

Corruption indices of *Coalition 2000*

PUBLIC OFFICIALS



January 2003

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METHODOLOGY

SAMPLE

National survey of public officials, conducted in 1999 among 320 officials and in 2002 among 412 officials. The survey covers representatives of the following groups of public sector officials:

- Doctors, nurses, orderlies and hospital administration
- Teachers, university lecturers and university administration
- Officials in regional administrations
- Local administration (officials in municipalities and town halls)
- Officials in the Hygiene and Epidemiology Inspectorate, fire brigade, construction control and other departments
- Customs and tax officers
- Officials in the judicial and court system (investigators, prosecutors, administration)
- Officials in the police, incl. Traffic Police
- Officials in central administration - ministries, committees, government agencies
- Officials in labor offices and social assistance services

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method is face-to-face interview.

FIELD WORK

1999	27.03.1999 to 16.04 1999
2002	03.12.2002 to 16.12.2002

THE MAIN PROBLEMS BULGARIA IS FACING

During both monitored periods corruption is assessed by public officials as one of the five most important national problems. In its importance corruption is commensurate with the main socio-economic problems our society is facing.

TABLE 1. MAIN PROBLEMS BULGARIA IS FACING (%)

	April 1999	December 2002
Unemployment	58.1	55.3
Low incomes	60.6	50.5
Badly functioning economy	-	42.2
Corruption	42.8	37.1
Crime	47.8	29.6
Poverty	32.2	24.5
Political instability	19.7	18.7
Worsening education	5.3	12.9
Worsening healthcare	11.3	11.2
High prices	9.7	7.5
Drug addiction	-	2.7
Environmental pollution	2.5	2.2
Ethnic problems	3.4	1.0

Interviewees cited up to three answers, therefore the percentage sum total exceeds 100.

Base: All respondents

CORRUPTION INDICES

- Corruption indices are the main product of the *Corruption Monitoring System (CMS)* of *Coalition 2000*.
- Corruption assessment index numbers assume values from 0 - 10.
- The closer the value of the index is to 10, the more negative are the assessments of the evaluated aspect of the corruption in the country.
- Index numbers close to 0 indicate approximation to the ideal of a “corruption-free” society.
- Corruption indexes have been grouped into several categories:
 - Attitudes towards corruption;
 - Corrupt practices;
 - Assessment of the spread of corruption;
 - Corruption-related expectations.

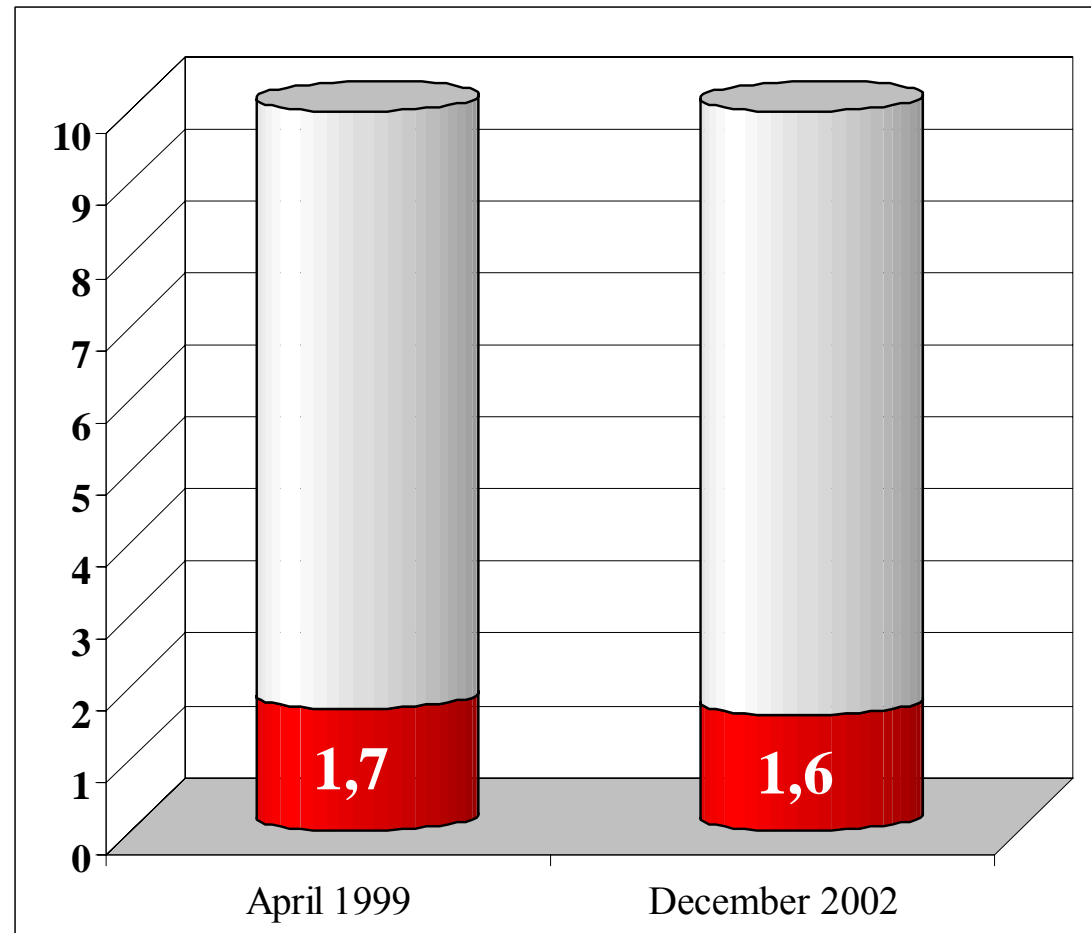
ATTITUDES TOWARDS CORRUPTION

ACCEPTABILITY IN PRINCIPLE

This index reflects the extent to which various corrupt practices are tolerated within the value system by the public officials.

The value of this index in December 2002 is very close to that registered in April 1999 and shows that on an ethical level corruption continues to be perceived as inadmissible.

