

Survey 2021 French speaking Expatriates in CEE

Executive Summary



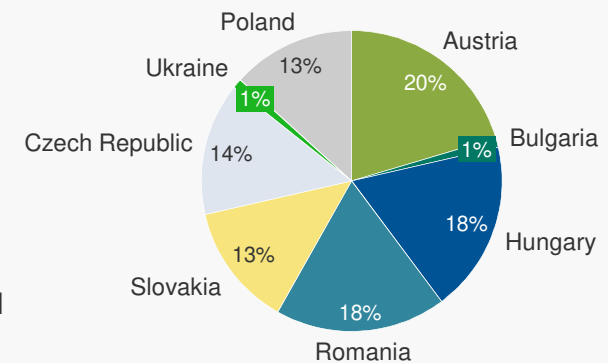
After one year of COVID, exchanges between people have been considerably reduced. Almost no more travel, no more informal talks possible, relationships reduced and transferred to the digital world. And yet the natural urge to share and get inspired by other views has grown proportionally during the crisis. The longer the duration, the more everyone wants to compare their daily situation with peers.

The French-speaking community residing in Central Europe is growing in number. It brings together business executives, either assigned into another country by the employer or being locally recruited (emigrants). Day by day, being confronted with a professional and private environment that is different from their home country, everyone has their own opinion on the advantages and disadvantages of their expatriation. Everyone judges the local colleagues differently.

It is from this perspective that TARGET Executive Search, an Austrian Executive Search company (Headhunting group), covering the Central European region for more than 27 years, wanted to offer a platform for exchanges to the French-speaking community.

400 people were contacted. 83 participated in this survey which focused on the following key points:

- Is the current country of residence and work satisfactory?
- How do they judge the professional world around them in relation to their home country?
- Which points in the working world diverge from the home country?
- Do they feel that they benefit in general from expatriation, in other words: do they feel stronger than if they had stayed in their homeland?



The participants in this study reside in Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia or Ukraine.

The eight key findings of this survey

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Valuing the host country



87% of people value the country they are living and working in.

Financial benefits



The expatriation for a company brings a certain financial gain: for **72%** a plus going up to **+ 30%**, for **1/5** beyond **40%**.
Even for emigrants the balance is positive.

Comparing working styles



34% of participants say their local peers work harder than in the West. In contrast, Poland rates this at **64%**.

Feeling strong



75% feel stronger because of their expatriation. Emigrants often have family-orientated values.

Appreciation



85% of all participants feel appreciated by their colleagues.

Comparing managerial skills



65% of participants judge the managerial skills of their local peers to be superior or equal to those of the West. **73%** in SK. **77%** in Austria.

Gender split for executives



The proportion of female executives is higher than / equal to that in Western Europe according to **60%** of participants. According to **80%** in RO. However the proportion is lower according to **60%** in HU, **54%** in SK.

Female leaders

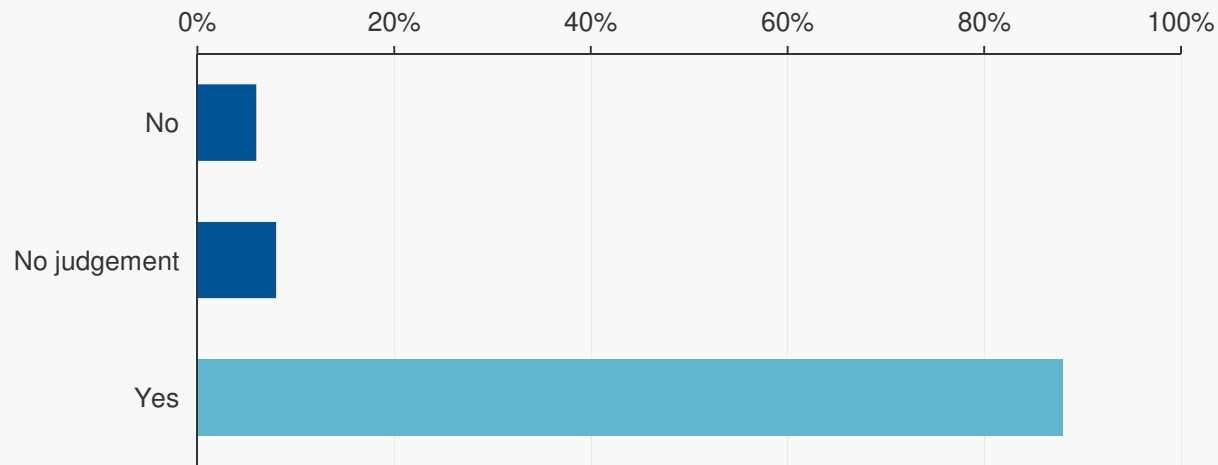


Female executives are better than men due to **30%** of the responses. **45%** in PL. **53%** in RO.

