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TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL AZERBAIJAN

Country Corruption Assessment:
Public Opinion Survey in Azerbaijan

Baku 2004

This report presents analysis of the results of the population survey on the problem of corruption in Azerbaijan, organized in April-May 2004 to the order of Transparency Azerbaijan (chairman of board Sabot Bagirov, executive director Rena Safaralieva) by a group of sociologists led by Tatiana Sulina.

This survey is an integral part of the large scale national research into the problem of corruption in the country, other components of which are: the legislative framework study (with support from the OSCE office in Baku), its implementation in practice (donor – British Embassy in Baku), enterprise survey (with funding to be provided by Statoil Azerbaijan a.s) and the final research, representing   assessment of the National Integrity System, the copyright of which belongs to Transparency International (funded by the Azerbaijan office of the Eurasia Foundation).

This project would have been impossible without financial support from BP Azerbaijan Business Unit. We also thank all members of the project team – nearly 50 professionals.

The report consists of four parts: Main Conclusions, Assessment of the Level of Corruption in Azerbaijan, Analysis of the Respondents' Demographics Data and Methodology Description. Questions of the Questionnaire are offered in the main body of the report.

Table of Contents

I. MAIN CONCLUSIONS

1. Moderate views regarding the general political situation and level of development in Azerbaijan seem to predominate among Azeris, according to our assessment of respondents' views. However, our assessment also reveals that there exists a fairly even-numbered split between the respondents who are satisfied with the status quo in Azerbaijan and those who are not. We infer from this assessment that this social cleavage could potentially widen in the future. Note that the number of citizens who are very unsatisfied with the status quo in Azerbaijan is quite substantial at 12,8%, whereas the number of those who are very satisfied is much lower, 4,5%, by comparison. However, if one takes into account the predominance of optimistic expectations (optimists outnumber pessimists four to one) regarding the country's near-term economic prospects, as well as the high price of oil on the global market, one should not dramatise the current situation.

2. The standard of living of Azeris is extremely low. Despite the fact that only 40% of all participants assessed their standard of living as "poor" or "very poor," the situation appears to be much worse in reality. This conclusion is based on the fact that 50,7% of respondents, the majority of whom placed themselves in the middle class category, stated that they find it difficult to meet all of their basic needs with their income. In many cases, these respondents indicated that while they have money for food, they face difficulties putting aside money for clothes.

Moreover, the aggregate family (4 people) income of four-fifths of those surveyed is below 600 000 manats or less than a dollar per capita per day, which hardly covers the minimum consumer basket. As only 31,8% of respondents stated that they restrict their spending to food, we can assume that they have informal revenues. The near twofold discrepancy between the respondents' declared incomes and self-assessment of their well being level and their actual expenses would seem to confirm the opinion of some experts that the shadow economy turnover is approximately equal to the annual budget of Azerbaijan.

3. According to respondents, the main problems currently facing Azerbaijan are social and economic in nature. They identify the following three issues as top priority or requiring immediate resolution: unemployment (34,9%), settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem (22,3%) and improvement of the social protection of the population (22,0%). Corruption attracted the attention of only 11% of respondents. Although this problem was referred to 2-3 times less frequently than other problems, similar research indicates public concern about this social phenomenon is increasing.

Among those respondents who indicated that corruption is a top priority concern for Azerbaijan, males (68,2%) clearly outnumber females (31,8%). This can be explained in that men have traditionally been more active in the system of social relations and, therefore, tend to encounter corruption more often. Urban dwellers (56,4%) seem to be more concerned about corruption than people from rural areas (43,6%), which, again, is to be expected as economic life is more developed in cities than in the country. Also, urban areas tend to have denser networks of public officials and more opportunities are available to resort to corrupt practices. Unemployment and the lack of prospects for a better life has caused a substantial portion of the population (22,2%), most disturbingly the young and educated, to consider emigration. Among those respondents who expressed a willingness to emigrate, nearly half are between the ages of 18 and 30. 42,9% of respondents with incomplete higher education and 26.0% of those who have completed higher education are also considering emigration.

4. Regarding the population's perceptions of corruption forms and dynamics, three quarters of all respondents (74,9%) perceive corruption only in the form of a bribe, which they encounter in their daily lives. According to 53,9% of all respondents, the level of corruption in Azerbaijan has increased considerably during the last 10 years. Some reasons for this include: the lack of an efficient state anti-corruption program, the decline of the population's average income, the liquidation of Soviet-era supervisory bodies, an imperfect legislative framework, and a lack of control over the implementation of laws and the behaviour of public officials.

5. Population perceptions of the level of corruption in Azerbaijan are uniformly negative. The overwhelming majority of all respondents (86,9%) believe that the level of corruption in Azerbaijan is either "high" or "very high." 83,2% of respondents either "do not approve" or "are exasperated" with the level of corruption in the country. Nearly half of all the survey participants (48,6%) think that bribes are paid as a result of direct extortion on the part of public officials. However, it is interesting to note that 37,3% of respondents believe that bribes are voluntarily paid as a form of gratitude for the resolution of certain problems and 12,8% consider bribery as a form of social tradition. One can observe from the respondents' answers that while Azeri society seems to denounce corruption on the one hand, a considerable portion of the population seems to have become accustomed to corruption and views it as an inevitable and habitual evil. Given the high perceived level of corruption in Azerbaijan and the population's mixed attitude toward it, one can infer that there exists a danger that a certain part of Azeri society is becoming apathetic, as it is growing accustomed to corruption.

6. The imperfection of the legal system in the Azerbaijan creates conditions favourable for corrupt practices to continue. One in every five respondents is convinced that contradictory norms are deliberately included in legislative acts in order to facilitate extortion. An assessment of the survey results reveals that most respondents are not well informed about the Law on Combat Against Corruption that was adopted by the Milli Majlis (Parliament). Approximately half of all respondents were not aware of the existence of this law and expressed doubt regarding its implementation.

7. Respondents consider the primary causes of corruption in the country to be: the corruption of elites, the deficiency of the public administration system, and lack of control over behaviour of public officials via social institutions. Approximately half of all respondents believe that corruption affects all levels of the public administration system, and one quarter believes it affects the highest echelons of this system most seriously. In summary, respondents seem to believe that rampant corruption in Azerbaijan can be blamed on the inefficiency of the public administration system as well as on the weak resistance of society.

8. The population's opinion about the possibility of launching a major campaign against corruption in Azerbaijan is split nearly evenly between optimists and pessimists, with the number of optimists being slightly higher. One can infer from these results that the higher number of optimists indicates that there is public demand for the launch of such a campaign in the near future.

9. The leading role in the fight against corruption, according to majority of respondents, should be assumed by the government. Many respondents also maintained that law enforcement bodies, courts, Parliament, and the media have an important role to play as well. According to the majority of those surveyed, municipal councils, NGOs and other social institutions do not enjoy sufficient authority to be at the forefront of this battle. One in every

ten of the survey participants claimed that the fight against corruption should be led by the President himself.

If the population expresses a certain degree of confidence in the ability of the President and his administration to combat corruption, their faith in the ability of the other structures of the state, such as the Cabinet of Ministers, Prosecutor's Office, courts, Ministry of Interior Affairs, etc., to reduce the extreme level of corruption in the country is lacking. However, most respondents do maintain that these structures should be leading the fight against corruption in Azerbaijan. This contradiction does not seem to be easily resolvable. It would require that the citizenry give substantial support to the President and his administration should he opt to purge and re-organise state structures, which is necessary in order to restore public faith in these institutions and to incorporate them in the larger fight against corruption in Azerbaijan.

Unfortunately, respondents seem to demonstrate that Azeris feel detached from the anti-corruption process in that they often attempt to shift the burden of responsibility for a fight against corruption to others, particularly the authorities, rather than seeing a possible role for themselves in this struggle.

10. According to respondents, the following is a list of anti-corruption measures that are being implemented in Azerbaijan, in order of their perceived importance:

- tightening of criminal and administrative liability for corruption;
- adoption of an efficient national anti-corruption program, as well as the establishment of a special anti-corruption agency;
- increasing transparency in the public administration system;
- replacing corrupt public officials from the old regime with new ones;
- public administration reform;
- education of the population and creation of public aversion towards corruption;
- judicial reform and the establishment of independent courts;
- increasing salaries and pensions in the public sector to a level that is comparable with those offered by the private sector;
- institutionalization of annual income declaration by public officials and disclosure thereof to the general public.

It should be mentioned that despite the fact that preference is still given to the old Soviet methods of administrative enforcement, new methods that tend to ensure more transparency in the public administration system and more active involvement of social institutions were also supported by those surveyed.

11. It is difficult to pinpoint the particular corruption problem areas in Azerbaijan, as citizens seem to be exposed to extortion frequently. According to public perception, health care and road police services are the most difficult to be obtained without a paying a bribe. Indeed, the likelihood of experiencing extortion when seeking these services is over 80%. The personal experience of the respondents seems to correlate with their perception of the degree of corruption of various public institutions. For instance, the personal experience of most respondents indicates that it is nearly impossible to avoid paying a bribe when one wishes to obtain social benefits, police protection, reduced or adapted military service, a court hearing, employment in the public sector, a land plot or the legalisation of its purchase. According to

respondents, it is possible to resist extortion to some degree and still obtain religious or education services.

12. The high level of corruption in Azerbaijan that is perceived by respondents does not seem to be based on media reports or hearsay, but rather, on personal, negative experience. For instance, 58,9% of all respondents state that either they themselves or a member of their family have experienced extortion, of which 67,74% found themselves in such a situation within last 6 months. It is interesting to note that 55,9% of respondents indicated that they would pay a bribe for a service if asked and a further 12,7% evaded answering this question, which would seem to confirm that social resistance to extortion in Azerbaijan is minimal. Respondents also noted that those who do not pay bribes are generally not rendered the service they required.

The level of corruption in the education system seems to be moderate in Azerbaijan. 72,1 % of respondents believe that people experience corruption "from time to time", "often" and "very often", only 54,7% think that it is impossible to obtain service without bribing, and only 49% have had personal experience with extortion in this sphere. This moderate level can possibly be attributed to the existence of a test system of admission to higher and special secondary educational institutions. Despite some particular deficiencies, on the whole, this system has earned a reputation for being a rather objective mediator of relations between service seekers and state machinery by minimizing the role that the "personality factor" plays. Moreover, this model involves the computerised registration of data and has clear and transparent rules of admission. This model could be used in other spheres where transparency is lacking such as the banks' payments of pensions and the publication of legislative acts.
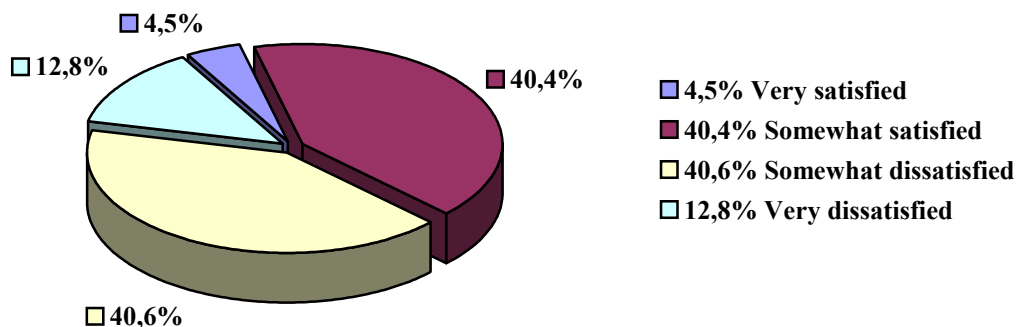
Based on our analysis of the survey results, we maintain that there exists conspicuous and systemic corruption in Azerbaijan. Only profound reform of the whole system of public administration as well as a mobilisation of public opinion, social institutions and civil society can ensure the success of the fight against corruption in Azerbaijan.

II. ASSESSMENT OF THE LEVEL OF CORRUPTION IN AZERBAIJAN

ASESSMENT OF THE GENERAL SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

A 1. How do you perceive the current situation in Azerbaijan in general?[1]

Diagram 1

- 4,5% Very satisfied
- 40,4% Somewhat satisfied
- 40,6% Somewhat dissatisfied
- 12,8% Very dissatisfied

As one can see from the distribution of the respondents' answers, the overall assessment of the general situation in the country is neither good nor bad. The number of those who are satisfied and who are unsatisfied with the general situation in the country is comparable.

ASESSMENT OF THE ECONOMIC SITUATION AND ITS PERSPECTIVES

A 2. How would you evaluate the current economic situation in Azerbaijan?

