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Analysis of the results of the court users' satisfaction survey in 10 courts of Albania

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The content of this report reflects the views of its author and not necessarily those of the Council of Europe and the European Union.

Court survey was administered by IDRA shpk Tirana, Albania. IDRA also conducted the survey data processing. The data analyses and its interpretation were provided by the author of this report.

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Introduction

"In the determination of his civil rights and obligations or of any criminal charge against him, everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law".(art. 6 European Convention on Human Rights, Rome, 1950)

Around Europe there is a progressive evolution in the concept of "justice", which must certainly adhere to art. 6 of the Convention of Human Rights, but it should also be respectful of the citizens' demands and perceptions with greater external orientation, without compromising judges' independence.

Courts should be able to respond adequately to societal challenges, pressure for better public services, and increased number of tasks. In order to do that, courts have to be put in the conditions to know what these demands are, enabling them to adopt those actions and changes for a sound functioning.

Therefore, it is of paramount importance to collect information to know what these demands and perceptions are, then to assess the functioning of the court, and to plan possible changes. One of the tools to collect such information is the court users' satisfaction survey, which is not a panacea for the courts' problems, but it can help to detect some critical aspects, particularly at the local level, where "justice is done".

Indeed, court users' surveys are aimed at collecting information based on people who actually deal with the administration of justice and, therefore, can help to identify some areas of possible improvements.

In 2010 The European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice of the Council of Europe, Working Group on Quality of Justice (CEPEJ-GT-QUAL) delivered a report on how "To conduct satisfaction surveys of court users in Council of Europe member States" (CEPEJ 2010-2).

In this document it is stated that: *"Satisfaction surveys are a key element of policies to introduce a culture of quality. Taking expectations as its starting point, a public-satisfaction approach reflects a concept of justice centered more on the service user than on the judicial system's internal performance"*.

On this respect, the European Network of Councils for the Judiciary (ENCJ) has also recently stated that: *"The user/citizen's point of view concerning the services delivered by the judicial system was neglected most of the time up until two decades ago. As judges are professionals, they considered the quality of the judicial decision as pivotal. This quality was monitored by means of appeal and*

cassation. In such a quality system the work is overdone or verified, and quality management takes the form of inspection of the product or service delivered.”¹

The data collected are usually very useful as a basis for a self-assessment process of the functioning of the judicial organization. Indeed, the evaluation process can be used, among other goals, to check if the organisation is pursuing its institutional mission, to address changes to constantly improve the service delivered, to increase users' confidence in the administration of justice.

The questionnaires used in this exercise are based on a sample prepared by the Commission for the Efficiency of Justice of the Council of Europe (Quality group). Finalisation of the questionnaires was a result of a tailored and holistic process. National Coordination Committee (NCC) involving the representatives of the courts, Ministry of Justice and the High Council of Justice was set up and met on several occasions to tailor and adopt them to Albanian context with a guidance of international expert, Ms H el ene Jorry. The questionnaires have been tested in two courts and actual conduct of surveys started in 2015. They have multiple-choice questions, Likert scales with level of satisfaction on stated sentences (scale from 1 to 7), and some open-ended questions. Two questionnaires were used. One for court's users "*limited to individuals having had actual contact with the court concerned*" (CEPEJ 2010, 10) and another one specifically for lawyers.

The **questionnaire for court's users** has 42 questions divided in 7 areas of investigation.

The first area deals with the "personal characteristics of the interview". Then, the second section collects answers on the "Accessibility and premises of the court". The following section approaches the "Functioning of the court", then the "Judges' behaviour" during the decision making process. A couple of questions deal with the "prosecutors' behaviour". The fifth section collects information on "Access to information", the last part is dedicated to a more "General perception of the functioning of justice" by the court's users.

The **lawyers' questionnaire**, after a couple of questions regarding the status of the lawyer's interviewed, is divided into 4 sections. The first one deals with the "Relations with the court"; the second with the "Preparation and conduct of court sessions"; the third with "judges' decisions"; the last section raises some questions about the "General functioning of the court".

Researchers of IDRA, a research company specifically selected for this exercise by the Council of Europe, administered the questionnaires. Replies were anonymous and statistically processed with the application Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) by IDRA.

Regarding the characteristics of the sample of people interviewed, a random sampling of about 150 people was adopted for each court, as far as the court users' questionnaire is concerned, and a random sampling of 30 lawyers from the same courts for the lawyers' questionnaire.

The research took place in 10 courts selected in agreement with the Council of Europe.
They are:

¹ European Network of Councils for the Judiciary (ENCJ) Working Group on Quality Management. 2008b. Report ENCJ Working Group Quality Management, European Network of Councils for the Judiciary, Budapest p.6.

- The High Court of the Republic of Albania;
- Tirana and Vlora Appeal Courts;
- Tirana Serious Crimes Court;
- Tirana Administrative Court;
- 5 district courts: Tirana, Elbasan, Durres, Lushnje, and Gjirokaster,

In the Serious Crime Court, the questionnaire was administered only to lawyers.

IDRA, as reported, administered the questionnaires in different days and various hours, to have a more random distribution of both court's users and lawyers.

This exercise has collected 1,330 interviews with court's users, and 301 interviews with lawyers.

It is important to underline that the quantitative data provided in this report are exclusively based on the questionnaire replies and the data processing carried out by IDRA. It goes without saying that neither the Council of Europe nor the author of this report can comment on the accuracy of the responses provided by the interviewees, the data entry, and the data processing of this exercise.

In relation to specific issues emerging from the data analysis, more *qualitative studies* would be required before conclusions as to the reasons for the interviewees' responses can be drawn. In this perspective, such studies should be carried out as a follow-up for some relevant questions. Quantitative data can show a problem or an interesting issue, which usually has to be further investigated with qualitative analysis.

This report is organised as follows. The first part is an Executive summary and recommendations. The second part is the data analysis comparing the results among the 10 courts, divided into two different groups; one collects the five district courts, the second group clusters the five courts with different jurisdictions. Then, in the appendix, an analysis for each court has been carried out to allow a better understanding of each single and specific situation.

The draft report was discussed in a workshop attended by members of NCC including the court personnel of the 10 courts involved in this exercise. This event allowed to collect some further information for amendment and improvement of the current report.

More specific data and charts can be found in the reports prepared by IDRA, which are the basis for this work.

Executive summary and recommendations

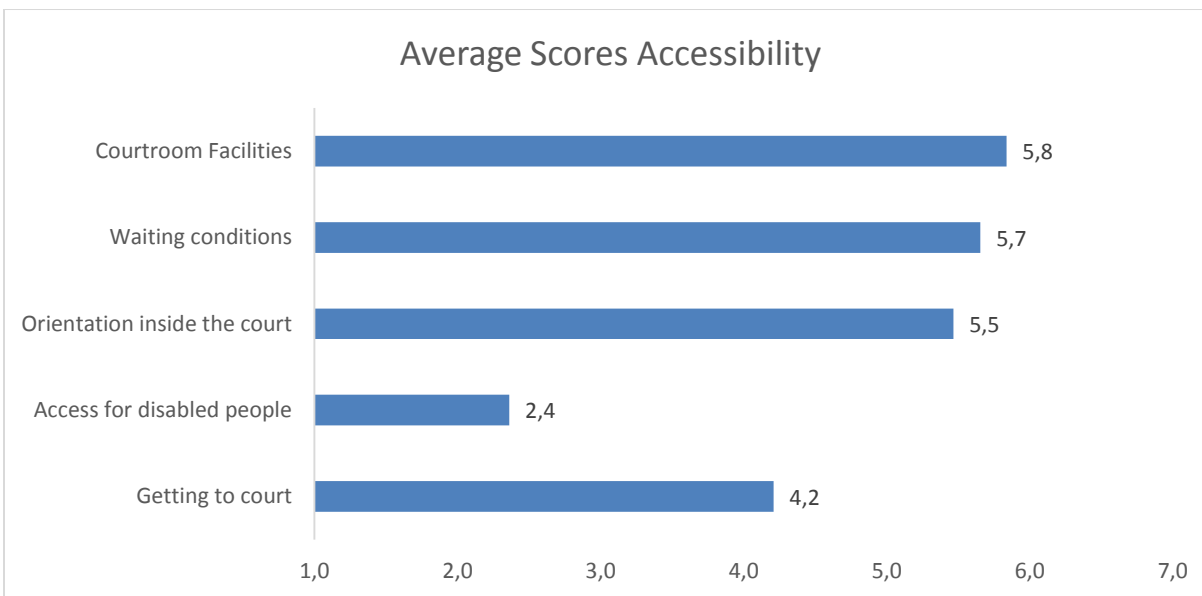
Last fall two questionnaires, based on a sample prepared by the “Quality working” group of the Commission for the Efficiency of Justice of the Council of Europe, were administered by IDRA to 1,330 court’s users and 301 lawyers. The interviews took place in 10 different Albanian courts,² to collect information about the level of satisfaction on: “Accessibility and premises of courts”, “Functioning of the court”, “Judges behaviour and hearings”, “Prosecutors”, “Access to information”, “General perception of the functioning of justice”, “Relations with the court”, “Court sessions”.

Data were statistically processed taking also into consideration the so called “independent variables” such as: gender, age, previous experience in courts, if the users were on legal aid, or if they won the case. These factors do not affect significantly the level of satisfaction observed.

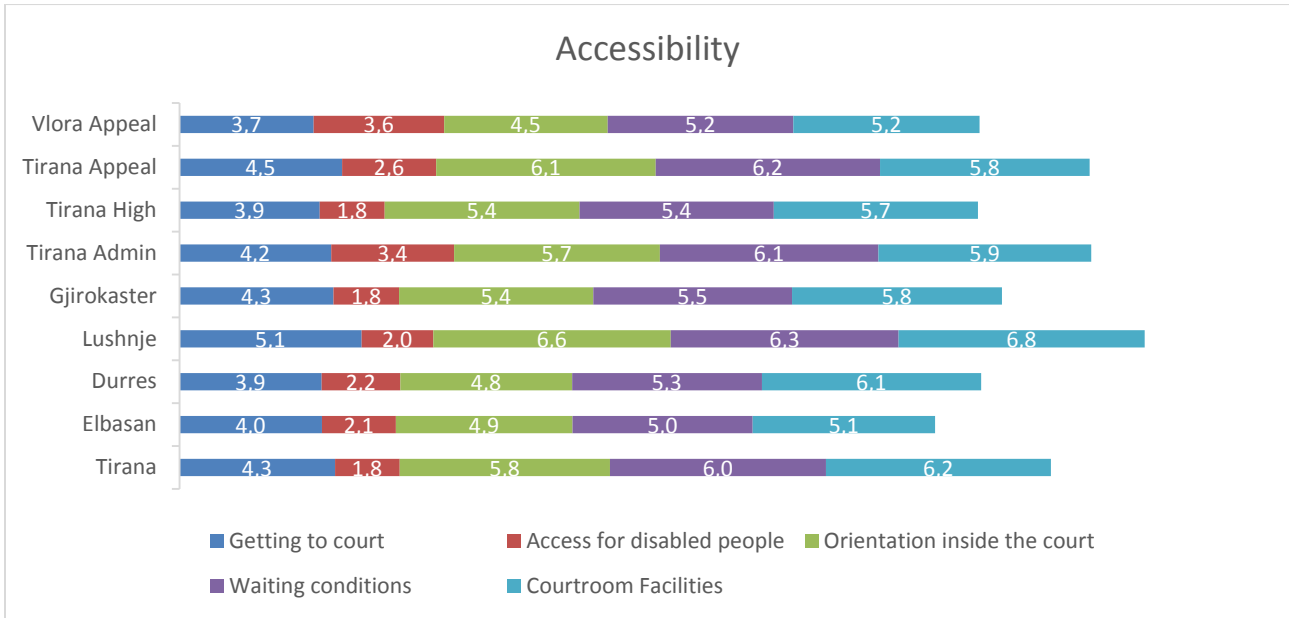
Court’s Users Survey

Accessibility and premises of courts

In general, the court’s users rate quite well the accessibility and premises of the courts. The level of satisfaction is particularly high in Lushnje. However, some concern are showed about the way to getting to courts and, above all, about the access for people with disabilities, which has extremely low scores in almost all the courts, the Administrative court in Tirana, and the Court of appeal in Vlora have better scores on this issue.

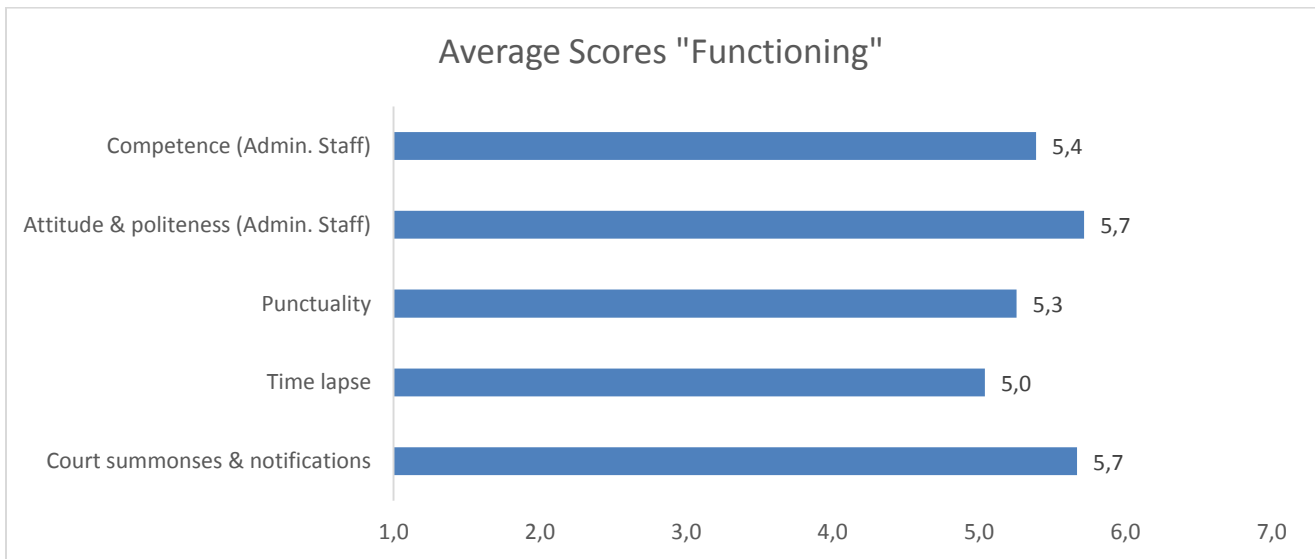


² Tirana, Elbasan, Durres, Lushnje, and Gjirokaster, and 5 other courts with different jurisdiction such as: Tirana Administrative Court, Tirana High Court, Tirana Serious Crime Court, Tirana Appeal Court, and Vlora Appeal Court. In Tirana Serious Crime Court, the questionnaire was administered only to lawyers.

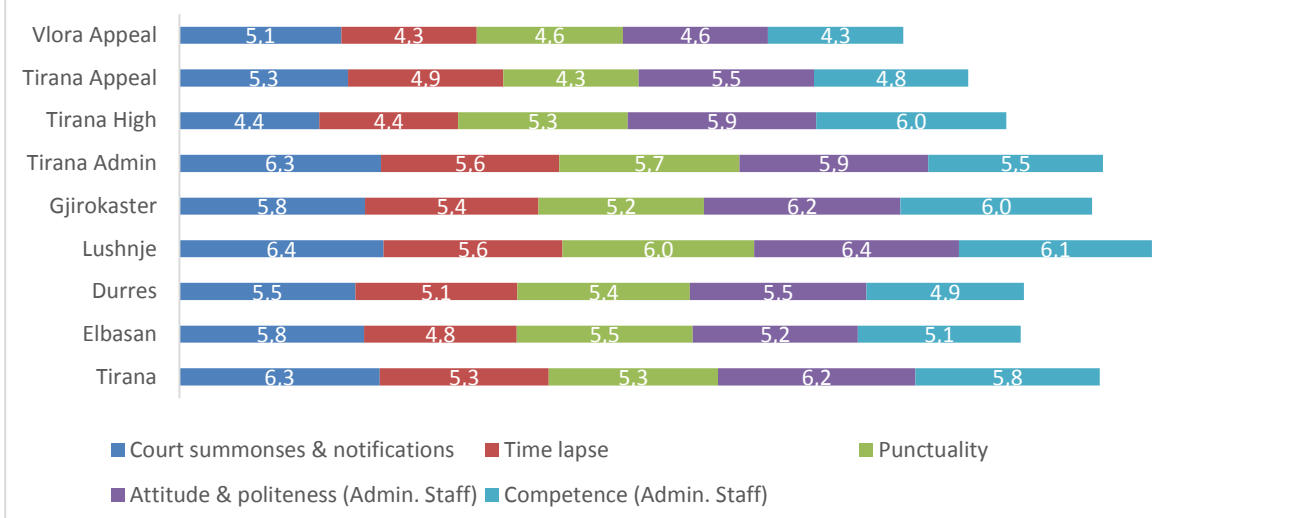


Functioning of courts

The level of satisfaction of court's users on court functioning is quite good in all the courts. Lushnje district court has the better score, while in general the level of satisfaction in the district courts is higher than in the "other courts". The lowest score are related to the time elapsed between the court summons and the date of the hearing.



Functioning

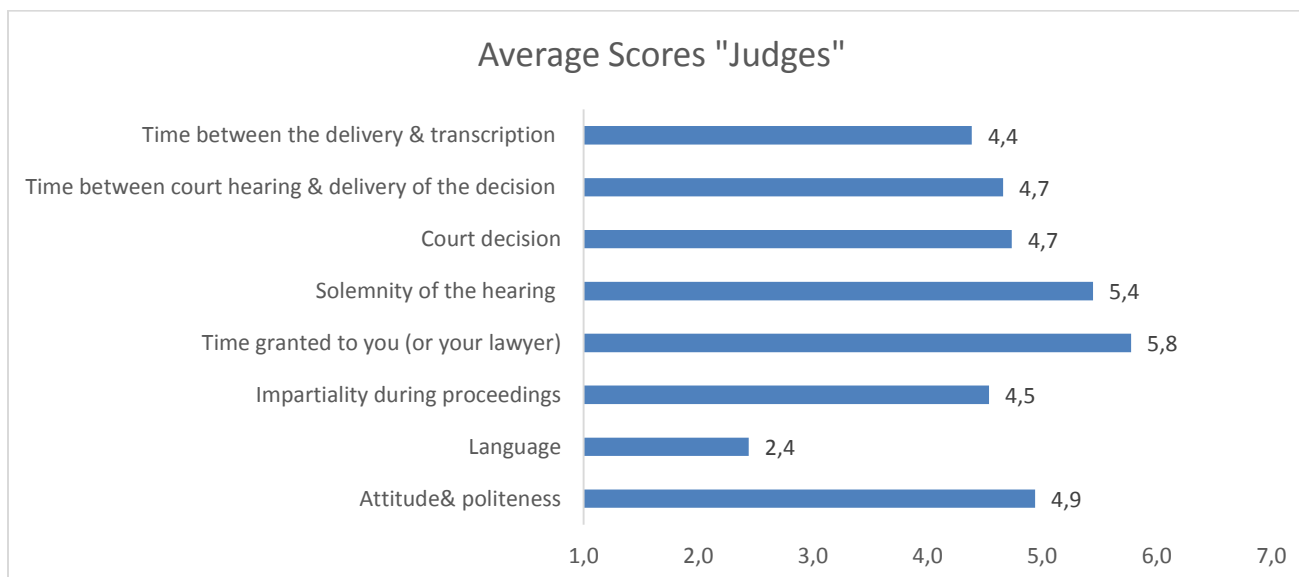


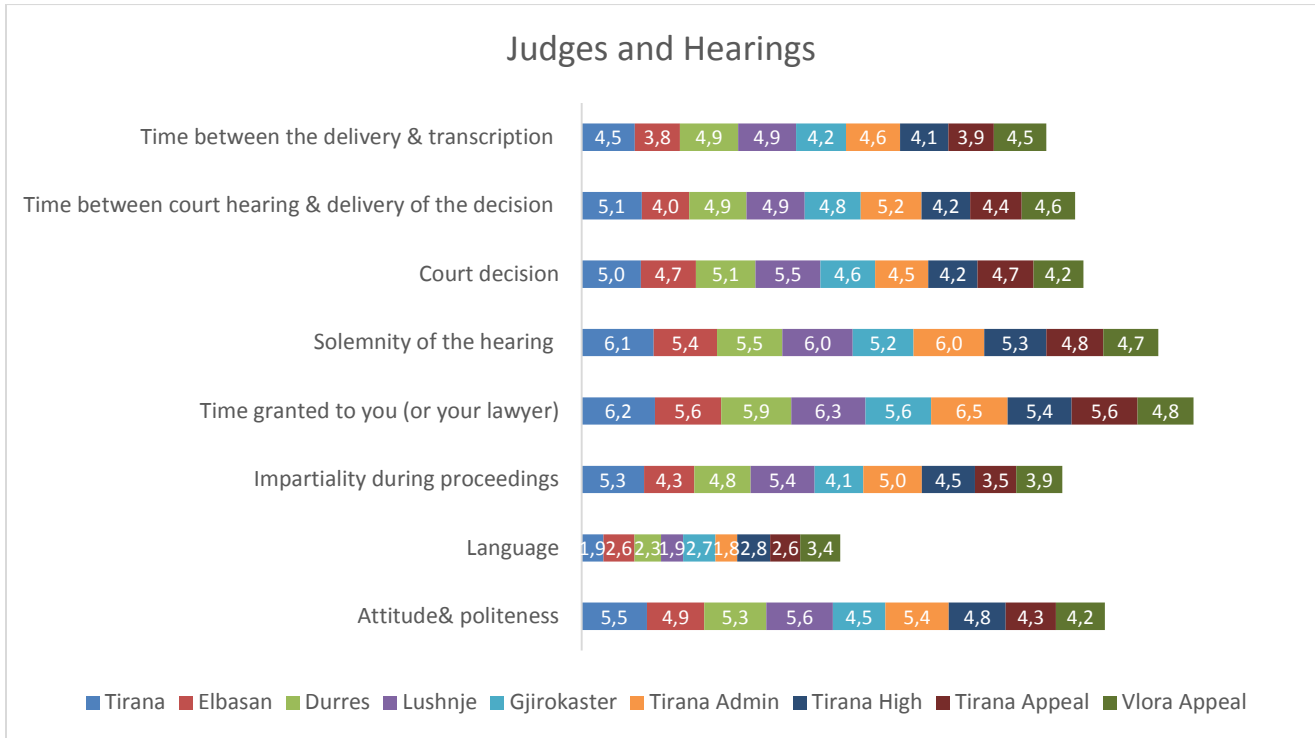
Judges and Hearings

The level of satisfaction of court’s users about judges and the hearings is lower in comparison to the accessibility and functioning of the court. Depending on the issue, each court has scores a little lower than the average scores.

In all the courts, the lowest level of satisfaction is about the clarity of the language used by judges.

