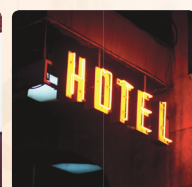




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BUSINESS, CORRUPTION AND CRIME IN ALBANIA:

The impact of bribery and
other crime on private enterprise

2013

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the European Union



UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME
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Executive summary

This survey of private businesses in Albania reveals that corruption and other forms of crime are a great hindrance to private enterprise and have a negative effect on private investment. A significant percentage of businesses pay bribes to public officials repeatedly over the course of the year. Businesses in the Accommodation and Transportation sectors are those most affected by bribery, followed by businesses in the Construction sector. The public officials with the highest risk of bribery in interactions with businesses are police officers, customs officers, tax/revenues officers, municipal or provincial officers and land registry officers.

While indicators of corruption perceptions are undoubtedly useful for raising awareness, this survey measures the actual experience of corruption and crime through representative sample surveys of businesses in order to provide a more realistic, evidence-based assessment of corruption and crime affecting the business sector. In so doing it focuses on the extent and pattern of bribery by businesses from five different sectors (accounting for over 83.5 per cent of all businesses in Albania) in their frequent interactions with the public administration.

According to the survey, of all the businesses that had contact with a public official in the 12 months prior to the survey 15.7 per cent paid a bribe to a public official. The average prevalence of business bribery in Albania is slightly lower than the share of ordinary citizens (19.3 per cent) who experienced the same in UNODC's 2011 general population survey.¹

The examination of the experience of businesses that pay bribes to public officials underlines the fact that corruption plays a role in the daily business of many companies. Bribe-paying businesses pay an average of 4.6 bribes per year, or about one bribe every eleven weeks. The prevalence of bribery is higher among small (10 to 49 employees) businesses than among businesses of other sizes.

¹ Data referring to bribery by individuals and households are taken from the recent UNODC study, *Corruption in Albania: bribery as experienced by the population* (2011).

Half of all the bribes paid to public officials by businesses in Albania are paid in cash (50 per cent), followed by the giving of food and drink (24.4 per cent) in exchange for an illicit “favour” by the public official and the provision of other goods not produced by the company (22.8 per cent). When bribes are paid in cash, the mean amount paid per bribe is 53,000 Lek, or the equivalent of 904 EUR-PPP.

As for which party actually broaches the subject of kickbacks, in 22.7 per cent of all bribery cases the payment of a bribe is offered by a representative of the business without a prior request being made, whereas in almost two thirds (63.6 per cent) of cases payment is either explicitly (17.1 per cent) or implicitly (38.2 per cent) requested by the public official or paid after a third-party request (8.3 per cent).

The most common purposes for paying bribes cited by businesses is to “speed up business-related procedures” (39.1 per cent of all bribes), “making the finalization of a procedure possible” (16.8 per cent), “receiving better treatment” (7.2 per cent), reducing the cost of a procedure” (6.6 per cent) and “receiving information” (2.8 per cent). At the same time, almost one out of seven (13.5 per cent) bribes paid serve no specific immediate purpose for the businesses paying them, suggesting that these are “sweeteners” given to public officials to “groom” them for future interactions in the interest of the company.

Only 2.2 per cent of the businesses who paid bribes had reported bribery incidents in the 12 months prior to the survey to official authorities in Albania, which suggests that businesses often feel obliged to participate in bribery. This is also reflected in the main reasons cited for not reporting bribery: “giving gifts to public officials is common practice” (36.2 per cent) and “it is pointless to report it as nobody would care ” (23.6 per cent).

Bribery in the private sector not only comprises bribes paid by businesses to public officials, it also takes place between businesses themselves in order to secure business transactions. Though lower than the prevalence of bribery between the private and public sector, at 3.7 per cent the prevalence of business-to-business bribery indicates that the practice does exist in Albania. This type of corruption is not to be confused with normal marketing or public relations activities, in that it specifically aims, through illegal means, to breach the integrity of the bribe-taker in exchange for a bribe. Less than 0.1 per cent of bribe-paying businesses in the survey reported such business-to business bribery incidents to relevant authorities.

Some 3.3 per cent of business representatives decided not to make a major investment in the 12 months prior to the survey due to the fear of having to pay bribes to obtain requisite services or permits, thus the impact of bribery on business activity can be substantial.

The consequences of other more conventional crimes on a business’s property and economic activities can also be considerable, both in terms of direct costs stemming from physical damage and indirect costs in the form of insurance premiums, security expenditure and lost investment opportunities. For instance, 5.8 per cent of businesses in Albania fall victim to burglary in a year and such businesses are victimized an average of 1.9 times in that period.

The annual prevalence rate for fraud by outsiders (4.8 per cent) in the private sector is also significant, as is the average number of times businesses affected fall victim to this crime (2.8). The prevalence rate of vandalism is 1.6 per cent, with businesses being victimized an average of 1.6 times a year. In addition, the prevalence rate of motor vehicle theft (MVT) is 0.5 per cent of all car owning businesses, with victims suffering an average of 1.6 incidents. Moreover, over the past 12 months 0.5 per cent of all businesses

in Albania fell victim to extortion, a crime that can be linked to organized criminal groups.

In marked contrast to corruption, a larger share of conventional crimes (on average, 49.3 per cent for five crime types) is reported to the police by businesses in Albania. While the majority of business representatives (67.7 per cent) consider that the crime risk for their company has remained stable in comparison to the previous 12 months, around one in twelve (8.6 per cent) think it is on the increase and 19.5 per cent on the decrease. The fear of crime plays an important role in the decision-making process of business leaders when it comes to making major investments. Although there are some differences by economic sector, on average 4.4 per cent of the entrepreneurs in Albania state that they did not make a major investment in the previous 12 months due to the fear of crime.

Yet while about 88.8 per cent of businesses in Albania use at least one protective security system against crime, only 18.5 per cent have any kind of insurance against the economic cost of crime. Together corruption and other forms of crime place a considerable burden on economic development in Albania. Putting in place more and better targeted measures for protecting businesses against crimes, as well as for preventing corruption (such as effective internal compliance measures and other policies concerning corruption) could make that burden considerably lighter.



Key Findings

- Business representatives in Albania rank corruption as the second most significant obstacle to doing business, after high taxes.
- Over eight out of ten companies (85.1 per cent) had at least one direct contact with a public official or civil servant in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- The bribery prevalence rate among those businesses who had contact with public officials in that period is 15.7 per cent.
- Bribe-paying businesses paid an average of 4.6 bribes to public officials in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- There are some variations in the prevalence of bribery across business sectors in Albania: Accommodation and Food service activities (20.3 per cent); Transportation and Storage (20.1 per cent); Building and Construction (18.7 per cent); Manufacturing, Electricity, Gas and Water supply (14.1 per cent) and Wholesale trade and Retail trade (14 per cent).
- In Albania, 35.7 per cent of bribes are paid in cash. The mean amount paid per bribe is 53,000 Lek which corresponds to 904 EUR-PPP.
- In almost two thirds (63.6 per cent) of all bribery cases, the payment of the bribe is either explicitly (17.1 per cent) or implicitly (38.2 per cent) requested by the public official or requested through a third party (8.3 per cent) on behalf of the official, while in 22.7 per cent of cases it is offered by a business representative without prior request.
- Around two fifths (40.8 per cent) of all bribes paid by businesses in Albania are paid before the service, while 26 per cent are paid after the service is delivered.
- The main purposes of paying bribes are to speed up a procedure (39.1 per cent), to make the finalization of a procedure possible (16.8 per cent) and receiving

better treatment (7.2 per cent). In addition, 13.5 per cent of bribes paid served no specific immediate purpose.

- The prevalence rate of bribes paid to public officials is highest for police officers (12.5 per cent), customs officers (12.3 per cent), tax/revenues officers (10.7 per cent) and municipal or provincial officers (10.2 per cent).
- Only 2.2 per cent of the businesses part of the survey had reported bribery incidents in the 12 months prior to the survey to official authorities in Albania. Over one third (36.2 per cent) of business representatives did not report bribery because they consider there is no need to report bribery as it is common practice to pay or give gifts to public officials. In addition, almost one quarter (23.6 per cent) of respondents stated they did not report bribery because it would be pointless to report it as nobody would care about it.
- The prevalence of business-to-business bribery in Albania amounts to 3.7 per cent.
- In over half (51.6 per cent) of business-to-business bribery cases a prior request by a counterpart is made either explicitly, implicitly or by a third party. The most important purpose of business-to-business bribery in Albania is to secure better prices (29 per cent).
- Businesses in Albania are affected by different forms of crime to varying degrees: the 12 month prevalence rate of business victimization is 5.8 per cent for burglary, 4.8 per cent for fraud by outsiders, 1.6 per cent for vandalism, 1.2 per cent for motor vehicle theft (MVT) and 0.5 per cent for extortion.
- The share of each type of crime reported to the police ranges from 82.9 per cent for MVT, 58.9 per cent for vandalism, 55.4 per cent for burglary, 41.4 per cent for extortion cases and 15.3 per cent for cases of fraud by outsiders.
- Around nine in ten (88.8 per cent) businesses in Albania use at least one protective security measure against crime.
- The majority of business representatives (67.6 per cent) state that they consider the crime risk for their business entity to have remained stable in comparison to 12 months previously; while 8.6 per cent think it is on the increase and 19.5 per cent on the decrease.
- On average 4.4 per cent entrepreneurs in Albania state that they did not make a major investment in the previous 12 months due to the fear of crime.



Introduction

In different guises and to varying degrees, corruption exerts a negative influence on all societies. As shown in UNODC's 2011 report *Corruption in Albania: bribery as experienced by the population*,² petty corruption also remains a pervasive reality in Albania and has a significant impact on the interaction of private citizens with public officials in the country.

In addition to their negative impact on private households, certain types of corruption can also have grave consequences for the business sector and economic performance and can become a barrier to private and foreign investment, trade and economic development. Private companies may also be affected further by the impact of crime on their operations. This can range from extortion by organized criminal groups, to serious fraud and embezzlement of funds by managers to vandalism and assaults from criminal competitors, each of which has the potential to cause serious damage to the business environment in which companies operate and to increase the cost of doing business.

Anti-corruption infrastructure and the fight against corruption

Parallel to the progressive European integration, awareness of corruption has increased in Albania and successive Albanian governments have committed themselves to fighting corruption. Important instruments in the upgrading of the legislative framework for the fight against corruption are represented by the ratification of the Criminal Law Convention against Corruption (2001) and the Civil Law Convention against Corruption (2000). Furthermore, Albania introduced important anti-corruption legislation by adopting the Law on Declaration of Properties by Officials (2002) and the Law on Prevention of Conflict of Interest (2005), which gave the High Inspectorate for the Declaration and Auditing of Assets (HIDAA), established in 2003, the legal infrastructure to fulfil its purpose, that is the fight against corruption.

² UNODC, 2011.

Regarding the institutional framework, Albania has strengthened its institutional and administrative capacity for preventing, investigating and prosecuting corruption. In 2001, the Albanian Government adopted a new structure for the Ministry of Public Order and for the General Directorate of the Police, according to this new structure, the Section on Economic and Financial Crime is responsible for combating financial crime and money laundering, fraud, forgery and corruption. The Anti-Corruption Monitoring Group (ACMG) was first established in 2002 to ensure the implementation of the anti-corruption plan through monitoring and advice. In recent years, the Cross-cutting Strategy for Prevention, Fight against Corruption and Transparent Governance (2008) was established and action plans to implement the strategy have been drafted each year. All relevant activities are coordinated by the Department for Internal Administrative Control and Anti-Corruption (DIACA), which also performs internal controls on all administrative bodies.

In 2006, Albania became party to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). The Convention does not define corruption per se, but lists a number of different behaviours that States party to UNCAC have to criminalize or consider criminalizing (such as active and passive bribery of national public officials, active and passive bribery of foreign public officials, embezzlement, trading in influence, abuse of functions and illicit enrichment). Furthermore, the Convention explicitly requires or encourages the criminalization of corruption in the private sector (such as active and passive bribery in the private sector, embezzlement of property in the private sector and laundering the proceeds of crime), which is specifically directed at fighting corruption in the business sector.

States parties to UNCAC agreed to have a Review Mechanism to enable all parties to review their implementation of UNCAC provisions through a peer review process. One of the objectives of this mechanism is to encourage a participatory and nationally driven process towards anti-corruption reform and it is noteworthy that Albania will be reviewed in the fourth wave (2013-2014).

The scope and methodology of this study

While perception-based indicators can be useful for raising awareness about corruption and mobilizing support for anti-corruption policies, they fail to provide specific indications on the extent of corruption and on particularly vulnerable areas. To gain a more realistic, evidence-based assessment of corruption and crime affecting the business sector it is necessary to go beyond perception-based indicators and to measure the actual experience of corruption and crime through representative sample surveys of businesses.

Over the past decade, the understanding of corruption and crime has been much improved through the results of large-scale sample surveys in different contexts around the world. UNODC has been at the forefront of promoting household corruption surveys and victimization surveys in different contexts and has contributed to the further development and refinement of existing methodologies for measuring corruption and crime. Recent corruption surveys supervised by UNODC in countries as diverse as Iraq, Afghanistan and Nigeria, in addition to the countries/areas of the western Balkans, provide insights on the extent and nature of corrupt practices as well as a host of other issues relevant for the design of effective policies, such as the concrete modalities of bribery and the sectors, positions and administrative procedures most at risk.³

³ Reports of corruption surveys undertaken by UNODC in partnership with national governments can be found at <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/statistics/corruption.html>.

Following the conclusion of the household surveys on bribery and corruption in Albania and other western Balkan countries and the publication of the survey results in regional and national reports in 2011, UNODC was approached with a request to complement the findings from the household surveys with an assessment of corruption and crime affecting the business sector in the region and entered into consultations with national counterparts and potential donors. The resulting project proposal to conduct large-scale sample surveys of businesses focusing on corruption and crime was endorsed by the project countries and received funding from the European Union in the context of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance 2011.⁴

To implement the research in Albania, UNODC partnered with the Institute of Statistics of Albania (INSTAT), which has the recognized technical capacity and expertise to conduct large-scale surveys of the business sector. The INSTAT worked with UNODC and other relevant stakeholders in Albania to elaborate the most relevant questionnaire, guidelines for interviewers and other survey tools. The instruments and survey methodology were reviewed, tested and refined in meetings with stakeholders, a regional technical workshop organized by UNODC in June 2012 and a small-scale pilot survey.⁵ At the regional level, a Technical Advisory Group supervised the process and provided expert inputs and advice.

The main objective of the survey was to produce evidence-based factual assessments of the patterns and nature of corruption and crime affecting the business sector, which feed into a process for strengthening integrity and transparency between public offices and the business sector, and for promoting an enabling environment for business development in Albania. The research focused on the extent and patterns as well as the prevailing types and modalities of corruption affecting businesses, with a particular focus on bribery.⁶

This national report complements the analysis provided in the regional report for the whole western Balkan region.⁷ The objective, both at the national and regional level, is not to rank or grade countries/areas but to provide analytical insights into a hidden phenomenon. It is hoped that the factual information contained in this report will supply the public authorities as well as the business organizations of Albania with a useful tool for further strengthening their anti-corruption policies and strategies.

⁴ All countries/areas of the western Balkans have adopted the Multi-beneficiary Programme 2011 under the IPA-Transition Assistance and Institution-Building Component of the European Union.

⁵ The pilot survey was conducted on 90 businesses in Durrës and Tirana.

⁶ Bribery is defined as (a) the promise, offering or giving to a public official, directly or indirectly, of an undue advantage, for the official himself or herself or another person or entity, in order that the official act or refrain from acting in the exercise of his or her official duties and (b) as the solicitation or acceptance by a public official, directly or indirectly of an undue advantage, for the official himself or herself or another person or entity, in order that the official act or refrain from acting in the exercise of his or her official duties.

⁷ *Business, Corruption and Crime in the western Balkans: The impact of bribery and other crime on private enterprise*, UNODC (2013).



1. Prevalence of bribery

The extent and frequency of bribery

Running a business is essentially a private sector activity oriented towards clients and customers, but commercial activities are also enmeshed in a network of public services, administrative obligations and prerequisites (such as tax inspections or customs clearing) that require frequent interactions with the public administration. Some of these (such as filing tax declarations) are indirect while others take the form of direct interactions with public officials (such as health, labour or tax inspections, legal proceedings or the request of building permits). In this regard companies in Albania are similar to companies elsewhere: over eight out of ten (85.1 per cent) businesses surveyed had at least one direct contact with a public official or civil servant in the 12 months prior to the survey, with some variation in the five business sectors surveyed. The rate of direct interaction varied from 75.2 per cent in the Manufacturing, Electricity, Gas and Water supply sector to 88.4 per cent in the Wholesale trade and Retail trade sector.

The overwhelming majority of interactions with public officials follow the rules and regulations applicable to the administrative procedures in question, yet in every direct interaction those rules are vulnerable to manipulation in exchange for private benefit resulting from an illicit transaction between the private sector service user and a civil servant. The receipt of money, a gift or other counter favour, in addition to (or instead of) the requisite official fee, for the personal gain of a civil servant represents an act of administrative bribery. As the data show, such episodes still play a role in the interactions of private companies with the public sector in Albania.