Diagram 2

- 3,4% Very good
- 44,2% Good
- 42,7% Bad
- 6,5% Very bad
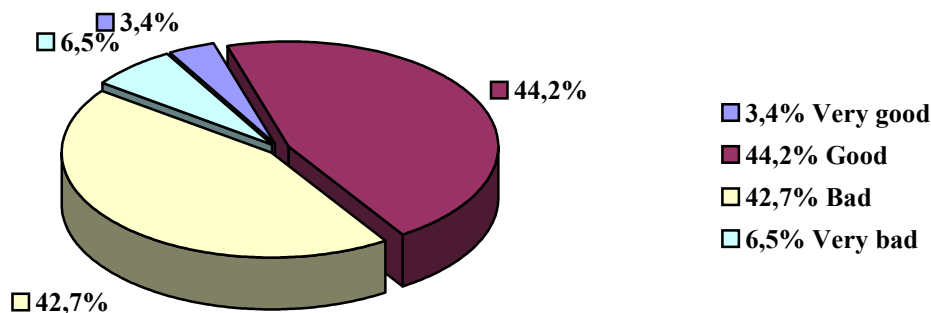
As illustrated in the diagram above, respondents seem to be even more moderate in their perceptions of the current economic situation in Azerbaijan. Indeed, the opinions of respondents are almost evenly split. Although the generally moderate assessment offered by respondents seems to testify to the lack of an obvious crisis in the country, the even split may be interpreted as evidence of a profound polarisation of society. Delays in resolving this problem may potentially result in the alienation of society from the state.

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[1] The report is compiled on the basis of the survey questionnaire. However, succession of both may not coincide exactly.

A 3. What do you think the economic situation in Azerbaijan will be a year from now? Will it improve, remain the same, or worsen?

Diagram 3

☐ 11,1%   ☐ 11,8%

☐ 42,8% Will improve

☐ 34,3% Will remain and same

☐ 11,1% Will worsen

☐ 11,8% Difficult to say/No answer

34,3%

42,8%
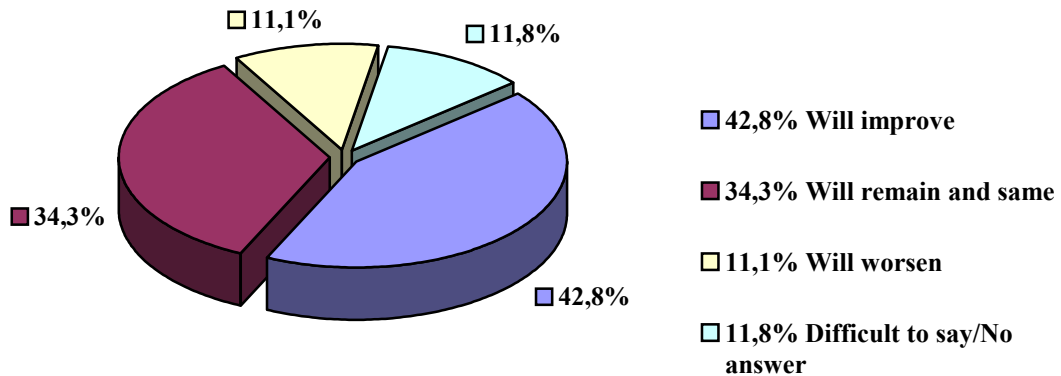
Respondents seem to be cautiously optimistic regarding the economic prospects of Azerbaijan. The number of those who expect the economic situation t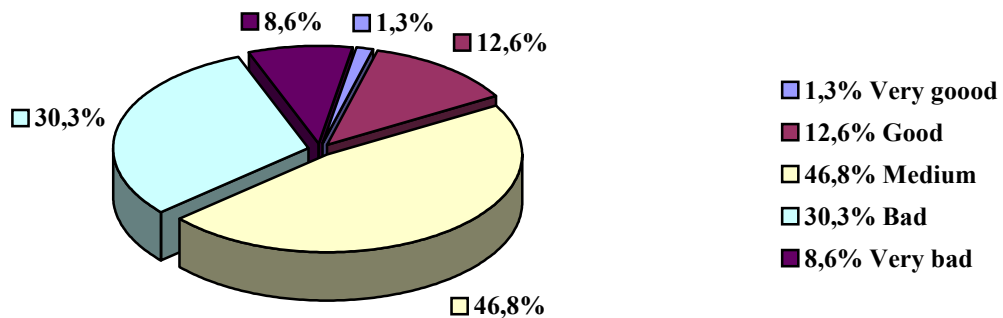o improve within one year is four times larger than those who anticipate economic decline in the same period. It is likely that this optimism is a result of increasing economic development in the last several years, particularly in the capital city of Baku, as well as high oil prices on the global market. One might also attribute the generally positive mood of respondents to the fact that the government has made some effort and several promises regarding job creation and development of the rural areas in Azerbaijan in recent times.

ASSESSMENT OF THE PERSONAL LEVEL OF LIVING STANDARD

A 4. How would you assess your own standard of living or quality of life?

Diagram 4

☐ 8,6%   ☐ 1,3%   ☐ 12,6%

☐ 30,3%

☐ 1,3% Very goood

☐ 12,6% Good

☐ 46,8% Medium

☐ 30,3% Bad

☐ 8,6% Very bad

46,8%

Based on the respondents' own subjective assessments, people belonging to the middle and upper classes constitute the majority of the population, the same as in developed countries. However, official data and statistics do not bear these assessments out: the majority of the population actually earns a per capita income of under $2 per day. The number of citizens who earn less than $1 per day is also quite high. The overestimation of the personal living standard is most likely a result of individuals' comparisons of the quality of life of their entire families with those who live in dire poverty.[2]

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[2] According to World Bank and UN data, based, mainly, on the official statistics the percent of poor population (i.e. with income below 1$ per capita per day) was as follows: 1996г – 61%, 2001 –49%, 2002 – 46,7%, and finally 2003 – 44% of the total Azerbaijan population. Source: ECHO newspaper, 12 July 2004

D 7. How would you assess financial situation of your family?

Diagram 5

☐ **31,8% We do not have enough money to buy food**

☐ **50,7% We have enough money to buy food, but it is difficult to buy clothes**

☐ **15,0% We have enough money to buy food and clothes and we can save some money, but not enough to buy expensive items**

☐ **1,4% We can afford to buy some expensive items**

☐ **0,5% We can afford anything we want**
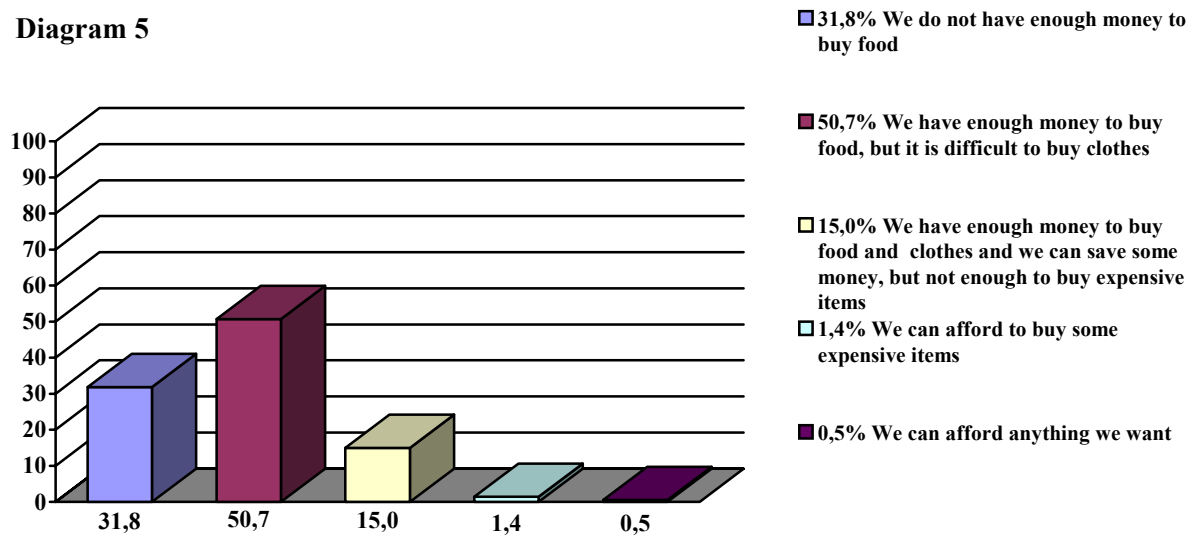
A comparison of diagrams 5 and 6 demonstrates that only those who do not have enough money to buy food consider their financial level to be "poor" and "very poor." Those who can afford to buy sufficient food but have difficulties buying clothes consider themselves to be middle class. Those who described their living standard as good can afford to buy food and clothes and save some money but their income is not sufficient to allow them to purchase any luxury goods. Thus, they do not qualify as middle class, according to internationally accepted standards. Indeed, only 1,4% of those surveyed can afford to buy expensive items and, therefore, qualify as middle class. The number of wealthy people in Azerbaijan is minuscule but their incomes are perceived to be comparable with those of wealthy people in other countries according to other sources.

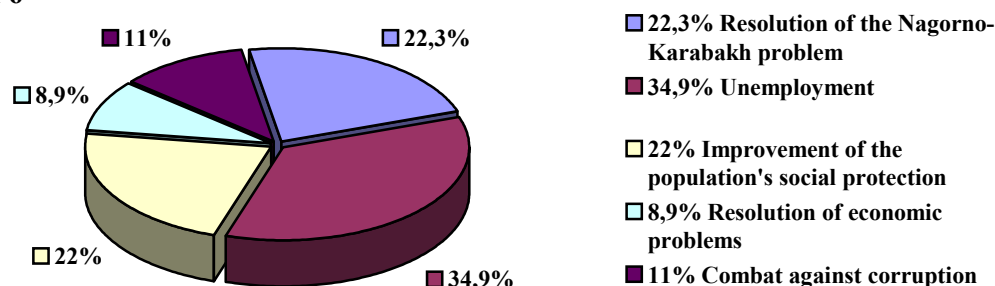**D 6. What is your level of monthly income?**

Responding to the question about their level of family monthly income (including salaries, child allowances and other contributions), only 6,1% of respondents indicated that they received in the range of 600.000 to 1.000.000 AZM and only 3,1% received over 1 million AZM.[3] The declared family income of the majority of respondents (83,5%) was below 600.000 per month, which barely covers a family's basic needs, and 31,8% of respondents maintained that they have difficulties buying food. It is interesting to note that despite their apparent poverty, the majority of the population still spends money on items other than food (see distribution of answers to the Question D7). Thus, we can presume that many citizens receive unregistered income of a magnitude that is comparable to that of their official earnings. According to some experts, the value of exchange in the shadow economy in Azerbaijan is equal to the annual budget of the country. This is indirectly confirmed by results of this survey.

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[3] As of survey period, the official AZM exchange rate was 4 925 per 1 USD

COUNTRY'S PRORITY PROBLEMS

A 7. What problem faced by the country is the most serious?

Diagram 6

■11%   ■22,3%   ■ 22,3% Resolution of the Nagorno-
□8,9%   Karabakh problem
                  ■ 34,9% Unemployment
□22%   □ 22% Improvement of the
                  population's social protection
■34,9%   □ 8,9% Resolution of economic
                  problems
   ■ 11% Combat against corruption

Of all the problems faced by the country, the respondents seemed to agree that the most serious problem, requiring immediate resolution, is that of unemployment. The second priority concern is the desire to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The third most serious problem in Azerbaijan is perceived to the need to improve the social protection of the population. The need to fight against corruption was viewed by the respondents as the fourth most serious problem confronting Azerbaijan at present. Despite the fact that the issue of corruption was referred to 2 or 3 times less frequently than were the other concerns, there has been an obvious increase in the public level of concern regarding corruption lately.[4] Of those concerned with corruption in Azerbaijan, males (68,2%) outnumber females (31,8%). This can be explained by the fact that men have traditionally been better integrated in the social system than women and, therefore, are more likely to encounter extortion and corruption. There is no distinct difference in the respondents' attitudes towards corruption if one takes into account their age and level of education. However, urban dwellers (56,4%) seem to be somewhat more concerned about this problem than rural citizens (43,6%). This difference can be explained by the fact that economic activity and financial operations (both in the formal and shadow economies) tend to be concentrated in the capital city of Baku and other cities, which leads to much greater contact between the urban dwellers and public officials as well as the former's much broader access to media and other sources of information.

THE POSSIBILITY OF EMIGRATION OUT OF THE COUNTRY

A 5. Should you have an opportunity, would you leave Azerbaijan for good?

