



# The Rule of Law in North Macedonia

Key Findings from the WJP General Population Poll 2023

# Acknowledgements

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## 1. ABOUT THIS REPORT

- 5 About This Report
- 6 Executive Findings

## 2. RULE OF LAW INDEX IN NORTH MACEDONIA

### 3. THEMATIC FINDINGS

#### SECTION I: AUTHORITARIANISM, FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, AND GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

- 14 Authoritarianism
- 17 Fundamental Freedoms
- 20 Government Accountability

#### SECTION II: CORRUPTION AND TRUST

- 22 Corruption
- 24 Bribery Victimization
- 25 Trust
- 26 Disaggregated Perceptions, by Political Support

#### SECTION III: SECURITY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

- 28 Crime Victimization
- 29 Security
- 30 Criminal Justice
- 33 Police
- 35 Victim Support

#### SECTION IV: ACCESS TO JUSTICE

- 37 Justice Journey in North Macedonia
- 39 Justice Journey in North Macedonia, by Economic Status
- 41 Justice Gap

#### SECTION V: DIVERSE VIEWS ON RULE OF LAW

- 43 Disaggregated Perceptions, by Ethnic Background
- 45 Disaggregated Perceptions, by Economic Status

## 4. PROJECT DESIGN

- 48 Methodology

## 5. APPENDIX

- 51 About the WJP
- 52 Other Publications

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

5 About This Report

6 Executive Findings

# ABOUT THIS REPORT

**EFFECTIVE RULE OF LAW** reduces corruption, combats poverty and disease, and protects people from injustices large and small. Strengthening the rule of law is an important objective for governments, donors, and civil society organizations around the world. To be effective, rule of law development requires clarity about the fundamental features that define the rule of law, as well as an adequate basis for its evaluation and measurement.

*The Rule of Law in North Macedonia: Key Findings from the General Population Poll 2023* presents question-level data drawn from the General Population Poll (GPP), an original data source designed and collected by the World Justice Project.

The GPP was conducted between May and July 2023 through face-to-face interviews to a nationally representative sample of 1,594 North Macedonian households. This poll was designed to capture data on the experiences and perceptions of ordinary people regarding a variety of themes related to the rule of law.

*This report represents the voices of people in North Macedonia and their experiences with the rule of law in their country.*

The data derived from the General Population Poll is presented in this report as thematic findings, each one highlighting a different dimension of the rule of law from the perspective of North Macedonians. These thematic briefs focus on the current rule of law ecosystem in North Macedonia while simultaneously illuminating changes over time. Each section touches upon perceptions of and attitudes towards the following topics: government accountability, authoritarianism, fundamental freedoms, corruption, trust in institutions, the criminal justice system and its actors, crime victimization, security, police performance, and access to justice.

# EXECUTIVE FINDINGS

*The Rule of Law in North Macedonia: Key Findings from the WJP General Population Poll 2023* provides a comprehensive overview of how citizens perceive and experience the rule of law in North Macedonia. The results show an overall decrease in the perception of the rule of law in the country, compared to results from previous years. Similarly, the findings indicate that perceptions vary significantly based on the political affiliation and cultural background of the respondent.

## SECTION 1

### Authoritarianism, Fundamental Freedoms, and Government Accountability

#### 1. Authoritarianism

A majority respondents in North Macedonia agreed that top government officials engage in authoritarian behavior across all branches of government. North Macedonians felt that government officials resort to misinformation to shape public opinion in their favor (67%), attack or attempt to discredit opposition parties (60%) and seek to influence the promotion or removal of judges (60%).

- Views on the current government vary by partisanship. On the whole, government supporters held much more positive views on the government than non-supporters. 77% of non-government supporters believe that top government officials **attack or attempt to discredit opposition parties** compared to only 48% of government supporters.
- A quarter (25%) of respondents agreed that **it is not necessary to obey the laws of a government that they did not vote for**, while nearly a third (32%) of respondents agreed that **government efficiency is more important than citizen influence**.

#### 2. Fundamental Freedoms

On average, more respondents believe that their freedom of expression is guaranteed, while fewer respondents believe that their freedoms of political participation, free and fair election, and religion are guaranteed compared to 2014 and 2017, respectively.

- When asked about fundamental freedoms in North Macedonia, respondents had more favorable views of freedom of religion, with 73% of respondents agreeing that **religious minorities can observe their holy days**. Conversely, North Macedonians had less favorable views on electoral freedoms, with only 37% of respondents agreeing that **local government officials were elected through a clean process**.
- Between 2017 and 2023, North Macedonia's most significant trends in public opinions on fundamental freedoms include an improvement in the perception that **local government officials are elected through a clean process** (up 10 percentage points) and a decline in the perception that **religious minorities can observe their holy days** (down 10 percentage points).
- Perceptions of fundamental freedoms once again diverged between government supporters and non-government supporters. On average, non-government supporters were 24 percentage points less likely to hold positive views of fundamental freedoms in North Macedonia when compared to government supports.

#### 3. Government Accountability

Perceptions of government accountability in North Macedonia are extremely negative. Only one in ten surveyed respondents believed that a high-ranking government official would be held accountable for breaking the law. This represents a decline of 3 percentage points since 2017. The difference in perceptions of impunity is stark between government supporters and non-government supporters. Only 4% of non-government supporters believed that a high-ranking government official would be held accountable for breaking the law, compared to 27% of government supporters.

## SECTION 2

### Corruption and Trust

#### 4. Corruption

Public views on the pervasiveness of corruption among the legislature, national government officials, and judges and magistrates deteriorated in North Macedonia since 2017. Perceptions of corruption in the judiciary deteriorated the most, with perceptions declining by an average of 18 percentage points.

- **Members of Congress were considered the most corrupt**, with 74% of respondents agreeing that most or all members working in that institution were corrupt. Police officers were considered the least corrupt, with 50% of respondents agreeing that most or all police officers were corrupt.
- **A majority of respondents in North Macedonia believed that corrupt behaviors are not acceptable**. Nearly 75% of respondents said it was not acceptable for a private citizen to offer a bribe, while over 75% of respondents said it was not acceptable for a law enforcement officer to request a bribe.

## 5. Bribery Victimization

More respondents reported being asked to pay a bribe across all sectors in 2023 compared to 2017. In 2023, 18% of respondents who had requested government permits or documents reported that they had paid a bribe, while only 9% of respondents reported paying a bribe to secure a place in a public school.

- Nearly 50% of respondents who had utilized a public defense attorney reported paying a bribe in the previous 12 months, compared to only 9% of respondents who had interacted with an elected representative and 14% who had interacted with a police officer.

## 6. Trust

Respondents in North Macedonia trust people living in their country more than any public actor (48%); however, the percentage of respondents declined by 7 percentage points since 2017. Respondents had the least trust in judges and magistrates (24%) and national government officers (25%).

- Government supporters had more trust in all public institutions when compared to non-government supporters. The views of government supporters and non-government supporters diverged the most in their levels of trust in national government officials—a 32 percentage point gap.

## SECTION 3

### Security and Criminal Justice

#### 7. Crime Victimization

On average 13% of all respondents surveyed in North Macedonia reported experiencing a crime in the past 12 months.

- Slightly more than 40% of North Macedonian respondents who were victims of a crime reported it to the authorities and, of those who reported, 76% filed an official crime report.
- Of those North Macedonians who were victims of a crime, 7% were victims of corruption, financial, and commercial crimes, 7% were victims of property crimes, and 5% were victims of crimes against life and integrity of the individual.

#### 8. Security

Perceptions of security in North Macedonia remained relatively stable since 2017. A large majority of respondents (79%) reported that they felt safe walking in their neighborhoods at night.

- Sociodemographic factors play a role in perceptions of security in North Macedonia. Ethnic Macedonians, those with light skin tones, and those without high school diplomas were more likely to feel safe walking in their neighborhood at night, while previous victims of crime, those of low economic status, and urban dwellers were the least likely to feel secure.

#### 9. Criminal Justice

Respondents are most confident that the criminal justice system safeguards presumption of innocence (43%) and least confident that the criminal justice system ensures timeliness (25%). Average perceptions of the criminal justice system deteriorated across all areas since 2017. Perceptions of adherence to equal treatment of victims (down 14 percentage points) and equal access (down 14 percentage points) declined the most during the polling interval.

- Perceptions of the criminal justice system varied between government supporters and non-government supporters. Government supporters held much more positive views of the criminal justice system, with 58% of government supporters expressing confidence that the criminal justice system safeguards presumption of innocence compared to only 39% of non-government supporters.
- Average perceptions of trust and effectiveness of prosecutors, public defense attorneys, and judges and magistrates all declined, while perceptions of corruption for those actors grew since 2017.

## **10. Police Performance**

**When asked about their impressions of police performance, respondents in North Macedonia had the most negative views on police accountability and corruption and the most positive views on due process and public service.**

- When asked about their perceptions of police performance, respondents in North Macedonia were most confident that:
  - Police help them feel safe in their neighborhoods (79%).
  - Police do not use excessive force (72%).
  - Police help them feel safe (69%).
- Respondents in North Macedonia were the least confident that:
  - Police do not serve the interests of politicians (27%).
  - Police investigate crimes in an independent manner (31%).
  - Police are held accountable for seeking (35%) or accepting (35%) bribes.
- Respondents in North Macedonia most often indicated that suspects with a lower economic status (48%) or from a minority ethnic group (44%) would most likely be subject to discrimination during a police investigation.

## **11. Victim Support**

North Macedonians were the most confident that crime victims would be **addressed by police using accessible language (54%)** and would **receive protection from the police if their safety was in danger (39%)**. They were the least confident that they would **receive effective and timely medical and psychological care (29%)** and **receive information and legal advice when going to the authorities (29%)**.

## **SECTION 4**

### **Access to Justice**

#### **12. Justice Journeys in North Macedonia**

**Slightly more than 1 in 3 (36%) of respondents in North Macedonia reported experiencing a legal problem in the last two years, on average.** The most common legal problems relate to consumer issues or financial issues. On average, 49% of respondents in North Macedonia reported that their legal problem was fully resolved, and the average time reported to resolve the problem was approximately 8 months.

- One fifth (20%) of surveyed North Macedonians with a legal problem obtained help from a person or organization that was able to help them better understand or resolve their problem. Meanwhile, 27% of respondents reported that it was difficult or nearly impossible to find the money required to resolve their problem.
- Approximately one-third (32%) of respondents in North Macedonia who resolved their legal issues experienced at least one hardship during the resolution process. The most frequently cited hardship was health—22% of respondents reported experiencing a physical or stress related illness.

#### **13. Justice Journeys in North Macedonia by Economic Status**

**North Macedonians with a low economic status experienced legal problems at a higher rate (42%) than those from a high economic status (32%).** North Macedonians from a high economic status were more likely to report that their problems were fully resolved (54%) than those with a low economic status (45%), and it took an average of two months longer for North Macedonians with a low economic status to resolve their legal problems when compared to those with a high economic status.

- Respondents with a high economic status were more confident that they could achieve a fair outcome (+16%) and were more likely to report that they could get all the expert help they wanted (+13%), compared with respondents with a low economic status.
- 37% of respondents with a low economic status reported that it was difficult or nearly impossible to find the money required to solve their problem compared to only 8% of respondents with a high economic status.

#### **14. The Justice Gap in North Macedonia**

**50% of respondents in North Macedonia had at least one unmet justice need and are considered in the justice gap.** 62% of respondents in North Macedonia faced at least one barrier to justice.

- Sociodemographic characteristics play a part in the likelihood that a respondent would be in the justice gap. North Macedonians with light skin tones or who are of ethnic Macedonian background were less likely to be in the justice gap, while North Macedonians with a low economic status or no high school diploma were more likely to fall in the justice gap.

## SECTION 5

### Diverse Views on Rule of Law

#### 15. Perceptions by Ethnic Background

On average, North Macedonians with an ethnic Macedonian background had more positive perceptions of fundamental freedoms than those with an ethnic Albanian background. Ethnic Macedonians were 31 percentage points more likely to agree or strongly agree that it was possible for people to join any political organization and 27 percentage points more likely to agree or strongly agree that religious minorities can observe their holy days. Respondents of ethnic Albanian background were 5 percentage points more likely to believe that the media can expose cases of corruption.

- Perceptions of police also varied by ethnic background. Across all questions, respondents of Macedonian ethnic background had more positive perceptions of the police. 54% of respondents with a Macedonian ethnic background agreed or strongly agreed that police respect the rights of suspects compared to only 33% of respondents with an Albanian ethnic background.

#### 16. Perceptions by Economic Status

On average, North Macedonian respondents with a low economic status were 10 percentage points more likely to agree or strongly agree that top government officials engage in authoritarian behaviors than respondents with a high economic status. 60% of respondents with a high economic status agreed that top government officials attack or attempt to discredit the electoral system and other supervisory organs compared to 72% of respondents with a low economic status.

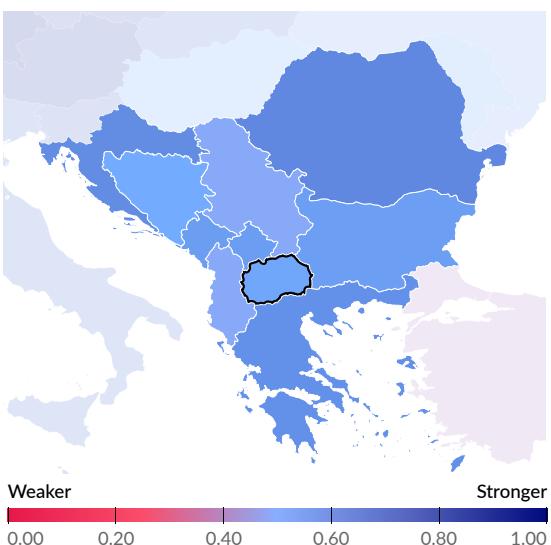
- North Macedonian respondents with a low economic status were, on average, 6 percentage points more likely to believe that national government officers, prosecutors, public defense attorneys, and judges and magistrates engaged in corrupt behaviors when compared to respondents with a high economic status.
- North Macedonian respondents with a high economic status were 10 percentage points more likely to have a lot or some trust in national government officers, prosecutors, public defense attorneys, and judges and magistrates when compared to respondents with a low economic status.

RULE OF LAW  
INDEX IN  
NORTH  
MACEDONIA

# RULE OF LAW INDEX OVERVIEW

WJP Rule of Law Index 2023 Changes Over Time and Factors

## I OVERALL SCORE



Regional Rank	Country/Jurisdiction	Overall Score*	Global Rank	6-Year % Change in Overall Score	0%
1/10	Romania	0.63	40	-5%	<div style="width: 63%; background-color: #e6194b;"></div>
2/10	Croatia	0.61	45	1%	<div style="width: 61%; background-color: #1976d2;"></div>
3/10	Greece	0.61	47	0%	<div style="width: 61%; background-color: #1976d2;"></div>
4/10	Montenegro	0.56	57	-	<div style="width: 56%; background-color: #1976d2;"></div>
5/10	Kosovo	0.56	58	-	<div style="width: 56%; background-color: #1976d2;"></div>
6/10	Bulgaria	0.56	59	0%	<div style="width: 56%; background-color: #1976d2;"></div>
► 7/10	North Macedonia	0.53	67	-3%	<div style="width: 53%; background-color: #e6194b;"></div>
8/10	Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.51	75	-8%	<div style="width: 51%; background-color: #e6194b;"></div>
9/10	Albania	0.48	91	-5%	<div style="width: 48%; background-color: #e6194b;"></div>
10/10	Serbia	0.48	93	-4%	<div style="width: 48%; background-color: #e6194b;"></div>

## I FACTORS IN DETAIL



Factor	Global Rank
1 Constraints on Government Powers	97/142
2 Absence of Corruption	75/142
3 Open Government	70/142
4 Fundamental Rights	56/142
5 Order and Security	43/142
6 Regulatory Enforcement	94/142
7 Civil Justice	75/142
8 Criminal Justice	72/142

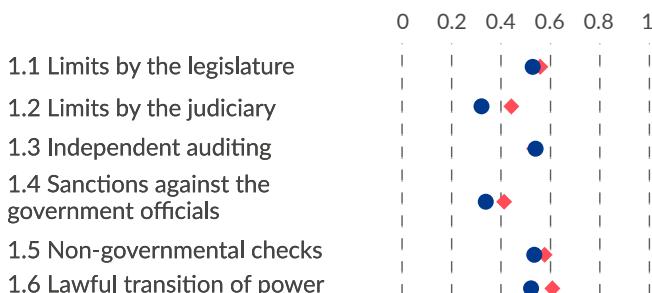
\* Scores range from 0 to 1, with 1 indicating the strongest adherence to the rule of law. Scores are rounded to two decimal places.

