# Corruption in Albania
## Perception and Experience

## SURVEY 2009

## Summary of findings

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**Summary of findings**

# Executive Summary

### Corruption Perception

- The perception of corruption in Albania remains high. Out of 20 institutions rated by the general public in the 2009 survey, 14 are considered to be more corrupt than honest and only 6 fall below the midpoint of a scale where 0 means "Very honest" and 100 means "Very corrupt".

- Religious leaders, the President, media, military, public school teachers and NGO leaders are perceived as least corrupt. Custom officials, tax officials, ministers, parliamentarians and doctors, on the other hand, are perceived as the most corrupt.

- About half of the general public sample (48.5%) thinks that corruption has increased compared to a year ago, while 38% think it has remained at the same level.

### Corruption Experience

- In general, the overall experience with corruption transactions has declined from 2005 to 2009. Out of 10 ways in which an individual could be victimized, the average number of ways of victimization experience for 2009 is 1.29, a decrease from 1.7 in 2005. From the 10 scenarios presented, the percentage of people who declared at least one experience with corruption has decreased from 66.5% in 2005 to 57.1% in 2009.

### Summary of findings

- Health represents the sector most quoted for bribery. 37.1% of respondents said that they had bribed a doctor or nurse during the last year.

### Fight against Corruption, Trust and Transparency

- Overall, the Albanian public reports that institutions are not doing enough to fight corruption. On a scale of 0-100 where 0 means "Does not help at all" and 100 means "Helps a lot", the average score of all 9 institutions evaluated is 43.8 points. Only media is seen as contributing to the fight against corruption with 63.6 points, while all other institutions are evaluated with less than 50 points on the scale.

- Religious leaders, High Inspectorate for the Declaration and Audit of Assets and government, are seen as least helpful in the fight against corruption. Courts and the General Prosecutor's office show an improvement of about 5 points and 6 points, respectively, from 2005 to 2009. However, both still have less than 50 points on the scale.

- Albanians' trust in institutions continues to be low. The average score of trust for all 15 institutions presented to respondents is 44.3 points on a scale where 0 means "Do not trust at all" and 100 means "Trust a lot". This score is also below mid-scale for public sector employees (48.8 points).

- The public perceives institutions as not being transparent. None of the institutions evaluated received more than 50 points on a 0 to 100 scale, where 0 means "Not at all transparent" and 100 means "Fully transparent". The most transparent institution, according to the general public, is local government, which still scores only 40.3 points. The least transparent institution is the Property Restitution and Compensation Agency with a score of 27.2 points.

## *Corruption Phenomenon Understanding*

- When judging the two parties in a corrupt transaction, Albanians show more tolerance towards "givers" than towards "takers". For example, a student who gives a shirt to the teacher with the hope of receiving a better grade is seen as either not corrupt (35.4%) or justified (34.7%). Similarly, a mother who pays 500 Leks for the certificates of her children to avoid staying in a queue is also seen as not corrupt (26.3%) or as largely justified (43.4%).

- There is a tendency from the Albanian public to include under the term "corruption" even phenomena that are generally not considered as corruption related. Asked about a flower vendor who raises the prices of flowers during holidays, almost half of respondents say that the vendor is corrupt and must be punished. Although this misconception has an impact on over-inflating the corruption perception, analyses show that the impact is rather low.

## Summary of findings

## *Judicial System*

- 46.6% of the respondents have a lot or some trust in the judicial system. This is a 12 percentage point improvement from 2005 when 34.6% of the respondents had the same opinion.

- Almost three-quarters of citizens that have dealt with courts declared that the courts have treated them either "Very well" or "Well". This represents a notable improvement from 2005 by almost 15 percentage points.

## *Economic Evaluation*

- More than half of the respondents (54.4%) think that the economic situation of the country is "Bad" or "Very bad". Economic optimism, judged by the opinions of respondents on how the economic situation will be a year from now, is only slightly better than in 2008, but much less than the levels of the 2006 and 2005 surveys. One in four respondents replied that they are pessimistic about the country's economic situation a year from now.

## Introduction

This report presents the findings of the 2009 general public, public sector employees, and judges surveys on corruption issues. This is the fifth report following the 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2008 reports. The main objective of these surveys is to measure over time the general perception, attitude, and experiences of corruption in Albania.

The set of surveys consists of:

- **General Public sample**
  - *Targeted -* National sample of 1,200 respondents, 18+ years old
  - *Actual* - 1,194 respondents

- **Public Sector sample**
  - *Targeted* - A sample of 600 public sector employees divided into four strata each with 150 respondents:
    - i) Central Administration
    - ii) Local Administration
    - iii) Education Sector
    - iv) Health Sector
  - *Actual* - 596 respondents

- **Judges Survey**
  - *Targeted* - A sample of 300 judges of the Albanian courts in all levels.
  - *Actual* - 172 respondents

**Timing**
The survey was conducted during the period of January-February 2009.

**Method**
Face-to-face interviews

## Summary of findings

# Sample Structure and Demographics

## General Public Sample

The general public sample was based on a multi-stage, random probability sampling drawn from a list of voting centers from the last local elections. Voting centers for sampling purposes represent the primary sampling units. The 100 primary sampling units were selected using a formula with a randomly generated number which takes into account the number of voters for each voting center and urban vs. rural voting centers. Within the geographical area designated by these units, the respondents were selected based on random-route sampling (every third door was selected and the person with the latest birthday in that household was then interviewed).

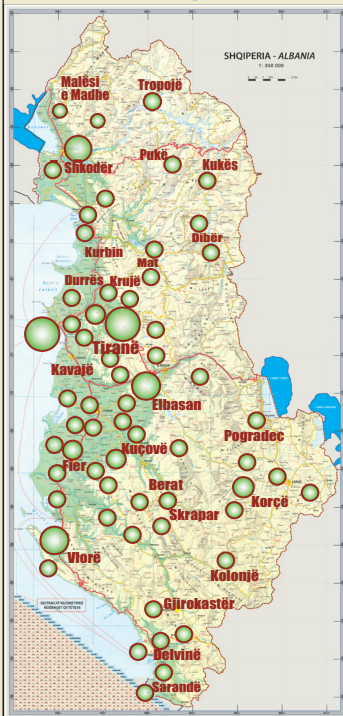**Tab.1 Geographic distribution of the sample**



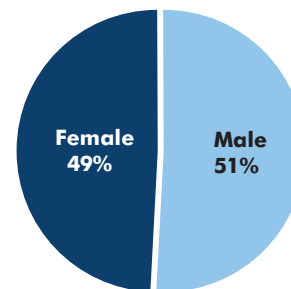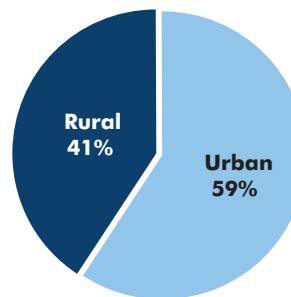**Fig. 1    Gender of the respondents**
*General Public 2009*



Female 49%    Male 51%

**Fig. 2    Urban vs. Rural respondents**
*General Public 2009*



Rural 41%    Urban 59%

# Summary of findings

## Public Sector Employees Sample

A quota sampling based on four major strata was used for the Public Sector sample. Each of these strata contained around 150 respondents.

The strata of the sample were:

1.  **Central Administration**
    a. All ministries
    b. All other central institutions besides ministries
    c. The Fiscal System (Customs and Tax Department)
    d. Budgetary independent institutions

2.  **Local Administration**
    a. Communes
    b. Municipalities

3.  **Education Sector**
    Geographically distributed sample of employees in:
    a. Pre-primary (Kindergartens)
    b. Compulsory (Elementary Schools – 9 years)
    c. Secondary Schools
    d. Universities

4.  **Health Sector**
    Geographically distributed sample of:
    a. Doctors
    b. Nurses
    c. Dentists and Pharmacists (public service)

**Tab. 2    Distribution of sample according to public sector structures:**

| Structure | No. of Interviewees | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Central Administration | 150 | 25.2 |
| Local Administration | 147 | 24 6 |
| Education Sector | 150 | 25.2 |
| Health Sector | 149 | 25.0 |
| **Total** | **596** | **100** |

**Fig. 3    Gender of respondents**
*Public Sector 2009*



Male 31%

Female 69%

## Margin of Error

The margin of error for the General Public sample is ± 2.8% and for the Public Sector sample is ±4%, both with a confidence interval of 95%. Technically speaking a sampling error of ± 2.8% means that, if repeated samples of this size were conducted, 95% of them would reflect the views of the population with no greater inaccuracy than ± 2.8%. The testing of statistical significance, which takes into account the margin of error, is important especially when comparing historical data or when presenting subgroup analysis of results. These statistical significance tests are applied to the results presented throughout the report.

