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INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE AND SOCIAL VALUES ITALY

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Introduction

The following report is based on data collected during ethnographic fieldwork, as a part of the ANTICORRP project, Work Package 4 - The Ethnography of Corruption. In particular, it deals with the results of a survey conducted in Italy on a small sample, divided in two groups: inhabitants of the cities of Monza (Northern Italy) and Lecce (Southern Italy). The results will be presented as a whole, although we are aware of the fact that neither of the two cities can be considered as representative of the very regionally diverse Italian reality. As a consequence of that, differences at a macroscopic level will be pointed out, in an attempt to take into account relevant issues that have arisen.

The aim of the survey is to collect information on how different areas of the public and private life are perceived by the respondents, and in particular: public institutions, local development, local customs, and values. The main focus of the questions is to investigate how people deal with the problem of corruption (if perceived at all), its effects, practices, social and cultural norms, as well as with the anti-corruption discourse, both at a local and national level. It is important to stress that the word "corruption" itself is not directly used in the survey, with one exception in section D, where it is used to address one of a series of hypothetical scenarios. Avoiding direct references to corruption as a phenomenon was a choice based on the awareness that corruption itself is hard to define and to frame, since it consists of multiple practices not always perceived as fraudulent or illegal, which are not necessarily fitting the social understanding of *object* corruption. Using a word that has such strong moral and social implications in the public discourse would have possibly influenced the results of the survey, and make the respondent feel at unease or bias their responses when dealing with such matters.

The survey target has been the ordinary residents in the above mentioned cities, in an attempt to give a bottom-up perspective of the relationship between the citizen and the institutions at multiple levels (from local to nations and supranational), as well as to underline how the citizens relate to such institutions in matter of social trust and ability to interact with them.

The survey is aimed at providing comparable data among the countries it has been conducted in, in the scope of the WP4 research. Therefore it serves a double purpose:

attempting a comparison within two different areas in Italy, as well as providing information which could be used in a wider, comparative framework.

2. Methodology, sampling and field

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the results of this survey were obtained with a sample of 140 respondents, equally divided between the two cities of Monza and Lecce.

The questionnaire was translated into Italian from the original in English, with only minor changes to adapt it to the Italian political and institutional reality. The preliminary indications on how to select the respondents was to provide only one survey per household and that the surveyed should be male/female in working age, between 18-65 years old.

The research has been conducted in two different moments for the separated areas, namely September-October 2013 for Lecce, and November-January 2013 for Monza. The methodologies which have been majorly used were the hand-to-hand distribution, inviting respondents to get in contact with relatives and friends who might have applied to our research sample, so to create a network of self perpetrating survey circulation; and the collection via email and social networks, given the fact that the survey in this case has never been published on any platform, but was rather compiled by respondents who were subsequently involved through a *snowballing* method. As a consequence of such an approach, a face-to-face relation between respondents and researchers hasn't always been possible.

Having chosen Monza and Lecce as sample cities was due to multiple factors.

First, the accessibility of the two areas by the researchers who have conducted the surveys. Second, a pre-existent network of acquaintances, which in both cases facilitated the starting up of the distribution and collection process. Third, a *relative* similitude between the two cities in terms of demography and industrial development, though well aware of the striking differences between the two regions they are situated in - Lombardy and Apulia - from a cultural, political and historical point of view.

Monza - Lombardy

- Population: ~123.500 inhabitants (Lombardy ~9.9 Mlm)
- Capital of the Province of Monza and Brianza
- Economy: it is the most important economic, industrial and administrative centre of the Brianza area, supporting a textile and furniture industry, featuring small to medium enterprises, with few relevant exceptions. Its province is also considered to be one of the wealthiest in Italy.

- Features a large number of immigrants, both from other Italian regions (mainly from the south) and from abroad. Foreign immigrants are about 1/10 of the entire population.
- In the last 20 years it has been led by right-wing parties, with the exception of years 2002-2007
- Civic activity on anti-corruption is growing and the anti-corruption discourse if getting more and more relevant in the public agenda.

Lecce - Apulia

Population: ~90.000 inhabitants (Apulia ~4 Mln)

- Economy: one the most prosperous of southern Italy, but still mostly based on agriculture, food related industry and above all tourism
- Political stability over years, mostly right-wing orientations, although very frequent changes in local allegiances
- Over the last 5 years increase of north-bound migration. Foreign immigrants are also present, with a ratio of about 1/15 of the entire population.
- Corruption is not a main topic in media/civil society discourses, in spite of clear clientelistic basis of local politics

As summarized by Table 1, the sample is constituted as follows:

Number of people surveyed: 140: 70 living in Monza, 70 living in Lecce

- Gender: 76 males (54,3%), 54 females (45,7%)
- Age: the most represented age group is that of people between 25 and 35 years (35%), followed by 35-45 (26,4%), 45-55 (21,4%), 55-65 (8,6%) and finally 15-25 and over 65 years old (both 4,3%)
- Education level: the majority of the respondents claimed to have a university degree, either BA, MA or PhD (59.3%). The rest of the surveyed sample has a high school degree (34,3%), middle school (3.6%), technical degree (2.1%). None of the respondent have obtained a primary school degree only.
- Occupation: the answers to this question were various and somewhat hard to categorize. We have divided the provided information into the following subgroups: public sector employee; private sector employee; occupation that requires expertise - both as employed or freelance - including doctors, lawyers, accountants and

university professors, when it was not possible to determine whether in the public or private sectors; self-employed or freelance (i.e. journalists, photographers, consultants, workers in the fields of advertisement and communication); employed (mostly commerce and retail); business - large scale entrepreneurs; housewives; students; retired and unemployed.

Gender	**Monza**	**Lecce**	**Total**
Male	31	45	76
Female	39	25	64
Age			
15-25	7	0	6
25-35	23	26	49
35-45	19	18	37
45-55	11	19	30
55-65	10	2	12
65 +	1	5	6
Education level			
Primary	0	0	0
Middle school	3	2	5
High school	30	18	48
College/University	35	49	84
Technical	2	1	3
n/a	0	0	0
Occupation			
Public sector employee	4	15	19
Private sector employee	25	17	42
Workers in the private sector (commerce, retail, etc)	3	7	10
Housewife	1	2	3
Occupations that require expertise (doctors, engineers, lawyers and so on)	12	8	20
Retired	6	5	11
Self-employed or free-lance (consultants, journalists, advertisement...)	7	2	9
Student	5	5	10
Unemployed	5	9	14
Business -- large scale entrepreneur	2	0	2
Region			
Monza (North)	70	0	70
Lecce (South)	0	70	70

Table 1 Sample

Getting access to the sample hasn't always been an easy task. Since we were already familiar with the two locations we had decided to survey, we could count on a number of already well established networks to start our sampling from. Nevertheless, the decision of submitting only one survey per household proved to have fairly limited our contact range.

As a matter of fact, another element has made it necessary for us to rely on other forms of distribution, such as the internet and contacts through social networks, rather that face-to-face surveys: the intrinsic nature of the cities chosen for our research. In the case of Monza, it has been pretty difficult to physically meet with potential respondents, even at weekends, due to their hectic way of life and multiple everyday obligations. Furthermore, it is common for people living in Monza to work in the neighbour city of Milano, or in the province, where most factories and industries are located. Due to that, Monza inhabitants don't necessarily spend most of their day in the city where they reside, which required alternative contact methods. Moreover, most of the respondents, which were personally approached, didn't seem to have the will or the time to fill in the survey straight away, and by that to discuss with the researcher about questions, doubts or eventual comments, but rather postponed answering the questions to a "free moment".

The only people which seemed more eager in spending time commenting the survey were retired people and unemployed. The case of retired people, though, posed another problem: some of them seemed (or claimed) to not have fully understood the questions, and therefore needed help. One interviewed woman, while filling in the survey, kept lifting her head up, with a doubtful look in her eyes, and saying "*Why* are you asking *me* that?", somehow implying she felt at unease with the questions because she considered herself not involved with such matters. Interestingly, some of the questions made her reconsider her behaviour and her attitude towards the investigated themes, and to the extent that she started wondering whether she had been acting correctly until the present day. At the end of the survey she seemed to be puzzled about everything and she begged not to use her survey for this research. Other respondents claimed that the survey was pretty long and they didn't know when or if they would have managed to compile it, which in fact delayed significantly collecting time, made it necessary for us to remind these respondents about the survey multiple times.

Lecce presented a somewhat similar situation. Here a larger portion of respondents worked in the public administration, compared to Monza, and in general they had time for the compilation. The survey was in general positively welcomed, as some informants stressed that although difficult, the themes by it introduced were highly relevant and timely. In some

instances the respondents overtly declared to prefer the online compilation to the presence of the interviewer, which in most of the cases was accepted. Concerning the topic, we have encountered fewer occasions, comparatively with Monza, of “resistance” or “reluctance” to engage in answers with the theme of corruption, since it was recognized as one of the most complex and serious problems of the political conditions of the region. Two respondents even pointed out to the lack of the word “corruption” in the survey, which for them was unjustified.

3. Local institutions

The first part of the survey was supposed to investigate how people relate to different kinds of institutions, both at a local and national level, and how do they evaluate their importance for the society they live in.

3.1 Institutions important for promoting well-being

The first question was

> *"Do these institutions play an important role in promoting the general well being of your community?"*

Respondents were given a list of institutions and were asked to rate them either as not important – fairly important – very important.

The proposed institutions were:

- Municipality
- Province
- Region
- Government coalition
- Opposition Parties
- Health Centres
- Church
- Police
- Local cultural associations
- National NGO's
- EU
- Other

It is important to note that not all the respondents indicated values for every provided choice, some of them just evaluated those institutions that were relevant for them. These were very few cases, but as it can be noticed in Chart 1, results do not relate to all 140 completed surveys.

Some respondents also indicated alternatives in the section named "other", though not always providing a "rate", while others have provided a rate without giving an option. Answers included: social associations (2), cultural institutions, aggregation centres, voluntary service (2), NGO's, labour offices, schools (5), universities (3).

Municipalities were recognized as the institutions that play a bigger role in granting people their well being, with 62,7% of the respondents (137) thinking they are very important. Health centres also scored pretty high, with 56,8% of the surveyed people (139) thinking they play a very important role. The institution which proved to be considered as less potentially effective is the Church, with an average of 10,9% of the interviewed (137) giving it the highest rate.

Results are in general quite various, the most striking fact being probably the lack of confidence in opposition parties, which score pretty high as "not important" (39,7% of 136) and definitely low as "very important" (21,3%). Similar result can be seen in the case of the Province.

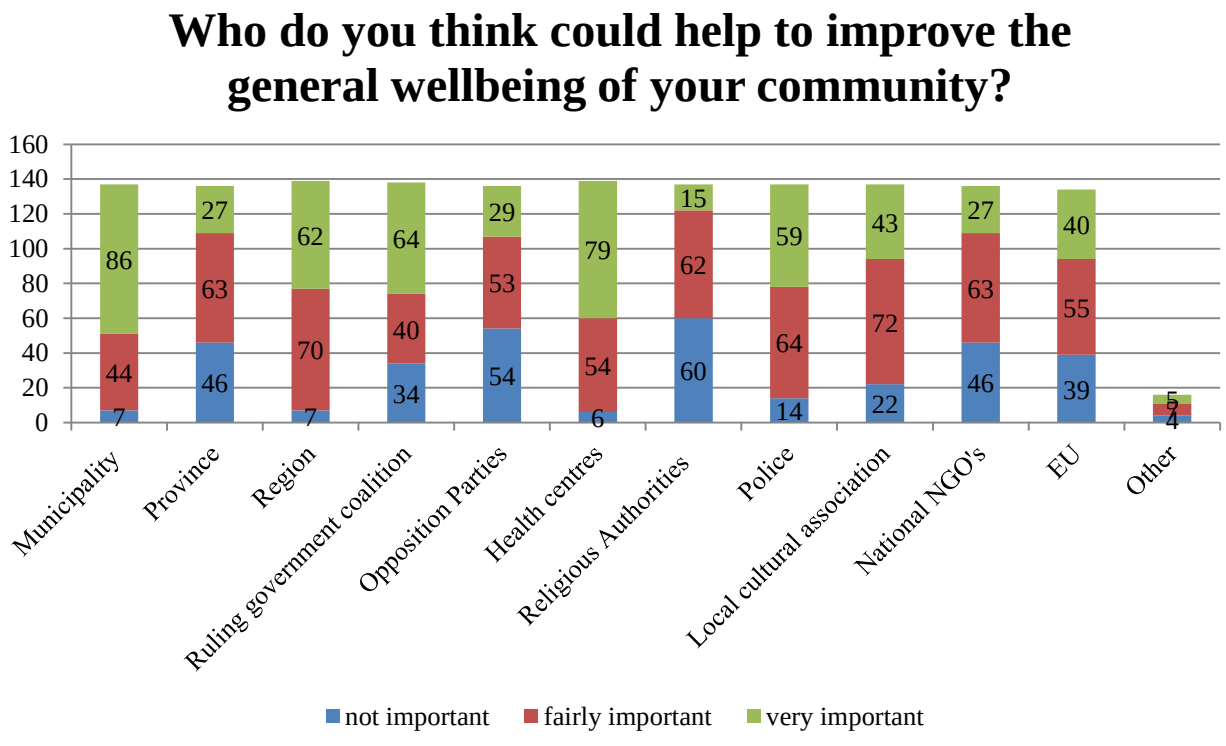


Figure 1 Institutions important for promoting well-being

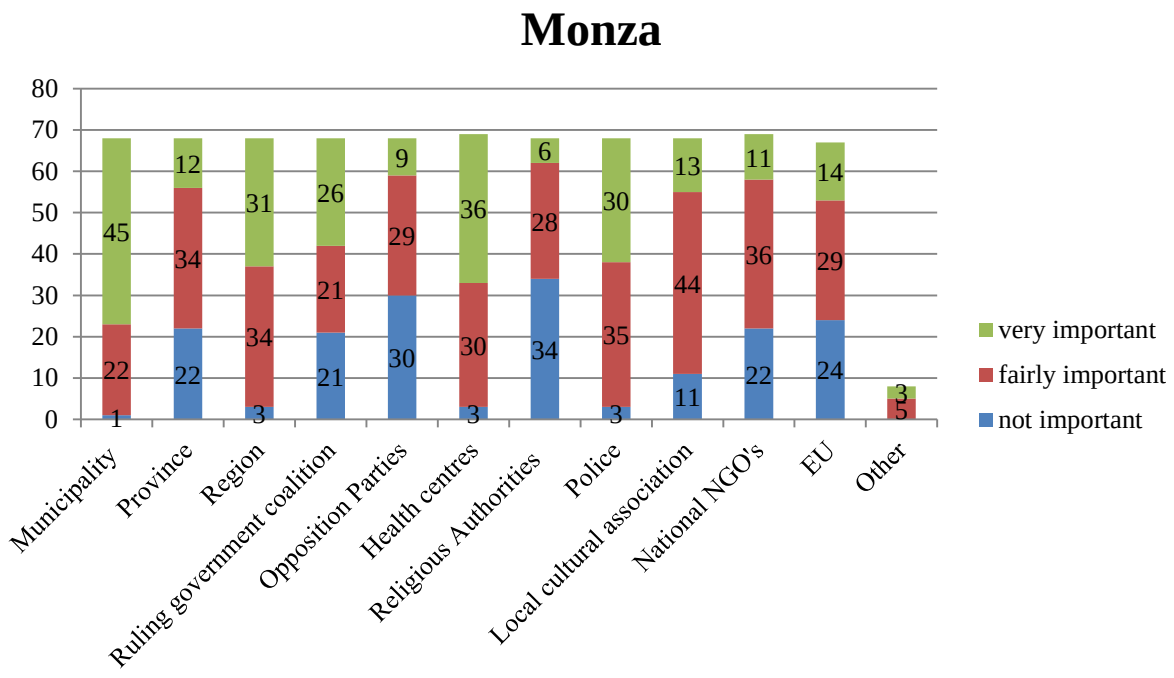


Figure 2 Institutions important for promoting well-being - Monza

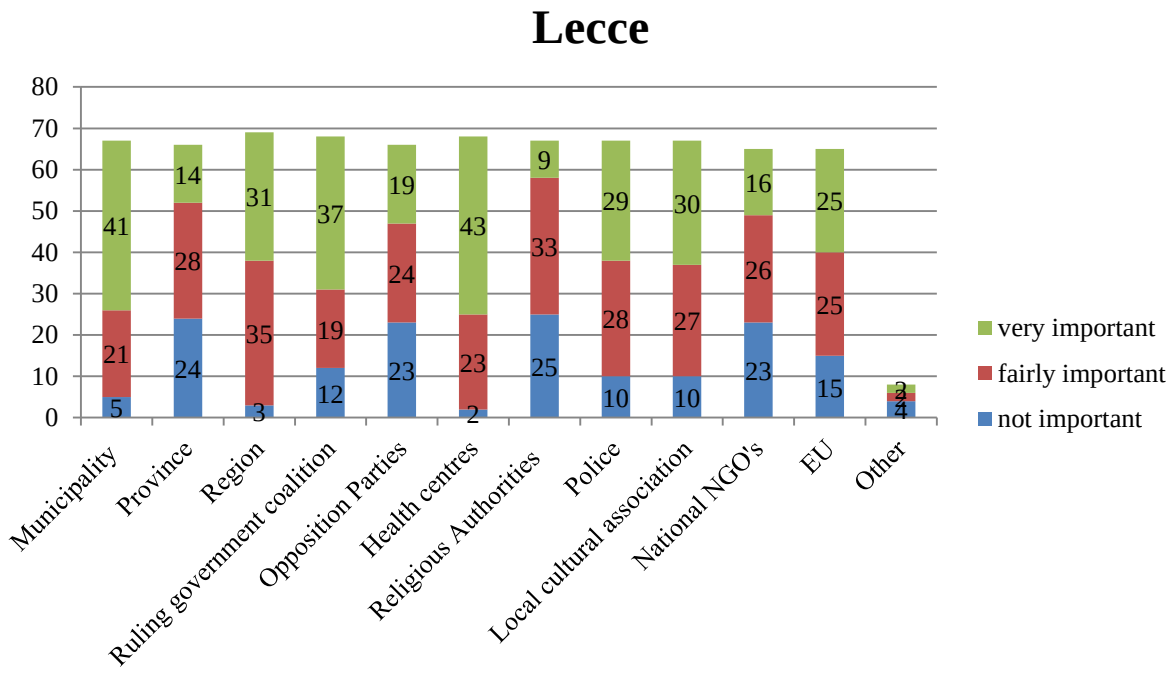


Figure 3 Institutions important for promoting well-being - Lecce

3.2 Public officials

The second question of this section is aimed at understanding what kind of institutional figures do people perceive as being public officials.

