

# PUBLIC PERCEPTION TOWARDS SECURITY AND JUSTICE INSTITUTIONS AND CORRUPTION ISSUES IN ALBANIA





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The data presented in the report derive from the Western Balkans Security Barometer (WBSB) survey. WBSB is a new regional initiative launched by KCSS in 2020, implemented in cooperation with the Belgrade Centre for Security Policy (BCSP) in Serbia and Center for the Study of Democracy and Governance (CSDG) in Albania, supported by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). WBSB serves as an instrument to measure public perceptions in Albania, Kosovo and Serbia on different security-related issues. The findings demonstrate how citizens percept or are informed about the issues presented in this report. As such, the views presented in this report do not necessarily represent the views of the KCSS, BCSP, CSDG or NED.

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# **PUBLIC PERCEPTION TOWARDS SECURITY AND JUSTICE INSTITUTIONS AND CORRUPTION ISSUES IN ALBANIA**

January 2023

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The Western Balkans Security Barometer (WBSB) is a regional project that measures public perceptions in Albania, Kosovo and Serbia for a wide range of security, rule of law, justice, regional cooperation and peacebuilding issues, implemented by local civil society organisations in the respective countries.

WBSB has an identical methodology in all three countries, and it also measured simultaneously the perceptions of the citizens of Kosovo and Serbia on the same issues. The results of the WBSB will be published in four different reports for each country.

CSDG has implemented WBSB in Albania for the second year since 2021. Along with the National Security Barometer which CSDG has produced since 2019, this project has produced a wealth of data that are used by a wide range of actors from policy makers, security practitioners, academia, the media, the international donors, etc.

The regional edition measures not only the perception of Albanian citizens towards their institutions and security issues, but also their perceptions on regional cooperation and specifically the relations between Albania, Kosovo, and Serbia. The first report was "Public Safety and Internal and External Threats" (2022). This is the second report "Public Perception towards Security and Justice Institutions and Corruption Issues" (2022) that includes only the data for Albania.

The report has been produced based on data collected from a survey based on multi-layered random sample of 1120 adults conducted between 23 September and 2 October 2022 through face-to-face interviews.

Surveys were proportionally distributed among 61 municipalities of Albania, taking into consideration the rural/urban areas, gender, and age quotas. Based on this multi-layered sampling approach an accurate geographic and demographic representation of Albania's adult population has been achieved, while maintaining a sampling error lower than  $\pm 2.9\%$  for the overall sample.

## 2. PUBLIC PERCEPTION TOWARDS SECURITY INSTITUTIONS

This section provides the survey results related to the opinion of the citizens towards security institutions. The security institutions that this report refers to include the Armed Forces, State Police, Agency of Police Supervision, State Information Service, Prison Police, the Custom Administration and the Civil Emergency Management Agency.

This section includes also opinions of the citizens on institutions that perform oversight roles of the security institutions, namely, the Assembly, the Government, the President, Local Administration and High State Audit.

The Armed Forces remains the most trusted security institution in Albania, even if less citizens than in the year 2021 (32.99%) trust or completely trust Armed Forces. There are no clear differences based on age groups or those who obtain a university diploma or those who does not.

The Civil Emergency Management Agency appears as the second most trusted institution (29.21%) according to the respondents of this survey.

The citizens opinion differs more regarding their opinion on the State Police. Only 26.37% of responders trust or completely trust the State Police, whereas another 30.45% has some trust. A large majority of 43.06% have little or no trust at all.

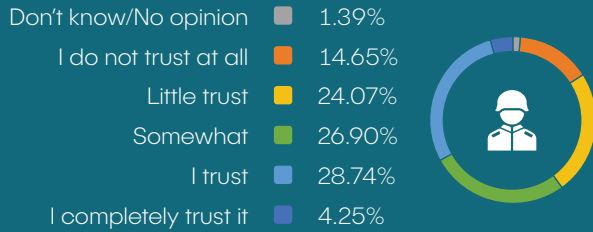
The Custom Administration is viewed as the least trusted institution. Only 14.84% of the respondents trust or completely trusts the Custom Administration and another 27.80% has some trust. More than half of the respondents (53.01%) do not trust this institution.

The Agency of Police Supervision and the Prison Police appear to enjoy low to moderate levels of trust among the citizens. 20.90% trust a lot or trust the Agency of Police Supervision while 28.50% have some trust. On the other hand, only 17.63% trust a lot or trust the Prison Police while 30.50% have some trust.

