



PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL THREATS

KOSOVO CITIZENS PERSPECTIVE



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Perceptions presented in this report are a summary of information gathered from respondents and it only demonstrates how people percept institutions. It is in no way a conclusive assessment of the quality of the work of institutions subject to this study. It shall serve as an instrument to them for addressing potential shortcomings but also an indicator of the effectiveness of their communication with the people.

The views presented in this report are perceptions of the respondents and do not necessarily represent the views of the Kosovar Centre for Security Studies. Opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily represent the views of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED).

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**Pristina
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This special edition of the KSB presents citizens' perception on public safety issues and what do they perceive as the key internal and external threats towards the security of Kosovo. The first chapter of the report presents the perceptions on how safe do citizens' feel in Kosovo and their respective communities. Moreover, the public safety chapter includes the citizens' perception on different issues that potentially endanger the community and how much of a threat the citizens' perceive those issues. On the other hand, the second chapter consists of citizens' perceptions on what are the key internal and external threats to the national security of Kosovo and presents their opinion on how much of a threat do several issues present to the security of Kosovo. The key findings of this report are:

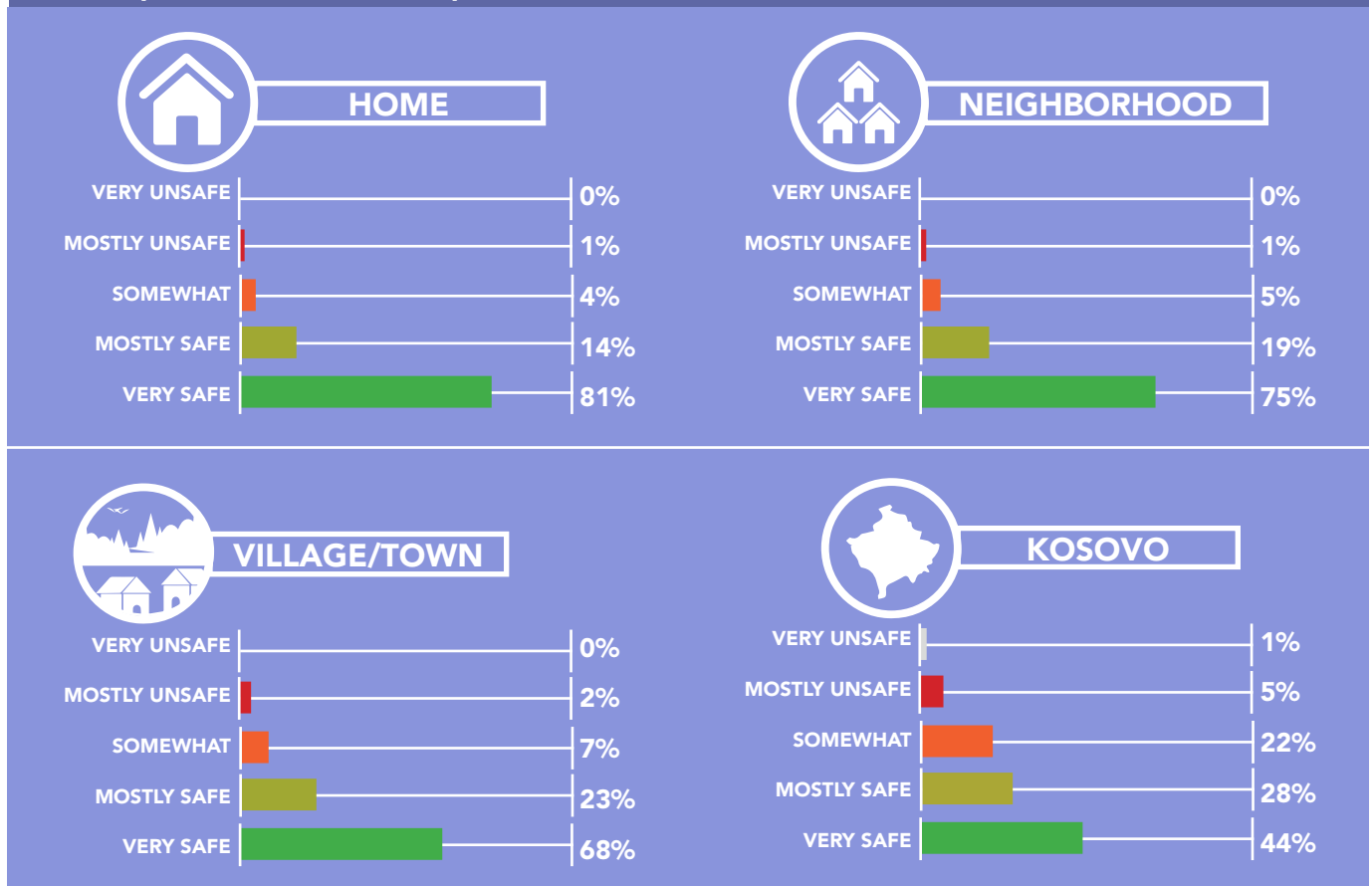
- Respondents feel safe in their immediate communities. However, the results show a tendency for the feeling of insecurity to slightly increase as respondents expand from their immediate communities;
- When asked to identify a threat posed to the community without stating pre-defined options of what the potential threats would be, the majority of respondents (43 percent) declared that there are no threats at all at their respective communities;
- When presented with pre-defined options of different phenomena that potentially endanger the community, 64 percent of the respondents believe that the emigration of Kosovo citizens' is a high threat or a very high threat for the community;
- When asked to identify the key internal national security threats, without pre-defined options on what the potential threats would be, 24 percent of the respondents listed corruption/ nepotism as the key internal threat;
- When presented with pre-defined options of different phenomena that potentially endanger the national security of Kosovo, 88 percent of respondents share the opinion that unemployment is a high threat or very high threat for the national security of Kosovo;
- In regard to external national security threats, 44 percent of the respondent believe that Serbia is the largest external security threat for Kosovo.

PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS ON PUBLIC SAFETY

One of the key issues analyzed through the Kosovo Security Barometer survey, namely the Western Balkans Security Barometer, was the respondents' perception on public safety issues. Through questions on this topic, citizens had the opportunity to express the extent to which they feel safe in their homes, neighborhoods, villages/towns and in Kosovo in general. Additionally, an open-ended question offered the respondents the opportunity to identify what they personally perceive as the greatest threat of their respective communities. The responses on the open-ended question were analyzed and grouped in categories based on the frequency of different responses. As a follow-up to the open-ended question, the respondents had the opportunity to assess how much of a threat certain phenomenon present to the community.

Generally, citizens' feel safe in their communities, however, the results show a tendency for the feeling of insecurity to increase as respondents expand from their immediate communities. 95 percent of the respondents feel very safe or mostly safe in their homes, while 94 percent of them stated that they feel very safe or mostly safe in their neighborhoods. On the other hand, 91 percent of respondents feel very safe or mostly safe in their village/town. In contrast to their homes and neighborhoods, there is a slight increase in the sense of insecurity in this case; 9 percent of respondents have stated that they feel mostly unsafe or somewhat safe in their village/town. Whereas, when asked how safe they feel in Kosovo in general, 28 percent of respondents stated that they feel very unsafe, mostly unsafe or somewhat safe. Although the insecurity is noticed to be higher in Kosovo in general when compared to homes, neighborhoods and villages/towns, yet, the majority of respondents, respectively 72 percent of them, feel very safe or mostly safe in Kosovo.

FIGURE 1 SECURITY PERIMETER: HOW SAFE DO CITIZENS FEEL IN THEIR HOMES, NEIGHBORHOODS, VILLAGES/TOWNS AND KOSOVO IN GENERAL



Moreover, the respondents were asked to identify a phenomenon that they personally perceive as the biggest threat of their immediate communities (neighborhood, village, town). This was an open-ended question and the respondents had the chance to provide their answers without pre-defined options in the questionnaire. The results from the open-ended questions show positive results pertaining the threats posed to the communities. 43 percent of the respondents consider that they do not have any potential threat in their immediate communities. For 13 percent of the respondents stray animals are a common problem, while 12 percent of the respondents perceive the theft of personal property as a great threat in their respective communities. The "Others" category includes the less frequent responses of respondents, which if divided into separate categories would amount to less than 1 percent. This category includes responses when citizens have considered COVID 19 and other health aspect as a risk to their community, responses that refer to political aspects as community risk, responses related to the culture and mentality of community members or specific issues of the respondents that they perceive as a threat to the wider community.

