



THE UNITED STATES AND ITS VALUES

in Central & Eastern Europe's War of Narratives

INTRODUCTION

In a public opinion poll GLOBSEC conducted in seven Central and Eastern European countries in the spring of 2019, two key findings were observed in relation to the US:

1) a low identification with US values;

2) a high perception of the US as a threat among some countries.

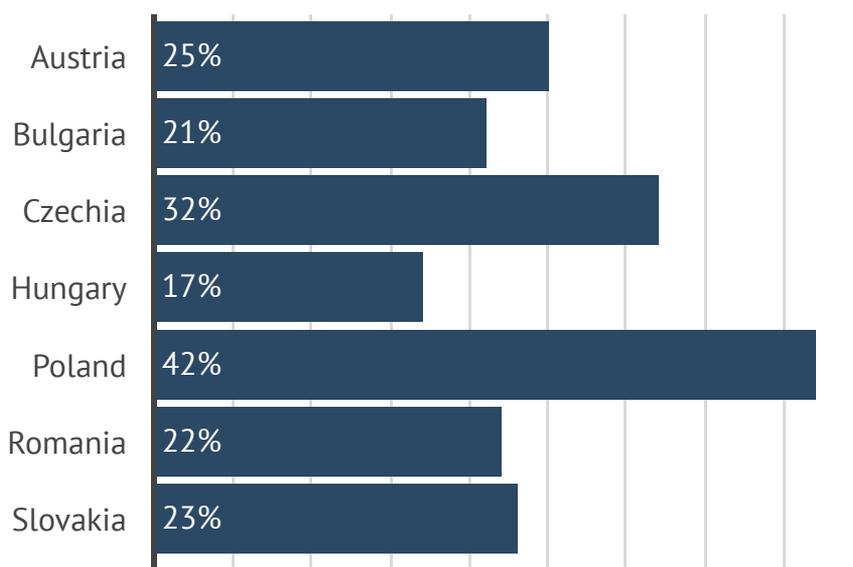
These findings came as a surprise to many, as all countries covered in the poll are members of the Transatlantic community where the US plays a key role as a security guarantor.

First, **low identification with US values is in contrast with strong support for EU values in a majority of the surveyed countries.**

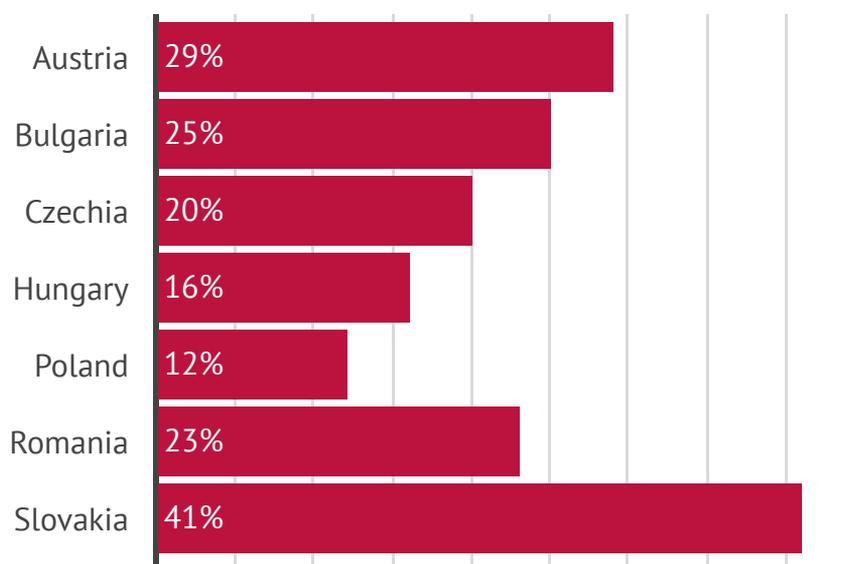
Second, **strong perception of the US as a threat in Slovakia, Bulgaria and Romania (all NATO members) is in contrast with the strong US role in the region in terms of military support.**

While an in-depth analysis of the root causes of these discrepancies is needed and, planned in the follow-up to these findings, a segmentation of society helps us better understand where to look and what to look for.