## Summary of findings

## Presentation of Findings

All of the survey findings are presented on a 0-100 scale for better understanding and presentation.

The following is an example of a question included in the questionnaire:

*[Use card "D"] Now, I will name various public and private institutions. I am interested to know how corrupt or honest do you think the representatives of these institutions are. Please, rate each one of them from 1 to 10, 1 being very honest and 10 very corrupt.*

| INSTITUTIONS | Levels of Corruption | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Very honest | | | | | | | | Very corrupt | | DK/NR | | |
| PC19 . School teachers | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) | (9) | (10) | (88) | PC19 | |

A conversion is required to facilitate accurate statistical analysis. It is achieved by subtracting 1 from each point on the 1-10 scale so that the questions are scored on a 0-9 scale. The scale is then divided by 9, so that it ranges from 0-1, and multiplied by 100 to obtain a 0-100 range. In this scale, 0 means "Very honest" and 100 means "Very corrupt". An illustrative graph is presented on the right in which the category "School teachers" received a score of "48". The score does NOT mean that 48 percent of the public reported that school teachers are corrupt; it represents the perception of how corrupt an institution is on a scale of 0 to 100. In other words, "School teachers" received an average score of 48 points on a 0-100 scale as perceived by the public.
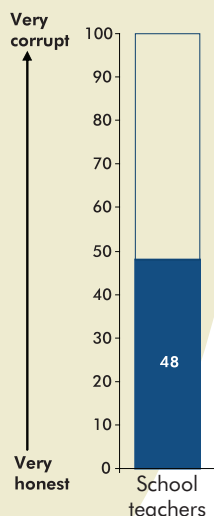


There are also three other 0-100 scales presented in the report. Those scales are:

- **Trust** - A scale that shows the evaluation of respondents for different institutions regarding trust. In this scale 0 means "Do not trust at all" and 100 means "Trust a lot".
- **Contribution to the fight against corruption** - A scale that shows how respondents perceive different institutions regarding their contribution to the fight against corruption. In this scale 0 means "Does not help at all" and 100 means "Helps a lot".
- **Transparency** - A scale that shows the respondents' perception about the transparency of different institutions. In this scale 0 means "Not at all transparent" and 100 means "Fully transparent".

As a norm, the graphs including yearly comparisons only present the institutions that have experienced statistically significant changes. Results from institutions that do not show considerable change are presented only if deemed important.

## Summary of findings

## Perception of Corruption[1]

Out of 20 institutions and groups evaluated by the general public in 2009, only six of them fall under the midpoint of a scale where 0 means "Very honest" and 100 means "Very corrupt" (Fig. 4). The other 14 institutions are viewed as more corrupt than honest. The average score of all 20 institutions evaluated is 61.5 points, indicating a high level of corruption perception, overall. Religious leaders, the President, the media, the military, public school teachers and NGO leaders are still perceived as the least corrupt. On the contrary, custom officials, tax officials, ministers, parliamentarians and doctors are perceived as the most corrupt.

Compared to 2008, the ranking of institutions based on perceived corruption has remained almost the same.

From 2008 to 2009, the military shows a deterioration of 4 points. However, it still remains more honest than corrupt (39.2 points). Perception of policemen has slightly deteriorated from 2006 (59.5 points) to 2009 (63.1 points). However, it is still marginally better than the 2005 survey result (66.4 points). The ranking of ministers also fell slightly in 2009, with 6.5 more points on the corruption scale, reaching the same level as in 2005 (78.9 points).

There is no statistically significant difference in corruption perceptions between urban respondents and rural respondents.



**Fig. 4  Honesty vs. Corruption**
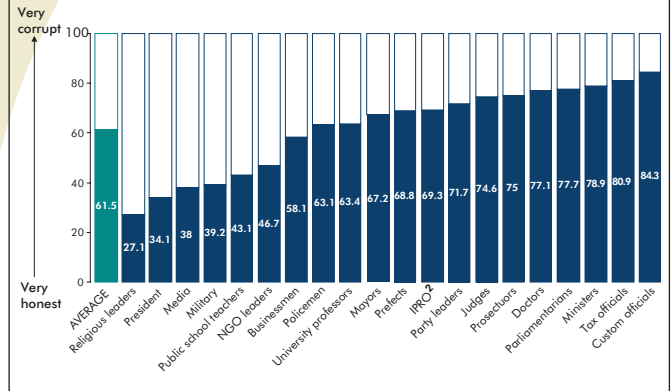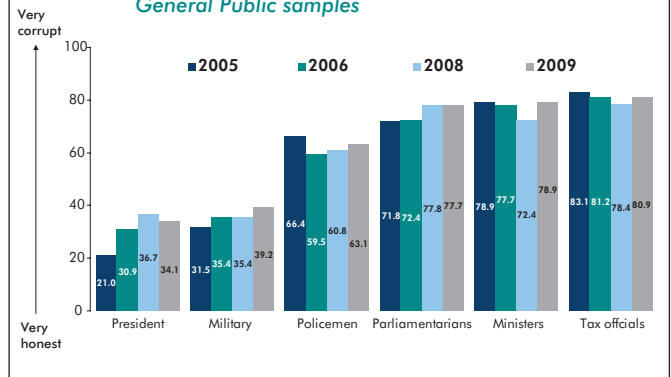*General Public 2009*



**Fig. 5  Honesty vs. Corruption** - *Only those institutions that show a difference in years*
*General Public samples*

1. No definition of corruption was provided to respondents. They were asked to evaluate each of the institutions based on their own perception of corruption.
2. IPRO is acronym for Immovable Property Registration Office.

## Summary of findings

Public sector employees, in aggregate, perceive the institutions/groups as more honest than the general public. The average score of 21 institutions was 50.5 points. This is 11 points less than the average score of the general public. Nine institutions out of the 21 are evaluated as more honest than corrupt on balance (Fig. 6)[3].

Compared to the general public sample, where policemen received a score of 63.1 points, the public sector employees reported that policemen are more honest, 47.2 points (Fig. 7). This perception has improved consistently from 2005 to 2009. The public sector employees' perception of judges has also improved with a decrease of 9.5 points from 73 points in 2008 to 63.5 in 2009. Unlike the general public perception, the perception of public sector employees for ministers shows improvement with almost 8 points decrease from 2008. However, with a score of 62.1 points on the corruption scale, ministers are still considered corrupt even by the public sector employees.

In the view of the public sector employees, the ranking of institutions based on perceived corruption is similar to the one generated by the general public sample.



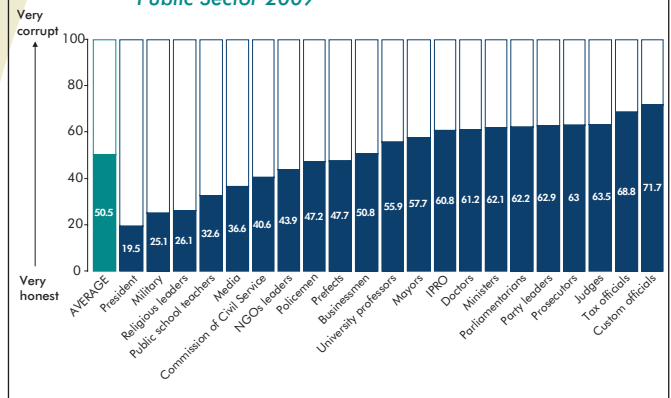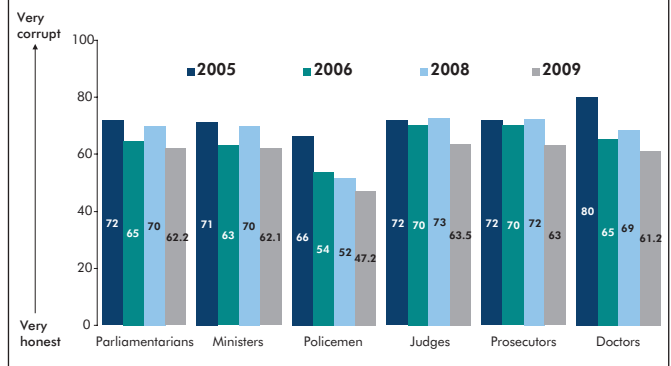**Fig. 6    Honesty vs. Corruption**
*Public Sector 2009*



**Fig. 7    Honesty vs. Corruption** - *Selected institutions*
*Public Sector samples*

3. Public sector employees were presented with a list of 21 institutions to evaluate, one more than the general public. The additional institution is the Civil Service Commission.

