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# 2017 GLOBAL CORRUPTION BAROMETER: VIETNAM

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Views and experiences from Vietnamese citizens



Hong Duc Publishing House

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**Towards Transparency (TT) is a Vietnamese non-profit consultancy organization founded in 2008 to contribute to the prevention of and fight against corruption. In March 2009, TT became the official national contact of Transparency International. TT's vision is a Vietnam free of corruption where people enjoy social justice, accountability and transparency in all aspects of life. TT's mission is to reduce corruption in Vietnam by increasing demand and promoting measures for transparency, accountability and integrity in government, business and civil society at large.**

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Every effort was made to verify the accuracy of information contained in this report. Nevertheless, the authors cannot take responsibility for the consequences of the report's use for other purposes or in other contexts.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer is the largest worldwide survey asking citizens about their personal experiences of corruption in their daily lives, their perceptions about corruption challenges in their own countries, and their willingness to act against corruption.

Vietnam has been included in three editions of the Global Corruption Barometer: 2010, 2013, and 2017. This report, based on the country-level data collected from May to June 2016, provides key insights into the views and experiences of Vietnamese citizens and outlines actions that should be taken in response to the 2016 findings.



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## KEY FINDINGS

### 1. People think corruption is on the rise

A majority, 72 per cent, of respondents said that corruption in the public sector is a serious problem. This is a clear increase from the 61 per cent reported in 2013. Further, 58 per cent believed that corruption had increased over the past year.

### 2. Citizens experience a high level of corruption

Of those who had contact with any of the six surveyed public services, 65 per cent reported they had to pay bribes. This is the highest rate among surveyed ASEAN (The Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries<sup>1</sup> and the second highest of the countries surveyed in the Asia-Pacific region, only after India.

### 3. Police and tax officials, followed by business executives, are seen as the most corrupt groups in Vietnam

Vietnamese citizens perceived police (57 per cent), tax officials (47 per cent) and business executives (37 per cent) as the most corrupt groups. Notably, more people perceived business executives to be corrupt than they had in 2013 (33 per cent).

### 4. Very few people report corruption because they think nothing will be done

Only 3 per cent of those who paid a bribe while accessing a public service reported the incident to a competent government authority. The top reason for not reporting corruption was that “nothing will be done”.

### 5. People are more pessimistic about the effectiveness of government action against corruption

One out of two respondents (49 per cent) said that government anti-corruption actions were ineffective. This is a sizable increase from 2013 (37 per cent). Notably, people in rural areas seemed to be more disappointed than those in urban areas.

### 6. Refusing to pay a bribe is seen as the most effective action ordinary citizens can take against corruption

When citizens were asked for the best actions they can take to combat corruption, 37 per cent said refusing to pay bribes. Nevertheless, 15 per cent felt completely powerless in fighting corruption saying that “ordinary people cannot do anything”.

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## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Stop bribery in public services

The government of Vietnam should focus its anti-corruption efforts on the groups perceived to be most corrupt (police, tax officials and business executives), especially where people experience the highest rates of corruption (police, public healthcare and public education).

To gain public trust, the government of Vietnam should accelerate its efforts to address systemic problems that allow corruption to spread in the public sector. This includes: continuing to increase transparency in administrative procedures through effective implementation of the newly approved Law on Access to Information; clarifying legal provisions to reduce the discretion that allows officials to abuse their positions; and improving the provision of public services.<sup>2</sup>

### 2. Engage citizens and society in anti-corruption efforts

An enabling environment for stronger engagement with citizens and society needs to be established. Over half of the Vietnamese surveyed said that ordinary people can make a difference in combatting corruption. To encourage people to do this, they need to be assured that they will not face adverse consequences from resisting bribery. Current legislation for whistleblower protection needs to be amended to have specific provisions on the protection of corruption whistleblowers. Anti-corruption agencies should develop user-friendly reporting mechanisms, ensure appropriate follow-up to whistleblowers' disclosures and implement outreach programmes to empower people to report corruption.

### 3. Address corruption in the business sector

Businesses should apply international standards and good practice, and commit to doing business with integrity. They should demand their business partners apply them too, to create a more enabling business environment and improve their reputation. At the same time, corruption in the business sector needs to be strictly regulated by relevant laws, while ensuring new legal documents are synchronised with existing legislative environment.

# BACKGROUND

Corruption has long been a concern of the Vietnamese government and the country's Communist Party. Despite decades of anti-corruption efforts, corruption in Vietnam remains prevalent and serious (The World Bank 2012; 2016). The government's recent assessment of the 10-year implementation of the Anti-Corruption Law (2005) concludes:

**“Corruption remains complex, happens at many levels and sectors, and has not been driven back. In general, anti-corruption efforts have not achieved the set objectives and contain many weaknesses.”**

*- Government report, No. 330/BC-CP, dated 22 September 2016, page 15*

There is a high risk of corruption in the public sector in the forms of gifts, informal charges and facilitation payments. According to a joint report by the Centre for Community Support and Development Studies (CECODES), the Centre for Research and Training of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front (VFF-CRT) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2016), bribery in the public sector is more prevalent, and citizens are more likely to pay bribes compared to 2013 to get a land use right certificate, hospital services and education. A number of recent studies have shown that corruption in Vietnam has transformed and extends beyond pervasive petty corruption and bribes. For example, the ratio of firms paying informal fees equal to more than 10 per cent of their revenue has been increasing in the last years (Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry & USAID 2015: page xii).

Similarly, a number of grand corruption cases have been discovered and prosecuted recently (Government report 2016: page 11). Corruption resulting from collusion between public officials and businesses has emerged (Asia Pacific Institute of Management & United Nations Development Programme 2016: page 3). This type of corruption arises when public officials and non-state partners collude for the sake of their own private interests. This collusion-based corruption distorts and nullifies government regulations for private gains, and thus dangerously erodes the public trust in state management.

This current state of corruption and its various forms in Vietnam require a review of the country's anti-corruption strategy and system. The Anti-Corruption Law is being revised with a greater focus on addressing conflict of interest, corruption in the private sector and new anti-corruption agencies, among others (Government report 2016).

This survey presents government and policy makers with information that show what must be done to ensure Vietnam's anti-corruption strategy is more effective as well as how best to mobilise non-state actors and increase citizen participation in anti-corruption efforts.

It is noted that the data of this report cover the period from 26 May to 20 June 2016 when the field survey was carried out. Therefore, Vietnam's recent anti-corruption actions by the Party and the government as reported in the media in 2017 were not included in this report.





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# CITIZENS' PERCEPTIONS OF CORRUPTION

## MOST PEOPLE BELIEVE CORRUPTION IN VIETNAM HAS INCREASED OVER THE PAST YEAR

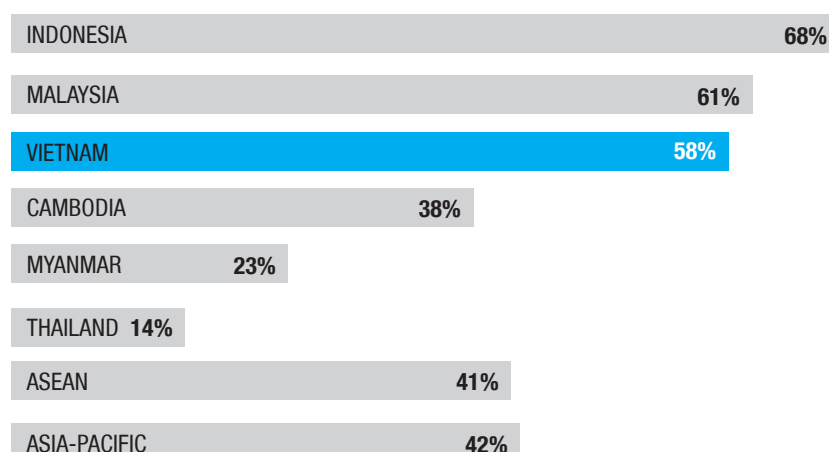
As shown in figure 1, despite on-going implementation of a number of amended laws and several legal documents on anti-corruption in recent years (see more in annex 2), when asked about how the level of corruption had changed in the past year, more than half (58 per cent) of respondents said that corruption in Vietnam had increased. People's perceptions on the change in the level of corruption differed between rural and urban areas. Urban respondents (62 per cent) were more likely than rural respondents (56 per cent) to say that the level of corruption had increased over the past 12 months.

