

# Perception of the police in Montenegro

Results of a quantitative  
survey

November 2021

## Summary

*In order for the Police Directorate to function properly and meet its task of serving citizens, it is necessary to first determine which patterns of police behavior citizens perceive as desirable and what they expect from police service. This report is a step forward in that direction.*

*For the purpose of drafting this report, a quantitative survey has been conducted on a nationally representative sample of 1002 respondents, which guarantees a standard margin of error of +/- 3.1% with a 95% confidence interval for 50% response distribution. Field surveys were conducted between September 29 and October 17 2021, and the data obtained were analyzed during the first half of November 2021. It should be recalled that this is the third wave of the survey – the first two were conducted in late 2019 and in 2020. This re-surveying allows for monitoring of trends and comparing individual results.*

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

*The first thematic unit contains background information about the method used and the data collected. The key 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 past 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.*

*This year’s survey sheds light on several interesting phenomena and changes in the perception of the police as compared to previous survey waves.*

*The Police Directorate is perceived more positively compared to last year. Police service comes in as the third most-trusted institution, right behind religious institutions and the Montenegrin Army, and is trusted by a cumulative of 53.9% of respondents. Almost two-thirds of respondents, 7.7% more than last year, claim that the police cooperate with citizens in their community, causing the number of those who feel safe in their community to go up to 82.1%. This also prompted the increase in the number of respondents that have a favorable view of the security situation in Montenegro (68.6%).*

*The leading associations at the mention of police service are safety, security and peace. Almost three-quarters of the respondents view the police in a positive light, and as many as 41.1% of them observe changes for the better in the past 12 months. The police are said to be most efficient in the areas of protecting citizens’ safety (59.9%), border management and security (53.5%) and traffic safety (50.3%). Compared to last year, significantly higher satisfaction score has been recorded with areas such as the fight against crime, corruption and drug trafficking. On the other hand, areas that are more community-oriented, such as traffic safety and domestic violence, show decreased satisfaction scores.*

*Serbian ethnic affiliation is no longer the dominant indicator of a negative attitude towards the police – Serbs are much more likely than other ethnic groups to cite improvement in the work of the police in the past 12 months, as agreed by 55.2% of them. The number of Serbs who cite a positive view of the police is increasing, while the number of positive views as voiced by Montenegrins, Bosniaks and Muslims is declining, and the overall ratings recorded in this survey are now more evenly distributed than in the previous waves. Namely, 54.1% of Serbs trust the police, which is a major increase compared to last year's 25.7%. On the other hand, the number of Bosniaks and Muslims who trust the police has seen a steep decline – from 71.2% to 46.4%.*

*Respondents are voicing a better perception of an average police officer as compared to last year – as many as 74.5% of those polled say that police officers are kind, 70.2% that they are communicative and*

66.3% find them willing to help citizens. Persons under the age of 45, highly educated and respondents living in the south of Montenegro are more likely than average to hold a less negative perception of police officers. Three out of five respondents dub the police as an institution that serves its citizens, while 52.1% find them to be adequately trained. On the other hand, respondents gave lowest rankings to a claim that the police recruitment system is a transparent one - cumulatively, only 34.0% of respondents agree with the said claim.

There is a marked tendency to cite police independence - the number of respondents who claim that the groups listed in the questionnaire can exert influence on the police has decreased with all of the seven groups. State-level politicians (74.5%) and criminal groups (67.9%) are recognized as exerting most influence, whereas citizens (22.7%) and civil society (19.3%) are said to have the least influence on the work of the police.

Drug trafficking, drug use and corruption are perceived as Montenegro's top-three security threats. Citizens associate corruption not only with society, but also with the very police service - although the number of respondents who find that the police are combating corruption successfully is increasing (44.9%), a relative majority of 49.1% still points to underachievement in anti-corruption efforts. Although as few as 7.3% of respondents believe that there is not a single police officer involved in corruption, this still constitutes an increase compared to last year's 4.3%. On the other hand, as many as 84.4% of those polled claim that police officers are involved in corruption, be it to a greater or lesser extent.

As many as 84.3% of those surveyed believe that women and men are equally capable of carrying out police duty, a result almost identical to last year's. Women, those under the age of 55, respondents with higher educational attainment levels, respondents who declare themselves as Montenegrins and residents of the coastal region are more likely than average to agree with this view. The majority of respondents agree in that woman can match the performance of their male colleagues in administrative and managerial positions within police force, while such attitude is less present when it comes to women doing field work and taking part in special police operations. Half of the respondents fully agree that more women are needed in the police service, and over four-fifths claim that women can be more effective in contact with victims of trafficking and domestic violence, and that mixed patrols are the best way to boost cooperation between citizens and police. At the same time, when considering a career in the police force, female respondents are mostly concerned about striking a balance between work and family life (61.4%) and about police work possibly being too demanding (54.0%).

An increase has been observed in the self-reported level of being informed - from 39.8% as recorded last year to 55.4%. Respondents are most often informed about the work of the police through TV (70.3%) and web portals (65.6%), and an increased use of information channels compared to the previous wave has been recorded only with social networks - Facebook and Twitter. Respondents voice the greatest interest in activities conducted to combat organized crime - 71.7% of respondents are interested in this topic, while 68.1% are interested in the fight against corruption. Only 22.8% of respondents claim to have sufficient information on how to join the police force, and communication activities should be continued to that end.



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### *Disclaimer*

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## Method and data

The last year was full of numerous challenges for both the citizens and the state apparatus of Montenegro. This fully applies to the Police Directorate as well. In addition to regular activities related to the prevention of criminal acts and misdemeanors, and the protection of the safety of citizens, the year 2021 was also marked by personnel changes conditioned by changes in the executive branch. Of course, we should not forget the complex conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which aggravated the circumstances in which members of the Police Directorate operate.

The report in front of you was created with the aim of answering the question of what are the attitudes of the citizens of Montenegro **about the police** as an institution, **its employees** and **the activities** carried out by the police.

The findings will serve to further develop a professional and democratic police service, which enjoys the trust of citizens and has the necessary capacity to effectively detect crimes of corruption and organized crime, and to increase security in the local community.

The results can be seen as a presentation of attitudes about the police at one point in time, in October 2021. At the same time, since this is a **longitudinal project**, the report also contains data from the previous two waves of research that were conducted at the end of 2019 and 2020. This enables **the comparison of results**, and **monitoring of trends** and changes in the attitudes of the population of Montenegro regarding the image and work of the police, which is an additional value of the report.

The report follows the construction of the questionnaire, which will be discussed later, and is divided into seven sections. In the first part, basic information about the used method and collected data is given.

The main findings are systematized in the following chapters: "**Security and Police**" contains data on the general perception of security in Montenegro, and attitudes about the police and the quality of its work in the previous 12 months; The chapter "**Police in the community**" presents data related to the assessment of the level of satisfaction of citizens in terms of presence and cooperation with members of the police in their community, while the chapter "**Corruption**" contains respondents' views on the perception of the police fight corruption.

Furthermore, the chapter "**Integrative Policies**" follows, dedicated to the analysis of attitudes about the basic characteristics of Montenegrin police officers, the representation of women in the police and their attitudes about potential careers in this institution. The next chapter, "**Information**", deals with the self-assessment of the level of information about the work of the police and the channels that respondents most often use for information. Finally, the main section of the report presents the main findings.

The questionnaire was created as a combination of the so-called **closed-ended**<sup>1</sup> and **open-ended**<sup>2</sup> 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, in some parts of the report, the answers of the respondents to open-ended questions were presented, in which explanations were given for specific views on the police and suggestions were given for the improvement of communication channels used by this institution.

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<sup>1</sup> Questions with given answers in advance.

<sup>2</sup> Questions without pre-offered answers, where the respondent can offer and explain his position.

## Sample

The public opinion poll on the perception of the police in Montenegro was conducted on a sample of **1002 adult respondents**, representative of Montenegro. 479 men and 523 women participated in the research.

The sample structure was defined by the *multistage random sampling* method of selection, which guarantees a standard statistical error of  $\pm 3.1\%$  with a confidence interval of 95% for 50% of the distribution.

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). In the second step, the sampling units within the stratum were divided into three groups: large, medium and small, with the households in which the survey was conducted being selected at this level. The selection of the household in which, within the sample unit, the survey was conducted was done by the *random walk* method. The number of questionnaires completed within each stratum was determined in accordance with the results of the last official census, conducted in 2011.

After collecting data from **21 out of 24** Montenegrin municipalities, post-stratification was performed as per the basic demographic characteristics of the population: gender, age and ethnicity, in order to additionally secure a representative sample<sup>3</sup>.

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,
- Police in the community,
- Corruption,
- Integrative politics,
- Information,
- Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents (gender, age, ethnicity, education, income, region, etc.).

## Data collection and quality control

The fieldwork part of the survey was conducted between 29.09.-17.11.2021., while the data was analyzed in the first half of November 2021.

The research was conducted using the **CAPI** (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing) *technique*, meaning using *face-to-face* interviewing using tablet devices.

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

- **Communication with interviewers** on a daily basis: the field coordinator contacted the interviewers every day and discussed the situation on the ground, potential problems the interviewer faces and plans for the next working day,
- **GPS location control** – the field coordinator checks whether the data was collected at the locations where it should have been done,
- **Telephone or e-mail control** of 20% of the sample,
- **Interview length check**: CAPI software automatically records the duration of each interview. The field coordinator deletes all surveys that last less than 80% of the pre-calculated duration of one interview,

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<sup>3</sup> 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.

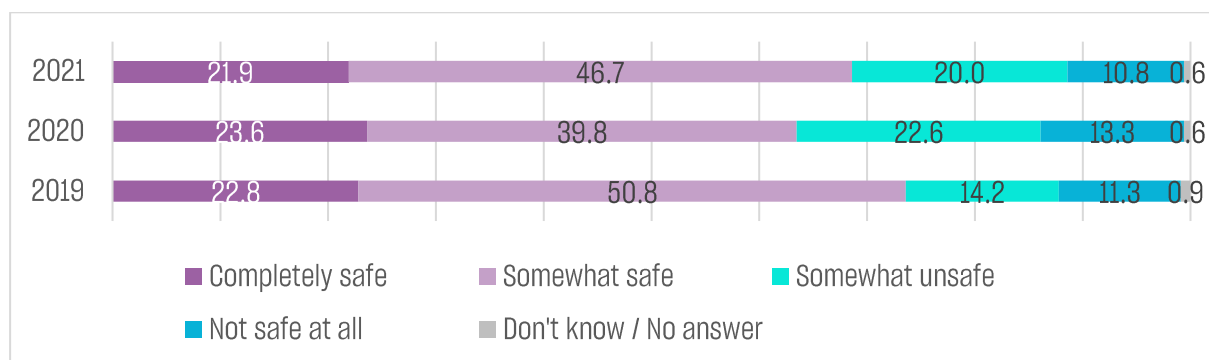
- **Logical control** of each questionnaire entered: The field coordinator reads the answers and checks that they are consistent.

## Security and police

The first thematic chapter of this report is dedicated to the perception of security and the role of the Police Directorate in providing it. The chapter will analyze data on the perception of security at the national level and within the community in which the respondents live, and the main security threats to Montenegrin society. Also, the project team analyzed the level of trust in a number of institutions operating in Montenegro. Furthermore, data that specifically concerns the perception of the police is also presented – these are the first associations with this institution, the general attitude that respondents have towards the police and the perception of police work in the previous 12 months. Finally, the chapter contains issues dedicated to the COVID-19 pandemic, its impact on the security of Montenegro and police activities aimed at limiting the spread of this disease.

As noted earlier, this analysis starts off with safety-related questions. Cumulatively, a little **over two-thirds** of this year’s survey respondents claim to be feeling **safe** in Montenegro. Namely, one-fifth say that they feel completely safe, with an additional 46.7% feeling somewhat safe. It is noticeable that the number of those who have a positive view of safety in Montenegro is below the 2019 level, but still marking a **4.8% increase** compared to last year’s survey.

Once again, we delved into how responses vary between different socio-demographic groups in relation to this question. Interestingly enough, the statistically relevant differences occur only **region-wise**. Thus, respondents from the south (77.9%) and the northern region (72.5%) are way more likely than respondents from the central region (61.7%) to express a favorable view of safety in Montenegro. It is worth adding that, unlike with the previous survey waves, **there are no statistically significant differences observed in the perception of safety among respondents of different ethnicity**.

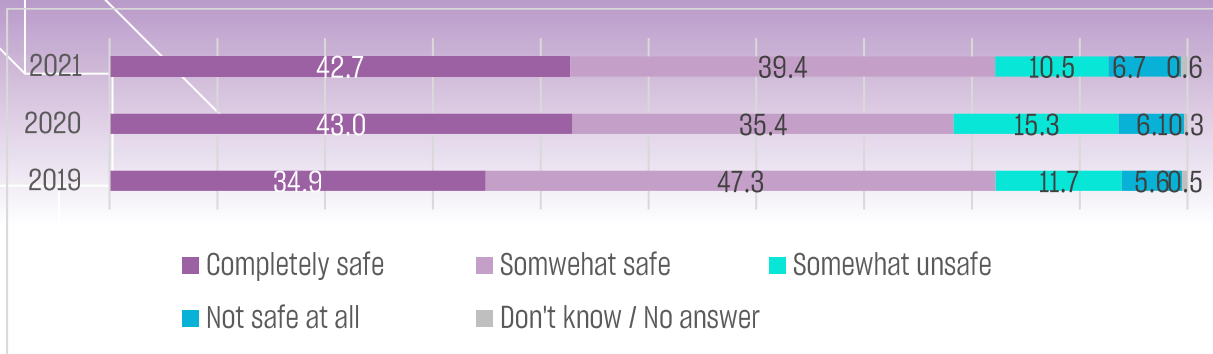


Graph: How would you rate the security situation in Montenegro?

In this year’s survey, safety at the local level yet again scores better than safety at the national level. The project team noted this kind of correlation in a number of surveys conducted in Montenegro<sup>4</sup>, which can be explained by the fact that **the closer and tighter the communities are**, the higher their perceived safety gets. A **slight increase in perceived safety** has been yet again observed since the 2020 wave.

Thus, cumulatively **82.1% of respondents** consider their **local community to be a safe one**. Aside from the region where respondents live, statistically significant differences also come up age-wise. As with the previous question, residents of the **central region** feel **least safe**. At the same time, it is the **respondents under the age of 35** that feel less safe than others.

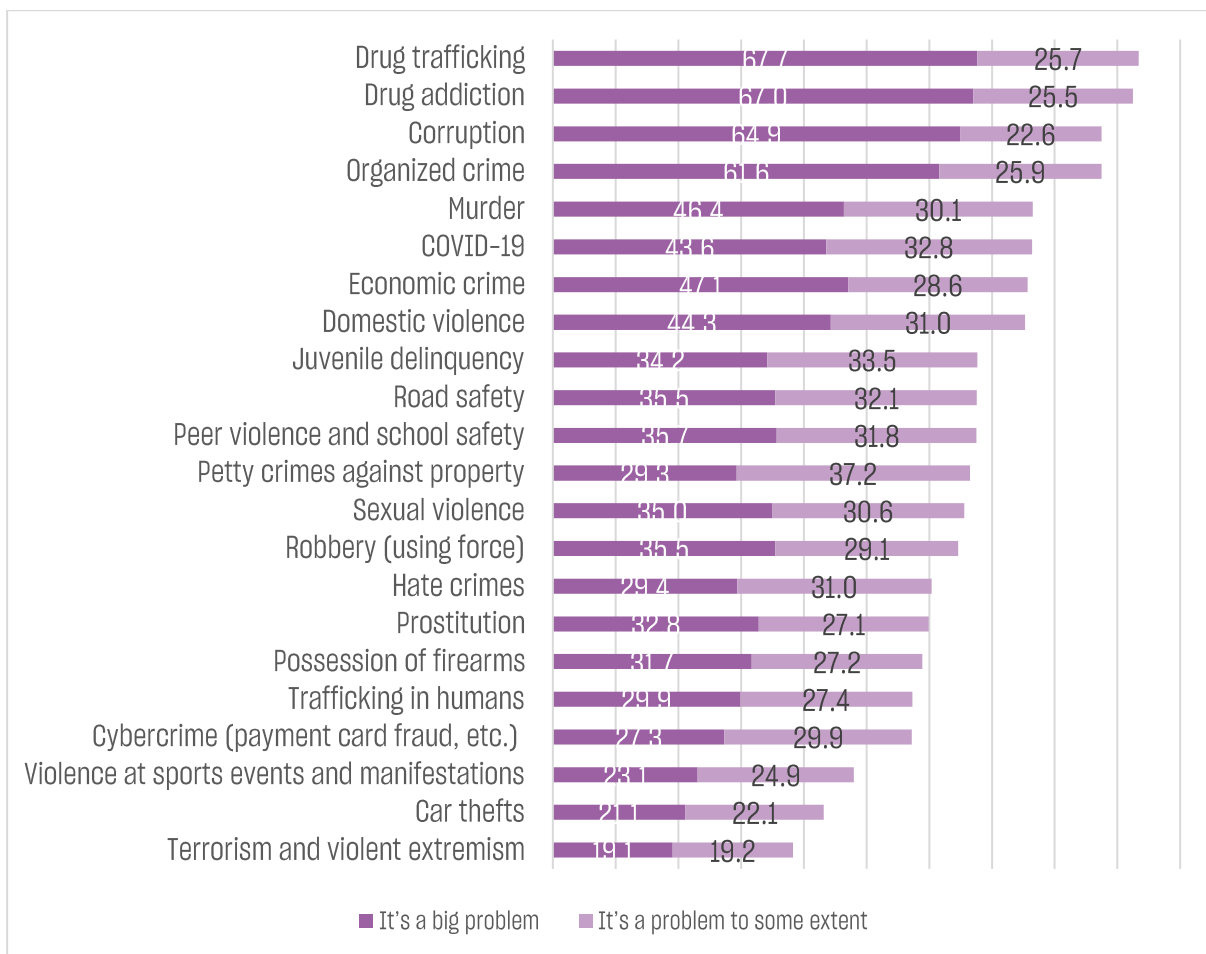
<sup>4</sup> One such example is the survey *The Influence of Media on the Suppression of Violent Extremism in Montenegro*, conducted by NGO NOMEN in cooperation with DeFacto Consultancy in 2018. The report with key survey findings is available at the following link: <https://www.nvo-nomen.org/images/documents/Izvje%C5%A1taj%20-%20CG%20verzija.pdf>.