Diagram 7

□22,2%

                  □ 22,2% Yes
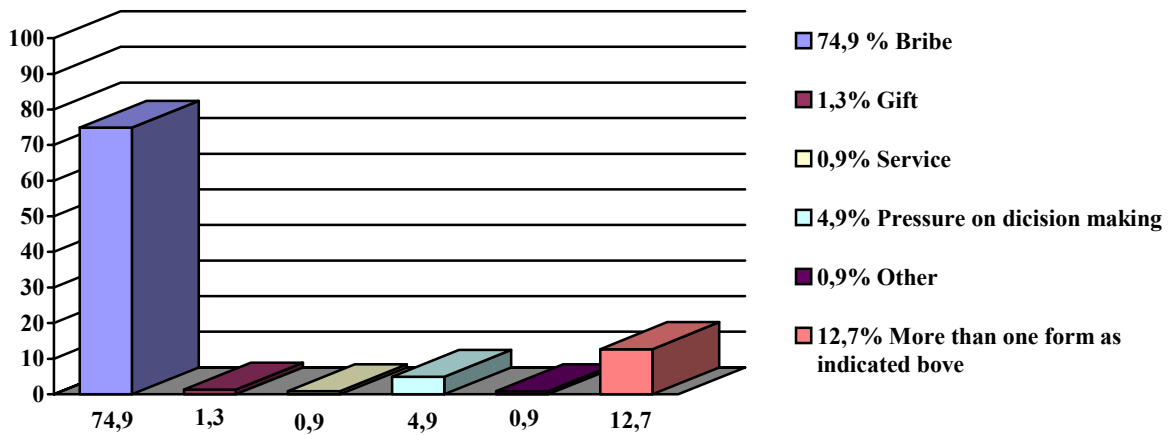   ■ 75,9% No

■75,9%

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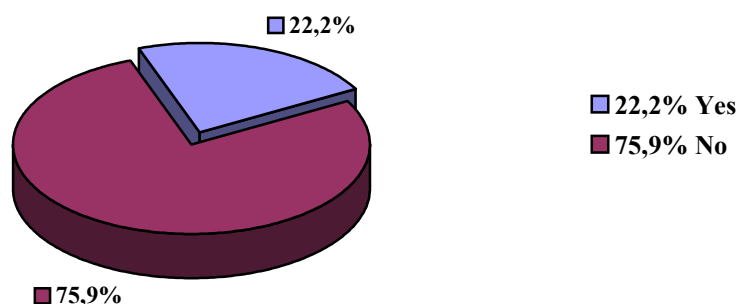
[4] Public Opinion Monitoring As A Factor of Civil Society Formation in Azerbaijan, Baku, 2004., publication of Pulse sociologic service

Unemployment and a lack of prospects for a better life force quite a substantial portion of the population (22,2%) to consider emigration in Azerbaijan. Among those willing to emigrate, nearly half (44,6%) are aged between 18 and 30. Among those who identified themselves as potential migrants, 68,9% live in cities and towns and 31,1% live in rural areas. Nearly half of all respondents with incomplete higher education and a quarter of those with completed higher education are considering emigration. However, it is also important to note that the proportion of people with a relatively low level of education is also quite high (73,0%).

NOTION OF CORRUPTION

B 1. How do you understand "corruption"?

Diagram 8

Legend:
- 74,9 % Bribe
- 1,3% Gift
- 0,9% Service
- 4,9% Pressure on dicision making
- 0,9% Other
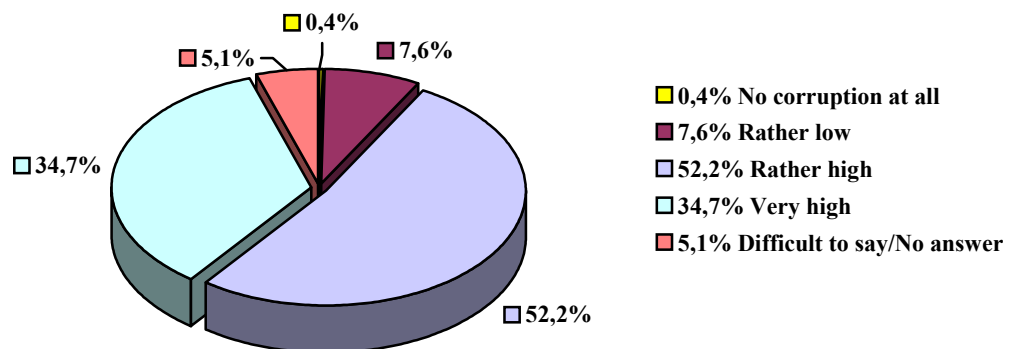- 12,7% More than one form as indicated bove

Nearly all respondents seem to understand corruption exclusively in terms of bribery, which is not surprising given how often most of them have encountered this form of corruption. Except for the application of pressure in decision-making processes, of which 4,9% of the respondents were aware, it seems as though the Azeri population is practically unaware of other forms of corruption. Abuse of office, embezzlement of state property, land or mineral resources, etc., are generally not viewed as forms of corruption, which would seem to confirm that the Azeri population is not well informed about corruption.

CORRUPTION LEVEL ASSESSMENT

B 3. How do you assess the level of corruption in our country?

Diagram 9

Legend:
- 0,4% No corruption at all
- 7,6% Rather low
- 52,2% Rather high
- 34,7% Very high
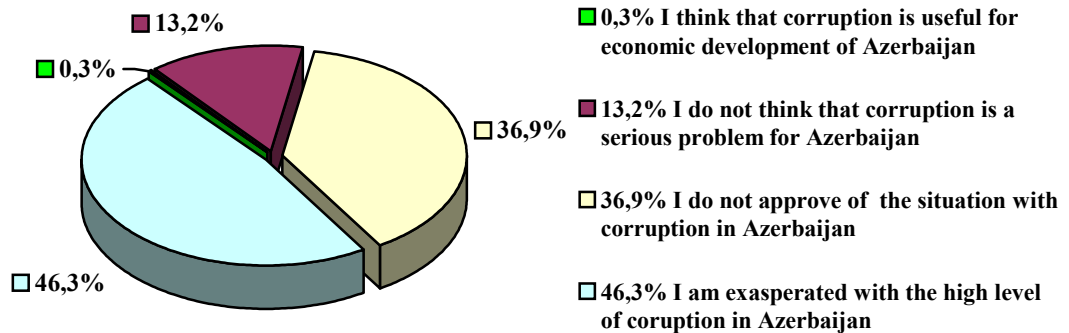- 5,1% Difficult to say/No answer

Only a small fraction of respondents evaded or faced difficulty responding to this question. The number of respondents who believe the level of corruption in Azerbaijan to be high or very high is much greater than that of those who believe it is low or non-existent.

PERSONAL AND PUBLIC ATTITUTE TOWARDS CORRUPTION

B 2. Which of the given statements below best reflects your attitude towards corruption?

Diagram 10

- ■ **13,2%**
- ■ **0,3%**
- □ **36,9%**
- □ **46,3%**

- ■ **0,3% I think that corruption is useful for economic development of Azerbaijan**
- ■ **13,2% I do not think that corruption is a serious problem for Azerbaijan**
- □ **36,9% I do not approve of the situation with corruption in Azerbaijan**
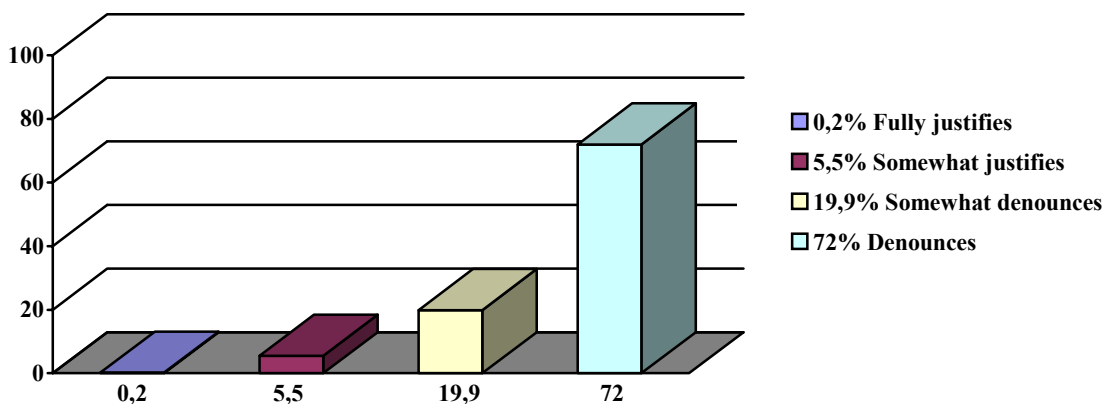- □ **46,3% I am exasperated with the high level of coruption in Azerbaijan**

According to respondents, the idea that corruption might have been useful to keep the inefficient machinery of the Soviet-style state running might have been justifiable in the authoritarian Soviet society but is extremely inappropriate in Azerbaijan's new market-oriented society. When responding to Question B2 above, nearly 8% of respondents described the level of corruption in Azerbaijan as low. The number of people who do not consider corruption to be a serious problem for Azerbaijan is somewhat higher at 13,2%. However, proportion of those who personally take corruption negatively exceeds those who are complacent or tolerant by 6 times, as compared to the 10 fold discrepancy in the Question B3 to the similar question, concerning public opinion, rather than personal. Note that there is an obvious discrepancy between the respondents' assessment of the level of corruption in Azerbaijan and their perception of Azeri society's aversion to it. One might infer from this discrepancy that part of Azeri society is becoming complacent and accustomed to corruption.

B 9. What is the public attitude towards corruption?

Diagram 11

- □ **0,2% Fully justifies**
- ■ **5,5% Somewhat justifies**
- □ **19,9% Somewhat denounces**
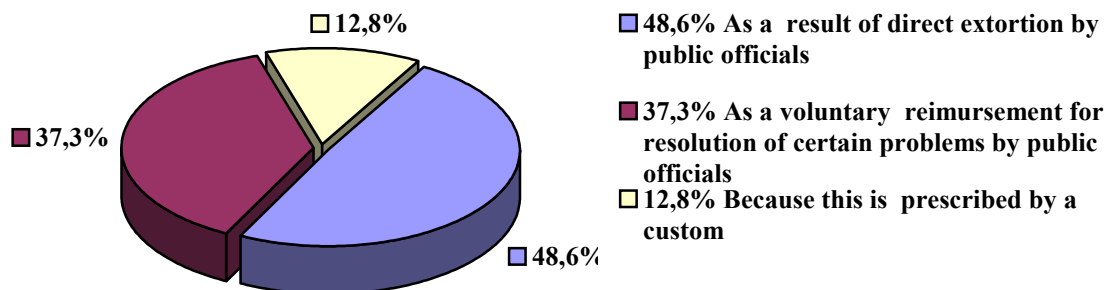- □ **72% Denounces**

According to the distribution of responses, over four fifths of respondents believe that the Azeri society denounces corruption, which correlates with their responses to the previous question. However, in their assessment of the public opinion respondents think that other

people are less tolerant and complacent towards corruption, which can be interpreted as a desire of a part of respondents to shift resistance to corrupt practices onto others.

B 5. Why do people pay bribes?

Diagram 12

□ **12,8%**

■ **37,3%**

■ **48,6%**

□ **48,6% As a result of direct extortion by public officials**

■ **37,3% As a voluntary reimursement for resolution of certain problems by public officials**

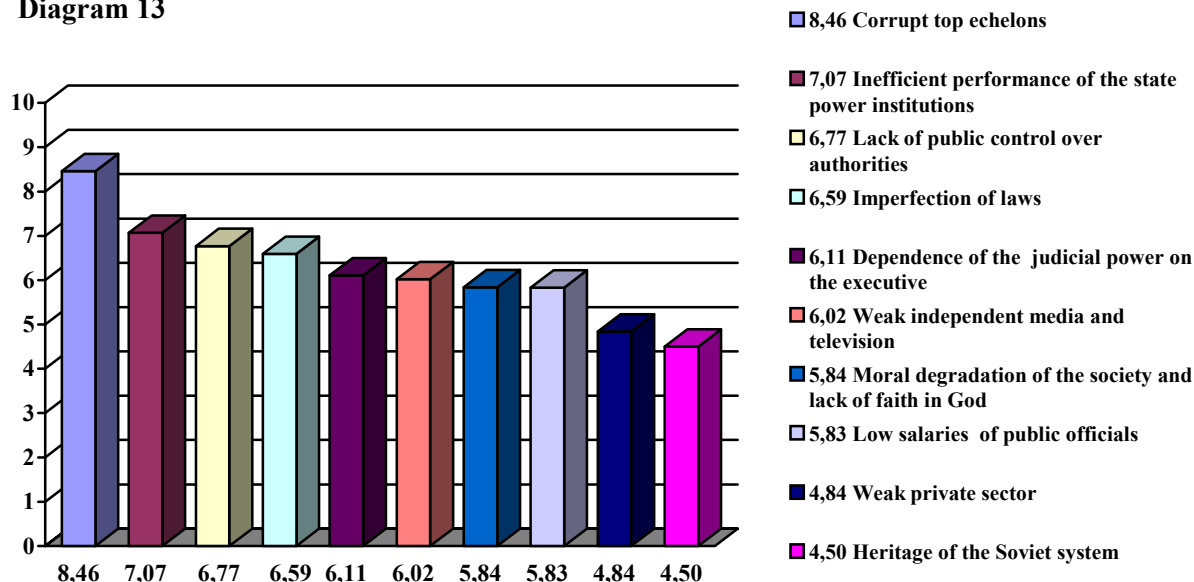□ **12,8% Because this is prescribed by a custom**

Despite the prevailing attitude against corruption, evidenced by the Azeris' responses to questions B.2, B.3, and B.9, the survey also shows that bribery has been normalized in the everyday life of Azeris. For instance, although half of respondents clearly perceive bribes to be linked to direct extortion on the part of public officials, the other half (37,3% + 12,8%) considers the offering or receiving of a bribe to be a voluntary act.