FIGURE 1: PERCEIVED CHANGE IN CORRUPTION LEVELS IN THE PAST YEAR IN VIETNAM



The proportion of respondents who said that corruption had increased in the last 12 months in Vietnam is higher than the average for surveyed ASEAN countries and those in the Asia-Pacific region (Transparency International 2017). Among ASEAN countries, Vietnam belongs to the top three countries where citizens thought corruption in their country had increased over the last year, only after Indonesia and Malaysia. However, the number of people who said corruption had increased in Vietnam was significantly higher than in Thailand, Myanmar and Cambodia (figure 2).

FIGURE 2: PERCEIVED INCREASE IN CORRUPTION LEVELS IN THE PAST YEAR – REGIONAL RESULTS



PEOPLE INCREASINGLY  
THINK CORRUPTION IN  
THE PUBLIC SECTOR IS  
A SERIOUS PROBLEM

Respondents in Vietnam were asked to what extent they believed corruption was a serious problem in the public sector. Nearly three out of four people (72 per cent) said corruption in the public sector was a serious or very serious problem, while only 4 per cent said that corruption in Vietnam was not a problem (figure 3).

FIGURE 3: PERCEIVED SERIOUSNESS OF CORRUPTION IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR IN VIETNAM



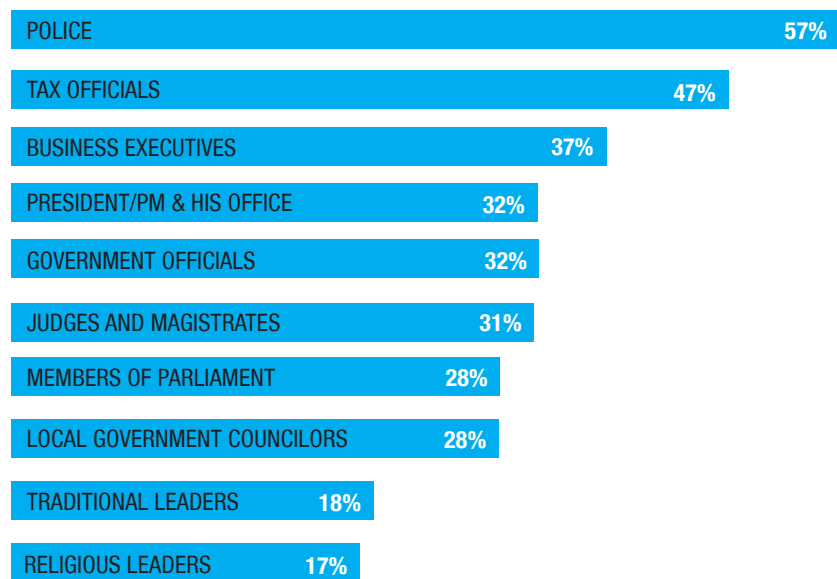
Compared to 2013, the percentage of respondents who said corruption was a serious or very serious problem increased markedly from 60 per cent to 72 per cent. At the same time, there was a significant decrease in the percentage of respondents who said corruption was not a problem, from 14 per cent to 4 per cent.<sup>3</sup> These results suggest that an increasing number of citizens are concerned about the seriousness of corruption in Vietnam.

In 2016, more people from rural areas said corruption in the public sector was a serious problem (74 per cent) than those from urban areas (67 per cent). In 2013, 67 per cent of urban and 57 per cent of rural respondents said corruption in the public sector was a serious or very serious problem. This suggests that, in the last three years, people in rural areas have become more pessimistic while those in urban areas have seen no change in the seriousness of corruption.

## POLICE, TAX OFFICIALS AND BUSINESS EXECUTIVES PERCEIVED AS THE THREE MOST CORRUPT GROUPS

Respondents were asked how corrupt they thought 10 different institutions and groups in Vietnam were. As shown in figure 4, citizens surveyed in Vietnam indicated that the police, tax officials and business executives were the most corrupt. More than half of respondents said the police was highly corrupt (57 per cent); more than two out of five said tax officials were highly corrupt (47 per cent); and more than one-third said business executives were highly corrupt (37 per cent).

FIGURE 4: INSTITUTIONS AND GROUPS PERCEIVED TO BE MOST CORRUPT

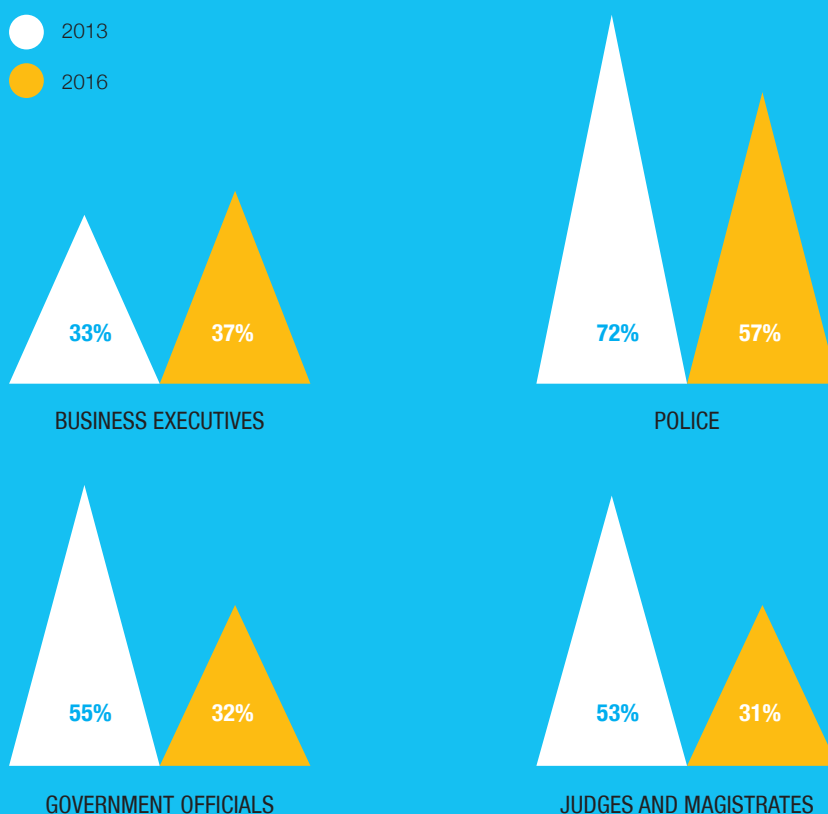


Although the police, government officials, and judges and magistrates are perceived to be highly corrupt, there was a clear drop in the percentage of people who said that “most of them” and “all of them” are involved in corruption compared to 2013 (figure 5). **This can be seen as an encouraging signal for anti-corruption efforts tackling such institutions.** Meanwhile, business executives are the only group that was perceived to be more corrupt than three years ago, increasing from 33 per cent in 2013 to 37 per cent in 2016.<sup>4</sup>

“

The police was thought to be the most corrupt group among those surveyed in ASEAN countries (58%) and the Asia-Pacific region.

