

Ghana Center for Democratic Development
Accra, Ghana
3 December 2019

News release

Ghanaians perceive increase in corruption level, give government low marks on fighting graft, new Afrobarometer study shows

More than half of Ghanaians say the level of corruption in the country has increased and the government is doing a poor job in fighting it, a new Afrobarometer survey shows. Approval ratings for the government's anti-corruption efforts have declined sharply since 2017 after more than doubling in the previous three years.

The survey shows that most Ghanaians perceive at least "some" corruption in key public institutions, and a majority fear retaliation if they report graft to the authorities.

Ghana ranks 78th out of 180 countries on Transparency International's 2018 Corruption Perceptions Index, three places below its 2017 position.

Key findings

- Among key public officials in Ghana, the police, judges and magistrates, Members of Parliament, civil servants, and tax officials are most widely perceived as corrupt (Figure 1). But perceived corruption among the police has declined slightly compared to 2017.
- The Army, religious leaders, and the presidency are the most trusted public institutions (by 72%, 63%, and 58% who say they trust them "somewhat" or "a lot"), while opposition political parties (37%), local government officials (38%), and tax officials (39%) are least trusted (Figure 2).
- More than half (53%) of Ghanaians say corruption in the country has worsened "somewhat" or "a lot" during the year preceding the survey, a 17-percentage-point increase compared to 2017. This follows a huge (47-percentage-point) improvement between 2014 and 2017 (Figure 3).
- The police are the institution that the largest number of citizens report bribing to access services. Among those who had contact with key public services during the previous year, four in 10 say they paid a bribe to avoid problems with the police (42%) or to obtain police assistance (39%) (Figure 4).
- Six in 10 Ghanaians (61%) believe they risk retaliation or other negative consequences if they report incidents of corruption. Only one-third (34%) say they can report corruption without fear of retaliation (Figure 5).
- Compared to 2017, there has been a 27-percentage-point drop in popular approval ratings of the government's performance in fighting corruption – a dramatic reversal of earlier gains. Only a minority (40%) say the government is doing a "fairly" or "very" good job (Figure 6).