Do you think the values of your country are in line with the values of the US?



Do you think the US presents a danger (significant threat) to your country?



INTRODUCTION

No unifying pattern across the region

Years of experience in researching the region have shown that no strong generalization can be applied to Central and Eastern Europe. While some similarities in attitudes can be observed, general conclusions are difficult to draw as diverse historical, geographical, political, societal and economic factors come into play in each country concerned. What are then the segments of population which identify with US values the most? Which age groups are the most prone to perceiving the US as a threat? Are there any differences between the regions? And is there any correlation between the indicators? The answers can be found on the following pages.



Read more key findings in a country-based comparative report

GLOBSEC Trends 2019:

Central and Eastern Europe 30 years after the fall of the Iron Curtain



Question of values

The decision of approaching the question of values so broadly was made by the analysts with the aim of observing more spontaneous perceptions and feelings of closeness to the US. An in-depth analysis is planned for the beginning of 2020.

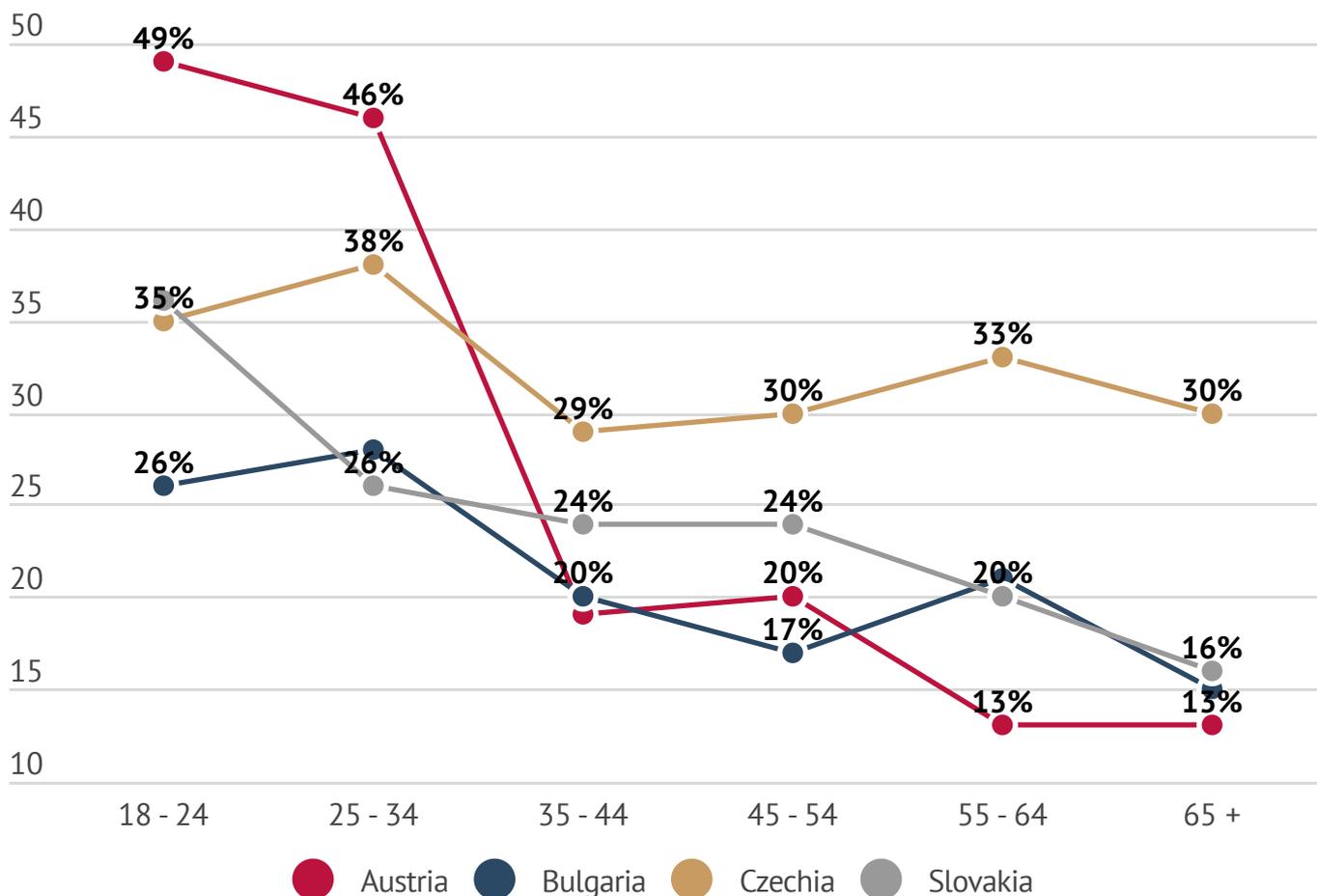
<https://www.globsec.org/publications/globsec-trends-2019/>

