



OPINION POLL “TRUST IN GOVERNMENT”

within the framework of

OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is a multilateral initiative that aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. OGP addresses five “grand challenges” that governments face: 1) Improvement of public services; 2) Increasing public integrity; 3) Managing more effectively public resources; 4) Creating safer communities and 5) Increasing corporate accountability, whilst, each of them should reflect four core open government principles: 1) *Transparency*; 2) *Citizen Participation* 3) *Accountability* and 4) *Technology and Innovation*.

Albania is a member of the OGP Initiative since August 2011 and thus far has adopted two National Action Plans, 2012-2013 and currently 2014-2016, with commitments that aim to promote the OGP principles of transparency, support active citizenship and increase institutional accountability.

The first Opinion Poll which aimed to explore the level of public trust towards governmental institutions as well as explore citizens’ attitudes towards the performance of public institutions and service delivery was conducted by the Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM) in April – May 2013, with a response rate of 1200 at national level. Findings were launched and can be accessed: www.idmalbania.org. A year and a half later, October 2014, the same Opinion Poll was held with the same response rate of 1200. Results are analyzed as follows and comparison with the 2013 is made.

Main pillars upon which the questionnaire was build are:

- Government Transparency
- Citizen Engagement
- Accountability
- Performance of Public Institutions
- Intervention of Politics in Agenda Setting of Public Institutions
- Gender Considerations in Public Institutions
- Public Satisfaction towards Public Service Delivery



METHODOLOGY

This survey aims to explore the level of public trust towards governmental institutions as well as explore citizens' attitudes towards the performance of public institutions and service delivery. As such it calls for a ***quantitative methodological approach***.

To this purpose a questionnaire was developed, piloted and then administered with a sample of 1200 respondents, aiming a national geographical coverage. A **quota sampling approach** was employed to select an equal number of respondents from every large administrative unit of the country (regions). This sampling technique, although a non-probability sampling not allowing for generalisations to the whole population, is most appropriate when aiming to give same "voice" to the opinion of all citizens regardless to the vicinity with the central government, centralised services etc.

In addition, in selecting the equal quotas per each area, a large variety of respondents' profiles was included in terms of gender, age, education level, employment status as well as incomes and ideological profiles; although some of these characteristics could not be pre-determined since the selection of respondents was random with prior quota sampling according to the population size of the 12 administrative regions in Albania.

The survey was conducted in parallel in 5 other Western Balkan countries, making it possible for the data to be analyzed at regional level as well.

The instrument

A questionnaire was designed including primarily closed-ended questions organized in the following sections:

- a. demographics
- b. data on perceived levels of trust, transparency, accountability
- c. data on citizens active participation
- d. data on gender equality and good governance

Data collection and analysis

A combination of data collection techniques, including online and paper based data collection was used due to the limitations in the field of using advanced technology. However, all data was entered in a common database and was processed and analyzed to present findings of descriptive statistics and relational statistics to provide general trends as well as more detailed analysis based on groups of interest.

