



opinion poll 2020 **TRUST IN GOVERNANCE**



Institute for Democracy and Mediation
Instituti për Demokraci dhe Ndërmjetësim

With funding from



**Austrian
Development
Cooperation**



Opinion poll

TRUST *in* GOVERNANCE 2020

Survey Report



Institute for Democracy and Mediation
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Opinion Poll 2020: Trust in Governance

Survey Report

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Trust in Governance 2020 at a glance

In its eighth annual edition, the ‘Trust in Governance’ opinion poll was conducted by the Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM) in November–December 2020 across the 61 municipalities of Albania, using a randomly selected and nationally representative sample of 2,500 citizens. The year was marked by the aftermath of the devastating earthquake in Albania in November 2019, and the COVID-19 pandemic which caused major disruption to all facets of life in the country including governance, citizen engagement, and public service delivery. This affected the findings of the annually recurring sections, and also resulted in the inclusion of a new section: natural disasters. The findings are grouped into nine main sections and summarised as follows:



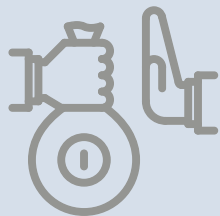
Trust in institutions

- International organisations like NATO, the UN and the EU, ranked as the most trusted institutions.
- Religious institutions (69.8%) were the domestic institutions most trusted by the Albanian population, followed by educational institutions (54.1%), the armed forces (54.0%), and civil-society organisations (52.6%).
- Political parties (20.4%), the courts (23.8%), the president (23.9%), parliament (24.1%), and the prosecution (24.3%) were among the lowest ranking institutions in terms of trust.
- Compared to 2019, trust in the police, healthcare institutions, the media, central government, and the army has decreased, while trust in religious institutions has increased.
- A mere 28.7% of the Albanian population surveyed believed that judicial reform is being implemented correctly and 52.8% of respondents believed that judicial reform will have a positive impact on the development of the country.
- Although social media (36%) and portals (15%) are becoming more popular – even among people over 65 years old – as the primary source for news on current affairs for the Albanian population, television (58%) remained the most popular media outlet in Albania.
- One in three Albanian citizens believed that the information provided by Albanian media is accurate/true.



Transparency and accountability

- The majority of Albanians surveyed perceived the central government (64.3%) and municipality (62.2%) as not transparent, though this is an improvement of 2 and 1 percentage points (p.p.), respectively, compared to 2019.
- The majority of the Albanian population polled (64.1%) were aware that the right to information is guaranteed by law. Albanians over 65 years old or with an income of 50,001–70,000 ALL were more likely to be aware of this legislation.
- Compared to 2019, the proportion of Albanian citizens that perceived local government as accountable increased by 6 p.p. to 37% in 2020 and for central government the proportion increased by 4 p.p. to 35% in 2020.
- The Albanian population surveyed tended to believe that the most effective domestic accountability mechanism is the Albanian Supreme State Audit Institution (60.7%), followed by the media (52.8%), parliament (48.1%), civil society (44.8%), and the Ombudsman (44.3%).
- On the whole, the Albanian population believed that international organisations hold the government to account better than the domestic organisations listed.



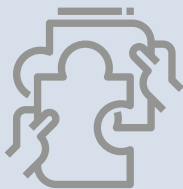
Corruption in public institutions

- 86.7% of Albanian citizens reported that they perceive 'petty' corruption to be widespread, while 84.1% reported 'grand' or high-level corruption to be widespread.
- Judicial institutions were ranked as the most corrupt in 2020, followed by healthcare institutions, law enforcement, and parliament.
- Compared to last year, the percentage of the Albanian population that did not have confidence in the prosecution of petty corruption increased – from 61.1% in 2019 to 64.5% in 2020.
- 7 in 10 Albanians reported they do not have confidence in the prosecution of grand corruption cases.
- The proportion of Albanians that reported having paid a bribe to receive a service from the central government increased from 19% in 2019 to 32% in 2020. More Albanians reported to have received a service from the central government in 2020, 41% compared to 32% in 2019.



Political influence

- Religious institutions were perceived as the least politically influenced institution (12%), while the prosecution (58%) and courts (56%) were perceived as the most politically influenced institutions.
- Compared to 2019, a smaller percentage of Albanians viewed the courts, the media, and civil-society organisations as being influenced by political interests.



Citizen engagement

- In 2020, a smaller percentage (49%) of the Albanian population was interested in participating in the decision-making process of public institutions than in 2019 (57%).
- Albanians with a university degree (or higher), students, public sector employees, and members of political parties were more likely to report being interested in participating in the public decision-making process.
- Most Albanians felt that they do not have sufficient opportunities to participate in the decision-making of public institutions.
- Approximately 1 in 8 Albanian citizens reported that they used the online portal 'www.konsultimipublik.gov.al' in 2020 to obtain information or give their opinion on draft legislation or draft strategies/action plans.
- The majority of the Albanians surveyed believed that 'citizens have sufficient knowledge to understand government decisions' (71%).
- Although 38% of respondents believed that suggestions from civil society are taken into consideration, 65% felt that local public hearings are formal events. Meanwhile, 35% agreed with the statement 'municipal councillors represent local communities'.
- 22% of the respondents attended a demonstration/rally or signed a petition in 2020.
- 67% were willing to engage in voluntary work, particularly those younger than 45 years old, attending a university, working in the public sector, or living in rural areas.
- The percentage of the Albanian population wanting to move to another country remains high: 44% of respondents reported that they want to emigrate.



Satisfaction with public service delivery

- 38% of Albanian citizens, on average, were satisfied with the delivery of core public services. The delivery of education services (49%) and cleaning services (49%) were perceived as most satisfactory.
- 45% of Albanian citizens that had used an administrative service in 2020 were satisfied or very satisfied with the delivery of this service. Particularly the delivery of civil registry (68%), road transportation (56%), and social insurance (54%) services received higher ratings.
- Compared to last year, a smaller percentage of respondents submitted a complaint to institutional public service providers (12% in 2020 versus 17% in 2019).
- 12.4% of the citizens surveyed directed complaints to the online platform *shqiperiaqeduam.al*. Albanians with an income of over 70,001 ALL/month were more likely to have submitted complaints to the platform.
- Similar to 2019, approximately 1 in 4 Albanians believed that institutions 'listen to' and properly address citizens' complaints.
- 57.2% of respondents said that the quality of social services delivered by the municipality had not changed, while 23.6% said that the quality of social services had improved and 19.2% said that it had worsened.
- Compared to 2019, a higher percentage of the Albanian population reported visiting an Agency for the Delivery of Integrated Services (ADISA) service window (29% versus 24%). Among those who visited an ADISA service window, 73.4% indicated that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the service they received, an increase of more than 4 p.p. compared to last year.
- 70% of the Albanian population surveyed did not feel safe in everyday life. The main reasons for feeling unsafe were crime, health-related concerns, employment insecurity, and injustice.



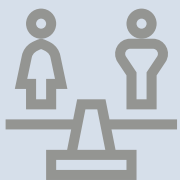
Natural disasters

- 40.3% of Albanian respondents were satisfied that the decision-making of the central government was transparent in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic; 43.7% were satisfied with the provision of online alternatives for obtaining services; and 34.5% were satisfied with the respect shown for human rights and freedoms during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Less than half of the Albanian population polled were satisfied with the post-earthquake response of the central government (38%) and local government (38%).
- Overall, higher levels of dissatisfaction were mainly found among younger age groups, students, the unemployed, private sector employees, and persons with disabilities.



Use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

- 63% of the Albanian population were aware that their municipality had a website, an increase of 20 p.p. compared to 2015.
- The main reason for using the website of the municipality was 'to receive information on available services and where and how to access them'.
- Compared to 2019, a higher percentage of the Albanian population indicated that they are aware that the government administration offers electronic services through the e-Albania portal (93% in 2020 versus 71% in 2019)
- 74.3% of the citizens that were aware of the existence of e-Albania indicated that they have received electronic services through the portal in 2020.
- Compared to 2019, a smaller percentage of Albanians assessed electronic services as being functional, easy to use, and providing citizens the opportunity to express comments/suggestions.



Gender and social inclusion

- 50% of men and 39% of women agreed that there is equality between men and women, as did a smaller overall proportion of respondents than last year (45% in 2020 versus 54% in 2019).
- 74.5% of men and 68.2% women believed that men and women have the same access to public services, which represents a slight increase on 2019 when 71.1% of the men and 66.4% of the women agreed with the statement.
- A majority of the Albanian population surveyed (67.8%) believed that public servants serve with the same devotion and ethics to women and men.
- 1 in 8 Albanians reported being treated differently by an institution or public official on the basis of gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, a disability, or something else. Of those that had suffered discrimination in 2020, most were treated differently because of their age or gender.
- 80% of the Albanian population surveyed thought that women and men are equally capable of holding any public position. Women, younger people, and those with university degrees (or higher) were more likely to indicate that women and men are equally capable of holding any public position.
- Similar to 2019, in 2020 around 6 in 10 Albanians thought that an increased number of women in municipal councils has a positive impact on local governance.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Since the fall of communism, Western Balkan countries have undergone a substantial transition towards an open and democratic society. In recent years, the reform agenda has been further stimulated by the requirements for joining the European Union (EU) set out by the European Commission. In Albania, the functioning of democratic institutions, public administration reform, rule of law, and economic development are at the heart of these reforms¹. The proper implementation of these reforms and the opening of accession talks are currently important indicators for the public's perception of the Albanian government. Together with long-term indicators such as trust in governance, public-service delivery, and public accountability these are important factors that determine support for the status quo in Albanian society.

The Opinion Poll is an instrument that enables the monitoring of public trust and perceptions on governance and citizen engagement in Albania on a yearly basis. Its main objective is to explore public perceptions and attitudes on issues such as trust in public institutions, institutional transparency and accountability, corruption, the level of citizen engagement in policy- and decision-making, satisfaction with public-service delivery, and enforcement of non-discriminatory laws and policies. Furthermore, 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 report presents the findings from the Opinion Poll 'Trust in Governance' conducted by the Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM) during 13 November and 10 December 2020 across the 61 municipalities of Albania. This is the eighth consecutive year that the Opinion Poll has been conducted (2013–2020) employing a similar survey instrument. Throughout 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic caused major disruption to overall governance, the ability of citizens to engage in decision-making processes, and hindered physical public-service delivery. This affected not only the findings of the annually returning sections, but also inspired the inclusion of a new section: natural disasters.

The report starts with an outline of the methodology and the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, 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 face of natural disasters; use of ICT (Information and Communications Technology); 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’ 2020 employed a representative sample of the Albanian population in which respondents were selected across the country’s municipalities and their administrative units. Employing a weighted, nationally representative sample allows us to extrapolate from the findings of the Opinion Poll for the Albanian population as a whole. Consequently, the statistical significance level of the sample is described as follows: for an adult population of 2,213,610,² 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 .

In order to determine the quota size of each of the counties, the resident population of Albania was retrieved from the civil registry and the number of residents of each of the districts was retrieved from the Institute of Statistics (INSTAT).³ Quantitative data from the civil registry for 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 counties⁴.

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 and over 18 years old, a linear interpolation technique was used. The population representation coefficient for Albanian men over 18 years old as per 1 January 2019 was determined at 0.768076985 and for Albanian women over 18 years old at 0.778576952. The total population representation coefficient for Albanians over 18 years old was 0.773333171.⁵ As an illustration, Table 1 shows the distribution per county (Alb. *Qark*) of the Albanian resident population over 18 years and the sample size per county.

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- 2 See Table 1 for details.
- 3 INSTAT defines the Albanian resident population as “all persons residing or intending to reside in the country for at least 12 months, regardless of their nationality”. For the purpose of this study non-Albanian citizens were excluded.
- 4 This year’s sample is exactly the same as the 2019 sample.
- 5 This means that about 77% of the Albanian population are over 18 years old as of 1 January 2019.

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

County	Resident population	Resident population over 18	Sample size per county		
			Men	Women	Total
Berat	125,157	96,788	54	55	109
Dibër	118,948	91,986	54	50	104
Durrës	290,126	224,364	127	126	253
Elbasan	274,982	212,653	119	121	240
Fier	294,747	227,938	130	127	257
Gjirokastër	61,423	47,500	26	28	54
Korçë	207,889	160,767	90	92	182
Kukës	76,594	59,233	34	33	67
Lezhë	125,195	96,817	54	55	109
Shkodër	202,895	156,905	86	91	177
Tiranë	895,160	692,257	384	399	783
Vlorë	189,311	146,400	82	83	165
Total	2,862,427	2,213,610	1,240	1,260	2,500

43 trained interviewers administered the questionnaire in face-to-face interviews using PAPI (paper-assisted personal interview). The data was processed and analysed using SPSS software to present findings of descriptive and relational statistics.

2.2 Survey instrument

Each year, the survey instrument includes the same core questions on trust in governance, corruption, citizen engagement, and the use of ICT as in earlier reports dating back to 2013. However, its content is annually reviewed by a panel of experts in the fields of good governance and social sciences to keep up with recent developments and trends in public discourse. This year, a number of questions were omitted based on considerations of appropriateness with the focus of the questionnaire and to allow for new questions to be added without it becoming too long. These included the entire section ‘performance of public institutions’, the assessment of the quality and content of municipal websites, and follow-up questions about exercising the right to information and the type of public consultation respondents attended.

To reflect the events of the past year including the COVID-19 Pandemic and the November 2019 Earthquake aftermath, a new section was added to the questionnaire, which explores the citizens’ perspectives with regards to the government’s post-earthquake response and handling of the pandemic. Additionally, an answer option was added on natural disasters

in the question on whether citizens feel safe in everyday life. Lastly, despite Albania not legally recognising a third gender, the questionnaire now includes a third gender option to better reflect the non-binary concept of gender.

2.3 Focus groups

Due to the on-going pandemic and our commitment to social distancing to prevent the spread of SARS-CoV-2, this edition of the Opinion Poll 'Trust in Governance' does not include focus groups.

2.4 Limitations

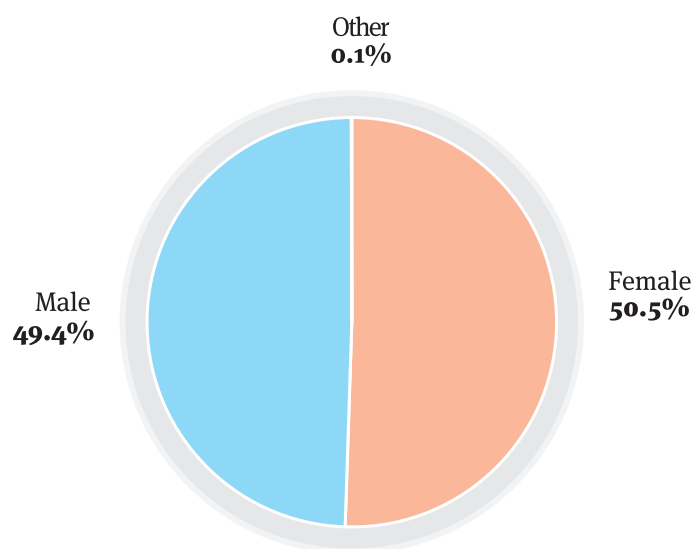
This is the second year that the Opinion Poll employs a representative sample of the Albanian population, instead of the quota sample that was used from 2013 to 2018. This means that the results of the 2020 and 2019 Opinion Polls can be generalised to the entire population using weights of representation of the statistical sample to the entire population. However, comparison of the 2020 and 2019 statistical results with previous years (2013-2018) could 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 ‘The Trust in Governance’ 2020 at a national level. In this chapter, the main demographics of the final sample of respondents are presented below in terms of gender, geographical representation, age, education, employment status, individual income, disability and minority representation.

Of the 2,500 respondents, 50.5% were female, 49.4% male, and one person chose “other”⁶. The geographical distribution was 72.8% urban and 27.2% rural. In comparison, data from the Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) says that in 2011, 58.2% of the Albanian resident population was located in an urban area.⁷ However, over the past ten years this number has increased.

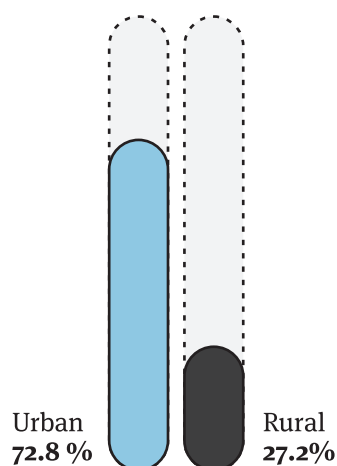
Figure 1. Gender representation



Base: N = 2500

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- 6 Due to only one person belonging to the gender “other”, based on the requirement for statistically representative data, this person’s answers have not been included separately in the report when checking responses across genders.
- 7 INSTAT. (May 2014). A new urban–rural classification of Albanian population. Accessed via: http://www.instat.gov.al/media/2919/a_new_urban-rural_classification_of_albanian_population.pdf

Figure 2. Geographical representation

Base: N = 2500

With regards to the age distribution, all respondents were at least of voting age as the sample included only those of 18 years and older. The oldest respondent is 87 years old. Most respondents (63.8%) were between 18 and 45 years old: 17.4% were between 18 and 25 years old, 26.7% between 26 and 35 years old, and 19.7% between 36 and 45 years old⁸. A further 36.2% of the respondents were between 46 and 87 years old. For the distribution of the respondents according to each of the age groups, see Table 2.

Table 2. Age groups

Age (in groups)	Percentage
18–25 years old	17,4%
26–35 years old	26,7%
36–45 years old	19,7%
46–55 years old	16,6%
56–65 years old	12,4%
66 and over	7,2%
Total	100,0%

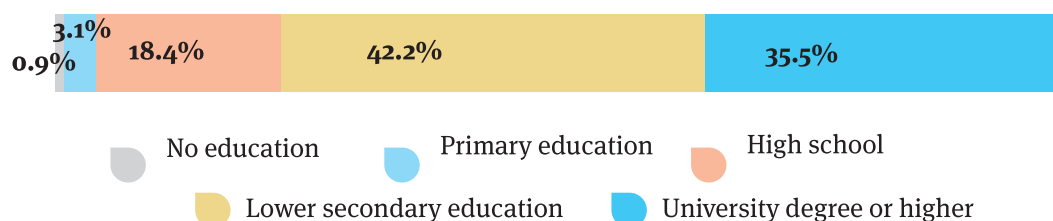
Base: N = 2500

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8 The age distribution of the sample is similar to previous years. Like the Albanian resident population (see INSTAT), the proportion of respondents between 25 and 34 years old is larger than that of other age groups.

The majority of the respondents (77.7%) had received a high school diploma or held a university or postgraduate degree: 42.2% had completed their education at the upper secondary level (i.e. high school diploma); whilst 35.5% received a university or postgraduate degree. 22.4% of the respondent had up to lower secondary education: some 18.4% of the respondents had completed the compulsory 8/9-year programme, while 4% had received no education or finished only primary education (4/5-year programme).

Figure 3. Educational attainment



Base: N = 2462

At the time of the survey, 57.9% of the respondents that reported their employment status was employed, 24% was unemployed, 11.1% was retired, and 6.5% studying. 0.4% of the respondents (11 respondents) gave a different employment status, such as being a homemaker or being declared invalid.

Table 3. Employment status

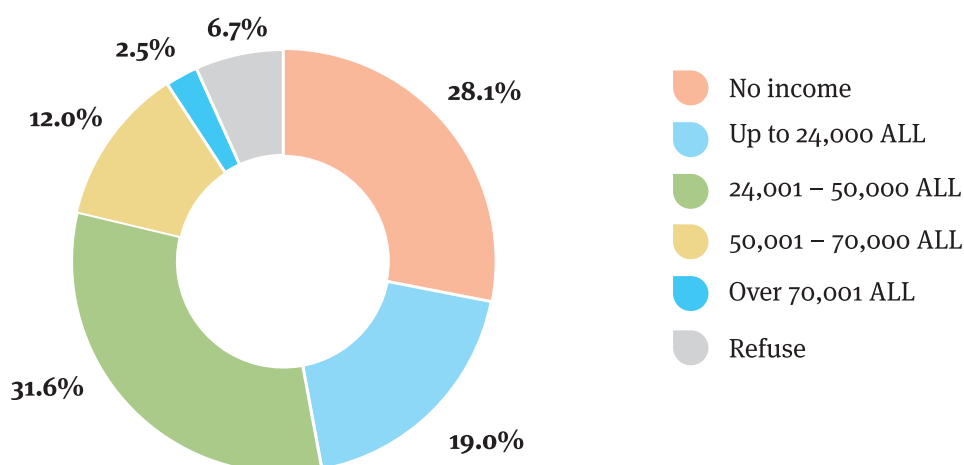
Employment status	N	Percentage
Employed	1424	57.9%
Public Sector	381	27.7%
Private Sector	969	70.4%
Other	27	2.0%
Total	1377	100%
Unemployed	591	24.0%
Student	161	6.5%
Retired	272	11.1%
Other	11	0.4%
Total	2459	100.0%

Base: N = 2459

The distribution of respondents' individual monthly income is presented in the following graph. 28.1% did not have any regular monthly income at the time of interview, whilst 19% reported a net income up to 24,000 ALL per month (approx. US\$238). 31.6% earned between 24,001 and 50,000 ALL per month, 12% 50,001–70,000 ALL per month and 2.5% of the sample had regular individual monthly income of over 70,001 ALL (approx. \$640). 6.7% of the respondents refused to note their income.

There are differences in income across female and male respondents. 32.1% of the female respondents did not have a regular monthly income, versus 24% of the male respondents. Similarly, 50.3% of the male respondents had a regular monthly income of more than 24,001 ALL, as compared to only 42.1% of the female respondents. 3.9% of the male respondents indicated that they have a monthly average income of more than 70,001 ALL, while only 1.1% of the female respondents said the same.

Figure 4. Regular individual monthly (net) income



Base: N = 2449

Asked if they consider themselves as having a disability, 5.2% of the respondents that answered the question self-reported having a disability (N = 124).

Lastly, the respondents were asked if they belong to a minority group. 4.4% of the respondents stated that they belong to a minority group. Of those, 23.7% identified as Greek, 24.6% as Roma, 13.2% as Macedonian, 8.8% as Egyptian, and 4.4% as Bosnian. 18.4% of those indicating they consider themselves a member of a minority group did not reveal to which minority group they belong.

94.4% of the respondents did not identify as being a member of a minority group. Table 4 provides figures on the respondents that belong to minority groups. Due to the small

proportion of respondents that reports to belong to a minority group, this demographic characteristic is only be included in the analysis of survey results when directly relevant to the respective question (e.g. discrimination or safety-related questions).

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

Member of a minority group?	N	Percentages
Yes	110	4.4%
Greek	27	1.1%
Macedonian	15	0.6%
Aromanian	1	<0.1%
Roma	28	1.1%
Egyptian	10	0.4%
Montenegrin	3	0.1%
Bosnian	5	0.2%
Serbian	1	<0.1%
Bulgarian	3	0.1%
Refuse/other minority group	21	0.8%
No	2338	94.4%
Refuse to answer	28	1.1%
Total	2476	100.0%

Base: N = 2476

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 organisations. This includes parliament, government, police, courts, and independent public institutions, as well as non-state organisations such as the media, religious organisations, and non-governmental organisations.⁹ Researching institutional trust is important, because it is a key indicator of individual and social wellbeing, and a fundamental condition of collective action and collaboration.¹⁰ In addition to being essential to social cohesion, trust in institutions and particularly the trust in government is seen as one of the foundations upon which the legitimacy of political systems is built. Lack of trust compromises the willingness of citizens and organisations to respond to public policies, thus hindering sustainable development.¹¹

The first part of the section on institutional trust asked respondents to rate 17 key state actors and public institutions 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 having knowledge about how specific institutions are designed and/or function.

Trust in institutions, the 2020 results

In 2020, Albanian citizens continued to perceive religious institutions (69.8%) as the most trusted domestic institutions, followed by educational institutions (54.1%), civil-society organisations (52.6%), and the armed forces (54.0%). Political parties (20.4%), the courts (23.8%), the president (23.9%), parliament (24.1%), and the prosecution (24.3%) were among the lowest ranking institutions. International organisations like NATO, the UN and the EU, ranked as the most trusted institutions.

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9 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>

10 OECD (2013), ‘Trust in government, policy effectiveness and the governance agenda’. Available at https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/governance/government-at-a-glance-2013/trust-in-government-policy-effectiveness-and-the-governance-agenda_gov_glance-2013-6-en

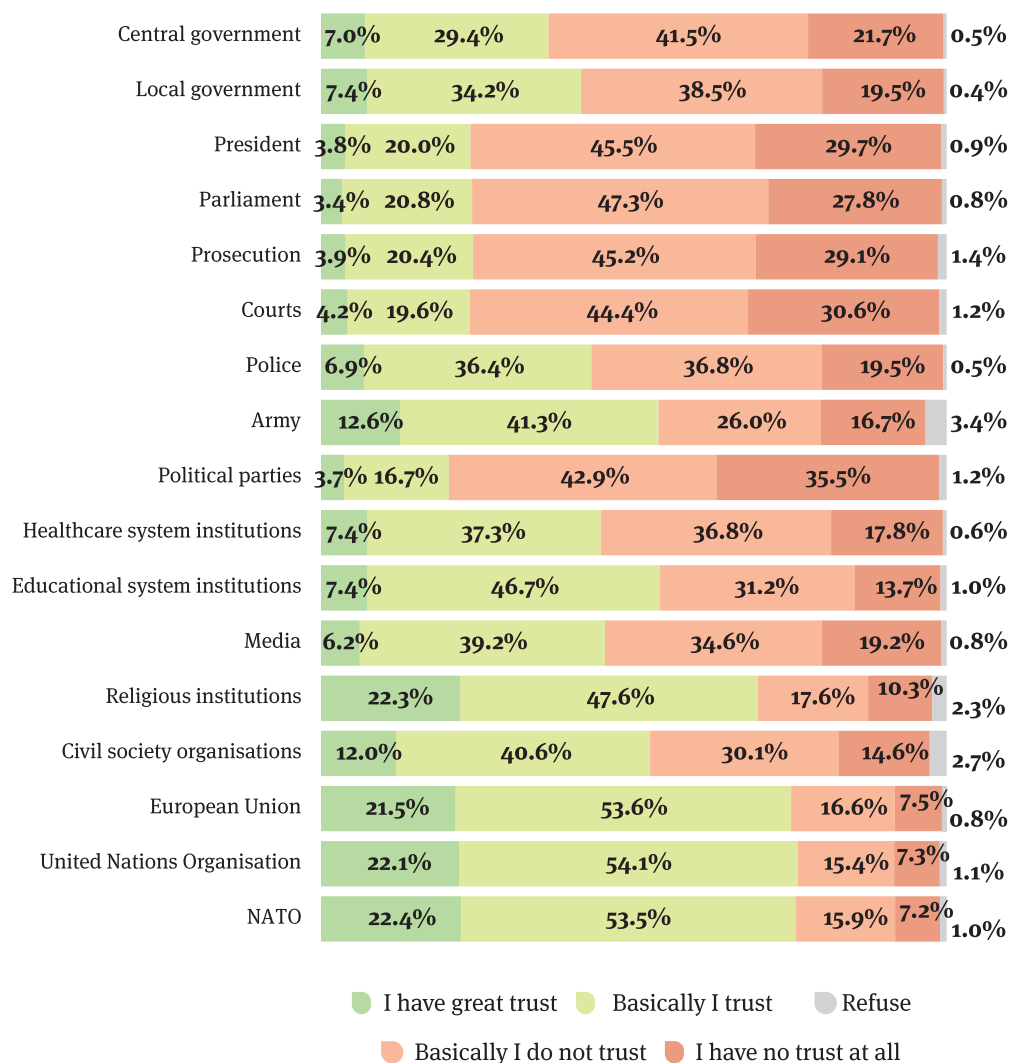
11 *Ibid.*

In 2020, of the domestic institutions and key political actors rated, four received a positive trust rating ('I have great trust' or 'Generally, I trust') from more than half of the respondents. These institutions include religious institutions (69.8%), civil-society organisations (52.6%), educational institutions (54.1%), and the armed forces (54.0%). Religious institutions ranked as the most trusted domestic institutions, with 22.3% of the respondents indicating they have great trust and 47.6% indicating that they generally trust these organisations. 27.9% of the respondents indicated that they generally do not trust religious institutions or do not trust them at all. The second-most trusted institution, civil-society organisations, were greatly trusted by 12.0% and generally trusted by 40.6% of the respondents; while 44.7% of the respondents indicated that they generally do not trust civil-society organisations or do not trust them at all.

