



The Rule of Law in North Macedonia

Key Findings from the General
Population Poll 2023

Acknowledgements

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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.

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ABOUT THIS REPORT

5 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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RULE OF LAW INDEX IN NORTH MACEDONIA

10 Rule of Law Index in North

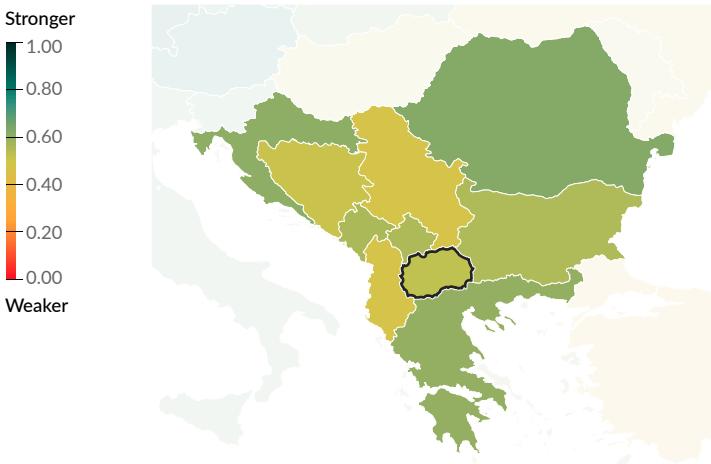
Macedonia

11 Factors in North Macedonia

RULE OF LAW INDEX OVERVIEW

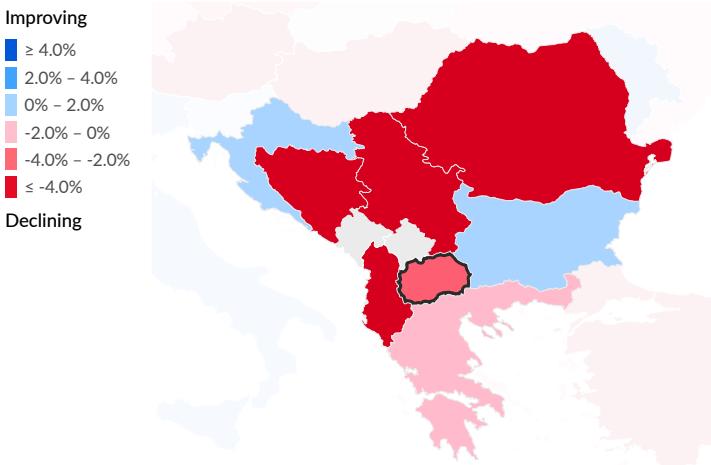
WJP Index 2023 Factors and Changes Over Time

I OVERALL SCORE



Regional Rank	Country/Jurisdiction	Overall Score*	Global Rank
1/10	Romania	0.63	93
2/10	Croatia	0.61	91
3/10	Greece	0.61	75
4/10	Montenegro	0.56	67
5/10	Kosovo	0.56	59
6/10	Bulgaria	0.56	58
► 7/10	North Macedonia	0.53	57
8/10	Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.51	47
9/10	Albania	0.48	45
10/10	Serbia	0.48	40

I 6-YEAR % CHANGE IN OVERALL SCORE*



Country/Jurisdiction	6-Year % Change in Overall Score
Croatia	0.01
Bulgaria	0.01
Greece	0.00
► North Macedonia	-0.03
Serbia	-0.04
Albania	-0.05
Romania	-0.05
Bosnia and Herzegovina	-0.08
Kosovo	
Montenegro	

I FACTORS IN DETAIL

Factor	Global Rank
1 Constraints in 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

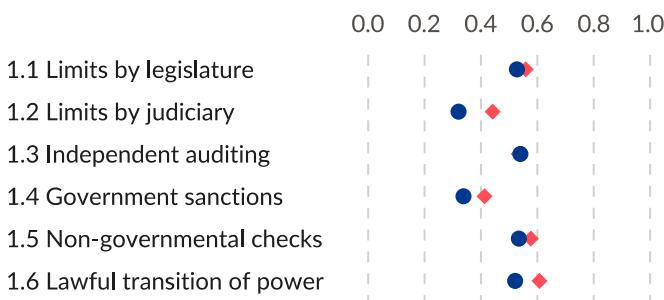


* Scores range from 0 to 1, with 1 indicating the strongest adherence to the rule of law, scores are rounded to two decimal places.

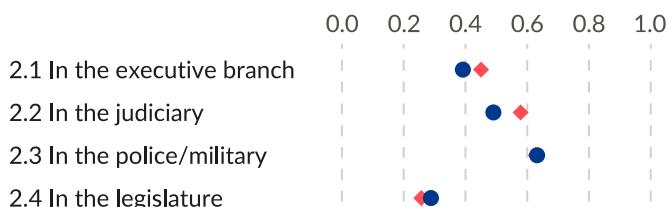
I FACTORS IN DETAIL

● North Macedonia ♦ Balkans Countries

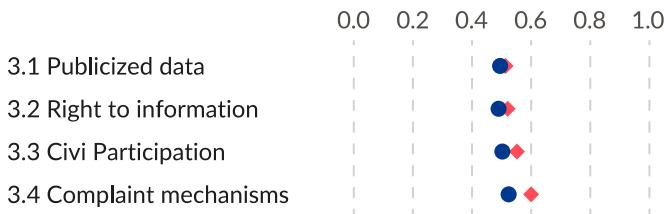
Factor 1: Constraints in Government Powers



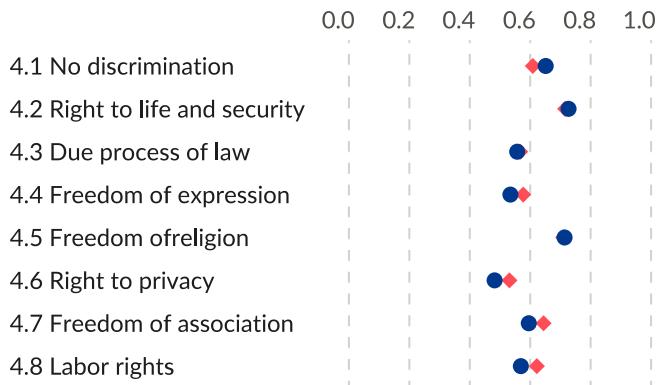
Factor 2: Absence of Corruption



Factor 3: Open Government



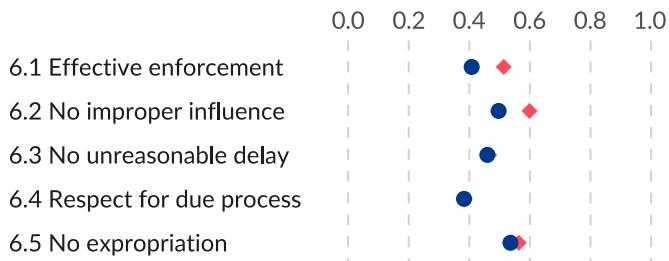
Factor 4: Fundamental Rights



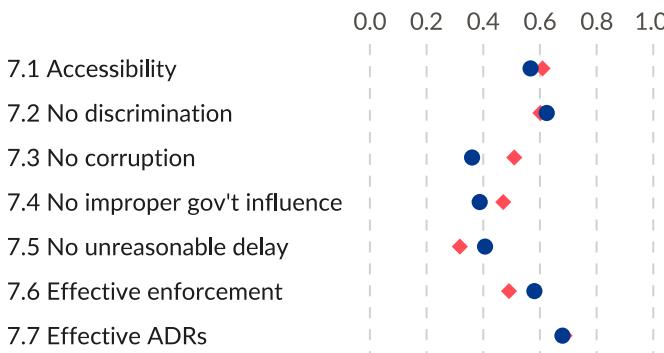
Factor 5: Order and Security



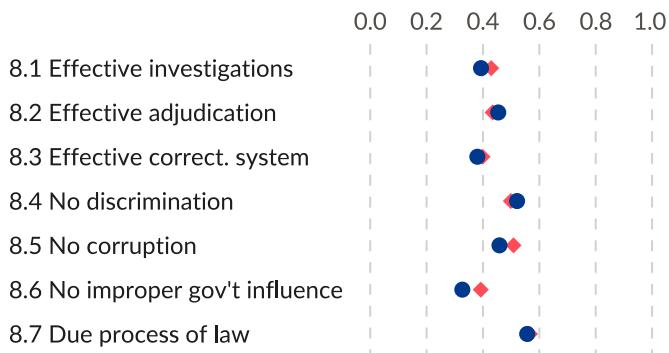
Factor 6: Regulatory Enforcement



Factor 7: Civil Justice



Factor 8: Criminal Justice



THEMATIC FINDINGS

SECTION I AUTHORITARIANISM, FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, AND GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

13 Authoritarianism

16 Fundamental Freedoms

19 Government Accountability

AUTHORITARIANISM

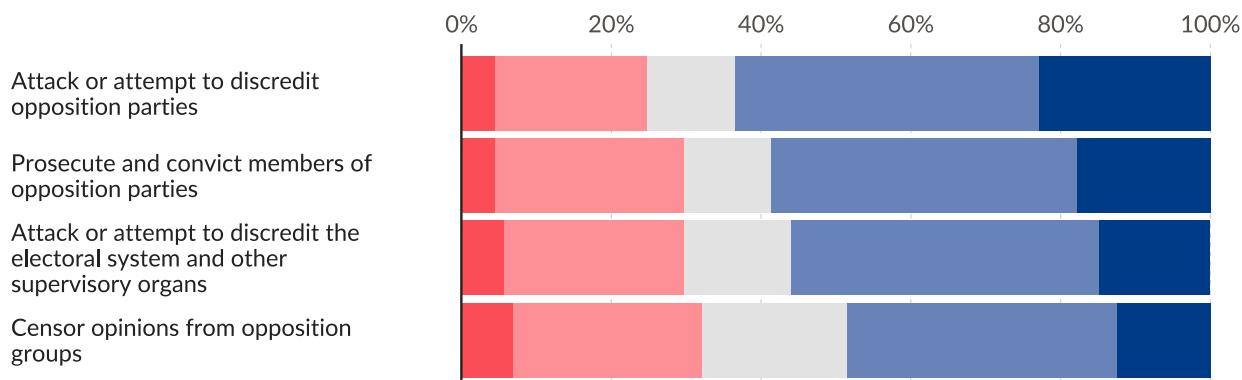
CHART 1.

