



NATIONAL DEBATE
FOR THE NATIONAL POSITIONS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

What is Deliberative Polling®?

Deliberative Polling® is a unique form of political consultation that combines techniques of public opinion research and public deliberation to reveal what public opinion would be on a particular issue if citizens were given a chance to be more informed. The Deliberative Poll aims to consider the views and preferences of the public, both prior to and following a thorough understanding of the topic.

Representative sample

Initial survey

Before the deliberative event, a baseline survey was conducted with a nationally representative sample of 1001 citizens between 27th of May and 14 of June, 2024. Ethnicity of the respondents: 67% Macedonians, 24.6% Albanians and 8.4% others.

After the deliberation

After the two day deliberative event on 6th and 7th of July, 2024, 135 respondents filled out the survey again, after two days of informing and discussing the topics with relevant stakeholders from the Macedonian society.

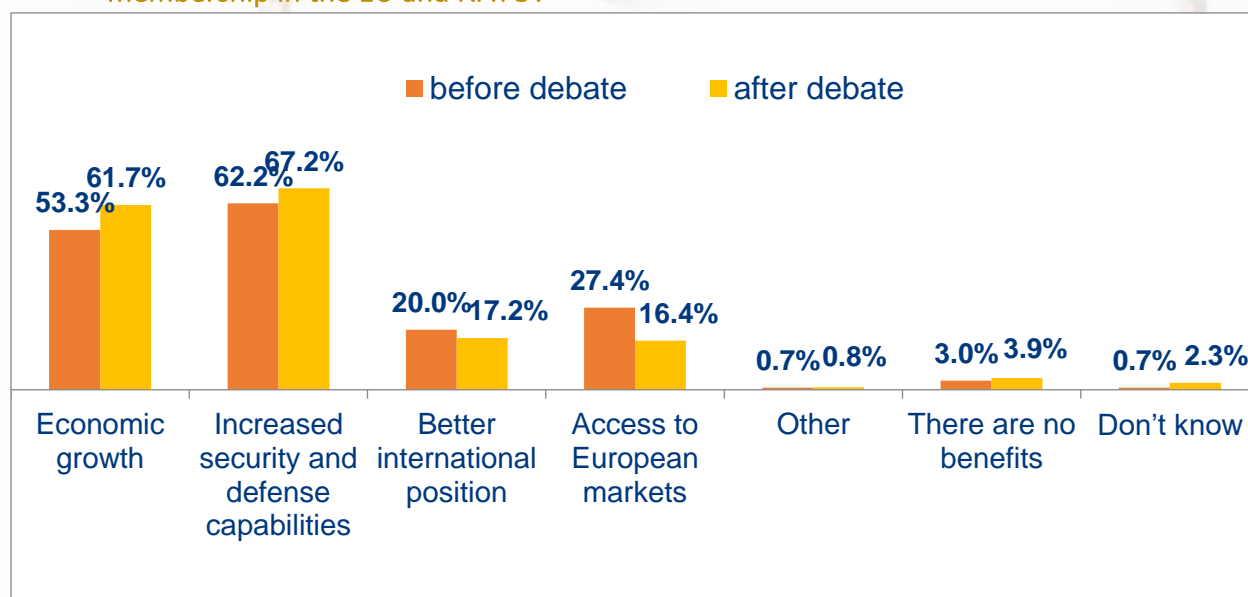
The deliberative event

The two day event was held in Hotel Continental in Skopje on the 6th and 7th of July, 2024. 135 respondents divided into 11 groups were informed and deliberated with each other about the foreign policy of the Republic of North Macedonia and its compliance with the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU and the topic of the relations between North Macedonia and NATO, focusing on mechanisms for effective security, defence and economic stability. Each of the groups then posed questions to a panel of experts and politicians from across the spectrum, in order to build informed and unbiased views. The discussions of the two days were covered by two national TV stations - TV 24 and Sitel TV.

Results

Here are some of the results of preference changes of the citizens regarding the state positions in international relations, after holding the deliberative event.

1. In your opinion, what do you think are the main benefits of North Macedonia's membership in the EU and NATO?



① As an effect of the debate, statistically significant results are visible with an increased value after the debate in the answer economic growth. A number of participants increased their support for economic growth as the main benefit of EU and NATO membership from before to after the debate. There is a minimal percentage increase in response to increased security and defence capabilities after the debate.