The domestic institutions and key actors that received the lowest ratings were political parties (20.4%), courts (23.8%), the president (23.9%), parliament (24.1%), and the prosecution (24.3%). For political parties, 42.9% of respondents indicated that generally they do not trust these institutions and 35.5% said that they do not trust political parties at all. Similarly, 30.6% of the respondents indicated that they do not trust courts at all, 29.7% of the respondents had the same level of trust in the president, and 29.1% for the prosecution.

Local and central government enjoy greater levels of trust than the legislative and judicial branches. 41.6% of the respondents indicated that they trust local government, with 7.4% saying they have great trust and 34.2% that they generally trust local government. For central government, 36.4% of the respondents said that they trust the institution, comprised of 7% indicating they have great trust and 29.4% that they generally trust it.

International institutions and organisations such as the EU, NATO, and the UN were the highest rated institutions. The European Union received a positive trust rating from 75.1% of respondents; NATO from 75.9%; and UN organisations from 76.2%.

Figure 5: Institutional Trust 2020

Base: Central gov. (N=2497); local gov. (N=2497); President (N=2499); Parliament (N=2493); Prosecution (N=2495); Courts (N=2495); Police (N=2495); Army (N=2493); Pol. parties (N=2491); Healthcare (N=2493); Education (N=2490); Media (N=2490); Religious inst. (N=2494); CSOs (N=2488); EU (N=2494); UN (N=2497); NATO (N=2494).

Socio-demographic comparison of institutional trust

Albanians in the age group '66 and over' more often indicated that they have trust in the president, parliament, political parties, the media, and religious institutions, Albanians residing in rural areas reported similar or higher trust levels for 16 of the 17 the rated institutions.

No substantial differences were found for gender, education, or geographic representation. Female respondents were more likely to indicate that they trust central government (38%) than men (35%), while men were more likely to trust the media (47%), the UN (77%), and NATO (77%) than women (44%, 75%, and 75% respectively). Respondents between 46 and 55 years old indicated higher than average rates of trust for parliament (30%), the police (49%), army (59%), and healthcare institutions (50%). Similarly, respondents of 66 years old and over reported higher trust rates for political parties (27%), healthcare institutions (52%), and religious institutions (75%). In terms of employment status, students reported higher trust ratings for the army (59%) than average, while retired respondents reported a higher than average rate for the police (48%) and the media (51%). Similarly, respondents with an income from 50,001–70,000 ALL per month reported higher levels of trust in the army and respondents with an income over 70,001 ALL per month reported higher levels of trust in healthcare institutions.

Overall, respondents residing rural areas reported similar or higher trust levels than respondents in urban areas for all but one of the institutions rated. Most notable were central government (35% for urban vs. 40% for rural), the president (22% urban vs. 28% rural), political parties (19% vs. 24%), and civil-society organisations (51% vs. 56%). See Table 6 at the end of this chapter for data on the socio-demographic breakdown of trust in institutions.

Respondents who indicated they belong to a minority group¹² reported lower levels of trust in four institutions – the army (46%), police (38%), healthcare institutions (39%), and educational institutions (50%) – than respondents not in a minority group (54%, 43%, 45%, and 54% respectively). On the other hand, respondents belonging to minority groups reported higher levels of trust in the media (55%), political parties (25%) and religious institutions (75%), than non-minority respondents (45%, 20%, and 70% respectively).

Respondents who indicated they have a disability were more likely to report that they trust the central government (44%), local government (47%), parliament (31%), and the media (53%) than respondents that indicate without a disability (36%, 41%, 24%, and

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12 Due to the small number of respondents indicating that they belong to a minority group, there are limitations as to how representative these answers may be for all minority Albanian citizens. Therefore, this demographic is only included when directly relevant to the question or when a clear trend is visible.

45% respectively). By contrast, respondents with a disability were less likely to report that they trust the president (15%) than respondents that did not indicate they have a disability (24%).

When cross-referencing municipality size with trust in local government, respondents residing in smaller municipalities (<50,000 inhabitants) reported higher trust ratings (46%) than those living in medium-sized (50,000–100,000 inhabitants) municipalities (44.3%), or large (>100,000 inhabitants) municipalities (39.3%). Lastly, the data does not show any major difference in the level of trust in political parties reported among respondents who are members of a political party and respondents who are not. In fact, even among political party members, there is a low level of trust: 75.3% in total indicated either that they generally do not trust political parties (40.2%) or do not trust them at all (35.1%).

Trust in institutions over the years

Compared to 2019, trust in the police (- 12 p.p.), healthcare institutions (- 6 p.p.), the media (- 6 p.p.), central government (- 5 p.p.) and the army (- 5 p.p.) has declined, while trust in religious institutions has increased (+ 4 p.p.). International organisations like the EU, UN and NATO, who saw a spike of perceived trust in 2017, are now back to the trust levels observed in 2015/2016.

Compared to the 2019 Opinion Poll, which was conducted with the exact same methodology and sample, trust ratings have decreased slightly for most institutions. Particularly trust in the police (- 12 p.p.), healthcare institutions (- 6 p.p.), the media (- 6 p.p.), central government (- 5 p.p.), and the army (- 5 p.p.) have decreased compared to the 2019 results. On the other hand, the level of trust in religious institutions has increased compared to last year (+ 4 p.p.).

With regards to the changes in trust levels over the years, there has been an observable decrease in public trust in institutions since around 2017. For central government, the president, parliament, the police, the army, healthcare institutions, the education system, and the media trust has decreased by around 10 p.p. The judiciary, which was split into courts and prosecution from 2017 onwards, has seen a steady erosion of trust over the last three years: whereas in 2018 the proportion of respondents indicated that they trust courts and the prosecution was 28%, this decreased to 27% in 2019 and 24% in 2020. International institutions and organisations have also seen their levels of trust decrease, particularly when compared with 2017, but each still enjoys the trust of more than 75% of respondents.

Table 5: Institutional trust 2015–2020*

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

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

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

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

Justice reform

28.7% of the Albanian population surveyed believes that judicial reform is being implemented correctly and 52.8% of respondents believed that the reforms will have a positive impact on the development of the country. Between 2016 and 2020, the proportion of Albanians who feel that judicial reform is being implemented correctly and will have a positive impact on the development of Albania has decreased by 17 p.p. and 18 p.p. respectively.

In 2016, Albania embarked on a transformative reform of its justice system aiming to overhaul widespread corruption and political influence in order to (re)build public trust in the judiciary. This complex reform package, has consisted, among other measures, of the vetting of judges and prosecutors, the creation of new institutions such as the Special Prosecution's Office Against Corruption and Organised Crime (SPAK). The progress of the implementation of justice reform, in particular the vetting procedure, has been recognised by the EU.¹³ Yet, the EU and the US have urged the government and political actors in Albania to maintain and deepen the momentum for reform of the judiciary and the rule of law.

In 2020, 28.7% of the respondents believed that judicial reform is being implemented correctly, while 53.3% of respondents indicated that they perceive that reform is not implemented correctly. Yet, the majority of respondents (52.8%) do believe that justice reform will have a positive impact on the development of Albania. Only 31% said it will not have a positive impact on Albania and 16.2% did not know.

Figure 6: Perceived impact and implementation of the justice reform 2020

Implementation of justice reform



Positive impact of justice reform



● Yes
 ● No
 ● I do not know

Base: Implementation of justice reform (N=2494); Impact of reform (N=2493)

Differences across gender, education, employment status, income, and geographic representation were not substantial. Female respondents were equally likely to indicate that they think justice reform is being implemented correctly (28%) and has a positive impact on the development of Albania (52%) as men (29% and 54% respectively). Respondents in the age group '36 to 45 years old' were less likely to perceive that judicial reform is implemented correctly (49%) or that the reform will have a positive impact (25%). On the other hand, respondents in the age group '46 to 55 years old' were more likely to perceive

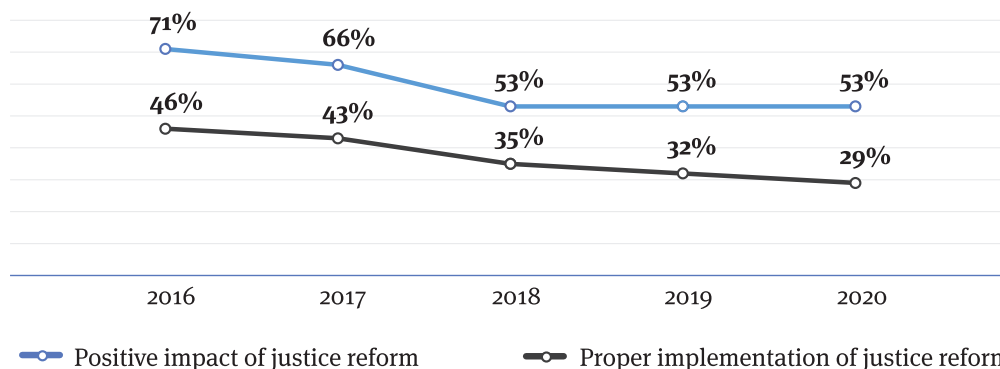
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13 European Commission (2019), 'Albania 2019 Report'. Available at <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-albania-report.pdf>.

that the reforms are being implemented correctly (56%) or that they will have a positive impact (33%). Respondents that indicated they belong to a minority group were less likely to perceive justice reform as being implemented correctly (20%), while respondents with a self-reported disability were more likely to report that they believe the reforms will have a positive impact on the development of Albania (62%). For a full socio-demographic breakdown of the responses on justice reforms, see Table 7 at the end of this chapter.

Compared to 2019, the perception that judicial reform is being implemented properly has decreased by 3 p.p., while the perceived impact on the positive development in Albania has remained the same. Yet, when looking back at public perceptions at the start of the reforms in 2016, we can see that the perception of proper implementation has decreased by 17 p.p. from 46% in 2016 to 29% in 2020. Similarly, between 2016 and 2020 the proportion of respondents that believed the justice reforms would have a positive impact decreased by 18 p.p. from 71% to 53%.

Figure 7: ‘Positive impact’ or ‘proper implementation’ of justice reform, % yes 2016–2020



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

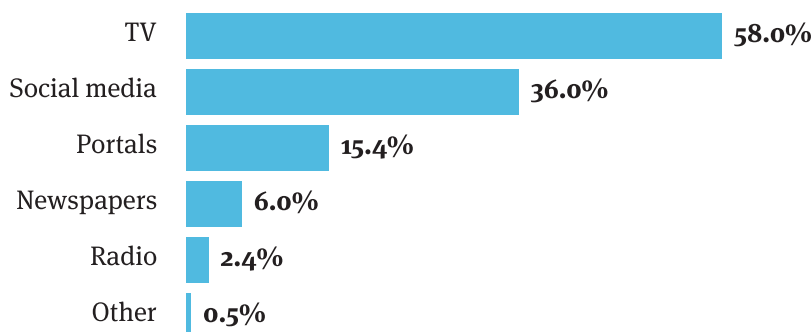
*Note: Since 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

Media use

Although social media (36%) and portals (15%) are becoming more popular as the primary source for news on current affairs for the Albanian population, television (58%) remains the most popular media outlet, particularly among people residing in rural areas (65%). Compared to previous years, social media is becoming more popular among older generations, even those aged over 65 years old. Social media is particularly popular among people with an income over 70,001 ALL (48%).

The majority of the Opinion Poll 2020 respondents (58%) reported using television as their main information outlet to get news about current affairs, followed by social media (36%), portals (15.4%), newspapers (6%) and radio (2.4%). A further 0.5% of the respondents indicated that they use a different information source for news about current affairs, including “what my children tell me”, “I receive that information through friends”, “I receive that information through acquaintances/people I know”, or “I don’t watch [current affairs]”.

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



Base: N = 2491

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

As for differences across age, education, employment status, and disability: women (60%) used television as their primary source of information more often than men (57%), while men used social media (38%) as their primary source more often than women (35%). Respondents with an income of more than 70,001 ALL were more likely to use social media as their primary source of information on current affairs (48%), while respondents residing in rural areas (65%) and respondents belonging to a minority group (64%) were more likely to indicate that TV is their primary source of information on current affairs. For a

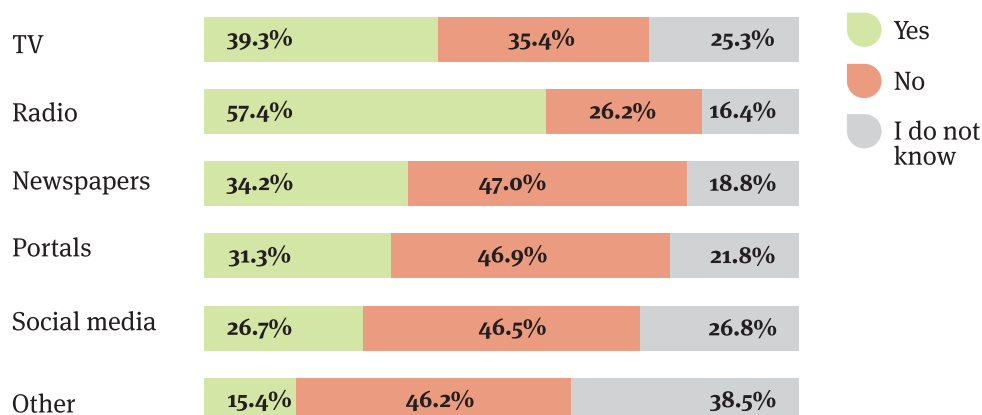
full breakdown of the data based on demographics, see Table 8 at the end of this chapter.

Although television remains the most popular medium to receive information about current affairs among respondents, it has witnessed a decline compared with 2017 when 70% of respondents stated that television was their most-used medium. Data from the 2020 Opinion Poll also shows that the use of social media as a primary source of information is increasing, from 18% in 2017, 22% in 2018, 25% in 2019, to 36% in 2020. This year, for the first time, even older generations noted social media as their primary source of information on current affairs: 40% of respondents between 56 and 65 years old and 38% of respondents in the age group '66 and over' indicated that social media is their primary source of information on current affairs. Also, the usage of portals has increased from 7% in 2018 to 15% in 2020.

Accuracy of media

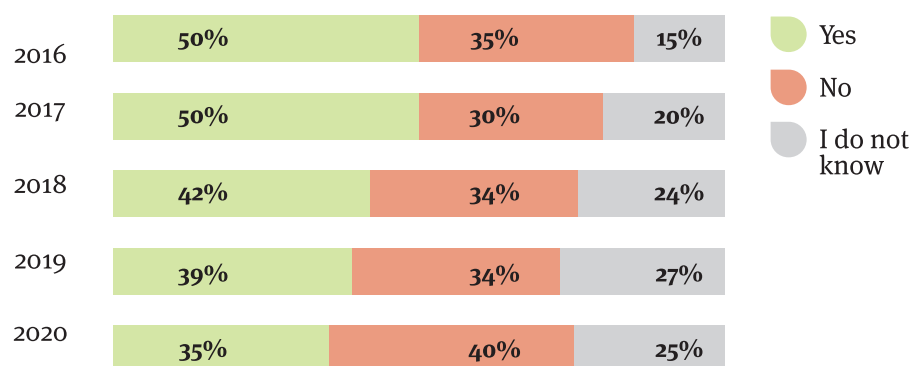
One in three Albanian citizens believed that the information provided by Albanian media is accurate/true, a decrease of 15 p.p. compared to 2016. Albanians using radio (57.4%) or television (39.3%) as their primary source of information for news on current affairs are most likely to believe the information provided by Albanian media is accurate and/or true.

35.1% of the respondents believed that the information provided by Albanian media is accurate and/or true. 40.4% indicated that they do not believe the information provided is accurate/true and 24.5% were not sure. Respondents who reported social media as their most-used outlet for news on current affairs were most sceptical about the accuracy of information provided by Albanian media, with only 26.7% of the respondents indicating that the information provided is accurate/true. Respondents that use the radio, on the other hand, more often indicated that the information provided by Albanian media is accurate and/or true (57.4%), followed by those that use television as their primary source for news on current affairs (39.3%).

Figure 9: Perception of media accuracy according to most-used media outlet 2020

Base: N = 2491

Compared to previous years, the proportion of respondents that perceived the information provided by Albanian media is accurate and/or true has decreased by 15 p.p., from 50% in 2016 and 2017 to 35% in 2020.

Figure 10: Accuracy of media 2016–2020

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

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

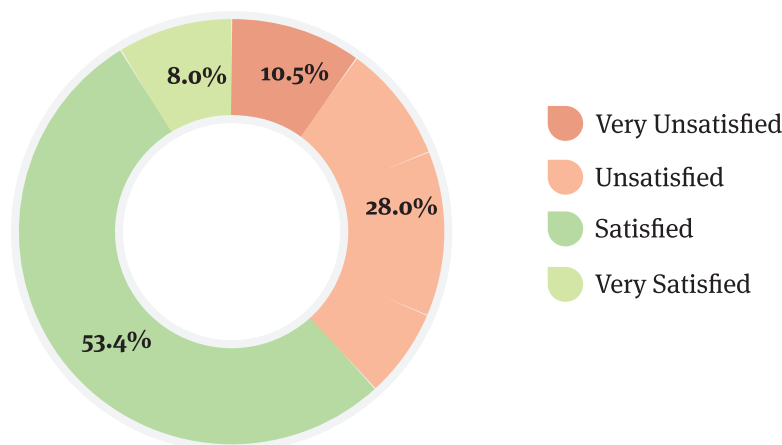
Support for foreign donors

The majority of the Albanian population was satisfied (53.4%) or very satisfied (8%) with the impact of foreign assistance in Albania.

The majority of the respondents (61.4%) were satisfied with the impact of foreign assistance (donors) in Albania: 8% were very satisfied and 53.4% satisfied with the impact of foreign donors.

No substantial differences were found across gender, income, or geographical representation. Female respondents (61%) and male respondents (62%) were equally likely to report that they were satisfied with foreign donor assistance in Albania. Older age groups such as respondents '56 to 65 years old' and '66 and over' were more likely to be satisfied or very satisfied with the impact of foreign donor assistance in Albania. Retired respondents (65.3%) and respondents working in the public sector (65%) were more likely to be satisfied with the impact of foreign donor assistance, while students (56.3%) were less likely to be satisfied or very satisfied with foreign donor assistance. Respondents that reported being a member of a minority group (57%) or respondents indicating that they have a disability (58%) reported less frequently that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the impact of foreign donor assistance in Albania.

Figure 11: Satisfaction with foreign donor assistance



Base: N = 2466

Respondents that indicated that they believe that international organisations hold the government to account were more likely to be satisfied or very satisfied with the support of foreign donors in Albania (see section 4.2 “Transparency and Accountability”, the question “Do international organisations hold the government to account?”). 65.8% of the respondents that believe international organisations hold the Albanian government to account were satisfied or very satisfied with impact of foreign assistance (donors) in Albania, while only 49.5% of the respondents that do not believe international organisation hold the government to account are satisfied or very satisfied with the impact of foreign donors.

Table 6: Demographic breakdown of trust ('I have great trust' and 'Generally, I trust')

	Central Gov.	Local Gov.	President	Parliament	Prosecution	Courts	Police	Army	Political Parties	Health	Education	Media	Religious inst.	CSOs	EU	UN	NATO
TOTAL (% Trust)	36%	42%	24%	24%	24%	24%	43%	54%	20%	45%	54%	45%	70%	53%	75%	76%	76%
Gender																	
Male	35%	41%	24%	24%	24%	24%	43%	54%	20%	46%	54%	47%	70%	52%	75%	77%	77%
Female	38%	42%	24%	25%	25%	24%	44%	54%	21%	44%	54%	44%	70%	53%	75%	75%	75%
Age																	
18–25	35%	43%	23%	21%	25%	23%	43%	57%	19%	46%	58%	45%	68%	53%	74%	75%	76%
26–35	37%	41%	25%	24%	25%	23%	41%	52%	20%	44%	53%	42%	67%	50%	73%	75%	75%
36–45	33%	38%	23%	22%	23%	23%	40%	51%	17%	40%	50%	44%	71%	53%	74%	74%	74%
46–55	40%	46%	25%	30%	26%	28%	49%	59%	24%	50%	58%	48%	72%	55%	78%	80%	79%
56–65	36%	43%	21%	22%	21%	21%	44%	53%	20%	45%	51%	47%	72%	52%	76%	77%	78%
66 and over	39%	40%	28%	28%	27%	27%	46%	57%	27%	44%	57%	52%	75%	55%	78%	79%	76%
Educational attainment																	
Up to lower secondary*	36%	41%	21%	26%	25%	26%	44%	56%	20%	45%	55%	46%	73%	52%	78%	79%	77%
High school	35%	41%	25%	24%	24%	24%	42%	52%	20%	44%	53%	45%	68%	52%	73%	74%	75%
University	38%	44%	24%	24%	24%	23%	43%	56%	21%	46%	55%	45%	70%	54%	76%	77%	76%
Employment status																	
Total	35%	40%	24%	23%	23%	22%	41%	53%	20%	45%	53%	45%	70%	52%	74%	77%	76%
Employed	38%	43%	22%	22%	21%	18%	43%	54%	24%	45%	53%	45%	72%	53%	75%	78%	78%
Private	34%	39%	25%	23%	23%	24%	40%	52%	19%	45%	54%	46%	69%	52%	74%	75%	75%
Unemployed	38%	43%	21%	26%	26%	26%	45%	55%	19%	43%	56%	43%	69%	51%	51%	76%	77%
Student	35%	44%	27%	21%	27%	23%	46%	59%	19%	46%	53%	45%	70%	54%	54%	76%	72%
Retired	39%	43%	26%	26%	26%	25%	48%	56%	23%	44%	56%	51%	73%	56%	56%	78%	77%
Geographic representation																	
Urban	35%	41%	22%	23%	24%	24%	42%	54%	19%	44%	54%	45%	69%	51%	75%	77%	76%
Rural	40%	44%	28%	26%	24%	24%	45%	54%	24%	46%	54%	47%	72%	56%	75%	75%	75%
Income																	
No income	37%	44%	22%	26%	26%	25%	45%	56%	19%	44%	55%	44%	70%	52%	77%	76%	75%
Up to 24,000 ALL	35%	40%	24%	22%	24%	23%	42%	53%	18%	42%	50%	47%	70%	53%	75%	75%	76%
24,001–50,000 ALL	35%	41%	25%	24%	23%	23%	42%	52%	22%	46%	54%	46%	69%	50%	73%	75%	77%
50,001–70,000 ALL	38%	41%	23%	24%	23%	24%	41%	59%	22%	48%	58%	43%	73%	57%	77%	79%	77%
Over 70,001 ALL	34%	39%	23%	15%	25%	21%	41%	52%	21%	52%	56%	46%	69%	49%	70%	74%	72%

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

Note: Colours represent ≥5 p.p. difference with total responses.

Table 7: Demographic breakdown of justice reform

	Positive impact of justice reform (% yes)	Proper implementation of justice reform (% yes)	
Total			
	53%Gender	29%	
Female	54%	29%	
Male	52%	28%	
Age			
18 - 25 years old	55%	32%	
26 - 35 years old	52%	28%	
36 - 45 years old	49%	25%	
46 - 55 years old	56%	33%	
56 - 65 years old	51%	25%	
66 and over	55%	30%	
Education			
Up to lower secondary	53%	30%	
High school	51%	29%	
University degree	55%	28%	
Employment			
Employed	Total	54%	28%
	Public	55%	26%
	Private	29%	29%
Unemployed	51%	29%	
Student	52%	31%	
Retired	53%	29%	
Income			
No income	52%	30%	
Up to 24,000 ALL	53%	29%	
24,001 – 50,000 ALL	54%	28%	
50,001 – 70,000 ALL	55%	31%	
Over 70,001 ALL	49%	28%	
Geographic representation			
Urban	53%	28%	
Rural	53%	32%	

* 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).

Note: Colours represent ≥ 5 p.p. difference with total responses.

Table 8: Demographic breakdown of media

		Media outlet mostly used				
		TV	Radio	Newspapers	Portals	Social media
Total		58%	2%	6%	15%	36%
Gender						
Female		57%	3%	6%	16%	38%
Male		60%	2%	6%	15%	35%
Age						
18 - 25 years old		61%	2%	4%	16%	34%
26 - 35 years old		58%	3%	6%	17%	39%
36 - 45 years old		60%	3%	8%	13%	32%
46 - 55 years old		57%	2%	6%	18%	36%
56 - 65 years old		58%	2%	5%	13%	40%
66 and over		55%	3%	7%	15%	38%
Education						
Up to lower secondary*		55%	2%	5%	15%	36%
High school		61%	2%	6%	15%	36%
University degree		57%	3%	7%	17%	38%
Employment						
Employed	Total	59%	3%	7%	15%	37%
	Public	55%	3%	9%	18%	38%
	Private	60%	3%	6%	14%	37%
Unemployed		59%	2%	5%	16%	34%
Student		62%	2%	4%	16%	37%
Retired		56%	3%	7%	15%	37%
Income						
No income		60%	2%	4%	15%	35%
Up to 24,000 ALL		55%	3%	6%	17%	34%
24,001 – 50,000 ALL		60%	3%	7%	14%	37%
50,001 – 70,000 ALL		58%	2%	6%	16%	37%
Over 70,001 ALL		56%	5%	5%	12%	48%
Geographic representation						
Urban		56%	3%	6%	16%	37%
Rural		65%	2%	7%	13%	33%

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

Note: Colours represent ≥ 5 p.p. difference with total response.

4.2 Transparency and accountability

Transparency and accountability of public administration are central to the theory and practice of good governance and considered essential elements of a properly functioning democratic system. Both transparency and accountability 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'.¹⁴

The main assumption underlying the concept of transparency is a government that operates in an open manner. This entails, *inter alia*, a government being transparent about how it operates, about its activities and expenditures, and about its operations and the decisions it takes. A key element of transparency is the right of access to information held by public authorities. However, transparency also includes other elements, such as ensuring that meetings of public decision-making bodies are accessible to the public.¹⁵

Accountability 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 via answerability can be made effective in obtaining accountability. Accountability can be vertical – owed directly to the public – or horizontal, delivered through mechanisms that operate between public institutions.¹⁶

Transparency

The majority of Albanians surveyed perceived the central government (64.3%) and municipality (62.2%) as not transparent. Particularly people with an income over 70 001 ALL indicated not to agree with the statement 'the central government/municipality is transparent': of that demographic only 32% agreed with the statements.

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- 14 United Nations. (2019). Sustainable Development Goals. Available at <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/peace-justice/>
- 15 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). Retrieved at http://www.law-democracy.org/live/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Transparency-and-Accountability.final_Mar14.pdf
- 16 Ibid.

The majority of the respondents does not agree (62.2%) that the municipality is transparent. Only 6.4% of the respondents indicates that they fully agree with the statement ‘The municipality is transparent’, while 36.8% generally agreed or fully agreed. Similarly, 64.3% of the respondents does not believe the central government is transparent, while 34.6% does believe the central government is transparent: 28.2% agrees with the statement and 6.4% said that they fully agree.

