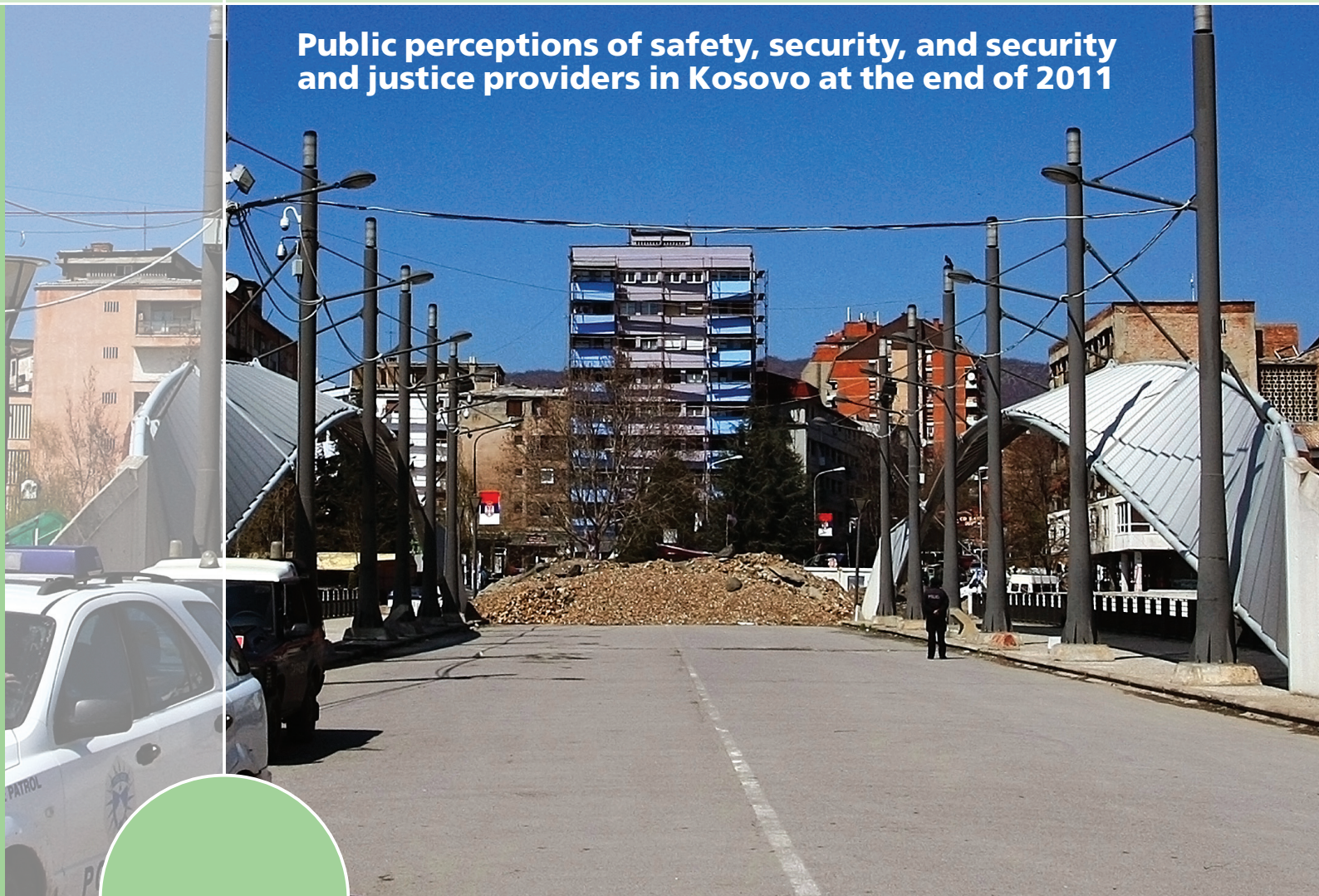




Still time to act

Rising conflict fears in Kosovo

Public perceptions of safety, security, and security and justice providers in Kosovo at the end of 2011



October 2012

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and justice providers in Kosovo at the end of 2011**

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This map is intended for illustrative purposes only. Saferworld takes no position on whether this representation is legally or politically valid.

Executive summary

“It is a little better but it is not as good as it could have been. Tomorrow depends upon today, whether it will be good or not, and it depends on what we do to strengthen the rule of law.”

Kosovo Albanian male, Ferizaj/Uroševac

THIS SURVEY IS THE SEVENTH in a series that tracks public perceptions of safety and security in Kosovo over time. It studies how people understand their security environment, what access they have to security and justice institutions, and what they think about the performance of those institutions. It is based on qualitative and quantitative data collected through a household survey and focus group discussions, and was conducted by Saferworld with input provided by the Kosovo Law Institute (KLI). It takes into account the role of different demographic factors – such as ethnicity, geographic location, gender and age – in shaping people’s perceptions of national and international security providers. The survey aims to contribute to the development of responsive, accountable and people-focused security and justice provision in Kosovo.

Saferworld’s 2010 survey, *Time to Act*, pointed to a serious decline in perceptions of security and safety in Kosovo and, particularly, in the level of trust placed in national and international institutions. It demonstrated how the political crisis that erupted in Kosovo from late 2010 was affecting people’s views about their security environment, highlighting the need for steps by the Government of Kosovo and relevant international actors to reverse the negative trend and prevent dissatisfaction from growing.

Results from the 2011 survey indicate that little has changed for the better. Political turmoil over the course of the year – including a lingering electoral crisis and the eruption of tensions in Northern Kosovo – continued to impact heavily on people’s views about security and stability and their attitudes towards security and justice providers. Divides between the Kosovo Government in Prishtinë/Priština and the Kosovo Serb population in the North have widened, while across all ethnic groups fears of violent conflict resuming in the next five years have increased. Meanwhile, confidence in Kosovo’s lead security and justice institutions – the police, the judiciary, customs sector and, at the international level, the EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) – has remained low. Survey results show that confidence-building measures are now urgently required to prevent social polarization from growing and to restore popular trust in governing institutions.

Declining optimism and fears for stability

- Nearly 44% of people overall – and 73% of Kosovo Serbs – believe that renewed violent conflict in Kosovo is likely, though many are unable to pinpoint precise triggers.
- More than 50% believe that a special status for Northern Kosovo would adversely affect security.
- Most people feel that EU-sponsored dialogue between Prishtinë/Priština and Belgrade will be unable to deliver improvements in their security environment.

Political dynamics have continued to impact significantly on perceptions of security in Kosovo. Survey results in the years prior to 2011 indicated that fewer and fewer people viewed violent conflict as a likely possibility. In 2011, this trend was reversed. Nearly 44% now believe it likely that conflict could resume. Such concerns have always been greater among the Kosovo Serb community, but have become more intense, with nearly three quarters of Kosovo Serbs now expressing a fear about conflict resuming. Issues related to the north and Mitrovicë/Mitrovica were seen as being the most likely triggers of conflict, but by relatively small numbers of people (18% and 15% respectively), which might suggest that people do not believe there is a single, high-profile issue that is particularly likely to spark conflict in the near future. There is also evidence that opinion has hardened against granting a special status for Northern Kosovo as a potential solution to the Northern issue, among both Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs. Both communities indicated a lack of conviction the measure would solve current tensions, with a significant majority of Kosovo Albanians fearing it would make security worse. Additionally, confidence in the ability of the EU-sponsored dialogue between Belgrade and Prishtinë/Priština to ease the situation has also reduced, despite technical arrangements agreed late in the year. Survey responses point to a lack of transparency surrounding the dialogue process and a dearth of information on its proceedings.

Local safety and security concerns

- A large majority of people feel safe in their neighbourhoods, though local safety and security concerns have risen overall.
- Crime has continued to diminish as a dominant safety and security concern, with fears instead focused on pollution, traffic and infrastructure, and dangers posed by stray dogs.
- The number of people interested in acquiring firearms has reduced since 2010.

Developments in 2011 also appear to have affected perceptions of security at the local level, with fewer people seeing their neighbourhoods as fully or somewhat safe than in 2010. However, overall perceptions of day-to-day security remained relatively high, despite fears for stability and an erosion of trust in the security sector. This may be a result of several factors, including the establishment of new municipal structures, progress with decentralisation, and perceptions that conflict risks are most closely linked to political rather than local dynamics. As in 2010, crime no longer dominates safety and security concerns at the local level. Local safety concerns have instead come to focus on environmental pollution – such as air and water pollution, litter and related health risks – poor infrastructure, and the dangers posed by packs of stray dogs. While weapons possession still remains a problem in Kosovo, a majority of people are unable to identify the extent of weapons possession in their localities. Encouragingly, the number of people interested in attaining firearms has reduced since 2010, though interest overall is still greater than in 2009.

Faith in national security and justice providers

- Trust in governing security and justice providers – including central government, the police, judiciary and the customs sector – has remained low, though with a slight improvement on levels recorded in 2010.
- Among national security providers, the Kosovo Security Force has continued to enjoy the highest levels of trust, followed by the Kosovo Police.
- The judiciary remained the least trusted institutions, due to perceived high levels of corruption and partiality and the weakness of confidentiality mechanisms.

Saferworld's 2010 survey tracked a significant deterioration in people's perceptions of Kosovo's central government and its police, judiciary and customs service. Results from the 2011 survey indicate that this crisis in confidence has continued, albeit with a slight improvement in some sectors. Less than 20% of people expressed confidence in Kosovo's central government. The Kosovo Police – which has traditionally enjoyed higher levels of respect compared to other security institutions – was also unable to improve its image over the past year. Faith in the judiciary remains particularly low, indicating that problems relating to poor confidentiality and witness protection identified in the 2010 survey have persisted. Overall, the results show that people continue to believe their institutions are dominated by inefficiency, lack of accountability and corruption. Already low levels of trust accorded to national institutions by Kosovo Serbs further deteriorated in 2011, reflecting growing alienation among Kosovo Serb communities resulting from political and security developments over the past two years.

Confidence in international actors

- Only 13% of all respondents express trust in EULEX, while nearly half believe that EULEX should leave.
- Confidence in the NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR) has remained higher, at 49%.

Public perceptions of and trust in EULEX – already low in 2010 – further deteriorated in 2011. Just 13% of survey respondents have some element of trust in the mission and more than half feel it is making no contribution to enhancing the rule of law in Kosovo. Many people see the mission's activities – which include monitoring and advising Kosovo institutions and executive responsibility for judicial proceedings for specific crimes – as confusing and lacking transparency. Survey results are also likely to be linked to frustration surrounding EULEX's failure to prosecute so-called 'big fishes', and possibly to opposition among sections of society to the 2009 arrest of former Kosovo Liberation Army fighters. The re-configuration of the mission will provide an important opportunity to address some of these perceived failings. KFOR has continued to garner higher levels of support overall, though as with several other security and justice providers, confidence was considerably lower among Kosovo Serbs.

Findings identified in this report highlight the need for urgent measures by the government and the international community to respond to popular safety and security concerns in Kosovo and address a pervasive lack of trust in governing security and justice actors. Key messages to policymakers engaged in security and justice provision in Kosovo are outlined below.

Recommendations to the Government of Kosovo and its institutions

- **Take urgent steps to reach out to Kosovo Serbs in the North.** Initiate dialogue with Kosovo Serbs in the North of Kosovo to identify and address governance, development and rule of law concerns. Develop measures to address community concerns in the North and avoid actions that will further inflame local tensions.