FIGURE 1. ACCEPTABILITY IN PRINCIPLE



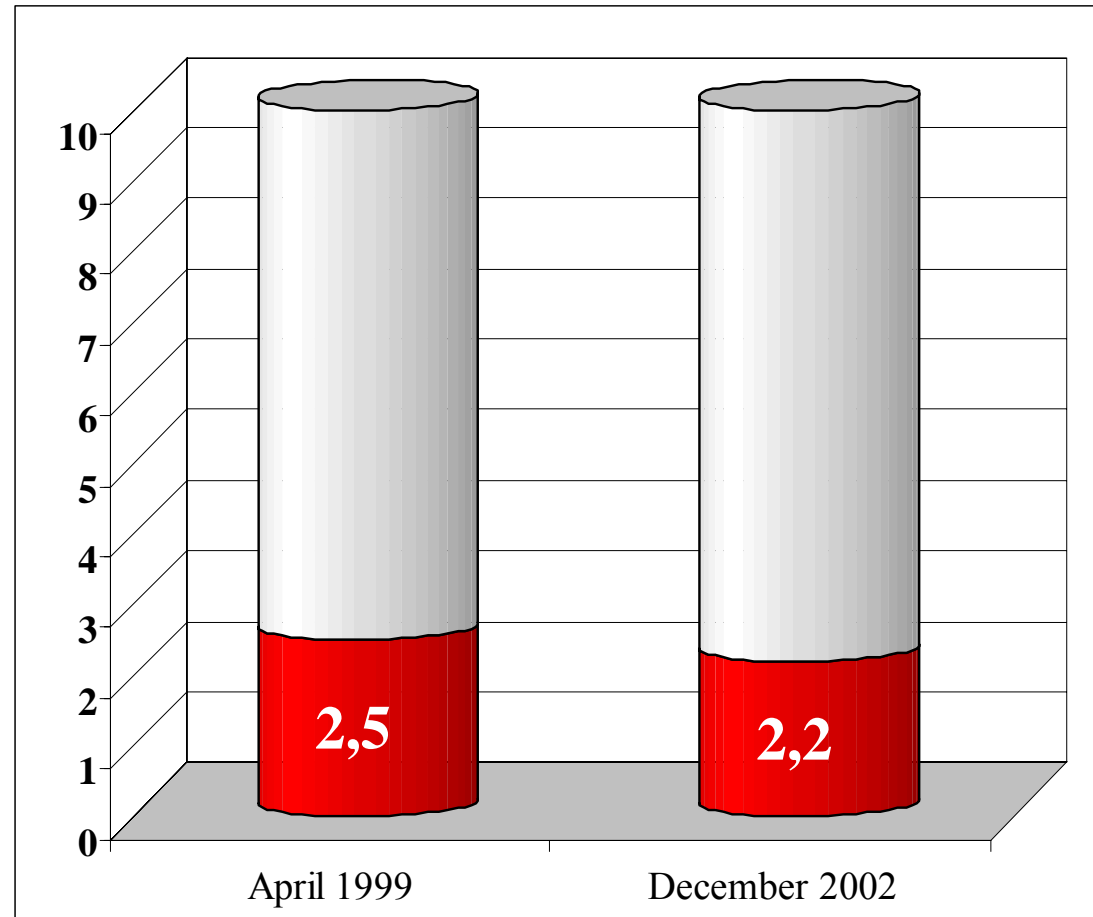
Base: All respondents

SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CORRUPTION

This index measures public officials' inclination to compromise on their values and principles under the pressure of circumstances.

The value of the index registered in December 2002 has decreased by 0.3 points and shows that the susceptibility to corrupt actions of public sector officials is slightly decreasing.

FIGURE 2. SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CORRUPTION



Base: All respondents

SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CORRUPTION

Refusal, for one reason or another, to accept money or a gift offered by a citizen for the solution of his/her problem was declared by about two-thirds of the polled public officials. The offer of money or gifts by citizens is regarded as insulting by the majority of respondents. The fear of official or other sanctions is another valid reason for such refusal.

Nevertheless, nearly one fifth of the respondents would accept the offered money or gift, citing various reasons for this: *“as a sign of gratitude”*, *“because the salaries of officials are so low that they could not afford to refuse”*, *“because it is impolite to refuse”*.

TABLE 2. SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CORRUPTION – REACTION OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS TO OFFERS OF MONEY OR A GIFT BY A CITIZEN FOR THE SOLUTION OF HIS/HER PROBLEM

(“IF A CITIZEN OFFERS YOU MONEY OR A GIFT IN ORDER TO SOLVE HIS/HER PROBLEM, YOU...:”)

	(%)
Would feel offended and would refuse	42.2
Would refuse because you fear official or other sanctions	23.3
Would accept it as a sign of gratitude	13.1
Would accept it because the salaries of officials are so low that you could not afford to refuse	6.3
Would accept it because it is impolite to refuse	3.2
<i>Other</i>	5.3
<i>Don't know / No answer</i>	6.6

Base: All respondents

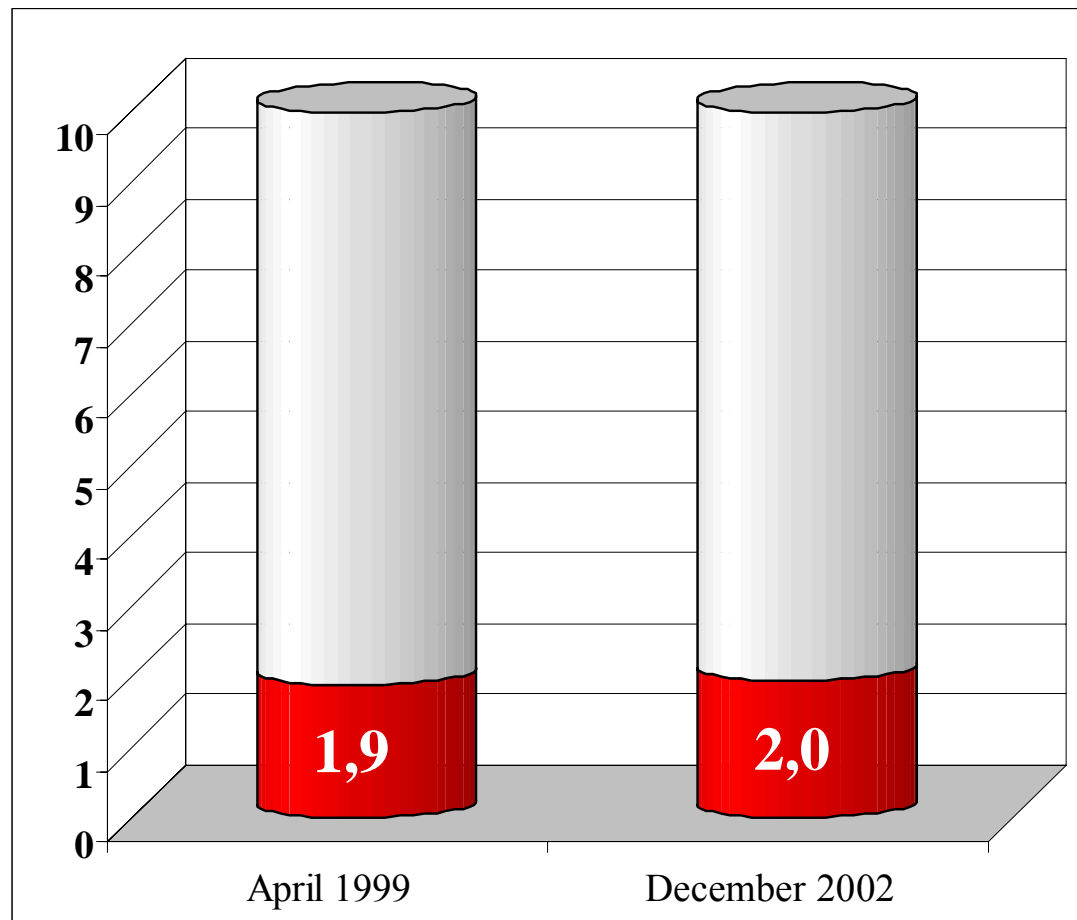
CORRUPT PRACTICES

CORRUPTION PRESSURE

This index measures the spread of attempts by citizens to offer public sector officials money, gifts or favours in order to solve their personal problems.

The value of the indices shows that direct coercion and indirect attempts to involve public officials in corruption are relatively not widespread, i.e. the corruption pressure put on officials was relatively weak during both monitored periods.

FIGURE 3. CORRUPTION PRESSURE



Base: All respondents

CORRUPTION PRESSURE

(PROFESSIONAL GROUPS)

The obtained data reflect the personal experience of the public sector officials in their contacts with colleagues from other professional groups.

In the three-and-a-half-year period between the two surveys, some changes have occurred in the “ranking” of professional groups, which have put the strongest corruption pressure on public officials. Whereas during the first monitored period **corrupt behavior was most actively manifested** by *customs officers and municipal officials*, the **strongest corruption pressure** according to the present survey was exerted by *doctors and police officers* (put on one in four public officials who had contact with them). The five professions, which exert strong corruption pressure, also include *customs officers, lawyers and university lecturers*.

TABLE 3. CORRUPTION PRESSURE
 (“IF YOU HAPPEN TO HAVE BEEN ASKED FOR SOMETHING IN ORDER TO HELP YOU SOLVE A PROBLEM IN THE LAST YEAR, IT WAS ASKED BY...”)

