Transatlantic Trends 2008

G|M|F The German Marshall Fund of the United States

STRENGTHENING TRANSATLANTIC COOPERATION

COMPAGNIA di San Paolo

FUNDAÇÃO LUSO-AMERICANA

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- **Transatlantic Trends** is an annual international study sounding public opinion on a range of topics to do with foreign policy and international relations. The idea is to map the attitudes and contrasting views held by citizens in the United States and Europe.

  ➡ **Geographical scope of the survey:** United States and Europe (12 countries: Germany, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Spain, France, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, United Kingdom, Romania and Turkey)

  ➡ **Sample size and fieldwork dates:** 1,000 interviews per country, conducted in June 2008

- Spain has participated in this survey for the fifth year running through the medium of the **BBVA Foundation**. Since 2002, Transatlantic Trends has been conducted by the German Marshall Fund in the United States and a broad group of European foundations.

The study is divided into four modules:

- Trends and expectations for transatlantic relations
- Views of transatlantic priorities and challenges
- U.S. voters ahead of the presidential elections
- Turkey and international relations

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Trends and expectations for transatlantic relations

- U.S. leadership
- President George W. Bush's handling of world affairs
- Expectations for transatlantic relations
- Impact of U.S. presidential elections on transatlantic relations

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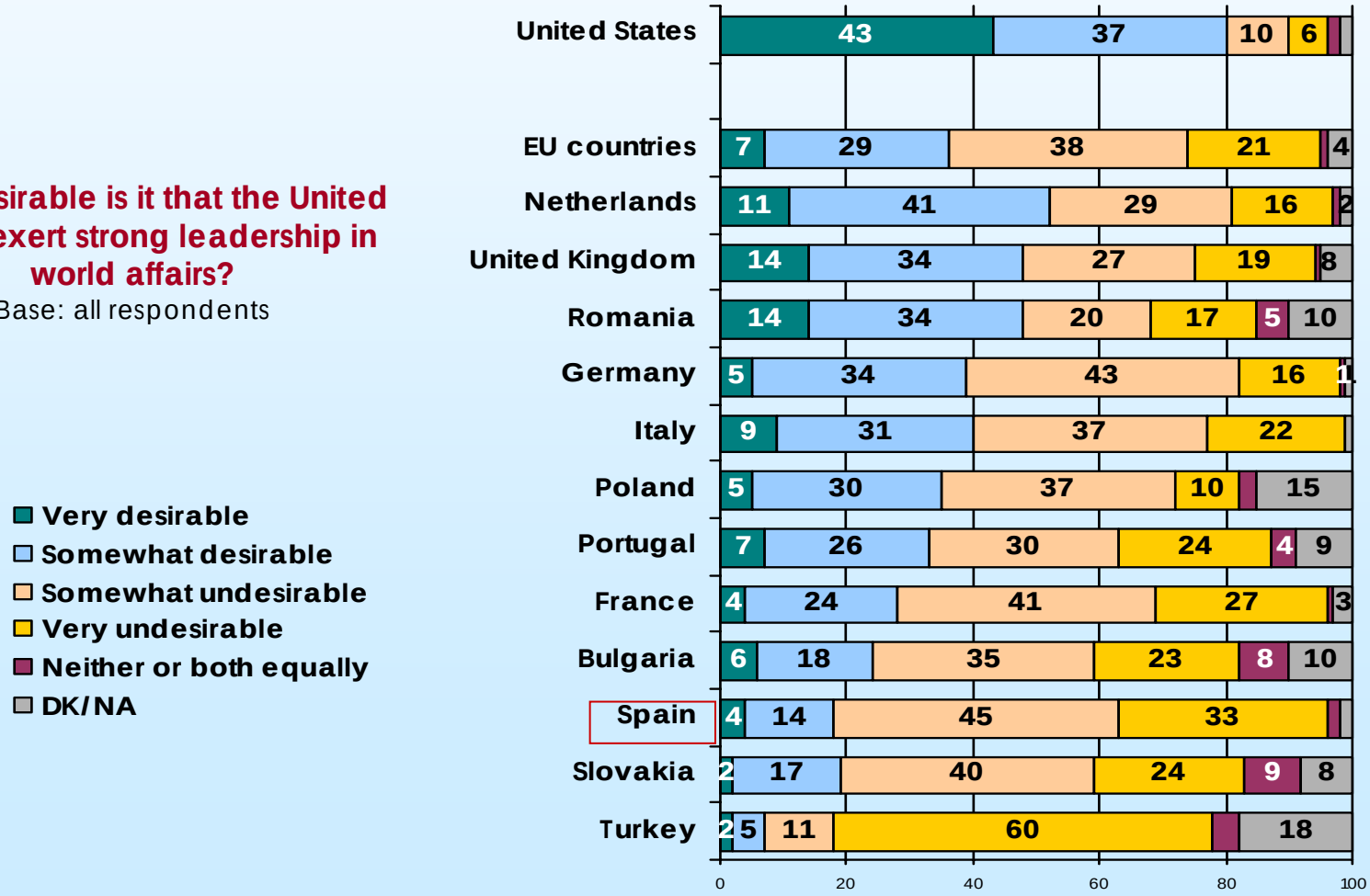
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THE UNITED STATES' LEADERSHIP IN WORLD AFFAIRS

- **Citizens in most European countries view a strong U.S. leadership in world affairs as "undesirable." Only in the Netherlands, United Kingdom and Romania are opinions more favorable than unfavorable in this respect**

How desirable is it that the United States exert strong leadership in world affairs?

Base: all respondents



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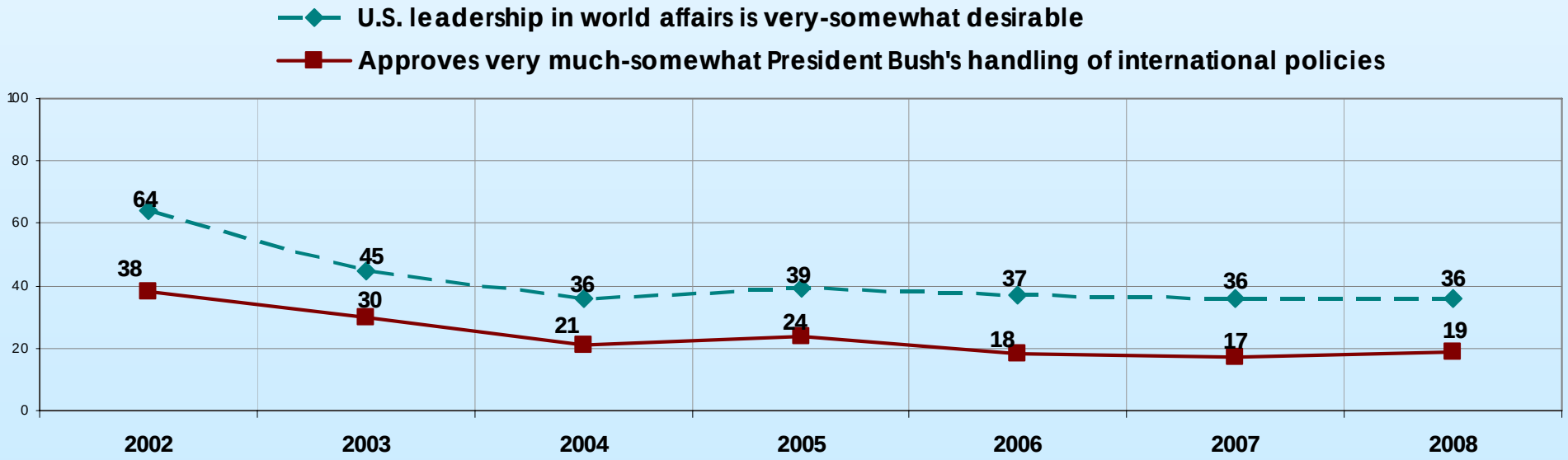
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U.S. LEADERSHIP AND THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION

- **Europeans continue to distinguish their views of U.S. leadership in world affairs from the way they have been handled by President Bush**
- **The gap between views of U.S. leadership and of Bush's handling of international policies has persisted since 2002 within a generally adverse trend**

Attitudes towards U.S. leadership and President Bush's handling of international policies.

Base: total respondents in European Union countries



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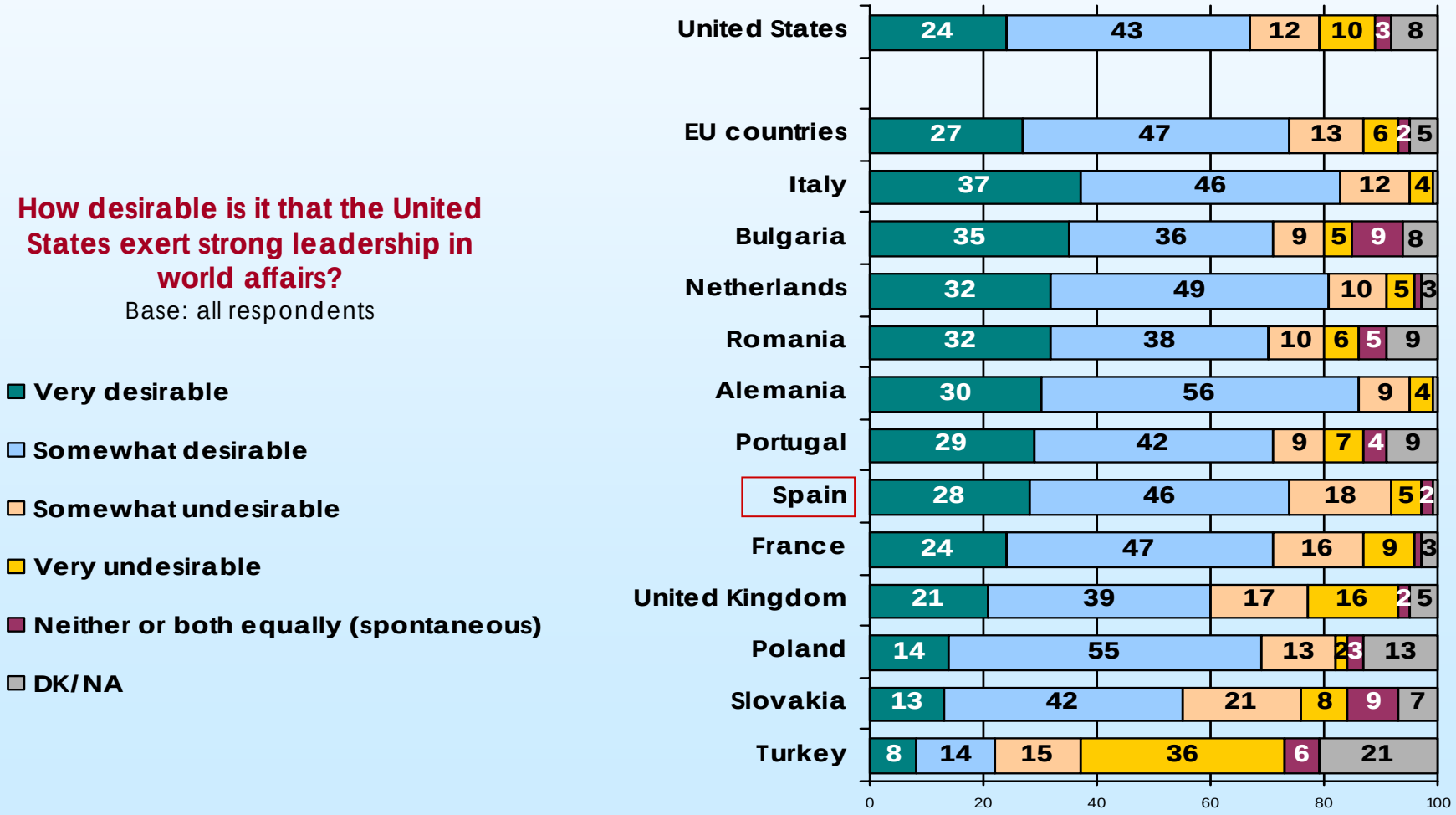
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EUROPEAN UNION LEADERSHIP IN WORLD AFFAIRS

