



opinion poll  
2016  
**TRUST IN GOVERNANCE**



Institute for Democracy and Mediation  
Instituti për Demokraci dhe Ndërmjetësim



*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*



Opinion poll

# TRUST *in* GOVERNANCE 2016



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*Opinions and views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) or of the United Nations (UN).*

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This survey report presents the findings of the public Opinion Poll carried out during 12-24 December 2016 across 61 municipalities of Albania. The objective of the Opinion Poll is to explore the level of trust towards public institutions as well as the attitudes towards the performance of public institutions and service delivery in the country. Using a quota sampling approach, 1647 surveyed citizens were asked on their perceived levels of trust, transparency, accountability, participating in decision-making processes and use of technology. A summary of the main results organized by the thematic sections follows:

## TRUST PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS:

- Supranational institutions/organizations like **EU** (80%), **NATO** (79%) and **UN** (79%) continue to rank as the most trusted institutions in Albania, enjoying the trust of roughly 4 in 5 surveyed Albanians. These institutions also enjoy the greatest proportion of citizens expressing great trust (in a range of 34-36%).
- **Religious Institutions** enjoy the highest trust rating among domestic public institutions under the scale category “I have great trust”. 22% of surveyed citizens’ state that they have great trust at Religious Institutions. However, in an aggregate level (“I have great trust” or “Basically I trust”), surveyed citizens are more trusting of the **Police** (61%), **Education system** (59%), **Religious Institutions** (58%), **Media** (58%) and **Armed Forces** (55%).
- 44% of surveyed Albanians trust the **Central Government**, in comparison to 49% that trust their **Local Government**.
- The **Judiciary system** (74%) is the least trusted institution in Albania, followed with a similar margin by **Political Parties** (72%). The **Parliament** ranks as the third least trusted institution, distrusted by 71% of the surveyed public.
- In general, **older demographics** of the Albanian society, **employed** individuals (especially, workers in the public sector), and citizens residing in **urban areas**, on average, tend to be more trustful.
- Even though 71% of surveyed citizens believe that if implemented accordingly, the Justice Reform will have a positive impact, just 46% of citizens believe that the Justice Reform will be implemented accordingly in comparison to 42% who do not hold the same opinion.

- 35% of surveyed citizens do not think that the information provided by media is accurate and truthful. 74% of surveyed citizens assess television as their most used medium.

### **TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY:**

- The view that the central government is **transparent** is held by 39% of surveyed citizens as compared to 61% of them who do not agree with this statement. At the level of the local government, 43% of respondents believe that their Municipality is transparent.
- 36% of surveyed citizens perceive the government to be **accountable** for its actions, against 64% of respondents who disagree. At the level of local government, 33% of respondents believe their Municipality is accountable.
- 63% of surveyed citizens believe that the State Audit Office holds the central government into account.

### **CORRUPTION IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS:**

- **The Judiciary system** is ranked by the surveyed citizens (34%) as the most corrupted institution for 2016. The central **government** ranks second (28%) followed by the **Parliament** (15%).
- For 2016, 26% of surveyed citizens declared to have **paid a bribe** to public officials at central level as compared to 29% of citizens at the local government. Asked on the reasons, 58% of them declared to have been explicitly **asked by government authorities**, 20% gave the bribe as a **gratitude** for the received service, whilst 22% as an **incentive** in order to receive **better services** in the future.

### **CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT:**

- 79% of surveyed citizens perceive not having sufficient opportunities to participate in decision-making/consultation processes with institutions at central level, as compared to 67% at the local level.
- 7% of surveyed citizens and the central level and 19% at the local level have been **invited** to participate in **consultation processes** during 2016.
- For 2016, 22% have attended a demonstration/rally or signed a petition.
- 77% of the respondents declare willingness to engage in **voluntary work** for the benefit of the community.

## **SATISFACTION WITH PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY and ICT:**

- Citizens are mostly **satisfied** with the **supply of drinking water** (72%), **police services** (66%) and **cleaning services** (offered at local level) (61%).
- On the other side of the spectrum, more than half of the citizens are **not satisfied** with **employment services** (78%), with **judiciary services** (66%) and with **social welfare services** (60%).
- **Urban-rural** classification appears to be a major determining factor behind the satisfaction level, with citizens residing in rural areas more likely to report lower levels of satisfaction with public service delivery as compared to those residing in urban areas.
- Only 28% of surveyed citizens trust that the institutions who offer public services listen and properly **address the complaints coming from citizens**, as compared with the majority (or 46%) who do not believe so.
- 42% of surveyed citizens are aware of the existence of a website of their respective municipalities. However, out of them, the majority or 59% do not use the webpage and only 34% of them are informed about **electronic services** provided by their municipalities.

## **GENDER AND SOCIAL INCLUSION:**

- 48% of surveyed Albanians believe that there is equality between men and women in the Albanian society. This belief is shared by only 37% of the female population, as compared to 55% of the male population.
- 59% of surveyed citizens hold that men and women have the same access to public services. This belief is shared by only 55% of women, as compared to 63% of men.
- 6% of the sample reports to have been **treated differently** by an institution/or public official during 2016 **on the basis of their gender**.
- As regards women in local decision-making, only 24% of the surveyed citizens claim to know that there are more women in their respective Municipal Councils, as compared to the majority of them (or 57%) who are not aware of the **gender composition** of their Municipal Councils.





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# INTRODUCTION

Trust in government is important for the success of a wide range of public policies that depend on behavioral responses from the public. Levels of trust affect the willingness of citizens and business to respond to public policies and contribute to a sustainable economic recovery. It is also noted that government capacity and quality of government have strong effects on almost all standards of well-being as well as social trust and political legitimacy. Evidence also suggests that satisfaction with public service delivery is positively correlated to citizen trust in government and governance. Further, addressing inequalities and adopting adequate policies for inclusive growth contribute to citizens' trust to institutions. The Opinion Poll "Trust in Governance" is an instrument to monitor standards in open government, citizen engagement and rule of law in Albania, on yearly basis.

This Survey Report presents the findings of the public Opinion Poll "Trust in Governance" (hereafter "Opinion Poll") carried out during 12-24 December 2016 across the 61 municipalities of Albania. It provides insights on public beliefs, perceptions and attitudes on issues such as: trust on public institutions, institutional transparency and accountability, level of corruption, efficiency and effectiveness of public services, level of citizen engagement in policy and decision making, and enforcement of non-discriminatory laws and policies.

The Opinion Poll provides data that feed into the monitoring and assessment of major reforms Albania is undertaking, such as "*the Territorial and Administrative Reform*", "*the Reform on Public Administration*", as well as the implementation of national and international initiatives such as "*Open Government Partnership*". Moreover, the Opinion Poll contributes to the measuring and monitoring of the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Albania – focusing on generating data relevant to indicators of Goal 16 "Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies".

Findings are compared with findings from previous years (starting from 2013) and possible correlations among specific indicators such as *trust*, *corruption level*, *satisfaction with service delivery* and *use of ICT* are presented.

This is the fourth consecutive year (2013-2016) this Opinion Poll is being conducted, based on similar methodology, instrument and national coverage. Every year, data is collected in months of (November – December).

# METHODOLOGY

The Opinion Poll aims to explore the level of public trust towards public 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, the survey instrument, used in previous years, was fine-tuned and then administered with a sample of **1647 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 (n=27)<sup>1</sup>. In addition, quota controls were used for gender and urban-rural classification. The same method has been used since 2013. In selecting equal quotas per each area, the aim was to include a large variety of respondents' profiles in terms of age, education level, employment status as well as income. However, since there are only two control groups the "other characteristics" of the sample vary. Refer to Annex 2 for the socio-demographics distribution since 2013.

This is the 4th consecutive year the Opinion Poll is conducted with the same core questions on Trust in Governance, Level of Corruption, ICT and Citizen Engagement to ensure comparability with previous years. However, due to recent developments at national level (the Territorial and Administrative Reform, the Reform in Public Administration) and at international level (the approval of SDG indicators), sets of new questions were added to enable measurement of relevant indicators. The questionnaire content was reviewed by a Panel of Experts in the fields of good governance, anti-corruption, local governance, economics, sociology and safety.

Fieldwork was carried out in the period **12-24 December 2016**. The questionnaire was administered in face-to-face interviews using PAPI (paper assisted personal interview). Data were processed and analyzed to present findings of descriptive and relational statistics using STATA 12.0.

## Limitations

Given that the final aim was to give "voice" to all citizens regardless of their vicinity to the central government, quota sampling was utilized. However, quota sampling is based only on two characteristics: gender and location (urban or rural). Other individual-level characteristics, such as age and income, may not be well represented in the final sample.<sup>2</sup>

Even though the survey was conducted across the 12 regions of Albania, results cannot be generalized to the entire population. Despite this, findings provide several insights on perceptions and attitudes and how they have changed over time.<sup>3</sup>

# DEMOGRAPHY OF SAMPLE

A total of 1647 Albanian citizens aged 18 years and over 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.

Fig. 1

Gender representation

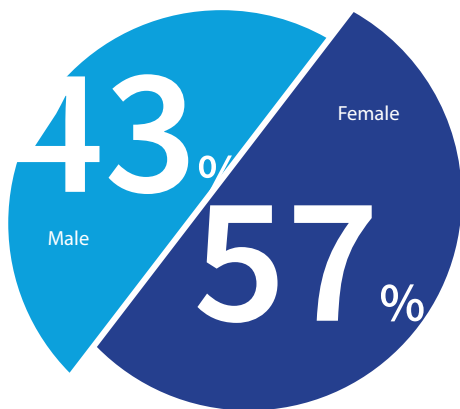
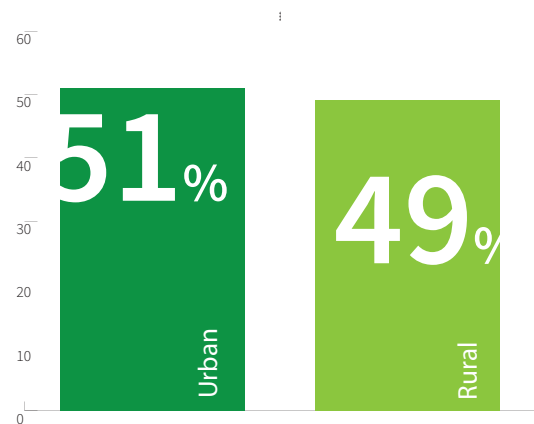


Fig. 2

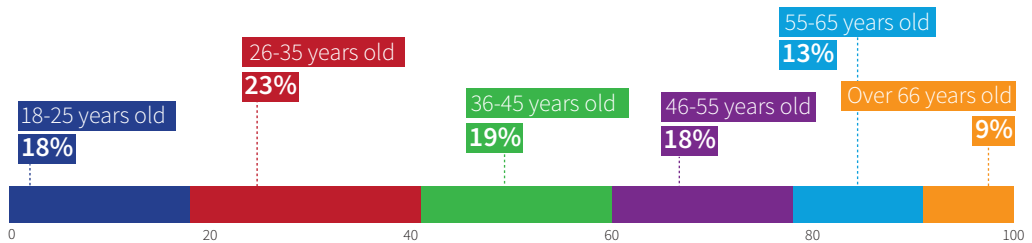
Geographical classification



The population sample included 57% men and 43% women. 51% lived in urban areas and 49% in rural areas. Average age was 42 years old (SD=15)<sup>4</sup> in an interval from 18-91 years. For the distribution of age according to different age groups see figure 2.

Fig. 3

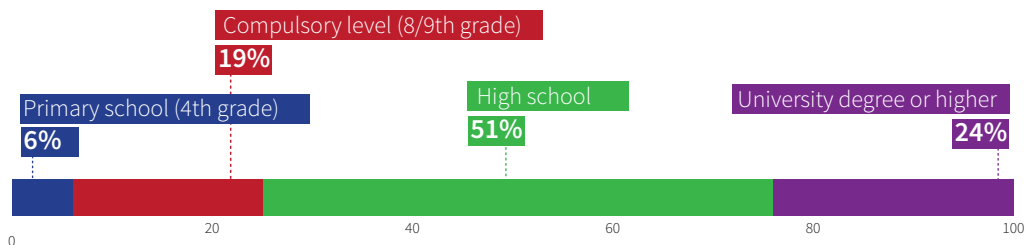
### Age groups



As regards educational attainment (figure 3), slightly more than 5 in 10 citizen surveyed have completed high school and about 24% already possessed or were in the process of obtaining a university or post-university degree. Roughly 19% have only accomplished compulsory education.

Fig. 4

### Educational attainment



As regards the employment status, about 43% of the sample was employed at the moment of the interview (with 32% of those employed working in the public sector, whilst 68% in the private sector). 8% of those surveyed were students and 12% retired. Moreover, 25% of the sample reported to have lived abroad for at least one year.

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.

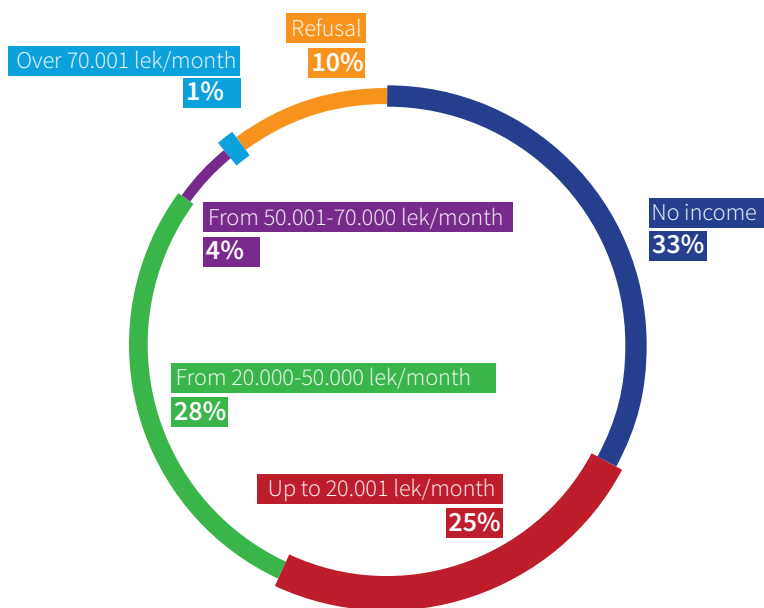
**Table 1. Employment status**

Employed	Public Sector <b>32%</b>	<b>43%</b>
	Private Sector <b>68%</b>	
Unemployed		<b>35%</b>
Student		<b>8%</b>
Retired		<b>12%</b>
Other		<b>2%</b>

The distribution of respondents' individual monthly income is presented in figure 5.

**Fig. 5**

Regular individual monthly income (net)



# FINDINGS

## TRUST IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

Trust in institutions or Institutional trust stands for the individual expectation that a given institution will produce positive outcomes (Levi and Stoker 2000). Focusing on political trust, Hetherington (1998) considers trust to be a function of institutional evaluation, citizens' policy considerations<sup>5</sup>, the quality of policy outcomes, media reporting,<sup>6</sup> perceptions about social and cultural change, but also socio-demographic characteristics, such as age, education, income and gender.

As emphasized by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD 2013), 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, thus hindering sustainable development.

“Trust in institutions” represents one of the core modules of the Opinion Poll. In particular, citizens are asked to rate how much they personally trust a set of key public and political institutions at the central and local level, as well as other important actors<sup>7</sup> on a four point scale from 1 (you have great trust) to 4 (you do not trust an institution at all). When citizens indicate that they trust certain institutions,<sup>8</sup> we assume that their opinion is based on the related institutional images they have constructed, which coincides with the relevant general or normative criteria they use in their rating. The basic assumption here is that in order to construct their pictures of public institutions, citizens do not need to know in detail how various institutions are designed; they develop expectations about the institutions in question.

Figure 6 summarizes the distribution of results.

Data for 2016 show that supranational institutions/organizations like **EU**, **NATO** and **UN** rank as the most trusted institutions in Albania, enjoying the trust of roughly 4 in 5 surveyed Albanians. (80%, 79%, 79% of public trust, respectively).<sup>9</sup> Likewise, these institutions also enjoy the greatest proportion of citizens expressing great trust (in a range of 34-36%).

In contrast, only five out of thirteen (5/13) domestic institutions enjoy more than 50% of public trust, outlining a general trend of low trust in public domestic institutions.

In an aggregate level,<sup>10</sup> surveyed citizens are more trusting of the **Police** (61%), **Education**

**system** (59%), **Religious Institutions** (58%), **Media** (58%) and **Armed Forces** (55%).

However, **Religious Institutions** appear to enjoy the highest trust rating among domestic public institutions if we consider the scale category “I have great trust”. 22% of surveyed citizens’ state that they have great trust at Religious Institutions, compared to 12% that have great trust at the Police.

Within a margin of 5% of each other,<sup>11</sup> the Local Government appears to enjoy greater trust than the Central Government. 44% of surveyed Albanians trust the **Central Government**, in comparison to 49% that trust their **Local Government**.

Even if those who trust the Central Government are in the minority (44%), the Central Government enjoys more trust than the Parliament, which is considered trustworthy by only 27% of the surveyed public.

The public is ambivalent concerning civil society, since in the same proportion, 46% of surveyed citizens express trust in Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), whilst 46% of them generally tend not to trust CSOs. 7% of them do not have any opinion.

At the other end of the spectrum, the **Judiciary system** (74%) is the least trusted institution in Albania<sup>12</sup>, followed with a similar margin by **Political Parties** (72%). More than one in every three surveyed citizens have “no trust at all” at these institutions (36% and 35%, respectively). The **Parliament** ranks as the third least trusted institution, distrusted by 71% of the surveyed public.<sup>13</sup>

### *Socio-Demographic Comparison*

After presenting the aggregate dynamics of trust, we now examine whether trust in specific institutions varies among the different segments of the Albanian population.