## I FACTORS IN DETAIL

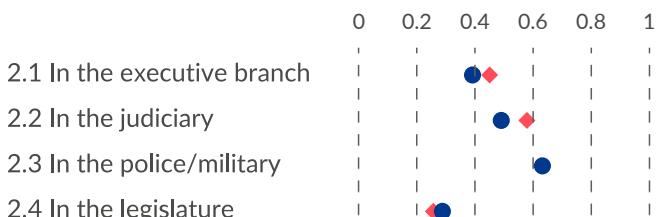
● North Macedonia

◆ Balkan Country Average

### - Factor 1: Constraints on Government Powers



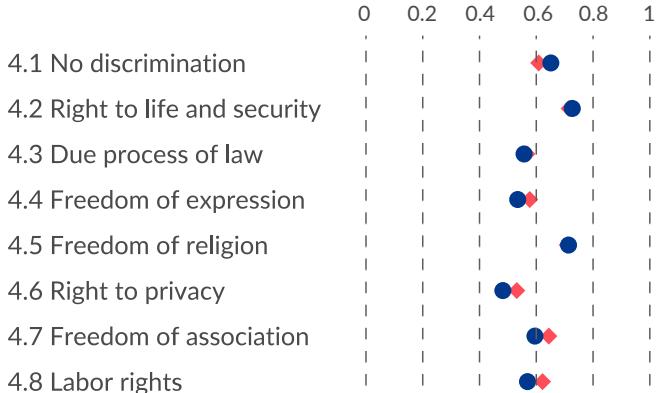
### - Factor 2: Absence of Corruption



### - Factor 3: Open Government



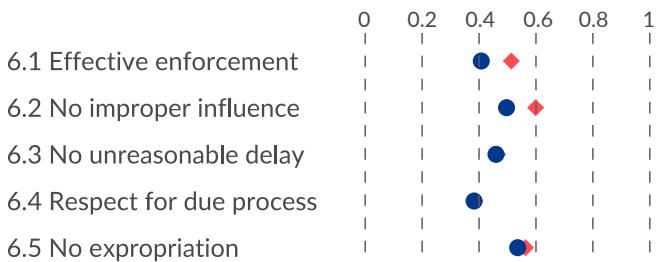
### - Factor 4: Fundamental Rights



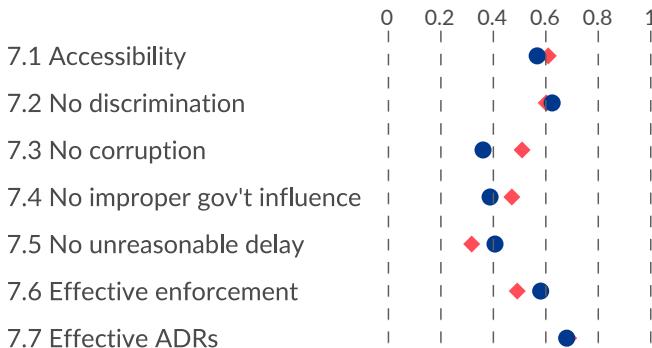
### - Factor 5: Order and Security



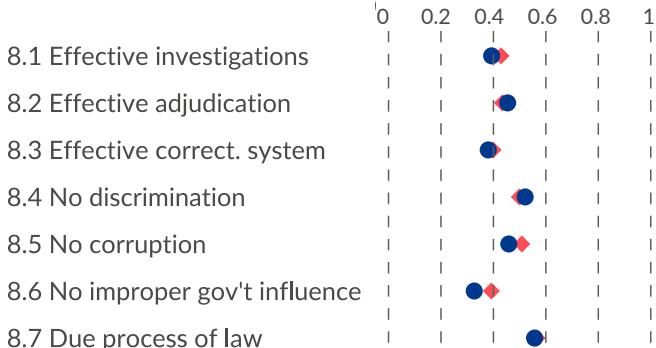
### - Factor 6: Regulatory Enforcement



### - Factor 7: Civil Justice



### - Factor 8: Criminal Justice



## THEMATIC FINDINGS

### SECTION I AUTHORITARIANISM, FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, AND GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

14 Authoritarianism

17 Fundamental Freedoms

20 Government Accountability

# AUTHORITARIANISM

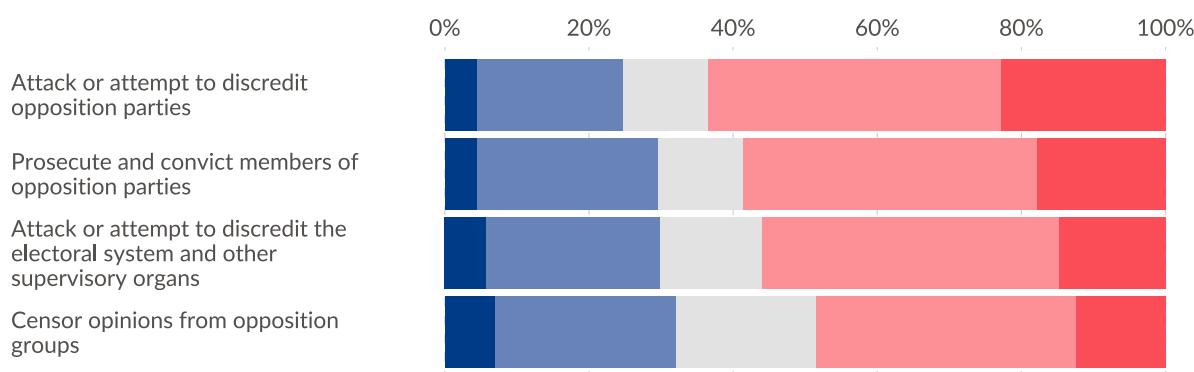
## CHART 1.

### Perceptions of Authoritarian Behaviors

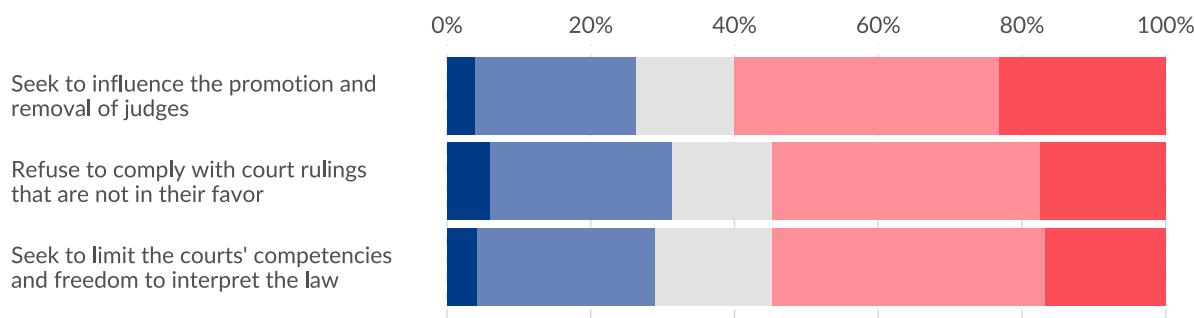
Percentage of respondents in North Macedonia who agree or disagree that top government officials...

● Strongly Disagree   ● Disagree   ● No answer   ● Agree   ● Strongly Agree

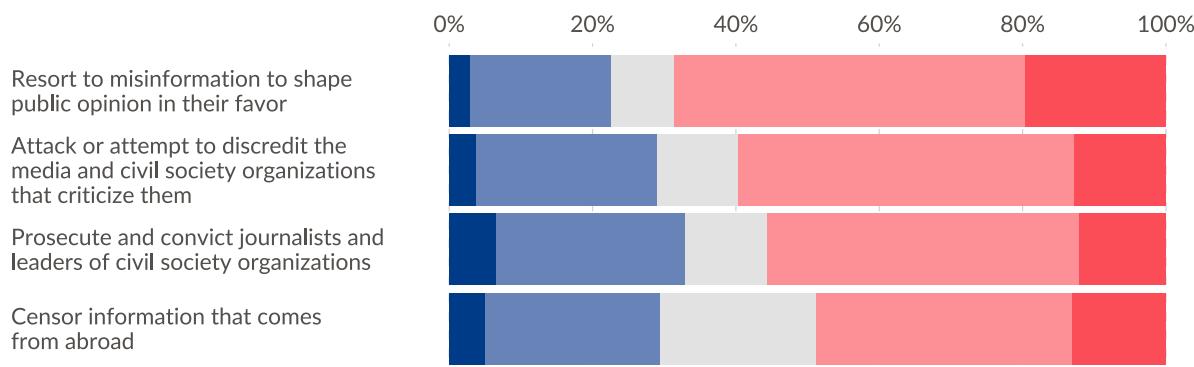
#### ATTACKS ON ELECTORAL SYSTEMS AND OPPOSITION PARTIES



#### ATTACKS ON THE JUDICIARY



#### ATTACKS ON THE MEDIA AND MISINFORMATION



Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

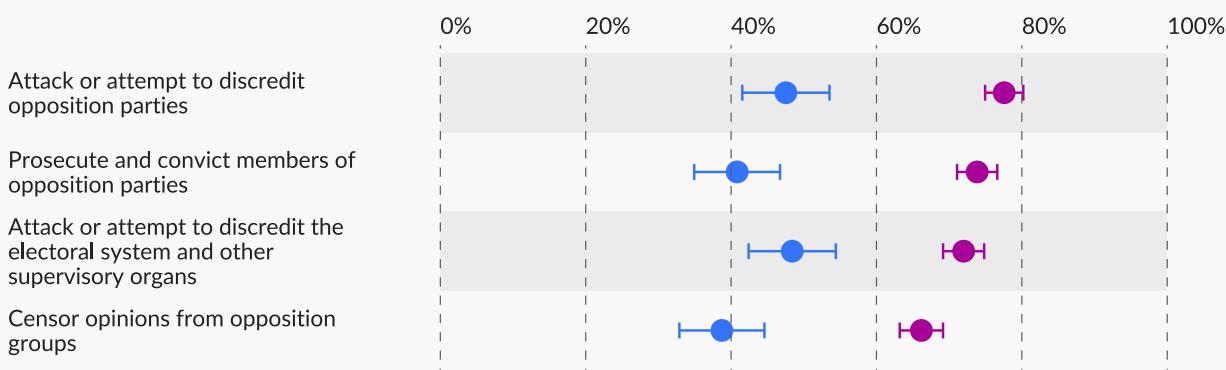
## CHART 2.

### Perceptions of Authoritarian Behavior, by Political Support

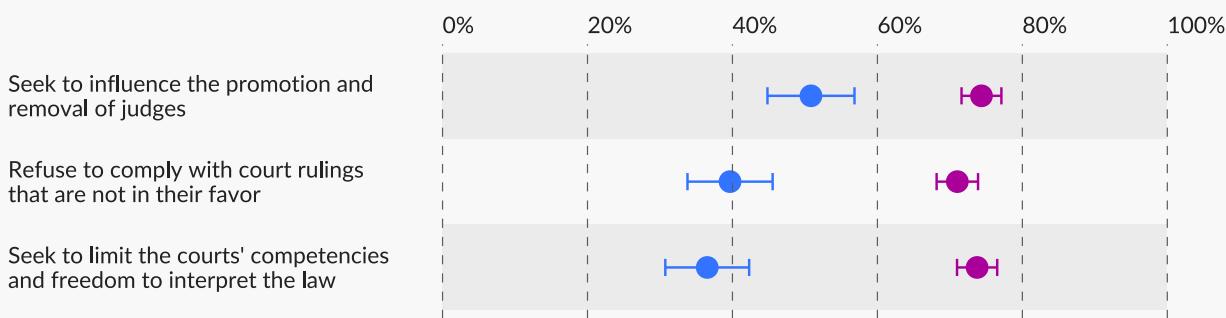
Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree that top government officials...

● Non-Government Supporter   ● Government Supporter

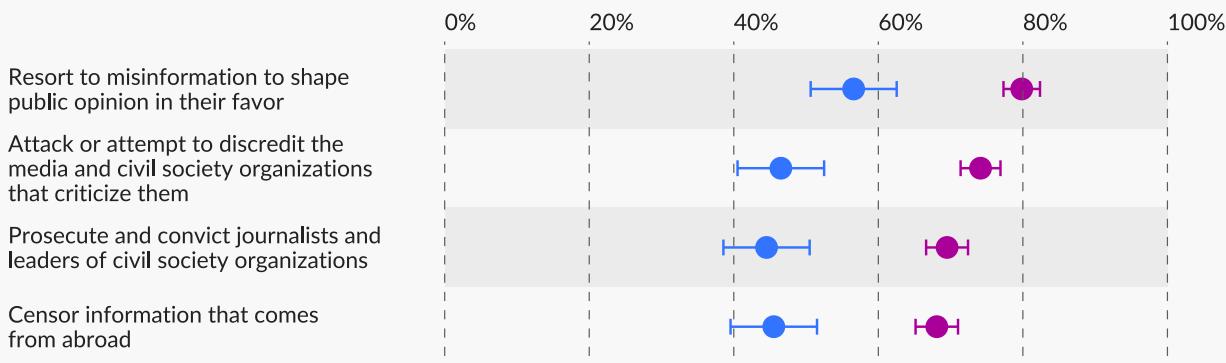
#### ATTACKS ON ELECTORAL SYSTEMS AND OPPOSITION PARTIES



#### ATTACKS ON THE JUDICIARY



#### ATTACKS ON THE MEDIA AND MISINFORMATION



Note: The bars encompassing the data points in our visuals are indicative of 95% confidence intervals. These intervals provide a reliable range within which we can reasonably infer that the true values lie.

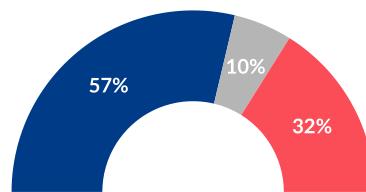
Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

### CHART 3.

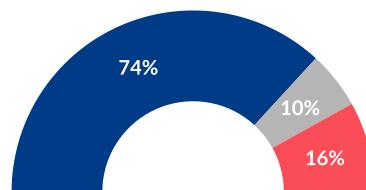
## Attitudes Towards Authoritarianism and Rule of Law

Percentage of respondents who agree with the following statements

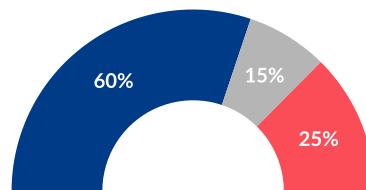
- Government efficiency is more important than citizen influence
- It is important that citizens have a say in government matters, even at the expense of efficiency
- None of the above/Prefer not to answer



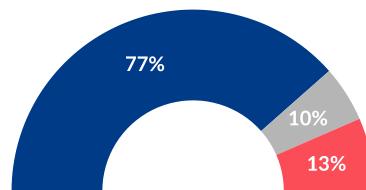
- The president should not be bound by the law or courts
- The president must always obey the law and the courts
- None of the above/Prefer not to answer



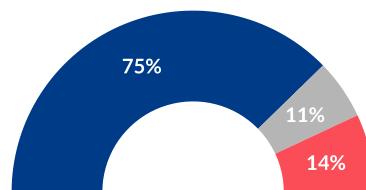
- It is not necessary to obey the laws of a government that you did not vote for
- It is important to obey the government in power, no matter who you voted for
- None of the above/Prefer not to answer



- The president can attack the media, civil society, and opposition groups
- The president must respect the media, civil society, and opposition groups
- None of the above/Prefer not to answer



- The president can undermine independent authorities
- The president must respect independent authorities
- None of the above/Prefer not to answer



Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

# FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

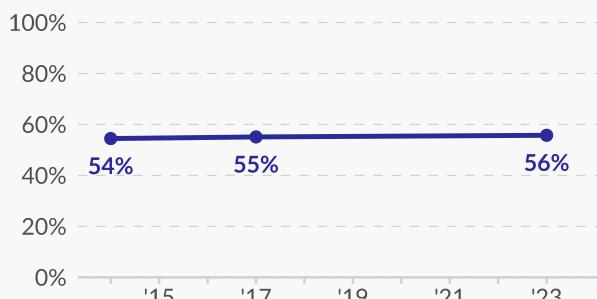
## CHART 4.