Figure 12: Perceived transparency of central and local government 2020

The municipality is transparent



The central government is transparent



Base: For central government (N=2495), for local government (N=2494)

When checking across demographics, no substantial differences were found for gender, education, employment sector, geographical representation, disability, or whether a respondent belongs to a minority group or not. Female respondents were equally likely to perceive the central government (35%) and municipality (37%) are transparent as male respondents (35% and 36% respectively). Respondents in the age group 36 to 45 years old (32%) with an income of over 70 001 ALL (32%) were less likely to indicate that the municipality is transparent. Respondents that are a member of a political party (43%) are more likely to perceive that the municipality is transparent than respondents that indicate they are not a member of a political party (36%).

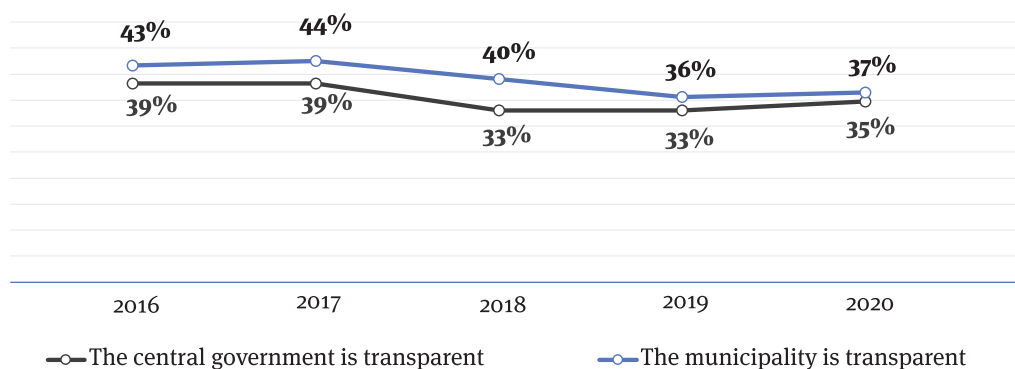
Respondents with an income of 50 001 to 70 001 ALL (40%) or respondents in the age group 46 to 55 years old (39%) were more likely to indicate that they perceive the central government as transparent, while respondents with an income of over 70 001 ALL (28%) were less likely to indicate that they perceive the central government as transparent. For more information on the demographic breakdown of the answers, see Table 10 at the end of this chapter.

Transparency over the years

Compared to 2019, the perceived transparency of the local and central government has increased with 1 p.p. and 2 p.p. respectively. Yet, when looking at the long-term trend, the perception on the government's transparency, both local and central, has decreased.

Compared to 2019, the perceived transparency of the local and central government has increased with 1 p.p. and 2 p.p. respectively. Looking back at the perceived transparency of the central and local government over the years, a small decrease is visible. Whereas in 2016 43% of the respondents indicated that the central government was transparent, only 37% says the same in 2020 (-6 p.p.). Similarly, in 2016 39% of the respondents perceived the local government as transparent, while in 2020 this was 35%.

Figure 13: Change in perceived institutional transparency 2016-2020



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

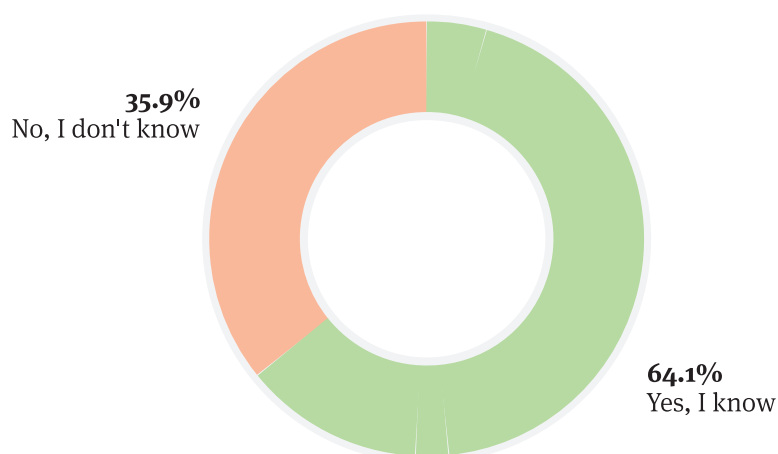
*Note: Since 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

Exercising the right to information

The majority of the Albanian population polled (64.1%) were aware that the right to information is guaranteed by law. Albanians over 65 years old or with an income of 50 001 – 70 000 ALL were more likely to be aware that the right to information is guaranteed by law (both 70%).

One of the key elements to ensuring transparency is access to information that lies with public authorities, now regulated by Law no. 119/2014 “On the Right to Information”. The law on the right to information provides that everyone has the right to access public information without having to explain the reason they have requested it. The procedure requires that requests for information shall be in writing and delivered by hand, mail or email, with the correct identity of the applicant and his/her signature. The public authority, in turn, processes the request for information no later than 10 working days after the day of submission of the request (Law no. 119/2014). 64.1% of the respondents that answered this question said that they are aware that the right to information is guaranteed by law in Albania, while 35.9% responded that they were not aware.

Figure 14: Public awareness of right to information Law 2020



Base: N = 2237

No substantial differences were found across gender, education, employment sector, geographical representation, or whether a respondent has a disability or not. Female (64%) and male (65%) respondents were equally likely to be aware that the right for information is guaranteed by law. Respondents in the age group 66 and over (70%), students (69%), retired respondents (70%), respondents with an income between 50 001 ALL and 70 000 ALL (70%), or respondents belonging to a minority group (70%) were more likely to indicate that they are aware of the right to access information, while respondents in the age group 36 to 45 years old were less likely (59%) to indicate that they are aware of the law on the right to information. Respondents living in small (56%) or medium-sized (59%) municipalities were less likely to indicate that they are aware of the right to access information than respondents living in large municipalities (68%).

Compared to last year, the proportion of respondents that was aware has decreased, as 66.7% of the 2019 Opinion Poll respondents were aware that the right to information is guaranteed by law in Albania. In 2018 and 2017, 60% of the respondents were aware that the law guarantees the right to information, while in 2016 this was 57%.

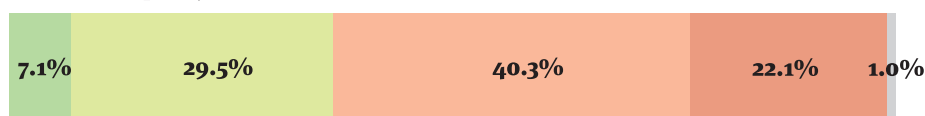
Accountability

The majority of the Albanian population did not perceive local or central government structures as accountable. Only 36.6% of Albanians perceived the municipality as accountable and 34.5% indicated that they perceive the central government as accountable. People with an income over 70 001 ALL were less likely to perceive central and local government as accountable (28% and 32% respectively).

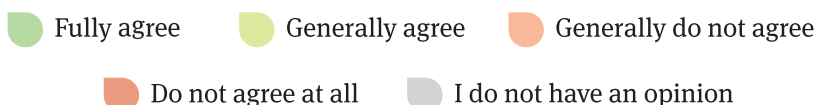
The majority of respondents does not perceive the municipality or central government as accountable. 62.4% of the 2020 Opinion Poll respondents indicate that they do not perceive the municipality is accountable (40.3%) or not accountable at all (22.1%). Similarly, 64.3% of the respondents indicate that they do not perceive the central government as accountable: 41.3% generally does not agree with the statement ‘The central government is accountable’, while 23% did not agree at all.

Figure 15: Perceived accountability of central and local government 2020

The municipality is accountable



The central government is accountable



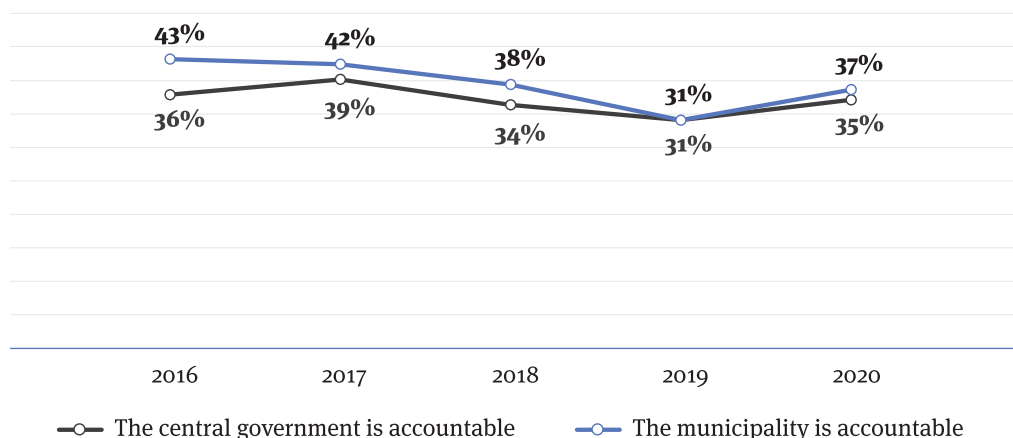
Base: For central government (N=2495); For local government (N=2489).

When looking at the differences across demographics, no substantial differences were found for gender, education, employment status, geographical representation, or whether a respondent has a disability or not. 35% of the female respondents perceived the central government as accountable, compared to 34% of male respondents. Respondents with an income of more than 70 001 ALL were less likely to indicate that they perceive the central government (32%) or the municipality (28%) as accountable. Respondents indicating that they belong to a minority group are less likely to report they perceive the municipality (32%) and the central government (32%) as accountable. Furthermore, respondents residing in small (40%) municipalities were more likely to indicate that they perceive the local government as accountable than respondents residing in medium-sized (37%) or large municipalities (36%). For the entire demographic breakdown, see Table 10 at the end of this chapter.

Perception of accountability of central and local government 2016–2020

Compared to 2019, the proportion of Albanian citizens that perceived local government as accountable increased by 6 p.p. to 37% and for central government by 4 p.p. to 35%. However, when looking at the ratings over the past five years, a decline compared to 2016 remains visible.

Compared to the 2019 Opinion Poll results, the proportion of respondents that perceives the local and central government as accountable has increased. For local government, the proportion of respondents that perceives the municipality as accountable has increased with 6 p.p. to 37%. Similarly, the proportion of respondents that perceives the central government as accountable has increased with 4 p.p. to 35%. When looking back further to the perceptions on accountability since 2016, a small decline in remains visible. In 2016, 43% of respondents perceived local governments as accountable, 6 p.p. more than in 2020. The perceived accountability of central government declined 1 p.p. in the same timeframe, from 36% in 2016 to 35% in 2020.

Figure 16: Change in perceived accountability 2016–2020

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

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

Horizontal and vertical accountability

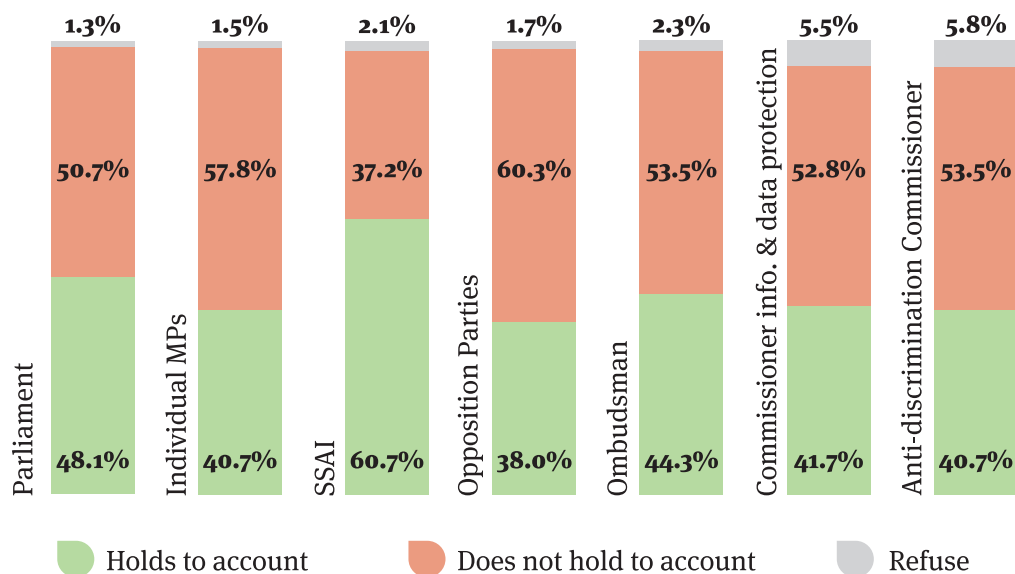
The Albanian population surveyed tended to believe that the most effective accountability mechanism is the Albanian Supreme State Audit Institution (60.7%), followed by the media (52.8%), parliament (48.1%), civil society (44.8%), and the Ombudsman (44.3%). 40.7% believe that an individual MP can hold the government to account. On the whole, the Albanian population believed that international organisations hold the government to account better than the domestic organisations listed.

Accountability can be classified according to the type of accountability exercised and/or the person, group or institution that the public official answers to, and these can be further grouped under two main forms: horizontal accountability and vertical accountability. Horizontal accountability concerns the capacity of state institutions (such as the legislature and the judiciary) to oversee government policy by demanding information, scrutinising officials and punishing improper behaviour. On the other hand, vertical accountability is the means by which citizens, mass media, and civil society seek to enforce standards of good performance on government officials.

The Supreme State Audit Institution (SSAI) continues to be perceived as the institution with the greatest role in holding the government to account (60.7%), followed by parliament

(48.1%), the Ombudsman (44.3%), the Commissioner on the Right to Information and Data Protection (41.7%), the Anti-Discrimination commissioner (40.7%), and individual MPs (40.7%). Only 38% of the respondents perceive that opposition parties can hold the government to account.

Figure 17: Perceived effectiveness of horizontal accountability mechanisms 2020



Base: Parliament (N=2497); MPs (N=2492); SSAI (N=2495); opp. parties (N=2492); Ombudsman (N=2488); Commissioner on the Right to Information (N=2487); Anti-Discrimination Commissioner (N=2489).

When checking the perception of horizontal accountability across demographics, no substantial difference was found for gender, education, or employment sector. Female respondents indicated less often that parliament (47%) and the Commissioner on the Right to Information and Data Protection (41%) hold the government to account. Respondents in the age group 66 and over (54%) and respondents residing in rural areas (55%) were more likely to perceive that the parliament can hold the government to account, while students (43%) and respondents with an income over 70 001 (39%) perceive less often that parliament can hold the government to account.

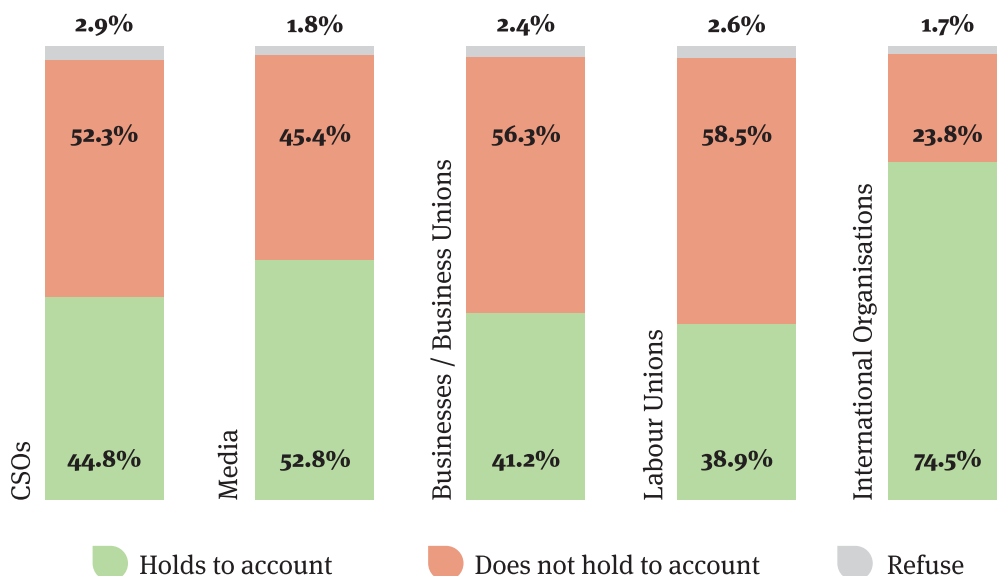
Students (46%) or respondents in the age group 56 – 65 years old (46%) were more likely to perceive that individual MPs can hold the government to account, while respondents in the age group 36 to 45 were less likely (34%) to perceive that individual MPs can hold the government to account. Respondents in the age group 66 and over (67%) and retired

respondents (67%) were more likely to perceive that the SSAI can hold the government to account, whereas students were less likely to perceive this (55%).

Furthermore, respondents with an income over 70 001 perceive less often that the Ombudsman (39%) can hold the government to account. Respondents in the age group 46 to 55 years old perceived more often that the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner (46%) can hold the government to account. Respondents that indicate they have a disability were more likely to perceive that parliament (52%), individual MPs (48%), and opposition parties (43%) hold the government to account, while respondents with a disability are less likely to perceive that the Ombudsman holds the government to account (40%). Respondents belonging to a minority group indicate more often that individual MPs (46%), opposition parties (48%), and the Commissioner on the Right to Information and Data Protection (52%) hold the government to account. For all findings across demographics, see Table 11 at the end of this chapter.

Regarding domestic vertical accountability mechanisms, the media was perceived as having the greatest role in holding the government accountable (52.8%), followed by civil society (44.8%), businesses / business unions (41.2%) and labour unions (38.9%). Approximately three quarters of respondents (74.5%) believed that international organisations hold the government to account.

Figure 18: Perceived effectiveness of vertical accountability mechanisms 2020



Base: CSOs (N=2491); Media (N=2491); Businesses / Business Unions (N=2492); Labour Unions (N=2491); Intl. Organisations (N=2494).

When checking across demographics, no substantial differences were recorded for gender, age, education, or employment sector. Female respondents indicated less often that CSOs (44%) and labour unions (38%) hold the government to account. Respondents with an income over 70 001 ALL were less likely to believe that civil society can hold the government to account (38%) or that international organisations hold the government to account (70%). Students were less likely to believe that the media (48%) can hold the government to account. Respondents residing in rural areas were more likely to perceive that businesses/business unions (47%) or labour unions (44%) can hold the government to account. Respondents that have a disability are more likely to perceive the media (60%) holds the government to account. Similarly, respondents belonging to a minority group were more likely to perceive that media (60%) and international organisation (79%) hold the government to account. For the full demographic breakdown of the responses, see Table 11 at the end of the chapter.

Compared to 2019, respondents answered less often that there are mechanisms that hold the government to account. For eight of the twelve institutions included in the question ‘Does this institution hold the government to account?’, the proportion of respondents that said “yes” has decreased. Particularly the parliament (-6 p.p.), media (-5 p.p.), international organisations (-4 p.p.), and opposition parties (-4 p.p.) were seen less often as holding the government to account. On the other hand, the Commissioner on the Right to Information and Data Protection (+3 p.p.) and businesses/ Business Unions (+2 p.p.) were perceived more often as being able to hold the government to account.

Looking at long-term trends, the Supreme State Audit Institution and the media are considered the two most effective domestic institutions to hold the government to account. Since international organisations have been included in 2019, these are accounted as being rated most often as being able to hold the government to account. Over the years, opposition parties, the Ombudsman, and the media are seen as less and less effective in holding the government to account. Since 2016, the proportion of respondents answering “yes” has decreased with 13 p.p., 10 p.p. and 9 p.p. respectively.

Table 9: Perceived effectiveness of accountability mechanisms 2016–2020

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Parliament	51%	63%	54%	54%	48%
Individual MPs	X	X	X	44%	41%
SSAI	63%	67%	61%	64%	61%
Opposition Parties	51%	54%	43%	42%	38%
Ombudsman	54%	55%	59%	44%	44%
Commissioner on the right to information and data protection	X	X	X	39%	42%
Anti-discrimination Commissioner	46%	45%	44%	41%	41%
Civil Society Organisations	46%	51%	49%	48%	45%
Media	62%	65%	58%	58%	53%
Businesses / Business Unions	43%	44%	40%	39%	41%
Labour Unions	39%	46%	42%	41%	39%
International Organisations	X	X	X	79%	75%

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

Table 10: Demographic breakdown for transparency and accountability

	The central government is transparent	My municipality is transparent	The central government is accountable	My municipality is accountable
Total	35%	37%	35%	37%
Gender				
Female	35%	36%	34%	36%
Male	35%	37%	35%	37%
Age				
18–25 years old	32%	36%	32%	37%
26–35 years old	35%	37%	35%	36%
36–45 years old	32%	32%	33%	34%
46–55 years old	39%	40%	39%	40%
56–65 years old	35%	38%	35%	39%
66 and over	36%	39%	34%	34%
Education				
Up to lower secondary	34%	36%	34%	36%
High school	33%	35%	34%	35%
University degree	37%	39%	35%	38%
Employment				
Employed Total	34%	36%	34%	36%
Public	37%	38%	37%	40%
Private	34%	36%	34%	35%
Unemployed	35%	37%	35%	38%
Student	31%	37%	32%	38%
Retired	35%	38%	34%	34%
Income				
No income	34%	37%	35%	38%
Up to 24,000 ALL	34%	36%	33%	34%
24,001–50,000 ALL	34%	37%	34%	37%
50,001–70,000 ALL	40%	39%	38%	38%
Over 70,001 ALL	28%	32%	28%	32%
Geographic Representation				
Urban	34%	36%	34%	36%
Rural	36%	39%	36%	39%

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

Note: Colours represent >5 p.p. difference with total response.

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

	Parliament	Individual MPs	Supreme State Audit Institution	Opposition Parties	Ombudsman	Commissioner right to info. & data protection	Anti-discrimination Commissioner	Civil Society Organisations	Media	Businesses/ Business Unions	Labour Unions	International Organisations
Total (% accountable)	48%	41%	61%	38%	44%	42%	41%	45%	53%	41%	39%	75%
Gender												
Female	49%	41%	61%	38%	44%	43%	41%	46%	53%	41%	40%	75%
Male	47%	40%	61%	38%	44%	41%	40%	44%	52%	41%	38%	74%
Age												
18-25 years old	46%	42%	58%	37%	44%	41%	39%	45%	52%	40%	40%	74%
26-35 years old	47%	41%	59%	38%	45%	43%	40%	44%	51%	43%	38%	74%
36-45 years old	45%	34%	59%	36%	41%	38%	37%	44%	53%	40%	40%	76%
46-55 years old	51%	44%	64%	41%	48%	44%	46%	43%	56%	41%	37%	74%
56-65 years old	51%	46%	61%	39%	45%	44%	43%	47%	53%	43%	39%	75%
66 and over	54%	39%	67%	40%	44%	40%	42%	49%	55%	42%	43%	72%
Education												
Up to lower secondary*	47%	42%	60%	39%	41%	41%	41%	46%	52%	42%	39%	76%
High school	48%	40%	62%	38%	45%	41%	41%	45%	53%	38%	39%	74%
University degree	49%	40%	60%	37%	44%	43%	40%	44%	53%	43%	39%	75%

	Parliament	Individual MPs	Supreme State Audit Institution	Opposition Parties	Ombudsman	Commissioner right to info. & data protection	Anti-discrimination Commissioner	Civil Society Organisations	Media	Businesses/ Business Unions	Labour Unions	International Organisations
Total (% accountable)	48%	41%	61%	38%	44%	42%	41%	45%	53%	41%	39%	75%
Employment												
Total	48%	39%	60%	37%	45%	41%	41%	45%	53%	42%	39%	75%
Employed	53%	40%	60%	36%	44%	42%	44%	43%	56%	41%	39%	74%
Private	46%	39%	61%	37%	44%	41%	40%	46%	52%	42%	38%	75%
Unemployed	46%	43%	59%	38%	42%	41%	37%	43%	53%	41%	37%	74%
Student	43%	46%	55%	40%	47%	46%	42%	45%	48%	39%	43%	75%
Retired	54%	40%	67%	41%	43%	42%	43%	48%	55%	41%	41%	75%
Income												
No income	46%	44%	59%	40%	43%	43%	39%	44%	53%	40%	39%	75%
Up to 24,000 ALL	48%	40%	63%	38%	45%	40%	40%	43%	52%	42%	40%	74%
24,001–50,000 ALL	49%	39%	61%	38%	42%	42%	41%	47%	56%	42%	38%	75%
50,001–70,000 ALL	48%	40%	63%	34%	47%	41%	45%	43%	52%	44%	41%	75%
Over 70,001 ALL	39%	41%	46%	37%	39%	39%	36%	38%	49%	41%	34%	70%
Geographic representation												
Urban	45%	40%	60%	37%	44%	42%	41%	44%	52%	39%	37%	75%
Rural	55%	43%	63%	41%	45%	41%	40%	48%	55%	47%	44%	73%

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

Note: Colours represent >5 p.p. difference with total responses

4.3 Corruption in public institutions

Corruption – the abuse of public power for private gain – is classified 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.¹⁷ For several years now, the Opinion Poll has addressed questions on the extent that corruption is widespread, the level of confidence in the prosecution of corruption cases, and the most corrupt institution. Respondents have also provided information on their personal experiences – whether they have paid a bribe to local or central-level authorities, and the reason for paying a bribe and not reporting bribe requests to official authorities.

Perceptions on the Prevalence of Corruption

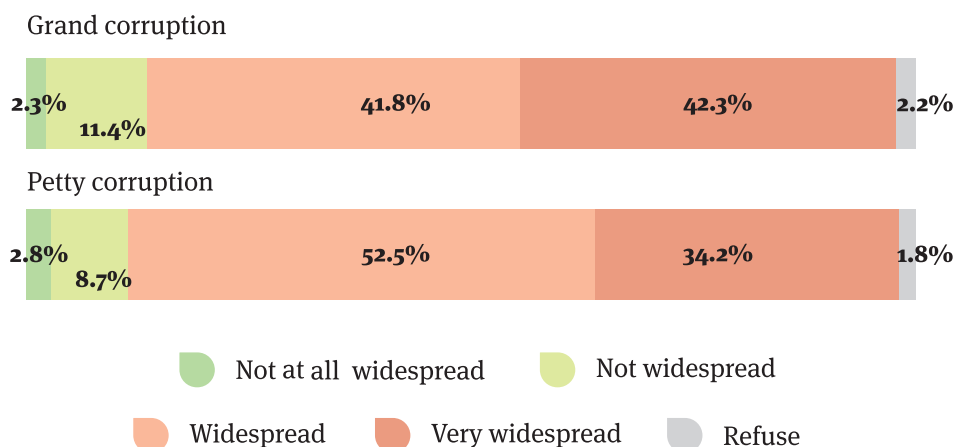
Similar to 2019, the vast majority of the Albanian population perceived corruption as ‘widespread’ or ‘very widespread’. 86.7% reported that petty corruption is (very) widespread and 84.1% reported that grand corruption is (very) widespread. Judicial institutions were ranked as the most corrupt in 2020, followed by healthcare institutions, law enforcement, and parliament.

Respondents were asked to assess the extent that corruption is widespread on a 4-point scale – from 1 (not at all widespread) to 4 (very widespread). Comparisons were drawn between petty corruption – abuse of entrusted power by public officials in their interactions with citizens – and grand corruption – abuse of high-level power that benefits the few and causes serious and widespread harm to individuals and society.

The vast majority of respondents (86.7%) reported that petty corruption is widespread (52.5%) or very widespread (34.2%). Meanwhile, 2.8% reported that petty corruption is ‘not at all widespread’ and 8.7% reported that petty corruption is ‘not widespread’. Regarding grand corruption, 84.1% reported that grand corruption is either widespread (41.8%) or very widespread (42.3%). 2.3% reported that grand corruption is ‘not at all widespread’ and 11.4% reported that grand corruption is ‘not widespread’.

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17 For the exact definitions of petty corruption and grand corruption, see Transparency International’s Corruptionary: <https://www.transparency.org/en/corruptionary>

Figure 19: Perceived prevalence of corruption 2020

Base: Petty corruption (N = 2499); grand corruption (N = 2499).

