



**KCSS**  
Kosovar Centre for Security Studies

# KOSOVO SECURITY BAROMETER SIXTH EDITION

December, 2016



**National Endowment  
for Democracy**  
*Supporting freedom around the world*

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Perceptions presented in this report are a summary of information gathered from respondents and it solely demonstrates how people perceive institutions. It is no way a conclusive assessment on the quality of the work of institutions subject to this study. It shall serve as an instrument to them towards addressing potential shortcomings, but also an indicator of the effectiveness of their communication with the people. The views presented in this report are perceptions of the respondents and do not necessarily represent the views of Kosovar Centre for Security Studies.

Opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily represent the views of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED).

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

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Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS) would like to express special acknowledgements for their remarkable contribution the field research team. The 2016 Kosovo Security Barometer team was composed of:

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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<b>AoK</b>	Assembly of Kosovo
<b>CSDP</b>	Common Security and Defence Policy
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EULEX</b>	European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo
<b>GoK</b>	Government of Kosovo
<b>KAF</b>	Kosovo Armed Forces
<b>KCSS</b>	Kosovar Centre for Security Studies
<b>KFOR</b>	NATO-led Kosovo Force
<b>KIA</b>	Kosovo Intelligence Agency
<b>KP</b>	Kosovo Police
<b>KSB</b>	Kosovo Security Barometer
<b>KSF</b>	Kosovo Security Force
<b>NATO</b>	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
<b>NED</b>	National Endowment for Democracy

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## WHAT IS THE KOSOVO SECURITY BAROMETER?

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The Kosovo Security Barometer (KSB) is a specific programme of Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS) designed to serve as an annual publication. The primary focus of the KSB is to measure the public opinion perceptions towards security and justice institutions. It also measures the public perception on the internal and external security threats to Kosovo. The KSB marks one of the largest and rather first initiatives designed, implemented, and communicated by a local think tank in Kosovo. KCSS has no political constraints in communicating the findings and messages. Finally, the KSB is unique for its methodological approach, such as the unique tailoring of the quantitative and qualitative methods aiming to offer realistic results on public perceptions towards security-related issues.

### Whom do we target?

The KSB targets a wide variety of actors interested in the public opinion trends in Kosovo in the field of security and justice. It targets the following stakeholders: policymakers in Kosovo as well as the Western Balkans; the international organizations in Kosovo and their headquarters; local and international civil society organizations; academia and the media.

### Impact

The impact of the KSB can be expected to multiply in the mid-term for a number of reasons, which include (a) KCSS's credibility as a politically non-affiliated and an independent think-tank; (b) KCSS's track record of employing appropriate scientific methods in its research; (c) the importance of local ownership; and (d) the professional capacities available at the KCSS. In its all previous editions, the KSB has achieved to fulfill the aforementioned aims.

### Methodology

The Sixth Edition of the KSB provides a summary of citizens' trust towards security and justice institutions. It measured with particular focus the public perception towards internal and external safety and security-related concerns as well as issues pertaining to the future of the KSF and the international security presence in Kosovo.

Answers to the KSB questionnaires were collected through face-to-face interviews conducted around Kosovo. Most of the questions were close-ended in the form of five-point Likert scales. Few questions were open-ended allowing respondents the opportunity to provide their opinions without predefined options. The sampling, piloting, and interviewing were conducted by the KCSS team consisted of 27 field researchers. The national sample from which the research was drawn featured 1,093 households, following a representative sample of the population above 18 years old in Kosovo. The ethnic breakdown of the interviewed respondents was as follow: 86.9 percent K-Albanian, 7.0 percent K-Serbian, and 6.1 percent involved other communities (1.4 percent Turks, 0.6 percent Bosnian, 0,9 percent Roma, Ashkali, Egyptians and the rest includes Gorans, Croats, and Montenegrins).

The sample frame was based upon telephone code areas, and, as such included the following 7 regions: Ferizaj, Gjakova, Gjilan, Mitrovica, Peja, Prishtina and Prizren. The first stage of geographical clustering was based on the 2011 Kosovo Census Report, while the second stage involved clustering samples by the respective municipal areas with a stratified rural/urban sample as per the number of households. The last stage followed a random sampling method using the nearest 'birthday method'. Random sampling ensures that each resident in Kosovo has an equal probability of being chosen for an interview. Given the the sample used for this study, the results of the survey project the mirror image of trends in attitudes and perceptions amongst the entire adult population of Kosovo in general. The margin of error is 3 percent with a confidence interval of 95 percent.