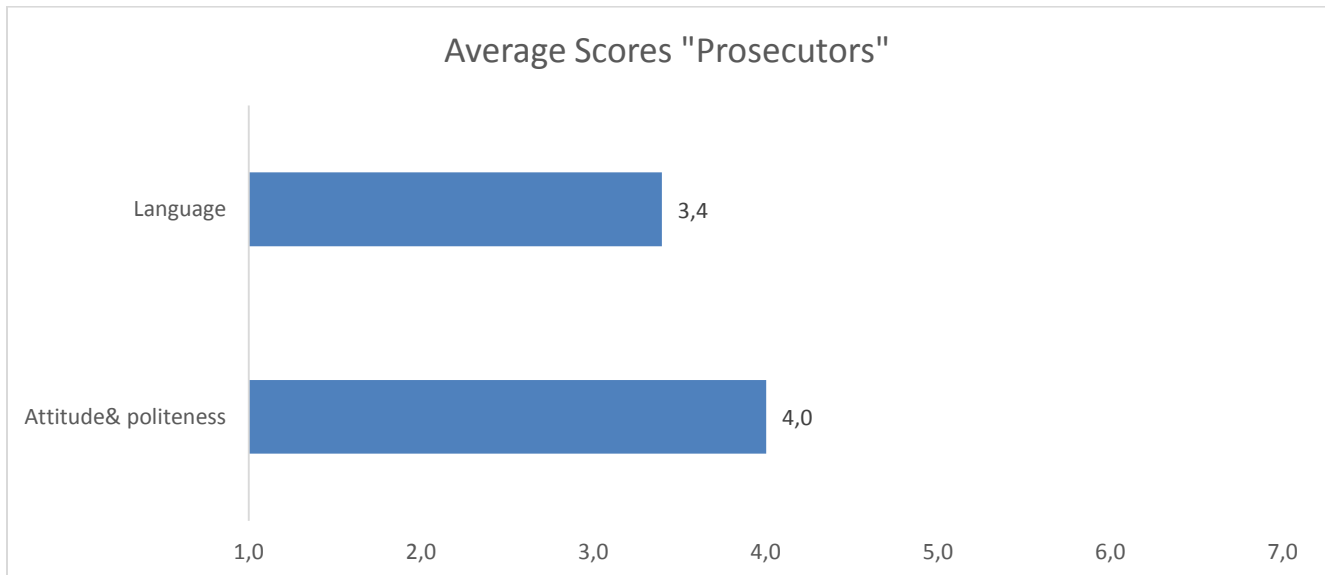
Average Scores "Judges"

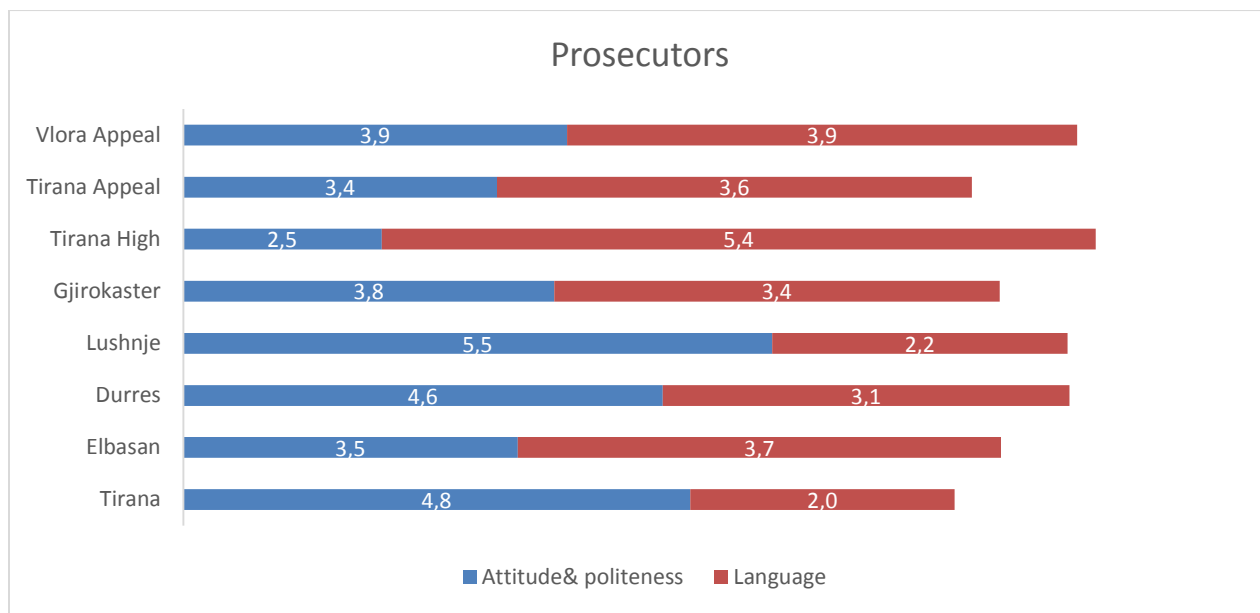




Prosecutors

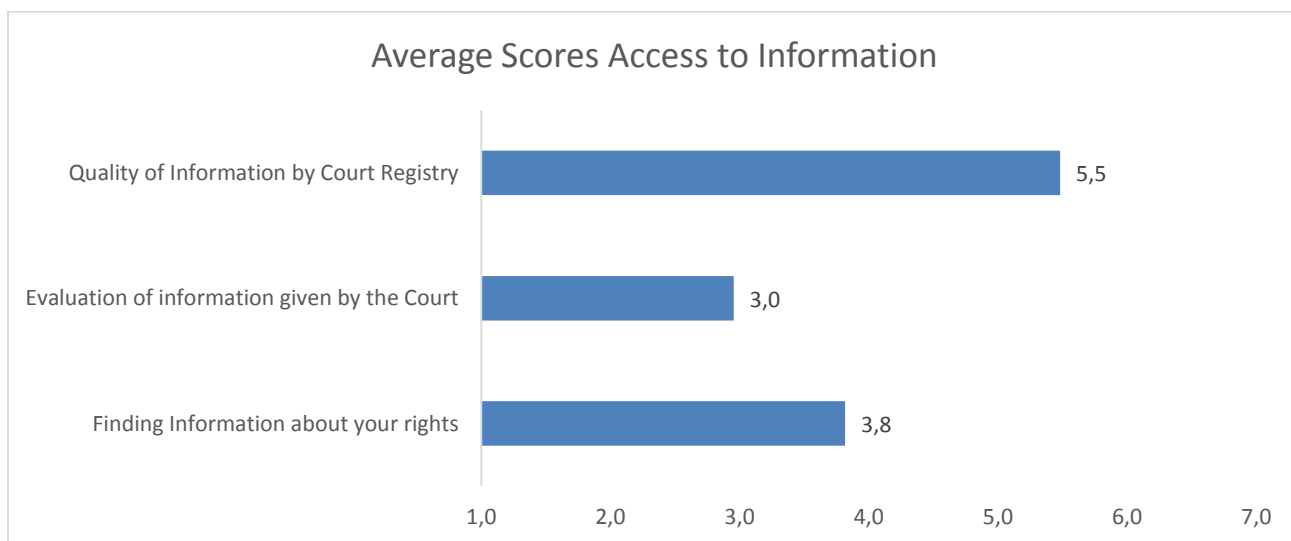
There were just a couple of questions about the language used and the attitude and politeness of the prosecutors. This question can be highly affected by the profile of the person interviewed. However, data show that the level of satisfaction on both items is not very high, in particular in the so called "other courts".

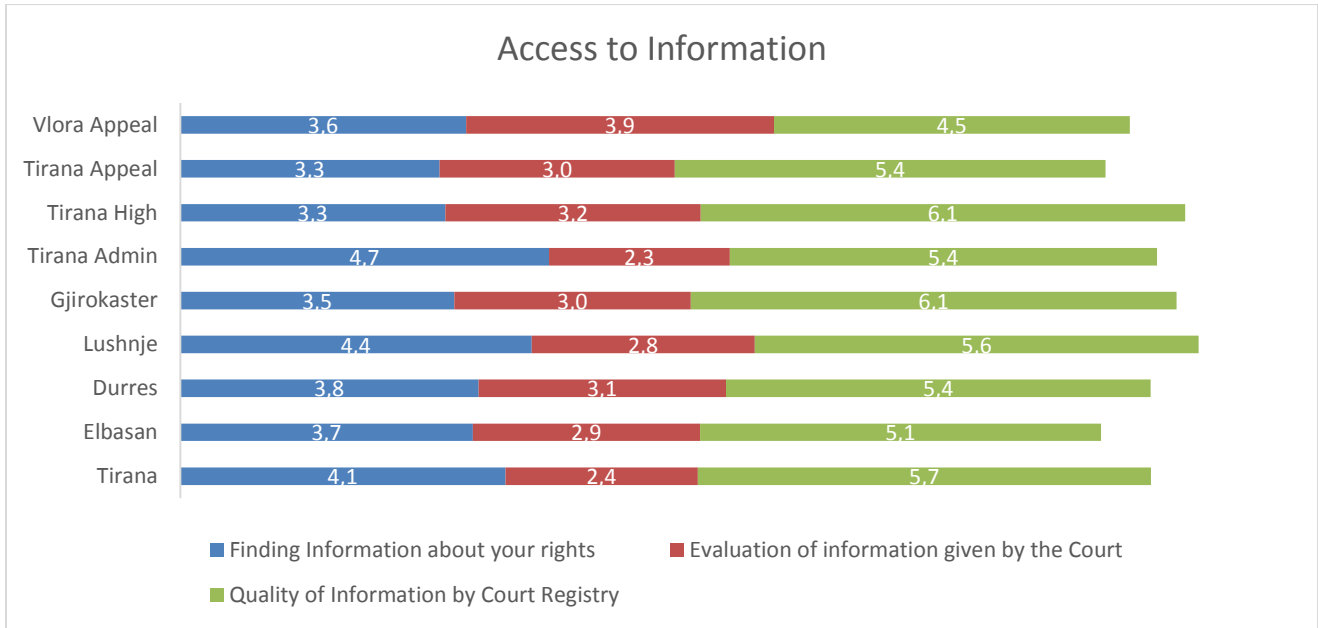




Access to information

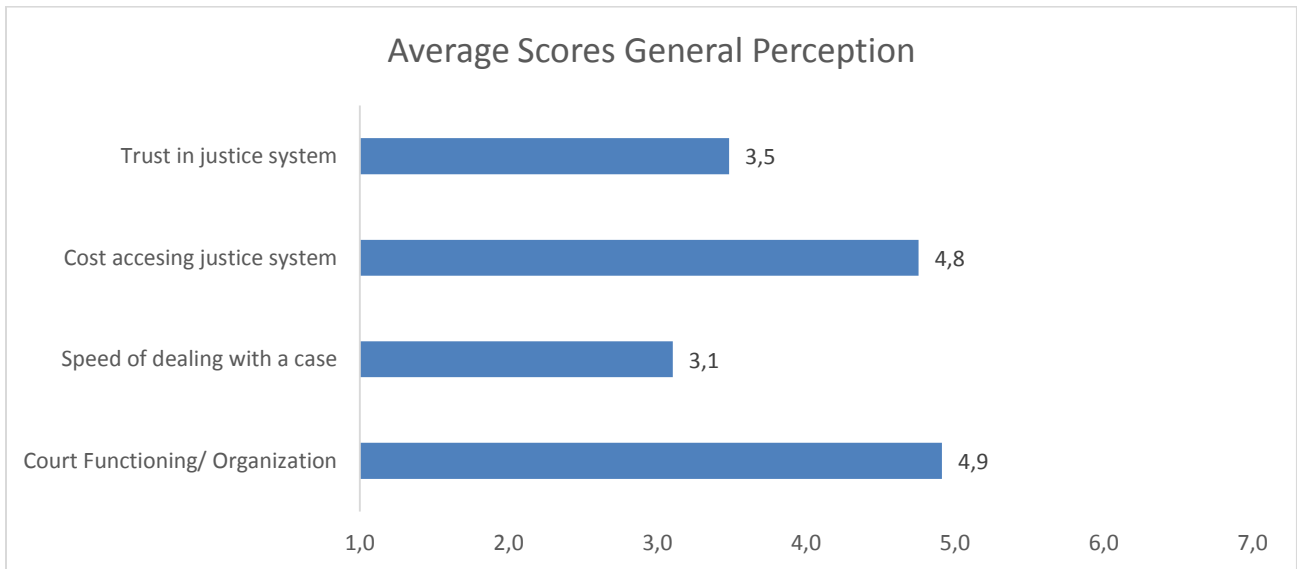
The level of satisfaction about the access to information is quite high as far as the quality of the information is concerned, but just around the middle of the scale as far as the easiness to find the information about citizens' rights and even lower about the evaluation of the information given by the court.

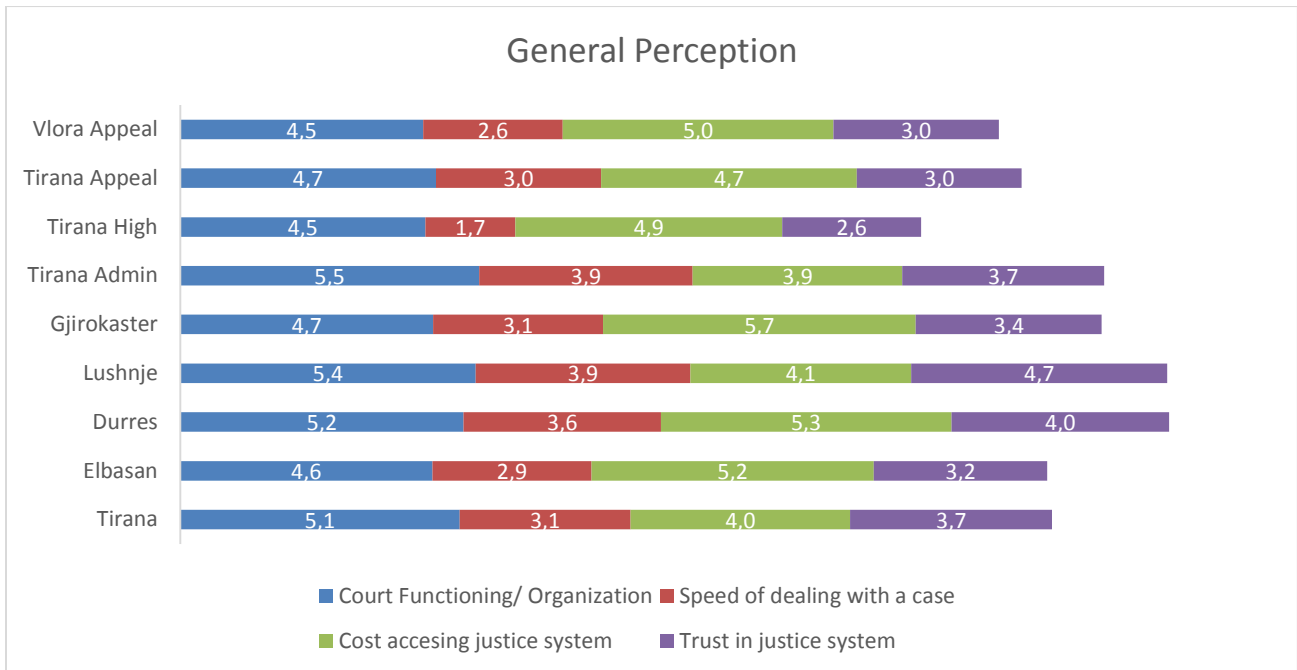




General perception of the function of justice

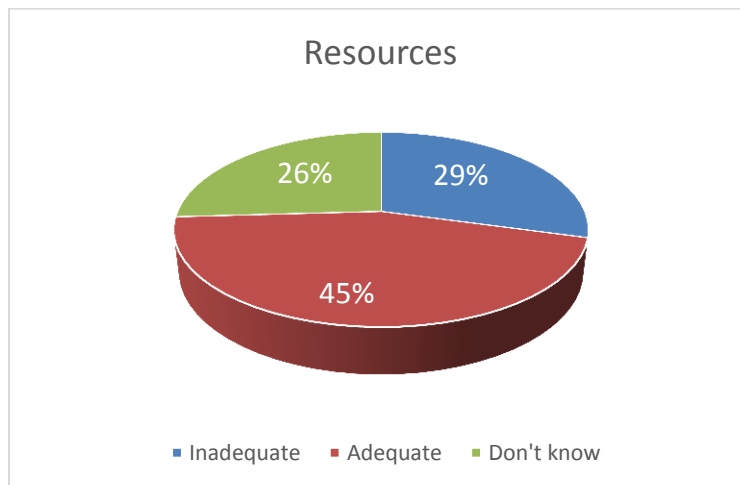
The general perception has a quite good level of satisfaction as far as the court functioning organization and the costs accessing the justice systems are concerned. On the contrary, the speed in dealing with the case and the trust in the justice system have scores below the middle level of the scale.





Resources

45% of the users' interviewed think that the financial, infrastructure, and human resources are adequate, while 29% think that they are not. 26% of the people replied that they do not know. However, there are significant differences from court to court. In particular, in Vlora appeal court 68% of the users interviewed say that resources are inadequate.

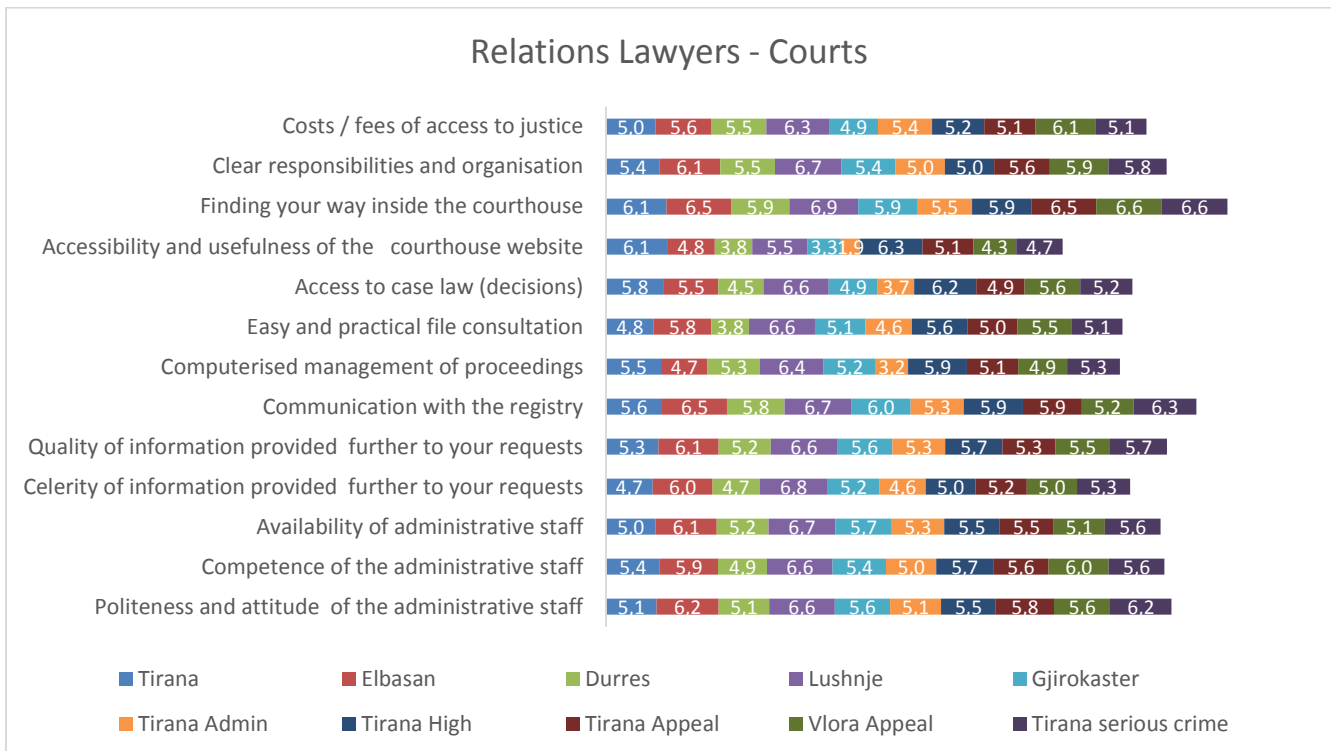
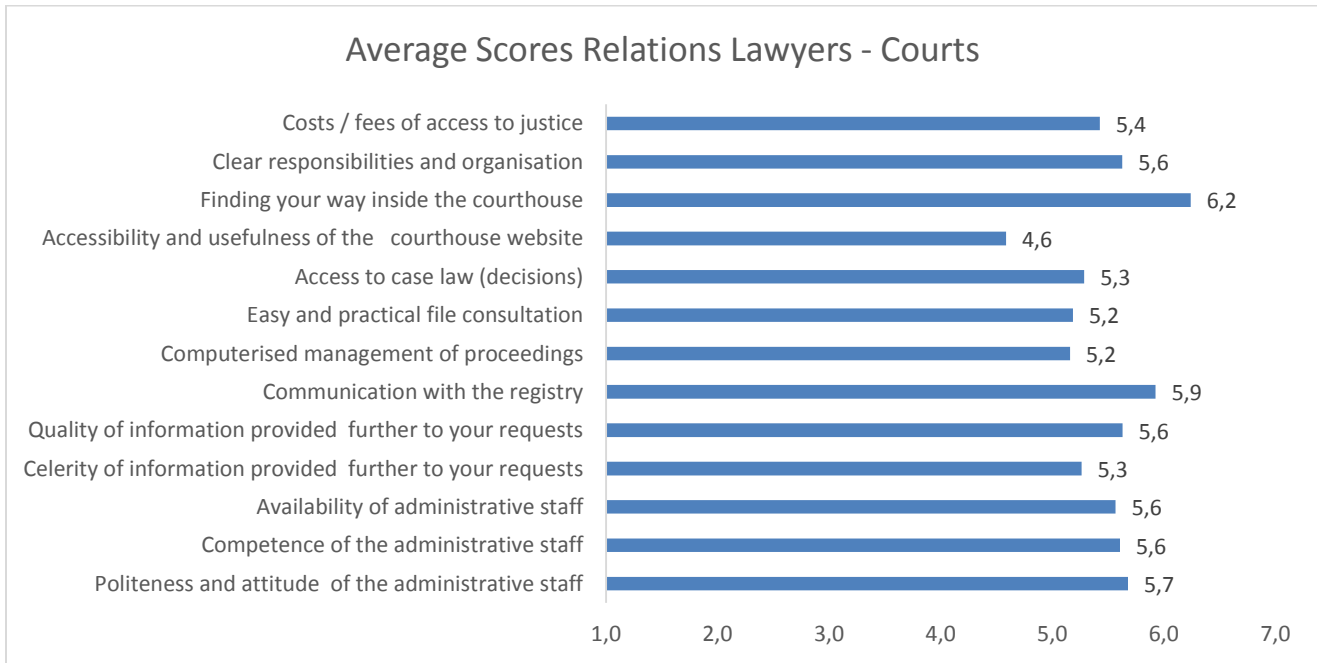


Lawyers' Survey

Usually in surveys, lawyers give a higher score than court's users. This is often due to their better knowledge of the courts' complexity and difficulties, but also it may be due to a certain attention of lawyers to avoid any possible disappointment of judges. This exercise confirm this general trend.

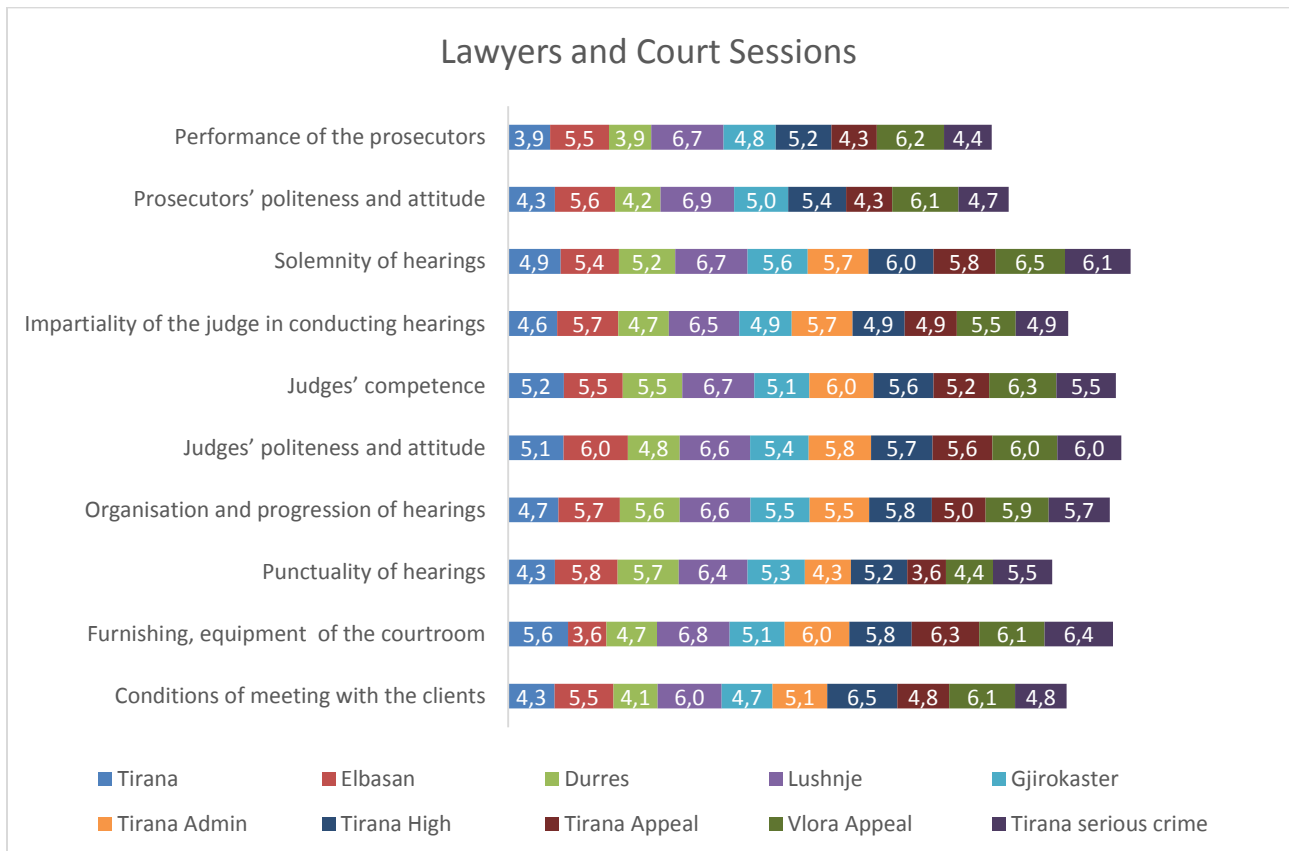
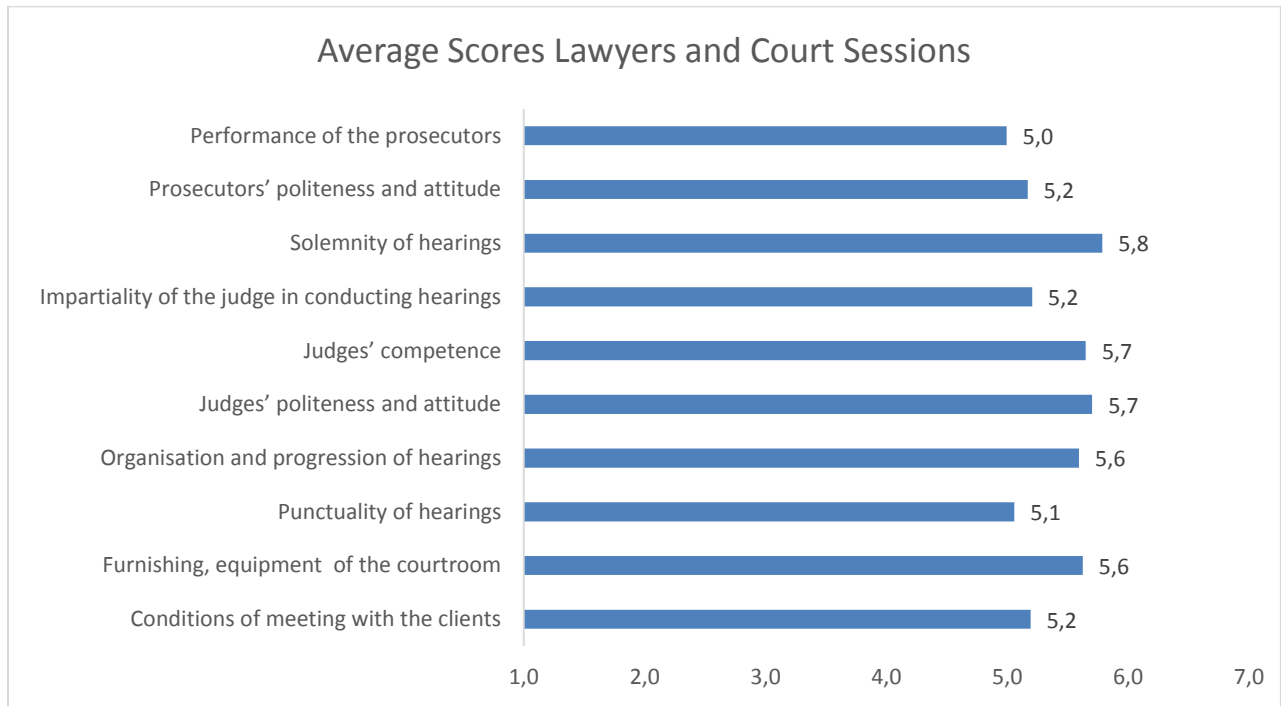
Relations with the courts

Lawyers' interviewed say that the relations with the courts are quite good. Some problems arise in Tirana Administrative court, as far as the use of information and communication technologies is concerned.