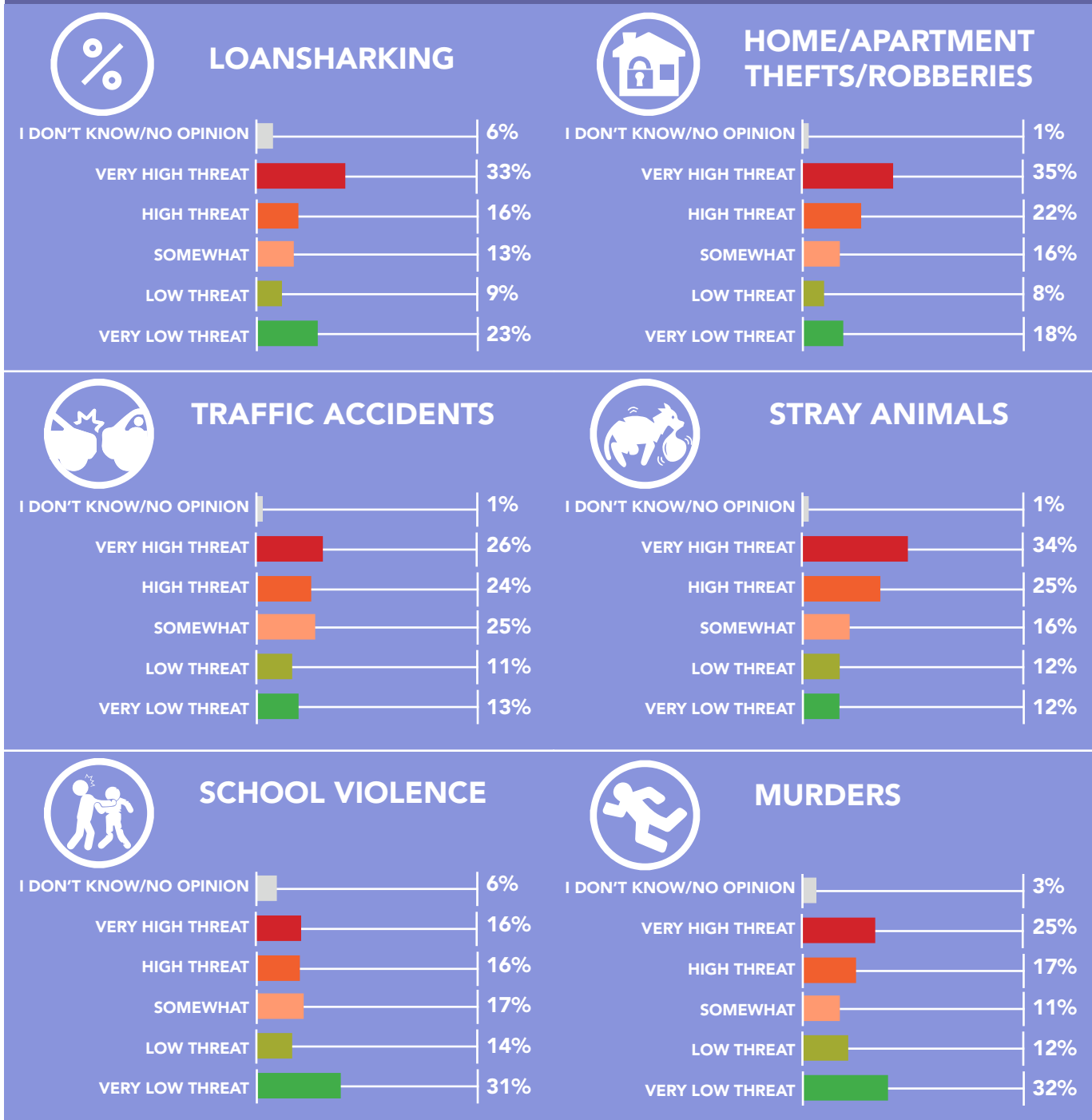
FIGURE 2 OPEN-ENDED QUESTION - RESPONDENTS MAIN SAFETY THREATS IN THEIR IMMEDIATE COMMUNITIES



After the open-ended question, respondents were asked to assess how pre-defined options consisting of various phenomena endanger their community. In this close-ended question, respondents ranked the emigration of Kosovo citizens as the highest threat to the community with 64 percent of them sharing the view that this phenomenon is a very high threat or high threat. The perception towards emigration as a community threat was mostly linked with the lack of perspective for the youth in Kosovo in general, and the weakening of communities as a result of the loss of

capacity and resources that young people potentially bring to the community. ¹ Similarly to the open-ended question, stray animals and robberies are considered a high threat for the community with 59 percent and 57 percent respectively of respondents who believe that these phenomena consist a very high threat or high threat. On the other hand, 45 percent of respondents believe that the community is very little or not threatened at all from school violence and violence by criminal groups, while 44 percent share such perception towards murders as a community threat.

