



# Perceptions of interethnic relations and the Holocaust in Romania

National survey

November-December 2021

Research conducted by Studio Twelve SRL

# Methodology

- Target group: the adult, non-institutionalized population of Romania. Data were collected using the CATI (computer-assisted telephone interviewing) method.
- Sample: 1064 interviews. Multistadial cluster sample with random selection of telephone numbers.
- Data collection: 22 November - 2 December 2021.
- The sample was validated based on INSSE 2009 and 2002 population census data. Tolerated error 3% at 95% probability level.
- In order to reduce discrepancies between the sample and the study population, an iterative proportional weighting was applied, taking into account the following characteristics: gender, age, education, occupation, residence, region.

# Main conclusions

- Most respondents are rather neutral towards ethnic minorities. The strongest negative attitudes are towards the Roma.
- The vast majority of respondents believe that the Jewish minority is important for Romania.
- Most respondents define the Holocaust in negative terms, but associate it to a lesser extent with Romania.
- The percentage of those not interested in the Holocaust is almost double that of those interested.
- The main sources of information about the Holocaust are the Internet and television. School plays a smaller role.
- The strongest attributes for Ion Antonescu are: great patriot, great strategist, but also dictator and responsible for crimes against the Roma.
- Almost half of the respondents consider other violent episodes in Romania's history to be as serious as the crimes and persecutions committed against Jews. Only a quarter of respondents considers them more serious.
- The majority of respondents believe that the Holocaust is discussed less than necessary in Romania.
- Most respondents believe that the Legionary Movement was fascist, terrorist, responsible for crimes against the Jews, but also patriotic.

# Results



# Perception of minorities

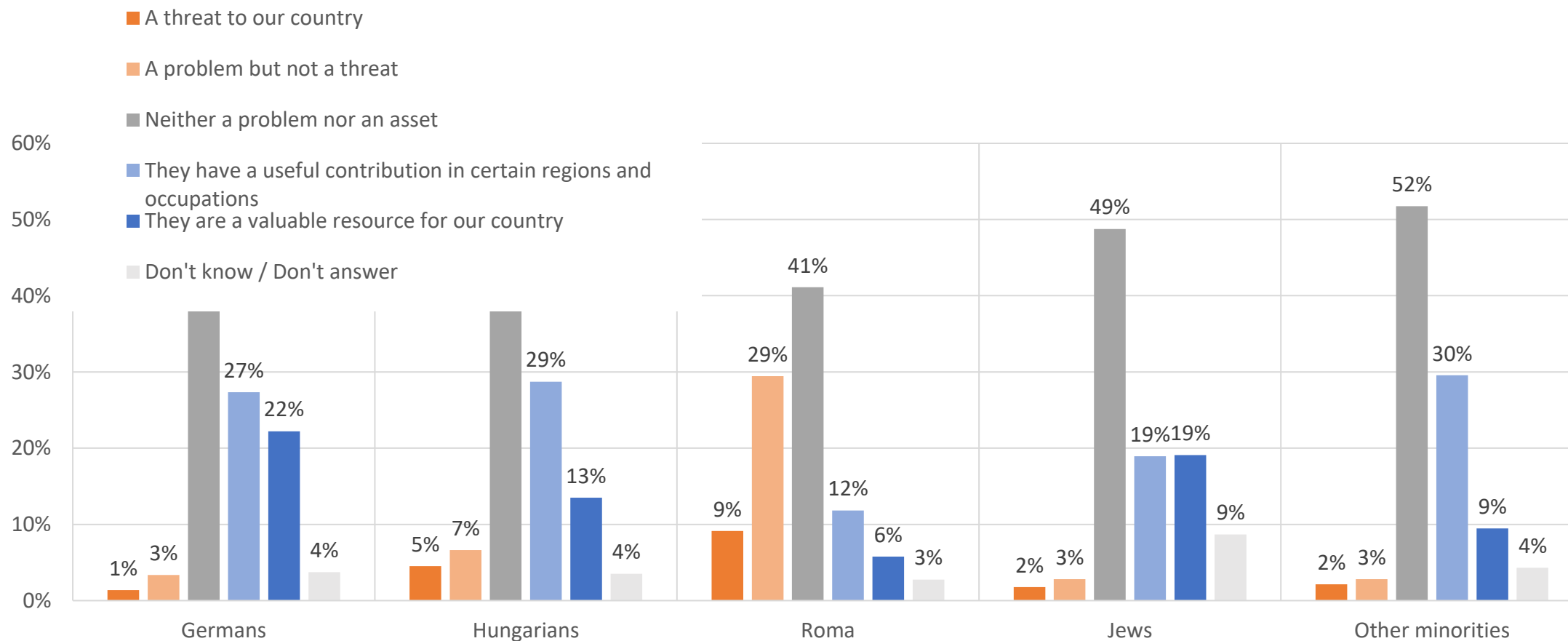
Very few of the respondents consider that Germans, Jews or other ethnic minorities are a threat to Romania. Jews and Germans are perceived to the least extent as a threat to the country. Roma and Hungarians are perceived most as a threat to the country.

Most respondents (29%) see Roma as a problem, not a threat.

Germans are seen most as a valuable resource for the country. The Roma are perceived to the least extent as a valuable resource.

The strongest negative attitudes are directed towards the Roma.

**Q1 – If you consider the minorities in our country, you would say that ... [APPLIES TO EACH MINORITY] in our country are a threat, a problem but not a threat, neither a problem nor an asset, have a useful contribution in certain regions and occupations, or are a valuable resource to our country?**



# Status of minorities in Romania

Most of the respondents affirm that ethnic minorities have the same rights as the majority population.

The minority perceived by most respondents as having more (or much more) rights is the Roma (followed by Hungarians and Germans).

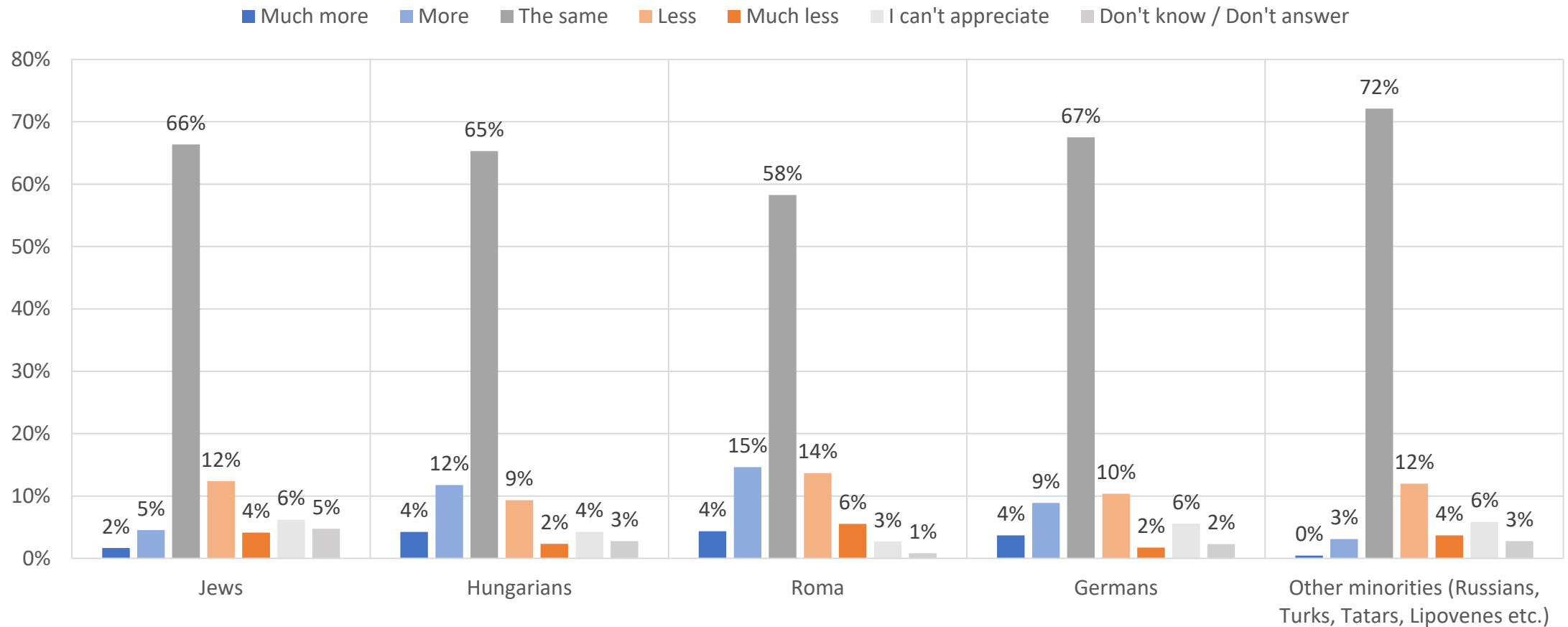
At the same time, the Roma minority is perceived as having fewer (or much fewer) rights, followed by the Jews.

The two categories of perceptions regarding Roma rights are relatively evenly split across the sample.

The biggest difference between those that consider the minority to have more (or much more), respectively less (or much less) rights regards the Jews. In other words, there are more respondents considering that the Jews have fewer rights, than those considering that they have more.

The situation is reversed for Hungarians: there are more who believe they have more rights than those who claim they have fewer.

## Q2 – You currently believe that the following minorities living in Romania have rights in relation to the majority population:

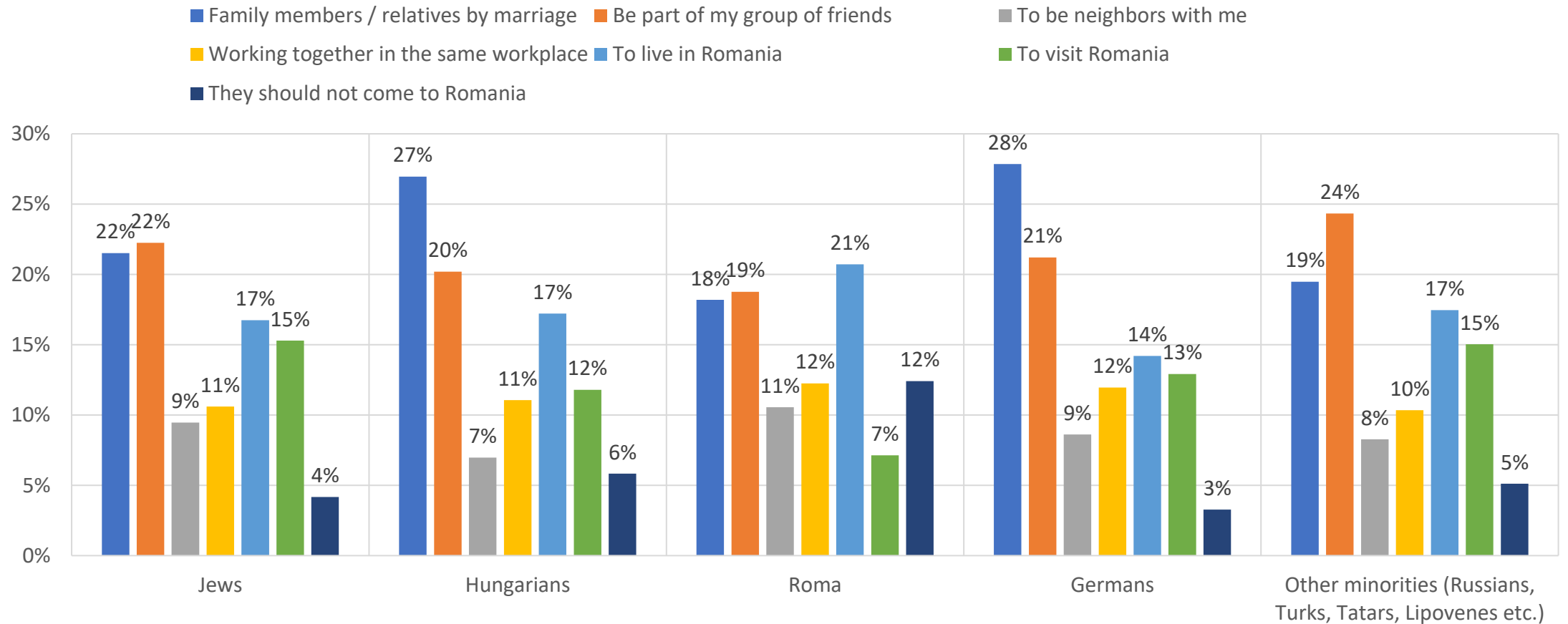




# Proximity to minorities

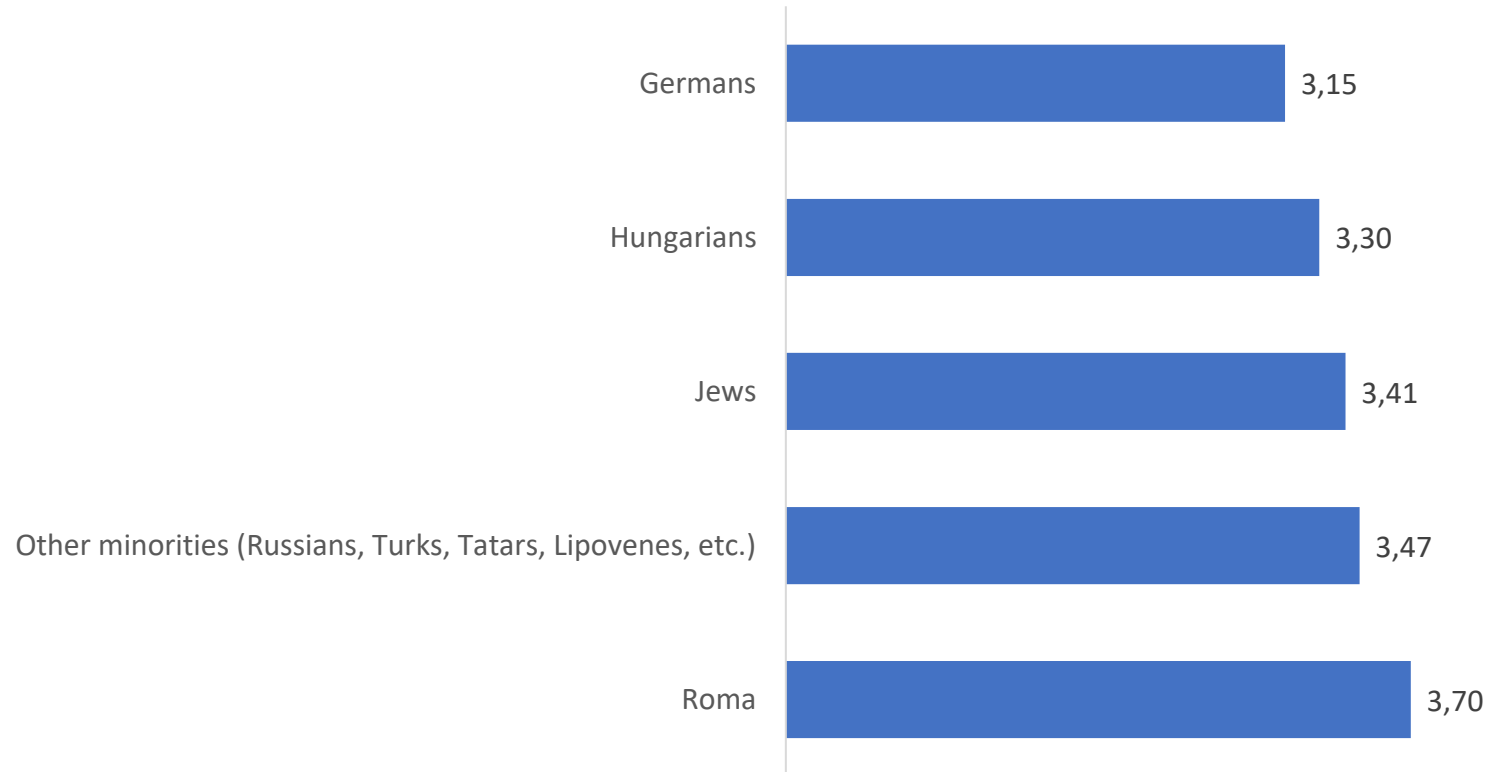
- Social distance scale- the main conclusion is that in general the Roma are the least accepted. The percentage of those who believe that "they should not come to Romania" is high.
- The most accepted ethnic minorities as family members/relatives by marriage are Germans and Hungarians.
- At the other end of the spectrum are the Roma and other minorities.
- Hungarians are the least accepted as neighbours.

# Q3 – What would be the closest relationship you would accept with people from the following minorities?



# Social distance scale

What would be the closest relationship you would accept with people from the following minorities?  
Medium



The scores presented are averages of the responses across the entire sample.

The scale has a minimum value of 1 (which means the minimum distance from that ethnic group - all answers are coded 1: "Family members / relatives by marriage") and a maximum value of 7 (maximum distance from that ethnic group - all answers are coded 7: "Should not come to Romania").

# Attitudes towards the JEWS

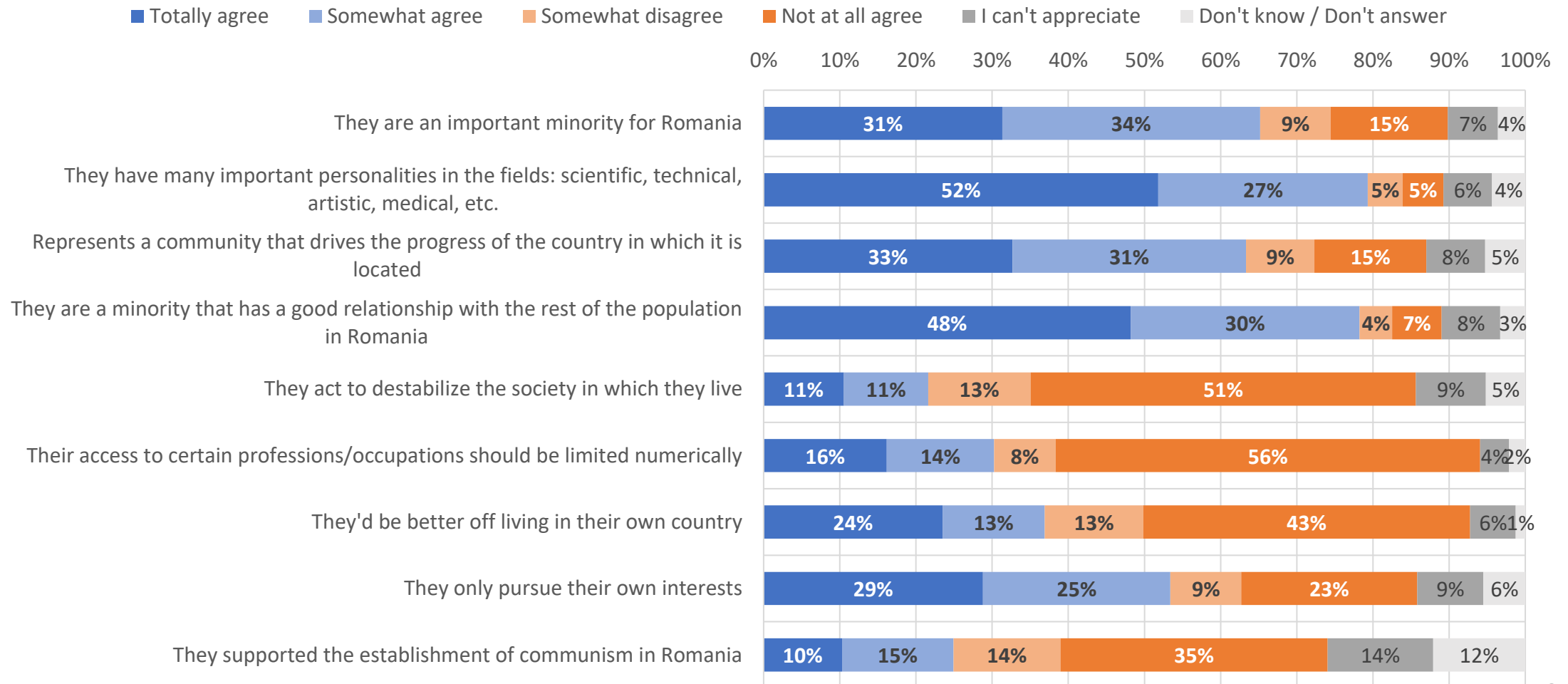
The vast majority of respondents believe that the Jewish minority is important for Romania, has important personalities in various fields, contributes to the progress of the country and does not seek to destabilise it.

However, 54% of respondents believe that Jews are only pursuing their own interests, that it would be better for them to live in their own country (37%) or that they should be restricted from certain professions/occupations (30%).

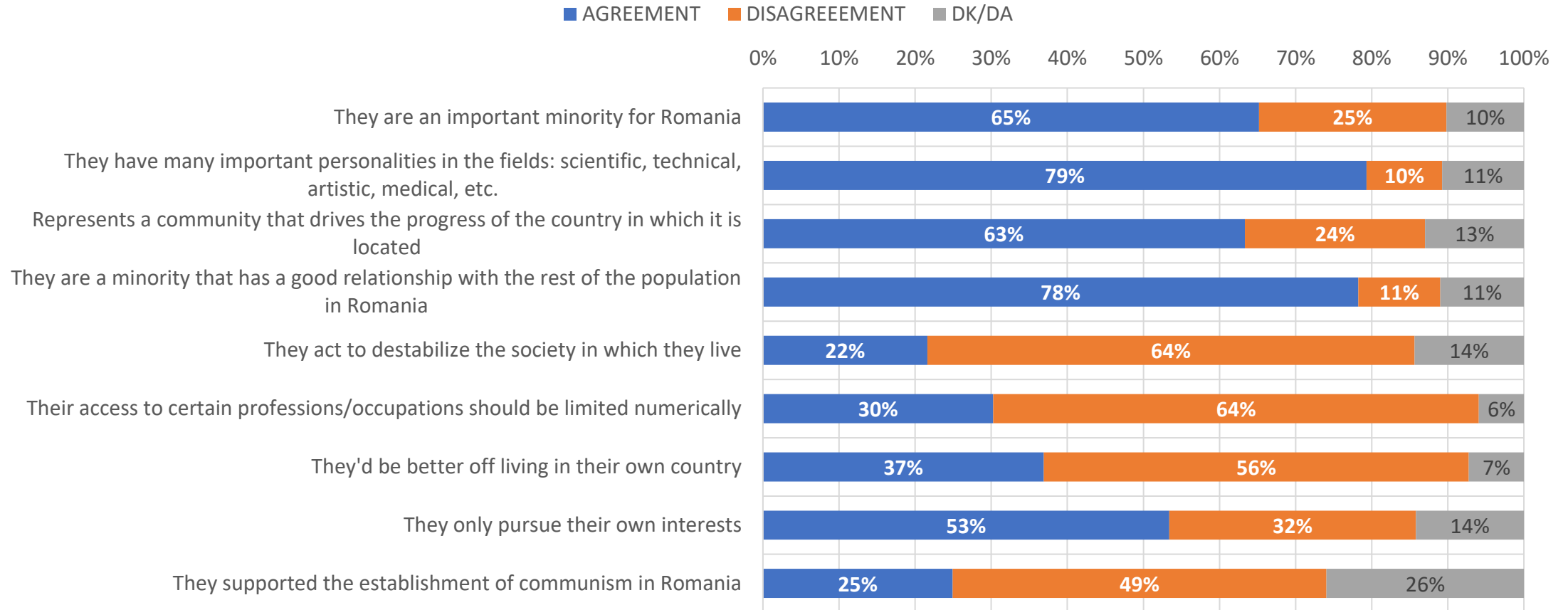
Beyond the existence of some socially desirable responses, there can also be identified the existence of anti-Semitic prejudice.

Those who believe that Jews act to destabilise the society in which they live represent a minority (22%). This minority is over-represented among young people (18-29), those with primary education, those with populist views, those who rarely (once a month or less) watch TV news, those who write daily or several times a week comments at the end of online articles.

# Q4 – If we now refer only to the JEWS, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



# Synthesis - Agreement vs Disagreement?



# Attitudes towards the HOLOCAUST

27% of respondents associate the Holocaust with the extermination of Jews during World War II.