- **Support for the European Union exercising strong leadership in world affairs remains strong among both Europeans and Americans**

How desirable is it that the United States exert strong leadership in world affairs?

Base: all respondents



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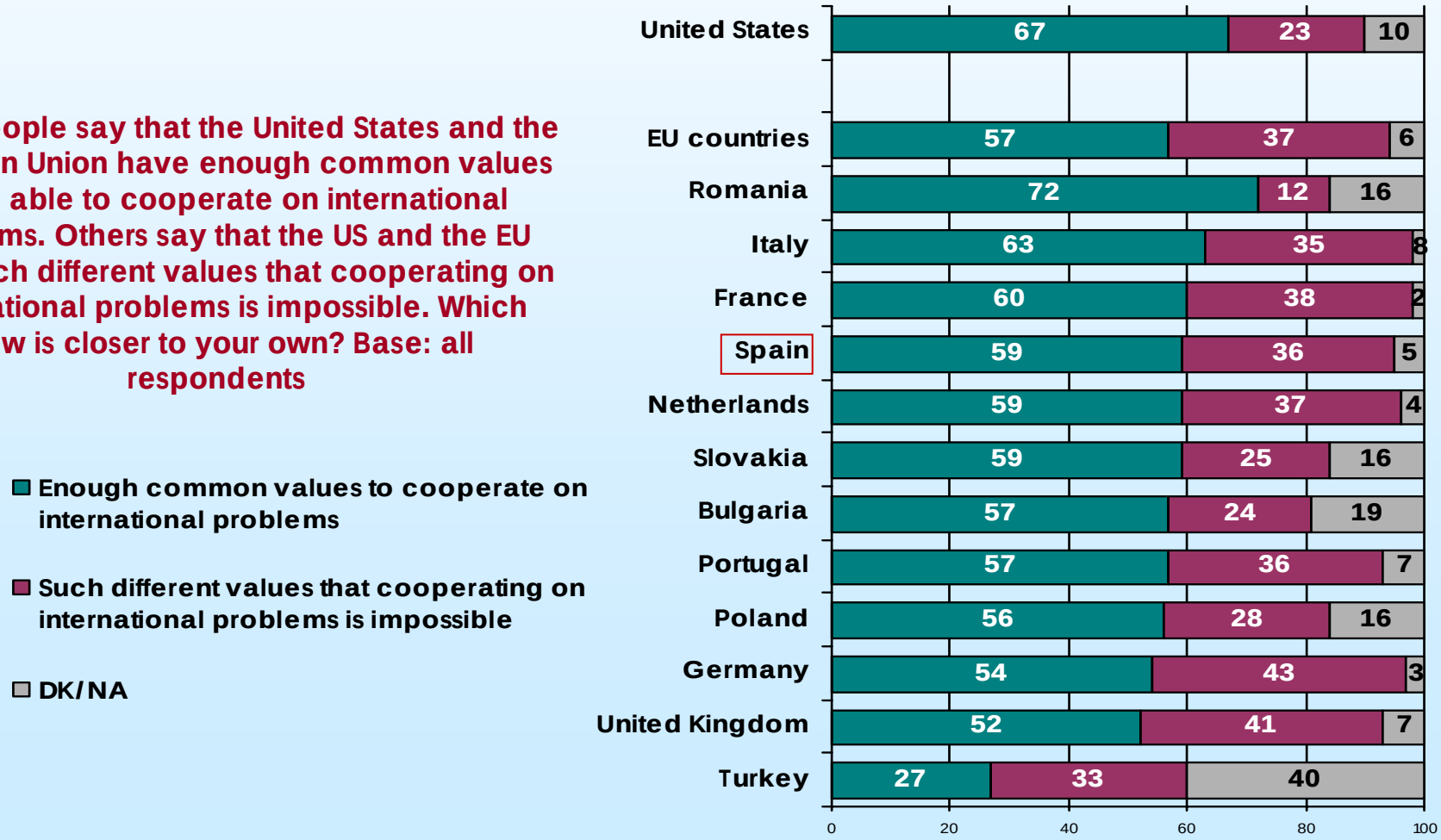
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COMMON VALUES AND COOPERATION

- **Both Europeans and North Americans believe they have enough common values to be able to cooperate on international problems**

Some people say that the United States and the European Union have enough common values to be able to cooperate on international problems. Others say that the US and the EU have such different values that cooperating on international problems is impossible. Which view is closer to your own? Base: all respondents



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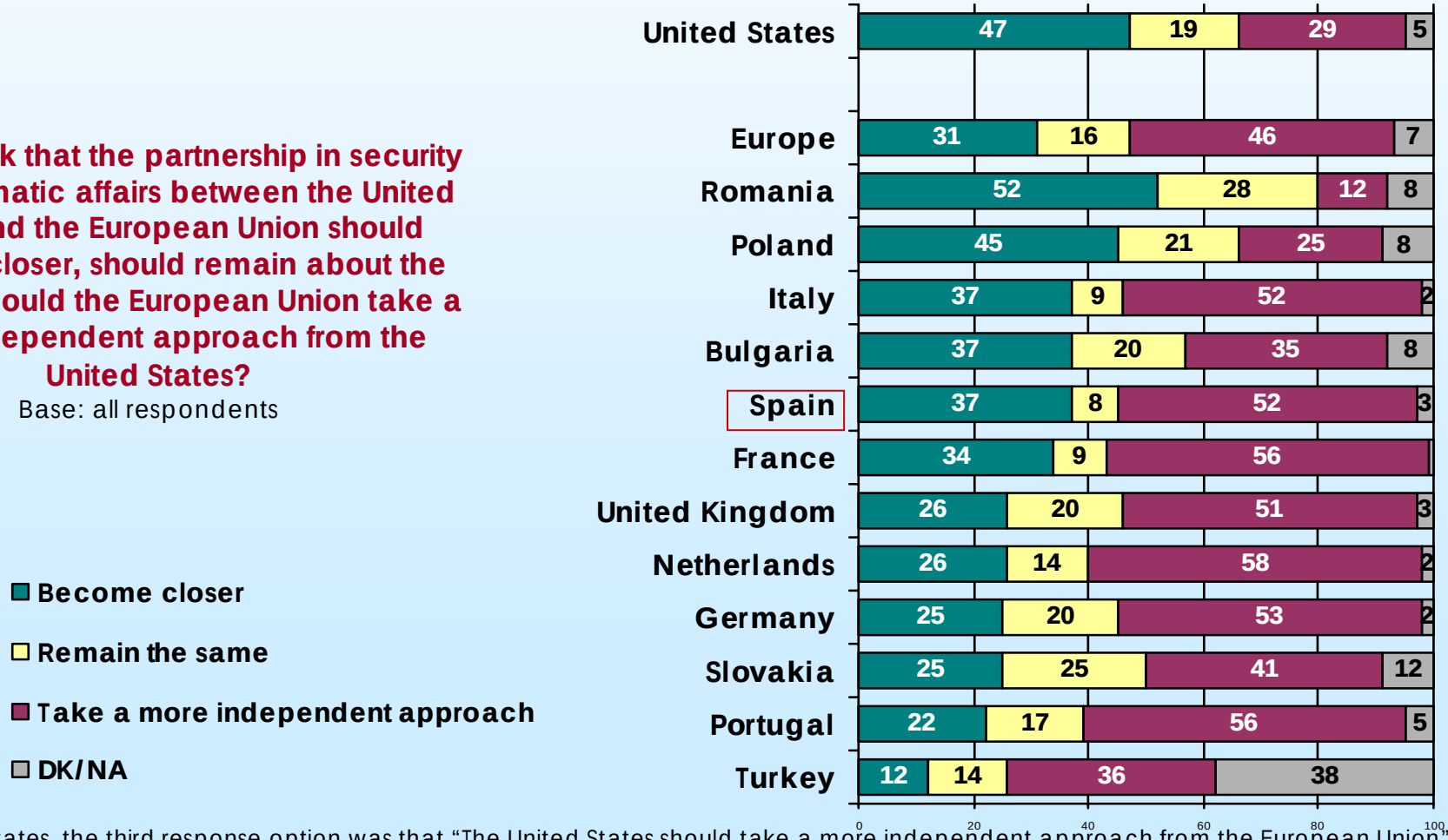
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EXPECTATIONS FOR TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS

- **A relative majority of Americans would like a closer partnership with the European Union in security and diplomatic affairs, while a relative majority of Europeans believe the EU should take a more independent line from the United States**

Do you think that the partnership in security and diplomatic affairs between the United States and the European Union should become closer, should remain about the same, or should the European Union take a more independent approach from the United States?