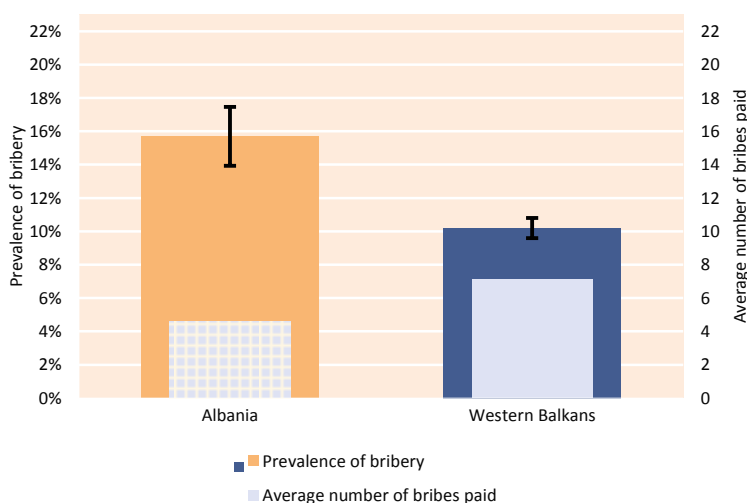
Direct interaction between a representative of a business and a public official is required for an act of bribery to take place (including through an intermediary), thus the prevalence of bribery is calculated as the number of businesses who gave a public official money, a gift or counter favour on at least one occasion in the 12 months prior to the survey, as a percentage of businesses that had at least one contact with a public official in the same period. As such, the average prevalence of business bribery in Albania is 15.7 per cent, which means that around one out of six businesses in the five economic sectors

surveyed, who had contact with a public official in the 12 months prior to the survey, paid a bribe to a public official.

But prevalence of bribery alone does not provide the complete picture of the extent and severity of bribery. Another important indicator is the frequency of bribe-paying, which in this case means the average number of times that bribe-payers actually paid bribes during the 12 months prior to the survey. In Albania, bribe-paying businesses paid an average of 4.6 bribes to public officials in that period.

As shown in Figure 1, while the prevalence of business bribery in Albania is higher than the regional average, the frequency of bribe-paying is lower than in the western Balkans as a whole (average prevalence of 10.2 per cent and average frequency of 7.1 at the regional level).

Figure 1 Prevalence of bribery and average number of bribes paid, Albania and western Balkan region (2012)



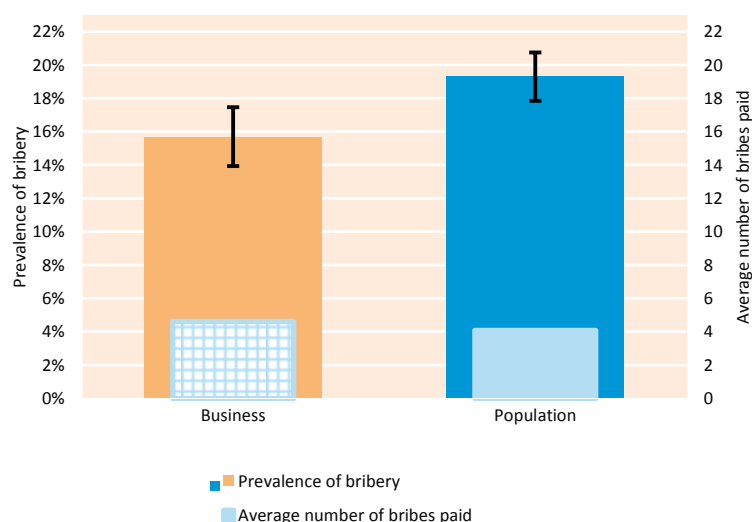
Note: Prevalence of bribery is calculated as the number of businesses who gave a public official money, a gift or counter favour on at least one occasion in the 12 months prior to the survey, as a percentage of businesses who in the same period had at least one contact with a public official. The average number of bribes refers to average number of bribes given by all bribe-payers, i.e. those who paid at least one bribe in the 12 months prior to the survey. The bars indicate the confidence interval at 95 per cent confidence level.

While direct comparisons between businesses and private individuals can raise difficult methodological issues, especially in relation to the size of companies, a comparison of businesses and private households regarding the prevalence and frequency of bribery reveals important differences in the pattern of bribery.

Figure 2 shows the bribery prevalence and frequency rates of businesses in Albania together with those of private individuals from UNODC’s 2011 general population survey on corruption and bribery.⁸ The average prevalence of bribery is higher for private individuals (19.3 per cent) than for businesses (15.7 per cent), while the average frequency of bribery for private individuals (4.1) is almost the same as the frequency of bribery among businesses (4.6).

⁸ *Corruption in Albania: bribery as experienced by the population*, UNODC (2011).

Figure 2 Prevalence of bribery and average number of bribes paid, by businesses and by private citizens, Albania (2010-2012)



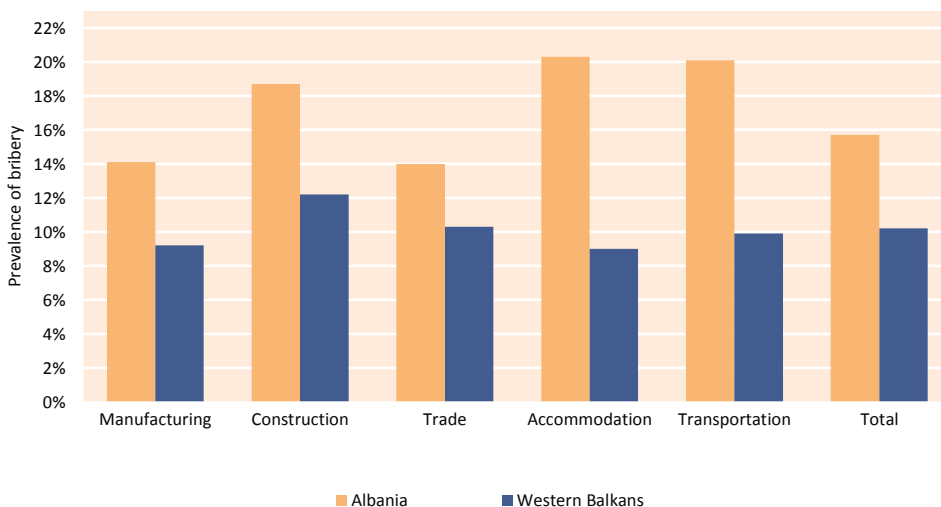
Note: Prevalence of bribery is calculated as the number of businesses/adult citizen (aged 18-64) who gave a public official money, a gift or counter favour on at least one occasion in the 12 months prior to the survey, as a percentage of businesses/adult citizens who in the same period had at least one contact with a public official. The average number of bribes refers to average number of bribes given by all bribe-payers, i.e. those who paid at least one bribe in the 12 months prior to the survey. The bars indicate the confidence interval at 95 per cent confidence level.

Economic sectors

The prevalence of bribery shows substantial variations across business sectors in Albania. Among the five sectors studied Accommodation and Food service activities has the highest bribery prevalence rate (20.3 per cent), closely followed by Transportation and Storage (20.1 per cent). Building and Construction (18.7 per cent); Manufacturing, Electricity, Gas and Water supply (14.1 per cent) and Wholesale trade and Retail trade (14 per cent) have a lower bribery prevalence rate.

In comparison to the regional averages by economic sector (Figure 3), all sectors in Albania have substantially higher bribery prevalence rates. Accommodation (20.3 versus 9 per cent), Transportation (20.1 versus 9.9 per cent) and Construction (18.7 versus 12.2 per cent) have a rate that is significantly higher than the regional average, while Manufacturing (14.1 versus 9.2 per cent) and Trade (14 versus 10.3 per cent) have a rate that is somewhat closer to the regional average.

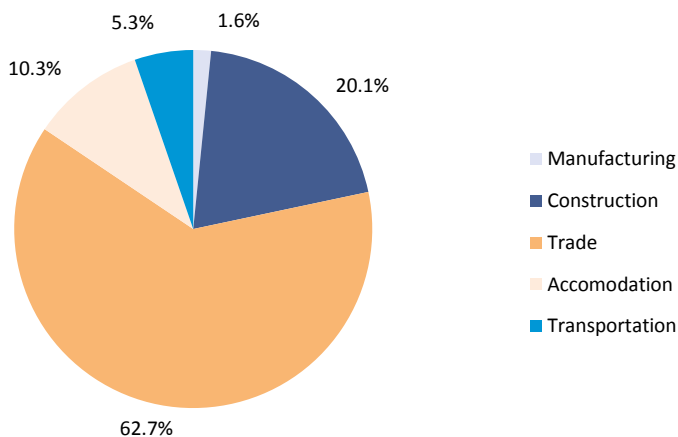
Figure 3 Prevalence of bribery, by economic sector, Albania and western Balkan region (2012)



Note: Prevalence of bribery is calculated as the number of businesses who gave a public official money, a gift or counter favour on at least one occasion in the 12 months prior to the survey, as a percentage of businesses who in the same period had at least one contact with a public official.

The variation in the prevalence of bribery by economic sector has a direct influence on the calculation of the bribery prevalence rate at the national level. Figure 4 shows the underlying composition of the bribes paid in the five economic sectors in Albania. The Wholesale trade and Retail trade sector accounts for the largest share (62.7 per cent) of the bribes paid, which is due to the fact that this sector accounts for the largest share (43.8 per cent) of businesses in Albania.⁹

Figure 4 Distribution of all bribes paid, by economic sector, Albania (2012)

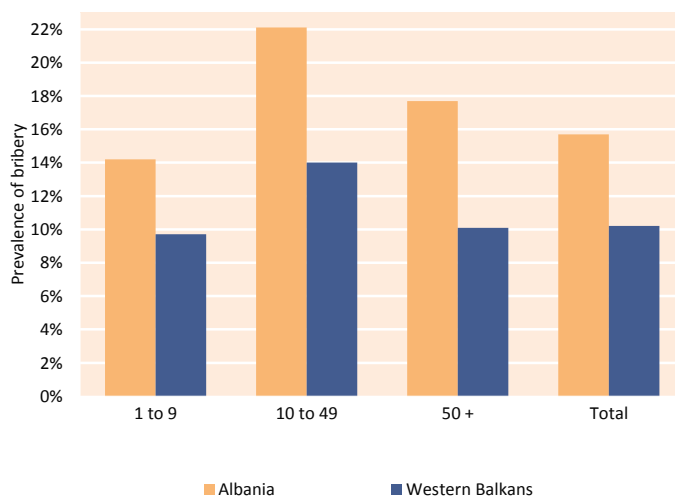


Another interesting pattern emerges when looking at bribery by business size (number of employees). The prevalence of bribery is higher for small businesses (10 to 49 employees) than for other business sizes. As shown in Figure 5, this is a pattern also found at the regional level. In Albania, the prevalence of bribery is also somewhat higher for medium and large businesses (over 50 employees) than for micro businesses (up to 9

⁹ See Figure 44 on the structure of the economy.

employees). One possible explanation may be that in Albania, very small businesses simply cannot afford to pay bribes in the first place. On the other hand, medium and large businesses may have more to lose in terms of their reputation and legal sanctions if detected, and may be more reluctant to disclose their experience of bribery.

Figure 5 Prevalence of bribery, by number of employees, Albania and western Balkan region (2012)



Note: Prevalence of bribery is calculated as the number of businesses who gave a public official money, a gift or counter favour on at least one occasion in the 12 months prior to the survey, as a percentage of businesses who in the same period had at least one contact with a public official.



2. Nature of bribes

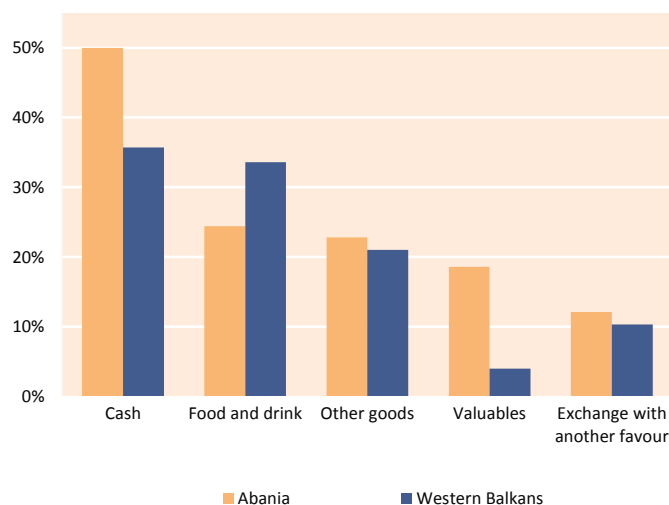
Forms of payment

“Greasing the palm” of an official with cash is a common form of bribery but businesses may also exert influence through the offer of free goods or services that they normally sell, or by negotiating a direct or indirect exchange with a counter favour.

As shown in Figure 6, of all the bribes paid to public officials by businesses in Albania, half (50 per cent) are paid in cash, followed by the giving of food and drink (24.4 per cent). The provision of other goods not produced by the company in exchange for an illicit “favour” by the public official is responsible for almost one quarter (22.8 per cent) of all bribery cases, while 18.6 per cent of all bribes are paid in valuables and 12.1 per cent take place in the form of an exchange of one favour for another.

In comparison to the forms of payment employed at the regional level, it is noteworthy that in Albania a higher percentage of bribes are given in cash payments and in the form of valuables, while a lower percentage is given in the form of food and drink. At the regional level, 35.7 per cent of all bribes paid to public officials by businesses are paid in cash, followed by the provision of food and drink (33.6 per cent) and in the form of other goods (21 per cent).

Figure 6 Percentage distribution of bribes paid by businesses to public officials, by type of payment, Albania (2012)



Note: Data refer to the last bribe paid by each bribe-payer in the 12 months prior to the survey. The sum is higher than 100 per cent since, in some cases, bribes are paid in more than one form (for example, money and goods).

In the case of the business sectors under study, cash payments appear to be the predominant form of bribery in all sectors except in the Accommodation and Food activities sector, where the provision of food and drink is more important.

Bribes paid in cash

Given that a large part of bribes by businesses in Albania are paid in cash, the size of cash bribes paid by bribe-payers gives an important indication of the value of bribe payments. The mean amount paid per bribe across all economic sectors is 53,000 Lek or 383 Euro at market exchange rates (EUR), a figure that amounts to 152 per cent of the average net monthly salary in Albania. At the same time, the median bribe paid by bribe-payers (20,000 Lek) is substantially lower than the mean, indicating the arithmetic influence of some very large bribes (Table 1).¹⁰ Taking into account differences in price levels in Europe, in Albania the mean bribe amount in Euro corresponds to 904 EUR-PPP¹¹ which is close to the mean amount paid per bribe in the western Balkan region (881 EUR-PPP).

A comparison of the mean bribe size paid by businesses (53,000 Lek) with the corresponding mean amount paid by private citizens (5,710 Lek), as found in UNODC's 2011 general population survey on administrative corruption and bribery,¹² indicates that the average size of bribes paid by companies is around nine times that of private individuals (Table 1). Given that businesses typically have greater financial capacity than households and may have more to gain through bribery related to their business transactions, this is not surprising.

¹⁰ The mean bribe size is calculated as the arithmetic average of bribes paid in cash. In most distributions, the mean is influenced by a relatively small number of very high values. As an additional indicator of the distribution of bribes by size, the median bribe size can be considered. The median bribe size is exactly the middle value of all the bribes sorted by size in ascending order, which implies that about 50 per cent of all bribes are higher and 50 per cent are lower than the median value.

¹¹ EU-27 Euro Purchasing Power Parities (EUR-PPP) are used to make amounts surveyed in national currencies comparable on an international level.

¹² *Corruption in Albania: bribery as experienced by the population*, UNODC (2011).

Table 1 Average size of bribes paid in cash by businesses and by private citizens (in Lek, EUR and in EUR-PPP), as a percentage of GDP per capita and as a percentage of the average monthly net salary, Albania (2010-2012)

Indicators	Reference group	
	Population in Albania (2010)	Business in Albania (2012)
Mean bribe (ALL)	5,710	53,000
Median bribe (ALL)	1,000	20,000
Mean bribe (EUR)	43	383
Mean bribe (EUR-PPP)	103	904
Mean bribe as % of GDP/capita (2012)	1.3%	11.1%
Mean bribe as % of average monthly net salary (2010)	16.4%	152%

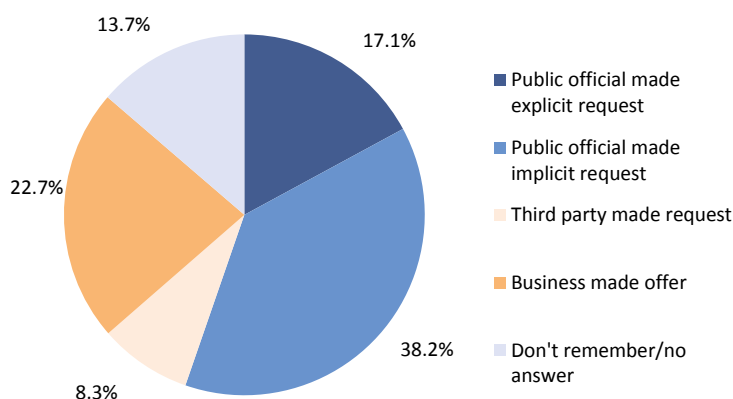
Sources for additional indicators: Albanian national currency is Lek (ALL), Euro/ALL average exchange rate in 2012: 1 Euro = 139.59 ALL; Bank of Albania; EUR-PPP conversion rates: Eurostat; GDP per capita estimated on the basis of WIIW; average monthly net salary: Institute of Statistics of Albania (INSTAT).

Bribe-seeking modality and timing

Data on the modality of bribery can provide an important insight into how the bribery of public officials by businesses actually works. The mechanisms of bribe-paying are often characterized by certain implicit patterns well known to both bribe-payers and bribe-takers that are based on the understanding of when a kickback may lead to an illicit advantage for both parties. This is even truer for businesses, for which speeding up administrative procedures or “cutting red tape” by circumventing laws and regulations with the help of bribery can create huge benefits. In the economic realm, where each comparative advantage can lead to greater profits and a larger market share for a business, this can result in a type of escalation in which bribes are not only expected but are actually offered “voluntarily” by businesses in order to get ahead of competitors. When bribery becomes a routine exercise for certain companies to gain privileged services or illicit benefits from public officials, payments may be both expected more often and paid more often.