Afrobarometer surveys

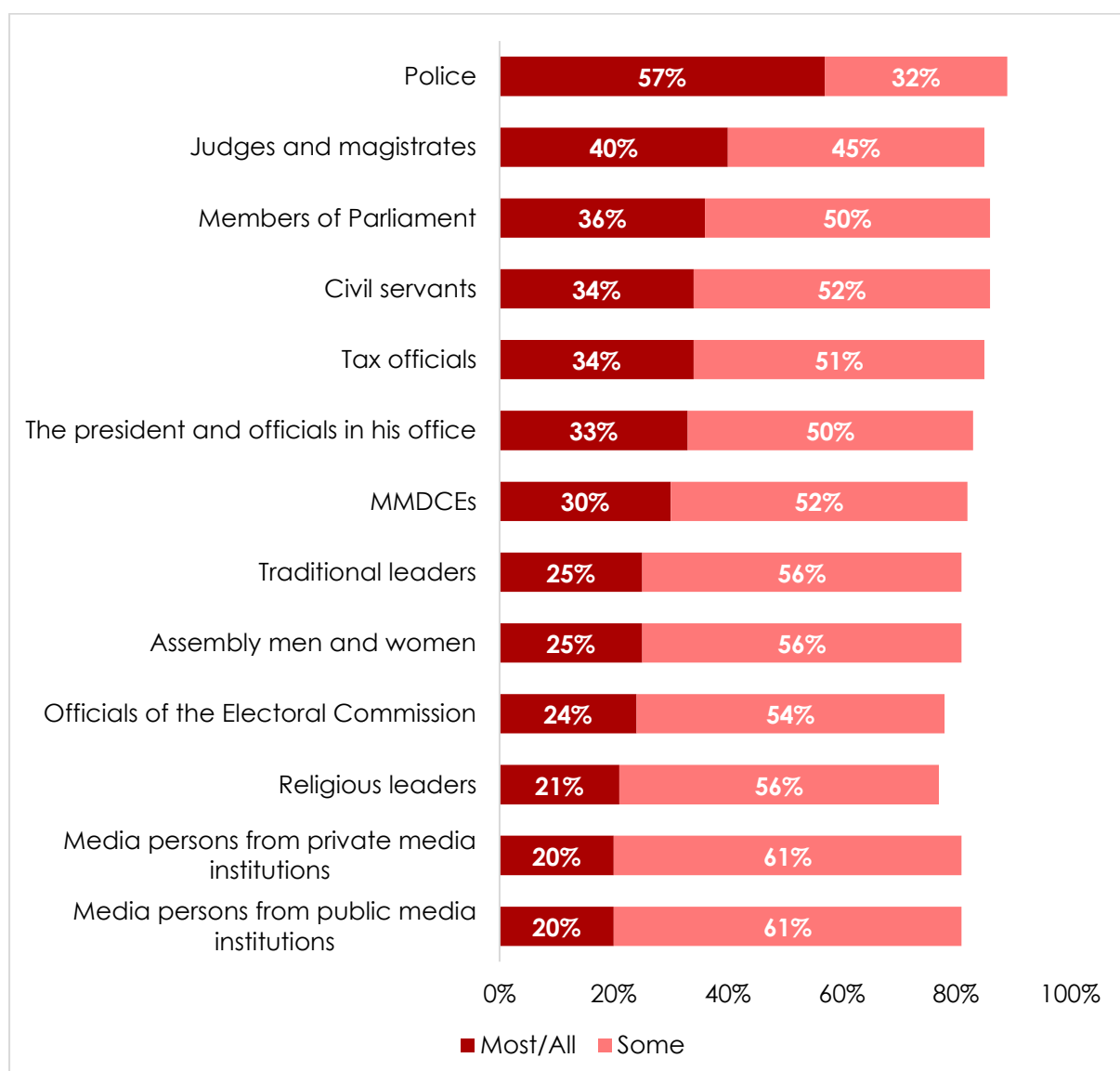
Afrobarometer heads a pan-African, nonpartisan research network that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions, and related issues across

Africa. Seven rounds of surveys were completed in up to 38 countries between 1999 and 2018. Round 8 surveys are planned in at least 35 countries in 2019/2020. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples.

The Afrobarometer team in Ghana, led by the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana), interviewed 2,400 adult Ghanaians between 16 September and 3 October 2019. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-2 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys were conducted in Ghana in 1999, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2014, and 2017.