Graph 1: Do you feel safe in your community?

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 Montenegrin citizens. There have been no major shifts therein compared to last year's survey - namely, the top-six threats as recorded in last year's survey remain the same, albeit with a slightly changed order.

This year's survey once again points to drug trafficking as the biggest threat to safety in Montenegro. A total of 93.4% of respondents hold this view - 67.7% perceive it as a major problem and an additional 25.7% claim that it is a problem to a certain extent. Following drug trafficking, it is drug use<sup>5</sup> that is perceived as one of the major threats by 92.5% of citizens, followed by corruption<sup>6</sup> opted for by as many as 87.5% of respondents.



Graph 2: In your opinion, to what extent does each of these problems pose a threat to citizens' safety in Montenegro? - % of those who believe that the given issues are a problem / a big problem

<sup>5</sup> In last year's survey, this security threat was fourth-ranked, cited by as many as 88.8% of respondents.

<sup>6</sup> Last year, this security threat came up as second most-cited, by as many as 89.9% of respondents.

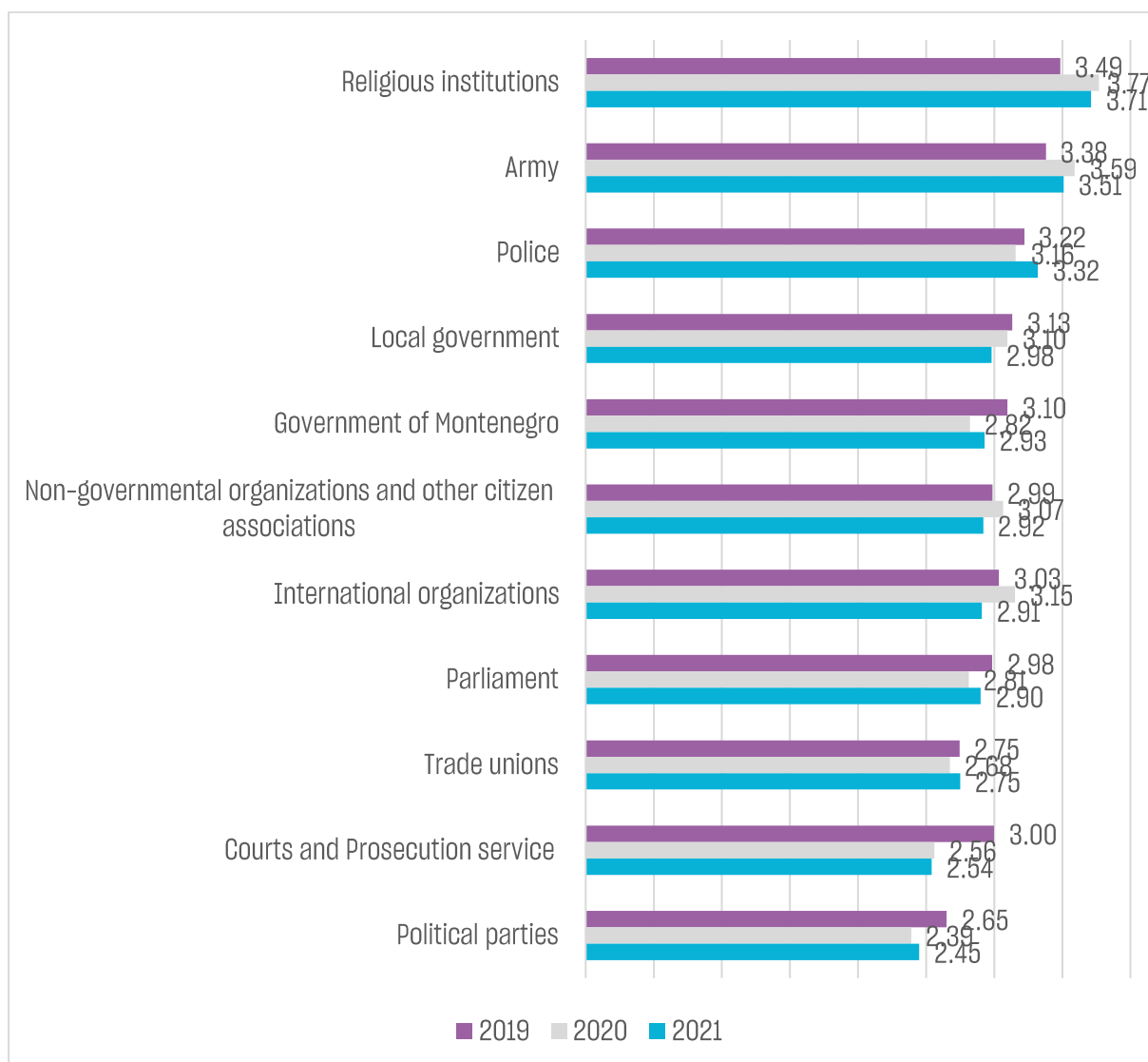
Violence at sporting events (48.0%), car thefts (43.2%) and terrorism and violent extremism (38.3%) have taken a back seat, a result nearly identical to last year's survey.

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 are less polarized compared to last year's survey wave, i.e. respondents are less inclined to choosing the "complete confidence" and "no confidence at all" options, with a growing number of those that hold a more neutral perception of these institutions,
- Third year in a row, the church, the army and the police are labeled as the most-trusted institutions,
- While trust in the government and parliament is showing a slight growth, the level of trust in other institutions of the system (local governments, courts and the prosecution) continues to go down,
- A decreased 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 and 2020 survey. The scores are given on a 1-5 scale, whereby 1 denotes complete lack of trust in an institution and 5 indicates complete trust.

Religious institutions garner most trust, with an average score of 3.71. The Army of Montenegro comes in second-ranked (3.51), followed by the police as the third most-trusted institution (3.32).

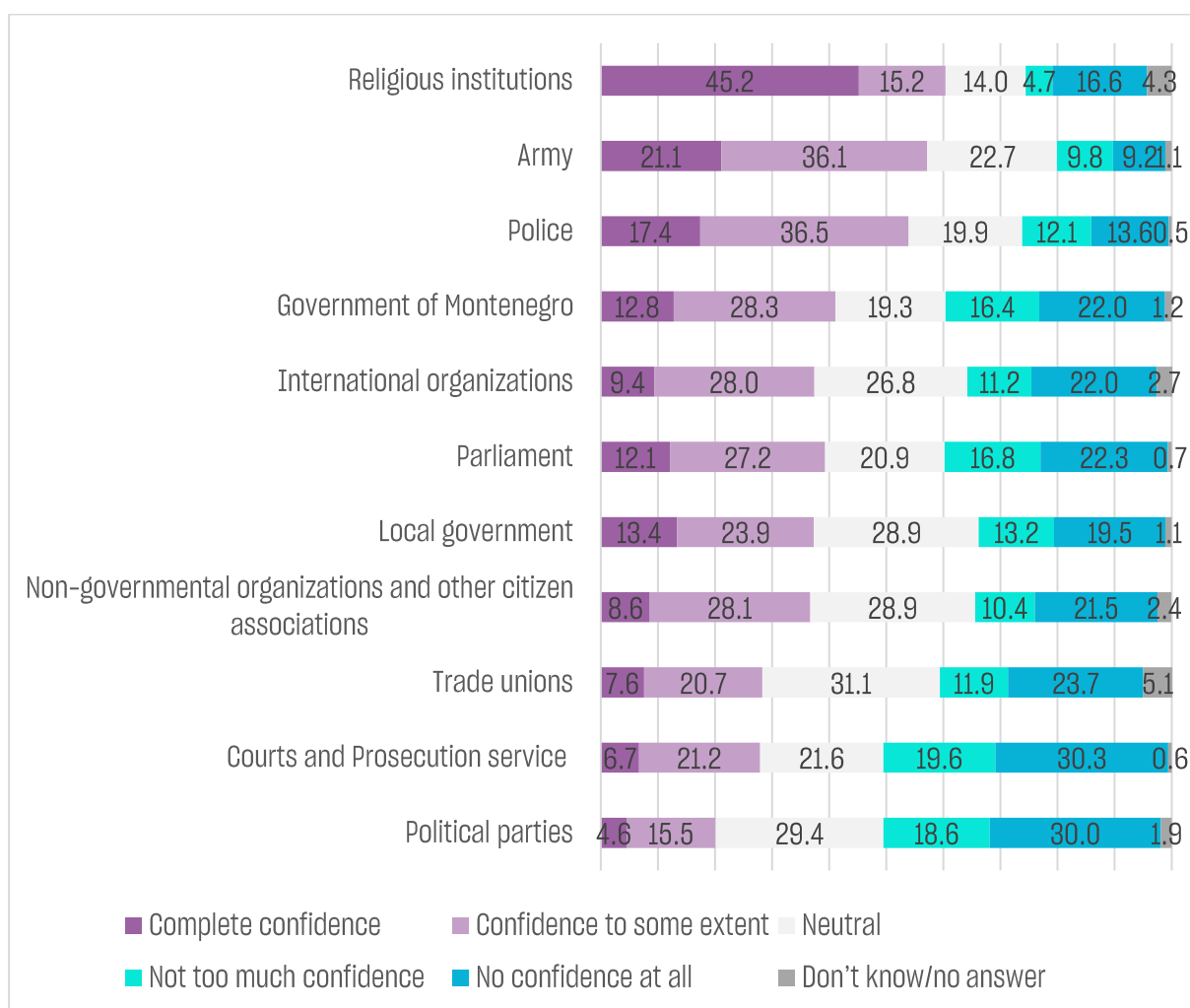


Graph 3: To what extent do you have confidence in the institutions listed? (1 - no confidence at all, 5 - complete confidence)

Since the average score<sup>7</sup> often tends to simplify the results obtained, the graph below once again shows a more detailed breakdown of this year's responses about the level of trust in individual institutions. We can therefore see that cumulatively 60.4% of respondents trust religious institutions - 45.2% fully and 15.2% to some extent. The Army of Montenegro has recorded a cumulative of 57.2% confidence, whereas the police service is trusted by a total of 53.9% of respondents.

In terms of socio-demographic characteristics, the statistically relevant differences in the level of trust placed in the police occur between respondents of different ethnicities and regions. Thus, Albanians show the highest level of trust - cumulatively, 70.0% of them trust the police. In addition, 55.4% of Montenegrins trust this institution, with percentage remaining the same as last year. The biggest differences in the perception of this institution were noticed with Serbs, Bosniaks and Muslims. Namely, 54.1% of Serbs trust the police, which is a major increase compared to last year's 25.7%. On the other hand, the number of Bosniaks and Muslims who trust the police has seen a steep decline - from 71.2% to 46.4%.

Region-wise, it has been observed that residents of the north (60.6%) place more trust in the police than respondents from the central (52.4%) and southern region (49.2%). This distribution matches last year's survey results.



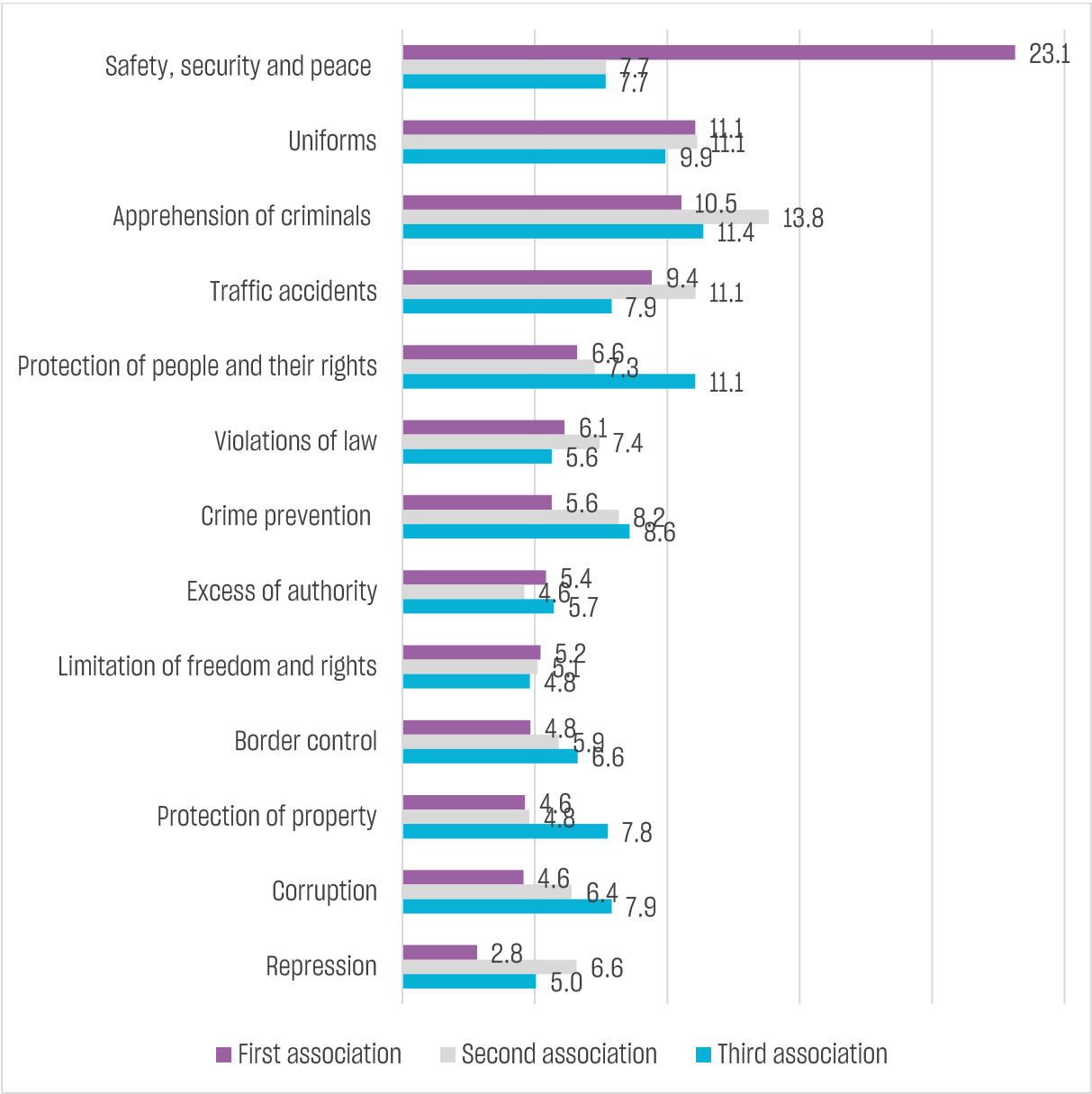
Graph 4: To what extent do you have confidence in the institutions listed?

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 association at the mention of police. We have observed that response percentages are much more evenly distributed than in last year's survey.

<sup>7</sup> In this case, the arithmetic mean, which is the sum of all the scores divided by the count of answers (respondents)



The leading associations at the mention of police still remain to be **safety, security and peace** - this is the first-cited association by **one in four** respondents. The second most-cited association is **uniform**, picked out by every ninth respondent, while every tenth surveyed person associates the police with **criminal arrests**. Least cited associations are protection of property, chosen as the first association by 4.6% of respondents, followed by corruption (4.6%) and repression (2.8%).



Graph 5: What are the first three associations that come to your mind when you hear the word police?

