



Naša uprava

institut alternativa

QCIN
Centar za
istraživačko
novinarstvo
Crne Gore

NH
NEW HORIZON
Civil Society Organization

Natura
NVO Natura-Kolašin



Perception of Public Administration

Public Opinion Survey



March 2017



This paper has been produced with the assistance of the European Union within the project "Civil Society for Good Governance: To Act and Account", implemented by Institute Alternative, Bonum, Natura, New horizon and Centre for Investigative Journalism. The contents of this paper are the sole responsibility of the authors and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.

Table of contents

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 3

KEY FINDINGS 4

SURVEY RESULTS 6

Attitudes towards state and local administration 6

Attitudes towards public administration 9

The perception of public administration services 13

Public discussions 16

Public administration websites 17

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Within quantitative survey conducted by CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing) technique a total of 1027 citizens of Montenegro aged 18+ were interviewed. The survey was done within regular monthly public opinion poll, average duration of which was 45 minutes. The sample was a three-stage random representative stratified sample. Data collection was realised in the period between 10th and 16th February 2017. Fieldwork control was done by subsequent repeated contacting of a minimum of 10% of respondents. Ipsos Strategic Marketing uses SM-S software for data collection and data entry, so in course of interviewing / data entry a 100% logic control was also performed.

KEY FINDINGS

The citizens do not make a big distinction between state and local administration, and higher percentage of the citizens rate public administration with negative scores than positive ones. On average they rate it 5 on the scale from 1 to 10. There are no differences between the citizens who had the opportunity to communicate with public administration during the past 12 months and those who did not. More than a half of the citizens do not see any change in the quality of public services during the past 3 years. Among the citizens who state that the quality of services has changed there is a similar percentage of those who perceive improvement of the quality of services and those who think that the quality of services has worsened. Higher percentage of the citizens state that they trust public administration, among whom those with elementary education are in the lead, and the least trusting citizens are the unemployed. One in four citizens had prior experience with public administration. With the increase of educational attainment and income also increases the likelihood that the citizens had experience with state and local administration. The citizens state that they mainly had contact with municipality and police units, followed by tax administration, courts and Cadastre.

The citizens perceive as the biggest problems of public administration: irregular employment, inefficiency of public administration and corruption. They also mention inadequate work of public servants, but also the size of public servants apparatus. They see as the best solutions decrease of corruption, increase of internal control in public administration and stricter punitive measures. Nevertheless, somewhat higher percentage of the citizens think that the Government will not manage to fight these problems until 2020 compared to those who think that it will manage to do this. Majority of citizens think that the public administration budget is used for wrong purposes, whereas the citizens who had some experience with public administration during the past 12 months are more convinced in this. According to the citizens, the most important factors in finding employment are connections (family and friends), but crucial factor are political connections. Education, skills and experience of the candidate are in the third place according to the citizens.

The citizens have a moderate attitude towards the services of public administration, where similar percentage of the citizens are satisfied and dissatisfied. Dissatisfaction with the services is the result of inefficiency in solving the requests, long waiting in lines, necessity to use connections in order to solve the request and complex procedures. One in two citizens thinks that the requests are solved too slowly. As regards the prices of the services, the opinions are divided. On the other hand, the citizens mainly do not know how they could make complaints about the work of public administration, so very small percentage of them have filed complaints in recent years.

The majority of citizens are not informed about public debates organised by public administration bodies, so one in four citizens claims to have followed some public debate organised by public administration.

Just one in ten citizens visited Internet presentation of some public administration body during the past 12 months, and even smaller percentage of them visited the eGovernment portal (one in four citizens heard about this portal). Among users of Internet presentation, the percentage of citizens who are satisfied with the contents of the presentation exceeds the percentage of those who are not satisfied with it. Satisfaction is smaller only in terms of regular updating of contents of presentations. The citizens who haven't used the websites of public administration mainly claim that they had no need for it.

SURVEY RESULTS

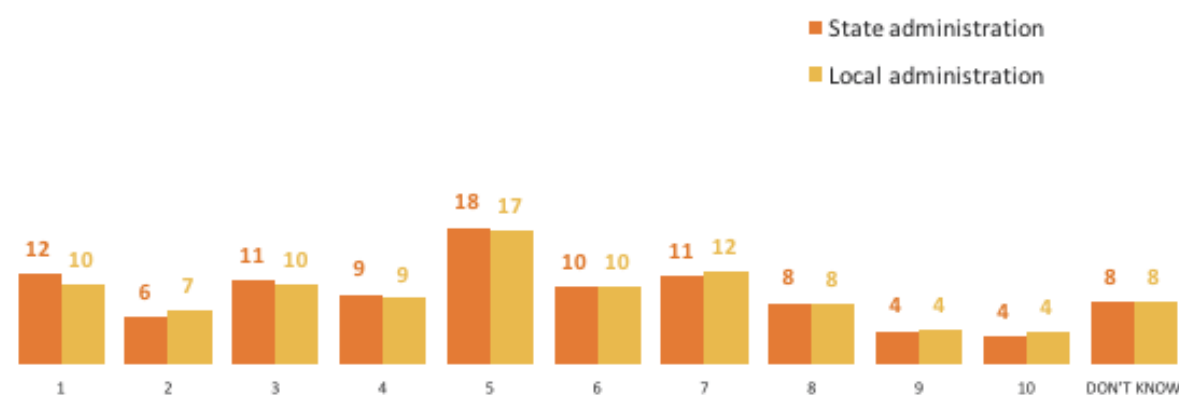
Attitudes towards State and Local Administration

Citizens' attitudes towards state and local administration are practically identical. Average score that the citizens give state administration is 5, and local administration 5.1. The highest percentage of the citizens rate with medium grades – usually grade 5 (17-18% of Montenegrin citizens). However, there is also a considerable percentage of the citizens who rate the administration with grade 1 (10-12%), which means that higher percentage of the citizens rate it negatively (from 1 to 5 = 53-55%) than positively (from 6 to 10 = 37-39%). The survey did not record a statistically significant difference between the citizens who had experience with public administration and those who didn't. Differences between category of the citizens are small, so average scores for public administration are slightly higher among pupils, students and the employed, and lower among the unemployed, citizens with the lowest income and pensioners. Besides that, in municipalities with the smallest number of inhabitants public administration is rated slightly more positively compared to medium populated municipalities where the ratings are slightly more negative. Unemployed citizens, those with the lowest income per household member and the ones with secondary education rate local administration with lower grades in contrast to the citizens from smaller municipalities and college or university education who rate it with somewhat higher grades (all average grades range between 4.6 and 5.7).

