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Corruption in Albania:

BRIBERY AS EXPERIENCED BY THE POPULATION



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CORRUPTION IN ALBANIA:
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Corruption is often reported in the international community to be an area of vulnerability for the countries of the western Balkans and it appears that the people of Albania would tend to agree. Results presented in this report show that Albanian citizens rank corruption as the second most important problem facing their country, after unemployment.

Corruption comes in many guises and, in contrast to other surveys that look at people's perceptions, this survey focuses on the actual experience of administrative corruption and provides information on the nature of bribery and its procedures. This is the kind of petty corruption that affects the daily lives of ordinary people in their dealings with the public administration, the service provider which plays such a huge a role in contemporary society that a remarkable eight out of ten adult Albanians interact with it at some point during the course of the year.

Such dealings may be for anything from a medical visit or school enrolment to the issue of a new passport or driving licence but, according to the results of this survey, a significant amount of them are of a dubious variety. Although there are notable variations between the Albanian regions, on average, 28.3 per cent of Albanian citizens aged 18 to 64 have been exposed - either directly or through a household member - to a bribery experience with a public official in the 12 months prior to the survey. But when focusing on bribes actually paid, the percentage of Albanian citizens who pay at least one bribe in the same period – among those who have contacts with the public administration– is 19.3 per cent, and those who pay at least one bribe in that period actually do so once every three months. The highest prevalence of bribery is observed in the Central region, while in the Mountain region it is significantly lower.

The face of corruption in Albania has slightly different features than in other parts of the western Balkans region. For example, bribery in Albania is more prevalent in rural areas than in urban areas (20.9% vs. 17.7%) and, unexpectedly, more Albanian women pay bribes than Albanian men (21.3% vs. 17%). Moreover, bribes are almost exclusively given in the form of

cash payments, while payments in kind are not used. On average, each bribe paid was worth 5,710 Albanian Leks, or the equivalent of approximately 43 Euro¹.

Such cash payments are not trivial, bearing in mind the per capita incomes in Albania, and it would be wrong to assume that people are always coerced into paying them. Almost 30 per cent of bribes paid are actually offered by citizens themselves, while in more than half of cases they are paid in response to an indirect request by a public official and for almost 15 per cent they refer to an explicit request by a public official or a third party. In many cases bribes are paid to facilitate bureaucratic procedures and the existence of deficiencies and bottlenecks in the public sector is confirmed by the fact that the 70 per cent of citizens who participate in a bribery act do so to receive better treatment, while 9 per cent does so to speed up a procedure or to avoid the payment of a fine.

Such a need for better treatment no doubt explains why the public officials paid most kickbacks in Albania are doctors. Some 71 per cent of citizens who pay bribes pay them to doctors, almost a half to nurses (47%) while 14 per cent pay police officers².

The picture painted in this survey is sometimes a troubling one, but data indicate that there is some resistance to bribery and Albanian citizens do not always consent to the payment of bribes in order to facilitate or benefit from a particular administrative procedure: for every three who do so there is one who refuses, turning down the request made by a public official. On the other hand, only a negligible amount of bribe-payers (less than 1%) report their experience to the authorities. There are numerous reasons for this: some citizens do not deem bribery to be of the same gravity as “real” crimes, in part because there is a sense of acceptance that bribery is simply a common practice (45%) and also, when constituting an expression of gratitude for services rendered, actually a positive practice (13%). Citizens also fail to report bribery events because bribe payment can, of course, be of direct benefit to the bribe-payer (9%), and because they believe reporting to be a futile exercise as nothing would be done, nor would anyone care (29%).

Interestingly, for 44 per cent of bribe-payers this survey interview was the first time they had admitted to the payment of a bribe, having never previously shared the experience with anybody, even close friends or relatives. It seems that when it comes to bribery a well-established and selective code of silence still exists in many cases.

Bribery not only affects the services provided to citizens by public officials. The public administration is the largest employer in Albania and its associated job security and accompanying benefits are highly coveted. Some 16 per cent of Albanian citizens, or members of their households, applied for a job in the public sector in the three years prior to the survey, but of those whose application was successful some 9 per cent admit to paying some money, giving a gift or doing a favour to help secure their position. Among those who failed, there is a widespread perception that factors such as cronyism, nepotism or bribery played a decisive role in the recruitment process, while only 15 per cent believe that the selection was made on merit.

While Albanian women in their thirties are those most exposed to bribery, characteristics such as income, education level or employment status do not appear to have a clear effect on the probability of experiencing bribery. For instance, although the prevalence of bribery increases slightly with middle income level, its frequency follows another pattern and the average number of bribes paid is actually higher among lower income groups than wealthier citizens, with no social group being exempt from bribery.

¹ Amounts in Albanian Lek (ALL) are converted into Euro by using the annual average exchange rate published by Eurostat. For international comparisons, amounts in national currency should be converted by using Purchasing Power Parities (PPP): when using conversion rates in PPP, as published by Eurostat, 5,710 Lek are equivalent to approximately 103 EUR-PPP.

² The sum is higher than 100 per cent since bribe-payers have often made payments to more than one public official in the 12 months prior to the survey

Nor, of course, is any social group exempt from the possibility of falling victim to the other five crime types examined in this survey. While the one-year prevalence rates for personal theft, burglary, assault/threat, car theft, and robbery in Albania are considerably lower than for bribery (2.9%, 1.5%, 0.6%, 0.4% and 0.3%, respectively), These are quite modest levels, on a par with those evidenced in other European countries, which probably explains why citizens of Albania feel rather safe in relation to crime: more than eight out of ten feel safe when walking alone after dark in their neighbourhoods, and an even larger majority of citizens feel fairly secure in their homes.

But perceptions about corruption in Albania are not so positive. More than half of the population believe that corrupt practices occur often or very often in local or central government. Furthermore, one third of Albanian citizens believe that corruption is actually on the rise in their country, while 41 per cent believe it to be stable and 26 per cent think it is decreasing. Perceptions, it should be underlined, are nothing more than opinions and are not to be confused with the actual experience of corruption that provides the main focus of this report. Nevertheless, such a perception can be interpreted as an expression of citizens' awareness of one of the principal challenges facing Albania, both now and in the years to come.



KEY FINDINGS

- Albanian citizens rank corruption as the second most important problem facing their country today, after unemployment.
- Eight out of ten Albanian citizens interact with the public administration at some point during the course of the year.
- In the 12 months prior to this survey, 28.3 per cent of Albanian citizens have been exposed - either directly or through a household member - to a bribery experience with a public official.
- The bribery prevalence rate – the percentage of citizens paying a bribe among those who had contact with public officials in the 12 months prior to the survey - is 19.3 per cent.
- There are some differences in the prevalence of bribery in urban (17.7%) and rural (20.9%) areas and in the regions of Albania, with the highest prevalence rate registered in the Central region and the lowest prevalence rate registered in the Mountain region.
- The bribery prevalence rate is 21.3 per cent for Albanian women, as opposed to 17 per cent for Albanian men.
- Bribe-payers, i.e. those who have reported payments of bribes in the 12 months prior to this survey, have on average paid four bribes or the equivalent of one bribe every three months.
- Almost all bribes are paid in cash (99.6%) and the average bribe amounts to 5,710 Lek, or the equivalent of approximately 43 Euro.
- In about 30 per cent of bribery incidents Albanian citizens initiate the payment; in more than half of cases they are made to understand a kickback is required and in 10 per cent of cases the bribe is explicitly requested by an public official.
- The main purposes of paying bribes in Albania are to receive better treatment (71%), speed up a procedure (9%) or to avoid the payment of a fine (9%).

- More than 70 per cent of all bribe-payers in Albania pay kickbacks to doctors (71%), almost half (47%) pay to nurses and 14 per cent to police officers³.
- Of those citizens who refuse to pay bribes, 29 per cent refuse to pay doctors and 10 per cent refuse to pay municipal officers.
- Less than 1 per cent of Albanian citizens who experience bribery actually report the incident. Citizens do not report bribery because they see it as a common practice (45%), because they give bribes voluntarily as a sign of gratitude (13%) or they think reporting is pointless, because nobody would care (29%).
- Concerns about corruption in the public sector are confirmed by the experience of those who, in the three years prior to this survey, secured a job in the public administration: 9 per cent of them was recruited with the help of a bribe.
- Bribery has a higher prevalence rate than other crimes such as theft, burglary, assault and robbery. Low rates have been recorded for such crimes in Albania, thus explaining why citizens feel safe at home after dark and do not use advanced security systems to protect their homes

³ The sum is higher than 100 per cent since bribe-payers have often made payments to more than one public official in the 12 months prior to the survey



INTRODUCTION

Corruption remains an issue for countries all over the world. Socio-economic development, the institutional and political setting or the prevailing social and cultural norms are all elements that can shape it in very different manners, but corruption is still a scourge from which no country is truly exempt and it is often reported to be an area of vulnerability for the countries of the western Balkans, including Albania. Indeed, the citizens of Albania perceive corruption to be a major problem: the results presented in this report show that they rank corruption as the most important problem facing their country after unemployment.

International legal instruments and national policies

In the last decade, awareness of corruption has increased in Albania and it has become an important priority in the political agenda of the country. Successive Albanian governments have committed themselves to fighting corruption and key steps have been taken to address the issue, in part because of commitments deriving from the European Union accession process and the subsequent need to adapt national legislation to the *acquis communautaire*.

The upgrading of the legislative framework for the fight against corruption in Albania was manifested in the ratification of two Council of Europe conventions –the Criminal Law Convention against Corruption (2001) and the Civil Law Convention against Corruption (2000). In 2006, Albania also became party to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), a consequence of which is the Implementation Review Mechanism, established in 2009 to enable all parties to review their implementation of UNCAC provisions through a peer review process. One of the objectives of this mechanism is to encourage a participatory and nationally driven process towards anti-corruption reform and it is noteworthy that Albania will be reviewed in the fourth wave (2013-2014).

Furthermore, the legal framework of national legislation for combating corruption has been incorporated into the existing criminal legislation. The national Criminal Code criminalises the main forms of corruption and the Criminal Procedure Code includes special investigative measures to fight corruption.

In 2008 an anti-corruption strategy was adopted and action plans to implement the strategy have been drafted each year. The latest action plan includes measurable indicators, which should enable monitoring of progress, as endorsed by the inter-ministerial working group responsible for preparation, drafting and follow-up of implementation of the anti-corruption strategy. All relevant activities are coordinated by the Department for Internal Administrative Control and Anti-Corruption (DIACA), which also performs internal controls on all administrative bodies.

Among the policies put in place to prevent corruption, it is important mentioning the law on the declaration and auditing of civil servants' assets and a law for the prevention of conflicts of interest while engaged in public work.

The complexity of corruption

Corruption can occur at different levels. A distinction is usually drawn between grand and administrative (petty) corruption, with the former referring to corrupt practices affecting the legislative process and policymakers, and the latter referring to dealings between civil servants and the public. In either case, it has a devastating impact on the rule of law, hinders equal access to public services, affects public trust in state institutions and is a hurdle to economic and social development, especially in young democracies.

Corruption is a complex crime with blurred boundaries making it often difficult to distinguish between culprit and victim. It is not necessarily a one-dimensional transaction in which an active perpetrator coerces a passive party: both sides may benefit, and the victim might be a third party or the community at large. Moreover, there are cultural and social factors that can further cloud the issue. The giving of gifts, for example, whether as a "thank you" or bureaucratic lubricant, may be considered acceptable in one culture yet unethical in another.

The importance of studying direct experience

In this context, comprehensive assessments of corruption can greatly assist governments in better tailoring policies and enhancing the capabilities of anti-corruption bodies. At the same time, it is widely accepted that the collection of empirical data in this area represents a real challenge because of the complex and covert nature of corruption. These difficulties are sometimes circumvented by focusing on perceptions about corruption, rather than on actual experience of it. Perception-based indicators, while useful for raising awareness about the issue of corruption and helping to advocate policy measures for addressing it, fail to provide clear indications as to the extent of corruption and vulnerable areas. Increasing concerns are also expressed about the validity of methods used to build perception-based indicators.

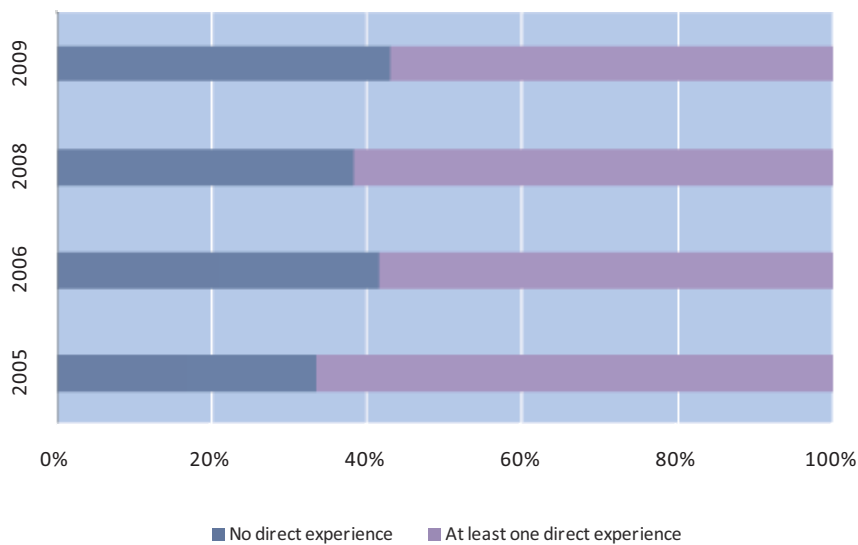
In recent years, tools for collecting information on direct experiences of corruption have been developed: sample surveys can produce important indicators about the extent and nature of corrupt practices. More importantly, the wealth of information gathered can shed light on the modalities of corruption and the sectors, positions and administrative procedures more at risk. Promoted by a variety of international organizations, national institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and development agencies, a number of such surveys have been conducted in several countries around the world, including Albania and the western Balkan region, thus proving the feasibility and relevance of this approach.

