and a “negative” one among 17%, but in 2014, the number of those claiming a “positive” image fell by 9% (40% in total) while the “negative” one rose by 8% (25% in total). The “neutral” image of the EU in the perception of the respondents also increased (32% in total in 2014).

In this context, a very *low level of awareness* and, conversely, a relatively *high level of orientation* of Armenia's population in relations to the EU, NATO, the CIS and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) are surprising. Specifically, in 2009, more than 60% of respondents considered themselves as uninformed about the EU¹⁷, and an absolute majority even deemed Armenia to be a member of the EU¹⁸. The absolute majority of respondents considered themselves uninformed about the CIS too¹⁹, but a vast majority gave the correct answer to the question of Armenia's membership in this organization²⁰. In addition, according to the analytical organization “Integration and Development”, in 2013, the vast majority of the Armenia's population (nearly 70%) did not know exactly what the EAEU was, either²¹. The lack of awareness is confirmed indirectly also by data from the Barometer quantitative study in 2015. According to these results, while more than 80% of respondents from Yerevan consider themselves informed about the EU²², around 40% of them still deems Armenia to be a member of the EU²³. The most amazing thing is that 30% of respondents, who deem Armenia to be a member of the EU, consider itself as well informed, and 50% considers itself as sufficiently informed about the EU. The same misperception of Armenia's cooperation with international organization is registered also in case of NATO and CSTO (see *Table 6*²⁴). Moreover, amazingly, around half of respondents

¹⁷ “How much do you know about the EU?”. *Caucasus Barometer 2009 Armenia*. Generated since Feb 27, 2013 <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2009am/EUKNOWL/> 15 July 2015.

¹⁸ “Is Armenia a member of the European Union?”. *Caucasus Barometer 2009 Armenia*. Generated since Feb 27, 2013 <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2009am/MEMBREU/> 15 July 2015.

¹⁹ “How much do you know about CIS?”. *Caucasus Barometer 2009 Armenia*. Generated since Feb 27, 2013 <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2009am/CISKNWL/> 15 July 2015.

²⁰ “Is Armenia a member of the CIS?”. *Caucasus Barometer 2009 Armenia*. Generated since Feb 27, 2013 <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2009am/MEMBKCIS/> 15 July 2015.

²¹ Manukyan S., Arutyunyan G., Safaryan A., “*Otnosheniye armyanskogo obshchestva k yevraziyskoy i yevropeyskoy integratsii*”. IAEO “Integratsiya i razvitiye”. Yerevan, 2013, pp. 20-21.

²² “Tsanotutyun Evropakan miutyun het”. *Barometer.am*. June 9, 2015 at <http://www.barometer.am/news/real-politics/20150609/2530/> 15 July 2015.

²³ “Arman-k-zarmank. yerevantsineri shurj 40%-y karcum e, vor Hayastany Evropakan miutyun andam e”. *Barometer.am*. June 11 2015 at <http://www.barometer.am/news/real-politics/20150611/2633/> 15 July 2015.

²⁴ This comparative table combines the data from Barometer (Yerevan) survey 2015: “Tsanotutyun NATO-i het”. *Barometer.am*. May 26 2015 at <http://www.barometer.am/news/real-politics/20150526/2047/>; “Yerevantsineri 34%-y kartsum e, te Hayastany NATO-i andam e”. *Barometer*.

from Yerevan did not know that Armenia is not only a member of CSTO, but also one of its founding-members.

Table 6. Awareness about Armenia's Relations with the EU, NATO, and EAEU (%)

	EAEU		CSTO		EU		NATO	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Informed about	77.9	21.2	41.8	58.2	82.3	17.7	81.3	18.7
Armenia is a member of	73.1	9.5	37.7	13	38.6	48.4	33.9	66.1
Support membership in					59.8	23.1	37.3	37.3

It is noteworthy that in the case of a dilemma between the EU and CIS, in 2009 a vast majority of respondents opted for cooperation with the CIS (60% for CIS vs. 25% for the EU)²⁵. However, despite the fact that in 2013 the absolute majority (55%) of respondents²⁶ advocated Armenia's membership in the EAE, a relative majority (40%) was also in favour of Armenia's membership in the EU²⁷. Up to 2013, a similar pattern was also observed in the case of NATO, but in 2013, only a minority of respondents (23%) supported Armenia's membership in the NATO²⁸.

