Public Opinion Poll: Plovdiv
September-October 2023
Methodology

• The survey was conducted on behalf of the International Republican Institute's Center for Insights in Survey Research by ESTAT.

• Data was collected between 21 September 2023 and 6 October 2023 through CAPI administered face-to-face interviews in respondents’ homes.

• The sample consisted of n=300 adults, who are 18 years or older, residents of the municipality of Plovdiv, Bulgaria, and have voting rights. The sample excluded residents detained in custody or currently in prison.

• A multi-stage probability sampling method was used to design a municipally representative sample. The sample was stratified by urban/rural residency, followed by random selection of primary sampling units (PSUs) within each stratum. Households were selected by random walk in each of the 30 PSUs, and respondents were selected by the last birthday method. The sampling frame was based on the 2021 Population and Housing census.

• The achieved sample was weighted for gender, age group, and type of settlement.

• The response rate was 46 percent.

• The margin of error for the mid-range of the full sample does not exceed ±5.7 points.

• Charts and graphs may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding. Cited bases are weighted.
In general, would you say that Plovdiv municipality is heading in the right direction or in the wrong direction?

- In the right direction: 35%
- In the wrong direction: 52%
- Don't know/Refused: 13%
What is the most important problem facing Plovdiv municipality today? And what is the second most important problem facing Plovdiv municipality today?

(Up to two responses accepted; spontaneous response; top 15 responses displayed)
How would you describe the current economic situation of your household?

- Very good: 46%
- Somewhat good: 38%
- Somewhat bad: 5%
- Very bad: 5%
- Don't know/Refused: 6%
How likely or unlikely are ordinary people able to influence decisions made by your mayor and municipal administration?

- Very likely: 39%
- Somewhat likely: 14%
- Somewhat unlikely: 4%
- Very unlikely: 4%
- Don't know/Refused: 39%
How likely or unlikely are ordinary people able to influence decisions made by your municipal council?

- Very likely: 45%
- Somewhat likely: 13%
- Somewhat unlikely: 4%
- Very unlikely: 4%
- Don't know/Refused: 34%
To what extent do civil society organizations (CSOs) impact municipal administration policy in Plovdiv municipality? A CSO is a local, national or international group of people who organize to support a particular interest, group or issue.
To what extent do CSOs impact municipal council policy in Plovdiv municipality?

- Very impactful: 35%
- Somewhat impactful: 20%
- Somewhat unimpactful: 11%
- Very unimpactful: 6%
- Don't know/Refused: 11%
For the following issues, is the municipal government doing a very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad or very bad job?

- **Providing education**: 19% very good, 40% somewhat good, 22% somewhat bad, 6% very bad, 13% don't know/refused.
- **Creating jobs**: 7% very good, 43% somewhat good, 28% somewhat bad, 15% very bad, 7% don't know/refused.
- **Attracting EU funds**: 9% very good, 39% somewhat good, 18% somewhat bad, 10% very bad, 24% don't know/refused.
- **Providing healthcare**: 12% very good, 34% somewhat good, 36% somewhat bad, 11% very bad, 7% don't know/refused.
- **Attracting private investments**: 5% very good, 34% somewhat good, 27% somewhat bad, 10% very bad, 24% don't know/refused.
- **Maintaining infrastructure like roads and public buildings**: 5% very good, 23% somewhat good, 35% somewhat bad, 33% very bad, 3% don't know/refused.
- **Fighting crime**: 2% very good, 23% somewhat good, 44% somewhat bad, 25% very bad, 7% don't know/refused.
- **Engaging citizens in decision-making**: 2% very good, 14% somewhat good, 40% somewhat bad, 39% very bad, 6% don't know/refused.
- **Fighting corruption**: 1% very good, 9% somewhat good, 41% somewhat bad, 42% very bad, 6% don't know/refused.
How would you rate the performance of the municipal administration in communicating with the public about the decisions they take?

- Very good: 46%
- Somewhat good: 26%
- Somewhat bad: 13%
- Very bad: 10%
- Don't know/Refused: 5%
How would you rate the performance of the municipal council in communicating with the public about the decisions they take?

- Very good: 47%
- Somewhat good: 20%
- Somewhat bad: 12%
- Very bad: 17%
- Don't know/Refused: 4%
Did you vote in the April 2, 2023 parliamentary elections?

- Yes: 59%
- No: 40%
- Don't know/Refused: 1%
For which party did you vote in the April 2, 2023 parliamentary elections?

