



opinion poll
2021
TRUST IN GOVERNANCE



Institute for Democracy and Mediation
Instituti për Demokraci dhe Ndërmjetësim

With funding from



Austrian
Development
Cooperation



Opinion poll

TRUST *in* GOVERNANCE 2021

Survey Report



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Opinion Poll 2021: Trust in Governance

Survey Report

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This report was prepared under the framework of the “Consolidation of Citizen-Centric Public Service Delivery in Albania” (CSDA) project, a donor pool fund implemented by the Government of Albania in partnership with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and with Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) as a key contributor, together with UNDP. The content of this report is the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Albanian Government, UNDP, or ADC.

Trust in Governance 2021 at a glance

In its ninth annual edition, the ‘Trust in Governance’ Opinion Poll was conducted by the Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM) in November 2021 across the 61 municipalities of Albania, using a randomly selected and nationally representative sample of 2,500 citizens. The COVID-19 pandemic continued to cause disruption to all facets of life in the country, including governance, citizen engagement and public service delivery. Public perceptions and attitudes on the relevant issues targeted by the survey were also likely to have been affected by the combined impact of an intensive parliamentary electoral campaign in April 2021; post-election political developments; the ongoing reconstruction programme in areas affected by the devastating 2019 earthquake; and the EU’s failure to kick-start accession negotiations with Albania.

The findings are grouped into nine main sections and summarised as following:



Trust in institutions

- Organisations such as NATO (73.2%), the UN (71.4%), and the EU (71.3%), maintained their ranking as the most trusted international institutions in Albania, despite a decline compared to 2020.
- Albanian citizens continued to perceive religious institutions (67%) as the most trusted domestic institutions, followed by educational institutions (57.1%), the armed forces (54.6%), and civil-society organisations (52.6%).
- The president (23.5%), political parties (26.4%), the courts (27.7%), and the prosecution (28.4%) were among the least trusted institutions in 2021.
- Up to 35% of Albanians believed that judicial reform is being implemented correctly and 57% believed that it will positively impact the development of the country. Both figures witnessed an increase by 6 and 4 percentage points (pp) respectively, compared to 2020.
- Television (54%) remained the most popular media outlet, particularly among people living in rural areas (60%), although social media (29%) and online portals (10%) are growing in popularity as the primary source for news on current affairs.
- During 2021, one in four citizens believed that the information provided by Albanian media was accurate/true.



Transparency and accountability

- More than half of surveyed Albanians perceived the central government (57.4%) and municipal governments (58.2%) as non-transparent, although the perception of transparency increased compared to 2020, marking the second consecutive year of improvement.
- In 2021, most of the Albanian population (62.2%) was aware that the right to information is guaranteed by law.
- 37.5% of the Albanian population perceived the central government as accountable and 38.6% perceived the municipality as being so; an increase in both for the second year in a row.
- Awareness of the mechanisms that hold the government to account increased for all listed institutions in 2021. Overall, Albanians believed that international organisations (77%) hold the government to account better than domestic organisations.
- The three institutions perceived as the most effective mechanisms for domestic accountability were the Albanian State Supreme Audit Institution (71.1%), followed by parliament (63.9%) and the media (61.5%).



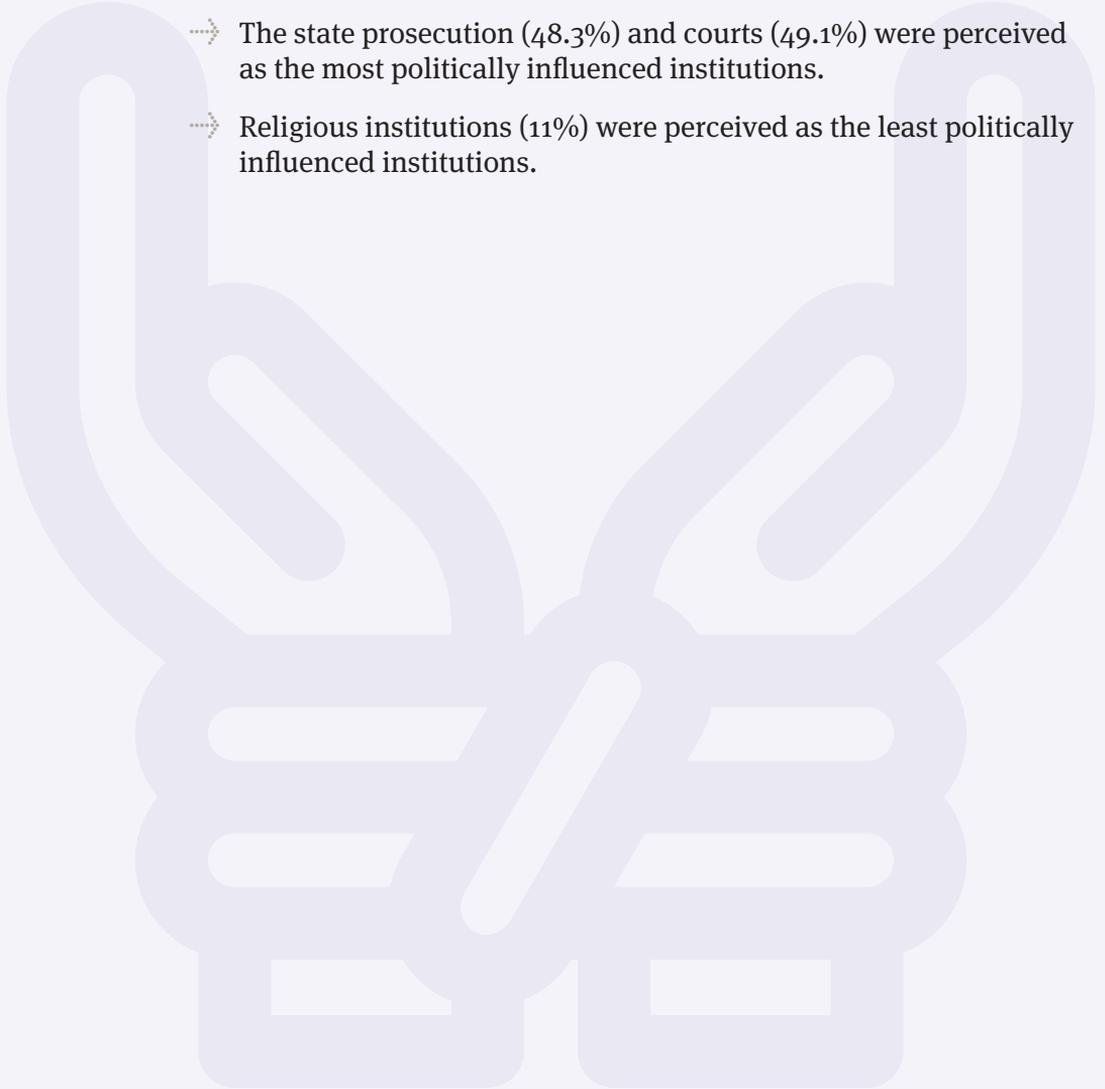
Corruption in public institutions

- 83.1% of Albanians perceived petty corruption as widespread or very widespread, while 83.7% perceived grand or high-level corruption as such.
- The top five institutions in terms of perceived corruption in 2021 were the judiciary, followed by healthcare institutions, public administration, local institutions and the police.
- 68.4% of citizens had no confidence in the prosecution of grand corruption cases, while 59.3% had no confidence in the effective prosecution of petty corruption.
- 11% of the Albanian population witnessed cases of corruption at the central government level and 18.5% at the local government.
- 29.4% of citizens that received a service from local government in 2021 (N=1672), reported having paid a bribe to public officials at this level.
- 34.6% of citizens that received a service from central government institutions in 2021 (N=973), reported having paid a bribe to officials at this level.



Political influence

- The state prosecution (48.3%) and courts (49.1%) were perceived as the most politically influenced institutions.
- Religious institutions (11%) were perceived as the least politically influenced institutions.





Citizen engagement

- Albanian citizens' interest in participating in the decision-making processes of public institutions continued to fall in 2021 – 43.5% compared to 49% in 2020 and 56.5% in 2019.
- The majority of Albanian citizens (72.2%) reported insufficient opportunities to participate in the decision-making process of public institutions.
- More citizens (38.1%) reported having opportunities to participate in local-level decision-making, than at the level of central government (27.8%).
- 16.6% of surveyed citizens used the online portal www.konsultimipublik.gov.al to be informed or be consulted about draft legislation or draft strategies/action plans at the central level.
- The majority of Albanian citizens (71.7%) were confident that citizens have sufficient knowledge to understand if government decisions are good or bad.
- Most citizens (63.2%) saw local public hearings as formal events, while 40.3% believed that public institutions take suggestions from civil society into consideration.
- 38.8% of Albanians agreed that municipal councils represent local communities and 33% found that citizens' priorities were reflected in their municipal budget.
- More Albanian citizens (27.1%) attended a demonstration/rally or signed a petition in 2021 compared to 2020 (22%).
- 65.1% of citizens were willing to engage in voluntary work. Younger generations, students and employees in the public sector were more inclined to volunteer for the benefit of the community.
- 41% of Albanian citizens wanted to move to another country in 2021.



Satisfaction with public service delivery

- Satisfaction rates for public service delivery improved for most of the core and administrative public services measured by the survey, compared with 2020.
- More Albanian citizens (41.9%) were satisfied with the delivery of core public services, compared to 2020 (38%). Education (53.3%), cleaning services (48.3%), and emergency medical services (46%) were reported as satisfactory more often than police services (37.4%), public transport (32.6%), and judicial services (27.2%).
- 54% of Albanian citizens who had used an administrative service in 2021 were satisfied or very satisfied with the service, particularly when it came to the civil registry (72%), social insurance (64%), and road transport (60%).
- 15.1% of survey respondents submitted a complaint to public service providers in 2021.
- 16.1% of Albanian citizens used the online platform www.shqiperiaqedum.al to file a complaint in 2021.
- 26.2% of Albanians believed that institutions properly address citizens' complaints.
- More citizens (36.9%) visited a service window of the Agency for the Delivery of Integrated Services (ADISA) in 2021, than in 2020 (29.4%). Service delivery satisfaction rose to 76.9% in 2021 from 73% in 2020.
- 71.6% of surveyed citizens did not feel safe in everyday life, roughly the same as in 2020 (70%). The main drivers of feelings of insecurity included crime, health issues, injustice, unemployment and natural disasters.



Natural Disasters

- More than half of citizens were dissatisfied with the transparency of central (52.1%) and local government (52.9%) decision-making during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 47.3% of Albanians were dissatisfied with the provision of online alternatives for obtaining services during the pandemic. 52.6% were also dissatisfied with the respect shown by institutions for human rights and freedoms during the same period.
- Around half of the Albanian population were dissatisfied with the execution of the post-2019 earthquake reconstruction programmes of the central government (49.2%) and local government (50.8%).



Use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

- 59.7% of surveyed citizens were aware that their municipality had a website. 40.7% of them had used the website of their municipality.
- 89.4% of Albanians were aware that the government offers electronic services through the e-Albania portal. 80.1% of them had received services through the e-Albania portal (74% in 2020).
- 92.6% of users assessed electronic services as functional and 90% believed the e-Albania portal improved speed of service.



Gender and social inclusion

- 60.6% of the Albanian population agreed that there is equality between men and women – up from 45% in 2020.
- 74.8% of citizens believed that men and women have the same access to public services.
- Most citizens (76.6%) believed that civil servants serve with the same devotion and ethics to women and men.
- The majority of the Albanians (81.8%) thought that men and women are equally capable of holding any public position.
- Approximately 1 in 8 Albanians reported being treated differently by an institution or public official based on gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, or something else; the same as in 2020.
- 6 in 10 Albanians thought that a higher number of women in municipal councils would have a positive impact on local governance.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Albania has been an official candidate for European Union (EU) accession since June 2014. The functioning of democratic institutions, public administration reform, rule of law, and economic development are not only at the heart of the accession process,¹ they are fundamental to the country's democratisation process itself. The public perception of democracy and the quality of governance in Albania are important indicators of the proper implementation of reforms by state institutions, support for the role those different agents play in society and progress towards EU accession.

The 'Trust in Governance' Opinion Poll is an annual exercise used to measure citizen's trust in public institutions. It is a quantitative instrument designed to explore public perceptions and attitudes on issues such as trust in public institutions; institutional transparency and accountability; the spread of corruption in state institutions; the level of citizen engagement in policy- and decision-making; satisfaction with public-service delivery; and enforcement of non-discriminatory laws and policies. Each year the Opinion Poll generates data that feeds into the enhancement of major reforms related to good governance, anti-corruption, judicial reform, and cross-cutting issues such as gender equality and social inclusion.

This survey report presents the findings of the Opinion Poll conducted by the Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM), across all 61 municipalities of Albania, between 6 and 21 November 2021. It is the ninth consecutive year that the Opinion Poll has been carried out (2013–2021) employing a similar survey instrument, with the same core questions. The 2021 edition is the second funded within the framework of the "Consolidation of Citizen Centric Public Service Delivery in Albania" (CSDA) project, a donor pool fund implemented by the Government of Albania in partnership with UNDP, and with Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) as key contributor, together with UNDP.

The report starts with an outline of the methodology and the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample, followed by the survey findings grouped into nine main sections: trust in institutions; transparency and accountability; corruption in public institutions; political influence; citizen engagement; satisfaction with public-service delivery; government performance in the face of natural disasters; use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT); and gender and social inclusion.



1 Democratic institutions, public administration reform, rule of law, economic development, and competitiveness are considered the "fundamentals" of the *acquis* by the European Commission.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 STATISTICAL METHODOLOGY AND THE STATISTICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

The Opinion Poll ‘Trust in Governance 2021’ employed a representative sample of the Albanian population for which respondents were selected from across the country’s municipalities and their administrative units. Using a weighted, nationally representative sample allows us to extrapolate from the Opinion Poll findings to the Albanian population as a whole. Consequently, level of statistical significance of the sample is described as follows: for an adult resident Albanian citizen population of 2,220,569, with a sample size of 2,500 respondents, for a confidence level of 95%, the confidence interval is ± 1.96 ; and for a confidence level of 99%, the confidence interval is ± 2.58 .

To determine the quota size of each of the counties, the total population of Albania was retrieved from the civil registry, and the number of residents of each of the counties on 1 January 2021 was retrieved from the Institute of Statistics (INSTAT). Since the number of Albanian residents over 18 years old has only changed by around 0.31% between 2019 and 2021, it did not statistically affect the sample size by county or the confidence interval mentioned above. Hence, as in the two previous editions, quantitative data as of 1 January 2019 was used to calculate the sample size by municipality and, in more detail, by the administrative units within them. The sample of 2,500 respondents was distributed across all 61 municipalities of the 12 counties.

Subsequently, distribution by county was adjusted to select only the adult population (aged 18 years and older) and to employ quota controls for gender. As INSTAT does not define age groups as either under 18 years old or over 18 years old, a linear interpolation technique was used.

The population representation coefficient for Albanian men over 18 years old as of 1 January 2019 was determined at 0.779325197 and for Albanian women over 18 years old at 0.790087789. The total population representation coefficient for Albanians over 18 years old was 0.78472508614746. As an illustration, Table 1 shows the distribution per county of the Albanian resident population over 18 years old and the sample size per county.

Table 1: Resident population on 1 January 2019 and 1 January 2021 and sample size per county

County	Resident population 2019	Resident population over 18 years old, 2019	Resident population over 18 years old, 2021	Sample size per county		
				Men	Women	Total
Berat	125,157	96,788	93,735	54	55	109
Dibër	118,948	91,986	89,210	54	50	104
Durrës	290,126	224,364	229,163	127	126	253
Elbasan	274,982	212,653	208,929	119	121	240
Fier	294,747	227,938	224,433	130	127	257

County	Resident population 2019	Resident population over 18 years old, 2019	Resident population over 18 years old, 2021	Sample size per county		
				Men	Women	Total
Gjirokaštër	61,423	47,500	45,538	26	28	54
Korçë	207,889	160,767	158,666	90	92	182
Kukës	76,594	59,233	58,374	34	33	67
Lezhë	125,195	96,817	94,699	54	55	109
Shkodër	202,895	156,905	154,730	86	91	177
Tiranë	895,160	692,257	715,818	384	399	783
Vlorë	189,311	146,400	147,273	82	83	165
Total	2,862,427	2,213,610	2,220,569	1,240	1,260	2,500

2.2 SURVEY INSTRUMENT

For the ninth time in a row, this report is based on primary data collected annually through a repeated survey which allows the researchers to make comparisons and measure change over time.² Therefore, since 2013 the ‘Trust in Governance’ instrument has included the same core questions regarding trust in governance, transparency and accountability, corruption, citizen engagement, and ICT use. However, to keep up with recent Albanian developments and trends, the survey content is revised annually to take account of these and new variables are introduced only if necessary and without affecting the comparability of the data.

In 2021, as a result of the panel’s revisions, following consultations with the development and government partners, several changes were introduced. These included the addition of two new questions and a few answer options, while one question was omitted, leaving the number of pages of the questionnaire unchanged.

Specifically, in Section I – Trust in Institutions, question one (Q1) evaluating the public’s trust in institutions included two new categories, the “Municipal administration” and “Municipal council” besides just “Local Government”.

In Section V – Use of ICT, the option of “getting municipality budget information” as an important section within the municipality’s website, was added in Q3. The same logic was applied for adding another option in Q6, to better assess electronic services. Given enhanced digitalisation efforts in Albania, a new question was added to measure the level of ability of citizens in using electronic services (Q7).

In Section VI – Public Service Delivery, a new question (Q1.2) was introduced to evaluate the ease at which citizens could obtain public administrative services, while the question evaluating local government social services was omitted given that the category of social assistance is



² Repeated surveys ask the same questions to different samples of people.

placed under core public services in Q1. Under Q1, the emergency services were separated into “emergency medical service” and “firefighters”, thus enabling a specific evaluation for each; and in the “cleaning services” category a reference was added to waste collection, which had become a sensitive problem for various local communities during 2021.

Section VII was updated to reflect the events of the past years, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the reconstruction programme following the November 2019 earthquake. In Q1 an option was added to measure public satisfaction with the transparency of local government decision-making. While in Q2 the focus shifted from evaluating the central and local governments’ first response to exploring citizens’ perspectives regarding the execution of the government’s post-earthquake reconstruction programme.

Lastly, in the “Demography” section, the regular monthly income was adjusted in accordance with the minimum wage scale that entered into force on 1 January 2021.

2.3 DATA COLLECTION AND PROCESSING

The face-to-face interview method was used for data collection. Before starting the field work, the questionnaire was pre-tested, and enumerators were trained.

The interview process took place between 6 and 21 November 2021, across 61 municipalities, with an average of 50 minutes per interview. A total of 43 experienced enumerators were engaged in the data collection and at the end of the field work, quality control checks of the collected data were conducted before the data entry.

2.4 DATA ANALYSIS

Data entry was done in Excel and then the dataset went through the data cleaning process, codification, and transferred into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software for statistical analyses. Collected data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics to check for differences observed among variable categories. The data analysis stage intended to reflect the perceptions of surveyed citizens without attempting to interpret them.

2.5 FOCUS GROUPS

Due to the ongoing pandemic and our commitment to preventing the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, following the 2020 edition precedent, this edition of the Opinion Poll ‘Trust in Governance’ does not include focus groups.

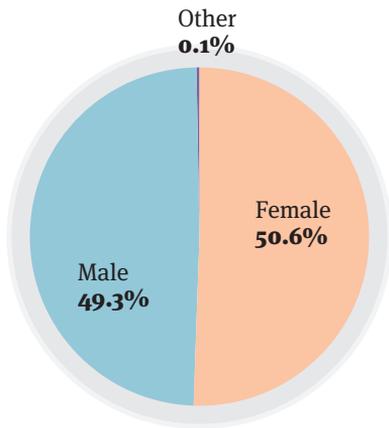
2.6 LIMITATIONS

This is the third year that the Opinion Poll has employed a representative sample of the Albanian population, instead of the quota sample that was used from 2013 to 2018. This means that the results of the 2021, 2020, and 2019 Opinion Polls can be generalised to the entire population. However, a comparison of the 2021, 2020, and 2019 statistical results with previous years (2013–2018) carry a level of statistical uncertainty.

3. DEMOGRAPHY OF SAMPLE

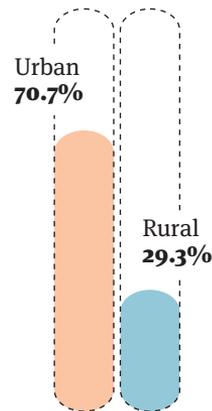
A total of 2,500 Albanian citizens aged 18 years and over were surveyed for the Opinion Poll ‘Trust in Governance 2021’ at a national level. Of the 2,500 respondents, 50.6% were female, 49.3% were male, and two respondents chose the option ‘other’.³ The geographical distribution was 70.7% urban and 29.3% rural.

Figure 1. Gender representation



Base: N = 2500

Figure 2. Geographical representation



Base: N = 2500

With regard to the age distribution, all respondents were at least of voting age as the sample included only those 18 years old and older. The oldest respondent was 84 years old. Most respondents (62.4%) were between 18 and 45 years old: 15.2% were between 18 and 25 years old, 25.4% between 26 and 35 years old, and 21.9% between 36 and 45 years old. A further 37.6% of the respondents were between 46 and 84 years old, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Age groups

Age (in groups)	Percentage (%)
18-25 years old	15.2%
26-35 years old	25.4%
36-45 years old	21.9%
46-55 years old	17%
56-65 years old	12.5%
66 years old and over	8.1%
Total	100%

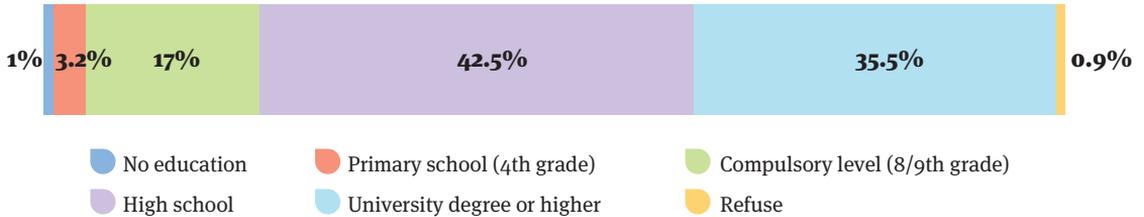
Base: N = 2500



3 Given the small number of respondents (two) who chose the option ‘other’, they were not included in the analyses conducted for gender differences.

The majority of the respondents (78%) had received a high school diploma or held a university or postgraduate degree: 42.5% had completed their education at the upper secondary level (i.e., high school diploma); whilst 35.5% had received a university or postgraduate degree. 21.1% of the respondents had up to lower secondary education: 17% of the respondents had completed the compulsory 8/9-year programme, while 4.1% had received no education or finished only primary education (4/5-year programme).

Figure 3. Educational attainment



Base: N = 2500

With regard to employment status, at the time of the survey, more than half (56.8%) of the respondents reported being employed, 20.6% were unemployed, 11.5% were retired, and 7% studying. 3.2% of the respondents (N=79) gave a different employment status such as homemaker, being registered as disabled or because they work abroad (e.g., seasonal work). The majority of employed respondents (68.9%) were in the private sector, with 27.7% in the public sector and 3.4% chose ‘other’.⁴

Table 3. Employment status and sector

Employment status*	N	%
Employed	1420	56.8%
<i>Public Sector</i>	424	27.7%
<i>Private Sector</i>	1055	68.9%
<i>Other</i>	53	3.4%
<i>Total</i>	1532**	100%
Unemployed	514	20.6%
Student	174	7%
Retired	287	11.5%
Other	79	3.2%
Refuse	26	1%
Total	2500	100%

*Data in bold derive from Q4: Employment status. N = 2500.

**Data in italics derive from Q5: Employment sector. Base N = 1532.

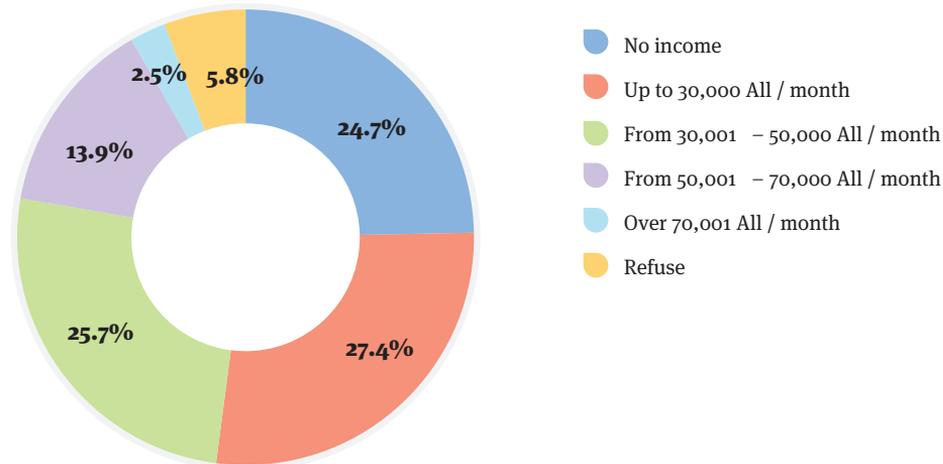


4 Qualitative data collected through the open-ended questions suggests it corresponds with self-employed respondents.

The following graph – Figure 4 – presents the distribution of respondents’ monthly income categories. At the time of the interview, 24.7% did not have any regular monthly income, whilst 27.4% reported a net income up to 30,000 ALL (the minimum wage⁵) per month. 25.7% earned from 30,001 to 50,000 ALL per month, 13.9% earned between 50,001 and 70,000 ALL per month and 2.5% of the sample had a regular individual monthly income of over 70,001 ALL. 5.8% of the respondents refused to note their income.

Concerning differences in income across female and male respondents, substantial differences have been found in terms of having a regular monthly income or not. Female respondents were more likely to report no regular monthly income (57.9%) than men (42.1%). Roughly the same proportion of females and males reported a regular monthly income of up to the minimum wage (30,000 ALL), specifically 50.9% for female respondents and 49.1% for males. The results show that male respondents were more likely to report having a higher monthly income than females over the 30,001 ALL bracket; respectively 52.7% for 30,001–50,000 ALL; 51.9% for 50,001–70,000 ALL; and 58.7% for over 70,001 ALL.

Figure 4. Regular individual monthly (net) income



Base: N = 2500

Survey respondents were also asked whether they identify themselves as a person with any disability, and 6.5% self-reported to currently having a disability (N = 161).

Lastly, the respondents were asked if they belong to a minority group. 5.8% of the respondents stated that they did. Of those, 30.5% identified as Roma, 24.8% as Greek, 14.9% as Egyptian, 14.2% as Macedonian, and 2.1% as Bosnian. Another 8.5% of those indicating they consider themselves a member of a minority group did not reveal to which minority group they belong.



5 The minimum wage was up to 24,000 ALL/month in 2015–2020, and up to 30,000 ALL/month in 2021

Table 4 shows respondents' answers on this question. Due to the small proportion of respondents that reported belonging to a minority group, this demographic characteristic is only included in the analysis of some survey results (e.g., discrimination or safety-related questions).

Table 4. Are you a member of a minority group?

Member of a minority group?	N	%
Yes	143	5.8%
<i>Greek</i>	35	1.4%
<i>Macedonian</i>	20	0.8%
<i>Aromanian</i>	3	0.1%
<i>Roma</i>	43	1.7%
<i>Egyptian</i>	21	0.8%
<i>Montenegrin</i>	3	0.1%
<i>Bosnian</i>	3	0.1%
<i>Serbian</i>	0	0%
<i>Bulgarian</i>	1	<0.1%
<i>Refuse/other minority group</i>	14	0.5%
No	2305	92.8%
Refuse to answer	37	1.5%
Total	2485	100%

Base: N = 2485

4. OPINION POLL RESULTS

4.1 TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS

Trust in institutions represents one of the core pillars of the ‘Trust in Governance’ Opinion Poll. Trust in public institutions is understood as citizens’ confidence in state bodies. This includes parliament, government, police, courts, and independent public institutions. Given their role in the country’s governance, the poll also investigates public trust in non-state organisations such as the media, religious institutions, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).⁶

In this part of the survey, respondents were asked to rate 19 key state actors and public institutions, including, for the first time in this edition, the municipal administration and municipal council, on a four-point scale from 1 (I have great trust) to 4 (I do not trust at all). The basic assumption here is that the degree of trust in certain institutions indicated by respondents stems from a combination of both macro-and micro-level factors. The implication is that respondents indicate their degree of trust based on their general perception and experiences with the relevant actors and institutions without necessarily knowing how specific institutions are designed and/or function.



Trust in institutions, the 2021 results

In 2021, international organisations like NATO (73.2%), the UN (71.4%), and the EU (71.3%), are ranked as the most trusted international institutions. Albanian citizens continued to perceive religious institutions (67%) as the most trusted domestic institutions, followed by educational institutions (57.1%), the armed forces (54.6%), and civil-society organisations (52.6%). The president (23.5%), political parties (26.4%), the courts (27.7%), the prosecution (28.4%), and the parliament (33.2%) were among the lowest-ranking institutions in the 2021 results.

The survey results show that 4 out of 16 domestic institutions and key political actors were trusted to some degree (‘I have great trust’ or ‘Basically, I trust’) by more than half of the respondents. They include religious institutions (67%), followed by educational (57.1%), the armed forces (54.6%), and civil-society organisations (CSOs) (52.6%). Specifically, religious institutions are ranked as the most trusted domestic institutions, with 22.5% of respondents indicating they have great trust and 44.5% basically trust them; while 29.3% of the respondents indicated that they either basically do not trust religious institutions or do not trust them at all. The second-most trusted institution, public educational bodies, were greatly trusted by 10.6% and basically trusted by 46.6% of respondents; while 41.7% of the respondents indicated that they basically do not trust or do not trust them at all.