Previous studies conducted in Albania

Various surveys and studies have been conducted in Albania in an attempt to provide data and analyses on the extent and nature of corruption. For example, a series of studies conducted by the Institute for Development Research and Alternatives (IDRA) found that more than 50 per cent of the population had a direct experience of bribery in recent years⁴.

⁴ IDRA, Corruption in Albania, perception and experience, 2009

Figure 1: Percentage of population having direct experience of bribery, Albania (2005, 2006, 2008 and 2009)

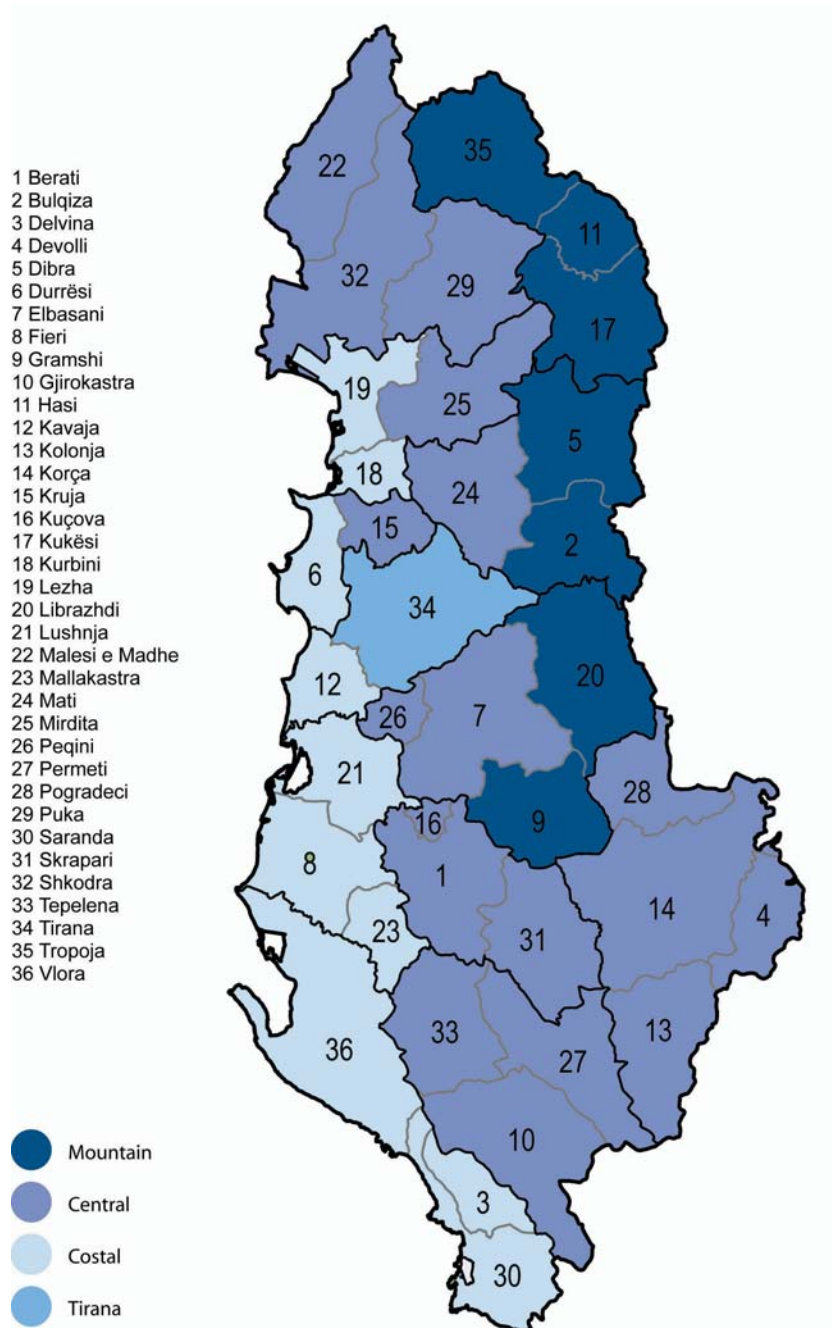


Surveys conducted in the same period by Transparency International also found that a high share of the population had a direct experience of bribery in Albania: around 70 per cent in the years 2006 and 2007⁵. While data are not strictly comparable due to methodological differences, all studies point to a high prevalence of bribery as experienced by the population.

The scope and methodology of this study

Following a bilateral agreement between the European Commission and the Albanian Government, UNODC provided its support in conducting this large-scale survey on corruption, with the Institute of Statistics of Albania (INSTAT) acting as the national partner for implementing the survey and research activities. The main objective of this survey was to examine actual experience of administrative corruption in Albania: the research probed the prevailing types and modalities of corruption that affect citizens' daily lives, with particular focus on bribery, a practice that, in accordance with the United Nations Convention against Corruption, is a criminal offence. Additional topics covered in the surveys include reporting of corruption to the authorities, citizens' opinions about corruption and integrity, and the experience, as victims, of other forms of crime. In order to collect this information, in 2010, a sample survey was conducted via face to face interviews with a nationally representative sample of 3561 Albanian citizens aged 18 to 64, selected randomly in each region of the country.

⁵ Transparency International, Global Corruption Barometer, 2006 and 2007

Map 1: Regional coverage of the Survey

This report contains the analysis of the data collected in that survey. Its goal is not to rank the different regions of the country or any selected sector or ministry on a corruption scale, but rather to provide analytical knowledge about a complex phenomenon, both at a national and sub-national level. To fight corruption effectively it is necessary to understand its many facets since there is no simple “one-size-fits-all” solution to the problem. It is believed that the evidence-based information presented in this report will provide the authorities of Albania with an additional tool for developing well-targeted anti-corruption policies. Information that can also be made use of in the peer review process of the UNCAC Implementation Review Mechanism, as well as represent a benchmark for measuring future progress in the fight against corruption.

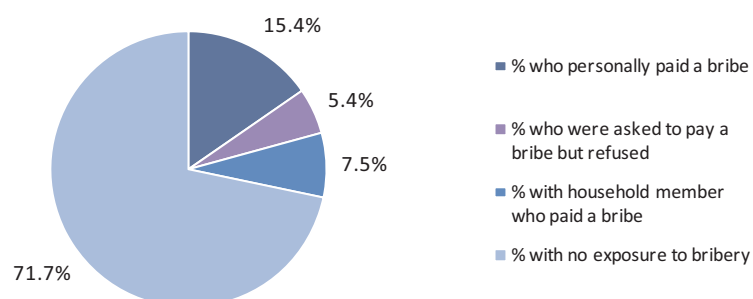


1. PREVALENCE OF BRIBERY

The public sector plays a major role in contemporary society. Whether for a medical visit, school and university enrolment or the issue of an ID card, to name but a few examples, citizens and households depend on its services for a huge variety of reasons. The fact that eight out of ten adult Albanians reported having at least one contact with a public official in the 12 months prior to this survey shows just how substantial that role actually is.

The demand made on the system is clear but when it comes to integrity in the provision and use of its services the picture that emerges is a somewhat cloudy one. One important finding of this survey is that a considerable number of Albanian citizens (556,000, equivalent to 28.3% of adult population aged 18 to 64) had either direct or indirect exposure to a bribery experience with a public official in the 12-month period in question. As figure 2 shows, this number represents the sum of three different groups: the percentage of citizens who actually paid money, gave a gift or counter favour to a public official; the percentage of those requested to pay a bribe by a public official but refused to do so; and the percentage of those who shared a household with someone who did pay a bribe.

Figure 2: Direct and indirect exposure of adult population in Albania to bribery in the 12 months prior to the survey, (2010)

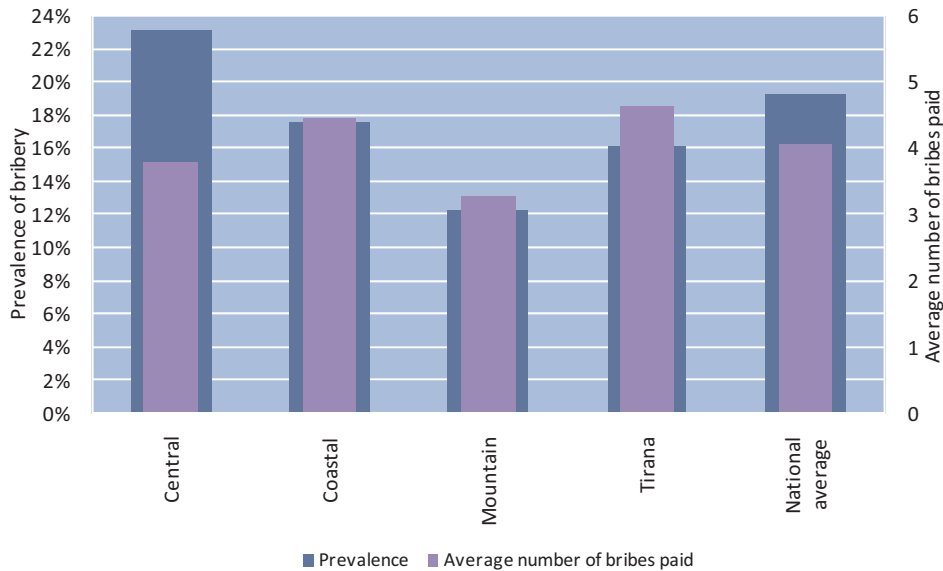


The data in figure 2 show that bribery is still a significant issue in the lives of many citizens of Albania. At the same time, it is encouraging to note that there is a considerable portion of Albanians capable of saying “no”, thus refusing to pay the kickback requested by a public

official. Data show that for every three citizens who pay a bribe to a public official during the course of the year, there is one who turns down such a request.

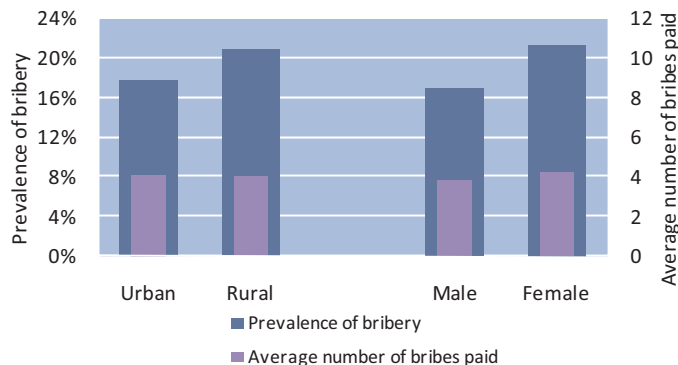
When focusing on bribes actually paid, the prevalence of bribery is calculated as the number of citizens who, in the 12 months prior to the survey, gave a public official some money, a gift or counter favour on at least one occasion, as a percentage of citizens who had at least one contact with a public official. As such, the average prevalence of bribery in Albania is 19.3 per cent at a national level, though there is some fluctuation in the prevalence rate throughout the different Albanian regions (figure 3).

Figure 3: Prevalence of bribery and average number of bribes paid by region, Albania (2010)



Note: Prevalence of bribery is calculated as the number of adult citizens (aged 18-64) who gave a public official some money, a gift or counter favour on at least one occasion in the 12 months prior to the survey, as a percentage of adult citizens who had at least one contact with a public official in the same period. The average number of bribes refers to average number of bribes given by all bribe-payers, i.e. those who paid at least one bribe in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Figure 4: Prevalence of bribery and average number of bribes paid, by sex and urban/rural areas, Albania (2010)



Note: Prevalence of bribery is calculated as the number of adult citizens (age 18-64) who gave a public official some money, a gift or counter favour on at least one occasion in the 12 months prior to the survey, as a percentage of adult citizens who had at least one contact with a public official in the same period. The average number of bribes refers to average number of bribes given by all bribe-payers, i.e. those who paid at least one bribe in the 12 months prior to the survey.

For example, the prevalence rate is somewhat higher than the national average in the Central region (23.2%), whereas it is considerably lower in the Mountain region (12.3%) (figure 3). Moreover, at a national level, the prevalence of bribery is higher in rural areas (20.9%) than in cities (17.7%), an interesting finding for a phenomenon - bribery – that is more often associated with urban areas, where there is a larger concentration of administrative functions and services.

On a national level, 21.3 per cent of the adult female population participates in bribery, as opposed to 17 per cent of the male population (figure 4). The difference is quite remarkable, also taking into account the perceived gender roles, which assign men greater responsibility for dealing with public administration and activities outside home in general. The difference in the prevalence of bribery between sexes can be found in all Albanian regions, with a significant difference in the Coastal region (21.4% for women vs. 13.4% for men).

However, it is misleading to consider the prevalence rate alone when evaluating the extent of bribery in any given country. To get a fairer impression, the frequency of bribe paying should also be taken into consideration since only one fifth of bribe-payers in Albania give bribes on one occasion, while some 80 per cent of them do so on multiple occasions. Effectively, on average, bribe-payers in Albania pay two public officials on two different occasions, thus everyone who reported the payment of at least one bribe had to pay four bribes or the equivalent of one bribe every three months. As figure 3 shows, the highest frequency is registered in Tirana region, while the lowest is in the Mountain region. Overall, as figure 4 shows, the average number of bribes paid is similar among urban and rural areas and male and female citizens. Although sizeable regional variations exist in Albania, data indicate that bribes are paid on a fairly regular basis by citizens using this tool to overcome difficulties or bottlenecks when dealing with the public administration.



2. NATURE OF BRIBES

Payments to public officials come in several shapes and sizes and are made for different reasons in diverse contexts. Money or gifts, for example, may be explicitly requested by public officials for the completion of a procedure or offered by a citizen to facilitate a service or simply express gratitude for a service rendered. In this chapter, a number of payment characteristics are presented in order to shed some light on what is clearly a complex question.

