RESULTS

Access to Information Programme

National Public Opinion Poll
September-October 2008
Aims and Tasks of the Public Opinion Poll

Aiming at better efficiency in achieving its mission to facilitate the exercise of the right of access to information, Access to Information Programme Foundation assigned to Market LINKS, a Research and Consulting Agency, to perform a public opinion poll among adult Bulgarian population, as well as among Bulgarian journalists from electronic and printed media. The public opinion poll had the following aims.

● To study the level of awareness about the right of access to public information – among Bulgarian citizens and journalists.

● To outline public attitude towards the guarantee and respect of the right of access to public information.

● To outline practices and problems with obtaining access to public information.
Design of the Public Opinion Poll

Two types of public opinion polls:

1. Opinion poll among journalists
   *Professional awareness of access to information right*
   *Professional assessment and self-assessment on practices and problems related to the access to public information*

2. Opinion poll among adult citizens
   *Citizens awareness of access to information right*
   *Public opinion assessment on practices and problems related to the access to public information*
Methodological Framework – representative public opinion poll

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF OPINION POLL:</th>
<th>Quantitative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>METHOD OF REGISTRATION:</td>
<td>Direct personal interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLLED SAMPLE:</td>
<td>Population, 18+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIZE OF THE SAMPLE:</td>
<td>1210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REPRESENTATION:</td>
<td>National</td>
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<tr>
<td>TIME FRAME:</td>
<td>September 2008</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Methodological Framework—opinion poll among journalists

**TYPE OF OPINION POLL:** Quantitative

**METHOD OF REGISTRATION:** Direct personal interview, online interview

**RESPONDENTS:** Journalists, chief editors, program managers and managers of national and regional media

**NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS:** 156

**TIME FRAME:** September 2008
### Parameters of the polled sample—national representative opinion poll

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>51.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>48.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td>18-34</td>
<td>29.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35-59</td>
<td>42.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60+</td>
<td>27.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Place of living</strong></td>
<td>Sofia</td>
<td>14.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Big city</td>
<td>12.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other city</td>
<td>41.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Village</td>
<td>31.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td>Bulgarian</td>
<td>86.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roma</td>
<td>5.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>6.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Parameters of the polled sample – journalists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of media</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Printed Media</td>
<td>40,4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>20,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Media</td>
<td>17,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cable TV</td>
<td>14,1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air TV</td>
<td>7,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place of operation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofia</td>
<td>19,90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big city</td>
<td>59,00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another city</td>
<td>14,10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>7,00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position held in the media</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editor</td>
<td>28,2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporter</td>
<td>26,9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Editor, Deputy Chief Editor</td>
<td>26,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director, Program Director</td>
<td>9,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correspondent</td>
<td>4,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner, Manager</td>
<td>2,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producer</td>
<td>1,9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host of a show</td>
<td>0,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commentator</td>
<td>0,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1,2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Right of Access to Public Information in Bulgaria

Q. Are you aware of your right of access to public information?

Base: all respondents (1210), 18+

Base: All journalists (156)
Right of access to public information guaranteed by Bulgarian legislation

Q. Does Bulgarian legislation guarantee citizens' right of access to public information?

Base: all respondents (1210), 18+

Base: all journalists (156)
Respect to the right of access to public information in Bulgaria

Q. Is the right of access public information respected in Bulgaria?

Citizens

- Yes: 18%
- No: 62%
- Cannot define: 14%

Journalists

- Yes: 81%
- No: 5%
- Cannot define: 20%

Base: all respondents (1210), 18+

Base: all journalists (156)
Guarantee and respect to the right of access to public information by the institutions

Q. What is the extent of importance to which the following bodies shall guarantee and respect the right of access to public information in the country?

- **State Administration - Executive Bodies**
  - Citizens: 84%, Important: 10%, Not important: 6%
  - Journalists: 99%, Important: 0%

- **Local bodies of self government - mayors and municipal councils**
  - Citizens: 86%, Important: 8%, Not important: 6%
  - Journalists: 98%, Important: 11%, Not important: 1%

- **Bodies of judicial power**
  - Citizens: 82%, Important: 11%, Not important: 7%
  - Journalists: 96%, Important: 18%

- **Media**
  - Citizens: 81%, Important: 13%, Not important: 6%
  - Journalists: 94%, Important: 4%

- **Natural and legal persons financed from the state budget**
  - Citizens: 79%, Important: 13%, Not important: 8%
  - Journalists: 92%, Important: 5%

Base: all respondents (1210), 18+  
Base: all journalists (156)
Access to Information Programme and Access to Public Information Act - awareness

Q. Are you aware of the existence of:

Access to Information Programme

Citizens:
- 4% have contacted/used
- 7% are well aware but don't have direct impressions
- 23% are aware of the existence but not familiar
- 66% are not aware at all

Journalists:
- 40% have contacted/used
- 34% are well aware but don't have direct impressions
- 18% are aware of the existence but not familiar
- 6% are not aware at all

Access to Public Information Act

Citizens:
- 5% have contacted/used
- 8% are well aware but don't have direct impressions
- 27% are aware of the existence but not familiar
- 60% are not aware at all

Journalists:
- 34% have contacted/used
- 38% are well aware but don't have direct impressions
- 21% are aware of the existence but not familiar
- 4% are not aware at all

Base: all respondents (1210), 18+ Base: all journalists (156)
Q. Do you need assistance/consultation in cases when you want to obtain access to public information?