Figure 1: Evaluation of the quality of work of state and local administration

How do you generally evaluate the quality of work of STATE ADMINISTRATION? Please evaluate on the scale from 1-10, where 1= very poor quality, and 10= very high quality? Base: Total target population

How do you generally evaluate the quality of work of LOCAL ADMINISTRATION? Please evaluate on the scale from 1-10, where 1= very poor quality, and 10= very high quality? Base: Total target population



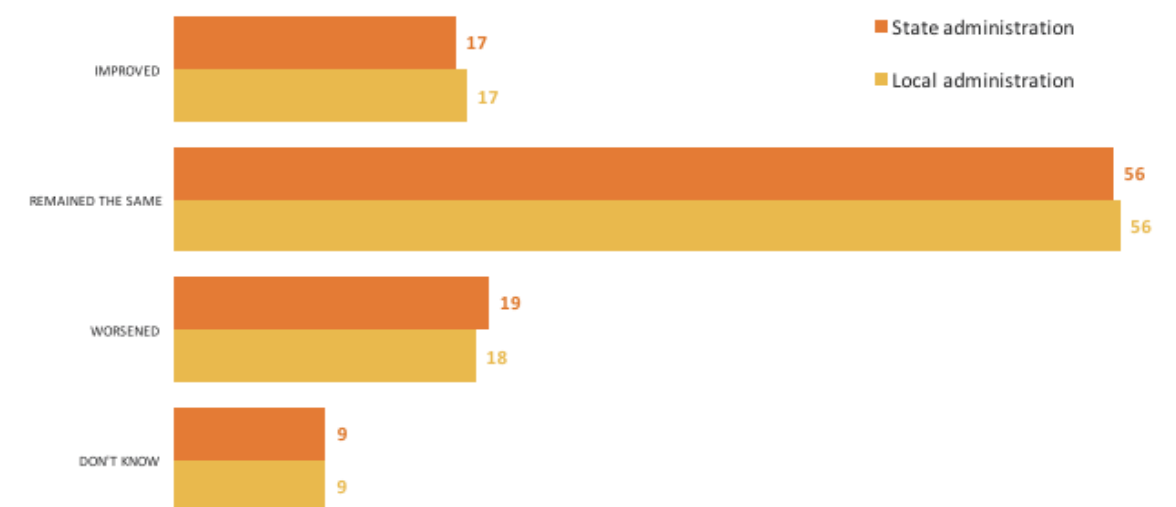
The citizens similarly perceive the change of quality of services rendered by public administration in the past three years on both state and local levels – more than one half of the citizens think that there has been no change (56%), while less than one fifth of the citizens believe that the

quality of their services has been improved (17%), or worsened (18-19%). A higher percentage of the citizens who have had experience with public administration during the past 12 months believe that the quality of its services has improved (24%), but also worsened (24%). Besides that, higher percentage of the citizens who had experience with local administration think that quality of work of local administration has worsened (26%), but percentage of those who think that quality of their services has improved isn't negligible either (22%). A higher percentage of citizens from central municipalities believe that the quality of state administration has improved, while in northern municipalities smaller percentage of citizens have the same opinion (10%). In southern municipalities, a higher percentage of citizens think that the quality of services on local level has improved (24%). A higher percentage of citizens with the lowest income believe that the quality of public services on state level has improved (25%) in contrast to the citizens with the highest educational attainment who think that the quality of public services on local level has worsened (24%).

Figure 2: Perception of change of quality of service of public administration in the last 3 years

Would you say that quality of services in STATE ADMINISTRATION has generally improved or worsened in comparison with the period of 3 years ago, or has it remained the same? Base: Total target population

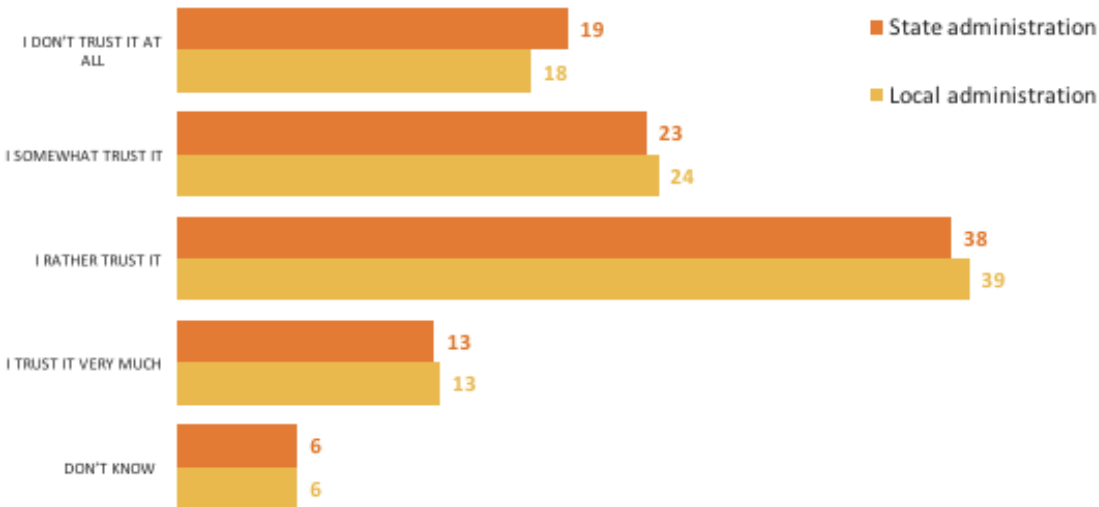
Would you say that quality of services in LOCAL ADMINISTRATION has generally improved or worsened in comparison with the period of 3 years ago, or has it remained the same? Base: Total target population



It can be concluded that the citizens trust public administration more than they distrust it – however, the highest percentage of the citizens express moderate trust (38 – 39%), although the percentage of those who absolutely distrust it is not negligible either (18 – 19%). Citizens who trust state administration in higher than average percentage are those with the lowest level of education (64% of them rather trust it or trust it very much). Citizens who trust local administration in lower percentage are the unemployed (52% of them do not trust it at all or they somewhat trust it).