Prior to the commencement of fieldwork, a pilot interview was conducted in mid-September 2016, in order to test the feasibility of the questionnaire. The research team subsequently reported that the pilot interview was successful, and no problems were encountered with the questions asked to the pilot interviewees. All interviews were completed from during the first two weeks of October 2016. Data processing and analysis has been completed using the SPSS software.

Perceptions presented in this report are a summary of information gathered from respondents and it solely demonstrates how people perceive these institutions. Hence, this report does not represent a conclusive assessment on the quality of the work of the institutions subject to this study. The KCSS's intention through this publication is solely to interpret the perceptions that is to say "what is the say" of the Kosovo citizens in areas covered by the questionnaire. The KCSS team does not take responsibility for the outcome of the data, especially if and when this should trigger any reactions amongst specific actors. The team remains ready to make the entire process, and the methodology used, transparent should any subject be interested in them.

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## KOSOVO SECURITY BAROMETER (KSB) 2016: KEY FINDINGS

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### **Trust towards security and justice institutions:**

- The Firefighters appeared to be the most trusted institution with 77 percent. All communities in Kosovo have highlighted the trust towards this institution, with special emphasis in the northern municipalities of Kosovo. It is followed by the Kosovo Security Force as the second most trusted institution with 72 percent. The latter registered the most prominent result ever recorded by KSB survey when compared to previous editions of the survey;
- The Kosovo Police (with 56 percent) continued to maintain its image as the most trusted police force in the region, when compared to regional barometers. Meanwhile public trust towards the Kosovo Intelligence Agency continues to be low, partially due to lack of knowledge on the institution;
- While trust towards NATO-led Kosovo Force-KFOR slightly dropped (from 63 percent in 2015 to 58 percent in 2016), it remains to be the most trusted international mission. Public calls on the continuation of the KFOR mandate demonstrates its credibility, but also the sense of public security in terms of local defence institution;
- On the other hand, trust towards EULEX remains low;
- Up to 67 percent of respondents stated that they do not trust the Government of Kosovo. Also, mistrust of the citizens to the Assembly of Kosovo is high where 66 percent of them do not trust either;
- Finally, the opinion towards Municipalities is divided: 40 percent of respondents stated that they distrust their municipalities comparing to 34 percent that expressed trust.

### Perceptions on internal and external threats/challenges:

- Approximately 94 percent of the respondents ranked unemployment as a serious challenge towards Kosovo's national security;
- Around 93 percent of respondents asked viewed corruption as a threat to national security followed by organized crime (90 percent) showing therefore the Government's failure to deal with both challenges;
- Slightly more than 80 percent of respondents consider the ongoing political instability as a threat. It stands for 10 percent higher comparing to those who considered violent extremism as a threat;
- ISIS is considered the main external threat towards national security by 66 percent of the respondents, thus leaving the threat from Serbia (with 59 percent) immediately behind;
- The respondents feel less concerned about natural hazards with only 48 percent of them considering it as a threat. However, the spread of global pandemic diseases concerned 61 percent of the respondents.

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# CHAPTER I:

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## 1. KSB 2016: TRUST TOWARDS SECURITY AND JUSTICE INSTITUTIONS

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Measurement of public trust is one of the most important indicators reflecting the quality of performance of any institution. It is a mechanism which is widely used to measure the good governance of specific institution as perceived by individual citizen. At considerable degree it reflects their actual performance in the ground. On the other hand, it also reflects the overall satisfaction of citizens with their economic, social and political environment which is unavoidably connected to the performance of the political and institutional elites.

Henceforth, the chapter on trust represents one of the main pillars of the KSB. Likewise previously, during this year (2016) the focus of this chapter is mainly to measure the citizens' trust towards security and justice institutions. As earlier editions, the criteria for selection of the targeted institutions are based on the comprehensive approach of the security sector. It implies that the focus of the KSB 2016 is not limited only to traditional security institutions, such as the Kosovo Police (KP), the Kosovo Security Force (KSF), the Kosovo Intelligence Agency (KIA) and Firefighters, NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) and European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX). On the contrary, this edition further provides a holistic perspective in regard to measure citizens' perception towards the following institutions: Prosecution, Courts, Government of Kosovo (GoK), Assembly of Kosovo (AoK) and Municipalities.

