

# **Armenian-Azeri Mutual Perceptions Project**

## **Country Report**

### **Potential of Azerbaijani and Armenian Peoples in Peacebuilding and Post-Conflict Cooperation**

#### **Survey in Azerbaijan**



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# 1. Introduction

In accordance with the agreement between American University and the Azerbaijan Sociological Association (ASA), a survey was conducted on the potential of Azeri and Armenian peoples in peacebuilding and post-conflict cooperation. The study was carried out from April 1 to July 15, 2003 in Azerbaijan. At the request of American University a similar survey was also conducted in Armenia.

Because the Armenian-Azeri conflict is ongoing, the research team took very seriously the necessity of finding real ways to take steps toward resolution of the conflict. The purpose of this research is to illuminate the key components of a stable peace in the South Caucasus. This survey is dedicated to one of the most important components of peace, namely the intentions and wishes of the people involved in the conflict to establish peace.

The goal of the survey was to gather information regarding the experience, knowledge and attitudes of Azeri and Armenian peoples towards one another and towards the Armenian-Azeri conflict.

The main hypothesis of the research is that there are some common points in the joint experience of Azeri and Armenian people, as well as common points in their knowledge about the conflict and in their attitudes towards each other. The research also assumes that there are the areas of joint interests and goals, and that these areas of common interest are capable of uniting the nations, leading them to peace, stability and cooperation. The goal of the research was to identify these common areas, study their content and structure, and work out recommendations on making use of the potential of the two peoples in the peacebuilding process.

Respondents to the survey were taken from a cross-section of the Azeri population. Respondents were inhabitants of the capital, towns, villages and border areas, and included males and females, people of different ages, educational backgrounds, occupation, working and social status, various incomes, long time residents of each area as well as refugees and IDPs.

The survey was conducted by the Method of Standardized Interview face to face with respondents in the calm environment in households. Altogether, 1200 respondents were interviewed in Azerbaijan, including 200 respondents representing the Azeri community of Nagorno-Karabakh, which are allocated as IDPs throughout Azerbaijan presently.

The information gathered from the survey allowed researchers to collect representative information on the experiences and attitudes of Azeri people towards the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as knowledge about the possible reasons and methods of effective conflict resolution, and their position on establishing peace and post-conflict cooperation between the two countries. The results of the survey allowed us to carry out an analysis of the situation and to develop the suggestions and recommendations shown here.

## 2. Survey Methodology

### 2.1 Sample design

In general the survey sample was designed based on the data of the state statistics on qualitative and quantitative indicators of the population of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Certain target groups were also chosen in accordance with the objectives of the research. The Multi Stage Random Area Sample was implemented. It allowed the research team to cover every Azeri region, including the capital, towns and villages, domestic and border settlements, permanent settlements, IDP and refugee camps. Households within settlements were chosen randomly.

All together, approximately 1200 respondents were interviewed. The survey sampling gave a coefficient of representation of all of the important indicators of the survey (P) in the sample equal to 0.95 and standard deviation equal to 0.05, which shows a high representation of the results of the survey.

Distribution of respondents according to interview locations is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. Distribution of the respondents according to interview locations.**

#	Selected settlement	Type of the settlement	Number of respondents
1	Baku	capital	431
2	Ganja	town	100
3	Sumgait	town	90
4	Shamkir	town	40
5	Nakhchivan	town	30
6	Sheki	town	30
7	Ordubad	town	20
8	Imishli	town	20
9	Kurdamir	town	20
10	Jalilabad	town	20
11	Khachmaz	town	10
12	Sadarak (Sadarak region)	village	20
13	Ashagi Buzgov (Babek region)	village	20
14	Yuxari aylis (Ordubad region)	village	10
15	Tatli (Agstafa region)	village	20
16	Kamarli (Gazakh region)	village	20
17	Alibeyli (Tovuz region)	village	20
18	Gulustan (Goranboy region)	village	40
19	Refugee camps (Barda region)	village	89
20	Duztahir (Gusar region)	village	20
21	Gonagkend (Guba region)	village	20
22	Aligasimli (Jalilabad region)	village	20
23	Hasanli (Masalli region)	village	20
24	Galagatyin IDP camp (Sabirabad region)	village	30
25	Ilisu (Gakh region)	village	20
26	Aliabad (Zagatala region)	village	20
<b>Total number of questioned</b>			<b>1200</b>

Respondents were strictly determined by the route lists according to the sample for each town. Supervisors monitored the selection process precisely and if it was necessary, made corrections as indicated by the methodology.

### 2.2. Organization of the Survey

The survey was conducted with respondents individually “face to face” in the selected households. The interviewer questioned the respondent verbally. The answers of the respondents were marked by the interviewer.

The confidentiality of the respondents was protected in the following manner. The sample was designed randomly by districts without any reference to names and address or telephone number of participants. Researchers notified the respondents that the survey is confidential and their answers would be used for the exclusively scientific study and would not be released to any government agency. The respondents were also told that the interviewers would not be able to spread the names of the respondent, as they would not know them. They stated these facts for the respondents before every interview.

This research is very sensitive and touches the feelings of the people. Nevertheless, the sensitivity of this subject did not cause risks for respondents, as the survey procedure provided complete confidentiality of the answers of the respondents. The respondents were selected randomly. At the beginning of the survey interviewer stated that participation is completely voluntary and at any time if he/she felt uncomfortable they might stop the interviewing. The methodology and procedure of the survey ensured complete confidentiality and the voluntary nature of participation for respondents.

Using the questionnaire in the process of the survey it was possible to gather a broad material, achieve a positive attitude of the respondents towards participation in the interview, as well as full and adequate understanding of the questions in the questionnaire participants. This allows us to conclude that the content of the questionnaire and methodology of its implementation were in complete accordance with both the aims of the survey, the specifics of the issue being studied, and the specific of respondents of the survey.

## **2.3. Data processing and analysis**

Entering, processing and analysis of the data were realized by means of the SPSS system. For this purpose the SPSS program was adapted to the questionnaires used in the survey.

Processing and data analysis were realized in the entire survey data pool, and also in the various demographic categories of the respondents such as sex, age, education, type of activity, average monthly income, type and location of living settlement, migration, work and social status.

From the results of the data processing tables, graphs and diagrams that reflected the results of the survey were created. We carried out a logical interpretation of the empirical data in order to arrive at a deeper study of the key issues addressed by the survey, with the idea of ascertaining the human potential for peacebuilding and post-conflict cooperation in the region.

## **3. Analysis and interpretation of the survey results**

### **3.1. Description of surveyed population**

In the process of conducting survey 1200 respondents were questioned. The basic part of respondents, which covered main target groups of the current research, was 1000 persons who were distributed in the following way:

- Local inhabitants –691 persons (69.1% out of the total number of questioned);
- Refugees-92 persons (9.2%);
- IDP-217 persons (21.7%)

Besides this, there were surveyed 200 IDPs who represent the Azeri community of Nagorno-Karabakh.

34% of respondents were questioned in the capital of the country, Baku; 33% of respondents in towns and district centers; 33% were questioned in villages; 90% of respondents were questioned in the internal regions of Azerbaijan and 10% of respondents in the border regions with Armenia.

In terms of gender, respondents were distributed in the following manner: 48% - men, 52% - women.

Among the people questioned 29.6% were ages 18-25 years, 30.3% of respondents were 26-40 years, 24.1% were 41-60 years and 16% were 61 and over.

Distribution of respondents by education was as follows:

- Illiterate 4.0%
- Elementary education – 8.1%
- Secondary education – 52,8%;
- High (bachelor and master) – 33,8%;
- Post higher education (candidate or doctor of sciences) – 1.3%.

According to the employment status respondents were being distributed in the following manner:

- Employed – 32.8%;
- Students – 10.1%;
- Pensioners – 15.0%;
- House wives – 15.2%;
- Unemployed – 26.8%;
- Others – 0.1.

