

**For Immediate Release**

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**CAUCASUS RESEARCH RESOURCE CENTER-ARMENIA RELEASES CAUCASUS BAROMETER 2015 SURVEY**

**Yerevan, Armenia** – The Caucasus Research Resource Center (CRRC)-Armenia Foundation has released the results of the latest-2015 wave of the Caucasus Barometer survey conducted in the South Caucasus since 2004. The questionnaire consists of more than 100 questions, enabling collection of thorough information on public opinion regarding socio-economic, demographic and political developments in the countries.

In 2015, around 4200 households were randomly surveyed in Armenia and Georgia only (1869 and 2251, respectively). The results of the survey illustrate that poverty and unemployment remain the two most disturbing issues for the respondents both in Armenia and Georgia. Particularly, 40% of the respondents in Armenia and 51% in Georgia indicate unemployment as the most important issue. Meanwhile, respectively 17% and 16 % of respondents pinpoint poverty as the most crucial issue.

Interestingly, the fraction of respondents perceiving Armenia and Georgia as non-democratic countries increased slightly in 2015 relative to that in 2013 (32% in 2015 versus 28% in 2013 in Armenia; 17% in 2015 versus 11% in 2013 in Georgia). As a matter of fact, in 2013 only 18% of the respondents in Azerbaijan considered their country as non-democratic<sup>1</sup>.

In the context of reducing trust toward public governance bodies, the trust toward the army and the church remains high. Specifically, in 2015, 76% of the respondents in Armenia (62% in 2013), and 74% in Georgia fully or rather trust the army.

To capture the recent developments in the Republic of Armenia, several questions on the Constitutional Reforms and Cumulative Pension System were included in the 2015. Thus, only 15% of the respondents support the Constitutional Reforms and 9% support the introduction of the Cumulative Pension System.

In contrast to Georgia (21% of the respondents) the Armenian society seems to be more inclined toward the Eurasian Economic Union (52% of the respondents). Meanwhile, 37% of the respondents in Armenia and 41% in Georgia support the membership of the respective countries to the European Union.

Despite the socio-economic hardship the overall sense of happiness remains above the average in both countries: on a scale from 1 (“Very unhappy”) to 10 (“Very happy”), Armenian respondents scored 6.5 while the Georgians ones 6.6<sup>2</sup>.

Adhering to its mission to facilitate the public policy debate via active research in social sciences, CRRC provides the complete database and supporting documents to all interested counterparts free of charge. The databases and respective documents are available at the Caucasus Barometer and the CRRC-Armenia websites<sup>3</sup>.

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**CRRC-Armenia** is a research institution established in 2003 as part of CRRC network operating in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. Developed through strong support provided upon the past ten years by The Carnegie Corporation, Yerevan State University and the Eurasia Partnership Foundation, in 2013 CRRC-Armenia registered as independent local Foundation in Armenia. The goal of CRRC-Armenia continues to remain strengthening social science research and public policy analysis.

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<sup>1</sup> Interestingly, in 2013 the majority of respondents in all countries (61%, 55% and 47% respectively in Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia) prefer democracy to the other forms of governance.

<sup>2</sup> In 2013 the results were the following: Armenians scored 6.7 while the Georgians 7.0 and in Azerbaijan 6.6.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.crcc.am/research-and-surveys/caucasusbarometer/documentation>; [www.caucasusbarometer.org](http://www.caucasusbarometer.org)