



2022

**The Public Opinion Poll  
On Corruption and Anti-Corruption Efforts for 2022**

**AMAN**  
Transparency Palestine



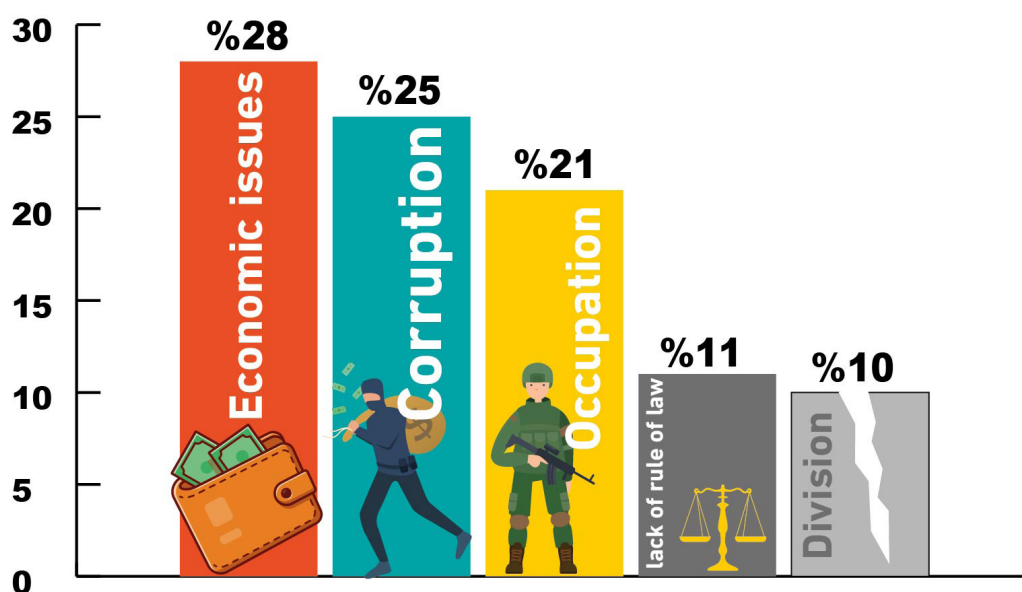
# **The Public Opinion Poll On Corruption and Anti-Corruption Efforts for 2022**

## **Executive Summary**

**November  
2022**

The Coalition for Accountability and Integrity (AMAN) conducted a poll of the Palestinian public opinion in the West Bank (including Jerusalem) and Gaza Strip during the period 10-16 September 2022<sup>1</sup>. The aim is to identify the changes in the citizens' perception and awareness of corruption and anti-corruption efforts.

Economic issues, the spread of corruption, occupation, lack of rule of law and the continued division constitute the five main issues that have priority according to the citizens (28%, 25%, 21%, 11% and 10.5% respectively).



Twenty eight percent of the respondents to the poll pointed out that the escalating economic crises constitute the first challenge that must constitute a priority. This rate is higher in the north and south West Bank than in the middle, and higher among the private sector employees.

The rate of the respondents who consider the spread of corruption the main issue that must constitute a priority increased to 30% among the inhabitants of villages and towns, compared to 22% in the refugee camps and 24% in the cities. It amounted to 33% among the government employees, compared to 27% among the private sector employees.

Thirty one percent of the citizens in the West Bank considered the spread of corruption a challenge that must be addressed as a priority, compared to 16% in Gaza Strip, while the findings revealed a higher sensitivity among the citizens of Gaza Strip towards the impact of division.