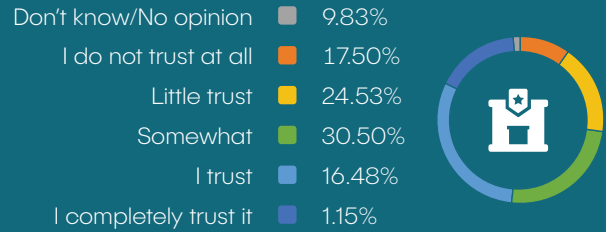
**FIGURE 1** LEVEL OF TRUST IN SECURITY INSTITUTIONS IN ALBANIA

**HOW MUCH DO YOU TRUST THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTIONS?**

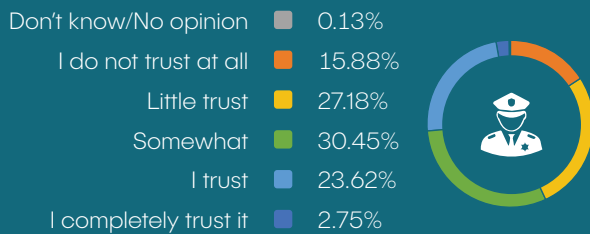
**ARMED FORCES**



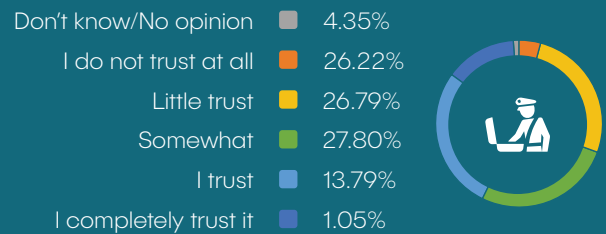
**PRISON POLICE**



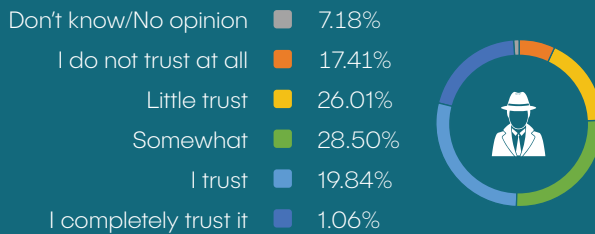
**POLICE**



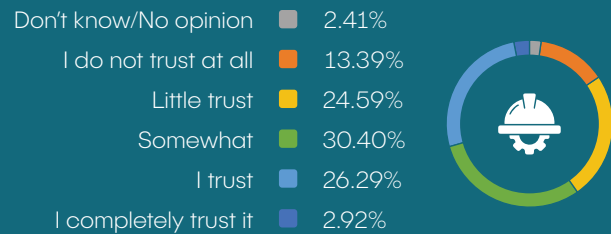
**CUSTOMS**



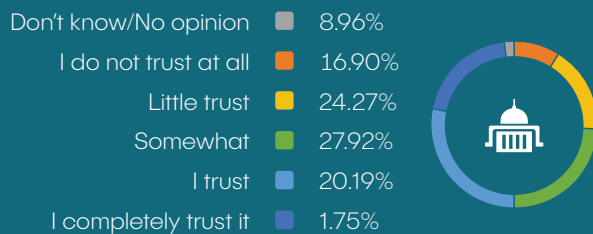
**AGENCY OF POLICE SUPERVISION**



**NATIONAL AGENCY FOR CIVIL PROTECTION**



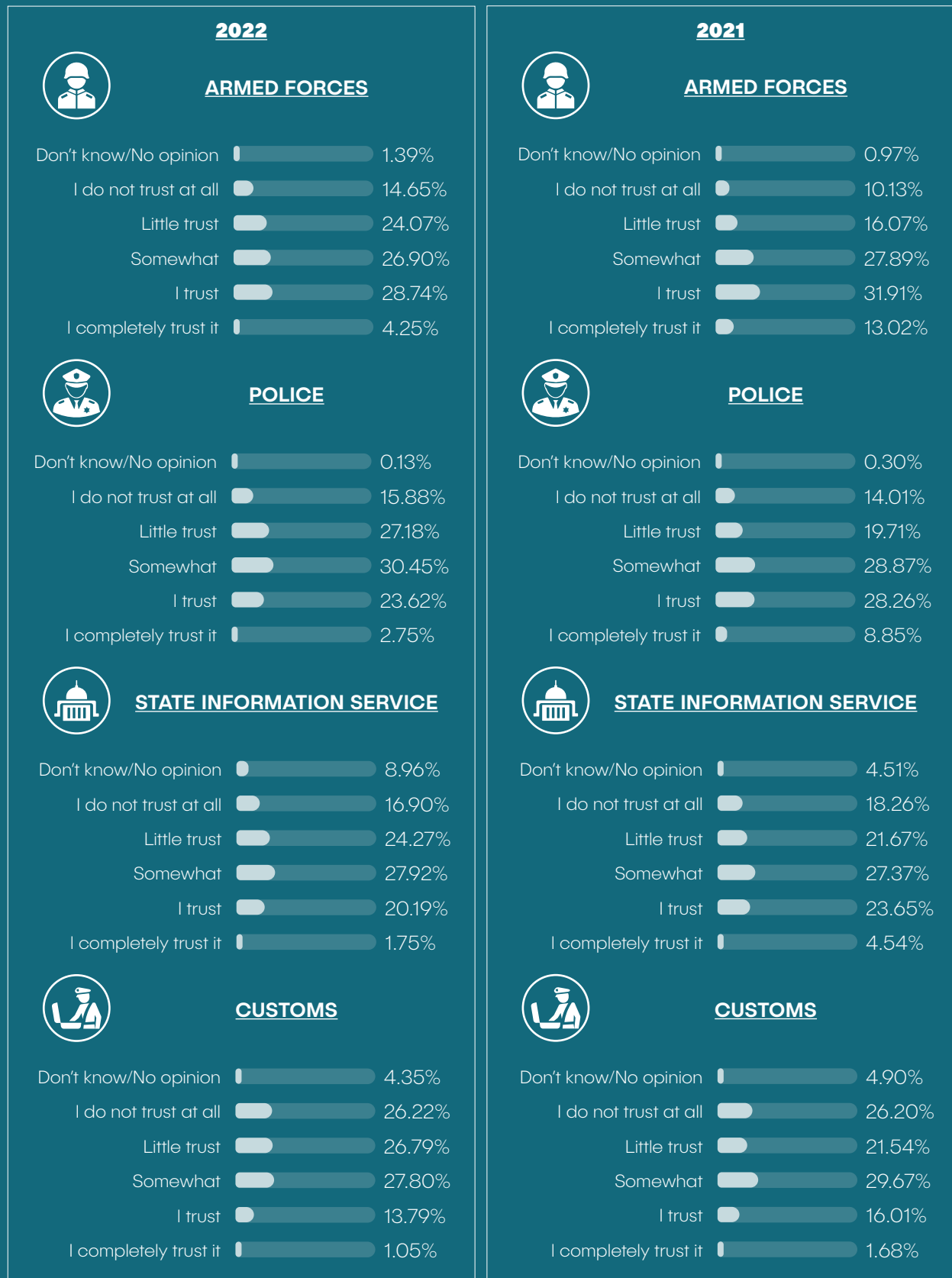
**STATE INFORMATION SERVICE**



Compared to the survey conducted in 2021, there is a decrease in the number of respondents that trust or completely trust the Armed Forces, the State Information Service, and the Customs, while the percentage of respondents that have little or no trust in the abovementioned security institutions is increased. (see graph no. 2)

