Perception of the police in Montenegro

- Results of a quantitative survey –

December, 2020

Summary

The COVID-19 epidemic brought about many challenges to the citizens of Montenegro, but also to state institutions. The Police Directorate was particularly affected by the epidemic, given the scope of its competencies.

The epidemic has put an additional strain on regular police activities in ensuring the protection of citizens' safety and preventing criminal offenses and misdemeanors. Additionally, citizens showed lack of cooperation in adhering to the state-prescribed measures aimed at preventing the spread of the epidemic and there has been an overall increase in the polarization of Montenegrin society in the course of this year. All that combined helps shed light on the complexity of the task ahead of the Police Directorate.

The goal of this report is to describe citizen's perceptions related to activities of the Montenegrin Police Department. The fieldwork part of the survey took part between Nov 12 and December 1 2020, while data analysis was conducted in the first half of December. It is important to note that this year's research comes as as the second research wave, following up on the one conducted in late 2019, which allows for comparisons between some of the results obtained through both cycles.

For the purpose of drafting this report and collecting data, a quantitative survey was conducted on a sample of 1007 respondents of legal age, 504 men and 503 women. In order to comply with state-prescribed measures aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19, we conducted the interviews by phone, i.e. by using CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) technique.

The key findings are divided into seven thematic units, thus emulating the structure of the questionnaire created in cooperation with representatives of OSCE, the Ministry of Interior and the Police Directorate.

The first thematic unit contains background information about the method used and the data collected. The main findings have been systematized into following chapters: "Safety and Police" presents findings on the overall perception of safety in Montenegro and views regarding police service and the quality of its work in the previous 12 months; "Community policing" assesses the level of citizen satisfaction regarding the presence and cooperation with police officers in their community, whereas "Corruption" analyzes the perception of police efforts to tackle corruption. The next chapter, "Integrative policies", analyzes attitudes on the main characteristics ascribed to Montenegrin officers, the representation of women in police service and their take on potential career in police force. "Information" is the chapter where citizens self-assess their level of being informed about the work of the police and the channels they use to learn this information. A synthesis of the most important survey findings is presented in the last section of the report.

Almost two-thirds of respondents have a positive view of the safety in Montenegro, and 66.1% of them have a positive attitude towards the police. Though the score remains high, this is still a decline compared to last year. Even though safety, security and peace remain as the most opted-for associations at the mention of this institution, only one-fifth of respondents reported having observed positive changes in the work of the police in the past 12 months. More than 60% of respondents believe that Montenegrin police officers are kind, communicative and willing to help when needed. Despite the contention by some parts of the society, as many as 51.8% of respondents are satisfied with police activities aimed at combating the COVID-19 epidemic, while only a quarter of them disagree. This wave of the research yet again confirms that national minorities have a remarkably positive attitude towards the police, which is a very important factor in ensuring stability and law and order in a country such as Montenegro.

On the other hand, the critical issues as reported last year have been mirrored in this year's survey as well - 92.0% of respondents perceive drug trafficking as a security threat to Montenegro, 89.9% feel the same way about corruption and 89.6% about organized crime. The support for a claim that police recruitment system is a transparent one went down to one-fourth of those polled.

We have already mentioned corruption as a serious challenge - this is confirmed by 77.1% of respondents who find that police officers are involved in corrupt activities to a greater or lesser extent, while merely one-third of interviewees find that the police are successful in their anti-corruption efforts. Respondents find that politicians and criminal groups had an increased influence on the police in the past 12 months, while the influence of civil sector and citizens has seen a decline.

Four-fifths of the respondents believe that men and women are equally capable of fulfilling their duties as police officers. However, the more fieldwork comes into play, the less they agree with the above - while 97.3% of those polled find women just as capable of performing administrative duties, 86.3% find them suitable for working in border police and 55.7% find them fit to serve in special police units.

The said data indicate that activities aimed at the development of the Police Directorate must not only be continued, but also intensified. The police must operate with impartiality and approach their work from the standpoint of civil rights protection and respect for human dignity.

Contents

Disclaimer

Method and Data

This has been a very challenging year for the citizens of Montenegro, but also for state institutions. This entirely applies to the Police Directorate. In addition to their regular activities in ensuring the protection of citizens' safety and preventing criminal offenses and misdemeanors, in 2020 they were also tasked with activities aimed at resolving the complex epidemiological situation caused by the COVID-19 epidemic.

This report is aimed at shedding light on how Montenegrin citizens perceive the success of the police in tackling these challenges, its officers and the activities they carry out.

The results can serve as a presentation of citizens' views at a single point in time, November 2020. An added value is in that this second wave of the research project comes as a follow-up to the research carried out in December last year. This allows for comparing results obtained through both research cycles.

The report emulates the structure of the questionnaire to be discussed below, and is divided into seven sections.

The first part contains basic information about the method used and the data collected. The main findings have been systematized into following chapters: "Safety and Police" presents findings on the overall perception of safety in Montenegro and views regarding police service and the quality of its work in the previous 12 months; "Community policing" assesses the level of citizen satisfaction regarding the presence and cooperation with police officers in their community, whereas "Corruption" analyzes the perception of police efforts to tackle corruption. The chapter entitled "Integrative policies" analyzes attitudes on the main characteristics ascribed to Montenegrin officers, the representation of women in police service and their take on potential career in police force. "Information" is a chapter in which citizens self-assess their level of being informed about the work of the police and the channels they use to learn this information. The main findings are presented in the last section of the report.

The questionnaire was created as a combination of the so-called closed-ended[1] and open-ended[2] questions. In order to deliver a more complex analysis, the report will not only present the basic frequency response calculations as per closed-ended questions - the variables will be cross-referenced with the main demographic characteristics (gender, age, ethnicity, education level, income level, the region that respondents live in etc.) in order to detect differences between specific demographic groups. The statistically relevant differences, if any, will be presented and commented upon. Comparisons with the results obtained through last year's research will be presented where applicable. In addition, the report will feature the respondents' answers to open-ended questions. The answers were anonymized and presented under a code - thus, the code ID100 indicates the hundredth respondent who participated in the survey.

Sample

Public opinion survey on the perception of the Montenegrin police was conducted on a sample of 1007 respondents, 504 men and 503 women.

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[1] Questions with pre-specified answers provided.
[2] Questions without pre-specified answers provided, which the respondent can answer in their own words and present their argument.

Given the complex epidemiological situation caused by COVID-19, the interviews were conducted by phone, i.e. by using CATI (*Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing*) technique. The sampling frame was drawn from telephone directory held by DeFacto[3].

A two-step stratification was carried out during the sample definition process. In the first step, the general population of Montenegro was divided into three strata corresponding to the geographical regions in Montenegro (north, center and south). The allocation of respondents per strata is proportional to the size of the given strata i.e. the number of questionnaires to be completed within each stratum was determined in accordance with the results of the latest official census conducted in 2011. In the second step, households were selected through simple random sampling, ie. by dialing randomly selected phone numbers.

After collecting data from all of the 24 Montenegrin municipalities, post-stratification was performed as per the basic demographic characteristics of the population: gender, age and ethnicity[4].

The questionnaire designed for this research is based on last year's questionnaire, and is in line with recommendations of representatives of OSCE, the Ministry of Interior and the Police Directorate.

It is made up of several sections:

- Introductory questions regarding the perception of the safety situation and the police,
- Community Policing,
- Corruption,
- Integrative Policies,
- Information,
- Demographics (gender, ethnicity, age, education, income, etc.).

Significant changes were introduced only with regard to the chapter "Integrative Policies", which is now expanded with additional questions.

Data collection

The fieldwork part of the survey was conducted between Nov 12 and December 1 2020.

As previously mentioned, respondents were contacted by phone i.e. by means of CATI (*Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing*) technique. The software operates automatically and measures the duration of each question, which is an additional form of control. After data were collected, they were exported to .sav, .csv and .exe formats so that they could be loaded into any major statistical data processing tools including SPSS, STATA, and R.

Data were analised during the first half of December 2020.

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[3] The directory contains around 900,000 telephone numbers in Montenegro, both landline and mobile. The directory allows for filtering phone numbers by the type of telecommunication provider and by municipality and region in which a number is registered.

[4] In Montenegro, ethnicity is also applied in the post-stratification process, besides gender and age. According to the latest 2011 census, no ethnic group has an absolute majority in Montenegro - the population of the country is made up of 45% Montenegrins, 29% Serbs, 9% Bosniaks, 5% Albanians, 3% Muslims (as a designation of an ethnic group) and 1% Croats. Different ethnic groups have displayed differing attitudes on many key issues, which is a major reason for using this variable in the post-stratification process.

Data quality control

The project team used the following measures to ensure data control:

- 10% of the sample verified by phone,
- Interview length check: The CATI software automatically records the duration of each interview - field survey coordinator deletes all the surveys lasting less than 80% of the pre-calculated duration of an interview,
- Logic control is performed for each questionnaire loaded - field survey coordinator reads out the answers and checks for consistency.

Safety and Police

The first thematic chapter of this report is dedicated to the perception of safety and the role of the Police Directorate in ensuring public safety. The chapter will analyze data on the perception of safety at the national level as well as within the respondents' respective communities and the main national security threats as perceived. The project team also examined the level of confidence in a number of institutions operating in the territory of Montenegro. Herein, we provide the data on the public perception of the police - the most common associations at the mention of this institution, the general attitude that respondents have towards the police and the perception of police performance in the previous 12 months. The newly introduced questions in this chapter are those related to the COVID-19 epidemic, its impact on the security of Montenegro and police activities aimed at controlling the spread of this disease.

As noted earlier, this analysis starts off with safety-related questions. Cumulatively, almost two-thirds of our survey respondents claim to be feeling safe in Montenegro. One-fifth of respondents say that they feel completely safe, with an additional 39.2% feeling somewhat safe. Albeit a high score, the percentage of people who feel safe fell by 10.2% as compared to last year's survey, which is a matter of concern.

Once again, we delved into how responses vary between different demographic groups in relation to this question. Interestingly enough, unlike with last year's survey, there are no significant differences in perception among survey respondents in terms of gender or the region they live in. The same goes for different educational attainment and income levels of respondents. The statistically significant differences occur only between respondents of different ethnicities. Thus, 75.2% of respondents who identify as Bosniaks or Muslims feel safe in Montenegro, while 69.2% of Montenegrins feel the same way. Albanians (52.7%) and Serbs (52.4%) feel least safe.
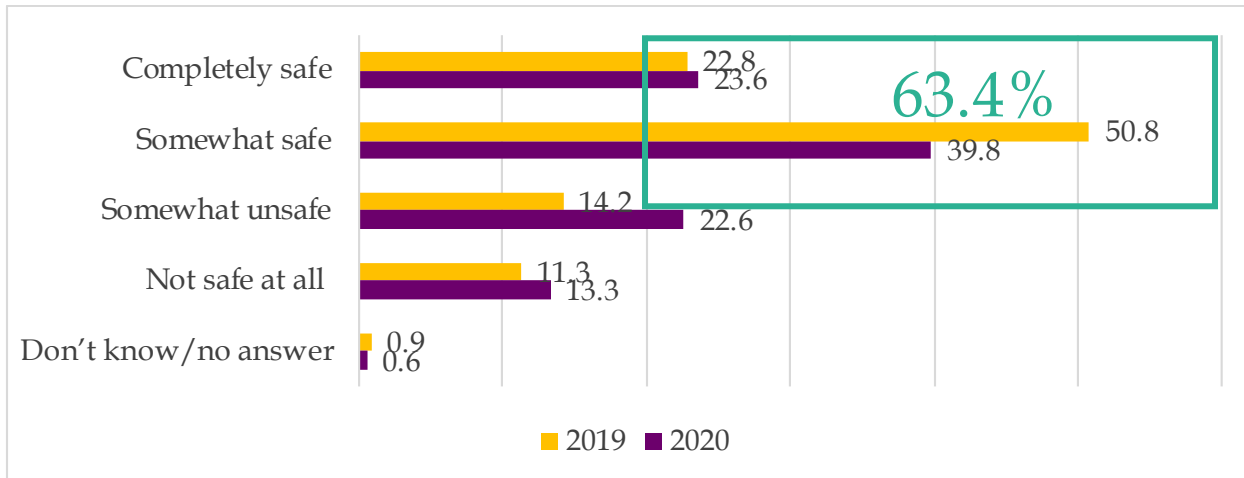
Completely safe — 22.8 (2019), 23.6 (2020)
Somewhat safe — 50.8 (2019), 39.8 (2020)
Somewhat unsafe — 14.2 (2019), 22.6 (2020)
Not safe at all — 11.3 (2019), 13.3 (2020)
Don't know/no answer — 0.9 (2019), 0.6 (2020)

63.4%

■ 2019 ■ 2020

Figure 1: How would you rate the security situation in Montenegro?

In this year's survey, security at the local level yet again scores better than security at the national level. The project team noted this kind of correlation in a number of surveys conducted in Montenegro, which can be explained by the fact that the closer and tighter the communities are, the higher their perceived safety gets.

However, a decline in the perceived safety is observed in this respect as well.

Cumulatively 78.4% of respondents consider their local community to be a safe one, as compared to 82.2% of respondents in the previous survey. It is interesting to note a certain regrouping of those who feel safe in their community - namely, while the number of those who feel completely safe in the local community is growing, the number of those who feel somewhat safe has decreased by almost the same number of respondents. The cause behind this may be sought in the perception of safety at state level - the lower it is, the more citizens strive to seek support and safety in their local communities.

This time, apart from ethnicity, the statistically significant differences have also come up depending on the region where respondents live. Yet again, Serbs reported feeling least safe in their local community. Regional distribution of survey responses shows that respondents from the north of Montenegro feel most safe (cumulatively 83.1%), followed by those living in the southern (80.0%) and central region (74.2%).
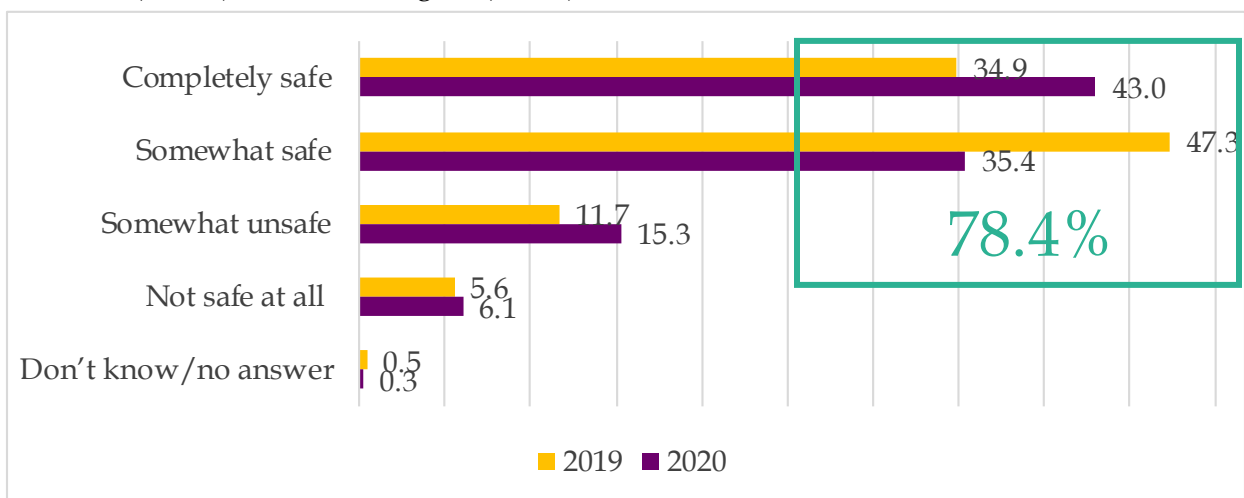

Completely safe — 34.9 (2019), 43.0 (2020)
Somewhat safe — 47.3 (2019), 35.4 (2020)
Somewhat unsafe — 11.7 (2019), 15.3 (2020)
Not safe at all — 5.6 (2019), 6.1 (2020)
Don't know/no answer — 0.5 (2019), 0.3 (2020)

78.4%

■ 2019 ■ 2020

Figure 2: Do you feel safe in your community?

Furthermore, we asked the respondents to assess the extent to which each of the problems listed in the graph below presents a threat to the safety of citizens of Montenegro. It is noteworthy that the listed problems are given similar rankings as in the last year's survey. The top five security threats reported in last year's research have remained the same, with a slightly changed order.

The newly introduced questions offered in this year's survey are related to the COVID-19 epidemic. This particular threat managed to make its way to the top five and thus squeeze out homicide, which now takes sixth place.

