



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
Mission in Kosovo

# **“MEASURING THE TRUST”**

**SECURITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY  
PERCEPTIONS IN KOSOVO**

**10 June 2008**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report, “Measuring the Trust”, reflects upon the public perception of the work done by the local Security and Public Safety institutions in Kosovo. The findings are based on a Kosovo-wide survey<sup>1</sup> that was conducted in November and December of 2007 during the Kosovo status negotiations ongoing at that time.

The main finding of the survey is that the overall public perception towards the work of the Kosovo Security and Public Safety providers is good. The interviewees said to trust KFOR, the Kosovo Protection Corps, the Kosovo Police Service, the Emergency Preparedness Units, but they trusted less some other institutions, mainly due to the lack of information about the existence of these institutions. Although the research that led to the drafting of this report showed that there is a reasonable good level of public trust towards the Kosovo Police Service as an institution, it should be noted that allegations of concrete cases of misconduct by individual Police Officers have a direct impact on the overall public judgement of the Kosovo Police Service as a whole.

This report shows a series of shortcomings based on the interview results broken down into the different communities in Kosovo. Many members of the Serbian community (in the south) and of the Albanian community (in the north) said that they did not feel safe, and that they did not trust the Security and Public Safety providers in their own environment.

In general, the individuals interviewed were concerned about the quality of work of the Kosovo Police Service in issues such as:

- The fight against robbery
- The issue of illegal parking (particularly emphasized in Prizren).
- The need to increase patrols around school premises as a way to prevent possible incidents in school yards.

The individuals interviewed expressed their belief that the often perceived ineffective performance of the Kosovo Police Service was due to a lack of professionalism and nepotism within the service, as well as due to perceived flaws in the current Police selection and training procedures for the Kosovo Police Service.

Furthermore, the interview respondents noted, during the survey discussions, concerns with the performance of the **Judicial Institutions**<sup>2</sup> and the effectiveness of the **Correctional Service**.

The findings also revealed that the respondents:

- were often not aware of the existence of the **Police Inspectorate of Kosovo**<sup>3</sup>, thus lacking knowledge about the role and responsibilities of this institution;
- were often not aware of the work of the **Kosovo Anti-Corruption Agency**;
- were often not aware of the work of the **Community Police Units of the Kosovo Police Service**.

The respondents considered the **Customs Service** important, but suspected nepotism among some officials and expressed dissatisfaction with uncontrolled imports such as expired food and medications, identifying them as a serious threat to Security and Public Safety in Kosovo.

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<sup>1</sup> The sample was composed of 1,700 individual interviews and seven focus group debates, attended by 200 participants. The sample for the individual interviews was composed of three sub-samples with 1,360 Kosovo Albanians, and 340 non-Albanians above the age of 18.

<sup>2</sup> Judicial institutions include the courts, prosecution and other relevant judicial bodies.

<sup>3</sup> In response to this, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, Department for Public Safety, in January 2008 ran a public campaign to promote the Police Inspectorate to the public.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings obtained through the opinion poll with the aim of supporting the strategic planning of the activities of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo related to Public Safety matters. The Mission wants to convey the findings to the Government of Kosovo and to the respective local Security and Public Safety institutions.

This report is part of the comprehensive efforts of the Mission to look deeper into the performance of the local security and public safety institutions, which impact on the life of the residents of Kosovo.

Relevant political events took place at the time this survey was conducted. With the ongoing status negotiations at that time, the security circumstances and developments in Kosovo were tense and complex.

The level of safety as perceived by the respondents varied in different aspects. They often had mixed feelings when they replied to the questions about their perceptions of safety. Many felt a level of danger, which they could not describe in detail but the respondents were saying that they do not feel safe. It was a shared perception that the situation at the time entailed uncertainties regarding the security situation with possible consequences for the stability in Kosovo.

This report is part of the effort of the department to evaluate the public's perception regarding the work of the local security and public safety institutions in Kosovo. A similar opinion poll is intended for Autumn 2008, in order to assess if the public perception data has changed from the data collected at the end of 2007, given that some viewpoints may have been influenced by the events in the first half of 2008.

## 2. THE MAIN SECURITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY PROVIDERS AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

**The Kosovo Police Service** was established by the UNMIK (United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo) under the authority of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244, of 10 June 1999. At present, the Kosovo Police Service is made up of more than 7,500 police officers. It has the main responsibility to maintain security and public order in Kosovo. Initially, the Kosovo Police Service was fully under UNMIK Police authority. Gradually UNMIK Police transferred responsibilities for law and order and border policing functions to the Kosovo Police Service. Almost all policing facilities have been transitioned to the Kosovo Police Service.

**The UNMIK Police**, consisting of 1,500 International Civilian Police Officers, in coordination with the Kosovo Police Service, help to ensure a safe and secure environment in Kosovo and particularly provides temporary law enforcement<sup>4</sup>. Its competencies are decreasing due to the increasing role of the Kosovo Police Service.

**The Police Inspectorate of Kosovo** is a body of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. It is a newly established mechanism and its main task is to oversee the performance of the Kosovo Police Service and to ensure its accountability and transparency. The Inspectorate scrutinizes management efficiency, effectiveness in compliance with the newly established legal

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<sup>4</sup> See <http://www.civpol.org/unmik/mandate.htm>

framework<sup>5</sup> and investigates any possible misconduct of employees of the Kosovo Police Service.

**The Fire and Rescue Services** have the primary responsibility for dealing with fire and natural disasters that occur in Kosovo. They are part of the Department of Emergency Management of the Ministry of Internal Affairs but operate under the responsibility of the respective municipalities. These services as well respond to other emergencies, such as earthquakes, flooding and dealing with other civil protection issues.

