



RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS IN KOSOVO AND SERBIA TOWARDS PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

COMPARATIVE POLICY
BRIEF

W B WESTERN BALKANS
S B SECURITY BAROMETER

2020 FIRST REGIONAL
SURVEY EDITION



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Perceptions presented in this report are a summary of information gathered from respondents and it only demonstrates how people percept institutions. It is in no way a conclusive assessment of the quality of the work of institutions subject to this study. It shall serve as an instrument to them for addressing potential shortcomings but also an indicator of the effectiveness of their communication with the people.

The views presented in this report are perceptions of the respondents and do not necessarily represent the views of the Kosovar Centre for Security Studies and the Belgrade Centre for Security Policy. Opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily represent the views of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED).

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NOVEMBER 2020

PROJECT SUPPORTED BY:



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This overview is one of the outputs of the regional project **“Western Balkans Security Barometer”** (WBSB), led by the Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS) in partnership with the Belgrade Centre for Security Policy (BCSP) in Serbia. Bearing in mind the complexities and the ongoing political dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia that could potentially lead to resolution, the project was initiated by launching the first regional survey targeting both countries. This edition of the WBSB presents the findings of this survey conducted simultaneously in Kosovo and Serbia in September-October 2020.

Both organisations, KCSS and BCSP, have published their respective country reports, in which data on the following issues: i) trust in security, justice, central and local institutions in Kosovo and Serbia, ii) frequency of respondents’ direct contact with principal security and justice institutions in Kosovo and Serbia, and iii) respondents’ perceptions on the pervasiveness of corruption in key institutions in Kosovo and Serbia, are analysed and quantitatively interpreted. This comparative policy brief is intended as an overview of the key findings of both country reports, and serves as a tool to compare Kosovar and Serbian respondents’ perceptions on public institutions.

The key findings in terms of trust, perception of corruption and frequency of contact in public institutions by citizens of both countries respectively, are as follows:

Overall, in Kosovo the security institutions seem to enjoy the highest levels of public trust followed by municipalities while in Serbia it is the central institutions followed by security institutions that resulted the most trusted.

- Overall, in Kosovo the security institutions seem to enjoy the highest levels of public trust followed by municipalities while in Serbia it is the central institutions followed by security institutions that resulted the most trusted.

- A common pattern that came from responses of the citizens in both countries when it comes to trust is that they both consider the security institutions and in particular the military as among the most trusted. At the same time, they both consider justice institutions as among the least trusted which is a key indicator that indicates for a presence of the overspread corruption in the top level of both societies.

- Open-ended questions of the survey show that in both countries the number of respondents having no trust at any institution is not lower though – in Serbia with 15 percent compared to Kosovo with 12 percent.

- With small differences, similarity in perceptions between respondents in Kosovo and Serbia were noticed also regarding the corruption. In Kosovo, the institutions perceived as most corrupted resulted being the Government, Courts, Prosecution and Customs while the least corrupted ones were considered Kosovo Security Force followed by Kosovo Correctional Services, Kosovo Police and municipalities. In Serbia, the institutions perceived as most corrupted are Prosecution, Courts, Serbian Police, Government and municipalities while the least perceived corrupted have resulted Armed Forces and Correctional Service.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#The WBSB survey results also show the low frequency of respondents' interaction in both countries with only the municipalities and police resulted being the institutions that have frequently contact with their respective citizens.

PERCEPTIONS ON PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS IN KOSOVO AND SERBIA:

Trust, Contact and Corruption

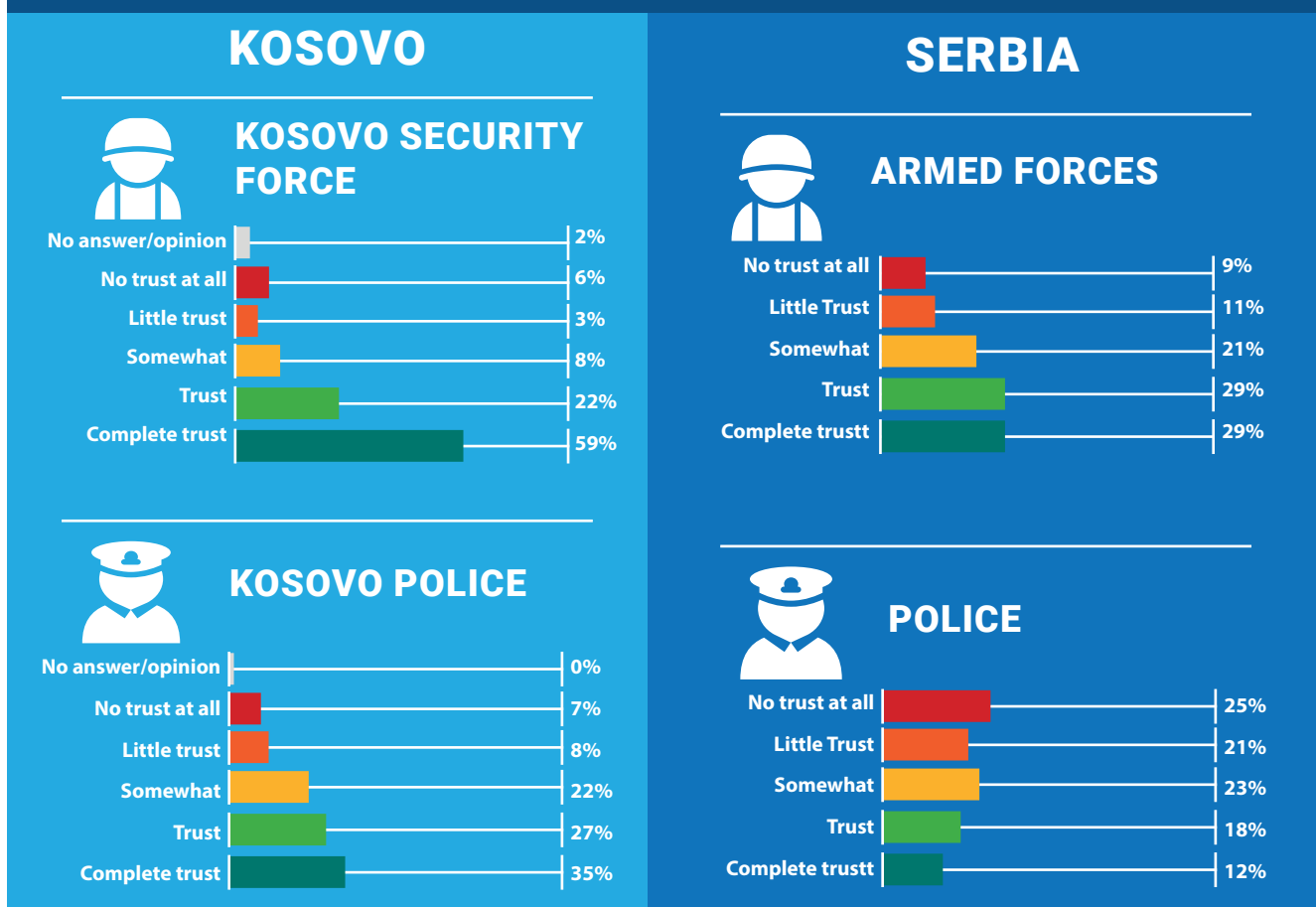
1. Most trusted public institutions in Kosovo and Serbia