**FIGURE 2** LEVEL OF TRUST IN SECURITY INSTITUTIONS IN ALBANIA IN 2022 AND 2021

**LEVEL OF TRUST IN SECURITY INSTITUTIONS IN 2022 AND 2021**





## 2. Public perception towards security institutions

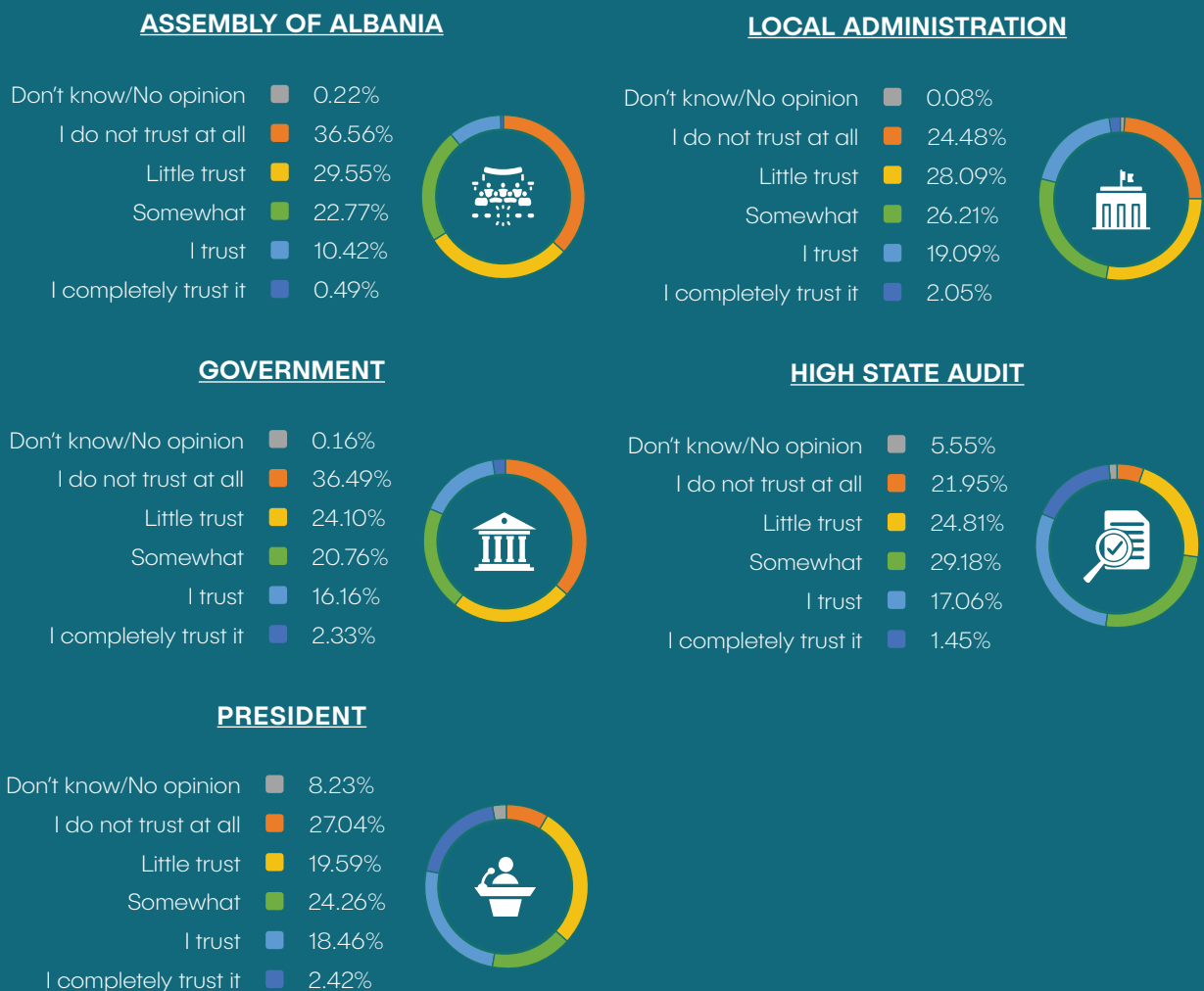
Public trust in the oversight institutions remain also low. The Assembly of Albania is perceived as the least trusted public institutions by responders with only 1 out of 10 (10.91%) answering that trust or completely trust this institution. Whereas 2 out of 3 people (66.11%) have a little or no trust at all.

18.49% of responders do trust or completely trust Government of Albania, whereas 60.59% have little or no trust at all in this institution. Local administration is seen as most trusted institution among the responders (21.14%) followed by the institutions of the President considered by 20.88% as most trusted institution.

However, more than half of the respondents (52.57%) have little or no trust at the local administration and almost half citizens asked in this survey (46.63%) have little or no trust at all in the institution of the President.