Figure 3: Trust in public administration

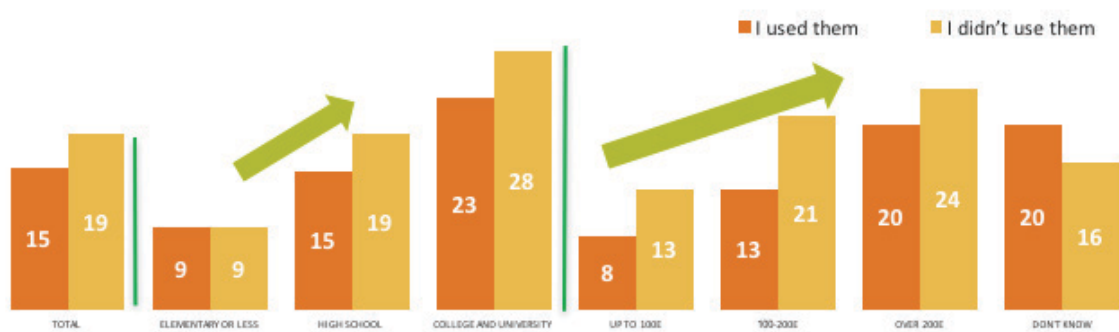
To what extent do you trust public administration? Base: Total target population



Similar percentage of citizens claim to have had experience with state administration (15%) and local administration (19%) during the past 12 months. One in four citizens had experience with public administration (state, local or both – 25%). With the increase of education and income it is more likely that the citizen had some experience with state or local administration.

Figure 4: Usage of services of public administration

Did you use the services of public administration during the past 12 months? Base: Total target population

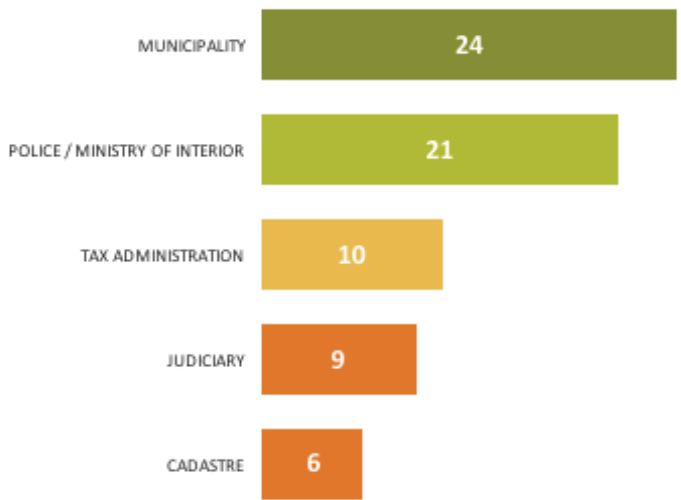


In terms of the institutions which the citizens contacted, the highest percentage of them had contacts with a municipality (24%), Ministry of Interior (21%), Tax administration (10%), judiciary (9%) and Cadastre (6%). Other ministries are mentioned as well (in the first place Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Ministry of Education), Employment Bureau, PDI

Fund, Communal inspection, Labour Inspectorate and Market Inspectorate, Departement of Public Revenues...

Figure 5: Institutions visited by citizens in the last 12 months

The services of which public administration institutions (both state and local) did you use during the past 12 months? Multiple answers; those that used services of state or local administration (25% of target population)

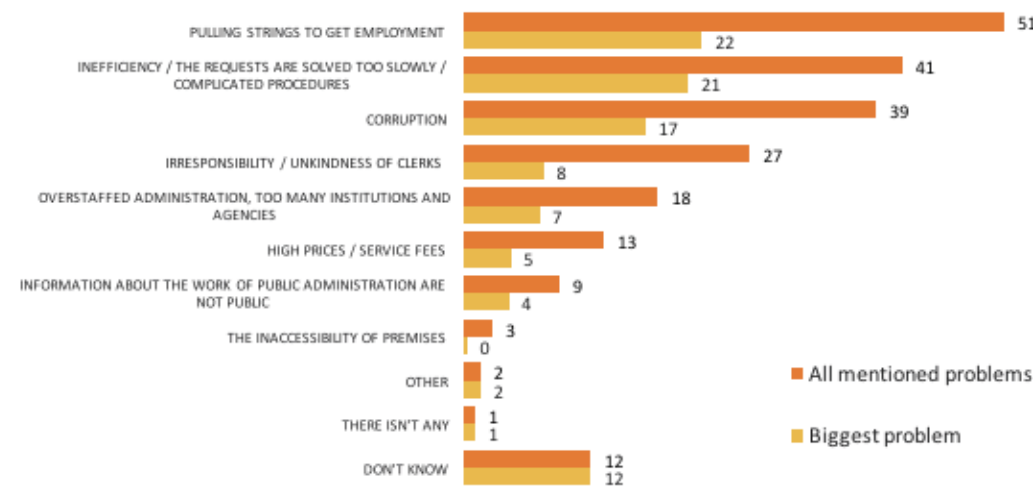


Attitudes towards Public Administration

The biggest problem of public administration which the citizens single out is employment based on connections and pulling of strings. One in two citizens points it out as one of the problems (51%), while one in five citizens believes that this is the biggest problem (22%). Higher percentage of citizens who pinpoint employment based on connections as the biggest problem are from northern region (34%), rural areas (31%). Logically, this is particularly annoying to the unemployed (33%). One fifth of the citizens think that inefficiency of public administration is the highest problem (21%), which is a bigger problem than employment based on connections in central region (27%) and in urban areas (26%). Corruption occupies the third place and it is mentioned in similar percentage as inefficiency (39% mentioned corruption and 41% inefficiency), but a smaller percentage of citizens single it out as the biggest problem (17%). In rural areas corruption is mentioned in higher percentage (50%) than inefficiency. Inadequate work of public servants is mentioned by one in four citizens (27%), and considerably more frequently by the citizens who had experience with public administration (41%) and housewives who believe that irresponsible and unkind public servants are the biggest problems of public administration (17%). Also, overstaffed administration (18%), high prices of services rendered by public administration (13%) and non-transparent information about the work of public administration (9%) are mentioned.