Among questioned are entrepreneurs 13.8%, private sector employees 44.6%, government sector employees 30.3%, state officials 5.8%, servicemen 2.8%, NGO employees 0.6%, mass media employees 1.9%, other 0.3%.

Distribution of respondents by average monthly income was made in the following manner:

- No income - 34.2%;
- Up to USD 20 – 33.5% ;
- USD 21-USD 40 - 20.4%;
- USD 41-USD 60- 5.9%;
- USD 61-USD 80 - 2.3%;
- USD 81-USD 100 – 2.5%;
- USD 101 and more - 1.2%.

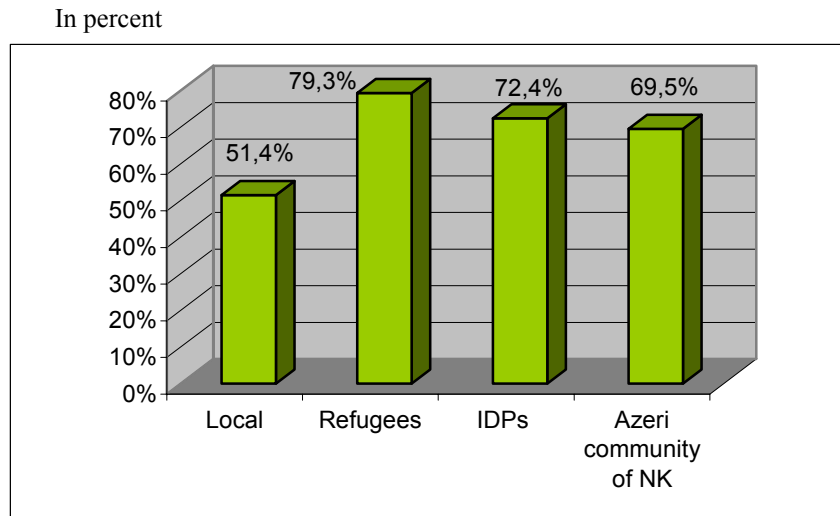
The distribution of respondents by public institutions was the following:

- Members of any party – 20.1%
- Members of trade unions – 5.9%
- Members of NGOs – 0.4%
- Persons who are not members of any public institutions – 73.4%

### 3.2. Previous experience and current contacts

Both Azeris and Armenians lived in a number of regions of Azerbaijan and Armenia before the start of the conflict, in 1988. In connection with this 58.4% of the respondents said that they had contacts with Armenians in the past. The largest number of contacts with Armenians referred to Azeri IDPs from Nagorno-Karabakh (69.5% of respondents) and Azeri refugees from Armenia (79.3% of respondents).

**Graph. 1 Distribution of the answers of respondents on having contact with Armenians in the past**



Regarding the answers of respondents the contacts with Armenians were realized in the following manner:

- Lived in the neighborhood (40.5%)
- Have worked together (22.3%)
- Had family friendship (10.3%)
- Were godfathers (kirva) of each other (4.3%)
- Got married with an Armenian (3.2%)
- Children born after dead child usually were called by Armenian names (0.5%)
- Have had contact at the market place (9.5%)
- Had joint business (0.3%)
- Have studied together (9.1%)

The conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan led to termination of interpersonal and interfamily relations. All respondents who had had connections with Armenians before the conflict noted that contacts are terminated at the present time. Exceptions are the respondents from the border regions. They have been keeping not only the contacts that took place in the past, but also report making new contacts during the conflict period. 64.3% of Azeris who live in the border regions with Armenia noted that they have contact with Armenians at the present time. The majority of those contacts were realized in the border trade. 36.4% of respondents who lived on the border side noted this. Equally with this, respondents from the border side also named the contacts connected with interpersonal (36.4%) and interfamily relations (18.2%). IDP and refugee respondents reported that contacts with Armenians took place in third countries due to business (53.8% of IDPs and 27.9% of refugees). In the capital of Azerbaijan, Baku respondents marked that during the conflict period they had contacts with Armenians regarding joint education (30.0%), scientific (12.5%) and internet activities (25.0%).

A small number of respondents (8.6%) reported that they had friends or acquaintances from among Armenians at the present time. It is important to note that in comparison with the basic population, respondents who have Armenian friends and acquaintances are more among inhabitants of the border villages (35.7%). IDPs and refugees said that they did not keep up any relations with Armenian friends at the present time. There are more those who keep in touch with their Armenian friends among the respondents who live in the border regions (40.0% from among those who had relations with Armenians). Primarily, these meetings take place on the territory of Georgia, Sadahli village where there is a market of mutual trade between Azeris and Armenians. Respondents in Baku said that they kept in touch with their Armenian friends by means of email (47.4%), phone (26.3%) or had meetings in third countries beyond the South Caucasus, usually in Russia (26.3%).

At the present time all the above-mentioned contacts between Azeris with Armenians are not frequent and basically take place episodically. On the whole according to the opinion of the respondents these contacts were terminated at the beginning of the conflict. 35.1% of respondents from among the basic population are satisfied with the termination of contacts with Armenians, 48.7% of respondents are indifferent towards it. At the same time 16.2% of respondents are not satisfied with termination of contacts with Armenians.

A considerably large number of respondents (24.5%) reported that they were not personally ready to have any contacts and relations with Armenians in future. But 21.7% of respondents expressed their readiness to have these kinds of relations. At the same time, the largest part of respondents (53.8%) said that it was difficult for them to answer the question about the intention to have contacts with Armenians in the future.

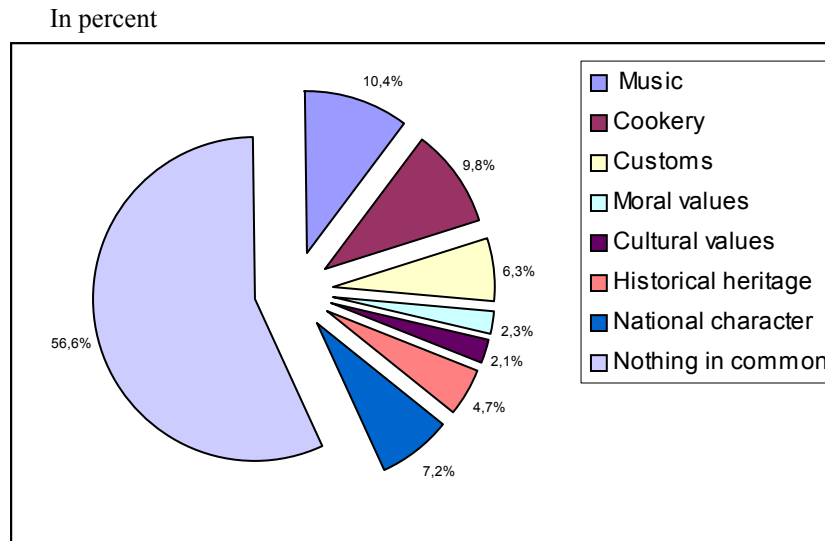
Basically, Azeri refugees from Armenia would not like to have any contacts with Armenians in future (34.8%). Some of them justify this stance by citing the many cases of violence used against them and their families during the deportation of Azeris from Armenia in 1988-1989. The position of IDPs in this question is somewhat different. Though IDPs pointed to the many cases of violence used by Armenians during the conflict, most of them intended to have contact with Armenians in the future (57.6%). The IDPs who represent the Azeri community of Nagorno-Karabakh adhere to the same position. 52.5% of them intend to have contact with Armenians in future. IDPs justify this opinion based on the idea that Nagorno-Karabakh is their Motherland and they are going to return there. Further they say that there are many Armenians who live in Nagorno-Karabakh and after the return of IDPs to Nagorno-Karabakh they would live together with them. The most notable thing is that IDPs from Nagorno-Karabakh are ready for this.

### **3.3. Mutual perception and attitude**

Except for the youth, most respondents had rich experience of communication with Armenians before the conflict period. In connection with this, respondents gave precise answers to the questions regarding indicators that characterize Armenians and the questions that require comparison of Armenians and Azeris by these indicators.