> *"Please select among the following working categories, those that according to your understanding apply to* ***public official****".*

This prompt is particularly important if we take into account the commonly accepted definition of corruption as the "abuse of a public office for personal gain". Individuating a working category as public officer, or not, kind of preselects the perception of possible fraudulent actions and corruption attempts.

As chart 2 shows, almost the totality of the respondents – 137 out of 140, 97,8% – indicated policemen (and policewomen) as public officers. High scores have also been collected by Municipality employees (75,7%), for obvious reasons, since they're mostly (but not all) employees of the public sector.

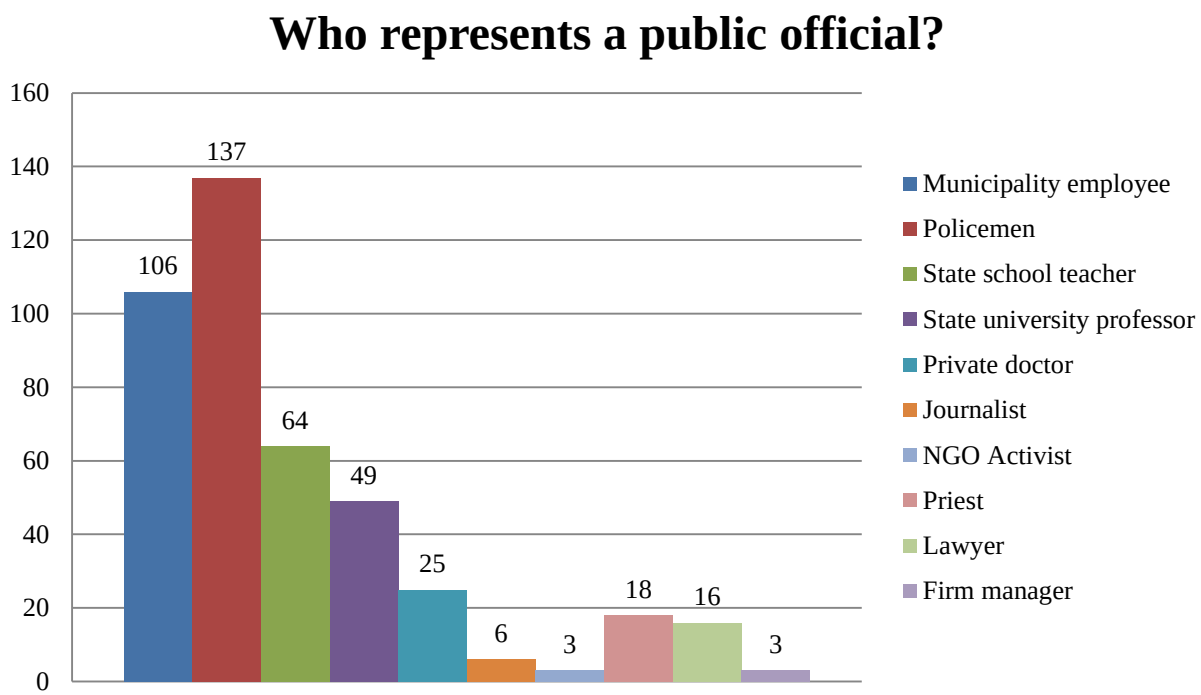


Figure 4 Public official

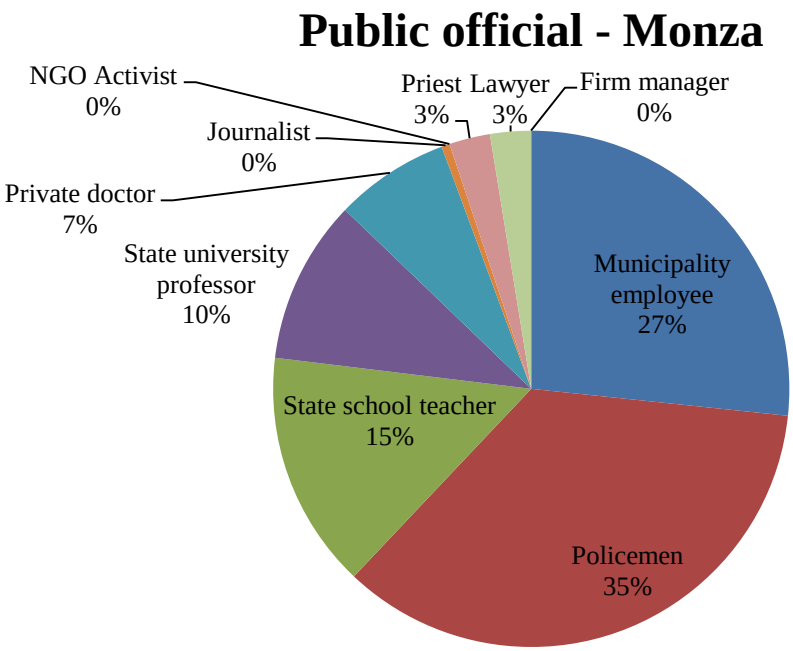


Figure 5 Public official - Monza

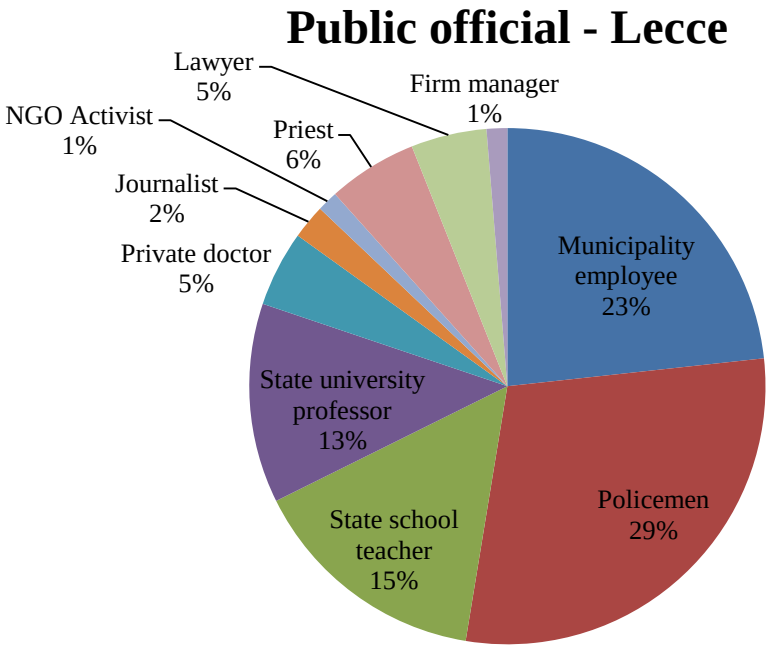


Figure 6 Public official - Lecce

3.3 Trust in Institutions

Trust is a very important component of the relationship between citizens and the institutions. It has been reported by many authors (i.e. see Rothstein) that countries with high levels of generalized social trust tend to be more democratic and have better performing institutions, and trust in trust can be considered as a mutually reinforcing phenomenon. That should imply that those institutions that are more trusted in, tend indeed to provide better services, based on some kind of "positive social pressure". On the other hand, countries that have a low levels social trust, tend to develop negative values such as envy, cynicism and pessimism, which in the end lead to the increase of the so called "personalized trust" (Uslaner 2002), which implies that people only trust close friends and family members and distrust the people outside those circles.

Attempting the evaluation of such a complex phenomenon, which includes a series of historical, social, cultural and economic variables, with one survey question can be considered risky and not representative of the reality. Nevertheless we have tried to at least obtain an impression of how people relate to different areas of the institutions they (almost) daily find themselves confronted with.

The prompt was

*"How much do you **trust** the following institutions"*

were the surveyed people were asked to rate each option with a number from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest).

In the Italian survey, the provided options were:

- Municipality
- Region
- Church
- Parish
- Judges
- Police
- Health Centres (public)
- Health Centres (private)
- Public Schools
- Tax office
- Local Cultural Associations
- Media
- EU

As in the question about well-being providers, not all respondents rated each given option. These have been very few exceptions, but in a few cases (municipality, region, church and media) results are not provided on the totality of the surveys, but rather on a maximum of 138 or 139.

Results are revealed in two different figures. The first one shows the average rates gained by each institution. It can be noticed that higher levels of trust are relative to public schools (3,3), public health centres and the police force (both 3.2), followed by private health centres and local cultural associations (each 3,1). It could be arguable, if we agree on what has been reported at the beginning of this paragraph, that people seem to trust more those institutions that are closer to them, or with which contacts are (or need to be) reiterated for various reasons.

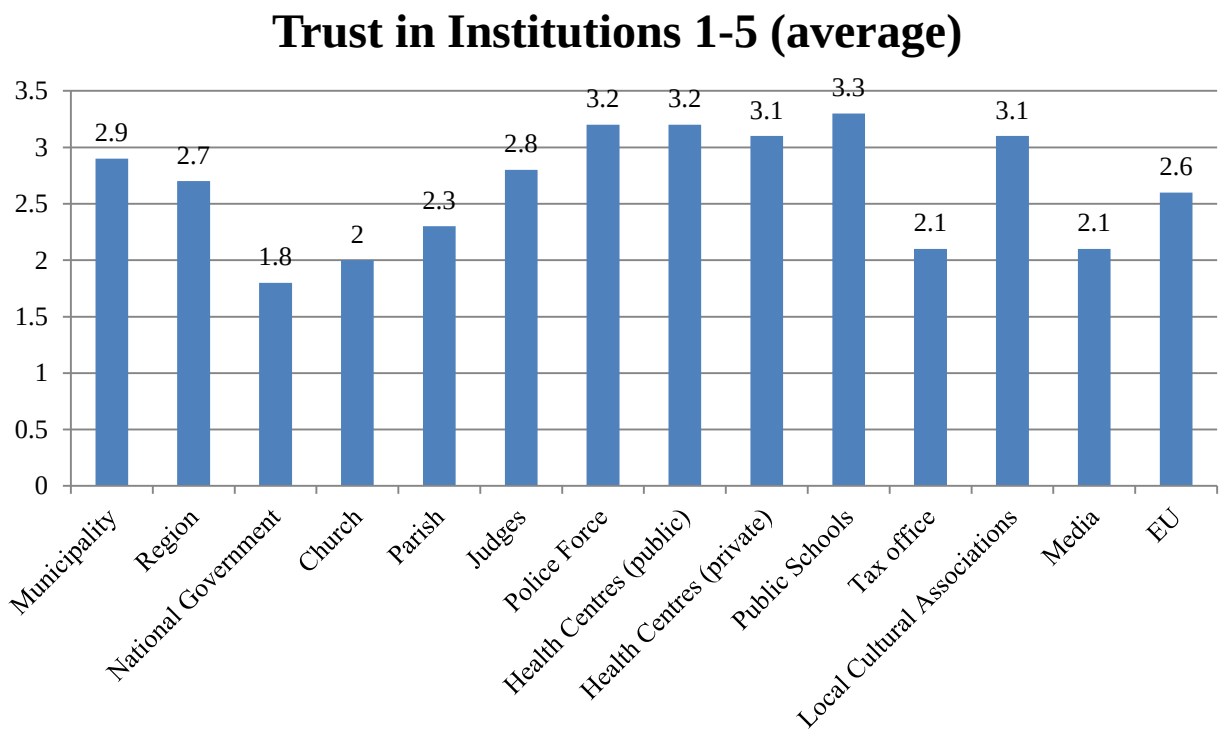


Figure 7 Trust in institutions (average)

Those institutions which scored below the average of 2,5 are indeed the National Government, Church and Parish, Tax offices and Media, and all these results shall lead to further questions which should probably be deeply analyzed during interviews. The low trust in the government was somehow to be expected due to the latest events in the Italian politics

and in the frequent changes of Prime Ministers and Ministers. The current economic crises surely also has an influence on the perception of such high level institutions, as well as on the trust in tax offices, some of which have been recently been in the spotlight due to corruption practices.

The low rates obtained by Church and Parish are also definitely worth some further considerations, especially in the case of Italy, which is considered to be a country with a strong Roman Catholic tradition, that highly influenced the perception of morality and values. It would be interesting to conduct an in depth research on how these two elements cohabit, and on if and how people are aware of the ascendancy that religion originated elements of the culture might have on everyday life.

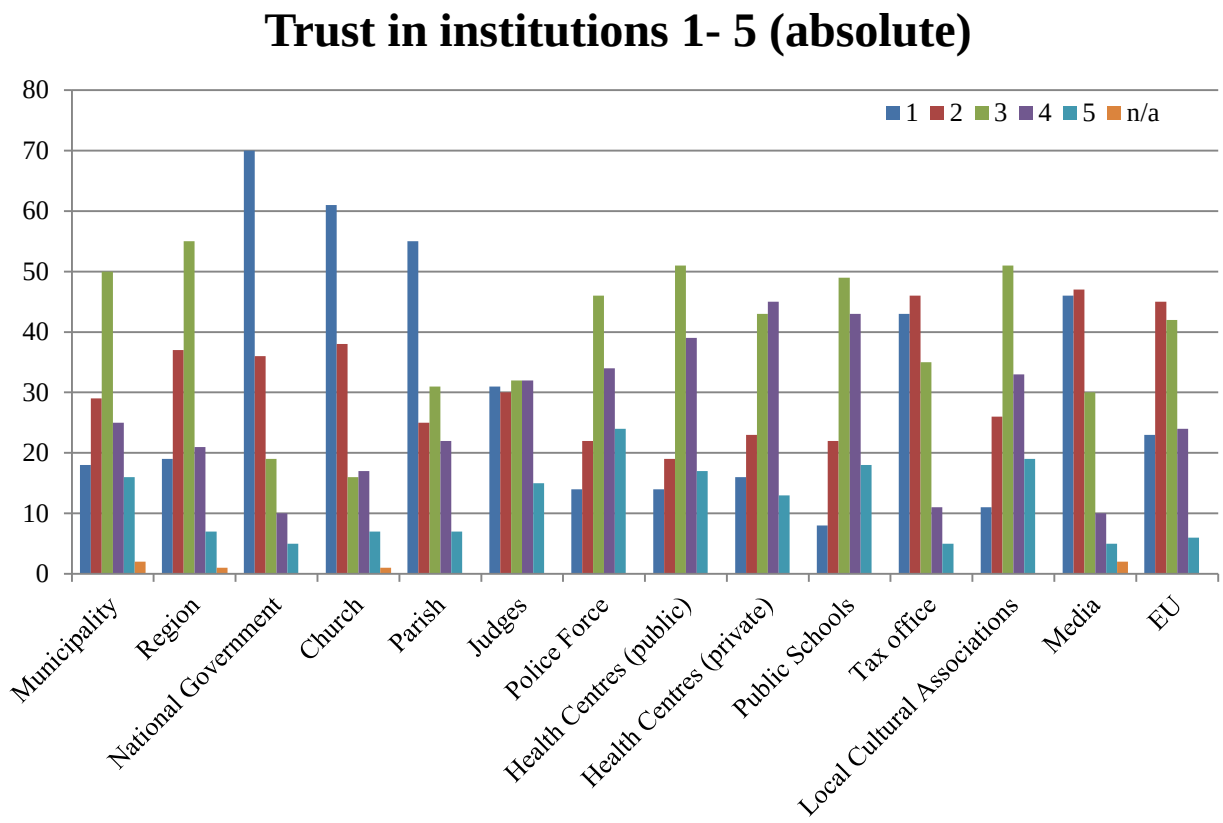


Figure 8 Trust in institutions (absolute)

3.4 Experience with institutions

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, trust in institutions might be influenced by the interactions occurred between the service providers and the citizens. It can be implied that having received a good service could increase levels of trust, as well as the opposite.

Respondents were asked to rate their experience with different institution with which they had to deal recently. The question was:

> *"With which of the following institutions have you or members of your family recently encountered cases of **good service** or of **bad service**"*

The possible choices were very similar to those of the previous question: in the Italian survey, the provided options were:

- Municipality
- Province
- Region
- Church
- Magistrature
- Police
- Health Centres (public)
- Public Schools
- Tax office
- Local Cultural Associations

People were asked to state whether they had received a good service or a bad service and eventually motivate their choice. Assuming that not all the respondents had to deal with each institution in the latest period, the figure is related to those who have provided answers.