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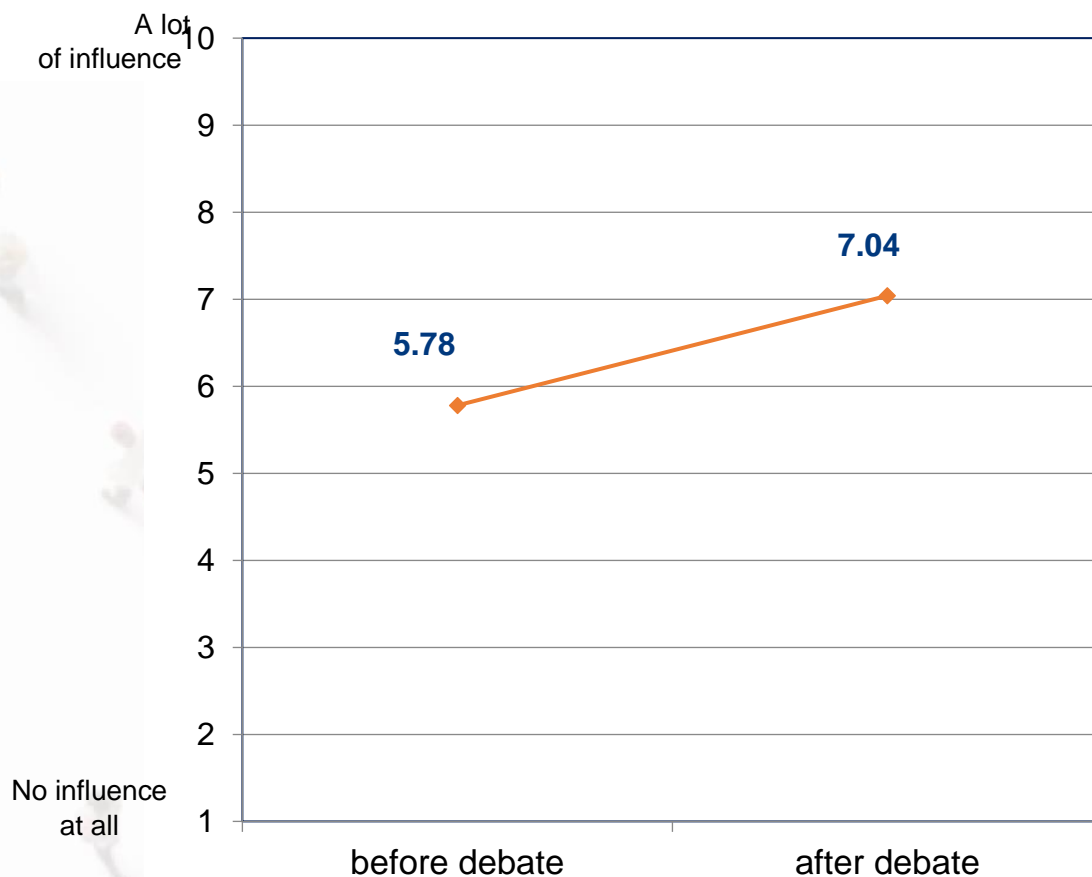


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On the other hand, there was a decrease in the percentage of participants who believe that access to European markets is the main benefit of North Macedonia's membership in the EU and NATO, before and after the debate.

2. On a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means “no influence at all”, 10 means “a lot of influence” and 5 is the middle value, does the foreign policy of North Macedonia affect your daily life?



① The debate significantly changed the perception of the respondents, increasing awareness and perception of the impact of foreign policy on their daily lives. The mean values show an increase in the perception of the influence of foreign policy on daily life, from 5.78 before the debate to 7.04 after the debate. According to the results, the debate had a significant and positive impact on the respondents' perceptions, increasing their awareness of the importance and influence of North Macedonia's foreign policy on their daily lives.