- **Yes, definitely**: 49%
- **Yes, in case of refusal**: 71%
- **I don't need assistance/consultation**: 13%
- **I cannot define**: 2%

*Base: all respondents (1210), 18+*

*Base: all journalists (156)*
Procedure of obtaining access to public information

Q. Do you know:

- What to do to obtain information from central and municipal administration?
  - Citizens: 7%, 21%, 20%, 52%, 6%
  - Journalists: 57%, 38%, 4%

- Whom to address in order to obtain public information?
  - Citizens: 8%, 20%, 19%, 53%, 6%
  - Journalists: 58%, 37%, 5%

- Which institution to address in case of refusal of public information?
  - Citizens: 5%, 15%, 15%, 66%, 7%
  - Journalists: 47%, 37%, 9%, 6%

- Yes, I know well
- Yes, I know vaguely
- Yes, I know in general terms
- No, I don't know at all
- I cannot define

Base: all respondents (1210), 18+
Base: all journalists (156)
Interest towards public information

Q: To what extent does the following public information is interesting to you as a citizen?

Citizens

Q: To what extent the following public information is interesting for you?

Journalists

- Activity reports by central government institutions
- Activity reports by local authorities
- Contracts signed by central and local authorities
- Budget of public institution/municipality
- Financial reports of public institutions/municipalities
- Development programs and strategies
- List of classified documents
- Public registers

Base: all correspondents (1210), 18+

Base: all journalists (156)
Intention to use the right of access to public information

Q: Have you used the right of access to public information and would you use it if you have not?

Citizens

- Yes, I have already used my right: 7%
- Not yet, but I would search for public information: 63%
- Not yet, and would not in the future: 19%
- I cannot define: 11%

Journalists

- Yes, I have already used my right: 62%
- Not yet, but I would search for public information: 34%
- Not yet, and would not in the future: 2%
- I cannot define: 2%

Base: all respondents (1210), 18+
Base: all journalists (156)
Ways of requesting access to public information

Q: How did you request access to public information?

Citizens

- I don't remember/No answer; 1%
- Via the institutional Internet site: 24%
- At the institution-in a written form: 36%
- At the institution-verbally: 39%

Journalists

- I don't remember; 2%
- Via the institutional Internet site: 17%
- At the institution-in a written form: 49%
- At the institution-verbally: 32%

Base: all respondents who have used the right of access to information (86)
Q. What was the result from your attempt to obtain access to public information?

Results from attempts to obtain access to information

Base: all respondents who have used the right of access to information (86)

- I obtained the entire requested information: 51%
- I obtained incomplete information: 37%
- I was refused: 18%
- I have not received an answer yet: 6%

Base: all journalists who have used the right of access to information (97)

- I obtained the entire requested information: 37%
- I obtained incomplete information: 37%
- I was refused: 12%
- I have not received an answer yet: 8%
Q. Have you appealed the refusal of access to information?

Base: all respondents who have been refused access to public information (10)

- 32% I appealed
- 29% I did not appeal because I did not know how
- 65% I did not appeal

Base: all journalists who have been refused access to public information (17)

- 39% I did not appeal
Q. Do you know a person or organization who have sought public information?

- **Citizens**
  - I know: 74%
  - I don't know but I have heard of such cases: 13%
  - No: 12%

- **Journalists**
  - I know: 70%
  - I don't know but I have heard of such cases: 14%
  - No: 5%
  - I cannot remember/No answer: 8%

Base: all respondents (1210), 18+
Base: all journalists (156)
Q. Are you aware of any cases in which access to public information has been refused?

**Citizens**
- I know about a lot of cases: 3%
- I know about such a case: 37%
- I don't know: 42%
- I cannot remember/No answer: 9%

**Journalists**
- I know about a lot of cases: 3%
- I know about such a case: 11%
- I don't know: 9%
- I cannot remember/No answer: 13%

Base: all respondents (1210), 18+

Base: all journalists (156)
Q: Do you follow or not publications/programs in media related to the problems with the provision of access to information?

- Yes, regularly: 8%
- Yes, partially of topics that are interested to me: 38%
- No: 54%

Q: Do you personally publish/broadcast on the problems related to the provision of access to information?

- Yes, regularly: 14%
- Yes, partially of topics that are interested to me: 55%
- No: 31%

Base: all respondents (1210), 18+
Base: all journalists (156)
Q: In your opinion to what extent the topic of access to public information is covered by Bulgarian media?

- Not sufficiently; 86%
- Sufficiently, as much as it is necessary; 13%
- I cannot define; 1%

Q: In your opinion to what extent the topic of access to public information is covered by your media?

- Not sufficiently; 50%
- Too much; 1%
- I cannot define; 5%
- Sufficiently, as much as it is necessary; 44%

Base: all journalists (156)
Q. Are the following topics interesting for you as a journalist?

- Activity reports of local authorities: 75%
- Financial reports of institutions/municipalities: 72%
- Contracts of institutions/local authorities: 71%
- Budget of institutions/municipalities: 67%
- Development programs and strategies: 61%
- Activity reports of state institutions: 55%
- Public registers: 52%
- List of classified documents: 45%

Base: all journalists (156)