(Among respondents from Plovdiv who voted in the April 2, 2023 parliamentary elections, n=177; spontaneous response)

- Citizens for the European Development of Bulgaria - Union of Democratic Forces (GERB-UDF) 25%
- We Continue the Change - Democratic Bulgaria 24%
- Bulgarian Socialist Party 13%
- Revival 11%
- There is Such a People 3%
- The Movement for Rights and Freedoms 2%
- Other 1%
- Don’t know/Refused 21%
How do you view the recent change in national government as a result of the April 2, 2023 parliamentary elections?

- Very positive: 28%
- Somewhat positive: 21%
- Somewhat negative: 5%
- Very negative: 3%
- Don't know/Refused: 5%
Do you believe that corruption in Plovdiv municipality is a serious problem or not?

Prior to asking this question, the following introduction was read to the respondent “I will now ask you a series of questions about corruption. When I say corruption, I mean abusing public office for personal gain, like when a government official solicits bribes or awards a contract in exchange for political support or money.”
On which source do you base your assessment of the level of corruption in Plovdiv municipality?

(Up to two responses accepted)

- Information provided by the media, such as TV, radio, newspaper, internet, Facebook etc.
  - First most important: 25%
  - Second most important: 32%
  - Total: 57%

- Talk with friends and people around
  - First most important: 29%
  - Second most important: 19%
  - Total: 48%

- Talk with relatives or family
  - First most important: 18%
  - Second most important: 16%
  - Total: 34%

- Information about corruption given by civil society organizations
  - First most important: 8%
  - Second most important: 10%
  - Total: 18%

- Personal experience, meaning you have had to provide cash, gifts, or favors
  - First most important: 8%
  - Second most important: 3%
  - Total: 11%

- Government reports
  - First most important: 2%
  - Second most important: 2%
  - Total: 4%

- Reports of politicians
  - First most important: 2%
  - Second most important: 2%
  - Total: 4%

- Don't know/Refused
  - First most important: 9%
In your experience, what type of corruption is most common in Plovdiv municipality?

- Acting in self-interest instead of in the interest of citizens: 21%
- Extortion: 15%
- Stealing or deliberately mismanaging funds: 15%
- Soliciting bribes or gifts: 15%
- Failure to investigate or prosecute wrongdoing: 13%
- Making decisions based on connections as opposed to merit: 12%
- Awarding contracts to friends, family, or political supporters: 2%
- None of these exist in our municipality: 1%
- Don't know/Refused: 6%
Do you believe that corruption in our country is a serious problem or not?

- 55% Very serious
- 40% Somewhat serious
- 4% Somewhat not serious
- <1% Not at all serious
- 1% Don't know/Refused
In your experience, what type of corruption is most common in our country?

- Acting in self-interest instead of interest of citizens: 27%
- Stealing or deliberately mismanaging funds: 24%
- Failure to investigate or prosecute wrongdoing: 18%
- Soliciting bribes or gifts: 14%
- Making decisions based on connections as opposed to merit: 12%
- Extortion: 3%
- Don't know/Refused: 3%
Over the past 12 months, has corruption among each of the following levels of government increased, decreased, or stayed the same?
To what extent do you think corruption can be reduced in Plovdiv municipality?

- Corruption can be completely eradicated: 46%
- Corruption can be substantially reduced: 20%
- Corruption can be reduced to a certain degree: 5%
- Corruption cannot be reduced at all: 3%
- Don't know/Refused: 26%
Please tell me if there is a lot, some, little, or no corruption among each of the following providers of government services in Plovdiv municipality.

- **State inspection and control bodies**: 48% A lot, 30% Some, 12% Little, 3% No, 7% Don’t know/Refused
- **Traffic police**: 47% A lot, 28% Some, 16% Little, 1% No, 7% Don’t know/Refused
- **Police**: 41% A lot, 34% Some, 16% Little, 2% No, 7% Don’t know/Refused
- **Courts**: 51% A lot, 23% Some, 16% Little, 4% No, 7% Don’t know/Refused
- **Public medical establishments**: 37% A lot, 26% Some, 30% Little, 4% No, 3% Don’t know/Refused
- **Municipal record-keeping and licensing offices**: 31% A lot, 26% Some, 19% Little, 3% No, 21% Don’t know/Refused
- **Municipal tax-collecting offices**: 27% A lot, 21% Some, 21% Little, 12% No, 19% Don’t know/Refused
- **Public education establishments**: 16% A lot, 18% Some, 41% Little, 14% No, 11% Don’t know/Refused
At which level of government is corruption most prevalent?