When it comes to the modality of bribery in Albania, the data show that businesses are frequently pro-active in influencing public officials through bribery. In almost one quarter (22.7 per cent) of all bribery cases, the payment of a bribe is offered by a representative of the business without a prior request being made, whereas in almost two thirds (63.6 per cent) of cases payment is either explicitly (17.1 per cent) or implicitly (38.2 per cent) requested by the public official or requested through a third party (8.3 per cent) on behalf of the official (Figure 7).

Figure 7 Percentage distribution of bribes paid by businesses, by modality of bribe requests and offers, Albania (2012)



Note: Data refer to the last bribe paid by each bribe-payer in the 12 months prior to the survey.

When comparing the modality of bribery by businesses to the modality of bribery by private citizens in the household survey, some similarities appear: when private citizens pay bribes to public officials, in 29.5 per cent of cases the citizen makes the offer, while in 10.4 per cent of cases the request is made explicitly by the official. In 56 per cent of cases the bribe is requested implicitly from the citizen and in 4.1 per cent through a third party.

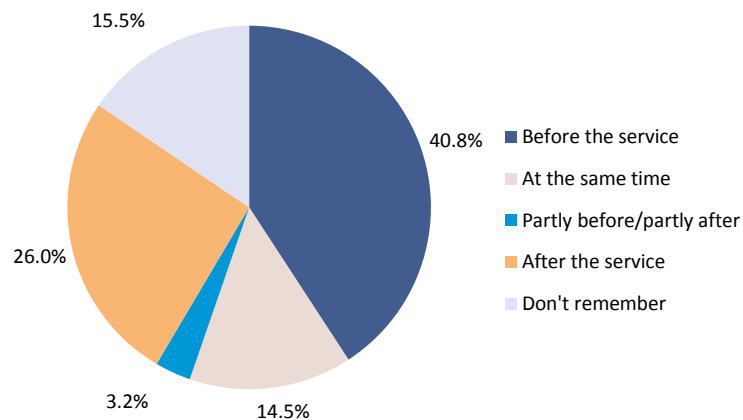
These findings have a number of policy implications. A high share of bribes requested by bribe-takers suggests that public officials are quite unafraid to request a bribe, either from businesses or households. If bribe-takers do not expect that bribery requests will be reported and do not anticipate any sanctions for extracting bribes, bribery may be met by a culture of acceptability and become endemic in certain public offices. In such cases, public officials taking bribes should be directly targeted by ending impunity through the dissemination and enforcement of strict anti-bribery rules. If bribe-payers feel coerced to pay bribes, they are also more likely to come forward and report bribery, which should be encouraged through the opening of further channels for reporting bribery cases (such as anti-corruption hotlines). Conversely, if bribe payers proactively offer bribes to public officials to influence the provision of public services in their favour, legal reforms that outlaw the “grooming” of civil servants through regular “gifts” may be called for.

In addition to identifying the initiating party in a case of bribery, it is also relevant to know about the timing of bribe payments as this can provide further insight into the motivation and purpose of bribery. Payments made in advance are often seen as a requirement for getting things done, while payments made after the public service has been delivered may be seen either as a sign of gratitude or as another form of “grooming” in which the payment serves as a “sweetener” for luring public officials into a dependent relationship, and the acceptance of a “gift” at an earlier point in time obliges the official to return the favour to the business at a later point in time.

The data show that over one quarter (26 per cent) of all bribes by businesses in Albania are paid after the service is delivered, while two fifths (40.8 per cent) are paid before the service and 14.5 per cent at the same time. Some 3.2 per cent of bribes are paid partly before and partly after the service, while about 15.5 per cent of respondents do not

remember when the bribe was paid (Figure 8). This shows public officials' powerful position when requesting bribes, since payments are mostly given before the service is delivered.

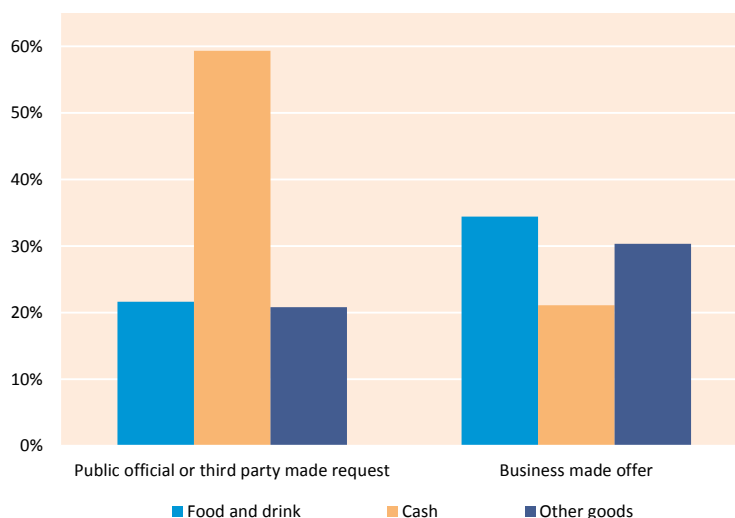
Figure 8 Percentage distribution of bribes paid by businesses, by timing of payment in relation to service delivery, Albania (2012)



Note: Data refer to the last bribe paid by each bribe-payer in the 12 months prior to the survey.

When the form of bribe payment is analysed in relation to the modality of bribe requests or offers, the data reveal different preferences of bribe-payers and bribe-takers. Public officials who directly or indirectly ask for bribes will often request them in the form of cash payments, while businesses that offer bribes to public officials may want to look for less costly alternatives related to their regular business activities, such as the provision of food and drink (when in Accommodation and Food service activities sector) or other types of goods and services (especially in Wholesale trade and Retail trade). The data show that in almost three fifths (59.3 per cent) of bribery cases in which a bribe is requested (either explicitly, implicitly or through a third party), the payment is made in cash, while this is the case for only 21.1 per cent of bribery cases in which a business offers a bribe in the first place. In over one third (34.4 per cent) of cases when a business offers a bribe, as opposed to 21.6 per cent of the cases in which the bribe is requested, the payment is in the form of food and drink (Figure 9).

Figure 9 Percentage distribution of bribes paid by businesses, by type of payment and by modality of bribe requests and offers, Albania (2012)



Note: Data refer to the last bribe paid by each bribe-payer in the 12 months prior to the survey.

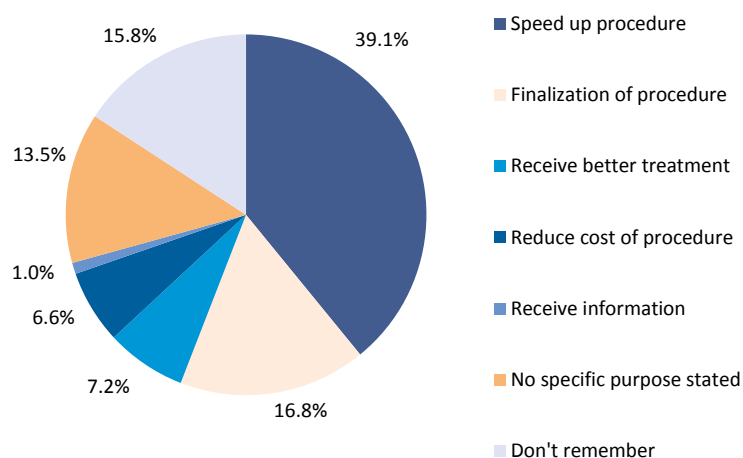
Purposes of bribes

The bribery of public officials can have a variety of purposes. Public officials may be able to extract bribes for a legitimate public service that they could otherwise deny to the client or delay for an indefinite period. On the other hand, kickbacks may also be paid on the initiative of the business with a view to influencing regulatory decisions, tax assessments, public procurement processes or the provision of public services, among other things. For each of these business-related procedures, the purpose of bribery may differ according to the nature of the process or decision that is subject to manipulation. For example, bribes may aim to change a negative decision for a building permit and thereby allow the finalization of an administrative process in the interest of the company.

In the economic world, bribes may also be important for speeding up a variety of typically time-consuming and drawn-out procedures, such as obtaining utility connections (electricity or water), customs clearance of goods, obtaining certain types of authorization for production processes or speeding up health and safety inspections at business premises by providing advance notice of upcoming inspections. While speeding up administrative procedures may not seem a bad idea overall, speeding up procedures exclusively for bribe-paying businesses by prioritizing them over honest businesses creates unfair competition, thus damaging the economy.

On the other hand, some bribes may serve a purpose whose benefit to the official who accepts the “gift” is not immediately apparent, such as when a business representative uses “gifts” as a way of “grooming” the public official for future interactions by creating a dependent relationship between that official and the bribe-payer.

Figure 10 Percentage distribution of bribes paid by businesses, by purpose of payment, Albania (2012)



Note: Data refer to the last bribe paid by each bribe-payer in the 12 months prior to the survey.

From the perspective of businesses in Albania, the most important purpose of paying bribes is to “speed up business-related procedures” (39.1 per cent) that would otherwise be delayed. Other stated purposes of bribes paid are “making the finalization of a procedure possible” (16.8 per cent), “receiving better treatment” (7.2 per cent) and “reducing the cost of a procedure” (6.6 per cent). At the same time, almost one out of seven (13.8 per cent) bribes paid serve no specific immediate purpose for the businesses paying them, suggesting that these are “sweeteners” given to public officials to “groom” them for future interactions in the interest of the company (Figure 10).



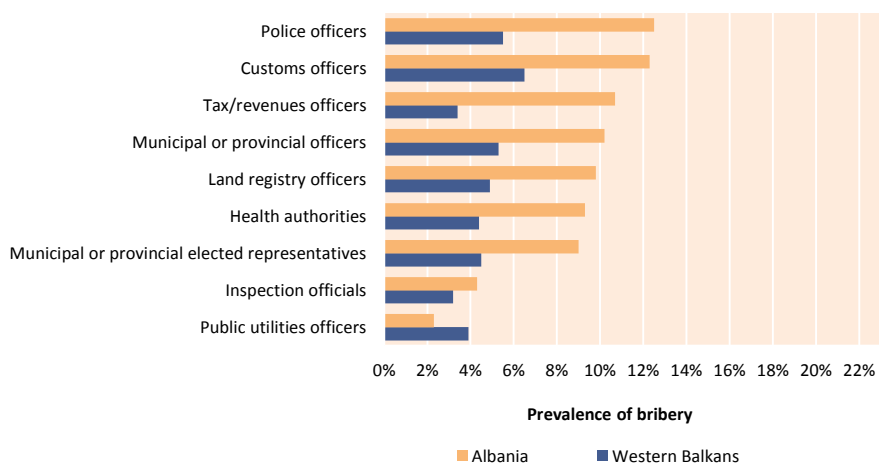
3. Public officials and bribery

Just as there are certain purposes and procedures for which businesses are more prone to making offers to public officials, certain types of public official are involved in bribery more often than others. For this reason, it is useful to analyse the probability of a particular type of official receiving a bribe when he or she is contacted, independently of the frequency of interaction. To measure this, the number of businesses who paid a bribe to a selected type of public official is compared with the number of businesses who had contacts with that type of official in the 12 months prior to the survey: in other words, the prevalence of bribery to selected public officials by businesses.

The prevalence rate of bribes paid to public officials by businesses in Albania ranges from 12.5 per cent for police officers to 2.3 per cent for public utilities officers, which means that the likelihood of police officers receiving a bribe from businesses each time they are in direct contact with a business is 5.4 times that of public utilities officers. In addition, customs officers, tax/revenues officers and municipal or provincial officers also have prevalence rates over 10 per cent, while those of others officials listed in Figure 11 are between 2.3 per cent and 9.8 per cent.

Prevalence rates of bribes paid to most types of public official by businesses in Albania are substantially above those of bribes paid to the same type of official in the western Balkan region as a whole especially for police officers (12.5 versus 5.5 per cent) and tax/revenues officers (10.7 versus 3.4 per cent). In contrast, the prevalence rate of bribes paid to public utilities officers (2.3 versus 3.9 per cent) is lower in Albania than in the western Balkan region.

Figure 11 Prevalence of bribery to selected public officials by businesses, Albania and western Balkan region (2012)



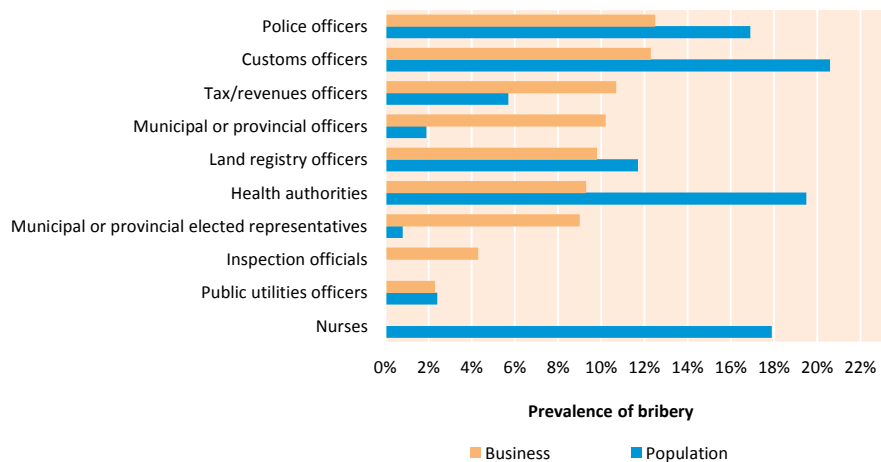
Note: Prevalence of bribery is calculated as the number of businesses who gave a public official money, a gift or counter favour on at least one occasion in the 12 months prior to the survey, as a percentage of all businesses who in the same period had at least one contact with a public official. In this chart prevalence of bribery is computed separately for each type of public official.

It is also useful to compare the prevalence of bribery by businesses to selected public officials to the prevalence of bribery to the same type of public official by private citizens. Both private businesses and ordinary citizens are affected by bribery in their own interactions with public officials, but businesses and citizens often deal with different sectors of the administration and can thus provide complementary perspectives on the vulnerability of public officials to bribery. For example, for ordinary citizens in Albania, the risk of bribery is higher in their interactions with health authorities or customs officers than when dealing with municipal or provincial elected representatives or land registry officers. On the other hand, bribery risks for businesses are highest in interactions with the police officers and customs officers, which may indicate problems with lengthy bureaucratic procedures that businesses want to overcome through the payment of bribes.

These different patterns of bribery risk are shown in Figure 12, which compares the prevalence of bribery to selected types of public official who receive the bribe from businesses with the equivalent rates in UNODC's 2011 general population survey on corruption and bribery in Albania.¹³

¹³ *Corruption in Albania: bribery as experienced by the population*, UNODC (2011).

Figure 12 Prevalence of bribery to selected types of public official who receive the bribe, by businesses and the population, Albania (2010-2012)



Note: Prevalence of bribery is calculated as the number of businesses/adult citizens who gave a public official money, a gift or counter favour on at least one occasion in the 12 months prior to the survey, as a percentage of all businesses/adult citizens who in the same period had at least one contact with a public official. In this chart prevalence of bribery is computed separately for each type of public official.



4. Reporting bribery

There are a number of reasons for businesses to “blow the whistle” on bribery by reporting corrupt public officials to the police or other authorities. Businesses often feel forced to pay bribes to obtain services that should normally be provided by the state without additional costs, in a timely manner and of an acceptable quality. Bribes thus constitute an expense that cuts directly into their profits and – as businesses are confronted with routine tasks, such as paying taxes, health and safety inspections or clearing goods through customs, on a regular basis – acquiescing to a bribery demand may increase expectations of regular future payments on the part of public officials, which may become a significant cost factor over time. At the same time, the long-term market benefits that a business can glean from the payment of bribes are uncertain: the very fact that a public official regularly accepts bribes is an indication that any advantage over competitors gained through bribery will be quickly eroded if other businesses also pay bribes.

In the real world, however, such obvious incentives to report bribery to the authorities rarely translate into action. At the regional level, on average only 1.8 per cent of bribes paid by businesses in the western Balkans are reported to official authorities.¹⁴ With some 2.2 per cent of all bribes paid by businesses reported to official authorities, the situation in Albania is similar.¹⁵ Survey findings at the regional level indicate that most reports are made directly to the police but some are also made to other official institutions, such as prosecutor’s offices, official anti-corruption agencies or official anti-corruption hotlines. A small number of bribes paid (0.3 per cent at the regional level) are reported to other non-official institutions, such as non-governmental organizations or the media.

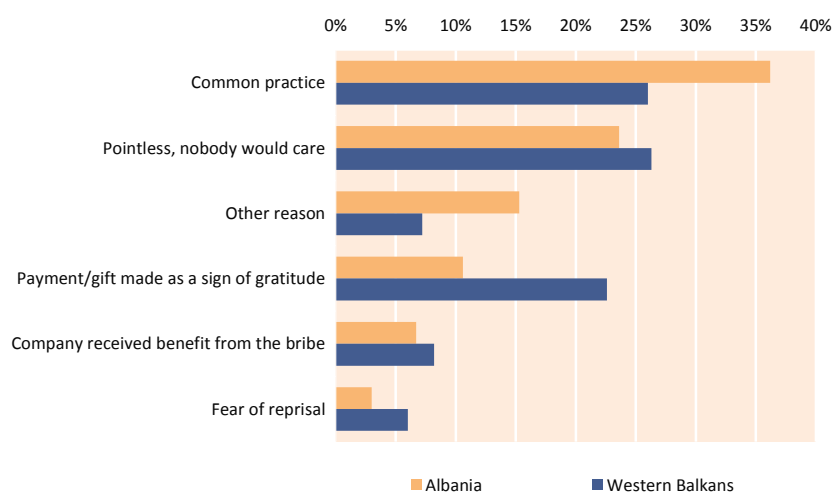
Given that only a small percentage of businesses in the sample turned to official authorities in order to file a complaint about corrupt officials accepting bribes, when, in theory, businesses have good reasons for denouncing bribery, the important question becomes why businesses did not report bribery? In Albania the most important reason for

¹⁴ *Business, Corruption and Crime in the western Balkans: The impact of bribery and other crime on private enterprise*, UNODC (2013).

