



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NORTH MACEDONIA CITIZENS CONCERNED WITH CRIME, CORRUPTION AND ECONOMY

Challenges include lack of public trust in institutions fighting corruption

SKOPJE, December 9, 2021 - Citizens of North Macedonia believe the country is not moving forward in fighting corruption.

In the latest National Democratic Institute (NDI) survey conducted in July and August 2021 with a representative sample (n=816) and an estimated margin of error +/-3.43%, citizens were polled on their general outlook, top concerns, perceptions about corruption, and confidence in the judiciary and other institutions in their abilities to combat corrupt practices.

One-third believes the country is moving in the wrong direction overall, citing crime, corruption, poor governance, and self-interested politicians as the main contributing factors. Four in 10 report that their personal life has worsened over the past three years.

Top concerns are in reducing corruption and organized crime in conjunction with improving the judicial system (43%) followed by economic concerns and standard of living (37%). Nearly two-thirds (63%) are dissatisfied with the fight against corruption; 58% do not see government efforts as effective.

Respondents are particularly troubled by how the courts and the Office of the Public Prosecutor are fighting corruption, and believe public sector corruption to be the most consequential. They express strong levels of distrust in the courts (65%) and public prosecution (62%), and register higher levels of dissatisfaction with their performance fighting corruption. The public sees the courts and public prosecutor's office as the most corrupt institutions in the country most in need of reform.

"Sixty-four percent of citizens' surveyed agreed that corruption is the most important problem in North Macedonia," said Robert Scott Heaslet, NDI's North Macedonia Director, *"as we mark International Anti-Corruption Day on December 9, citizens are motivated for reform and expect anti-corruption actions, including stemming political impunity, filling regulatory gaps and changing personnel as required, which are necessary to raise public confidence."*

Almost two thirds of citizens (64%) believe corruption cannot be reduced at all, or it can be reduced but only to a certain degree. One out of every two citizens thinks that no party will be successful in fighting corruption. Still, more than half (54%) report willingness to participate or initiate a civic activity to help combat corruption, through petition, demonstration, and boycott.

"The government has an opportunity to partner with civil society to improve public policy and watchdog groups to monitor anti-corruption progress." Heaslet added.

For more information on NDI's research in North Macedonia please visit <https://www.ndi.org/central-and-eastern-europe/north-macedonia>.