Problem	It's a big problem	It's a problem to some extent
Drug trafficking	72.4	19.6
Corruption	73.5	16.4
Organized crime	73.4	16.2
Drug addiction	65.0	23.8
COVID-19	61.8	23.2
Murder	60.2	23.5
Economic crime	52.9	29.2
Road safety	42.4	31.4
Domestic violence	44.0	28.3
Juvenile delinquency	32.6	32.1
Peer violence and school safety	31.4	30.1
Petty crimes against property	23.0	37.9
Robbery (using force)	31.0	28.8
Possession of firearms	26.0	29.9
Cybercrime (payment card fraud, etc.)	28.3	21.5
Sexual violence	24.5	23.7
Hate crimes	22.6	22.4
Car thefts	19.2	24.0
Prostitution	22.3	20.8
Trafficking in humans	24.7	17.3
Violence at sports events and manifestations	15.7	19.2
Terrorism and violent extremism	16.2	12.7

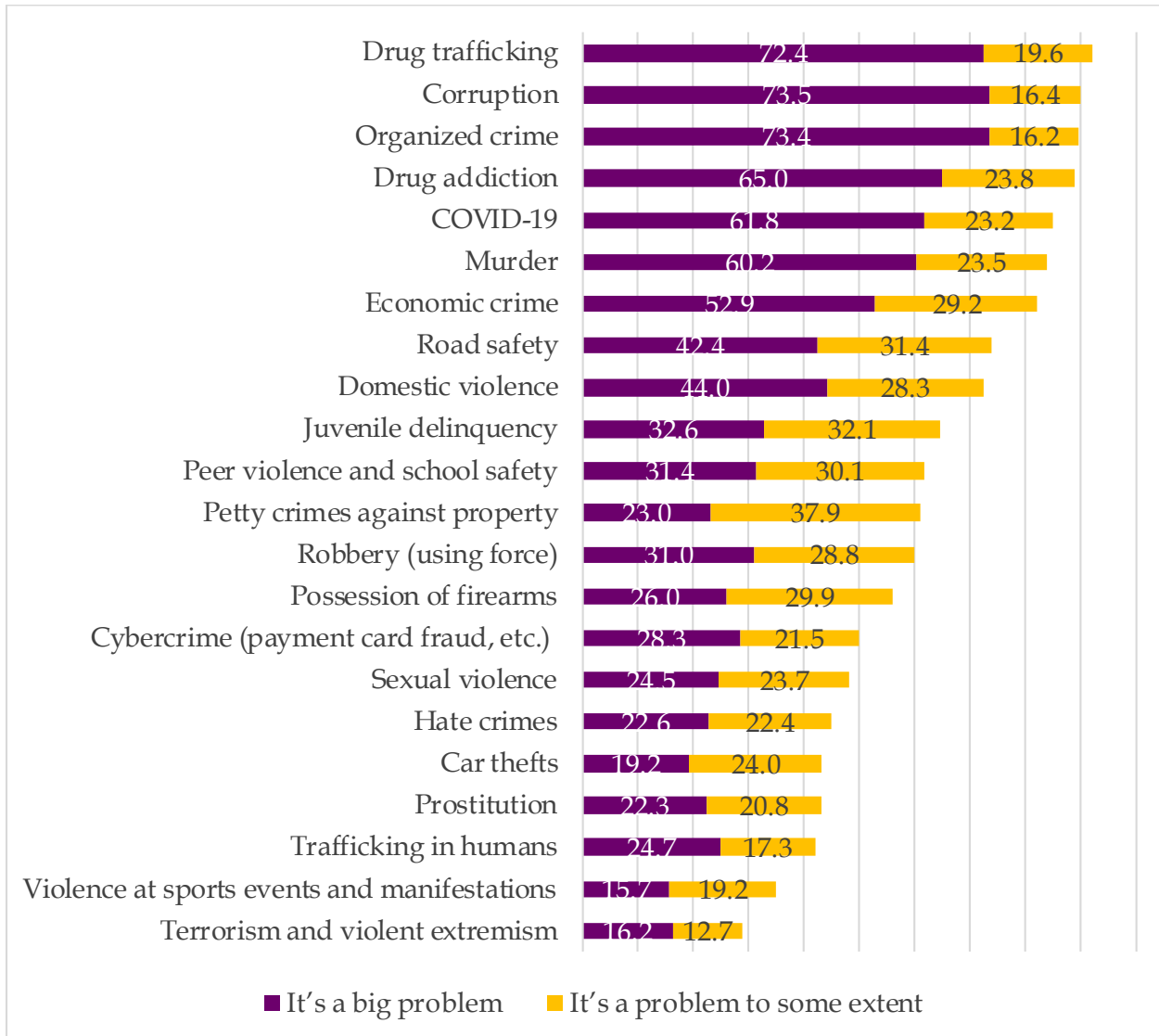■ It's a big problem   ■ It's a problem to some extent

Figure 3: In your opinion, to what extent does each of these problems pose a threat to citizens' safety in Montenegro? - % of those who perceive a threat as a big problem or a problem to some extent

This year's research highlights drug trafficking as the biggest threat to the security of Montenegro. Thus, a total of 92.0% of respondents[5] consider drug trafficking to be a problem -

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[5] In last year' survey, this security threat was second-ranked, with as many as 83.8% of respondents choosing this option

72.4% perceive it as a major problem and an additional 19.6% claim that it is a problem to a certain extent. Following drug trafficking, it is corruption[6] that is perceived as one of the major problems by 89.9% of citizens, followed by organized crime[7] opted for by as many as 89.6% of respondents. Violence at sporting events (34.9%) and terrorism and violent extremism (28.9%) have taken a back seat, which is nearly identical to the past year's results.

In order to examine more closely the views on security threats listed above, we decided to cross-reference them with specific demographic variables, just like in the last year's survey.

In terms of gender-based differences in responses, we find that men tend to perceive the majority of security threats as less serious than women. For example, while 90.2% of male respondents perceives drug trafficking as the biggest threat to the security of Montenegro, the same applies to 93.9% of women. The statistically significant differences occur only as per the perception of drug abuse. The most significant differences in answers offered by different age groups occur in terms of perceived risk of COVID-19 epidemic. Here we notice a positive correlation, i.e. the older a person is, the greater the fear of the epidemic. While 78.9% of respondents under the age of 34 consider COVID-19 to be a security threat, as many as 92.0% of respondents over the age of 55 feel the same way. This is understandable given that COVID-19 mortality risk is many times higher for the elderly.

The statistically significant differences come up with regards to the region in which respondents live. It can be noticed that four out of five respondents from the central region consider items listed in the table as more of a threat than respondents living in the north and south of Montenegro. The only exception is COVID-19 - central region residents perceive this disease to be less risky than residents of other regions.

	Gender		Age			Region		
	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	South	Centre	North
Drug trafficking	90.2	93.9	91.5	91.1	93.6	90.5	93.7	90.7
Corruption	89.7	89.9	91.2	88.9	89.9	88.3	91.5	89.7
Organized crime	88.1	91.1	93.1	86.1	89.9	85.6	92.9	88.0
Drug addiction	87.1	90.6	88.8	88.6	88.8	85.0	91.1	86.9
COVID - 19	82.7	87.3	78.9	84.2	92.0	87.5	82.4	86.6

Table 1: In your opinion, to what extent does each of these problems pose a threat to citizens' safety in Montenegro? (crosstabulated with gender, age and region in which the respondent lives)

We probed the respondents about how much confidence they have in certain institutions in Montenegro. Compared to last year's survey, four trends have been observed this time around:

- The attitudes of the respondents have become more polarized, i.e. respondents are more inclined to choosing the "complete confidence" and "no confidence at all" options, while the number of those that hold a more neutral perception of these institutions is dwindling;
- Just like in late 2019, the church, the army and the police have made it to the most-trusted institutions;

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[6] Last year, this security threat came third in the survey, as an option selected by as many as 83.0% of respondents.

[7] In last year' survey, this security threat was fourth-ranked. Cumulatively 76.0% of respondents perceive it as a threat to Montenegro.

- Confidence in other institutions of the system (government, parliament, courts and prosecution and political parties) has declined;
- An increased confidence in the civil sector and international organizations has been noted. These four trends are shown in the table below. It contains average confidence ratings for the institutions listed below, as compared against those from the 2019 survey. The scores are given on a scale from 1 to 5, whereby 1 denotes complete lack of trust in an institution and 5 indicates complete trust. Thus, the most trusted institution is the church, with an average score of 3.77 out of 5. The army of Montenegro comes second-ranked, followed by the police as the third most trusted institution. On the other hand, political parties are by far the lowest-rated institutions in terms of public trust.
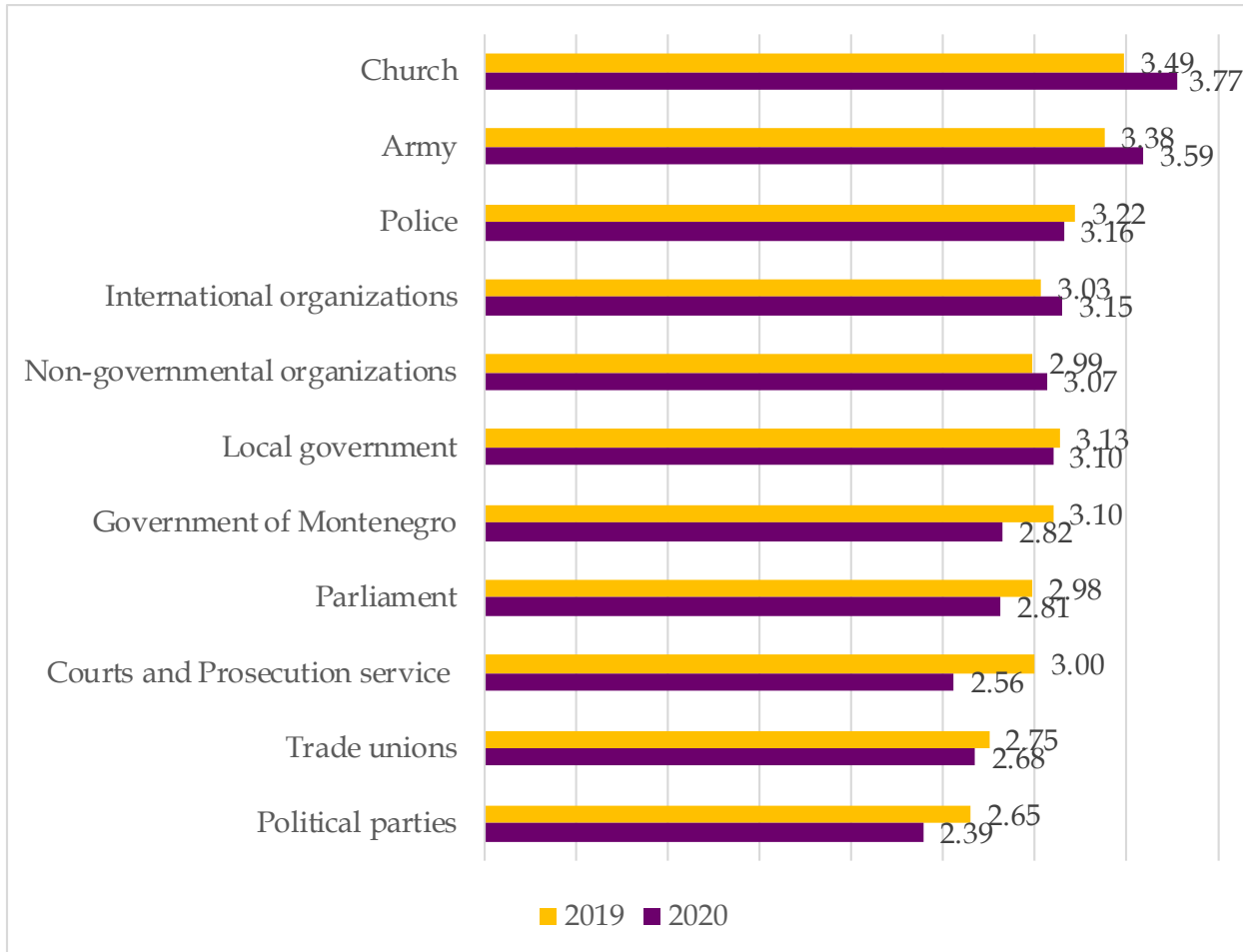

Figure 4: To what extent do you have confidence in the institutions listed in the table below? (1 – no confidence at all, 5 – complete confidence)

Since the average score[8] often tends to simplify the results obtained, the graph below once again shows a more detailed breakdown of responses as per level of trust in individual institutions measured in November 2020. We can therefore see that cumulatively 61.7% of respondents trust the church - 41.7% fully and 20.0% to some extent. The Army of Montenegro has recorded the

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[8] In this case, the arithmetic mean, which is the sum of all the scores divided by the count of answers (respondents)

cumulative percentage of 57.5% in confidence level, whereas the police is trusted by a total of 48.0% of respondents.

In terms of demographics, the statistically significant differences in the level of trust placed in the police occur between respondents of different age groups, ethnicities and the regions they live in. There is a positive correlation to be noted age-wise - the older a person is, the greater their trust in institutions. As many as 41.2% of respondents under the age of 35 have confidence in the police, while the same was said by 54.8% of those over the age of 55.

National minorities place most trust in the police, as 71.2% of Bosniak and Muslim respondents trust this institution, and the same is true for 61.9% of Albanians. Furthermore, 55.0% of Montenegrins trust this institution, while Serbs trust the police the least - a total of 25.7% of members of this demographic group put their trust in the work of the police, and only 9.7% claim that they fully trust this institution. As per the regions that respondents live in, the inhabitants of the northern region (54.9%) maintain the highest level of confidence, whereas citizens of the central region have least trust (44.0%).
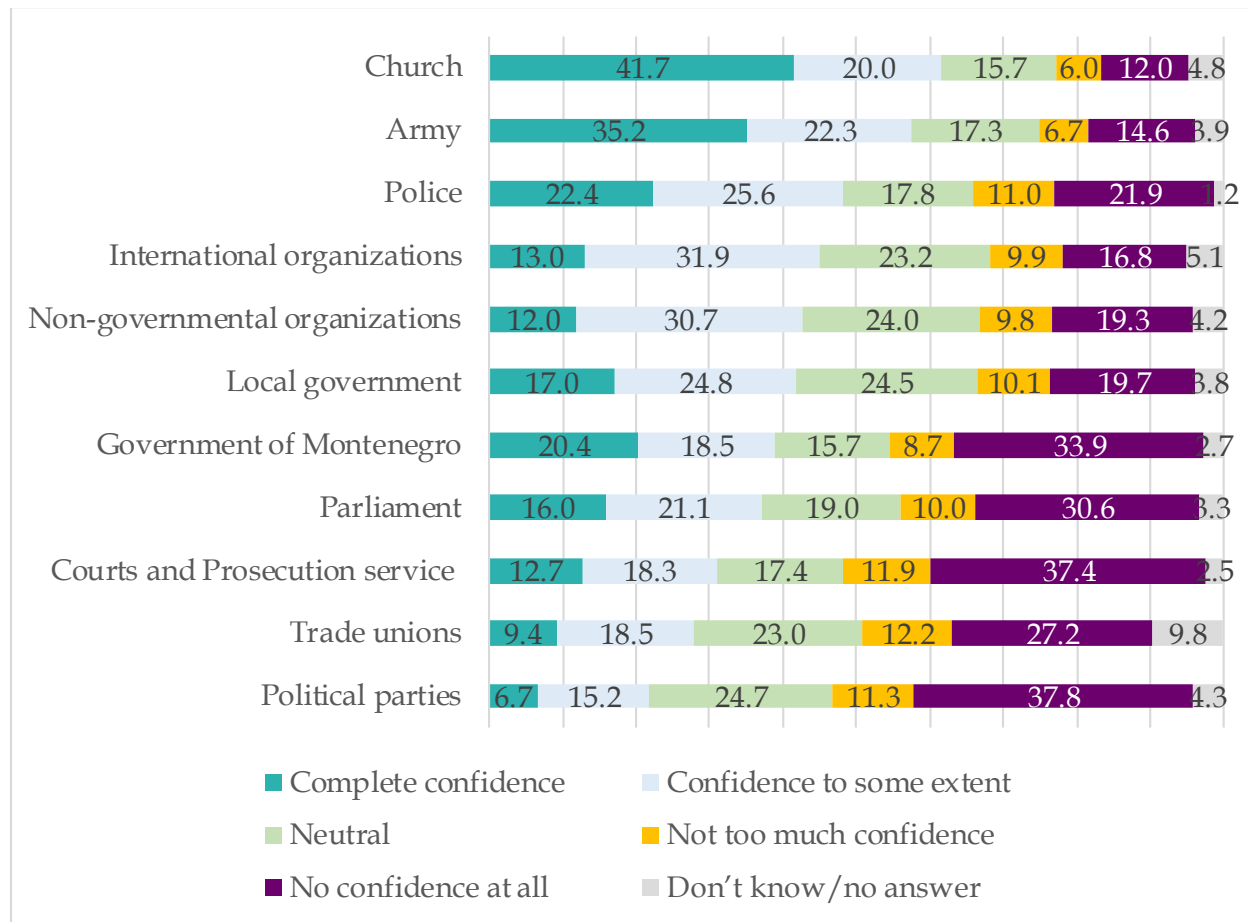
Institution	Complete confidence	Confidence to some extent	Neutral	Not too much confidence	No confidence at all	Don't know/no answer
Church	41.7	20.0	15.7	6.0	12.0	4.8
Army	35.2	22.3	17.3	6.7	14.6	3.9
Police	22.4	25.6	17.8	11.0	21.9	1.2
International organizations	13.0	31.9	23.2	9.9	16.8	5.1
Non-governmental organizations	12.0	30.7	24.0	9.8	19.3	4.2
Local government	17.0	24.8	24.5	10.1	19.7	3.8
Government of Montenegro	20.4	18.5	15.7	8.7	33.9	2.7
Parliament	16.0	21.1	19.0	10.0	30.6	3.3
Courts and Prosecution service	12.7	18.3	17.4	11.9	37.4	2.5
Trade unions	9.4	18.5	23.0	12.2	27.2	9.8
Political parties	6.7	15.2	24.7	11.3	37.8	4.3

Figure 5: To what extent do you have confidence in the institutions listed in the table below?

This chapter will further present respondents' views on issues more closely related to the police and its perception in the eyes of citizens. We have therefore asked citizens about their first associations at the mention of police.

Two out of five respondents cited safety, security and peace as their first choice. The second most common association was corruption, as quoted by one-tenth of respondents. Other options got similar ratings by those polled, as 7.6% of them chose uniform as an association, 7.4% opted for traffic accidents and an additional 6.1% chose arresting of criminals as their association.

Abuse of power and repression are associations that are to some extend more cited than in the previous wave of research, but each of the two is the first association picked out by less than 5% of respondents. Associations such as restrictions on freedom and rights (1.1%) and protection of property (1.0%) were least cited.
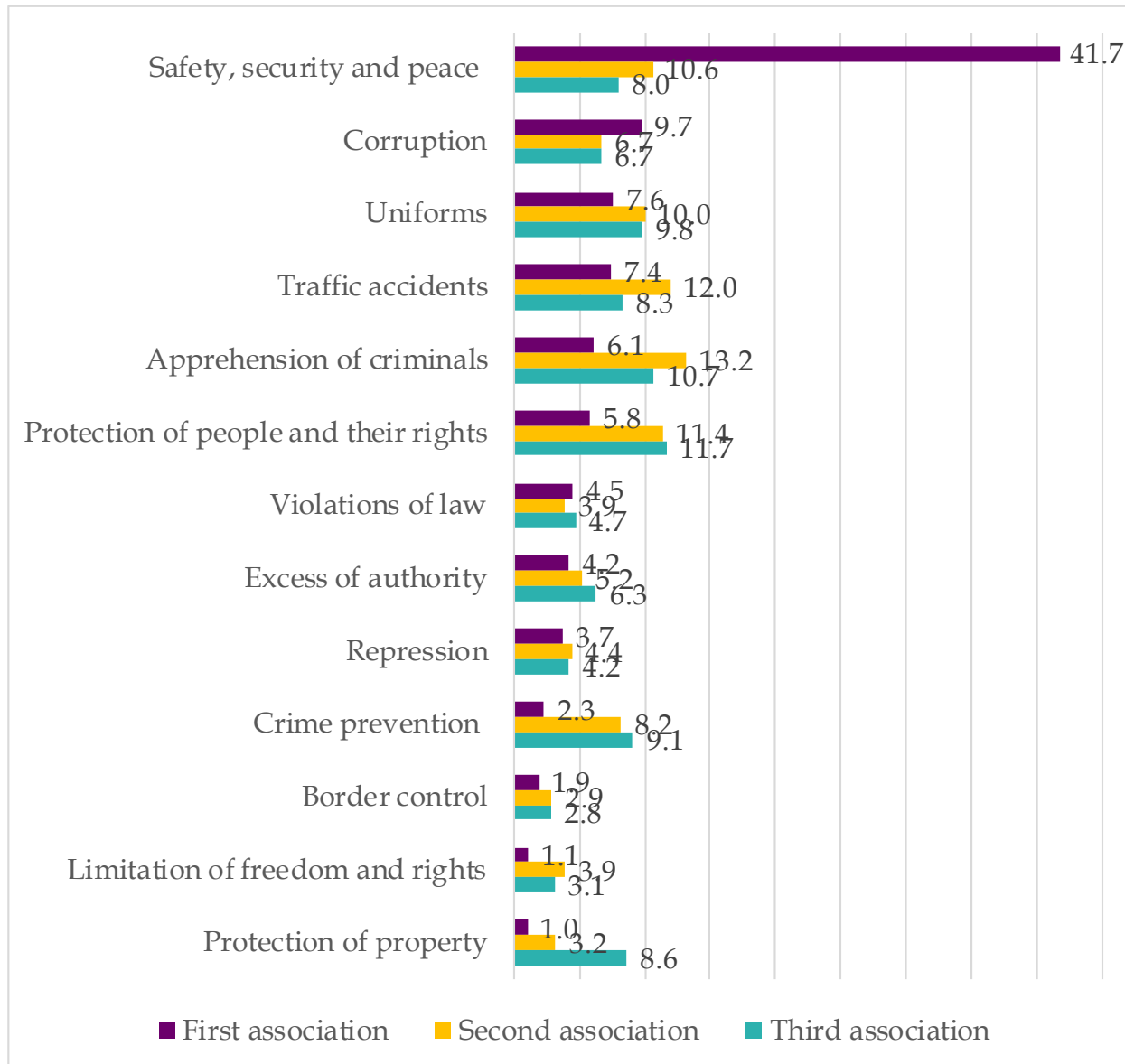
Figure 6: : What are the first three associations that come to your mind when you hear the word police?