CAUSES OF CORRUPTION

B 4. What are the causes of corruption in our country?

Diagram 13

10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0

8,46   7,07   6,77   6,59   6,11   6,02   5,84   5,83   4,84   4,50

□ **8,46 Corrupt top echelons**

■ **7,07 Inefficient performance of the state power institutions**

□ **6,77 Lack of public control over authorities**

□ **6,59 Imperfection of laws**

■ **6,11 Dependence of the judicial power on the executive**

■ **6,02 Weak independent media and television**

■ **5,84 Moral degradation of the society and lack of faith in God**

□ **5,83 Low salaries of public officials**

■ **4,84 Weak private sector**

■ **4,50 Heritage of the Soviet system**

Respondents were asked to rank the importance of each of the causes listed above on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being the least important and 10 being the most important). It should be noted that most respondents did not consider the Soviet heritage to be the main cause of corruption. Indeed, it was ranked rather low by respondents. Perhaps the low ranking of this potential cause can be explained in that the situation in Azerbaijan has worsened considerably in the 13 year period since the demise of the Soviet Union. Concerning the apparent weakness of the

private sector, respondents also believed that this is rather more a consequence than a cause of corruption in Azerbaijan.

The theories of causation related to the moral degradation and/or low salaries of public officials seem to be similarly unpopular among Azeris. Indeed, salaries in the public sector have increased several times over the last few years, and this has not helped to curb corruption among public officials. According to respondents, the primary cause of corruption in Azerbaijan is the ruling elite itself.

The remaining causes ranked by respondents can be categorized in two main groups: the inefficiency of state machinery and related imperfection of laws, and the dependence of the judicial system on the executive power. The second cause is connected to a weakness in Azeri society, in which officials and authorities are not controlled by the public and media freedoms are lacking. In short, respondents seemed to identify the primary cause of corruption in Azerbaijan as a combination of the inefficiency of state authorities and the weak resistance of the population.

SPREAD OF CORRUPTION OVER THE LEVELS OF THE PYRAMID OF AUTHORITY

B 6. On which level of the pyramid of authority has corruption spread the most?
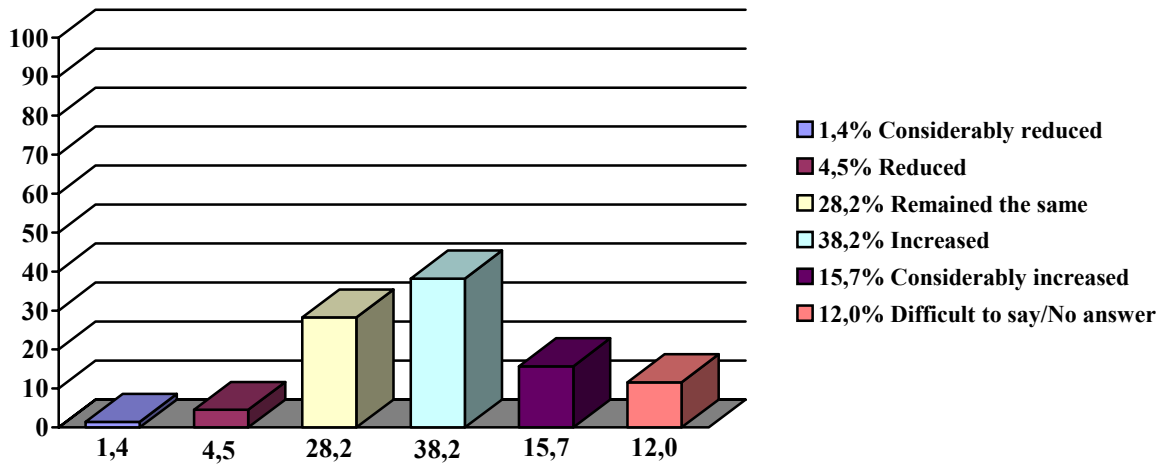
Diagram 14
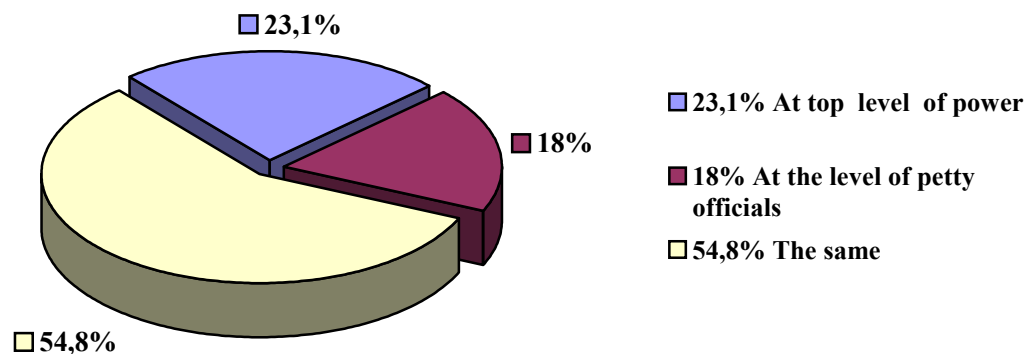
More than half of all respondents believe that corruption is evenly spread over the whole pyramid of authority in Azerbaijan. However, most respondents believe that corruption is more frequent at the top levels of power than it is at the bottom level among petty officials. Of course, this seems to be a subjective evaluation on the part of respondent, as it is clear from their personal experiences with corruption that they encounter it most often on the petty official level (i.e. with policemen, local public administrators, doctors, teachers) and almost never with the representatives of the top echelons of power. One can infer that respondents arrived at the conclusion that the top levels of authority are affected the most by corruption because the petty acts that they experience are performed openly and without any fear, thus causing citizens to believe that this petty corruption is tolerated, if not encouraged by, the top. In fact, petty officials themselves do not try to conceal the fact that they pass a large portion of their "earnings" up. In short, the opinions of respondents demonstrate that corruption has penetrated the whole system of social relations in Azerbaijan deeply, which in turn supports the theory of systemic corruption that claims that corruption penetrates all layers, branches and links of the power system from the top down.

DYNAMICS OF THE LEVEL OF CORRUPTION DURING THE PAST 10+ YEARS

B 7. How have the dynamics of the corruption level in Azerbaijan changed as compared to its dynamics 10 years ago?

Diagram 15

Legend:
- 1,4% Considerably reduced
- 4,5% Reduced
- 28,2% Remained the same
- 38,2% Increased
- 15,7% Considerably increased
- 12,0% Difficult to say/No answer

Quite a substantial proportion of respondents found it difficult to answer this question or avoiding answering it at all, perhaps because they found it difficult to compare current realities with the difficult period of transition. It is clear that a substantial portion of respondents have very little understanding of the dynamics of corruption during transition in the 1990s because they were too young at the time. However, when assessing the data from respondents, one can conclude that there is no evidence that the level of corruption in Azerbaijan has declined over the past ten years. Rather, it appears that many respondents believe that corruption has increased substantially over the past 10 years.

B 8. What is causing the aggravation of the corruption problem in Azerbaijan compared to its status 10 years ago?

Diagram 16

Value	Description
4,29	Absence of an efficient state anti-corruption program
3,66	Decrease of the population's income
3,60	Liquidation of the Soviet control bodies
3,15	Difficulties of the transition period
3,07	Formation of new legislation
2,65	Emergence of the private sector
2,55	Impact of the high living standard of Western countries
2,33	Foreign humanitarian aid

It should be noted that this question was posed only to those respondents who answered Question B7 affirmatively (53,9%). Respondents were asked to evaluate each of the aggravating factors of corruption compared to the Soviet Era listed above in terms of their importance on the scale from 1 to 5 (1 being the least important and 5 the most important). According to respondents, the most important causal factor is the lack of an efficient state anti-corruption program. However, it should be noted that respondents were not referring to a formal document, but rather to a clearly and firmly expressed political will to confront this problem.
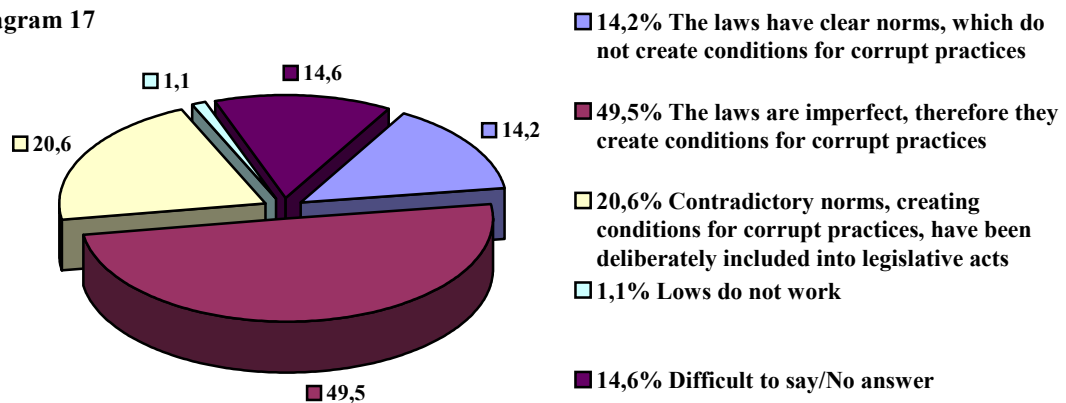
The decline of the population's income level was named as the second most important factor aggravating corruption in Azerbaijan as it forces public officials to seek alternative sources of income in the forms of gifts and bribes. Here, one can discern a contradiction between the respondents' answers to this question and those to Question B.4, in which the theory that low salaries in the public sector was fuelling corruption in Azerbaijan was not given much support. Perhaps one can explain this contradiction by hypothesizing that although low-paid public officials are forced to accept bribes in order to survive, increasing their salaries to a decent level will not guarantee that the level of corruption in a country will decline. Public sector salaries are, therefore, a necessary but not sufficient determinant of the level of corruption in Azerbaijan.

One can also observe from the survey results that there is a connection between the elimination of Soviet control bodies and the aggravation of corruption in Azerbaijan. The social and economic difficulties of the transition period, as well as delayed and imperfect legal reform are also important factors according to many respondents. Other important factors aggravating corruption in the country that were mentioned by respondents included lack of public control over the implementation of laws and the conduct of public officials.

LEGISLATION AND CORRUPTION

B 10. What is the relation between legislation and corruption in our country?

Diagram 17

□ **14,2% The laws have clear norms, which do not create conditions for corrupt practices**

■ **49,5% The laws are imperfect, therefore they create conditions for corrupt practices**

□ **20,6% Contradictory norms, creating conditions for corrupt practices, have been deliberately included into legislative acts**

□ **1,1% Lows do not work**
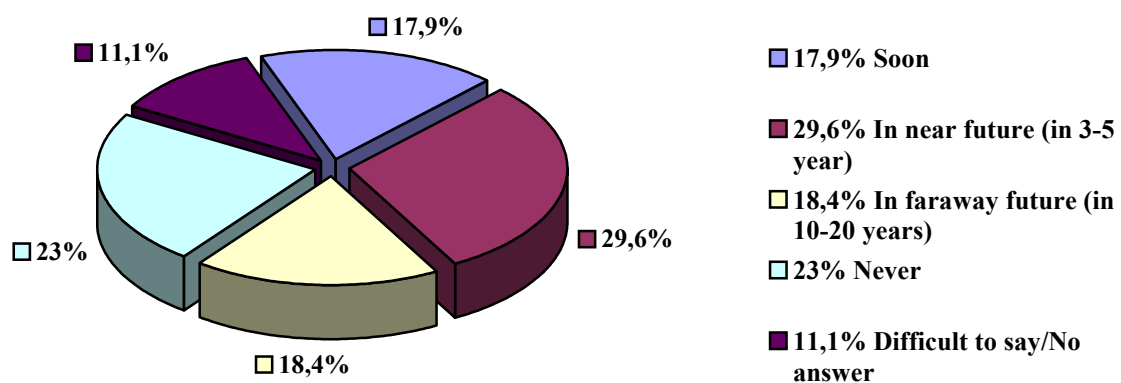
■ **14,6% Difficult to say/No answer**

As one can see from the diagram above, it seems that respondents found it difficult to answer this question. An evaluation of the effectiveness of current legislation in coping with corruption requires special knowledge which the respondents were clearly lacking. Indeed, one in every four respondents avoided answering this question. However, nearly half of all respondents believe that a weak legal environment facilitates recourse to corrupt practices. Also, one in every five respondents believes that contradictory norms have been deliberately included into national legislation in order to create an environment favourable for corruption.

ON PERCEPTIONS OF THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION IN AZERBAIJAN

B 11. When will the fight against corruption begin in Azerbaijan?