**FIGURE 3** LEVEL OF TRUST IN SECURITY-RELATED INSTITUTIONS IN ALBANIA

### HOW MUCH DO YOU TRUST THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTIONS?

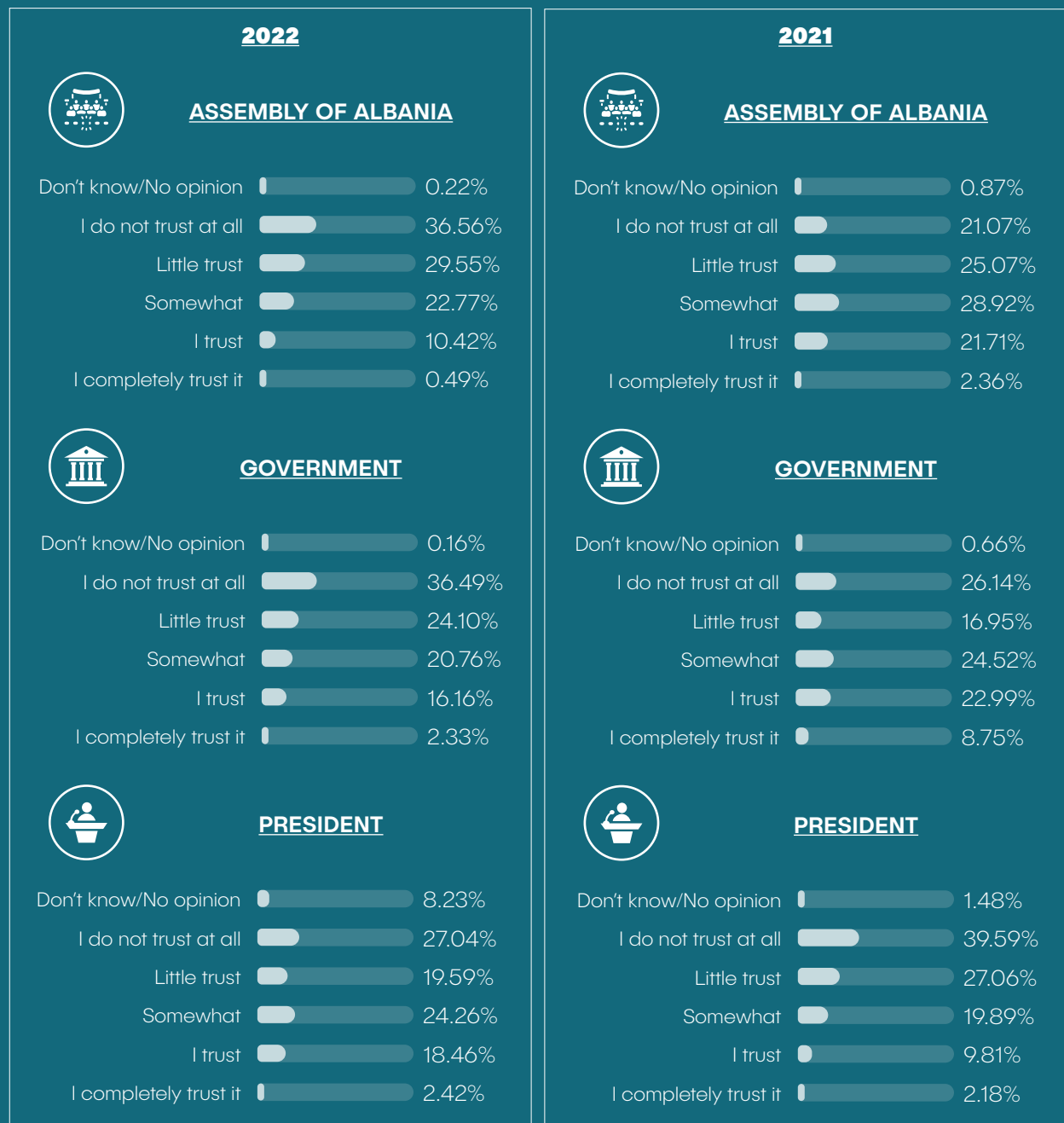


## 2. Public perception towards security institutions

Compared to the survey conducted in 2021, only the institution of the President shows an increase of the number of citizens that trust or completely trust this institution, while the Country's New President was elected on June 2022. (see graph no. 4)

**FIGURE 4** LEVEL OF TRUST IN SECURITY-RELATED INSTITUTIONS IN ALBANIA IN 2022 AND 2021

### LEVEL OF TRUST IN SECURITY-RELATED INSTITUTIONS IN 2022 AND 2021



### 3. PUBLIC PERCEPTION TOWARDS JUSTICE INSTITUTIONS

This section provides the survey results related to the citizens opinion towards the justice institutions in Albania. The e institutions that this report refers to include the courts, prosecution, Special Courts against Corruption and Organized Crime, and the Special Prosecution against Corruption and Organized Crime (SPAK).

Also, this section provides data on public trust towards non-state actors such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), media, religious communities and political parties.

The justice reform in Albania was considered as the most comprehensive reform undertaken in the country during the last decade. In 2016, when this reform was adopted and began to be implemented, the expectations of the Albanian citizens were very high. After more than 6 years of the first Constitutional Amendments, the public expectations in justice institutions remains at low levels.

SPAK, however, is seen as the most reliable institution based on respondents' answers. 26.30% of respondents trust or completely trust the SPAK, while another 25.31% has some trust in this institution. Almost half of respondents, (45.38%) have little or no trust at all.

Regarding the district court and district prosecution, public trust on these institutions is lower than in special institutions against corruption and organized crime. Only 13.08% of the respondents trust or completely trust the district prosecution and 13.47% trust or completely trust the district courts. Whereas almost half of respondents have little or not trust at all in the district courts and the district prosecution offices.