**The Customs Service** is a reserved power of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, with the Kosovo Government bearing significant responsibility in its administration and operational delivery. The main priorities of the UNMIK Customs are to collect and protect revenue for the Kosovo Consolidated Budget; to facilitate legitimate trade by re-establishing suspended customs procedures and adopting modern customs practices and techniques. It further protects society and legitimate trade by pursuing and preventing smuggling and fraud<sup>6</sup>.

**The Correctional Service** operates under the responsibility of the Ministry of Justice. It deals with matters pertaining to the judicial system and the correctional service and provides security in the prisons and protects personal data relating to its service.

**The NATO-led KFOR (Kosovo Force)** has a mandate based on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244. The objective of the KFOR is to establish and maintain a secure environment in Kosovo<sup>7</sup>. KFOR has approximately 16.000 soldiers in Kosovo and has, amongst other duties, direct responsibility to protect Kosovo against external threats.

**The Kosovo Protection Corps** is a civilian emergency service organization. It was established on a provisional basis by UNMIK Regulation 1999/8 on 20 September 1999. Its responsibilities comprise tasks such as: disaster response to tackle major fires and industrial accidents; searching and rescue operations; provision of humanitarian aid; assisting in demining; contributing to reconstruction of infrastructure and communities. The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General exercises the direction, funding and administrative authority.

**The Kosovo Anti-Corruption Agency** is an independent body newly established by the Anti-Corruption Law 2004/34, as promulgated by UNMIK Regulation 2005/26, of 12 May 2005. It oversees local institutions and investigates into possible corruption activities. The Kosovo Anti-Corruption Agency began its work in Kosovo on 17 July 2006 with the appointment of a director and has been operational since February 2007.

### **3. THE PERCEPTION OF THE WORK DONE BY THE SECURITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY PROVIDERS**

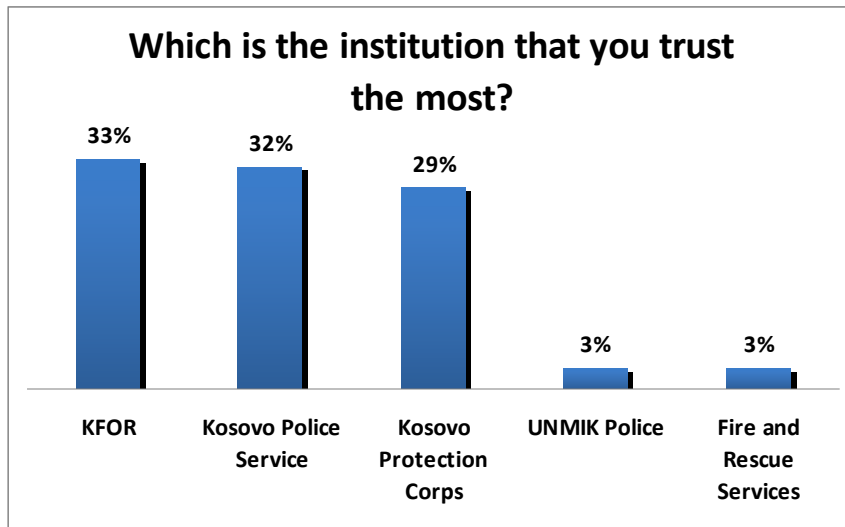
In general, the respondents said that they trusted the main security providers in Kosovo. They trusted less some other institutions, but this was not related to the quality of the work but mainly due to the fact that they were not aware of their existence.

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<sup>5</sup> See UNMIK Regulation 2005/54 and Administrative Direction 2006/9.

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.euinkosovo.org/uk/about/about\\_pillarcomp.php](http://www.euinkosovo.org/uk/about/about_pillarcomp.php)

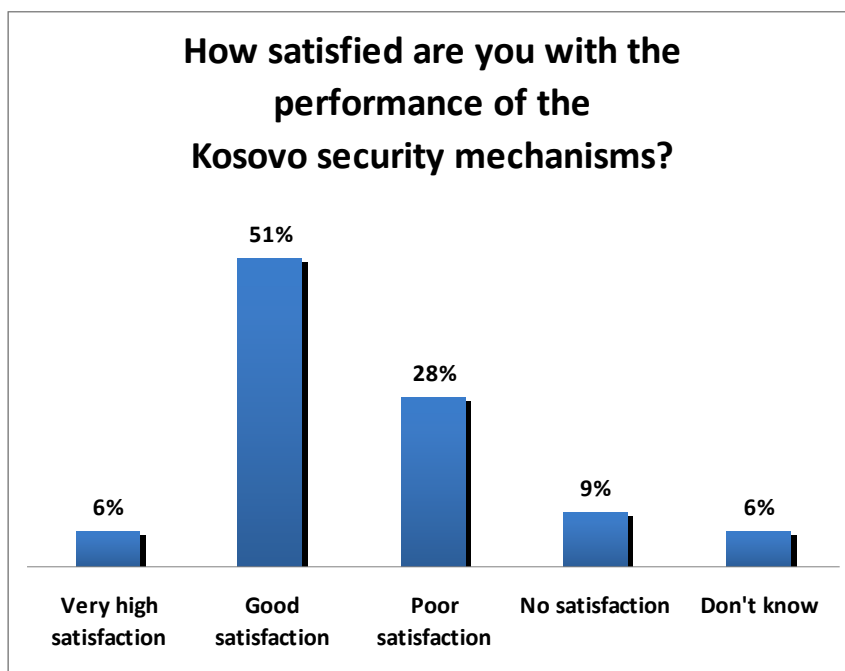
<sup>7</sup> <http://www.nato.int/kfor/docu/about/objectives.html>