Figure 6: Perception of key problems of public administration

In your opinion what is the key problem of our public administration? Base: Total target population

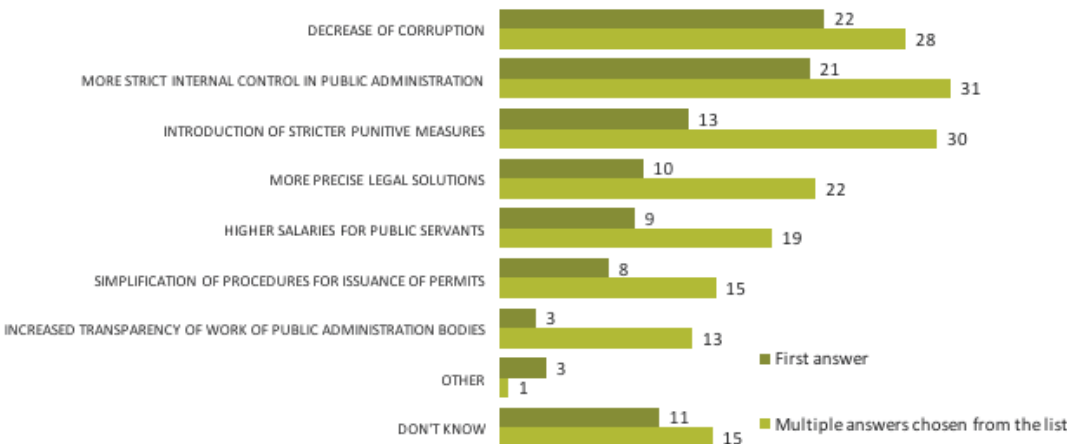


One in five citizens believes that reduction of corruption would be the most important factor in solving these problems (22%), as well as introduction of stricter internal control in public administration (21%). Reduction of corruption is pointed out by higher percentage of the citizens who have experience with public administration (31%). Lesser percentage of the citizens mention punitive measures (13%). When the list of potential solution for corruption is presented (28%), stricter control (31%) and punitive measures (30%) are selected by practically same percentage of the citizens. Citizens who have experience with public administration most frequently mention punitive measures (40%). More precise legal solutions (spontaneously 10%, recognition 22%), higher salaries for public servants (9% - 19%), simplification of procedures for issuance of permits (8% - 15%) and increased transparency of work of public administration bodies (3% - 13%) are also mentioned.

Figure 7: Suggestions for improving quality of work of public administration bodies

In your opinion, what would be the best way to improve the work of public administration bodies? (Spontaneous answer) Base: Total target population

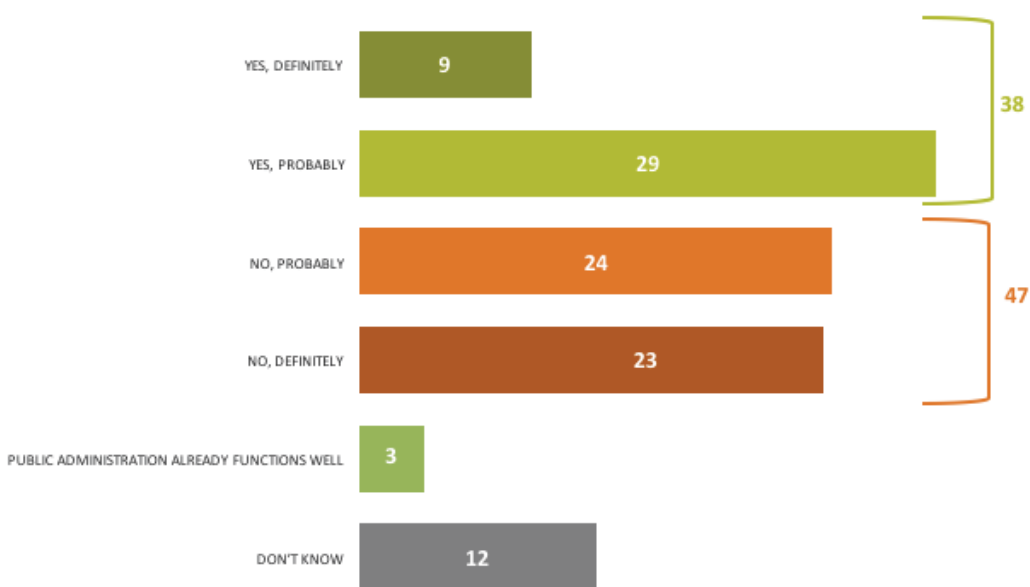
In your opinion, in which of the following ways would it be possible to improve the quality of work of public administration bodies? (Choosing multiple answers from a proposed list) Base: Total target population



Almost one half of the citizens believe that the Government will not manage to solve the main problems of public administration until the year 2020 (47%). Among them, there is a higher percentage of male (54%) than female (40%) citizens. One half of these citizens (23%) are convinced that it is not possible to solve the problems of public administration in this period. Lower percentage of citizens think that the Government will manage to solve the problems of public administration (38%), while negligible percentage of them think that public administration does not have big problems.