10.4% of respondents stated that Armenians and Azeris have very similar national music. 9.8% named cookery to be another point in common, including such dishes as dolma, bozbash, kufta, kabab, etc. 6.3% of respondents pointed to the many common traditions, solemnities, customs, 2.3% named common moral values, 2.1% to common cultural values, 4.7% noted common historical past, 7.2% listed common traits of the national character. At the same time more than half of respondents (56.6%) said that there was nothing in common between Armenians and Azeris. In general, this point of



**Graph 2. The opinions of respondents on what Azeris and Armenians have in common**

view was shared by the young respondents who did not have personal experience with Armenians. The biggest part of what they know about Armenians comes from the media and from hearing their families and friends talk about the conflict: that Armenians occupied 20% of Azerbaijanian territory, used violence against Azeris, and expelled them from their Motherland.

Speaking of the differences between Azeris and Armenians the respondents pointed to the differences of these nations in the language and religion. It is very notable that only 9.8% marked religious difference. It testifies about the character of Azeris whose attitude doesn't depend on religious affiliation. Even those respondents who do not like Armenians, do not consider religion to be the basis of the difficulty.

In general the intrinsic qualities named by Azeris respondents to describe the Azeri people are: kindness (98.7%), hardworking (96.0%), patriotism (87.8%), honesty (95.8%), reliability (95.1%), accuracy (83.9%), enterprise (87.1%), internationalism (95.0), friendliness (98.1%), peaceful disposition (97.4%), mercy (98.7%), responsibility (83.2%), hospitality (98.4%) and compliance (84.6%).

In general intrinsic qualities named by Azeris to describe Armenians are the following: nationalism (88.6%), vindictiveness (93.7%), rancor (97.2), cruelty (98.0%), animosities (97.7%), laziness (49.8%), ruse (97.9%), lying (97.7%), rage (96.3%), carelessness (61.2%), irresponsibility (65.8%), ruthlessness (99.0), lack of desire for compromise (98.3%), stubbornness (95.9%) and inhospitality (74.6%).

At the first it seems that respondents referred only positive things to Azeris and negative ones to Armenians. However, more careful analysis shows that even having a negative attitude towards Armenians about half of respondents could find such positive qualities of Armenians as hardworking (53.9%), accuracy (39.8%), enterprise (60.4%), which points to the objectivity of respondents and the ability to find mutual understanding with Armenians in future.

The results of the survey showed that the majority of the respondents consider Armenians as objective towards Azeris. Answering the question "What traits do Armenians refer to Azerbaijanians, thinking of us?" respondents named many good qualities. Talking to interviewers many refugees from Armenia

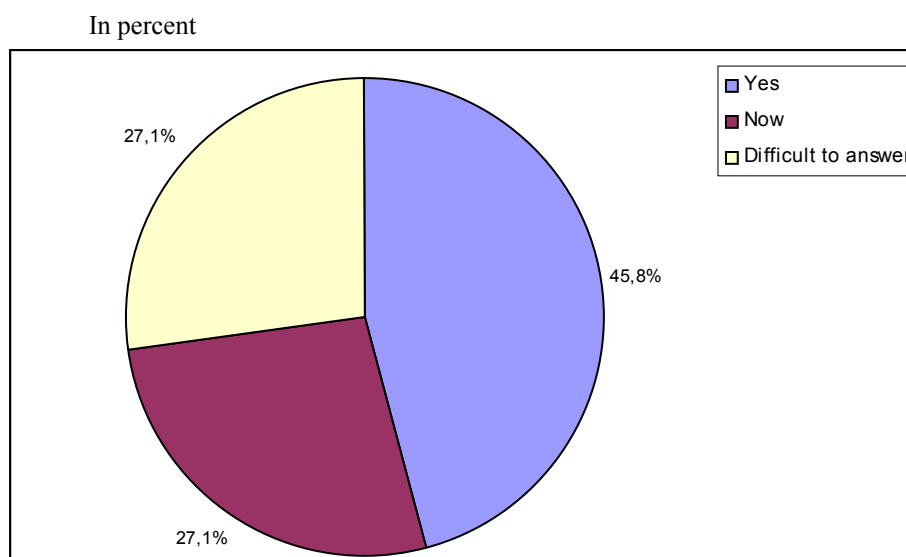
and IDPs from Nagorno-Karabakh said that many Armenians respected Azeris and always considered their high qualities as an example bringing up the children in the pre-conflict period.

At the same time majority of respondents think that Armenians refer to themselves only high qualities. Particularly such as peaceful disposition (95.4%), internationalism (75.2%), kindness (92.3%) and do not notice such qualities as nationalism (49.4%), vindictiveness (48.0%), rancor (16.7%), cruelty (12.7%), animosities (13.6%).

### 3.4. Opportunities and conditions of revitalization

The majority of respondents are optimistic regarding the future of Azerbaijanian-Armenian relations. They are confident that the conflict will come to an end and that these two nations will live in peace. So respondents think that after terminating the reasons of the conflict and after fair conflict resolution the contacts between Azeris and Armenians will be re-established in future. This is the opinion of 45.8% of the respondents.

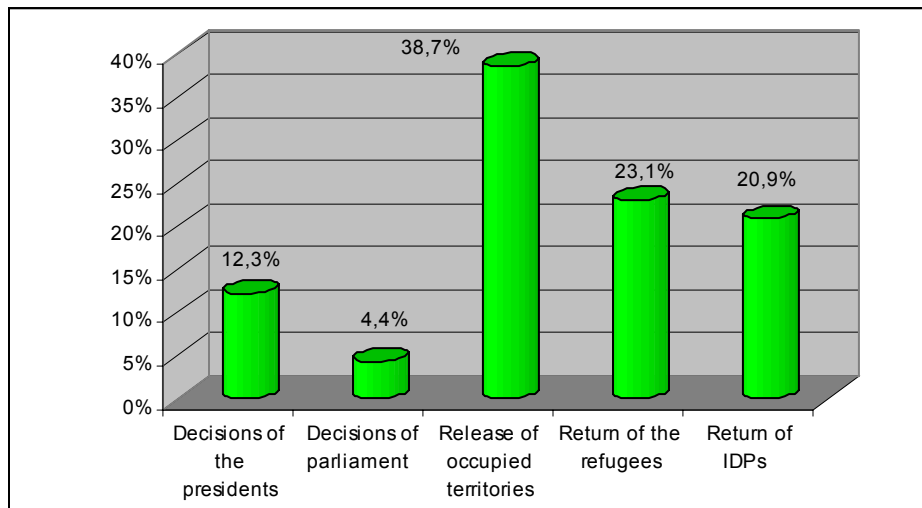
**Graph 3. Distribution of respondents based on their intension for re-establishment of contact between Azeris and Armenians in future**



At the same time, contacts between Azeris and Armenians cannot be re-established on their own. According to most respondents (67.7%) it is necessary to fulfill some conditions. Among those conditions respondents first of all name the release by Armenia of the occupied Azeri territories, including Nagorno Karabakh (38.7%). Other conditions of re-establishing contacts between Azeris and Armenians named by respondents are: return of refugees to the native land (23.1%), return of IDPs to the places of permanent residence in Nagorniy Karabakh (20.9%) and in other occupied regions of Azerbaijan.

