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ALBANIAN SECURITY BAROMETER NATIONAL SURVEY



Center
for the Study
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and Governance

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STIFTUNG

Albanian Security Barometer National Survey 2020

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CSDG 2021

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List of Abbreviations

ASB	Albanian Security Barometer
CSDG	Center for the Study of Democracy and Governance
EU	European Union
FES	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
Instat	Institute of Statistics
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
SHISH	State Intelligence Service
SPAK	Special Anti-Corruption Structure

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Foreword

The Albanian Security Barometer 2020 provides important insights into citizens' perceptions of security. How safe do people feel? What types of threats do they perceive? This study is extremely valuable in that it does not merely analyse the risks themselves but rather how citizens identify them. If we want to understand the dynamics of security and discuss security policy options, it is not enough to examine statistics regarding security-related incidents. We need to engage with citizens' perceptions of threats and of the provision of security as a fundamental function of the state as they have a decisive impact on society and its development. If citizens do not feel safe, they tend to lose trust in the state, and thus in state institutions, democratic processes, mechanisms of redistribution and other basic elements of society.

If implemented correctly, security measures can create an enabling environment for active citizenship and allow for the full expression of civil liberties, as well as supporting participation and democratic mechanisms. At the same time, interventions justified by security needs can be detrimental. Even basic, legitimate security measures restrict citizens' freedom to some extent. However, if misused, they can become tools for stabilizing power structures that curtail democratic processes and liberties. Security policies must allow for a delicate balance of security (and the perception thereof) and a guarantee for fundamental democratic rights and liberties. Finding this balance requires deliberation involving both political decision-makers and civil society.

A singular event of 2020 affected citizens' perception and attitudes concerning security: the Covid-19 pandemic. This development has made even clearer that security is multidimensional and its perception depends on many different factors, including state capacities and the provision of public goods, as well as accessible and inclusive information and deliberation. Experiencing personal risks and those to one's environment – in this case, through the pandemic – may severely affect one's perception of security. This effect is magnified by a lack of support or protection in the case of an illness. This underlines that security provision is not only a question of armed or security forces but also one of the provision of different kinds of public goods, such as health care and social security, and one of trust in state institutions. This further shows how perceptions can be strongly influenced by how and what kind information is distributed. Conspiracy theories and misleading and false reporting can have dramatic impacts and demand specific intervention. 2020

has taught us important lessons about what security means and this report offers an excellent basis for further discussion.

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) Tirana is delighted to support this publication as we want to encourage such discussions and deliberation on the appropriate policy interventions and governmental reform strategies. Data and information have been collected and analysed to provide a resource for security policy dialogue and facilitate the development of comprehensive policies with the involvement of a broad range of societal actors. Civil society ought to have a strong role in this dialogue, insisting on a careful consideration of both security needs and fundamental liberties.

These deliberations ought to be an ongoing exercise as perceptions evolve as dynamically as risks and related actors themselves. Security questions are important from local to global scales. They are constantly developing under complex conditions. Important issues range from organized crime and the effects of corruption on the national level to international terrorism and an unstable global environment. These issues factor into citizens' perceptions and are recorded in this barometer, which, in its second edition, demonstrate changes over time.

We are grateful to Arjan Dyrmishi and his team at the Center for the Study of Democracy and Governance for their important and exceptional work. We are certain that the information in this barometer will inform ongoing debates on sustainable security policy, helping strengthen Albania's social fabric.

Stine Klapper

Head of Office, FES Tirana

Introduction

Security is a fundamental function of the state and one of the defining aspects of any democratic and law-based society. At the individual and community levels, a variety of security concerns shape people's perceptions and influence their everyday decision making. Similarly, international events and issues that affect security influence national policies and decision-making.

In a democratic system that builds on free elections and delegation of decision-making powers from citizens to public officials, soliciting and reflecting on the attitudes and opinions of citizens is a necessity, both for the design of security policies and for the assessment of their implementation and effectiveness.

For these reasons, the Center for the Study of Democracy and Governance has paid special attention to citizens' perceptions of security since 2019 when the first edition of the Albanian Security Barometer (ASB) was issued.

The ASB focuses on a wide range of security issues, contributing to better awareness among various social actors and improving public discourse on security policies in the long term.

The barometer highlights the attitudes and perceptions of the public opinion regarding internal and external security threats, the performance of security and justice institutions, and the importance and effectiveness of security-related policies, measures, and actions.

This second security barometer employed similar research questions to that of ASB 2019. However, given the unique implications of the Covid-19 pandemic, the barometer asked additional research questions to solicit and explore public perception and attitudes related to this new development.

- 1) What do citizens perceive as main security threats at different levels?
- 2) How satisfied are they with the performance of Albania's security and justice institutions in addressing the security threats and risks identified?
- 3) To what extent have security policies and measures met citizens' concerns and expectations?
- 4) What are the policies and approaches that citizens think would improve security?
- 5) What are citizens' perceptions of the integrity of security institutions?

- 6) How do citizens perceive the corruption and trustworthiness of security and justice institutions?
- 7) What are the perceptions of NATO and the EU in relation to Albania's security?
- 8) What are citizens' perceptions of the influence of friendly countries on Albania's security and those of countries vying for influence in the Balkan region?
- 9) How much do citizens support the establishment of new institutions to fight organized crime and what are their expectations?
- 10) What do citizens think of the oversight of security institutions?
- 11) What do citizens think of Albania's EU membership potential and how Albania is performing in meeting the EU conditions, particularly with regard to building a professional and independent public administration and fighting corruption and organized crime?
- 12) How do citizens see the security implications of the Covid-19 pandemic?

Methodology

Questionnaire

The questionnaire used for this survey is comprised of 90 multiple choice questions, of which 8 are demographic/geographic, and 2 administrative. This edition of the barometer included four questions on citizens' perceptions of the security situation created by the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, two questions were included regarding the religious affiliation and attendance of religious services. This reflects the religion's growing role in society and politics.

Several interrelated questions are found in sequential order, comprising a series of 2 to 3 questions (such as questions 12 and 13; 15 and 16; 17 and 18; 19 and 20, and 23, 24 and 25). In answering these questions, respondents first excluded the first-choice answer to the previous question (excluding their first and second choices in the third questions of three-question sequences). Such sequential questions were chosen for those topics where the collection of additional data was necessary for more in-depth analysis. For instance, in questions 23, 24 and 25, interviewees were asked to select who they thought were the first, second and third friendliest countries towards Albania. By combining the data collected through these questions, we are able to see the most common choices provided by the respondents (full questionnaire in Annex 1).

Sample

A multi-layered random sample of 1115 adults were used for this survey. In the first layer, questionnaires were proportionally distributed among 61 municipalities of Albania based on their adult population. In the second layer, observations were proportionately distributed among urban, suburban, and rural areas within each municipality, in order to mirror the Albanian population distribution (Annex 2). Similarly, proportional gender and age quotas were developed for each sublayer. Finally, geolocation points were randomly selected from the map of Albania for the interviews, according to the above sampling scheme (Annex 3).

The purpose of this multi-layered sampling approach was to achieve accurate geographic and demographic representation of Albania's adult population, while maintaining a sampling error lower than $\pm 2.9\%$ for the overall sample.

The error margin for subsamples varies from $\pm 3.4\%$ to $\pm 6\%$, but subsamples with an error margin of over $\pm 4.4\%$ have been excluded from the analysis.

This random sampling ensures that each resident in Albania has an equal probability of being chosen for participating in the survey. Using this sampling method, the results of the survey generally reflect attitudes and perceptions of the overall adult population in Albania.

The error margin for the overall statistical sample is $\pm 2.9\%$; female: $\pm 4.1\%$; male: $\pm 4.1\%$; urban: $\pm 3.9\%$; rural and suburban: $\pm 4.4\%$; lower and secondary education, $\pm 3.4\%$; higher education: $\pm 6\%$.

Data Collection and Processing

This survey was conducted through face-to-face interviews, according to the above sampling approach. Before starting field work, the 30 interviewers were trained by the project management team.

The field work for collecting the data was conducted between 21 September and 4 October, 2020. The answers of the interviewees were entered directly by the interviewers on smartphones and were transmitted instantly to the central server through a special, purpose-built software program by the project's IT specialist.

The time and location of each interview was recorded automatically. This information was used daily by the statistics director and the 13 field supervisors to ensure that the interviews were conducted in accordance with the predetermined sampling scheme and methodological instructions. The supervisors conducted daily random quality checks on the interviews completed in the areas under their supervision.

At the end of the field work, a general quality control check of the interview data collected on the server was conducted. Prior to data analysis, the sample was reweighted to reflect the proportional Albanian age distribution as reported by the Institute of Statistics (INSTAT). Then, the data were processed and analysed using the statistical software STATA 11.

In addition to the analysis of data generated from the overall sample, data on gender, education, and geographical distribution (rural, suburban, urban) were also analysed when deemed relevant.

Data Analysis

The data collected and processed were analysed by grouping answers into seven main chapters.

- 1) Demographic Information
- 2) Personal and Community Security Threats
- 3) Satisfaction with Security and Attitudes Towards Approaches to Improve Security
- 4) National and International Security
- 5) Influences on Albania's Security
- 6) EU Integration and Key Priorities
- 7) Integrity and Trust in Institutions

In addition to analysing citizens' perception of and attitude towards problematic issues, and unlike in the 2019 barometer, this barometer also focuses on identifying changes compared with the previous year.

The data analysis intended to reflect the perceptions and attitudes of the citizens without attempting to interpret them.

The data are shown in graphs to make them more comprehensible and legible.

Gjetjet kryesore



A considerable percentage of citizens feel safe in their place of residence and work. Safety is perceived to be greater by urban residents and men. Compared to the 2019 barometer, there is a slight decrease in the level of security as fewer respondents say they feel very safe



Theft, robbery, conflicts over property, homicide, and organized crime are perceived as the main threat to personal security. Compared to 2019, there is an increase in the percentage of citizens who identify organized crime and domestic violence as the main threat to personal security.



The level of security is considered similar with the previous year by some **62%** of citizens, while **23%** say that they feel less secure during this year. Only **15%** of the respondents declare feeling more secure.



Expectations for the improvement of security are lower than last year as fewer citizens think that the overall security situation in the next 12 months will be better. Half of the respondents say it will be the same.



Overall, about **29%** of respondents say they are very satisfied with the security situation in their place of residence, whereas only about **25%** of those living in suburban and rural areas think so.



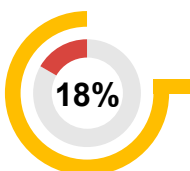
Respondents provided a relatively low rating for the level of cooperation among state structures, such as the police and local government, in ensuring security.



The State Police remains the most important institution for respondents' everyday security, but the percentage of those who think so decreased this year. The percentage of those who see security as linked to measures taken by themselves has increased.



Compared to 2019, there was an increase of the percentage of citizens that identify community representatives as actors with an important role in providing everyday security.



Half of the respondents think that the presence of the police is sufficient, but **18%** of respondents think that this presence should increase. The percentage of citizens living in suburban and rural areas who think that the police presence is sufficient is lower.



The modernization of the police is regarded as a favourable option by a little more than half of respondents as a way to increase security, but when 16 compared to a year before the percentage of respondents sharing this opinion fell by about 10 percentage points.



The level of satisfaction with the contribution of the army to security provision is relatively high but only one-quarter of citizens think that the level of contribution of this institution to the country's security is high. This percentage is lower compared to 2019.



The level of satisfaction with the contribution of the secret services is reportedly lower as only **15%** think that the level of their contribution to the security of the country is high.



Similar to the previous barometer, corruption, organized crime and unemployment are perceived as the three main security threats to Albania. However, there is an increasing percentage of respondents identifying unemployment and organized crime as the main security threats compared to 2019.



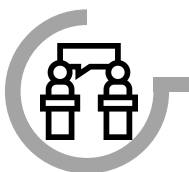
The percentage of citizens who regarded the threat of environmental degradation/pollution and the influx of foreign migrants as the main threat has increased from the previous year, while fewer citizens regard terrorism, war with neighbouring countries and violent extremism as the main threat.



About three-quarters of those asked think that the Covid-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on the country's security and **61%** think it will also have such an impact in the coming year.



Most respondents perceive war among nations, terrorism, organized crime, and corruption as the main threat to the security of the Balkans, but compared to the previous year, there is a much higher percentage of those who regard corruption as the main threat to the region.



A majority of citizens think that relations among Balkan countries are the same as a year ago, but there is a significant decrease in the percentage of those who think that these relations are better than a year ago.



Over three-fifths of citizens think that the Covid-19 pandemic will have a negative impact on security in the region and beyond in Europe.



Terrorism, war among nations, and global warming are perceived as the greatest threats to global security. The percentage of those who see terrorism as a major threat has declined, but the percentage of those that regard mass migration, organized crime, and corruption as major global threats has increased.



The USA, Germany, and Italy were identified as the three friendliest countries to Albania. Yet, when compared to 2019, there is a significant 17 increase in the percentage of citizens who identify Turkey as one of the friendliest countries. Although grouped in countries described as “external actors”,¹ over 75% of citizens say that Turkey has a positive or very positive impact on Albania’s security.



Albanian citizens consider that both NATO and the EU contribute positively to Albania’s security and an increasing percentage of respondents think that Albania’s security will improve after gaining membership to the EU.



Most respondents believe that USA and Germany have a positive impact on Albania’s security.



While considered “external actors”, in contrast to the countries of the Euro-Atlantic alliance, China and the Arab countries are seen by a growing percentage of citizens to have a positive impact on the security of Albania. In contrast, the percentage of citizens who think that Russia and Iran have a negative impact on Albania’s security is higher than in the previous year.



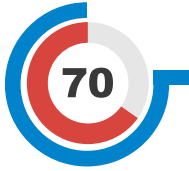
Albanian citizens remain optimistic about their country’s entry into EU. This is seen in the slight increase of the percent of those who think membership will be achieved within 10 or 15 years and a decrease in the percentage of those who think that this will happen in 20 years or will never be achieved.



Corruption and organized crime continue to be regarded as the main obstacles to EU integration by the vast majority of citizens. However, the percent of interviewed citizens who think that the fight against organized crime will not be won has declined in contrast to the slight increase in those who are somewhat satisfied with the fight against this security threat compared with 2019.



With regards to the provision of security, two-thirds of citizens think that the police do not respect human rights while on duty. Additionally, three-fifths of the citizens think that the State Police do not treat all citizens equally in their work



Over 70% of respondents think that only a minority of people in the security institutions are employed solely based on merit and skills.



Most citizens think that security institutions are only a little independent of political influence. Customs is regarded as the most politically influenced 18 institution by the largest percentage of citizens, followed by the State Police, State Intelligence Service (SHISH) and the Army.



The percent of citizens who think that justice institutions (Prosecutor Office and courts) are influenced by politics is higher than that of security institutions.



When compared to 2019, there is a significant decrease in the percentage of citizens who believe that with the establishment of the Special AntiCorruption Structure (SPAK), the fight against corruption and organized crime will be strengthened and that the effectiveness of the courts will increase after the justice reform



Customs, State Police, SHISH and the military are regarded as corrupt by the highest percentage of citizens. Citizens report their trust in these security institutions following the same order.



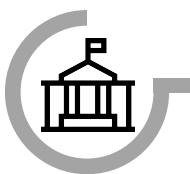
Ashtu si dhe për perceptimin mbi pavarësinë nga ndikimi politik, institucionet e drejtësisë (Prokuroria dhe Gjykatat) shihen si të korrupsuara nga një numër shumë më i madh qytetarësh. Për pasojë, këto institucione kanë edhe numrin më të ulët të qytetarëve të cilët besojnë tek to.



Trust in state institutions such as the government, the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Defence is also low, with approximately half of respondents trusting or not trusting these institutions. The level of trust has fluctuated somewhat compared to 2019.



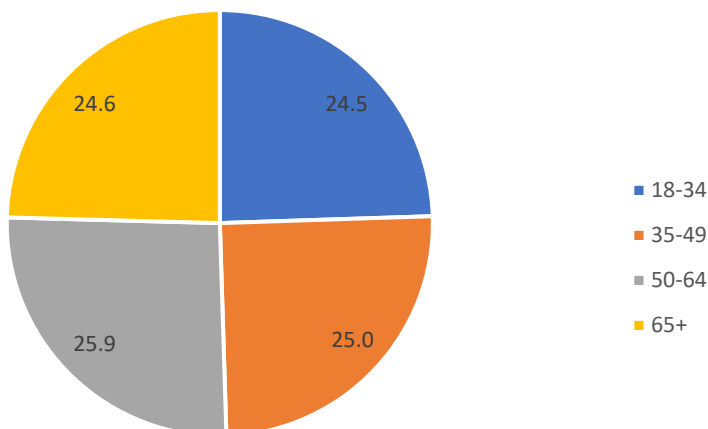
This division is also reflected in the trust placed in the institutions regarding the management of the Covid-19 pandemic.



In terms of the effectiveness of the Parliament as an overseer of security institutions, only half of the respondents think that this oversight is effective. On the other hand, over 70% of respondents declared that they would like this oversight strengthened.

Demographic Information

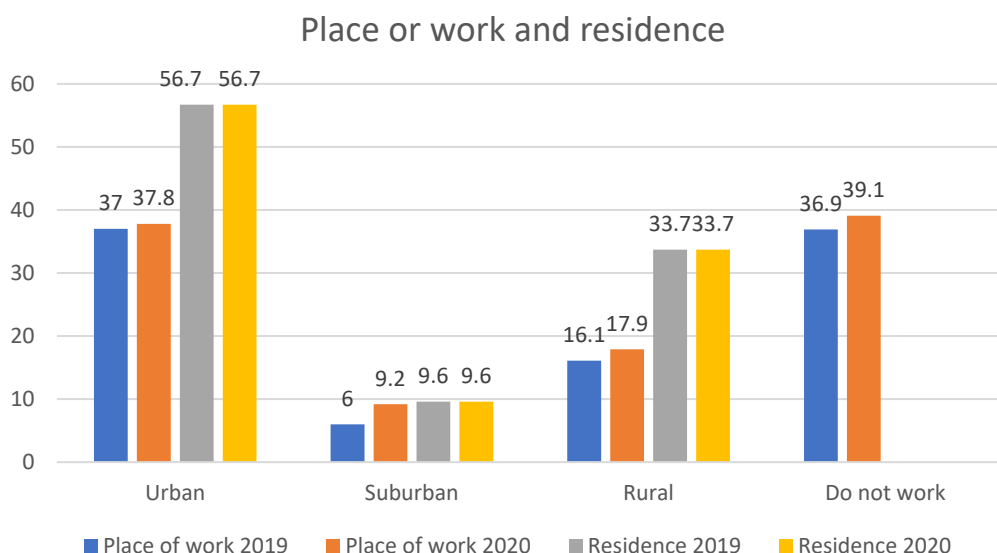
Of the 1115 respondents surveyed, 50.1% were female and 49.9% male. The age distribution is almost equal for the four age groups as shown in the graph below.



Graph 1. Age of respondents.

The majority of the surveyed population resides in urban and suburban areas, 56.7%, and 9.6% respectively. More than one-third, 33.7%, of the respondents live in rural areas.

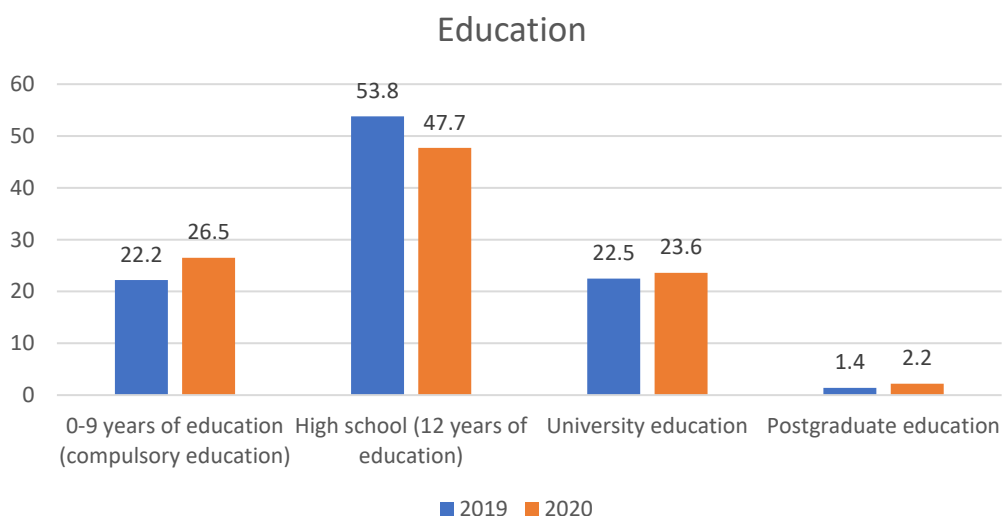
The survey shows the type of area (urban, suburban, rural) where respondents lived was relatively similar to the previous year, other than an increase by 3.2 percentage points of the citizens that are employed in suburban areas.



Graph 2. Place of work and residence.

A plurality of respondents, 47.71%, completed secondary education. The percentage of those who had completed compulsory education was 26.46%, a figure about 4% higher than the previous year.

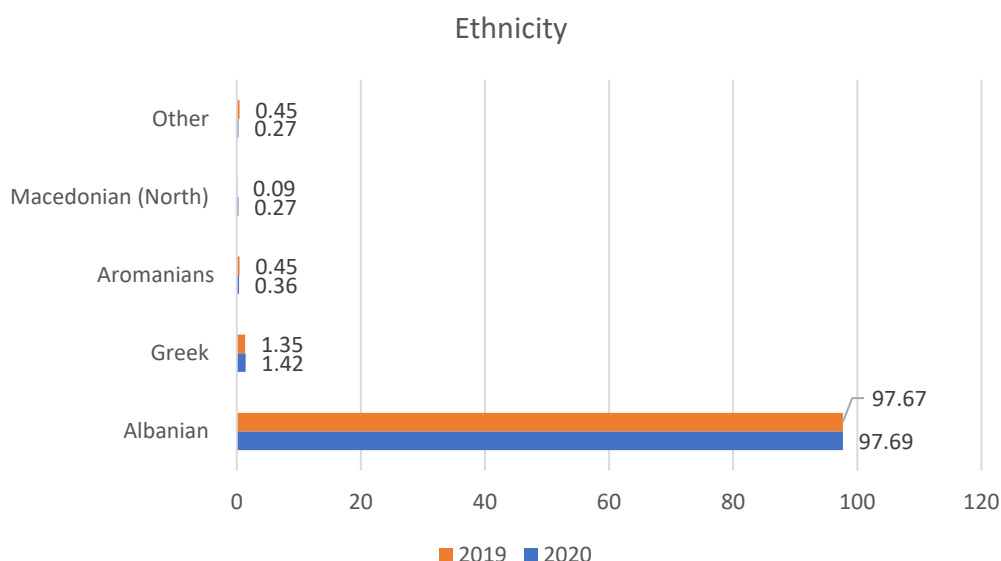
23.6% of those surveyed hold bachelor's/undergraduate degrees and 2.2% hold postgraduate degrees, while the largest portion, 47.71%, completed 12-year secondary education. 26.5% completed compulsory (primary) school.



Graph 3. Education level of respondents.

Regarding ethnicity, 97.69% of those surveyed are Albanian, 1.42% Greek, 0.36% Aromanian, 0.27% (North) Macedonians and 0.27% belong to other ethnicities.

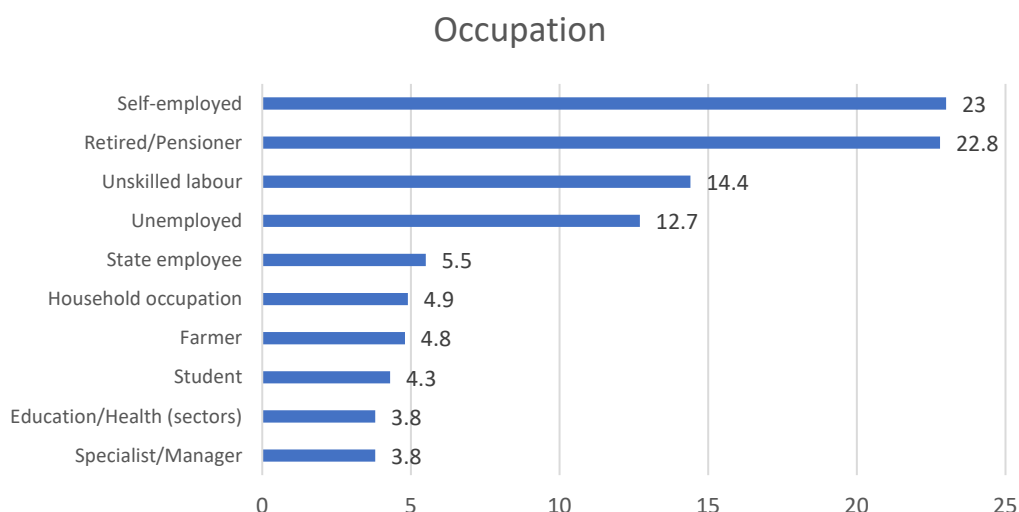
Compared to the past year, there is a slight increase in the percent of respondents of (North) Macedonian ethnicity and a decrease in the percentage of Greeks and Aromanians.



Graph 4. Ethnicity of respondents.

Occupation-wise, 23% were declared as self-employed, 22.8% retired; 14% unskilled labour, and 12.7% unemployed.² A similar percentage, 4.8%, declared farming and housekeeping as their occupation respectively.

² INSTAT reports an unemployment rate of 11.6% for the third quarter of 2011 in Albania.
See: <http://www.instat.gov.al/media/7812/lfs-q3-2020.pdf>

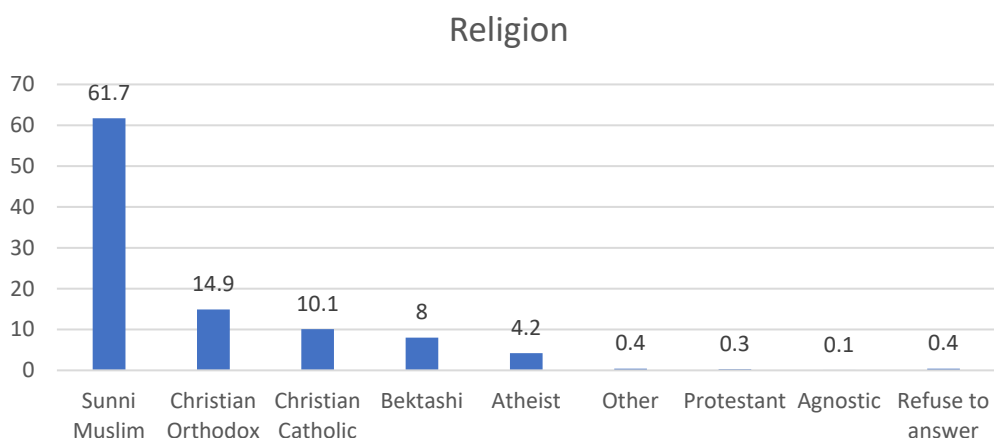


Graph 5. Occupation of respondents.

Given the increasing importance of religion and faith in the Albanian society, this edition of the barometer included a question on the respondents' religious faith.

61.7% of respondents declared that they belong to the Sunni Muslim faith, 14.9% Orthodox (Christian), 10.1% Catholic, 8% Bektashi (Sufi Muslim) and 4.2% are atheists.

Attendance of religious services is generally infrequent. Of those who say they are believers, only 5.2% say they attend religious services more than once a week, 7.1% once a week, and 9.9% once or twice a month, 24.7% several times a year, and 53% rarely or never.