### Fundamental Freedoms in North Macedonia Over Time

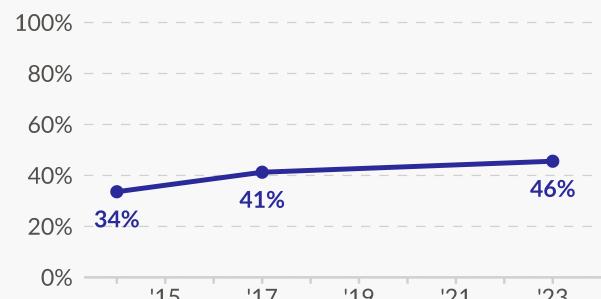
Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree with the following statements

#### EXPRESSION

##### People can express opinions against the government



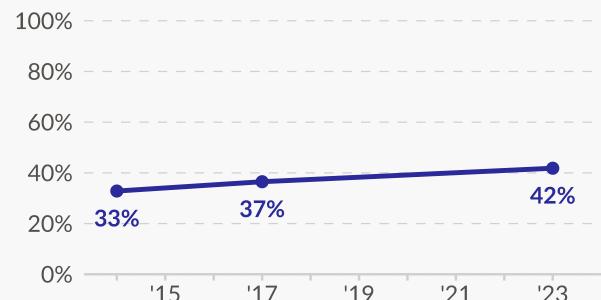
##### Civil society organizations can express opinions against the government



##### Political parties can express opinions against the government



##### The media can express opinions against the government without fear of retaliation



##### The media can expose cases of corruption



Source: WJP General Population Poll 2014, 2017, and 2023

## ■ PARTICIPATION

### People can attend community meetings



### People can join any political organization



### People can organize around an issue or petition



## ■ ELECTIONS

### Local government officials are elected through a clean process



### People can vote freely without feeling harassed or pressured



## ■ RELIGION

### Religious minorities can observe their holy days



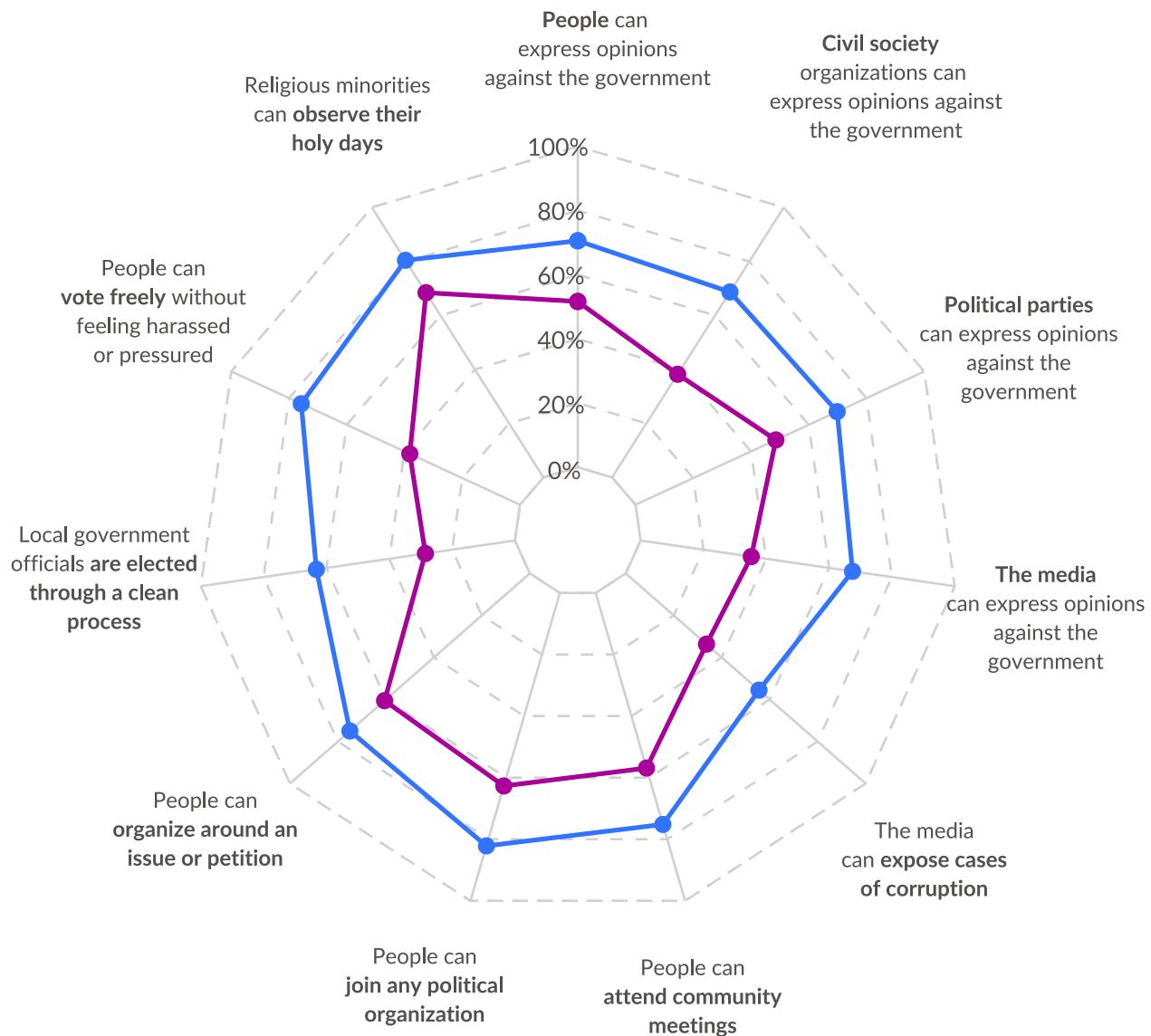
Source: WJP General Population Poll 2014, 2017, and 2023

## CHART 5.

### Perceptions of Fundamental Freedoms, by Political Support

Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree with the following statements

● Non-Government Supporter     ● Government Supporter

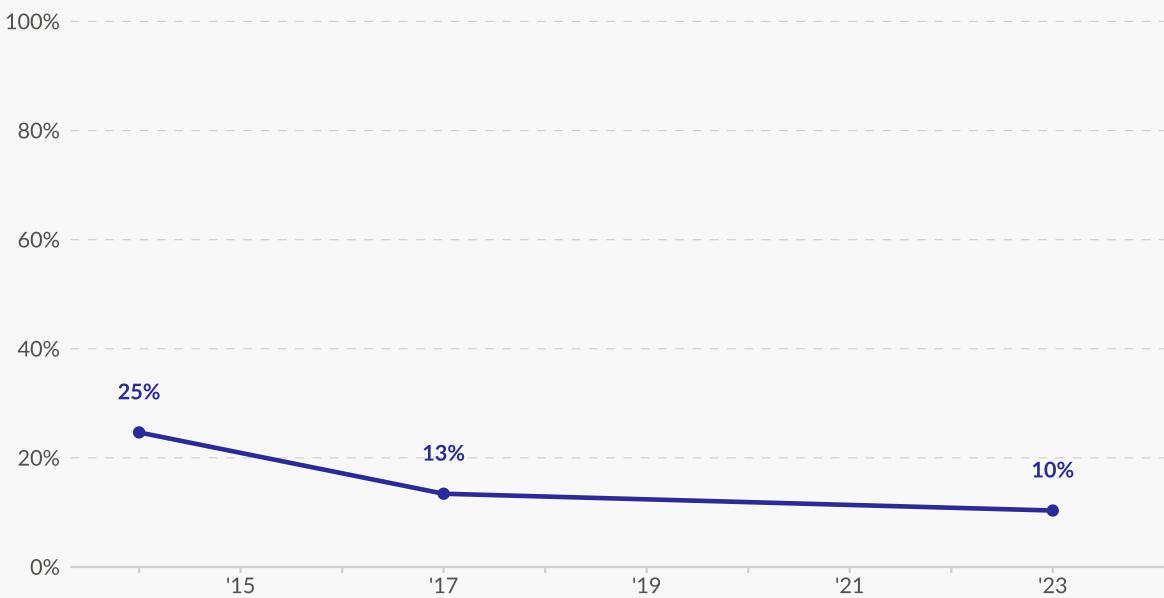


# GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

## CHART 6.1

### Perceptions of Accountability in North Macedonia Over Time

Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree that high-ranking government officials would be held accountable for breaking the law

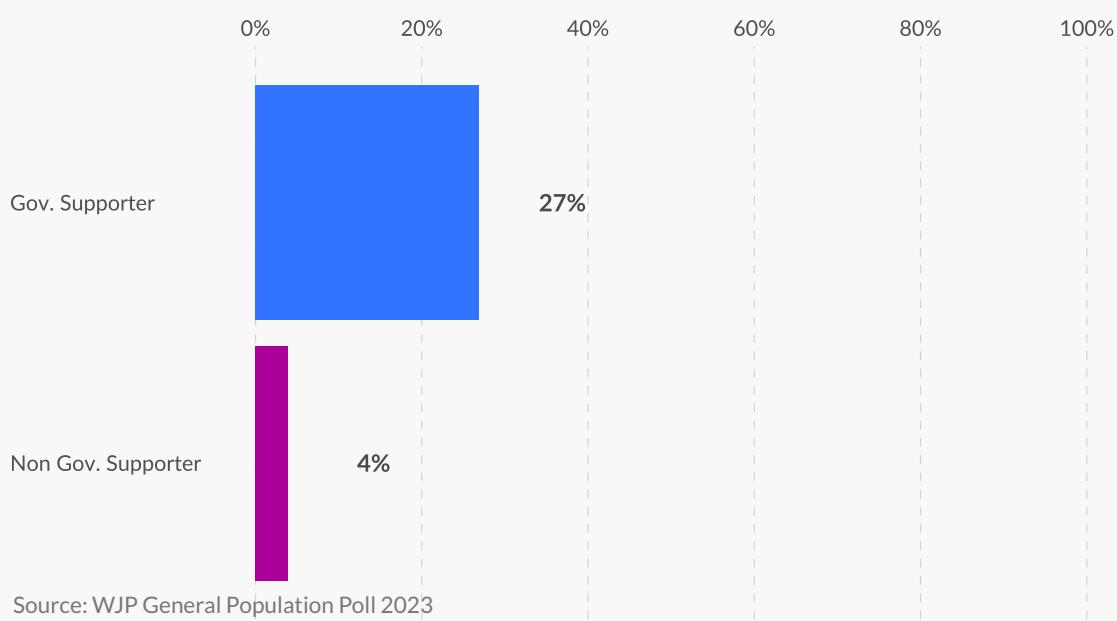


Source: WJP General Population Poll 2014, 2017, and 2023

## CHART 6.2

### Perceptions of Accountability in North Macedonia by Political Support

Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree that high-ranking government officials would be held accountable for breaking the law



Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

## THEMATIC FINDINGS

## SECTION II CORRUPTION AND TRUST

- 22 Corruption
- 24 Bribery Victimization
- 25 Trust
- 26 Disaggregated Perceptions

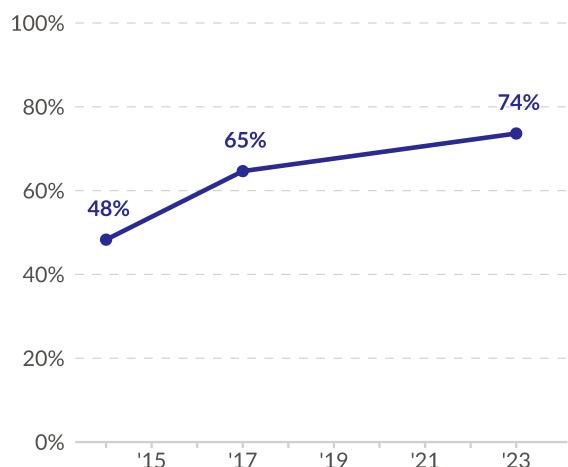
# CORRUPTION

## CHART 7.

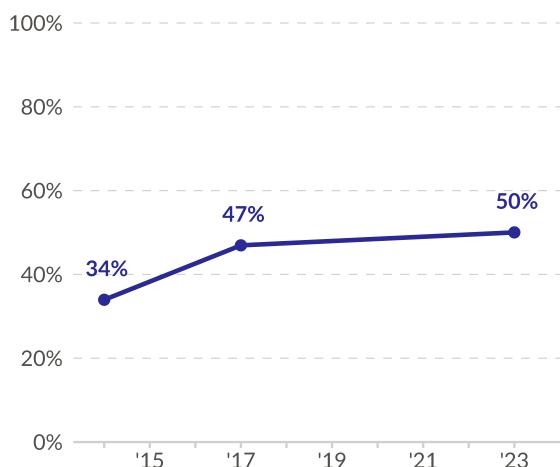
### Perceptions of Corruption by Institution Over Time

Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree that most or all people working in the following institutions are corrupt

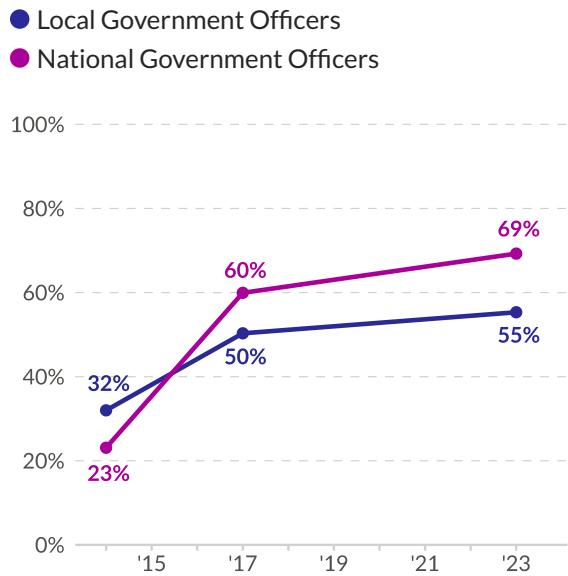
#### MEMBERS OF CONGRESS



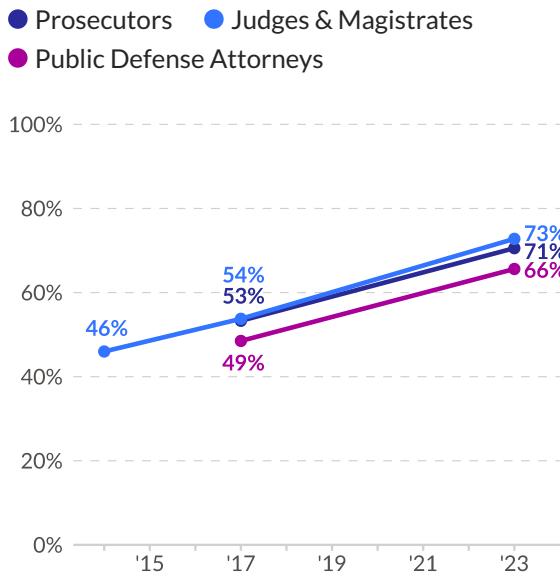
#### POLICE OFFICERS



#### EXECUTIVE



#### JUSTICE SYSTEM



Source: WJP General Population Poll 2014, 2017, and 2023

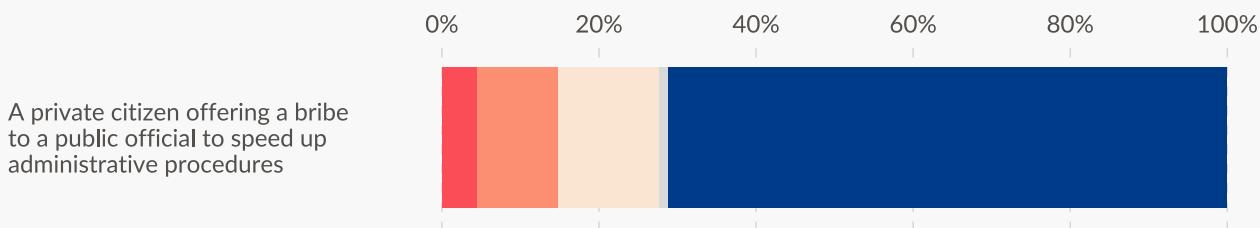
## CHART 8.