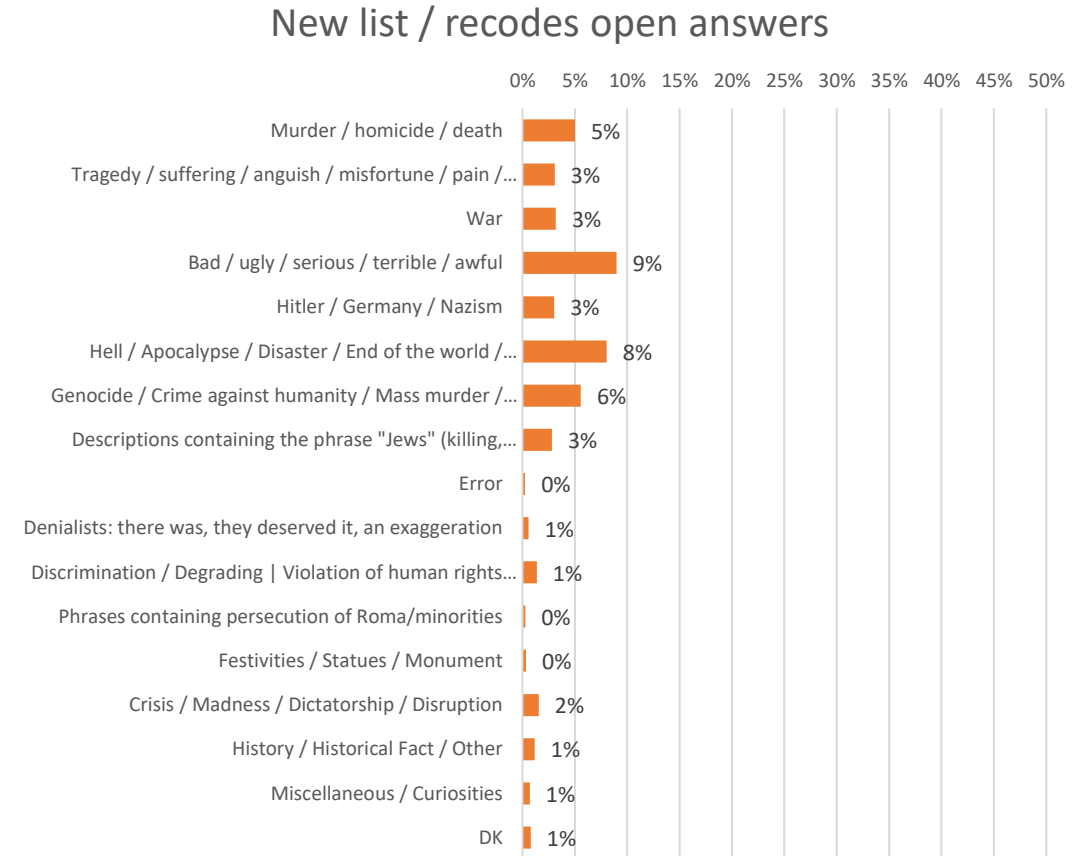
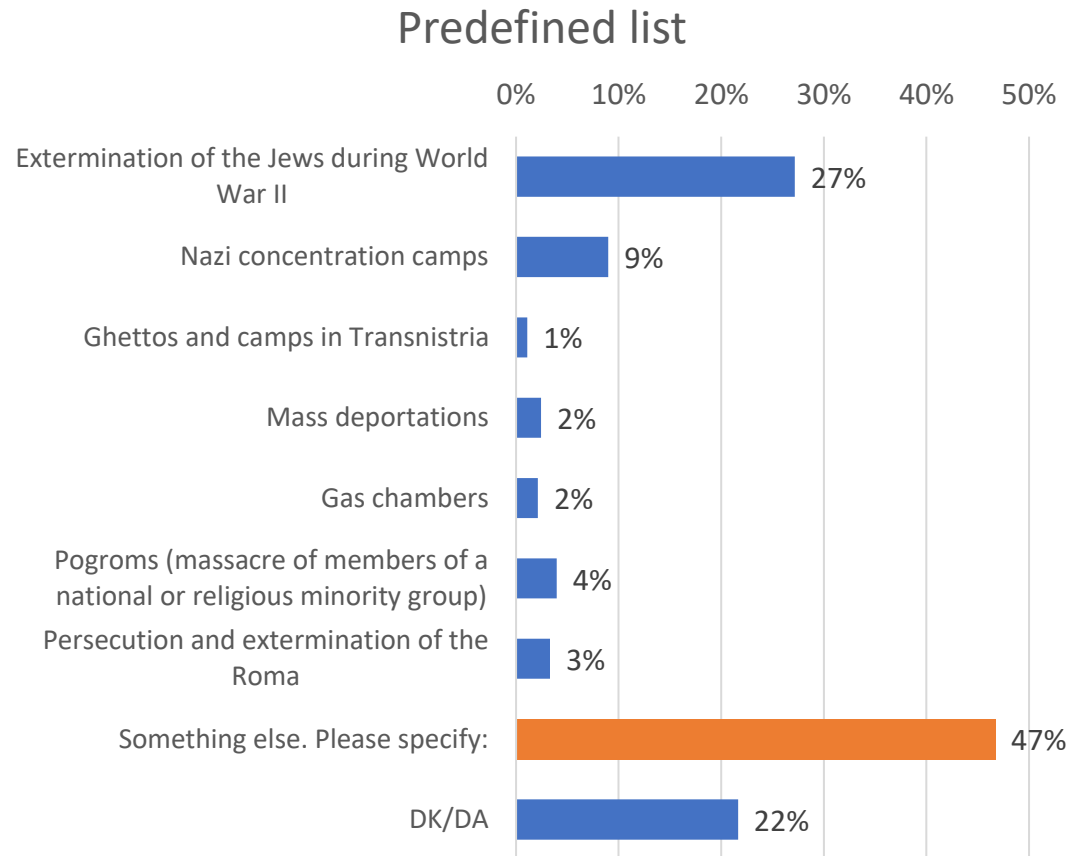
A significant percentage of the respondents (22%) choose "Don't know/Don't answer" when asked what they think of when they hear the term Holocaust.

The lower the level of education and age, the harder it is for the respondents to associate the Holocaust with something they consider defining.

In addition to the Jews, Roma are considered the main victims of the Holocaust. However, most respondents (42%) cannot name other victims of the Holocaust.

65% of the respondents believe that the Holocaust happened in Germany, 52% in other countries and only 32% believe it happened in Romania.

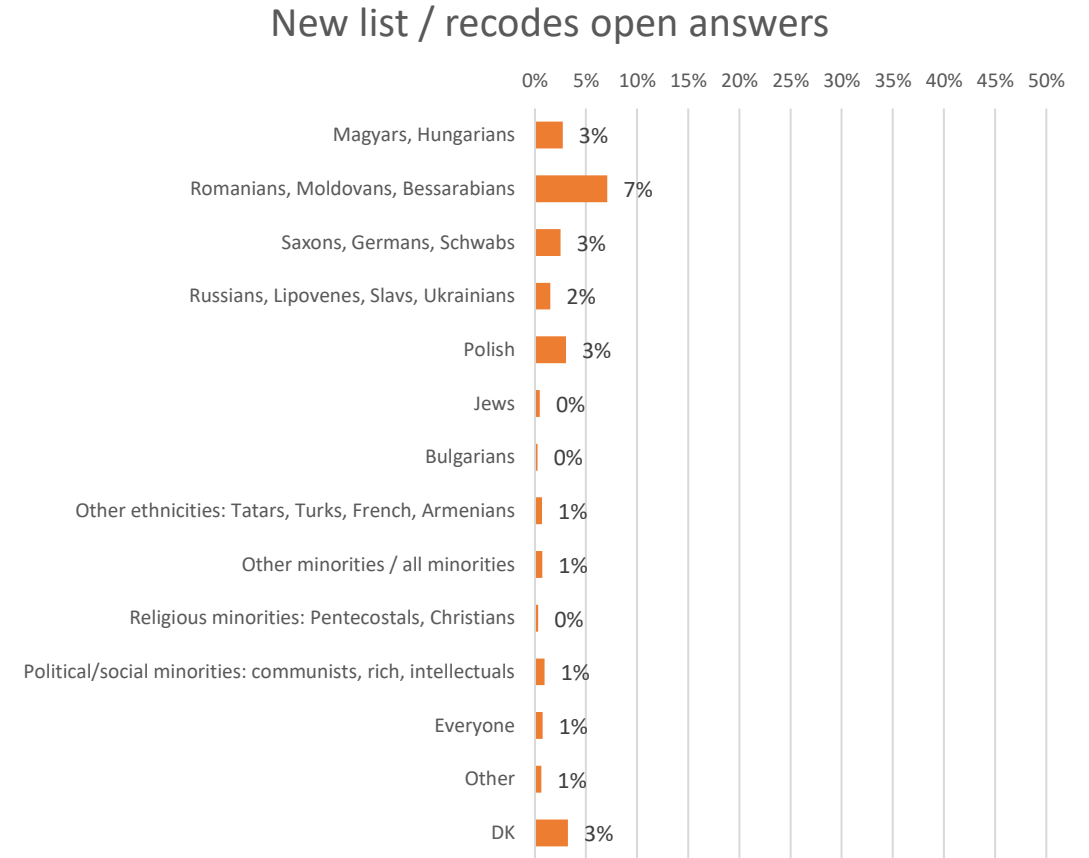
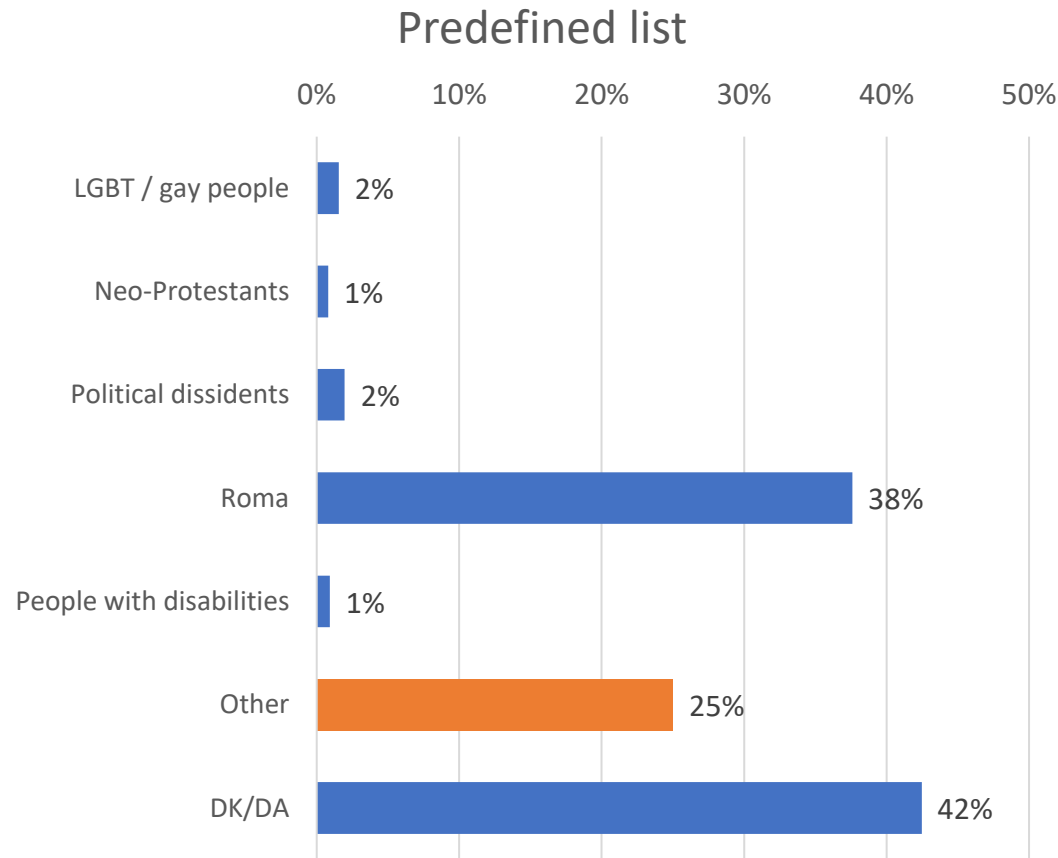
# Q5 – Please tell me what you think of when you hear the term HOLOCAUST?



Note: The percentages in the first graph exceed 100% because each response was recorded separately, as one person may have more than one spontaneous response. The second graph is obtained only by recoding the responses of those who gave a different answer from the pre-coded list. The sum of the percentages of the second graph is 47%, those who were pre-coded as saying "other".