FIGURE 3 RESPONDENTS PERCEPTIONS ON MAIN SAFETY THREATS FOR THE COMMUNITY



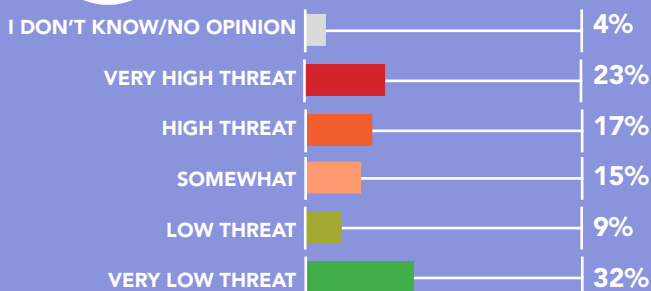
¹ Focus Groups with Field Researchers, 15/10/2020 & 30/10/2020.



SEXUAL HARASSMENT



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



ILLEGAL USE OF FIREARMS



EMIGRATION OF KOSOVO CITIZENS



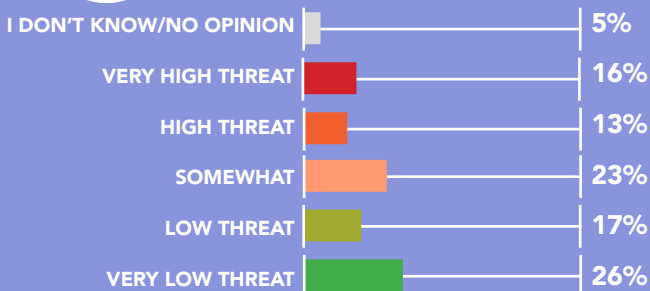
LACK OF LIGHTING IN PUBLIC SPACES



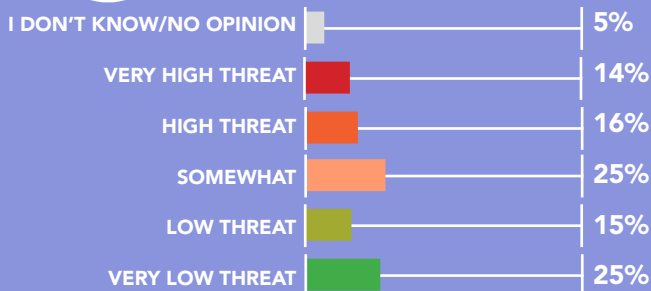
LACK OF CONSTRUCTION SAFETY



NATURAL DISASTERS

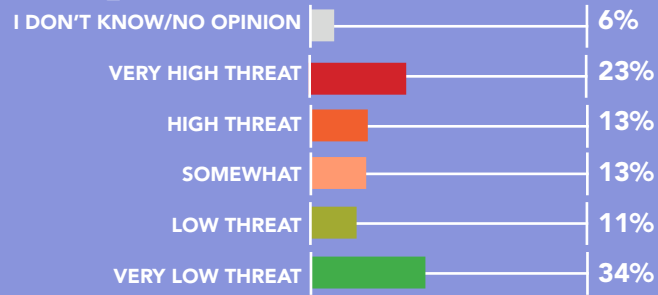


PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES





VIOLENCE FROM CRIMINAL GROUPS



PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS ON INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL THREATS TOWARDS KOSOVO'S NATIONAL SECURITY