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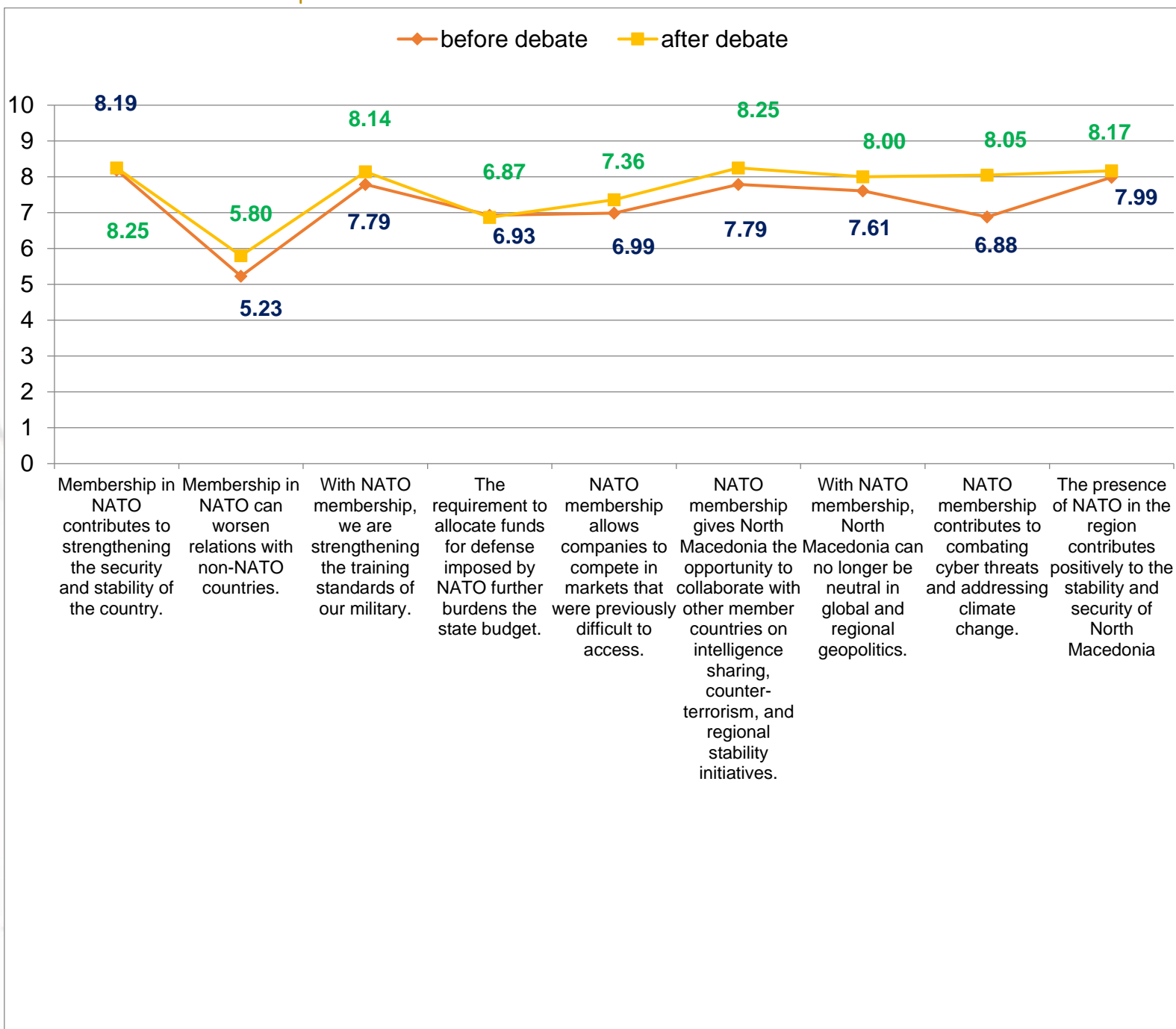
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3. How much do you agree with the following statements related to the country's membership in NATO?



