



# The Rule of Law in North Macedonia

Key Findings from the General  
Population Poll 2023

# Acknowledgements

*The Rule of Law in North Macedonia: Key Findings from the General Population Poll 2023* was produced by the World Justice Project under the research oversight of Alejandro Ponce and the executive direction of Elizabeth Andersen.

The production of this report was led by Ana María Montoya. This report was prepared by Erin Campbell, James Davis, Dalia Habiby, Artha Pillai, Santiago Pardo, and Carlos Toruño.

The findings in this report are taken from the General Population Poll (GPP) conducted for the World Justice Project in 2023. The GPP's conceptual framework and methodology were developed by Mark David Agrast, Juan Carlos Botero, and Alejandro Ponce. The production of this iteration of country report series was developed by Ana María Montoya, Santiago Pardo, Alejandro Ponce, Tanya Primiani, Hannah Rigazzi, Natalia Rodríguez Cajamarca, Victoria Thomaides, and Carlos Toruño Paniagua.

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## ABOUT THIS REPORT

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# 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 briefs, 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

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## SECTION 1

### Authoritarianism, Fundamental Freedoms, and Government Accountability

#### 1. Authoritarianism

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#### 2. Fundamental Freedoms

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#### 3. Government Accountability

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## SECTION 2

### Corruption and Trust

#### 4. Corruption

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#### 5. Trust

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#### 6. Bribery Victimization

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## **7. Disaggregated Perceptions of Corruption and Trust**

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## **SECTION 3**

### **Security and Criminal Justice**

#### **8. Crime Victimization**

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#### **9. Security**

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#### **10. Criminal Justice**

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#### **11. Police Performance**

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## SECTION 4

### Access to Justice

#### 11. Access to Justice

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## THEMATIC FINDINGS

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

10 Authoritarianism

13 Fundamental Freedoms

16 Government Accountability

# AUTHORITARIANISM

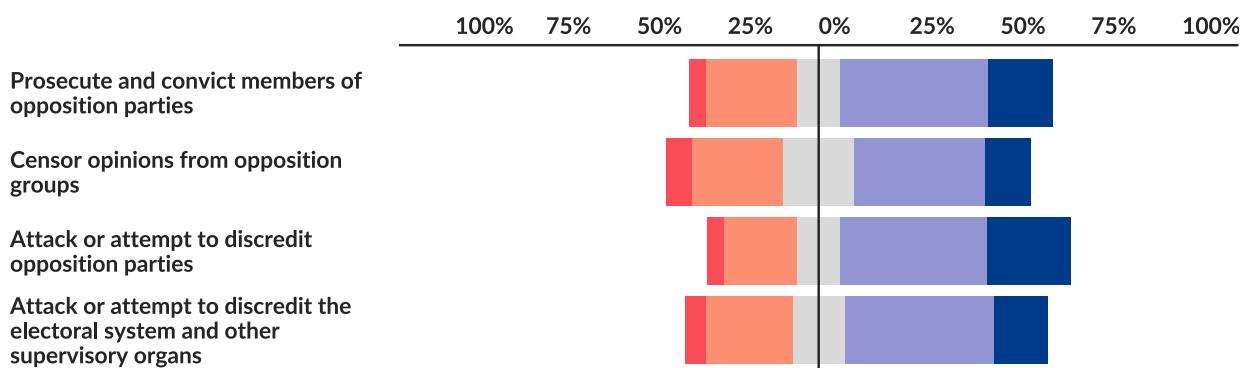
## CHART 1.

### Perceptions of Authoritarian Behaviors

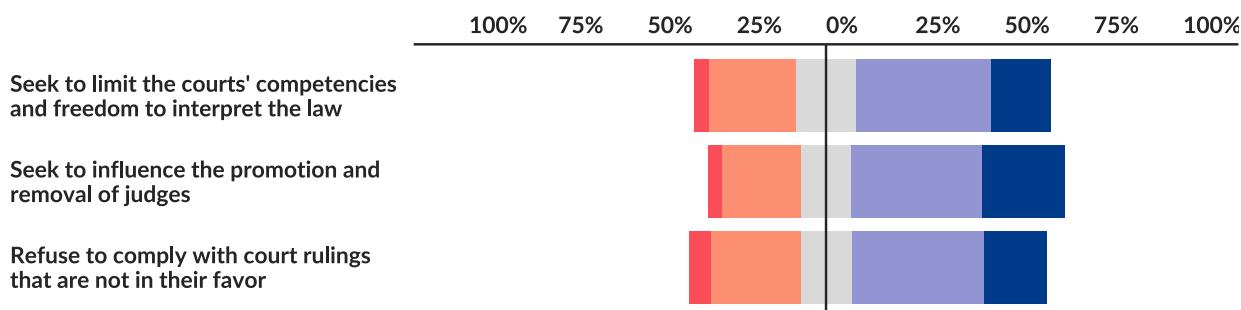
Percentage of respondents in North Macedonia who believe that top government officials...

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

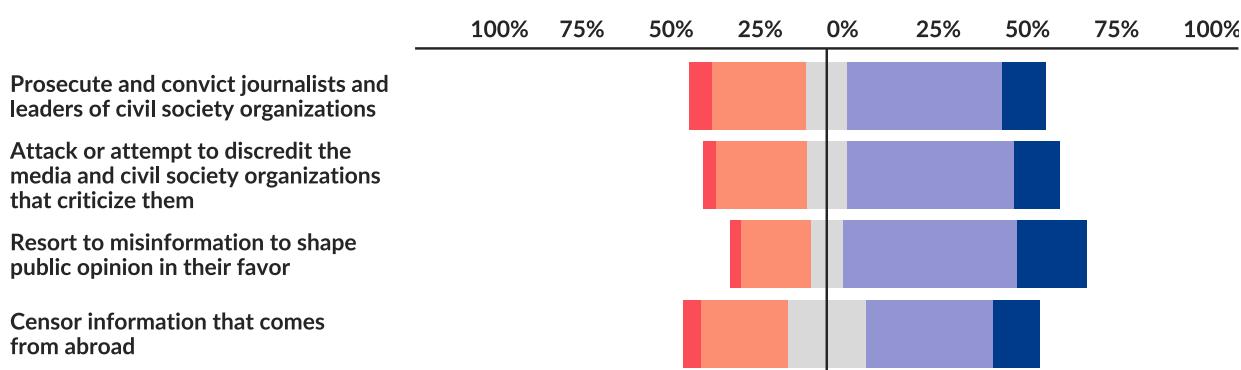
#### ATTACKS ON ELECTORAL SYSTEMS AND OPPOSITION PARTIES



#### ATTACKS ON THE JUDICIARY



#### ATTACKS ON THE MEDIA AND MISINFORMATION



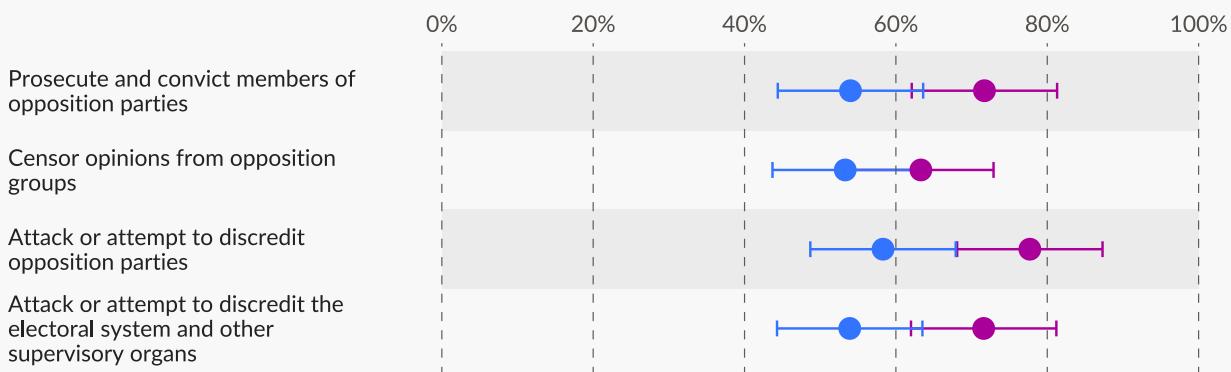
## CHART 2.

### Perceptions of Authoritarian Behavior, by Cultural Group

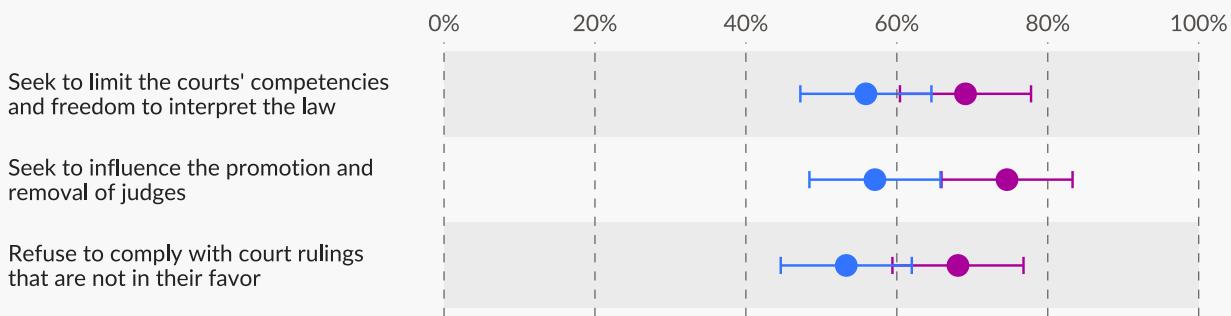
Percentage of respondents in North Macedonia who believe that top government officials...