**Graph 1:** *Which is the institution that you trust the most?*

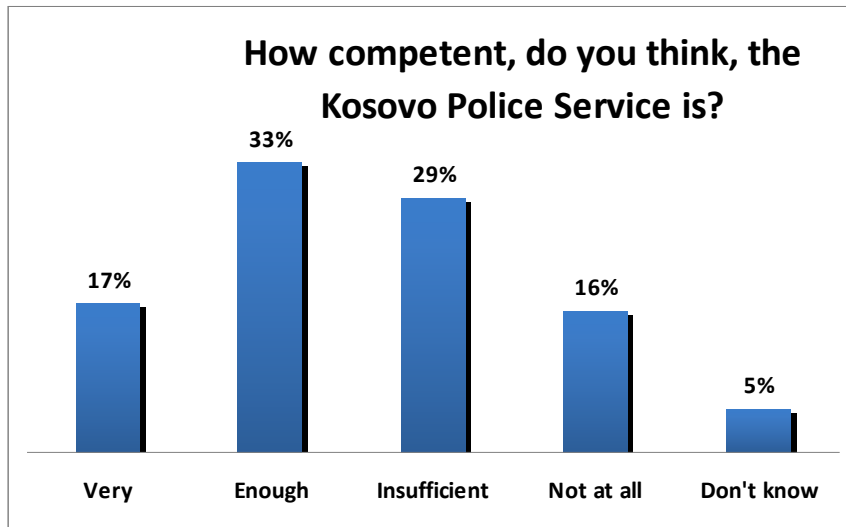
While asking the respondents to only give one answer to the question: “Which is the Security and Public Safety institution that you trust the most?”, 33% of them ranked KFOR and the Kosovo Police Service at the top, while the Kosovo Protection Corps with 29% is ranked third. The comparably low level of trust in the Fire and Rescue Services could be explained by the fact that most of the respondents were never in an emergency situation when the assistance of this Service is needed. The ones who required the help of the Fire and Rescue Services spoke of having good experiences with the Fire Fighters.

Being asked how satisfied they are with the work done by the Security and Public Safety providers, a majority of respondents (60%), said that they had a “very high” or “good” level of satisfaction while, 28% of the respondents expressed a low level of satisfaction. Nine percent of them said that they were not satisfied at all.



**Graph 2:** *The level of satisfaction with the performance of the Kosovo security mechanisms*

In general, the perception of the performance of the **Kosovo Police Service** was positive, but the current Police training system was considered not to be sufficient to develop a good quality Police officer.



**Graph 3:** *How competent do you think the Kosovo Police Service is?*

Around 17 % of the respondents considered the Kosovo Police Service as very competent, while most of the respondents (33 %) described the competency of the Kosovo Police Service as “good enough for the job”; 29 % thought that the Police was insufficiently competent for the job, while some 16 % thought that the Police was not capable at all to perform its duties.

When asked whether the OSCE could play a role in further improving the performance of the Kosovo Police Service, the majority of the responders (68 %) believed that the OSCE could help; 6 % did not believe that the OSCE could do so; and 26 % said that they did not know.

The perception of the work of the **Judicial institutions** was negative because the respondents suspected a high level of corruption and inefficiency in dealing with judicial cases. Furthermore, the escape of some prisoners from the Dubravë/Dubrava prison<sup>8</sup> appeared to have damaged the reputation of the **Correctional Service**.

The **Customs Service** was considered to be important, but people expressed dissatisfaction with uncontrolled imports of expired food and medications. They saw this as a serious threat to their safety and security.

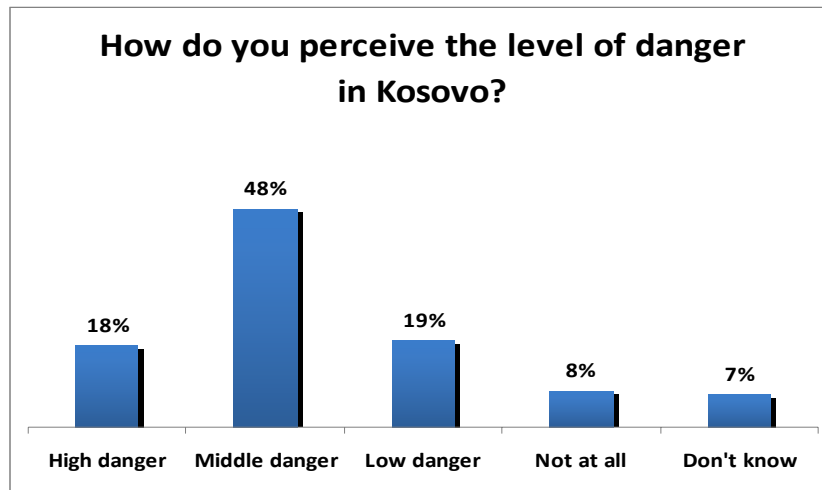
The performance of the **Fire and Rescue Service** was highly appreciated although respondents were aware of the bad working conditions and the poor equipment suffered by this Service.