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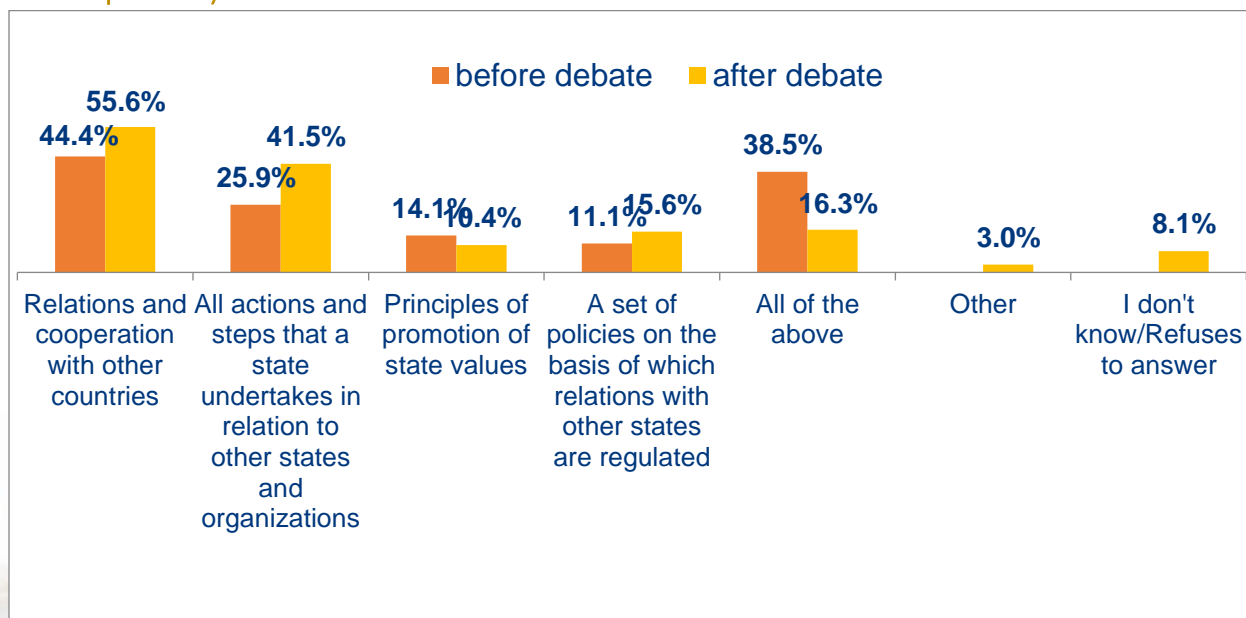
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4. In your own words, tell me what the foreign policy of a country is? (multiple answers are possible)



Correct answer: Relations and cooperation with other countries

① A significant increase in the respondents' awareness of the importance of relations and cooperation with other countries is noted, as well as of all the actions and steps that a country undertakes in relation to other countries and organisations. This indicates that the debate had a positive effect on the respondents' understanding of the meaning of foreign policy. At the same time, there is a decrease in the percentage of respondents who see all the offered aspects together, which suggests that respondents have started to differentiate and value specific areas more. In addition, new aspects of thinking emerged, while a small percentage remained undecided after the debate.