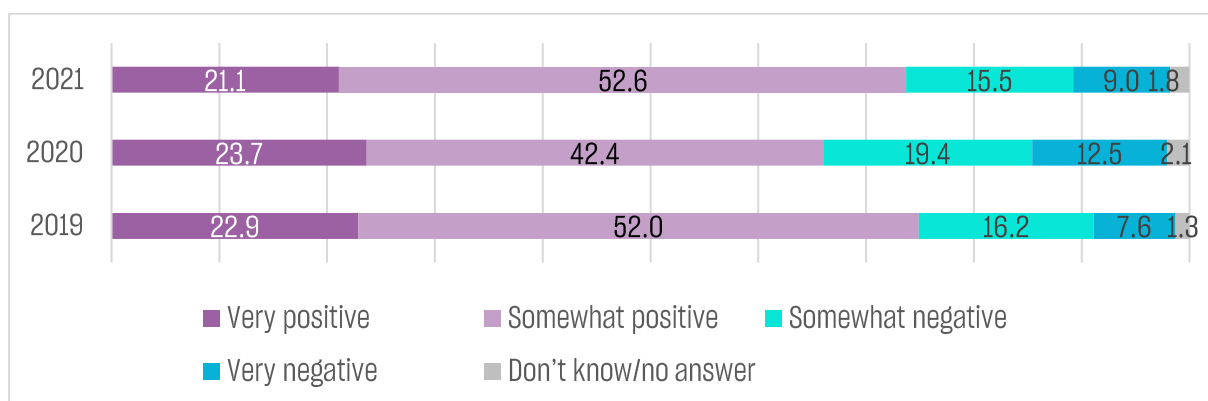
The **general attitude towards the police** has seen an improvement compared to last year, but still remains slightly below levels measured in the 2019 survey.

**Almost three-quarters of the respondents have a positive view** of the police. Among these, every fifth respondent has a very positive attitude, while additional 52.6% cite a somewhat positive attitude towards the police. The previously noted differences between demographic subcategories come up with this issue as well. The statistically significant differences occur between different age groups, education attainment levels and regions the respondents live in. As with last year’s survey, the older the respondents, the more often they tend to have a remarkably positive attitude towards the police, with residents of the north being more likely than others to hold such a view.

A negative correlation has been observed between education level of respondents and their perception of the police force - the higher the level of education, the less positive the respondents are about the work of the police.

It is worth noting that **Serbian ethnic affiliation is no longer the dominant indicator of a negative attitude** towards the police - the number of Serbs who cite a positive view of the police is increasing, while the number of positive views as voiced by Montenegrins, Bosniaks and Muslims is declining, and the overall ratings recorded in this survey are now more evenly distributed than in the previous waves.

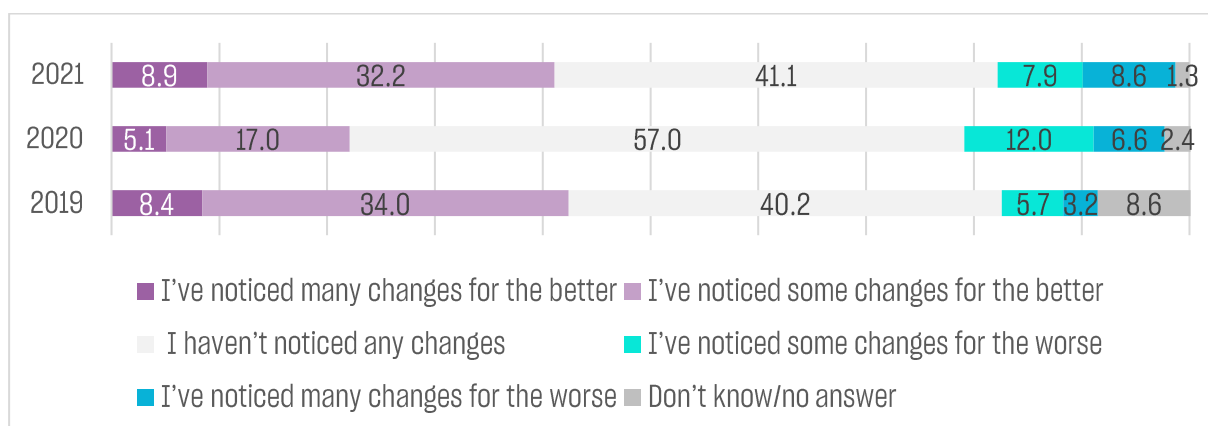
There are no statistically significant differences among groups differing by gender and income-level profiles.



Graph 6: What is your overall attitude to the police?

Compared to last year's survey, there has been a **significant increase in the number of respondents** who claim to have noticed **changes for the better** in the work of the police - a cumulative of 41.1% of respondents agree with this claim. This increase is primarily due to the spillover from the group of respondents who claim not to have observed any changes whatsoever, since the number of those who observe changes for the worse still remains quite high - every sixth respondent holds this view.

The statistically relevant differences are once again present with regard to ethnicity and region the respondents live in. **Serbs are much more likely than other ethnic groups to cite improvement** in the work of the police in the past 12 months - as agreed by **55.2% of respondents from this cohort**. At the same time, residents of the north are more likely to cite improved police performance than respondents from other regions - 48.8% of northerners hold this view, compared against 38.4% of respondents from the south and 37.8% of those living in the central region.

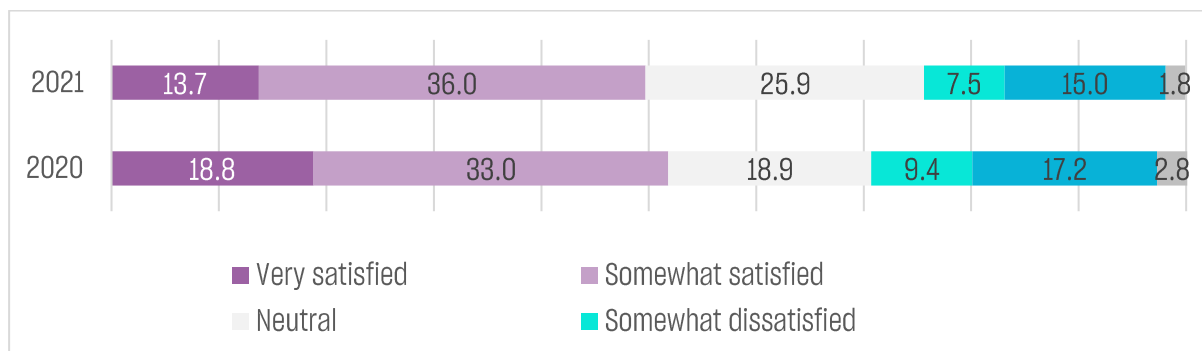


Graph 7: Have you noticed some changes in police work over the past 12 months, either for the better or for the worse?

We have already touched upon the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on safety 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. Compared to last year's survey, we notice an increase in the number of respondents who are

undecided on this matter, which prompted a slight decline in the numbers of both those who commend or disapprove of the Police Directorate's activities aimed at combating the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thus, almost half (49.7%) of respondents are satisfied with the implemented measures, which is a slight decrease compared to last year's 51.8%. Roughly one-fourth of respondents are undecided on the matter, while one-fifth express dissatisfaction with such measures undertaken by the police in the previous period. The elderly and residents of the north are more likely than others to voice support for police activities aimed at curbing the COVID-19 pandemic.



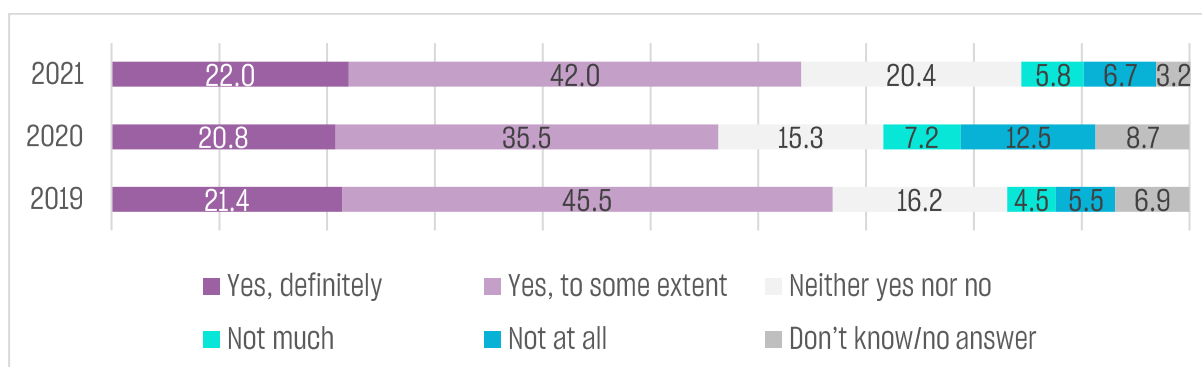
Graph 8: To what extent are you satisfied with the activities of the Police Directorate aimed at combating the COVID-19 epidemic?

## Police in the community

In this chapter, we will show the extent to which citizens are satisfied with the presence of the police in their community and the cooperation they achieve with this institution. In addition, we will analyze which police service they most often had contact with and how satisfied they are with the work and efficiency of the police in certain areas. We will also see how much citizens are ready to report domestic violence if they find out about this phenomenon, as well as what is their perception of certain claims related to the attributes of the police that were presented to them through the questionnaire.

As in the previous survey waves, the majority of respondents, as many as 64.0% (a 7.7% increase compared to last year's wave) claim that the **police cooperate with members of their community**. One-fifth of respondents could sway either way when it comes to police-community cooperation, whereas, cumulatively, every eighth respondent finds that the police do not cooperate with citizens.

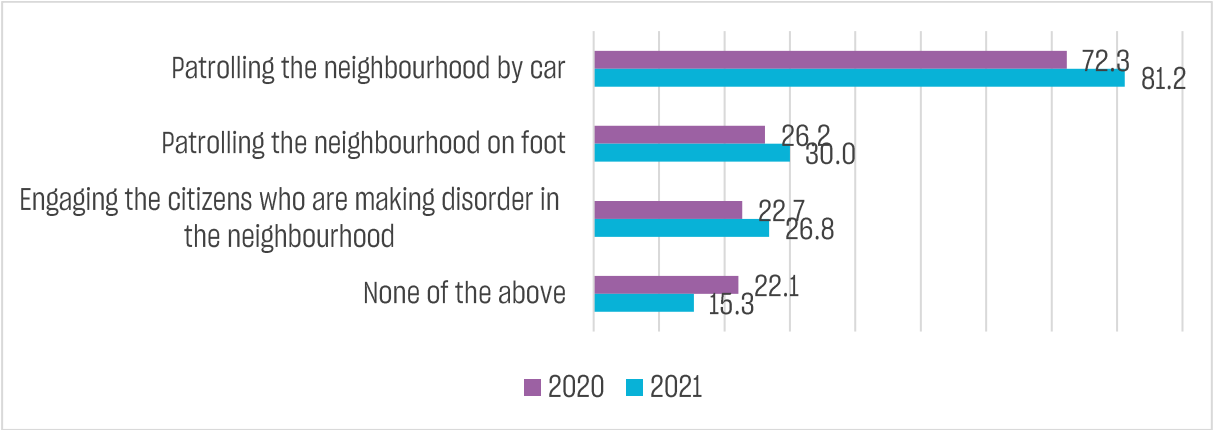
The previously established differentiation in attitudes as based on **age of respondents** comes up yet again - the older the respondent, the more likely they are to cite police-community cooperation. We also take note of the previously observed differences among respondents coming from **different regions**. Thus, residents of the central region are less likely than others to claim that the police cooperate with citizens in their community - as cited by 60.1% of them, compared against 65.6% of respondents from the north and as many as 69.8% of those living in the coastal part of Montenegro.



Graph 9: Do police cooperate with citizens in your community?

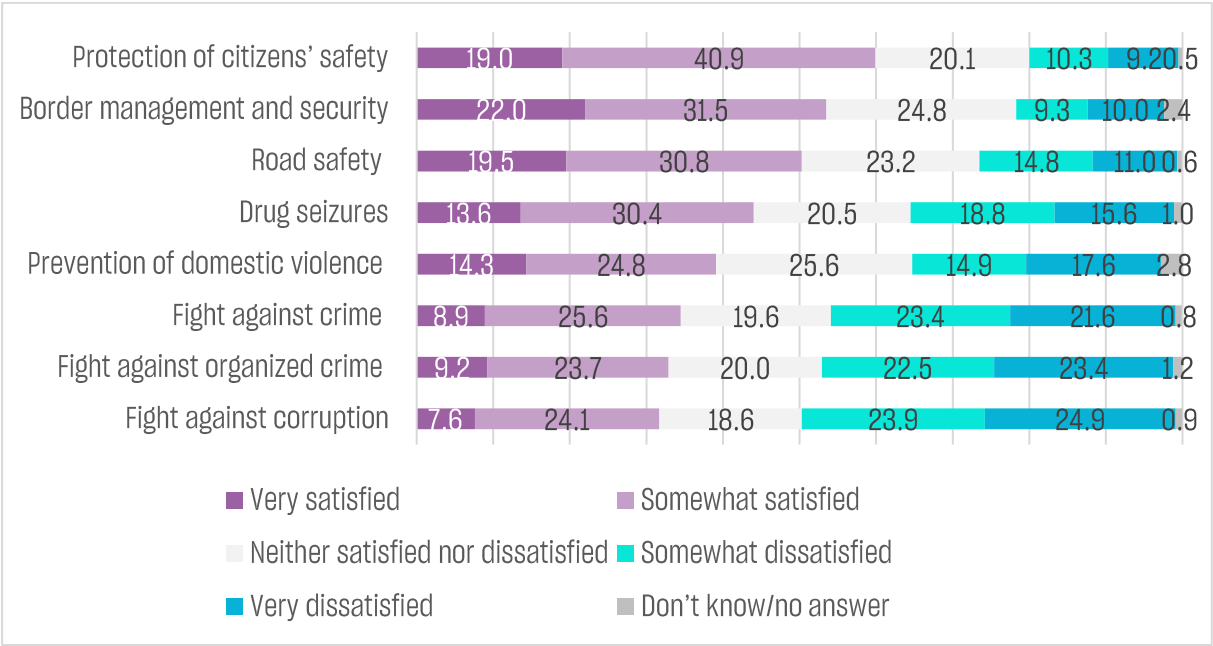
To follow up on that, we asked the respondents about whether they noticed the presence of police officers in their neighborhood. This is the so-called **multiple-choice question**, so the fact that the sum of all the answers exceeds 100% should come as no surprise.

It is evident that more respondents are claiming to be noticing police officers in their neighborhood than in last year's survey. **Four out of five** respondents claim that **patrol cars can be seen doing rounds** in their neighborhoods. Almost **every third respondent** reports having met a **police officer while on foot patrol**, while **every fourth** respondent confirms to having seen **police officers take action on disturbance calls and noise complaints** in their neighborhood. On the other hand, almost every seventh respondent claims not to have spotted police officers performing any of the above activities in their neighborhood.



Graph 10: Have you seen police officers in your neighbourhood in the previous 12 months:

The next question was meant to explore how **satisfied citizens are with efficiency of the police** in respective lines of work. As in last year's survey, respondents consider police to be most efficient in **ensuring citizens' safety** - 59.9%, followed by **border management and security** (53.5%) and **traffic safety** (50.3%), while they remain least satisfied with police performance in combating crime (34.5%), organized crime (32.9%) and corruption (31.7%).

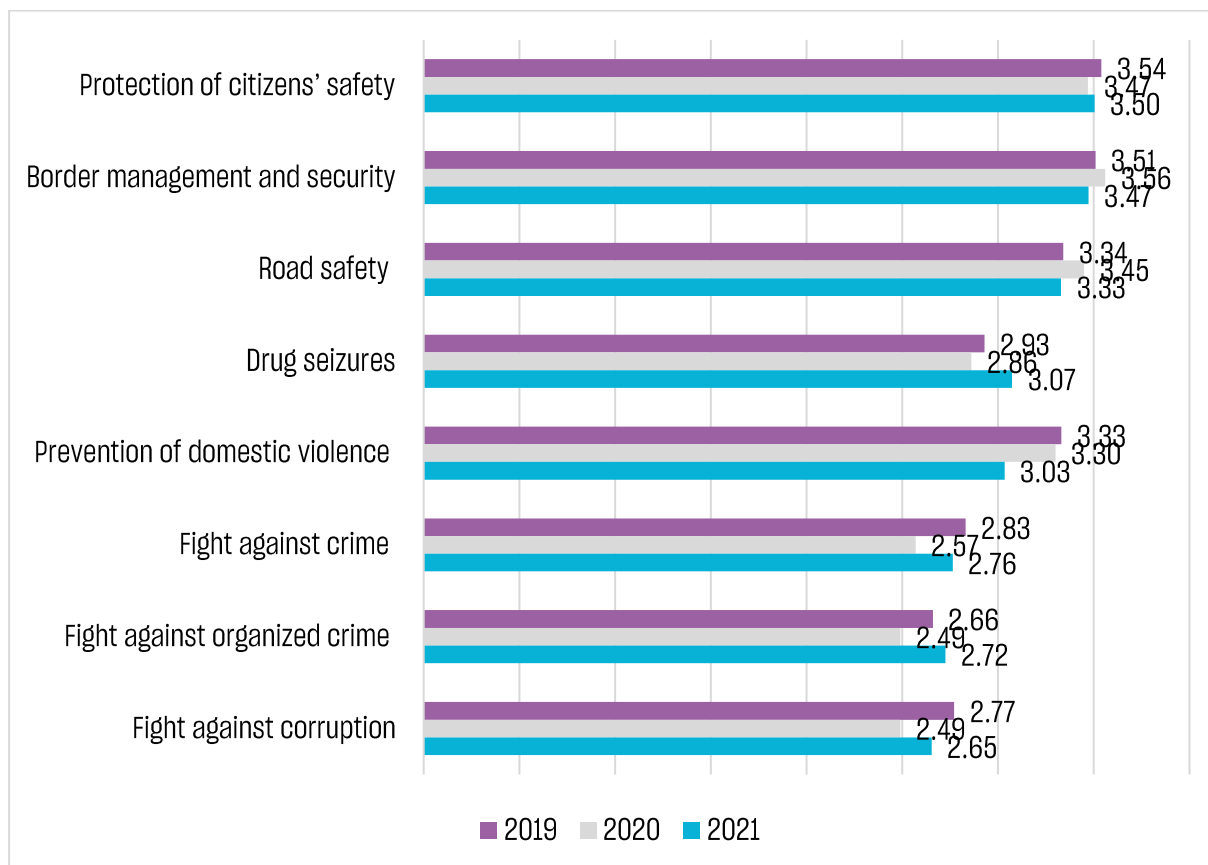


Graph 11: How satisfied are you with the efficiency of the police in each of these areas?