	April 1999		December 2002	
	%**	Base*	%**	Base*
Doctors	21.7	224	26.6	369
Police officers	20.6	141	25.2	270
Customs officers	26.7	86	19.4	134
Lawyers	-	-	19.0	195
University professors	-	-	17.1	129
Municipal officials	24.4	205	13.2	317
Businessmen	22.7	163	12.1	264
Administrative staff from the judicial system	15.7	140	10.1	208
Political party and coalition leaders	-	-	9.1	99
University officials	-	-	8.9	123
Criminal investigators	7.4	94	8.8	148
Ministry officials	15.4	91	7.2	166
Teachers	6.4	171	7.1	240
Judges	8.7	103	6.7	150
Prosecutors	3.2	94	6.6	136
Tax officials	10.6	189	6.3	304
Mayors and Municipal Council members***	5.3	95	6.0	216
Bankers	-	-	5.7	175
Members of Parliament	7.4	54	5.0	80
Representatives of non-governmental organizations	-	-	4.2	144
Journalists	-	-	2.5	119
Ministers	-	-	1.4	69

* Number of respondents who had contact with the respective officials during the last year.

** Relative share of respondents in contact with public officials who were asked for money, a gift or service.

*** In April 1999 the assessment concerns the spread of corruption among municipal councilors.

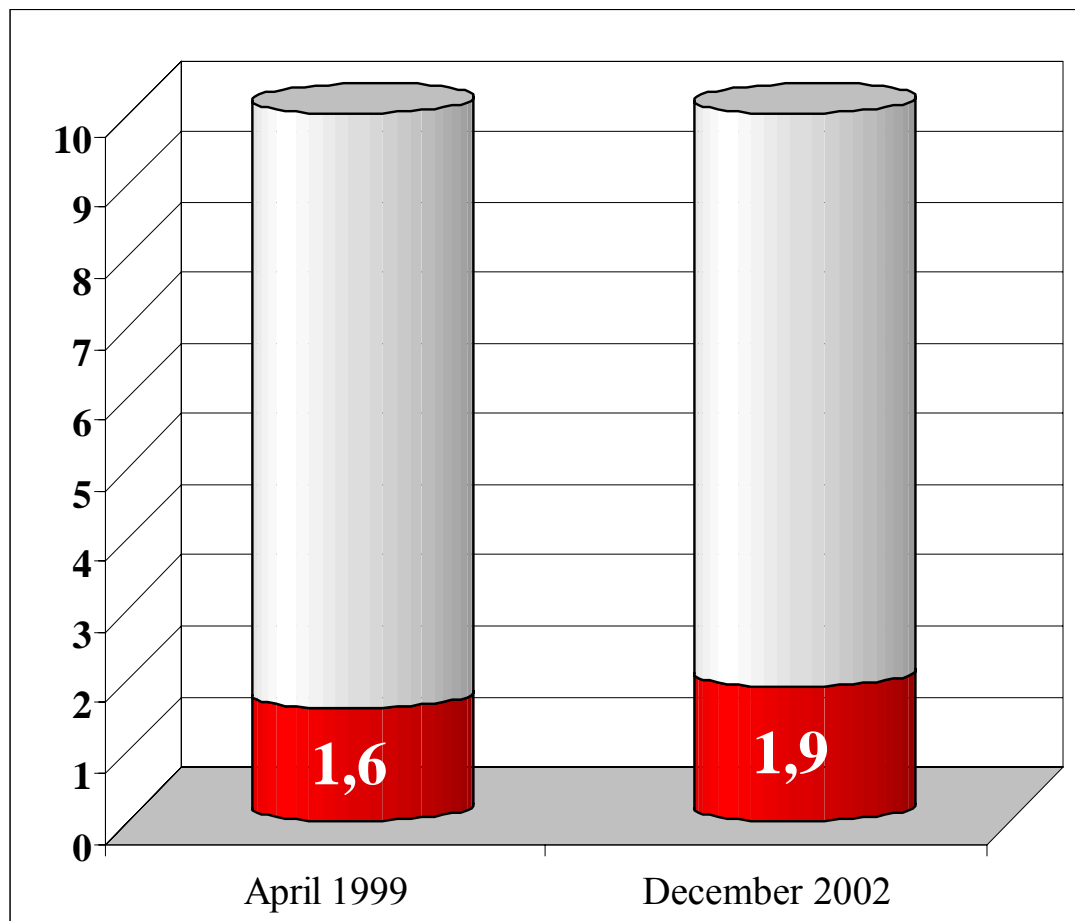
CORRUPT PRACTICES

The index reflects the admission/ self-assessment of the personal participation of respondents in forms of corrupt behavior.

Despite the slight increase in the value of the index, it remains comparatively low and shows that a relatively small part of public officials are inclined to admit their direct participation in any form of corrupt behavior, despite the anonymity of the survey.

FIGURE 4. CORRUPT PRACTICES

(“IN THE LAST YEAR, HAVE YOU EVER ACCEPTED A GIFT FROM A CITIZEN WHOSE PROBLEM YOU DEALT WITH AS PART OF YOUR DUTIES?”)



Base: All respondents

***CORRUPT PRACTICES
IN ONE'S OWN ENVIRONMENT***

It reflects the perception of the public officials about **the degree of participation of their colleagues in forms of corrupt behavior.**

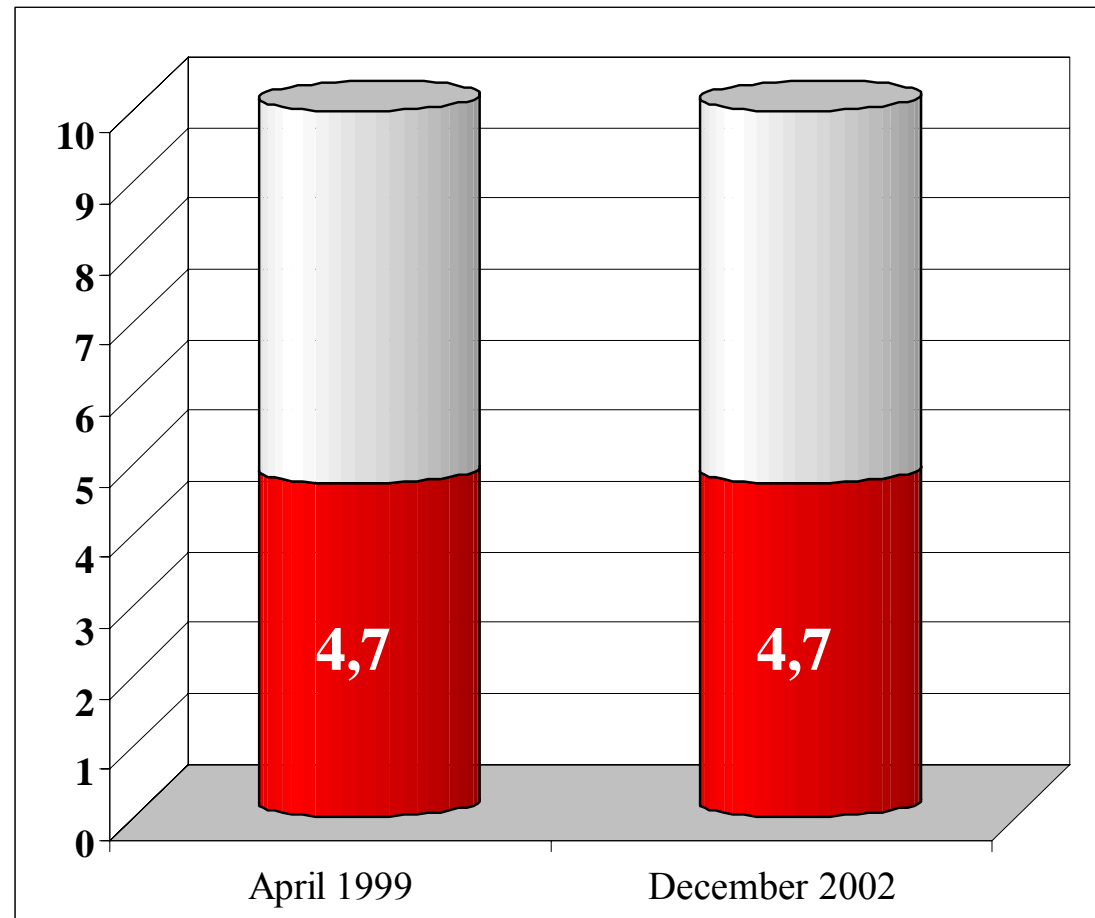
For a period of nearly three years and a half no change has been observed in the value of the index. The value of the two indices shows that most public sector officials presume that their colleagues are involved in corruption.