AGE: Identification with US values

Age often constitutes a determining variable in data analysis. In this respect, the region can be divided into two groups:

Group 1: Austria, Bulgaria, Czechia, Slovakia: youth-positive

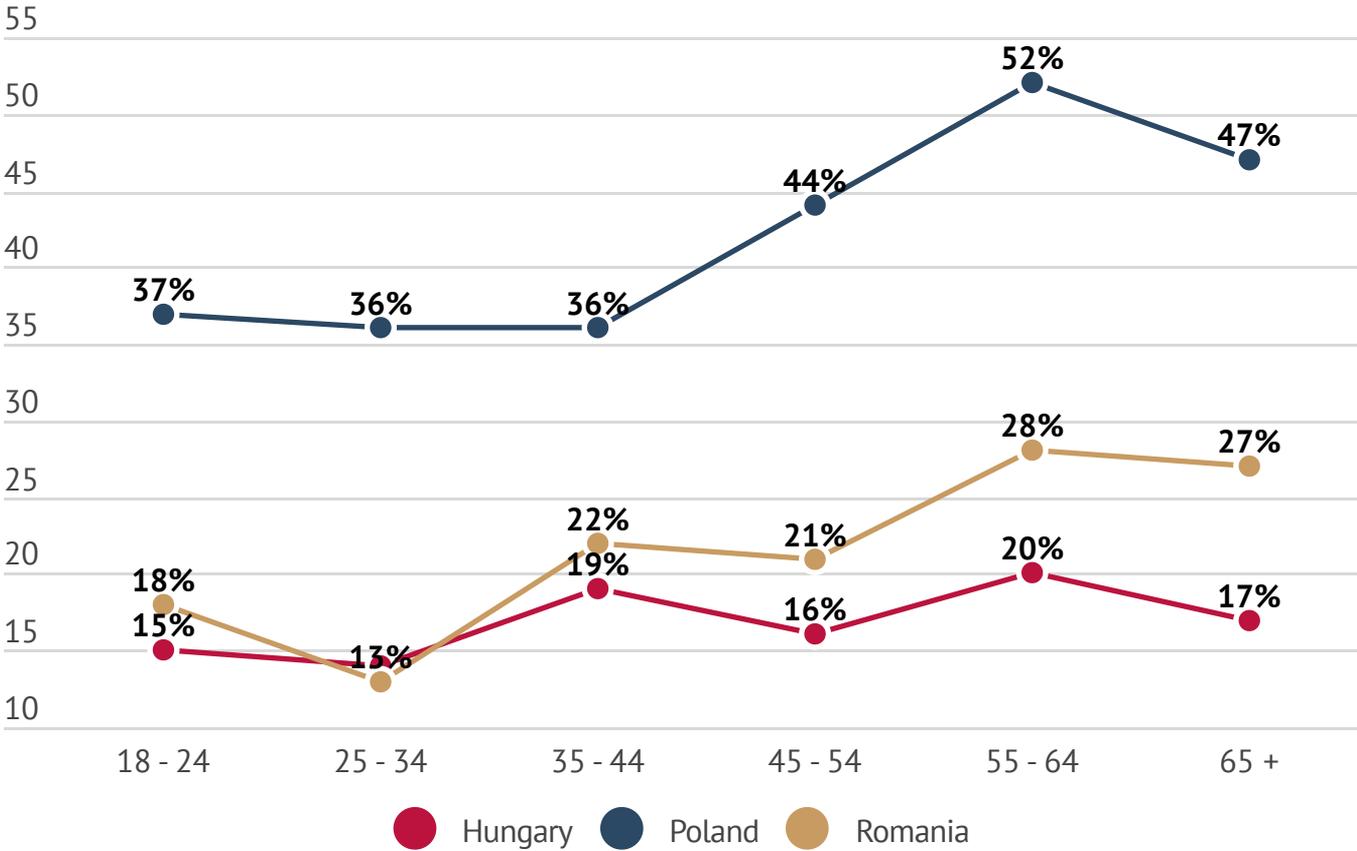
Austria is the leader in terms of the most pro-US oriented youth. In fact, younger people aged 18 – 34 strongly affected the results – 48% identify with US values, which is double of Austrian average of 24%. Both in Austria and Slovakia, a clear negative correlation between age and embracement of US values could be observed.