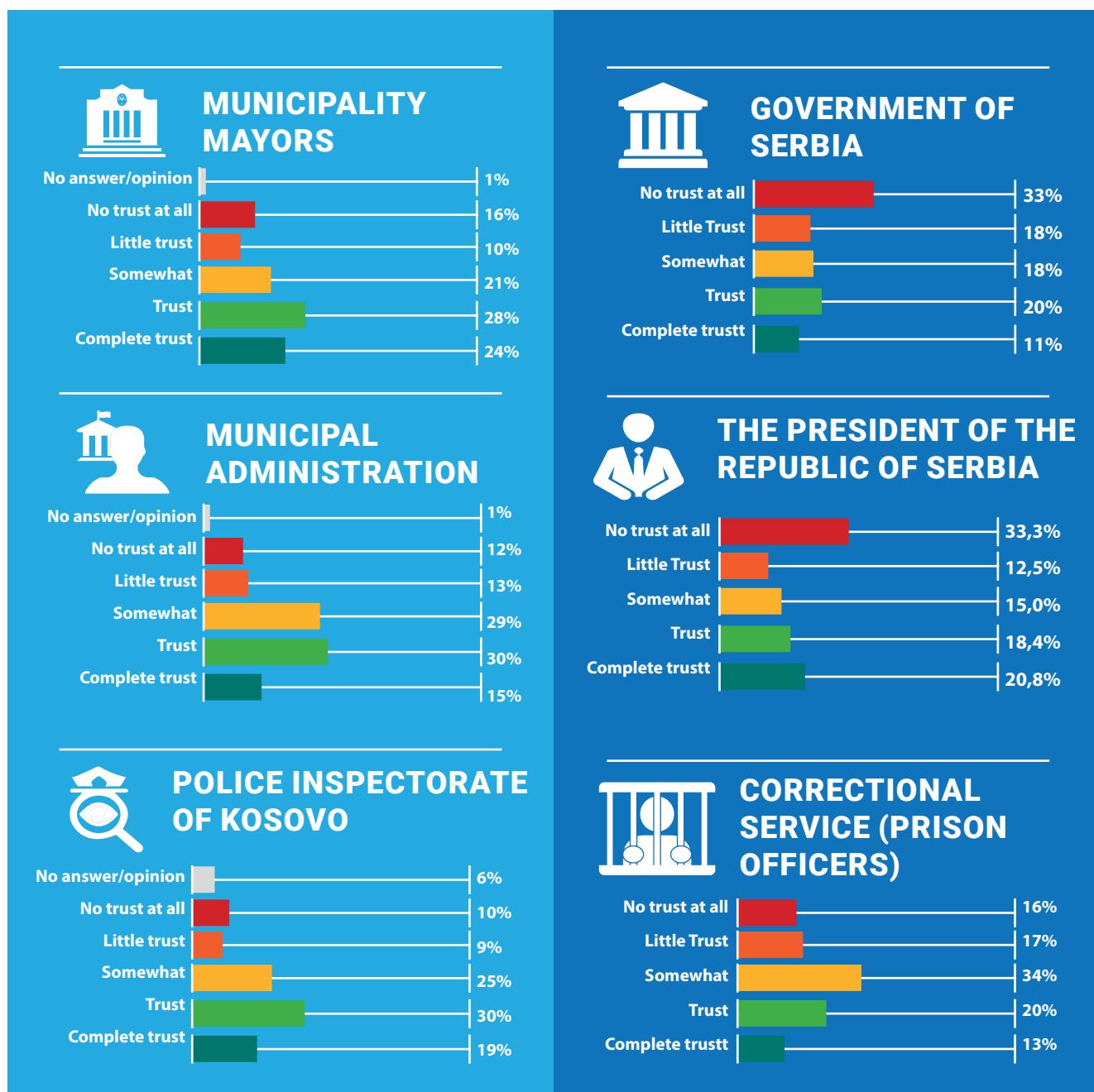
The results of the WBSB 2020 indicate that respondents in Kosovo and Serbia have different perceptions when considering their trust in public institutions in the respective countries.

In this regard, based on results gathered in Kosovo, the most trusted public institutions are primarily security institutions and municipalities. More precisely, the Kosovo list is topped by the Kosovo Security Force (with a total of 81 percent of respondents having various degrees of trust), followed by the Kosovo Police (62 percent), municipality mayors (52 percent), Police Inspectorate of Kosovo (49 percent) and administration of municipalities (45 percent).

On the other hand, although Serbia's security institutions are, similarly to Kosovo's, ranked among the most trusted institutions by respondents, when compared to Kosovo the level of respondent's trust in security institution in Serbia seems to be significantly lower. The Serbian Armed Forces are the most trusted institution in Serbia, by more than half of respondents (around 58 percent), followed by other well trusted public institutions such as: President of Serbia (39 percent), Correctional Service/prison officers (34 percent), Government of Serbia (31 percent) and Serbian Police (30 percent). It is worth mentioning that there are enormous differences in terms of public trust in police institutions in Kosovo and Serbia – while 62 percent of Kosovar respondents' tend to have solid trust in the Kosovo Police, trust in the police is lower in Serbia, with only 30 percent of respondents having solid trust in the Police. However, the results of trust in the Serbian Police show that around 23 percent of respondents have somewhat trust on this security institution.