FIGURE 5: INSTITUTIONS AND GROUPS WITH THE LARGEST CHANGES IN CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS IN VIETNAM (% OF RESPONDENTS THINKING THAT “MOST OF THEM” AND “ALL OF THEM” ARE INVOLVED IN CORRUPTION)



Still, these percentages for Vietnam regarding the perceived level of corruption of the police, tax officials and business executives is higher than the ASEAN and Asia-Pacific regional averages. The police was thought to be the most corrupt group among those surveyed in ASEAN countries (58 per cent) and the Asia-Pacific region (41 per cent). Tax officials were thought to be mostly or entirely corrupt by 44 per cent of ASEAN and 33 per cent of Asia-Pacific respondents. Business executives were thought to be the third most corrupt group in Vietnam, but were not in top five most corrupt groups or institutions in ASEAN countries or the Asia-Pacific region.

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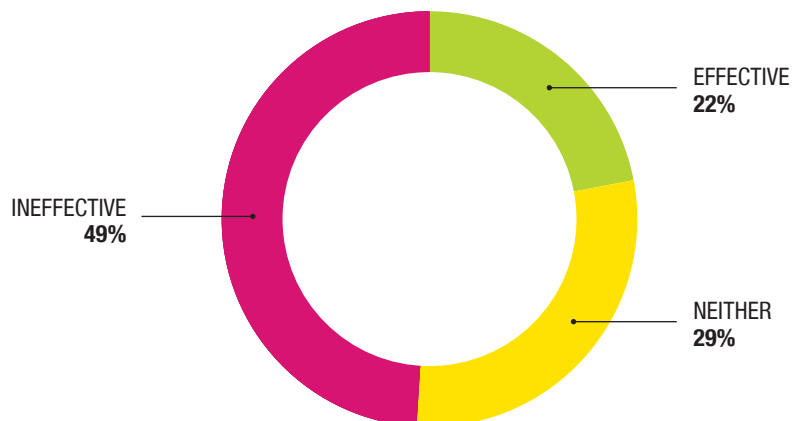
## GOVERNMENT ACTION AGAINST CORRUPTION PERCEIVED AS INEFFECTIVE BY HALF OF RESPONDENTS

Respondents were asked about their views on the effectiveness of their government in fighting corruption. Half (49 per cent) said that the government's actions were ineffective or very ineffective in the fight against corruption, while 22 per cent said the government's actions against corruption were effective (figure 6).

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**FIGURE 6: PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNMENT ACTION AGAINST CORRUPTION IN VIETNAM**

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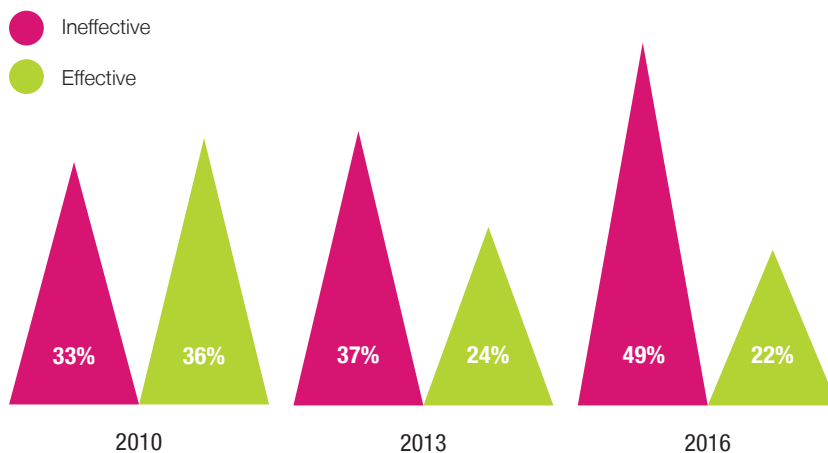
Rural respondents were more critical on this issue, with 52 per cent thinking that the government's actions against corruption were ineffective compared to 43 per cent of urban respondents.

As shown in figure 7, Vietnamese citizens became more pessimistic about the government's anti-corruption efforts over the past six years. In 2010, 36 per cent of respondents reported that the government was effective in curbing corruption, which fell to 24 per cent in 2013 and 22 per cent in 2016. This increasing lack of confidence is shown inversely by the percentage of people who said that the government's actions were ineffective, which increased from 33 per cent in 2010 to 37 per cent in 2013 and 49 per cent in 2016.



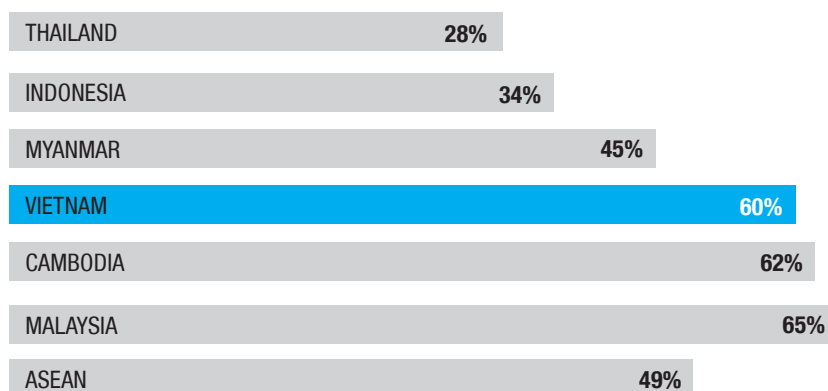
**When asked how well or badly the current government was handling the fight against corruption in the government, nearly two out of three (60%) of Vietnamese citizens responded “badly”.**

**FIGURE 7: CHANGES IN PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNMENT ACTION AGAINST CORRUPTION (2010-2016)<sup>5</sup>**



When asked how well or badly the current government was handling the fight against corruption in the government, nearly two out of three (60 per cent) of Vietnamese citizens responded “badly”. In the region, this percentage was only lower than Cambodia (62 per cent) and Malaysia (65 per cent), and much higher than Thailand (28 per cent), Indonesia (34 per cent), Myanmar (45 per cent) and the ASEAN’s average (49 per cent) (figure 8).

**FIGURE 8: CITIZENS WHO THINK THEIR GOVERNMENT IS HANDLING CORRUPTION BADLY – RESULTS BY ASEAN COUNTRIES**



Bài 1 (172) Tính nhẩm:

$$3000 + 2000 \times 2 = 7000$$



Thứ hai ngày 25 tháng 4 năm 2011

Giáo án

Liệt 166: Ôn tập bốn phép tính trong phạm vi 100.000

# CITIZENS' EXPERIENCES OF CORRUPTION

Respondents were asked if they had come into contact with any six of the following key public services in the last 12 months: public schools, public healthcare, ID documents, utilities providers, the police and the courts. Of those who had contact with any of these six public services, respondents were asked whether they had paid a bribe, given a gift or done a favour to receive the services needed.

## BRIBERY RATES

Nearly two out of three (65 per cent) of people surveyed paid a bribe in the last 12 months when they used a public service. Public healthcare, public schools and the police had the top three highest bribery rates:



AMONG 67% OF RESPONDENTS WHO WERE IN CONTACT WITH PUBLIC HEALTHCARE, THREE OUT OF FIVE PAID A BRIBE (59%).



AMONG 45% OF RESPONDENTS WHO WERE IN CONTACT WITH PUBLIC EDUCATION SERVICES, 57% PAID A BRIBE.