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<sup>8</sup> On 18 of August 2007 following an incident in Dubravë/Dubrava prison in Istog/Istok, seven inmates managed to escape (<http://www.unmikonline.org>)

#### 4. THE GENERAL PERCEPTION OF DANGER IN KOSOVO

While the Kosovo status negotiations dominated the political agenda in 2007, tensions grew. There was a public perception (nourished by the daily media) that Belgrade would impose security measures if Kosovo unilaterally declared its independence. Some armed members of the Kosovo Albanian paramilitary organization “Albanian National Army” (ANA), appeared in the media claiming to be the “Guardians of Kosovo”.



**Graph 4:** *The general public perception of the level of danger in Kosovo*

Subsequently, the local institutions declared that they were ready to protect the population from any threat by any group.<sup>9</sup> This situation of uncertainty and tension was the background in which this survey was conducted, and this may help explaining some of the results.

When the respondents, regardless of the community they belong to, were asked: “How do you perceive the level of danger in Kosovo?”, as illustrated above, 18% of the total poll thought that there was a high degree of danger in Kosovo, 48% of the respondents felt that the danger is an average level, 19% believed that there is a low level of danger. Seven percent of respondents said that there was no danger in Kosovo.

##### 4.1 Risk assessment on the Kosovo-wide and local levels

On the Kosovo-wide level, the uncertain security developments (with the possible infiltration of some armed groups) linked to the then ongoing Kosovo status negotiations were perceived as a risk. These issues were raised as a concern in all group debates. Looking at the political situation, the activity of parallel structures, especially in the Kosovo Serb-inhabited areas, was a cause for major concern for the Kosovo Albanians raised during the focus group debates in Prishtinë/Priština<sup>10</sup>. In Gjilan/Gnjilane the administrative boundary line management was mentioned as a security concern. When asked to identify security issues that occur at the local level, the risks brought up by the respondents were more related to individual security rather than to the overall security situation in Kosovo. The issue of burglaries mentioned in most of the focus group debates was considered an ongoing risk for individual security and property. The participants in Gračanica/Graçanicë repeatedly stated that the situation in their area was unstable and insecure, and participants in the focus groups there noted widespread anxiety. In

<sup>9</sup> 04 October 2007, Kosovo Public Service Broadcasting System RTK and News Agency Kosova Live

<sup>10</sup> Particularly mentioned were the activities of the Serbian Ministry of Internal Affairs as well as parallel judicial institutions activities.



Pejë/Peć the participants said that food imported in Kosovo does not fulfil criteria of health and hygiene and that they consider this a potential risk.

Being asked what they would consider a **structural threat** to their safety in Kosovo, some respondents in the focus group debates mentioned daily social issues that they perceive are making their everyday life harder such as public mismanagement, lack of water, electricity or inflation.

Nevertheless, obviously the ongoing Kosovo **status negotiations** at the moment of the interviews had such an effect on the people, that 41% of the respondents to the questionnaire perceived the then ongoing status negotiations as the first critical point.

While 9% of the respondents considered the **socio-economic situation** as a potential danger to security, another 9% of the respondents saw the most difficulties in **finding and keeping employment**. From their point of view unemployment is a Kosovo-wide social issue and is seen as still far away from the government's priorities. For 8%, **illegal armed groups** were a matter of concern and 5% of the respondents emphasized that the implementation of the **rule of law** is not sufficient although there was a large support by the International Community. Five percent of the respondents saw **corruption** as a potential factor that could destabilize the security situation. 16% of the people did not answer to the question about what they would consider a structural threat.

#### 4.2. The focus group debates - qualitative research

Although the survey shows an acceptable level of trust in the security institutions, the situation remained tense in the sphere of individual safety such as theft, bodily harm or kidnapping, because these had a more direct impact on peoples' life than the overall security situation did. People were worried about the poor performance of the Kosovo Police Service in efforts to identify and arrest housebreakers. This issue was particularly mentioned in the focus group debates in Pejë/Peć, Prizren and Gračanica/Graçanicë. People stressed that the family members often stay in their houses to prevent burglaries, which makes their life more difficult. They said that the burglaries especially occur during the summer when visitors come to Kosovo.

In Prizren the most emphasized issue was related to the illegal parking of cars on the pedestrian pathways endangering the safety of school children. One participant said: "If my child is not feeling safe, how can we discuss overall security?" The participants repeatedly requested that the officials of the Kosovo Police Service increase the number of patrols around educational premises. Some participants said that it was necessary to engage private security companies and gave successful examples of other regions such as Prishtinë/Priština and Pejë/Peć. Others asked: "Why should we pay for private security companies if the police is responsible for overall security?" The representatives of the Kosovo Police Service expressed their concerns and said that the absence of police officers is due to lack of personnel.

In general, participants doubted that the Kosovo Police Service could be more effective due to the perceived lack of professionalism within the service. Participants said that an approximately nine week long basic training course<sup>11</sup> was not enough for a professional police officer. There were cases where the people presented proofs such as accident reports, which showed the low competence of the Police officers, who drafted the documents.

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<sup>11</sup> The basic training course for Police cadets in the OSCE-run Kosovo Police Service School in Vushtrri/Vučitrn from entry until graduation changed in 1999 from six weeks to eight weeks and was prolonged to 12 weeks and lastly to 20 weeks.

In addition, participants criticized the recruitment procedures because they believed that the background of the new Police officers was not taken into consideration. Almost all participants agreed on the necessity of reviewing the educational and training programme for the Kosovo Police Service<sup>12</sup>. All issues that were brought up referred to the short period of basic education for newly recruited police cadets. In addition, not only the initial period of training was a matter of concern.

The graduation criteria for police officers were also considered an issue. In order to reach the rank of a colonel, officers do not need to have graduated from university with a bachelor's degree; only the completion of secondary school was enough to be promoted to a senior officer's rank. These issues repeatedly came up in the debates.