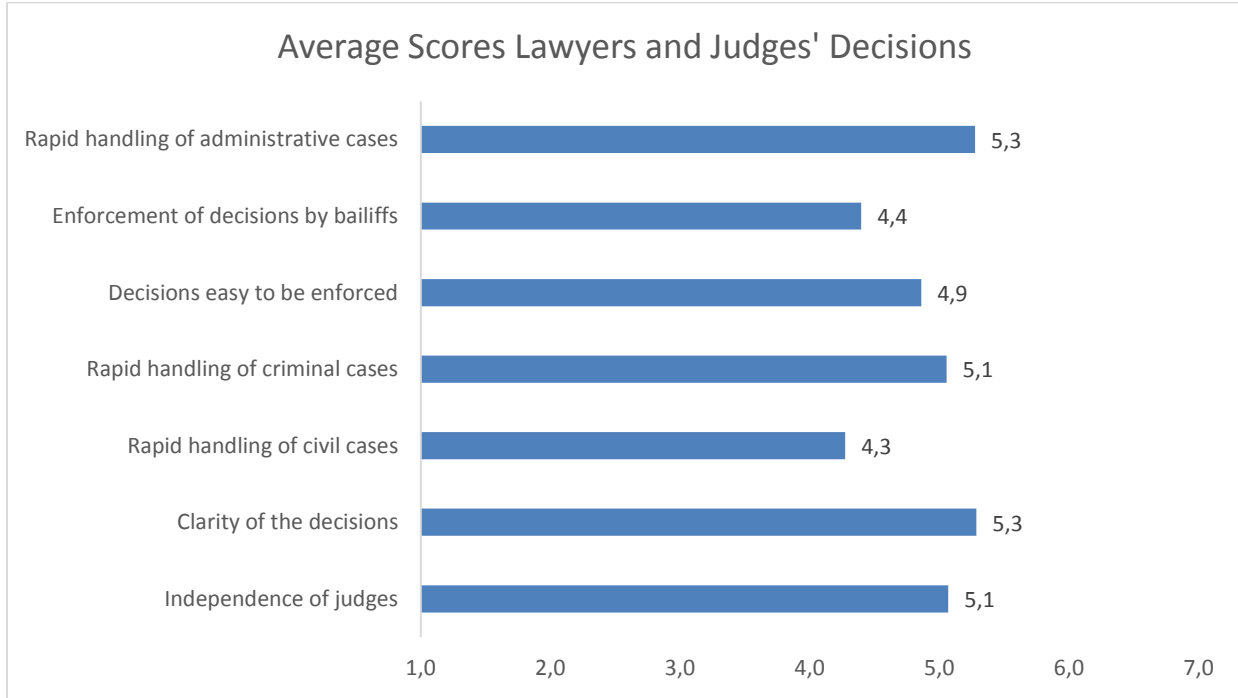
Preparation and conduct of court sessions

The level of satisfaction is quite high in all the courts. In Vlora appeal court score about punctuality of the hearing is a little lower. In Elbasan, lawyers give a lower score on furnishing of the courtroom.



Judges' decisions

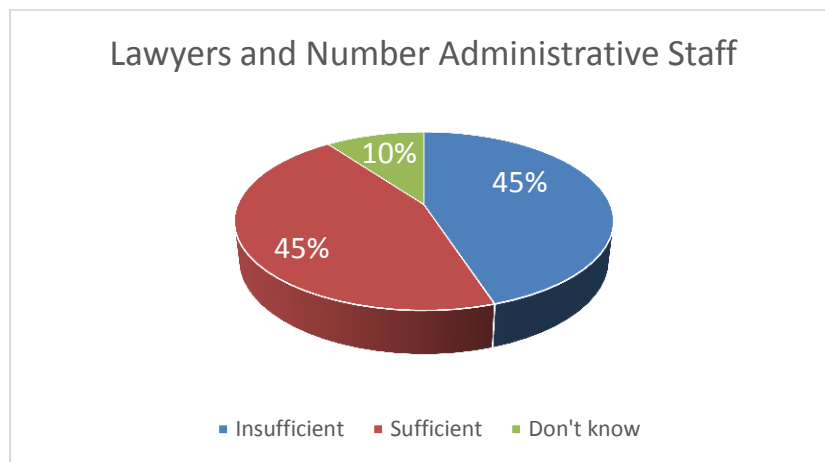
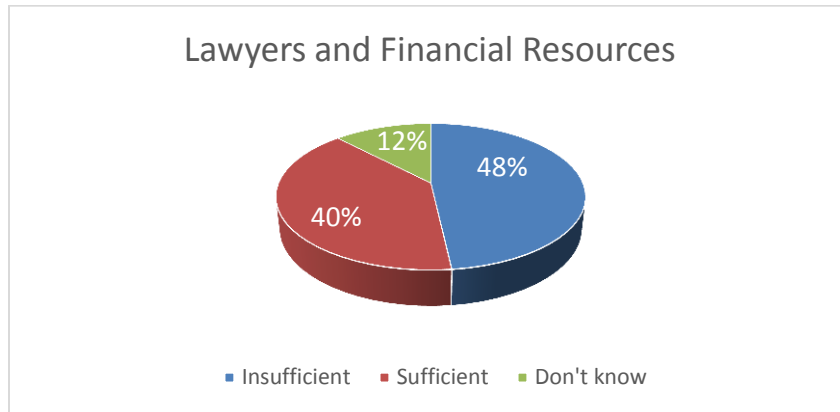
Scores of the level of satisfaction of the lawyers about the judges' decisions and behaviour are quite high.

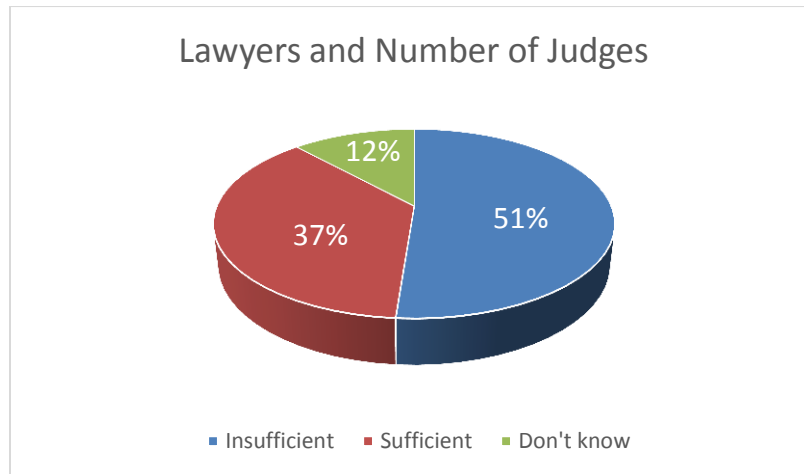


Resource

Lawyers were asked to express their opinion about the resources (finance and infrastructure, administrative staff, judges) available.

48% of the lawyers think that financial resources are insufficient, 45% think that administrative staff is not sufficient. As far as the number of judges is concerned, 37% think that the number is sufficient and 51% that is not.





Possible improvements

Finally, in the “open-ended” questions (question n. 41 courts users’ survey and question n. 38 lawyers’ survey), it was asked to identify some possible changes to improve the functioning of courts. Among them, it is possible to single out four possible improvements:

- Give special attention to the risk of corruption in the judicial system
- Decrease the length of judicial proceedings
- Enforce punctuality
- Use of audio recording systems during the court hearings

Recommendations

These brief recommendations are exclusively based on the analysis of the results of this exercise. Further and more in-depth analysis should be needed to come out with more specific and context-dependent proposals.

Court users’ satisfaction survey should be carried out **periodically** in order to collect data in different years and then allowing a diachronic analysis of the information to monitor changes in the users’ perception of the court functioning, as well as to assess the changes carried out.

If court users’ satisfaction survey are too expensive and time consuming, courts may take into consideration the **establishment of a permanent forum** with lawyers and representatives of local association to collect constant information on the court functioning.

The accessibility and premises of the courts should be improved to **ease the access for people with disabilities**. If structural building renovations are not possible, courts should do their best to remove any possible obstacles to ease the access for them. For example, at least one courtroom could be set at the ground floor, and a specific front desk may be organize to ease the collection of information or the delivery of documents.

It looks like most of the information to the public are given at the front desk, which are usually very time-consuming. Courts may do their best to **improve the communication with the public through the phone and the development of the web sites**, which have been rated quite low.

In some courts, the politeness and competence of administrative personnel has not been assessed very positively; **training, monitoring of practices**, and **turnover** of the personnel in different functions may help to improve the service delivered and its perception.

The **length of proceeding** particularly at the Court of appeal and the High court **should be improved**. CEPEJ has developed several tools that cannot be fully reported here to try to improve the pace of litigation and to improve the court functioning. Among them can be mentioned the setting of timeframes, court and chief judge control of case progress, differentiated case management, realistic scheduling of trial events to improve the punctuality of hearings, firm and credible trial dates, strict policies to avoid hearing postponements, increasing the number of early settlements. In addition, under the current project, amongst others, an in-depth assessment of the current state of the Albanian judicial system³ and a thematic report on judicial time management in Albanian courts⁴ was prepared, The former provides a clear, comprehensive picture of the main indicators of the functioning of the judicial system and suggested overall and specific recommendations on how to better address the existing challenges. Letter describes the structural obstacles in implementing the CEPEJ time management Guidelines, their consequences and proposes possible solutions for making courts capable of implementing them in their daily work. It is advisable for the courts to consult closely with above-mentioned documents for addressing the length of proceedings.

The **language** of both judges and prosecutors is considered difficult by court's users. This is typical due to the technical legal language but an effort to **improve the communication** with the parties can help to improve the relation between citizens and courts.

Serious matters of concern are the **low level of trust in the judiciary** and the **perception of corruption**.

These issues are very difficult to tackle and they need much more analysis and knowledge of the actual situation to be addressed. However, some possible paths to be undertaken can be drafted. Requirement of judicial independence and impartiality lies in the protection of citizens against the manipulation of case assignment in order to attain a certain outcome. Court **case assignment rules** should be **simple and clear** and court's users should be informed of the formal rules on internal case assignment and also aware of the actual practices.

Chief judges should carry out a constant **monitoring of case processing**, and establish a "**grievance committee**" to collect information on possible malpractices.

³ In-depth Assessment Report of the Justice System in Albania, written by Jacques Bühler and Jon Johnsen, 2015

⁴ Time management in Albanian Courts. Major findings of the EU/COE "Support to Efficiency of Justice" Project (SEJ), Written by Aida Bushati Gugu, Jon T. Johnsen and Elira Kokona, 2015

A **board of judges** from different courts may be established to check a sampling of decided cases to detect problems.

Judges' **decisions** should be **published** on the website of the court to ease the access of data and to increase transparency.

Courts' website, particularly in some courts, should be improved also to decrease the number of people asking for information at the court registry.

It should be carefully check if the **transcriptions of judgements** is **always needed**. Then, explore the possibility to adopt **audio recording**, and **voice recognition systems**.

Lawyers or associations on a voluntary basis may help the court to give the need **information on citizen's rights** with dedicated desks.

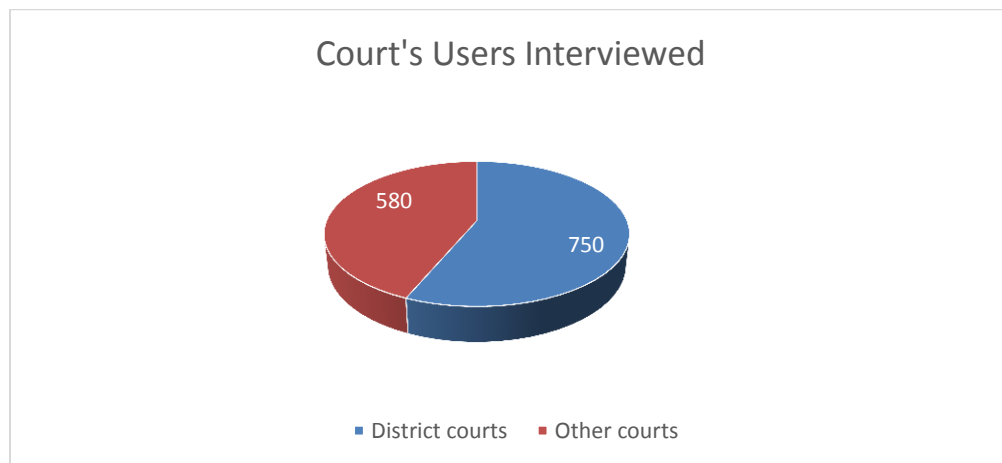
Data Analysis

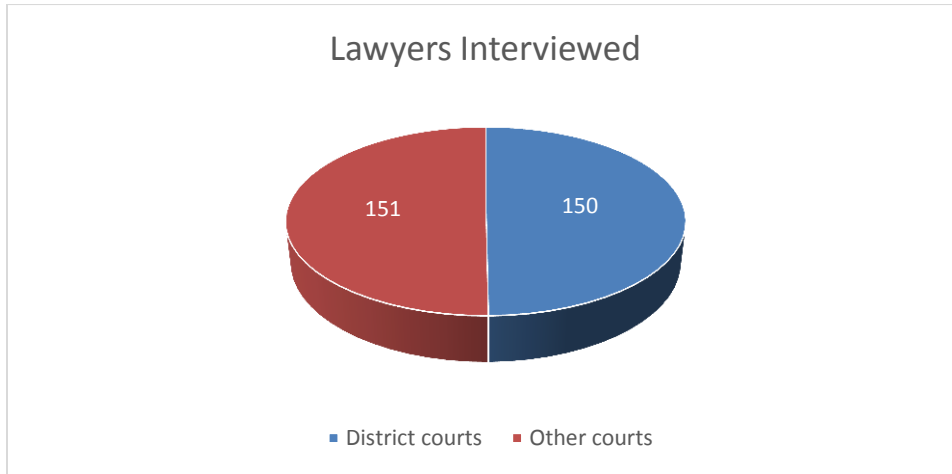
Court's users

Profile of the court's users interviewed

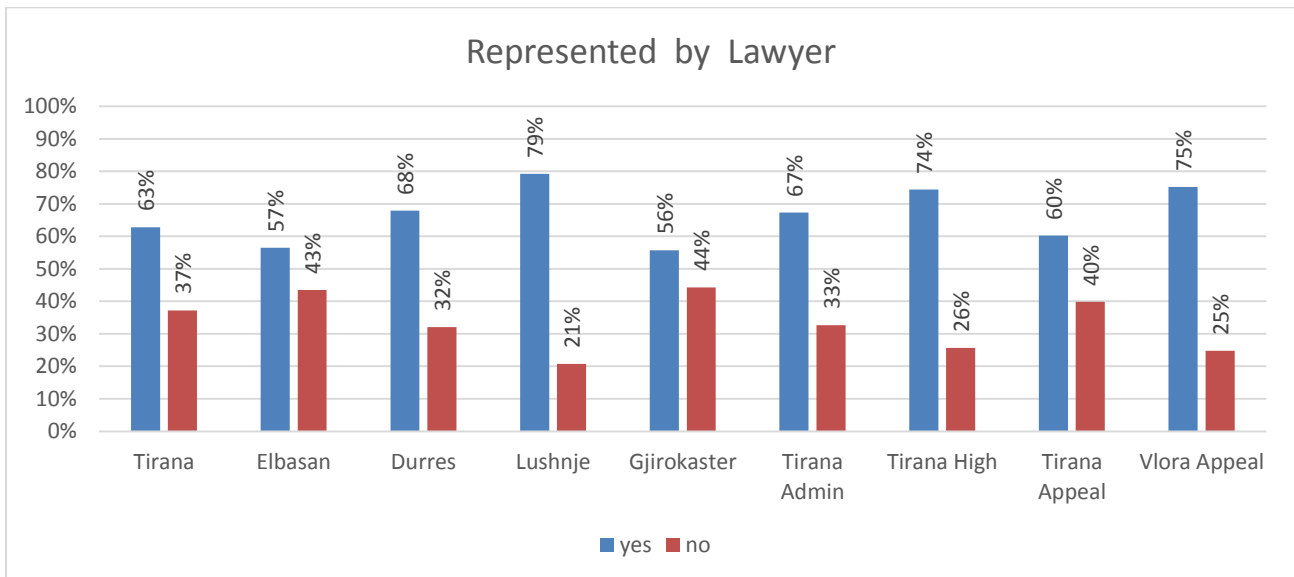
Court's users interviewed were selected randomly, by gender, age, with or without previous experience in the court, they may be party in a case, relatives of a party, witnesses or expert to give testimony in a civil or criminal case.

580 court's users wer einterviewed in the 5 different District courts. 750 in the other 5 courts with different jurisdictions, three of which were located in Tirana.

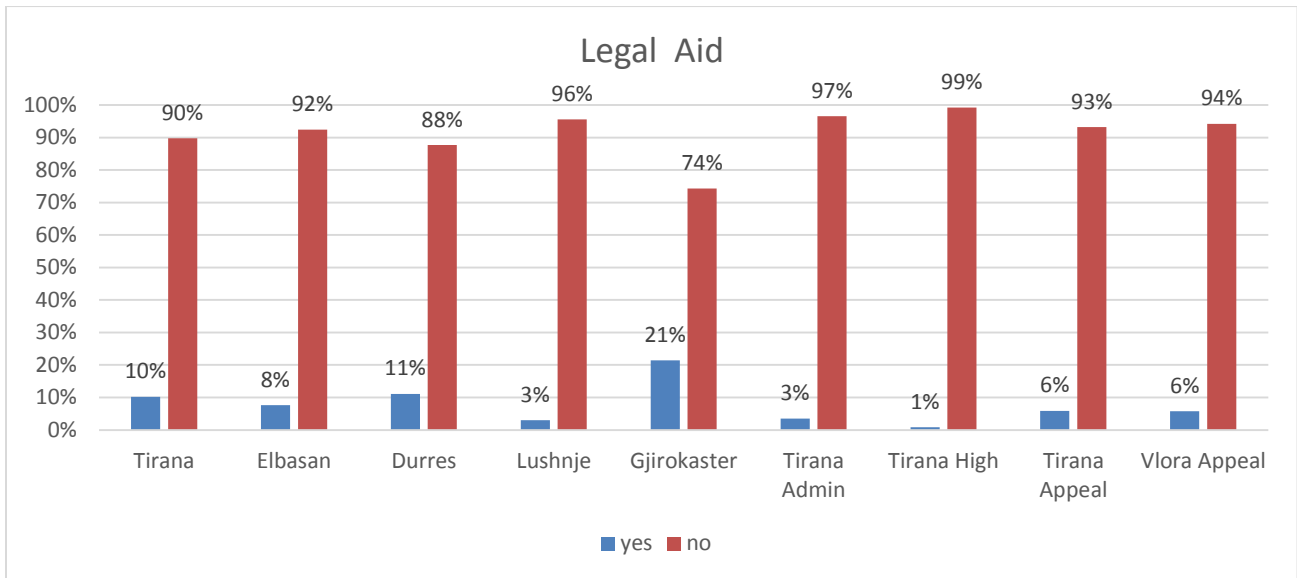




The following chart shows the percentage of interviewees that were represented by a lawyer, and then if they were on legal aid.



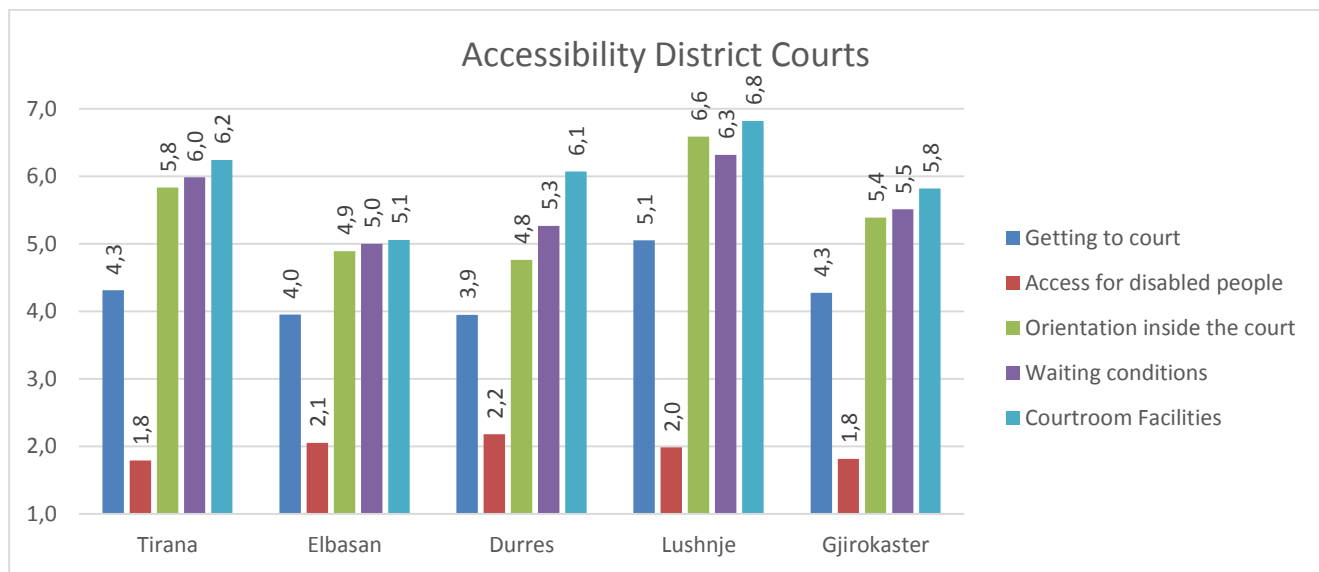
Court's users were asked if they had legal aid, and as the following chart shows, most of the interviewee was not on legal aid. A higher percentage is only in Gjirokaster.



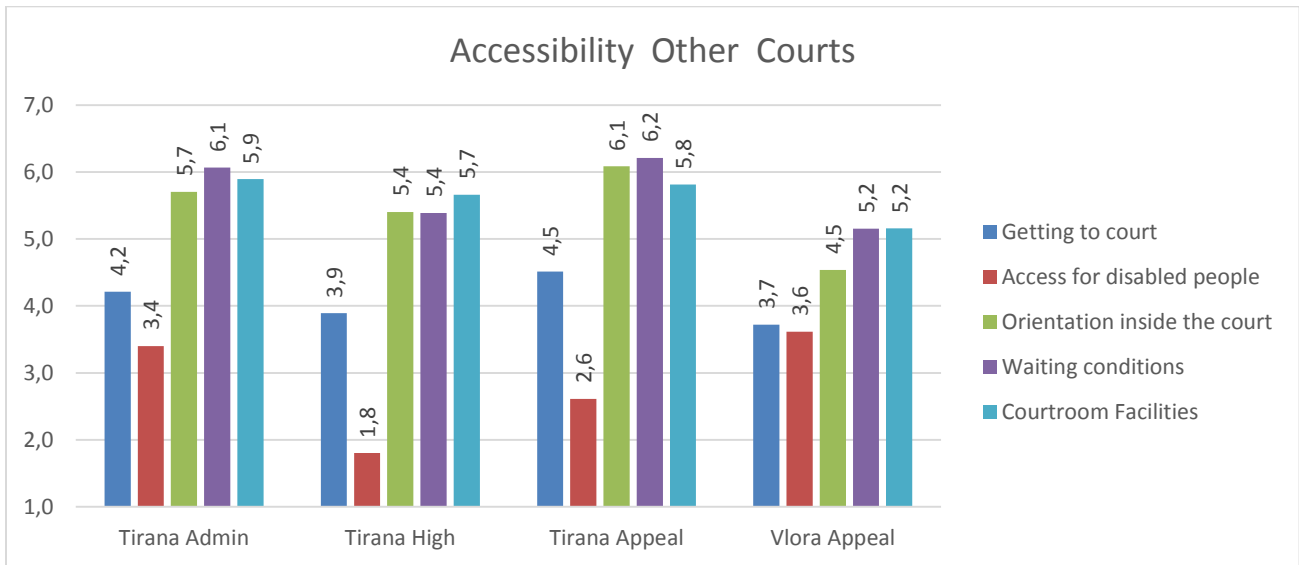
It is worth mentioning that data analysis shows that the **level of satisfaction is not affected by the gender, age, previous experience with the court or other courts, if the interviewee was represented by a lawyer, or if the decision was in favour of the interviewee.**

To facilitate the interpretation of data, the presentation of data has divided the courts into two groups: five “District courts”, and the “Other courts”.