For the 2020 survey, comparisons across gender, age, education, geographical area, or belonging to a minority group did not reveal significant differences concerning the prevalence of corruption. For female and male respondents, the percentage that said grand corruption is widespread or very widespread is 84. The percentage that said petty corruption is widespread or very widespread is 86 (female) and 87 (male). 89% of public sector employees and 87% of private sector employees reported that petty corruption is widespread or very widespread.

Compared to the study of 2019, a higher percentage of those employed in the public sector reported that petty corruption is widespread or very widespread (88.5% vs. 77.7%). A similar pattern was observed for grand corruption. 84.8% of public sector employees (versus 78.2% in 2019) reported that grand corruption is widespread or very widespread. Respondents that indicate they have a disability were less likely to perceive that petty corruption is widespread or very widespread (82%).

Similar to the opinion poll of 2019, most Albanians perceive corruption as widespread or very widespread. Over time, the percentage of respondents reporting that petty corruption is 'widespread' or 'very widespread' has not changed. Specifically, 87% of respondents in the opinion poll of 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 reported that petty corruption is 'widespread' or 'very widespread', though compared to 2019 the percentage of respondents in 2020 that perceive petty corruption as very widespread decreased slightly (-3 p.p.). A decline, even though not substantial, is observed as regards the percentage of respondents reporting that grand corruption is 'widespread' or 'very widespread': in 2017 this was 88%, while in 2020 it was 84%. Table 12 presents the perceived prevalence of corruption from 2017 to 2020.

Table 12: Perceived prevalence of corruption 2017–2020

		2017	2018	2019	2020
Petty Corruption	Widespread	54 ⁰ %	53%	50%	53%
	Very widespread	33%	34%	37%	34%
Grand Corruption	Widespread	48%	48%	43%	42%
	Very widespread	40%	41%	43%	42%

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

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

Respondents were asked to share their opinion on “which was the most corrupt institution in 2020?” A significant number of respondents (569 out of 2357) indicated that justice system institutions were the most corrupt in 2020, followed by health system institutions (372 out of 2357) and law enforcement institutions (157 out of 2357). Table 13 presents the frequency and percentage of responses by institution.

Table 13: The most corrupt institution in 2020

	Frequency	Percentage
Justice system institutions	602	25.0%
Health system institutions	398	16.5%
Law enforcement institutions (police)	167	6.9%
Parliament	148	6.1%
Local government institutions	128	5.3%
Education system institutions	107	4.4%
President	76	3.2%
Political Parties	71	2.9%
Other*	281	11.7%
Total	2407	100.0%

*Other institution mentioned are the Prime Minister’s Office, the Media, the Agency for Legalisation, Urbanisation and Integration of Informal Areas and Buildings (ALUIZNI), civil society organisations, and “all public institutions are corrupt” or “they are all the same”.

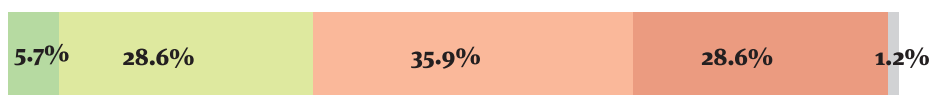
Confidence in the prosecution of corruption cases

The percentage of the Albanian population that did not have confidence in the prosecution of petty corruption has increased – from 61.1% in 2019 to 64.5% in 2020. While the percentage of the population that did not have confidence in the prosecution of grand corruption has not changed significantly, it continued to remain high. 7 in 10 Albanians do not have confidence in the prosecution of grand corruption cases.

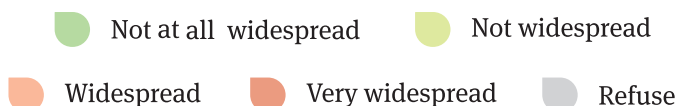
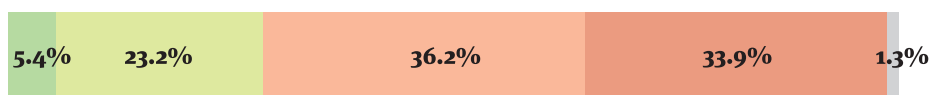
Respondents were asked to assess their level of confidence in the prosecution of corruption cases on a 4-point scale – from 1 (I have great confidence) to 4 (I do not have confidence at all). Differences were drawn between petty corruption and grand corruption. 64.5% of study participants reported that they ‘do not have confidence’ or ‘do not have confidence at all’ in the prosecution of petty corruption. Specifically, 35.9% reported that they ‘do not have confidence’ and 28.6% reported that they ‘do not have confidence at all’. 5.7% reported that they have great confidence and 28.6% reported that they have confidence in the prosecution of petty corruption.

Figure 20: Perceived prosecution of corruption cases 2020

Petty corruption



Grand corruption



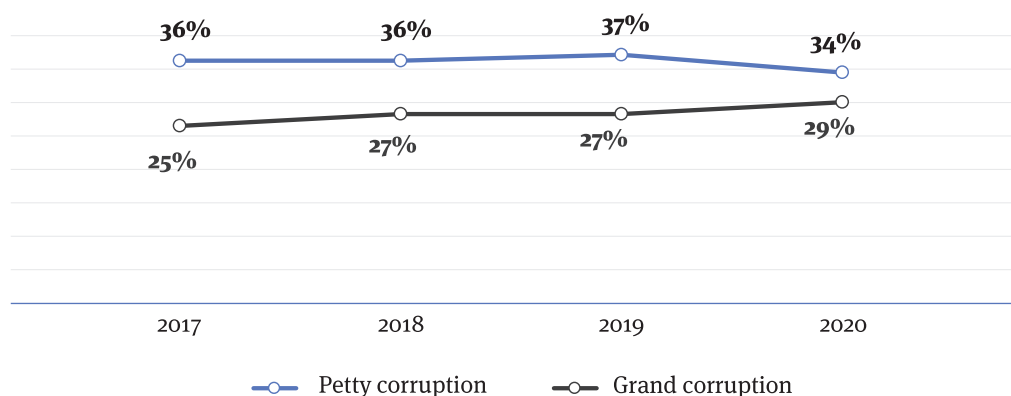
Base: Grand corruption (N=2494); Petty corruption (N=2496).

Differences across gender, education level, employment status, employment sector, geographical area, disability, or belonging to a minority group or not. Male and female respondents indicate equally often (65%) that they do not have confidence or do not have great confidence in the prosecution of petty corruption cases. For grand corruption

cases, 69% of the percentage of female respondents has (great) confidence that they will be prosecuted, while for male respondents it was 71. Respondents with higher levels of income – 70 001 ALL or more per month – were more likely to report that they ‘do not have confidence’ or ‘do not have confidence at all’ in the prosecution of petty and grand corruption (both 25%).

Every year since this question was added to the survey, the proportion of respondents who reported that they have confidence or great confidence in the prosecution of petty corruption has been higher than the confidence in the prosecution of grand corruption. However, the difference is shrinking, as the confidence in the prosecution of grand corruption is increasing overtime while the confidence in the prosecution of petty corruption cases is declining. In 2017 the confidence in petty corruption cases was 36%, while that for grand corruption was 25% - a difference of 11 p.p. In 2020, the difference is only 5 p.p.: 34% for petty corruption and 29% for grand corruption.

Figure 21: Confidence in prosecution of corruption cases 2017-2020



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

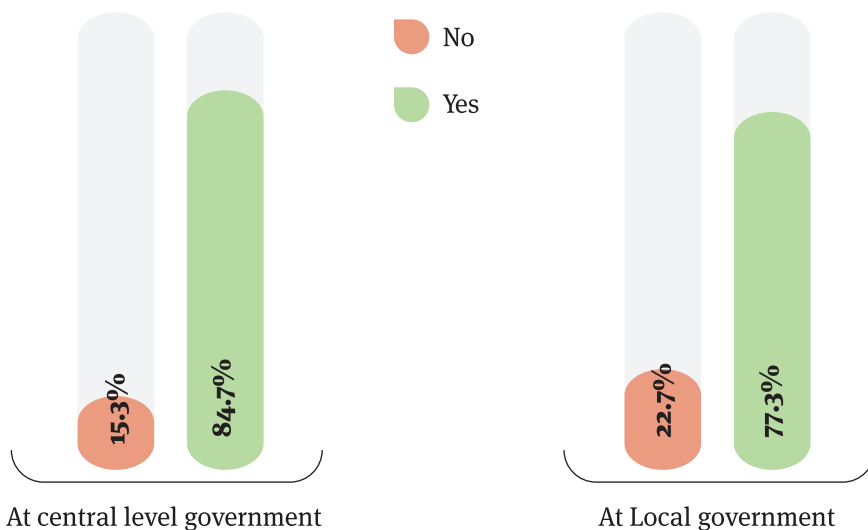
*Note: Since 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

Personal exposure to corruption cases

Personal exposure to corruption continues to remain high at both levels of the government. 15.3% of the Albanian population have witnessed cases of corruption at the central government and 22.7% have witnessed cases of corruption at the local government.

15.3% of study participants reported that they have witnessed cases of corruption at the central government; meanwhile, the percentage of study participants that have witnessed cases of corruption at the local government was 22.7%.

Figure 22: Personal exposure to corruption 2020



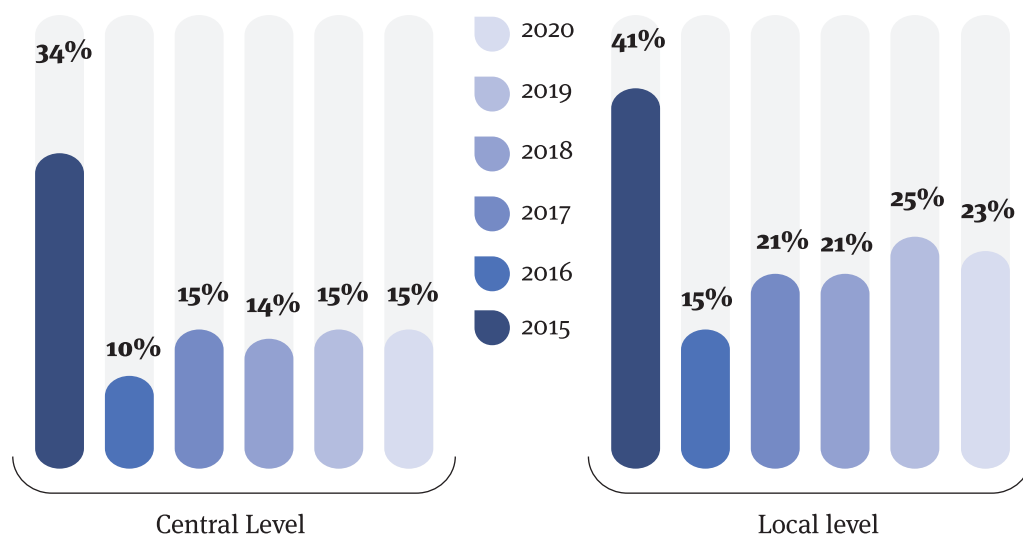
Base: Central government (N=2483); Local government (N=2483)

When checking across demographics, no substantial differences were found for employment sector, employment status, geographical representation, belonging to a minority group, or disability. 16% of male respondents and 15% of female respondents reported that they have witnessed corruption at the central level. Meanwhile, 24% of male respondents and 22% of female respondents reported that they have witnessed corruption at the local level.

Respondents in the age group '56 years old and above' were more likely to report that they have witnessed corruption at the central level (56-65: 18%, 66 and over: 18%). A similar pattern was found concerning corruption at the local level. 26% of respondents in the age group '56-65 years old' and 29% of respondents '66 and over' reported that they have witnessed corruption at the local level. For income, respondents with an income up to 24 000 ALL were more likely to have witnessed corruption at the central (18%) and the local (24%) level government. Respondents with an income of more than 70 001 ALL also reported more often to have personally witnessed corruption at the local level (28%).

Figure 23 displays changes in the personal exposure to corruption at both levels of the government over time. Data reveal similar percentages of respondents witnessing cases of corruption in 2019 and 2020.

Figure 23: Personal exposure to corruption at a central and local level 2015-2020



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

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

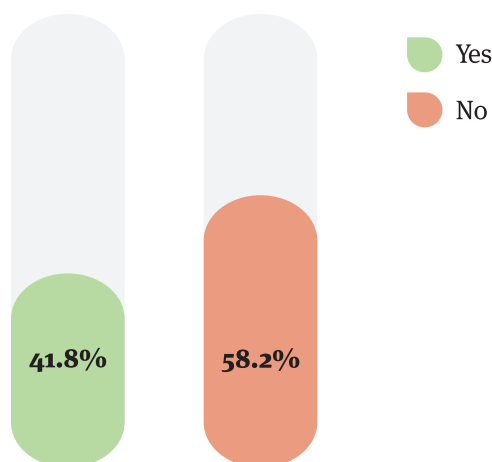
Prevalence of bribes

While the percentage of the Albanian population that received a service from the central government in 2020 increased – from 32% in 2019 to 41% in 2020 – so did the percentage of the population that reported to have paid a bribe – from 19% in 2019 to 32% in 2020. The percentage of the Albanian population that received a service from the local government in 2020 did not change significantly, compared to 2019. Meanwhile, the percentage of those who reported to have paid a bribe decreased – from 35.8% in 2019 to 32.4% in 2020.

41.8% of respondents reported that they received a service from the central government. A higher percentage reported receiving a service from the central government in 2020 than 2019 – 41.8% vs. 34.8%. 31.5% of those who received a service from the central government reported paying a bribe.

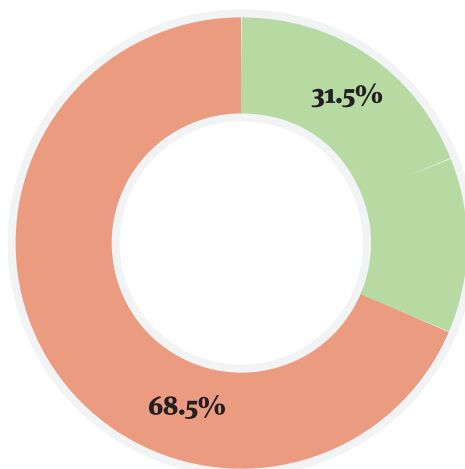
When checking across demographics, no substantial differences were found for gender, employment status, and whether the respondent has a disability or not. 31% of female respondents who received services at the central government reported that they paid a bribe. Meanwhile, the percentage for male respondents was 32. Respondents in the age group '66 and over' (42%), with up to lower secondary education (36%), and living in urban areas (32%) were more likely to report that they paid a bribe to public officials in the central government, while respondents belonging to a minority group were less likely (26%) to do so.

Figure 24: Services received at central level 2020



Base: N = 2500

Figure 25: Bribes paid 2020 at central level

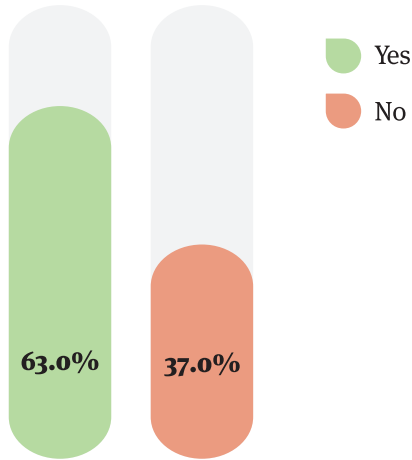


Base: N = 1046

A higher percentage, 63.0%, reported that they received a service from local government officials. 32.4% of those who received a service from the local government reported paying a bribe.

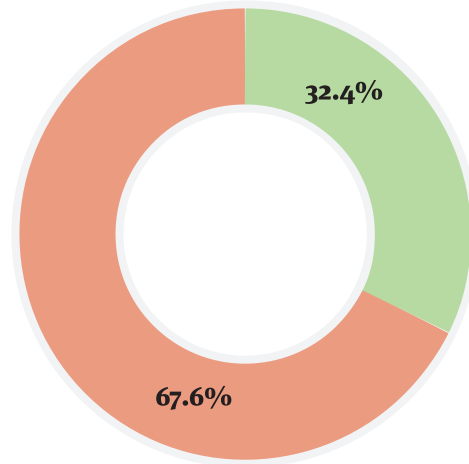
Respondents in the age group '66 and over' (39%) were more likely to report that they paid a bribe to public officials in the local government, while respondents indicating they have a disability were less likely to report that they have paid a bribe to receive a service at the local government in 2020 (25%). No substantial differences were found across other demographics such as gender, education, employment status, or whether a respondent belongs to a minority group or not.

**Figure 26: Services received
at local level 2020**



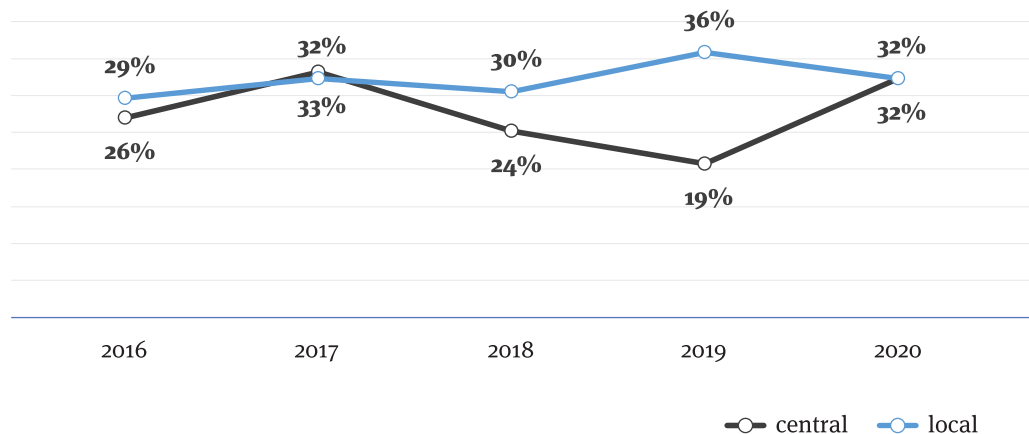
Base: N = 2500

**Figure 27: Bribes paid
at local level 2020**



Base: N = 1575

Figure 28 presents the prevalence of paying bribes over time. The comparison indicates that the prevalence of paying bribes at both levels of the government has converged, resembling the year 2017. Compared to 2019, a higher percentage reported paying a bribe to receive a service from the central government: 31.5% vs. 19.1%, while the percentage of those who reported paying a bribe to receive a service from the local government in 2020 was lower than in 2019: 32.4% vs. 35.8%. Since 2016, when this question was first included, the percentage of respondents that reported to have paid a bribe for a service they received at the central level increased with 3 p.p. and at the local level with 6 p.p.

Figure 28: Prevalence of paying bribes 2016-2020

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

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

The main reason for paying a bribe, according to the respondents, was that there was a demand for it. 46.8% of respondents that indicated to have paid a bribe reported that they were asked to pay the bribe, 25.3% reported that they paid a bribe to receive better services in the future, and 16.4% reported that they paid a bribe to express their gratitude to the service provider. Among those who selected 'other', a common response was that if they did not pay a bribe, the service would be inadequate or the service would not be provided at all.

Table 14: Reasons for paying bribes 2020

	Percentage	Number
I was asked for it	46.8%	285
As a gratitude for the received service	16.4%	100
So that I can receive better services next time	25.3%	154
Other*	11.5%	70
Total	100%	609

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

Only 30 respondents or 4.8% of those who paid a bribe said that they reported it to official authorities. The main reason for not reporting the bribe was that 'It is useless; nobody would care about it' (40.7%). Other reasons were that paying a bribe is 'a common practice' (27.7%) and 'a sign of gratitude' (9.4%). A smaller percentage, 6.7%, reported that they don't have information where to report the bribe. Around 10% of the respondents feared reprisal – if they took the initiative to report the bribe.

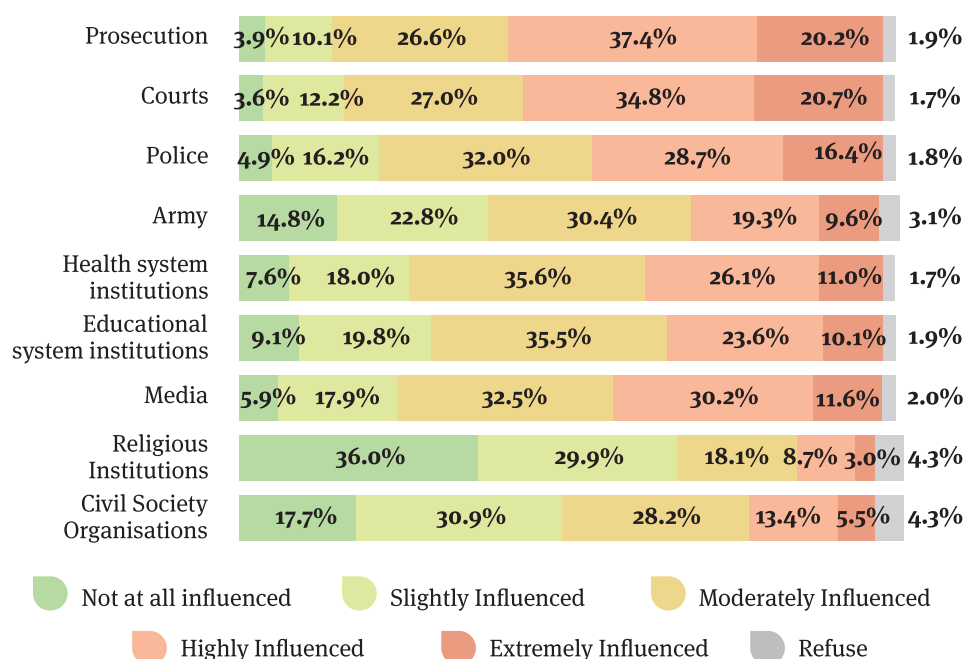
4.4 Political influence

Political influence – affecting political decisions that advance group interests – undermines the independence of public institutions and democratic decision-making, and erodes citizens’ trust in the government. For the fifth consecutive year, respondents were asked to rate on a five-point scale – from 1 (not at all influential) to 5 (extremely influenced) – how much they think political interests influence the agenda of 9 institutions – the prosecution, courts, police, army, health system institutions, educational system institutions, media, religious institutions, and civil society organisations.

Political interests in the agenda of institutions

Similar to 2019, religious institutions were perceived as the least politically influenced institution; meanwhile, the prosecution and courts were perceived as the most politically influenced institutions.

Religious institutions were perceived as the least influenced by political interests in 2020. 65.9% of study participants reported that religious institutions were either ‘not at all influenced’ (36.0%) or slightly influenced (29.9%) by political interests. After religious institutions, the institutions that were perceived as the most independent from political interests were civil society organisations (48.6%), the army (37.6%), education system institutions (28.9%), and health system institutions (25.6%).

Figure 29: Perceived influence of political interests in the agenda of institutions 2020

Base: Prosecution (N=2496); courts (N=2496); police (N=2490); army (N=2488); healthcare (N=2493); education (N=2492); media (N=2493); religious institutions (N=2489); CSOs (N=2491).

The prosecution and courts were perceived as the most politically influenced institutions. 57.6% of study participants viewed the prosecution as ‘extremely influenced’ (20.2%) or ‘highly influenced’ (37.4%) by political interests. Only 3.9% of study participants viewed the prosecution as ‘not at all influenced’ by political interests. 55.5% of study participants viewed courts as ‘extremely influenced’ (20.7%) or ‘highly influenced’ (34.8%) by political interests. Only 3.6% of study participants viewed courts as ‘not at all influenced’ by political interests.

Demographic comparison for perception of political influence on institutions

The relationship between demographics 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 is influenced by politics.

When checking across demographics, no substantial differences are found for gender or geographical representation. Female respondents were more likely to report that police (46%), the army (30%), and health system institutions (38%) are highly or extremely influenced by politics than men (44%, 28%, and 36% respectively). Respondents in the age group 26 to 35 years old were more likely to indicate that the police (51%) is ‘highly influenced’ or ‘extremely influenced’ by politics, while respondents in the age group ‘66 and over’ were less likely to report that the prosecutor (48%), courts (46%), police (37%) and education system institutions (28%) are ‘highly influenced’ or ‘extremely influenced’ by politics.

Respondents working in the public were less likely to report that any of the rated institutions is ‘highly influenced’ or ‘extremely influenced’ by politics than respondents working in the private sector. Particularly for the prosecutor (44%), courts (44%), and the police (34%), respondents working in the public sector reported substantially less often that the institutions’ agenda is influenced by politics.

Respondents with an income of up to 24 000 ALL were less likely to report that the prosecutor (50%), courts (50%), the police (39%), and the media are ‘highly influenced’ or ‘extremely influenced’ by politics. Respondents with an income of more than 70 001 ALL / month, on the other hand, were more likely to report that the agenda of the rated institutions is ‘highly influenced’ or ‘extremely influenced’ by politics. For all institutions, this group reported more often that the institution is influenced by politics.

Respondents that belong to a minority group were more likely to report that institutions are highly or extremely influenced by politics. This includes the Prosecutor (63%), education system institutions (40%), civil society organisations (24%). Respondents that have a disability were more likely to report that they perceive the media (33%) as highly or extremely influenced by politics, while they perceive courts less often (51%) as highly or extremely influenced by politics. For the findings across demographics, see also Table 16 at the end of this section.

Annual comparison of influence by political interests

Compared to 2019, a smaller percentage of Albanians viewed the courts, the media, and civil society organisations as being influenced by political interests; meanwhile, a higher percentage of Albanians viewed the healthcare system as being influenced by political interests.

The perceived influence of politics in the agenda of public institutions has remained largely the same for the nine rated institutions. Compared to 2019, the proportion of respondents that viewed courts, civil society organisations, and the media as ‘extremely influenced’ or ‘highly influenced’ by political interests has decreased with 5 p.p., 4 p.p. and 3 p.p. respectively. Meanwhile, the healthcare system and religious institutions were seen more often as highly or extremely influenced by politics (+4 p.p. and +3 p.p. respectively). The

assessments of four institutions – the prosecution, police, army, and education system – has not changed substantially from 2019 to 2020: the difference is only 1 p.p.

Table 15: Institutions perceived as ‘highly influenced’ or ‘extremely influenced’ by politics 2016–2020

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

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, see Figure 29.