The performance of the **Judicial institutions** was considered as the weakest among all public safety actors discussed in the focus groups. The public perceives a high level of ineffectiveness among these institutions. They said that although the judicial institutions were not considered direct security actors, their inefficiency affected other security mechanisms.

The co-operation between the Kosovo Police Service and the judicial institutions was perceived as weak. This topic in particular was mentioned by the respondents in Pejë/Peć: "The Police does its job well, but the prosecution and the courts do not". During the focus group debate in Prishtinë/Priština, it was particularly mentioned that although the **Kosovo Anti-Corruption Agency** initiated some cases, they did not, however, publish the end results of their work most probably due to the sensitivity of the issues. This could be considered as a reason why respondents were not aware of the Agency. In addition, in parallel to the implementation of the survey, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo ran a public campaign about the existence of the Anti-Corruption Agency. Due to this timing, the results of the campaign, which may have increased awareness about the Anti-Corruption Agency, are not reflected in this survey.

In all focus group debates people criticized the **Correctional Service**, mentioning the escape of prisoners from Dubravë/Dubrava Prison and noted that they were aware that this was a risk for society.

During the discussions about the judicial system in the Gjilan/Gnjilane debates, some participants argued that **UNMIK** had failed to establish a robust and just judicial system. Participants in this region stated that the current judicial system was not functional due to the presence of some UNMIK international judges and prosecutors who would lack sufficient local knowledge about the society in Kosovo.

Despite the lack of fire and rescue vehicles and other fire fighting equipment, the people expressed their satisfaction with the work done by the **Fire and Rescue Services**. Even though respondents declared that these units were not among the primary security mechanisms, they were well aware of their specific job. The work of the Fire and Rescue Service was appreciated by all respondents<sup>13</sup> even in the areas where people criticised other security institutions.

Participants in the Pejë/Peć focus group debate mentioned the importance of the **Kosovo Forest Agency**<sup>14</sup>. People felt that this institution even acted as if it was a security mechanism,

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<sup>12</sup> This issue was not only mentioned in Prizren but also in Gjilan/Gnjilane, Prishtinë/Priština and Pejë/Peć.

<sup>13</sup> Such as Kosovo Serbs in Gračanica/Graçanicë or Kosovo Albanians in northern Mitrovicë/Mitrovica.

<sup>14</sup> The Kosovo Forestry Agency operates under the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development and is obliged to manage forest resources to preserve and increase the value of the forest

especially during the wild fires that occurred in the summer 2007. However, the general ineffectiveness of the Kosovo Forest Agency in efforts to decrease the damage to the forests of the Pejë/Peć region was seen as a troublesome fact due to illegal woodcutting. Respondents in general appreciated the performance of the **Kosovo Protection Corps** and **KFOR**. There was no specific concern or complaint brought up, except in Gračanica/Graçanicë where a number of Kosovo Serbs expressed their dissatisfaction with KFOR in their area<sup>15</sup>.

With regards to the **Customs Service** participants in the debates, specifically in Pejë/Peć, emphasized their dissatisfaction related to the uncontrolled import of food. Participants said also that medicines beyond their expiry dates have been imported and that they felt that local institutions should protect them from intoxication or contamination by imported food and medicines. In Pejë/Peć the participants felt that the **Customs Service** and the **Border and Boundary Police** were ineffectively fighting these activities. In addition, there was a perception of a level of corruption among the employees of the Customs Service.

#### 4.3. Perceptions from the Communities' perspectives

Discussions held with Kosovo Albanian participants living in northern Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, a predominantly Kosovo Serb area, showed that they were not satisfied with the security situation. The major part of the debate was focused on the discussions between a representative of the **Kosovo Police Service** and the Kosovo Albanian respondents.

The Kosovo Albanians said that they did not feel safe in northern Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, even though there were Police and KFOR check points operating 24 hours during 7 days of the week. They said that after midnight the police officers usually stayed inside their vehicles sleeping, and that therefore there was not enough safety and trust towards the Kosovo Police Service in northern Mitrovicë/Mitrovica and people would not report cases. They requested more proactive patrols around their neighbourhood. The situation was a potential risk for their individual security due to the activity of, as they claimed, extremists in this area. In this region, the bridge that connects northern and southern Mitrovicë/Mitrovica was the most emphasized object of security concerns rather than the administrative boundary line.

#### 4.4. Perceptions from the Serb Community

The Kosovo Serb participants of the focus group debate in Gračanica/Graçanicë were very anxious and felt neglected by the security mechanism in their area. They expressed their doubt regarding the Security and Public Safety agencies' quality and professionalism, education and obedience to their code of conduct. Many of them said that the recruitment criteria of the Kosovo Police Service were inadequate and unbecoming for this Service. According to them, the Kosovo Police Service in their area was incapable and ineffective in dealing with organized crime and investigations in general, though permanently available and willing to issue traffic tickets<sup>16</sup>. They emphasized, that they in case of safety concerns preferred to call the Fire and Rescue Service rather than the Police.