**Graph 4. The opinion of respondents about conditions the accomplishment of which is necessary for re-establishment of contacts between Armenians and Azeris.**

In percent

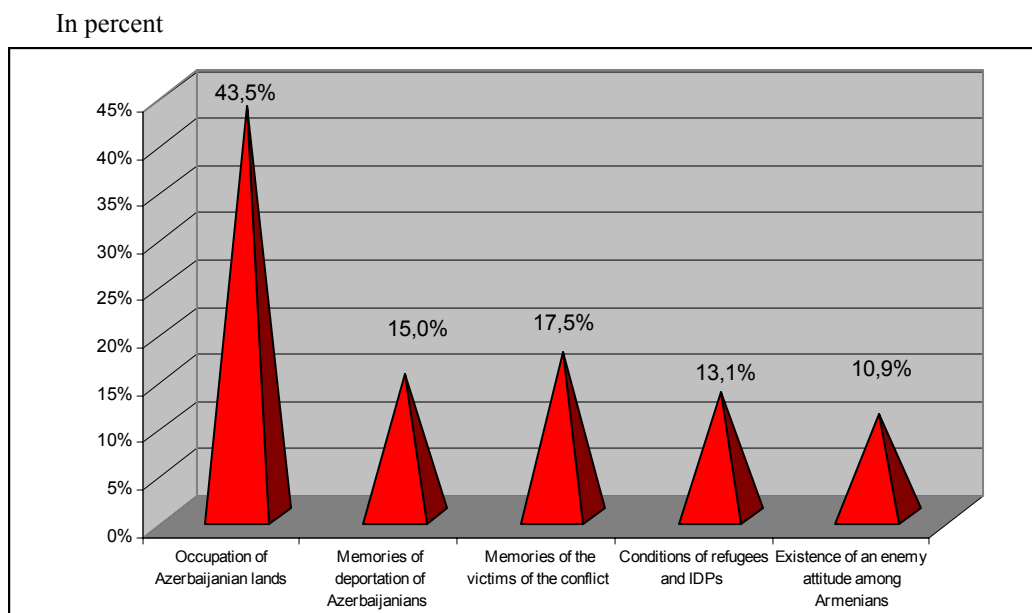


Respondents report that contacts between Armenians and Azeris might be realized in such areas as border trade (23.3%), student exchange (7.1 %), joint scientific events (10.0%), joint business (16.3%), intergovernmental cooperation (11.8%), social programs (7.3%), and cooperation between NGOs (6.0%). Talking about the areas of the future contacts between the two peoples, respondents particularly highlighted cooperation in resolution of regional problems such as ecological and economic problems, cooperation for resolution of extraordinary situations, etc. (16.6% of respondents).

Answering the question “Can these contacts lead to the establishment of peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan in the future?” the majority of respondents (66.8%), said “No,” and 30.2% of respondents said “It is difficult to answer.” But these numbers do not in fact demonstrate that Azeris do not wish for peace. Answering the next question 93.2% of respondents said that they would like Azerbaijanians and Armenians to live in peace. For all these respondents think that this peace might be established only in case of release of all occupied territories and return of refugees and IDPs to the places of permanent living.

Speaking of the events and matters in the past and present that prevent the establishment of peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan, respondents named ongoing occupation of Azeri territories (43.5%), memories of deportation of Azerbaijanians from Armenia in the past (15.0%), memories of the victims of the conflict (17.5), existence of an enemy attitude among Armenians (10.9%).

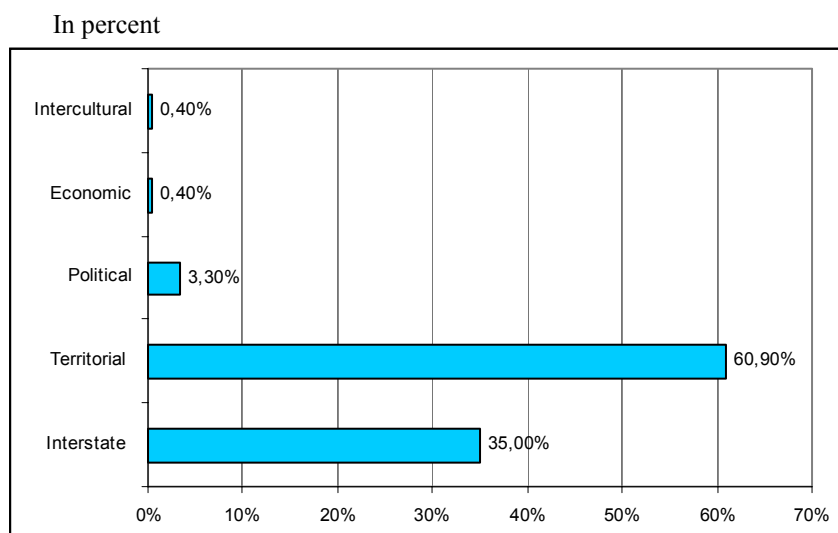
**Graph 5. The opinion of respondents on events that prevent the establishment of peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan**



### 3.5. Opinion of respondents on history and conflict reasons

Analysis showed that ongoing Azeri-Armenian conflict allowed people to clarify the content and particularities of this conflict. The majority of respondents realize that this conflict is not interethnic, antireligious or national liberation conflict. In the opinion of 60.9% of respondents the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan is a territorial one. In the opinion of 35.0% of respondents it is an interstate conflict. According to the opinion of 3.3% of respondents this conflict is political, 0.4% say it is economic conflict, 0.4% considers it an intercultural one.

**Graph 6. Determination of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict by the respondents**

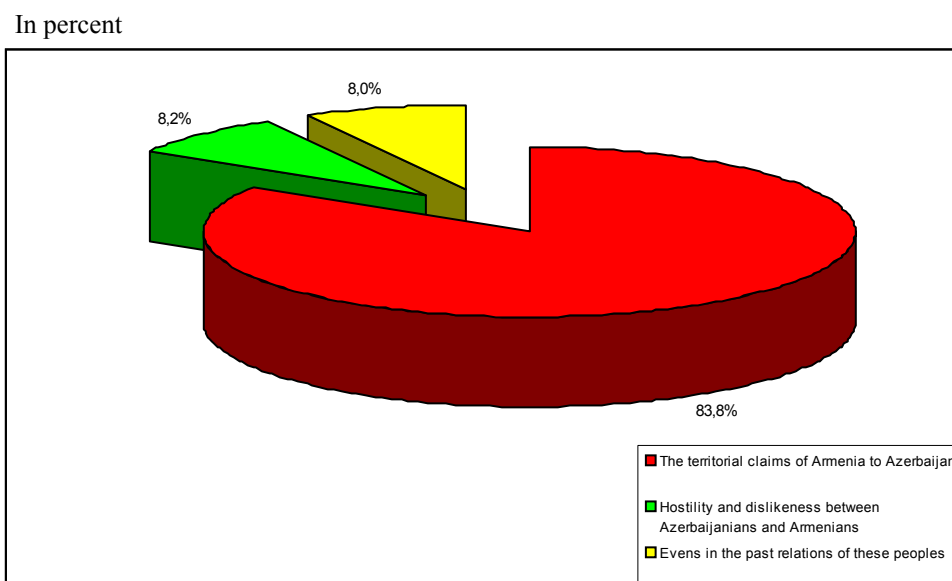


The survey showed that different groups of population have different ideas regarding the history of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Some of the respondents (13.4%) think that this conflict

occurred in the beginning of the XX century, when the armed fights between Armenians and Azerbaijanians took place. Others (12.8%) related the beginning of the conflict with the 1920s of the XX century, when the administrative and territorial division of the Azerbaijanian SSR and the Armenian SSR were established. 10.0% of respondents think that the conflict dates back to the end of the 1940s and beginning 1950s of the XX century, when by the decision of the Soviet government deportation of Azerbaijanians from Armenia took place. However, the major part of respondents relates the beginning of the conflict with the end of the 80s of XX century, the period of the so-called “perestroika”. Particularly at this time as 31.8% of respondents think the conflict occurred because Armenians of Nagorniy Karabakh have started movement for independence of the Nagorniy Karabakh Autonomous Area (NKAA) from Azerbaijan and moved to become part of Armenia. The other group of respondents (31.6%) also related the beginning of the conflict to the 1980’s when the last deportations of Azerbaijanians from Armenia took place.