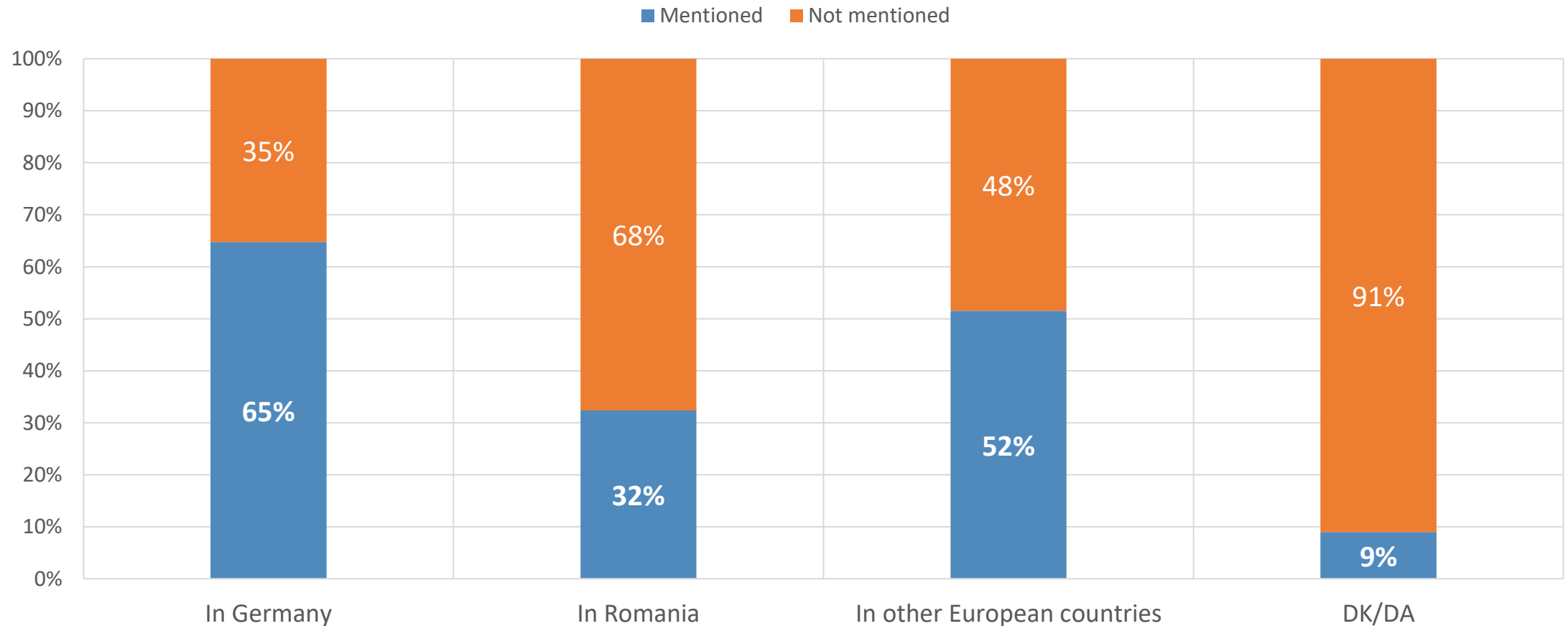


# Q5a – Can you list, besides Jews, other victims of the Holocaust in Romania?



*Note: The percentages in the first graph exceed 100% because each response was recorded separately, as one person may have more than one spontaneous response. The second graph is obtained only by recoding the answers of those who gave a different answer from the pre-coded list. The sum of the percentages of the second graph is 27%, those who were pre-coded as saying "others".*

**Q6 – If you think that the term HOLOCAUST means the systematic state-organized persecution and extermination of European Jews by Nazi Germany, its allies and collaborators between 1933 and 1945, you believe that this happened:**



# Subsample (32%). Those who believe the Holocaust happened in Romania

Most respondents identify the Holocaust in Romania with the deportation of the Jews to Nazi camps and the confiscation of property. Pogroms and mass executions are the least (24% and 25% respectively) identified with the Holocaust.

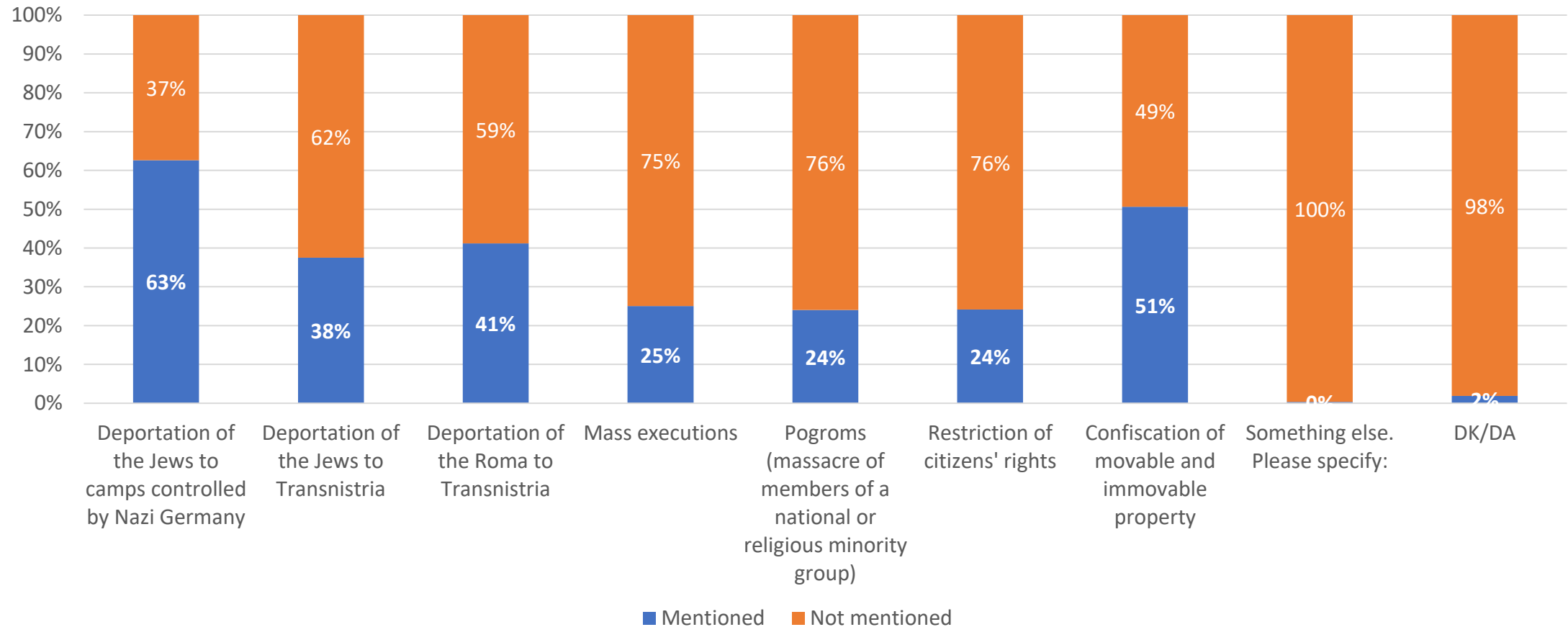
The main responsibility for the outbreak of the Holocaust in Romania lies outside the country - Nazi Germany (53%).

Internally, responsibility for the Holocaust lies with Ion Antonescu (69%), the Legionary Movement (66%), the Romanian government of 1940-1944 (59%) and the anti-Semitic press/literature (53%).

The main cause for the anti-Semitic policy of the Antonescu government, but also for the deportation of the Roma is considered to be German influence on the Romanian government.

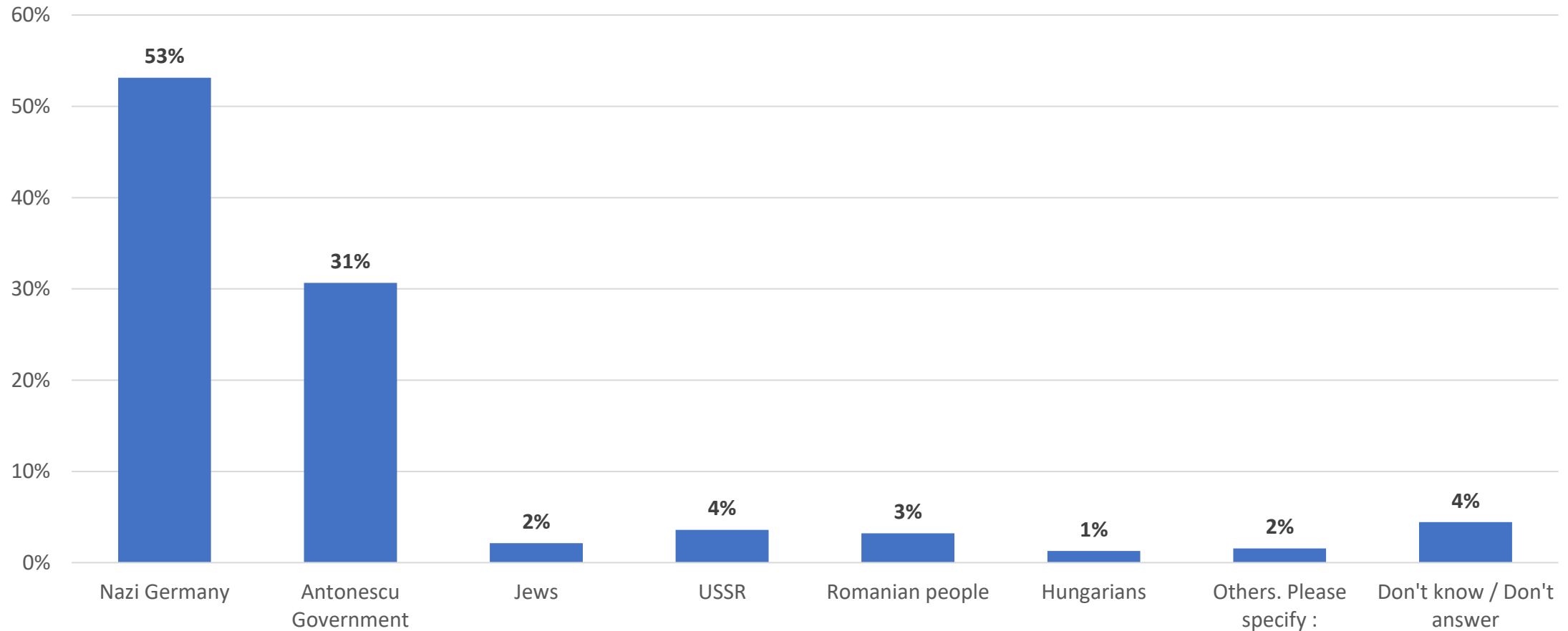
It is worth noting that while in the case of the anti-Semitic policy the option "anti-Semitism of government decision-makers" is accepted by 24% of respondents, in the case of Roma deportation the same option ("racism of government decision-makers") is accepted by 48%.

## Q7 – What was the HOLOCAUST in Romania? Please indicate 3 main actions during the Holocaust.



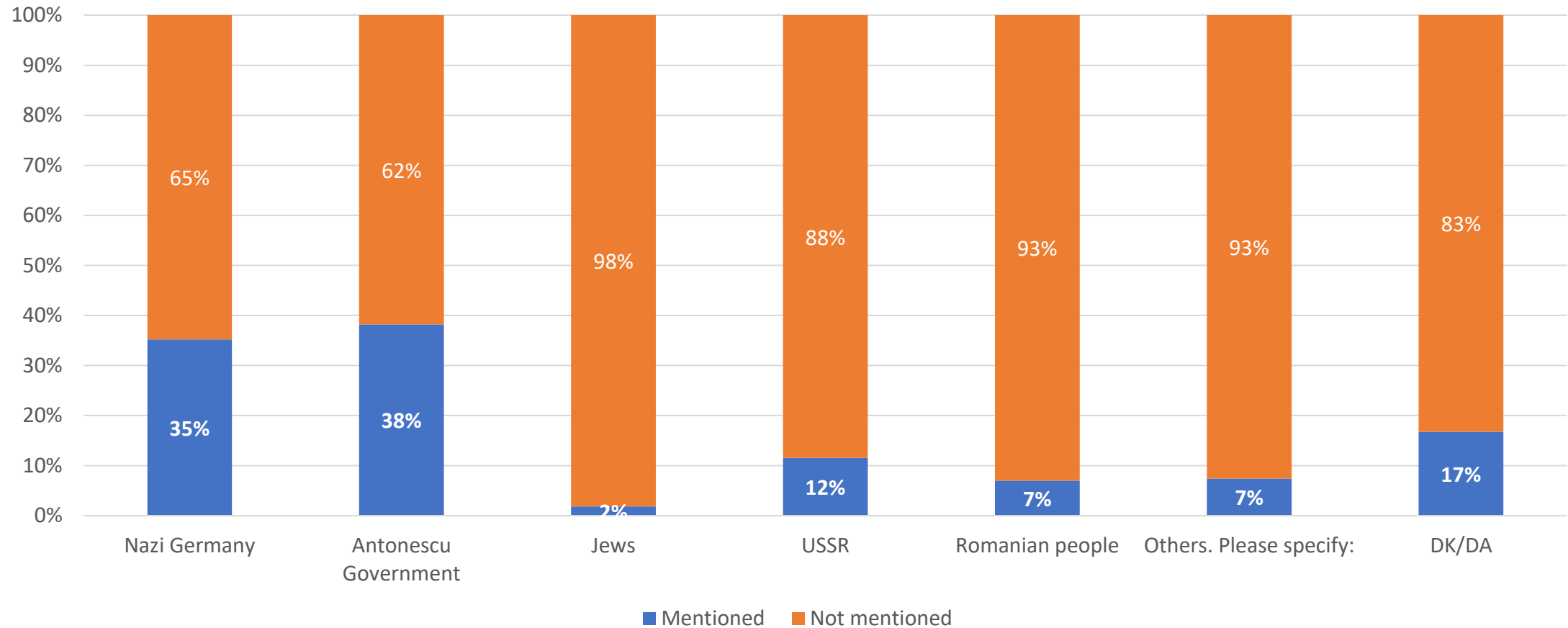
*Note: Percentages calculated from those who were asked, i.e. those who answered Q6 that the Holocaust took place in Romania. N=345*