¹⁵ Due to the low number of bribes reported to national authorities in Albania and a corresponding high margin of sampling error, survey results on the share of bribes reported to authorities should be interpreted with caution.

not reporting bribery cited by responding business representatives is the perception that there is no need to report bribery as it is common practice to pay or give gifts to public officials (Figure 13). Over one third (36.2 per cent) of respondents gave this reason for not reporting bribery in Albania, compared to 26 per cent in the western Balkans on average. In addition, almost a quarter (23.6 per cent) of respondents stated that they did not report bribery because it would be pointless to report it as nobody would care about it, a share that is below the regional average (26.3 per cent at the regional level). In contrast, the share of respondents who stated that they did not turn to authorities because the payment or gift was given as a sign of gratitude to the public servant for delivering the service requested (10.6 versus 22.6 per cent regionally) or because the company received a benefit from the bribe (6.7 versus 8.2 per cent regionally) were substantially below the regional average.

Figure 13 Percentage distribution of bribe-paying businesses not reporting their experience to authorities/institutions, according to the most important reasons for not reporting, Albania and western Balkan region (2012)



Note: Data refer to bribe-payers who did not report their last bribe paid in the 12 months prior to the survey to authorities/institutions.

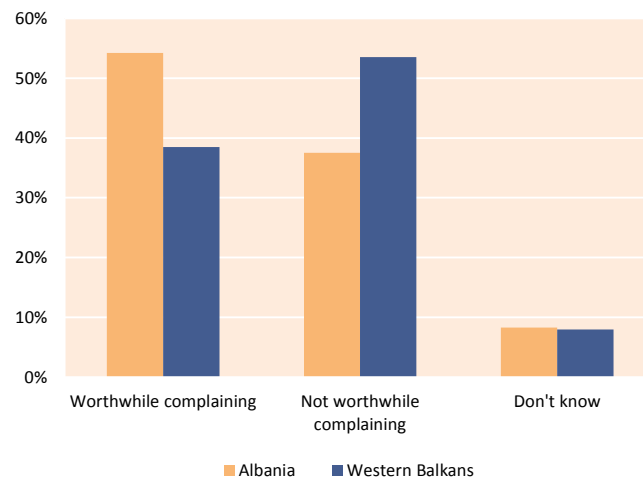
The findings as to why bribery is not reported to public authorities in Albania fit into the general patterns of timing, modalities and purposes of bribery outlined in Chapter 2. Large shares of bribes are paid on the request of public servants, are paid before the service is delivered and are paid in cash. This indicates that many businesses feel obliged to pay bribes to public officials and do not report bribery due to a lack of trust in authorities.

At the same time, the resulting conclusions should be qualified by data relating to the perception of business representatives about public authorities in general. In a wider context less than forty per cent of business representatives in Albania (37.5 per cent) reported that they do not consider it worthwhile to complain to public authorities (whether through a public agency or an institution such as an ombudsman) when feeling treated unfairly (Figure 14). This lack of faith in the accountability of public institutions in general is thus less pronounced in Albania than at the regional average (53.5 per cent).¹⁶ For anti-corruption policy makers, the figures nevertheless signal the challenges of encouraging more businesses to report bribery and thereby facilitate the fight against

¹⁶ The regional average does not include data from Montenegro, where this question was not included in the survey.

corruption. In fact, creating better and more secure reporting channels for denouncing acts of corruption will only result in increased reporting when there is a general feeling that turning to the authorities for help is worthwhile and is followed up by appropriate action.

Figure 14 Percentage distribution of business representatives according to whether they consider complaints about public administration worthwhile, Albania and western Balkan region (2012)

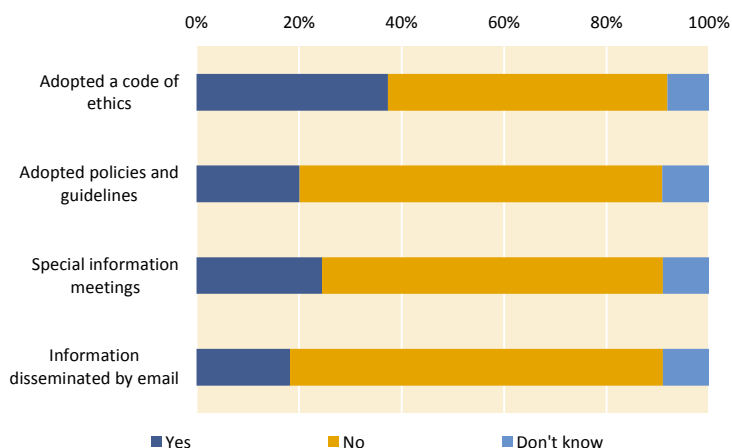


Internal compliance mechanisms

Despite the fact that very few business representatives consider the lodging of a formal complaint to the authorities worthwhile and even fewer report their experiences of bribery to the authorities, many businesses have recognized that illicit behaviour such as bribery and fraud can seriously harm their reputation and business interests. To prevent common malpractices in the workplace and to increase integrity and transparency in their own businesses, companies around the world are increasingly implementing comprehensive internal compliance policies that specify certain unacceptable practices and sanction violations of established standards.

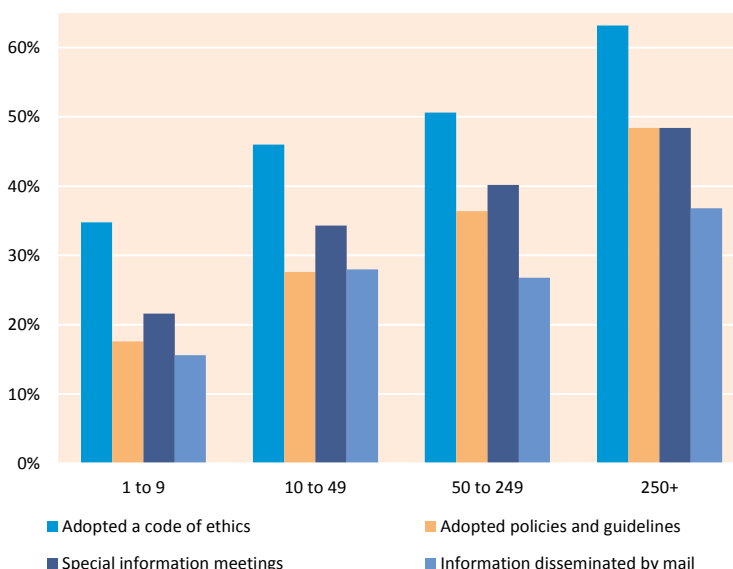
In Albania, while being far from universal, such internal compliance mechanisms are increasingly widespread. According to the survey, over one third (37.3 per cent) of companies have adopted an internal code of ethics and around one fifth (20.1 per cent) have adopted policies and guidelines concerning bribery and corruption (Figure 15). In addition, almost a quarter (24.5 per cent) have organized dedicated meetings to inform employees of their existing anti-corruption guidelines and policies and 18.2 per cent have disseminated this information by email.

Figure 15 Percentages of businesses that have adopted selected internal compliance measures, by number of employees, Albania (2012)



The data show that internal efforts to increase transparency and integrity by the private sector are less common among small companies than among large ones. As shown in Figure 16, the adoption of a code of ethics, dedicated anti-corruption policies and guidelines, as well as their dissemination through meetings or emails, is far more widespread among larger companies than among those with fewer employees. But given that micro and small companies make up the largest share of all businesses in Albania, the widespread adoption of specific integrity standards and compliance policies by businesses in the region requires their promotion not only among large companies but also among micro and small companies.

Figure 16 Percentage of businesses that have adopted an internal code of ethics, by number of employees, Albania (2012)





5. Business-to-business bribery

Bribery is most often associated with corrupt public officials who accept money, gifts or other illicit favours related to public service delivery, yet significant forms of bribery also take place within the private sector itself, that is to say, between representatives of private sector business entities. Such bribery in the course of economic, financial or commercial activities is defined in the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) as the “promise, offering or giving (active bribery) as well as the solicitation or acceptance (passive bribery), directly or indirectly, of an undue advantage to/by any person who directs or works, in any capacity, for a private sector entity ... in order that he or she, in breach of his or her duties, act or refrain from acting”. The Convention requires that its signatories consider establishing such acts as criminal offences.¹⁷

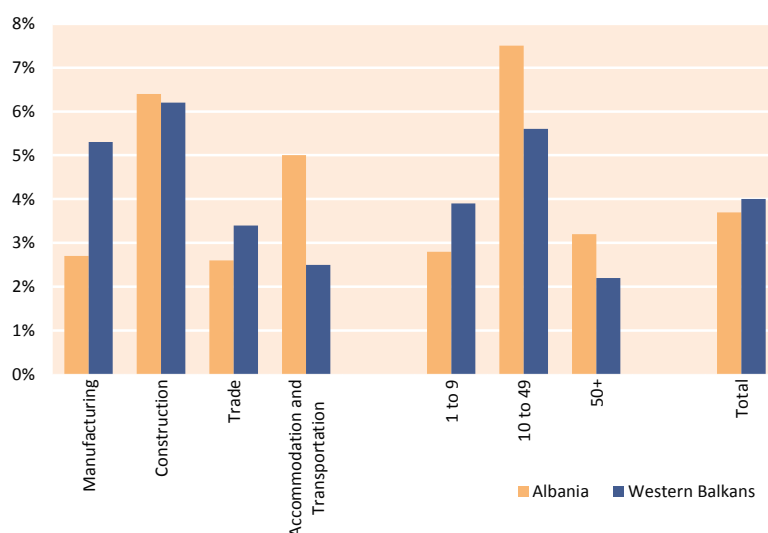
Business-to-business bribery thus takes place between representatives of businesses who give a gift, counter-favour or pay extra money (excluding the normal payment) to secure a business transaction. Such illicit transactions are different from normal business transactions, for example marketing or public relations activities, in that they specifically aim, through illegal means, to breach the integrity of the bribe-taker in exchange for a bribe. This is a form of bribery that obstructs the beneficial mechanisms of the free market and is not only detrimental to businesses whose representatives accept bribes, but also to society as a whole. The prevalence of business-to-business bribery is calculated as the number of businesses who gave money, a gift or counter favour, in addition to any normal transaction fee, on at least one occasion in the 12 months prior to the survey to any person who works, in any capacity, for a private sector business entity, including through an intermediary.¹⁸ As shown in Figure 17, according to this definition the average prevalence of business-to-business bribery in Albania amounts to 3.7 per cent (against 4 per cent at the regional level). Although less than the average prevalence of bribes paid by businesses to public officials, this finding indicates that private sector bribery constitutes a problem in Albania.

¹⁷ Article 21 UNCAC.

¹⁸ Since all businesses can be assumed to have regular contact with other businesses, or at least one contact with another business, either as supplier or client, in the previous 12 months, the prevalence is calculated as the share of bribe-paying businesses out of all businesses.

Opportunities for individuals in private sector entities to engage in illicit dealings with other private sector businesses vary across economic sectors. For example, individual business representatives may accept offers of contracts whose costs exceed current market prices in return for a personal kickback, or individual employees with access to confidential information may reveal this information to other businesses in return for a personal benefit. The data indicate that such private sector bribery episodes in Albania have higher prevalence rates in the Construction sector (6.4 per cent) than in the Accommodation and Transportation sectors combined (5 per cent), the Manufacturing sector (2.7 per cent) and the Trade sector (2.6 per cent). As in the case of public sector bribery, prevalence rates are higher in small (10 to 49 employees) companies (7.5 per cent) than in micro (1 to 9 employees) companies (2.8 per cent) and medium and large (over 50 employees) companies (3.2 per cent), similar to the pattern found in the western Balkan region as a whole (Figure 17).

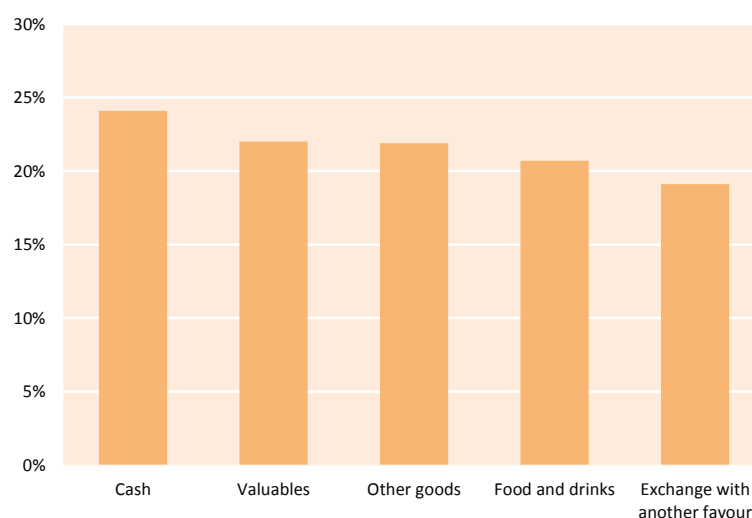
Figure 17 Prevalence of bribery among private sector business entities, Albania and western Balkan region (2012)



Forms of payment

As in public sector bribery, in business-to-business bribery payment can be made in a variety of forms: money, goods, food and drink, valuables or in the form of an explicit exchange for another favour. In the business world of Albania, cash is the most important form of bribe payment among private sector entities, as it is between businesses and public officials. However, valuables, other goods, the provision of food and drink and the exchange of one favour for another favour also play an important role when it comes to illicit dealings among business representatives (Figure 18).

Figure 18 Percentage distribution of bribes paid by businesses to private sector business entities, by type of payment, Albania (2012)



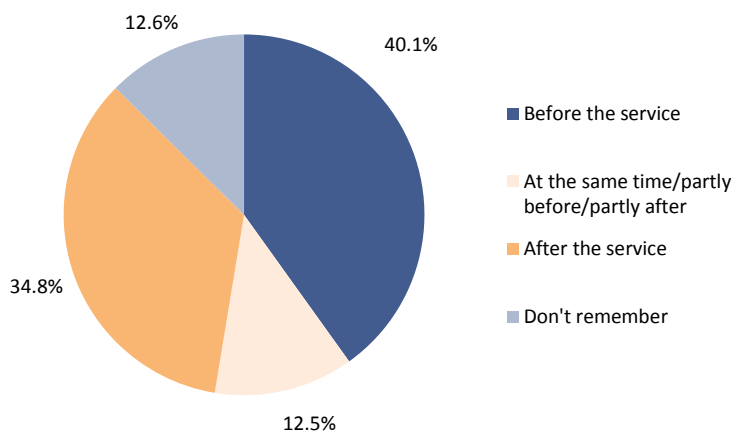
Note: Data refer to the last bribe paid by each bribe-payer in the 12 months prior to the survey. The sum is higher than 100 per cent since, in some cases, bribes are paid in more than one form (for example, money and goods).

Bribe-seeking modality and timing

According to the survey, over one third (35.9 per cent) of business-to-business bribes are paid without being requested by one of the business representatives involved and are offered instead by the bribe-payer in order to obtain a certain illicit advantage (for example, to facilitate or accelerate a procedure or to gain advantage over a competitor). In contrast, over half (51.6 per cent) of cases involve some form of request. Bribes are given after they have been requested either explicitly (11.6 per cent) or implicitly (23.3 per cent), while in 16.7 per cent of cases a third party related the bribery request.

It is notable that a large portion of bribes are paid after the delivery of the goods or service in question (34.8 per cent), while 40.1 per cent are paid before the service. In addition, 12.5 per cent of bribes are paid at the same time or partly before/partly after the goods or service is delivered and one out of eight (12.6 per cent) business representatives did not remember when the bribe was delivered (Figure 19).

Figure 19 Percentage distribution of business-to-business bribes paid, by timing of payment in relation to service delivery, Albania (2012)

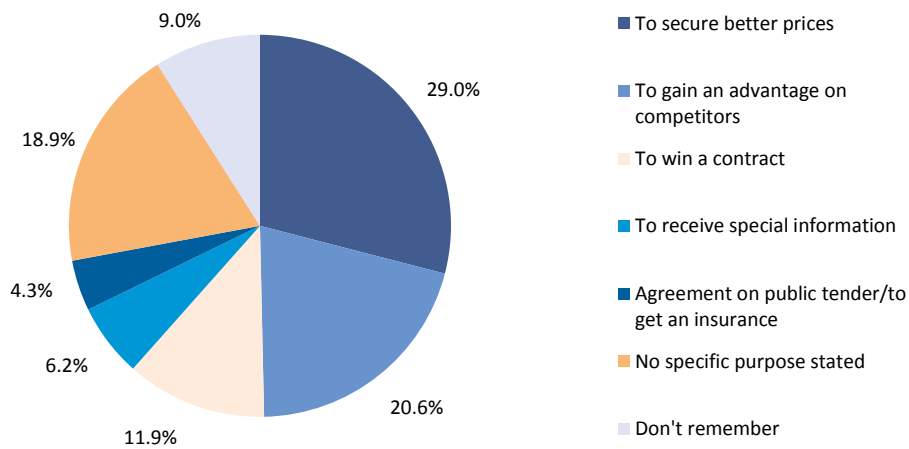


Note: Data refer to the last bribe paid by each bribe-payer in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Purposes of bribes

When bribes are paid by one business representative to another, it is normally to the detriment of the business whose representative accepts the bribe, whereas the bribe-paying business expects to benefit from the bribe. This is clearly reflected in the fact that when it comes to business-to-business bribery in Albania the most important purpose of bribes is to secure better prices (29 per cent). One out of five bribes are paid to gain an economic advantage over competing companies (20.6 per cent), 11.9 per cent are paid to win a contract, 6.2 per cent to receive special information and 4.3 per cent to make an agreement on a public tender. In addition, almost one fifth of all business-to-business bribes (18.9 per cent) are paid with no immediately obvious purpose, though it can be assumed that such payments serve to entice bribe-takers into long-term “dependency”, which makes them more amenable to the granting of favours to the bribe-paying business at some point in the future (Figure 20).

