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Report concludes:

Paramaribo feels and is safe

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PARAMARIBO - Compared to other countries in the Americas, it is obvious that Paramaribo, capital of Suriname is quite safe. The country scores lower on crime and victims than the average of the 26 countries surveyed for the Americas Barometer 2012.

The research polled the opinion of the public in North, South and Central America and the Caribbean. Respondents in Suriname feel a lot safer in Paramaribo than the people of the other countries feel in their capital city.

Paramaribo scores 37.5 on the safety feeling in the capital, while other capitals have a much higher score. From the report it can safely be concluded that people in Suriname feel a lot safer than the majority of the Americas. The report was drafted by researchers Jack Menke, Marten Schalkwijk and Jaïr Schalkwijk.



Actual drop

The report also states that crime has actually dropped in Suriname. 'Police figures show a decreasing trend, despite the fact that crimes have become more violent than before. So while there is a drop in numbers, crime has hardened.

The unsafe feeling has dropped significantly in the past two years, the report states. Back in 2010 it was still 39.1 percent but it then took a dive to 34.1 in 2012. One of the findings is that the actual number of victims is dropping at a rapid pace according to police figures. This drop is in line with the government's policy on crime and with police statistics on crime and crime levels.

Hinterland safest

Of the several regions in the country, the perception of lack of safety is lowest in the hinterland and highest in capital Paramaribo. This is in line with expectations, because rural areas are much safer than urban areas. The Americas Barometer 2012 report will be presented on 17 July in Suriname.-

<http://www.dwtonline.com/de-ware-tijd/> Surinamese have more confidence in RC Church

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dWT photo / Claudio Barker The St. Peter and Paul Cathedral, flagship of the Roman Catholic Church in Suriname, towers above Paramaribo. Research shows that the average citizen trusts the RC Church most.-.

PARAMARIBO - Of all institutions in Suriname, the Roman Catholic Church is trusted most, immediately followed by the Central Polling Station (CHS). The polling station seems to be even more popular than elections.

One interesting note is that confidence in the election process is far better than that in political parties, states the report 'The Political Culture of Democracy in Suriname and in the Americas, 2012: Towards Equality of Opportunity'. The report was compiled by researchers Jack Menke, Maarten Schalkwijk and Jaïr Schalkwijk of the Anton de Kom University and Mitchell Seligson of the Van der Bilt University. The sample is part of the 'Americas Barometer 2012' poll conducted in all countries of the Western Hemisphere.

Growing confidence

In Suriname society seems to trust institutions more. Compared to other countries in the Americas, the country scores above average for confidence in important institutions. It scores highest for support of the current political system, confidence in the justice system, the electoral commission and the Court of Justice. It holds a second place for supposing that trials are fair. When it comes to trusting Parliament, the police, the Roman Catholic Church, political parties and mass media, Suriname takes third.

The Roman Catholic Church scores highest for confidence in religious organizations, followed by the Protestant Church. The Islam and Hinduism are way down the list. The research revealed that in Suriname the religions respect each other. Even non-believers do not have adverse feelings towards believers. This is in line with the national feeling of the multi-religious Surinamese society, the report concludes.

'This is the first report of its kind,' says Menke, adding that it can always be expanded. Over 41,000 people in 26 countries have been polled. The researchers conducted a general research, especially in the case of religion. Menke says that confidence in the RC Church might be explained by the fact that demographically RCs are the largest group in the sample. It is interesting that the RC Church would score better in Suriname compared to other countries.

Housing

The report also shows that as for the biggest problem in society there have been important shifts. City dwellers consider housing the biggest problem due to the geographical division of city, district and hinterland. This is followed by high prices for commodities and crime. Hinterland inhabitants suffer more from unemployment and high prices.-.



dWT foto / Claudio Barker - De St. Petrus en Pauluskerk, bekend als de kathedraal, is het boegbeeld van de Rooms Katholieke kerk in Suriname. Blijkt dat de burger van alle instanties het meest vertrouwen heeft in de Rooms katholieke kerk.-.

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Survey:

Normal South American trend in Surinamese presidency

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PARAMARIBO - President Desi Bouterse is the least popular among the afro hinterland population (marrons), women and persons with a higher education. Among religious groups he is backed by Christians and to a lesser extent by Muslims and Hindus. These figures were released after a poll by the American Van der Bilt University and the Stichting Wetenschappelijke Informatie.

A survey in 26 countries in the region, polled citizens about their confidence in institutions and their country's electoral system. The survey also included discrimination, ethnicity and what is considered the biggest problem in the respective countries. The part about Suriname is entitled 'The Political Culture of Democracy in Suriname and in the Americas, 2012: Towards Equality of Opportunity'.

The researchers say they focused on Bouterse because of his military background. His election to the presidency in 2010 is common to the South and Central American trend, where formal military leaders seek public office. Other examples are the late Hugo Chavez from Venezuela, Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua, Lucio Gutierrez in Ecuador and Ollanta Humala in Peru. The report also deals with Bouterse as main suspect in the December killing trial and the adopted Amnesty Act 2012.

Seventy percent

Seventy percent of the persons polled say they have confidence in the president. He scores best in his own party, while NPS and VHP supporters trust him least. In ABOP and Pertjajah Luhur circles the President scores well. Men like him better than women. In Suriname the survey was conducted by Jack Menke, Marten Schalkwijk and Jaïr Schalkwijk of the Anton de Kom University.