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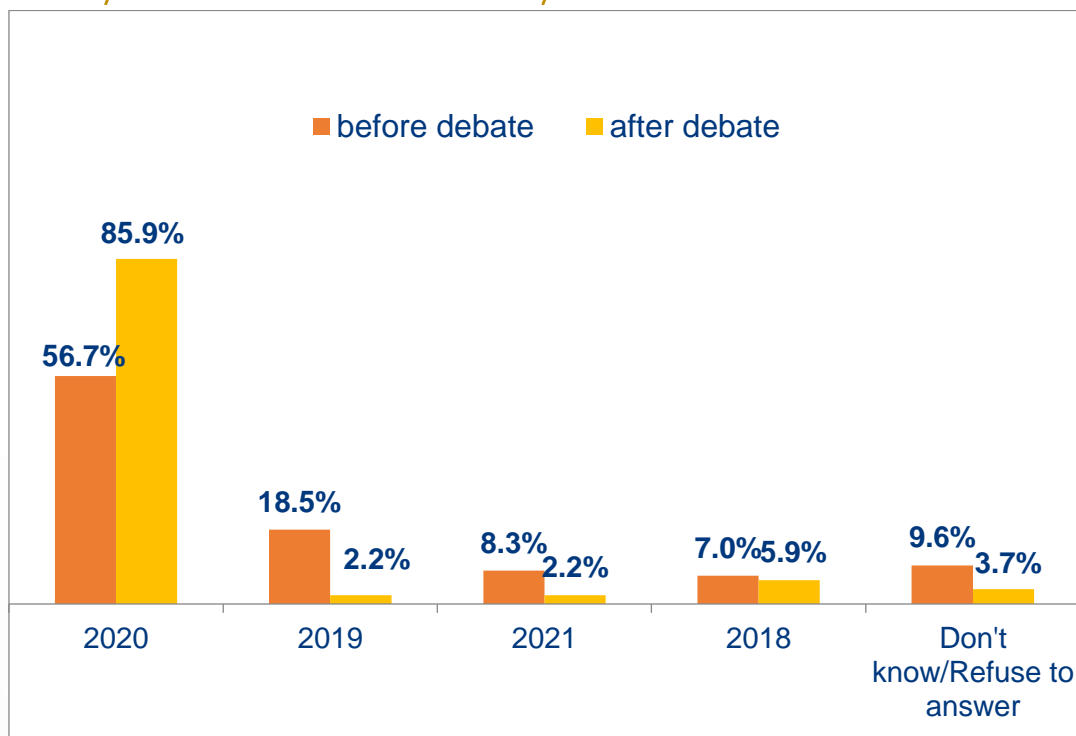
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5. In what year did North Macedonia officially become a full member of NATO?



Correct answer: 2020

① After the debate, the percentage of respondents identifying 2020 as the correct answer to this question increased significantly, reaching 85.9% compared to 56.7% before the debate. The remaining years (2019, 2021 and 2018) mark a decrease in relevance among respondents, indicating that the debate highlighted the significance of the events and changes in 2020. The percentage of respondents who do not know or refuse to answer has decreased, which suggests better awareness and clarity after the debate.



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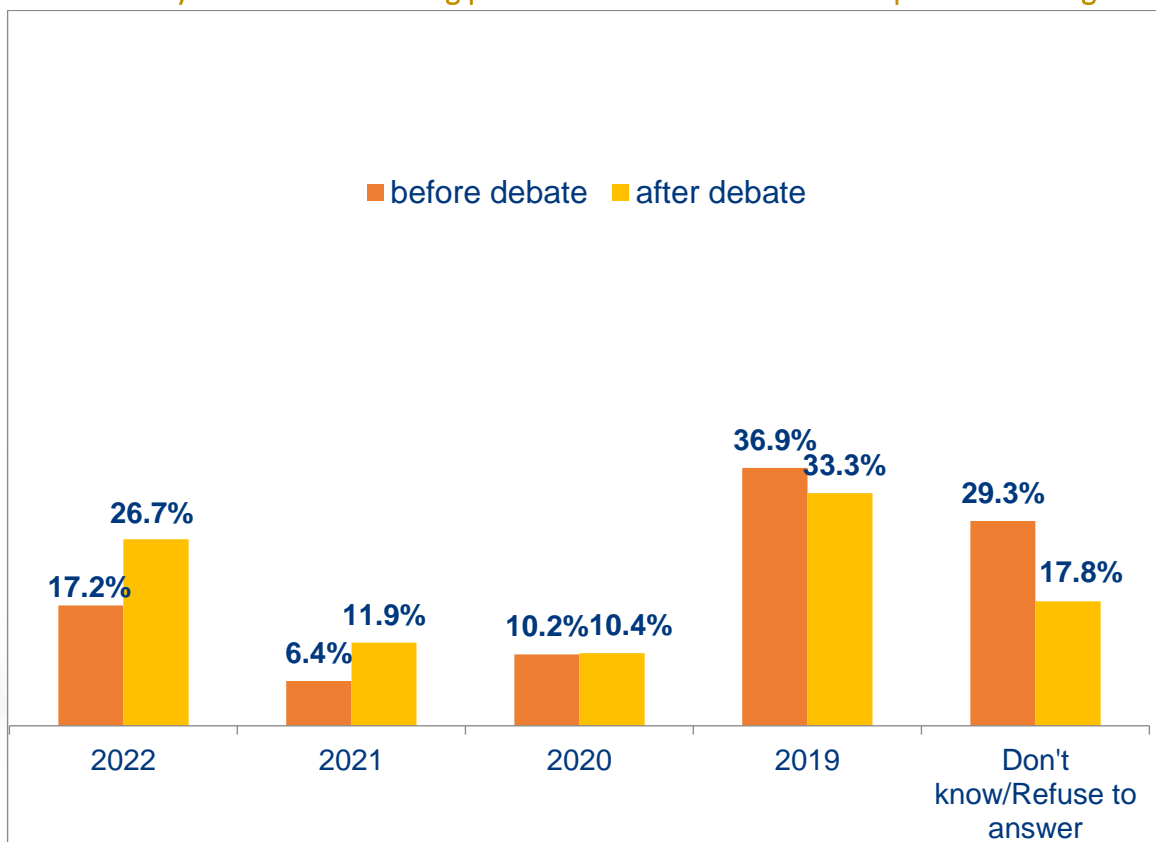
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6. In which year did the screening process for accession to the European Union begin?