- Municipal authorities: 18%
- National authorities: 70%
- There is no corruption: 2%
- Don't know/Refused: 10%
Who among municipal authorities is most corrupt, if any?

(Among respondents who think that corruption is most prevalent among national or municipal authorities from Plovdiv, n=264; spontaneous response)
Who among national authorities is most corrupt, if any?

(Among respondents who think that corruption is most prevalent among national or municipal authorities from Plovdiv, n=264; spontaneous response)
To what extent, if any, has corruption had a negative impact on you?

- 33% It has had a lot of negative impact
- 20% It has had some negative impact
- 23% It has had little negative impact
- 17% It has not had any negative impact
- 7% Don’t know/Refused
To what extent, if any, has corruption had a negative impact on you?

Among those who declared that corruption had a negative impact on them, n=81

In general, would you say that Vidin municipality is heading in the right direction or in the wrong direction?

- In the right direction: 28%
- In the wrong direction: 59%
- Don’t know/Refused: 12%

Among those who declared that corruption had little/no negative impact on them, n=169

In general, would you say that Vidin municipality is heading in the right direction or in the wrong direction?

- In the right direction: 38%
- In the wrong direction: 50%
- Don’t know/Refused: 12%

*Good is the total of very good and somewhat good. Bad is the total of somewhat bad and very bad.*
In the past two years, how often, if at all, have you witnessed or experienced corruption?

- Daily: <1%
- Weekly: 2%
- Monthly: 8%
- Less frequently: 24%
- Not at all: 56%
- Don’t know/Refused: 10%
In which context did you witness or experience corruption. Did you experience or witness corruption....?

(Among respondents who have witnessed corruption, n=103; only “Yes” responses displayed)
In your dealings with the municipal government, how important are personal contacts and relationships to get things done?

- Very important: 27%
- Somewhat important: 13%
- Somewhat unimportant: 8%
- Very unimportant: 7%
- Don't know/Refused: 44%
Are you aware of any anti-corruption initiatives by any of the following levels of government?

- Municipal authorities: 22% Yes, 71% No, 7% Don't know/Refused
- National authorities: 28% Yes, 65% No, 7% Don't know/Refused
How effective or ineffective is each of the following levels of government in addressing corruption?

Municipal authorities:
- Very effective: 3%
- Somewhat effective: 8%
- Somewhat ineffective: 42%
- Very ineffective: 40%
- Don't know/Refused: 7%

National authorities:
- Very effective: 3%
- Somewhat effective: 5%
- Somewhat ineffective: 39%
- Very ineffective: 46%
- Don't know/Refused: 7%
Based on your experience, please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with each statement... The _______ has a sincere desire and will to combat corruption in our country.

- The president of Bulgaria: 8% Strongly agree, 18% Somewhat agree, 21% Somewhat disagree, 38% Strongly disagree, 15% Don't know/Refused
- The prime minister of Bulgaria: 4% Strongly agree, 12% Somewhat agree, 29% Somewhat disagree, 45% Strongly disagree, 10% Don't know/Refused
- The municipal council: 4% Strongly agree, 12% Somewhat agree, 28% Somewhat disagree, 47% Strongly disagree, 9% Don't know/Refused
- The judiciary of Bulgaria: 4% Strongly agree, 9% Somewhat agree, 27% Somewhat disagree, 54% Strongly disagree, 6% Don't know/Refused
- The mayor: 4% Strongly agree, 9% Somewhat agree, 26% Somewhat disagree, 50% Strongly disagree, 11% Don't know/Refused
- The parliament of Bulgaria: 3% Strongly agree, 7% Somewhat agree, 32% Somewhat disagree, 54% Strongly disagree, 3% Don't know/Refused
Which among the following groups is the most important and the second most important to effectively address corruption in Plovdiv municipality?

(Up to two responses accepted)

- National political leadership
- Citizens
- Municipal political leadership
- Public sector employees
- National media
- Private sector
- International NGOs or CSOs
- Domestic NGOs or CSOs
- Local media
- No (other) group can effectively address corruption
- Don't know/Refused

First most important

Second most important
To what degree, if at all, is it the responsibility of citizens to address corruption?

- 37%: To a very large degree
- 28%: To a somewhat large degree
- 21%: To a somewhat small degree
- 12%: To a very small degree
- 2%: Don't know/Refused
Do you know where to report a corrupt act of a municipal official?

- Yes: 49%
- No: 46%
- Don’t know/Refused: 5%
What channels would you contact to report a corrupt act?