Noticeably, the officials are far more inclined to presume corrupt actions of their colleagues than to declare personal participation in them.

As a rule, the polled public officials see and presume corrupt actions in their professional sector, excluding themselves in most cases.

FIGURE 5. CORRUPT PRACTICES

(“IN YOUR OPINION, HOW OFTEN DO PUBLIC OFFICIALS IN YOUR ORGANIZATION ACCEPT MONEY OR GIFTS FROM PEOPLE WHOM THEY ARE IN CONTACT WITH IN THEIR OFFICIAL CAPACITY?”)



Base: All respondents

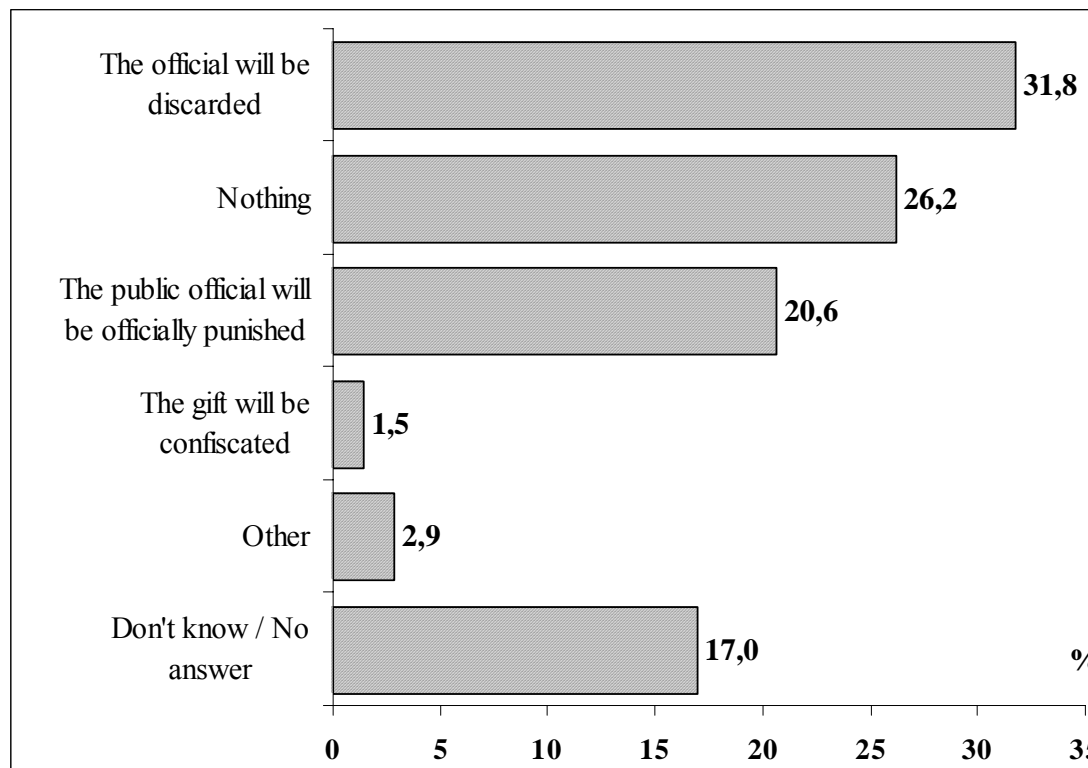
CONSEQUENCES OF CORRUPT ACTIONS

The polled public officials are not unanimous with regard to the outcome of a situation in which an official has accepted money or a gift from a citizen for the discharge of his official duties.

Significantly, nearly one third of the respondents expect that such an official would be sacked, whereas 26.2% do not expect him to suffer any consequences. About one fifth of the interviewed officials envisage a more lenient punishment.

FIGURE 6. CONSEQUENCES OF CORRUPT ACTIONS

(“WHAT IS MOST LIKELY TO HAPPEN TO AN OFFICIAL WITH FUNCTIONS SUCH AS YOURS WHO HAS ACCEPTED MONEY OR A GIFT FROM A CITIZEN FOR THE DISCHARGE OF HIS DUTIES?”)



Base: All respondents

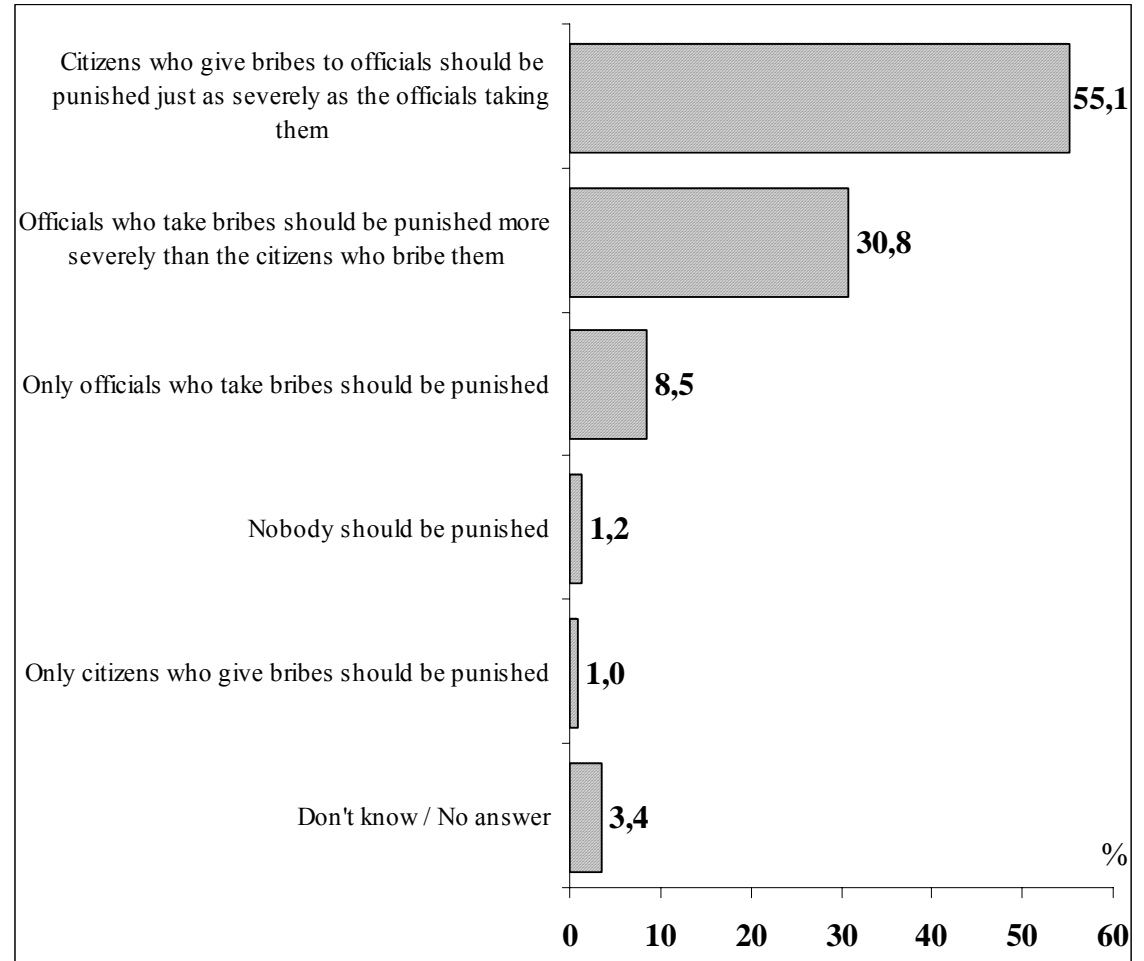
CONSEQUENCES OF CORRUPT ACTIONS

There are two basic principles which public officials believe should determine punishments for corrupt actions:

- 1) Both parties – the one exerting corruption pressure (citizens), as well as the one succumbing to corruption (public officials), should be punished. The option of only one of the parties being sanctioned is not supported.
- 2) The severity of the punishments should be the same both for bribing citizens and public officials taking bribes.