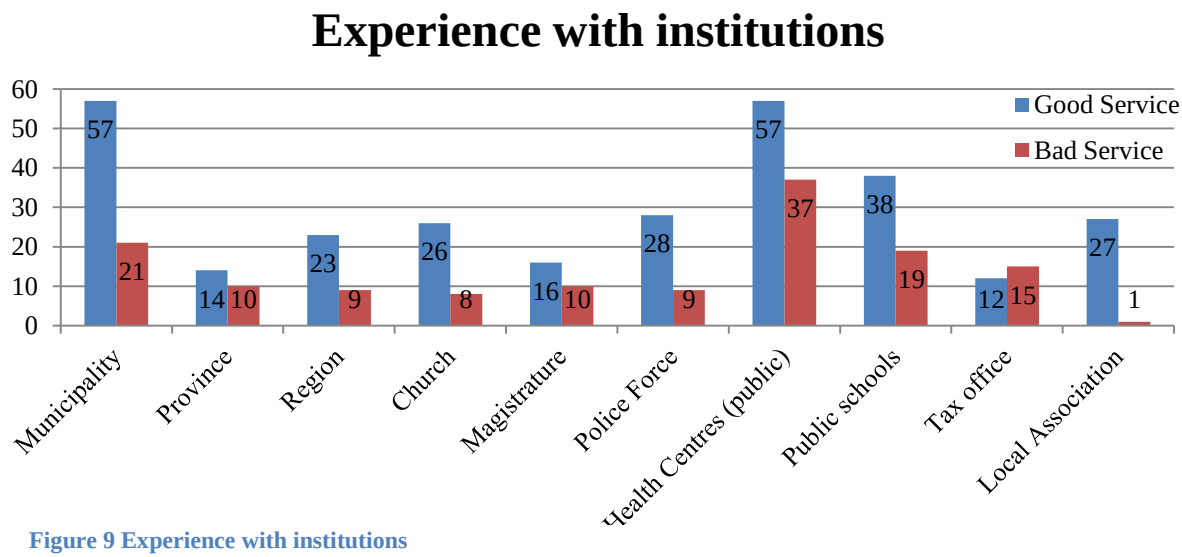


Figure 9 Experience with institutions

The overall results are somewhat controversial. The three institutions that have proved to have provided most "good services" - Municipality (57), Public Health Centers (57) and Public Schools (38) -, are the same ones that seem to have supplied a "bad service" (respectively 21, 37, 19). That implies that the data shall be considered separately for the two cities, since they might be different both in the quality of services and in the expectations of the citizens.

Indeed, when we take a look at the answers separately, it is evident how the perceptions are different in the two cities.

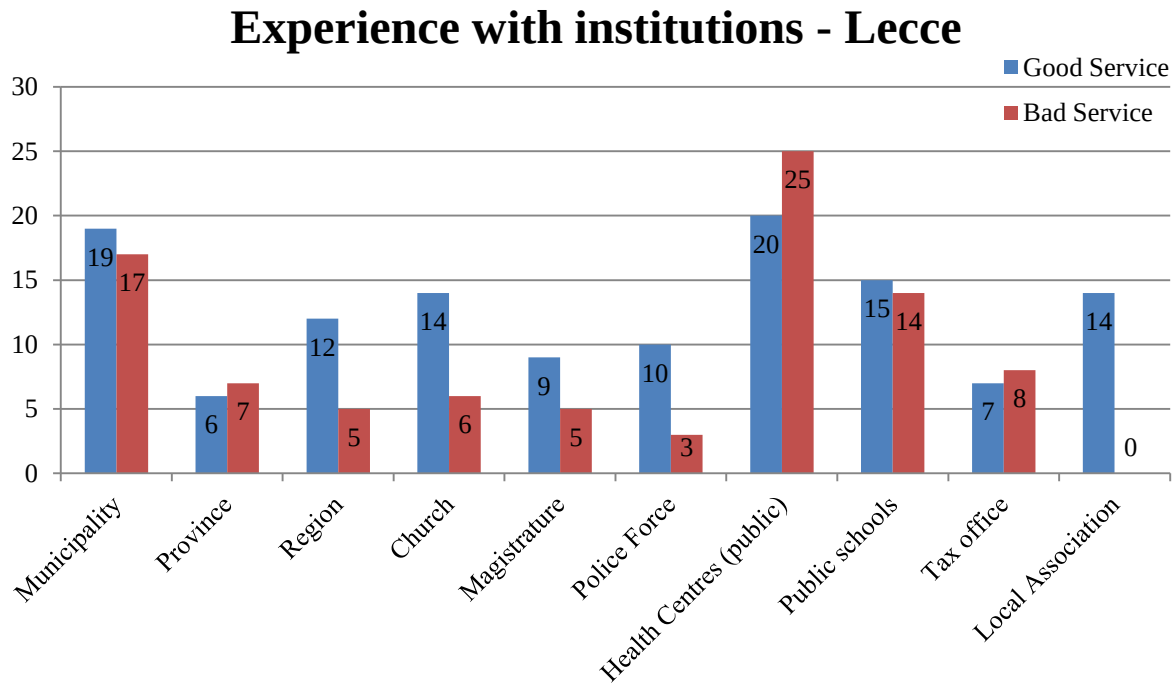


Figure 10 Experience with institutions - Lecce

In Lecce, the experience with institutions was overall considered as mainly positive, with some exceptions, particularly in the case of the Municipality (19 positive vs 17 negative), Public Schools (15 positive vs 14 negative) and the interesting case of Health Centres, which received a majority of negative rates (25 vs 20). Province and Tax Offices are considered to be the ones which generally provide the worst services.

The respondents had also the possibility to motivate their answer by adding a short description.

In the case of the Municipality, the main problems were indicated as being the too complicated bureaucracy, the lack of transparency in some procedures and the lack of

computerization, the employees not being friendly or polite. One respondent wrote that that main problem with the Municipality is actually it's "clientelism", which affects the overall performance.

No examples of "good services" were given, apart from a respondent who indicated "I have a relative working there" (survey #54, Lecce), implying that personal acquaintance with an employee should be a sufficient reason for having a "good service".

The critical issues individuated for Helth Centres were mainly their supposed slowness in providing services, and again the lack of politeness and competence of the employees, which seem not to justify the high costs of the medical services. On the other hand, two surveyed people maintained that their expectations were fulfilled by the health centers.

Public schools in Lecce received almost an even amount of bad and good rates. The main problems encountered were the lack of competence of the teaching staff and their inability to adequate to new realities, as well the obsolete teaching programs.

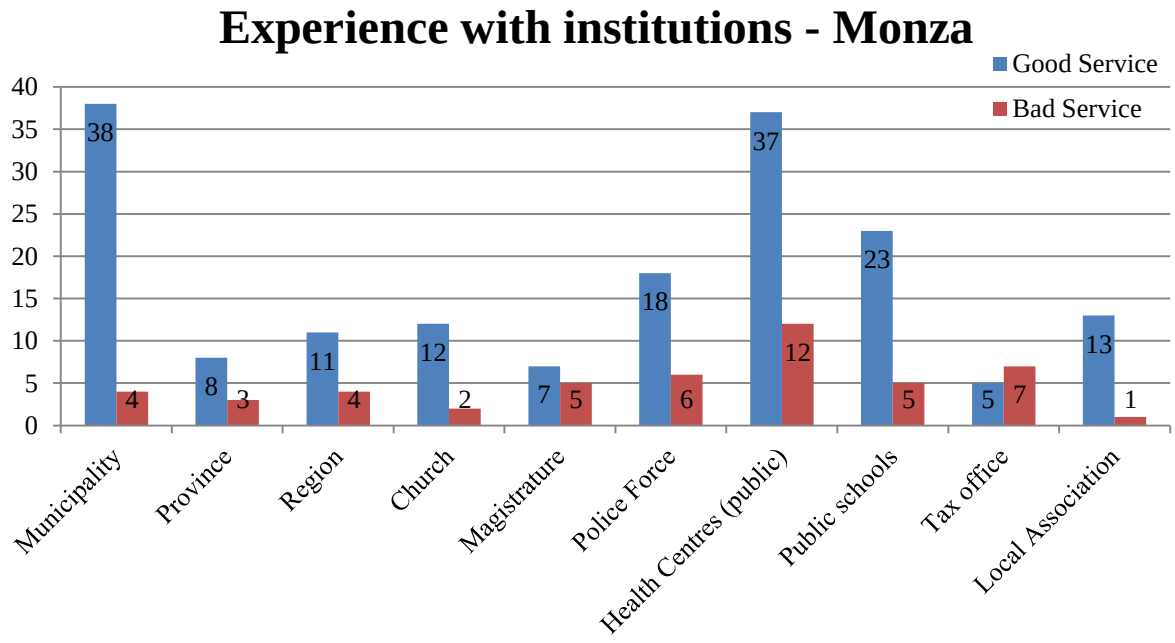


Figure 11 Experience with institutions - Monza

Looking at the answers provided for the other institutions, the most frequent comment was that employees are not competent, not motivated and that they work too slowly (i.e. judges), also as a consequence of the high bureaucratization of most of the procedures.

The results of the survey for the city of Monza were very different. First of all, there is an overall majority of positive ratings for all the institutions, with higher peaks than in Lecce. Negative ratings are very few, and mostly concentrated in the Health sector.

As for in Lecce, though, the Municipality, Health Centers and Public Schools have provided better services, though the comparison is on a totally different scale (respectively 38vs4 - 37vs12 - 23vs5).

The problems encountered in the Municipality of Monza were mainly the lack of interest for "real" problems, as for example the poor condition of the pavements (ref. survey #23, Monza), and again the bureaucratization of the procedures. No positive rates were motivated.

In the case of Health Centres, "bad services" were influenced by the long waiting lists for medical services, for which one might wait up to six month, or even one year. No remarks were made on the competence of friendliness of employees, though that's not the case of the ratings given to Public Schools, where the main issue seems to be once again the lack of competence of the teachers.

The slowness of the procedures and the high bureaucratization have been yet again addressed as the biggest problems encountered with the other institutions, especially with the Magistrature and Tax Offices.

4. Local Issues

The second section of the survey was aimed at investigating how the respondents relate to the role that institutions might - or might not - have in the improvement of local issues, but also to look at the strategies which might be put into act in order to obtain a certain service.

4.1 Problems in the community

The first question of the section required the respondents to list three main problems encountered in the city of residence, in an open format:

> *"What in your view are the most serious* ***problems*** *in your community? List at least three starting from the most important."*

As in the previous case, the results for the two cities are represented separately, in order to take into account the differences between the two realities. The provided answers were very various and required general categorization. It is also important to notice that, especially in the case of Monza, not all the respondents filled in the question.

Anyhow, it can be noticed that though some similarities exist, the perception of problems in the community is definitely influenced by the area where one lives.

The problems which are felt to be most important in Monza are those of Transports/Infrastructures, which is probably explainable by the fact that in the last five years the city has suffered the renovation of one of the busiest streets that serves as a link between the cities of Milan and that of Lecco, which crosses the eastern part of Monza. These works have greatly influenced the viability, which was only restored a couple of months ago with the opening of the longest urban tunnel in Europe.

Other relevant problems have proved to be the inadequacy of services and resources, the lack of cultural events (esp. dedicated to younger people), the shortage of schools funding as well as the outdated didactic programs, and the lack of competence/indifference of workers either in the public and the private sectors.

The category named as "Other" included different issues which couldn't easily be integrated anywhere else, as bullying, lack of trust in institutions, the abundance of big malls to the detriment of small business, lack of services dedicated to the elderly, gender differences in the accessibility to services and jobs, the slowness in fostering innovations and so on. Other relevant answers were "power positions are held in the hands of incompetent people", "citizens not being aware that their actions have an influence on the whole community" and "people are not protected from illicit activities, neither when the fact has already occurred, nor in the prevention phase".

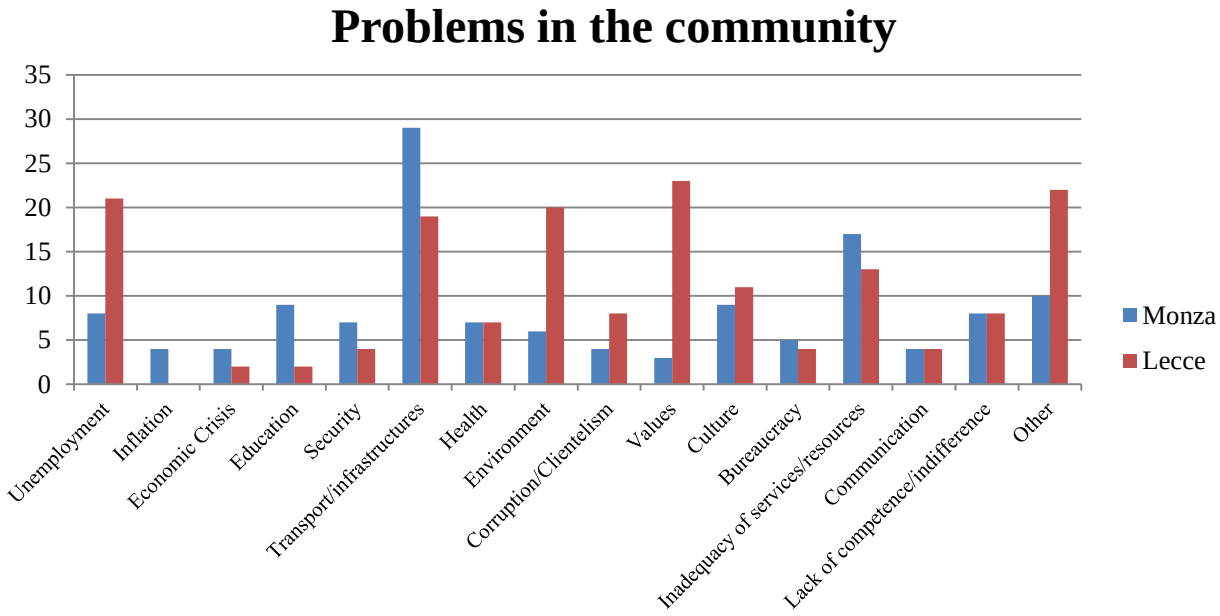


Figure 12 Problems in the community

In Lecce, the perception of problems addresses different issues. First and foremost, "unemployment" seems to be to be strongly felt, which makes particularly sense if we consider that a fair number of the respondent from Lecce declared not to be working at the time.

"Values", "Environment" and "Transport and Infrastructures" collected also high scores. Given examples were the lack of respect for things that belong to the community, vandalism, no civics, too much traffic and lack of public parking lots, people not obeying to the rules of waste collection, etc. Among the answers included in the "Other category", fairly relevant were the inference of the Church in public affairs, no transparency in the public office, a general "mafioso" attitude, expensive rental contracts, no welfare policies addressed to families and elderly, "living in Italy and especially living in the south of Italy" (ref. survey

#38 Lecce), plus various references to a supposed familistic behaviour, which would prompt the citizens to worry for their own well-being rather than to work on the issues which could increase the general comfort of the whole community.

4.2 Ability to obtain services from Institutions relying exclusively on own means

Question number 10 was aimed at investigating the relationship with institutions in the scope of the ability of the respondents in obtaining services with their own means. The accessibility to information and the knowledge of the different procedures supposedly play an important role in the way people relate to institutions, some of which may require additional expertise in the understanding of how they work.

Prompt:

> *"With which of the aforementioned institutions do you feel that you are not able to settle a matter/obtain a service with **your own resources**?"*

Options were:

- Municipality
- Province
- Region
- Church
- Magistrature
- Health Centres (public)
- Public Schools
- Tax office
- Local Cultural Associations

The data are presented both as united and separately for the two cities. If we consider them as one, it can be seen that those institutions which are recognized to be most difficult to deal with are Province, Region, Magistrature and Tax Office. The last two have obtained homogeneous results, which were to some extent predictable, since both require specific knowledge which might not be at everyone's reach. Province and Region are two institutions

with which the citizen alone doesn't have to deal very often, unless for peculiar issues linked for example to construction, taxes and soil usage. For this matter, the interviewees might feel at unease when having to deal with such complex procedures on an occasional basis.

It can be noticed, nevertheless, that the problems with both Magistrature and Tax offices seem to be much more relevant for the inhabitants of Monza, while the opposite is valid in case of the Region for the people living in Lecce.

Other differences can be noticed in the case of the Municipality, which seems to be much more "obscure" for Lecce inhabitants, as well as Church, Health Centres and Local associations.

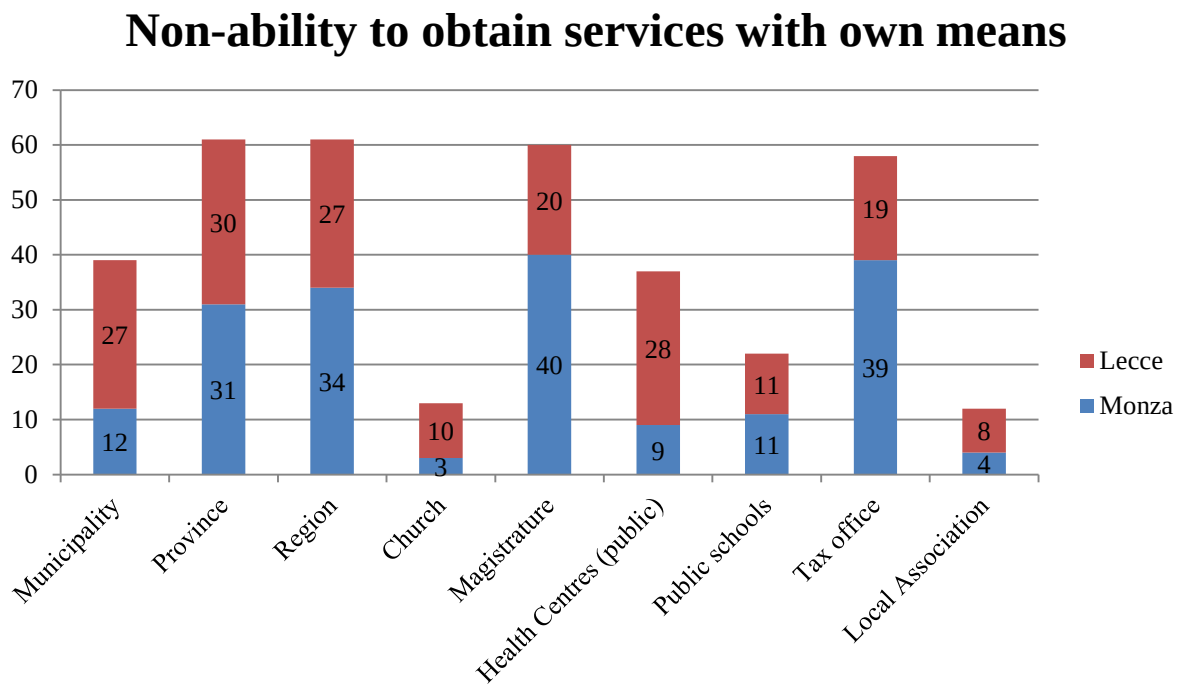


Figure 13 Non-ability to obtain services with own means

4.3 Preferred problem resolution techniques

The following question was conceived as a consequence of the previous one. Once the respondents had individuated those institutions they find it hard to deal with, it was asked to them what would they advise to a third person as a possible solution to obtain the desired service.