6 Eurofound (2018), Societal change and trust in institutions, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg. Available at <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/report/2018/societal-change-and-trust-in-institutions>

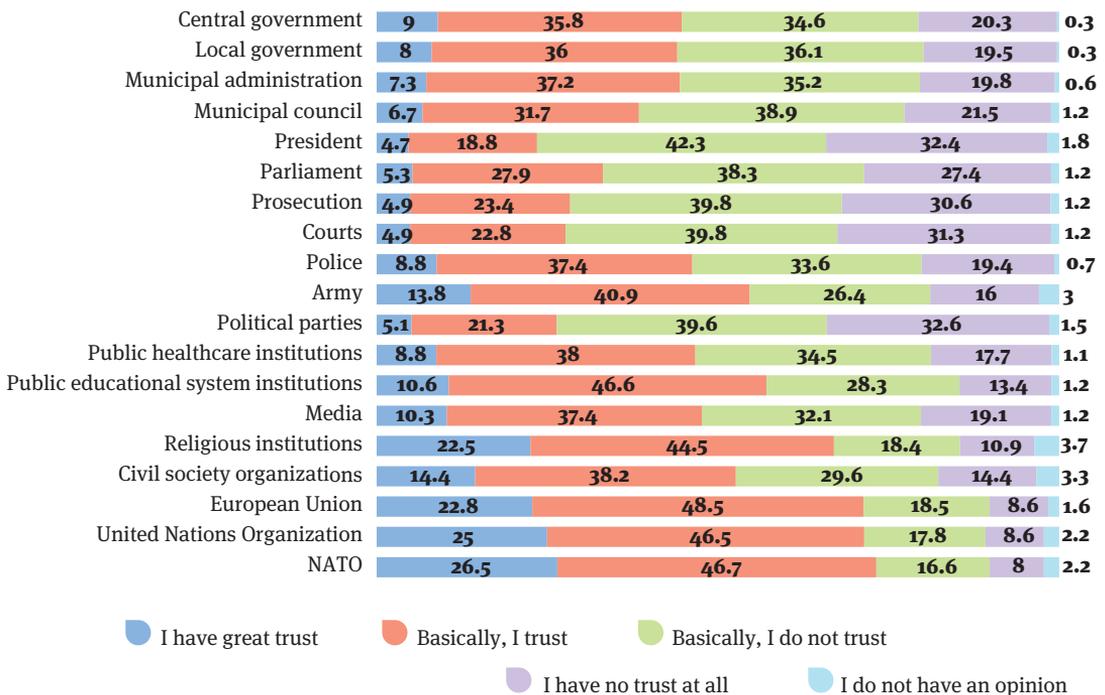
On the other hand, the domestic institutions and key actors that received the lowest trust ratings include the president (23.5%), political parties (26.4%), the courts (27.7%), the prosecution (28.4%), and the parliament (33.2%). For the president, 42.3% of respondents indicated that basically they do not trust this institution and 32.4% reported that they do not trust it all. Regarding political parties, 39.6% of respondents asserted that, basically, they do not trust these institutions and 32.6% said that they do not trust political parties at all. Similarly, 31.3% of survey respondents claimed that they do not trust courts at all, 30.6% claimed the same for the prosecution, and 27.4% for the parliament.

The 2021 figures show that central and local governments enjoy greater levels of trust than the legislative and judicial branches. 44.7% of the respondents indicated that they trust the central government, with 9% saying they have great trust and 35.8% that they basically trust.

For local government, 44% of the respondents said that they trust the institution, comprised of 8% indicating they have great trust and 36% that they basically trust it. 44.4% of the respondents reported that they trust the municipal administration, with 7.3% saying they have great trust and 37.2% that they basically trust. While, regarding the municipal council, 38.4% of the respondents said that they trust it, with 6.7% indicating they have great trust and 31.7% saying they basically trust it. Figures show that the municipal administration enjoys a greater level of trust than the municipal council. Also, that the level of trust for the municipal administration is roughly the same as trust reported for the local government overall.

In 2021, international organisations like NATO (73.2%), the UN (71.4%), and the EU (71.3%) ranked as the most trusted institutions.

Figure 5: Institutional trust 2021 (%)



Base: N = 2500 for all institutions

Socio-demographic comparison of institutional trust

Albanians working in the public sector reported high levels of trust for 17 of the 19 rated institutions. Respondents with incomes over 50,001 ALL also reported high trust levels for most of the rated institutions, 13 out of 19. While respondents without regular monthly income reported low trust levels for 18 of the 19 rated institutions.

Demographic comparisons revealed few differences based on respondent's gender, education level, employment status, or geographical location. Female respondents were more likely to indicate that they trust the municipal administration (48%), the municipal council (42%), the armed forces (56%) and healthcare institutions (51%) than male (respectively 41%, 35%, 53% and 43%). Respondents aged 66 years old and over reported higher trust rates than other age groups for local government (54%), the municipal administration (53%), and the armed forces (63%). Meanwhile, students reported high trust ratings for the president (28%), the courts (28%), the EU (72%), and the UN (74%).

When looking at level of education, respondents holding a university degree were more likely to report high trust levels for the central government (48%), the municipal administration (49%), the municipal council (43%), the prosecution (32%), the courts (31%), the police (51%), the EU (74%), and NATO (76%). Retired respondents reported a higher level of trust compared with other demographics when it came to the armed forces (62%), political parties (34%), healthcare institutions (51%), education institutions (60%), the media (54%) and NATO (73%). Surveyed respondents with incomes over 50,001 ALL per month reported higher levels of trust for most of the rated institutions, 13 out of 19. Also, Albanians working in the public sector reported higher trust levels for 17 of the 19 rated institutions.

The results show that there are some substantial differences between respondents living in urban areas and those in rural areas. Specifically, citizens in urban areas reported higher trust levels than those in rural areas for the armed forces (56%), religious institutions (68%), CSOs (54%), and the UN (73%). On the other hand, respondents living in rural areas only reported higher trust levels than those in urban areas for healthcare institutions (50%). *See Table 6 at the end of this chapter for data on the socio-demographic breakdown of trust in institutions.*

Trust in institutions over the years

In 2021, trust in the central government (9 pp), parliament (9 pp), and political parties (6 pp) increased, while trust in religious institutions declined (3 pp), compared to 2020. Also, while still the most trusted overall, figures for international organisations declined, respectively UN (5 pp), EU (4 pp), and NATO (3 pp).

Looking at the trend since 2019, the figures for 2021 show an increase in trust particularly for the central government (4 pp compared to 2019, and 9 pp to 2020), parliament (5 pp compared to 2019, and 9 pp to 2020) and political parties (3 pp compared to 2019, and 6 pp to 2020), overcoming the observable dip in 2020. In 2021, trust ratings have also increased by 4 pp for both the prosecution and courts compared to 2020, part of an upward trend since 2019. Overall, compared to 2020, all domestic institutions under survey improved their trust standing in 2021, except for CSOs and the president, which remained at the same level, and religious institutions, which decreased by 3 pp (though this was still higher by a marginal 1 pp compared to 2019). On the contrary, while

the only institutions recording figures above 70%, a decline was observed in the trust regarding international organisations in 2021 compared to both 2020 and 2019; the UN (5 pp and 4 pp respectively), NATO (3 pp and 5 pp) and the EU (4 pp and 2 pp).

Table 5: Institutional trust 2015–2021

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Central government	34%	44%	47%	42%	41%	36%	45%
Local government	X	49%	49%	47%	42%	42%	44%
Municipal administration**	X	X	X	X	X	X	44%
Municipal council**	X	X	X	X	X	X	38%
President	29%	36%	33%	30%	28%	24%	24%
Parliament	22%	27%	34%	30%	28%	24%	33%
Judiciary*	17%	23%	X	X	X	X	X
Prosecution	X	X	22%	28%	27%	24%	28%
Courts	X	X	21%	28%	27%	24%	28%
Police	46%	61%	53%	58%	55%	43%	46%
Armed forces	46%	55%	63%	63%	59%	54%	55%
Political parties	15%	23%	21%	22%	23%	20%	26%
Healthcare	27%	50%	53%	54%	51%	45%	47%
Education system	33%	59%	63%	64%	57%	54%	57%
Media	39%	58%	54%	56%	51%	45%	48%
Religious institutions	52%	58%	76%	73%	66%	70%	67%
Civil society	38%	46%	57%	57%	56%	53%	53%
EU	72%	80%	85%	80%	73%	75%	71%
UN	X	80%	85%	79%	75%	76%	71%
NATO	74%	79%	84%	81%	78%	76%	73%

Base: N= 2500 in 2021; N=2488-2499 in 2020; N=2499 in 2019; N=1647 in 2018, 2017, 2016.

Note: In 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

* From 2017 onwards, 'Judiciary' has been divided into 'Prosecution' and 'Courts'.

** Municipal administration and Municipal council have been added in the 2021 edition.



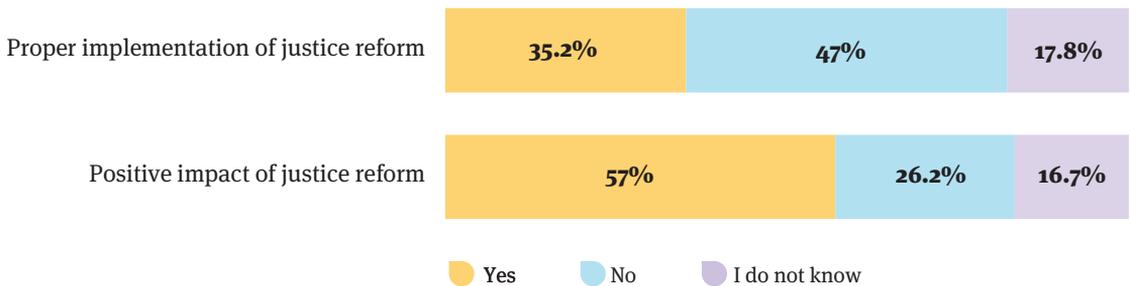
Justice reform

35% of the surveyed Albanian population believed that justice reform is being implemented properly, while 57% believe that justice reform will have a positive impact on the development of the country. In 2021, the proportion of citizens who felt that justice reform is being implemented properly improved by 6 pp, compared to 2020. Also, the percentage of respondents who feel that the reforms will have a positive impact on the development of Albania has increased by 4 pp in the last year.

Albanian justice reform started in 2016, with the intention of overhauling widespread corruption and political influence in the judicial process. It is one of the largest and most complex institutional reform programmes being undertaken in the country, consisting of, among other measures, the vetting of judges and prosecutors and the creation of new institutions such as the Special Prosecution Office Against Corruption and Organised Crime (SPAK).

In 2021, 35.2% of the respondents believed that justice reform is being implemented properly, while 47% of respondents indicated that they do not think that it is being implemented properly. More than half of respondents (57%) believe that justice reform will have a positive impact on the development of Albania. Only 26.2% said it will not have a positive impact and 16.7% did not know.

Figure 6: Perceived impact and implementation of the justice reform 2021

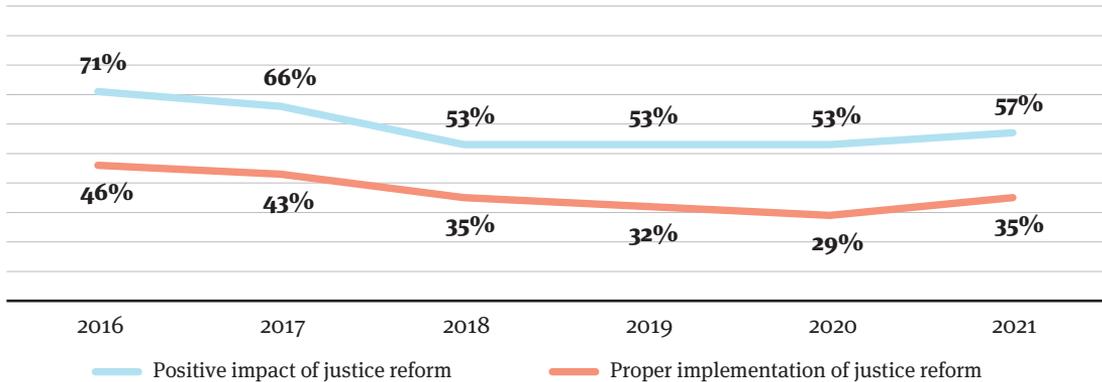


Base: Proper implementation of justice reform (N=2500); Impact of reform (N=2500)

The results show that differences across respondents' gender, age group, education, and employment statuses were substantial. Specifically, female respondents were more likely to indicate that they think justice reform is being implemented properly (38%) and will have a positive impact on the development of Albania (60%), than males (33% and 54% respectively). Respondents aged 18 to 25 years old were less likely to think that justice reform is implemented correctly (31%) or that the reforms will have a positive impact (55%). On the other hand, respondents 66 years old and over were more likely to perceive that the reforms are being implemented correctly (45%) and that they will have a positive impact (63%). Survey respondents with a university degree were more likely to see justice reform as being implemented properly (38%) and has a positive impact on the development of Albania (63%), when comparing education level. In terms of the employment sectors, respondents working in the private sector were less likely to perceive that justice reform is implemented correctly (31%) or that the reform will have a positive impact (56%) compared to those working in the public sector (56% and 72% respectively). Respondents without a regular monthly income were less likely still to think that the reforms are being implemented correctly (26%) and has a positive impact on development (48%). Also, respondents belonging to a minority group were less likely to perceive justice reform as being implemented correctly (30%), while respondents with disabilities (47%) were more likely to believe the reforms will have a positive impact on the development of Albania. See Table 7 at the end of the chapter for a full socio-demographic breakdown of the responses on justice reforms.

Looking at the trend since 2019, the 2021 figures show an increase in the perception that justice reform is being implemented properly; 3 pp up on 2019 and 6 pp compared to 2020. Also, the proportion of respondents that feel reform will have a positive impact on the development of Albania has increased by 4 pp each year, between 2019 and 2021. Despite this, public perceptions have dropped slightly since the start of the reforms in 2016 – with 35% of 2021 respondents seeing reform as being properly implemented compared to 46% in 2016. Similarly, the proportion of respondents that believed the justice reforms would have a positive impact was lower at 57% compared to 71% in 2016.

Figure 7: ‘Positive impact’ or ‘proper implementation’ of justice reform, (% yes) (2016–2021)



Base: For positive impact of justice reform, 2016 (N=1639); 2017 (N=1644); 2018 (N=1642); 2019 (N=2494); 2020 (N=2493); 2021 (N=2500). For proper implementation of justice reform 2016 (N=1641); 2017 (N=1646); 2018 (N=1645); 2019 (N=2498); 2020 (N=2494); 2021 (N=2500).

Note: In 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

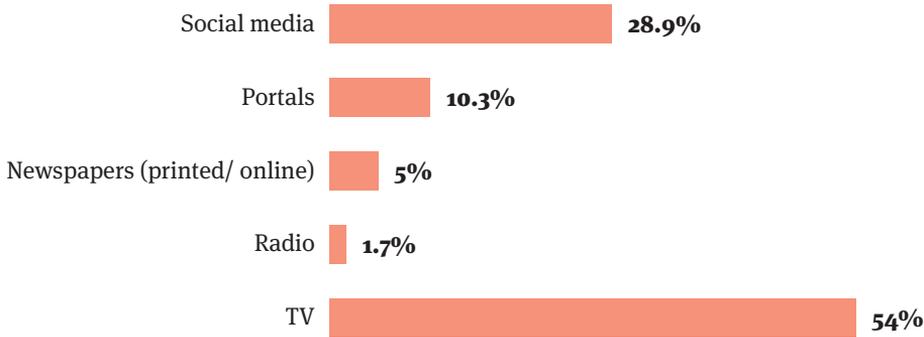


Media use

Although social media (28.9%) and online portals (10.3%) are becoming more popular as the primary source for news on current affairs for the Albanian population, television (54%) remains the most popular media outlet, particularly among people living in rural areas (60%). However, social media is more popular among younger generations, 18–25 years old (58%) and 26–35 years old (45%); students (61%); people with a university degree (44%); and those with a regular monthly income over 70,001 ALL (44%).

In the 2021 Opinion Poll, more than half of respondents (54%) reported using television as their main information outlet to get news about current affairs, followed by social media (28.9%), online portals (10.3%), newspapers (5%), and radio (1.7%).

Figure 8: Most-used mediums for information about current affairs



Base: N =2481

*Note: some respondents chose more than one option; the percentages do not total at 100%

The results show that respondents' gender does not play any role in the type of media outlet the prefer. But differences were found across age groups, education levels, employment status, and geographical location. Young respondents, especially those aged 18–25 years old are more likely to report social media as their preferred media outlet (58%) and less likely to use TV as their primary source (22%). On contrary, respondents over 56 years old report using TV as their primary source of information (80%) and are much less likely to use portals (2%) and social media (4%). Differences were found also according to geographical location with respondents residing in rural areas (60%) more likely to indicate that TV is their primary source of information and less likely to use social media (24%). Moreover, the data shows that social media is more likely to be used as the primary media outlet by respondents with an income more than 70,001 ALL/month (44%). For a full breakdown of the data based on demographics, see Table 8 at the end of this chapter.

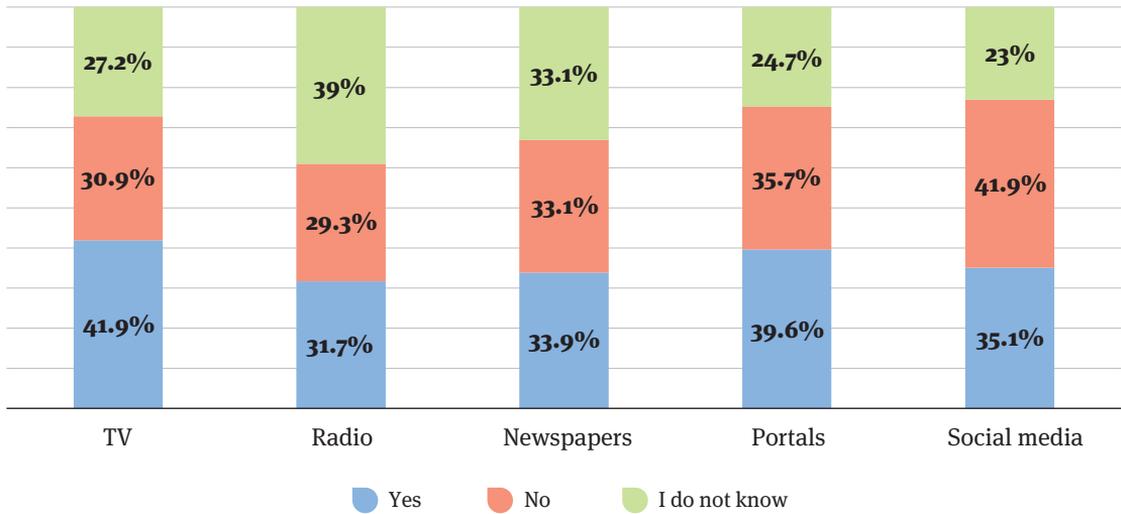
Although television remains the most popular medium to receive information about current affairs, in 2021 the figure (54%) has decreased by 3 pp since 2019 (57%) and 4 pp from 2020 (58%). Social media usage declined by 7 pp from 2020 (36%) yet witnessed a cumulative increase of 4 pp compared to 2019 (25%).

Accuracy of media

In 2021, 38.8% of the Albanian citizens believed that the information provided by Albanian media is accurate/true. Albanians using television (42%) or online portals (40%) as their primary source of information for news on current affairs were most likely to believe the information provided by Albanian media is accurate and/or true.

38.8% of the respondents believed that the information provided by Albanian media is accurate and/or true, while 34.9% perceived it as inaccurate/not true and 26.3% were not sure (did not know). TV users were the most likely to indicate that the information provided by TV is accurate and/or true (41.9%), followed by those that use portals as their primary news source (39.6%). By contrast, respondents who reported radio as their most-used outlet for news on current affairs were the most sceptical about the accuracy of information, with only 31.7% of these respondents indicating that the information provided by the Albanian media is accurate/true.

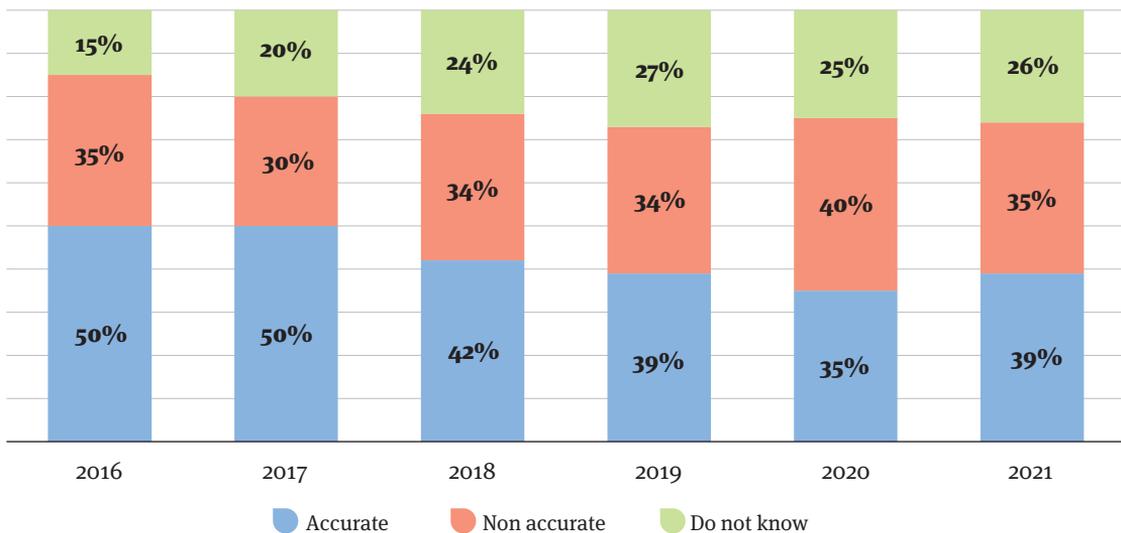
Figure 9: Perception of information accuracy provided according to most-used media outlet 2021



Base: N=2478

In 2021, the proportion of respondents who saw the information provided by Albanian media as accurate reached the same level as in 2019 (39%), overcoming the dip in 2020.

Figure 10: Accuracy of media 2016–2019



Base: 2016 (N=1639); 2017 (N=1646); 2018 (N=1643); 2019 (N=2496); 2020 (N=2491); 2021 (N=2500)

Note: In 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

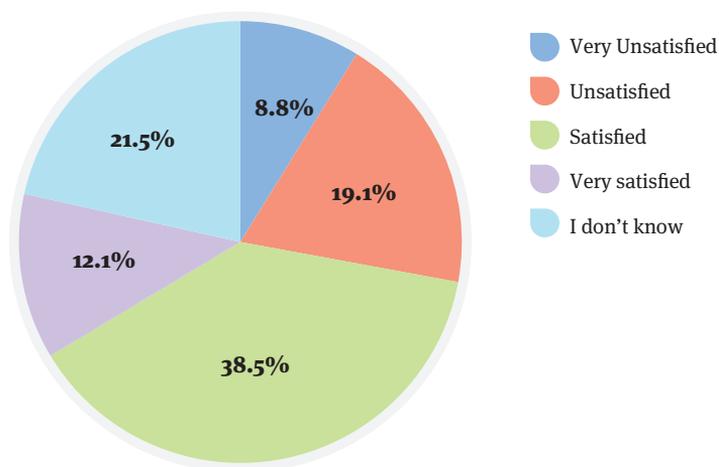
Support of foreign donors

50.6% of the Albanian population were satisfied or very satisfied with the impact of foreign assistance in Albania. On the other hand, 21.5% of the surveyed respondents said they were not sure (did not know).

Half of the respondents (50.6%) were satisfied with the impact of foreign assistance (donors) in Albania: 12.1% were very satisfied and 38.5% were satisfied. On the other hand, 27.9% were dissatisfied and a further 21.5% of respondents stated that they didn't know.

No substantial differences in perception were found across respondents' gender (female 52% and male 48%), age group, or geographical location. 57% of the surveyed respondents with incomes between 30,001–70,000 ALL reported that they were satisfied with the assistance of foreign aid. Public-sector employees (62%) were likely to be satisfied with the impact of foreign donations, while students (42%) were less satisfied. Less than half of those belonging to a minority group (40.6%) and those with disabilities (43%) stated that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the impact of foreign donor assistance in Albania.

Figure 11: Satisfaction with foreign donor assistance



Base: N = 2500

In 2021, as in the previous year, figures show that survey respondents who believe that international organisations hold the government to account were more likely to be satisfied to some degree with the support of foreign donors in Albania.⁷ 55.5% of these respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with the impact of foreign assistance in Albania, compared to 34.6% of the respondents who do not believe international organisations hold the government to account.

7 See section 4.2 “Transparency and Accountability”, the question “Do international organisations hold the government to account?”

Table 6: Demographic breakdown of trust, the sum of “I have great trust” and “Basically I trust”

	Central Govt.	Local Gov.	Municipal Administration	Municipal Council	President	Parliament	Prosecution	Courts	Police	Armed forces	Political Parties	Health	Education	Media	Religious inst.	CSOs	EU	UN	NATO	
TOTAL (% Trust)	45%	44%	44%	38%	24%	33%	28%	28%	46%	55%	26%	47%	57%	48%	67%	53%	71%	71%	73%	
	Gender																			
Male	43%	41%	41%	35%	22%	31%	28%	27%	48%	53%	25%	43%	53%	45%	65%	49%	67%	68%	71%	
Female	47%	47%	48%	42%	25%	35%	29%	28%	44%	56%	27%	51%	61%	50%	69%	56%	75%	75%	76%	
	Age																			
18–25 years old	40%	40%	37%	36%	27%	29%	25%	25%	43%	52%	22%	42%	55%	48%	66%	54%	72%	72%	70%	
26–35 years old	45%	43%	45%	38%	23%	33%	31%	30%	48%	55%	27%	49%	57%	45%	68%	56%	73%	72%	75%	
36–45 years old	43%	43%	47%	40%	23%	34%	30%	29%	47%	56%	28%	47%	57%	49%	67%	51%	70%	69%	72%	
46–55 years old	46%	45%	42%	38%	20%	32%	25%	28%	44%	51%	26%	47%	58%	47%	66%	52%	72%	73%	75%	
56–65 years old	46%	44%	46%	37%	25%	34%	27%	23%	46%	55%	27%	44%	58%	48%	66%	51%	71%	71%	72%	
66 years old and over	53%	54%	53%	43%	23%	39%	30%	27%	50%	63%	30%	52%	60%	52%	70%	49%	71%	72%	76%	
	Educational attainment																			
Up to lower secondary	41%	41%	40%	34%	24%	31%	27%	26%	44%	52%	27%	46%	55%	44%	64%	50%	68%	69%	69%	
High School	44%	43%	43%	37%	22%	32%	27%	26%	44%	53%	25%	45%	56%	49%	69%	53%	71%	72%	73%	
University	48%	48%	49%	43%	25%	36%	32%	31%	51%	58%	28%	50%	59%	49%	67%	54%	74%	73%	76%	
	Employment status																			
Total	49%	48%	48%	42%	25%	37%	31%	30%	50%	59%	29%	50%	63%	49%	70%	54%	73%	74%	76%	
Employed	70%	70%	69%	63%	30%	55%	43%	42%	66%	74%	39%	64%	73%	55%	73%	63%	81%	81%	84%	
Private	40%	39%	40%	33%	22%	29%	26%	25%	44%	52%	24%	45%	58%	46%	67%	51%	70%	71%	73%	
Unemployed	33%	31%	33%	29%	20%	23%	21%	22%	36%	42%	18%	37%	44%	44%	62%	49%	68%	65%	67%	
Student	43%	43%	38%	37%	28%	30%	26%	28%	43%	54%	25%	42%	52%	43%	63%	55%	72%	74%	72%	
Retired	53%	53%	52%	45%	26%	40%	32%	28%	50%	62%	34%	51%	60%	54%	69%	51%	71%	71%	73%	
	Geographical location																			
Urban	45%	44%	45%	39%	24%	33%	28%	28%	47%	56%	26%	45%	57%	49%	68%	54%	73%	73%	74%	
Rural	45%	44%	44%	38%	22%	33%	28%	26%	45%	52%	27%	50%	58%	45%	64%	48%	67%	69%	70%	
	Income																			
No income	35%	34%	34%	30%	21%	24%	21%	22%	36%	45%	20%	37%	46%	44%	62%	51%	68%	67%	67%	
Up to 30,000 ALL	44%	45%	44%	37%	22%	32%	26%	25%	46%	56%	27%	46%	58%	49%	70%	53%	71%	72%	73%	
30,001–50,000 ALL	50%	50%	50%	44%	27%	38%	34%	33%	50%	60%	31%	51%	64%	52%	72%	58%	76%	76%	79%	
50,001–70,000 ALL	52%	51%	53%	47%	26%	43%	35%	32%	56%	61%	32%	55%	65%	47%	66%	51%	72%	73%	76%	
Over 70,001 ALL	43%	38%	43%	44%	24%	35%	29%	32%	57%	59%	33%	49%	57%	49%	71%	56%	79%	76%	81%	

Note: Colours represent cases when the differences observed among variable categories, are statistically significant (Chi-square test of independence, $p \leq 0.05$).

Note: The group “up to lower secondary education” includes respondents with no education, primary education, and those that attended school until the compulsory level (8/9 year)

Table 7: Demographic breakdown of justice reform

	The positive impact of justice reform (% yes)	Proper implementation of justice reform (% yes)
Total	57%	35%
Gender		
Male	54%	33%
Female	60%	38%
Age		
18–25 years old	55%	31%
26–35 years old	57%	36%
36–45 years old	58%	36%
46–55 years old	57%	34%
56–65 years old	55%	32%
66 and over	63%	45%
Education		
Up to lower secondary	52%	32%
High School	55%	34%
University degree	63%	38%
Employment		
Employed	Total	61%
	Public	72%
	Private	56%
Unemployed	45%	24%
Student	56%	34%
Retired	61%	41%
Income		
No income	48%	26%
Up to 30,000 ALL	56%	36%
30,001 – 50,000 ALL	63%	40%
50,001–70,000 ALL	63%	42%
Over 70,001 ALL	67%	35%
Geographical location		
Urban	58%	36%
Rural	56%	34%

Note: Colours represent cases when the differences observed among variable categories, are statistically significant (Chi-square test of independence, $p \leq 0.05$).

Note: The group “up to lower secondary education” includes respondents with no education, primary education, and those that attended school until the compulsory level (8/9 year).

Table 8: Demographic breakdown of media

		Media outlets mostly used				
		TV	Radio	Newspapers	Portals	Social media
Total		54%	2%	5%	10%	29%
Gender						
Male		55%	2%	4%	10%	31%
Female		54%	2%	6%	10%	27%
Age						
18–25 years old		22%	1%	3%	16%	58%
26–35 years old		32%	2%	3%	17%	45%
36–45 years old		60%	2%	4%	10%	25%
46–55 years old		76%	1%	6%	6%	11%
56–65 years old		80%	2%	8%	2%	8%
66 years old and over		80%	2%	11%	2%	4%
Education						
Up to lower secondary		75%	2%	7%	5%	10%
High School		59%	2%	5%	8%	26%
University degree		35%	1%	4%	16%	44%
Employment						
Employed	Total	50%	2%	4%	12%	32%
	Public	49%	1%	5%	14%	30%
	Private	51%	2%	4%	11%	33%
Unemployed		58%	1%	6%	10%	25%
Student		20%	0%	2%	17%	61%
Retired		81%	3%	9%	2%	5%
Income						
No income		51%	1%	4%	11%	33%
Up to 30,000 ALL		69%	2%	8%	6%	15%
30,001–50,000 ALL		51%	1%	3%	10%	34%
50,001–70,000 ALL		40%	2%	4%	16%	37%
Over 70,001 ALL		37%	2%	2%	16%	44%
Geographical location						
Urban		52%	1%	5%	12%	31%
Rural		60%	2%	6%	7%	24%

Note: Colours represent cases when the differences observed among variable categories, are statistically significant (Chi-square test of independence, $p \leq 0.05$).

Note: The group “up to lower secondary education” includes respondents with no education, primary education, and those that attended school until the compulsory level (8/9 year).

4.2 TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Transparency and accountability of public administration are considered essential elements of a functioning democratic system. They are mutually reinforcing and enable citizens to hold those in power to account. Therefore, building accountable and transparent institutions was included as one of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, more specifically 'Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels', and 'Target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable, and transparent institutions at all levels.'⁸

The main assumption underlying the concept of transparency is that the government operates openly. That is to say it is transparent about how it operates, about its activities and expenditures, and about the decisions it takes. A key vehicle for transparency is the right of access to information held by public authorities. However, transparency also includes other elements, such as ensuring that the meetings of public decision-making bodies are accessible to the public.⁹

Accountability, meanwhile, assumes that the government should bear responsibility for its decisions and actions. There are two dimensions to accountability: answerability, or the obligation of public authorities to provide information and explanations to the public about their activities, and enforcement, or the mechanisms by which the information obtained can ensure that the government provides a remedy for any failings. Accountability can be vertical – owed directly to the public – or horizontal, delivered through mechanisms that operate between public institutions.¹⁰



Transparency

More than half of surveyed Albanians perceived the central government (57.4%) and municipality (58.2%) as non-transparent. This tendency is particularly present among respondents without regular monthly income.