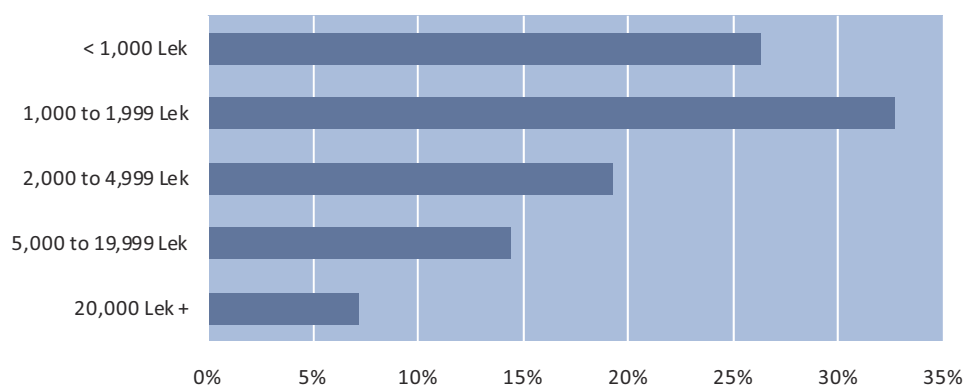
Forms of payment

In Albania, almost 100 per cent of bribes are paid in cash,(99.5%) while a minor share is given in the shape of valuables (0.5%). Other goods, exchange services and especially food and drinks are never used as forms of payment. A large proportion of bribes take a form that can be interpreted as a barter – either explicit or implicit – between two parties in which each one of them both gives and receives something in the exchange. But it should be stressed that in most cases the two parties are not on an equal footing, with one of them (the public official) usually being in a position of strength from a negotiating perspective.

When focusing on the amounts paid (figure 5), the results of this survey show that 26 per cent of all bribes are for amounts smaller than 1,000 Lek⁶ (approximately less than 10 Euro), one third of all bribes paid are in the 1,000-1,999 Lek range (from 10 to 15 Euro), almost 20 per cent are in the 2,000-4,999 Lek range (approximately from 15 Euro to 37 Euro). Some 14 per cent are in the 5,000-19,999 Lek range (from 37 to 150) and, interestingly, 7 per cent of bribes paid in cash are for amounts larger than 20,000 Lek (approximately 150 Euro). While not quite “grand corruption” these are certainly very considerable amounts for the households involved, taking into account the average monthly net wage of 40,874 Lek⁷.

⁶ Albanian national currency is Lek (ALL). Euro/Lek average exchange rate in 2010: 1 Euro = 132.05 Lek

⁷ Average monthly net wage for 2009 reported by Eurostat

Figure 5: Percentage distribution of bribes paid in cash by amount paid (in Lek), Albania (2010)

Taking into account the last bribes paid in cash, the average bribe amounts to 5,710 Lek (approximately 43 Euro); a figure that corresponds to 14 per cent of the average Albanian monthly salary in 2009. As table 1 shows, by far the largest average amount is paid in both Coastal and Mountain regions (6,334 Lek), while the smallest is paid in Tirana region (4,641 Lek). If the average amount paid for bribes in Albania is relatively low, it should not be forgotten that citizens have to make such payments on a quite regular basis, as the high prevalence rate demonstrates (see chapter 1). This means that the overall impact of bribery on household budgets is indeed quite significant.

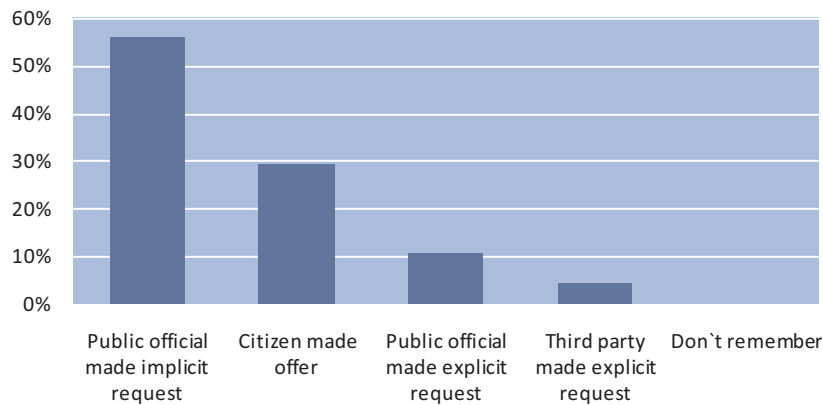
Table 1: Average amount of bribes paid in cash (in Lek, Euro and EUR-PPP) by region, Albania (2010)

Average bribe	Regions				National average
	Central	Coastal	Mountain	Tirana	
Lek	5,617	6,334	6,334	4,641	5,710
Euro	43	48	50	35	43
EUR-PPP	102	115	120	84	103

Bribe-seeking modality and timing

In contacts with public officials resulting in a payment of money or gifts, in 30 per cent of cases payment is offered by citizens themselves, whereas in about 70 per cent of cases payment is actually made following a request. However, in only 10 per cent of all bribery cases that request is made explicitly by the public official, while in 56 per cent of cases the public official makes the citizen understand implicitly that a kickback is necessary. Add to this the other 4 per cent of cases who receive the request through a third person intermediary (figure 6) and the complexity of corruptive practices can be seen.

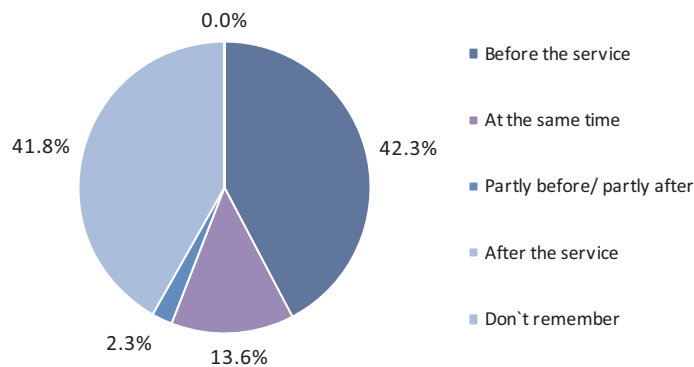
Figure 6: Percentage distribution of bribes paid by modality of bribe request/offer, Albania (2010)



Note: Data refer to the last bribe paid by each bribe-payer in the 12 months prior to the survey.

The timing of a bribe payment can also shed light on the motivation behind it, in particular as to whether it is made to facilitate a specific service or as a “thank you” for the successful completion of the procedure. Data show that in the 42 per cent of cases bribes are paid before the service and in another 42 per cent of cases after the service. Some 14 per cent are paid at the same time that the service is provided and almost 3 per cent of all bribes are given partially before and partially after the service is actually carried out (figure 7).

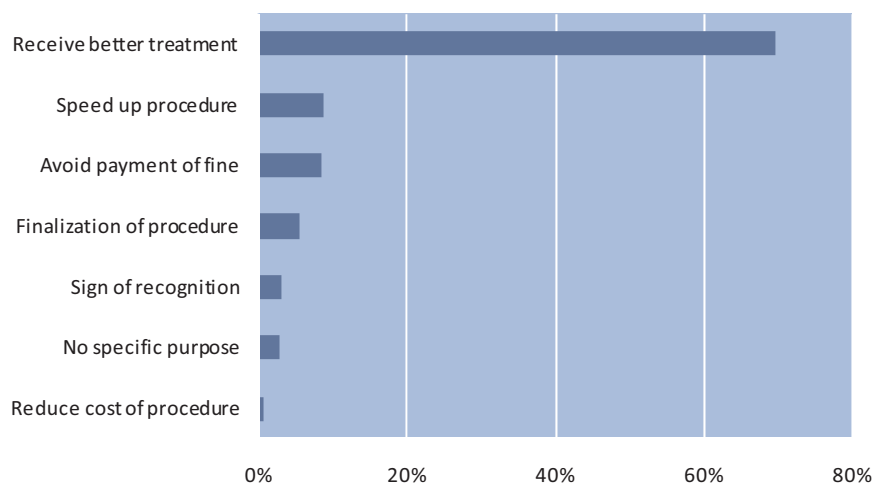
Figure 7: Percentage distribution of bribes paid by timing of payment in relation to service delivery, Albania (2010)



Note: Data refer to the last bribe paid by each bribe-payer in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Purposes of bribes

In every procedure bribes may be used for different purposes. People may, for example, give bribes in relation to the identity card or passport issuing procedure in order to speed up the procedure, reduce the official fee, receive information or get better treatment. Different purposes of bribes given, irrespective of the procedure for which they apply, are shown in figure 8.

Figure 8: Percentage distribution of bribes paid, by purpose of payment, Albania (2010)

Note: Data refer to the last bribe paid by each bribe-payer in the 12 months prior to the survey.

In Albania, the large majority of bribes (70%) are paid by citizens to receive better treatment: while this can mean different things in different contexts and to different people, the issue of raising quality of services delivered by the public administration appears to be central in the fight against bribery. Other reasons for paying bribes, as reported by citizens, are to speed up a procedure (9%), avoid the payment of a fine (9%) or the finalization of a procedure (6%), pointing to specific deficiencies and weaknesses in public service delivery.

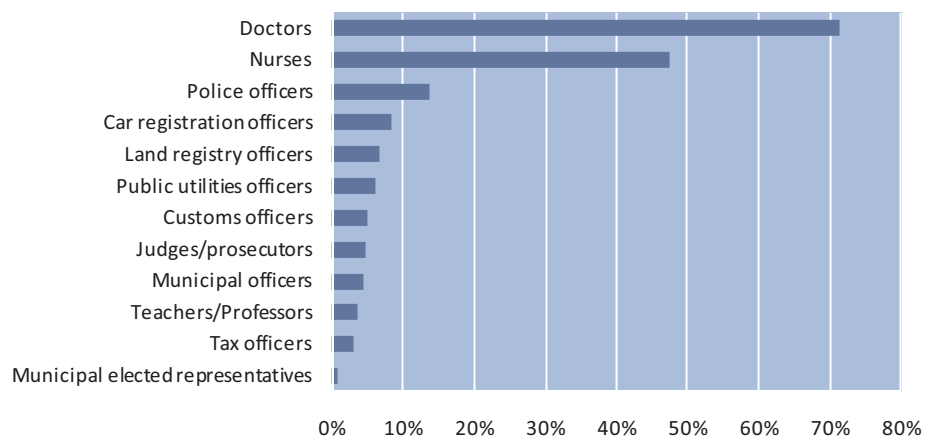


3. PUBLIC OFFICIALS AND BRIBERY

Just as bribery may be employed for diverse purposes in varying guises and different contexts, not all sectors of the public administration in Albania are affected by corruption to the same extent. There are certain types of public official that seek bribes more frequently than others, while there are certain procedures and situations in which beneficiaries of public services are more prone to making offers to public officials in order to reduce red tape and finalize proceedings.

According to the experience of citizens who paid at least one bribe in the 12 months prior to the survey, the public officials who receive most kickbacks in Albania are doctors (71% of citizens with recent corruption experience give bribes to doctors), nurses (47%), police officers (14%) and car registration officers (8%) (figure 9). Other types of public officials receive a smaller percentage of bribes, ranging from municipal elected representatives (1%) to land registry officers (7%).

Figure 9: Percentage distribution of bribe-payers who paid to selected types of public officials, Albania (2010)

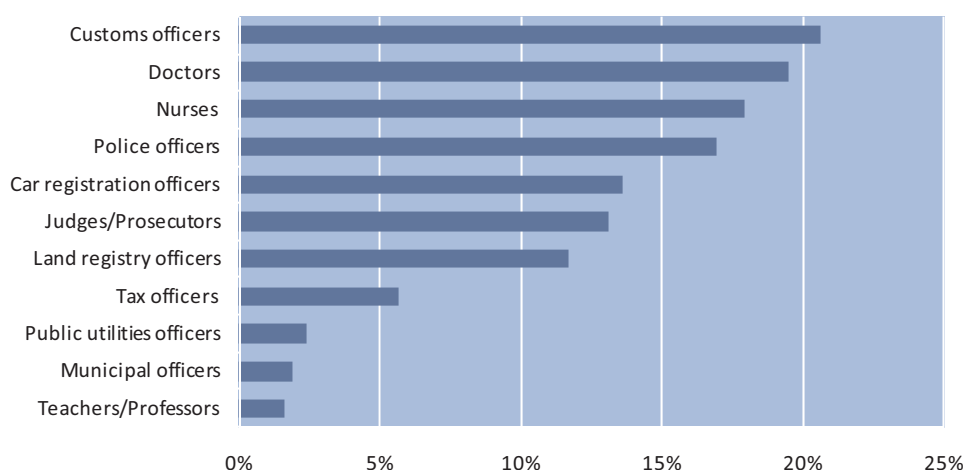


Note: The sum is higher than 100 per cent since bribe-payers could have made payments to more than one public official in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Type of settlement can also have an impact on the type of official involved in acts of bribery. For example, more citizens from urban than from rural areas pay bribes to police officers (16% vs. 12%) and car registration officers (11% vs. 6%). Meanwhile, doctors are more often recipients of kickbacks or gifts in rural areas than in urban areas: 75 per cent of bribe-payers in rural areas make at least one such payment to doctors, respectively, in comparison with 68 per cent in urban areas

To some extent, it is unsurprising that public officials with a high level of interaction with the public also receive the highest number of bribes. However, there are some positions in the public administration, such as in the judiciary or customs service, where the frequency of interaction with citizens is certainly more limited but where bribery experiences are still a recurrent problem. For this reason, it is useful to analyse not only which types of officials account for the greatest numbers of bribe receipts but also the probability of a particular type of official receiving a bribe when he or she is contacted – independently from the frequency of interactions. To measure this, the number of citizens who paid a bribe to a selected type of public official is compared with the number of citizens who had contacts with that type of official in the 12 months prior to the survey. Figure 10 shows bribery prevalence rates calculated as the percentage of people who paid a bribe to a selected type of public official over those who had a contact with the same type of public official.