- **Implement agreements struck during the Kosovo-Serbia dialogue and report publicly on progress.** Fully implement agreements brokered over 2011 and early 2012 and develop dedicated mechanisms and indicators to monitor progress. Develop a communications strategy to improve information dissemination surrounding the EU-facilitated talks, promote transparency and clarify implications for people's everyday lives.
- **Address the crisis of confidence in Kosovo's government, security sector and justice institutions.** Survey findings highlight the need for decisive measures to improve transparency, responsiveness and accountability in government, the security sector and justice system, in the context of persistent high levels of mistrust. Police-community relations should be strengthened through a more regular, visible police presence. Specific steps are required to improve confidentiality in the justice system.
- **Ensure anti-corruption efforts are backed by sustained political attention and resources.** Several steps have been taken in the past year to tackle corruption, including passage of new anti-corruption legislation, establishment of anti-corruption bodies and changes to judicial salaries and the judicial reappointment process. The government should now ensure full implementation of new laws, allocate sufficient resources to relevant agencies to enable progress and publicly report on results based on measurable indicators.
- **Enforce and improve people's understanding of weapons control legislation.** The Penal Code and its provisions on weapons use and ownership should be implemented and information on existing SALW control legislation better disseminated. The existence of local safety forums throughout Kosovo provides an important opportunity for the government to consult and involve local communities in this process and to capitalize on changing attitudes towards weapons ownership. Government institutions should become more proactive and preventative in their efforts to combat illicit weapons possession and use.
- **Use the EU accession process to articulate a common vision for Kosovo.** The European Commission's decision in March 2012 to launch an initial feasibility study on EU integration provides a valuable opportunity for the Kosovo Government to articulate a long-term plan for Kosovo's development and address socio-economic concerns. This needs to be accompanied by a national, inclusive dialogue that involves all of Kosovo's communities.

Recommendations to the international community

- **Use EU accession processes to leverage progress in the Serbia-Kosovo dialogue.** EU institutions should clarify that EU accession is conditional on improved relations between Serbia and Kosovo and full implementation of agreements reached during the EU-facilitated talks. The EU should develop a mechanism to monitor and report on implementation progress.
- **Ensure coherent messages on the purpose and outcomes of the dialogue.** Address public perceptions that the dialogue process lacks transparency and ensure a clearer flow of information about specific agreements, their implementation and implications for ordinary people's lives. Actively promote the dialogue as a means of ensuring progress towards sustainable peace in the Western Balkans.
- **Address serious public concerns about EULEX's performance.** EULEX should develop a communications strategy to clearly articulate its rule of law mandate and mission objectives in Kosovo and ensure that communication channels with the public are open during periods of tension. The recently approved Strategic Review of the EULEX Mission provides a good opportunity to address people's concerns before future mandate changes take place.

Recommendations on and to civil society

- **Increase cooperation with civil society.** The government, security providers and international actors should seek all opportunities to engage civil society in the articulation and implementation of measures to strengthen the rule of law. A two-way flow of consultation and engagement is required to ensure that people's concerns are addressed.

- **Develop grassroots community structures.** The relationship between non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and local level structures needs to be strengthened. Civil society organisations with rule of law expertise should seek ways of expanding networks to include grassroots organisations and local community structures – the survey shows a great interest in rule of law engagement among local communities.

1

Introduction

THIS REPORT ASSESSES perceptions of safety and security among Kosovo's population and attitudes towards Kosovo's leading security and justice providers. It is the seventh in a series of assessments carried out since 2006 as part of the SafePlace project framework, which aims to identify people's concerns about their security environment and in turn highlight key lessons for policymakers. Data collection for the study was undertaken between November and December 2011 and feedback provided by the Kosovo Law Institute (KLI). The German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UK Department for International Development (DFID) have funded this project.

The survey focuses both on popular security perceptions and views about the accessibility, responsiveness and effectiveness of key security and justice providers, particularly the Kosovo Police (KP), the judiciary, customs and the European Union's Rule of Law Mission (EULEX). Respondents were asked about the trust they place in different security and justice providers, how satisfied they are with their performance and whether they see any recent improvements in areas such as the speed of proceedings, impartiality, confidentiality and combatting corruption. The report also looks at the impact of local, national and regional dynamics on safety and security perceptions. Over 2011, developments included a lingering political crisis in Kosovo's governing institutions, the escalation in tensions in Northern Kosovo, sporadic violence, and new challenges affecting talks between Prishtine/Priština and Belgrade. Where relevant to analysis or policy recommendations, key political and security developments during early 2012 are also highlighted.

In the context of continuing political turmoil, this report seeks to provide a voice for Kosovo's diverse communities and support the development of responsive, accountable and people-focused security and justice institutions. This is a critically important moment at which to take stock, amidst a new crisis of confidence in Kosovo's governing institutions and a rise of fears about violent conflict resuming. The report sheds light on some of these dynamics. It also outlines the national and international policy steps required to address popular concerns and prevent dissatisfaction from growing.

Information analysed includes quantitative and qualitative data gained from household surveys and focus group discussions. Data has been disaggregated by age, gender, ethnicity, and region/municipality. The category 'other ethnic groups/minorities' refers to all ethnic groups living in Kosovo that consider themselves neither Kosovo Albanian nor Kosovo Serbs. All place names identified in the report have been provided in the two official languages. When comparing data over time, the report refers to previous perception surveys carried out by Saferworld and FIQ, and mostly (unless otherwise mentioned) to the last perception survey, covering the period of autumn 2010 to May 2011 when it was published.

This report begins with a brief overview of recent political events in Kosovo and developments in the security and justice sector. Section 3 outlines people's views about their safety and security situations, including national and local level concerns. Section 4 sets out people's perceptions of and satisfaction with Kosovo and international security providers, with quantitative survey results supplemented by information gathered from regional focus groups held across Kosovo. The report concludes with a set of recommendations aimed at addressing key security and justice concerns and strengthening Kosovo's national and international governing institutions.

2

Context: Political and security developments in 2011

POLITICAL TENSIONS IN KOSOVO increased on several fronts over 2011, exposing the fragility of the country's nascent governing institutions and the persistence of deep internal regional and ethnic divides. An electoral crisis that started in late 2010 continued into 2011, before a new national president was eventually appointed in April. Violence erupted in Northern Kosovo in July 2011, after Prishtinë/Priština moved to impose an embargo on Serbian goods in response to Serbia's 2008 blockage on Kosovo imports. Events brought the unresolved "Northern problem" to the fore and temporarily stalled talks between Prishtinë/Priština and Belgrade. Meanwhile, Kosovo continued to experience high levels of unemployment, sluggish economic growth and new strains in relations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which temporarily suspended financial assistance in 2011. Below are some of the major political and security developments in Kosovo over 2011 and emergent issues in early 2012:

- **Political strains.** The collapse of the coalition government in late 2010 was followed by a renewed political crisis in Kosovo in early 2011. Parliamentary elections were held in December 2010 amid accusations of multiple irregularities and fraud. On 22 February, the Kosovo National Assembly convened to elect a new president and government. However, after protests by some Assembly members, the Constitutional Court in March ruled the presidential election unconstitutional, stating that the constitutionally required quorum for the election had not been met. An interim successor – former police commissioner Atifete Jahjaga – was finally elected to office in April 2011. Fresh presidential elections were planned for 2012 pending constitutional reforms, though the poll now looks set to be postponed to 2013.
- **Escalation of tensions in the North.** At the end of July, the Kosovo Government sent police units and customs officers to border points in Jarinje and Brnjak along the Serbian border to enforce a December 2011 economic reciprocity bill banning imports from neighbouring Serbia. Local Kosovo Serb communities reacted angrily to a move that was seen as an effort by Prishtinë/Priština to extend its authority to the North. Protests resulted in the death of one police officer, while the Jarinje border post was set alight and barricades placed on major transport routes. Tensions again erupted in September, when EULEX began helicoptering Kosovo customs staff to the border. Attempts by KFOR to remove the blockages led to violent confrontations in late

November. A call from the President of Serbia for the barricades to be removed was seen by Kosovo Serb communities as a betrayal by the Serbian Government. In February 2012, Kosovo Serbs in the North of Kosovo organised an unofficial referendum on the Kosovo state, despite appeals from Serbia, Kosovo and the international community not to proceed. The poll resulted in an overwhelming rejection of Prishtinë/Priština's authority. In contrast to the North, Kosovo Serb communities south of the River Ibar continue to work well with Kosovo institutions, participating in the elections, the Kosovo Assembly and the government and establishing new municipalities and municipal structures.

- **Talks between Kosovo and Serbia falter.** EU-backed talks between Serbia and Kosovo began in March 2011 following a September 2010 call by the UN General Assembly for the dialogue to resume. Talks proceeded during the year, but were temporarily broken off following events in Northern Kosovo. The dialogue – technical discussions that avoided debate on status and recognition – resulted in some steps forward, with deals struck on mutual recognition of university degrees, the exchange of data on civil registries and cadastral records and, in September, on the sensitive issue of the Kosovo Customs stamp. From late 2011, the sides reached further agreements on creating an EU-developed Integrated Border Management System at crossing points and on Kosovo's representation at international forums. However, there has been a general failure to implement the agreements, which has in turn become an obstacle to further dialogue.
- **Elections in Serbia.** The run up to national and local elections in Serbia in May 2012 were accompanied by suggestions from the Serbian Government and local political party leaders in the North that local elections should also be held in Northern Kosovo. The calls drew negative reactions from both Prishtinë/Priština and international actors. The results of Serbian elections will impact both on prospects for the current dialogue as well as directly upon Kosovo itself, with campaign rhetoric focusing on national sovereignty and hostility towards Kosovo independence.
- **EU candidacy discussions.** In March 2012, the EC announced the start of a feasibility study as the beginning of Kosovo's path to EU membership, one of the Kosovo Government's core priorities. The process will require firmer progress by Prishtinë/Priština to deliver political, social and economic reforms, strengthen the rule of law and improve regional cooperation.
- **Suspension of IMF financial assistance.** In July 2011, the IMF suspended €87 million worth of loans pledged under its standby agreement with Kosovo, following a decision by the Prime Minister to raise civil servants salaries, a move that had not been factored into the annual budget. The suspension also meant the EC was unable to hand over its tranche of macro financial assistance. An IMF mission arrived in Prishtinë/Priština in early 2012, agreeing that funding could resume. However, the loss of major international financial assistance in Kosovo over 2011 did little to help the country's troubled economic situation, an issue of major public concern.
- **End of supervised independence.** The International Steering Group (ISG) for Kosovo – charged with steering the Kosovo status process under the Ahtisaari Plan – met in July 2012 and announced that supervised independence would end and its International Civilian Office (ICO) close in September 2012. During the course of its operations, the Head of the ICO has had the authority to veto appointments and ensure that all legislation is in full accordance with the 'Ahtisaari principles'.
- **Legislative and institutional reform efforts.** The new National Assembly passed several pieces of legislation during the year aimed at strengthening the rule of law. These included new criminal code laws on the declaration of gifts, conflicts of interest and protection of witnesses, and development of a new Law on Courts, which outlines a framework for radical transformation of the justice system. Measures to reform the judiciary were also taken forward, providing for the recruitment of additional judges and an increase in their salaries to support conditions for judicial independence.

However, the backlog of court cases remains high (standing at 119,000 in 2011) and the effectiveness of the judicial reform law, once operational, will depend heavily on implementation and allocation of sufficient resources. Efforts also focused on tackling corruption, with the Anti-Corruption Agency beginning to work more effectively with prosecutors and a new Anti-Corruption Council, chaired by the president, established in February 2012. However, the government's anti-corruption drive and efforts to build popular trust were dealt a significant blow in early 2012 when the Kosovo Special Prosecutor responsible for anti-corruption cases was arrested on alleged corruption charges.

3

Public perceptions of security and personal safety

THIS CHAPTER ANALYSES people's understanding of political and security developments over 2011, including concerns about the risks of violence and violent conflict. It also covers perceptions of security at the local level and other socio-economic issues affecting views about community safety.