More than half of the survey respondents, 57.4% did not believe (i.e., 'generally do not agree' and 'do not agree at all') that central government is transparent. 41.4% did feel that the central government is transparent (33.6% agreed with the statement and another 7.7% fully agreed). Similarly, 58.2% of respondents did not agree ('generally do not agree' and 'do not agree at all') that the municipality is transparent. Only 8% of the respondents claimed to fully agree with the statement: 'The municipality is transparent', while 32.2% generally agreed.

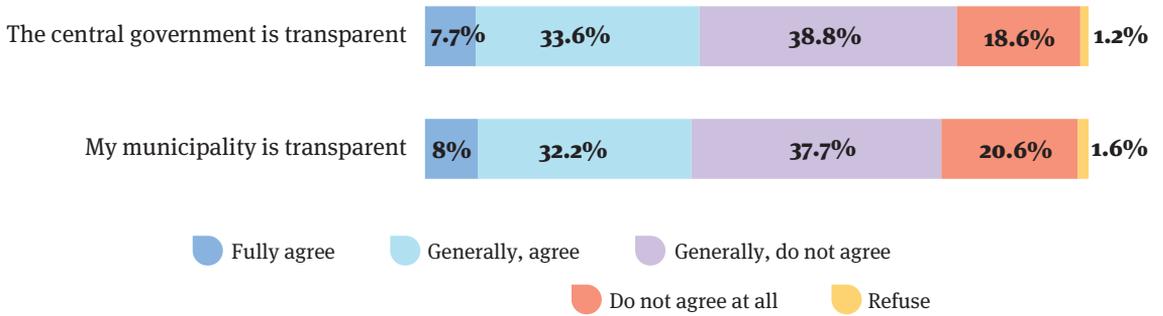
Figure 12: Perceived transparency of central and local government 2021



8 United Nations. (2019). Sustainable Development Goals. Available at <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/peace-justice/>

9 The explanation of the concepts is to a large extent based on the Briefing Paper "International Standards on Transparency and Accountability". Centre for Law and Democracy (2014). Available at http://www.law-democracy.org/live/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Transparency-and-Accountability.final_Mar14.pdf

10 Ibid.



Base: Central government (N=2500); local government (N=2500)

When checking across demographics, substantial differences were found among respondents based on gender, age, education level, employment sector, geographical location, disability, minority, as well as political party membership. Female respondents were more likely to perceive that central government (44%) and the municipality (44%) are transparent than their male counterparts (39% and 37% respectively). The youngest respondents, especially between 18 to 25 years old (35%), were less likely to indicate that the central government is transparent.

Regarding respondents' income, people without a regular monthly income did not agree that the central government and municipality are transparent; indeed, only 32% agreed with either of the statements. In terms of differences across respondents' employment sectors, the data suggest that public-sector workers were more likely to agree that the central government (64%) and the municipality (63%) are transparent than employees of the private sector, among whom, 36% agreed with both statements.

Respondents that are a member of a political party were more likely to see the central government (63%) and the municipality (61%) as transparent, than respondents who were not members of a political party (38% and 37% respectively).

Survey respondents with an income of 50,001 to 70,001 ALL/month (49%) and those in the 66 years old and over age group (54%) were more likely to indicate that they feel the central government is transparent than their comparative groups. Furthermore, survey respondents with an income of 50,001 to 70,001 ALL/month (48%) and university degree holders (44%) were more likely to indicate that they perceive the municipality as transparent.

Meanwhile respondents living in rural areas (38%) were less likely to agree that their municipal government is transparent, compared with urban residents (41%). *For more information on the demographic breakdown of the answers, see Table 10 at the end of this chapter.*



Transparency over the years

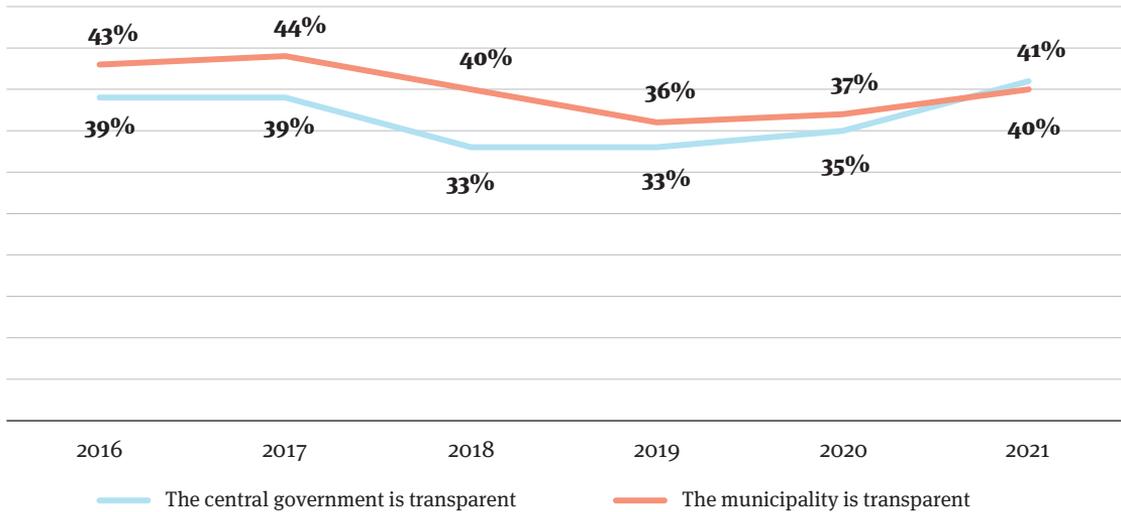
In the 2021 Opinion Poll, the perceived transparency of the central and local governments has increased by 6 pp and 3 pp respectively, compared to 2020, marking the second consecutive rise.

In the 2021 study, the perception of central government transparency has increased by 6 pp

compared to 2020, bringing a cumulative rise of 8 pp compared to 2019.

Similarly, municipal transparency witnessed another increase in this study – 3 pp compared to 2020, and a cumulative rise of 4 pp since 2019.

Figure 13: Change in perceived institutional transparency 2016-2021



Base: Central gov.: 2016 (N=1647); 2017 (N=1636); 2018 (N=1644); 2019 (N=2492); 2020 (N=2495), 2021 (N=2500) and local gov.: 2016 (N=1645); 2017 (N=1637); 2018 (N=1642); 2019 (N=2489); 2020 (N=2494); 2021 (N=2500).

Note: In 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.



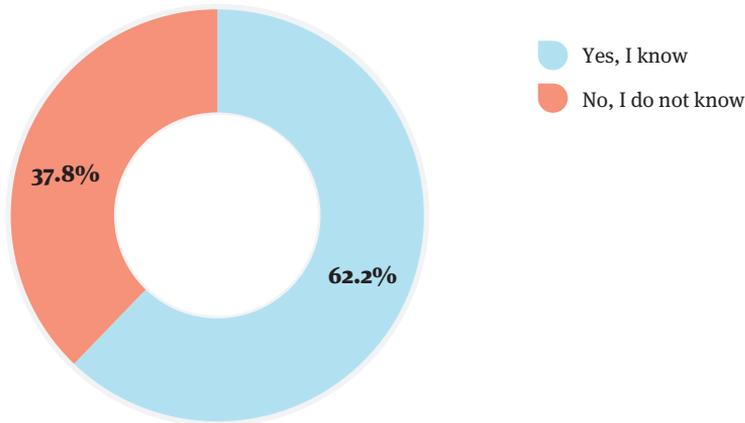
Exercising the right to information

Most of the Albanian population (62.2%) were aware that the right to information is guaranteed by law. Particularly, Albanians in the 26–35 age group (68%), those with a university degree (76%) and with a regular monthly income of over 70,001 ALL (79%) showed higher levels of awareness.

The right to information is one of the key planks of transparency programmes, therefore it is crucial to assess citizens’ awareness of it. Law No 119/2014 – On the Right to Information, one of the most significant steps taken towards improving transparency, provides the right of access to information that is produced or held by public sector bodies. It states that everyone has the right to access public information without having to explain the reason they have requested it.

A majority (62.2%) of survey respondents said that they were aware that the right to information is guaranteed by law in Albania, while 37.8% were not aware.

Figure 14: Public awareness of the right to information law 2021



Base: N = 2391

No substantial differences were found between females (61%) and males (63%). Yet the survey results reveal substantial differences in other demographic categories such as age group, education level, geographical location, and income. Respondents between 26 and 35 years old (68%), those with a university degree (76%), those residing in urban areas (65%) and those with regular monthly incomes of over 70,001 ALL (79%) were all more likely to be aware of the right to access information than their demographic counterparts.

Respondents belonging to a minority group and those with disabilities were less aware (both 52%) of the law on the right to information.

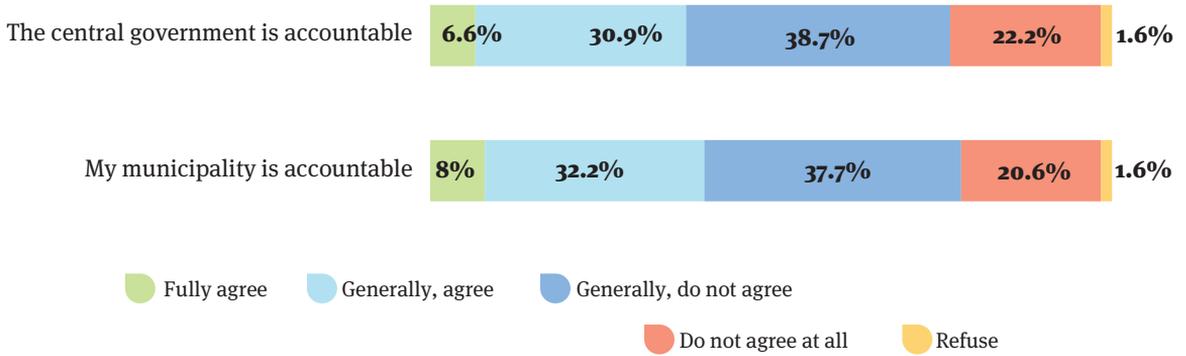
Overall in 2021, the proportion of survey respondents who reported being aware that the right to information is guaranteed by law in Albania continued to decline (62% compared to the 64% in 2020), a cumulative decrease of 5 pp since 2019 when it was 67%.

Accountability

More than half of the Albanian population did not perceive central or local governments as accountable. Only 37.5% indicated that they see the central government as accountable and 38.6% saw the municipality as accountable. People without a regular monthly income were even less likely to perceive the central and local governments as accountable (27% and 31% respectively).

60.9% of the survey respondents reported that they do not perceive the central government as accountable: comprised of 38.7% who generally did not agree with the statement: 'The central government is accountable', and 22.2% who did not agree at all. Similarly, 59.6% of respondents in 2021 indicated that they did not perceive the municipality as accountable (generally – 37.1%; and not at all – 22.5%).

Figure 15: Perceived accountability of central and local government 2021



Base: For central government (N=2500); For local government (N=2500).

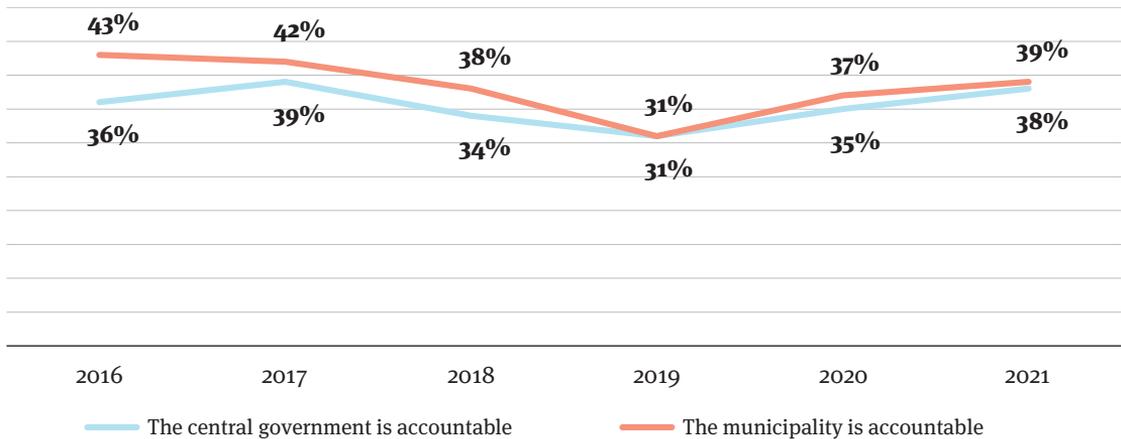
When looking at the differences across demographics, no substantial differences were found by age group or geographical location. Results show that substantial differences were found according to gender, with females (40%) more likely to perceive the central government as accountable (compared to 35% of male respondents). Similarly, 41% of females perceived the municipality as accountable, compared to 36% of males. In terms of education, respondents holding a university degree (42%) were more likely to perceive the municipality as accountable. By contrast, respondents without a regular monthly income were less likely to see the central government (27%) or the municipality (31%) as accountable. See Table 10 at the end of this chapter for the entire demographic breakdown.

● ● Perception of accountability of central and local government 2016–2021

In 2021, the proportion of citizens who perceived the central government as accountable increased for the second year in a row; by 3 pp compared to 2020 (38% vs. 35%), and 7 pp cumulatively since 2019 (31%). Similarly, the proportion of respondents who perceive the local government as accountable rose by 2 pp compared to the previous year, and 8 pp cumulatively since 2019.

In 2021, the proportion of respondents that saw the central government as accountable increased for the second year in a row, by 3 pp compared to 2020 (38% vs. 35%), and 7 pp cumulatively since 2019 (31%). Similarly, the proportion of respondents that perceive their municipality as accountable (39%) increased by 2 pp compared to the previous year (37%), and by 8 pp cumulatively since 2019 (31%).

Figure 16: Change in perceived accountability (2016–2021)



Base: Central: 2016 (N=1646); 2017 (N=1635); 2018 (N=1644); 2019 (N=2491); 2020 (N=2495); 2021 (N=2500), and local: 2016 (N=1645); 2017 (N=1633); 2018 (N=1643); 2019 (N=2485); 2020 (N=2489); 2021 (N=2500).

Note: In 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.



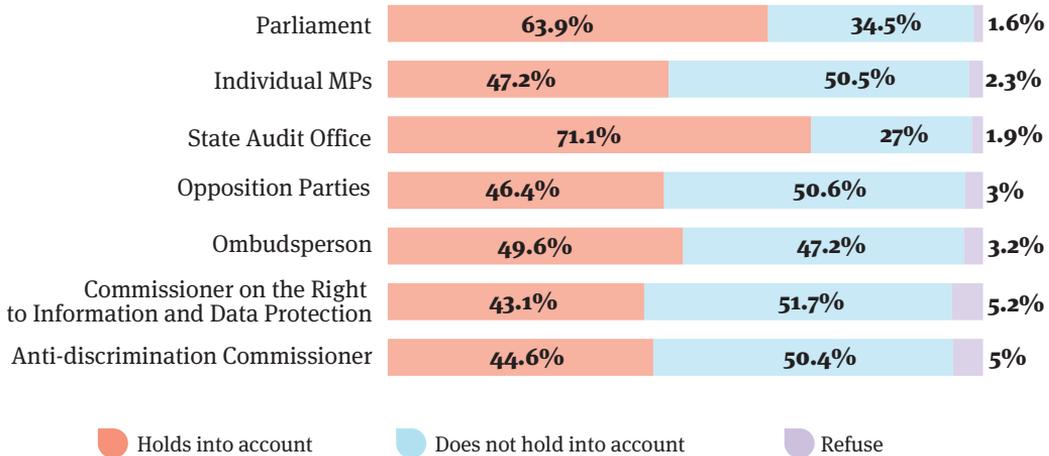
Horizontal and vertical accountability

The percentage of surveyed respondents who were aware of the institutional mechanisms that hold the government to account has increased for all listed institutions in 2021. Overall, Albanians continue to believe that international organisations (77%) hold the government to account better than the domestic organisations. Surveyed respondents tend to believe that the most effective domestic accountability mechanism is the Albanian State Supreme Audit Institution (71.1%), followed by parliament (63.9%) and the media (61.5%).

Accountability can be classified as horizontal accountability and vertical accountability according to the type of accountability exercised and/or the person, group, or institution that the public official answers to. Horizontal accountability is exercised through a network of institutions and concerns the capacity of state institutions (such as the legislature and the judiciary) to oversee government power by demanding information, scrutinising officials and punishing improper behaviour. Whereas vertical accountability can be understood as a relationship between institutions and citizens. This encompasses how citizens, mass media and civil society seek to enforce compliance with standards of good performance by government officials.

Regarding domestic horizontal accountability mechanisms, the State Supreme Audit Institution (SSAI) continues to be perceived as the institution with the greatest role in holding the government to account (71.1%), followed by parliament (63.9%) and the Ombudsperson (49.6%). On the other hand, individual MPs (47.2%), opposition parties (46.4%), the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner (44.6%), and the Commissioner on the Right to Information and Data Protection (43.1%) were rated as less effective in holding the government to account.

Figure 17: Perceived effectiveness of horizontal accountability mechanisms 2021



Base: N=2500 for all listed organizations

Overall, when checking respondents' perception of horizontal accountability across demographics, few substantial differences were found by gender, age group, and education level for most of the listed institutions. Female respondents were more likely than males to indicate that parliament (67%) holds the government to account. Respondents in the age group 66 and over (59%) were more likely than others to think that individual MPs hold the government to account, while respondents holding a university degree or higher (77%) felt more often that the SSAI can hold the government to account. Results show substantial differences in terms of employment, income, and geographical location. Public-sector workers were more likely to perceive that all the listed organisations (parliament, 75%; individual MPs, 55%; SSAI, 83%; opposition parties, 51%; the Ombudsperson, 60%; Commissioner on the Right to Information and Data Protection, 54%; and Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, 55%) can hold the government accountable than those working in the private sector. Unemployed respondents were less likely to feel that the opposition parties (42%), individual MPs (43%), the Ombudsperson (44%), the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner (42%), or the Commissioner on the Right to Information and Data Protection (38%) can hold the government to account, whereas students were more likely to see the SSAI (67%) as effective in that role.

Furthermore, respondents with a regular monthly income of up to 30,000 ALL and 30,001 to 50,000 ALL were more likely to believe that parliament (67% each respectively) can hold the government to account. Similarly, respondents with an income of 30,001 to 50,000 ALL/month were more likely to perceive that SSAI (78%) can do that. On the other hand, respondents over 70,001 ALL/month more often felt that individual MPs (54%) and opposition parties (51%) are among the horizontal mechanisms that can be effective in holding the government to account.

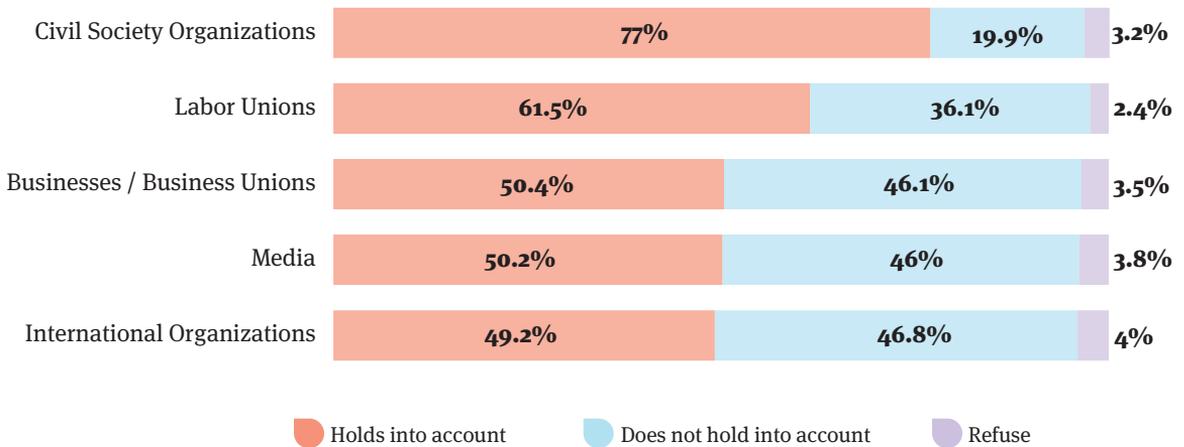
Rural respondents were more likely than those in urban areas to believe that parliament (68%) and the opposition (50%) can hold the government to account, while urban residents gave more favourable responses on all the other listed organisations.

Respondents with disabilities were less likely to perceive that parliament (62%), the State Supreme Audit (69%), the Ombudsperson (48%), the Commissioner on the Right to Information and Data Protection (41%) and the opposition parties (45%) hold the government to account.

Respondents belonging to a minority group indicated more often than others that parliament (66%) and the opposition parties hold the government to account (50%). *For all findings across demographics, see Table 11 at the end of this chapter.*

Regarding domestic vertical accountability mechanisms, the media was perceived overall as having the greatest role in holding the government accountable (61.5%), followed by businesses/business unions (50.4%) labour unions (50.2%), and civil-society organisations (49.2%). By contrast, as many as three-quarters of respondents (77%) believed that international organisations hold the government to account.

Figure 18: Perceived effectiveness of vertical accountability mechanisms 2021



Base: N=2500 for all listed organisations

When checking across demographics, few substantial differences were observed based on respondents’ gender, age group, education, or employment sectors, and no differences were found in terms of geographical location. Female were more likely to believe that the labour unions (52%) hold the government to account. Surveyed respondents aged 66 and over (83%) and those with an income over 70,001 ALL/month (84%) were most likely to perceive that international organisation hold the government to account. Regarding education levels, respondents with a university degree or higher were most likely to believe that the media (65%) can hold the government to account. *For the full demographic breakdown of the responses, see Table 11 at the end of the chapter.*

Respondents with disabilities were more likely to think that CSOs (52%) and businesses/business unions (53%) hold the government to account. Similarly, respondents belonging to a minority group were more likely than those not in a minority to say that CSOs (60%), labour unions (57%), and international organisations (78%) hold the government to account.

Compared to 2020, respondents were more likely to feel that there are mechanisms that hold the government to account. For all the institutions included for the question ‘Does this institution hold the government to account?’, the proportion of respondents who said “yes” has increased. Moreover, there has been an increase compared to 2019 for all domestic institutions. Particularly, parliament (+16 pp compared to 2020, +10 pp compared to 2019), the labour unions (+11 pp

compared to 2020, +9 pp compared to 2019), SSAI (+10 pp compared to 2020, +7 pp compared to 2019) and businesses/business unions (+9 pp compared to 2020, +11 pp compared to 2019) have all seen a sizeable increase in the perception of their effectiveness in accountability.

Over the last six years, the SSAI and the media have been considered the two most effective domestic institutions to hold the government to account. Since international organisations were included in 2019, they have been seen most often as being able to hold the government to account.

Table 9: Perceived effectiveness of accountability mechanisms (2016–2021)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Parliament	51%	63%	54%	54%	48%	64%
Individual MPs	X	X	X	44%	41%	47%
State Supreme Audit Institution (SSAI)	63%	67%	61%	64%	61%	71%
Opposition parties	51%	54%	43%	42%	38%	46%
Ombudsperson	54%	55%	59%	44%	44%	50%
Commissioner on the right to information and data protection	X	X	X	39%	42%	43%
Anti-discrimination Commissioner	46%	45%	44%	41%	41%	45%
Civil society organisations	46%	51%	49%	48%	45%	49%
Media	62%	65%	58%	58%	53%	62%
Businesses / Business Unions	43%	44%	40%	39%	41%	50%
Labour unions	39%	46%	42%	41%	39%	50%
International organisations	X	X	X	79%	75%	77%

Note: In 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

Table 10: Demographic breakdown for transparency and accountability 2021

	The central government is transparent	My municipality is transparent	The central government is accountable	My municipality is accountable
Total	41%	40%	38%	39%
Gender				
Male	39%	37%	35%	36%
Female	44%	43%	40%	41%
Age				
18–25 years old	35%	37%	33%	33%
26–35 years old	41%	41%	37%	38%
36–45 years old	40%	40%	36%	39%
46–55 years old	43%	41%	40%	40%
56–65 years old	41%	37%	35%	37%
66 and over	54%	49%	48%	47%
Education				
Up to lower secondary	38%	34%	35%	35%
High School	41%	40%	37%	38%
University degree	44%	44%	40%	42%
Employment				
Employed Total	45%	43%	41%	42%
Public	64%	63%	62%	62%
Private	36%	36%	33%	33%
Unemployed	29%	29%	25%	29%
Student	36%	39%	33%	35%
Retired	53%	48%	47%	48%
Income				
No income	32%	32%	27%	31%
Up to 30,000 ALL	42%	40%	38%	40%
30,001–50,000 ALL	46%	45%	44%	44%
50,001–70,000 ALL	49%	48%	42%	43%
Over 70,001 ALL	41%	40%	35%	37%
Geographical location				
Urban	42%	41%	38%	39%
Rural	40%	38%	37%	37%

Note: Colours represent cases when the differences observed among variable categories, are statistically significant (Chi-square test of independence, $p \leq 0.05$).

Note: The group “up to lower secondary education” includes respondents with no education, primary education, and those that attended school until the compulsory level (8/9 year).

Table 11: Socio-demographic breakdown of horizontal and vertical accountability 2021

	Parliament	Individual MPs	Supreme State Audit Institution	Opposition Parties	Ombudsman	Commissioner right to info. & data protection	Anti-discrimination Commissioner	Civil Society Organizations	Media	Businesses / Business Unions	Labour Unions	International Organisations
Total (% accountable)	64%	47%	71%	46%	50%	43%	45%	49%	62%	50%	50%	77%
Gender												
Male	61%	48%	70%	46%	48%	41%	43%	48%	62%	50%	48%	78%
Female	67%	47%	72%	47%	51%	45%	46%	51%	61%	51%	52%	76%
Age												
18-25 years old	61%	44%	71%	48%	53%	46%	48%	53%	61%	53%	51%	75%
26-35 years old	63%	45%	72%	44%	49%	46%	45%	50%	62%	48%	52%	80%
36-45 years old	65%	45%	73%	45%	51%	45%	45%	47%	60%	49%	47%	75%
46-55 years old	66%	51%	71%	47%	47%	41%	46%	47%	63%	53%	51%	78%
56-65 years old	61%	47%	67%	48%	45%	37%	39%	48%	59%	52%	45%	71%
66 and over	69%	59%	68%	50%	53%	38%	41%	53%	65%	50%	56%	83%
Education												
Up to lower secondary	62%	47%	63%	44%	45%	37%	40%	48%	59%	51%	50%	73%
High school	65%	47%	70%	47%	51%	42%	44%	49%	60%	49%	51%	78%
University degree	65%	48%	77%	46%	52%	48%	48%	50%	65%	52%	50%	79%
Employment												
Employed	Total	66%	48%	76%	48%	52%	46%	46%	51%	64%	52%	80%
	Public	75%	55%	83%	51%	60%	54%	55%	54%	66%	55%	54%
	Private	61%	45%	72%	46%	48%	43%	43%	48%	62%	50%	47%
Unemployed	60%	43%	64%	42%	44%	38%	42%	46%	59%	47%	52%	71%
Student	58%	48%	67%	47%	53%	48%	52%	50%	56%	48%	53%	72%
Retired	67%	56%	64%	48%	53%	39%	42%	53%	62%	53%	55%	76%
Income												
No income	59%	44%	65%	43%	47%	41%	44%	48%	59%	49%	53%	72%
Up to 30,000 ALL	67%	50%	69%	49%	50%	41%	43%	51%	60%	49%	51%	78%
30,001–50,000 ALL	67%	48%	78%	49%	54%	47%	47%	51%	67%	53%	52%	82%
50,001–70,000 ALL	65%	51%	77%	47%	50%	48%	47%	49%	63%	57%	48%	78%
Over 70,001 ALL	62%	54%	75%	51%	48%	44%	46%	52%	62%	63%	51%	84%
Geographical location												
Urban	62%	48%	73%	45%	51%	45%	46%	48%	62%	50%	50%	78%
Rural	68%	45%	67%	50%	46%	39%	42%	52%	60%	51%	50%	75%

Note: Colours represent cases when the differences observed among variable categories, are statistically significant (Chi-square test of independence, $p \leq 0.05$).

Note: The group “up to lower secondary education” includes respondents with no education, primary education, and those that attended school until the compulsory level (8/9 year).

4.3 CORRUPTION IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

Corruption – the abuse of public power for private gain – can be divided into petty corruption and grand corruption. Petty corruption refers to the abuse of entrusted power by public officials in their interactions with citizens; meanwhile, grand corruption refers to the abuse of high-level power that benefits the few and causes serious and widespread harm to individuals and society.¹¹

Every year, the questionnaire has reproduced the same set of questions to gather information on the level of widespread of petty and grand corruption; on the level of confidence in the prosecution of petty and grand corruption; whether respondents have witnessed corruption cases taking place in public institutions; which institutions they would rank as the most corrupt; whether they received services from central/local level institutions; and if they had paid a bribe to a public official.



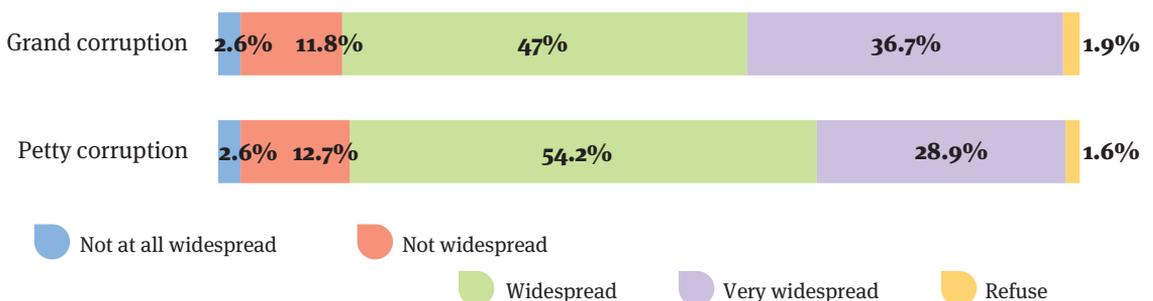
Perceptions of the prevalence of corruption

The vast majority of the Albanians perceive corruption as ‘widespread’ and ‘very widespread’. 83.1% of respondents reported that petty corruption is ‘widespread’ or ‘very widespread’ and 83.7% of respondents reported that grand corruption is ‘widespread’ or ‘very widespread’. The five institutions perceived as the most corrupt in 2021 were justice institutions followed by the healthcare system, public administration, local level institutions, and the police.

Respondents were asked to assess the spread of corruption on a 4-point scale – from 1 (not at all widespread) to 4 (very widespread). Comparisons were drawn between petty corruption and grand corruption.

The vast majority of respondents, (83.1%) reported that petty corruption is ‘widespread’ or ‘very widespread’. Meanwhile, 15.3% reported that petty corruption is ‘not widespread’ or ‘not widespread at all’. Regarding grand corruption in 2021, 83.7% of respondents reported it as ‘widespread’ or ‘very widespread’ with 14.4% of respondents reported that grand corruption is ‘not widespread’ or ‘not widespread at all’.