AMONG 50% OF RESPONDENTS WHO WERE IN CONTACT WITH POLICE, 66% PAID A BRIBE.<sup>6</sup>

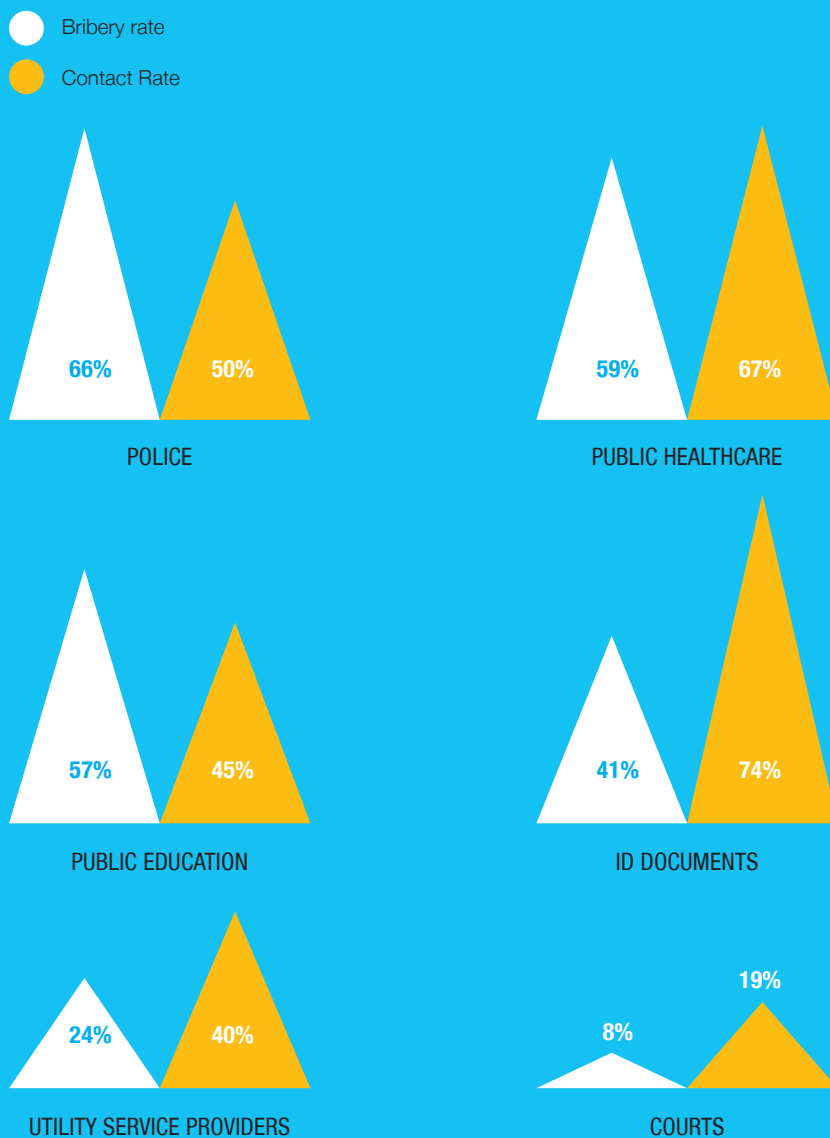


AMONG 19% OF RESPONDENTS WHO ACCESSED A COURT SERVICE, 8% PAID A BRIBE.

“

**This suggests that poor people without the means to pay bribes may be more vulnerable to being denied access to public services that are meant to be equally available to all.**

**FIGURE 9: BRIBERY RATE FOR CITIZENS IN CONTACT WITH PUBLIC SERVICES**



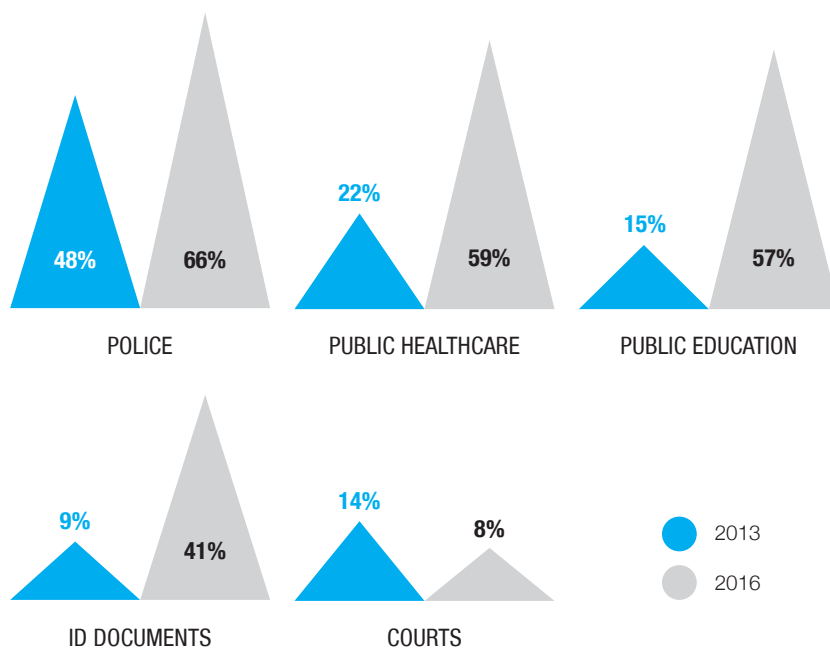
The survey results provide further detail on who is more likely to pay a bribe: young people under 30 years old were less likely to pay bribes (21 per cent), compared to people over 30 years old (79 per cent). Also, those with higher income levels were more likely to have paid a bribe, with 81 per cent of those who reported having paid a bribe having a high income. This suggests that poor people without the means to pay bribes may be more vulnerable to being denied access to public services that are meant to be equally available to all.



**The bribery rate when using a public service in Vietnam is the highest (65%) among surveyed ASEAN countries and the second highest of the 16 countries surveyed in the Asia-Pacific region.**

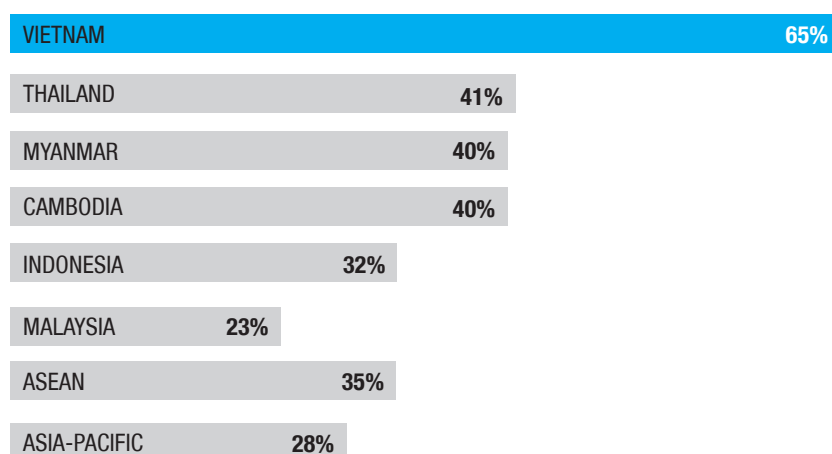
As shown in figure 10, the reported incidence of corruption increased considerably from 2013 to 2016,<sup>7</sup> with the exception of the courts which showed a slight decrease.<sup>8</sup> These results also indicate that respondents' perceptions and experiences of corruption levels in Vietnam over the last three years are increasing.