In addition, "Integration Barometer – 2014" shows that an absolute majority supports Armenia's Eurasian integration: 64% of respondents support Armenia's membership in the Russia-led Customs union, 21% of them are indifferent and only 8% of respondents are against this Eurasian choice²⁹. However, as in the case of geopolitical

am. May 27 2015 at <http://www.barometer.am/news/real-politics/20150527/2083/>; "Yerevanum NATO-in andamaksutyany koghmnakitsneryn aveli shat en". *Barometer.am.* June 8 2015 at <http://www.barometer.am/news/real-politics/20150608/2479/>; "Tsanotutyun Evropakan miutyany het"; "Armanak-zarmank. yerevantsineri shurj 40%-y karcum e, vor Hayastany Evropakan miutyany andam e"; Yerevantsineri 60%-y koghme e Evropakan miutyany Hayastany andamaksutyany". *Barometer.am.* June 15 2015 at <http://www.barometer.am/news/real-politics/20150615/2784/>; "Tsanotutiun HAPK-i het", *Barometer.am.* June 26, 2015 at <http://www.barometer.am/news/real-politics/20150626/3251/>; "Yerevantsineri mot 50%-y teghyak che, vor HH-n HAPK andam e, ayn el – himnadir-andam", *Barometer.am.* July 6, 2015 at <http://www.barometer.am/news/real-politics/20150706/3680/> 15 July 2015.

²⁵ "Cooperation with the CIS VS cooperation with the EU". *Caucasus Barometer 2009 Armenia.* Generated since Feb 27, 2013 at <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2009am/COOPCIS/> 15 July 2015.

²⁶ "Support of country's membership in Eurasian Economic Community". *Caucasus Barometer 2013 Armenia.* Generated since Feb 27, 2013 at <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2013am/EECSUPP/> 15 July 2015.

²⁷ "Support of country's membership in EU". *Caucasus Barometer 2013 Armenia.* Generated since Feb 27, 2013 at <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2013am/EUSUPP/> 15 July 2015.

²⁸ "Support of country's membership in NATO". *Caucasus Barometer 2013 Armenia.* Generated since Feb 27, 2013 at <http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2013am/NATOSUPP/> 15 July 2015.

²⁹ "Integratsionnyy barometr YEABR — 2014", p. 98.

attraction, here, too, Armenia shows an average result when compared to other post-Soviet countries.

It is also noteworthy that in all cases in Yerevan, the number of supporters of Armenia's cooperation with/membership in the EU, EAEU, NATO or CSTO was always the highest.

Given all these accounts, it is not surprising that Armenia's society has profound complementary preferences in cooperation with the EU and Russia (see *Table 7*). Russia is a preferable partner in the fight against external threats, as well as in the industry, and the EU is preferable in the humanitarian sphere, in the sphere of science and education. However, it seems that there are many people who want to see cooperation both with the EU and Russia, particularly in the field of science, education and industry³⁰.

Table 7. Preferential Partners by Sphere of Cooperation (%)

	Russia	EU	Both
Human rights	25	52	6
Science	28	47	15
Industry	50	24	17
Karabakh issue	64	14	5
External security	72	10	3

A vast majority of Armenia's society welcomes cooperation with the EU in humanitarian, political and economic spheres: there is a widespread public perception that the EU should play a greater role in trade (89%) and economic development (86%), education (81%), regional cooperation (79%), and democracy (76%)³¹.

In general, it seems that Armenian society traditionally perceives the EU as one of the main partners of Armenia and highlights the EU's activity in the field of development and promotion of peace and stability in the region. However, public support of Armenia's cooperation with the EU in recent years has decreased (see *Table 8*)³². Nevertheless, a vast majority of respondents still supports Armenia's cooperation with the EU.

³⁰ "Otnosheniye armyanskogo obshchestva k yevraziyskoy i yevropeyskoy integratsii", pp. 20-21.

³¹ "Perception of the European Union". *EU Neighbourhood Barometer. Autumn 2012 wave 2*.

³² The results of EU Neighbourhood Barometer Wave 2 (Autumn 2012) and Wave 5 (Spring 2014) compared.