### 1.1. Trust towards Security Institutions

The results significantly showed that the citizens' trust towards security institutions remained much higher compare to other public institutions. This has not surprisingly known that in the 2015 KSB's edition were experienced very similar results as well.<sup>1</sup> However, it does not imply that there have not been changes when it comes to citizens' trust perception in the security sector.

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<sup>1</sup> See Kosovo Security Barometer, 2016 Regular Edition, Kosovar Center for Security Studies (KCSS), Prishtina, December 2015

The most surprising result came with the Firefighters which we have decided to include them again as a separate unit<sup>2</sup> but resulted, by far, the most trusted institution in Kosovo. More precisely, in total 77 percent of respondents stated that they trust Firefighters representing an increase of trust to 10 percentage points when compared to the 2015 results. The perception towards this institution is not seemingly to be based on the experience of the citizens, but rather on the widespread believe for the poor conditions of the Firefighters and, furthermore, their duties risk invited to intervene in all types of natural and man-made hazards. Another argument rests on the overwhelming trust by the minorities which unreservedly rates high level of trust towards the Firefighters.

The KSF ranked at second place in the list of most trusted institutions in Kosovo. However, despite dropping its lead as the most trusted institution in Kosovo, the results shows that during the past 12 months of 2016 the public trust towards the KSF has been increased with more than 5 percentage points compare to the same period of 2015. Respectively, this year (2016) 72 percent of the respondents pointed out that they do trust the KSF, thus marking the highest percentage this institution has ever recorded by the KSB surveys.<sup>3</sup> At some degree, the result reflects the overall positive performance of the KSF<sup>4</sup> as well as the overall appreciation of the Kosovo citizens for a domestic uniformed structure. However, similarly to previous years, another reason to why citizens indicated this great amount of trust towards the KSF has derived as a result of the self-responsibility feelings which prevail among citizens to support the transformation process of the KSF into the Kosovo Armed Forces (KAF).<sup>5</sup> Additionally, it is important to highlight that the citizens have started to feel concerned about the Kosovo institutions' commitment when it comes to the KSF's transformation into the KAF. Only 55 percent of the respondents have stated that they are satisfied with the Government of Kosovo's (GoK) pledge in this regard.

Perceptions were positive also towards the KP where 56 percent of the respondents pointed out that they trust this institution. It is worth mentioning that the KP remained one of the most frequently contacted institutions with 28 percent of the respondents declaring to have had contacts with KP over the last 12 months of 2016. Moreover,

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2 Firefighters in Kosovo operate under the Agency for Emergency Management, Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA)

3 Kosovar Security Barometer (KSB) have been launched by Kosovar Center for Security Studies (KCS) for the first time in December 2012. So far it have concluded 5 annual surveys highlighting findings regarding the citizens trust towards security and justice institution for five consecutive years.

4 See also KCSS's monitoring report on "Monitoring and Assessing the integrity and internal governance in the Ministry of Kosovo Security Force and the Kosovo Police" published on the 26 May 2016 which assesses in detail the Integrity in Ministry of Kosovo Security Force and Kosovo Police, <http://www.qkss.org/en/Reports/Monitoring-and-Assessing-the-integrity-and-internal-governance-in-the-Ministry-of-Kosovo-Security-Force-and-the-Kosovo-Police-700>

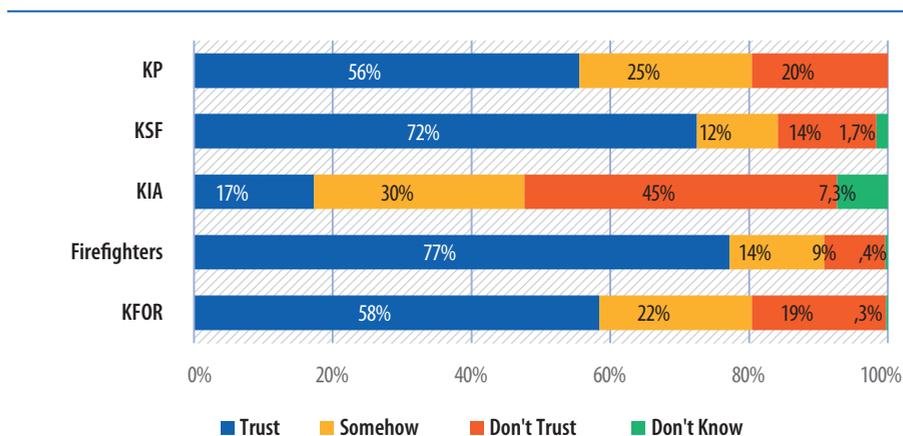
5 Focus Group with Field Researchers of Kosovo Security Barometer (KSB) Survey of Annual Edition of 2016, Kosovar Center for Security Studies, 31st October 2016