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

Table 16: Demographic breakdown of highly or extremely influenced institutions 2020

	Prosecution	Courts	Police	Army	Healthcare system institutions	Educational system institutions	Media	Religious institutions	CSOs
TOTAL (% of highly or extremely)	58%	56%	45%	29%	37%	34%	42%	12%	19%
Gender									
Male	58%	55%	44%	28%	36%	33%	41%	12%	19%
Female	58%	56%	46%	30%	38%	34%	42%	12%	18%
Age									
18–25	60%	56%	47%	31%	37%	35%	38%	10%	18%
26–35	61%	60%	51%	31%	40%	36%	46%	12%	21%
36–45	54%	50%	41%	27%	34%	33%	42%	12%	17%
46–55	59%	57%	46%	28%	38%	32%	42%	12%	18%
56–65	58%	56%	42%	28%	38%	33%	39%	13%	20%
66 and over	48%	46%	37%	25%	32%	28%	38%	10%	21%
Education									
Up to lower secondary*	55%	51%	43%	26%	37%	33%	41%	14%	19%
High-school	60%	57%	45%	29%	37%	34%	40%	13%	20%
University degree	57%	56%	48%	31%	37%	34%	45%	10%	18%

	Prosecution	Courts	Police	Army	Healthcare system institutions	Educational system institutions	Media	Religious institutions	CSOs
TOTAL (% of highly or extremely)	58%	56%	45%	29%	37%	34%	42%	12%	19%
Employment									
Employed	56%	55%	45%	28%	37%	33%	42%	10%	17%
Public	44%	44%	34%	24%	30%	28%	40%	8%	16%
Private	59%	59%	47%	29%	38%	34%	43%	11%	18%
Unemployed	65%	59%	50%	32%	42%	39%	44%	16%	23%
Student	62%	58%	47%	33%	34%	35%	36%	12%	17%
Retired	49%	47%	38%	25%	33%	28%	38%	12%	21%
Income									
No income	65%	58%	49%	32%	40%	38%	44%	16%	23%
Up to 24,000 ALL	50%	50%	39%	26%	35%	30%	37%	11%	19%
24,001–50,000 ALL	56%	54%	44%	26%	36%	32%	41%	10%	18%
50,001–70,000 ALL	58%	58%	45%	30%	37%	35%	42%	9%	15%
Over 70,001 ALL	62%	63%	58%	43%	42%	50%	57%	18%	27%
Geographic representation									
Urban	56%	54%	43%	29%	37%	33%	43%	12%	20%
Rural	62%	59%	50%	30%	39%	35%	39%	12%	17%

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

Note: Colours represent >5 p.p. difference with total responses

4.5 Citizen engagement

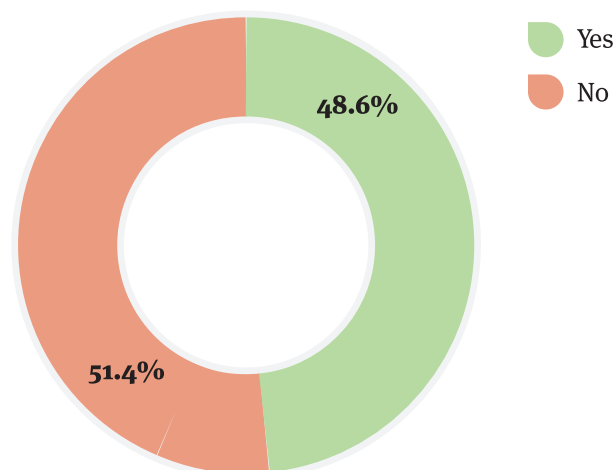
Citizen engagement in decision-making processes is the bedrock of democracy. The 2020 Opinion Poll, similar to previous years, differentiates between citizen engagement in decision-making processes at the central and local level. Questions focused on interest and opportunities to participate in decision-making processes, participation in consultation processes and meetings, and the reasons for being disengaged from decision-making. Other questions focused on engagement in voluntary work, attendance of demonstrations/rallies, and petition signing. Similar to the 2019 Opinion Poll, respondents were asked about the portal “Konsultimipublik.gov.al” – whether they have used the portal to obtain information or give their opinion on draft legislation or draft strategies/action plans. Respondents were also asked about their intentions to move from their place of residence.

Participation in decision-making

Compared to last year, a smaller percentage of the Albanian population was interested in participating in the decision-making process of public institutions: 49% in 2020 versus 57% in 2019. Albanians with a university degree (or higher), students, public sector employees, and members of political parties were more likely to report being interested in participating in the public decision-making process. Most Albanians felt that they do not have sufficient opportunities to participate in the decision-making of public institutions.

48.6% of respondents reported that they are interested to participate in the decision-making process of public institutions, a percentage smaller than in 2019 (56.5%).

Figure 30: Interested to participate in the decision-making process of public institutions 2020



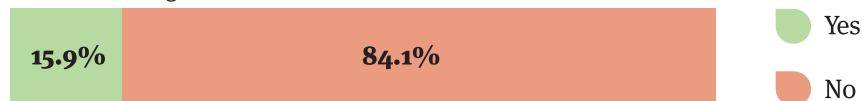
Base: N = 2498

When checking across demographics, no substantial differences were found across geographical representation or whether a respondent belongs to a minority group. A similar percentage of women (48%) and men (49%) reported that they would like to participate in the decision-making process of public institutions. Younger respondents (18-35 years old) are more likely to report that they are interested in participating in decision-making of public institutions (55%) than older respondents. Respondents with university degree or higher expressed greater interest: 60% of respondents with university-level education or higher, 47% of respondents with high school education, and 35% of respondents with up to lower secondary education reported that they would be interested to participate in the decision-making process of public institutions. Students (62%) and public sector employees (66%) were more likely to report that they are interested to participate in the decision-making process of public institutions, while respondents that indicate they have a disability were less likely (42%) to be interested in participating in the decision-making processes of public institutions. See Table 18 at the end of the chapter for more information.

71.8% of respondents reported that they do not have sufficient opportunities to participate in decision-making processes at the central government – a percentage similar to the year 2019 (70.6%). Meanwhile, a smaller percentage, 61.2%, reported that they do not have sufficient opportunities to participate in decision-making processes at the local government. In the study of 2019, 58.6% of respondents reported that they do not have sufficient opportunities to participate in decision-making processes at the local level.

Figure 31: Opportunities to participate in the decision-making of public institutions 2020

At local level government



At central level government

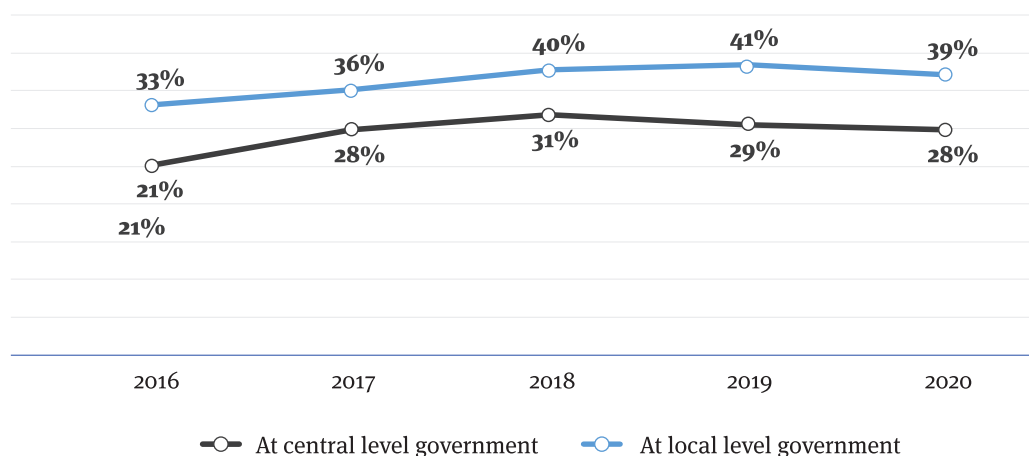


Base: For central government (N=2482); for local government (N=2491).

Similar to the study of 2019, a larger proportion of male respondents (30%) than female respondents (26%) reported that they have sufficient opportunities to participate in decision-making at the central government. A similar pattern was found at the local level: 37% of female respondents and 41% of male respondents reported that they have sufficient opportunities to participate in decision-making at the local government. Differences were also found across age groups – respondents in the age groups ‘56 to 65 years old’ and ‘66 and over’ being less likely to report that they have sufficient opportunities to participate in decision-making both at the central (19% and 16% respectively) and local level (28% and 22% respectively).

Respondents with university degree or higher were more likely to report that they have sufficient opportunities to participate in decision-making at the central (40%) and local (51%) government. Public sector employees – compared to private sector employees – were more likely to report that they have sufficient opportunities to participate in decision-making at the central (44%) and local (57%) government. Respondents that belong to a minority group (34%) or have a disability (34%) were less likely to perceive there are sufficient opportunities to participate in decision-making processes at the local level. See Table 18 at the end of the chapter for more information.

Figure 32 displays changes in the percentage of respondents who reported that they have sufficient opportunities to participate in decision-making over time. Although the proportion of respondents indicating they have sufficient opportunities to participate in the decision-making at the central and local level has increased over the years, there was a small decline notable compared to last year (1 p.p. and 2 p.p. respectively). Consistently, a higher percentage of respondents have reported that there are sufficient opportunities to participate in decision-making at the local government, compared to the central government.

Figure 32: Sufficient opportunities to participate in decision-making 2016–2020

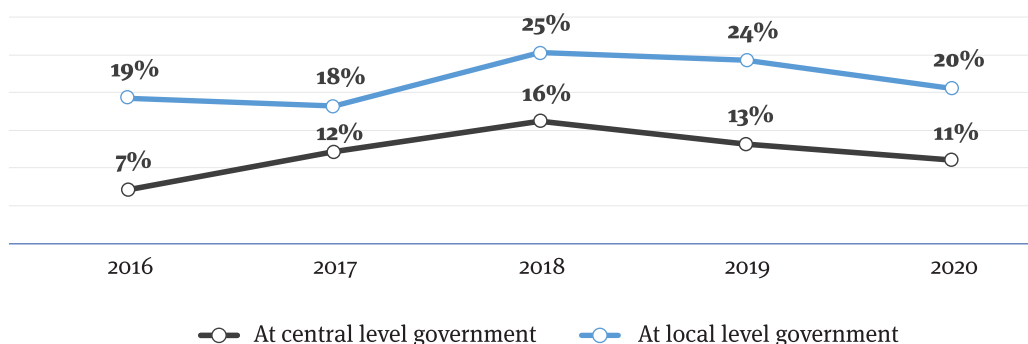
Base: Central, 2016 (N=1633); 2017 (N=1634); 2018 (N=1630); 2019 (N=2480); 2020 (N=2482). Local 2016 (N=1634); 2017 (N=1630); 2018 (N=1638); 2019 (N=2463); 2020 (N=2491).

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

Consultation processes

10.9% of Albanian citizens was invited to participate in consultation processes organised by public institutions at the central government, while 20.3% was invited to participate in consultation processes at the local government. 12.9% of survey participants reported that they used the online portal “www.konsultimipublik.gov.al” to obtain information or give their opinion on draft legislation or draft strategies/action plans – a percentage higher than in the opinion poll of 2019 (8%).

10.9% of study participants reported that they have been invited to participate in consultation processes organised by public institutions at the central government. A higher percentage, 20.3%, reported that they have been invited to participate in consultation processes organised by public institutions at the local government. The percentage of study participants who reported that they have been invited to participate in consultation processes in 2020 is lower than in 2019. Specifically, the percentage is 4 points lower concerning invitations to participate in consultation processes at the central government (20% in 2020 versus 24% in 2019) and 2 points lower at the local government (11% in 2020 versus 13% in 2019).

Figure 33: Invitations to participate in consultation processes 2016–2020

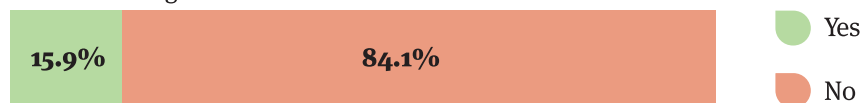
Base: Local level: 2016 (N=1624), 2017 (N=1635), 2018 (N=1629), 2019 (N=2482), 2020 (N=2486); Central level: 2016 (N=1631), 2017 (N=1635), 2018 (N=1630), 2019 (N=2483), 2020 (N=2486).

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

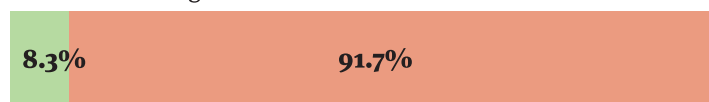
8.3% of study participants reported that they have participated in consultation process led by the central government, compared to 10.7% in 2019. 15.9% of study participants reported that they have participated in consultation processes led by the local government, a percentage smaller than in 2019 (24.6%).

Figure 34: Participation in consultation meetings 2020

At local level government



At central level government



Base: For central government (N=2258); For local government (N=2285).

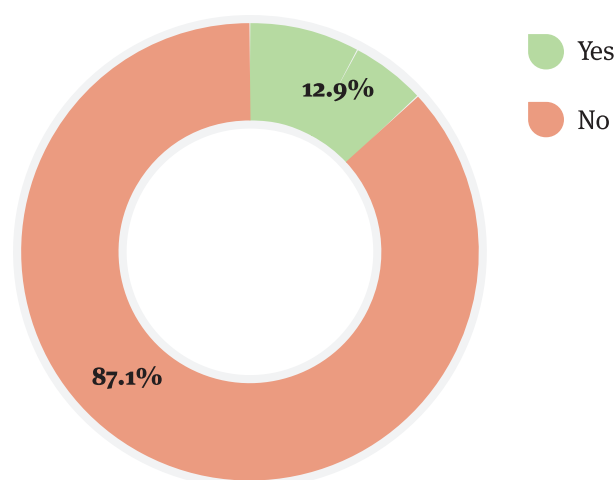
The main reason for the lack of participation was the disbelief in consultation meetings (27.5%), followed by the expectation that others will participate (16.6%), and the belief that there are no consultation mechanisms in place (14.4%). Other reasons include the lack of information (9.8%) and difficulties accessing consultation meetings (6.8%).

Table 17: Reasons for not participating in consultation processes 2020

I expect others to do so	16.6% (n = 416)
I don't believe in such processes	27.5% (n = 687)
I did not have information on the subject	9.8% (n = 245)
I could not reach the location or access online meetings	6.8% (n = 171)
I believe there are no consultation mechanisms or processes established	14.4% (n = 360)
Other*	6.6% (n = 166)

*Common “other” answers were health issues, old age, lack of interest, or answers that were actually included as options, such as lack of information.

13% of study participant reported that they used the portal “www.konsultimipublik.gov.al” in 2020 to obtain information or give their opinion on draft legislation or draft strategies/ action plans – a percentage higher than in 2019 (8%).

Figure 35: Usage of portal “Konsultimipublik.gov.al” 2020

Base: N = 2451

When checking across demographics, no substantial differences were found for gender, geographical representation, disability, or whether a respondent belongs to a minority group or not. Women (15%), compared to men (11%), were more likely to report that they have used the online portal “www.konsultimipublik.gov.al”. Respondents in the age groups of ‘26-35 years old’ (19%) and ‘36-45 years old’ (15%), with university degree or higher (21%), students (16%), public sector employees (28%), respondents with an income of 50 001 ALL to 70 000 ALL (24%), or residents of urban areas (14%) were more likely to report that they have used the online portal “www.konsultimipublik.gov.al”. See Table 19 for more information on differences across demographic characteristics.

Statements on citizen engagement

A large percentage of the Albanian population believed that ‘citizens have sufficient knowledge to understand government decisions’ (71%) and ‘local public hearings are formal events’ (65%). Meanwhile, less than 40% believed that ‘suggestions from the civil society are taken into consideration’ (38%) and ‘municipal councillors represent local communities’ (35%).

Survey participants were asked to assess on a 4-point scale the extent that they agreed with 5 statements that concerned local representation and citizen engagement in decision-making. 71.2% of study participants said that they ‘fully agree’ or ‘generally agree’ with the statement ‘Citizens have sufficient knowledge to understand government decisions’. 71% of female respondents and 72% of male respondents said to fully or generally agree with the statement. Respondents with university degree or higher (74%), living in small municipalities (76%), or with a disability (77%) were more likely to agree with the statement, while those with an income over 70 001 ALL (64%) were less likely to agree with the statement.

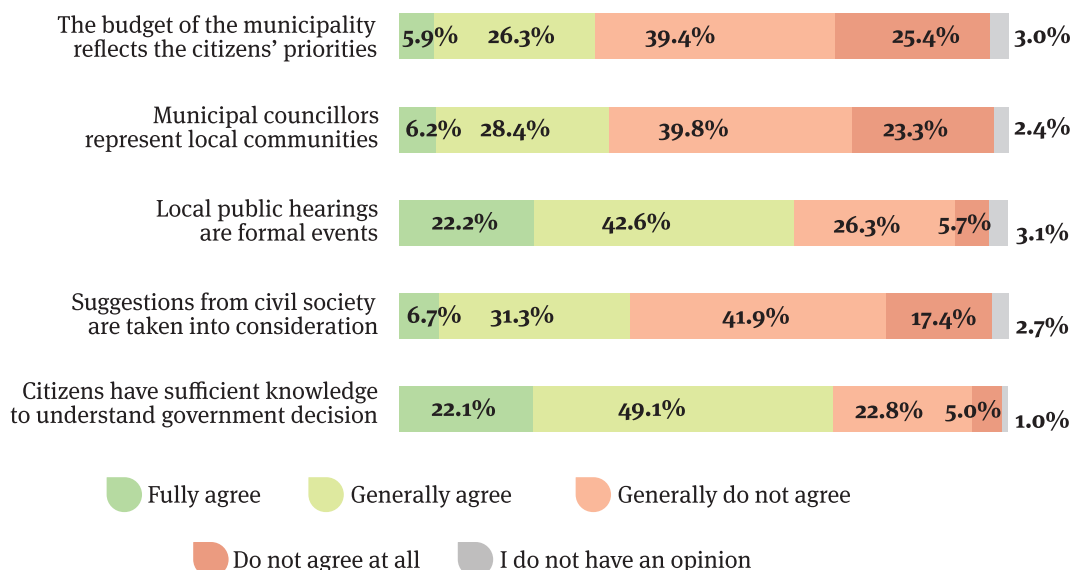
A smaller percentage, 38%, said that they ‘fully agree’ or ‘generally agree’ with the statement ‘Suggestions from the civil society are taken into consideration’. 37% of female respondents and 39% of male respondents said to fully or generally agree with the statement. Public sector employees (57%) and students (43%) were more likely to agree with the statement, while unemployed respondents (30%), those with an income over 70 001 ALL (31%), or respondents with a disability (30%) were less likely to agree with the statement.

The majority of respondents, 64.8%, said that they ‘fully agree’ or ‘generally agree’ with the statement ‘Local public hearings are formal events’. 37% of female respondents and 39% of male respondents said to fully or generally agree with the statement. The unemployed (70%), respondents residing in medium-sized municipalities (70%), respondents with an income over 70 001 (73%), or respondents belonging to a minority group (71%) were more likely to agree with the statement.

34.6% said that they ‘fully agree’ or ‘generally agree’ with the statement ‘Municipal councillors represent local communities’. 34% of female respondents and 36% of male respondents said to fully or generally agree with the statement. The elderly (48%) and public sector employees (40%) were more likely to agree with the statement, while respondents working in the private sector (23%), with an income over 70 001 ALL (20%), or with a disability (28%) were less likely to agree that municipal councillors represent local communities’.

32.2% said that they ‘fully agree’ or ‘generally agree’ with the statement ‘The budget of the municipality reflects citizens’ priorities. 31% of female respondents and 33% of male respondents said to fully or generally agree with the statement. Respondents in the age group ‘66 and over’ (44%) and public sector employees (54%) were more likely to agree with the statement, while those with an income over 70 001 ALL (20%) or with a disability (19%) were less likely to agree with the statement. Table 20 provides more information on differences across demographic characteristics.

Figure 36: Statements on local representation and citizen engagement 2020



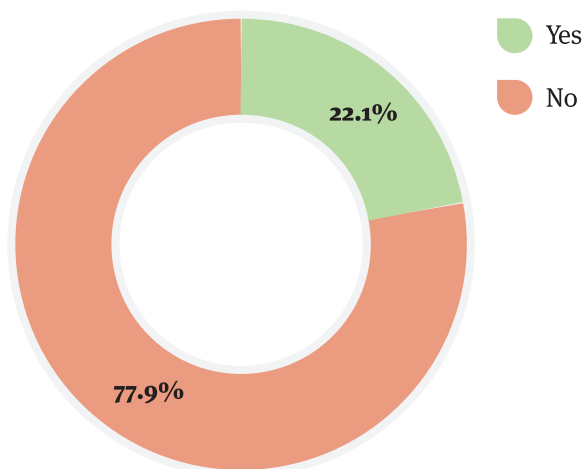
Base: Municipal budget (N=2495); councillors reflect communities (N=2495); public hearings (N=2490); suggestions taken into account (N=2490); citizens sufficient knowledge (N=2488).

Attending a demonstration/rally or signing a petition

22% of the respondents attended a demonstration/rally or signed a petition in 2020. Respondents in the age group of 18-25 years old and with university degree (or higher), students, private sector employees, and residents of urban areas were more likely to report that they attended a demonstration/rally or signed a petition in 2020.

77.9% of study participants reported that they have not attended a demonstration/rally or signed a petition in 2020 – a percentage close to the opinion poll of 2019 (76.4%).

Figure 37: Attended a demonstration/rally or signed a petition 2020



Base: N = 2483

The main reason for attending a demonstration/rally or signing a petition in 2020 was the ‘shared interest of the community I belong to’ (53.9%), followed by personal interest (25.7%), party militancy (11.8%), and peer pressure (6.6%). Some respondents opted to give their own personal reason, which included participating in a protest about violence against women and girls (N=3) due to a particularly worrisome alleged rape case of a minor by her school’s security guard, one person noted that they participated in the protest for the National Theatre and one participated in a demonstration/rally for ‘national interests’.

When checking across demographics, no substantial differences were found for gender and whether a respondent belongs to a minority group. 21% of female respondents and

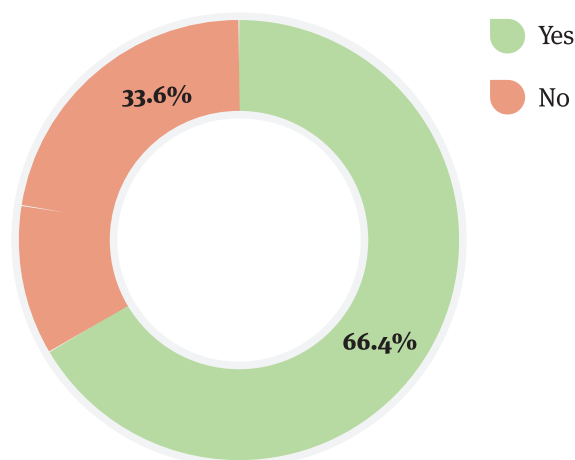
23% of male respondents reported that they have attended a demonstration/rally or signed a petition in 2020. Respondents in the age group of '18-25 years old' (36%) and with university degree or higher (31%), students (35%), private sector employees (26%), residents of urban areas (24%), and members of political parties (37%) were more likely to report that they have attended a demonstration/rally or signed a petition in 2020, while respondents with a disability were less likely (15%) to have attended a demonstration/rally or signed a petition. Members of the Democratic Party (59.6%) – compared to members of the Socialist Party (27.7%) and the Socialist Movement for Integration (40.7%) – were more likely to report that they have attended a demonstration/rally or signed a petition in 2020.

Willingness to engage in voluntary work

Compared to 2019, a smaller percentage of the Albanian population were willing to engage in voluntary work (67% versus 78%). Albanians younger than 45 years old, attending a university, working in the public sector, and living in rural areas were more likely to report that they are willing to engage in voluntary work.

66.4% of survey participants reported that they are willing to engage in voluntary work for the benefit of the community. Compared to the opinion poll of 2019 (78%), 2018 (67%), 2017 (75%), and 2016 (77%), a smaller percentage reported that they are willing to engage in voluntary work.

Figure 38: Willingness to engage in voluntary work 2020



Base: N = 2489

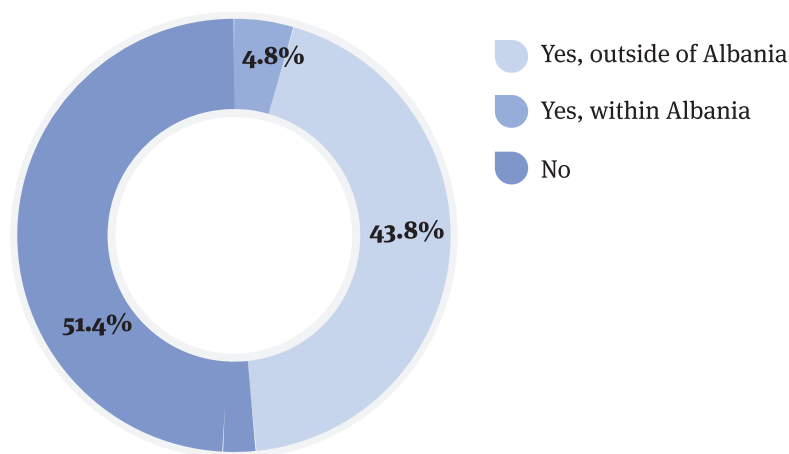
66.5% of female respondents and 66.2% of male respondents reported that they are willing to engage in voluntary work. Respondents younger than 45 years old (between 72% and 76%) and with university education or higher (77%), students (79%), public sector employees (78%), respondents with an income over 24 001 ALL (73% to 75%), residents of rural areas (69%), and respondents belonging to a minority group (70%) were more likely to report that they are willing to engage in voluntary work. Respondents with a disability are less likely (52%) to indicate that they are willing to engage in voluntary work for the benefit of the community.

Moving from current place of residence

The percentage of the Albanian population wanting to move to another country remains high. In the opinion poll of 2020, 44% of respondents reported that they want to migrate. Women, young respondents (between 18 and 25 years old), respondents with university degree (or higher), students, private sector employees, residents of rural areas, and respondents who lacked income were more likely to indicate that they want to move to another country.

The percentage of Albanians who want to move to another country remains high. 43.8% of study participants said that they wanted to move outside of the country, 4.8% within the country, and 51.4% did not want to move. These percentages for the year 2019 were 46.3, 4.7, and 49.0, respectively.

Figure 39: Moving from current place of residence 2020



Base: N = 2481

47% of female respondents and 41% of male respondents reported that they want to move to another country. Respondents between 18 and 25 years old (66%), with university degree or higher (51%), students (67%), private sector employees (49%), residents of rural areas (48%), and respondents who reported that they do not have any income (56%) were more likely to say that they want to move to another country. Respondents belonging to a minority group (58%) and respondents with a disability (61%) were more likely to indicate that they do not want to move.

Most survey participants who said that they want to move to another country reported economic factors as the main driving force (487 out of 1197), followed by the need to pursue better education (67 out of 1197), and join family members living abroad (54 out of 1197). Other reasons included having better access to health services, living in a politically stable country and a more just society. A significant number of survey participants (543 out of 1197) listed more than one factor (e.g., higher levels of income and better access to health services).

Table 18: Demographic breakdown – interest in and opportunities to participate in decision-making 2020

		Interest in participating in decision-making processes	Sufficient opportunities to participate in decision making	
			Central Government	Local Government
Total		49%	28%	39%
Gender				
Female		48%	26%	37%
Male		49%	30%	41%
Age				
18-25 years old		55%	32%	44%
26-35 years old		55%	32%	43%
36-45 years old		52%	33%	44%
46-55 years old		42%	24%	37%
56-65 years old		40%	19%	28%
66 and over		28%	16%	22%
Education				
Up to lower secondary*		35%	18%	25%
High school		47%	24%	36%
University degree		60%	40%	51%
Employment status				
Employed	Total	54%	33%	45%
	Public	66%	44%	57%
	Private	50%	29%	41%
Unemployed		41%	21%	30%
Student		62%	35%	48%
Retired		31%	19%	23%
Income				
No income		45%	23%	32%
Up to 24,000 ALL		40%	22%	30%
24,001–50,000 ALL		55%	33%	47%
50,001–70,000 ALL		60%	41%	52%
Over 70,001 ALL		51%	38%	48%
Geographic representation				
Urban		49%	28%	38%
Rural		48%	29%	40%

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

Note: Colours represent >5 p.p. difference with total responses.