AGE: Identification with US values

Group 2: Hungary, Poland, Romania: youth-negative

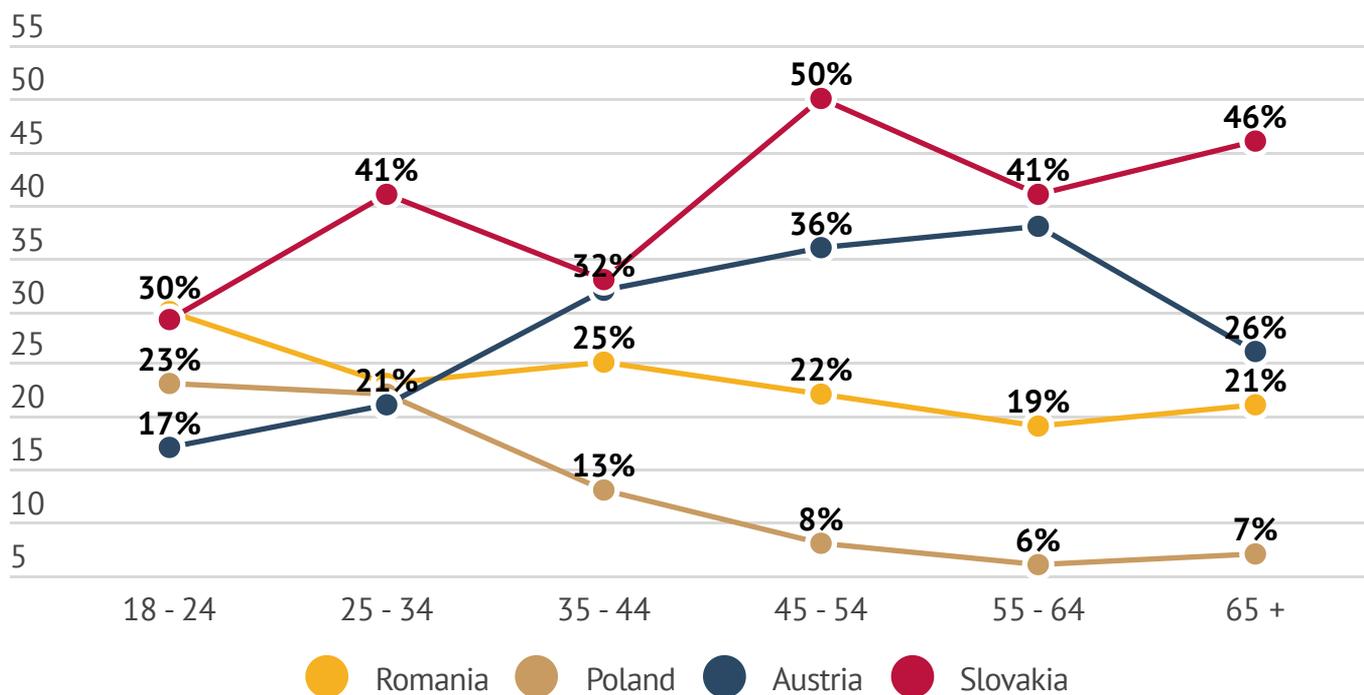
A positive correlation could be observed in Poland – the most supportive age group is 55-64 years old with 52% identifying with US values, while the least supportive ranges from 18 to 44 years, with an average identification level of 36%.