The general attitude toward the police has taken a decline compared to last year. Nevertheless, two-thirds of respondents are still positively inclined towards this institution. Among these,

every fifth respondent has a very positive attitude, while additional 42.4% have a somewhat positive attitude towards this police.

In terms of demographic subcategories, the differences observed earlier are manifested in this case as well. The statistically significant differences occur between different age groups, ethnic groups and the regions the respondents live in. Older respondents are more likely to have a positive attitude towards the police.

Serbs are more likely to harbor a more negative attitude towards this institution - only 46.5% of Serbs view the police in either very or somewhat positive light, while the same is true for 70.3% of Albanians, 74.0% of Montenegrins and as many as 84.1% of Bosniaks and Muslims. Region-wise, the most negative attitude towards the police has been voiced by respondents from the central part of Montenegro - a fifth of them have a very positive attitude towards the police, and the same goes for a quarter of respondents from the southern region and one-third of respondents from the northern region.

There are no statistically significant differences among groups differing by gender-education-income profile.
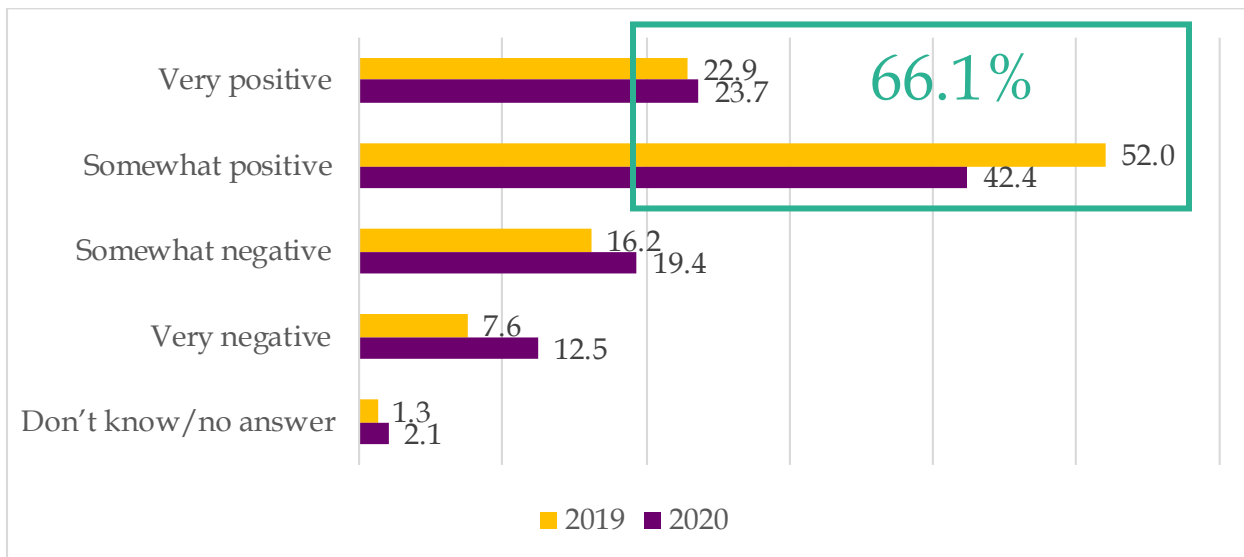
Figure 7: What is your overall attitude to the police?

Compared to last year's survey, there has been a significant drop in the number of respondents who observed an improved police performance, while the number of those who claim that nothing has changed or that police performance has dropped in the last 12 months is growing.

Cumulatively, only one-fifth of respondents have noticed a change for the better in the work of the Montenegrin police in the previous 12 months, a slightly smaller percentage of respondents reports changes for the worse, while over a half of all respondents claim that there has been no change.

The statistically significant differences between demographic categories exist only in terms of ethnicity of respondents - Bosniaks and Muslims (31.7%), Montenegrins (27.9%) and Albanians (24.1%) are far more likely to claim that the police have improved their work in the previous 12 months, compared to merely 9.7% of Serbs that share this view.
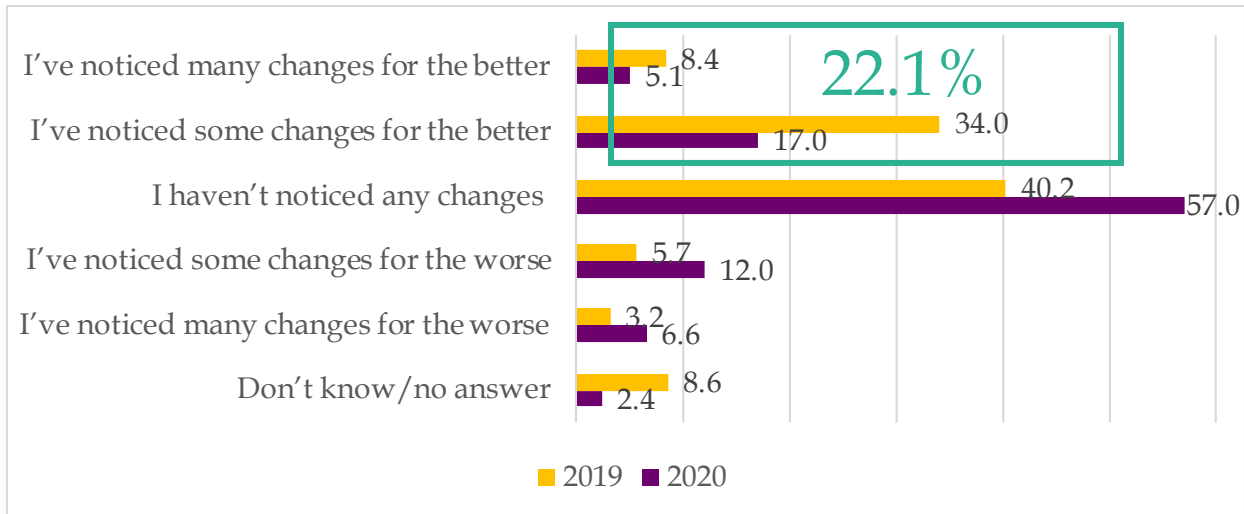
I've noticed many changes for the better — 5.1 / 8.4 — 22.1%
I've noticed some changes for the better — 17.0 / 34.0
I haven't noticed any changes — 40.2 / 57.0
I've noticed some changes for the worse — 5.7 / 12.0
I've noticed many changes for the worse — 3.2 / 6.6
Don't know/no answer — 2.4 / 8.6

■ 2019 ■ 2020

Figure 8: Have you noticed some changes in police work over the past 12 months, either for the better or for the worse?

We have already touched upon the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on security in Montenegro previously in this report. We conclude this chapter with another coronavirus-related question. We asked the respondents about how they perceive the activities of the Police Directorate aimed at combating the epidemic. More than half of them are satisfied with the implemented measures - 18.8% of respondents are very satisfied, and an additional 33.0% are satisfied to a certain extent. Roughly one-fifth of the respondents were indecisive on the matter, while a quarter of them expressed dissatisfaction with the measures undertaken by the police in the previous period.

The statistically significant differences are once again present in three demographic categories of respondents, the same as before - the age of respondents, their ethnicity and the region they live in. A recurring trend has been observed - the older the respondent, the greater their satisfaction with the work of the police, and this also goes for measures aimed at combating the COVID-19 epidemic. Serbs are least satisfied with the said measures, whereas respondents coming from ethic minority groups express the greatest deal of satisfaction.

Respondents from the central region are yet again most reserved when it comes to police activities - only 13.0% are very satisfied with measures for combating the COVID-19 epidemic, while the same is true for 22.3% of citizens of the north and 25.1% of respondents from the southern, coastal region Montenegro.
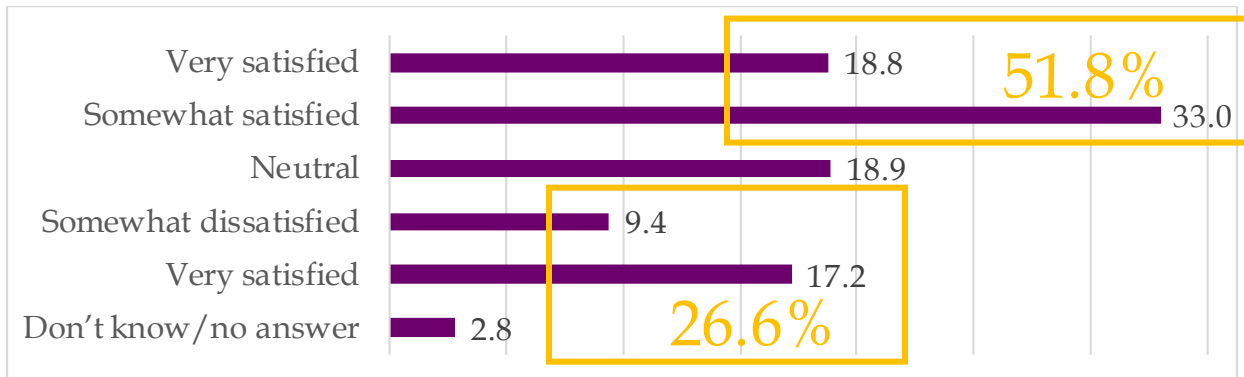

Very satisfied — 18.8 — 51.8%
Somewhat satisfied — 33.0
Neutral — 18.9
Somewhat dissatisfied — 9.4
Very satisfied — 17.2
Don't know/no answer — 2.8 — 26.6%

Figure 9: To what extent are you satisfied with the activities of the Police Directorate aimed at combating the COVID-19 epidemic?

Community Policing

The last year's report already highlighted the importance of community policing in creating safe, healthy and crime-resistant communities. In a civic society, the police do not have an exclusively corrective role as an institution that is allowed to use force, but rather serve as a bridge between local community and the government. The police are involved in the everyday life of a community in various ways and in various spheres of life - from traffic and border control, through prevention of violence to the fight against many forms of crime. A consistent implementation of laws governing these areas is in the common interest of both citizens and the police as a state authority. Trust-based policing is necessary for the police-community cooperation to yield results. In order to win this trust, the police must always act in a way that protects civil rights and ensures respect for human dignity, and never approach their work from the perspective of repression, violation of law and abuse of power.

Having all this in mind, this chapter will show to what extent citizens are satisfied with the presence of the police in their community and the cooperation they have with this institution. Additionally, we will analyze which police services they contacted most frequently and how satisfied they are with the performance and efficiency of the police in particular areas of work. We will also probe into how likely citizens are to report domestic violence if they are aware of it, as well as how they perceive certain police-related claims presented in the questionnaire.

Once again, as in the previous survey, the majority of respondents, as many as 56.3%, state that the police cooperates with members of their community. Another 15.3% could sway either way when it comes to police-community cooperation, while cumulatively every fifth respondent finds that the police do not cooperate with citizens. Like with most of the previously mentioned parameters, a decline has been noted in this respect as well.

The previously established differentiation in attitudes with regard to the age of the respondents is noticeable again - however, in this case there are no differences between all of the three analyzed age groups[9], only a clear distinction between respondents under the age of 35 and those above. Cumulatively 51.9% of respondents aged 18 to 34 have stated that the police cooperate with them and their fellow citizens, whereas the same was said by over 59% of people in the age groups 35-54 and 55+.

The previously observed ethnicity-based differences have come up again - while 65.8% of Bosniaks and Muslims, 62.1% of Montenegrins and 60.0% of Albanians claim that the police cooperate with citizens in their community, only 43.0% of Serbs feel the same way. For the first time, the statistically significant differences occur between respondents of different income levels - the middle-income respondents (59.2%) are most prone to confirming that police-citizen cooperation exists in their community.

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[9] Respondents aged 18-34, 35-54 and 55+.

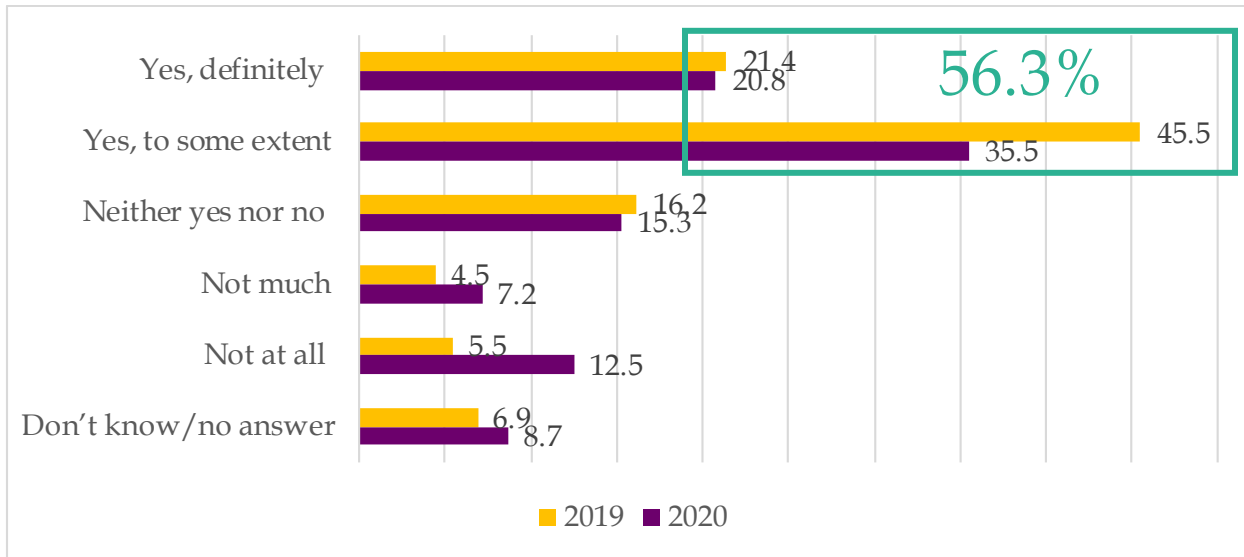|		
Yes, definitely	21.4 / 20.8	56.3%
Yes, to some extent	45.5 / 35.5	
Neither yes nor no	16.2 / 15.3	
Not much	4.5 / 7.2	
Not at all	5.5 / 12.5	
Don't know/no answer	6.9 / 8.7	

2019 2020

Figure 10: Do police cooperate with citizens in your community?

To follow up on that, we asked the respondents about whether they noticed the presence of police officers in their neighborhood. This is a multiple choice question, so the fact that the sum of all the answers exceeds 100% should come as no surprise. The majority of respondents, nearly three-quarters, claim that patrol cars can be seen doing rounds in their neighborhoods. One in four respondents reported having met a police officer while on foot patrol, while every fifth respondent confirmed having seen police officers take action on noise complaints in their neighborhood. On the other hand, one-fifth of respondents claim they have not seen police officers performing any of the above activities in their neighborhood.

Patrolling the neighbourhood by car	72.3
Patrolling the neighbourhood on foot	26.2
Engaging the citizens who are making disorder in the neighbourhood	22.7
None of the above	22.1
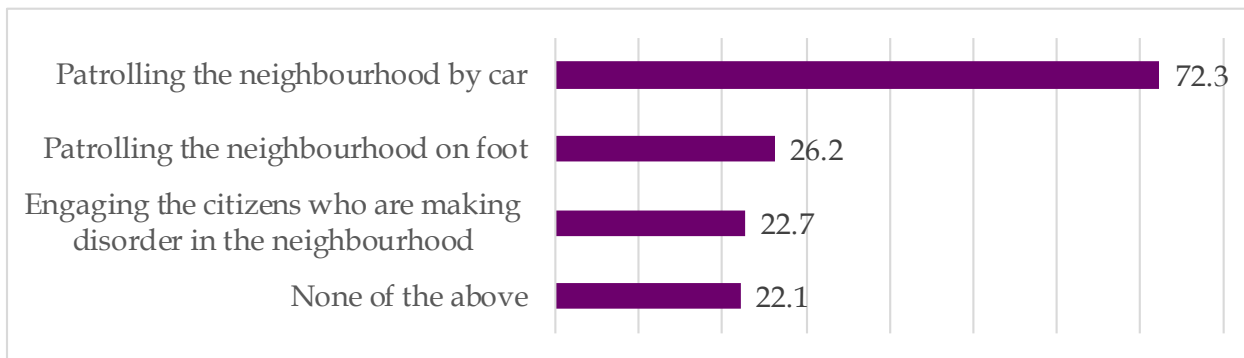
Figure 11: Have you seen police officers in your neighbourhood in the previous 12 months during?

The next question is meant to explore how satisfied citizens are with the efficiency of the police in particular areas of their work. Respondents consider police to be most efficient in ensuring citizens' safety - 60.8%, followed by traffic safety - 57.1% and border management and security - 56.4%, while respondents are least satisfied with police performance in combating crime - 32.5%, fighting corruption - 29.2%, and organized crime - 27.6%.
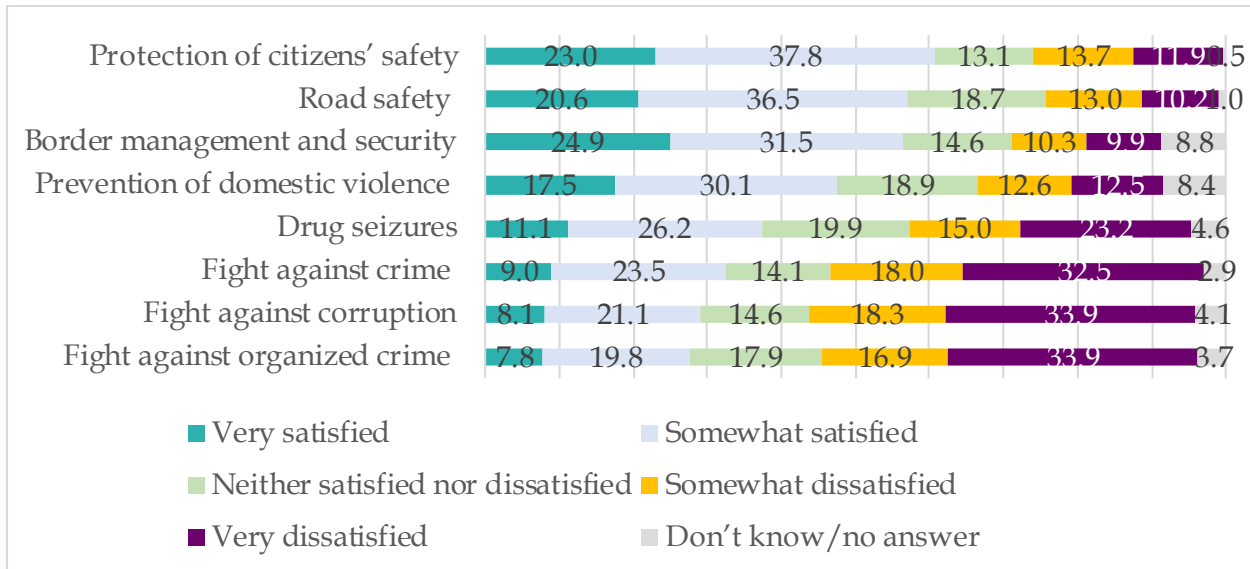
Figure 12: How satisfied are you with the efficiency of the police in each of these areas?