The graph below also shows responses as compared against previous two survey waves. For each of the areas listed, the arithmetic mean of the responses is given on a 1-5 scale, where 1 indicates that a respondent is very dissatisfied and 5 that they are very satisfied with the work of the police in the given area.

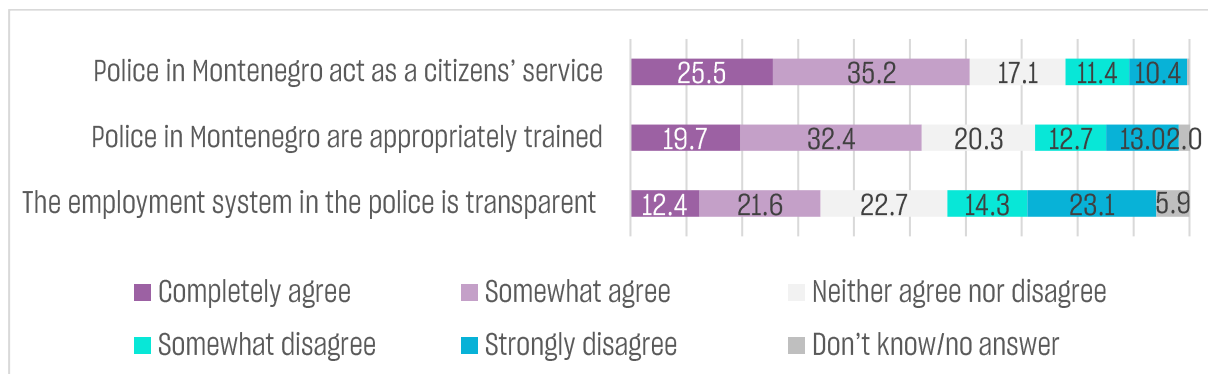
Compared to last year, significantly higher satisfaction score has been recorded with areas such as the fight against crime, corruption and drug trafficking. One of the reasons thereof may be the success of the “187” operation, with police seizing over 1 ton of cocaine in August 2020.

On the other hand, areas that are more community-oriented, such as traffic safety and preventing domestic violence, show decreased satisfaction scores. A decline in satisfaction with police performance in the prevention of domestic violence should come as no surprise, given that field surveys were conducted at a time when a nineteen-year-old girl from Tuzi was killed by her fiancé, who also injured her father.



Graph 12: How satisfied are you with the efficiency of the police in each of these areas? - comparing with the two previous waves

Respondents were asked to rank the claims below that refer to the work of the police. Three out of five respondents dub the police as an institution that serves its citizens, while 52.1% find them to be adequately trained. On the other hand, respondents give lowest rankings to a claim that the police recruitment system is a transparent one - cumulatively, only 34.0% of respondents agree with this claim.

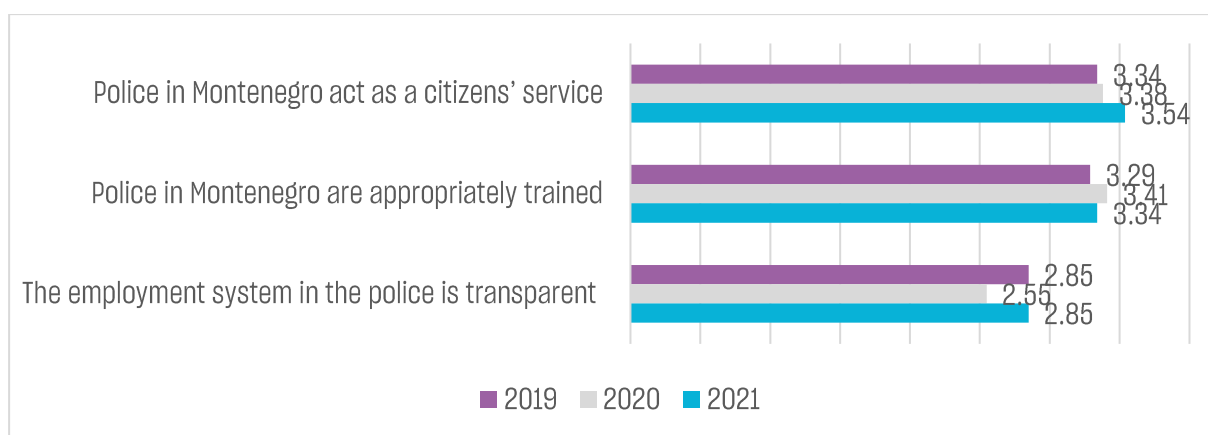


Graph 13: To what extent do you agree with the following:

Residents of the southern region are much less likely than others to believe that the police recruitment system is a transparent one (19.2%) and that the police are adequately trained (30.8%). The older the person is, the stronger their conviction that the police are at citizens' service. Unlike with last year's

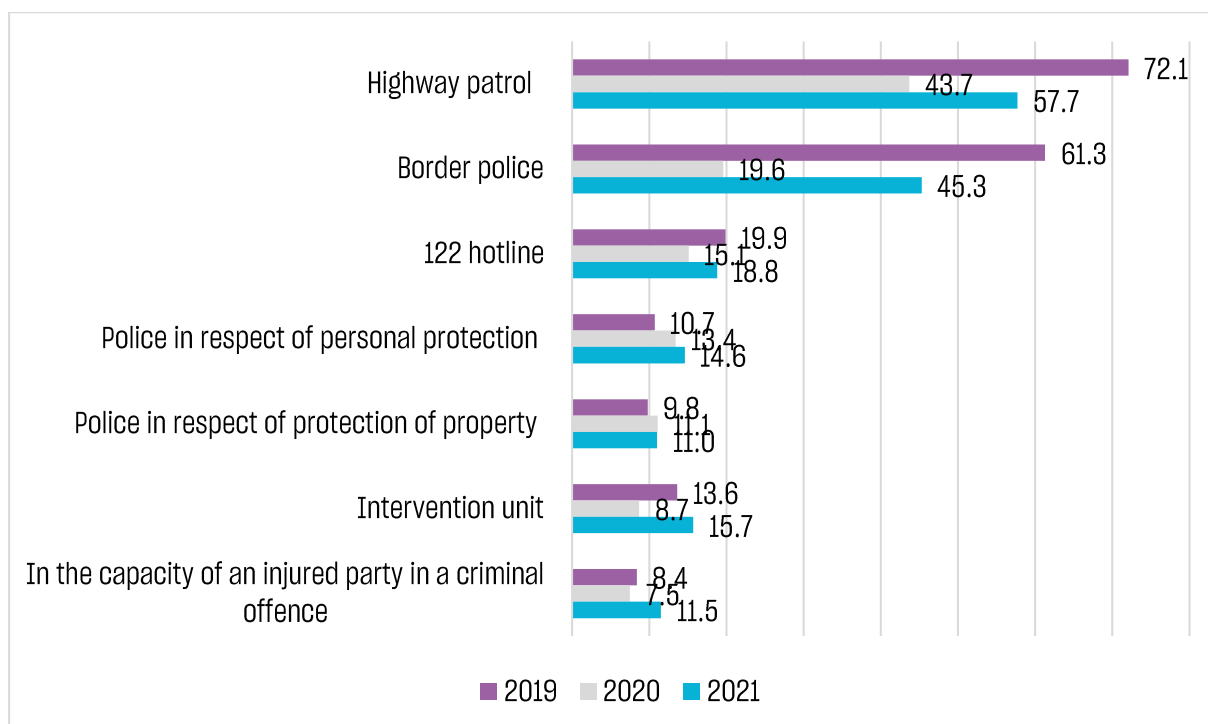
survey, there has been no prominent difference between socio-demographic subcategories such as ethnicity – Albanians (72.0%) and Serbs (62.5%) are most likely to perceive the police as a service to its citizens, Montenegrins are more likely than others (53.1%) to label them adequately trained, and Bosniaks and Muslims (44.7%) are most likely to agree with the view that the police recruitment system is a transparent one.

As with the previous question, we compared these findings against results obtained in previous survey waves. The graph below shows the values of the arithmetic mean on a 1-5 scale, where 1 indicates that a respondent does not agree at all, and 5 that they fully agree with the given claims. It is striking that the number of those who view the police as a service to its citizens continues to grow with each year. On the other hand, the number of respondents who see the police as being adequately trained has seen a drop, while the number of those who consider the police recruitment system to be a transparent one has returned to the 2019 level.



Graph 14: To what extent do you agree with the following: - comparing with the previous two waves

The respondents were asked to list police services they come in contact with. In the course of 2021, the respondents had most encounters with traffic police (57.7%) and border police (45.3%), the same as in the previous two survey waves. There is also a substantial increase in the number of contacts with these two departments, which is probably due to the eased domestic and international travel restrictions that were in force during 2020.

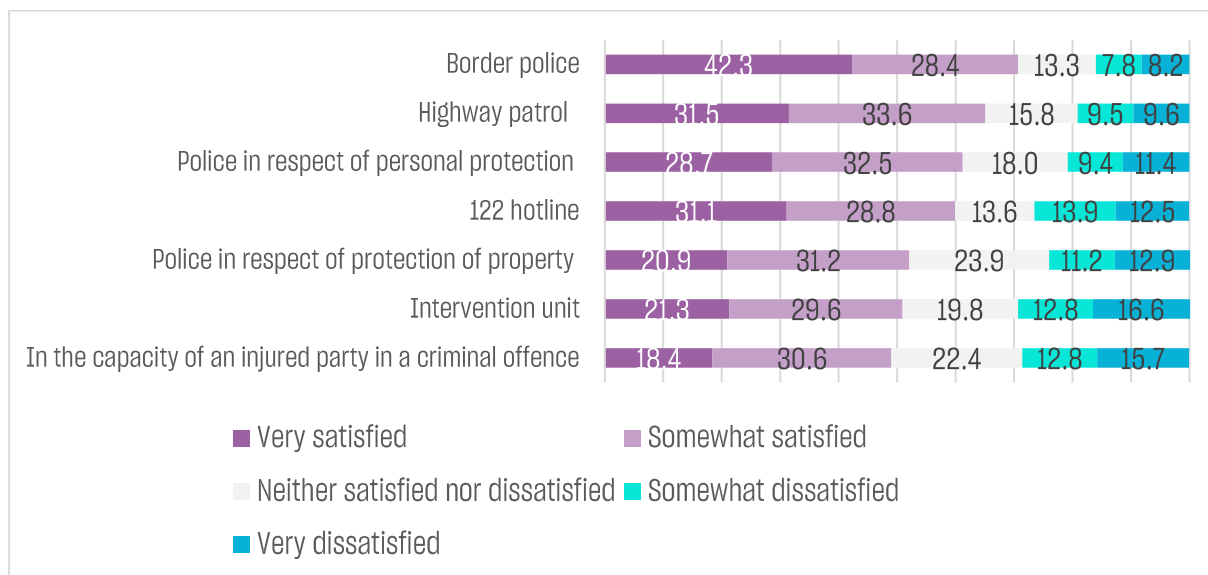


Graph 15: To what extent did you have contact with a specific police service in the last 12 months?



Contacts with most of other police services have seen an increase as well, as they went back to the 2019 level.

The following question delves into how satisfied the citizens are with the work of those police services they had come in contact with in the past 12 months. Out of those who did come into contact with a police service, the majority of citizens express satisfaction with the operation of the border police (70.7%), the same percentage as recorded in last year's survey. Next-ranked in terms of citizens' satisfaction are traffic police (65.1%) and officers providing personal protection (61.2%).

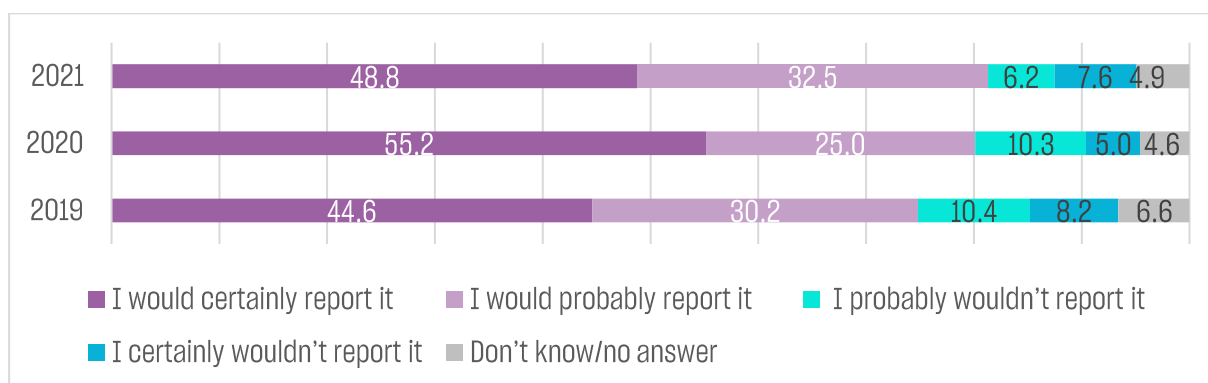


Graph 16: If you had contact with a specific police service in the last 12 months, how satisfied were you with police performance in those situations?

Citizens' willingness to report certain misdemeanors/ criminal activities that they are aware of serve as an indicator of their confidence in the police. Therefore, the following 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.

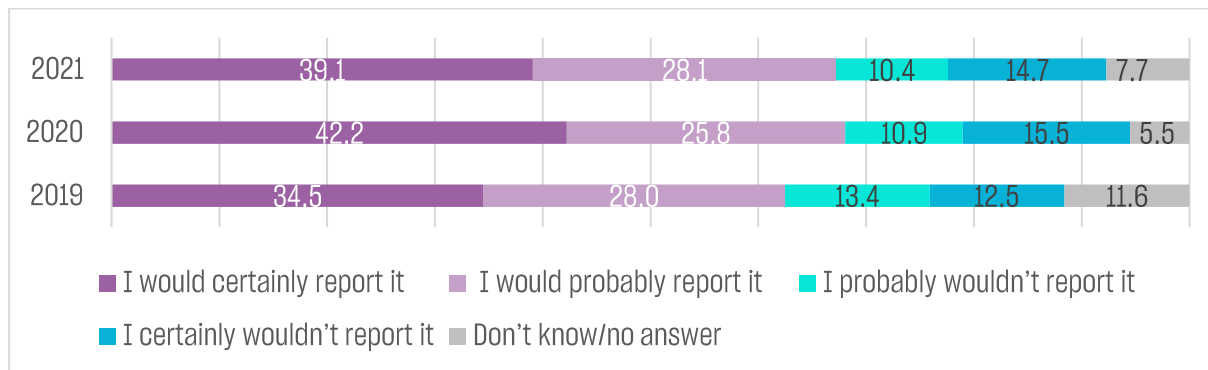
With each new survey wave, we observe a mild increase in the number of those citing willingness to report domestic violence. This year, 81.3% of respondents claim they would report domestic violence taking place in their environment. However, such a high percentage should be taken with a grain of salt, given that the respondents have not experienced such a situation first-hand and did not actually have to make such a decision and file a report against someone living in their vicinity.

The statistically significant differences come up only between respondents coming from different regions. Namely, residents of the central region (85.2%) are most likely to report domestic violence, while respondents from the south of Montenegro (75.3%) are least likely of all to do so.