TABLE 1 MOST TRUSTED PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS (CLOSED-ENDED QUESTIONS):

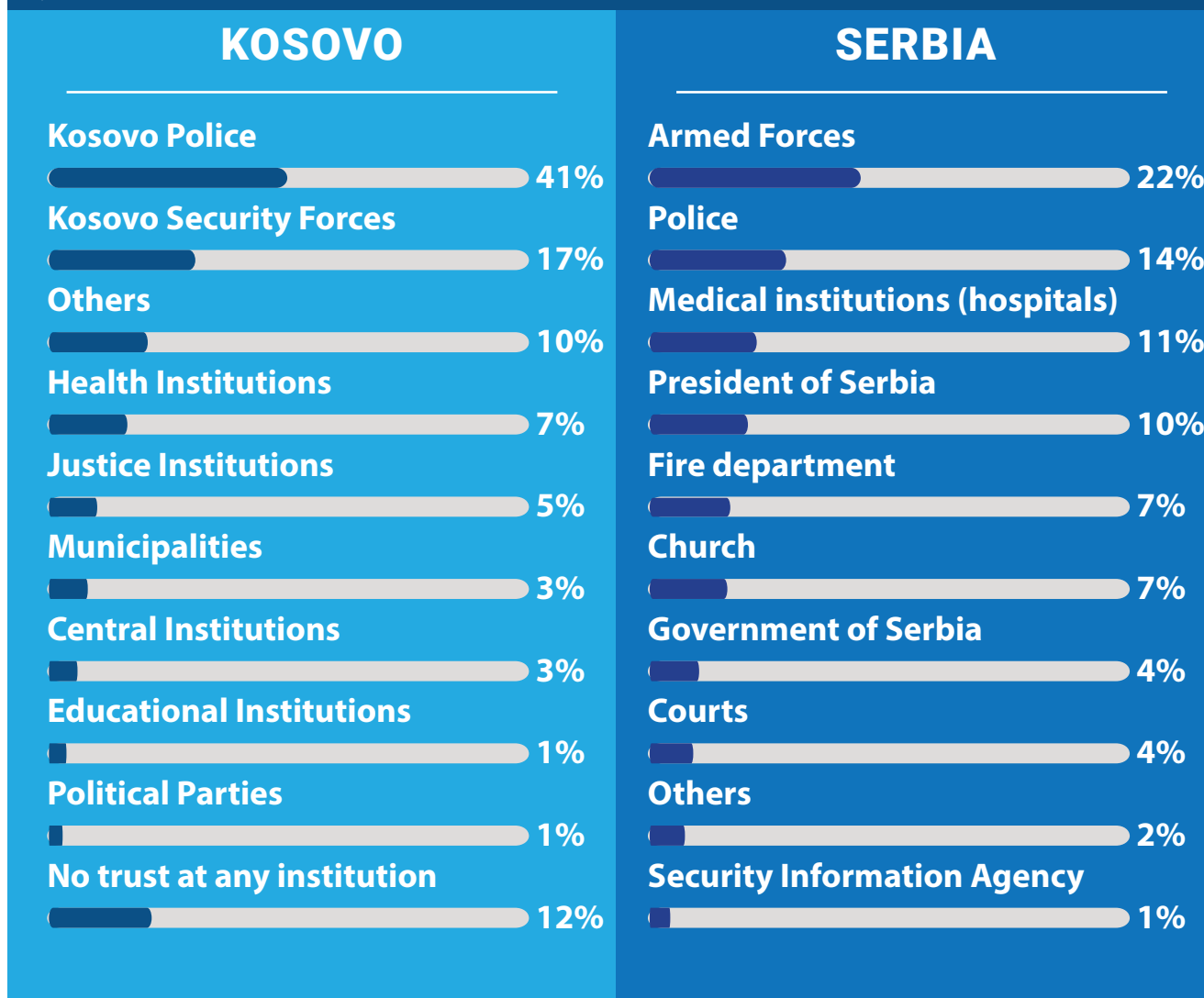




The WBSW 2020 had a specific open-ended question as to which institution the respondents trust the most without pre-determined options. Kosovar respondents ranked the Kosovo Police first in the list with 41 percent followed by Kosovo Security Force with 17 percent. However, it is important to notice that the number of respondents who have no trust at any institution is 12 percent in total.

While, the respondents in Serbia put the Armed Forces as the most trusted by 22 percent which is significantly lower to Kosovo Security Force when comparing to Kosovo. The second most trusted is ranked by the Serbian Police with 14 percent. However, one can note that that the number of respondents showing no trust at any Serbian institutions is higher than in Kosovo institutions – from 15 percent in Serbia to 12 percent in Kosovo.

TABLE 2 TEN MOST TRUSTED INSTITUTIONS ACCORDING TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION RESULTS:



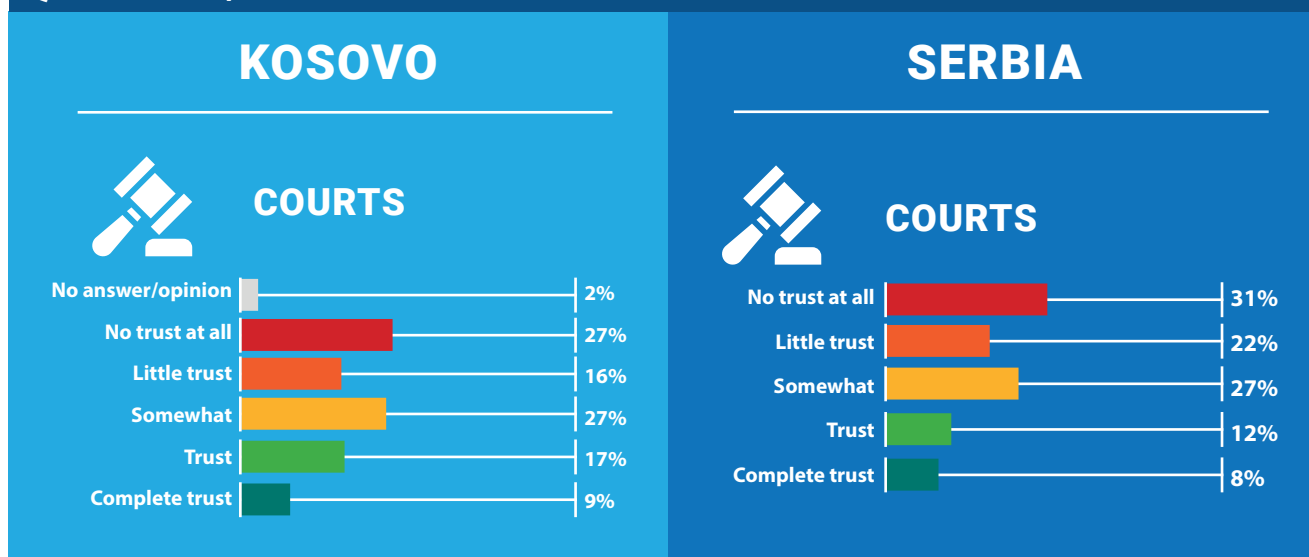
2. Least trusted public institutions in Kosovo and Serbia

In terms of the least trusted institutions in Kosovo, the WBSB data interpretation indicates that when it comes to central institutions, the Kosovo Government and Kosovo Assembly are the least trusted by Kosovar respondents. The low level of trust in both central institutions reveals that they are not perceived positively by respondents, as less than 20 percent of them have trust in these institutions. Accordingly, the least trusted institution in Kosovo is the Government, with 13% of respondents having trust in it (while 70 percent of them have no trust), followed closely by the Kosovo Assembly, with 16 percent of respondents stating they have trust in the work of the Assembly (while 58 percent of them have no trust).

Next in line in the list of least trusted public institutions by Kosovar respondents are the Anti-Corruption Agency (21 percent of respondents have trust in it), President of Kosovo (22 percent of respondents have trust in the institution), Courts (26 percent of respondents have trust in them), Kosovo Intelligence Agency (29 percent of respondents have trust in it) and Prosecution (30 percent of respondents have trust in it). Slightly higher level of trust is shown in the Kosovo Correctional Service (34 percent of respondents have trust in it) and Kosovo Customs (38 percent of respondents have trust in it), as shown in the table below.

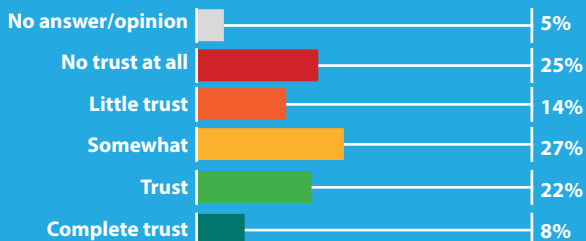
On the other hand, the least trusted institutions in Serbia have resulted to be the justice and rule of law institutions. Based on the data gathered in Serbia, Courts and Prosecution are the least trusted institutions in Serbia, with only around 20 percent of respondents having trust in them, while the level of distrust in the Prosecution and in Courts is around 54 percent and 53 percent, respectively. Other Serbian institutions in which respondents have low levels of trust are the Anti-Corruption Agency (21 percent of respondents have trust in it), Customs (24 percent of respondents have trust in it), municipal/city administration (24 percent of respondents have trust in them), Assembly of Serbia (26 percent of respondents have trust in it), Mayors (26 percent of respondents have trust in them) and Security Information Agency (29 percent of respondents have trust in it).

TABLE 3 LEAST TRUSTED PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS (CLOSED-ENDED QUESTIONS):

