



Opinion poll

2015
TRUST IN GOVERNMENT



Institute for Democracy and Mediation
Instituti për Demokraci dhe Ndërmjetësim



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Policy Association for an Open Society

Opinion poll

Trust in government

2015



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The objective of this Opinion Poll was 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 in Albania. A quota sampling approach was employed, selecting an equal number of respondents from each of the 61 local government unit in the country, with a sample of 1600 respondents.

TRUST: In Albania, the highest level of trust is enjoyed by NATO (74%) and EU (72%). Religious Institutions enjoy the third highest trust rating. More than 1 in 2 surveyed Albanians (52%) state that they trust religious institutions. 1 in 3 surveyed citizens (34%) trust the government. The government (34%) enjoys greater trust than the parliament (22%). Albanian citizens have as much trust in the media (39%) as they have in non-profit organizations (38%). The Judiciary system (80%) and Political Parties (79%) are the least trusted institutions. The institutions that have suffered the steepest decline of trust in 2015 compared to 2014 are: the Parliament (from 29% to 22%) and the Health System (from 32% to 27%). Media is the only institution that has shown no change in trust. On the other hand, compared to 2014, Religious institutions have shown the highest increase in the level of trust (from 44% to 52%). Since 2013, the Judiciary and the Institutions of the Education System are facing a decline in public trust as opposed to the Police, which is experiencing a steady increase.

GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND OPEN DATA: The public opinion is divided in its stand to whether Albanian institutions are transparent and accountable with regard to their daily work. 47% of surveyed citizens believe that Albanian public institutions are not transparent and accountable, compared to 41% that believe the contrary. There is a widespread recognition among citizens on the importance and benefits of Open Data. Slightly more than 9 in 10 surveyed Albanians believe that Open Data policies increase citizens' trust in government; strengthen the relationship between the government and its citizens; improve peoples' life; and, ultimately foster economic development.

CORRUPTION IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS: With regard to the central government level, whilst roughly 1 in 3 surveyed Albanians (34%) report that they have been witnesses of a case of corruption, a greater proportion of citizens (53%) claim no such exposure to corruption. Personal exposure to corruption is higher in the local government. The majority of surveyed or 41% report that they have been witnesses of a case of corruption in their municipality of residence, whilst 34% do not report such experience. At both government levels, central and local, embezzlement (abuse with/or theft of public funds) appears to be the most common form of corruption taking place. Patronage and Blackmailing are the two least common forms of corruption as perceived by citizens.

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT: Whilst citizens believe they have sufficient knowledge to judge whether a government decision is good or bad for the Albanian society (62%), they do not appear to believe in the efficiency of the mechanisms that enable citizen engagement in policy-and decision-making, thus transferring the power of shaping public policies and holding the government to account to the Parliament. As a result, 80% of those surveyed believe that the Members of the Parliament should take over the responsibility of citizens to shape public policies. Findings reveal a worrying level of apathy characterizing the Albanian society; an issue of extreme importance, which should be taken into further consideration by respective institutions (government, CSOs, donors etc.).

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY: With regard to accountability mechanisms, 79% of surveyed citizens believe that the Parliament is the institution with the greatest impact in holding the government to account. The public perception appears to be split on the role of the Ombudsman to hold the government accountable. Only 35% of the surveyed citizens believe the Albanian Civil Society Organizations can hold the government accountable.

ICT AND GOOD GOVERNANCE: The majority of surveyed citizens (65%) believe that ICT can improve governance, whilst 1 in 5 citizens (25%) is not aware of or does not have the necessary information on the opportunities ICT could offer to strengthen good governance. On the other hand, citizens do not use ICT as one of the tools to connect with their local government unit (Municipality).

PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS: The three highest ranked institutions for their performance are Religious Institutions, Police and Armed Forces, which are rated positively by 29%, 23%, and 22% of surveyed Albanians, respectively. Institutions rated the lowest by the public opinion are the Judiciary and Political Parties. Even though there is a widespread perception that public institutions are not performing very good in delivering their core functions, almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the surveyed citizens (or 71%) believe that public institutions can improve their performance.

POLITICAL INFLUENCE IN THE WORK OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS: The Judiciary (59% of surveyed citizens) and the Central Electoral Committee (55% of surveyed citizens) are the two perceived institutions upon which high political influence is exercised. Religious institutions (62%) are perceived to be the most independent ones. Nearly half of the respondents believe that political interests have a high influence on institutions of health system (46%) and upon institutions of education system (45%).

SATISFACTION WITH PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY: The proportion of surveyed citizens who are unsatisfied with the quality of public service delivery is higher than the proportion of those satisfied. Surveyed citizens are mostly satisfied with emergency services (firefighters, police emergency etc) and communal services (offered at local level), 38% and 34% of surveyed, respectively. On the other side, more than half of the citizens are not satisfied with employment services (59%), with judiciary services (56%) and with health services (53%).

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INTRODUCTION

The public Opinion Poll “Trust in Government” (hereafter: the Opinion Poll) is an instrument to advocate for and monitor standards in open government, good governance and the rule of law in six countries of the Western Balkans.¹ Built upon a shared methodology, since 2013 the Opinion Poll is conducted annually at the national level in each of the six countries. In Albania, it is conducted in November of each year and is financially supported by UNDP Albania.

The Opinion Poll is carried out within the framework of the “Advocacy for Open Government” project, funded by the European Union and implemented by six well-known think tanks² in each of the six Western Balkans countries, within the timeline 2012-2016. The objective of the project is to foster inclusive, accountable and transparent governance and policymaking through enhanced civil society expertise and strengthened structures for dialogue between civil society and government within the framework of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) initiative.

Under the OGP umbrella, the project addresses the overall objective of the region’s EU integration process as well as anchoring democratic values and structures by providing the skills for civil society and greater interconnectedness between civil society and government institutions. To this end, activities are designed along three main areas: 1) Policy Analysis and Monitoring; 2) Advocacy towards policy makers and CSO coalition building; and 3) Education and Awareness Raising.

In Albania, the project is implemented by the Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM) in close cooperation with relevant public institutions at the central and local level, with civil society organizations and with the support of donor organizations advancing the implementation of OGP principles in the country.

METHODOLOGY

This Opinion Poll 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 1600 respondents, aiming a national geographical coverage. A quota sampling approach was employed to select an equal number of respondents from each of the 61 Local Government Units in the country. This sampling technique, although a non-probability sampling that does not allow for generalisations to the whole population, is most appropriate when aiming to give the same “voice” to the opinion of all citizens regardless to the vicinity with the central government, centralised services etc. In addition, in selecting 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 income; although some of these characteristics could not be pre-determined since the selection of respondents was random conditional to the prior quota sampling size of the administrative regions in Albania.

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

- **Section 1** gathered data on demographics, namely gender, age, level of education, employment status and individual income.
- **Section 2** gathered data on perceived levels of trust, transparency, accountability, citizen's participation in decision making processes and use of technology as a means of communication of citizens with the government at local level.
- **Section 3** gathered data on perceived satisfaction levels on quality of public service delivery and gender considerations in public policies and public services.

Data collection and analysis

The survey questionnaire was administered in face-to-face interviews using PAPI (paper assisted personal interview). All data was entered in a common database, processed and analyzed to present findings of descriptive and relational statistics, with the aim of providing general trends, complemented with more detailed analysis based on demographic characteristics (age, education background, employment status etc).



DEMOGRAPHY OF SAMPLE

A total of 1600 Albanian citizens aged 18-65 and over (refer to methodology section) were surveyed at the national level. Main demographics of the final sample of respondents are presented below in terms of gender, age, education, employment status and individual income.

The population sample included 50% women and 50% men. The sample is younger and more educated than the average population. The majority of respondents fall in the age group 18-35 (48%). As regards educational attainment, 4 in 10 citizen surveyed have completed high school and, about 43% already possess or are in the process of obtaining a university or post-university degree. Roughly 12% have only accomplished compulsory education.

Fig. 1

Gender representation

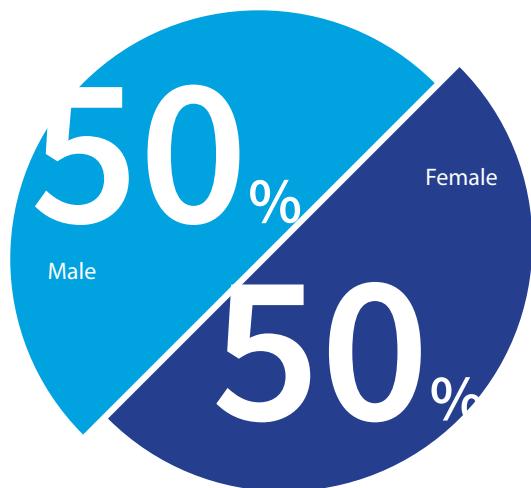


Fig. 2

Age representation

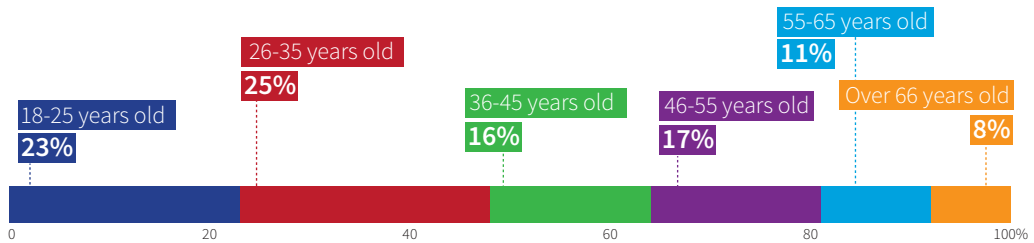


Table 1. Education status

No formal education	2%
Primary school	2%
Compulsory level	12%
High school	40%
University degree or higher	43%
Refusal	1%

As regards the employment status, about 45% of the sample is employed, whilst 28% is unemployed. 9% of those surveyed are students and 11% retired.

Table 2. Employment status

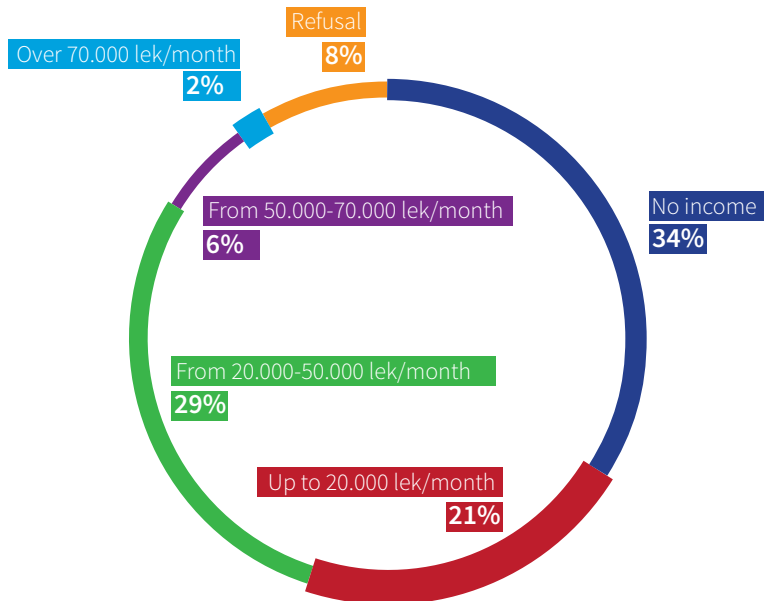
Employed	45%
Unemployed – looking for a job	22%
Unemployed – not looking for a job	6%
Student	9%
Retired	11%
Other	7%

The distribution of citizens' individual monthly income is presented in Fig.3



Fig. 3

Regular individual monthly income



Roughly, 81% of the sample lives in cities and 19% in rural areas.

Ethical Considerations

The data gathering process was conducted under anonymity and confidentiality was ensured.

FINDINGS

Trust in Public Institutions

David Easton defines Trust as holding a positive perception about the actions of an individual or an organization. It is a subjective phenomenon, reflected in the “eyes of the beholder” that matters especially to the extent that it shapes behavior. Trust in government represents confidence of citizens in the actions of a “government to do what is right and perceived fair”³ (Easton, 1965). According to OECD⁴, trust in public institutions is important for the success of a wide range of public policies, programs and regulations that depend on the cooperation and compliance of citizens. Lack of trust compromises the willingness of citizens and businesses to respond to public policies and thus hinders sustainable development. OECD identifies six areas where governments can work to establish and consolidate trust from the citizens: reliability, responsiveness, openness, better regulations, integrity and inclusive policymaking. All of these areas constitute an integral part of this Opinion Poll, in pursuit of understanding the perspectives and opinions of the Albanian society around these crucial issues.

However, trust is not limited to the specific aspects of the public sector. It represents a mix of different experiences, stereotypes and ideologies that are very sensitive to policy outcomes and to wider societal and political circumstances in each country. Social and demographic factors, such as the level of literacy and education, gender and age also affect social and political trust. Therefore, an analysis of the relationships between the above mentioned demographic factors and the results provided by the Opinion Poll has been undertaken.

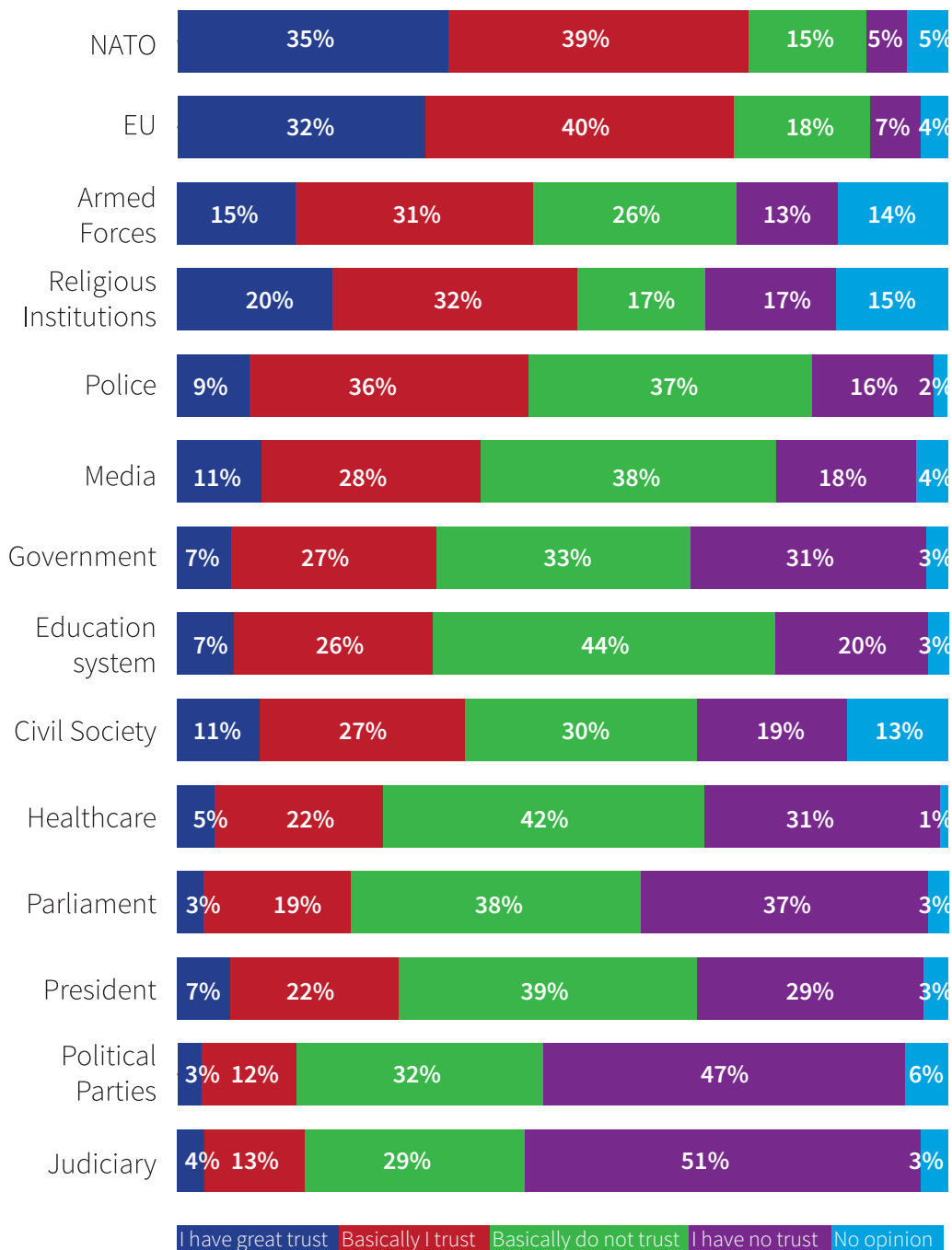
Following the demographic data, in Section 2 the Questionnaire starts by asking citizens to rate their level of trust towards a number of Public Institutions at the central and local level as well as towards other important actors (Media, Civil Society etc). Two non-Albanian institutions, namely NATO and the European Union (EU) have been added to the list, mostly due to the high level of involvement of these institutions in the political, economic and social life of the Albanian society.