● Christian Orthodox   ● Sunni Muslim

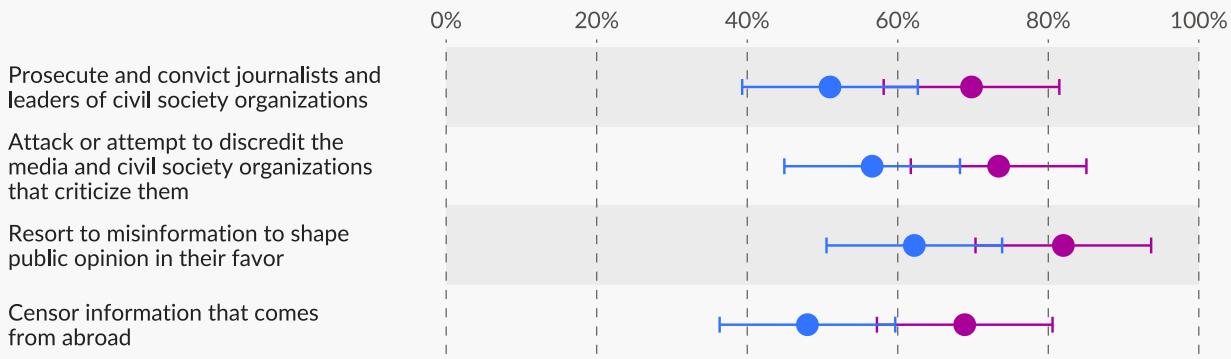
#### ATTACKS ON ELECTORAL SYSTEMS AND OPPOSITION PARTIES



#### ATTACKS ON THE JUDICIARY



#### ATTACKS ON THE MEDIA AND MISINFORMATION



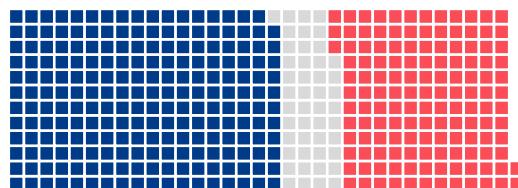
Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

### CHART 3.

## Attitudes Towards Authoritarianism and Rule of Law

Percentage of respondents who agree with the following statements

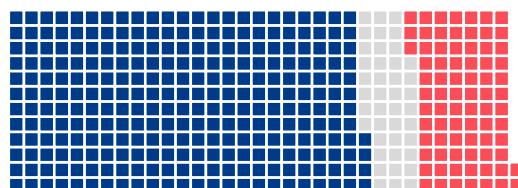
- The president can attack the media, civil society, and opposition groups



- The president must respect the media, civil society, and opposition groups

- None of the above/Prefer not to answer

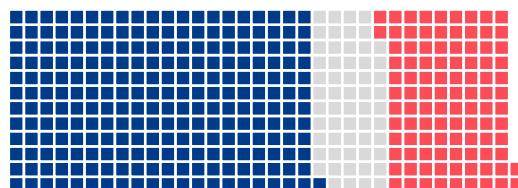
- The president can undermine independent authorities



- The president must respect independent authorities

- None of the above/Prefer not to answer

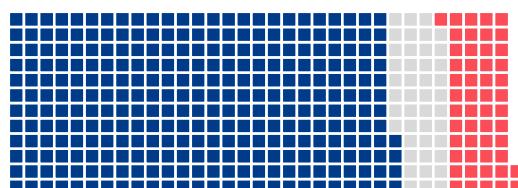
- Government efficiency is more important than citizen influence



- 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

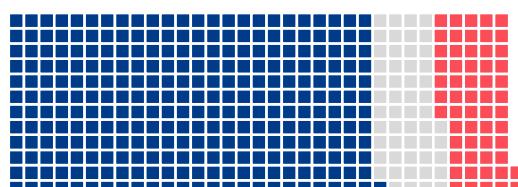
- The president should not be bound by the laws or courts



- 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

# FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

## CHART 4.

### Fundamental Freedoms in North Macedonia Over Time

Percentage of respondents who believe 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



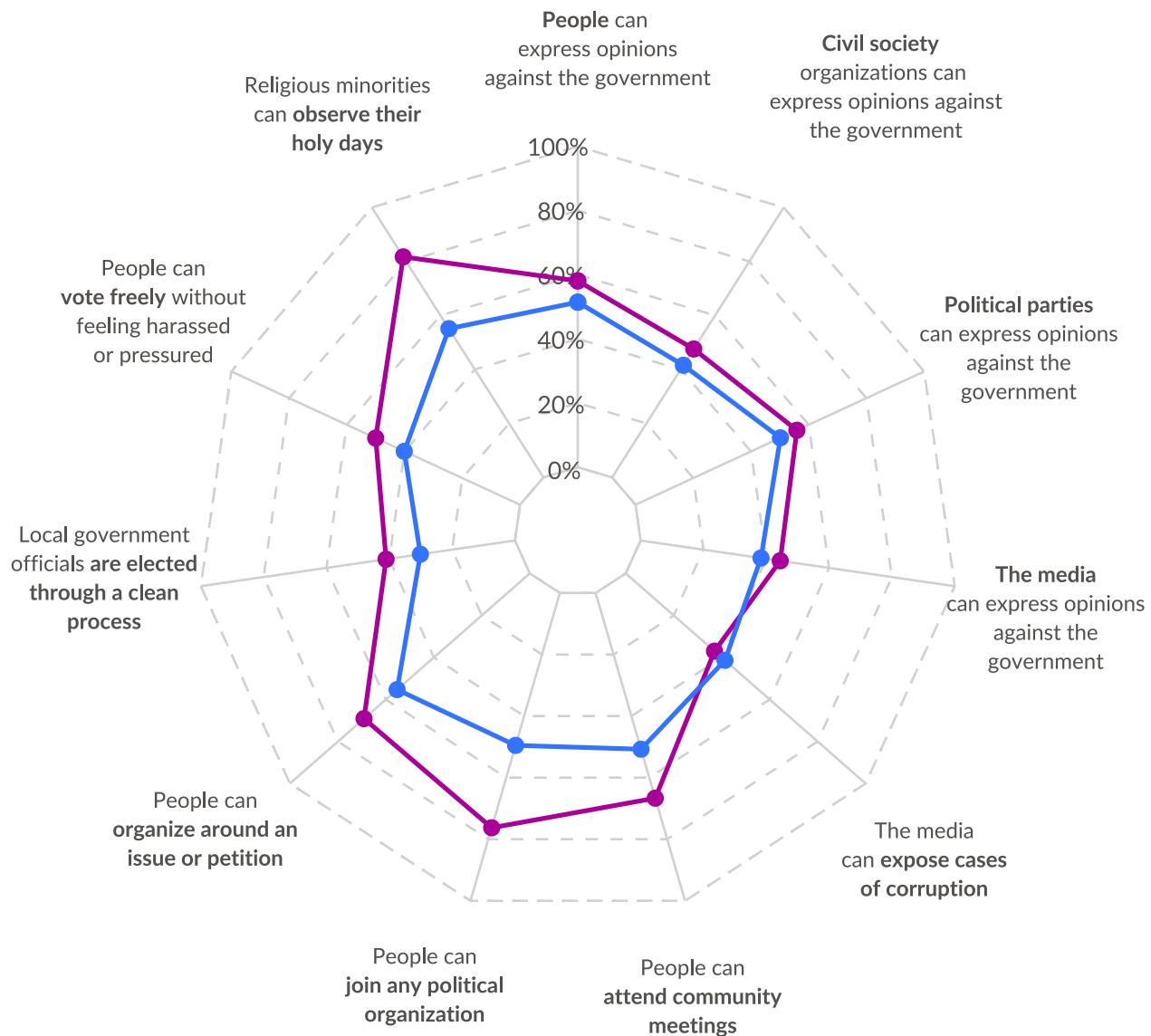
Source: WJP General Population Poll 2014, 2017, and 2023

## CHART 5.

### Perceptions of Fundamental Freedoms, by Cultural Group

Percentage of respondents who believe the following statements

● Christian Orthodox    ● Sunni Muslim



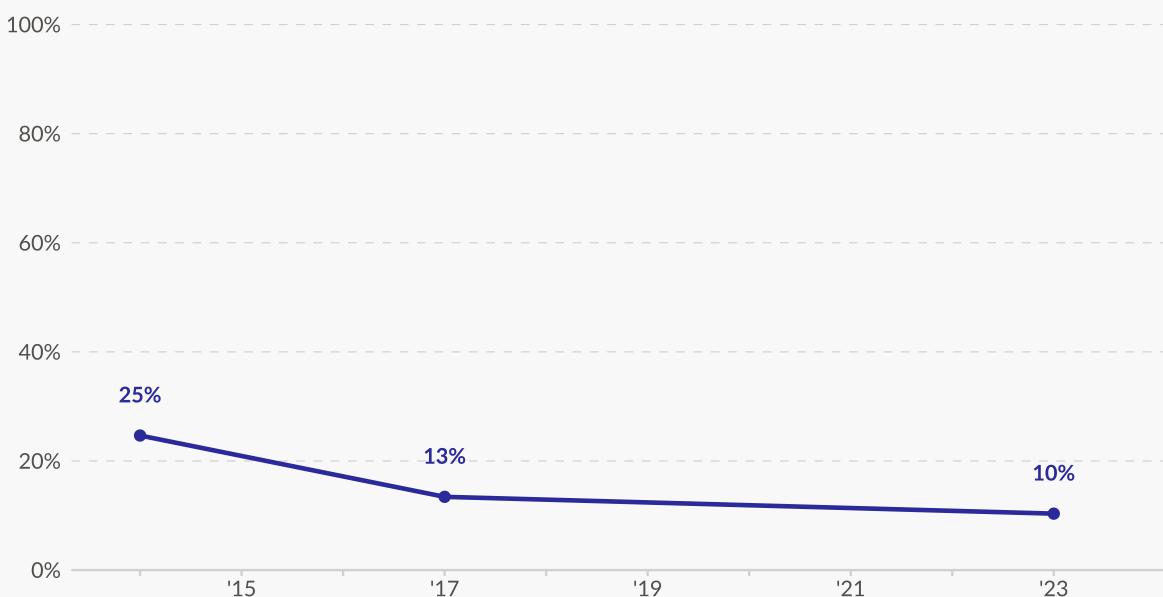
Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

# GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

## CHART 6.1

### Perceptions of Accountability in North Macedonia Over Time

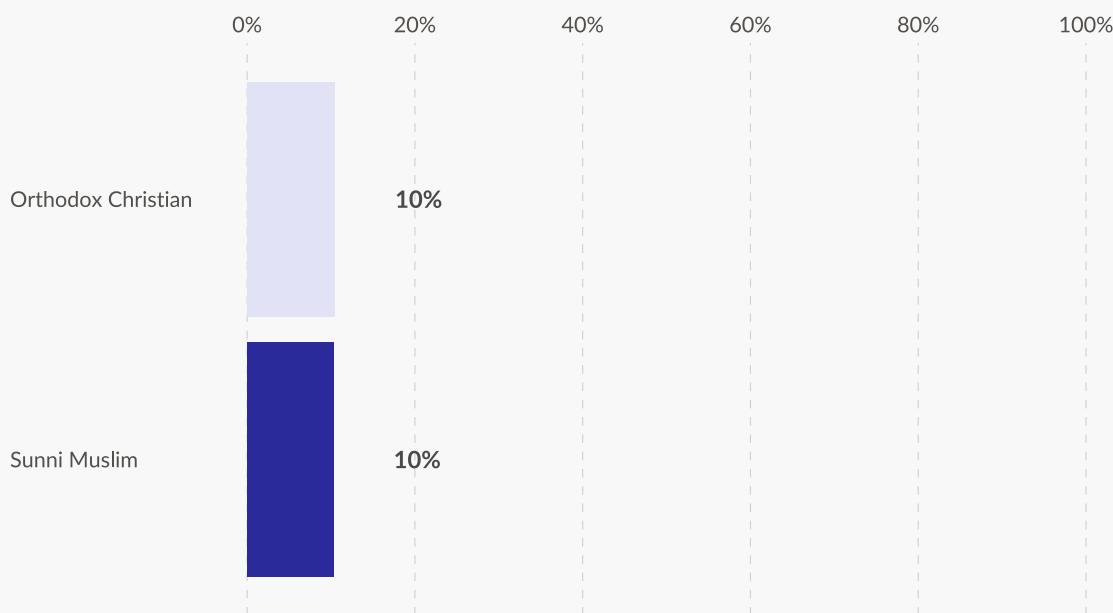
Percentage of respondents who believe that high-ranking government officials would be held accountable for breaking the law



## CHART 6.2

### Perceptions of Accountability in North Macedonia by Cultural Group

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



Source: WJP General Population Poll 2015, 2017, and 2023

## THEMATIC FINDINGS

## SECTION II CORRUPTION AND TRUST

- 18 Corruption
- 20 Bribery Victimization
- 21 Trust
- 22 Disaggregated Perceptions

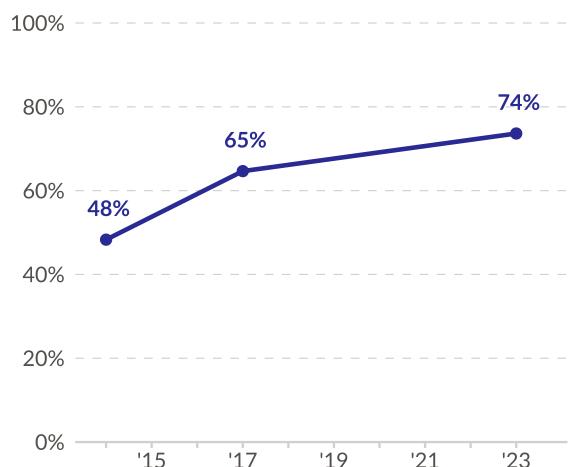
# CORRUPTION

## CHART 7.

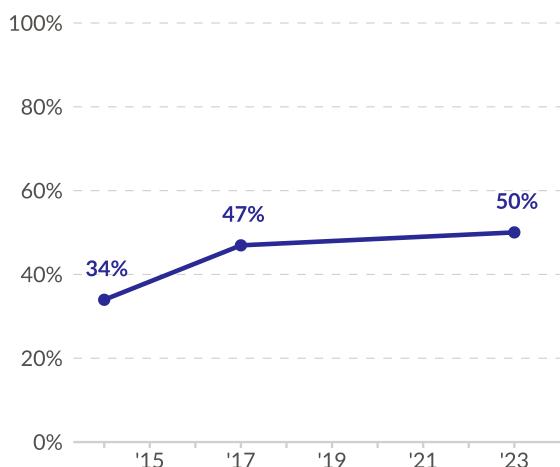
### Perceptions of Corruption by Institution Over Time

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

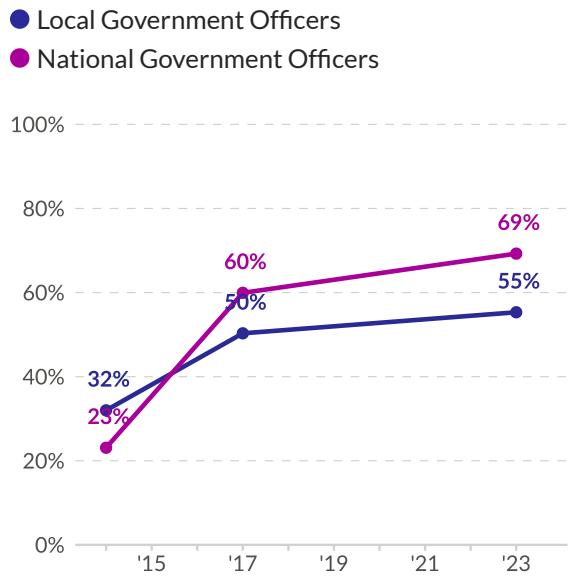
#### MEMBERS OF CONGRESS



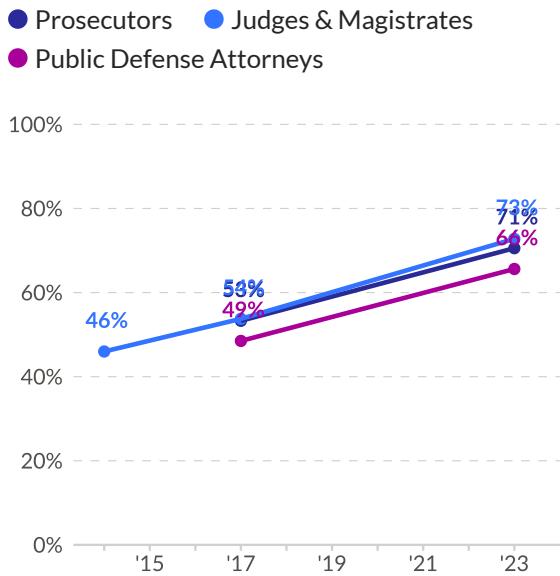
#### POLICE OFFICERS



#### EXECUTIVE



#### JUDICIARY



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

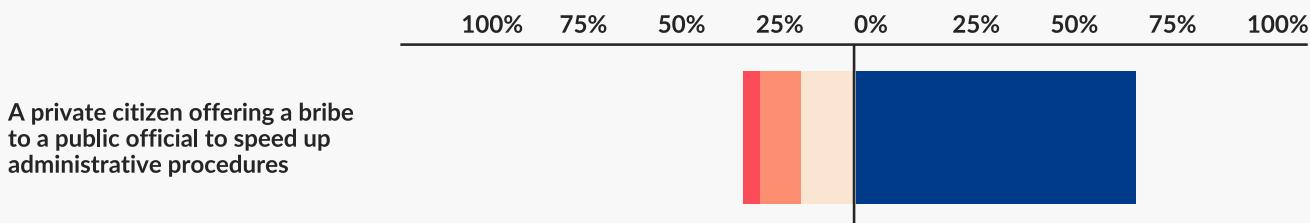
## CHART 8.