(Among respondents who know where to report a corrupt act, n=145; spontaneous response; multiple responses accepted)

- The national anticorruption commission: 35%
- The police: 33%
- The anticorruption committee within the municipal...: 19%
- The regional attorney: 10%
- A specific local news/media outlet: 10%
- The municipal administration via hotline/form for...: 10%
- A national media outlet: 9%
- The national ombudsman: 7%
- A civil society organization: 4%
- The local ombudsman: 3%
- A local member of the national parliament: 1%
- A minister or deputy minister: 1%
- Don't Know/Refused: 0%
During the past 12 months, have you or anyone in your household reported a corrupt act by a municipal official?

(Among respondents who know where to report a corrupt act, n=145)
Some people are unwilling to report corrupt actions because of various reasons. Please tell me which of the following you personally consider as the primary reason for not reporting corruption to the relevant authorities.

- No action will be taken even if corruption is reported: 30%
- Those who report corruption will be subject to retribution/revenge: 19%
- Lack of evidence to prove: 13%
- Lack of clarity about corruption proceedings: 8%
- It's not worth reporting corruption if I am not personally hurt by it: 8%
- Our society does not reward those who report corruption: 7%
- Most people who indulge in corruption only do so because of economic hardship: 5%
- There is no mechanism to report corruption anonymously: 2%
- Do not know the relevant institution responsible for corruption cases: 3%
- Don't know/Refused: 3%
What do you think is the primary factor causing corruption in public institutions?

- Weak rule of law: 19%
- Weak ethics or morals: 13%
- Culture of impunity: 12%
- Institutional leadership is corrupt: 9%
- Long or unclear procedures for services: 9%
- Internal controls are weak: 6%
- Politicians and power holders interfere in the work of institutions: 6%
- Corruption is an accepted part of life: 6%
- Need for money to make a living: 6%
- Lack of transparency: 5%
- No effective external oversight: 5%
- One-party control of government: 2%
- There is no corruption in public institutions: 1%
- Other: <1%
- Don't know/Refused: 1%
Which of the terms I will show you best reflects how a corrupt person is perceived in our society?

- Venal: 42%
- Powerful: 20%
- Selfish or self-centered: 15%
- Guilty: 10%
- Resourceful: 3%
- Clever or smart: 2%
- Poor: 2%
- Greedy: 1%
- Other: 5%
- Don't Know/Refused

*Responses receiving <1% are collapsed into Other*
How transparent or nontransparent is the work of the mayor and the municipal administration?

- Very transparent: 30%
- Somewhat transparent: 4%
- Somewhat nontransparent: 14%
- Very nontransparent: 8%
- Don't know/Refused: 44%
Do you find the information you need from the municipal administration easily or not?

- Very easily: 22%
- Somewhat easily: 34%
- Somewhat difficultly: 21%
- Very difficultly: 9%
- I don’t need information from the municipal administration: 4%
- Don’t know/Refused: 11%
Are you aware of when municipal government public discussion meetings take place?

- Yes: 91%
- No: 5%
- Don't know/Refused: 4%
Have you ever attended a municipal government public discussion meeting?

- 97% Yes
- 3% No
- Don't know/Refused
How transparent or nontransparent is the work of the municipal council?

- Very transparent: 46%
- Somewhat transparent: 15%
- Somewhat nontransparent: 11%
- Very nontransparent: 4%
- Don't know/Refused: 24%
Are you aware of when municipal council meetings take place?

- Yes: 90%
- No: 6%
- Don’t know/Refused: 4%
Have you attended any municipal council meetings?

- Yes: 98%
- No: 2%
- Don't know/Refused: 0%
How closely do you follow the decisions and actions taken by each of the following institutions?

- The mayor: 1% Very closely, 24% Somewhat closely, 33% A little, 39% Not at all, 1% Don’t know/Refused
- The municipal administration: 1% Very closely, 18% Somewhat closely, 32% A little, 46% Not at all, 1% Don’t know/Refused
- The municipal council: 1% Very closely, 17% Somewhat closely, 35% A little, 45% Not at all, 1% Don’t know/Refused
Is it easy or difficult to communicate with the following entities in Plovdiv municipality?