Figure 20 Percentage distribution of business-to-business bribes paid, by purpose of payment, Albania (2012)



Note: Data refer to the last bribe paid by each bribe-payer in the 12 months prior to the survey.

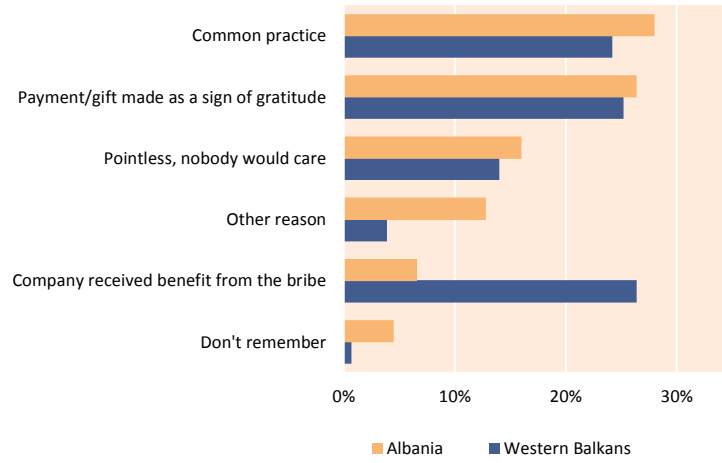
Reporting business-to-business bribery

At the regional average, a mere 0.8 per cent of all bribes paid between business representatives are reported to authorities, such as the police, anti-corruption agency or to supervisors in the affected businesses.¹⁹ With less than 0.1 per cent of business-to-business bribery incidents being reported to official authorities, the situation in Albania is similar. This is indicative of the fact that both parties to a business-to-business bribery episode feel equally implicated in the crime and are reluctant to come forward and “blow the whistle”.

The above conjecture is confirmed by the fact that the most important reasons given by bribe-paying businesses in Albania for not reporting bribery are: bribery is such a common practice that there is no need to report it (28 per cent) and the payment or gift is given as a sign of gratitude (26.4 per cent). Other bribe-payers do not inform the authorities because they consider that reporting bribery is pointless as nobody would care (16 per cent); the company receives a benefit from bribing a representative of another company (6.6 per cent) or due to other reasons (12.8 per cent). Similar reasons for not reporting business-to-business bribery are cited in the western Balkan region as a whole (Figure 21).

¹⁹ *Business, Corruption and Crime in the western Balkans: The impact of bribery and other crime on private enterprise*, UNODC (2013).

Figure 21 Percentage distribution of businesses that pay bribes to other businesses not reporting their experience to authorities/institutions, according to the most important reasons for not reporting, Albania (2012)



Note: Data refer to bribe-payers who did not report their last bribe paid in the 12 months prior to the survey to authorities/institutions.



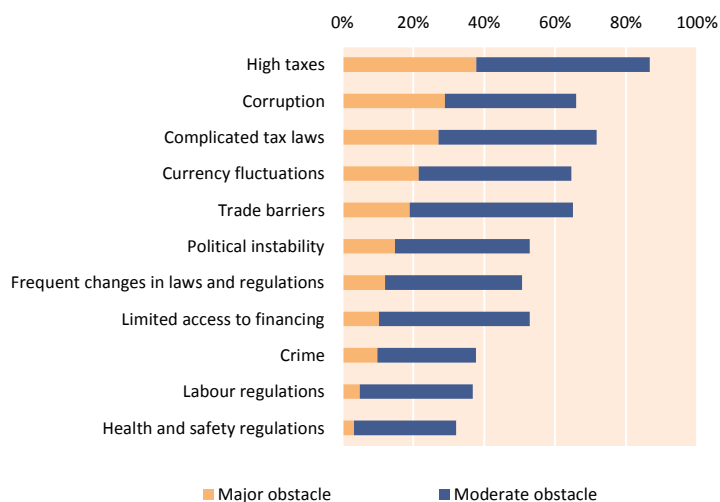
6. Perceptions and opinions about corruption

In the business world, perceptions are fundamental factors for shaping decisions, economic behaviour and outcomes. The perception of a favourable business environment, for example, creates the expectation of a positive return on an investment, making businesses more inclined to invest than when they perceive a negative business environment. Greater investment creates more demand, more jobs, higher growth and a more dynamic and prosperous economy. In economics, therefore, perceptions often translate directly into outcomes.

In order to carry out their economic activities effectively and to attain their business goals, private companies require a business environment with the right conditions to enable them to be both productive and profitable. These conditions include the rule of law to enforce contracts and provide security, the requisite regulatory environment and a functioning infrastructure, to name but a few. Conversely, the absence of these conditions, or the presence of factors detrimental to the business climate represent an obstacle to doing business and prevent the private sector from prospering and developing its full potential.

When asked whether certain issues represent an obstacle to doing business in their country, business owners and representatives in Albania rank corruption as the second most important issue after high taxes. In fact, corruption is considered a major obstacle by 28.9 per cent of business representatives, after high taxes (37.8 per cent). In addition, another 37 per cent of respondents consider corruption a moderate obstacle to doing business (Figure 22).

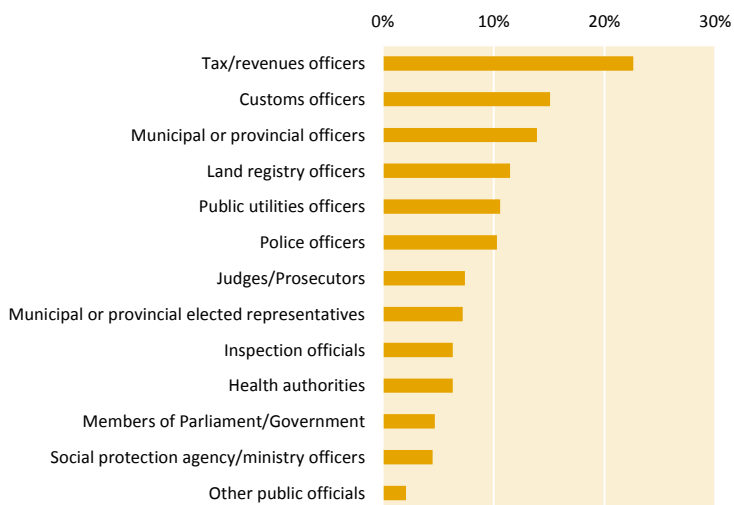
Figure 22 Percentage distribution of business representatives who consider selected issues a major or moderate obstacle to doing business, Albania (2012)



Perception of corruption of public officials

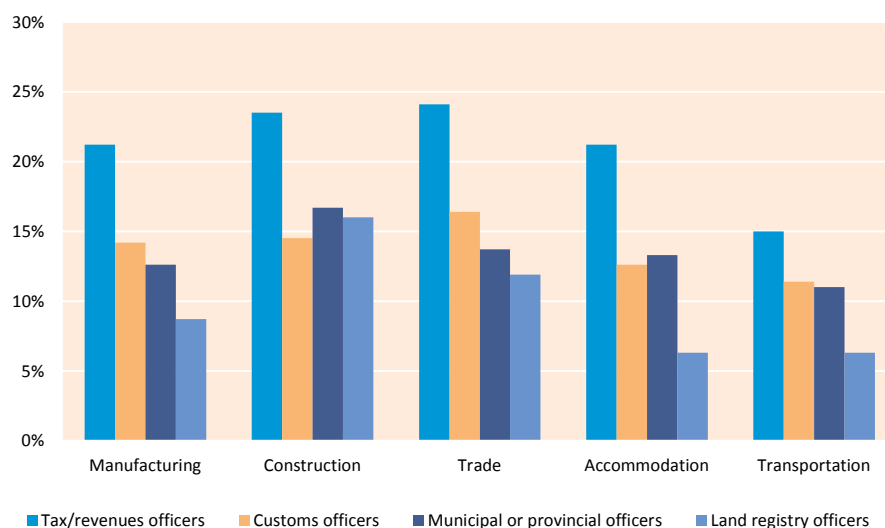
When business representatives consider corruption to be an obstacle to doing business they often have in mind particular types of public official (or specific administrative procedures) among whom corruption may be encountered more frequently than among others. These are often public officials at the local level with whom businesses are in frequent interaction or officials who are frequently mentioned in the media in connection with corruption. In Albania, almost a quarter (22.6 per cent) of business representatives think that the payment of bribes to tax/revenues officers occurs very or fairly frequently in companies such as their own, followed by customs officers (15.1 per cent), municipal or provincial officers (13.9 per cent) and land registry officers (11.5 per cent, Figure 23).

Figure 23 Percentage of business representatives who consider that the payment of bribes to selected public officials occurs very or fairly frequently in businesses like theirs, Albania (2012)



Such perceptions of the frequency of bribe-paying to certain types of public official need further differentiation by economic sector. Since business representatives were asked if they consider that the payment of bribes to certain officials by “businesses like theirs” occurs frequently, the comparison by type of official is most meaningful in relation to similar businesses in their own sectors. As shown in Figure 24, almost one quarter (24.1 per cent) of business representatives in Trade consider the bribery of tax/revenues officers to be very or fairly frequent, while 23.5 per cent of respondents in Construction, 21.2 per cent in Manufacturing, 21.2 per cent in Accommodation and 15 per cent of respondents in Transportation think the same. Land registry officers are seen to be the most susceptible to bribery in the Construction sector (16 per cent) as are municipal or provincial officers (16.7 per cent).

Figure 24 Percentage of business representatives who consider that the payment of bribes to selected public officials occurs very or fairly frequently in businesses like theirs, by economic sector, Albania(2012)



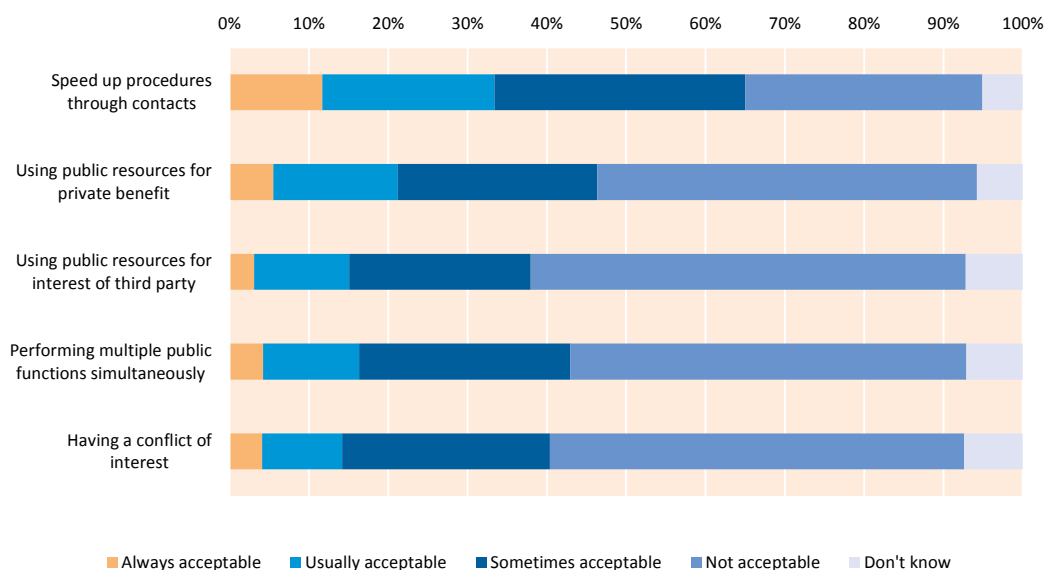
Attitudes towards corrupt behaviour

As in the case of perceptions of corruption, attitudes towards what constitutes corruption and what is acceptable behaviour often differ among individuals, societies and different economic sectors. Surveying business representatives as to their attitudes towards certain forms of corrupt behaviour can also shed light on their willingness to become involved in bribery and corruption, as well as their expectations about it.

The data show that most business representatives are well aware of the limits of ethical behaviour in business transactions and classify acts outside those limits as “not acceptable”. However, there are also significant numbers of them who qualify some illicit acts as acceptable behaviour, particularly when the severity of the violation is not immediately obvious. For example, almost two thirds of business representatives in Albania (65 per cent) consider the use of relationships and personal contacts in public institutions for speeding up business-related procedures to be acceptable (Figure 25). Also, in cases that clearly violate ethical standards, like using public resources for private benefit, there is a sizable share of around 46.3 per cent of business representatives who consider it to be acceptable. In addition, other seriously corrupt acts (including using public resources for the interest of a third party and performing public functions while having an interest in private companies) are considered by around 40 per cent of business

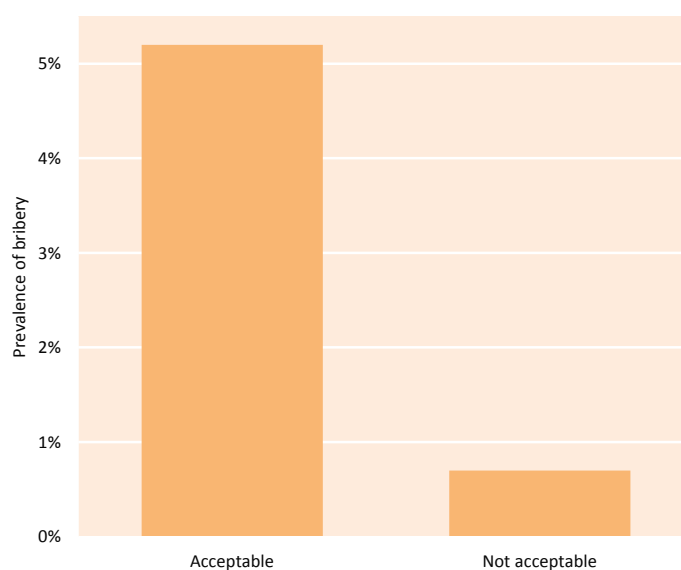
representatives to be acceptable. Also around four out of ten business representatives (40.4 per cent) consider the performing of multiple public functions at the same time to be acceptable.

Figure 25 Percentage of business representatives who consider various forms of corruptive behaviours always/usually/sometimes/not acceptable, Albania (2012)



Different attitudes towards corruption translate into distinct patterns of bribery. The data show that the less aware business leaders are that certain economic transactions – particularly in interactions with public officials – are unacceptable, the more likely those business representatives are to engage in such behaviour. Even for a relatively “soft” form of illicit intervention with public officials (the use of relationships and personal contacts in public institutions for speeding up business-related procedures) it can be shown that those business representatives who consider such illicit acts acceptable, also have a higher prevalence of bribery (Figure 26).

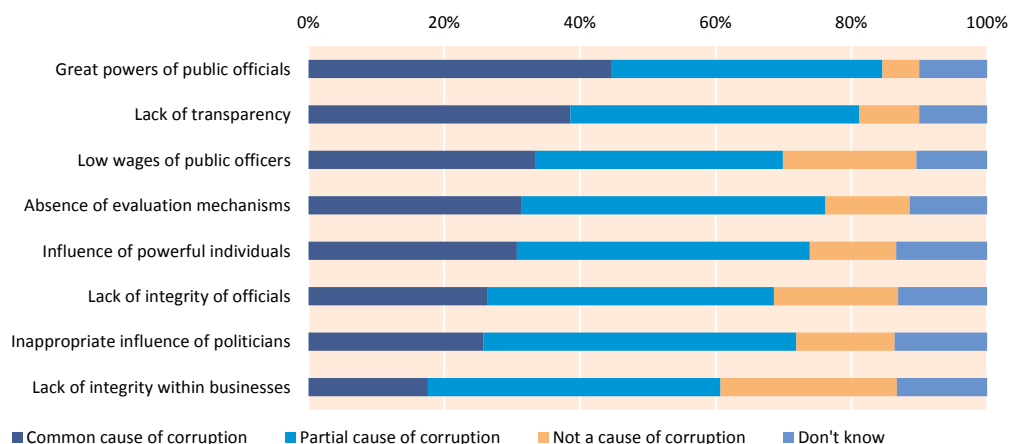
Figure 26 Prevalence of bribery, by groups of business representatives who consider the use of relationships in public institutions acceptable/not acceptable, Albania (2012)



Perception of causes of corruption

Surveying business representatives as to their perception of the causes of corruption can shed light on some causes of corruption that an effective anti-corruption strategy could usefully target. The data show that 44.6 per cent of business representatives consider great powers of public officials to be a common cause of corruption, followed by lack of transparency (38.6 per cent) and low wages of public officers (33.5 per cent). In addition, between 31.3 and 25.8 per cent of business representatives in Albania consider the absence of evaluation mechanisms, influence of powerful individuals, lack of integrity of officials and inappropriate influence of politicians to be a common cause of corruption (Figure 27). In contrast, lack of integrity within businesses is perceived by only 17.6 per cent of business representatives to be a common cause of corruption.

Figure 27 Percentage of business representatives who consider various issues to be a common cause of corruption/partial cause of corruption/not a cause of corruption, Albania (2012)

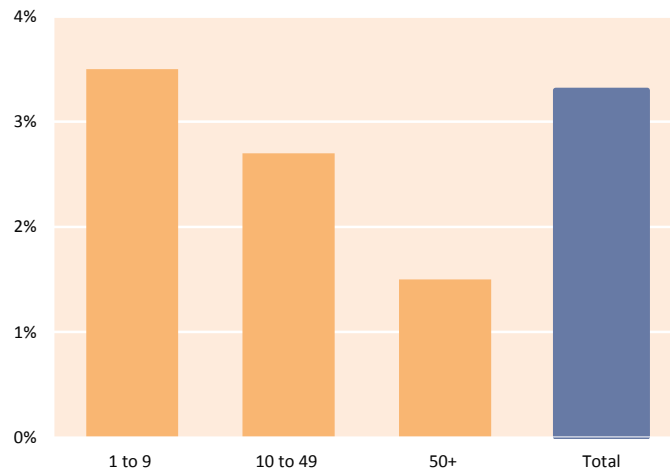


The impact of bribery on business investment

Besides having a direct effect on the disposition of businesses to pay bribes, the perception of bribery has an indirect effect on the willingness of businesses to make major investments, which has potentially disastrous consequences for economic growth and development. In all, 3.3 per cent of businesses in Albania decided not to make a major investment in the 12 months prior to the survey due to the fear of having to pay bribes to obtain requisite services or permits.