### Attitudes Towards Corrupt Behaviors

Percentage of respondents who believe the following behaviors are always or usually acceptable

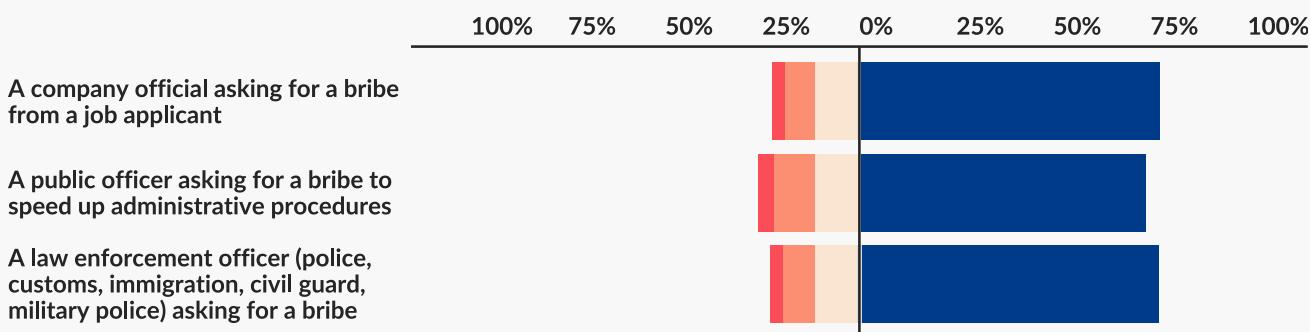
● Always Acceptable    ● Usually Acceptable    ● Sometimes Acceptable    ● No answer    ● Not Acceptable

#### Bribes Offered



A private citizen offering a bribe to a public official to speed up administrative procedures

#### Bribes Requested

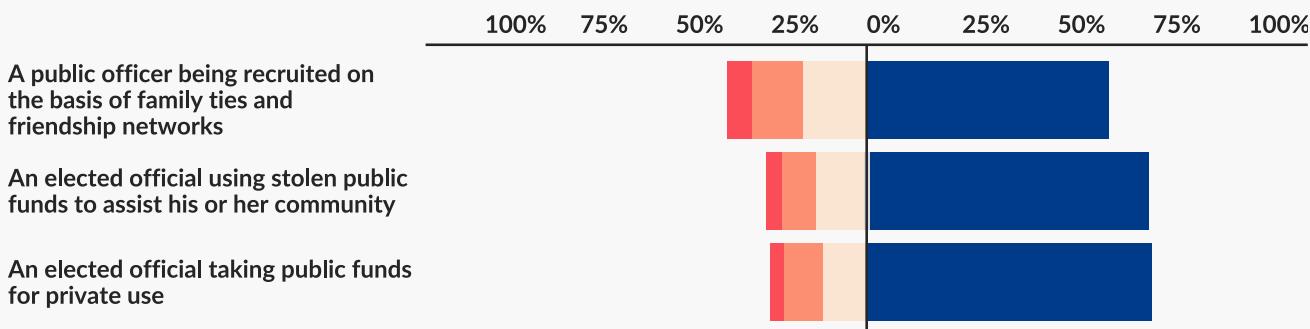


A company official asking for a bribe from a job applicant

A public officer asking for a bribe to speed up administrative procedures

A law enforcement officer (police, customs, immigration, civil guard, military police) asking for a bribe

#### Nepotism and Embezzlement



A public officer being recruited on the basis of family ties and friendship networks

An elected official using stolen public funds to assist his or her community

An elected official taking public funds for private use

Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

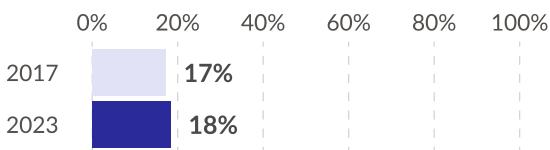
# BRIBERY VICTIMIZATION

## CHART 9.1

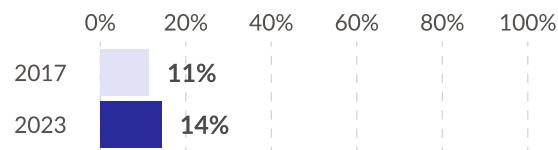
### Bribery Victimization Over Time

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

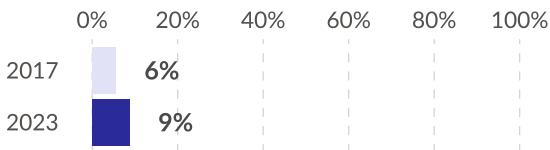
#### REQUEST A GOVERNMENT PERMIT OR DOCUMENT



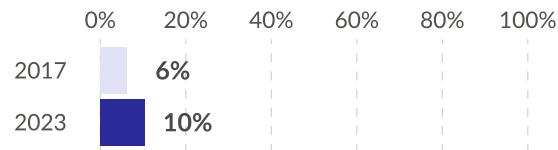
#### REQUEST PUBLIC BENEFITS OR ASSISTANCE