**FIGURE 10: CHANGE IN BRIBERY RATES REPORTED BY PUBLIC SERVICE USERS: 2013 COMPARED TO 2016<sup>9</sup>**



As shown in figure 11, the bribery rate when using a public service in Vietnam is the highest (65 per cent) among surveyed ASEAN countries and the second highest of the 16 countries surveyed in the Asia-Pacific region, only after India with 69 per cent.<sup>10</sup> This percentage for Vietnam is also higher than the average for the Asia-Pacific region, where one in four service users (28 per cent) had to pay a bribe.

**FIGURE 11: PUBLIC SERVICE USERS WHO PAID A BRIBE IN 2016 – REGIONAL RESULTS<sup>11</sup>: VIETNAM IS FAR AHEAD**



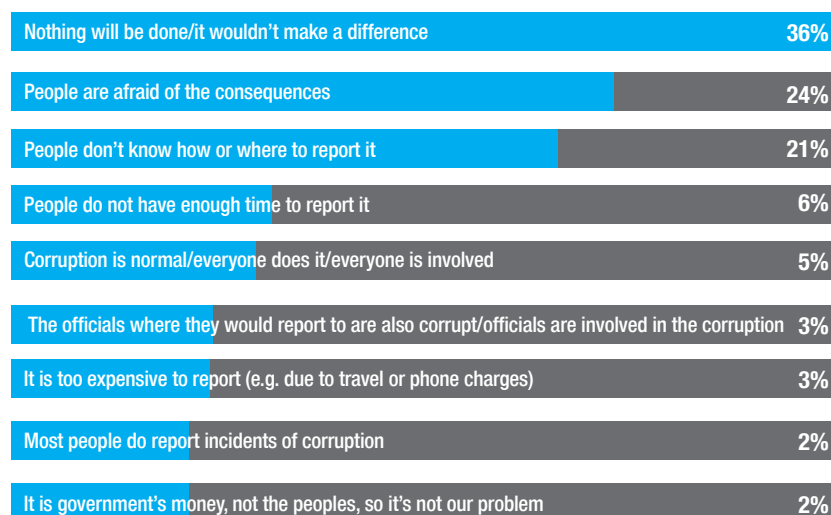


## REPORTING CORRUPTION

Given the high bribery rates (65 per cent), it is important to know whether citizens reported incidences of corruption. Of the respondents in Vietnam who experienced corruption and paid a bribe, only 3 per cent said they reported the incident to a government official or an appropriate authority, leaving a striking 97 per cent who experienced corruption but did not report it. This extremely low reporting rate is consistent with the results from the Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI) 2015;<sup>12</sup> only 4 per cent of the survey respondents who paid a bribe reported it.

All Global Corruption Barometer Vietnam survey respondents were also asked to provide one reason why they think people do not report corruption when they experience it. More than one-third (36 per cent) said that reporting corruption would not make a difference; 24 per cent said people were afraid of the negative consequences of reporting corruption; 21 per cent said they did not know how or to whom to report a corruption case. These results highlight citizens' concerns of reprisal and doubt in the effectiveness of reporting corruption (figure 12).

**FIGURE 12: REASONS WHY VIETNAMESE CITIZENS DO NOT REPORT INCIDENTS OF CORRUPTION**





**People in ASEAN countries said they were most afraid of the consequences of reporting corruption.**

As shown in table 1 below, the reasons why many people in Vietnam do not report corruption are similar across the surveyed ASEAN countries. People in ASEAN countries said they were most afraid of the consequences of reporting corruption. This suggests that current whistleblower protection policies in the region are ineffective or insufficient in protecting people who report corruption against retaliation or other negative consequences.

The second most common reason people in the region gave for not reporting corruption was the belief that it would not make a difference, suggesting that citizens do not trust government bodies or anti-corruption agencies in handling corruption to take effective actions on the basis of their complaints. The third most common reason for people not reporting corruption was that they did not know how or where to report it, which highlights a need for establishing an effective corruption reporting system and communicating to the public about how they can report a case of corruption.

**TABLE 1: TOP THREE REASONS WHY PEOPLE DO NOT REPORT CORRUPTION WHEN IT OCCURS - RESULTS FOR ASEAN COUNTRIES**

COUNTRY	PEOPLE ARE AFRAID OF THE CONSEQUENCES	NOTHING WILL BE DONE / IT WOULDN'T MAKE A DIFFERENCE	PEOPLE DON'T KNOW HOW OR WHERE TO REPORT IT
<b>ASEAN</b>	30%	19%	22%
<b>Cambodia</b>	51%	19%	16%
<b>Indonesia</b>	40%	13%	28%
<b>Malaysia</b>	15%	12%	23%
<b>Myanmar</b>	25%	31%	17%
<b>Thailand</b>	16%	21%	28%
<b>Vietnam</b>	24%	36%	21%

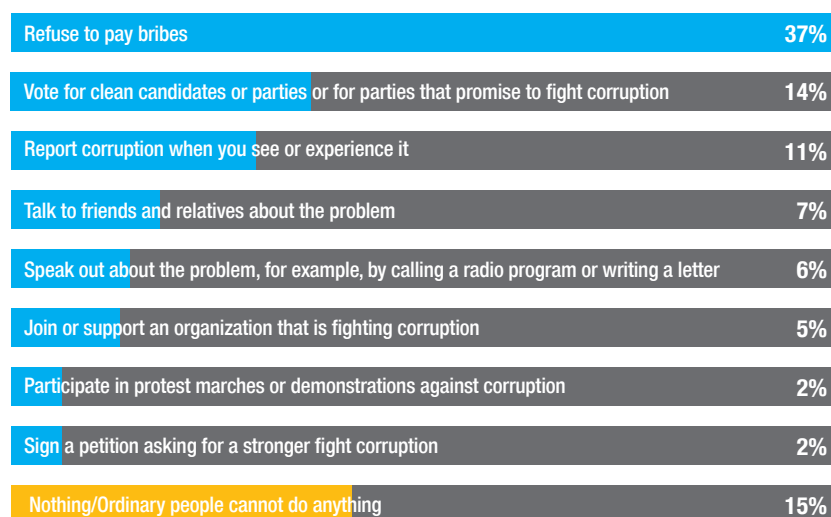
# HOW CAN ORDINARY PEOPLE FIGHT CORRUPTION?

Vietnamese respondents were asked whether ordinary people could make a difference in the fight against corruption. Positively, over half (55 per cent) said that ordinary people can make a difference in combatting corruption. However, this rate for Vietnam is the lowest among surveyed ASEAN countries which averaged 69 per cent in 2016.

Urban respondents in Vietnam (61 per cent) were more optimistic than their rural counterparts (51 per cent), agreeing that ordinary people could contribute positively to curbing corruption.

As shown in figure 13, when respondents were asked what the most effective thing that an ordinary person can do to help combat corruption, the top five chosen answers were: refusing to pay bribes (37 per cent); doing nothing (15 per cent); voting for candidates that promise to fight corruption (14 per cent); reporting corrupt behaviors (11 per cent); talking to friends or relatives about the problem (7 per cent). It is interesting to note that rural respondents were more likely to choose voting for clean candidates as a way to combat corruption (15 per cent) than those living in the urban areas (10 per cent).

FIGURE 13: MOST EFFECTIVE THINGS ORDINARY PEOPLE CAN DO TO COMBAT CORRUPTION IN VIETNAM





**From all ASEAN countries surveyed, Vietnamese citizens are the most optimistic about what ordinary people can do to help combat corruption.**

These results are similar to the survey results in Cambodia and Indonesia but are very different from those in Myanmar, Thailand and Malaysia. As shown in table 2, while one-third of respondents in surveyed ASEAN countries think there is nothing to be done, other respondents agree that the three most effective things that an ordinary person can do to combat corruption are to: i) refuse to pay bribes; ii) report corruption when they see or experience it; and iii) vote for clean/candidates/parties promising to fight corruption.