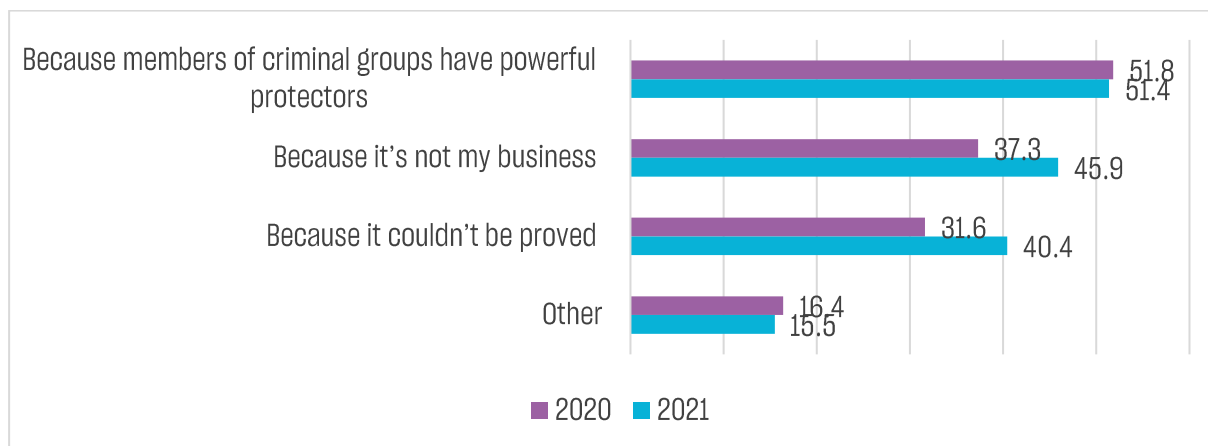
Graph 17: If you were aware of domestic violence in your surroundings, how likely would you be to report it?

Citizens were asked about the likelihood of them reporting a crime if they had knowledge of any. A cumulative of 67.2% of respondents would report a crime to the police, slightly fewer than recorded in last year's survey. Respondents from the south would be less likely than others to report criminal activity - 58.3% of them express willingness to do so, as compared against 68.3% of respondents from the central region and 72.1% of those living in the north. The statistically significant differences have also come up education-wise - the more educated a person is, the more likely they are to claim they would turn to the police if they had any knowledge of crimes taking place.



Graph 18: If you were aware of criminal activities, how likely would you be to report it?

Those who stated that they would not report a 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 (51.4%). Also, 45.9% of those who would not report a crime say that they would not do so because it is none of their business, while two out of five respondents point out that the crime would not be proven.



Graph 19: Say why you wouldn't report such activities?

We asked those interlocutors who chose the "something else" option<sup>8</sup> to explain their reasoning. The majority of them say that filing a report would have no effect, and that it is the task of the police and not the citizens is to detect and report criminal activities.

"Because I know there would be no point in doing that."

"Because no one would consider my concerns, the police wouldn't do anything about it."

"Courts often acquit them, and drawing from my personal experience, I don't believe the police would solve the problem."

A small portion of respondents are not convinced that their anonymity would be guaranteed when filing a report, which can have two types of consequences - by having their identity revealed, the respondent

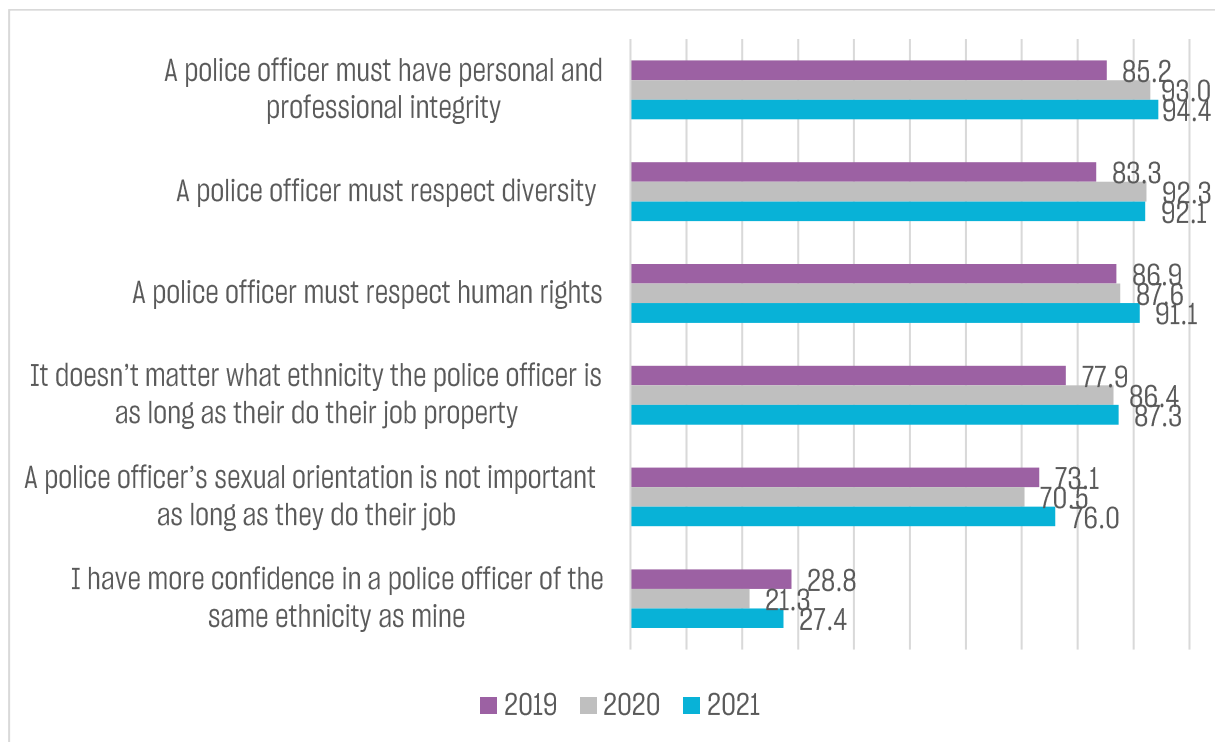
<sup>8</sup> 45 respondents answered this question.

and their family members would be putting their lives on the line, and they might be condemned by their community.

“Because they’d find out that I reported them.”  
 “I would always file a report if I knew for sure it was 100% anonymous, but I don’t believe this to be the case, this sort of information always gets out.”  
 “I hate snitches, I would never snitch on my neighbor.”

We conclude this chapter by presenting the respondents with a series of desired characteristics to be ascribed to a police officer, asking them if and to which extent they agree with the said claims. We have noted that the vast majority of respondents agree with the claim that a **police officer must possess personal and professional integrity** - 94.4%, **respect diversity** - 92.1% and **respect human rights** - 91.1%. Fewest respondents agree with the statement “I have more confidence in a police officer with the same ethnic background as me” - 27.4% chose this option, which is a positive finding for a multicultural society such as Montenegro.

It is also worth noting that, **overall, there is a higher level of agreement** with individual claims compared to last year’s results - the only outstanding exception is observed with the last claim in the graph below.



Graph 20: To what extent do you agree with the following claims? - cumulative % of respondents who somewhat / completely agree

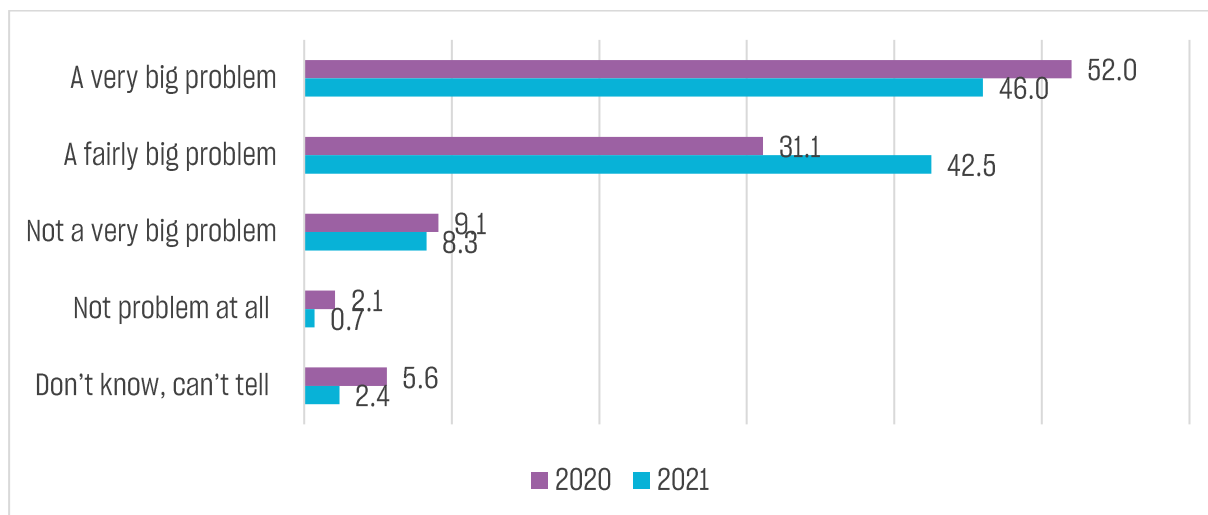
## Corruption

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 service, 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 question was meant to examine whether citizens find that corruption is a prominent problem in Montenegro. Cumulatively, 88.5% of respondents believe that **corruption is a pronounced problem in Montenegro**, marking a **5.4% increase compared to last year’s survey wave**. On a positive note, we observe a redistribution of responses within the group of respondents who claim that corruption is a pronounced

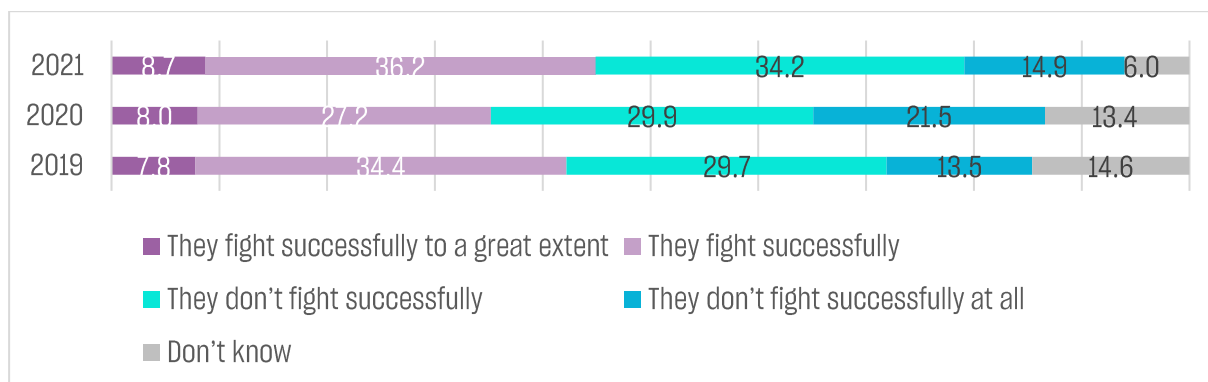
problem - namely, the number of those who believe that corruption is a very pronounced issue is declining and spilling over into a group of respondents that perceive it as a somewhat pronounced issue.

On an interesting note, this is one of the few questions where respondents' ethnicity comes into play - as in the previous wave, Serbs (53.9%) are more likely than others to perceive corruption as a very pronounced problem, followed by Montenegrins (44.5%) and Albanians (44.0%), while Bosniaks and Muslims are much less likely than others (26.6%) to consider corruption as a very pronounced problem in Montenegro.



Graph 21: In your opinion, to what extent is corruption a problem in Montenegro?

We asked the respondents about their position on how successful the police are in fighting corruption in their own ranks. Cumulatively, 44.9% of respondents find that the police are successfully fighting corruption within the force, which is a better score than those recorded in the previous two waves. Still, a relative majority of 49.1% still points to underachievement in anti-corruption efforts. Corruption-wise, the statistically relevant differences are once again present with regard to ethnicity and region the respondents live in. Thus, Albanians (65.3%) are much more likely than others to perceive the police as being successful at tackling corruption in their own ranks. At the same time, residents of the central region are most likely to show positive attitude about this issue - 48.0% find the police-led anti-corruption efforts to be successful, while the same goes for 44.4% of respondents from the north and 39.1% of those from the south of Montenegro.

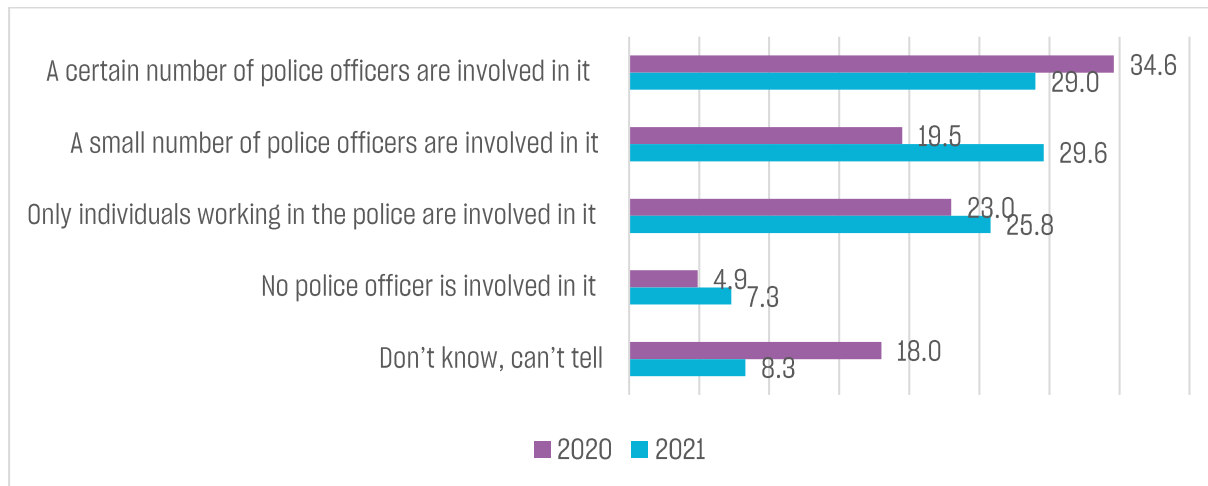


Graph 22: Do you think the police fight corruption in their ranks successfully?

Following these two questions, we also checked into how the respondents view the scope of Montenegrin police involvement in corrupt activities. Although as few as 7.3% of respondents believe that there is not a single police officer involved in corruption, this still marks an increase compared to last year's 4.3%. At the same time, a number of those who were undecided on this issue in the previous wave has now spilled over into the group of respondents who believe that police officers are involved in corruption to a greater or lesser extent. In this year's wave, a cumulative of 84.4% respondents hold this view, compared to 77.1%

as recorded last year. It is also worth noting that the number of respondents who claim that “a certain number” of police officers are involved in corrupt activities has decreased and spilled over into the group of respondents choosing “a small number” and “it’s only individual cases” options.

Residents of the central region are much less likely (75.1%) than others to claim that police officers are involved in corruption. On the other hand, the higher the educational attainment level of respondents, the stronger their belief that police officers are involved in corruption.

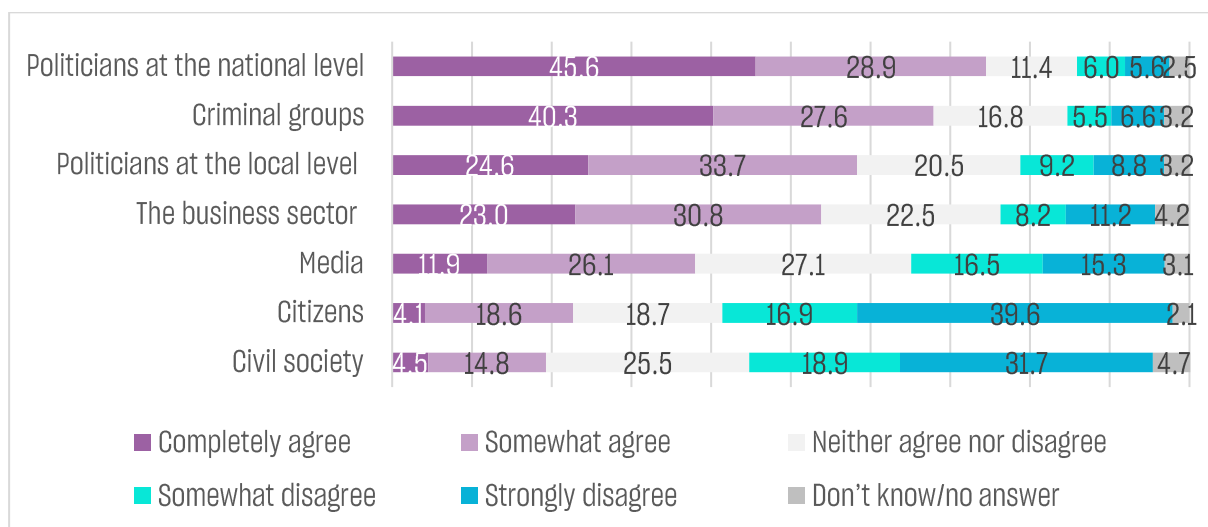


Graph 23: What is your opinion on the potential involvement of police officers in corruption?

The previous chapter has exposed that some respondents would not report criminal activity out of fear of potential retaliation by criminal groups. With this in mind, we also asked the respondents about which other groups exert influence on the work of the police and to what extent.