Figure 19: Perceived prevalence of corruption 2021



Base: Petty corruption (N = 2500); Grand corruption (N = 2500).



11 For definitions of petty corruption and grand corruption, see Transparency International’s ‘Corruptionary’. Available at <https://www.transparency.org/en/corruptionary>.

For the 2021 survey, comparisons across respondents' gender, age groups and education levels did not reveal differences concerning the perceived prevalence of petty corruption. Such differences are present only across employment statuses, geographical location, minority group membership and income levels. 86% of unemployed respondents reported that petty corruption is widespread or very widespread; while private sector employees (85%) were more likely to report petty corruption as widespread or very widespread, than public-sector employees (75%). Similarly, 87% of respondents without a regular monthly income reported petty corruption as being widespread or very widespread. While, as per geographical location, respondents living in urban areas (85%) were more likely to see petty corruption as widespread or very widespread compared to those living in rural areas (78%). Respondents who belong to a minority group (74%) were less likely to perceive petty corruption as widespread or very widespread compared to non-minority citizens (84%).

On the prevalence of grand corruption, no substantial differences were observed based on respondents' gender (84% in both categories). Differences were present across age groups, education levels, employment sectors, and monthly incomes. Respondents between 56 and 65 years old (88%) were more likely to report grand corruption as 'widespread' or 'very widespread' than other age groups. In terms of education level, survey respondents with up to lower secondary education (89%) were more likely to perceive grand corruption as 'widespread' or 'very widespread' than others. Moreover, public-sector employees (86%) were more likely to consider grand corruption as 'widespread' or 'very widespread' compared to private sector employees (72%). A higher percentage of respondents without a regular income and those with monthly incomes up to 30,000 ALL/month (87% in both categories) saw grand corruption as 'widespread' or 'very widespread', compared to the other income categories. Also, urban respondents (85%) were more likely to see grand corruption as 'widespread' or 'very widespread' compared to respondents living in rural areas (81%).

In 2021, the percentage of respondents indicating petty corruption as 'very widespread' decreased by 5 pp compared to 2020 and continued the downward trend since 2019 (-8 pp cumulatively), while those reporting it as 'widespread' increased marginally compared to 2020 (+1 pp) witnessing a cumulative increase of 4 pp compared to 2019. In 2021, the percentage of respondents reporting that petty corruption is 'very widespread' saw a decline compared with the 2017 figure for the first time, (-4 pp to 29%).

As regards grand corruption, in 2021, overall figures (widespread and very widespread combined) remained the same as in 2020 (-2 pp compared to 2019), although in contrast to both of the previous years, the 'very widespread' figure was lower.

Table 12. Perceived prevalence of corruption (2017–2021)

		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Petty Corruption	Widespread	54%	53%	50%	53%	54%
	Very widespread	33%	34%	37%	34%	29%
Grand Corruption	Widespread	48%	48%	43%	42%	47%
	Very widespread	40%	41%	43%	42%	37%

Base: Petty corruption, 2017 (N=1641); 2018 (N=1644); 2019 (N=2494); 2020 (N=2499); 2021 (N=2500); Grand corruption, 2017 (N=1641); 2018 (N=1644); 2019 (N=2495); 2020 (N=2499); 2021 (N=2500)

Note: In 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

Survey respondents were asked about their perception of the most corrupt institutions in 2021. The five most frequently cited institutions were justice institutions (21.5%), healthcare institutions (19.1%), public administration (10.1%), local level institutions (8.9%) and the police (7.1%).



Confidence in the prosecution of corruption cases

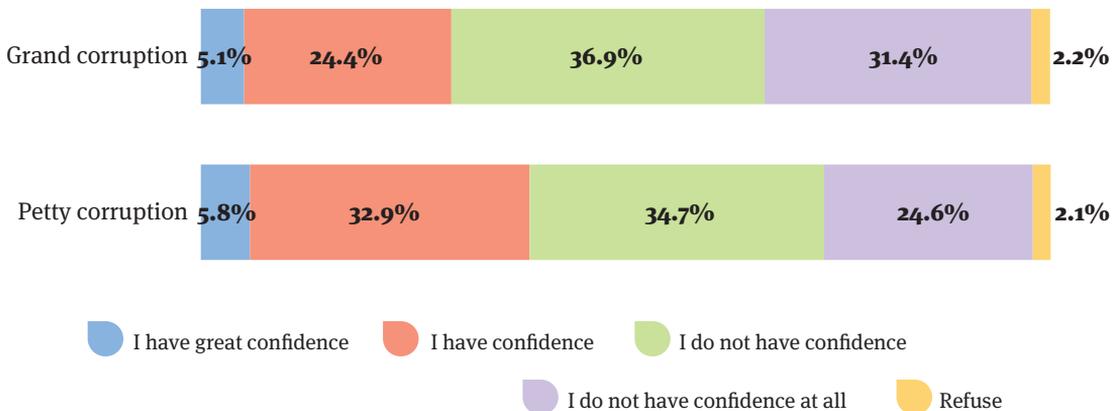
In 2021, the percentage of Albanians that did not have confidence in the prosecution of petty corruption declined to 59.3% (from 64.5% in 2020). While the percentage of respondents that did not have confidence in the prosecution of grand corruption cases was 68.4%, similar to 2020.

Respondents were asked to assess their level of confidence in the prosecution of corruption cases on a 4-point scale – from 1 (I have great confidence) to 4 (I do not have confidence at all). Differences were drawn between petty corruption and grand corruption.

On petty corruption, 59.3% of survey respondents reported that they ‘do not have confidence’ or ‘do not have confidence at all’, while 38.6% reported that they ‘have confidence’ or ‘have great confidence’ in their prosecution.

For grand corruption, the results show that 68.4% of respondents stated that they ‘do not have confidence’ or ‘do not have confidence at all’ in the prosecution of these cases, while 29.4% said they ‘have confidence’ or ‘have great confidence’.

Figure 20: Confidence in prosecution of corruption cases 2021



Base: Grand corruption (N=2500); Petty corruption (N=2500).

Confidence in the prosecution of petty corruption cases did not differ significantly based on respondents’ gender (female 41% and male 36%) and their geographical location. But differences were found across respondents’ age groups, education levels and employment sectors.

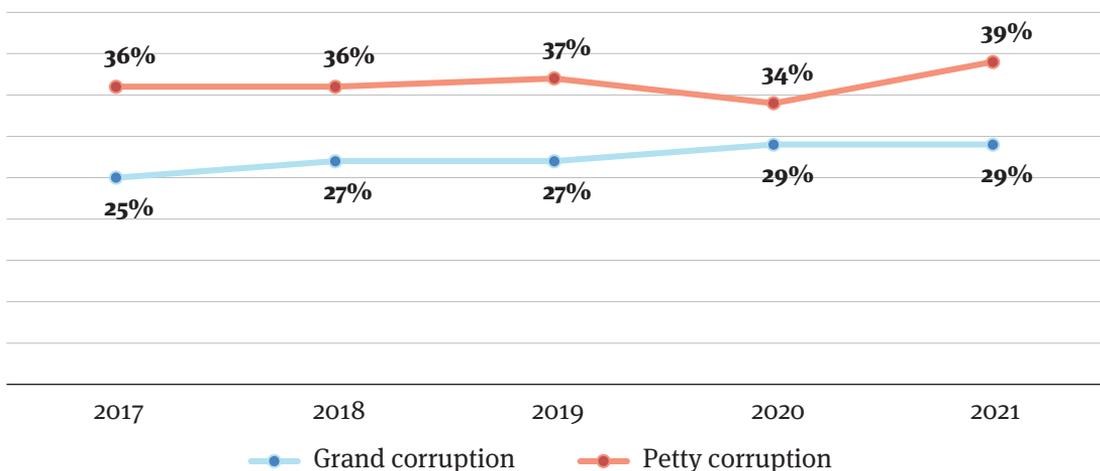
Respondents aged 18–25 years old (31%) were less confident in the prosecution of such cases than other age groups. Respondents with up to lower secondary and high school education (37% for both categories) were also less confident than those holding a university degree (43%). Moreover, public-sector employees (58%) were more confident in the prosecution of petty corruption cases compared to those working in the private sector (35%).

Concerning the prosecution of grand corruption cases, the demographic breakdown again shows no substantial differences based on respondents' gender (female 31% and male 28%) and geographical location. On the other hand, differences were observed across respondents' age group, education level, employment sector and income. Respondents 66 years old and over (39%) were more likely to report being confident in the prosecution of such cases compared with respondents in other age groups. Also, respondents holding a university degree or higher (33%) were more confident compared to those with other education levels (28% for two other categories). Moreover, public-sector employees (47%) were more confident in the prosecution of grand corruption cases than those in the private sector (25%). In terms of monthly income categories, respondents with 50,001–70,000 ALL/month (77%) were less likely to believe in the prosecution of grand corruption than those with other incomes.

As shown in Figure 21, in 2021 the proportion of respondents who reported that they have great or some confidence in the prosecution of petty corruption cases increased by 5 pp compared to 2020 (34%). This is the highest figure since 2017, picking up a slight upward trend from 2019 and recovering from the dip in 2020. However, the proportion of respondents who reported that they have great or some confidence in the prosecution of grand corruption cases remained similar to the 2020 figure (+2 pp compared to 2019).

Since 2017, when this question was asked by the survey, respondents continue to report greater confidence in the prosecution of petty corruption cases compared with grand corruption.

Figure 21: Confidence in the prosecution of corruption cases (2017–2021)



Base: Grand corruption: 2017(N=1639),2018(N=1644),2019(N=2490),2020(N=2494),2021(N=2500); Petty corruption: 2017(N=1639),2018(N=1644),2019(N=2461),2020(N=2496),2021(N=2500).

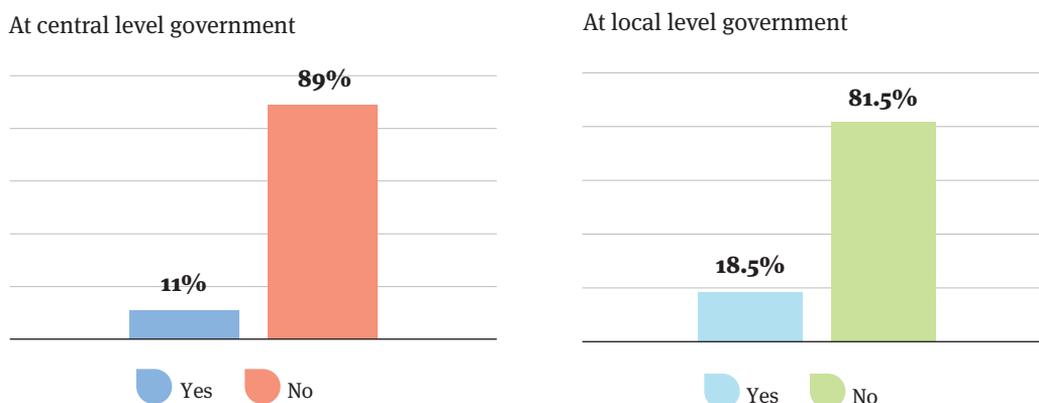
Note: In 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

Personal exposure to corruption cases

The 2021 Opinion Poll results show that 11% of the Albanian population have witnessed cases of corruption at the central government and 18.5% have witnessed cases of corruption at the local government.

11% of survey respondents reported that they have witnessed cases of corruption in central government, while the percentage of those who have witnessed corruption at the local government was 18.5%.

Figure 22: Personal exposure to corruption 2021



Base: Central government (N=2489); local government (N= 2490)

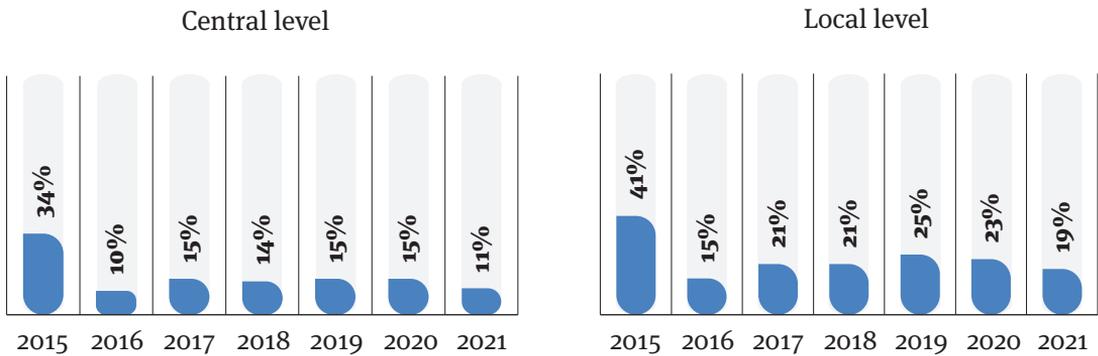
When checking across demographics, no substantial differences were found based on gender (females, 10%, and males, 12%), employment sector, geographical location, minority group membership or disability when it came to personal exposure to corruption at the central government level. Results show that respondents between 36 and 45 years old (13%), were more likely to report having witnessed corruption at the central level compared with those over 66 years old (6%). Similarly, respondents holding a university degree or higher (14%) were more prone to report witnessing corruption than those with other education levels. Respondents with over 70,001 ALL/month (27%) were also more likely than their counterparts to report witnessing corruption at the central government level.

Male respondents (21%) more often reported witnessing corruption at the local level than females (16%). Respondents between 26 and 35 years old (22%), were more likely to report seeing local corruption compared with those over 66 years old (10%). Respondents holding a university degree or higher (21%) more often reported local corruption than those with up to secondary education (17%). Regarding employment sectors, private sector workers (20%) were more likely to report witnessing corruption than those in the public sector (15%). Moreover, respondents with an individual monthly income over 70,001 ALL/month (36%) were more likely to have witnessed corruption in local government compared to other income levels.

Figure 23 shows the changes in reported personal exposure to corruption at both levels of

government since 2015. Results in 2021 suggest that there has been a decline in personal exposure to corruption at the central level by 4 pp compared to 2020 and 2019 (15% in both years). While at the local level, 2021 saw a decline compared to both 2020 (-4 pp) and 2019 (-2 pp), for a cumulative drop of 6 pp.

Figure 23: Personal exposure to corruption at a central and local level (2015–2021)



Base: For central government: 2015(N=1585),2016(N=1633),2017(N=1638),2018(N=1631),2019(N=2487),2020(N=2483),2021(N=2489). For local government: 2015(N=1571),2016(N=1633),2017(N=1639),2018(N=1631),2019(N=2487),2020(N=2483),2021(N=2490).

Note: In 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

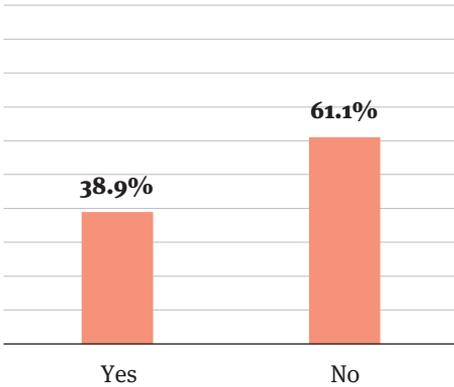
Prevalence of bribes

During 2021, 38.9% (N=973) of surveyed citizens reported receiving a service from public institutions at the central level. A third of these, 34.6% (N=337) said they had paid a bribe to public officials. Meanwhile, the percentage of the Albanian population that received a service from the local government in 2021 was 66.9% (N=1672) and the percentage of these reported having paid bribes to local level officials was 29.4% (N=491).

In 2021, 38.9% (N=973) of surveyed respondents reported receiving a service from public institutions at the central level during 2021, while 61.1% (N=1527) had not. Among respondents who benefited from a service at central level institutions, 34.6% (N=337 out of 973) said that they paid a bribe to a public official for it.

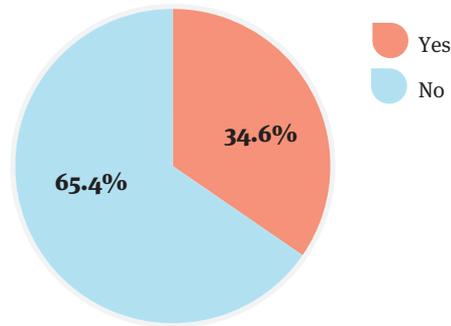
When checking across demographics, no substantial differences were found based on gender (females, 33%, and males, 37%), educational level, geographical location, or income when it came to reporting having paid a bribe at the central government level. Respondents between 36 and 45 years old (41%) were more likely to indicate bribery compared to those over 66 years old (19%). On the other hand, unemployed (46%), private sector employees (37%), respondents with a disability (49%), and those belonging to a minority group (42%) were more likely to say they have paid a bribe for a service at the central government level. Also, respondents living in rural areas (40%) were more likely to report bribery than urban residents (32%).

Figure 24: Services received at central level 2021



Base: N = 2500

Figure 25: Bribes paid by service-users at central level 2021

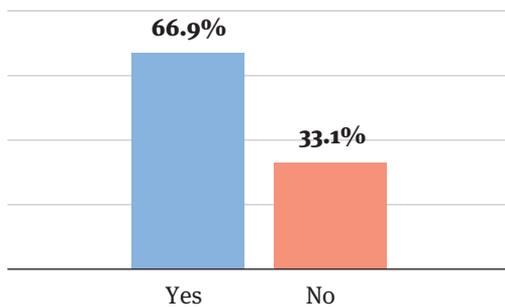


Base: N = 973

Referring to services received from the local government, 66.9% (N=1672) of respondents reported to have obtained a service, while 33.1% (N=828) had not. Among respondents who received a service at the local level, 29.4% (N=491) reported that they paid a bribe to a public official for it.

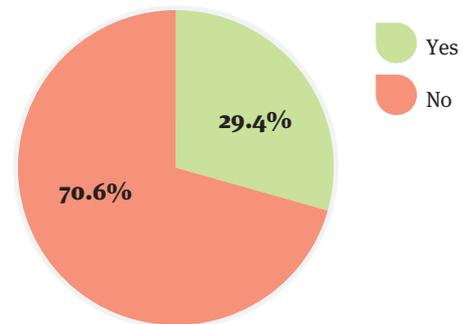
The data show that unemployed respondents (38%) and private sector employees (31%), were more likely to report that they paid a bribe for a service received at the local level government. No substantial differences were found across demographics relating to gender (females 28% and males 31%), age, education level, geographical location, disability, or minority membership.

Figure 26: Services received at local level 2021



Base: N = 2500

Figure 27: Bribes paid by service-users at local level 2021

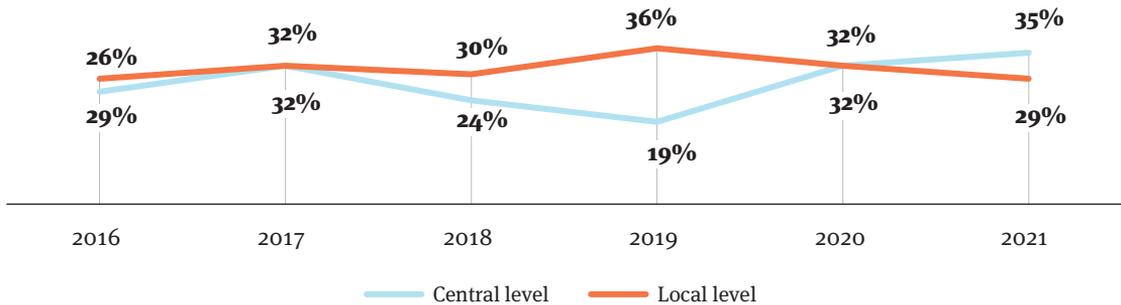


Base: N=1672

Compared to 2020, the proportion of survey respondents who reported having paid a bribe at central level institutions was higher in 2021 (35% compared to 32%), resulting from both a decrease of total service users (N=973 compared to 1046) and an increase in those among them reporting the payment of a bribe (N=337 compared to 329).

On the other hand, the proportion of survey respondents who reported paying a bribe when receiving a service at the local level decreased (29% compared to 32% in 2020).

Figure 28: Percentage of the prevalence of paying bribes (2016–2021)



Base: Local level: 2016 (N=838); 2017 (N=916); 2018 (N=924); 2019 (N=1744); 2020 (N=1575), 2021 (N=1672). Central level: 2016 (N=406); 2017 (N=561); 2018 (N=648); 2019 (N=1518); 2020 (N=1046), 2021(N=973).

Note: In 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

The main reason for bribe paying, according to the respondents, was that they were asked to (44.9%), 24.8% said they did so to receive better services next time, and 15% paid a bribe to express their gratitude for the service. Among those who selected ‘other’, a common response was that if they paid a bribe, the service would be faster.

Table 13: Reasons for paying bribes 2021

	N	%
I was asked to pay	261	45%
So, I can receive better services next time	144	25%
As a gratitude for the received service	87	15%
Other*	89	15%
Total	581	100%

*Other: “No services are provided unless you pay a bribe”; “to obtain services faster”.

Only 31 respondents (5.3%) of those who paid a bribe said that they reported it to the authorities. Among respondents who did not report the bribe (94.7%), the main reason mentioned was that ‘it is useless, and nobody would care about it’ (44.5%) followed by the suggestion that paying one is a common practice (32.3%). Only a small percentage of respondents (3%) said they do not know where to report bribery or to whom. Moreover, 7% of respondents feared reprisals if they took the initiative to report the bribe.

4.4 POLITICAL INFLUENCE

The assessment of political influence in processes of decision-making is crucial, due to the potential for this influence to affect political decisions and advance group interests. This undermines the independence of public institutions and democratic decision-making and erodes citizens' trust in the government. For the sixth consecutive year, respondents were asked to rate on a five-point scale – from 1 (not at all influenced) to 5 (extremely influenced) – how much they think political interests influence the agenda of nine institutions – the prosecution, courts, police, armed forces, public health institutions, educational institutions, media, religious institutions, and civil society organisations.

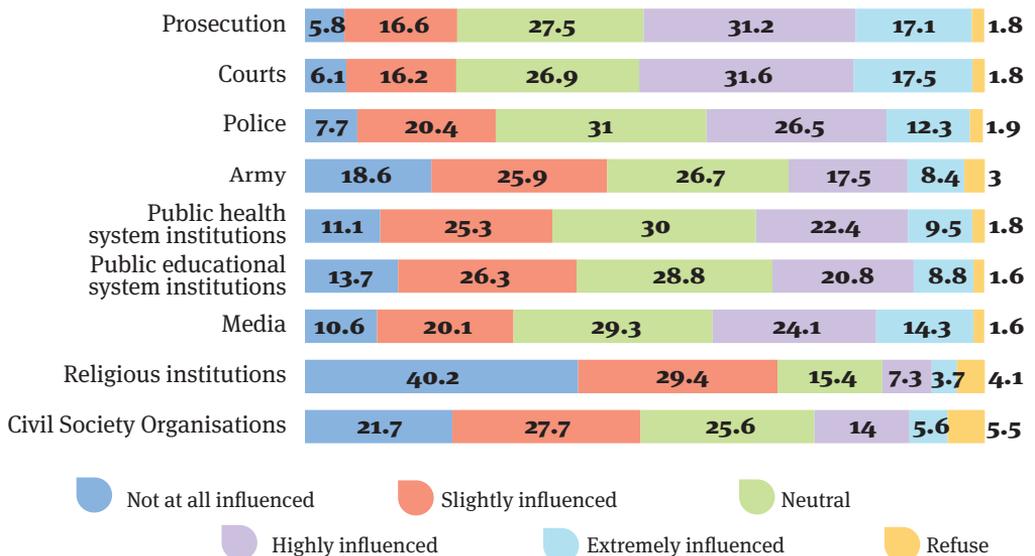
Political interests in the agenda of institutions

The prosecution and courts were perceived as the most politically influenced institutions; meanwhile religious institutions were perceived as the least politically influenced institution.

69.6% of survey respondents reported that religious institutions were either 'not at all influenced' or 'slightly influenced' by political interests. After religious institutions, the institutions that were perceived as the most independent from political interests were civil society organisations (49.4%), the armed forces (44.5%), public education institutions (40%), and public health institutions (36.3%).

The prosecution and courts were perceived as the most politically influenced institutions. 48.3% of survey respondents viewed the prosecution as 'highly influenced or extremely influenced' by political interests. Only 22.4% of respondents viewed the prosecution as 'not at all' or 'slightly influenced' by political interests. 49.1% of survey respondents viewed courts as 'extremely influenced' or 'highly influenced' by political interests. Only 22.3% of respondents viewed courts as 'not at all' or 'slightly influenced' by political interests.

Figure 29: Perceived influence of political interests in the agenda of institutions 2021 (%)



Base: Prosecution (N=2495); Courts (N=2495); Police (N=2492); Armed forces (N=2475); Healthcare (N=2490); Education (N=2490); Media (N=2493); Religious institutions (N=2492); CSOs (N=2495).

Demographic comparison for the perception of political influence on institutions

The relationship between demographic characteristics and perception of political influence over institutions varied by the type of institution. However, public-sector employees were consistently less likely to report that the agenda of public institutions are influenced by politics.

Male respondents were more likely to report that prosecution (52%), the police (42%), media (41%), and public health system institutions (35%) are ‘highly’ or ‘extremely influenced’ by politics, than female (45%, 36%, 35% and 29% respectively). Respondents in the age group ‘66 years old and over were more likely to indicate that the prosecution (56%), courts (59%), civil society organisations (27%) are ‘highly influenced’ or ‘extremely influenced’ by politics. Respondents in the age group ‘46-55 years old’ were less likely to report that the prosecutor (43%) are ‘highly influenced’ or ‘extremely influenced’ by politics. While respondents belonging to ‘26-35 years old age group’ were less likely to report that civil society organisations (17%) are highly or extremely influenced by politics and 18-25 years old age group were less likely to report that the courts (45%), are ‘highly influenced’ or ‘extremely influenced’ by politics.

Public-sector employees were more likely to say that the listed institutions are ‘not at all’ or ‘slightly influenced’ by politics than those working in the private sector. This was particularly the case with civil society organisations (57%), religious institutions (75%), the armed forces (54%), public educational system institutions (50%).

Respondents with an income of over 70,001 ALL/month were more likely than other income brackets to report ‘high’ or ‘extremely high’ political influence over the prosecution (62%), media (41%), courts (59%), police (51%), public health system institutions (39%) and public educational system institutions (37%). On the other hand, respondents with an income from 30,001 to 50,000 ALL / month were less likely to report ‘high’ or ‘extreme’ influence over the agenda of the listed institutions. Urban residents were more likely to report that all listed institutions were ‘highly’ or ‘extremely influenced’ by politics compared to those residing in rural areas. Respondents with disabilities were more likely to report that the armed forces (32%), public health system institutions (35%), public educational systems (35%), religious institutions (14%) and CSOs (19%) were ‘highly’ or ‘extremely influenced’ by politics. As were respondents belonging to a minority group when it came to public health institutions (47%) and the media (48%). *For the full findings across demographics, see Table 15 at the end of this section.*

Political influence over time

In 2021, the perceived influence of politics on the agenda of public institutions decreased for almost all rated institutions. It went up only for CSOs, though marginally (+1 pp), a figure which was still 3 pp lower compared to 2019. Compared to 2020, the proportion of respondents that viewed the prosecution, courts, police, armed forces, healthcare systems, education systems and media as ‘highly’ and ‘extremely influenced’ decreased by 10, 7, 6, 3, 5, 4 and 4 percentage points respectively. The figure was also marginally lower for religious institutions (-1 pp), though higher by the same margin compared to 2019 (+1 pp). The decreasing perception of political influence on the prosecution and courts can be traced from 2017, whereas for other organisations, such as the police and media, the drop has been since the 2019 study.

Table 14: Institutions perceived as ‘highly influenced’ or ‘extremely influenced’ by politics (2016–2021)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Prosecution	X	67%	60%	59%	58%	48%
Courts	X	70%	63%	61%	56%	49%
Police	46%	47%	48%	44%	45%	39%
Armed forces	33%	29%	33%	30%	29%	26%
Healthcare system	41%	34%	36%	33%	37%	32%
Education system	38%	29%	34%	33%	34%	30%
Media	45%	37%	39%	45%	42%	38%
Religious institutions	9%	9%	12%	10%	12%	11%
CSOs	20%	26%	24%	23%	19%	20%

Base: In order as listed: 2016 (N= 1633, 1621, 1621, 1626, 1629, 1628, 1630, 1628); 2017 (N= 1615, 1616, 1611, 1608, 1615, 1613, 1612, 1614, 1615); 2018 (N= 1628, 1631, 1624, 1614, 1626, 1633, 1629, 1628, 1632); 2019 (N=2488); 2020 (N= 2490); 2021 (N= 2495,2495,2492, 2475, 2490, 2490, 2493, 2492, 2495)

Note: In 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

Table 15: Demographic breakdown of ‘highly’ or ‘extremely influenced’ institutions 2021

	Prosecution	Courts	Police	Armed forces	Health system institutions	Educational system institutions	Media	Religious ins.	CSOs	
TOTAL (% of highly or extremely influenced)	48%	49%	39%	26%	32%	30%	38%	11%	20%	
Gender										
Male	52%	52%	42%	28%	35%	32%	41%	11%	21%	
Female	45%	46%	36%	24%	29%	27%	35%	11%	18%	
Age										
18-25 years old	47%	45%	39%	25%	32%	31%	35%	11%	20%	
26-35 years old	48%	49%	40%	26%	32%	28%	39%	10%	18%	
36-45 years old	48%	48%	38%	26%	31%	30%	36%	11%	20%	
46-55 years old	43%	46%	37%	25%	32%	30%	43%	12%	20%	
56-65 years old	52%	53%	39%	26%	32%	29%	39%	10%	18%	
66 and over	56%	59%	41%	31%	35%	30%	41%	16%	27%	
Education										
Up to lower secondary*	48%	48%	38%	27%	32%	30%	43%	15%	22%	
High school	49%	50%	39%	25%	32%	29%	37%	9%	18%	
University degree	47%	48%	38%	25%	31%	30%	37%	10%	20%	
Employment										
Employed	Total	44%	46%	36%	23%	30%	27%	37%	10%	18%
	Public	30%	33%	25%	17%	23%	22%	30%	7%	14%
	Private	51%	52%	41%	26%	33%	29%	41%	10%	20%
Unemployed	55%	55%	46%	31%	35%	36%	40%	14%	19%	
Student	45%	44%	41%	30%	35%	34%	33%	10%	22%	
Retired	53%	53%	37%	28%	33%	28%	39%	15%	22%	
Income										
No income	53%	52%	44%	29%	34%	34%	38%	13%	21%	
Up to 30,000 ALL	51%	51%	40%	30%	34%	30%	41%	13%	21%	
30,001–50,000 ALL	40%	42%	31%	17%	24%	23%	34%	7%	16%	
50,001–70,000 ALL	47%	49%	37%	25%	29%	27%	37%	10%	17%	
Over 70,001 ALL	62%	59%	51%	29%	38%	37%	41%	8%	19%	
Geographical location										
Urban	46%	47%	37%	23%	29%	27%	36%	10%	18%	
Rural	54%	55%	44%	32%	38%	35%	44%	13%	24%	

Note: Colours represent cases when the differences observed among variable categories, are statistically significant (Chi-square test of independence, $p \leq 0.05$).