FIGURE 7. THE PERCEPTION OF THE PUBLIC OFFICIALS ABOUT PUNISHMENTS IN CASES OF CORRUPTION

(“WHICH OF THE LISTED OPINIONS COMES CLOSEST TO YOUR OWN?”)



Base: All respondents

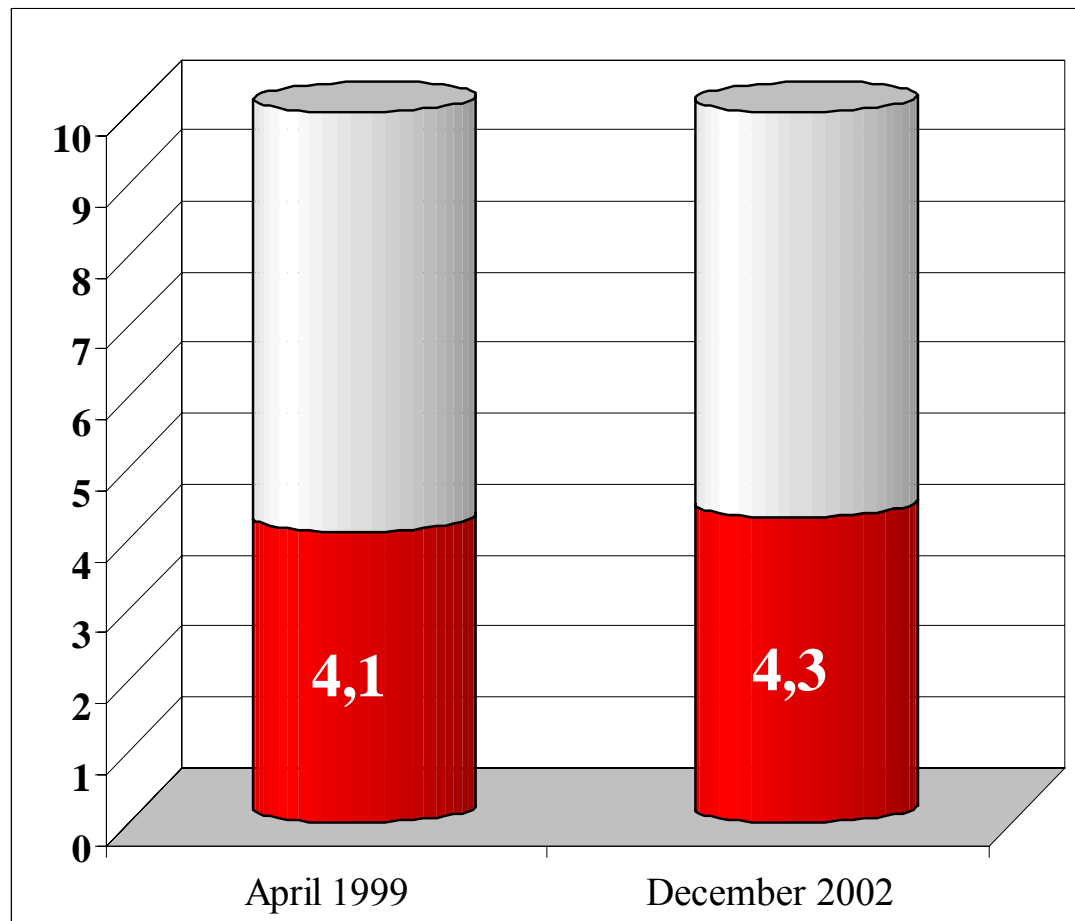
ASSESSMENTS OF THE SPREAD OF CORRUPTION

SPREAD OF CORRUPTION

It registers the assessments of public officials about the degree of spread of corrupt practices.

A slight increase in the value of this index has been recorded and the registered levels show that corrupt practices are perceived as relatively widespread forms of daily social action in both monitored periods.

FIGURE 8. SPREAD OF CORRUPTION



Base: All respondents

SPREAD OF CORRUPTION

There are two key factors which, according to public officials, determine the spread of corruption during both monitored periods:

- “the low salary” causes the official to participate in corruption;
- “getting rich quickly” tempts those who have power to become corrupt.

The lack of adequate legislation, according to respondents, is also a factor for the development of corruption, along with the inefficiency of the judicial system, the inability to separate personal interest from official duties and the venality of the men in power.

The public officials consider the moral crisis during the period of transition to be a stronger corruption factor than the peculiarities of Bulgarian national culture and the heritage of the totalitarian past.

TABLE 4. MAJOR FACTORS INFLUENCING THE SPREAD OF CORRUPTION IN THE COUNTRY (%)

	April 1999	December 2002
The low salaries of public officials	77.5	65.5
Fast personal enrichment sought by those in power	51.9	52.7
Imperfect legislation	26.9	33.3
Inefficiency of the judicial system	21.6	29.6
Intertwinement of official duties and personal interests	35.6	29.6
The venality of the men in power	-	26.5
The lack of strict administrative control	22.8	22.6
The moral crisis in the period of transition	32.2	20.4
Specific characteristics of Bulgarian national culture	6.3	6.8
The problems inherited from the totalitarian past	16.9	5.6

The sum total of the percentages exceeds 100 since the interviewees cited up to three factors.

Base: All respondents

SPREAD OF CORRUPTION

During both monitored periods public officials consider corruption to be most widespread among *customs officers*.

Officials presume that corruption is widespread among the political elite – among *MPs, politicians, leaders of political parties and coalitions, ministers*.

A high likelihood of corruption is also seen among *tax officials, prosecutors and judges*.

Further down in the “rank list” of professions, perceived as corrupt, are businessmen and lawyers who in April 1999 were ranked immediately after customs officers.

According to public officials, corruption remains least widespread among journalists and teachers.

TABLE 5. SPREAD OF CORRUPTION
 (“*HOW WIDESPREAD WOULD YOU SAY CORRUPTION IS AMONG THE FOLLOWING GROUPS?*”)*

	April 1999	December 2002
Customs officers	76.9	85.0
Members of Parliament	50.3	69.9
Political party and coalition leaders	51.6	68.7
Tax officials	52.2	57.8
Ministers	49.0	56.8
Prosecutors	48.8	54.2
Judges	47.2	53.9
Businessmen	57.5	53.8
Police officers	48.4	52.6
Lawyers	54.7	52.2
Mayors and Municipal Council members**	39.1	51.2
Doctors	44.1	49.1
Ministry officials	47.9	49.0
University professors	-	46.2
Criminal investigators	41.6	45.7
Bankers	-	40.0
Municipal officials	47.2	39.3
Administrative staff from the judicial system	42.8	35.7
University officials	-	33.3
Representatives of non-governmental organizations	26.9	30.1
Journalists	18.7	22.6
Teachers	11.9	12.9

* *Relative share of respondents answering “Almost all” and “Most are involved in it”.*

** *In April 1999 the assessment concerns the spread of corruption among municipal councilors.*

Base: All respondents

SPREAD OF CORRUPTION AMONG INSTITUTIONS

Public officials assess *customs* as the institution in which different corrupt practices are most widespread.

In May 2002 the method of registration of data of the institutional spread of corruption was changed. Despite this, the structure of the state institutions and departments regarded as most corrupt did not change significantly.