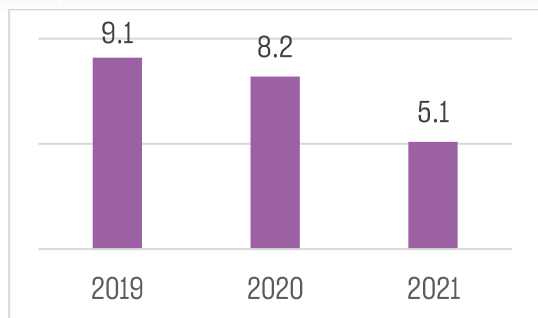
Respondents reach the greatest level of agreement with the claim that **state-level politicians** exert influence on the police - cumulatively, **74.5%** of respondents agree with this claim, thus marking a **6.8% drop from last year's survey**. Furthermore, **67.9%** of respondents have noted **the influence of criminal groups**, while another **58.3%** find that **local-level politicians** can have an impact on the work of the police. According to the respondents, citizens (22.7%) and civil society (19.3%) have least influence on the police.

Compared to previous survey waves, there is now a marked **tendency to cite police independence** - the number of respondents who claim that the seven groups listed in the graph below can exert influence on the police has seen an all-round decrease. Influence exerted by state-level politicians and civil society has seen a major drop.

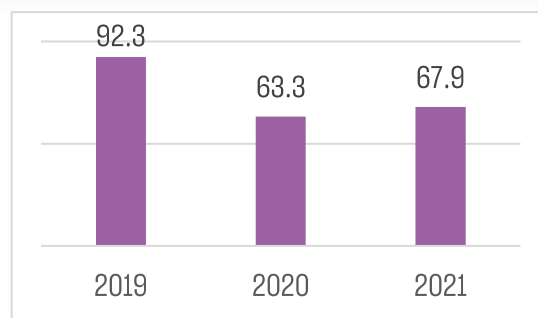


Graph 24: To what extent do you think these actors influence the work of the police?

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 paying a fine. Only 5.1% of respondents answered in the affirmative, with a declining trend observed compared to previous two waves. Of course, we need to reiterate the comment we made in previous survey waves - it is necessary to consider that the figure might in fact be higher, given the rebuttable assumption that not all the respondents are willing to admit to breaking the law.



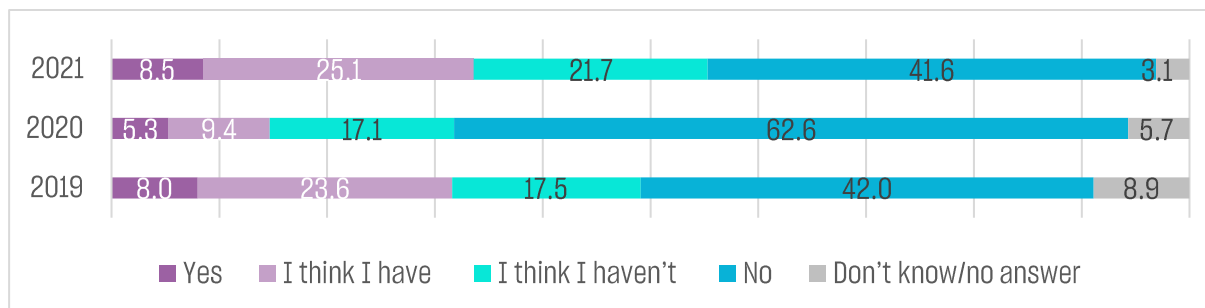
Graph 26: Over the past 12 months, have you or a member of your household ever OFFERED a bribe in any form to a police officer in order to avoid being punished?



Graph 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 a little over two-thirds of cases, respondents claimed that a police officer accepted a bribe. The percentage is almost identical to the one recorded in the previous wave, and significantly lower than the one measured in the 2019 survey. However, given the relatively small number of observations, i.e. a low number of respondents who claim to have offered bribes, no firm conclusion can be drawn about the change in the behavior of police officers.

To finish off the corruption-related chapter, we asked the respondents if they were familiar with any specific anti-corruption activities carried out by the police. A total of one-third of the respondents have heard of such activities in the past 12 months, thus matching the 2019 results, while also scoring much higher than in last year's survey wave.



Graph 27: Have you heard of any specific activities aimed at suppressing corruption in the police over the past 12 months?

## Integrative policies

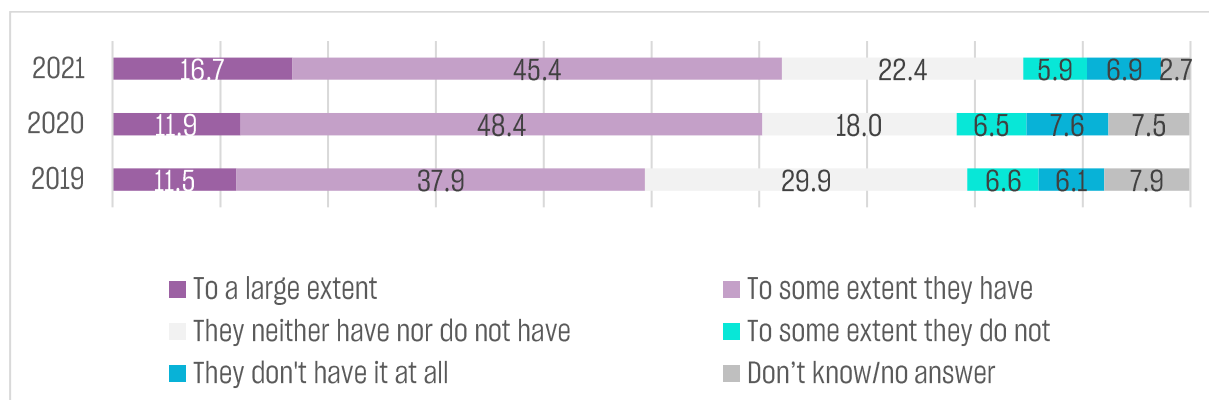
Effective communication and cooperation with citizens that is based on trust is an imperative for proactive community policing. That is why additional professionalisation of the police force is a necessary precondition in the process of building a successful democratic society, through a greater accessibility,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

Almost two-thirds of the respondents believe that local-level authorities and citizens contribute to safety in their municipalities. With each survey wave, we observe an increased number of affirmative answers.



The statistically relevant differences occur between respondents belonging to different ethnicity and age cohorts. Albanians (74.0%) and Montenegrins (66.7%) are more likely than others to acknowledge the contribution of local governments and citizens. The number of Bosniaks and Muslims who agree that local governments and citizens contribute to safety in their local communities has seen a major drop from the previous survey wave (from 69.1% to 56.8%), while the number of Serbs who agree with this claim has gone up (from 49.3% to 58.1%).

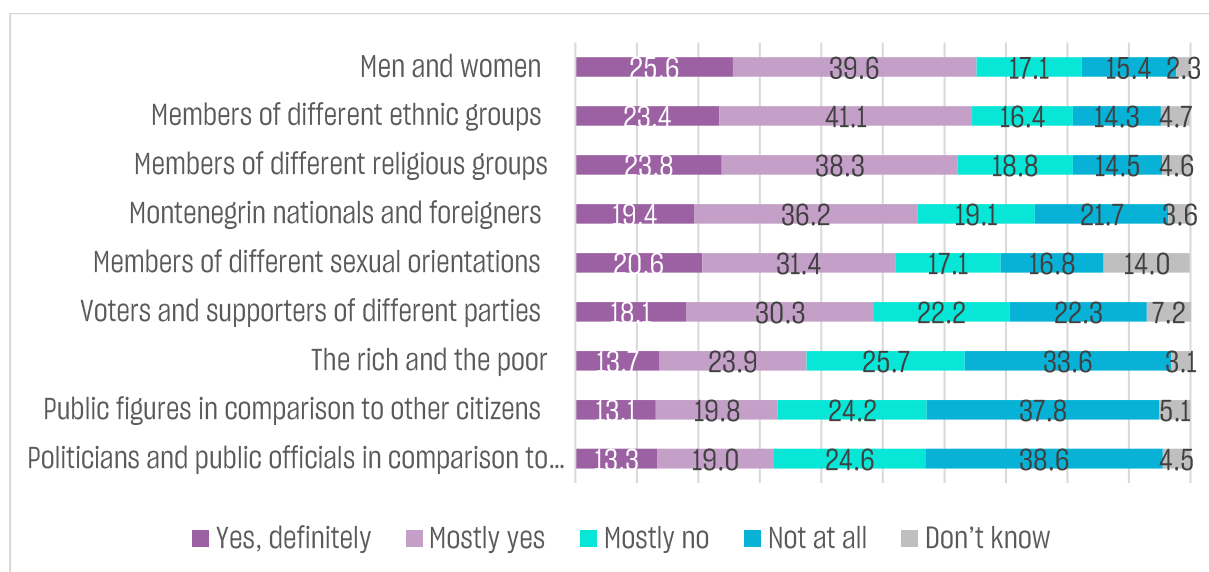
As with the previous wave, the older the respondents, the more they support the view that local governments and citizens contribute to safety in their municipalities.



Graph 28: 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 survey waves, 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. Compared to the 2020 survey, respondents give a slightly more favorable assessment of the attitude of police officers towards most of these groups. The only exception is recorded with how the police treat public figures in relation to other citizens, recording a 5.4% drop in positive responses.

In terms of scores recorded 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 almost two-thirds of the surveyed population believe this to be the case. Residents of the northern region are more likely to agree with this view than those living in the central and southern part of Montenegro.



Graph 29: In your opinion and experience, do police officers treat the following groups with equal professionalism and respect?

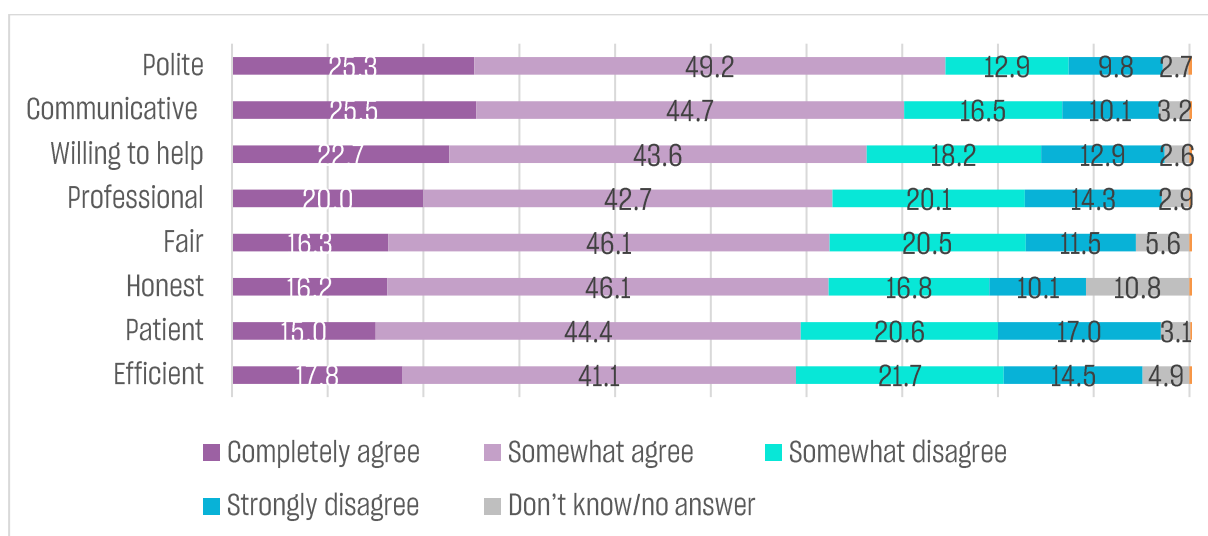
As many as 64.5% respondents find that police officers treat members of different ethnic groups with the same level of professionalism. Albanians (74.0% of them) are most likely to support this view, followed by Serbs (65.8%), Bosniaks and Muslims (64.2%) and Montenegrins (62.9%).

As in the previous survey wave, respondents find that **disparate treatment** by police officers is largely conditioned by one's **social and economic status**, and survey findings indicate that equal treatment is less present when it comes to police handling **the rich and the poor** (37.6%), **public figures as compared to other citizens** (32.9%) and **politicians as compared to other citizens** (32.3%).

The next section of this chapter explores traits ascribed to an average Montenegrin police officer, as cited by respondents. It should be noted that this survey wave records a **higher number of respondents who find that each of the characteristics listed in the graph below can be attributed to police officers**. This increase ranges from a symbolic 0.1% with traits such as willingness to help citizens to 4.3% pertaining to features such as professionalism and fairness.

Nearly **three-quarters** of respondents perceive police officers as being **polite**, **70.2%** find them **communicative** and almost **two-thirds** describe them as being **willing to help**.

Least-cited traits that characterize Montenegrin police officers are **patience** (59.4%) and **efficiency** (58.9%). Still, it is worth noting that more than half of the citizens ascribe these two features to Montenegrin law enforcement.



Graph 30: Would you say that an average Montenegrin police officer is:

Based on the attributes listed in the graph above, we created a composite variable<sup>9</sup> that we refer to as **police perception index**. The new variable was created by recoding the responses obtained. The recoding was done by way of ascribing a 0 score to each “I do not agree at all” response, whereas each “I fully agree” answer option is awarded a score of 1. Thus, an **ideal police officer** would receive a total score of 1, meaning that such an officer is considered as possessing all of the traits listed above. Conversely, a score of 0 would indicate that a police officer does not possess any of the listed traits.

The analysis shows that 9.9% of respondents give the average Montenegrin police officer a score of 0, i.e. this group does not recognize an average officer as having any of the features listed in Graph 31. On the other hand, 6.4% of respondents believe that an average Montenegrin police officer has each of these traits.

As for the **overall police perception index**, a score of 0.71 was recorded on a scale from 0 to 1. No statistically relevant differences in the overall score have been observed as based on gender or ethnicity of the respondents. Age, education level and region where respondents live have come up as socio-demographic categories that generate statistically relevant differences in perceptions of law enforcement.

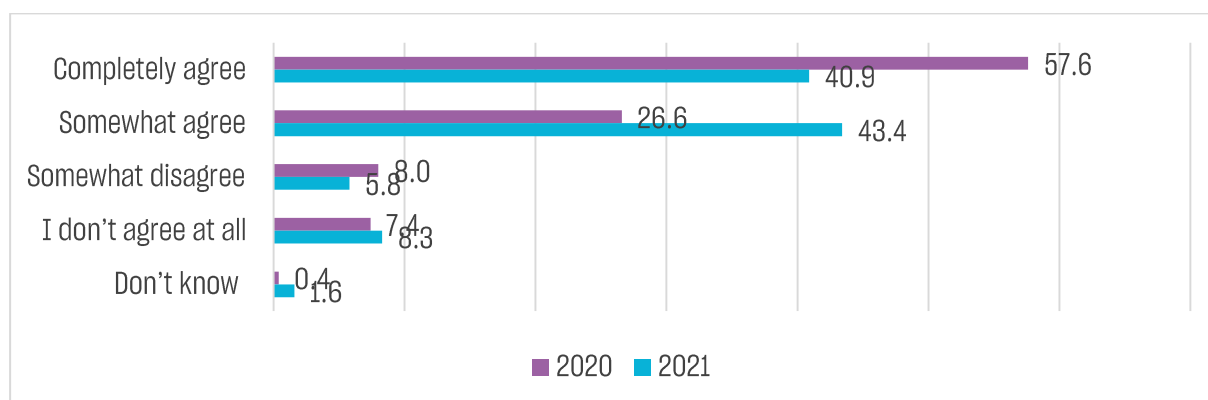
<sup>9</sup> Composite variables are usually an effective way of presenting complex ideas and concepts in the form of a new, single variable. Composite variables are created by combining two or more individual variables. Being derived from individual, one-dimensional variables, they can provide new and more comprehensive insights into respondents' data and opinions.

Thus, respondents from the south award lower score (0.67) to qualities ascribed to an average Montenegrin police officer, compared to those living in the central and northern part of the country – respondents from these regions give police officers a grade point average of 0.72. Persons under the age of 35 also harbor a more negative perception of police officers compared to older respondents, and the same is true for highly educated respondents as compared to those with lower education levels.

One of the pillars of police sector reform is gender policy aimed at increasing the number of women employed in police force. This measure is an integral part of the Police Directorate Development Strategy, and is complementary to UN Sustainable Development Goals<sup>10</sup>. It is for this very reason that we compiled a set of questions that aim to explore the respondents’ attitudes about women potentially seeking employment in the security sector.

Currently, women account for 15.9% of police force<sup>11</sup>, and the first question is meant to explore the respondents’ views on whether *women are equally capable of performing police duty*. A cumulative of 84.3% of those surveyed believe that *women and men are equally capable of carrying out police duty*. The result is almost identical to one recorded last year, with a 0.1% increase observed. However, we need to make a point of a redistribution of responses observed within the group of respondents who agree that women and men are equal in this regard. Thus, while the number of respondents who fully agree with this view has decreased by 16.7%, the number of respondents who somewhat agree has gone up by an almost identical percentage.