**FIGURE 5** LEVEL OF TRUST IN JUSTICE INSTITUTIONS IN ALBANIA

**HOW MUCH DO YOU TRUST THE FOLLOWING JUSTICE INSTITUTIONS?**

**DISTRICT COURTS**

Don't know/No opinion	2.79%
I do not trust at all	29.95%
Little trust	29.83%
Somewhat	23.96%
I trust	12.11%
I completely trust it	1.36%



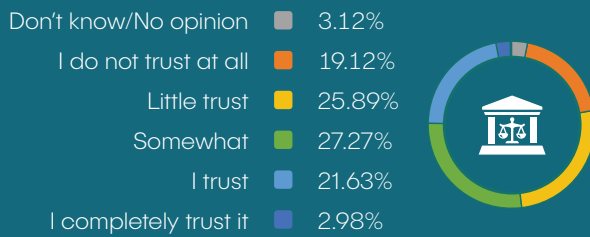
**DISTRICT PROSECUTION**

Don't know/No opinion	2.71%
I do not trust at all	29.43%
Little trust	29.81%
Somewhat	24.96%
I trust	12.07%
I completely trust it	1.01%

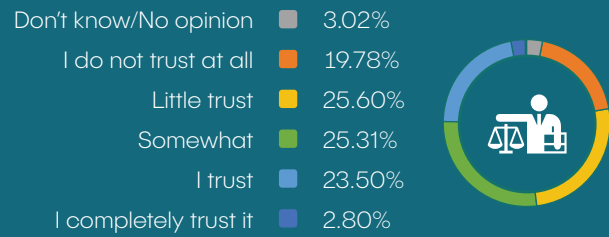


### 3. Public perception towards justice institutions

#### SPECIAL COURTS FOR CORRUPTION AND ORGANIZED CRIME



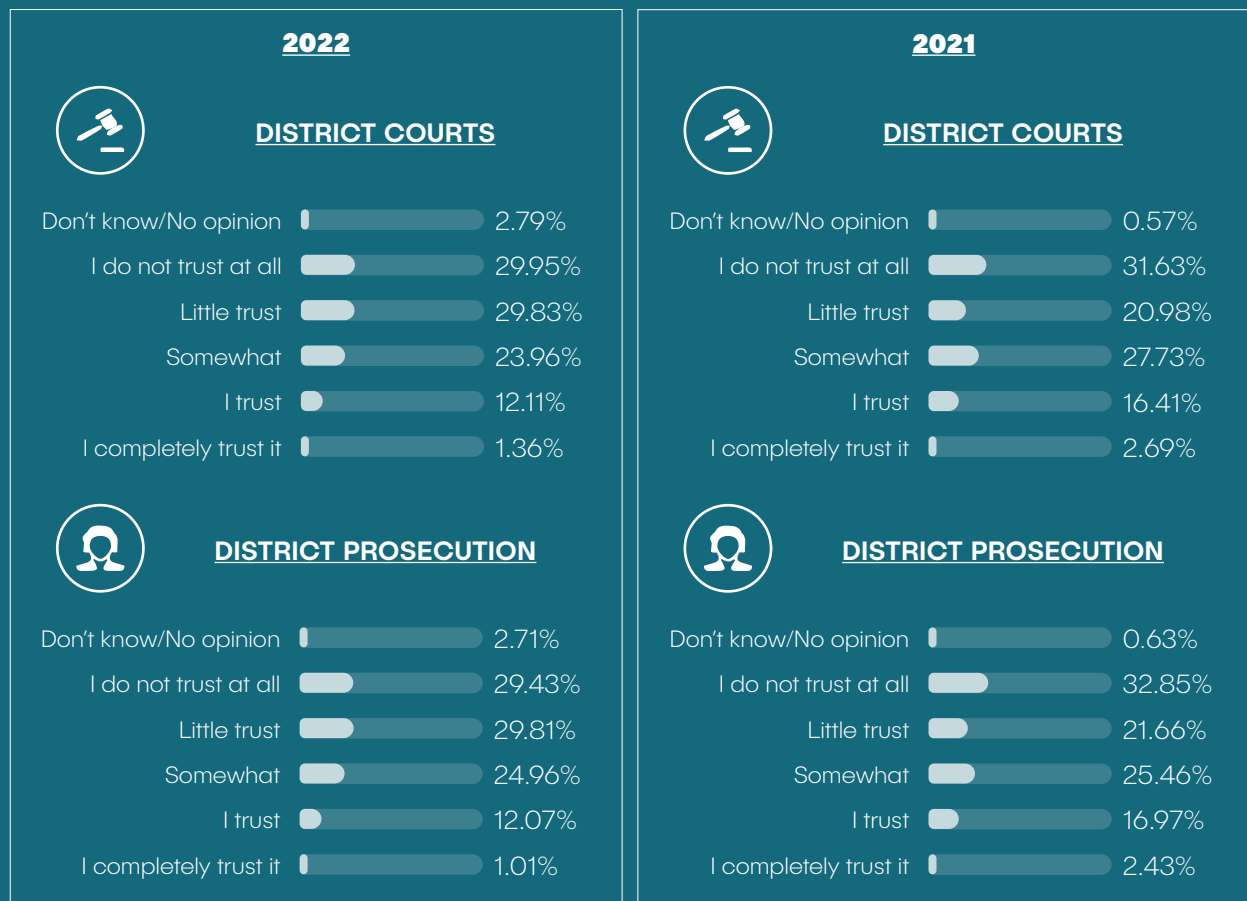
#### SPECIAL PROSECUTION AGAINST CORRUPTION AND ORGANIZED CRIME (SPAK)