Expatriates agree that their host country is advantageous for their career



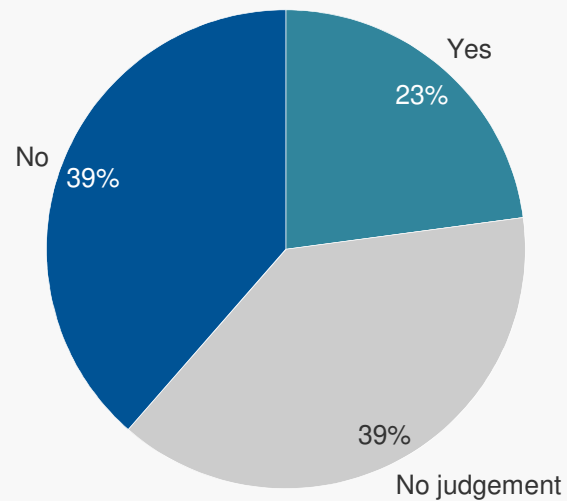
Q1: Is the country in which you are living and working good for your career ?



The preference largely depends on the infrastructure of the company participants are working for. A major interest in Western European countries is evident.



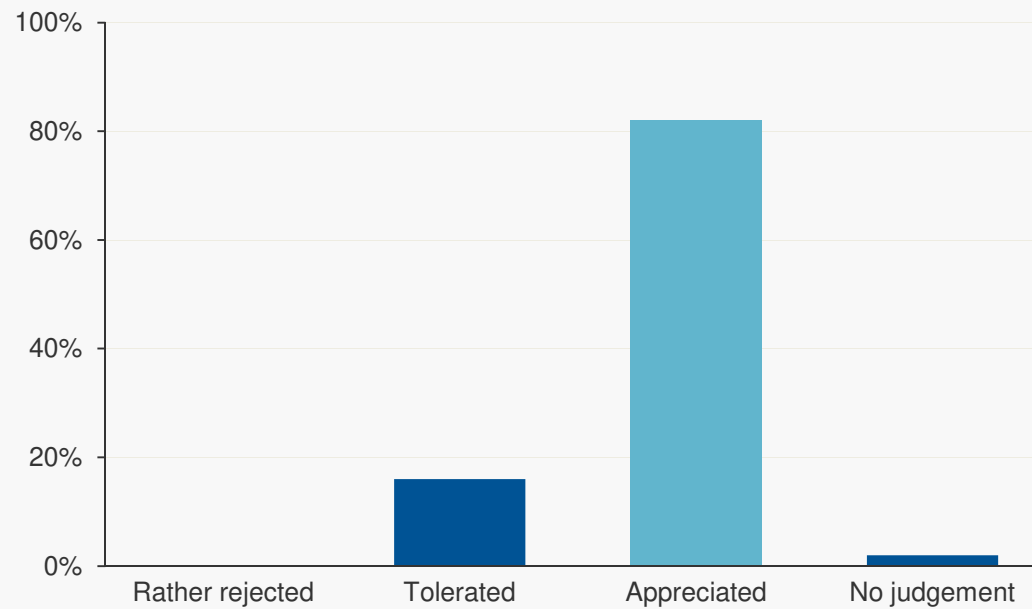
Q2: Would you prefer another country to live and work in ?



