



Poll Summary

The Ohrid Institute for Economic Strategies and International Affairs survey reveals a number of interesting developments among residents of Macedonia regarding their priorities in political culture and economic development. The most important findings are:

- Currently Macedonian citizens have a generally optimistic view of their current and future situation. 30% of the respondents in our sample say that Macedonia is “moving in the right direction” compared to 26% who believe it is moving in the “wrong” direction. Nearly one-fifth (18%) believe that their economic lives have improved over the past 4 years and one-seventh (14%) have an optimistic outlook of the country’s economic future.
- While there is increasing optimism in the country, economic issues dominate people’s concerns. Nearly eight of every ten respondents (79%) identify Unemployment, the economy, and low living standards as the most important problem facing the country.
- Despite these economic problems few residents (16%) plan to leave Macedonia to improve their economic prospects. 8% plan to immigrate to another country while an additional 8% intend to find employment abroad. These residents tend to be younger and the most common destinations are the US, Germany, Italy, Australia, and Greece.
- In terms of economic vs. social policy the Macedonian public is split holding many opinions that are in conflict. This reveals strong fears of a continuing weak, or worsening, economy and its impact on the economic and social lives of the residents of Macedonia. Respondents show strong support (60% or better) for a “free market” organization of the country and strongly believe that individual responsibility determines a person’s success or failure, however, they also support elements of strong national policies to “control” the effects of free market policies in protecting individuals.
- Macedonians support foreign investment in the country at very high levels and tend to show higher levels of trust that international companies will work in the interests of Macedonian society than will Macedonian companies.
- Politically, the Macedonian electorate tends to “define” themselves slightly “right” of “center,” but when asked to define what is meant by the political “right” and “left” they are generally unable to do so. This reveals the inability of the political structures in Macedonia to communicate strong identifiable positions of their parties, particularly on economic and social programs to the electorate.