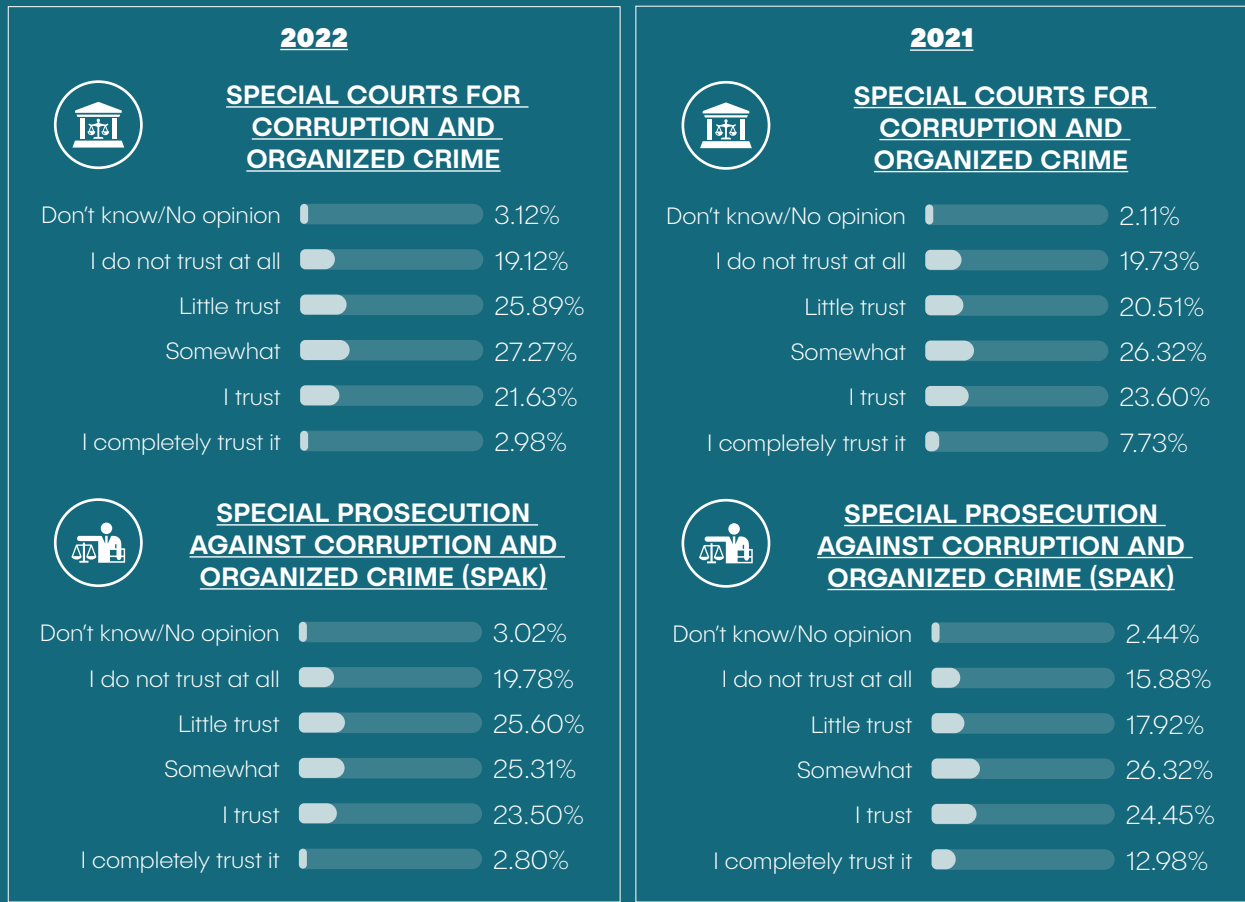
Similarly, as with the level of trust in security institutions, the percentage of respondents that trust or completely trust the district courts and prosecutions and the Special Courts and Prosecution (SPAK) has decreased from the year 2021, while more citizens have little or no trust in the abovementioned justice institutions (see graph no. 6).

**FIGURE 6** LEVEL OF TRUST IN JUSTICE INSTITUTIONS IN ALBANIA IN 2022 AND 2021

#### LEVEL OF TRUST IN JUSTICE INSTITUTIONS IN 2022 AND 2021



### 3. Public perception towards justice institutions



Among the non-state actors, the religious communities are seen as the most trusted institution by the citizens: 38.49% of trust or completely trust them.

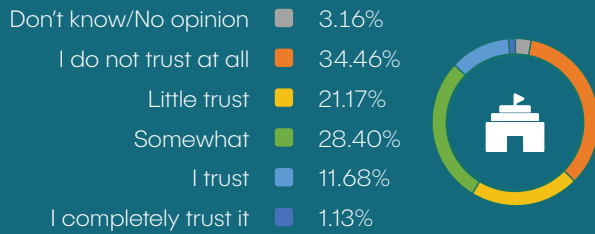
The political parties appear as the least trusted institutions: 76.66% of the citizens have little or no trust at all. Only 5.91% trust or completely trust them.

The media and the NGOs also do not enjoy high levels of trust. 21.42% of respondents trust or completely trust media while 40.44% of the citizens have some trust. On the other hand, only 12.81% trust or completely trust the NGOs while a smaller percentage of respondents (28.40%), compared to the media, has some trust in the NGOs.

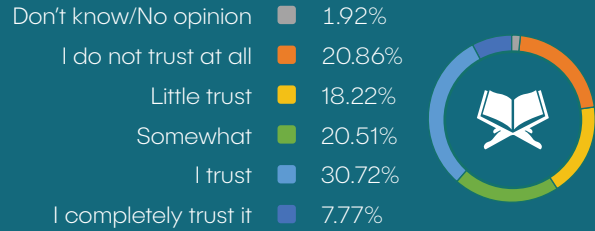
**FIGURE 7** LEVEL OF TRUST IN NON-STATE ACTORS IN ALBANIA

**HOW MUCH DO YOU TRUST THE FOLLOWING NON-STATE ACTORS?**

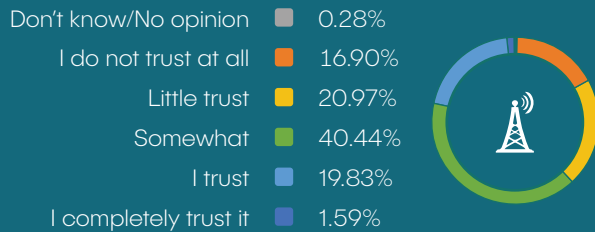
**NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOs)**