Public officials consider the biggest corruption to exist in *customs, the judicial system, ministries and the budget sphere as a whole, in the system of healthcare and in the system of the Interior Ministry*. Specifically, among state agencies the *Privatization Agency* is defined as most corrupt, among ministries – *the Ministry of Economy*, and among the media – *the print media as a whole and Bulgarian National Television (BNT)*.

Noticeably, not a single respondent stated that there is no corruption in Bulgaria.

TABLE 6. SPREAD OF CORRUPTION AMONG INSTITUTIONS (DECEMBER 2002)

(“IN YOUR OPINION, WHERE IN BULGARIA IS CORRUPTION MOST WIDESPREAD?”; “IN WHICH MINISTRIES IS CORRUPTION MOST WIDESPREAD?”; “IN WHICH AGENCIES OR DEPARTMENTS (EXCLUDING MINISTRIES) IS CORRUPTION MOST WIDESPREAD?”; “IN WHICH SPHERES OF THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM IS CORRUPTION MOST WIDESPREAD?”; “IN WHICH BULGARIAN MEDIA (ELECTRONIC AND PRINT MEDIA) IS CORRUPTION MOST WIDESPREAD?”)

GENERAL SPREAD	%
Customs, among customs officers.	37.1
Court, judicial system. Among lawyers, investigators.	33.3
Ministries, budget sphere. In the National Social Security Institute (NSSI). In the agencies.	20.6
The healthcare system. In the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF). In the Medical Authority certifying disability.	19.4
The system of the Interior Ministry (incl. in the Traffic Police)	16.3

MINISTRIES	%
Ministry of Economy. In privatization.	35.9
Ministry of Finance. Customs.	27.9
Ministry of Justice. The judicial system.	23.3
Interior Ministry, police	17.5
Ministry of Health	17.0

STATE AGENCIES	%
Privatization agency	47.8
Customs	25.7
Tax offices	7.5
In departments, linked with the issue of permits, incl. construction supervision	4.6
Bulgarian Telecommunications Company (BTC), telecommunications	3.2

JUDICIAL SYSTEM	%
Prosecutors, Prosecutor’s Office	42.2
Judges, court	41.3
Investigators, investigation	24.8
Lawyers, notaries	13.8
In the whole judicial system	3.4

BULGARIAN MEDIA	%
Print media	17.2
Bulgarian National Television	15.0
“24 Chassa” daily	7.3
Television (in general)	6.6
“Troud” daily	6.1

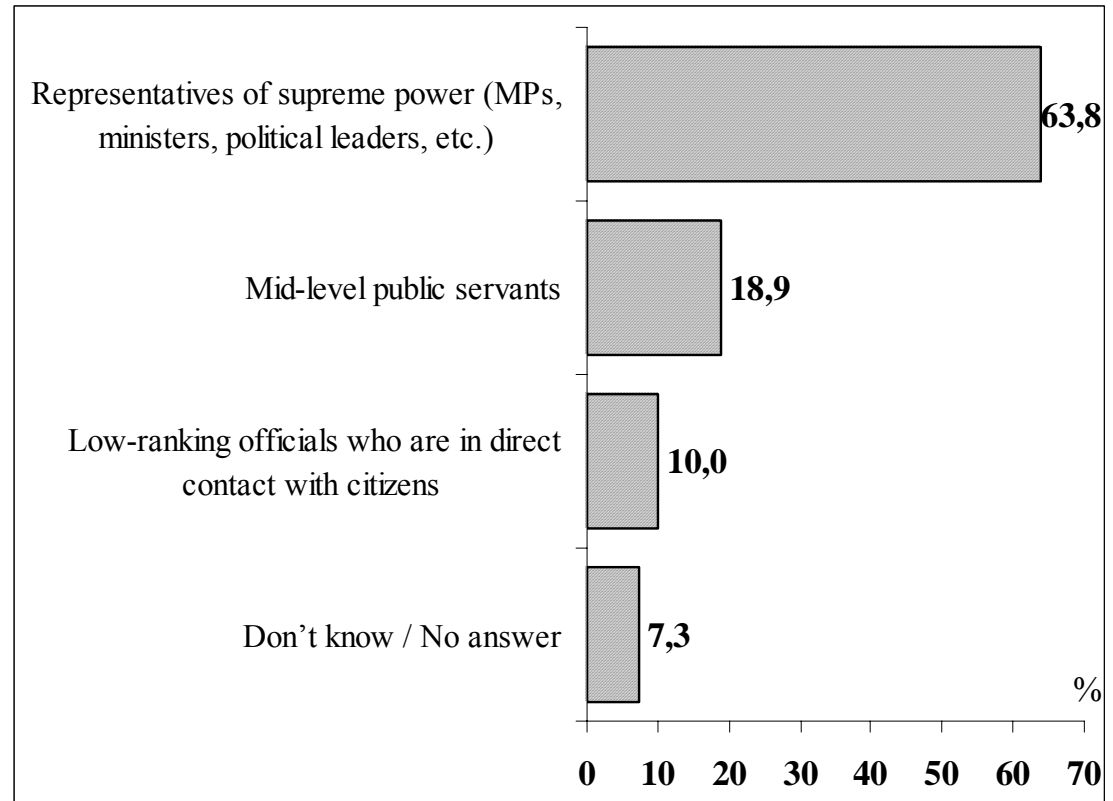
Base: All respondents

SPREAD OF CORRUPTION

Almost two-thirds of the polled public officials share the opinion that **corruption in Bulgaria is most widespread among the representatives of supreme power (MPs, ministers, political leaders)**. Only one person in ten believes the most corrupt to be low-ranking officials who are in direct contact with citizens, i.e. the group of public officials into which the respondents themselves fall. This means that the respondents as a rule do not identify themselves with officials involved in corruption – not contact with citizens, but rank and position are the factors which determine the level of corruption most of all.

FIGURE 9. THE NOTION OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS OF THE SPREAD OF CORRUPTION IN THE COUNTRY

(“IN YOUR OPINION, CORRUPTION IN BULGARIA IS MOST WIDESPREAD AMONG:”)