Note: The group “up to lower secondary education” includes respondents with no education, primary education, and those that attended school until the compulsory level (8/9 year).

4.5 CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

Citizen engagement in decision-making processes enables the strengthening of good governance and allows greater participation of citizens in a democracy. The survey questions included in this section did not differ from the previous opinion poll in 2020. They measured the interest of respondents in participating in decision-making processes and the opportunities provided by public institutions to enable their participation, differentiating between the central and local levels of government. Moreover, respondents were asked about citizens' engagement in consultation processes, the usage of the online consultation portal 'konsultimipublik.gov.al'; participation in demonstrations and signing petitions; and voluntary work engagement for the benefit of the community. Lastly, they were asked about the possibility of them wanting to leave their place of residence, within or outside of Albania.

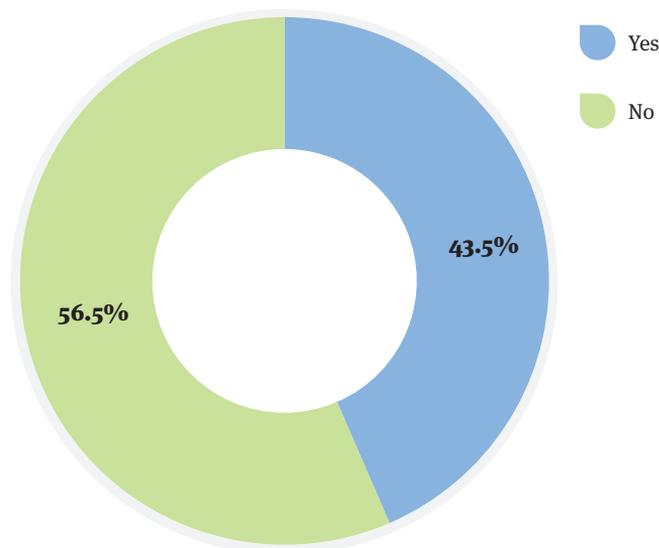


Participation in decision-making

The interest of the population in participating in the decision-making processes of public institutions decreased further to 43.5% in 2021 (48.6% in 2020). Moreover, the majority of Albanian citizens felt that they lack sufficient opportunities to participate in the decision-making processes of public institutions in 2021. However, they consistently reported greater participation opportunities at the local government level than in the central government level.

43.5% of respondents reported that they were interested in participating in the decision-making processes of public institutions. Compared to 2020 (48.6%), the percentage of respondents interested in becoming active in the country's governance has decreased by 5.1 points.

Figure 30: Interest to participate in decision-making process of public institutions 2021

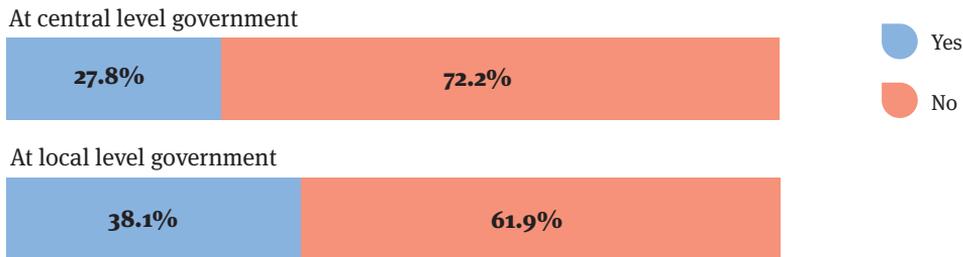


Base: N = 2500

The respondents who were most likely to be active citizens belonged to the 26–35 (50%) or 36–45 (49%) age groups; had a university degree or higher (57%); or lived in rural (47%) rather than urban areas (42%). These people were employed (50%), mostly in the public sector (65%) and had a regular monthly income between 50,001 and 70,000 ALL (58%). Party affiliation is another characteristic, as 63% of respondents who were interested in such processes were political party members. Respondents aged 66 and over (23%), who had up to a lower secondary degree (31%), were unemployed (36%), had an income up to 30,000 ALL/month (32%) or had a disability (30%) were less interested in being active in decision-making processes. Gender differences were not significant (females 42% and males 45%). *See Table 17 at the end of the chapter for the full breakdown.*

72.2% of respondents thought that opportunities to participate in decision-making processes at the central government level are not sufficient – similar to the 2020 results (72%). At the local level, 61.9% of respondents also believed they do not have sufficient opportunities to participate in public decision-making processes – again similar to the 2020 results (61.2%).

Figure 31: Opportunities to participate in the decision-making process of public institutions 2021



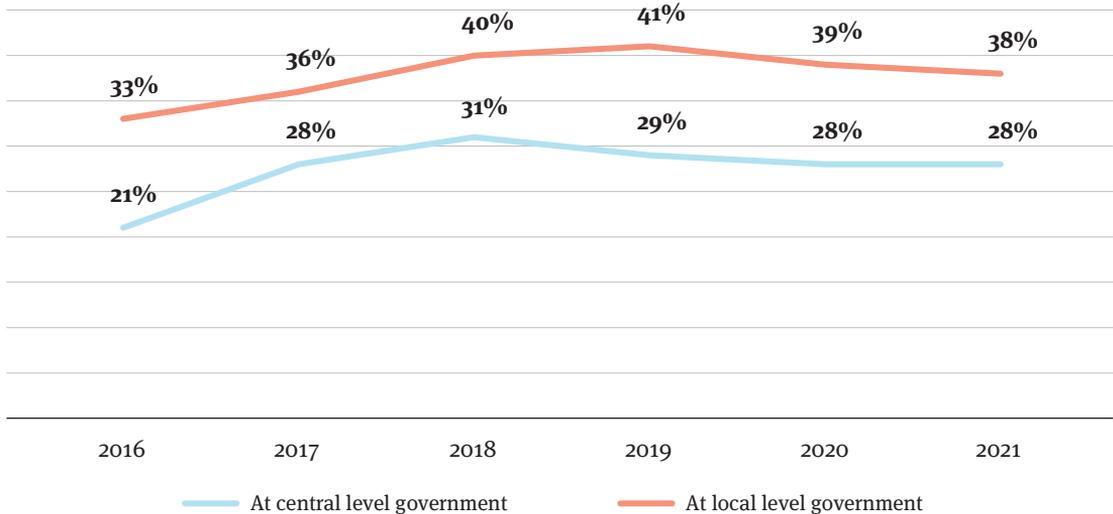
Base: Central government (N=2490); local government (N=2494).

Gender (females 28% and males 28% for central government; females 37% and males 39% for local government), geographical location, and membership of a minority group appeared to play no role in respondents’ assessment of the opportunities to participate in decision-making at central or local level. Differences, however, were found across respondents’ age group, education level, employment status and income.

Respondents who were 26 to 35 years old were most likely to report sufficient opportunities at the central (34%) and local level (46%); as were respondents with a university degree or higher (40% for central level and 52% for local level), compared to respondents holding up to a lower secondary degree (17% for central level and 25% for local level). Employed respondents, especially those in the public sector tended reported more often about sufficient opportunities at both levels – 45% for central level and 63% for local government level. Respondents with monthly incomes of 50,001 to 70,000 ALL were more positive about the sufficiency of participation opportunities at central (40%) and local level (51%), compared to those making over 70,001 ALL/month (37% at central level and 44% at local level). Respondents who had a disability were less likely to feel that there are sufficient opportunities to participate in decision-making processes at either the central (14%) or local level (19%). Generally, respondents’ perceptions on the sufficiency of opportunities for local participation were notably higher than for the central level. *See Table 17 at the end of the chapter for more detailed information.*

Figure 32 shows the percentage of respondents who reported they have sufficient opportunities to participate in decision-making, both at the central and local level throughout 2016–2021. Perceived opportunities to participate in central government decision-making in 2021 has remained broadly the same as in the 2020 study, i.e., a marginal drop of 1 pp since 2019. In the same timeframe, 2019–2021, perceived opportunities at the local level have seen a gradual downward trend (41% in 2019, 39% in 2020 and 38% in 2021), although this has been consistently higher than for the central government throughout 2016–2021.

Figure 32: Sufficient opportunities to participate in decision-making (2016–2021)



Base: Central, 2016 (N=1633); 2017 (N=1634); 2018 (N=1630); 2019 (N=2480); 2020 (N = 2482); 2021 (N = 2490). Local, 2016 (N=1634); 2017 (N=1630); 2018 (N=1638); 2019 (N=2463); 2020 (N = 2491); 2021 (N = 2494).

Note: In 2019, the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

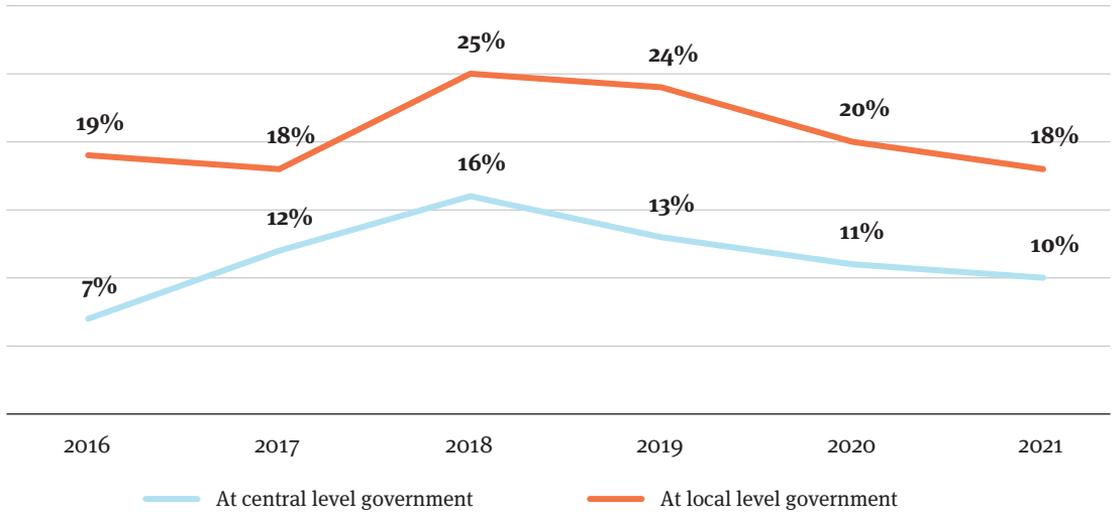
Consultation processes

9.7% of surveyed Albanian citizens said they were invited to participate in consultation processes organised by public institutions at the central government and 17.8% at the local government in 2021. 7.4% of Albanians surveyed participated in consultation processes organised by the central government and 14.5% by the local government. More survey respondents (16.6% in 2021 vs. 12.9% in 2020) used the online portal ‘www.konsultimipublik.gov.al’ to be informed or be consulted about draft legislation or draft strategies/action plans in central government.

9.7% of respondents reported that they were invited to participate in consultation processes organised by public institutions at the central government level in 2021, and 17.8% at the local level.

As shown in the Figure 33 below, reported invitations to participate in consultation processes at the local level have been consistently higher than in the central level government since 2016. However, invitations to participate in public consultations have witnessed a downward trend at both levels in the past three years.

Figure 33: Invitations to participate in consultation processes (2016–2021)

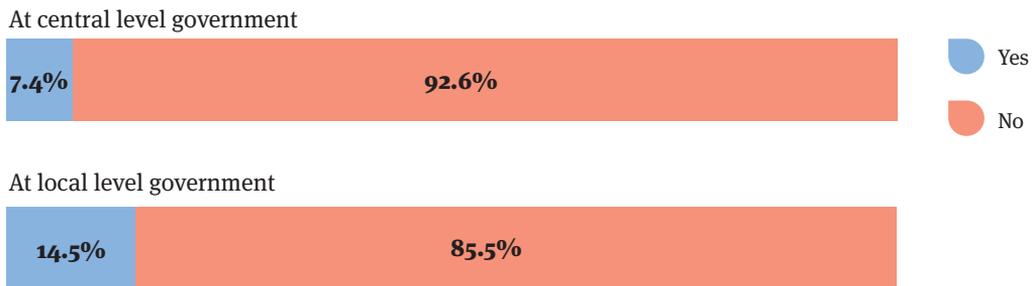


Base: Local level: 2016 (N=1624), 2017 (N=1635), 2018 (N=1629), 2019 (N=2482), 2020 (N=2486); 2021 (N=2494). Central level: 2016 (N=1631), 2017 (N=1635), 2018 (N=1630), 2019 (N=2483), 2020 (N=2486), 2021 (N=2494).

Note: In 2019, the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

Citizens’ participation in public consultations remained very low in 2021. Regardless of invitation, 7.4% of respondents reported they had participated in consultation processes led by the central government, compared to 8.3% in 2020. 14.5% of respondents reported they had participated in local consultation processes, while 15.9% did so in 2020.

Figure 34: Participation in consultation meetings 2021



Base: Central government (N=2442); local government (N=2463).

The main reason for the lack of participation was a continued scepticism regarding the consultation processes (29.3%). This was followed by the expectation that others should do the job instead (22.6%); and the belief that there were no consultation mechanisms in place (22.3%). Lack of information on the subject for discussion (9.8%) and limited ability to access the meeting locations (10%) were less frequently cited as reasons for not participating in consultation processes.

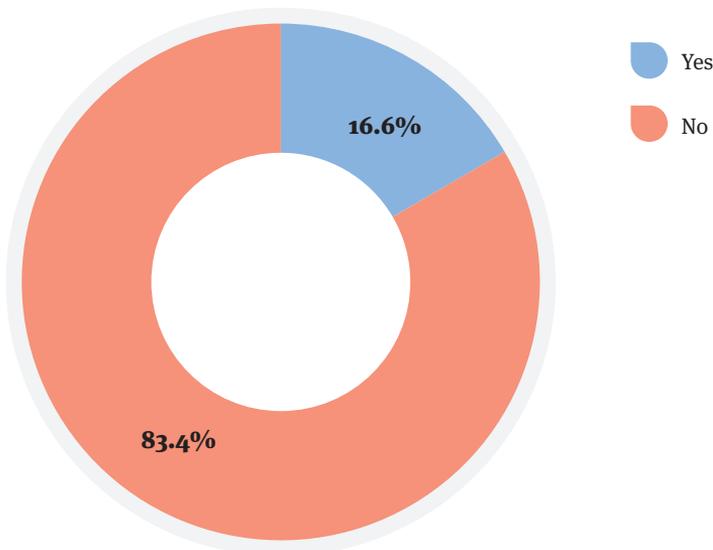
Table 16: Reasons for not participating in consultation processes 2021

	N	%
I expect others to do so	475	22.6%
I don't believe in such processes	618	29.3%
I did not have information on the subject	206	9.8%
I could not reach the location or access online meetings	210	10%
I believe there are no consultation mechanisms or processes established	469	22.3%
Other*	128	6.1%

*Common “other” answers were not knowing when, where and the purpose of the consultation meeting; lack of invitation for participating in it; low collective self-esteem; lack of education necessary for attending these meetings; lack of interest or old age.

16.6% of respondents used the portal ‘www.konsultimipublik.gov.al’ to access information about or give their opinions on draft legislation or draft strategies/action plans, a higher percentage than 12.9% in 2020.

Figure 35: Usage of the “konsultimipublik.gov.al” portal 2021



Base: N = 2500

Respondents in the 26–35 age group (24%), with a university degree or higher (26%), employed in the public sector (30%), with an income of 50,001 to 70,000 ALL/month (31%) and over 70,001 ALL/month (32%), were all more likely to report that they used the online portal ‘www.

konsultimipublik.gov.al'. Respondents with disabilities were far less likely to use it (8%). Gender differences were not significant (females 17% and males 16%). See Table 18 for more information on differences across demographic characteristics.

Statements on citizen engagement

The majority of Albanian citizens (71.7%) were confident that citizens have sufficient knowledge to understand if government decisions are good or bad. However, 63.2% saw local public hearings as being formal events, while 40.3% believed that public institutions take into consideration suggestions from civil society. 38.8% of respondents agreed that municipal councils represent local communities and 33% found citizens' priorities reflected in their municipality budget.

71.7% of survey respondents (71.2% in 2020) 'fully agreed' or 'generally agreed' that 'citizens have sufficient knowledge to understand whether government decisions are good or bad'. No substantial differences in the perceptions of respondents were observed across the categories of gender (females 70% and males 74%), age group, education level or geographical location. Retirees (77%), public-sector employees (76%), respondents with incomes of 30,001–50,000 ALL/month (76%), and those living in large municipalities (74%),¹² were more likely to agree with the statement.

40.3% of respondents either fully or generally agreed that 'suggestions from civil society are taken into consideration' (38% in 2020). Respondents who were 66 years old and over (46%), those holding a university degree or higher (44%), public-sector employees (61%), respondents with a monthly income of 50,000 to 70,001 ALL (50%), and those living in large municipalities (43%) were more likely to agree with the statement. By contrast, the younger generation i.e., 18 to 25 years old (34%), those with up to lower secondary education (36%), the unemployed (28%) and those with no regular monthly income (29%) were less likely to agree with the statement. Gender differences were not significant (females 41% and males 40%).

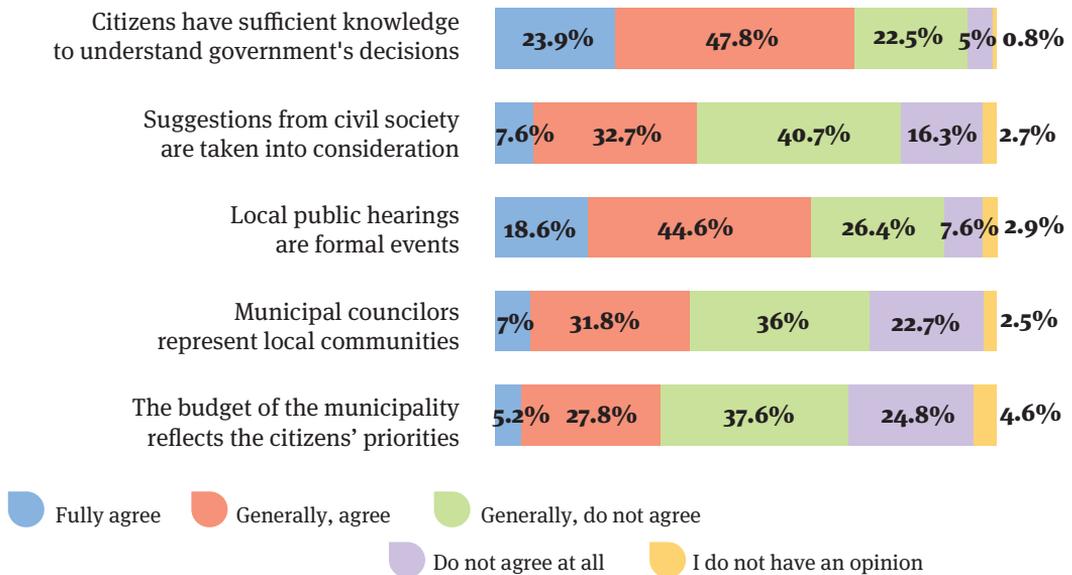
63.2% of survey respondents (64.8% in 2020) fully or generally agreed that 'local public hearings are formal events'. No substantial differences were observed across respondents' gender (females 63% and males 63%), age group, income, geographical location or municipality size. Considering other characteristics, private sector employees (67%) were more likely to agree with the statement than respondents employed in the public sector (55%). Also, respondents holding a high school diploma (66%) were more likely to agree than those with up to lower secondary education (59%).

A higher percentage of respondents (38.8%) compared to the 2020 study (34.6%) fully or generally agreed that 'municipal councillors represent local communities'. Public-sector employees (62%), respondents with an income of 50,001 to 70,000 ALL/month (46%) or those with a university degree (43%), were more likely to agree with the statement. On the other hand, unemployed respondents (32%), students (33%), those with a disability (31%), minority group members (35%) and survey respondents with a monthly income of over 70,001 ALL (29%) were all less likely to agree with the statement. Gender differences were not significant (females 40% and males 38%).

¹² Based on the resident population, the municipality size consists of Small (<=50,000), Medium (50,000- <=100,000), and Large (>100,000) municipalities.

A similar percentage (33%) of respondents as in 2020 (32%) fully or generally agreed that ‘the budget of the municipality where they live reflects citizens’ priorities’. The demographic characteristics of respondents most likely to agree with the statement include those with a university degree (38%), those employed in the public sector (56%), those with a monthly income of 50,001 to 70,000 ALL (41%) and those living in urban areas (35%). Respondents with up to lower secondary education (27%), unemployed (22%) and with no income (25%) were less likely to agree with the statement. Gender differences again were not significant (females 34% and males 32%). See Table 19 for more detailed data on differences across demographic characteristics.

Figure 36: Statements on local representation and citizen engagement 2021



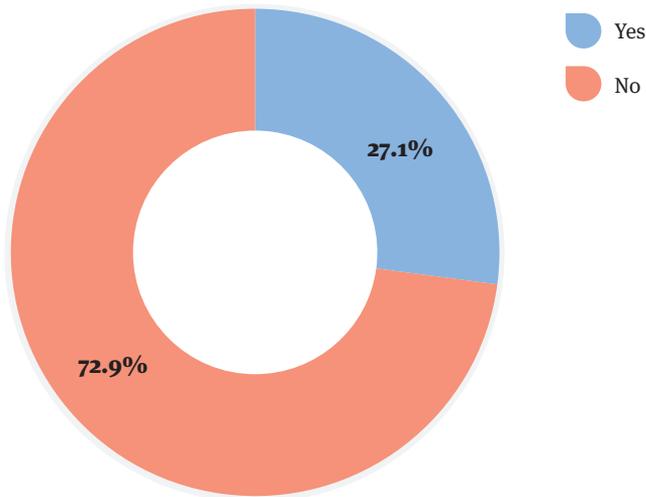
Base: Municipal budget (N=2500); councillors reflect communities (N=2500); public hearings (N=2500); suggestions taken into account (N=2500); citizens sufficient knowledge (N=2500).

Attending a demonstration/rally or signing a petition

More Albanian citizens (27.1%) attended a demonstration/rally or signed a petition in 2021 compared to the 22% in 2020. Respondents in the 18–25 age group, those with university degree or higher, current students, employed respondents with a monthly income of 50,001 to 70,000 ALL, and political-party members were all more likely to report their participation in a demonstration or a petition in 2021.

27.1% of respondents attended a demonstration/ rally or signed a petition in 2021, marking an increase compared to 2020 (+5 pp).

Figure 37: Attended a demonstration/rally or signed a petition 2021



Base: N = 2500

Analysis of the findings based on respondents' demographics such as gender (females 27% and males 27%), disability, minority group, employment sector and geographical location exhibited no substantial differences. Respondents that were most likely to engage in demonstrations and petitions in 2021 belonged to the age group of 18-25 years old (35%), were students (35%), held a university degree or higher (34%), were members of political parties (38%) and most commonly had a monthly income level of 50,001–70,000 ALL (32%). Older generations, especially respondents 66 years old and over (9%), those with up to a lower secondary education (22%) and those with an income up to 30,000 ALL/month (20%) were correspondingly less likely to have attended a demonstration/rally or signed a petition in 2021. Membership of a specific political party made no substantial difference in the participation of study respondents in a demonstration/rally or signing a petition in 2021.

'Shared interest of the community I belong to' was the most frequent reason (53.2%) given for attending a demonstration/rally or signing a petition in 2021 (53.9% in 2020). The second most common reason (26.7%) was 'personal interest' (25.7% in 2020), followed by 'political party militancy' (13.8% in 2021 and 11.8% in 2020), and 'peer pressure' (3.4% in 2021 and 6.6% in 2020). 2.8% of respondents opted for unlisted reasons for participating in a protest/rally or signing a petition.

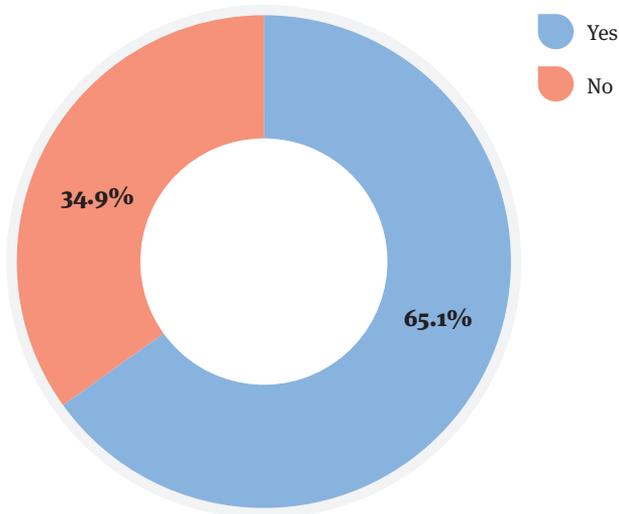


Willingness to engage in voluntary work

Most of the Albanian citizens surveyed (65.1%) were willing to engage in voluntary work. Younger generations, students, university degree holders, and employees in the public sector were more likely to report willingness to engage in voluntary work for the benefit of the community.

65.1% of all survey respondents said that they were willing to engage in voluntary work for the benefit of the community. In 2021, the proportion of respondents who reported a willingness to voluntarily serve the community continued the downward turn (65% compared to 66% in 2020), contributing to a cumulative decrease of 13 pp compared to 2019 data (78%).

Figure 38: Willingness to engage in voluntary work 2021



Base: N = 2488

The demographic characteristics of respondents more likely to do voluntary work included the 18 to 25 age bracket (75%), students (71%) or university degree holders (76%), those mostly employed in the public sector (81%) and those earning 50,001 ALL to 70,000 ALL (76%) per month. Gender (females 67% and males 64%), geographical location and membership of a minority group did not account for substantial differences in participants' willingness to engage in voluntary work.

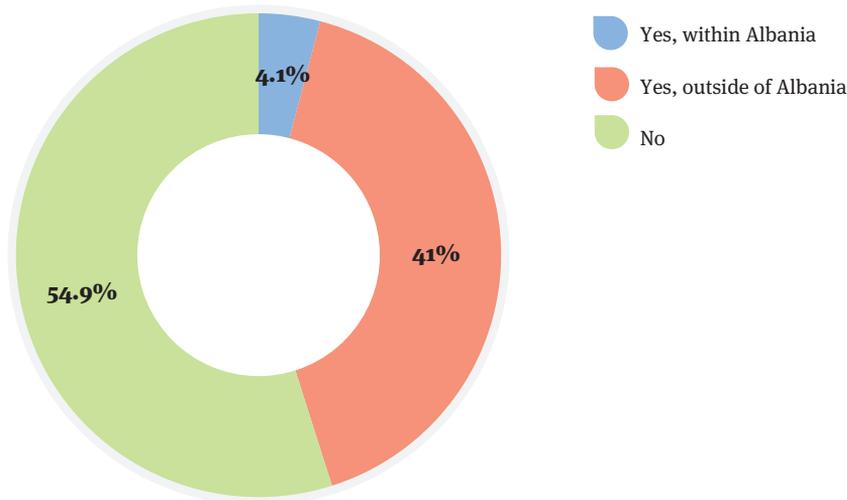


Moving from current place of residence

41% of Albanian citizens wanted to move to another country in 2021. Those wanting to migrate within the country was at 4% in 2021. Respondents who were 18 to 25 years old, particularly students, university degree holders and those employed in the private sector were more likely to want to move out of Albania in 2021.

Fewer survey respondents (41%) reported wanting to move to another country in 2021 than in 2020 (44%) – still representing approximately two-fifths of the resident population of Albania. Willingness for internal migration was around 4% in 2021, compared to 4.8% in 2020. Meanwhile, 54.9% of respondents did not want to move from their current place of residence.

Figure 39: Moving from current place of residence 2021



Base: N=2495

Desire to migrate within the country did not substantially differ according to gender (females 4% and males 4%). Apart from generations older than 66 years old who were less willing to migrate (1%), all other respondents under 65 years old were similarly likely to move to a different region of Albania (4% to 5%). Respondents with up to lower secondary education (5%), students (6%) and those with a disability (5%) were more inclined to move within the country.

On the other hand, the demographic profile of respondents who were more likely to move outside of Albania, were predominantly between the ages of 18 and 25 years old (64%), university degree holders (49%), those employed in the private sector (47%), students (61%), and those with no regular monthly income (52%). Older respondents, particularly those aged over 66 years old and over (7%), and respondents with a disability (24%) were more likely to report that they do not want to move out of the country. No substantial differences were reported according to respondents' gender (females 40% and males 42%), geographical location or minority group.

The primary reasons mentioned for moving to another country were: economic factors (N=305; a desire for a better life (N=229); followed by bad governance, corruption, or lack of justice (N=55); and educational purposes (N=47). More uncommon reasons were security and criminality, joining relatives abroad and access to better health services.

Table 17: Demographic breakdown – interest in and opportunities to participate in decision-making 2021

	Interest in participating in decision-making processes	Sufficient opportunities to participate in decision making	
		Central Government	Local Government
Total	44%	28%	38%
Gender			
Female	42%	28%	37%
Male	45%	28%	39%
Age			
18-25 years old	48%	30%	39%
26-35 years old	50%	34%	46%
36-45 years old	49%	31%	44%
46-55 years old	41%	26%	35%
56-65 years old	31%	17%	25%
66 and over	23%	14%	22%
Education			
Up to lower secondary	31%	17%	25%
High school	39%	23%	33%
University degree	57%	40%	52%
Employment status			
Employed	Total	50%	45%
	Public	65%	63%
	Private	43%	37%
Unemployed	36%	22%	31%
Student	49%	28%	36%
Retired	25%	15%	20%
Income			
No income	37%	21%	29%
Up to 30,000 ALL	32%	23%	29%
30,001 – 50,000 ALL	53%	32%	46%
50,001 – 70,000 ALL	58%	40%	51%
Over 70,001 ALL	51%	37%	44%
Geographical location			
Urban	42%	28%	38%
Rural	47%	28%	37%

Note: Colours represent cases when the differences observed among variable categories, are statistically significant (Chi-square test of independence, $p \leq 0.05$).

Note: The group “up to lower secondary education” includes respondents with no education, primary education, and those that attended school until the compulsory level (8/9 year).

Table 18: Demographic breakdown of consultation processes in 2021

	Invitation to participate in consultation in 2021		Participation in consultation in 2021		Usage of www.konsultimipublik.gov.al	
	At central level	At local level	At central level	At local level		
Total	10%	18%	7%	14%	17%	
Gender						
Female	11%	18%	8%	15%	17%	
Male	9%	17%	7%	14%	16%	
Age						
18-25 years old	11%	16%	8%	12%	18%	
26-35 years old	12%	22%	10%	19%	24%	
36-45 years old	11%	21%	9%	17%	18%	
46-55 years old	9%	17%	7%	13%	17%	
56-65 years old	7%	14%	4%	10%	7%	
66 and over	2%	8%	1%	7%	4%	
Education						
Up to lower secondary	5%	11%	3%	9%	8%	
High school	7%	14%	5%	11%	13%	
University degree	16%	26%	13%	22%	26%	
Employment						
Employed	Total	13%	23%	10%	18%	22%
	Public	22%	42%	20%	35%	30%
	Private	8%	15%	5%	11%	17%
Unemployed	7%	12%	5%	10%	12%	
Student	10%	13%	7%	12%	17%	
Retired	3%	9%	1%	8%	5%	
Income						
No income	7%	11%	5%	10%	12%	
Up to 30,000 ALL	5%	10%	2%	8%	9%	
30,001 – 50,000 ALL	13%	25%	10%	20%	21%	
50,001 – 70,000 ALL	17%	29%	16%	24%	31%	
Over 70,001 ALL	21%	27%	15%	23%	32%	
Geographical location						
Urban	11%	19%	8%	16%	18%	
Rural	8%	15%	5%	12%	14%	

Note: Colours represent cases when the differences observed among variable categories, are statistically significant (Chi-square test of independence, $p \leq 0.05$).