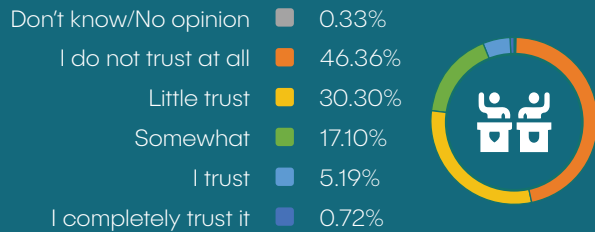
**RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES**



**MEDIA**



**POLITICAL PARTIES**



# 4. PUBLIC PERCEPTION TOWARDS CORRUPTION ISSUES

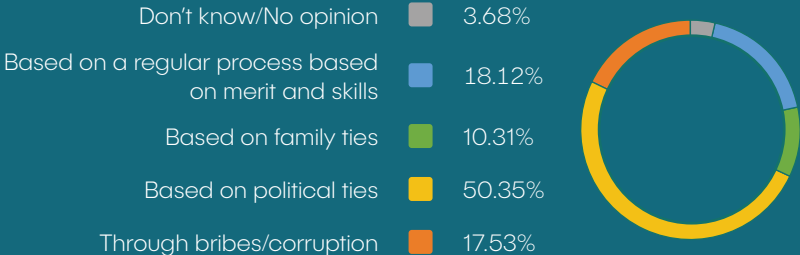
This section presents the results of the survey regarding the Albanian government efforts to fight corruption, the trust in the anti-corruption institutions, as well as the citizens attitudes to reporting corruption and the meritocracy in recruitment of staff in security institutions and public administration.

The results show that in overall the citizens consider the recruitment on the public and security institutions as biased and non-merit based. Half of responders (50.35%) consider the employment in the security institutions as based on political connections and 44.03% thinks the same for the employment in the public administration. Also 17.53% of respondents think that employment in security institutions is done through bribes and corruption, while 24.86% think the same for the employment in public administration.

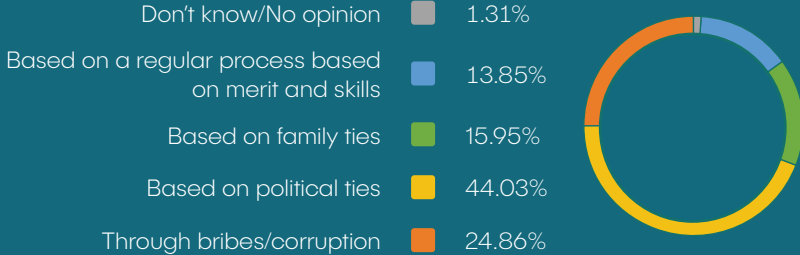
**FIGURE 8** EMPLOYMENT IN SECURITY INSTITUTIONS AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

**IN YOUR OPINION, THE EMPLOYEES OF SECURITY INSTITUTIONS AND CIVIL SERVANTS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION ARE MOST OFTEN EMPLOYED BASED ON:**

**EMPLOYEES OF SECURITY INSTITUTIONS**



**CIVIL SERVANTS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**



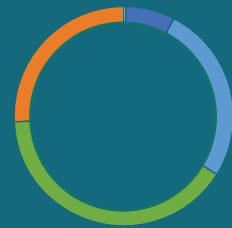
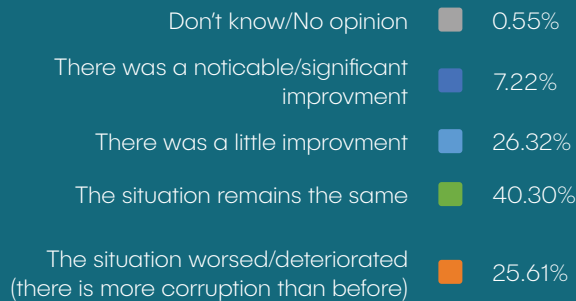
#### 4. Public perception towards corruption issues

When asked to evaluate the Albanian government's efforts in fighting corruption during the last 12 months, only 33.54% of citizens think that there has been little or noticeable/significant improvement in the fight against corruption.

A large majority of the respondents (40.30%) think that the situation with corruption in the country has remained the same, while 25.61% think that it has worsened/deteriorated, implying that there is more corruption than before.

**FIGURE 9 PERCEPTIONS ON ALBANIAN GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS IN FIGHTING CORRUPTION DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS**

PLEASE  
EVALUATE THE  
ALBANIAN  
GOVERNMENT'S  
EFFORTS IN  
FIGHTING  
CORRUPTION  
DURING  
THE LAST 12  
MONTHS?



Citizens were also asked about their attitudes on reporting corruption. The results show that most of respondents (43.69%) would not report it because they don't think anything would change/institutions would not react while another 36.71% would consider reporting the case to a competent authority.

**FIGURE 10 REPORTING CASES OF CORRUPTION**

IN CASE I  
WITNESS  
CORRUPTION, I  
WOULD:



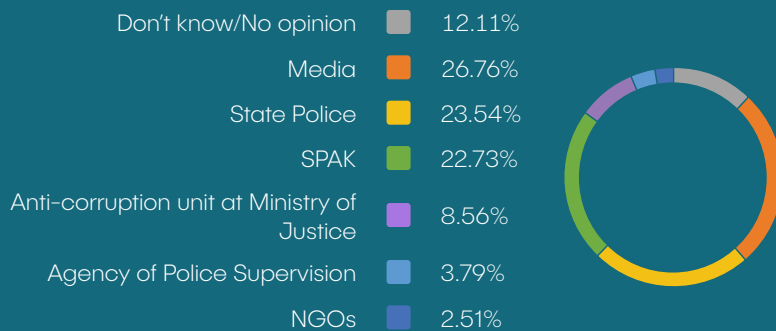


#### 4. Public perception towards corruption issues

Citizens were asked also about what institutions they feel more confident to report a case of corruption. Media is perceived as the most reliable channel to report a corruption case by 26.76% of the citizens. Regarding state institutions, 23.54% of respondents would report a case of corruption to the State Police 22.73% would report it to SPAK, while only 8.56% would report a corruption case to Anti-corruption unit at the Ministry of Justice.