2015 data show that the most trusted institutions in Albania are NATO and EU, which enjoy 74% and 72% of public trust, respectively (% of surveyed citizens expressing “I have great trust” or “Basically I trust”).⁵

In the midst of low trust levels in other institutions, Religious Institutions enjoy the third highest trust rating. More than every two Albanians (52%) state that they trust religious institutions; 15% do not have any opinion



Fig. 4
Trust 2015



Roughly one in three Albanians surveyed trusts the Government; the Government (34%) appears to enjoy greater trust than the Parliament (22%).

Citizens express as much trust for the media (39%) as for non-profit organizations (38%).

The Judiciary system (80%) and the Political Parties (79%) rank as the least trusted institutions in the survey (% of surveyed expressing “I have no trust” or “Basically I don’t trust”).

The Parliament is the third least trusted institution; 75% of surveyed Albanians do not have trust on the Parliament.

The majority or nine out of fourteen (9/14) institutions have more than 50% of those surveyed expressing no trust. Some include: the Healthcare System (73%), the President (68%), the Government (64%) and the Education System (64%).

When compared to 2014, the analysis reveals that seven out of fourteen (7/14) institutions have experienced a decrease or no change in their trust level. The institutions that have suffered the steepest decline of trust in 2015 are: the Parliament (from 29% to 22%) and the Health System (from 32% to 27%). Media is the only institution that has shown no change in trust.

Timeline comparison: On the other hand, Religious institutions have seen the highest increase in the level of trust (from 44% to 52%). Other institutions that have experienced an increase in trust from 2014 include: the Police (from 41% to 45%), the President (from 25% to 29%), Civil Society Organizations (from 34% to 38%) and the European Union (from 68% to 72%). See Fig. 5.

For the 3rd consecutive year (2013, 2014, 2015), the European Union and NATO remain the most trusted institutions in Albania; the least trusted institutions are the Political Parties and Judiciary.

The comparative analysis reveals that since 2013, the Judiciary and the Institutions of the Education System are facing a decline in public trust as opposed to the Police, which is experiencing a steady increase.

When analyzing results on levels of trust on institutions disaggregated by the respondents’ gender, age, and education levels, data indicate the following:

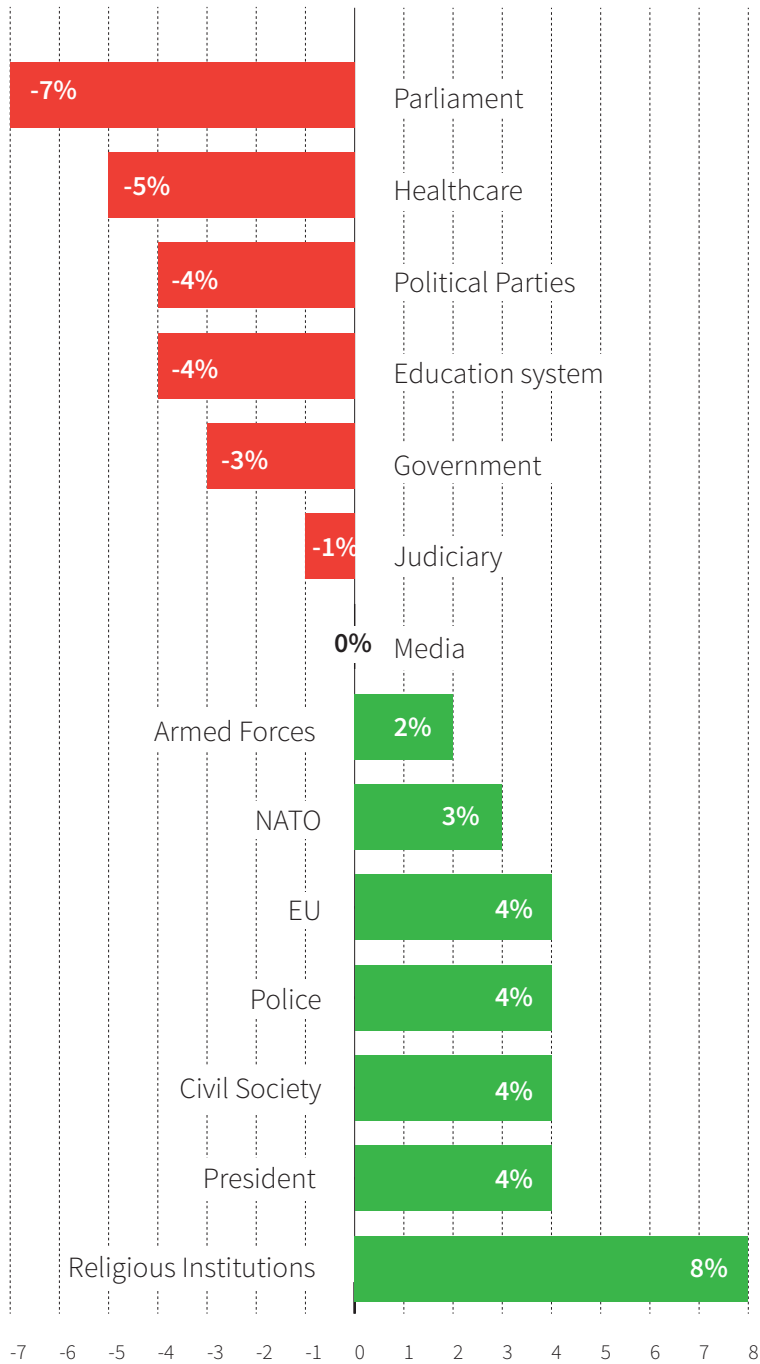
Gender and Trust: There is little difference in institutional trust between gender overall. Some variances can be discerned as regards trust in NATO, where more males (40%) express great trust in NATO than females (32%); and, 7% of female respondents claim to not have any opinion. Also, females tend to express less trust than males on healthcare institutions. 45% of females say that they basically do not trust healthcare institutions compared to 39% of males in the survey.

Age and Trust: Individuals aged 55 and over are more likely to have greater trust in the Government than the younger demographics. 40% of individuals aged 55 and over express



Fig. 5

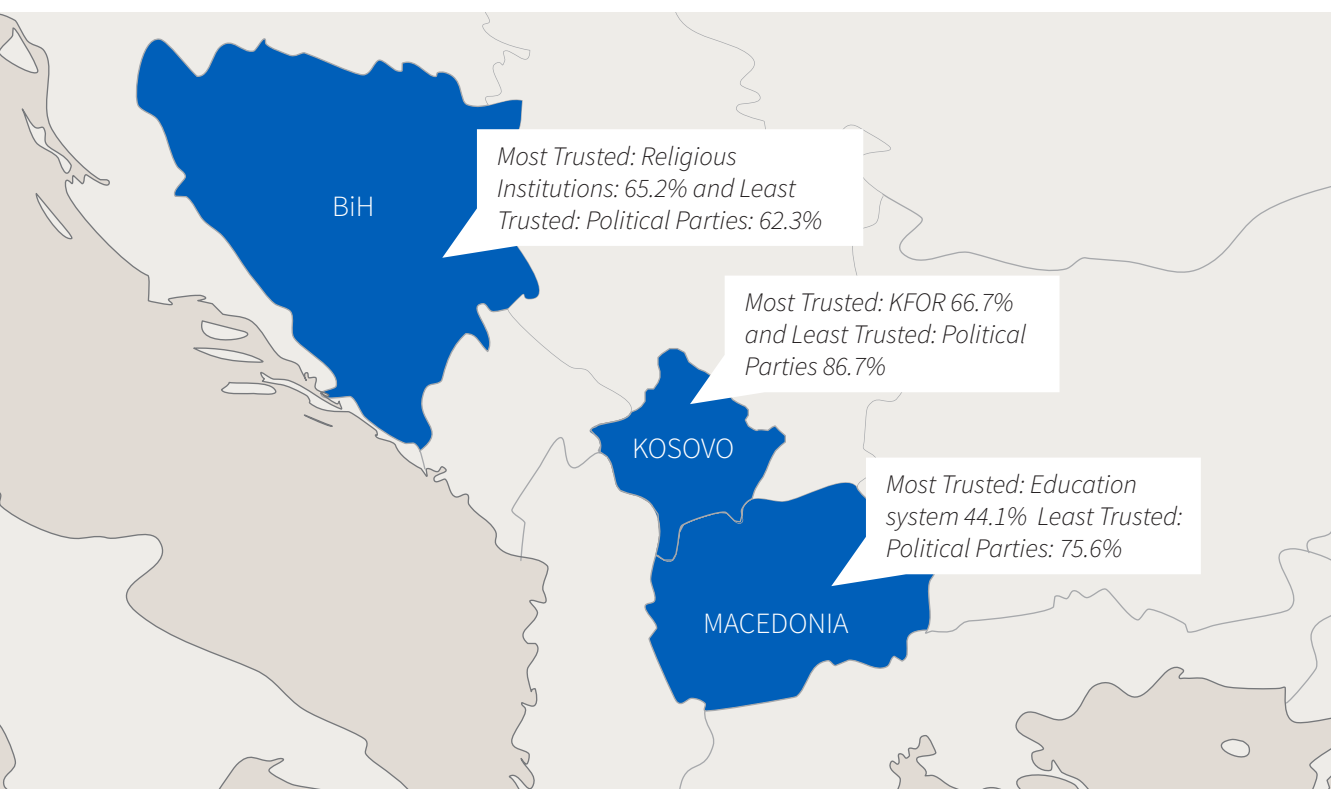
Change in trust (p.p.) 2014-2015



trust in the Government⁶ compared to 1 in 3 individuals in the age bracket 18-35 (32%) and 30% in the age bracket 36-55. The majority of individuals aged 36-55 (37%) have no trust in the government compared to 28% of those aged 18-35. On the contrary, 1 in 10 individuals aged 55 and over express great trust in the government. Individuals aged 55 and over are also more likely to have greater trust in the Police than the younger population. Specifically, 41% of individuals aged 55 and over basically trust the Police compared to 1 in 3 individuals in the age bracket 36-55 (33%). 40% of individuals aged 36-55 basically do not trust the State Police.

Level of Education and Trust: While one in two respondents (50%) with basic education (8-9 schooling years) have no trust in political parties, 44% of those with university degree express the same sentiment. Moreover, the lack of trust in healthcare institutions tends to decrease with the educational attainment of the respondents. 27% of individuals with basic education have no trust in healthcare institutions, compared with 29% with high-school and 33% with university education.

Regional comparison: Putting on the regional perspective lenses, results of the opinion poll (conducted with the same purpose and methodology), show that Political Parties are the least trusted institution at regional level.



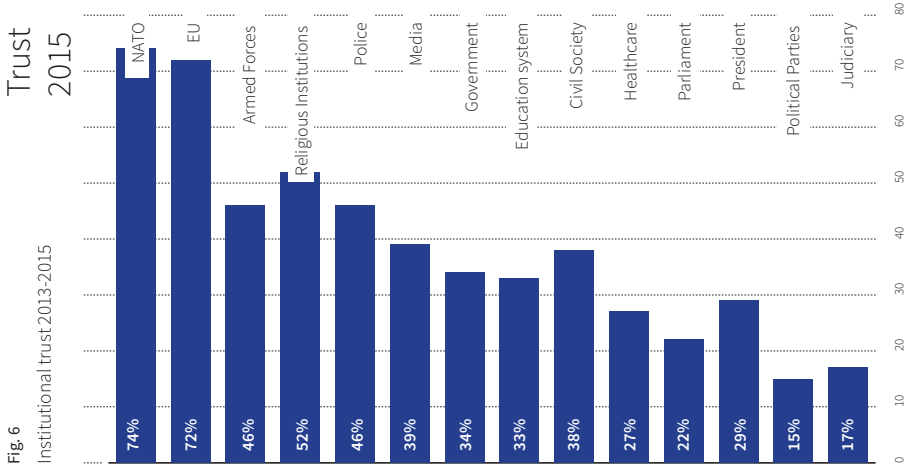


Fig. 6

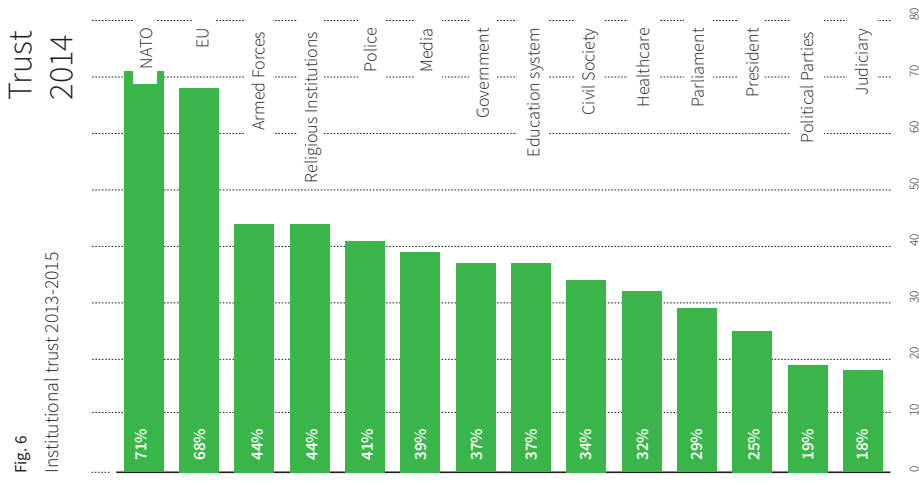


Fig. 6

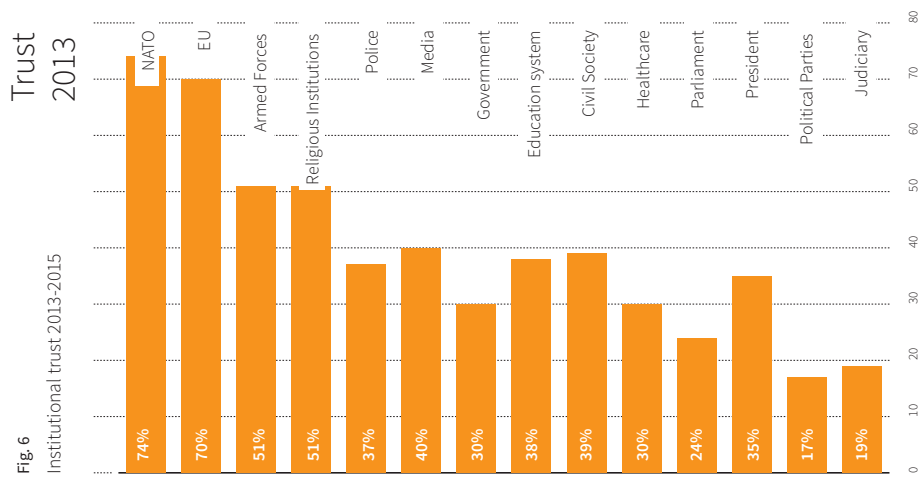


Fig. 6

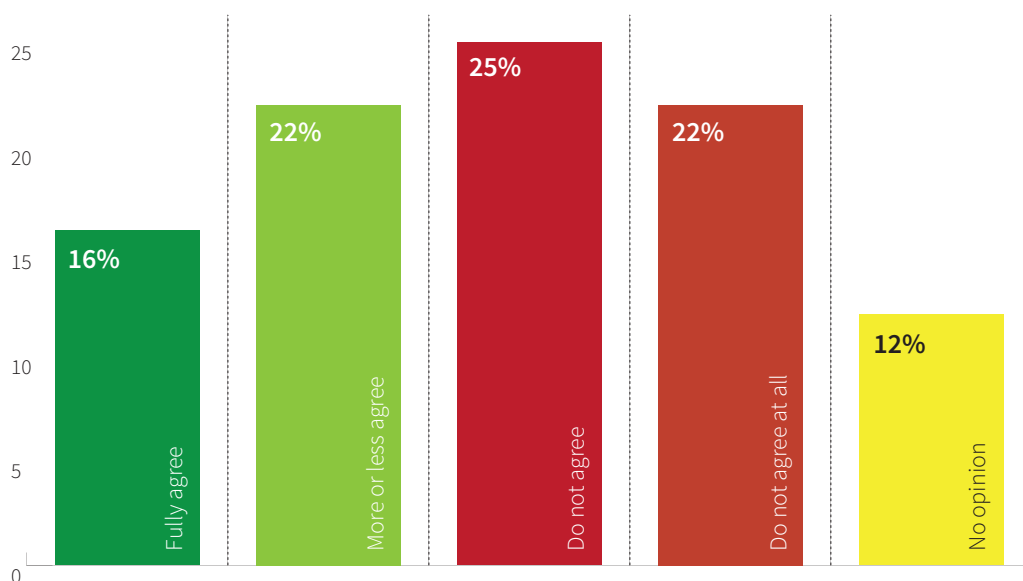
Perceptions on Government Transparency and Open Data

Citizen trust in public institutions and government in general is mainly a result of how these institutions and the governments behave towards their constituencies. Transparency is at the heart of how citizens hold their public officials accountable. Information on how officials implement public policies and spend taxpayers' money must be readily available and easily understood, allowing for good and just governance. There is no single definition of what constitutes transparency or a method for measuring it. However, for the purpose of this Opinion Poll, transparency has the meaning of active open data practices (disclosure of public data, information on public officials' personal incomes and assets, making use of Freedom of Information Act etc).