Note: The group “up to lower secondary education” includes respondents with no education, primary education, and those that attended school until the compulsory level (8/9 year).

Table 19: Demographic breakdown of statements on citizen engagement 2021

	Citizens have sufficient knowledge to understand government decision	Suggestions from civil society and interest groups taken into consideration	Local public hearings are formal events	Municipal councillors represent local communities	The budget of the municipality reflects the citizens' priorities
Total (% agree)	72%	40%	63%	39%	33%
Gender					
Female	70%	41%	63%	40%	34%
Male	74%	40%	63%	38%	32%
Age					
18-25 years old	68%	34%	65%	35%	30%
26-35 years old	72%	43%	64%	38%	35%
36-45 years old	72%	42%	62%	44%	33%
46-55 years old	70%	39%	63%	38%	33%
56-65 years old	71%	38%	65%	35%	29%
66 and over	80%	46%	60%	43%	37%
Education					
Up to lower secondary	69%	36%	59%	36%	27%
High school	73%	40%	66%	37%	32%
University degree	71%	44%	63%	43%	38%
Employment					
Employed	74%	45%	64%	43%	37%
Public	76%	61%	55%	62%	56%
Private	73%	38%	67%	35%	29%
Unemployed	64%	28%	61%	32%	22%

	Citizens have sufficient knowledge to understand government decision	Suggestions from civil society and interest groups taken into consideration	Local public hearings are formal events	Municipal councillors represent local communities	The budget of the municipality reflects the citizens' priorities
Total (% agree)	72%	40%	63%	39%	33%
Student	67%	34%	67%	33%	35%
Retired	77%	46%	60%	41%	37%
Income					
No income	66%	29%	64%	31%	25%
Up to 30,000 ALL	71%	39%	63%	38%	31%
30,001 – 50,000 ALL	76%	47%	66%	45%	40%
50,001 – 70,000 ALL	74%	50%	61%	46%	41%
Over 70,001 ALL	76%	43%	68%	29%	30%
Geographical location					
Urban	71%	41%	63%	40%	35%
Rural	74%	40%	64%	35%	28%
Municipality size					
Small	71%	39%	66%	41%	30%
Medium	66%	33%	61%	37%	33%
Large	74%	43%	63%	39%	34%

Note: Colours represent cases when the differences observed among variable categories, are statistically significant (Chi-square test of independence, $p \leq 0.05$).

Note: The group "up to lower secondary education" includes respondents with no education, primary education, and those that attended school until the compulsory level (8/9 year).

4.6 SATISFACTION WITH PUBLIC-SERVICE DELIVERY

Since 2013, the opinion poll has been measuring citizens' satisfaction with public service delivery in a dedicated section. The number of services has changed over the years. In 2021, the list was increased by one, reaching a total of 17 core and administrative public services. Core public services cover public health services, public education services (including pre-school), water supply, public transport, cleaning services (town and countryside, including waste collection), emergency services, judicial services and police services. To better assess satisfaction with emergency services, they were separated into the 'emergency medical service' and the 'firefighter emergency service', thus enabling a specific evaluation for both. Administrative services include social assistance, employment services (National Agency for Employment and Skills, AKPA; formerly SHKP), property services (the State Cadastre Agency, ASHK; formerly Mortgage and ALUIZNI), civil registry services, social insurance services (the Social Insurance Institute, ISSH), road transport services (General Directorate of Road Transport Services, DPSHTRR), business registration and licensing (National Business Centre, QKB), and construction permits. To evaluate the ease in accessing public administrative services, a new question was introduced in the survey.

Other questions focused on citizens' complaints about the delivered service, channels to submit complaints such as the co-governance platform 'www.shqiperiaqeduam.al' and the response from public service delivery providers. Survey respondents were asked if they had visited the Agency for the Delivery of Integrated Services (ADISA) service windows and the assessment of the level of satisfaction with their service delivery. The section concludes with an evaluation of citizens' everyday sense of security and the three main drivers behind its absence.



Satisfaction with service delivery of core public services

41.9% citizens were satisfied with the delivery of core public services in 2021. Education, cleaning services and the emergency medical service were more often reported as satisfactory, while the police services, public transport, and the judicial services were less so.

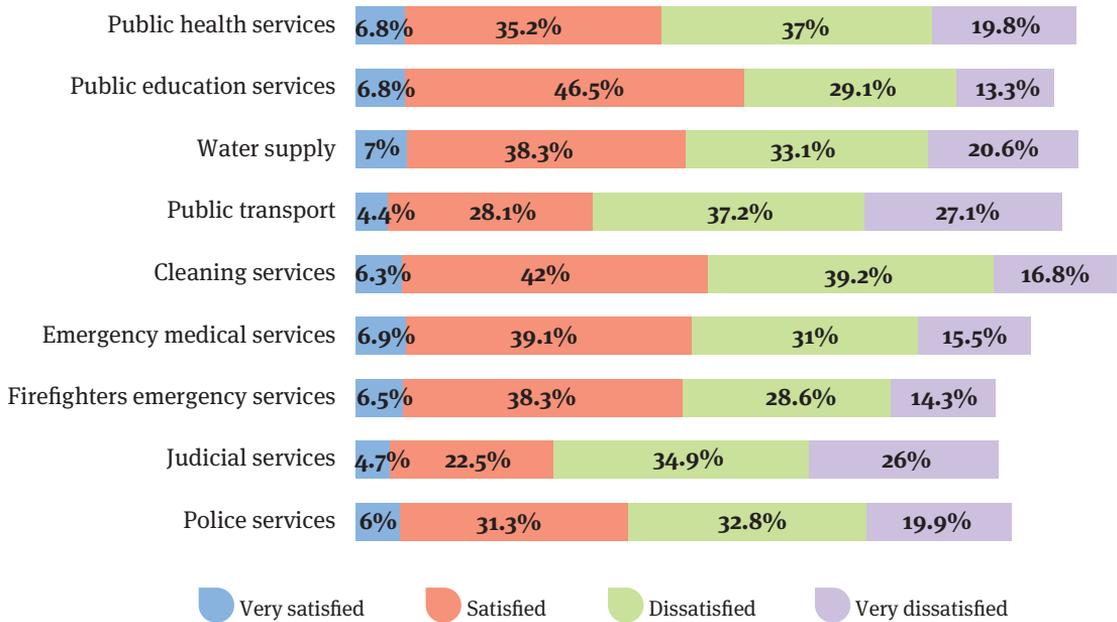
On average,¹³ 41.9% of respondents were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the core public services offered to citizens (38% in 2020; 41.5% in 2019), while 52.2% were 'dissatisfied' and 'very dissatisfied' with their delivery. Average satisfaction for core public services recovered in 2021 and reached the pre-pandemic satisfaction results reported in 2019.

53.3% of respondents reported they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with public education services, including pre-school, followed by 48.3% of respondents who were satisfied with cleaning services, including waste collection. Satisfaction with emergency medical services was higher (46%) than with the overall public health service (42%). Police services (37.4%), public transport (32.6%) and judicial services (27.2%) remained the lowest-rated core public services delivered to Albanian citizens during 2021. *For the rating of all core public services, see Figure 40.*



¹³ The average of the satisfaction rates for all core public services taken together.

Figure 40: Satisfaction with core public services 2021



Base: Healthcare (N = 2471); Education (N = 2429); Water (N = 2486); Public transport (N = 2480); Cleaning (N = 2477); Emergency - ambulance (N = 2429); Emergency - firefighters (N = 2391); Judicial (N = 2406); Police (N = 2404).

Satisfaction with delivery of administrative public services

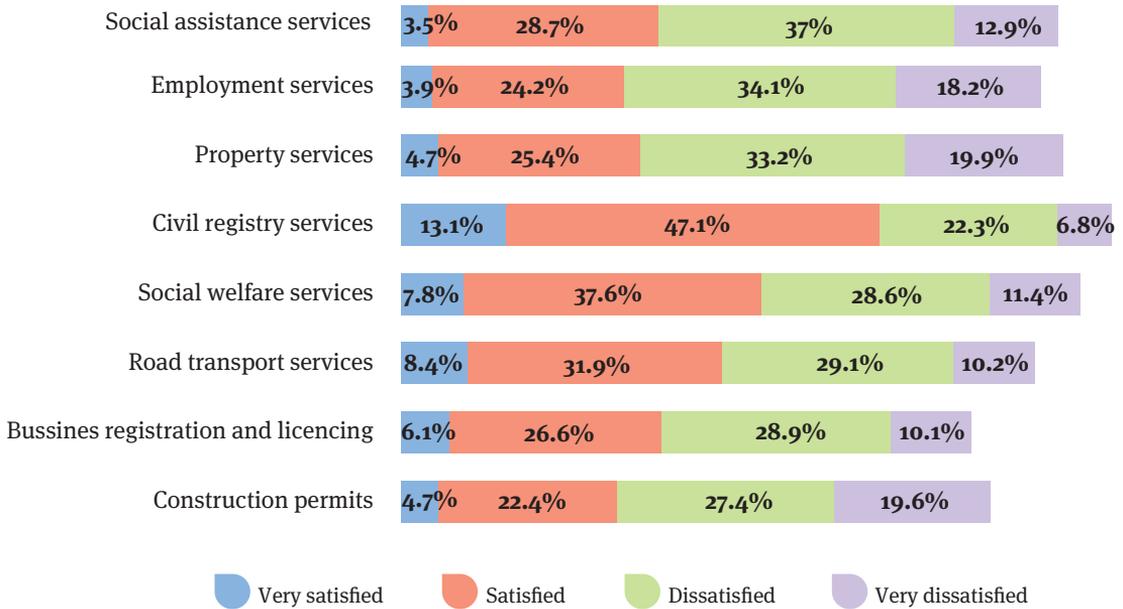
More than half of respondents (54%) who have used an administrative service were satisfied with its delivery in 2021. The delivery of civil registry services, social insurance and road transport were more often reported as satisfactory, while property services, employment services and construction permits, were less so.

On average,¹⁴ 37% of all survey respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the delivery of administrative public services – marking the highest average satisfaction rate in the last three years (33% in 2020 and 34.5% in 2019).

60.3% of respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the delivery of civil registry services, followed by the 45.4% of respondents that were satisfied with social insurance services and road transport services (40.3%). Delivery of property services (30.2%), employment services (28.2%) and construction permits (27.1%) were the lowest rated in 2021. See Figure 41 for the rating of all administrative services.

14 The percentage refers to the average satisfaction rate among all respondents for all administrative public services taken together.

Figure 41: Satisfaction with administrative public services 2021



Base: Social assistance (N = 2346); Employment (N = 2340); Property (N = 2358); Civil registry (N = 2396); Social insurance (N = 2368); Road transportation (N = 2350); Business registration (N = 2331); Construction permits (N = 2337).

Analysing the responses of actual users of public administrative services, on average,¹⁵ 54% said they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with administrative service delivery – a noticeably higher figure than the overall satisfaction rate (37%) reported by all survey respondents.

The most frequently used administrative services by study respondents in 2021 were the civil registry service (55%), social insurance services (39%) and road transport services (31%). The least used services were construction permits (15%) and business registration (14%).

The satisfaction rates of respondents who had used civil registry services (72%), social insurance services (64%), business registration and licencing (61%), construction permits (48%) were much higher than the overall satisfaction reported by all survey respondents, respectively (55%, 45%, 33%, 27% respectively). A smaller difference was noted between users’ satisfaction rate in employment (35%) and property (42%) services, and the assessment of all respondents (28%, 30% respectively). See Table 20 for more information.



15 The percentage refers to the average satisfaction rate for all administrative services, taken together, among respondents that had used the services in 2021.

Table 20: Utilisation of and satisfaction with administrative service delivery 2021

	Overall satisfaction rate 2021	% of respondents that used service in 2021	Users' satisfaction rate in 2021
Social assistance services	32%	22%	49%
Employment services	28%	27%	35%
Property services	30%	28%	42%
Civil registry services	60%	55%	72%
Social insurance services	45%	39%	64%
Road transportation services	40%	31%	60%
Business registration and licensing	33%	14%	61%
Construction permits	27%	15%	48%

*Note: Figures in bold represent ≥ 5 pp higher user satisfaction compared to overall satisfaction rate.



Demographic comparison for satisfaction with public services

Albanians holding a university degree or higher, those employed in the public sector, those with an income between 50,001 and 70,000 ALL/month, and those living in urban areas were the most satisfied with the delivery of core public and administrative public services. Unemployed respondents and those living in rural areas were less likely to be satisfied with these services.

The demographic analysis for the delivery of core public services is based on the satisfaction rates of all survey respondents, while the analysis for the delivery of administrative services is based solely on the satisfaction rates of the actual users of these services. Gender differences were not significant for 15 out of 17 satisfaction rates of the core and administrative public services. Female respondents were more likely to be ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with public education (56%) and social insurance services (68%), than male respondents (51% and 60% respectively).

Respondents holding a university degree or higher were more likely to be satisfied with public education (45%), emergency medical services and firefighters (51% each), the police (43%), the judiciary (31%) and with most of the administrative public services such as social assistance (64%), employment (41%), property (49%), civil registry (75%) and social insurance (70%). On the contrary, respondents who had up to lower secondary education were less likely to be satisfied with employment services (27%), social assistance (41%), social insurance (50%), civil registry services (63%) and the emergency medical services (40%). Public-sector employees were the most likely to be satisfied respondents with all core and administrative public-services measured by the survey, i.e. 16 out of 17 services. On the other hand, unemployed respondents were the least likely to be satisfied with all core public-services and the majority of administrative public services, particularly with judicial services (19%), employment (23%), police (26%), public health (28%) and public transport (27%).

When assessed by income, respondents with 50,001 to 70,000 ALL/month income were more likely to be satisfied with most public services, particularly with civil registry (80%), social insurance services (74%), public health (52%), emergency medical services (59%) and police services (49%). On the contrary, respondents that reported having no regular monthly income, were less likely to be satisfied with most of the public services, especially with the judicial services (21%), employment services (24%), police (29%) and public health services (31%). Urban residents were more likely to be satisfied with water supply (47%), emergency medical service and firefighters (47% each), public transport (34%), judicial services (28%), police services (39%) and civil registry (75%), compared to rural residents (41%, 44%, 40%, 29%, 24%, 33% and 66% respectively). *See Table 23 for more detailed data on demographic characteristics for satisfaction with public service delivery.*

Respondents who reported having a disability were less likely to be satisfied with most of the public services, such as public transport (23%), police services (27%), public health services (29%), water supply (34%), emergency medical services (34%), firefighters (31%), public education (41%), social insurance (48%), road transport (48%), civil registry (66%), business registration and licencing services (31%) and construction permits (20%). Members of minority groups were also less likely to be satisfied with public transport (26%), water supply (37%), public education (42%) and civil registry (68%) services.



Annual trends for satisfaction with public service delivery, 2016–2021

Satisfaction rates for public services improved for most of the core and administrative public services in 2021, compared to 2020. Civil registry, social insurance, property, employment and construction permits received their highest satisfaction rates since their inclusion in the survey.

Satisfaction rate improved either slightly or significantly for eight out of nine core public services in 2021 compared to 2020. Cleaning services, public health services and public transport witnessed a negligible change (-/+ 1 pp) in their satisfaction rate, while improvement was noted for public education services, water supply, emergency medical services, firefighters, police services and judicial services. Satisfaction rates for police services, public education, water supply and public transport improved for the first time in 2021, reversing the decline observed in 2016–2020.

All administrative public services bettered their satisfaction rate in service delivery compared to 2020 results, based on the assessment of all survey respondents. Most of them surpassed also the pre-pandemic rates of 2019 as well as the dip or plateau in 2020, except for road transport and business registration and licencing, while employment services continued the uptick that had started in 2020.

In 2021, five out of eight service groups, namely civil registry, social insurance, property, employment and construction permits recorded their best results in satisfaction rates since their inclusion in the survey, with civil registry services the first to cross the 60% mark. *See Table 21 for more detailed data.*

Table 21: Satisfaction with public service delivery (2016–2021)

	2016	2017	2018	2019*	2020	2021
Core public services						
Public health services	47%	42%	41%	44%	41%	42%
Public education services	58%	54%	50%	48%	49%	53%
Water supply	72%	56%	50%	47%	42%	45%
Public transport	55%	50%	37%	36%	32%	33%
Cleaning services	61%	57%	49%	51%	49%	48%
Emergency services	55%	53%	44%	47%	40%	X
Emergency medical service	X	X	X	X	X	46%
Firefighters	X	X	X	X	X	45%
Judicial services	21%	15%	19%	20%	20%	27%
Police services	66%	50%	40%	41%	33%	37%
Administrative services (all respondents)						
Social assistance services	34%	34%	31%	30%	28%	32%
Employment services	18%	19%	17%	22%	23%	28%
Property services	X	X	26%	26%	26%	30%
Civil registry services	X	X	X	57%	55%	60%
Social insurance services	X	X	X	42%	40%	45%
Road transport services	X	X	X	43%	38%	40%
Business registration and licensing	35%	36%	32%	35%	29%	33%
Construction permits	X	X	24%	24%	24%	27%

Note: Percentages in bold show the highest reported satisfaction rate during 2016–2021.

*Since 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

** The 2021 survey divided emergency services into emergency medical service and firefighters.

Assessment of administrative public services' delivery process

45.7% of administrative service users found the process to be easy, compared to 41.6% who assessed it as difficult. Young respondents, persons with a university degree or higher and public-sector employees were more likely to find the delivery process easy.

45.7% of respondents that had used the administrative public services reported that the process for accessing them was 'very easy' or 'easy', compared to 41.6% of users who found the process 'difficult' or 'very difficult'.

Figure 42: Accessibility of administrative public services 2021



Base: N = 2452

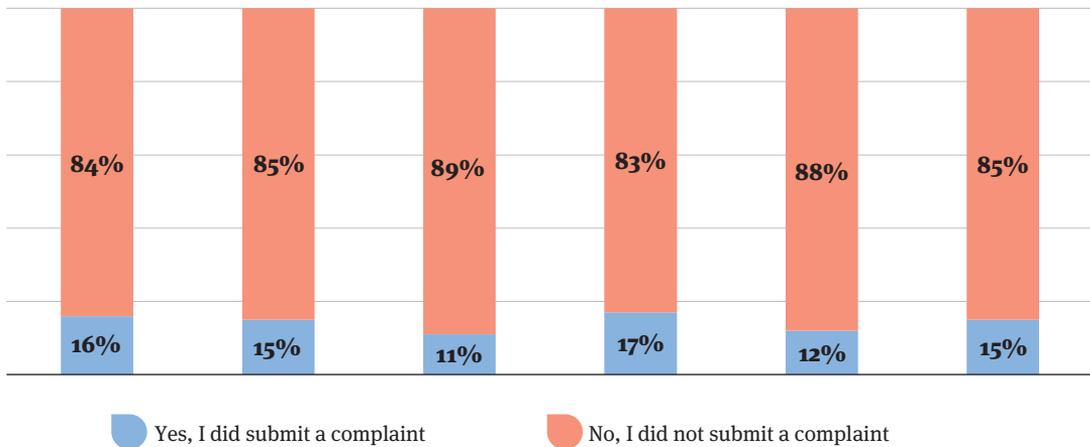
Respondents between 26 and 35 years old (56%) were more likely to assess the delivery process of administrative public services as effortless, compared to persons aged between 55 to 65 years old (35%). In terms of education, those holding a university degree or higher (58%) were more likely to find the process ‘easy’ or ‘very easy’, than persons having up to compulsory education (31%). Employed respondents, especially in the public sector (66%) and those with 50,001 to 70,000 ALL/month income, were more likely to find the delivery process easy, than the unemployed (32%) and persons with no income (37%). Gender differences (females 47% and males 45%) were not significant in the assessment of the delivery of public administrative services, while minority group members (36%) and persons with disabilities (28%) were less likely to find the process ‘easy’ or ‘very easy’.

Submission of complaints

15.1% of respondents submitted a complaint to public service providers in 2021. Students and respondents with over 70,001 ALL/month income were most likely to submit a complaint. Respondents aged over 56 years old and those living with up to 30,000 ALL/month income were least likely to file a complaint.

15.1% respondents submitted a complaint for a received service at the public institutions service providers compared to the 12% reported in the 2020 study. Based on demographics breakdown, respondents from 26 to 45 years old (18%), students (19%) or university degree holders (17%), and those earning over 70,000 ALL/month (25%) were more likely to file a complaint than survey respondents of 56 years old and over (8%), retired persons (7%) and those with only a lower secondary education (12%). Interestingly, respondents living with up to 30,000 ALL/month income (12%) were less likely to submit a complaint than respondents who were unemployed (15%) or had no income at all (16%). No substantial differences were found across respondents’ gender (females 15% and males 15%), employment sector, geographical location, disability, or minority group membership.

Figure 43: Percentage of respondents filing a complaint to institutions (2016–2021)



Base: 2016 (N = 1627); 2017 (N = 1639); 2018 (N = 1628); 2019 (N = 2491); 2020 (N = 2488); 2021 (N = 2494).

Note: In 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

Rates of filing a complaint for a received service from public service providers has been consistently low throughout 2016–2021. The lowest figure for filing complaints during 2019–2021 was reported in 2020 (12%) and the highest in 2019 (17%).

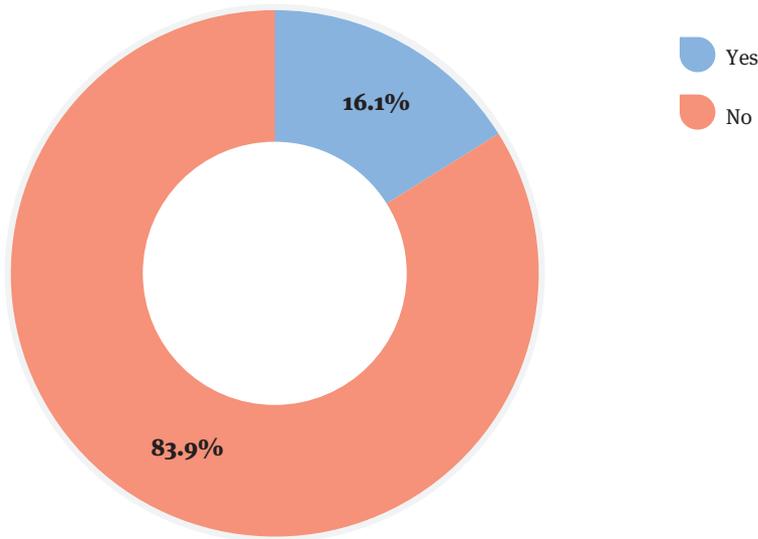
Co-governance platform [shqiperiaqeduam.al](http://www.shqiperiaqeduam.al)

More Albanian citizens used the online platform ‘www.shqiperiaqeduam.al’ to file their complaints in 2021 (16.1% in 2021 vs. 12% in 2020). However, fewer complaints were reported to have been addressed by the platform in 2021 (32.2% vs. 44% in 2020). Students, citizens living in rural areas and respondents with a disability were more likely to have submitted complaints to [shqiperiaqeduam.al](http://www.shqiperiaqeduam.al).

Survey respondents reported higher usage (16.1%) of the online platform ‘www.shqiperiaqeduam.al’ for submitting their complaints, compared to 12% in 2020. 83.9% of respondents had not filed a complaint on the platform in 2021.

When checking across demographics, no substantial differences were found according to respondents’ gender (females 17% and males 16%), education, employment sector or income. Students (21%) and respondents between 46 and 55 years old (20%) were more likely to submit complaints via the [shqiperiaqeduam.al](http://www.shqiperiaqeduam.al) platform, than those over 65 years old (6%). Respondents living in rural areas (20%) and those who reported having a disability (19%) were more likely to file a complaint through the platform.

Figure 44: Have you directed any complaints to shqiperiaqeduam.al in 2021?



Base: N = 2488

Of the respondents who had sent a complaint via the online platform shqiperiaqeduam.al, 32.2% said that their complaint was addressed. Compared to the 2020 study, the percentage of respondents whose complaint was addressed by the platform (44%) decreased by 12 pp. The 2021 figure was also lower than the 2019 results, when 37% of respondents' complaints were addressed by the platform.

Male respondents (34%), those aged 26 to 35 years old (41%), with a university degree or higher (38%), employed in the public sector (51%) and those living in urban areas (35%) more often reported that their complaint was addressed. Survey respondents with up to lower secondary education (23%), those who were unemployed (17%), living in rural areas (28%), had a disability (24%), and those who belonged to a minority group (8%) less often reported that their complaints had been addressed through the platform.



Albanian institutions address citizens' complaints

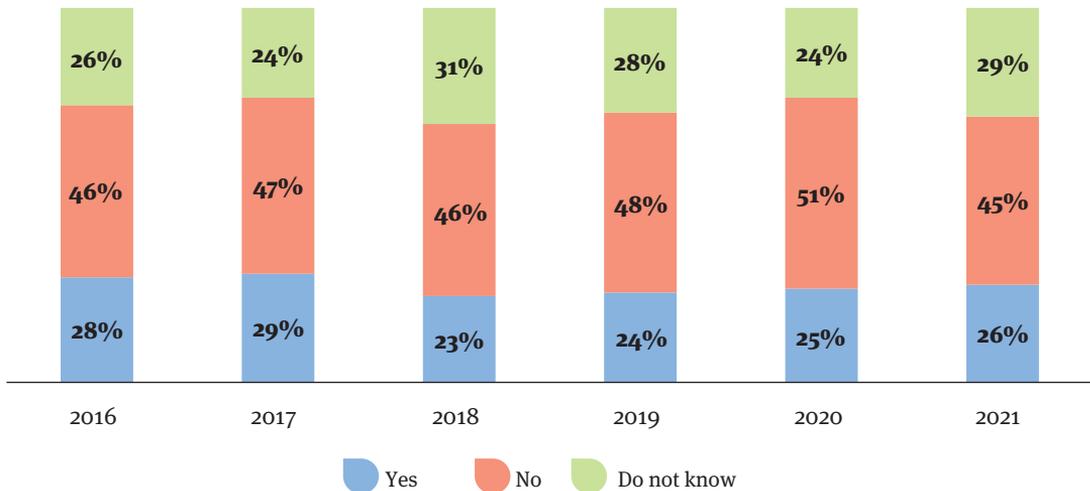
26.2% of Albanian citizens believed that institutions properly address citizens' complaints. Public-sector employees and citizens between 26 and 35 years old were more likely to believe that institutions properly address citizens' complaints.

26.2% Albanian citizens believed that institutions properly address their complaints, compared to 25% reported in the 2020 study. Demographic comparison shows that university degree holders (32%) tended to believe that institutions properly address citizens' complaints more than respondents with up to lower secondary education (19%). Similarly, respondents aged between 26 and 35 years old (33%) and over 66 years old (32%) were more optimistic than survey respondents aged between 56 and 65 years old (18%). Public-sector employees (48%) and respondents with

a regular income of over 70,001 ALL/month (38%) were more likely to believe that institutions properly address complaints. Unemployed respondents (14%), as well as minority group members (18%), were less likely to believe that citizens' complaints are properly addressed by institutions. Gender differences (females 26% and males 26%) were not significant.

Retrospectively, 2017 still represents the highest reported percentage of respondents (29%) who believed that institutions 'listened to' and properly addressed citizens' complaints. Confidence in institutions' ability to address complaints decreased in 2018 by 6 pp (23%) and has only marginally changed for a cumulative +2 pp between 2019 and 2021. Meanwhile, the 'Do not know' option continues to be chosen by a significant percentage of respondents.

Figure 45: Institutions properly address citizens' complaints 2016-2021¹⁶



Base: 2016 (N = 1259); 2017 (N = 1599); 2018 (N = 1565); 2019 (N = 2464); 2020 (N = 2475); 2021 (N = 2478).

Note: In 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

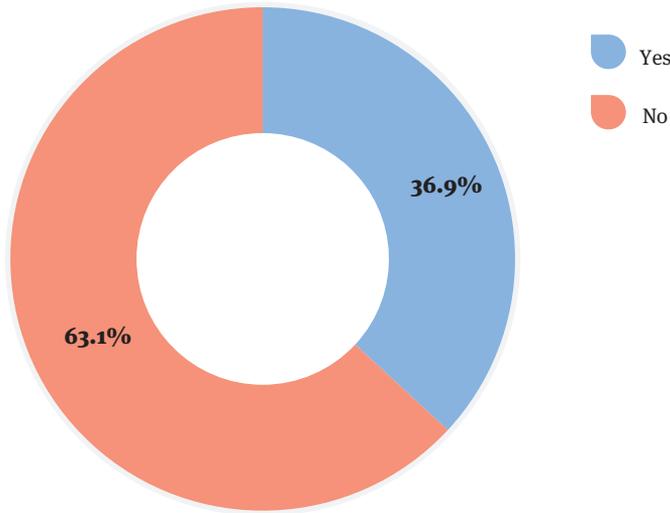
ADISA service windows

More respondents (36.9%) visited ADISA one-stop-shop service windows in 2021, compared to the year before (29%). Service delivery satisfaction rose to 76.9% compared to the 73% reported in 2020. Women, public-sector employees and respondents with an income of over 70,001 ALL/month were more likely to report satisfaction with ADISA service delivery.

36.9% of respondents reported they visited ADISA service windows in 2021, compared to 29% in 2020 – an increase of nearly 8 pp when it came to access, which surpassed the increase of 5 pp between the 2019 (24%) and 2020 studies, for a cumulative rise of almost 13 pp since 2019.

¹⁶ During 2016–2020, the survey question measured if institutions properly 'listened to' and 'addressed' citizens' complaints. In 2021 the question was simplified to "institutions properly address citizens' complaints", retaining the same meaning for the purposes of annual comparison.

Figure 46: Respondents that visited an ADISA service window 2021

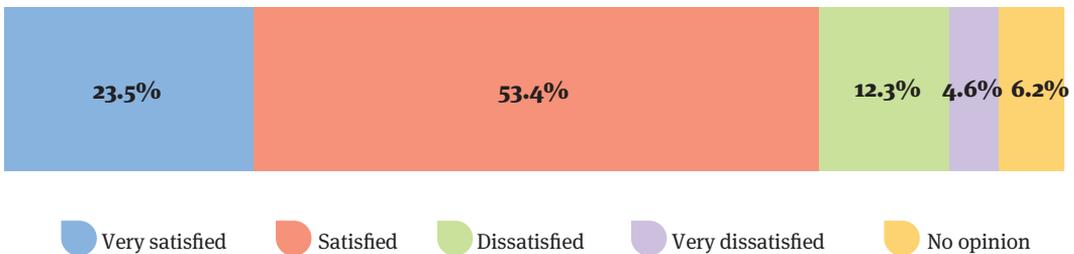


Base: N = 2489

When checking across demographics, no substantial differences were found for gender (females 36% and males 38%) and geographical location. Respondents between 46 and 55 years old (43%), those holding a university degree or higher (46%), working in the public sector (48%), unemployed (36%) and respondents with a regular income of over 70,000 ALL/month (56%) were more likely to have visited ADISA service windows in 2021. The same applied to respondents with a disability (38%) and those belonging to a minority group (38%). On the other hand, participants over 66 years old (18%), those with up to a lower secondary education (29%) and earning up to 30,000 ALL/month (27%) were less likely to have visited the service windows.