> *"How would you advice a person who can't successfully deal with institutions to **resolve** his problem?" (More than one answer possible):*
>
> *I would advise him to:*
>
> - *Ask for intervention from a friend*
> - *Ask for intervention from a relative*
> - *Ask for intervention from an important person*
> - *Pay a fee*
> - *Give a small gift*
> - *Denounce the disservice to the competent authorities*
> - *Try several times until I get a good result*
> - *Avoid in general dealing with that institution*
> - *Don't know*

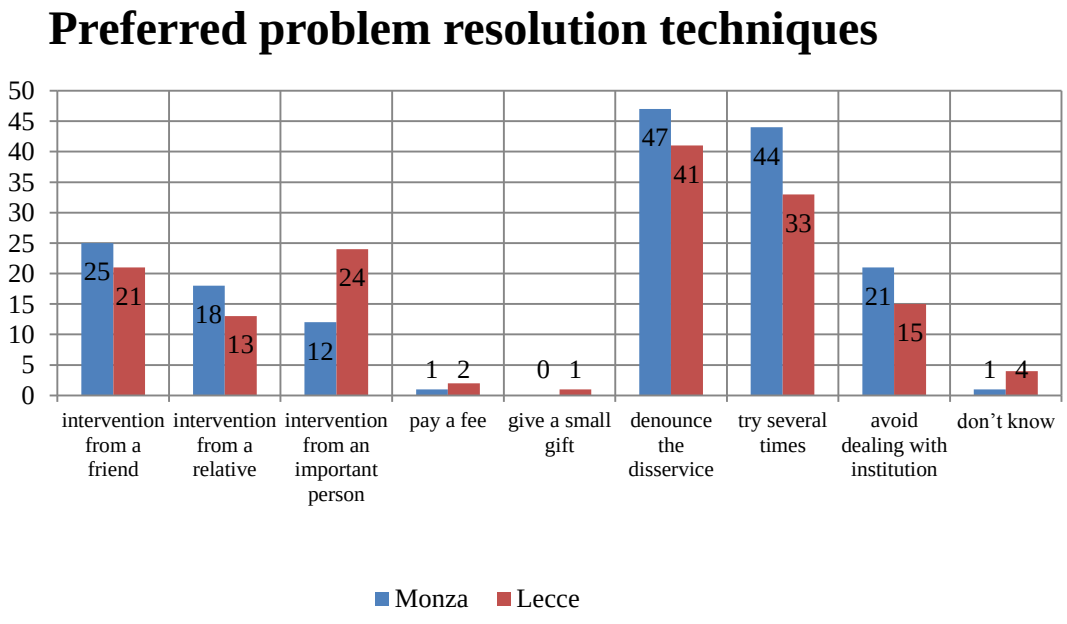


Figure 14 Preferred problem resolution techniques

The most preferred options were "denounce the disservice to the competent authorities" and "try several times until I get a good result", which stress a relative trust in institutions and the belief that even in case of encountered problems, a solution might be available. Noticeably, these options have been chosen by a slight majority of inhabitants of Monza.

The second set of options which gained the most votes was that which individuated personal relations - either formal and informal - as a way to obtain a service, in particular:

- Ask for intervention from a friend: 46 votes
- Ask for intervention from a relative: 31 votes
- Ask for intervention from an important person: 36 votes

What is interesting to notice, in this case, is the difference between the two geographical areas: whereas people living in Monza tend to rely on informal relations based on acquaintance or family ties, inhabitants of Lecce largely prefer the intervention of "an important person", whether known personally or not.

"Avoiding dealing with the institution" seems also to be an option, since it received 36 preferences.

On the other hand, "pay a fee" received a total of 3 votes, and "give a small gift" received one, which might imply that people usually don't see "petty corruption" as the most preferable way to obtain a service which should be granted anyway. It could also be maintained that the single person is rarely the first one to start the process which leads to corruptive practices, since other options are usually preferred (as reported by the figure). Paying a fee or giving a gift are probably chosen when no other attempt at dealing with the institution (or with the single person representing it in that specific case) has been successful, or even when more or less directly requested.

4.4 Institutions important for improving well-being

The next question, which aimed at gathering the views of the interviewees about the institutions that could help improve the general well-being of their society, was worded as follows:

> *"Who do you think could help to improve the general well-being of your community?"*

Given options:

- UE
- Ruling Government Coalition
- Opposition Parties
- Region
- Municipality
- Police and Army
- Magistrature
- Media
- Local Organizations
- International organizations
- Other (please specify)

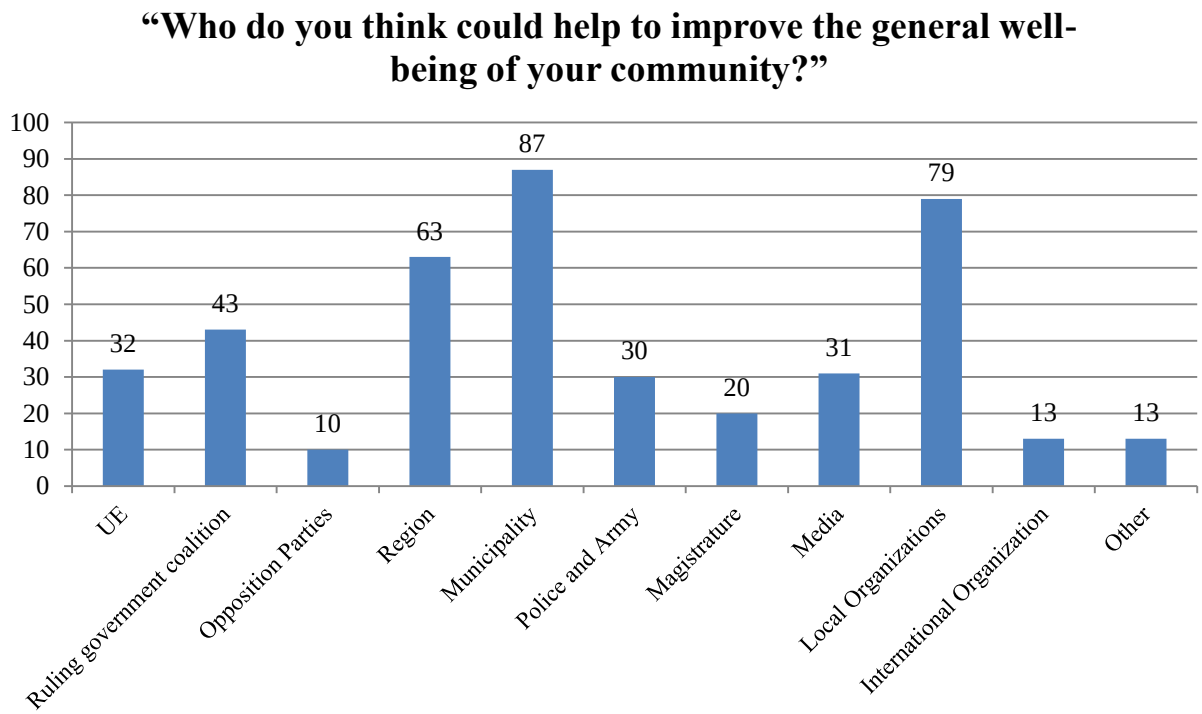


Figure 15 Institutions important for improving well-being

Not all the respondents indicated a preference (though they were a very small minority), therefore the data presented do not reflect the totality of the survey.

Results show that Municipality, Local Organizations and Region are considered to be the institutions that have more means when it comes to improving the life of a community. A comparison of the data obtained in the two sampled cities didn't show relevant differences and therefore the figure shows the results as unified. The three institutions which collected the most positive remarks are those which are definitely the closest to the everyday life of the citizens. Remarkable is the high score obtained in this case by the Region, unlike in previous questions, which could be due to the fact that "Regions" are responsible for providing important services, as for example Public Health, a field which has showed to be very important for the respondents.

"Ruling Government coalition" proved also to be considered as an important institution, while "Opposition Parties" were the ones to get the lowest results, a fact that reflects the peculiar moment of uncertainty that has been affecting the politics in Italy in the latest years, and especially at the present time.

Among the respondents who chose "Other" as an option, the provided alternatives (when given) where:

- Monza: "local administrations shouldn't be managed by politicians, but rather by experts", "a culture of legality", "citizens", "anything that is not related to the State", "the single citizen, whereas he's honest and responsible for his actions", "volunteering", "activities which would improve the self-awareness of people, i.e. conferences, psychological support at fair prices, and various practices as Reiki and bio-dance" and at last "I don't believe that this possible".
- Lecce: "private initiatives", "citizens", "a higher critical consciousness of my fellow-citizens", "schools", "mass layoffs", "self-awareness of the citizens, who shall feel responsible toward their actions and the public affairs".

It seems clear that respondents wish that the single citizen serves as first change factor in improving the well-being of their community, though an increase of self awareness, respect and responsibility towards the public affairs, in opposition to a sort of "familistic" (or one could say NIMBY[1]) approach that appears to be fairly widespread.

[1] NIMBY (not-in-my-back-yard): concept that applies to people who advocate some proposal, but oppose implementing it in a way that would require sacrifice on their part.

4.5 Practices against good society

Question number 15 was aimed at obtaining the views of survey participants about the some practices that are incompatible with the development of the society:

> *"In general which of the following practices are, in your opinion, spoiling the good development of a society?" (Multiple choices possible).*

- *Buying votes during elections*
- *Giving jobs to friends or relatives instead of people who deserve them*
- *Bringing gifts to obtain access to health services*
- *Bringing gifts to be accepted at a good school*
- *Exchanging confidential information to get tenders and public construction bids*
- *Paying fees to have documents sorted out quickly*
- *Convincing journalists not to publish sensitive articles*
- *Using scandals to get rid of political opponents*
- *Using development funds for private purposes*

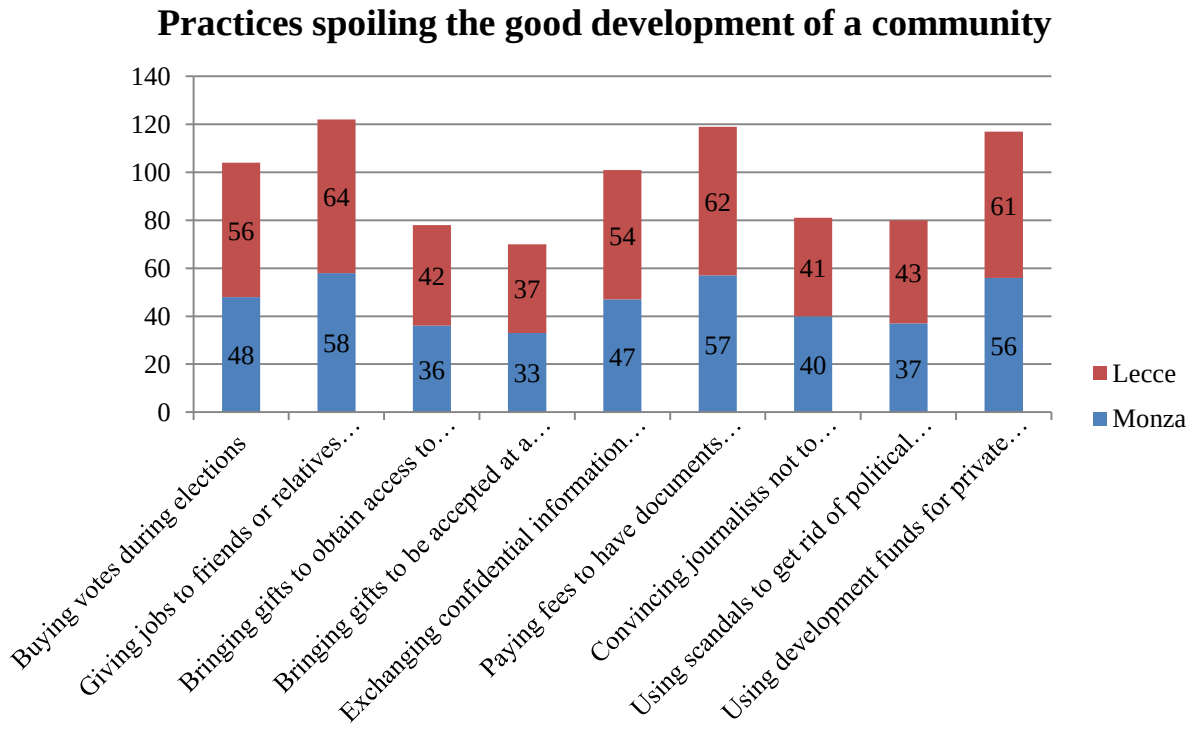


Figure 16 Practices spoiling the good development of a community

Though all the hypothetical practices proposed are potentially harmful for the good development of a society, results show that not all of them are actually perceived as such.

Once again answers have been relatively homogenous in the two groups, and though show some general discrepancies with the data provided by question number 11 (see paragraph 4.3 "Preferred solution techniques"), where most people maintained they would denounce a disservice to the competent authority. This question posed the problem of what could be considered as an issue potentially damaging for the development of a community.

The top three practices to be considered mostly detrimental were:

- Giving jobs to friends or relatives instead of people who deserve them (122)
- Paying fees to have documents sorted out quickly (119)
- Using development funds for private purposes (117)

Followed by

- Buying votes during elections (104)
- Exchanging confidential information to get tenders and public construction bids (101)

All the above mentioned issues are somehow related to the problem of the potential lack of competition existing in a society, which would diminish the chances of fairly accessing services, job positions and funds.

Practices involving the use of media and the public opinion obtained an average of 80 votes each. Surprisingly "Bringing gifts to obtain access to health services" and "Bringing gifts to be accepted at a good school" were the two options which obtained the lowest scores (respectively 78 and 70), which is to some extent in contradiction with the results obtained in the above mentioned question (see par. 4.3), where most people stated that paying a fee of giving a gift was the least favorite option in order to solve an issue with an institution. It can be maintained that, though the respondents wouldn't pick it as a "good solutions", they also don't consider such practices to be negatively affecting the fair development of their community, stressing once more the difference between how "grand corruption" and "petty corruption" are perceived on a moral basis.

4.6 Statement: “public sector officials who provide services to my community do not act the way they should”

As related to the previous questions, respondents have been asked to state whether the public officials' actions conform to the expectations. The question was worded as follows:

> *In your experience how true is the following statement: “public sector officials who provide services to my community do not act the way they should”*
>
> *a) Not true b) Rarely true c) Occasionally true*
>
> *d) Often true e) Always true*

Results are provided separately for Monza and Lecce, as the answers showed some differences.

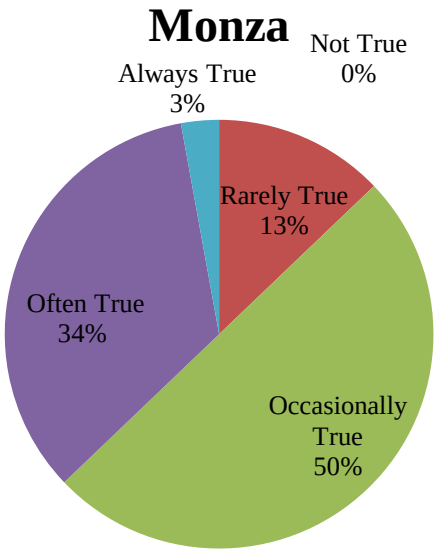


Figure 17 Statement: “public sector officials who provide services to my community do not act the way they should” - Monza

In Monza, 50 % of respondent claimed that the statement is occasionally true, while according to none of them it is not true, and only a small amount of them (13%) thinks that it

is rarely true. A little more than one third of the surveyed chose "often true" (34%), "always true" scored 3%. It is clear that most people in Monza think that public officers do not always act the way they should, though they do not show to have extreme distrust in their actions.

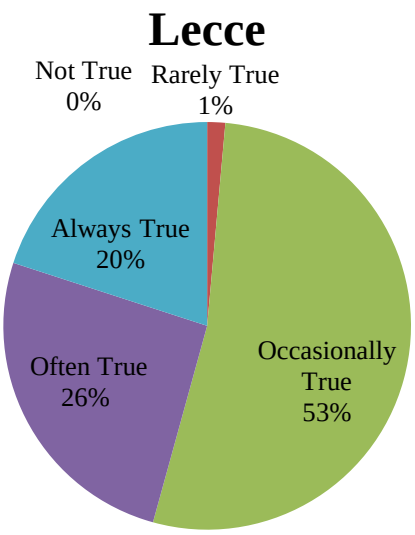


Figure 18 Statement: "public sector officials who provide services to my community do not act the way they should" - Lecce

Inhabitants of Lecce showed to consider the action of public officials as less compliant to their obligations. None of the respondents and only a 1% of them, seemed to be positive about the statement being "not true" or "rarely true". The other 99% individuated high chances of distrustful actions by public officials, so divided: 53% "occasionally true", 26% as "often true" and 20% as "as always true". Results show that in Lecce it is considered to be a common practice for employees of the public sector not to act according to the rules and to provide services according to their discretion.