Base: all respondents



(*) In the United States, the third response option was that "The United States should take a more independent approach from the European Union"

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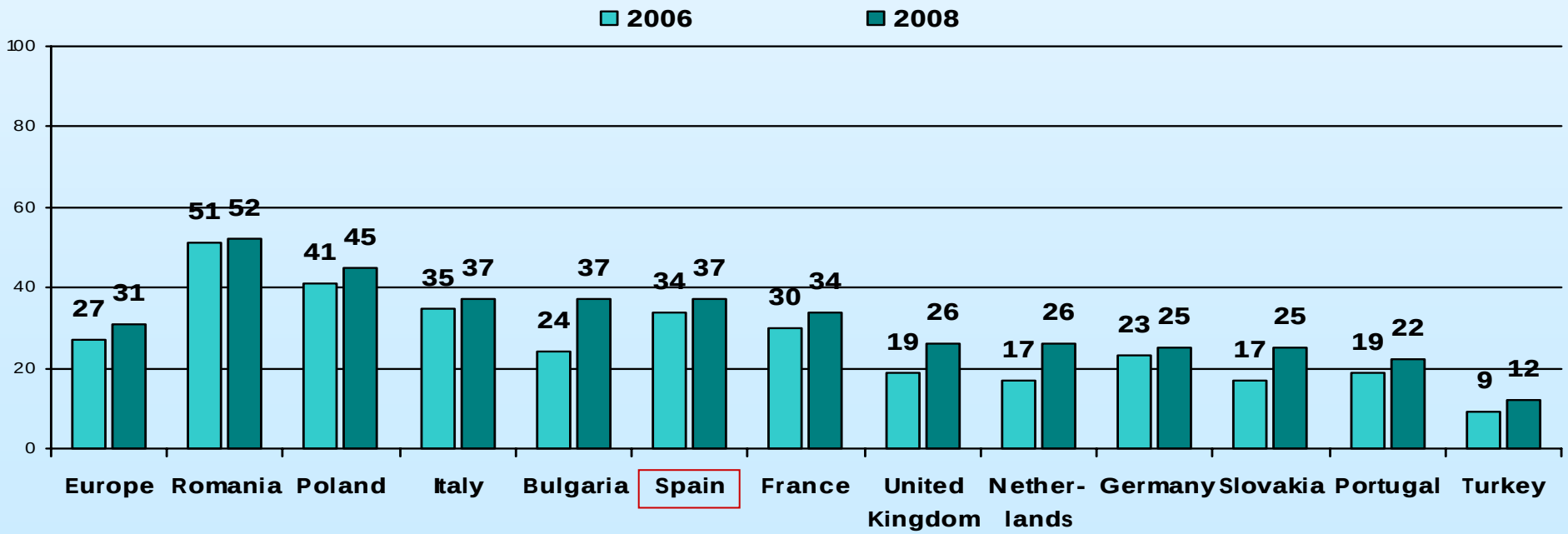
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CHANGING EXPECTATIONS FOR TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS

- **Although a majority of Europeans believe the European Union should take a more independent line from the United States in matters of security and diplomacy, a growing percentage would like to see closer relations between both powers**

Do you think that the partnership in security and diplomatic affairs between the United States and the European Union should become closer, should remain about the same, or should the European Union take a more independent approach from the United States? Percentage responding that it should "become closer"

Base: all respondents in European countries



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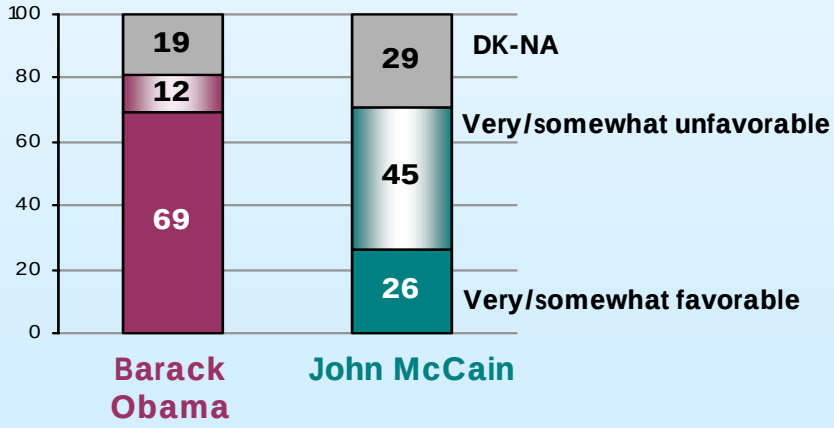
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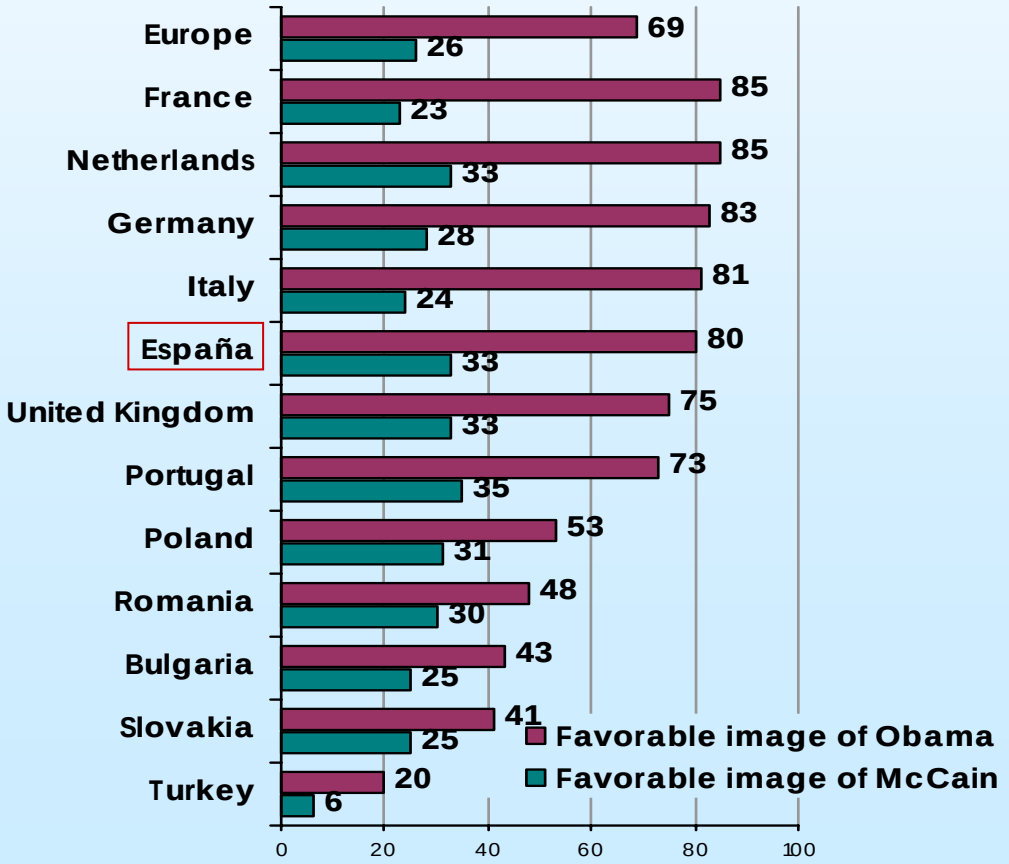
IMAGE OF THE U.S. CANDIDATES IN EUROPE

- **Europeans tend to take a highly favorable view of Barack Obama. Conversely, their view of John McCain is generally unfavorable, with a higher percentage feeling unable to make a judgment.**

To what extent is your view of the following candidates for president of the United States favorable or unfavorable? Percentage holding a favorable view of each

Base: all respondents in European countries





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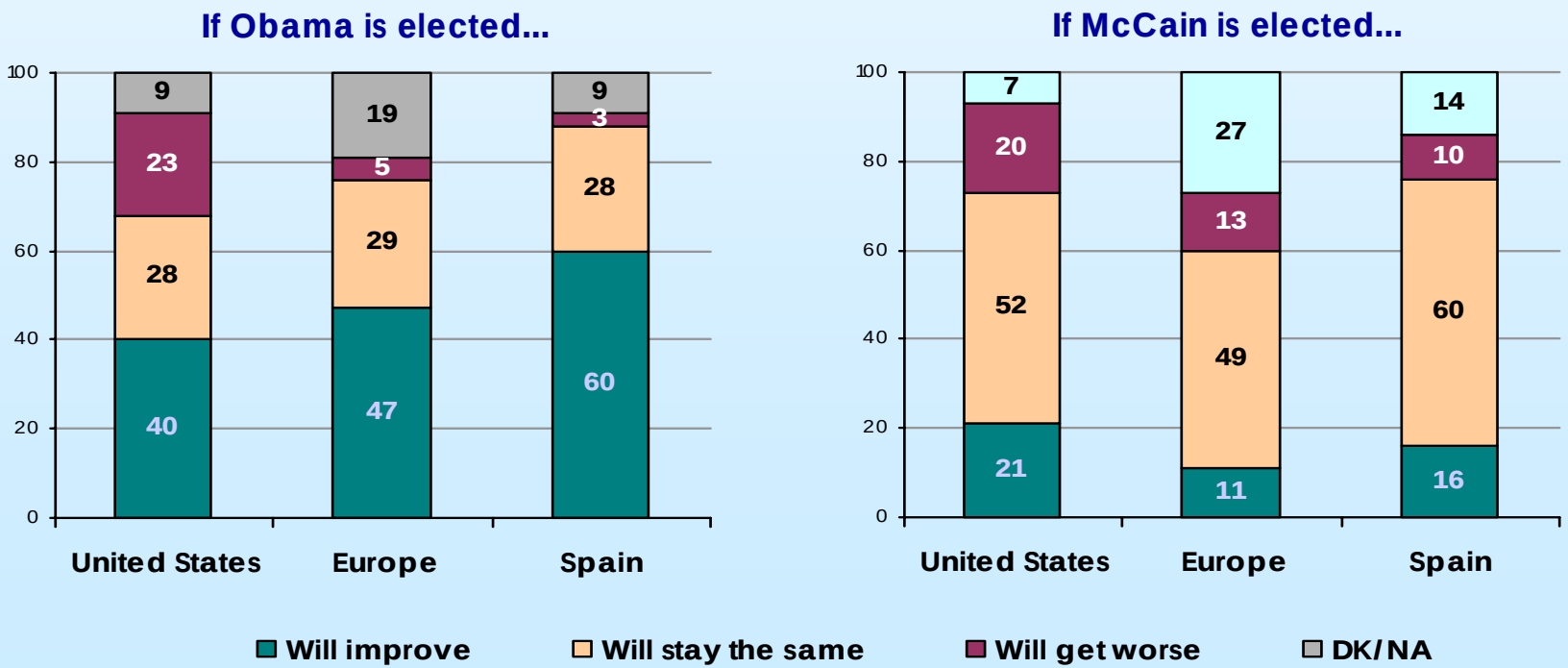
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VIEWS OF THE IMPACT OF THE ELECTIONS ON TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS

- **A relative majority of Europeans and Americans believe relations between the U.S. and Europe will improve if Barack Obama is elected president. If Senator McCain is elected, a majority believe that relations will stay the same**
- **Spaniards stand out from the European average for their greater optimism about the impact of the upcoming elections on transatlantic relations**

If ….. is elected, do you think that relations between the United States and Europe will improve, get worse, or stay the same following this upcoming election? Base: all respondents



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Views of transatlantic priorities and challenges

- Perception of threats
- Ordering of priorities
- Energy dependence
- The situation in Russia
- Measures to stabilize Afghanistan
- NATO

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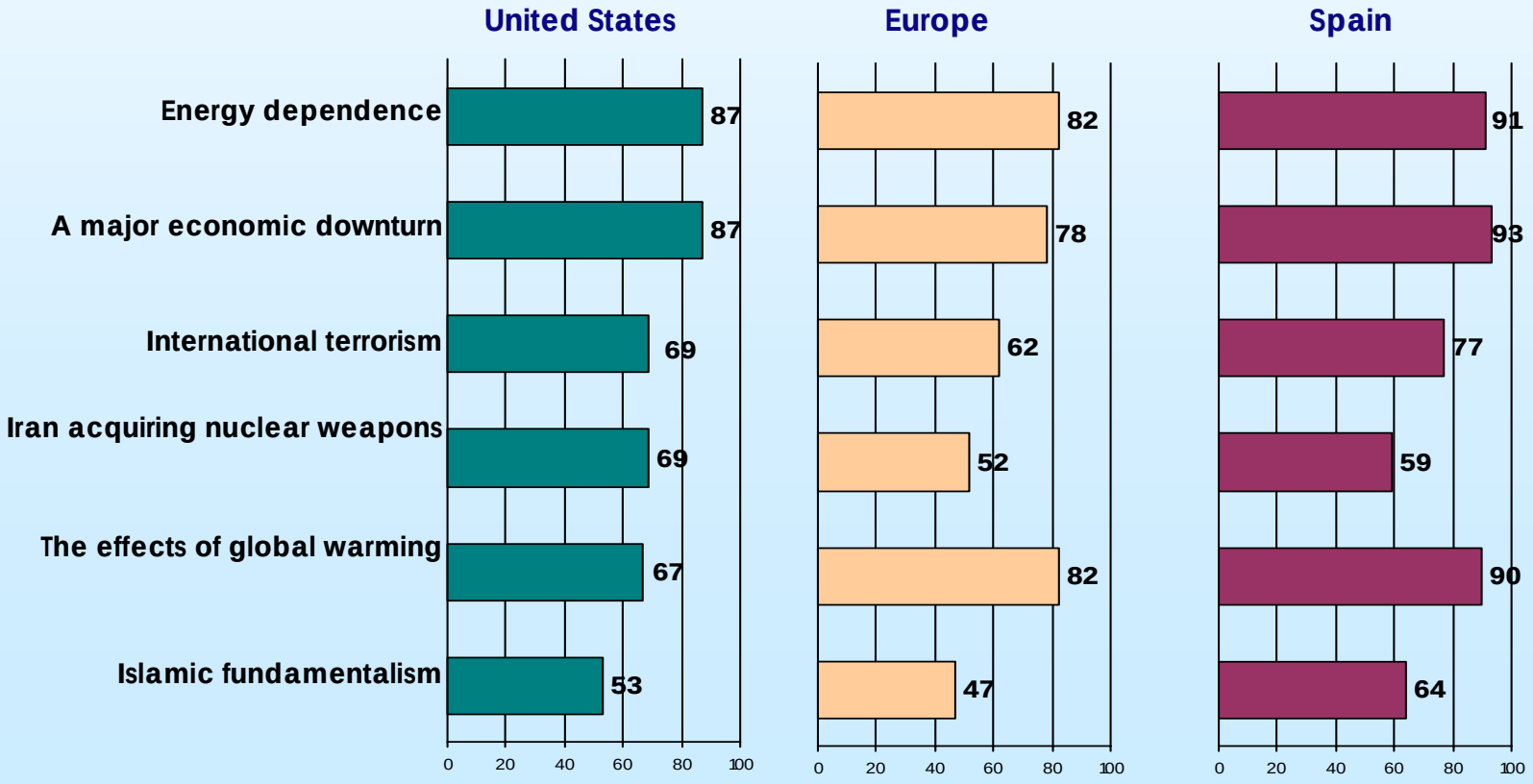
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INTERNATIONAL THREATS

- **Citizens on both sides of the Atlantic concur in rating energy dependence and a severe economic crisis among the threats most likely to personally affect them in the next ten years**
- **Differing perceptions of the threat of global warming, with Europeans more concerned**
- **Spaniards stand out as having a sharper perception of threats**

And in the next 10 years, please tell me how likely you are to be personally affected by each of the following threats. Percentage responding "very + somewhat likely" Base: all respondents



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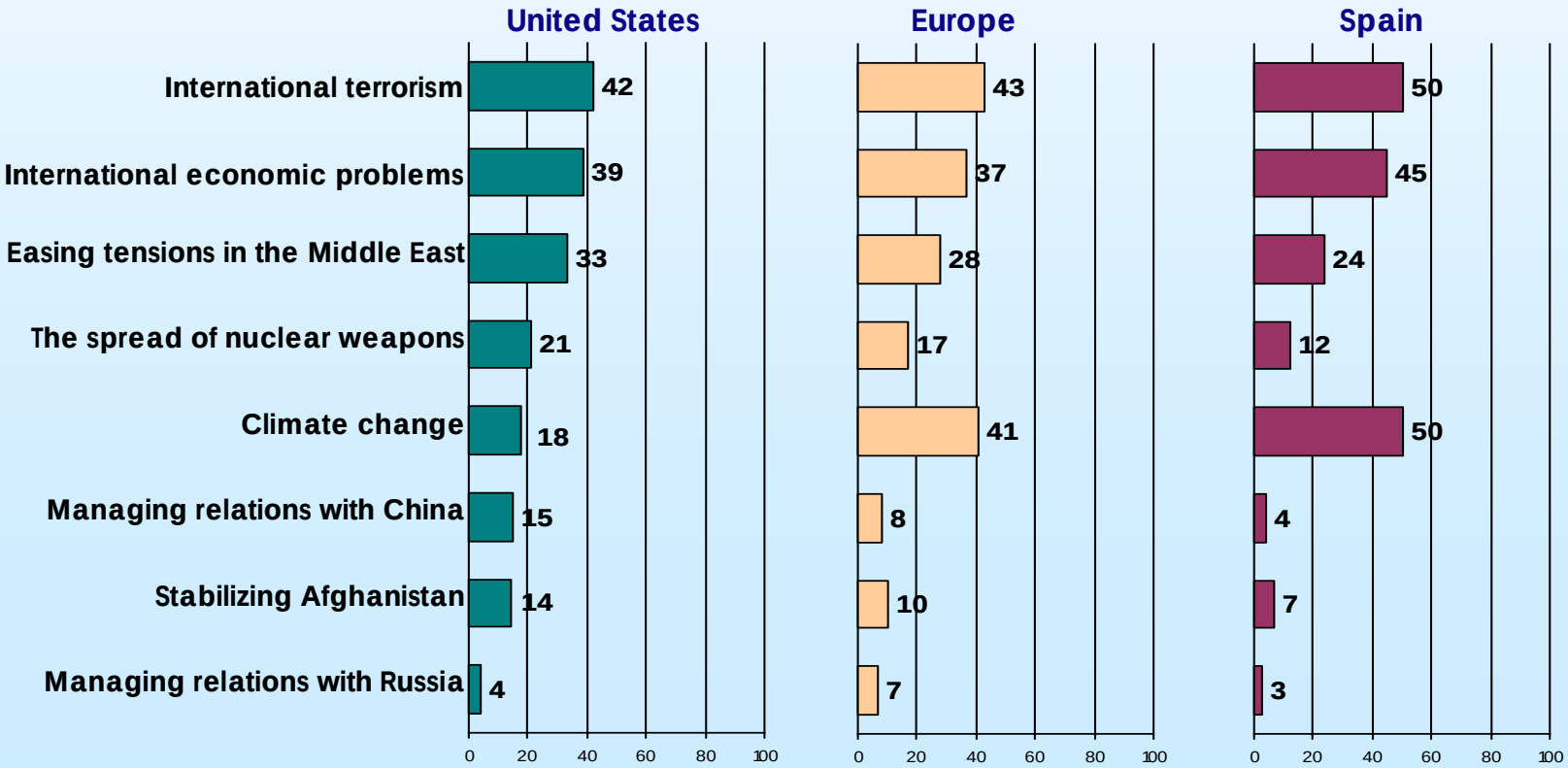
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PRIORITIES IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

- **Americans and Europeans state international terrorism and international economic problems as the top priorities for the future U.S. president and European leaders**
- **Europeans, especially the Spanish, also place global warming at the top end of the map**

