



Satisfaction with the situation at the country level and with personal circumstances

19 and 14 per cent of respondents believe that the economic and political situation in FYR Macedonia was better in 2016 than four years prior to the survey, in line with the averages for south-eastern Europe (SEE), both at 17 per cent, but below the corresponding figures for the transition region (24 and 28 per cent, respectively). About 20 per cent of those interviewed think that corruption levels improved in the four years preceding the survey.

About 27 per cent of Macedonians state that their household was better off in 2016 as compared to the four years prior to the survey, and 30 per cent are satisfied with their personal financial situation. Both figures compare well with the respective averages for SEE and the transition region as a whole, but they are both below the German ones.

Life satisfaction has increased by 2 percentage points since the last survey, from 33 per cent in 2010 to 35 per cent in 2016. However, it is still lower than the SEE average of 39 per cent and the transition average of 43 per cent, and well below the corresponding figures for Germany and Italy (72 and 42 per cent, respectively).

The percentage of the population that is optimistic about the future has decreased by 9 percentage points since the last survey in 2010. This decline occurred across all age and income groups, except for respondents aged 60 and over. As of 2016, 38 per cent of Macedonian respondents think that children born now will have a better life than the current generations, a figure below the transition region average of 50 per cent, but comparable to the SEE average of 39 per cent.

Attitudes towards democracy and the market economy

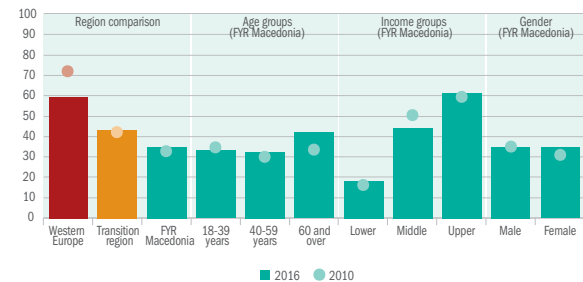
72 and 51 per cent of Macedonian respondents believe that democracy and a market economy are preferable to any other political or economic system. About 13 per cent of those surveyed might prefer an authoritarian regime under some circumstances, while 28 per cent believe that a planned economy might be preferable to a market one. Support for democracy and a market economy have both increased in Macedonia since 2010 and are now stronger than in SEE, the transition region and Italy (but still weaker than in Germany).

Notwithstanding this, many Macedonians believe that their country lacks at least some basic democratic institutions. The percentage of Macedonians who believe that certain democratic institutions exist in their country is lower than in SEE, the transition region, Italy and Germany for almost all of the options covered in the survey. For instance, only 38 per cent of those interviewed believe that peace and stability are guaranteed in the country while only 35 per cent think the country has free elections. This compares with 46 and 41 per cent of respondents, respectively, in the transition region as a whole.

Priorities for government spending

Among Macedonian respondents, 27 per cent of respondents would prefer extra government funding to be spent on helping the poor, a figure more than double the average for the transition countries (13 per cent). This is one of the highest figures in the transition region and also well above the corresponding ones for Germany (5 per cent) and Italy (16 per cent). The second most mentioned priority for extra government spending is health care (26 per cent) while education is third (18 per cent).

CHART 1. Life satisfaction: percentage of respondents who are satisfied with life, all things considered



Sources of information

The main daily sources of information for Macedonian respondents are the television and the radio (56 per cent), followed by discussions with family, friends or colleagues (38 per cent) and the internet and social media (32 per cent). The only sources of information that have not lost popularity since 2010 are the internet and social media, which registered a slight increase in usage rates by one percentage point. This improvement is, however, not uniform across demographic groups: it is stronger for the younger respondents (those aged 18 to 50) and for those in the lower income group.

Self-assessed health

65 per cent of Macedonians report a positive health self-assessment, a value that exceeds the averages for the transition region and Italy (both 54 per cent) and is comparable to average levels of self-assessed health observed in the rest of SEE as well as in Germany (65 and 68 per cent, respectively).

Quality of public services

Respondents in FYR Macedonia tend to be less satisfied with the quality of public services compared to the average respondent in the transition region, Germany and Italy. Overall, however, most Macedonians are satisfied with the quality of their telephone lines (83 per cent), and their electricity service and heating provision (74 and 71 per cent, respectively). The sole exception is the quality of the local road network, which is considered to be satisfactory by only 40 per cent of those surveyed.

Social and economic mobility

When Macedonian respondents were asked from a list of options what they thought were the most important factors for success in life in their country, about 46 per cent of them chose "political connections". Although this striking figure has slightly decreased since 2010, it remains the highest across the whole of the transition region. About 34 per cent of Macedonians believe that "effort and hard work" are important factors for success in life, while "intelligence and skills" are mentioned by only 15 per cent of those surveyed.

Attitudes towards women

85 and 82 per cent of female and male respondents in FYR Macedonia, respectively, believe that women are as competent as men as business executives, and around 78 per cent of those surveyed believe that it is important that their daughter achieves a university education. However, 48 per cent of men and 37 per cent of women think that men make better politicians than women and 38 per cent of men and 33 per cent of women believe that a woman should do the household chores, even if her husband is not working. About 56 per cent of respondents of either gender favour a traditional family arrangement where the man works and the woman takes care of the family.