Diagram 18

□ **17,9% Soon**

■ **29,6% In near future (in 3-5 year)**

□ **18,4% In faraway future (in 10-20 years)**

□ **23% Never**

■ **11,1% Difficult to say/No answer**

The optimistic respondents, or those who believe that a concerted effort to rally against corruption will begin soon or in 3-5 years, slightly exceeds the number of pessimistic respondents who believe that an organized, popular struggle against corruption will only take place in the faraway future, if at all. The higher number of optimists seems to indicate that there is substantial public demand for the implementation of more active measures to curb rampant corruption in Azerbaijan.

THE ANTI-CORRUPTION LAW

B12. Are you aware of the anti-corruption law adopted by Milli Majlis?

Diagram 19

■ 50,6%

■ 47,8% Yes
■ 50,6% No

■ 47,8%
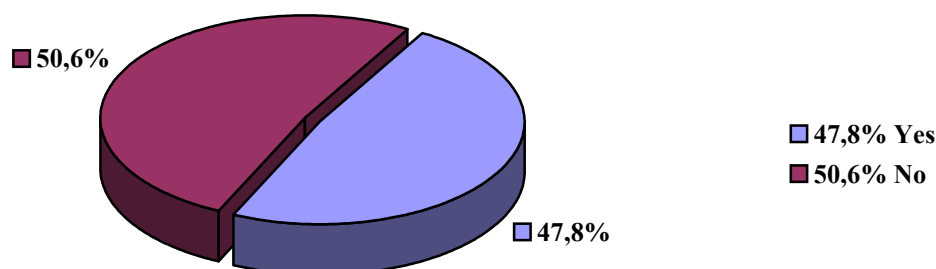
If we recall that corruption did not rank very high in terms of issue priority according to the respondents, the fact that nearly half of all respondents were aware of the fact that Milli Majlis (Parliament) has adopted an anti-corruption law, seems quite encouraging. On the other hand, the fact that only half are aware of the law does not instil confidence that it will be implemented properly.

B 13. Will this law work in practice?

Diagram 20

□ 17,6%

■ 42,9% Yes

■ 39,5% No

□ 17,6% Difficult to say/No answer

■ 39,5%

■ 42,9%
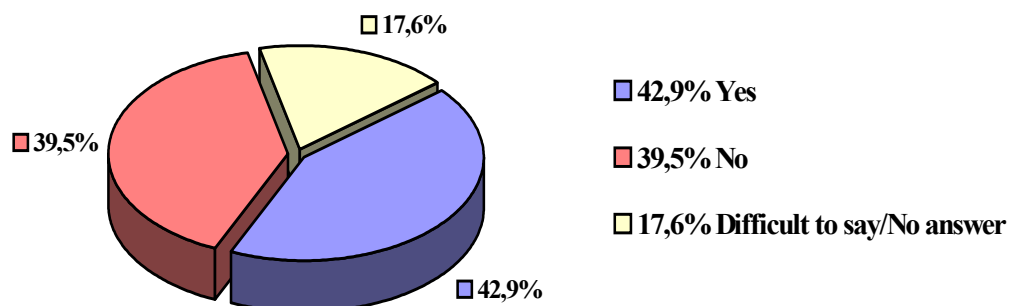
This question seemed to be difficult for some people to answer, considering the fairly high number (17,6%) of respondents who answered "difficult to say/no answer." Also, it seems that many respondents gave unsubstantiated answers in the "yes" and "no" categories, given that more than half of them had indicated in the previous question that they were not even aware that Milli Majlis had adopted an anti-corruption law.

WHO SHALL LEAD THE ANTI-CORRUPTION STRUGGLE?

B 14. What structures shall lead the anti-corruption struggle?

Diagram 21

☐ 9,6 Government	■ 8,38 Law enforcement bodies ☐ 7,39 Courts
☐ 7,25 Press and television	■ 7,24 Parlament ■ 5,45 Municipalities
■ 5,2 NGOs	☐ 4,92 Political parties ■ 4,55 Religious structures
■ 4,39 Business associations	
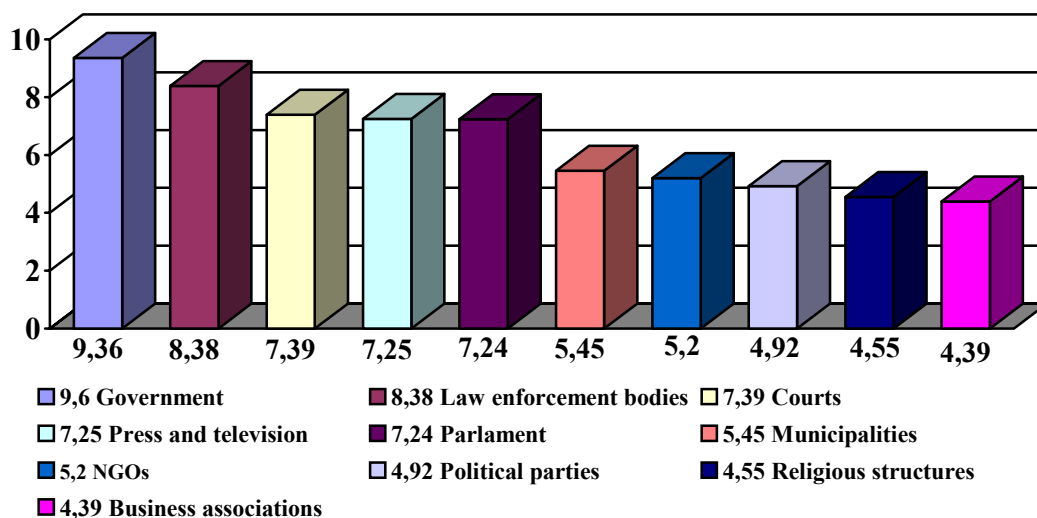
Respondents were asked to indicate which were the most important public and social institutions which should play a decisive role in the struggle against corruption on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 signifying "least important" and 10 signifying "most important"). This question elicited lively interest from the participants, with only 1,4% withholding a response. The absolute majority of respondents gave the mandate to the government, followed by law enforcement bodies, to lead the fight against corruption in Azerbaijan. The Parliament and media were also given fairly significant mandates by the respondents.

The role to be played by social institutions outside the state power system (parties, municipalities, NGOs, religious and business structures) is viewed to be less important, as compared to that of the state institutions. Moreover, one in every ten respondents maintained that the President should personally lead the anti-corruption struggle.

One can infer from the responses of those surveyed that the willingness of the state, law enforcement bodies and the President to participate in anti-corruption initiatives is perceived to be the decisive factor in the success or failure of the struggle against corruption in Azerbaijan. At the same time, one can also discern from the responses of those surveyed that there is a widespread feeling of alienation from the anti-corruption process, as respondents seem to prefer to shift the burden of responsibility for tackling this problem onto the shoulders of the authorities rather than defining a role for themselves in the fight against corruption.

B 16. To what degree do you trust various government agencies and other institutions?

It is important to discern not only which structures respondents believe should lead the fight against corruption because of their institutional mandate, but also to assess the degree of public confidence in these structures' ability to combat corruption effectively. The table below shows to what degree the respondents have confidence in the abilities of particular bodies to address corruption in Azerbaijan.
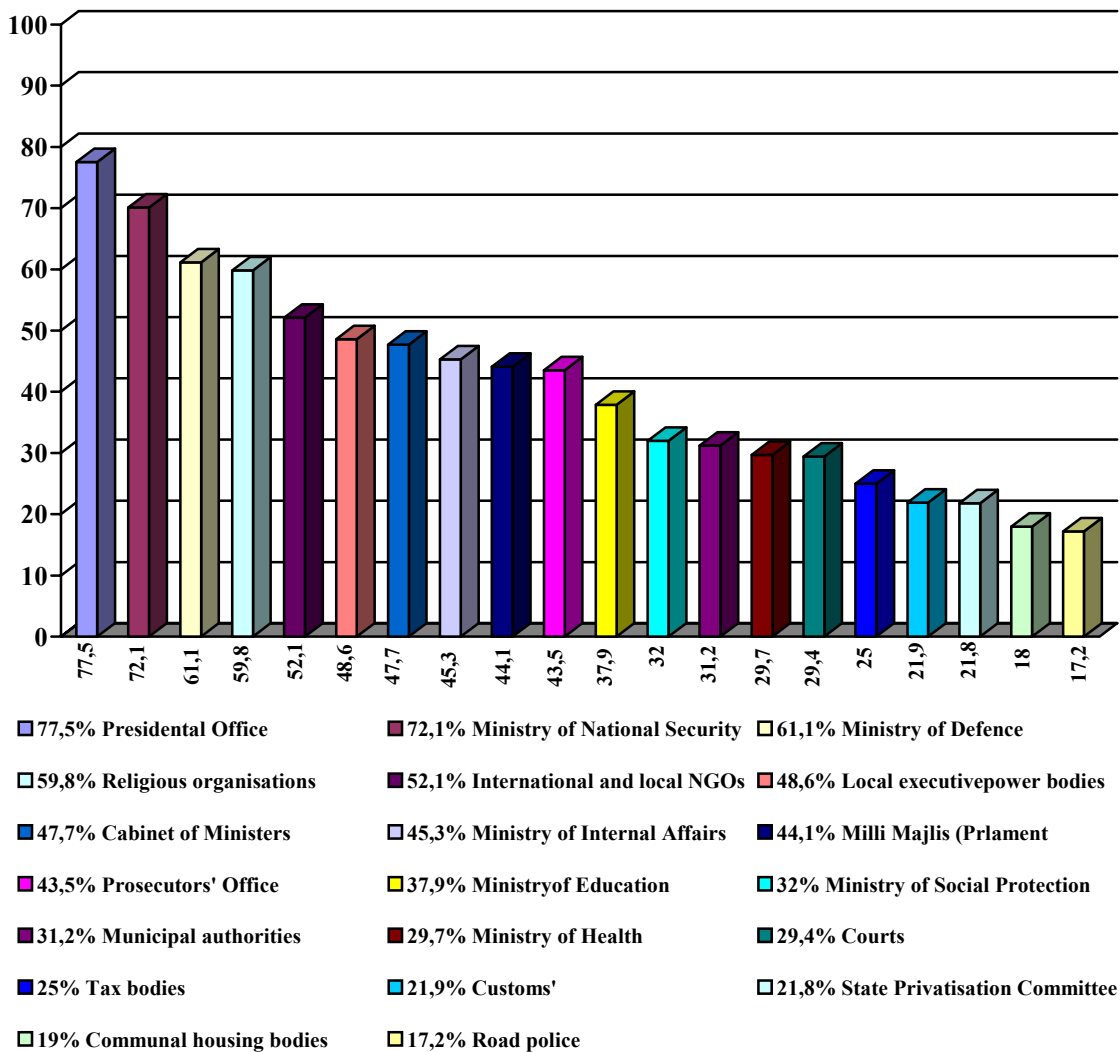
Table 1

	Fully trust (%)	Somewhat trust (%)	Somewhat distrust (%)	Fully distrust (%)	Difficult to say/ No answer (%)
Presidential Office	30,0	47,5	12,5	6,2	3,8
Milli Majlis	10,8	33,3	27,2	24,3	4,4
Cabinet of Ministers	10,6	37,1	30,6	15,3	6,4
Local executive power bodies	10,0	38,6	28,1	20,5	2,8
Courts	6,5	22,9	33,4	33,9	3,3
Customs'	3,2	18,7	27,8	35,4	14,9
Road police	2,4	14,8	34,8	42,6	5,4
Ministry of Internal Affairs	8,2	37,1	29,8	20,7	4,2
Tax bodies	4,3	20,7	32,5	29,7	12,8
State Privatisation Committee	3,7	18,1	30,9	27,2	20,1
Ministry of National Security	26,0	46,1	13,7	7,0	7,2
Prosecutors' Office	10,4	33,1	31,0	20,9	4,6
Ministry of Defence	19,2	41,9	22,1	14,5	2,3
Communal housing bodies	3,0	16,0	31,6	29,8	19,6
Ministry of Education	7,9	30,0	34,5	26,2	1,4
Ministry of Health	5,4	24,3	35,1	33,9	1,3
Municipal authorities	5,8	25,4	32,4	25,8	10,6
International and local NGOs	13,2	38,9	15,2	7,1	25,6
Religious organisations	17,7	42,1	20,3	14,6	5,3
Ministry of Social Protection	5,1	26,9	32,8	30,4	4,8

Below is a diagram illustrating the degree of confidence that respondents have in state and other public institutions (in descending order).