Women (88.5%) are more likely than men (80.0%) to perceive women and men as being equally capable of doing police work. Respondents *under the age of 55* are also *way more likely* than the 55+ cohort to perceive women and men as being equal in this respect. Statistically relevant differences are also present as based on ethnicity of the respondents – thus, Serbs (79.4%) are less likely than other respondents to deem both genders equally capable of working in police force.



Graph 31: In general, do you consider men and women equally capable of performing police work?

The respondents that either somewhat or completely disagree with the said view were asked to explain their reasoning. They had the option of answering in free-form, without pre-specified answer options. Most of the respondents from this group believe that policing is a male profession, and that men are physically stronger and therefore more capable of performing police duty.

“It’s job for a man, blood and guns are not meant for a woman.”

“A woman is not meant to chase criminals down the street and work in prison.”

“She needs to be protected, not the other way around.”

“A woman cannot use force against criminals.”

“It’s clear what a woman should do and what a man should do.”

“They are not as brave as men.”

<sup>10</sup> Specifically, SDG 5 on Gender equality.

<sup>11</sup> Data retrieved from URL: <https://www.osce.org/me/secretariat/480907>

"A woman and a man cannot be equal in providing protection, men are much braver."

"Very few men are capable of this, let alone a woman."

"They may be equal in some segments, but in policing, physical fitness certainly makes all the difference."

Some respondents also point out that women are gentler, that fieldwork is dangerous, and that administrative duty is something that would suit them better.

"Women are different and gentler."

"Women can't be cops in special units, maybe in an office somewhere."

"A woman can't be patrolling at 2 am, it's too dangerous."

"Although I consider myself a feminist, I think that men are more suited for fieldwork for biological reasons, and women may be better suited for tactical and bureaucratic jobs."

"Women should be working in a nicer profession."

Furthermore, a small portion of respondents point out that the main role of a woman is to be a mother and take care of the household, and that a job in the police force does not fit into this role. Finally, four respondents say that police women do not get the same respect as their male colleagues, ie. that citizens have greater respect for men in uniform.

"Women are meant to be mothers."

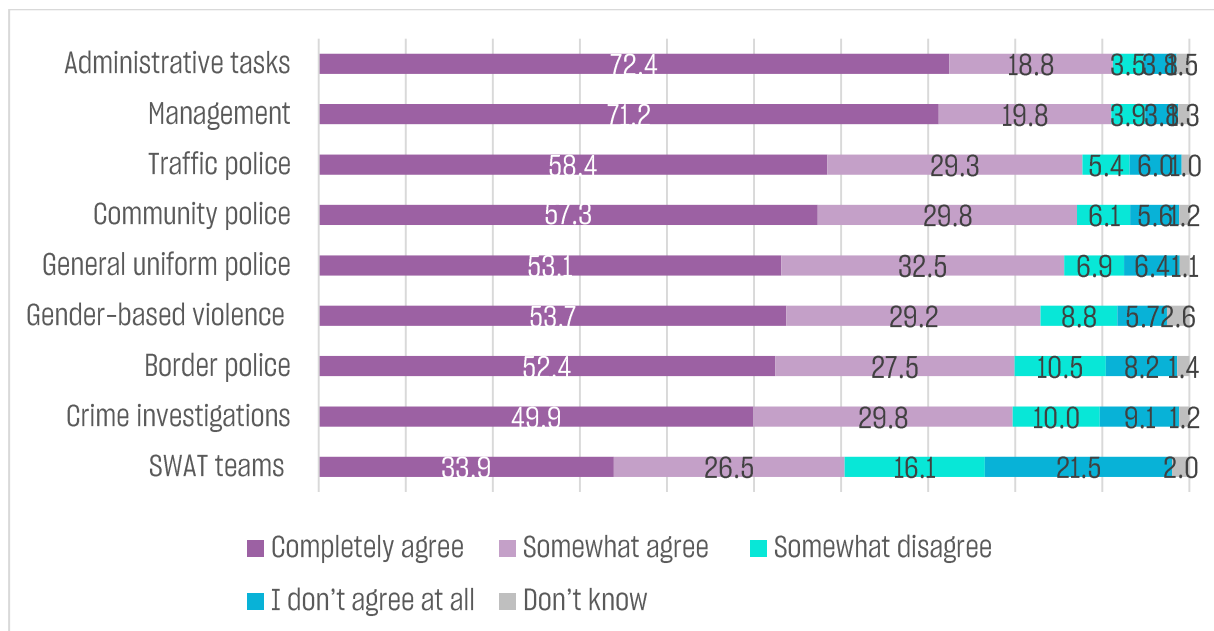
"A woman should be at home, with her family, and not out on the streets."

"A woman is meant to be a mother and a housewife."

"Because people don't respect women cops."

"Citizens have more confidence in male police officers, female police officers, it's sort of ridiculous."

As with the previous open-ended question, respondents recognize certain jobs as distinctively gender-defined, as 91.2% respondents believe that men and women are equally capable of doing administrative work, while 91.0% say the same of working in management structures. Slightly fewer respondents say that both women and men are equally capable of working in uniformed police, such as traffic police (87.7%), and community police (87.1%). On the other hand, only 60.4% of respondents believe that women are just as capable of working in special police units, ie. SWAT teams.



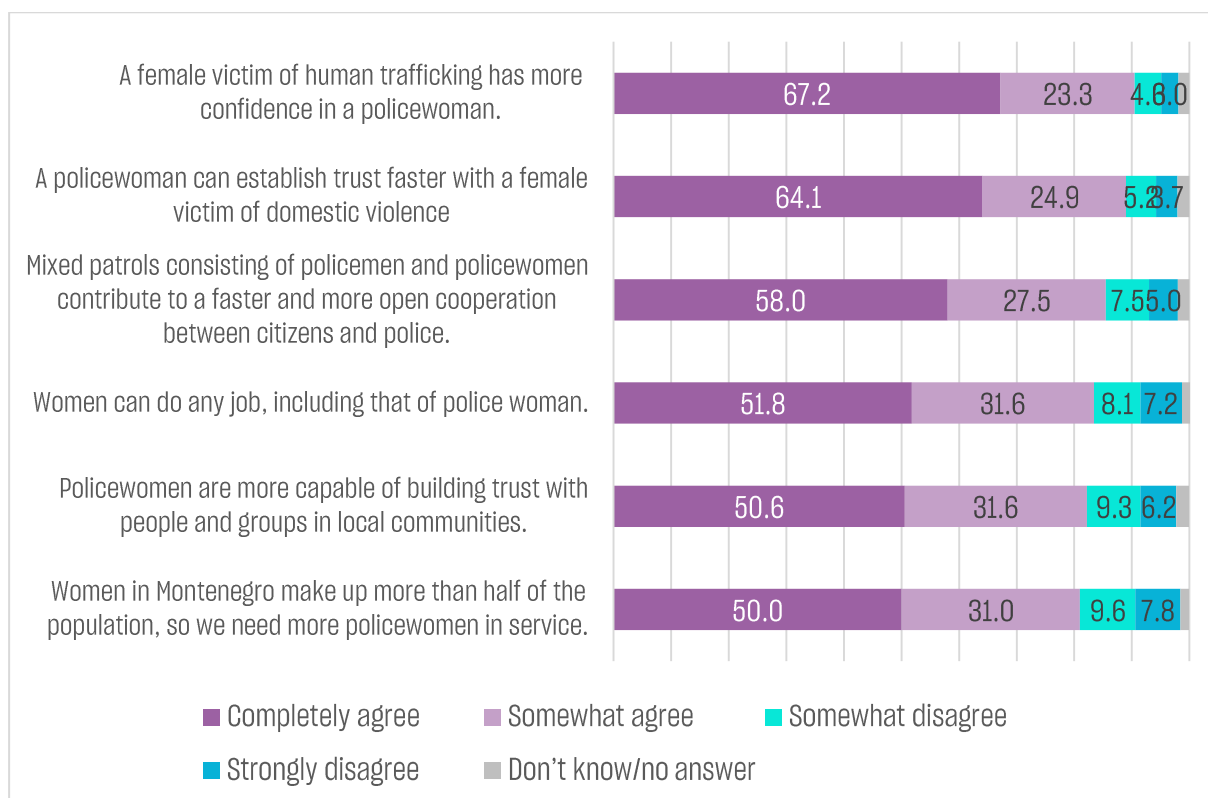
Graph 32: In your opinion, are men and women equally capable of working in:

It is worth mentioning that the level of agreement with the given views has decreased compared to last year's results. The recorded decline ranges from 1.7% for crime investigations to 6.4% for border police. The only exception is observed with agreement with a view that men and women are equally capable of working in special police units - the number of respondents who support this view has gone up by 4.7%.

With this question, we created another composite variable referred to as the **capability index**. Values presented in Graph 33 have been recoded, so that a **score of 0** indicates that a respondent believes that **women are not equally capable** of performing duty in any of the 9 listed police services, while a **score of 1** indicates that a respondent finds woman to be **just as capable** of performing any of these police duties.

For the entire sample size, the **capability index totals 0.83** on a scale from 0 to 1, with major variations among different socio-demographic subcategories. As expected, women (0.85) are more likely than men (0.81) to consider themselves equally capable of performing the aforementioned police activities. Also, the more educated a person is, the more they believe in women's capabilities. The statistically significant differences come up between respondents of different region-ethnicity-age profiles. Residents of the south (0.87) are much more likely than those living in the central (0.84) and northern (0.79) region to consider women as equally capable of performing all police jobs. Montenegrins (0.87) are much more likely than other ethnicities to voice this view. On an interesting note, younger respondents do not necessarily express greater confidence in women's ability to perform police duty just as their male colleagues; as expected, respondents over the age of 55 are more skeptical about women and men being equal in this respect (0.81), while the highest capability index score is recorded among the 35 to 54 age cohort (0.85).

We provided the respondents with several claims pertaining to capability of women for working in law enforcement and asked them to state the extent to which they agree with them. The vast majority of respondents, cumulatively **90.5%** of them, agree with the claim that a **female victim of trafficking is more likely to confide in a policewoman**. As many as **89.0%** believe that a **policewoman can build rapport with a battered woman** more quickly than a male officer, and 85.5% claim that mixed patrols with both male and female police officers would boost cooperation between citizens and the police.



Graph 33: How would you rate the following claims?

Once again, we created a composite variable and dubbed it **female police officers perception index**. The index is again measured on a 0-1 scale, where 0 implies that a respondent completely disagrees with all of the six claims listed in Graph 34, whereas 1 denotes agreement with all of the six claims.

The index as measured for the whole sample size totals 0.85 on a scale from 0 to 1, and values measured with individual socio-demographic categories largely correspond to the capability index measurements.

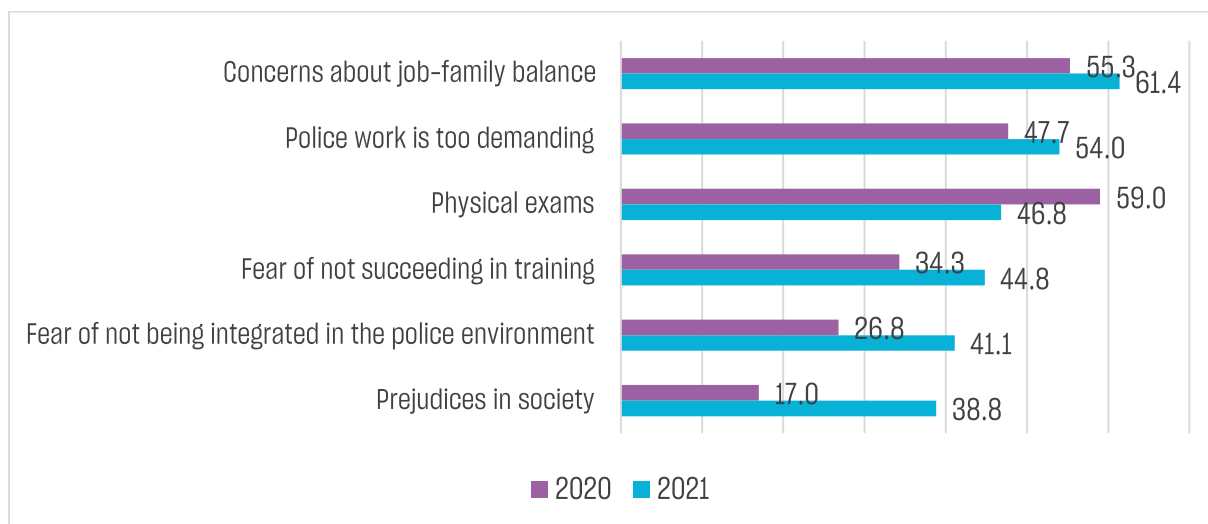


Women, those under the age of 55, respondents with higher educational attainment levels, respondents who declare themselves as Montenegrins and residents of the coastal region are more likely than average to agree with the claims listed in Graph 34.

Despite the legal provisions in force, the broader cultural context causes women to be less interested in pursuing careers in law enforcement, as confirmed by the evident and previously mentioned gender imbalance in police forces. In order to raise public awareness of the importance of women’s participation in policing and to promote policing, the Police Directorate, the Police Academy and the OSCE Mission to Montenegro conducted a public campaign “We are the power of the team - For more women in policing“ between April and May 2021, which has had a positive impact and triggered young people’s, especially women’s, interest in police careers. Namely, official information show that out of a total of 67 eligible candidates, 26 women, or 38.8%, were enrolled in the Police Academy this year, which is the highest percentage recorded since the establishment of the Academy in 2011. We therefore asked female respondents as to what their primary concern would be if they were to consider a career in the police.

Three out of five respondents in this year’s survey say that their main concern would be related to striking the work/family life balance. There is a positive correlation between the age of the respondents and the voiced concerns of reconciling work and family life - namely, the younger the respondent, the less likely she is to cite this particular reason. There are no other statistically significant differences between socio-demographic subcategories when this issue is concerned.

In addition, just over a half of the respondents consider policing to be too demanding. The older the respondent, the more likely she is to agree with the given claim. At the same time, the higher the education and income level of the respondents, the less they believe that police work is overwhelming. Women are least concerned with social prejudice, which is a positive finding. Still, this positive outcome is being clouded by the fact that over one-third of the respondents in this year’s survey chose this particular reason as a potential concern when considering a career in the police.



Graph 34: Should you consider a career in police, what would be your main concerns?

Although almost 20 months have passed since the first COVID-19 infection case in Montenegro, the pandemic continues to change the lives of Montenegrin citizens in many respects. Among others, respondents refer to the much-needed increase in digitalization and online services available to citizens. At the end of this thematic section, we prepared another open-ended question, where respondents were asked to make specific suggestions as to which useful digital services the Police Directorate could introduce.

A total of 107 respondents answered this question. Roughly one-third of them suggest creating a police department application modeled after the “48 hours” app introduced by some local self-government units. This app would help citizens make noise complaints, report violence taking place in their neighborhoods or other crimes. The app could automatically trace calls and speed up communication with police patrols located nearby. Also, the respondents say that such an application could feature an option for



tracking patrols that are on the way, so that citizens could know when the patrol is expected to reach the location that the call for help was sent out from. It goes without saying that such application should be optimized for mobile phones and that it should include the option for reporting a misdemeanor or criminal offense anonymously. Also, the app should envisage the feedback option, where citizens would be able to review the responding officers' performance (whether an officer is communicative, willing to help, efficient etc.).

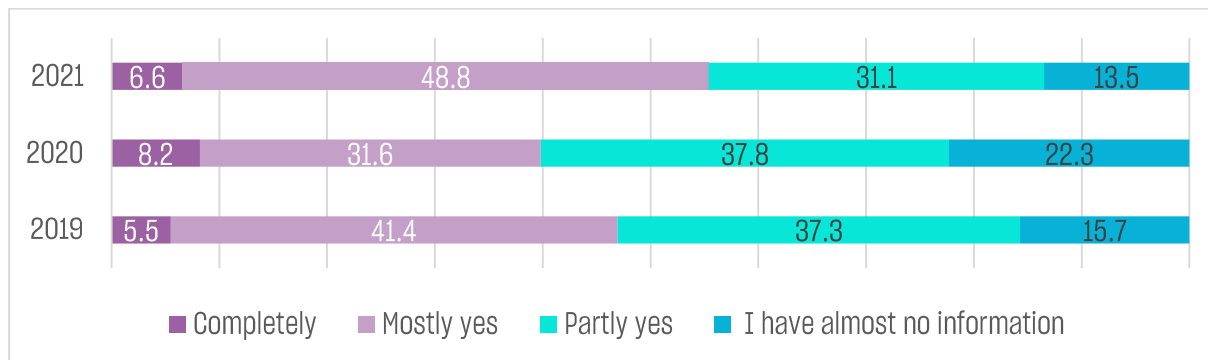
Respondents also say that the Police Directorate should turn to modern means of communication, primarily social networks such as Instagram and Twitter. Some respondents suggest that the police also communicate with citizens via Viber, and inform them about new contents posted on the website. They would be receiving Viber messages about educational contents covering current topics such as e.g. keeping children safe online, warning signs that a person is a victim of human trafficking or sexual exploitation, monthly reports on police performance, etc.