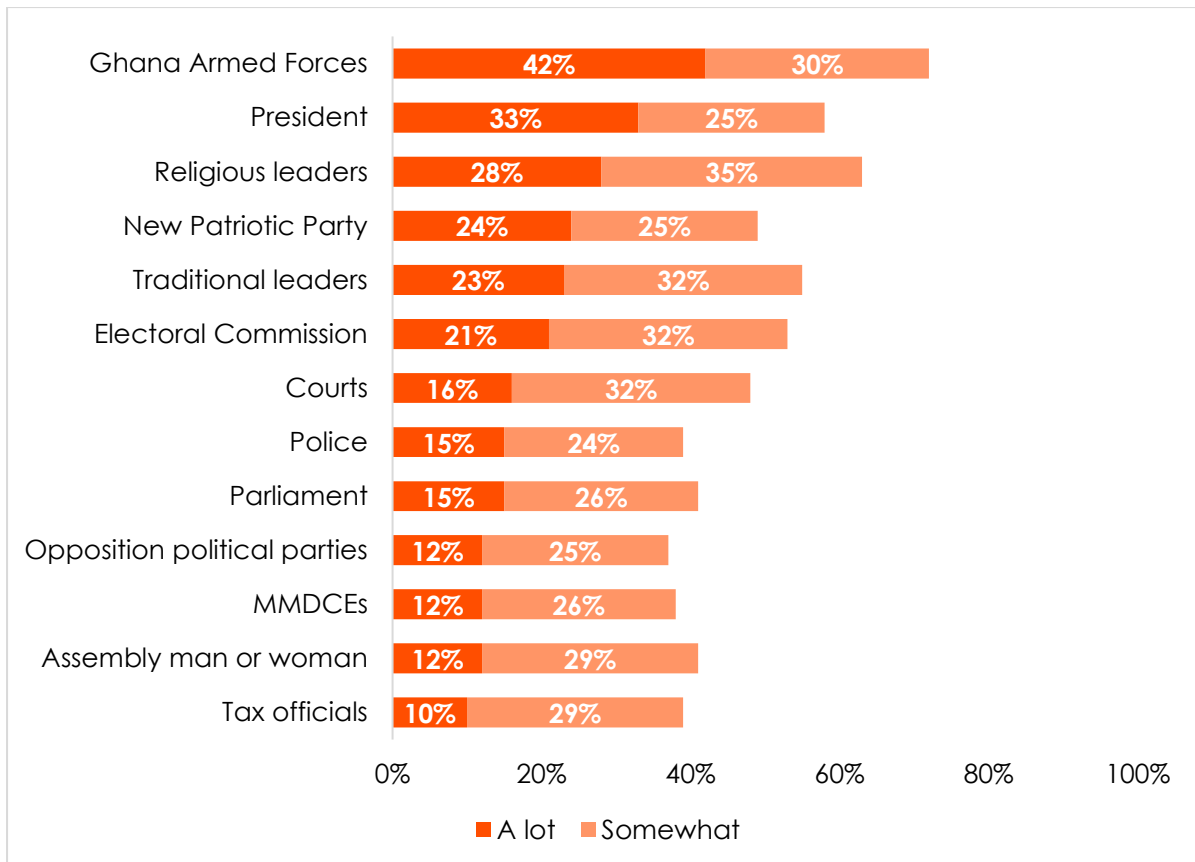
Charts

Figure 1: Who is corrupt | Ghana | 2019



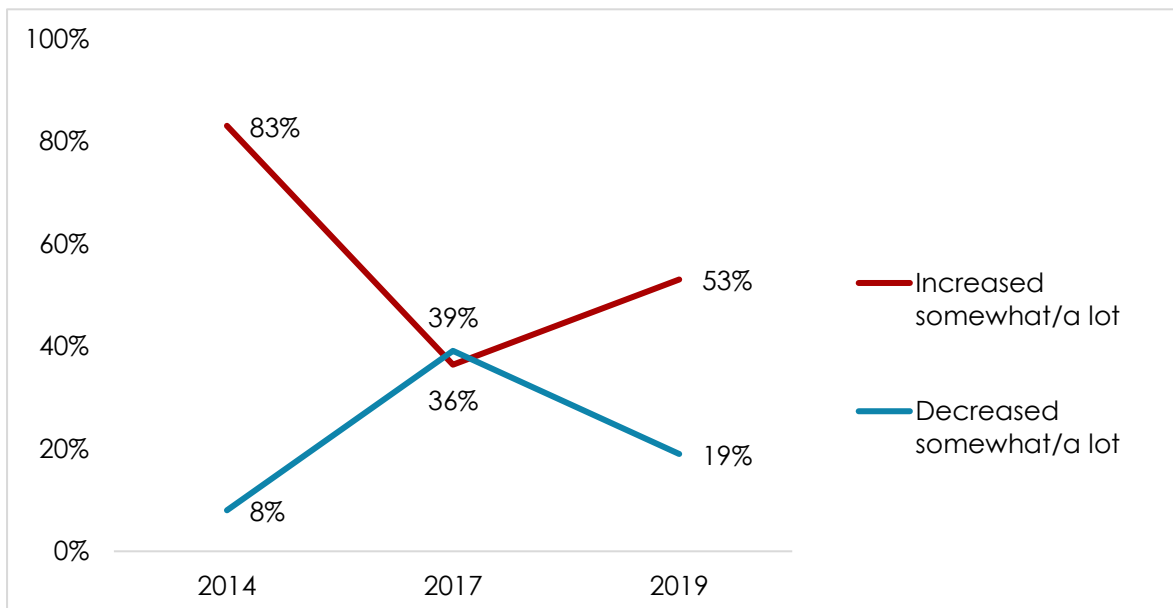
Respondents were asked: How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say?