compared to its counterparts in the region, the results have evidenced that it has constantly been placed among the most trusted police institutions in the region.<sup>6</sup>

To sum up with respect to domestic security institutions, the perception of citizens towards the KIA has continued to remain low. This state of play can be explained *vis-à-vis* a mixture of lack of understanding of the public opinion regarding the role of the particular institution (having in mind its classified mandate), but also inherited perception from the past revealing its shortcomings.

Finally, the results have demonstrated that in 2016 the KFOR remains among the most trusted international missions in Kosovo. Therefore, more than 58 percent of the respondents expressed their trust to KFOR.<sup>7</sup> The results have represented a decrease to 5 percentage of those who stated that they trust KFOR compared to same period 2015. However, this decrease does not represent any development of negative attitude among citizens towards KFOR. On the contrary, citizens firmly stated that KFOR should continue its presence in Kosovo for a foreseeable future. In point of fact, in 2016 around 43 percent of the respondents stated that KFOR should never leave which represents 5 percentage points increase compared to last year. At the same time, at least 33 percent of the respondents thought that KFOR should continue staying in Kosovo for at least another 2 to 3 years.

KSB 2016: Trust towards security institutions



<sup>6</sup> Point Pulse, "THE CITIZENS' OPINION OF THE POLICE FORCE: The Comparative Analysis of Public Opinion Surveys Conducted in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo, Macedonia and Serbia", Regional Publication, September 2016 <http://pointpulse.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/POINTPULSE-2016-WB-ENG.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Kosovo Security Barometer, Regular Annual Edition 2015, Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS), December 2015, [http://www.qkss.org/repository/docs/Kosovo\\_Security\\_Barometer\\_-\\_Fifth\\_Edition\\_523670.pdf](http://www.qkss.org/repository/docs/Kosovo_Security_Barometer_-_Fifth_Edition_523670.pdf)

## 1.2. Trust towards Justice Institutions

Kosovo's justice sector continues to remain fragile also during 2016. This applies not only to domestic judicial institutions, but also to the EULEX having its main responsibilities in judiciary.

According to the KSB 2016 results, around 51 percent of the respondents pointed out that they do not trust domestic courts. This can be considered as another concern which is being reiterated almost every year. As regards to courts, the results of 2016 have been identical to the KSB's edition of previous year.<sup>8</sup> Respectively, only 22 percent of respondents stated that they trust justice institutions. It confirms that during the last 12 months (2016) the Kosovo courts failed to perform any substantial steps which would convince citizens that the performance of justice sector is improved. As a result of these concerns, organized crime and corruption remain extremely high. Likewise there is an increase of number of cases where citizens take justice in their hand.<sup>9</sup> Hence, the results show that there is a need for drastic improvement of justice institutions in Kosovo in order to ensure that the situation of rule of law does not further deteriorate.

However, the citizens' trust resulted being low when it comes to the Prosecution as well, which is one of the main pillars of justice sector and rule of law in Kosovo. What is even more concerning, this year 46 percent of respondents stated that they do not trust Prosecution, marking 6 percentage further increase of distrust compared to same period last year.<sup>10</sup>

The EULEX, commonly known as the largest Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) mission ever launched by the EU, continues to remain unpopular in Kosovo, by even standing behind Kosovo's courts and Prosecution. Accordingly, more than 53 percent of the respondents expressed distrust towards the EULEX mission. One of the reasons why citizens do not trust EULEX is the weak reputation of the mission being embedded especially after the alleged corruption scandals which emerged during the