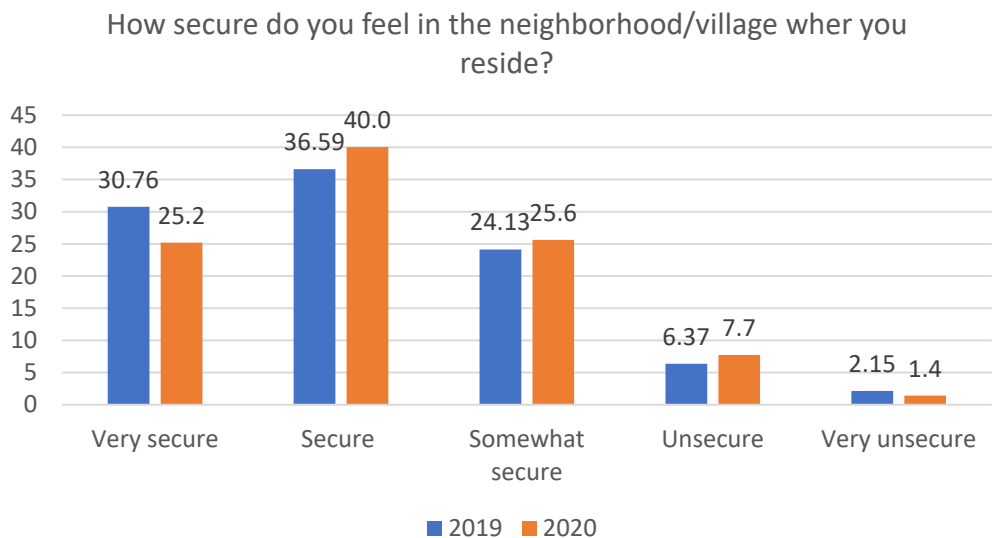


Graph 6. Religious faith of respondents.

Personal and Community Security Threats

The largest majority of respondents declare that they feel secure where they live. Some 65% of the respondents declare themselves to feel safe or very safe, while over 25% report feeling somewhat safe.

The survey shows few significant differences compared to the results of the 2019 barometer. While there is a slight increase in the percentage of those who say they feel unsecure (from 6.37 to 7.7%), there is a decrease in those who say they feel very unsafe (1.4% compared to 2.15% in the previous year). Similarly, even though the percentage of those who say they feel safe or somewhat safe increased slightly, the percentage of those who say they feel very safe decreased.

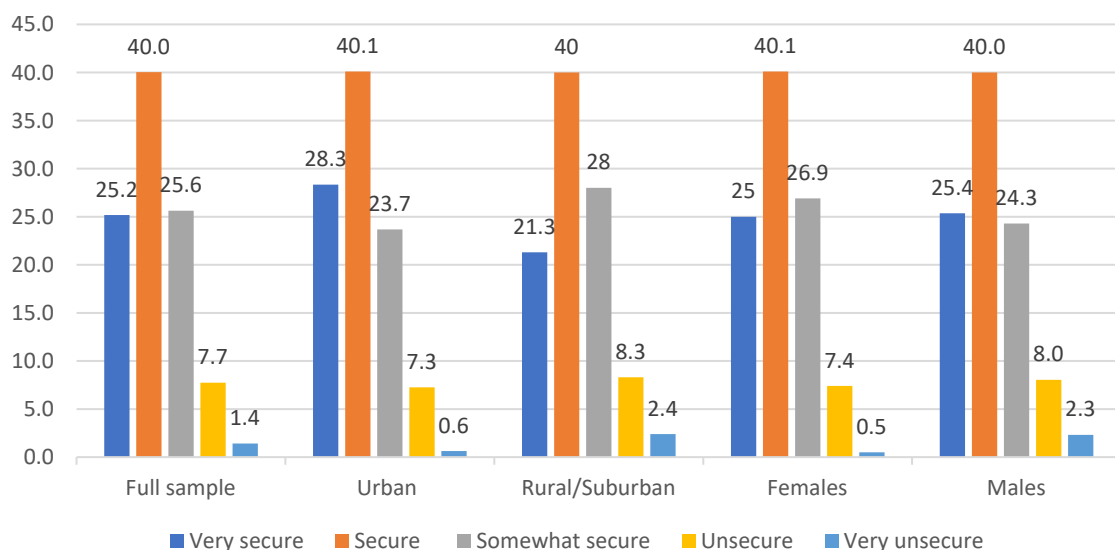


Graph 7. Security in the place of residence.

The highest security in the place of residence is in urban areas, where 28.3% of respondents feel very safe compared to 21.3% in rural and suburban areas.

Residents of rural and suburban areas and women occupy the highest percentage of those who say they feel very insecure, 2.3% and 2.4% respectively, compared to 0.6% of urban area residents and 0.5% of men who declare to feel very insecure.

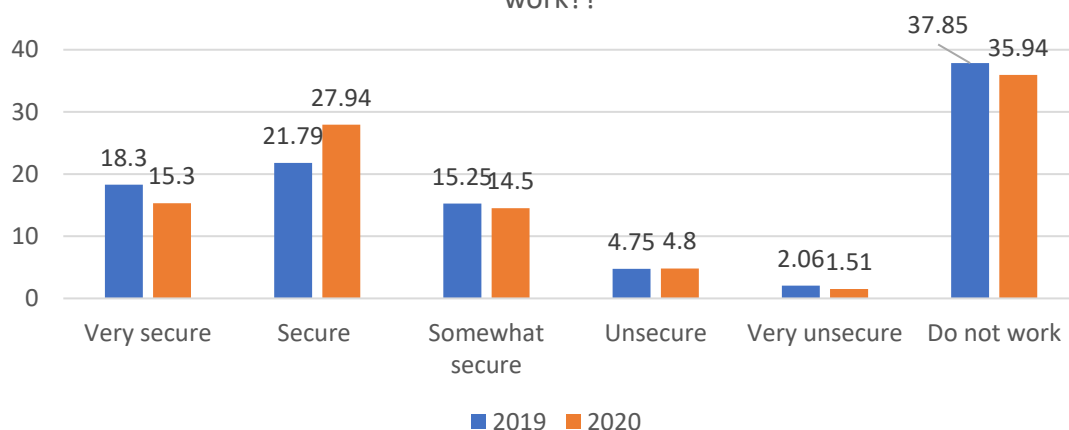
Security at residence by gender and place of residence



Graph 8. Respondents' security at residence by gender and place of residence.

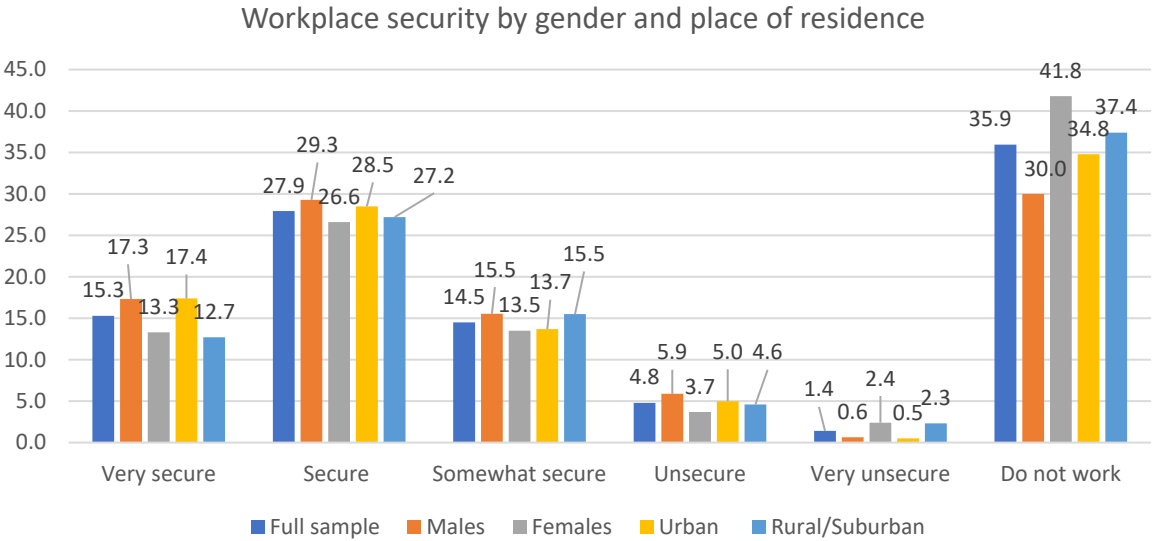
Similar changes are also seen regarding workplace security, although there is an increasing change of those who say they feel secure, as well as a 3 percentage point decrease of those who feel very secure. The percentage of those who don't commute to go to work has slightly decreased.

How secure do you feel in the neighborhood/village where you work??



Graph 9. Workplace security.

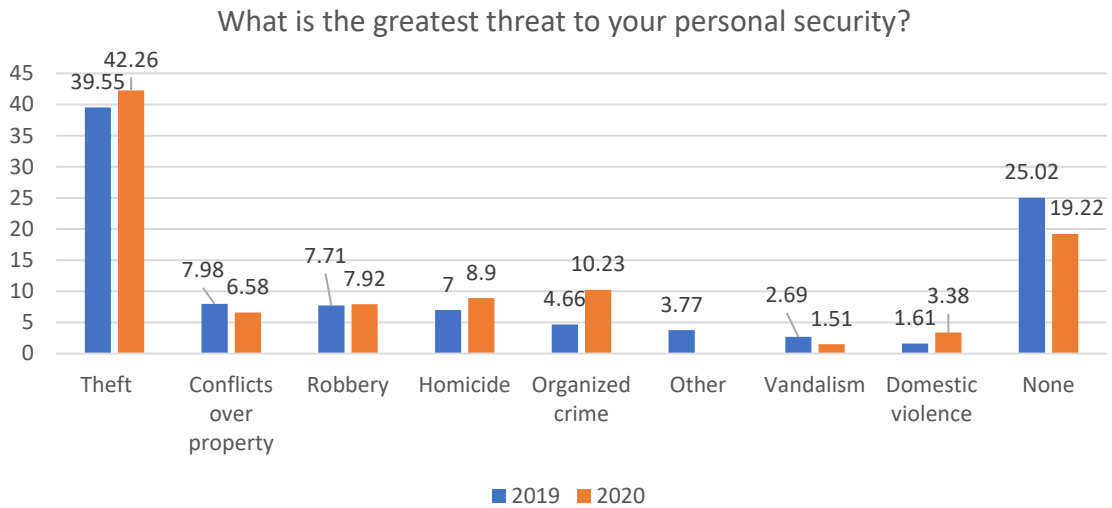
Women and residents of rural and suburban areas express a somewhat higher degree of insecurity than men and residents of urban areas regarding their workplace security.



Graph 10. Workplace security by gender and place of residence of respondents.

Theft, conflicts over property, robbery, homicide, and organized crime are perceived as the main threats to personal security.

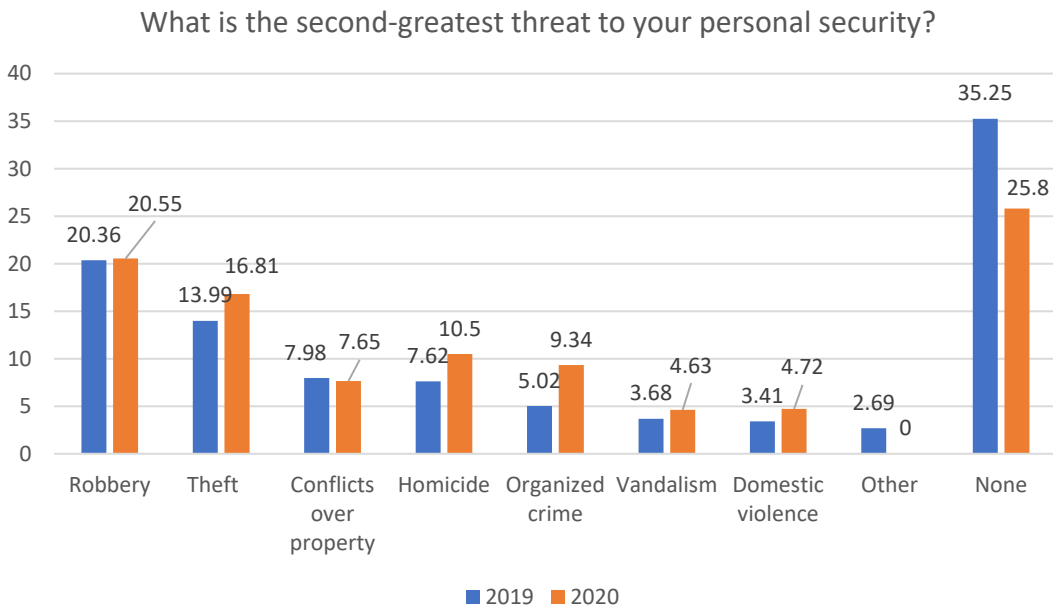
Compared to the previous barometer, organized crime (4.66 to 10.23%) and domestic violence (1.61 to 3.38%) more than doubled in terms of percentage of results from the previous year. It is also worth noting the decrease, by about 6 percentage points, in the those who did not identify any threats to their personal security compared to the previous survey.



Graph 11. Greatest threat to personal security.

Regarding the second-greatest threat, respondents identify robbery, theft, conflicts over property, homicide, and organized crime activity as threats to personal security.

The percentage of those who do not identify any security threats is still lower than in the previous year - 25.8% in 2020 compared to 38.25% in 2019.

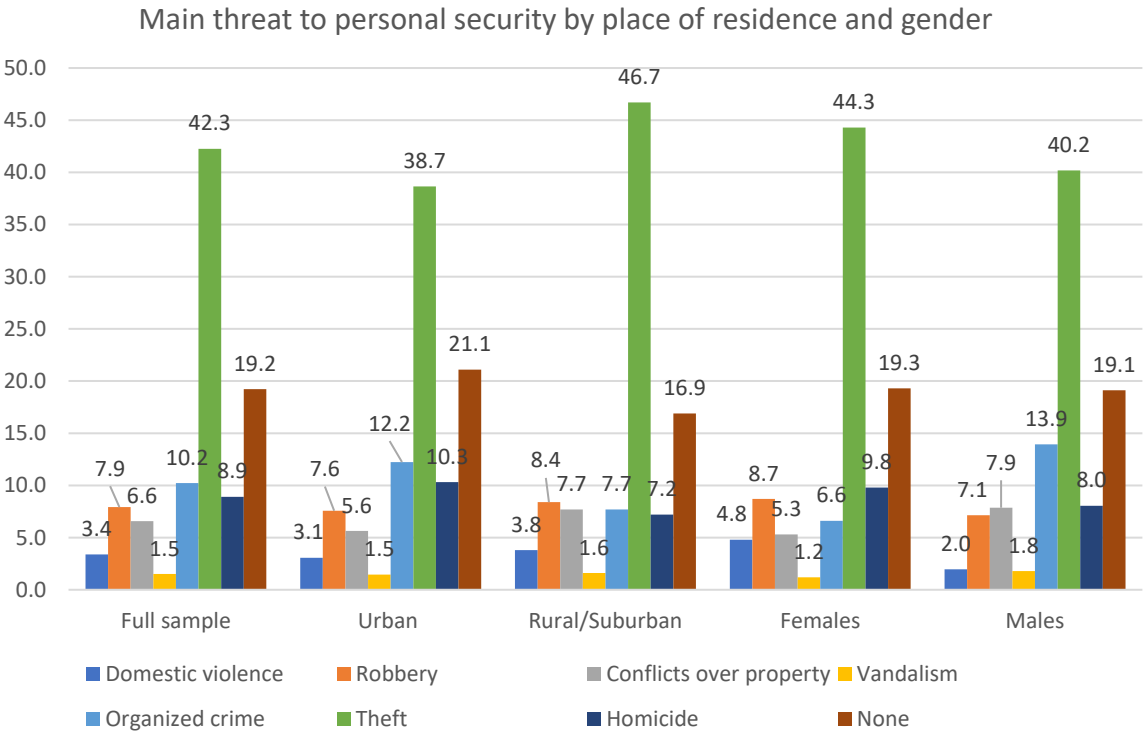


Graph 12. Second-greatest threat to personal security.

Security is perceived to be lower in rural and suburban areas. Here one finds the lowest percentages of those who see no threat, 16.9% of rural and suburban respondents versus 21.1% for those in urban areas.

Insecurity among women is also higher. They constitute the largest percentage of respondents who identify theft, robbery and domestic violence as the main threat to their security.

Domestic violence is identified as a security threat by 2% of men, but this percentage is over twice as high for women, at 4.8%. There is an increasing change compared to the 2019 barometer, when only 0.54% of men identified domestic violence as the main security threat.



Graph 13. Main threat to personal security by place of residence and gender.

Organized crime is identified as major threat by 12.2% of respondents in urban areas and 7.7% of residents of rural and suburban areas.

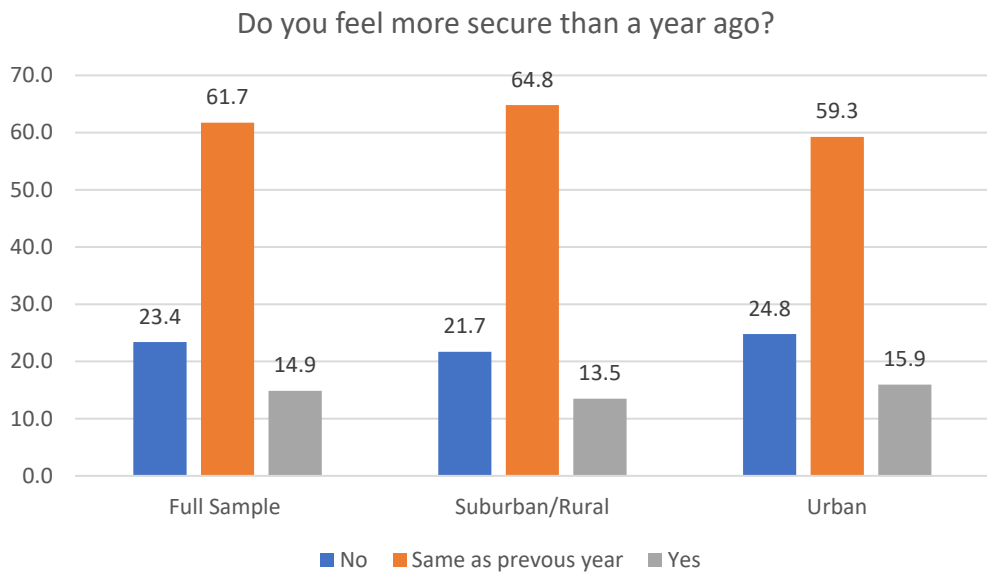
Thefts are identified as a threat by 46.7% of residents in rural and suburban areas and by 38.7% in urban areas. Domestic violence is identified as the second-greatest threat by 6.2% of women surveyed, the highest of all categories observed.



Graph 14. Second major threat to personal security by place of residence and gender.

An additional question was asked this year to see how the perception of security has changed from the past year.

Most respondents, 61.7% said they feel just as safe as a year ago. The feeling of security increased for 15% of respondents, while 23.4% said they do not feel safer than a year ago. Residents of urban areas show a slight change of insecurity compared to the previous year.

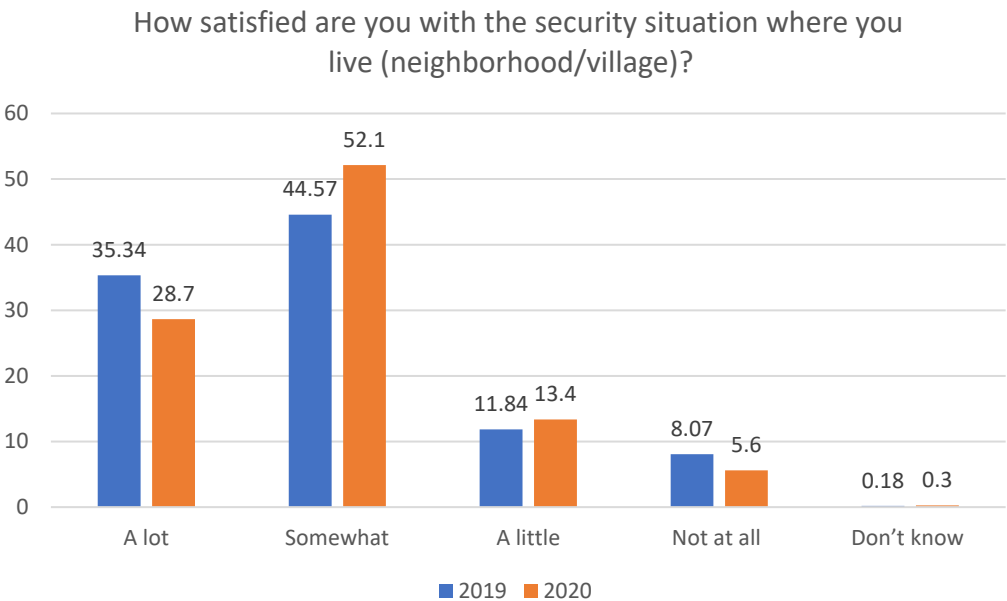


Graph 15. Perception of security compared with the past year.

Satisfaction with Security and Attitudes Towards Approaches to Improve Security

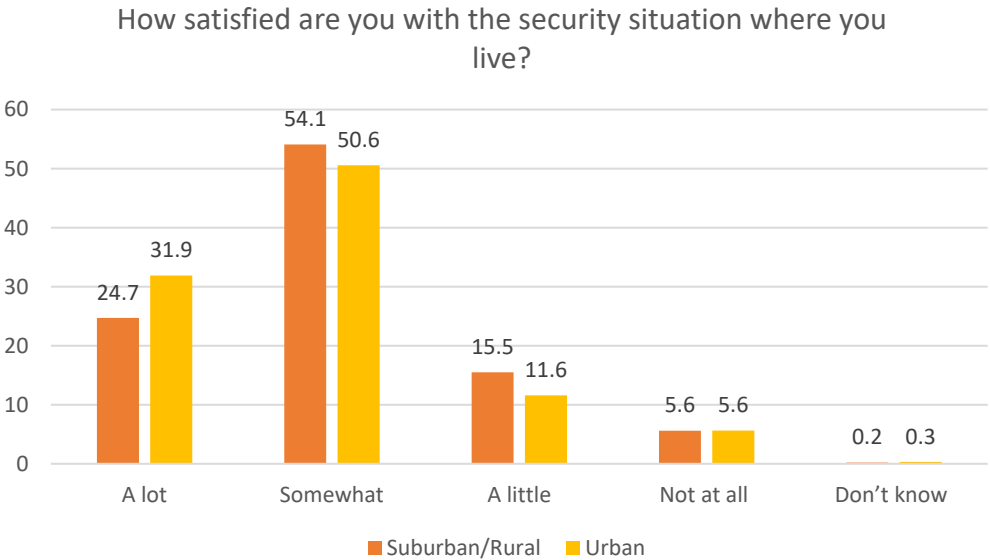
Generally, respondents reported being satisfied with the security situation in their place of residence. Only approximately 19% said they are a little or not at all satisfied with the security as compared with a total of 80.8% who say they are very or somewhat satisfied with security.

There is, however, is a slight change of insecurity compared to the previous year taking tin account that a smaller percentage of respondents say they are very satisfied. On the other hand, the percentage of those who say they are somewhat satisfied has increased.



Graph 16. Level of satisfaction with the security in the place of residence.

The level of satisfaction with security is slightly lower for residents in rural and suburban areas, as shown in the graph below.

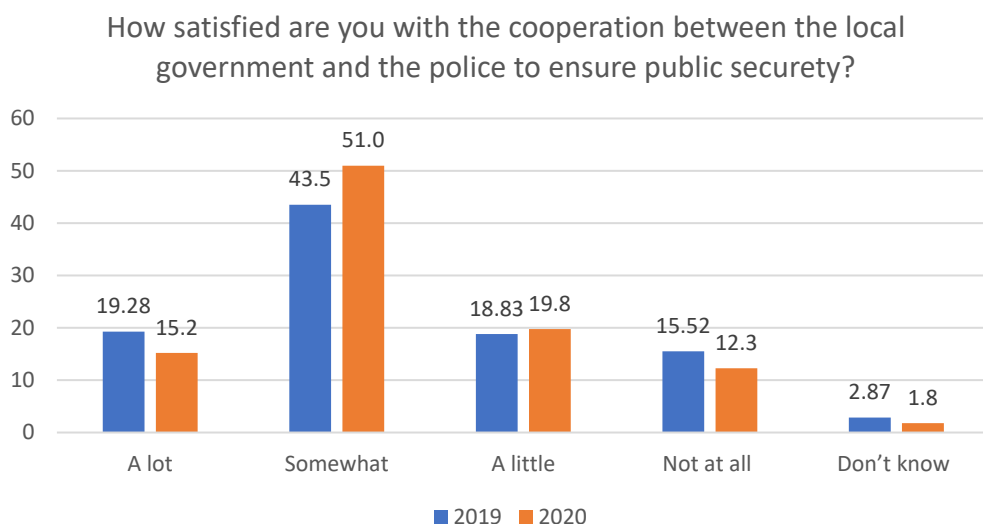


Graph 17. Level of satisfaction with security in the place of residence by residential area.

Given that an increasing percentage of people are accepting that community security is the result of coordination among institutions of various tiers of government, this barometer asked about the satisfaction of cooperation between the police and local government.

The data show that there is a slight decrease in the perception of satisfaction regarding the level of cooperation between these actors. The percentage of respondents that are very or somewhat satisfied with the cooperation under consideration compared to the 2019 barometer decreased from 19.28% to 15.2%.

This year, about one-third of respondents, 32.1%, think that this cooperation is not satisfactory. This is slightly higher for respondents living in rural and suburban areas (33.4%).

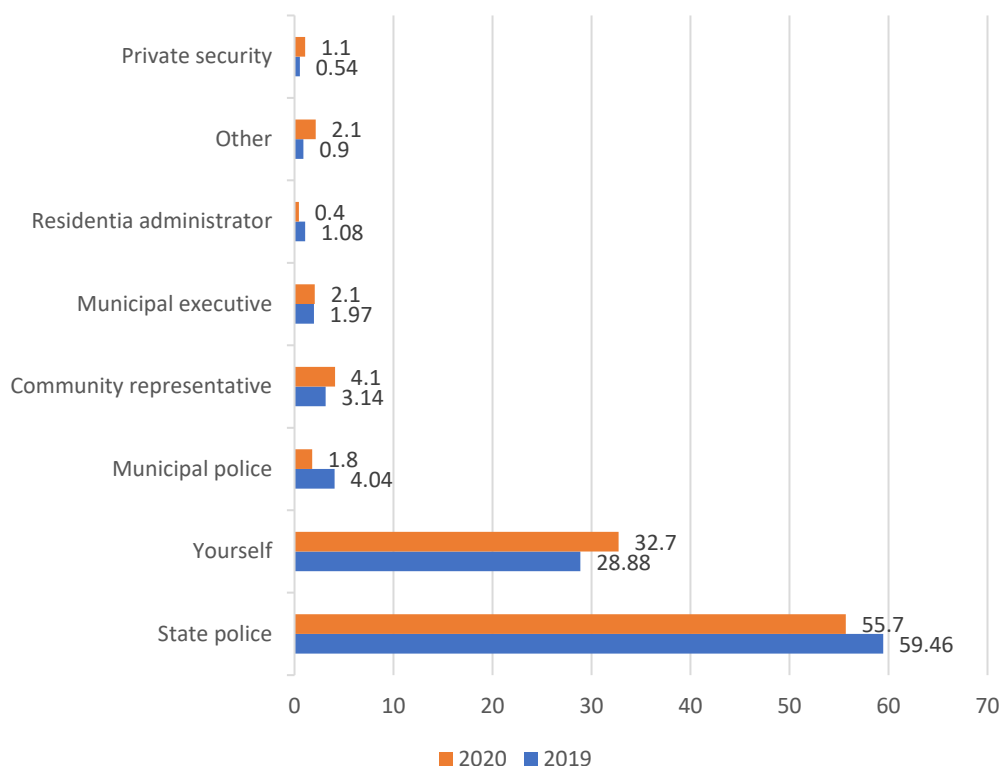


Graph 18. Level of satisfaction with cooperation between local government and police on issues of public safety.