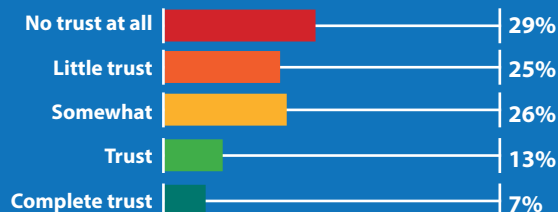




PROSECUTION



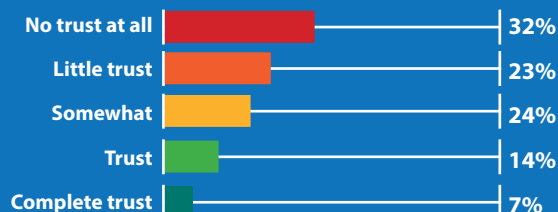
PROSECUTION



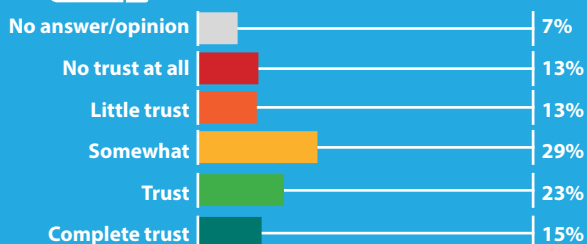
ANTI-CORRUPTION AGENCY



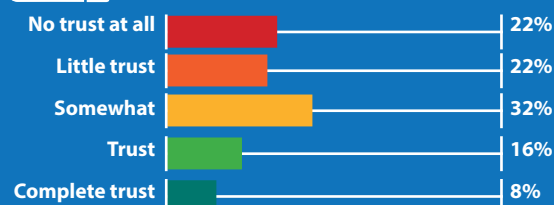
ANTI-CORRUPTION AGENCY



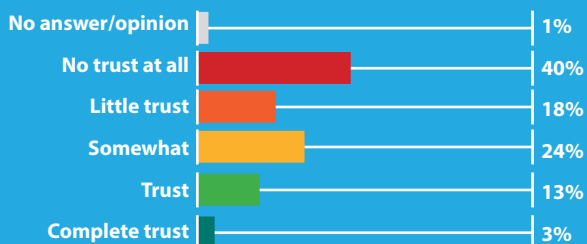
KOSOVO CUSTOMS



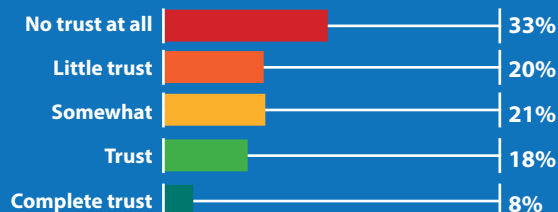
CUSTOMS

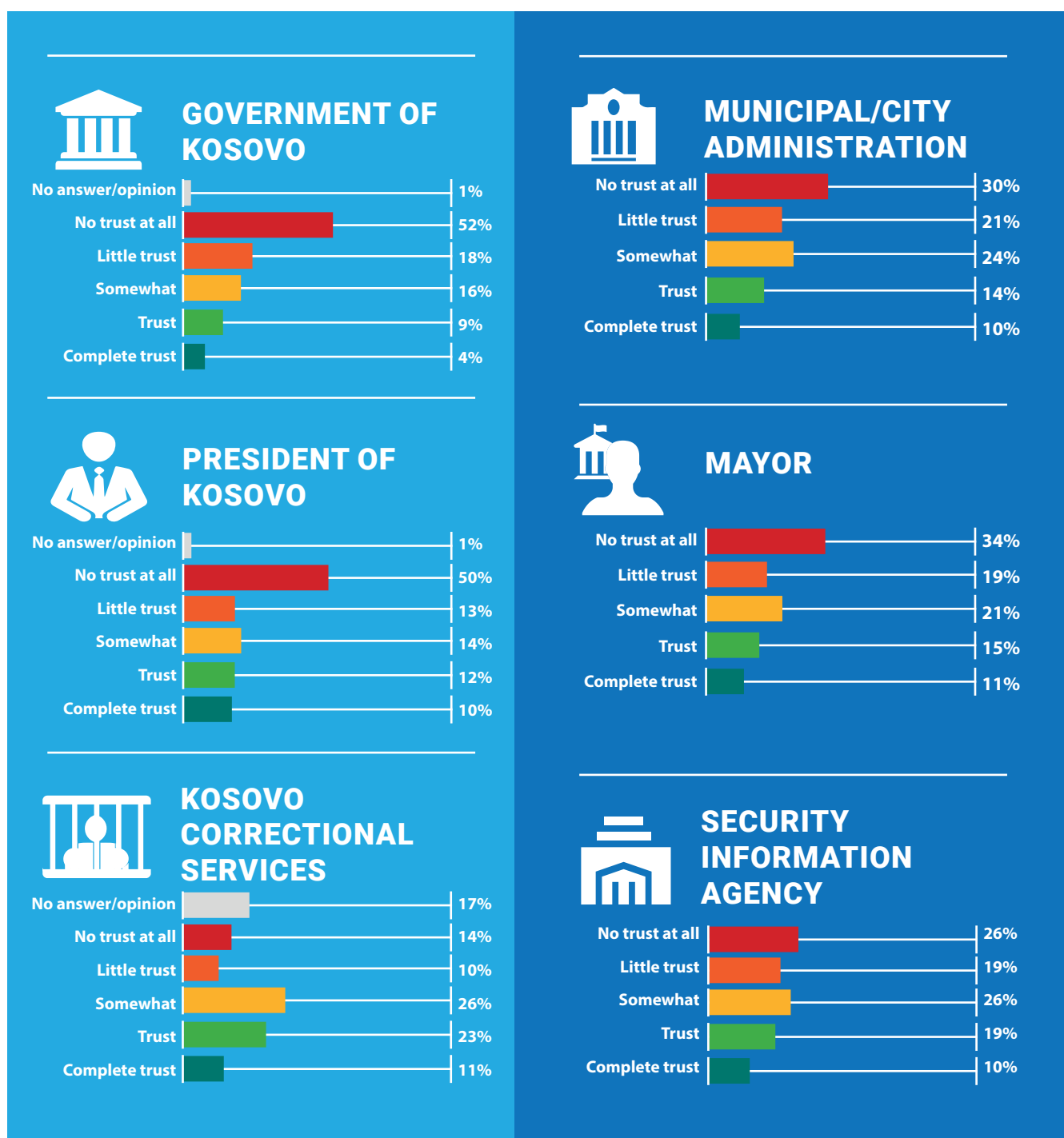


ASSEMBLY OF KOSOVO



ASSEMBLY OF SERBIA





Besides the closed-ended question, the survey also enabled the respondents to state which institution do they trust the least in both countries. In this regard, central institutions in Kosovo are the least trusted by 41 percent of respondents showing distrust towards them and the second least trusted are justice institutions with 17 percent of distrust.

The survey results in Serbia, however, show there is a vast difference with those in Kosovo. For instance, this open-ended question has revealed that the Courts and Police of Serbia are the least trusted institutions sharing similar percentages – 20 percent each of them. They are consequently followed by central institutions, hospitals and other institutions ranked by respondents as the least trusted institutions.

TABLE 4 TEN LEAST TRUSTED INSTITUTIONS ACCORDING TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTION RESULTS



3. Citizens' direct contacts with public institutions in Kosovo and Serbia

This edition of the WBSB has also measured the frequency of respondent's direct contacts over the last 12-month period with some of the selected institutions in Kosovo and Serbia.

The results have revealed almost similar results in both countries. Therefore, municipalities are the first public institutions that respondents answered that they have had more frequent of direct contacts with (48 percent in Kosovo compared to 50 percent in Serbia). They are followed by police institutions in both countries (22 percent in Kosovo and 25 percent in Serbia), Courts (13 percent in Kosovo and 22 percent in Serbia), Police Inspectorate of Kosovo (4 percent in Kosovo – this is valid only for Kosovo) and governments (4 percent in Kosovo and 5 percent in Serbia).