Figure 10: Prevalence of bribery for selected types of public officials receiving the bribe, Albania (2010)



Note: Prevalence of bribery is calculated as the number of adult citizens (aged 18-64) who gave a public official some money, a gift or counter favour on at least one occasion in the 12 months prior to the survey, as a percentage of adult citizens who had at least one contact with a public official in the same period. In this chart prevalence of bribery is computed separately for each type of public official.

This indicator shows that the highest average prevalence rates are recorded for custom officers (21%), doctors (20%) and nurses (18%). Moreover, a relatively high value is registered for police officers, car registration officers and judges/prosecutors, indicating that they also request the payment of bribes with a certain frequency from the citizens with whom they deal. The values presented in figure 10 are particularly relevant for identifying occupations where the risk of bribery is higher.

Figure 11: Average number of bribes paid to selected public officials, Albania (2010)

Note: The average number of bribes refers to average number of bribes given by all bribe-payers, i.e. those who paid at least one bribe in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Another important indicator of the extent of bribery among selected public officials is the frequency of payments. Figure 11 shows the average number of bribes given by bribe-payers to selected public officials, with nurses, for example, receiving almost three bribes from each bribe-payer and doctors receiving almost two and a half.

The analysis of data relating to the last incident when a citizen paid a bribe reveals that different types of public official are paid kickbacks for quite different reasons (see figure 12). For example, police officers are given bribes mostly to avoid or reduce payments of fines, while doctors and nurses are given money or gifts to receive better treatment and information, both crucial aspects in the use of health services and facilities. Bribes to customs officers are, on the whole, also paid to accelerate or finalize an otherwise lengthy or complex procedure or avoid the payment of a fine. The category of judges and prosecutors is the only one that is paid only with the purpose of speeding up the procedure in 100 per cent of cases. This shows that not only do the numerous administrative procedures and services carried out in the public sector have different features, they also have weaknesses for which bribery is often used as a remedy. The precise analysis and resolution of any such deficiencies and failings would no doubt represent a powerful preventative measure against corruption.

Modalities of bribe-paying to different types of public official also show the diverse nature of payments made to them (see figure 13). In the case of doctors and nurses, for example, bribes are paid after the service in the majority of cases, while payments are offered by citizens only in less than a third of cases. Bribes given to Judges/prosecutor are always asked by someone and never offered spontaneously by citizens. In the case of customs officers, bribes are often asked by somebody and rarely paid after the service; a significant share of bribes to customs officers are paid in kind, most often with valuables.

It should be noted, however, that Albanian citizens do not always agree to the payment of bribes in order to facilitate or benefit from a particular administrative procedure. As shown in chapter 1, for every three citizens who pay a bribe there is one who refuses to do so and turns down the request made by a public official. Figure 14 shows that doctors and municipal officers are two types of civil servant whose bribery requests are often declined: among those citizens who turn down bribe requests, 29 per cent have been personally asked to pay a bribe by a doctor, 10 per cent by a municipal officer and 8 per cent by a teacher/lecture or a public utilities officer.

Figure 12: Percentage of bribes paid to selected types of public officials by purpose of payment, Albania (2010)

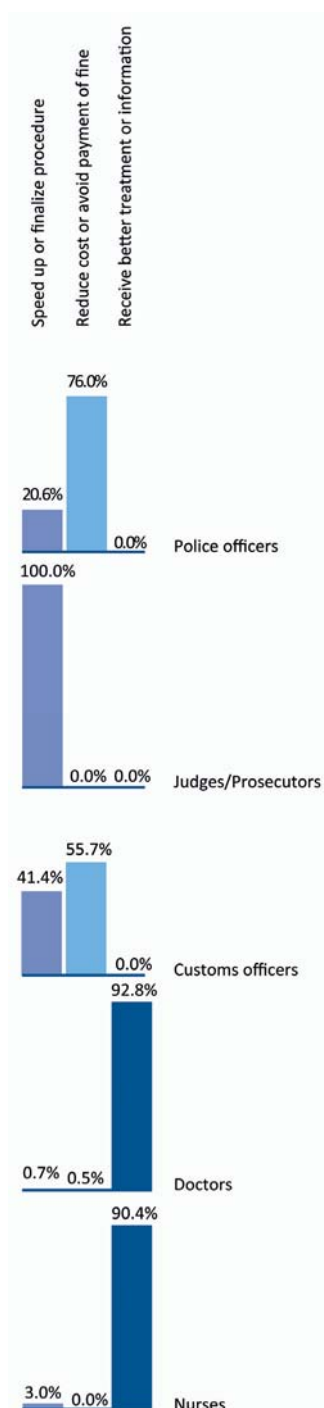
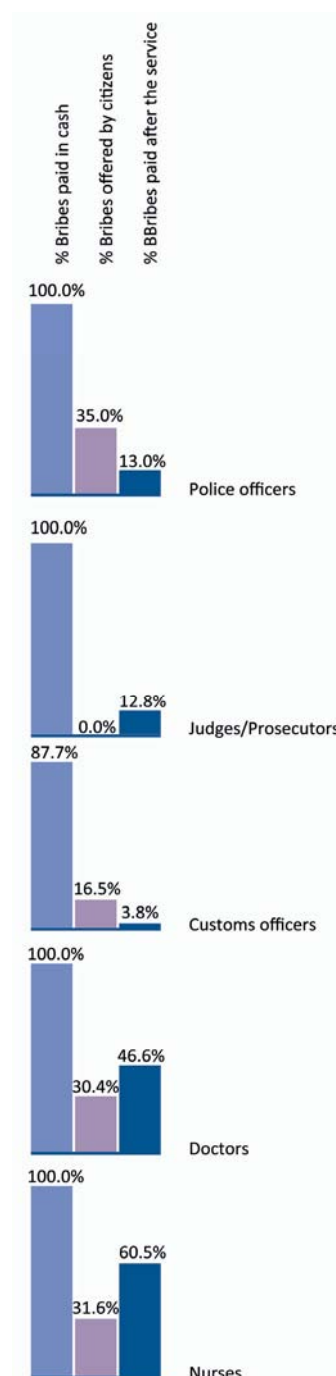


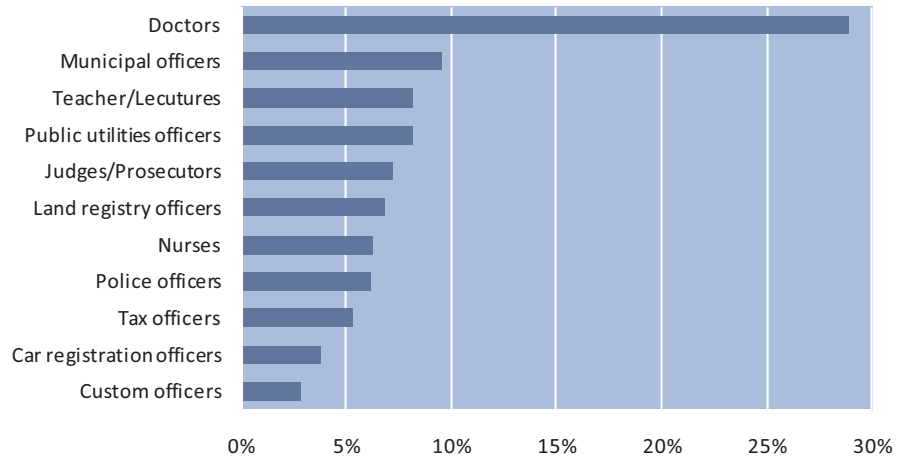
Figure 13: Three indicators for bribes paid to selected types of public officials: percentage of bribes paid in cash, of bribes offered by citizens; and of bribes paid after service delivery, Albania (2010)



Note: Data refer to the last bribe paid by each bribe-payer in the 12 months prior to the survey.



Figure 14: Percentage distribution of adult population refusing payment of bribe in the 12 months prior to the survey by type of public official requesting the bribe, Albania (2010)



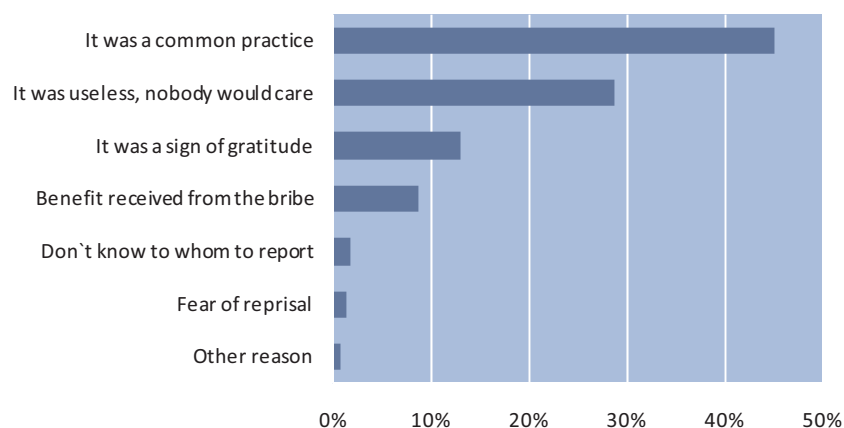


4. REPORTING OF BRIBERY

In general terms, the extent to which a crime is reported to the authorities by its victims is directly proportional to the combined effect of three factors: the perceived gravity of the crime experienced; faith in the authorities' resolve to identify the culprits; and the immediate benefit the victim can draw from reporting the crime (events covered by insurance, for example).

According to the results of this survey, less than 1 per cent of bribe-payers report their experience to the authorities, thus indicating that none of the above factors is currently playing a role in shaping reporting patterns on bribery.

Figure 15: Percentage distribution of bribe-payers not reporting their personal bribery experience to authorities according to the most important reason for not reporting, Albania (2010)



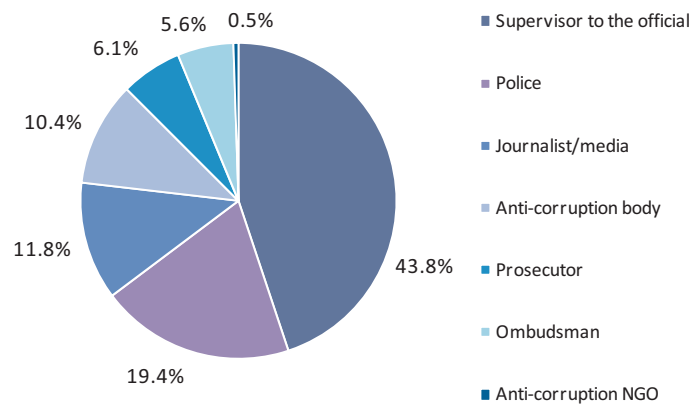
Note: Data refer to bribe-payers who did not report their last bribe paid in the 12 months prior to the survey to authorities/institutions.

When looking at the most important reasons for not reporting a personal experience of bribery, the major part of bribe-payers say that the payment of bribes is a common practice in

their country (45%). An important share of those who pay a bribe (29%) candidly admit that reporting would be pointless as nobody would do anything about it. Other citizens do not file a complaint to authorities since they actually receive benefit from paying the bribe so there would be no point in reporting it (9%) or simply they perceive it as a positive practice (13% say it is only a sign of gratitude). Data show that factors such as the fear of reprisals or insufficient knowledge and awareness of the authorities responsible for processing citizens' complaints cannot be considered important motivations for explaining the low reporting rate (figure 15)

Bribery experience may not usually be reported to the authorities but bribe-payers do share their experiences with people they know. The totality of citizens with bribery experience (100%) discuss it with friends or family but such talk does not go beyond the group of immediate acquaintances and nobody discuss the bribe paid with others or groups who may subsequently spread the word, such as NGOs or journalists.

Figure 16: Percentage distribution of adult population according to institutions indicated for future reports of bribery incidents, Albania (2010)



As stated above, very few citizens resort to the authorities to disclose their experience. Useful indications on how to increase reporting rates can be obtained from preferences expressed by citizens on the agency/official they would address in future if they had to report a bribery experience. As figure 16 shows, almost 45 per cent would approach the supervisor of the corrupt official, the police (19%), while another 12 per cent would report the episode to journalists and another 10 per cent to the anti-corruption body. Increasing the range of possible recipients of bribery complaints could be a strategy to improve reporting rates, with special attention to soft-agents, such as supervisor of the official, anti-corruption agency or ombudsman.



5. OTHER FORMS OF CORRUPTION

In addition to bribery related to public service delivery, Albanian citizens were asked about certain behaviours and practices in public sector recruitment.

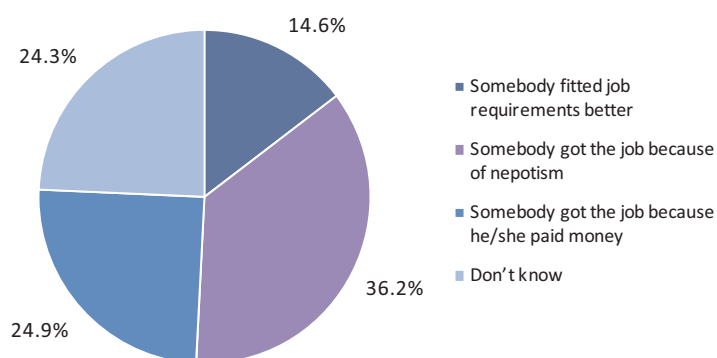
As well as being providers of myriad vital services to the population, public sector institutions jointly make up the largest single employer in any given country. Although decreasing significantly in recent years, the share of the workforce employed in the public sector in Albania is around 20 per cent according to recent ILO estimates⁸. Due to the sheer size and importance of the public administration, departments/agencies need to hire new staff on a regular basis. The recruitment process is usually regulated in order to ensure transparency, and new staff is normally selected on the basis of criteria such as competence and experience. But, according to survey results, it appears that other factors also come into play, such as nepotism, cronyism or even bribery.