## Summary of findings

General public perception that corruption among public officials is a "spread" phenomenon has not changed over the years.[4] It remains solidly high. However, there is a decrease in the number of respondents who said that corruption among public officials is "Widespread" from 57.1% in 2008 to 50.5% in 2009. Comparing these results with the 2005 survey, there is a 16 percentage point decrease.

Public sector employees, think that the corruption phenomenon among public officials is also a "spread" phenomenon. During the period 2005 to 2009, more than 80% of the public sector respondents said that corruption is either "Widespread" or "Somewhat widespread". Compared to the general public, fewer public sector employees think that the phenomenon is "Widespread" (32.7% vs. 50.5% of the general public).

**Fig. 8    Corruption among public officials**
*General Public samples*

■ Widespread  ■ Somewhat widespread  ■ A little widespread  ■ Not widespread

| Year | Widespread | Somewhat widespread | A little widespread | Not widespread |
|------|-----------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| 2009 | 50.5 | 43.6 | 5.3 | 0.6 |
| 2008 | 57.1 | 34.6 | 7.4 | 0.9 |
| 2006 | 53.1 | 40.9 | 5.5 | 0.4 |
| 2005 | 66.4 | 28.9 | 4.1 | 0.6 |

*% of respondents*
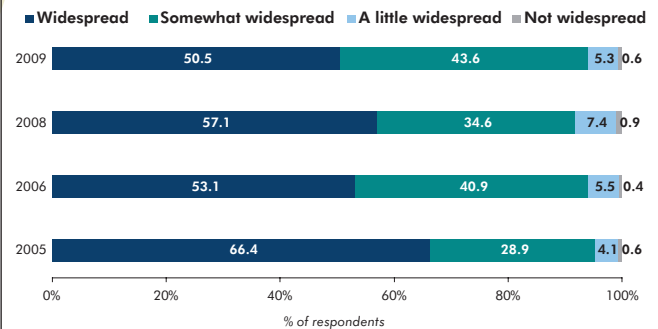
**Fig. 9    Corruption among public officials**
*Public Sector samples*

■ Widespread  ■ Somewhat widespread  ■ A little widespread  ■ Not widespread

| Year | Widespread | Somewhat widespread | A little widespread | Not widespread |
|------|-----------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| 2009 | 32.7 | 50.4 | 15.7 | 1.2 |
| 2008 | 37.5 | 45.9 | 15.2 | 1.4 |
| 2006 | 33.9 | 49.4 | 16 | 0.7 |
| 2005 | 39.8 | 49.1 | 10.4 | 0.7 |
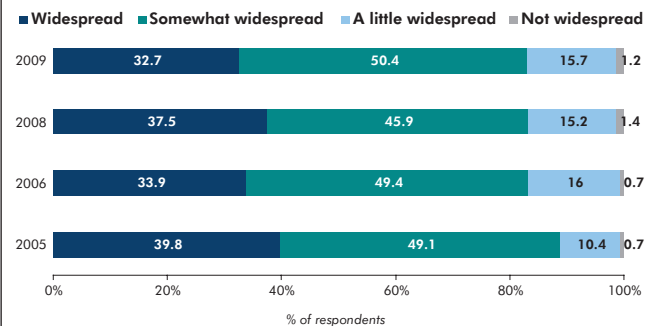
*% of respondents*

4. The term "spread" means an aggregate of the quantities indicated by those that said corruption is "Widespread" and "Somewhat widespread".

## Summary of findings

According to the general public sample, almost half of the respondents (48.5%) think that corruption has increased among public officials during the last year (Fig. 10). Only 13.5% of respondents think that corruption among public officials has decreased.

The situation is different, however, among public sector employees where only 22% of the interviewees think that corruption during the last year has increased. Almost 30% of public sector employees said that corruption has decreased during the last year, while 48.2% said it has remained the same.

**Fig. 10  Corruption among public officials compared to the last year**
*Samples 2009*



■ Increased    ■ Remained the same    ■ Decreased

| | General Public | Public Sector |
|---|---|---|
| Decreased | 13.5 | 29.8 |
| Remained the same | 38 | 48.2 |
| Increased | 48.5 | 22 |

**Summary of findings**
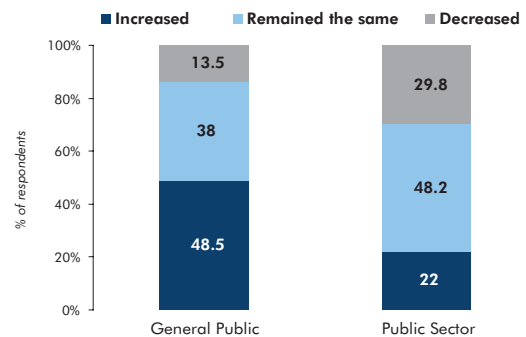
# Contribution of Institutions in the Fight Against Corruption

Overall the Albanian public has a negative perception of the contribution that different institutions have made in the fight against corruption. The average score for the 9 institutions/groups evaluated is 43.8 points on a 0-100 scale, where 0 means "Not helping at all" and 100 means "Helping a lot" (Fig. 11). The only institution that is evaluated as "helpful in fighting corruption" is the media which scored 63.6 points. All other institutions scored less than 50 points on this scale. Civil society scored 48.3 points and police earned 45.5 points.

The institutions reported as least helpful in the fight against corruption are:

- Religious leaders with 34.7 points.
- The High Inspectorate for the Declaration and Audit of Assets (HIDAA) with 34.9 points.
- Central government with 40.5 points.

A comparison of these perceptions over the period 2005-2009 shows little change. The media, which is seen as the strongest "fighter" against corruption, has improved by an additional 4.2 points since 2005 (Fig. 12). General Prosecutor's office has shown the biggest improvement from 2005 with a 6.1 point increase (from 36.3 to 42.4 points). Courts have also increased by 5.5 points since 2005, although in 2009 they scored slightly less than in 2008. HIDAA has decreased by almost 4 points from 38.7 in 2005, scoring 34.9 points in the 2009 survey.

In general, rural respondents evaluate the contribution of these 9 institutions in the fight against corruption slightly more positively than do urban respondents. The average score from rural respondents is 45.7 points while urban respondents had an average score of 42.7 points.

## Summary of findings



**Fig. 11  Extent to which institutions help to fight corruption**
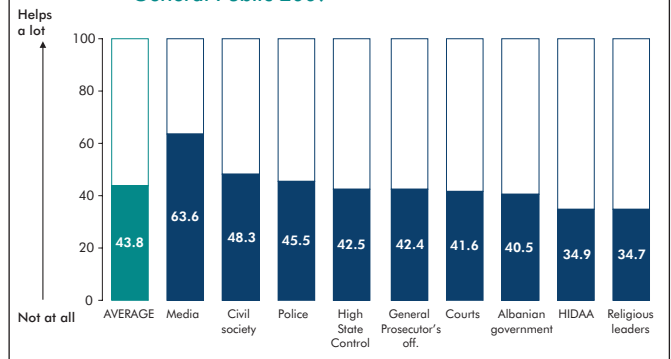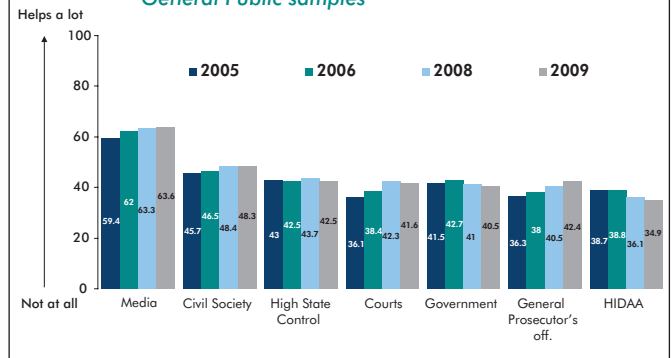*General Public 2009*



**Fig. 12  Extent to which institutions help to fight corruption**
*General Public samples*

## Trust in Institutions

Albanian citizens' trust in institutions continues to be very low. On average, the score of trust for all institutions evaluated is 44.3 points. Only the military, mayors and religious leaders are valued with a score of 50 points and above on a 0-100 scale where 0 means "No trust at all" and 100 means "Trust a lot". The Property Restitution and Compensation Agency (28.5), trade unions (33.5) and political parties (33.7), are the least trusted institutions in 2009 (Fig. 13).