Perceptions of Authoritarian Behaviors

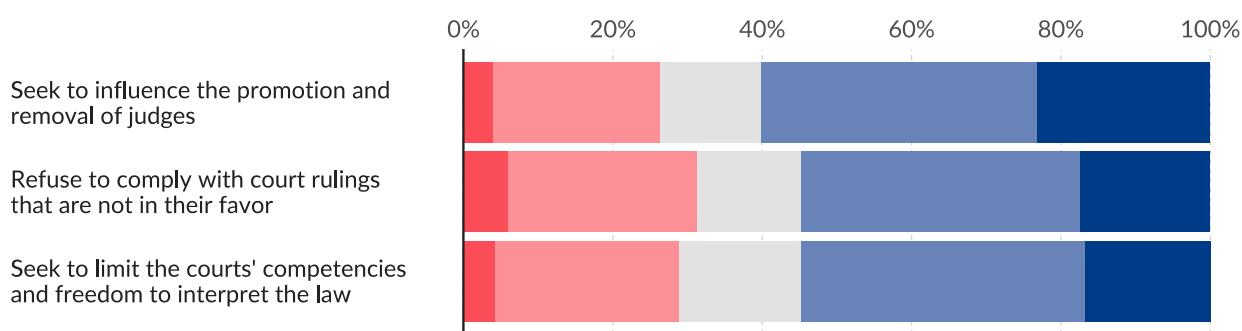
Percentage of respondents in North Macedonia who believe that top government officials...

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

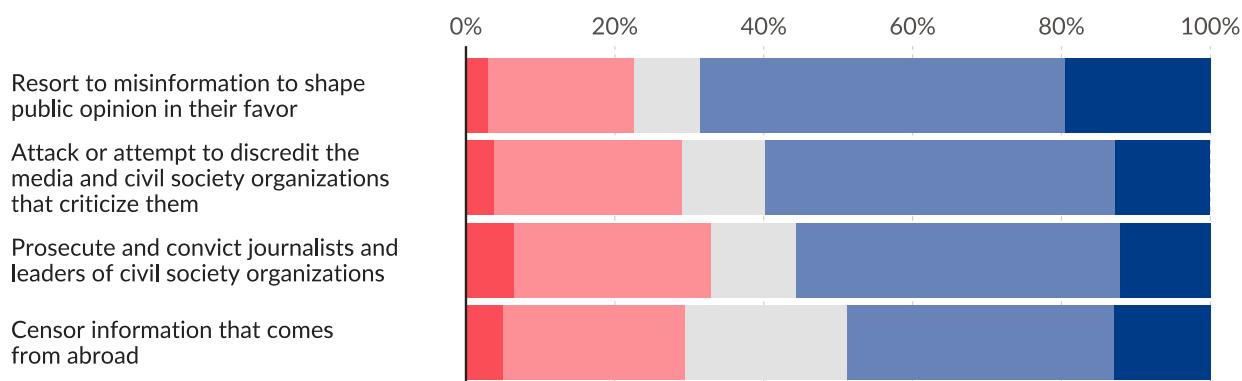
ATTACKS ON ELECTORAL SYSTEMS AND OPPOSITION PARTIES



ATTACKS ON THE JUDICIARY



ATTACKS ON THE MEDIA AND MISINFORMATION



Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

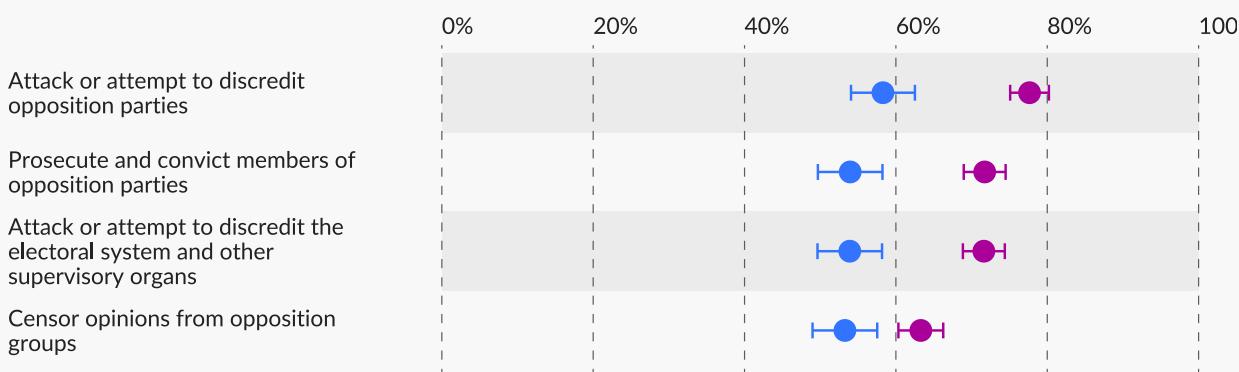
CHART 2.

Perceptions of Authoritarian Behavior, by Cultural Group

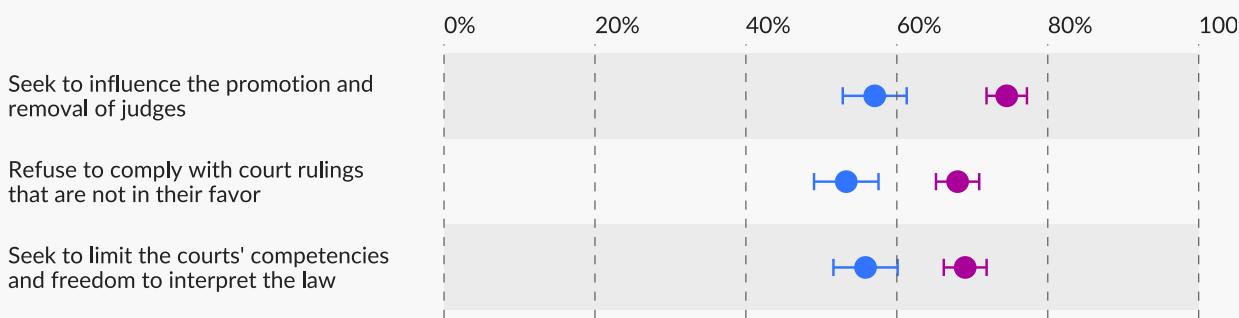
Percentage of respondents in North Macedonia who believe that top government officials...

● Christian Orthodox ● Sunni Muslim

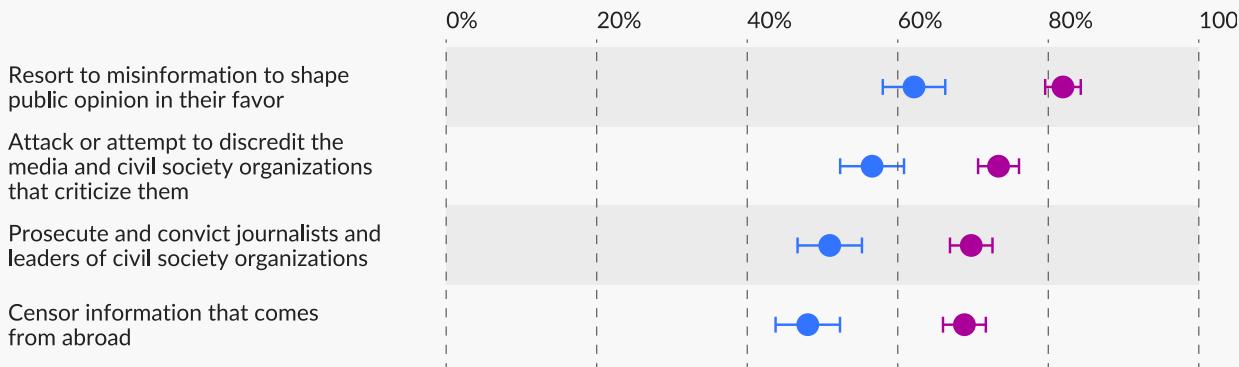
ATTACKS ON ELECTORAL SYSTEMS AND OPPOSITION PARTIES



ATTACKS ON THE JUDICIARY



ATTACKS ON THE MEDIA AND MISINFORMATION



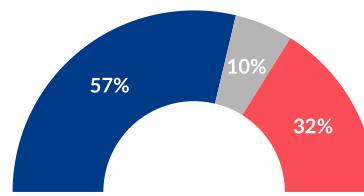
Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

CHART 3.

Attitudes Towards Authoritarianism and Rule of Law

Percentage of respondents who agree with the following statements

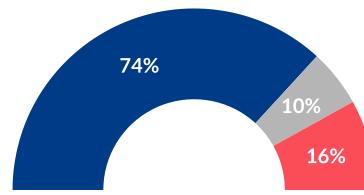
- The president can attack the media, civil society, and opposition groups



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

- None of the above/Prefer not to answer

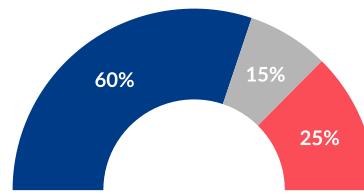
- The president can undermine independent authorities



- The president must respect independent authorities

- None of the above/Prefer not to answer

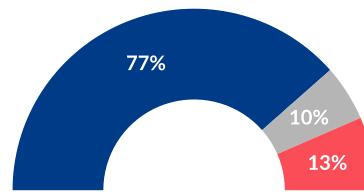
- Government efficiency is more important than citizen influence



- 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

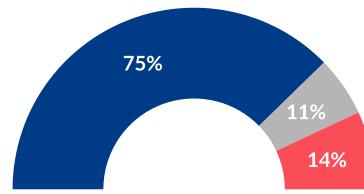
- The president should not be bound by the laws or courts



- 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

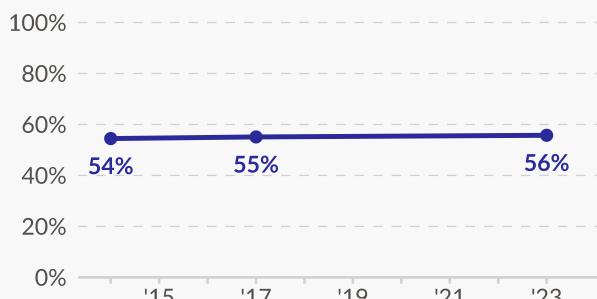
CHART 4.