Citizens in Myanmar seem to be most pessimistic about what they can do about anti-corruption (67 per cent think that ordinary people cannot do anything) while citizens in Vietnam seem to be the most optimistic (only 15 per cent think that ordinary people cannot do anything). In Malaysia and Vietnam, respondents said people could use voting mechanisms to vote for clean candidates/parties or for parties that promise to fight corruption. These comparative results suggest that anti-corruption in Vietnam has a positive outlook. Many people in Vietnam think that action can be taken against corruption, such as by refusing to pay a bribe, voting for clean candidates or reporting it.

**TABLE 2: CITIZENS' VIEWS ON ACTIONS TO TAKE AGAINST CORRUPTION IN ASEAN COUNTRIES**

COUNTRY	NOTHING/ ORDINARY PEOPLE CANNOT DO ANYTHING	REFUSE TO PAY BRIBES	REPORT CORRUPTION WHEN YOU SEE OR EXPERIENCE IT	VOTE FOR CLEAN CANDIDATES/ PARTIES THAT PROMISE TO FIGHT CORRUPTION
<b>Cambodia</b>	20%	38%	12%	11%
<b>Indonesia</b>	25%	36%	13%	5%
<b>Thailand</b>	31%	23%	13%	6%
<b>Myanmar</b>	67%	11%	10%	1%
<b>Malaysia</b>	23%	17%	13%	15%
<b>Vietnam</b>	15%	37%	11%	14%
<b>ASEAN</b>	33%	25%	12%	8%

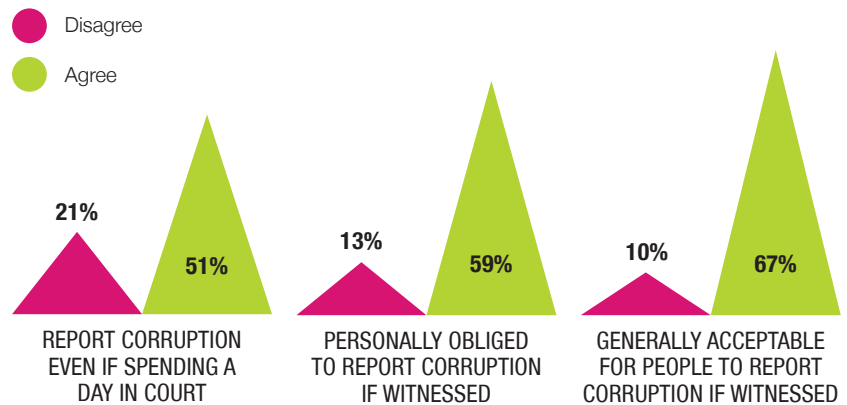


## WILLINGNESS TO REPORT CORRUPTION

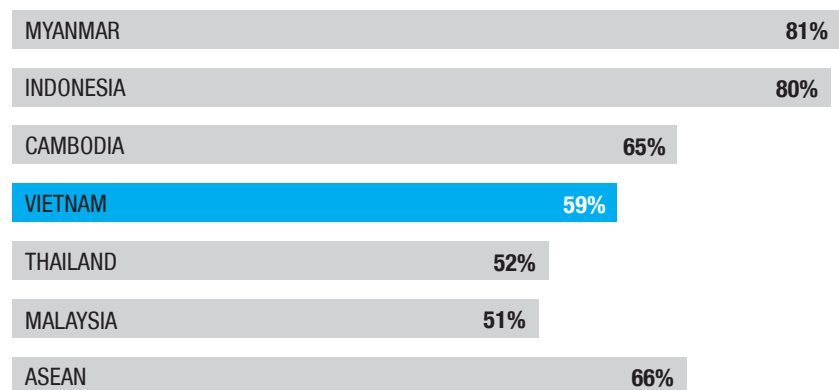
As shown in figure 14, two in three people (67 per cent) said that it was generally accepted by society for people to report a case of corruption that they have witnessed; just over half (51 per cent) said they would report a case of corruption even if they would have to spend a day in court to give evidence. Nearly three in five people (59 per cent) said they would feel personally obliged to report an act of corruption they witnessed, which was higher than in Malaysia (51 per cent) and Thailand (52 per cent), but much lower than in Indonesia (80 per cent), Myanmar (81 per cent) and the average for ASEAN countries (66 per cent) (figure 15).

These results suggest that Vietnamese citizens acknowledge their individual responsibility in reporting corruption and generally consider it as socially acceptable, which is encouraging for further engagement of citizen participation in anti-corruption efforts.

**FIGURE 14: CITIZENS' VIEWS ON REPORTING CORRUPTION IN VIETNAM**



**FIGURE 15: CITIZENS' VIEWS ON REPORTING CORRUPTION AS A PERSONAL OBLIGATION – RESULTS FOR ASEAN COUNTRIES**



# CONCLUSION

The findings of this report show that corruption in Vietnam remains serious and far-reaching despite the on-going anti-corruption efforts in the country. The majority of people surveyed think corruption in Vietnam has increased and that it is a serious problem. Bribery is also widespread among public services, with the highest rates in healthcare, public schools and the police.

Furthermore, there is a wide gap between those who experience corruption and those who report it. The reasons for not reporting incidents of corruption need to be addressed, including the belief that reporting would not make a difference, fear of negative consequences of reporting and a lack of information on how or to whom to report it.

Anti-corruption experiences in Vietnam in the last decades show that state anti-corruption agencies alone cannot effectively detect and combat corruption. To move forward, this is a great opportunity for government and state anti-corruption agencies to ensure active participation by non-state actors in anti-corruption. This is particularly important for addressing collusion-based corruption between government and business.

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**There is a wide gap between those who experience corruption and those who report it.**

This report shows that people believe they can make a difference in the fight against corruption and have a personal responsibility to report corruption. However, people need to feel safe and empowered to report corruption, convinced that doing so will make a difference.

We call on the Vietnamese government to engage citizens, businesses and the broader society in anti-corruption efforts, and to create an environment and legal framework that can best enable this. The government should focus its anti-corruption efforts on addressing systemic problems that enable corruption, especially within the groups perceived to be most corrupt and those with the highest bribery rates: business executives, police, public healthcare, public education and tax officials.

We also call on businesses to address a growing level of citizens' perception of business executives' corruption by applying international good practices and by committing to do business with integrity.

# METHODOLOGY NOTE

**The Global Corruption Barometer (GCB) is the largest cross-country survey conducted by Transparency International since 2003. It collects data on citizens' perceptions and experiences of corruption, their views on the government's anti-corruption efforts, as well as the effectiveness of anti-corruption measures.**

The Global Corruption Barometer 2016 survey was carried out in 119 countries worldwide, with 16 in the Asia-Pacific region through face-to-face and telephone interviews from July 2015 to January 2017. Six ASEAN countries were selected in this survey: Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam.

Vietnam was included in the last three editions of the Global Corruption Barometer in 2010, 2013 and 2017<sup>13</sup> with the coordination of Towards Transparency (TT) – the national contact of Transparency International in Vietnam. Towards Transparency Vietnam led in developing the Vietnam country reports (2010, 2013 and 2017).