I will now read out a list of issues that the next American president and European leaders could address together. Please say which you believe should be their top two priorities. Base: all respondents



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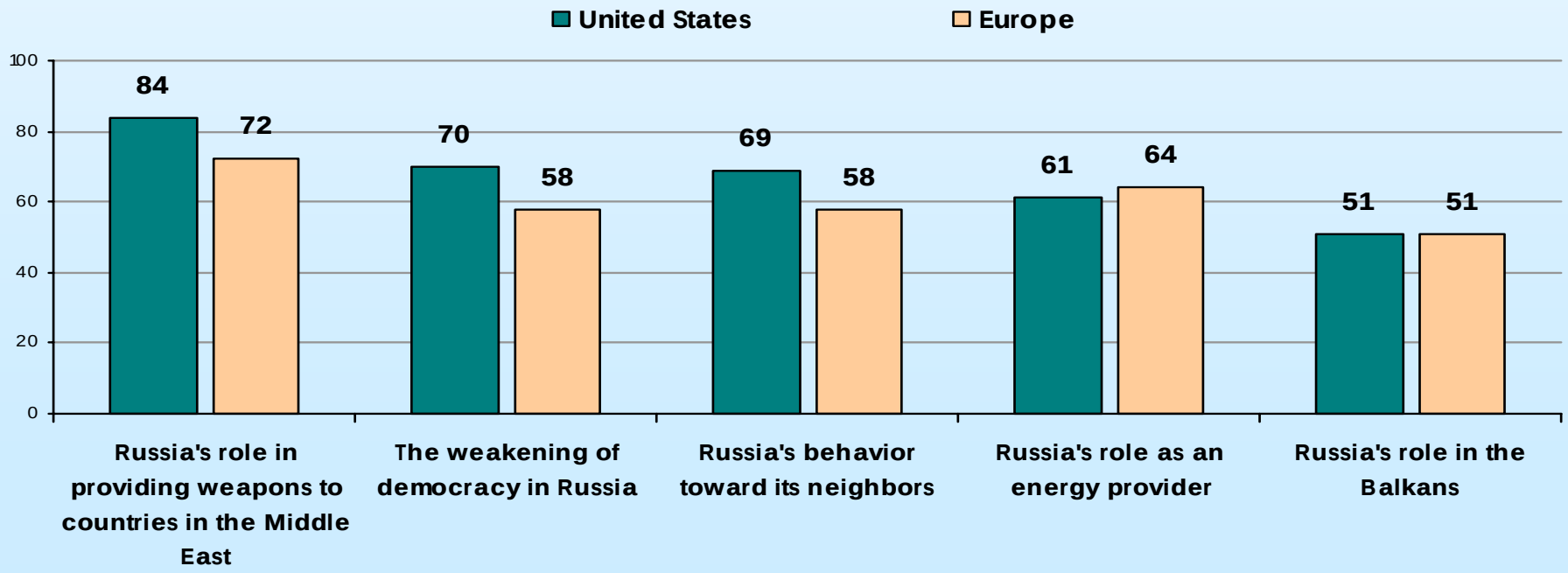
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THE SITUATION IN RUSSIA (*)

- **Americans and Europeans reserve their greatest concern vis à vis Russia for its role in providing weapons to the Middle East. They also express their unease about the weakening of its democracy, the country's behavior towards its neighbors, its role as an energy provider and its role in the Balkans**
- **Americans tend to express greater concern over these matters**

As you may know, some people are concerned about recent developments in Russia. Those who are concerned give a number of different reasons. To what extent are you concerned or not about each of the following items:

Percentage responding "very + somewhat concerned". Base: all respondents



(*) The armed conflict between Russia and Georgia broke out after the survey data had been collected

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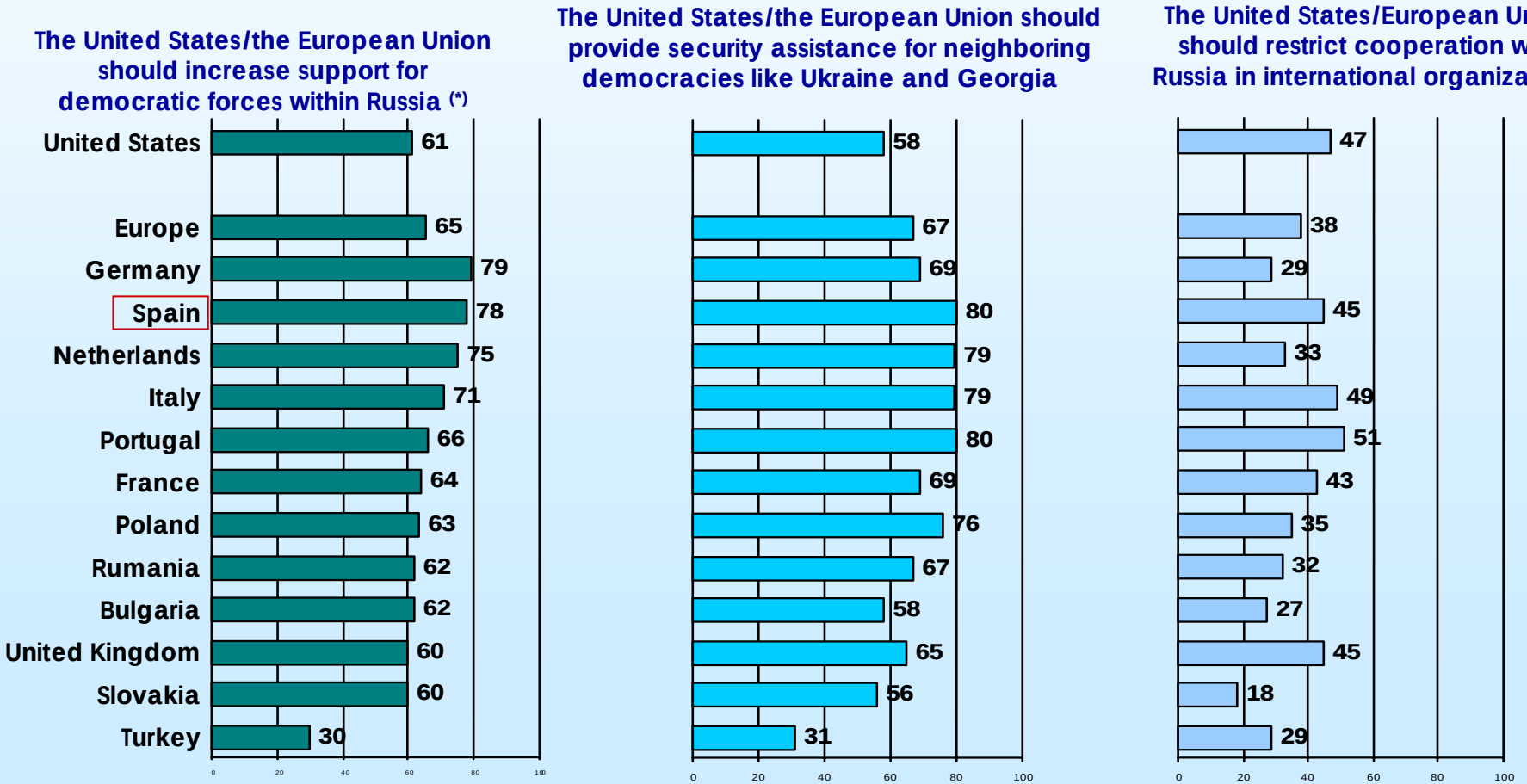
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THE SITUATION IN RUSSIA

- **Europeans and Americans approve increasing support for democratic forces inside Russia and the provision of security assistance to neighboring countries. Almost half of U.S. respondents would restrict cooperation with Russia in international organizations, while most Europeans reject this option**

Please tell me to what extent you approve or disapprove of each of the following actions being taken concerning Russia. Percentage responding "approve very much + approve somewhat". Base: all respondents



(*) Respondents in the United States were asked if the U.S. should take such actions, and those in the European Union whether they should be taken by the EU

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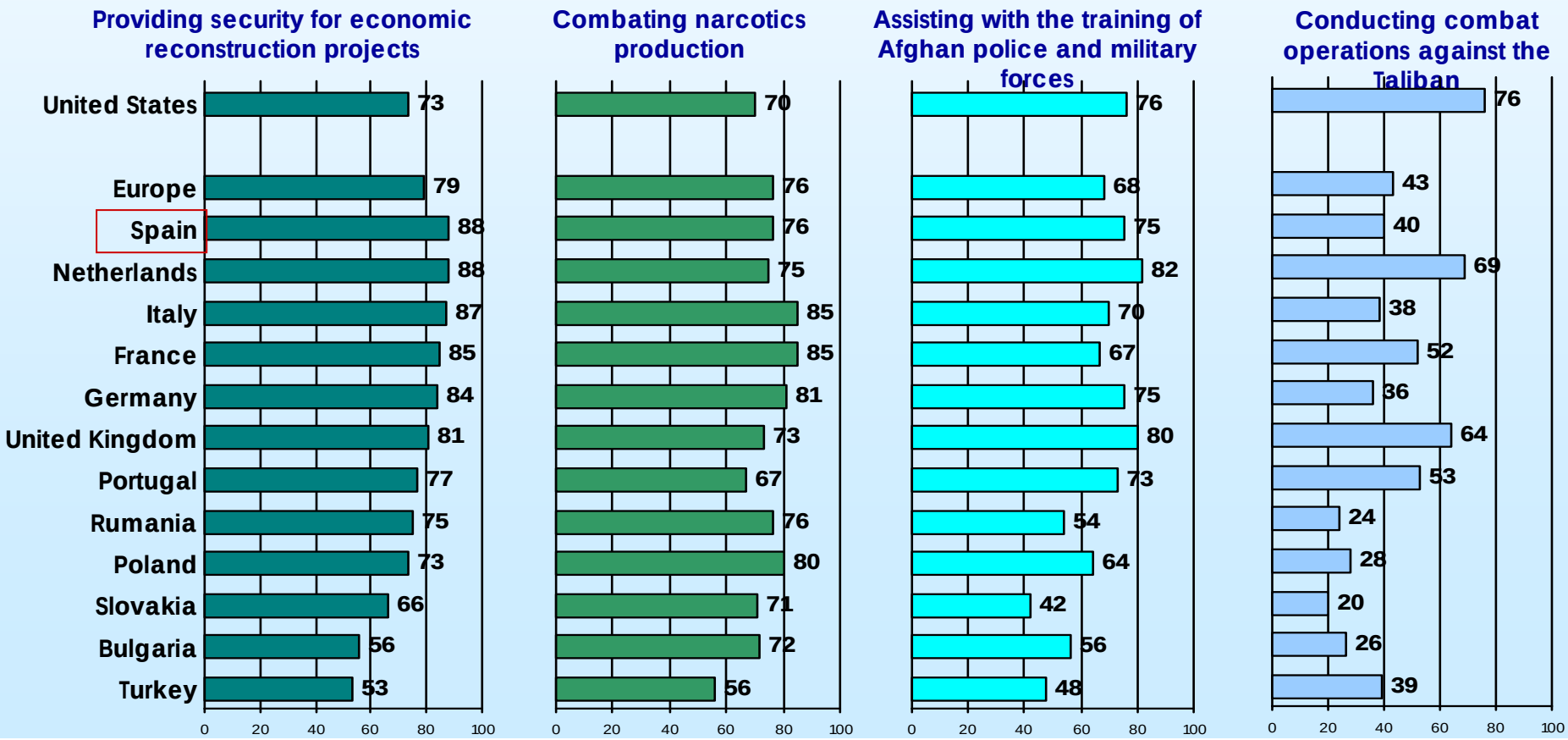
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MEASURES TO STABLILIZE AFGHANISTAN