Fundamental Freedoms in North Macedonia Over Time

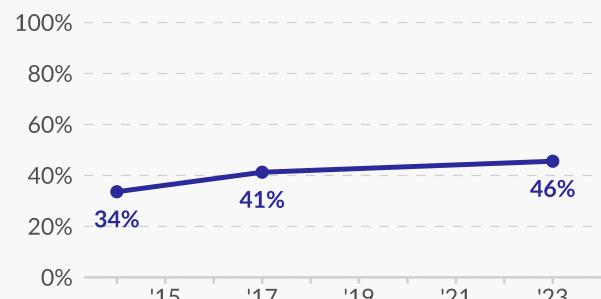
Percentage of respondents who believe the following statements

EXPRESSION

People can express opinions against the government



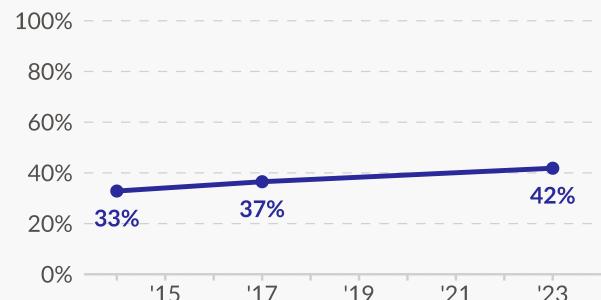
Civil society organizations can express opinions against the government



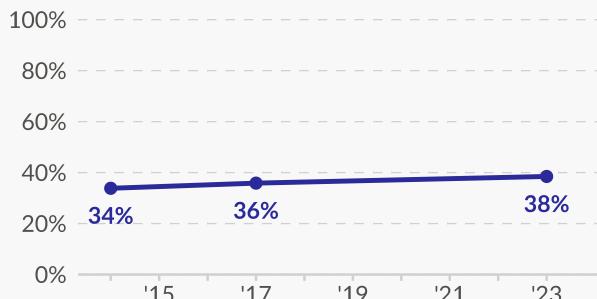
Political parties can express opinions against the government



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



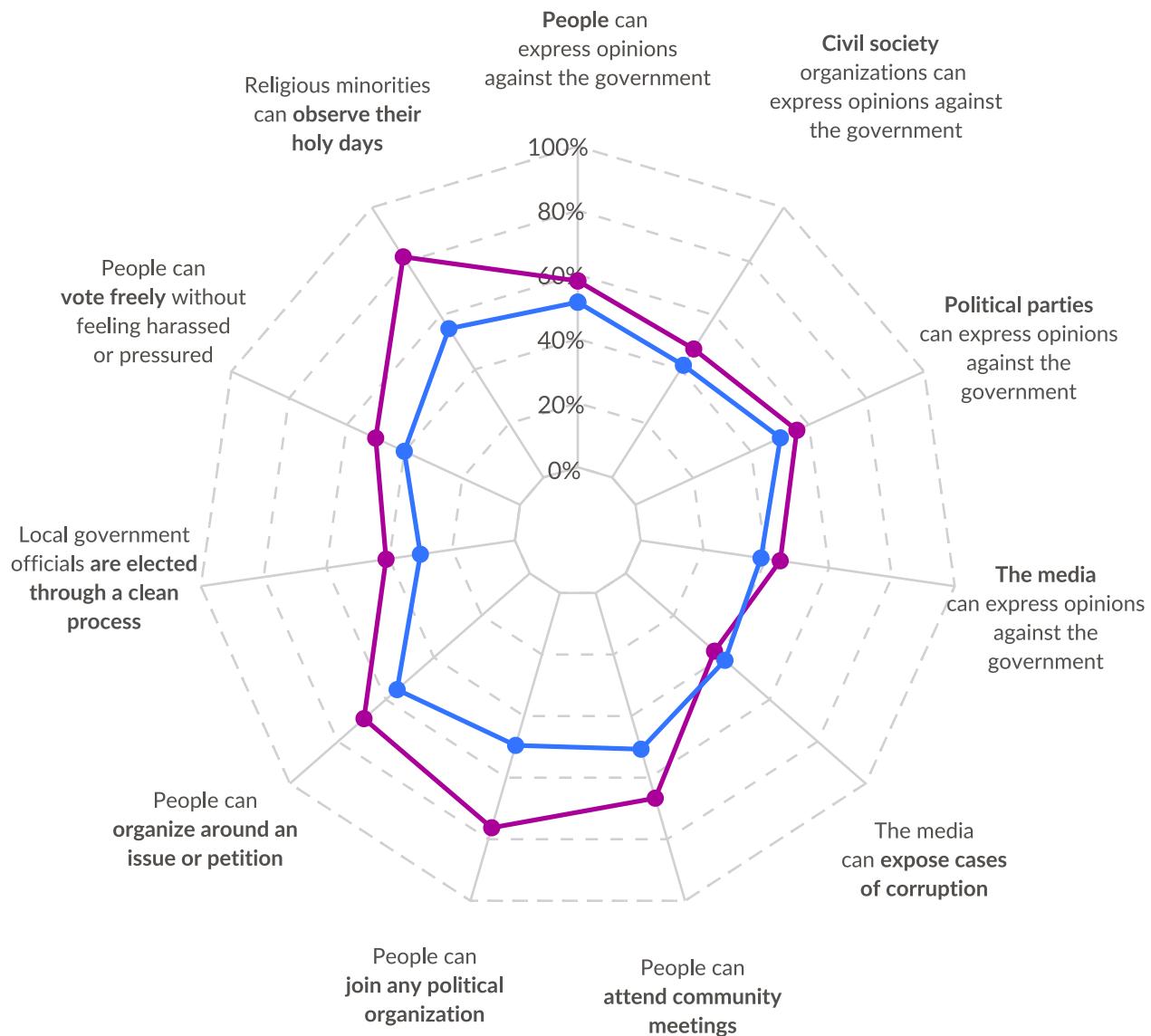
Source: WJP General Population Poll 2014, 2017, and 2023

CHART 5.

Perceptions of Fundamental Freedoms, by Cultural Group

Percentage of respondents who believe the following statements

● Christian Orthodox ● Sunni Muslim



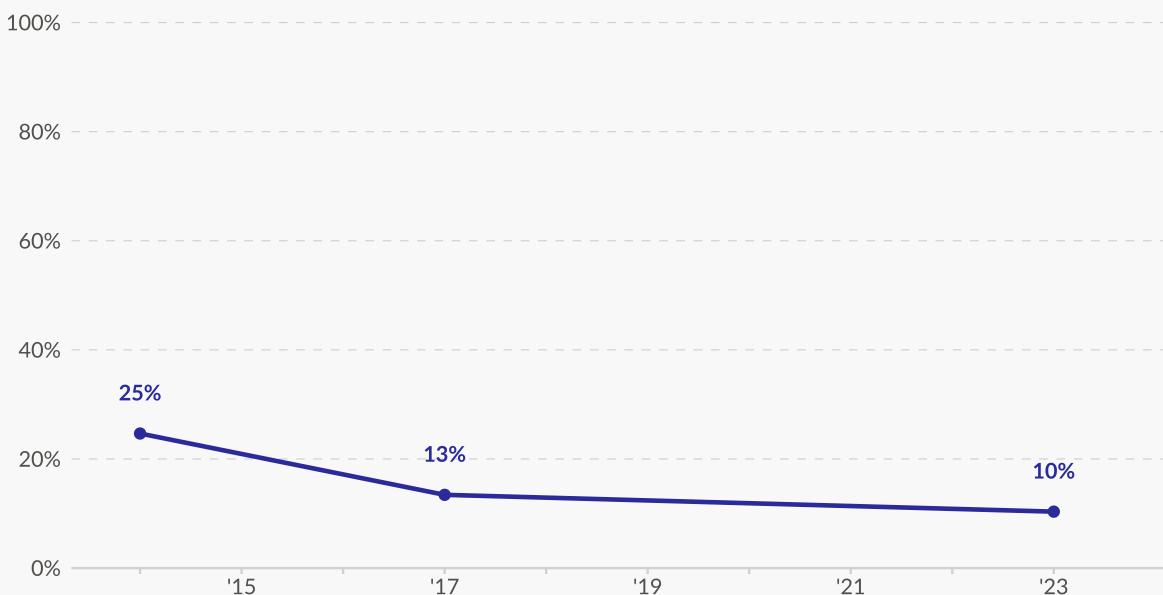
Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

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

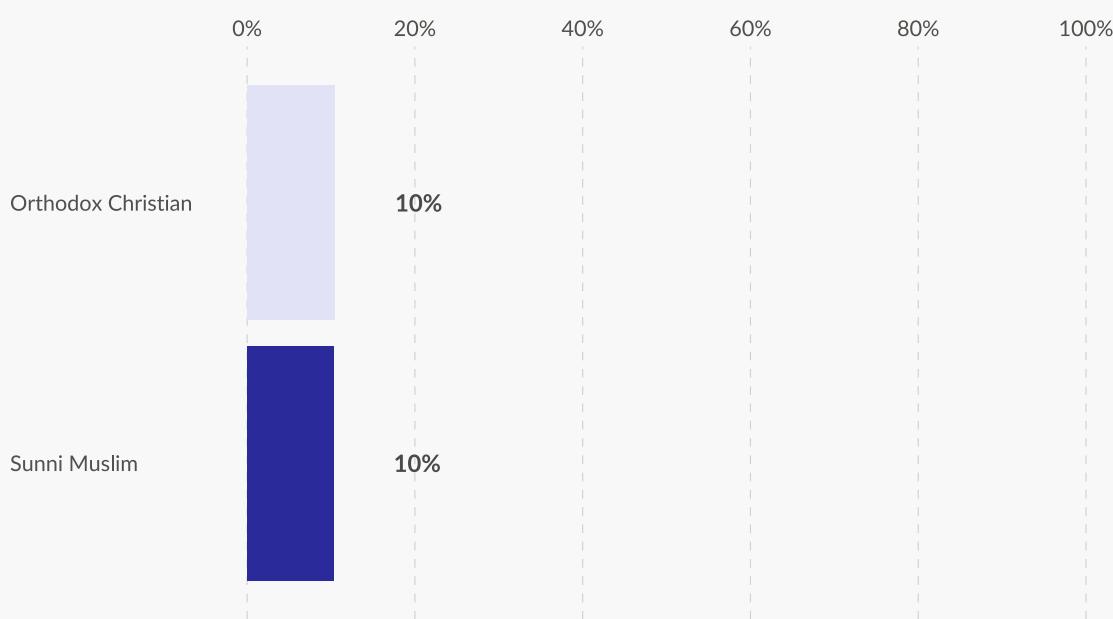


Source: WJP General Population Poll 2014, 2017, and 2023

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 2023

THEMATIC FINDINGS

SECTION II CORRUPTION AND TRUST

- 21 Corruption
- 23 Bribery Victimization
- 24 Trust
- 25 Disaggregated Perceptions

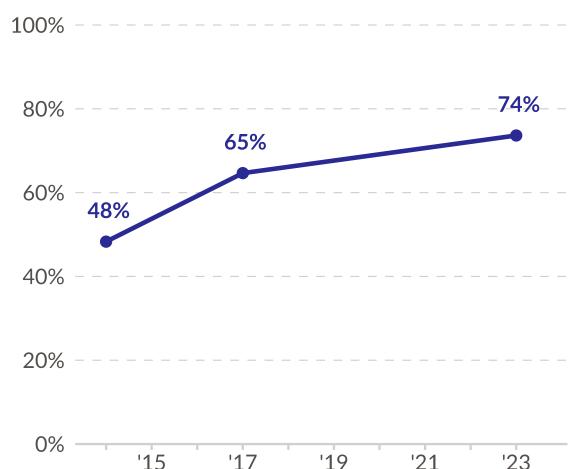
CORRUPTION

CHART 7.