Correct answer: 2022

① After the debate, the percentage of respondents identifying 2022 as the correct answer increased significantly from 17.2% to 26.7%. Similarly, there is an increase for 2021, from 6.4% to 11.9%. The percentage for 2020 remains almost the same. There is a slight decrease for 2019, from 36.9% to 33.3%. There is a significant decrease in the percentage of respondents who do not know or refuse to answer, from 29.3% to 17.8%, which indicates clarity and awareness after the debate.



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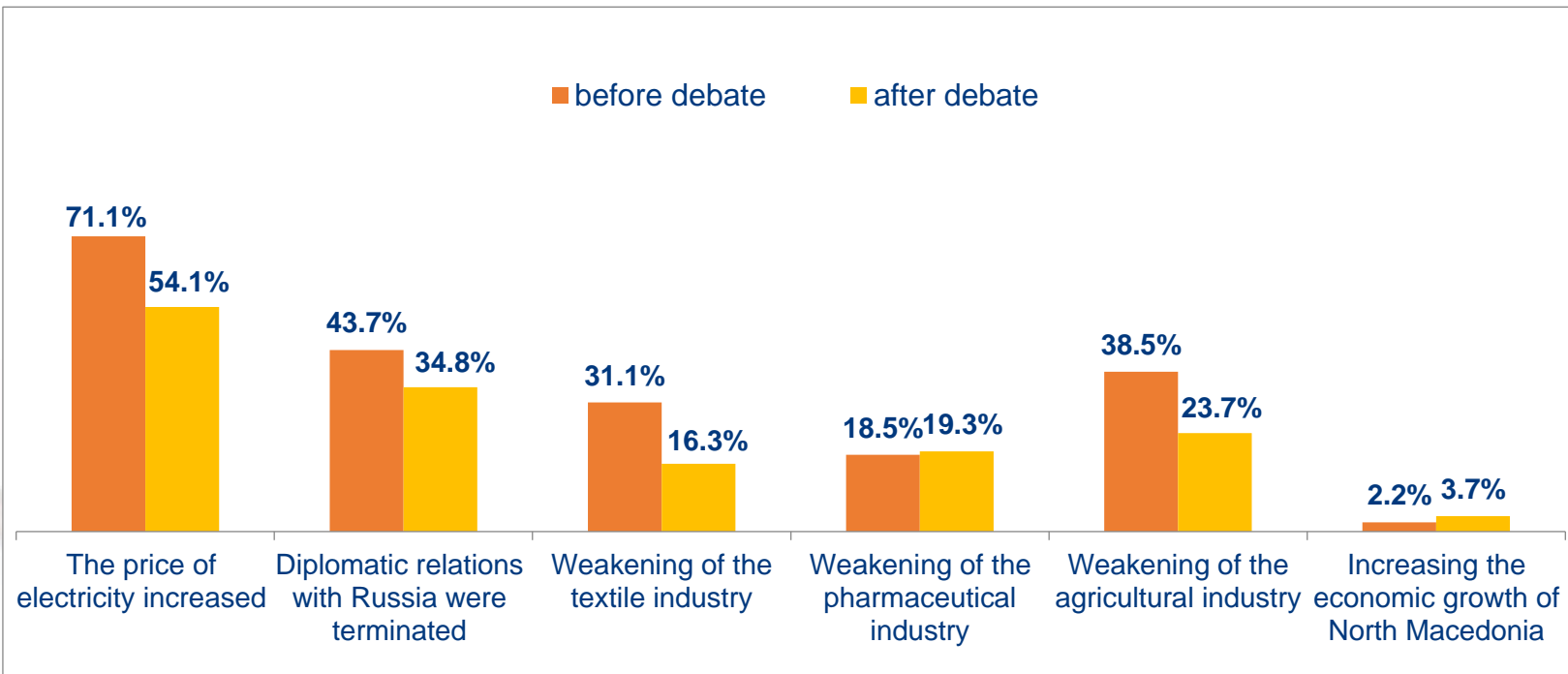
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7. In your opinion, did the sanctions that we implemented as a country against Russia have an impact at home? If so, how?