Confidence Level – 95%

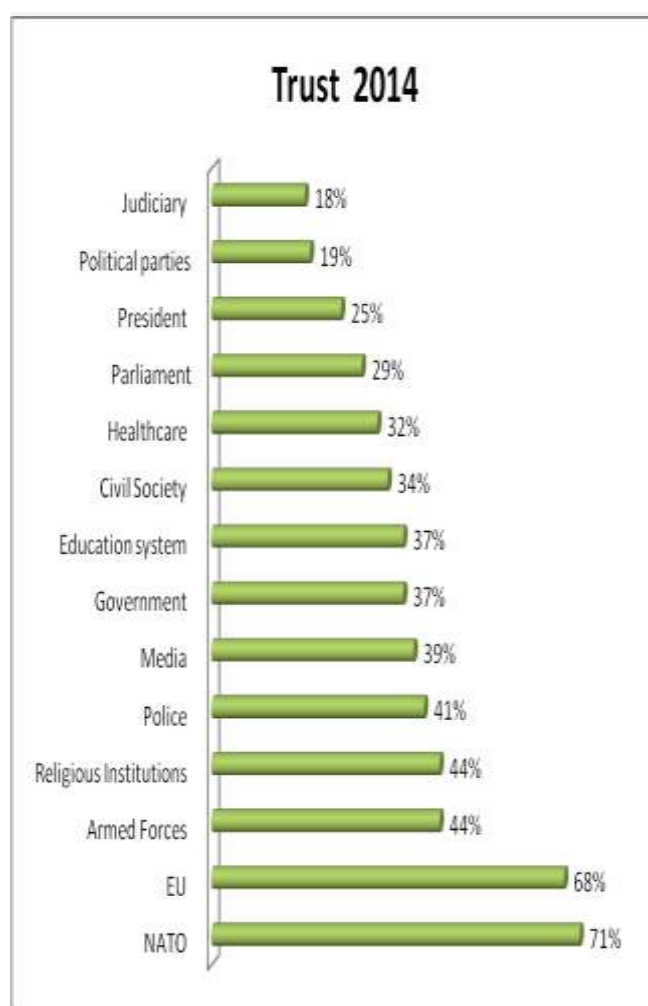
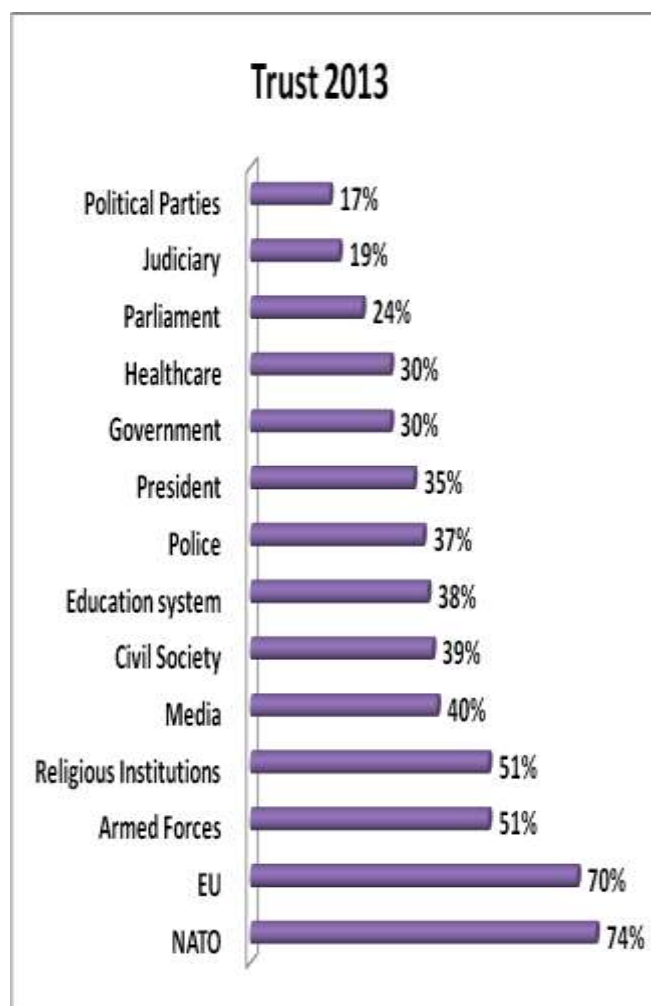
Confidence Interval – approx 3%



I. TRUST IN GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS IN ALBANIA

The most trustworthy institutions in Albania are **NATO**¹ (71% of the respondents) and the **European Union (EU)** (68%). Amongst the most trusted public institutions are the **Armed Forces** with 44% of trust, the **State Police** with 41% of trust, the **Central Government** and the **Institutions of the Education System** with 37% of trust each. On the other hand, the least trusted institutions are the **Judiciary** (18%) and the **Political Parties** (19%). **Civil Society Organizations** (NGO's) have the trust of only 34% of the public, whilst 9% of the public *does not have an opinion* on this.

If we compare the data with the period of May 2013, **NATO** (2013: 74%) and **EU** (2013: 70%) continue to be the most trusted institutions in Albania but with a 3 and 2 percentage points decline, respectively. Institutions which have gained trust are **Central Government** (from 30% - 37%), **Police** (from 37% - 41%), **Parliament** (from 24-29%). **Civil Society Organizations** have lost trust (from 39% - 34%) and Armed Forces have lost trust with 7% (from 2013: 51% - 2014: 44%)