Rural residents show slightly more trust in institutions than urban residents. The average calculated for rural residents shows a score of 46.1 points, 3.5 points higher than for urban residents.

Public sector employees, in general, have more trust in the evaluated institutions than does the general public. However, the average score for all institutions is 48.8 points, which still remains below the median score. Out of 15 institutions, public sector employees show a positive level of trust in 10. Similar to the general public sample, the least trusted institutions are the trade unions, political parties and Property Restitution and Compensation Agency (PRCA) (Fig. 14).

Public sector employees trust the police more (57.5) than the general public (47.8). Public sector employees also gave the central government a 51 point score on the trust scale, while the general public showed less trust with a score of 42.1 points.

**Summary of findings**



**Fig. 13 Trust in institutions**
*General Public 2009*
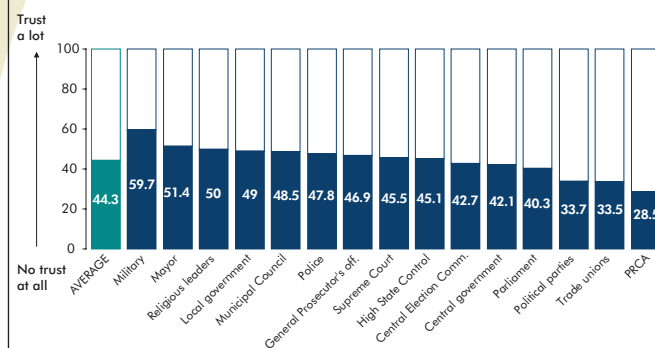


**Fig. 14 Trust in institutions**
*Public Sector 2009*
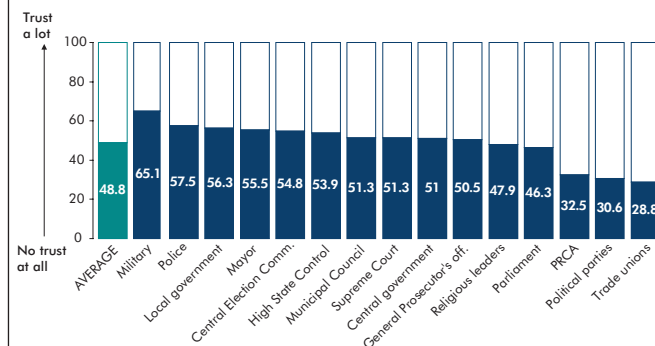
Comparing the general public results from 2005, there is a noticeable increase of almost 10 points in trust towards the General Prosecutor's Office. During the same time period, there is also an increase of about 5.5 points in trust for the Supreme Court. Trust towards the police has decreased slightly, by 4 points from 2006, reaching about the same level as 2005 (Fig. 15).

**Fig. 15  Trust in institutions**
*General Public samples*



**Summary of findings**
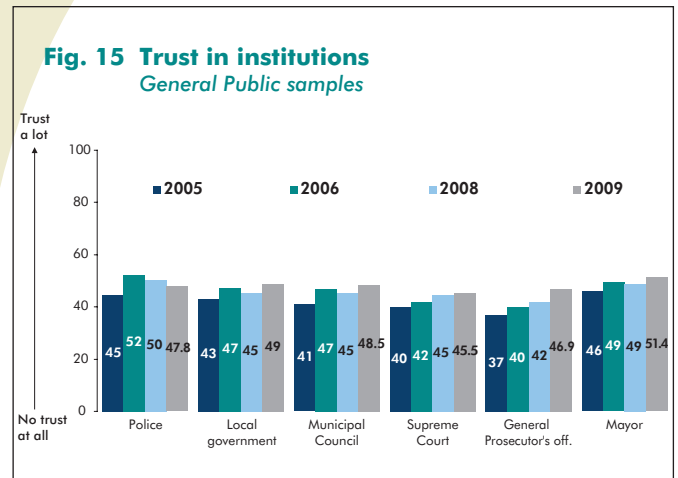
## Transparency of Institutions

The general public does not perceive institutions to be transparent. No institution, from those evaluated, received more than 50 points on 0-100 scale, where 0 means "Not at all transparent" and 100 means "Fully transparent". On average, all evaluated institutions scored 33.9 points. The most transparent institution, according to the general public, is local government, which still scores a low 40.3 points. The least transparent institution is the Property Restitution and Compensation Agency (PRCA) with 27.2 points (Fig. 16).

The results show a declining trend between 2005 and 2009 for three institutions. Central government scored 33.1 points in 2009, 11.9 points less than in 2005. The Parliament scored 31.9 points, 9.1 points less than in 2005. Similarly, the High State Control scored 34.5 points in 2009, 8.5 points less than in 2005. Courts scored almost the same in all four years demonstrating that perception has remained largely unchanged (Fig. 17).

Rural citizens tend to perceive the institutions/groups as more transparent than urban citizens, rating them with an average score of 36.9 points, almost 4 points higher than urban counterparts.



**Fig. 16 Institutional transparency**
*General Public 2009*

Fully transparent 100

Not at all transparent

AVERAGE 33.9 | Local government 40.3 | Ministry of Education 39.1 | High State Control 34.5 | Ministry of Health 33.8 | Central government 33.1 | Ministry of Finance 32.9 | Courts 32.7 | Parliament 31.9 | PRCA 27.2
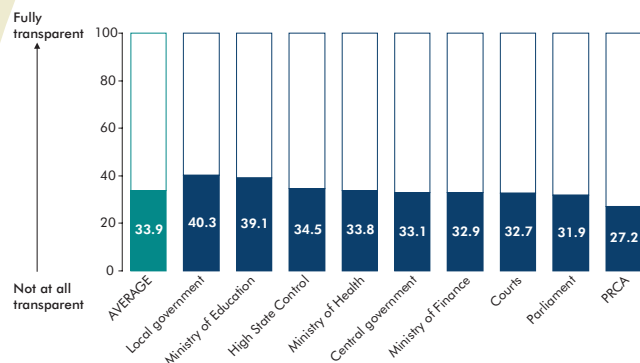


**Fig. 17 Institutional transparency** - *Selected institutions*
*General Public samples*

Fully transparent 100

Not at all transparent

■ 2005 ■ 2006 ■ 2008 ■ 2009

Local government: 41 44 43 40.3
High State Control: 43 40 39 34.5
Central government: 45 43 39 33.1
Parliament: 41 38 35 31.9
Courts: 33 33 33 32.7

**Summary of findings**
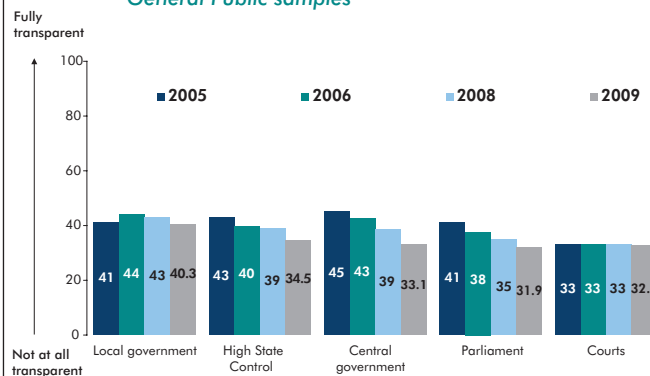
Public sector employees perceive the evaluated institutions as more transparent than the general public. In all institutions, there is a difference of at least 8 points in the perceived transparency between the two samples. The only exception is the PRCA, which was evaluated as the least transparent institution by both groups with an almost an identical score.

The public sector employees sample does not project the declining trend of perceived transparency observed in general public sample (Fig. 19).

The perception of the High State Control has improved since 2008 with a 5 point increase. Courts have also improved in the eyes of public sector employees by 6 points from 2008, and by 8 points from 2005 reaching 41 points in the 2009 survey. The public sector employees' perception of the central government has not changed over the last three years, remaining with a score of 51 points.