Whilst 2015 data show that the Albanian society believes that the Open Data approach is a must do in order to foster government transparency, increase public trust and serve as the baseline for economic and social development, the public opinion is divided in its stand to whether Albanian institutions are transparent and accountable with regard to their daily work. 47% of surveyed citizens believe that Albanian public institutions are not transparent and accountable⁷, whilst 41% of them believe the Albanian public institutions are transparent and accountable.⁸ 12% have no opinion or have refused to respond to this question. For more details see Fig.7.

Fig. 7

Transparency and accountability





With regard to open data approaches, findings show that there is a widespread recognition among citizens for the benefits of Open Data:

Slightly more than 9 in 10 surveyed Albanians believe that Open Data policies increase citizens' trust in government; only 9% of those surveyed disagree.⁹

In addition, 92% believe that Open Data approaches also strengthen the relationship between the government and its citizens (interest groups); only 8% disagree.¹⁰

Fig. 8

Open Data increases trust in government

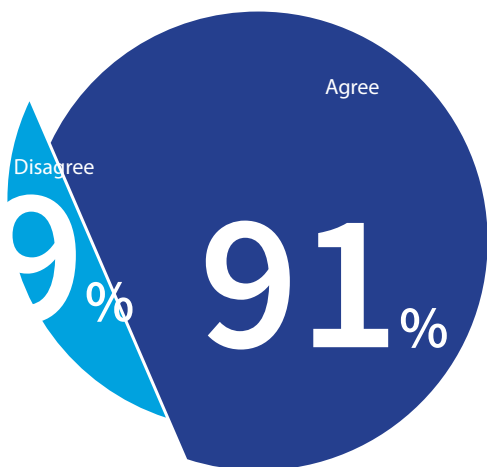
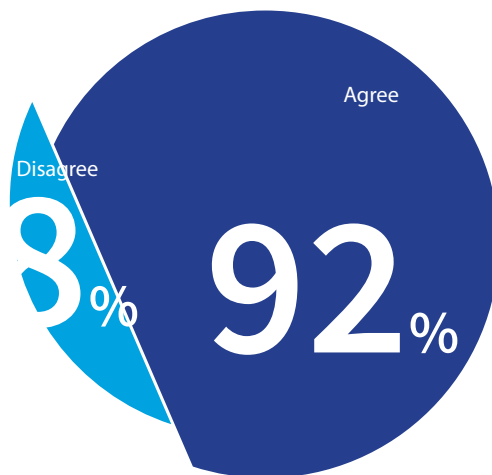


Fig. 9

Open Data strengthens the relationship between government and citizens/interest groups



Along the same lines, the vast majority or 89% of those surveyed state that open government data can improve peoples' life; and, 92% believe that open data policies foster economic development.¹¹

Fig. 10

Open Data by the government side improves citizens' life

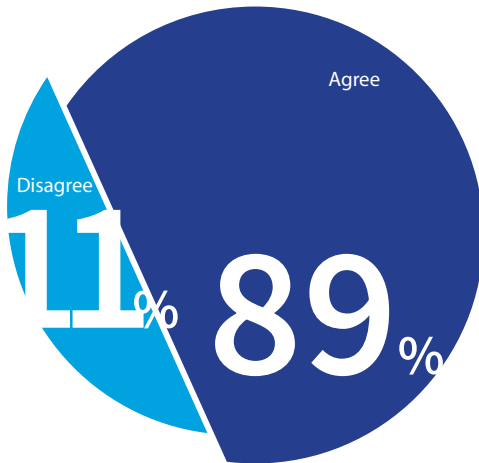
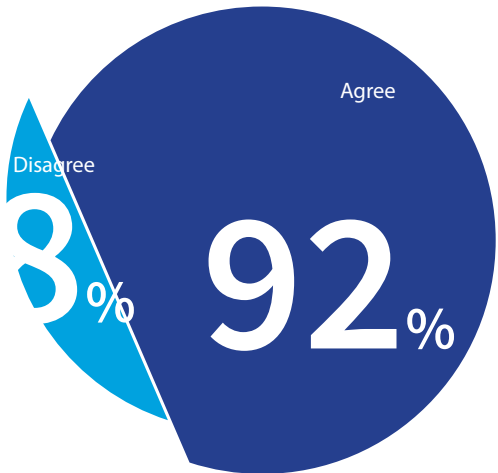


Fig. 11

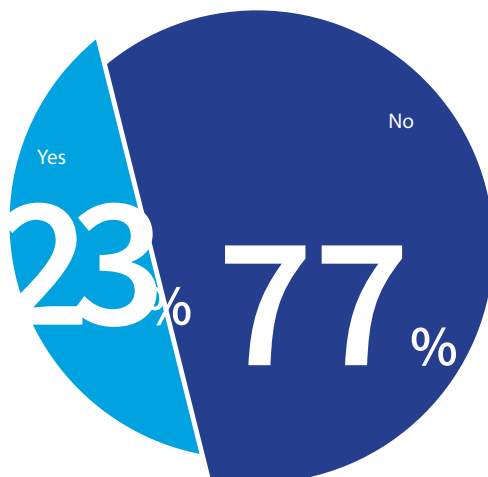
Open Data foster economic development



Nonetheless, notwithstanding the general recognition of the potential importance of Open Data, results show that the majority of surveyed Albanians (77%) have never submitted an official request to receive information from public institutions, as compared to 23% who did.

Fig. 12

Have you ever submitted request to receive information from public institutions?





In addition, citizens were also provided with a number of statements on transparency with regard to concrete policies or rules of procedure and were asked to rate their agreement or disagreement with each of those statements. Fig.13 visualizes a summary of the responses.

The vast majority or 79% of those surveyed strongly support the practice that the information on public works and contracts funded by the government should be made public.

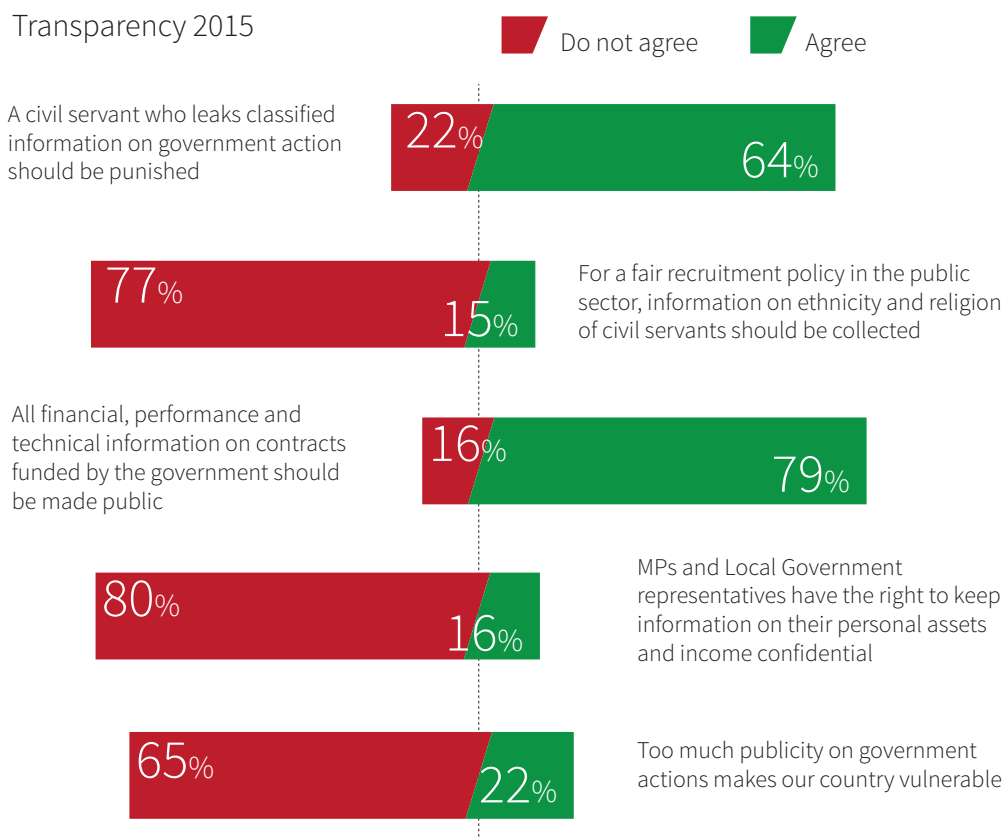
Moreover, 64% agree that a public official who “leaks” classified government information should be punished.¹²

8 in 10 surveyed citizens totally disagree with the statement that politicians, MPs and local elected officials should keep secret the information on personal income and wealth.

Another important result to look upon is that 77% of respondents are totally against recruitment practices that require information on ethnic origin and religious beliefs.

Fig. 13

Transparency 2015



Note: “No opinion” responses are not shown.

The overall results show that more than ¾ of the Albanian society en large demands open data policies and approached to be in place, as they believe it is a mechanism which highly contributes to good governance and to narrow the gap between government and citizens. Such practices will equip citizens with the necessary knowledge to actively engage in holding the government into account. A citizen armed with information about the government is a citizen able to ask the right questions and understand the priorities of government. Engaged citizens, journalists, and other stakeholders demand this data.

Timeline comparison: The comparative analysis shows that for the 3rd consecutive year (2013-2015), a steady increase in the public support towards the statement “All financial performance and technical information on contracts funded by the government should be made public” can be discerned.

Perception on corruption in public institutions

Transparency International broadly defines corruption as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain. This can happen anywhere, and can be classified as grand or petty, depending on the amounts of money lost and the sector where it occurs.

For the purpose of this Opinion Poll, corruption is looked at when it takes place in public institutions (the government and its decentralized units), which by default use public funds and provide services based on the motivation to improve citizens’ lives rather than to make a profit. Based on this assessment, any kind of abuse of entrusted power for private gain that takes place within the government or government bodies is considered as corruption in the public sector. Some of the most common forms of corruption in public institutions as defined by Transparency International are:

- **Embezzlement** - when a person, holding office in an institution, organization or company, dishonestly and illegally appropriates, uses or traffics the funds and goods they have been entrusted with for personal enrichment or other activities
- **Patronage** - form of favoritism in which a person is selected, regardless of qualifications or entitlement, for a job or government benefit because of political affiliations or connections
- **Nepotism** - form of favoritism based on acquaintances and familiar relationships whereby someone in an official position exploits his or her power and authority to provide a job or favor to a family member or friend, even though he or she may not be qualified or deserving.
- **Conflict of interest** - situation where an individual or the entity for which they



work, whether a government, business, media outlet or civil society organization, is confronted with choosing between the duties and demands of their position and their own private interests.

- **Misconduct in procurement** - a multi-step process of established procedures to acquire goods and services by any individual, company or organization – from the initial needs assessment to the contract’s award and service delivery.
- **Blackmailing** - the act of getting money from people or forcing them to do something by threatening to tell a secret of theirs or to harm them.

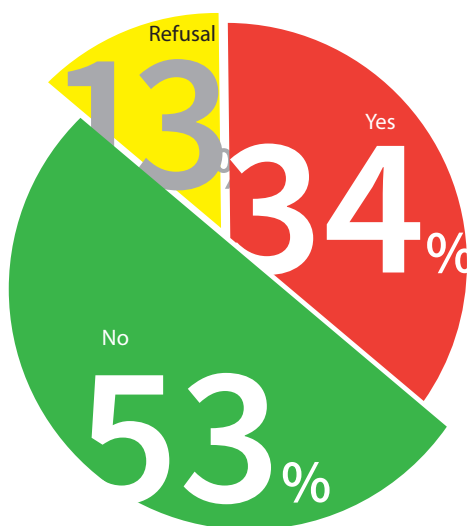
To this regard, citizens were asked whether they have witnessed a case of corruption in a public institution at the central government level or at the local government where they live.

With regard to the central government level, whilst roughly 1 in 3 surveyed Albanians (34%) report that they have been witnesses of a case of corruption, a greater proportion of citizens (53%) claim no such exposure to corruption. Meanwhile, 13% have chosen not to answer this question.

Personal exposure to corruption is higher in the local government, namely the municipality where citizens reside. Specifically, the majority of surveyed or 41% report that they have been witnesses of a case of corruption in their municipality of residence, whilst 34% do not report such experience. 1 in 5 individuals or 25% have chosen not to answer this question.

Fig. 14

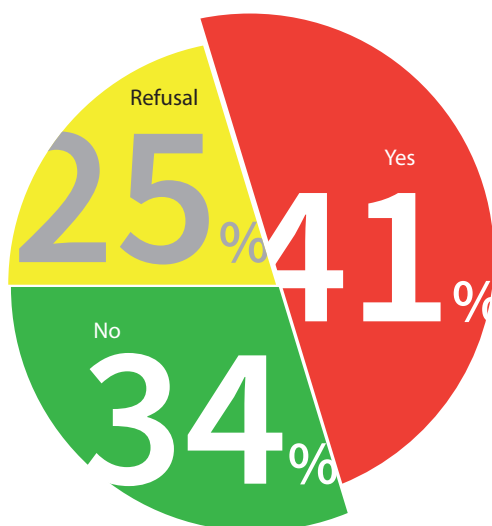
Have you witnessed a corruption case in public institutions?



One of the interpretations that can explain the higher number of surveyed claiming to have witnessed a corruption case in their municipality might be the fact that this Opinion Poll was conducted nationally – using quotas based on the administrative division (61 municipalities). Citizens residing in cities or villages outside of the capital are expected to have more contacts with the local government rather than with the central government.

Fig. 15

Have you personally witnessed a corruption case in the Municipality where you live?



Another possible reason might be that the municipality as the government unit offering more direct services to citizens, compared to central government institutions.

Gender and corruption: Relational statistics suggest that there is no apparent difference in exposure to corruption at the central and local level between genders.

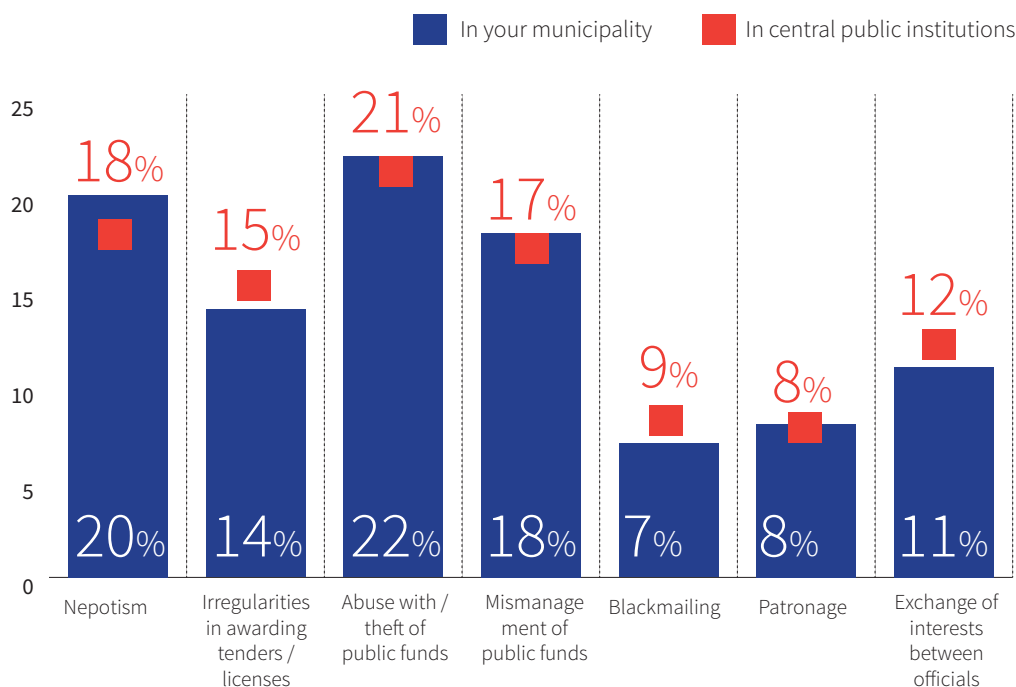
Age and corruption: However, citizens of age 18-35 are the age-group most likely to report personal exposure to corruption either at the municipality or at the central level (46% and 40%) as compared to 36-55 years olds (31% and 30%) and those 55 and over (30% and 22%).

Both groups of respondents, the ones who had witnessed a corruption case and the ones that had not, were asked to mention some of the most common forms of corruption taking place in public institutions (that they are aware of, have heard of, read or affected by). At both government levels, central and local, embezzlement (abuse with/or theft of public funds) appears to be the most common form of corruption taking place. On the other hand, Patronage and Blackmailing are the two least common forms of corruption as perceived by citizens.