Considering that only a certain portion of businesses are in a position to make major investments in the first place, the fact that corruption has such a negative impact is significant. But perhaps the most damaging aspect for economic development in the region is that the economic impact of bribery on the business climate and investment decisions is more pronounced for smaller than for larger businesses (Figure 28). Micro (3.5 per cent) and small companies (2.7 per cent) are much more affected than medium and large companies (1.5 per cent), which means that the fear of bribery has a bigger impact on precisely those businesses with the greatest potential for growth.

Figure 28 Percentage of business representatives who decided not to make a major investment in the 12 months prior to the survey due to fear of bribery, by number of employees, Albania (2012)





7. Prevalence and patterns of other forms of crime

In addition to corruption, businesses in the western Balkans, like businesses everywhere, are affected by various other forms of crime against their property or business activities. The impact of such crimes can be considerable, both in terms of direct costs and damages and of indirect costs, in the form of insurance premiums, security expenditure and lost investment opportunities. While crime is not ranked among the most important obstacles to doing business in Albania (Figure 22), there is still a substantial share of businesses who consider crime to be either a major (9.9 per cent) or a moderate obstacle (27.8 per cent) to doing business.

Measuring the direct impact of crime is challenging for a number of reasons, irrespectively of whether the victims are individuals or businesses. Police-reported crimes are widely understood to undercount the true extent of criminal activity. Before a crime is recorded in administrative crime statistics, it must be detected, reported to the police, recognized as a criminal act and recorded as a crime in police statistics. A large number of crimes are not reported to the police and some of those reported are not recorded in police statistics. Such limitations in official crime statistics can be overcome with the help of crime victimization surveys, which provides data to assess the so-called “dark figure” of crime not reported to the police. Such data supply valuable additional insights into the nature and modalities of the criminal act as well as the characteristics of the victims – information that is not usually available from official police data.

Businesses in Albania are affected by different forms of crime to varying degrees depending on their size, type of economic activity, location and other factors. Among five important types of crime,²⁰ the 12-month prevalence rate of business victimization in Albania is highest for burglary (5.8 per cent), where one in seventeen businesses have been victimized over the past 12 months. Moreover, many companies that experience burglary are victimized more than once – on average such businesses fall victim to burglary 1.9 times in a year. The prevalence rate for fraud by outsiders is somewhat lower (this includes fraud by customers, distributors or suppliers, but excludes fraud by employees and managers). Around 4.8 per cent of businesses annually are defrauded

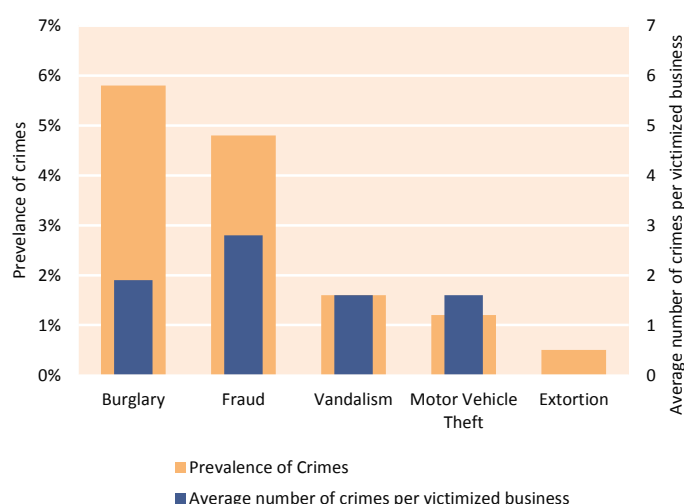
²⁰ See the Methodological Annex for detailed descriptions of these crimes.

through various means, such as by customers deceiving the company about their willingness to pay, through deception of suppliers in relation to the quality or quantity of goods or services delivered, or through computer fraud (Figure 29). On average victimized businesses fall victim to fraud by outsiders 2.8 times a year.

In the case of acts of vandalism against businesses, where buildings, equipment or other property on business premises have been deliberately damaged by acts of force, arson, graffiti or other means, 1.6 per cent of all businesses were victimized an average of 1.6 times in the previous 12 months. The prevalence rate of motor vehicle theft (MVT) is 1.2 per cent of all car-owning businesses, with victims suffering an average of 1.6 incidents (businesses affected may have more than one company vehicle in use at a time, including cars, vans, trucks, buses and other motor vehicles).

The data also show that 0.5 per cent of all businesses fell victim to extortion in the 12 months prior to the survey (since extortion is often an on-going activity, no average frequency is calculated).

Figure 29 Annual prevalence rates for different types of crime against businesses and average number of crimes per victimized business, Albania (2012)



Note: Annual prevalence rates for fraud by outsiders, burglary and vandalism are respectively calculated as the number of companies experiencing each of these crimes, as a percentage of the total number of companies; the annual prevalence rate for motor vehicle theft is calculated as the number of companies that experienced at least one theft of a car, van, truck, bus or other motor vehicle in the 12 months prior to the survey, as a percentage of companies owning a car, van, truck, bus or other motor vehicle. The average number of crimes is calculated as the average number of times businesses victimized by a crime experienced that type of crime.

While taking into account the fact that the comparability of the survey results with those in other countries may be influenced by divergences in survey procedures, such as differences in sample selection, survey mode, response rates and weighting procedures, an international comparison with survey findings in other countries will add further perspective on the results obtained. Comparability is greatest with recent survey results in the western Balkan region, where the same survey design and methodology was

employed.²¹ In addition, the results of an EU-wide pilot survey on business victimization are expected to be published in late 2013.²²

The cost of crime

The survey data indicate that the average cost of criminal damage caused by the five crime types covered is substantial in Albania. However, such costs are highly unevenly distributed, with a limited number of crime incidents that cause extremely costly damage and a larger number of incidents that result in below-average damage costs. This skewed distribution can be described by using two separate indicators, namely the average (mean) cost of criminal damage and the median cost of criminal damage.²³ As shown in Table 2, the mean cost of criminal damage is around 2 to 6 times higher than the median cost of all crime types, except for vandalism, where the ratio between mean and median is 16.

Table 2 Cost of economic damage caused by the last crime incident experienced by businesses in Albania (in Lek, EUR and EUR-PPP), by crime type, Albania (2012)

Cost of criminal damage	Burglary	Vandalism	Motor Vehicle Theft	Fraud by outsiders
Mean damage (ALL)	838,000	490,000	1,137,000	1,838,000
Median damage (ALL)	200,000	30,000	600,000	300,000
Mean damage (EUR)	6,003	3,508	8,146	13,170
Mean damage (EUR-PPP)	14,172	8,281	19,232	31,093

Victimization by economic sector

An analysis of the prevalence of business victimization in the five economic sectors covered by the survey indicates some pronounced differences between sector-specific crime victimization rates in Albania. As shown in Figure 30, sector-specific prevalence rates for vandalism are generally below 2.4 per cent in all sectors and prevalence rates for burglary range from 4.5 per cent for Trade to 7.8 per cent for Manufacturing. On the other hand, businesses in Trade (6 per cent), businesses in Construction (4.8 per cent) and businesses in Accommodation and Transportation combined (3.6 per cent) are the victims of fraud by outsiders much more often than businesses in the Manufacturing sector (2.3 per cent).²⁴

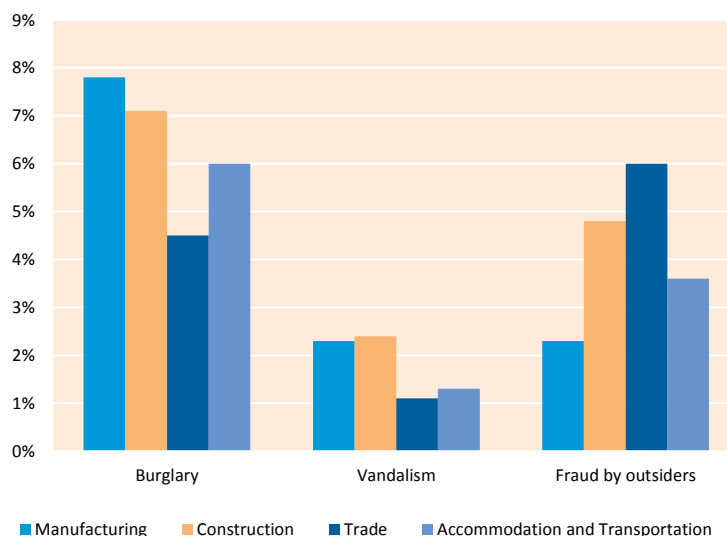
²¹ *Business, Corruption and Crime in the western Balkans: The impact of bribery and other crime on private enterprise*, UNODC (2013).

²² Gallup/Transcrime (forthcoming), EU Survey to assess the level and impact of crimes against business, Stage2: Piloting the survey module. Final Report.

²³ The median cost of criminal damage is exactly the middle value of all the damages sorted in ascending order, which implies that about 50 per cent of all the damages incurred are higher and 50 per cent are lower than the median value.

²⁴ Sector-specific data on extortion and motor vehicle theft are not available as the number of victimized businesses in the sample that experienced those crimes in each sector is too small to allow statistically significant comparisons.

Figure 30 Annual prevalence rates for burglary, vandalism and fraud by outsiders experienced by businesses, Albania (2012)



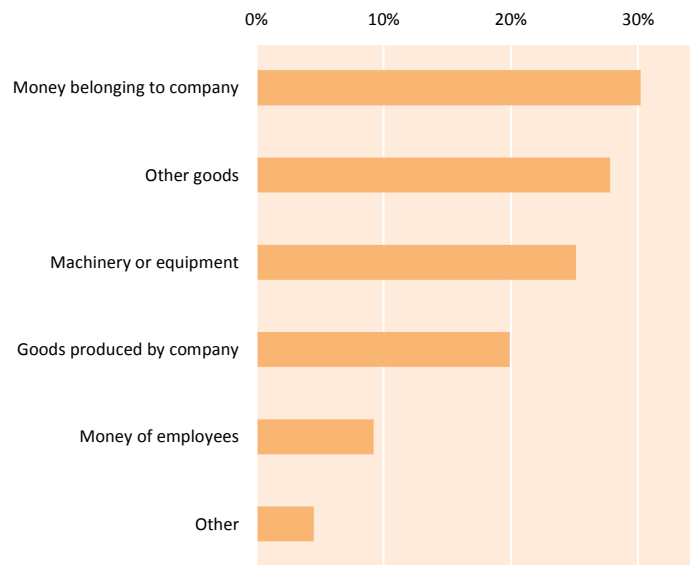
Note: Annual prevalence rates for fraud by outsiders, burglary and vandalism are respectively calculated as the number of companies experiencing each of these crimes, as a percentage of the total number of companies.

Burglary

Burglary is the act of unlawfully breaking and entering into (business) premises in order to steal something without coming into contact with anyone in those premises. As such, not all burglary attempts are successful in the sense that the perpetrators manage to steal something valuable. Out of all burglary incidents reported by businesses in Albania in the survey, 23 per cent can be classified as mere burglary attempts as nothing was actually stolen.

In cases when something is actually stolen from a business's premises there is usually a wide variety of valuables for the taking. As shown in Figure 31, in almost one third (30.2 per cent) of the cases money belonging to the victimized business is taken, as are other goods (not produced by the company itself) in 27.8 per cent of cases. Other common items stolen are machinery or equipment (25.1 per cent), goods produced by the company (19.9 per cent) and money of employees (9.2 per cent).

Figure 31 Percentage distribution of valuables stolen from businesses in burglary cases, Albania (2012)



Note: Data refer to the last burglary that resulted in any type of valuables stolen in the three years prior to the survey. The sum is higher than 100 per cent since, in some cases, more than one type of valuable is stolen (for example, machinery and money).

The aim of burglary also depends on the type of business broken into and the type of machinery, equipment and other valuable items in use. For example, machinery and equipment are the most typical types of valuable stolen from businesses in Construction (33 per cent) and in Manufacturing (29.7 per cent) whereas other goods not produced by the company in question are items commonly stolen from businesses in Trade (28.8 per cent).

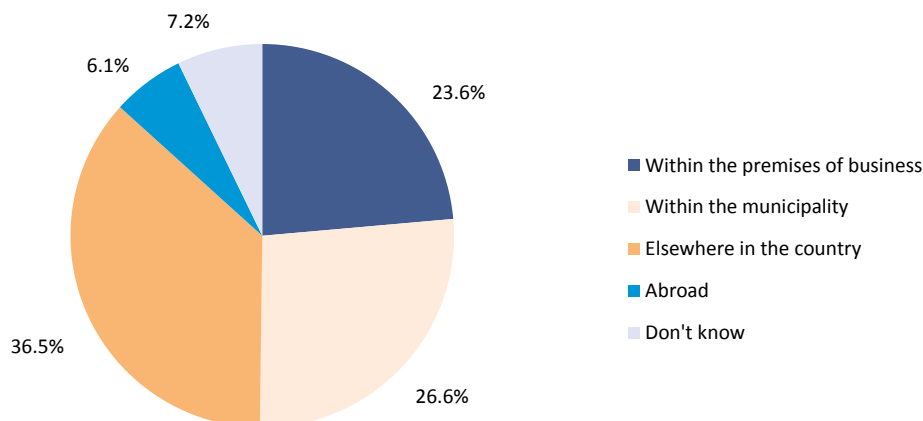
Vandalism

Acts of vandalism against businesses can be very damaging in terms of direct damage and repair costs, loss of production output as well as deterioration in the image of business premises and reduced attractiveness to clients. On average, acts of vandalism in Albania most often target buildings (52.5 per cent), machinery and equipment (23 per cent) and vehicles belonging to the targeted business (9.8 per cent).

Motor Vehicle Theft (MVT)

Theft of motor vehicles is different from the other crime types against businesses reported here in that the physical location of the offence can be either at the business premises or elsewhere. In fact, data on the location of MVT from businesses in Albania indicate that the majority (36.5 per cent) of it takes place in the country but outside the municipality where the businesses are located, while over a quarter (26.6 per cent) of MVT occurs outside business premises but within the same municipality as where those premises are located. Furthermore, 23.6 per cent of MVT takes place directly from business premises (such as a parking lot or garage) and 6.1 per cent abroad, during business trips, for example (Figure 32).

Figure 32 Distribution of the location of motor vehicle thefts from businesses, Albania (2012)



Note: Data refer to the last motor vehicle theft in the three years prior to the survey. Motor vehicles include cars, vans, trucks, buses or other motor vehicles.

A certain share of stolen vehicles can later be recovered. In many cases, offenders use the stolen vehicle for a limited time only (for example, for so-called “joy-riding” or for transportation while committing another crime) and abandon the vehicle after some time at a place where it can be found and returned to the owner. According to the data, almost one third of the motor vehicles (32.2 per cent) stolen from a business in Albania are eventually recovered after having been stolen.

Extortion

While the prevalence of extortion for businesses in Albania is 0.5 per cent, it is nevertheless cause for concern. Extortion is a very serious crime in which the perpetrators try to obtain money or other benefits from a company by threatening or intimidating managers or employees. In some cases, extortion is also presented as the offer of “protection” from damages to property or persons and the money paid is presented as a type of “protection money”. In some cases extortion can be linked to organized crime groups, who have the power and the means to make a credible threat towards a business with potentially dire consequences if their demands are not met.

The data indicate that extortion threats take on a variety of menacing forms. According to victimized businesses in Albania, over half (52.4 per cent) of extortion threats involve specific damage to the business or its property, while 16.1 per cent spell out unspecific damage to the business or its property. In addition, 11.3 per cent involve specific personal threats to harm the owner, manager, employees or their relatives. Other cases involve other threats, such as harming clients or contaminating products.

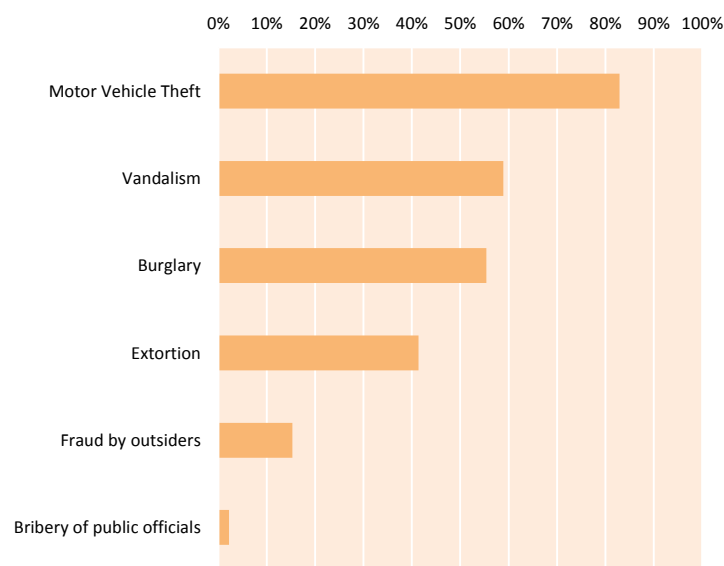
It is notable that the methods used to convey extortion threats to businesses in Albania are fairly conventional and seem designed to have the greatest possible impact on the person threatened. In almost two thirds of cases (62.3 per cent) one or several offenders walk into the premises of the business victimized to convey the threat, while in almost one third of cases (32 per cent) the threat is made in a personal encounter elsewhere. In about one fifth (20.6 per cent) of cases extortion threats are simply communicated by telephone.