#### SECURE A PLACE AT A PUBLIC SCHOOL



#### USE A PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

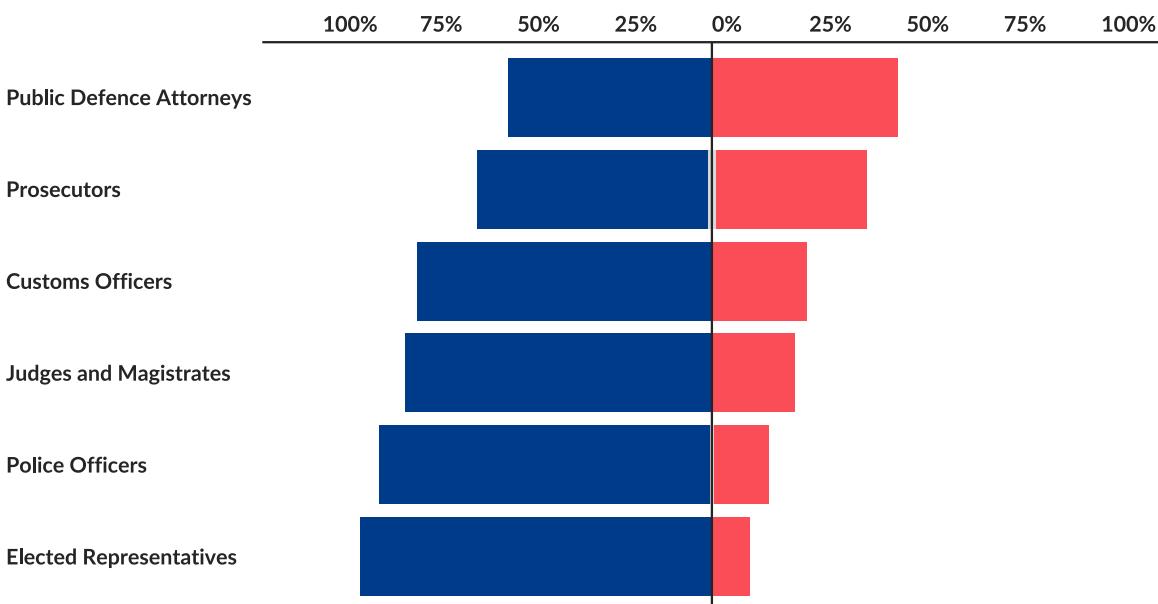


## CHART 9.2

### Bribery Victimization Across Agents

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

● No    ● No answer    ● Yes



Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023 and 2023

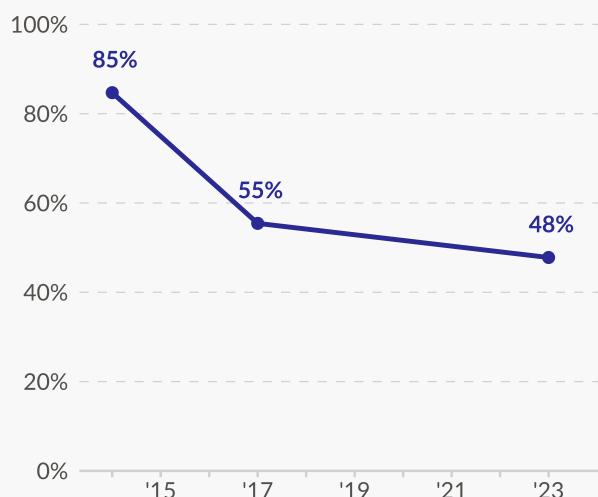
# TRUST

## CHART 10.

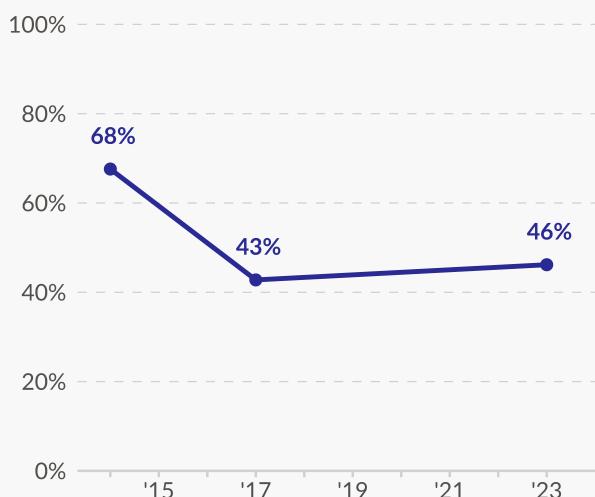
### Trust in Institutions Over Time

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

#### PEOPLE LIVING IN THEIR COUNTRY

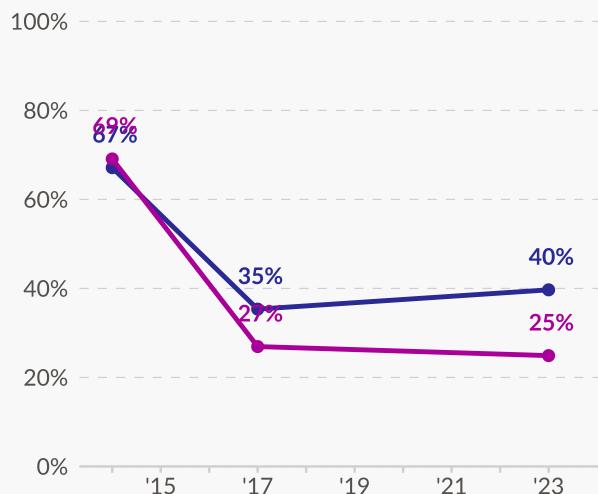


#### POLICE OFFICERS



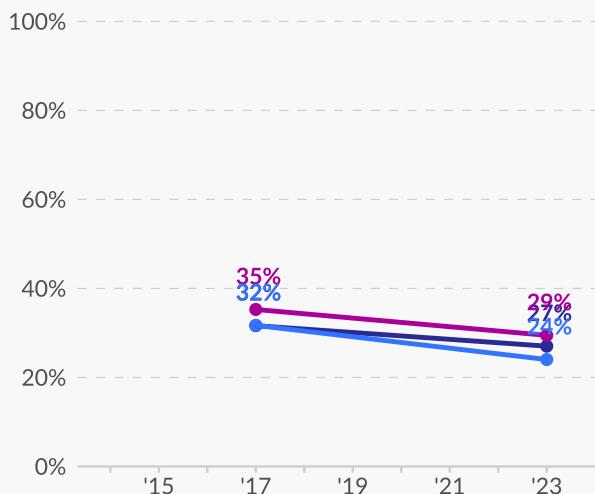
#### EXECUTIVE

- Local Government Officers
- National Government Officers



#### JUDICIARY

- Prosecutors
- Judges & Magistrates
- Public Defense Attorneys



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

# DISAGGREGATED PERCEPTIONS

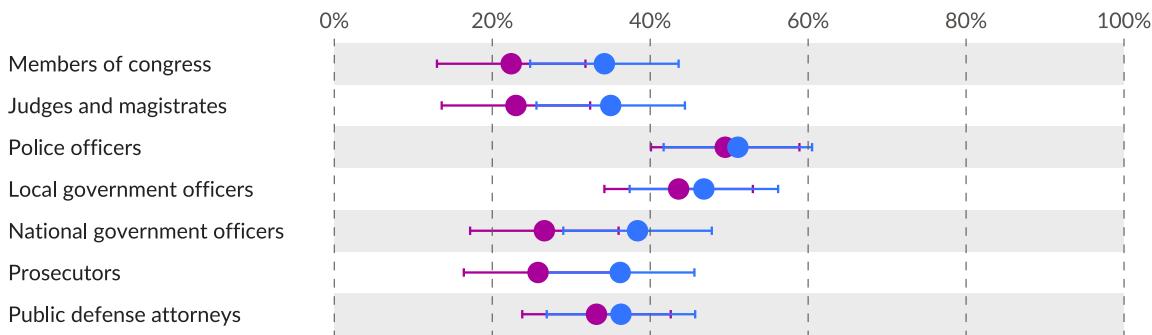
## CHART 11.

### Perceptions of Corruption and Trust, by Cultural Group

● Christian Orthodox   ● Sunni Muslim

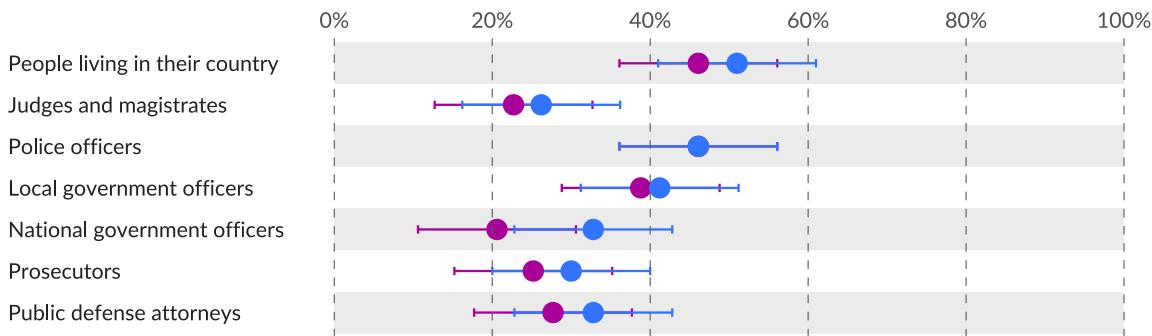
## CORRUPTION

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



## TRUST

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



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

## THEMATIC FINDINGS

SECTION III  
**SECURITY AND  
CRIMINAL  
JUSTICE**

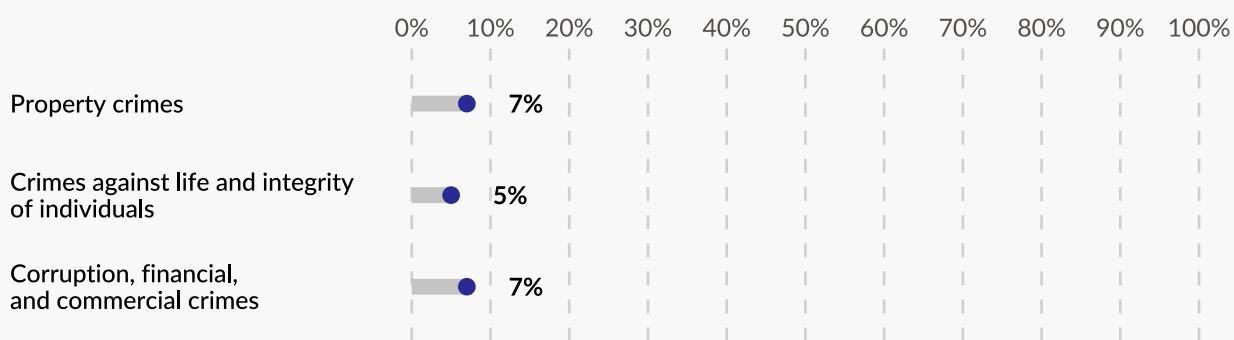
- 24 Crime Victimization
- 25 Security
- 26 Criminal Justice
- 29 Police
- 31 Victim Support