### Attitudes Towards Corrupt Behaviors

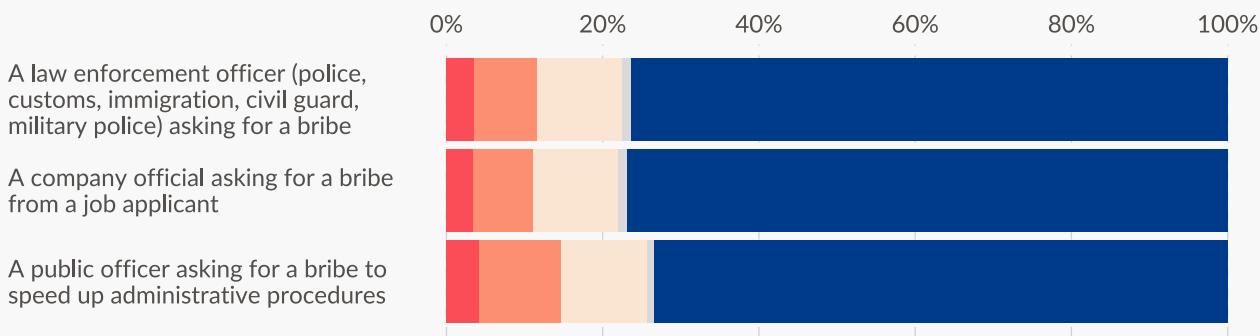
Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree that the following behaviors are acceptable or unacceptable

● Always Acceptable   ● Usually Acceptable   ● Sometimes Acceptable   ● No answer   ● Not Acceptable

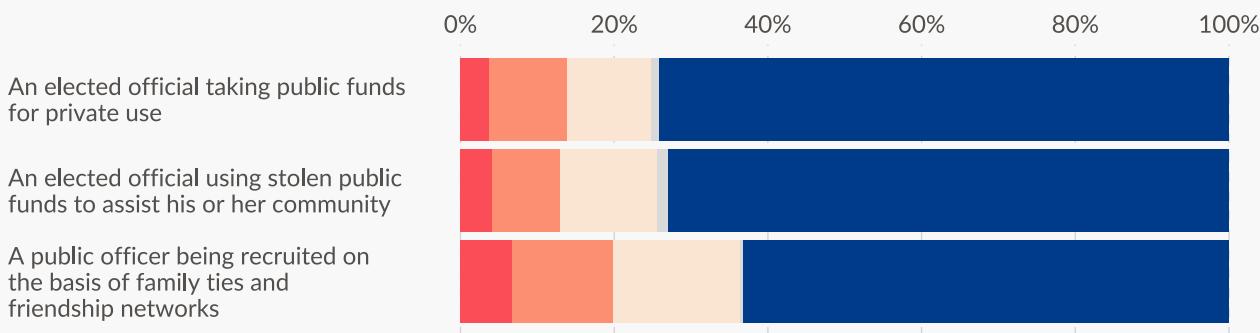
#### Bribes Offered



#### Bribes Requested



#### Nepotism and Embezzlement



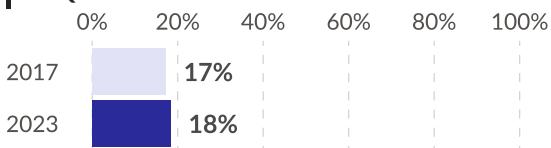
# BRIBERY VICTIMIZATION

## CHART 9.1

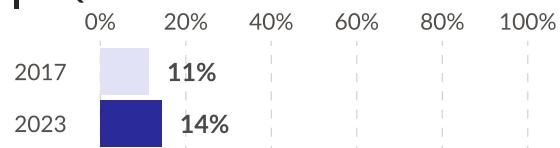
### Bribery Victimization Over Time

Percentage of respondents who paid a bribe in the last three years to access the following services, out of those who used these services

#### REQUEST A GOVERNMENT PERMIT OR DOCUMENT



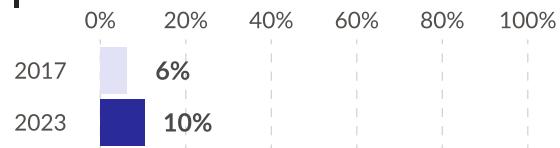
#### REQUEST PUBLIC BENEFITS OR ASSISTANCE



#### SECURE A PLACE AT A PUBLIC SCHOOL



#### USE A PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE



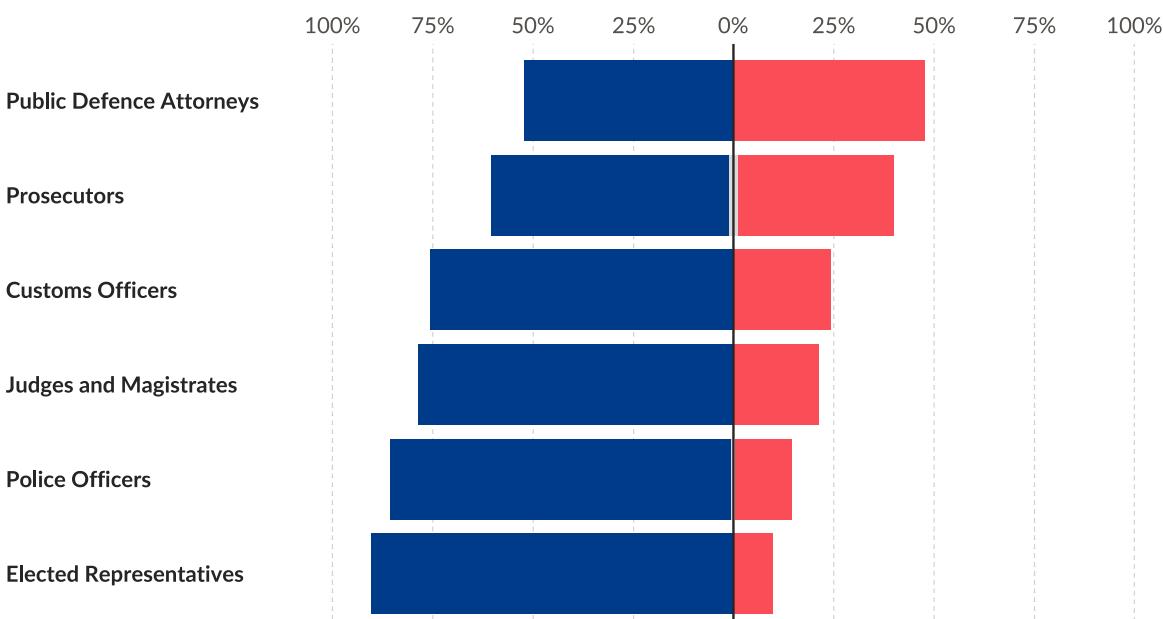
Source: WJP General Population Poll 2017, and 2023

## CHART 9.2

### Bribery Victimization Across State Officials

Percentage of respondents who paid a bribe in the last 12 months to one of the following public servants, out of those who had a contact with them

● No    ● No answer    ● Yes



Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

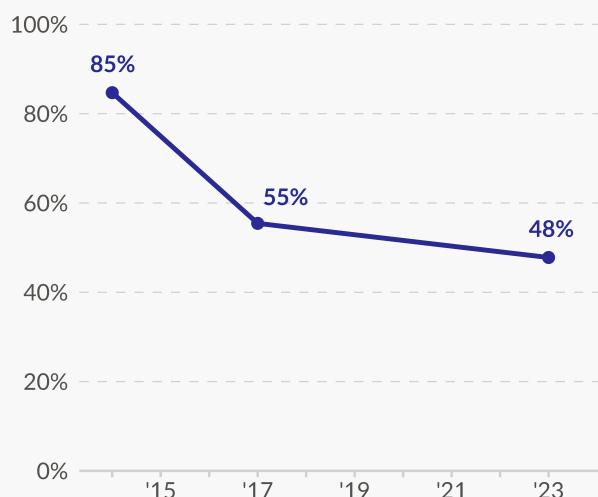
# TRUST

## CHART 10.

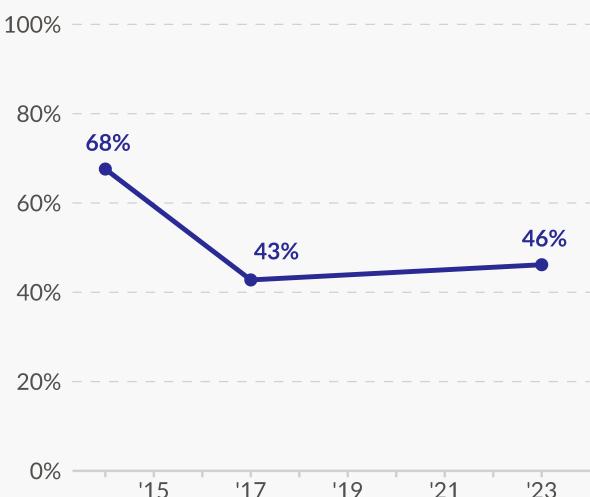
### Trust in Institutions Over Time

Percentage of respondents who have a lot or some trust in...

#### PEOPLE LIVING IN THEIR COUNTRY



#### POLICE OFFICERS



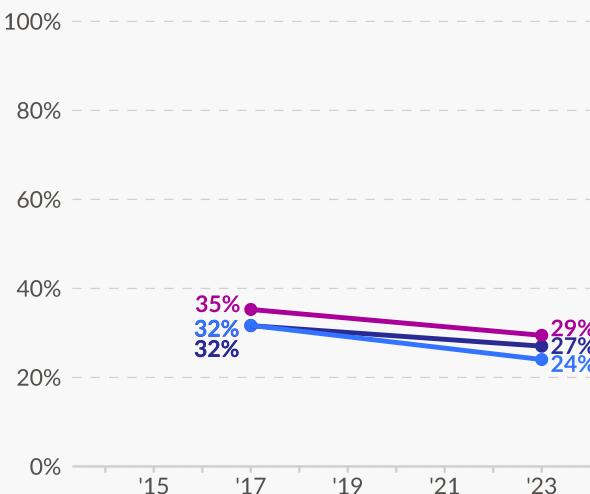
#### EXECUTIVE

- Local Government Officers
- National Government Officers



#### JUSTICE SYSTEM

- Prosecutors
- Judges & Magistrates
- Public Defense Attorneys



# DISAGGREGATED PERCEPTIONS

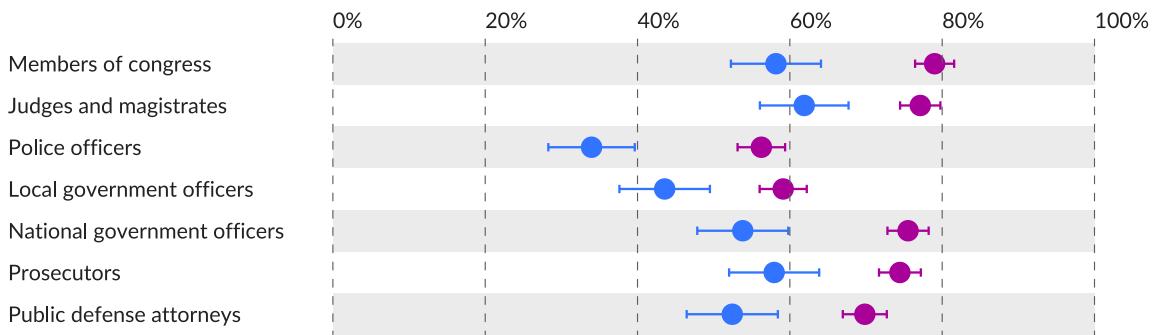
CHART 11.

## Perceptions of Corruption and Trust, by Political Support

● Non-Government Supporter    ● Government Supporter

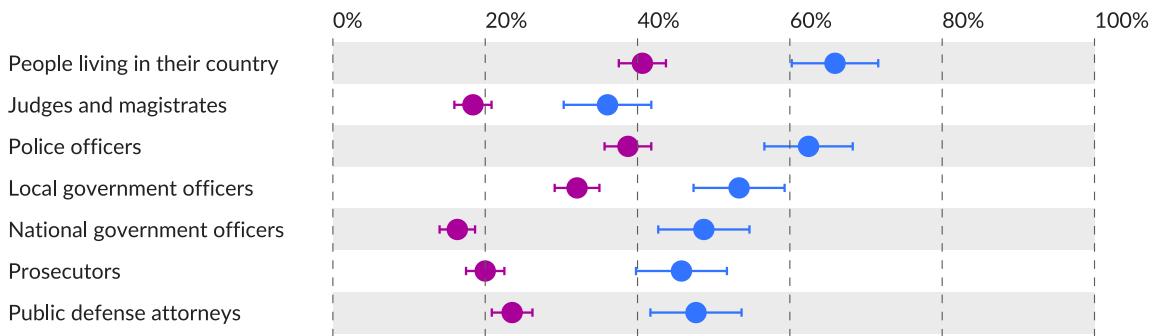
### CORRUPTION

Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree that most or all following public servants are corrupt



### TRUST

Percentage of respondents who have a lot or some trust in...



Note: The bars encompassing the data points in our visuals are indicative of 95% confidence intervals. These intervals provide a reliable range within which we can reasonably infer that the true values lie.

Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

## THEMATIC FINDINGS

### SECTION III **SECURITY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

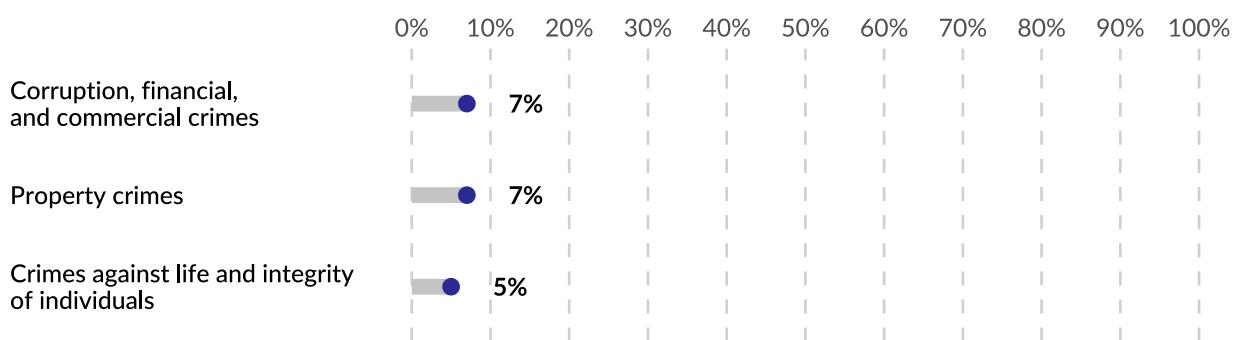
- 28 Crime Victimization
- 29 Security
- 30 Criminal Justice
- 33 Police
- 35 Victim Support