Acceptance levels are rated high, with most expatriates feeling appreciated



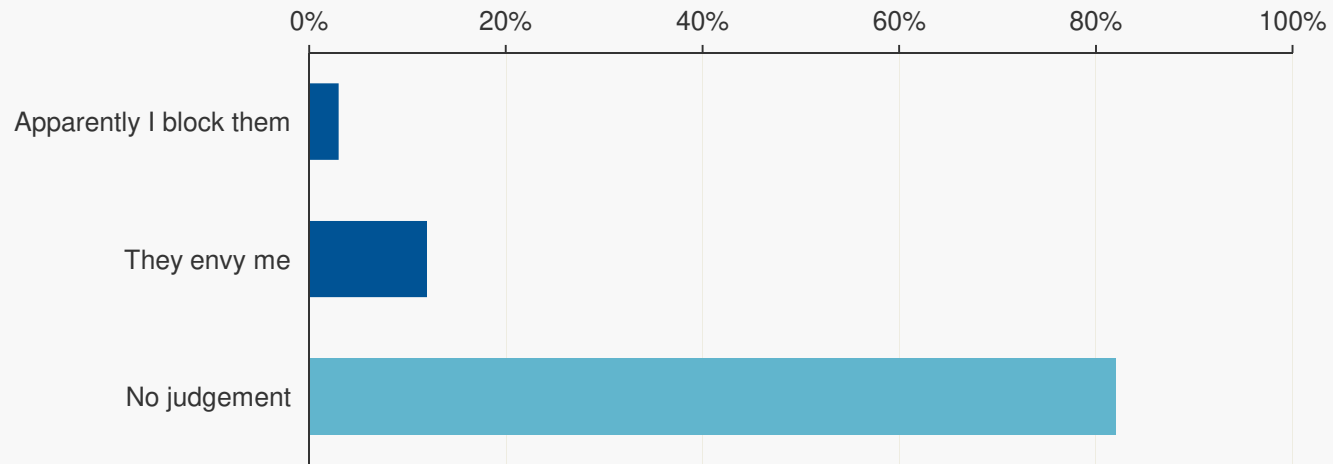
Q3: As an expatriate, do you feel yourself accepted by your local peers ?



Envy among colleagues is felt for less than 20%, while no negative feelings are perceived by the majority



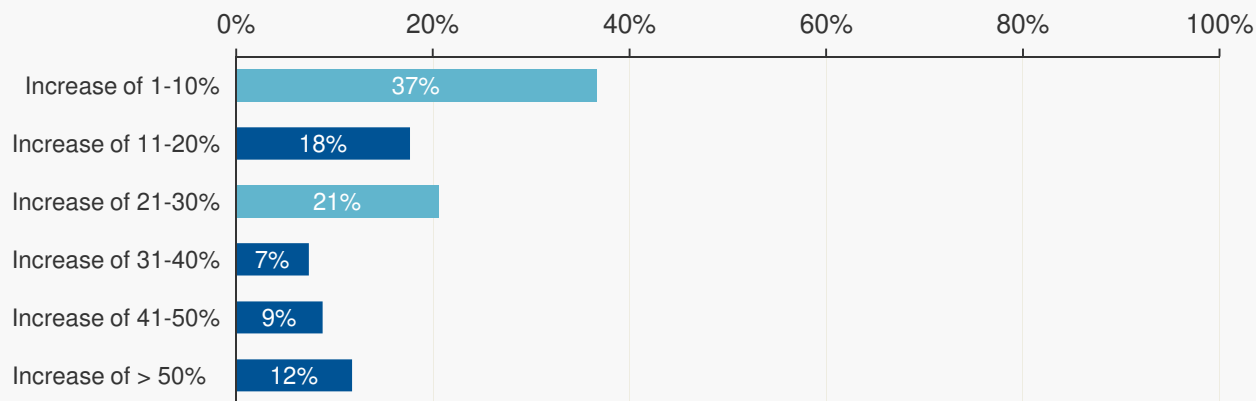
Q4: Do you sense envy among your colleagues, or do they think that you block their own career ?



Expatriation results in financial benefits for all participants, though gains may vary in size with 1/5 of respondents experiencing beyond 40% increase

Q5: Your expatriation provides you with a financial advantage. How much is it ?

These results reflect the situation of expatriates and of the locally recruited participants as well.