TABLE 5 FREQUENCY OF CITIZENS' DIRECT CONTACT OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS WITH PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

KOSOVO			SERBIA		
	No	Yes		No	Yes
Municipalities	51%	48%	Municipality	50%	50%
Kosovo Police	78%	22%	Police	76%	25%
Courts	87%	13%	Courts	78%	22%
Police Inspectorate of Kosovo	96%	4%	Government	95%	5%
Government	96%	4%			

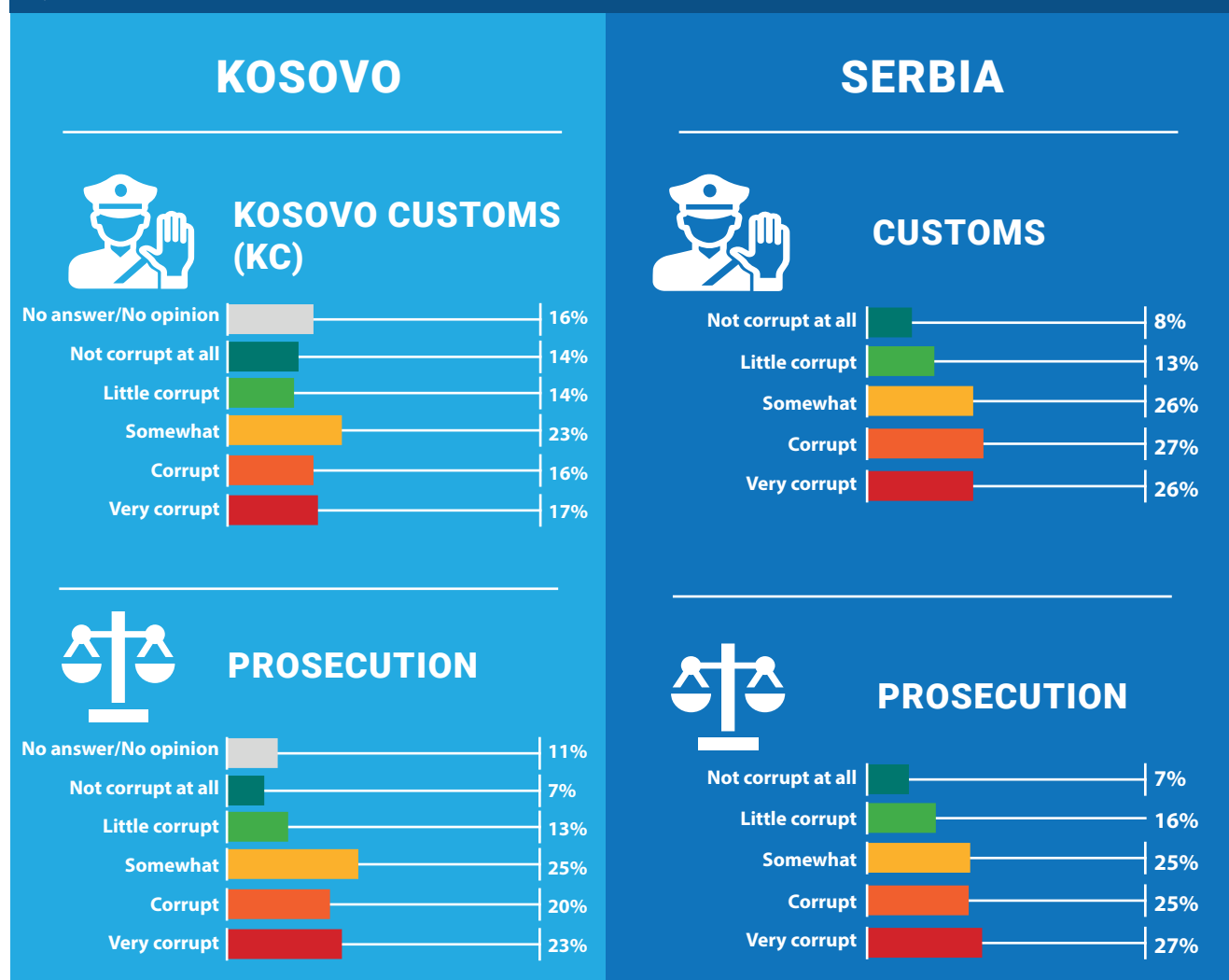
4. Most corrupted public institutions in Kosovo and Serbia

As regards the respondents' perceptions on the pervasiveness of corruption, the most corrupted institution is perceived to be the Kosovo Government, with 72 percent of respondents expressing this view. Second and third most corrupted are perceived to be the Courts and Prosecution, by 45 percent and 43 percent of respondents, respectively. Kosovo Customs are perceived to be less corrupted, with 33 percent of respondents believing that the customs are corrupted.

In Serbia, Customs are perceived as the most corrupted institution by 53 percent of respondents, followed by the Prosecution (52 percent), Courts (52 percent), Police (51 percent), Government (51 percent) and municipal/city administration (50 percent).

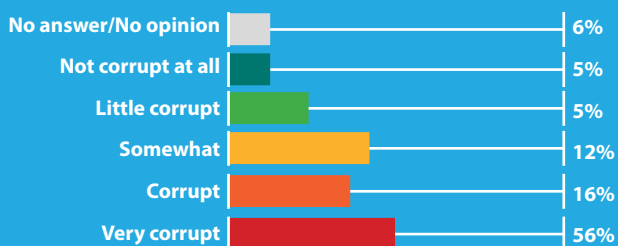
As evidenced by the survey's results, there are significant differences on respondents' perceptions of the most corrupted public institutions in Kosovo and Serbia. While Kosovar respondents have ranked the Kosovo Police and municipalities (for more details see the next section of the policy brief) as less affected by the corruption phenomenon, in Serbia, however, half of respondents perceive that these institutions are corrupted.