Participants see the main reason of the Azeri-Armenian conflict in the territorial claims of Armenia to Azerbaijan. 83.8% of respondents marked this. A very small number of respondents sees the reason of conflict in events in the relations of these peoples in the past (8.0%) and historically formed hostility and dislike of Azeris and Armenians towards each other (8.2%). It tells about the lack of rancor and intention to be hostile towards Armenians. Thus, the results of the analysis show that the reason of the conflict is not in the mutual relations of Armenians and Azeris, but in the aggressive politics of Armenia, which occupied 20% of the territory of Azerbaijan.

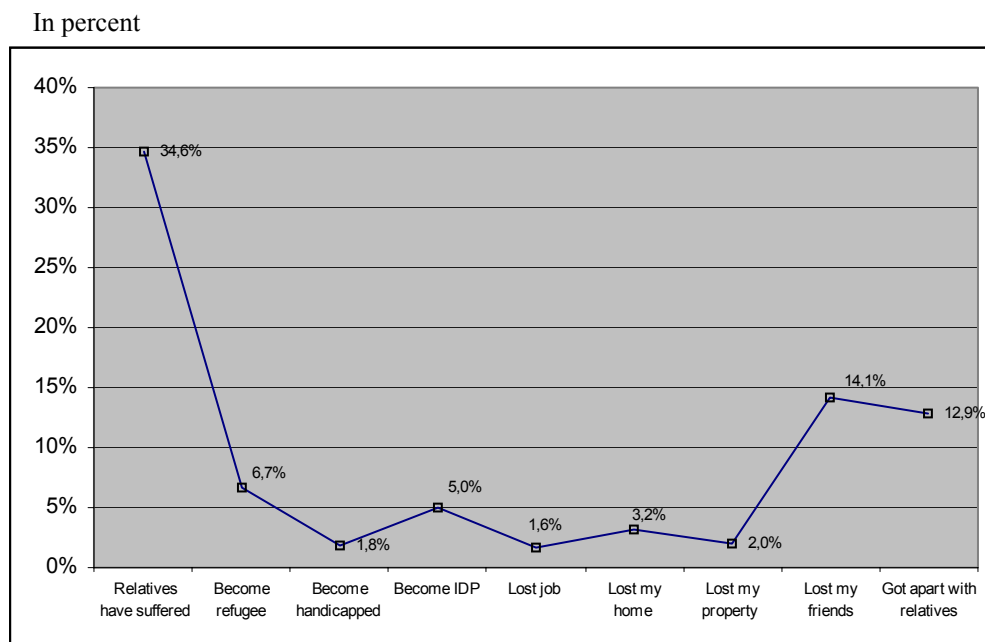
**Graph 7 The opinion of respondents about the main reason of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan**



Respondents also expressed their opinion about the causes preceding the conflict. They listed the following events as the potential causes which happened in 1988-1989: violence against Azerbaijanians in Armenia and their deportation (60.3%), murder of Azerbaijanians in Askeran district of NKAA (10.4%), meetings and demonstrations in Stepanakert and Erevan for independence of NKAA from Azerbaijan (29.3%). Although when speaking of the reasons of the conflict respondents are almost unanimous, their opinions about the causes of the conflict are quite different depending on the migration status of respondents. Refugees from Armenia see causes of the conflict in violence against Azerbaijanians in Armenia and their deportation (66.3%). IDPs from Karabakh see the cause of the conflict in meetings and demonstrations in Stepanakert for separation of NKAA from Azerbaijan (82.0%).

The attitude of people towards the conflict in general depends on how much this conflict touched him/her and his/her relatives. In the course of the survey, respondents named many consequences of the conflict that touched them personally. Among these consequences the following ones were highlighted: relatives have become victims of the conflict (34.6%), becoming a refugee (6.7%), becoming handicapped (1.8%), becoming an IDP (5.0%), losing job (1.6%), losing home (3.2%), losing property (2.0%), losing friends (14.1%), losing relatives (12.9%), other (0.2%). Consequences of the conflict touched all population groups of Azerbaijan. However, as it was shown by the survey results, refugees and IDPs suffered from the conflict more than any other group. For the last 15 years they have endured hardship and need as a consequence of the conflict.

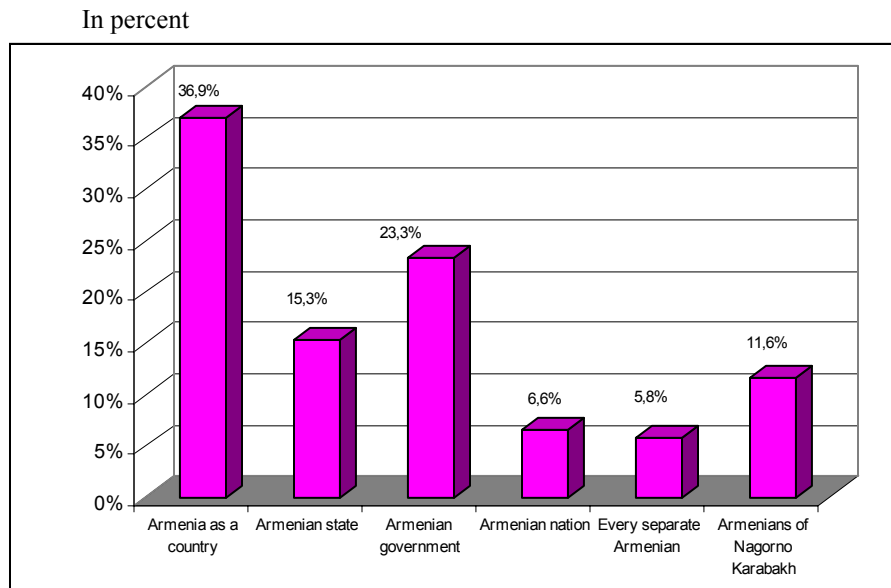
**Graph 8. The opinion of respondent of consequences of the conflict that touched them personally**



### 3.6. Image of the Other Party and striving to peace

The Armenian-Azeri conflict has touched feelings and ideas of all groups of the population of Azerbaijan. All people have suffered from this conflict to some degree. But the majority of the population considers that the conflict initiator was the Armenian Republic as a state but not the Armenian people. Thus, answering the question “What kind of attitude do you personally have towards Armenians” only 16.9% of respondents answered “hostile”. Friendly relations with Armenians was reported only by 2.9% of respondents. The majority of the survey participants (80.2% of respondents) noted that they were indifferent towards Armenians.

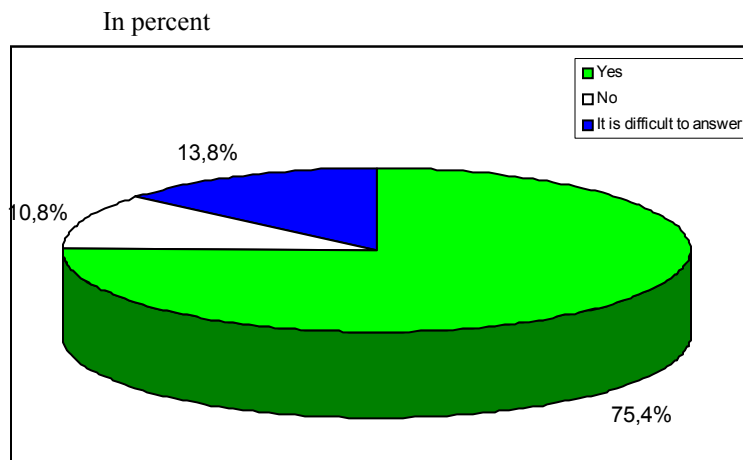
At the same time in Azeri society due to the many losses that Azeri nation has suffered from the conflict there is hostile attitude towards those who started this conflict. In the opinion of the majority of respondents the population of Azerbaijan has hostile attitude towards the Armenian Republic which carried out acts aggression against Azerbaijan and occupied its territory. It is important to note that people do not consider as an enemy the Armenian people in general, the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenian, but Armenia as a country (36.9%), the Armenian state (15.3%) and the Armenian government which leads the country at the present time (23.3%).