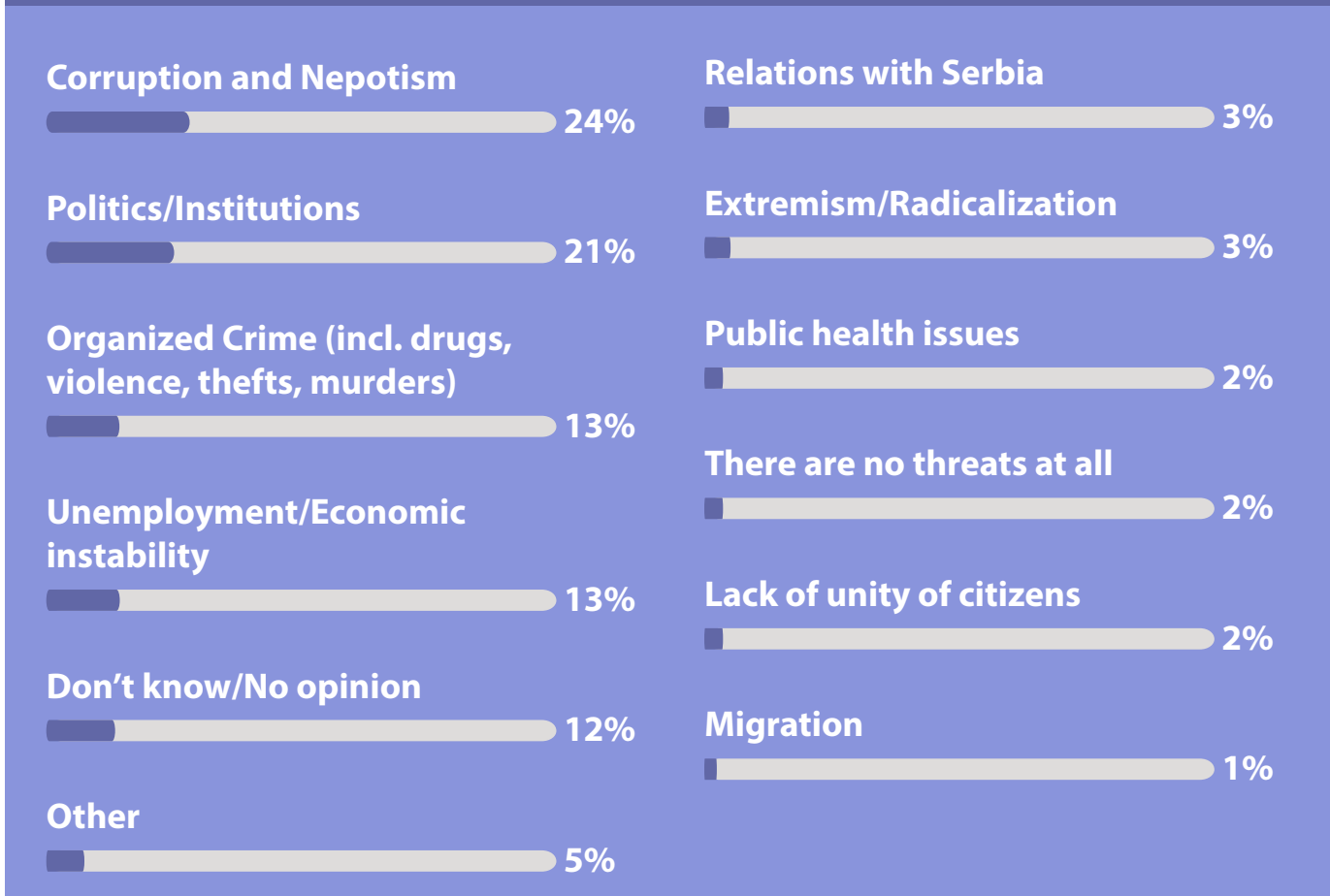
In addition to the public safety and citizens' perceptions on the potential threats posed to the community, the WBSB questionnaire was also focused on citizens' perceptions towards potential security threats in the national level. This section on the questionnaire consisted of three questions, two open-ended questions where respondents had the opportunity to give their opinion on what they perceive as the biggest internal and external threat to the security of Kosovo. The third question, similar to the previous chapter on the community threats, had pre-defined options of different phenomena for which citizens have had the opportunity to assess how much of a threat the pre-defined phenomena present to the security of Kosovo.

INTERNAL THREATS

The chapter of the questionnaire on the internal and external threats posed to the national security started with an open-ended question asking the respondents to identify one element/phenomena that they believe is the key threat towards Kosovo's national security. At the top of the list of threats, identified by the respondents themselves, stand corruption and nepotism with 25 percent of respondents perceiving these phenomena as the biggest internal threats to the security of Kosovo. 21 percent of the respondents see domestic politics and local institutions as a threat to the security of Kosovo, which reaffirms the low trust of citizens towards some of the key institutions in Kosovo.² In the "Politics/institutions" category we have summarized the responses where respondents specified different political processes, specific institutions and different political figures or parties. Moreover, 13 percent of respondents share the opinion that organized crime, including responses when violence, drugs, thefts and murders were specified, poses a threat to Kosovo's security. As with organized crime, 13 percent of citizens see unemployment and economic instability as a serious threat to the national security of Kosovo. The "Other" category summarizes the less-frequent responses that do not make up 1 percent of the total and mainly includes responses when respondents have identified the threats that are mainly considered external threats, specific responses for certain individuals or communities but which are not necessarily a threat to the national security and the responses when respondents have seen war with neighboring countries or civil war as a potential threat to the security of Kosovo.