AGE: The US as a threat

The patterns similar to previous pages could be observed in **Austria, Poland, Romania and Slovakia**. As you can see in the graph below, **young people in Romania and Poland are becoming less supportive of the US**, while in **Austria and Slovakia, youngsters are more pro-US** than other age groups in their countries.

Do you think the US presents a danger (significant threat) to your country?



Czech paradox

A strange paradox was observed in Czechia with regard to age groups. **On one hand, younger Czechs identify with US values more, on the other hand, younger Czechs also perceive the US as a threat more than others.** 24% of young Czechs aged 18-24 perceive the US as a threat, compared to only 16% of those older than 65 years.

In the remaining two countries, the strongest perception of the US as a threat was observed among:

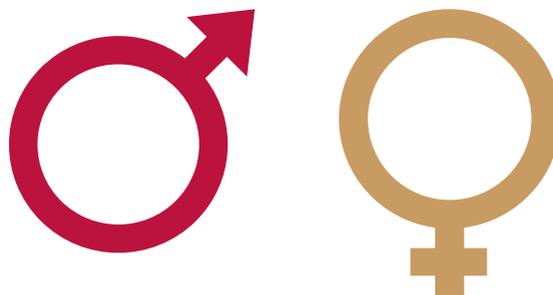
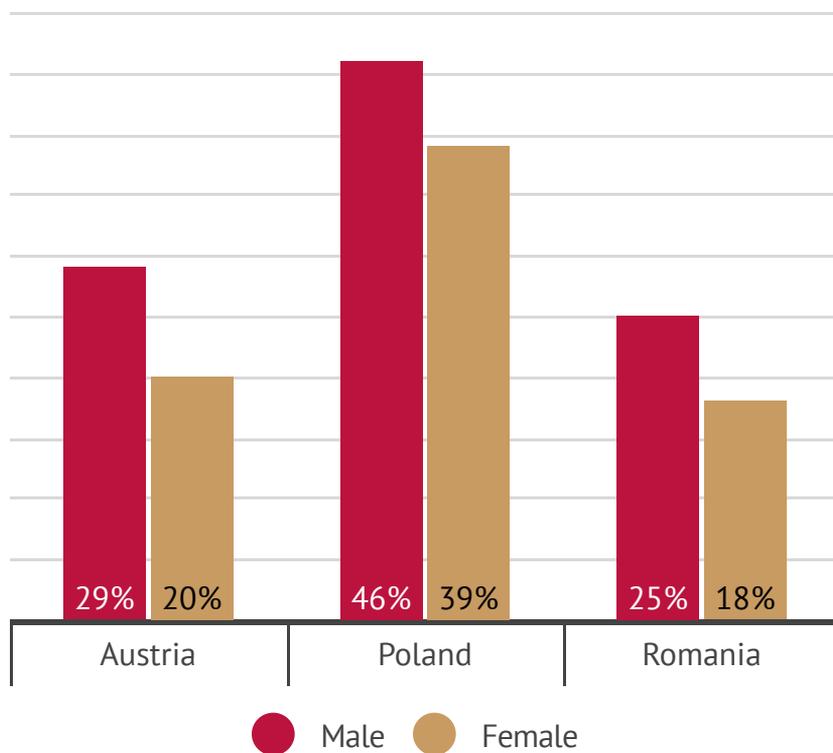
Bulgarians older than 65 years: 32%

Hungarians between 25 and 34 years: 22%

GENDER: Identification with US values

In Austria, Poland and Romania, the differences between the male and female respondents were more significant than in the other countries surveyed, with men always being stronger supporters of the US than women.