**Graph 9. The opinion of respondent on whom they see as their enemy in Armenia**

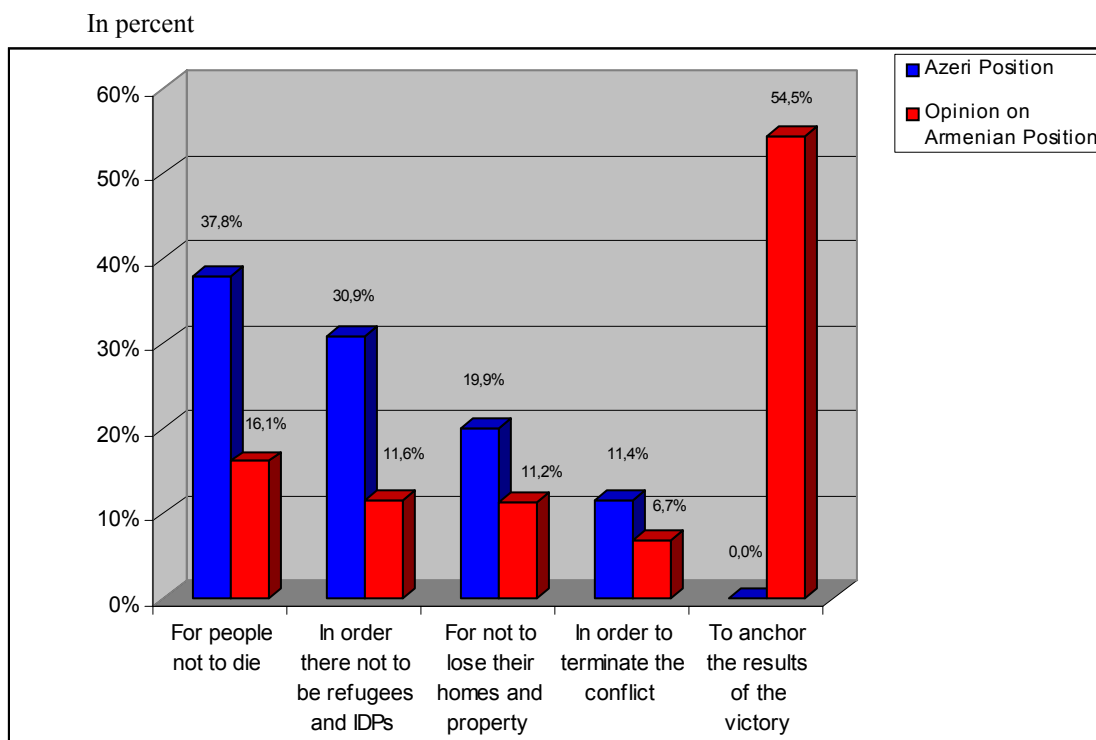
This attitude of people towards the conflict and those who initiated it is based on the personal experience and observations of people (37.8%). At the same time the attitude of people towards the conflict is being determined by such factors as the presentation of the conflict in government documents (5.3%), activities of mediators from different international organizations (3.6%), the information from TV (36.6%), radio (6.9%), newspapers (2.7%), internet (2.2%), from friends (4.9%), it also influences the relation of people towards those who started the conflict. Clearly the role of TV is dominant here.

The majority of respondents (60.8%) think that it is possible to establish peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan. At the same time respondents think that the peace between these two countries is only possible in case of accomplishing some preliminary conditions. First among these preliminary conditions respondents highlight the termination of territorial claims of Armenia towards Azerbaijan (16.9%), termination of militaristic and hostile images of Azeris in Armenian mass media (0.5%), termination of cultivation of the enemy in Armenian society (7.1%), fair decision of Karabakh problem (34.3%), return of refugees and IDPs to the places of permanent living (35.5%)

On the whole the results show that the majority of respondents (75.4%) want the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan to be resolved and a strong peace to be established. It is very interesting to note that many respondents think that Armenians want peace too 57.6%.

**Graph 10. The opinion of respondents on their intentions to resolve conflict and re-establishment of peace**

Respondents explain their intention to establish peace as: for people not to die in the war (37.8%), in order there not to be refugees and IDPs (30.9%), for people not to lose their homes and property (19.9%), in order to terminate the conflict between our peoples (11.4%). At the same time supposing that Armenians want peace, respondents think that the main reason of this is different in Armenia than in Azerbaijan. By the opinion of Azeri respondents (54.5%) the opposite side of the conflict wants peace to anchor the results of the victory over Azerbaijan.

**Graph 11. Comparison of the answers of respondents on why they want peace to be established and why Armenians want peace**

Talking to the interviewer in the refugee camp, the old Azeri refugee said “Armenia achieved the goal



it set having started the conflict: it occupied Karabakh and many other regions of Azerbaijan. Now it states to the world community that it wants peace and pretends to be more peaceful than Azerbaijan. We want peace no less than Armenia. However, the peace in the present situation means continuing of our losses and sufferings. Lets Armenia free the occupied territory of Azerbaijan. And lets starting from that moment there will be peace between our countries and we can be friends with Armenians. I myself in this case could have a chance to see my Armenian friends who I have been seeing for ages”.

The results of the survey have shown, that respondents see the peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan as a complete termination of military activities between countries (16.4%), an opportunity to travel from one country to the other (6.2%), an opportunity to have border trade (8.0%), availability of economic relations between countries (9.6%), an opportunity of information exchange between countries (2.6%), an opportunity to have cultural exchange between countries (4.1%). It is important to note that major part of respondents (53.1%) noted that they do not imagine peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan anyhow. Particularly, large numbers of those who do not imagine peace between two countries are among IDPs (65.0%).

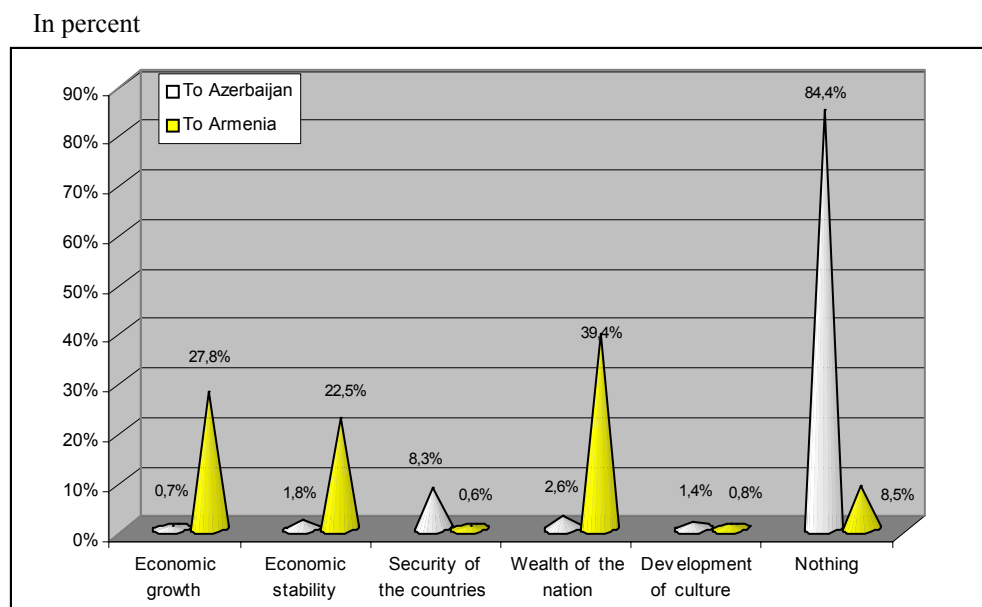
### **3.7. Terms of cooperation between Armenia and Azerbaijan**

Majority of respondents (52.6%) think that if there is peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan then it can lead to cooperation between these nations and countries. It is important to note that 58.8% of respondents want to have the post-conflict cooperation. Respondents noted that they want this post-conflict cooperation as it will lead to the development of regional economy (24.5%), cultural enrichment of our people (23.1%) and the promotion of political stability in the region (47.4%). It is very interesting to note that only 1.9% of respondents noted that the post-conflict cooperation will support the development of the economy of Azerbaijan. It is probably because the economy of Armenia is not capable and cannot support the development of more developed Azeri economy.

