**Global Corruption Barometer 2012/2013: Less perception, more bribing**

*Global Corruption Barometer[[1]](#footnote-1) results for Serbia indicate significant increase of bribing frequency in 2012 compared to previous years, perception that corruption is widespread in political institutions, slightly better evaluation of Government’s work, and belief that there would be no difference as a main reason for citizens not to report corruption . To change this state, by estimation of Transparency – Serbia, it is necessary to identify all sources of political parties’ financing, and especially during last year’s election campaign, to make process of state organs’ decision making transparent, to protect whistleblowers and to implement other measures to increase number of reported and completely investigated cases.*

***Primary global indicators***

Data from **Global Corruption Barometer**, on the basis of researches implemented by the end of 2012 and beginning of 2013 in 107 states and territories worldwide, in total of 14.300 examinees, show that **more than one quarter of people bribed in the past 12 months.** Most often bribed worldwide are police officers and judiciary employees. World population considers political parties (3.8, in a scale from 1 to 5) and police (3.7) as the most corrupted institutions. As much as 55% of examinees thinks or mainly agrees with observation that policy of their country is being lead in the interest of large business entities. Just 11% citizens of the world think their governments are effective in fight against corruption. Two thirds of people would report corruption and undertake steps to decrease it.

***Primary findings for Serbia***

**In Serbia**, research was implemented in the period from 7 to 14 September 2012[[2]](#footnote-2) in national sample from over 1000 examinees. The research indicates seemingly unusual findings and trends. Namely, as much as 55% of Serbian citizens thinks **level of corruption** „in the past two years“ **decreased** in large scale or at least a little. Such optimistic view of trend in 2010 had just 14% of examinees. At the same time, research shows **significant increase in percentage of citizens who bribed** „in the past year“ (26% of those who had contacts with respective public services and provided clear answer to these questions). There is also increased perception on corruption of individual institutions and sectors.

This paradox can be explained solely by basing citizens’ perception on general level of corruption on a fact that in the period of conducting interviews several important investigations were initiated and that it represents more of a reflection of hope into changing the status then of real situation.

**More than a half of Serbian citizens considers political parties, judiciary, public officials and health services as extremely corrupted**, while slightly less people has such opinion on police, parliament and country’s educational system. On the other hand, military and religious communities only one sixth of examinees consider as extremely corrupted.

In almost all monitored areas has come to **large increase of bribing cases**. As much as 26% of those that were in contact with offices providing services related to real estates claims to give bribe (2010 just 6.5%), in health sector 20.8% (previously below 13%), in judiciary 18.8% (comparing to 13%), in police 16 (previously 14.8%) and in education sector 14.9% (comparing to 4.1%).

In almost half of cases (46%) reasons for bribing was **speeding up of procedure**, in 28% „gifts of gratitude“ in 12% cases desire to obtain more beneficial service and in 15% bribe was the only way to obtain service. 36% mails and 31% females in Serbia thinks they are able to assist in fight against corruption. Largest interest for personal engagement exists in petition signing (83%), participation in protests (55%), while one third was prepared even for greater costs to do business with firms that are not bribing. As much as 58% of citizens claims to report corruption, **which is not in compliance with number of reported cases in reality.** Namely, on the basis of this research’s results and of similar researches conclusion can be drawn that in Serbia every year several hundreds of thousands of cases of corruption occurs. On the other hand, number of submitted criminal charges for all criminal acts of corruption is merely measured in several thousands. As main reasons for non-reporting of corruption citizens emphasize conviction into unchanged status (61%), fear of consequences (24%) and ignorance on who to turn to (13%).

**Average score of Government’s work** in fight against corruption is slightly better than it was in 2010 and 2008 – **2,42** (in „school“ scale from 1 to 5), compared to 2,24 and 2,38, but still worse than it was in 2007, when such scaling was done for the first time (2,73). At the same time, large number of citizens considers „that Government tailors its policy to fit the interests of several larger (business) subjects“. Such opinion shares 21% of examinees and those who mostly agree 42% while just 3% thinks company interest do not influence Governmental policy.

***Serbia in regional and global comparisons***

Citizens of Serbia answers do not deviate significantly comparing to the rest of western Balkans. Only significant deviation comes from the change in corruption level in the past two years. Just 23 percent of citizens in Western Balkans consider level of corruption as decreased, while such standpoint shares 55 of Serbian citizens. Far behind are Macedonia with 30 percent, Croatia with 29 percent of those who believe in less corruption. The least improvement, according to citizens’ opinion, is in B&H where 69 percent believes that level of corruption increased.

Globally observed, citizens of Serbia optimism regarding decreasing level of corruption share citizens of Azerbaijan, Belgium, Georgia, Cambodia, Rwanda, Sudan, Taiwan, Philippines and Fiji.

Related to corruption perception of public services and institutions, there is no greater deviation between states from Macedonia to Croatia – political parties and judiciary are perceived as most corrupted (4,1), followed by health (4.0), parliament (3,8), public officials (3,7), education and police (3,6). At the bottom of the list are religious communities (2, 5) and military (2, 5).

Citizens of Serbia perceive corruption as a serious problem, but are prepared to involve into its curbing in far less level than citizens from the region, especially when that requests some sort of personal sacrifice. For example, two third majority will rather do business with corrupting company than by more expensive goods or services from a company that is trustworthy as far as the corruption involvement.

Corruption would report 58 percent of Serbian citizens, which is less that regional average (68%). The most prepared to report corruption are examinees from Kosovo[[3]](#footnote-3) or Macedonia (84, and 82 percent).

***What does GCB indicates to further fight against corruption?***

This year GCB shows that in Serbia, after a long series of years, certain optimism in regards to possibility of curbing corruption exists. However, higher level of corruption perception in citizens, larger number of bribing cases that were not reported and belief into influence of grey eminences to state policy are factors that indicate to necessary ensuring the citizens in non-selectiveness and permanency of fight against corruption with concrete measures and that every reported or suspicious case will be quickly investigated. This is especially important since citizens hesitate to reports corruption and not because of fear, but for disbelief into its effectiveness.

Research undoubtedly shows that citizens see main corruption causes in politics, which can be related to capturing of state institutions by political parties, non-transparent process of decision making and insufficiently researched sources of party financing. Therefore it is not realistic to expect that fight against corruption in Serbia will bring more permanent effects while prosecution organs wait for the signals from ruling parties to initiate procedures and while all those who violated rules of election campaign financing are punished. It is also necessary to relocate decision making on important state matters from coalition meeting s to public institutions and to provide transparency of decision making process through organized lobbying and sensible public debates.

Transparency – Serbia

Belgrade, 9 July 2013

1. Global Corruption Barometer is two year research implemented by Transparency International for the eighth time in cooperation with Gallup network. GCB is not to be mixed with Corruption Perception Index of Transparency International. CPI ranks the countries by corruption perception and source of data are qualified examinees (e.g. businessmen, analysts etc.). On the other hand, GCB measures experiences and perception of representative population of some country. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Research for Serbia was done by TNS Medium Gallup agency. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. For Kosovo and Metohija special research was implemented. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)