Figure 8: Prediction of success of the Government in solving the problems of public administration

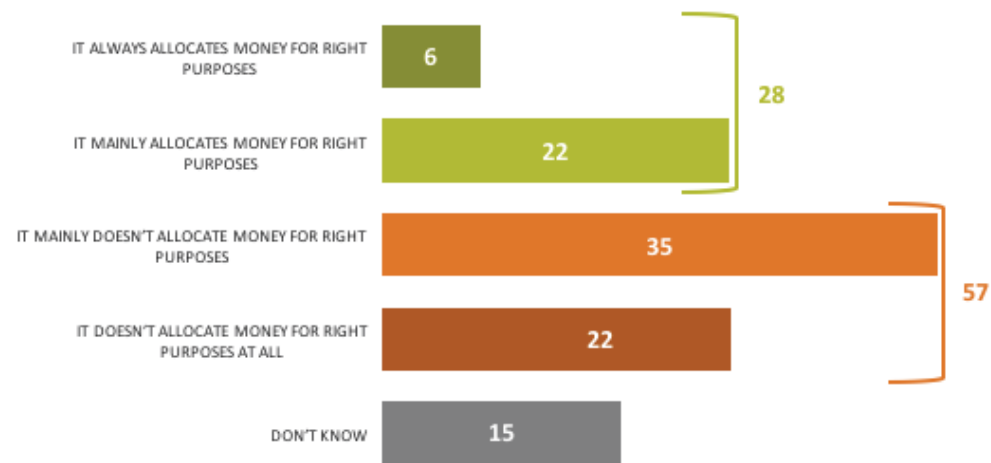
Do you think that until the year 2020 the Government will solve the key problems in the functioning of public administration? Base: Total target population



Twice as many citizens believe that the public administration budget is spent for wrong purposes (57%) than for right purposes (28%). While one fifth of the citizens believe that the public administration budget is not allocated for right purposes at all (22%), it is interesting that a higher percentage of the citizens who have experience with state administration (33%) and local administration (29%) share this opinion.

Figure 9: Perception of public administration budget allocation

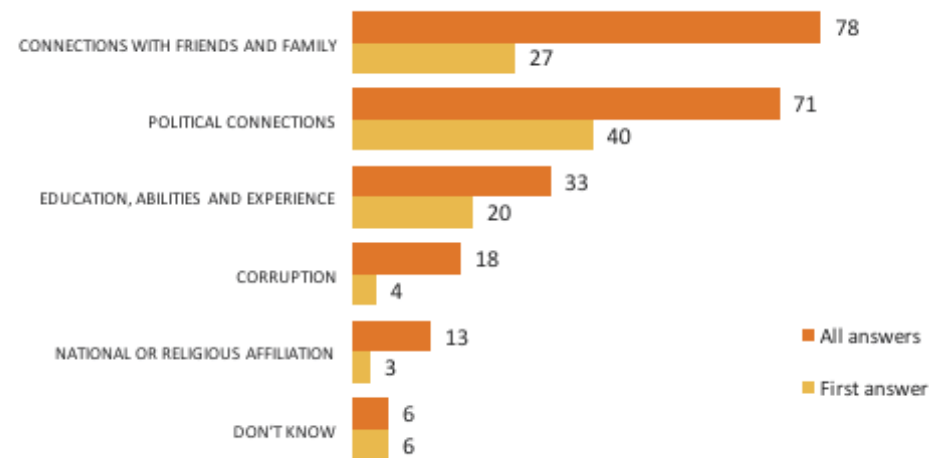
In your opinion, does public administration use its budget properly, that is, does it allocate the money for right purposes? Base: Total target population



When it comes to employment in public administration the citizens' first association is employment based on political connections (40%) and connections with friends and family (27%). A great majority of citizens believe that family and friends-based connections are used (78%), as well as political connections (71%). Education, abilities and experience of the candidates are in the third place, both if we observe the most important characteristic (20%) or general influence (33%). Factors like payment for the job or belonging to a certain national or religious group are mentioned to a lesser extent. The most important criterion for the unemployed (35%) and the citizens with the lowest income per household member (34%) is factor of family and friends based connections. Political connections as a crucial criterion are mentioned by approximately one half of the citizens in medium sized municipalities (48%), and approximately one third of the citizens in the smallest municipalities (31%). It is logical that a higher percentage of employed citizens believe that qualities of the candidate are an important criterion (38%) than the unemployed citizens (22%).

Figure 10: Attitudes towards ways of employment in public administration

In your opinion, what is the basic criterion for employment in the public administration? Base: Total target population

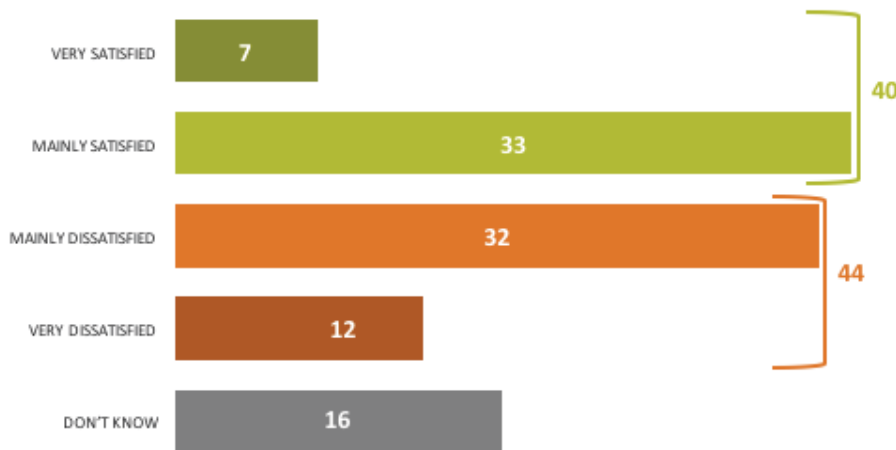


The Perception of Public Administration Services

Similar percentages of citizens are satisfied with public administration services (40%) and dissatisfied with them (44%). However, the percentage of the very dissatisfied is higher (12%) than the percentage of the very satisfied (7%). Men are more likely to be dissatisfied (50%) than women (38%), while citizens who have experience with local administration are more likely to have an extremely negative attitude (17%).

Figure 11: Satisfaction with services of public administration

How satisfied are you with public administration services? Base: Total target population



Inefficiency is the most common reason for dissatisfaction with the work of public administration (21% top of mind, 33% all mentioned), it is followed by waiting in lines (13%, 30%), the necessity of pulling strings (11%, 24%), the complexity of procedures (9%, 24%), officers' attitude (6%, 18%), not enough time for talking to the officers (4%, 14%) and unavailability of information (5%, 13%). In northern municipalities, the first association is the necessity of connections (17%), while long waiting in lines is the first association in Podgorica (25%). One in three citizens with experience with public administration mention the complexity of procedures (32%). In southern municipalities, inefficiency is a lot more likely to be mentioned (45%).