- **Broad support for using peaceful means to stabilize Afghanistan**
- **Opinions were divided on the option of conducting combat operations against the Taliban, which is supported by Americans but not by Europeans (only the British, Dutch and Portuguese)**

As you may know, many countries are engaged in different ways to stabilize Afghanistan. To what extent would you approve or disapprove of [COUNTRY'S] participation in the following efforts in Afghanistan:

Percentage responding "approve very much + approve somewhat". Base: all respondents



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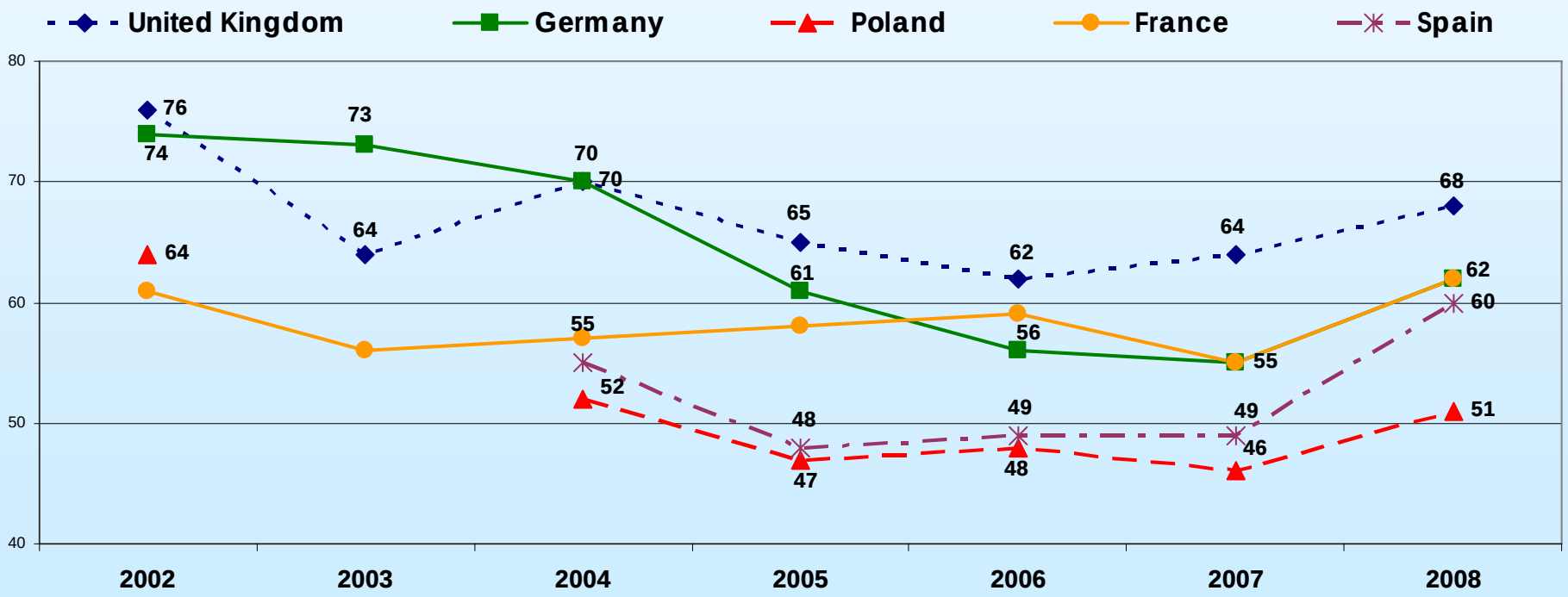
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NATO

- **Most European countries show increased support vs. 2007 for the idea that NATO is essential to national security, with certain countries halting the trend of declining support observed since 2002**

Some people say that NATO is still essential to our country's security. Others say it is no longer essential. Which of these views is closer to your own?

Percentage responding that it is "still essential". Base: All respondents



(*) 2003 data from the Office of Research, U.S. State Department.

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U.S. voters ahead of the presidential elections

- Differing priorities
- Differing perceptions of the situation in Russia
- Differing attitudes towards Afghanistan

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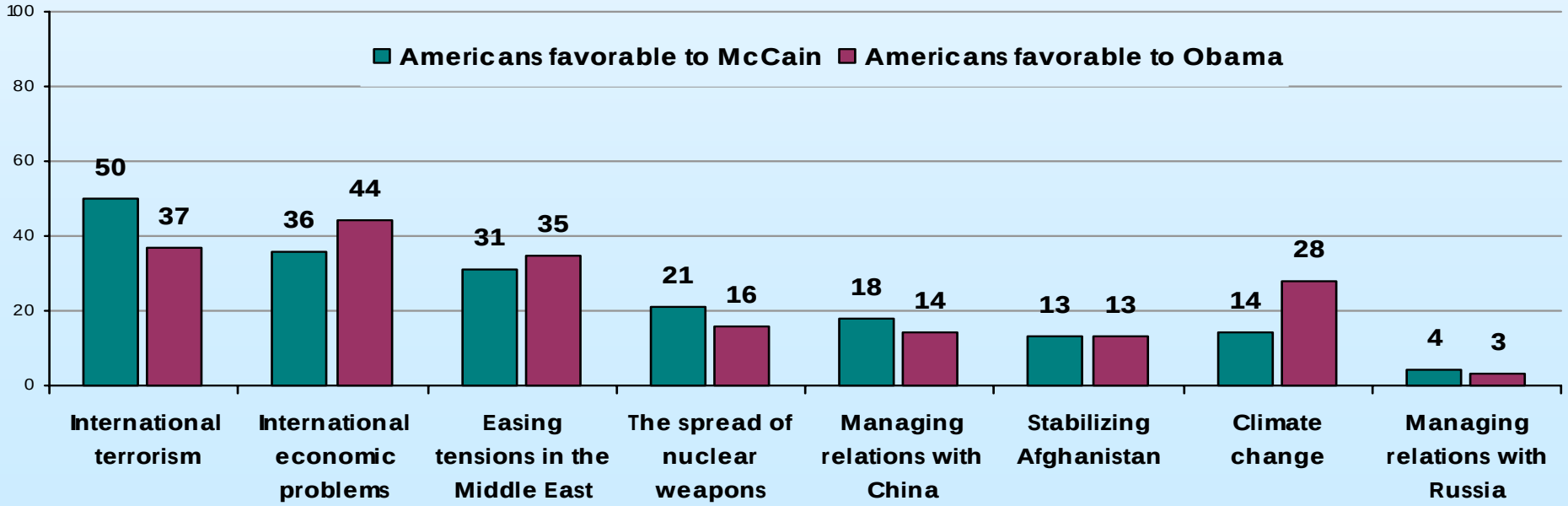
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THE PRIORITIES FOR AMERICANS

- **Although Americans coincide in some of their priorities, the order they assign them is not the same:**
  - **Those with a favorable view of Senator McCain attach more importance to international terrorism**
  - **Those with a favorable view of Senator Obama attach more importance to international economic problems and climate change**

I will now read out a list of issues that the next American president and European leaders could address together. Please say which you believe should be their top two priorities.

Base: all respondents



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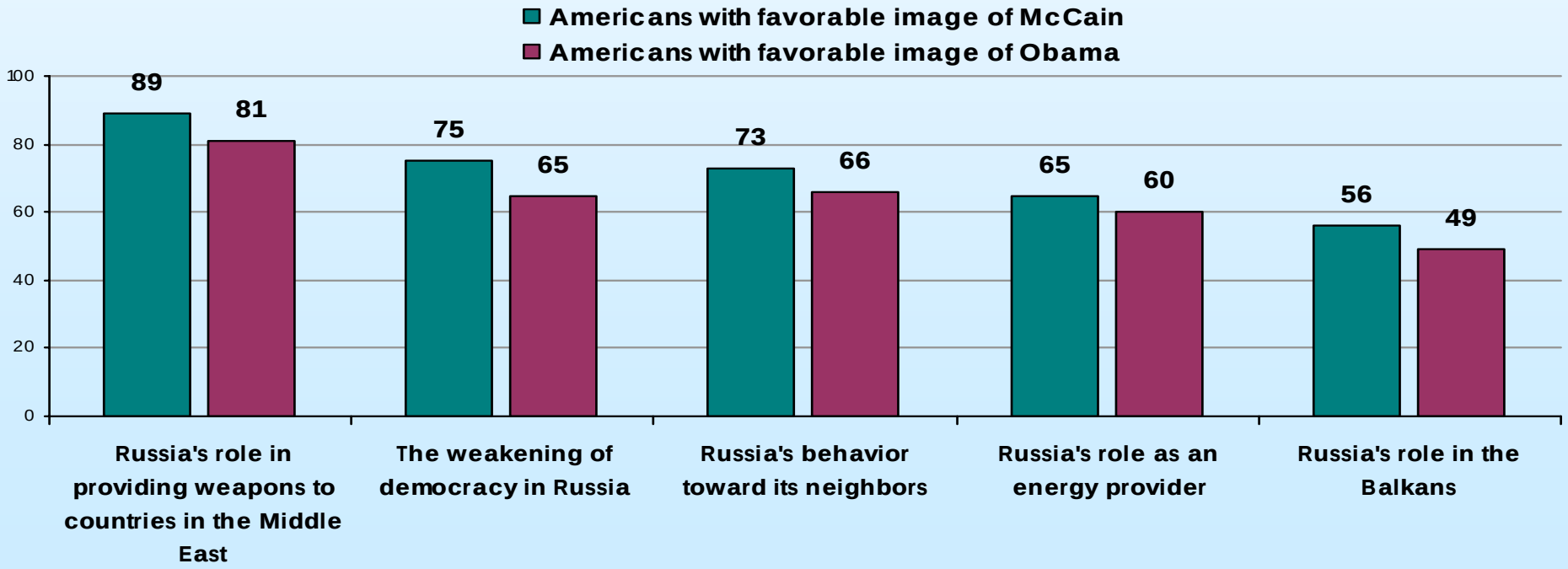
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THE SITUATION IN RUSSIA