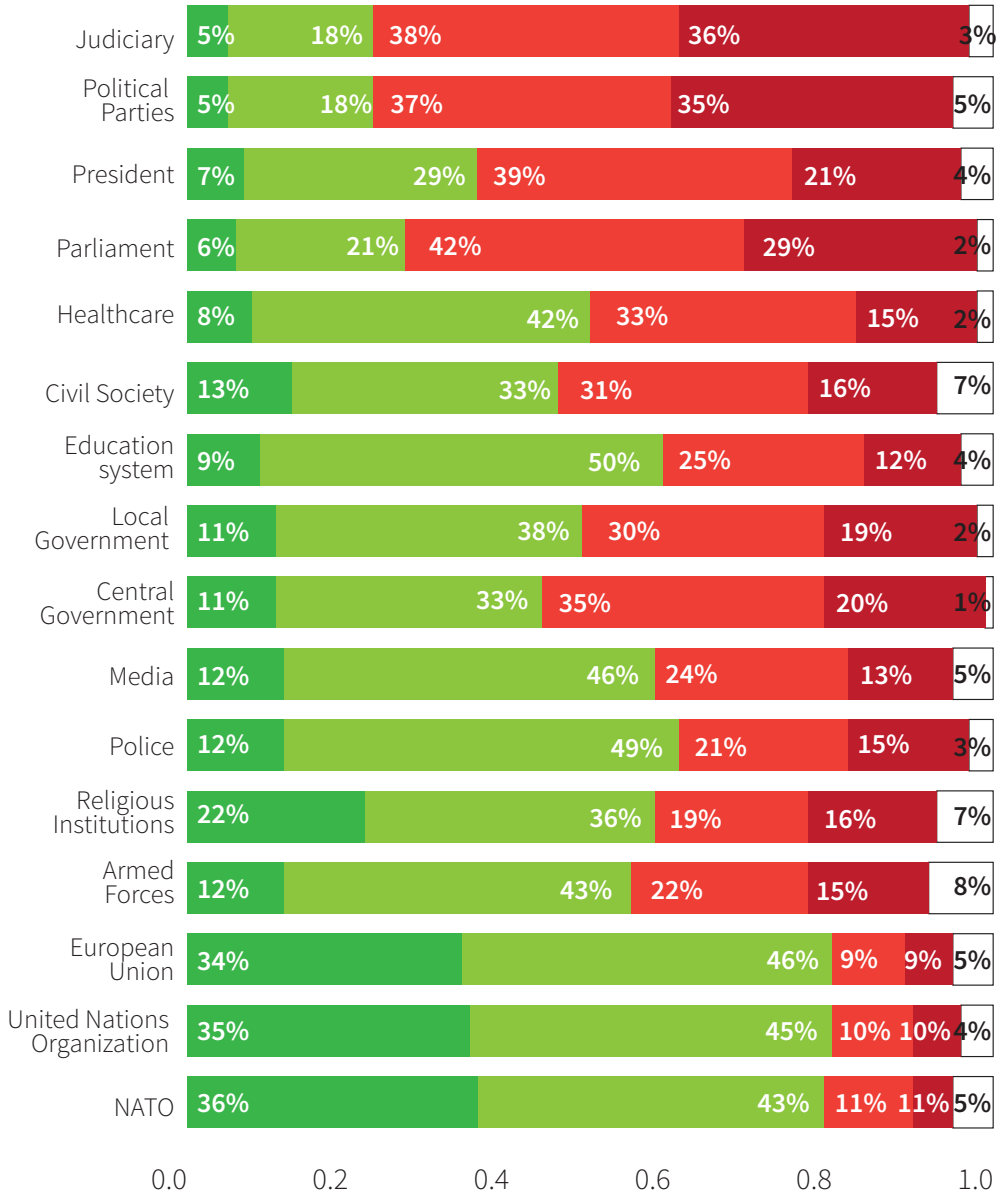
Table 2 summarizes the results in a matrix of the two-way tables.

In a combined level,<sup>14</sup> there appears to be little difference in institutional trust between gender overall. However, younger demographics are more likely to report higher levels of distrust as compared to the **older segments** of the Albanian society, who, on average, tend to be more trustful. As regards employment status, the **employed** part of the demographics appears to be more trustful and furthermore, within this category, this sentiment is most pronounced among employees in the **public sector**. Urban-rural classification also appears to play a role; citizens residing in **urban** areas have more trust, on average, as compared to those in rural areas.



Fig. 6

Institutional trust 2016



I have great trust | Basically I trust | Basically do not trust | I have no trust | No opinion

If we focus on specific institutions, data show that:

- The **Central Government** is considered more trustworthy by the older demographics (50% among 56-65 years-olds and 53% among over 66 years-olds), by individuals with a university degree (50%), employees in the public sector (63%) and individuals living in urban areas (46%).
- Trust in **Police** tends to be higher among the older demographics (65% among 56-65 years-olds and 76% among over 66 years-olds), individuals with a university degree (64%), employees in the public sector (73%) and individuals living in urban areas (64%).
- Trust in **CSOs** tends to be higher among females (49%), among 18-25 year-olds (51%) and those aged over 66 (50%), and among citizens with a university degree (56%).

Table 2. Two-way table of “I have great trust” or “Basically I trust”<sup>15</sup>

	Armed Forces	Religious Inst.	Police	Media	Government	Local Gov.	Education	Civil Society	Health-care	Parliament	President	Political Parties	Judiciary
TOTAL (trust)	55%	58%	61%	58%	44%	49%	59%	46%	50%	27%	36%	23%	23%
<b>Gender</b>													
Male	56%	57%	61%	59%	45%	51%	59%	44%	49%	26%	38%	24%	23%
Female	54%	58%	60%	58%	42%	48%	60%	49%	51%	28%	35%	22%	24%
<b>Age</b>													
18-25	51%	55%	55%	58%	40%	44%	59%	51%	49%	21%	32%	21%	23%
26-35	53%	54%	59%	56%	40%	45%	56%	45%	47%	27%	34%	20%	24%
36-45	52%	63%	57%	54%	42%	51%	59%	46%	45%	24%	37%	21%	18%
46-55	58%	59%	63%	58%	38%	47%	59%	46%	51%	27%	37%	22%	22%
56-65	55%	56%	65%	62%	50%	53%	62%	42%	54%	31%	42%	30%	27%
Over 66	74%	66%	76%	68%	63%	69%	67%	50%	62%	40%	40%	32%	29%
<b>Educational attainment</b>													
Basic Education	56%	57%	61%	60%	43%	49%	57%	45%	49%	27%	33%	22%	22%
High-school	54%	59%	59%	58%	41%	48%	59%	43%	50%	24%	36%	23%	23%
University	58%	58%	64%	58%	50%	53%	63%	56%	51%	32%	40%	23%	24%
<b>Employment status</b>													
Total	58%	60%	63%	56%	49%	55%	64%	49%	56%	32%	40%	26%	24%
Employed	65%	56%	73%	57%	63%	65%	72%	54%	63%	47%	47%	33%	34%
Private	51%	60%	58%	56%	41%	50%	59%	46%	50%	24%	36%	23%	21%
Unemployed	50%	54%	54%	53%	31%	37%	51%	43%	40%	17%	32%	17%	20%
Retired	69%	66%	75%	71%	61%	65%	67%	47%	52%	38%	41%	32%	30%
Student	52%	52%	63%	63%	44%	53%	64%	55%	61%	27%	34%	23%	22%
<b>Region</b>													
Urban	58%	59%	64%	59%	46%	52%	60%	47%	52%	25%	37%	25%	22%
Rural	52%	57%	58%	58%	41%	47%	59%	46%	48%	28%	36%	21%	24%

## Timeline Comparison

### Branches of government

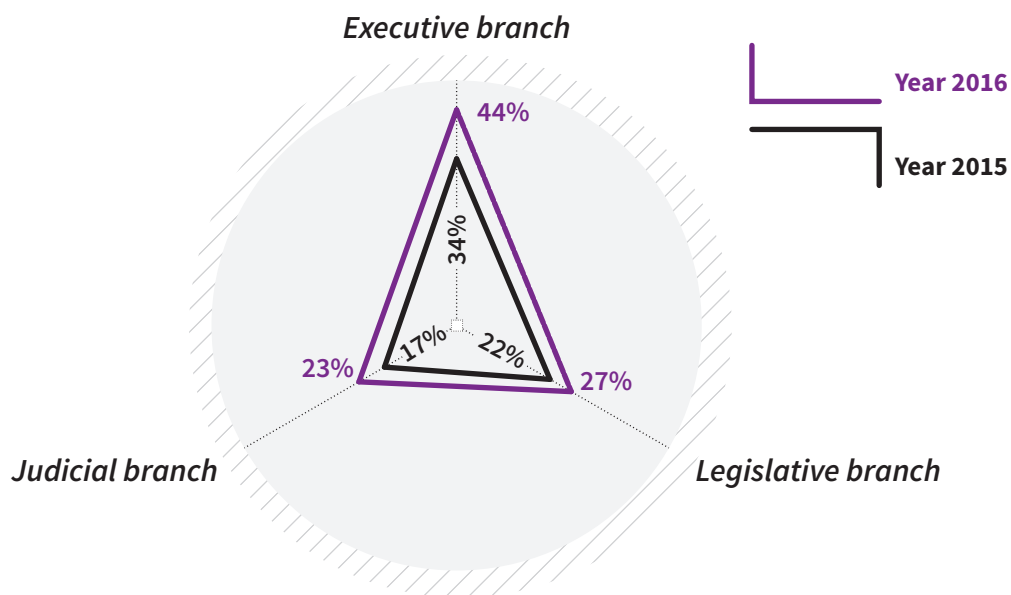
Figure 7 outlines the evolution of trust in the three branches of government.

Public trust remains key to the successful functioning of all branches of government. In particular, trust is important for the legislative branch, which is connected to citizens in the most direct way – through the election of representatives accountable to citizens at election time. But, as has been the case with the Opinion Poll since 2013, the Albanian public appears to keep supporting the executive branch, while the erosion of trust in the legislative and judicial branch continues.

In 2016, the percentage of surveyed Albanians expressing trust in the judicial branch is the lowest (23%), followed by the legislative branch trusted by only 27% of the surveyed public. The Executive branch (44%) remains – by far – the most trusted of the three branches.

Fig. 7

Trust in the three branches of government 2015-2016

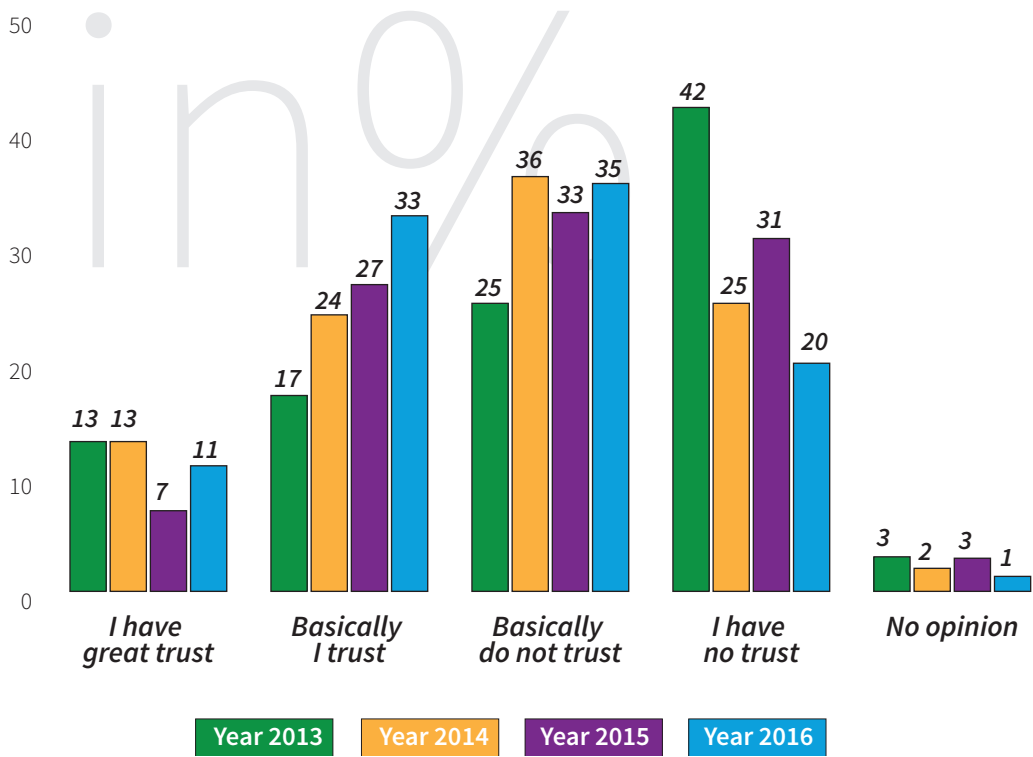


Note: % of surveyed citizens expressing "I have great trust" or "Basically I trust".

To this regard, figure 8 presents the evolution of trust in the Executive branch in more detail. However, whether or not respondents are able to distinguish between the notion of “government” as an institution and the incumbent party/parties in office remains much debated in the literature, mostly because supporters of a party in office tend to report markedly higher levels of trust in government (Citrin 1974, Norris 1999).

Our data suggest that while the “I have great trust” category has remained fairly constant over the four consecutive years since 2013, there has been some slight increase within the “Basically I trust” category. The biggest changes can be traced in the “I have no trust” category, which has gone down from 42% in 2013, to 20% in 2016.

**Fig. 8**  
Evolution of trust in central government 2013-2016

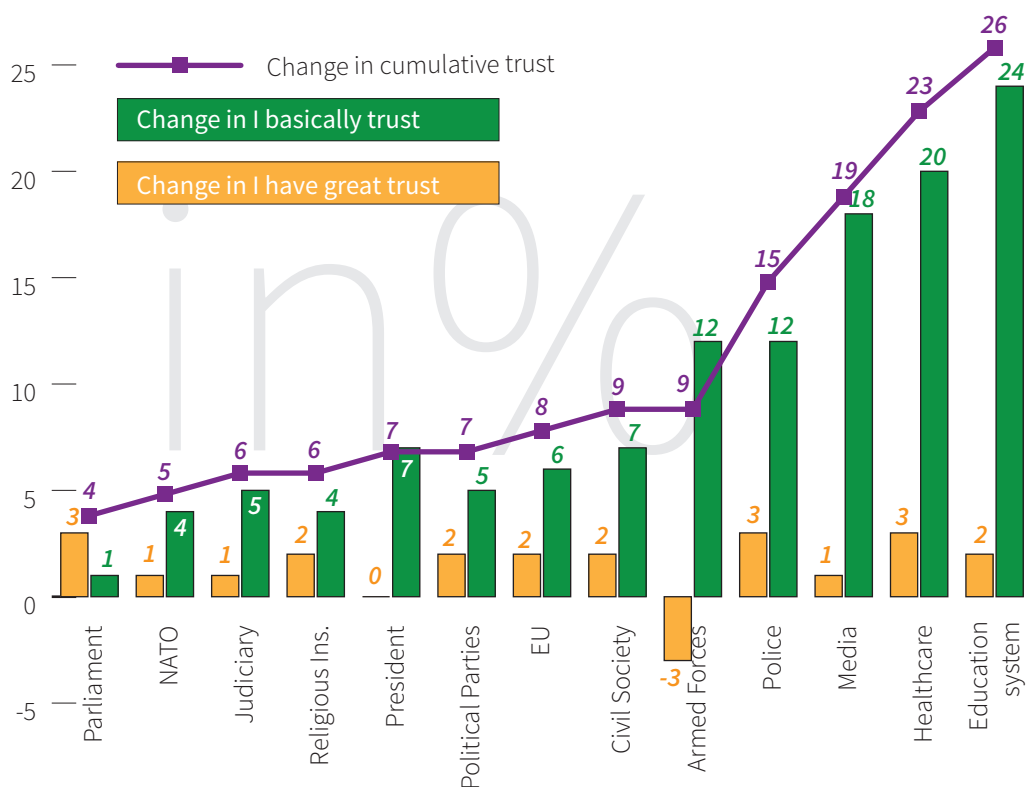


### Other Public Institutions

When compared to 2015, the analysis reveals that there has been an overall upward trend among the Albanian public regarding the extent to which they trust public institutions. Notwithstanding the fact that administrative institutions are trusted more than representative ones, the direction of change appears to take place in parallel. See Fig. 9 for the distribution of the change in trust disaggregated by the different categories that it is measured.

**Fig. 9**

Change in trust (percentage points: p.p) 2015-2016



The Education system (26 p.p) and the Healthcare system (23 p.p) have seen the highest increase in the level of aggregate trust. Media also registers a spike of 19 p.p.

Since 2013, for the 4th consecutive year, the European Union and NATO are the most trusted institutions in Albania, whereas Political Parties and Judiciary remain the least trusted institutions.

See figure 10 for the results since 2013.