Fig. 16

Most common forms of corruption



Perceptions on citizen engagement with the government

Citizen engagement is a cornerstone of open government; it is the vital link between transparency and accountability. The Open Government Partnership¹³ requires openness to citizen participation and engagement in policy-making and governance, including the basic protections for civil liberties. In an increasingly complex world, citizens’ inputs turn into a critical resource for policy-making. Good decision-making requires the knowledge, experiences, views and values of the public. Implementing difficult decisions depends on citizens’ consent and support. Unless citizens understand and are engaged in the decision themselves, trust is easily lost (OECD, 2009).¹⁴

People around the world have consistently indicated that they are not content with simply engaging with the government through periodic elections. Therefore, it is important that citizen engagement is well designed and properly resourced, and that it is born from a genuine desire to involve the public and take their input into account. Good citizen engagement can support the effective functioning of democracy, the legitimacy of governments, the successful

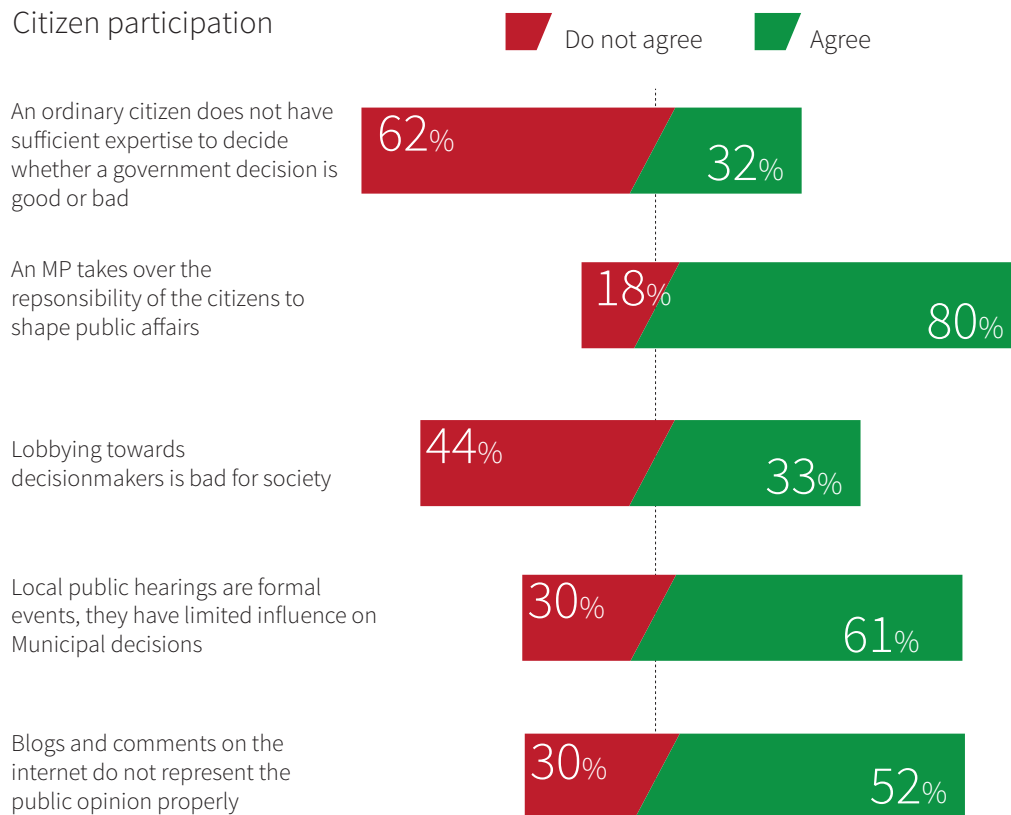
implementation of policy and the achievement of social outcomes. Bad engagement practice can lead to poor decisions and disengagement by citizens (Brodie et al, 2011).¹⁵

Based on the above discussion, citizens were asked whether they agree or not with five statements related to citizen engagement with the government.

Whilst citizens believe they have sufficient knowledge to judge whether a government decision is good or bad for the Albanian society, they do not appear to believe in the efficiency of the mechanisms that enable citizen engagement in policy-and decision-making. Therefore, they tend to transfer the power of shaping public polices and holding the government to account to the Parliament.

Fig. 17

Citizen participation



Note: "No opinion" responses are not shown.

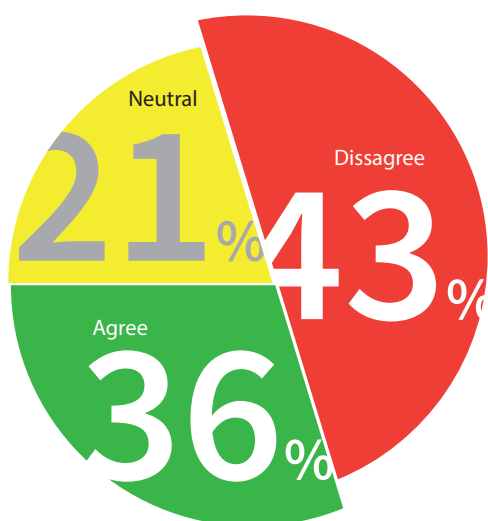
When asked on their opinion for the statement "An ordinary citizen does not have sufficient expertise to decide whether government decisions are good or bad", 62% of surveyed Albanians disagree with it. Nonetheless, the fact that 32% of the respondents agree with

this statement remains an issue of concern. If citizens do not trust themselves as capable of evaluating policies, they would not trust themselves to hold government accountable for making and executing those policies, accordingly.

Findings reveal a worrying level of apathy characterizing the Albanian society with regard to its engagement with the government at both levels. One of the reasons for the sentiment of “apathy” might be the vicious circle of lack of trust in which the citizens and public

Fig. 18

Suggestions coming from civil society and interest groups on draft laws are taken into consideration



institutions find themselves trapped. More concretely, whilst 36% believe that Parliament is open to consult with civil society and interest groups during Parliamentary hearings, 43% believe the inputs coming from CSO’s and interest groups are not taken into consideration.

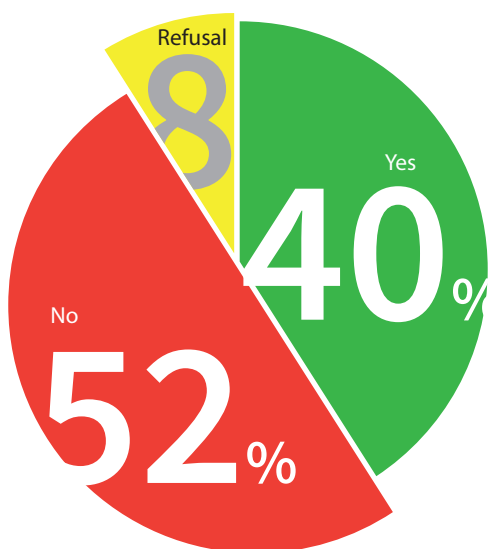
In the same line, with regard to local government, 61% of the respondents believe that “local public hearings are formal events; they have limited influence on Municipal decisions”. This is an issue of extreme importance, which should be taken into further consideration by respective institutions (government, CSOs, donors etc.).

The very low levels of trust on the Government channels of communication with the public as regards policy- and-decision making, as well as the considerable share of surveyed citizens not trusting in their capabilities to take an active role in the governance of their country (slightly less than 1 in 3 citizen or 32%) seem to lead the Albanian society to transfer this power to the Parliament. As a result, 80% of those surveyed believe that the Members of the Parliament should take over the responsibility of citizens to shape public policies.

Overcoming public disengagement, and effectively responding to citizens requires a culture change in how a government interacts and cooperates with the public. Even though there is a notably increased availability of the internet and accessibility to a wide range of governmental or other websites, blogs, the results indicate that citizens (52% of those surveyed) think that blogs and comments on the internet do not represent the public opinion properly.

Fig. 19

Participation in demonstration / signing petition



Alternatively, it is important to highlight that participation in demonstrations or signing of petitions is considered an important tool to hold government to account. 4 in 10 surveyed Albanians (or 40%) admit to have been personally engaged in any of these activities.

Gender and citizen engagement: Analysis reveals that men (47%) are more likely to participate in demonstrations or in signing petitions as compared to women (34%).

Age and citizen engagement: Participation tends to decrease with age (45% for the age-group 18-35, 38% for the age-group 36-55, and 31% for the age-group over 55 years old).

Timeline comparison: Comparative analysis shows that for 3rd consecutive year, there is a decrease in the proportion of surveyed citizens claiming that “Local public hearings are formal events with limited influence on municipals decision” (from 65% to 63% to 61%).

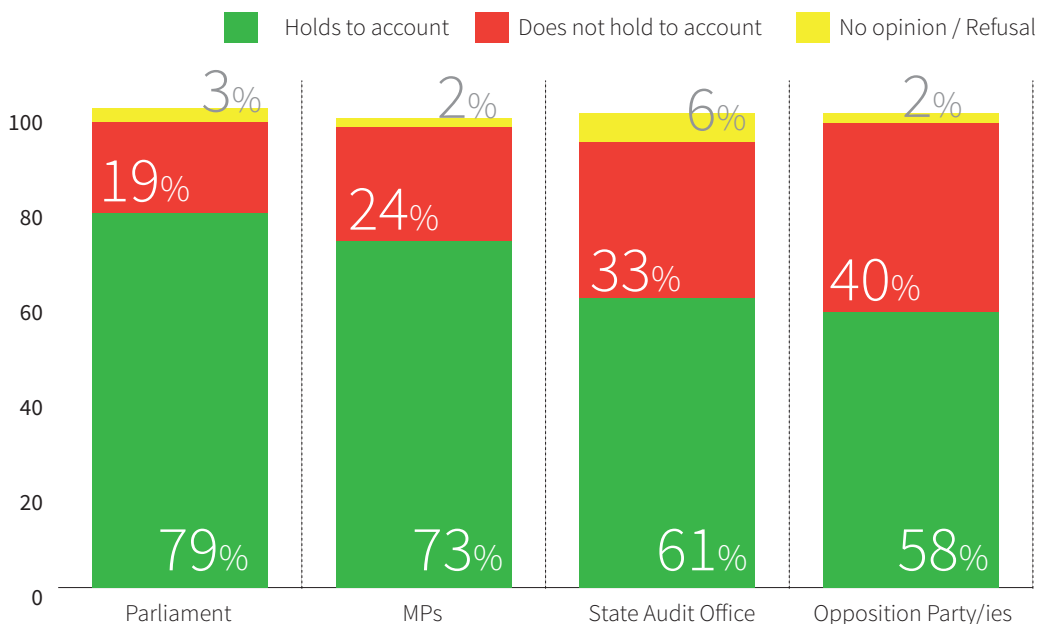


Perceptions on Government Accountability

The notion of accountability is an amorphous concept that is difficult to define in precise terms. According to World Bank¹⁶, accountability exists when there is a relationship where an individual or body, and the performance of tasks or functions by that individual or body are subject to another’s oversight, direction or request that they provide information or justification for their actions. The concept of accountability can be classified according to the type of accountability exercised and/or the person, group or institution the public official answers to. The present debate as to the content of different forms of accountability is best conceptualized by reference to opposing forms of accountability, recognizing two main forms: horizontal accountability and vertical accountability “Horizontal accountability is the capacity of state institutions to check abuses by other public agencies and branches of government, or the requirement for agencies to report sideways.” We can observe the rise of the administrative accountability with the establishment of Ombudsman, and the existence of independent inspectorates, auditors, supervisory bodies and etc. Alternatively, vertical accountability is the means through which citizens, mass media, and civil society seek to enforce standards of good performance on officials.¹⁷ Social accountability on the other hand is an approach (established set of mechanisms) towards building accountability that

Fig. 20

Horizontal accountability mechanisms



relies on civic engagement, namely when citizens and/or civil society organization participate directly or indirectly in exacting accountability. Mechanisms of social accountability can be initiated and supported by the state, citizens or both, but very often they are demand-driven and operate on voluntary basis.

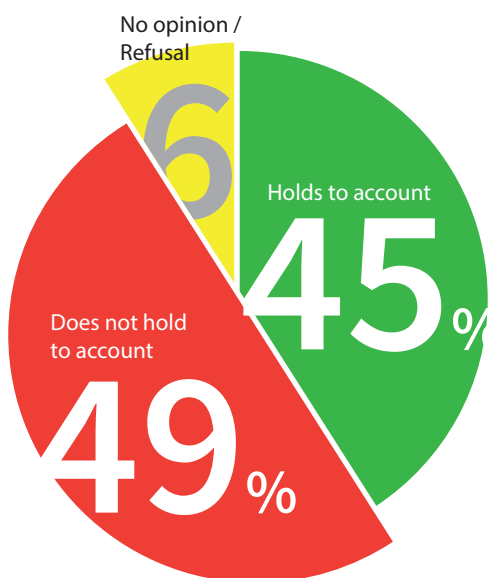
For the purpose of this survey, citizens were asked to give their opinion on how functional and effective the accountability mechanisms (horizontal and vertical) are in holding the central government to account for its actions.

With regard to horizontal accountability mechanisms, 79% of surveyed citizens believe that the Parliament is the institution with the greatest impact in holding the government to account to the society. Individual MPs follow with 73% .

As regards to the role of the Ombudsman, the public perception appears to be split into the ones that believe the Ombudsman has an impact on holding the government to account (45%) and the ones that perceive that this institution does not have an impact as such (49%). Acknowledging the very important role this institution is to play in the “checks and balance” institutional system, this finding suggests that more awareness raising is needed on the role of this institution.

Fig. 21

Ombudsman

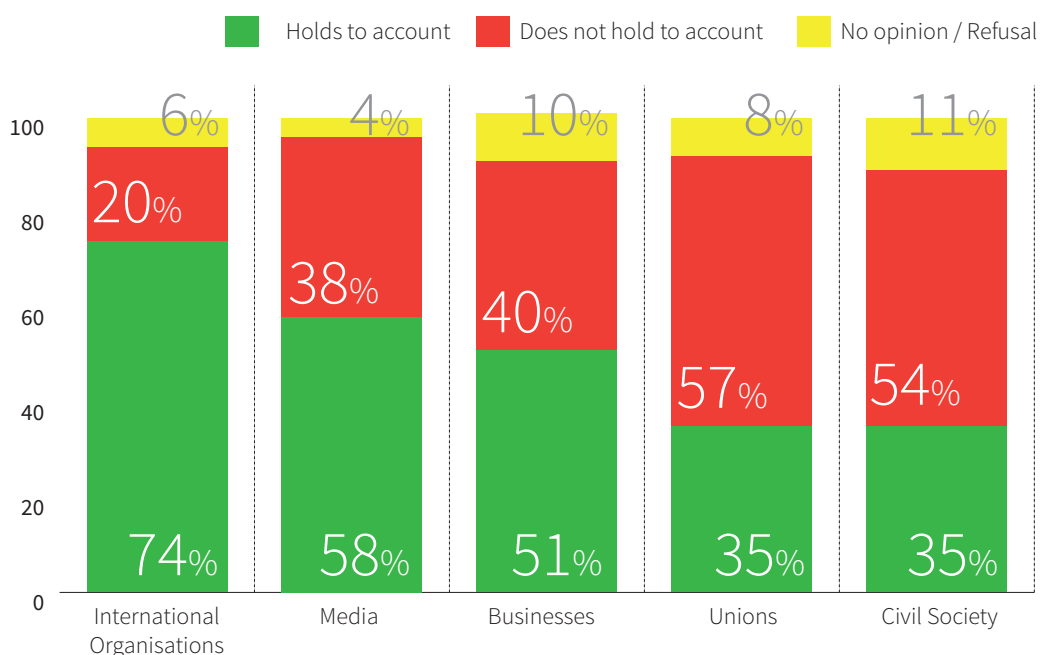




With regard to vertical accountability mechanisms, international organizations (like EU and NATO) are the ones with the highest perceived impact in holding the government to account, with 74% of surveyed citizens agreeing to this. On the other extreme, only 35% of the respondents believe the Albanian Civil Society Organizations can hold the government accountable. These findings correspond to the results on institutional trust whereby EU and NATO are trusted by 74% and 72 % of the citizens, whilst Albanian CSOs by only 38% of them.