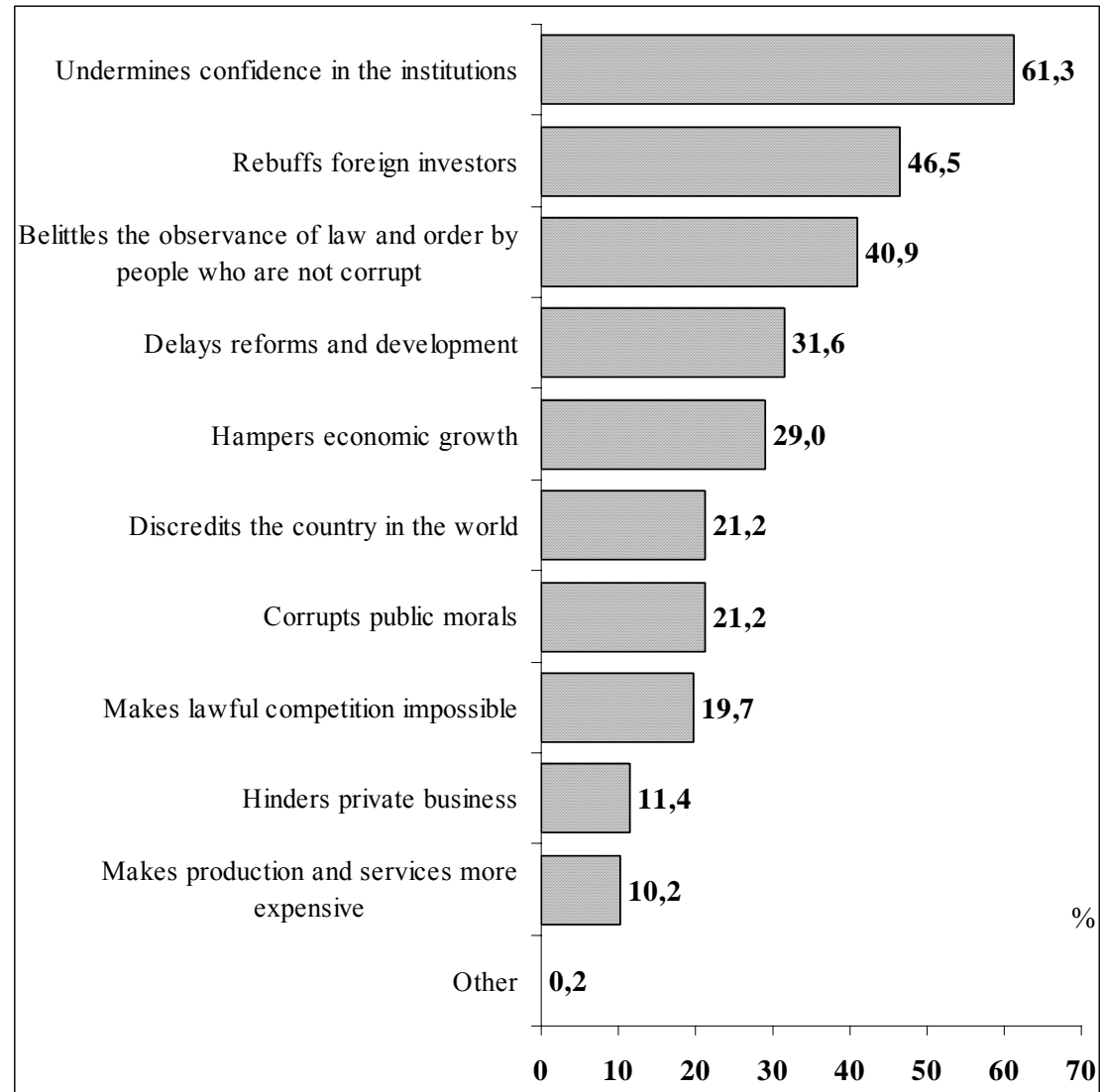
Base: All respondents

CONSEQUENCES OF CORRUPTION

The harmful consequences of corruption are many – both on an economic, as well as on a social and political level, but the public officials consider as most serious *the undermining of confidence in the institutions*.

Rebuffing foreign investors is also among the most negative results of corruption, together with belittling the observance of law and order by people who are not corrupt. In an economic aspect corruption results in delaying the reforms and hampers economic growth. Corruption also has a negative effect from a moral point of view – on the one hand it discredits Bulgaria in the world and, on the other, it undermines public morals.

FIGURE 10. NOTION OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS OF THE MOST HARMFUL CONSEQUENCES OF CORRUPTION*



* *The sum total of the percentages exceeds 100 because the respondents gave more than one answer.*

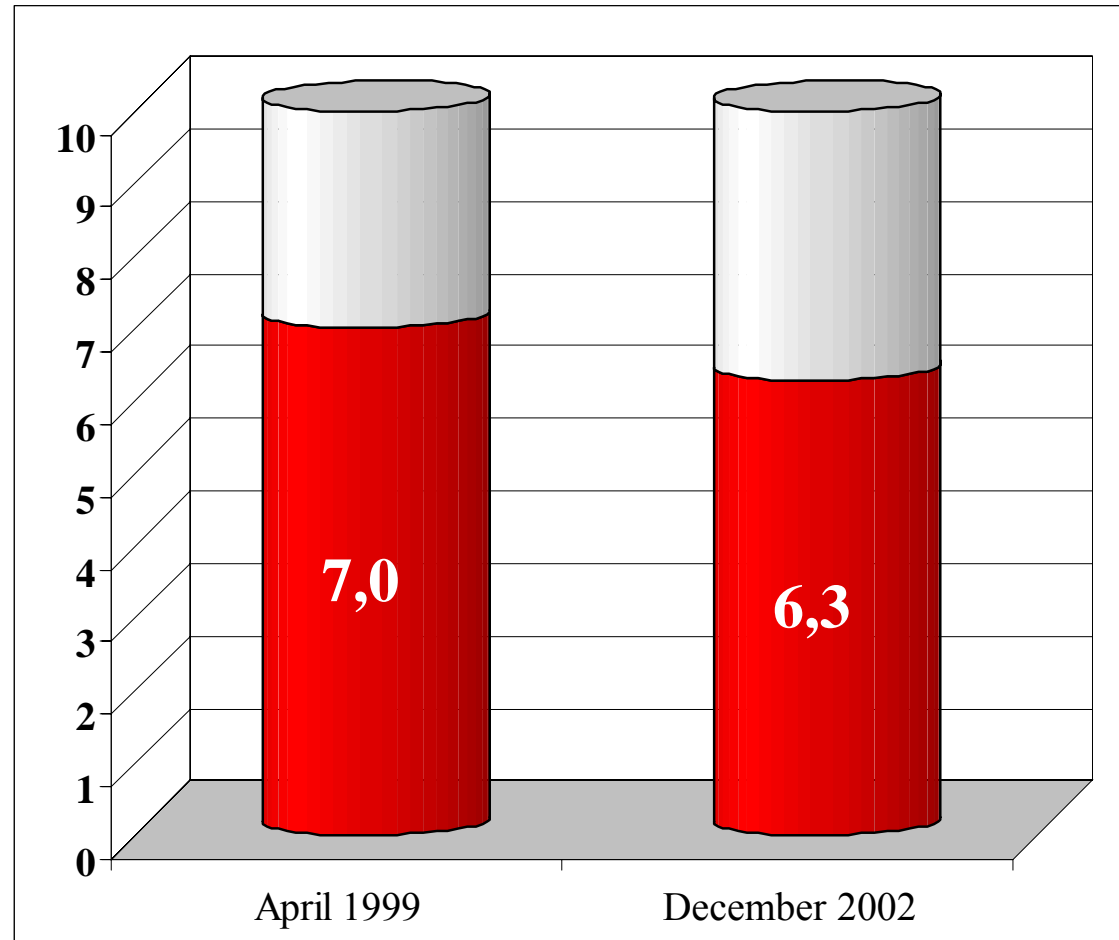
Base: All respondents

**PRACTICAL EFFECTIVENESS OF
CORRUPTION**

This index shows the assessments of the public officials of the degree of turning corruption into an effective means of solving everyday problems.

In December 2002 the value of the index decreased by more than half a point. Despite the registered drop, corrupt behavior and mechanisms largely continue to be perceived by the public officials as a successful social technology for solving personal problems.