Fig. 10 Institutional trust 2013-2016

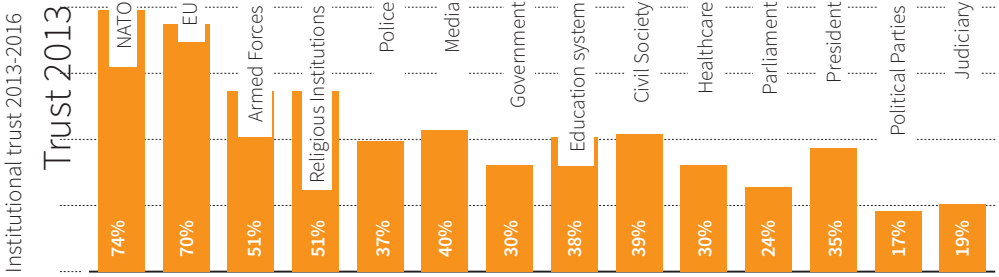


Fig. 10 Institutional trust 2013-2016

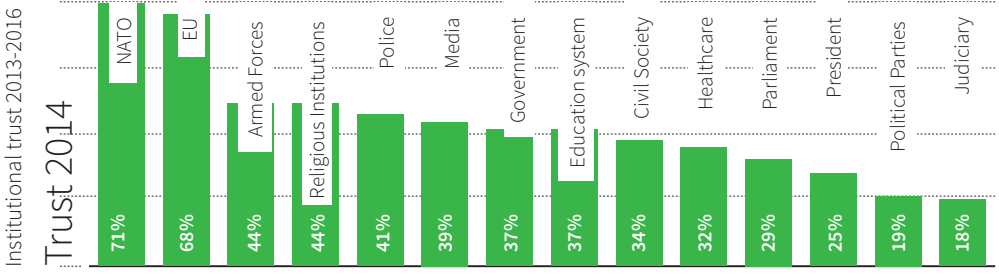


Fig. 10 Institutional trust 2013-2016

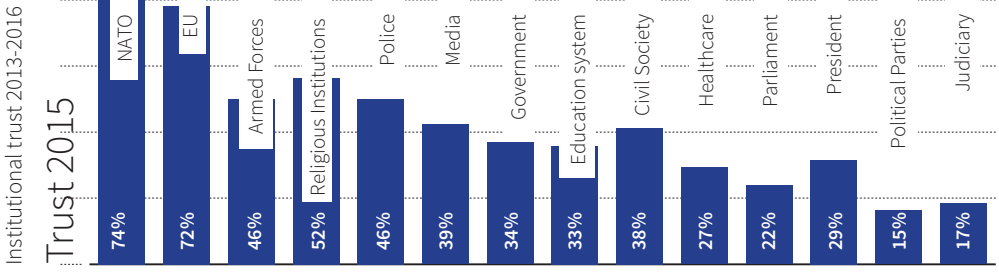
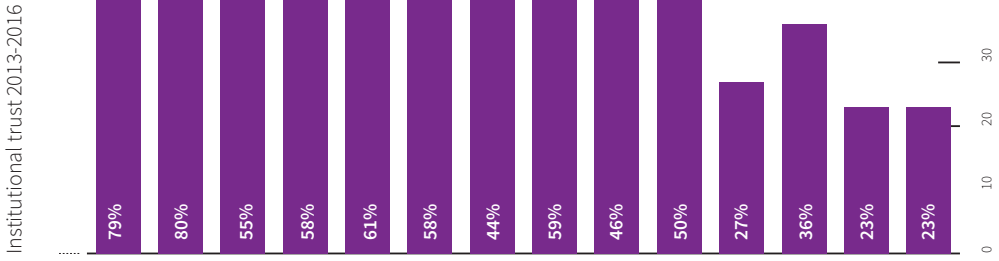


Fig. 10 Institutional trust 2013-2016



For this year, the core questions on institutional trust were supplemented with other questions enabling hence the Opinion Poll to adapt to the ever-changing focus on public discourse.

### Justice Reform

During 2016, the topic of the Justice Reform dominated much of the public discourse. On July 2016, constitutional amendments related to the organization and functioning of the justice system were unanimously adopted, launching a thorough and comprehensive judicial reform process – which is ongoing.

Asked on this issue, the majority or 71% of surveyed citizens believe that if implemented accordingly, the Justice Reform will have a positive impact, as compared to only around 18% of the public who do not share this belief. However, the public remains ambivalent in the perceptions regarding the proper implementation of the reform; just 46% of citizens believe that the Justice Reform will be implemented accordingly in comparison to 42% who do not hold the same opinion.

Fig. 11

Do you believe the Justice Reform will have a positive impact?

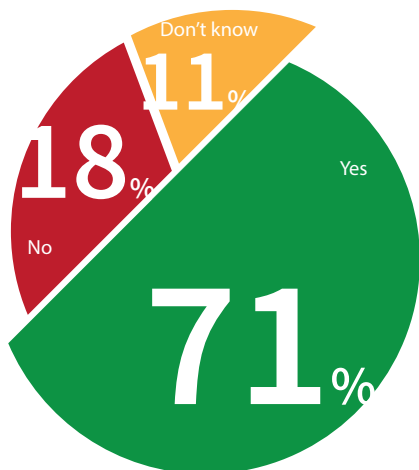
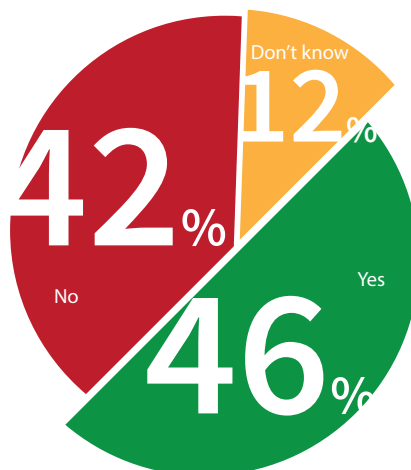


Fig. 12

Do you believe the Justice Reform will be implemented accordingly?



Socio-demographic analysis shows that most distrustful to the proper implementation of the reform tend to be the younger generations (53% of 18-24 years-old as compared to 35% of those aged over 55) and those unemployed at the moment of the interview (50%).



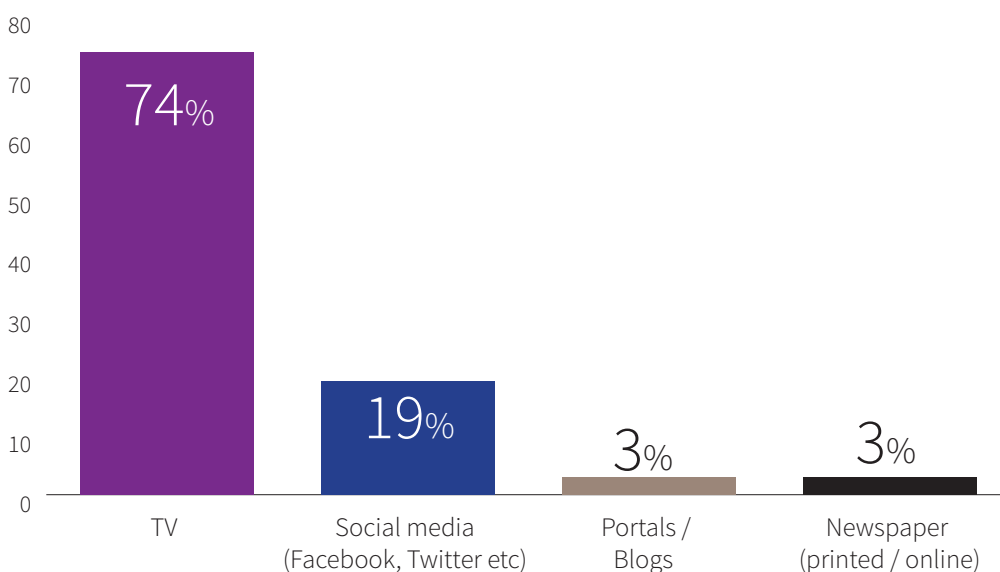
## Media

This sub-section aims to analyze the relationship of citizens with the media and the information it produces. After asking the respondents about their most used source of information, we inquire their views on the credibility and pertinence of media reporting.

In the literature, mass media is often cited as a major factor in reshaping contemporary politics and promoting distrust (Norris 2000, Newton 1997). To this note, our results show that the most popular medium with surveyed Albanians remains television: 74% of surveyed citizens assess it as the most used media medium (see Figure 12). Next, social network platforms rank as the second most popular medium with 19% of citizens reporting to using them more often. The generational split is evident – roughly one in two individuals aged 18-25 years-old (49%) cite social media as their most used medium, followed by television (41%).

**Fig. 13**

Media medium mostly used



Only one in every two surveyed citizens thinks that the information provided by media is accurate and truthful, as compared to 35% of them who do not think so. Socio-demographic analysis reveals that this affirmative view tends to be more prevalent across the older (54% of 46-65 years-olds and 67% aged over 65) and least educated (60% with basic education) part of the demographics.

On the other hand, when asked if the information provided by media is harmful<sup>16</sup>, 45% of the surveyed citizens believe that it is not harmful, whilst 43% of them believe that it is.

Fig. 14

Is the information provided by media accurate/true?

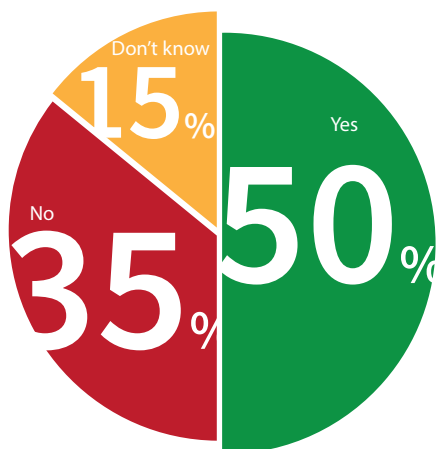
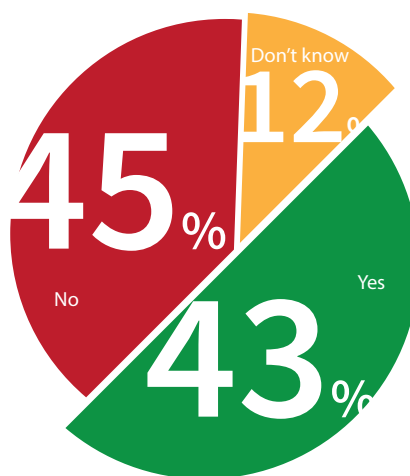


Fig. 15

Is the information provided by media harmful?



## TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

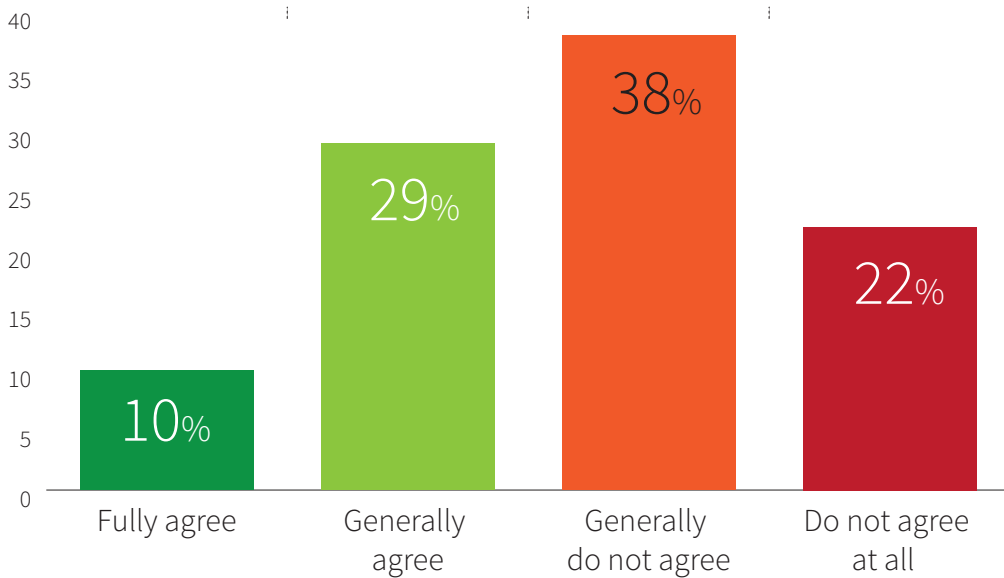
**Transparency** is nowadays considered as a key tool of good governance and a prerequisite to any democratic regime and as such, reforms aimed at promoting a more transparent administration are supported by most governments. Despite the overuse of the term, practitioners and scholars still hold different definitions of the term. Some of them focus their attention on Freedom to Information (FoI) laws, some focus on e-government and some others concentrate on the effects of transparency, assuming it generates greater trust, more participation, a more efficient administration and less corruption.

For the purpose of this analysis we are referring to Grimmelikhuijsen and Welch (2012) who have proposed one of the most recent definitions of transparency, which takes into account both state-citizens relations.<sup>17</sup>

According to the data, **39% of surveyed** citizens agree with the statement “central government is transparent” against **61% who do not agree** with this statement.

Fig. 16

Central Government is transparent



**Socio – demographic comparisons** show that there is no (considerable) difference between men and women on their perceptions on central government transparency.

**Table 3. Central Government transparency by gender**

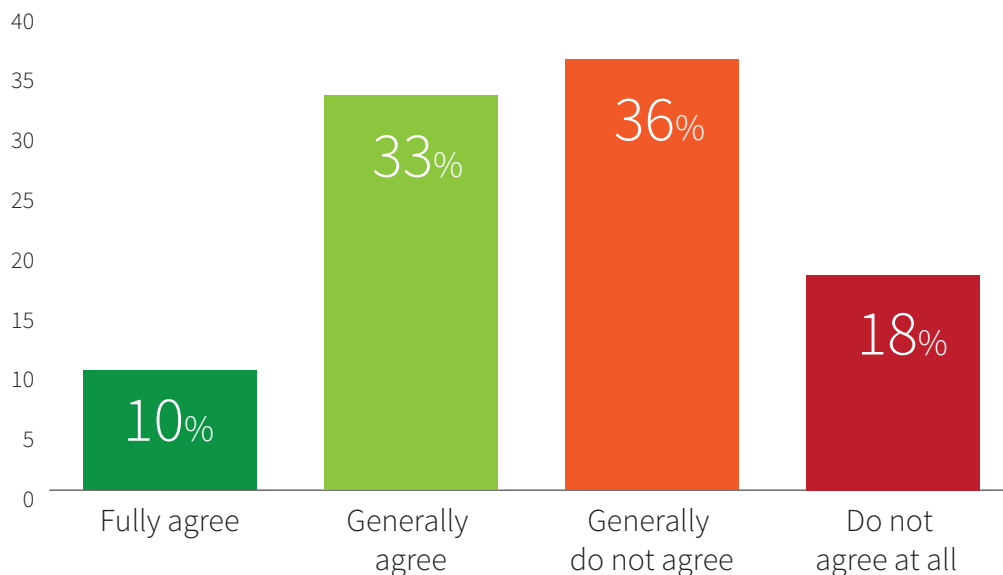
Central Government Transparency		
	Male	Female
Yes	38.0%	40.0%
No	62.0%	60.0%

Referring to local level government, 43% of surveyed citizens agree that the Municipality is transparent, whilst 57% disagree with the statement.

Comparing the two, data show that, with a slight difference of 4%, surveyed citizens believe that the Municipality is more transparent than the central Government.

**Fig. 17**

Municipality is transparent



From a socio – demographic point of view, data show there is no difference between men and women on their perceptions on Municipal transparency (Table 5). On the other hand, surveyed citizens, residents in urban areas tend to believe more on Municipal transparency (48%), compared to those living in urban areas (39%) (Table 4).

**Table 4. Municipal transparency by area**

Municipal Transparency		
	Rural	Urban
Yes	39.0%	48.0%
No	59.0%	50.0%

**Table 5. Municipality transparency by gender**

Municipal Transparency		
	Male	Female
Yes	44.0%	43.0%
No	55.0%	53.0%

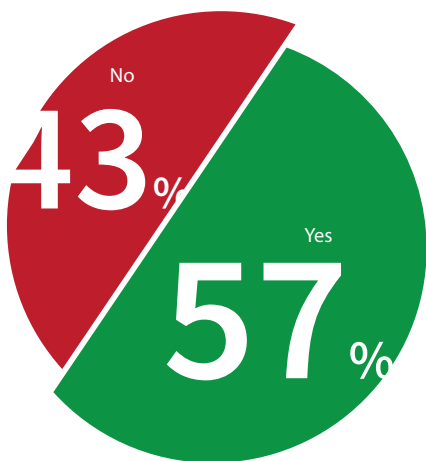
**Freedom of information** is broadly requested to be guaranteed by law. The main principle behind freedom of information legislation is that people have a right to know about the activities of public authorities, unless the law proclaims otherwise. In Albania, the Law no 114/2014 “On the right to Information” was adopted on 18 September 2014. The law guarantees the right to information and transparency to Albanian citizens. According to Article 3 of the Law, the following is guaranteed:

Citizens, subject to this Opinion Poll were asked if they are aware that in Albania, the right to information is guaranteed by law. 57% of surveyed citizens say they know that in Albania the “right to information” is guaranteed by law, against 43% of surveyed citizens who are not aware of this fact.

1. Everyone is entitled to know public information without being obliged to explain the motives.
2. The public authority is obliged to inform the applicant whether or not is in possession of the requested information.
3. Every person has the right to access public information through the original document or receiving a copy of it in the form or format that allows full access to the content of the document.
4. Public information given to a person cannot be denied to any other person who requests it, unless the information contains personal data of the subject in accordance with Article 17 of this Law.

Fig. 18

Awareness on "Right to Information Law"



Law 114/2014 requires public institutions (at central and local level) to approve transparency programs and appoint the Information Coordinators. Based on this, surveyed citizens were asked whether they had submitted a request for information to a public institution during 2016.

Roughly 1 in 4 (23%) of respondents (N=217)<sup>18</sup> say that in 2016, they submitted a request for information to public institutions, and 70% of those who submitted the request (N=167) received the requested information.

Fig. 19

Submitted request  
to information

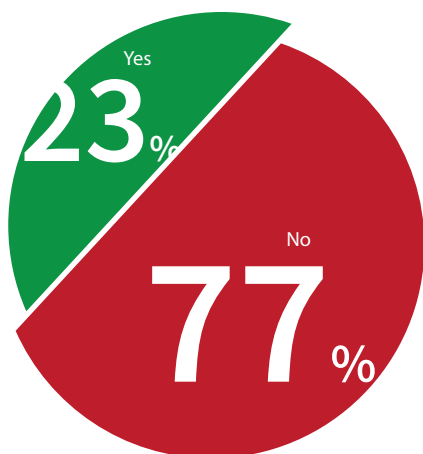
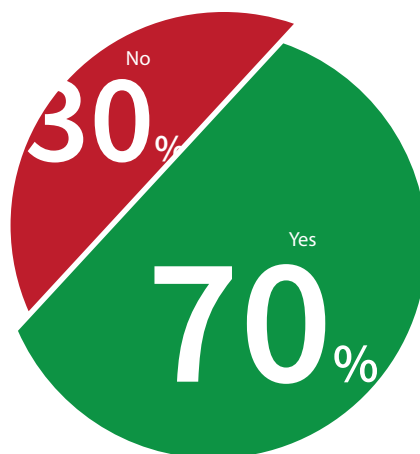


Fig. 20

Received requested  
information



According to a monitoring report conducted by BIRN Albania in 2016<sup>19</sup>, “municipalities in Albania are more transparent when it comes to the category/indicator of “freedom of information” “municipal councils transparency,”. Oppositely, the category where they are less transparent are: “financial transparency,” “legislation transparency” and “public consultation processes.”