Figure 12: Perception of problems in communication with public administration

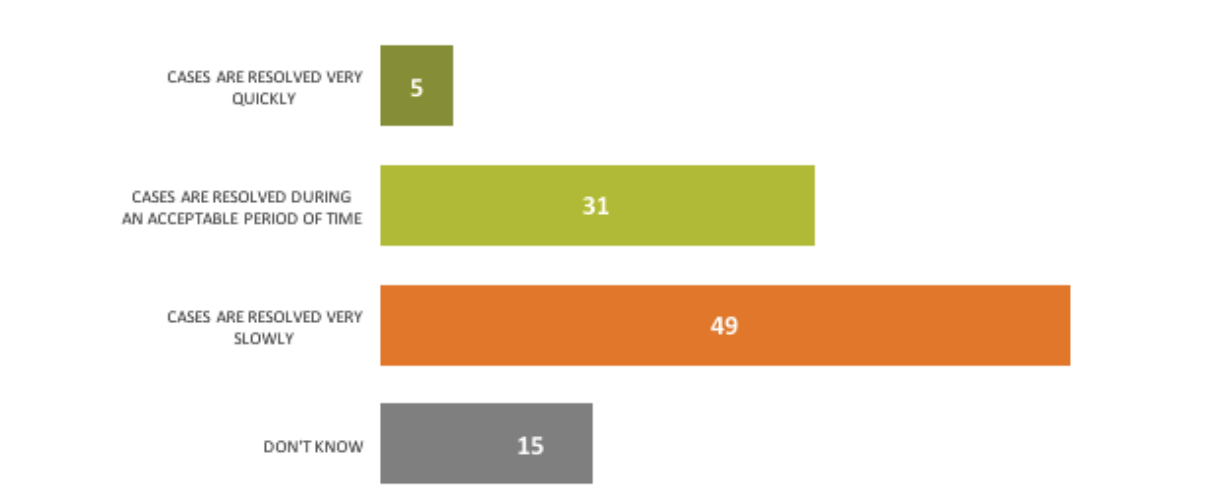
If you are dissatisfied with the services, what bothers you most regarding your communication with the public administration institutions/administration, or in the course of the required procedures? Base: Total target population



Half of the citizens believe that public administration resolves cases very slowly (49%). Residents of the southern municipalities are more likely to believe that cases are solved in short or acceptable period (46%) than total population (36%), but they are also less likely not to have an opinion about the duration of this period (8%) than total population (15%). The situation is quite the opposite in the southern region, where one fourth of citizens believe that cases are solved in an acceptable timeframe at least (26%), and similar percentage of citizens don't have an opinion about it (25%). a sličan broj građana nema mišljenje o tome (25%).

Figure 13: Perception of time required for resolving individual cases

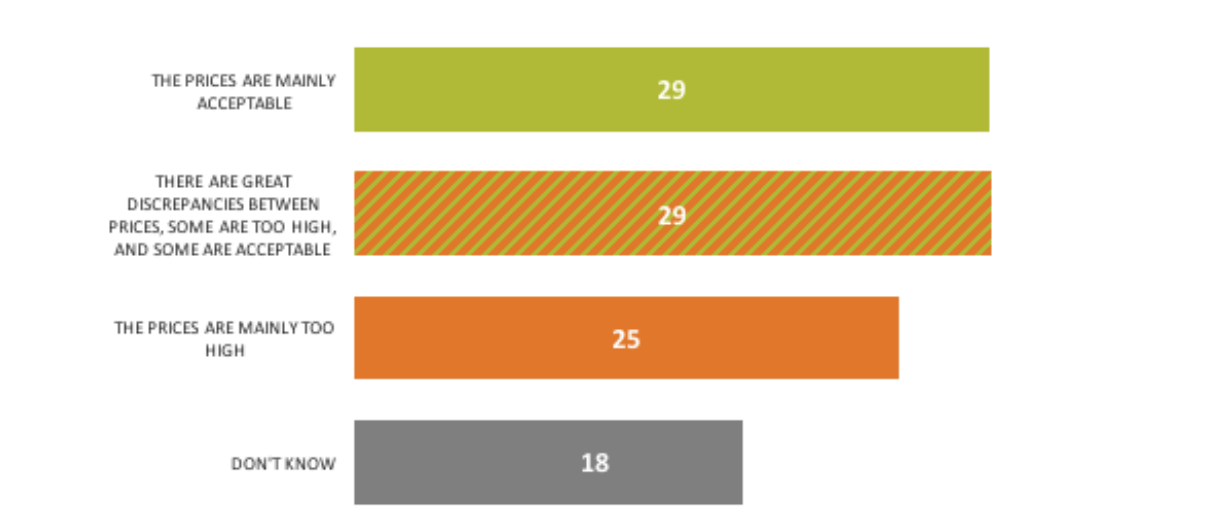
How would you evaluate the performance of the public administration regarding the time required for resolving individual cases? Base: Total target population



The citizens do not share a unanimous opinion about the prices of public administration services, so similar percentages of citizens consider the prices to be acceptable (29%), too high (25%) and depending on the service (29%). The citizens with the biggest income (32%), the unemployed (33%) and residents of medium-sized municipalities (30%) are more likely to consider the prices too high, while the citizens who have had experience with public administration believe that prices vary depending on the service (38%).