Diagram 22

- ☐ **77,5% Presidental Office**
- ■ **72,1% Ministry of National Security**
- ☐ **61,1% Ministry of Defence**
- ☐ **59,8% Religious organisations**
- ■ **52,1% International and local NGOs**
- ☐ **48,6% Local executivepower bodies**
- ■ **47,7% Cabinet of Ministers**
- ☐ **45,3% Ministry of Internal Affairs**
- ■ **44,1% Milli Majlis (Prlament**
- ■ **43,5% Prosecutors' Office**
- ☐ **37,9% Ministryof Education**
- ☐ **32% Ministry of Social Protection**
- ■ **31,2% Municipal authorities**
- ■ **29,7% Ministry of Health**
- ■ **29,4% Courts**
- ■ **25% Tax bodies**
- ☐ **21,9% Customs'**
- ☐ **21,8% State Privatisation Committee**
- ☐ **19% Communal housing bodies**
- ☐ **17,2% Road police**

From the graphical representation of the respondents' answers, it is clear that citizens trust the President and the Ministry of National Security (over 70%) the most. The second most trustworthy group includes the Ministry of Defence, religious associations and NGOs. The third group includes such important bodies as Milli Majlis, the Cabinet of Ministers, local executive power bodies, the Prosecutors' Office, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Protection, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and municipal councils, which are trusted by 30 to 50% of all respondents. Finally, the fourth group, including the Ministry of Health and Privatisation Committee, courts, tax bodies, customs agencies, communal housing bodies, and road police, does not enjoy much public confidence, as only 30% of respondents stated that they trusted these institutions and administrative bodies.

The results of this portion of the survey seem to present a contradictory picture. On the one hand, respondents believe that the fight against corruption should be led by the government and law enforcement bodies. However, it is equally clear that they do not have very much confidence in the ability of these institutions to address this problem effectively. It seems that this contradiction can only be reconciled if people give sufficient support to the head of state and his administration to lead a campaign against corruption, and that the head of state uses his popular mandate to simultaneously reform government structures and law enforcement bodies in order to inspire increased public trust.

ON ANTI-CORRUPTION METHODS

B 15. What measures, do you think, could help to strengthen the anti-corruption movement in Azerbaijan?

Table 2

Measure	Average score
Tightening of criminal and administrative liability for corruption	8,88
Adoption of an efficient national anti-corruption program, as well as establishment of a special anti-corruption agency	8,82
Increase of transparency in the public administration system	8,28
Replacement of the old most corrupt public officials by new cadres	8,19
Public administration reform	7,94
Education of the population and creation of public aversion towards corruption	7,69
Judicial reform and establishment of independent courts	7,52
Increase of salaries and pensions in the public sector to the level compatible with the private sector	7,26
Institution of annual income declaration by public officials and disclosure thereof to the general public	7,02
Annulment of liability for bribe giving	4,69

Respondents were asked to assess the impact that each of the anti-corruption measures listed above could have in the general fight against corruption in Azerbaijan on a scale of 1 (little impact) to 10 (significant impact). This question elicited a high degree of interest from the participants, as only 1,4% did not respond. Note that most of the suggested measures received positive responses from those surveyed, with the exception of the measure of annulment of liability for bribe giving.

It is worth noting that although preference is still given to the old Soviet methods of administrative enforcement, new methods designed to ensure greater transparency in the public administration system and the more active involvement of social institutions also enjoyed support from those surveyed.

Respondents expressed preference for the following anti-corruption measures: tightening of criminal and administrative liability for corruption, adoption of an efficient national anti-corruption program, and the establishment of a special anti-corruption agency. However, one might also interpret these particular preferences as stemming from the residual Soviet mentality, which favoured solutions that increased punishment or tightened bureaucratic and command methods.

It is interesting to note that some measures employed in developed countries also enjoyed the support of those surveyed, including: reforming public administration, increasing transparency in the public administration system, establishing independent courts, increasing salaries and pensions in the public sector, as well as encouraging public officials to declare their annual income. Such methods as substitution of the old most corrupt public officials

with new cadres, education of the population may also seem to have been inherited from the administrative –command system, however, they are very useful today as well.

FREQUENCY OF ENCOUNTERING EXTORTION WHEN RECIEIVNG VARIOUS SERVICES, AS PERCEIVED BY RESPONDENTS

C 1. How often do people such as yourselves encounter corruption in everyday situations?

Questions C1 and C2 were designed to reveal how much contact respondents believe citizens have with corrupt practices in certain institutions and to obtain particular services.

Table 3

Name of a service	Never	Seldom	From time to time	Rather often	Very often	Difficult to say/No answer
To receive assistance from local executive power bodies	22,1	19,2	24,6	17,8	7,0	9,3
To attain justice at court	7,3	14,1	27,4	26,4	19,0	5,8
To settle a problem with the road police	3,6	7,9	20,7	35,3	26,1	6,4
To receive assistance and protection of the police	7,4	14,6	25,7	32,6	16,7	3,0
To receive dwelling facilities or legalise the right for it	6,2	13,0	22,2	28,1	16,8	13,7
Military service draft	8,0	14,0	20,2	28,7	25,8	3,3
Communal housing	9,0	16,6	25,2	23,6	15,2	10,4
Education services	8,3	18,1	22,5	27,3	22,3	1,5
Health care services	3,4	9,7	18,5	34,8	33,2	0,4
To purchase or legalise land plot	6,3	14,2	19,2	28,9	22,1	9,3
To receive humanitarian aid from local or international NGO	34,7	18,5	11,0	4,5	2,4	28,9
To receive religious services	30,0	21,9	19,2	13,9	9,3	5,7
To receive social protection benefits	7,0	14,0	26,3	29,1	20,8	2,8
To be employed in the public sector	8,6	10,7	15,5	23,7	34,4	7,1

The diagram below illustrates the perceived frequency that bribes are demanded when citizens seek to obtain various services (in descending order). The diagram shows the average of responses in the range of "from time to time", "rather often" and "very often".

Diagram 23

86,5   82,1   76,2   75   74,7   73,6   72,8   72,1   70,2   67,1   64   49,4   42,4   17,9
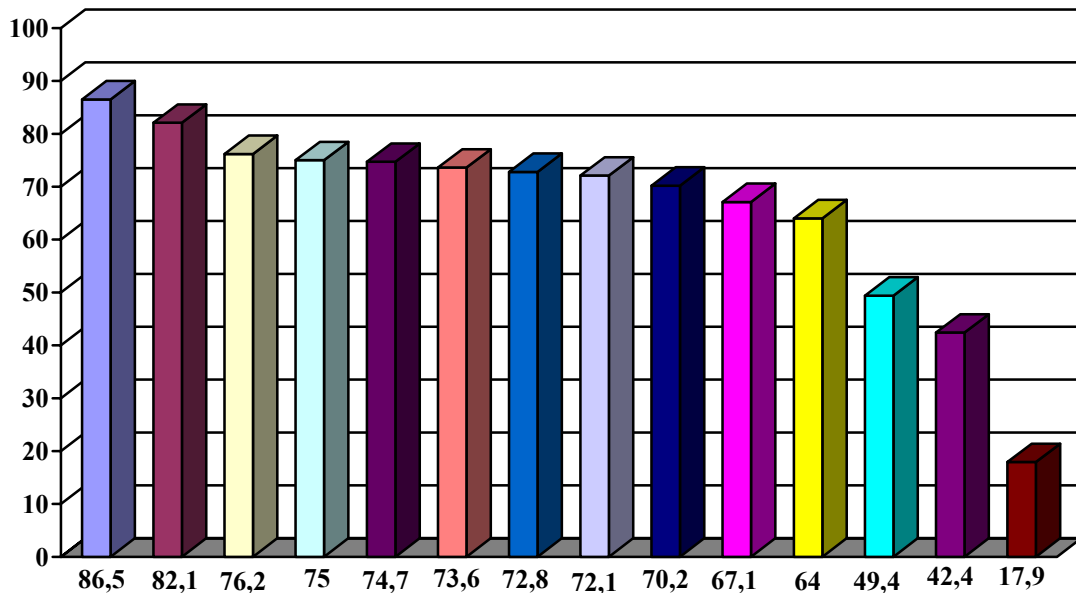
86,5% Health care
82,1% Road police
76,2% Social benefits
75,0% Police protection
74,7% Military service draft
73,6% Employment in the public sector
72,8% Judicial assistance
72,1% Education services
70,2% Purchase or legalisation of a land plot
67,1% Receive or legalise rights for dwelling
64,0% Communal housing services
49,4% Assistance form executive authorities
42,4% Religious services
17,9% Assistance from international or local NGOs

The perceived frequency of extortion in Azerbaijan was assessed by respondents using the following scale: "seldom", "from time to time", "rather often", and "very often." As illustrated by the diagram, it seems that most respondents believe that corruption has penetrated all spheres of life, including those areas which should be corruption-free by definition. It is worth mentioning that the most corrupt sphere, according to the respondents, was the sector that should be the most humane – the health care sector. Unsurprisingly, the second most corrupt sphere in Azerbaijan are the road police.

Concerning corruption in the executive power, the answers of respondents seem to be somewhat contradictory. On one hand, the executive power does not have a very corrupt image in the public's opinion. On the other hand, the same respondents note the high degree of corruption in sectors which report to the executive power. Moreover, over 70% of those surveyed believe that it is extremely difficult to find a job in the public sector unless one pays a bribe. A possible explanation for this contradiction might be that the respondents'

assessments were governed by stories told by their friends and family, media publications, etc., rather than by personal experience – as each individual would have a varying degree or frequency of contact with these organizations.

C 2. Is it possible to receive assistance or services from the agencies listed below without paying a bribe?

If Question C1 was designed to reveal how often, according to respondents, bribes are demanded for various services, then Question C2 was designed to determine the probability of receiving various services without paying a bribe. In other words, this question will assess the degree to which respondents believe that resistance to corruption is possible.

Table 4

Name of a service	Yes	No	Difficult to say/ No answer
To receive assistance from local executive power bodies	40,6	49,7	9,7
To attain justice at court	23,3	70,5	6,2
To settle a problem with the road police	12,8	79,6	7,6
To receive assistance and protection of the police	30,8	64,9	4,3
To receive dwelling facilities or legalise the right for it	16,0	70,9	13,1
Military service draft	23,9	69,6	6,5
Communal housing	25,7	64,7	9,6
Education services	42,8	54,7	2,5
Health care services	18,5	78,4	3,1
To purchase or legalise land plot	15,3	74,8	9,9
To receive humanitarian aid from local or international NGO	53,2	14,6	32,2
To receive religious services	59,3	34,4	6,3
To receive social protection benefits	24,2	70,5	5,3
To be employed in the public sector	17,1	73,2	9,7

The diagram below illustrates the improbability of receiving various services without paying a bribe, as perceived by respondents.

Diagram 24

79,6   78,4   74,8   73,2   70,9   70,5   70,5   69,6   64,9   64,7   54,7   49,7   34,4   14,6
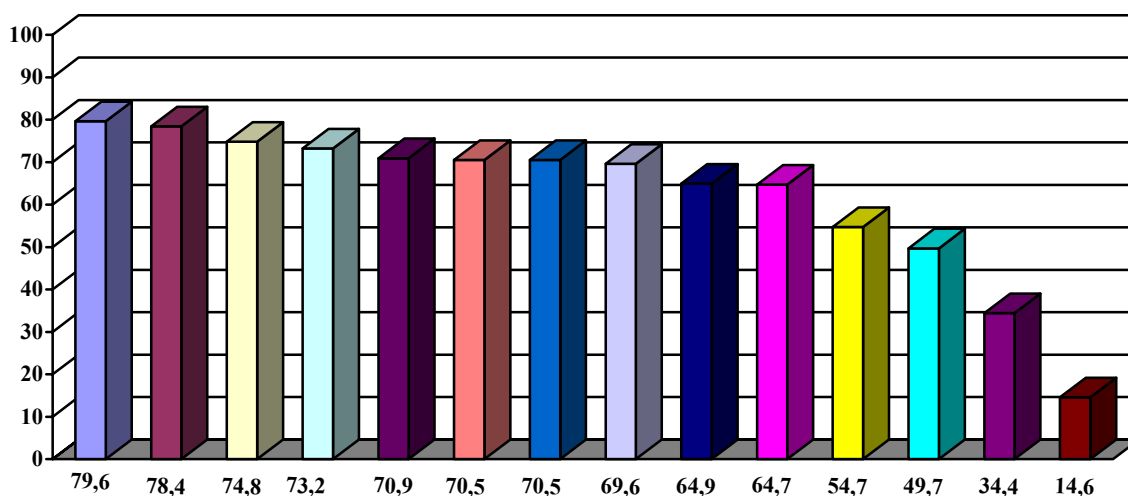
79,6% Road police
78,4% Health care
74,8% Purchase or legalisation of a land plot
73,2% Employment in the public sector
70,9% Receive or legalise rights for dwelling
70,5% Social benefits
70,5% Judicial assistance
69,6% Military service draft
64,9% Police protection
64,7% Communal housing services
54,7% Education services
49,7% Assistance form executive authorities
34,4% Religious services
14,6% Assistance from international or local NGOs

The distribution of the answers of those surveyed shows that it is practically impossible to obtain a desired service without paying a bribe in Azerbaijan. As in Question C1, the healthcare system and road police were at the top of the list. It seems that religious services and education are the only two sectors where resistance to extortion seems to be possible. Although the likelihood of experiencing extortion in the education system is 72,1%, only in 54,7% cases will a customer be refused service if he/she does not pay a bribe. The likelihood of experiencing extortion when one is attempting to obtain religious services is 42,4%, and customers will only be refused services in 34,4% of cases. Although the likelihood of experiencing extortion in the NGO sector or when seeking to obtain religious services is much lower than in other areas, it is perhaps much more shocking to citizens that these particular spheres are affected by corruption at all.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH CORRUPT PRACTICES

C 3. Have you or your family members personally encountered extortion?