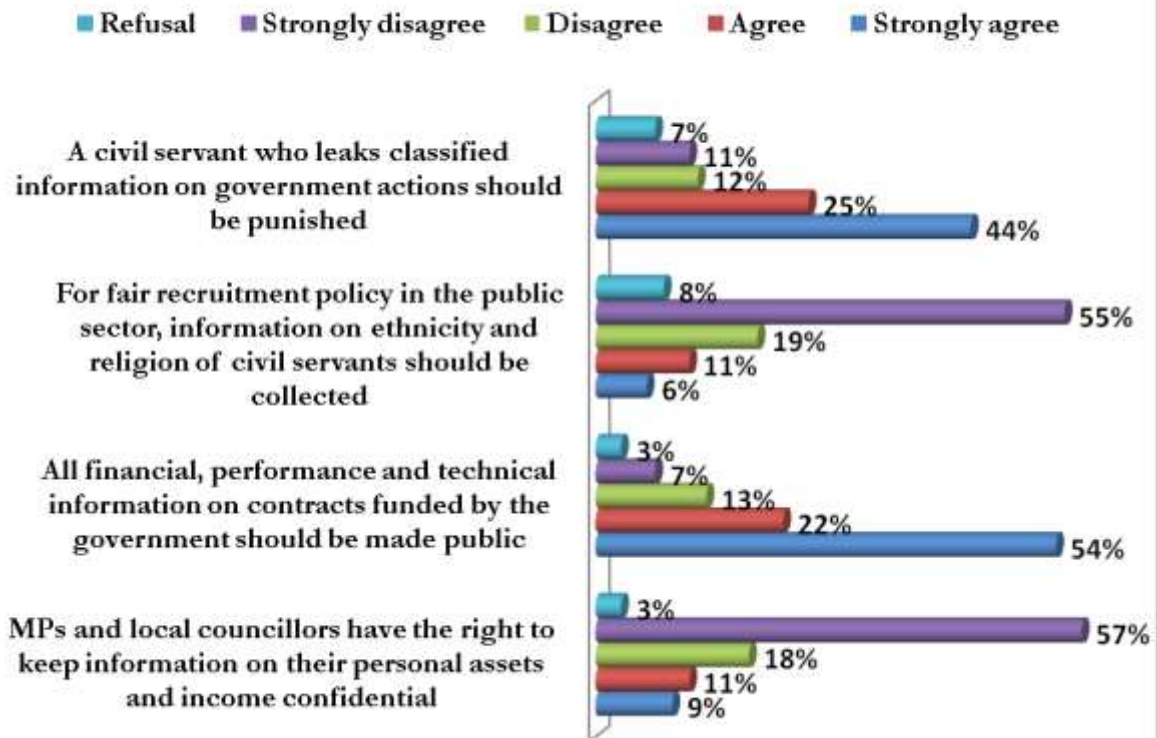
II. TRANSPARENCY AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Open Government Policies that focus on citizen engagement and access to information can help increase public trust. Results show that in general citizens do expect their governments to be open, practice anti-corruption policies and publish data. Major findings include:

- 76% of the respondents require that “All financial, performance and technical information on contracts funded by the government should be made public”;
- 75% of the respondents require that “MPs and local councilors make information on their personal assets and income public”;
- 63% of the respondents believe that “Local public hearings are formal events and they have limited influence on municipal decisions” even though 59% of them believe that the ordinary citizen does have the sufficient expertise to decide whether a government decision was good or bad.