Fig. 22

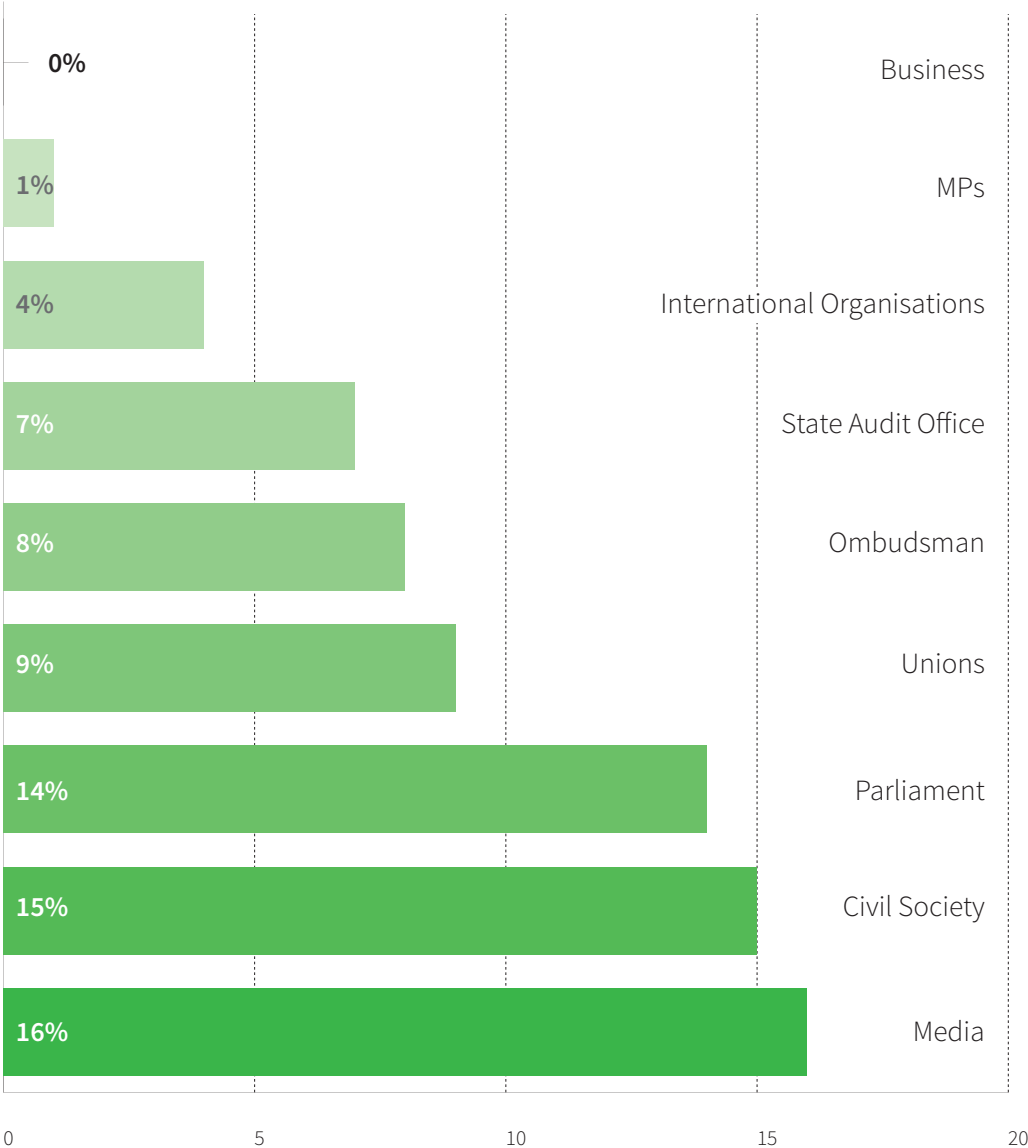
Vertical accountability mechanisms



Timeline comparison: Results indicate that in comparison to 2014, the three institutions perceived as having an increased role in holding the government to account are Media (from 42% to 58%), Civil Society Organizations (from 20% to 35%) and the Parliament (from 65% to 79%).¹⁸

Fig. 23

Change in impact of accountability mechanisms (p.p.)
2014-2015





Perceptions on ICT and good governance

In having good governance, transparency is vital but so is the active engagement and participation of citizens. Lately, across the world, technology has transformed the relationship between governments and their citizens. The Internet has had a democratization effect. Not only does it empower citizens to participate but it has also helped governments to understand and address real citizen needs. However, using the opportunities that technology brings to share information is only one half of the equation. All these will be rewards if citizens, civil society and businesses use this information to monitor progress, hold those making decisions to account and, where needed, to encourage change. It is vitally important, that both levels of government provide the tools to use this data and the opportunities it brings to make a positive impact on lives and communities.¹⁹

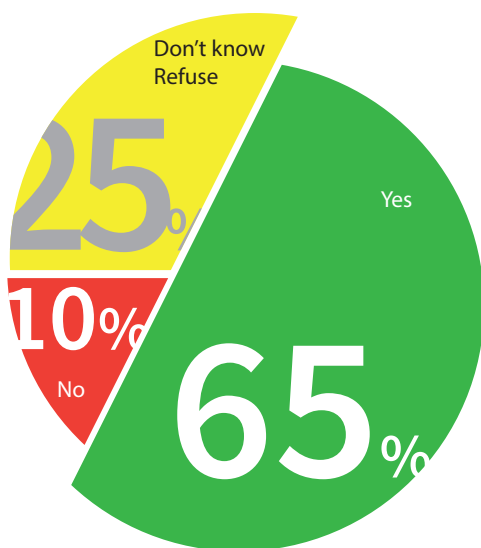
2015 data indicate that the majority of surveyed citizens (65%) believe that ICT can improve governance, whilst 1 in 5 citizens (25%) is not aware of or does not have the necessary information on the opportunities ICT could offer to strengthen good governance.

Moreover, relational analysis shows that this belief is most likely to hold among the youngest and more educated citizens.

Age and role of ICT: For instance, while 71% of citizens in the age-group 18-35 maintain that ICT can strengthen good governance, this proportion drops to 62% for the age-group 36-55, and to 50% for those aged 55 and over.

Fig. 24

Can use of ICT improve governance?

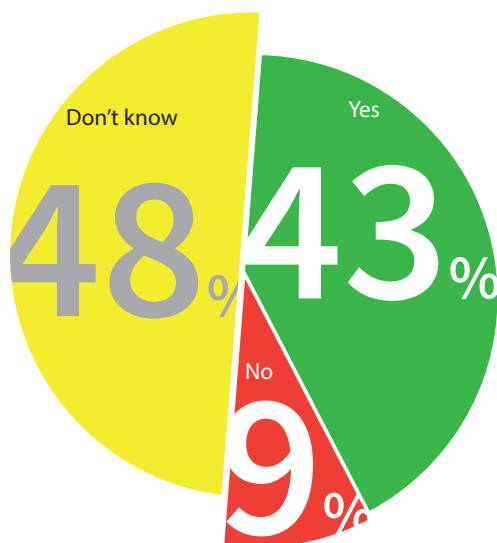


Education and role of ICT: As regards educational attainment, the statement is agreed upon by 76% of those with university degree and 61% with high school; the percentage plummets to 39% among those with compulsory education. There are no apparent variations in response by gender.

On the other hand, notwithstanding this acknowledgment of the potential benefits of ICT usage, it seems that citizens do not use ICT as one of the tools to connect with their local government unit (Municipality). When asked whether the Municipality where they live has a webpage or not, 48% of the respondents, said they do not know. Nevertheless, relational statistics suggests that this question might be subject to social desirability bias. Survey respondents have affirmed the existence of websites in the cases where their municipality does not have a website in fact. They might have also confounded the existence of websites with other social media accounts; some municipalities do not have websites, but official Facebook accounts instead.²⁰

Fig. 25

Does the Municipality (where you live) have a webpage?



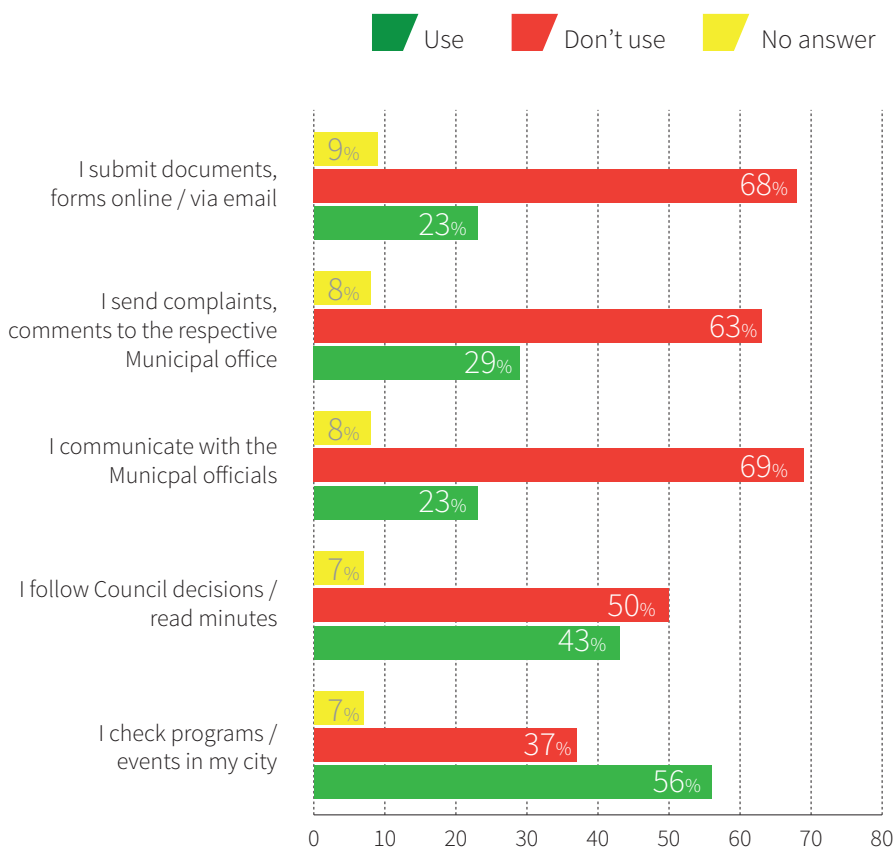
In the case when citizens are aware that their municipality has a webpage, the most common way the webpage is used is for “checking programs and events in the city”, as stated by 56% of those surveyed.²¹



However, when asked to rate the frequency of visiting the webpages, only 11% report to do so on a regular (very often) basis. The less used forms of communication include “communicating with the Municipal officials” and “submitting documents or forms online or via email” - as affirmed by 23% of those surveyed, respectively.

Fig. 26

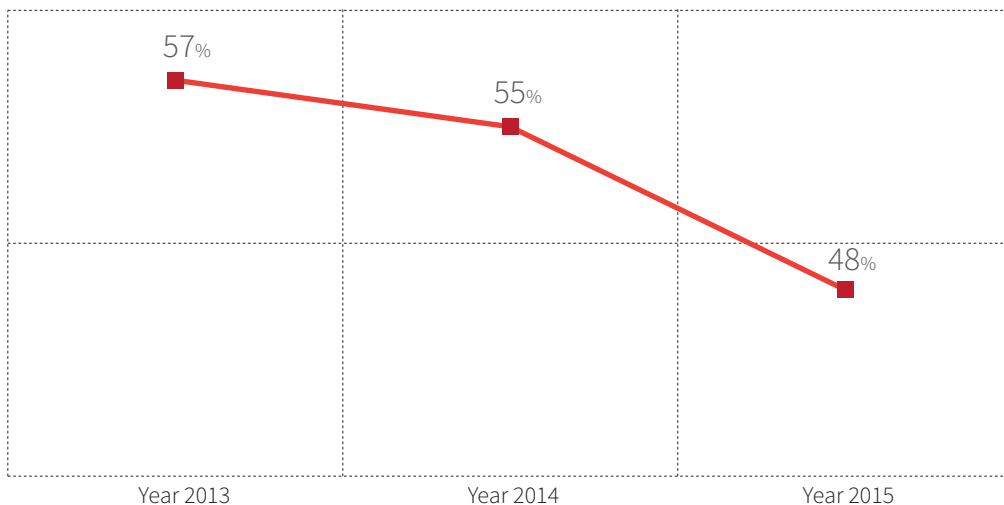
Forms of using ICT to communicate with local Municipality



Timeline comparison: Comparative analysis shows that, there is an increased awareness on the use of ICTs as a means to communicate with local government representatives, as indicated by the decrease in the proportion of individuals claiming that they do not know whether their municipality has a webpage. See Fig.27.

Fig. 27

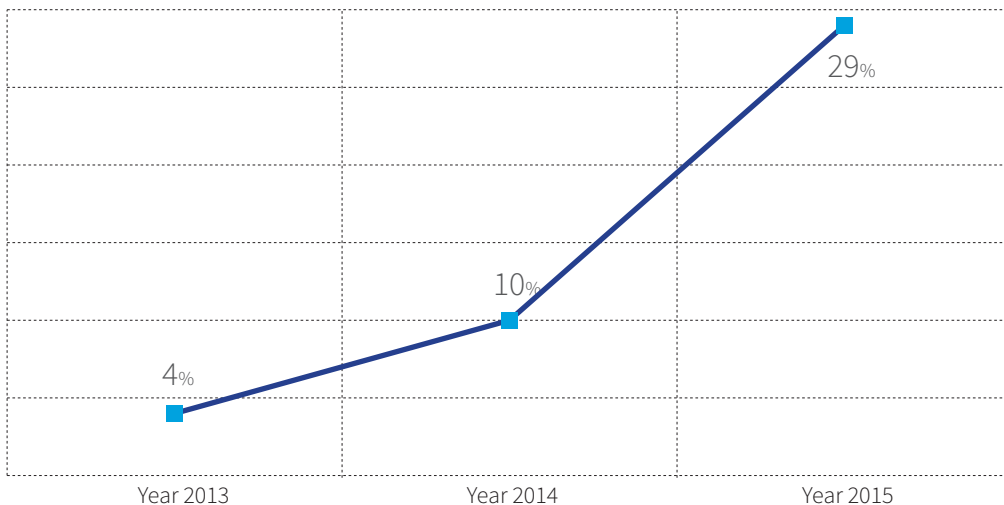
% of surveyed that do not know whether their Municipality has a webpage



In addition, also the proportion of surveyed citizens which claim that they use ICT (e-mails) to send complaints to responsible offices in their municipality, has increased considerably from 2013. This might be partially explained through the increased use of smartphones and the proliferation of social media as a means of communication. For more, see Fig.28

Fig. 28

% of surveyed that sent



Perception on Performance of Public Institutions

The public sector plays a major role in society. The public sector determines, usually through a political process, the outcomes it wants to achieve and the different types of intervention. These include enacting legislation or regulations; delivering goods and services; redistributing income through mechanisms such as taxation or social security payments; and the ownership of assets or entities, such as state owned enterprises. Governments also have a role in promoting fairness, peace and order, and sound international relations. Effective governance in the public sector encourages better decision making and the efficient use of resources and strengthens accountability for the stewardship of those resources. Effective governance is characterized by robust scrutiny, which provides important pressures for improving public sector performance and tackling corruption. Effective governance can improve management, leading to more effective implementation of the chosen interventions, better service delivery, and, ultimately, better outcomes. People's lives are thereby improved.²²

Citizens were asked to rate the performance of a number of Institutions in a range from 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent). For the analysis of this question, similar responses have been collated, namely the “excellent”/“very good job” category to represent “the good” parameter and “very poor”/“poor” category to represent “the poor” parameter.

2015 data show that the three top ranked institutions for their performance are Religious Institutions, Police and Armed Forces, which are rated positively by 29%, 23% and 22% of surveyed citizens, respectively. The performance of the central and local government is rated as good by the same proportion of surveyed Albanians (14% and 13%). A detailed breakdown of the results for the set of institutions can be found in Fig.29.

Not surprisingly, the institutions rated the lowest by the public opinion as regards their performance for 2015 are the Judiciary (with 67% of surveyed stating that the Judiciary is performing poorly) and Political Parties (with 63% of surveyed stating that Political Parties are performing poorly). More than 1 in 2 surveyed citizens (55%) perceive that the Parliament is performing poorly.

With regard to Government, a breakdown graphical view can be seen in Fig.30.