Key findings

- Political upheaval in early 2011 and events in Northern Kosovo have driven a rise in fears about the potential for conflict to re-erupt in Kosovo. Concerns are particularly high among communities most affected by tensions during the year, but also rose across other demographic groups.
- Opinion has hardened against granting a special status for Northern Kosovo, including among Kosovo Serbs. More and more people believe measures aimed at increased autonomy will worsen security and ethnic divisionism.
- Confidence that EU-backed talks will work to improve security has reduced. People also feel that there has been a lack of accessible information about the dialogue process and points of debate.
- Despite concerns about overall stability, three quarters of people feel that their local neighbourhood is relatively safe and secure.
- Fewer people see crime as the dominant safety and security concern at the local level, with fears instead focused on risks resulting from poor physical infrastructure, environmental pollution and packs of stray dogs.
- The number of people who say they are not interested in acquiring firearms has increased, with a majority now indicating they feel no need to carry a gun.

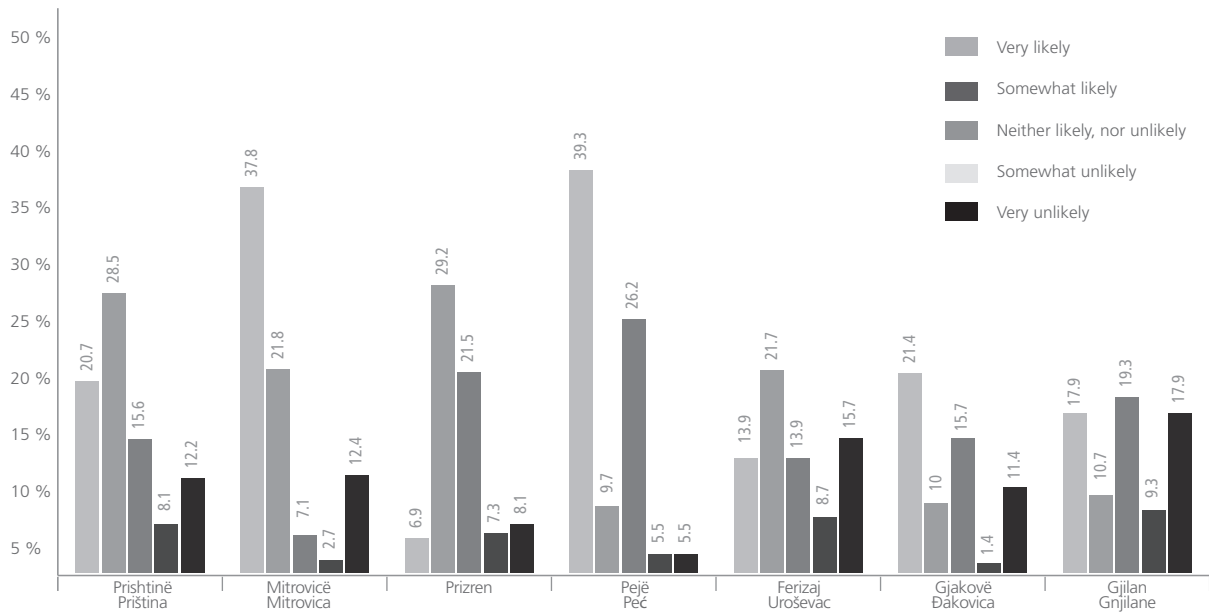
Perceptions of the likelihood of renewed conflict

In 2010, 38% of all survey respondents considered that a renewal of violence conflict was ‘likely’ or ‘very likely’. While still relatively high, the figure continued a positive trend established over the previous three years in which fewer and fewer people saw violent conflict as a likely possibility. Results from the 2011 survey indicate that this positive trend has been reversed: 44% of all respondents, including 73% of Kosovo Serbs (64.5% in 2010), expressed fears that violent conflict could resume. The three regions in which fears were highest were Mitrovicë/Mitrovica (60%), Prishtinë/Priština (49%) and Pejë/Pec (49%). Increased concern is shown virtually equally across age groups.

Violent conflict in next five years

When respondents were asked what they thought the key triggers for a resumption of violence might be, the most cited factors were issues related to the north (18% of respondents) and to Mitrovicë/Mitrovica (15%). Over a third of respondents (38%) were unable to pinpoint any specific potential triggers, while a variety of concerns were highlighted by smaller groups. This suggests that currently there is no issue seen as a major ‘lightning rod’ for potential conflict by a large section of the population, and that there are a wide range of issues that could act as triggers for violence in certain circumstances.

Figure 1. How likely is it that Kosovo will have another violent conflict in the next five years?



“Until our status is set as a state in negotiations, we don’t need to conduct talks with Serbia as we are not equals.”

Kosovo Albanian female, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica

Expectations that EU-sponsored dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo would improve security have fallen since the previous survey. Whereas 36% of people expected their security to increase by ‘a little’ or ‘a lot’ as a result of the talks in 2010, only 18% now express that view. Over a third of all respondents (37%) consider that things will remain the same (28% in 2010). The percentage of those who believe the dialogue will make security a ‘lot worse’ or ‘somewhat worse’ more than doubled from 7% to 18%. Just under a quarter of all respondents had no opinion as to how the dialogue might impact upon their security. Focus group discussions highlighted a lack of accessible information about the content and progress of the talks, underlining the need for the Kosovo Government to improve accompanying communications and outreach work.

Respondents to the survey were asked about the extent to which the granting of some form of special status to Northern Kosovo would affect security. The results show that,

in the current political environment, people are more concerned about this prospect than in 2010. In that year, 42% of all respondents thought that security would get 'a lot' or 'somewhat' worse, whilst 21% believed that it would improve. In the current survey, 55% said that the situation would get worse and only 6% saw any prospect of improvement.

Responses to this question reflected a continued marked difference of opinion between ethnic groups, though across all groups the trend is negative. Whereas in 2010 nearly half of Kosovo Serb respondents thought that the granting of special status would improve their security, confidence in the positive effects of this outcome has halved, dropping from 46% in 2010 to 22% in 2011. A further 35% of Kosovo Serbs did not know what impact special status might have on their security. Among Kosovo Albanians, just over 70% believe that the security situation would get worse (51% in 2010) and only 6% foresee an improvement, compared to 14% the previous year. Attitudes have clearly hardened against this in the majority community. These results are consistent across all regions of Kosovo, but it is among older age groups (40-60 years) that concerns about granting a special status for the North are highest.

Perceptions of local security

"It is a little better but it is not as good as it could have been. Tomorrow depends upon today, whether it will be good or not, and it depends on what we do to strengthen the rule of law."

Kosovo Albanian male, Ferizaj/Uroševac

Over three-quarters of all respondents feel secure in their local neighbourhoods, a slight decline from 2010. There has been an increase in the percentage of respondents who feel 'very safe' in their neighbourhoods – 52% compared to 45% in 2010 – but a simultaneous decline in the number of people who feel 'somewhat safe', from 32% in 2010 to 25% in 2011. This indicates that developments over 2011 have had a negative impact on perceptions of local security. However, confidence still remain relatively high. This may be a result of several factors, including the establishment of new municipal structures, progress with decentralisation, and perceptions that conflict risks are more closely linked to national political factors rather than local dynamics.

There was a sharper drop in perceptions of local safety and security among Kosovo Serbs. Whereas 76% felt 'very safe' or 'somewhat safe' in their home communities in 2010, the figure for 2011 is 65%. Meanwhile, the level of those who feel 'very unsafe' or 'somewhat unsafe' increased from 4% to 12% (for Kosovo Albanians, the figure is 5% and for other minorities, 6%).

Figure 2. Neighbourhoods considered as "safe" or "somewhat safe"

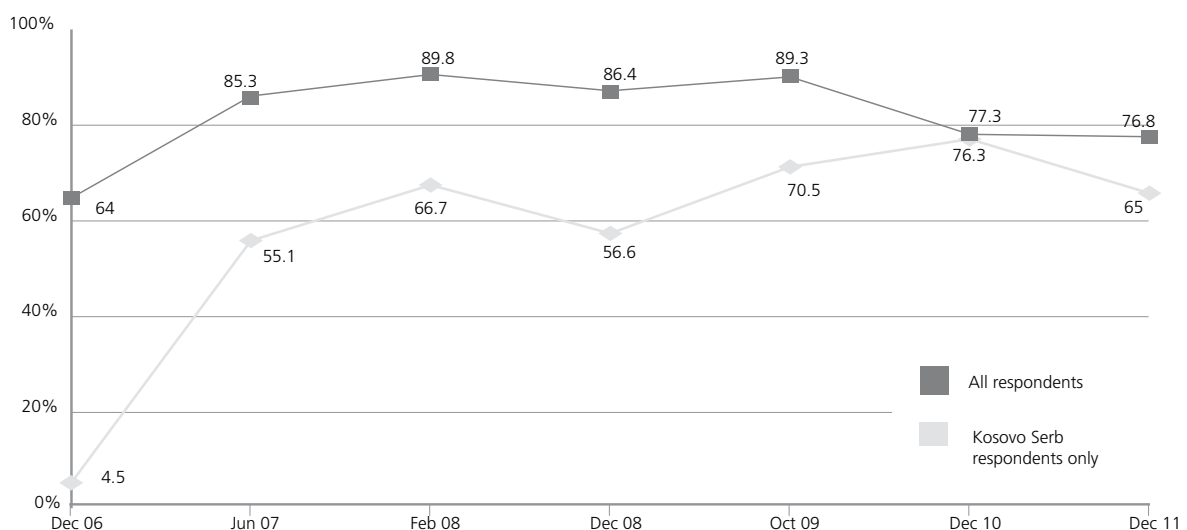
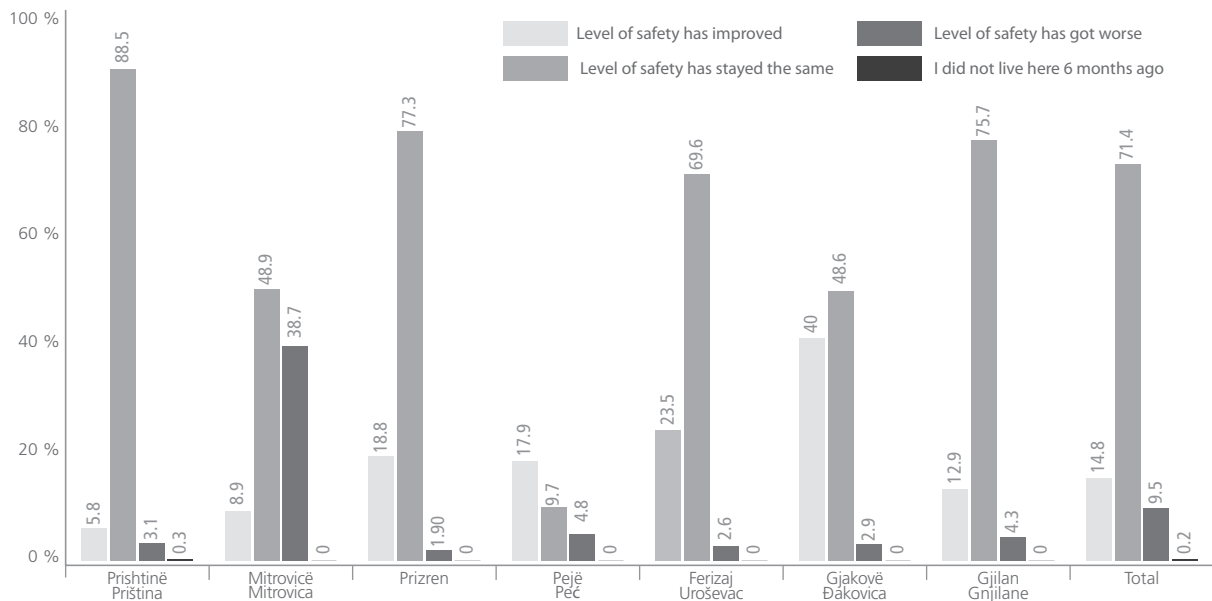


Figure 3. Comparison of the change in perceived levels of safety in neighbourhoods over six months



Other local safety and security concerns

Saferworld's 2010 survey found that day-to-day security concerns in Kosovo had shifted from previous years, moving away from post-conflict issues (such as weapons possession and inter-ethnic tension) and conventional security issues such as crime. This trend has continued in 2011, with the predominant local security concerns instead focusing on pollution and its impacts, traffic and infrastructure, health, and dangers posed by packs of stray dogs, a continuing safety threat. Issues related to Kosovo's status were another major concern highlighted by respondents.