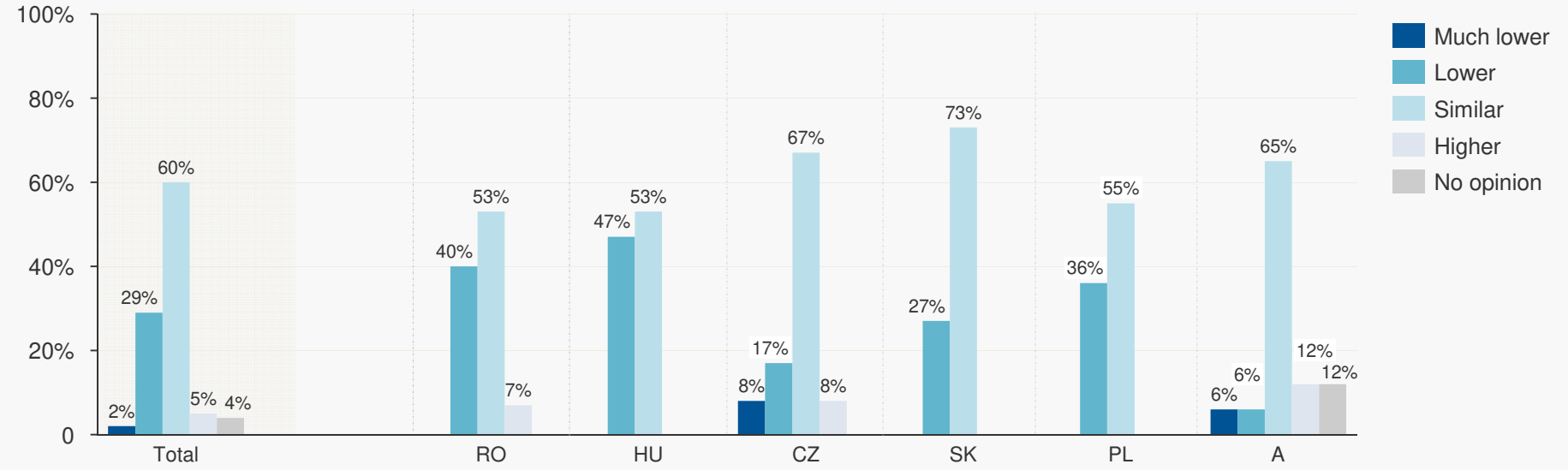


Comment: The dominance of locally recruited participants (60% of all replies) explains the high proportion of people answering an increase of 1-10%.

65% of participants judge the managerial skills of their local peers to be superior or equal to those of the West

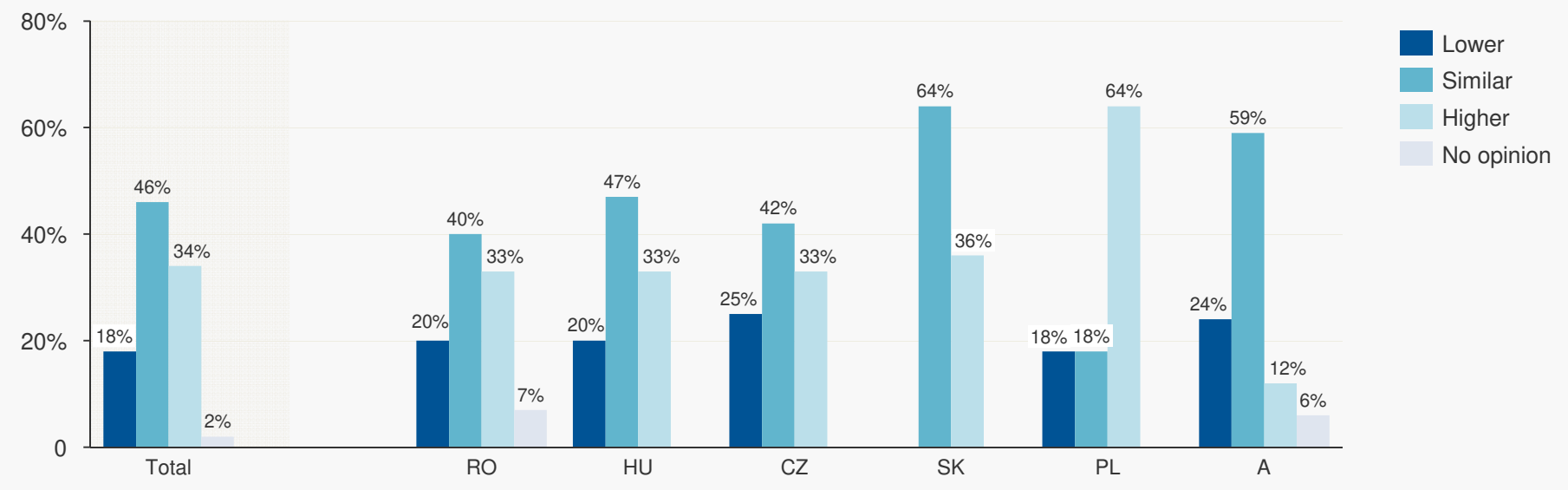
Q6: Do you think your local peers have similar management competencies as in Western Europe ?

No clear difference perceptible between expatriates and locally recruited people.