Fig. 29

Performance of core functions of the following institutions

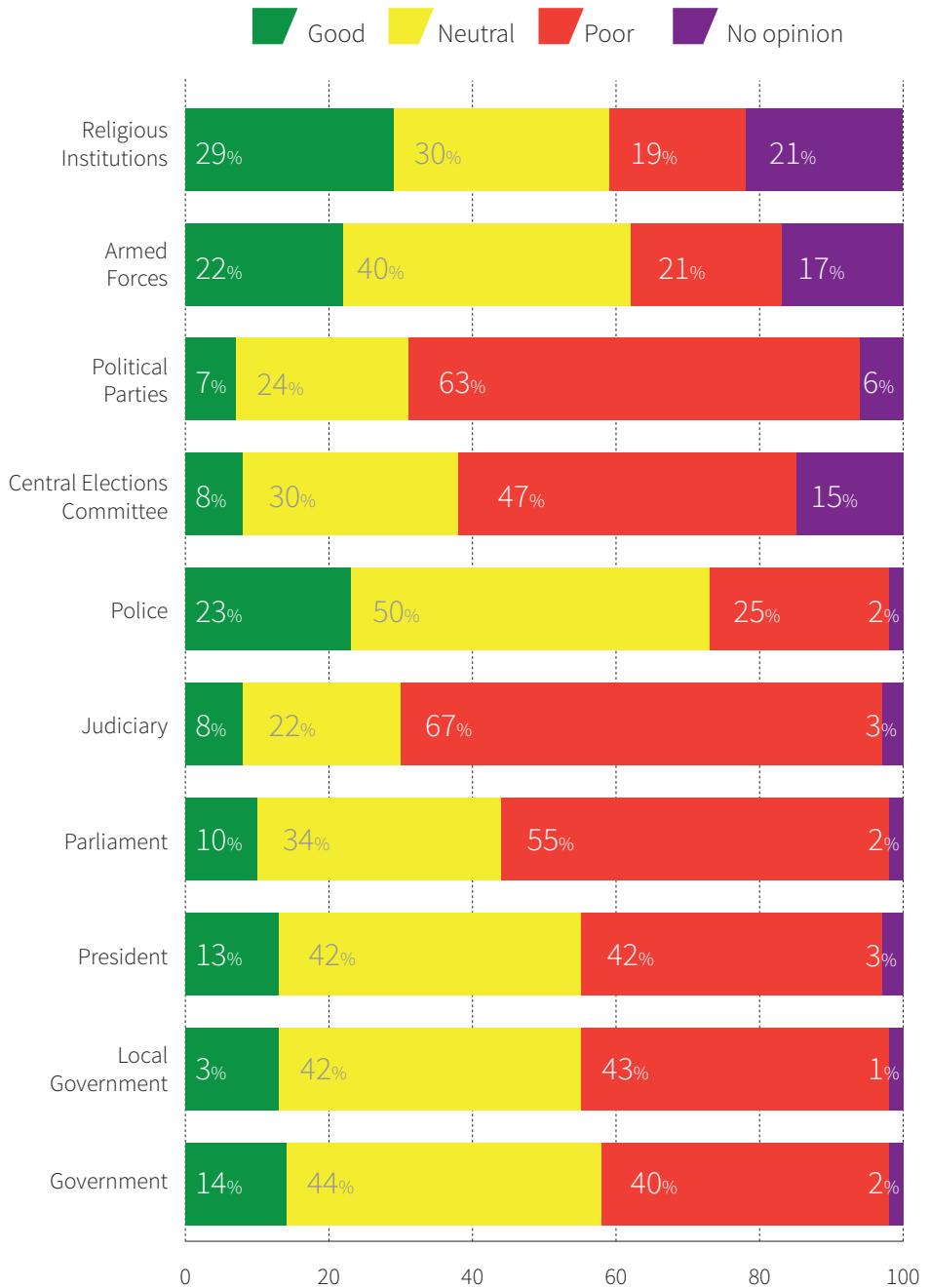
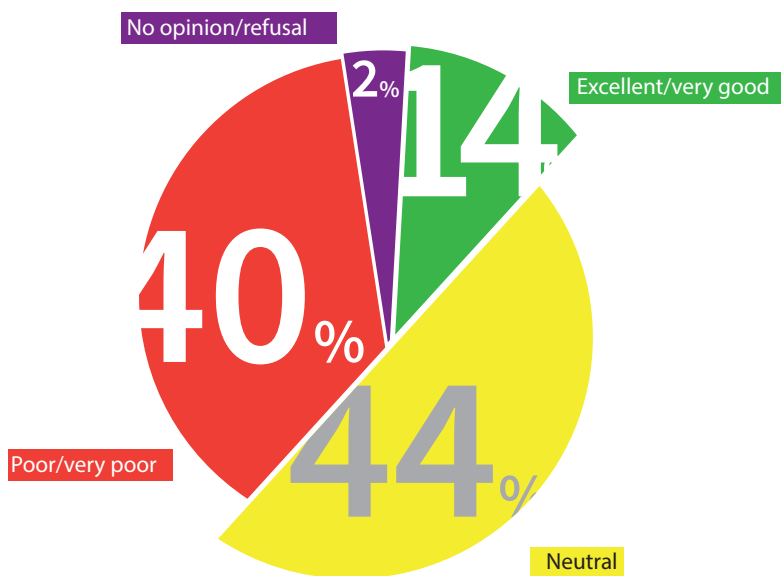




Fig. 30

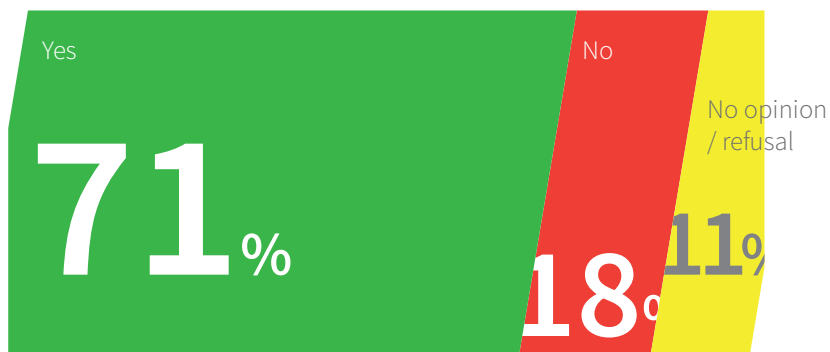
Performance of core functions: GOVERNMENT



Even though, there is a widespread perception that public institutions (the ones covered by this survey) are not performing very good in delivering their core functions, almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the surveyed citizens (or 71%) believe that public institutions can in fact improve their performance.

Fig. 31

Do you believe public institutions can improve the performance of their core functions



On the other hand, 18% perceive no faith in the ability of the above-mentioned institutions to improve the performance of their core functions. When asked to rate possible obstacles, approximately 8 in 10 citizens consider “non-transparent/irregular recruitment policies”, “lack of qualified staff” and “political interferences/high staff turnover” as the major obstacles to their improvement. More results are shown in table 3.

Table 3: Obstacles to improve the performance of public institutions

Important Obstacles to improve performance of public institutions	
Non-transparent/irregular recruitment policies	83%
Lack of will	70%
Lack of qualified staff	81%
Political interferences/high staff turnover	79%
Lack of infrastructure capacities	71%
Lack of vision and continuity	70%

Political influence on the work of public institutions

Intervention of politics in the daily work of these bodies was identified as one of the obstacles to improve the performance of public institutions (see Table above). This issue was explored further and citizens were asked whether, according to their opinion, political interests interfere in the work of public institutions. In the understanding of this Opinion Poll, Political influence is considered any regulatory actions taken by a government in order to affect or interfere with decisions made by individuals, groups, or organizations regarding social and economic matters.

Findings show that the Judiciary (59% of surveyed citizens) and the Central Electoral Committee (55% of surveyed citizens), but also at the considerable level the Police (48%) the institutions of health system (46%) and the institutions of education system (45%) are perceived as highly vulnerable to political influence.

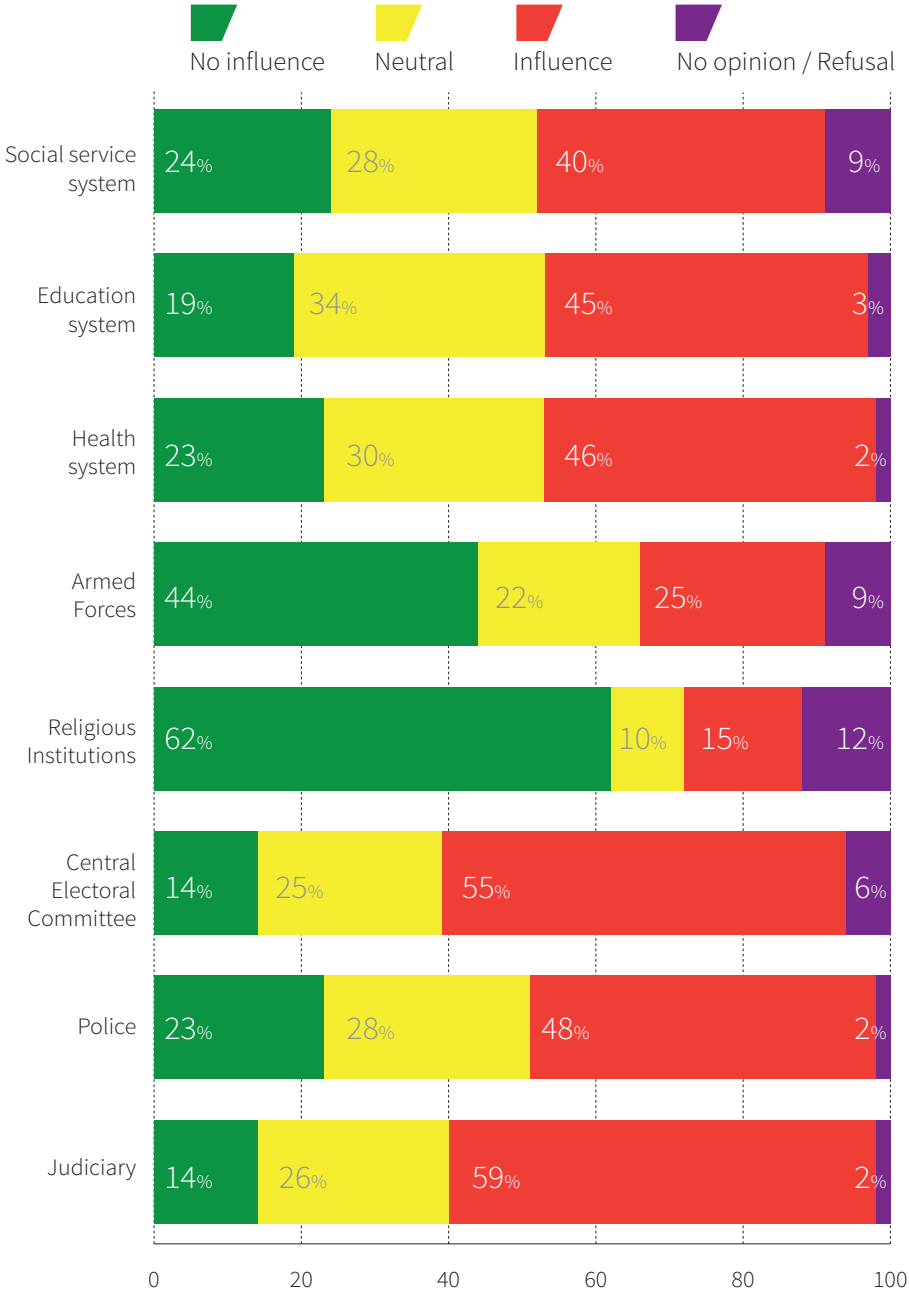
Religious institutions are perceived to be the most independent ones (among institutions subject to this survey). 62% of surveyed believe politics have no influence at all upon these institutions.



Fig.32 provides a detailed view of the answers.

Fig. 32

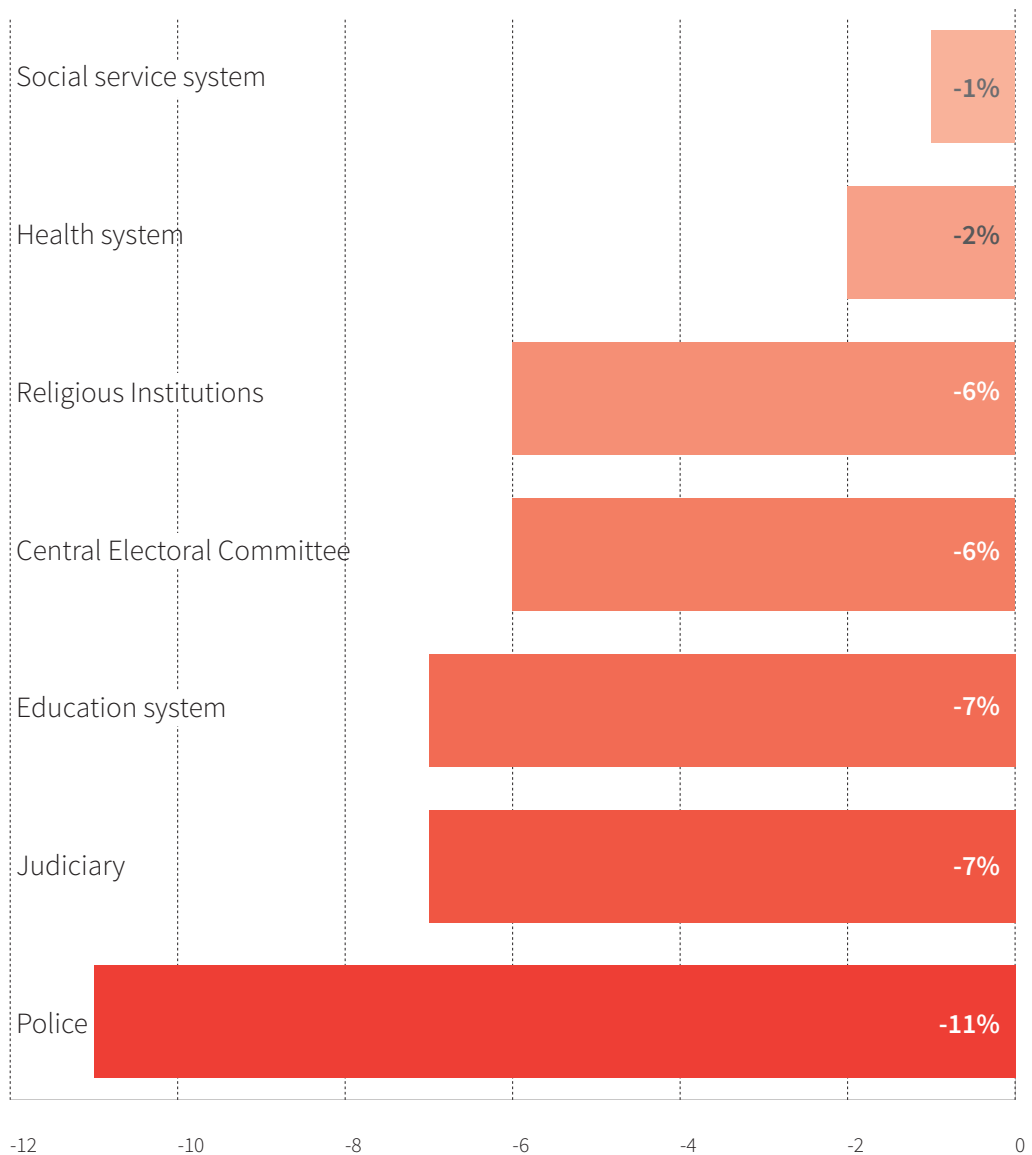
Political influence in the work of public institutions 2015



Timeline comparison: Comparative analysis indicates that there is an apparent decrease in the perceived influence of politics in the work of the selected public institutions. Compared to 2014, the institution that has seen the highest increase in independence from political influence is the Police (from 59% to 48%).²³ For more, see Fig. 33.

Fig. 33

Change in political influence (p.p.)
2014-2015





Perceptions on gender considerations with regard to public policies

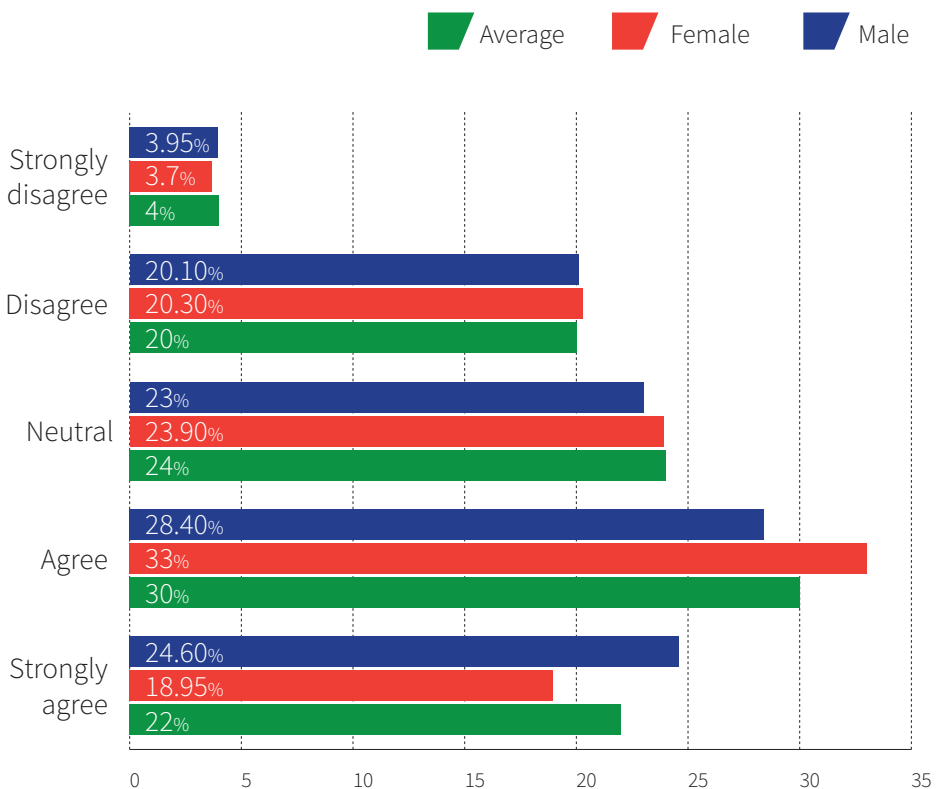
Citizens were asked to give their opinion on three main statements related to gender, focusing on (1) access to public services, (2) gender discrimination, and (3) engendering public policies. When analyzing these gender-related findings, what is striking is that there are no noteworthy differences in perceptions between men and women (as regards these three statements).

Delving into more details, results show that 52% of the respondents (collated answers of “strongly agree” and “agree”) believe that there is no visible discrimination between women and men in accessing public services. 20% of the respondents disagree with this statement.

