

Perceptions of Prosecutors' and Judges' Wheelings and Dealings

On January 19th 2019, the Rustavi 2 TV channel broadcasted an investigative documentary Studio Monitor and Radio Liberty produced. The documentary **"Judges in the Government's Service"** followed up on the government's attempted confiscation of **Constanta Bank** from its founders in 2011. It further hinted at alleged misconduct by the prosecutors and judges.

Between January 28 and February 4, 2019 CRRC-Georgia conducted a follow-up phone survey to find out whether and how the public viewed the documentary. The survey asked about a number of issues presented in the documentary including:

- If people knew that the Department to Investigate Offenses Committed in the Course of Legal Proceedings existed in the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia; This Department was established to deal with problematic issues that the documentary is focused about;
- Generally, in their opinion, how likely it was that the Prosecutor's Office effectively prosecuted representatives of the justice system (judges, prosecutors) if it found they had committed offences in the course of legal proceedings;
- How frequent or rare cases of judges in Georgia making deals with the government to have decisions favorable for them are;
- If they could recall a specific, recent case of government representatives seizing property from private individuals.

The phone survey resulted in 804 completed interviews. Its results are representative of the adult Georgian-speaking population of the country. The average margin of error of the survey is 2.6%. Results discussed in this blog are based on all completed interviews (804) and are weighted according to main demographic characteristics of respondents.

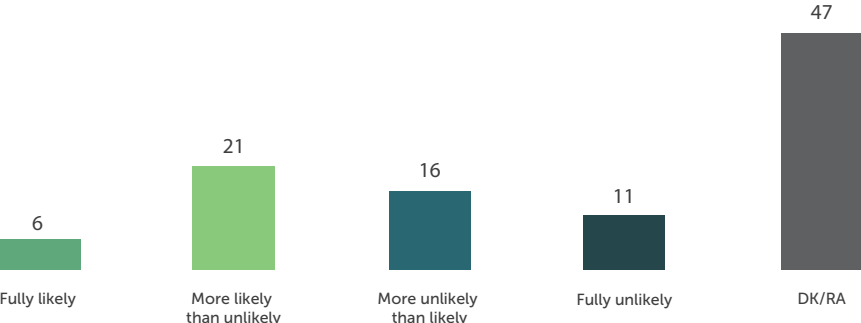
The documentary was broadcasted on Rustavi 2 and shared on the websites and social media pages of Radio Liberty and Studio Monitor. Only 3% of the adult Georgian-speaking population of the country reported watching the film. Most of them (66%) saw it on Rustavi 2. Most respondents that saw the film (54%) found it convincing, 14% did not consider it convincing and 32% did not know what to answer¹.

¹ In order to avoid any influence by the question about the documentary, which included the topic of the film, respondents were asked about the documentary per se in the end of the interview.

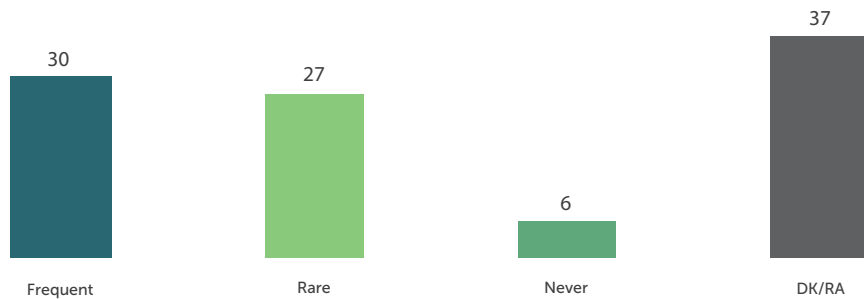
A small share of the public had heard of the Department to Investigate Offense Committed in the Course of Legal proceedings. Only 12% of the adult Georgian-speaking population had heard that a special department was established at the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia to investigate offences committed in the course of legal proceedings. A large majority (87%) did not know about it.

People are often uncertain about the Prosecutor's Office serving as a neutral actor in relation to the judiciary. About a quarter (26%) said it was fully likely or more likely than unlikely that the Prosecutor's Office prosecuted judges and prosecutors if it found that they had committed offences in the course of legal proceedings. About the same share (27%) reported that it was more unlikely or fully unlikely that the Prosecutor's Office effectively prosecuted representatives of the justice system. For the most part, people found it hard to respond to this question and the most frequent response was 'Don't know' (46%) while 1% refused to answer the question.

How likely or unlikely is it that the Prosecutor's Office effectively prosecutes representatives of the justice system (judges, prosecutors) if it finds they had committed offences in the course of legal proceedings? (%)



In your opinion, judges in Georgia making deals with the government representatives in order to have decisions favorable for them is a frequent case, a rare case, or never a case? (%)



As for judges making deals with the government, about a third (30%) of the population reported that in their opinion it was frequent, 27% said it was rare, and only 6% responded that it was never the case. A plurality (37%) could not answer the question.



Few people can recall a case of the government seizing private property. Respondents were asked to recall a specific, recent case of a government representative seizing property from private individuals. Only 1% could. Respondents generally said they did not know (49%), they could not recall a specific case (46%), or refused to answer the question (4%). Only a few people named specific cases. Those that did pointed to the [Omega](#) case, [TBC Bank](#) case and [Anzor Kokoladze](#) case.

Overall, the data suggests a small share of the public is aware of the Prosecutor's Office's department for investigating crimes committed during legal proceedings. They are also generally uncertain about how the Prosecutor's Office would deal with issues in the judiciary.

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Please name a specific case of the recent period, which refer to a government representative seizing property from private individuals. (%)