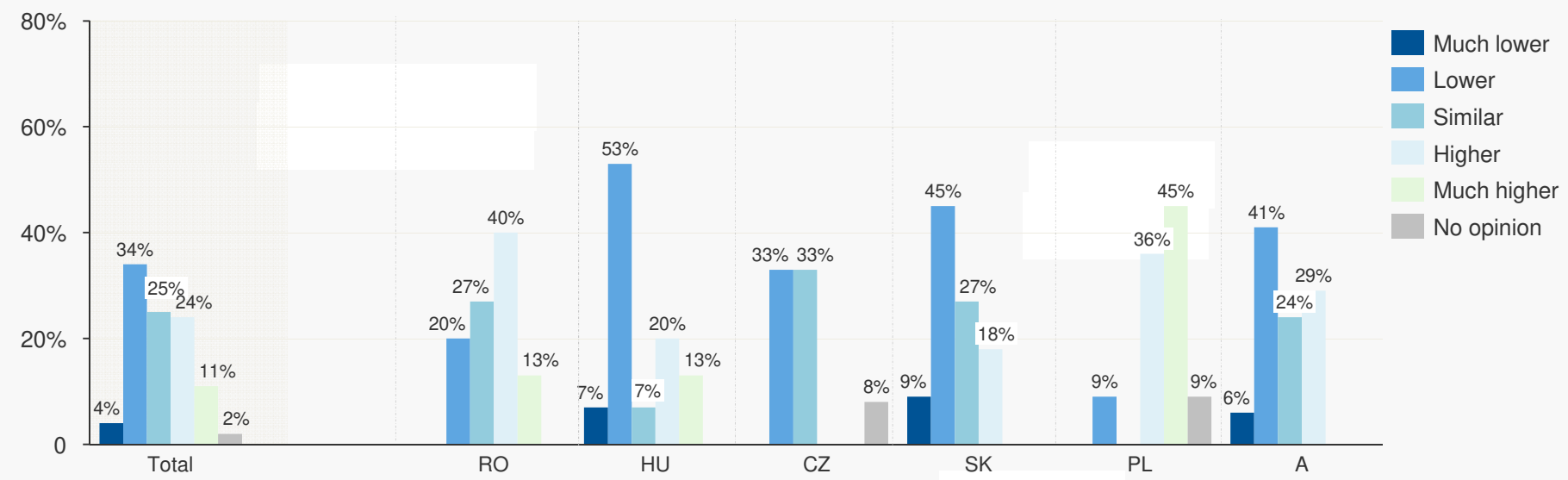
34% of participants say their local peers work harder than in the West

Q7: Do you consider your local peers as hard working as people in your home country ?



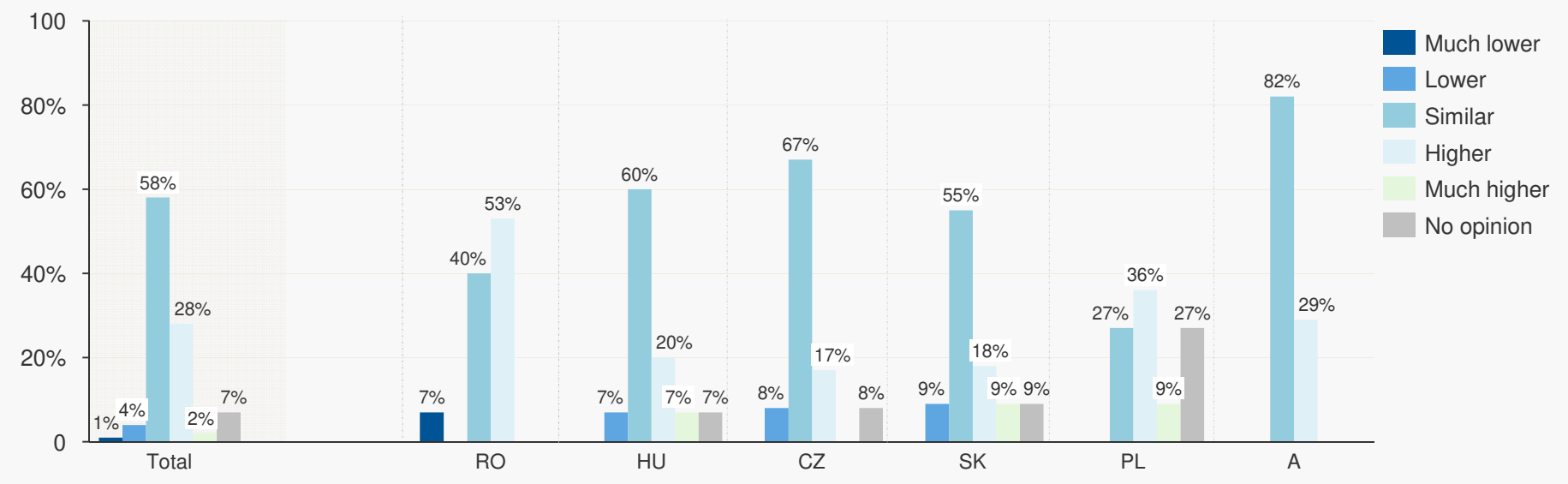
The proportion of female executives is for 60% of participants higher than or equal to that in Western Europe