Do you think the values of your country are in line with the values of the US?



EDUCATION: Identification with US values

Differences based on the level of attained education played a role in Austria, Czechia, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. Only in **Czechia** can we see a positive correlation between the identification with the values and the level of education attained. This is contrary to Slovakia, and Austria where the identification with the values is the strongest among those with elementary education.

	Average	Elementary	Secondary without final exam	Secondary with final exam	University
Austria	24%	45%	16%	17%	22%
Czechia	32%	22%	29%	31%	44%
Hungary	17%	11%	16%	17%	26%
Poland	43%	46%	48%	36%	43%
Slovakia	23%	29%	24%	23%	21%



REGIONS: Identification with US values

Are there regional differences?

The strongest regional differences were observed in Austria, Bulgaria and Slovakia with 19%, 18% and 17% differences between their most and least pro-US regions respectively. The smallest differences were observed in Poland (9%).

Are the capitals special?

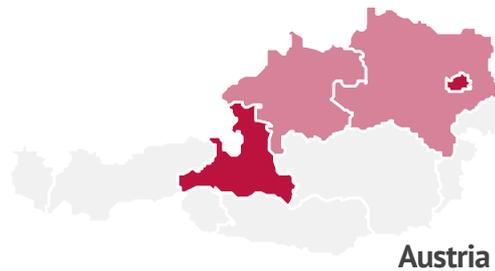
Only in Austria, Czechia, Hungary and Romania. In these four, countries the highest percentages of those who identified with US values were found in their respective capital regions – Vienna, Prague, Budapest and Bucharest.

Closer to US values

(dark red)

Vienna **35%**

Salzburg **33%**



Further from US values

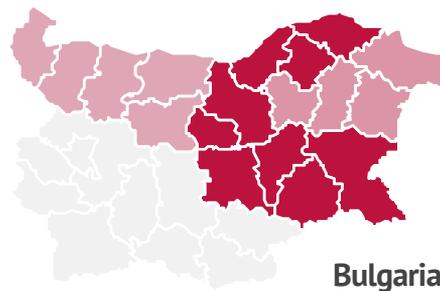
(light red)

Lower Austria **15%**

Upper Austria **17%**

North central **27%**

Southeast **25%**



Northwest **9%**

Northeast **11%**

Prague **40%**



Northwest **25%**

Central Moravia **27%**

REGIONS: Identification with US values

Closer to US values

Budapest **24%**



Further from US values

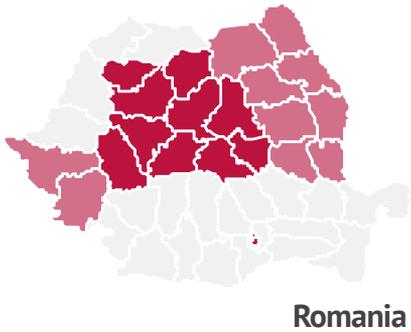
Southern Great Plain **10%**
South Transdanubia **13%**

Eastern **46%**,
Southern **45%**



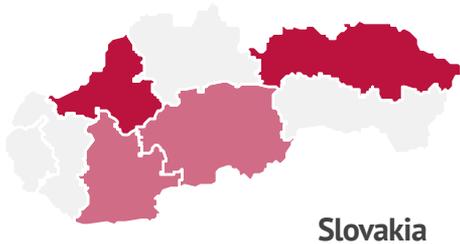
North-West **37%**

Bucarest **27%**
Transylvania **25%**



Banat **15%**
Moldova **15%**

Presovsky **34%**
Trenciansky **31%**



Banskobystricky **17%**
Nitriansky **18%**

REGIONS

Region vs. nominal GDP

Only in Czechia was some correlation identified between the region's economic development and support for US values. The table below indicates that regions in Czechia with a higher nominal GDP tend to have higher rates of identification with US values, and vice versa.