In terms of the role of various actors that are part of the security architecture at the community level, this year shows a significant decrease in the perception of the contribution of the municipal police (from 4% to 1.8%). Also, slightly fewer citizens than last year, a decrease of 3.8 percentage points, regard the State Police as a contributor to their security.

The percentage of respondents this year identifying themselves as the main contributor to their security increased by 3.9 percentage points. Likewise, a high percentage of respondents this year identify community representatives and private security companies as contributors to their security.

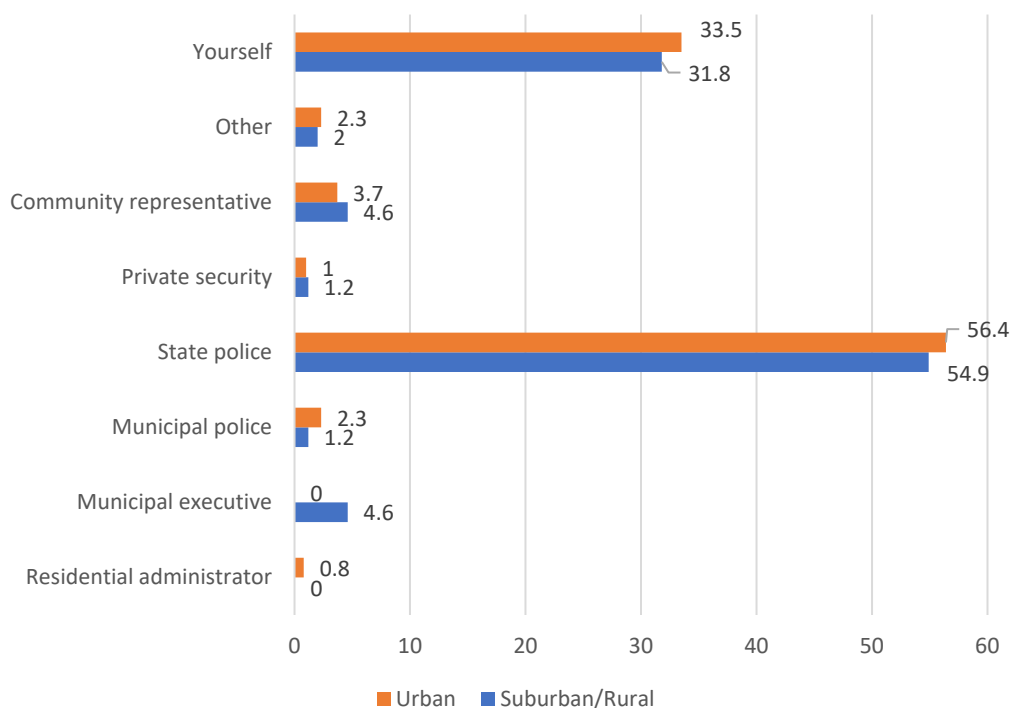
Which of these plays the most important role for your day-to-day security?



Graph 19. Results on the most important institution for providing security.

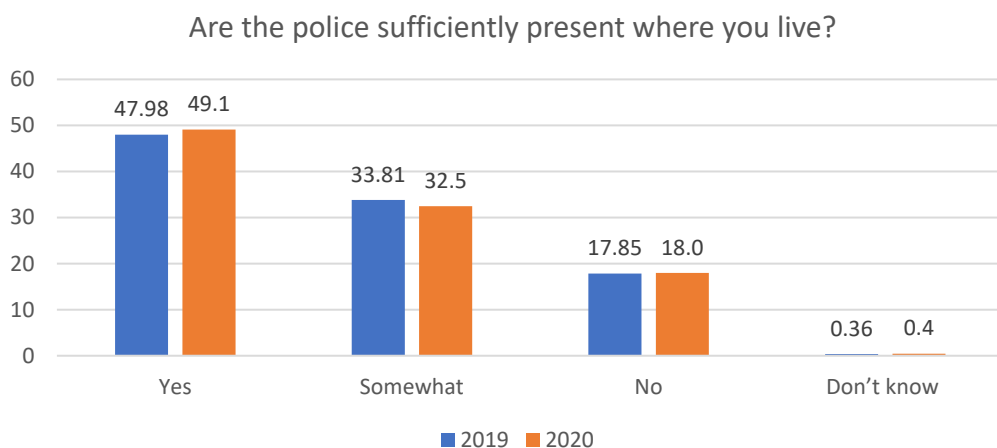
There is a stark difference among residents of suburban and rural areas. For 9.2% of the respondents living in these areas, the head of the municipality and community representatives are identified as playing an important role in providing security, compared to 3.7% in urban areas.

Which of these plays the most important role for your daily safety?



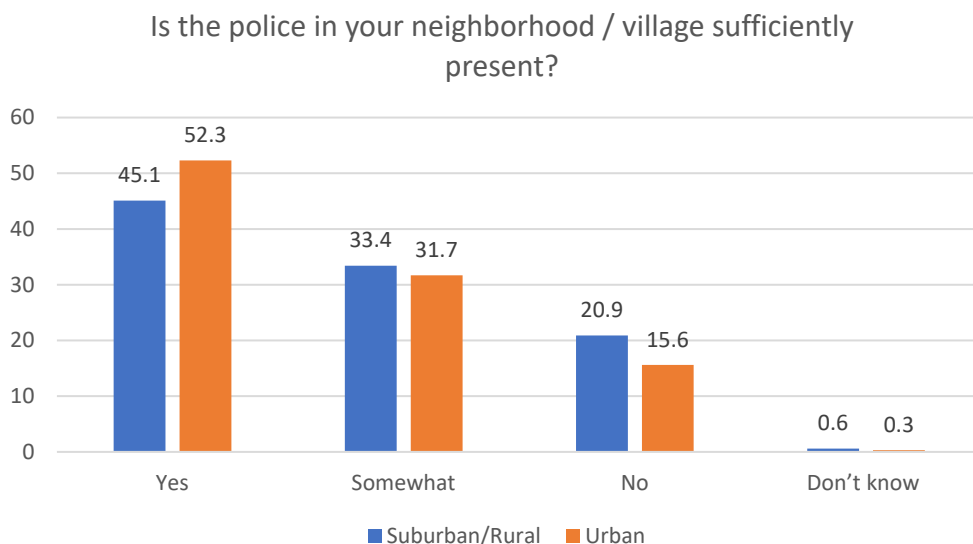
Graph 20. The most important provider of security by place of residence.

Regarding the sufficiency of the police presence at the community level, there are no differences compared with the 2019 barometer, although there is a slight increase in the percentage of those who think that the police are sufficiently present, and a similar slight decrease in those who think the police are somewhat present.



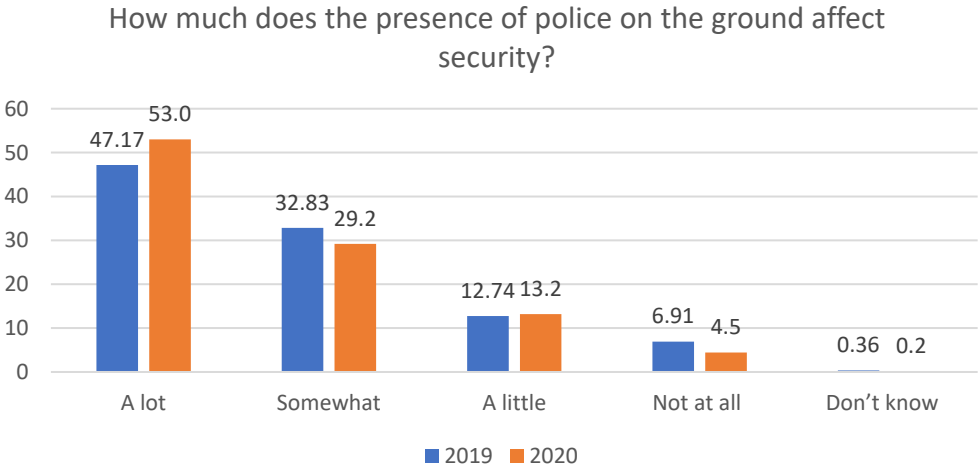
Graph 21. Level of satisfaction with police presence.

Regardless, there are some small differences as citizens living in rural and suburban areas feel that the police presence is less sufficient than those living in urban areas.



Graph 22. Level of satisfaction with police presence from those living in urban areas compared rural/suburban ones.

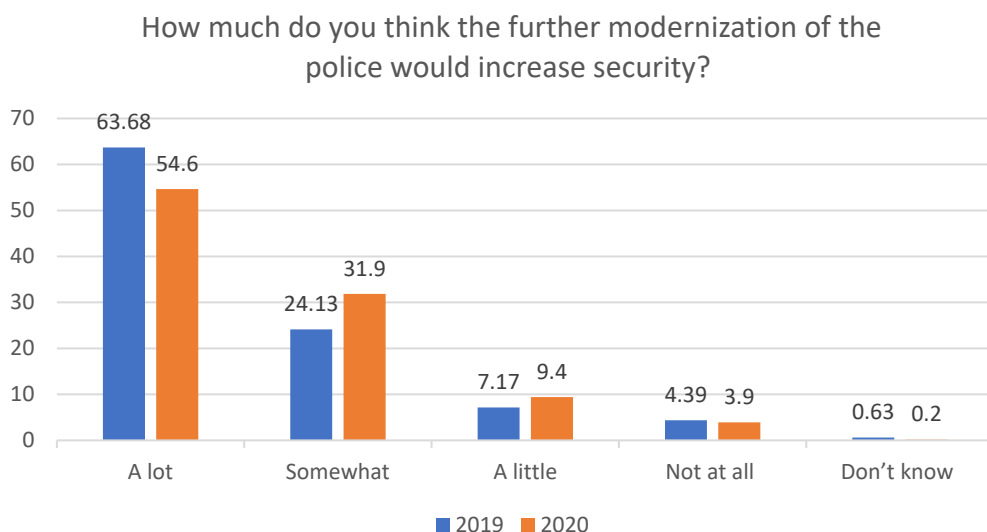
In terms of the relationship between police presence and security, there is an increase of about 2 percentage points in the percentage of respondents who think that the presence of police in the territory has a positive effect on security.



Graph 23. Perception of the impact of police presence on the level of security.

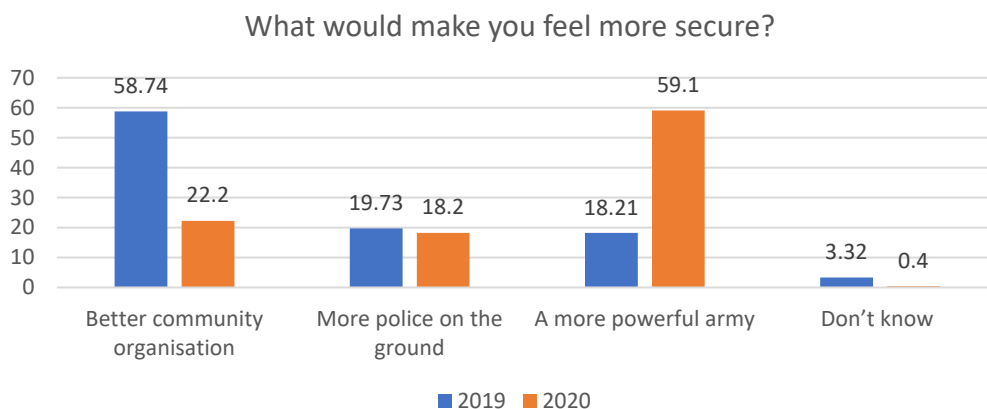
On the other hand, from the previous year, there is a decrease in the percentage of those who consider police modernization as a factor for further improving security. Fewer respondents think that this would greatly increase security (some 9 percentage points less) and those who think that it would increase security little or not at all increase by approximately 2 percentage points.

The same is observed (albeit with slight differences) for respondents living in rural and suburban and in urban areas. It is worth noting that in the 2019 barometer respondents living in rural and suburban areas thought that the further modernization of the police would lead to improved security was 6 percentage points greater than in urban areas, while in 2020 the difference was 1.2 percentage points.



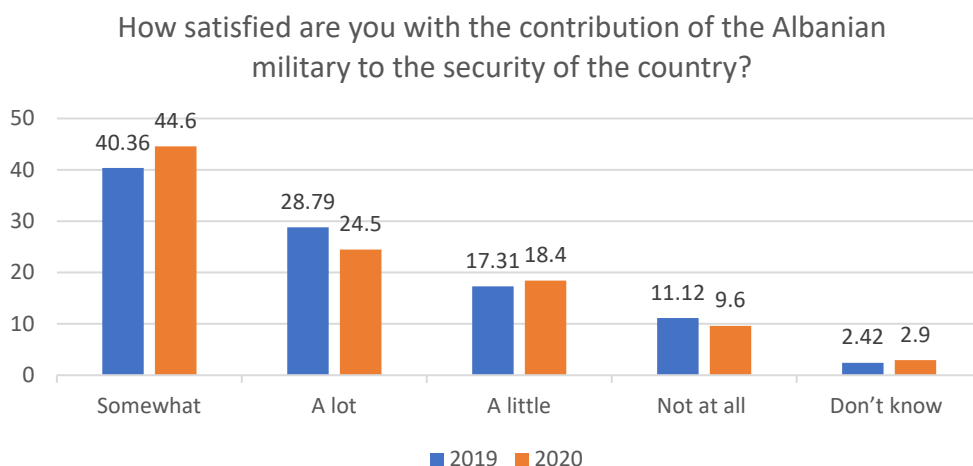
Graph 24. Perception of security improvement through police modernization.

In terms of increasing the feeling of security, this year's survey shows large increase in favour of a stronger military. Some 59.1% shared this opinion in 2020 compared to 18.2% in 2019.



Graph 25. Perception of measures that would improve security.

There was no significant change, however, compared to last year in terms of the level of satisfaction with the army's contribution to providing security. The majority of respondents, 69.1%, are very or somewhat satisfied with the contribution of the army, similar to last year but with smaller part of those who say they are very satisfied. Almost the same as last year, 28% say they are little or not at all satisfied.

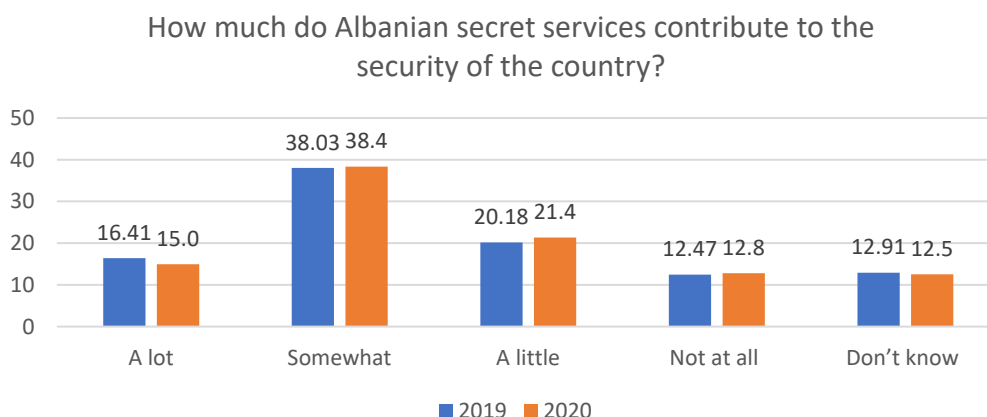


Graph 26. Satisfaction with the contribution of the military to country's security.

Almost no change is observed in terms of satisfaction with the secret services in providing security as compared to a year ago.

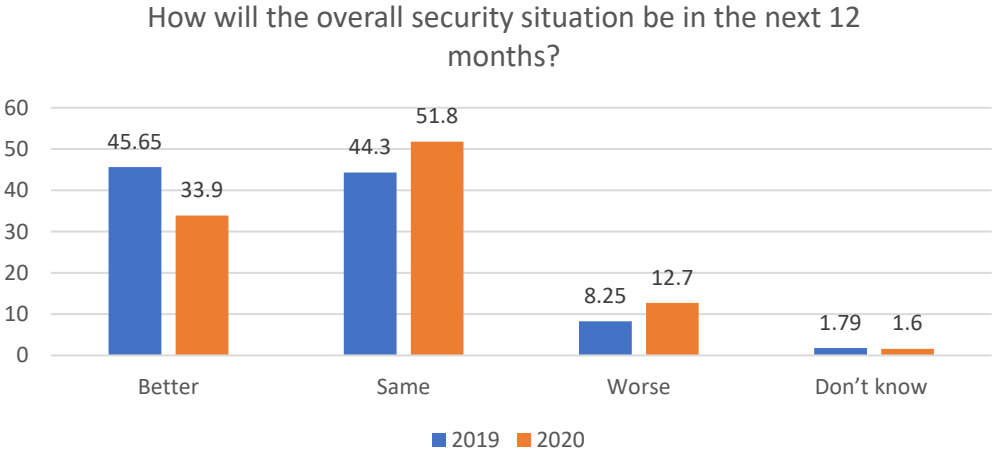
However, when compared with the military and police, just over one-third (34.2%) of respondents say they are little or not at all satisfied with the contribution of these institutions. This is higher than with army or police.

In addition, a relatively high percentage of respondents, 12.5%, did not know enough to give an opinion on these institutions' contribution to security, which indicates that the public has insufficient information to assess their role in providing security.



Graph 27. Perception of contribution of secret services to country's security.

In terms of security expectations for the following year, fewer citizens think that security will improve (11.7 percentage point decrease), whereas more think it will deteriorate (4.5 percentage point increase). The percentage of those who think security will be the same as last year increased (7.5 percentage point increase).

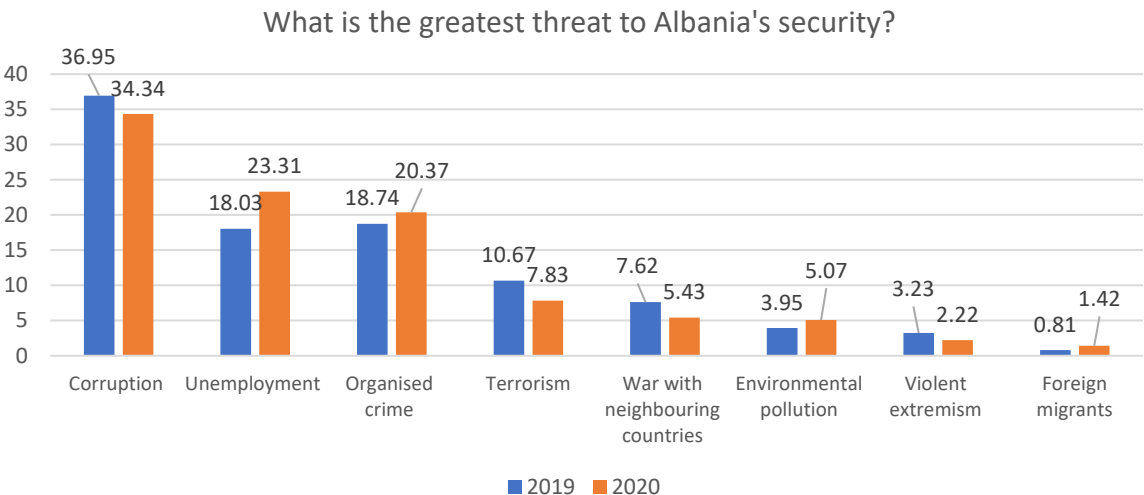


Graph 28. Expectations regarding security situation in the next 12 months.

National and International Security

Similar to the previous barometer, in addition to obtaining perceptions on security at individual and community levels, citizens were asked about their perceptions on security threats at the national, regional (Balkan) and global scales.

This year, most respondents identified corruption, organized crime, and unemployment as the biggest threats to Albania's security, but, unlike last year, the percentage of citizens who identify unemployment and organized crime as the main threats has increased.³ Regardless of the fact that the amount of those who regard corruption as a major threat has declined, a significant majority of respondents, over one-third, still see corruption as the main threat to Albania's security. There was also an increase in the percentage of citizens who saw the threat of environmental degradation/pollution and foreign migrants as the main threat, while fewer citizens than last year regard terrorism, war with neighbouring countries, and violent extremism as the main threat.

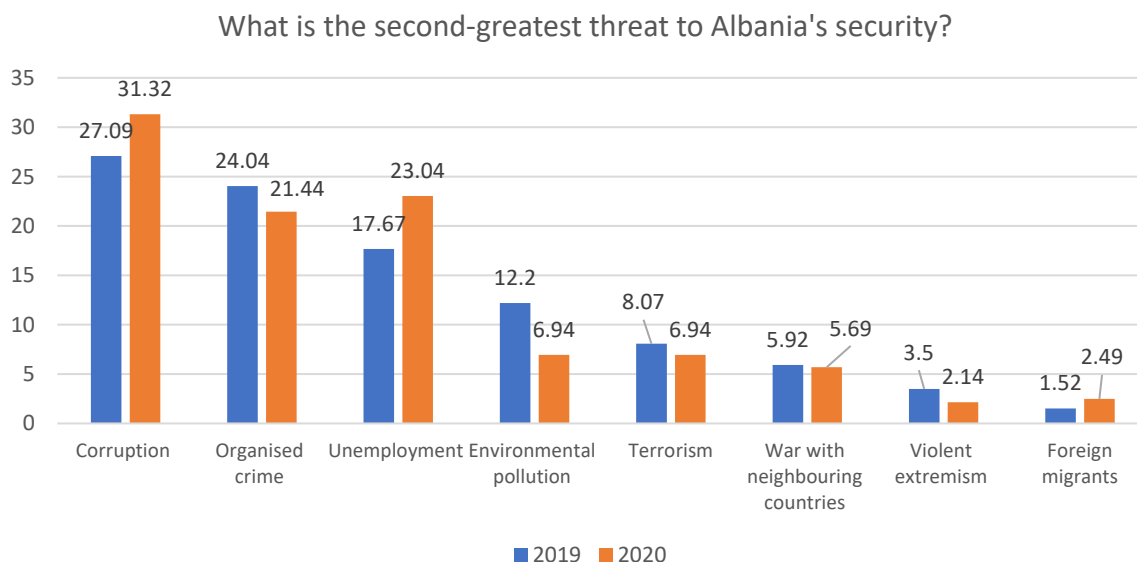


Graph 29. Perception of greatest threats to Albania's security.

³ To ensure that the question on unemployment was not understood as that of individual cases, interviewers ensured that respondents considered unemployment as a society-wide problem.

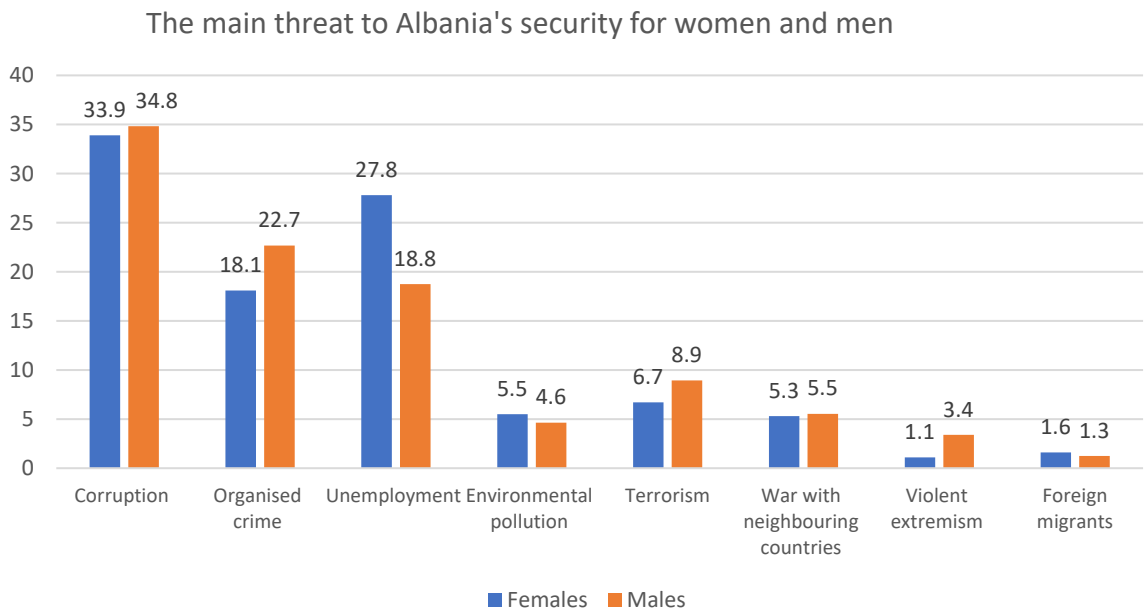
The responses regarding the Albania's second greatest threat tended to follow that of the greatest threat.

The scores for unemployment and corruption as the second greatest threat were 5.7 and 3.4 percentage points higher than as the greatest threat. Some 36.95% of respondents think that corruption is the greatest threat, while 27.09% identified it as the second-greatest.



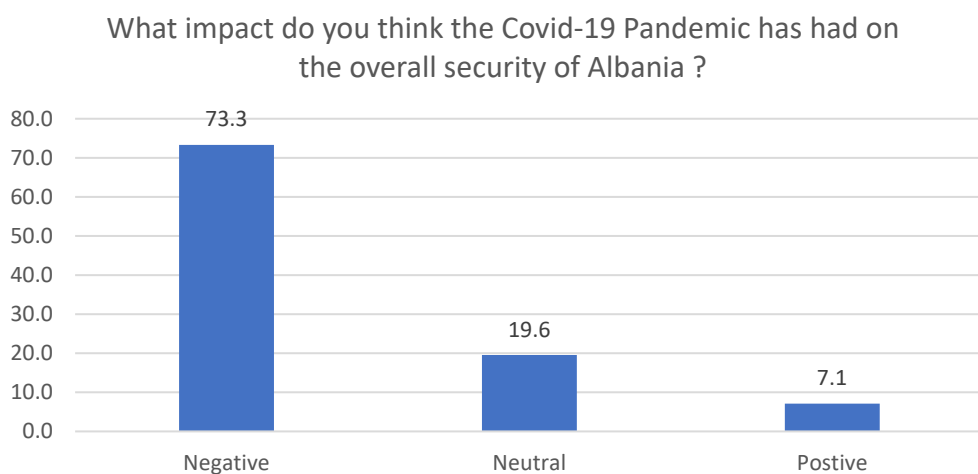
Graph 30. Perception of second-greatest threat to Albania's security.

Some gender differences emerge in terms of the greatest threat to the country's security. The percentage of men who regard organized crime, terrorism, and violent extremism as threats is higher, while a much larger percentage of women than men (27.8% versus 18.8%) see unemployment as the greatest threat.