Table 19: Demographic breakdown of consultation processes in 2020

	Invitation to participate in consultation in 2020		Participation in consultation in 2020		Usage of www.konsultimi.publik.gov.al
	At central level	At local level	At central level	At local level	
Total	10.9%	20.3%	8.3%	15.9%	13%
Gender					
Female	10%	19%	8%	14%	15%
Male	12%	22%	9%	17%	11%
Age					
18–25 years old	10%	20%	6%	15%	12%
26–35 years old	12%	22%	11%	20%	19%
36–45 years old	14%	24%	10%	18%	15%
46–55 years old	10%	19%	7%	14%	10%
56–65 years old	7%	17%	5%	12%	9%
66 and over	7%	12%	6%	11%	2%
Education					
Up to lower secondary*	7%	14%	4%	9%	3%
High school	10%	18%	6%	14%	11%
University degree	16%	27%	13%	23%	21%
Employment					
Employed	13%	25%	11%	20%	17%
Public	22%	40%	20%	33%	28%
Private	10%	20%	8%	16%	13%
Unemployed	8%	13%	3%	8%	7%
Student	9%	22%	5%	17%	16%
Retired	7%	11%	6%	12%	4%

	Invitation to participate in consultation in 2020		Participation in consultation in 2020		Usage of www.konsultimi publik.gov.al
	At central level	At local level	At central level	At local level	
Income					
No income	8%	15%	4%	10%	9%
Up to 24,000 ALL	8%	15%	6%	12%	6%
24,001–50,000 ALL	13%	26%	10%	20%	17%
50,001–70,000 ALL	17%	31%	16%	26%	24%
Over 70,001 ALL	18%	20%	12%	16%	12%
Geographic representation					
Urban	11%	20%	9%	16%	14%
Rural	11%	20%	8%	15%	11%

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

Note: Colours represent >5 p.p. difference with total responses.

Table 20: Demographic breakdown of statements on citizen engagement 2020

	Citizen 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	71%	38%	65%	35%	32%
Gender					
Female	71%	37%	65%	34%	31%
Male	72%	39%	64%	36%	33%
Age					
18-25	70%	38%	68%	31%	24%
26-35	70%	36%	68%	30%	28%
36-45	72%	38%	66%	36%	37%
46-55	72%	40%	64%	37%	35%
56-65	73%	40%	63%	38%	35%
66 and over	74%	40%	50%	48%	44%
Education					
Up to lower secondary*	69%	33%	63%	35%	30%
High school	71%	38%	66%	34%	31%
University degree	74%	41%	65%	35%	35%
Employment					
Employed	72%	40%	65%	34%	35%
Public	74%	57%	59%	40%	54%
Private	71%	34%	66%	23%	28%

	Citizen 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	71%	38%	65%	35%	32%
Unemployed	71%	30%	70%	29%	22%
Student	71%	43%	66%	36%	30%
Retired	73%	41%	54%	46%	42%
Income					
No income	71%	33%	70%	32%	24%
Up to 24,000 ALL	72%	39%	63%	36%	33%
24,001–50,000 ALL	73%	42%	64%	36%	37%
50,001–70,000 ALL	72%	42%	63%	40%	40%
Over 70,001 ALL	64%	31%	73%	20%	20%
Geographic representation					
Urban	70%	38%	64%	34%	32%
Rural	74%	38%	67%	37%	32%
Municipality Size					
Small	76%	39%	65%	33%	27%
Medium	72%	40%	70%	36%	37%
Large	70%	37%	63%	35%	32%

* 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).

Note: Colours represent ≥5 p.p. difference with total responses.

4.6 Satisfaction with public service delivery

The section concerning public service delivery has been part of the Opinion Poll since 2013. The questions are designed to collect information on citizens' satisfaction with 16 core and administrative public services. Core public services include public health services, public education system services (including pre-school), water supply, public transport, cleaning services (town, countryside), emergency services (firefighters, ambulance, etc.), judicial services, and police services. Administrative services include social assistance services, employment services (National Employment Service, SHKP), property services (State Cadastre Agency, ASHK; formerly ZRPP and ALUIZNI), civil registry services, social insurance services (Social Insurance Institute, ISSH), road transportation services (General Directorate of Road Transport Services, DPSHTRR), business registration and licensing (e.g., National Business Centre, QKB), and construction permits.

Questions also focused on whether respondents filed a complaint about service providers, submitted any complaints to the co-governance platform www.shqiperiaqeduam.al, and visited Agency for the Delivery of Integrated Services (ADISA) service windows. In this section, respondents were also asked whether they felt safe in everyday life and the three main reasons that make them feel unsafe.

During 2020, public service delivery was disrupted in affected areas in the aftermath of the November 2019 earthquake, and then nationwide as a result of restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. As the first cases were diagnosed in early March 2020, initially Albania went into a lockdown in which non-essential public services were suspended. After that, as delivery gradually resumed, ongoing restrictions to prevent the further spread of the virus, including the provision of certain services online only, remained in place. Some of the results in this section, therefore, are likely to have been influenced by these restrictions.

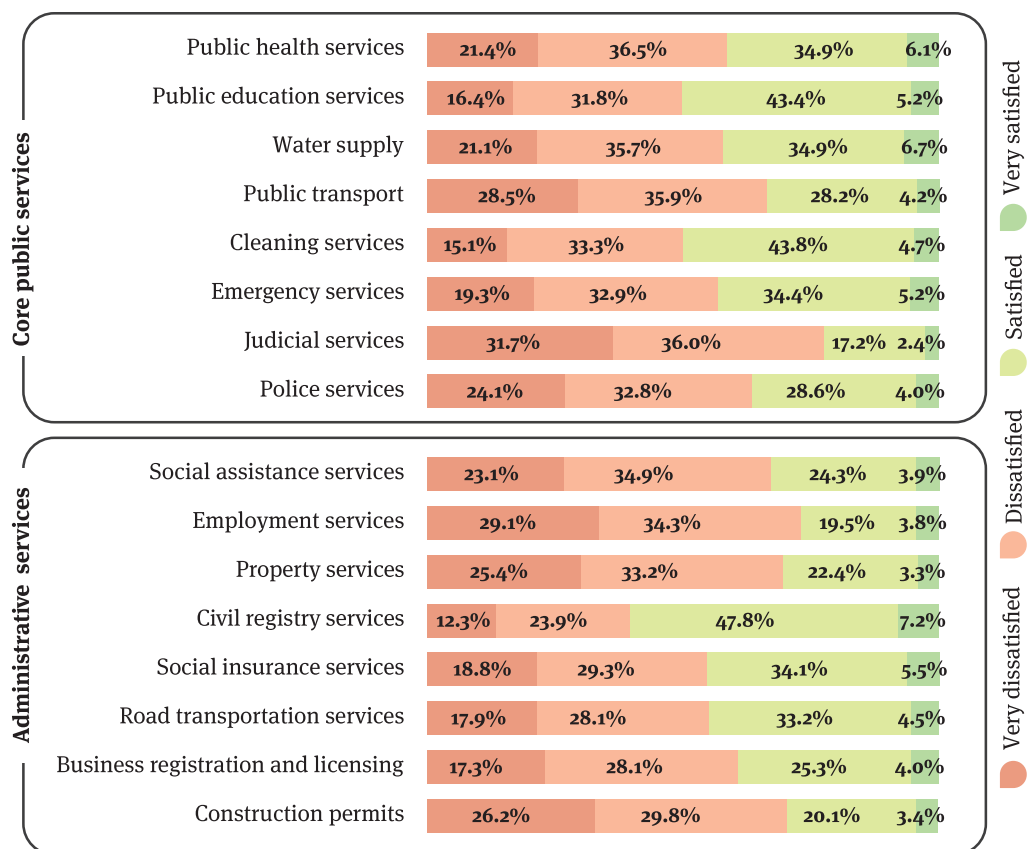
Satisfaction with service delivery of core public services

In 2020, 38% of Albanian citizens, on average, were satisfied with the delivery of core public services – a lower percentage than in 2019 (42%). The delivery of judicial services received the lowest rating, followed by public transport and police services.

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the delivery of public services on a scale from 1 (very satisfied) to 4 (very dissatisfied). Findings suggest that on average, 38% of study participants were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the delivery of core public services. Compared to last year's survey results, a smaller percentage of study participants (38% in 2020 vs. 42% in 2019) reported that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the delivery of core public services. 56.5% of study participants, on average, reported that they were 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with the delivery of core public services. A

higher proportion of respondents reported that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the delivery of public education services (48.6%) and street cleaning services (48.5%). Meanwhile, a smaller percentage of respondents reported that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the delivery of judicial services (19.6%), public transport (32.4%), and police services (32.6%). For the rating of all core public services, see Figure 40.

Figure 40: Satisfaction with public services 2020



Base: Healthcare (N=2471); Education (N=2449); Water (N=2475); Public transport (N=2465); Cleaning (N=2463); Emergency (N=2422); Judicial (N=2368); Police (N=2375); Social assistance (N=2362); Employment (N=2384); Property (N=2349); Civil registry (N=2418); Social insurance (N=2399); Road transportation (N=2376); Business registration (N=2329); construction permits (N=2338).

Satisfaction with delivery of administrative public services

44.7% of survey respondents that had used an administrative service in 2020 were satisfied with their delivery. The delivery of employment services, construction permits, and property services received the lowest ratings among administrative public services.

Respondents rated their satisfaction with the delivery of eight administrative public services, including social assistance services, employment services, property services, civil registry services, social insurance services, road transportation services, business registration and licensing, and construction permits. On average, 32.8% of respondents reported that they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the delivery of administrative public services, a drop of 1.7 p.p. compared with the 2019 Opinion Poll (32.8% versus 34.5%).¹⁸ A higher percentage of respondents reported that they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the delivery of civil registry services (55.0%), social insurance services (39.6%), and road transportation services (37.7%). A lower proportion reported that they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the delivery of employment services (23.3%), construction permits (23.5%), and property services (25.7%). For the assessment of all administrative services ranked in the Opinion Poll, see Figure 40.

Service users, compared to non-users, were more likely to report that they were satisfied with administrative public services. On average, 44.7% of survey respondents who had used an administrative service in 2020 were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the delivery of administrative services.¹⁹

Satisfaction rates were notably higher among respondents who had used the administrative service that they were asked to rate than the overall figure. For instance, road transportation services recorded a 56% satisfaction rate for those that had used the service, compared to a 38% overall satisfaction rate (an increase of 18 p.p.); social insurance services (54% satisfaction rate for those that had used the service, compared to a 40% overall satisfaction rate – an increase of 14 p.p.); and civil registry services (68% satisfaction rate for those that had used the service, compared to a 55% overall satisfaction rate – an increase of 13 p.p.). Similarly, respondents that had made use of the social assistance service, employment services and construction permits were happier about its service delivery than those respondents that had not used these services. Table 21 provides information on the utilisation of and satisfaction with administrative service delivery.

• • • • •

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

19 This percentage refers to the average of the satisfaction rate for all administrative services taken together among respondents that used the service in 2020.

Table 21: Utilisation of and satisfaction with administrative service delivery 2020

	Overall satisfaction rate	% of respondents that used service in 2020	Satisfaction rate among those that did use service
Social assistance services	28%	29%	37%
Employment services	23%	31%	29%
Property services	26%	28%	34%
Civil registry services	55%	52%	68%
Social insurance services	40%	41%	54%
Road transportation services	38%	29%	56%
Business registration and licensing	29%	16%	48%
Construction permits	23%	20%	29%

**Note: Green colours represent ≥ 5 p.p. improvement in user satisfaction compared to overall satisfaction rate.*

Civil registry services (52%), social insurance services (41%), and employment services (31%) were used more frequently in 2020. The least-often used services were business registration and licensing (16%) and construction permits (20%).

Demographic comparison for satisfaction with public service delivery

Albanians over 65 years old, those with a university degree (or higher), employed in the public sector, and those living in urban areas were more satisfied with the delivery of core public services and of administrative public services.

When checking across demographics, no substantial differences were found for gender or geographic representation. Female respondents were more likely to be satisfied with the service delivery of education (50%), emergency services (41%), police services (34%), and social insurance (56%), while male respondents were more likely to be satisfied with the delivery of road transportation services (59%), business licensing and registration services (50%), and construction permit services (31%).

Respondents in the age group '66 and over' were more likely to report that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with core public services and administrative public services (both users and non-users) such as healthcare services (49%), education services (58%),

water supply (47%), public transportation (40%), cleaning services (57%), emergency services (49%), police services (43%), social assistance services (39%), property services (46%), and civil registry services (78%). Respondents with a university degree or higher were more likely to report that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with public services such as healthcare services (48%), education services (54%), water supply (46%), cleaning services (55%), emergency services (46%), social assistance services (48%), employment services (37%), property services (41%), and road transportation services (64%).

Public sector employees, compared with private sector employees, were more likely to report that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with all public services (regardless of whether they had used the service or not). Unemployed respondents and respondents with no income were less likely to report that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with all core public services and several administrative public services. Respondents with no income less often reported that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the employment services (17%), civil registry (57%), social insurance (32%), road transportation (44%), and business registration and licensing (32%). Respondents with an income between 50,001 ALL and 70,000 ALL were more likely to be 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the majority of the rated services. See Table 24 for satisfaction with public service delivery across demographic characteristics.

Respondents who indicated they are a member of a minority group (both users and non-users) were less likely to be satisfied with the delivery of education system services (36%), cleaning services (39%), emergency services (32%), and civil registry services (49%) than respondents who do not belong to a minority group (49%, 49%, 40%, and 55% respectively). On the other hand, respondents belonging to a minority group were more likely to be satisfied with the service delivery of public transportation (38%) than those who do not belong to a minority group (32%).

Respondents who indicated that they have a disability (both users and non-users) were less likely to indicate that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the service delivery of education system services (41%), water supply (35%), public transportation (27%), cleaning services (38%), emergency services (30%), judicial services (12%), employment services (17%), road transport services (31%), and construction permits (19%) than respondents that do not have a disability (49%, 42%, 33%, 49%, 40%, 20%, 24%, 38%, and 24% respectively).

Annual trend in satisfaction with public service delivery

Compared to 2019, a lower percentage of the Albanian population reported that they were satisfied with the delivery of public services. The decline was noted particularly for the delivery of public health services, water supply, public transport, emergency services, police services, road transportation services, and business registration and licensing.

Compared to the 2019 Opinion Poll, the proportion of all respondents that was satisfied with the public service delivery declined in 11 out of the 16 categories of core and administrative public services. It remained the same for judicial services, property services and construction permits, and saw minor (1 p.p.) improvements in public education and employment services. Lower percentages of respondents reporting that they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the delivery of the public services were recorded in areas such as public health services (44% vs 41%), water supply (47% vs 42%), public transport (36% vs 32%), emergency services (47% vs 40%), police services (41% vs 33%), road transportation services (43% vs 38%), and business registration and licensing (35% vs 29%).

Table 22: Satisfaction rate with public service delivery 2016–2020

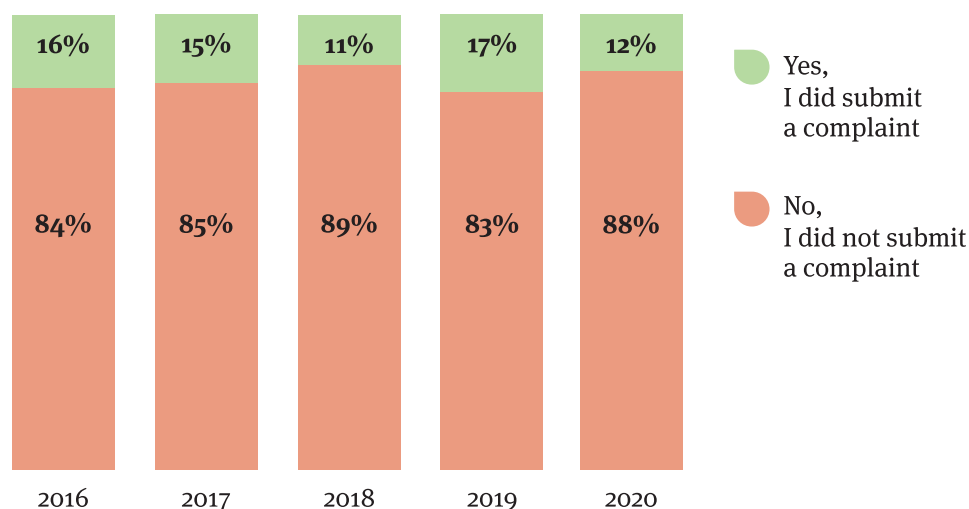
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Core public services					
Public health services	47%	42%	41%	44%	41%
Public education services	58%	54%	50%	48%	49%
Water supply	72%	56%	50%	47%	42%
Public transport	55%	50%	37%	36%	32%
Cleaning services	61%	57%	49%	51%	49%
Emergency services	55%	53%	44%	47%	40%
Judicial services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

Submission of complaints

Compared to 2019, a smaller percentage of respondents submitted a complaint to institutional public service providers (12% vs 17%). Respondents over 65 years old and with up to lower secondary education, the unemployed, and those with an income of up to 24,000 ALL per month were less likely to file a complaint.

Survey participants were asked whether they submitted a complaint for a service they received from one of the institutional public service providers. 12% of survey participants who received a service indicated that they submitted a complaint, and 88% indicated that they did not submit a complaint. When checking across demographics, no substantial differences were found according to gender, employment sector, geographical representation, and whether the respondent has a disability or not. 11% of female respondents and 14% of male respondents reported that they filed a complaint for a service received from institutions. Respondents in the age group '66 and over' (5%), those with up to lower secondary education (7%), the unemployed (11%), and those with an income of up to 24,000 ALL per month (10%) were less likely to file a complaint, while respondents belonging to a minority group were more likely (18%) to have filed a complaint.

Figure 41: Respondents sending a complaint to institutions 2016–2020



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

Compared to 2019, a smaller percentage (12% vs. 17%) reported that they had submitted a complaint. In 2018, 11% of survey participants said they submitted a complaint to one of the institutional public service providers, compared to 15% in 2017, and 16% in 2016.

Co-governance platform shqiperiaqeduam.al

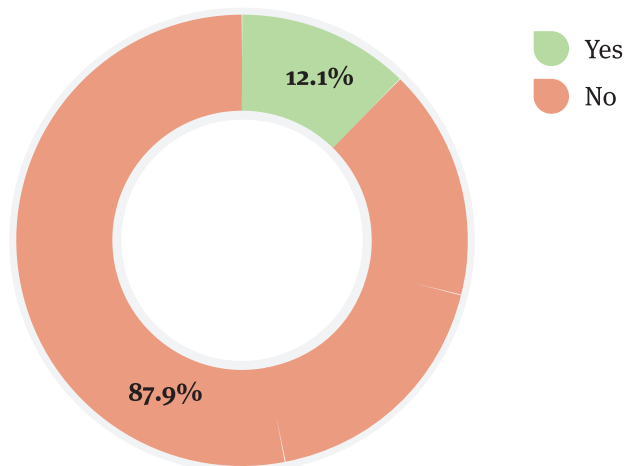
Compared to 2019, a smaller percentage of the citizens surveyed directed complaints to the online platform shqiperiaqeduam.al (12% versus 14%). Albanians with an income of over 70,001 ALL per month were more likely to have submitted complaints to shqiperiaqeduam.al.

12.1% of study participants reported that they used the platform *shqiperiaqeduam.al*, while 87.9% said they had not.

When checking across demographics, no substantial differences were found for gender, employment status, employment sector, geographical representation, and whether the respondent has a disability or not. 11% of female respondents and 13% of male respondents reported that they used *shqiperiaqeduam.al*. Respondents in the age group '66 and over' (4%) and those with up to lower secondary education (9%) were less likely to use the platform. Respondents belonging to a minority group (21%) or with an income of over 70,001 ALL/month were more likely to use the platform. 22% of respondents with an income of over 70,001 ALL/month and 8% of respondents with an income of up to 24,000 ALL/month reported that they used the platform.

Compared to last year, the proportion of respondents that had used the platform decreased slightly. Specifically, 12.1% of study participants in 2020 and 13.9% in 2019 reported that they had used the platform *shqiperiaqeduam.al* – a difference of 1.8 p.p.

Figure 42: Have you directed any complaints to *shqiperiaqeduam.al*? 2020



Base: N = 2482

Respondents that had submitted a complaint via the platform were further asked whether their complaint was addressed. Of the respondents that had sent a complaint, 44% said that their complaint was addressed, while 56% said that their complaint was not addressed. In the survey of 2019, 37% of respondents said that their complaint was addressed.

When checking across demographics, no substantial differences were found for gender, education, or geographical representation. 44% of female respondents and 45% of male respondents said that their complaint was addressed. Respondents in the age group '56–65 years old' (56%), employed respondents (51%), public sector employees (66%), and

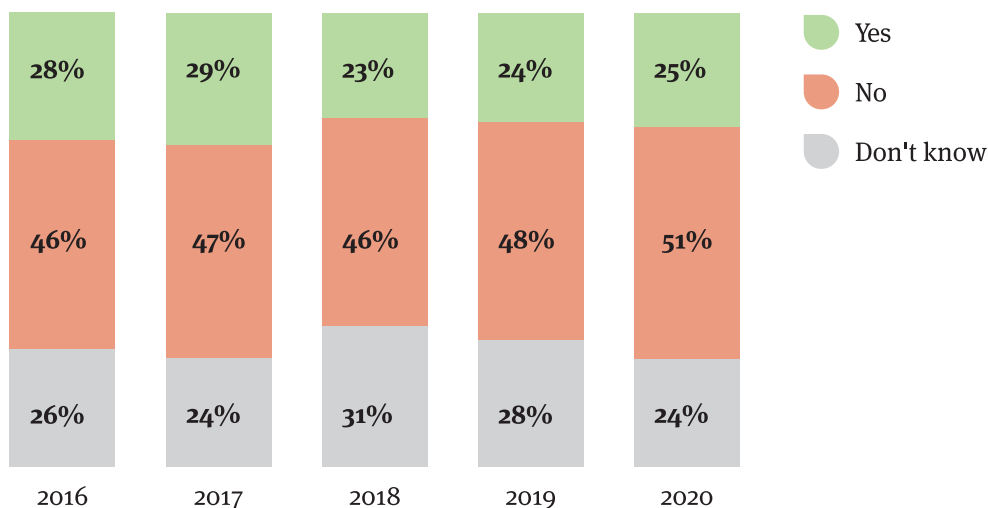
respondents belonging to a minority group (61%) were more likely to report that their complaint was addressed. Respondents who were 66 years old or older (22%), unemployed respondents (31%), respondents with no income (28%), and those indicating that they have a disability (29%), were less likely to report that their complaint was addressed.

Albanian institutions ‘listen to’ citizens

Similar to 2019, approximately 1 in 4 Albanians believed that institutions ‘listen to’ and properly address citizens’ complaints. Respondents over 65 years old, those with a university degree (or higher), and those employed in the public sector were more likely to believe that institutions ‘listen to’ and properly address citizens’ complaints.

Respondents were asked whether they believe that institutions ‘listen to’ and properly address citizens’ complaints. 25.45% of respondents answered that they believe that institutions ‘listen to’ and properly address the complaints coming from citizens. 50.9% answered that institutions do not ‘listen to’ and properly address the complaints coming from citizens, while 23.7% said that they ‘don’t know’. Broken down by gender, 24% of female respondents and 27% of male respondents believed that institutions ‘listen to’ and properly address citizens’ complaints. Respondents in the age group ‘66 and over’ (35%), those with a university degree or higher (29%), or employed in the public sector (46%) were more likely to believe that institutions ‘listen to’ and address citizens’ complaints. Respondents belonging to a minority group (19%) and respondents who have a disability (18%) were less likely to report that they believe institutions ‘listen to’ and properly address citizens’ complaints.

Figure 43 displays the change in respondents’ reports of whether institutions ‘listen to’ and properly address citizens’ complaints. The proportion of survey respondents who believed that institutions ‘listen to’ and properly address citizens’ complaints was lower this year than in 2016 and 2017, but did not change substantially between 2018 and 2020.

Figure 43: Institutions 'listen to' and properly address citizens' complaints 2016-2020

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

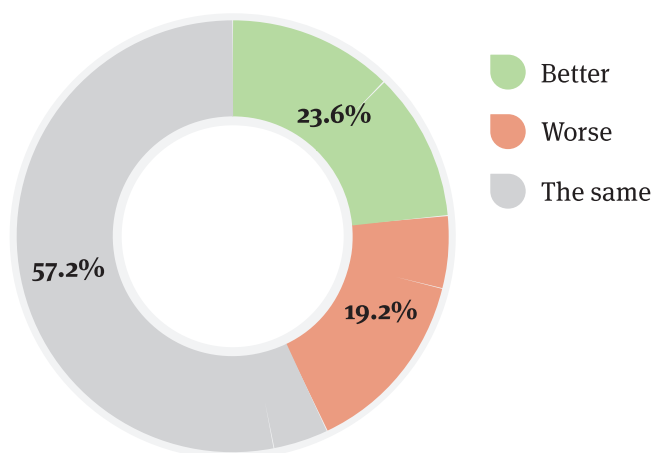
Assessing the quality of social services delivered by the municipality

More than half of the Albanian population did not perceive a change in the quality of social services in 2020. Albanians over 65 years old, with a university degree or higher, and employed in the public sector were more likely to report that the quality of social services had improved.

Respondents were asked to assess the quality of social services delivered by the municipality in 2020, compared to 2019. 57.2% of respondents said that the quality of social services had not changed. Meanwhile, 23.6% said that the quality of social services had improved and 19.2% said that it had worsened.

When checking across demographics, no substantial differences were found for income, geographical representation, disability, or whether a respondent belongs to a minority group. 22% of the female respondents and 25% of the male respondents indicated that the quality of social services in their municipality had improved. Respondents in the age group '66 and over' (30%), those with a university degree or higher (28%), and those employed in the public sector (42%) were more likely to report that the quality of social services had improved. Compared to the survey of 2019, a higher percentage of respondents reported that the quality of social services had not changed (57.2% in 2020 vs 52.8% in 2019).

Figure 44: Changes in the quality of municipal social services 2020

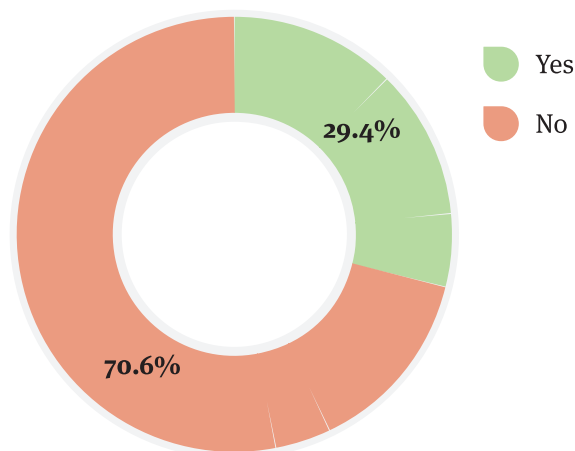


Base: N = 2467

ADISA service windows

29% of the Albanian population reported visiting an ADISA one-stop-shop service window. Among those who visited ADISA, 73.4% indicated that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the service they received, which was higher than in 2019. While Albanians over 66 were particularly satisfied with the service delivery at the ADISA service window they visited, people with a higher income were less likely to report that they were satisfied with the service delivery.

29.4% of study participants reported that they visited an ADISA service window. Compared to 2019, a higher percentage of study participants reported that they had visited an ADISA service window; 29.4% compared with 23.9% – a difference of 5.5 p.p.

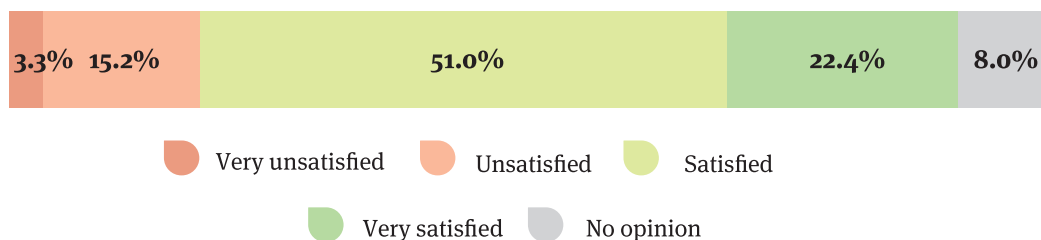
Figure 45: Respondents that visited an ADISA service window 2020

Base: N = 2473

When checking across demographics, no substantial differences were found for geographical representation or whether a respondent belongs to a minority group. 28% of female respondents and 31% of male respondents reported that they visited an ADISA service window in 2020. Respondents in the age group '66 and over' (15%), those with up to lower secondary education (24%), and those employed in the private sector (29%) were less likely to report that they visited an ADISA service window in 2020, while respondents with an income of 50,001 to 70,000 ALL (39%) or over 70,001 ALL (38%) were more likely to have visited an ADISA service window in 2020. By contrast, survey participants who indicated that they have a disability (24%) were less likely to report that they visited an ADISA service window in 2020.