**FIGURE 11** THE LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE IN INSTITUTIONS TO REPORT CORRUPTION CASES

CAN YOU NAME AN INSTITUTION IN WHICH YOU WOULD HAVE THE MOST CONFIDENCE TO REPORT CORRUPTION TO?



## 5. CONCLUSION

Based on the data collected through this survey, in general the trust of the Albanian citizens towards the security and justice institutions remains low.

The Armed Forces enjoys higher levels of trust, although no institution enjoys the majority of citizens' trust. Despite the fact that in the recent years government has tried to develop legal and functional reforms in the main security institutions such as the State Police or the Prison Police, it seems that the results of these reforms have not been sufficiently effective to increase the trust of the citizens.

Compared to the survey conducted in 2021, the percentage of respondents that trust or completely trust the Armed Forces, State Information Service and Customs has decreased.

Although the justice system reform which included as one of its pillars to restore the trust of the citizens is running through the 6th year of implementation, the Albanian citizens still have a very low level of trust in justice institutions. SPAK remains the most trusted institution by citizens (although at low levels).

Trust in political parties, which has been generally low in other surveys in previous years, continues to remain low. Among the non-governmental bodies, the media is viewed by the citizens as a trusted channel for reporting corruptions.

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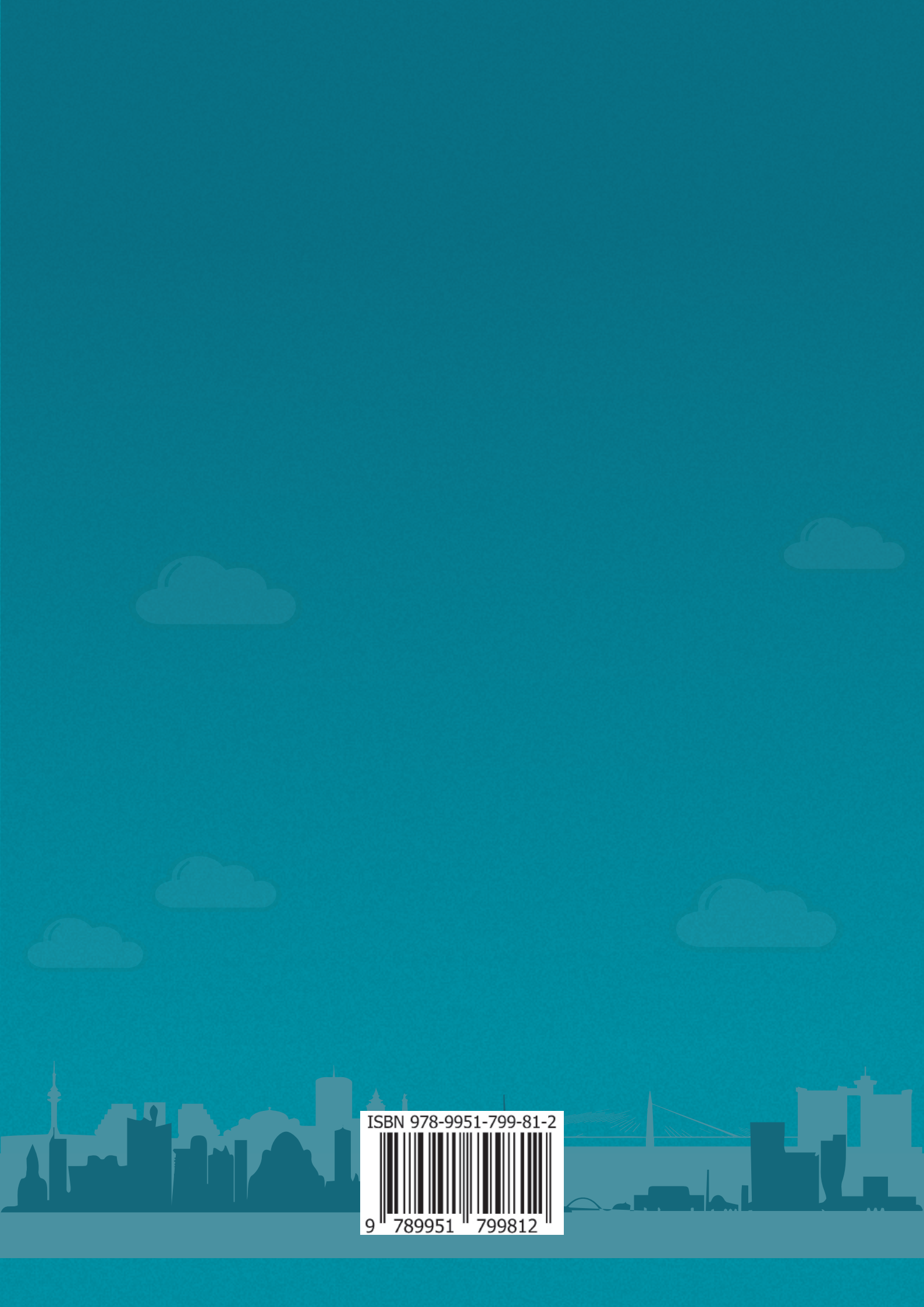
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