The municipal administration
- Very easy: 7%
- Somewhat easy: 25%
- Somewhat difficult: 36%
- Very difficult: 6%
- I have never made an attempt: 21%
- Don’t know/Refused: 5%

The municipal council
- Very easy: 2%
- Somewhat easy: 6%
- Somewhat difficult: 28%
- Very difficult: 16%
- I have never made an attempt: 41%
- Don’t know/Refused: 7%
What are the primary sources you use to learn about the decisions and actions taken by the municipal administration and the council?
(Spontaneous response; multiple responses accepted)

- Local media outlets: 21%
- The municipal website: 20%
- Friends or family: 20%
- National media: 17%
- Social media (such as Facebook): 16%
- I do not learn about decisions and actions taken by my municipal government: 22%
- Don’t know/Refused: 1%
Which of the following is your preferred channel of communication with the municipal administration and the council?

- Official e-mail exchange: 16%
- An online platform provided or endorsed by the municipality: 14%
- Social media (such as Facebook etc.): 11%
- Meeting with a member of the administration: 10%
- Meeting with the mayor: 6%
- Official letters: 5%
- Meeting with a municipal councilor: 5%
- Statement during a session of the council or a council working group: 2%
- Other: 1%
- I have never attempted to communicate with the municipal administration or the municipal council: 25%
- Don't know/Refused: 6%
To what extent are each of your municipal government entities influenced by wealthy people?

- The mayor:
  - Very much: 44%
  - Somewhat: 37%
  - A little: 7%
  - Not at all: 5%
  - Don't know/Refused: 8%

- The municipal administration:
  - Very much: 31%
  - Somewhat: 38%
  - A little: 15%
  - Not at all: 5%
  - Don't know/Refused: 11%

- The municipal council:
  - Very much: 37%
  - Somewhat: 41%
  - A little: 9%
  - Not at all: 3%
  - Don't know/Refused: 10%
Are you aware of any local CSOs, which means a local group that forms around a common goal and is not associated with the government, that work for more transparency in the municipal administration and the council?

- Yes: 67%
- No: 27%
- Don't know/Refused: 6%
Do you think that the transparency of the municipal administration has improved or worsened, or stayed the same over the last 10 years?
Do you think that the transparency of the municipal council has improved or worsened, or stayed the same over the last 10 years?
Do you see political will for improvement of transparency in the **municipal administration**?
Do you see political will for improvement of transparency in the **municipal council**?

- Yes: 74%
- No: 16%
- Don't know/Refused: 10%
Which of the following do you think is the most important factor for getting a job in the municipal administration?

- Having a family member or friend in municipal government: 38%
- Being a member of the political party in power in the municipality: 29%
- Education and experience: 15%
- Paying a bribe: 9%
- Other: <1%
- Don't know/Refused: 9%
Are you satisfied with the level of digital services offered by Plovdiv municipality?

- Yes: 44%
- No: 22%
- I have no need for digital services: 28%
- Don't know/Refused: 6%
Do you think efforts are made to improve the digital services offered by Plovdiv municipality?

(Among all respondents except for those who stated they have no need for digital services from Plovdiv, n=216)
How interested or uninterested are you in political news and information about Plovdiv municipality?

- **Very interested**: 41%
- **Somewhat interested**: 33%
- **Somewhat uninterested**: 19%
- **Very uninterested**: 5%
- **Don't know/Refused**: 2%
Are the media in Plovdiv municipality free to independently cover any issue or not?

- 33% Very free
- 16% Somewhat free
- 8% Somewhat not free
- 6% Very not free
- 6% Don't know/Refused
Which media platform do you use most frequently and second most frequently to gain political news and information about Plovdiv municipality?
(Up to two responses accepted)

- **Television**: 37% (Most frequently used) 28% (Second most frequently used)
- **Internet, other than social media**: 22% (Most frequently used) 18% (Second most frequently used)
- **Social Media, such as Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok etc.**: 20% (Most frequently used) 16% (Second most frequently used)
- **Print Media**: 5% (Most frequently used) 9% (Second most frequently used)
- **Radio**: 2% (Most frequently used) 8% (Second most frequently used)
- **None or no other**: 13% (Most frequently used) 20% (Second most frequently used)
- **Don't know/Refused**: <1%
Do you perceive local media as critical or not critical of the municipal administration and the council?

- Very critical: 33%
- Somewhat critical: 14%
- Somewhat not critical: 8%
- Very not critical: 5%
- Don’t know/Refused: 40%
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<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Urbanicity</th>
<th>Educational Attainment</th>
<th>How does your household financial situation compare to the average household in Plovdiv municipality?</th>
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<td>Men</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>66%</td>
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<td>Women</td>
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<td>Age 18-35</td>
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<td>48%</td>
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<td>Rural</td>
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<td>Complete primary school or no formal education</td>
<td>1%</td>
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<td>Don’t know/Refused</td>
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<td>My household is much worse off</td>
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