In Vietnam, the field survey was carried out from 26 May to 20 June 2016. The survey sample included 1,000 randomly selected people in 18 randomly selected provinces<sup>14</sup> in all six economic regions of Vietnam, proportional to the population size and urbanisation level of the country. The number of respondents in each sampled province was selected using a proportionate stratified random sampling method with its sample frame including population, gender and location as per the actual proportion of adults (at least 18 years old) in the 2009 population census. Only citizens at least 18 years old were eligible to be included in the survey.

Respondents were drawn using a cluster sampling method in which a cluster and starting household was randomly selected. Interviews were conducted with a group of nearby households, mostly in clusters of 10. In each household, one eligible person was chosen for the interview, following the Kish Grid rule. If the person selected was not at home at the time of the interview, the interviewer came back later to complete the interview. Replacement respondents for interviewees who could not be reached were chosen by a preset rule for all interviewers. The interview was face-to-face with the assistance of a tablet computer. A description of the survey sample can be found in annex 1.

The questionnaire was developed by Transparency International to allow for comparison across the surveyed countries. For specific country context, additional questions were added. In the case of Vietnam, five questions were added to make it a full set of questionnaires (see the last five questions in annex 4). All survey tools were translated into Vietnamese and reviewed by Towards Transparency Vietnam.

The survey was strictly supervised by a multi-layer structure, under the supervision of EFFICIENCE3 – the agency that is responsible for the methodological issues of the survey, as well as coordinators from Towards Transparency Vietnam, and survey team leaders in each region. Each team leader was responsible for monitoring progress and conducting random checks of the fieldwork in their designated region. The team leader fully participated in at least one interview from each interviewer and made random phone calls to 15 per cent of the respondents. The quality of the response sheet was verified in three ways: self-checking by interviewers, full checking by the team leader and random checks by EFFICIENCE3's general supervisor. After the field work, a number of phone calls were made to randomly selected respondents to make sure that the interviews were conducted in a professional and proper manner.

To ensure consistent data analysis, the summary results presented in this report do not include ambiguous responses (don't know/no answer). For regional comparison purposes, the average ASEAN level refers to the mean of the five above countries, excluding Vietnam. Regarding the 2010 Global Corruption Barometer Vietnam country report, it is noted that only citizens in five centrally-managed cities were interviewed, so its results should be considered as the views of urban residents.

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# ANNEXES

## ANNEX 1: KEY PARAMETERS OF THE SAMPLE

	TARGETED NUMBER	TARGET %	ACTUAL NUMBER	ACTUAL (%)
<b>Age</b>				
18-24 years old	136	13.6	105	10.5
25-34 years old	256	25.6	264	26.4
35-54 years old	389	38.9	456	45.6
55 and older	219	21.9	175	17.5
<b>The average age</b>			<b>40.8</b>	
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	495	49.5	564	56.4
Female	506	50.6	436	43.6
<b>Location</b>				
Rural area	664	66.4	687	68.7
Urban area	336	33.6	313	31.3
<b>Economic region</b>				
Red River Delta	227	22.7	234	23.4
Northern Highland & Midland	129	12.9	124	12.4
Northern & Coastal Central	217	21.7	213	21.3
Central Highland	60	6.0	52	5.2
South East	170	17.0	173	17.3
Mekong Delta	197	19.7	204	20.4
<b>Selected provinces</b>				
Ben Tre	71	7.1	71	7.1
Ca Mau	65	6.5	65	6.5
Can Tho	68	6.8	68	6.8
Lam Dong	15	1.5	15	1.5
Daklak	21	2.1	21	2.1

	TARGETED NUMBER	TARGET %	ACTUAL NUMBER	ACTUAL (%)
Gia Lai	16	1.6	16	1.6
Hanoi	164	16.4	164	16.4
Vinh Phuc	25	2.5	24	2.4
Thai Binh	46	4.6	46	4.6
Lang Son	32	3.2	32	3.2
Son La	41	4.1	41	4.1
Thai Nguyen	51	5.1	51	5.1
Nghe An	131	13.1	131	13.1
Da Nang	42	4.2	42	4.2
Phú Yên	39	3.9	40	4.0
Ho Chi Minh	137	13.7	137	13.7
Tây Ninh	19	1.9	19	1.9
Vung Tau	17	1.7	17	1.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>100</b>

## ANNEX 2: LEGAL DOCUMENTS ON ANTI-CORRUPTION, 2013-2016

LEGAL DOCUMENTS	CONTENT	ISSUED AGENCIES	ISSUED DATE
Law 27/2012	Amended Law on Anti-Corruption	National assembly	1 February 2013
Directive 12/CT-TTg	Strengthening detection, handling corruption cases	Prime minister	28 April 2016
Circular 04/2014/TT-TTCP	Regulation on the corruption situation and assessment of anti-corruption	Government Inspectorate	18 September 2014
Decree 59/2013/ND-CP	Detailed regulations on a number of articles of the Law on Anti-Corruption	Government	17 June 2013
Decree 211/2013/ND	Amending and supplementing some articles of Decree No. 107/2006/N -CP on imposing responsibility of the heads of agencies, organisations and units for the occurrence of corruption	Government	19 December 2013
Decree 78/2013/ND-CP	Regulation of asset and income transparency	Government	17 July 2013
Decree 90/2013/ND	Regulation of accountability of state agencies in performing their tasks	Government	8 August 2013
Resolution 82/NQ-CP	Developing the action plan as commanded by the Central Executive Committee of the Party on "strengthening the Party's leadership for anti-corruption and wastefulness" in the period 2012-2016	Government	06 December 2013
Directive 10/CT-TTg	Integrating anti-corruption into the curriculum at educational institutions since the school year 2013-2014	Prime minister	12 June 2013
Decision 81/2013/QĐ-TTg	List of state secrets levels: absolute secret, top secret by the Central Steering Committee for anti-corruption	Prime minister	30 December 2013

## ANNEX 3: SCORES OF INSTITUTIONS OR GROUPS PERCEIVED TO BE CORRUPT

INSTITUTIONS / GROUPS	2013	2016
Police	3.17	2.71
Public officials	2.85	2.27
Business executives	2.36	2.37
Judges and magistrates	2.80	2.23
Member of parliaments	2.23	2.15
Religious leaders	1.80	1.75

## ANNEX 4: QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESULTS

**1. In your opinion, what are the most important problems facing this country that the government should address?**

Poverty/destitution	28%
Crime and security	28%
Health	28%
Education	28%
Unemployment	25%
Wages, incomes and salaries	22%
Corruption	16%
Transportation	14%
Management of the economy	14%
Farming/agriculture	13%
Rates and taxes	12%
Sickness/disease	10%

**2. How many people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say?**

	NONE	SOME OF THEM	MOST OF THEM	ALL OF THEM	TOTAL
The President/Prime Minister and Officials in his Office	17.1	51.2	24.9	6.8	100
Members of Parliament	17.9	53.5	24.5	4.2	100
Government officials	9.9	58.6	26.2	5.4	100
Local government councilors	14.8	57.6	24.3	3.3	100
Police	3.3	39.5	40.4	16.8	100
Tax Officials, like Ministry of Finance officials or Local Government tax collectors	8.1	43.8	36.8	11.3	100
Judges and Magistrates	15.2	53.4	25.1	6.3	100
Traditional leaders	40.6	41.8	14.3	3.3	100
Religious leaders	45.4	37.9	13.2	3.5	100
Business executives	11.7	50.7	28.5	9.1	100

3. In your opinion, over the past year, has the level of corruption in this country increased, decreased or stayed the same? (% of respondents)