Respondents who had visited an ADISA service window, were asked to indicate how satisfied they were with the service. Among them, 73.4% reported that they were either 'satisfied' (51.0%) or 'very satisfied' (22.4%). Compared to the survey in 2019, a higher percentage of respondents reported that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' (73.4% vs 69.3%).

Figure 46: Satisfaction with ADISA one-stop-shop service 2020



Base: N = 722

When looking across demographics, no substantial differences were found for education, employment status, geographical representation, or whether a respondent belongs to a minority group. 75% of female respondents and 72% of male respondents reported that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the service delivery at ADISA. Respondents over 66 years old (80%) were more likely to have been satisfied with the service delivery at ADISA, while respondents with an income over 70,001 ALL (52%) were less likely to report that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the service delivery at the ADISA service window they visited.

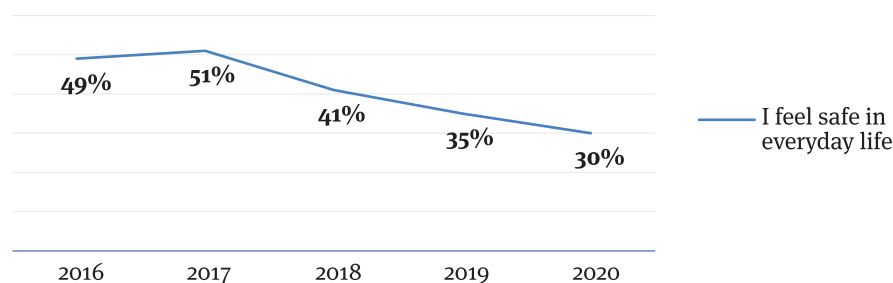
Safety in everyday life

In 2020, 70% of the Albanian population surveyed did not feel safe in everyday life – a higher proportion than in 2019 (65%). Women, the unemployed, students, private sector employees, rural residents, and those with no income were all more likely to report that they did not feel safe in everyday life. The main reasons for feeling unsafe were crime, health-related concerns, employment insecurity, and injustice.

Since 2016, the Opinion Poll has asked respondents about their sense of safety in their everyday life. 70% of respondents said that they do not feel safe in everyday life. Women (72%), compared to men (68%), were more likely to report that they do not feel safe in everyday life. The unemployed (79%), students (75%), private sector employees (72%), rural residents (75%), and those with no income (77%) were also more likely to report that they do not feel safe in everyday life. Respondents who reported that they have a disability (81%), compared to those who reported that they do not have a disability (70%), were even more likely to report that they do not feel safe in everyday life. 68% of respondents who self-identified as a member of a minority group and 70% of those who did not self-identify as a member of a minority group reported that they do not feel safe in everyday life.

Compared to the 2019 survey, when 65% of respondents said that they do not feel safe in everyday life, this year the proportion increased to 70%. Figure 47 shows the change in perceived safety in everyday life over the period 2016–2020. Starting from 2017, we observe a decline in the percentage of respondents who say that they feel safe – from 51% in 2017 to 30% in 2020.

Figure 47: Perceived safety in everyday life 2016 –2020



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

Respondents who indicated that they did not feel safe in their everyday life were asked to identify the three main factors that made them feel unsafe. Similar to the survey of 2019, the three main factors were criminality (59%), health issues (49%), and employment insecurity (41%). The newly added option, “feelings of insecurity due to disasters such as earthquakes and pandemics”, was mentioned by one in four, or 27% of the respondents. Other commonly cited factors were injustice (37%), politics (23%), and unequal wealth distribution (18%). Table 23 displays the list of reasons for feeling unsafe during 2016–2020.

Table 23: Reasons for feeling unsafe 2016–2020

Factors for feeling unsafe	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Crime (assault, burglary)	49%	58%	71%	67%	59% (N=1017)
Health issues	11%	30%	50%	49%	49% (N=833)
Employment insecurity	X	42%	52%	36%	41% (N=696)
Injustice	11%	32%	45%	36%	37% (N=632)
Feeling of insecurity due to natural disasters (e.g. earthquakes or pandemics)	X	X	X	X	27% (N=468)
Politics	5%	29%	45%	28%	23% (N=393)
Unequal wealth	3%	23%	23%	16%	18% (N=311)
Pollution	3%	12%	20%	17%	12% (N=214)
Drug use	6%	23%	29%	15%	9% (N=146)
Traffic	7%	11%	13%	13%	8% (N=135)
Domestic violence	3%	15%	19%	7%	6% (N=108)
Lack of free expression	1%	5%	11%	4%	3% (N=58)
Lack of confidentiality and protection when reporting wrongdoings	1%	6%	12%	3%	3% (N=44)
Discrimination on basis of sex, religion, wealth, social status	X	5%	7%	3%	1% (N=21)

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

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

Table 24: Satisfaction with public-service delivery across demographics 2020

Core services (all respondents)									Administrative services (only users)								
	Health	Education	Water	Public transport	Cleaning	Emergency	Judicial	Police		Social assistance	Employment	Property	Civil registry	Social insurance	Road transportation	Business reg. and licensing	Construction permits
TOTAL ** (% satisfied)	41%	49%	42%	32%	49%	40%	20%	33%		37%	29%	34%	68%	54%	56%	48%	29%
Gender																	
Female	41%	48%	41%	32%	49%	38%	19%	31%		38%	28%	35%	67%	52%	59%	50%	31%
Male	41%	50%	42%	32%	48%	41%	20%	34%		37%	29%	34%	69%	56%	54%	47%	28%
Age																	
18–25	39%	46%	39%	29%	48%	40%	19%	30%		49%	21%	37%	62%	53%	61%	46%	24%
26–35	40%	45%	39%	31%	48%	38%	18%	30%		37%	26%	31%	66%	55%	56%	49%	27%
36–45	41%	50%	42%	34%	48%	39%	20%	30%		35%	36%	35%	69%	57%	63%	52%	35%
46–55	40%	49%	46%	31%	49%	37%	19%	34%		38%	35%	34%	71%	54%	46%	48%	29%
56–65	43%	52%	43%	35%	46%	40%	22%	38%		31%	29%	33%	73%	49%	58%	50%	31%
66 and over	49%	58%	47%	40%	57%	49%	22%	43%		39%	27%	46%	78%	56%	36%	20%	27%
Educational attainment																	
Up to lower secondary*	35%	44%	37%	30%	42%	36%	18%	33%		30%	19%	25%	65%	41%	37%	32%	21%
High school	38%	46%	40%	33%	46%	36%	19%	31%		34%	24%	34%	66%	53%	53%	49%	29%
University	48%	54%	46%	34%	55%	46%	21%	35%		48%	37%	41%	72%	64%	64%	55%	35%

Core services (all respondents)								Administrative services (only users)									
	Health	Education	Water	Public transport	Cleaning	Emergency	Judicial	Police	Social assistance	Employment	Property	Civil registry	Social insurance	Road transportation	Business reg. and licensing	Construction permits	
TOTAL ** (% satisfied)	44%	49%	42%	32%	49%	40%	20%	33%	37%	29%	34%	68%	54%	56%	48%	29%	
Employment status																	
Employed	Total	44%	53%	45%	35%	52%	43%	22%	34%	43%	36%	35%	71%	60%	61%	55%	35%
	Public	62%	66%	54%	47%	66%	60%	35%	49%	58%	66%	51%	81%	78%	75%	80%	47%
	Private	38%	48%	40%	30%	48%	37%	17%	29%	38%	25%	29%	67%	54%	55%	49%	32%
Unemployed		31%	37%	32%	27%	39%	31%	14%	27%	29%	16%	27%	62%	44%	37%	19%	
Student		37%	46%	37%	23%	40%	31%	16%	27%	36%	16%	36%	47%	54%	35%	18%	
Retired		48%	55%	49%	38%	55%	46%	22%	41%	37%	26%	44%	80%	38%	16%	18%	
Income level																	
No income		32%	39%	34%	27%	40%	32%	15%	25%	30%	17%	28%	57%	32%	44%	32%	20%
Up to 24,000 ALL		42%	48%	40%	35%	48%	39%	21%	36%	38%	21%	36%	71%	50%	43%	39%	19%
24,001–50,000 ALL		46%	57%	46%	36%	55%	44%	22%	35%	40%	37%	34%	73%	58%	59%	55%	39%
50,001–70,000 ALL		51%	56%	48%	34%	54%	49%	24%	36%	51%	50%	43%	74%	73%	67%	63%	34%
Over 70,001 ALL		33%	33%	38%	21%	41%	35%	10%	32%	50%	21%	25%	60%	44%	48%	33%	17%
Geographic Representation																	
Urban		42%	48%	41%	34%	50%	40%	21%	34%	36%	29%	35%	66%	54%	56%	49%	29%
Rural		38%	50%	42%	29%	46%	40%	16%	30%	42%	28%	33%	74%	56%	56%	46%	30%

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

* 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).

Note: For core services, colours represent ≥ 5 p.p. difference with total response. For administrative services, colours represent ≥ 10 p.p. difference with total response.

4.7 Natural disasters

The year 2020 was marked by the aftermath of the November 2019 devastating earthquake in Albania, and the COVID-19 pandemic which caused major disruption to all facets of life in the country. To assess citizens' perspective on the handling of these events a new section, 'Natural disasters', was added to the Trust in Governance 2020 Opinion Poll.

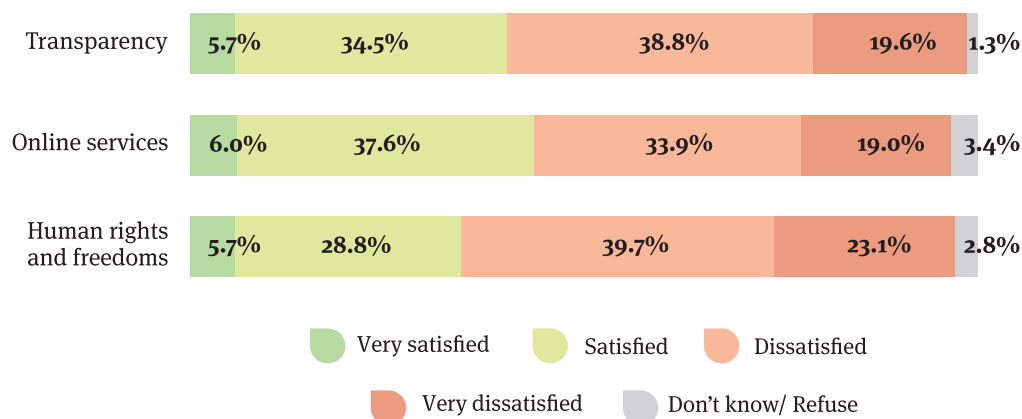
Survey participants were asked to rate their level of satisfaction on a four-point scale – from 1 (very satisfied) to 4 (very dissatisfied) – on three aspects that concerned the COVID-19 pandemic: the extent that the decision-making of central government was transparent, the provision of online alternatives for obtaining services (e.g., online consultation, online learning), and respect for human rights and freedoms. Another set of questions focused on government actions concerning the earthquake. Specifically, survey participants were asked to report their level of satisfaction with the government's initial post-earthquake response (e.g., communication with the public; the provision of care, shelter, and food; and damage assessment) both at the central and local level.

Governance during the COVID-19 pandemic

63% of the Albanian population surveyed were dissatisfied with the respect shown for human rights and freedoms, 58% were dissatisfied with the transparency of central government decision-making, and 53% were dissatisfied with the provision of online services during the COVID-19 pandemic. Higher levels of dissatisfaction were found mainly among younger age groups, students, the unemployed, private sector employees, and persons with disabilities.

40.3% of survey participants reported that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the extent that the decision-making of the central government was transparent, 43.7% were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with online services, and 34.5% were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the respect for human rights and freedoms during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 48: Citizens' satisfaction with crisis handling and governance during COVID-19 pandemic 2020



Base: Transparency (N=2496); online services (N=2497); human rights and freedoms (N=2491).

When broken down by gender, a higher percentage of men than women reported that they were satisfied with the transparency of decision-making, provision of online services, and respect for human rights and freedoms. Specifically, 39% of female respondents and 42% of male respondents were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the central government's transparency during the COVID-19 pandemic. 43% of female respondents and 45% of male respondents were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the provision of online services. 33% of female respondents and 36% of male respondents were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the respect shown for human rights and freedoms.

Respondents over 66 years old (51%), those with a university degree (45%), those employed in the public sector (65%), 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. Similarly, respondents over 66 years old (49%), those with a university degree (50%), employed in the public sector (66%), and with a monthly income between 50,001 and 70,000 ALL (55%) were more likely to report that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the provision of online services. Respondents over 66 years old (52%), employed in the public sector (54%), and with a monthly income between 50,001 and 70,000 ALL (41%) were also more likely to report that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the respect for human rights and freedoms. Respondents who reported that they do not have any income were more likely to express dissatisfaction with the transparency of decision-making (30%), online services (37%), and human rights and freedoms (33%). See Table 25 for the demographic breakdown of satisfaction with the governance of natural disasters.

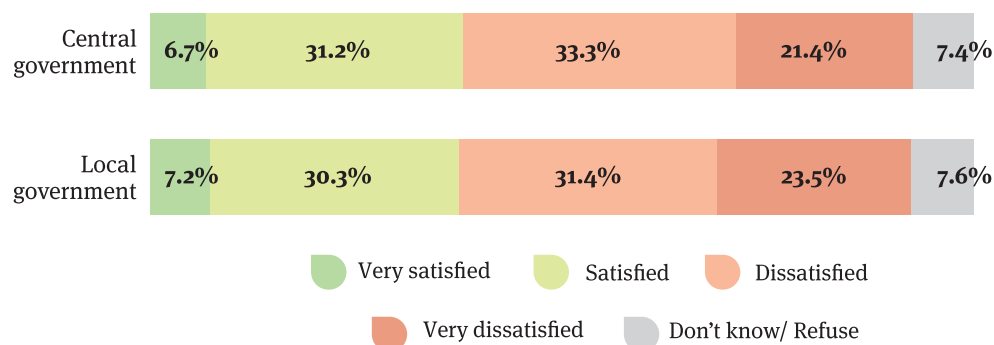
Persons with disabilities were more likely to express dissatisfaction with the transparency of decision-making. 71% of disabled survey respondents reported that they were ‘dissatisfied’ or ‘very dissatisfied’ with the transparency of decision-making; meanwhile, a significantly smaller percentage, 27%, said that they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’. This is in contrast to the 41% of non-disabled survey respondents who reported that they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the transparency of decision-making. Persons with disabilities were also less likely to report that they are ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the provision of online services (32%) and the protection of human rights and freedoms (25%).

Comparisons were also drawn between self-identified minority and non-minority members. 39% of study participants who identified themselves as a member of a minority group reported that they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the transparency of decision-making. The corresponding figure for those who did not identify as a member of a minority group was 41%. Differences as regards the provision of online services and the respect for human rights and freedoms were not substantial. Among those who self-identified as a minority, 43% reported that they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the provision of online services and 34% with the protection of human rights and freedoms. For those who did not self-identify as minority members, the percentages were 44 and 35, respectively.

The government’s initial post-earthquake response

More than half of the Albanian population surveyed were dissatisfied with the post-earthquake response of the central government (55%) and local government (55%). Dissatisfaction was more pronounced among younger age groups, the unemployed, students, private sector employees, and persons with disabilities.

Less than half of survey participants reported that they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the government’s initial post-earthquake response. Specifically, 37.9% reported that they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the central government’s initial post-earthquake response, and 37.5% reported that they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the local government’s response.

Figure 49: Citizens' satisfaction with government's initial post-earthquake response 2020

Base: Local government (N=2034); central government (N=2034).

Satisfaction with the central government's post-earthquake response was more pronounced among male respondents (39%) compared with female respondents (37%), as well as among respondents over 66 years old (47%), public sector employees (55%), and those with a monthly income between 50,001 and 70,000 ALL (45%). Similarly, satisfaction with the local government's post-earthquake response was greater among male respondents (39%) than female respondents (36%), as well as among respondents over 66 years old (48%), public sector employees (55%), and those with a monthly income between 50,001 and 70,000 ALL (43%). See Table 25 for the demographic breakdown of satisfaction with governance during natural disasters.

Persons with disabilities were significantly more likely to express dissatisfaction with the central government's post-earthquake response. Specifically, 67% of respondents with disabilities reported that they were 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with the central government's response; meanwhile, only 28% reported that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied'. 39% of respondents who said that they do not have a disability reported that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the central government's response. A similar pattern was found on the assessment of the local government response. 66% of respondents with disabilities reported that they were 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with the local government's post-earthquake response; only 29% reported that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied'. By contrast, 38% of respondents who said that they do not have a disability reported that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the local government's response.

There were no differences between self-identified minority members and non-minority members as regards 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 2020

	Transparency of 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)	40%	44%	34%	38%	38%
Gender					
Female	39%	43%	33%	37%	36%
Male	42%	45%	36%	39%	39%
Age					
18–25 years old	37%	42%	28%	36%	35%
26–35 years old	41%	45%	33%	38%	38%
36–45 years old	41%	43%	35%	37%	37%
46–55 years old	38%	42%	33%	33%	34%
56–65 years old	40%	43%	39%	43%	41%
66 and over	51%	49%	52%	47%	48%
Education					
Up to lower secondary *	34%	40%	30%	34%	36%
High school	39%	41%	35%	37%	36%
University degree	45%	50%	36%	41%	40%

	Transparency of 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)					
Employment					
Employed	Total	44%	47%	36%	39%
	Public	65%	66%	54%	55%
	Private	37%	41%	30%	34%
Unemployed		31%	36%	26%	33%
Student		34%	41%	29%	30%
Retired		46%	45%	46%	42%
Income					
No income		30%	37%	27%	35%
Up to 24,000 ALL		40%	42%	38%	37%
24,001–50,000 ALL		45%	48%	37%	40%
50,001–70,000 ALL		49%	55%	41%	43%
Over 70,001 ALL		47%	40%	32%	41%
Geographic representation					
Urban		41%	44%	34%	38%
Rural		39%	44%	35%	36%

* 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).

Note: Colours represent ≥ 5 p.p. difference with total responses.

4.8 Use of ICT

The digitalisation of public services is expected to make service delivery more efficient, effective, and transparent – resulting into lower levels of corruption and higher levels of citizen satisfaction with service delivery.²⁰ The e-governance platform e-Albania – launched in 2012 – offers 1922 services to individuals and businesses.²¹ In this section, respondents were asked questions about their knowledge and usage of the municipality website and the e-Albania portal. They were also asked questions about their impressions of the e-Albania portal.

Municipality website

Compared to 2019, a higher percentage of the Albanian population were aware that their municipality had a website (63% versus 54%). A higher percentage also used the website of the municipality (39% versus 36%). Younger age groups, respondents with university degree (or higher), students, public sector employees, and urban residents were more likely to report that their municipality had a website.

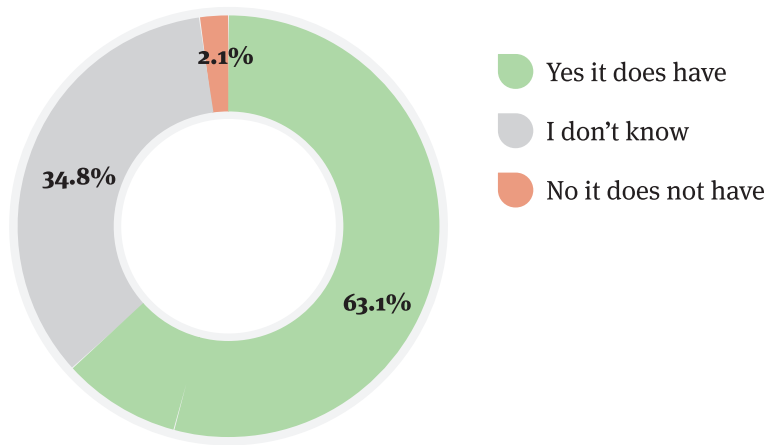
63.1% of study participants reported that their municipality has a website – a percentage higher than in 2019 (54%). 63% of female respondents and 63% of male respondents reported that their municipality has a website. Younger age groups (18-25: 80%, 26-35: 78%), respondents with university degree or higher (84.4%), students (79.5%), public sector employees (83.7%), and urban residents (63.3%) were more likely to report that their municipality has a website. Respondents with a disability (40%) or belonging to a minority group (45%) were less likely to indicate that they are aware of the existence of their municipality's website.

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20 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

21 E-Albania. (n.d.). Statistics for November 2020. Retrieved via: <https://e-albania.al/Pages/Statistics/statistika.pdf>

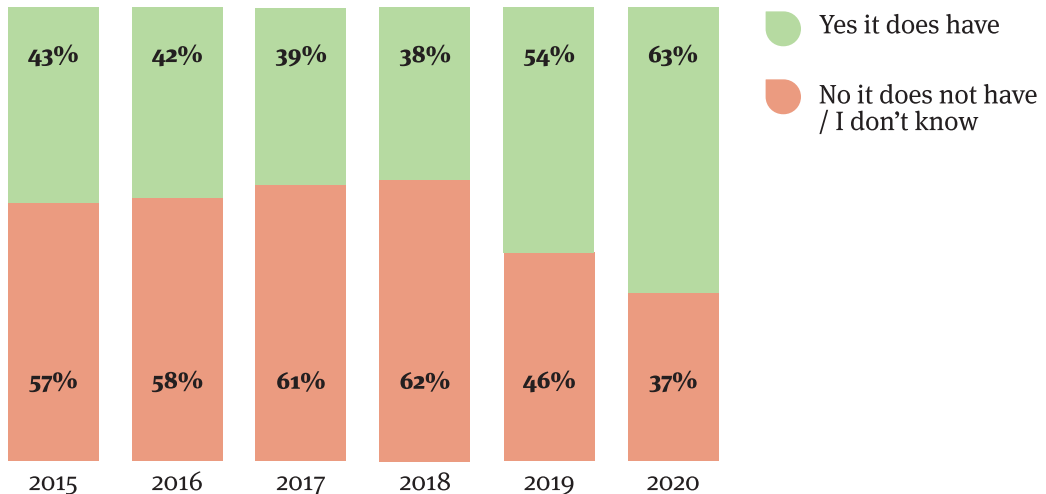
Figure 50: Do you know if your municipality has a website?



Base: N = 2500

The percentage of respondents reporting that their municipality has a website has increased over time. 43% of respondents in the study of 2015 and 63% of respondents in the study of 2020 reported that their municipality has a website – an increase of 20 p.p.

Figure 51: Do you know if your municipality has a website? 2015–2020



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

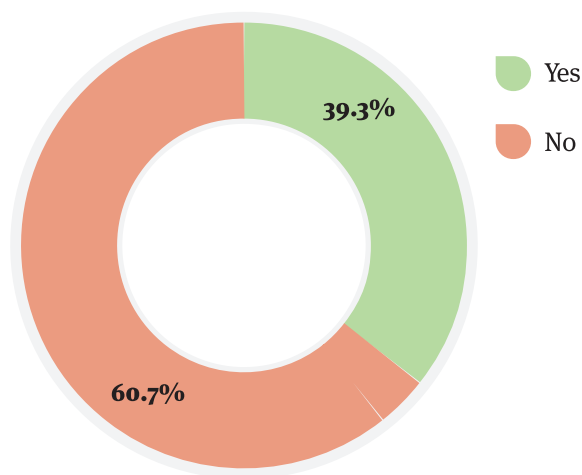
*Note: Since 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

Quality and reasons for using the municipality website

The main reason for using the website of the municipality in 2020 was ‘to receive information on available services and where and how to access them’. Women, younger age groups, respondents with university degree (or higher), students, and public sector employees were more likely to report that they use the website of the municipality.

39.3% of study participants reported that they use the website of the municipality – a percentage higher than in 2019 (35.7%), 2018 (35%) and 2017 (33%). In 2016, 41% of the respondents indicated that they use the municipality’s website.

Figure 52: Proportion of respondents that uses municipality website 2020



Base: N = 1575

When checking across demographics, no substantial differences were found for geographical representation and whether a respondent belongs to a minority group. 42% of female respondents and 37% of male respondents reported that they use the website of the municipality – a difference of 5.4 p.p. Younger age groups, respondents with university degree or higher (49%), students (42%), public sector employees (59%), respondents with a disability (47%) were more likely to report that they use the website of the municipality.

The main reason for using the website of the municipality was ‘to receive information on available services and where and how to access them’ (12.5%), followed by ‘to receive

information (check programs/events in my city/town)' (11.4%), 'to follow council decisions' (5.1%), 'to send complaints, comments to a municipal department/staff' (2.5%).

Table 26: Reasons for using the website of the municipality 2020

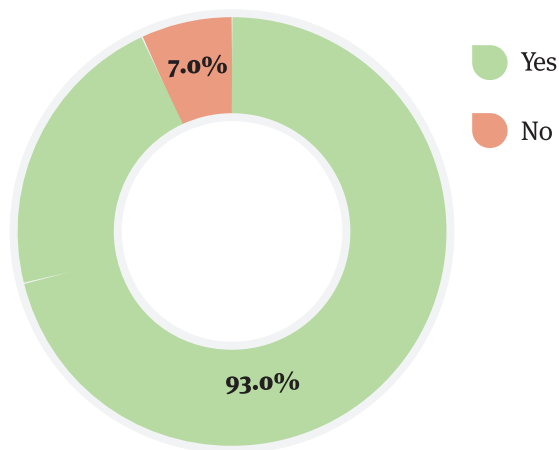
	Proportion of respondents
To receive information (check programs/events in my city/town)	11.4% (n = 284)
To follow council decisions, I read minutes of meetings	5.1% (n = 127)
To send complaints, comments to a municipal department/staff	2.5% (n = 62)
To receive information on types of available services and where and how to access them	12.5% (n = 313)
Other*:	1.6% (n = 40)

*Other: For all of the abovementioned reasons, or to obtain information on job vacancies.

E-governance in Albania

Compared to 2019, a higher percentage of the Albanian population indicated that they are aware that the government administration offers electronic services through the e-Albania portal (93% versus 71%) and that they have received electronic services through the e-Albania portal (74% versus 53%). Younger age groups, respondents with university degree (or higher), students, and public sector employees were more likely to report that they have received services through the e-Albania portal. Compared to 2019, a smaller percentage of Albanians assessed electronic services as being functional, easy to use, and providing citizens the opportunity to express comments/suggestions.

93.0% of study participants reported that they are aware that government administration offers electronic services through the e-Albania portal – a percentage significantly higher than in 2019. In 2019, 71.2% of study participants reported that they were aware of the e-Albania portal.

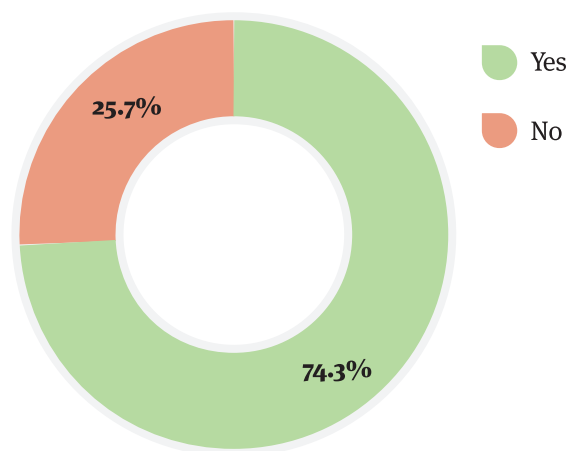
Figure 53: Awareness of the e-Albania portal 2020

Base: N = 2492

93% of female respondents and 94% of male respondents reported that they are aware of the e-Albania portal. Younger age groups, respondents with university degree or higher (99%), students (97%), those employed (96%), and urban residents (94%) were more likely to report that they are aware of the e-Albania portal. Respondents belonging to a minority group (84%) or with a disability (84%) were less likely to report that they are aware that government administration offers electronic services through the e-Albania portal.