- **Although concern runs high among both groups, Americans who favor John McCain express more concern than Obama supporters on issues to do with the situation of Russia**

As you may know, some people are concerned about recent developments in Russia. Those who are concerned give a number of different reasons. To what extent are you concerned or not about each of the following items:

Percentage responding "very + somewhat concerned". Base: all United States respondents



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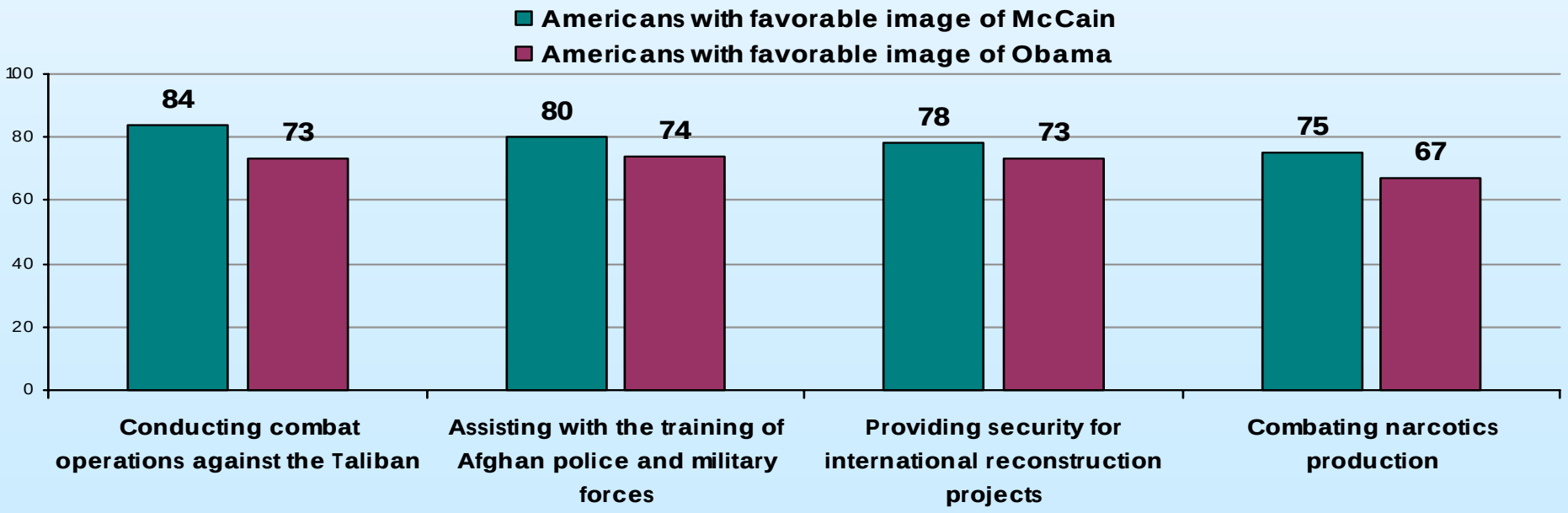
MEASURES TO STABILIZE AFGHANISTAN

In a context of widespread support, Americans with a favorable view of Senator McCain are likelier to back policy options to stabilize Afghanistan than those favoring Senator Obama.

As you may know, many countries are engaged in different ways to stabilize Afghanistan. To what extent would you approve or disapprove of [COUNTRY'S] participation in the following efforts in Afghanistan:

Percentage responding "approve very much + approve somewhat"

Base: all United States respondents



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Turkey and international relations

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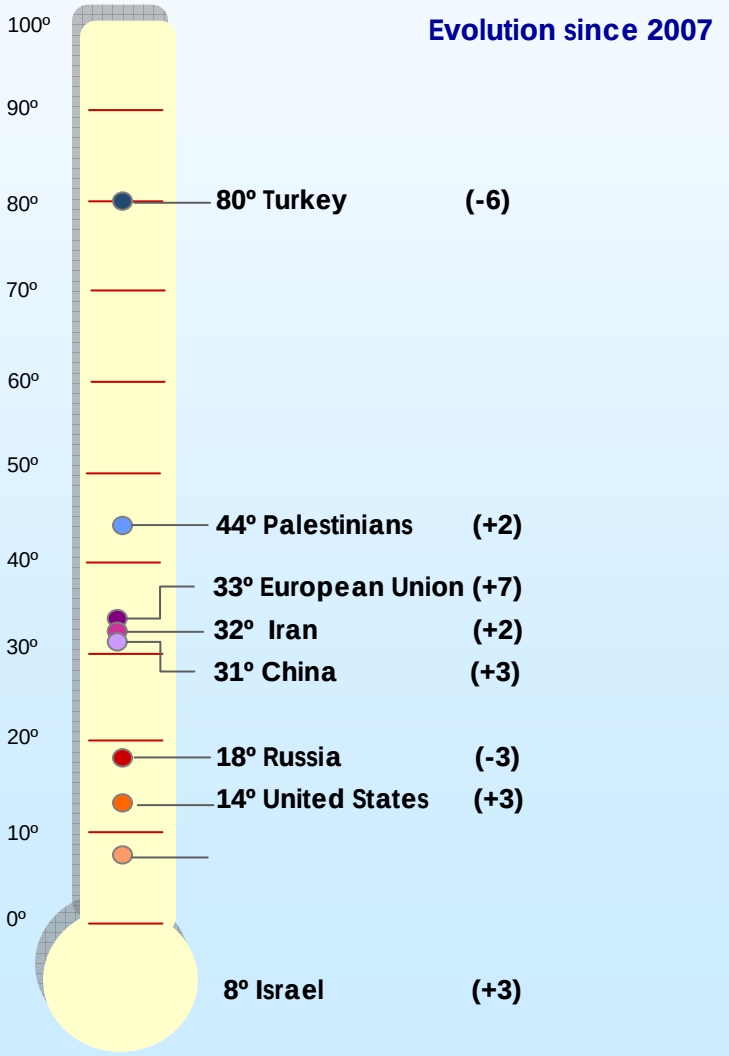
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TURKISH VIEWS ON COUNTRIES AND NATIONALITIES

- **Turks express a warmer sentiment towards the European Union and the United States than in 2007, reversing the negative trend in place since 2004**

Turks' views of other countries and peoples

Base: all respondents in Turkey. Mean on a scale from 0 to 100 (0 indicating the lowest score and 100 the highest score)



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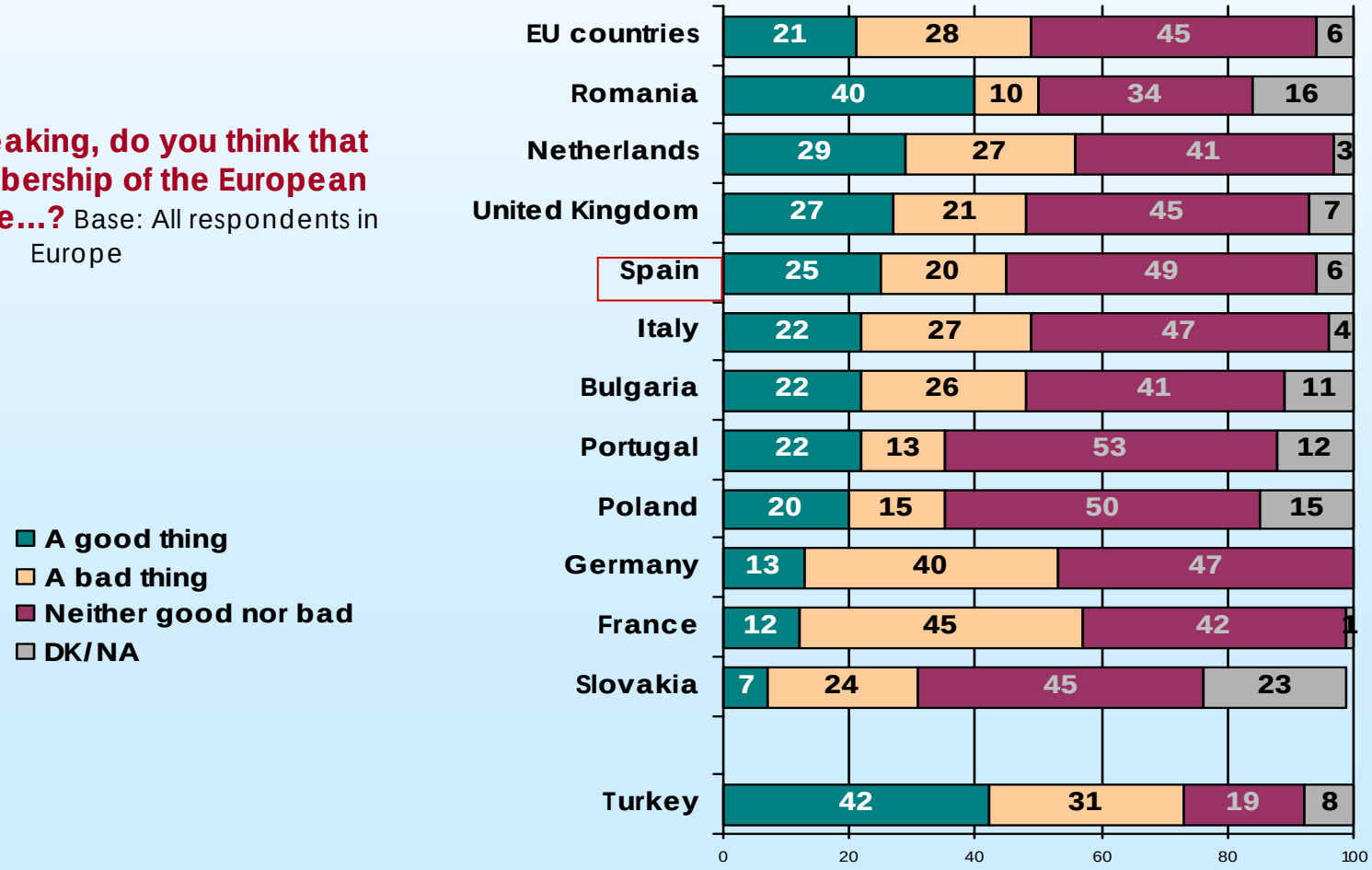
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TURKEY'S MEMBERSHIP OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