As the chart shows, the court’s users rate the Accessibility to District Courts quite similarly in all the 5 district courts. Lushnje court has a little higher level of satisfaction in all the items. The most important problem in all the five courts is the **access for people with disabilities that has a very low rate.**

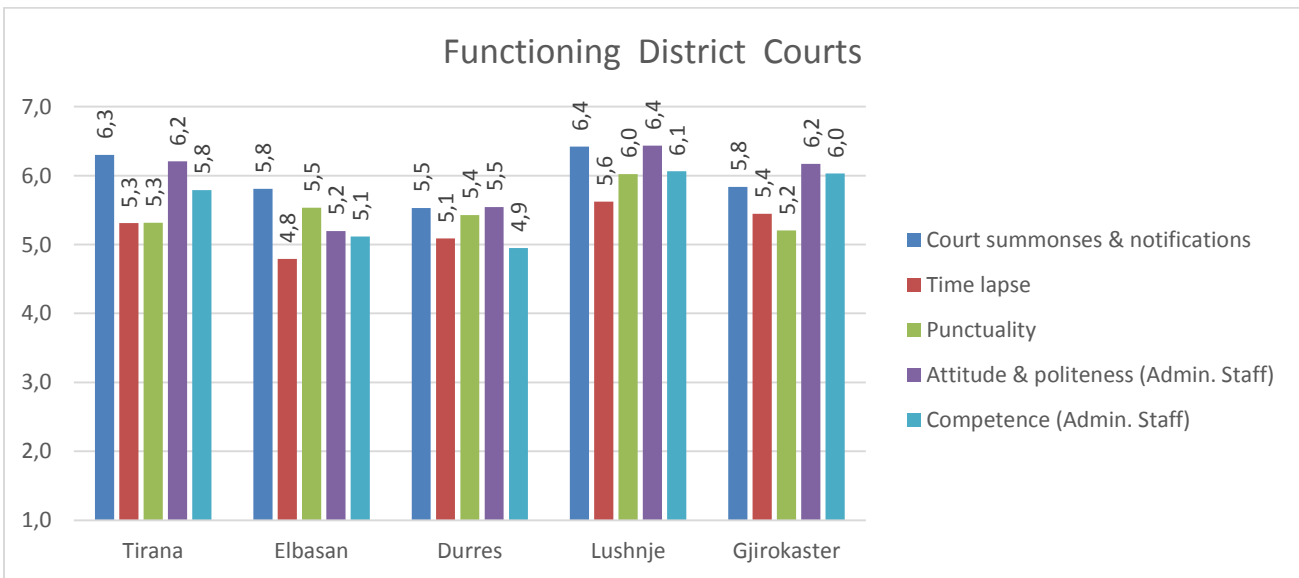


The accessibility of the “Other” four courts (Administrative court, High court, and two Appeal courts) is quite similar. The lowest satisfaction is related to the **access for people with disabilities**. In Tirana Adm. and Vlora Appeal the scores are slightly better than in the five district courts.



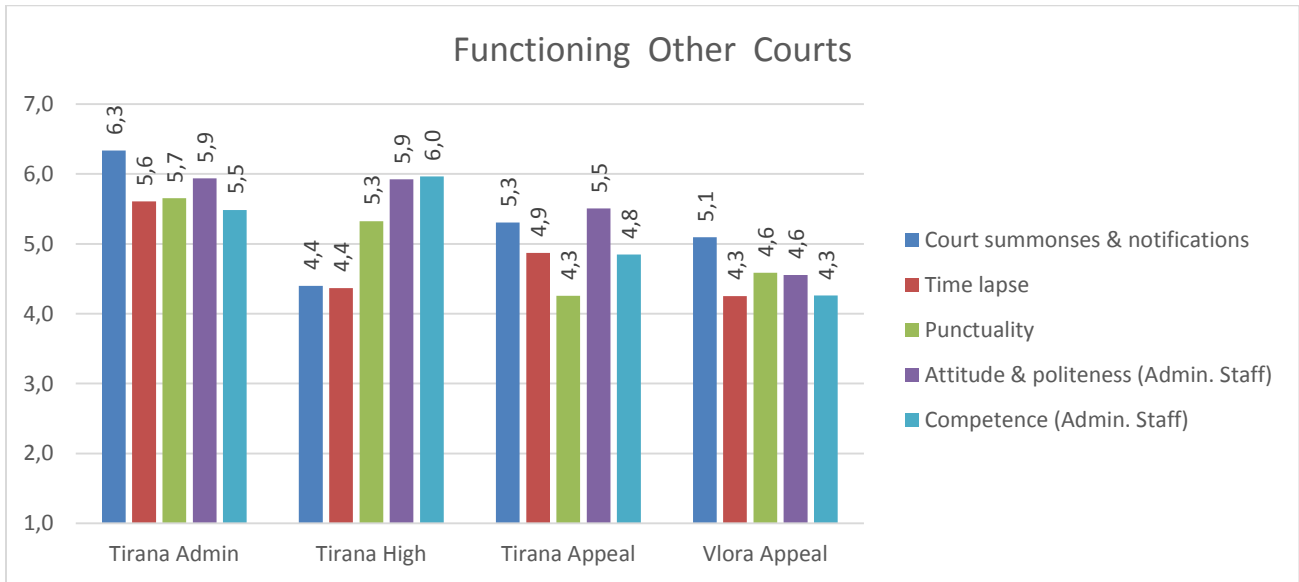
The questionnaire asked about the courts users’ level of satisfaction on several issues related to the court’s functioning.

As the chart shows, there are some, but not very significant, differences among the courts, with Lushnje that has a general higher score in all the items.



The court functioning in the other four courts has scores a little lower than in those in the district courts. In particular, are matter of some concern the clarity of summons and notifications and the

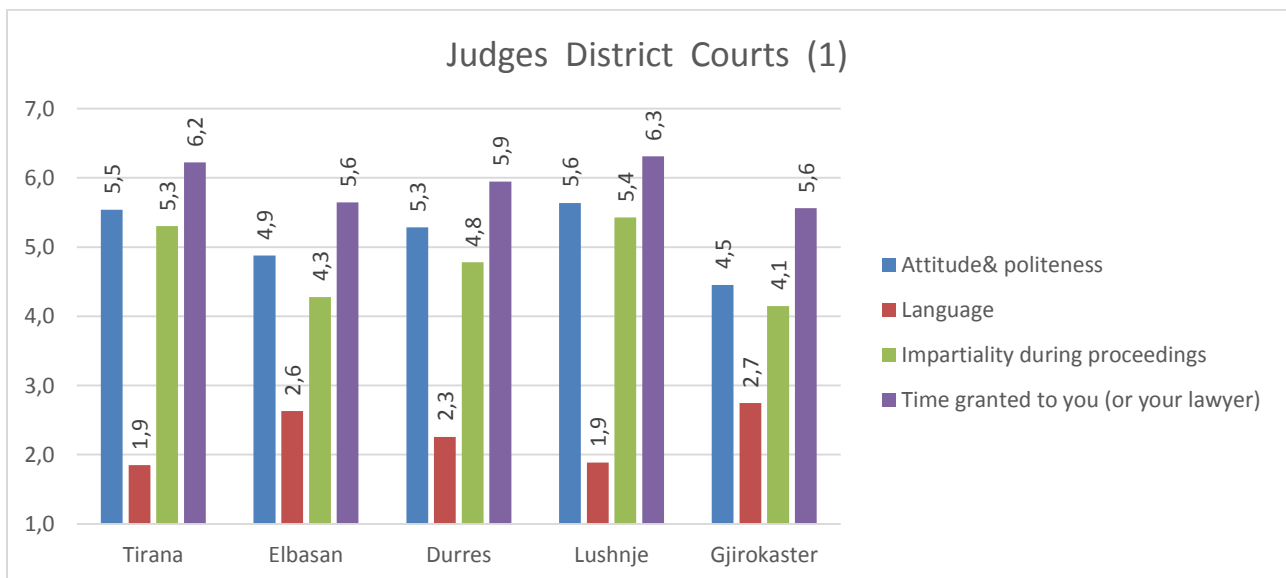
time elapsed between the summons and the date of the hearing. In Vlora the score about politeness of court personnel is a little lower than in the other courts.

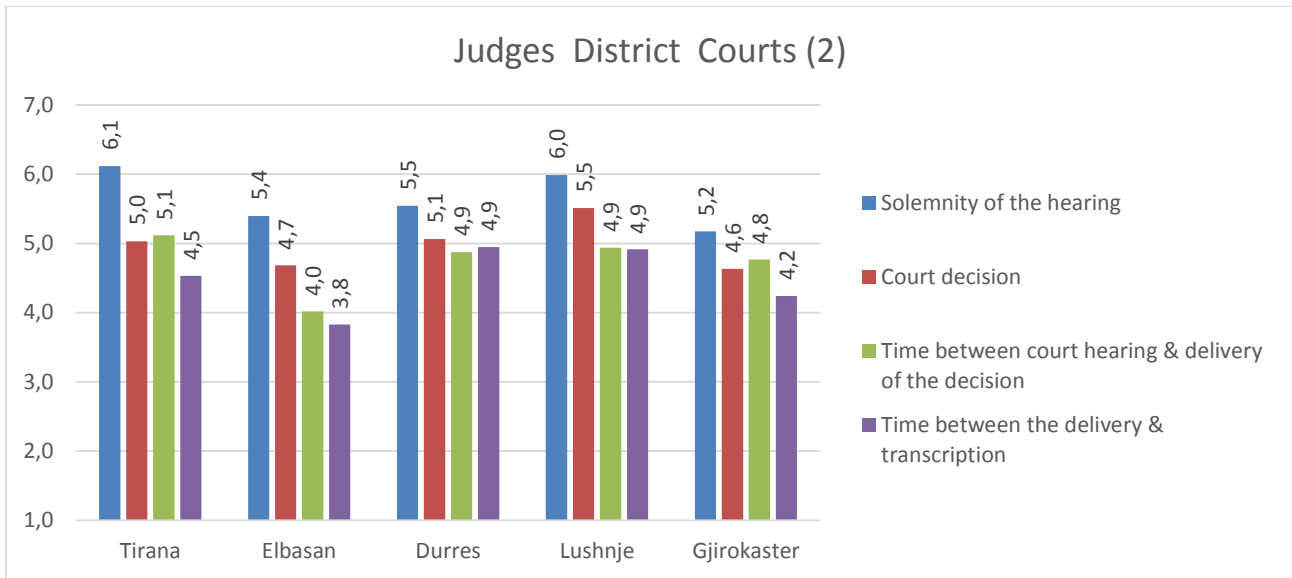


The following charts show the level of satisfaction of court’s users about items related to judges and the decision making process.

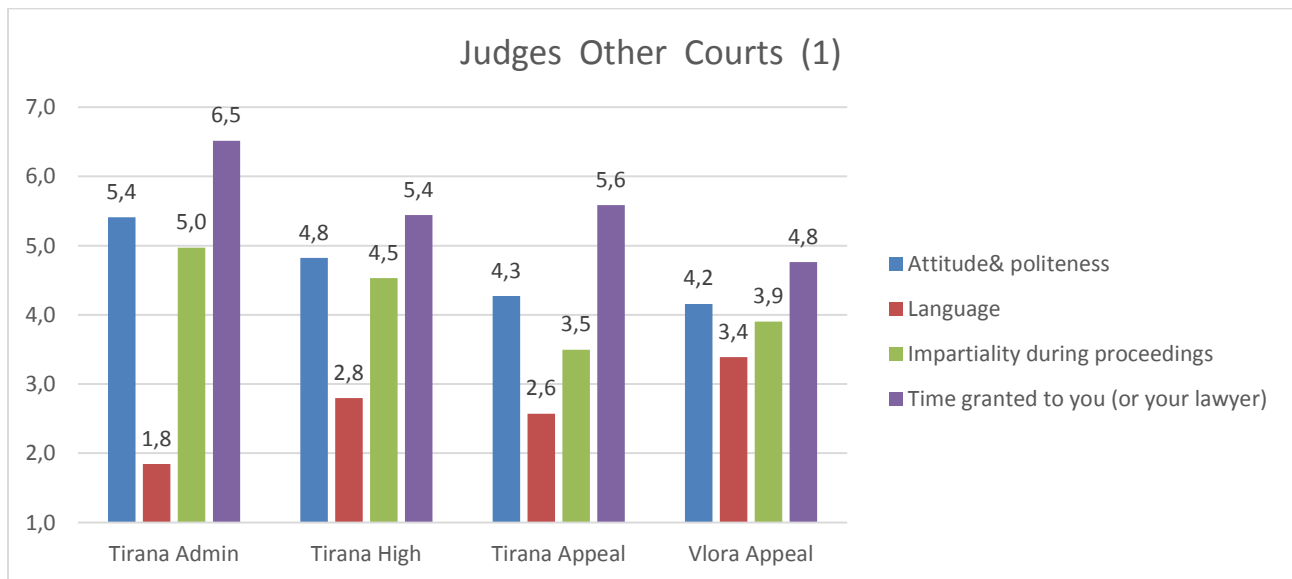
The lowest scores in all the five courts relates to the **language** used by the judges, which is considered **unclear**, and then the **time needed to the transcription of the judgements**.

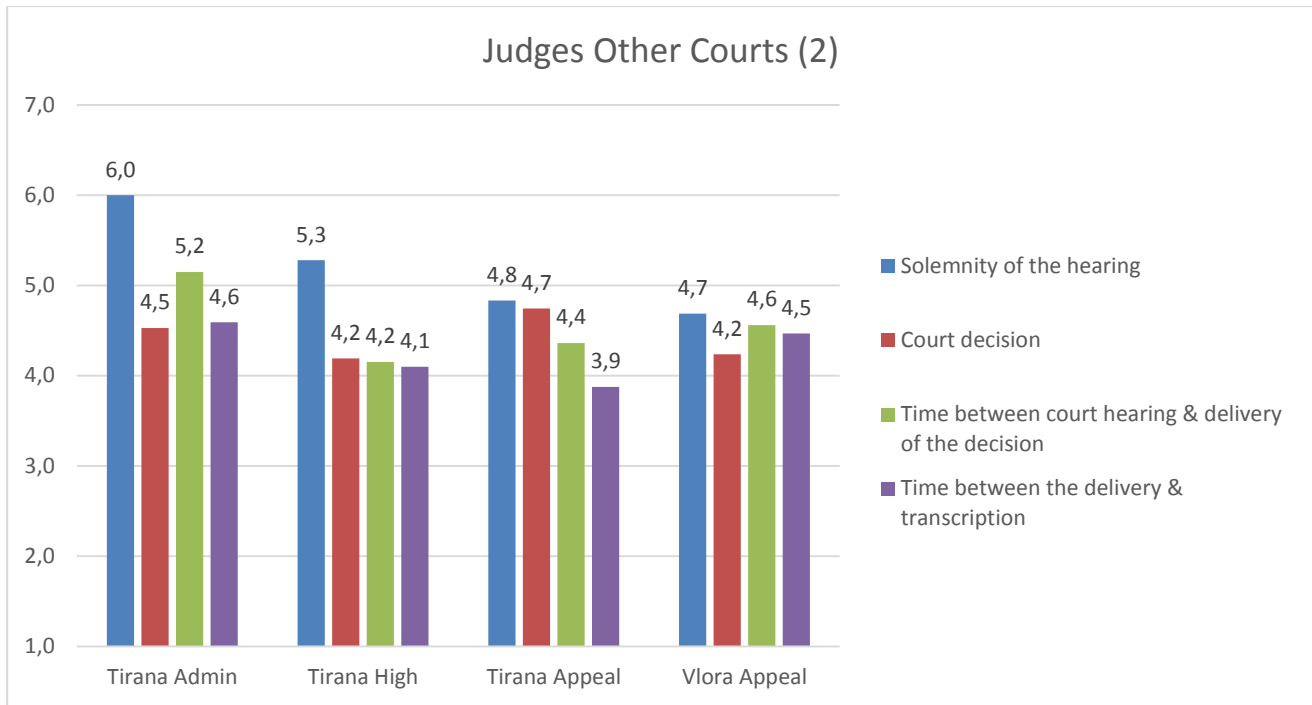
The district court of Gjirokaster has little lower scores in several items in comparison to the others.



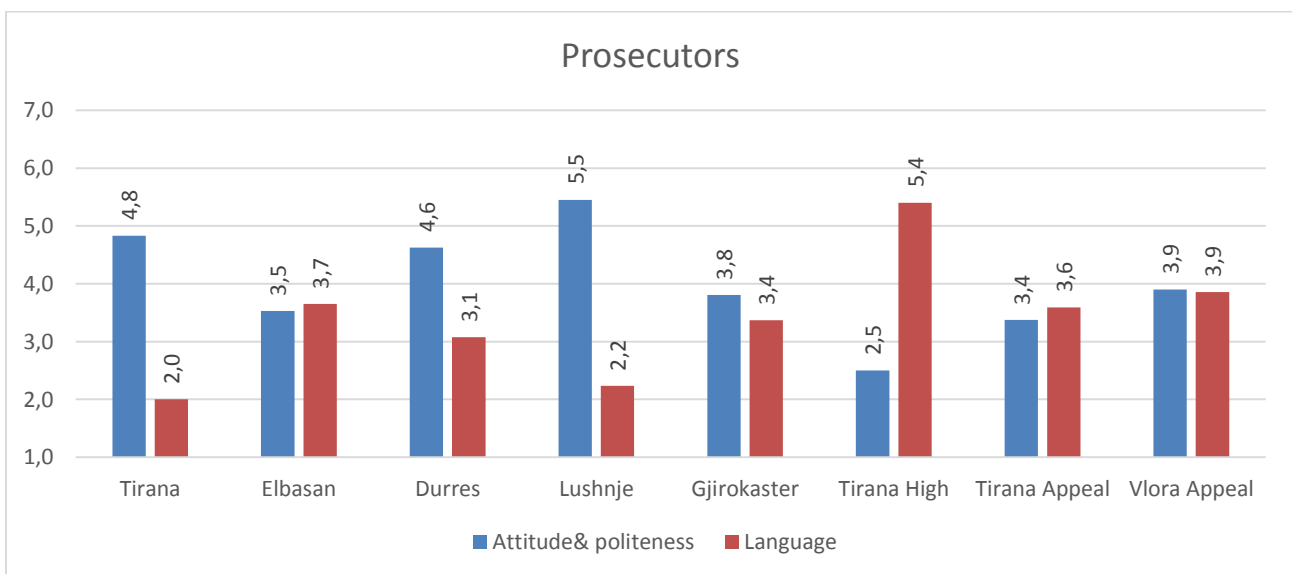


In the “Other courts”, as the charts show, there is still a problem of clarity of the language. In both the two appeal courts (Tirana and Vlora) the **“perceived impartiality of the judge in conducting the oral proceeding”** is a matter of concern.



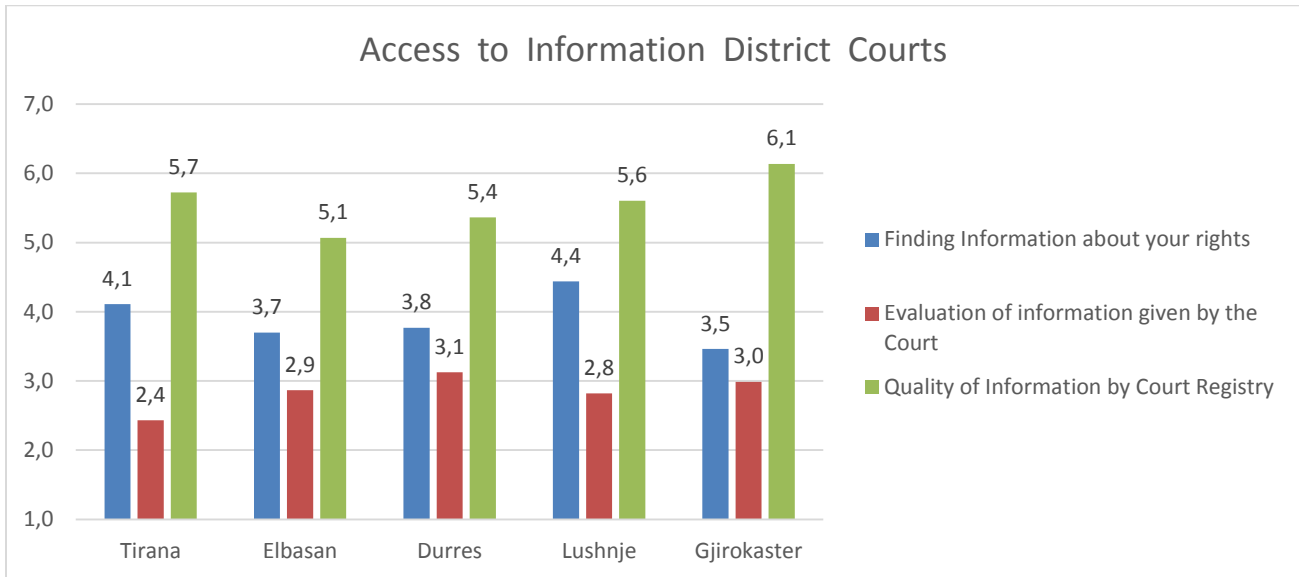


The questionnaire also had a couple of questions about the forensic activity of **prosecutors**. As the chart shows, the court's users are not very satisfied about the **language** used and **politeness**, in particular in Tirana High court. It is quite strange that the language used by prosecutor in this court has a very high score. It is worth mentioning that "politeness" scores quite high in Lushnje and Tirana district courts.

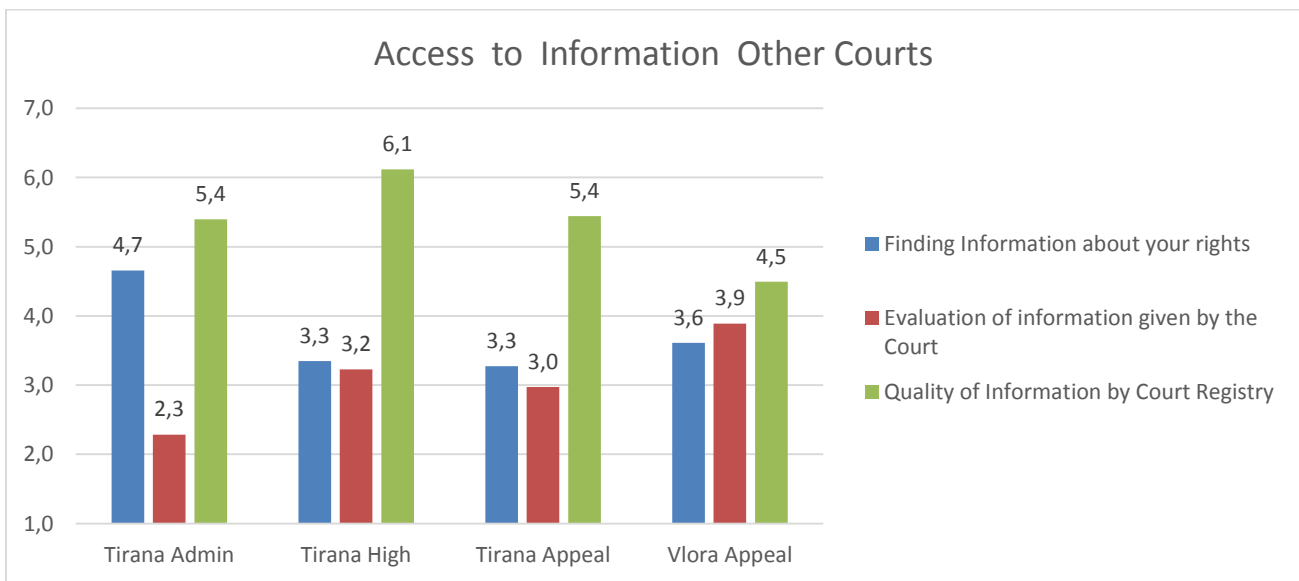


The information about the **court users' rights are not assessed high**, as well as the information provided by the court (on this respect, it is not very clear what kind of specific information the

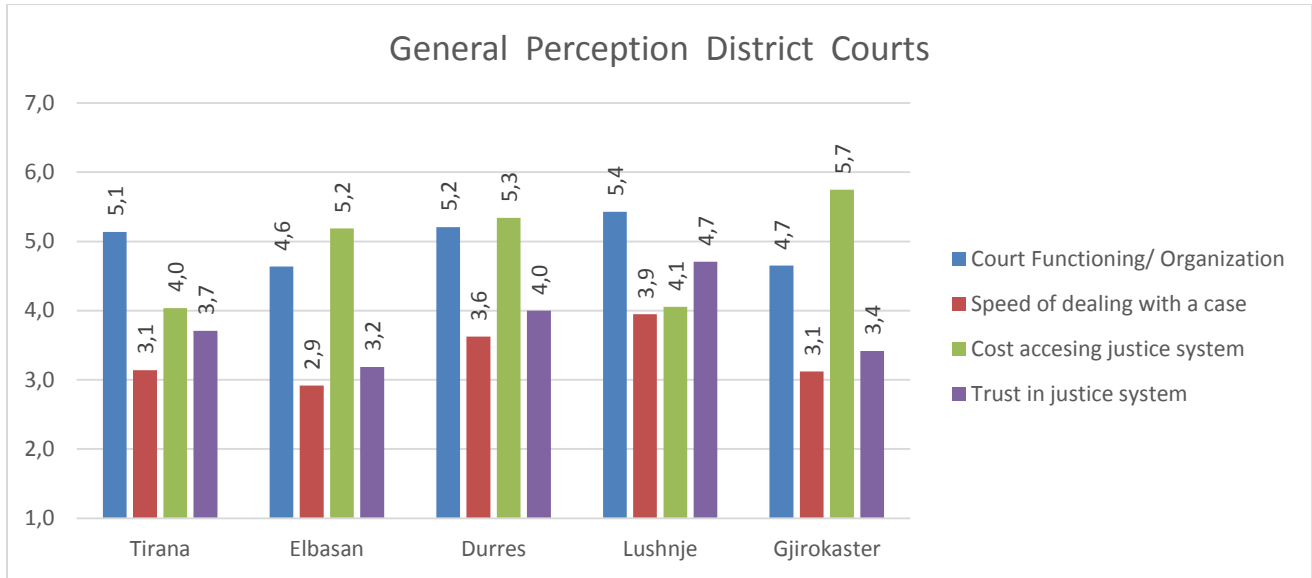
question refers to). On the contrary, the **information collected from the court registry** is in general **highly appreciated** by court's users.