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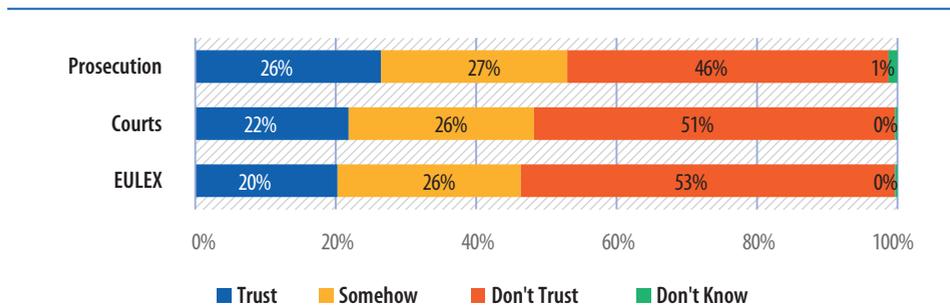
8 Kosovo Security Barometer, Regular Annual Edition 2015, Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS), December 2015, [http://www.qkss.org/repository/docs/Kosovo\\_Security\\_Barometer\\_-\\_Fifth\\_Edition\\_523670.pdf](http://www.qkss.org/repository/docs/Kosovo_Security_Barometer_-_Fifth_Edition_523670.pdf)

9 Return of Vendetta "Law" in Kosovo, within a week six homicides (Rikthimi i "ligjit" të Kanunit në Kosovë, gjashtë vrasje brenda javës), Telegrafi, August 2016 <http://telegrafi.com/rikthimi-ligjit-te-kanunit-ne-kosove-gjashte-vrasje-brenda-javes/>

10 See the Kosovo Security Barometer Regular Annual Edition for 2015 published by Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS), December 2015, [http://www.qkss.org/repository/docs/Kosovo\\_Security\\_Barometer\\_-\\_Fifth\\_Edition\\_523670.pdf](http://www.qkss.org/repository/docs/Kosovo_Security_Barometer_-_Fifth_Edition_523670.pdf)

years of 2014 and 2015.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, another reason to why citizens do not trust this mission can be traced to its failure to deliver the expectations that citizens had towards EULEX at the outset.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, the results of the KSB showed that citizens had less negative responses when asked in relation to the completion of the EULEX mandate and its departure from Kosovo. More precisely, only 44 percent of respondents have stated that the EULEX should have already departed Kosovo, whereas around 52 percent of the respondents were in favour of continuation of its presence for an additional period of time<sup>13</sup>.

KSB 2016: Trust towards justice institutions



### 1.3. Trust towards the Assembly and the Government of Kosovo

Apart from the traditionally perceived security and justice institutions, the AoK, the GoK and municipalities as well have crucial role in ensuring security, justice and rule of law. In the previous edition of the KSB has been stressed that the importance of executive and legislative institutions is both, strategic and operational. It implies that they are not only responsible to define the entire security and justice policies in Kosovo at the central and local level, but additionally they play an important role when it comes to their role and mandate from the comprehensive concept of the security sector. However, despite their importance in ensuring an overall secured environment and the rule of law in Kosovo, the survey results show that the citizens' trust towards these institutions is the lowest. More precisely, the results have confirmed that the country has entered into a deep political impasse and the legitimacy of the main state institutions, such as the GoK and the AoK is at stake.

11 Balkan Insight, Scandal and Suspicion at the EU's Kosovo Mission, News Article, November 2014, <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/scandal-and-suspicion-at-the-eu-s-kosovo-mission-1>

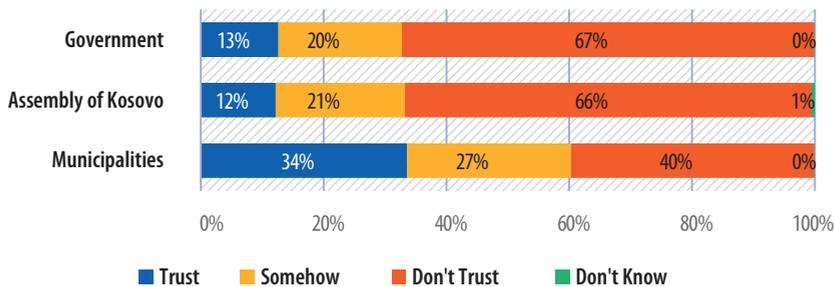
12 Focus Group with Field Researchers of Kosovo Security Barometer (KSB) Survey of Annual Edition of 2016, Kosovar Center for Security Studies, 31st October 2016

13 Around 32 percent of the respondents stated that the EULEX should stay in Kosovo for another 2 or 3 years while around 20 percent of the respondents stated that the EULEX should never leave Kosovo

Actually, the results of the KSB show that in 2016 the trust of citizens towards the GoK and the AoK is even lower than 12 months ago of 2015. In this regard, 67 percent of the respondents declared that they do not trust the GoK which compared to 2015 represent a 7 percentage point increase of distrust towards this institution.<sup>14</sup> And to make its case tougher, according to KSB findings this year the GoK resulted being the most distrusted institution in Kosovo.