- **Relative majorities in EU countries believe Turkey joining the EU would be "neither good nor bad"**
- **In Germany and France, a very significant percentage are opposed to Turkey's membership**
- **Although Turks are divided in their views, a relative majority see it as a good thing**

Generally speaking, do you think that Turkey's membership of the European Union would be…? Base: All respondents in Europe



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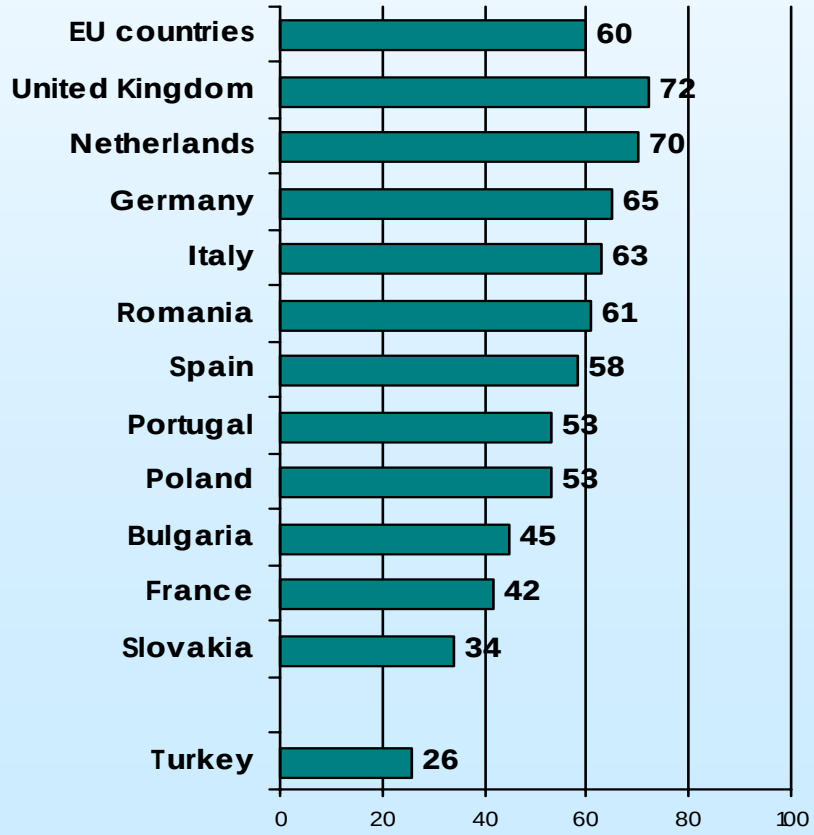
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TURKEY'S MEMBERSHIP OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

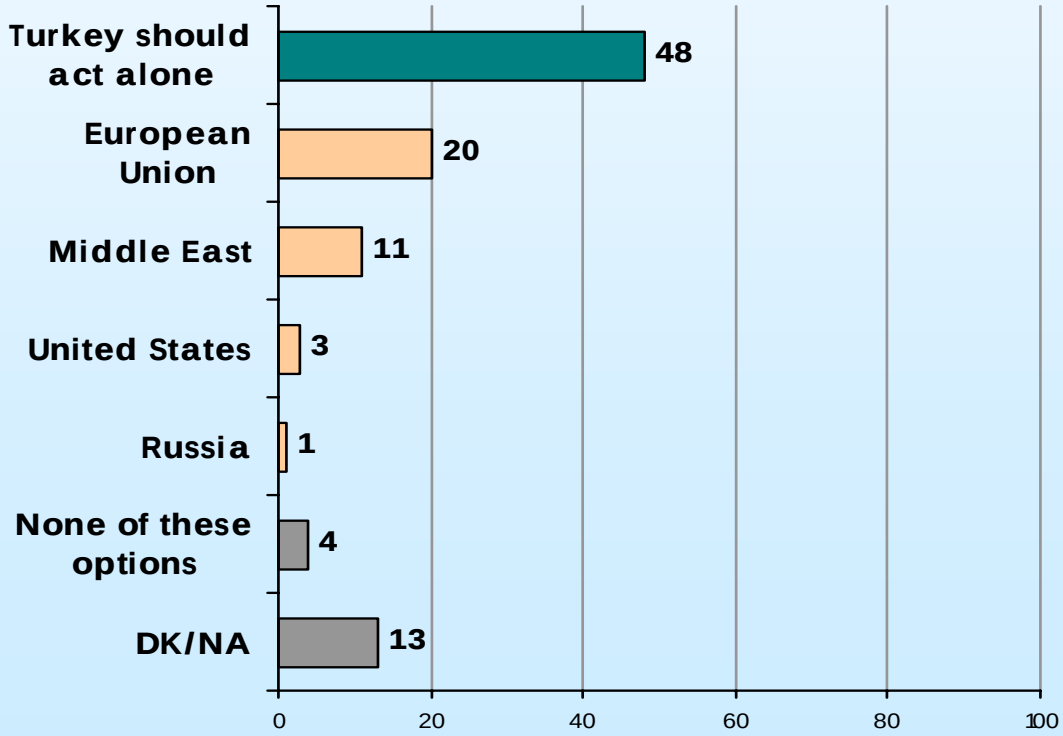
- **While a majority in European countries believe Turkey will join the EU, a majority in Turkey itself see it as unlikely**

How likely or not do you think it is that Turkey will join the European Union?
Percentage responding "Very-somewhat likely" Base: All respondents in Europe



- **A relative majority in Turkey believe the country should act alone on international matters**

On international matters, with which one of the following do you think Turkey should act in closest cooperation? Base: all respondents in Turkey



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Conclusions

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Transatlantic relations:

- Citizens remain critical of the G.W. Bush administration and, to a lesser extent, of the U.S.'s leadership in world affairs.
- Europeans and Americans believe they have enough common values to be able to cooperate on international problems
- Europeans believe the coming elections in the United States will impact on transatlantic relations: a relative majority expect relations to improve if Barack Obama is elected, while a relative majority believe that with a McCain victory they will stay the same

Transatlantic priorities and challenges:

- Transatlantic consensus that international terrorism and economic problems are the top priorities. Division on the importance attached to global warming, with Europeans more concerned
- Americans and Europeans are in favor of increasing support to democratic forces within Russia and providing security assistance for neighboring democracies
- Both approve support measures to stabilize Afghanistan, but differ on conducting combat operations against the Taliban

U.S. voters ahead of the presidential elections:

- Climate change differentiates Americans favorable to Senator McCain from those taking a favorable view of Senator Obama, who see it more as a threat and priority
- Those taking a favorable view of Senator John McCain tend to be more concerned about the situation in Russia
- Although support is generalized, McCain sympathizers also come out more strongly in favor of measures to stabilize Afghanistan

Turkey and international relations:

- Turks show themselves slightly warmer towards the European Union and the United States, but remain the most critical among the Europeans about the two powers' leadership in world affairs
- A relative majority of Turks continue to see European Union membership as a good thing, while a majority of EU citizens consider it neither good nor bad
- Even so, a majority in Turkey say the country should act alone on international matters

Salient features of Spain

- A very favorable view of Barack Obama and considerable optimism about the progress of transatlantic relations if he wins the election
- Heightened perception of global threats, with a large percentage identifying global warming (along with international terrorism and economic problems) as the top priorities for the next U.S. president and European leaders
- Spaniards are strong advocates of the European Union taking a more active role in international affairs
    - They are among those most in favor of increasing support to democratic forces in Russia and providing security assistance to neighboring democracies like Ukraine and Georgia
    - They stand out for their support for measures to stabilize Afghanistan, though they reject combat operations against the Taliban
- NATO has improved its image among Spaniards as an essential part of national security

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TECHNICAL NOTES

- **Transatlantic Trends** is an annual survey. The fieldwork was carried out by TNS Opinion between June 4 and 14, 2008
- **The sample came to approximately 13,000 cases in the United States and 12 European countries** (Germany, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Spain, France, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, United Kingdom, Romania and Turkey). 1,000 individuals were interviewed in each country
- **Interviews were conducted telephonically** using the CATI system (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews) in all countries except Poland, Slovakia, Turkey, Bulgaria and Romania (where interviews were face-to-face in view of their lesser telephone service penetration)
- **The sampling technique** was based on random selection of households and individuals reprsentative of the population of residents aged 18 and over
- **The margin of error** attributable to sampling and other random effects in each country is ± 3%, with a confidence level of 95% and in a worst-case scenario (p=q=0.5). Europe-wide figures are weighted on the basis of the size of the adult population in each survey country
- Data for “Europe” correspond to the 12 European countries taking part, while “EU countries” data correspond to the 11 European Union member states among them

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All survey documents and results tables are available from the survey website: www.transatlantictrends.org

Documents in Spanish and this powerpoint presentation are available from the BBVA Foundation website: www.fbbva.es