# CRIME VICTIMIZATION

## CHART 12.1

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

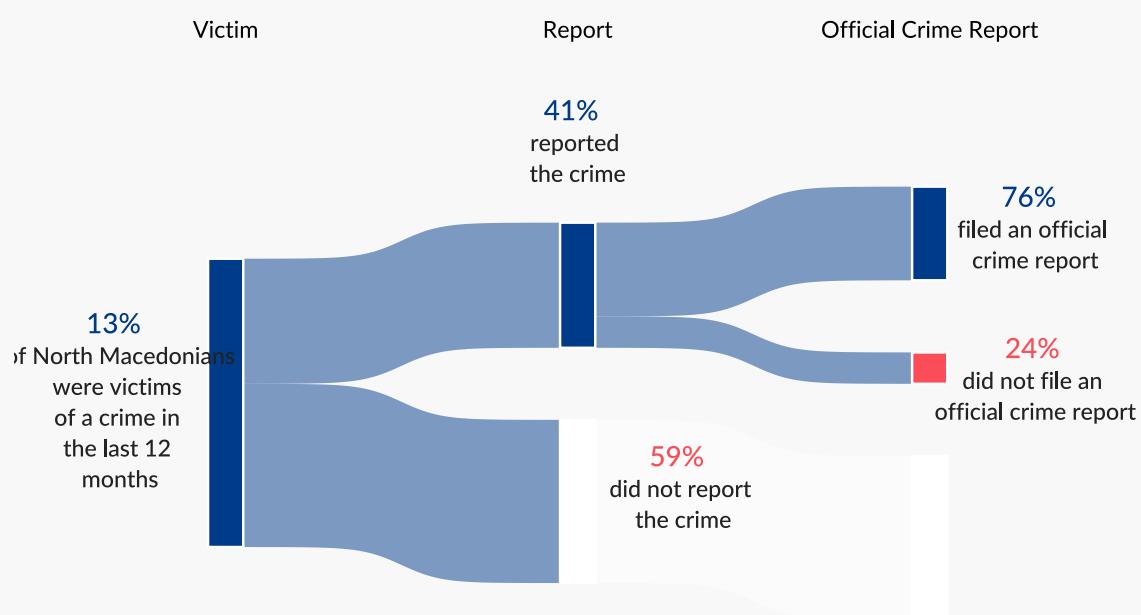
*Victimization rate, by type of crime*



## CHART 12.2

### Crime Victimization Rates and Reporting

*Data on crime victimization, reporting, and prosecution in North Macedonia*

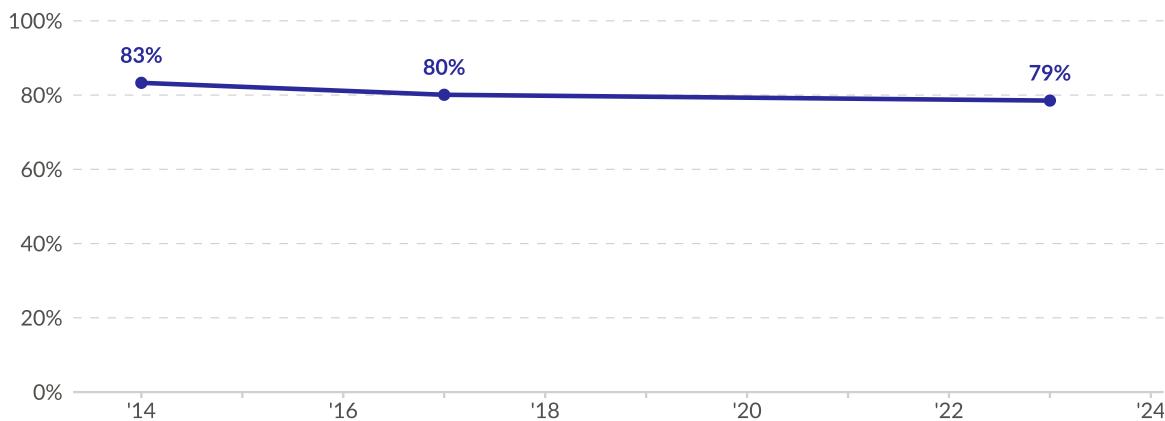


# SECURITY

## 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

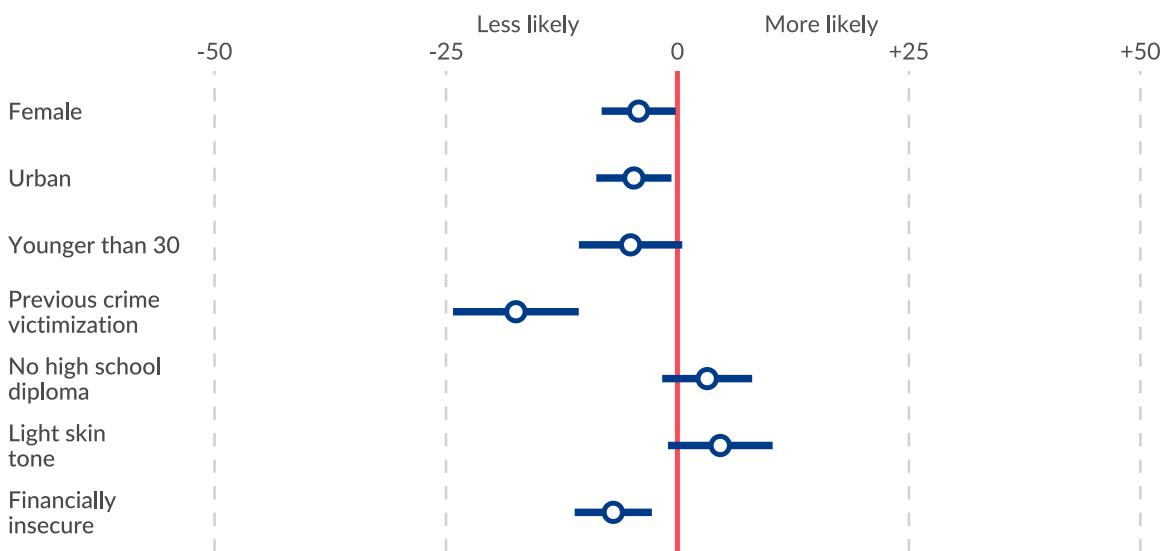


Source: WJP General Population Poll 2014, 2017, and 2023

## 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 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.

Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

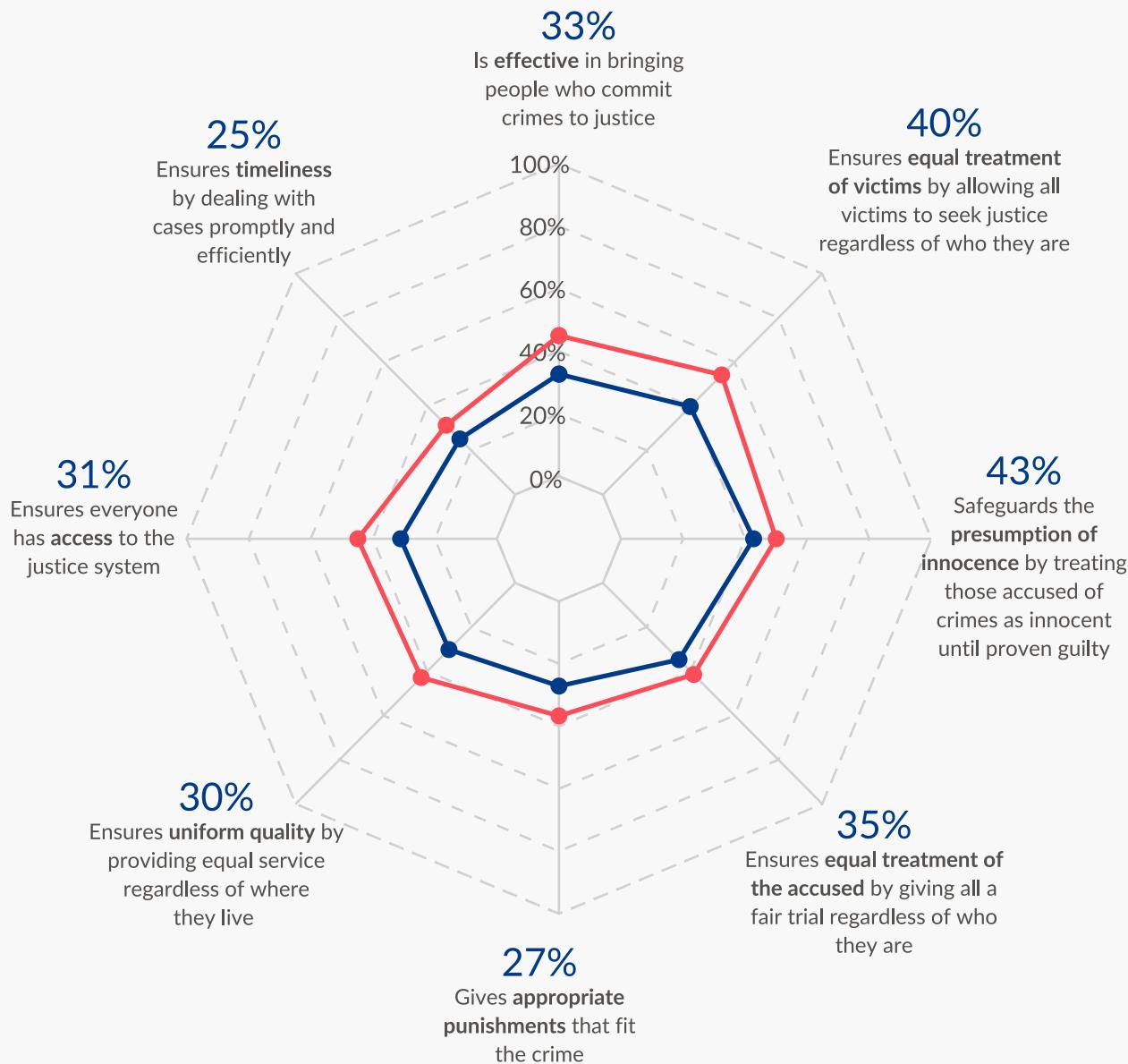
# CRIMINAL JUSTICE

CHART 14.1

## Perceptions of the Criminal Justice System in North Macedonia

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

● 2023    ● 2017

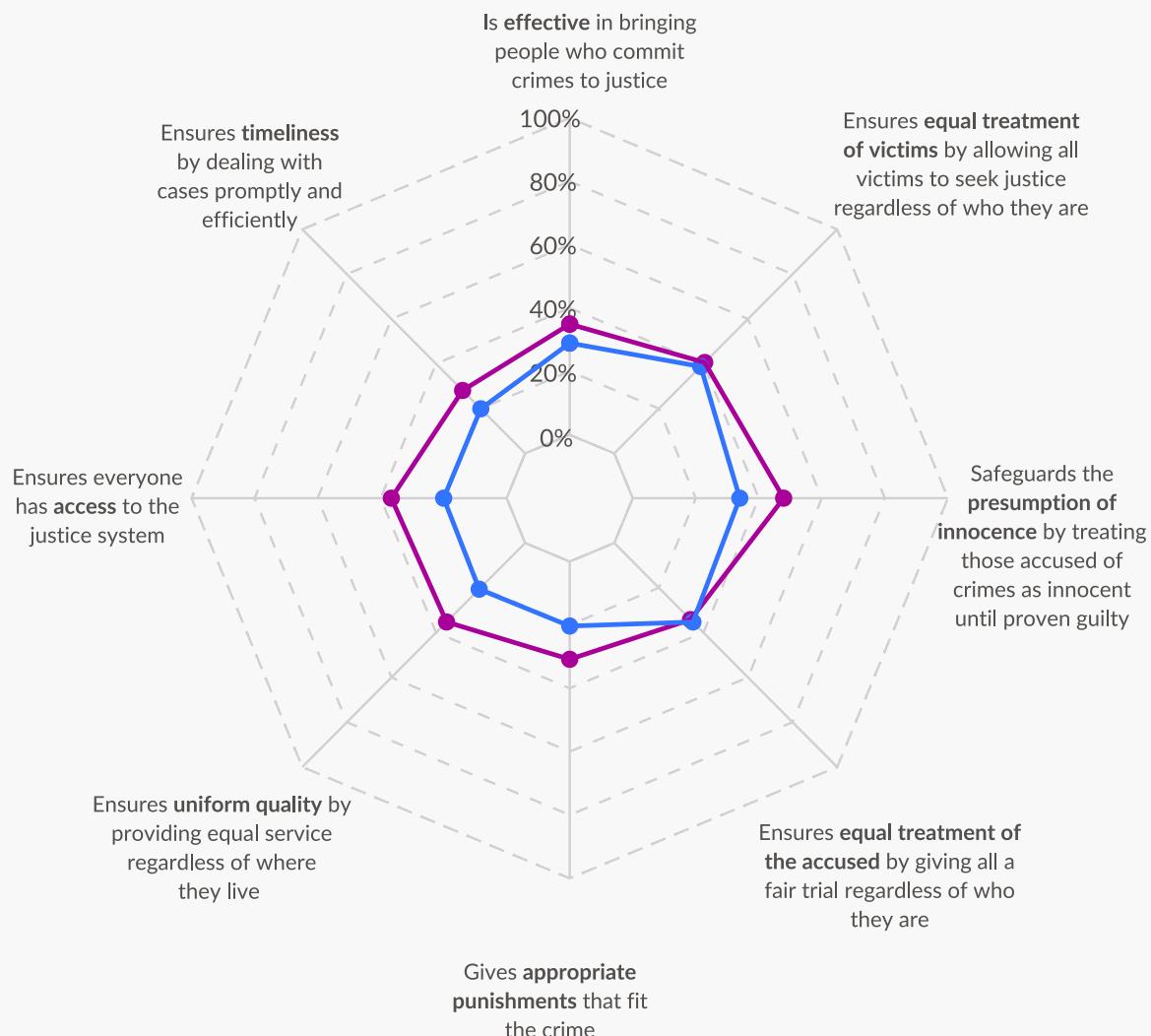


## CHART 14.2

### Perceptions of the Criminal Justice System, by Cultural Group

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

● Christian Orthodox    ● Sunni Muslim



Source: WJP General Population Poll 2017 and 2023

## CHART 15.

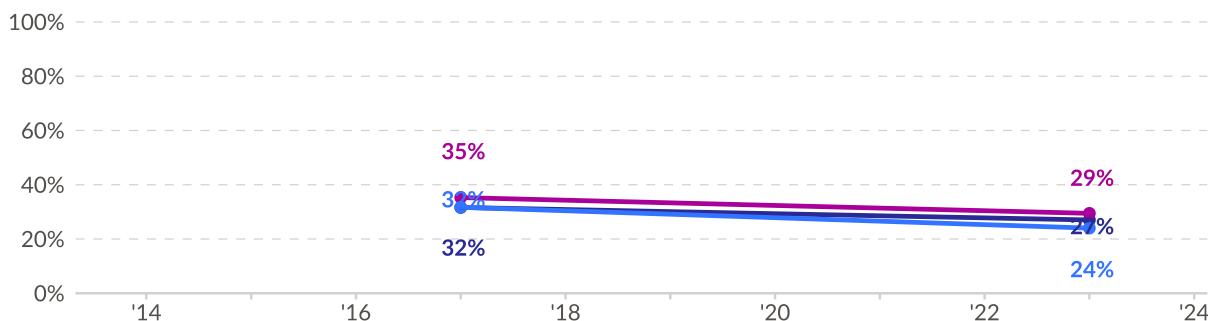
### Criminal Justice Actors

*Perceptions of criminal justice actors in North Macedonia*