76.9% of respondents who had visited ADISA service windows reported that they were ‘very satisfied’ (23.5%) or ‘satisfied’ (53.4%) with the service they received. The service delivery satisfaction rate is 4 pp higher than in 2020 (73%) and has been rising since it was first measured in 2019 (69%).

Figure 47: Satisfaction with ADISA service windows 2021 (%)



Base: N = 916

The respondents who were most likely to be satisfied with ADISA service delivery included holders of a university degree or higher (81%), employees of the public sector (89%) and those with an income between 50,001 and 70,000 ALL/month (85%). Female respondents (81%) were more likely to be satisfied with the service than males (73%). Respondents belonging to a minority group were less likely to be satisfied (60%) than those who did not (78%). Age, employment status, disability and geographical location did not exhibit significant differences.



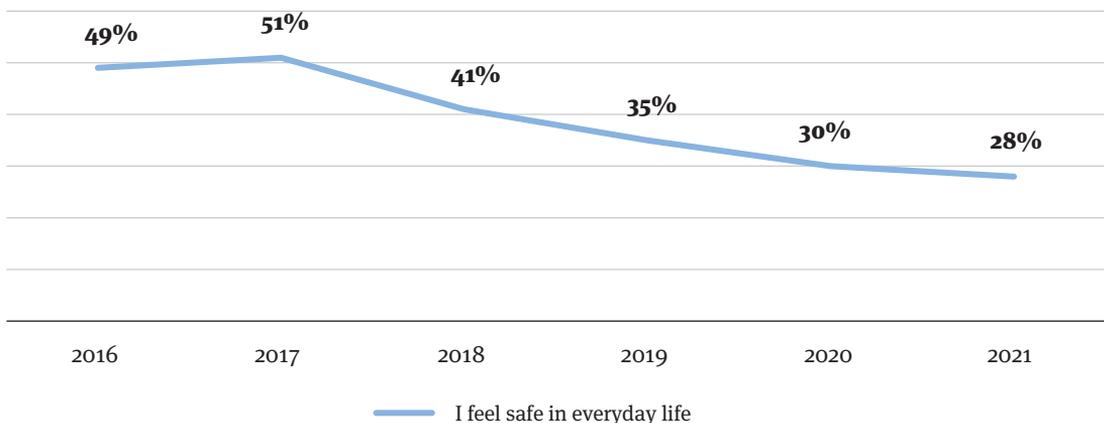
Safety in everyday life

71.6% of surveyed Albanian citizens did not feel safe in everyday life. The unemployed, younger generations, private sector employees, those with no income as well as respondents with the highest income were more likely to report insecurity in everyday life. The main drivers of feelings of insecurity were crime, health issues, injustice, employment insecurity and natural disasters.

71.6% of respondents said that in general, they do not feel safe in everyday life, up from the 70% reported in 2020. When checking across demographics, the younger generation, i.e., between 18 and 25 years old (79%), was more likely to report not feeling safe, as was the case with unemployed respondents (80%), private sector employees (74%), people with no income (82%) as well as those with the highest income level of over 70,001 ALL/month (71%). No substantial differences were found across gender (females 71% and males 72%), education, geographical location, disability or minority group membership.

Figure 48 notes citizens' perception of their safety as reported throughout the 2016 to 2021 studies. This shows a consistent downward trend since 2017, although 2021 marked the smallest annual decline in citizens' safety perception (-2 pp), compared to the more sizeable drop of over - 5 pp between 2017 and 2020.

Figure 48: Perceived safety in everyday life (2016–2021)



Base: 2016 (N=1608); 2017 (N=1615); 2018 (N=1629); 2019 (N=2500); 2020 (N=2492); 2021 (N = 2490).

Note: In 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

73% of respondents, 13 pp more than in 2020 (59%) reported criminality as the biggest factor in feeling unsafe in daily life, followed by health issues (43%) and injustice (35%). Employment insecurity (33%), and natural disasters such as earthquakes and pandemics (22%) were some of the other reported drivers of everyday insecurity during 2021. *Table 22 displays the full ranking of reasons for feeling unsafe on a daily basis during 2016–2021.*

Table 22: Reasons for feeling unsafe (2016–2021)

Reasons for feeling unsafe	2016	2017	2018	2019*	2020	2021
Crime (assault, burglary)	49%	58%	71%	67%	59%	73% (N=1290)
Health issues	11%	30%	50%	49%	49%	43% (N=766)
Employment insecurity	X	42%	52%	36%	41%	33% (N=590)
Injustice	11%	32%	45%	36%	37%	35% (N=630)
Feeling of insecurity due to natural disasters (e.g., earthquakes or pandemics)	X	X	X	X	27%	22% (N=388)
Politics	5%	29%	45%	28%	23%	17% (N=309)
Unequal wealth	3%	23%	23%	16%	18%	15% (N=274)
Pollution	3%	12%	20%	17%	12%	16% (N=276)
Drug use	6%	23%	29%	15%	9%	13% (N=223)
Traffic	7%	11%	13%	13%	8%	13% (N=238)
Domestic violence	3%	15%	19%	7%	6%	9% (N=151)
Lack of free expression	1%	5%	11%	4%	3%	3% (N=51)
Lack of confidentiality and protection when reporting wrongdoings	1%	6%	12%	3%	3%	4% (N=70)
Discrimination on basis of sex, religion, wealth, social status	X	5%	7%	3%	1%	1% (N=26)

Base: 2016 (N=1608); 2017 (N=1615); 2018 (N=1629); 2019 (N=1613); 2020 (N=1713); 2021 (N=1776).

Note: Multiple responses allowed; percentages do not add to 100%.

* In 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

Table 23: Satisfaction with core public-service delivery across demographics 2021

Public services (all respondents)										
	Health	Education	Water	Public transport	Cleaning	Emergency: the ambulance	Emergency: firefighters	Judicial	Police	
TOTAL (% satisfied)	42%	53%	45%	33%	48%	46%	45%	27%	37%	
Gender										
Female	43%	56%	47%	33%	50%	48%	47%	29%	39%	
Male	41%	51%	43%	32%	47%	44%	43%	26%	35%	
Age										
18–25 years old	37%	49%	41%	31%	44%	42%	39%	26%	32%	
26–35 years old	45%	54%	47%	31%	48%	49%	47%	28%	39%	
36–45 years old	43%	56%	44%	33%	49%	45%	45%	29%	39%	
46–55 years old	44%	53%	43%	32%	45%	48%	45%	27%	37%	
56–65 years old	36%	54%	44%	32%	49%	43%	44%	25%	39%	
66 years old and over	45%	53%	55%	42%	59%	49%	50%	26%	35%	
Educational attainment										
Up to lower secondary	40%	48%	44%	31%	43%	40%	41%	24%	34%	
High school	39%	52%	44%	32%	48%	45%	42%	26%	35%	
University	47%	59%	49%	35%	53%	51%	51%	31%	43%	
Employment status										
Employed	Total	46%	59%	48%	33%	51%	51%	50%	29%	41%
	Public	63%	75%	63%	46%	63%	67%	66%	42%	57%
	Private	40%	52%	42%	29%	46%	45%	43%	25%	36%
Unemployed	28%	39%	37%	27%	37%	33%	31%	19%	26%	
Student	39%	48%	41%	29%	43%	43%	43%	33%	38%	
Retired	43%	56%	53%	41%	57%	47%	48%	29%	39%	
Income										
No income	31%	40%	37%	28%	39%	36%	35%	21%	29%	
Up to 30,000 ALL	41%	52%	45%	33%	50%	43%	43%	26%	34%	
30,001–50,000 ALL	46%	62%	50%	38%	52%	52%	49%	31%	43%	
50,001–70,000 ALL	52%	61%	52%	33%	56%	59%	58%	33%	49%	
Over 70,001 ALL	41%	49%	43%	25%	46%	50%	53%	37%	46%	
Geographical location										
Urban	41%	54%	47%	34%	50%	47%	47%	28%	39%	
Rural	45%	51%	41%	29%	45%	44%	40%	24%	33%	

* The percentage is calculated as the sum of the percentage ‘satisfied’ and ‘very satisfied’.

Note: Colours represent cases when the differences observed among variable categories, are statistically significant (Chi-square test of independence, $p \leq 0.05$).

Note: The group “up to lower secondary education” includes respondents with no education, primary education, and those that attended school until the compulsory level (8/9 year).

Table 24: Satisfaction with administrative public-service delivery across demographics 2021

Administrative services (only users)									
	Social assistance	Employment	Property	Civil registry	Social insurance services	Road transportation	Business reg. and licensing	Construction permits	
TOTAL (% satisfied)	49%	35%	42%	72%	64%	60%	61%	48%	
Gender									
Female	51%	37%	44%	75%	68%	59%	56%	50%	
Male	48%	33%	40%	70%	60%	60%	64%	46%	
Age									
18–25 years old	50%	28%	56%	73%	68%	68%	68%	52%	
26–35 years old	64%	37%	45%	74%	71%	62%	65%	55%	
36–45 years old	46%	38%	38%	70%	70%	49%	61%	46%	
46–55 years old	50%	34%	34%	72%	59%	56%	52%	45%	
56–65 years old	38%	34%	44%	72%	58%	70%	54%	39%	
66 years old and over	49%	43%	39%	71%	56%	61%	58%	36%	
Educational attainment									
Up to lower secondary	41%	27%	42%	63%	50%	54%	47%	36%	
High school	47%	33%	35%	74%	67%	56%	60%	46%	
University	64%	41%	49%	75%	70%	64%	66%	56%	
Employment status									
Employed	Total	56%	41%	44%	77%	70%	64%	67%	53%
	Public	79%	67%	60%	84%	85%	73%	76%	72%
	Private	43%	28%	37%	72%	65%	60%	65%	48%
Unemployed	43%	23%	29%	61%	51%	49%	41%	33%	
Student	50%	36%	56%	71%	68%	52%	80%	70%	
Retired	49%	34%	44%	68%	57%	59%	50%	37%	
Income									
No income	42%	24%	38%	63%	52%	48%	45%	34%	
Up to 30,000 ALL	44%	28%	32%	68%	60%	54%	60%	43%	
30,001–50,000 ALL	61%	46%	53%	78%	72%	65%	71%	60%	
50,001–70,000 ALL	64%	53%	51%	80%	74%	67%	63%	53%	
Over 70,001 ALL	75%	50%	21%	74%	69%	52%	67%	38%	
Geographical location									
Urban	50%	33%	44%	75%	66%	61%	61%	51%	
Rural	48%	40%	38%	66%	60%	55%	59%	41%	

Note: Colours represent cases when the differences observed among variable categories, are statistically significant (Chi-square test of independence, $p \leq 0.05$).

Note: The group “up to lower secondary education” includes respondents with no education, primary education, and those that attended school until the compulsory level (8/9 year).

4.7 NATURAL DISASTERS

The continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the efforts to recover from the devastating earthquake of November 2019 represent two of the most important events fuelling the discourse and public perception of natural disasters. Therefore, the ‘Natural disaster’ section, first introduced in the Trust in Governance 2020 Opinion Poll was applied in the 2021 edition as well.

Survey respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction on a four-point scale – from 1 (very satisfied) to 4 (very dissatisfied) – on four aspects that concerned the COVID-19 pandemic: the extent that the decision-making of central government was transparent, the extent that the decision-making of local government was transparent, the provision of online alternatives for obtaining services (e.g., online consultation, online learning), and respect for human rights and freedom. The other set of questions was focused on government actions concerning the earthquake. Specifically, survey respondents were asked to report their level of satisfaction with the government’s post-2019 earthquake reconstruction programme execution (e.g., providing shelter, assessing damage, reconstruction) both at the central and local levels.

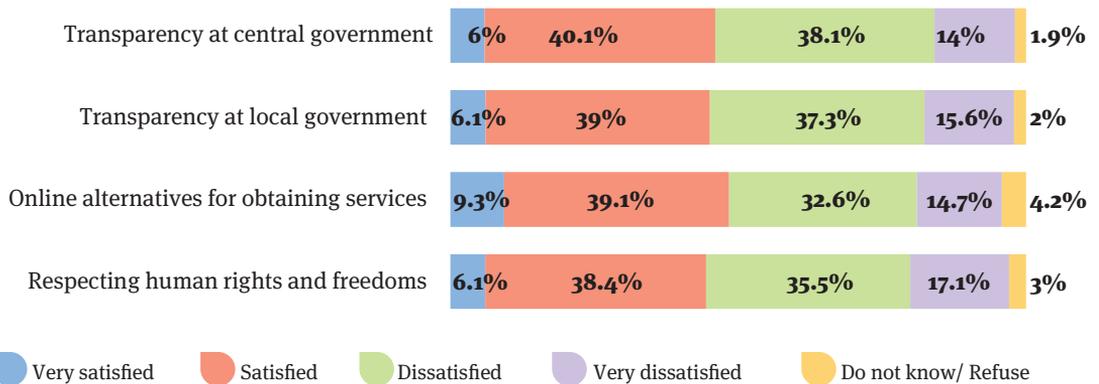


Governance during the COVID-19 pandemic

More than half of the respondents were dissatisfied with the transparency of central government (52.1%) and local government (52.9%) decision-making. Albanians were split in their opinion regarding the provision of online alternatives for obtaining services while 52.6% of them were dissatisfied with the respect shown for human rights and freedoms during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Less than half of survey respondents reported that they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the transparency of government decision-making during the COVID-19 pandemic, both at the central (46.1%) and local level (45.1%). 44.4% of respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the respect for human rights and freedoms showed by institutions during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and 48.4% were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the provision of online alternatives for the same period.

Figure 49: Citizens’ satisfaction with crisis handling and governance during COVID-19 pandemic 2021



Base: Transparency at central government (N=2496); Transparency at local government (N=2496); Online alternatives for obtaining services (N=2495); and Respecting human rights and freedoms (N=2495).

No substantial differences were observed based on respondents' gender (females 48% and males 44%) regarding their satisfaction with the transparency of decision-making at the central level during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. While a higher percentage of females (48%) than males (42%) reported that they were satisfied with the transparency of decision-making at the local level for the same period. Female respondents appear more 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' than male (52% vs. 45%) on the provision of online alternatives for obtaining services and the respect shown for human rights and freedoms (female 47% vs. male 42%) during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Respondents over 66 years old (61%), those with a university degree or higher (49%), employed in the public sector (67%), and those with a monthly income between 50,001 and 70,000 ALL were more likely to report that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the transparency of decision-making at the central level. The same applied for the level of satisfaction with transparency at the local level; respondents over 66 years old (57%), those with a university degree (48%), those employed in the public sector (66%), and those with a monthly income between 50,001 to 70,000 ALL (51%) were more likely to report that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied'.

Moreover, respondents in 26–35 age group (52%), those with a university degree (55%), employed in the public sector (69%), and with a monthly income between 50,001 to 70,000 ALL (58%) were more likely to report that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the provision of online alternatives for obtaining services.

Regarding satisfaction rates with the respect shown for human rights and freedoms, respondents over 66 years old (56%), employed in the public sector (64%), and with a monthly income between 50,001 to 70,000 ALL (52%) were most likely to report that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied'.

Respondents who reported that they do not have a regular monthly income were more likely to express dissatisfaction with the transparency of decision-making at both central and the local level (36% for both categories), provision of online alternatives for obtaining services (40%), and human rights and freedoms (35%). *See Table 26 for the demographic breakdown of satisfaction with the governance of natural disasters.*

Respondents who reported having a disability were more likely to express dissatisfaction with the transparency of decision-making. 61% of disabled respondents reported that they were 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with transparency at the central level; with a smaller percentage, 36%, said that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied'. Similarly, for local-level transparency, 60% of disabled survey respondents reported that they were 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with the transparency of decision-making. Also, they were more likely to express dissatisfaction with the provision of online alternatives for obtaining services (60%) and the respect shown by institutions regarding human rights and freedoms (63%).

Results show that respondents belonging to a minority group were less likely to be 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with central government transparency (36%), local-level transparency (39%), provision of online alternatives for obtaining services (36%) and the respect shown by institutions regarding human rights and freedoms (35%).



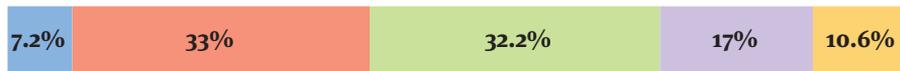
The government's post-earthquake response

Almost half of the Albanian population surveyed were dissatisfied with the execution of the post-2019 earthquake reconstruction programme by the central government (49.2%) and local government (50.8%). Dissatisfaction was more pronounced among the 56–65 age group, the unemployed, private sector employees, and persons with disabilities.

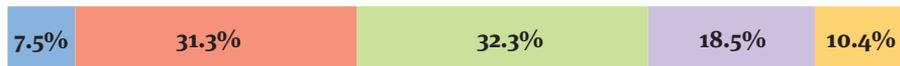
Less than half of survey respondents reported that they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the central government’s execution of its post-2019 earthquake reconstruction programme – specifically, 40.2% – while 38.8% reported the same for the local government response.

Figure 50: Citizens’ satisfaction with government’s post-earthquake reconstruction programme 2021

Central government



Local government



Base: Central government (N=2377); local government (N=2377).

Satisfaction with the central government’s post-earthquake reconstruction programme was more pronounced among females (43%) than males (37%), respondents with a university degree or higher (46%), public-sector employees (61%), and those with a monthly income between 50,001 and 70,000 ALL (51%). Similarly, satisfaction with the local government’s post-earthquake reconstruction programme was greater among females (41%) than males (36%), as well as among respondents with a university degree or higher (44%), public-sector employees (60%), and those with a monthly income between 50,001 and 70,000 ALL (49%). See Table 25 for the demographic breakdown of satisfaction with governance during natural disasters.

Persons with disabilities were more likely to express dissatisfaction with the central government’s execution of its post-earthquake reconstruction programme. Specifically, 64% of respondents with a disability said that they were ‘dissatisfied’ or ‘very dissatisfied’ with the central government’s response compared to non-disabled (48%) respondents. A similar pattern was found in the assessment of the local government reconstruction programme. 68% of respondents with disabilities reported that they were ‘dissatisfied’ or ‘very dissatisfied’ with the local government’s execution of the programme, compared to 49% of non-disabled participants.

There were no differences between respondents belonging to a minority group or not concerning satisfaction with the post-earthquake responses of either the central government or local government.

Table 25: Demographic breakdown of satisfaction with governance during natural disasters 2021

Administrative services (only users)							
	Transparency of central government decision-making	Transparency of local government decision-making	Provision of online services	Respect for human rights and freedoms	Central government post-earthquake response	Local government post-earthquake response	
Total (% satisfied and very satisfied)	46%	45%	49%	44%	40%	39%	
Gender							
Female	48%	48%	52%	47%	43%	41%	
Male	44%	42%	45%	42%	37%	36%	
Age							
18–25 years old	41%	41%	48%	40%	37%	37%	
26–35 years old	45%	45%	52%	44%	41%	40%	
36–45 years old	46%	45%	49%	45%	43%	41%	
46–55 years old	45%	45%	47%	44%	39%	37%	
56–65 years old	46%	44%	44%	43%	34%	33%	
66 years old and over	61%	57%	45%	56%	48%	46%	
Education							
Up to lower secondary	43%	41%	37%	39%	33%	33%	
High school	45%	46%	49%	45%	39%	38%	
University degree	49%	48%	55%	48%	46%	44%	
Employment							
Employed	Total	50%	49%	54%	48%	45%	44%
	Public	67%	66%	69%	64%	61%	60%
	Private	42%	41%	49%	42%	39%	37%
Unemployed	34%	33%	37%	33%	30%	28%	
Student	39%	39%	47%	41%	31%	32%	
Retired	57%	54%	44%	52%	44%	43%	
Income							
No income	36%	36%	40%	35%	30%	29%	
Up to 30,000 ALL	48%	47%	46%	45%	39%	37%	
30,001–50,000 ALL	51%	51%	55%	49%	47%	45%	
50,001–70,000 ALL	54%	51%	58%	52%	51%	49%	
Over 70,001 ALL	40%	40%	56%	48%	39%	33%	
Geographical location							
Urban	46%	46%	50%	46%	41%	40%	
Rural	45%	43%	44%	41%	38%	37%	

Note: Colours represent cases when the differences observed among variable categories, are statistically significant (Chi-square test of independence, $p \leq 0.05$).

Note: The group “up to lower secondary education” includes respondents with no education, primary education, and those that attended school until the compulsory level (8/9 year).

4.8 USE OF ICT

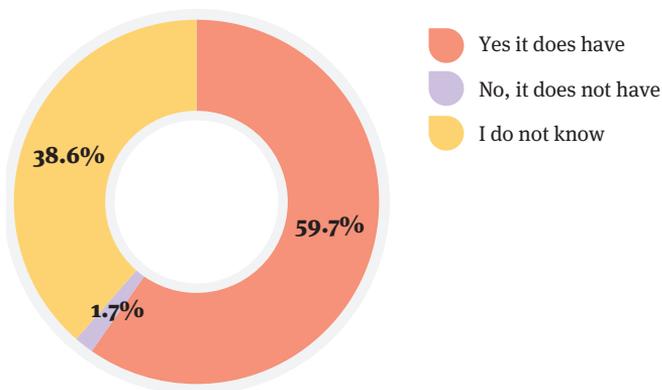
The digitalisation of public services is expected to make service delivery more efficient, effective, and transparent – resulting in lower levels of corruption and higher levels of citizen satisfaction with service delivery.¹⁷ The e-governance platform e-Albania – launched in 2012 – offers 1,212 services to individuals and businesses.¹⁸ In this section of the survey, respondents were asked questions about their knowledge and use of the municipality website and the e-Albania portal.

Municipality website

In 2021, 59.7% of respondents were aware that their municipality had a website (63.2% in 2020). 40.7% of them had used the website of their municipality (39.3% in 2020).

59.7% of respondents were aware that their municipality has a website – a smaller percentage than in 2020 (63.2%), while 38.6% said they do not know. No substantial differences were observed based on respondents' gender, females (60%) and males (59%) were both likely to be aware of the existence of their municipality website. Differences were observed across respondents' age group, education level, employment status, employment sectors, monthly individual incomes, geographical location, and disability. The respondents most likely to know about the existence of their municipality website were young people aged 26–35 years old (78%), students (76%), university graduates (83%), the employed (71%), particularly in the public sector (80%), respondents with a monthly income of over 70,001 ALL/month (84%) and urban residents (63%). Respondents with a disability (30%) were less likely to indicate that they were aware of the existence of their municipality's website.

Figure 51: Do you know if your municipality has a website? 2021



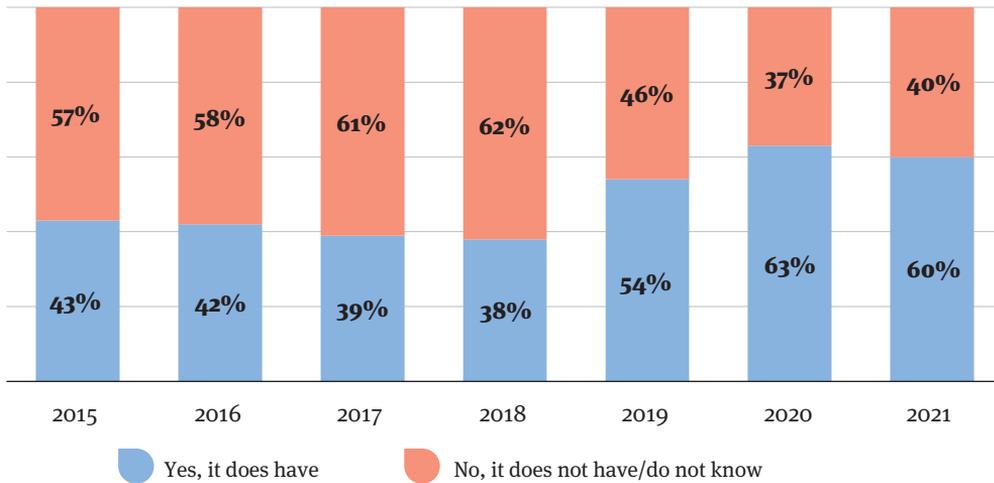
Base: N = 2500

17 See the report, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (March 2018), Embracing Digitalisation: How to use ICT to strengthen Anti-Corruption, available at <https://www.giz.de/de/downloads/giz2018-eng ICT-to-strengthen-Anti-Corruption.pdf>

18 E-Albania. (n.d.). Statistics for December 2021. Retrieved via: <https://e-albania.al/Pages/Statistics/statistika.pdf>

In the 2019–2021 period, the percentage of respondents reporting that their municipality has a website crossed the 60% threshold (63% in 2020), with the 2021 result remaining 6 pp higher than in 2019 (54%).

Figure 52: Do you know if your municipality has a website? (2015–2021)



Base: 2015 (N=1565), 2016 (N=1618), 2017 (N=1640), 2018 (N=1638), 2019 (N=2493), 2020 (N=2500), 2021 (N=2500).

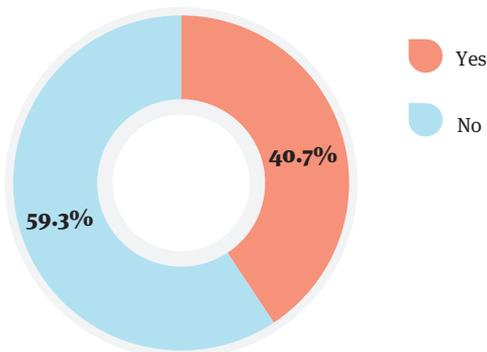
Note: In 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

Quality and reasons for using the municipality website

In 2021, 40.7% of surveyed Albanians reported using their municipality website and the main reason for using it was ‘to receive information (check programs/events in my city/town)’. Younger respondents, with a university degree or higher, employed, especially public-sector employees, respondents with a regular income from 50,001–70,001 ALL/month were all more likely to report that they use the website of the municipality than other groups.

Among respondents aware of the municipality website, more than half of them (59.3%) reported that they did not use it, while 40.7% did so.

Figure 53: Proportion of respondents that use municipality website 2021



Base: N=1493

No substantial differences were found for gender (females 41% and males 40%), geographical location, disability and belonging to a minority group. Differences were found based on age, education level, and employment. Respondents 26 to 35 years old (44%), with a university degree or higher (46%), employed (45%) especially those in the public sector (63%) and with an individual monthly income from 50,001–70,000 ALL/month (50%) were more likely to report that they had used the website of their municipality.

In 2021, the percentage of respondents (40.7%) who used the municipality website was only marginally higher than in 2020 (39.3%).

Table 26 shows that the main reason reported by website users was ‘to receive information (check programs/events in my city/town)’ (48.2%), followed by ‘to receive information on types of available services and where and how to access them’ (45.2%), ‘to follow council decisions, I read minutes of meetings (19.1%) and ‘to get information on municipality budget’ (17.9%).

Table 26: Reasons for using the website of the municipality 2021

	N	%
To get information on the municipality budget	109	17.9%
To follow council decisions, I read minutes of meetings	116	19.1%
To send complaints, comments to a municipal department/staff	77	12.7%
To receive information on types of available services and where and how to access them	275	45.2%
To receive information on programs/events in my city/town	260	48.2%
Other*	16	2.6%

* Such as to obtain information regarding a school project, job vacancies and/or to read the latest information.



E-governance in Albania

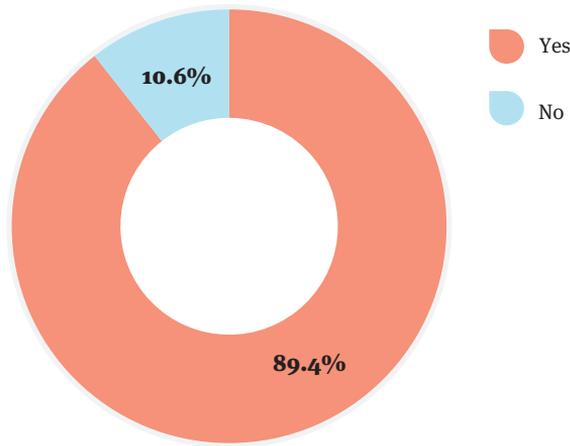
89.4% of respondents in 2021 said that they were aware that the government administration offers electronic services through the e-Albania portal (93% in 2020). 80.1% of these confirmed that they have received electronic services through the e-Albania portal (74% in 2020). A higher percentage of Albanians assessed electronic services as being functional and providing citizens the opportunity to express comments/suggestions, compared to 2020.

The vast majority of surveyed respondents (89.4%) reported that they were aware that the government administration offers electronic services through the e-Albania portal (93% in 2020).

No substantial differences were found based on respondents’ gender (female 89% and male 90%). Younger age groups, especially respondents between 26 and 35 years old (97%); with a university degree or higher (98%); employed (94%), especially public-sector employees (96%); those with an individual income over 70,001 ALL/month (97%); and urban residents (91%) all had very high levels of awareness about the e-Albania portal. Surveyed respondents who reported having a disability (79%) were less likely than non-disabled respondents (90%) to be aware of the

e-Albania portal. Similarly, respondents who belong to a minority group (83%) were less likely to be aware of the e-Albania services than those who do not belong to any minority (90%).

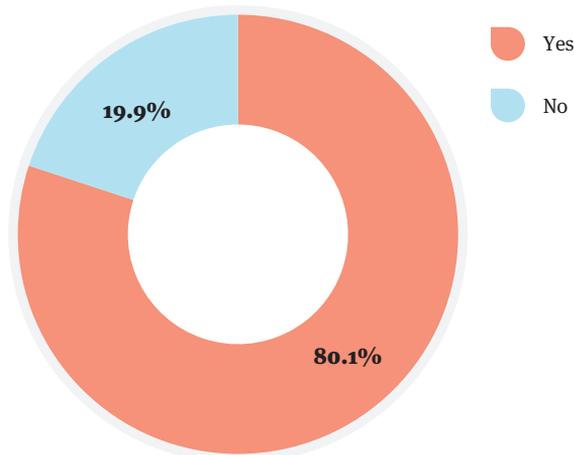
Figure 54: Awareness of the e-Albania portal 2021



Base: N = 2495

Among respondents that were aware of the e-Albania portal, 80.1% reported that they have received electronic services through the platform in 2021. Compared to the 2020 results (74%), the use of electronic services through e-Albania has increased by 5 pp.