FIGURE 11. PRACTICAL EFFECTIVENESS OF CORRUPTION



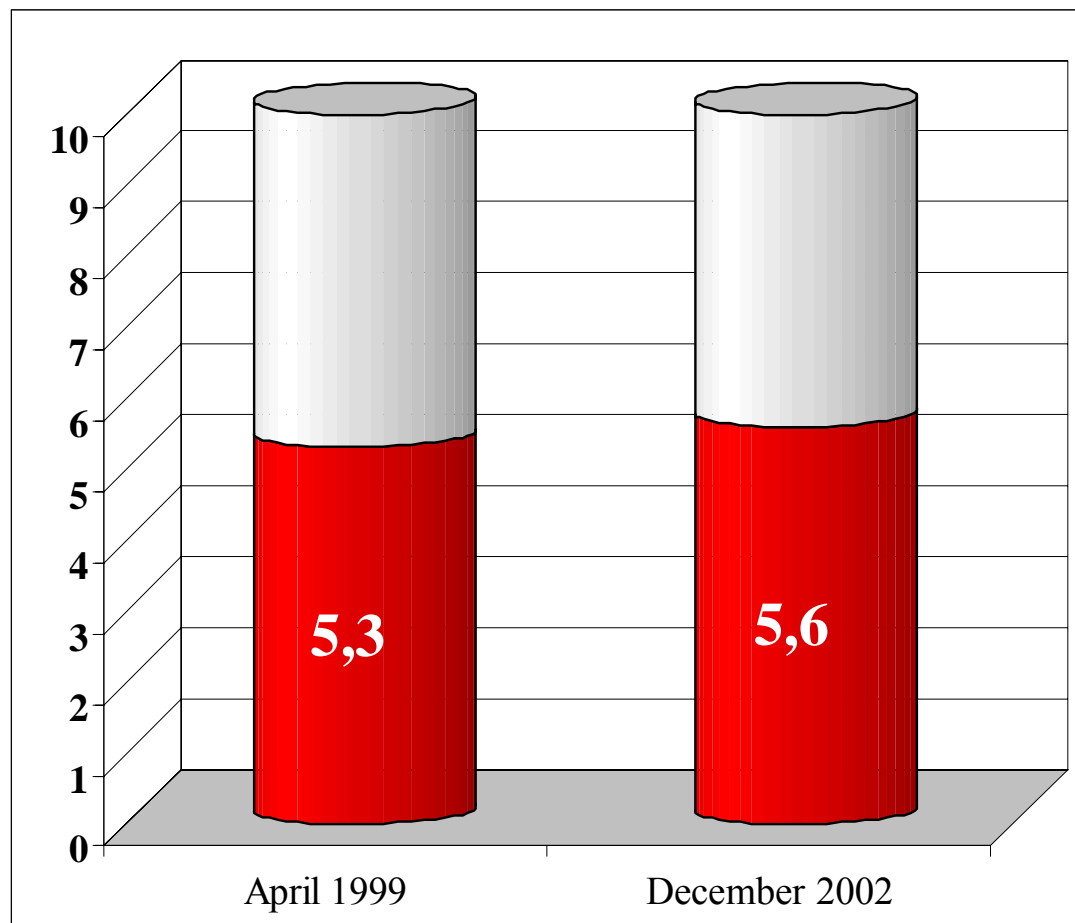
Base: All respondents

EXPECTATIONS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF CORRUPTION

This index registers assessments of the capability (potential) of Bulgarian society to cope with corruption.

The pessimism of the public officials with regard to the possibilities of curbing corruption is significant. A slight increase in the value of the index was registered in December 2002. As among the whole population, this shows the high level of distrust among public officials that the scale of corrupt practices can be decreased.

FIGURE 12. CORRUPTION EXPECTATIONS



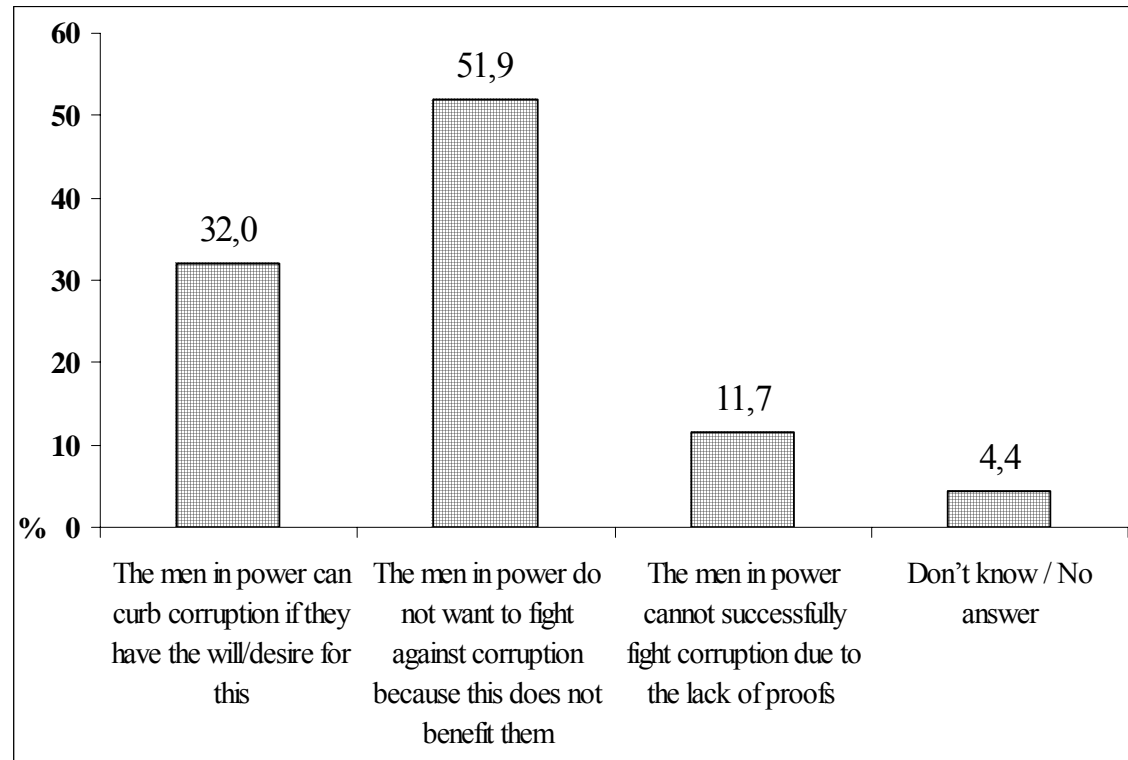
Base: All respondents

MEASURES FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

With regard to the measures taken in order to curb corruption, the prevalent opinion among public sector officials is that *“the men in power do not want to fight corruption because this does not benefit them”*. Nevertheless, the limitation of corruption is possible with manifest political will, the desire of the men in power themselves to cope with the problem being an important factor for this.

FIGURE 13. NOTION OF THE PUBLIC OFFICIALS ABOUT THE MEASURES FOR FIGHTING CORRUPTION, TAKEN BY THE ADMINISTRATION

(“WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS COMES CLOSEST TO YOUR OWN OPINION?”)



Base: All respondents

**MEASURES FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST
CORRUPTION**

A multitude of measures could be taken for the purpose of ensuring the fair attitude of public officials to citizens, without the need of the latter giving them money or gifts. As the most effective measure in this respect the polled public sector officials categorically cite the *increased salaries of employees*. The problem, according to the respondents, can be solved not so much through tighter control or by imposing punishments and sanctions, but by bigger financial incentives for public officials who are in direct contact with citizens.

TABLE 7. MEASURES FOR ENSURING THE FAIR ATTITUDE OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS TO CITIZENS, WITHOUT THE NEED OF THE LATTER GIVING THEM MONEY OR GIFTS

(“I WILL NOW READ OUT A LIST OF MEASURES, WHICH COULD ENSURE THE FAIR ATTITUDE OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS TO CITIZENS, WITHOUT THE NEED OF THE LATTER GIVING THEM MONEY OR GIFTS. WHICH MEASURE WOULD YOU CONSIDER AS THE MOST EFFECTIVE ONE?”)

	(%)
Raising the salaries of officials	41.7
Tighter control and punishments for officials	13.6
Reducing the number of required forms and documents	10.0
Public officials should have better special training, giving them the necessary knowledge and skills	5.6
The rights of citizens should be posted on boards in all administrative services	4.1
Stricter punishments for people who give bribes to officials	3.9
Citizens should have better procedures for appeals and complaints	3.2
Public officials should sign a “Moral code”, defining their behavior towards citizens	2.7
Greater openness – requiring officials to explain their actions to citizens and the mass media	1.9
Encouraging public officials to inform society of irregularities discovered by them in their work	0.5
<i>Don’t know / No answer</i>	12.9

Base: All respondents

Vitosha Research (VR) is a social and market research agency. It has been established as a result of the development of the Sociological program of the Center for the Study of Democracy and started its work in 1989.

Vitosha Research is specialized in carrying out social and market research in the fields of corruption and crime, social policies, economic, political and electoral behaviour, privatization, value orientations and attitudes of Bulgarians, public opinion studies, surveys of media audiences and programs, advertising and market research and others.



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