

**FINDINGS FROM THE OPINION POLL CONDUCTED IN THE
MUNICIPALITY OF SHKODRA**



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Introduction

An opinion poll, funded by Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, was conducted by fixed-line telephone with people from the urban area of Shkodra in the period March 26 – April 5, 2016. The interviewees were asked what they think is done best and worst so far by the new local administration; what people's expectations about potential improvements in different areas of local governing are; what do they think should be the number one priority for mayors, and so on.

Around 1400 people were contacted by phone in Shkodra to achieve the stated objective of 800 completed questionnaires. The sample was balanced through reweighting at the end of interviews' completion, to represent the urban population of the Shkodra Municipality demographically and politically. The maximum margin of statistical error for this sample is plus/minus 3.5%.

Results

1 – Based on what you have seen and heard in the last 8 months, what do you think the Municipality has done best:

- a- 25% Street cleaning and garbage collection
- b- 20% Street lightning
- c- 5% Street repair
- d- 16% Events organization
- e- 1% Responding to emergencies/citizens' complaints
- f- 30% Nothing
- g- 3% Don't know

2 – Based on what you have seen and heard in the last 8 months, what do you think the Municipality has done worst:

- a- 11% Street cleaning and garbage collection
- b- 1% Street lightning
- c- 24% Street repair
- d- 2% Events organization
- e- 3% Responding to emergencies/citizens' complaints
- f- 17% Nothing
- g- 30% Everything
- h- 12% Don't know

3 – Based on what you have seen and heard in the last 8 months, do you think that in the next 3 years the Municipality will improve street cleaning and garbage collection?

66% Yes; 30% No; 4% Don't know

4 – Based on what you have seen and heard in the last 8 months, do you think that in the next 3 years the Municipality will improve street lightning?

70% Yes; 25% No; 5% Don't know

5 – Based on what you have seen and heard in the last 8 months, do you think that in the next 3 years the Municipality will improve the city traffic?

42% Yes; 42% No; 16% Don't know

6 – Based on what you have seen and heard in the last 8 months, do you think that in the next 3 years the Municipality will improve the center of the city?

60% Yes; 30% No; 10% Don't know

7 – Based on what you have seen and heard in the last 8 months, do you think that in the next 3 years the Municipality will add/expand public schools and kindergartens?

46% Yes; 40% No; 14% Don't know

8 – Based on what you have seen and heard in the last 8 months, do you think that in the next 3 years the Municipality will add/expand public green spaces?

40% Yes; 44% No; 16% Don't know

9 – If you were the mayor, which of the following would you consider as the priority number 1 for your Municipality in the next 3 years:

- a- 23% Adding /expanding public schools and kindergartens
- b- 5% Public transportation
- c- 18% Street cleaning and garbage collection
- d- 24% Street repair
- e- 30% Adding/expanding public parks and playgrounds
- f- 1% Don't know

10 – What percentage of the councilmembers of your Municipality belongs to parties of the right?

- 3% (50%-55%)
- 10% (56%-60%)
- 13% (Over 60%)
- 74% Don't know

The actual percentage of the councilmembers of Shkodra Municipality that belong to parties of the right is 53%.

11 – Did you know anything about the last meeting of the Municipal Council beforehand?

6% Yes; 94% No

12 – Have you ever provided ideas/complaints to councilmembers before a meeting of the Municipal Council?

3% Yes; 97% No

13 – Do you think that the political configuration of the Municipal Council will help (1) or hinder (2) the work of the Mayor?

75% Will help; 10% Will hinder; 15% Don't know

Conclusions/Recommendations

Around 42% of urban adults in Shkodra think that the best job done by the new local administration in its 8 first months is street cleaning and garbage collection (25% selected this option when asked and 17% declared that everything is done right by the new administration). On the other hand, around 54% think that the worst job done by the new local administration in its 8 first months is street repair (24% selected this option when asked and 30% declared that nothing is done right by the new administration).

The most positive expectations for the next three years are in the areas of street lightning, cleaning /garbage collection and city center improvements (around 70%, 66% and 60% of urban adults, respectively, have positive expectations). The least positive expectations for the next 3 years are in the areas of public green spaces, city traffic and public school/kindergarten capacity (only 40%, 42% and 46% of urban adults, respectively, have positive expectations). One of the main comments made by the interviewees about public school/kindergarten capacity was that the central government would not support financially the local government to increase capacity. Whereas the main comment about public green spaces was that the experience of previous Mayors has shown that they have been much more interested in raising big concrete building in old green spaces than adding new ones. The Mayor's office should do a better public relations job to improve these perceptions.

Priority for Shkodrans in the next three years would be the adding/expanding of public parks and playgrounds (30% think so), the adding /expanding of public schools and kindergartens (24% think so), and street cleaning and garbage collection (23% think so).

Only 3% of Shkodrans know approximately the percentage of the councilmembers of Shkodra Municipality that belongs to parties of the right and 74% have no idea about it. Only 6% of

Shkodrans did know anything about the last meeting of the Municipal Council beforehand, and only 3% had ever provided ideas/complaints to councilmembers before a meeting of the Municipal Council. Around 75% of Shkodrans think that the political configuration of the Municipal Council will help the work of the Mayor and only 10% think the opposite.

As the above numbers suggest, the knowledge of common citizens about the Municipal Council is beyond minimal. Councilmembers should hold hearings before every meeting and publicize them, so that more people can learn about what decisions are to be made and moreover, to get feedback from the people that have elected them.