Another case of concern raised by the participants at the study was that walking and crossing the main street in Gračanica/Graçanicë after midnight was considered very risky because of provocations. All of them were worried when their family members were out late after

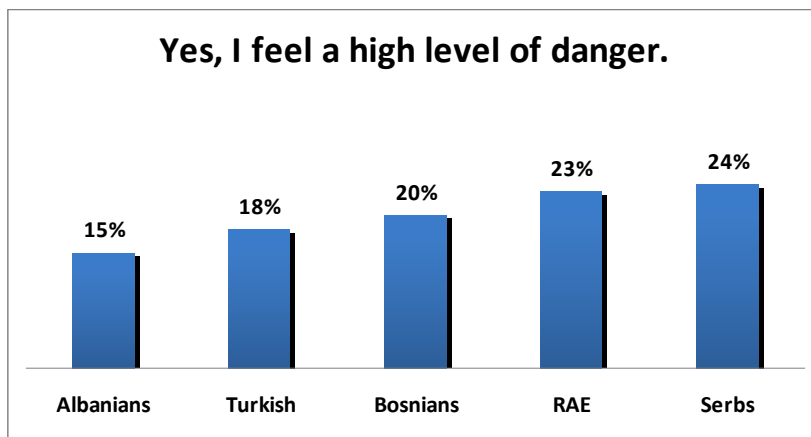
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assets in compliance with the Law On Forests in Kosovo No. 2003/3 as promulgated by UNMIK Regulation 2003/6 of 20 March 2003.

<sup>15</sup> Some participants in Gračanica/Graçanicë argued with a Swedish KFOR representative saying that KFOR was not approachable and only present in front of the monastery.

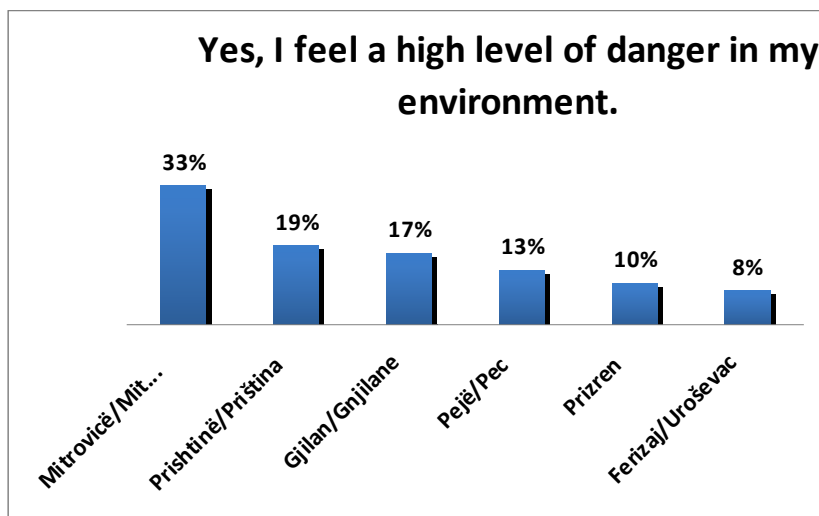
<sup>16</sup> Some of participants called the Kosovo Police Service as "Kosovo Police Statistical Unit" for being capable only to collect data.

midnight. Other participants raised the issue that they rather escorted their children to school than to let them walk on their own, because it was a long distance along the main regional road between Gračanica/Gračanicë and the schools.



**Graph 5:** Perception of a high level of danger broken down by communities (\*RAE: Roma, Ashkali, Egyptians)

The respondents to the questionnaire were asked: “Do you feel a high level of danger?”, and then the responses were broken down into the various communities. Among the non-Albanian communities, 24 % of the Kosovo Serb respondents perceived a high level of danger followed by the Kosovo Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities with 23%, while 20 % of the Kosovo Bosnians did so. Only 18 % of the Kosovo Turk respondents said that they felt a high level of danger. By comparison, 15 % of the Kosovo Albanians respondents said that they felt a high level of danger.



**Graph 6:** Perceptions of a high level of danger, broken down by regions

It is interesting to note the regional variation in responses to this question. While 33 % of all respondents living in Mitrovicë/Mitrova region believed that in their environment there was a high level of danger, only 8 % of the respondents in Ferizaj/Uroševac thought so.

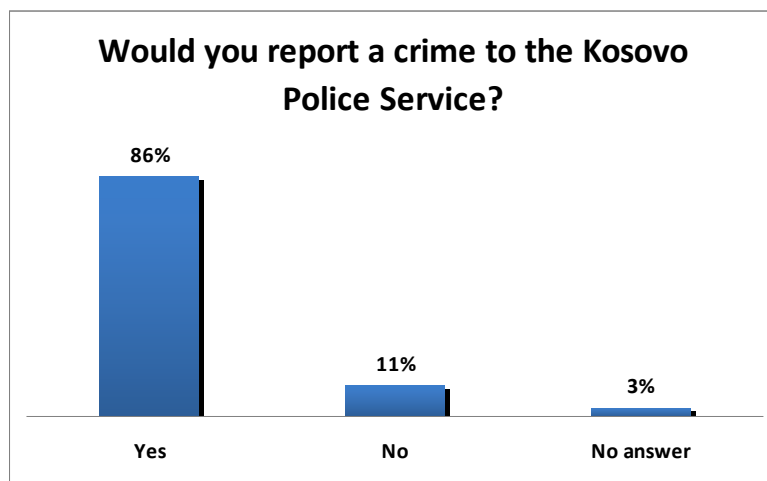
Looking at this difference in responses, a number of explanations can be hypothesized. The perceptions expressed by the inhabitants of Ferizaj/Uroševac region, the good figures from this region could be attributed to the comparably lower level of unemployment due to the US

Military Base “Camp Bondsteel” located close to Ferizaj/Uroševac employing some 2,000 local staff and the high presence of soldiers in the region. The ongoing tensions among communities in the city and greater region of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica may help to explain the high number of respondents in that region who said that they “felt a high level of danger in their environment”.