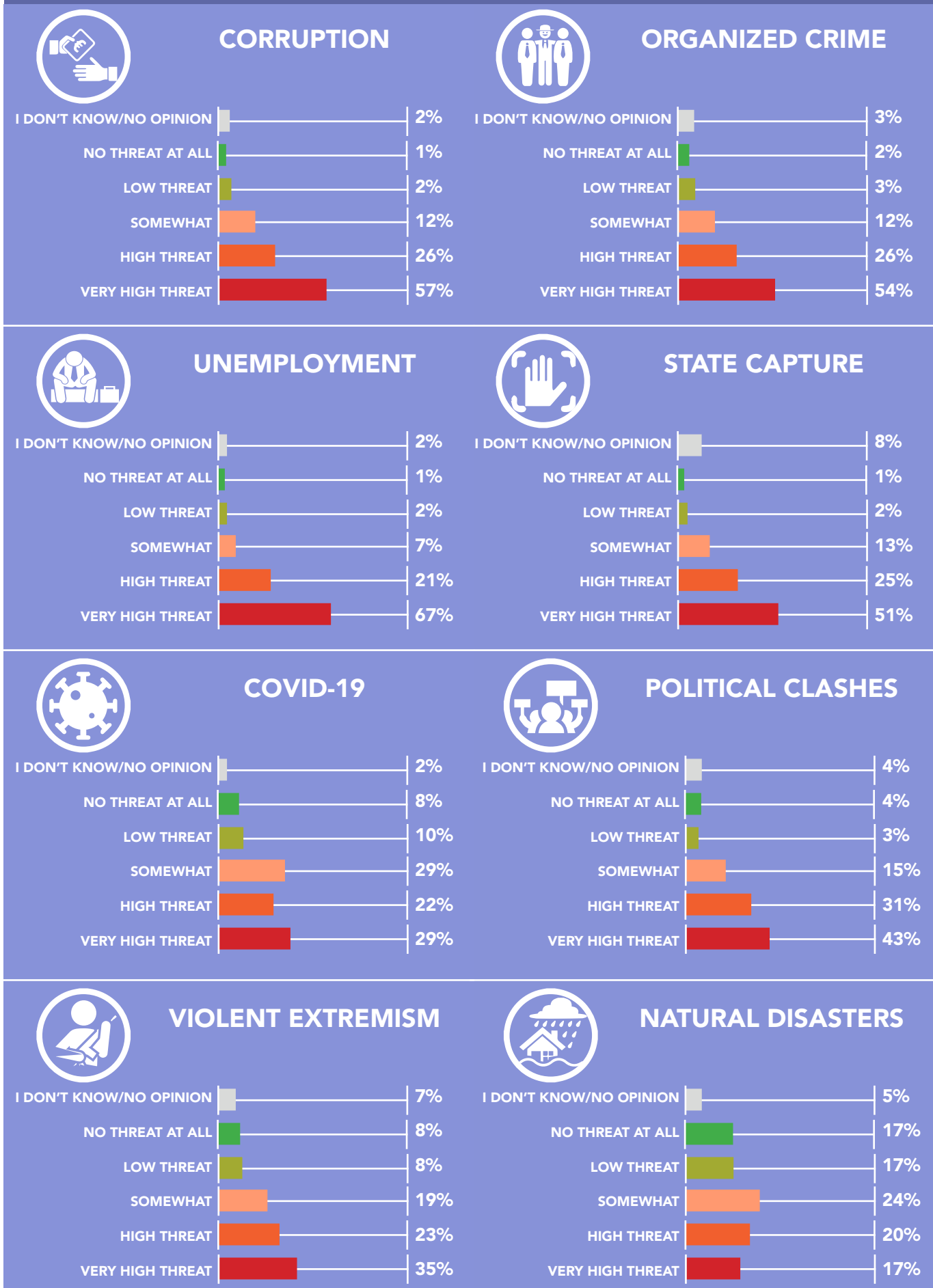
² For more information on the citizens' trust towards Kosovo institutions please refer to: <http://www.qkss.org/en/Kosovo-Security-Barometer/Kosovo-Security-Barometer-Tenth-Edition-1380>