In all countries job opportunities in the public sector are usually attractive to job seekers, not only for the nature of the work itself but also for the advantages typical of employment in the public administration, such as job security, associated social status and fair remuneration. In this sense, Albania is no exception and, according to the results of this survey, some 16 per cent of citizens or members of their households applied for a job in the public sector in the three years prior to the survey, of whom 25 per cent actually secured a job. Of those who were successful, 9 per cent admit paying money, giving a gift or doing a favour in order to be hired.

Data show that recruitment procedures in Albania's public sector suffer from some lack of transparency, at least in the opinion of applicants who were not recruited: as shown in figure 19, more than one third of those who did not get a job think that somebody else was employed due to cronyism or nepotism (36%), while an additional 25 per cent believe that somebody else was hired due to bribery. Only 15 per cent believe that somebody else better fitted the job requirements (figure 17). It should be remembered that these are only perceptions and do not necessarily reflect the real importance of such factors; however they express a negative opinion about recruitment practices and it is well known that certain expectations can also influence actual behaviours.

⁸ According to recent ILO estimates, the share of workforce in the public sector is 18.8 per cent in Albania (2005)

Figure 17: Percentage distribution of adult population who applied for a job in the public sector in the three years prior to the survey and were not hired according to perceived reason for not being recruited, Albania (2010)



Note: Data refer to adult population (aged 18-64) who applied for a job in the public service in the 3 years prior to the survey and who were not recruited.

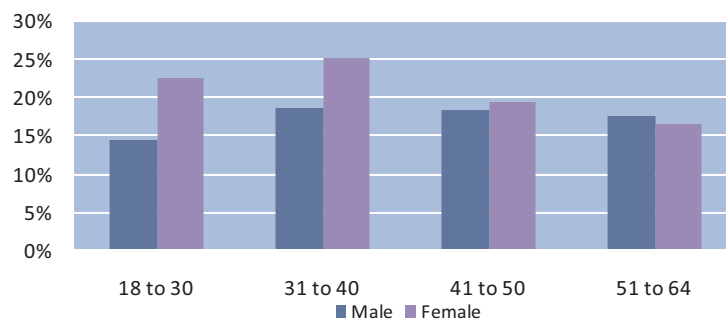


6. VULNERABILITIES TO BRIBERY

By definition, two parties play a role in an act of bribery, one giving and the other receiving a payment, gift or counter favour, though, as seen in previous chapters, on occasion a third person may act as an intermediary. Less clear is the identity of the victim: sometimes it is the bribe-payer, particularly when left with no choice but to pay in order to access a service, but in other cases the agreement between the two parties, whether explicit or implicit, is made at the expense of a third party, be it a specific individual, group or the community at large. Such blurred boundaries mean that any light, however faint, that can be shed on the features and characteristics of bribe-payers may be of assistance in developing anti-corruption policies and in assessing the impact of bribery.

In general terms, the demographic and socio-economic features of the bribe-paying population of Albania closely match those of the population as a whole, though some distinctive characteristics can be noted. For example, the prevalence of bribery is higher among female citizens than male citizens (21.3% vs. 17%), women in their thirties are those most exposed to bribery and the probability of being confronted with bribe requests decreases with age (figure 18).

Figure 18: Prevalence of bribery in Albania, by age groups and sex (2010)



Note: Prevalence of bribery is calculated as the number of adult citizens (aged 18-64) who gave a public official some money, a gift or counter favour on at least one occasion in the 12 months prior to the survey, as a percentage of adult citizens who had at least one contact with a public official in the same period.

There are, however, noteworthy differences in vulnerability between men and women in Albania when looking at the type of official receiving a bribe. The pattern that presents a higher number of women involved in acts of corruption is still the most common, but for example, the prevalence rate in relation to police officers is 19.1 per cent for men but 12.9 per cent for women and in relation to car registration officers it is 17.4 per cent for men but only 6 per cent for women.

The prevalence rate in relation to police officers is higher in urban areas than in rural areas (10.6% vs. 7.1%), while the opposite can be observed for doctors (5.5% urban vs. 8.5% rural). And when analyzing payments to certain types of official by age groups of bribe-payers, the likelihood of paying a police officer is highest in the youngest age group (18 to 30) surveyed and decreases with age. The prevalence rate in relation to police officers also increases with the level of household income, but when looking at characteristics such as education level or activity status no clear patterns emerge.

In general, administrative bribery appears to affect the different social strata without establishing a clear pattern. It is a pragmatic practice employed when a problem needs solving or a bureaucratic bottleneck needs clearing and the better off can afford the payment of larger bribes in order to do so, but no social group appears to be exempt from such activities.



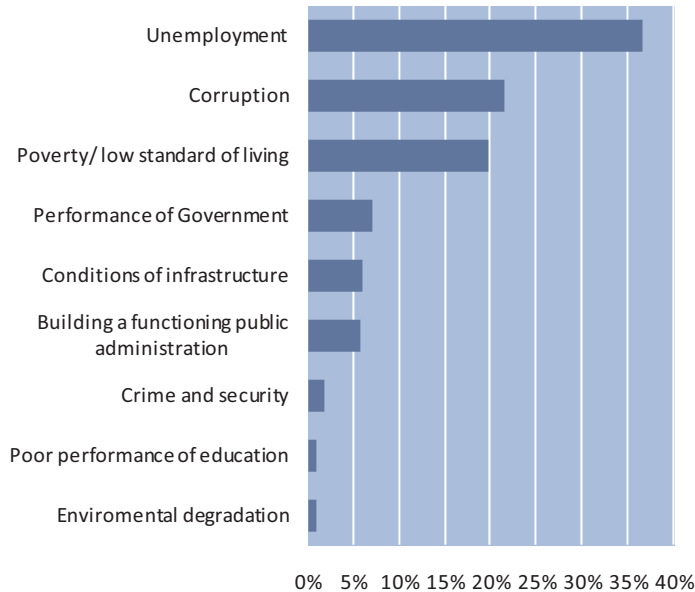
7. PERCEPTIONS AND OPINIONS ABOUT CORRUPTION

The perception of a certain phenomenon can be seen as the result of a process in which a piece of information, be it based on a direct or indirect experience, is processed and evaluated by any given person. Citizens' opinions about corruption are, therefore, the final outcome of a complex process and the type of information available to them is the first factor influencing their opinion. The media usually plays a major role in shaping public perceptions when, for instance, it focuses on specific episodes of corruption while neglecting others. And the same information can be interpreted in different ways by different people, depending on their culture, values, socio-economic status, occupation and other variables.

Perceptions of corruption, then, do not measure corruption per se, but instead measure the psychological impact of corruption on the population. This survey focuses on actual experiences of petty corruption but understanding how corruption is perceived by citizens is important in assessing the likelihood of corrupt practices occurring: the greater the perception of corruption, the greater the probability that certain practices will persist and develop further. If it is anticipated that the payment of a bribe is required to get something done, it is more likely that the bribe will be either requested or offered. Corrupt practices, including bribery, foster perceptions about corruption and those perceptions, in turn, foster corruption.

As already stated, according to the findings of this survey, the citizens of Albania believe that corruption is one of the biggest problems facing their countries today: they rank it the second most important issue to be addressed at national level after unemployment (figure 19).

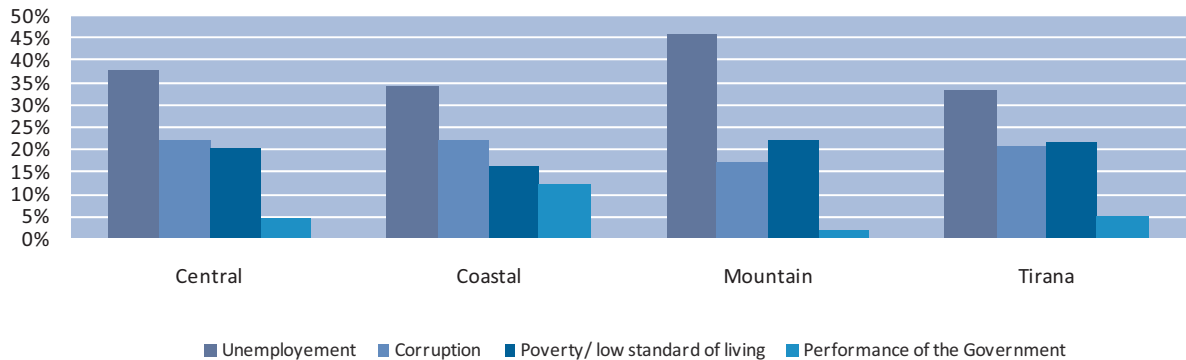
Figure 19: Percentage distribution of adult population considering selected issues as the most important in Albania (2010)



Unemployment is understandably rated the most important issue but corruption is actually ranked higher than issues such as poverty and the performance of the Government or even crime and security.

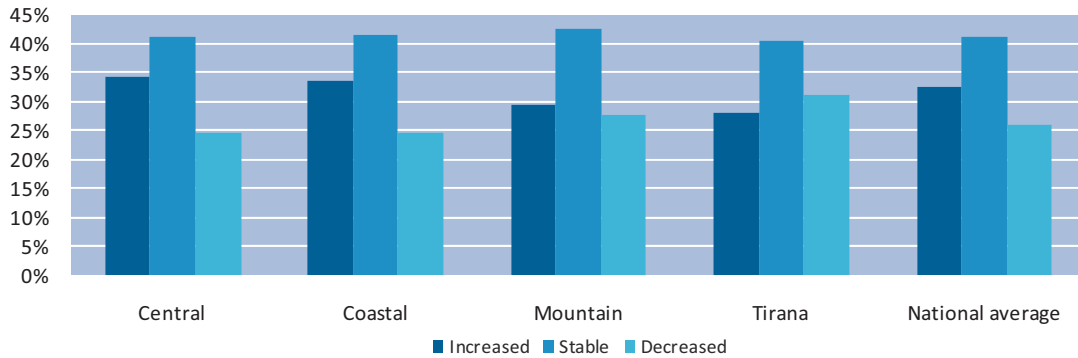
On a sub-national level, corruption is perceived to be the second most important problem in the Central and Coastal regions, while the third in Mountain and Tirana regions.(figure 20).

Figure 20: Percentage of adult population considering selected issues as the most important in Albania, by region (2010)



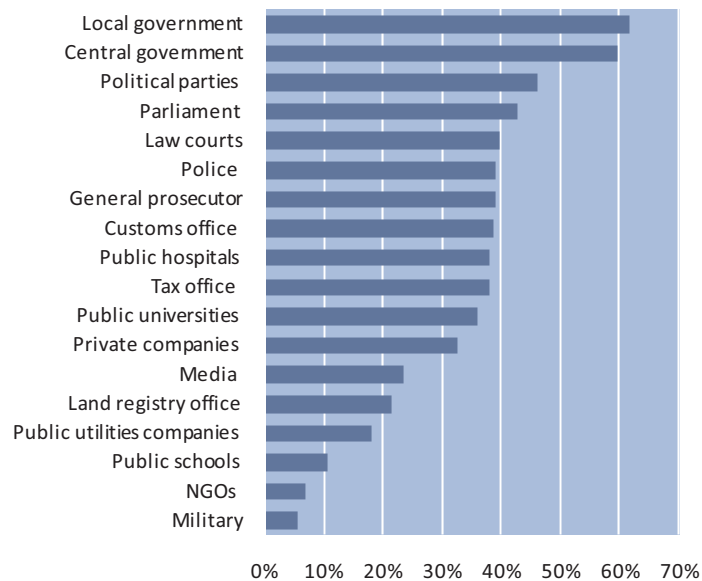
Another perspective to take into consideration when evaluating perceptions is whether corruption is perceived to be decreasing or increasing over time. As figure 21 shows, one third of Albanian citizens believe corruption to be on the rise in their country (although it must be reiterated that perceptions about time trends are different from actual bribery experience and are also different from opinions about corruption compared with other topics), while a large share of citizens perceive corruption as stable (41%). Variations between regions are quite limited in relation to this question: only Tirana region presents a relatively high proportion of citizens perceiving corruption as decreasing (31%).

Figure 21: Percentage distribution of adult population according to perceived trends of corruption in Albania in the three years prior to the survey, at regional level (2010)



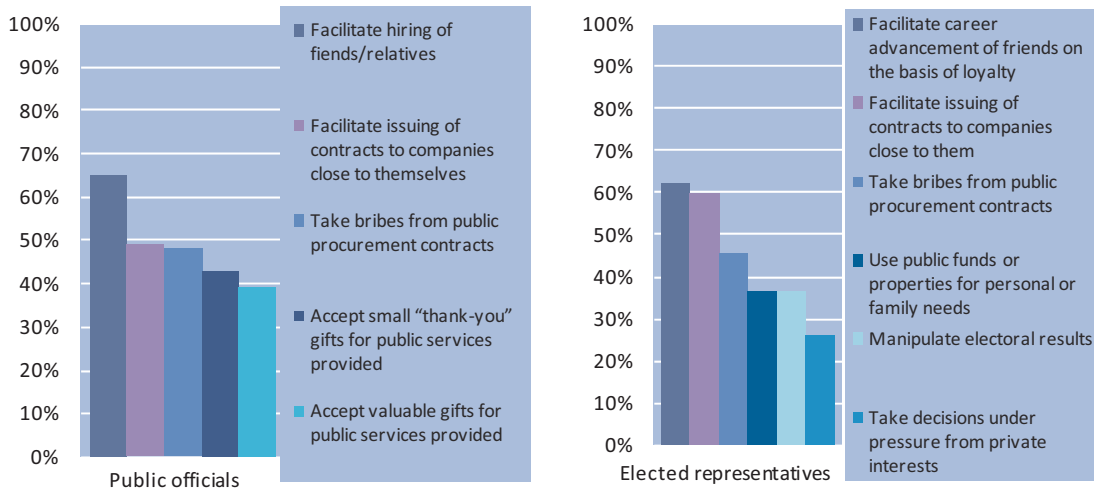
Several institutions or sectors are perceived to be permeated by corruption to a significant extent. Figure 22 shows that a significant, though variable, share of the population believes that corrupt practices occur often or very often in those institutions selected, with the military, NGOs and public schools among the organizations perceived to be more immune to corruption. On the other end of the scale, citizens put less trust in the integrity of local and central governments, political parties and the Parliament.