TABLE 6 MOST CORRUPTED PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS (CLOSE-ENDED QUESTIONS):

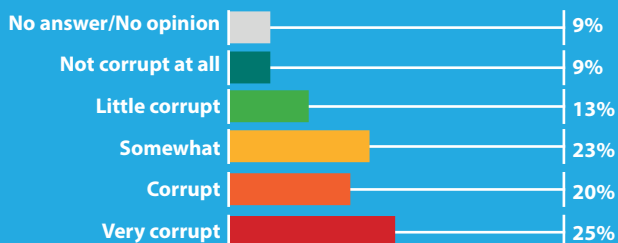




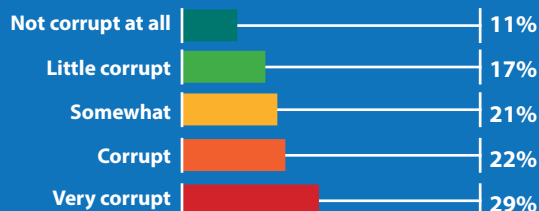
GOVERNMENT OF KOSOVO



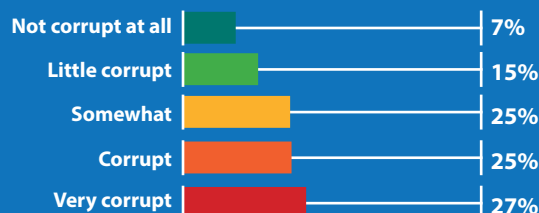
COURTS



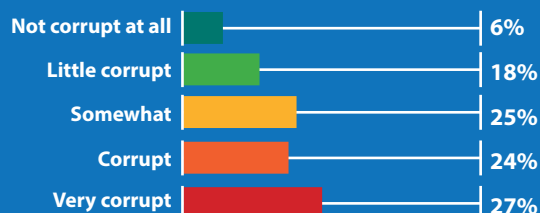
GOVERNMENT



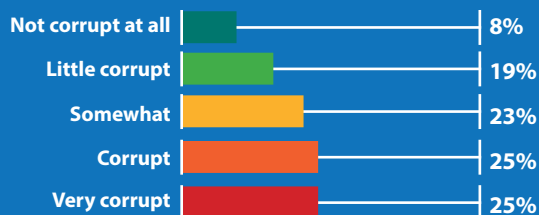
COURTS



POLICE



MUNICIPAL/CITY ADMINISTRATION



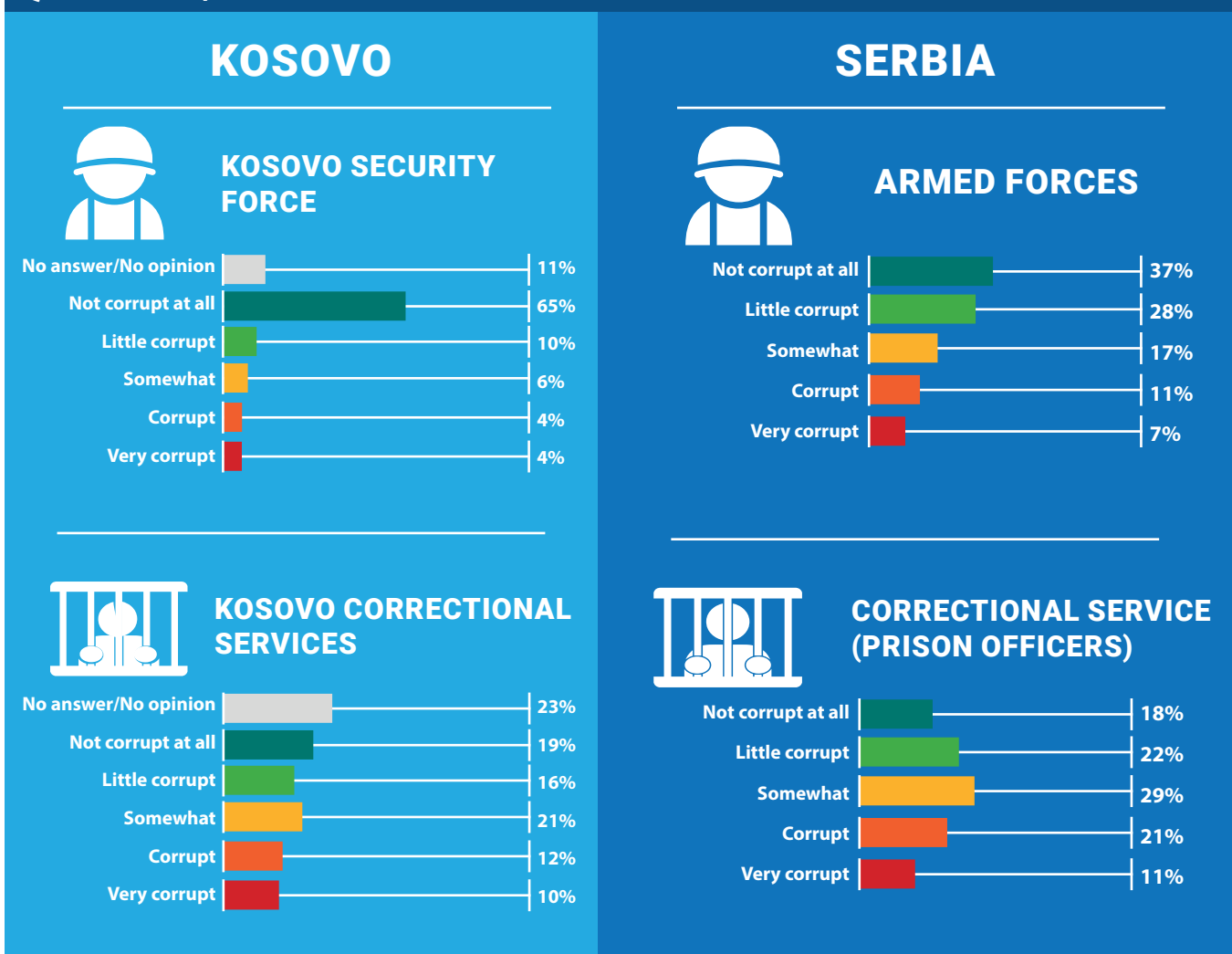
5. Least corrupted public institutions in Kosovo and Serbia

Kosovo’s security institutions are perceived as the least corrupted institutions by respondents in the country. In this regard, the Kosovo Security Force leads the ranking list of being the least corrupted institutions, as only 8 percent of respondents perceive it is affected by corruption, while 75 percent of them shared their views that it is not corrupted. However, around 6 percent of respondents answered that the Kosovo Security Force is somewhat corrupted, and around 11 percent of them did not answer or did not have an opinion on the matter.