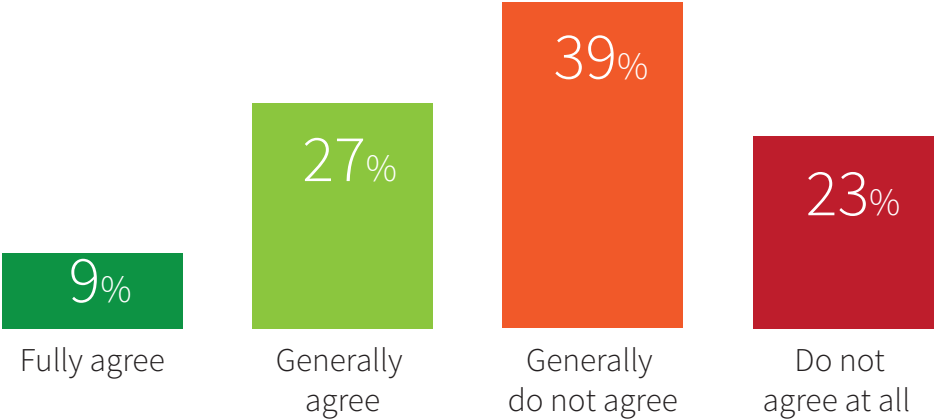
### Accountability

Similar to Transparency, the concept of **accountability** is one that has long been central to the theory and practice of public administration and governance, nonetheless its definition remains elusive. To be accountable means to have the duty to provide an account: that is, to explain and justify one’s actions in terms of appropriate criteria and in sufficient detail.

Based on the above explanation, Citizens were asked whether they perceive the central and local government to be accountable, that is: explaining its actions (or non-actions) to the constituencies.

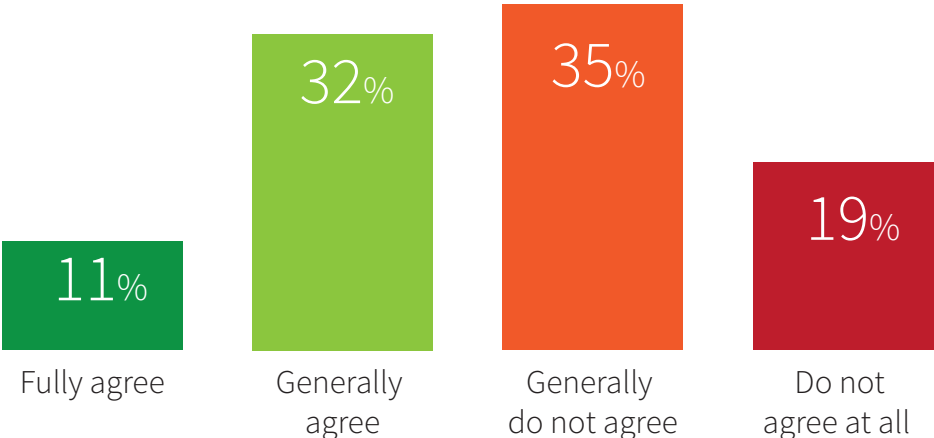
Data show that 36% of respondents believe the government is accountable for its actions (or non - actions), against 64% of respondents who disagree.

**Fig. 21**  
Central Government accountability



**With reference to local government, data show that** 43% of respondents believe the Municipality is accountable for its actions (or non - actions), whilst 54% of surveyed citizens disagree. 3% of respondent refused to answer, or do not have an opinion on the matter.

**Fig. 22**  
Municipal accountability

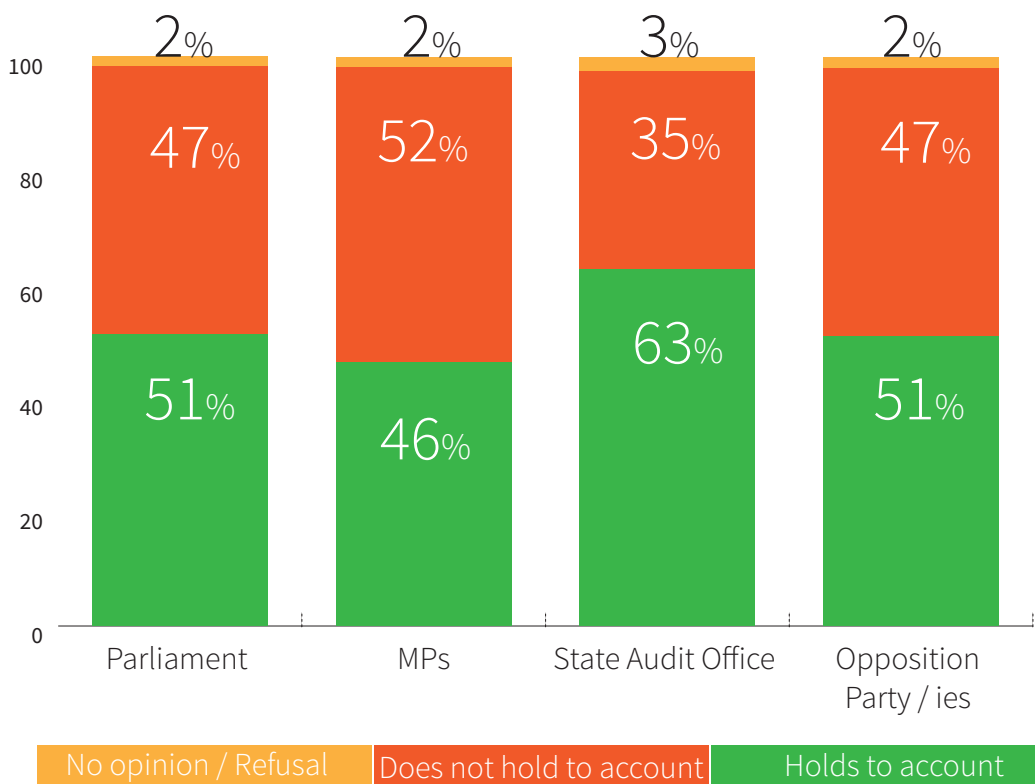


According to World Bank (2012), the concept of accountability can be classified according to the type of accountability exercised and/or the person, group or institution the public official answers to, recognizing two main forms: horizontal accountability and vertical accountability.

“**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.”

Fig. 23

Horizontal accountability mechanisms



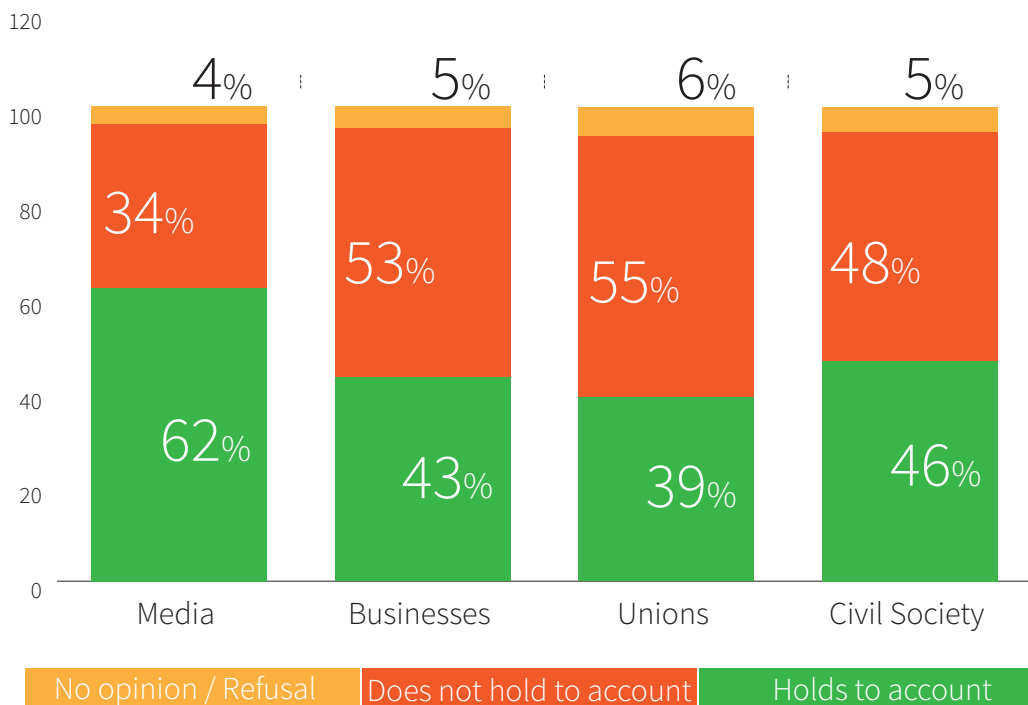
With regard to Horizontal accountability mechanisms (Figure 22), 63% of surveyed citizens believe that the State Audit Office holds the government into account, followed by the Parliament and the Opposition parties (51% of surveyed citizens) and individual Members of Parliament (MPs)(46% of surveyed citizens).



Alternatively, **Vertical accountability** is the means through which citizens, mass media, and civil society, business community, Unions etc, seek to enforce standards of good performance on government officials.<sup>20</sup>

Fig. 24

Vertical accountability mechanisms

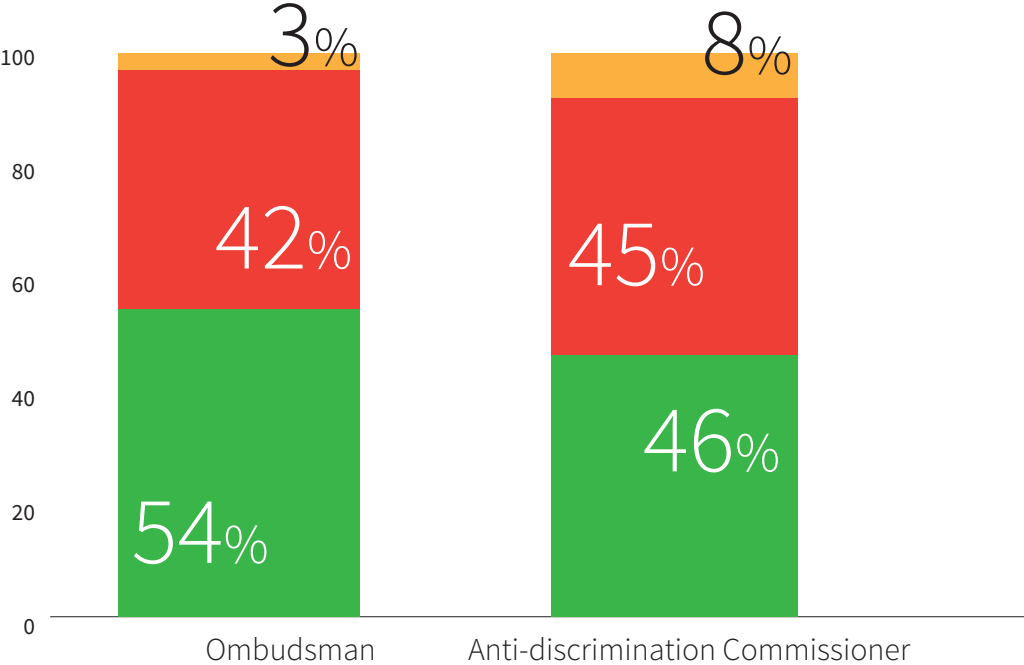


With regard to vertical accountability mechanism, 62% of surveyed citizens believe that Media holds the government into account, followed by Civil Society (46% of surveyed citizens) and Businesses (with 43%). Figure 23. According to the data, 55% of surveyed citizens believe that Unions do not hold the government into account.

Lately, experts suggest the term **administrative accountability**, exercised primarily through institutions, such as ombudsmen, auditors, and independent inspectors, which is a form of independent and external administrative and financial oversight and control. This form of accountability is different to the classic top-down/ principal agent relationship because the administrative accountability institution is not in a hierarchical relationship to the public officials and often do not have formal powers to coerce public officials into compliance.<sup>21</sup>

Fig. 25

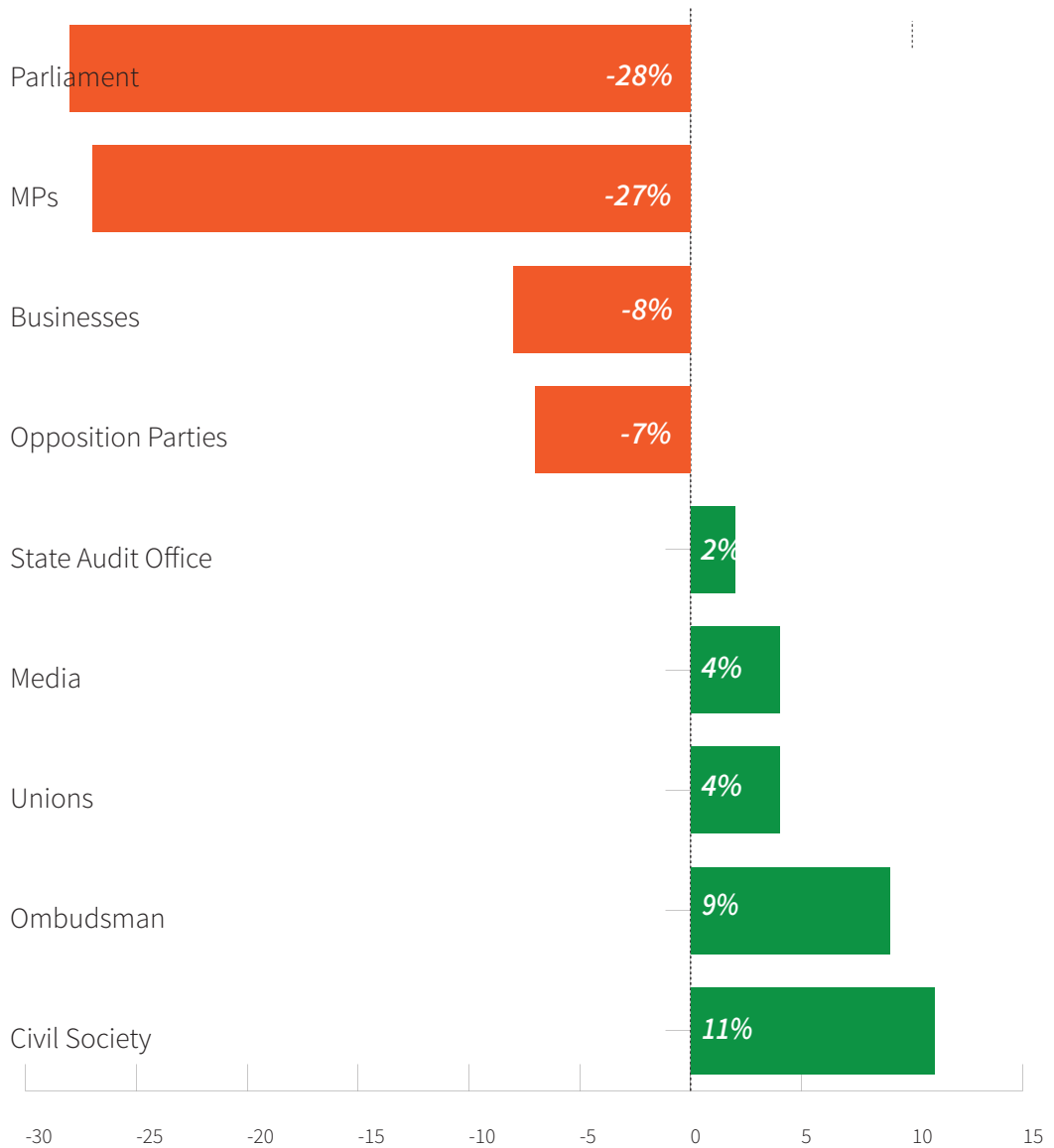
Administrative Accountability



Referring to Administrative accountability concept, 54% of the surveyed citizens believe that the Ombudsman holds the government into account, whilst, only 46% of respondents believe the Anti – discrimination Commissioner does so (Figure 25).

Fig. 26

Changes in accountability 2015-2016



**From a timeline perspective**, compared to 2015, Civil Society Organizations, the Ombudsman and Unions are perceived as having an increased role in holding the government to account, with respectively (11%, 9% and 4% increase. On the other hand, the Parliament and individual MPs are perceived to have a decreased role of (28% and 27% decrease respectively). For the distribution of results, see Figure 26.

## CORRUPTION IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

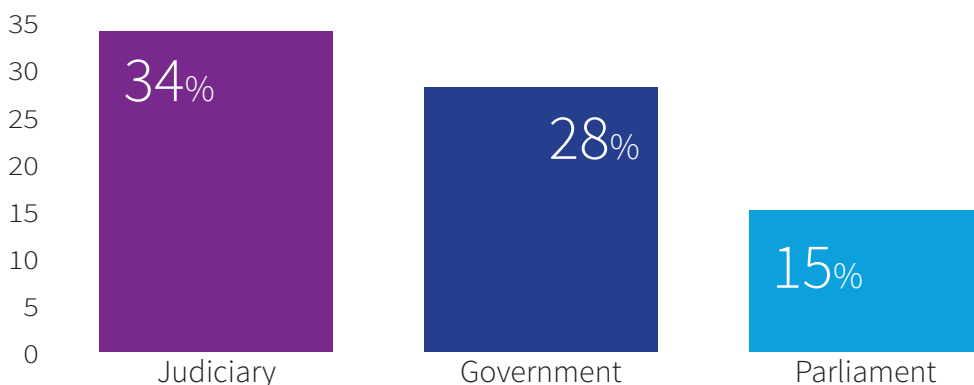
Transparency International broadly defines corruption as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain. This can happen anywhere, and can be classified as grand or petty, depending on the amounts of money lost and the sector where it occurs.