## 5. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PUBLIC AND THE SECURITY PROVIDERS

The relationship between the security institutions and the public is crucial as the security mechanisms rely on daily contacts with the population. This research focused on access to **the Kosovo Police Service**. The majority of respondents (56%) emphasized that in general they did not have contact with the officers of the Kosovo Police Service. Deeper analyses of the answers however showed that this was not the case. Although the respondents openly replied to all other questions of the survey, it became obvious that they were averse to go deeper into the issue of contact with Police officers although many said that they had experiences with the Kosovo Police Service on several occasions: by being a witness, investigation support or as participants in traffic. However, the majority of them said that they trust the Kosovo Police Service as an institution but they were unwilling to talk about their personal contacts with Police officers. Most of them stressed that they never were approached by a Police officer and they only would approach the Kosovo Police Service if a case would require. In addition, it was often said that there were deficiencies in the language use and behaviour of some Kosovo Police officers.

When the researchers asked: “Would you report a crime to the Kosovo Police Service?” 86 % of the respondents declared that they would report any crime case to the Kosovo Police Service. Nevertheless, 11% of the respondents would not report a crime at all and a very small number did not give any respond to this question.



**Graph 7:** *The willingness to report a crime to the Kosovo Police Service*

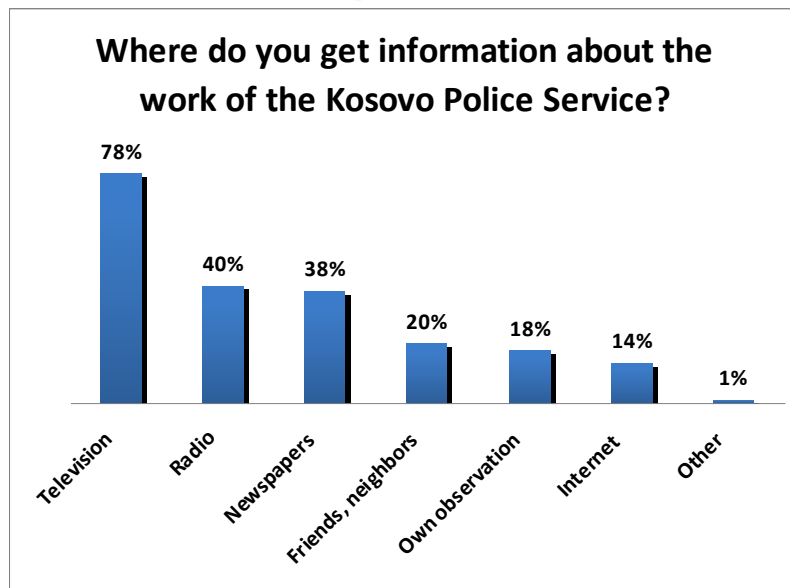
The expressed readiness of the respondents to report a crime (86%) is extremely high. The actual levels of crime reporting in many countries in Europe do not reach such high levels. However, doubts arise on whether this reported good will truly translates into real reports to the Police in daily life, given the fact that all respondents made emphasis of the importance of being assured of respect to anonymity and identity protection when thinking of reporting a crime. Under the current circumstances this assurance however can be doubted.

In this context, another relevant point has to be stressed: in Kosovo, according to international experts<sup>17</sup>, common criminality is relatively low. The main problems are organized crime and corruption.

During the focus group debate in Prishtinë/Priština the representative of the **Fire and Rescue Service** stressed that there were problems regarding the co-operation between the public and the Fire and Rescue Service. He said that when people reported fires to the emergency hotline, they gave old addresses and made it difficult for the Fire fighters to identify the fire site, which delayed rescue operations<sup>18</sup>. In addition, he emphasized that some people reported fake cases to the emergency hotline which caused immense problems.

Being asked to give their three main sources of information about the Kosovo Police Service, the main responses were television (78 %), radio (40%) and print media (38%). Fourteen percent of the respondents were informed through internet sources.

For 38% of the responders friends, neighbours and personal observations were cited as a source of information about the police.



**Graph 8:** *Source of information about the Kosovo Police Service*

There was no indication that the people would directly call the Police or ask a Police officer for information. The findings suggest that the Kosovo Police Service should probably reconsider its public information strategy including outreach activities to the public.

During the implementation of the survey in November 2007 many of the respondents were not able to evaluate the work done by some security institutions. The main reason for this was that they did not know that these institutions existed or what service they offered to the population. With a view on the Kosovo Community Policing Units, it was notable that most of the people for the first time heard about the KPS Community Police Officers through the questionnaires. People often stated that they did not know what these Officers were doing and

<sup>17</sup> UN Office on Drugs and Crime report “Crime and its impact on the Balkans”, March 2008.

<sup>18</sup> In response to this the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the OSCE Department for Public Safety in December 2007 ran a promotion campaign “What to do in case of emergency?”

that they did not know why they should approach them. Although the KPS Community Police, due to the very nature of their tasks, were meant to be the “key to the people”, it was confirmed by the Kosovo Police Service that the Community Police Units did not have an own spokesperson and that those units were not embedded in the communication and public outreach system of the Kosovo Police Service at all.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The results of this opinion poll indicate that the overall public relations campaign put in place since the beginning of the international presence in Kosovo has been highly successful, with a wide Kosovo public showing a high degree of general trust in Security and Public Safety providers such as the Kosovo Police Service. This is specially relevant since the public perception towards Police before 1999 was very negative.

However, it is also clear that certain cases of misconduct and shortcomings in the performance of individual members of the Kosovo Police Service in the field have a considerable impact in the public perception as well. The Kosovo residents have therefore a high level of trust in the Security and Public Safety institutions as such, sometimes even despite the known lack of proper equipment and standards, but express a serious mistrust in the context of personal experiences with the Police.