Diagram 25



☐58,9%

☐38,2%

☐58,9% Yes
☐38,2% No
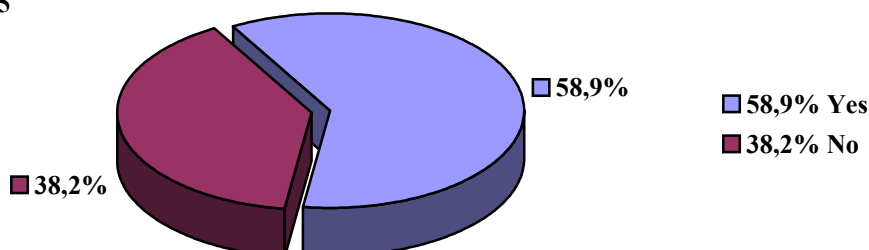
As one can see from the distribution of answers, the majority of respondents have encountered extortion personally or have witnessed the extortion of family members when they were attempting to resolve day-to-day problems. However, the argument that the whole population is involved in corrupt practices has not been confirmed by the data from this survey either. The number of people who avoided responding to this question was also rather small.

C 4. Will you please recall the last time you encountered extortion or were asked for a bribe?

This question was posed only to those who admitted that they have had a personal encounter with extortion or that his or her family have had such an experience (approx. 58,9% of respondents).
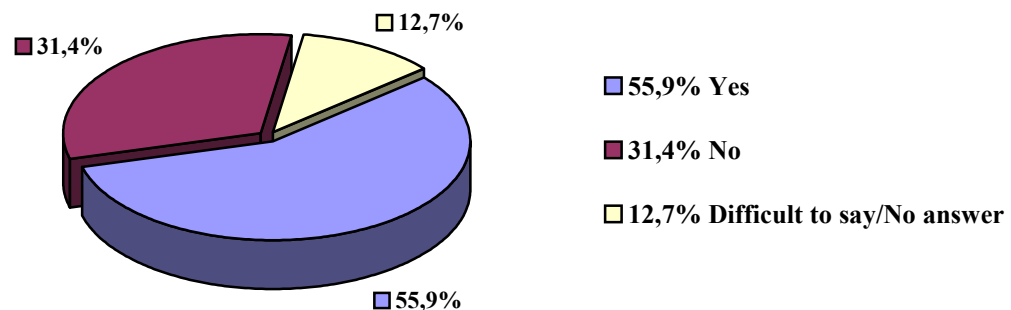
Diagram 26
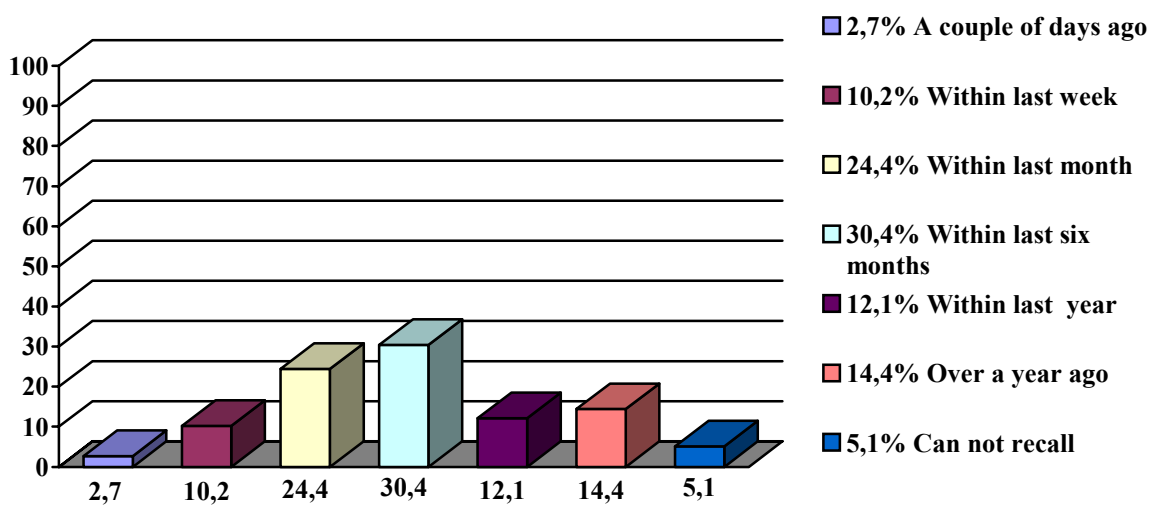
Nearly all participants responding the Question C3 admitted that they encounter extortion rather often. Two-thirds of them indicated that bribes were taken from them or members of their families within the past 6 months.

C 5. Would you or any of your family members give a bribe (gift, service, etc)?

Diagram 27

According to the distribution of responses, one can infer that less than one third would refuse to enter into a deal with bribe-takers, and that most of them would refuse not out of principle but due to a lack of financial resources. More than half stated that they would agree to pay if they had to and 12,7% of respondents avoided answering the question. We may conclude that
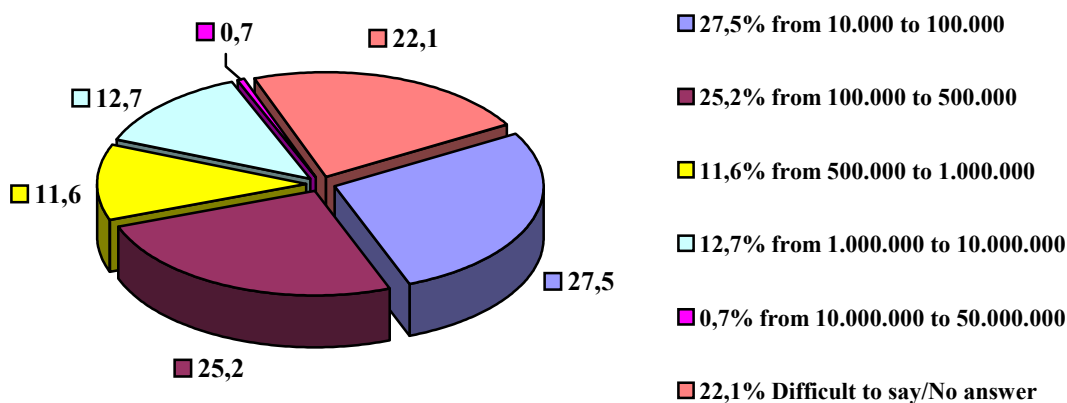
the general attitude of Azeri society towards corruption is one of resignation rather than of active resistance.

C 6. How much would you or any member of family be ready to spend on a bribe (gift, service)?

This question was not posed to all of those surveyed, but only to those who answered Question C5 affirmatively (55,9% of all respondents).

Diagram 28   **Amount of bribe (manat)**

- ☐ **27,5% from 10.000 to 100.000**
- ☐ **25,2% from 100.000 to 500.000**
- ☐ **11,6% from 500.000 to 1.000.000**
- ☐ **12,7% from 1.000.000 to 10.000.000**
- ☐ **0,7% from 10.000.000 to 50.000.000**
- ☐ **22,1% Difficult to say/No answer**

As seen from the distribution of answers, close to half of all bribe payments that people are willing to make is equal to or greater than 500 000 manats per bribe (about $100), which nearly equals the minimum monthly income of an average Azeri family of 4 people.

FREQUENCY OF EXPERIENCING EXTORTION WHEN RECEIIVNG VARIOUS SERVICES BASED ON THE PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF RESPONDENTS

C 7. Have you or any of your family members paid a bribe in order to resolve one of the problems listed below? C.8. If yes, to what degree were you or your family member satisfied with the problem's resolution?

If Questions C1 and C2 were designed to reveal the public's perception of the degree of corruption affection various institutions, Questions C7 and C8 are designed to elicit information about personal experience with corrupt practices. Depending on how frequently respondents had contact with various agencies, they arrived at conclusions which may or may not coincide with the real state of affairs. Therefore, both types of questions, the evaluative questions and those concerning personal encounters with corrupt practices, have been included.

The Question C7 was posed only to those respondents who responded affirmatively to both Questions C3 and C5, i.e. they have personally encountered extortion or would pay a bribe (46,1% of those surveyed). The Question C8 was posed only to those respondents who answered affirmatively to the corresponding points of the Question C7, i.e., they have personally encountered corruption when receiving particular services.

Table 5

Name of a service	C7		C8			
	No (%)	Yes (%)	of which (%)			
			Satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Not satisfied	Difficult to say/No answer
To receive assistance from local executive power bodies	81,1	18,9	35,6	40,2	21,8	2,3
To attain justice at court	88,3	11,7	31,5	38,9	29,6	-
To settle a problem with the road police	64,6	35,4	33,7	42,3	23,3	0,6
To receive assistance and protection of the police	57,5	42,5	48,5	32,7	18,9	-
To receive dwelling facilities or legalise the right for it	83,3	16,7	48,1	42,9	9,1	-
Military service draft	75,1	24,9	37,4	31,3	30,4	0,9
Communal housing services	73,5	26,5	44,3	32,8	23,0	-
Education services	51,0	49,0	30,5	43,4	26,1	-
Health care services	14,1	85,9	27,8	39,6	32,3	0,3
To purchase or legalise land plot	79,4	20,6	22,1	29,5	47,4	1,1
To receive humanitarian aid from local or international NGO	97,8	2,2	20,0	20,0	30,0	30,0
To receive religious services	75,5	24,5	53,1	39,8	5,3	1,8
To receive social protection benefits	57,9	42,1	21,2	39,2	39,2	0,5
To be employed in the public sector	78,1	21,9	35,6	31,7	32,7	-

The diagram below demonstrates frequency with which respondents have personally encountered extortion when receiving particular services.

Diagram 29

85,9 | 49 | 42,5 | 42,1 | 35,4 | 26,5 | 24,9 | 24,5 | 21,9 | 20,6 | 18,9 | 16,7 | 11,7 | 2,2
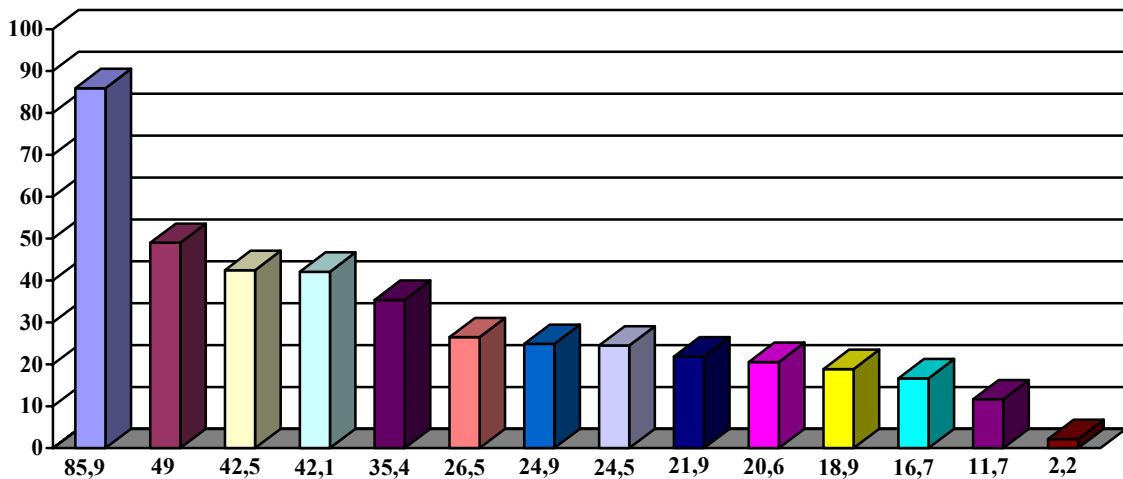
85,9% Health care
49,0% Education services
42,5% Police protection
42,1% Social benefits
35,4% Road police
26,5% Communal housing services
24,9% Military service draft
24,5% Religious services
21,9% Employment in the public sector
20,6% Purchase or legalisation of a land plot
18,9% Assistance from executive authorities
16,7% Receive or legalise rights for dwelling

11,7% Judicial assistance
2,2%   Assistance from international or local NGOs

The diagram below shows the degree of satisfaction with the quality of service after a bribe was paid, as experienced personally by respondents (in descending order).