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, should 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.

Citizens were asked to indicate the most corrupt public institution. Surveyed citizens rank the Judicial system as the most corrupt institution for 2016 (34% of respondents). The government was ranked as the second most corrupt institution by 28% of respondents, followed by the Parliament, with 15% of citizens.<sup>22</sup>

Fig. 27

Most corrupt institution 2016

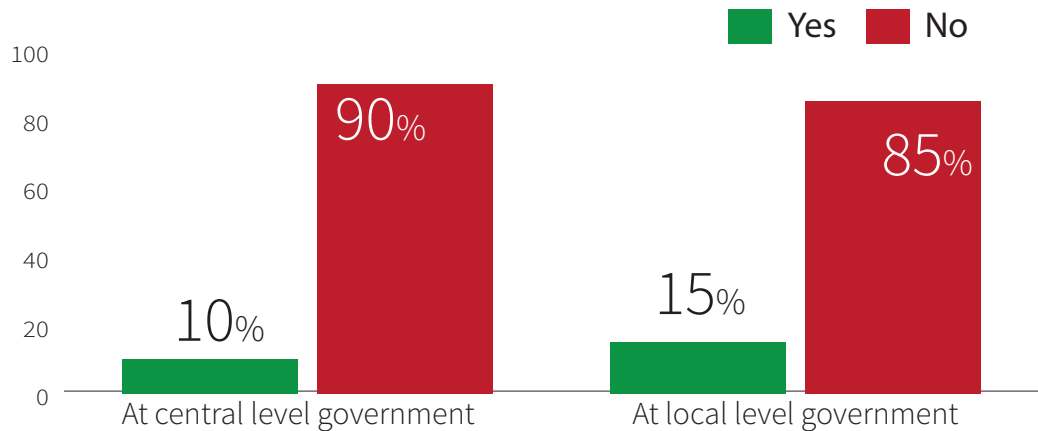


Next, citizens were asked about their personal exposure to corruption. For 2016, only 10% of surveyed citizens indicated personal exposure to at least one corruption case at the central government level whilst the majority 90% of surveyed citizens report to not have witnessed

a corruption case. On the other hand, at the local level, this percentage increases to 15% of citizens who have personally witnessed a corruption case.

Fig. 28

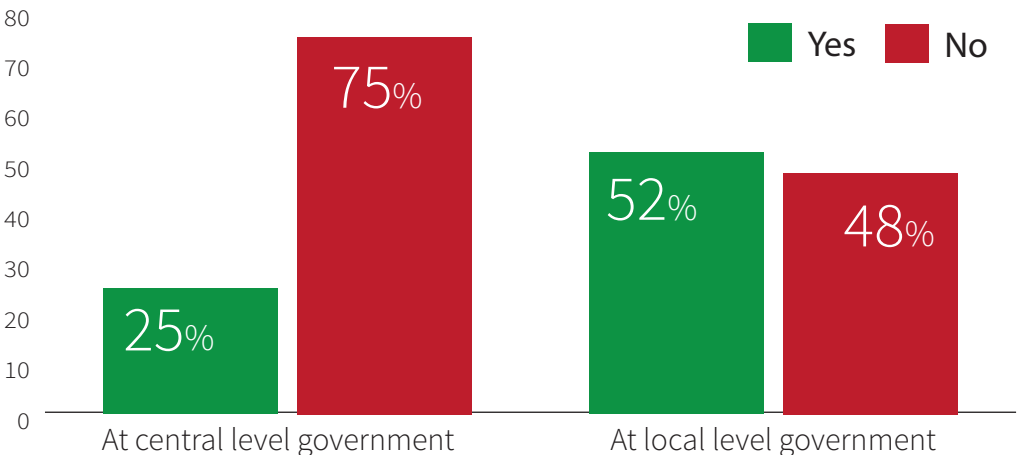
Exposure to corruption 2016



During 2016, 52% of surveyed citizens confirmed to have received a service by public institution at **local level government** against 48% that haven't received any public service. Meanwhile 25% of surveyed citizens indicated to have received services from **central level government** against 75% that stated the opposite.

Fig. 29

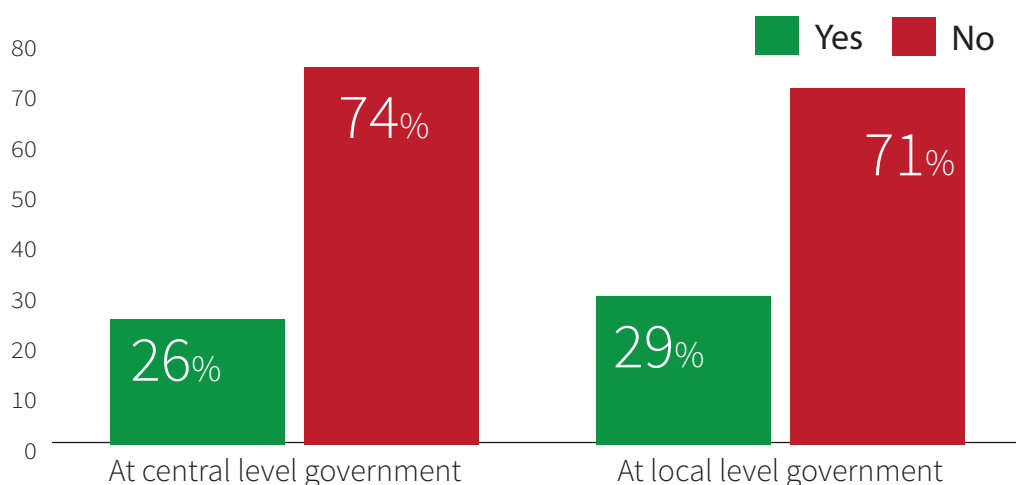
Services received by public institutions 2016



In order to measure the corruption at both level of governments, citizens that indicated to have received services from the central and local government during 2016, were further asked whether they have paid a bribe to public officials for the services received. 26% of those <sup>23</sup> (N=105) surveyed citizens confirmed to have paid a bribe to public officials at central level and 29% of those (N=240) (citizens confirmed to have paid a bribe to officials at local government.

**Fig. 30**

Bribes to a public official 2016



With regard to the reasons on paying a bribe to public officials, 58% of citizens confirmed to have paid a bribe because they were asked by government authorities. Further, 20% of citizens declared the bribe was given as a gratitude for the received service and 22% of surveyed citizens declared they gave a bribe in order to receive better services in the future.

Next, the respondents who admitted paying bribes during the last 12 months, were asked if they had reported this phenomenon to the respective official authority/institution. Data show that 5% of citizens who have paid a bribe (N=13) declared to have reported such case whilst the majority (95% or N=229) of citizens declared to have not reported this abusive case.

Furthermore, asked on the reasons behind non-reporting, 32% (N=81) of surveyed citizens declared that bribe is seen as a culture, a common practice or a sign of gratitude, 14% (N=36) of citizens believe that doesn't change the situation with the phenomenon corruption as no one would address it. However a greater proportion of citizens 40% (N= 101) claim to not know the respective authorities to whom to report. 7% (N=17) of surveyed citizens declared not to have reported the corruption case due to fear of reprisal.

## POLITICAL INFLUENCE

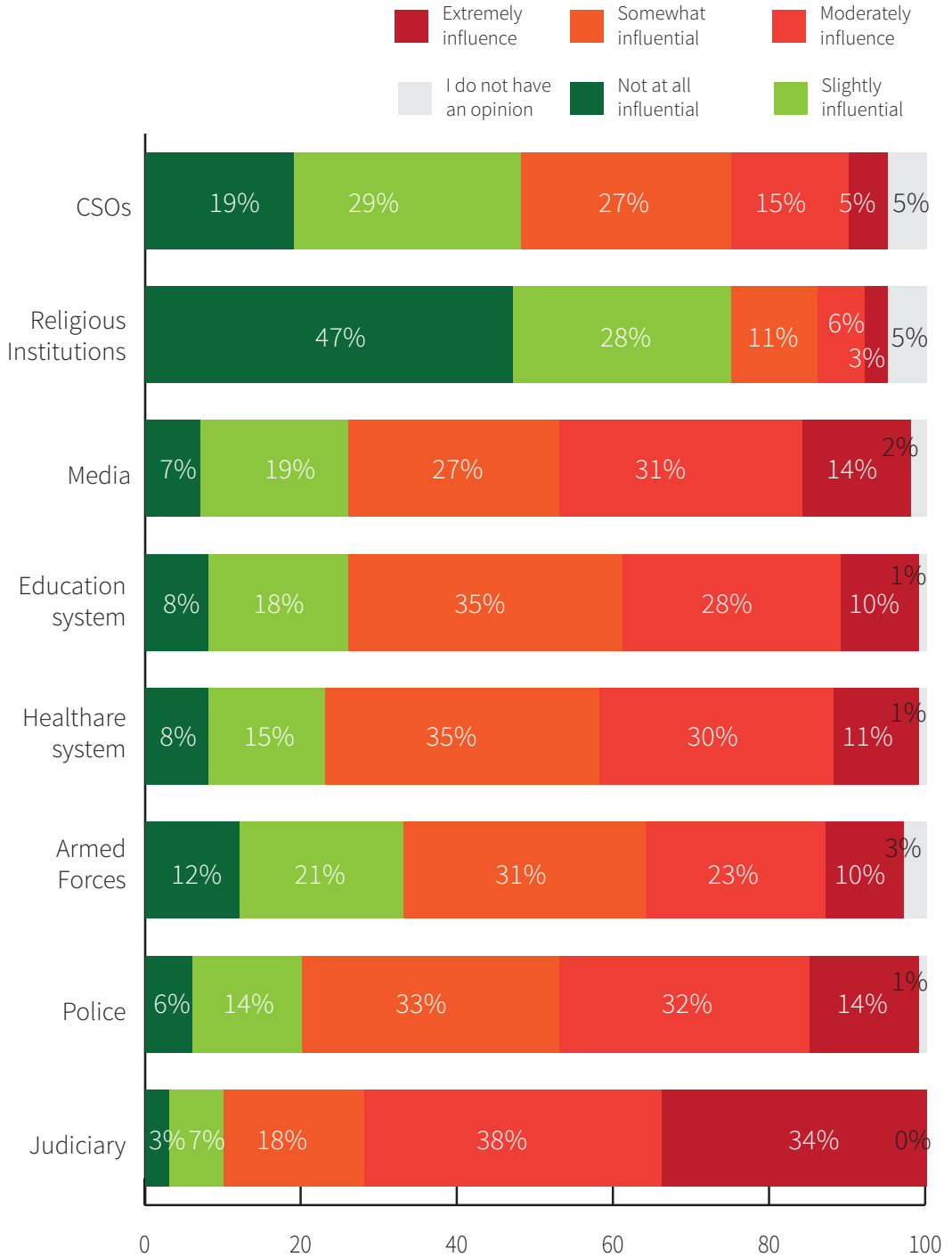
Intervention of political interests in the daily work of public institutions is considered any regulatory action taken by a government in order to affect or interfere with decisions made by individuals, groups, or organizations regarding social and economic matters.

In a scale from 1 (not at all influential) to 5 (extremely influential), **72% of surveyed citizens perceive the judiciary as the most vulnerable to political influence.** On the other hand, religious institutions are perceived to be the most independent ones from political influence. 47% of surveyed citizens believe politics have no influence at all in the work of religious institutions.



Fig. 31

Political influence in the work of public institutions 2016





## CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

Citizen engagement is what good government is mainly about, often being a vital link between transparency and accountability. 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).

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).

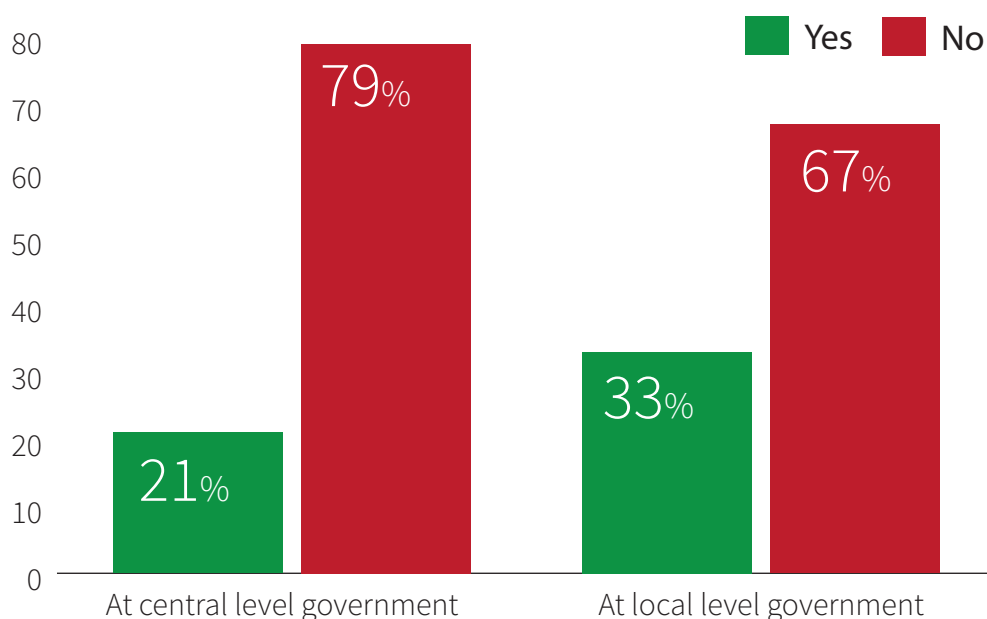
In Albania the Law no 146/2014 "On notification and public consultation" was adopted on 14 October 2014. The law aims to regulate the relations arising in a process of public consultation, among the relevant central and local public stakeholders in the process of decision making referring to legal acts, national and local strategic documents as well as policies with high public importance. At central level, the Electronic Register [www.konsultimipublik.gov.al](http://www.konsultimipublik.gov.al) was established, aiming to enhance the communication between government institutions and citizens (interest groups) in view of consultation processes. However, the platform has not reached its full potential, and currently has a low profile. Meanwhile, ministries use their official webpages to lead e-consultation processes, though it happens on ad hoc basis. The law extends its powers at local level as well, asking Municipalities to establish and make fully operational mechanisms to ensure consultation processes with citizens. Article 16 of the Law 146/2014 asks Local Government Units to appoint a coordinator for Notification and Public Consultation.

Citizens, subject to this survey, were asked several questions aiming to explore their stand with regard to the issues of citizen engagement in public consultation processes at central and local level government.

Data show that **at central level government, 79% of respondents** say that they do not feel they have sufficient opportunities to participate in decision-making / consultation processes with institutions at central level, and only **21% of respondents** who say they do have sufficient opportunities to engage.

Fig. 32

### Opportunities to participate in decision-making 2016



**Whilst at local level, 33% of respondents** say feel they have sufficient opportunities to engage in decision making within their Municipality, whilst **67% say they don't**. According to the study conducted by BIRN Albania<sup>24</sup>, which monitored all 61 Municipalities on the level of implementation of the Law on Freedom of Information and of the Law on Notification and Public Consultation, results show that overall Municipalities have fulfilled the legal obligations to ensure public consultation at 39%.

Exploring further, citizens were asked whether during 2016, they have been invited to participate in any of these processes at either at central and local level. Results show that at central level, only 7 % say they have received such an invitation (N=109), whilst 93 % say they haven't. At local level, only 19% of respondents that have been invited (N=1520) have participated, whilst 81% of respondents have not been invited.

Respondents who were invited to participate, were further asked whether they responded to the invitation and actually participated at the consultation process. Results show that the majority of those invited, did participate in such processes (62% at central level and 68% at local level). This might lead to the assumption that citizens are interested to become part of consultation process at both levels of governance and given the opportunity, they will make use of it.