# CRIME VICTIMIZATION

## CHART 12.1

### Types of Crimes Experienced by People in North Macedonia

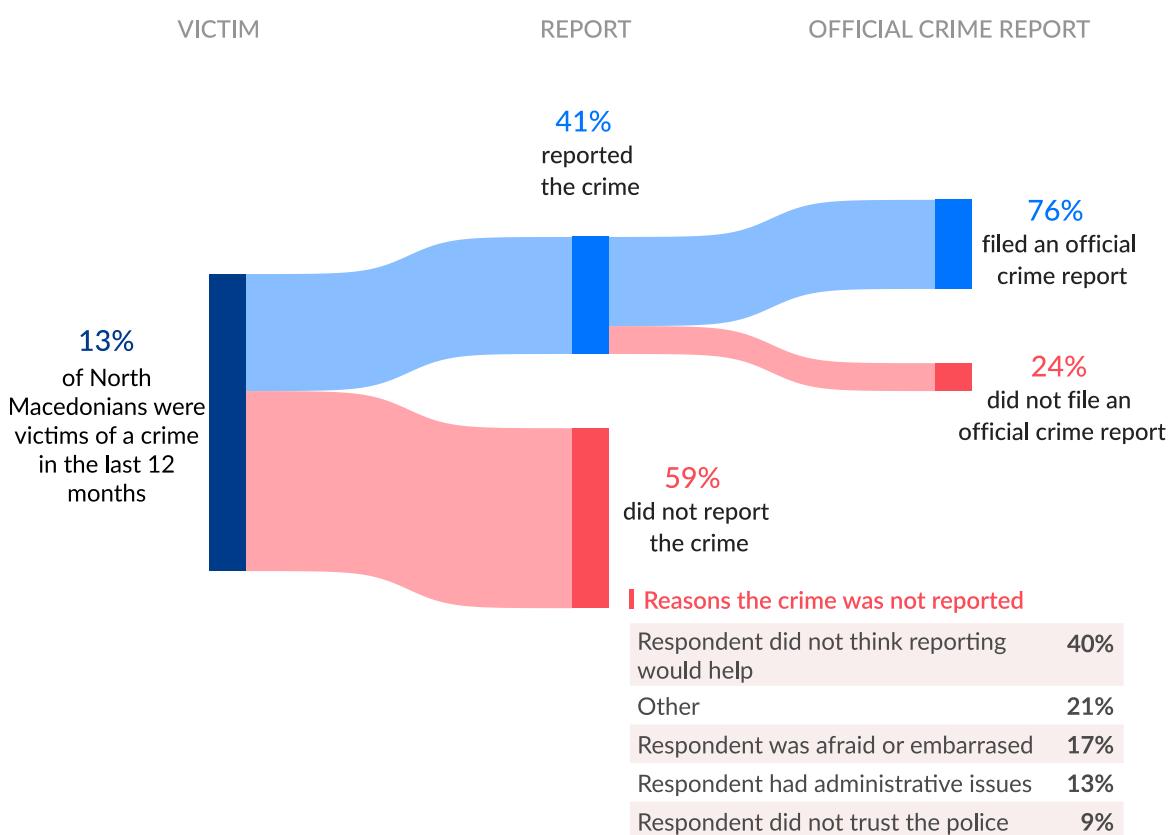
*Victimization rate in the last 12 months, by type of crime*



## CHART 12.2

### Crime Victimization Rates and Reporting

*Data on crime victimization and reporting in North Macedonia*



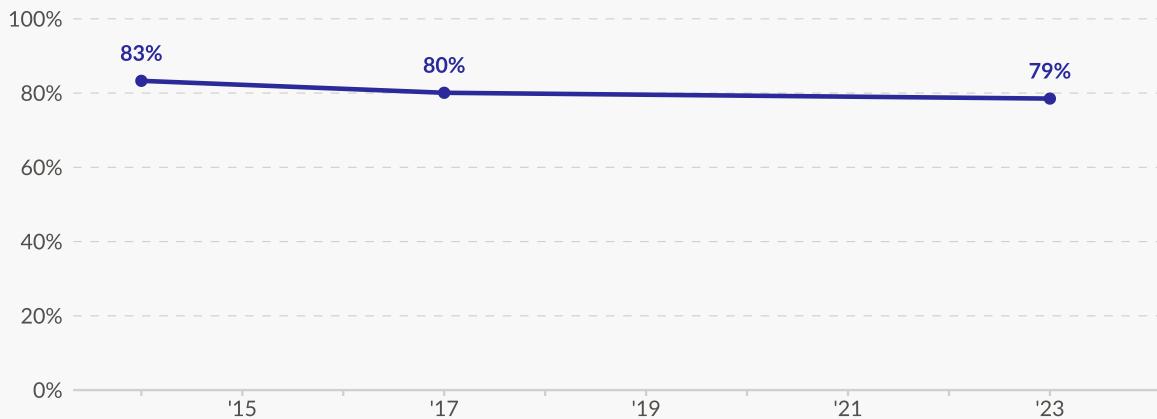
Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

# SECURITY

## CHART 13.1

### Perceptions of Security in North Macedonia

Percentage of respondents who reported that they feel safe or very safe walking in their neighborhood at night

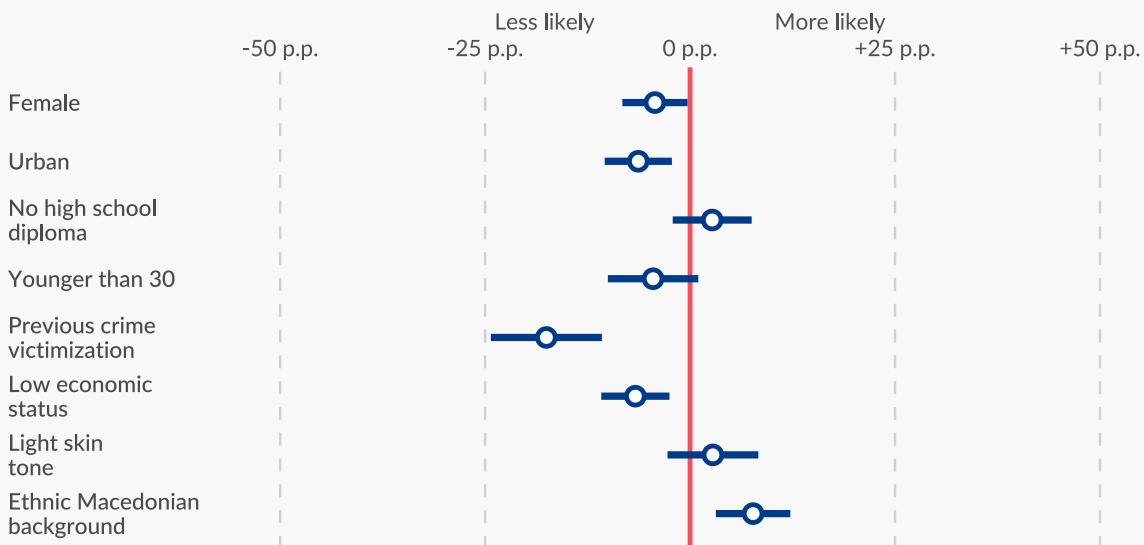


Source: WJP General Population Poll 2014, 2017, and 2023

## CHART 13.2

### Impact of Sociodemographic Characteristics on Perceptions of Safety

Likelihood that respondents feel safe or very safe walking in their neighborhood at night



Note: The results in this infographic were obtained from a logit regression. Each point indicates the average marginal effect, measured as percentage points (p.p.), of the corresponding sociodemographic characteristic on the predicted probability of a respondent to answer "safe" or "very safe" to the question "How safe do you feel walking in your neighborhood at night?" The lines indicate the 95% confidence intervals of each average marginal effect. For additional information on how Chart 13.2 was produced, please see the Regression Key linked in the Appendix.

Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

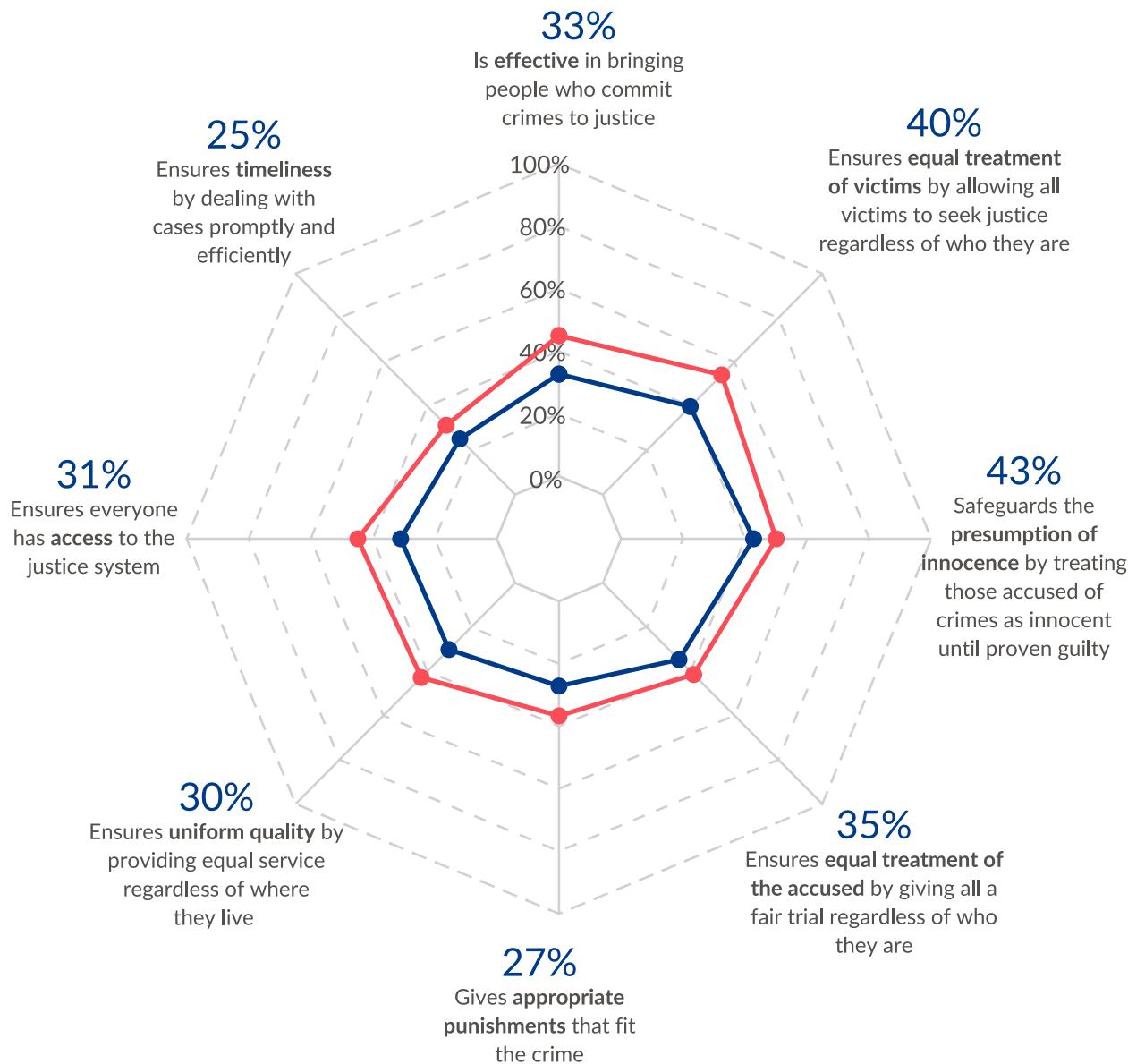
# CRIMINAL JUSTICE

CHART 14.1

## Perceptions of the Criminal Justice System in North Macedonia

Percentage of respondents who are confident or very confident that the criminal justice system...

● 2023    ● 2017



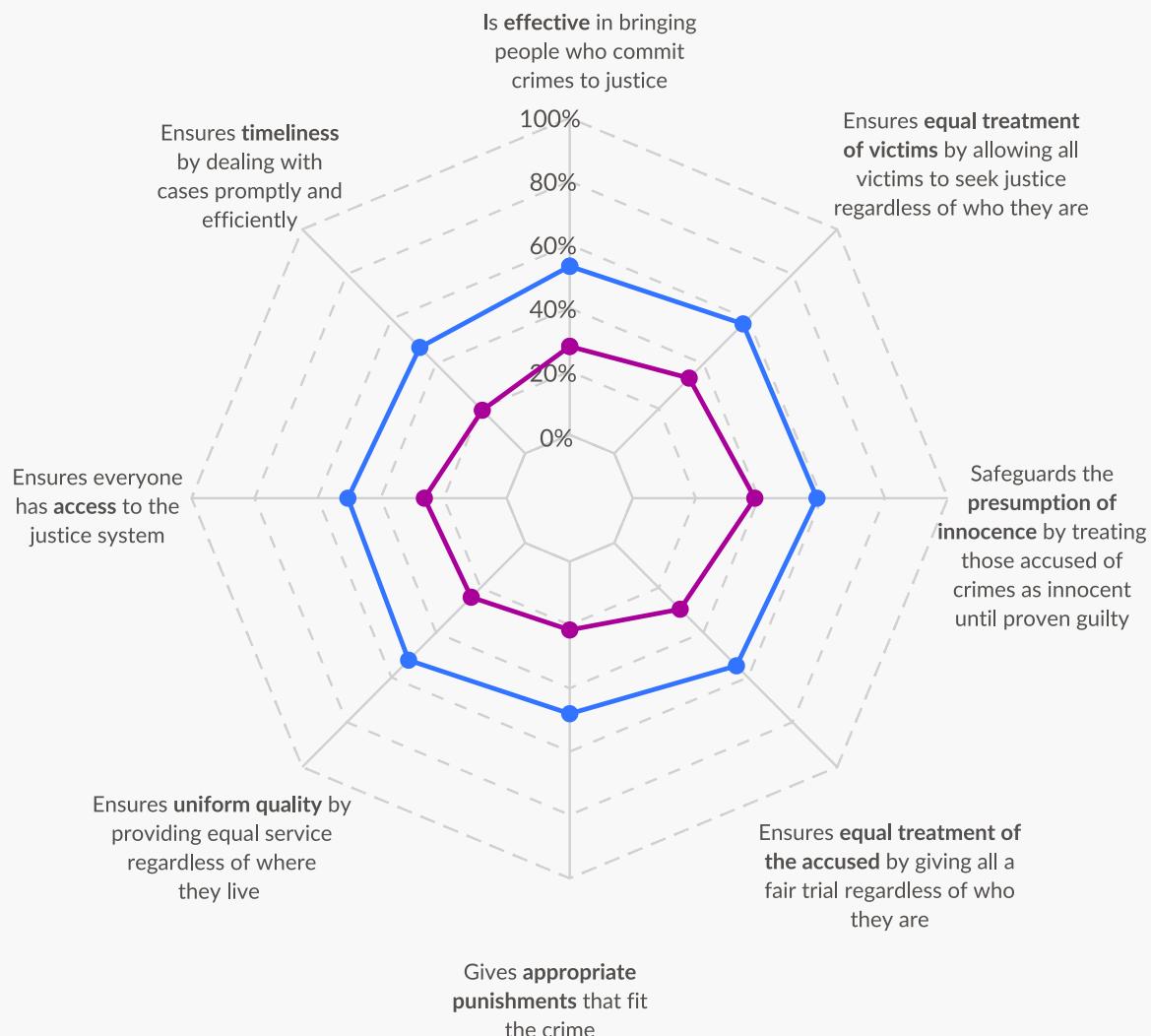
Source: WJP General Population Poll 2017 and 2023

## CHART 14.2

### Perceptions of the Criminal Justice System, by Political Support

Percentage of respondents who are confident or very confident that the criminal justice system...