Reporting crime to the police

Businesses that have been victims of crime have a number of reasons to report the incident to the police and provide detailed information to the authorities about its circumstances and the damage incurred, among them the hope of recovering stolen property and preventing similar occurrences in the future. The willingness to report crimes to the police varies with the general level of trust in the police but is also dependent on the type of crime and the expectation of what the police can and will do about the reported offence.

Further factors that have an influence on the reporting of crime are the seriousness of the crime and the amount of damage suffered, potential loss of reputation among clients and customers, and formal requirements for insurance payments. As shown in Figure 33, the share of each type of crime actually reported to the police ranges from 82.9 per cent for MVT and 58.9 per cent for incidents of vandalism, to 55.4 per cent for burglary, 41.4 per cent for extortion cases and 15.3 per cent for cases of fraud by outsiders. On average, for the five crime types covered, victimized businesses in Albania reported almost half of the crimes experienced in the three years prior to the survey (49.3 per cent). In comparison, only 2.2 per cent of the businesses reported bribery incidents to the authorities in the 12 months prior to the survey, as shown in chapter 4.

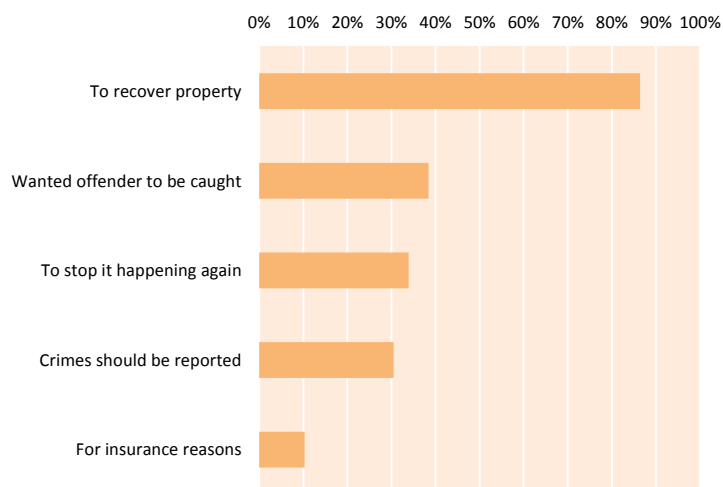
Figure 33 Police reporting rates by businesses, by type of crime, Albania (2012)



Note: Reporting rates for bribery refer to the last bribery experience in the 12 months prior to the survey, reported to official authorities; for other forms of crime, reporting rates refer to the last crime experienced in the past three years and reported to the police.

In many cases, the main reasons that businesses report crimes to the police are to recover property and a desire for the offenders to be caught: between 86.4 per cent and 53.1 per cent of businesses that reported incidents of MVT and vandalism cited these reasons as their two main motives. Other important reasons for reporting crime are a general belief that crimes should be reported to the police (burglary: 40.6 per cent; vandalism: 48.1 per cent; MVT: 30.5 per cent) and to stop it from happening again (burglary: 45.5 per cent; vandalism: 51.6 per cent; motor vehicle theft: 33.9 per cent). Claiming insurance payments is not a dominant motive for reporting crime in Albania, not even for MVT (10.3 per cent), as shown in Figure 34, which indicates a low level of insurance cover against crime by businesses.

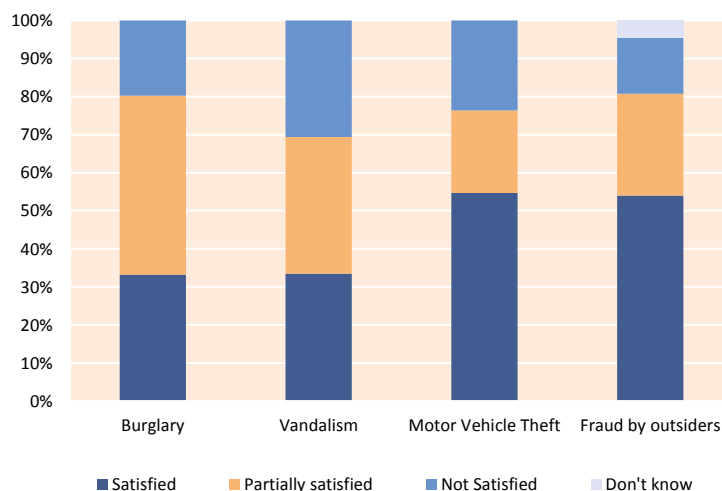
Figure 34 Reasons for reporting motor vehicle theft (MVT) from businesses to the police, Albania (2012)



Note: Data refer to the last case of motor vehicle theft experienced in the three years prior to the survey and reported to the police. The sum is higher than 100 per cent since, in some cases, more than one motive for reporting motor vehicle theft to the police exists (for example, to recover property and for insurance reasons).

Information relating to satisfaction with law enforcement authorities by victims of crime can be useful for improving the services and procedures of the police. In the case of businesses that fall victim to crime, around half of those that reported the incident to the police were completely or mostly satisfied with the way the police dealt with their reports. As in the case of police reporting, satisfaction with the police varies according to the crime type reported and is lowest for burglary (33.2 per cent satisfied) and highest for motor vehicle theft, where 54.7 per cent of reporting businesses were satisfied. On the other hand, around one third (30.6 per cent) were not satisfied with the action taken after reporting vandalism to the police (Figure 35).

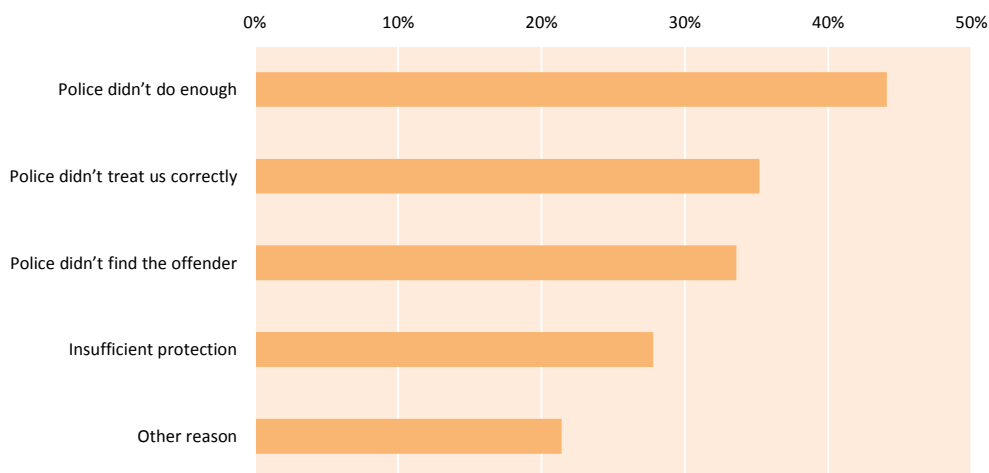
Figure 35 Satisfaction of businesses with the police, by type of crime reported to the police, Albania (2012)



Note: Data refer to the last crime incident experienced in the three years prior to the survey and reported to the police.

The main reasons for the dissatisfaction observed in the way the police react to crime reporting are often related to the difficulties of solving the crime in question and obtaining compensation for the victimized business. In the case of vandalism, for example, dissatisfied victims were not satisfied or not completely satisfied mainly due to the fact that the police were perceived as not doing enough (44.1 per cent) or because businesses felt they were not treated correctly (35.2 per cent). Around one third of businesses were not satisfied or not completely satisfied because the police did not find the offender (33.6 per cent) or felt they did not receive sufficient protection from crime (27.8 per cent) as shown in Figure 36.

Figure 36 Reasons for dissatisfaction of businesses that reported vandalism to the police, Albania (2012)

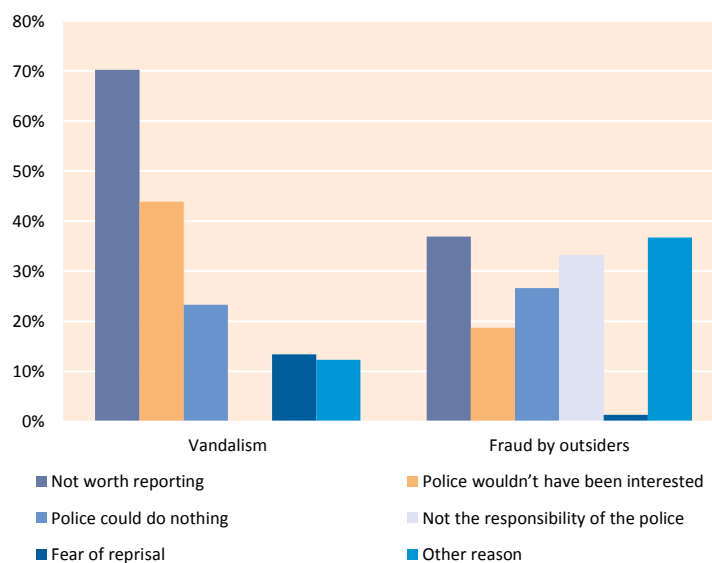


Note: Data refer to the last case of vandalism experienced in the three years prior to the survey and reported to the police. The sum is higher than 100 per cent since, in some cases, more than one reason for dissatisfaction with the police exists (for example, police did not find the offender and did not treat us correctly).

In the case of less frequently reported crimes against businesses, such as vandalism and fraud, there are a number of reasons why crime is not reported to the police, which depend on the crime type. For example, in cases of vandalism, seven out of eight (70.2

per cent) of businesses considered the crime not worth reporting to the police, while that was the case in 36.9 per cent of unreported fraud incidents (Figure 37). In addition, in cases of vandalism 43.9 per cent believed the police wouldn't have been interested, 23.3 per cent of businesses considered the police could do nothing and 13.4 were afraid of reprisal. In contrast, in the case of fraud by outsiders, around one third (33.2 per cent) of respondents did not report it to the police because they considered it was not the responsibility of the police. Other reasons for not reporting crime were also important for fraud by outsiders (36.7 per cent).

Figure 37 Reasons for not reporting selected types of crime incidents to the police, Albania (2012)

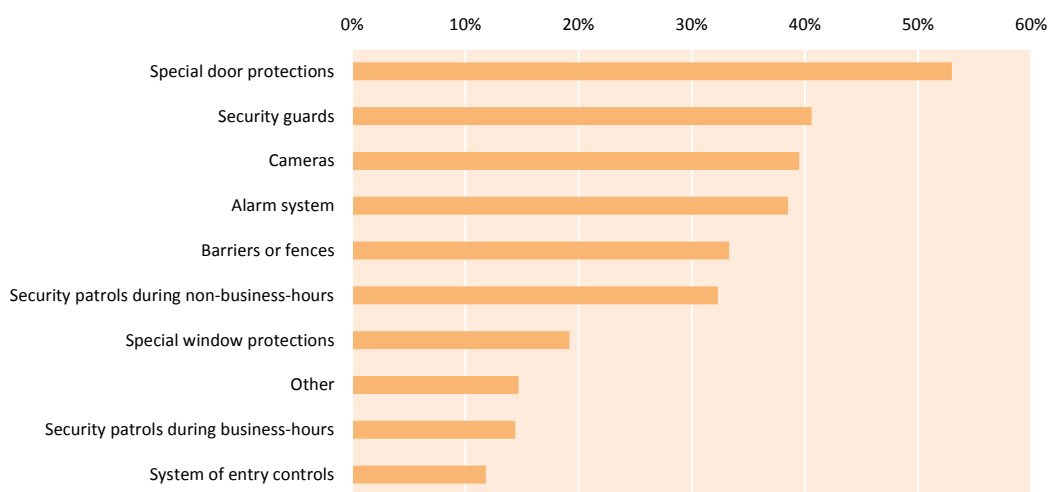


Note: Data refer to the last crime incident experienced in the three years prior to the survey that was not reported to the police. The sum is higher than 100 per cent since, in some cases, more than one reason for not reporting the incident to the police exists (for example, police could do nothing and fear of reprisals).

Crime prevention measures and costs

As the data from this survey show, businesses in Albania face a real risk of crime and its associated damage and costs. To protect themselves against crime, businesses often install special security systems (alarm systems, cameras) or use security guards or other measures. In total, 88.8 per cent of all businesses in Albania use at least one protective security measure against crime. As shown in Figure 38, the most widely used security measures are special door protections (53 per cent), security guards (40.6 per cent) cameras (39.5 per cent) and alarm systems (38.5 per cent). Barriers or fences (33.3 per cent), security patrols during non-business hours (32.3 per cent), special window protections (19.2 per cent), security patrols during business hours (14.4 per cent), and systems of entry controls (11.8 per cent) are also widely used protection measures.

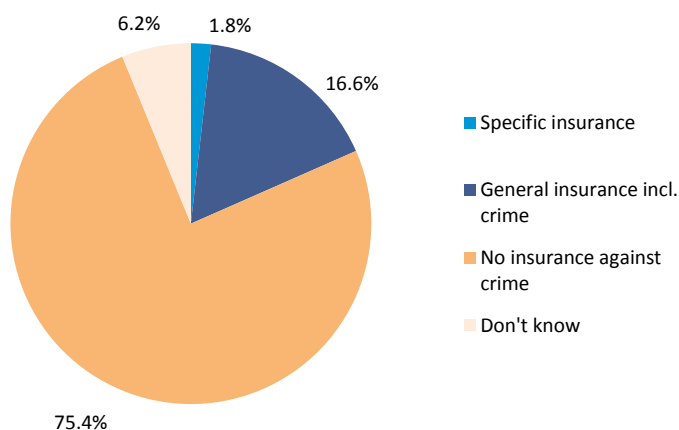
Figure 38 Percentage of businesses that use selected security measures against crime, Albania (2012)



Note: Data refer to all businesses in Albania. The sum is higher than 100 per cent since, in some cases, more than one security measure is used (for example, alarm system and camera).

Crime against businesses often causes considerable harm to businesses. To protect themselves against the financial implications, businesses can make use of insurance policies that pay compensation for damages. In Albania, only a minority of businesses have any kind of insurance against the consequences of crime. On average, only 1.8 per cent of all businesses have a specific type of insurance policy that specifically protects against crime events, whereas 16.6 per cent have a general insurance policy that also protects against criminal incidents and seven out of ten (75.4 per cent) have no insurance against crime (Figure 39).

Figure 39 Percentage of businesses that have an insurance policy against crime, by type of insurance, Albania (2012)



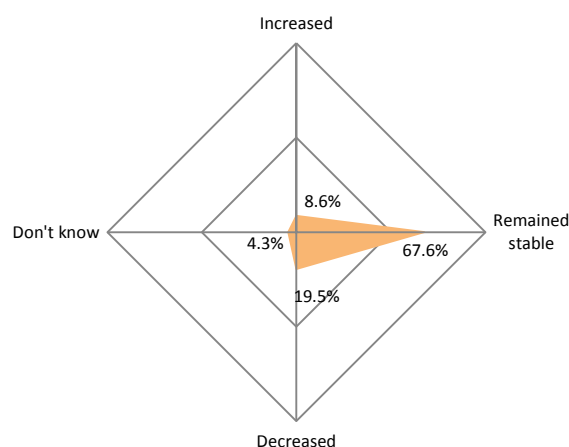
Perceptions and opinions about crime

As with perceptions about corruption, in addition to objective experience, perceptions about crime risk are influenced by a number of factors. Media reports and general feelings of insecurity and fear may contribute to an elevated perception of crime risk, as

does the physical appearance of an area. Such perceptions may also influence the extent to which crime in a certain area is perceived to be on the increase or decrease.

The majority of business representatives in the survey (67.6 per cent) stated that they considered the crime risk for their business entity to have remained stable in comparison to 12 months previously, whereas 8.6 per cent of respondents saw an increase in the crime risk and 19.5 per cent saw a decrease (4.3 per cent expressed no opinion). These perceptions of business leaders indicate a declining sensitivity to crime (Figure 40).

Figure 40 Perceptions of whether the risk of crime for one's business entity has increased, remained stable or decreased, Albania (2012)



The impact of crime on business investment

Although perceptions of crime risk alone do not have a high correlation with real crime risk, as measured by the experience of crime by businesses, such perceptions do nevertheless matter for shaping opinions about the prevailing “business climate” and the assessment of business and investment opportunities. A negative perception of the general crime situation in a country may lead to diminished investment and impact economic development and growth.

The data show that fear of crime is indeed a very relevant factor in the decision of business leaders to make a major investment. While there are differences in the impact of this factor according to economic sector (Figure 41), on average, 4.4 per cent of all business leaders stated that during the previous 12 months they decided not to make a major investment due to fear of crime. This is a very significant share of all businesses, considering that only a limited number of businesses are in a position to make major investments in the first place. It should be recalled that, in addition to businesses deciding not to make an investment out of fear of crime, over 3.3 per cent of businesses cancelled an investment decision out of fear of corruption (chapter 6). Together fear of crime and corruption add up to a considerable hindrance to economic development in Albania.

Figure 41 Percentage of business representatives who decided not to make a major investment in the 12 months prior to the survey for fear of crime, by sector, Albania (2012)





8. Concluding remarks

While corruption may be difficult to quantify, this report shows that surveys on the direct experience of corruption can help to draw at least a partial picture as to how, why, when, where and how much corruption affects the business sector in Albania. From this analysis the following elements could be retained for further consideration in view of developing effective anti-corruption measures at national level:

- The survey identifies some priority business sectors, such as Accommodation and Transportation, as well as certain types of public official, including, police officers, customs officers, tax/revenues officers and municipal or provincial officers on which attention should be focused in an attempt to hinder involvement in bribery.
- The prevalence rates of “white collar” crime such as fraud by outsiders and bribery are somewhat higher, yet the reporting rates of fraud by outsiders and bribery are far below those of other conventional crimes. This failure to report corruption implies that there is a lack of trust in authorities and that business organizations need to be more proactive in encouraging and promoting anti-corruption measures, codes of ethics and integrity.
- The issue of business-to-business bribery highlighted in this report sheds new light on illegal “marketing” practices in the form of bribery used to gain an unfair advantage over rival businesses. Further analysis of such practices should be undertaken to help guarantee a “level playing field” in the market place and guarantee that the usually beneficial mechanisms of the free market remain untarnished by corruption. A review of the legal provisions against corruption in the Criminal Code of Albania should ensure that, in addition to provisions against bribery of public officials, effective legal instruments against bribery in the private sector are available.
- The fear of having to pay bribes to obtain requisite services or permits led a total of 3.3 per cent of all businesses leaders in Albania to not make a major investment in the 12 months prior to the survey. This shows the “ripple effect” that corruption can have, with potentially disastrous consequences for economic

growth and development, particularly when only a certain portion of businesses are in a position to make major investments in the first place. Any efforts made to stem corruption need to be widely publicized to prevent further damage to investment and economic development.