Fig. 33

Invitations to participate in consultation processes 2016

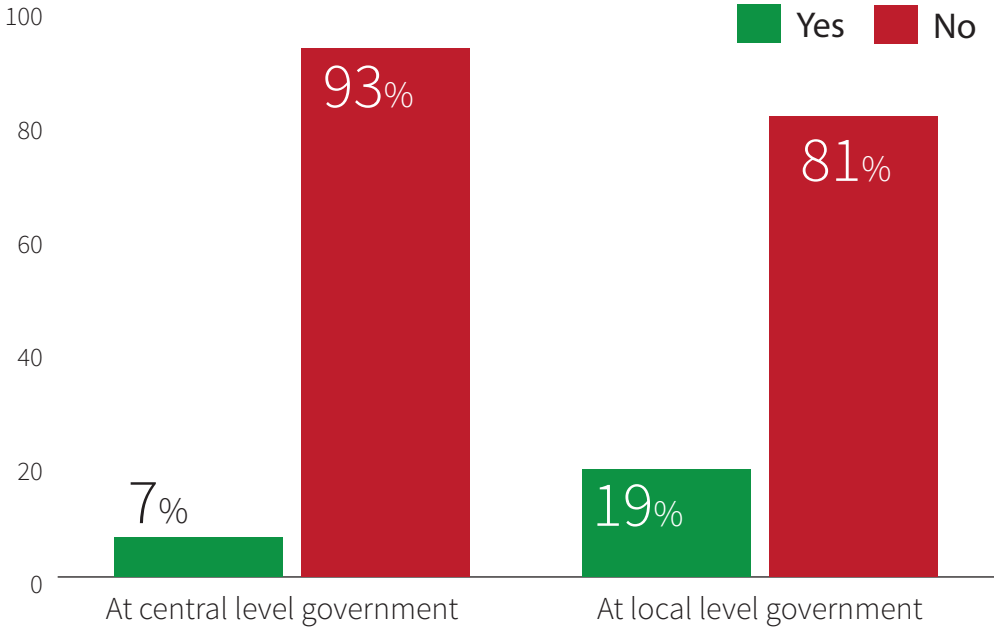
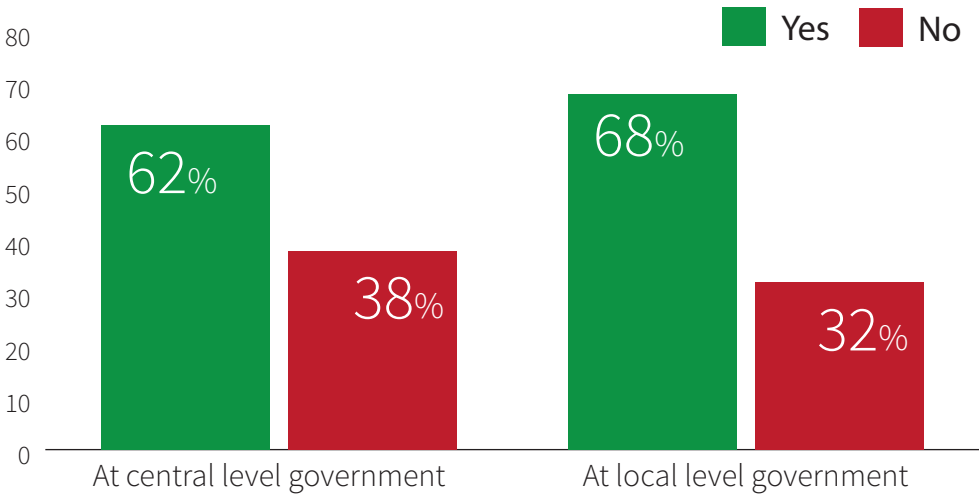


Fig. 34

Participation in consultations 2016



Citizens who did not respond to the invitation and did not participate in such consultation processes were further asked to explain the reasons behind the passive role. 64% of them<sup>25</sup> say that they “don’t believe in such processes”; 17% say they expect others to do so and 10% say they did not have information on the subject.

**Table 6. Reasons for not participating**

I expect others to do so	<b>17%</b>
I don't believe in such processes	<b>64%</b>
I did not have information on the subject	<b>10%</b>
I could not reach the location	<b>8%</b>
Other	<b>1%</b>

Lack of trust in the veracity and genuineness of the public consultation processes could be triggered by circumstances when public institutions fail to showcase how the feedback, suggestions coming from citizens and or other stakeholders are taken into consideration or, explain why those suggestions could not fit into the adopted policy document.

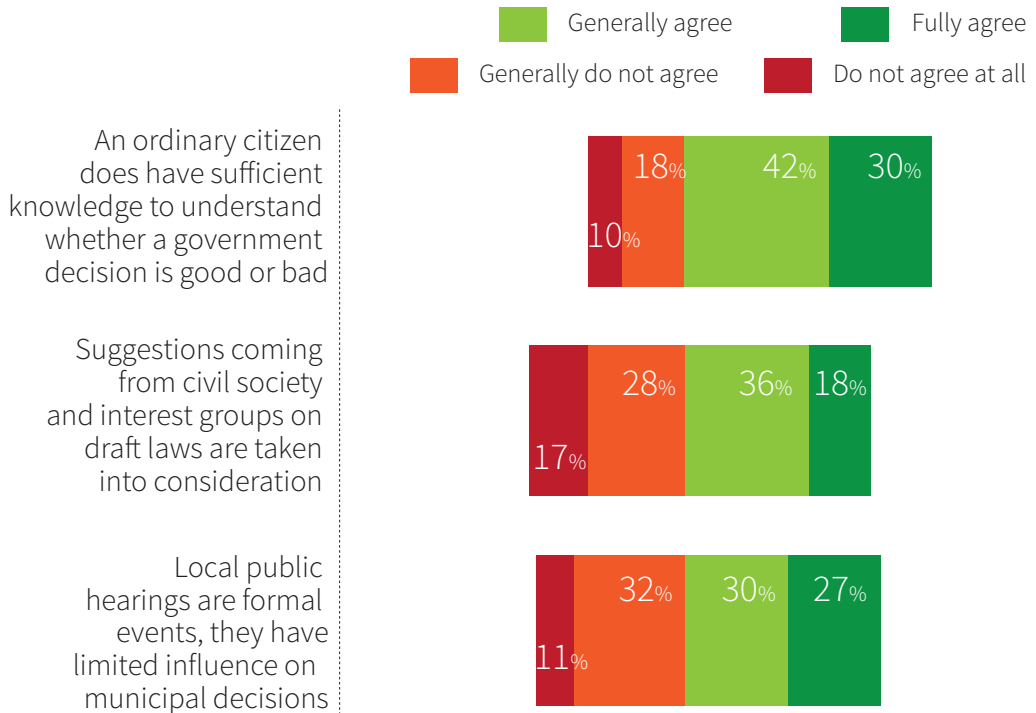
Moreover, when asked to take a stand (agreeability) on three specific statements related to citizen engagement, results show that:

- 72% of respondents believe an ordinary citizen does have the sufficient knowledge to understand whether a government decision is good or bad; HOWEVER
- 57% of respondents believe that local public hearing are formal events with limited influence on municipal decisions; AND
- 54% of respondents believe that suggestions coming from civil society and interest groups on draft laws are taken into consideration.

Even though during 2016 civil society organizations and other interest groups have called for and organized demonstrations and protests (signed petitions) targeting different policy areas, only 22% of respondents claim to have participated in such activities. The main reason for that is “Shared interest of the community where they belong (43% of respondents).

Fig. 35

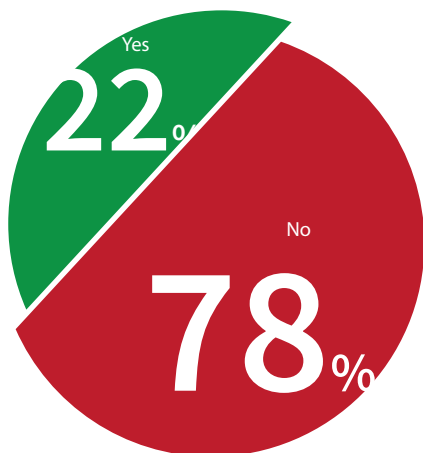
Citizen engagement statements



Note: "No opinion" responses are not shown

Fig. 36

Attended a demonstration / rally or signed a petition 2016



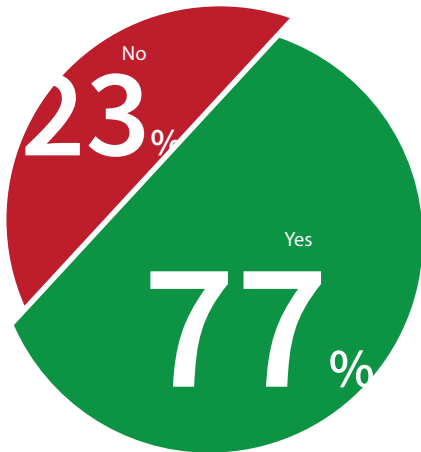
**Table 7. Reasons for civic engagement**

Personal interest	<b>20%</b>
Shared interest of the community I belong to	<b>43%</b>
Political party militancy	<b>12%</b>
Peer pressure	<b>3%</b>
A combination of more than one reason	<b>22%</b>

The final question with regard to citizen engagement aimed to explore citizen’s stand on voluntary work. 77% of respondents are willing to engage in voluntary work for the benefit of the community. Socio-demographic analysis reveals that younger generations tend to be more willing to engage in voluntary work (86% of the 18-25 year-olds as compared to 77% of the 46-55 year-olds)

**Fig. 37**

Potential engagement in voluntary work



## SATISFACTION WITH PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

Regular citizen feedback on the quality and efficiency of public service delivery holds particular importance in transition countries, where the relationships between policy-makers, service providers and citizens have been transformed intensely under the service delivery reforms centering on the citizen.

During 2016, a new law on the Delivery of Front Office Services entered into force,<sup>26</sup> followed by the adoption of a citizen-centred service delivery policy document with the aim of improving the quality of public services and enhancing citizen feedback.<sup>27</sup>

In five municipalities, one stop shops for public services were piloted. Since 2015, Albania has undertaken a new administrative-territorial division<sup>28</sup>, which provides for 61 municipalities. In January 2016, the new law on the organization and functioning of local governance entered into force,<sup>29</sup> stipulating the decentralization of a high number of competences to the consolidated municipalities.

In this context, the Opinion Poll aimed to quantify the level of public satisfaction towards public services delivered by a number of government-related institutions in the past 12 months. The selected public services are the ones citizens receive on a daily basis (i.e. public transport, supply of drinking water) or quite often (i.e. health services, communal services etc.) offered by both central and local government.

A detailed breakdown of these results can be found in Figure 38.

2016 data suggest that only six out of eleven listed public services (6/11) have at least more than 50% of the public generally satisfied.

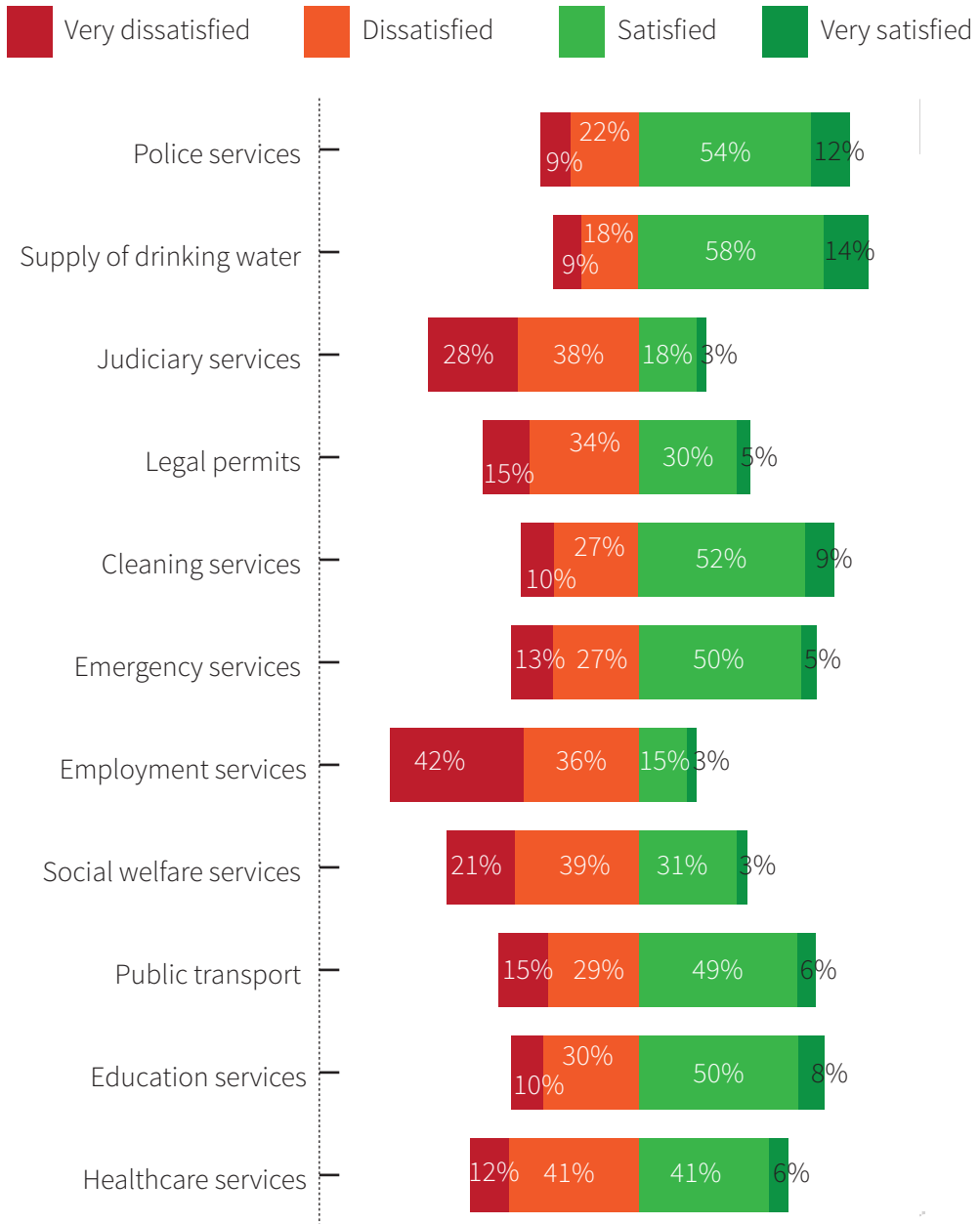
Citizens are mostly **satisfied**<sup>30</sup> with the **supply of drinking water** (72%), **police services** (66%) and **cleaning services** (offered at local level) (61%).

On the other side of the spectrum, more than half of the citizens are **not satisfied** with **employment services** (78%), with **judiciary services** (66%) and with **social welfare services** (60%).



Fig. 38

Satisfaction with public service delivery 2016



Note: "No opinion" responses are not shown.



## Socio-Demographic Comparison

After presenting the average satisfaction levels, we now turn to the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Table 8 summarizes the results in a matrix of the contingency tables.

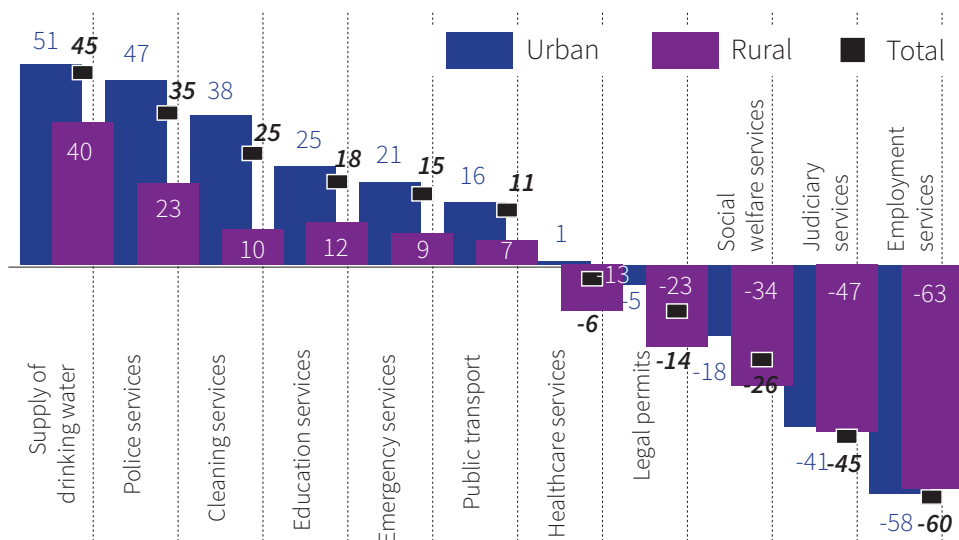
In an aggregate level, there appears to be little difference across gender in satisfaction with public service delivery. As it was the case with the levels of trust (see above), **older demographics** of the Albanian society tend to be more satisfied with the public services as compared to the younger generations. In addition, as regards employment status, the **employed** part of the demographics appears to be more satisfied and furthermore, within this category, satisfaction is most pronounced among employees in the **public sector**.

However, the **urban-rural** classification appears to be a major determining factor behind the satisfaction level, with citizens residing in rural areas more likely to report lower levels of satisfaction with public service delivery as compared to those residing in urban areas.

Figure 39 presents the net satisfaction<sup>31</sup> with public service delivery disaggregated by region. For instance, focusing on the services that have at least more than 50% of the public generally satisfied (the left of the panel), the net satisfaction gap goes from 6 p.p. for the supply of drinking water to 28 p.p. for the cleaning services. On the other end of the spectrum (the right of the panel), the negative net satisfaction gap is 14 p.p. for the health care public services and 16 p.p. for social welfare services.

Fig. 39

Net satisfaction by urban-rural classification



**Table 8. Two-way table of “Satisfied” or “Very satisfied**

	Healthcare services	Education services	Public transport	Social welfare services	Employment services	Emergency services	Cleaning services	Legal permits	Judicial services	Supply of drinking water	Police services
<b>TOTAL</b>	47%	58%	55%	34%	18%	55%	61%	35%	21%	72%	66%
<b>Gender</b>											
Male	45%	56%	54%	32%	17%	54%	60%	34%	20%	73%	65%
Female	50%	60%	56%	37%	19%	57%	63%	35%	23%	71%	68%
<b>Age</b>											
18-25	45%	59%	51%	34%	16%	53%	60%	35%	23%	74%	63%
26-35	41%	57%	55%	34%	15%	54%	60%	31%	19%	70%	61%
36-45	46%	58%	52%	32%	18%	55%	61%	33%	19%	74%	66%
46-55	48%	56%	59%	31%	18%	55%	63%	39%	20%	73%	68%
56-65	53%	59%	55%	36%	20%	54%	59%	34%	19%	66%	65%
Over 66	56%	62%	62%	40%	23%	67%	71%	43%	32%	76%	80%
<b>Education</b>											
Basic Education	48%	57%	55%	31%	14%	52%	53%	30%	23%	70%	66%
High-school	44%	56%	54%	31%	17%	57%	64%	35%	19%	71%	62%
University	50%	62%	58%	43%	23%	56%	64%	39%	23%	76%	73%
<b>Status of employment</b>											
Total	52%	62%	57%	36%	23%	59%	66%	42%	22%	74%	69%
Employed	65%	73%	62%	46%	33%	69%	69%	47%	27%	78%	76%
Private	46%	58%	53%	29%	17%	53%	64%	39%	20%	73%	65%
Unemployed	39%	51%	52%	29%	10%	50%	55%	25%	17%	69%	60%
Retired	54%	60%	62%	39%	25%	64%	69%	42%	30%	74%	77%
Student	42%	62%	49%	37%	16%	49%	55%	28%	20%	69%	59%
<b>Region</b>											
Urban	50%	61%	57%	37%	18%	58%	68%	38%	22%	75%	72%
Rural	43%	55%	53%	31%	17%	52%	54%	32%	21%	69%	60%

Next, respondents were asked about possible complaint systems in place and whether they trust these systems.