The table below also shows responses as compared against last year's survey. The first part of the table shows the cumulative percentage of respondents who expressed satisfaction with police efficiency in each of the areas provided. A positive trend has been observed on almost all counts - the percentage of satisfied respondents decreased only in terms of protection of citizens' safety (by 0.2%), the fight against crime (by 1.4%) and the fight against corruption (by 2.3%). When viewed from this perspective, the data seem encouraging.

However, the next part of the table shows that the percentage of undecided respondents drops as the number of those who are dissatisfied with police performance in these areas in 2020 records a largely increase. This finding is yet another confirmation of the previously stated conclusion that the society is polarized in terms of police perception, i.e. the attitudes of citizens are moving towards complete (dis)approval of the actions carried out by the Police Directorate.

	% satisfied		% dissatisfied	
	2019	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**
Protection of citizens' safety	61.0%	60.8%	17.9%	25.6%
Road safety	53.0%	57.1%	23.6%	23.2%
Border management and security	53.1%	56.4%	16.3%	20.2%
Prevention of domestic violence	41.9%	47.6%	17.4%	25.1%
Drug seizures	36.0%	37.3%	32.5%	38,2%
Fight against crime	33.9%	32.5%	36.3%	50.5%
Fight against corruption	31.5%	29.2%	37.6%	52.2%
Fight against organized crime	25.6%	27.6%	38.0%	50.8%

Table 2: How satisfied are you with the efficiency of the police in each of these areas? - % of very and somewhat satisfied and % of very and somewhat dissatisfied

Respondents were asked to rank the statements below that refer to the work of the police. Over half of citizens, 58.4%, say that the police are adequately trained, while 55.7% believe that Montenegrin police is an institution that serves its citizens. On the other hand, respondents gave

lowest rankings to a statement that the police recruitment system is a transparent one - cumulatively, only 27.9% of respondents agree with the said statement.

Citizens from the central region view the police as a service to citizens (50.5%) in a lesser degree than the rest of the population, as those living in the north, more often than others, believe that the police are adequately equipped (63.8%) and that the recruitment system is a transparent one (32.6%). The older the person is, the stronger their conviction that the police serve their citizens and are adequately equipped.

There are also strikingly different attitudes between demographic subcategories related to the ethnicity of respondents - just like before, Serbs are far less likely to agree with the given statements. Among all the ethnic groups, Bosniaks and Muslims are most likely to agree with all three statements - 74.4% of them claim that the police are adequately trained, 72.8% that they act as a service to citizens and 43.2% that the recruitment system is a transparent one.

There are no statistically significant differences between respondents of different education-income-gender profile when these three statements are concerned.
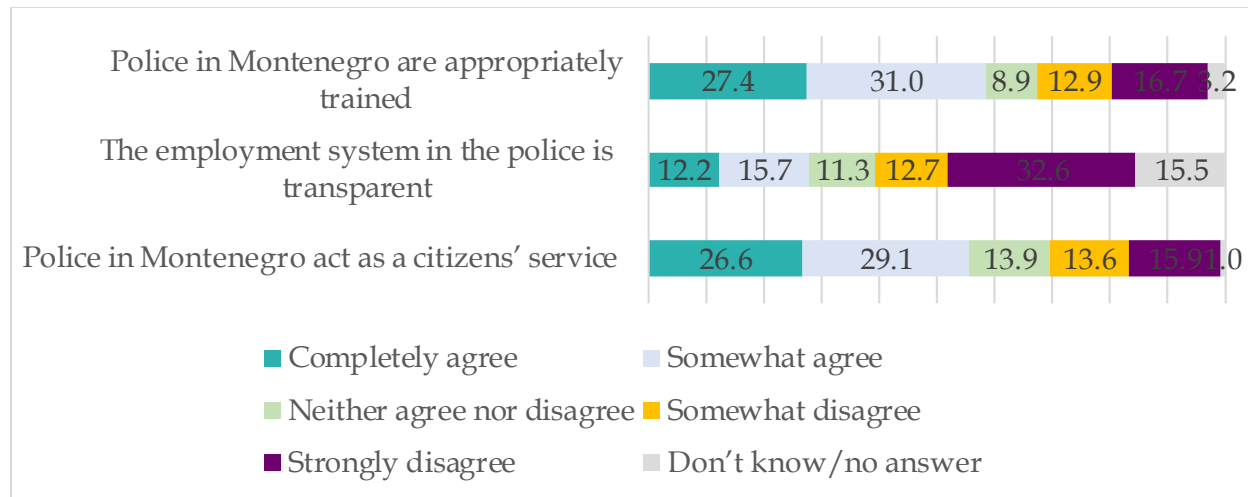
Figure 13: To what extent do you agree with the following:

As with the previous question, we compared these findings against last year's results.

We see that the number of those who agree in that the Montenegrin police are adequately equipped has seen the greatest increase. The number of those who view the police as a service to citizens has also inched up, while the number of respondents who believe that the recruitment system is a transparent one has decreased. At the same time, the number of respondents who disagree with these claims has increased, the most dramatic growth being recorded with respondents who dispute the claim that the police recruitment system is a transparent one.

	% of those who agree		% of those who disagree	
	2019	2020	2019	2020
Police in Montenegro act as a citizens' service.	52.9%	55.7%	26.2%	29.5%
The employment system in the police is transparent.	29.3%	27.9%	31.3%	45.3%
Police in Montenegro are appropriately trained.	47.5%	58.4%	25.8%	29.6%

Table 3: To what extent do you agree with the following:

The respondents were asked to list police services they have come in contact with. In the course of 2020, the respondents had most encounters with the traffic police (43.7%) and border police (19.6%), same as in 2019. However, we notice a large drop in the number of contacts made with these two sectors.

This finding is understandable given the strict COVID-19 movement restrictions that have been in force for most part of the year, both in domestic and international traffic. The number of contacts with the majority of other police sectors has declined as well, but to a much lesser extent.
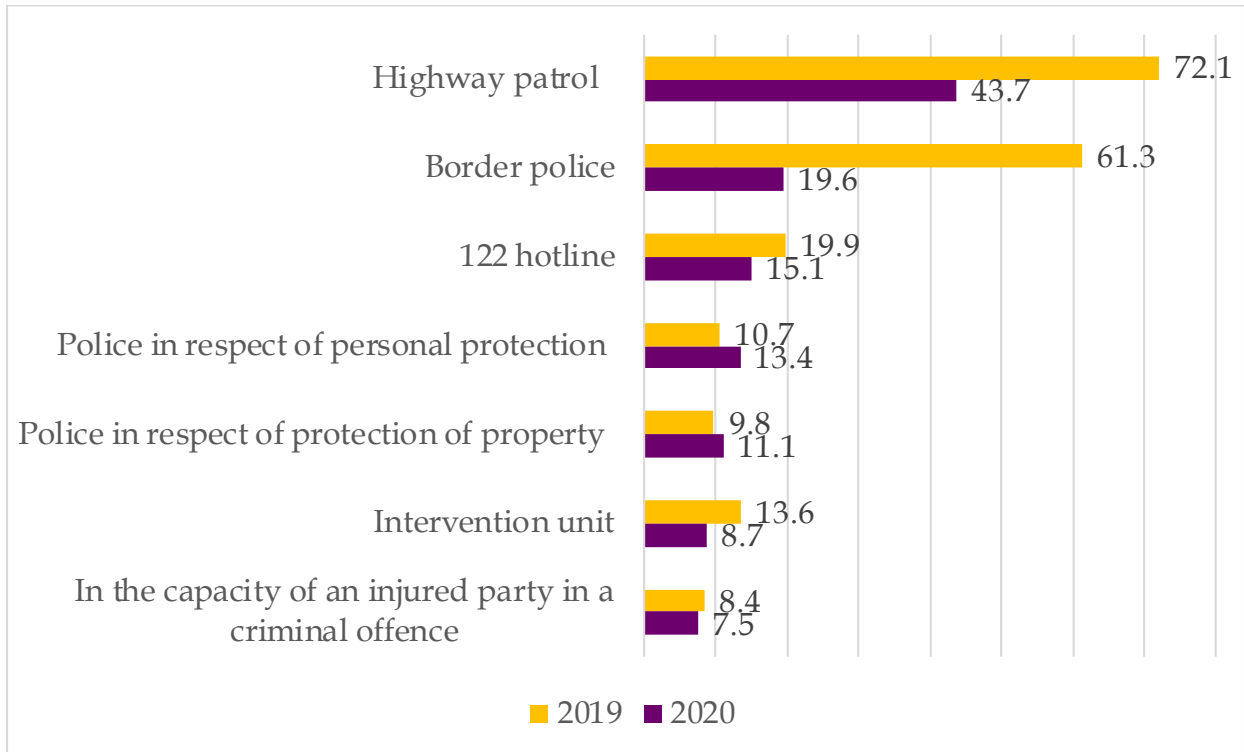
Figure 14: With which specific police service have you had contact in the last 12 months?

The following question delves into how satisfied citizens were with the work of those police sectors they had come in contact with in the past 12 months. Out of those who did have such an encounter, the majority expressed satisfaction with the operation of the border police - 75.5%, followed by traffic police - 72.1%, the Emergency Communications Center 122 - 68.2%, while citizens were least satisfied with the work of the intervention unit - cumulatively, 39.1% of respondents that came into contact with this unit are satisfied with their performance.
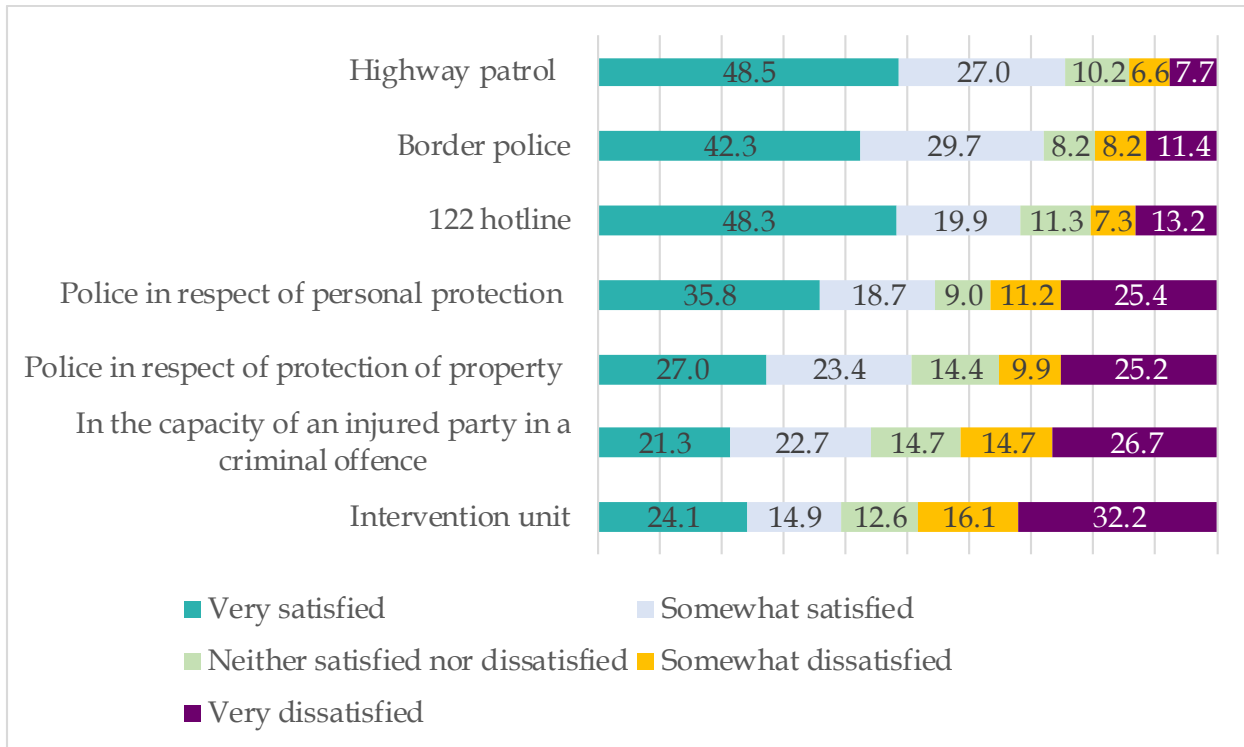
	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Highway patrol	48.5	27.0	10.2	6.6	7.7
Border police	42.3	29.7	8.2	8.2	11.4
122 hotline	48.3	19.9	11.3	7.3	13.2
Police in respect of personal protection	35.8	18.7	9.0	11.2	25.4
Police in respect of protection of property	27.0	23.4	14.4	9.9	25.2
In the capacity of an injured party in a criminal offence	21.3	22.7	14.7	14.7	26.7
Intervention unit	24.1	14.9	12.6	16.1	32.2

Figure 15: How satisfied were you with police performance in those occasions?

Citizens' willingness to report certain misdemeanors/ criminal activities that they had knowledge of serve as an indicator of their confidence in the police. Therefore, the next two questions probe into how willing citizens would be to report domestic violence and crime, should they be aware that these were taking place in their environment.

Compared to last year's survey, there is a certain increase in the number of those who would report domestic violence from a total of 74.8% to 80.2%. However, such a high percentage should be taken with a grain of salt, given that the respondents have not experienced such a situation first-hand, where they would actually have to make a decision and report a person from their environment.

The majority of respondents - 55.2% of those polled - say that they would certainly report domestic violence to the police if they were aware of it. Then, there are those who would probably report it - 25.0%, followed by those who would probably not report this type of violence - 10.3%, while only 5.0% of the respondents said that they would definitely not report violence.

The statistically significant differences occur only between respondents of different age groups. A negative correlation has been observed, namely, the younger the respondents, the more likely they are to report violence. Thus, cumulatively 86.2% of respondents under the age of 35 claim they would report domestic violence, while the same is true for 80.3% of respondents aged between 35 and 54, and for 74.2% of those aged 55 and over.
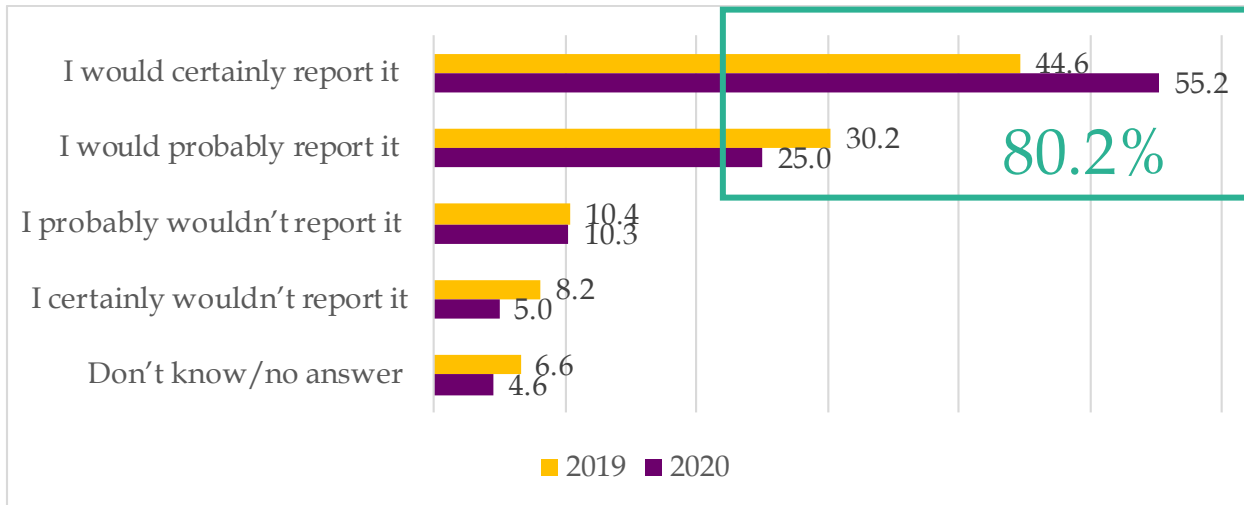
Figure 16: If you were aware of domestic violence in your surroundings, how likely would you be to report it?

Citizens were asked about the likelihood of them reporting a crime if they had knowledge of any. Cumulatively, 68.0% respondents would report a crime, which is a percentage lower than that pertaining to citizens who would report domestic violence. Compared to last year's research, respondents are more willing to report such deviant behavior. Men (73.8%) are more likely to report crime than women (62.3%). Also, the higher the level of income and educational attainment, the more willing the respondents are to report such behavior to police officers.
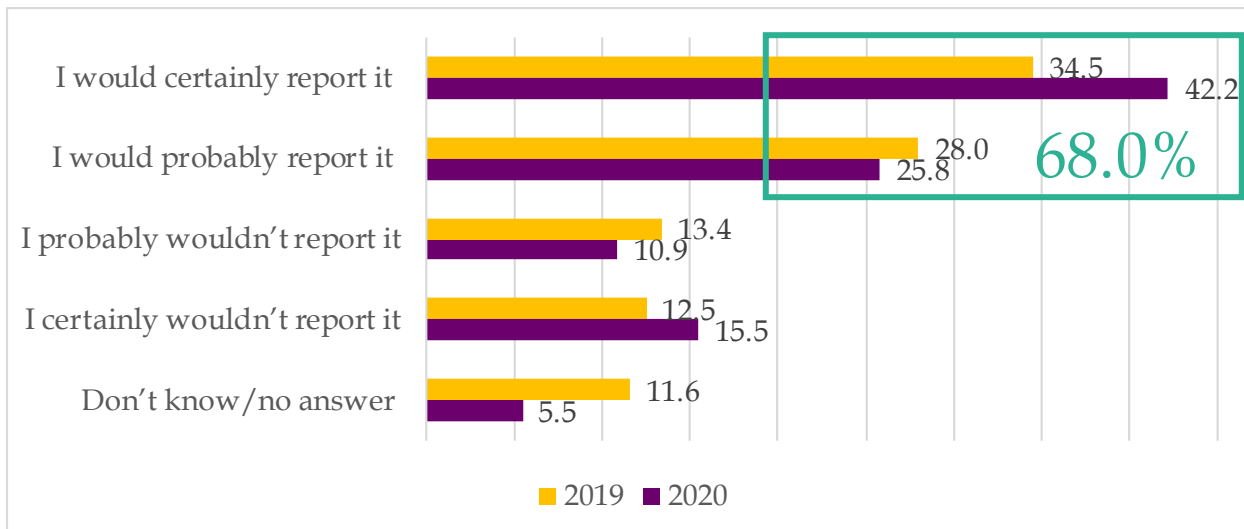
Figure 17: If you were aware of criminal activities, how likely would you be to report it?