US or Russian values?

Given their economic models and historical and political contexts, the US and Russia are, in the minds of many, still perceived as the representatives of two opposing camps. This seems to be the case particularly in Czechia, Hungary and Poland, where many regions with the highest degree of identification with US values also had the lowest degree of identification with the values of Russia.

Case of Czechia

	Nominal GDP in million EUR (2017)	Identification with US values	Identification with Russian values
Prague	48,751	40%	11%
Southeast	27,760	33%	12%
Northeast	22,981	33%	10%
Central Bohemia	22,784	35%	15%
Southwest	19,090	31%	17%
Central Moravia	18,024	27%	14%
Moravia-Silesia	18,016	28%	21%
North-West	14,315	25%	15%



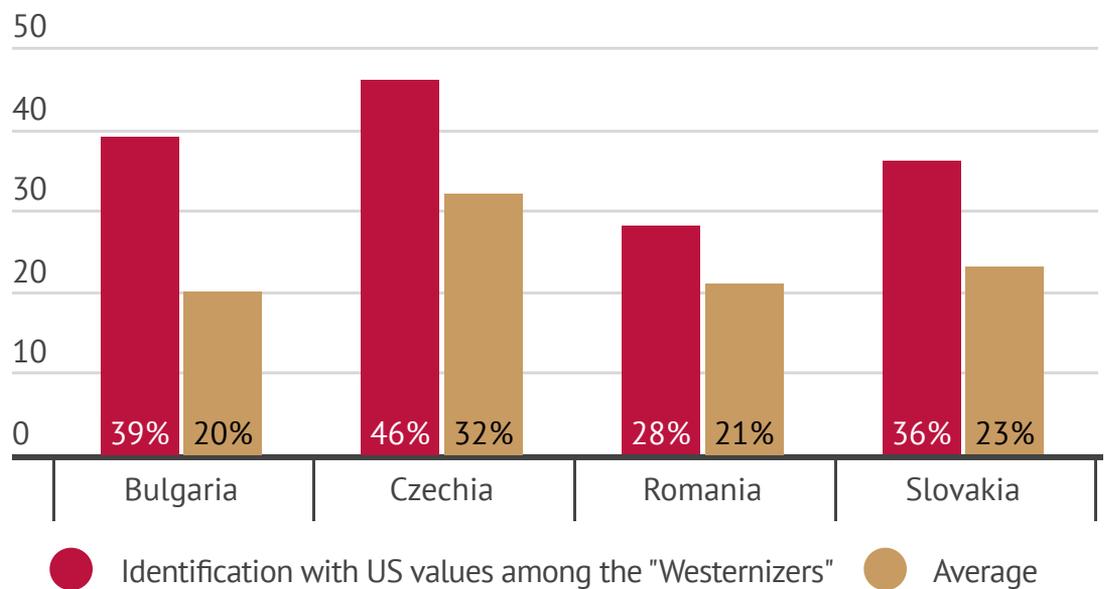
VALUES & GEOPOLITICAL PREFERENCES

While comparing the opinions of Central and Eastern Europeans on geopolitical orientation of their country and the perception of US values, several conclusions can be drawn:



In Bulgaria, Czechia, Romania and Slovakia, there might be a stronger association of the West with the US

In these 4 countries, a significantly stronger identification with US values was observed among those who would prefer to position their country in the West.



Not many Austrians and Slovaks who prefer to position their country in-between identify with US values

16% of Austrians and **18% of Slovaks** who would position their country somewhere between the East and West said they believe the values of their country are in line with the US values.

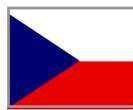
VALUES & GEOPOLITICAL PREFERENCES



In all countries except for Hungary, a lack of identification with US values was observed among those who would prefer to leave NATO and EU in case of a referendum.