● Non-Government Supporter     ● Government Supporter



## CHART 15.

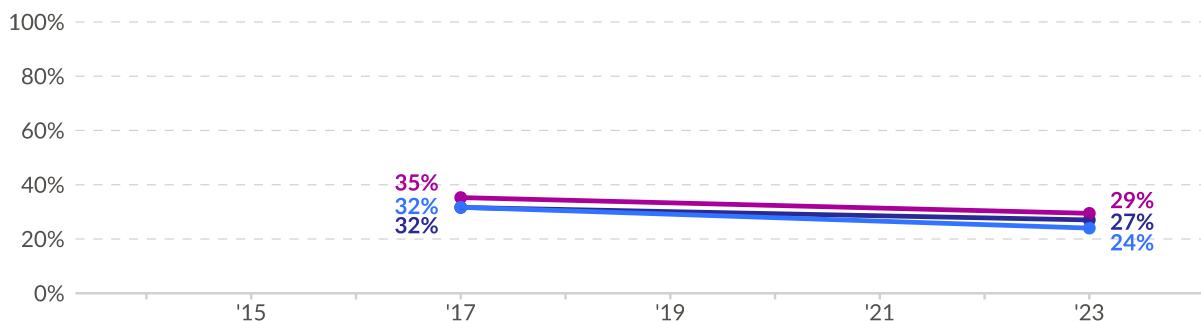
### Criminal Justice Actors

*Perceptions of criminal justice actors in North Macedonia*

● Prosecutors   ● Public Defense Attorneys   ● Judges & Magistrates

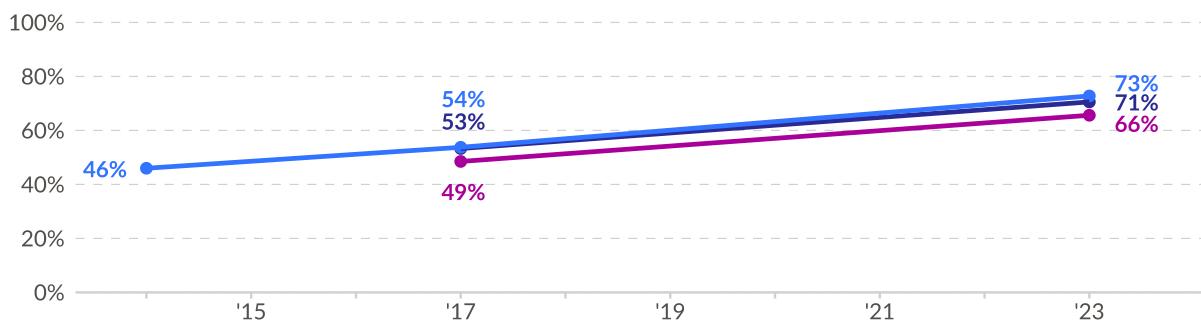
#### TRUST IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACTORS OVER TIME

*Percentage of respondents who have a lot or some trust in prosecutors, public defense attorneys, and judges and magistrates*



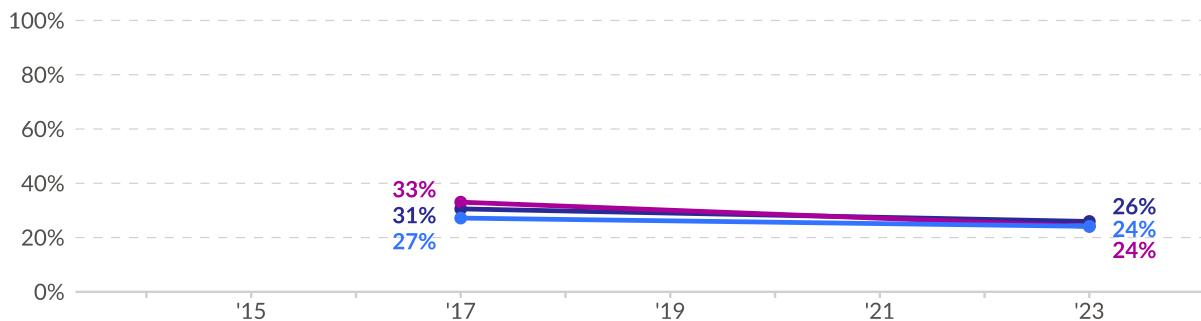
#### PERCEPTIONS OF CORRUPTION ACROSS CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACTORS OVER TIME

*Percentage of respondents who believe that most or all prosecutors, public defense attorneys, and judges and magistrates are corrupt*



#### PERCEPTIONS OF INDEPENDENCE ACROSS CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACTORS OVER TIME

*Percentage of respondents who believe that prosecutors, public defense attorneys, and judges and magistrates do their job well*



Note: Variables in independence category are as follows: Prosecutors prosecute crimes committed in an independent manner and are not subject to any sort of pressure; Public defenders do everything they can to defend poor people that are accused of committing a crime; Judges and magistrates decide cases in an independent manner and are not subject to any sort of pressure.

Source: WJP General Population Poll 2014, 2017, and 2023

# POLICE

## CHART 16.

### Perceptions of the Police

*Opinions on the effectiveness and legitimacy of law enforcement*

#### EFFECTIVENESS

##### Serve the Public

*Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree that the police...*

Are available to help when needed



Serve the interests of the community



Serve the interests of regular citizens



##### Crime Control and Safety

*Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree that the police...*

Help them feel safe



Resolve security problems in the community



Perform effective and lawful investigations



Respond to crime reports



#### LEGITIMACY

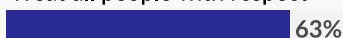
##### Due Process

*Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree that the police...*

Do not use excessive force



Treat all people with respect



Act lawfully



Respect the rights of suspects



##### Discrimination

*Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree that the police do not discriminate against suspects based on....*

Skin color



Religion



Citizenship



Ethnic background



Economic status



## **Corruption**

*Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree that the police...*

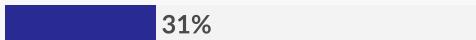
Are not involved in corrupt practices



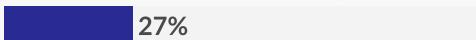
Do not serve the interests of gangs



Investigate crimes in an independent manner



Do not serve the interests of politicians



## **Trust and Crime Reporting**

*Percentage of respondents who...*

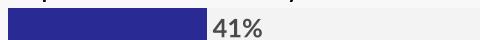
Feel safe in their neighborhoods



Trust the police



Report a crime when they are a victim



## **Accountability**

*Percentage of respondents who believe that the police...*

Are held accountable for violating laws



Are investigated for misconduct



Are held accountable for accepting bribes



Are held accountable for seeking bribes

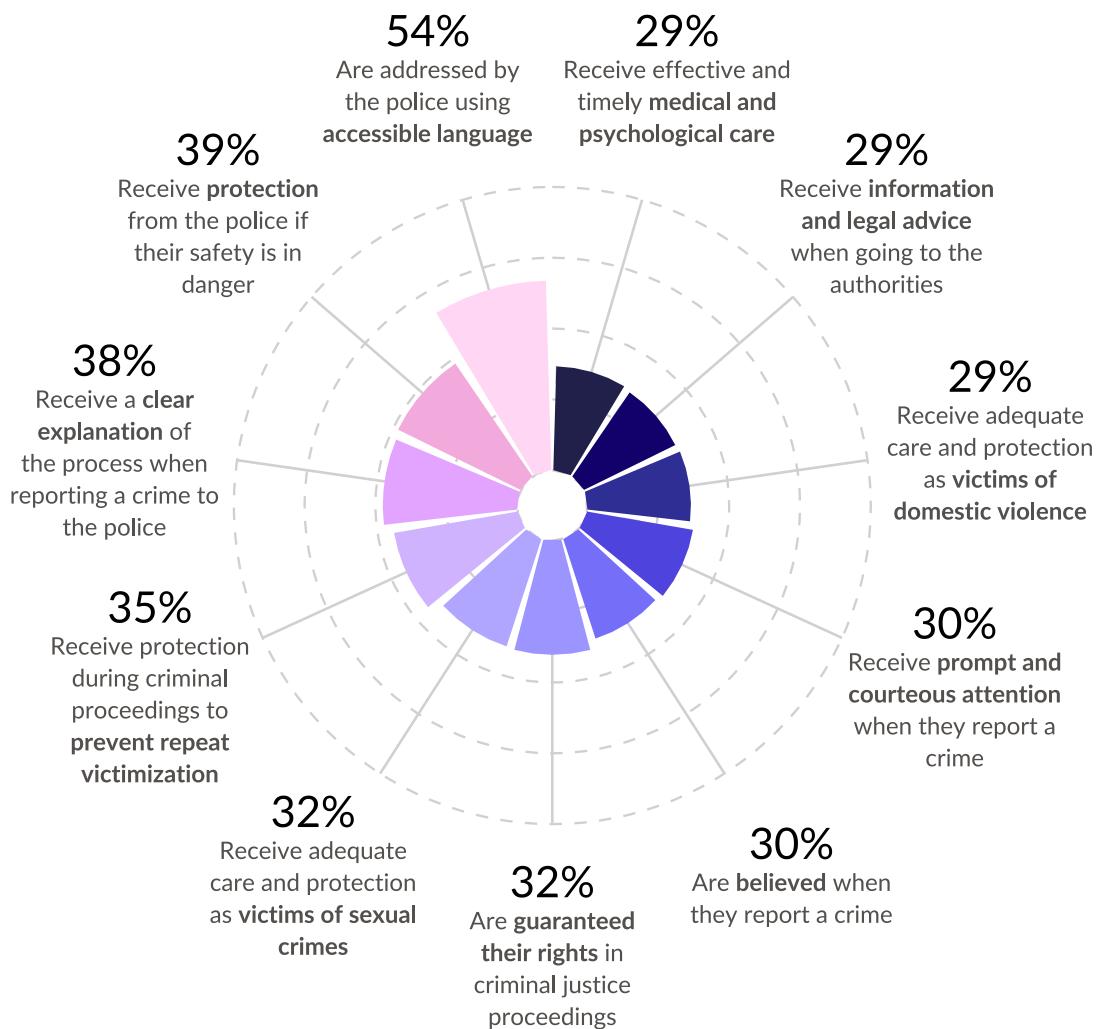


# VICTIM SUPPORT

CHART 17.

## Perceptions of the Treatment of Crime Victims

Percentage of respondents who are confident that crime victims...



## THEMATIC FINDINGS

### SECTION IV ACCESS TO JUSTICE

37 Justice Journey in North

Macedonia

39 Justice Journey in North

Macedonia, by Economic Status

41 Justice Gap

# ACCESS TO JUSTICE JOURNEY

CHART 18.

## Justice Journey in North Macedonia

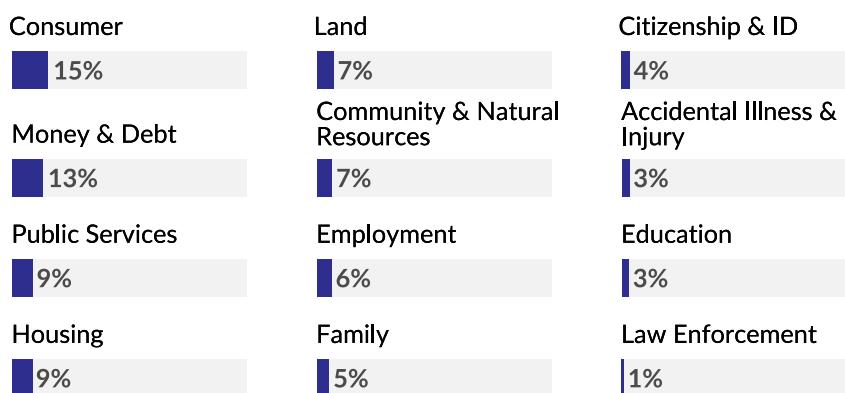
Paths followed by North Macedonians who experienced a legal problem in the last two years

### ► PART 1. Legal Problems

**36%**

Experienced a legal problem in the past 2 years

#### Incidence by type of problem:



### ► PART 2. Legal

#### Information

**60%**

Knew where to get advice and information

#### Expert Help

**46%**

Felt that they could get all the expert help they wanted

#### Confidence

**58%**

Were confident that they could achieve a fair outcome

### ► PART 3. Sources of Help

**20%**

Were able to access help

#### Type of advisor:

##### Friend or Family

**58%**

##### Civil Society Organization

**8%**

##### Trade Union or Employer

**4%**

##### Lawyer or Professional Advice Service

**33%**

##### Government Legal Aid Office

**3%**

##### Other Organization

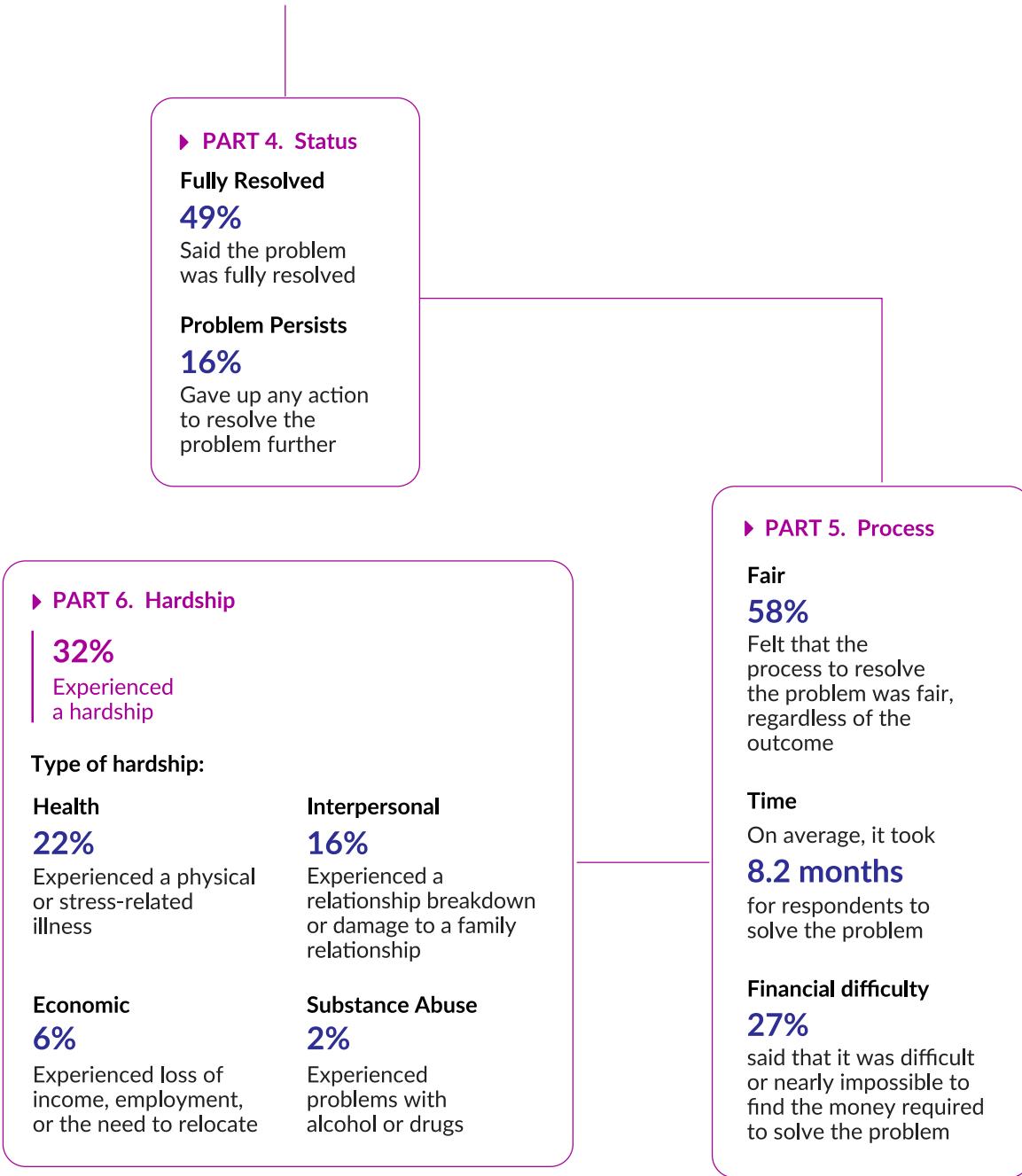
**11%**

##### Health or Welfare Professional

**7%**

##### Religious or Community Leader

**1%**



Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

## CHART 19.

### Justice Journey in North Macedonia, by Economic Status (E.S.)

Paths followed by North Macedonians who experienced a legal problem in the last two years

#### ► PART 1. Legal Problems

##### Financial Security

**32%**

Experienced a legal problem and had **high E.S.**

**42%**

Experienced a legal problem and had **low E.S.**

#### ► PART 2. Legal

##### Information

High E.S.



**64%**

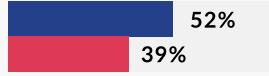
Low E.S.

**52%**

Knew where to get advice and information

##### Expert Help

High E.S.



**52%**

Low E.S.

**39%**

Felt that they could get all the expert help they wanted

##### Confidence

High E.S.



**67%**

Low E.S.