Figure 22: Percentage of adult population who consider that corrupt practices occur often or very often in selected sectors/institutions in Albania (2010)



These evaluations of the perception of corruption play an important role in helping stakeholders to learn about citizens' trust in institutions and their perceptions about the integrity of various crucial bodies in the public service. In addition to the findings about the sectors perceived to be corrupt, it is highly relevant to see which practices are perceived to be corrupt and to which procedures they relate (figure 23).

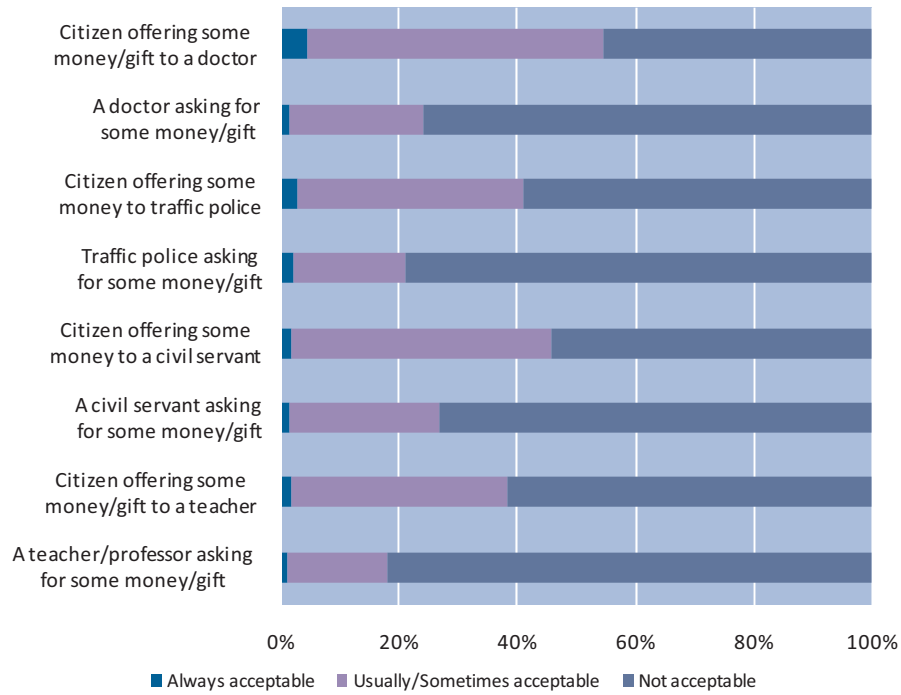
Figure 23: Percentage of adult population who perceive that selected malpractices occur often or very often, respectively among public officials and elected representatives in Albania (2010)



Certain malpractices, such as the hiring of friends and relatives and the issuing of contracts to certain companies, are perceived to happen on a frequent basis among public officials. Facilitate career of friends and facilitate the issuing of contracts to certain companies are malpractices that are perceived as the most important among elected representatives. A large share of the adult population of Albania perceives that all these malpractices occur on a regular basis. The manipulation of electoral results is also perceived to happen often or very often by almost 40 per cent of citizens..

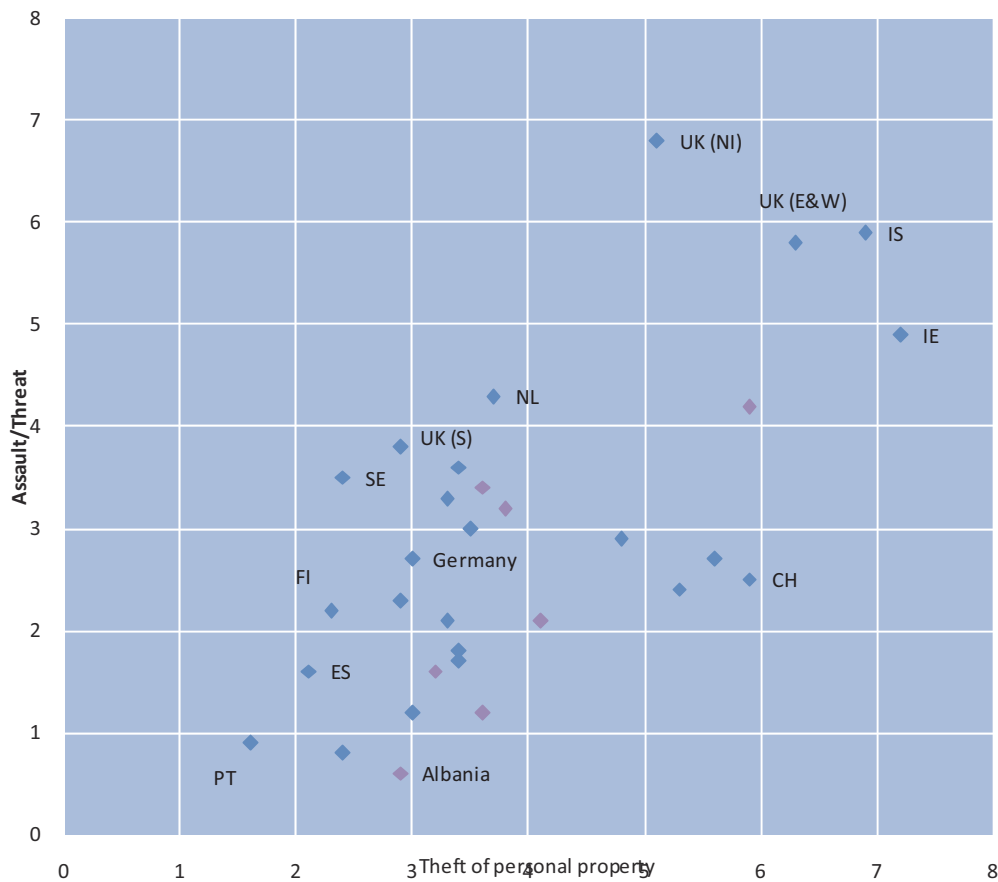
In addition to the perception of the extent of some behaviours, it is also important to understand to what point such practices are considered acceptable by the population as it is possible that the frequency of certain practices has the effect of making people consider such behaviours to be acceptable. Data presented in figure 24 indicate that for most citizens the various acts listed are not considered acceptable, though some nuances do exist and it appears that some behaviours are more acceptable than others. Moreover, the act of a citizen offering some money or a gift to a public official is usually more tolerated than the request actually made by a public official.

Figure 24: Percentage distribution of adult population in Albania according to acceptability of certain practices among selected public officials (2010)



As shown in figure 25, the annual prevalence rates of personal theft (2.9%), burglary (1.5%), assault/threat (0.6%), car theft (0.4% of all households who have owned a car in the past five years - this corresponds to 0.1% of all households) and robbery (0.3%) are substantially lower than for bribery (19.3%). When considering these figures in an international perspective, it is evident that the victimization experience of the citizens of Albania is fairly low compared to those recorded in other European countries. This is visualized in figure 26, where prevalence rates of assault and theft recorded in Albania and other countries of the western Balkan region are shown jointly with the most recent data available in a number of other European countries. Data indicate that the risk of victimization is comparatively low in terms of the share of the population being victim to two typical crimes, one against property (theft) and the other against the person (assault).

Figure 26: Annual prevalence rates of theft and assault/threat in western Balkan countries/areas and selected other European countries (2010 and most recent year)



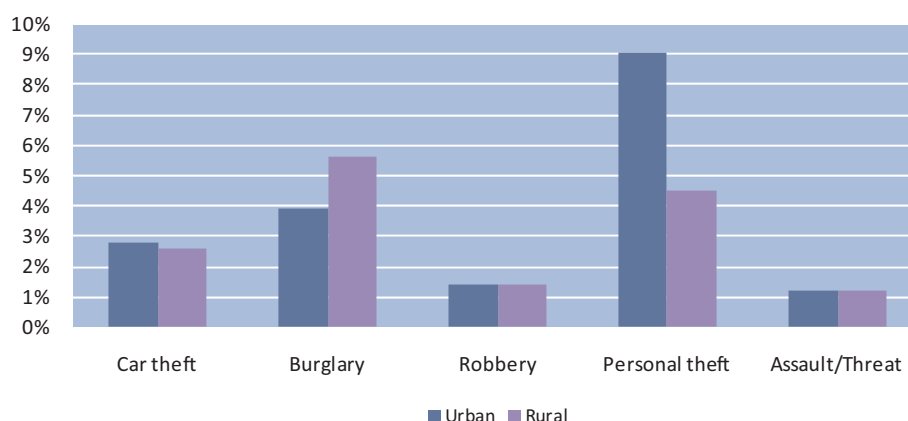
Note: Figures for other European countries are taken from the European Survey on Crime and Safety (EU-ICS) and the International Crime Victim Survey (ICVS) and refer to the year before survey conducted in 2004/2005. Source: WODC (2007), Criminal Victimization in International Perspective.

A similar pattern appears when considering the share of the population that experienced at least one incident of a particular crime in the five years prior to the survey⁹: Five year prevalence rates confirm the relative importance of personal theft (6.8%) and burglary (4.8%) risks among the Albanian population, while they place the prevalence of assault/threat (1.2%) now behind the prevalence of car theft (2.7%) and robbery (1.4%). Looking at differences

⁹ This indicator (i.e. five year prevalence rates) yields larger sub-samples which can produce statistically significant estimates for further breakdowns of data, such as by region, urban/rural settlement, sex, etc

between urban and rural areas, it is notable that the risk of being victim to car theft, robbery and assault/threat is almost equal in urban and non-urban areas, while five year prevalence rates for theft are substantially higher in urban areas and five year prevalence rates for burglary are considerably higher in rural areas (figure 27).

Figure 27: Five-year prevalence rates for selected types of crime in urban/rural areas, Albania (2010)



Note Prevalence rates for personal theft, assault/threat, robbery and burglary are respectively calculated as the number of adult citizens experiencing each of these crimes in the five years prior to the survey, as a percentage of the total adult population (age 18-64); the prevalence rate for car theft is calculated as the number of households who experienced one car, van or truck theft in the 5 years prior to the survey, as a percentage of households owning a car, van or truck.

When looking at territorial distribution, a more differentiated picture emerges. The inhabitants of the Tirana area are clearly affected by the highest levels of crime victimization for the four crime types listed, with the exception of burglary where the rate is exactly average. Inhabitants of the Central region face above average victimization risks for burglary and robbery only, while inhabitants of the Mountain region face comparatively high risks for theft and assault/threat. The inhabitants of the coastal region face below average victimization risks for all four crime types (table 2).

Table 2: Five-year prevalence rates for different types of crime by region, Albania (2010)

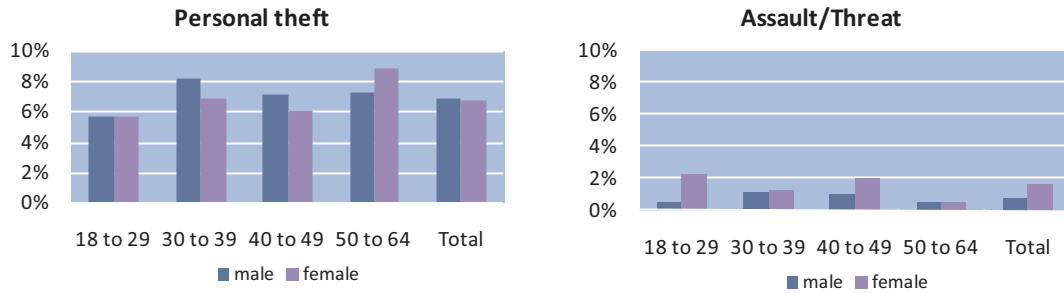
	Regions				National average
	Central	Coastal	Mountain	Tirana	
Personal theft	4.7	4.4	9.4	14.9	6.8
Burglary	5.4	4.6	1.9	4.8	4.8
Assault/threat (personal)	1.1	1.0	1.3	1.7	1.2
Robbery (personal)	1.5	0.6	0.6	3.0	1.4
Car theft	2.8	3.2	3.0	1.9	2.7

Note Prevalence rates for personal theft, assault/threat, robbery and burglary are respectively calculated as the number of adult citizens experiencing each of these crimes in the five years prior to the survey, as a percentage of the total adult population (age 18-64); the prevalence rate for car theft is calculated as the number of households who experienced one car, van or truck theft in the 5 years prior to the survey, as a percentage of households owning a car, van or truck.

Over a five year period, women face a significantly higher risk of becoming victim to assault/threat than men (1.6% vs. 0.7%), and also have a somewhat higher robbery risk than men (1.5% vs. 1.3 %), while the chances of women and men to become victims to theft are about equal (6.7% vs. 6.8% for men). At the same time there are also age-specific variations (figure 28): Persons belonging to the oldest age group (50-64 years) face the highest risk of

becoming victim to theft, while persons in the youngest age group (18-29 years) face the lowest risk. The contrary is true for victimization by assaults/threats. At 1.5 percent, the five-year risk of becoming victim to assaults/threats for 18-29 year old (as well as for 40-49 year old) is three times the risk for 50-64 year old (0.5%). Young women as well as women in their forties seem to be targeted most.