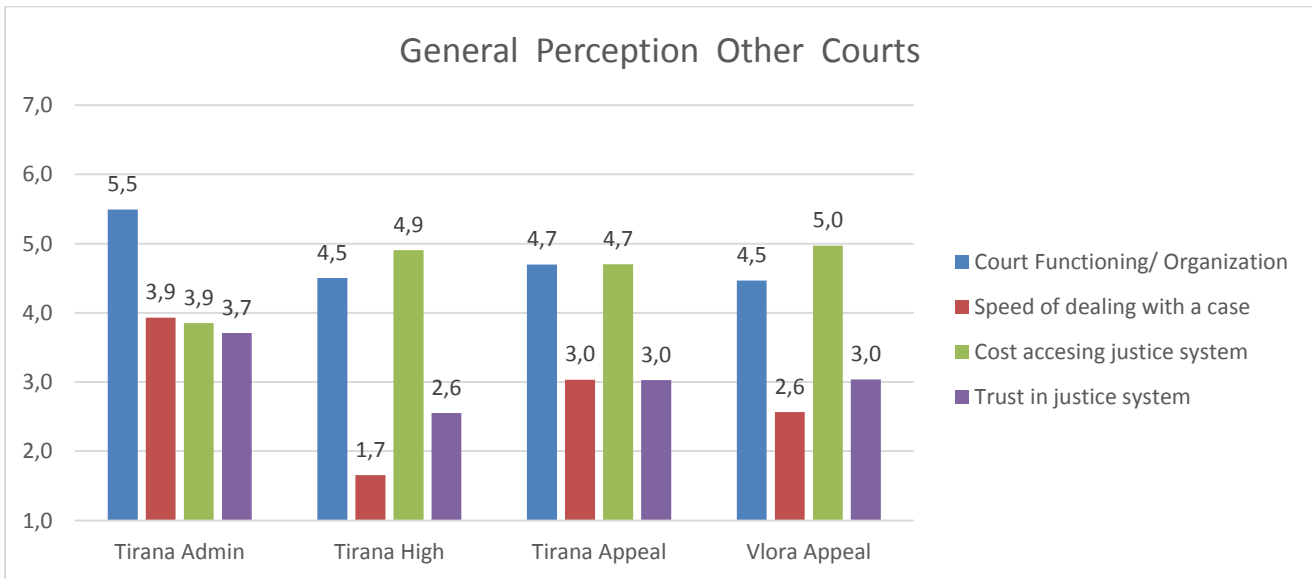
In the “Other courts”, score are lower. In particular, the collection of information about their rights and the information provided by the court are matter of concern.



The satisfaction level about the general perception of the **functioning** of district court is **quite high** about the understanding of courts functioning in all the courts. Some attention should be given to **“speed”** to deal with cases, which scores quite low in all the five district courts, and about the **“trust”** in the justice system, which are **matters of concern**.

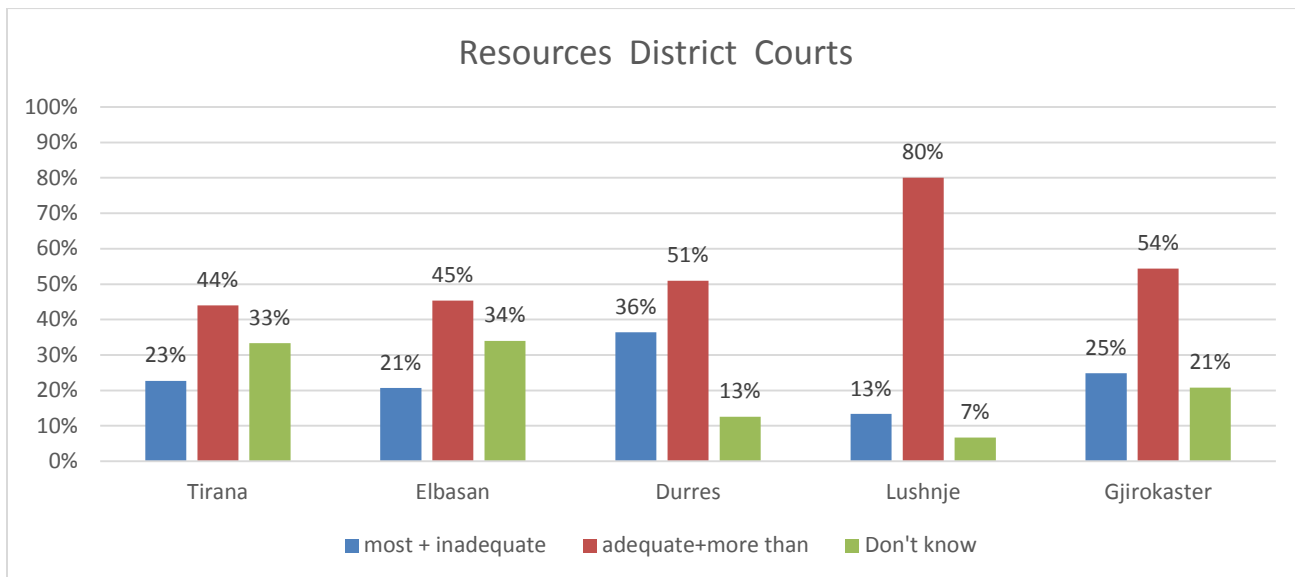


The general perception about the functioning of justice in the “other courts” raise some **matters of concern** about the “**speed**” and the “**trust**” in the justice system that score even lower than in the district courts.

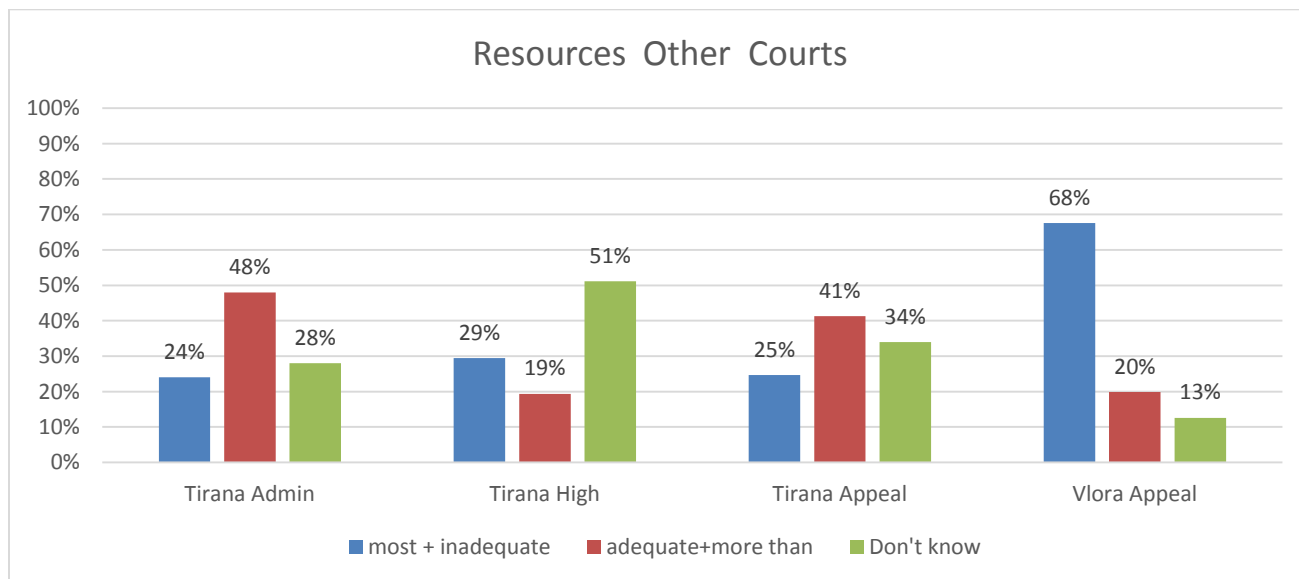


The resources available are rated by the court’s users interviewed in the district courts in very different ways.

As the following chart shows, 80% of court’s users consider them adequate in Lushnje. In the other four courts this percentage goes from 44% to 54%.



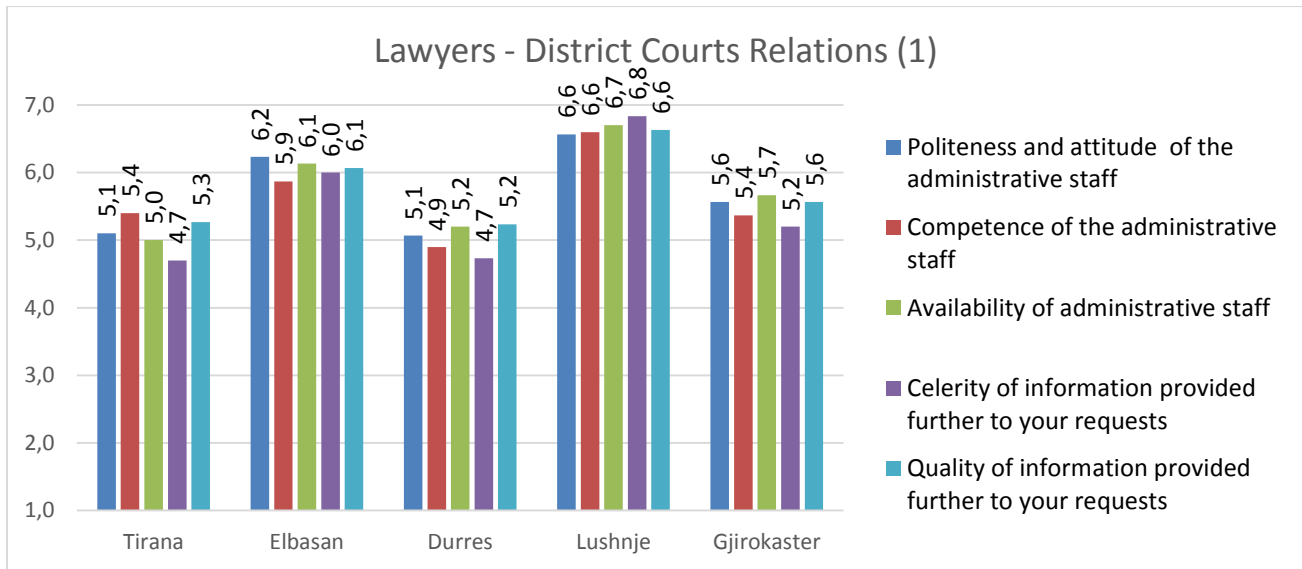
In the “other courts”, data from **Vlora appeal court** draw some attention because 68% of the people interviewed said that they perceive the **resources inadequate**.



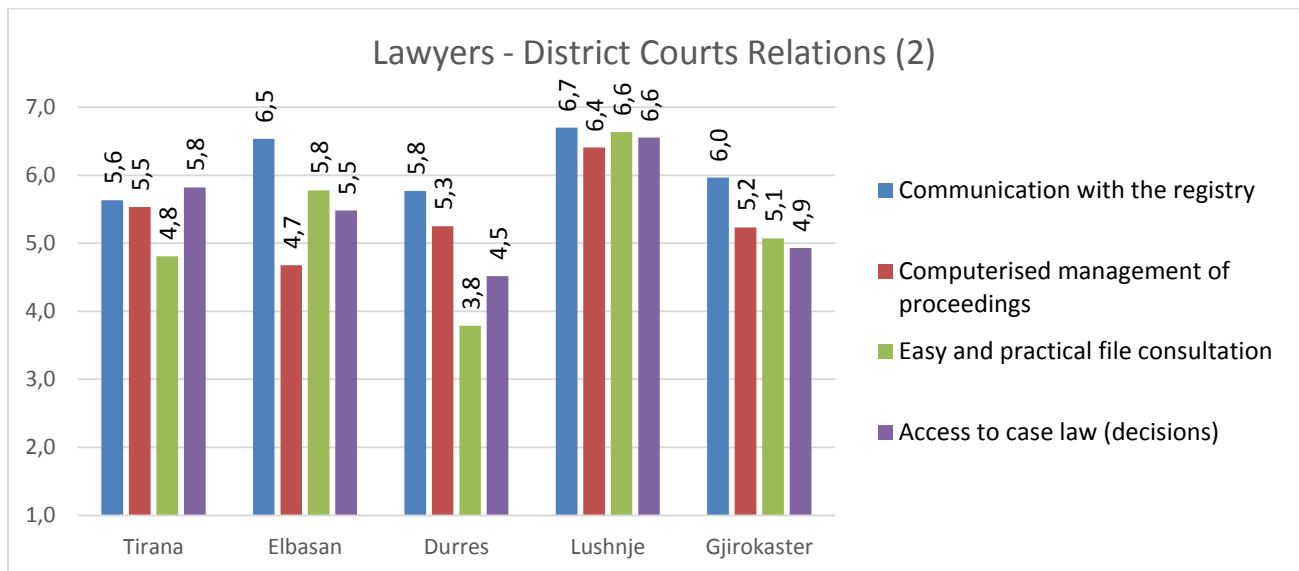
Lawyers

The first part of the questionnaire for lawyers deals with the level of satisfaction in relations with several courts' issues.

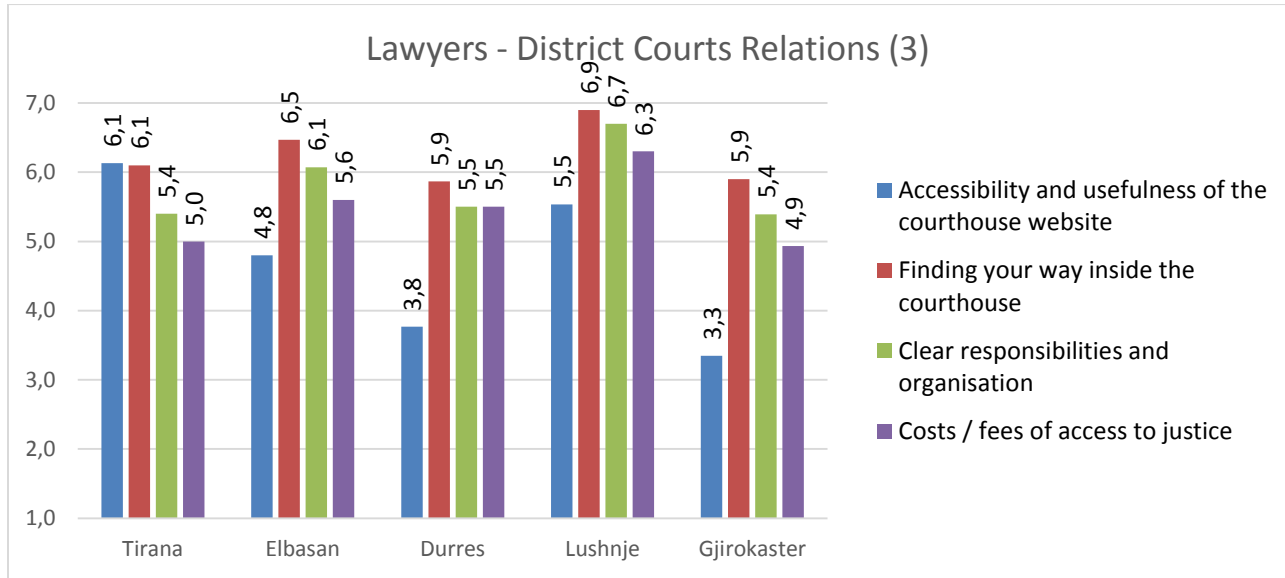
As the following charts show, the level of satisfaction of the lawyers in the 5 district courts is quite similar. The lawyers in the courts of Lushnje are, in general, more satisfied in comparison to the other courts.



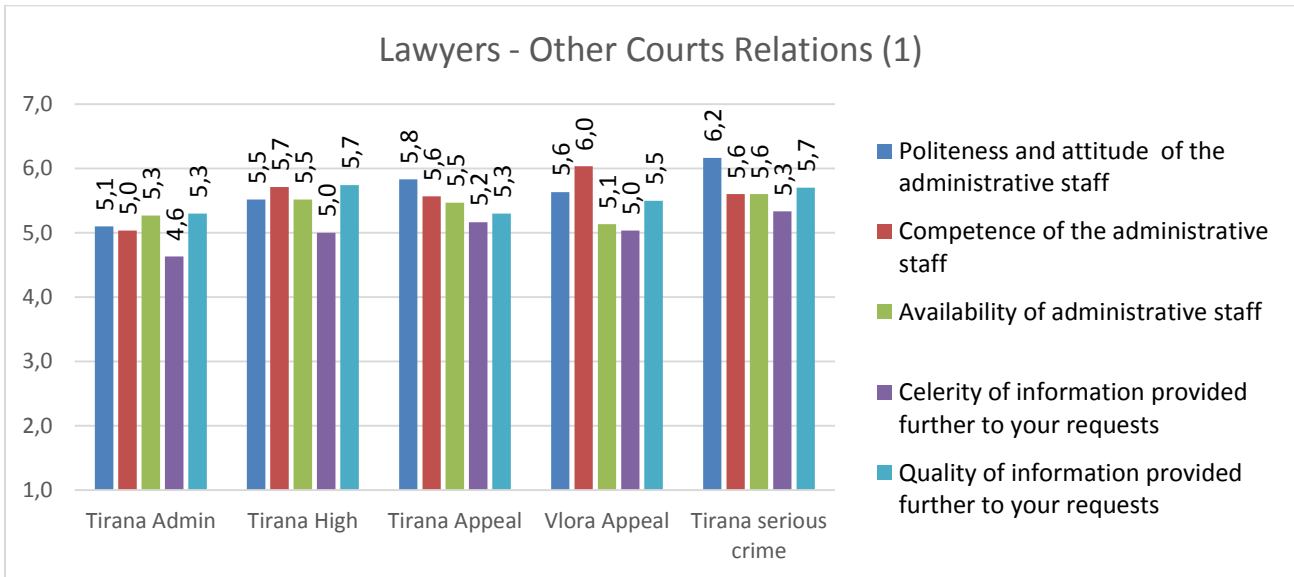
On the following 5 items, the district court of Lushnje scores better than the other courts. Some attention should be put in **Durres** about **difficulties to access and consult files**.



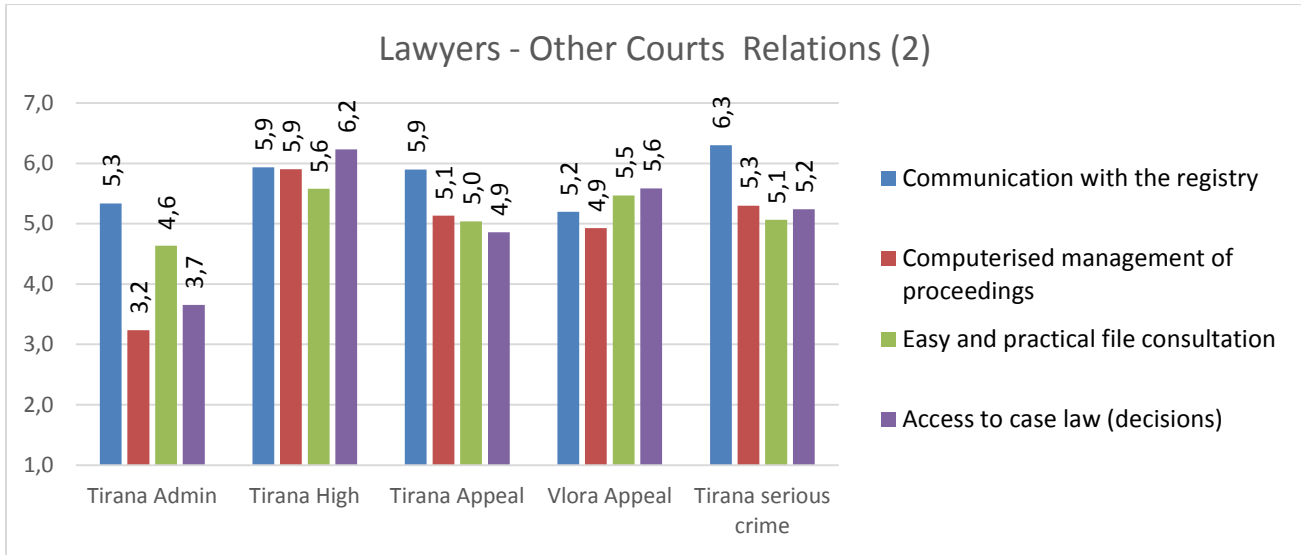
Other five items deal with court relations; lawyers appreciate the **information** that can be **downloaded** by websites in Tirana, Lushnje, and Elbasan, while it looks like they need some improvements in Gjirokaster and Durres, where the score are significantly lower.



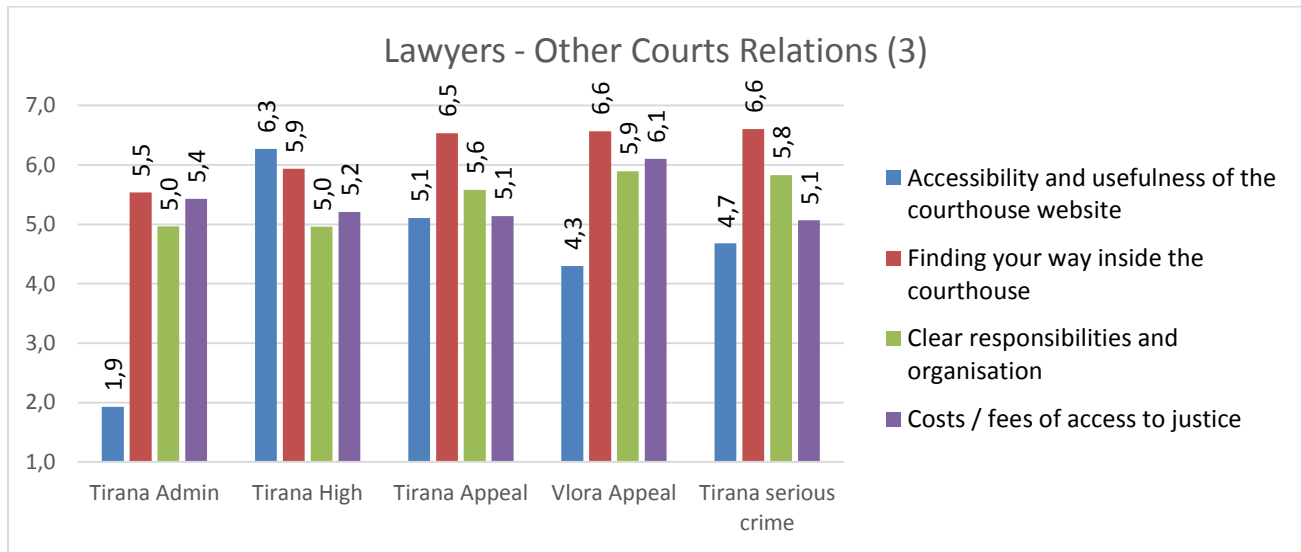
In the other five courts involved in this exercise, as the chart shows, in the first 5 items taken into consideration there are some different scores among the courts, but all of them are quite high.



The following 4 items analysed show that the lawyers have a **good level of satisfaction** about the communication with the registry, the file consultation, the computerised case management system, and the access to case law. Some concern is raised in the administrative court of Tirana, which scores quite low on both computerised case management systems and access to case file.