4.7 Means to express dissatisfaction

The last question of this section asked the respondent to state whether they thought they had the means to eventually express their dissatisfaction about the services provided:

> *"Do you feel you have the means to express dissatisfaction when the services provided by your local practitioner/service provider are not appropriate? If yes, what are they?"*

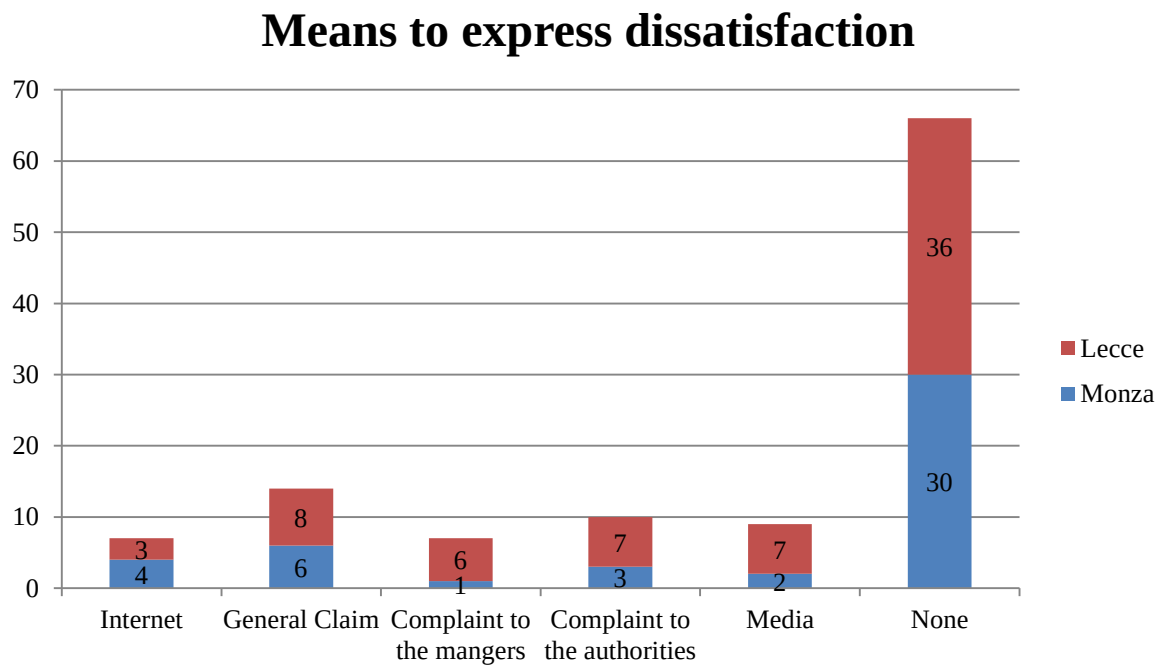


Figure 19 Means to express dissatisfaction

According to the great majority of the respondents, it is not possible for the citizen to express discontent, or anyway it wouldn't be effective. A complaint to the managers of the service, or directly to the authorities (i.e. police, Magistrature), seem to be the most viable option, as well as trying to get visibility on the matter on media such as newspapers, or through the internet, and especially the social network Facebook.

In general anyway, the surveyed of both cities appear to be aware of the fact that there is no effective mean or power which is in the position to protect them from disservices and

from practices not compliant to the rules. These results show a high level of distrust in the ability of the authority to protect the citizens' interests.

5. Social Norms

The following section of the survey was aimed at having a deeper look into what the respondents consider to be positive social norms and how to they rely to them.

5.1 Importance of social customs

Participants of the survey have been asked to evaluate the importance of customs below on the scale of "Not important", "Fairly important" and "Very important".

"In your community, how important is to:

- *Provide hospitality to guests*
- *Enjoy meals with other people*
- *Give presents during festive celebrations*
- *Reciprocate received gifts*
- *Reciprocate received gifts in time*
- *Reciprocate received gifts in same value*
- *Satisfy a personal request of favor*
- *Know who is the best person to ask a favor to*
- *Protect a person if I am in the position to do it*
- *Be in good terms with important persons*
- *Avoid bureaucracy because it is inefficient*
- *Keep a secret not to harm another person even if this is not legal*
- *Be cautious when talking of politics in public*
- *Spend time with friends outside the home"*

In general, answers appeared to be mostly concentrated on average values, that is for all the provided customs, people mainly chose the "fairly important" option.

In particular, there have been some differences in the answers given by citizens of the two cities.

In the case of Monza, "Spending time with friends outside the home" has been reported to be considered as very important by 23 people, the highest score. Other relevant customs gathering a high number of choices were "Avoid bureaucracy" (19) and "Know is the best person to ask a favor to" (17), which are in line with the results obtained in other questions on the matter.

As previously mentioned, the option "fairly important" was chosen for most customs. In particular, the highest scores were obtained by: "Protect a person if I am in the position to do it" (41), "Give presents during festive celebrations" (38), followed by "Be in good terms with important persons", "Satisfy a personal request of favor", "Provide hospitality to guests" (all 35), which seem to imply that inhabitants of Monza tend to give a relatively high importance to personal relationships and reciprocity.

On the other hand, the customs which have been considered less important were: "Be cautious when talking of politics in public" (45), "Enjoy meals with other people" (35), "Reciprocate received gifts in same value" (36).

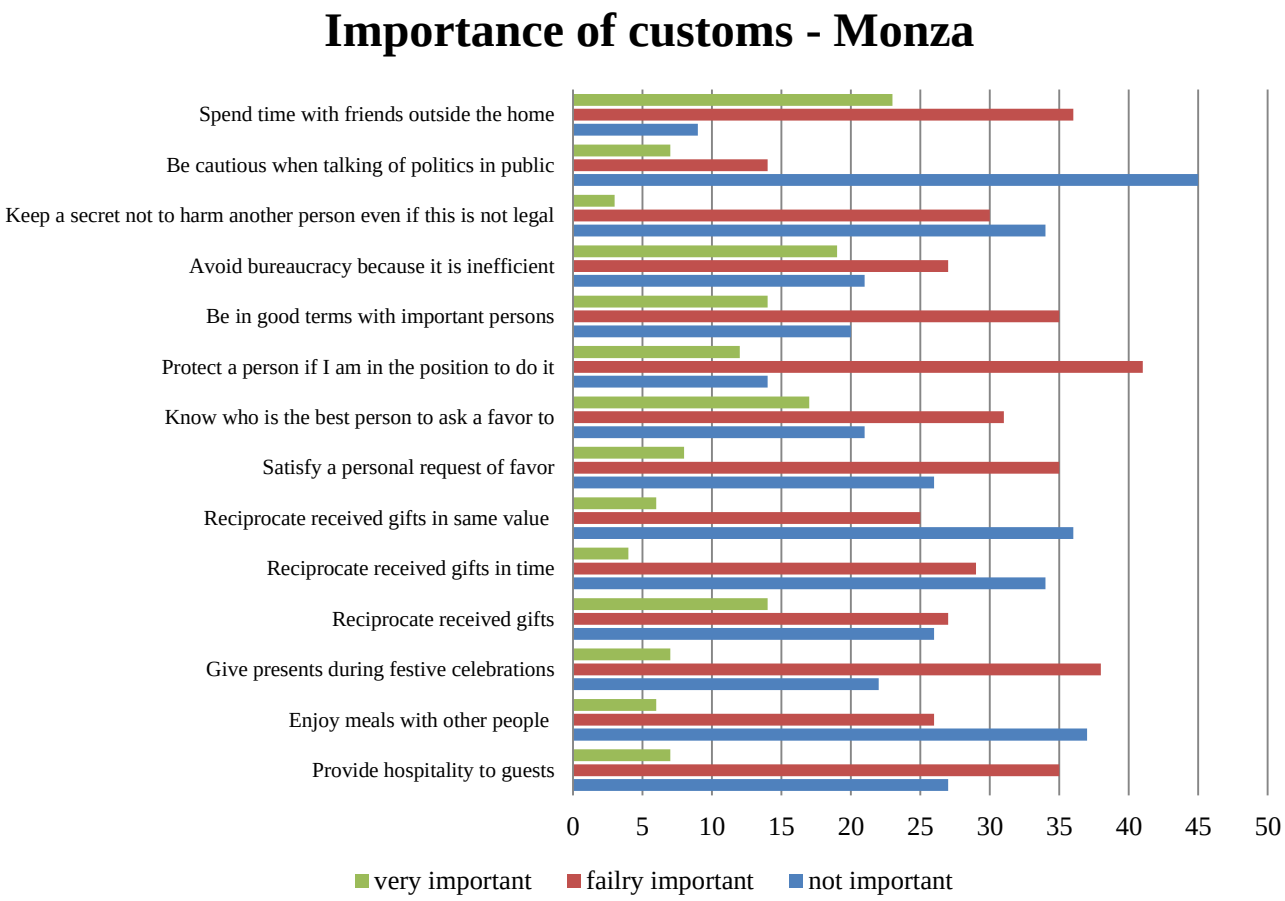


Figure 20 Importance of customs - Monza

As it can be seen in the following figure, the custom that is considered to be the most important in Lecce, was instead "Be in good terms with important persons" (29 choices), followed by "Know who is the best person to ask a favor to" (28) and "Reciprocate received gifts" (26), which seem to imply that inhabitants of Lecce are quite self aware of the "cultural competences" which are necessary to effectively deal with their social environment.

Fairly important were considered to be "Satisfy a personal request of favour" (43), "Protect a person if I am in the position to do it" (42), "Enjoy meals with other people" (38), the first two being in common with the results obtained in Monza, while the third was considered to be one of the least important customs.

Some similarities appeared also in the category "not important": as in Monza, "Be cautious when talking of politics in public" was considered not to be relevant by 52 people, "reciprocate gifts of the same value" was second with 24 preferences, but in opposition to Monza, inhabitants of Lecce don't take "Avoid bureaucracy" into high consideration, since it obtained 22 preferences and is therefore the third less important custom.

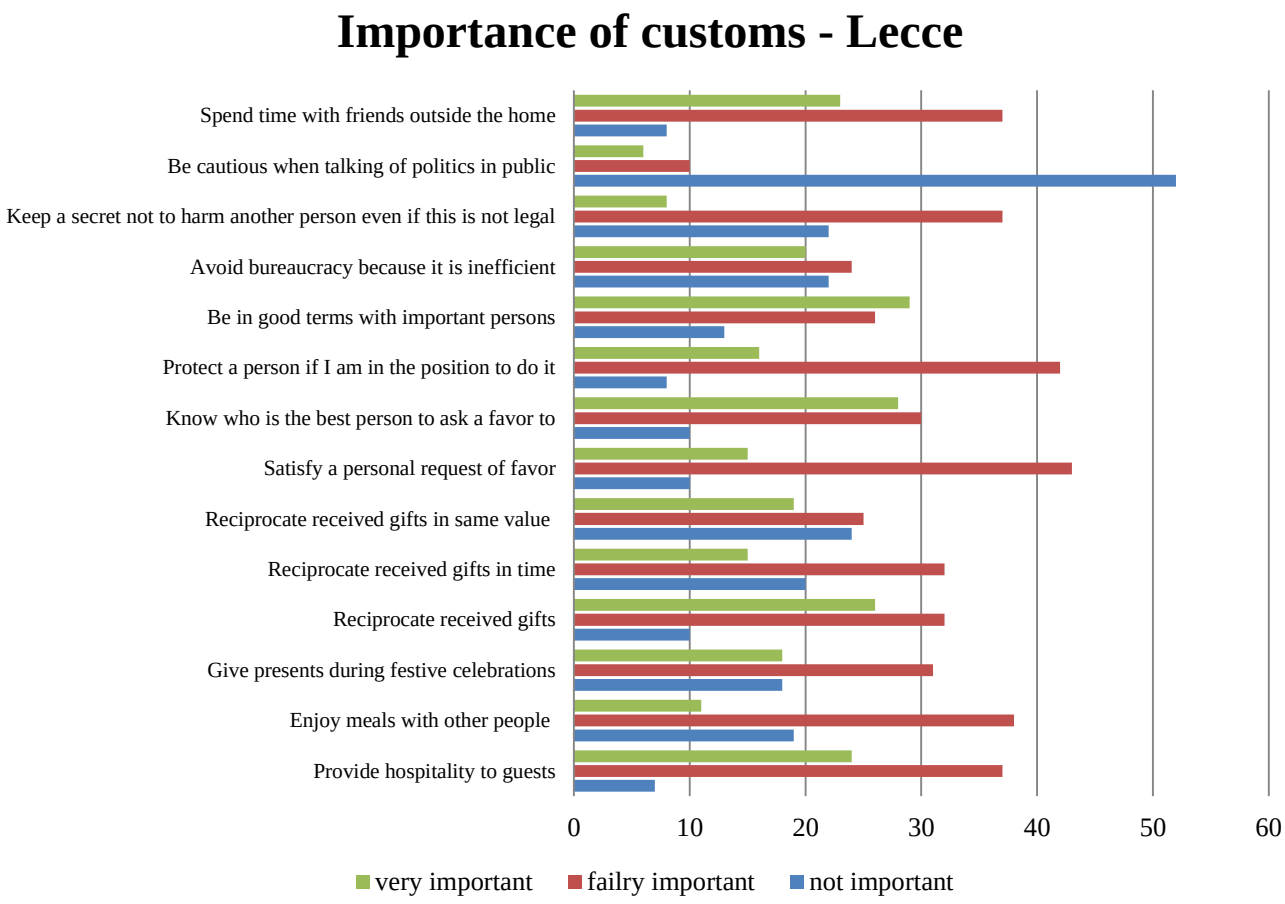


Figure 21 Importance of customs - Lecce

5.2 Statement: "Gift giving is related to better treatment/service"

The following two questions were asked in order to get a better understanding of how people perceive different modes of personal relations to public officials. The first question was about gift giving and was phrased as follows:

> *Do you agree with the following statement: "gift giving creates a bond where people know they will receive better treatment/service next time they visit the clinic/office?"*

Respondents were given 5 options:

1) Strongly disagree
2) Quite disagree
3) Neutral
4) Fairly agree
5) Totally agree

Results are shown by the following figure:

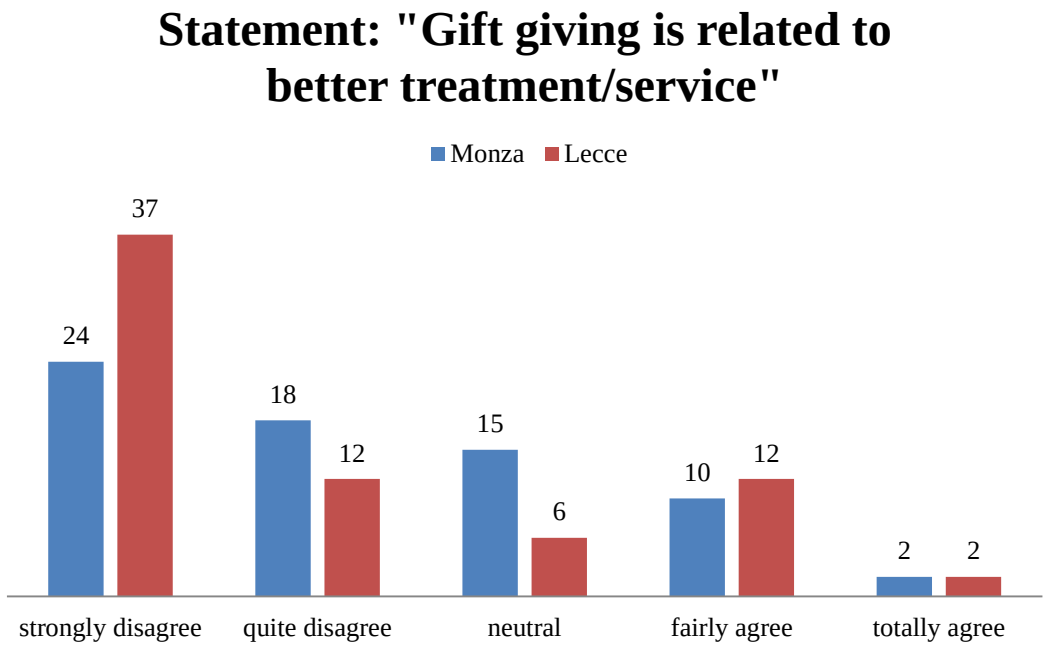


Figure 22 Statement: "Gift giving is related to better treatment/service"

Also in this case we can see some slight differences in the perceptions of citizens of the two cities, though the general results are compatible with those obtained for question at paragraph 4.3, where "giving a gift" was one of the preferred solution option to have scored the less choices.

Most of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement, although we had a majority of people from Lecce expressing disagreement (24 vs 37), but still indicating that giving a gift to a public official is somehow an inefficient practice when looking for a better service. Only 22 surveyed people fairly agreed, ad 4 totally agreed, showing again that only a minority of people find such practices to be profitable or would engage in them.

5.3 Statement: "Personal relations affect quality of service"

The other case question is not about gifts, but about the link between personal relations with the institutions and the quality of the provided services. Question has been stated in the survey as follows:

> *Do you agree with the following statement: "the quality of the services obtained is associated to the patient's/citizen's personal relationship with the service provider?"*

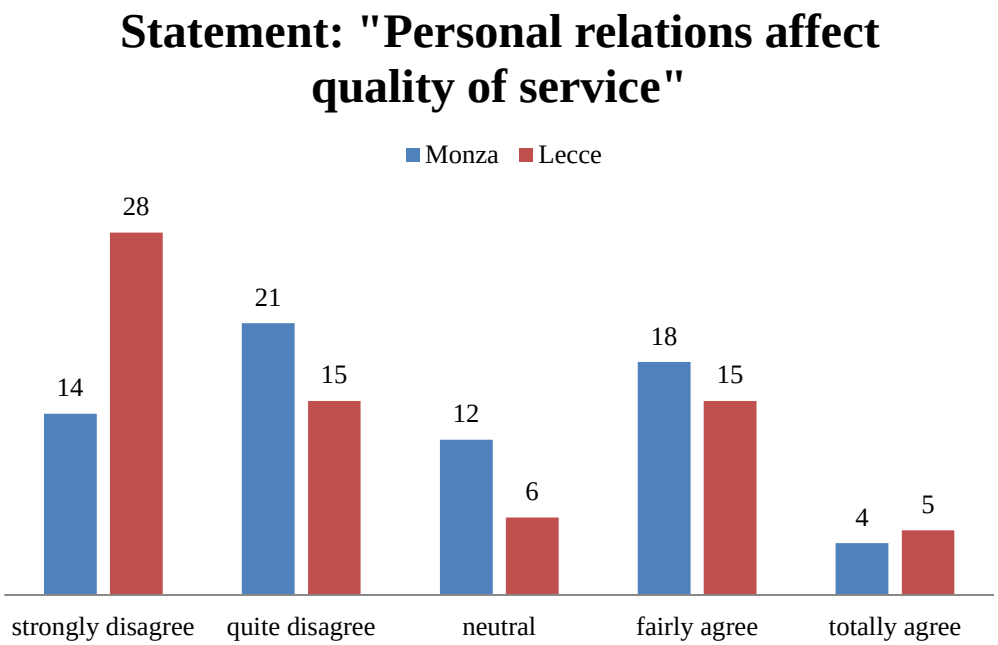


Figure 23 Statement: "Personal relations affect quality of service"

In opposition to the previous question, we can observe that a slight higher number of respondents seemed to fairly or totally agree to the statement. These results could be better explained if put into relation with those of question at paragraph 4.1 about the main problems encountered in the community. In that case, a total of 16 respondent had reported issues related to the lack of interest of the public officials about their job and the needs of the community, as well as their supposed unfriendliness and lack of competence, which somehow influenced not only the quality of their work, but also the personal relationship with the citizen.