Q8: How do you estimate the local proportion of female managers compared with your home country ?



Female executives are considered to be better leaders than men due to 30% of the responses

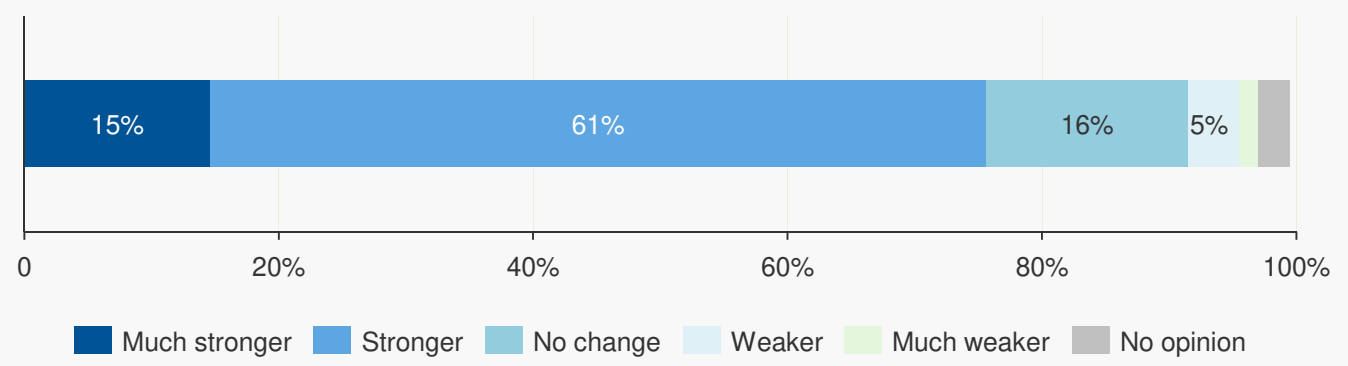
Q9: Compared with the local male managers, how do you consider the managerial competencies of local female managers ?



75% feel stronger because of their expatriation. Emigrants often have family-orientated values.

Q10: Do you believe that your current expatriation makes you, in total, stronger for the future ?

The majority of people saying that there has been no change or feel even weaker due to expatriation is locally recruited.



Some comments...



On the managerial competencies of the local peers:

«The more saturated the labour market is, the less people do their best. We always talk about the particularity of the CEE managers but this is what is difficult to be materialised in leadership due to a lack of willingness and of fulfilling their obligations.» (CZ)

On the expatriation (assignment):

« With the Covid pandemic and the extension of home office, I don't think that the expatriation system will remain a good model. The companies are largely globalized, the employees communicate to each other, the competencies are available, and the language and the « company culture » are becoming a minor problem. » (A)

« We cannot really talk about expatriation as long as we move in Europe. » (CZ)

« In my company there is no financial advantage linked with internal mobility within Europe. » (A)

On reasons of emigration:

« My host country offered me opportunities which I never could expect in France. Having experience in recruitment in different countries and considering my professional experience I definitively can witness that France is a elitist country and old-fashioned towards selection which focusses on degrees and the business schools more than experience and capacities. (American companies, for instance, principally assume that everyone can learn something new - which is obvious). When I graduated and went to French employers forums, the entrepreneurs laughed at me when I said I came from a university and not from a major business school (at equal educational level). This was the reason why I decided to emigrate.» (HU)

On living standards abroad, even if with local working contract:

« In addition to the attractiveness of the cost of living and the continuous growth of the GDP guaranteeing a rewarding professional activity, another advantage is the lower fiscal pressure on private people and companies as well»(SK)

TARGET Executive Search is an Austrian recruiting group specialized on direct search (Headhunting). Since 1994 we have been responding to the clients' needs from various sectors. We fulfill managerial positions from top/middle level to specialists.

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