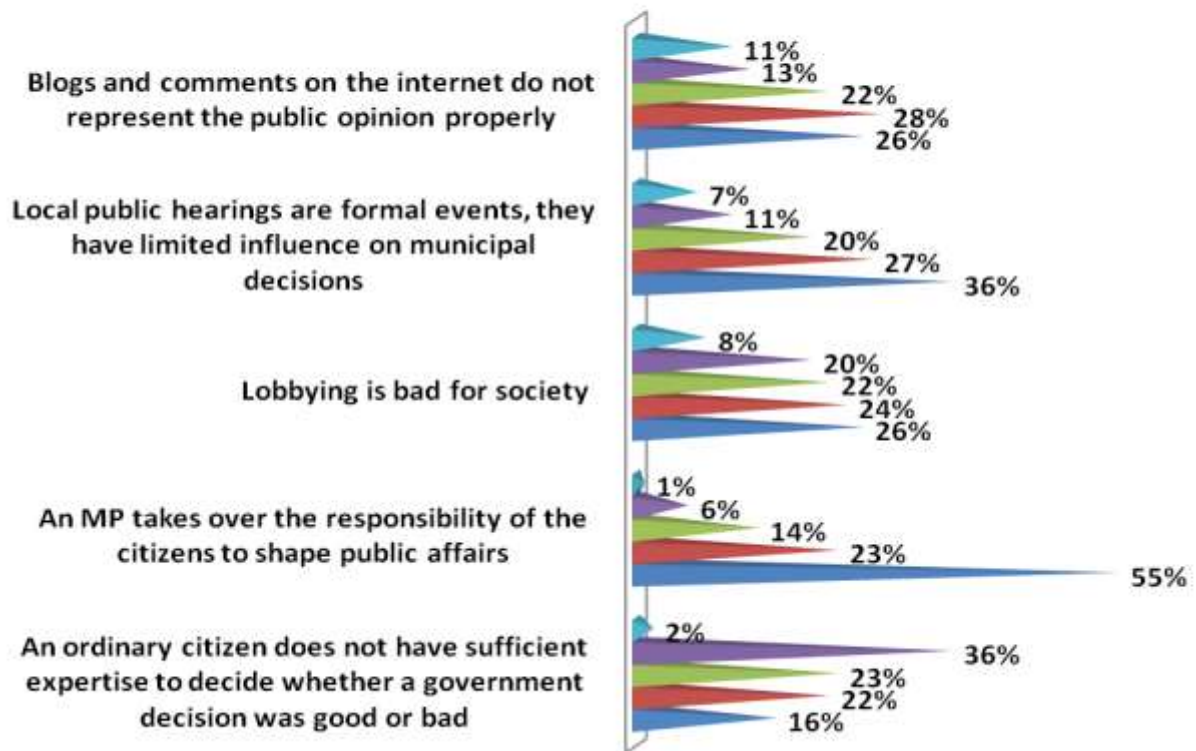


TRANSPARENCY



CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

■ Refusal ■ I strongly disagree ■ I disagree ■ I agree ■ I strongly agree



III. LEVEL OF POLITICAL INFLUENCE ON THE DAILY WORK OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

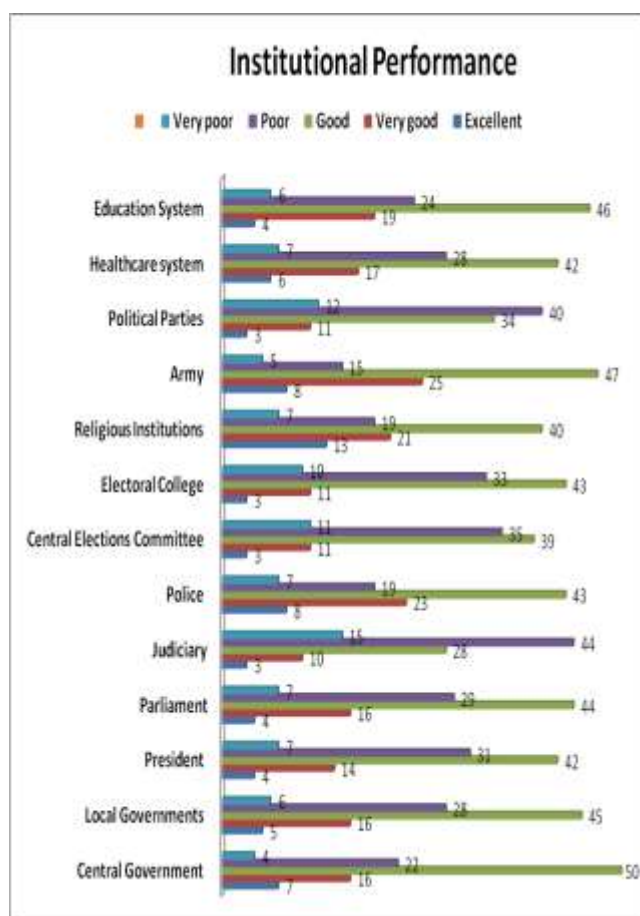
The public opinion believes that politics intervenes **sufficiently** to **very much** in the works of public institutions. The perception is that political influence has a great impact on the daily work of the Judiciary (66% of the respondents), on the Central Elections Committee (61% of the respondents), on the Police (59% of the respondents) and on the Electoral College (58% of the respondents). Only 21% of the respondents believe that politics intervenes on the works of Religious Institutions.