Stronger identification with the US values among

NATO supporters



35%



29%



26%

EU supporters



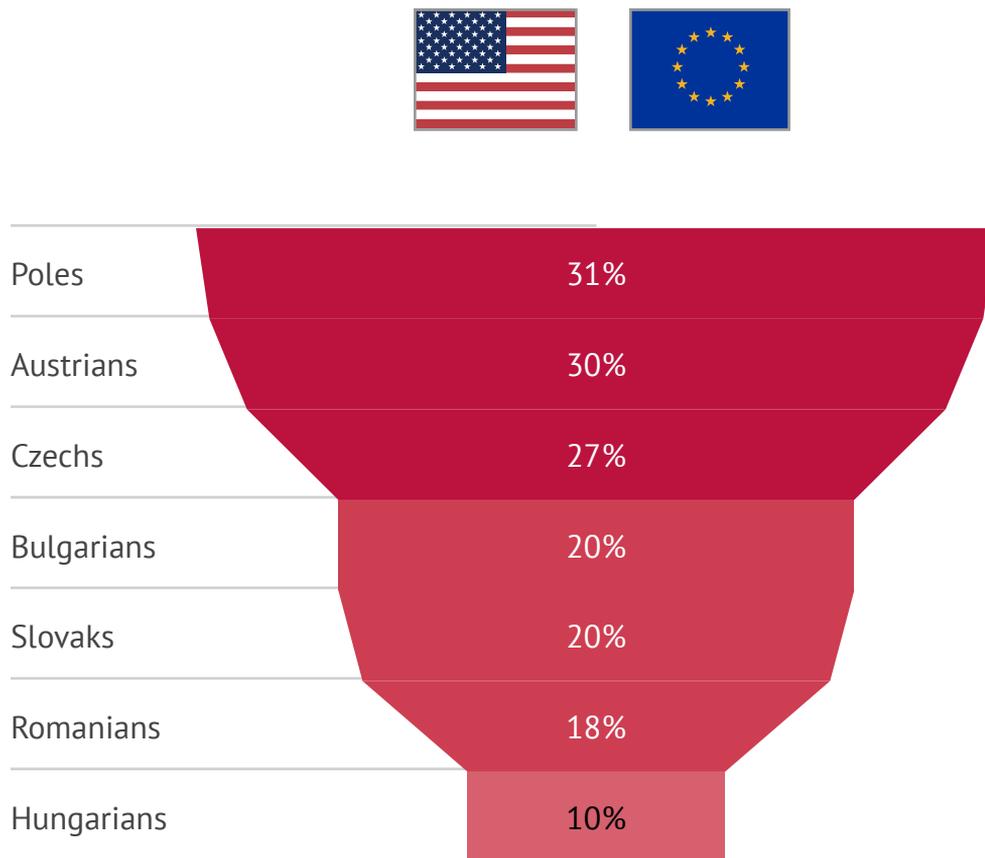
37%



27%

VALUES OVERLAP

How many think the values of their country are in line with both EU and US values?



Perhaps surprisingly, there were groups of respondents who considered their country's values to be in line with the values of both Russia and the US.

This segment of population is the highest in these countries: **15% in Bulgaria**
10% in Slovakia
8% in Hungary

ABOUT THE REPORT

The report was assembled based on data collected via public opinion polls in Austria, Bulgaria, Czechia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia in March 2019. The surveys were conducted on a sample of the population ranging from 1000 to 1025 respondents in each country using stratified multistage random sampling in the form of computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) in Slovakia and computer-assisted telephone interviewing in the other six countries. In all countries, the profiles of respondents were representative of the country by gender, age, education, place of residence and size of settlement. For the purpose of data visualization in this report, the results were rounded to full numbers.

The main findings of the survey were published in **GLOBSEC Trends 2019: Central & Eastern Europe 30 years after the fall of the Iron Curtain**.

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