Figure 2: Trust in institutions | Ghana | 2019



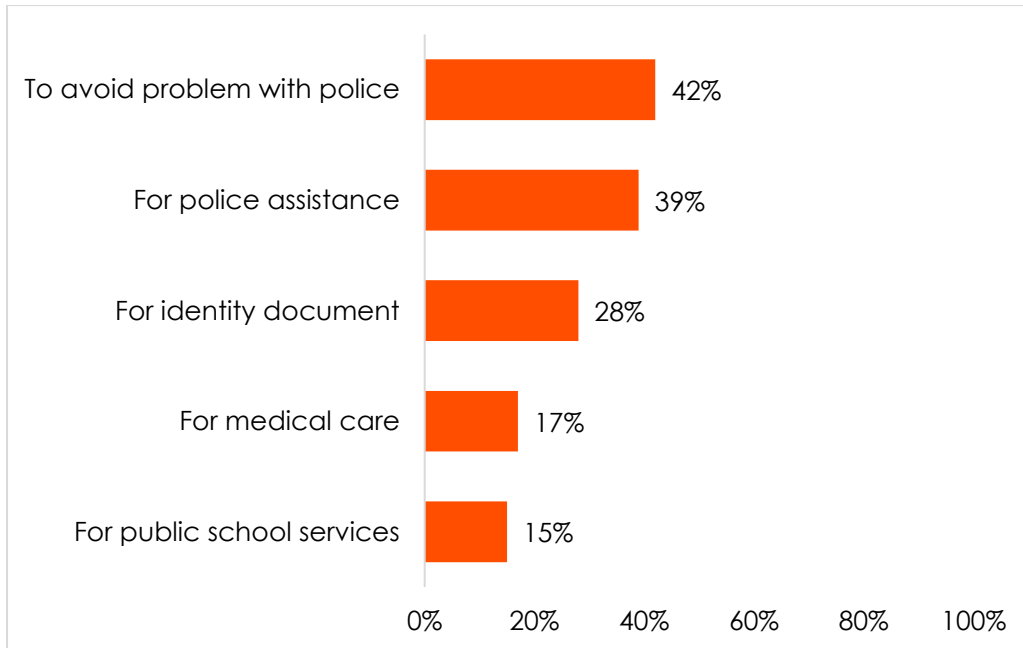
Respondents were asked: How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say?

Figure 3: Level of corruption | Ghana | 2014-2019



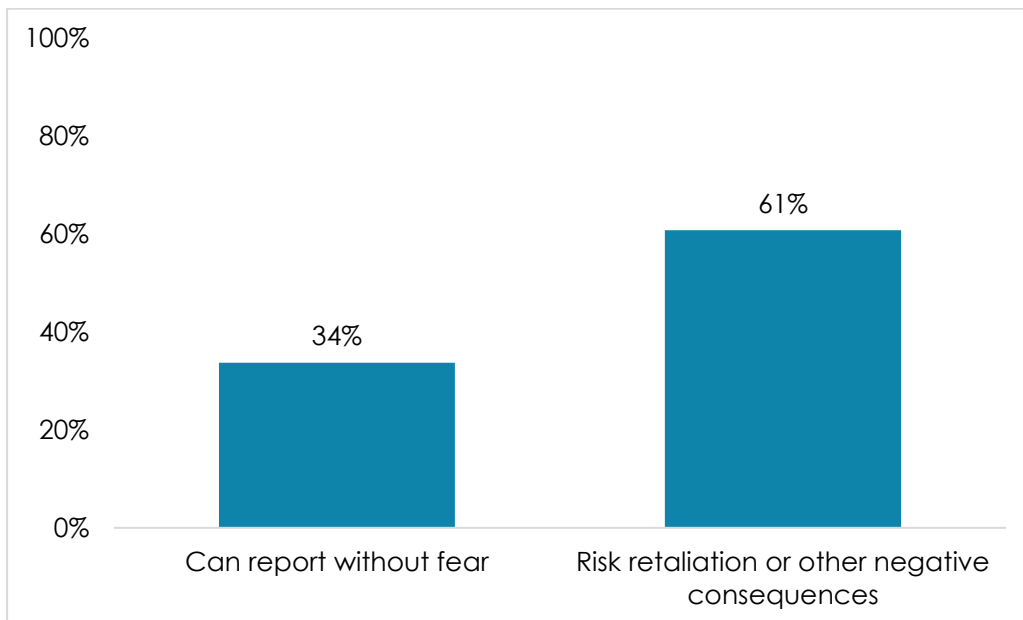
Respondents were asked: In your opinion, over the past year, has the level of corruption in this country increased, decreased, or stayed the same