Nevertheless, it must be noted that still a great majority of the respondents didn't seem to agree with that statement at all.

5.4 Agreement/disagreement with different scenarios

Participants to the survey have been given some hypothetic scenarios in order to understand behavioral patterns and social values. There have been five scenarios in the survey.

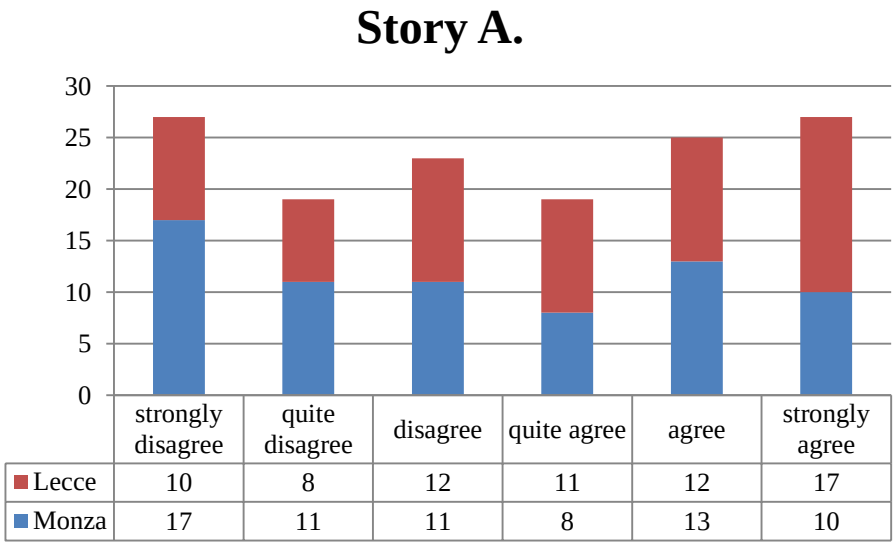
The given prompt was:

> *"The following stories have happened in other countries in the world. Please indicate if you would in principle agree with the behavior of the characters"*

The participants have been asked rate the scenarios, according to how they felt about them, on the scale of "Strongly disagree", "Quite disagree", "Disagree", "Quite agree", "Agree", "Strongly agree".

Story A.

In the district council a new person has been appointed recently. This person is very hard-working and loves to do things transparently. He would never accept any fee or gift from citizens to sort out problems. For doing this he avoids people and lives a lonely life all by himself, not to be put under pressure for demands of favors. For this, local people avoid him.



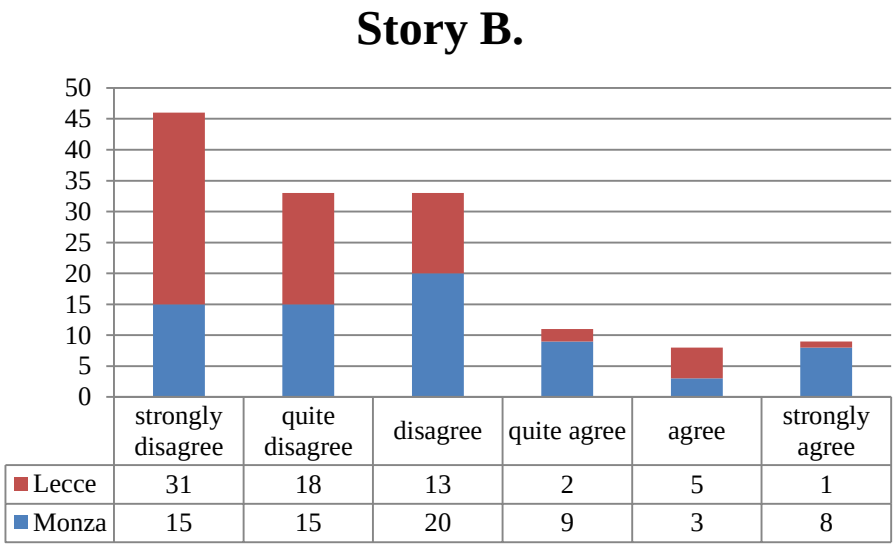
	strongly disagree	quite disagree	disagree	quite agree	agree	strongly agree
Lecce	10	8	12	11	12	17
Monza	17	11	11	8	13	10

Figure 24 Story A.

The rates given by the respondents are somehow difficult to interpret, since the percentages are quite homogeneous. What could be implied is that the hypothetic scenario is itself controversial and respondents have found it hard to either agree or disagree with it.

Story B.

He is a very resourceful person, he does what he can to help his friends and relatives and he knows a lot of people. When he needs a favor he always finds someone to turn to because he has always helped out. Unfortunately, last week he has been jailed for fraud and corruption. Most of the people who know him, however, still esteem and care for him for what he has done to them.



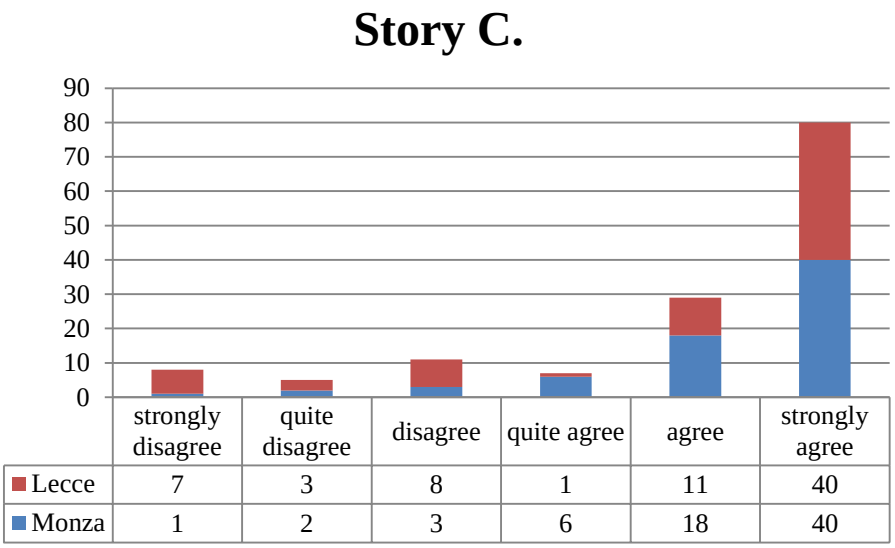
	strongly disagree	quite disagree	disagree	quite agree	agree	strongly agree
Lecce	31	18	13	2	5	1
Monza	15	15	20	9	3	8

Figure 25 Story B.

In the case of this scenario, we can see that the respondents generally disagreed with it, with a total of 81% percent of people providing a negative response (33% "strongly disagree", 24% "quite disagree", and 24% "disagree"). Such a result suggests that interviewees mostly condemn corruption practices and their effects, and do not consider people who have been guilty of these crimes as worth of esteem.

Story C.

A family has plans to build a new house in a village. They have asked what the official procedure is and are ready to follow it carefully. After some months everything turns difficult and they realize they would not get ahead of it without paying some fee to the right person. They decide to leave the village and look for another, where things are going according to the rules.



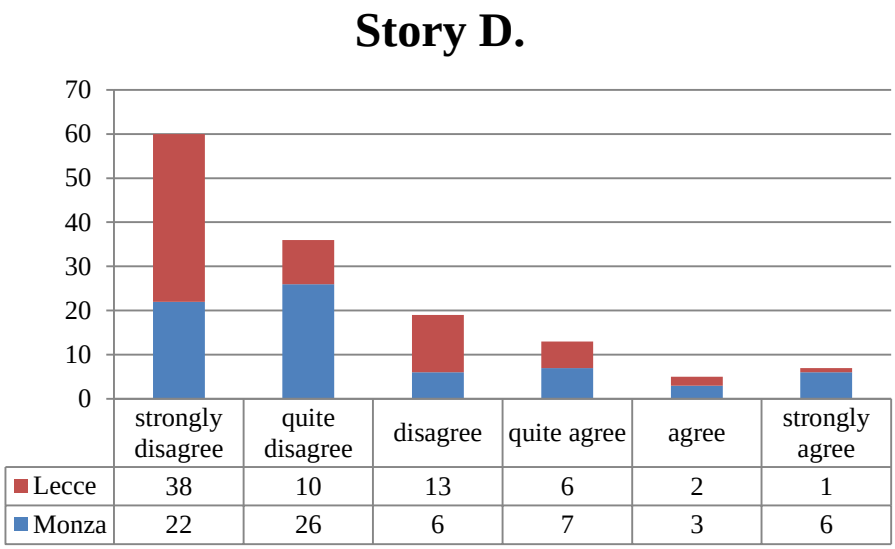
	strongly disagree	quite disagree	disagree	quite agree	agree	strongly agree
Lecce	7	3	8	1	11	40
Monza	1	2	3	6	18	40

Figure 26 Story C.

When asked to rate this scenario, 57% of the respondents claimed to "strongly agree" with it, 20% of them "agree" and 5% "quite agree", for a total of 82% of people being in accordance with the decision made by the hypothetic family to leave the "corrupt village" for another, where things run the way they should. These results are once again in line with those for question at par. 4.3, where "paying a bribe" was the solution option to have scored the least. That proves that, in general, people tend to avoid paying bribes when a second option is available.

Story D.

He has a small business in preparing sandwiches which he sells to local schools. Last year he was successful to win a tender and gained a contract in one local primary school. Unfortunately the school head has changed this year and his contract has expired. Before applying for the next tender he looks for an influential person who will introduce him the new school head.



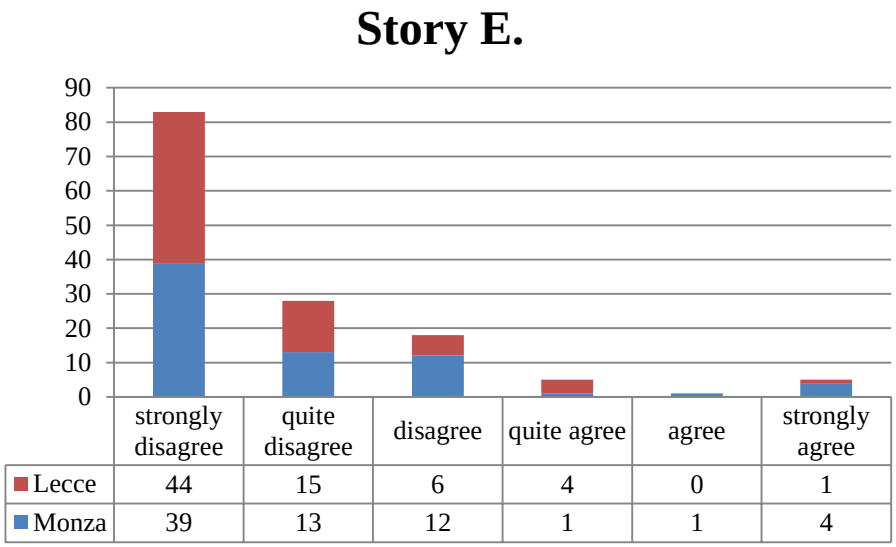
	strongly disagree	quite disagree	disagree	quite agree	agree	strongly agree
Lecce	38	10	13	6	2	1
Monza	22	26	6	7	3	6

Figure 27 Story D.

Also in this case, the great majority of the respondents disagreed (42% "strongly disagree", 26% "quite disagree", 14% "disagree", total 82%) with the given scenario, which implied the use of personal relationship to powerful people as a legitimate way to win over others in a competitive environment.

Story E.

She runs a local Ngo for human rights protection. She is very active and well established in the region, but she also has a lot of competitors. There was a large bid by an international donor last year so she applied, being one of the most successful in that field. In the end she failed because she was not aware that some politicians wanted a share of the money to approve the projects. Next time she will secure the proper agreement with them first.



	strongly disagree	quite disagree	disagree	quite agree	agree	strongly agree
Lecce	44	15	6	4	0	1
Monza	39	13	12	1	1	4

Figure 28 Story E.

This figure shows that a total of 92% percent of the respondents did not seem to hypothetical practice of assuring a politician the share of the value of a tender. 59% of the surveyed strongly disagreed, 20% quite disagreed and 13% disagreed, leaving a small number of people who found the scenario to be morally acceptable.

6. Values

6.1 Self-identification with character from “Not similar” to “Very similar”

In the survey, we have tried to understand how the participants relate themselves some values through gauging their association with a list of statements.

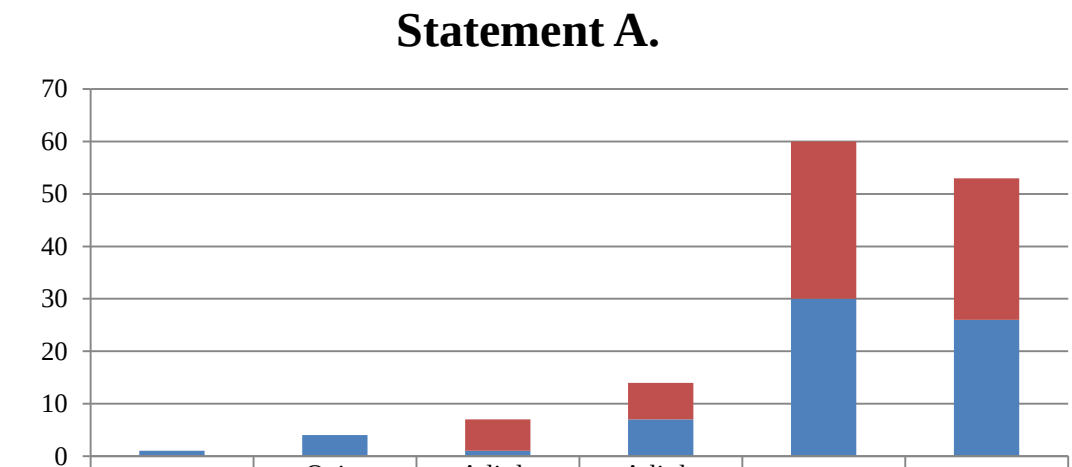
A Five-scale tool involving the following options was used in evaluating portrayals of each hypothetical character: “Not similar”, “Quite dissimilar”, “A little dissimilar”, “A little similar”, “Quite similar” and "Very similar".

Portrayals of characters stated in this group begin with an explanatory sentence:

> *"How similar to yourself is the person described by the following statements"*

Statement A.

He lives his life as a fully autonomous individual, trying to rely on other people’s help as less as possible.



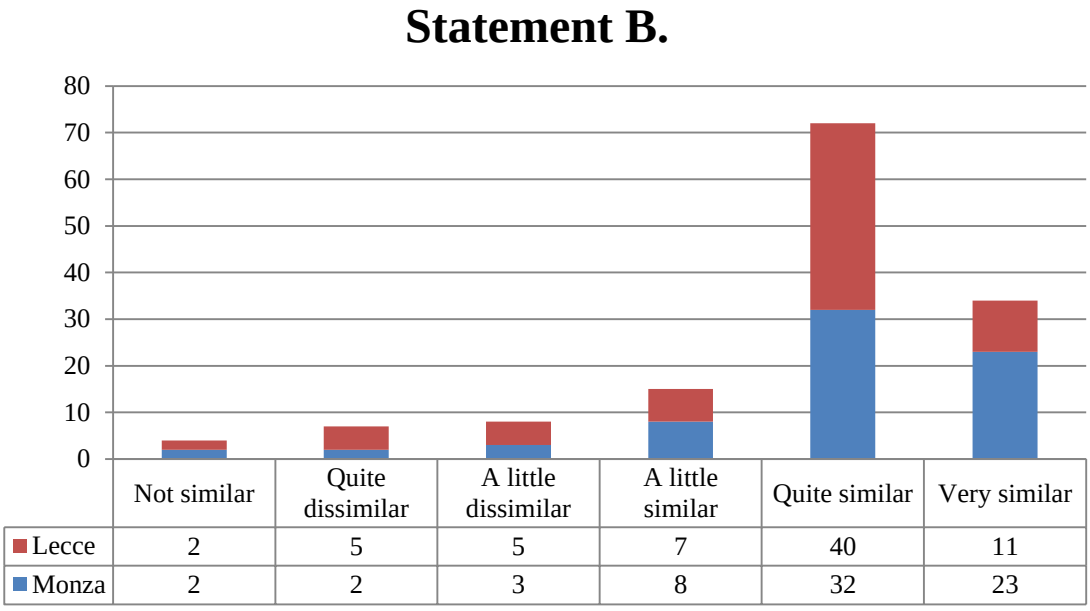
	Not similar	Quite dissimilar	A little dissimilar	A little similar	Quite similar	Very similar
Lecce	0	0	6	7	30	27
Monza	1	4	1	7	30	26

Figure 29 Statement A.