## Q8 - Who do you think was mainly responsible for the outbreak of the HOLOCAUST in Romania?



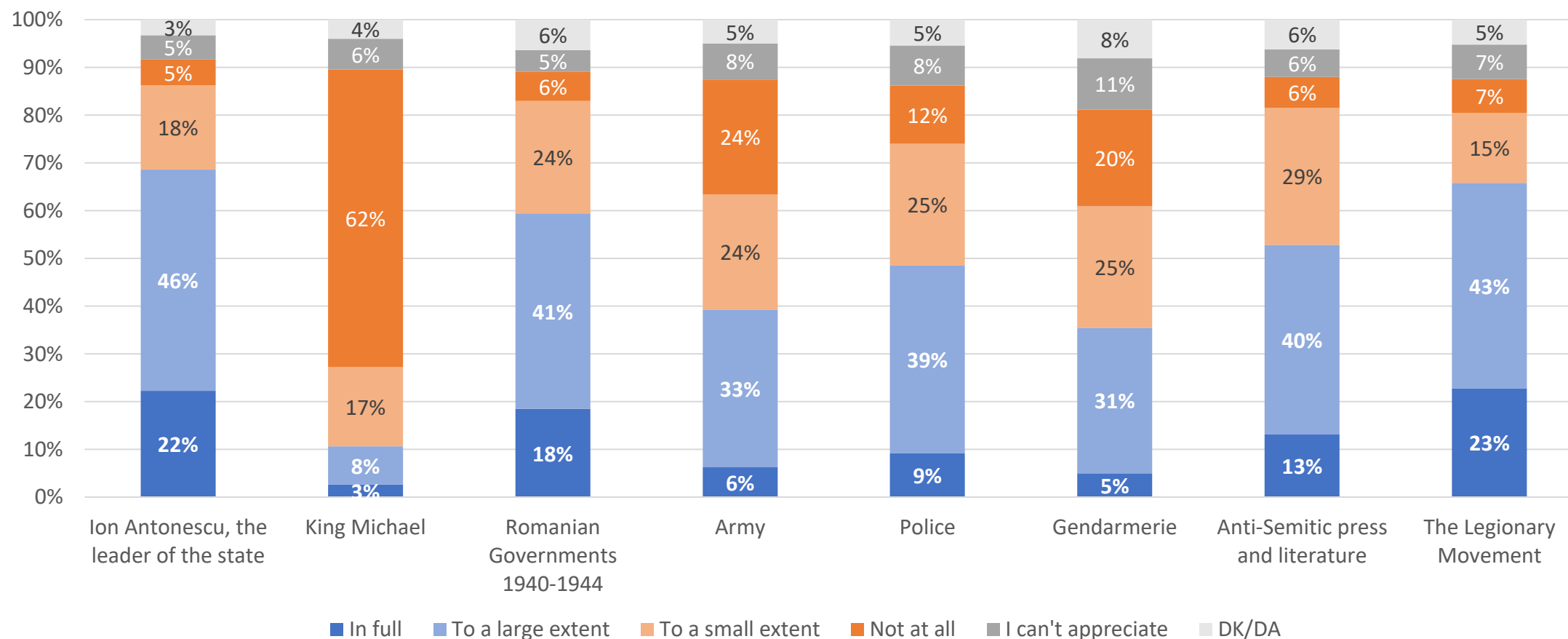
*Note: Percentages calculated from those who were asked, i.e. those who answered Q6 that the Holocaust took place in Romania. N=345*

## Q9 – Were there other perpetrators?



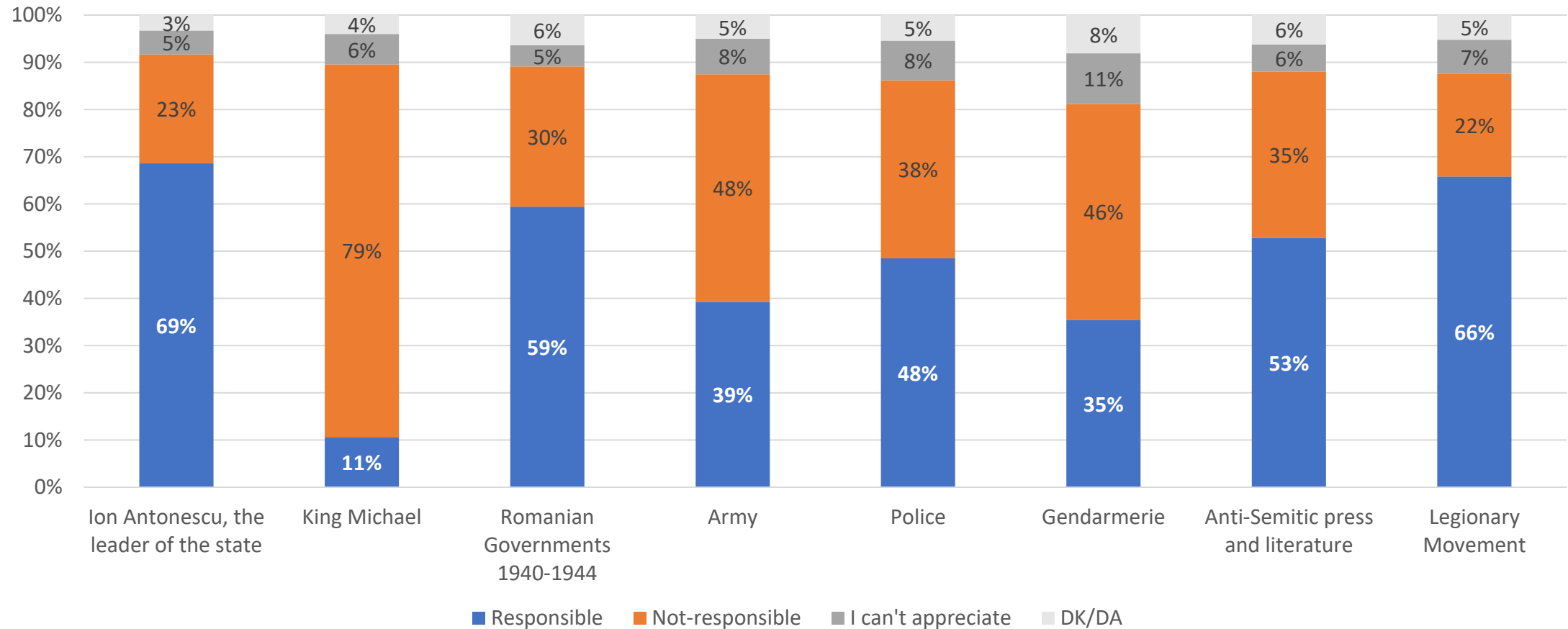
*Note: Percentages calculated from those who were asked, i.e. those who answered Q6 that the Holocaust took place in Romania. N=345*

# Q10. To what extent do you think the following categories were responsible for the Holocaust in Romania?



*Note: Percentages calculated from those who were asked, i.e. those who answered Q6 that the Holocaust took place in Romania. N=345*

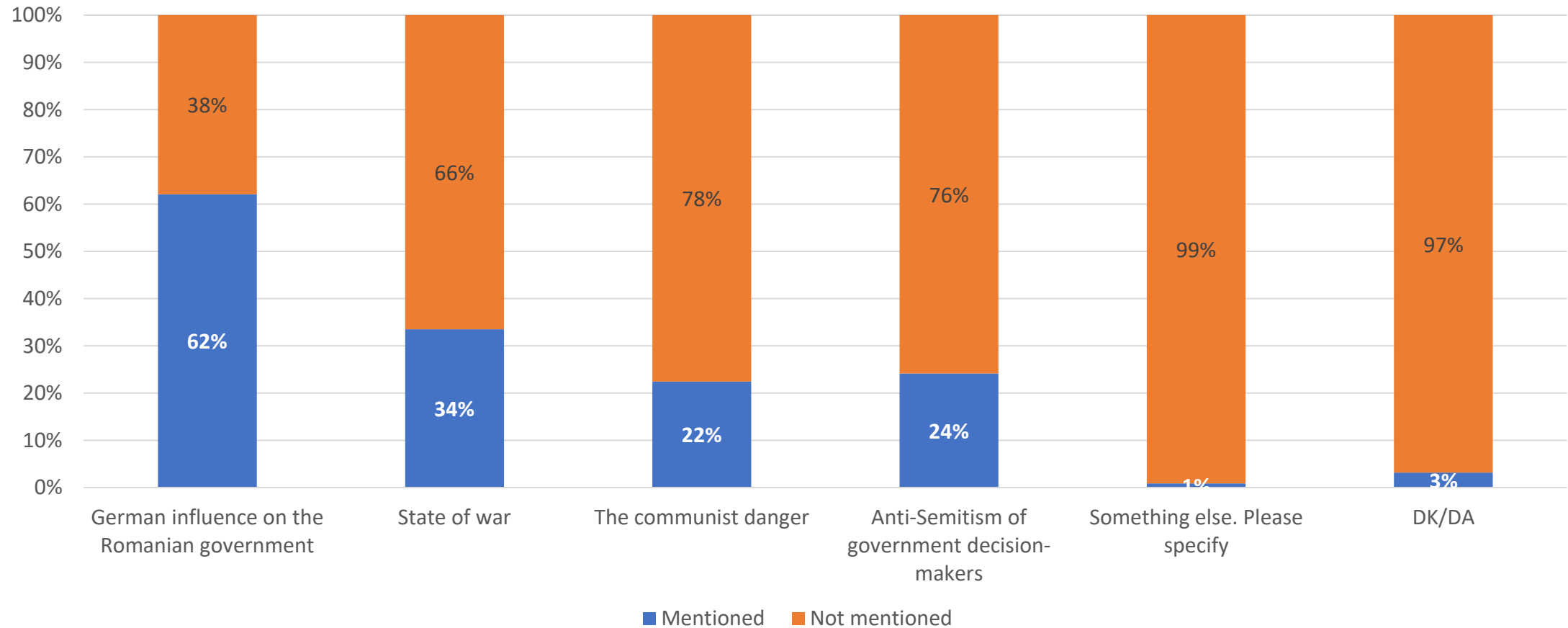
# SYNTHESIS. To what extent do you think the following categories were responsible for the Holocaust in Romania?



*Note: Percentages calculated from those who were asked, i.e. those who answered Q6 that the Holocaust took place in Romania. N=345*

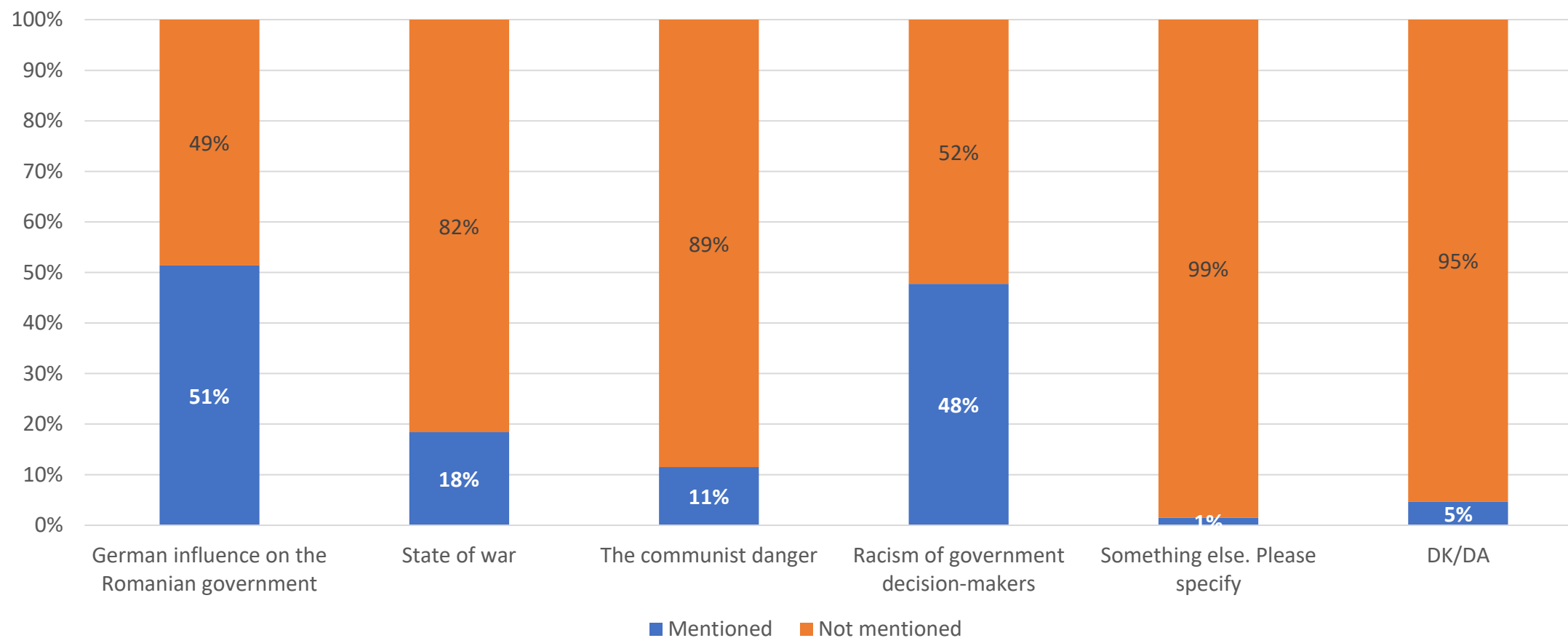


# Q11. What do you think were the causes behind the anti-Semitic policy of the Antonescu government?



*Note: Percentages calculated from those who were asked, i.e. those who answered Q6 that the Holocaust took place in Romania. N=345*