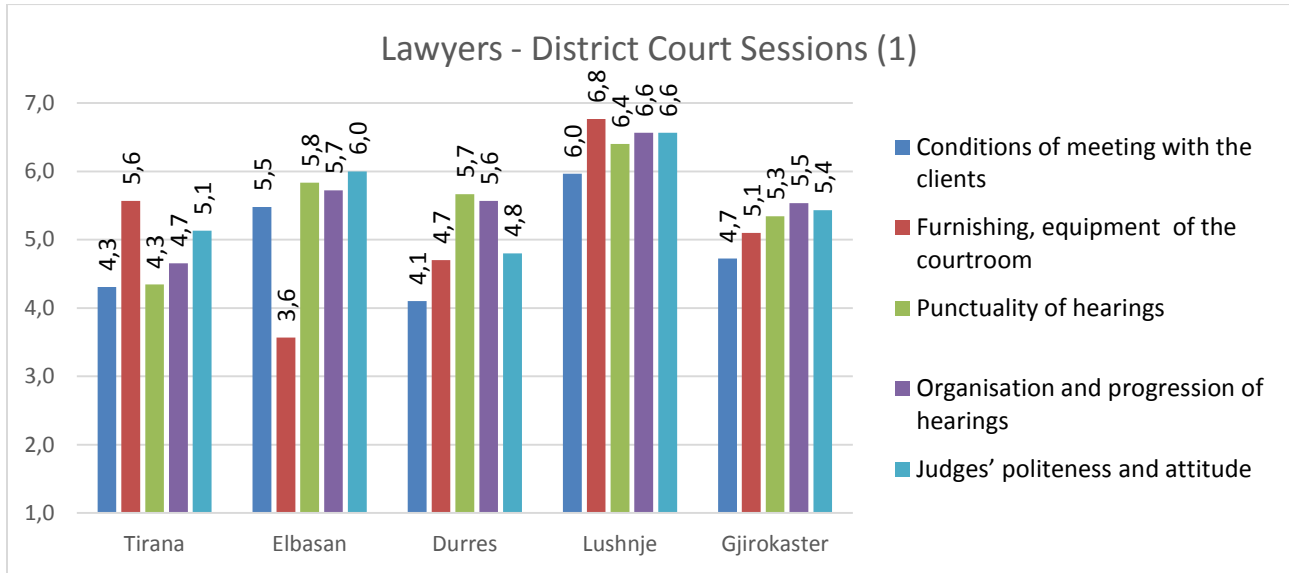


The last four items of this section show for almost all the courts quite high scores. Some attention is drawn by the accessibility and usefulness of the court website in particular in the Tirana Administrative Court. Score not really high on the same issue are also reported in Vloara Appeal Court, and Tirana serious crime court.



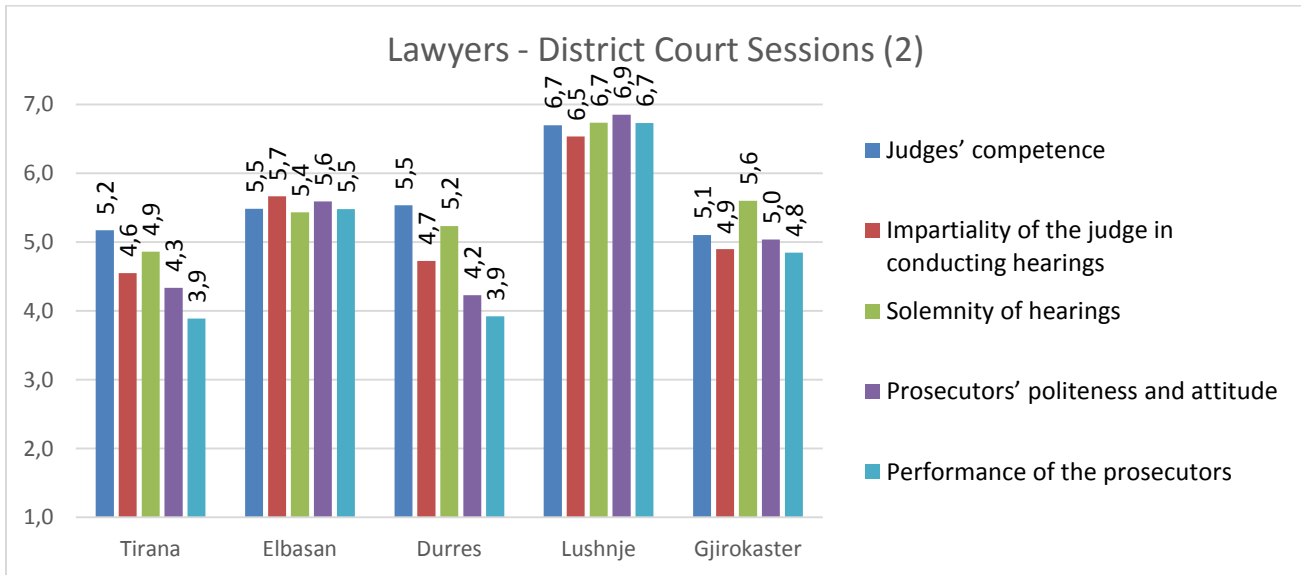
Another part of the questionnaire is dedicated to the level of satisfaction of the lawyers about court sessions.

As the following chart shows, in almost all the courts scores are a little lower than in the previous questions. Lushnje has again the highest score, while Tirana district court has the lowest, but always above the middle range of the scale on several items. In Elbasan, lawyers report a low level of satisfaction about the furnishing and equipment of the courtroom.

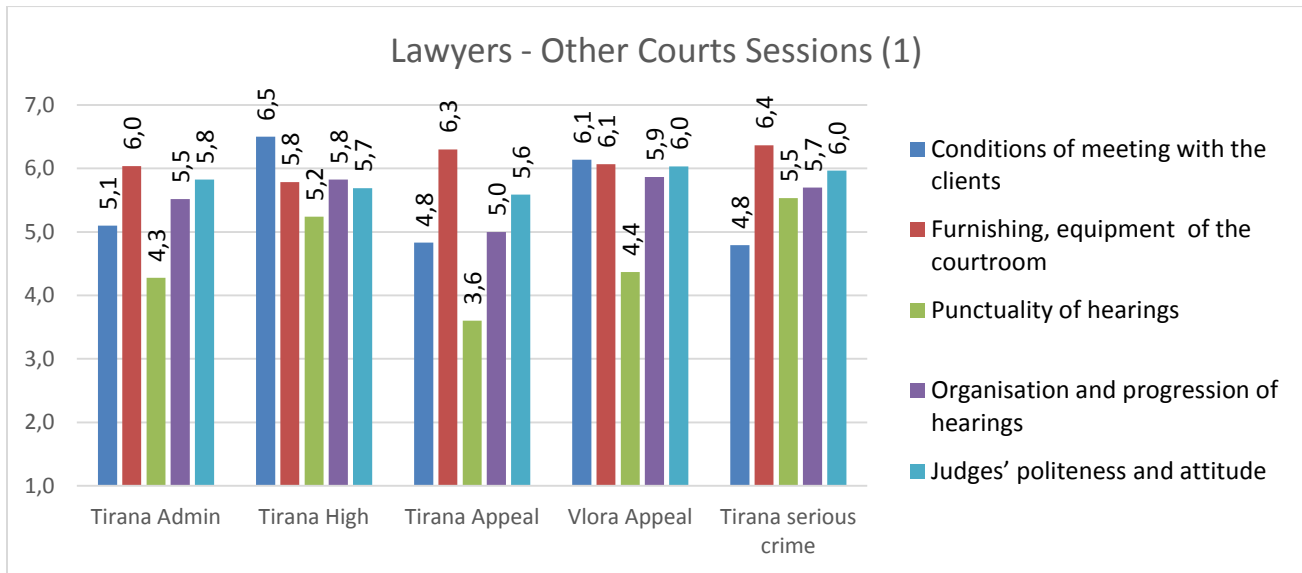


The following five items have quite good scores in all the district courts, with a little lower grades in Tirana and Durres.

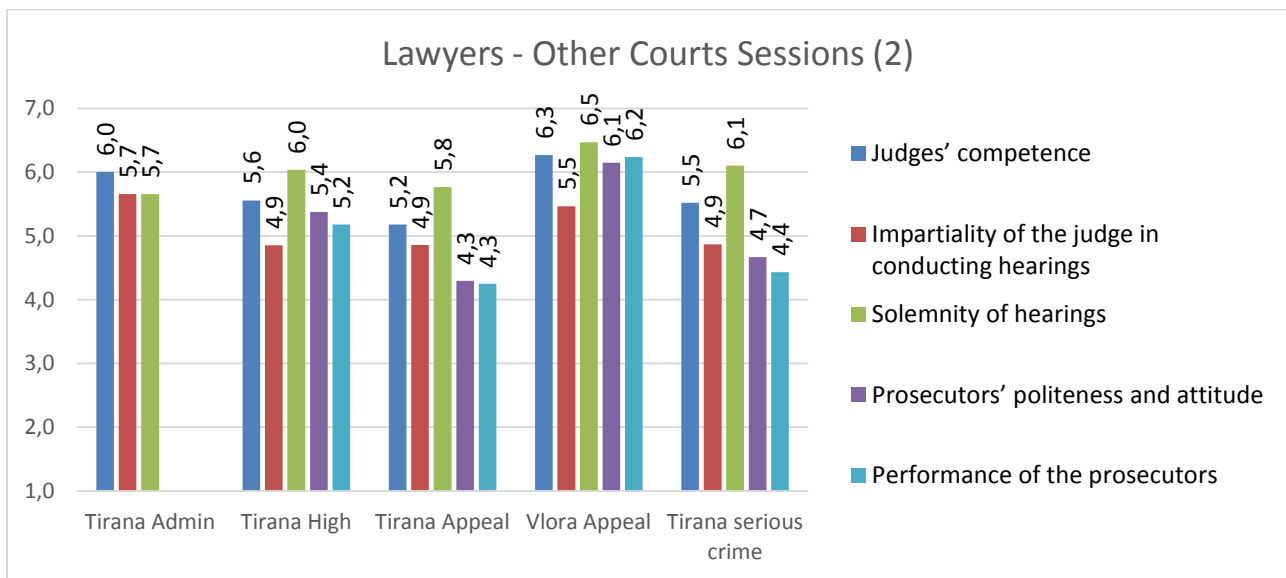
Some concern raises the relative low scores in some courts (Tirana, Durres, Gjirokaster) about the **“impartiality of the judges in conducting the hearings”**. This is a very important issue, which should be further investigated through a more in depth qualitative analysis.



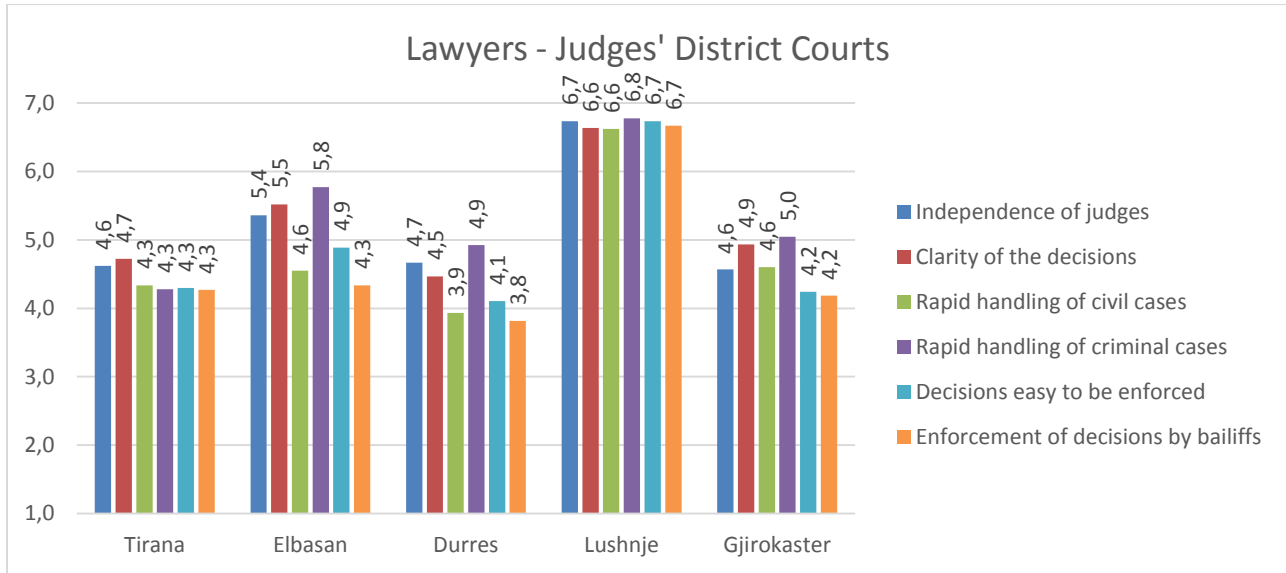
In general, all five items show in the following chart, have good scores. The **“punctuality of the hearings”** has a lower score in **Tirana Appeal court, Tirana administrative court, and in Vlora.**



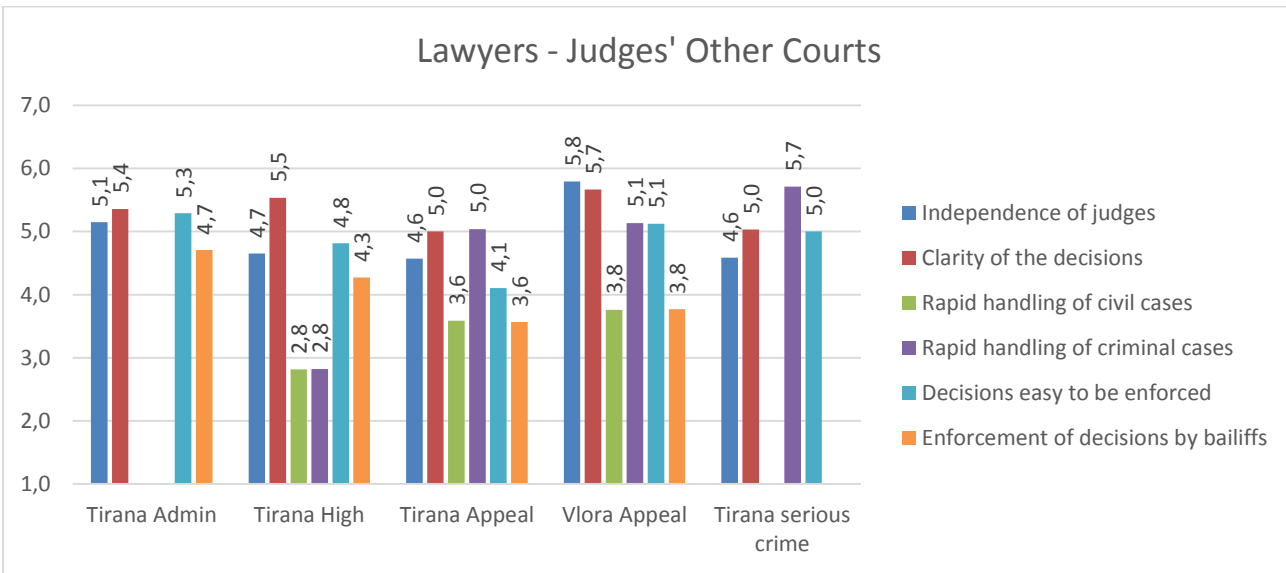
The final five issues about court sessions to be assessed by the lawyers have quite high scores in all the five “other courts” considered in this exercise. The important issue of “impartiality of the judge in conducting hearings” is graded higher in these courts than in the district courts.



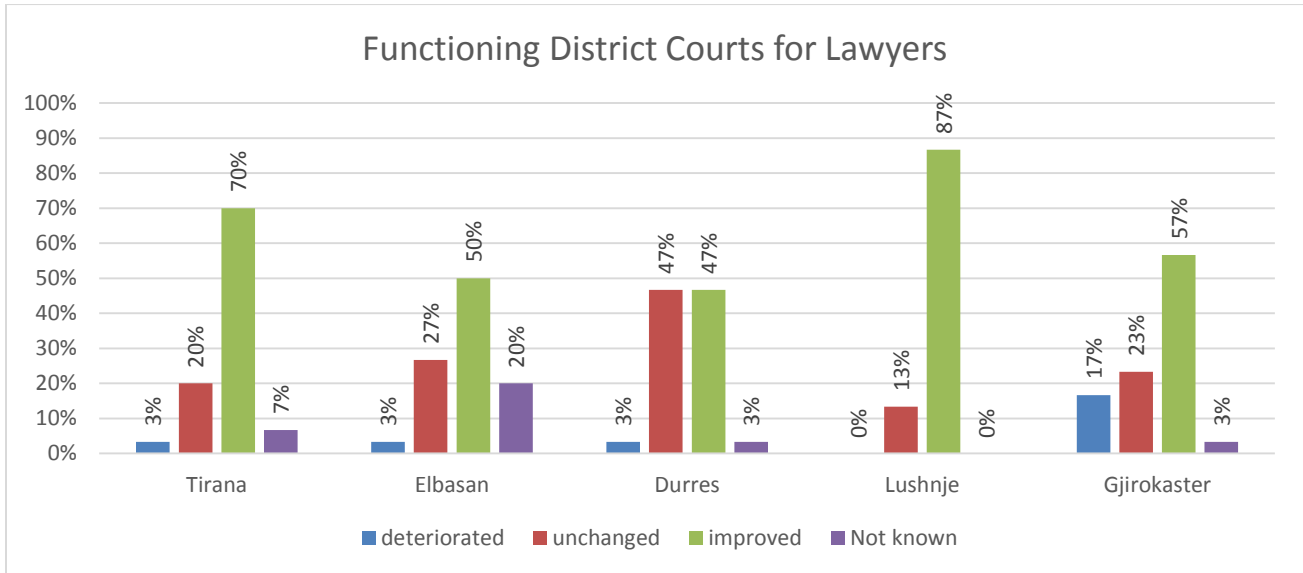
Lawyers also expressed their level of satisfaction on 7 issues related to the judges’ decision making process. As the following chart shows, Lushnje district court has the highest scores. In all the other courts the level of satisfaction is similar and a little above the middle level of scale. It is worth noticing that the score about the “**Independence of judges**” should be higher, considering such an important issue. Then, the core issues of case management such as the **rapid handling of civil and criminal procedure**, as well as the enforcement of the decisions **should be improved**, since the scores are not high, with the exception of the court in Lushnje.



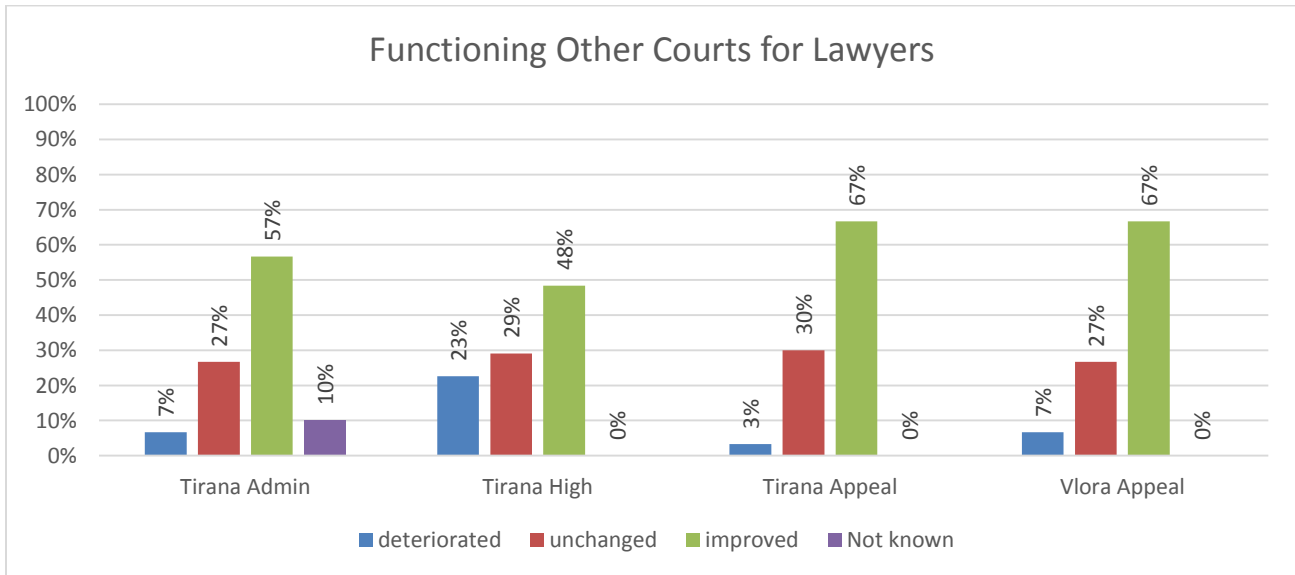
In the “Other courts”, lawyers are less satisfied about the **length of civil proceedings that are considered a problem**. In particular in Tirana High court both the length of civil and criminal proceedings are rated quite low.



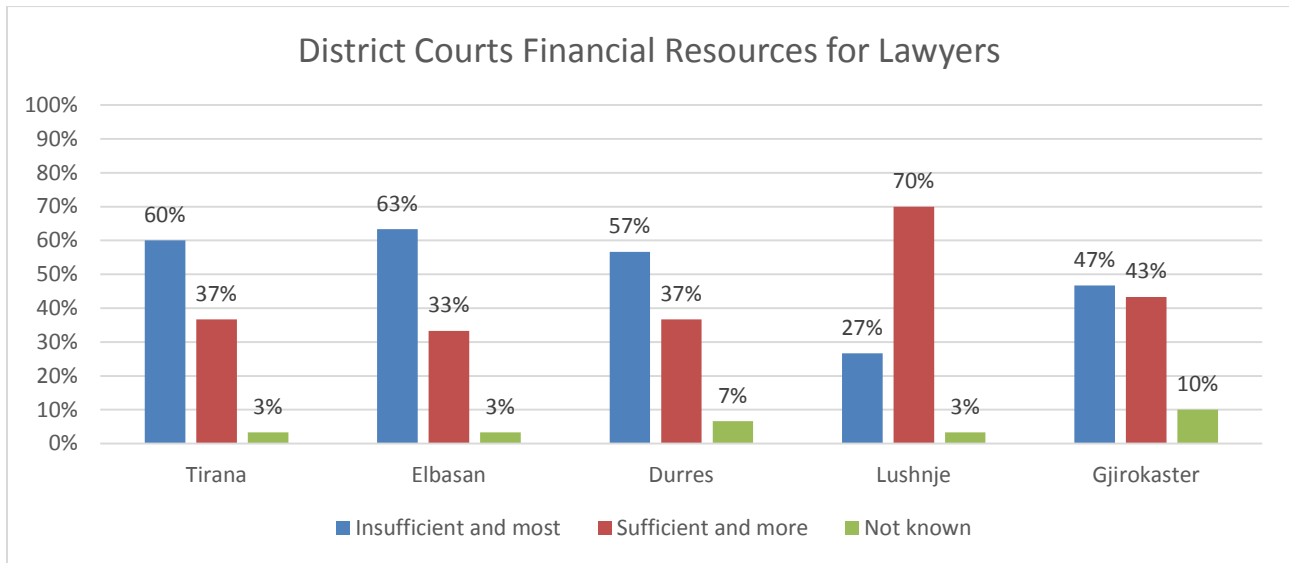
It is interesting to note the lawyers different opinions about the improvements of the courts in the last five years. As the following chart shows, 87% of the lawyers in Lushnje say that the courts has improved. This percentage decreases at 70%, but it is still very good, in Tirana, is 60% in Elbasan, 57% in Gjirokaster, and 47% in Durres. It would be interesting to analyse more in details why Lushnje has such a high result.



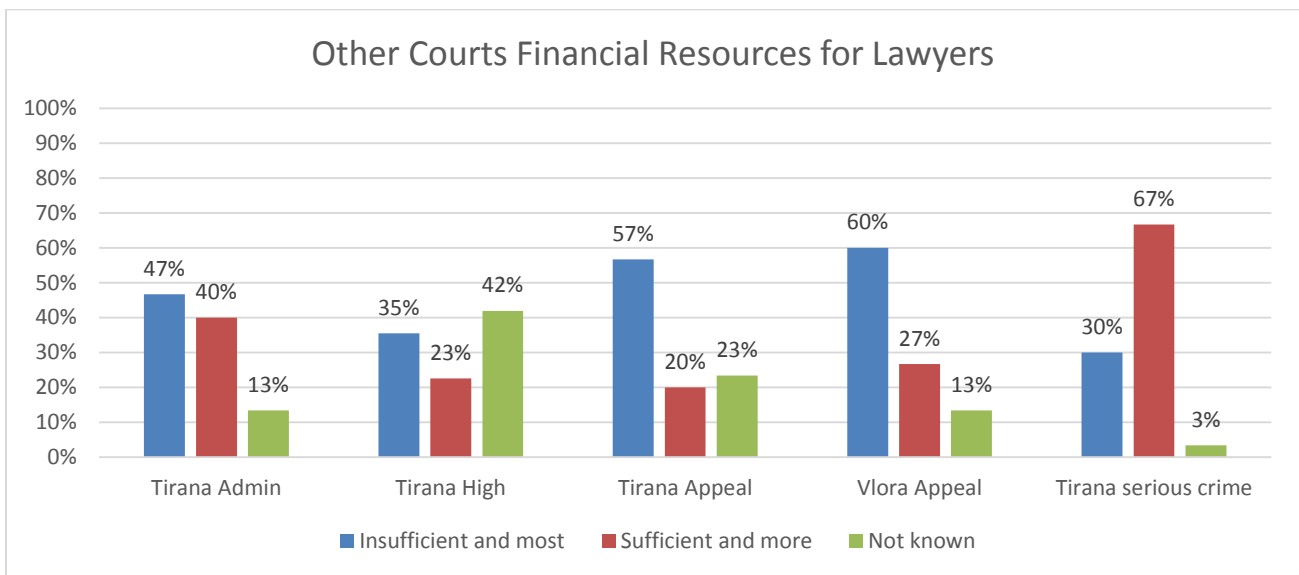
Lawyers rate the improvements in the functioning of courts a little lower in the “other courts”. However, as the following chart shows, the percentage are quite good, but in Tirana High Court, where 23% of the lawyers interviewed think that the functioning of the court is deteriorated in the last 5 years.