74.3% of study participants reported that they have received electronic services through e-Albania in 2020. In the study 2019, 53.1% of study participants reported that they have received electronic services through e-Albania.

Figure 54: Have you received any electronic services through the e-Albania portal? 2020

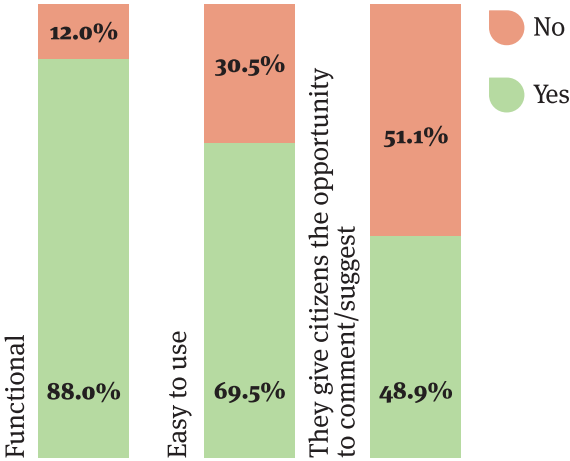


Base: N = 2317

When checking across demographics, no substantial differences were found for gender and geographical representation. 75% of female respondents and 74% of male respondents said that they have received electronic services through the e-Albania portal. Younger age groups, respondents with university degree or higher (87%), students (90%), and public sector employees (88%) were more likely to report that they have received services through the portal. Respondents that have a disability (62%) and respondents that belong to a minority group (65%) are less likely to have received electronic services through the e-Albania portal.

Electronic services were rated across three criteria: being functional, easy to use, and providing citizens the opportunity to express comments/suggestions. 88.0% of the survey respondents said that electronic services are functional, 69.5% said that they are easy to use, and 48.9% said that they give citizens the opportunity to express comments/suggestions. These percentages are smaller than in 2019. Specifically, in 2019 they were 94.6%, 80.1%, and 60.0%, respectively.

Figure 55 Quality assessment of e-services through the e-Albania portal 2020



Base: Functionality (N=1670); easy to use (N=1634); option for feedback (N=1624).

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.²² Albanian women, compared to men, are more likely to attend the university. Despite these achievements, women continue to be underrepresented in decision-making and they are expected to bear the burden of childcare and housework.²³ The section on gender and social inclusion captures citizens' perceptions concerning gender differences in access to public services and capability to hold public positions. Respondents were asked whether they have been treated differently by institutions/public officials on the basis of gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, or other reasons. The last question of the section sought to understand citizens' beliefs as regards the increased presence of women in local councils and its impact on local governance.

Perceptions about gender equality in Albanian society

Less than 50% of the Albanian population agreed that there is equality between men and women – a percentage smaller than in 2019 (45% versus 54%). Men were more likely than women to agree that there is equality between men and women. The unemployed, students, and people with up to lower secondary education were less likely to agree that there is equality between men and women.

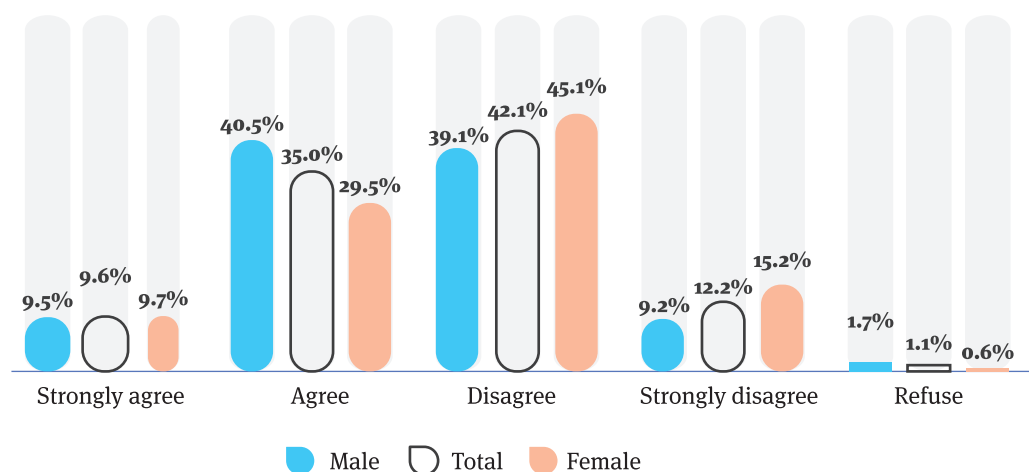
“ Statement 1: “There is equality between men and women in Albanian society”

Study participants were asked to assess the extent that they agreed with 3 statements on gender equality in Albania on a 4-point scale – from 1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree). 44.6% of the respondents reported that they ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement “There is equality between men and women in Albanian society” – a percentage smaller than in 2019 (54.3%). Men were more likely than women to agree with the statement. Specifically, 50.0% of male respondents and 39.2% of female respondents reported that they ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement.

• • • • •

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

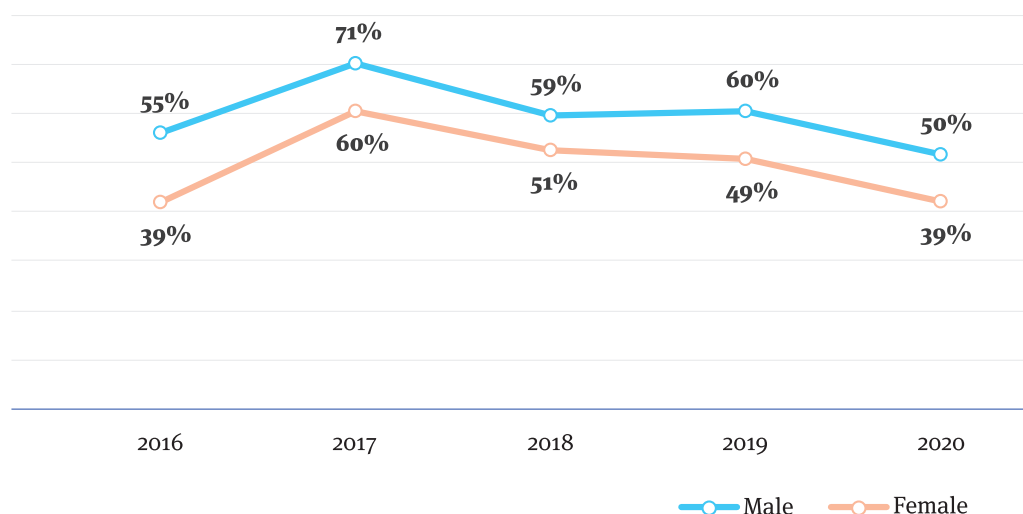
23 Dauti, M. and Zhllima, E. (2016). *Public Perceptions and Attitudes toward Gender Equality in Albania*. Tirana: UNDP . http://www.al.undp.org/content/dam/albania/docs/STU-DIMI_PERCEPTIMET_eng.pdf

Figure 56: Equality between men and women in Albanian society 2020

Base: N = 2497

Respondents 'over 65 years old' were more likely to agree with the statement "There is equality between men and women in Albanian society". 51% of respondents 'over 65 years old' said that they 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the statement. Meanwhile, the percentage of respondents between 18 and 25 years old was 43. A higher percentage of respondents with university degree or higher agreed with the statement "There is equality between men and women in Albanian society". Specifically, 46% of respondents with university degree (or higher), 45% of respondents with high school education, and 42% of respondents with up to lower secondary education reported that they 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the statement. Differences, however, were not substantial. The unemployed (36%) and students (39%) were less likely to 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the statement. Members of political parties (60%), compared to non-members (43%), were more likely to report that they 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the statement.

Comparing this year's results to the 2019 Opinion Poll, a smaller percentage of male and female respondents 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with the statement "There is equality between men and women in Albanian society". Whereas in 2020, 50% of the male respondents agreed with the statement, in 2019 60% agreed. Similarly, in 2020 39% of the female respondents agreed with the statement compared to 49% in 2019 – a decrease of 10 p.p. for each gender. This means that the proportion of female and male respondents that agrees with the statement is similar to the findings in 2016, when this question was first included in the survey.

Figure 57: Equality between men and women in Albanian society 2016–2020

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

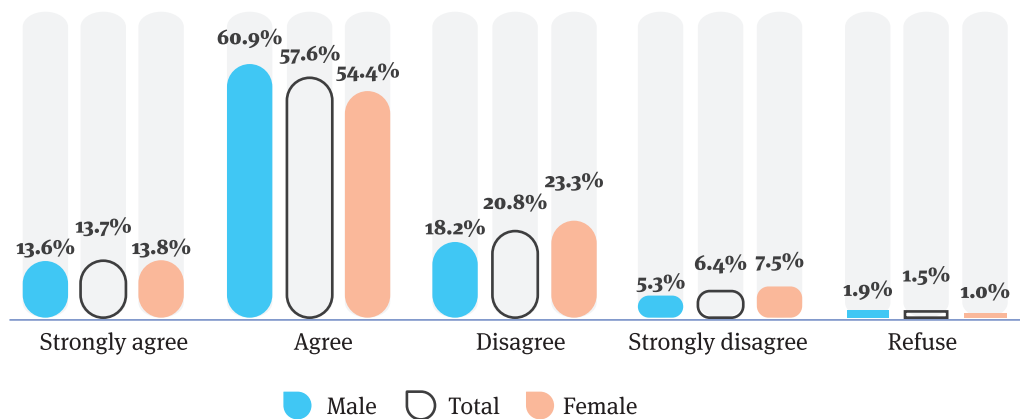
*Note: Since 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

Access to public services across genders

Around 70% of the Albanian population believed that men and women have the same access to public services. Women were less likely than men to agree that there is equality in access to public services. Further, the unemployed, students, private sector employees, and people with up to lower secondary education were less likely to agree that men and women have the same access to public services.

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

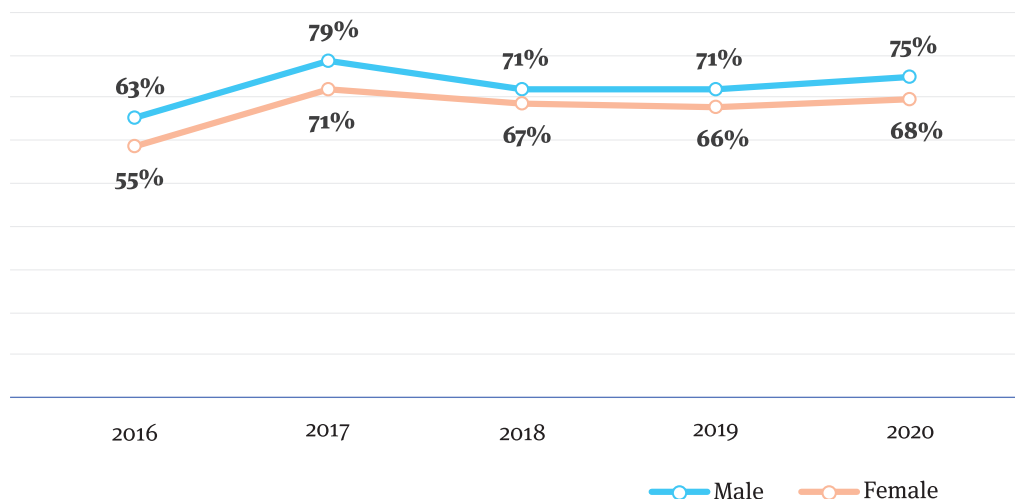
71.3% of study participants said that they ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement “In Albania, men and women have the same access to the public services”. 74.5% of male respondents and 68.2% of female respondents reported that they ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement.

Figure 58: In Albania, women and men have the same access to public services 2020

Base: N = 2496

74.1% of study participants between 26 and 35 years old said that they ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement “In Albania, men and women have the same access to the public services”. The percentage was not too different from respondents over 36 years old. For instance, 72% of study participants between 56 and 65 years old said that they ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement. 75% of study participants with university degree (or higher), 69% with high school education, and 72% with up to lower secondary education said that they ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement. The unemployed (66%) and students (64%) were less likely to ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement. Private sector employees (71%) were less likely than public sector employees (81%) to ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement.

While this year’s percentages have not reached the level of 2017 (79% and 71%, respectively), they are higher than in 2019. The percentage of male respondents who ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement has increased with 4 p.p. and the percentage of female respondents has increased with 2 p.p. from 2019 to 2020.

Figure 59: In Albania, women and men have the same access to public services 2016-2020

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

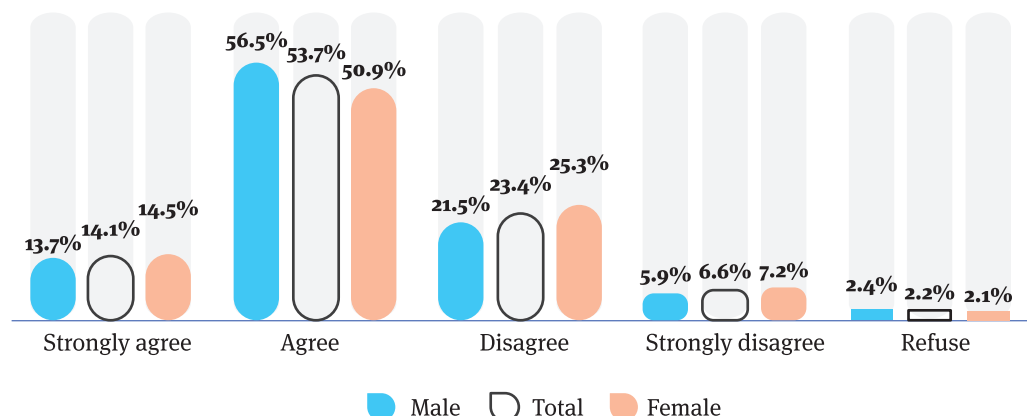
*Note: Since 2019 the sampling method was changed to a nationally representative sample.

Public services delivery across genders

A majority of the Albanian population surveyed believed that public servants serve with the same devotion and ethics to women and men. Women were less likely than men to agree with the statement. The unemployed, students, and private sector employees were less likely to indicate that women and men are treated equally by public servants.

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

67.8% of study participant reported that they ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement “In Albania, public servants serve with the same devotion and ethics to women and men”. This percentage is similar to the study of 2019 (67.5%). 70.2% of male respondents and 65.4% of female respondents said that they ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement “Public servants serve women and men with the same ethics and devotion”.

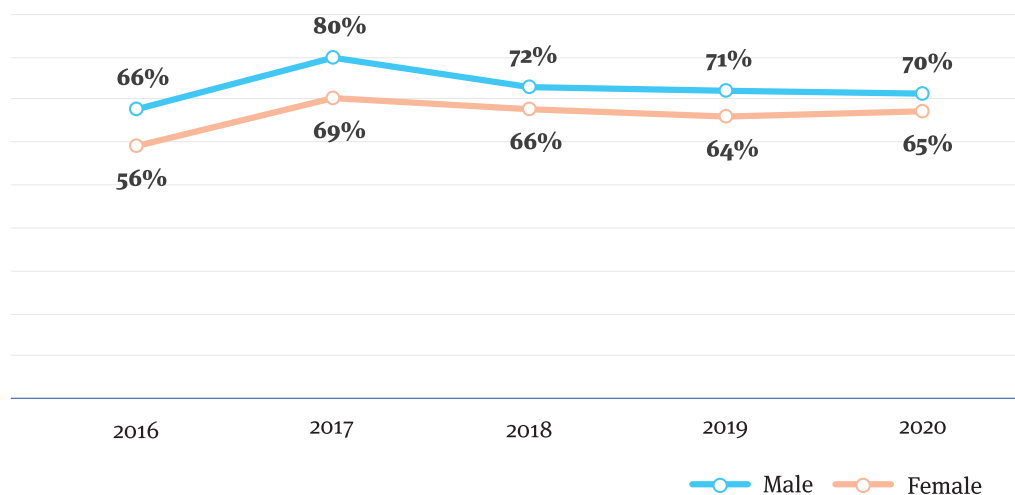
Figure 60: Public servants serve women and men with the same ethics and devotion 2020

Base: N = 2492

Respondents over 65 years old were more likely to agree with the statement. 74.3% of respondents over 65 years old said that they ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement. Meanwhile, 62% of respondents between 18 and 25 years old said that they ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’. Respondents with university degree or higher (74%) – compared to those with high school education (64%) and up to lower secondary education (66%) – were more likely to report that they agree with the statement. The unemployed (60%) and students (61%) were less likely to ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement. Private sector employees (67%), compared to public sector employees (79%), were less likely to report that they ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement. Members of political parties (75%), compared to non-members (66%), were more likely to report that they ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement “Public servants serve women and men with the same ethics and devotion”.

The percentage of male and female respondents who ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement “In Albania, public servants serve with the same devotion and ethics to women and men” has not changed substantially after 2018. Compared to 2016, however, the proportion of respondents that agrees with the statement increased with 4 p.p. and 10 p.p. respectively.

Figure 61: Public servants serve women and men with the same ethics and devotion 2016-2020



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

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

Discrimination by institutions or public officials

Similar to 2019, approximately 1 in 8 Albanians reported being treated differently by an institution or public official on the basis of gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, a disability, or something else. Of those that had suffered discrimination in 2020, 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. 11.7% of study participants reported that they have been treated differently because of their gender (3.6%), age (4.4%), ethnicity (1.4%), sexual orientation (0.1%), disability (0.9%), or other reasons (1.3%). 88.3% of study participants reported that they have not been treated differently.

Table 27: Discrimination by institutions 2020

I have been treated differently	11.7% (n=292)
Gender	3.6% (n=91)
Age	4.4% (n=111)
Ethnicity	1.4% (n=34)
Sexual orientation	0.1% (n=2)
Disability	0.9% (n=22)
Other*	1.3% (n=32)
I have not been treated differently	88.3% (n=2207)

Base: N = 2499

*Other: For example, discrimination on the basis of origin, economic status, and political views.

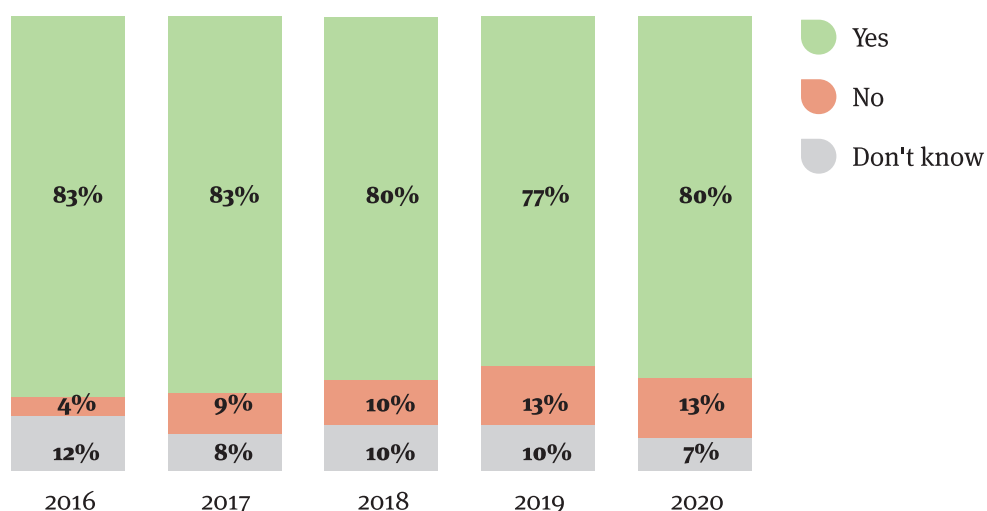
There were differences in reporting across demographic groups. For gender-based discrimination, women (6.2%) reported more often than men (1.1%) that they have faced discrimination. Further, respondents in the age category of 26-35 years old (4.3%), the age category of 36-45 years old (5.9%), and employed in the private sector (4.1%) reported more often that they were treated differently by an institution or a public official based on their gender. As regards age-based discrimination, respondents over 65 years old (15.1%), with up to lower secondary education (6.9%), and employed in the private sector (2.6%) reported more often that they were treated differently by an institution or a public official based on their age. Because of the small number of respondents who reported that they were treated differently because of their sexual orientation (N = 2), disability (N = 22), and ethnicity (N=34), particularly when combining these findings with respondents that self-report that they are disabled or respondents that report to be a member of a minority group, we refrain from reporting these results.

Women in the decision-making process

80% of the Albanian population surveyed thought that women and men are equally capable of holding any public position. Women, younger people, and those with university degrees (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”. 79.6% of respondents chose the answer ‘yes’, in other words they thought that “women and men are equally capable for holding any public position”. Meanwhile, 13.3% chose the answer ‘no’. A smaller percentage, 7.1%, said that they ‘don’t know’. Compared to the study of 2019, a higher percentage of study participants (80% versus 77%) said that “women and men are equally capable for holding any public position”.

Figure 62: Women and men are equally capable for holding any public position 2016-2020



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

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

Women (85.2%), compared to men (73.8%), were more likely to say that “women and men are equally capable for holding any public position”.

Figure 63: Gender differences for women and men are equally capable for holding public positions 2020

Male



Female



Base: N = 2498

Respondents in the age groups 18 to 25 (82%), 25 to 36 (83%), 36 to 45 (80%) and 46 to 55 (82%), respondents with university degree or higher (86%), and respondents with an income of 70 001 ALL or more (85%) were more likely to think that “women and men are equally capable for holding any public position”.

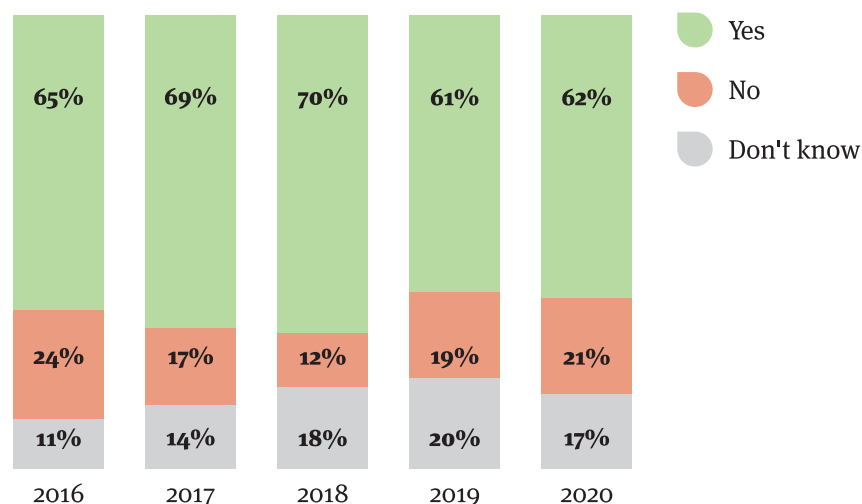
Women's impact on local governance

Similar to 2019, 6 in 10 Albanians thought that an increased number of women in municipal councils will have a positive impact on local governance. Women were significantly more likely than men to report that an increased presence of women in municipal councils will have a positive impact on local governance. Albanians between 26 and 35 years old and between 56 and 65 years old, with up to lower secondary education, and employed in the private sector were more likely to be sceptical of the impact of women's numbers on local governance.

Respondents were asked if they believe that the increased presence of women in municipal councils has a positive impact on local governance. 62.3% study participants believed that the increased presence of women in municipal councils has a positive impact on local governance. A smaller percentage, 21.2%, said that it does not have a positive impact and 16.5% were not sure.

Compared to the study of 2019, a higher percentage of study participants were slightly more sceptical about the impact of women's presence in municipal councils. Differences, however, were not substantial.

Figure 64: Positive impact of increased female representation in the municipal council 2016–2020



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

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

Male respondents (53%), compared to female respondents (72%), were less likely to believe that the increased presence of women in municipal councils will have a positive impact on local governance – a significant gender gap of 19 percentage points. Respondents between 26 and 35 years old (59%) and between 56 and 65 years old (58%) were more likely to be sceptical about the impact of women's numbers on local governance. Respondents with up to lower secondary education (57%), compared to those with high school education (61%) and university-level education or higher (67%), were less likely to believe that the increased presence of women in municipal councils will have a positive impact. Private sector employees (59%), compared to public sector employees (70%), were more likely to be sceptical.

APPENDIX 1:

Sample characteristics 2013–2020

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Gender								
Male	45%	49%	50%	43%	51%	52%	49%	49%
Female	55%	50%	50%	57%	49%	48%	51%	51%
Other (new in 2020)								< 0.1
Age groups								
18 – 25	14%	23%	22%	18%	19%	16%	19%	17%
26 – 35	14%	22%	25%	23%	23%	23%	26%	27%
36 – 45	14%	18%	16%	19%	19%	19%	20%	20%
46 – 55	19%	18%	17%	18%	19%	20%	16%	17%
56 – 65	20%	10%	11%	13%	11%	13%	12%	12%
66 and over	18%	7%	8%	9%	9%	9%	7%	7%
Geographical representation								
Urban			81%	51%	50%	50%	70%	73%
Rural			19%	49%	50%	50%	30%	27%
Education Level								
No education + elementary education	1%	1%	3%	6%	5%	7%	4%	4%
Middle secondary education	14%	15%	12%	19%	17%	23%	18%	18%
High school	40%	41%	40%	50%	50%	46%	44%	42%
University degree	44%	42%	43%	24%	28%	24%	33%	36%
Employment Status								
Employed	40%	46%	45%	43%	46%	46%	54%	58%
Unemployed	20%	25%	28%	35%	34%	32%	25%	24%
Student	8%	10%	9%	8%	7%	6%	7%	7%
Retired	26%	9%	11%	12%	12%	12%	11%	1%
Other	3%	5%	7%	2%	1%	4%	3%	<1%
Employment Sector								
Public				32%	29%	28%	25%	28%
Private				64%	71%	69%	72%	70%
Other				4%		3%	3%	2%

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Regular individual monthly income (Net)								
No income			34%	33%	37%	32%	29%	28%
Up to 24,000 ALL			21%	25%	24%	28%	25%	19%
24,001 – 50,000 ALL			29%	28%	25%	28%	28%	32%
50,001 – 70,000 ALL			6%	4%	5%	4%	7%	12%
Over 70,001 ALL			2%	1%	2%	<1%	2%	2%
Are you a member of a minority group?								
Yes					9%	7%	6%	4%
Greek					3.2%	2.7%	1.5%	1.1%
Macedonian					1.6%	1.1%	0.9%	0.6%
Aromanian					<0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	<0.1%
Roma					2.3%	2.4%	1.5%	1.1%
Egyptian					0.9%	0.2%	0.9%	0.4%
Montenegrin					0%	0%	0.1%	0.1%
Bosnian					0.2%	<0.1%	0.2%	0.2%
Serbian					0%	0%	<0.1%	<0.1%
Bulgarian					<0.1%	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%
No					90%	92%	93%	94%
Do you have a disability?								
Yes					7.3%	5.0%	6.5%	5.2%
No					92.2%	94.1%	92.7%	93.9%
Yes					40%	36%	35%	34%
Do you have a political party preference?								
SP					15.5%	16.1%	12.3%	11.9%
DP					8.5%	9.2%	8.1%	8.4%
SMI					3.4%	1.2%	2.1%	2.4%
Other					0.7%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%
No					52%	58%	60%	59%
Are you a member of a political party?								
Yes					16%	12%	13%	10%
SP					6.9%	6.6%	4.6%	4.1%
DP					2.6%	3.0%	2.9%	1.9%
SMI					2.2%	0.8%	0.9%	1.1%
Other					0.6%	<0.1%	0.2%	<0.1%
No					75%	81%	82%	81%

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