## Q12. What do you think were the reasons behind the Antonescu government's decision to deport the Roma?



*Note: Percentages calculated from those who were asked, i.e. those who answered Q6 that the Holocaust took place in Romania. N=345*

# Holocaust interest, sources of information, knowledge

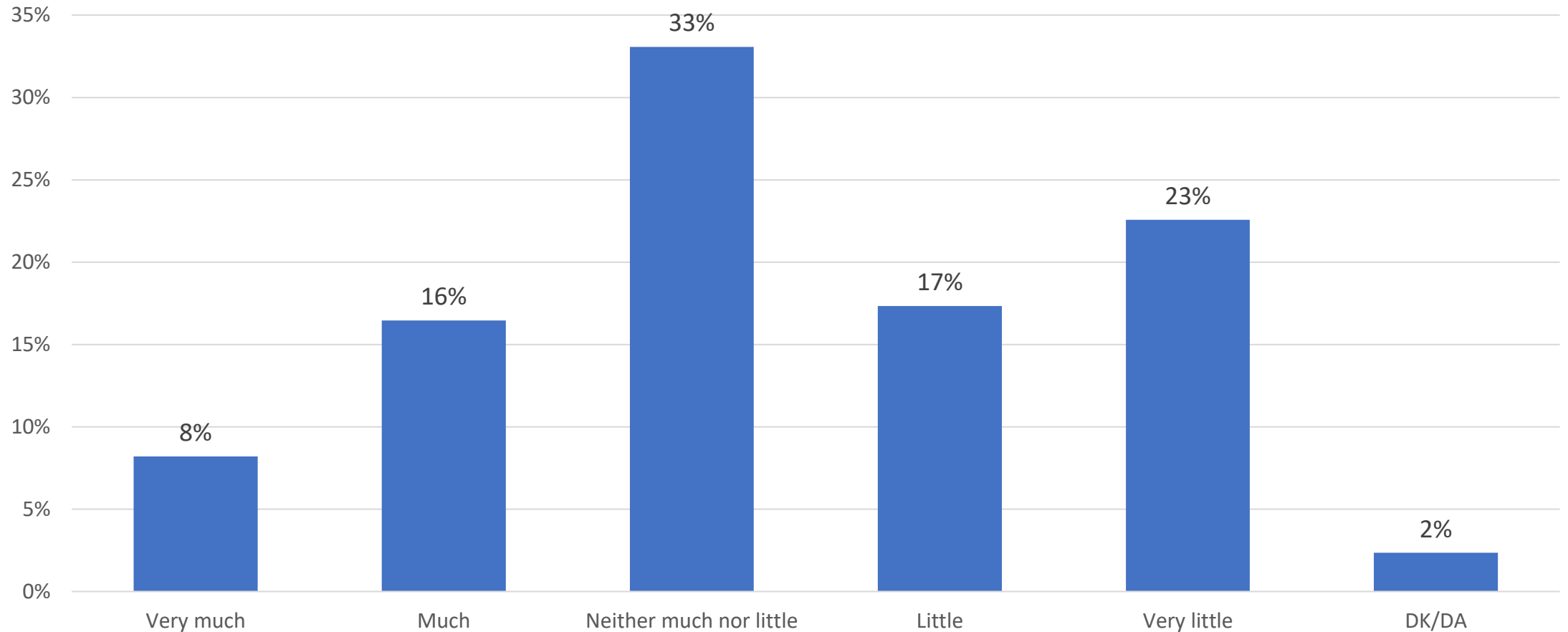
The percentage of those disinterested in the Holocaust is almost double that of those interested. Among those who are very and very much interested in the Holocaust, there are over-represented those with a primary education, those who get their information from TV and the Internet, and those with residence in medium and large urban areas.

The main sources of information are the Internet and Television. As a source of information about the Holocaust, schools play a minor role.

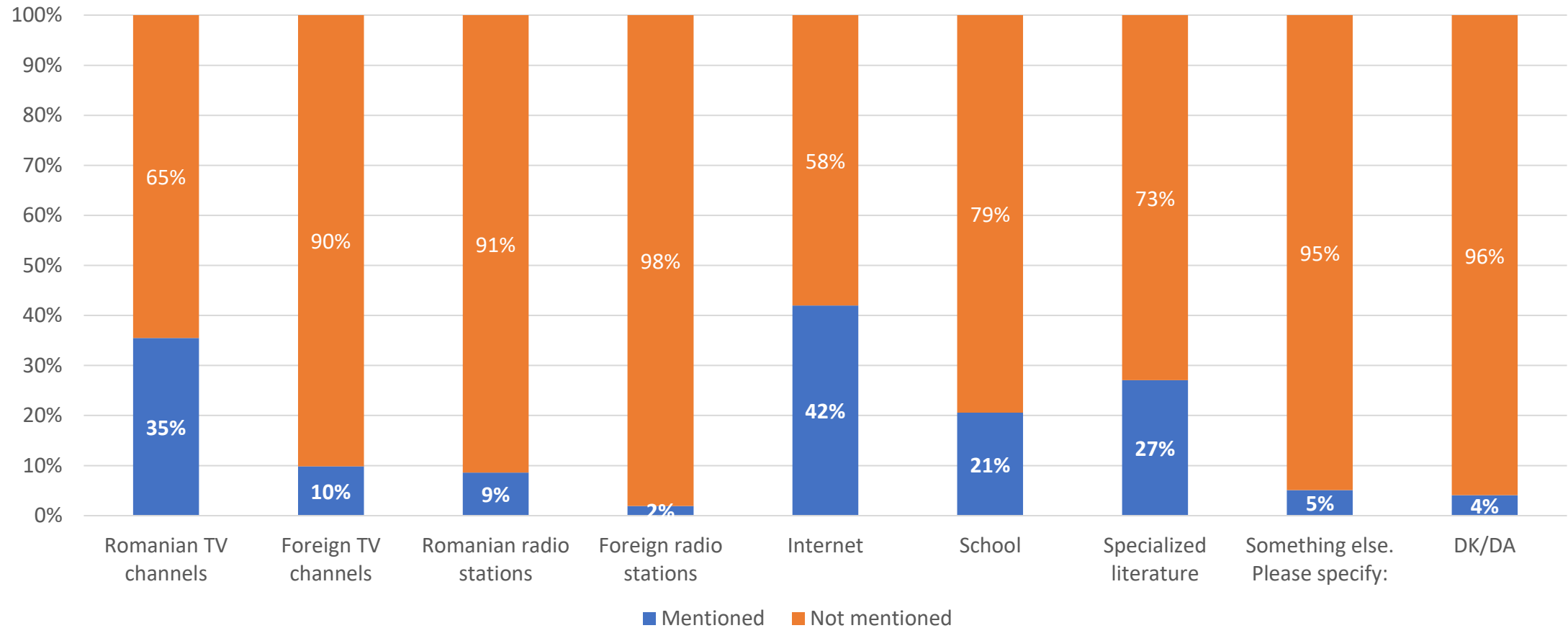
The majority of the respondents do not know that Romania has a national Holocaust memorial day. Of those who say there is a national Holocaust memorial day, a very large proportion cannot say when it is. Among those who do not know that there is a national Holocaust memorial day in Romania, the following categories are over-represented: women, those with primary education, those from Transylvania, those with residence in medium and very large urban areas.

*Note: Percentages calculated from the total sample.*

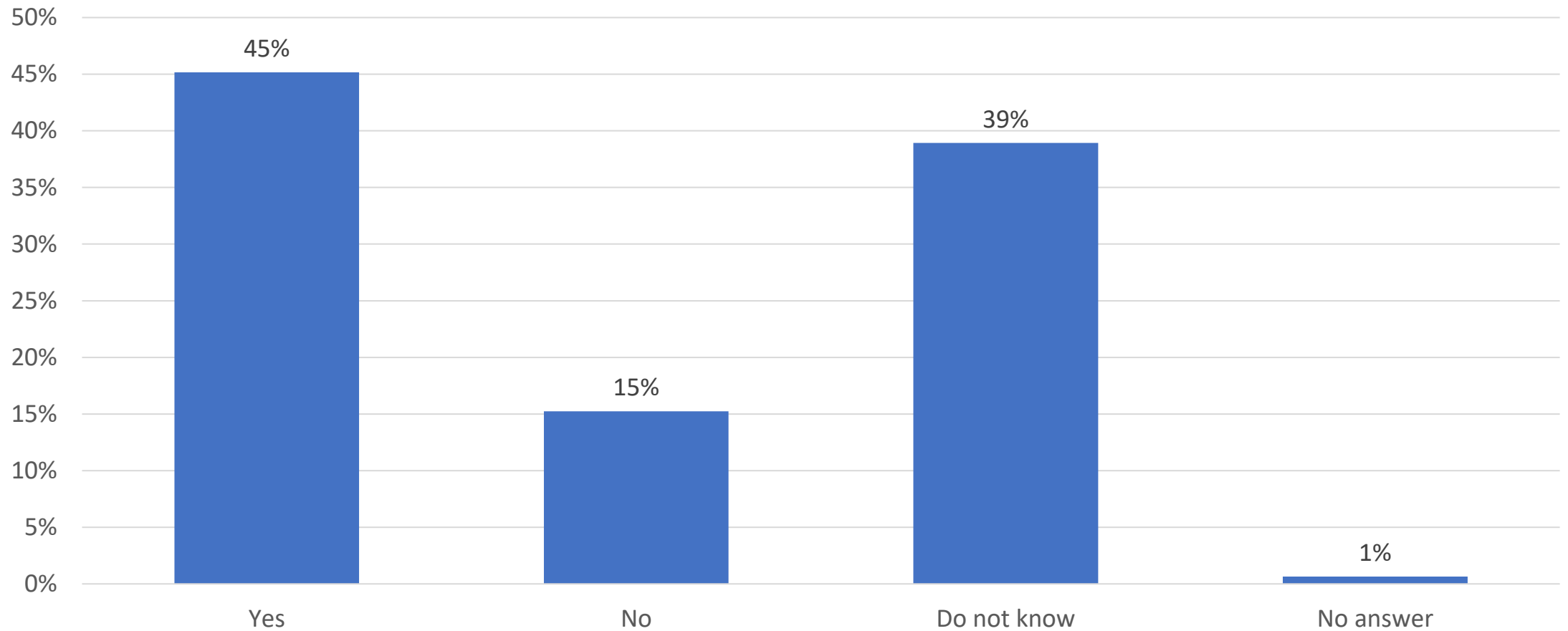
# Q13. How much are you interested in the HOLOCAUST topic?



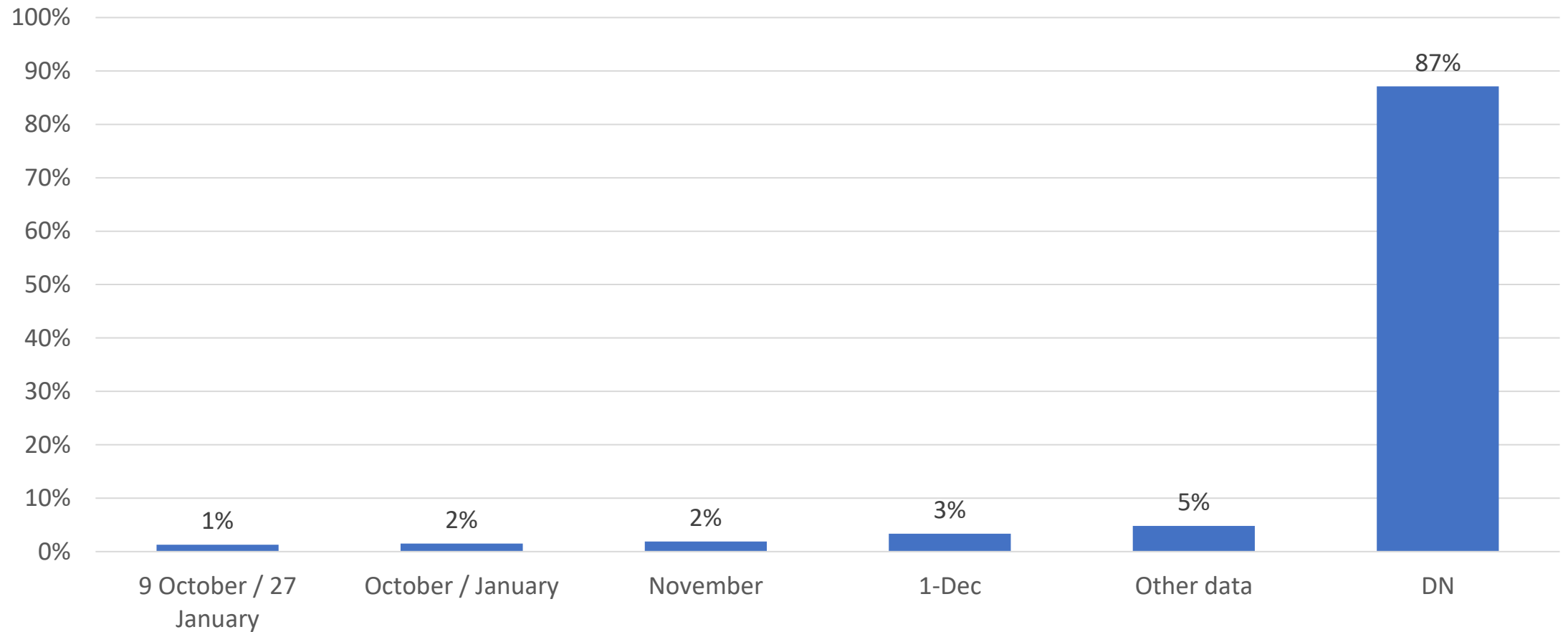
## Q14. Where do you get your information on the HOLOCAUST?