CHART 2. Optimism: percentage of respondents who are optimistic about the future of the younger generation

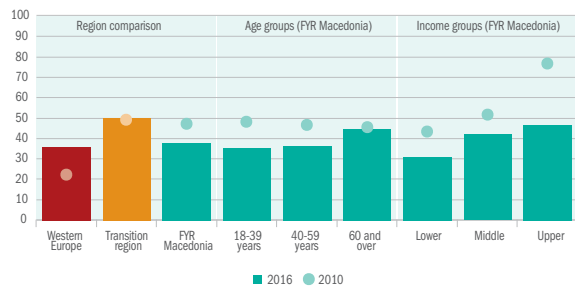


CHART 3. Market economy and democracy: percentage of respondents who prefer a market over a planned economy and democracy over an authoritarian government

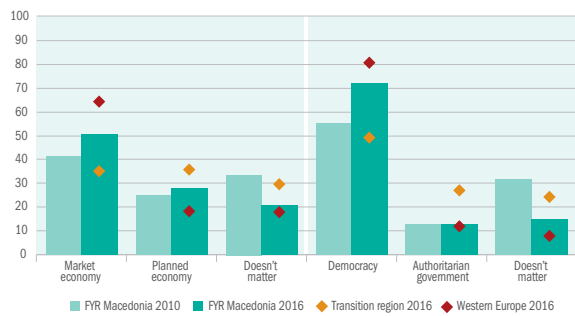


CHART 4. Basic democratic institutions: percentage of respondents who agree that the country has these basic democratic institutions

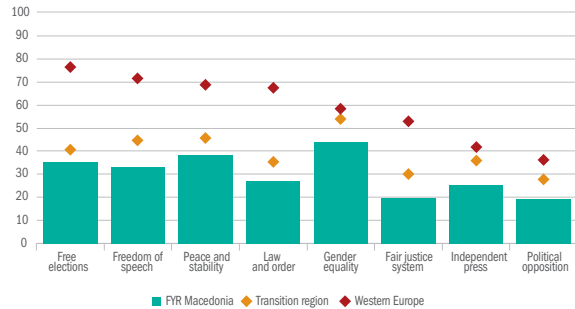


CHART 5. Priorities for government spending

Panel A: Percentage of respondents who identify a given area as a priority in terms of government spending



Panel B: Breakdown of preferences for the top priority (assisting the poor)

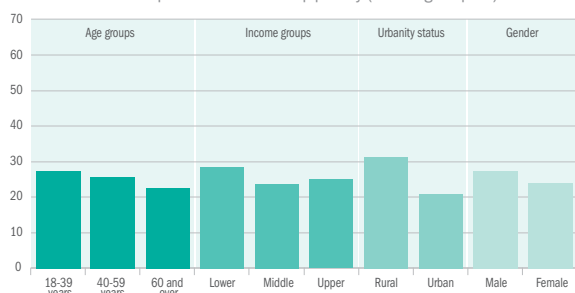


CHART 6. Sources of information: percentage of respondents who use these different sources of information

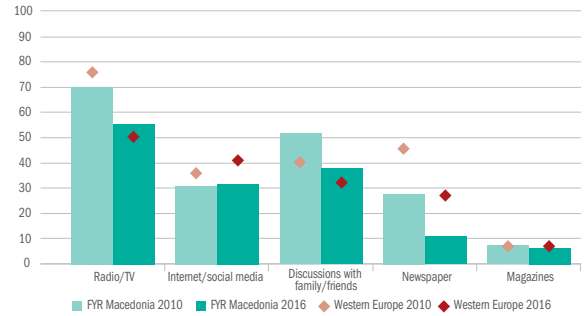


CHART 7. Health assessment: percentage of respondents who report themselves to be in good health (self-assessed)

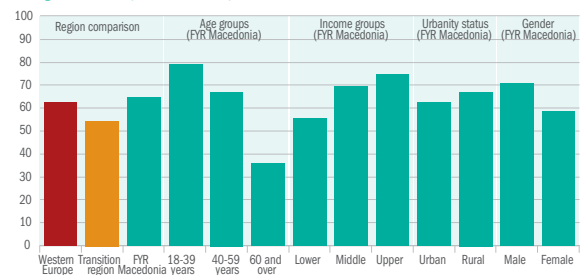


CHART 8. Quality of services: percentage of respondents who are satisfied with the quality of public services, by category



CHART 9. Factors for success: percentage of respondents who identify the given factor as the most important for success, by income level

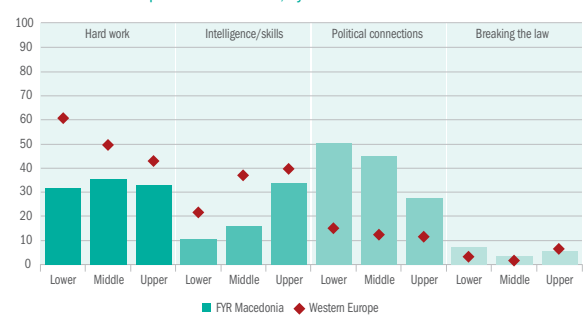


CHART 10. Attitudes towards women: percentage of respondents who agree with the statements below