● Prosecutors   ● Public Defense Attorneys   ● Judges & Magistrates

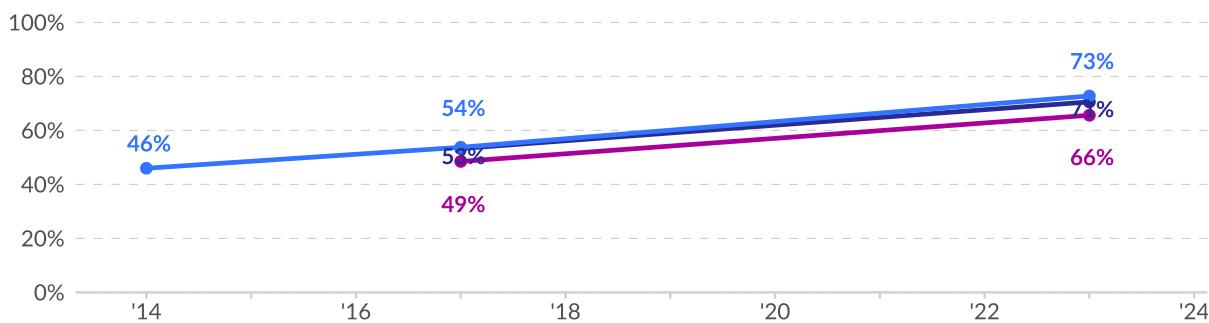
#### TRUST IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACTORS OVER TIME

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



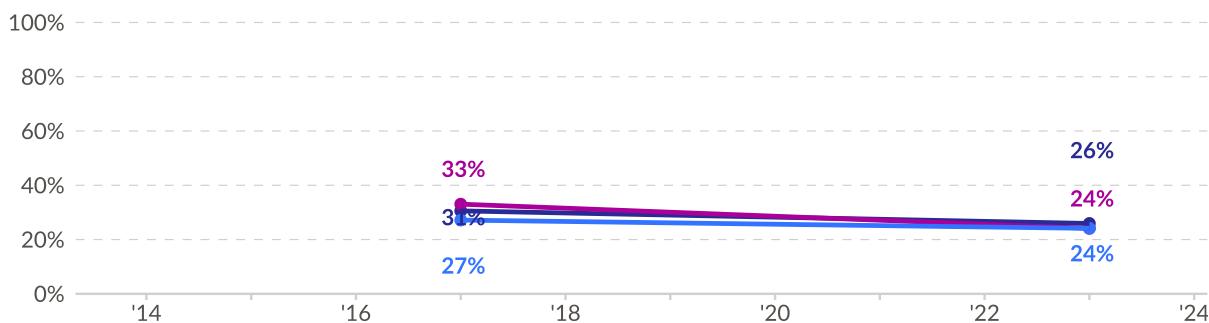
#### PERCEPTIONS OF CORRUPTION ACROSS CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACTORS OVER TIME

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



#### PERCEPTIONS OF EFFECTIVENESS 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 Effectiveness 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 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 believe 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 believe 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 believe 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 believe that the police discriminate against suspects based on....*

Economic status



Ethnic background



Foreigner status



Religion



Skin color



## **Corruption**

*Percentage of respondents who believe 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

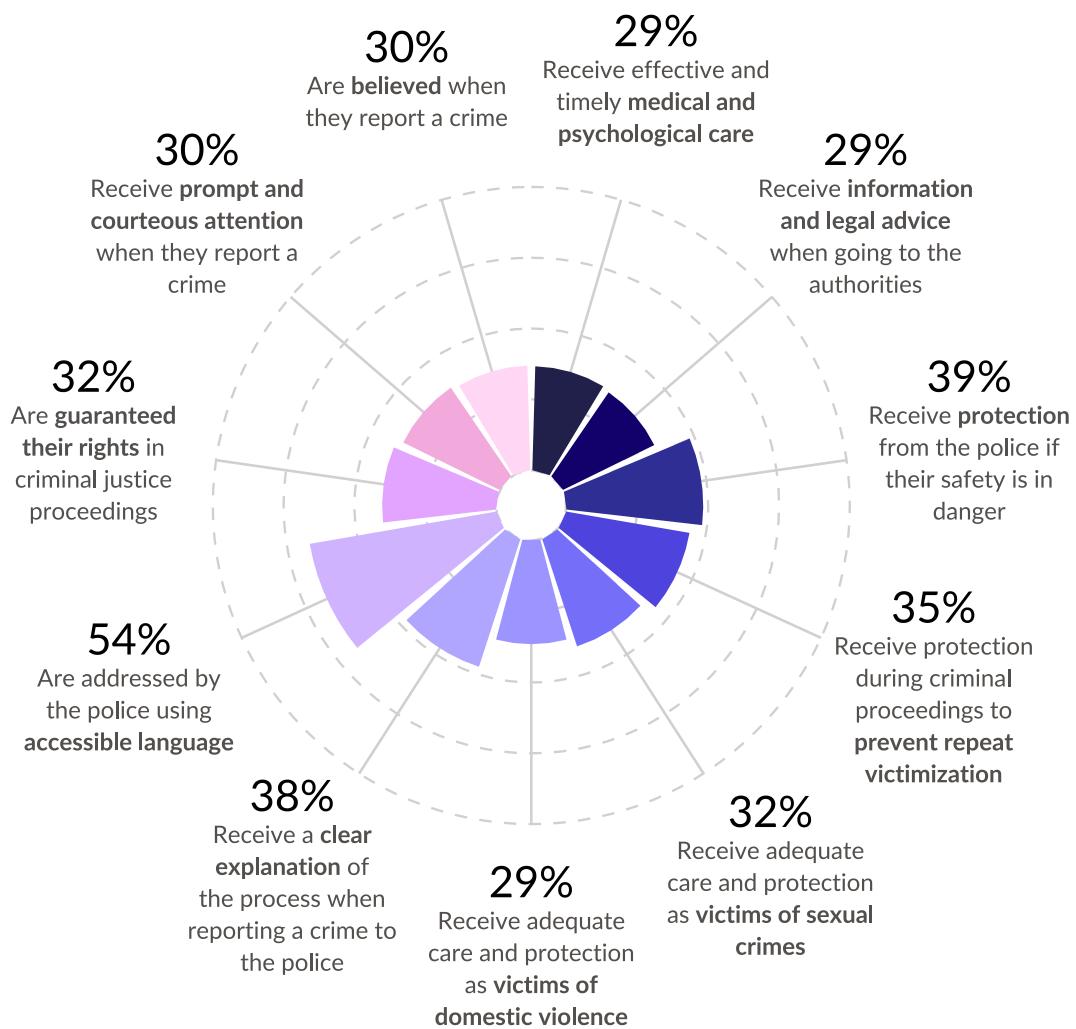


# VICTIM SUPPORT

CHART 17.

## Perceptions of the Treatment of Crime Victims

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



Note: For additional information on how Chart 17 was produced, please see the Appendix.

Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

## THEMATIC FINDINGS

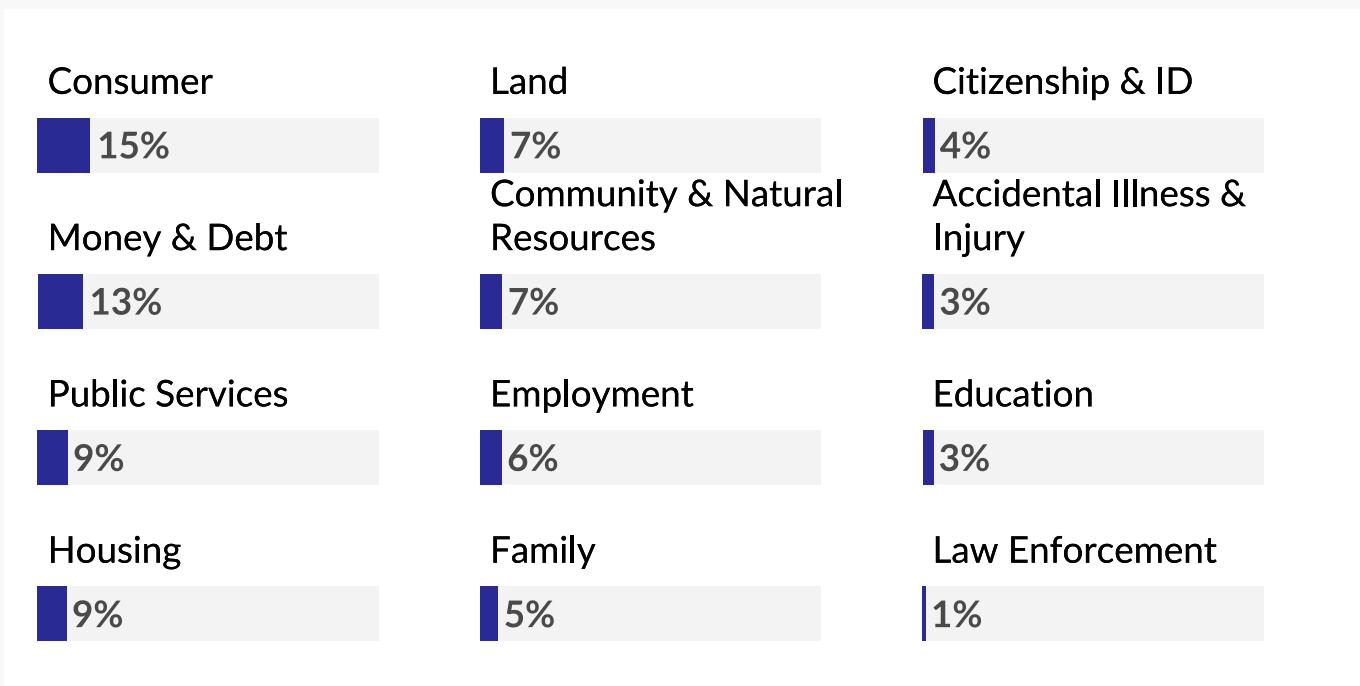
SECTION IV  
**ACCESS TO  
JUSTICE**

# ACCESS TO JUSTICE JOURNEY

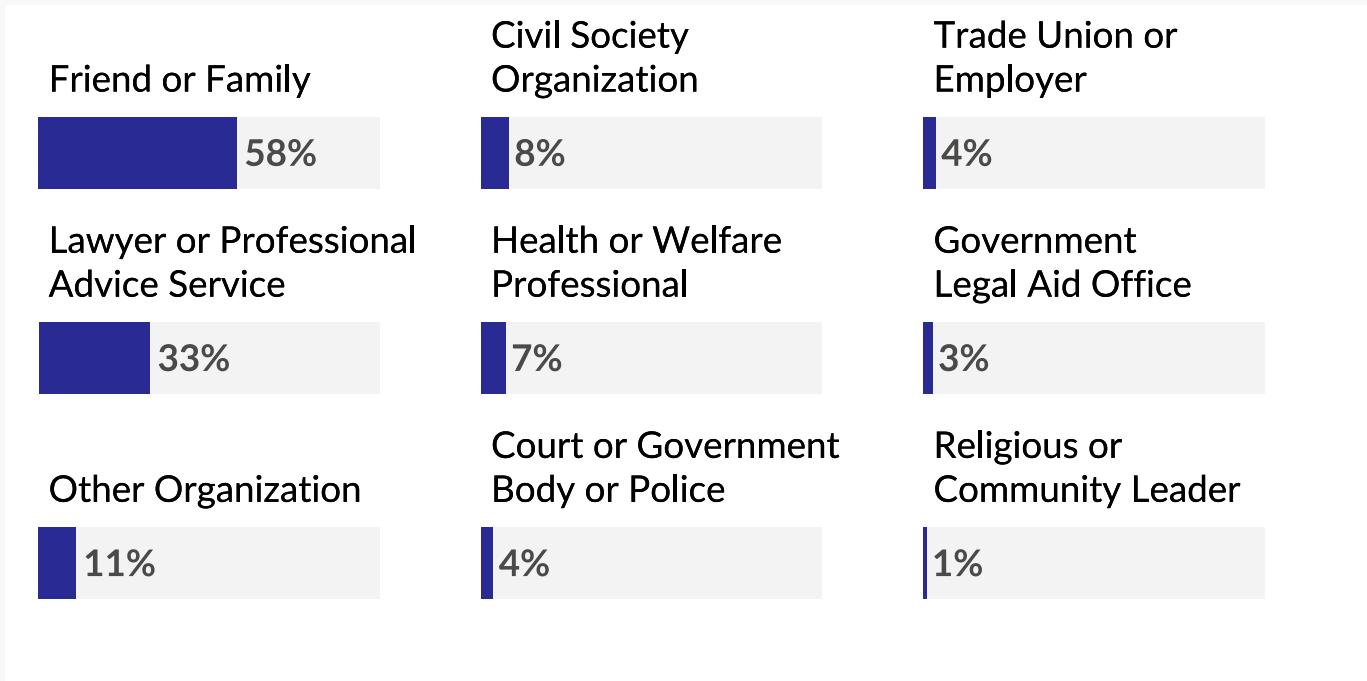
CHART 18

## Justice Journey in North Macedonia

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



Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023



## PROJECT DESIGN

36 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 General Population Poll 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 General Population Poll 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. Geo-economic 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 is predefined following population quotas. Finally, households were selected following a random choice for a starting point and an equal-steps route for surveyors.

## 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, 19% in the Southeast and Southwest regions, 14% in Poloski, 12% 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

**BACKGROUND:** Sixty-four percent (64%) of respondents identified themselves as Macedonians, while 29% identified as Albanian. 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

## 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.

## 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.

## APPENDIX

39 About the WJP

40 Other Publications



## ABOUT THE WORLD JUSTICE PROJECT

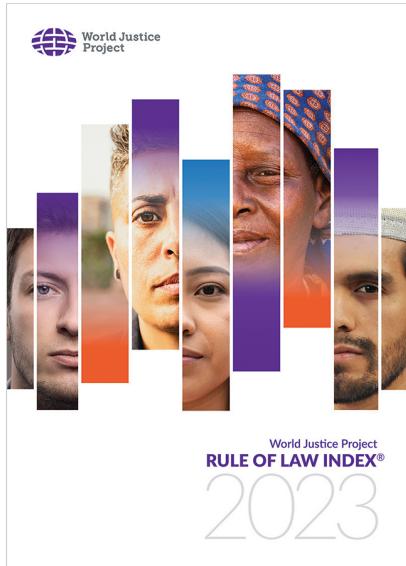
The World Justice Project (WJP) is an independent, multidisciplinary organization working to create knowledge, build awareness, and stimulate action to advance the rule of law worldwide. Effective rule of law is the foundation for communities of justice, opportunity, and peace—underpinning development,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



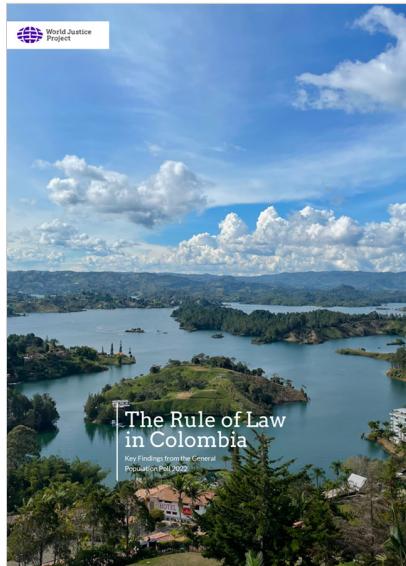
**WJP Rule of Law Index 2023 Insights**

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

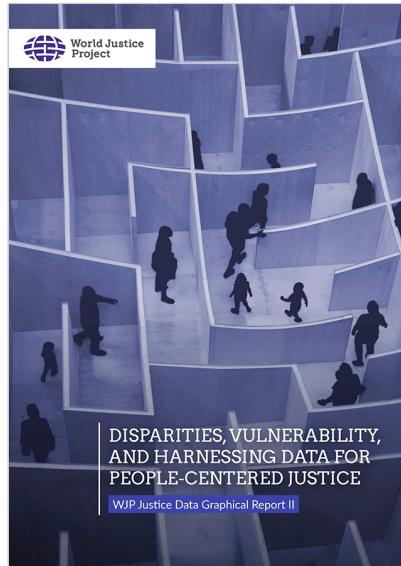


**WJP Mexico States Rule of  
Law Index 2022-2023**

Perceptions and experiences in 32  
states



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



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



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

For more information or to read these reports, visit [worldjusticeproject.org/our-work](http://worldjusticeproject.org/our-work)



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