# Q15 -Is there a national HOLOCAUST Remembrance Day in Romania?



# Q16 - Please tell me what that date is?



*Note: Percentages calculated from those who were asked, i.e. those who answer Q15 that there is a Holocaust Remembrance Day in Romania. N=481*

# Perceptions - Ion Antonescu

The majority of the respondents (59%) believe that Antonescu was a "great patriot". There is a mix of responses, where different attitudes are evident.

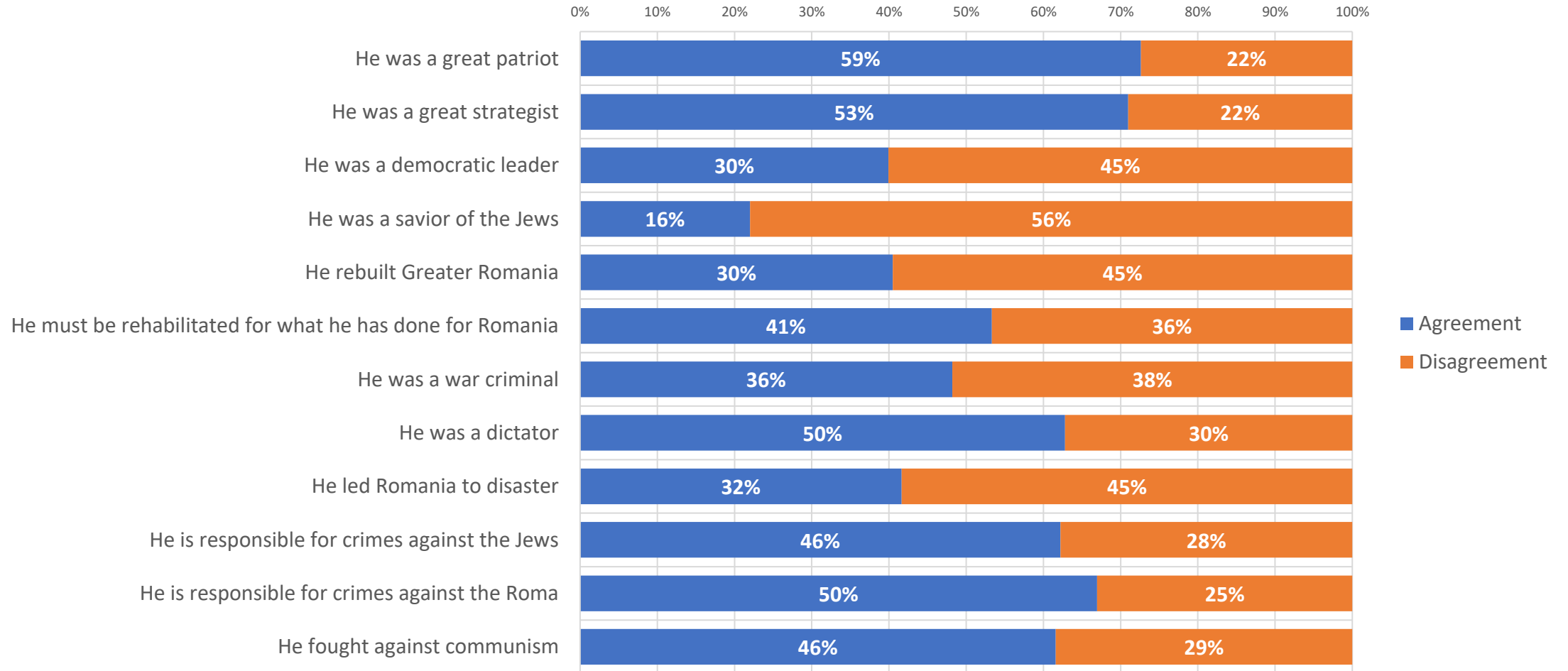
45% of the respondents disagree with the statement that Antonescu was "a democratic leader". Among them are mainly those over 45 years old. A significant percentage of young people consider Antonescu "a democratic leader".

The majority of the respondents do not consider Antonescu "a saviour of the Jews". These are mostly men, over 45 years old, with higher education. Young people with primary education are the main category of respondents who tend to accept the assertion that Antonescu was "a saviour of the Jews".

*Note: Percentages calculated from the total sample.*



## Q17. Attributes - Ion Antonescu



# Holocaust, other violent episodes in Romanian history

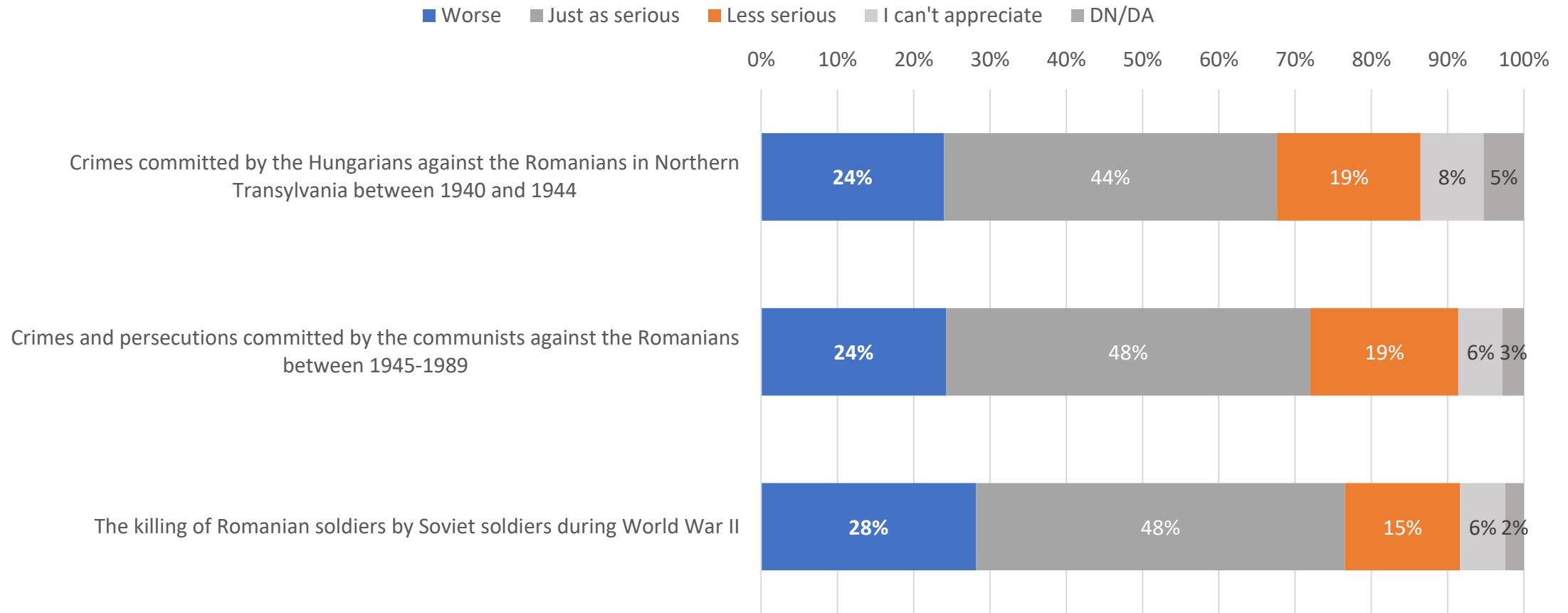
More than half of the respondents believe that other violent episodes in Romania's history are as serious or more serious than the crimes and persecutions committed against Jews. A quarter of the respondents consider them more serious.

At the same time, significantly fewer people believe that the Holocaust was more critical than the mentioned events.

Most of those who regard the events mentioned as equally serious have higher education.

*Note: Percentages calculated from the total sample.*

## Q20. I am going to read you a series of violent episodes in the history of Romania and ask you to tell me how serious they are compared to the crimes and persecutions committed against the Jews during the Holocaust in Romania?



# Political parties - anti-Semitism

AUR is the political party most often mentioned as having anti-Semitic messages and PMP the least.

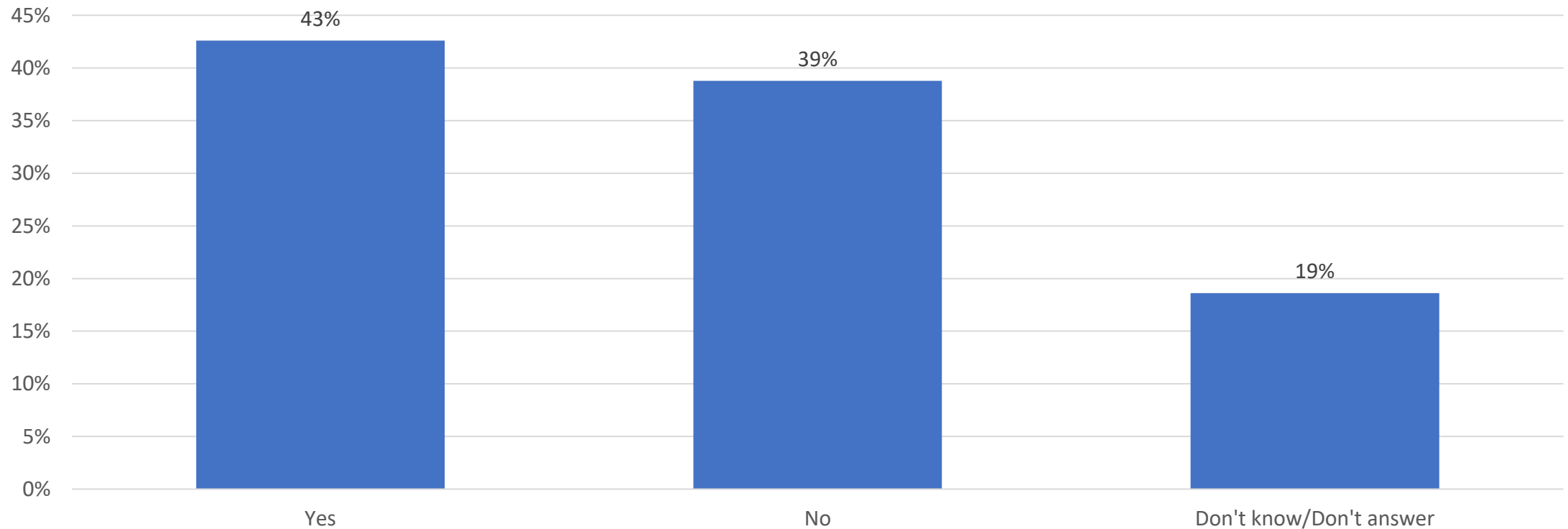
PSD and PNL are more often mentioned (16%) as having antisemitic messages, compared to USR (11%) or UDMR (9%).

Many also say they do not know or do not answer the question (almost 30%).