Similarly to the GoK, almost the same results are faced also on citizens' perception towards the AoK, where more than 66 percent of respondents declared that they do not trust the only directly elected institution in Kosovo. On the other hand, when it comes to trust towards the municipal institutions, the situation appears relatively better. Around 34 percent of the respondents declared that they trust their municipality versus 40 percent who declared that they distrust their municipal authorities. It is worth mentioning that these results are relatively normal considering that Kosovo is approaching to the local election year in 2017. It implies that the municipalities in general have not been deeply affected by political impasse which has gripped the central state institutions.

KSB 2016: Kosovo's Trust towards Government, Assembly and Municipalities



14 See the Kosovo Security Barometer Regular Annual Edition for 2015 published by Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS), December 2015, [http://www.qkss.org/repository/docs/Kosovo\\_Security\\_Barometer\\_-\\_Fifth\\_Edition\\_523670.pdf](http://www.qkss.org/repository/docs/Kosovo_Security_Barometer_-_Fifth_Edition_523670.pdf)

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## CHAPTER II

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### 2. KSB 2016: CITIZENS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS RISKS AND THREATS

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Measuring citizens' perception towards internal and external security threats represents one of the main goals of the KSB.

Given that Kosovo is exposed to various threats it represents existential concerns for its citizens and their wellbeing. This includes the following concerns: high level of unemployment; overspread corruption; organized crime; political instability; rise of violent extremism; ongoing destabilized situation in the northern Kosovo; tensed relationship with Serbia; exposure to the natural catastrophes; potential spread of global rooted epidemics; and global economic crises.

As can be noticed, these are concerns which among others are related to the performance of the state institutions as well. Therefore, along with measurement of the trust towards security and justice institutions, perceptions towards risks and threats are one of the most important inputs allowing the KSB to provide its audience a holistic mosaic of socio-economic, security, rule of law and political situation in the ground.

Meantime, citizens feel more threatened by internal threats than the external ones. Internal socio-economic problems and concerns which are high level of unemployment, corruption and organized crime resulted being the most problematic issues with more than 90 percent of respondents expressing serious concerns followed by the political instability. Likewise, violent extremism and destabilized situation in the northern Kosovo are challenging issues bringing concern to the Kosovo citizens.

More detailed interpretation with reference to the internal and external threats can be found in the following sections.

## 2.1. Internal Threats to National Security

KSB 2016: Personal incomes as declared by respondents	
Refused to answer	28%
<b>From 0-120 €</b>	<b>31%</b>
From 120- 250 €	14%
From 250-500 €	22%
From 500-800 €	3%
More than 800 €	2%

The findings show that 94 percent of the respondents consider the unemployment as the largest challenge to Kosovo's national security. This is a major concerning number indicating that Kosovo continues to remain highly vulnerable when it comes to the potential socio-economic riots. It is a signal showing that Kosovo citizens are living in a relatively low level of economic standard. Moreover, this is firmly confirmed by the respondents' general data collected by the survey demonstrating that more than 31 percent of them declared to receive 0 to 120 euro per month. Considering that these amounts of incomes are very close to the global poverty line, they also show that a significant portion of the Kosovo citizens live in the difficult financial conditions. In the meantime, only 5 percent of the respondents declared that they receive more than 500 euro per month. The respondents answered that their gap in income is filled on regular basis by the remittances. The declaration of income cannot be verified as such, but it can guide our interpretation and people's perception on different security challenges.