Data show that during the last 12 months, some 16% of surveyed citizens (N=252) claim to have submitted a complaint regarding a received service to the relevant institutions. Nevertheless, from this proportion, only 1 in 3 citizens (N=84) report that their complaint was addressed afterwards; 50% of them (N=125) state that their complaint was not addressed.

Fig. 40

During 2016, did you submit a complaint to the above institutions for a received service?

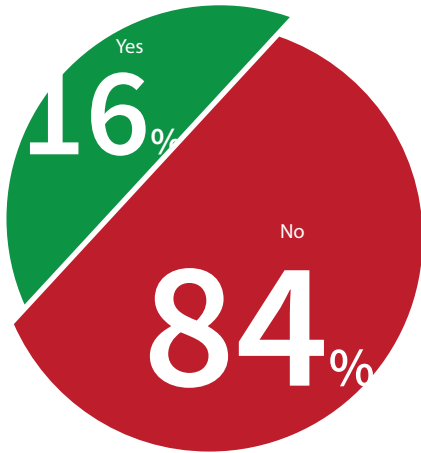
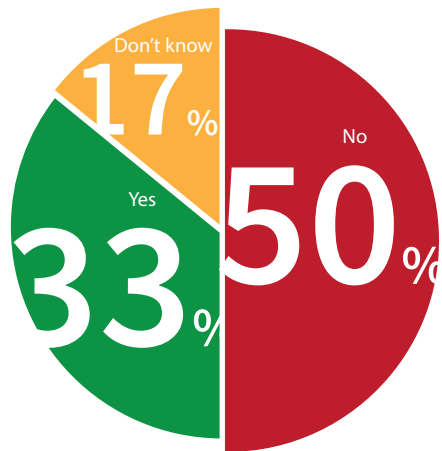


Fig. 41

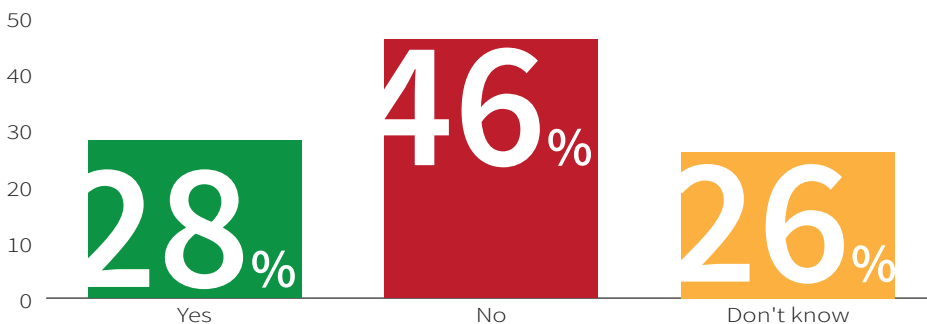
If you sent a complaint, was your complained addressed?



This finding is consistent with the result that only 28% of surveyed citizens trust that the institutions listens and properly addresses the complaints coming from citizens, as compared with the majority (or 46%) who do not believe so. See Figure 46.

Fig. 42

Do you believe that the institutions “listen to” and properly addresses the complaints coming from citizens?

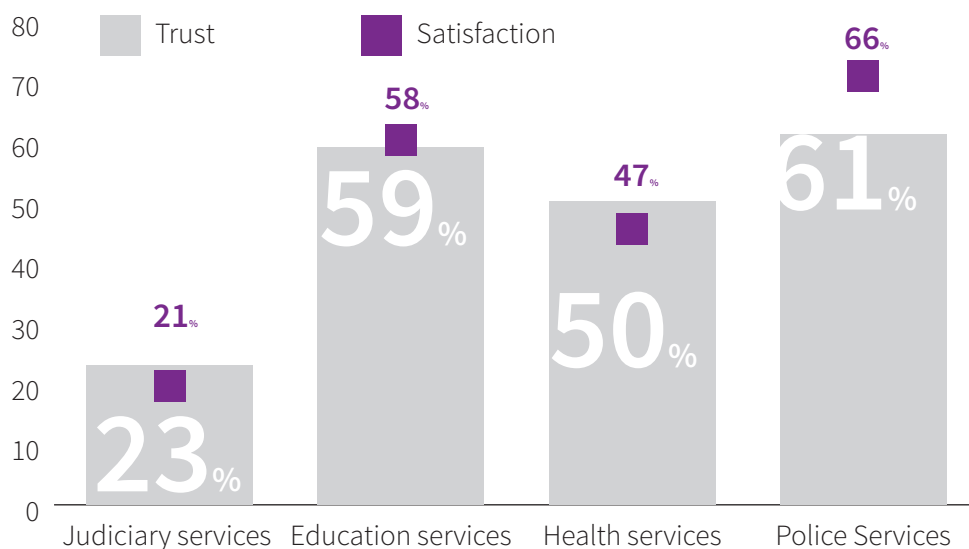


### Service delivery and trust

When analyzing the relationship between the level of satisfaction and reported trust for four institutions and the services they provide (namely, health services, education services, judiciary services and policy services) trust and satisfaction tend to go hand in hand with minor exceptions. For the case of health services, citizens hold slightly greater trust in the respective healthcare system (50%), than report to be satisfied (47%). Whereas, for the police it is reversed. See figure 47.

Fig. 43

Trust in institutions and satisfaction with public service delivery 2016



### Safety in everyday life

A safe society is a core demand of citizens and central for their well-being. To this end, respondents were asked if they feel safe in their everyday life. Slightly over half (51%) of surveyed citizens report not feeling safe as compared to 49% of them who assert the opposite. This feeling of unsafety is widespread among the rural areas (57%) as compared to urban ones (45%).

Analysis of data shows that those people reporting feeling unsafe have less trust in the police (70% of them tend not to trust the police) and are less likely to be satisfied with police services (76% of them are dissatisfied with police services).

The main reported reason for feeling unsafe is criminality (49%). For the distribution of the responses see Table 9.

Fig. 44

In general, do you feel safe in your everyday life?

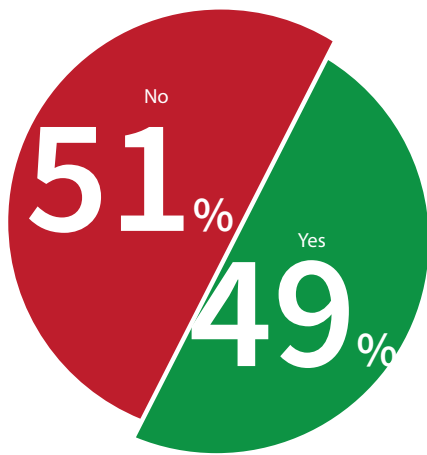


Table 9. Main factors for feeling unsafe

Criminality	49%
Justice	11%
Health	11%
Traffic	7%
Drug use	6%
Politics	5%
Pollution	3%
Domestic Violence	3%
Unequal wealth	3%
Free expression	1%
Confidentiality	1%

## ICT (USE OF TECHNOLOGY)

This section analyses some indicators on the usage of ICT aiming to explore the electronic interaction between government and its constituencies. The reforms undertaken by the Albanian government with regard to broadband connection, introduction of electronic governance and digital technology have created opportunities for increasing access to information.

Data show that, 42% of surveyed citizens are aware of the existence of the website of their respective municipality, whilst 52% responded “no” and 6% “don’t know” (See figure 45).<sup>32</sup>

Fig. 45

Do you know if your Municipality has a website?

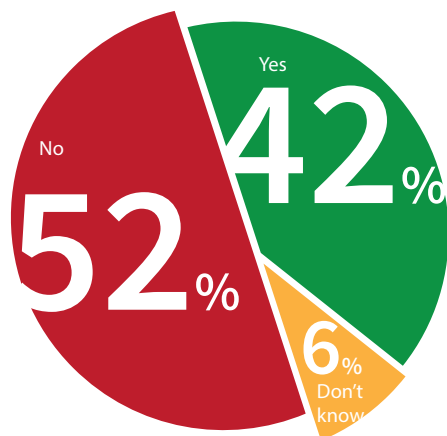
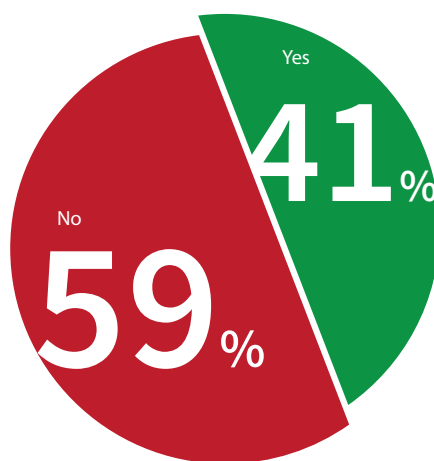


Fig. 46

Do you use the webpage of your Municipality?



Only those citizens who were aware of the existence of the website, were asked to respond to the other questions in this section (N= 692). Figure 46 shows that 59% of surveyed citizens<sup>33</sup> (N=383) do not use the webpage of the municipality, whilst 41% (N =266) of surveyed citizens **use the webpage of the municipality** for different purposes.

Table 8 shows that out of 41% (N=266) of citizens that use the municipality website, 61% of them (N=163) use it to receive information (check programs/ events in my city/town). Meanwhile 22% (N=58) of them use the website of municipality to follow council decisions, reading minutes of meetings etc. 11% of citizens (N=28) use website municipality to send complaints, comments to a municipal department/staff and 6% of citizens to receive services.

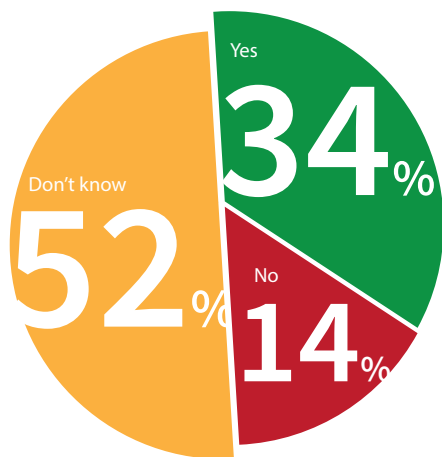
**Table 10. Various usages of the Municipality’s web page**

To receive information (check programs/ events in my city/town)	To follow council decisions, reading minutes of meetings	To send complaints, comments to a municipal department/staff	To receive services
61%	22%	11%	6%

Out of 42% of citizens (indicated in Fig.45) that are aware of the existence of a municipality website, only 34% of them (N=232) are informed about electronic services provided by their municipalities. 14% of citizens are not informed about electronic services offered by their municipalities and 52% have responded that they don’t know as shown in the Figure 47.

**Fig. 47**

Informed if the Municipality offers e-services

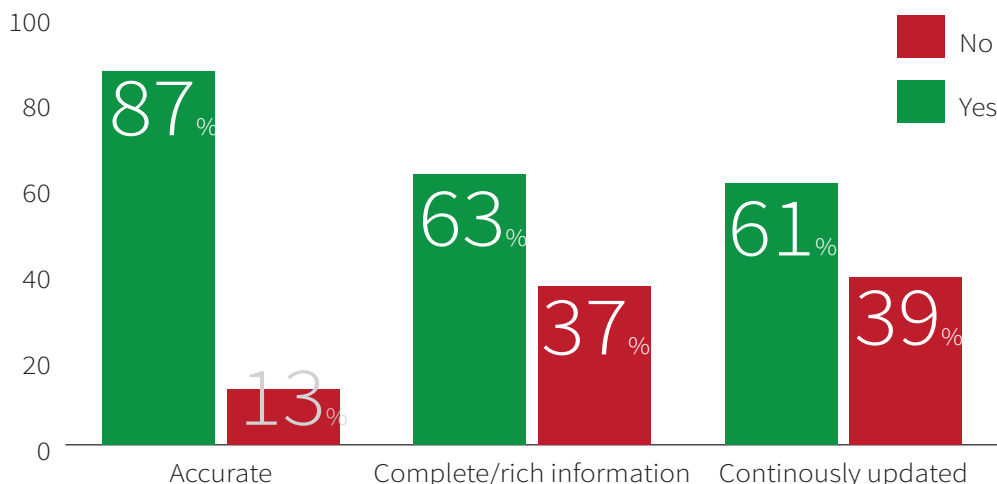


Responses on the question about the quality of website in term of information and services provision, show that 87% (N=230) of the surveyed citizens consider the quality of information accurate, whilst 13% (N=35) of them believe that the information is not accurate enough.

Moreover 63% (N=166) of citizens surveyed said that the information provided in the website is rich and completed. In contrary 37% (N=96) of citizens believe that the information provided in the website of the municipality is not complete and rich. With regard to the question on “Continuously updated the information on the website” 61% (N=163) of citizens replied “Yes”, whilst 39% (N=102) said “No”.

Fig. 48

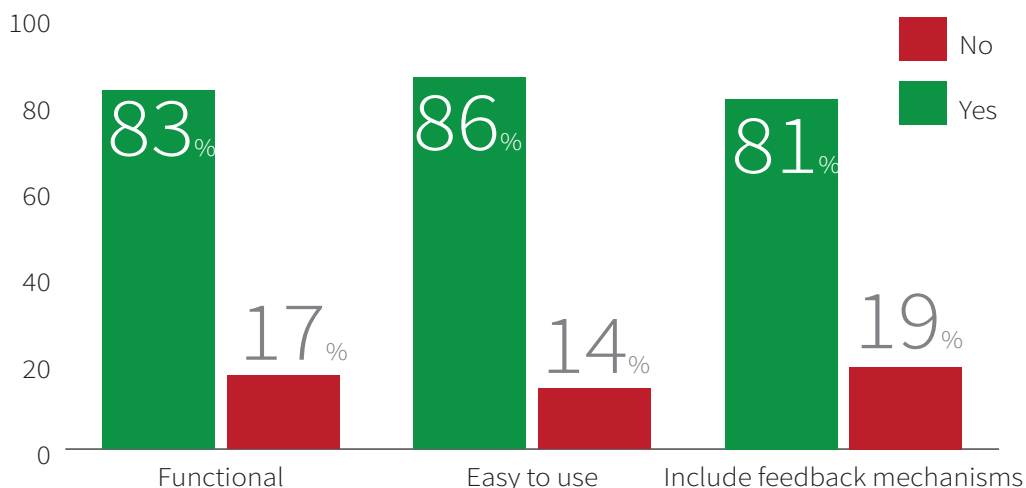
The quality of website in term of information provided



With reference to quality of website in term of service provision, 83% (N=221) of citizens responded that services available on the website are functional, against of 17% (N=44). On the other side 86% (N=226) of citizens responded that services provided are easy to use whilst 14% (N=37) believe the contrary. With regards to the feedback mechanism, 81% (N=214) of surveyed citizens (who use the municipality website) responded that the municipality website includes feedback mechanisms, as opposed to 19% (N=51) who did not.

Fig. 49

The quality of website in term of service provision





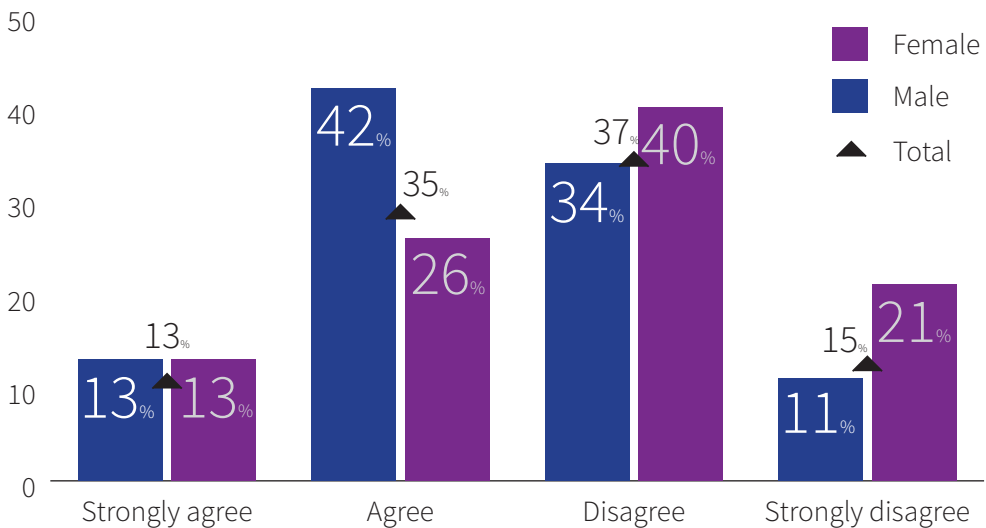
## GENDER AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

Last, respondents were asked to give their opinion on three main statements related to gender that focus on (1) attitudes towards gender equality, (2) access to public services, and (3) engendering of public policies. Data point out to the existence of a perception gap on the current state of gender parity – with the male part of the population portraying a rosier status quo.