Those who stated that they would not report crime were asked to explain why. This was a multiple choice question, so the sum of all the answers exceeds 100%. The most common answer given by respondents is that they fear revenge because members of criminal groups are backed by powerful people (51.8%). Also, 37.3% of those who would not report a crime say that they would not do so because it is none of their business, and a little less than one-third of respondents highlighted that the crime would probably not be proven.
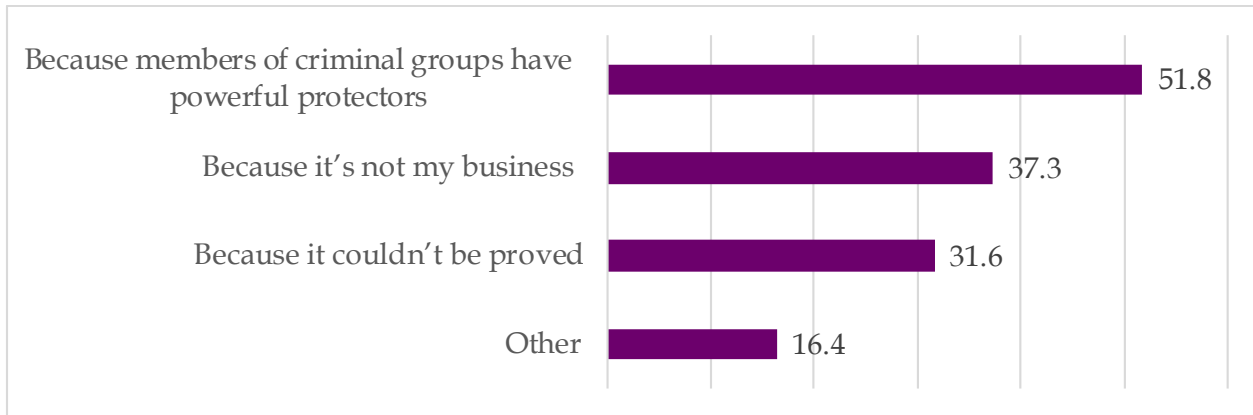
Figure 18: Why you wouldn't report such activities?

Apart from the pre-specified answers, we gave the respondents the opportunity to state the reason in their own words.

A part of them fears that the reports are not really anonymous, which could have undesired implications for them or their families.

"I am afraid someone could go after my children. If I were on my own, I certainly would, but I am afraid that someone might take revenge on my children."(ID429)

"Reports are not anonymous, formally they might be, but not really." (ID732)

This motive is closely tied to the belief that the police are working in collusion with criminal organizations, and that they would not provide protection to a person who filed the report. It has also been pointed out that it is up to the police, and not the citizens, to expose crime.

"I am afraid that the identity of the person who filed the report would be exposed because of corrupt officers and their ties to criminal groups. If my anonymity was guaranteed and respected, then I would report both criminal activities and domestic violence." (ID382)

"Those that file a report are not fully protected and do not remain anonymous, so they suffer great consequences, unfortunately. I wish things were different, so that we could all help each other, be conscientious and help the community." (ID531)

"Because I think the police are involved in crime and I don't think there's any point in reporting." (ID587)

"Because the police know about it for sure, it's just not in someone's interest to do something about it." (ID915)

Further on, the respondents say that the majority of Montenegrins live in relatively tight communities, and they are afraid they would be dubbed "spies".

"So I would not be called a spy." (ID637)

"No one would protect me afterwards, it would immediately be revealed who reported it, and I would become a spy, why should I do that if I'm going to be blamed for it." (ID266)

"I'm not a neighborhood spy." (ID468)

We conclude this chapter with a question in which we presented the respondents with a series of desired characteristics to be ascribed to a police officer, and asked them if they agree with them.

We have noted that the vast majority of respondents agree with the claim that a police officer must possess personal and professional integrity - 93.0%, respect diversity - 92.3% and respect human rights - 87.6%. Fewest respondents agree with the statement "I have more confidence in a police officer with the same ethnic background as me" - 21.8%, which is a positive finding for a multicultural society such as Montenegrin. It is worth noting that the level of agreement with individual statements has improved compared to last year's results, i.e. the first five claims from the chart below have garnered greater support, unlike the last one. The only exception was noted with regard to the claim that sexual orientation of a police officer is not important as long as they are doing their job well - namely, in this wave of research, the number of respondents who agree with this statement is slightly lower than in 2019.
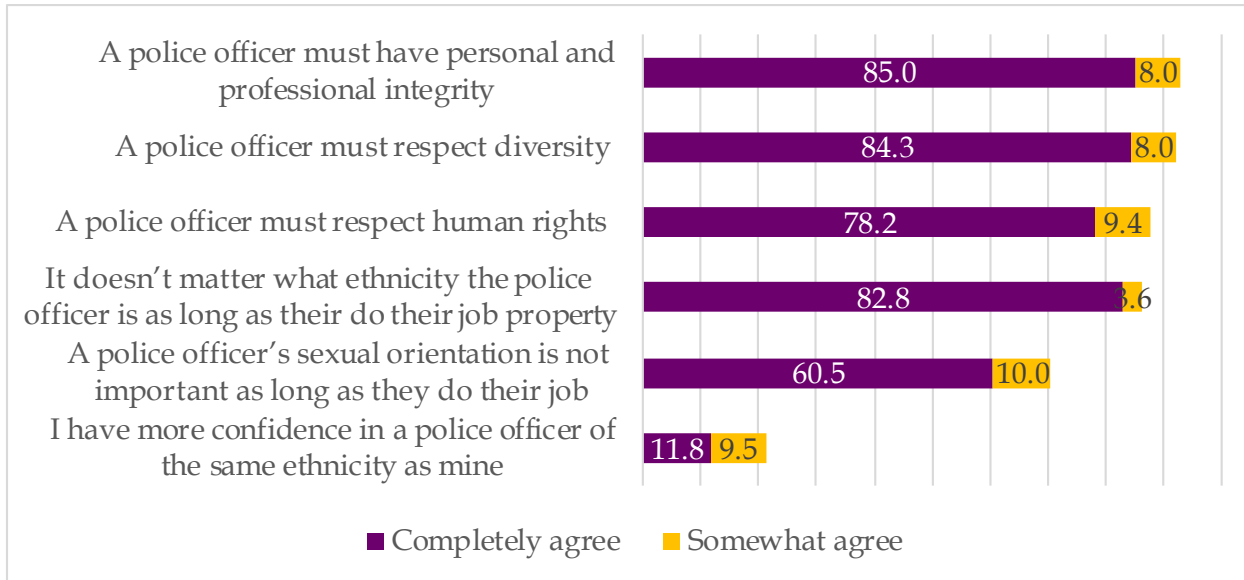
Figure 19: To what extent do you agree with the following claims?

Corruption

In this chapter, we shall analyze the respondents' stance on the relationship between law enforcement and corruption and whether corruption is tackled successfully. In addition, we will examine their attitudes about the influence of certain social groups on the police, we will talk about their experiences regarding bribery of police officers and see how familiar they are with anti-corruption activities undertaken by the police.

The first such question was meant to examine whether citizens find that corruption is a prominent problem in Montenegro. Cumulatively, 83.1% of those polled believe that corruption is a major problem in Montenegro - 52.0% of respondents think that this is a very big problem and an additional 31.1% say that it is quite a problem.

The younger the respondents, the more they find that corruption is a major problem. Serbs have the most negative attitude about the prevalence of corruption in Montenegro, while Bosniaks and Albanians are least likely to label it as a widespread issue. Residents of the central region are more likely than others to consider corruption a pronounced problem. Also, there is a positive correlation between income level of respondents and their level of agreement with the statements

presented in the graph below - the higher the income they earn, the more likely they are to perceive corruption as a prominent problem in Montenegro.
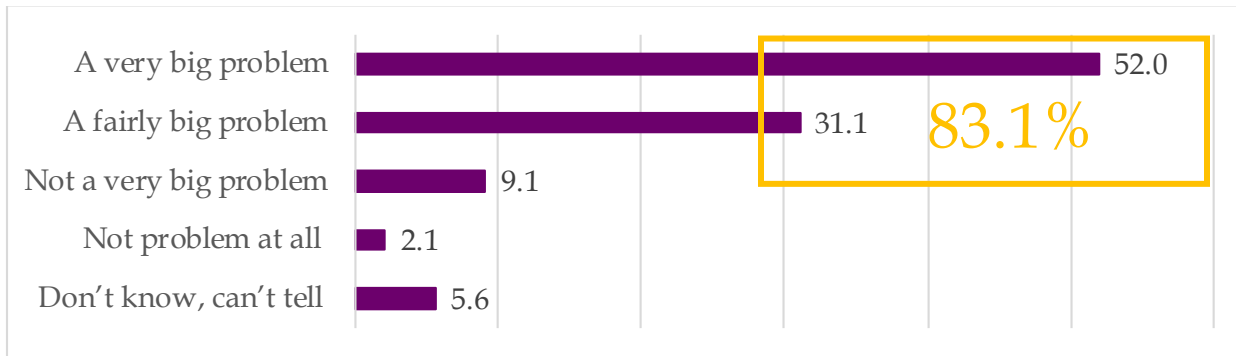

Figure 20: In your opinion, to what extent is corruption a problem in Montenegro?

We asked the respondents about the number of police officers involved in corrupt activities. Only 4.9% of respondents believe that there are no police officers involved in such activities, while cumulatively 77.1% say that police officers are involved in corruption to a greater or lesser degree.

The majority of those respondents who do have an opinion on the matter, 34.6%, believe that a certain number of officers is involved in corruption. Every fifth respondent believes that there are not many such cases, and almost every fourth one believes that there are only individual cases of officers involved in corrupt activities. There is a also a strikingly high percentage of respondents who were undecided or did not want to state their opinion.

Citizens from the central part of Montenegro were most straightforward in discussing the issue - cumulatively, 82.0% thought that police officers were to some extent involved in corruption. The statistically significant differences were also noted as per the respondents' age, their ethnicity, and education and income level. The younger the respondent, the higher the number of police officers involved in corruption they quote. On the contrary, members of ethnic minorities are less likely than others to believe that corruption is present in police ranks.

Finally, it should be noted that there is a positive correlation when it comes to the relationship between education and income level on the one hand, and the attitude on involvement of police officers in corruption on the other - the higher the educational and income level of respondents, the stronger their belief that police officers are involved in corruption.
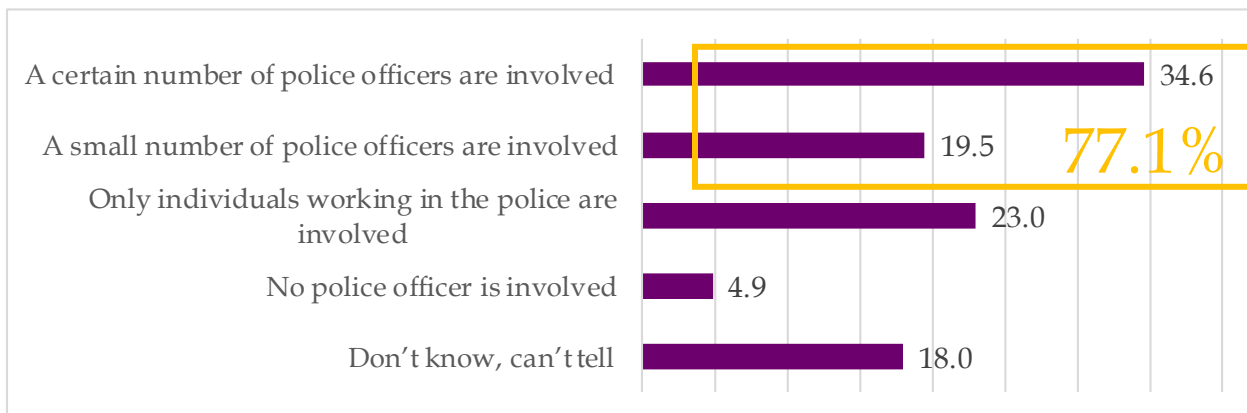

Figure 21: What is your opinion on the potential involvement of police officers in corruption?

To follow up on answers to previous questions, we asked the respondents to evaluate how successfully the police fight against corruption within their ranks. Cumulatively, 35.2% of respondents believe that the police are tackling this issue successfully, while 51.4% disagree. This is an evident decline compared to the previous wave of the research.

While the perception of a successful fight against corruption increases with the age of the respondents, the situation is different when it comes to the education level of respondents. Namely, the higher the education level, the fewer are the respondents who believe that the police are successfully tackling corruption in their ranks.

Once again, the respondents from the central region harbor the most negative attitude towards the police - only 31.0% of them consider the police are fighting corruption successfully. The previously observed patterns in terms of ethnicity of respondents have come up again - Serbs have the most negative perception of the anti-corruption efforts made by the police - only 17.8% of them consider them successful.
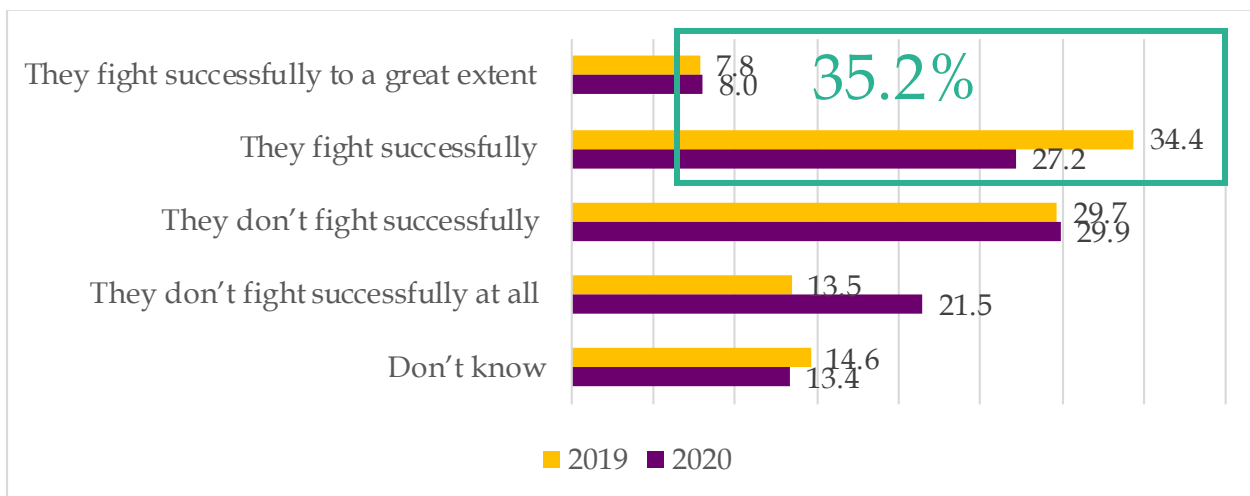

Figure 22: Do you think the police fight corruption in their ranks successfully?

The previous chapter has exposed that some respondents would not report criminal activity out of fear of potential retaliation by criminal groups. The respondents claim that they would not report a crime because of the alleged ties between criminal groups and some police officers.

To that end, we asked respondents to say to which extent the groups presented in the graph below have an impact on police work.

Respondents reach the greatest level of agreement in that state-level politicians exert influence on the police - cumulatively, 81.3% of respondents agree with this statement. Furthermore, 68.6% of respondents have noted the influence of criminal groups, while another 63.7% find that local-level politicians can have an impact on the work of the police. According to the respondents, civil society (27.1%) and citizens (26.1%) have least influence on the police.

Compared to the previous wave of research, the following trend has emerged - respondents believe that the influence of politicians on the police has increased significantly in the past 12 months, while the same can be said for criminal groups and the business sector, albeit to a lesser extent. They find that the influence of the media remained at almost the same level, while the influence of civil society and citizens has declined.

In this year's survey, we notice that women, respondents over the age of 55 and those who have completed only primary school and earn low income are less likely than average to agree with the statement that state-level politicians have an influence on the work of the police. At the same time, when it comes to the influence that state-level politicians exert on the police, it is Serbs (89.7%) and Montenegrins (81.9%) that agree with this statement more than all the other ethnic groups.
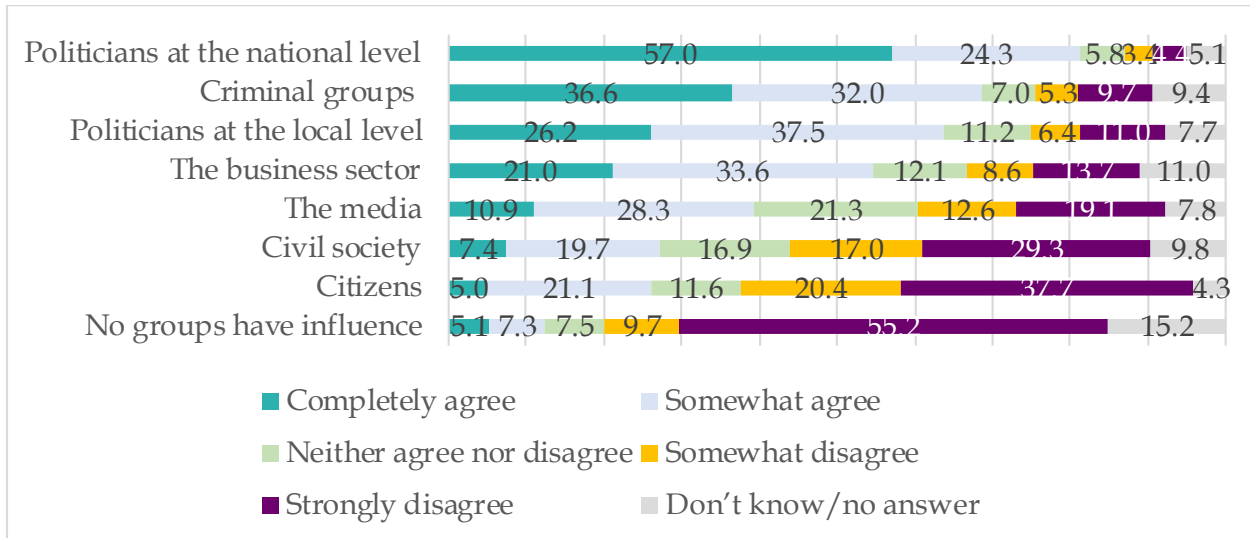

Figure 23: To what extent do you agree that the following groups have influence on police work?