**51%**

Were confident that they could achieve a fair outcome

#### ► PART 3. Access to Help

##### Those who could access help:

**21%**

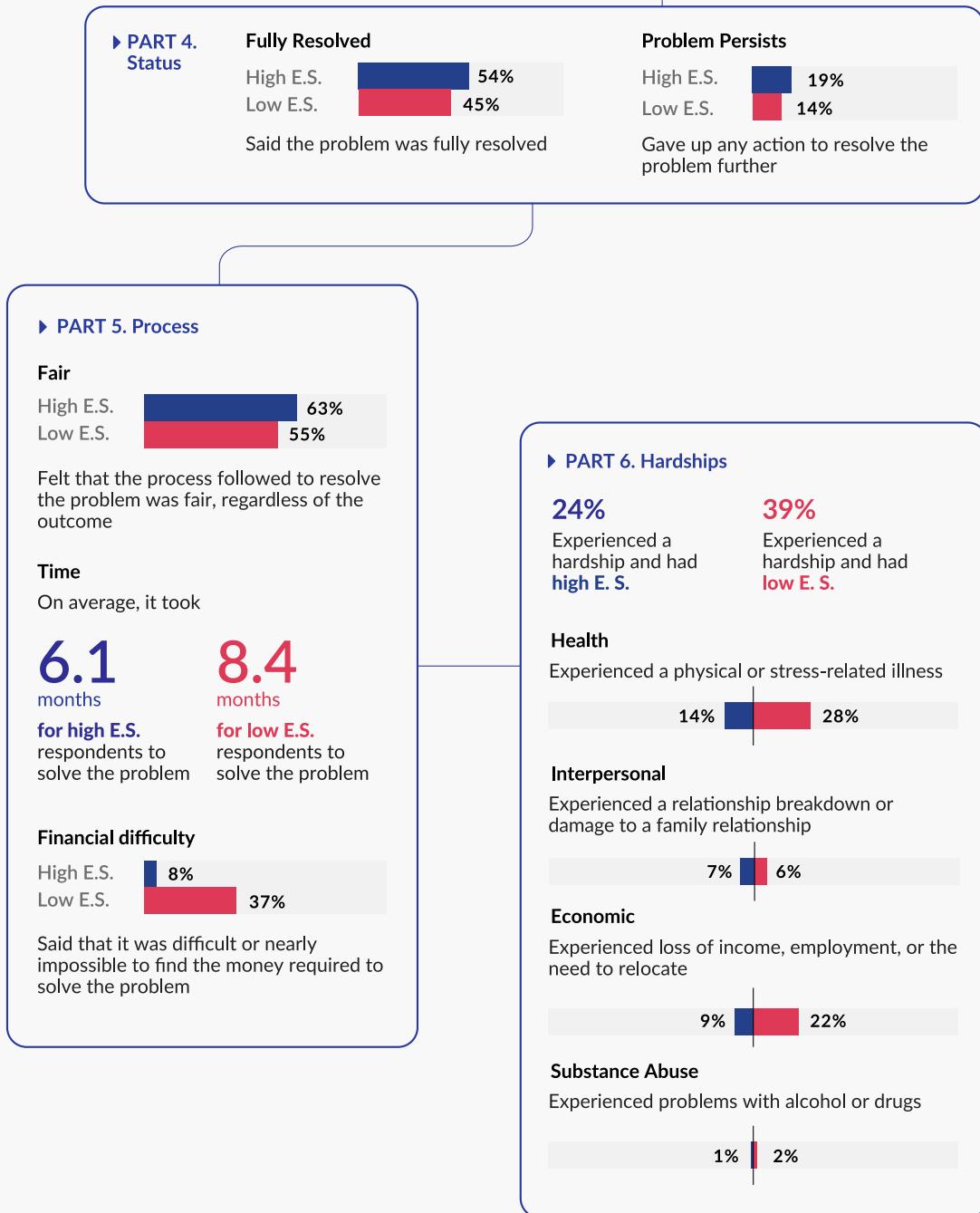
had high E.S.

**19%**

had low E.S.

Note: Low economic status (Low E.S.) refers to households with a monthly net income that is insufficient for purchasing basic necessities like food, clothing, and other essential products. On the other hand, high economic status (High E.S.) refers to households whose monthly net income is high enough to afford basic necessities like food, clothing, and other essential products.

Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023



Note: Low economic status (Low E.S.) refers to households with a monthly net income that is insufficient for purchasing basic necessities like food, clothing, and other essential products. On the other hand, high economic status (High E.S.) refers to households whose monthly net income is high enough to afford basic necessities like food, clothing, and other essential products.

Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

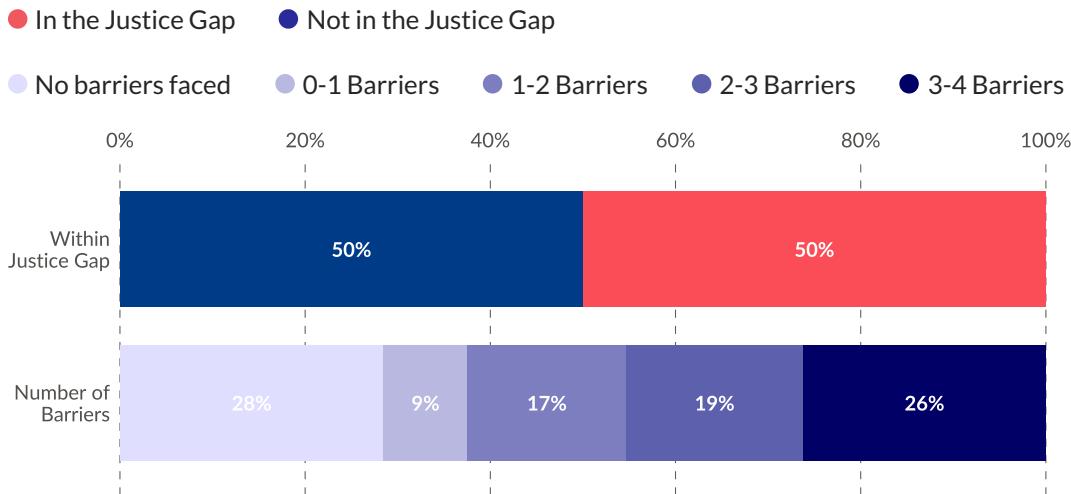
# CIVIL AND ADMINISTRATIVE JUSTICE GAP

## CHART 20.1

### The Justice Gap and Barriers to Justice in North Macedonia

Percentage of people in the justice gap and the number of barriers to justice they faced

The civil and administrative justice gap refers to individuals experiencing unmet civil justice needs, depriving them of necessary justice for everyday issues. To measure this, an indicator was developed considering key barriers to justice: inadequate access to information and advice; lack of assistance and representation; delays, affordability, fairness in resolution; and achieving a solution to legal problems.

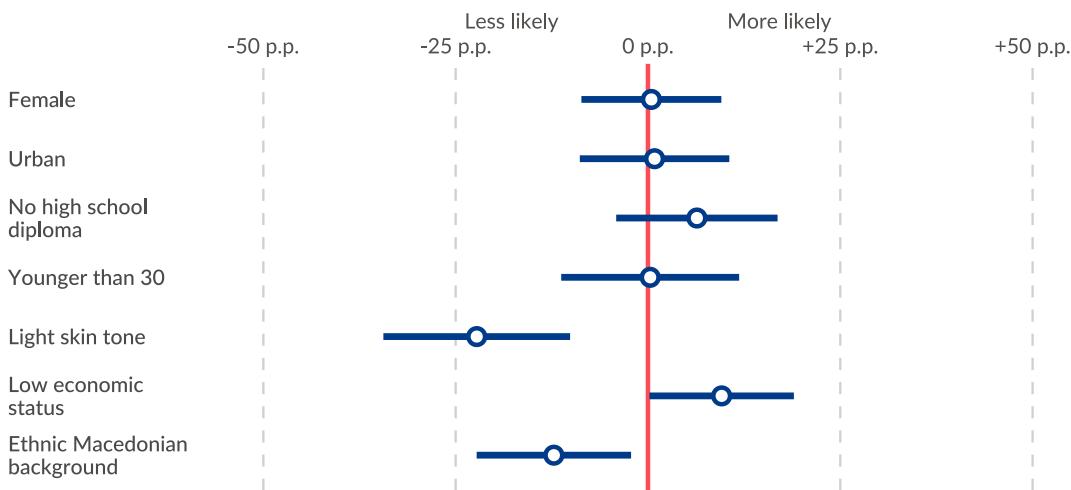


Note: This chart is sourced from the document [dissecting the justice gap in 104 countries](#) produced by the World Justice Project.

## CHART 20.2

### Impact of Sociodemographic Characteristics on the Justice Gap

Likelihood that respondents are in the justice gap



Note: The results in this chart were obtained from a logit regression. Each point indicates the average marginal effect, measure as percentage points (p.p.), of the corresponding sociodemographic characteristic on the predicted probability of a person to be in the justice gap. The lines indicate the 95% confidence intervals of each average marginal effect. For additional information about the justice gap, please see the document [Measuring the Justice Gap](#) produced by World Justice Project.

Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

## THEMATIC FINDINGS

### SECTION V DIVERSE VIEWS ON RULE OF LAW

43 Disaggregated Perceptions By  
Ethnic Background

45 Disaggregated Perceptions By  
Economic Status

# DISAGGREGATED PERCEPTIONS BY ETHNIC BACKGROUND

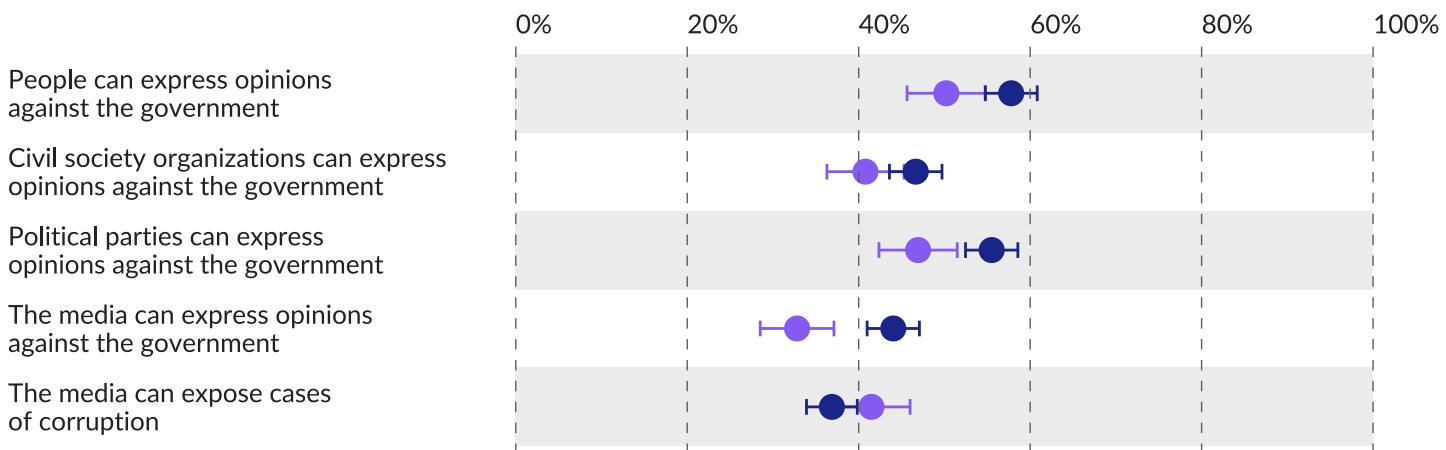
CHART 21.

## Perceptions of Fundamental Freedoms, by Ethnic Background

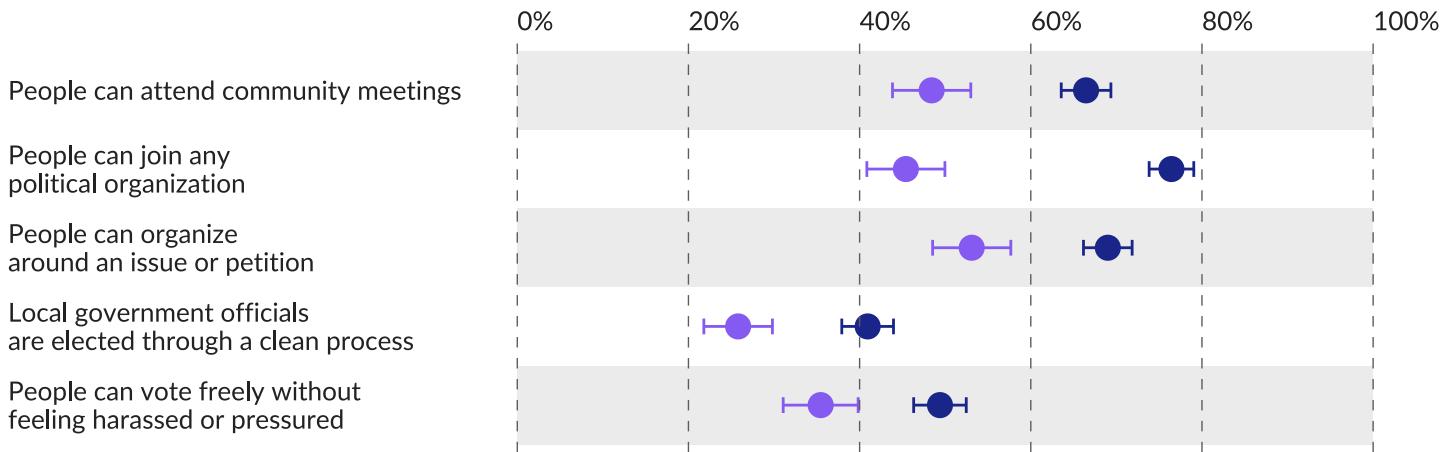
Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree with the following statements

● Albanian    ● Macedonian

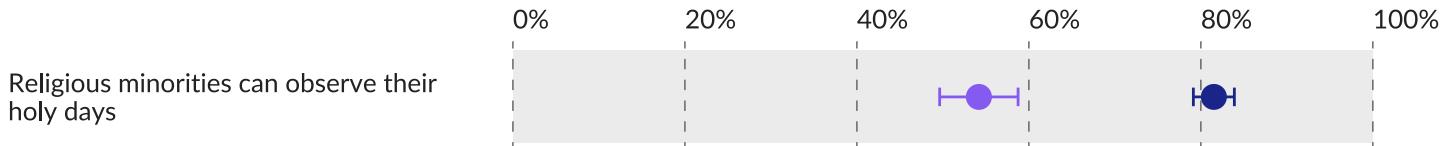
### EXPRESSION



### ELECTIONS AND PARTICIPATION



### RELIGION



Note: The error bars encompassing the data points in our visuals are indicative of 95% confidence intervals. These intervals provide a reliable range within which we can reasonably infer that the true values lie.

Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

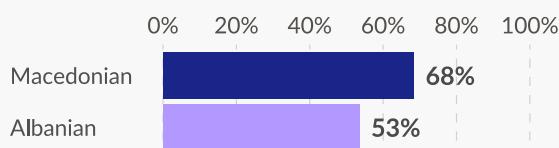
## CHART 22.

### Perceptions of the Police by Ethnic Background

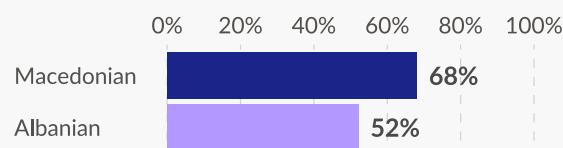
Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree that the police...