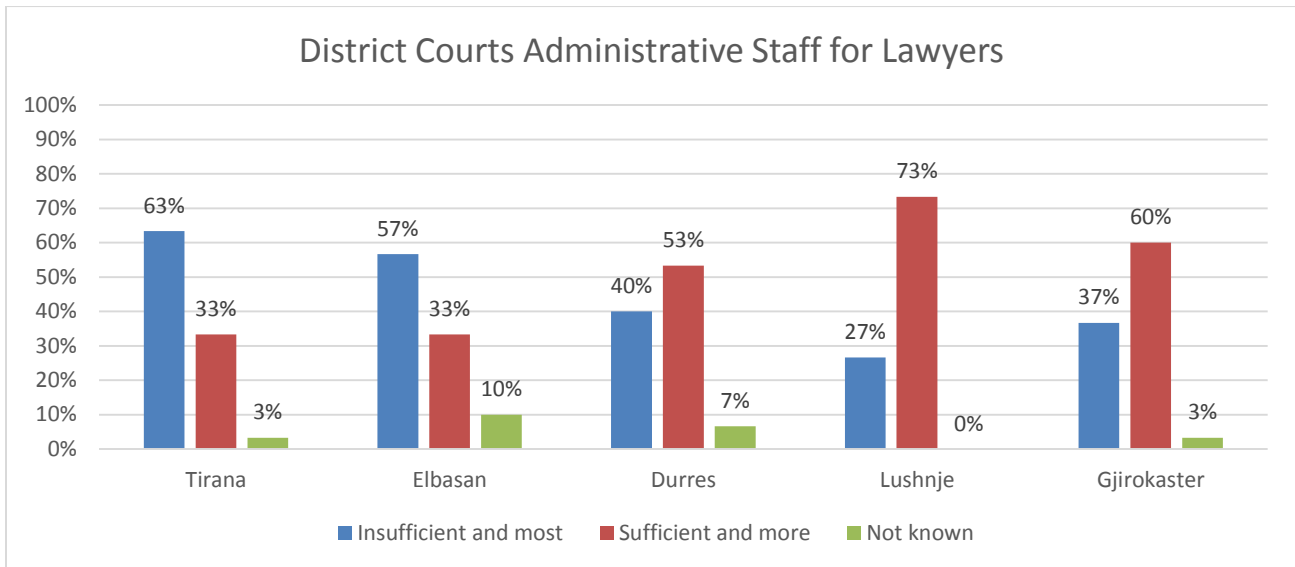
It is also interesting to note that as far as the resources are concerned, 70% of the lawyers interviewed in Lushnje district court say that they are sufficient or even more than sufficient. In the other four courts, a large percentage of lawyers say, as the following chart shows, that resources are insufficient.



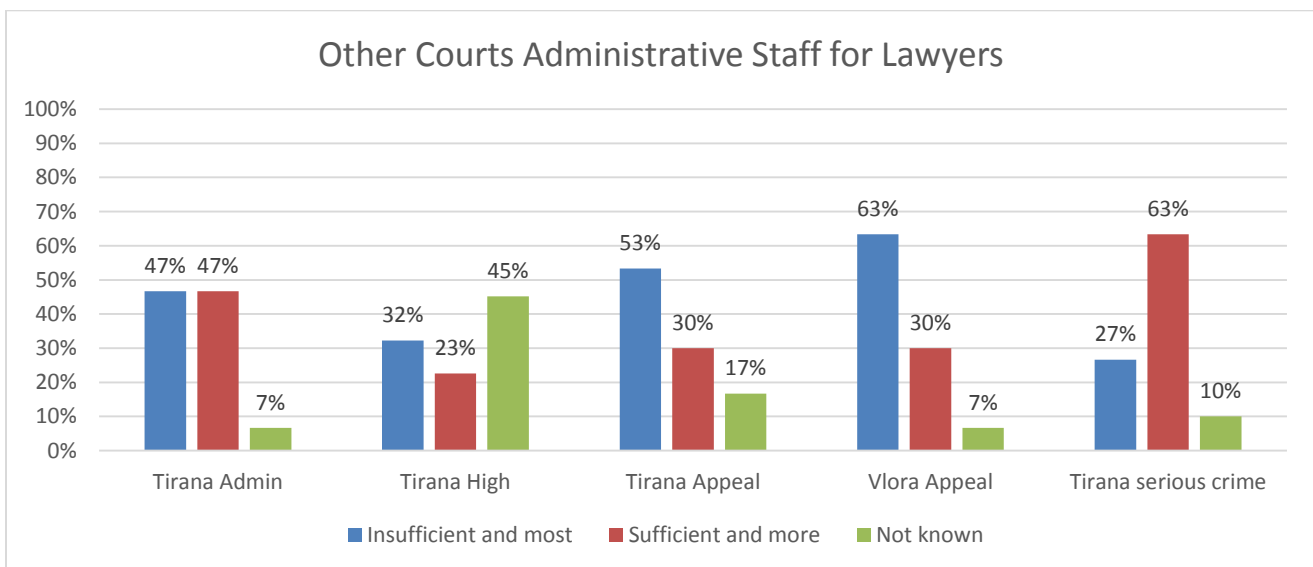
In the “other courts”, only in Tirana serious crime courts, lawyers think that resources are sufficient. In all the other courts, the clear perception is that they are not sufficient, this is particularly true in Vlora appeal court.



A specific question asked lawyers to assess if they consider sufficient the number of administrative staff. As the following chart shows, lawyers in Lushnje, Gjirokaster and Durres district courts think that the number of administrative staff is sufficient. On the contrary, in Tirana and Elbasan, lawyers think that administrative staff is not enough.

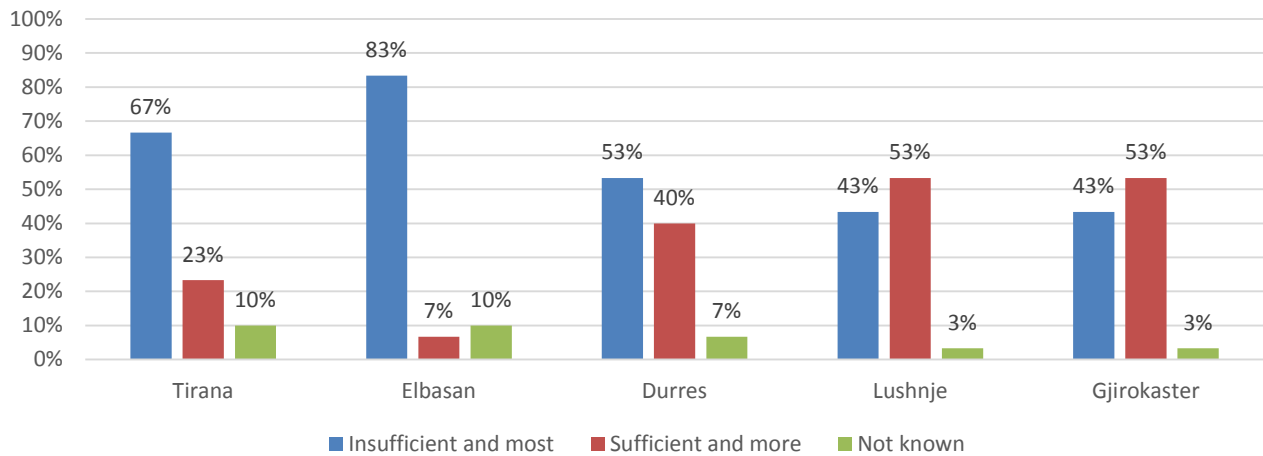


In the “Other courts”, only in Tirana serious crime court, lawyers say that the administrative staff is sufficient. Quite dramatic the **perception of the lack of personnel in Vlora Appeal court**.



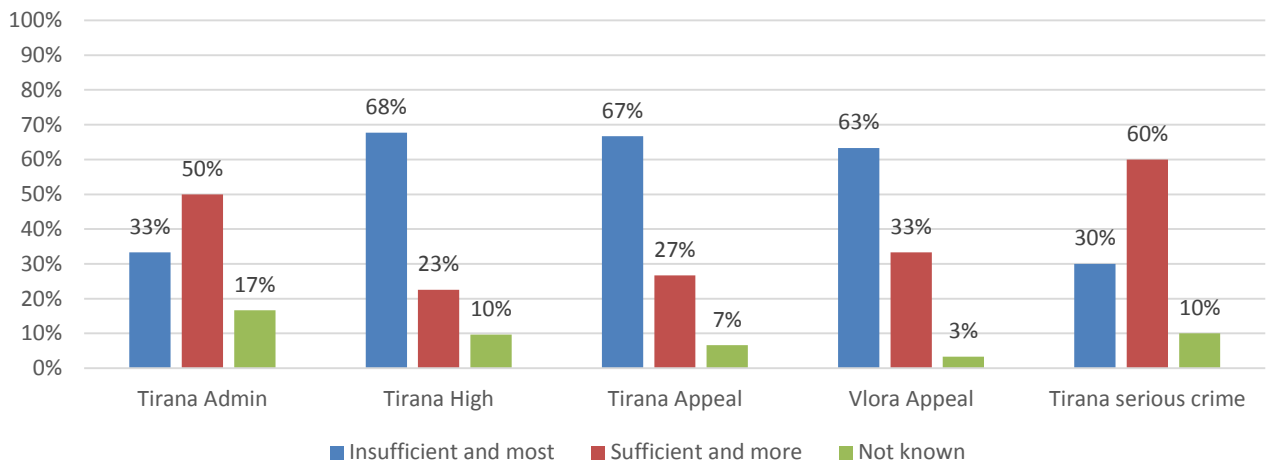
About 50% of the lawyers interviewed in Lushnje, Gjirokaster and Durres think that the number of judges is sufficient, as the following chart shows. Quite dramatic is the situation perceived by the lawyers in **Elbasan** and **Tirana**, where the large majority think that the **number of judges is insufficient**.

District Courts Number of Judges for Lawyers



In the “Other courts”, in Tirana serious crime court, and Tirana administrative court, the majority of lawyers think that the number of judges is sufficient. In the other 3 courts, over 60% of the lawyers say that the judges are not sufficient.

Other Courts Number of Judges for Lawyers



Appendix – Data analysis for each court

Tirana District court

In Tirana the court users interviewed were 57% male and 43% female. 43% were less than 45 years old, 57% older. 62% of the interviewees had a previous experience with this court, 73% also with another court.

83% of the respondents were party in a case, 9% witnesses or experts, almost all (96%) of them were in court for a civil case.

The **accessibility to court** was measured by 5 questions. The court scored quite high (the scale used is from 1 to 7) on "courtroom facilities" (6.2), "orientation inside the court" (5.8) and "waiting conditions in the court" (6.0). A little less was graded the way to getting to court (4.3). **Very low** is the score about the "access for disabled" (1.8).

The **Court functioning** was measured by 5 questions. The Court scores quite high in all the issues: "clarity of summons and notifications" (6.3), "attitude and politeness" (6.2), "competence" (5.8), "time lapsed" between summon and the court hearing (5.3), and "punctuality" (5.3).

Judges' performance was measured by 8 questions. The court scores quite high on "time granted to the party" (6.2), "solemnity of the hearing" (6.1); a little lower about "attitude and politeness" (5.4), "impartiality" (5.3), "time elapsed between the hearing and the delivery of the decision" (5.1), "clarity of court decision" (5.0), "time elapsed between the decision and its transcription" (4.5). The **lowest item** is related to the "clarity of the judges' language", which scores only 1.9 out of 7.

A couple of questions referred also to **prosecutors**. The "language" used got a **low score** (2.0), while "attitude and politeness" is more than one point above the middle level of the scale (4.8).

The **access to information** has been measured through the "easiness to get information on user's rights", which scores just above the middle level (4.1), and the "clarity of information" provided by the court, which scores **quite low** (2.4).

The **registry** has been mainly used for "withdraw documents" (54%), and "information on court's decisions" (37%). 98% of this information are collected in person from the registry, and the quality of this information has been rated quite well (5.7).

The **general perception of the functioning of justice** has been measured through 4 questions. The "court functioning organisation" is quite clear (5.1), then the "costs accessing the system" (without considering the legal fees) is fair (4.0); the **trust** in the justice system (3.7) and the **speed** dealing with the case (3.1) are **matters of concern**.

44% of the court users think that resources available to the courts are adequate, while the 23% does not think so. 33% does not know.

Lawyers interviewed in Tirana district court have an average of more than 6 years of practice. 47% work in a law office, 53% are self-employed.

The questionnaire measures the perception of the **lawyers' relations with the court** through 13 dimensions/questions.

From the highest to the lowest level of satisfaction, the average scores of the lawyers in Tirana district court are as follows (please note that the scale is from 1 to 7):

Accessibility and usefulness of court web site	6.1
Finding your way within the courthouse	6.1
Access to case law	5.8
Communication with the registry	5.6
Computerised management of the proceedings	5.5
Competence of the administrative staff	5.4
Clear responsibility and organisation	5.4
Quality of information	5.3
Politeness and attitude of the administrative staff	5.1
Availability of the administrative staff	5.0
Costs/fee access to justice	5.0
Easy and practical file consultation	4.8
Celerity of the information provided	4.7

All the dimensions were also rated by **their importance**, which is always very close to the maximum of the scale (7.0).

Lawyers were also asked to express their level of satisfaction about the **preparation and conduct of court sessions** through 10 questions, which got the following average scores:

Furnishing equipment of the courtroom	5.6
Judges competence	5.2
Judge politeness and attitude	5.1
Solemnity of the hearings	4.9
Organisation and progression of hearings	4.7
Impartiality of the judge in conducting hearings	4.6
Punctuality of hearings	4.3
Conditions of meeting with the client	4.3
Prosecutors' politeness and attitude	4.3
Performance of the prosecutors	3.9

The third area of interest investigated with the questionnaire was the perception of the lawyers about the **judges and the decision making process**, which was measured through the following items with the following scores:

Clarity of decisions	4.7
Independence of judges	4.6
Rapid handling of civil cases	4.3
Rapid handling of criminal cases	4.3
Decision easy to be enforced	4.3
Enforcement of decision by bailiffs	4.3
Rapid handling of administrative cases	not applicable

70% of the lawyers interviewed has a perception that the functioning of courts has improved in the last 5 years, 20% that has not changed, 3% that it is worst.

67% think that the workload of the courts has increased faster than its means; 23% think that has increased more slowly than it means, 10% that has increased in proportion to its means

Finally about 60% of the lawyers think that the resources are not sufficient.

Lushnje District Court

In Lushnje the court users interviewed were 71% male and 28% female. 36% were less than 45 years old, 64% older. 64% of the court's users had a previous experience with this court, more than 89% also with another court.

87% of the respondents were party in a case; 76% in a civil suit, 24% in a criminal case.

The **accessibility to court** was measured by 5 questions. The court scores quite high (the scale used goes from 1 to 7) on "courtroom facilities" (6.8), "orientation inside the court" (6.6), and "waiting conditions" (6.3) in the court. A little less is graded the way to "getting to court" (5.1). **Very low** is the score about the "access for disabled" (2.0).

The **Court functioning** was measured by 5 questions. The Court scores high on all the issues: "attitude and politeness" (6.4), and "clarity of summonses and notifications" (6.4), "competence" (6.1) "punctuality" (6.0), "time lapsed" between summon and the court hearing (5.6).

Judges' performance was measured by 8 questions. The courts scores quite high on "time granted to the party" (6.3), "solemnity of the hearing" (6.0), a little lower about "attitude and politeness" (5.6), "clarity of court decision" (5.5), "impartiality" (5.4), "time elapsed" between the hearing and the delivery of the decision (4.9), "time elapsed between the decision and its transcription" (4.9). The **lowest item** is related to the "clarity of the judges' language", which scored only 1.9 out of 7.

A couple of questions referred to **prosecutors**. The "**language**" is rated **very low** (2.2), while the "attitude and politeness" is quite high (5.5).

The **access to information** has been measured through the "easiness to get information on users' rights", which scores above the middle level (4.4), the "**clarityclarity of the information**" provided by the court, which scores **quite low** (2.8). The "information from the court registry", which is mainly used to "withdraw documents" (30%), and "collecting information on court's decisions" (39%). 100% of this information is collected in person from the registry and the quality of this information is rated quite well (5.6).

The **general perception of the functioning of justice** in this court has been measured through 4 questions. The "court functioning organisation" is quite clear (5.4), then the "costs accessing the system" (without considering the legal fees) is fair (3.9), the trust in the justice system (4.7) and the speed dealing with the case (3.9) are a little higher than the middle of the scale.

80% of the court users think that resource available to the courts are adequate, while 14% do not think so.

Lawyers interviewed in Lushnje district court have an average of more than 10 years of practice. 27% work in a law office, 73% are self-employed.

The questionnaire measures the perception of the **lawyers' relations with the court** through 13 dimensions/questions.

From the highest to the lowest level of satisfaction, the average scores of the lawyers in Lushnje are as follows (please note that the scale is from 1 to 7):

Finding your way within the courthouse	6.9
Celerity of the information provided	6.8
Clear responsibility and organisation	6.7
Communication with the registry	6.7
Availability of the administrative staff	6.7
Access to case law	6.6
Competence of the administrative staff	6.6
Quality of information	6.6
Politeness and attitude of the administrative staff	6.6
Easy and practical file consultation	6.6
Computerised management of the proceedings	6.4
Costs/fee access to justice	6.3
Accessibility and usefulness of court web site	5.5

All the dimensions were also rated by their importance, which is always very close to the maximum of the scale (7.0).

Lawyers were also asked to express their level of satisfaction about the **preparation and conduct of court sessions** through 10 questions, which have the following average scores:

Prosecutors' politeness and attitude	6.9
Furnishing equipment of the courtroom	6.8
Judges' competence	6.7
Solemnity of the hearings	6.7
Performance of the prosecutors	6.7
Judges' politeness and attitude	6.6
Organisation and progression of hearings	6.6
Impartiality of the judge in conducting hearings	6.5
Punctuality of hearings	6.4
Conditions of meeting with the client	6.0

The third area of interested investigated with the questionnaire is the perception of the lawyers about the **judges and the decision making process**, which is measured through the following items with the following scores:

Rapid handling of criminal cases	6.8
Independence of judges	6.7
Decision easy to be enforced	6.7
Enforcement of decision by bailiffs	6.7
Rapid handling of civil cases	6.6
Clarity of decisions	6.6
Rapid handling of administrative cases	not applicable

87% of the lawyers interviewed have a perception that the functioning of courts has improved in the last 5 years; 13% that has not changed.

47% think that the workload of the courts has increased faster than its means; 47% think that has increased more slowly than it means, 6% that has increased in proportion to its means

Finally about 30% of the lawyers think that the resources are not sufficient, in particular the number of judges.

Gjirokaster District Court

In Gjirokaster the court's users interviewed were 70% male and 30% female. 35% were less than 45 years old, 65% older. 95% of users had a previous experience with this court, 81% also with another court.

43% of the respondents were party in a case, 19% relatives (family) of one of the parties, 17% were there to get a certificate, 12% to request information. 71% were involved in a civil proceeding, 21% in a criminal one.

The **accessibility to court** was measured by 5 questions. The court scores quite high (the scale used is from 1 to 7) on "courtroom facilities" (5.8) "orientation inside the court" (5.4) and "waiting conditions" (5.5) in the court. A little less is graded the "way to getting to court" (4.3). **Very low** is the average score about the "**access for disabled**" (1.8).

The Court functioning was measured by 5 questions. The Court scores quite high in all the issues: "attitude and politeness" (6.2), "competence" (6.0), "clarity of summons and notifications" (5.8), "time lapsed" between summon and the court hearing (5.4), and "punctuality" of the court hearing once scheduled (5.2).

Judges' performance were measured by 8 questions. The court scores quite high on "time granted to the party" (5.6), "solemnity of the hearing" (5.2), "time elapsed" between the hearing and the delivery of the decision (4.8); a little lower about "clarity of court decision" (4.6), "attitude and politeness" (4.5), "impartiality" (4.1), "time elapsed" between the decision and its transcription (4.2). The **lowest item** is related to the "**clarity of the judges' language**", which scores 2.7 out of 7.

A couple of questions referred to **prosecutors**. The "language" has a middle range score (3.4), as well as "attitude and politeness" (3.8).

The **access to information** has been measured through the easiness to "get information on user's rights", which scores 3.5 and the "clarity of the information" provided by the court, which scored 3.0. The **registry** has been mainly used to withdraw documents (55%) and getting information on court's decisions (48%). 98% of this information were collected in person from the registry, and the quality of this information has been rated well (6.1).

The **general perception of the functioning of justice** in this court has been measured through 4 questions. The "costs accessing the system has a good level of satisfaction (5.7), the "court functioning organisation" is quite clear (4.7), the "**trust**" in the justice system (3.4) and the "speed" dealing with the case (3.1) are **below the middle level of the scale**.

54% of the court users think that resource available to the courts are adequate, while 14% do not think so.

Lawyers interviewed in Gjirokaster district court have an average of more than 8 years of practice. 20% work in a law office, 80% are self-employed.

The questionnaire measure the lawyers' perception about the **relations with the court** through 13 dimensions/questions.

From the highest to the lowest level of satisfaction, the average scores of the lawyers in Gjirokaster are as follows (please note that the scale is 1 to 7):

Communication with the registry	6.0
Finding your way within the courthouse	5.9
Availability of the administrative staff	5.7
Quality of information	5.6
Politeness and attitude of the administrative staff	5.6
Competence of the administrative staff	5.4
Clear responsibility and organisation	5.4
Computerised management of the proceedings	5.2
Celerity of the information provided	5.2
Easy and practical file consultation	5.1
Costs/fee access to justice	4.9
Access to case law	4.9
Accessibility and usefulness of court web site	3.3

All the dimensions were also rated by their importance, which is always very close to the maximum of the scale (7.0).

Lawyers were also asked to express their level of satisfaction about the **preparation and conduct of court sessions** through 10 questions, which have the following average scores:

Solemnity of the hearings	5.6
Organisation and progression of hearings	5.5
Clear responsibility and organisation	5.4
Judge politeness and attitude	5.4
Punctuality of hearings	5.3
Judges competence	5.1
Furnishing equipment of the courtroom	5.1
Prosecutors' politeness and attitude	5.0
Impartiality of the judge in conducting hearings	4.9
Performance of the prosecutors	4.8
Conditions of meeting with the client	4.7

The third area of interest investigated with the questionnaire was the perception of the lawyers about the **judges and the decision making process**, which was measured through the following items with the following scores:

Rapid handling of criminal cases	5.0
Clarity of decisions	4.9
Rapid handling of civil cases	4.6
Independence of judges	4.6
Decision easy to be enforced	4.2

Enforcement of decision by bailiffs	4.2
Rapid handling of administrative cases	not applicable

57% of the lawyers interviewed have a perception that the functioning of courts has improved in the last 5 years; 23% that it is not changed, 17% that has deteriorated.

63% think that the workload of the courts has increased faster than its means.

Finally about 47% of the lawyers think that the resources are not sufficient.

Durres District Court

In Durres the court's users interviewed were 73% male and 27% female. 52% were less than 45 years old, 48% older. 54% had a previous experience with this court, 81% also with another court.

44% of the respondents were party in a case, 42% relatives (family) of one of the parties, 10% witness or expert. 68% were there for a civil proceeding, 23% for a criminal one.

The **accessibility to court** was measured by 5 questions. The court scores quite high (the scale used is from 1 to 7) on "courtroom facilities" (6.1), "waiting conditions" (5.3) in the court, "orientation inside the court" (4.8). A little less is graded the "way to getting to court" (3.9). **Very low** is the score about the "**access for disabled**" (2.2).

The **Court functioning** was measured by 5 questions. The court scores quite high (5.5) in both "clarity of summons and notifications" and "attitude and politeness". Quite good scores are related to "punctuality" (5.3) of the court hearing once scheduled, "time lapsed" between summon and the court hearing (5.1), and "competence of court personnel" (4.9).

Judges' performance were measured by 8 questions. The courts scores quite high on "time granted to the party" (5.9), "solemnity of the hearing" (5.5), a little lower about "attitude and politeness" (5.3), "clarity of court decision" (5.1), "time elapsed" between the decision and its transcription" (4.9), "time elapsed" between the hearing and the decision" (4.9), "impartiality" (4.8),. The **lowest item** is related to the "**clarity of the judges' language**" which scores only 2.3 out of 7.

A couple of questions referred to **prosecutors**. The "**language**" used has a **low score** 3.1. "Attitude and politeness" receive a score above the middle range of the scale (4.6).

The **access to information** has been measured through the easiness to "get information on user's rights", which scores 3.8, and the "clarity of the information" provided by the court, which scored 3.1. The **registry** has been mainly used to "withdraw documents" (54%), and getting information about "court's decisions" (37%). 87% of this information are collected in person from the registry and the quality of this information has been rated good (5.4).

The **general perception of the functioning of justice** in this court has been measured through 4 questions. The "court functioning organisation" is quite clear (5.2), the "costs accessing the system" (without considering the legal fees) is not considered expensive (5.3), the "trust" in the justice system (3.6) and the "speed" dealing with the case (3.6) have the lowest scores.

44% of the court users think that resource available to the courts are adequate, while 23% of the users do not think so.