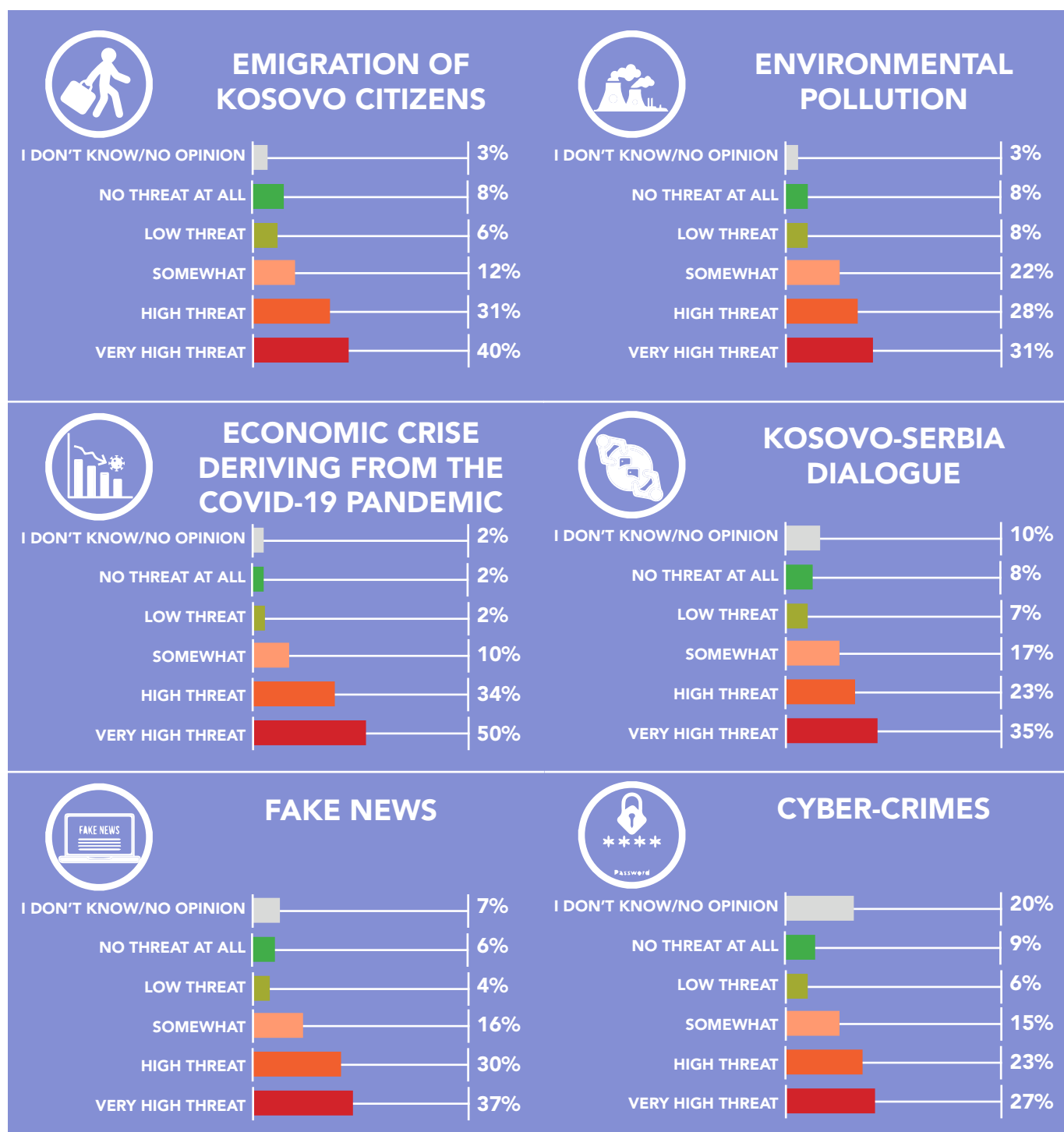
FIGURE 4 OPEN-ENDED QUESTION - RESPONDENTS PERCEPTION ON THE MAIN INTERNAL NATIONAL SECURITY THREATS