**Fig. 18  Institutional transparency**
*Public Sector 2009*

Fully transparent

Not at all transparent

| AVERAGE | Local government | Central government | High State Control | Ministry of Education | Parliament | Ministry of Finance | Ministry of Health | Courts | PRCA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 45.6 | 54.7 | 51 | 50.5 | 47.4 | 47.2 | 45.7 | 43.6 | 40.9 | 29.3 |

**Fig. 19  Institutional transparency** - *Selected institutions*
*Public Sector samples*

Fully transparent

Not at all transparent

■ 2005   ■ 2006   ■ 2008   ■ 2009

| | Local government | Central government | Parliament | High State Control | Courts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2005 | 55 | 55 | 50 | 49 | 33 |
| 2006 | 49 | 51 | 49 | 48 | 33 |
| 2008 | 56 | 51 | 47 | 46 | 35 |
| 2009 | 55 | 51 | 47 | 51 | 41 |

**Summary of findings**

## Corruption Experience

The surveys, besides measuring perceptions, also explore personal experiences with corruption. Respondents were asked whether they paid bribes to obtain public services during their interaction with public institutions. They were also asked whether they have ever been asked by public officials to pay bribes. Ten such questions were used to create an index entitled "Corruption victimization". This is a count index used to measure the number of ways a person has been victimized by corruption. The score is based on the average number of ways in which respondents claim to have been victimized.

Reported victimization declined in 2009 from 2005. Out of 10 ways in which an individual could be victimized, the average number of experiences for 2009 is 1.29, a decrease from 1.7 in 2005 (Fig. 21).

In general, experience with corruption is declining. In almost all scenarios provided in the questionnaire, there is a decline in the percentage of people reporting paying a bribe or being asked for a bribe. The only exception is corruption in the health sector which shows no change.

Similar to previous years, in the 2009 survey respondents declare that the most common instances of victimization from corruption are:

i) **Visiting a doctor/nurse** (37.1% of the total general public sample said that they had paid a bribe to a doctor or a nurse during the last year, Fig. 20).

ii) **Processing of documents** like a business license, certificates etc. (19% of the respondents said that they gave a bribe to process documents during the last year).

## Summary of findings

**Fig. 20 Corruption victimization** - *During last year did any of the following happen? Those that answered yes. General Public samples*
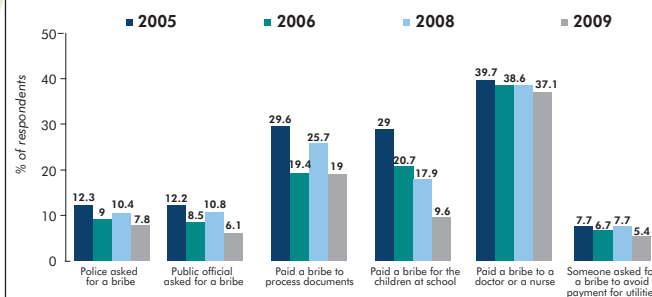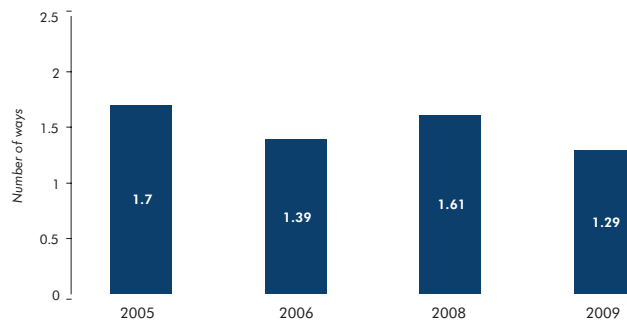
**Fig. 21 Corruption victimization index**
*General Public samples*

After an analysis of all corruption victimization scenarios, the survey shows that 57.1% of the citizens reported at least one experience with corruption during the last 12 months. This number is approximately 5 percentage points lower than in 2008, and about 9 percentage points lower than in 2005 (Fig. 22). It should be noted that the largest impact is from those people who acknowledged having to pay a bribe to a doctor or a nurse. Excluding this sector from the calculation, then only 35% of respondents reported at least one experience with corruption.

In order to determine differences in perceptions based on direct experience with corruption, the respondents were divided into two groups.

1. Respondents who did not have any direct experience with corruption during the last year
2. Respondents who had at least one direct experience with corruption during the last year

An average score of their corruption perception on institutions was calculated. It is interesting to note that the overall perception of both of these groups was similar.[5] Respondents that had no experience with corruption reported an average score of 61.4 points on the scale of 0 to 100 where 0 means "Very honest" and 100 means "Very corrupt" (Fig. 23). Similarly, respondents who have had at least one experience with corrupt transactions reported 62.6 points on average.

**Fig. 22  Direct experience with corruption**
*General Public samples*

■ No direct experience    ■ At least one direct experience

| Year | No direct experience | At least one direct experience |
|------|------|------|
| 2009 | 42.9 | 57.1 |
| 2008 | 38.3 | 61.7 |
| 2006 | 41.7 | 58.3 |
| 2005 | 33.5 | 66.5 |

0%     20%     40%     60%     80%     100%

*% of respondents*
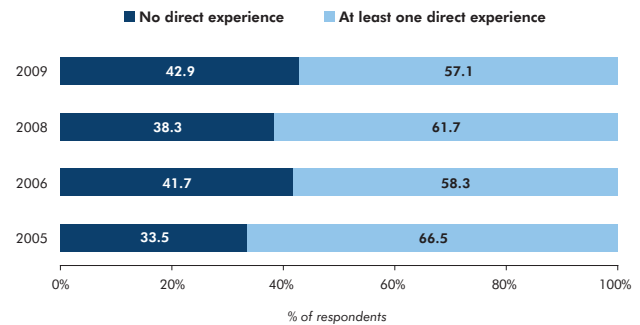
**Fig. 23  Honesty vs. Corruption**
*Experience vs. non experience with corruption*
*General Public 2009*
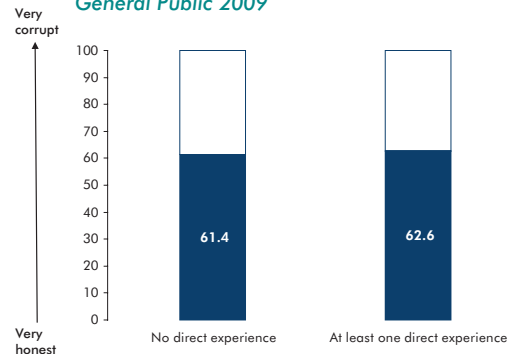
Very corrupt

100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0

Very honest

| No direct experience | At least one direct experience |
|------|------|
| 61.4 | 62.6 |

## Summary of findings

## Attitudes towards Corruption

The survey continues to explore the attitudes of the Albanian public towards different dimensions of corruption. Several scenarios of corrupt transactions were presented to respondents for their judgment of the different parties involved.

The following scenarios were presented:

- A student who gives a shirt to the teacher with the hope of receiving a better grade
- A mother who gives 500 Leks to avoid a queue for birth certificates for her children
- A businessman who pays a bribe of $10,000 to a minister

The tolerance of the Albanian public toward "givers" is persistent throughout the four years.

Excluding the obvious scenario of a minister taking a bribe from a businessman, where more than 80% of the respondents thought both parties involved in the transaction to be "Corrupt and must be punished", the public opinion was generally different in the other two scenarios. The student who gave a shirt to the teacher with the hope of receiving a better grade was seen as not corrupt by 35.4% and rather justified by 34.7% of the respondents. The mother who pays 500 Leks for the certificates of her children to avoid staying in a queue is also seen as not corrupt by 26.3% and is justified by 43.4%. These opinions are very similar over the years (Fig. 25).