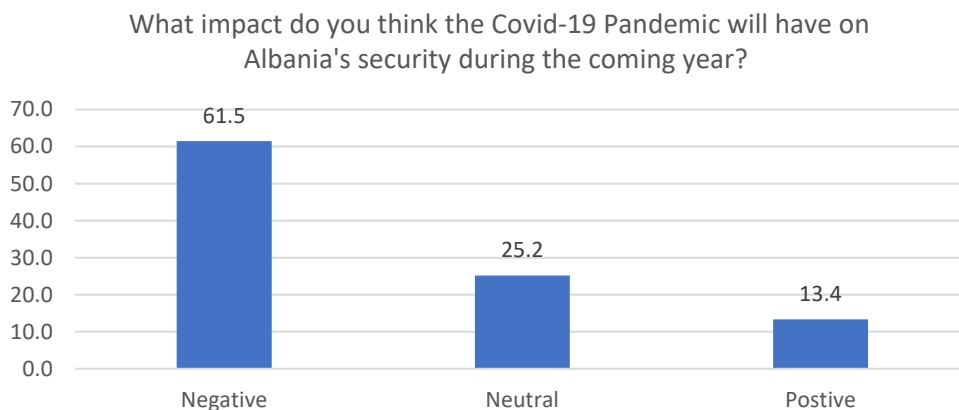
Graph 31. Perception of the greatest threat to Albania's security by gender.

Given the potential implications of the Covid-19 pandemic, the barometer asked additional research questions to solicit and explore the public's perception of and attitudes towards its impact on the country's security. Some 73.3% of the respondents think that the pandemic has had a negative impact on the security of the country, while 19.6% think that it has not played a role.



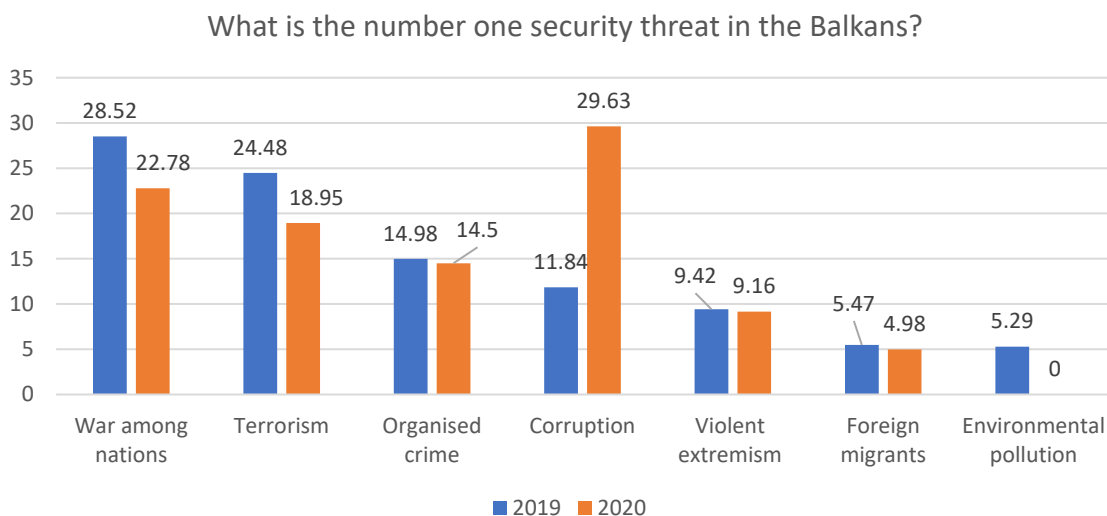
Graph 32. Impact of Covid-19 pandemic on Albania's security.

The responses regarding the impact of the pandemic in the following year show similar tendencies, but a lower percentage think it will have a negative impact and a higher percentage of those who see the pandemic as playing a neutral or even positive (13.4%) role.



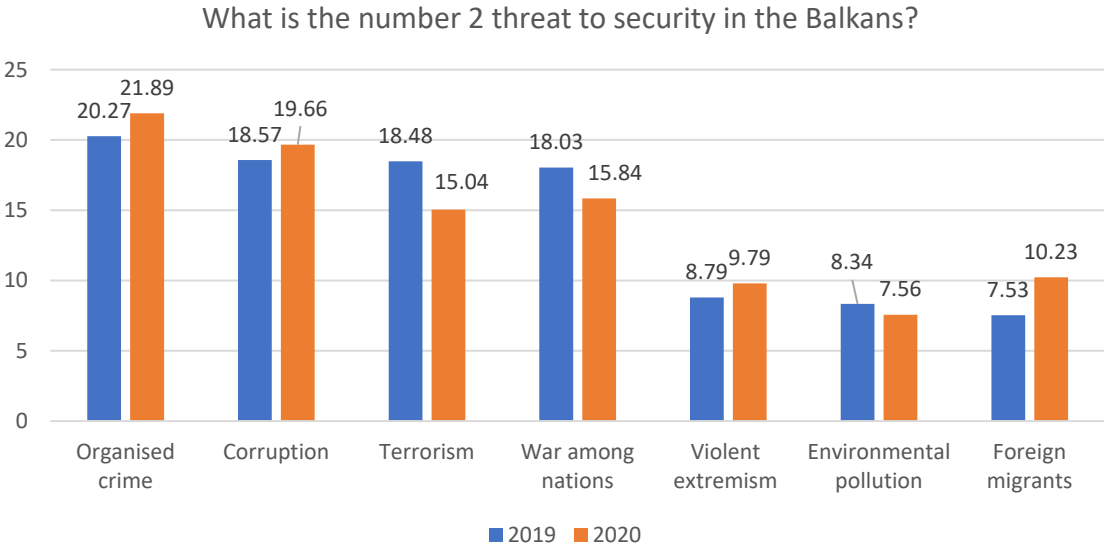
Graph 33. Impact of Covid-19 pandemic on Albania's security in the next 12 months.

In terms of security threats in the Balkans, there is a much higher percentage of citizens who regard corruption as a major security threat this year compared to 2019 barometer. The percentage increase from 11.84% to 29.63%. Compared to last year, the security threat from war among neighbouring nations, terrorism, and organized crime is seen as major threats by a lower percentage of citizens.



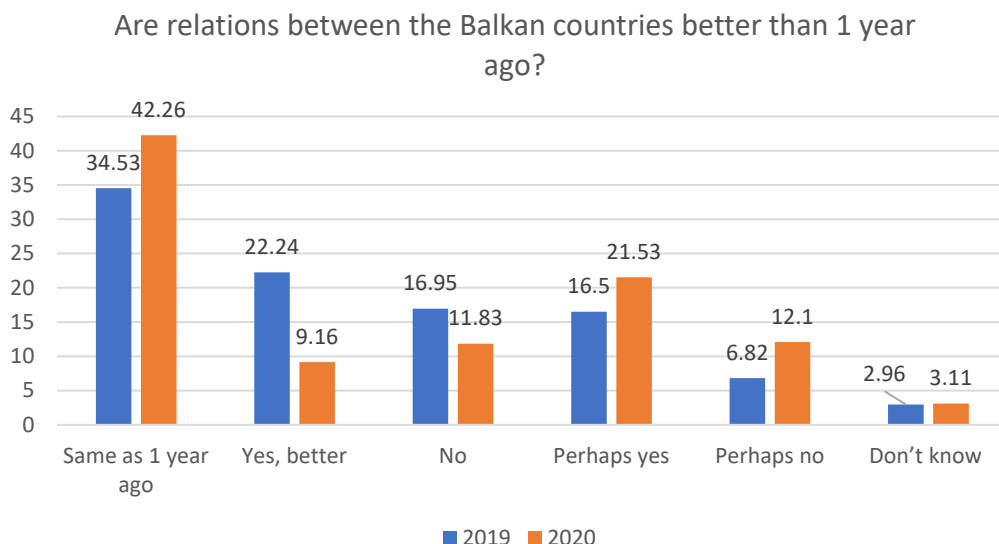
Graph 34. Perception of the main security threat in the Balkans.

In terms of the second greatest threat to the Balkan region, similarly to the previous year, a more even breakdown of the seven security threats can be seen. A slightly lower percentage is observed for the threat from terrorism and war among nations.



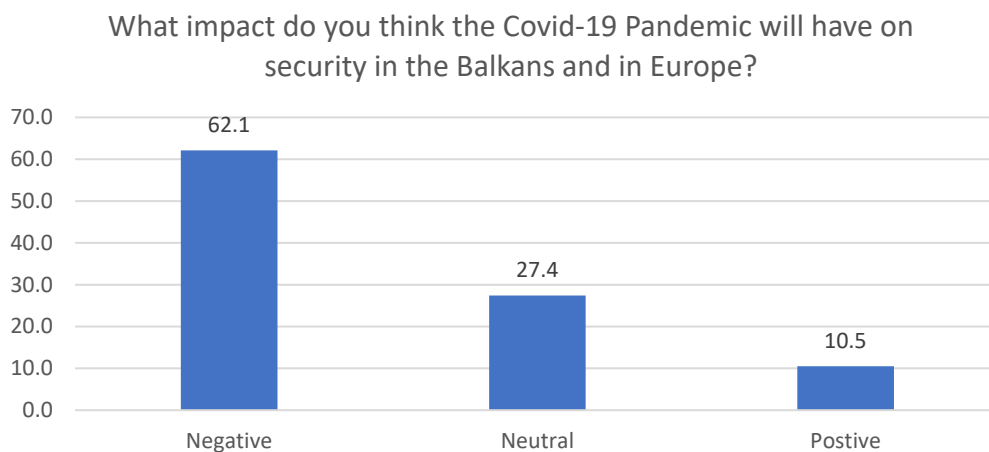
Graph 35. Perception of the second-greatest security threat in the Balkans

Regarding the perception of relations between Balkan countries, a significant decrease (13 percentage points) is found in the percentage of those who think that these relations are better than a year ago compared to the 2019 barometer. A larger percentage, (42.2%, a 7.7 percentage point increase) think that the relations among Balkan countries have not changed, while the percentage who think that relations are worse decreased by 5 percentage points.



Graph 36. Perception of relations among Balkan countries compared to one year ago.

Similar to the question on Albania's security, a majority (62%) of citizens think that the Covid-19 pandemic will have a negative impact on security in the region and elsewhere in Europe.

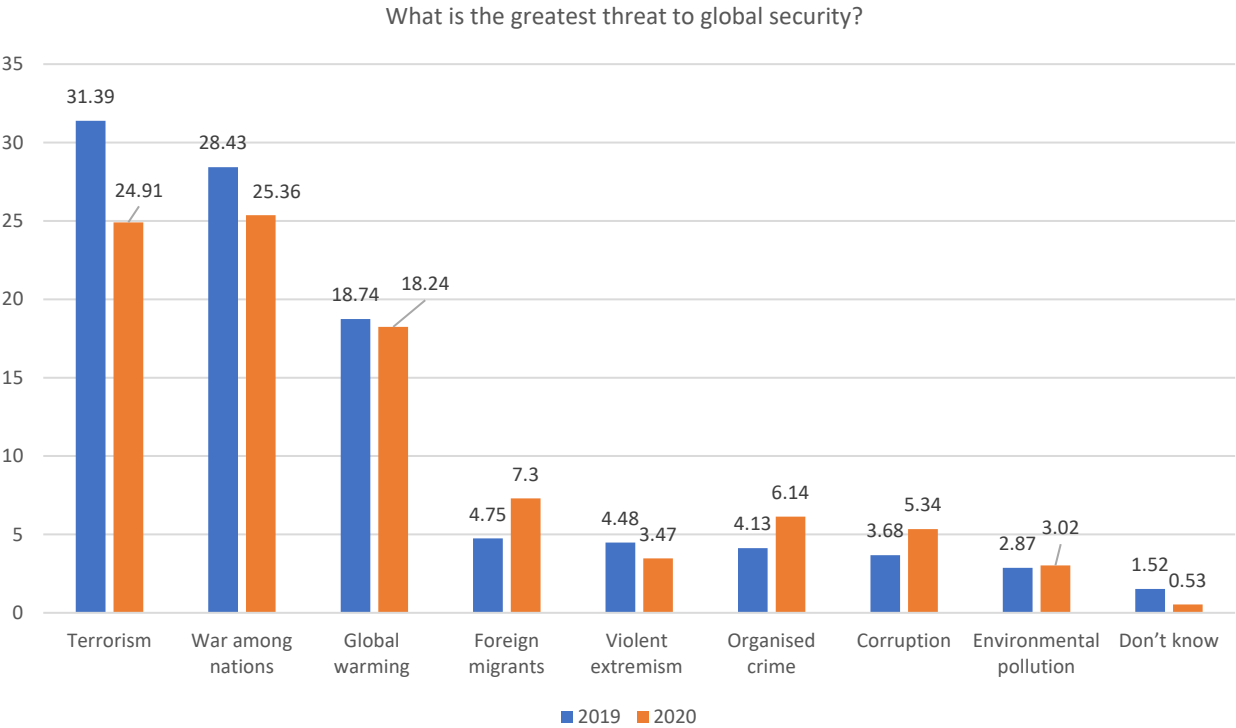


Graph 37. Impact of Covid-19 pandemic on security of the Balkans and Europe.

Globally, terrorism, war among nations and global warming are perceived by the highest percentage of respondents as the three greatest threats to global security.

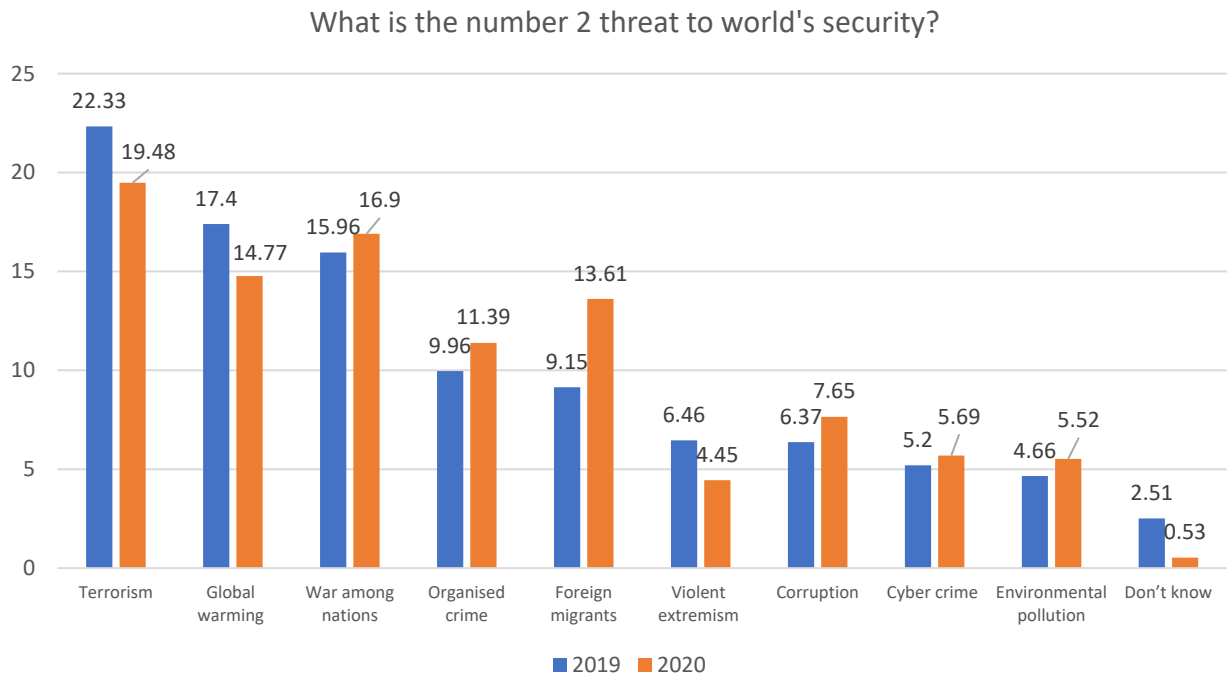
However, similar to the question on the security of Albania and the Balkan region, there is a 6.5 percentage point decrease among those who see terrorism as the main threat to global security. The same change is observed for the threat of war among nations, global warming, and violent extremism.

There is an increase by 3 percentage points of those who see mass migration, organized crime, and corruption as the greatest threat to the global security.



Graph 38. Perception of main threat to global security.

Similar changes to above can be seen in the responses given to the second-greatest threat to the global security, where the percentage of those who see foreign migrants as a threat has a more noticeable increase, about 4.5 percentage points.



Graph 39. Perception of second most important threat to global security.

Influences on Albania's Security

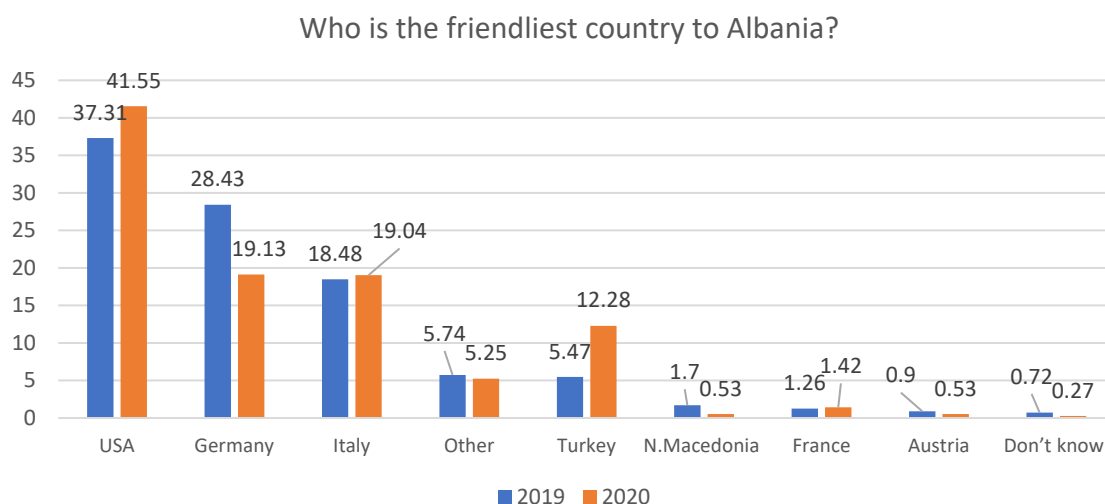
Given that global security is defined by nations' relations in the international security system, interviewees were asked which country they considered to be the friendliest to Albania, about the role that NATO and the EU play in the country's security, and about the influence of individual countries on Albania's security.

Friendliest Countries

Citizens were asked via three different questions to identify, among nine options, which country they identified as being the friendliest, the second friendliest and the third friendliest to Albania.

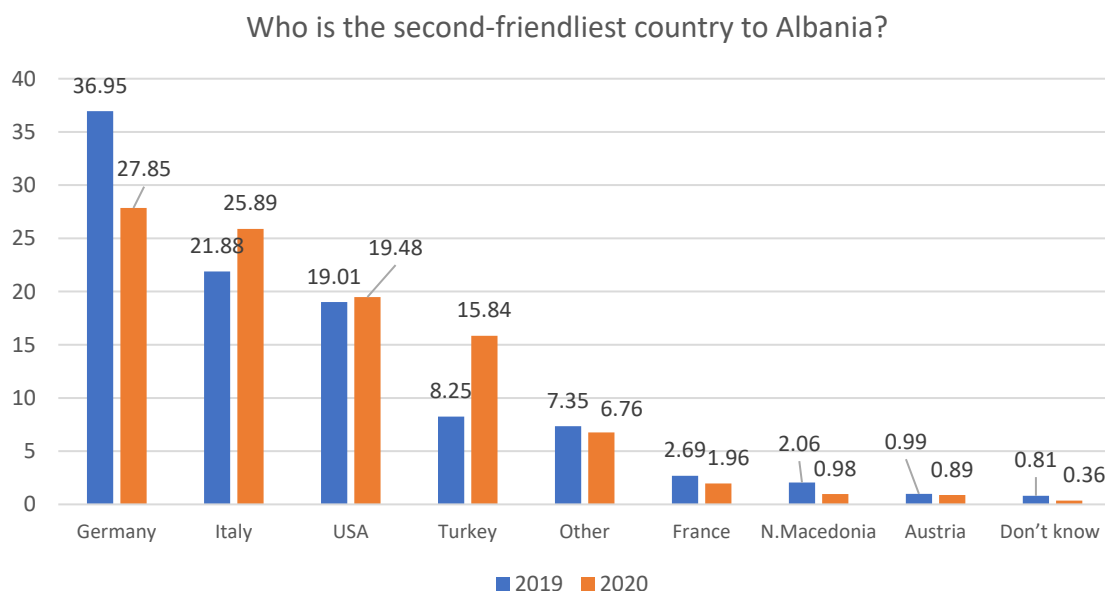
Similar to the 2019 barometer, the USA, Germany, and Italy were identified as the three friendliest countries by most respondents.

The USA is perceived as the friendliest country by about 4 percentage points more than in the 2019 barometer, while Germany is regarded as friendliest by 9.1 percentage points fewer respondents. Turkey was identified as the friendliest to Albania by an increase of 6.8 percentage points over the previous year (an increase of approximately 125%).



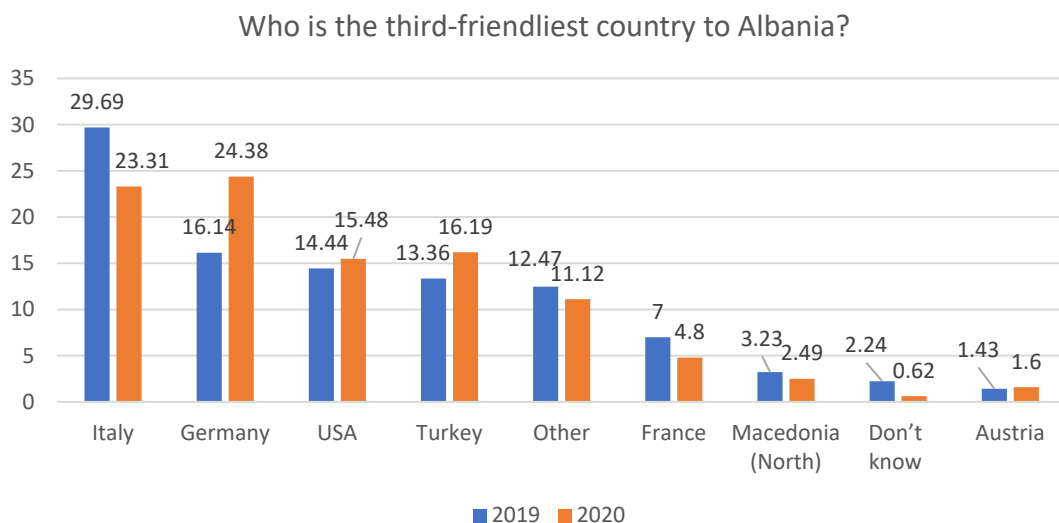
Graph 40. Perception of the friendliest country to Albania.

Germany has been identified as the second-friendliest country by a plurality of 27.8% of respondents, a decrease of 9.1 percentage points compared to the 2019 barometer. Italy is considered as the second-friendliest country to Albania by about an additional 4 percentage points of respondents than last year, and Turkey saw an increase of 7.5 percentage points.



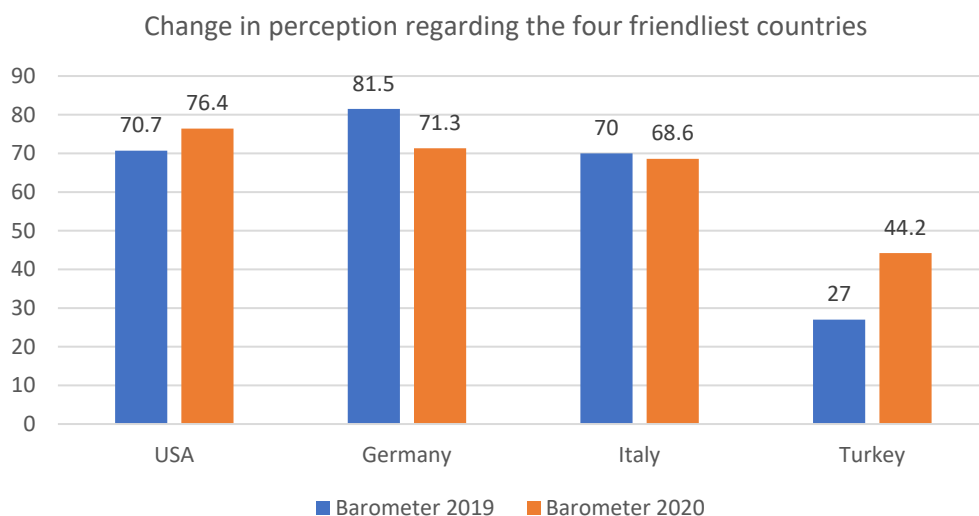
Graph 41. Perception of the second-friendliest country to Albania.

Similar changes are also identified for the third friendliest country in terms of the four aforementioned countries. But as can be seen from the graph, the percentage of those who considered Italy the third-friendliest decreased, whereas the corresponding figure for Germany increased by 8.2 percentage points, for Turkey by 2.8 percentage points.



Graph 42. Perception of third-friendliest country to Albania.

The graph below shows the change in perception regarding the four friendliest countries using the aggregated percentages of the three questions. As can be seen, Turkey is regarded as one of the friendliest countries by more respondents (an increase of 15 percentage points). The change for the USA was 6 percentage points more, 10 percentage points less for Germany and 1.4 percentage points less for Italy.

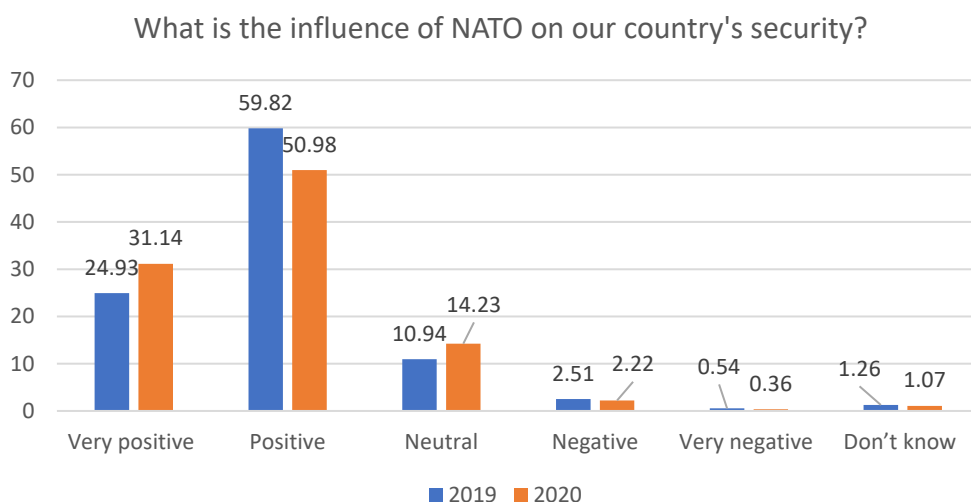


Graph 43. Change in perception of the four friendliest country to Albania between the two barometers.