After the open-ended question, the respondents gave their assessment on how much of a threat the pre-defined options listed in the table below present to the national security of Kosovo. Generally, most of the options in the closed-ended question are perceived as a potential threat to Kosovo's security. With 88 percent of the respondents declaring that unemployment is high threat or very high threat, this phenomenon is considered to be the highest threat to Kosovo's national security. Corruption is perceived as a high threat and very high threat for the national security from 84 percent of the respondents, while 83 percent of the respondents share such perception for organized crime. The economic crisis deriving from the COVID-19 pandemic period is perceived as a higher threat than COVID-19 itself. 84 percent of the respondents perceive the economic crisis deriving from the COVID-19 pandemic as a high threat or very high threat, while 51 percent of the respondents share such perception for the COVID-19 itself. The phenomenon perceived least threatening to the national security is Natural Disasters, with 34 percent of respondents declaring that natural disasters are a low threat or it does not present a threat at all. On the other hand, it was noticed that citizens do not have enough information in regard to cybercrimes; 20 percent of the respondents declared that they have no opinion at all about the potential threat that may derive from this phenomenon, while 50 percent of respondents perceive this phenomenon as high threat very high threat to the security of Kosovo.

FIGURE 5 RESPONDENTS PERCEPTIONS ON THE MAIN INTERNAL THREATS TO THE NATIONAL SECURITY OF KOSOVO





EXTERNAL THREATS

In regard to Kosovo's external security threats, the WBSB observed the citizens' perception through one open-ended question without pre-defined options. The majority of respondents, respectively 44 percent, hold the opinion that Serbia is the main external threat to the security of Kosovo. A large proportion of respondents, 20 percent of them, stated that they have no information on what potentially poses an external threat to Kosovo's security. The "Others" category summarizes the less-frequent answers that do not consist 1 percent of the total answer and mostly includes answers that are more relevant to the internal threats or threats posed to immediate communities. The "Foreign countries and agencies" includes the responses referring

to different foreign countries and agencies which if categorized in their own categories would consist less than 1 percent of the total responses. On the other hand, the "Kosovo's weak international standing" summarizes the answers where respondents held the belief that main external threats for the security of Kosovo are different foreign affairs processes such as Kosovo-Serbia dialogue, weak diplomacy, lack of membership in international organizations, lack of visa liberalization etc. If all answers included in this category would be categorized separately, they would not consist 1 percent or more of the total.

FIGURE 6 OPEN-ENDED QUESTION - RESPONDENTS PERCEPTIONS ON THE MAIN EXTERNAL THREATS TO THE NATIONAL SECURITY OF KOSOVO



METHODOLOGY

The KSB consists of a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods that provide objective and credible results. KSB data are collected through face-to-face interviews with randomly selected respondents conducted by KCSS field researchers throughout the entire territory of Kosovo. The field research for the KSB 10th edition was conducted from September, 25th to October, 2nd 2020.

The KSB questionnaire mostly consisted of a list of closed questions in the form of five-point Likert scale, followed by several open-ended questions that allow respondents to provide context and elaborate their opinions without predefined options. The national sample featured 1,132 households, constituting a representative sample of the population above 18 years old in Kosovo. The sample frame was based upon telephone code areas, and included the following 8 districts: Ferizaj, Gjakova, Gjilan, Mitrovica South, Mitrovica North, Peja, Prishtina and Prizren.

The first stage of geographical clustering was based on the 2012 Kosovo Census Report. The second stage involved clustering samples by municipal area with a stratified rural/urban sample as per the number of households. The last stage followed a random sampling method using the nearest 'birthday method.' Random sampling ensures that each resident in Kosovo has an equal probability of being chosen for an interview. With the sample used for this study, the results of the survey mirror trends in attitudes and perceptions amongst the entire adult population of Kosovo.

The data were verified in real time through field coordinators that visited a predefined sample of households after the completion of the survey in the respective households, through telephone contact with all respondents to confirm the adherence to the methodology and some of the key answers and by analyzing the logical consistency of the answers when processing and analyzing the data. The margin of error is 3 percent with a confidence interval of 95 percent. Data processing and analysis has been completed using the SPSS software. For a detailed breakdown of the demographic data of the respondents please refer to [Kosovo Security Barometer 10th edition](#).

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