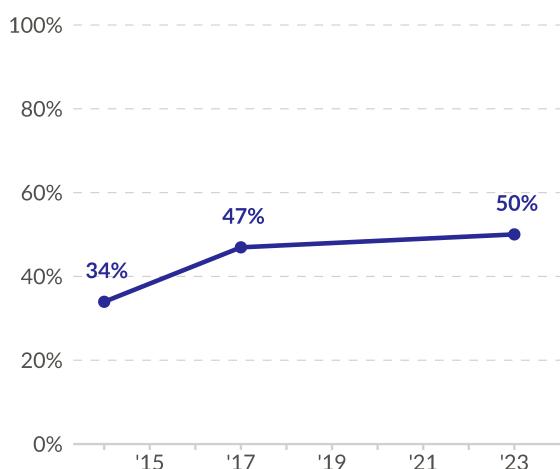
Perceptions of Corruption by Institution Over Time

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

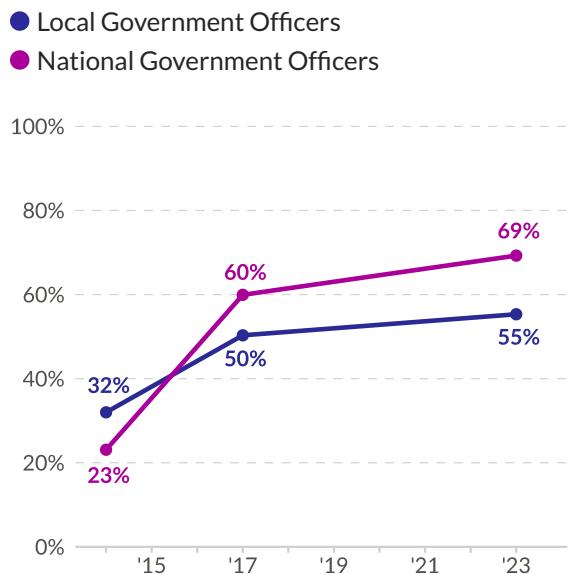
MEMBERS OF CONGRESS



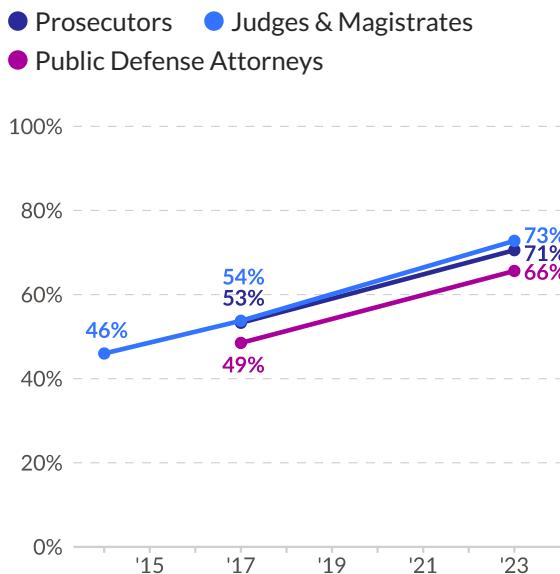
POLICE OFFICERS



EXECUTIVE



JUDICIARY



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

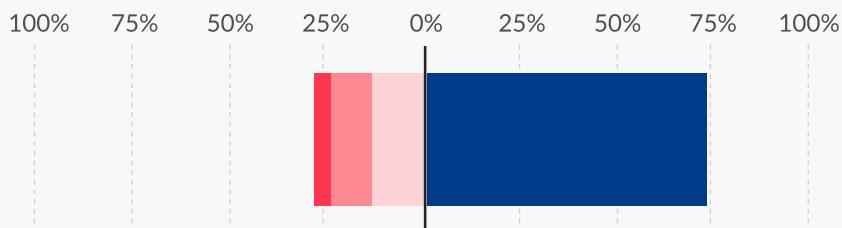
CHART 8.

Attitudes Towards Corrupt Behaviors

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

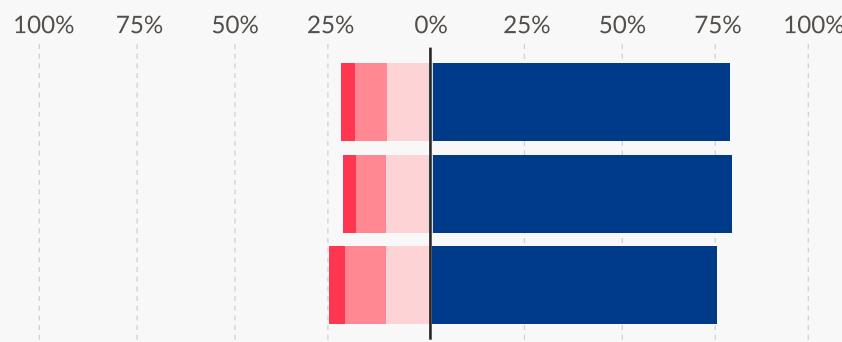
● Always Acceptable ● Usually Acceptable ● Sometimes Acceptable ● No answer ● Not Acceptable

Bribes Offered



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

Bribes Requested

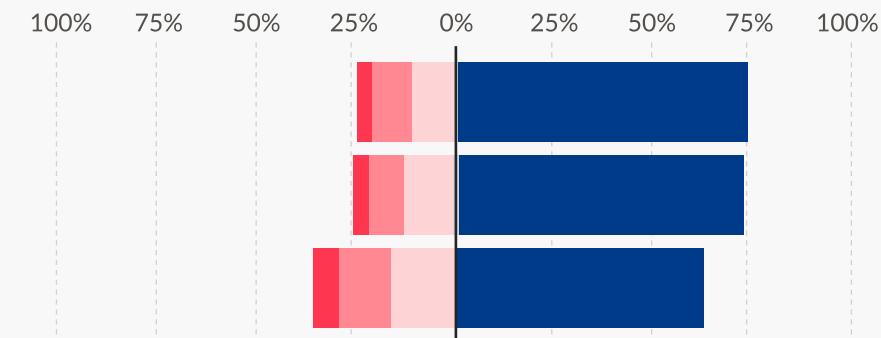


A law enforcement officer (police, customs, immigration, civil guard, military police) asking for a bribe

A company official asking for a bribe from a job applicant

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

Nepotism and Embezzlement



An elected official taking public funds for private use

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

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

Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023

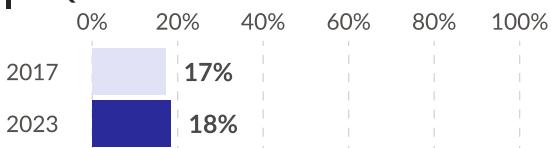
BRIBERY VICTIMIZATION

CHART 9.1

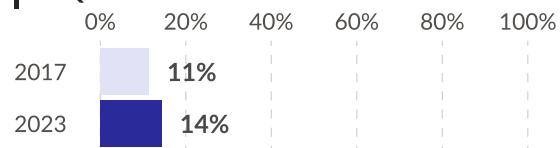
Bribery Victimization Over Time

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

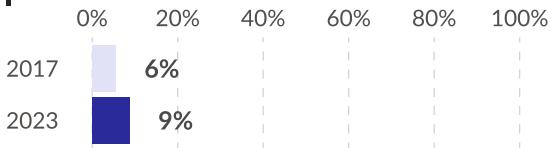
REQUEST A GOVERNMENT PERMIT OR DOCUMENT



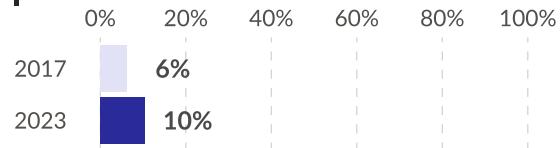
REQUEST PUBLIC BENEFITS OR ASSISTANCE



SECURE A PLACE AT A PUBLIC SCHOOL



USE A PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE



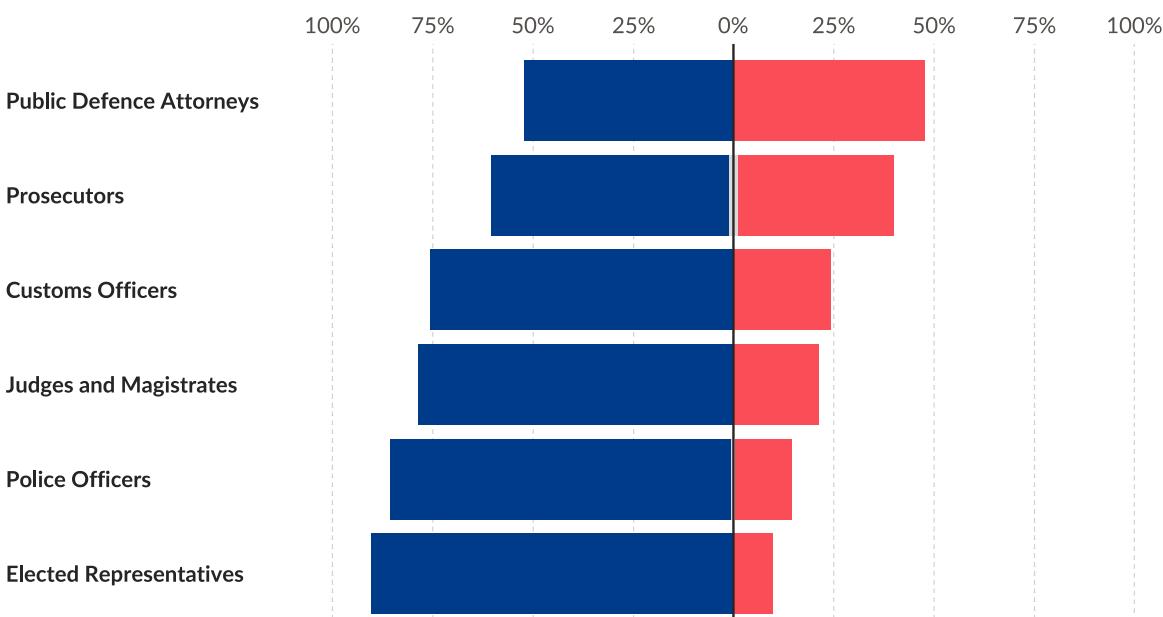
Source: WJP General Population Poll 2017, and 2023