INCREASED A LOT	INCREASED SOMEWHAT	STAYED THE SAME	DECREASED SOMEWHAT	DECREASED A LOT	TOTAL
19.6	38.9	24.7	14.6	2.2	100

4. How often, if ever, did you have to pay a bribe, give a gift or do a favour when contacting with one of below public services to get the assistance you needed? (% of respondents)

	NEVER	ONCE OR TWICE	A FEW TIMES	OFTEN	NO CONTACT	TOTAL
Public school officers/ teachers	19.2	19.0	5.0	1.6	55.2	100
Public health officials	27.4	31.3	7.1	0.8	33.4	100
ID documents	44.1	28.3	1.9	0.1	25.7	100
Utility service providers	30.3	7.8	1.5	0.5	60.0	100
Police officers	16.9	27.0	4.9	0.9	50.4	100
Judge or court officials	17.6	1.3	0.1	0.1	80.9	100

5. If you ever paid a bribe for any of the services discussed above, did you report any of the incidents you mentioned to a government official or someone in authority? (% of respondents)

	NO	YES	TOTAL
	97.4	2.6	100

6. Which of the following happened the most recent time that you reported a bribery incident? (% of respondents)

	NO	YES	TOTAL
Authorities took action against the government officials involved.	78.4	21.6	100
You suffered retaliation or other negative consequences as a result of reporting the incident.	79.0	21.0	100

**7. Some people say that many incidents of corruption are never reported. Based on your experience, what do you think is the main reason why many people do not report corruption when it occurs? (% of respondents)**

Nothing will be done/It would not make a difference	35.8
People are afraid of the consequences	23.9
People do not know how to report it	10.6
People do not know where to report it	10.0
People do not have enough time to report it	5.5
Corruption is normal/everyone does it/Everyone is involved	5.0

The officials where they would report to are also corrupt/officials are involved in the corruption	3.3
It is too expensive to report (e.g. due to travel or phone charges)	2.6
Most people do report incidents of corruption	1.6
It is government's money, not the peoples, so it's not our problem	1.0
Other	0.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

**8. How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the fight against corruption in government, or haven't you heard enough to say? (% of respondents)**

VERY BADLY	FAIRLY BADLY	FAIRLY WELL	VERY WELL	HAVEN'T HEARD ENOUGH	TOTAL
13.9	46.0	27.2	2.7	10.3	100

**9. What is the most effective thing that an ordinary person like you can do to help combat corruption in this country? (% of respondents)**

Refuse to pay bribes	37.5
Nothing/Ordinary people cannot do anything	15.1
Vote for clean candidates or parties or for parties that promise to fight corruption	13.5
Report corruption when you see or experience it	11.2
Talk to friends and relatives about the problem	7.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

Speak out about the problem, for example, by calling a radio program or writing a letter	5.5
Join or support an organization that is fighting corruption	5.3
Participate in protest marches or demonstrations against corruption	2.4
Sign a petition asking for a stronger fight against corruption	2.3
Other	0.1

**10. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements  
(% of respondents)**

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL
Ordinary people can make a difference in the fight against corruption	4.0	17.8	23.6	42.9	11.8	100
In our society it is generally acceptable for people to report a case of corruption they have witnessed	1.2	9.3	22.3	50.4	16.8	100
If I would witness an act of corruption, I would feel personally obliged to report it	1.2	12.1	27.3	46.7	12.7	100
I would report a case of corruption even if I would have to spend a day in court to give evidence	3.2	17.7	28.4	38.7	12.1	100

**Vietnam additional questions:**

**11. To what extent do you believe corruption is a problem in the public sector in your country? (% of respondents)**

NOT A PROBLEM AT ALL				VERY SERIOUS PROBLEM	DO NOT KNOW	TOTAL
1	3	24	35	35	2	100

**12. How effective do you think your government's actions are in the fight against corruption? (% of respondents)**

VERY EFFECTIVE	EFFECTIVE	NEITHER EFFECTIVE NOR INEFFECTIVE	INEFFECTIVE	VERY INEFFECTIVE	TOTAL
2.0	19.5	29.1	38.0	11.4	100

13. What do you think should be the top priority for government to fight corruption? (% of respondents)

IMPROVED INTEGRITY AMONG PUBLIC OFFICIALS	BETTER PROTECTION OF VICTIMS, WITNESSES	STRONGER PUNISHMENT OF PERPETRATORS	SIMPLIFICATION AND INCREASED TRANSPARENCY	FIGHTING CORRUPTION IN THE BUSINESS SECTOR	SOMETHING ELSE	TOTAL
23.7	12.0	41.0	17.1	5.8	0.6	100

14. How much, if anything, do you know about the “Anti-Corruption Commission”? (% of respondents)

NEVER HEARD OF THEM	HEARD THE NAME, BUT DON NOT KNOW ANYTHING	A FAIR AMOUNT	A GREAT DEAL	TOTAL
29.9	57.4	12.0	0.7	100

15. How well or badly would you say the “Anti-Corruption Commission” is doing at fighting corruption in this country? (% of respondents)

NEVER HEARD OF THEM	VERY BADLY	FAIRLY BADLY	FAIRLY WELL	VERY WELL	HAVE NOT HEARD ENOUGH	TOTAL
29.9	2.5	6.3	3.7	0.1	57.5	100

# END NOTES

1. The ASEAN countries surveyed are Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar and Thailand.
2. See relevant recommendations in “Forms and Effects of Corruption in the Education Sector in Vietnam”, Transparency International and Towards Transparency, 2011, and “Towards a Transparent and Quality Healthcare system”, Transparency International and Towards Transparency, 2011.
3. These numbers include respondents who said “corruption was not a problem at all” and “corruption was not a problem”.
4. In 2013, Vietnamese citizens were asked to rank institutions and groups using a 5-point scale, where 1 was “not corrupt at all”, and 5 was “extremely corrupt”. In 2016, we used a 4-point scale. To make this comparison possible, we converted the 2013 results to a 4-point scale, such that 1=1, 2=1.6, 3=2.4, 4=3.2, 5=4. Results show that, except for the business executive group, all comparable institutions or groups were perceived less corrupt compared to the 2013. The detailed converted scores are shown in annex 3.
5. The 2010 results reflect views of urban residents only.
6. This finding shows that perceptions of citizens regarding police corruption are aligned with their daily experiences.
7. In 2013, respondents were asked whether someone in their house had paid a bribe, while in 2016, respondents were asked whether they themselves had paid a bribe. Despite these changes, the results indicate that there has been a rise in bribery for most services since the last survey was conducted.
8. This is possibly due to the low contact rate with courts in Vietnam in 2016.
9. This figure excludes utility services as they were not included in the 2013 questionnaire. Two types of services reported in 2013 were not included in the 2016 edition (land services and tax or customs).
10. Transparency International, 2017.
11. In Malaysia, due to survey implementation differences, the results are based on the total population.
12. The Public Administration Performance Index 2015, CECODES, VFF-CRT & UNDP.
13. The first Global Corruption Barometer (GCB) survey in Vietnam was conducted in 2010 with a sample of 1,000 people randomly selected in the five centrally-managed cities. The second GCB survey conducted in 2013 was expanded to 15 provinces across the country and its sample included 1,000 people randomly selected in both rural and urban areas. The survey for the 2017 GCB report randomly selected 1,000 respondents in 18 provinces, covering both urban and rural areas.
14. The surveyed provinces include: Hanoi, Vinh Phuc, Thai Binh, Lang Son, Son La, Thai Nguyen, Nghe An, Da Nang, Phú Yên, Gia Lai, Dak Lak, Lam Dong, Ho Chi Minh, Tây Ninh, Vung Tau, Can Tho, Ben Tre and Ca Mau.

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