*Note: Percentages calculated from the total sample.*

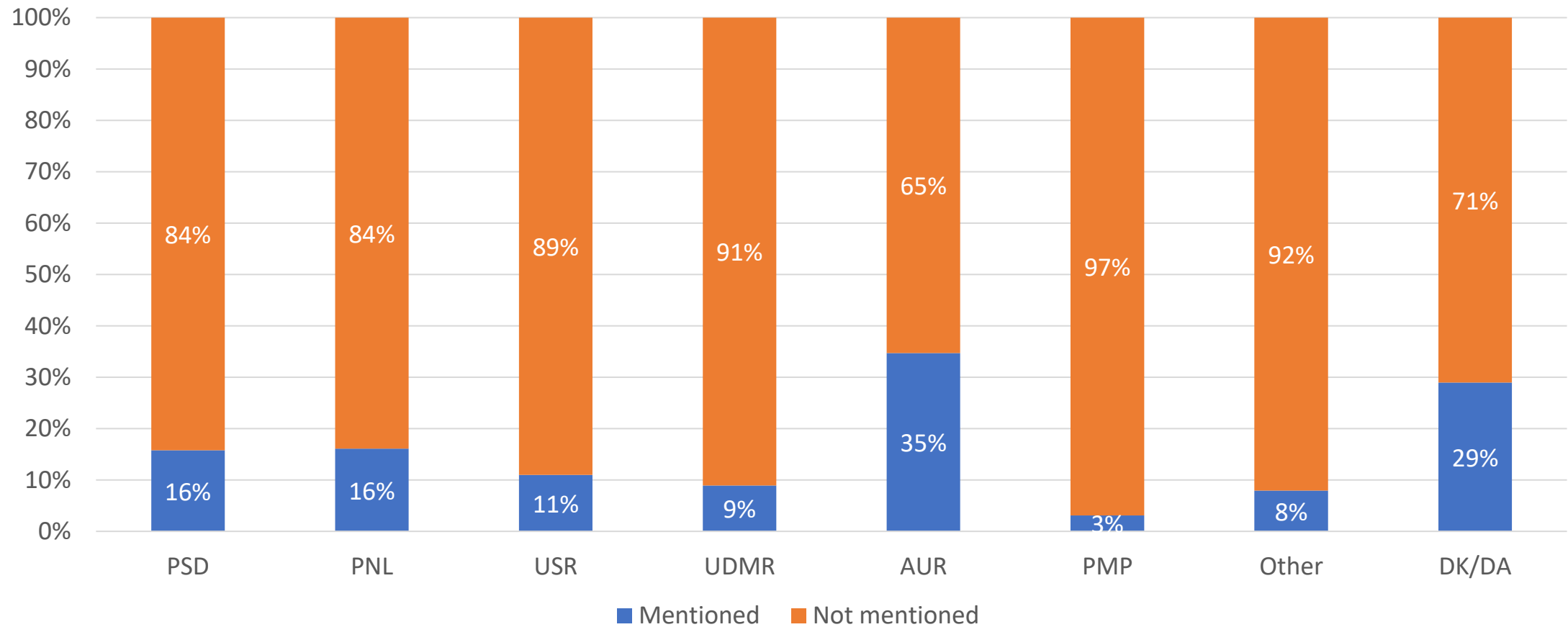
# Political parties - with anti-Semitic message

Q18 - In your opinion, are there any political parties or formations with anti-Semitic messages in Romania at the moment?



*Note: Percentages calculated from the total sample.*

## Q19. Which are these parties?



*Note: Percentages calculated from those who were asked, i.e. those who answered Q18 that there are parties with an anti-Semitic message in Romania.*

# Perceptions - Holocaust

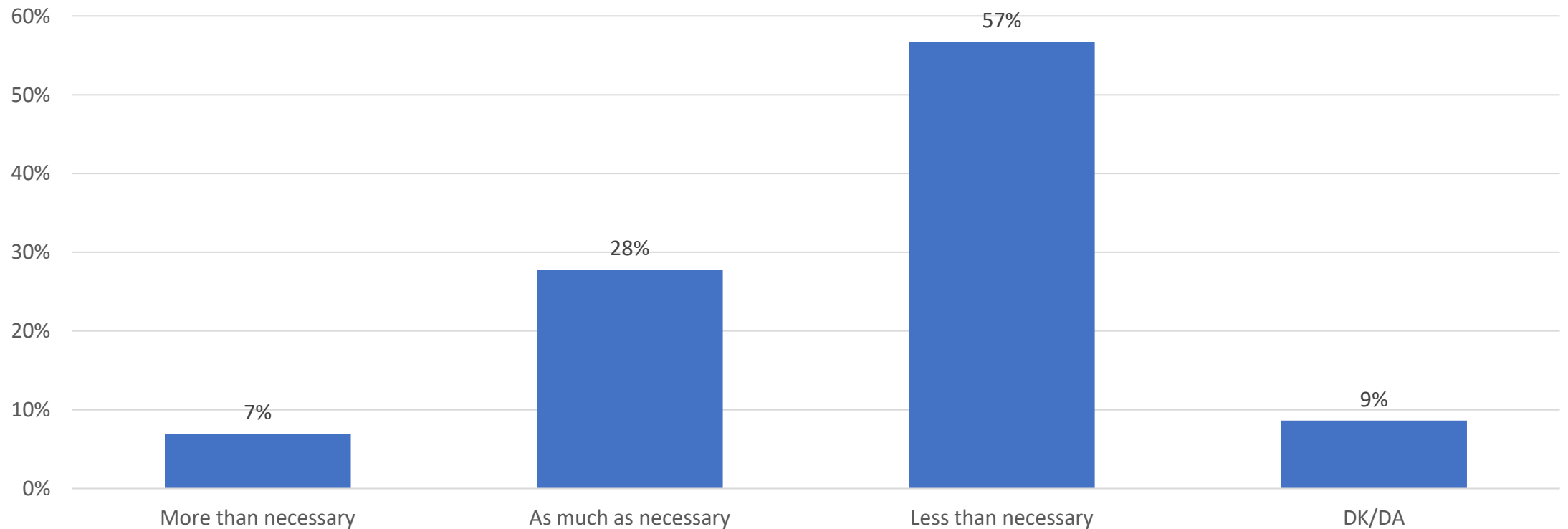
The majority of the respondents believe that the Holocaust is discussed less than necessary in Romania.

Those up to 44 years old and with primary education are over-represented among those who feel that the Holocaust is less discussed than necessary.

*Note: Percentages calculated from the total sample.*

# Perceptions - Holocaust

Q21 - Do you think that in Romania the Holocaust is discussed more than necessary, as much as necessary or less than necessary?





# Perceptions - Jews and the Holocaust

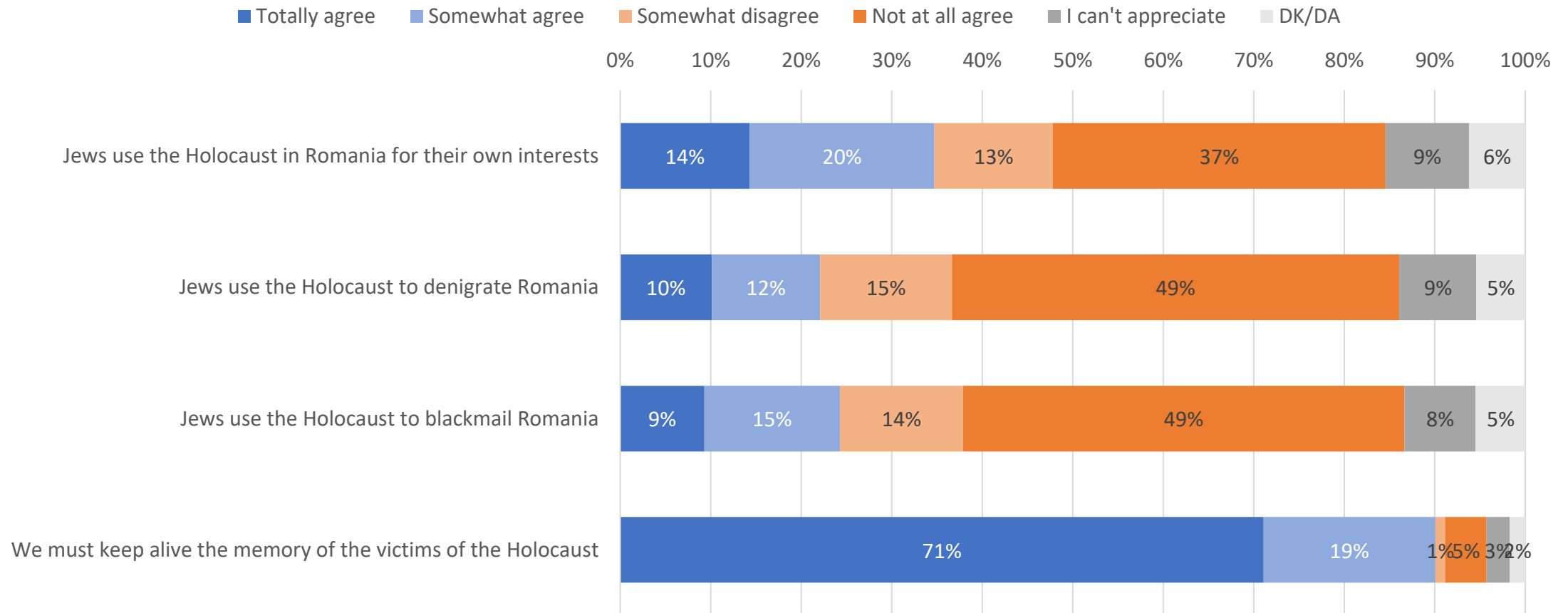
The vast majority of the respondents (90%) believe that "we must keep alive the memory of the victims of the Holocaust".

Among those who believe that Jews are using the Holocaust in Romania for their own interests, young people (18-29 years old), those with populist views, those from Bucharest and the large countryside, the unemployed and farmers are over-represented.

Education, populist attitudes and age greatly influence responses for this category.

*Note: Percentages calculated from the total sample.*

# Q22 -To what extent do you agree with the following statements about Jews and the Holocaust?

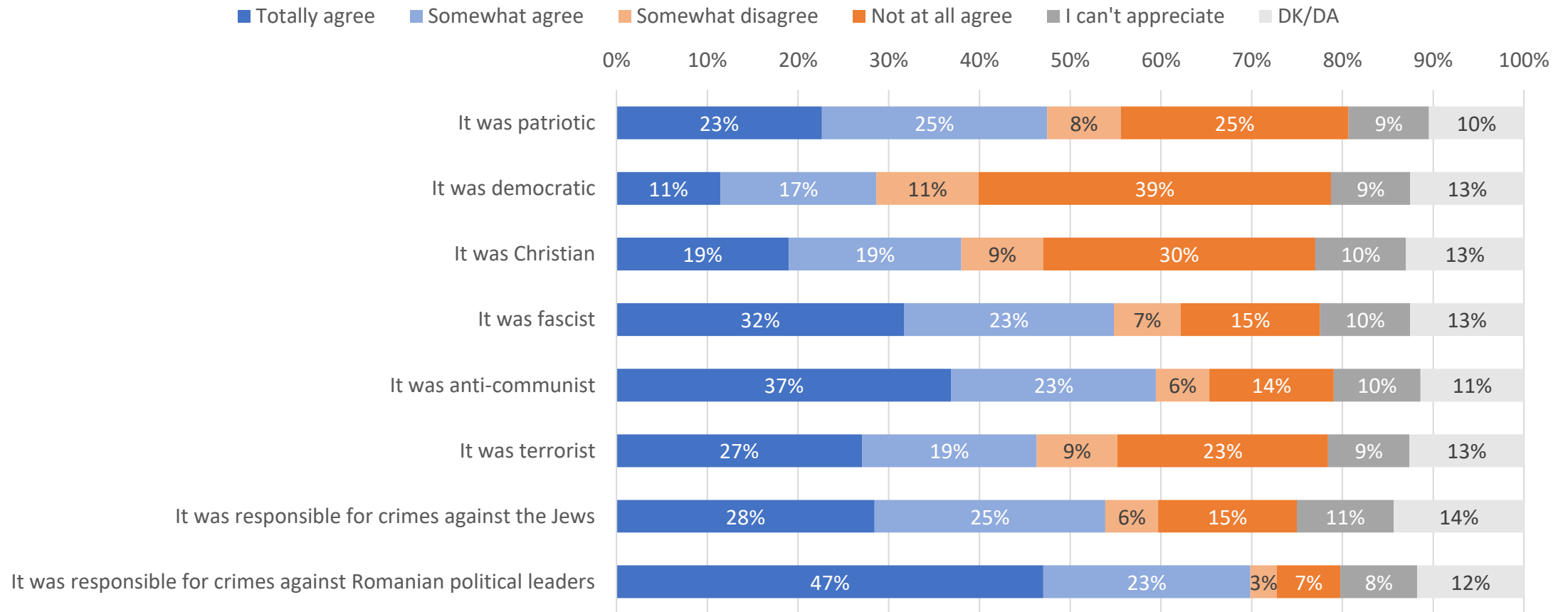


# Perceptions – The Legionary Movement

Most of the respondents consider that the Legionary Movement was fascist, terrorist, responsible for crimes against the Jews and Romanian political leaders, but patriotic.

*Note: Percentages calculated from the total sample.*

## Q23 -From 1927 to 1940, the Legionary Movement was a political organisation in Romania. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?



# Synthesis - agreement

