

# Open Government Partnership MACEDONIA OPEN GOVERNMENT Monitoring Report

The key concept of OGP Initiative is to improve all aspects of accountability through greater openness of public sector operation. The political, administrative, fiscal and social accountability of governments very much depends on the data and information available in various areas of governance and service provision. So the focus on open data makes the OGP Initiative distinct from other programs. However, it is *not only about transparency*, because the institutional and procedural *conditions of accountability* are also integral parts of the Initiative.

The aim of the project “Advocacy and monitoring of country action plans for Open Government: The right to know in SEE” is to meet some criteria of openness in the areas of highest importance through gradually implemented actions. There is no ideal status of openness, but government accountability might be increased through the following steps:

- (i) *mapping* of open government issues will help
- (ii) to identify *commitments* and specify *actions*. If they have already been included in the government OGP strategy, then
- (iii) civil society organisations should do *monitoring*. But if commitments are missing then
- (iv) *advocacy* goals should be specified and programs have to be launched.

In the course of the project baseline and monitoring surveys on trust and confidence in government as well as the citizens’ perceptions on open government are being made. This document presents the results of the monitoring on confidence and trust in government. It is based on a representative survey of 1584 respondents who were surveyed in the period of 8-13 February 2014. The survey was made prior to the start of all political activities related to the forthcoming Presidential elections to allow for politically unbiased results.

The part of the 2014 Open government survey that measures the progress of citizens perceptions in the areas of open government: transparency, accountability, effective delivery

## PROJECT PARTNERS



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of public services, efficient management of public finance and open data will be conducted and released in April-May 2014.

## **SURVEY ON TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT**

### **I.1. Confidence in government**

#### **1. Confidence in institutions**

The opinion poll conducted within the process of production of this monitoring report showed that citizens' trust in institutions have overall improved from the same period last year. The President is the institution in which 54% of citizens have trust or even great trust. The 2014 result shows increase in the trust of the President compared to the 43.9% of trust depicted in the course of the same survey in April 2013. The same might be noticed for the Government, where the 35.2 % had great trust or basically trusted the Government in 2013, whereas 47% have opted for these options in the 2014 survey.

The judiciary remains to be the institution with lowest level of trust with 58% (combined responses under basically do not trust and have no trust); but still reporting improvement from the 2013 when the trust in the courts was even lower (63% of respondents claimed they basically do not trust or have no trust in judiciary). Parliament is the institution which has most remarkable improvement in level of confidence among citizens. If in 2013, 61.9% of citizens did not trust or had no trust in the Parliament; in 2014 only 47% of them belong to this category.

#### **2. Confidence in services**

In regard to public services the opinion poll conducted within the process of production of this monitoring report showed that the army has biggest confidence levels (67%) which again is an improvement from the 58% of confidence the Macedonian army had in 2013. The trust in the police on the other hand has dropped as in 2014 only 49% of the citizens have reported confidence as compared to the 2013 levels of 53%.

#### **3. Confidence in civil society**

The trust in civil society remains lowest of all institutions measured in the open government survey in 2014 as well. The results show that the political parties are the least trustful actors in

the Macedonian society with 67% of respondents that either basically do not trust or do not have trust in them; followed by media with 52% of distrust. Even this results confirm the overall improvement in trust of citizens as the 2013 results were even grimmer, noting that political parties had 74.6% of distrust, whereas media 63.5% of non-confidence among citizens (combined answers basically do not trust and have no trust).

Contrary the civil society organizations that enjoy greatest trust of citizens are the religious communities for whom in 2014 citizens showed combined trust of 60% whereas in 2013 the Macedonian Orthodox Church had 39% of trust, and the Islamic religious community 29.9% of trust.

#### 4. Confidence in political leaders

Contrary to the results on the trust of citizens in institutions which depict upturn trends, the trust of citizens political leaders shows downturn trend. Namely, in only one case, the Prime Minister Gruevski, citizens have showed to predominantly trust 42%, as compared to the number of people who distrust him 27%. The only other case where the trust and distrust are in balance is Liljana Popovska (23%). All other political leaders majority of the citizens distrust (please see list below). However, one must note the very big number of respondents who do not have opinion on this matter as compared to the other set of questions in this survey.

Political leader	Have trust	Do not have trust	Without opinion
Nikola Gruevski	42%	27%	31%
Liljana Popovska	23%	23%	54%
Stevche Jakimovski	23%	27%	50%
Andrej Zhernovski	19%	34%	47%
Zoran Zaev	14%	43%	43%
Ali Ahmeti	12%	48%	40%
Menduh Thaci	9%	50%	41%
Ljupcho Zikov	7%	25%	68%

In terms of analysing the trend of change in trust of political leaders in the case of Nikola Gruevski, Liljana Popovska, Andrej Zhernovski and Ali Ahmeti the trust of citizens increased whereas in the case of Zoran Zaev the trust decreased as well as the distrust (from 34% in 2013 to 43% in 2014). The trend of increasing distrust is noted among all political leaders measured in the two rounds of the Open government survey, but the biggest change is observed for the distrust in Menduh Thaci, Ali Ahmenti and Zoran Zaev respectfully.

Political leader	Have trust		Do not have trust		Without opinion	
	February 2014	April 2013	February 2014	April 2013	February 2014	April 2013
Nikola Gruevski	42%	38%	27%	18%	31%	44%
Liljana Popovska	23%	22%	23%	19%	54%	59%
Stevche Jakimovski	23%	n/a	27%	n/a	50%	n/a
Andrej Zhernovski	19%	16%	34%	29%	47%	55%
Zoran Zaev	14%	15%	43%	34%	43%	51%
Ali Ahmeti	12%	10%	48%	35%	40%	55%
Menduh Thaci	9%	7%	50%	34%	41%	59%
Ljupcho Zikov	7%	n/a	25%	n/a	68%	n/a