Pollution. When asked to identify their three major concerns, 43% of all respondents singled out pollution, a level of concern that was also reflected in focus group discussions. Water and air pollution caused by energy production, waste, litter and a failure to enforce environmental policies were the main problems highlighted by participants. People also highlighted disincentives to voluntary clean-up schemes: as soon as areas were cleaned up, waste almost immediately reappeared.

"In Skenderaj nobody knows what kind of water they are drinking, where it comes from and how many times it is cleaned up. It comes all the way from Mitrovicë/Mitrovica to here from the Klinë/Klina River, it is mixed and nobody knows whether it is drinkable or not drinkable. When there are water supply cuts or when it rains, after two hours it is all mud and small gravel."

Kosovo Albanian male, Skenderaj/Srbica

Traffic and poor infrastructure. In the 2010 survey, problems related to traffic topped the list of security problems faced by communities, highlighted by 37% of respondents. This concern has remained high in 2011, with 41% of people listing traffic among their top three safety priorities. Concern was particularly high in Prizren and Gjilan/Gnjilane. 32% of all respondents also identified poor infrastructure – including electricity supply, the condition of roads, and water and waste management systems – as an area of major concern, a message reiterated in focus group discussions.

“Nobody respects the rules in traffic. Every second person gets a driver’s licence and half of them don’t see signs, where to stop, whether there are pedestrians or maybe a school nearby. There are lots of traffic accidents near schools and nobody is held responsible.”

Kosovo Albanian male, Pejë/Peć

“Street lighting is not safe... in winter when it rained there were power cuts and even pylons falling as they are not new and get destroyed and become out-dated.”

Kosovo Albanian male, Pejë/Peć

Kosovo’s status. Concerns and uncertainty related to Kosovo’s status – focused, for example, on the pace of international recognition or opposition to full independence – was identified by 37% of all respondents as one of the three major issues of concern. Concern was particularly high among Kosovo Serbs, at 72%.

Dangers posed by stray dogs. Packs of stray dogs have always featured prominently in community safety and security concerns in Kosovo and the wider Western Balkans region. The issue was identified as a particular problem in the 2010 survey, with a third of respondents listing the issue as a top security concern, a three-fold increase from the previous year. This figure declined somewhat in 2011, but has remained high, raised by 28% of respondents.

“They are in huge numbers now. You might see 15-20 dogs wandering around all night long. If you happen to go out at midnight or after midnight, they are all over the place.”

Kosovo Albanian male, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica

Health. Health issues were another major point of concern, highlighted by 23% of survey respondents and many individuals in group discussions. Specific issues raised include the availability of and level of care provided in public hospitals, the quality of medicines and the fact that foodstuffs, mainly imported, were sold beyond their expiry dates.

“We cannot find doctors in the public health care facilities where they work. You cannot find them during regular working hours, as at that time they are working in their private health care clinics.”

Kosovo Albanian female, Prishtinë/Priština

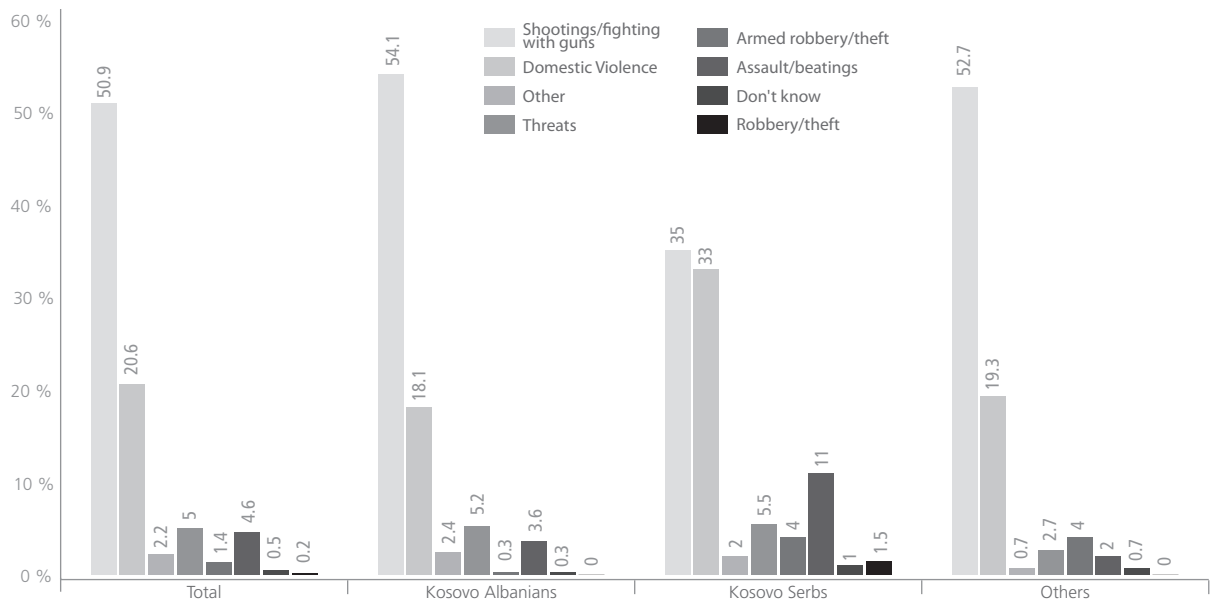
Crime. Survey results indicate that fewer and fewer people see crime as an important security risk. Nearly 9% of all respondents identified crime as a major safety and security threat – compared to 14% in 2010, 23% in 2009 and 21% in 2008. The gap in perceptions among ethnic groups apparent in 2010 also reduced. While 30% of Kosovo Serbs saw crime as a major problem in 2010, results from the 2011 survey showed little significant differentiation between ethnicities. In response to a further question, 36% of all respondents expressed themselves as being ‘concerned’ or ‘quite concerned’ about their family becoming a victim of crime. In Prishtinë/Priština, the figure was 53%. Yet, when asked if any of their family members had ever been the object of a crime, 98% replied no.

Violence and increased use of drugs among young people were issues raised during most of the group discussions. Concern about the use of alcohol and the presence of knives and drugs in schools and among young people, particularly the unemployed, appears to be on the rise.

“The youth go out at night for fun but they get into fights, killings with weapons and the worst thing is that young people in high schools carry guns. Every second one has a knife or a gun.”

Kosovo Serb female, Shtërpçë/Štrpce

Figure 4. Types of crime that occur frequently in communities



Use and ownership of weapons

“In Kosovo, every household has a weapon. Maybe not only one but for each family member.”

Kosovo Albanian male, Prishtinë/Priština

“There needs to be no need of fear and no need to carry guns. Not to feel the need. When that day will come – god knows.”

Kosovo Albanian male, Pejë/Peć

While the proliferation of small arms remains a problem in Kosovo, the majority of survey respondents were unable to say how many households in their locality possessed a weapon, with 66% of all respondents saying they “did not know”. Concern has remained among a minority, however, with 7% stating that between a quarter and a half of all households in their communities possessed a weapon.

People’s interest in acquiring firearms has reduced since 2010, though overall levels still remain higher than in 2009. 63% of all respondents said that they were not interested in acquiring a firearm (56% in 2010) and 24% said that they would (28% in 2010). People in the 18-28 and 50-59 year age groups were more prepared to obtain weapons than other groups – 26% and 28% respectively. There are also regional differences in interest in acquiring firearms, ranging from 43% of respondents in Gjakovë/Đakovica to 15% in Prizren. Overall, when people were asked why they would want a firearm, 20% said it was for family protection. Asked whether owning a weapon would make their households feel safer, 61% of people felt that it would not. This represents an improvement since 2010, when 50% of all respondents were against weapon ownership. Only 13% of Kosovo Serb respondents felt that possession of a weapon would enhance their safety, compared to 21% for all respondents. 33% however felt that their safety would not be enhanced with a gun, an increase from 27% in 2010.

The survey shows a slight rise in the number of those who never heard gunshots, from 16% in 2010 to 18% in 2011. There is, however, a small increase in the number of those hearing gunshots a few times a year, from 59% in 2010 to 62% in 2011. In the Mitrovicë/Mitrovica region, 39% hear gunshots a few times a year, 15% once a month, 18% a few times a month and 1% a few times a week. In addition, 10% of Kosovo Serb respondents stated that they or a family member had been shot at one or more times in the last six

months. The survey found that most people believe that weapons are mainly being used during the course of celebrations (such as weddings and anniversaries) and for hunting. When asked what they thought about celebratory shootings, 13% of all respondents thought that it was unacceptable, 7% believed that people who were doing it were not aware of the risks, whilst only 1% believed it was an acceptable tradition.

“I think that it would be better to permit carrying guns, but after we meet some criteria. I would not permit anyone under the age of 40 years and carrying guns only inside premises not outside the house. Only for protection reasons.”

Kosovo Albanian male, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica

“The best of the best would be for citizens not to possess weapons at all, regardless of whether he is a bodyguard or someone in a high position, as we are a very hot tempered people and for a little dispute we resort to weapons.”

Kosovo Albanian male, Skenderaj/Srbica

4

Public perceptions of and attitudes towards security and justice actors and institutions

THIS SECTION ANALYSES perceptions of security and justice actors, including how people view their performance and efficiency and what challenges people encounter in engaging with them. Security and justice actors include the police, judiciary and customs, as well as the international actors EULEX and KFOR.

Key findings

- There has only been a slight improvement in people's overall trust since the low levels recorded in 2010. Saferworld's 2010 survey highlighted serious concern about the crisis in confidence in Kosovo's security and justice institutions. That concern remains.
- Trust in the central government has increased slightly, but still totals just over 20% of survey respondents. There has also been an increase in trust accorded to municipal authorities, yet at 32% it is still far short of the 62% figure recorded in 2009.
- Confidence in the Kosovo Police has risen slightly since 2010, but trust continues to be undermined by perceptions of corruption and insufficient training.
- The Kosovo Security Force remains the most trusted security provider amongst Kosovo Albanians and non-Serbian minorities, though confidence among Kosovo Serb communities is extremely low.
- As in previous surveys, the judiciary continues to score poorly across all population groups.
- KFOR remains the most trusted of the international actors, while trust in EULEX has continued to decline.

Overall levels of trust in Kosovo’s security sector, justice institutions and the government increased slightly from low levels recorded in 2010. However, the overall picture remains negative, with all institutions assessed in the survey garnering considerably lower confidence than in 2009. The Kosovo Government, judiciary and intelligence agency were the three least trusted institutions. For the government, levels of trust stood at just 20%, down from 52% in 2009, while the judiciary was trusted by 17% of respondents, down from 40% in 2009. Trust in the Kosovo Security Force and Kosovo Police has continued to be higher than in other institutions, though here too confidence also remained low. As in previous years, confidence varies significantly between different ethnic groups, with Kosovo Serbs indicating lowest levels of support. Figures indicate the considerable impact of political turmoil over 2010-2011 on popular perceptions of their governing institutions and views about the prevalence of corruption, nepotism and inefficiency.