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

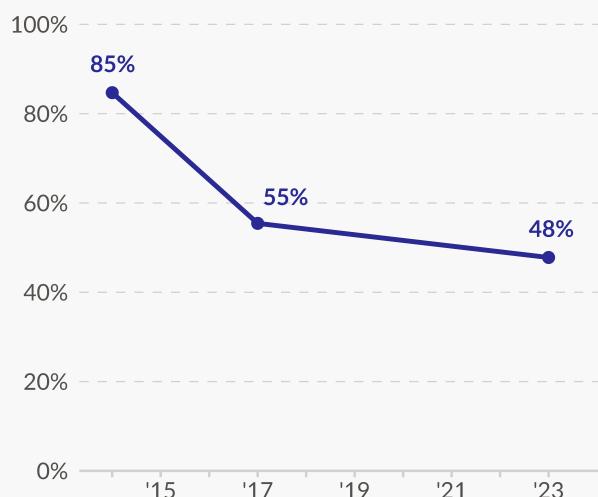
TRUST

CHART 10.

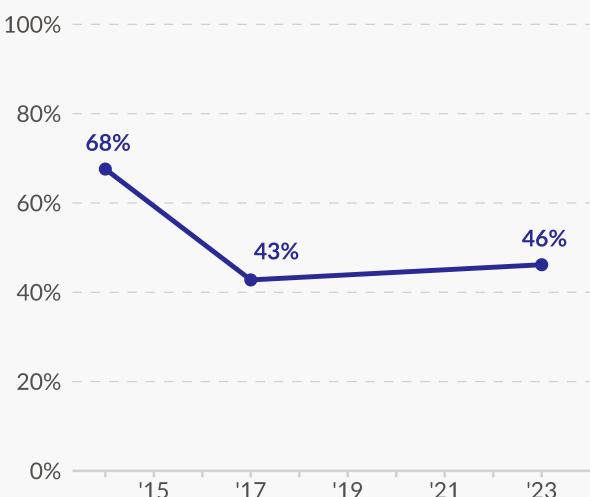
Trust in Institutions Over Time

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

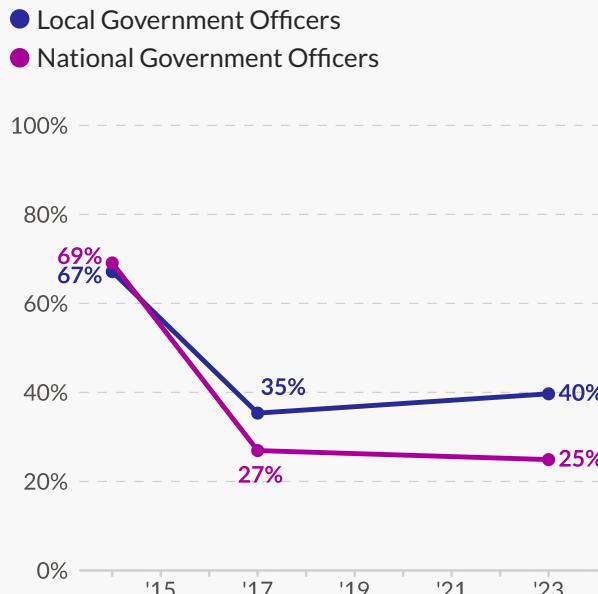
PEOPLE LIVING IN THEIR COUNTRY



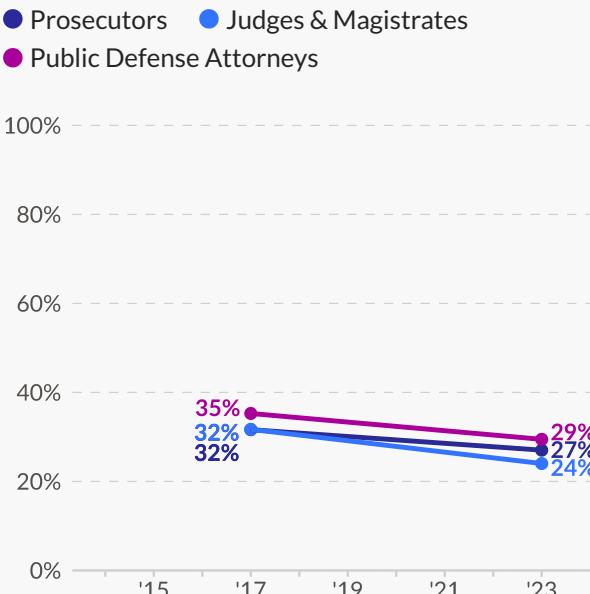
POLICE OFFICERS



EXECUTIVE



JUDICIARY



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

DISAGGREGATED PERCEPTIONS

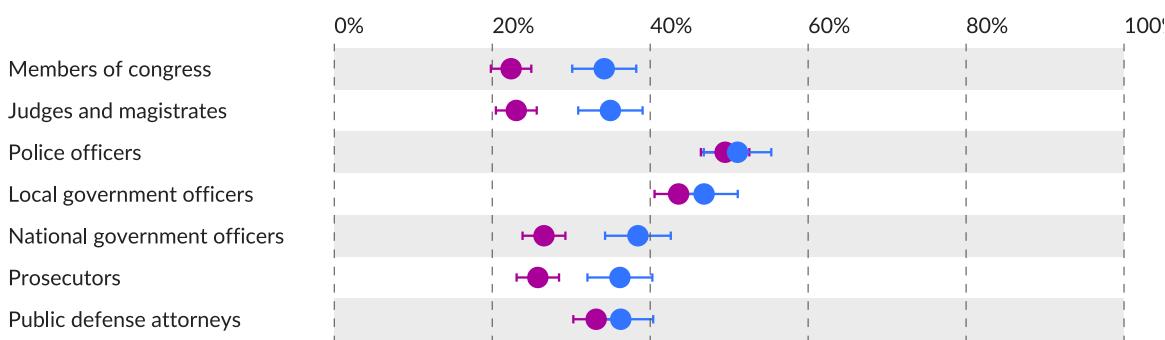
CHART 11.

Perceptions of Corruption and Trust, by Cultural Group

● Christian Orthodox ● Sunni Muslim

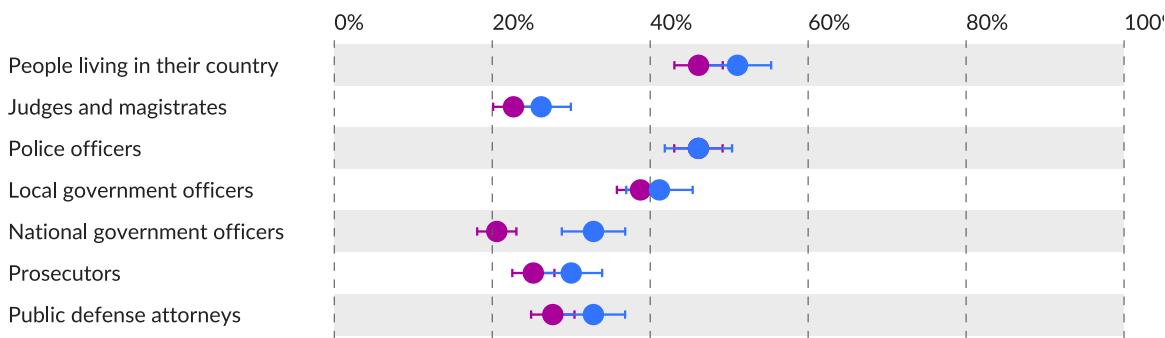
CORRUPTION

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**

- 27 Crime Victimization
- 28 Security
- 29 Criminal Justice
- 32 Police
- 34 Victim Support