Correct Answer: Weakening of the textile, pharmaceutical and agricultural industries

① After the debate, there is a significant decrease in the percentage of respondents who believe that the price of electricity has increased (from 71.1% to 54.1%) and that diplomatic relations with Russia have been severed (from 43.7% to 34.8%). The percentage of those who believe there is a weakening of the textile and agricultural industries also decreased, from 31.1% to 16.3% and from 38.5% to 23.7%, respectively. The percentage of respondents who believe that there is a weakening of the pharmaceutical industry remains almost the same, with a slight increase (from 18.5% to 19.3%). There is also a small increase in the percentage of respondents who believe that the economic growth of North Macedonia has increased (from 2.2% to 3.7%).



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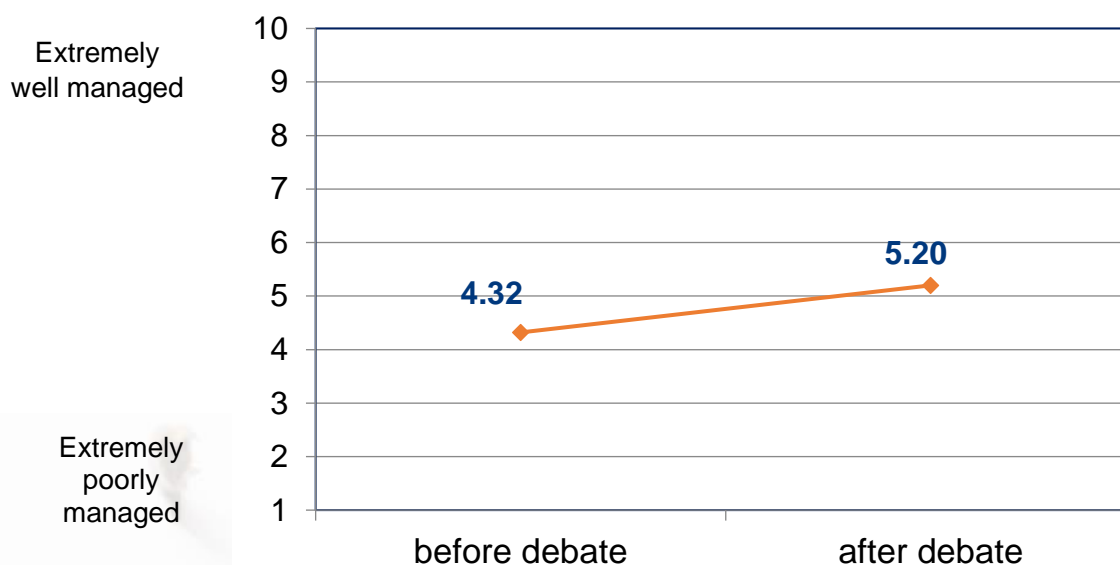
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8. How well is North Macedonia dealing with the effects felt on the domestic economy due to the sanctions?



① There is a statistically significant difference between the groups in opinions about how North Macedonia is dealing with the effects on the domestic economy due to the sanctions. This means that the debate led to a significant improvement in respondents' perceptions of how North Macedonia is dealing with the effects on the domestic economy due to sanctions. The medium value of the answers increased significantly from 4.32 before the debate to 5.20 after the debate, indicating that respondents perceive the situation as better after the debate.



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