Figure 5. Trust in institutions and security providers – comparison 2010-11

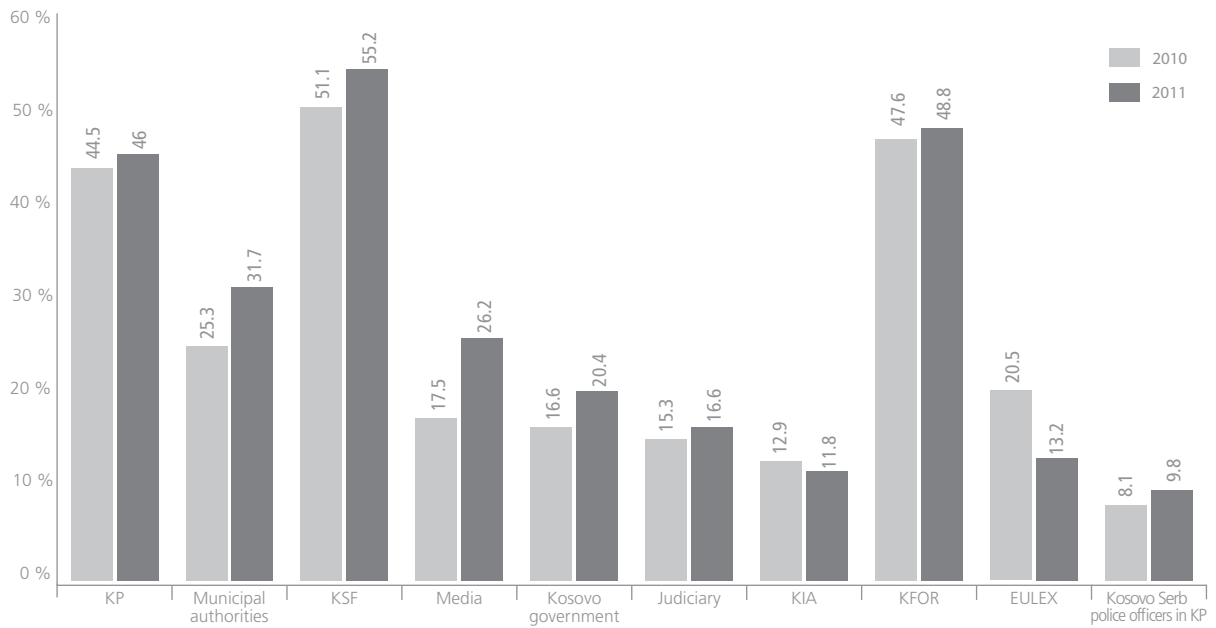


Figure 6. Trust in institutions and security providers (high levels of trust)

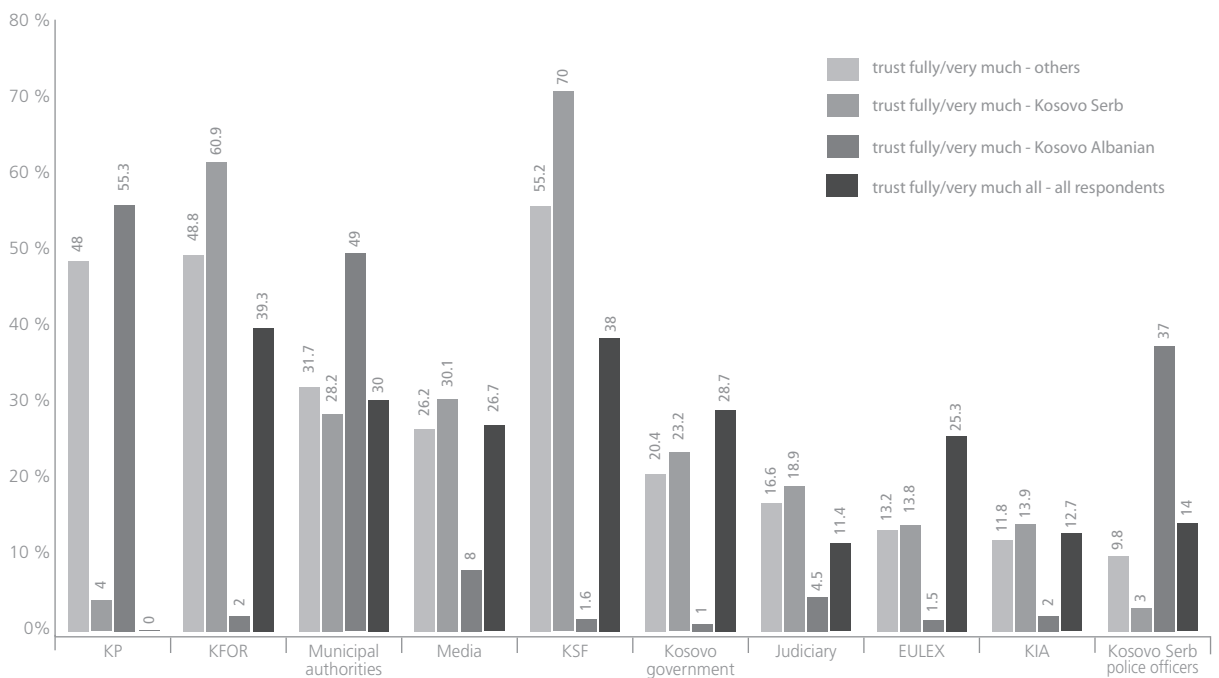
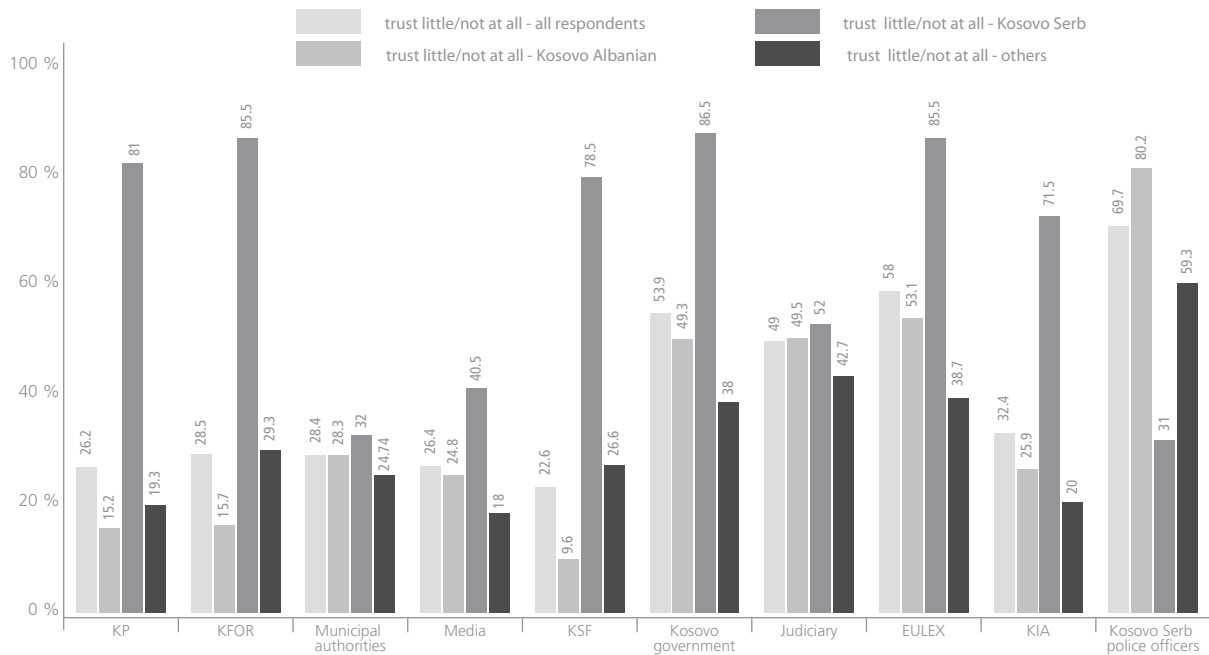


Figure 7. Trust in institutions and security providers (low levels of trust)



Kosovo Police

In 2009, 77% of all respondents said that they trusted the Kosovo Police ‘very much’ or ‘fully’. This figure slumped to 44% in 2010 and the corresponding response for 2011 showed only a slight increase in confidence to 46%. Similarly, those who trusted the Kosovo Police ‘only a little’ or ‘not at all’ stood at 26% in 2011, nearly unchanged from 24% in the previous year.

Trust among Kosovo Albanians rose slightly in 2011, from 48% in 2010 to 55% in 2011. Amongst other (non-Kosovo Albanian or Serb) ethnicities, however, there was a significant decline – from 70% in 2010 to 45% in 2011. The number of people among other ethnicities expressing little or no confidence in the Kosovo Police rose from 15% to 19% in 2011. Confidence in the police among Kosovo Serb populations has remained extremely low. Dissatisfaction with the Kosovo Police among this ethnic group rose from 71% in 2010 to 81% in 2011. At the same time, confidence in Kosovo Serb police officers among Kosovo Serbs almost doubled, from 19% in 2010 to 37% in 2011.

Perceptions on the performance of police

Figure 8. How would you assess the performance of the Kosovo Police in terms of partiality?

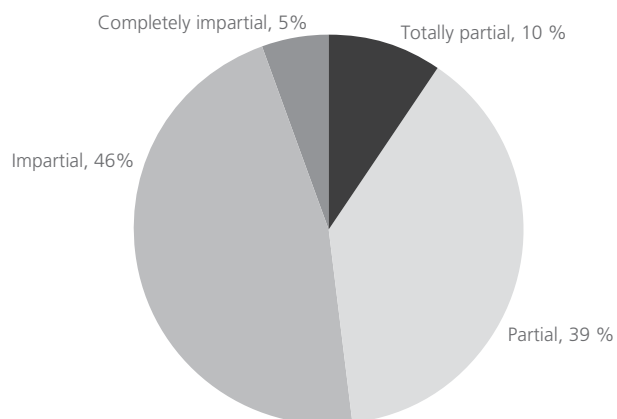


Figure 9. How would you assess the performance of the Kosovo Police in terms of respect?

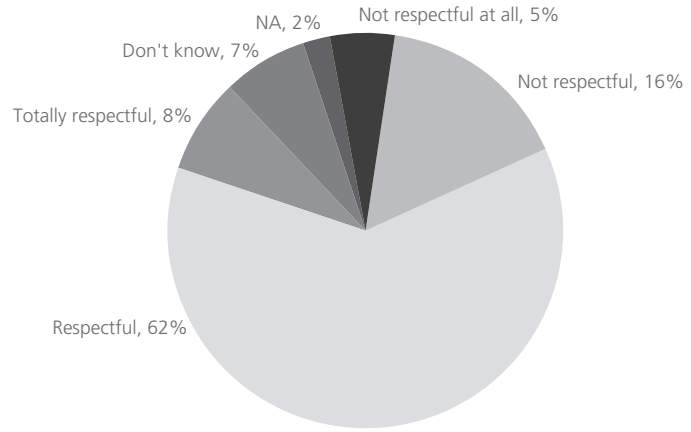


Figure 10. How would you assess the performance of the Kosovo Police in terms of timely response?

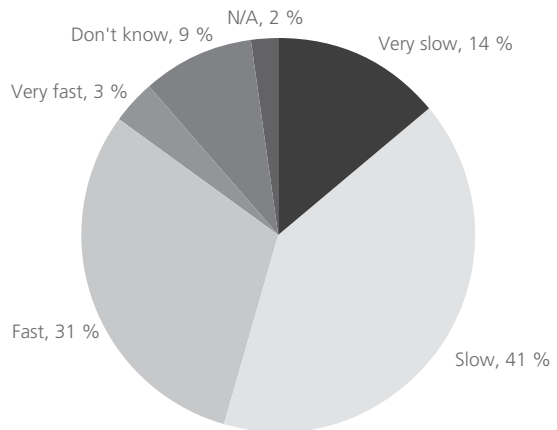


Figure 11. How would you assess the Kosovo Police in terms of corruption?