As it can be noted, the great majority of the respondents declared to feel either "quite similar" (60) or "very similar" the statement, hence they try to live their lives as autonomous individuals. It is important to note that the one person not feeling similar to it, as well as the four people who stated they are quite dissimilar, all live in Monza. Other results were basically homogeneous in numbers for the two cities.

Statement B.

He would not break the rules, because rules are what make order in a society.



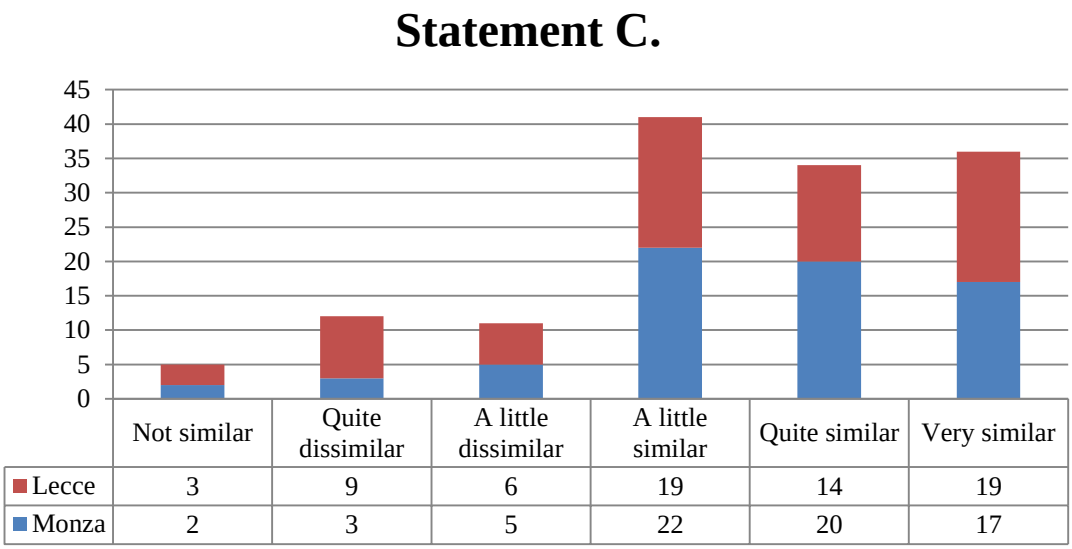
	Not similar	Quite dissimilar	A little dissimilar	A little similar	Quite similar	Very similar
Lecce	2	5	5	7	40	11
Monza	2	2	3	8	32	23

Figure 30 Statement B.

Also in this case, we had a large number of surveyed people responding that they're mostly keen following the rules, since 72 people answered the statement is "quite similar" to themselves, and 34 picked the option "very similar". Among the respondents who affirmed that they somehow do not feel that the statement applies to them, we had a slight majority of people living Lecce (total of 12 vs 7 in Monza).

Statement C.

He thinks that traditions must be respected because they make up one person's culture.



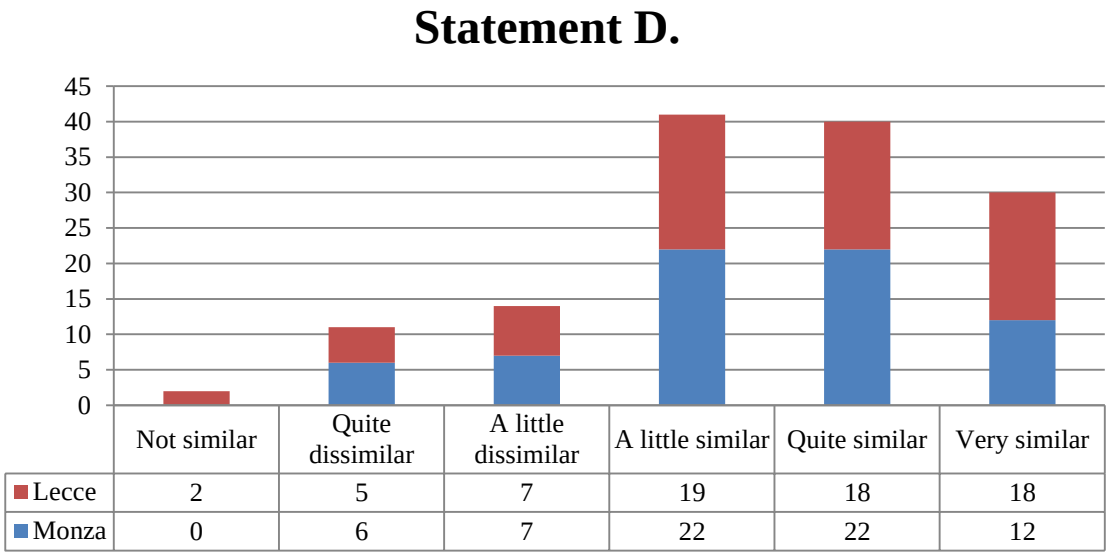
	Not similar	Quite dissimilar	A little dissimilar	A little similar	Quite similar	Very similar
Lecce	3	9	6	19	14	19
Monza	2	3	5	22	20	17

Figure 31 Statement C.

Though in this figure a peak of respondents feeling only "a little similar" to the proposed characteristic is present (41), we also had a high amount of people considering themselves either "quite similar" (34) or "very similar" (36). No substantial differences between answers given in the two cities can be evidenced, although people feeling dissimilar to the statement were negligibly more in Lecce.

Statement D.

He believes that young generations should learn more from listening to the advices from elderly people.



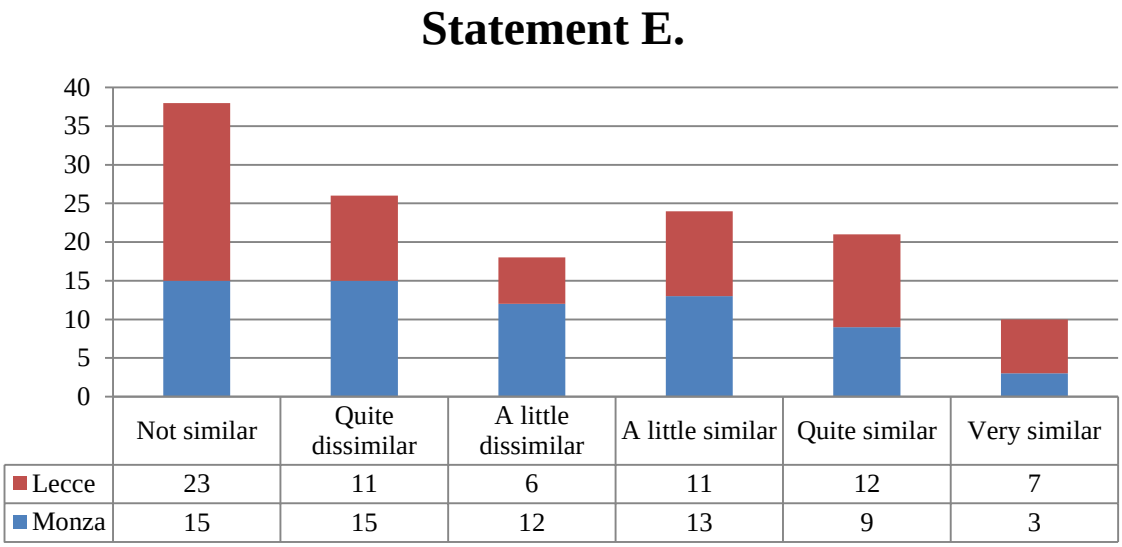
	Not similar	Quite dissimilar	A little dissimilar	A little similar	Quite similar	Very similar
Lecce	2	5	7	19	18	18
Monza	0	6	7	22	22	12

Figure 32 Statement D.

Notably, the great majority of the respondents (111 altogether, which makes 80,4% of the total), affirmed to feel somewhat similar to the statement.

Statement E.

He is very religious because religion helps people to be part of a community and get together regularly.



	Not similar	Quite dissimilar	A little dissimilar	A little similar	Quite similar	Very similar
Lecce	23	11	6	11	12	7
Monza	15	15	12	13	9	3

Figure 33 Statement E.

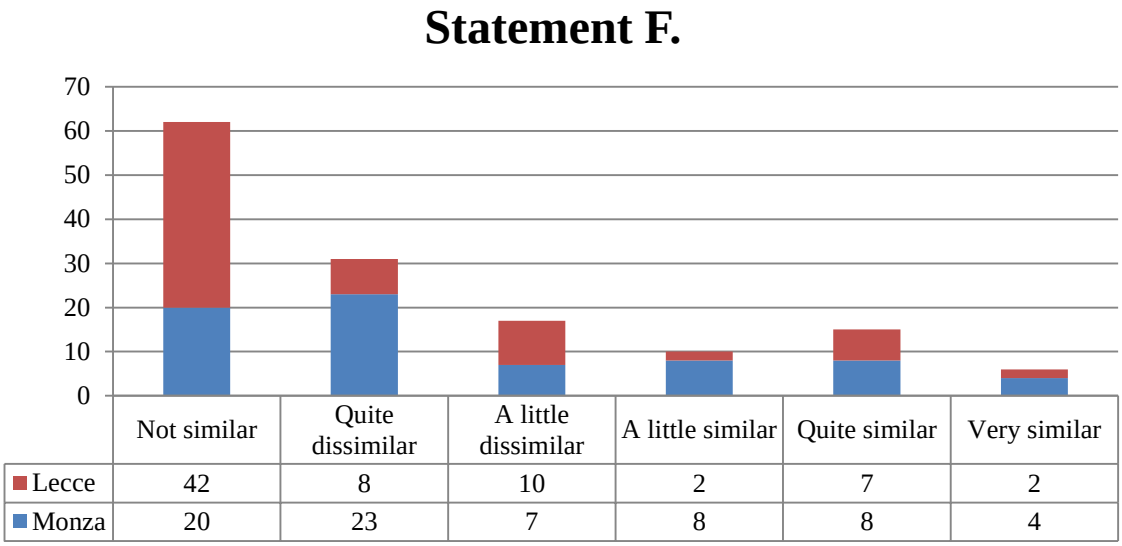
Questions about religious values proved already to give controversial results in this survey (see section 1. Local Institutions). Inhabitants of the two cities seem to have a variegated perception of the importance of religion in their lives. Almost 60% of the respondents claimed to feel somewhat dissimilar to the statement, with a peak of 38 people (27,7%) being totally dissimilar. It shall be noted that this answer was provided mostly by inhabitants of Lecce (23 vs 15 in Monza).

On the other hand, 40% of the surveyed people appeared to feel a similarity to the statement, with 7,2% of them stating to be "very similar".

It could be maintained that, although most people claimed not to be very religious, or as in other questions, not to have a good relationship with the religious authorities, there is still a fair amount of the surveyed (up to 40%), that thinks that religion and its values are an important part of their lives and serve as a meant to maintain and reinforce a community.

Statement F.

He thinks that strangers should not be accepted in the community if most of the people don't want so.



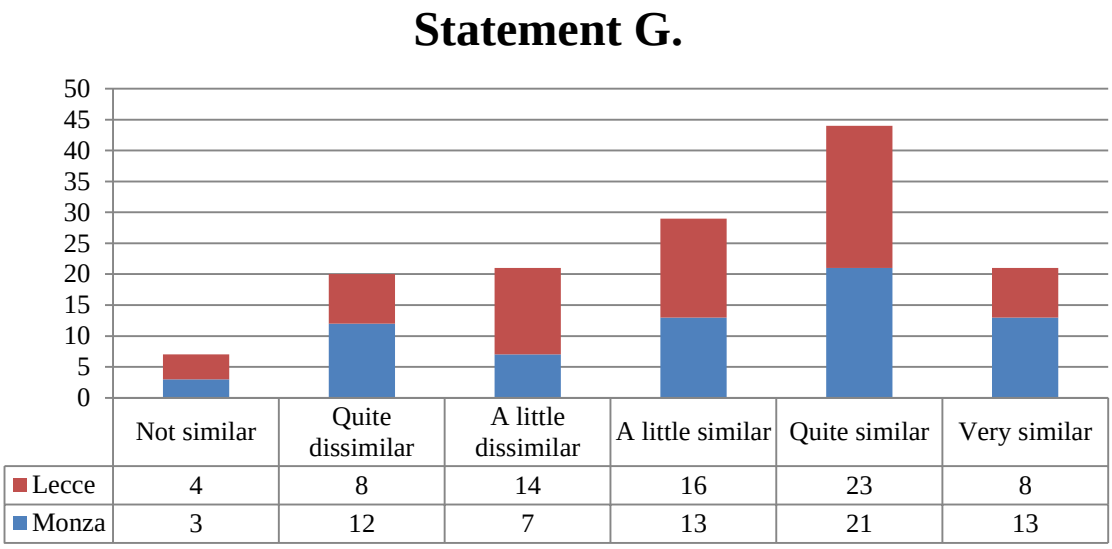
	Not similar	Quite dissimilar	A little dissimilar	A little similar	Quite similar	Very similar
Lecce	42	8	10	2	7	2
Monza	20	23	7	8	8	4

Figure 34 Statement F.

The great majority of the respondents claimed not to agree with the statement, which demonstrates that citizens of the two municipalities are generally well-disposed towards foreigners. It should be noticed, though, that most of the people who assured to feel somewhat similar to the given statement live in Monza. It could be maintained that the reason lies in the fact that people living in the North of Italy have to deal with higher numbers of foreigners residing there, and therefore might feel their presence as more problematic due to various reasons (i.e. higher competition in the job market in a moment of economic crises). It shall also be noted that in the North political parties who have been leading a propaganda against immigrants and foreigners have been pretty strong in the last years, though their power is currently decreasing.

Statement G.

His house is often visited by guests and he has an intense social life.



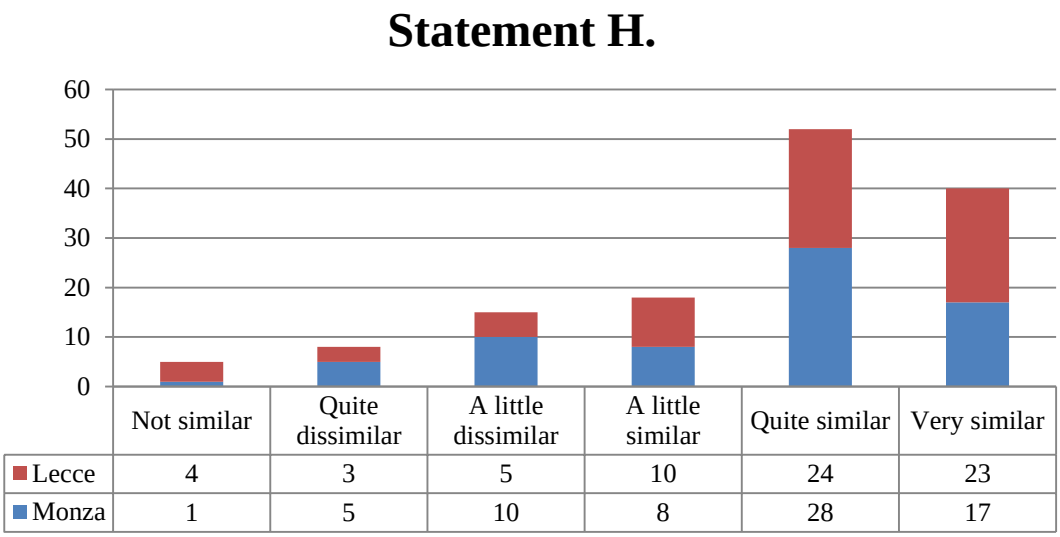
	Not similar	Quite dissimilar	A little dissimilar	A little similar	Quite similar	Very similar
Lecce	4	8	14	16	23	8
Monza	3	12	7	13	21	13

Figure 35 Statement G.

This statement has some relations to previous questions related to social life and hospitality (see par. 5.1). As earlier claimed, respondents seem to give importance to spending time with friends and have an active social life. Not particular differences can be noted in the answers provided by inhabitants of the two cities, we can see a majority of people feeling similar to the proposed statement: 20,7% chose " a little similar", 31,4% "quite similar" and 15% "very similar". About one third of the surveyed people (46 out of 140), though, claimed not to have a very intense social life.

Statement H.

He thinks that being loyal to one's superior or boss is a very important virtue.



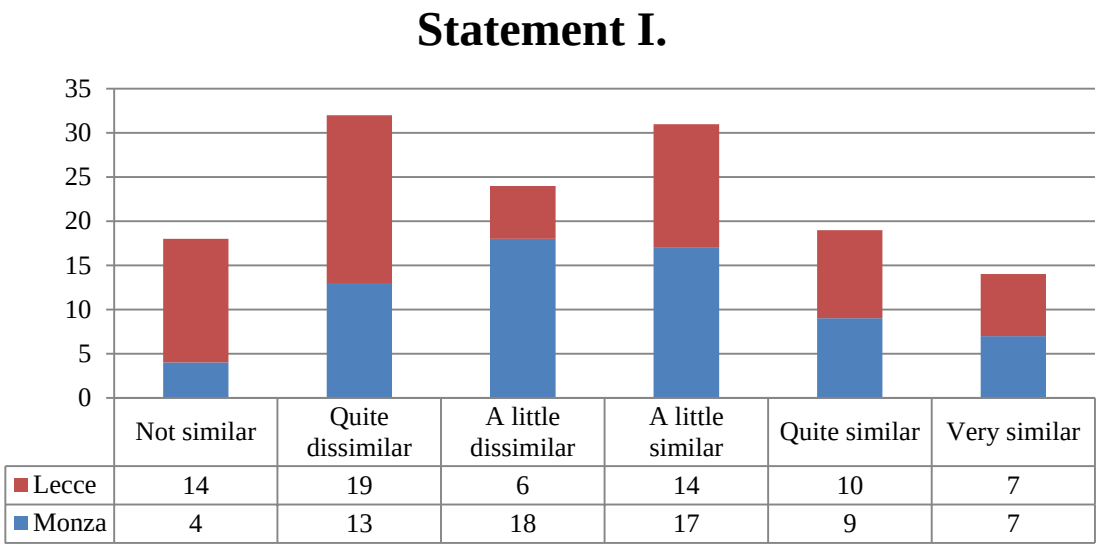
	Not similar	Quite dissimilar	A little dissimilar	A little similar	Quite similar	Very similar
Lecce	4	3	5	10	24	23
Monza	1	5	10	8	28	17

Figure 36 Statement H.