By the opinion of respondents, the post-conflict cooperation between Armenia and Azerbaijan can be realized in the border trade (20.0%), the students exchange (3.5%), the joint business (9.3%), the conduction of joint scientific researches (6.5%), the conduction of joint economic programs (6.0%), the conduction of joint social programs (6.1%), the conduction of joint ecological programs (10.7%), the conduction of joint actions in extraordinary situations in region (10.7%), the intergovernmental cooperation in political sphere (6.4%), the cooperation between NGOs in development of civil society (3.6%). At the same time 16.7% of respondents think that post-conflict cooperation between Armenia and Azerbaijan cannot be realized in anything.

The large part of respondents think that the post-conflict cooperation is needed as for Azerbaijan so for Armenia. However, by the opinion of the respondents Armenian can gain one thing from this cooperation and Azerbaijan the other.

**Graph 12. Comparison of the answers of respondents on what the post conflict cooperation can give to Azerbaijan and Armenia**



Speaking of the usefulness of the post-conflict cooperation for Azerbaijan the respondents pointed to straighten the security of our country (8.3%) and development of culture (1.4%). By the opinion of respondents for Armenia the post-conflict cooperation will provide economic growth (27.8%), economic stability (22.5%), and improvement of welfare of the nation (39.4%). It is interesting that by the opinion of 84.4% of respondents Azerbaijan will not gain anything from cooperation with Armenia.

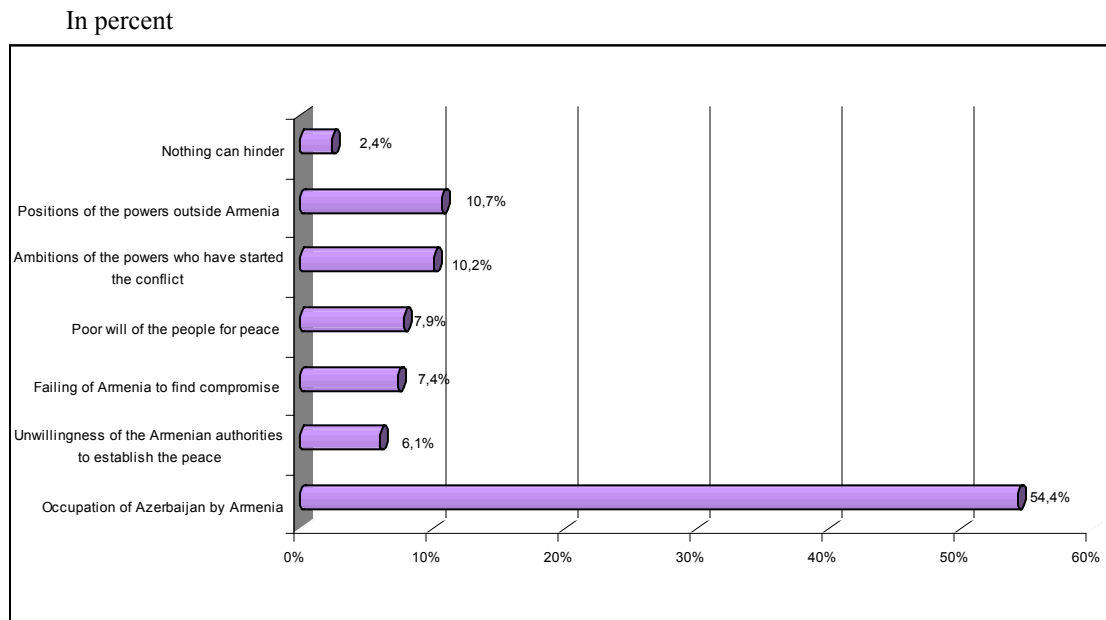
The results of the survey have shown that respondents are personally interested in the post-conflict cooperation with Armenia. By their opinion this kind of cooperation will give an opportunity to communicate with friends and/or acquaintances in Armenia (8.7%), to have joint business (4.3%), joint trade (8.0%), to visit neighbor country (3.3%), to straighten feeling of personal security (10.6%). At the same time we can note that the number of interested in personal participation in the post-conflict cooperation with Armenia is very small. 64.9% of respondents think that the post-conflict cooperation will not give them anything.

Respondents expressed their attitude towards the factors, which could help to establish peace and cooperation between two peoples and countries. Saying these respondents first of all pointed onto termination of territorial claims of Armenia to Azerbaijan (32.8%). By the opinion of the respondents in order to establish peace and cooperation between Azerbaijan and Armenia it is also necessary to find fair decision of the Karabakh problem (25.4%), return of the refugees and IDPs to the places of permanent residence (16.3%), activation of the governmental efforts for resolution of the conflict (1.2%), termination of military hysteria and hostile propagation in Armenian Mass Media (0.7%), termination of the cultivation of an enemy image in Armenia (7.9%), establishment of trade-economical relations between two countries (0.4%), reestablishment of cooperation in the sphere of culture (0.7%). According to the opinion of 14.6% of respondents nothing can help to achieve peace and cooperation between two countries and nations.

At the same time by the opinion of respondents by present time there are many factors, which could hinder the establishment of peace and cooperation between two countries and nations. In a capacity of such factors respondents named ongoing occupation of the part of Azerbaijanian territory by Armenia

(54.4%), unwillingness of the authorities of Armenia to establish the peace (6.1%), failing of the Armenian leaders to look for compromise decision (7.4%), ambitions of the powers who have started the conflict (10.2%), poor will of Armenians for peace (7.9%) and positions of the powers outside Armenia and Azerbaijan, and interested in the prolongation of the conflict (10.7%).

**Graph 13. The opinion of respondents on what can hinder the establishment of peace and cooperation between two countries and peoples**



Participants of the survey were convinced that it is necessary to cooperate between the two countries and nations on different levels in order to achieve peace and post-conflict interaction. First of all by the opinion of respondents similar cooperation should be realized on governmental level (56.6%). Together with this respondents point out to the importance of cooperation between two nations also on local/municipal (3.9%), business structures (4.8%), NGO (6.3%), Mass Media (4.9%), scientific and educational institutions (3.4%), separate socio-demographic groups (2.5%), interfamily (3.2%) and interpersonal (3.1%) levels.

### 3.8. Factors of controversial actions and potential of peacebuilding

The conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan brought losses and sufferings for thousands of people, having left deep trace in their minds and feelings. The future peace between two countries will unconditionally cure the wounds of the conflict. However, as talks with respondents have shown, memories about the hardship due to the conflict will slow the normalization of the relations for long time between the two nations. Majority of respondents (68.2%) noted that Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict will influence the hardness of the peace and cooperation between Armenia and Azerbaijan in the future.

Considerably large number of respondents (34.1%) thinks that there is hate and image of enemy towards the Other Party of the conflict in the country. However, as it was known from interviews with respondents that Azeris do not relate hate and image of enemy to Armenian people and each Armenian separately, but to political power of Armenia which carried out aggression against Azerbaijan and caused hardship of large mass of people in Azerbaijan. In this connection, the following ones are very

interesting: although refugees and IDPs state more about the hate towards the Other Party of the conflict, they particularly have many friends among Armenians. During the interview one woman IDP said “We used to be in good relations with Armenians in Karabakh, we were always together in sadness and joy. I miss them very much now. God punish the government of Armenia which started this conflict and put us apart from our Armenian friends from Karabakh”

Majority of participants of the survey (75.8%) supposed that the Other Party of the conflict has hate and image of enemy towards Azerbaijan. By the opinion of respondents it is the result of the state policy of directed hostility against Azerbaijan and Turkey conducted in Armenia, cultivating an image of Azeris as an enemy in minds of Armenians with using of Mass Media, educational system and manipulating of the historical events.