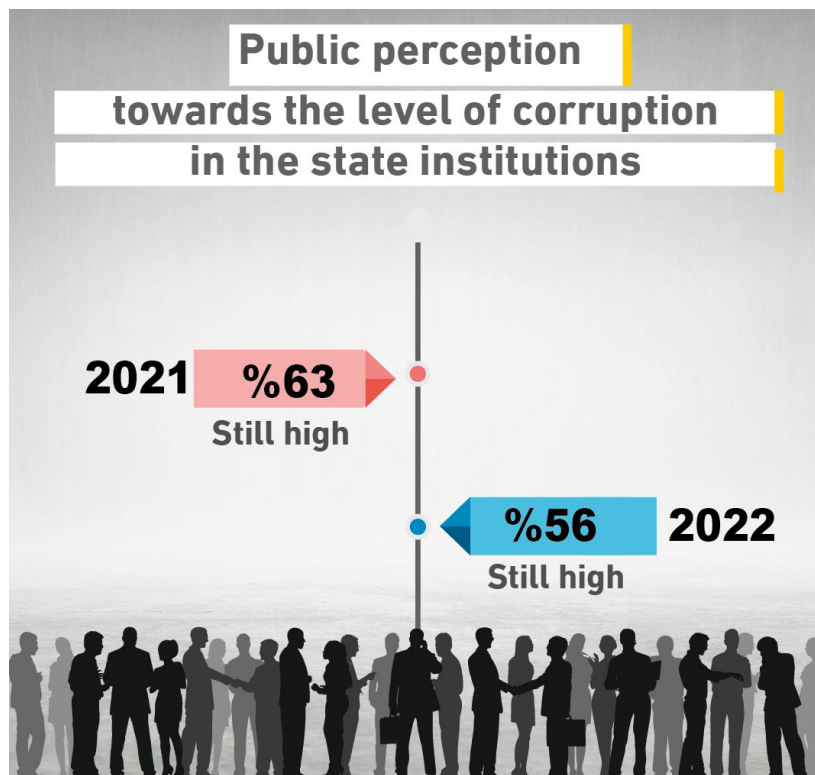
<sup>1</sup> The Coalition for Integrity and Accountability- AMAN signed a contract with Qiyas Center for Surveys and Measuring Opinion Polls in its capacity as an expert institution specializing in survey research, to conduct this poll according to the statistical criteria adopted in public opinion polls.

## Improved public perception towards the level of corruption

- The rate of citizens who expressed pessimistic expectations towards corruption and anti-corruption efforts for the next year decreased, as 49% of the citizens said that corruption would increase, compared to 59% last year.



- The rate of citizens who believe that the rate of corruption in the state institutions is still high dropped from 63% in 2021 to 56% in 2022.



## The government institutions are the most corrupt

The majority of interviewed citizens in the West Bank and Gaza Strip this year believe that the sectors most susceptible to corruption are the government institutions, especially the senior employees in the executive public sector institutions (ministries, security services, local authorities).

The service delivery ministries (Finance, Health, Social Development, security institutions, Education) are the most susceptible to corruption from the citizens' perspective.

## Favoritism (wasta) and Nepotism are the most common forms of corruption

The offenses of favoritism and nepotism, embezzlement of public funds, breach of trust, abuse of power, bribery and money laundering are the most common forms of corruption. Twenty four percent of the citizens considered favoritism and nepotism as the most common offense, hence ranking first, followed by embezzlement of public funds (23%), breach of trust (13%), abuse of power (12%), bribery for delivering a public service (10%) and money laundering (8%).



The citizens believe that weak compliance with the rule of law, absence of the legislative council and the control bodies, lack of seriousness in holding the corrupt senior persons accountable, weak civil society organizations, and occupation have all contributed to the spread of corruption in Palestine. The citizens also believe that some services suffer from poor integrity, especially the appointments and promotions in senior positions, health services, distribution of humanitarian aid and issuing permits.

The citizens still perceive favoritism as means to obtain public services. The respondents who resorted to favoritism justified their behavior by:

- Wanting to reduce the time required in following the bureaucratic procedures.
- Fear that another ineligible person takes it because of corruption.
- The culture of the Palestinian people who do not perceive favoritism as a wrongful doing.

## Increase in the rate of bribery in 2022

The rate of the respondents who said that they or one of their relatives paid or gave gifts to an employee amounted to 24%. Comparing this rate with the average of the previous three years reveals an increase by 6 points (24% compared with 18%) in the rate of those who said that they or one of their relatives paid or gave gifts to an employee in return for a public service. The low income of some junior employees, the need, the limited opportunities for the citizens to obtain services and failure to hold the senior officials accountable encouraged some employees who work in service delivery to ask for bribes.



Ten percent of the citizens said that bribery is the most common form of corruption, while 14% said it is the second most common form and 17% considered it the third most common form of corruption in Palestine.