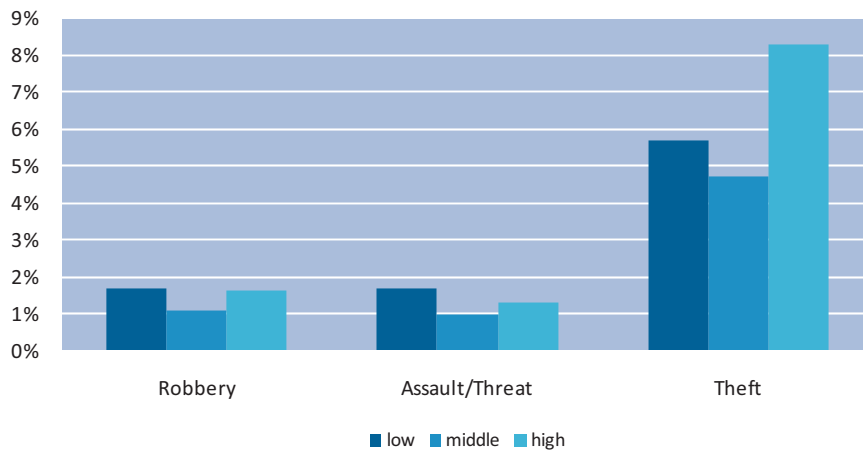
Figure 28: Five-year prevalence rates of assault/threat and personal theft by age groups and sex, Albania (2010)



Note Prevalence rates for personal theft and assault/threat are calculated as the number of adult citizens experiencing each of these crimes in the five years prior to the survey, as a percentage of the total adult population (age 18-64)

When considering further characteristics of crime victims, it appears that individuals from the highest income group also face the highest risk of falling victim to personal theft, followed by individuals from the lowest income group. However, individuals from the lowest income group have a higher risk of robbery as well as of assault/threat than either middle or high income groups (figure 29).

Figure 29: Five-year prevalence rates for selected crimes by income group, Albania (2010)



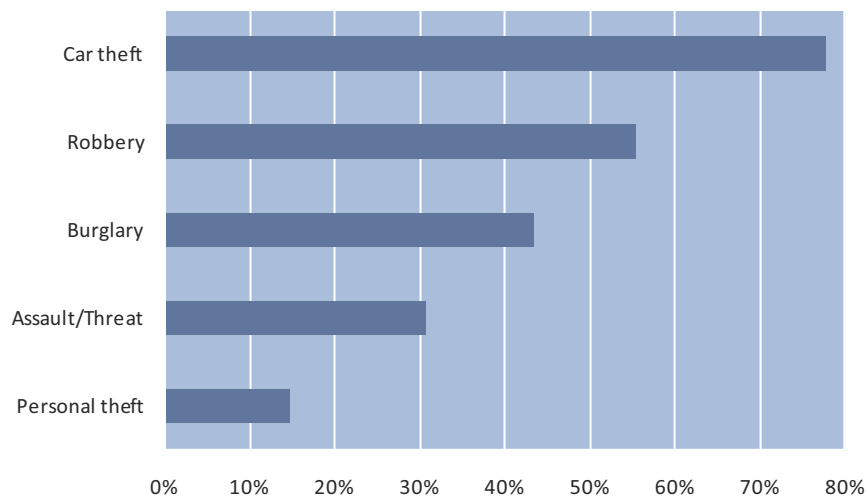
Note Prevalence rates for robbery, personal theft and assault/threat are calculated as the number of adult citizens experiencing each of these crimes in the five years prior to the survey, as a percentage of the total adult population (age 18-64)

An important feature of crimes and of their impact on victims is their level of violence, and the use of weapons by offenders represents a direct indication of that level. Prevalence rates for violent crimes such as robberies and assaults are moderate in Albania and in about 80% of all cases they are conducted without guns or knives. Only in a minority of cases are they perpetrated under the threat of arms such as knives (some 13% for robbery and 6% for assault) or guns (some 3% for robbery, 5% for assault).

Reporting of crime

Various factors, including the level of violence, have an impact on the willingness of victims to report crimes to the police. (figure 30). Car theft is reported to the police in about 78 per cent of cases, for reasons of insurance and de-registration. In addition, crimes are more frequently reported the greater the amount of damage or psychological trauma suffered. Robbery is reported to the police, on average, in some 55 per cent of cases, with a greater tendency to report by women (65% vs. 43% for men) and a higher reporting rate when significant damage occurs and when a gun or a knife is used in the robbery. Burglary is reported in about 43 per cent of all cases, with a significantly higher reporting rate in urban areas (49% vs. 40% in rural areas) and when something is actually stolen. Less than one third (31%) of all incidents of assault/threat are reported to the police, with a higher tendency to report by men (35%) compared to women (29%). Finally, personal theft is reported in only around 15 per cent of cases, with men reporting somewhat more frequently (17%) than women (13%).

Figure 30: Percentage of victims of selected types of crime who reported their experience to authorities by type of crime, Albania (2010)

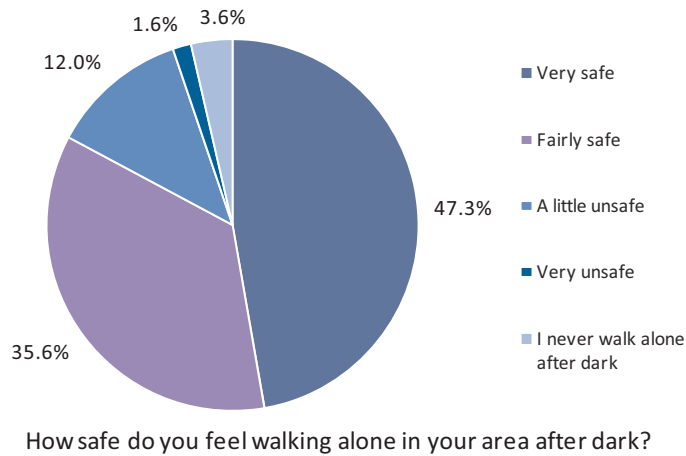


Note: Reporting rates refer to the latest case reported to the police in the 5 years prior to the survey.

Perceptions of safety from crime

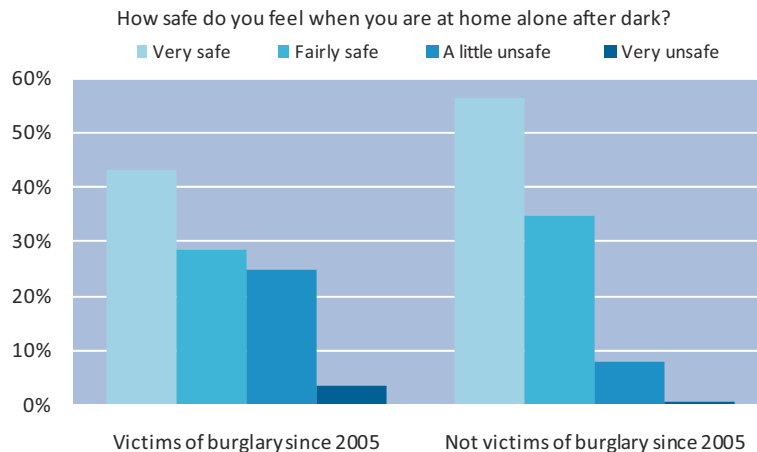
The incidence of assault and robbery might affect feelings of safety or fear in public spaces. One-year and five-year prevalence rates indicate that in Albania the risk of falling victim to a crime such as robbery, theft or personal assault is very moderate. Consequently, in Albania the great majority of the population – around 83 per cent of citizens – feel very or fairly safe walking alone after dark, with few differences between urban and rural areas (figure 31). As expected, men are less afraid than women (15.3 % of women feel a little and 2.1% feel very unsafe vs. only 8.3% and 0.9%, respectively, of men). Both younger men and younger women feel slightly safer than older age groups of the same sex. However, 9 per cent of women aged 18-29 and 7.8 per cent of women aged 30-39 never walk alone after dark compared to only 2.9 per cent of women aged 41-50 and 3.7 per cent aged 51-64. Less than 1 per cent of men of all age groups admit that they never walk alone after dark.

Figure 31: Percentage distribution of adult population according to feeling of safety, Albania (2010)



In total, almost 90 per cent of Albanian citizens, almost irrespective of age, feel safe at home alone after dark while 9 per cent of the population feel a little unsafe and only 1 per cent feel very unsafe. This notion is slightly more pronounced among the male population and residents of urban areas. For obvious reasons, respondents who fell victim to burglary in the five years prior to the survey are considerably more concerned about their safety than those who did not have such an experience. More than 28% of those who had been victims of burglary in the past five years felt a little or very unsafe, while only around 9 per cent of those who had not been victims of burglary felt unsafe (figure 32).

Figure 32: Percentage distribution of adult population according to feeling of safety, respectively for victims and non-victims of burglary, Albania (2010)

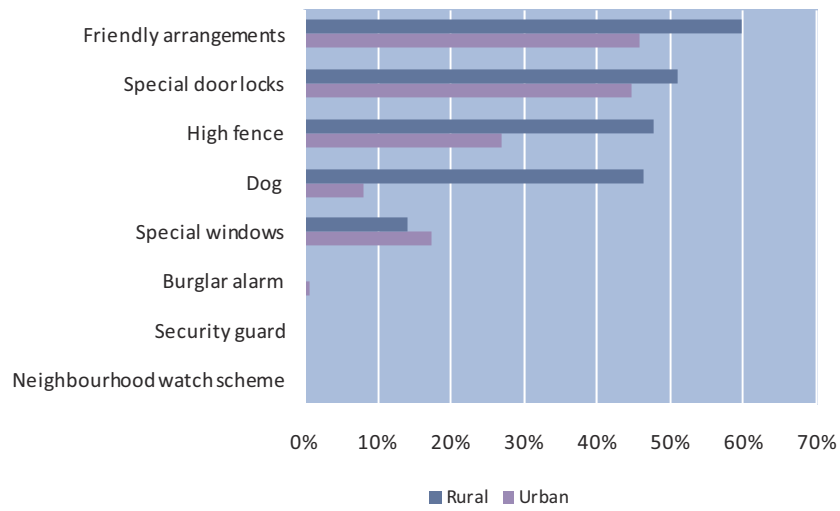


Despite the generally high levels of perception of safety, more than four-fifths of the population have installed some sort of safety measures for protecting their homes against burglary. However, many of the measures used can only provide some minimal measure of protection for the home. In fact, the most frequently used security measure in place is having friendly arrangements for watching a neighbour's home (52.7%), followed by special doorlocks (47.8%), a high fence around the house (37.5%) and keeping a dog (27.4%). All these protection measures are more frequently used in rural areas than in urban areas (figure 33). In addition, 15.8 per cent of households have installed special windows (17.4% in urban vs. 14.1% in rural areas), while less than 1 per cent of households have a burglar alarm. Formal



Neighbourhood watch schemes and security guards are virtually never used by private households in Albania.

Figure 33: Types of home protection used in rural and urban areas, Albania (2010)





9. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Corruption means different things to different people but for many it is a kind of spectre whose pernicious presence can be felt while its structure remains both intangible and impossible to delineate. Yet this report shows that, thanks to the analysis of the direct experience of bribery undertaken in the corresponding background surveys, it is possible to draw at least a partial profile of this particular phantom.

As in many other fields, both on the economic and social front, the data and analyses provided in this report are not to be used to score or rank the different regions of the country, or any selected sector or ministry, on a corruption scale but rather to help understand a complex issue and to assist policymaking in developing appropriate measures against it. To this end, the following elements could be retained for further consideration with a view to developing effective anti-corruption measures at national level:

- There is no single modus operandi for bribery and any particular one in force may vary depending on the specific purpose of the payment, the public official and the administrative procedure involved. Data indicate that established practices exist, and policies for fighting bribery, including preventive measures, need to take this into account. A full understanding of the mechanism of bribery will assist the Albanian authorities in developing a combined set of preventive and criminalization measures for fighting bribery in its various guises.
- Malpractice occurs on a regular basis in the performance and duties of public officials in Albania but some sectors appear to be more vulnerable to bribery than others. This obviously depends on the nature of the services provided but it also appears that certain practices are more established in certain sectors than in others. A better understanding of the reasons why bribes are paid and the identification of specific issues, such as the quality of services – for example, the reduction of health service waiting times or streamlining in the fining procedure – could assist in the implementation of specific measures. And sectors shown to be more vulnerable to bribery could undergo specific assessments in order to identify priority areas in need of specific support.
- An area of concern is the very low share of bribe-payers who file a complaint with the authorities. A thorough analysis of existing reporting channels could be considered in

order to make them more easily accessible, better known and, where necessary, more confidential. The information collected in this survey provides invaluable insights on how to improve such mechanisms.

- In general, corruption is not accepted by Albanian citizens –they voiced great concern about it in the survey– yet bribery appears to be tolerated as a tool for getting things done and receiving better treatment. A further assessment of public awareness about corruption could be considered and further initiatives might be developed to inform those who do not deem bribery to be on a par with “real” crimes, as well as to increase understanding about the pernicious effect that kickbacks have on the fair delivery of public services.
- Though still embryonic in nature, some of this survey’s findings touch on areas, such as public sector recruitment and vote-buying, which relate to the general provisions of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Further analysis of the vulnerabilities that have emerged could thus be undertaken forthwith.

This survey has been conducted in the framework of a regional programme to assess the actual experience of bribery in the western Balkan region. As such, it provides the possibility of having a comparative perspective on the extent, modality and nature of bribery in Albania and the other countries/areas of the region, thus giving added value in understanding this phenomenon. This is particularly true if such exercises can be repeated over time in order to monitor changes at national and regional level.

A monitoring system of corruption at national level should include a variety of tools for collecting evidence about its various manifestations and assisting policy-making:

- General assessments of the experience of bribery and other forms of corruption (both for the population at large and the business sector), for the purpose of providing benchmarks and measuring progress.
- Sectoral assessments of the working conditions and integrity of public officials by sector (health sector, judiciary, police, customs, etc.) for the purpose of providing more in-depth and specific information as well as assisting in identifying targeted policy measures.
- A system for monitoring the state response to corruption –both repressive and preventive measures– in order to identify successful and unsuccessful practices.