Corruption and organized crime came immediately next as the most concerning internal security threats. Respectively, more than 93 percent of the respondents stated that corruption presents a major threat towards Kosovo's national security, whereas 90 percent of them expressed that organized crime is the third largest concern in regard to internal security threats. The high level of perceived corruption and organized crime is in line with low level of citizens' trust towards the executive and judiciary institutions in Kosovo. It provide the basis to assume that both, the GoK and judiciary in Kosovo, have failed to undertake any tenable step which could demonstrate to citizens that they have undertaken any substantial step to combat this phenomena. On the contrary, citizens continue to believe that these major challenges have been embedded deeply within the mid-level and high level of governmental and judicial bodies, which

is also reflected by their lack of willingness to prevent and combat these phenomena. Furthermore, lack of the political will as well as inability of the relevant institutions to produce tangible results on fighting organized crime and corruption cases in Kosovo has directly influenced the public perception showing high level of distrust towards the state institutions, including executive and justice bodies.

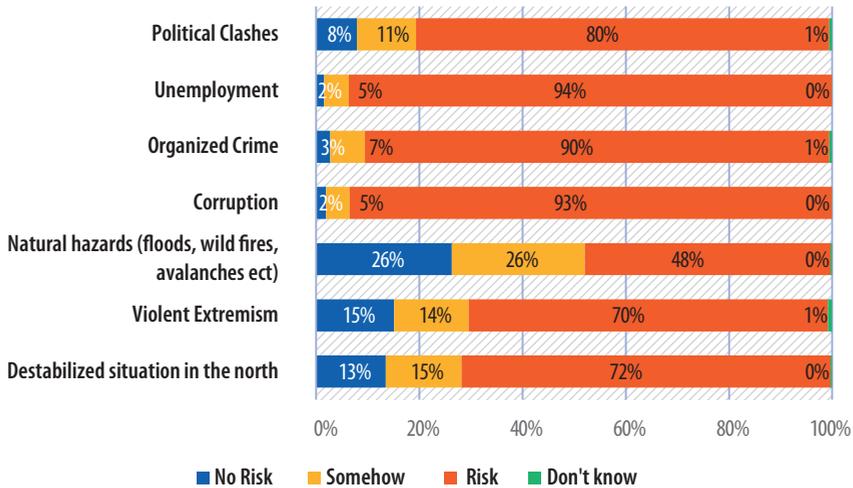
The KSB 2016 shows that seriously concerning threat which is constantly perceived by citizens is the political instability as well. This particularly seems to be triggered by the action of opposition parties who demonstratively opposed the approval of the Brussels Agreement on Association of Serb majority Municipalities in Kosovo and the Agreement on Border Demarcation with Montenegro signed by the GoK's relevant representatives without prior consensus with the other opposition parties. This caused a chaotic situation in Kosovo as neither ruling parties, nor opposition showed willingness to find a solution based on consensus in order to overcome disputes over both agreements. Consequently, it has created frustration and disappointment among the citizens which is further reflected in the 2016 KSB results' where 80 percent of the respondents considered tensed political situation as a major threat towards the internal security.

It is important to notice that when it comes to the violent extremism and destabilized situation the threat perceived by citizens have been slightly lower. Around 70 percent of the respondents answered that the violent extremism presents a threat towards Kosovo's national security. In addition, 72 percent of the respondents perceived the situation in the northern Kosovo as a serious national threat. The latter results of both threats are interesting given that both challenges had similar attention of the public over the last 12 months of 2016. On one hand, the EU-facilitated dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia as well as the implementation of the agreements deriving from the dialogue have stagnated during this period, while on the other hand, issues pertaining to countering violent extremism continued to prevail as the main topic of the public opinion's discourse. This is mainly triggered by the fact that violent extremism has become an issue which has obtained attention on global scale. While, the situation in the north Kosovo so far have been considered within the frame of the EU-facilitated dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia.

Finally, the KSB results showed that Kosovo citizens feel less concerned as to threats which are not caused by the human force. Thus, only 48 percent of the respondents considered that natural hazards represent major threat towards Kosovo's national security. This is the case despite that Kosovo over the last 12 months of 2016 have been a subject of various floods which affected certain areas. At the same time, during the summer period the country has been affected almost regularly by wildfires and its territory is considered to be tectonically active. Furthermore, Kosovo is exposed also to

other national disaster phenomena, such as avalanches, landslides, heavy winters and water droughts. However, it seems that citizens are adapted to the natural conditions in Kosovo. Therefore national hazards were not considered as challenging as the other human driven threats.

KSB 2016: Citizens' perceptions towards Internal Natural Security Threats



## 2.2. External Threats to National Security

Although Kosovo remains to be relatively a stable country, it continues to be exposed also by the various external national security threats whose origin is either regional, global or both. In principle, the list of such threats is relatively broad. However, the KSB have strived to narrow down the number of indicators into the four most concerning ones based on the answers provided by the respondents asked. Therefore, the KSB once again have decided to measure the citizens' perceptions towards terrorist organization so-called Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), global scale epidemics, global economic crises and Serbia.