**Fig. 24  Attitudes toward corruption**
*General Public 2009*

- Corrupt and must be punished
- Corrupt but justified
- Not corrupt

| Scenario | Corrupt and must be punished | Corrupt but justified | Not corrupt |
|---|---|---|---|
| The student who gave the shirt to the teacher | 29.9 | 34.7 | 35.4 |
| The teacher who accepted the shirt from the student | 63.2 | 20.3 | 16.5 |
| The mother of children who paid the bribe for certificates | 30.3 | 43.4 | 26.3 |
| The official who accepted the bribe from the mother | 80.4 | 12 | 7.6 |
| The businessman who paid the minister | 81.7 | 16.6 | 1.8 |
| Minister accepting the bribe from businessman | 95.7 | 3.6 | 0.7 |

*% of respondents*



**Fig. 25  Attitudes toward corruption**
*General Public samples*

- Corrupt and must be punished
- Corrupt but justified
- Not corrupt

| | Mother 2005 | Mother 2006 | Mother 2008 | Mother 2009 | Student 2005 | Student 2006 | Student 2008 | Student 2009 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Not corrupt | 19.1 | 15.3 | 21.4 | 26.3 | 27.6 | 25.8 | 29.9 | 35.4 |
| Corrupt but justified | 57.6 | 61 | 56.1 | 43.4 | 40.3 | 43.1 | 41.9 | 34.7 |
| Corrupt and must be punished | 23.3 | 23.7 | 22.5 | 30.3 | 32.2 | 31.2 | 28.2 | 29.9 |

*% of respondents*

## Summary of findings

When asked about a flower vendor who increases prices during holidays, more than half of the respondents replied he is "Corrupt and must be punished" (Fig. 26). Approximately a quarter of the respondents said he is "Corrupt but justified" and only 25.7% said he is "Not corrupt". These proportions have remained the same throughout the past four years.

This result shows that the Albanian public perceives businesses that inflate prices during periods of higher demand as engaging in corrupt practices.

The above result also suggests that perceived corruption might be, to a certain extent, over-inflated since it includes phenomena other than clear corruption cases. In fact, when analyzing corruption opinions of those who think the flower vendor is "Not corrupt" and those who think he is "Corrupt and must be punished", there are statistically significant differences. Respondents who consider the flower vendor corrupt tend to rate the different institutions, except for custom officials, as more corrupt than respondents who consider the vendor not corrupt (Fig. 27). However, the opinions are never so divergent as to change the overall status of the institution (i.e. one institution that is considered corrupt by the group of respondents who think the flower vendor is corrupt, is not considered honest by the other group and vice versa). It shows that although the perception might differ, it does not change the overall tendency.

**Fig. 26 Attitudes toward corruption**
*Flower vendor*
*General Public samples*

Legend: ■ Corrupt and must be punished  ■ Corrupt but justified  ■ Not corrupt

| Year | Corrupt and must be punished | Corrupt but justified | Not corrupt |
|------|------|------|------|
| 2005 | 42.3 | 32.3 | 25.4 |
| 2006 | 51.4 | 25.4 | 23.2 |
| 2008 | 52.2 | 27.6 | 20.2 |
| 2009 | 51 | 23.3 | 25.7 |
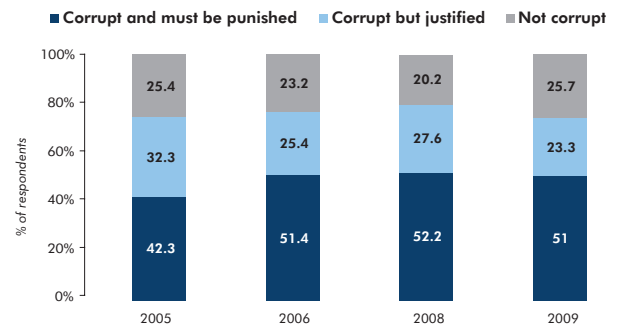
**Fig. 27 Honesty vs. Corruption**
*Based on opinions towards the flower vendor*
*General Public 2009*

Legend: ■ Corrupt and must be punished  ■ Not corrupt

| Institution | Corrupt and must be punished | Not corrupt |
|------|------|------|
| Parliamentarians | 79.1 | 75.4 |
| University professors | 66.5 | 59.3 |
| Religious leaders | 30.2 | 20.8 |
| Political parties | 74 | 68.6 |
| NGO leaders | 49 | 41.5 |
| Public school teachers | 44.2 | 38.7 |
| Custom officials | 83.7 | 88.4 |
| Businessmen | 60 | 55.3 |
| Doctors | 78.9 | 72.3 |
| IPRO | 71.5 | 66.2 |

**Summary of findings**
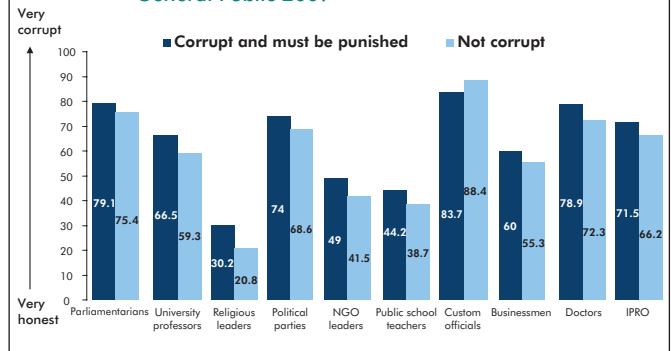
## Judicial System

Although trust in the judicial system has improved significantly since 2005, still half of Albanian citizens (53.3%) have little or no trust in it. But, compared to 2005, the number of people who trust the Judicial System "A lot" or "To some degree" has increased by 12 percentage points, from 34.6% in 2005 to 46.6% in 2009 (Fig. 28).

Another observed improvement is the overall treatment by the courts. In 2009, 73.3% of those who dealt with courts declared they were treated "Well" or "Very well". This result represents almost a 15 percentage point improvement from 2005 (Fig. 29).

There is continuous improvement in treatment by the following institutions:

- Police
- Prosecutors' office

When asked how they were treated by the police, the proportion of respondents that replied "Poorly" or "Very poorly" was 26.6%, a decrease of 10.9 percentage points from 37.5% in 2005 (Fig. 30). Similarly, the number of those who reported poor treatment by Prosecutors' office decreased from 38.7% in 2005, to 29.6% in 2009 (Fig. 30).

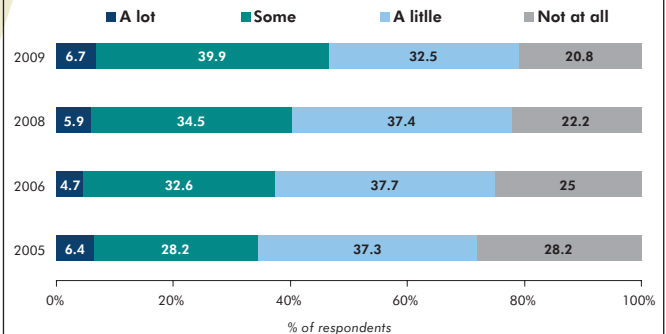**Fig. 28  Trust in judicial system**
*General Public samples*

■ A lot    ■ Some    ■ A litlle    ■ Not at all

| Year | A lot | Some | A little | Not at all |
|------|-------|------|----------|------------|
| 2009 | 6.7 | 39.9 | 32.5 | 20.8 |
| 2008 | 5.9 | 34.5 | 37.4 | 22.2 |
| 2006 | 4.7 | 32.6 | 37.7 | 25 |
| 2005 | 6.4 | 28.2 | 37.3 | 28.2 |

*% of respondents*

**Fig. 29  Treatment by the courts**
*Only those who have dealt with courts*
*General Public samples*

■ Very well    ■ Well    ■ Poorly    ■ Very poorly

| Year | Very well | Well | Poorly | Very poorly |
|------|-----------|------|--------|-------------|
| 2009 | 8.5 | 64.8 | 20.6 | 6.1 |
| 2008 | 11.9 | 57.5 | 20.2 | 10.4 |
| 2006 | 11.1 | 50 | 22.8 | 16 |
| 2005 | 8.3 | 50.4 | 22.7 | 18.6 |

*% of respondents*

**Summary of findings**
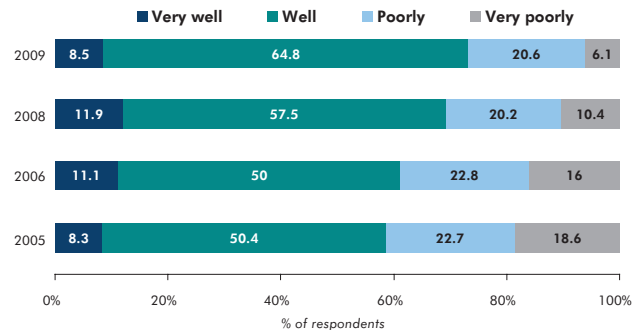
However, the general public still reports that the factors that influence the outcome of trials are more related to corruption than to justice. "Facts and applicable law" continues to be the least influential factor. On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means "No influence" and 10 means "Influence a lot", "Facts and applicable law" scores only 6.8 points. The factor that Albanians continue to believe is most likely to affect the outcome of a trial is "Monetary considerations" with 8.6 points followed by "Business connections of the judges" and "Personal connections of the judges" with 8 and 7.9 points, respectively (Fig. 32).