Statement 1: Women and men have same access to public services

Fig. 34

Women and men have same access to public services



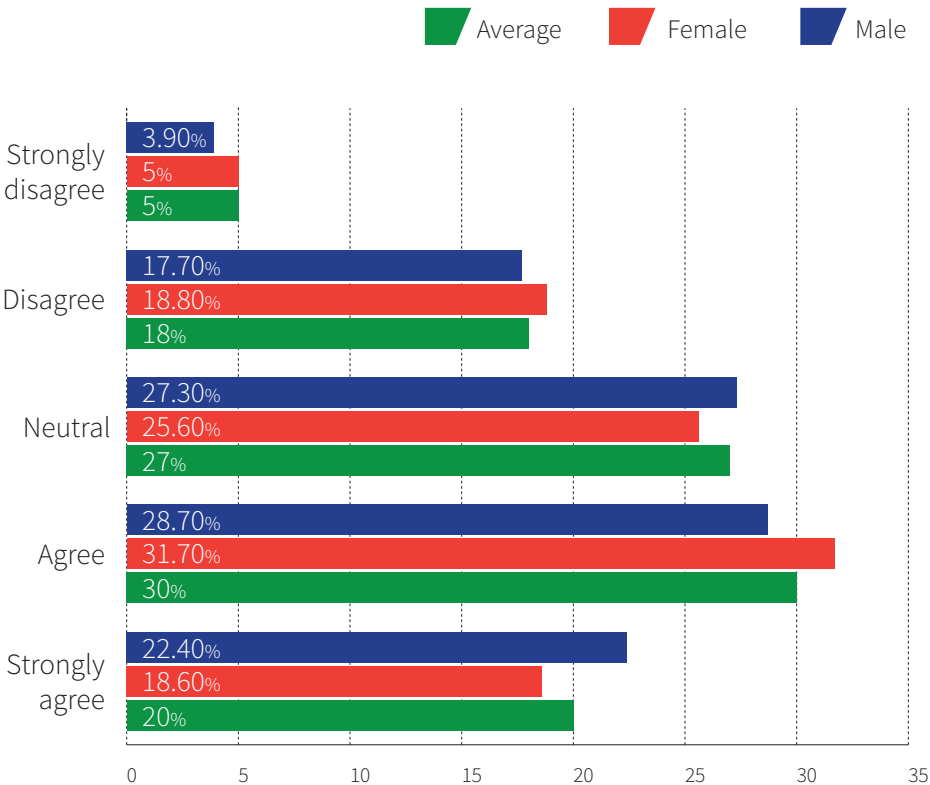
When looking at differences between the answers given by men and women, what can be noticed is that more women tend to say “agree” and more men tend to say “strongly agree” with this statement. However, what seems also worrying is that in average 24% of those surveyed are neutral and 24% disagree, which might indicate a strong perception of gender-biased access to services.

Statement 2: Public servants serve with the same devotion and ethics to women and men

Results show that 50% of the respondents believe this statement stands true. When disaggregating data by gender, results show that this statement is supported more or less equally by both men (51.1%) and women (50.3%).

Fig. 35

Public servants serve with the same devotion and ethics to women and men



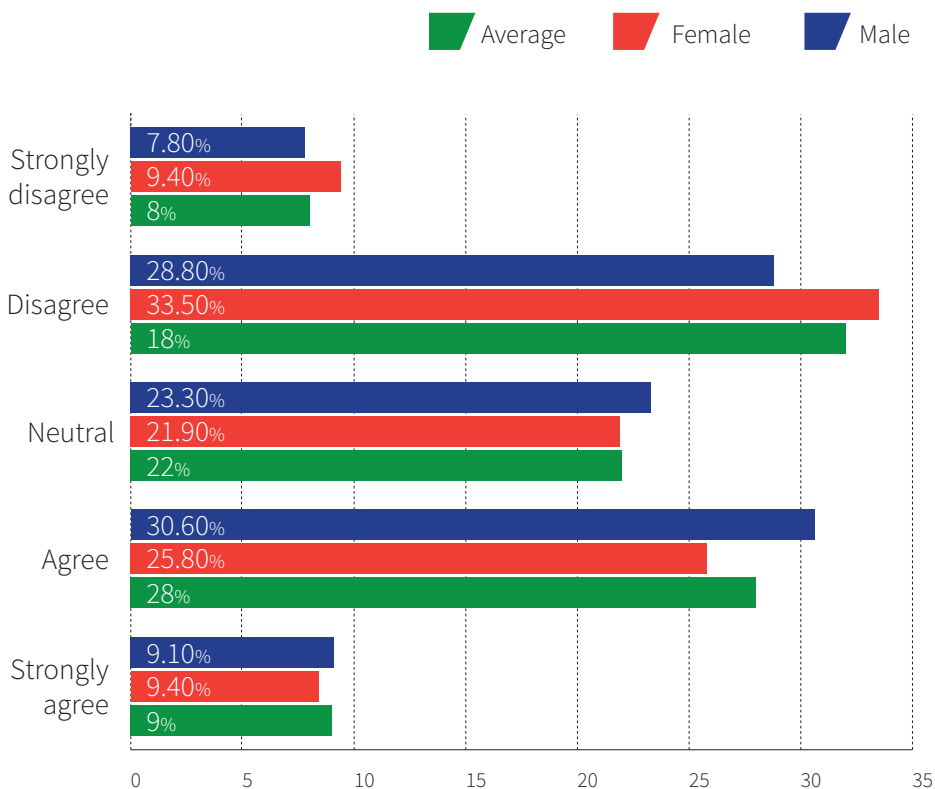


Statement 3: Engendering public policies

Only 37% of the population believes that gender differences and needs are taken into consideration by public institutions when policies are drafted and programs designed.

Fig. 36

Public institutions consider gender differences / needs when drafting policies



What is important to highlight is that a considerable portion of the population (22%) does not have an opinion or stand with regard to gender sensitivity considerations in public policy development. Furthermore, 40% believe such considerations are not made at all, painting a doomed and ill-disposed environment for a gender-balanced development.

Satisfaction with Public Service Delivery

Whether a better public service delivery will actually contribute to restoring trust in government remains to be a matter of controversy.²⁴ However, there is ample empirical evidence that satisfaction and trust are positively correlated. Many governments have therefore adopted programs in order to restore and increase trust in their institutions. The underlying idea is simply that increased quality of public service delivery will increase satisfaction with the public sector which in turn ultimately will lead to increased trust in government (Bouckaert & Van de Walle 2003)²⁵.

Based on this assumption, the last question of the Opinion Poll aimed to measure the level of public satisfaction towards public services delivered by a number of government-related institutions. The selected public services are the ones citizens receive on a daily basis (i.e. public transport) or quite often (i.e. health services; communal services etc.) offered by both central and local government.

A detailed breakdown of the results can be found in Fig.37.

In a nutshell, findings suggest that the proportion of surveyed citizens who are unsatisfied with the quality of public service delivery is higher than the proportion of those satisfied.

Findings show that citizens are mostly satisfied with emergency services (firefighters, police emergency etc) and communal services (offered at local level), 38% and 34% of surveyed, respectively.

On the other side, more than half of the citizens are not satisfied with employment services (59%), with judiciary services (56%) and with health services (53%).

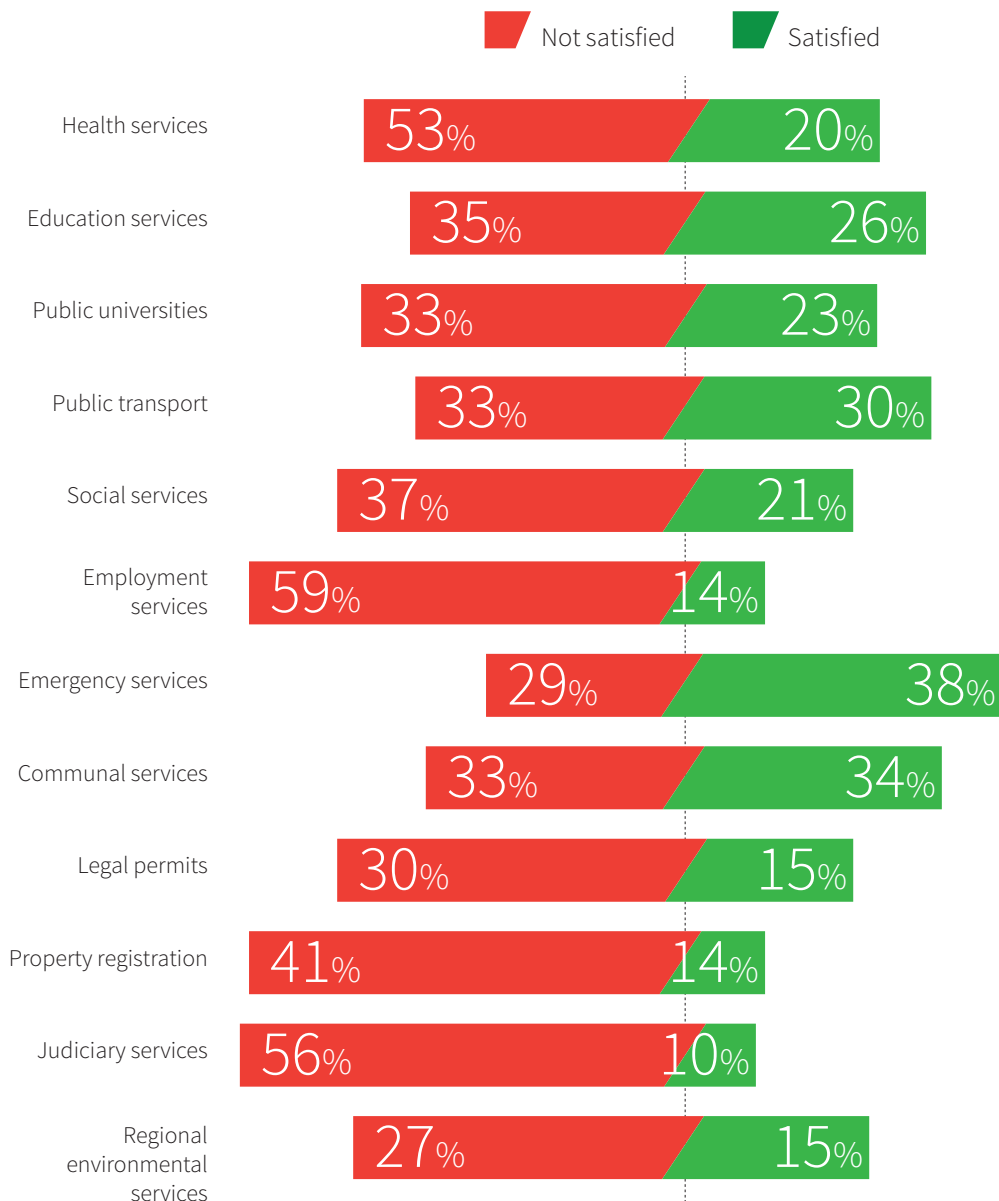
Detailed analysis on the relationship between gender and satisfaction with public services shows that generally (with regard to services subject to this survey) there are no noteworthy differences between males and females and their level of satisfaction.

Gender and satisfaction with public services: Nonetheless, whilst having a closer look, data shows that male respondents tend to be more dissatisfied with social services than female respondents. Specifically, 41% of males express that they are dissatisfied with social service delivery compared to 33% of females in the survey²⁶. In addition, males are also less likely to be satisfied with judiciary services than females. 60%²⁷ of males are dissatisfied with judiciary service delivery compared to 49% of females.

Age and satisfaction with public services: As regards age, relational analysis does not show variance in dissatisfaction in health system delivery with age. But, young demographics remain less positive in views about the performance of public universities than older individuals in survey: 38%²⁸ of individuals aged 18-35 are dissatisfied with public universities,



Fig. 37
Satisfaction with public service delivery 2015



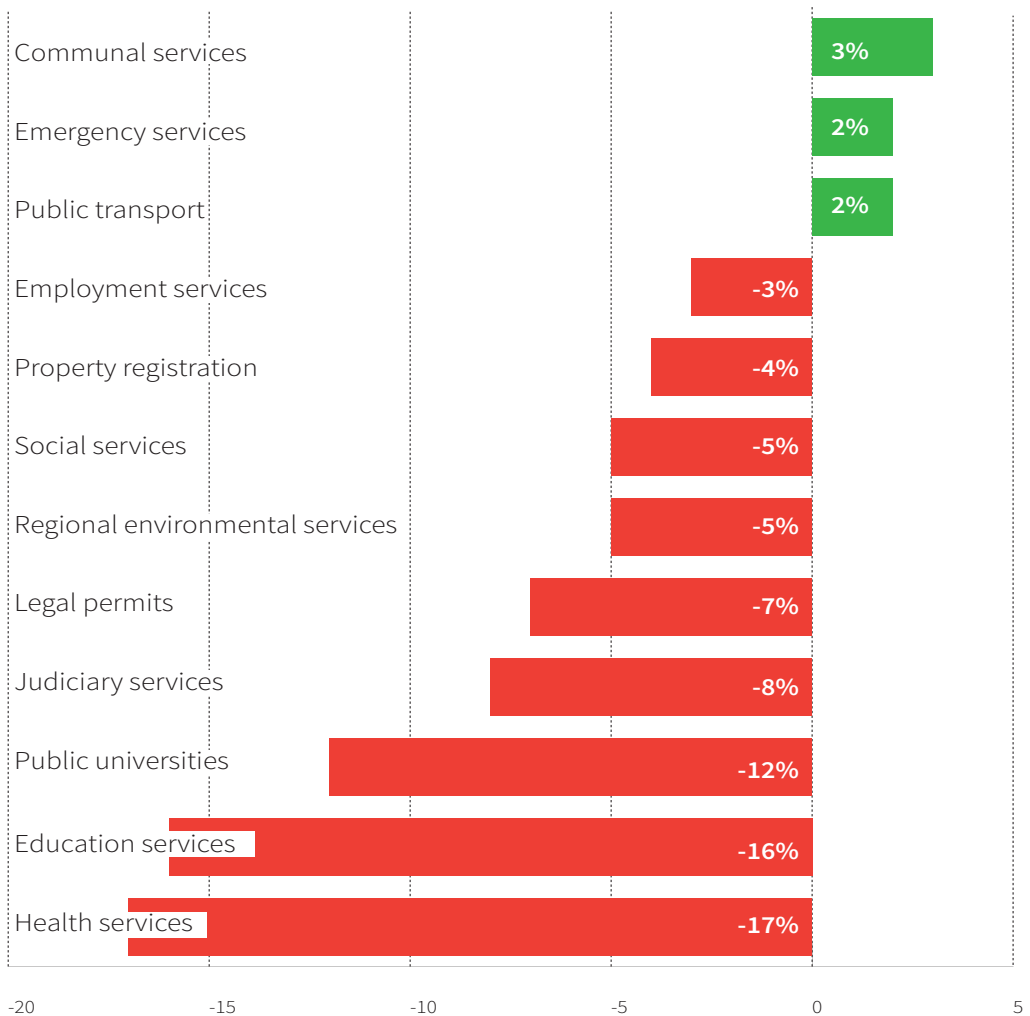
Note: "No opinion" responses are not shown.

compared with 33% of individuals aged 36-55 and 23% of individuals in the 55 and over age-group.

Timeline comparison: The comparative analysis shows that the three institutions facing a positive change in satisfaction levels are Communal services (from 31% - 34%), Emergency services (from 36%-38%) and Public transport (from 28%-30%). On the other hand, Health services (from 37% - 20%) and Educations services (from 42% - 26%) are the two institutions that have experienced the steepest decline in satisfaction levels for 2015.²⁹

Fig. 38

Change in public service satisfaction(p.p.)
2014-2015

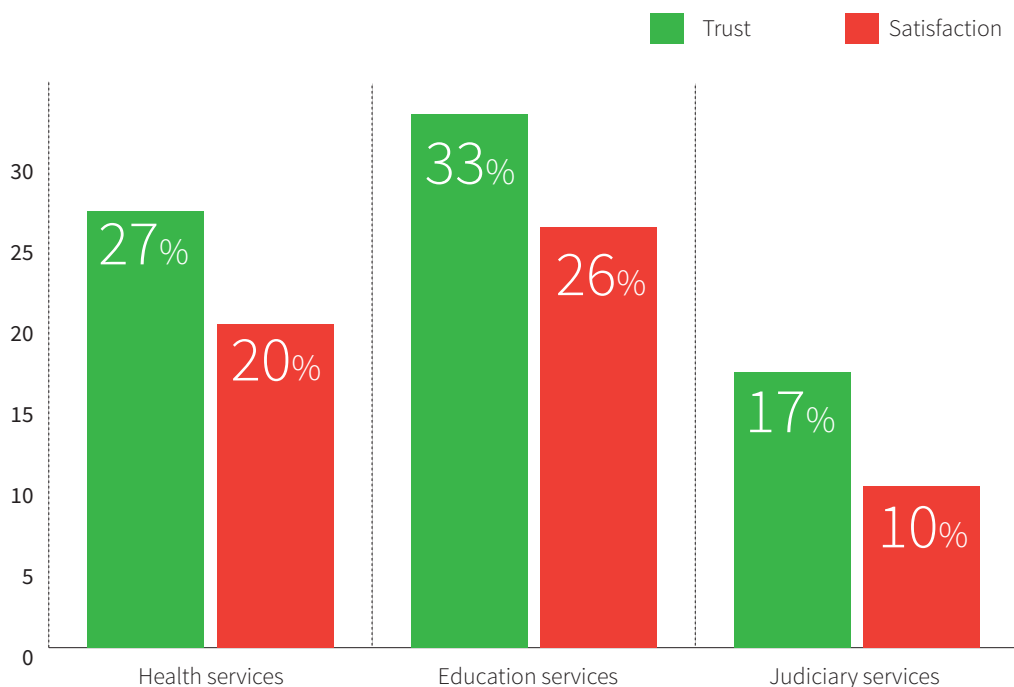




When analyzing the relationship between level of satisfaction and trust for three institutions, namely health services, education services and judiciary services, data shows that satisfaction and trust go hand in hand. Quite interesting findings that might call for further analysis, is the result that in the three cases, citizens report to be less satisfied, however, hold greater trust in the respective institution.