When it comes to ISIS, the results of the KSB showed that Kosovo citizens consider it as the main external threat to national security of the country. This comes mainly as a result of its notorious reputation that this terrorist organization has developed on the global scale. Nowadays citizens are more aware about the threat coming from the propaganda used by this terrorist organization. Therefore, they are well-informed that the threat posed by this ISIS is not limited to the global strategic level, but it has affected the domestic and regional levels too. In particular, they are conscious about

the fact that ISIS currently represents a major inspiration for the spreading of violent extremism ideology in Kosovo as well as to its neighbourhood countries. As the KSB results have evidenced, around 66 percent of the respondents considers ISIS as a major threat towards national security, which makes it the highest perceived external threat to Kosovo.

Citizens expressed fears in respect of the affection of Kosovo by global economic crises where around 62 percent of respondents pointed out the global economic crises as a serious threat to national security of Kosovo. This is due to the fact that Kosovo is quite much depended on the remittances, while at the same time citizens are noticing that there is a low interest by foreign companies to invest in Kosovo.

Similarly, 60 percent of the respondents declared that spreading of the global pandemics have posed a major threat to the national security of the country. Having in mind the widening of globalization and increased role of media, it can be assumed that the Kosovo citizens seem to be well-informed. During 2016 the most outspoken pandemic was Zika virus, which was spread in various parts of the globe.<sup>15</sup> However, this virus was not the only reason why interviewed respondents expressed their concerns.<sup>16</sup> Instead, they were worried also about the other pandemic disease which may be spread globally in the future and be Kosovo potentially affected.

Finally, the citizens expressed concerns also related to external threat that originate from the region. It is important to point out that citizens considered Serbia lesser threat compared to the aforementioned treats. Currently, the citizens do not consider Serbia's potential engagement or involvement into a direct hostile act against Kosovo as being a major imminent threat. Despite of this, around 60 percent of the respondents continues to think that Serbia still represents a major threat towards national security of Kosovo.<sup>17</sup>

More detailed overview of perceived external threats towards these four indicators can be found in the following visualized chart.

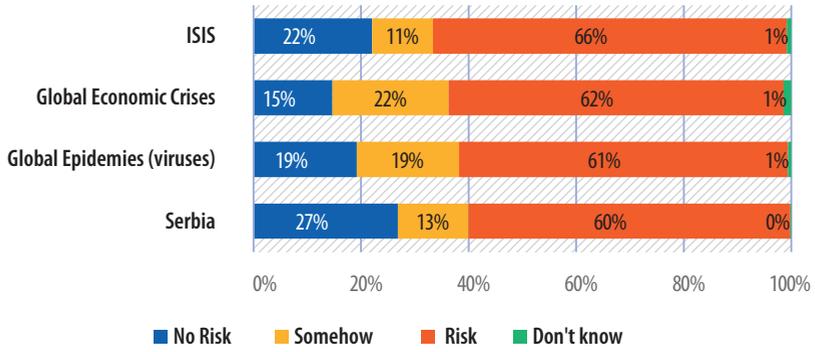
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15 World Health Organization, Profile of Zika Virus, last updated 6<sup>th</sup> September 2016, <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/zika/en/>

16 Focus Group with Field Researchers of Kosovo Security Barometer (KSB) Survey of Annual Edition of 2016, Kosovar Center for Security Studies, 31st October 2016

17 It worth noticing that field research of the survey was conducted prior to the latest arresting of two Kosovo citizens (one of whom was a senior officer of Kosovo Police) by Serbian Police which happened during the October – November 2016

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Katalogimi në botim – (CIP)

Biblioteka Kombëtare e Kosovës "Pjetër Bogdani"

351.746.1(496.51)(048)

Kosovo Security Barometer / prepared by Mentor Vrajolli, Florian Qehaja. - Sixth Edition. - Prishtina : Kosovar Centre for Security Studies, 2016. – 21 f. ; 21 cm. 21 cm.:

1.Vrajolli, Mentor 2. Qehaja, Florian

**ISBN 978-9951-679-52-7**

ISBN 978-9951-679-52-7



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