In addition, other public institutions that respondents perceive less corrupted are the Kosovo Correctional Service (perceived as corrupted by 22 percent of respondents), Kosovo Police (perceived as corrupted by 27 percent of respondents) and Municipalities (perceived as corrupted by 30 percent of respondents).

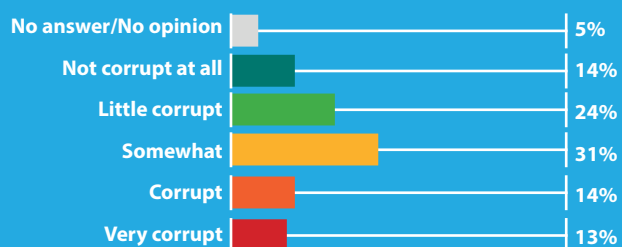
Similarly, the least corrupted institution in Serbia have resulted the Armed Forces, perceived as corrupted by 18 percent of respondents in total, followed by Correctional Service/Prison Officers, perceived as corrupted by around 32 percent of respondents.

TABLE 7 LEAST CORRUPTED PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS (CLOSE-ENDED QUESTIONS):

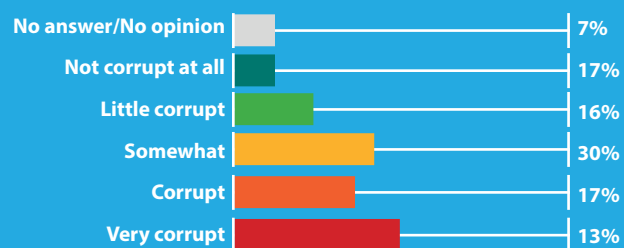




KOSOVO POLICE



MUNICIPALITIES



METHODOLOGY

The Western Balkans Security Barometer consists of a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods that provide objective and credible results. Its data are collected through face-to-face interviews technique with randomly selected respondents conducted throughout the entire territory of both countries - Kosovo and Serbia. The field research in both countries took place from late September to early October 2020 conducted by the respective field research teams of Kosovar Centre for Security Studies in Kosovo and by Sprint agency in Serbia.

The questionnaire mostly consisted of closed-ended questions in the form of five-point Likert Scale, followed by several open-ended questions that allow respondents to provide their thoughts without predefined options. The national sample in Kosovo from which the research was drawn, featured 1,132 households, thus constituting a representative sample of the population above 18 years old in Kosovo. The sample frame was based upon telephone code areas, and, as such included the following 8 districts: Ferizaj, Gjakova, Gjilan, Mitrovica South, Mitrovica North, Peja, Prishtina and Prizren. The first stage of geographical clustering was based on the 2012 Kosovo Census Report. The second stage involved clustering samples by municipal area with a stratified rural/ urban sample as per the number of households. The last stage followed a random sampling method using the nearest 'birthday method'. Random sampling ensures that each resident in Kosovo has an equal probability of being chosen for an interview. With the sample used for this study, the results of the survey mirror trend in attitudes and perceptions amongst the entire adult population of Kosovo in general.

As regards Serbia, the survey was conducted on a representative sample of 1,095 adult respondents from covering 120 polling stations stratified into nine strata according to the polling station size (small/medium/large) and it included the region of Vojvodina, Belgrade and Central Serbia. In each strata, the number of polling stations where field research was conducted was determined in accordance with the share of the population in that strata in relation to the total population of voters according to the voter list from the 2020 parliamentary elections: "Vojvodina small" - 1; "Vojvodina medium" - 10; "Vojvodina big" - 20; "Belgrade small" - 0; "Belgrade medium" - 4; "Belgrade big" - 26; "Central Serbia small" - 9; "Central Serbia medium" - 20; "Central Serbia big" - 30. Within each of the nine strata, sampling was random, three-stage: the sampled polling stations within each strata were determined by the PPS method (probability proportional to size sampling), the households in which the survey was conducted were determined randomly depending on the type of settlement - rural/urban; type of building - houses/buildings; storeys of buildings - low/high buildings; while the respondent in a household was determined by the criterion of the first following birthday.

The data were verified in real time through field coordinators that visited a predefined sample of households after the completion of the survey in the respective households. This was further undertaken through telephone contact with all respondents to confirm the adherence to the methodology and some of the key answers as well as analysing the logical consistency of the answers when processing and analysing the data. The margin of error is 3 percent with a confidence interval of 95 percent. Data processing and analysis has been completed using the SPSS software.

The following figures present the demographic data of the respondents in Kosovo and Serbia within the framework of the WBSB 2020:

FIGURE I RESPONDENTS OF THE WBSB 2020 BY REGION

KOSOVO		SERBIA	
REGION	% OF RESPONDENTS	REGION	% OF RESPONDENTS
Prishtina	22%	Vojvodina	27%
Mitrovica South	11%	Belgrade	24%
Gjilan	12%	Western Serbia and Sumadija	27%
Peja	13%	Southern and Eastern Serbia	21%
Gjakova	11%		
Prizren	15%		
Ferizaj	12%		
Mitrovica North	4%		

FIGURE II RESPONDENTS OF THE WBSB 2020 BY AREA

KOSOVO		SERBIA		
AREA	% OF RESPONDENTS	AREA	% OF RESPONDENTS	
RURAL	50%	RURAL	35%	
URBAN	50%	SUB-URBAN	19%	
		URBAN	46%	

FIGURE III RESPONDENTS OF THE WBSB 2020 BY GENDER REPRESENTATION

KOSOVO		SERBIA	
GENDER	% OF RESPONDENTS	GENDER	% OF RESPONDENTS
MALE	45%	MALE	49%
FEMALE	55%	FEMALE	51%

FIGURE IV RESPONDENTS OF THE WBSB 2020 BY AGE

AGE	% OF RESPONDENTS
KOSOVO	
18-25	20%
26-35	16%
36-45	18%
46-55	18%
56-65	14%
66+	14%
SERBIA	
18-34	27%
35-54	36%
55 and over	37%

FIGURE V RESPONDENTS OF THE WBSB 2020 BY ETHNIC BACKGROUND

ETHNICITY	% OF RESPONDENTS
KOSOVO	
K-Albanians	90%
K-Serbs	8%
K-Other	2%
SERBIA	
Serbs	91%
Others	9%

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