It is relevant to highlight that despite the success of the abovementioned public relations campaign to improve the image of the Security and Public Safety providers in the eyes of the general public, these same agencies and institutions still lack a communication strategy when it comes to make the public aware of the work done at the service of the people. This is very relevant when it comes to strengthening the levels of real cooperation between the population and the agencies, specially towards the Kosovo Police Service.

Serious insufficiencies already identified by international experts in the past have been hereby also highlighted by the respondents to this opinion poll, thus posing a clear message to the local authorities that these shortcomings and insufficiencies must be properly addressed and corrected.

The main insufficiencies identified by the public through this survey are:

- The level of mistrust between different ethnic communities remains very high, thus making difficult the progress towards a multi-ethnic society in Kosovo. This mistrust affects the public’s perception of the performance of individuals in the Security and Public Safety agencies, specially the Kosovo Police Service.
- The public perceives the current selection and training procedures for the members of the Kosovo Police Service as not complete enough. This seems to be specially true when referred to the public perception towards high ranking officers.
- The gaps and lacks in the witness protection system and the issue of identity protection of police informants remains a main concern for the public in Kosovo.
- The wider public seems to be unaware of the existence and work of different relevant institutions, such as the Kosovo Anti-Corruption Agency. Trusting the institutional system when people do not know it is very difficult.
- The public is concerned about the security implications derived from the entry into Kosovo of uncontrolled parties of expired medicaments and food. This concern reflects in the weak trust towards the Customs Service.

- The public is aware and concerned about the poor conditions and equipment lacks of the Department for Emergency Management, specially the Fire and Rescue Brigades.
- Every day life Public Safety concerns are related to issues such as illegal parking of vehicles, insecurity in school yards and burglaries, so strengthening the institutional efforts to deal with these issues would improve positively the public's perception of security and trust in the institutions.

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## METHODOLOGY OF THE SURVEY “MEASURING THE TRUST”

The Kosovo-wide survey “Measuring the Trust” reflects upon the public perception of the work done by the local security and public safety institutions in Kosovo.

The survey was conducted in November and December 2007 during the ongoing status negotiations.

The sample was composed of 1,700 individual interviews and seven focus group debates, attended by 200 participants. The sample for the individual interviews was composed of three sub-samples with 1,360 Kosovo Albanians, and 340 non-Albanians above the age of 18.

The selection of 1,700 respondents was done using the random walk technique respecting the share of the different communities living in Kosovo.

Region	Municipality	Ethnic Communities			Total	
		K-Alb	K-Serb	Others	Number	Percent
		80%	11.76%	8.24%		
Prishtinë/ Priština	Prishtinë/Priština, Obiliq/Obilić, Podujevë/Podujevo, Lipjan/Lipljan Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, Shtime/Štimlje, Glogovac/Glogovac,	449	66	46	561	33%
Mitrovicë/M itrovica	Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, Zubin Potok, Zvečan/Zvečan, Vushtrri/Vučitrn, Leposaviq/Leposavić, Skenderaj/Srbica	231	34	24	289	17%
Gjilan/ Gnjilane	Kamenicë/Kamenica, Viti/Vitine, Novobrdë/Novobërd, Gjilan/Gnjilane	136	20	14	170	10%
Pejë/ Peć	Pejë/Peć, Istog/Istok, Klinë/Klina, Deçan/Deçane, Gjakovë/Djakovica, Rahovec/Orahovac	231	34	24	289	17%
Ferizaj/ Uroševac	Ferizaj/Uroševac, Shtërpçë/Štrpce, Kaçanik/Kaçanik	82	12	8	102	6%
Prizren	Prizren, Suharekë/Suva Reka, Dragash/Dragaš, Malishevë/Mališevo	231	34	24	289	17%
<b>Total</b>		1360	200	140	1700	100%

### Research questionnaire and focus group debates

The survey addressed 1,900 residents of Kosovo from the two groups below, and included (a) individual interviews, and (b) group interviews-focus group debates:

**a) Individual Interviews/Questionnaires (quantitative indicators):** Kosovo-wide representative sample showing diversity in age, gender, education, urban/rural, social status;

**b) Focus Group Debates (qualitative indicators):** Altogether seven focus group debates were held throughout Kosovo to collect qualitative indicators about the performance of the security sector of Kosovo.

**Questions that lead through the individual interviews and the focus group debates:**

- What is the level of satisfaction about safety and how do you feel about the performance of the security mechanisms?
- Where/how do you get the information regarding security mechanisms in Kosovo?
- Which security mechanisms/institutions are still far away from your expectation?
- What do you think is the most possible risk that could destabilize the security in Kosovo?
- Which is the institution that you trust the most?
- How satisfied are you with the performance of the security institutions?
- How competent do you think the Kosovo Police Service is?
- How do you perceive the level of danger in Kosovo?
- Do you feel a high level of danger?
- Would you report a crime to the Kosovo Police Service?
- Where do you get your information about the Kosovo Police Service?

The **1,700 collected questionnaires** were processed into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences - SPSS.

The debates, that were attended by approximately **200 participants**, were openly recorded on tape. The scope of it was planned to get together all sides of the stakeholders related to the security like, institutional (local and regional), municipality, security stakeholders (like KPS, KPC, KFOR, FRS, Ambulances etc), school directors, different associations from the civil society side, citizens, journalists, representatives from different projects (dealing with women, youth, farmers, civil society focus etc)