Influence of Western Countries, NATO, and EU on Security

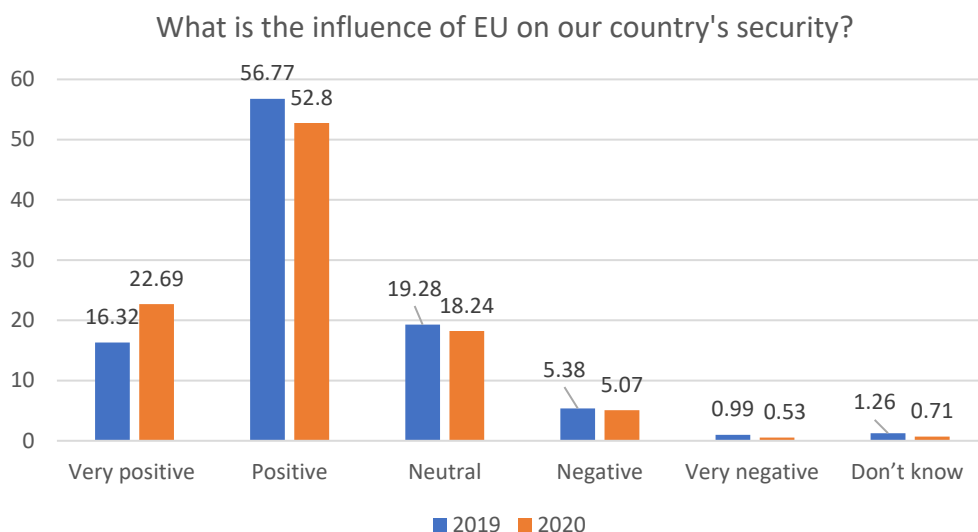
In terms of the various international actors' influence on Albania's security, citizens were asked about their perceptions regarding the influence of NATO and the EU on the security of the country as well as that of various influential countries in the international arena.

The 2020 barometer reveals that most of Albanian citizens consider both NATO and the EU to contribute positively to Albania's security. In terms of NATO's influence, the percentage of those who think that NATO has a positive and very positive influence on Albania's security has decline slightly from 84.7% to 82.1% in the 2020 barometer. The percentage of respondents that declared that NATO has a neutral influence has also increased.



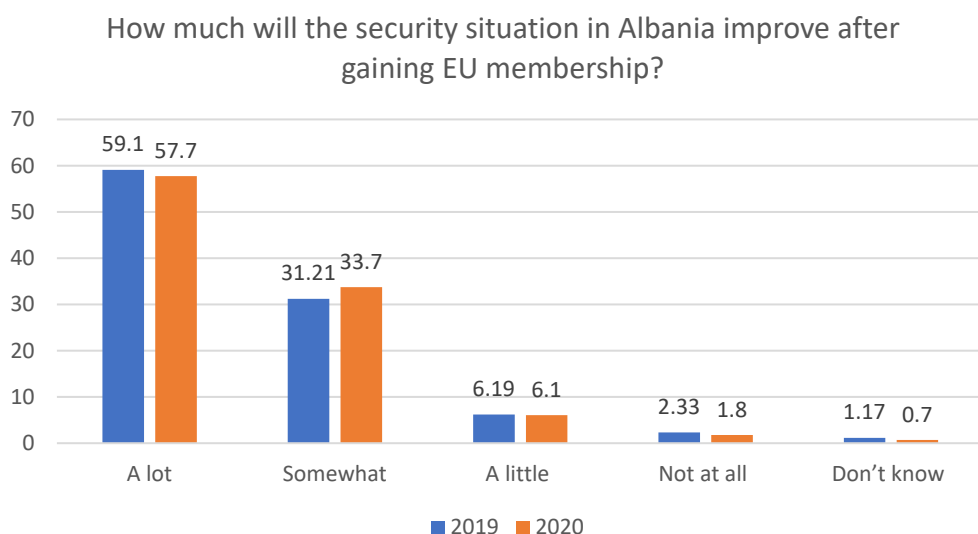
Graph 44. Perception of NATO influence on Albania's security.

Unlike the perception of NATO, this year's barometer reports a slight increase in the percentage of those who think that the EU plays a positive and very positive role in Albania's security, from 73.9% to 75.49%.



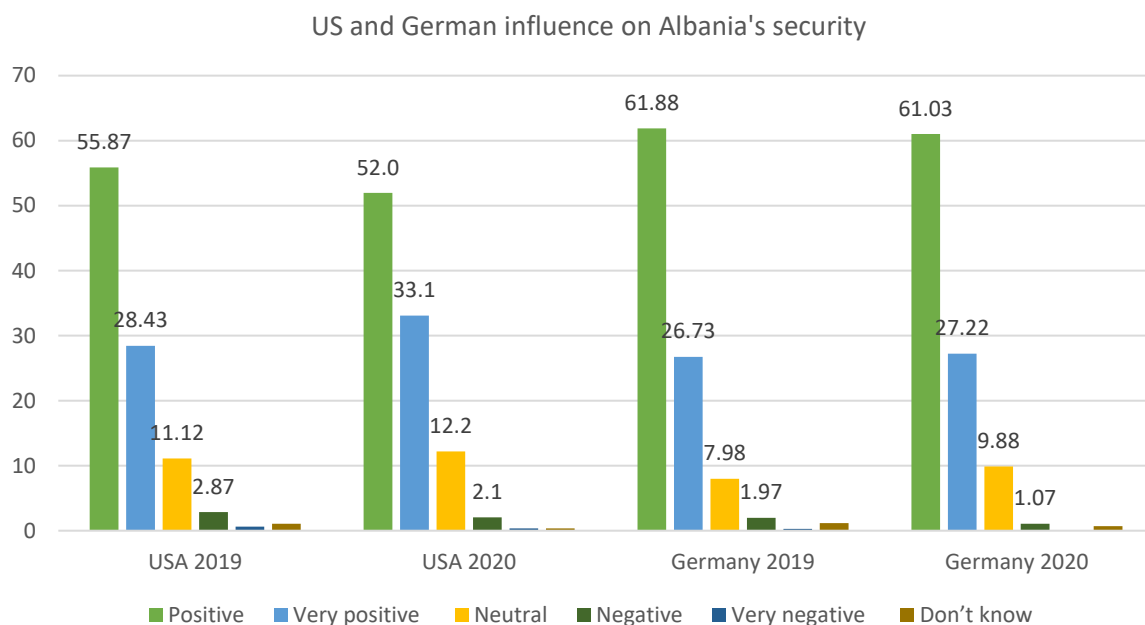
Graph 45. Perception of EU influence on Albania's security.

The perception about the EU as a positive contributor to security is also reflected in the question on the EU's influence on Albania's security upon gaining membership. The answers show a slightly increase of about 1 percentage point of those who think that the security situation in Albania will improve a lot or somewhat with EU membership and a similar decrease of those who think that this will have little impact.



Graph 46. Expectations of security after gaining EU membership.

This year, both the USA and Germany are perceived as having a positive influence on the security of Albania. Similar to the previous barometer, there is a slightly higher percentage, 88.2%, of those who think that Germany has a positive or very positive impact compared to the USA, about which 85.1% share this opinion, though the percentage of those who think that the USA has a very positive influence is higher. It is worth noting the slight increase of those who think that the USA does not play a role, which is also increasing for Germany although lower in absolute value.



Graph 47. Perception of influence of the USA and Germany on Albania's security.

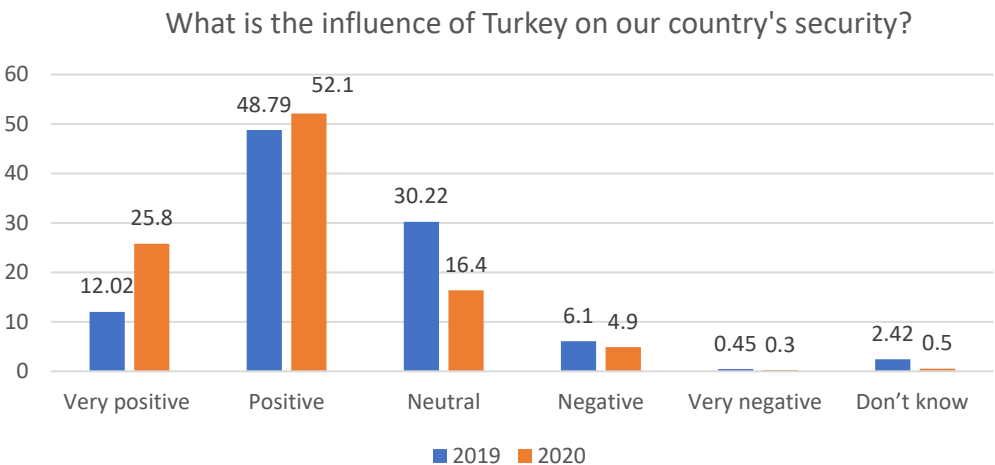
Influence of “External Actors”

In addition to the USA and Germany as major Western powers within NATO and the EU, citizens were also asked about their perception of the impact of so-called “third actors” or “external powers” on Albania's security, which includes those countries that over the last decade have mainly sought to extend their influence in the Balkan countries to rival with the EU and NATO.

The citizens were asked the same question: “What is the influence of a certain country on your country’s security?” referring to Russia, China, Turkey, Iran, and the Arab countries.

Overall, the results show significant changes in perceptions compared to the 2019 barometer, perhaps influenced by international events.

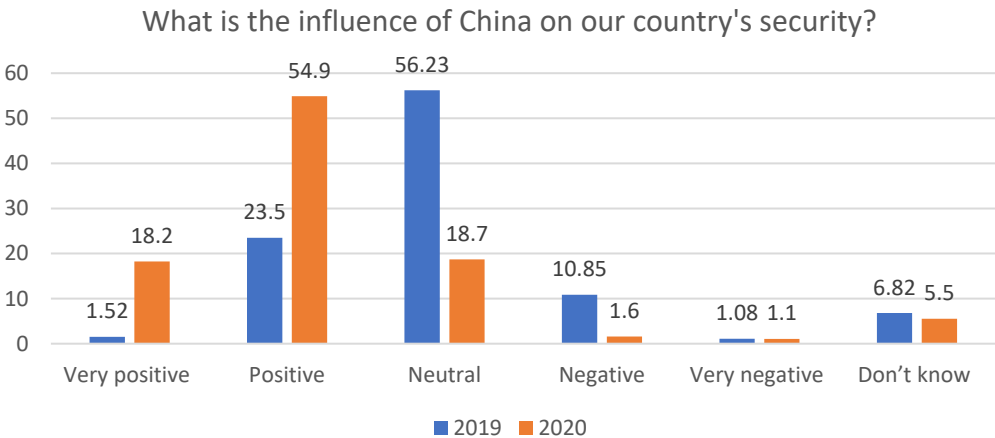
For example, the percentage of respondents who see Turkey’s influence as positive or very positive increased by about 17 percentage points compared to the 2019 barometer. There was also a decrease by 13.8 percentage points of those who think that Turkey has no role in the security of Albania and a slight decrease in the percentage of those who think it has a negative or very negative role, by about 5 percentage points.



Graph 48. Perception of Turkey’s influence.

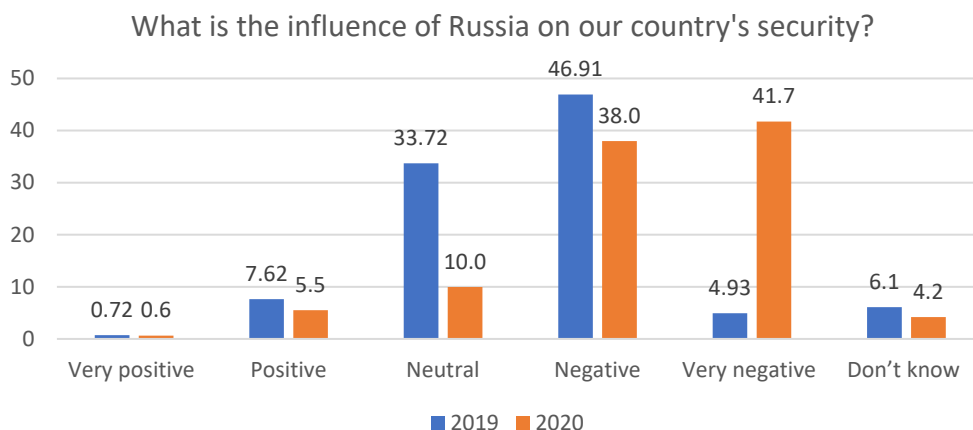
Similar changes with Turkey apply to the answers given regarding China, which is seen to play a positive role in Albania’s security by a significantly higher percentage than in the previous barometer.

The percentage of respondents who think that China plays a neutral role dropped by 37.5 percentage points. On the other hand, those who think that China has a positive influence on the country’s security increased by 31.4 percentage points. There is also a high percentage increase of about 17 percentage points of those who think China has a very positive influence and a significant decline of those who think China has a negative influence. Amid increasing security-related tensions between the USA and China and the connection that Albanian citizens see between their country’s security and the USA, this change calls for a thorough examination and analysis.



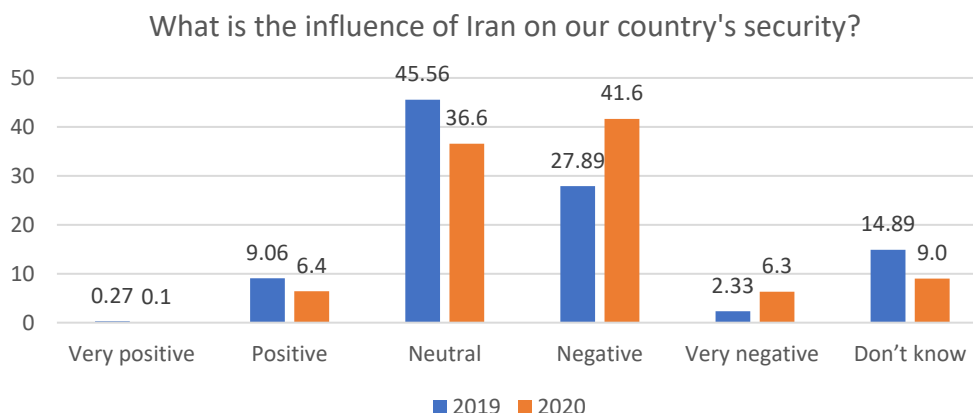
Graph 49. Perception of China’s influence.

For Russia, the barometer results show considerable changes in the perception of Albanian citizens regarding its influence on the country’s security. Yet, unlike in the case of Turkey and China, the change was largely negative. This year’s survey found a substantial increase of 36.7 percentage point of those who think that Russia’s influence on Albania’s security is very negative, from 4.9% in 2019 to 41.7% in 2020. Also, a 23.7 percentage point drop in those who think Russia has no influence is noted. However, about 6% of respondents think that Russia has a positive impact on the country’s security, somewhat less than in the previous barometer.



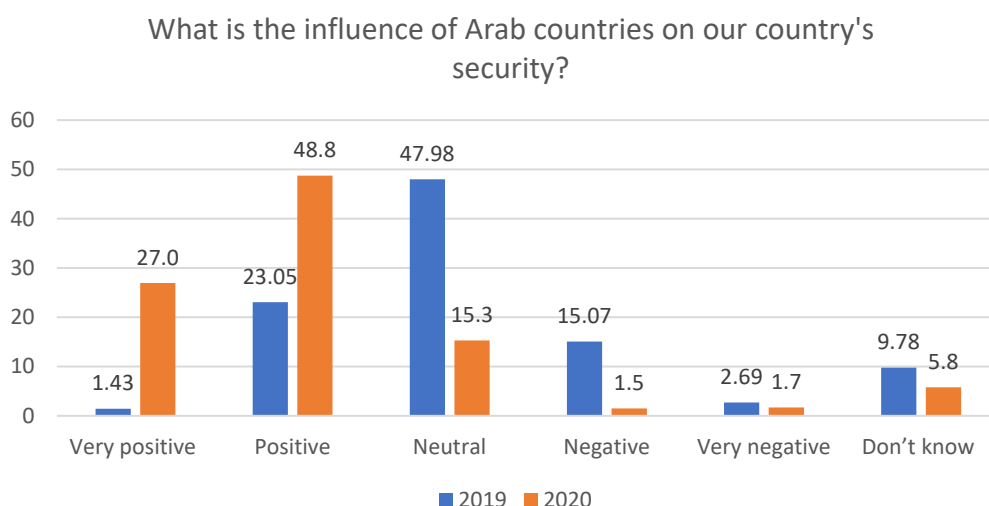
Graph 50. Perception of Russia's influence.

Regarding the influence of Iran, the results show an increase in the percentage of those who think that this country has a negative or very negative impact on the security of Albania and a decrease in the percentage of those who think that it has a neutral influence. However, taking into account Albania's frozen relations with Iran since the expulsion of the Iranian Ambassador as *persona non grata* in 2018 and the declaration of two other Iranian diplomats as unacceptable in January 2020, there seems to be a nonalignment between the official policy and the public perceptions. As in the case of China, this change deserves to be analysed more thoroughly.



Graph 51. Perception of Iran's influence.

Similar to the previous barometer, citizens were asked about their perception of Arab countries' influence on the security of Albania, given their increasing presence in Albanian of countries such as Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar. The results show that the percentage of citizens who think that these countries have a positive or very positive impact on the security of Albania has increased considerably. While the barometer of 2019 showed that 24.5% of citizens declared such opinion, in 2020 the share of respondents jumped to 75.8%. Indeed, this change is also accompanied by a significant decline of the percentage of respondents who say that Arab countries have a negative or very negative influence and those who declare that these countries have no influence.

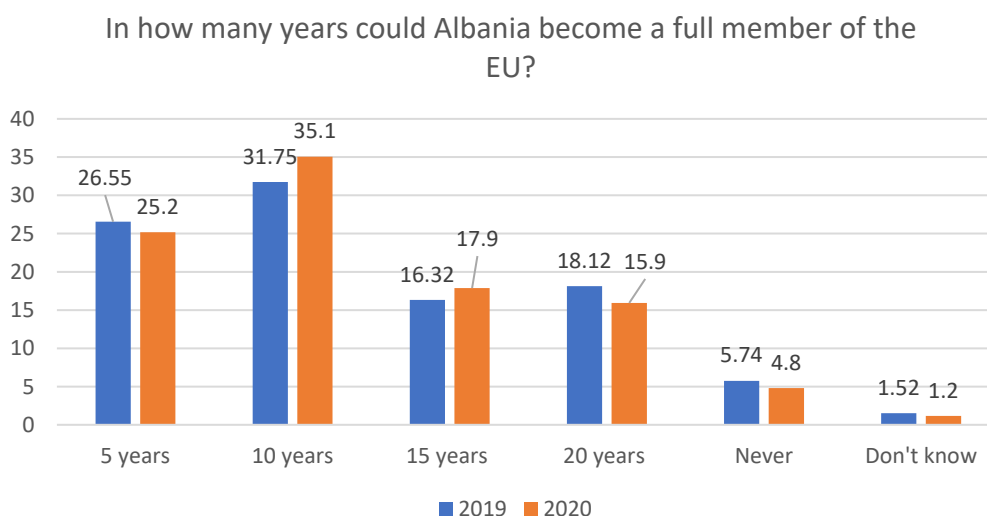


Graph 52. Perception of Arab countries' influence.

EU Integration and Perception of Key Priorities

EU membership has been declared as Albania's top national priority, significantly shaping and influencing domestic and foreign policies. In March 2020, the EU decided to open membership negotiations, though Albania will have to meet certain conditions in order to obtain an initiation date for these negotiations.

This decision seems to have affected citizens' perception regarding the time at which Albania will join the EU. This is expressed by means of a slight increase of the percentage of those who think that membership will be achieved within 10 or 15 years and a decrease in the percentage of those who think that this will happen in 20 years or will never happen.

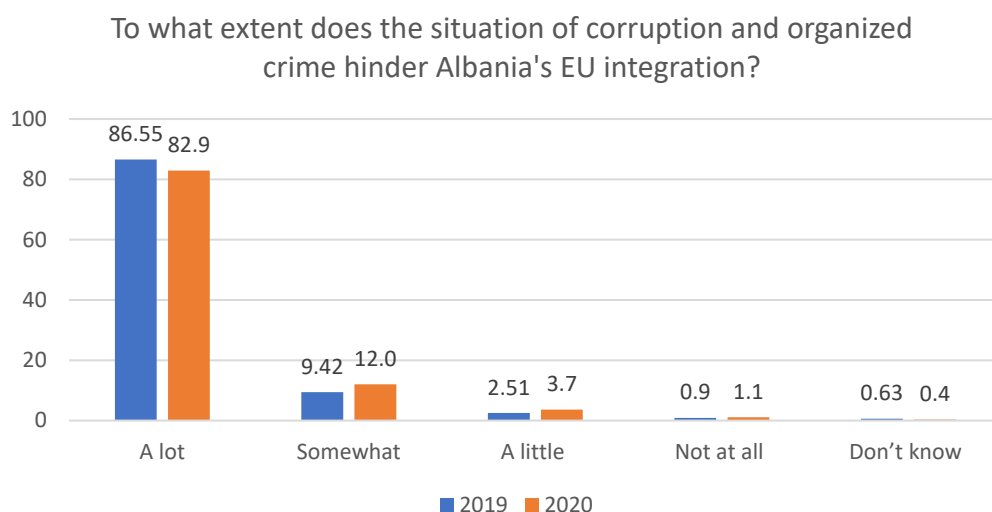


Graph 53. Expectation of the time needed for Albania to achieve EU membership.

Opening EU membership negotiations and subsequent membership are related to the fulfilment of some key priorities, including (1) reform of the public administration in order to enhance its professionalism and to undergo depoliticization, (2) strengthening of the independence, efficiency, and accountability of judicial institutions, (3) the fight against corruption, (4) the fight against organized crime, and (5) the improvement of the protection of

human rights, anti-discrimination policies and implementation of property rights.

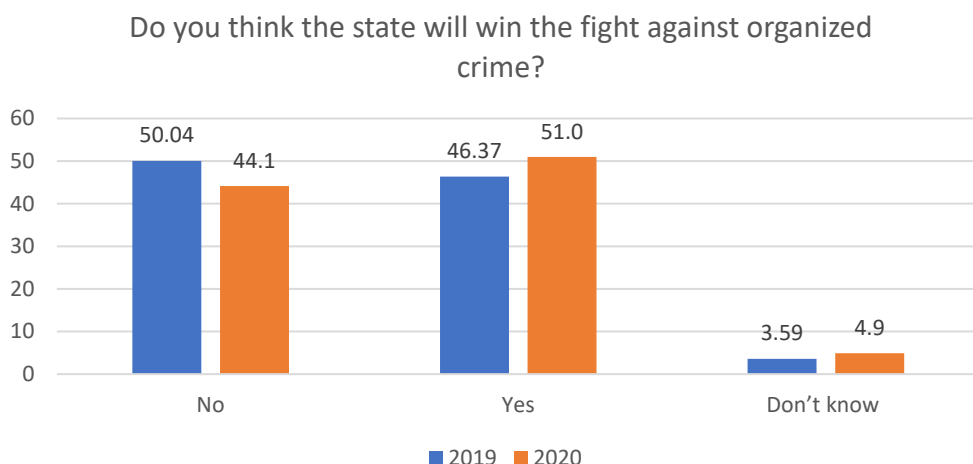
The barometer results show that citizens are very well aware of the obstacles to EU accession posed by corruption and organized crime: 95% of those surveyed answered that corruption and organized crime impede Albania's EU integration somewhat or to a great extent. This percentage is similar with that of the previous barometer. Yet, there is a slight increase from 3.4% to 4.8% in the percentage of those who think that corruption and organized crime hinder the membership process little or not at all.



Graph 54. Perception of the negative influence of corruption and organized crime on Albania's EU integration.

Given that the fight against organised crime has been and remains one of the key priorities for Albania's EU accession process, the barometer has included two questions to get the perceptions of the citizens regarding their confidence in the results of the fight against organised crime.

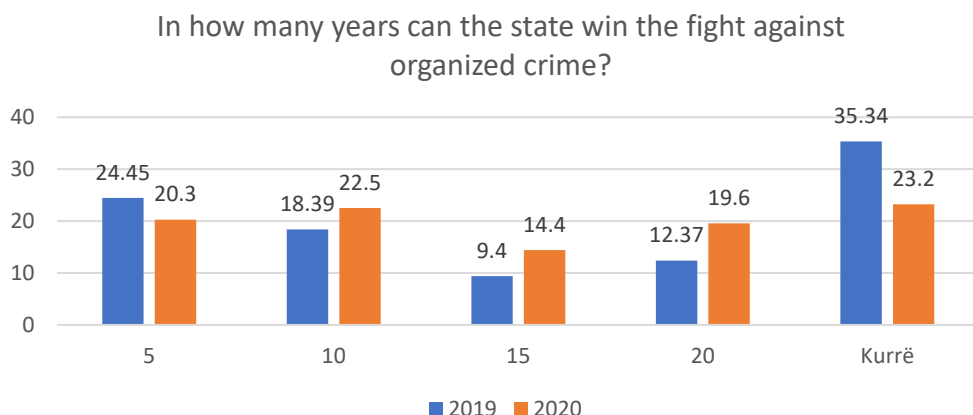
Same as in the previous barometer, citizens remain almost equally split between those who believe that the fight against organized crime will be won and those who do not believe in the prospect of winning this fight. However, there is a slight increase in the percentage of those who are more confident about the positive results of the fight against organised crime.



Graph 55. Expectations on the war against organized crime.

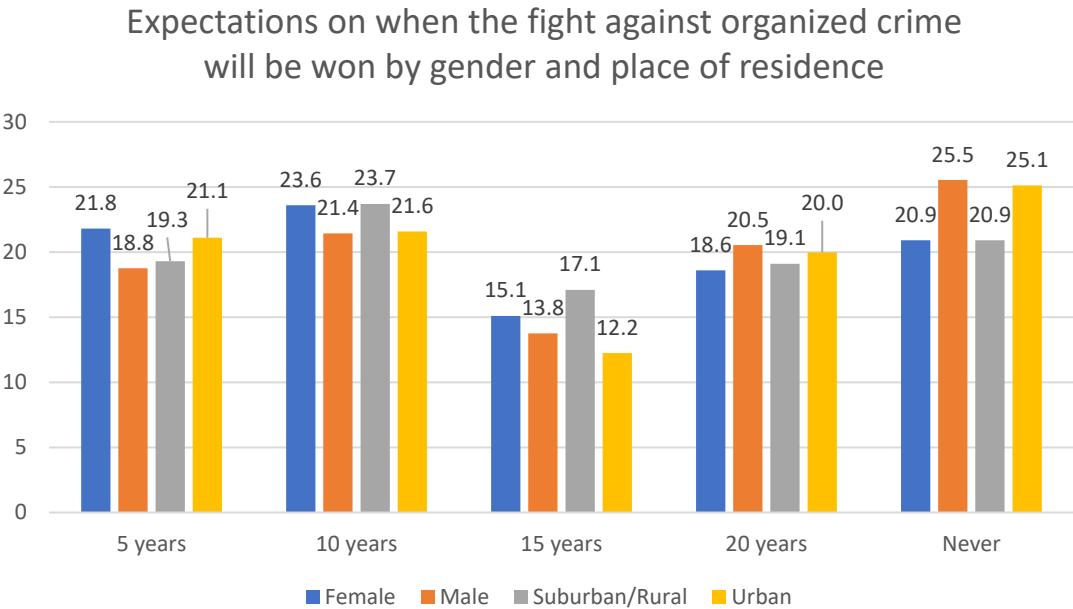
Those who say the fight against organized crime will be won were asked to say how long this victory can be achieved. The result shows a sharp decline of the percentage of those who think this war will never be won, from 35.34% in 2019 to 23.2%. However, there is an increasing trend in the percentage of those who see the results of this war to be obtained in the next 10 to 20 years and a decrease of those who believe that these results will be obtained within 5 years.

Regarding the time when the results of the fight against organised crime will be achieved, there is a decrease of the percentage of those who expect the results within 5 years and an increase of those who expect those results in 10 or 15 years. About the same percentage of those who are not confident about the results (42.8%) say that this fight will bear its results in 20 years or never.