CRIME VICTIMIZATION

CHART 12.1

Types of Crimes Experienced by People in North Macedonia

Victimization rate, by type of crime

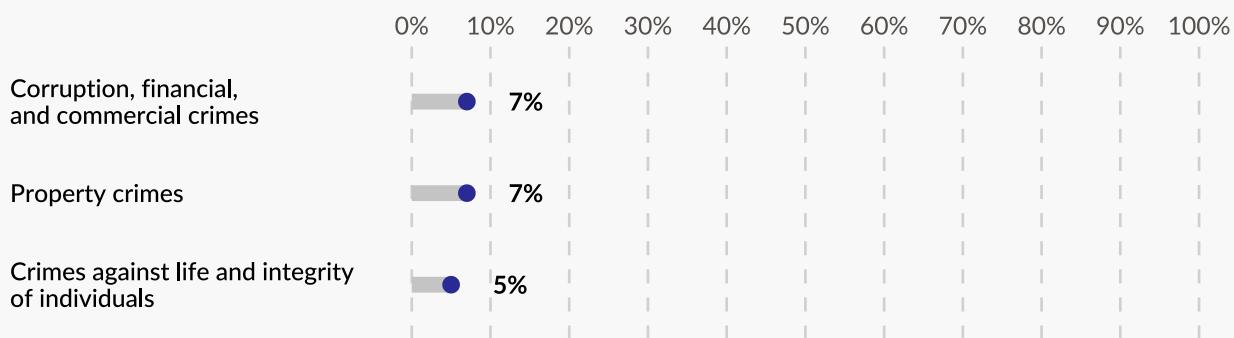
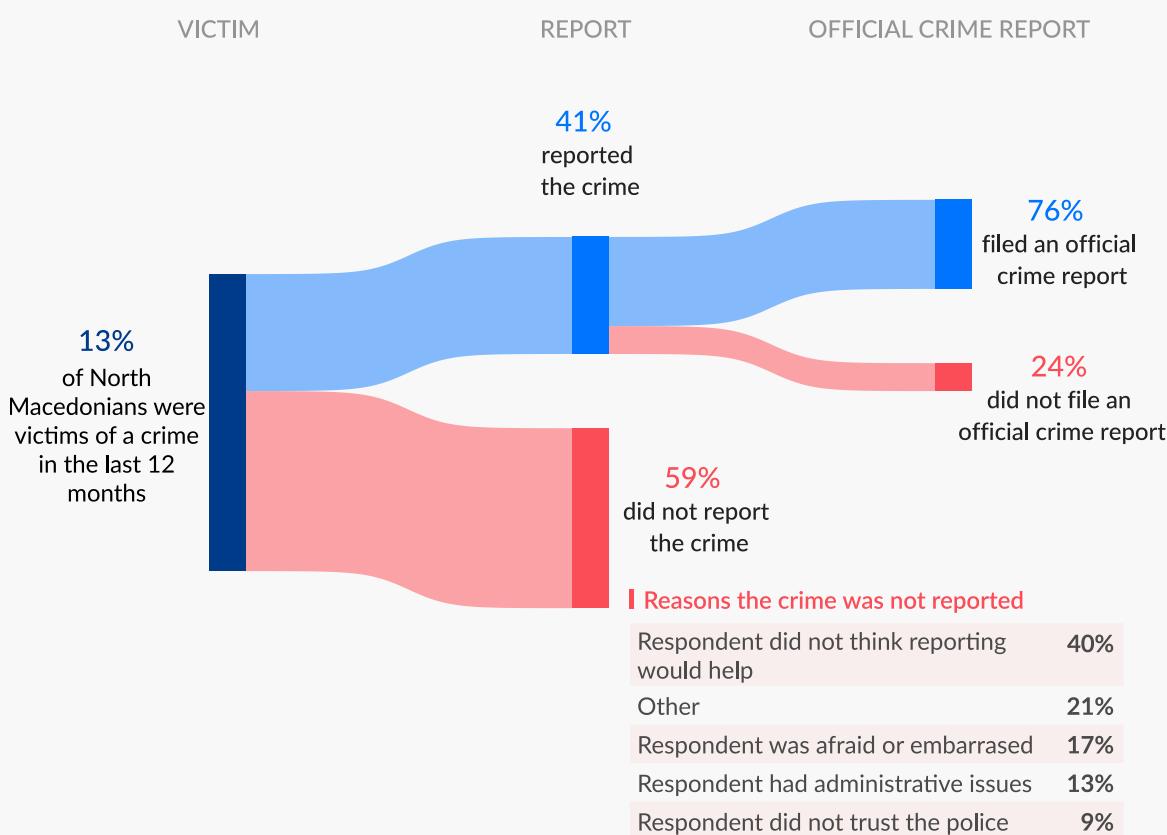