According to the respondents, bribery is most common in the service of issuing official permits in Gaza Strip, as 41% considered that bribery is most common in issuing official permits.

The citizens still consider that the crimes related to expired and spoiled food and drugs have increased in 2022



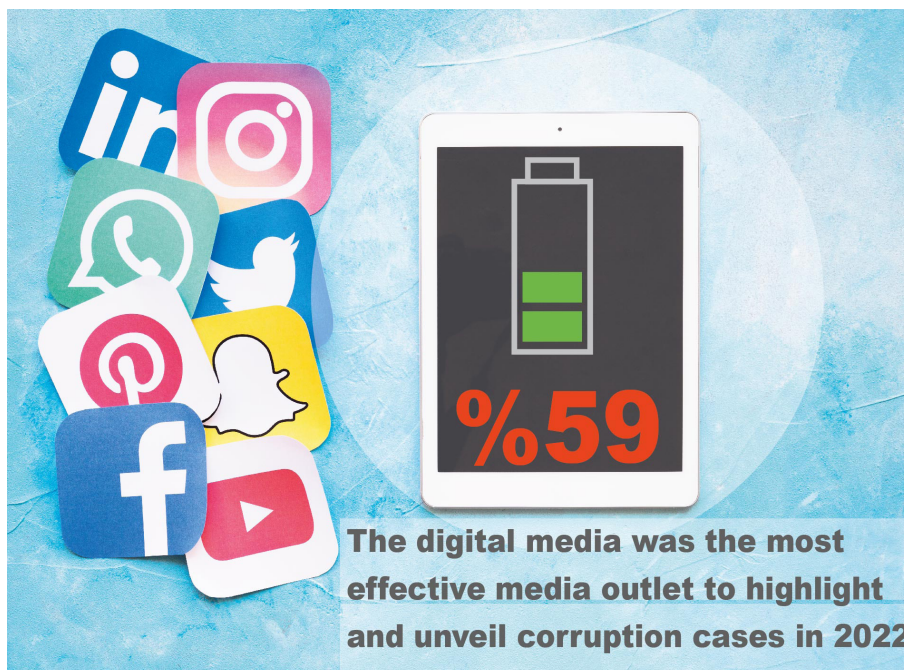
Seventy four percent of the citizens believe that the offenses related to expired and spoiled food and drugs have **increased in 2022, compared to 70% in 2021** because of:

- Failure to hold the offenders accountable.
- Use of favoritism, nepotism and cronyism to overlook such offenses.
- The applicable legislations do not provide for deterrent penalties.
- Lack of public awareness towards those offenses.

The citizens still believe that the media is not playing an effective role in fighting corruption



Eighty-five percent of the citizens believe that the Palestinian media plays a poor or medium role in unveiling corruption cases. On the other hand, 59% of the citizens believe that the digital media was the most effective media outlet to highlight and unveil corruption cases in 2022.





**Although the rate of citizens who believe that the judiciary is corrupt has decreased, it continues to be high (68%).**

Despite the approval of the Whistleblower Protection Regulations, and the increase in the rate of those who believe that reporting corruption is a duty according to the law compared to previous years, the majority of citizens continue to believe that citizens refrain from reporting corruption. The reasons are lack of sufficient protection to whistleblowers and witnesses, lack of sufficient awareness about corruption and its forms, ignorance of the competent authorities that receive corruption complaints and fear of reprisal.

**A vast majority of citizens consider anti-corruption efforts insufficient**

A vast majority of the citizens (85%) consider the efforts exerted to combat corruption insufficient. According to the citizens, the most important reasons for insufficient anti-corruption efforts are:

- 1- Lack of transparency in the administration of state institutions.
- 2- Lack of political will to hold the corrupt accountable.
- 3- The penalties against the offenders of corruption offenses are not deterrent.
- 4- Lack of role models among the officials, who would be compliant with the values of integrity and preserve public resources and interests.

