



Caucasus Research Resource Centers - ARMENIA
A Program of the Eurasia Partnership Foundation



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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The Caucasus Research Resource Centers will present the 2008 Armenia Corruption Survey of Households

Yerevan, Armenia. On July 21st the Caucasus Research Resource Centers, a program of the Eurasia Partnership Foundation in Armenia, will present the key findings from the USAID Mobilizing Action Against Corruption (MAAC) Activity's 2008 Armenia Corruption Survey of Households. The survey sample included 1,549 adults from all over the country.

The current economic crisis has had drastic effects on Armenia, and the South Caucasus in general, but what persists throughout both the global crisis and periods of prosperity is the presence of corruption. The Corruption survey provides a unique and valuable opportunity to examine the general perceptions, personal experience, and perceptions of the government's anticorruption activity.

The basic findings of the survey reveal that 86% consider corruption a very serious problem. The level of corruption is perceived commonly in the electoral system (66%), police (66%), healthcare (61%) and education (58%). Inside the public sector, 45% of respondents see corruption as more severe among high-ranking public officials, whereas only 9% believe it is most prevalent among low ranking public officials.

The overall perception of what constitutes corruption was assessed: 95% agreed that paying a judge to achieve favorable treatment was a form of corruption, while only 37% considered using an office car by a government employee for private purposes to be a corrupt act. But there is some hope, though 53% of individuals reported they would pay a bribe if asked, 72% stated they would not take a bribe if offered. Surprisingly, punishment is not an effective way to prevent bribery since only 5% of those who would not pay a bribe, and 11% of those who would not take one, mentioned a high risk of being punished.

What is most concerning is that more than half of the respondents believe there is nothing they can do personally to reduce corruption. The data shows that from the respondents' perspective the government is doing very little, with 52% of Yerevan respondents and about 30% of respondents from other cities and rural areas disagreeing with the statement that the government has a sincere desire to combat corruption.

Despite the government and societal inadequacies, the perceived level of corruption in Armenia slightly diminished: 30% of respondents of the survey believe it has decreased relative to the year before, while 17% believe it has increased.

In the long run, this survey provides a unique tool for the Government and NGOs in Armenia to create solid strategies to fight corruption taking into account the public opinion and perceptions, as well as empower citizens of in defending their rights.

The survey instruments and outputs (the questionnaire, show cards, the survey database in SPSS format, the final analytical report) are available for downloads at www.crcc.am. The mentioned package is also recorded on CDs for dissemination.

About CRRC

CRRC is a network of resource and training centers established in 2003, in the capital cities of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia with the goal of strengthening social science research and public policy analysis in the South Caucasus. A partnership between the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Eurasia Partnership Foundation and local universities (Yerevan State University for CRRC-Armenia), the CRRC network offers scholars and practitioners stable opportunities for integrated research, training and collaboration in the region. www.crcc.am

About MAAC Activity

Launched in July 2007 as a comprehensive anti-corruption initiative aimed at reducing corruption on both ground and system levels, MAAC provides support to anticorruption activities of the Government of Armenia and civil society by establishing a mechanism to address grievances and effect systems-level and procedural reforms, designing and implementing anti-corruption initiatives with targeted government agencies, supporting civil society organizations in developing innovative approaches to mobilize action against corruption, and increasing awareness among youth and adults against corruption. www.maac.am