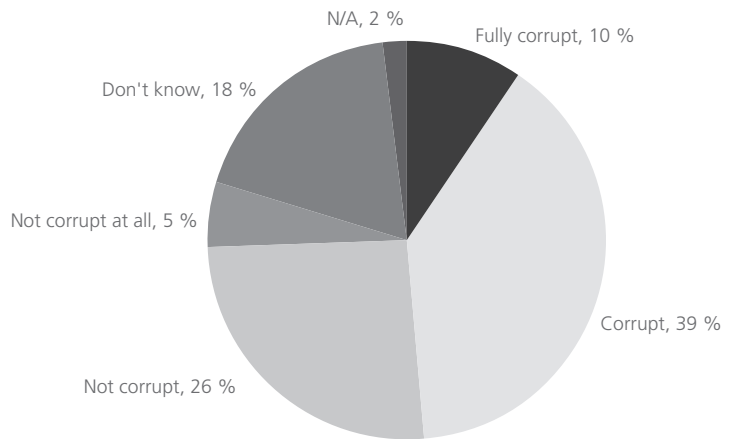
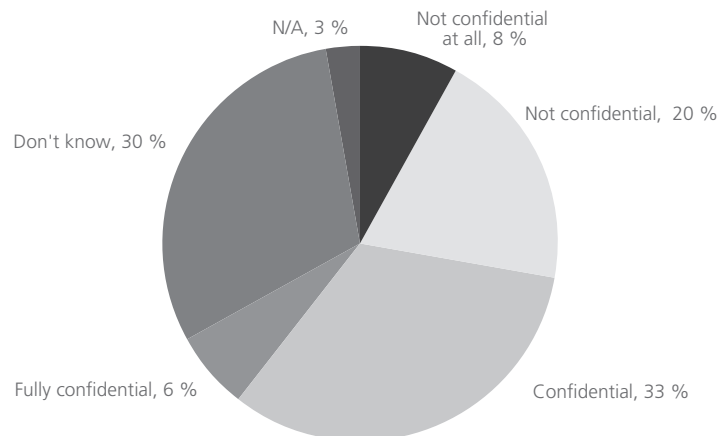


Figure 12. How would you assess the performance of the Kosovo Police in terms of confidentiality?



“I think that the quality of police work would improve when police officers would undergo training and education and there should be some criteria to be a police officer...it should be like a school that would be 2-3 years long, like finishing a university in a qualified manner, not 2-3 weeks training or 2 months training.”

Albanian male, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica

Respondents were asked about priority areas for police reform and improvement. The frequency of police patrols was identified as the most important issue, seen as the top priority by 45% of respondents. Lack of adequate training among police officers was also highlighted during discussion groups. People feel that too much emphasis is currently being placed on physical fitness training, at the expense of attention to police-community relations.

“I had the case to see a person with a package of foodstuff and they fined him 500 Euros. They have fined him twice (before) with 5,000 Euros. Now they say we are combatting corruption, they are the most corrupt persons, the law itself is corrupt.”

Male, Kosovo Albanian, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica

Corruption continues to be seen as widespread within the police service. 49% of all respondents (43% of Kosovo Albanians, 79% of Kosovo Serbs and 42% of other ethnicities) regard the police as fully or partly corrupted. This represents a more than 10% increase on responses in 2010. When asked whether the police were not corrupt or not at all corrupt, 31% of all respondents expressed this view compared to 39.6% in 2010. Again, this reflects a decline in trust across population groups. Only 37% of Kosovo Albanians (45% in 2010), 33% of other minority groups (40% in 2010) and 4.5% of Kosovo Serbs (16% in 2010) saw the police service as not corrupt.

Confidence in the impartiality of the police service – their ability to carry out their duties fairly and without discrimination – also declined, particularly among Kosovo Serb and other ethnic minority groups. The number of people who view the Kosovo Police as totally partial or partial rose from 37% in 2010 to 43% in 2011. This rise is due to a change in perceptions among non-Kosovo Albanian ethnic groups: among the Kosovo Serb community, views of the police as partial rose from 53% in 2010 to 78% in 2011 and among other ethnic groups from 26% to 36%. Views among Kosovo Albanian remained largely unchanged, at 36%. Fewer than half of all respondents (46%) regard the police as impartial or totally impartial – 55% of Kosovo Albanians, 5% of Kosovo Serbs and 49% of other minorities.

“Perhaps police officers don’t take the job very seriously – smuggling, beatings or clashes. I go to a police officer and he knows the [accused] so he doesn’t want to take any action.”

Kosovo Albanian male, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica

Perceptions of police performance in other spheres – including the speed of response and confidentiality – also declined from 2010. 55% of all respondents regard police response times as being ‘very slow’ or ‘slow’, compared to 43% in 2010. A substantial minority (28%) also expressed a lack of trust in the ability of police to maintain confidentiality. This seems to have had a continuing impact on people’s willingness to provide information to the police. Although a majority of all respondents (79%) conveyed that they were ‘likely’ or ‘very likely’ to report crimes to the police, this constitutes an almost 10% decline from responses in 2010 (88%).

The judiciary

“There is no justice. Whoever has strong connections will get things done. Those who don’t have connections lose.”

Male, Kosovo Albanian, Kamenicë/Kamenica

Despite legislative and other reforms undertaken by the Kosovo Government and National Assembly over 2011, there continues to be worryingly low levels of confidence in the justice sector among the population. In 2011, 27% of all respondents stated that they ‘do not trust justice sector at all’, while 22% said they had only ‘a little’. This continues a negative pattern identified in the previous two surveys, which found that 28% and 26% of people had no or little trust in the sector respectively in 2010 and 22% and 15% respectively in 2009. Only 17% of all respondents trust the judiciary a lot or fully. Perceptions were shared relatively evenly across Kosovo’s different ethnic groups, with 49.5% of Kosovo Albanians, 52% of Kosovo Serbs and 43% of other ethnicities expressing no trust or only a little trust in the justice sector.

The number of people expressing high levels of trust in the judiciary remained relatively constant, with 17% of all respondents conveying strong support for the sector in 2011 and 15% in 2010. This remains well below the 2009 figure of 40%. Again, when it comes to positive trust in the judiciary, there were few differences in opinion between ethnic groups.

Perceptions on the performance of the justice sector

Figure 14. How would you assess the performance of the justice sector in terms of impartiality?

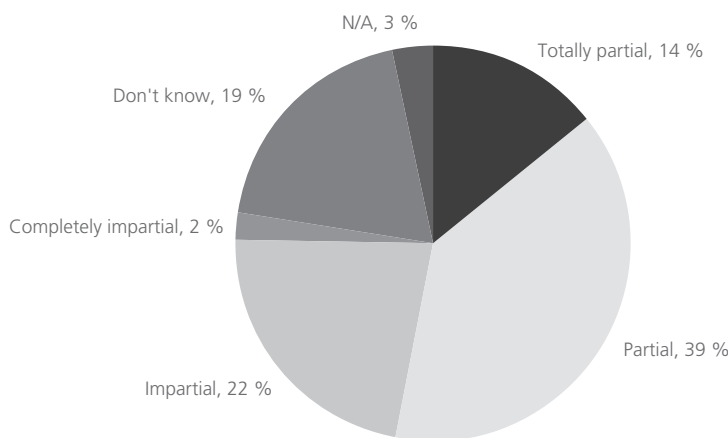


Figure 15. How would you assess the performance of the justice sector in terms of respect?

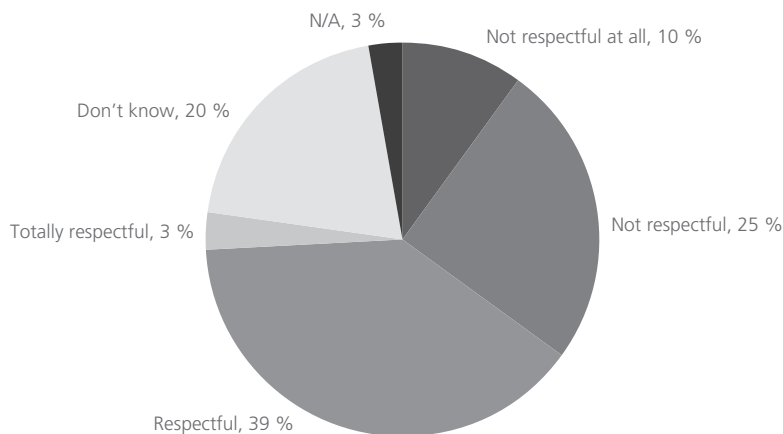


Figure 16. How would you assess the performance of the justice sector in terms of speed of proceedings?

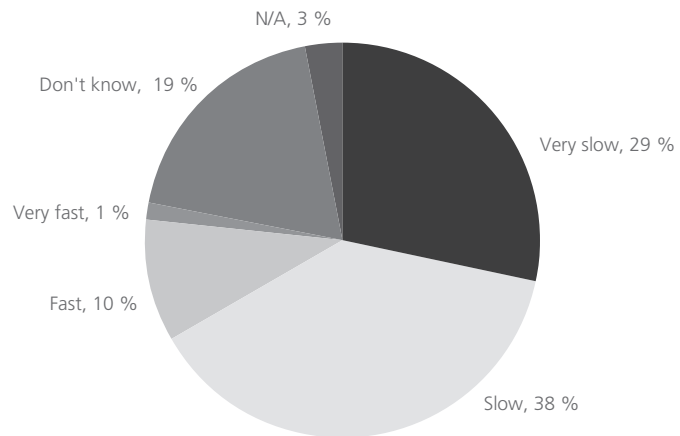


Figure 17. How would you assess the performance of the justice sector in terms of corruption?

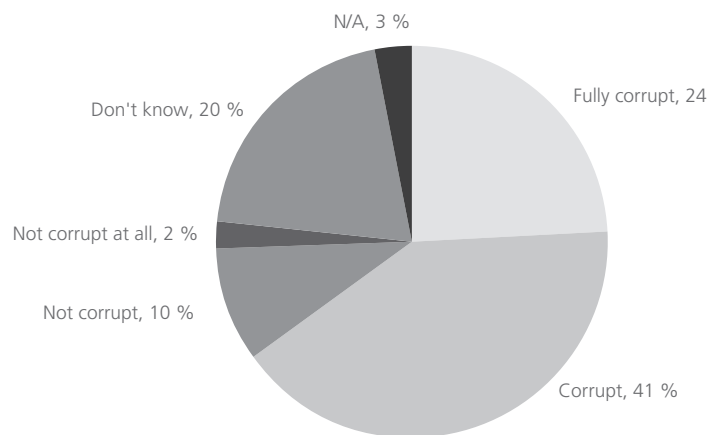
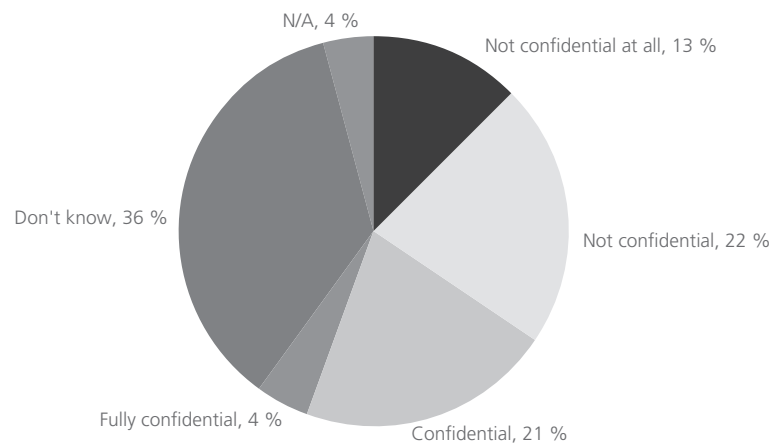


Figure 18. How would you assess the performance of the justice sector in terms of confidentiality?



There was a slight improvement in perceptions of efficiency and speed of delivery. In 2011, 67% of all respondents said that the judicial system was 'slow' or 'very slow' in its performance, compared to 71% in 2010. Overall, however, the picture remains negative. Over two thirds of the Kosovo population still have few expectations of 'justice swiftly done'. There were some differences in perception of efficiency between ethnic groups. 71% of Kosovo Albanians and 58% of Kosovo Serbs were critical of the speed of courts. The view among other ethnicities rose by 10% (52% compared to 42% in 2010).

“The courts are not working properly, they are neglectful. They leave so many cases unresolved.”

Kosovo Albanian male, Skenderaj/Srbica

“There is not only a lack of rule of law but a lack of judges as well. We are informed by the media that in Podujeva there is only one judge and he has to resolve 4,000 cases.”