Figure 55: Have you received any electronic services through the e-Albania portal? 2021



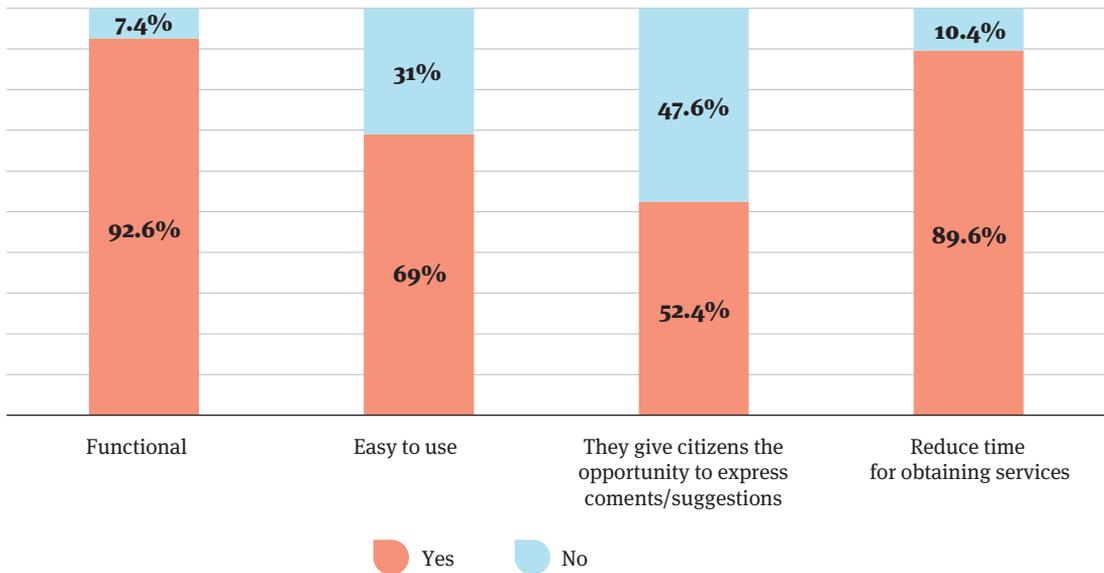
Base: N = 2230

When checking across demographics, no substantial differences were found according to respondents' gender (female 80% and male 80%), disability or geographical location. Differences were found based on respondents' age group, education, employment, and membership of a minority group. Respondents in the 26–35 age group (89%); students (92%); those with a university degree or higher (91%); employed (85%), especially public-sector workers (90%); and respondents with an individual monthly income over 70,001 ALL (97%) were all more likely to report that they have received services through the portal. Respondents who belong to a minority group (69%) were less likely to have received services through the portal.

Surveyed respondents were asked to assess the provision of electronic services based on the following criteria: functionality, accessibility, and feedback mechanism. Approximately nine in ten respondents felt that services provided through the e-Albania portal were functional (92.6%) and that they reduce time (89.6%). In terms of accessibility, more than half of the respondents (69%) reported that services provided through the e-Albania portal were easy to use. Figures show that 52.4% of the respondents were aware that the portal offers its users the opportunity to express suggestions/comments.

In 2021, the percentage of respondents who assessed the e-Albania portal as functional (93%) has increased by 5 pp, compared to 2020 (88%). Also, the percentage of respondents reporting that the e-Albania portal gives the opportunity to provide feedback (52%) has increased by 3 pp compared to the previous year (49%).

Figure 56: Quality assessment of e-services through the e-Albania portal 2021



Base: Functionality (N=1765); easy to use (N=1742); option for feedback (N=1738); reduce time (N=1744).

In 2021, Opinion Poll respondents reporting to have used electronic services were asked if they accessed them by themselves or with the help of others. The data show that most citizens (70%) accessed the electronic services personally, while 30% did so with the help of others.

4.9 GENDER AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

Women's participation in Albanian politics has increased significantly in the last ten years, mainly due to the electoral gender quota.¹⁹ Another factor has been that Albanian women are more likely to attend university than men. Despite these achievements, women continue to be underrepresented in decision-making processes and they are still generally expected to bear the burden of childcare and housework.²⁰ This section focuses on gender and social inclusion by capturing citizens' perceptions concerning gender differences in terms of access to public services and ability to hold public positions. As in previous reports, the questionnaire asked survey respondents whether they have been treated differently by institutions/public officials based on their gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, or other reasons. There were three key statements upon which respondents were asked to express their perception of gender considerations in governance. These statements are analysed throughout the section. To conclude, respondents were asked on their beliefs regarding the increased presence of women in local councils and its impact on local governance.



Perceptions about gender equality in Albanian society

60.6% of the Albanian population agreed that there is equality between men and women – a higher proportion than in 2020 (45%) and 2019 (54%). Men were more likely than women to agree that there is equality between men and women.

Survey respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with 3 statements on gender equality in Albania on a 4-point scale – from 1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree).

Statement 1: “There is equality between men and women in Albanian society”

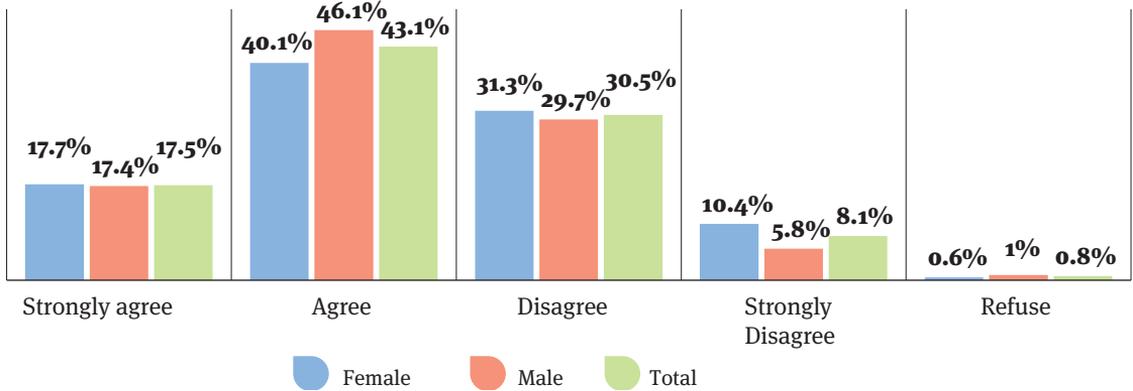
60.6% of the respondents reported that they ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement. Men more often agreed with the statement than women – 63.5% of male respondents compared to 57.8% of female.



19 Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) Women and Men in Albania 2019 (2019), p. 55–57, http://www.instat.gov.al/media/6413/burra-dhe-gra_2019.pdf

20 Dauti, M. and Zhllima, E., Public Perceptions and Attitudes toward Gender Equality in Albania (Tirana: UNDP, 2016). http://www.al.undp.org/content/dam/albania/docs/STUDIMI_PERCEPTIMET_eng.pdf

Figure 57: 'Equality between men and women in Albanian society' 2021

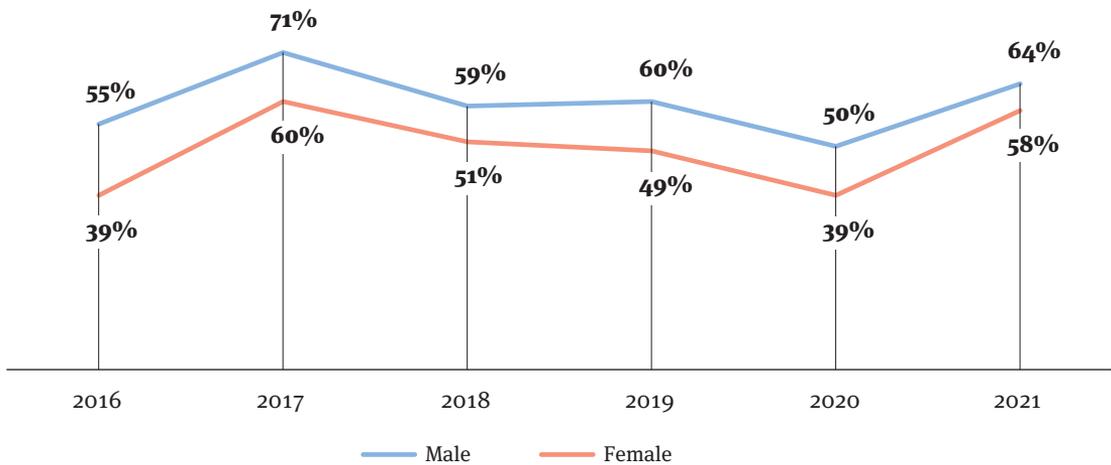


Base: N=2493

Demographic comparison shows that respondents' answers did not differ significantly by age group, meaning that respondents of all ages tend to have the same perception of gender equality in Albania. Differences across respondents' education levels show that respondents with up to lower secondary education were less likely (54%) to agree with the statement, compared with those with high school education (64%) or with a university degree (60%). In terms of employment status, figures show that employed respondents (63%) were more likely to agree that there is gender equality within Albanian society than unemployed (53%).

61% of the Albanian population agreed that there is equality between men and women – a higher proportion than in both 2020 (45%) and 2019 (54%). In 2021, compared to 2020 results, there was an increase by 19 pp among female respondents (58% vs. 39%) and 14 pp among male respondents (64% vs. 50%) reporting that there is equality between men and women.

Figure 58: 'Equality between men and women in Albanian society' (2016–2021)



Base: 2016 (N=1636); 2017 (N=1623); 2018 (N=1636); 2019 (N=2487); 2020 (N=2497); 2021 (N=2493).

Note: In 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

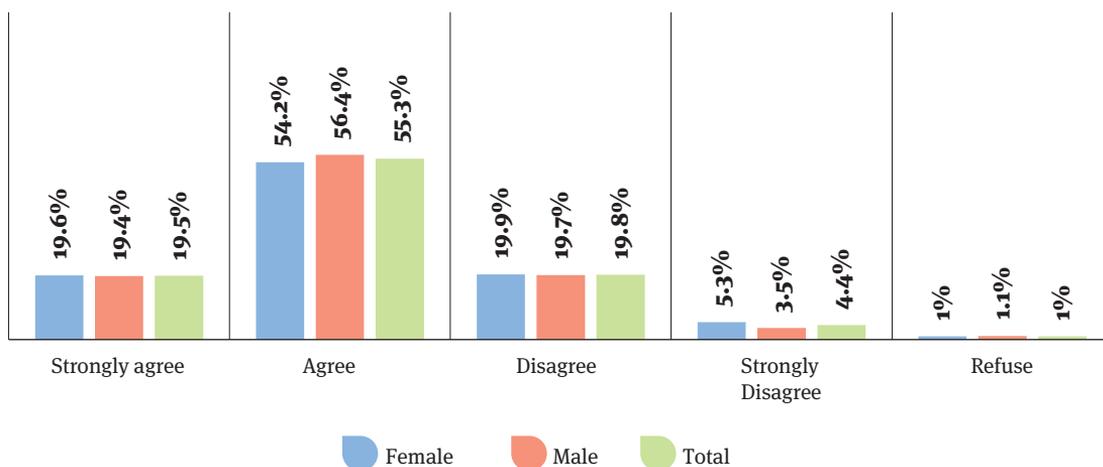
Access to public services

Around 75% of the Albanian population believed that men and women have the same access to public services. While men and women's perceptions do not differ substantially, citizens above 56 years old tended to think there is gender equality in accessing public services more often than the younger age groups.

Statement 2: "In Albania, men and women have the same access to public services"

74.8% of survey respondents said that they 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with this statement. Both male and female respondents tended to think alike, with 75.8% and 73.8% respectively. With regard to differences across age groups, the data show that respondents 56–65 years old (79%) and 66 years old and over (82%) were more likely to believe that men and women can equally access public services compared to other age groups. On the other hand, respondents with up to lower secondary education (69%) seemed to agree less with the statement compared to other education levels (high school 77% and university degree 76%).

Figure 59: 'In Albania, women and men have the same access to public services' 2021



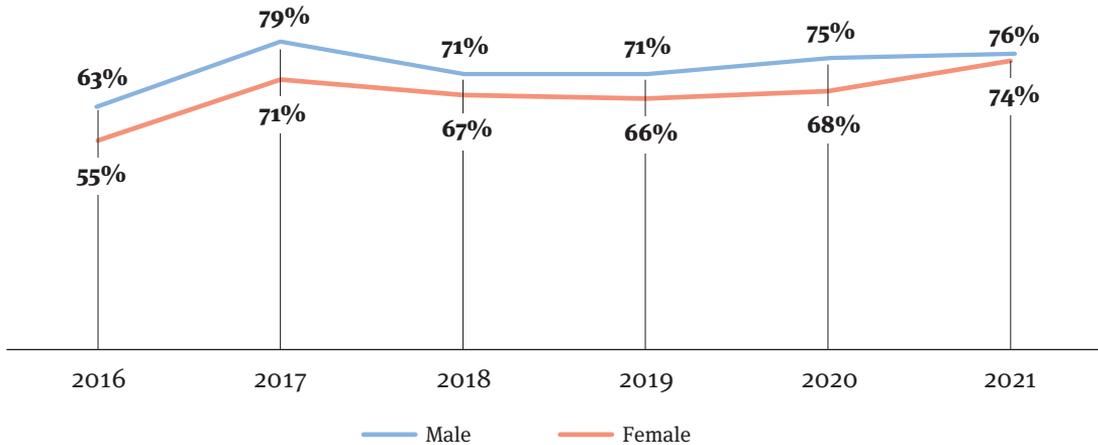
Base: N=2494

Data also show that unemployed respondents (66%) and those without a regular monthly income (68%) were less likely to 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the statement. Respondents working in the private sector (73%) were also less likely to agree with the statement, compared with public-sector employees (84%).

Between 2019 and 2021, the percentage of women who 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the statement has noticeably increased. In 2021, it went up by 6 pp compared to 2020, and by 8 pp compared with 2019. Meanwhile, the percentage of men who 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the

statement continued to increase (1 pp compared to 2020), giving a cumulative increase of 5 pp compared with 2019. Moreover, the data show that the gender gap has narrowed to 2 pp, the smallest since the 2016 study. See Figure 60 for the distribution of data over the years.

Figure 60: ‘In Albania, women and men have the same access to public services’ (2016–2021)



Base: 2016 (N=1635); 2017 (N=1619); 2018 (N=1624); 2019 (N=2487); 2020 (N=2496); 2021(N=2494).

Note: In 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.



Public service delivery

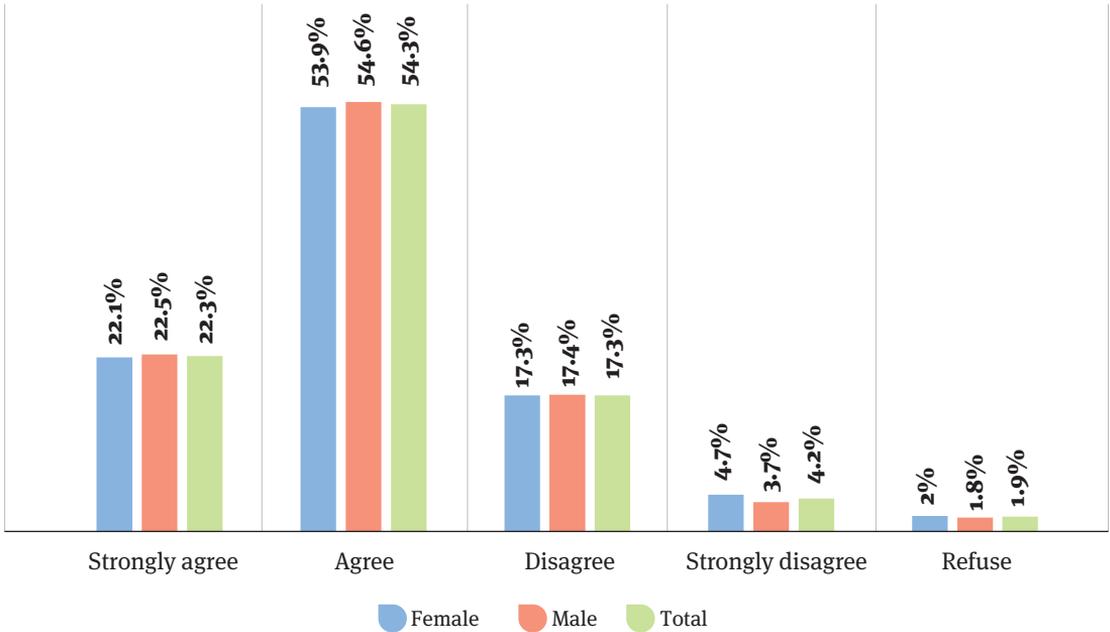
Most Albanians (76.6%) believe that civil servants serve with the same devotion and ethics to women and men.

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

76.6% of survey respondents reported that they ‘agree or strongly agree’ with this statement – higher than in 2020 (67.8%). Demographics checks show that men and women tended to equally agree with the statement (77.1% and 76.1% respectively).

Furthermore, employed respondents (78%) were more likely to agree with the statement than unemployed (68%). Also, respondents working in the public sector (87%) tended to agree that gender equality is observed by civil servants more than their private sector counterparts (74%). Respondents with an individual monthly income from 50,001 to 70,000 ALL (82%), and members of a minority group (78%) were more likely to report that they ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement than their peers. However, respondents with a disability (64%) were less likely to agree with the statement than non-disabled citizens (78%).

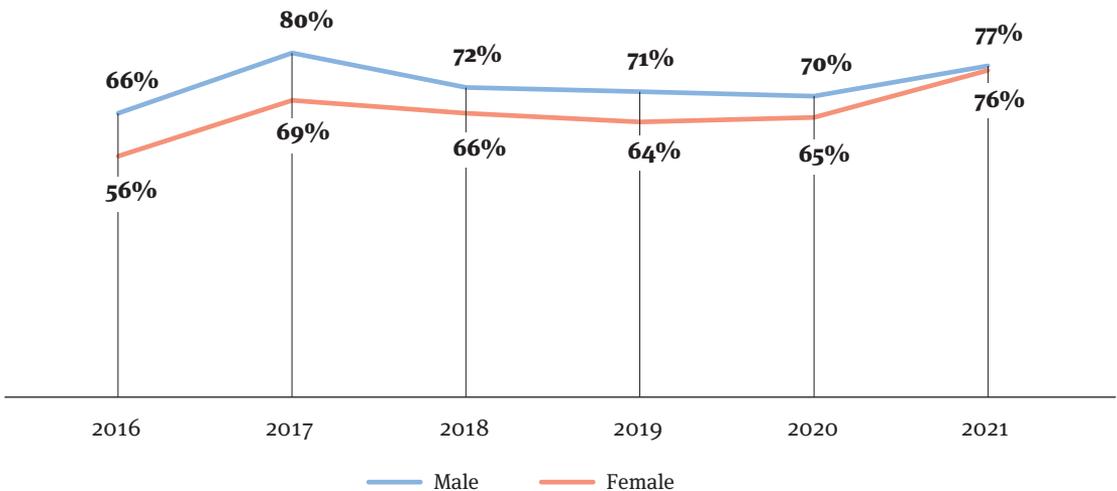
Figure 61: ‘Public servants serve women and men with the same ethics and devotion’ 2021



Base: N=2494

Between 2019 and 2021, the percentage of men and women who ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement has noticeably increased. In 2021, it went up by 7 pp and 11 pp respectively compared with 2020, and by 6 pp and 12 pp compared with 2019. Moreover, the data show that the gender gap was narrowed to 1 pp, the smallest since the 2016 study. See Figure 62 for the distribution of data over the years.

Figure 62: ‘Public servants serve women and men with the same ethics and devotion’ (2016–2021)



Base: 2016 (N=1635); 2017 (N=1614); 2018 (N=1636); 2019 (N=2487); 2020 (N=2492); 2021 (N=2494).

Note: In 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

Discrimination by institutions or public officials

Approximately one in eight Albanians reported being treated differently by an institution or public official based on gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, or something else, roughly the same as in 2020 (12%), as well as in 2019 (13%). Of those that had suffered discrimination in 2021, most were treated differently because of their age or gender.

Respondents were asked whether they were treated differently because of gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, or other reasons. A total of 11.8% of survey respondents reported that they have been treated differently because of their gender (3.7%), age (4.6%), ethnicity (1.3%), sexual orientation (0.2%), disability (1.2%), or other reasons (0.8%). 88.2% of survey respondents reported that they have not been treated differently.

Table 27: Discrimination by institutions 2021

During 2021, have you been treated differently by an institution or public official?	N	%
I have not been treated differently	2197	88.2%
I have been treated differently on the basis of*	294	11.8%
Gender	92	3.7%
Age	115	4.6%
Ethnicity	33	1.3%
Sexual orientation	5	0.2%
Disability	30	1.2%
Other**	19	0.8%

Base: N = 2491

*The total sum of gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability and other.

**Other: For example, discrimination based on origin, economic status, and political views.

For gender-based discrimination, females (6%) reported more often than males (2%) that they had faced discrimination. Furthermore, respondents in the 36-45 age bracket (6%), those with a university degree (4%), the unemployed (6%), private sector employees (5%), respondents with an individual monthly income over 70,001 ALL (6%) more often said that they were treated differently by an institution, or a public official based on their gender than other groups.

As regards age-based discrimination, female respondents (5%), those aged 18 to 25 years old (11%), those with up to lower secondary education (6%), students (12%), and private-sector employees (3%) more often reported that they were treated differently by an institution, or a public official based on their age than other groups.

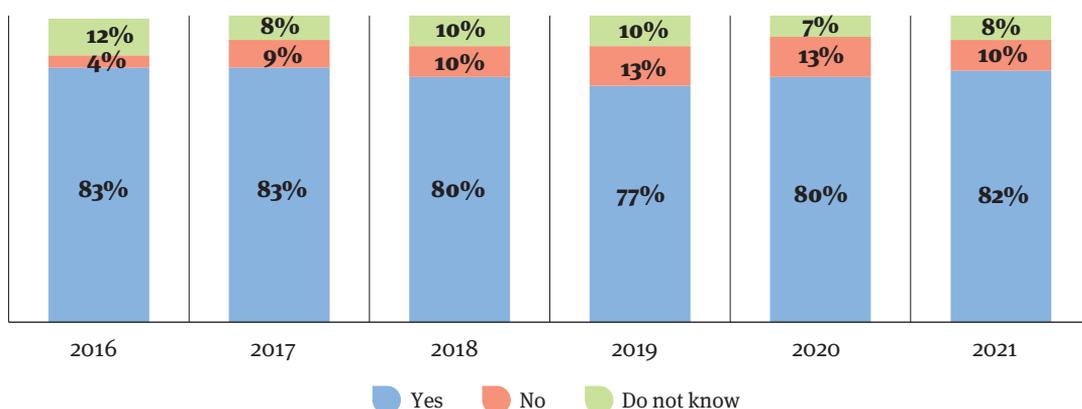
In 2021, the proportion of survey respondents who reported being treated differently by an institution or public official based on gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, or something else was similar to both 2020 (12%) and 2019 (13%).

Women in the decision-making process

81.8% of the Albanian population surveyed thought that men and women are equally capable of holding any public position. Women, younger people aged between 18–25 years old and those with a university degree (or higher) were more likely to indicate that women and men are equally capable of holding any public position.

Respondents were asked whether they thought that “women and men are equally capable for holding any public position”. 81.8% of respondents said ‘yes’, while 9.9% answered ‘no’, and a further 8.3%, said that they ‘don’t know. Compared to the 2020 study, the percentage of survey respondents who said that “women and men are equally capable of holding any public position” continued its upward trend (+2 pp), for a cumulative increase of 5 pp compared with 2019.

Figure 63: ‘Women and men are equally capable of holding any public position’ (2016–2021)

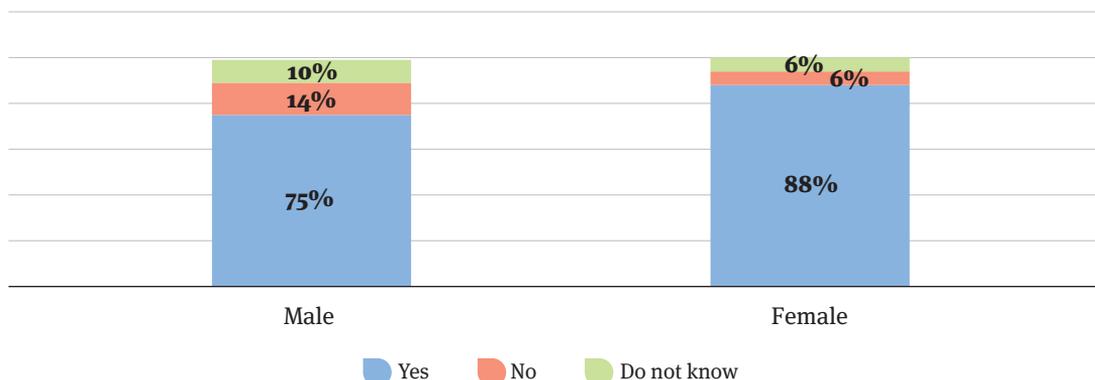


Base: 2016 (N=1635); 2017 (N=1628); 2018 (N=1632); 2019 (N=2486); 2020 (N=2498); 2021 (N=2496)

Note: In 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

Female (88%) respondents were more likely to say that “women and men are equally capable for holding any public position” compared to male (75%).

Figure 64: ‘Gender differences for women and men are equally capable of holding public positions’, 2021



Base: N= 2496

Respondents in the 18–25 age group (85%), respondents with a university degree or higher (89%), students (86%), public-sector employees (90%), and those with an income of over 70,001 ALL/month (92%) were more likely to think that women and men are equally capable for holding any public position.



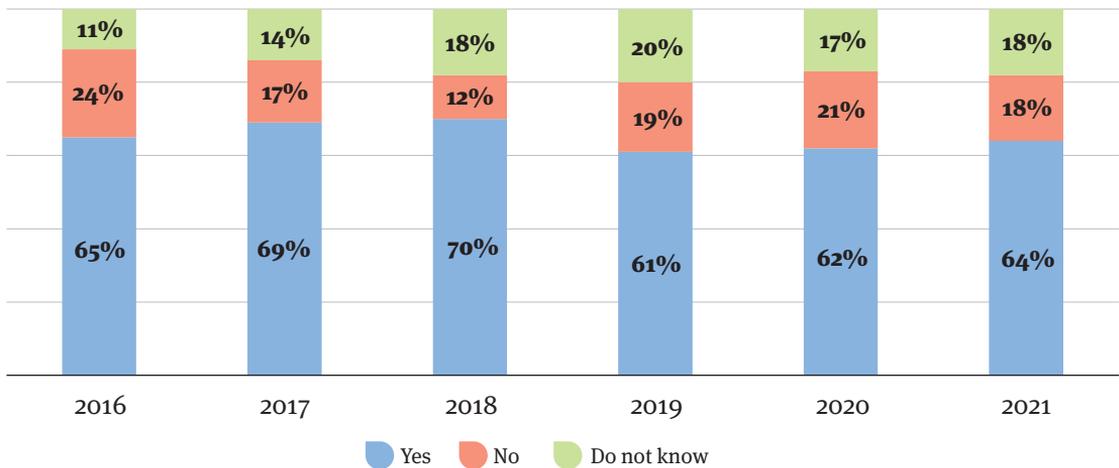
Women’s impact on local governance

In 2021, 6 in 10 Albanians thought that an increased number of women in municipal councils will have a positive impact on local governance, a similar number as 2020. Women were significantly more likely than men to agree with the statement.

Respondents were asked if they believe that the increased presence of women in municipal councils has a positive impact on local governance and 64.4% agreed with the statement. A smaller percentage, 17.8%, said that it does not have a positive impact and a similar percentage (17.7%) did not know.

In 2021, the proportion of respondents believing that an increased number of women in municipal councils will have a positive impact on local governance continued to trend upward (64% compared to the 62% reported in 2020) witnessing a cumulative increase of 3 pp compared to 2019 data (61%).

Figure 65: ‘Positive impact of increased female representation in the municipal council’ (2016–2021)



Base: 2016 (N=1635); 2017 (N=1631); 2018 (N=1633); 2019 (N=2486); 2020 (N=2498); 2021 (N=2494)

Note: In 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

Male respondents (53%) were less likely to believe that the increased presence of women in municipal councils will have a positive impact on local governance compared to female respondents (75%). Respondents with up to lower secondary education (59%), compared to those with high school education (62%) and university degree or higher (71%), were less likely to believe that the increased presence of women in municipal councils will have a positive impact. Private-sector employees (63%) were more likely to be sceptical than public-sector employees (75%).

5. Appendix 1: Sample characteristics (2013–2021)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Gender									
Male	45%	49%	50%	43%	51%	52%	49%	50.5%	50.6%
Female	55%	50%	50%	57%	49%	48%	51%	49.4%	49.3%
Other (new in 2020)								<0.1%	0.1%
Age groups									
18–25	14%	23%	22%	18%	19%	16%	19%	17.4%	15.2%
26–35	14%	22%	25%	23%	23%	23%	26%	26.7%	25.4%
36–45	14%	18%	16%	19%	19%	19%	20%	19.7%	21.9%
46–55	19%	18%	17%	18%	19%	20%	16%	16.6%	17%
56–65	20%	10%	11%	13%	11%	13%	12%	12.4%	12.5%
Over 66	18%	7%	8%	9%	9%	9%	7%	7.2%	8.1%
Geographical location									
Urban			81%	51%	50%	50%	70%	72.8%	70.7%
Rural			19%	49%	50%	50%	30%	27.2%	29.3%
Education Level									
No education + elementary education	1%	1%	3%	6%	5%	7%	4%	4%	4.1%
Middle secondary education	14%	15%	12%	19%	17%	23%	18%	18.3%	17%
High school	40%	41%	40%	50%	50%	46%	44%	41.9%	42.9%
University degree or higher	44%	42%	43%	24%	28%	24%	33%	35.3%	35.8%
Employment Status									
Employed	40%	46%	45%	43%	46%	46%	54%	57.3%	56.8%
Unemployed	20%	25%	28%	35%	34%	32%	25%	23.8%	20.6%
Student	8%	10%	9%	8%	7%	6%	7%	6.5%	7%
Retired	26%	9%	11%	12%	12%	12%	11%	10.9%	11.5%
Other	3%	5%	7%	2%	1%	4%	3%	0.4%	3.2%

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Employment Sector									
Public				32%	29%	28%	25%	27.7%	27.7%
Private				64%	71%	69%	72%	70.4%	68.9%
Other				4%		3%	3%	2%	3.4%
Regular individual monthly income (Net)									
No income			34%	33%	37%	32%	29%	28.1%	24.7%
Up to minimum wage			21%	25%	24%	28%	25%	19%	27.4%
Above the minimum wage-50,000 ALL			29%	28%	25%	28%	28%	31.6%	25.7%
50,001-70,000 ALL			6%	4%	5%	4%	7%	12%	13.9%
Over 70,001 ALL			2%	1%	2%	<1%	2%	2.5%	2.5%
Are you a member of a minority group?									
YES					9%	7%	6%	4.4%	5.8%
Greek					3.2%	2.7%	1.5%	1.1%	1.4%
Macedonian					1.6%	1.1%	0.9%	0.6%	0.8%
Aromanian					<0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	<0.1%	0.1%
Roma					2.3%	2.4%	1.5%	1.1%	1.7%
Egyptian					0.9%	0.2%	0.9%	0.4%	0.8%
Montenegrin					0%	0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Bosnian					0.2%	<0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%
Serbian					0%	0%	<0.1%	<0.1%	0%
Bulgarian					<0.1%	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%	<0.1%
No					90%	92%	93%	93.5%	92.8%
Do you have a political party preference?									
Yes					40%	36%	35%	33.6%	40.6%
SP					15.5%	16.1%	12.3%	11.9%	13.6%
DP					8.5%	9.2%	8.1%	8.4%	9.4%
SMI					3.4%	1.2%	2.1%	2.4%	2%
Other					0.7%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%
No					52%	58%	60%	58.8%	54.2%

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Are you a member of a political party?									
Yes					16%	12%	13%	10.4%	12.5%
SP					6.9%	6.6%	4.6%	4.1%	4.6%
DP					2.6%	3%	2.9%	1.9%	2.6%
SMI					2.2%	0.8%	0.9%	1.1%	0.8%
Other					0.6%	<0.1%	0.2%	<0.1%	0.2%
No					75%	81%	82%	81.2%	81.6%



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