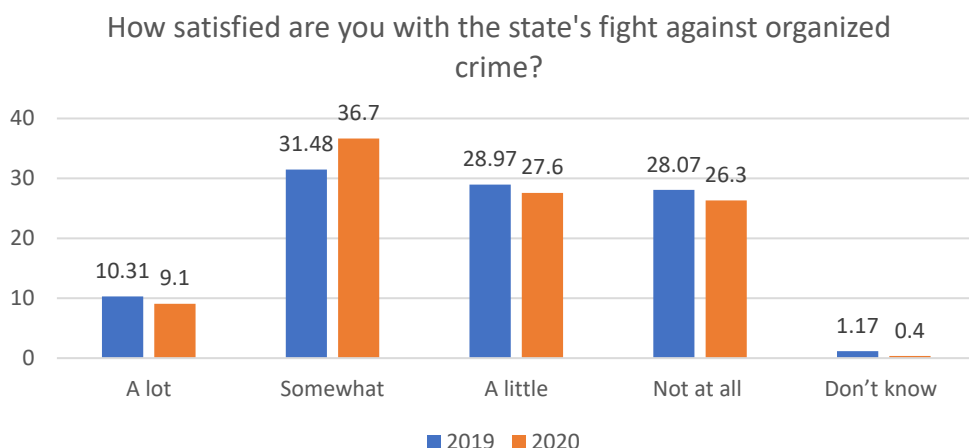
Graph 56. Expectations on the time needed to win the war on organized crime.

The results of responses disaggregated by gender and place of residence show that women and residents of suburban and rural areas are less inclined to believe that the fight against organized crime will be won. It is worth noting the higher percentage of female respondents, 6.7% versus 3% of male respondents, who do not have an opinion on the result of the fight against organized crime.



Graph 57. Expectations on the fight against organized crime by gender and place of residence

In terms of satisfaction with institutions’ performance in the fight against organized crime, the percentage of the respondents who are somewhat satisfied has increased by about 5 percentage points and the percentage of those who say they are very satisfied has slightly decreased. Likewise, the percentage of those who are little or not at all satisfied has slightly decreased by about 1 to 2 percentage points.

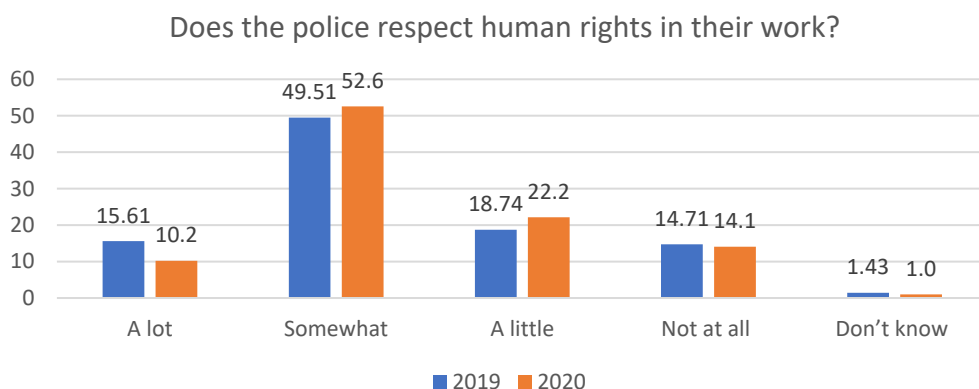


Graph 58. Results on the level of satisfaction with the state's war on organized crime.

Another key criterion for EU membership negotiations is improvement of the human rights protection. Given that the State Police is the institution which to a large extent interacts with the citizens by exercising its monopoly of force, citizens were also asked in this year's barometer about their perception regarding the respect of human rights by the police.

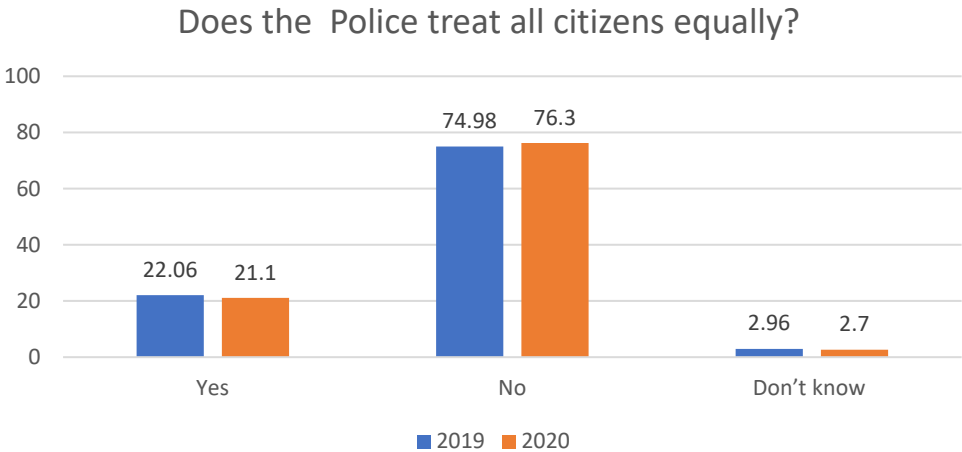
The results show that the percentage of those who think that the police respect human rights during the exercise of duty has decreased by about 4 percentage points. The decrease is slightly higher this among those who think that the police respect these rights to a great extent.

This change can be explained with the increased police interaction with citizens amid protests in implementing the measures imposed to prevent the spread of the pandemic during 2020.



Graph 59. Perception of police compliance with human rights.

Equal treatment of citizens by the State Police continues to be a concern to respondents taking into account that three-quarters think that citizens are not treated equally. Moreover, the survey data show that this sentiment continued in 2020 as in 2019. The percentage of those who think that the State Police does not treat citizens equally increased slightly and the percentage of those who think otherwise decreased slightly by 1 percentage point.

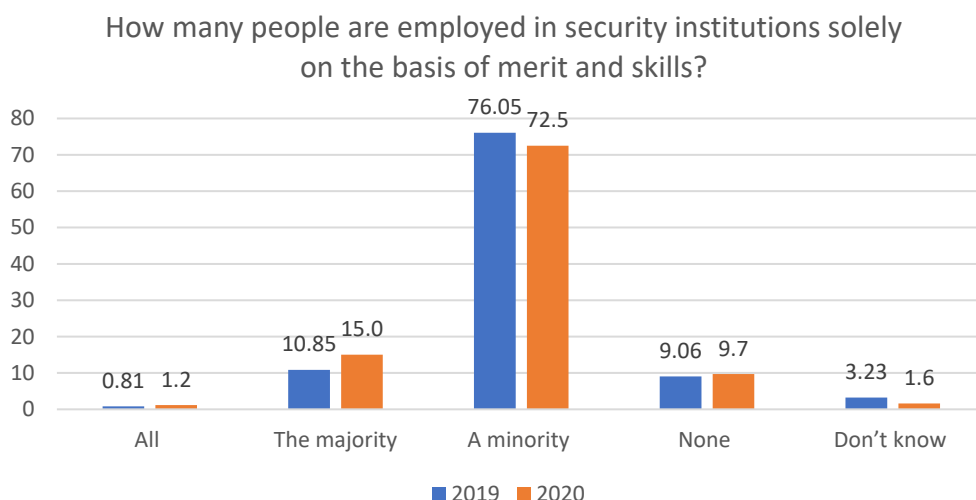


Graph 60. Perception of equal treatment of citizens by the police.

The reform of public administration, strengthening its professionalism and its depoliticization are other key EU priorities. One of the main elements of strengthening professionalism and depoliticization is in the recruitment in the public administration.

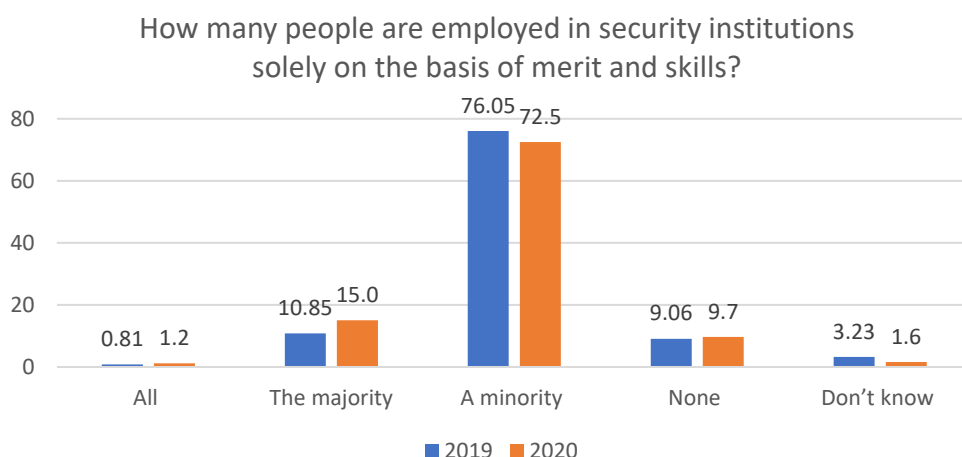
Barometer results show that this year the belief that employment in state administration is only based on merit and skills is low, as 85% of respondents think that no one or only a minority are employed based on those criteria.

However, there is a slight positive change as there are about 5 percentage points fewer of those thinking that only a minority are employed in the state administration based only on merit and skills and more respondents (by 4.2 percentage points) think that the majority are.



Graph 61. Perception of employment in the public administration based on skill/merit.

A similar inclination appears regarding employment in security institutions. The vast majority, 82.2%, think that none or only a minority are employed in security institutions solely based on their merits or skills. Yet, similar to the state administration as a whole, the results show a slight decrease in those who think few people are employed this way and an increase of about 4% of those who think that the majority are employed based on those criteria.

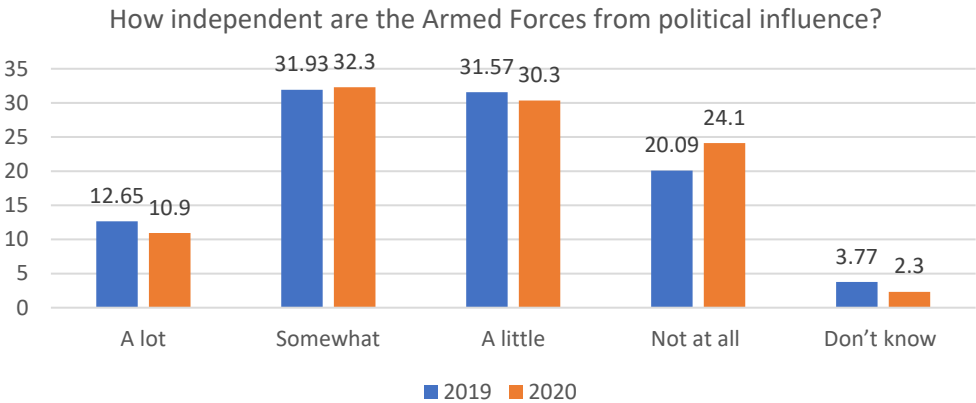


Graph 62. Perception of merit- and skill-based employment in security institutions.

In addition to recruitment, political influence on security institutions, which are presumed to have legal and professional autonomy, constitutes one of the foundations of security sector reform and good governance.

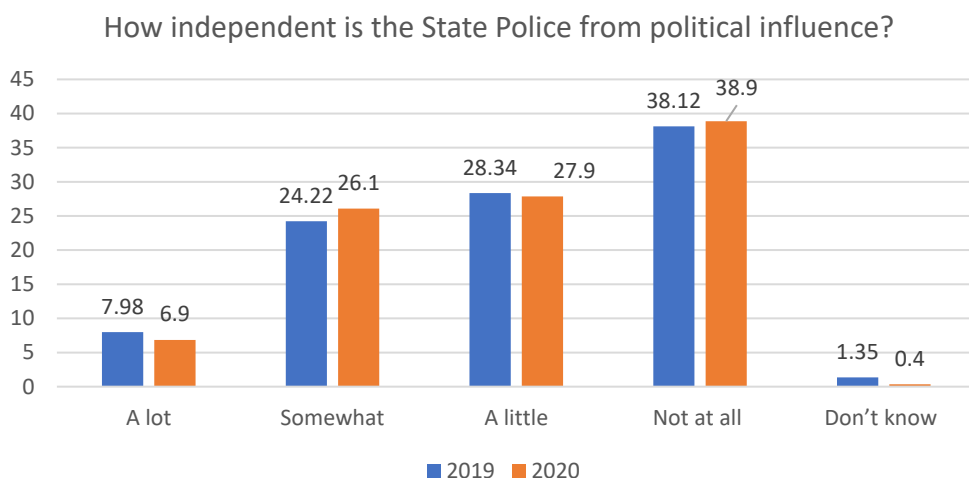
In terms of political influence on the military, the barometer shows that citizens are generally divided between those who think the military is very or somewhat independent of political influence, at 43%, and those who think that this institution is slightly or not at all independent, at 54.4%.

However, an increasing percentage of respondents think that political influence in the military has increased, as the 2019 barometer showed that only 52.4% shared this opinion.



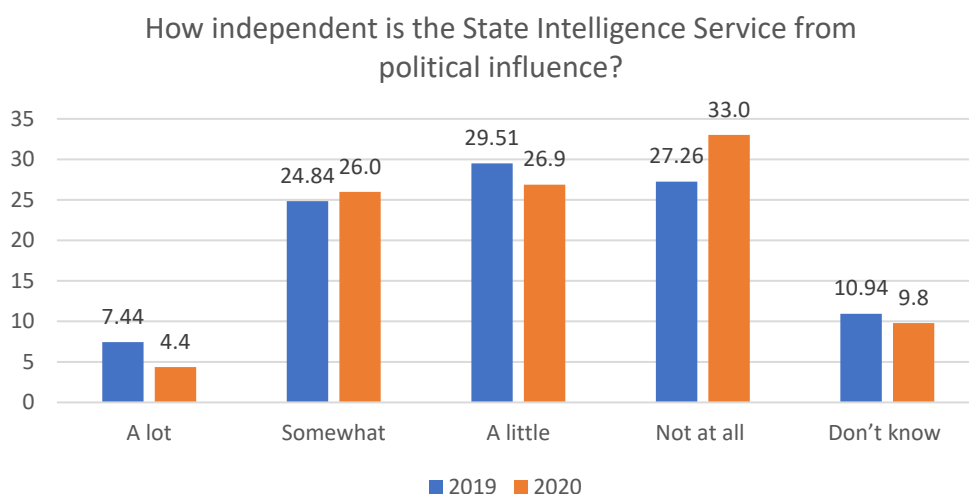
Graph 63. Perception of the military’s independence from political influence.

Compared to the military, the State Police are perceived by more people to be under the influence of politics, as more than two-thirds, 66.8%, think that this institution is a little or not at all independent from political influence. No noticeable change compared to the 2019 barometer can be seen.



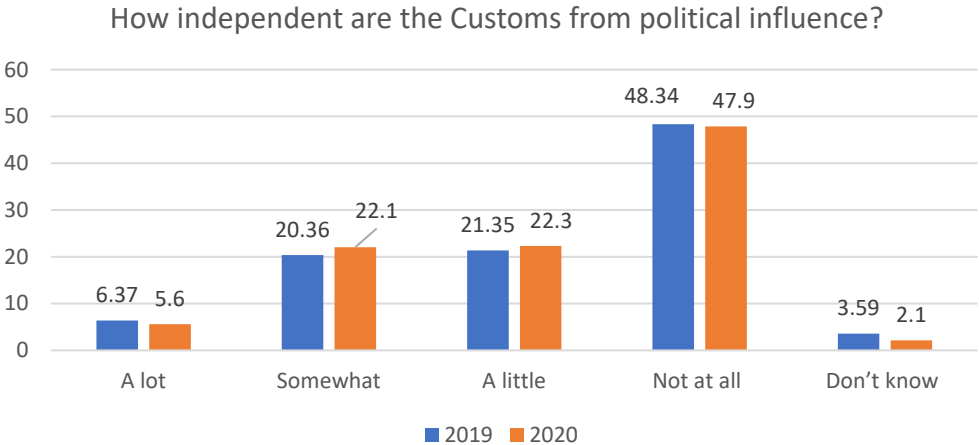
Graph 64. Perception of State Police's independence from political influence.

Similar to the State Police, the State Intelligence Service is perceived to be under the influence of politics by a large percentage of citizens. Some 60% think that SHISH is a little or not at all independent from political influence, but there is a larger percentage of those who think that SHISH is not independent at all compared to the State Police (with an increase of about 6 percentage points compared to the 2019 barometer), and a 3 percentage point decrease of the percentage of those who think this institution is very independent.



Graph 65. Perception of State Intelligence Service's independence from political influence.

Customs remains the institution which is perceived as little or not at all independent of the political influence by the largest share of citizens, 70.2%, compared to other executive institutions. There was no noticeable change compared to the 2019 barometer.



Graph 66. Perception of Customs' independence from political influence.

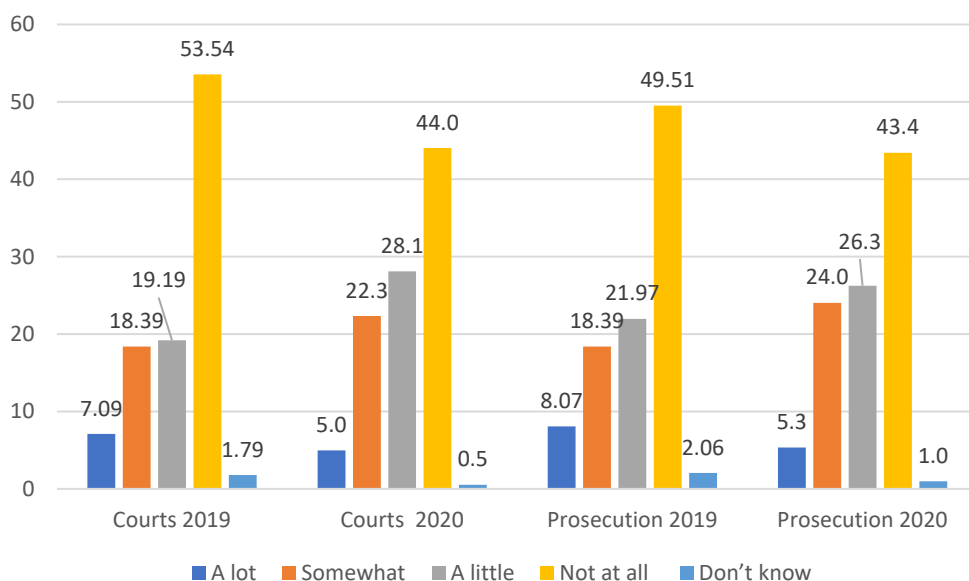
Even regarding the independence of justice institutions from political influence, a large percentage of citizens, over two-thirds, think that these institutions are only little or not at all independent.

When compared to the 2019 barometer, however, both institutions have seen a decrease in the percentage of those who think they are not independent at all and an increase in the percentage of those who think they are only a little independent, which can still be interpreted as a serious challenge regarding their perception.

For both the courts and the Office of the Prosecutor General, only 5% of citizens think they are very independent of political influence, slightly lower than that observed in the 2019 barometer. The percentage of citizens who think that the Office of the Prosecutor General is very independent of the political influence is about 3.5 percentage points lower and about 3 percentage points less for the courts.

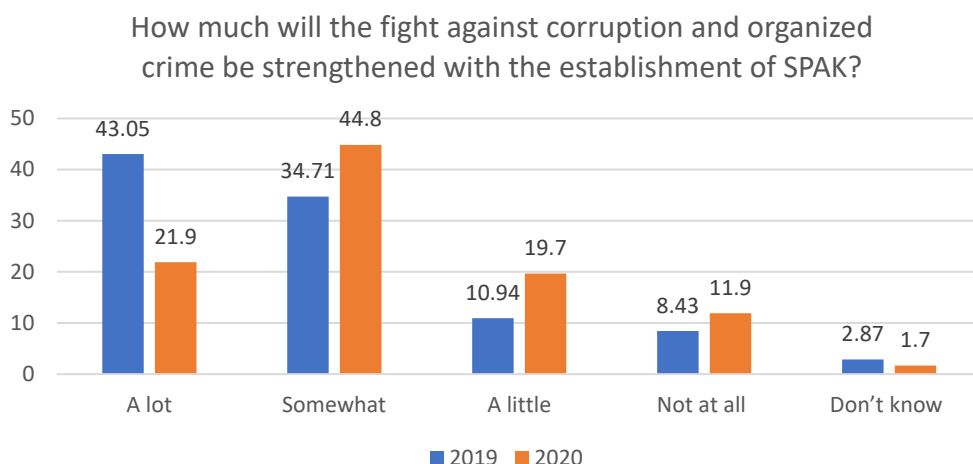
Strengthening such institutions' independence from political influence has been named as one of the cornerstones of the justice reform.

Independence from the political influence of the Prosecution and the Courts



Graph 67. Perception of independence of Office of the Prosecutor General and courts from political influence.

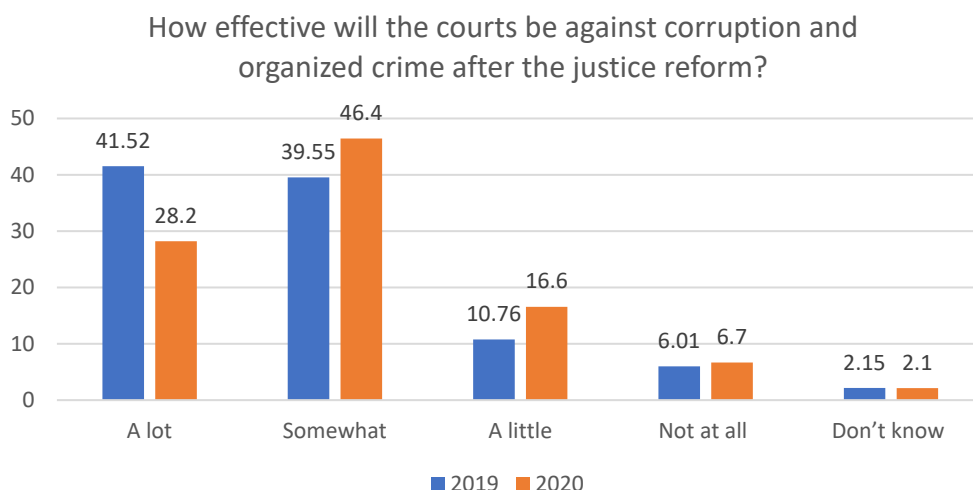
Current politics are reflected in the barometer when considering respondents' expectations regarding the fight against corruption and organized crime with the creation of new institutions. The results show a significant decrease, of 21.6 percentage points, of those who think that the fight against corruption and organized crime will be strengthened after the creation of SPAK, as compared to the 2019 barometer. There is also a significant increase, from 19.37% to 31%, of respondents who think that the fight against corruption and organized crime will be strengthened little or not at all with the creation of SPAK.



Graph 68. Perception regarding the effect of the establishment of SPAK effect on the fight against corruption/organized crime.

Similar changes are also revealed in the survey data regarding the effectiveness of the courts against corruption and crime after the justice reform. Compared to the 2019 barometer, we see a drop by 13.3 percentage points of those who see the effectiveness of the courts increasing significantly after the justice reform.

Likewise, the survey showed a 6.6 percentage point increase in the percentage of citizens who think that the courts will be less or not at all effective against corruption and crime after the justice reform.



Graph 69. Expectations of effectiveness of courts against corruption and organized following the justice reform.

Integrity and Trust in Institutions

Trust is one of the most important foundations upon which the legitimacy of institutions is built. In order to effectively perform their missions, institutions need to be trusted and supported by citizens. On the other hand, trust is closely linked with the extent to which citizens believe that security institutions are free from corruption and of high integrity.

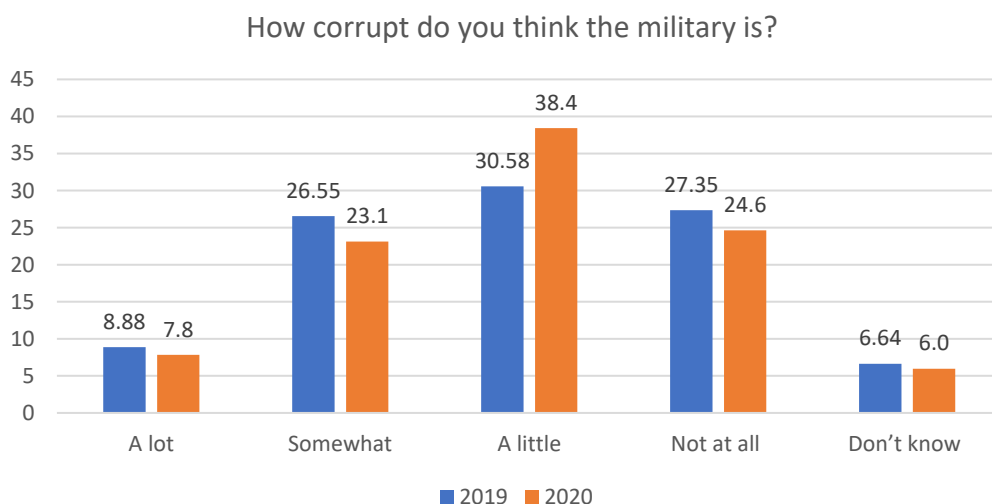
Given that corruption continues to be one of the main concerns for Albanian society in general and security institutions in particular, this edition of the barometer explored citizens' perceptions on the spread of corruption in these institutions and on the trust in security institutions and the institutions that control and supervise them.

Corruption in Security and Justice Institutions

This section of the survey asked citizens to say to what extent corruption is widespread in the main security institutions.

With regards to the military, the data from the responses show that there is a decrease in the perception of the spread of corruption in this institution.

Compared with 35.4% who thought that corruption was very or somewhat widespread in the military in the 2019 barometer, the data of this barometer show a decrease to 30.9% in 2020. This change is also manifested in the increase of the percentage of those who think that corruption is a little or not at all widespread, from 57.9% in 2019 to 63% in 2020.

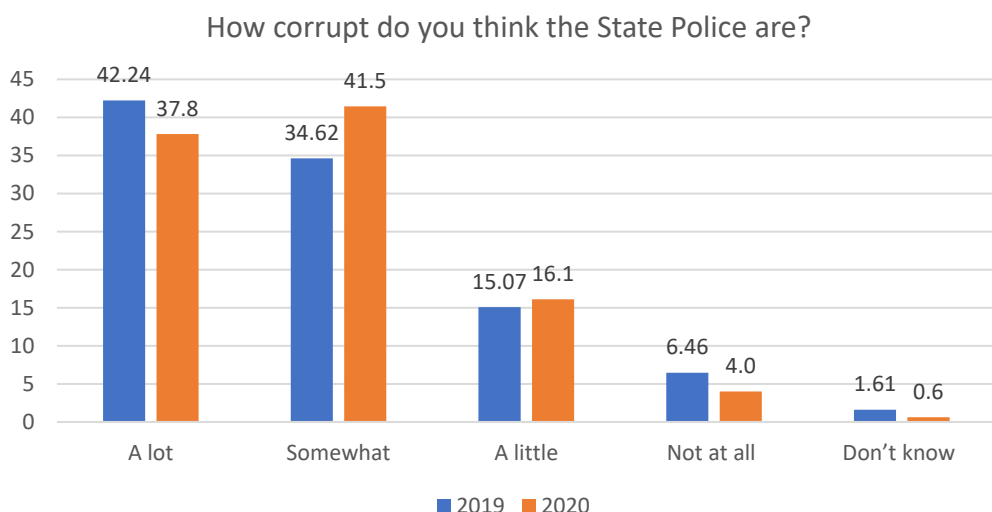


Graph 70. Perception of corruption in the military.