	On Judiciary	On Police	On Central Elections Committee	On Electoral College	On Religious Institutions	On Army	On Healthcare	On Education System	On Network of Social Services
Not at all	4%	5%	5%	5%	39%	12%	8%	7%	10%
To some degree	9%	13%	10%	13%	24%	20%	15%	13%	17%
Intervenes	20%	23%	24%	24%	15%	25%	29%	27%	31%
Sufficiently	26%	29%	22%	25%	12%	24%	23%	23%	21%
Very much	40%	30%	39%	33%	9%	18%	25%	29%	20%



IV. USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

- 63% of the respondents believe that the use of ICT can improve governance. However, 56% of them do not know if the Local Government Unit (LGU) (municipality or commune) has an official webpage;
- The most common way of using the LGU official webpage is by checking public programs and events online (22%). The least common way of using the LGU official webpage is by communicating with the selected representatives (8%).



V. PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

Respondents were asked to rate in a scale from 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent) the performance of core functions of a number of institutions. Results show that all of the institutions have scored the highest on the evaluation grade “good performance”.

- 50% of the respondents believes that the Central government is performing “good”, followed by the Army (47%) and the Institutions of the Education System (46%);
- In the combined variables “very good” and “excellent” performance, respondents rate on the first place the Religious Institutions (34%);
- 44% of the respondents rate the performance of the Judiciary as “poor”.



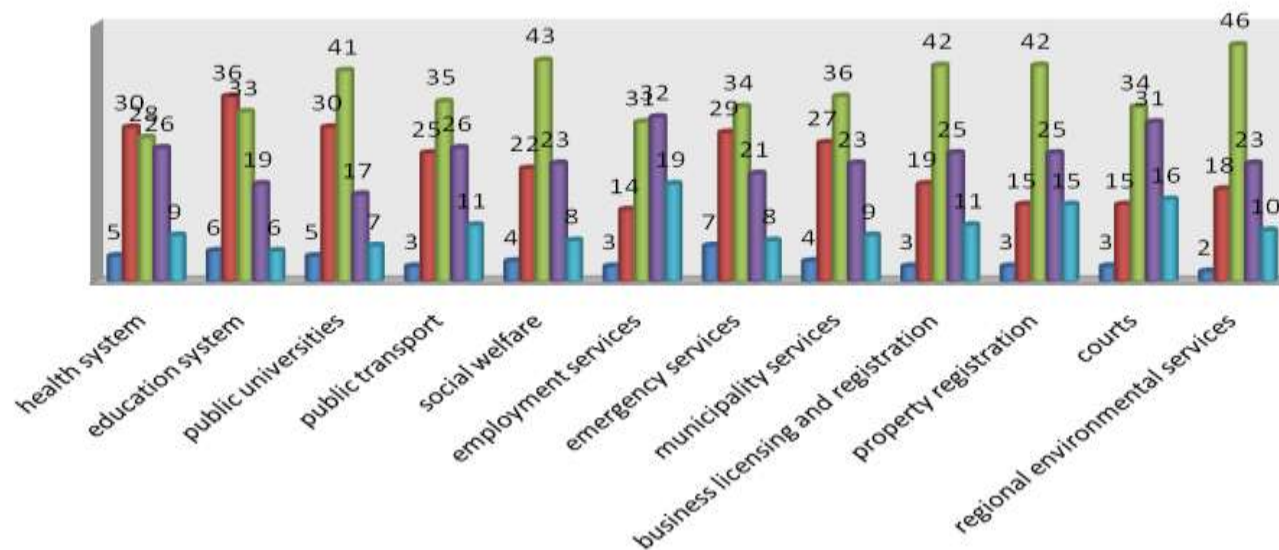
VI. LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

- The public opinion is most satisfied with public service delivery in the Education System (42 %), Health System (35%) and with the services offered by Public Universities (35%);
- The public opinion is dissatisfied with the services offered by the Employment Services (51%) and Courts (47%).



Level of satisfaction with public service delivery

■ Very satisfied
 ■ Satisfied
 ■ Somehow satisfied
 ■ Dissatisfied
 ■ Totally dissatisfied



VII. GENDER CONSIDERATIONS FROM PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

About 12% of the respondents believe that the Central Government *always* takes gender considerations on account when designing policies or national strategies, while 27% of the respondents believe that Political Parties, Health System and Educational System institutions do *often* take into consideration gender issues.

30% of the respondents believe that the Local Government and the Judiciary *occasionally* take into consideration gender issues, while 12% of them believe that the Police *never* takes into consideration gender issues.