Figure 14: Perception of public administration services prices

How would you evaluate the prices of public administration services? Base: Total target population



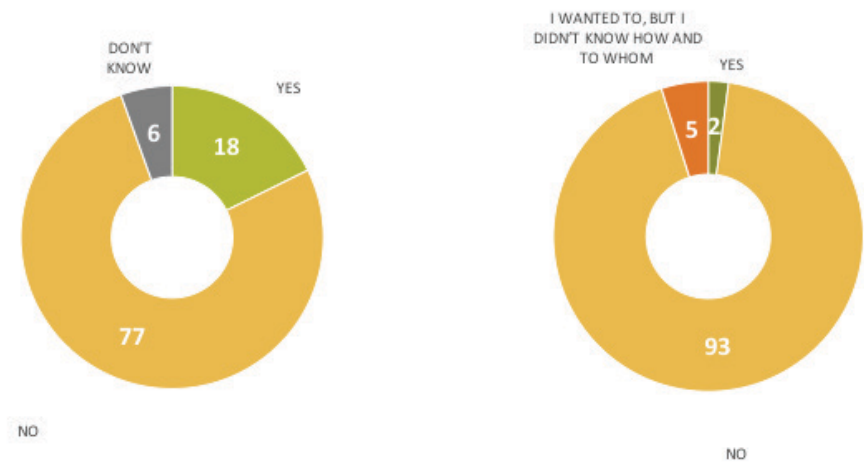
Less than a fifth of the citizens are familiar with the complaint procedures about irregularities in the work of the public administration bodies (18%). The citizens with experience with public administration are more likely to be aware of the possibility to complain (28%), as well as the employed (23%) and residents of the smallest municipalities (27%). This awareness grows with education (citizens with primary education or without formal education 4%, secondary school education 18%, higher education 30%).

A few citizens wanted to complain, but did not know how (5%), and even fewer complained about the work of public administration bodies (2%). The citizens who have complained have mainly done this to the employees in the institution that provided the unsatisfactory service or in writing to the relevant body or institution head, some used the institution's website for this, the complaint box or have written their complaint in the guestbook or reported it to the Ethics Board.

Figure 15: Experience with complaints about the work of public administration bodies

Are you familiar with the way you can complain about irregularities in the operations of public administration bodies or about corruption in public administration? Base: Total target population

Have you complained about the work of public administration over the past 5 years? Base: Total target population



Public Debates

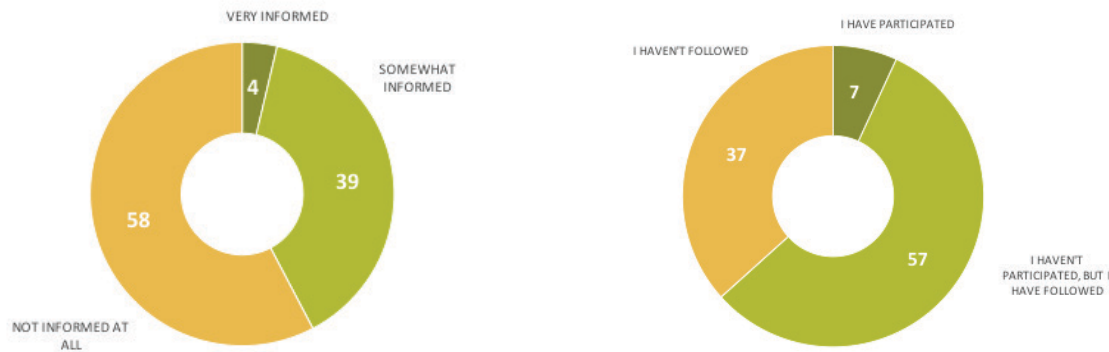
A large share of citizens are not informed about public debates organized by the public administration bodies (58%), while very few are well informed (4%). Higher income and higher education are accompanied by better knowledge about this matter. The employed, men, citizens from the central region, as well as the citizens with experience with public administration are better informed.

As for the citizens who say that they are at least somewhat informed about public debates, most of them have followed these debates (24% of total population), and a few have participated (3% of all citizens). The participants are more likely to be the citizens with experience with public administration (11%) and employed citizens (12%).

Figure 16: Familiarity with public debates

How informed are you about public debates organized by the public administration bodies, for instance municipalities, ministries? Base: Total target population

Have you participated in or at least follow some public debate of public administration bodies? Base: those that are at least somewhat informed about public debate organized by public administration bodies (42% of target population)

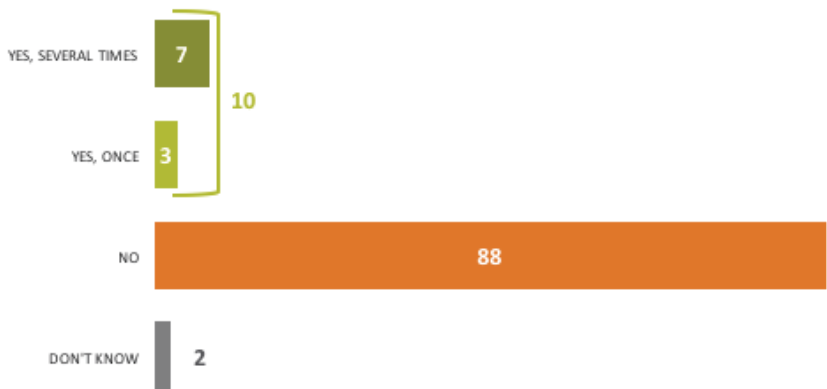


Public Administration Websites

One in ten citizens visited some public administration website (10%), several times usually, over the past 12 months. Citizens who had contact with the public administration over the past 12 months are more likely to have visited public administration websites several times (16%).

Figure 17: Visiting of internet presentations of public administration bodies

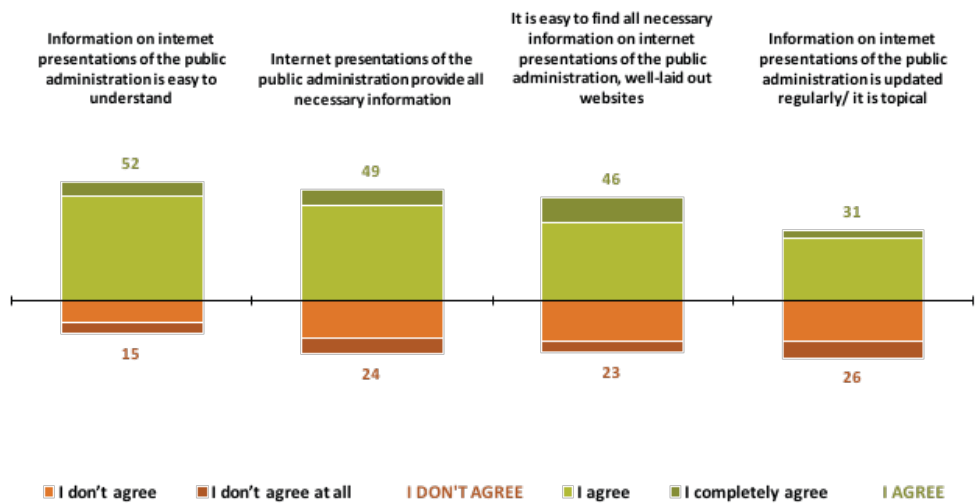
Have you visited Internet presentation of any administration body (municipality, ministry) over the past 12 months? Base: Total target population