Data on the State Police show an opposite change to that of the military.

In 2019, 76.8% thought that corruption in the State Police was very or somewhat widespread, which increased to 79.3% in 2020. There is also a slight decrease from 21.5% to 20.1% of the percentage of those who think that corruption in this institution is a little or not at all widespread.

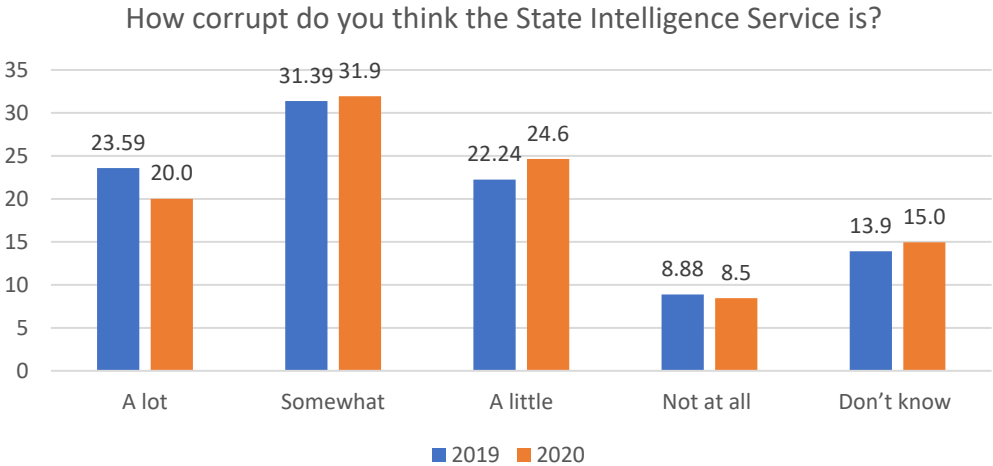
However, in terms of the severity of the spread of this phenomenon, the percentage of respondents who think that corruption is very prevalent has decreased from 42.2% in 2019 to 37.8% in 2020.



Graph 71. Perception of corruption in the State Police.

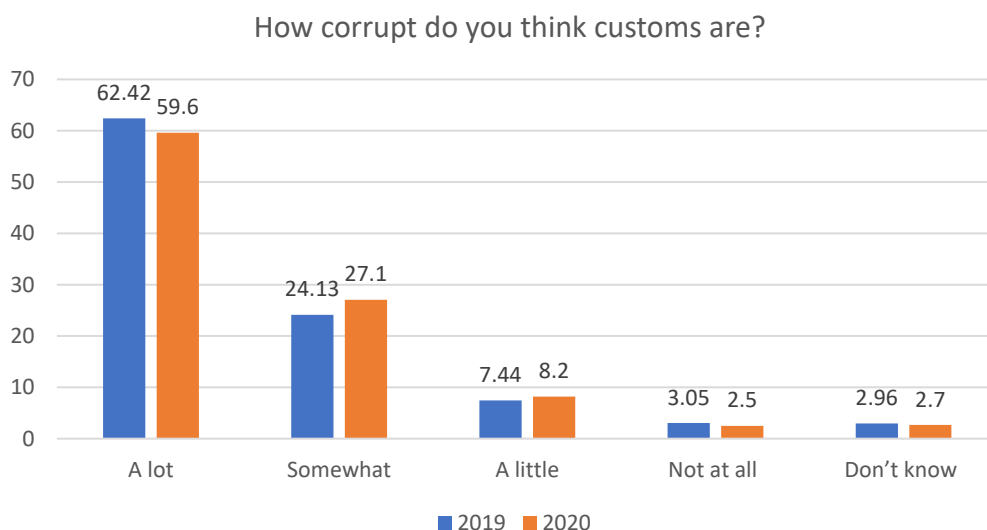
For the State Intelligence Service, the proportion of those who think it is highly or somewhat corrupt is over half, at 51.9%. However, this has decrease slightly from 54.98% in the 2019 barometer. There is also a decrease in the percentage of those who think that it is very corrupt and an increase of those who think that it is only a little or not at all corrupt.

However, one can notice a slight increase in the percentage of respondents who do not have an opinion, in contrast to general changes in this barometer indicating the public’s perception of being better informed on the topics asked.



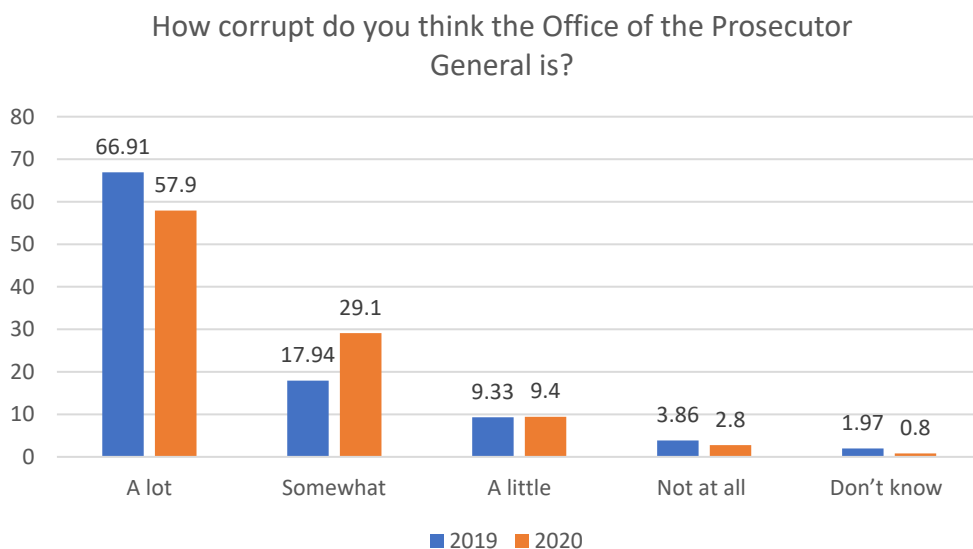
Graph 72. Perception of corruption in the State Intelligence Service.

Similar to the 2019 barometer, customs are perceived by the greatest percentage of respondents as being the most corrupt among the executive branch institutions. A whopping 86.7% think that customs are somewhat or very corrupt versus 10.7% who think that it is a little or not at all corrupt.



Graph 73. Perception of corruption in customs.

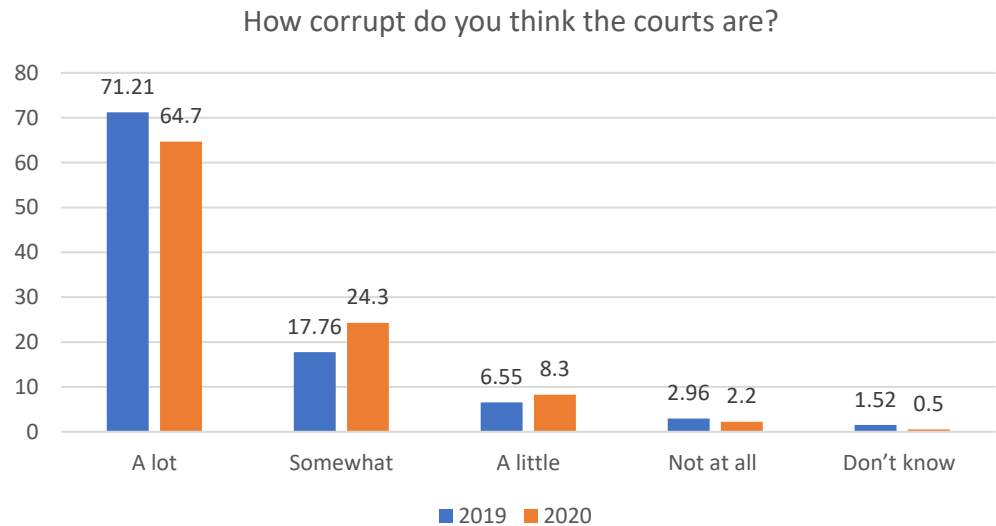
The perception of corruption in the justice institutions is also high. Some 57.9% of the citizens think that the Office of the Prosecutor General Office is very corrupt, similar to customs. It should be noted, however, that, when compared with the figures of the 2019 barometer, the percentage of citizens who had this opinion has dropped by 9 percentage points.



Graph 74. Perception of corruption in the Office of the Prosecutor General.

Of all the institutions discussed, the courts received the highest percentage of responses perceiving it as highly corrupt, 64.7%. Likewise, only 10.5% of citizens think that the courts are a little or not at all corrupt, marking the lowest percentage compared to other institutions.

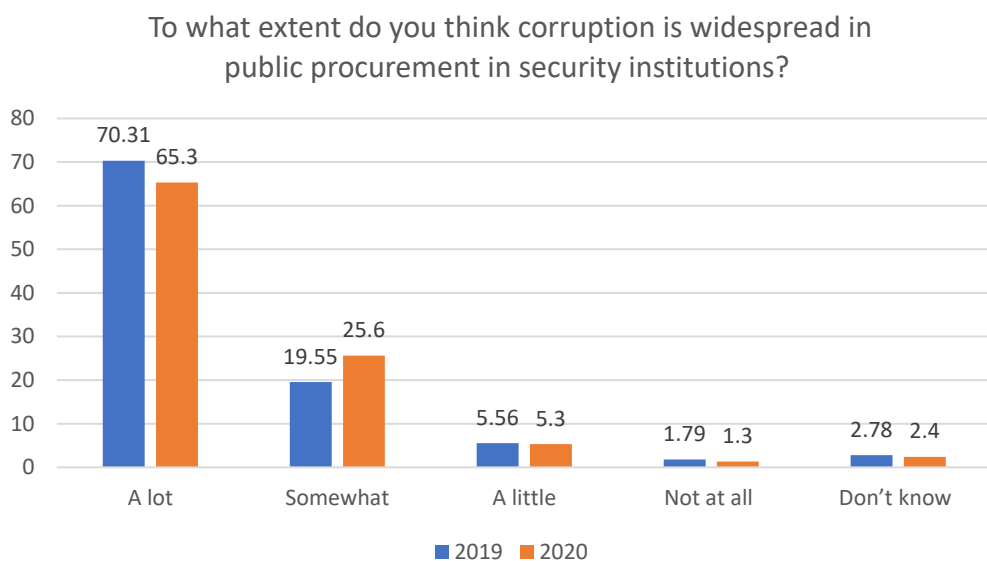
However, similar with the Office of the Prosecutor General, comparison with the 2019 barometer reveals a decrease in the percentage of citizens who think that that the courts are very corrupt, but to a lesser extent, about 6.5 percentage points.



Graph 75. Perception of corruption in the courts.

Taking into account that public procurement is one of the most affected activities by corruption and, moreover, that procurement in security institutions is often carried out under rules aimed at maintaining state secrecy, the questionnaire solicited respondents' opinion regarding this public activity.

The results point to a 5 percentage point decrease of the percentage of citizens who think that corruption is very widespread in the procurement of security institutions, although there is a similar increase of those who think that this type of corruption is somewhat widespread. On the other hand, the percentage of those who think that corruption in tenders conducted by security institutions is a little or not at all widespread has slightly decreased, with 6.6% of respondents.



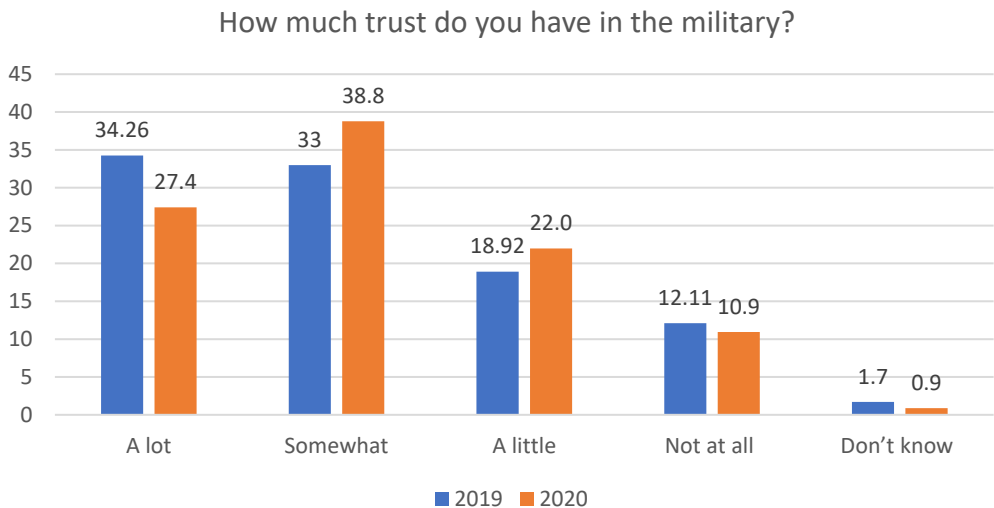
Graph 76. Perception of corruption in public procurement in security institutions.

Trust in the Security and Justice Institutions

Security institutions contribute to maintaining order and social stability, but they perform this task by restricting the freedom of individuals. The higher the trust in these institutions, the higher their democratic legitimacy.

In general, the barometer results show that trust in institutions is relatively low.

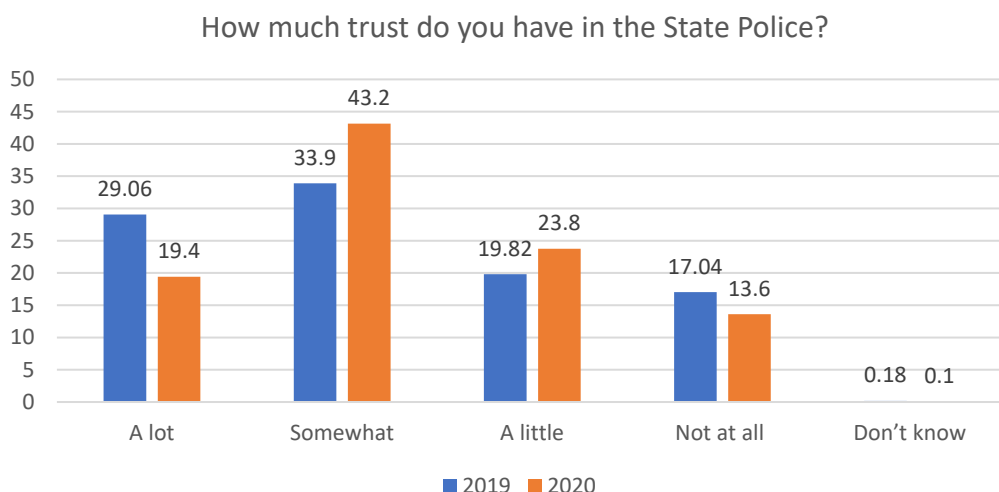
Although the military enjoys comparatively higher confidence, the percentage of citizens who have a lot of trust in them is only 27.4% featuring a decline by about 7 percentage points compared to 2019. The percentage of citizens who have little or no trust remains high, 32.9%, and marks a slight increase from the 31% that was recorded in 2019.



Graph 77. Perception of trust in the military.

A similar decline is reported among those who placed a lot of trust in the State Police; this percentage has dropped by 10 percentage points compared with 2019. A slight change is also seen in the percentage of those that have little or no trust at all in this institution – from 36.86% in 2019 to 37.4% in 2020.

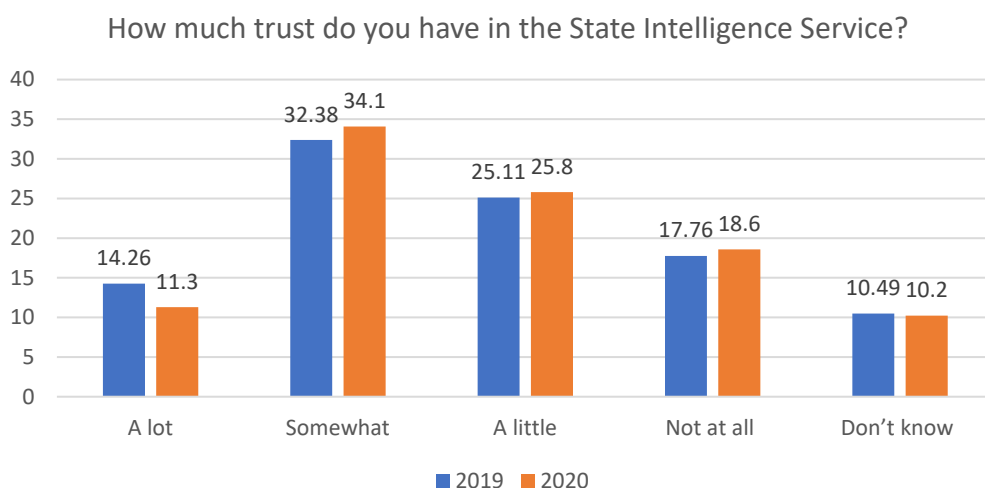
Similar to the case of the military, there is an increase of 9 percentage points of the percentage of respondents who placed somewhat trust in the State Police.



Graph 78. Perception of trust in the State Police.

Trust remains low for the State Intelligence Service, with a lower percentage of those who have a lot of trust compared to the military and the State Police. Only 11.3% have a lot of trust in this institution, a decrease of about 3 percentage points compared to the 2019 barometer, and there was a 1.5 percentage point increase in the percentage of those who have little or no trust at all in it.

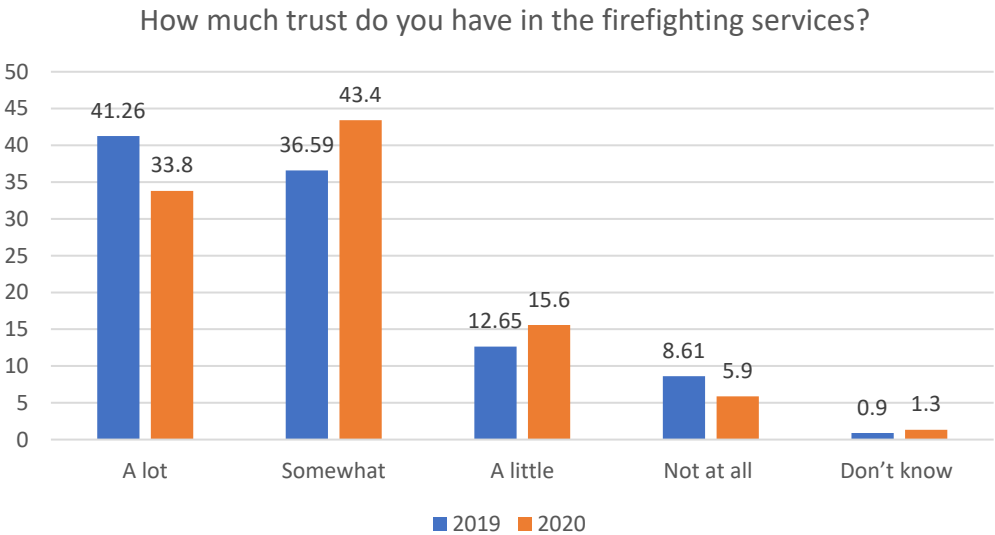
Similar to other questions asked on the State Intelligence Service, the percentage of respondents who answered “don’t know” to this question is comparatively high.



Graph 79. Perception of trust in the State Intelligence Service.

Firefighting services enjoy the highest trust with one-third (33.8%) of respondents stating that they have a lot of trust in them, but, similar to the general change observed with other institutions, a decrease of 7.46 percentage points compared to 2019 is seen.

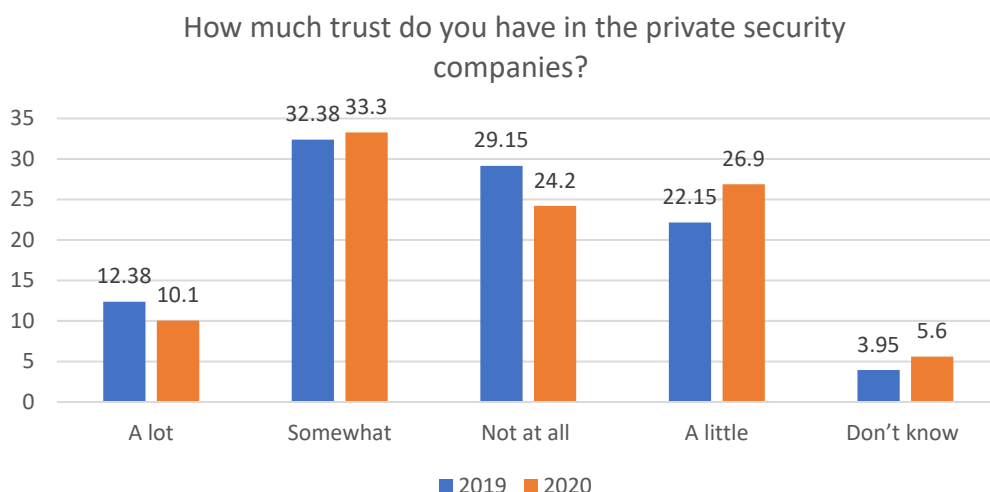
However, unlike other institutions, the total percentage of those who have little or no trust at all in the firefighting services remains the same.



Graph 80. Perception of trust in the firefighting services.

Again, in this year’s barometer, citizens were asked about their trust in private security companies, which provide a wide range of services. While these companies are not public institutions, they are licensed and inspected by state security institutions. Hence, through them, trust in public security institutions can be deduced.

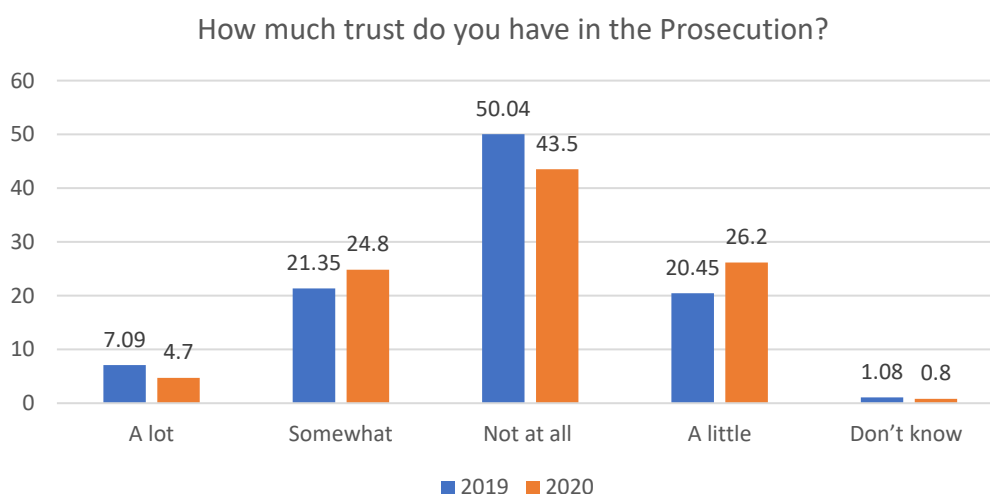
With the exception of a slight decrease in the percentage of citizens who say they have a lot of trust in the private security companies, in general no noticeable changes can be identified when compared with 2019. However, it is worth noting a 5 percentage point decrease in the percentage of those who say they have no trust at all and an increase in those who say they have little trust, which might be interpreted as a positive change.



Graph 81. Perception of trust in private security companies.

Trust in justice institutions remained low this year as well, with the Prosecution service recording the lowest percentage (4.7%) of those who trust it highly. Compared to 2019, this figure has dropped by about 3 percentage points, which shows that the justice reform has not increased citizens’ trust and confidence in this institution.

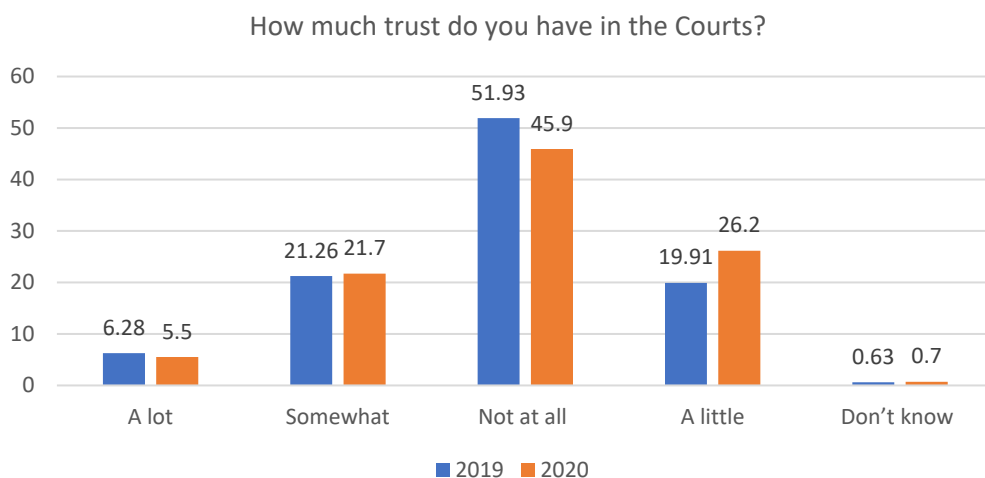
While it has decreased by 7 percentage points, the percentage of those who say they have no trust at all remains quite high, at 43.5%.



Graph 82. Perception of trust in the Prosecutor General

Trust in the courts also remains low, with 45.9% of citizens saying they have no trust at all, the highest absolute percentage of all institutions surveyed.

There is, however, a 6 percentage point decline in this figure compared to 2019, a positive change. Yet, the percentage of those who say they have a lot of trust in the courts has decreased as well, albeit by an insignificant amount – from 6.2% to 5.5%.

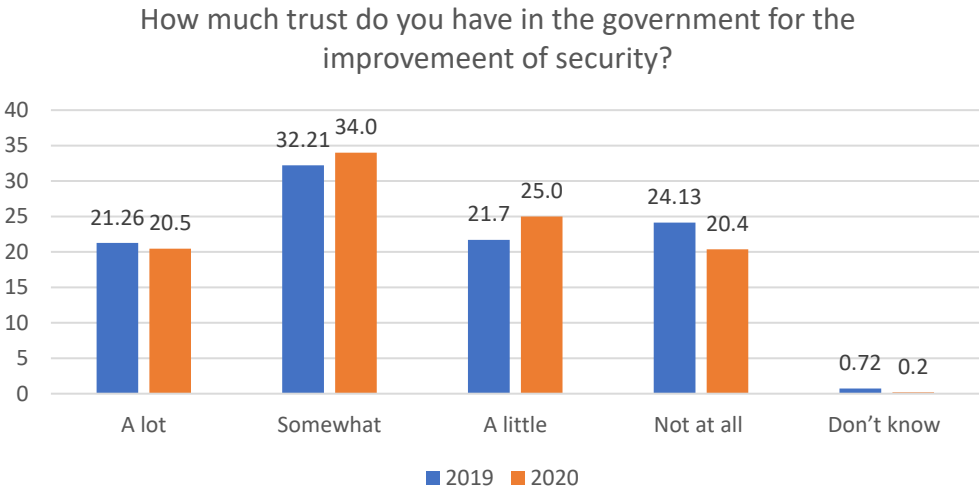


Graph 83. Perception of trust in the courts.