- While conventional crimes against businesses engender substantial costs for the economy, businesses in Albania seem to give relatively little thought to the mitigation of crime consequences by means of dedicated insurance policies.
- Though ostensibly small in numerical terms, the fact that 0.5 per cent of all businesses in Albania fall victim to extortion is still significant, not least because extortion is a crime that can be linked to organized criminal groups. This reason alone means that the relationship between extortion and business needs to be explored thoroughly.
- In addition to the direct consequences of the crime, merely being investigated for corruption and fraud can have negative repercussions on a company's reputation. Many companies around the world are recognizing this and more and more are implementing comprehensive internal compliance policies that specify certain unacceptable practices and sanction violations of established standards. In Albania, such internal compliance mechanisms are still far from universal and in further need of promotion. In particular, compliance policies are less common among smaller companies. Given that micro- and small companies make up the largest share of all businesses in Albania, this situation needs to be addressed.
- Awareness of corruption and what is considered unacceptable behaviour is high in Albania and around one out of four business representatives consider corruption a major obstacle to doing business, yet bribery often appears to be tolerated as a tool for getting things done or receiving better treatment. A further assessment of corruption awareness among business leaders could be considered and further initiatives might be developed to increase understanding about the pernicious effects of corruption on the efficient allocation of resources in a market economy.
- As the data pertaining to the perception of corruption reveal, public opinion about corruption in Albania shows a considerable level of concern about the issue. A window of opportunity is, therefore, open as it is likely that business organizations, as well as their constituent members, would welcome the further implementation of anti-corruption policies.

The present survey represents the first attempt to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the actual experience of business bribery in Albania in order to help identify effective measures to fight it. Added value can be gained if the exercise is repeated over time so as to monitor changes in the experience and impact of bribery in Albania.

Such a monitoring system on corruption at national level should include a variety of tools to collect evidence about its various manifestations and assist policy-making:

- Sectorial assessments of the working conditions and integrity of civil servants by sector (health sector, judiciary, police, customs, etc.) for the purpose of providing more in-depth and specific information and assist in identifying targeted policy measures. This should be prioritized in areas particularly vulnerable to bribery, as indicated in this and the UNODC 2011 general population survey;

- General assessments of the experience of bribery and other forms of corruption (both for the general population and the business sector), for the purpose of providing benchmarks and measuring progress;
- A system for monitoring the state response to corruption, both repressive and preventive measures, in order to identify successful and unsuccessful practices.

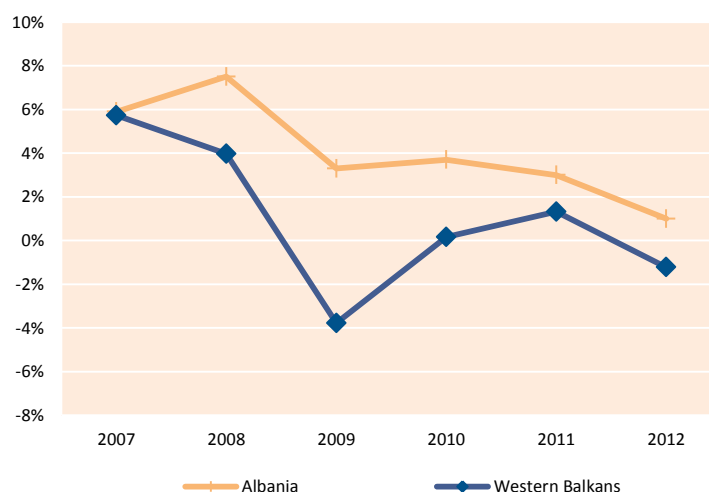
A national monitoring system on corruption could be initiated and developed by the country's main anti-corruption bodies. The system should enjoy the attention and trust of the public and relevant civil society organizations. Further involvement of the Institute of Statistics of Albania (INSTAT), relevant ministries and experienced research centres, with the support of international and regional organizations, will enable the monitoring mechanism to produce high quality and relevant information for fighting corruption in a more effective manner.



Annex I: Economic context of business corruption in Albania

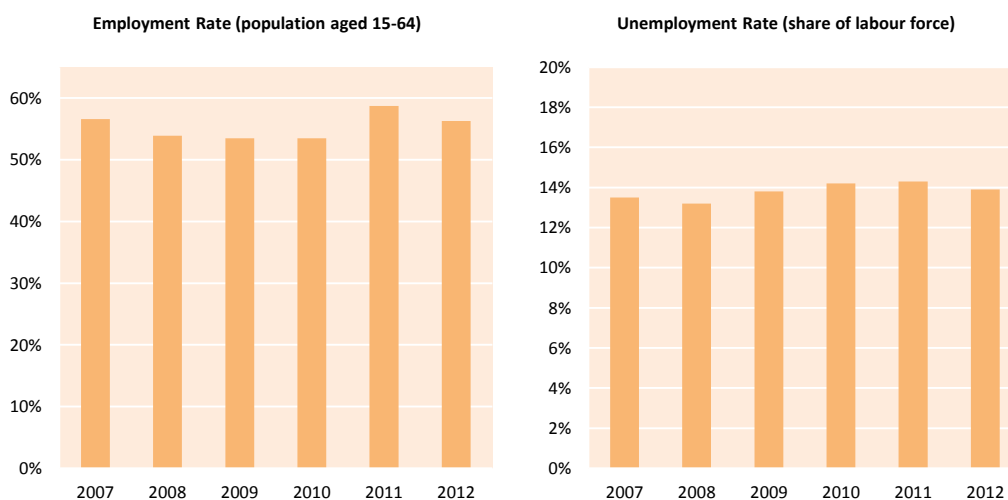
The recent economic history of Albania is characterized by the difficult transition from a centrally-planned economy to a market economy. After strong economic growth in the mid-1990s, the collapse of several financial pyramid-schemes (Ponzi schemes) led to civil protests, the fall of the acting government and a sharp recession in 1997. Economic growth resumed in 1998 and continued into the late 2000s when the effect of the global financial and economic crises slowed economic growth in 2009. The economy slowed further in 2012 due to the impact of the second wave of the on-going financial crisis on large parts of Europe. Although Albania's GDP growth trends are similar to the (weighted) average in the western Balkans, the economy has performed consistently above the regional growth trend over the past five years (Figure 42).

Figure 42 Percentage change in GDP, Albania and western Balkan region (2007-2012)



Sources: Eurostat; EU Progress Reports 2012; Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies (WIIW) 2013

Traditionally employment rates have been high and unemployment rates low in Albania when compared to the western Balkan region. For the last six years, both the employment and the unemployment rate have been relatively stable (Figure 43).

Figure 43 Rates of employment and unemployment, Albania (2007-2012)

Sources: Institute of Statistics of Albania (INSTAT)

In terms of economic structure, the majority of the companies in Albania operate in only five sectors of the economy. Following the “Statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community” (NACE), these five sectors are defined as:

1. Manufacturing, Electricity, Gas, and Water supply²⁵
2. Building and Construction²⁶
3. Wholesale trade and Retail trade; Repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles²⁷
4. Transportation and Storage²⁸
5. Accommodation and Food service activities (hotels and restaurants)²⁹

The present survey of corruption and crime affecting businesses surveyed only businesses from these five sectors while excluding other economic activities (such as agriculture, education or health services). This choice of economic sectors also ensures broad coverage of the Albanian economy in terms of the value added (percentage of GDP by sector) and employment (percentage of total employees in each sector), as well as the share of businesses covered. The five sectors listed account for 83.5 per cent of all businesses in the country, 25.1 per cent of total employees and 44.1 per cent of the total GDP (net of taxes). The rest is distributed among all other economic activities that are typically carried out either by private businesses (such as agriculture, mining, financial activities, real estate activities, professional, scientific or technical activities) or by public institutions (public administration, defence, education, health).

On taking a closer look at the structure of businesses in Albania (Figure 44), the largest shares are in the Wholesale Trade and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motor Cycles sector (43.8 per cent). Smaller shares of businesses are in the Accommodation and Food Service activities sector (16.1 per cent); the Manufacturing, Electricity, Gas, and Water supply sector (9.2 per cent); the Transportation and Storage sector (10.2 per cent) and the Building and Construction sector (4.3 per cent).

²⁵ Categories, C, D, E of NACE Rev. 2.

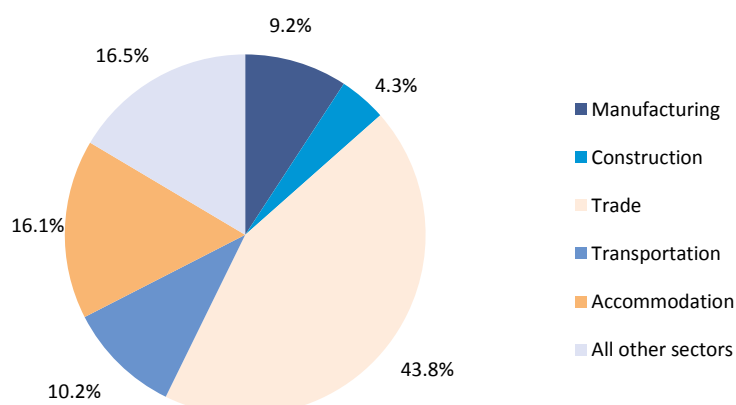
²⁶ Category F of NACE Rev. 2.

²⁷ Category G of NACE Rev. 2.

²⁸ Category H of NACE Rev. 2.

²⁹ Category I of NACE Rev. 2.

Figure 44 Relative shares of businesses in the five economic sectors represented in the survey, Albania (2012)



Source: Institute of Statistics of Albania (INSTAT)

Another important structural characteristic is that most businesses in Albania are comparatively small in terms of the number of employees: 95.2 per cent of all registered businesses in the five sectors covered have less than 10 employees, 3.9 per cent have between 10 and 49 employees, 0.7 per cent of all business have between 50 and 249 employees, while only 0.2 per cent of all businesses have more than 250 employees.³⁰ Despite the preponderance of very small business units, it should be noted that the relative importance of larger companies is far greater in terms of their contribution to GDP and total employment than their share in the number of businesses indicates.

³⁰ Institute of Statistics of Albania (INSTAT)



Annex II: Methodology

Data presented in this report were collected in a national survey carried out as part of the EU-funded project “Assessment of Corruption and Crime affecting the Business Sector in the Western Balkans”. The project involved seven independently administered surveys, which were conducted autonomously by national partners in accordance with jointly developed survey tools and common methodological standards.

A core questionnaire was jointly developed and, after testing in a pilot survey, was adopted by each national partner. All surveys used face-to-face interviews, either PAPI or CAPI, for data collection. Along with the questionnaire, a complete set of common tools was specifically developed for this survey, such as guidelines for interviewers, a codebook and other operational tools for the fieldwork. At all stages, strict statistical standards, including measures for protecting data confidentiality, were followed so as to ensure the highest possible quality of data.

The field work was carried out by the Institute of Statistics of Albania (INSTAT) between 17 October 2012 and 18 November 2012. INSTAT organized the training of interviewers and supervised the whole data collection process from first contact to data entry. The net sample size was 1,999 businesses from the five main economic sectors, which together account for 83.5 per cent of all businesses in the country. The sample was stratified by economic sector and four sizes of company (micro, small, medium and large).

The target population included active businesses of all sizes. The sample design used for this survey is a simple stratified random sample. The different strata from which the units were drawn refer to the five main economic sectors according to NACE Rev. 2 (Manufacturing, Electricity, Gas, and Water supply (sectors C, D, E); Building and Construction (sector F); Wholesale trade and Retail trade and Repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles (sector G); Accommodation and food service activities (sector I) and Transportation and storage (sector H)) and from 4 business size categories (micro (1-9 persons employed); small (10-49 persons employed); medium (50-249 persons employed) and large (more than 250 persons employed) companies).

The first rule taken into consideration for the sampling procedure was that a minimum number of 40 business entities (net) per business size and sector were to be selected for

large and medium size businesses. In those sectors, where the number of large business entities (250+ employees) is smaller than 40, all units in the frame were sampled.

In the case of business entities with multiple business local units, the interview was to be addressed to the company's head office and all the questions in the survey referred to the entity's activities at all its business premises. One-man businesses (including self-employed) were generally excluded from the sample except where otherwise indicated.

Regarding the questions on victimization from crime, the five crime types covered in the survey are defined in the survey questions as follows:

1. Burglary: "has anyone broken and entered into any of the premises of your business entity in order to steal something without coming into contact with anyone in the premises (owners, employees or customers)"
2. Vandalism: "has any part of any buildings belonging to your entity, or to equipment, vehicles or stock belonging to your entity at its premises, been deliberately damaged? INCLUDE, for example, damage through force, arson or graffiti. DO NOT INCLUDE any damage as a consequence of other types of crime (e.g. breaking into the premises)";
3. Theft of vehicles: "have any motor vehicles (cars/vans/trucks/buses, or other motor vehicles) owned or leased by your entity, been stolen, when nobody was in the vehicle?"
4. Fraud by outsiders: "has any outsider, such as a customer, distributor or supplier, defrauded the business entity obtaining a financial advantage or causing a loss by implicit or explicit deception (e.g. customers deceive about their willingness to pay the agreed price; distributors and suppliers deceive about the quality or the quantity of goods /services delivered)? (INCLUDE fraud using electronic communication network or information system)"
5. Extortion: "has anyone tried to obtain money or any other benefits from the business entity by threatening and/or intimidating managers and/or employees working for your business entity, including threats to damage property or to damage/contaminate products or by offering informal "protection" against such damages?"

A summary of the characteristics of the survey in Albania is provided in Table 3

Table 3 Key survey characteristics, Albania (2012)

Survey characteristics	
Responsible agency	Institute of Statistics of Albania (INSTAT)
Survey period	17 October 2012 to 18 November 2012
Sample design	<p>Stratified simple random sampling. The stratification was made according to business sector and number of employees. The sample frame was created from the Register of Active Enterprises (end of December 2011).</p> <p>194 companies in total were allocated following the rule that a minimum number of 40 were to be selected per business size and sector.</p> <p>For the other 1,806 companies, a Proportional Allocation was used.</p> <p>The selection probability of companies in strata was independent and was not affected by the number of selected companies in other strata.</p> <p>One-man businesses (including self-employed) were included in the sample.</p>
Respondent selection	The person responsible for the management of the business. When this person was not clearly identifiable the interviewers asked the owner, director or other staff who could provide accurate answers to the questions.
Data collection method	PAPI – Paper and Pencil Interview.
Quality control measures	<p>Manual data checking was done by: interviewers, supervisors, and data entry operators.</p> <p>The questionnaires presenting some problems were back-checked by supervisors by phone or face-to-face.</p> <p>Logic checks were conducted during data entry.</p>
Net sample size	1,999
Response rate	82.2 per cent



Annex III: Main indicators

Table 4 Main indicators by sector, Albania and Western Balkan region (2012)

Indicator	Economic sector					Total
	Manu- facturing	Constru- ction	Trade	Accom- modation	Transpor- -tation	
Contact rate (Albania)	75.2%	86.4%	88.4%	86.7%	85.0%	85.1%
Contact rate (western Balkans)	67.0%	72.1%	72.6%	72.5%	76.6%	71.8%
Prevalence of bribery (Albania)	14.1%	18.7%	14.0%	20.3%	20.1%	15.7%
Prevalence of bribery (western Balkans)	9.2%	12.2%	10.3%	9.0%	9.9%	10.2%
Prevalence of business-to-business bribery (Albania)	2.7%	6.4%	2.6%	5.0%		3.7%
Prevalence of business-to-business bribery (western Balkans)	5.3%	6.2%	3.4%	2.5%		4.0%
Prevalence of burglary (Albania)	7.8%	7.1%	4.5%	6.8%	5.5%	5.8%
Prevalence of vandalism (Albania)	2.3%	2.4%	1.1%	3.6%		1.6%
Prevalence of fraud (Albania)	2.3%	4.8%	6.0%	5.9%	2.3%	4.8%

Indicator	Economic sector					
	Manu- facturing	Constru- ction	Trade	Accom- modation	Transpor- tation	Total
Reporting rate of burglary to police (Albania)	48.9%	59.0%	53.9%	64.7%	61.3%	55.4%
Reporting rate of vandalism to police (Albania)	89.0%	49.3%	51.5%	42.1%	66.7%	58.9%
Percentage of businesses that use any kind of security measures (Albania)	90.9%	86.7%	89.9%	93.5%	79.1%	88.8%
Percentage of businesses that have an insurance policy against crime (Albania)	19.2%	18.6%	18.8%	21.9%	12.3%	18.5%

Note: Prevalence of bribery is calculated as the number of businesses who gave a public official money, a gift or counter favour on at least one occasion in the 12 months prior to the survey, as a percentage of businesses who in the same period had at least one contact with a public official. The annual prevalence rates for fraud by outsiders, burglary and vandalism are respectively calculated as the number of companies experiencing each of these crimes, as a percentage of the total number of companies. Reporting rates for bribery refer to the last bribery experience in the 12 months prior to the survey, reported to official authorities; for other forms of crime, reporting rates refer to the last crime experienced in the past three years and reported to the police.