About half of the citizens who visited some public administration websites agree that they provide clear information (52%), that presentations include all necessary information (49%) and that they are easy to find (46%). Citizens are less likely to be dissatisfied with these characteristics of internet presentations (15% clarity, 24% availability, 23% layout). As for the regular updating of information on public administration websites, the shares of satisfied (31%) and dissatisfied users (26%) are similar.

Figure 18: Attitudes on internet presentations of public administration

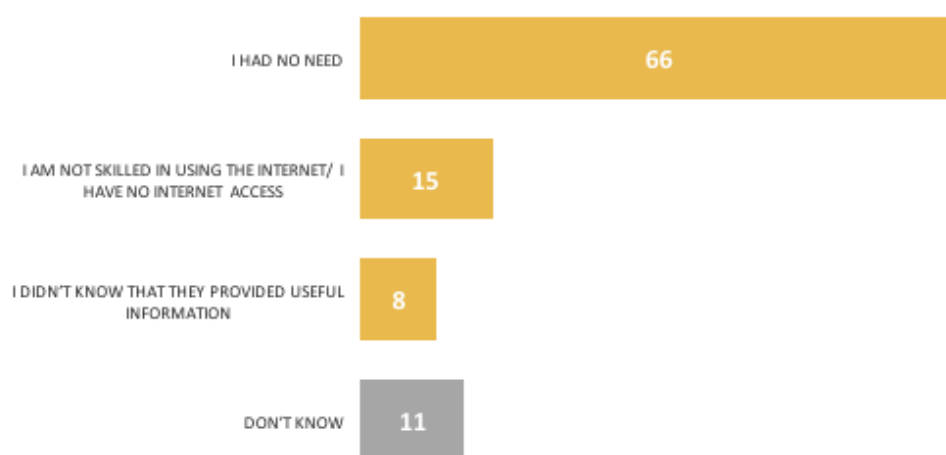
Please evaluate the information provided by internet presentations of public administration. Base: those that visited internet presentation of some public administration body in the last 12 months (10% of target population)



Two thirds of the citizens who have not used public administration websites say that they had no need (66%), while the percentage of those who cannot access the internet is lower (15%), as well as the percentage of those who do not know that public administration websites provide useful information (8%). Citizens with experience with public administration who haven't used their websites are more likely to say that they do not know that public administration websites provide useful information (18%).

Figure 19: Reasons most citizens did not visit internet presentations of public administration bodies

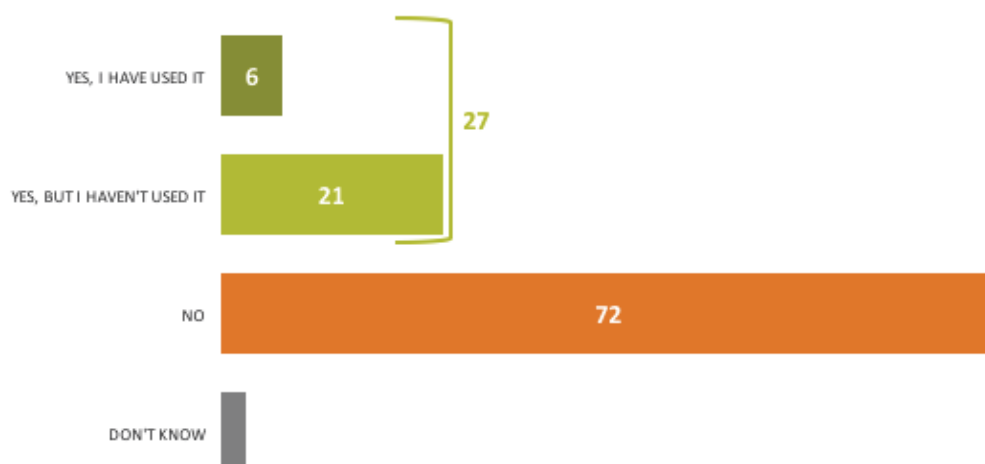
Why didn't you visit internet presentations of public administration bodies? Base: those who haven't visited internet presentations of public administration bodies in the last 12 months (88% of target population)



One in four citizens heard of the eGovernment portal (27%), and a few have used it (6%). Citizens with experience with public administration are better acquainted (30%) and they are more likely to have used the portal (13%).

Figure 20: Awareness of eGovernment portal

Have you heard of the portal eGovernment? Base: Total target population



About Institute Alternative

We function as a think tank or a research centre, focusing on the overarching areas of good governance, transparency and accountability. Our research and advocacy activities are structured within following programme strands: Public Administration, Accountable Public Finance, Parliamentary Programme, and Security and Defence. On the basis of our programmes, we monitor the process of accession negotiations with the EU, actively participating in working groups for chapters 23 and 32. Our flagship project is the Public Policy School, which is organised since 2012. Institute Alternative was granted with the licence to conduct research activities in the field of social sciences by the Ministry of Science in 2013.

The project “Civil Society for Good Governance: To Act and Account!” is financed by the European Union and implemented by Institute Alternative, Bonum, Natura, New Horizon and Center for Investigative Journalism. The objective of the project is to advance good governance practices in public administration of Montenegro.



WWW.MOJAUPRAVA.ME

More about Institute Alternative available at:

www.institut-alternativa.org

www.mojgrad.me

www.mojauprava.me

www.mojnovac.me