Kosovo Albanian male, Kamenicë/Kamenica

When people were asked how confident they were that cases would be resolved and perpetrators brought to justice, 43% were ‘not very confident’ or ‘not confident at all’, whilst only just over a quarter (27%) were ‘somewhat confident’ or ‘very confident’. These responses are broadly similar to those recorded in 2010. However, changes in perceptions were apparent at the regional level. In Prishtinë/Priština, 57% of people were ‘not confident’ or ‘not confident at all’ that effective judicial action would be taken in response to crimes, whilst the figure for Mitrovicë/Mitrovica was 63%. In 2010, the equivalent figures were 51% and 57% respectively. Whilst in 2010, 68% of respondents in Ferizaj/Uroševac were ‘very confident’ or ‘somewhat confident’ in the courts, the figure for 2011 dropped to 43.5%.

The impartiality of the courts has always been regarded as poor, a perception that continued in 2011. 53% of all respondents said that the judiciary is ‘totally partial’ or ‘partial’ with 24.5% regarding it as ‘impartial’ or completely ‘impartial’. There was a slight improvement in views among some ethnic groups. 55% of Kosovo Albanians expressed a belief that the judiciary is ‘totally partial’ or ‘partial’ compared to 61% in 2010, while 57% of Kosovo Serbs shared the same opinion compared to 44% in 2010. By contrast, views among other ethnic groups have changed for the worse. In 2010, 47% thought the judiciary was ‘impartial’ or ‘completely impartial’. In 2011, that figure was 31%.

The judiciary has continued to perform particularly badly on the issue of perceived corruption. 65% of all respondents viewed the courts as ‘fully corrupt’ or ‘corrupt’. Broken down by ethnicity, 69% of Kosovo Albanians, 61% of Kosovo Serbs and 50% of other ethnicities saw the system as corrupt. Again, there was a marked deterioration in perceptions among other ethnic groups: in 2010, 37.5% saw the sector as corrupt.

“[Regarding narcotic cases] There are people we see, we know them. Cases go to court, they get convicted to one or two days or within an hour they get released because they are supported by somebody. Nobody is being held accountable for this. Money is doing it all in the courts.”

Kosovo Albanian male, Pejë/Pec

“There is too much influence between judges, MPs and government.”

Kosovo Albanian male, Prishtinë/Priština

Confidentiality in the justice sector has also remained a problem. Just 26% of all respondents saw the justice sector as being ‘confidential’ or ‘fully confidential’, as opposed to 33% the previous year. 35% assessed it as ‘not confidential at all’ or ‘not confidential’. Confidence among other minority groups also declined on this issue: in 2010, 21% considered that the system was ‘not confidential’ or ‘not confidential at all’, with lack of confidence rising to 33% in 2011.

Kosovo Customs

Trust in the Kosovo Customs service remained low in 2011, with only 16% of all respondents saying they trusted the sector 'a little' and 28% 'not at all'. In 2010, these figures were 21% and 24% respectively. The Kosovo Serb population demonstrated the lowest confidence: 66% trusted them 'not at all' compared to 53% in 2010 – a clear reflection of the impact of events over the year. Trust is stronger among the Kosovo Albanian and other ethnic minority communities, though confidence has still declined since 2010: in 2011, 22% and 11% of these groups respectively placed no trust in customs, compared to 20% and 14% in 2010.

Responses differed between regions. In contrast to 2010, the greatest level of distrust is found not in any of the border regions but in Prishtinë/Priština, where 61% of respondents stated that they did not trust customs at all or 'just a little'. In 2010, Ferizaj/Uroševac was the region with the least trust in customs at 60%, but in 2011 that figure had dropped to 29%. There was little change in levels of trust in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica (52% against 53% in 2010) or Pejë/Pec (38% in 2011, 49% in 2010). The highest levels of trust came from Ferizaj/Uroševac and Gjakovë/Đakovica.

Perceptions on the performance of customs

Figure 19. How do you assess the performance of customs in terms of impartiality?

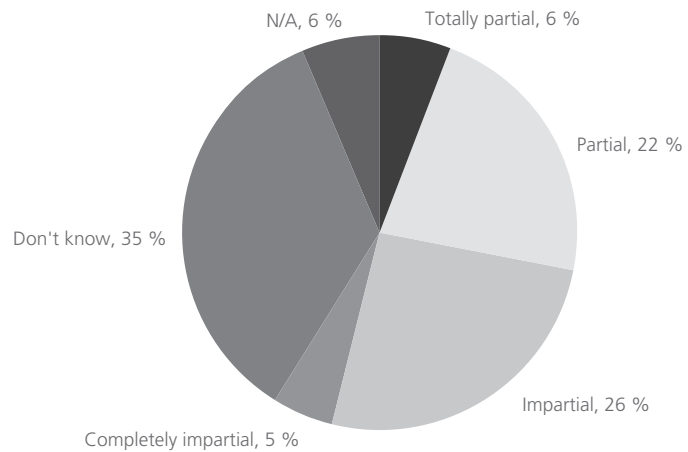


Figure 20. How do you assess the performance of customs in terms of respect?

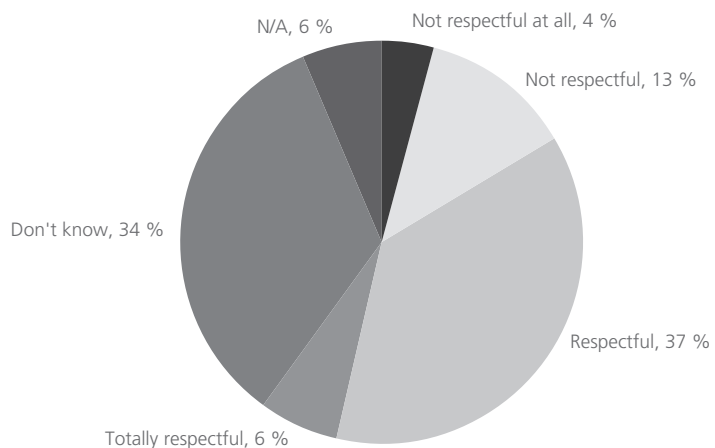


Figure 21. How do you assess the performance of customs in terms of speed of proceedings?

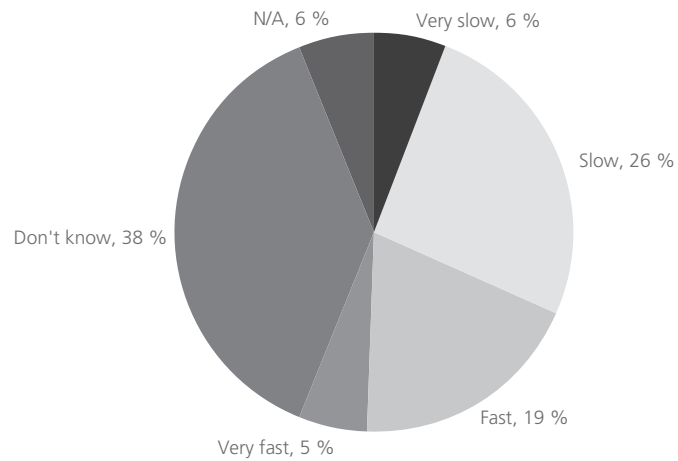


Figure 22. How do you assess the performance of customs in terms of corruption?

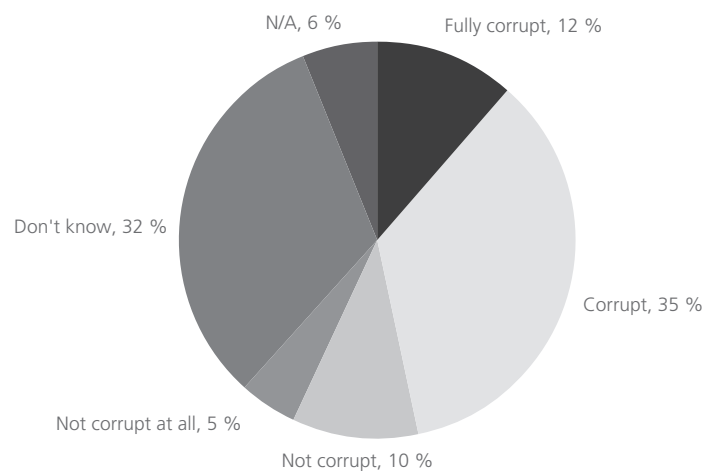
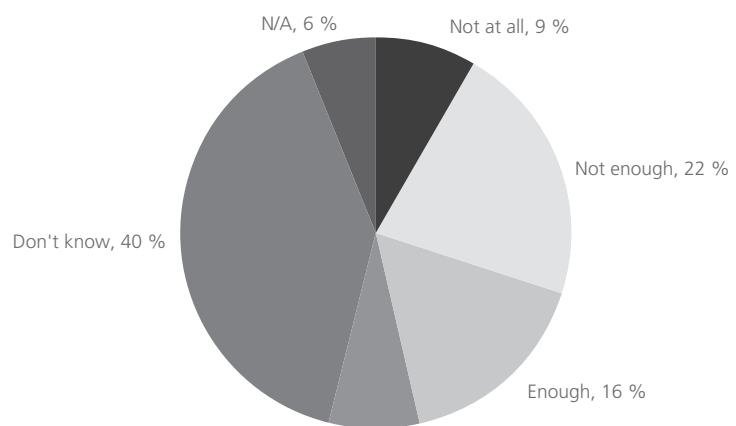


Figure 23. How do you assess the performance of customs in terms of following formal procedures?



“Customs are not doing their job properly, as the issue of border posts is not resolved. But more broadly I think there is corruption and failure among customs officials to fulfil their obligations, as they are not performing to a satisfactory level.”

Kosovo Albanian male, Ferizaj/Uroševac

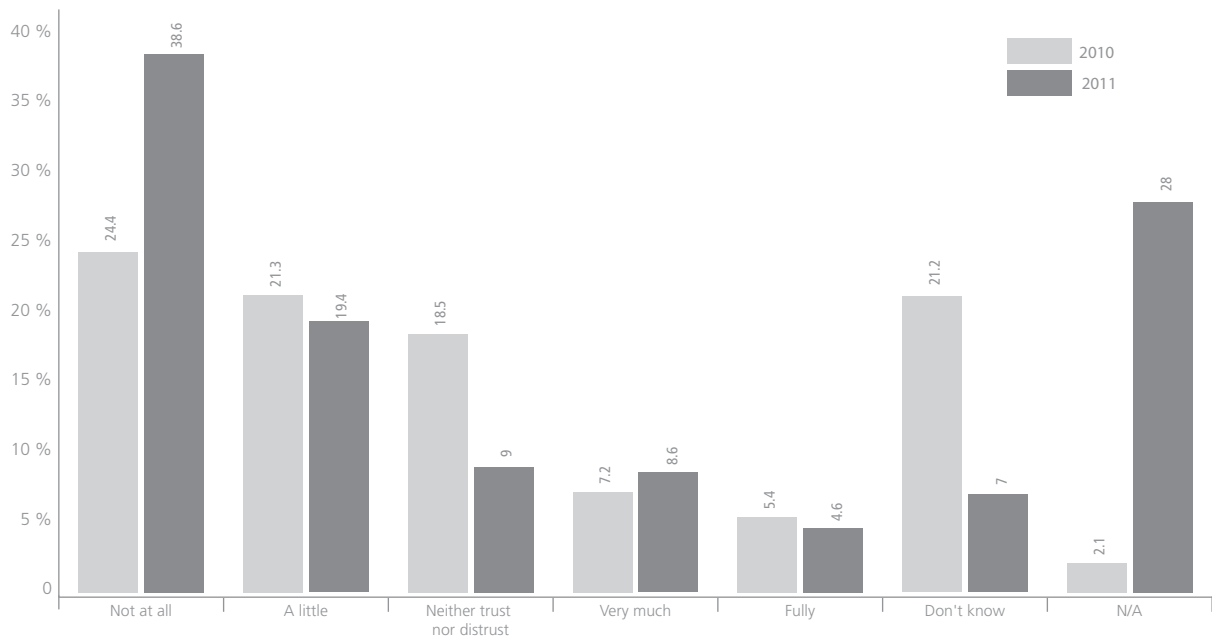
As with the Kosovo Police and the judiciary, corruption in Kosovo Customs is perceived as endemic. Whilst 47% of all survey respondents saw it as being either ‘fully corrupt’ or ‘corrupt’, in both Prishtinë/Priština and Pejë/Pec over 60% of respondents expressed this view. As in 2010, the views of Kosovo Albanians and other ethnicities were relatively evenly divided in their perceptions of the impartiality of the customs sector. 24% of Kosovo Albanians view customs as partial and 37% impartial, whilst 32% of other ethnic groups view customs as partial and 33% as impartial. The figure

was different among Kosovo Serbs, 2.5% of whom viewed customs as impartial and 45% as partial. This was a deterioration from 2010, when 14% of Kosovo Serbs viewed the customs service as impartial and 36% as partial. In 2010, customs scored relatively well in terms of treating people with respect – the view of over 50% of respondents. That figure also declined in 2011, to 44%. The decline is attributable to a change in perceptions among Kosovo Serbs: just 9% of Kosovo Serb respondents believed customs staff treated them with respect, down from 37% in 2010. On the other hand, 56% of other minorities saw them as being respectful – an increase over 40% seen the previous year.

The EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX)

Public trust in EULEX has continued to deteriorate. 58% of all respondents trusted it either 'not at all' or a 'little', a further decline from 47% lack of confidence expressed in 2010. Just 13% of people trusted it 'fully' or 'very much' compared to 21% in 2010. Mistrust is highest among the 18-29 and 50-59 years old age groups, at 61% and 64% respectively. There are wide regional and ethnic differences. Frustration with the mission was greatest among Kosovo Serbs, 86% of whom expressed little or no trust in the mission's work, followed by Kosovo Albanians (55%) and other minority groups (39%). Regionally, dissatisfaction was highest in Prishtinë/Priština (70%), followed closely by Mitrovicë/Mitrovica (68%), Ferizaj/Uroševac (59%) and Gjakovë/Đakovica (16%). In 2010, these numbers were Pristina (56%), Mitrovicë/Mitrovica (67%), Ferizaj/Uroševac (53%) and Gjakovë/Đakovica (32%).

Figure 24. Trust in EULEX



“Security should be provided by the foreign organisations, first of all EULEX. But they are not doing that. I have no information on their work and we see a lot of what they are doing by bringing customs officers at the boundary points and whose side they are on.”

Kosovo Serb male, Zvečan/Zvečan

“EULEX is in monitoring and I don't expect anything from them, except that they almost ran me over with their cars several times because they drive too fast. They are out of control.”

Kosovo Albanian male, Prishtinë/Priština

Survey results show that a majority of people feel that EULEX is failing to deliver on its core mandate. In 2010, 53% of all respondents expressed a belief that EULEX was contributing to the rule of law, but by 2011 this number had reduced to 33%. A hardening of opinion among Kosovo Serbs, as a result of EULEX's role along the Kosovo-Serbian border from September, played a major role in this reversal: 81% of Kosovo Serb respondents condemned EULEX's performance. The majority of respondents in Prishtinë/Priština, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, Prizren, Pejë/Peć and Ferizaj/Uroševac also evaluated the mission's activities negatively. Perceptions of EULEX's role in combatting corruption have also become more critical. In 2010, 51% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that EULEX was making a positive contribution in addressing corruption amongst rule of law actors. In 2011 this figure almost halved to 30%. Regionally, Prishtinë/Priština (61%), Mitrovicë/Mitrovica (66%), Prizren (55%) and Gjilan/Gnjilane (59%) were the areas that judged its performance on this front most poorly.

“EULEX's performance is disappointing and I haven't noticed any impacts, despite them having foreign judges and police officers. It is not working. It's been 2 years now and there is no transformation in the judiciary.”

Kosovo Albanian male, Kamenicë/Kamenica

Perhaps unsurprisingly given the above findings, nearly half (48%) of all respondents felt that the time has come for EULEX to leave, up from 39% in 2010. This perception was most prevalent among Kosovo Serbs and residents of Prishtinë/Priština, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica and Gjilan/Gnjilane.

Views about the relationship between EULEX and Kosovo authorities also deteriorated. On cooperation with central government, 44% of all respondents 'completely agreed' or 'agreed' that the relationship worked well (down from 55% in 2010). Regarding cooperation with municipal authorities, views are more divided. Amongst all respondents, 31% of people agreed or completely agreed that co-operation was effective (compared to 36% in 2010), whilst 38% disagreed or completely disagreed (31% in 2010). The most dramatic change was amongst Kosovo Serb respondents, 80% of whom believed the relationship worked badly (compared to 55% in 2010). Views about whether EULEX worked well with the Government of Serbia differed sharply between ethnic groups. 60% of Kosovo Albanians saw the relationship working well, compared to just 4% of Kosovo Serbs. Among respondents as a whole, 49% believe that cooperation with Belgrade is effective.

NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR)

“NATO is here. In my opinion for as long as the internationals are here, there cannot be war.”

Minority male, Prizren

Among international security providers, KFOR has continued to garner the most support among respondents, despite an on-going reduction in permanent troop levels. Overall, 49% of respondents trusted KFOR 'very much' or 'fully', with support among Kosovo Albanians increasing from 54% in 2010 to 61% in the current survey. Support was considerably lower among Kosovo Serbs and other ethnic minorities: 86% of Kosovo Serbs said they trusted KFOR only 'a little' or 'not at all', a further decline from already low confidence in 2010 (75%) that was likely driven by KFOR's intervention in Northern Kosovo in mid 2011. Among other ethnic minorities, confidence dropped more steeply from 67% in 2010 to 39% in 2011. Despite variable confidence in KFOR and, in EULEX's case, a general lack of confidence in its performance, participants in in focus group discussions expressed the view that international actors constituted an important guarantor against a major new outbreak of violence.

5

Recommendations

THE FINDINGS IDENTIFIED in this report highlight the need for urgent measures by the government and the international community to respond to popular safety and security concerns in Kosovo and address a pervasive lack of trust in governing security and justice actors. Key messages to policymakers engaged in security and justice provision in Kosovo are outlined below. Their core purpose is contribute to an inclusive national debate about security and justice reform in Kosovo and support the development of a more responsive, effective and accountable security and justice institutions.

Recommendations to the Government of Kosovo and its institutions

- **Take urgent steps to reach out to Kosovo Serbs in the North.** Initiate dialogue with Kosovo Serbs in the North of Kosovo to identify and address governance, development and rule of law concerns. Develop measures to address community concerns in the North and avoid actions that will further inflame local tensions.
- **Implement agreements struck during the Kosovo-Serbia dialogue and report publicly on progress.** Fully implement agreements brokered over 2011 and early 2012 and develop dedicated mechanisms and indicators to monitor progress. Develop a communications strategy to improve information dissemination surrounding the EU-facilitated talks, promote transparency and clarify implications for people's everyday lives.
- **Address the crisis of confidence in Kosovo's government, security sector and justice institutions.** Survey findings highlight the need for decisive measures to improve transparency, responsiveness and accountability in government, the security sector and justice system, in the context of persistent high levels of mistrust. Police-community relations should be strengthened through a more regular, visible police presence. Specific steps are required to improve confidentiality in the justice system.
- **Ensure anti-corruption efforts are backed by sustained political attention and resources.** Several steps have been taken in the past year to tackle corruption, including passage of new anti-corruption legislation, establishment of anti-corruption bodies and changes to judicial salaries and the judicial reappointment process. The government should now ensure full implementation of new laws, allocate sufficient resources to relevant agencies to enable progress and publicly report on results based on measurable indicators.
- **Enforce and improve people's understanding of weapons control legislation.** The Penal Code and its provisions on weapons use and ownership should be implemented and information on existing SALW control legislation better disseminated. The existence of local safety forums throughout Kosovo provides an important opportunity for the government to consult and involve local communities in this process and to capitalize on changing attitudes towards weapons ownership. Government institutions

should become more proactive and preventative in their efforts to combat illicit weapons possession and use.

- **Use the EU accession process to articulate a common vision for Kosovo.** The European Commission's decision in March 2012 to launch an initial feasibility study on EU integration provides a valuable opportunity for the Kosovo Government to articulate a long-term plan for Kosovo's development and address socio-economic concerns. This needs to be accompanied by a national, inclusive dialogue that involves all of Kosovo's communities.

Recommendations to the international community

- **Use EU accession processes to leverage progress in the Serbia-Kosovo dialogue.** EU institutions should clarify that EU accession is conditional on improved relations between Serbia and Kosovo and full implementation of agreements reached during the EU-facilitated talks. The EU should develop a mechanism to monitor and report on implementation progress.
- **Ensure coherent messages on the purpose and outcomes of the dialogue.** Address public perceptions that the dialogue process lacks transparency and ensure a clearer flow of information about specific agreements, their implementation and implications for ordinary people's lives. Actively promote the dialogue as a means of ensuring progress towards sustainable peace in the Western Balkans.
- **Address serious public concerns about EULEX's performance.** EULEX should develop a communications strategy to clearly articulate its rule of law mandate and mission objectives in Kosovo and ensure that communication channels with the public are open during periods of tension. The recently approved Strategic Review of the EULEX Mission provides a good opportunity to address people's concerns before future mandate changes take place.

Recommendations on and to civil society

- **Increase cooperation with civil society.** The government, security providers and international actors should seek all opportunities to engage civil society in the articulation and implementation of measures to strengthen the rule of law. A two-way flow of consultation and engagement is required to ensure that people's concerns are addressed.
- **Develop grassroots community structures.** The relationship between non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and local level structures needs to be strengthened. Civil society organisations with rule of law expertise should seek ways of expanding networks to include grassroots organisations and local community structures – the survey shows a great interest in rule of law engagement among local communities.

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Methodology

THE METHODOLOGY FOR this tracker survey is the same as that used for previous surveys, particularly for the 2007 report 'Human Security' and for the 2010 report 'Time to act'. This allows for comparisons to be made over time. The data were collected through face-to-face household survey interviews using a questionnaire, based on a template developed for previous surveys, and refined to meet this specific research requirement. The research sample for the household survey included 1,250 Kosovo citizens over the age of 18 years, of both sexes (54.2% male, 45.8% female). All age groups, all municipalities and regions of Kosovo and both rural and urban areas were represented. The sample has been divided into three sub-samples:

- **900 Kosovo Albanians (72 percent, indicative)**
- **200 Kosovo Serbs (16 percent, indicative)**
- **150 Kosovo non-Serb minorities, namely Turkish, Bosniak, Gorani, Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian (12 percent)**

To complement the household survey data, the 10 Focus Group Discussions (7 with Kosovo Albanians, 2 with Kosovo Serbs and 1 with other ethnic minority groups), were organised in selected key locations across Kosovo, in order to gain a deeper understanding of answers given in the household survey and to address any issues that either needed clarification or were not covered by the survey. Focus Group Discussions were held in Prishtinë/Priština, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, Pejë/Peć, Skenderaj/Srbica, Ferizaj/Uroševac, Lipjan/Lipljan, Kamenicë/Kamenica, Zvečan/Zvečan, Shtërpçë/Štrpce and Prizren.

Saferworld is an independent international organisation working to prevent violent conflict and build safer lives. We work with local people affected by conflict to improve their safety and sense of security, and conduct wider research and analysis. We use this evidence and learning to improve local, national and international policies and practices that can help build lasting peace. Our priority is people – we believe that everyone should be able to lead peaceful, fulfilling lives, free from insecurity and violent conflict.

COVER PHOTO: Mitrovica, October 2012 – a barricade in the bridge that divides the city of Mitrovica makes movement of citizens difficult. DRITON PAÇARADA



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