Diagram 30

92,9	91	81,2	77,1	76	75,8	73,9	70,4	68,7	67,4	67,3	60,4	51,6	40
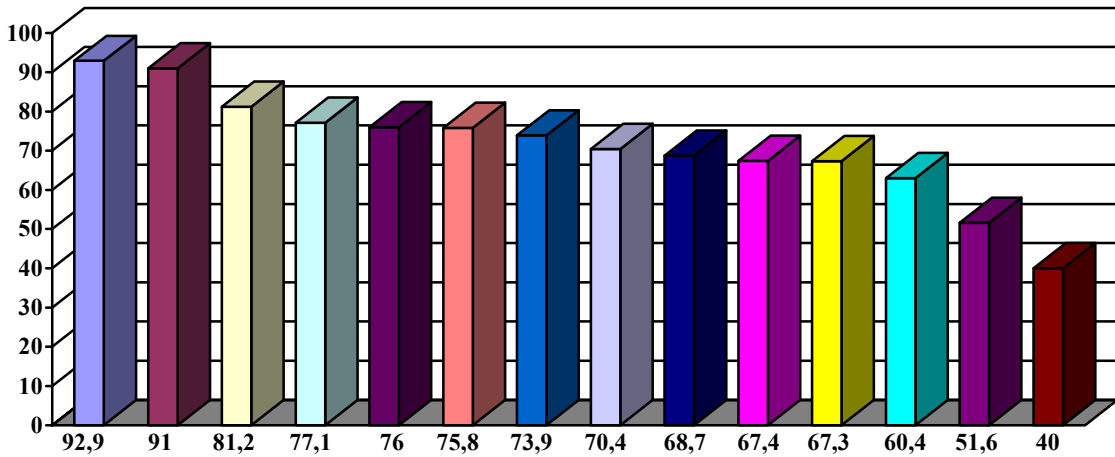
92,9%   Religious services
91,0%   Receive or legalise rights for dwelling
81,2%   Police protection
77,1 % Communal housing services
76,0%   Road police
75,8%   Assistance from executive authorities
73,9%   Education services
70,4%   Judicial assistance
67,4%   Health care
68,7%   Military service draft
67,3%   Employment in the public sector
60,4%   Social benefits
51,6%   Purchase or legalisation of a land plot
40,0%   Assistance from international or local NGOs

Although respondents seem to have encountered corruption in various spheres with differing degrees of frequency, this question aimed to inquire further about the personal experience of respondents. As in Questions C1 and C2, healthcare services topped the list (85,9% of all respondents have had personal experience with corruption in this sector). However, one should note that citizens apply for medical services much more often than they do for other types of services, such as judicial assistance. Corruption in the education system seems to be of a moderate level and is concentrated primarily in the testing systems for admission to higher and special secondary educational institutions. Despite individual deficiencies, however, this testing system has, on the whole, earned the reputation of being a rather objective mediator of relations between public service seekers and the state machinery by tending to minimize the role that the "personality factor" plays. Moreover, this model is based on a computerised registration of data and has clear and transparent rules of admission. We believe that this testing model can and will reduce the level of corruption in the education system in Azerbaijan. Therefore, it will be recommended for introduction into other spheres where corruption is a problem, such as in the areas of pensions payments via banks and the publication of legislative acts.
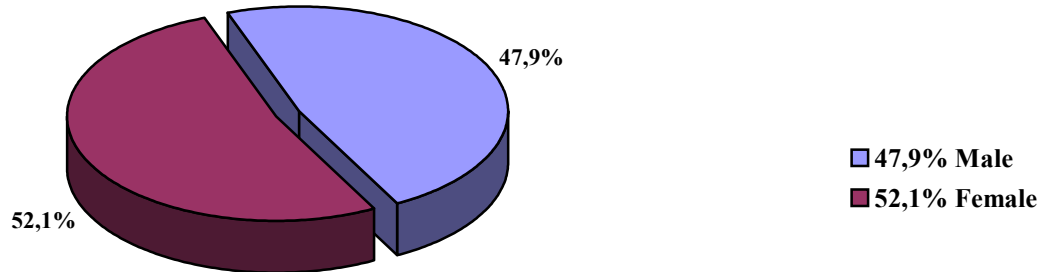
As one can see from the distribution of the respondents' answers, in most cases, they appear to be satisfied with the quality of services rendered after bribes are paid. The highest degree of satisfaction is observed when people receive religious services or receive/legalise rights for a dwelling. People seem to be the least satisfied when they have to pay a bribe in order to obtain

assistance from NGOs or if bribes are exchanged in the allocation or purchase of land plots. Those who cannot afford to pay bribes often do not receive the services they need.

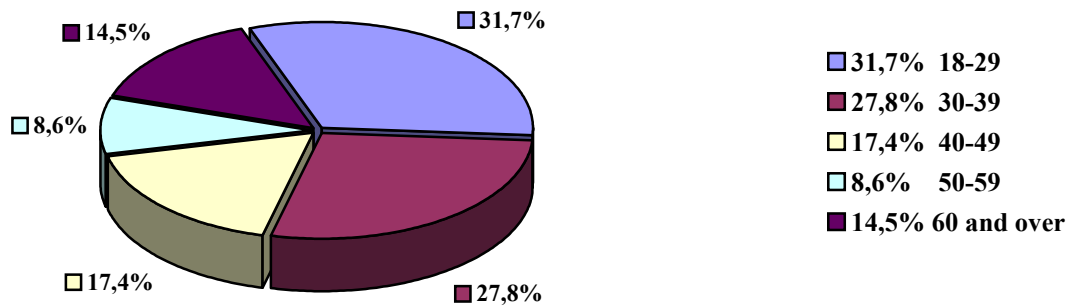## III. RESPONDENTS' DEMOGRAPHICS DATA AND
SAMPLE REPRESENTATION

D 1. Sex of respondents

Diagram 31

47,9%

52,1%

■ **47,9% Male**
■ **52,1% Female**

D 2. Age of respondents

Diagram 32

■ 14,5%

□ 8,6%

□ 17,4%

□31,7%

■ 27,8%

■ **31,7% 18-29**
■ **27,8% 30-39**
□ **17,4% 40-49**
□ **8,6%   50-59**
■ **14,5% 60 and over**

D 3. Employment of respondents

Diagram 33

□ 42%

■ 58%

■ **42,2% Hold a job**
■ **57,8% Do not hold a job**
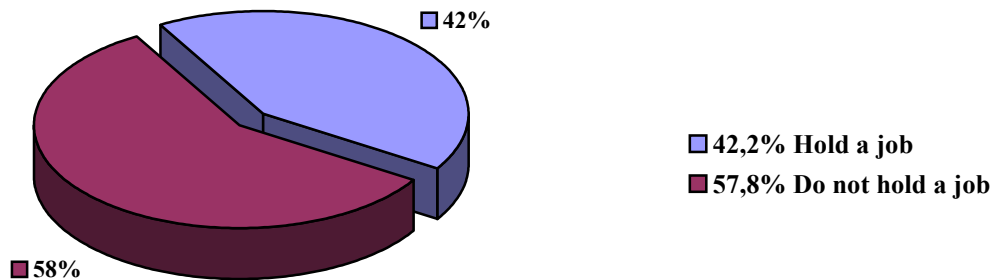
Actual employment figures do not correspond to official data or to the assessments of independent experts. The official number of registered unemployed in Azerbaijan amounts to approximately 1% of the able-bodied working population, which is far from the real picture. According to various experts, the share of unemployed in the country is in the range of 30-40% of economically active adults. It is extremely difficult to give a more accurate estimate, given the prevalence of latent employment forms and the extremely high level of mass labour migration to Russia, Ukraine, Turkey and other CIS and foreign countries. However, it is clear that number of unemployed reflected in this survey exceeds even the most pessimistic estimates.

D 4. Employment sector

Table 5

Unemployed	57,8
Agriculture	9,6
Industry	3,0
Construction	2,8
Commerce	4,9
Services	7,1
Education, science, health care	11,6
Public administration	1,6
Army, police, law enforcement bodies	0,6
Banking system	0,2
Self-governments	0,2
Transport	0,2
Religion	0,1
Difficult to say/No answer	0,3

D 5. Education level

Table 7

No education	7	0,7
Primary (complete/incomplete)	34	3,4
Incomplete secondary/technical or professional	65	6,5
Secondary technical	68	6,8
Comprehensive secondary (grades 10-11)	455	45,5
Special secondary	198	19,8
Incomplete higher	35	3,5
Higher	138	13,8

IV. METHODOLOGY DESCRIPTION

Sampling method

The sampling method is based on the division of Azerbaijan's territory into 10 economic-geographic zones. The general size of the sample is 1000 respondents (aged 18+), of which 249 respondents live in Baku and 751 respondents in 48 settlements in the republic's regions.

Table 8

№	Name of settlement	№	Name of settlement
1	c. Baku	26	v. Khosrov
2	c. Lenkoran	27	c. Gazakh
3	v.Seybattin	28	v. Chayli
4	v. Sharafa	29	v. Kosalar
5	v. Arkivan	30	c. Shamkir
6	v. Khoroni	31	v. Sabirkend
7	V Separadi	32	c. Ganja
8	v. Yolojag	33	v. Uchtepe
9	c. Mingechaur	34	v. Balchili
10	v. Khavarli	35	c. Sheki
11	v. Tanrigular	36	v. Gohmug
12	c. Barda	37	v. Kish
13	v.Jeirli	38	v. Gahbash
14	v. Yeni Dashkent	39	v. Turajli
15	v. Shoranli	40	c. Guba
16	c. Ali-Bayramli	41	v. Chilegir
17	v. Ashagi Gahramanli	42	v. Khil
18	c.Salyan	43	v. Gochagli
19	v. Khidirli	44	c. Sumgait
20	v. Chuhanli	45	v. Novkhani
21	c. Shemaha	46	c. Nachichevan
22	v. Charhan	47	v. Sirab
23	v. Chuhuryurt	48	v. Demirchi
24	c. Agdash	49	v. Yayji
25	v. Yuhari Gasil		

Nation-wide representation

Nation-wide representation was defined in accordance with the size of the adult population (over 18 years of age) in accordance with the data of the 1999 census. Respondents were selected according to the principle of the random (route) sampling. However, outside of Baku, an additional quota requirement was assigned to interviewers. Quota requirements are necessary in the provinces, as the majority of able-bodied males are often engaged in seasonal migration to Russia.

57,9% of all respondents are urban residents, living in cities and towns, and 42,1 % are rural people. This proportion, as well as distribution of respondents in terms of age and sex, also generally tends to correlate with the census data of 1999.

Refugees and IDPs were also included in the survey, as their share in the general composition of the population of Azerbaijan is quite high (over 780,000 people). Without refugee representation, the random sample would have been incomplete. Refugees were surveyed in their compact residence in Baku and in a tent town near Barda.

Responses of the research participants to the topic of the survey
Interviews were conducted under the condition of anonymity, particularly through the use of the "face-to-face" method. The team of interviewers made 2 047 visits and the ratio of refusals to granting of interviews was 1:2. The population did not express any specific fears when responding to questions dealing with the problem of corruption in Azerbaijan.

The principle of the questionnaire compilation
The sociological estimation of corruption in Azerbaijan was completed with the aid of a questionnaire with two types of questions: those that asked respondents to evaluate the general corruption situation in Azerbaijan and those that requested information based on personal encounters with corrupt practices. Organizers of the survey based the composition of the questionnaire on the fact that respondents tend to answer evaluative questions more willingly. However, conducting comparative analysis of data derived with the help of evaluation questions is rather difficult. Questions pertaining to personal encounters with corrupt practices contain much useful information, but respondents are somewhat reluctant to respond to this type of question.

When designing the survey, organizers took the experience of the INDEM, a well known Russian Foundation, into consideration, which shows that the responses of those surveyed by evaluative questions correlate strongly with their level of confidence in public institutions. Therefore, it seems that the respondents' evaluation of the level of corruption of various public institutions is more indicative of the general attitude of the population towards certain institutions than it is of the real state of these institutions. In order to ensure objectivity in our survey, we therefore included questions designed to evaluate the degree of trust that respondents have of various institutions as well as questions concerning their personal encounters with corrupt practices.

A "correction coefficient for insincerity" was not applied in this research. The whole section of questions dealing with personal encounters with corrupt practices, beginning with Question C3, gave respondents the option of declining to answer, which 41,4% of respondents exercised. Interviewers also noted at the end of their questionnaires that 87,2% of all respondents seemed interested, 8,5% indifferent and only 4,3% seemed either tired or distracted when asked to respond to questions dealing with their personal encounters with corruption. The majority of those surveyed responded willingly and without any fear. The average time per interview was 32 min.

Response of the authorities to the interview organization
Except for the capital city of Baku, assistance from local authorities was required in all other regions for efficient interview organization. According to the interviewers, local authorities responded quite reasonably to requests for assistance regarding the organization of a survey on an issue as delicate as corruption. In many areas, the Shemakha region being one example, local authorities provided interviewers with premises or transportation. While some authorities requested a blank copy of the questionnaire, there were no cases of attempts to influence or intimidate respondents. It was only in one village that the local authorities referred to upcoming elections and prohibited the conduct of interviews. This village was substituted for another, similar village in the same region.

Supervision and control

The performance of interviewers was supervised by telephone. Besides, second visits were made to approximately 10% of respondents in order to guarantee the integrity of the survey data.

Data input and processing

After the field survey was completed, all questionnaires were checked by supervisors. The survey data was digitized and processed with the help of the statistics program SPSS for Windows 11.0. The input files and hard copy questionnaires are available.