CHART 12.2

Crime Victimization Rates and Reporting

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

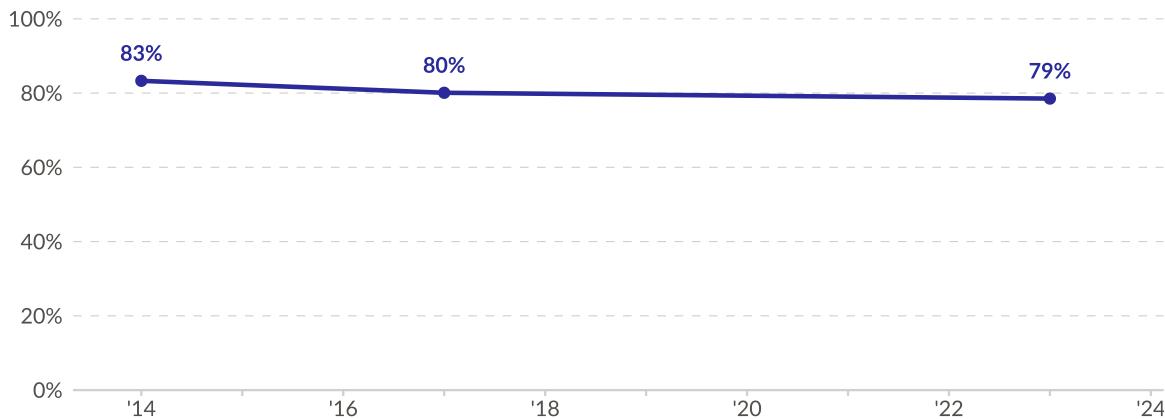


SECURITY

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

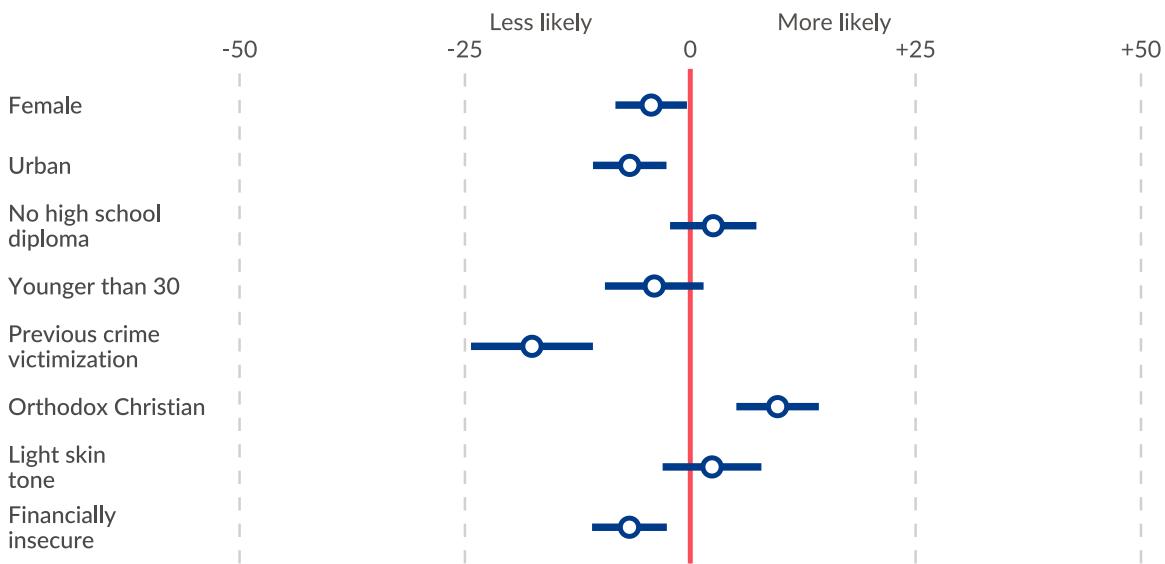


Source: WJP General Population Poll 2014, 2017, and 2023

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

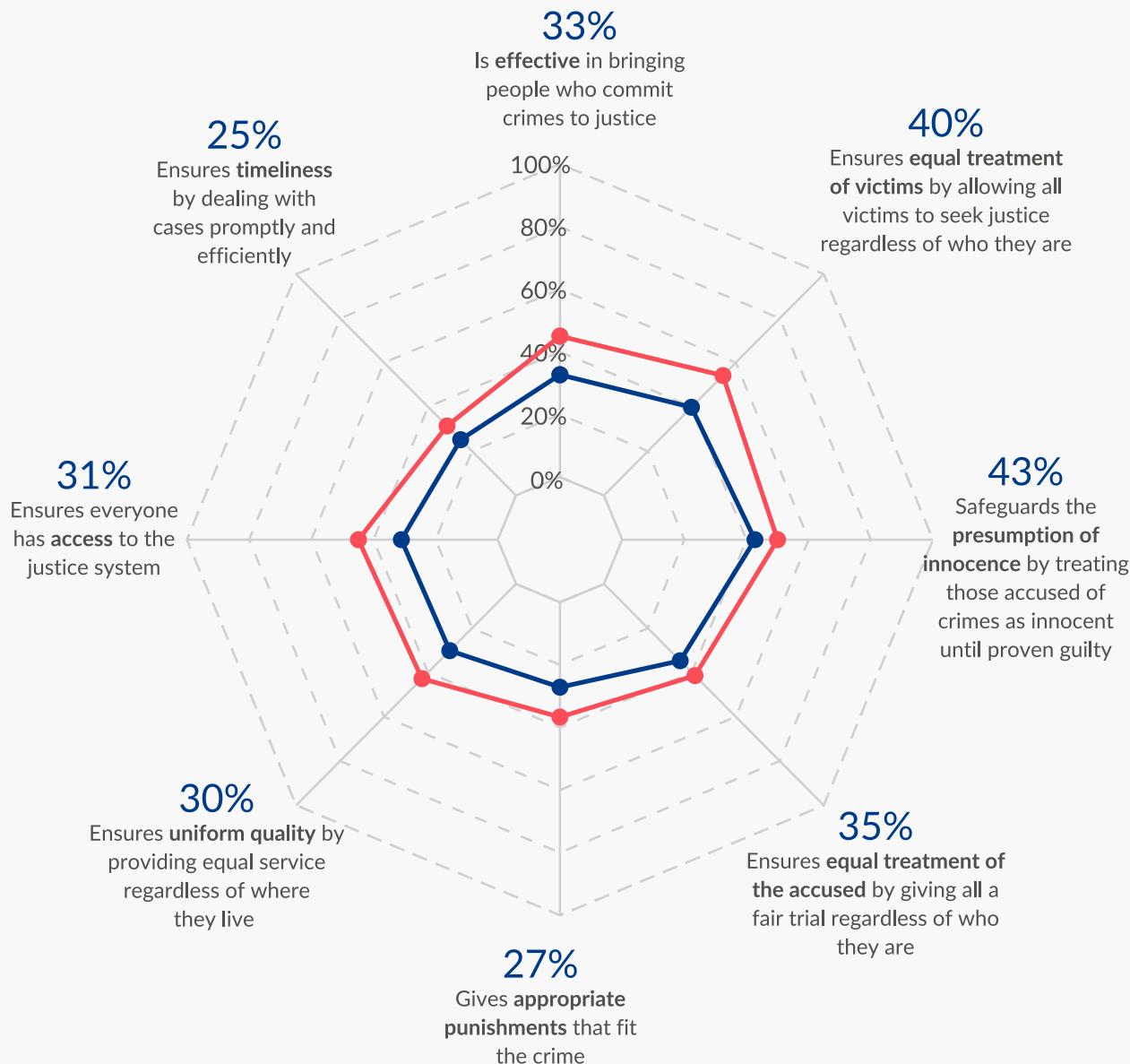
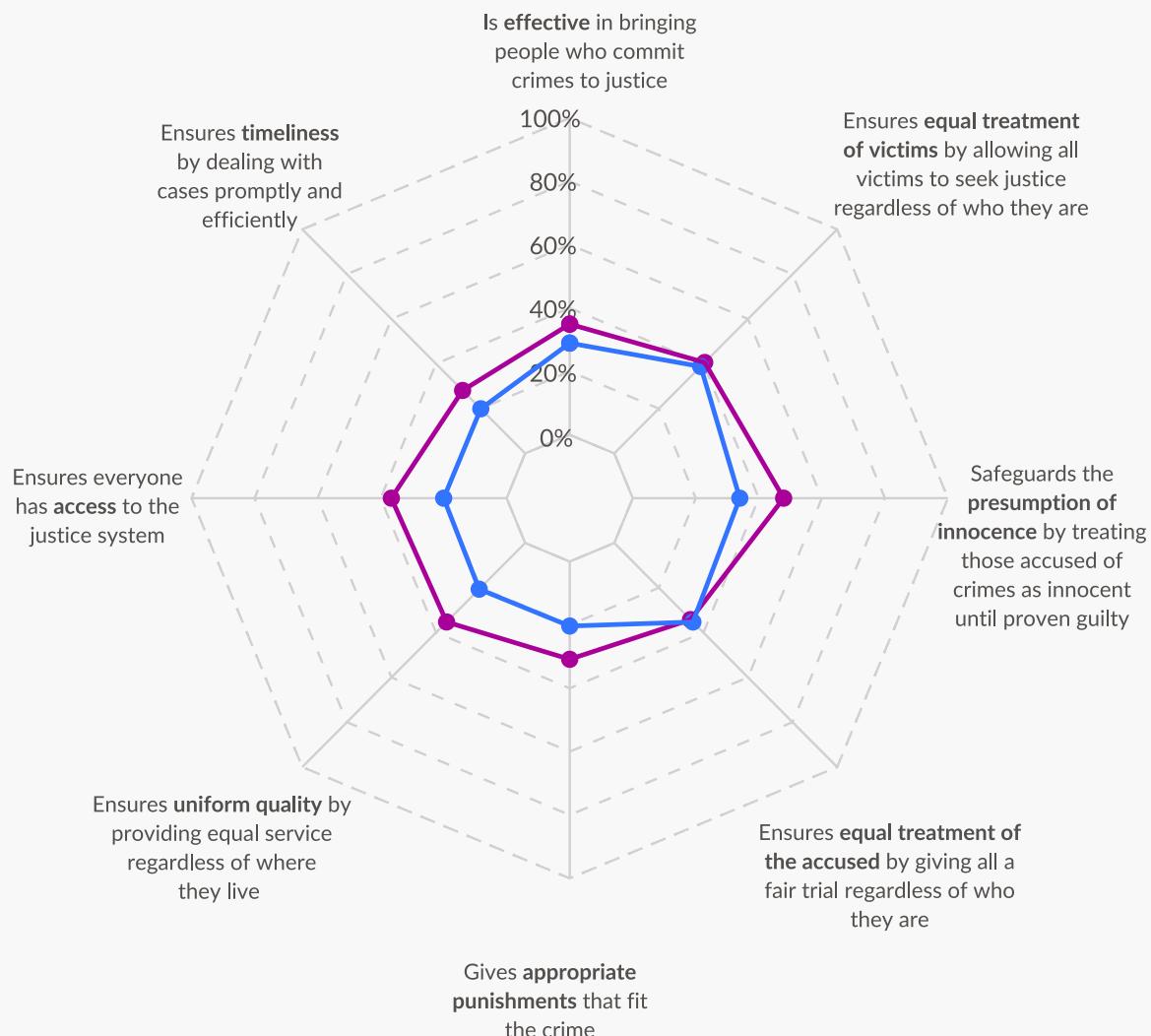


CHART 14.2

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.

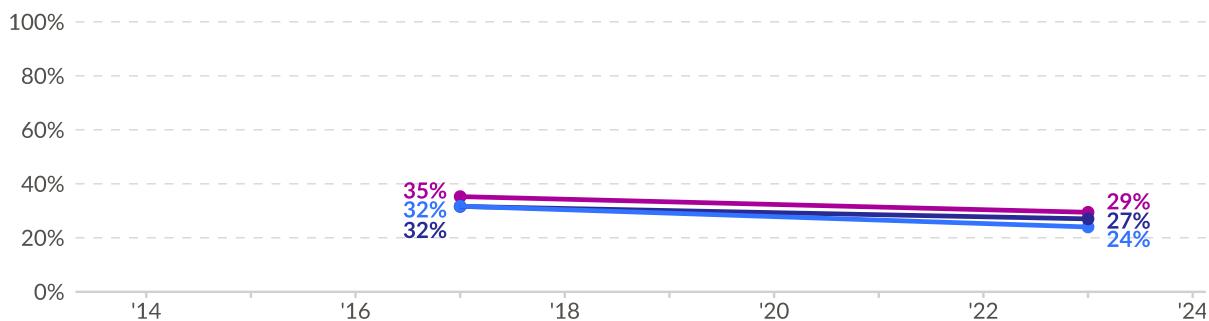
Criminal Justice Actors

Perceptions of criminal justice actors in North Macedonia

● Prosecutors ● Public Defense Attorneys ● Judges & Magistrates

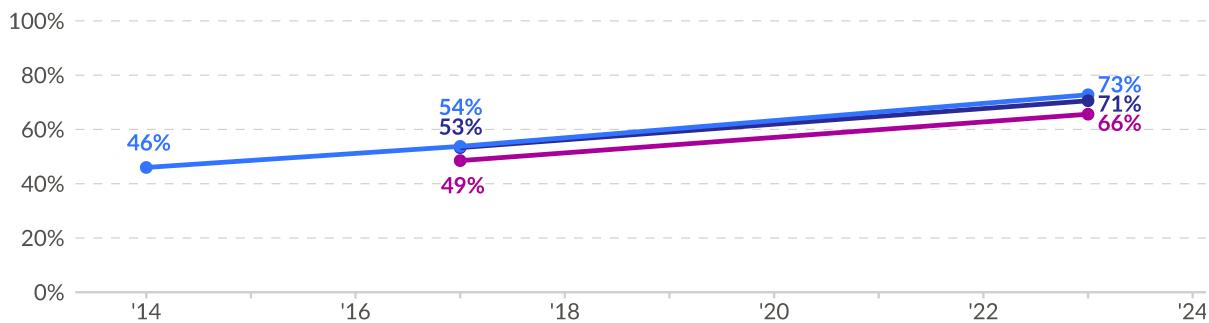
TRUST IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACTORS OVER TIME

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



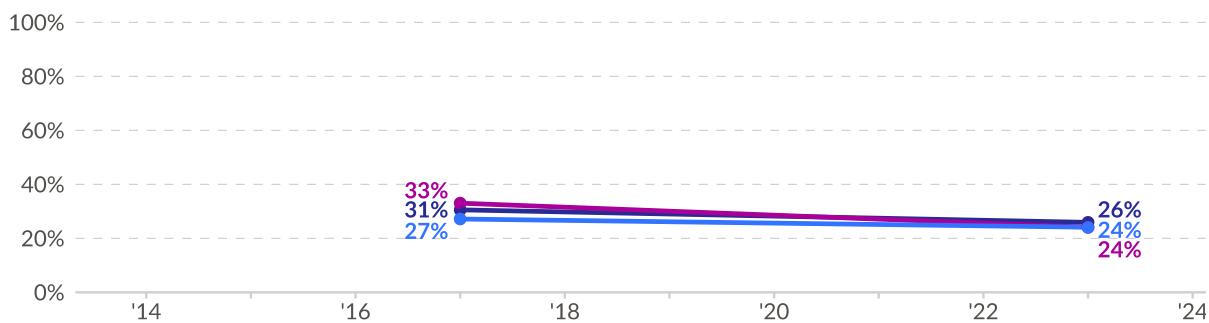
PERCEPTIONS OF CORRUPTION ACROSS CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACTORS OVER TIME