In Albania, various exercises have been conducted in these areas but further involvement of government agencies responsible for producing statistical data, relevant ministries and experienced research centres, with the support of international and regional organizations, will enable Albania to produce high quality and relevant information for fighting corruption more and more effectively.

As the data pertaining to the perception of corruption in this report reveal, public opinion about corruption in Albania shows a considerable level of concern about the issue. A window of opportunity is, therefore, open and it is likely that the citizens of Albania would warmly welcome the further implementation of anti-corruption policies.



10. METHODOLOGICAL ANNEX

Data presented in this report were collected in a sample survey representative of the resident population of Albania. This survey was part of a regional project in which independently administered surveys were conducted in the countries/areas of the western Balkan region. For Albania, the survey was conducted by the Albanian Institute of Statistics (INSTAT). The anonymity of respondents was protected in all stages of the survey, all questionnaires were treated confidentially and were not made available to any third party.

A core questionnaire and other survey tools were jointly developed by UNODC and its national partners to ensure common methodological standards and comparability of results. After translation into Albanian, the questionnaire was tested in a pilot survey in July and August 2010 and then finalized.

The survey was conducted in September/October 2010 through face-to-face interviews with randomly selected respondents. The target population was the resident population of Albania aged 18 to 64. A stratified two-stage with probability proportional to size sampling method was used: in the first stage the total population was stratified by territory (16 regions). Within each stratum enumeration areas were selected using probability proportional to size sampling (with number of households as auxiliary variable). In the second stage, households were selected via random sampling in sampled enumeration areas. Within selected households the person (aged 18 to 64) with the next birthday was selected as the survey respondent. The response rate for all contacts made during fieldwork was 72.7 per cent, resulting in a net sample size of 3,561 respondents.

Quality control measures were put in place both during and after the conduct of the interviews:

- fieldwork coordinators checked each questionnaire for errors and completeness
- back-checking by fieldwork coordinators was implemented for 10 per cent of interviews, either by phone or face to face
- data were captured using optical scanner (with controls in place)
- logic checks were conducted on the final dataset

Albania	
Responsible agency	Institute of Statistics of Albania (INSTAT)
Survey period	September – October 2010
Target population	Resident population of Albania, aged 18 to 64
Sample design	Stratified two-stage cluster Stratified by 16 geographical areas Enumeration areas within each stratum selected using probability proportional to size sampling (with number of households as auxiliary variable) Households selected randomly with replacement and with over-sampling for possible non-response
Respondent selection	Person (aged 18 to 64) with next birthday within selected household
Quality control measures	Fieldwork coordinators' check of each questionnaire Fieldwork coordinators back-checking by phone (sample of interviews) Automatic data capture using optical scanner (with controls in place) Logic checks conducted on final dataset
Net sample size	3,561
Response rate	72.7 per cent



11. STATISTICAL ANNEX

Table 1: Bribery indicators by region, Albania (2010)

	Regions				National average
	Central	Coastal	Mountain	Tirana	
Percentage of population having contacts to public administration	81.8%	72.3%	82.2%	87.3%	79.7%
Prevalence of bribery	23.2%	17.6%	12.3%	16.1%	19.3%
Average number of bribes	3.79	4.45	3.28	4.65	4.08
Average bribe ALL	5617	6334	6634	4641	5710
Average bribe Euro	43	48	50	35	43
Average bribe Euro-PPP	102	115	120	84	103

Table 2: Percentage distribution of bribes paid by type of payment, by region, Albania (2010)

Note: Data refer to the last bribe paid by each bribe-payer in the 12 months prior to the survey. The sum is higher than 100 per cent since, in some cases, bribes are paid in more than one form (for example, cash and food)

	Regions				National average
	Central	Coastal	Mountain	Tirana	
Cash	99.0%	100.0%	98.3%	100.0%	99.4%
Food and drink	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other goods	0.7%	0.5%	3.0%	0.0%	0.6%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 3: Percentage distribution of bribes paid by timing of payment in relation to service delivery, by urban/rural, sex and age, Albania (2010)

	Urban/Rural		Sex		Age			
	Urban	Rural	Male	Female	18 to 29	30 to 39	40 to 49	50 to 64
Before the service	37.8%	46.1%	42.0%	42.5%	45.3%	46.6%	36.9%	37.5%
After the service	39.6%	43.6%	43.3%	40.7%	39.5%	39.5%	35.9%	54.5%
At the same time	19.4%	8.7%	12.1%	14.7%	12.3%	12.6%	23.0%	7.2%
Partly before/partly after	3.2%	1.6%	2.6%	2.2%	2.9%	1.3%	4.1%	0.8%
Don't remember	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 4: Percentage distribution of bribes paid by modality of bribe request/offer, by urban/rural, sex and age, Albania (2010)

	Urban/Rural		Sex		Age			
	Urban	Rural	Male	Female	18 to 29	30 to 39	40 to 49	50 to 64
Public official made explicit request	9.7%	11.0%	8.2%	11.9%	12.7%	7.2%	9.6%	11.1%
Public official made implicit request	45.9%	64.6%	59.5%	53.5%	53.7%	60.9%	53.5%	56.4%
Third party made explicit request	4.3%	4.0%	5.0%	3.5%	3.6%	3.4%	1.7%	8.5%
Citizen made offer	40.1%	20.4%	27.3%	31.1%	30.0%	28.4%	35.2%	24.1%
Don't remember	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 5: Percentage distribution of bribes paid by purpose of bribe request/offer, by urban/rural, sex and age, Albania (2010)

	Urban/Rural		Sex		Age			
	Urban	Rural	Male	Female	18 to 29	30 to 39	40 to 49	50 to 64
Speed up procedure	7.5%	10.0%	7.6%	9.8%	7.7%	7.4%	8.4%	13.2%
Avoid payment of fine	7.7%	3.8%	6.8%	4.8%	4.4%	4.9%	6.1%	7.9%
Receive better treatment	1.6%	0.3%	2.1%	0.0%	0.5%	1.9%	0.8%	0.4%
Receive information	8.0%	9.1%	14.4%	4.5%	9.6%	6.3%	12.8%	5.4%
Finalization of procedure	68.4%	70.8%	60.6%	76.2%	70.8%	74.2%	68.3%	63.8%
Reduce cost of procedure	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Avoid other problems	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
No specific purpose	2.0%	3.7%	4.2%	2.1%	3.6%	2.9%	1.4%	3.5%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 6: Percentage distribution of bribe-payers who paid to selected types of public officials, by urban/rural and sex, Albania (2010)

	Urban/Rural		Sex	
	Urban	Rural	Male	Female
Police officers	15.7%	12.2%	24.3%	6.3%
Judges/Prosecutors	4.1%	5.6%	3.4%	6.0%
Land registry officers	10.4%	3.7%	9.0%	5.2%
Tax officers	4.2%	2.4%	4.7%	2.1%
Customs officers	3.2%	6.8%	5.3%	5.0%
Public utilities officers	8.1%	4.7%	7.5%	5.5%
Municipal officers	6.8%	2.4%	3.4%	5.2%
Doctors	67.6%	74.5%	69.2%	72.8%
Nurses	52.1%	43.3%	38.3%	53.8%
Teachers	5.8%	1.9%	1.5%	5.3%
Social protection officers	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
Car registration officers	10.7%	6.2%	17.1%	2.1%
Municipal elected representatives	1.2%	0.5%	0.4%	1.1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note: The sum is higher than 100 per cent since bribe-payers could have made payments to more than one public official in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Table 7: Percentage distribution of bribe-payers not reporting their personal bribery experience to authorities according to the most important reason for not reporting, by urban/rural and sex, Albania (2010)

	Urban/Rural		Sex	
	Urban	Rural	Male	Female
Common practice	40.0%	49.7%	43.4%	46.5%
Pointless, nobody would care	28.3%	29.1%	34.0%	25.0%
Don't know to whom to report	1.6%	2.1%	1.2%	2.3%
Fear of reprisals	1.8%	1.2%	1.2%	1.7%
benefit received from the bribe	10.9%	6.8%	9.4%	8.2%
Sign of gratitude	17.1%	9.7%	9.8%	15.5%
Other reason	0.4%	1.3%	1.0%	0.8%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 8: Percentage distribution of adult population recruited in the public sector in the three years prior to the survey who paid money, gave gifts or did favours to facilitate their recruitment, by regions, Albania (2010)

	Regions				National average
	Central	Coastal	Mountain	Tirana	
Yes	0.0%	11.1%	11.4%	14.9%	9.0%
No	92.8%	88.9%	88.6%	85.1%	89.0%
Don't know	7.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%
No answer	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Table 9: Percentage of adult population who consider that corrupt practices occur often or very often in selected sectors/institutions, by regions, Albania (2010)

	Regions				National average
	Central	Coastal	Mountain	Tirana	
Parliament	30.6%	37.3%	23.4%	33.1%	32.6%
Central government	37.6%	42.9%	29.6%	33.1%	37.9%
Local government	37.2%	41.6%	34.6%	41.7%	39.2%
Law court	56.4%	66.1%	54.3%	56.3%	59.4%
General prosecutor	38.0%	47.9%	41.3%	23.9%	39.0%
Police	50.6%	47.4%	31.9%	38.5%	46.0%
Military	5.5%	5.8%	6.3%	6.0%	5.7%
Tax office	33.7%	42.8%	35.8%	40.7%	38.1%
Customs office	37.3%	51.5%	44.3%	38.7%	42.7%
Public utilities companies	19.9%	22.2%	16.8%	26.1%	21.5%
Public hospitals	65.5%	59.4%	46.1%	62.7%	61.4%
Public schools	24.1%	22.6%	12.2%	29.8%	23.7%
Public universities	46.8%	33.9%	30.0%	37.5%	39.6%
Land registry office	28.2%	51.0%	20.2%	33.9%	36.0%
Private companies	10.7%	10.1%	14.3%	11.3%	10.9%
NGOs	5.9%	8.7%	4.9%	8.3%	7.2%
Political parties	34.6%	44.5%	34.6%	38.8%	38.5%
Media	17.1%	18.5%	15.1%	21.0%	18.1%

Table 10: Five-year prevalence rates for selected types of crime, by region, Albania (2010)

	Regions				National average
	Central	Coastal	Mountain	Tirana	
Robbery	1.5%	0.6%	0.6%	3.0%	1.4%
Personal theft	4.7%	4.4%	9.4%	14.9%	6.8%
Threat/Assault	1.1%	1.0%	1.3%	1.7%	1.2%
Car theft	2.8%	3.2%	3.0%	1.9%	4.8%
Burglary	5.4%	4.6%	1.9%	4.8%	2.7%

Table 11: Percentage of victims of selected crimes who reported their experience to authorities by type of crime, by regions, Albania (2010)

	Regions				National average
	Central	Coastal	Mountain	Tirana	
Robbery	62.9%	22.7%	64.6%	58.8%	55.5%
Personal theft	9.6%	8.6%	21.3%	20.0%	14.7%
Threat/Assault	30.2%	39.0%	44.2%	17.7%	30.7%
Car theft	72.1%	76.2%	46.3%	100.0%	77.6%
Burglary	40.4%	40.7%	37.8%	57.4%	43.4%

Table 12: Percentage distribution of adult population according to perceptions of safety, walking alone in neighbourhood after dark, by regions, Albania (2010)

How safe do you feel walking alone in your area (i.e. neighborhood or village) after dark?

	Regions				National average
	Central	Coastal	Mountain	Tirana	
Very safe	38.5%	57.4%	61.0%	43.1%	47.3%
Fairly safe	40.3%	31.5%	28.9%	35.0%	35.6%
A little unsafe	13.3%	9.4%	6.2%	16.6%	12.0%
Very unsafe	1.4%	1.1%	2.6%	2.4%	1.6%
I never walk alone after dark	6.5%	0.6%	1.4%	2.9%	3.6%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 13: Percentage distribution of adult population according to perceptions of safety, home alone after dark, by regions, Albania (2010)

How safe do you feel when you are home alone after dark?

	Regions				National average
	Central	Coastal	Mountain	Tirana	
Very safe	47.6%	64.6%	61.3%	54.3%	55.4%
Fairly safe	39.2%	27.9%	29.5%	38.1%	34.5%
A little unsafe	12.2%	6.3%	7.1%	7.6%	9.0%
Very unsafe	1.0%	1.2%	2.1%	0.1%	1.0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

16 September 2011

Corruption in Albania: Bribery as Experienced by the Population

Erratum

1. Page 49, first paragraph, third sentence

For Statistical Office of the Republic of Albania (SORS) *read* Albanian Institute of Statistics (INSTAT)

2. Page 49, second paragraph, last sentence

For June *read* July and August

3. Page 49, third paragraph, first sentence

For June/July *read* September/October

4. Page 49, third paragraph, first sentence

For (25 regions) and two types of settlement (urban and rural) *read* (16 regions)

5. Page 49, third paragraph, last sentence

For 70.1 per cent, resulting in a net sample size of 3,000 respondents *read* 72.7 per cent, resulting in a net sample size of 3,561 respondents

6. Page 49, bulletpoints, last sentence

After second bulletpoint *insert* data were captured using optical scanner (with controls in place)

7. Page 50, table entitled “Albania”

For the existing table *substitute*

Albania	
Responsible agency	Institute of Statistics of Albania (INSTAT)
Survey period	September – October 2010
Target population	Resident population of Albania, age group 18-64
Sampling design	Stratified two-stage cluster Stratified by 16 geographical areas Enumeration areas within each stratum selected using probability proportional to size sampling (with number of households as auxiliary variable) Households selected randomly with replacement and with over-sampling for possible non-response
Respondent selection	Person (aged 18-64) with next birthday within selected household
Quality control measures	Fieldwork coordinators’ check of each questionnaire Fieldwork coordinators back-checking by phone (sample of interviews) Automatic data capture using optical scanner (with controls in place) Logic checks conducted on final dataset
Net sample size	3,561
Response rate	72.7 per cent

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