Trust in the Institutions Overseeing and Controlling Security Institutions

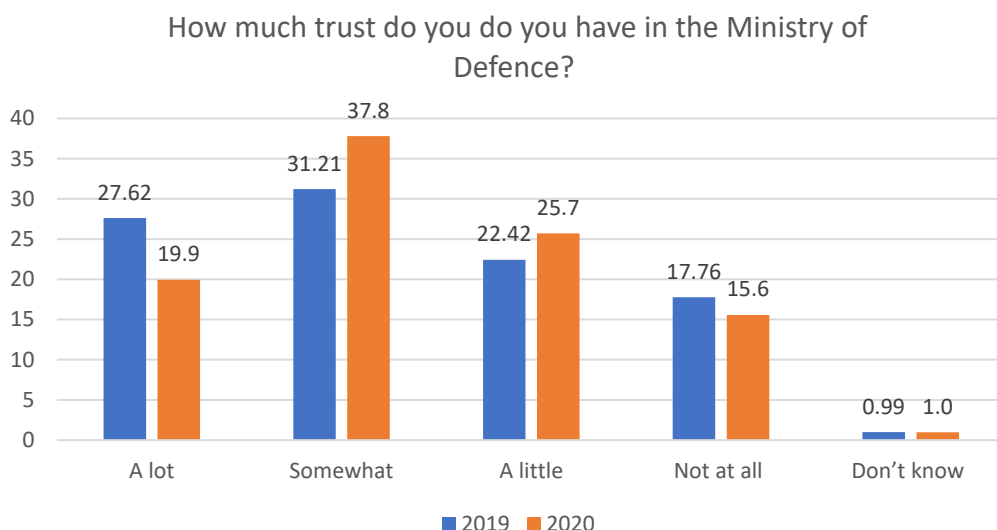
The democratic governance of the security sector presumes a clear segregation of the roles of the security institutions and agencies responsible for their control and oversight, specifically executive and parliamentary institutions.

In terms of trust in the government, the survey results show that a slightly higher percentage of citizens, 54.5%, say they have a lot or some trust in the government in improving their security. Some 45.4% say they have little or no trust at all. No significant differences are seen compared to 2019.



Graph 84. Perception of trust in the government.

Overall, the percentage of citizens who say that they have a lot or some trust in the Ministry of Defence, 57.7%, is higher than the percentage of those who place this level of trust in the government. However, when compared to 2019, one can note a decrease of 7.7 percentage points of those who say they have a lot of trust. Regardless, the percentage of citizens who say they have little or no trust in the Ministry of Defence is 41.3%, a very high figure.

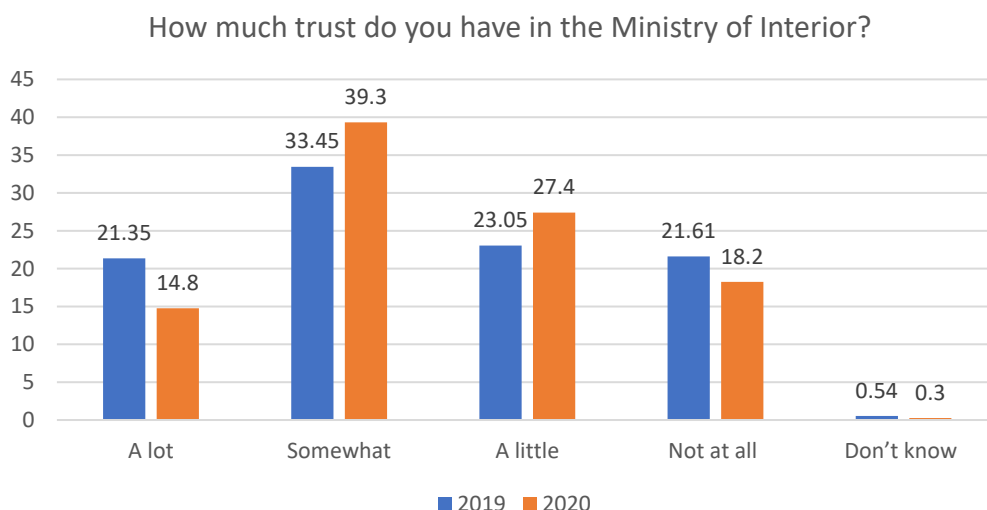


Graph 85. Perception of trust in the Ministry of Defence.

The same change observed in the Ministry of Defence is identified with regard to the trust in the Ministry of Interior, in which we see a decrease of 6.55 percentage points of the percentage of citizens who say they have a lot of trust in this institution.

Overall, the percentage of citizens who say they have a lot or some trust in the Ministry of Interior, 54.1%, is slightly lower than the Ministry of Defence. This is a little lower than in 2019, when it was 54.8%.

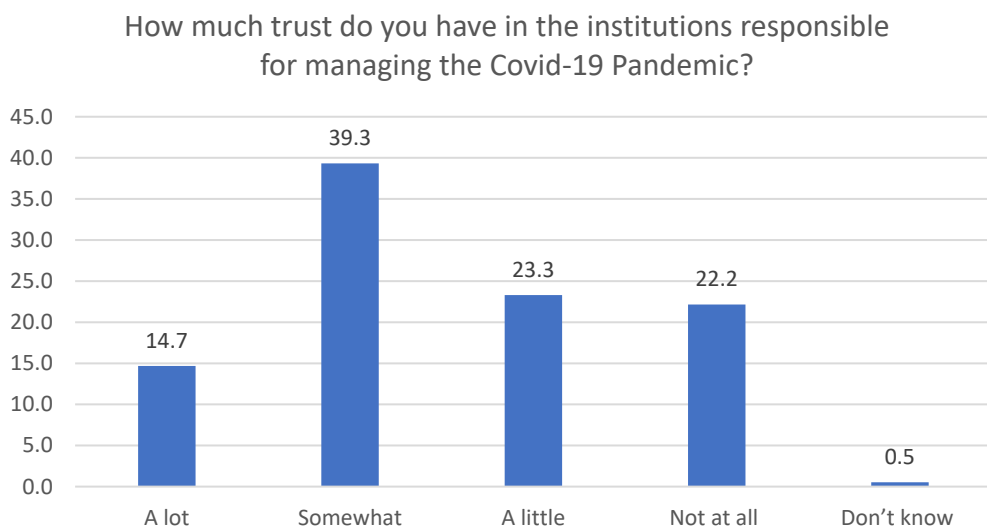
On the other hand, 45.6% say that they have little or no trust in this ministry, a figure slightly higher than the 44.65% of the 2019 barometer.



Graph 86. Perception of trust in the Ministry of Interior.

Considering the possible effects of the pandemic as a security issue, this edition of the barometer included a question on trust in the institutions charged managing Covid-19.

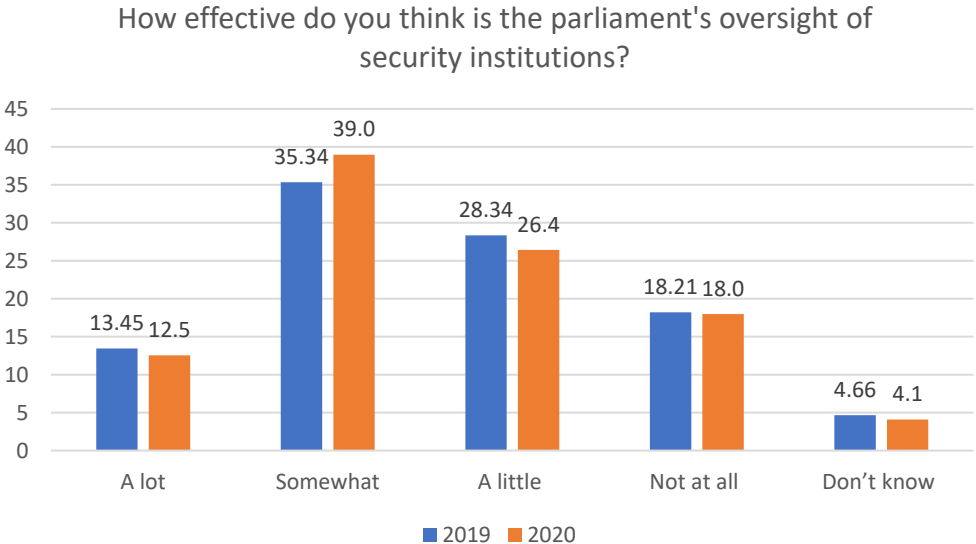
The results generated from the survey show a somewhat equal split between citizens who have little or no trust in these institutions, 45.5%, and those who say they have some or a lot of trust, 54%.



Graph 87. Perception of trust in the institutions responsible for managing the Covid-19 pandemic.

Legislative oversight of security institutions is another important function that, together with executive control, comprises the democratic governance of the security sector as a whole.

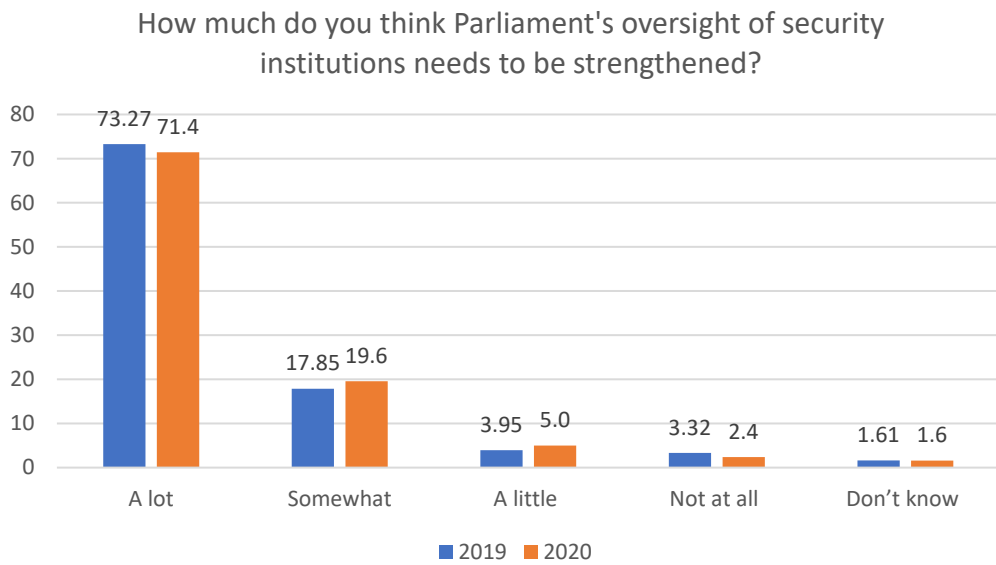
The survey results reveal a situation almost the same as in 2019, with a slight increase in the percentage of those who think that the control of parliament over security institutions is somewhat effective and a similarly small decrease in the percentage of those who think that this control is less effective.



Graph 88. Perception of effectiveness of Parliament's oversight of security institutions.

With regard to the question of whether parliament's control over security institutions should be strengthened, citizens are resolute that the current situation should change. Some 71.4% of respondents say that there is a great need for this change to happen, but with a slight decrease compared to the 2019 barometer.

On the other hand, the percentage of those who say that there is little or no need for this to happen remains low at 7.4%.



Graph 89. Results on whether Parliament's oversight of justice institutions needs to be strengthened.

Annex 1 – Survey Questionnaire

1- How old are you?

18–34

35–49

50–64

65 or over

2- Your gender?

Male

Female

3- What is your ethnicity?

Albanian

Greek

Macedonian

Aromanian

Other

4- What religion do you believe in, if any?

Sunni Muslim

Bektashi (Sufi Muslim)

Catholic

Orthodox

Protestant

Other

Atheist

Agnostic

No answer

5- How often do you attend religious services/ceremonies?

More than once a week

Once a week

Once or twice a month

Several times a year

Rarely

Never

6- What level of education have you completed?

0-9 years (compulsory education)

Secondary school

University education

Postgraduate education

7- What is your occupation?

Worker (unskilled labour)

Farmer

State employee

Self-employed/manager

Education/health sector

Retired

Unemployed

Student

8- The location of your workplace is in a:

City

Suburb

Village

Not employed

9- How secure do you feel in the village/neighbourhood where you work?

Very Secure

Secure

Somewhat Secure

Not Secure

Very Insecure

Not employed

10- You reside in a:

City

Suburb

Village

11- How secure do you feel in the location where you reside?

Very Secure

Secure

Somewhat Secure

Not Secure

Very Insecure

12- What is the greatest threat to your personal security?

- Theft (of property)
- Robbery
- Conflicts over property
- Domestic violence
- Vandalism
- Homicide
- Organized crime
- Theft of personal data
- None

13- What is the second-greatest threat to your personal security?

- Theft (of property)
- Robbery
- Conflicts over property
- Domestic Violence
- Homicide
- Organized Crime
- Cybercrime
- None

14- Do you feel more secure than a year ago?

- Yes
- No
- Same as a year ago

15- What is the greatest threat to the security of Albania?

- War with neighbouring countries
- Terrorism
- Violent extremism
- Organized crime
- Corruption
- Foreign migrants
- Environmental degradation/pollution
- Unemployment (as a social phenomenon not as a personal problem)

16- What is the second-greatest threat to the security of Albania?

- War with neighbouring countries
- Terrorism
- Violent extremism
- Organized crime

- Corruption
- Foreign migrants
- Environmental degradation/pollution
- Unemployment (as a social phenomenon not as a personal problem)
- Global warming

17- What is the greatest threat to security in the Balkans?

- War between countries
- Terrorism
- Violent extremism
- Organized Crime
- Corruption
- Foreign migrants
- Environmental degradation/pollution
- Global warming

18- What is the second-greatest threat to security in the Balkans?

- War between countries
- Terrorism
- Violent Extremism
- Organized Crime
- Corruption
- Foreign migrants
- Environmental degradation/pollution

19- What is the greatest threat to global security?

- War between countries
- Terrorism
- Violent extremism
- Organized crime
- Cybercrime
- Corruption
- Foreign migrants
- Environmental degradation/pollution
- Do not know

20- What is the second-greatest threat to global security?

- War between countries
- Terrorism
- Violent extremism
- Organized crime

Cybercrime
Corruption
Foreign migrants
Environmental degradation/pollution
Do not know

21- Are relations among Balkan countries better than one year ago?

No
Perhaps no
Perhaps yes
Yes
Do not know

22- Do you think security in the Balkans will improve over the next year?

No
Perhaps no
Perhaps yes
Yes
Do not know

23- What is the friendliest country to Albania?

USA
Germany
Italy
Turkey
France
Austria
North Macedonia
Other
Do not Know

24- What is the second-friendliest country to Albania?

USA
Germany
Italy
Turkey
France
Austria
North Macedonia
Other
Do not Know

25- What is the third-friendliest country to Albania?

USA
Germany
Italy
Turkey
France
Austria
North Macedonia
Other
Do not Know

26- What is the influence of NATO on our country's security?

Very positive
Positive
Neutral
Negative
Very Negative
Do not Know

27- What is the influence of the EU on our country's security?

Very positive
Positive
Neutral
Negative
Very Negative
Do not Know

28- What is the influence of the USA on our country's security?

Very positive
Positive
Neutral
Negative
Very Negative
Do not Know

29- What is the influence of Germany on our country's security?

Very positive
Positive
Neutral
Negative
Very Negative
Do not Know

30- What is the influence of Turkey on our country's security?

Very positive
Positive
Neutral
Negative
Very Negative
Do not Know

31-What is the influence of Russia on our country's security?

Very positive
Positive
Neutral
Negative
Very Negative
Do not Know

32- What is the influence of China on our country's security?

Very positive
Positive
Neutral
Negative
Very Negative
Do not Know

33- What is the influence of Iran on our country's security?

Very positive
Positive
Neutral
Negative
Very Negative
Do not Know

34- What is the influence of Arab countries on our country's security?

Very positive
Positive
Neutral
Negative
Very Negative
Do not Know

35- What would make you feel safer?

Better community organization
More deployed police officers
A stronger army
Do not Know

36- Which of the following plays the most important role in your daily security?

State Police
Municipal Police
Private Security
The administrator of your residence
Your Community Representative
Local municipal representative
Yourself
Other

37- Are the police sufficiently present in your community?

Yes
Somewhat
No
Do not Know

38- How satisfied are you with the security situation where you live?

Very
Somewhat
A Little
Not at all
I Do not Know

39- How satisfied are you with the cooperation between the local government and the police to ensure public safety?

Very
Somewhat
A Little
Not at all
I Do not Know

40- How satisfied are you with the fight against organized crime?

Very
Somewhat
A little
Not at all
I Do not Know

41- Do you think the state will win the war against organized crime?

Yes

No

I Do not Know

42- In how many years can the state win the fight against organized crime (if yes)?

5 years

10 years

15 years

20 years

Never

43- How satisfied are you with the contribution of the Albanian army to ensure security?

A Lot

Somewhat

A Little

Not at all

I Do not Know

44- How much do the Albanian secret services contribute to the security of the country?

A Lot

Somewhat

A Little

Not at all

I Do not Know

45- Does police presence contribute to increased security?

A Lot

Somewhat

A Little

Not at all

I Do not Know

46- How much do you think further modernization of the police would increase security?

A Lot

Somewhat

A Little

Not at all

I Do not Know

47- How much do you think increasing the number of police would increase security?

- A Lot
- Somewhat
- A Little
- Not at all
- I Do not Know

48- How will the overall security situation be in the next 12 months?

- Better
- The Same
- Worse
- I Do not Know

49- Do the police respect human rights in performing their duty?

- A Lot
- Somewhat
- A Little
- Not at all
- I Do not Know

50- How much do you trust in the government regarding the improvement of security?

- A Lot
- Somewhat
- A Little
- Not at all
- I Do not Know

51- How much do you trust the Ministry of Defence?

- A Lot
- Somewhat
- A Little
- Not at all
- I Do not Know

52- How much do you trust the Ministry of the Interior?

- A Lot
- Somewhat
- A Little
- Not at all
- I Do not Know

53- How much do you trust the military?

A Lot
Somewhat
A Little
Not at all
I Do not Know

54- How much do you trust the State Police?

A Lot
Somewhat
A Little
Not at all
I Do not Know

55- How much do you trust firefighters?

A Lot
Somewhat
A Little
Not at all
I Do not Know

56- How much do you trust the State Intelligence Services?

A Lot
Somewhat
A Little
Not at all
I Do not Know

57- How much do you trust the public prosecutors?

A Lot
Somewhat
A Little
Not at all
I Do not Know

58- How much do you trust the courts?

A Lot
Somewhat
A Little
Not at all
I Do not Know

59- How much do you trust private security forces?

- A Lot
- Somewhat
- A Little
- Not at all
- I Do not Know

60- Do the State Police treat all citizens equally?

- Yes
- No
- I Do not Know

61- How much do you think the fight against corruption and organized crime will be strengthened with the establishment of the SPAK?

- A Lot
- Somewhat
- A Little
- Not at all
- I Do not Know

62- How corrupt do you think the military is?

- A Lot
- Somewhat
- A Little
- Not at all
- I Do not Know

63- How corrupt do you think the State Police is?

- A Lot
- Somewhat
- A Little
- Not at all
- I Do not Know

64- How corrupt do you think the State Intelligence Services are?

- A Lot
- Somewhat
- A Little
- Not at all
- I Do not Know

65- How corrupt do you think the public prosecutors are?

- A Lot
- Somewhat
- A Little
- Not at all
- I Do not Know

66- How corrupt do you think the courts are?

- A Lot
- Somewhat
- A Little
- Not at all
- I Do not Know

67- How corrupt do you think customs are?

- A Lot
- Somewhat
- A Little
- Not at all
- I Do not Know

68- How is independent do you think the military is from political influence?

- A Lot
- Somewhat
- A Little
- Not at all
- I Do not Know

69- How independent do you think the State Police is from political influence?

- A Lot
- Somewhat
- A Little
- Not at all
- I Do not Know

70- How independent do you think the State Intelligence Services are from political influence?

- A Lot
- Somewhat

A Little
Not at all
I Do not Know

71- How independent do you think public prosecutors are from political influence?

A Lot
Somewhat
A Little
Not at all
I Do not Know

72- How independent do you think the courts are from political influence?

A Lot
Somewhat
A Little
Not at all
I Do not Know

73- How independent do you think the Albanian customs are from political influence?

A Lot
Somewhat
A Little
Not at all
I Do not Know

74- How effective will the courts be against corruption and organized crime after the justice reform?

A Lot
Somewhat
A Little
Not at all
I Do not Know

75- To what extent do you think corruption is widespread in procurement/tenders in public security organisations?

A Lot
Somewhat
A Little
Not at all
I Do not Know

76- How many people do you think are employed in the state administration solely based on merit and skills?

- All
- The majority
- The minority
- None
- I Do not Know

77- How many people are employed in the security institutions solely based on merit and skills?

- All
- The majority
- The minority
- None
- I Do not Know

78- According to you, how effective do you think parliament's oversight of public security organisations is?

- A Lot
- Somewhat
- A Little
- Not at all
- I Do not Know

79- Do you believe it is necessary to strengthen parliament's oversight of security institutions?

- A Lot
- Somewhat
- A Little
- Not at all
- I Do not Know

80- To what extent does corruption and organized crime hinder Albania's EU integration?

- A Lot
- Somewhat
- A Little
- Not at all
- I Do not Know

81- How much will the security situation in Albania improve after EU membership?

- A Lot
- Somewhat
- A Little
- Not at all
- I Do not Know

82- In how many years might Albania become a full member of the EU?

- 5 years
- 10 years
- 15 years
- 20 years
- Never
- I Do not Know

83. What impact do you think the Covid-19 pandemic will have on the security of Albania as a whole?

- Negative
- Positive
- Neutral

84. How much trust do you have in the institutions responsible for managing the Covid-19 pandemic?

- A lot
- Somewhat
- A little
- Not at all
- Do not know

85. What impact do you think the Covid-19 pandemic will have on security in the Balkans and in Europe?

- Negative
- Positive
- Neutral

86. What impact do you think the Covid-19 pandemic will have on Albania's security during the coming year?

- Negative
- Positive
- Neutral

87- District where the respondent lives

- Berat
- Dibër
- Durrës
- Elbasan
- Fier
- Gjirokastra
- Korça
- Kukës
- Lezha
- Shkodra
- Tirana
- Vlorë

88- Address of the interviewee

89- Telephone number of the interviewee

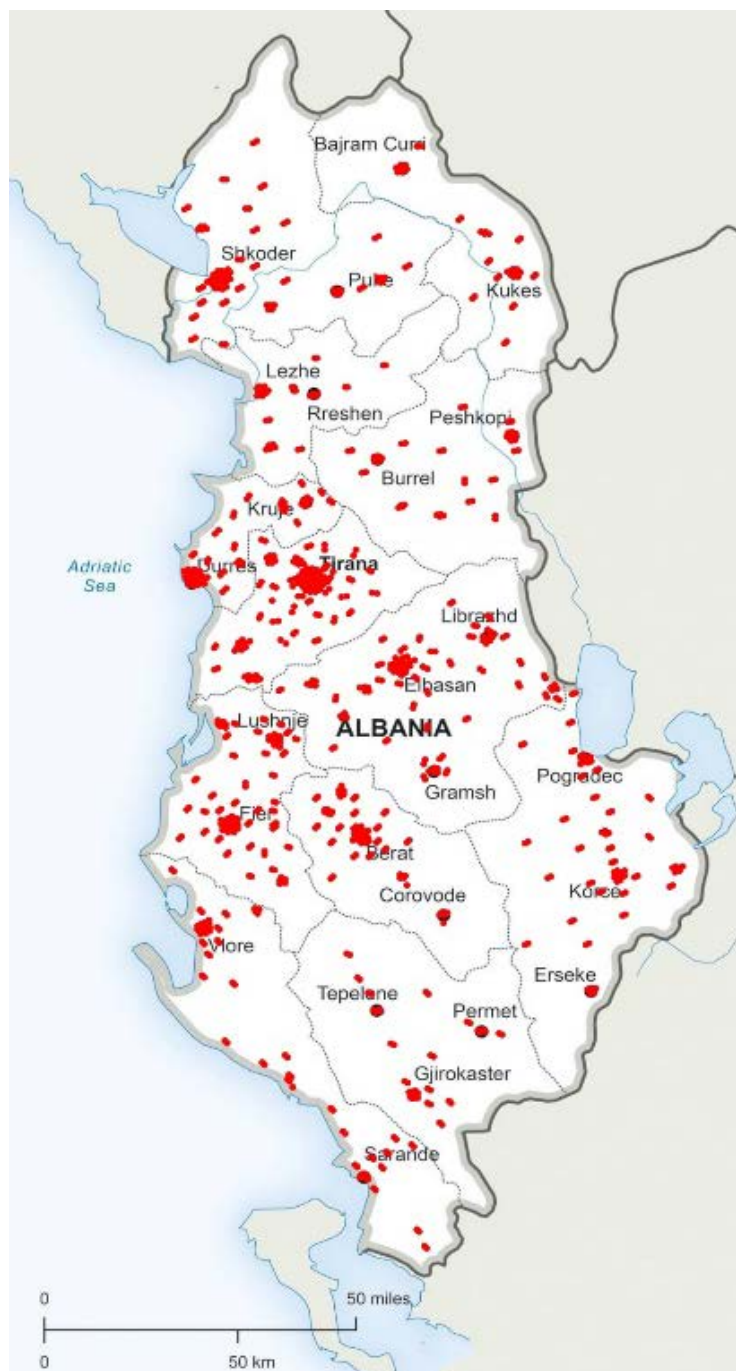
90- Telephone number of the interviewer

Annex 2 – Sample Distribution across 61 Municipalities

	Municipality	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Belsh	7	0.63
2.	Berat	24	2.15
3.	Bulqiza	11	0.99
4.	Cërrik	11	0.99
5.	Delvina	4	0.36
6.	Devoll	13	1.17
7.	Divjaka	15	1.35
8.	Dropull	4	0.36
9.	Durrës	67	6.01
10.	Elbasan	54	4.84
11.	Fier	50	4.48
12.	Finiq	6	0.54
13.	Fushë-Arrez	3	0.27
14.	Gjirokastra	14	1.26
15.	Gramsh	10	0.9
16.	Has	7	0.63
17.	Himara	5	0.45
18.	Kamza	32	2.87
19.	Kavaja	17	1.52
20.	Këlcyra	3	0.27
21.	Klos	6	0.54
22.	Kolonja	6	0.54
23.	Konispol	3	0.18
24.	Korça	34	3.05
25.	Kruja	22	1.97
26.	Kuçova	14	1.26
27.	Kukës	17	1.52
28.	Kurbin	17	1.52
29.	Lezha	25	2.24
30.	Libohova	2	0.18
31.	Librazhd	11	0.99
32.	Lushnja	34	3.05
33.	Malësi e Madhe	12	1.08
34.	Maliq	17	1.52
35.	Mallakastra	11	0.99
36.	Mat	11	0.99

37.	Memaliaj	5	0.45
38.	Mirdita	10	0.9
39.	Patos	12	1.08
40.	Peqin	10	0.9
41.	Përmet	5	0.45
42.	Peshkopia	21	1.88
43.	Pogradec	24	2.15
44.	Poliçan	5	0.45
45.	Përrenjas	9	0.81
46.	Puka	5	0.45
47.	Pustec	2	0.18
48.	Roskovec	9	0.81
49.	Rrogozhina	9	0.81
50.	Saranda	10	0.9
51.	Selenica	8	0.72
52.	Shijak	10	0.9
53.	Shkodra	47	4.22
54.	Skrapar	5	0.45
55.	Tepelena	4	0.36
56.	Tirana	221	19.82
57.	Tropoja	8	0.72
58.	Ura Vajgurore	10	0.9
59.	Vau i Dejës	14	1.35
60.	Vlora	43	3.86
61.	Vora	10	0.9
Total		1,115	100

Annex 3 – Map of geographical distribution of sample⁴



⁴ This map has been electronically generated by the geo positioning of the interviewed by the interviewees smart tablets/phones

ALBANIAN SECURITY BAROMETER NATIONAL SURVEY



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