Respondents were also asked if they or their family members had offered a bribe to a police officer in the past year in order to avoid a fine, and the answers are shown in the graph below. One in twelve respondents answered in the affirmative, which is almost the same result as in last year's survey. Of course, we need to reiterate the comment we made in last year's research - it is necessary to consider that the figure might in fact be higher, given the rebuttable assumption that not all the respondents were willing to admit to breaking the law.
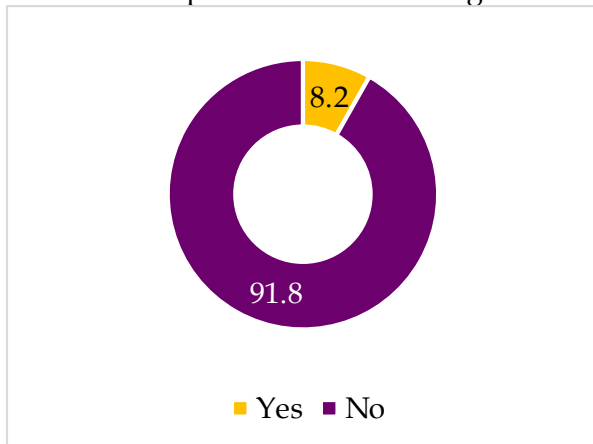

Figure 24: Over the past 12 months, have you or a member of your household ever offered bribe in any form to a police officer in order to avoid being punished?
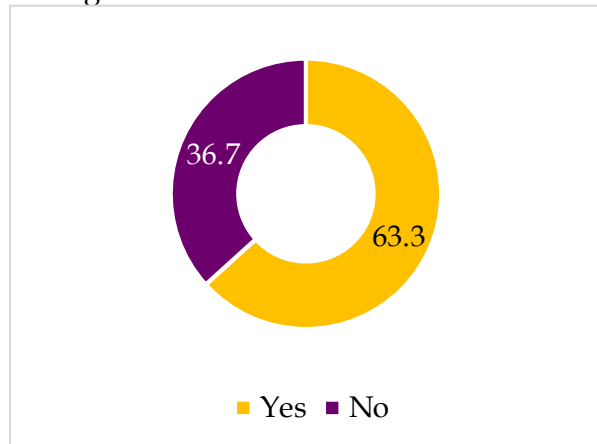
Figure 25: Over the past 12 months, have you or a member of your household PAID a bribe in any form, i.e. has the police officer accepted the bribe you offered?

Those who opted for the Yes answer were asked about the police officer's reaction. In nearly two-thirds of cases, respondents claimed that a police officer accepted bribe. Although a high percentage, it is still significantly lower than 92.3%, as was recorded in the previous wave of the research. However, given the relatively small number of observations, i.e. respondents who claim to have offered bribe, no firm conclusion can be drawn about the change in the behavior of police officers.

To finish off the corruption-related chapter, we asked respondents if they were familiar with any concrete anti-corruption activities carried out by the police. Only one-seventh of the respondents had heard about such activities in the previous 12 months, which is a significantly lower result than the one recorded in last year's survey. In fact, 5.3% say they have definitely heard about them, and an additional 9.4% think they might have heard about some of the police activities in this area. This drop can be explained by the fact that, during 2020, the respondents were mainly focused on (what they believe to be) much more important topics such as the COVID-19 epidemic, the economic recession that goes with it and the heated election campaign ahead of parliamentary elections held on August 30. Also, the Police Directorate was faced with many challenges in the course of 2020, which could have diverted their attention from the promotion of anti-corruption efforts. Though we may acknowledge this explanation, activities carried out by the police with the aim of suppressing corruption in their ranks still need to be promoted and communicated to the public in 2021.
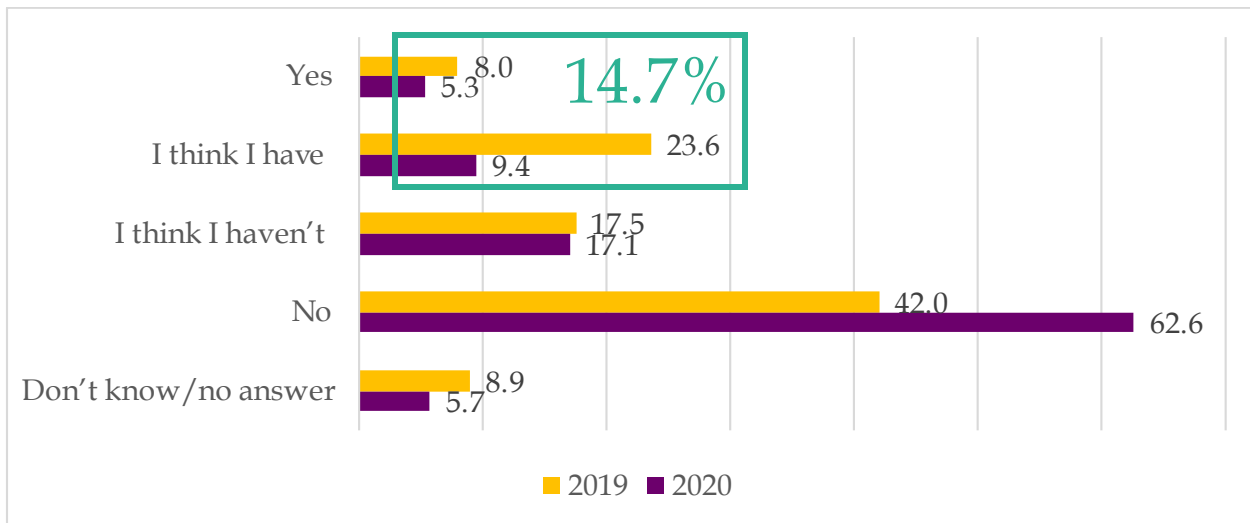

Figure 26: Have you heard of any specific activities aimed at suppressing corrupton in the police over the past 12 months?

Integrative policies

The protection against discriminatory treatment on any grounds is enshrined in the Constitution and laws of Montenegro, especially the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination, which is why we have dedicated this chapter to the public perception of integrative policies. Law enforcement policy should be an integral, and at the same time clearly guided and recognizable part of the police development program, as envisaged by the Police Development Strategy for the period 2016-2020.

In an effort to keep track of how citizens' perceptions have changed from the previous year, we have kept some of the survey questions from last year's research. We also expanded the

questionnaire with a set of questions related to gender equality in law enforcement and digital policing services for easier access.

Effective and trust-based communication and cooperation with citizens is an imperative for proactive policing at the national as well as at the local level. That is why additional professionalisation of the police force is a necessary precondition in the process of building a successful democratic society, through a greater accessibility, respect for human rights and cooperation with the community at the local level. Therefore, the first question in this chapter explores how local authorities and citizens contribute to a higher level of security.

The majority of survey respondents - 60.3% of them - stated that local governments and citizens do contribute to security in their respective municipalities, while, according to 18.0% of those polled, local contribution is neither relevant nor irrelevant. Cumulatively, every seventh respondent believes that local authorities and citizens have either some influence or no influence at all.

Responses vary among different ethnic groups, as minority peoples claim more often that local authorities and citizens do contribute to general security - Albanians and Bosniaks, i.e. Muslims (69.1%), followed by Montenegrins (64.4%), whereas Serbs are least supportive of this view (49.3%). Furthermore, we have noticed a positive correlation between the age of respondents and where they stand on this issue - the older the respondents, the more they support the view that local governments and citizens contribute to security in their municipalities.
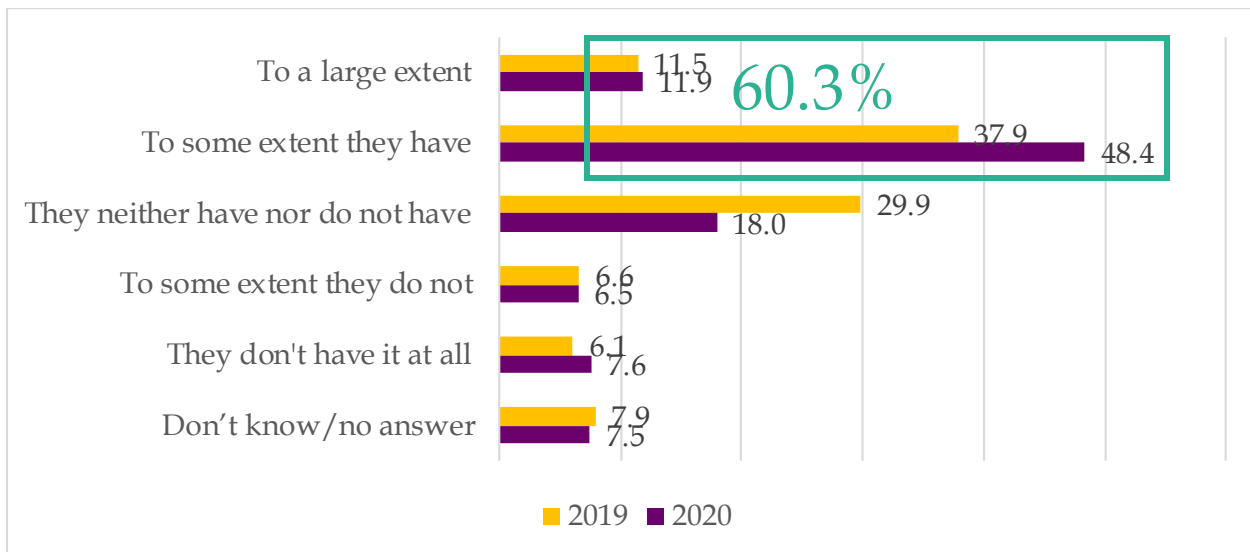

Figure 27: To what extent do the local authorities and citizens contribute to security in your municipality?

The next question refers to how law enforcement officers treat certain social groups. Like in the previous wave of the research, respondents were presented with a list of different social groups and asked to evaluate whether police officers display the same level of professionalism and provide equal treatment to all of them.

A staggering drop in the overall score has been noted when it comes to police officers' treatment of all of the above groups, as compared to 2019 results. Speaking about results as per individual categories, a finding from the previous wave of research has been reiterated - police officers provide equal treatment to women and men for the most part, as more than three quarters of the

surveyed population believe this to be the case. Albanians, Bosniaks and Muslims are more prone to agreeing with this point than Serbs and Montenegrins.

People with different sexual orientation are second-ranked in terms of receiving professional and respectful treatment by the police, which is deemed to be a progress, considering that this social group was fourth-ranked in 2019. This may be attributed to an enhanced cooperation between the LGBT community and the Police Directorate, which resulted in the establishment of a Trust Team. Respondents over the age of 55 (18.4%) are least prone to agreeing with this view, unlike younger respondents. More than half of the surveyed population, 59.0%, believe that police officers treat members of different ethnicities with equal professionalism and respect.

Respondents find that disparate treatment by police officers depends on one's political affiliation and economic status, and research findings indicate that such treatment is most evident towards voters and supporters of different parties (42.2%), the rich and the poor (34.7%) and politicians and public officials (31.0%), as compared to other citizens.
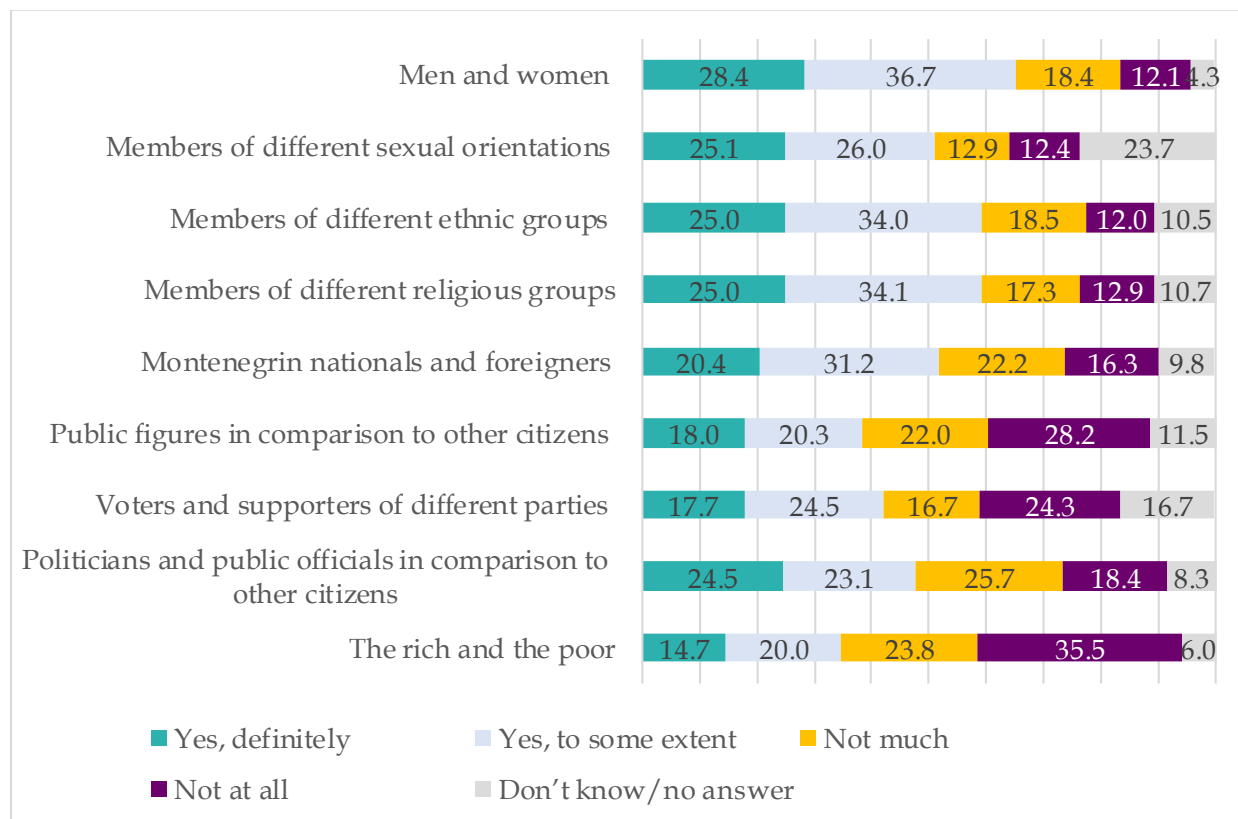

Figure 28: In your opinion and experience, do police officers treat the following groups with equal professionalism and respect?

The next section of the chapter is dedicated to the traits of an average Montenegrin police officer, as cited by respondents. As many as 70.5% of the surveyed citizens have stated that police officers are kind, 67.1% of them claim they are communicative and 66.2% find them willing to help citizens.

When it comes to the perception of the average Montenegrin police officer in the eyes of the respondents, a lower degree of agreement with the stated characteristics is noticeable in relation to the research conducted in 2019.
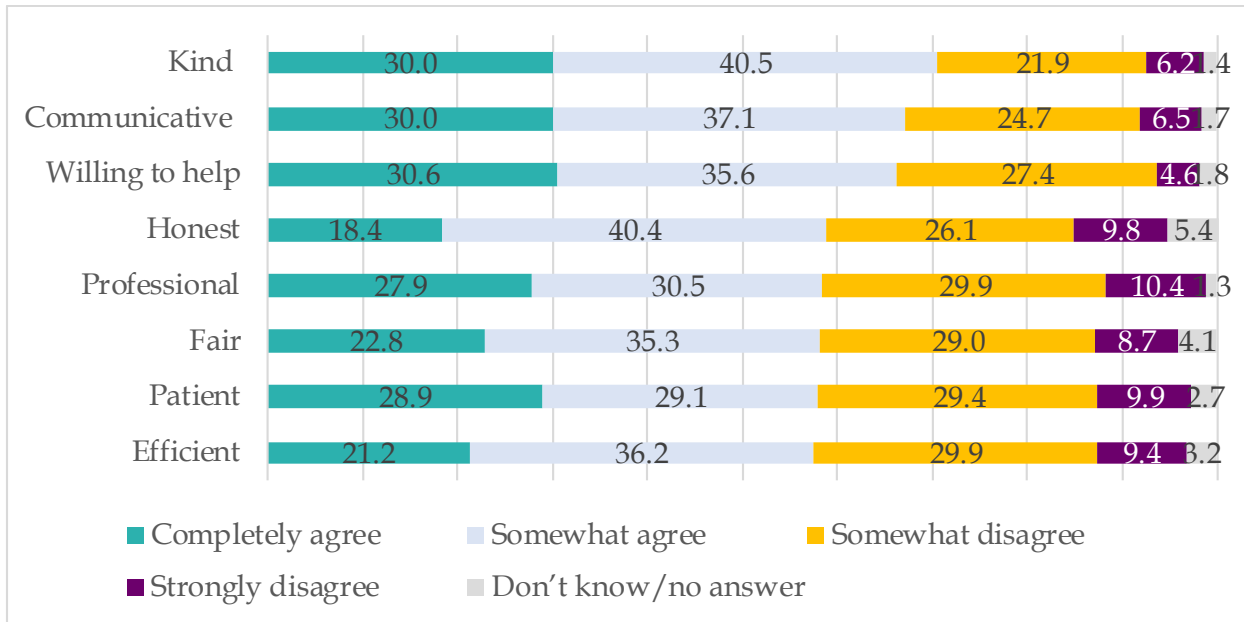
	Completely agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/no answer
Kind	30.0	40.5	21.9	6.2	1.4
Communicative	30.0	37.1	24.7	6.5	1.7
Willing to help	30.6	35.6	27.4	4.6	1.8
Honest	18.4	40.4	26.1	9.8	5.4
Professional	27.9	30.5	29.9	10.4	1.3
Fair	22.8	35.3	29.0	8.7	4.1
Patient	28.9	29.1	29.4	9.9	2.7
Efficient	21.2	36.2	29.9	9.4	3.2

Figure 29: Would you say that an average Montenegrin police officer is:

The issue of particular importance is gender policy, as is defined by the Strategy that indicates the need for strategic action in order to fully implement the adopted regulations that guarantee protection against discrimination on any grounds. It is for this very reason that we have created a set of questions that seeks to explore the respondents' attitudes about women employed in the security sector.

Cumulatively, three-quarters of the respondents believe that men and women are equally capable of fulfilling their duties as police officers. As for the response distribution per demographic groups, the statistically significant difference occurs with respondents of different ethnicities, as 87.0% Montenegrins are more inclined to perceiving women as capable of working in the security sector, while 83.7% of Albanians, 82.6% of Bosniaks and Muslims, and finally 80.4% Serbs agree with this view.
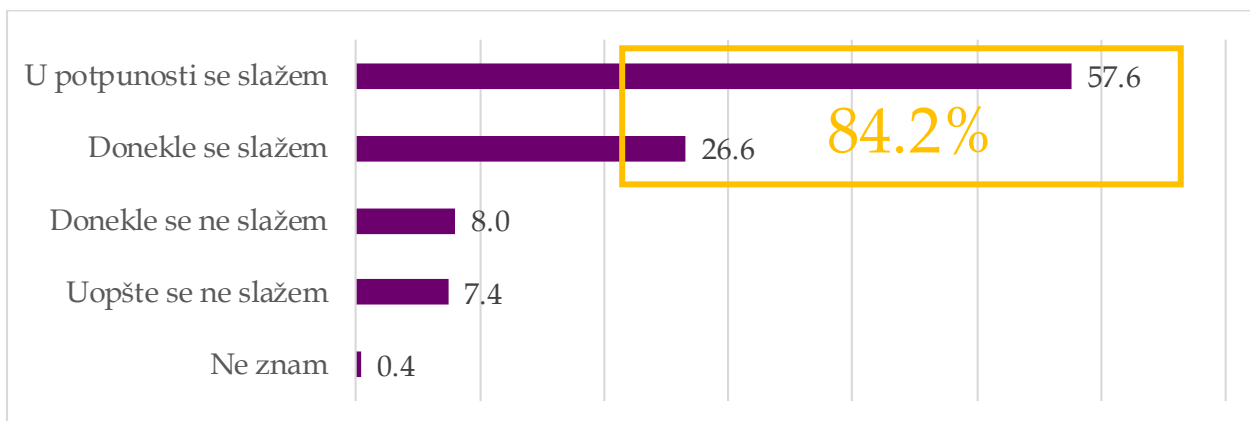

U potpunosti se slažem	57.6
Donekle se slažem	26.6
Donekle se ne slažem	8.0
Uopšte se ne slažem	7.4
Ne znam	0.4

84.2%

Figure 30: In general, do you consider men and women equally capable of performing police work?