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

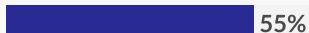
Serve the Public

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

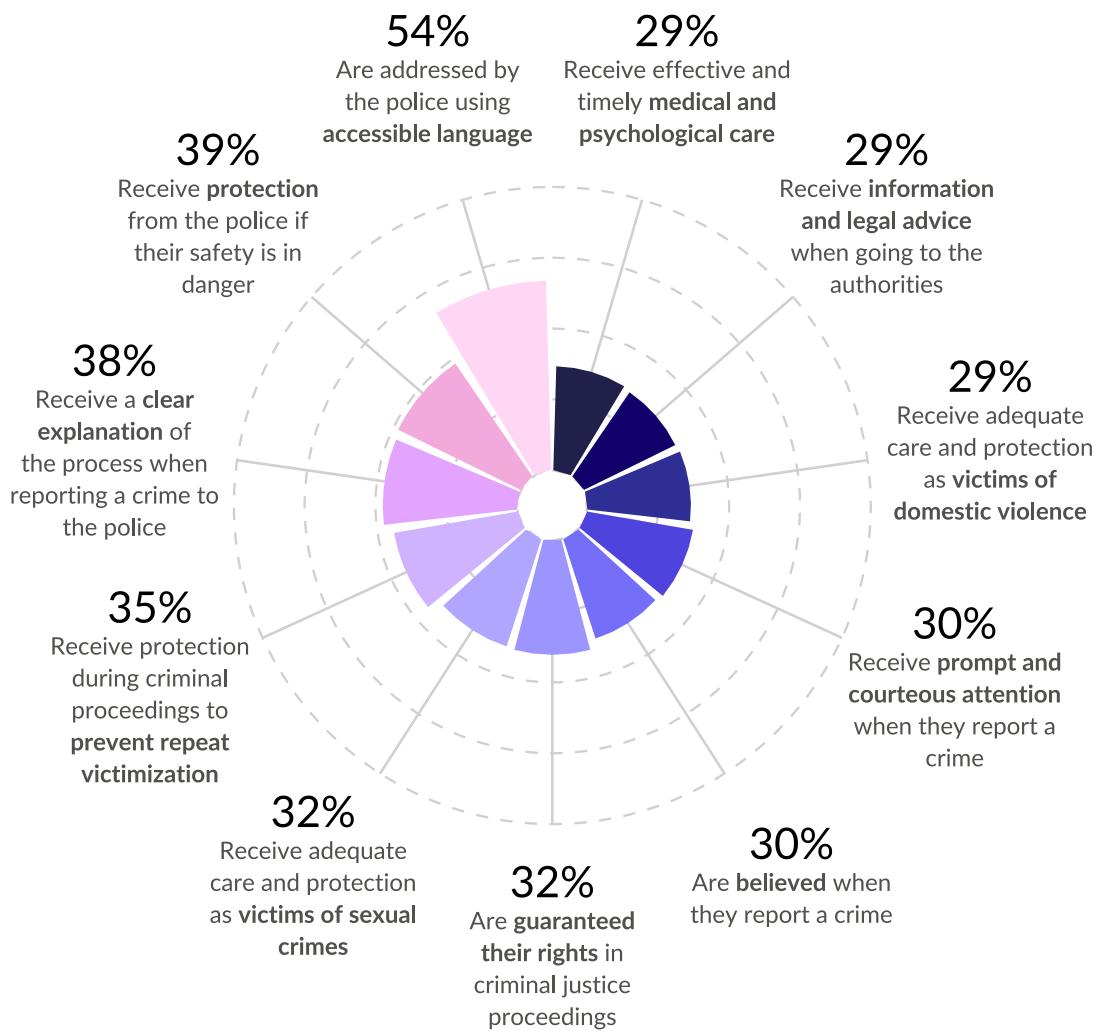


VICTIM SUPPORT

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

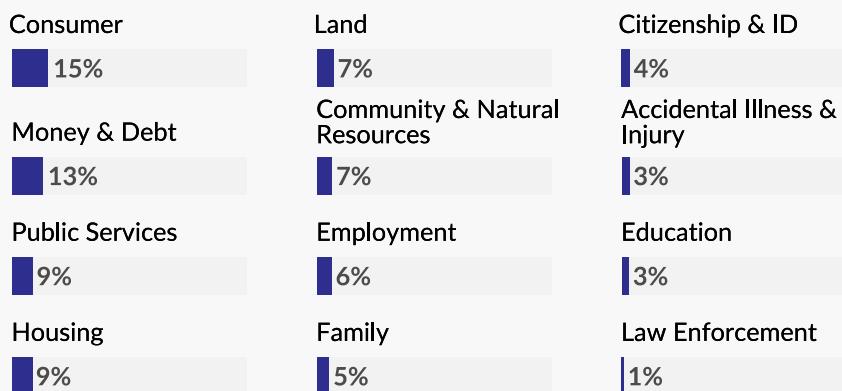
Paths followed by Macedonians who experienced a legal problem in the last two years

► 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%

Health or Welfare Professional

7%

Government Legal Aid Office

3%

Other Organization

11%

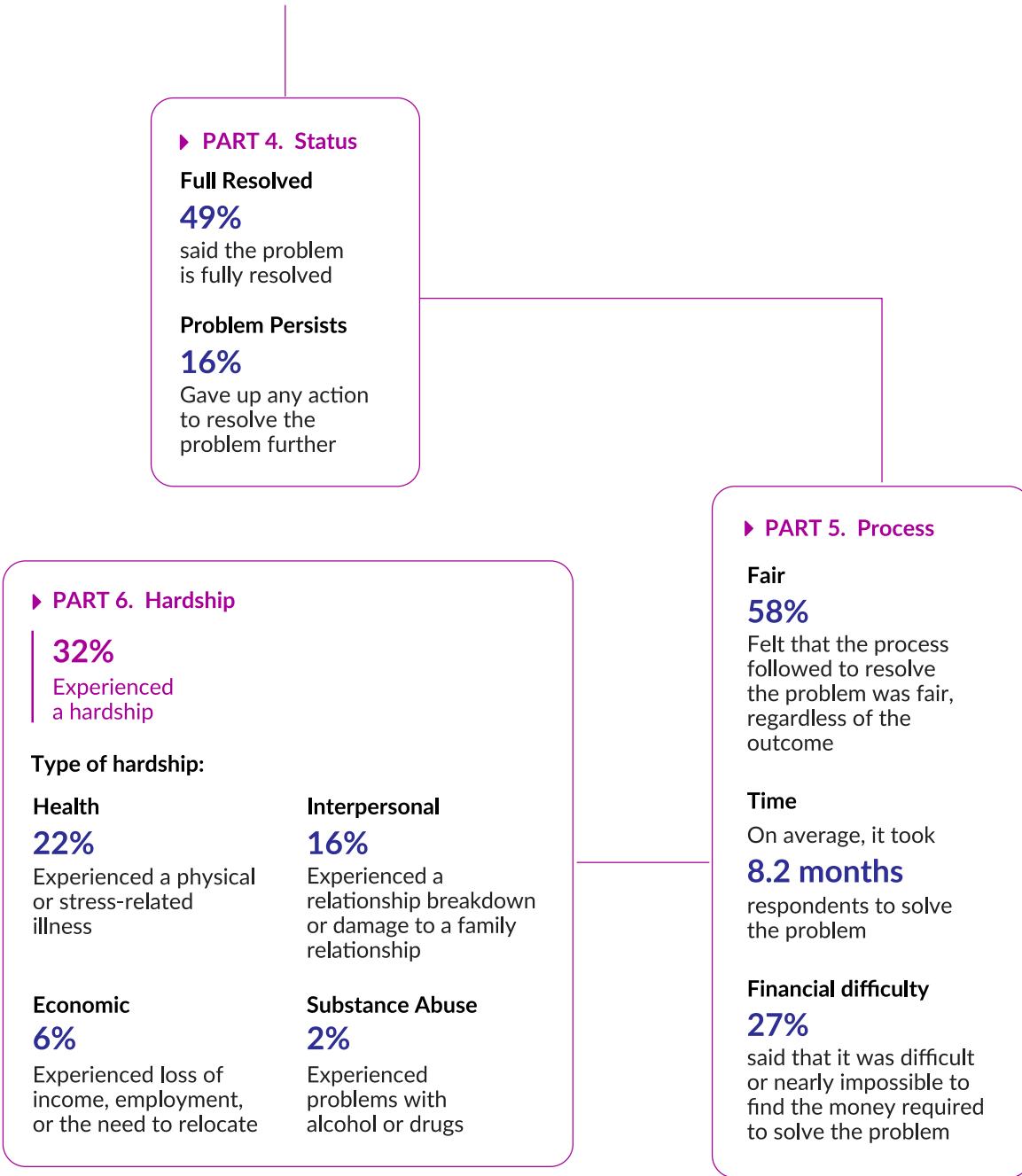
Court or Government Body or Police

4%

Religious or Community Leader

1%

Source: WJP General Population Poll 2023



PROJECT DESIGN

35 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

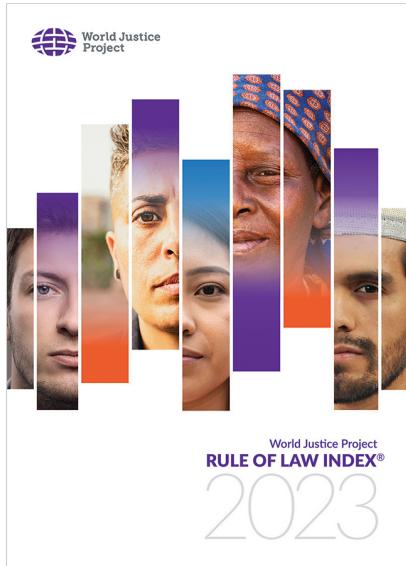
The World Justice Project (WJP) is an independent, multidisciplinary organization working to create knowledge, build awareness, and stimulate action to advance the rule of law worldwide. Effective rule of law is the foundation for communities of justice, opportunity, and peace—underpinning development,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

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

For more information click on the publication.



WJP Rule of Law Index 2023



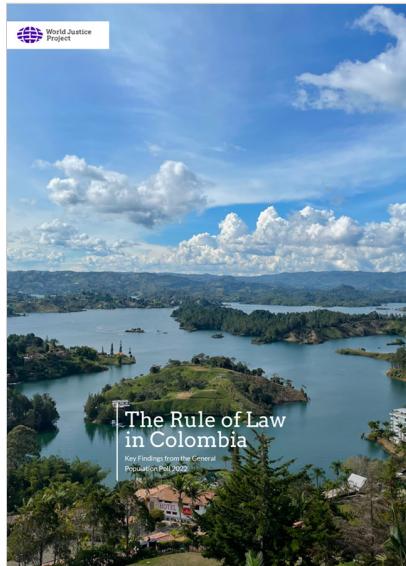
WJP Rule of Law Index 2023 Insights

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

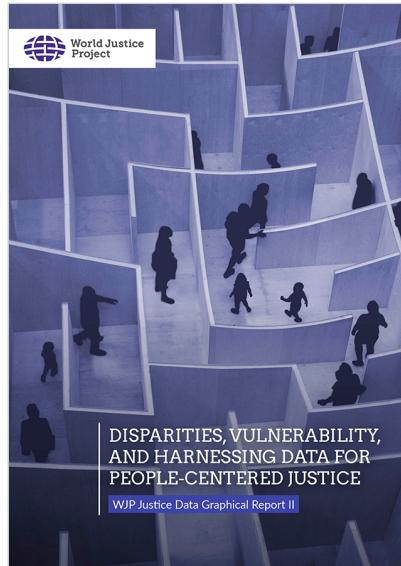


**WJP Mexico States Rule of
Law Index 2022-2023**

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**

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