Fig. 39

Correlation between trust and satisfaction



Citizens were asked whether they are aware of possible complaint systems established by and in place at local government units and whether they trust these systems.

41% of the surveyed Albanians claimed that the Municipality where they reside has a complaint mechanism (electronic or any other mechanism) in place, whilst 33% of those surveyed are not aware of whether such systems exist.

Moreover, 1 in 4 surveyed citizens (25%) trust that the Municipality where they reside listens and properly addresses the complaints coming from citizens, as compared with 38% who do not believe so.

Fig. 40

Does the municipality where you reside have a system to collect and address complaints?

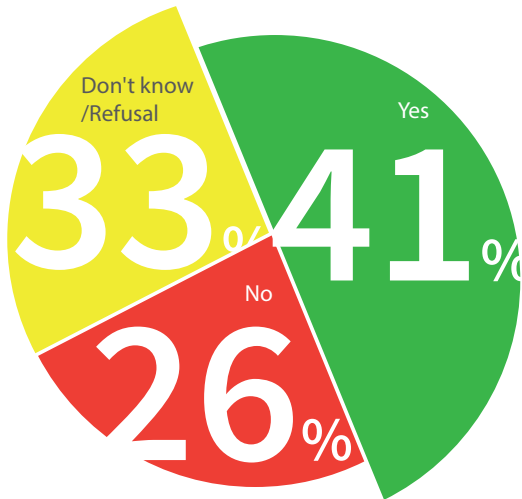
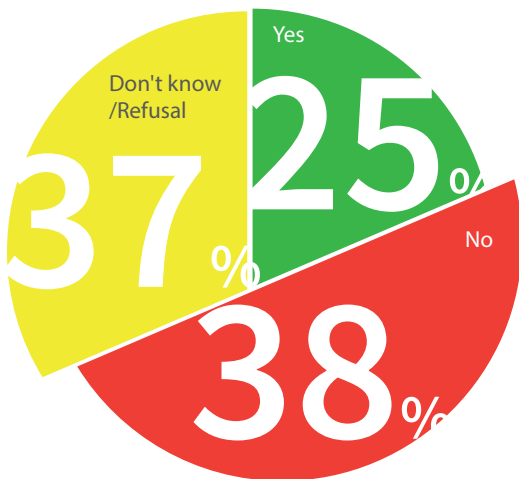


Fig. 41

Do you believe the Municipality "listens" and properly addresses the citizens' complaints?





endnotes

-
1. Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia
 2. Albania: IDM Institute for Democracy and Mediation; Bosnia-Herzegovina: ANALITIKA Center for Social Research, Kosovo: Riinvest Institute, Macedonia: CRPM Center for Research and Policy Making; Montenegro: CEDEM Center for Democracy and Human Rights; CEMI The Monitoring Center; and Serbia: CEAS Center for Euro-Atlantic Studies
 3. Easton D (1965) A Systems Analysis of Political Life, John Wiley, New York.
 4. OECD (2013), Government at a glance 2013, OECD publishing, www.oecd.org
 5. Respondents were asked to rate institutional trust in a range from “I have great trust” to “I have no trust” (1-4).
 6. Collating the responses of “I have great trust” with those of “Basically I trust”.
 7. Collating the responses of “Do not agree” with those of “Do not agree at all”.
 8. Collating the responses of “Fully agree” with those of “More or less agree”.
 9. For the category “Agree”, the percentages of “Fully agree” with “Somewhat agree” and “Agree” have been aggregated. For the category “Disagree”, the percentages of “Disagree” and “Fully disagree” have been aggregated. “No opinion” responses are not shown.
 10. Explanation as above.
 11. Explanation as above.
 12. It is worth to note the close understanding and the level of citizen understanding between the two widely used terms nowadays: “whistleblowing” and “leaking”. Whilst the whistleblowing / leaking distinction is quite blurred recently, the original intent clearly distinguishes these two processes. Whistleblowing involves reporting of illegal activities or malfeasance to the media or to the agency responsible for oversight and enforcing the relevant laws. Whistleblowers are supposed to be protected from employer retaliation (as in getting fired). Law does not protect information leaking on the other hand, since it involves illegally revealing confidential company or government secrets or information to some outside person or party. Albania has prepared a draft law on whistleblowers (submitted to the Parliament on December 23rd 2015). Upon law adoption, extensive information campaigns with the general public are necessary.
 13. <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/>
 14. OECD, 2009, Focus on Citizens: Public Engagement for Better Policy and Services, www.oecd.org
 15. Brodie, E; Hughes, T; Jochum, V; Miller, S; Ockenden, N; & Warburton, D, 2011, Pathways through Participation: What creates and sustains active citizenship?
 16. World Bank, 2012, Public office private interests: Accountability through Income and Asset Disclosure, Washington DC
 17. Ibid, 6
 18. For comparison purposes with 2014, the category “Accountable”, the percentages of “Very much” with “Sufficiently” have been aggregated.
 19. Open Government Partnership, <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/>
 20. Out of 61 municipalities, 15 municipalities have active websites.
 21. For the category “Use”, the percentages of “Very often” with “Often” and “Sometimes” have been aggregated.
 22. OECD (2013), Government at a glance 2013, OECD publishing, www.oecd.org



23. For comparison purposes with 2014, the category “Influence”, the percentages of “Very much influence” with “Sufficiently influence” have been aggregated.
24. Jarl K Kampen, J. K., Van de Walle, S., & Bouckaert, G. (2006). ‘Assessing the relation between satisfaction with public service delivery and trust in government: The impact of the predisposition of citizens toward government on evaluations of its performance’. In: *Public Performance and Management Review*, 29 (4): 387-404.
25. Van de Walle, Steven and Bouckaert, Geert, *Public Service Performance and Trust in Government: The Problem of Causality* (September 13, 2003). Van de Walle, S. & Geert Bouckaert, *Public Service Performance and Trust in Government: The Problem of Causality*, in: *International Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. 29 (8 & 9): 891-913. Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2325327>
26. Collating the responses of very unsatisfied with unsatisfied.
27. Idem as above.
28. Idem as above.
29. For comparison purposes with 2014, the category “Satisfied”, the percentages of “Very satisfied” with “Satisfied” have been aggregated.

POLLING QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION I

Town / Village

Q1: Sex/Gender:

1. Male
2. Female

Q2: Age:

1. 18 – 25 years
2. 26 – 35 years
3. 36 – 45 years
4. 46 – 55 years
5. 56 – 65 years
6. Over 66 years
99. REFUSE

Q3: Educational level?

1. No education
2. Primary school
3. Compulsory level (8/9th grade)
4. High school
5. University degree or higher
99. REFUSE

Q4: What is your employment status?

1. Employment
2. Non-employed – looking for job
3. Non-employed – not looking for job
4. Student
5. Retired
6. Other _____
99. REFUSE

Q5: Regular individual monthly income?

1. No income
2. Up to 20.000 Lek / month
3. From 20 001 – 50 000 Lek / month
4. From 50 001 – 70 000 Lek / month
5. Over 70 001 Lek / month
99. REFUSE

SECTION II

Q1: TRUST

Please, state your confidence and trust in the following institutions:

No	Institutions	I have great trust	Basically I trust	Basically I do not trust	I have no trust	I do not have an opinion / REFUSE
1	Government	1	2	3	4	99
2	President	1	2	3	4	99
3	Parliament	1	2	3	4	99
4	Judiciary	1	2	3	4	99
5	Police	1	2	3	4	99
6	Central Elections Committee	1	2	3	4	99
7	Religious Institutions	1	2	3	4	99
8	Army	1	2	3	4	99
9	Political Parties	1	2	3	4	99
10	Health system institutions	1	2	3	4	99
11	Educational system institutions	1	2	3	4	99
12	European Union	1	2	3	4	99
13	NATO	1	2	3	4	99
14	Civil Society Organizations	1	2	3	4	99
15	Media	1	2	3	4	99

Q2: TRANSPARENCY

No	To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	1= Fully agree	2= Generally agree	3 = Generally do not agree	4= Do not agree at all	99=Do not know, REFUSE
1	Too much publicity on government actions makes our country vulnerable.	1	2	3	4	99
2	MPs and local councillors have the right to keep information on their personal assets and income confidential.	1	2	3	4	99
3	All financial, performance and technical information on contracts funded by the government should be made public.	1	2	3	4	99
4	For fair recruitment policy in the public sector, information on ethnicity and religion of civil servants should be collected.	1	2	3	4	99
5	A civil servant who leaks classified information on government actions should be punished.	1	2	3	4	99
6	Public institutions are transparent and accountable with regard to their daily work	1	2	3	4	99

Q3: Have you been a witness of a corruption case taking place in public institutions during the last year?

1. Yes
2. No
3. I don't know / REFUSE

Q4: According to your opinion, which are the most common forms of corruption taking place in public institutions? (you can select more than one answer)

1. Patronage
2. Nepotism
3. Conflict of interest
4. Embezzlement
5. Misconduct in procurement

6. Blackmailing
7. Exchange of personal favours
8. Other: Please specify
- a. _____

Q5: CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

No **To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**

1= Fully agree
 2= Generally agree
 3 = Generally do not agree
 4= Do not agree at all
 99=Do not know, REFUSE

1	An ordinary citizen does not have sufficient expertise to decide whether a government decision was good or bad.	1	2	3	4	99
2	An MP takes over the responsibility of the citizens to shape public affairs	1	2	3	4	99
3	Lobbying with politicians and decision makers is bad for the society.	1	2	3	4	99
4	Local public hearings are formal events, they have limited influence on municipal decisions	1	2	3	4	99
5	Blogs and comments on the internet do not represent the public opinion properly.	1	2	3	4	99

Q6: Have you ever attended a demonstration / rally or ever signed a petition?

1. Yes
2. No
3. REFUSE

Q7: ACCOUNTABILITY

No	According to your opinion, to what extent the following organisations can hold the government into account?	1= Influences very much	2= Influences	3=No Influence	4=No Influence at all	99=Do not know, REFUSE
1	Parliament	1	2	3	4	99
2	Individual MPs	1	2	3	4	99
3	Political parties (opposition)	1	2	3	4	99
4	State Audit Office	1	2	3	4	99
5	Ombudsman	1	2	3	4	99
6	Media	1	2	3	4	99
7	Unions	1	2	3	4	99
8	Civil Society Organizations	1	2	3	4	99
9	Religious institutions	1	2	3	4	99
10	International Organizations	1	2	3	4	99
11	Business	1	2	3	4	99

Q8: USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Do you believe that the use of information and communication technology can improve governance?

1. Yes
2. No
3. I don't know / REFUSE

Q.9.a. Does your Municipality have a website?

1. Yes
2. No
3. I don't know

Continue to section III

Continue to section III

No	Q.9.b. If your Municipality has a webpage, in what way and how often do you use it?	1= Very often	2= Often	3=Sometimes	4=Never	99=Do not know, REFUSE
1	I check programs, events in my city/town	1	2	3	4	99
2	I follow council decisions, reading minutes of meetings	1	2	3	4	99
3	I communicate with my councillor	1	2	3	4	99
4	I send complaints, comments to a municipal department/staff	1	2	3	4	99
5	I submit documents, forms to the local administration	1	2	3	4	99

SECTION III

Q1. How would you rate in a scale from 1 (Excellent) to 5 (Very Poor) the performance of core functions of the following institutions?

No	Institutions	Excellent	Very Good	Neutral	Poor	Very Poor	I have no opinion / REFUSE
1	Central Government	1	2	3	4	5	99
2	Local governments	1	2	3	4	5	99
3	President	1	2	3	4	5	99
4	Parliament	1	2	3	4	5	99
5	Judiciary	1	2	3	4	5	99
6	Police	1	2	3	4	5	99
7	Central Election Committee	1	2	3	4	5	99
8	Religious Institutions	1	2	3	4	5	99
9	Army	1	2	3	4	5	99
10	Political Parties	1	2	3	4	5	99

Q 2. How much does politics intervene in the agenda of the following institutions?

No	Institutions	Not at all	No Influence	Neutral	Influence	Very much	I have no opinion / REFUSE
1	Judiciary	1	2	3	4	5	99
2	Police	1	2	3	4	5	99
3	Central Election Committee	1	2	3	4	5	99
4	Religious Institutions	1	2	3	4	5	99
5	Army	1	2	3	4	5	99
6	Health system institutions	1	2	3	4	5	99
7	Education system institutions	1	2	3	4	5	99
8	Institutions delivering social services	1	2	3	4	5	99

Q3. Do you agree with the following statements?

No	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I have no opinion / REFUSE
1	In Albania, women and men have same access to the public services.	1	2	3	4	5	99
2	In Albania, public servants serve with the same devotion and ethics to women and men.	1	2	3	4	5	99
3	Public institutions are doing their best in combating gender inequalities and exclusion of women.	1	2	3	4	5	99

No	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I have no opinion / REFUSE
4	There is transparency and accountability in the work of public institutions.	1	2	3	4	5	99
5	Parliament is open to consult with civil society and interest groups in standing committee's hearings.	1	2	3	4	5	99
6	Suggestions and inputs by civil society and other interest groups on draft legal and policy documents is considered and reflected by parliamentary standing committees.	1	2	3	4	5	99

Q4. Do you believe public institutions in Albania can perform better?

1. Yes
2. No
3. I don't know / REFUSE

Q5. If you answered "NO" to question 4, please rate the following reasons according to their importance:

No	Reason	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not Important	Not at all Important	I have no opinion / REFUSE
1	There is no will	1	2	3	4	5	99
2	Lack of capacities	1	2	3	4	5	99
3	Staff is poorly qualified	1	2	3	4	5	99
4	Interference of politics / high turnover rates of staff	1	2	3	4	5	99
5	Non-transparent/ unfair hiring and promotion policies and practices	1	2	3	4	5	99
6	Lack of vision and consistency	1	2	3	4	5	99

Q6. How satisfied are you with the current quality and professionalism of public services?

No	Institutions	Totally dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	I have no opinion / REFUSE
1	Healthcare system services	1	2	3	4	5	99
2	Education system services (including pre-school)	1	2	3	4	5	99
3	Public universities	1	2	3	4	5	99
4	Public transport	1	2	3	4	5	99
5	Social welfare services	1	2	3	4	5	99
6	Employment services	1	2	3	4	5	99

No	Institutions	Totally dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	I have no opinion / REFUSE
	Emergency services (police, fire department, first aid service)						
	Municipal services (cleaning, construction permits etc.)						
	Business licensing & registration						
	Property registration						
	Courts & other judiciary institutions' services?						
	Regional Environmental Directorate						

Q7: Are you aware if your Municipality has in place a system to receive complaints from citizens with regard to their dissatisfaction with municipal service delivery?

1. Yes (continue to question 7/a)
2. No
3. I don't know / REFUSE

Q 7/a : Do you believe the Municipality “listens to” and properly addresses the complaints coming from citizens?

1. Yes
2. No
3. I don't know / REFUSE

Q 8: Have you been a witness of a corruption case taking place in your Municipality during the last year?

1. Yes
2. No
3. I don't know / REFUSE

Q. 9: According to your opinion, which are the most common forms of corruption taking place in your Municipality (you may select more than one answer)

1. Patronage
2. Nepotism
3. Conflict of interest
4. Embezzlement
5. Misconduct in procurement
6. Blackmailing
7. Exchange of personal favours
8. Other: Please specify
- a. _____

SECTION IV

Q1 : Have you ever filed a formal request for public information or data?

1. Yes
2. No

Q2: Do you agree with the following statements?

No	Statement	Fully agree	Somehow agree	Neutral	Do not agree	Do not agree at all	I have no opinion / REFUSE
1	Open data strengthens the relationship between government and citizens (groups of citizens)	1	2	3	4	5	99
2	Open Data increase the trust of citizens towards the government	1	2	3	4	5	99
3	Open Data promote economic development	1	2	3	4	5	99
4	Open Data improve quality of citizens' life	1	2	3	4	5	99

THANK YOU!