#### EFFECTIVENESS

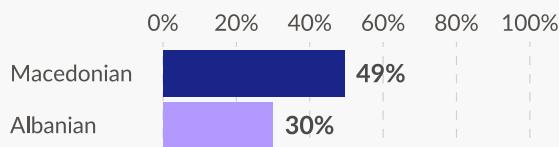
##### Are available to help when needed



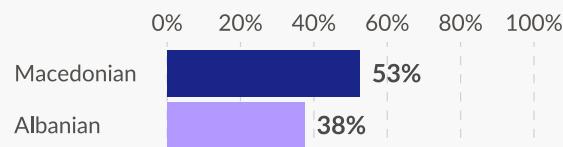
##### Resolve security problems in the community



##### Perform effective and lawful investigations

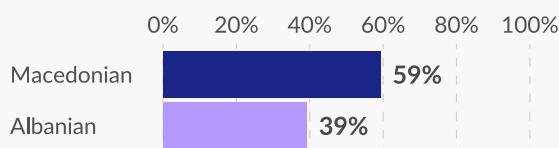


##### Serve the interests of regular citizens

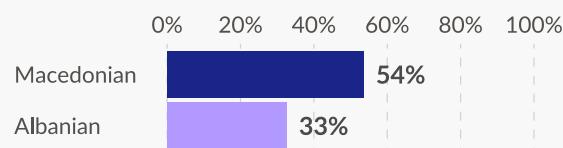


#### LEGITIMACY

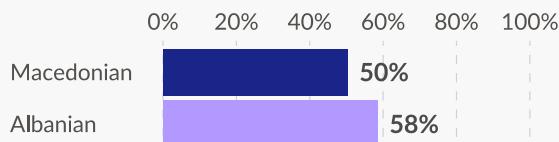
##### Act lawfully



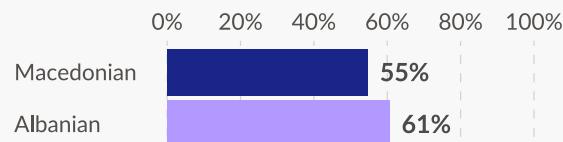
##### Respect the rights of suspects



##### Do not discriminate by economic status



##### Do not discriminate by ethnic background



Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

# DISAGGREGATED PERCEPTIONS BY ECONOMIC STATUS

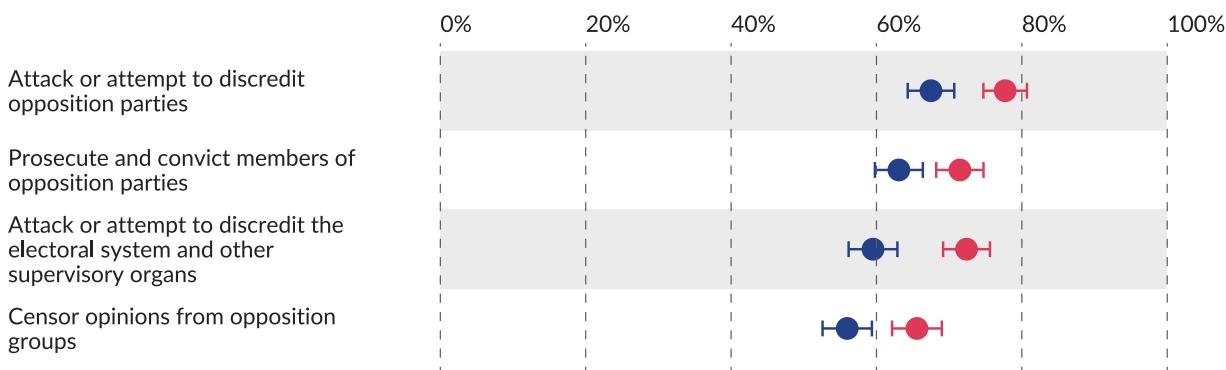
CHART 23.

## Perceptions of Authoritarian Behavior, by Economic Status

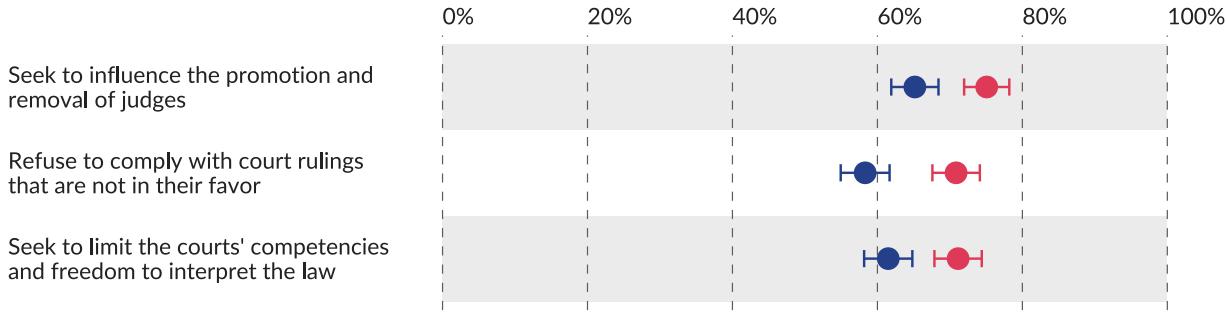
Percentage of respondents in North Macedonia who agree or strongly agree that top government officials...

● Low Economic Status    ● High Economic Status

### ATTACKS ON ELECTORAL SYSTEMS AND OPPOSITION PARTIES



### ATTACKS ON THE JUDICIARY



### ATTACKS ON THE MEDIA AND MISINFORMATION



Note: The bars encompassing the data points in our visuals are indicative of 95% confidence intervals. These intervals provide a reliable range within which we can reasonably infer that the true values lie.

Low economic status refers to households with a monthly net income that is insufficient for purchasing basic necessities like food, clothing, and other essential products. On the other hand, high economic status refers to households whose monthly net income is high enough to afford basic necessities like food, clothing, and other essential products.

Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

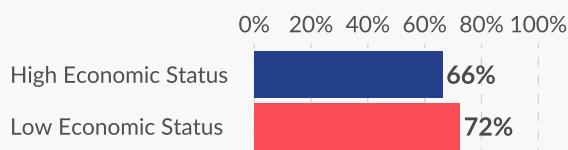
## CHART 24.

### Perceptions of Corruption and Trust, by Economic Status

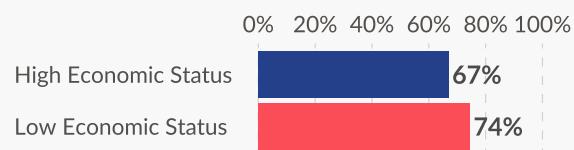
#### CORRUPTION

*Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree that most or all of the following public servants are corrupt*

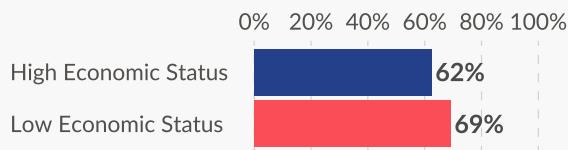
##### National government officers



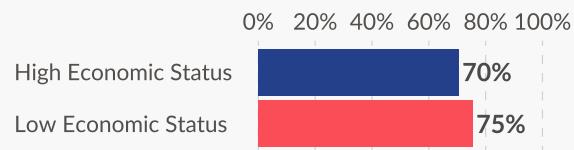
##### Prosecutors



##### Public defense attorneys



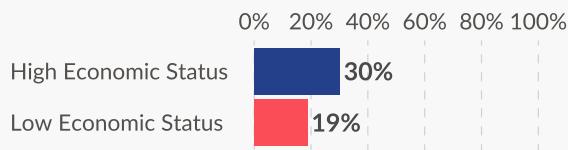
##### Judges and magistrates



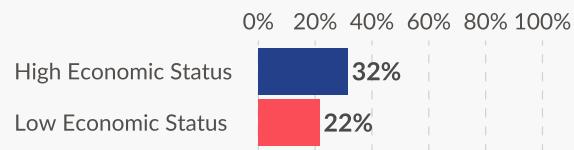
#### TRUST

*Percentage of respondents who have a lot or some trust in...*

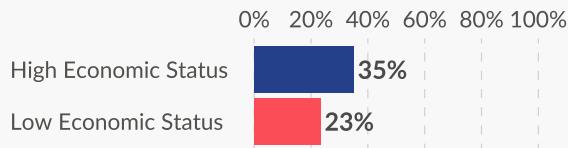
##### National government officers



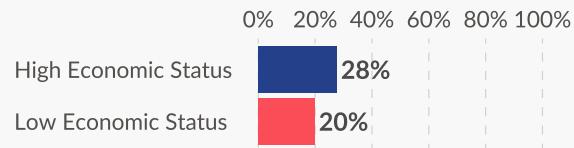
##### Prosecutors



##### Public defense attorneys



##### Judges and magistrates



Note: Low economic status refers to households with a monthly net income that is insufficient for purchasing basic necessities like food, clothing, and other essential products. On the other hand, high economic status refers to households whose monthly net income is high enough to afford basic necessities like food, clothing, and other essential products.

Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

## PROJECT DESIGN

48 Methodology

# METHODOLOGY

To present an image that accurately portrays the rule of law as experienced by ordinary people, data in this report is drawn from the General Population Poll (GPP), an original data source designed and collected by the World Justice Project (WJP). The GPP captures the experiences and perceptions of ordinary citizens concerning the performance of the state and its agents and the actual operation of the legal framework in their country.

The GPP used to collect data in North Macedonia in 2023 features several questions that highlight perceptions on salient issues, including authoritarian behavior, corruption, criminal justice, fundamental freedoms, security, and access to justice. In total, the GPP questionnaire includes 88 perception-based questions and 69 experience-based questions, along with sociodemographic information on all respondents. Additionally, the GPP in North Macedonia was administered to a sample of 1,594 respondents.

## DATA COLLECTION

The GPP in North Macedonia was conducted for the WJP's *The Rule of Law in North Macedonia: Key Findings from the General Population Poll 2023* with sampling, fieldwork, and data processing by Ipsos Strategic Marketing, based in Belgrade, Serbia. IPSOS administered the surveys between May and July 2023, conducting face-to-face interviews using a multi-stage stratified random sampling design. The target population group for this survey included North Macedonians aged 18 years or older residing across all eight regions throughout the country.

## SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLE FRAME

The General Population Poll in North Macedonia represents an achieved total sample size of 1,594 interviews distributed proportionally across eight regions. IPSOS based the sampling frame on the most recent population estimates from the National State Statistical Office, acquiring a proportionally stratified sample by region, age, gender, socioeconomic status, and level of urbanization.

In order to address all relevant topics while controlling the questionnaire length, the World Justice Project split three of the survey modules into two versions (Option A and Option B) and randomly assigned one option to each respondent for each module. These modules included: Hypothetical Situations, Civic Participation, and Institutional Performance. Aside from these modules, the questionnaires are identical.

## SAMPLING

Households were selected following a two-level randomized stratification. Geoeconomic strata were combined with the level of urbanization to get a first level stratification. In the second level, polling stations (sampling points) were randomly selected using a Lahirie PPS Cumulative algorithm. The number of sampling points per strata was predefined following population quotas. Finally, households were selected following a random choice for a starting point and an equal-steps route for surveyors.

## INTERVIEWING AND QUALITY CONTROL

In total, 76 interviewers worked on this project, including 67 female interviewers. Interviews were conducted in Macedonian and Albanian languages.

During data processing, 676 interviews (approximately 44% of the sample) were backchecked via telephone. Additional quality control measures included GPS validation of all sampling segment interviews, checks for abnormal answer patterns, and photo verification. After quality control, 56 interviews were rejected from the final sample. Interviews averaged 51 minutes in length and ranged from 20 to 267 minutes.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

**COVERAGE:** Interviews were distributed across regions to create a nationally representative sample. Thirty percent (30%) of the interviews took place in the Skopje region, 19% in the East and Northeast regions of the country, 18% in the Southeast and Southwest regions, 14% in Poloski, 11% in Pelagoniski, and the remaining 8% of the interviews took place in the Vardaski region of the country.

**GEOGRAPHY:** Thirty-eight percent (38%) of respondents resided in rural areas, while 62% of respondents resided in metro areas or cities.

### RACIAL AND ETHNIC BACKGROUND:

Sixty-four percent (64%) of respondents identified themselves as ethnic Macedonians, while 29% identified as ethnic Albanians. The remaining 7% of respondents identified themselves as part of other ethnic groups.

**GENDER:** The sample is equally divided between males (50%) and female respondents (50%).

**EDUCATION:** Most respondents (81%) reported that they had received at least a high school diploma or vocational degree.

## RESPONSE RATES

Eligible household, non-interview	575
Refusals	449
Break-off	7
Non-contact	101
Other	18
Ineligible household	189
No eligible respondent in the household	23
Quota filled	140
Other	26

## DATA REVIEW AND JUSTIFICATION

As part of the data analysis process, the team consulted several third-party sources in order to contextualize and validate perception-based data captured by the General Population Poll and compare it with the objective rule of law situation in-country. Peer data sources consulted include select indicators measured by the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem), Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index, the Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index (BTI), and Freedom House's Freedom in the World. While certain trends captured by the 2023 General Population Poll in North Macedonia are comparable to trends in perceptions data measured by other indices, the experiences and perceptions presented in this report may not always coincide with the reality of North Macedonia's rule of law performance as measured by other sources.

## HISTORICAL DATA

Historical data in this report derives from the *WJP Rule of Law Index®*'s General Population Poll that is typically administered every two to three years using a nationally representative probability sample ranging 500 to 1,000 respondents. These household surveys were administered in the three largest cities of most countries until 2018, when the World Justice Project transitioned to nationally representative coverage as the preferred methodology for polling. The historical polling data used in this year's reports was collected in 2014, 2017, and 2023.

## RULE OF LAW INDEX

For detailed insights into the estimation of WJP Rule of Law Index scores, as well as information regarding the methodology used for factors and sub-factors, please refer to [Index-Methodology-2023](#) available on the World Justice Project website.

## APPENDIX

51 About the WJP

52 Other Publications



## ABOUT THE WORLD JUSTICE PROJECT

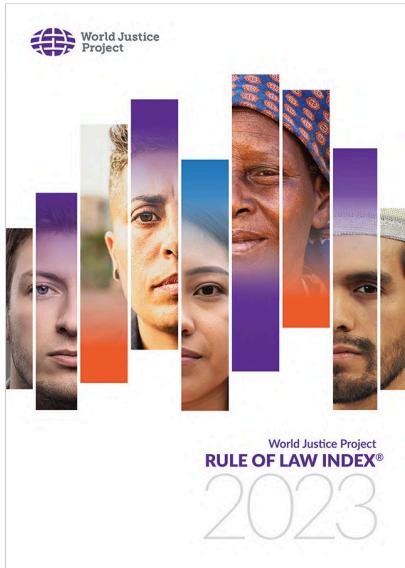
The World Justice Project (WJP) is an independent, multidisciplinary organization working to create knowledge, build awareness, and stimulate action to advance the rule of law worldwide. Effective rule of law is the foundation for communities of justice, opportunity, and peace—underpinning development, accountable government, and respect for fundamental rights.

The WJP builds and supports a global, multidisciplinary movement for the rule of law through three lines of work: collecting, organizing, and analyzing original, independent rule of law data, including the *World Justice Project Rule of Law Index*; supporting research, scholarship, and teaching about the importance of the rule of law, its relationship to development, and effective strategies to strengthen it; and connecting and building an engaged global network of policymakers and advocates to advance the rule of law through strategic partnerships, convenings, coordinated advocacy, and support for locally led initiatives.

Learn more at: [worldjusticeproject.org](http://worldjusticeproject.org).

# OTHER PUBLICATIONS

For more information click on the publication.



**WJP Rule of Law Index 2023**



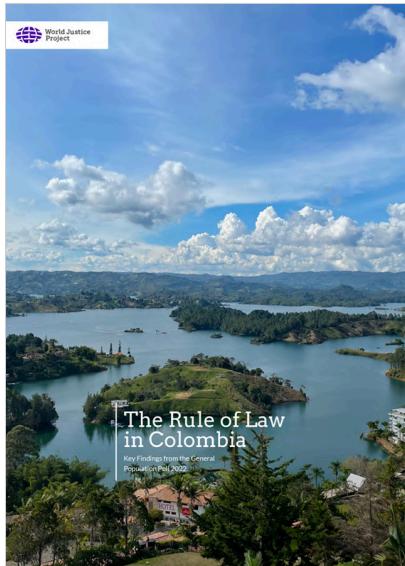
**WJP Rule of Law Index 2023 Insights**

Highlights and data trends from the  
WJP Rule of Law Index 2023

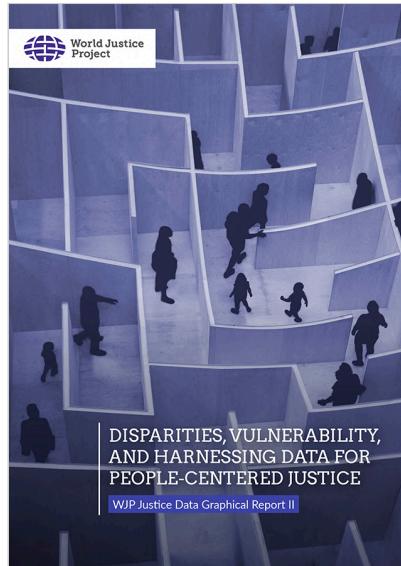


**WJP Mexico States Rule of  
Law Index 2022-2023**

Perceptions and experiences in 32  
states



**Rule of Law Surveys in Latin American  
and Caribbean Countries**



**WJP Justice Data Graphical Report  
Part II  
2023**



**Environmental Governance Indicators  
for Latin America & the Caribbean  
2020**

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