**Half the citizens are not convinced in the efficiency and effectiveness of the efforts of the anti-corruption agencies in combatting corruption in the West Bank**

While the rate of those who believe that the anti-corruption agencies in the West Bank are independent has increased by double compared to the findings of the polls of the past five years, however half the citizens are not convinced in the **efficiency and effectiveness of the efforts of the anti-corruption agencies in combatting corruption in the West Bank. They continue to doubt their independence and believe that the powerful political parties interfere in their work.** The respondents to the poll believe that the following parties interfere the most in the work of the anti-corruption agencies: (1) The council of ministers and the ministers, (2) the presidency, (3) the security services, (4) the governors and mayors, and (5) the party leaders.

**The citizens in Gaza Strip are not convinced of the efforts of the anti-corruption agencies**

A high rate of citizens in Gaza Strip are not convinced of the efforts of the anti-corruption agencies. They are skeptical towards the independence of the anti-corruption agencies, and believe that they are under the influence of the ruling authority in Gaza such as the security services, the Attorney-General, PLC members and party leaders.

The findings reveal that the opinions of the citizens in the West Bank and Gaza over the deteriorating level of independence and effectiveness of anti-corruption agencies (Anti-Corruption Commission and the State Audit and Administrative Control Bureau in the West Bank, and the Anti-Corruption and Money Crimes Prosecution and the State Audit and Administrative Control Bureau in Gaza Strip) are close.

**They also reveal that those agencies face interferences and influence of different parties, such as the presidency, security services and faction leaders in the West Bank, and ( Hamas) in particular in Gaza Strip. This may undermine the public trust in anti-corruption agencies in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip.**

There were clear discrepancies in the citizens' attitudes, opinions and perceptions in the current poll in each of the West Bank and Gaza Strip towards certain issues. The citizens' opinion reflected a typical attitude towards the Palestinian Authority by Hamas constituency in each of Gaza Strip and the West Bank. They were more critical in the West Bank, while their attitudes towards the existing authority in Gaza Strip were more lenient, according to the poll, in several aspects such as promotions, appointments, concentration of corruption and the most corrupt groups. This reflects the level and impact of factional affiliation in evaluating matters. The opinions seem less stringent among the constituency of the ruling faction in the West Bank. For example, 69% of the respondents in the West Bank believe that the level of corruption in the Palestinian society is high, compared with 37% in Gaza Strip. Regarding nepotism in the appointments and promotions in ordinary government jobs, a high rate is noted in the West Bank compared with Gaza Strip, as 93% of the respondents said that it existed, compared with 60% in Gaza Strip.

Regarding change in the level of corruption in 2022, 59% of the respondents in the West Bank believe that corruption increased, compared with 32% in Gaza. Regarding the citizens' future expectations about the spread of corruption in 2023, 63% of the respondents in the West Bank believe that it will increase, compared with 29% in Gaza.

Despite the improving service delivery and work procedures in the Palestinian state institutions during the past years, the findings of the opinion polls during the past years indicated that the citizens' perceptions and attitudes towards fighting corruption have not changed. This may be explained by the lack of openness towards anti-corruption measures by the ruling authorities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The social media is replete with news and comments with no means to verify their accuracy, which leads to a high level of sensitivity among the Palestinian public. This is more the case in the West Bank because of the lack of trust and the high level of criticism of the performance of the ruling class, held responsible for the failure to hold legislative elections. Furthermore, the general public feeling towards the weak institutions of the political system affected the level of the citizens' satisfaction with the performance of the state institutions.



**AMAN was established in 2000 as a civil society organization that seeks to combat corruption and promote integrity, transparency and accountability in the Palestinian society. The Coalition was first formed by an initiative from a number of civil society organizations working in the field of democracy, human rights and good governance. In 2006, the Coalition was accredited as a national chapter for Transparency International.**

**AMAN is a Palestinian think tank and a specialized body providing knowledge on corruption at the local and regional level through producing specialized reports and studies. The periodic publications include: The annual Integrity and Anti-Corruption Report, the annual Palestinian Integrity Index and the National Integrity System studies and reports, in addition to the Coalition's continued contribution to produce reports and studies on the status of corruption in the Arab region.**

**As part of the global anti-corruption movement - and of international alliances and partnerships with relevant specialized coalitions and organizations - AMAN plays a key role in the transfer and contextualization of necessary international knowledge and tools to combat corruption in all sectors.**

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