Table 8. The EU's Importance for Armenia (%)

	2012	2014	Difference
The EU is an important partner of Armenia	86	67	-19
The EU brings peace and stability in the region	75	50	-25
The EU contributes to the development of Armenia	78	58	-20
The EU has the appropriate level of involvement in Armenia	66	53	-13

Conclusion

1. Armenia has an average cumulative geopolitical orientation to the post-Soviet space: this space is more attractive than Europe and other countries.
2. According to socio-cultural indicators, Armenia's population shows "self-sufficiency". Cultural indexes of orientation towards post-Soviet and European countries are close, and in this case, the European orientation dominates. However, Armenia and Ukraine are the most culturally self-sufficient countries.
3. Armenia's overall economic indicators show a multilateral orientation with a relative predominance of attraction of the post-Soviet space. Armenia's society prefers Russian products, Russian labor market and Russians as business partners. However, it is noteworthy that tourists, temporary workers and students from Europe are more preferred. In general, in the economic dimension, the post-Soviet and European indexes differ only slightly.
4. The picture is radically different in politics. According to these criteria, Armenia is one of the countries that is the most oriented towards the post-Soviet space. In the realm of military-political cooperation, a vast majority of Armenia's society prefers post-Soviet space. It seems that this political cluster is the dominant factor of Armenia's public orientation.
5. A detailed analysis of these data revealed that the main factor for the orientation to the post-Soviet space in terms of economic and political indicators is Russia. Only Russia, and not the post-Soviet space in general is the "centre of attraction" for the Armenian society. Moreover, for the society the Russian factor is crucial to assess the foreign policy of Armenia.
6. Russia is the only "centre of gravity" for Armenia in the post-Soviet space. Russia is the sole country that in general holds the image of a friend of Armenia among the vast majority of the population. Europe, and more specifically France occupies the second position, followed by Georgia. A relative majority of respondents consider these countries as Armenia's friends.

7. Russia is the preferable partner against external enemies and in the Karabakh conflict, and the EU – in the field of science and protection of human rights. In addition, European tourists, students and migrant workers are the most preferable compared to others.
8. Such a high political orientation on Russia is the cause of Armenia's general orientation on the post-Soviet space. Consequently, for the society in practice there is no "post-Soviet" or "Eurasian" choice, but precisely the "Russian" choice in foreign policy.
9. The vast majority of respondents suffer from a lack of awareness about the EU and the CIS/EAEU. An absolute majority even thinks that Armenia is a member of the EU. Nevertheless, if in 2011 both the above had mainly positive image and confidence, in 2014 the trust towards the EU fell down.
10. Despite a widespread unawareness, the vast majority of the Armenia's population is interested in Armenia's relations with both the "West" and "North". Moreover, a vast majority supports Armenia's membership in the EAEU and a relative majority supports country's membership in the EU.
11. The EU has traditionally a positive or neutral image across Armenia's society. However, this positive image is gradually declining, giving rise to a negative one.
12. In the case of a dilemma (option "or-or"), the vast majority of the population (in all age groups) chooses "Northern" direction. However, in the case of absence of a dilemma (option "and-and"), the number of supporters of the synthesis of Armenia's cooperation with the two poles (even Armenia's membership in organizations of both geopolitical spaces) increases. Nevertheless, even in this case, the predominance of the "Northern" factor remains. In general, Armenia has an average support for membership in the EAEU.
13. The number of supporters of the "Northern" direction is higher among the older generation, and the supporters of the "Western" space are mostly young people. However, even a relative majority of young people choose the "Northern" direction in the case of the dilemma of "or-or".

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Abstract

This article focuses on the analysis of foreign policy attitudes and perceptions within Armenia's society. The analysis is based on the comparison and interpretation of results of various quantitative surveys conducted in Armenia from 2009 to 2015. The results of this comparative chronological analysis are compared with the basic principles of official foreign policy, enshrined in the National Security Strategy of Armenia (2007).

In this framework, the core emphasis is placed perceptions of European and Eurasian dimensions of Armenia's foreign policy. The objective of this analysis is to identify the existing and changing features of the foreign policy orientation within Armenia's society.

It is concluded that for Armenia's society there was and is not any “Eurasian”, but only a “Russian” choice: the vast majority of Armenia's population considers relations with Russia as strategic and as based not on economic or socio-cultural, but mainly on political (security) reasons. However, absolute majority also welcomes Armenia's broad cooperation with West, especially with the EU. Moreover, the majority even stands for Armenia's membership in the European Union alongside with the membership in the Eurasian Union.

Key words: Armenia, Public Opinion, European Union, Eurasian Economic Union, Russia, Complementarity