Figure 4: Paid bribe to access public services | Ghana | 2019



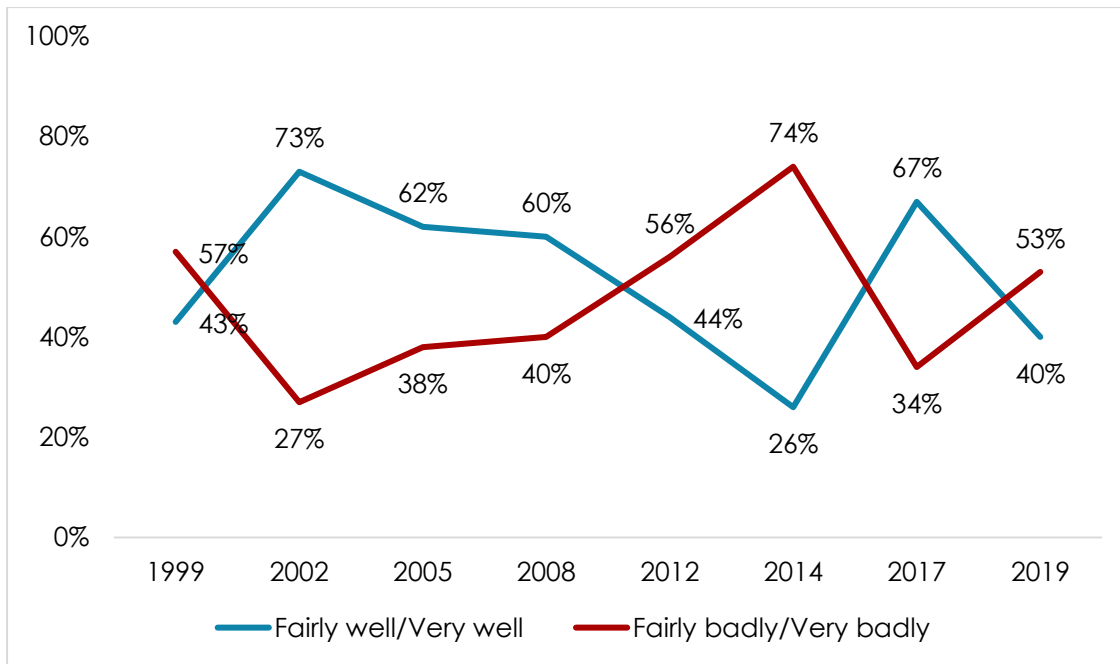
Respondents who had contact with key public services during the previous year were asked: And how often, if ever, did you have to pay a bribe, give a gift, or do a favour [for a public official to obtain the needed assistance or avoid problems]? (% who say "once or twice," "a few times," or "often")

Figure 5: People risk retaliation if they report corruption | Ghana | 2019



Respondents were asked: In this country, can ordinary people report incidents of corruption without fear, or do they risk retaliation or other negative consequences if they speak out?

Figure 6: Government's performance in fighting corruption | Ghana | 1999-2019



Respondents were asked: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say?

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