In addition, respondents believe that services for issuing e-documents should be developed, which is all the more relevant during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## 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 increase has been observed in the self-reported level of being informed since the previous survey wave. While 39.8% of respondents claimed to be either fully or informed for the most part in the previous wave, the percentage has gone up to 55.4% in this year's survey. Men (62.2%) are more likely than women (49.1%) to claim to be either fully or mostly informed about the work of the police. Also, respondents from the northern region are reportedly more informed about the activities of the Police Directorate than respondents living in the central and coastal region.



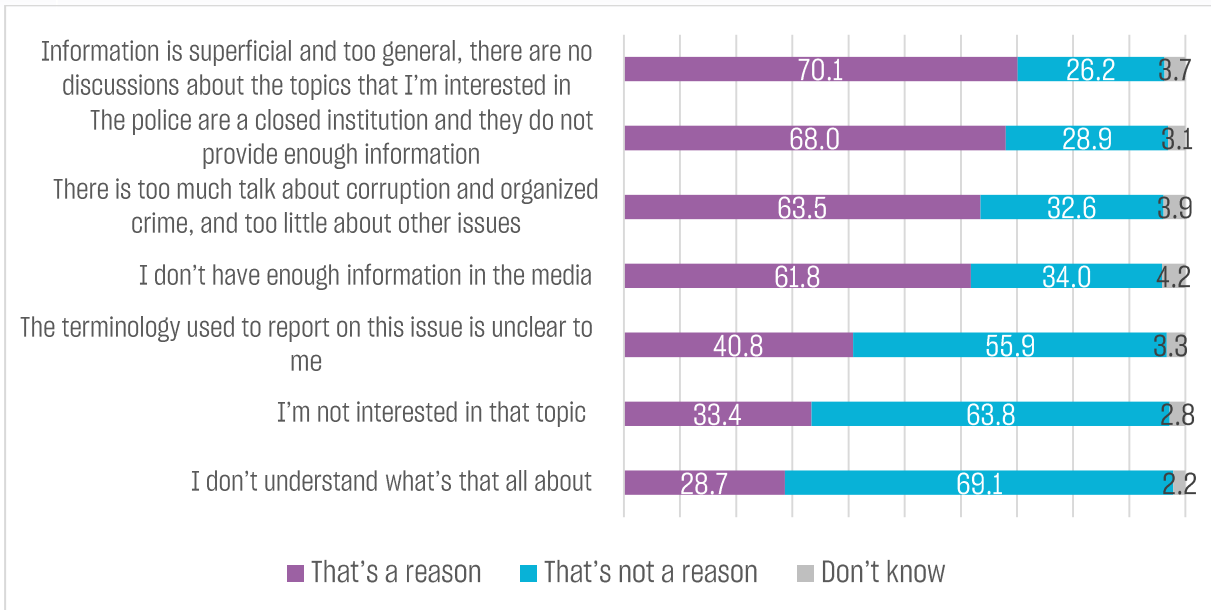
Graph 35: Generally speaking, how are you personally informed about police work?

In order to gain a deeper understanding of reasons behind their lack of information, we presented the respondents who are either partly informed or almost uninformed with a multiple-choice question, asking them to indicate whether the options listed constitute the reasons behind their lack of information.

The majority of respondents, 70.1%, find that the police-related information are superficial and too broad. This reason is more often cited by respondents from the south than by residents of the other two Montenegrin regions.

Additionally, 68.0% of respondents from this group claim that the police service is an enclosed institution that does not provide sufficient information about its work due to the nature of its activities, while 63.5% believe that there is too much talk about organized crime and corruption, while other topics take a back seat.

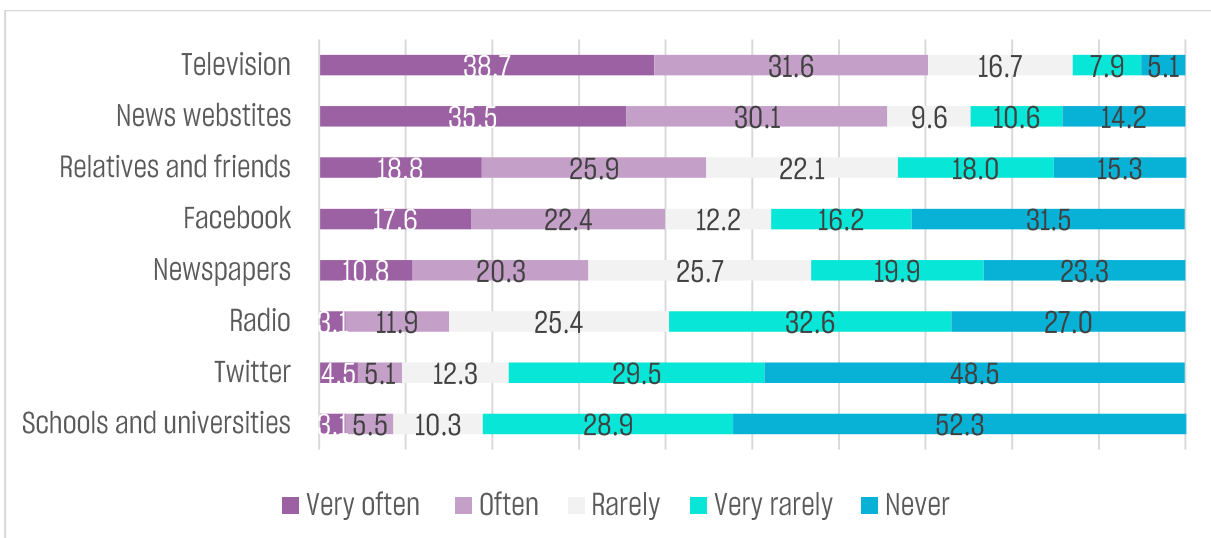
The two least cited reasons are those of respondents not being interested in police-related topics (33.4%) and not understanding the content that is communicated to them (28.7%). This fact can be viewed in a positive light - the prevailing reasons for lack of information cannot be attributed to citizens lacking interest in the work of the police, but to other reasons that can be addressed with efficient and timely information.



Graph 36: 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 previous two survey waves, the results indicate that **television and web portals** are the two most common ways of learning about the work of the police. Cumulatively, **70.3%** of respondents cite **television** as the primary source of information, while **65.6%** 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, track down police-related information on Internet portals.

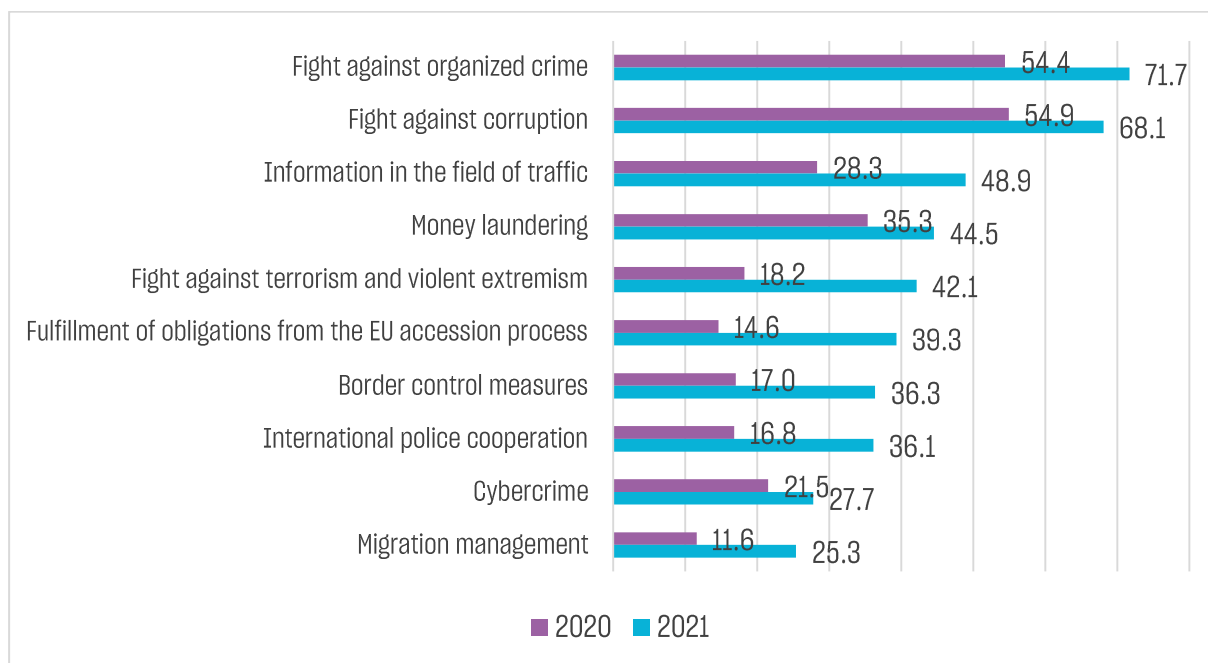
It is important to note that this year's survey shows the **declining use of almost all the media**. The recorded decline ranges from 1.8% for radio to as much as 10.1% for print media. On the other hand, **an increased use of information channels** for tracking down police-related information has been recorded only with social media - **Facebook and Twitter**. These data substantiate the previously stated recommendation of the respondents for the Police Directorate to increase communication through social networks.



Graph 37: How do you keep yourself informed about the work of Montenegrin police?

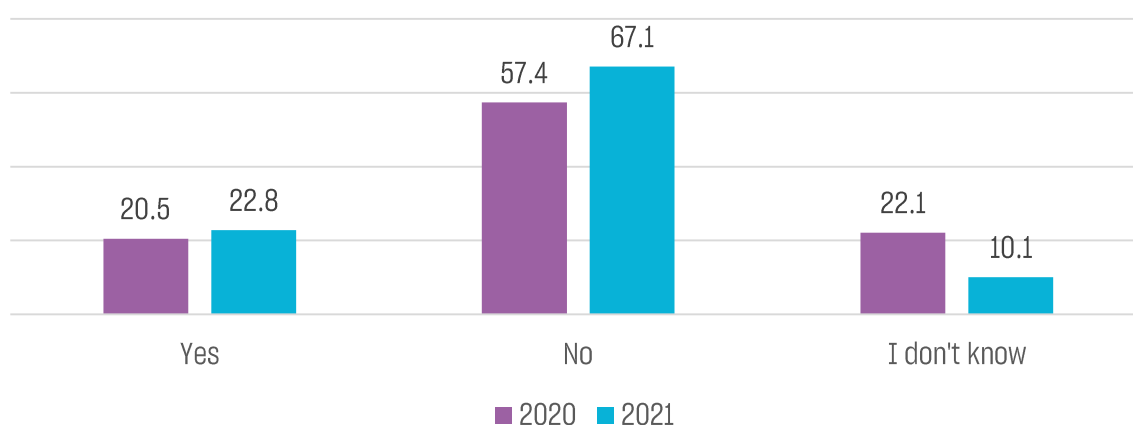
The respondents were then asked to state which specific topics they would like to be more informed about. They were able to choose from several pre-specified options, so it should come as no surprise that the sum of all the answers exceeds 100%.

The order of the topics listed is largely in line with last year's results. However, in this survey wave, respondents are much more likely to say they would like to be informed on all the topics listed. Respondents show greatest interest in activities conducted to combat organized crime - 71.7% of respondents are interested in this topic, while 68.1% are interested in the fight against corruption. Only 27.7% would like more information on cybercrime, and 25.3% are interested in migration management.



Graph 38: Which topics related to police work would you like to receive more information about?

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. The number of persons that are sufficiently informed has seen a slight increase from 20.5% to 22.8%.



Graph 39: In case you would be interested in joining the Police, do you consider that you have access to enough information about the recruitment procedures?

When socio-demographic characteristics are concerned, the statistically relevant differences occur between respondents of different gender-ethnicity-education-region profiles. Thus, women (69.4%) are more likely to claim that they do not have enough information than men (64.7%). This view is also voiced by members of ethnic minorities - as many as 90.0% of Albanians and 72.4% of Bosniaks and Muslims

claim that there is not enough information on the recruitment process. This issue requires further action, so that police force would be equally accessible to all Montenegrin citizens.

There is a positive correlation between education attainment and level of being informed about the recruitment process – the more educated a person is, the more informed they claim to be. Finally, it should be noted that residents of the southern region (15.2%) are least familiar with the recruitment processes, while respondents from the north of Montenegro (32.7%) come up as being most informed.

## Main findings and recommendations

This year's survey sheds light on several interesting phenomena and changes in the perception of the police as compared to previous survey waves.

**The Police Directorate is perceived more positively compared to last year.** Police service comes in as the third most-trusted institution, right behind religious institutions and the Montenegrin Army, and is trusted by a cumulative of 53.9% of respondents. Almost two-thirds of respondents, 7.7% more than last year, claim that the police cooperate with citizens in their community, causing the number of those who feel safe in their community to go up to 82.1%. This also prompted the increase in the number of respondents that have a favorable view of the security situation in Montenegro (68.6%).

The leading associations at the mention of police service are safety, security and peace. Almost three-quarters of the respondents view the police in a positive light, and as many as 41.1% of them observe changes for the better in the past 12 months. The police are said to be most efficient in the areas of protecting citizens' safety (59.9%), border management and security (53.5%) and traffic safety (50.3%). Compared to last year, **significantly higher** satisfaction score has been recorded with areas such as the **fight against crime, corruption and drug trafficking**. On the other hand, areas that are more community-oriented, such as **traffic safety** and **domestic violence**, show **decreased satisfaction scores**.

**Serbian ethnic affiliation is no longer the dominant indicator of a negative attitude towards the police** – Serbs are much more likely than other ethnic groups to cite improvement in the work of the police in the past 12 months, as agreed by 55.2% of them. The number of Serbs who cite a positive view of the police is increasing, while the number of positive views as voiced by Montenegrins, Bosniaks and Muslims is declining, and the overall ratings recorded in this survey are now more evenly distributed than in the previous waves. Namely, 54.1% of Serbs trust the police, which is a major increase compared to last year's 25.7%. On the other hand, the number of Bosniaks and Muslims who trust the police has seen a steep decline – from 71.2% to 46.4%.

**Respondents are voicing a better perception of an average police officer as compared to last year** – as many as 74.5% of those polled say that police officers are kind, 70.2% that they are communicative and 66.3% find them willing to help citizens. Persons under the age of 45, highly educated and respondents living in the south of Montenegro are more likely than average to hold a less negative perception of police officers. Three out of five respondents dub the police as an institution that serves its citizens, while 52.1% find them to be adequately trained. On the other hand, respondents gave lowest rankings to a claim that the police recruitment system is a transparent one – cumulatively, only 34.0% of respondents agree with the said claim.

**There is a marked tendency to cite police independence** – the number of respondents who claim that the groups listed in the questionnaire can exert influence on the police has decreased with all of the seven groups. State-level politicians (74.5%) and criminal groups (67.9%) are recognized as exerting most influence, whereas citizens (22.7%) and civil society (19.3%) are said to have the least influence on the work of the police.

**Drug trafficking, drug use and corruption are perceived as Montenegro's top-three security threats. Citizens associate corruption not only with society, but also with the very police service** – although the number of respondents who find that the police are combating corruption successfully is increasing (44.9%),

a relative majority of 49.1% still points to underachievement in anti-corruption efforts. Although as few as 7.3% of respondents believe that there is not a single police officer involved in corruption, this still constitutes an increase compared to last year's 4.3%. On the other hand, as many as 84.4% of those polled claim that police officers are involved in corruption, be it to a greater or lesser extent.

As many as 84.3% of those surveyed believe that women and men are equally capable of carrying out police duty, a result almost identical to last year's. Women, those under the age of 55, respondents with higher educational attainment levels, respondents who declare themselves as Montenegrins and residents of the coastal region are more likely than average to agree with this view. *The majority of respondents agree in that woman can match the performance of their male colleagues in administrative and managerial positions within police force, while such attitude is less present when it comes to women doing field work and taking part in special police operations.* Half of the respondents fully agree that more women are needed in the police service, and over four-fifths claim that women can be more effective in contact with victims of trafficking and domestic violence, and that mixed patrols are the best way to boost cooperation between citizens and police. At the same time, when considering a career in the police force, female respondents are mostly concerned about striking a balance between work and family life (61.4%) and about police work possibly being too demanding (54.0%).

*An increase has been observed in the self-reported level of being informed* - from 39.8% as recorded last year to 55.4%. Respondents are most often informed about the work of the police through TV (70.3%) and web portals (65.6%), and an increased use of information channels compared to the previous wave has been recorded only with social networks - Facebook and Twitter. Respondents voice the greatest interest in activities conducted to combat organized crime - 71.7% of respondents are interested in this topic, while 68.1% are interested in the fight against corruption. Only 22.8% of respondents claim to have sufficient information on how to join the police force, and communication activities should be continued to that end.