“Statement 1: In the Albanian society there is equality between men and women”

Fig. 50

In the Albanian society there is equality between men and women



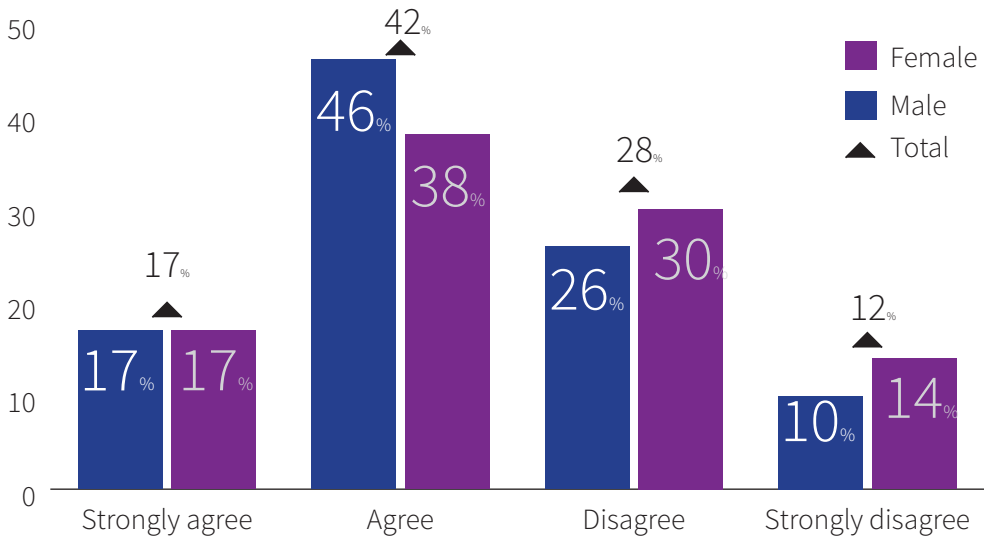
Note: “No opinion” responses are not shown.

On the whole, only 48% of surveyed Albanians believe that there is equality between men and women in the Albanian society. As figure 50 shows, this percentage drops to 37% within the female population, as compared to 55% of the male population.

“Statement 2: In Albania, women and men have same access to public services”

Fig. 51

In Albania, women and men have same access to public services



Note: “No opinion” responses are not shown.

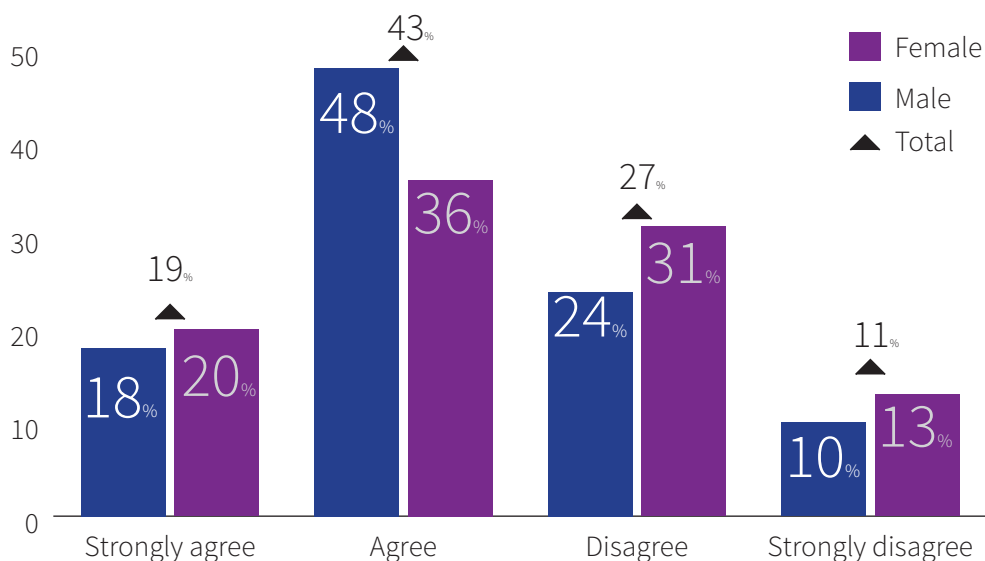
The majority or 59% of surveyed citizens hold that men and women have the same access to public services. However, this belief is shared by only 55% of women, as compared to 63% of men.

“Statement 3: In Albania, public servants serve with the same devotion and ethics to women and men”

The view that public servants serve with the same devotion and ethics to women and men is held by 62% of surveyed citizens. Congruent to the previous two statements, only 56% of women perceive this as compared to 66% of men.

Fig. 52

In Albania, public servants serve with the same devotion and ethics to women and men



Note: "No opinion" responses are not shown.

Next, respondents were asked about their experiences of discrimination in access to public services in the reference period of the last 12 months. The majority of the sample (or 87%) claims not to have been treated differently by an institution or public official. However, 6% of them report to being treated differently on the basis of their gender. Table 11 summarizes the distribution of results.

**Table 11. During 2016, have you been treated differently by an institution/or public official, on the basis of:**

Basis	Yes, I have been discriminated based on:
Gender	6%
Age	4%
Ethnicity	1%
Sexual orientation	0%
Disability	1%
Other	1%

### Women in local decision-making

Earlier to the last held local elections in 2015, amendments were made to the Electoral Code to require 50% representation of each gender on the lists of candidates – with the aim of increasing the number of women in local decision-making.

One year after the local elections, respondents were asked about their awareness and held views on the gender composition of their local municipal councils.

First, 24% of the surveyed citizens claim to know that there are more women in their respective Municipal Councils, as compared to the majority of them (or 57%) who are not aware of the gender composition of their Municipal Councils.

Fig. 53

Do you know if there are more women in the Municipal Council?

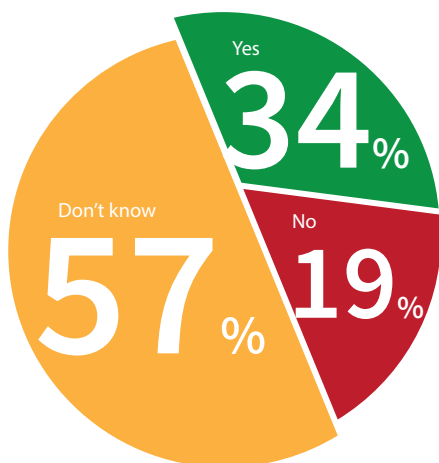
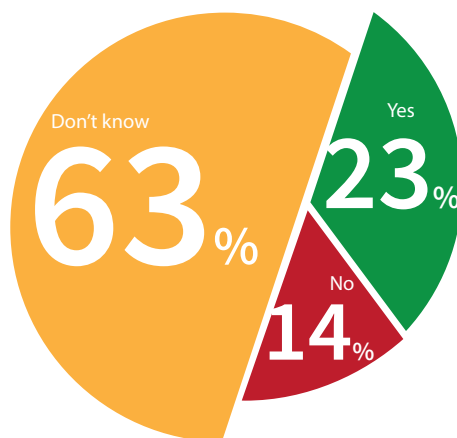


Fig. 54

Are you satisfied with the number of actual women in your Municipal Council?



Second, at a normative level, the majority of surveyed citizens (or 65%) believe that an increased number of women in Municipal Councils will have a positive impact in local governance. 24% of them do not share this view. On the other hand, as figure 56 describes, the majority of the surveyed citizens (83%) think that women are just as capable as men holding any public position. See table 5 for the summary of these results disaggregated by gender and region of residence

Fig. 55

Do you believe an increased number of women in the Municipal Council will have a positive impact in local governance?

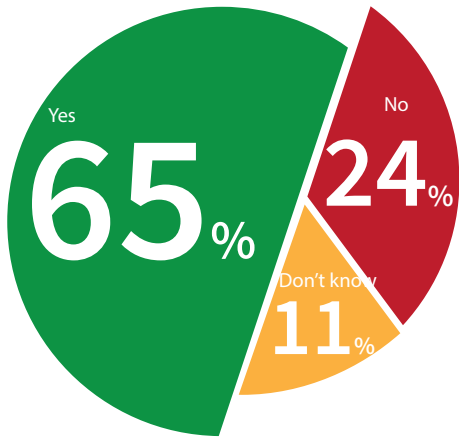
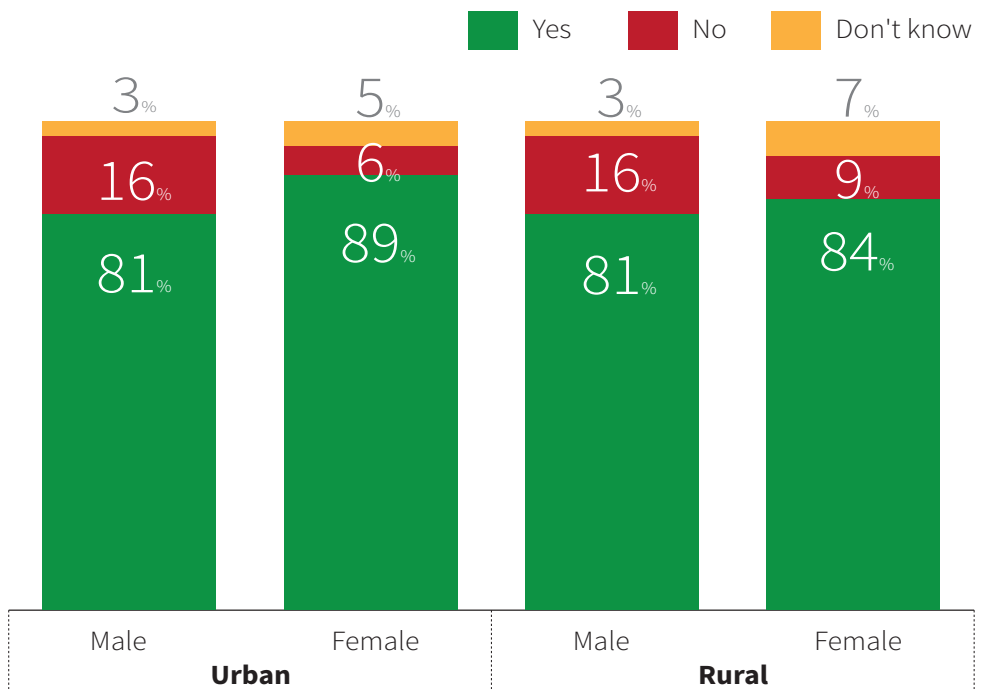


Fig. 56

Do you think women are just as capable as men holding any public position?



**Table 12. Two-way table**

	Do you know if there are more women in the Municipal Council?			Are you satisfied with the number of actual women in your Municipal Council?			Do you believe an increased number of women in the Municipal Council will have a positive impact in local governance?		
	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know
Total	24%	19%	57%	23%	14%	63%	65%	24%	11%
<b>Gender</b>									
Male	24%	21%	55%	24%	13%	63%	57%	31%	12%
Female	24%	17%	59%	21%	16%	63%	77%	15%	9%
<b>Region</b>									
Urban	26%	17%	56%	24%	15%	60%	67%	23%	12%
Rural	22%	22%	58%	22%	14%	65%	63%	24%	10%

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# Annex 1

No.	Qark	Urban Area	Rural Area	No of Questionnaires
		Municipality Center	Administrative Unit	
				27 (keeping an equal distribution between urban and rural areas)
1	Berat	Berat	Otlak	
		Ura Vajgurore	Poshnjë	27
		Kuçovë	Kozarë	27
		Skrapar	Qendër Skrapar	27
		Poliçan	Tërpan	27
2	Dibër	Peshkopi	Maqellarë	27
		Bulqizë	Ostren	27
		Burrel	Ulëz	27
		Klos	Xibër	27
		Durrës	Ishëm	27
3	Durrës	Shijak	Maminas	27
		Krujë	Fushë Krujë	27
		Elbasan	Labinot	27
4	Elbasan	Cërrik	Gostimë	27
		Belsh	Grekan	27
		Peqin	Përparim	27
		Gramsh	Pishaj	27
		Librazhd	Hotolisht	27
		Përrenjas	Qukës	27
		Fier	Cakran	27
5	Fier	Roskovec	Kuman	27
		Patos	Sharrëz	27
		Lushnjë	Golem	27
		Divjakë	Grabian	27
		Ballsh	Selitë	27



		Gjirokastrë	Antigonë	27	
		Libohovë	Qendër Libohovë	27	
6	Gjirokastrë	Memaliaj	Memaliaj Fshat	27	
		Përmet	Petran	27	
		Këlcyrë	Kelcyrë Fshat	27	
		Tepelenë	Dukat	27	
		Dropull	Pogon	27	
			Korçë	Vithkuq	27
			Maliq	Libonik	27
7	Korçë	Pustec	Pustec fshat	27	
		Ersekë	Novoselë	27	
		Bilisht	Hoçisht	27	
		Pogradec	Udënisht	27	
			Kukës	Bicaj	27
			Krumë	Golaj	27
8	Kukës	Bajram Curri	Margegaj	27	
			Lezhë	Shëngjin	27
9	Lezhë	Rrëshen	Rubik	27	
		Laç	Milot	27	
			Shkodër	Rrethinat	27
10	Shkodër	Koplik	Grumire	27	
		Pukë	Gjegjan	27	
		Vau Dejës	Bushat	27	
		Fushë Arrrëz	Fierzë	27	
			Tiranë	Petrelë	27
11	Tiranë	Kamëz	Paskuqan	27	
		Vorë	Bërxullë	27	
		Kavajë	Luz i vogël	27	
		Rrogozhinë	Kryevidh	27	
12	Vlorë	Vlorë	Orikum	27	
		Selenicë	Vllahinë	27	
		Himarë	Lukovë	27	
		Sarandë	Ksamil	27	
		Konispol	Xarrë	27	
		Finiq	Livadhja	27	

## Annex 2: Sample characteristics 2013-2016

	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>Gender</b>				
<b>Male</b>	45%	49%	50%	57%
<b>Female</b>	55%	50%	50%	43%
<b>Age groups</b>				
<b>18-25</b>	14%	23%	23%	18%
<b>26-35</b>	14%	22%	25%	23%
<b>36-45</b>	14%	18%	16%	19%
<b>46-55</b>	19%	18%	17%	18%
<b>55-65</b>	20%	10%	11%	13%
<b>Over 66</b>	18%	7%	8%	9%
<b>Education level</b>				
<b>Uneducated</b>	1%	1%	2%	0%
<b>Basic education (9 years)</b>	14%	15%	14%	25%
<b>High school</b>	40%	41%	40%	51%
<b>University degree</b>	44%	42%	43%	24%
<b>Employment status</b>				
<b>Employed</b>	40%	46%	45%	43%
<b>Unemployed</b>	20%	25%	28%	35%
<b>Student</b>	8%	10%	9%	8%
<b>Retired</b>	26%	9%	11%	12%
<b>Other</b>	3%	5%	7%	2%

Note: Refusals are not included. Percentages might not sum up to 100%.

# endnotes

1. Refer to the Annex 2.
2. *While in the field, interviewers faced difficulties to recruit women as study participants. This was especially the case in rural, northern area. In addition, individuals with lower levels of education were more willing to participate in the study. This experience had two implications. The ratio of women participating in the study was lower than men (43% vs. 57%). Furthermore, the majority of respondents (51%) had high school education.*
3. *Literature suggests that socio-demographic characteristics, such as age, education, income and gender are determinants of trust levels. For more please check: Arnold, Christine et al. (2012): 'Trust in the institutions of the European Union: A cross-country examination, European Integration online Papers, (EIoP), Special Mini-Issue 2, Vol. 16, Article 8.*
4. *SD denotes standard deviation. Standard deviation is a measure that summarizes the size by which every value varies from the mean.*
5. *If people perceive that the government is pursuing policy goals with which they agree, then they should trust the government more.*
6. *As a distributor of positive and negative information people receive about government.*
7. *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.*
8. *Throughout the report, for the sake of analysis, the bottom (1-2) and top (3-4) verbal ratings are collated in two broad categories: tend to trust and tend not to trust.*
9. *% of surveyed citizens expressing "I have great trust" or "Basically I trust".*
10. *See above.*
11. *This refers to percentage points changes.*
12. *% of surveyed expressing "Basically I don't trust" or "I have no trust".*
13. *See above.*
14. *% of surveyed expressing "I have great trust" or "Basically I trust".*
15. *Percentages have been rounded to the nearest percent.*
16. *For example, graphic and image portrayal or sensationalizing of crime.*
17. *"Transparency is the availability of information about an organization or actor allowing external actors to monitor the internal workings or performance". Transparency would therefore include both the state's and the public's perspectives on the release of and access to information (active and passive transparency), the participation of citizens in the process, and consequently their capacity to evaluate the functioning of the authorities*

18. *N* denotes the number of observations.
19. BIRN Albania. (2016). *Local Government under the Lens of Freedom of Information*. Retrieved from <http://birn.eu.com/en/news-and-events/birn-albania-publishes-report-on-transparency-of-local-government>
20. *Ibid*, 6
21. *Ibid*.
22. *This was an open-ended question. In the graph, the three most mentioned institutions are included.*
23. *Citizens who have received services.*
24. BIRN Albania. (2016). *Local Government under the Lens of Freedom of Information*. Retrieved from <http://birn.eu.com/en/news-and-events/birn-albania-publishes-report-on-transparency-of-local-government>
25. *64% of respondents who did not participate at consultation processes, namely (38% at central level and 32% at local level).*
26. *Ligj nr. 13/2016 datë 18.2.2016 Për mënyrën e ofrimit të shërbimeve publike në sportel në Republikën e Shqipërisë.*
27. *Long-term Policy Document on the Delivery of Citizen Centric Services by Central Government Institutions in Albania*. Retrieved from <http://www.adisa.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/GoA-Citizen-Centric-Service-Delivery-Policy-Document2c-April-2016.pdf>
28. *Law No. 115/2014, "On Administrative-territorial Division of Local Government Units in the Republic of Albania".*
29. *Law no. 139/2015 "On local self-government".*
30. *% of surveyed expressing "Satisfied" or "Very satisfied".*
31. *The "net satisfaction" is defined as the difference between the percentage of the respondents who answered "Very satisfied" or "Satisfied" and "Very dissatisfied" and "Dissatisfied", not taking into account "do not know" replies. It can be a positive value, meaning that on average, citizens tend to be satisfied with that service, or a negative value, which means that generally, citizens tend to be dissatisfied with it.*
32. *31 / 61 Municipalities have official websites (manually checked on January 2017)*
33. *Aware of the existence of the Municipality website*