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Report concludes Suriname has a stable democracy

19/07/2013

PARAMARIBO - Suriname has a stable democracy. There is much tolerance towards opposition parties and much support for the country's political system. However, between 2010 and 2012, support for the political system has gone down, states the Americas Barometer 2012 poll. The report, drafted after research in 26 countries in the Western Hemisphere, was presented on Wednesday in the SGS building. Marten Schalkwijk, one of the compilers of the report says that Suriname has a rather fair score, a development which he considers positive because it shows that democratic achievements are not in jeopardy. Countries like Honduras, Bolivia and Haiti have an entirely

different situation and need to be kept under a watchful eye. Schalkwijk calls for alertness now that public support for the political system has gone down in the past two years.

The nationwide poll, which included 1,492 respondents, also looked into what people considered to be the biggest problem in Suriname. Housing scores high in that regard, a problem that elevates Suriname to the first place in the region. Several samples since 2000 show that this is a persistent problem. 'In the region this is not such a big problem, since less than 2 percent referred to it, so it means that here we're doing something structurally wrong compared to other countries,' Schalkwijk says, adding that it could mean that the people in other countries have bigger problems than housing or that they have found better solutions to housing issues. The scientists considers it necessary to have a broad national discussion on housing and not to leave this issue simply to a passing government.-.

<http://www.dwtonline.com/de-ware-tijd/> Americas Barometer report identifies alarming disparities

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PARAMARIBO - Between 2010 and 2012 disparity in income has further widened. The Americas Barometer report states that compared to other countries in the region, the disparity in Suriname has not improved, but rather deteriorated. The report speaks of an alarming disparity between rich and poor.

'Latin America is known as the region with the highest income and welfare disparities in the world, so Suriname is no exception,' says sociologist Jack Menke. Research in Suriname for the report was conducted by the Scientific Data Foundation and drafted by

scientists Menke, Marten Schalkwijk and Jaïr Schalkwijk. 'Globally the region has the highest disparity, but between the countries there is barely any difference.'

Difference in labor

The sociologist concludes that disparity in Suriname has slightly widened between 2010 and 2012. 'It is a phenomenon that has been going on for the past thirty years,' Menke says. He attributes the difference to labor. 'If we look at economic development, the mining sector has yielded much. Another reason could be the urban trek of mostly uneducated hinterland residents, who only get low-paid jobs. Immigrants from abroad, especially the Netherlands, bring the higher incomes to the country.'

Over 20 percent of the population is dependent on government support. This places Suriname in the top three of countries where citizens receive government aid. The figures will increase, because plans by the government include expansion of social security. 'Compared to countries in the region, Suriname has a fairly well developed social security system.' Mainly people from the Districts of Para, Brokopondo and Sipaliwini are dependent of government aid.

Other forms of disparity

Americas Barometer has also researched discrimination, by studying the position of people with similar skills and education, but belonging to different social backgrounds. The report also deals with disparities based on gender, residence and ethnic groups. Gender does not play a role in education in Suriname. 'That is an important aspect, because educational level seems to be an important indicator for the height of income, although women are paid far less than men in Suriname.' Almost 60 percent of the male respondents admitted they earn more than their spouse, while 56 percent of female said they earned less than their male partner. In only one third of the cases there was equality. Contrary to many other countries ethnicity is more important than complexion. An average of 12.1 percent experiences discrimination on the work floor or at school. Young respondents with a darker skin color say they are discriminated much more than older respondents with a lighter skin color. An interesting note is that fewer women say they feel discriminated against. The report also states disparity in income between people living in urban areas and those in rural areas.-

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Americas Barometer: Verschillen arm en rijk Suriname toegenomen



Een bedelaar in Paramaribo. Foto: Hugo den Boer

PARAMARIBO - Het rapport Americas Barometer 2012, een breed vergelijkend onderzoek naar de publieke opinie van burgers in 26 landen in alle delen van Amerika en het Caribisch gebied, spreekt over een stijging van ongelijkheid in Suriname. Volgens de cijfers die in het rapport gebruikt worden is het gat tussen het armste deel van de samenleving en de rijken in de afgelopen jaren toegenomen.

"In tegenstelling tot vele andere landen in het onderzoek is de ongelijkheid in Suriname niet verbeterd, maar juist erger geworden", stelt het rapport. Niet alleen rijk en arm verschillen steeds meer van elkaar. De antwoorden van respondenten hebben ook aangetoond dat er een verschil in economische waardering is tussen man en vrouw. "Vrouwen hebben een beduidend lager inkomen dan mannen in Suriname." Bijna zestig procent van alle mannelijke respondenten zei dat ze meer verdienen dan hun echtgenoot, terwijl ongeveer 56 procent van de vrouwelijke respondenten zei dat ze minder dan hun mannelijke partner verdienen. "In slechts ongeveer een derde van alle gevallen is er inkomensgelijkheid tussen de partners."

In tegenstelling tot veel andere landen, is etniciteit in Suriname belangrijker dan huidskleur. Respondenten van jongere leeftijd of met een donkere huidskleur zeggen vaker gediscrimineerd te worden dan ouderen of personen met een lichtere huidskleur. Tenslotte is er ook een inkomensverschil vastgesteld tussen mensen die in stedelijk gebied werken en die daarbuiten leven.