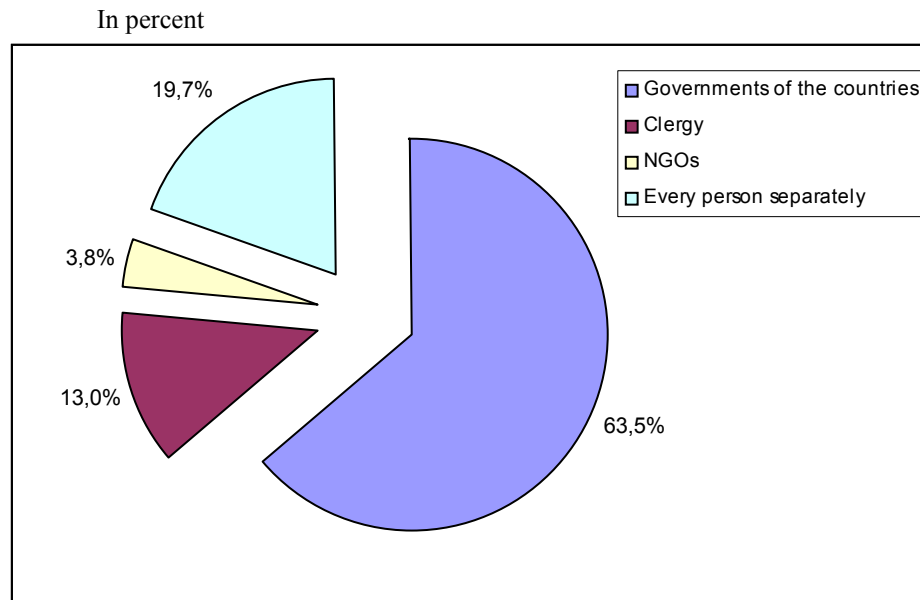
Respondents offered their suggestions to overcome hate and an image of enemy in minds of Azeris and Armenians towards each other. They think that similar relation of neighbor people to each other can be overcome in the way of changes in the educational systems for the growing generation (27.2%), positive propagation in the Mass Media (13.8%), activation of the efforts of intellectuals (14.2%), conducting joint cultural activities for better understanding of each other (16.9%), establishment of cooperation between two peoples in social, economic and cultural spheres (23.7%). Equally with this, small number of respondents (1.9%) thinks that hate and image of enemy in the minds of Azeris and Armenians cannot be overcome.

The survey has shown that population of the country is weakly informed about the relation of Armenians towards peace and cooperation with Azerbaijan. Answering the question “Do you think that Armenians are ready for cooperation?” the majority of respondents (65.9%) marked “it is difficult to answer”. 23.8% of respondents said that Armenians were not ready for cooperation and 10.3% of respondents supposed that Armenians were ready to cooperate with Azeris.

The results of the survey showed that though the Armenian side initiated the conflict, the majority of Azeris think that Armenian people and Armenians are not interested in this conflict. According to the opinion of respondents this conflict is needed for enemies of the two peoples (23.8%), power political elite of Armenia (28.2%), military elite of Armenia (5.6%), forces beyond Armenia and Azerbaijan, pursuing their goal (15.8%), extreme nationalists powers in Armenia (14.0%), Armenian Diaspora (8.8%). 3.8% of respondents think that nobody needs Armenian-Azeri conflict.

First of all, respondents think that it is necessary to make efforts by the governments of the two countries (63.5%). On a level with this they pointed to clergy (13.0%) and NGOs (3.8%) in order to establish peace between our countries and nations. It is very interesting to note that considerably large part of respondents (19.7%) noted that every person has to make effort in order to establish peace and cooperation between our countries and peoples (19.7%).

**Graph 14. Opinion of respondents on who has to make an effort for establishment of peace between two countries and their peoples**



According to opinions of respondents there is not enough information about Armenia in the country. The large part of population obtains information about Armenia from TV (23.3%). Very few respondents (4.4%) from Baku said that they receive information about Armenia from Internet. 21.7% of refugees have old information about Armenia gathered while staying in that country. The majority of all respondents (49.3%) said that they did not obtain any knowledge about Armenia.

Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict is always in the middle of attention of the Azeri society. Issues concerning the conflict are widely shown by Mass Media, Internet, published in books, being discussed on scientific, public and political forums, during the personal contacts and talks of people between each other. All marked kinds of communications serve to inform people about the conflict. According to the data of the survey, the most meaningful source of information about the conflict is TV. 60.2% of respondents noted this. Next to TV by its meaningfulness on conflict information follow radio (13.0%), newspapers (7.3%), Internet (3.4%), government sources (0.4%), political parties (1.0%), friends (8.1%).

Armenian and Azeri people always lived historically together. However, existing Armenian-Azeri conflict brought so many losses, difficulties and sufferings to both nations. It reduced the number of those people who were positive about the joint living with Armenians. Only 25.4% of respondents stated that if peace was established, and Armenians came back to their native lands, they would not be able to live with Armenians together again, it was difficult for 55.4% of respondents to answer this question. At the same time 19.2% of respondents thought that they could live with Armenians after establishing peace with Armenians. Those who marked that were old people, who equally with difficulties of the conflict did remember all good that was concerned with joint living of Azeris and Armenians.

The survey has shown that people would like the establishment of peace between Azerbaijan and Armenia in case of fair conflict resolution. Respondents agree with an idea that equally with the governments of the countries and NGOs, people themselves can contribute a lot to the process of peace establishment and cooperation between the two countries. However, thus many respondents said

(56.5%), they were not personally ready for concrete activities to undertake in order to establish peace and cooperation between two countries and peoples. Only 28.7% of respondents said that they were ready to convince friends that the peace between our countries and peoples had to be established, 2.1% of respondents were ready to appear in Mass Media with articles and statements directed to the establish the peace, 9.7% of respondents were ready to be the envoy for peace and participate in negotiations establishment.

## 4. Conclusion

The results of the survey conducted allow the following conclusions:

- ❖ The Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict led to the occupation of 20% of Azerbaijanian territory by Armenia, about 1 million of refugees and IDPs, and brought much suffering to the Azeri people. In spite of this, there is clear potential for peace and post conflict cooperation in Azerbaijan.
- ❖ The first-hand experience in both countries of Azeris and Armenians living together in the same communities before the conflict is the basis of the potential peace for the Azeri people.
- ❖ Another important part of the potential for establishing the peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan is the common historical past, common elements in culture, traditions, heritages, moral values and interests of people.
- ❖ In general people in Azerbaijan consider as an enemy Armenia as a country and Armenia as a state which initiated the aggression against Azerbaijan, occupied its territory, and expelled the Azeris from their places of permanent living, turning them to refugees and IDPs. At the same time as it was shown by the results of the survey that Azeris generally don't consider as an enemy Armenian people and individual Armenians.
- ❖ Many Azeris have friends and acquaintances from among Armenians. However, the connection with them was terminated during the conflict.
- ❖ Connections with Armenians are being kept among the inhabitants of border regions of Azerbaijan at the present time. In addition there are the new connections which have appeared during the continuing conflict. Border trade is the main venue for contact.
- ❖ Basically, the population of Azerbaijan has good knowledge of the content and essence of the conflict. This knowledge allowed respondents defining the Armenian-Azeri conflict not as interethnic and interconfessional, but as an interstate, territorial one.
- ❖ The territorial claims of Armenia to Azerbaijan, occupation of the territory of Azerbaijan by Armenia, expelling Azeris from their permanent places of living in Armenia and separatist movements of Armenian community of Nagorno-Karabakh, were determined by respondents the basic reasons of the conflict.
- ❖ According to the survey results Azeris want peace and post conflict cooperation with Armenia only after a solution is found to the causes of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. Basically, they think that it is compulsory to free Azerbaijanian territory occupied by Armenia, creation of conditions for return of refugees and IDPs to the places of permanent living, termination of separatist movement of Armenian community in Nagorno-Karabakh area of Azerbaijan in order

to establish peace.