It can be seen from the figure above that rates to this statement have been very positive: 66,6% of the respondents felt either "quite similar" or "very similar" to the proposed scenario.

Statement I.

He will try not to show his true feelings in public in order not to appear selfish or egocentric.



	Not similar	Quite dissimilar	A little dissimilar	A little similar	Quite similar	Very similar
Lecce	14	19	6	14	10	7
Monza	4	13	18	17	9	7

Figure 37 Statement I.

Answers to this question gathered mainly in the middle. Most surveyed people claimed to be either "quite dissimilar" (23,1%), "a little dissimilar" (17,4%) or " a little similar" (22,4%) - total 62,9%. The motivation could rely in the fact that appearing selfish or egocentric are characters that usually imply a negative connotation, and the question itself entails a disposition in showing true *negative* feelings, which might not be socially acceptable. Respondents might have felt at unease with expressing their compliance with such a statement, and therefore didn't give themselves away in either being too similar or too dissimilar to it.

Statement J.

He prefers not to show to others his economic standards of living to avoid jealousy.

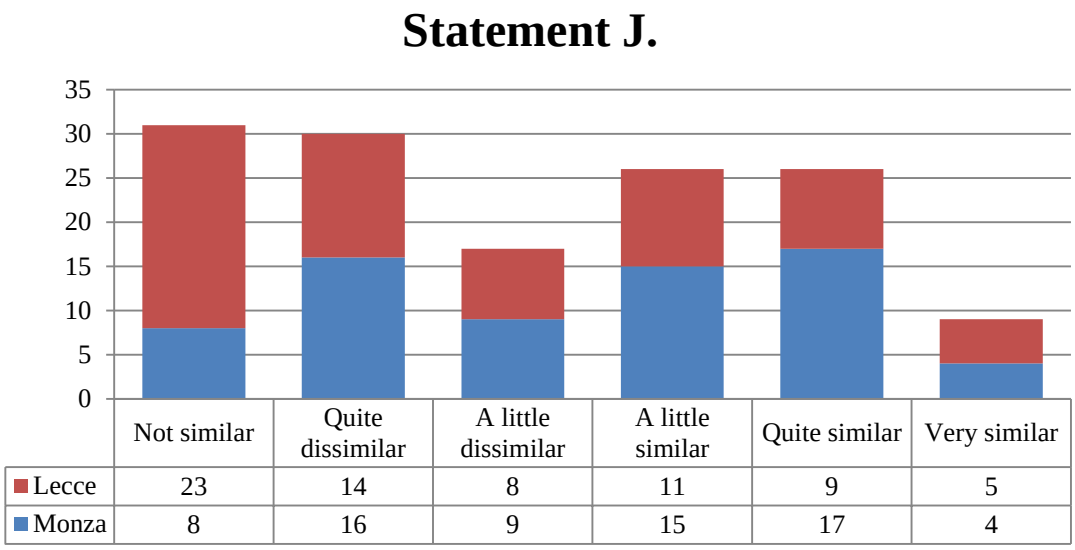


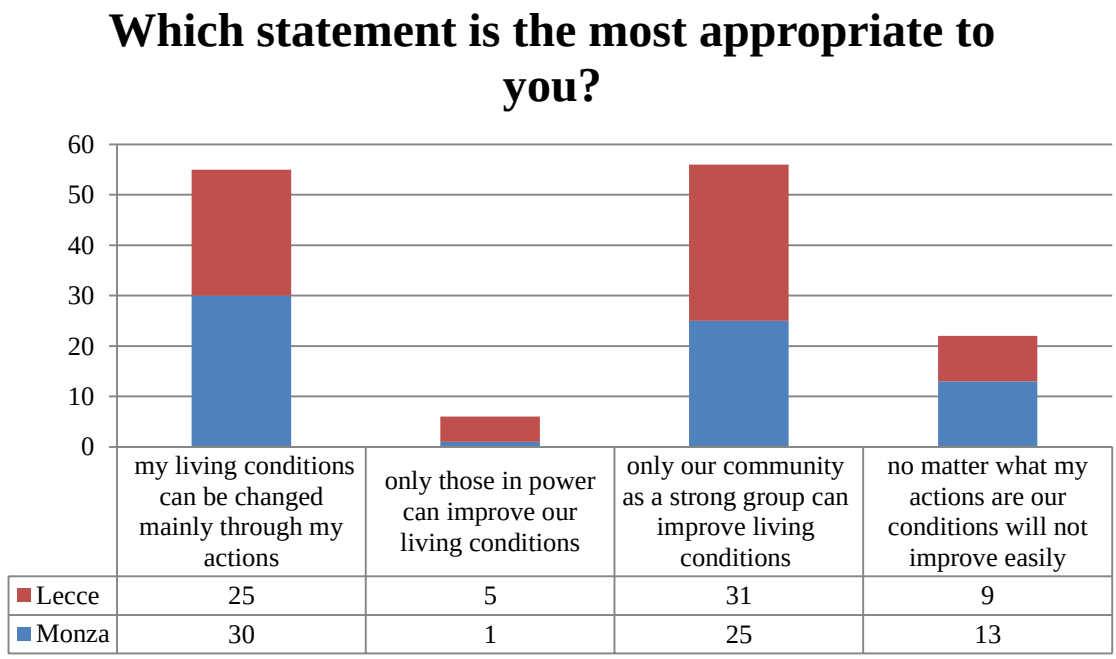
Figure 38 Statement J.

In this case results are presented separately for the two cities in order to stress the difference among provided answers. As it can be noticed, the majority of inhabitants of Lecce claimed not to feel similar to the statement, and therefore think that one's economic standard would not influence other people's perception of him. That is not the case of the inhabitants of Monza, which seem to have a much more variegated perspective on the matter, and generally tend to avoid showing off.

6.2 Choose from the following list the statement that is the most appropriate to you:

One of the last items in the survey has made the participants choose from the following statements, the one that mostly apply to them:

> *Choose from the following list the statement that is the most appropriate to you*
>
> - *to believe living conditions can be changed mainly through my actions*
> - *to believe only those in power can improve our living conditions*
> - *to believe only our community as a strong group can improve living conditions*
> - *to believe no matter what my actions are our conditions will not improve easily*



	my living conditions can be changed mainly through my actions	only those in power can improve our living conditions	only our community as a strong group can improve living conditions	no matter what my actions are our conditions will not improve easily
Lecce	25	5	31	9
Monza	30	1	25	13

Figure 39 Most appropriate statement

Two statements got the highest - and equal - amount of choices (each 40%): "to believe living conditions can be changed mainly through my actions" and "to believe only our community as a strong group can improve living conditions", which are the two options with a *positive* connotation. Second was "to believe not matter what my actions are, our conditions will not improve easily" with 16% of the preferences, which denotes somehow a fatalist attitude. Remarkably, "to believe only those in power can improve our living conditions" gathered only 4% of the choices, which once confronted with the results obtained in previous questions is not so surprising. For example, as we can see in Figure 3 - Paragraph 3.3 "Trust in institutions", the National Government was the institution to have gathered the lowest score (1,8 average from 1 to 5) and was considered to be the one having the least means to improve the well-being of a community.

6.3 Choose from the following list the statement that is most important to you:

Participants have been asked to choose "the most important" statement for themselves. Question is as follows:

> *Choose from the following list the statement that is mostly true to yourself:*
>
> - *to do all my best to help the community in which I live*
> - *to do all my best to improve only the life of my family, others will do by themselves*
> - *to do what I can to improve things according to the indications of those who administer the country*
> - *to do what I can to improve my living standards, but society won't improve anyway*

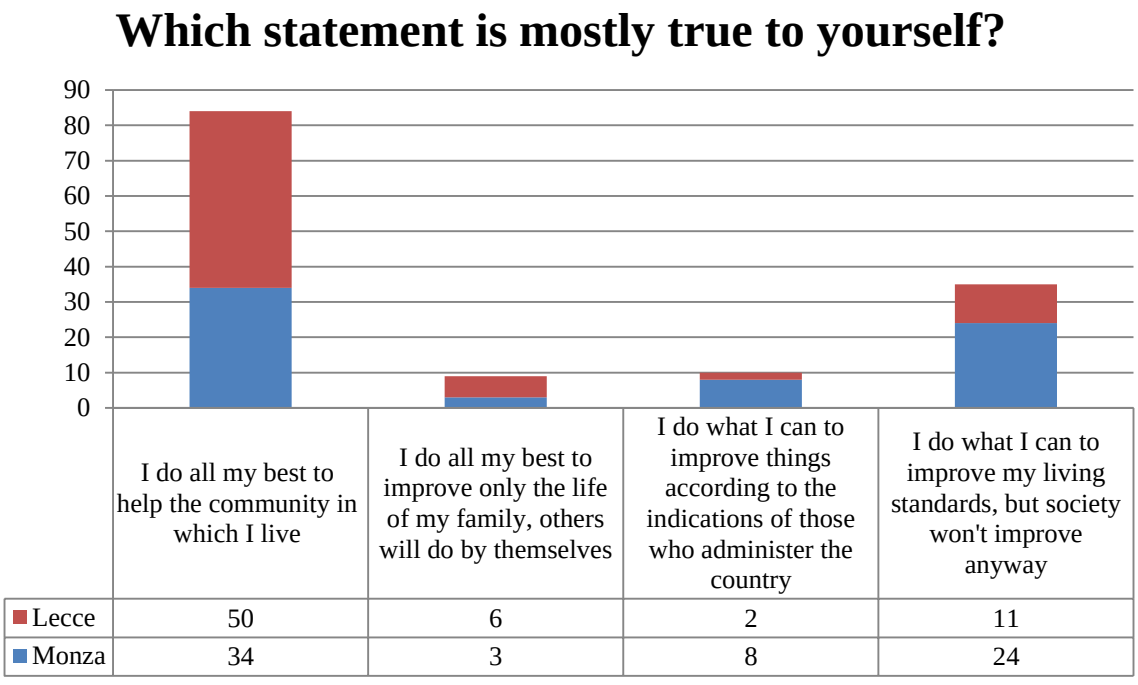


Figure 40 Statement mostly true to oneself

61% of the respondents, the majority, claimed to do all the best they can to help the community in which they live, a data which is in accordance to the results of the previous question.

On the other hand, a remarkable 25% of the surveyed - the majority living in Monza, stated that despite one's effort to improve their living standards, the society as a whole will unlikely amend. The remaining 14% was equally divided between the other two options.

Conclusions

The results of the survey conducted between September 2013 and January 2014 provided valuable information on trust and experiences with local institutions, as well as serious problems in the community, the quality of services provided by institutions and access to these services, and social norms and values in two Italian cities, namely Monza and Lecce. When relevant, results have been presented separately for the two realities, in an attempt to provide an exhaustive report of the most salient findings.

The first section of the survey was aimed at investigating how the respondent relate to local institutions on the basis of their relationship with them, on trust and on the satisfaction (or lack of) with the services provided at multiple levels. Municipalities and Health Centres have proved to be the two institutions which are considered to be the most important when it comes to provide the well-being of a community, on the other hand Religious Authorities/Church, were considered to be the least effective in doing so. The results obtained by the National Government and its Opposition Parties also demonstrate that Italian citizens seem to have a problematic relationship with the highest authority of the country, probably related to the scandals and government changes which have recently affected the political life.

When asked about their trust in institutions, surveyed people confirmed their perceptions by individuating in the Church and in the National Government as the two bodies to be less trustworthy, followed by Tax Offices and Media. The results obtained by Church and Parish shall be probably further investigated in the scope of understanding how and if the values portrayed by these institutions effectively have an influence on social norms and customs, although not directly perceived as such on a rational, explicit level.

Experiences with institutions are also conforming to the results obtained with the first two questions, even though with some differences between the two sampled cities. In general, it can be maintained that Municipalities and Health Centres are once again considered to be the ones which provide better services, though in Lecce there was a slight majority of people having experienced a disservice with this institution, mostly based on the lack of organization and the long waiting lists. Inhabitants of Monza seemed to have collected, in average, much better experiences with each institution indicated in the survey, while in Lecce that was not always the case.

The second section of the survey was intended to investigate how the respondents relate to the role that institutions might - or might not - have in the improvement of local issues, but also to look at the strategies which might be put into act in order to obtain a certain service.

The results were quite various when the data obtained in the two cities were analyzed separately. First, it was asked what were the most serious problem in the own community. Major problems were altogether encountered in the Transports/infrastructures field and in the supposed inadequacy of services and resources, mostly meant as lack of funding for activities dedicated to the poor, younger people and elderly. Lecce, anyway, seemed to be the city where most problems were to be encountered, or at least where the respondents appeared to be more aware of such issues. In particular, beside the already mentioned Traffic/infrastructures field, also Unemployment, Environment and Values. Regarding the latter, some respondents have individuated in the so called "familistic behaviour" one of the most detrimental attitudes toward the community.

Secondly, the respondents were asked to state with which local institution they thought they could not obtain services relying on own means. Province, Region, Magistrature and Tax Offices were individuated as he most problematic, although in this case it was the inhabitants of Monza mostly feeling at unease when having to deal with them, especially in the last two cases.

Moreover, as a consequence of the previous question, surveyed people were asked to indicate a possible solution to obtain the desired service from the above mentioned institutions. The great majority chose "denounce the disservice to the competent authorities" and "try several times until I get a good result", pointing out that people are supposedly ready to stand for their rights and try pursuing a legal conduct when dealing with institutions. What is interesting to notice when looking at the scores obtained by other proposed solutions, is that whereas people living in Monza tend to rely on informal relations based on acquaintance or family ties, inhabitants of Lecce largely prefer the intervention of "an important person", whether known personally or not.

Surveyed people have also been prompted at indicating which institutions shall have more means in the improvement of the well-being of their community. Results show that Municipality, Local Organizations and Region are considered to be the most important. A comparison of the data obtained in the two sampled cities didn't show relevant differences.

A list of hypothetical practices against good society was then proposed to the respondents, asking them point out those which were incompatible with the good development of a society. Although all the possibilities were potentially harmful, results show that not all of them are actually perceived as such.

Once again answers have been relatively homogenous in the two city-groups, and though show some general discrepancies with the data provided by the previous question about the preferred solution techniques, where paying a fee of give a gift where the two least favourite. Surprisingly, "Bringing gifts to obtain access to health services" and "Bringing gifts to be accepted at a good school" were the two options which obtained the lowest scores, that is, people didn't seem to consider them too damaging. It can be maintained that, though the respondents wouldn't pick them as "good solutions", they also don't consider such practices to be negatively affecting the fair development of their community.

Respondents have also been asked to state how do they relate to the statement "*public sector officials who provide services to my community do not act the way they should*, and in both cities the great majority considered it to be either "occasionally true" or "often true", making it clear that their expectations on how a public service should work are not always met, or at least that they have the perception that in public offices things don't run the way they should.

The last question of this section asked the respondent to state whether they thought they had the means to eventually express their dissatisfaction about the services provided. 90 interviewees out of the total 140 answered "no", other options provided included making an official complaint, whether to the institution or to the manager of the services. A small number of people claimed they would turn to Media and Internet.

The third section of the survey was dedicated to social norms and local customs.

First, the respondents have been asked to evaluate the importance of the latter from a given list, on a scale from "not important" to "very important". Results have been various and showed some difference among the perceptions of the inhabitants of the two target cities. In Monza "Spending time with friends outside the home" seemed to be the most important custom, "Protect a person if I am in the position to do it" was the first among the fairly important ones and "Be cautious when talking of politics in public" was the least important. In Lecce, instead, most important was "Be in good terms with important persons", "Satisfy a personal request of favour" was fairly important and finally once more "Be cautious when talking of politics in public" was considered not to be relevant.

The next two questions were asked in order to get a better understanding of how people perceive different modes of personal relations to public officials, including gift-giving. The majority of surveyed people believed that gift-giving doesn't lead to obtaining a better treatment/service, and they didn't even seem to particularly agree with the fact that the quality of services provided can be influence by the personal relation to the workers in the institution, although in the second case a slightly higher number of respondents seemed to fairly agree.

Participants to the survey have been given some hypothetic scenarios in order to understand behavioral patterns and social values. There have been five scenarios in the survey. Respondents have generally reported to disagree with hypotetical corruption practices and find themselves in accordance with virtuos attitudes, with no relevant differences among the inhabitants of the two cities.

The last section of the survey was dedicated to values. We have tried to understand how the participants relate themselves some values through gauging their association with a list of statements portraying different characters under the explanatory sentence "*How similar to yourself is the person described by the following statements"*.

Results showed that respondents indentify themselves positively with trying to be as autonomous as possible, not breaking the rules, being loyal to superiors (which could though be a double-edged sword, in case the superior engages in illicit activities) and think that younger people should learn from their elderly. On the other hand, they didn't seem to believe that religion plays an important role in the society and also that strangers should be not accepted in a society, if the majority doesn't want them. Surveyed people showed ambivalent feelings towards traditions having to be respected, about leading an intense social life and not having to show their true (negative) feelings. One statement proved to be particularly problematic, namely the one about avoiding to show the real economic standards to keep away from envy and jealousy. In this case, answers have been pretty different in Monza and Lecce.

One of the last items in the survey has made the participants choose the one that mostly apply to them, from two groups of statements. It emerged that the great majority of them believes that living conditions can be changed mainly through their actions and that only the community as a strong group can improve living conditions, which were the two options with a *positive* connotation. In accordance to that, they also claimed to do all the best they can to help the community in which they live.