**Fig. 31  Treatment by the prosecutors' office**
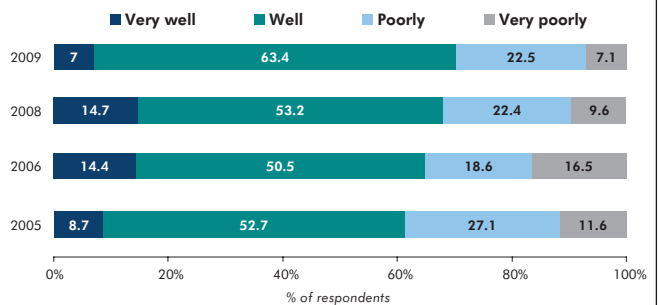*Only those respondents who have dealt with prosecutors' offices*
*General Public samples*

| | Very well | Well | Poorly | Very poorly |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2009 | 7 | 63.4 | 22.5 | 7.1 |
| 2008 | 14.7 | 53.2 | 22.4 | 9.6 |
| 2006 | 14.4 | 50.5 | 18.6 | 16.5 |
| 2005 | 8.7 | 52.7 | 27.1 | 11.6 |

% of respondents

**Fig. 30  Treatment by the police**
*Only those respondents who have dealt with police*
*General Public samples*

| | Very well | Well | Poorly | Very poorly |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2009 | 9.6 | 63.8 | 18.4 | 8.2 |
| 2008 | 12.8 | 54.6 | 21.1 | 11.5 |
| 2006 | 13.5 | 51.7 | 22.8 | 12 |
| 2005 | 11.4 | 51.1 | 23.1 | 14.4 |

% of respondents
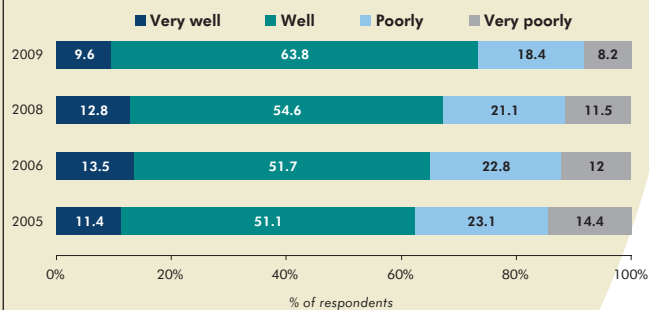
**Fig. 32  Factors that influence the outcome of trials**
*General public 2009*

| Factor | Score |
|---|---|
| Monetary consideration (payment of money to affect the outcome) | 8.6 |
| Business connections of the judges | 8 |
| Personal connection of the judges | 7.9 |
| Political considerations | 7.43 |
| The facts and applicable law in each case | 6.8 |

No influence — Influence a lot

**Summary of findings**
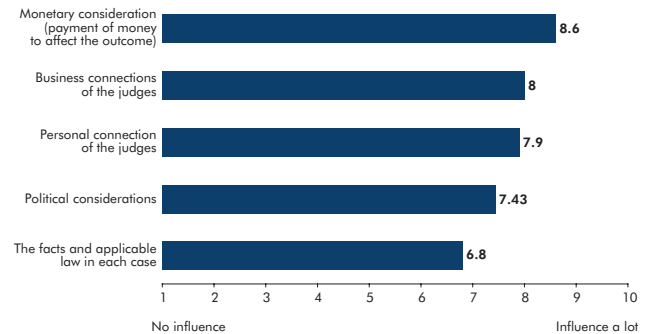
Overall, 82% of judges surveyed agree with the general statement that "judges in Albania are impartial in conducting trials". This is an increase of 7.2 percentage points from the 2008 survey. This result differs greatly from the perceptions of the general public and the public sector employees samples (Fig. 34). Only 16% of the general public sample think that judges are impartial. Similarly, approximately only 20% of the public sector employees sample think the same.

When asked whether corruption in the Albanian court system is a serious problem, only 27.3% of the judges responded affirmatively, a decrease of 23.2 percentage points from 2008 (Fig. 33). 37.2% of judges agreed that lawyers approaching judges outside the court is a common practice, a decrease of 18.3 percentage points from 2008. A significant decrease is also observed in the litigants approaching judges with bribe offers. Only 23.3%

of the judges agreed that litigants approached them with bribes; a decrease of 17.7 percentage points from 2008.

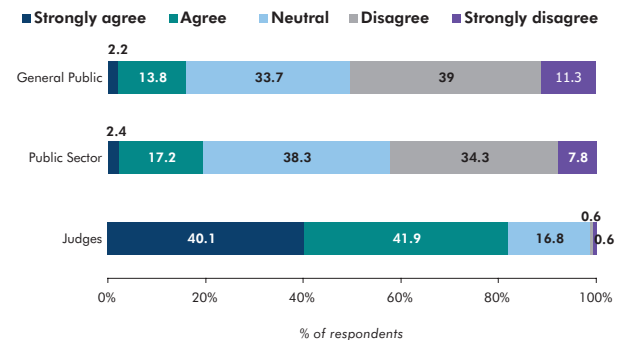**Fig. 34  Judges are impartial in conducting trials**
*Samples 2009*



**Fig. 33  Corruption in Albanian courts and approach of lawyers and litigants to judges**
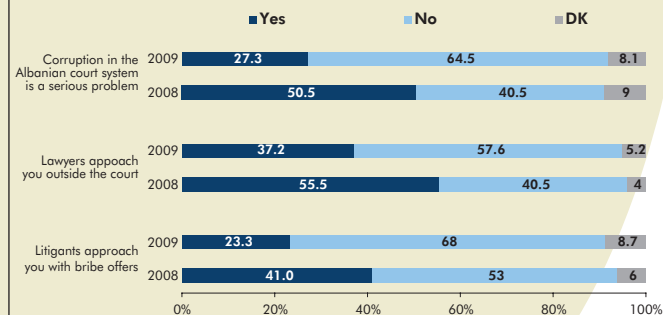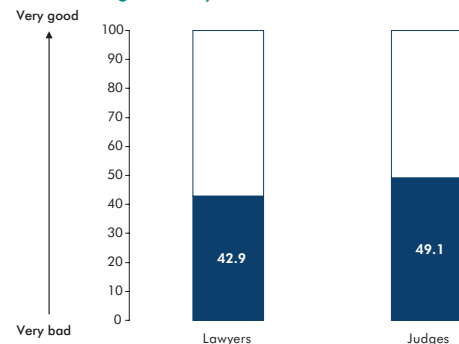*Judges Surveys*



**Fig. 35  Own assessment of how judges and lawyers are viewed by the public**
*Judges Survey 2009*



## Summary of findings

## Economic Evaluation

Regarding the economic situation of Albania in general, more than half of respondents (54.4%) considered it as "Bad" or "Very bad" (Fig. 36), a percentage not much different when compared with the 2005 results, and a decrease of 6 percentage points from 2008. Only 12.3% categorized the situation as "Good" or "Very good", which represents no statistically significant change from the 2008 survey. 33.3% of the respondents consider the economic situation to be "Fair".

Public sector employees tend to perceive the economic situation more favorably than the general public. Only 29% of them consider it as "Bad" or "Very bad" (Fig. 37). The economic situation is considered "Fair" by 52.4% of the public sector employees, while only 18.7% consider it as "Good" or "Very good".