The respondents that agree to a certain extent or completely disagree with the said view, i.e. 15.4% of them, were asked to provide an explanation. They had the option of answering an open-ended

question in free-form, and their answers were subsequently coded. The following is a list of the most frequently cited answers:

- It's a man's job / Men are stronger – 47;
- They don't have the stamina – 23;
- It's not a job fit for a woman – 20;
- They're the weaker sex – 14;
- They're exposed to too many risks – 8;
- They lack authority – 6;
- Women have more house chores – 6;
- They're more fit for office / administrative work – 5;
- Other – 9.

More than one-third of the 137 respondents who answered the given question believe that police work is an exclusively male occupation. Some respondents were more specific, so the second most frequent answer is that women are not physically predisposed for police work, while 20 respondents are convinced that it is not a job suitable for women. We asked the respondents to state the extent to which they believe that men and women are equally capable of taking responsibility in different organizational units and specific areas of police work.

As with the previous open-ended question, respondents recognize certain jobs as distinctively gender-defined, so almost all respondents (97.3%) believe that men and women are equally capable of doing office work, as well as working in administration, i.e. management structures. Slightly fewer respondents have stated that both women and men are capable of working in uniformed police, such as traffic police (92.7%), and community police, as 92.0% of respondents have backed this view. However, as many as 42.5% of those surveyed believe that women cannot match the performance of their male colleagues in SWAT teams, i.e. special operations units.
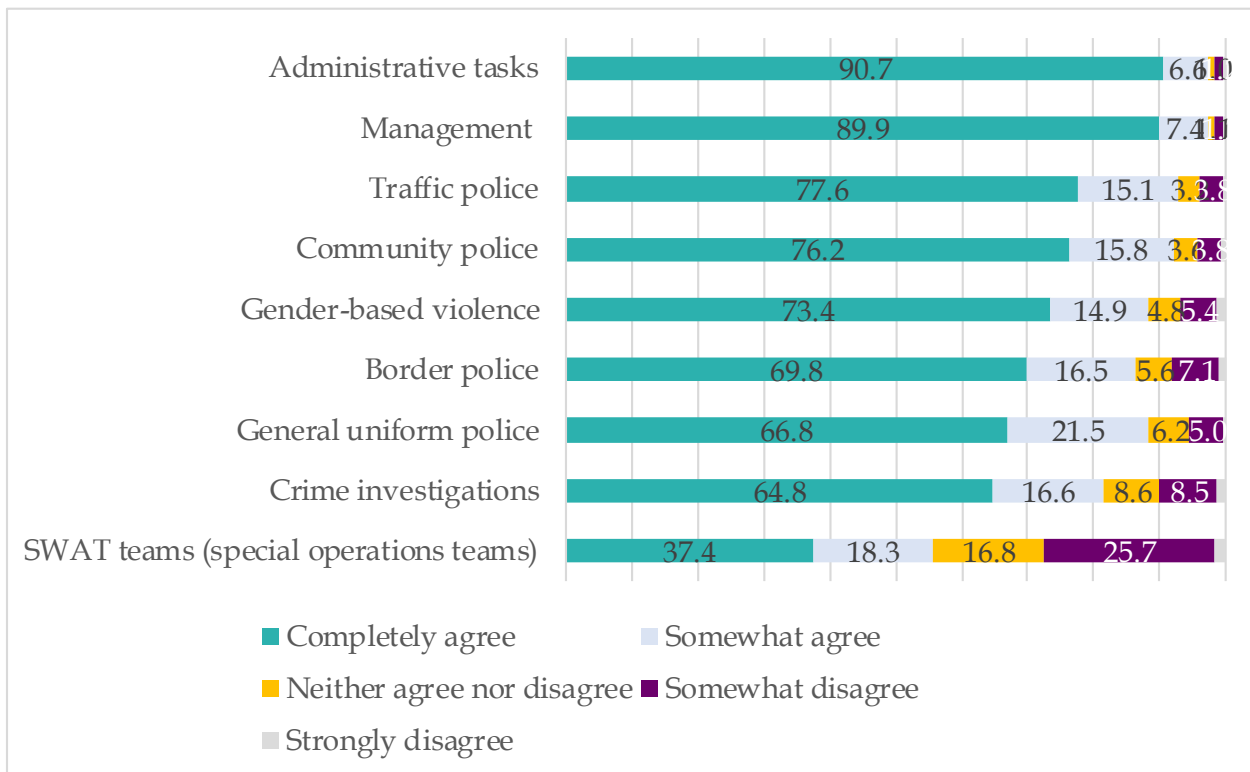

Figure 31: In your opinion, are men and women equally capable of working in?

31

Furthermore, we offered several pre-specified options to the respondents and asked them to state the extent to which they agree with them. This was done through a so-called *multiple choice question*, which is why the sum of all the answers exceeds 100%. This question was part of the last year's survey as well. We can observe an increased agreement with the view that women show greater sensibility than men to female victims of domestic or some other type of violence. This was backed by as many as 91.8% of the respondents, while 89.5% of those polled stated that women are able to perform any job, including working in the security sector.
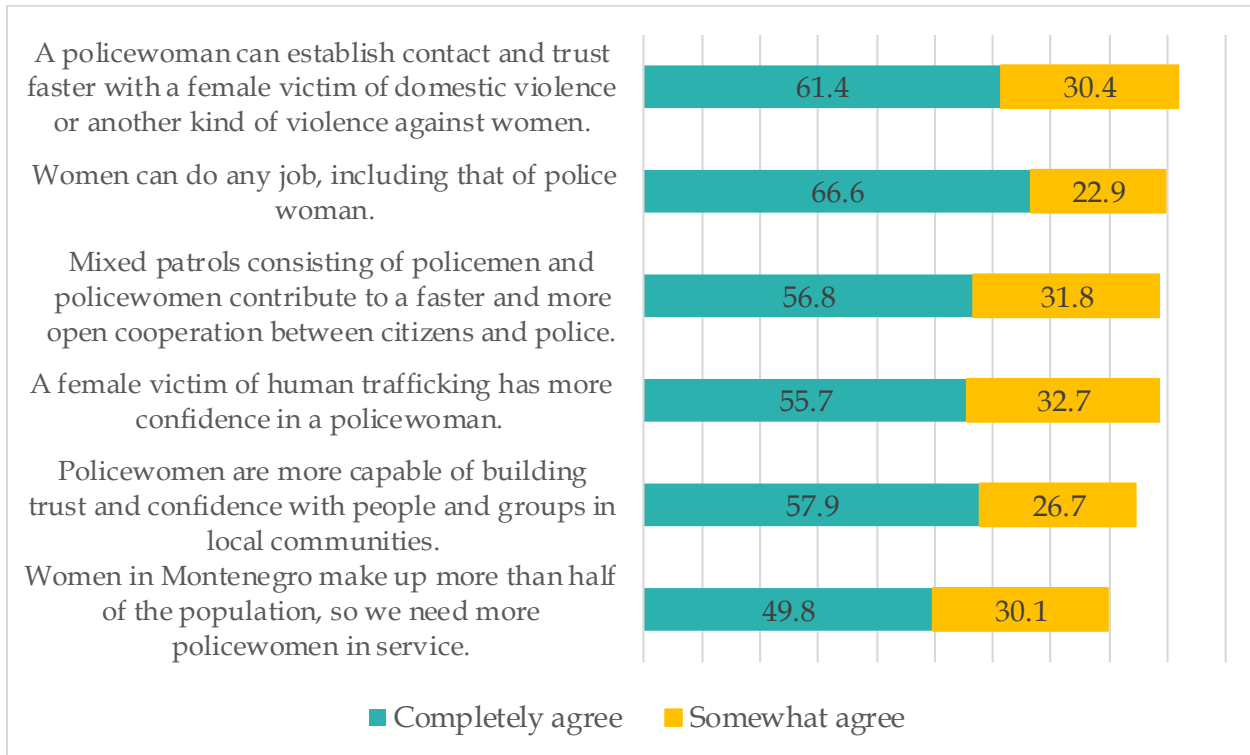

Figure 32: How woud you rate the following claims?

As shown in the following table, there is a higher level of agreement with all these statements compared to the survey conducted in 2019.

	2019	2020
A policewoman can establish contact and trust faster with a female victim of domestic violence or another kind of violence against women.	83.4%	91.8%
Women can do any job, including that of police woman.	86.10%	89.50%
Mixed patrols consisting of policemen and policewomen contribute to a faster and more open cooperation between citizens and police.	81.6%	88.6%
A female victim of human trafficking has more confidence in a policewoman.	81.9%	88.4%
Policewomen are more capable of building trust and confidence with people and groups in local communities.	/	84.60%
Women in Montenegro make up more than half of the population, so we need more policewomen in service.	76.6%	79.9%

Table 4: How would you rate the following claims? - % of the respondents who agree completely or strongly

Despite the regulations in force, the wider cultural context accounts for women being less interested in working in the security sector, which is confirmed by the evidently disproportionate share of female officers in the entire police workforce. We therefore asked female respondents as to what their primary concern would be if they were to consider a career in the police.

More than half of them (59.0%) have stated that physical fitness tests would be the biggest obstacle for them. There is a negative correlation between the respondents' education attainment level and their agreement with the view that fitness tests would be an obstacle. The higher the level of education, the less concerned they are about their ability to pass the physical fitness tests. As many as 55.3% of respondents are somewhat suspicious of whether they would be able to strike a work-life balance, and the statistically significant differences in this respect occur between respondents coming from different regions. Respondents from the northern region are far more concerned about reconciling professional and family responsibilities (65.8%) compared to those living in the central (53.9%) and southern region (47.8%).

Women are least concerned with social prejudice, which is an extremely positive finding given the patriarchal culture of Montenegrin society. Only 17.0% of them state that this would be a matter of concern if they were to pursue a career in the security sector, which is the answer most often cited by highly educated women under the age of 34.
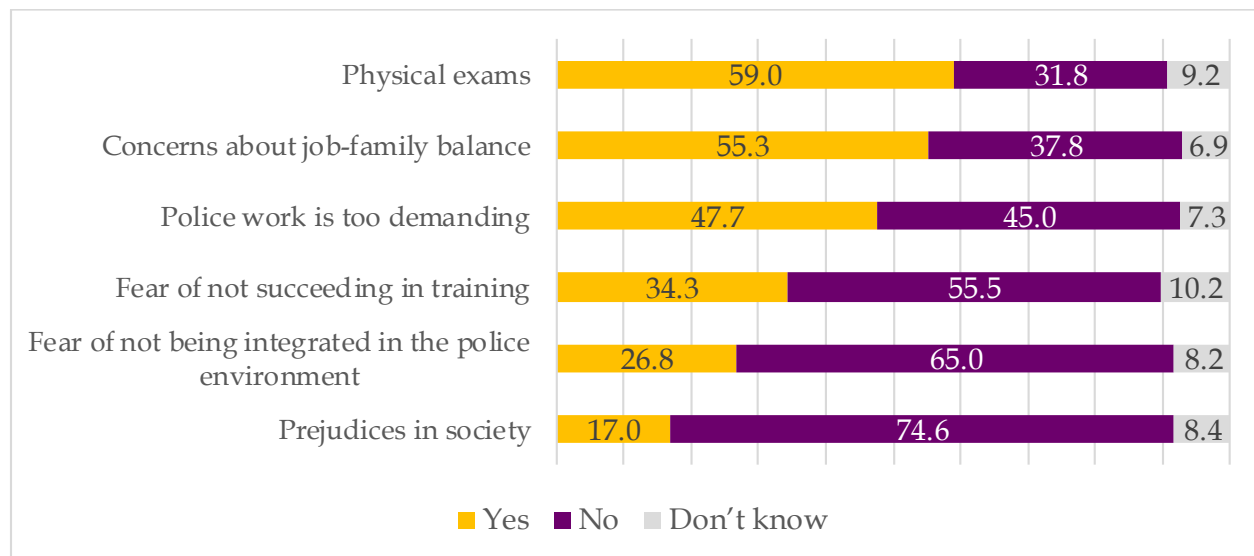

Figure 33: Should you consider a career in police, what would be your main concerns?

The COVID-19 epidemic has brought numerous changes to the lives of Montenegrin citizens. Among others, the need for an increased level of digitization and online services that institutions can provide is highlighted. Thus, at the end of this thematic section, we prepared another open-ended question, where citizens were asked to make specific suggestions as to which useful digital services the Police Directorate could introduce. A total of 288 respondents agree that a digital service would improve the work of the Police Directorate and facilitate communication with citizens, and their concrete proposals were then coded in several categories.

Half of the abovementioned group state that an online service for reporting misdemeanors and criminal offenses would be a useful tool that would relieve the call center, emphasizing anonymity as its primary feature. This was marked as extremely important by victims of

domestic violence. Given that the "Be Safe" application, which enables victims of violence to reach out for help, was introduced in early May upon initiative by the Government of Montenegro, the Ministry of Interior and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), it is necessary to further promote this online service so as to make it more effective. Respondents also propose that the system automatically generates the address from which a citizen reports an incident, such as a fire. To that end, the potential digital service could feature predefined items that citizens could easily choose from, as that would facilitate and speed up the reporting process. The concrete suggestions from the respondents are provided below:

"It would be useful to provide a digital emergency reporting service, which would send the location automatically." (ID 264)

"A service through which they could anonymously report violations, violence and corruption, because many people stay silent out of fear." (ID 930)

"Introduce an online service where citizens can report anything, and ensure that it is protected, not anonymous, but that the data of the person who filed the report are protected." (ID 742)

A number of respondents find that a mobile application would be a useful channel for reporting problems, as well as a chat option. Quite fewer respondents mentioned Viber platform as an adequate channel for a more efficient police–citizen communication.

"It would be useful to introduce an application for reporting each problem separately, divided by categories." (ID 59)

"Yes, it is necessary to create an application to make it easier for citizens to report crimes or complaints into the work of the police, as well as some operational information." (ID 545)

"An application for anonymous reporting of irregularities." (ID 491)

"A chat room for reporting human rights violations, which could also be used to report all types of violations." (ID 752)

"Yes, reporting violence via Viber." (ID 684)

One-fourth of respondents who answered the previous question have noted the usefulness of an informational website that would feature comprehensive information on the activities of the Police Directorate, instructions for citizens, as well as service information.

"I would like to see a website with more information about the work of the police, not only about corruption and crime, but also about other activities such as: juvenile delinquency, drug abuse, prostitution and cybercrime." (ID 512)

"It is necessary to educate citizens about the work and competencies of the police. I think greater attention should be paid to that. For example, RTCG aired a show about the Army, the anti-terrorist unit, so there should be more of such police-related contents, in order to make citizens more familiar with the work of the police as a service meant for citizens." (ID 131)

"It is necessary to educate citizens about when and in which situations they can turn to the police about different types of violence. In that sense, deliver trainings for all registered victims of violence, also organize online or else face-to-face trainings in schools, explain what and when students can report something to the police, in order to react preventively, and not after peer or other violence, theft etc. have already taken place." (ID 635)

34

"A service for evaluating police performance and making suggestions." (ID 767)

"It would be good to have a website with more information about the work of the police, about all operations and activities, not just crime." (ID 463)

"More information about the work of the police, to be more transparent, with more information about how the police can treat us in different situations. For example, in which situations the police may stop us, what questions they can ask, in general - more information about the work of the police and about our rights when it comes to police conduct." (ID 56)

Information

In this chapter, we will analyze how informed the surveyed citizens are about the work of the Police Directorate, the specific topics they would like to be more informed about, as well as the information channels they use.

An evidently lower level of being informed has been noted compared to the research conducted in 2019. While in the previous wave 46.9% of respondents claimed to be either fully or informed for the most part, the percentage recorded in this wave is 39.8%. Men are more likely to claim being informed than women, be it fully or for the most part. Also, respondents from the southern region are reportedly more informed about the activities of the Police Directorate in relation to those respondents who live in central and northern regions.

On the other hand, this wave of the research records a higher number of respondents who claim to be almost completely uninformed about the activities of the Police Directorate.
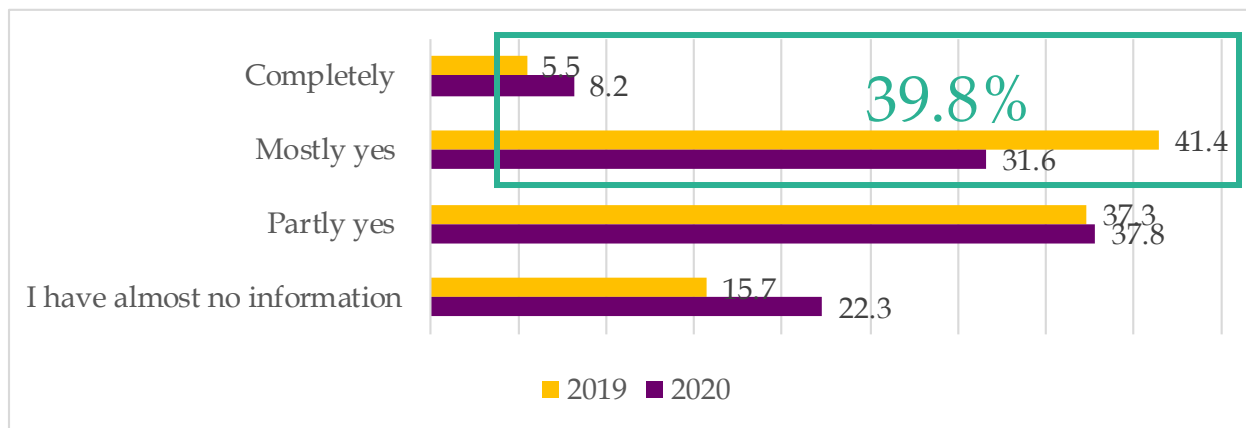

Figure 34: Generally speaking, how are you personally informed about police work?