Lawyers interviewed in Durres district court have an average of more than 7 years of practice. 30% work in a law office, 70% are self-employed.

The questionnaire measures the lawyers' perception about the relations with the court through 13 dimensions/questions.

From the highest to the lowest level of satisfaction, the average scores of the lawyers in Durres are as follows (please note that the scale is 1 to 7):

Finding your way within the courthouse	5.9
Communication with the registry	5.8
Costs/fee access to justice	5.5
Clear responsibility and organisation	5.5
Computerised management of the proceedings	5.3
Quality of information	5.2
Availability of the administrative staff	5.2
Politeness and attitude of the administrative staff	5.1
Competence of the administrative staff	4.9
Celerity of the information provided	4.7
Access to case law	4.5
Easy and practical file consultation	3.8
Accessibility and usefulness of court web site	3.8

All the dimensions were also rated by their importance, which is always very close to the maximum of the scale (7.0).

Lawyers were also asked to express their level of satisfaction about the **preparation and conduct of court sessions** through 10 questions, which got the following average scores:

Punctuality of hearings	5.7
Organisation and progression of hearings	5.6
Judges' competence	5.5
Solemnity of the hearings	5.2
Judges' politeness and attitude	4.8
Impartiality of the judge in conducting hearings	4.7
Furnishing equipment of the courtroom	4.7

Prosecutors' politeness and attitude	4.2
Conditions of meeting with the client	4.1
Performance of the prosecutors	3.9

The third area of interested investigated with the questionnaire was the perception of the lawyers about the **judges and the decision making process**, which was measured through the following items with the following scores:

Rapid handling of criminal cases	4.9
Independence of judges	4.7
Clarity of decisions	4.5
Decision easy to be enforced	4.1
Rapid handling of civil cases	3.9
Enforcement of decision by bailiffs	3.8
Rapid handling of administrative cases	not applicable

47% of the lawyers interviewed had a perception that the functioning of courts has improved in the last 5 years; 47% that has not changed, 3% that is deteriorated.

57% think that the workload of the courts has increased faster than its means; 20% that has increased at the same pace.

Finally about 50% of the lawyers think that the resources are not sufficient.

Elbasan District Court

In Elbasan the court's users interviewed were 62% male and 38% female. 37% were less than 45 years old, 53% older. 67% had a previous experience with this court, 57% also with another court.

53% of the respondents were party in a case, 26% relatives (family) of one of the parties, 8% witnesses or experts. 83% were there for a civil proceeding, 15% for a criminal one.

The **accessibility to court** was measured by 5 questions. The court scores quite high (the scale used is from 1 to 7) on "courtroom facilities" (5.1), "waiting conditions" (5.0) in the court, and "orientation inside the court" (4.9). A little less is graded the "way getting to court" (4.0). **Very low** is the score about the "access for disabled" (2.1).

The **Court functioning** was measured by 5 questions. The Court scores quite high (5.8) in "clarity of summons and notifications", "punctuality" of the court hearing once scheduled (5.5), and "attitude and politeness" (5.2). Quite good scores are related to "competence of court personnel" (5.1); "time lapsed" between summon and the court hearing (4.8).

Judges' performance were measured by 8 questions. The court scores quite high on "time granted to the party" (5.6), "solemnity of the hearing" (5.4), a little lower about "attitude and politeness" (4.9), "clarity of court decision" (4.7), "impartiality" (4.3), "time elapsed" between the hearing and the delivery of the decision (4.0), "time elapsed" between the decision and its transcription" (3.8). The **lowest item** is related to the "**clarity of the judges' language**" which scores 2.6 out of 7.

A couple of questions referred to **prosecutors**. The "language" has a middle range score 3.7. "Attitude and politeness" receive a score just a little lower (3.5).

The **access to information** has been measured through the "easiness to get information on user's rights", which scores 3.7 and the "clarity of the information" provided by the court, which scores 2.9. The **registry** has been mainly used to "withdraw documents" (66%) and getting "information on court's decisions" (75%). 98% of this information are collected in person from the registry, and the quality of this information is rated well (5.1).

The **general perception of the functioning of justice** in this court has been measured through 4 questions. The "cost accessing the system" (without considering the legal fees) is not considered expensive (5.2), the "court functioning organisation" is quite clear (4.6), the "trust" in the justice system (3.2) and the "speed" dealing with the case (2.9) have the lowest scores.

45% of the court users think that resource available to the courts are adequate, while 22% do not think so.

Lawyers interviewed in Elbasan district court have an average of about 7 years of practice. 30% work in a law office, 70% are self-employed.

The questionnaire measure the lawyers' perception about the **relations with the court** through 13 dimensions/questions.

From the highest to the lowest level of satisfaction, the average scores of the lawyers in Durres are as follows (please note that the scale is from 1 to 7):

Finding your way within the courthouse	6.5
Communication with the registry	6.5
Politeness and attitude of the administrative staff	6.2
Clear responsibility and organisation	6.1
Quality of information	6.1
Availability of the administrative staff	6.1
Celerity of the information provided	6.0
Competence of the administrative staff	5.9
Easy and practical file consultation	5.8
Costs/fee access to justice	5.6
Access to case law	5.5
Accessibility and usefulness of court web site	4.8

Computerised management of the proceedings	4.7
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All the dimensions were also rated by their importance, which is always very close to the maximum of the scale (7.0).

Lawyers were also asked to express their level of satisfaction about the **preparation and conduct of court sessions** through 10 questions, which got the following average scores:

Judges' politeness and attitude	6.0
Punctuality of hearings	5.8
Organisation and progression of hearings	5.7
Impartiality of the judge in conducting hearings	5.7
Prosecutors' politeness and attitude	5.6
Judges' competence	5.5
Conditions of meeting with the client	5.5
Performance of the prosecutors	5.5
Solemnity of the hearings	5.4
Furnishing equipment of the courtroom	3.6

The third area of interested investigated with the questionnaire was the perception of the lawyers about the **judges and the decision making process**, which was measured through the following items with the following scores:

Rapid handling of criminal cases	5.8
Clarity of decisions	5.5
Independence of judges	5.4
Decision easy to be enforced	4.9
Rapid handling of civil cases	4.6
Enforcement of decision by bailiffs	4.3
Rapid handling of administrative cases	not applicable

50% of the lawyers interviewed had a perception that the functioning of courts has improved in the last 5 years; 27% that it has not changed, 3% that has deteriorated.

83% think that the workload of the courts has increased faster than its means.

Finally, more than 55% of the lawyers think that the resources are not sufficient; this percentage hits 70% about the perception relate to the lack of judges.

Tirana High Court

In Tirana High Court, the court's users interviewed were 74% male and 26% female. 14% were less than 45 years old, 56% older. 70% had a previous experience with this court, 98% also with another court.

92% of the respondents were party in a case, 5% relatives (family) of one of the parties; most of them were there for a civil case.

The **accessibility to court** was measured by 5 questions. The court scores quite high (the scale used is from 1 to 7) on "courtroom facilities" (5.7) "orientation inside the court" (5.4), and "waiting conditions" (5.4) in the court. A little less is graded the way to "getting to court" (3.9). **Very low** is the score about the "access for disabled" (1.8).

The **Court functioning** was measured by 5 questions. The Court scores quite high about "competence of court personnel" (6.0), "attitude and politeness" (5.9), "punctuality" (5.3), the scores decrease for "time lapsed" (4.4), and "clarity of summons and notifications".

Judges' performance were measured by 8 questions. The courts scores quite high on "time granted to the party" (5.4), "solemnity of the hearing" (5.3), a little lower about "attitude and politeness" (4.8), "impartiality" (4.5), "time elapsed" between the hearing and the delivery of the decision (4.2), "clarity of court decision" (4.2), "time elapsed" between the decision and its transcription" (4.1). The **lowest item** is related to the "clarity of the judges' language", which scores only 2.8 out of 7.

A couple of questions referred to **prosecutors**. The "language" got a quite high score (5.4), while "attitude and politeness" received a low score (2.5).

The **access to information** has been measured through the "easiness to get information on user's rights", which scores 3.3 and the "clarity of the information" provided by the court, which scores 3.2. The **registry** has been mainly used to "withdraw documents" (66%), and "information on court's decisions" (22%). 100% of this information were collected in person from the registry, and the quality of this information has been rated well (6.1).

The **general perception of the functioning of justice** in this court has been measured through 4 questions. The "cost accessing the system" (without considering the legal fees) is not considered expensive (4.9), the "court functioning organization" is quite clear (4.5), , the "**trust**" in the justice system (2.6); and the "**speed**" dealing with the case (1.7) are **matters of concern**.

54% of the court users think that resource available to the courts are adequate, while 17% do not think so.

Lawyers interviewed in Tirana High Court have an average of more than 9 years of practice. 39% work in a law office, 61% are self-employed.

The questionnaire measures the lawyers' perception about the **relations with the court** through 13 dimensions/questions.

From the highest to the lowest level of satisfaction, the average scores of the lawyers in Tirana are as follows (please note that the scale is from 1 to 7):

Accessibility and usefulness of court web site	6.3
Access to case law	6.2
Finding your way within the courthouse	5.9
Computerised management of the proceedings	5.9
Communication with the registry	5.9
Quality of information	5.7
Competence of the administrative staff	5.7
Easy and practical file consultation	5.6
Politeness and attitude of the administrative staff	5.5
Availability of the administrative staff	5.5
Costs/fee access to justice	5.2
Clear responsibility and organisation	5.0
Celerity of the information provided	5.0

All the dimensions were also rated by their importance, which is always very close to the maximum of the scale (7.0).

Lawyers were also asked to express their level of satisfaction about the **preparation and conduct of court sessions** through 10 questions, which have the following average scores:

Conditions of meeting with the client	6.5
Solemnity of the hearings	6.0
Furnishing equipment of the courtroom	5.8
Organisation and progression of hearings	5.8
Judges' politeness and attitude	5.7
Judges' competence	5.6
Clear responsibility and organisation	5.4
Prosecutors' politeness and attitude	5.4
Punctuality of hearings	5.2
Performance of the prosecutors	5.2
Impartiality of the judge in conducting hearings	4.9

The third area of interested investigated with the questionnaire was the perception of the lawyers about the **judges and the decision making process**, which was measured through the following items, with the following scores:

Clarity of decisions	5.5
Decision easy to be enforced	4.8
Independence of judges	4.7
Enforcement of decision by bailiffs	4.3

Rapid handling of civil cases	2.8
Rapid handling of criminal cases	2.8
Rapid handling of administrative cases	not applicable

50% of the lawyers interviewed have a perception that the functioning of courts has improved in the last 5 years; 27% think that it has not changed.

78% think that the workload of the courts has increased faster than its means.

Finally, about 35% of the lawyers think that the resources are not sufficient, this percentage goes up to 60% when it deals with the numbers of judges

Tirana Administrative Court

In Tirana Administrative Court, the court users interviewed were 83% male and 17% female. 39% were less than 45 years old, 61% older. 81% of the court's users had a previous experience with this court, 57% also with another court.

95% of the respondents were party in a case.

The **accessibility to court** was measured by 5 questions. The court scores quite high (the scale used is from 1 to 7) on "waiting conditions" (6.1) in the court, "courtroom facilities" (5.9), "orientation inside the court" (5.7). A little less was graded the way to "getting to court" (4.2). The score about "**access for disabled**" (3.4) is low, but it is higher than in the other courts involved in this exercise.

The **Court functioning** was measured by 5 questions. The Court scores quite high about all the items: "clarity of summons and notifications", "attitude and politeness" (5.9), "punctuality" (5.7), "time lapse" (5.6), and "competence of court personnel" (5.5).

Judges' performance were measured by 8 questions. The courts scores quite high on "time granted to the party" (6.5), "solemnity of the hearing" (6.0), a little lower about "attitude and politeness" (5.4), "impartiality" (5.0), "time elapsed" between the hearing and the delivery of the decision (5.2), "time elapsed" between the decision and its transcription (4.6), "clarity of court decision" (4.5). The **lowest item** is related to the "**clarity of the judges' language**", which scores only 1.8 out of 7.

The **access to information** has been measured through the "easiness to get information on user's rights", which scored 4.7 and the "clarity of the information" provided by the court, which has a low score (2.3). The **registry** has been mainly used to "withdraw documents" (63%), information on court's decisions (27%), and "information on forms of legal action" (25%). 96% of this information are collected in person from the registry and the quality of this information are considered quite good (5.4).

The **general perception of the functioning of justice** in this court has been measured through 4 questions. The "court functioning organization" is quite clear (5.5), the "cost accessing the system" (without considering the legal fees) is not considered very expensive (3.9), the "**trust**" in the justice system (3.7); and the "**speed**" dealing with the case (3.9) have the lowest scores, but above the middle level of the scale.

58% of the court users think that resource available to the courts are adequate, while the 42% does not think so.

Lawyers interviewed in Tirana Administrative Court have an average of 10 years of practice. 60% work in a law office, 40% are self-employed.

The questionnaire measures the lawyers' perception about the **relations with the court** through 13 dimensions/questions.

From the highest to the lowest level of satisfaction, the average scores of the lawyers that practice in Tirana administrative courts are as follows (please note that the scale is from 1 to 7):

Finding your way within the courthouse	5.5
Costs/fee access to justice	5.4
Quality of information	5.3
Availability of the administrative staff	5.3
Communication with the registry	5.3
Politeness and attitude of the administrative staff	5.1
Clear responsibility and organisation	5.0
Competence of the administrative staff	5.0
Celerity of the information provided	4.6
Easy and practical file consultation	4.6
Access to case law	3.7
Computerised management of the proceedings	3.2
Accessibility and usefulness of court web site	1.9

All the dimensions were also rated by their importance, which is always very close to the maximum of the scale (7.0), but "conditions of meeting with the clients", which has a score 5.6.

Lawyers were also asked to express their level of satisfaction about the **preparation and conduct of court sessions** through 10 questions, which got the following average scores:

Furnishing equipment of the courtroom	6.0
Judges' competence	6.0
Judges' politeness and attitude	5.8
Solemnity of the hearings	5.7
Impartiality of the judge in conducting hearings	5.7
Organisation and progression of hearings	5.5

Clear responsibility and organisation	5.4
Conditions of meeting with the client	5.1
Punctuality of hearings	4.3

The third area of interested investigated with the questionnaire was the perception of the lawyers about the **judges and the decision making process**, which was measured through the following items, with the following scores:

Clarity of decisions	5.4
Decision easy to be enforced	5.3
Rapid handling of administrative cases	5.3
Independence of judges	5.1
Enforcement of decision by bailiffs	4.7

57% of the lawyers interviewed had a perception that the functioning of courts has improved in the last 5 years; 27% think it is unchanged, 7% is deteriorated.

50% think that the workload of the courts has increased faster than its means; 30% think it has increased in proportion to its means.

Finally, about 40% of the lawyers think that the resources are not sufficient.

Tirana Serious Crime Court

In the Serious Crime Court the people interviewed were only lawyers.

Lawyers interviewed have an average of 10 years of practice. 53% work in a law office, 47% are self-employed.

The questionnaire measures the lawyers' perception about the relations with the court through 13 dimensions/questions.

From the highest to the lowest level of satisfaction, the average scores of the lawyers that practice in Tirana Serious Crime court are as follows (please note that the scale is from 1 to 7):

Finding your way within the courthouse	6.6
Communication with the registry	6.3
Politeness and attitude of the administrative staff	6.2
Clear responsibility and organisation	5.8
Quality of information	5.7
Competence of the administrative staff	5.6
Availability of the administrative staff	5.6
Celerity of the information provided	5.3

Computerised management of the proceedings	5.3
Access to case law	5.2
Costs/fee access to justice	5.1
Easy and practical file consultation	5.1
Accessibility and usefulness of court web site	4.7

These items were also rated on their importance, which was for all of them equal or very close to 7.

Lawyers were also asked to express their level of satisfaction about the **preparation and conduct of court sessions** through 10 questions, which have the following average scores:

Furnishing equipment of the courtroom	6.4
Solemnity of the hearings	6.1
Judges' politeness and attitude	6.0
Organisation and progression of hearings	5.7
Judges' competence	5.5
Punctuality of hearings	5.5
Clear responsibility and organisation	5.4
Impartiality of the judge in conducting hearings	4.9
Conditions of meeting with the client	4.8
Prosecutors' politeness and attitude	4.7
Performance of the prosecutors	4.4

The third area of interested investigated with the questionnaire was the perception of the lawyers about the **judges and the decision making process**, which was measured through the following items with the following scores:

Rapid handling of criminal cases	5.7
Clarity of decisions	5.0
Decision easy to be enforced	5.0
Independence of judges	4.6

60% of the lawyers interviewed had a perception that the functioning of courts has improved in the last 5 years; while 30% think it is unchanged, 10% is deteriorated.

43% think that the workload of the courts has increased faster than its means; 37% think that increased in proportion to its means, 20% that it has increases more slowly than its means.

Finally, about 30% of the lawyers think that the resources are not sufficient.

Tirana Appeal Court

In Tirana Appeal Court, the court's users interviewed were 71% male and 29% female. 52% were less than 45 years old, 48% older. 64% had a previous experience with this court, 72% also with another court.

58% of the respondents were party in a case, 29% relatives (family) of one of the parties, 11% witnesses or experts; 50% were there for a civil proceeding, 48% for criminal cases.

The **accessibility to court** was measured by 5 questions. The court scores quite high (the scale used is from 1 to 7) on "waiting conditions" (6.2), "orientation inside the court" (6.1), "courtroom facilities" (5.8) in the court. A little less is graded the way to "getting to court" (4.5). Very low is the score about the "access for disabled" (2.6).

The **Court functioning** was measured by 5 questions. The items that scores quite high are: "attitude and politeness" (5.5) "clarity of summons and notifications" (5.3), "time lapse" (4.9), "competence of court personnel" (4.8), a little less about "punctuality" (4.3).

Judges' performance were measured by 8 questions. The courts scores quite high on "time granted to the party" (5.6), "solemnity of the hearing" (4.8), "clarity of court decision" (4.7), a little lower about "time elapsed" between the hearing and the delivery of the decision (4.4), "attitude and politeness" (4.3), "time elapsed" between the decision and its transcription" (3.9), "impartiality" (3.5). The **lowest item** is related to the "clarity of the judges' language", which scores only 2.6 out of 7.

A couple of questions referred to **prosecutors**. Both the "language" (3.6), and the "attitude and politeness" (3.4) of prosecutors are rated in the middle of the scale.

The **access to information** has been measured through the "easiness to get information on user's rights", which scores 3.3 and the "clarity of the information" provided by the court, which scores 3.0. The **registry** has been mainly used to "withdraw documents" (38%) and information on court's decisions (59%). Practical information on court's decisions (21%), "Information on forms of legal action" (19%). 90% of this information were collected in person from the registry and the quality of this information is considered quite well (5.4).

The **general perception of the functioning of justice** in this court has been measured through 4 questions. The "court functioning organization" is quite clear (4.7), the "cost accessing the system" (without considering the legal fees) is not considered expensive (3.3), the "**trust**" in the justice system (3.0); and the "**speed** dealing with the case" (3.0) have the **lowest scores**.

41% of the court users think that resource available to the courts are adequate, while 25% do not think so.

Lawyers interviewed in Tirana Appeal Court have an average of more than 8 years of practice. 50% work in a law office, 50% are self-employed.

The questionnaire measure the lawyers' perception about the **relations with the court** through 13 dimensions/questions.

From the highest to the lowest level of satisfaction, the average scores of the lawyers in Tirana are as follows (please note that the scale is 1 to 7):

Finding your way within the courthouse	6.5
Communication with the registry	5.9
Politeness and attitude of the administrative staff	5.8
Clear responsibility and organisation	5.6
Competence of the administrative staff	5.6
Availability of the administrative staff	5.5
Quality of information	5.3
Celerity of the information provided	5.2
Costs/fee access to justice	5.1
Computerised management of the proceedings	5.1
Accessibility and usefulness of court web site	5.1
Easy and practical file consultation	5.0
Access to case law	4.9

All the dimensions were also rated by their importance, which is always very close to the maximum of the scale (7.0).

Lawyers were also asked to express their level of satisfaction about the **preparation and conduct of court sessions** through 10 questions, which got the following average scores:

Furnishing equipment of the courtroom	6.3
Solemnity of the hearings	5.8
Judges' politeness and attitude	5.6
Clear responsibility and organisation	5.4
Judges' competence	5.2
Organisation and progression of hearings	5.0
Impartiality of the judge in conducting hearings	4.9
Conditions of meeting with the client	4.8
Performance of the prosecutors	4.3
Prosecutors' politeness and attitude	4.3
Punctuality of hearings	3.6

The third area of interested investigated with the questionnaire was the perception of the lawyers about the **judges and the decision making process**, which was measured through the following items, with the following scores:

Clarity of decisions	5.0
Rapid handling of criminal cases	5.0

Independence of judges	4.6
Decision easy to be enforced	4.1
Enforcement of decision by bailiffs	3.6
Rapid handling of civil cases	3.6
Rapid handling of administrative cases	not applicable

67% of the lawyers interviewed has a perception that the functioning of courts has improved in the last 5 years, 30% think that it is unchanged.

70% think that the workload of the courts has increased faster than its means.

Finally, about 50% of the lawyers think that the resources are not sufficient.

Vlora Appeal Court

In Vlora Appeal Court, the court's users interviewed were 80% male and 20% female. 25% were less than 45 years old, 75% older. 57% had a previous experience with this court, 61% also with another court.

71% of the respondents were party in a case, 19% relatives (family) of one of the parties, 9% witnesses or experts; 74% were there for a civil proceeding, 18% for criminal cases.

The **accessibility to court** was measured by 5 questions. The court scores quite high (the scale used is from 1 to 7) on "courtroom facilities" (5.2) "orientation inside the court" (4.5) and "waiting conditions" (5.2) in the court. A little less is graded the way to "getting to court" (3.7), and the "access for disabled" (3.6).

The **Court functioning** was measured by 5 questions. The following items score quite high: "clarity of summons and notifications" (5.1), "punctuality" (4.6), "attitude and politeness" (4.6), "time lapse" (4.3), and "competence of court personnel" (4.3).

Judges' performance were measured by 8 questions. The courts scores quite high on "time granted to the party" (4.8), "solemnity of the hearing" (4.7), "time elapsed" between the hearing and the delivery of the decision (4.6), a little lower about "attitude and politeness" (4.2), "clarity of court decision" (4.2), "impartiality" (3.9), "time elapsed" between the decision and its transcription" (4.5). The lowest item, but still just above the middle of the scale, is related to the "clarity of the judges' language", which scores 3.4 out of 7.

A couple of questions referred to **prosecutors**. Both the "language" (3.9), and the "attitude and politeness" (3.9) of prosecutors are rated above the middle of the scale.

The **access to information** has been measured through the "easiness to get information on user's rights", which scores 3.6 and the "clarity of the information" provided by the court, which scores 3.9.

The **registry** has been mainly used to “withdraw documents” (37%) and to collect “information on court’s decisions” (38%). Practical information on the execution of court’s decisions (13%), “Information on forms of legal action” (16%). 100% of this information is collected in person from the registry and the quality of this information is rated fairly well (4.5).

The **general perception of the functioning of justice** in this court has been measured through 4 questions. The “court functioning organization” is quite clear (4.5), the “costs accessing the system” (without considering the legal fees) is not considered expensive (5.0), the “**trust**” in the justice system (3.0); and the “**speed**” dealing with the case (2.6) got the lowest scores, raising some matter of concern.

68% of the court users think that resource available to the courts are adequate, while the 20% does not think so.

Lawyers interviewed in Vlora have an average of more than 9 years of practice. 67% work in a law office, 33% are self-employed.

The questionnaire measure the **lawyers’ perception about the relations with the court** through 13 dimensions/questions.

From the highest to the lowest level of satisfaction, the average scores of the lawyers in Vlora are as follows (please note that the scale is 1 to 7):

Finding your way within the courthouse	6.6
Costs/fee access to justice	6.1
Competence of the administrative staff	6.0
Clear responsibility and organisation	5.9
Communication with the registry	5.2
Politeness and attitude of the administrative staff	5.6
Access to case law	5.6
Quality of information	5.5
Easy and practical file consultation	5.5
Availability of the administrative staff	5.1
Celerity of the information provided	5.0
Computerised management of the proceedings	4.9
Accessibility and usefulness of court web site	4.3

All the dimensions were also rated by their importance, which is always very close to the maximum of the scale (7.0).

Lawyers were also asked to express their level of satisfaction about the **preparation and conduct of court sessions** through 10 questions, which got the following average scores:

Solemnity of the hearings	6.5
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Judges' competence	6.3
Performance of the prosecutors	6.2
Conditions of meeting with the client	6.1
Furnishing equipment of the courtroom	6.1
Prosecutors' politeness and attitude	6.1
Judges' politeness and attitude	6.0
Organisation and progression of hearings	5.9
Impartiality of the judge in conducting hearings	5.5
Punctuality of hearings	4.4

The third area of interest investigated with the questionnaire was the **perception of the lawyers about the judges and the decision making process**, which was measured through the following items with the following scores:

Independence of judges	5.8
Clarity of decisions	5.7
Rapid handling of criminal cases	5.1
Decision easy to be enforced	5.1
Enforcement of decision by bailiffs	3.8
Rapid handling of civil cases	3.8
Rapid handling of administrative cases	not applicable

67% of the lawyers interviewed had a perception that the functioning of courts has improved in the last 5 years, 27% think that it is unchanged.

60% think that the workload of the courts has increased faster than its means.

Finally, more than 55% of the lawyers think that the resources are not sufficient.