**Fig. 36  General economic situation in Albania**
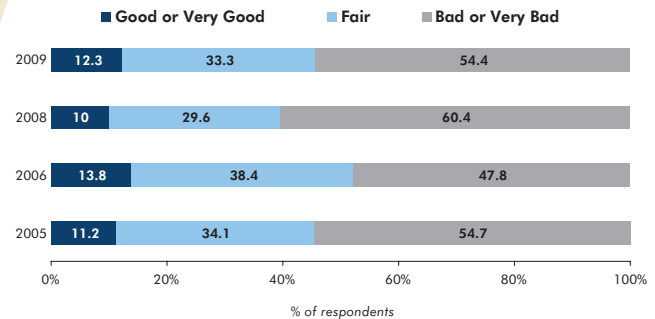*General Public samples*

■ Good or Very Good    ■ Fair    ■ Bad or Very Bad

| Year | Good or Very Good | Fair | Bad or Very Bad |
|------|-------------------|------|-----------------|
| 2009 | 12.3 | 33.3 | 54.4 |
| 2008 | 10 | 29.6 | 60.4 |
| 2006 | 13.8 | 38.4 | 47.8 |
| 2005 | 11.2 | 34.1 | 54.7 |

*% of respondents*

**Fig. 37  General economic situation in Albania**
*Samples 2009*

■ Good or Very Good    ■ Fair    ■ Bad or Very Bad

| | Good or Very Good | Fair | Bad or Very Bad |
|--|-------------------|------|-----------------|
| General Public | 12.3 | 33.3 | 54.4 |
| Public Sector | 18.7 | 52.4 | 29 |

*% of respondents*

**Summary of findings**
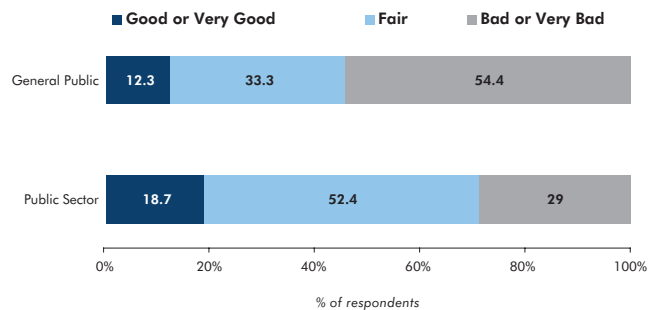
The percentage of Albanians who declare an improvement of the general economic situation compared to last year is still very low on average (Fig. 38). Only 13.5% of the respondents said that the economic situation is "Better" than last year, a 4.4 percentage point increase from 2008. The situation remains the "Same" for 41.5% of the respondents, while 45% report that the situation is "Worse" than the last year.

Economic optimism, judged by opinions on how the economic situation will be a year from now, is only slightly better than in 2008 and is still far down from the levels of the 2006 and 2005 surveys. About 39% of the respondents think that the economic situation will be "Better" a year from now, while 35% think it will be the "Same" (Fig. 39). Similarly, 25.4% of the respondents are pessimistic about the country's economic situation a year from now, a 2.5 percentage point reduction from 2008 but 10.6 percentage points higher than in 2005.

**Fig. 38  General economic situation compared to a year ago**
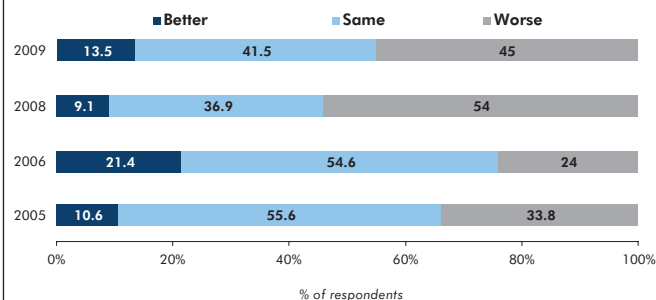*General Public samples*



| | Better | Same | Worse |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2009 | 13.5 | 41.5 | 45 |
| 2008 | 9.1 | 36.9 | 54 |
| 2006 | 21.4 | 54.6 | 24 |
| 2005 | 10.6 | 55.6 | 33.8 |

*% of respondents*

**Fig. 39  General economic situation a year from now**
*General Public samples*



| | Better | Same | Worse |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2009 | 39.3 | 35.3 | 25.4 |
| 2008 | 35.8 | 36.3 | 27.9 |
| 2006 | 50.8 | 37.9 | 11.3 |
| 2005 | 51.7 | 33.5 | 14.8 |

*% of respondents*

**Summary of findings**
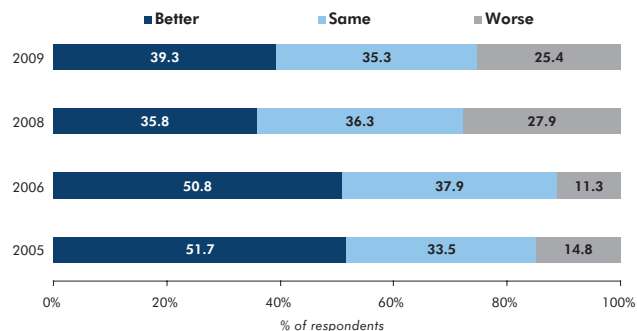
## Impact of Political Orientation on Perceptions

This survey indicates that perceptions about corruption, trust, transparency and the extent to which institutions fight corruption are highly correlated with the political orientation of respondents.[6]

In general, right-leaning respondents evaluate institutions more positively than left-leaning respondents. The general corruption perception of 20 evaluated institutions is about 10 points higher on average for left-leaning than for right leaning respondents (Fig. 40). Consistently, corruption perceptions of different institutions are higher for respondents who identify themselves as left-leaning. Despite these differences, however, even right-leaning respondents think that institutions are on average "more corrupt than honest" with a score of 54.7 points.

While only 4% of left-leaning respondents think that corruption among public officials has decreased compared to a year ago, 37.2% of right-leaning respondents believe the same. While 60.4% of the left-leaning respondents consider that corruption among public officials has increased compared to a year ago, only 22% of the right-leaning respondents believe the same. Among those whose political orientations fall in the center, more than half (53.4%) reported that corruption has increased from last year.



**Fig. 40 Honesty vs. Corruption - Average**
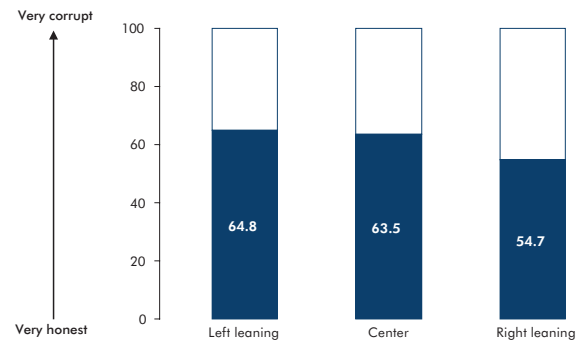*By political orientation*
*General Public 2009*



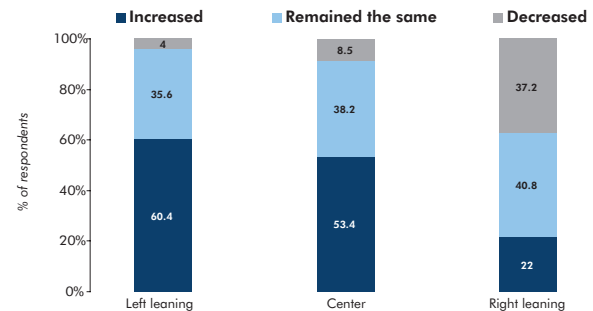**Fig. 41 Corruption among public officials compared to the last year**
*By political orientation*
*General Public 2009*

6. *Respondents were asked to place their own political orientation on a scale of 1-10 where 1 is far left and 10 is far right. Left-leaning respondents are defined as those that answered 1-4; center those that answer 5-6; right-leaning those that answered 7-10.*

## Summary of findings

Political orientation also plays a role in influencing the level of citizens' trust towards different institutions. Right-leaning respondents tend to show more trust in state institutions, than left-leaning respondents. There is a difference of as much as 13 points, between left-leaning respondents and right-leaning ones.

Illustratively, left-leaning respondents show low trust towards the central government with 32.3 points on the trust scale (Fig. 42). Right-leaning respondents, on the other hand, trust considerably more the government with almost double the number of points (65.8). Similarly, right-leaning respondents trust Parliament with 57.6 points, while left-leaning respondents show their distrust with 34.3 points (Fig. 43).

Overall, right-leaning respondents tend to view more positively the government's role in the fight against corruption. Left-leaning respondents have evaluated the

government's contribution in the fight against corruption with 30.3 points, while right-leaning respondents have given a score of 62.1 points (Fig. 44).

**Fig. 43  Trust in Parliament**
*By political orientation*
*General Public 2009*



Trust a lot — No trust at all

Left leaning: 34.3 | Middle: 36.9 | Right Leaning: 57.6

**Fig. 42  Trust in central government**
*By political orientation*
*General Public 2009*



Trust a lot — No trust at all

Left leaning: 32.3 | Middle: 37.4 | Right Leaning: 65.8

**Fig. 44  Extent to which government helps to fight corruption**
*By political orientation*
*General Public 2009*



Helps a lot — Not at all

Left leaning: 30.3 | Center: 37.7 | Right leaning: 62.1

## Summary of findings