In an effort to determine the reasons for the lower level of being informed, we offered several possible answers to respondents, allowing them to choose all and any that apply. The largest number of respondents, 34.5%, state that they are not interested in this topic, and gender-wise, women (40.2%) opt for this answer more often than men (28.9%). Also, respondents with a lower level of education attainment are more likely to state that they are not interested in the work of the police. As many as 32.9% of those polled find that the information available are superficial and too broad and that there is not enough information about topics that trigger their interest, while one-fourth of respondents quote insufficient media coverage. The smallest percentage of respondents, 8.8%, answered that they did not understand the terminology used to report on the work of the Police Directorate.
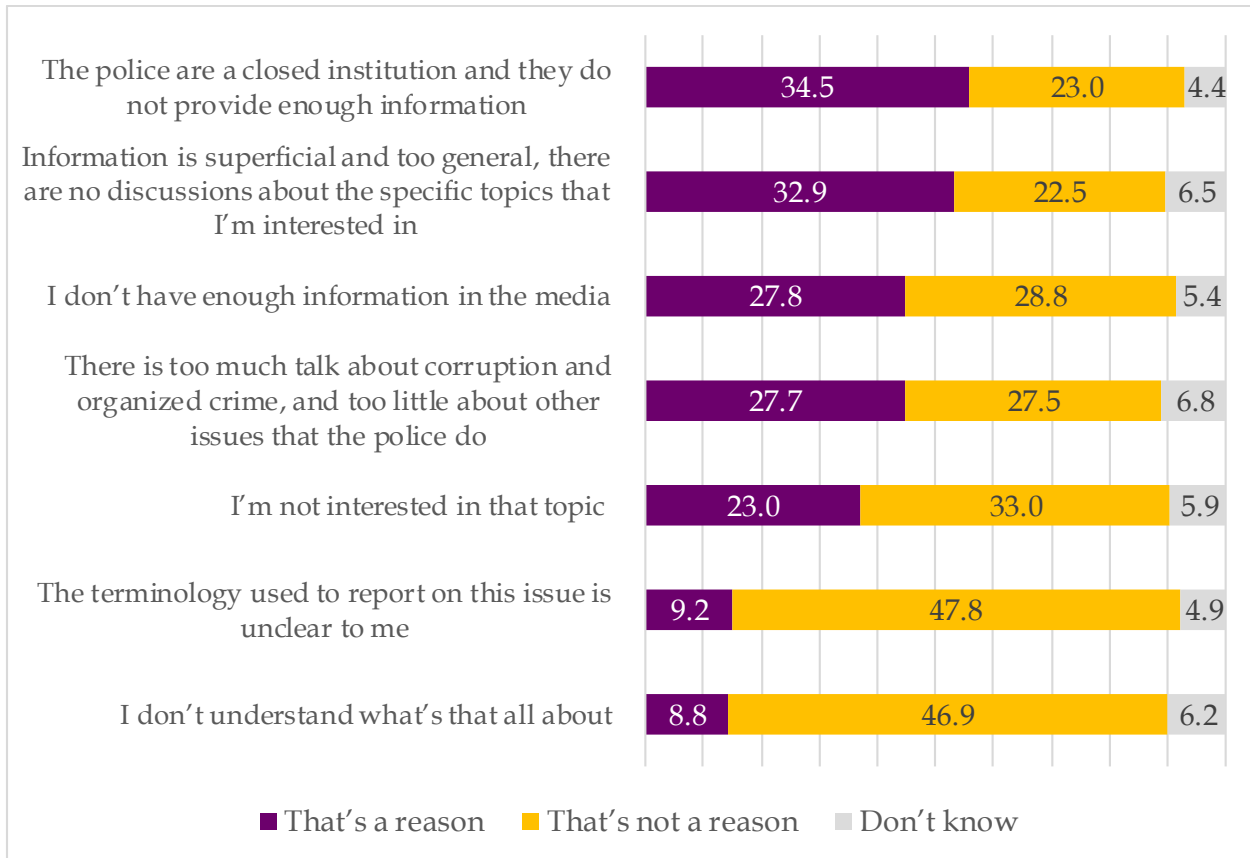
	That's a reason	That's not a reason	Don't know
The police are a closed institution and they do not provide enough information	34.5	23.0	4.4
Information is superficial and too general, there are no discussions about the specific topics that I'm interested in	32.9	22.5	6.5
I don't have enough information in the media	27.8	28.8	5.4
There is too much talk about corruption and organized crime, and too little about other issues that the police do	27.7	27.5	6.8
I'm not interested in that topic	23.0	33.0	5.9
The terminology used to report on this issue is unclear to me	9.2	47.8	4.9
I don't understand what's that all about	8.8	46.9	6.2

■ That's a reason ■ That's not a reason ■ Don't know

Figure 35: If you are not or if you are only partly informed, why is that the case?

The next question refers to information channels. As with the first wave of the research, the results indicate that television and internet portals are the two most common ways of learning about the work of the police. Cumulatively, 76.9% of respondents cite television as the primary source of information, while 69.0% of them cite internet portals. When demographic characteristics of the respondents are considered, television is more often picked out as a response by older respondents, while respondents up to the age of 34, and predominantly highly educated persons at that, learn this information through Internet portals.
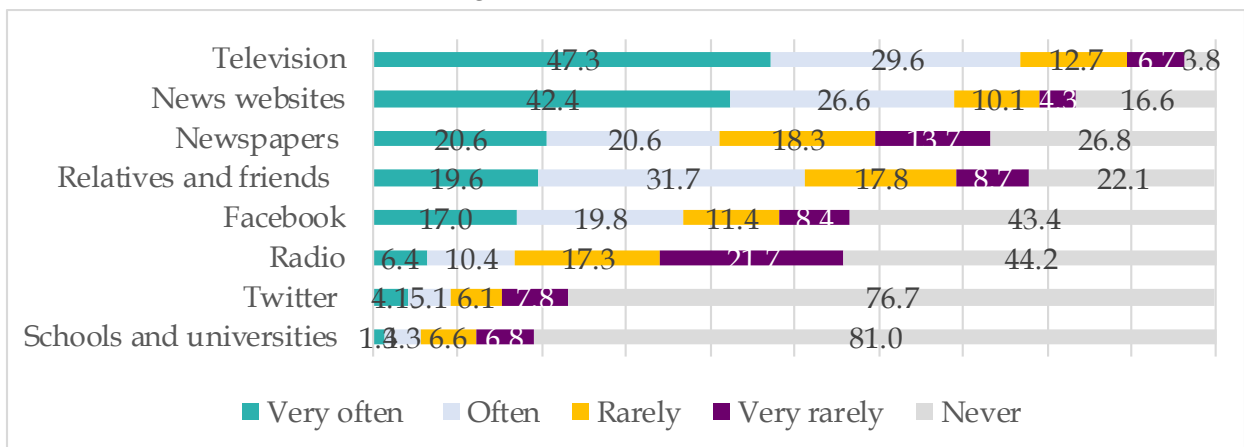
	Very often	Often	Rarely	Very rarely	Never
Television	47.3	29.6	12.7	6.7	3.8
News websites	42.4	26.6	10.1	4.3	16.6
Newspapers	20.6	20.6	18.3	13.7	26.8
Relatives and friends	19.6	31.7	17.8	8.7	22.1
Facebook	17.0	19.8	11.4	8.4	43.4
Radio	6.4	10.4	17.3	21.7	44.2
Twitter	4.1	5.1	6.1	7.8	76.7
Schools and universities	1.4	4.3	6.6	6.8	81.0

■ Very often ■ Often ■ Rarely ■ Very rarely ■ Never

Figure 36: How do you keep yourself informed about the work of Montenegrin police?

As social networks are becoming an increasingly important source of information, in this wave of research we decided to segregate them into two separate responses, and examine the extent to which both of the included networks are used for getting informed about activities of the Police Directorate. The results indicate that every third citizen is informed via Facebook, while 9.2% of them find information on Twitter. The statistically relevant data show that these are persons below the age of 34, and that highly educated persons are more likely to turn to this source of information.

The respondents were then asked to state which specific topics they would like to be more informed about. They express greatest interest in activities conducted to combat and sanction corruption - 54.9% of respondents are interested in this topic, while 54.4% of them are interested in the fight against organized crime. Only 14.6% of respondents would like to learn more about the fulfillment of obligations under the European integration agenda and Montenegro's EU s accession process, while 11.6% show interest in the topic of migration management.
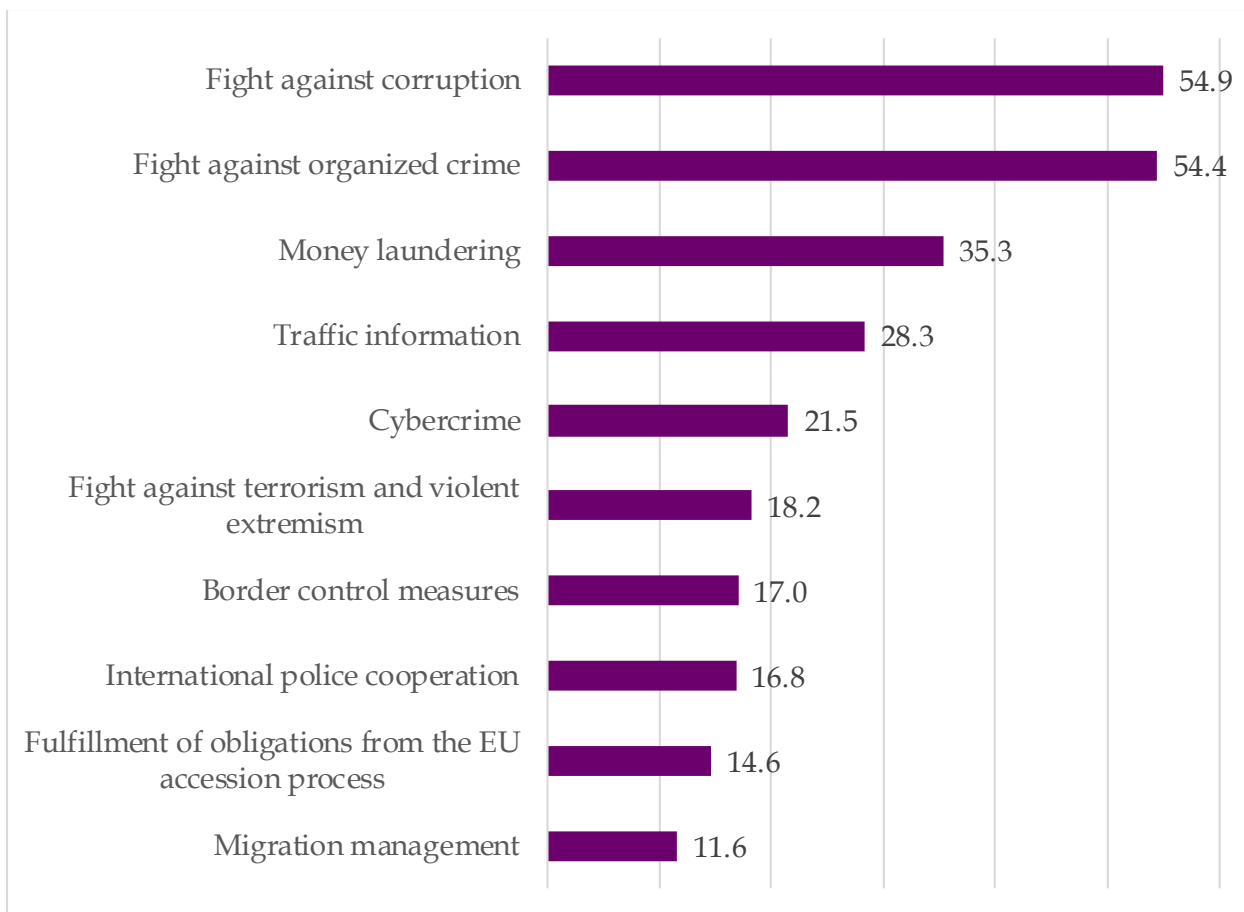

Figure 37: Which topics related to police work would you like to receive more information about?

Finally, respondents were provided with an open-ended question, so as to be able to add any topic of interest that might not have been addressed in the questionnaire. Of the 48 respondents who added a specific answer free-form, the most frequent ones refer to tackling domestic and peer violence. Attached herein are some of the most illustrative answers:

*"Fight against domestic violence, violence in schools, mobbing. So, a little bit more about some forms of everyday violence that is not being talked about enough, and which is indeed happening but we may not recognize that it is happening to an individual, so it would be good to talk a little more about that violence that happens in everyday life, for all of us to be educated about it and raise awareness about this problem." **(ID 889)***

*"Fight against peer violence and domestic violence." **(ID 660)***

*"Working with children, in general, more actions should be intended for children and youth, such as the Firecracker operation. We should be informed about such actions to the greatest extent possible, and these kinds of information should be communicated to a large number of children and young people." **(ID 717)***

We end this chapter by asking respondents if they are sufficiently informed about the recruitment process, should they be interested in joining the police force. More than half of the respondents stated that they were not sufficiently informed about the recruitment process.

In terms of demographics, the statistically significant differences occur between respondents of different gender-age-education profile. Thus, women respond that they do not have enough information - 60.0% to a greater extent than men - 55.0%, while the same is claimed by persons under the age of 34 - 65.8%, and they opt for this response more often than respondents aged 35 to 54 (50.8%) and those older than 55 (56.9%). There is a positive correlation between education attainment and level of being informed - the more educated a person is, the more informed they claim to be. Every fifth respondent remained undecided on this matter, which indicates that the Montenegrin public needs to be informed on this issue more frequently and more thoroughly.
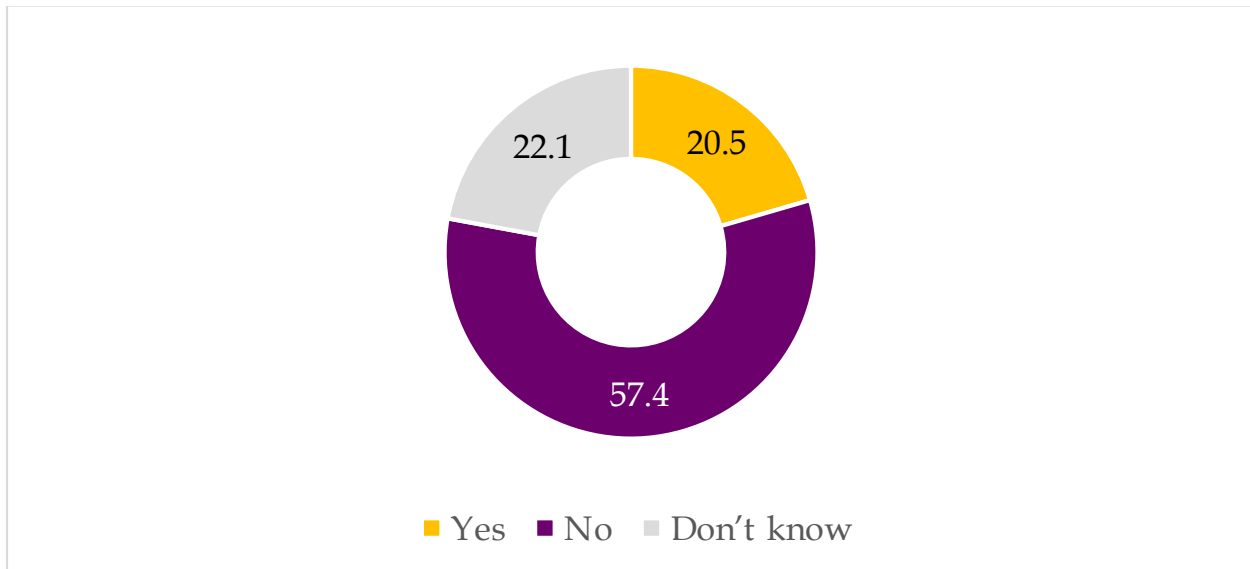

Figure 38: In case you would be interested in joining the Police, do you consider that you have access to enough information about the recruitment procedures?

Main findings

Safety and Police

- The overwhelming majority of citizens, almost two-thirds of them, claim that they feel safe in Montenegro, Still, there has been a drop in the said percentage compared to last year.
- The major problems cited by Montenegrin citizens are those related to drug trafficking (92.0% respondents), corruption (89.9%), and organized crime (89.6%),
- Police are the third most-trusted state institution, Cumulatively, 48.0% of respondents trust the police, which is thus outrun only by the military and church, However, the number of those that do not have confidence in police service has increased from last year,
- The most common associations at the mention of police, as quoted by 41.7% citizens, are safety, security and peace,
- Two-thirds of respondents have a positive perception of the police. Members of national minorities and respondents over the age of 55 have an above-average positive attitude, whereas Serbs harbor the most negative attitude,
- Only one-fifth of respondents have noticed a change for the better in the work of the police in the past 12 months,
- As many as 51.8% of respondents are satisfied with police activities in combating the COVID-19 epidemic.

Community Policing

- As many as 56.3% respondents agree with the statement that the police cooperate with members of their community,
- The majority of respondents, 72.3%, claim that patrol cars can be seen doing rounds in their neighborhoods.
- According to respondents, the police are most efficient in the areas of protecting citizens' safety (60.8% agree), traffic safety (57.1%) and border management and security (56.4%). On the other hand, the fight against organized crime and corruption are recognized as the most problematic areas,
- In addition, respondents gave lowest scores to a claim that police recruitment system is a transparent one - cumulatively, a little over one-quarter of respondents agree with the said statement,
- Out of those who did come into contact with a particular police sector, the majority expressed satisfaction with the operation of the border police – 75.5%, followed by traffic police - 72.1% and the Emergency Communications Center- 68.2%,
- As many as 80.2% of respondents would report domestic violence, and 68.0% would report a crime happening in their environment
- The vast majority of respondents agree with a claim that a police officer must possess personal and professional integrity - 93.0%, respect diversity - 92.3% and respect human rights - 87.6%.

Corruption

- Cumulatively, 83.1% respondents pinpoint corruption as a major problem in Montenegro, whereas 35.2% believe that the police are successfully combating corruption,
- As many as 77.1% of those polled claim that police officers are involved in corruption to a greater or lesser extent,
- Only one-seventh of respondents are familiar with police activities aimed at combating corruption carried out in the past 12 months. Such activities should be better communicated to the public,
- The respondents believe that state-level politicians exert the biggest influence on the police – as many as 81.3% respondents agree. Furthermore, 68.6% of respondents have noted the influence of criminal groups, while another 63.7% find that local-level politicians can have an impact on the work of the police,
- One out of twelve respondents admitted to having offered bribe to a police officer in the past 12 months. On those occasions, police officers accepted bribe in nearly two-thirds of cases. This should be remedied by providing trainings to police officers, especially those working in sectors that have more frequent contacts with citizens,
- Almost one-third of respondents have heard of police activities aimed at combating corruption.

Integrative policies

- As many as 60.3% of respondents believe that local authorities and citizens contribute to greater security in their respective municipalities,
- More than three quarters of those polled state that police officers provide equal treatment to women and men for the most part, while disparate treatment by police officers is most evident towards voters and supporters of different parties (42.2%), the rich and the poor (34.7%) and politicians and public officials (31.0%) as compared to other citizens,
- As many as 70.5% of those polled have stated that police officers are kind, 67.1% of them claim they are communicative and 66.2% find them willing to help citizens,
- Cumulatively, 84.2% of the respondents believe that men and women are equally capable of fulfilling their duties as police officers,
- Nearly all of the respondents (97.3%) believe that men and women are equally capable of doing office work. The closer the work is to the field, the lower the respondents' consent,
- As many as 91.8% of respondents agree with the view that women show greater sensibility than men to female victims of domestic or some other type of violence, whereas 89.5% stated that women are able to perform any job, including working in the security sector,
- More than half of female respondents have stated that physical fitness tests would be the biggest obstacle for them to pursue a career in the security sector, while they are least concerned with social prejudice,
- When asked about digital services that would improve the work of the Police Directorate and police-citizen communication, respondents most often cited an online platform for anonymously reporting crimes and misdemeanors, an application, a chat and an informational website that would feature useful information.

Information

- As many as 39.8% or respondents claim to be informed about the work of the Police Directorate either fully or for the most part;
- The largest number of respondents, 34.5%, state that they are not interested in the work of the Police Directorate and claim this to be the reason for their lack of information in the subject matter, while only 8.8% say they do not understand the terminology used to report on the work of the Police Directorate;
- Cumulatively, 76.9% of respondents cite television as the primary source of information about the work of the police, while 69.0% of them use internet portals to track down such information;
- Respondents expressed interest in learning more about the activities carried out to combat and sanction corruption - 54.9% of them gave this answer, while 54.4% of them are interested in having more information about the fight against organized crime.
- More than half of the respondents stated that they were not sufficiently informed about the police department recruitment process.