



MINISTRIA E PUNËS, ÇESHTJEVE SOCIALE  
DHE SHANSEVE TË BARABARTA

# National Report

# National Report on the Status of Women and Gender Equality in Albania

# 2011





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The National Report on the Status of Women and Gender Equality (NRSWGE) in Albania is produced by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MoLSAEO) with the financial and technical support of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN Women).



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# Abbreviation and Acronyms

## Abbreviation and Acronyms

ADC	Austrian Development Cooperation
ASP	Albanian State Police
BoA	Bank of Albania
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action
CCR-DV	Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence
CEC	Central Elections Commission
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all form of Discrimination against Women
CoM	Council of Ministers
CSC	Community Score Card
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DEOFP	Directorate of Equal Opportunities and Family Policies
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DoPA	Department of Public Administration
DSDC	Department of Strategy and Donor Coordination
DV	Domestic Violence
EA	Economic Aid
EC	European Commission
EiG	Equity in Governance Project
EU	European Union

FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GB	Gender Budgeting
GEE	Gender Equality Employee
GEL	Gender Equality Law
GoA	Government of Albania
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
HH	Household
ICITAP	International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMWG	Inter-Ministerial Working Group
INSTAT	National Institute of Statistics
IPH	Institute of Public Health
IPRO	Immovable Property Registration Office
ISI	Institute of Social Insurance
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LGUs	Local Government Units
LMVFR	Law on Measures against Violence in Family Relations
LSMS	Living Standard Measurement Survey
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
METE	Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoAFCP	Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoH	Ministry of Health

MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoLSAEO	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
NAP	National Action Plan
NES	National Employment Service
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NPO	Non-for-Profit Organization
NSGE-GBV&DV	National Strategy for Gender Equality and the Eradication of Gender Based Violence and Domestic Violence
NSPE	National Strategy for Pre-university Education
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SSS	State Social Services
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
TUS	Time Use Survey
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN INSTRAW	United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
UNSCR 1325	United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
VAW	Violence against Women
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization

## Preface

The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) are pleased to provide today the first National Report on the Status of Women and Gender Equality (NRSWGE) in Albania. For some time now, the co-operation between the two institutions has been vested with a series of results to policy and legal frameworks. While the MoLSAEO has continuously shown the Government of Albania political will to protection and advancement of the women's rights and their role in political, economic and social life, UN Women is the global champion for women and girls in achieving the goals on gender equality and jump-starting progress for women empowerment.

The National Report on the Status of Women and Gender Equality (NRSWGE) in Albania is the first national report, which will serve as the substantive basis to analyse the overall situation of women and men in Albania. Nine policy areas of key importance to gender equality are covered: national development indicators, demographics, legal frameworks and institutional mechanisms, health, education, work, entrepreneurship and property rights, social policies and social services, political representation and participation, and domestic violence. It tries to answer to two critical questions: Are women better now compared to 10 years ago? How are women positioned compared to men in society?

The Report will be issued every two years aimed at assessing and monitoring progress in implementing national and international commitments to gender equality and women's human rights. In addition, the statistics, analysis, as well as the conclusions and recommendations presented in the report can be used for evidence-based policy-making and to develop new programmes and researches, as well as improve data collection and processing in the country.

The Report is based on the Set of Harmonised Indicators on Gender Equality and the Status of Women in Albania, endorsed and adopted by the Government of Albania in 2010. It is the result of two-year efforts of the Inter-Ministerial Working Group on Monitoring Gender Equality in Albania, led by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MoLSAEO), with the financial and technical support of UN Women, Albania.

MoLSAEO and UN Women Albania would like to thank the Advisory Board of the NRSWGE, the National Council on Gender Equality, line ministries, INSTAT, civil society representatives, academia and the other international organizations involved for the finalisation of this report. Special thanks go to the team of international and national experts that have worked to collect, analyse and produce the report.

We hope that the analysis and information presented in the report will be used by the Government of Albania international organizations, researchers, scholars, civil society organizations and citizens to advance an enabling legal, political, social and economic environment to ensure gender equality and women's empowerment in Albania.

Sincerely,

**Semia Solange Guermas De Tapia**  
UN Women Representative  
Albania



**Filloreta Kodra**  
Deputy Minister of Labour, Social  
Affairs and Equal Opportunities



## Executive Summary

**W**ithin the overall framework of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination of Women, and the obligations derived from Albania's accession to the European Union, the Government of Albania has re-confirmed its commitment to strive for gender equality in its cross-cutting National Strategy for Gender Equality, Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence 2011-2015. The vision as set in this strategy is to strive for "a society in which gender equality is respected and appreciated, taught, supported and promoted; gender-based violence of any form is not tolerated, but is punished; victims of gender-based violence are supported and protected; and equality in opportunity and treatment is a reality for all women and men."

The National Set of Harmonised Gender Indicators (HGI), endorsed and adopted by the government of Albania in 2010, is the official tool for monitoring progress in the implementation of national and international commitments to gender equality and women's human rights. By using the HGI as a guiding framework, Albania's first National Report on Gender Equality and the Situation of Women assesses whether the aforementioned vision is being

realised. The report covers nine areas of key importance to gender equality: national development indicators; demographics; legal frameworks and institutional mechanisms; health; education; work, entrepreneurship and property rights; social policies and social services; political representation and equal participation; and domestic violence. In each of these areas, the report aims at answering two main questions: what is the status of women today? And: how does the status of women compare to that of men?

From the analysis of officially published national statistics it is evident that progress has been made recently in the collection of sex-disaggregated statistics, as well as in main development indicators. Indeed, the majority of government institutions increasingly produce data disaggregated by sex, especially in the areas of population dynamics, education and training, formal employment, and public representation in decision-making. Gradually, gender statistics also become available in new areas, for example, through surveys on time use, the gender wage gap, and domestic violence. At the same time, in several areas and sectors, sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics are either not yet collected, have not been officially published, or cannot be





compared due to differences in concepts and methodology. Even when sex-disaggregated data is available, gender issues cannot be adequately analysed if further disaggregation according to age, residence, and socio-economic and minority status is missing.

Comprehensive data regarding health, social insurance, poverty, the informal sector, and informal employment still needs to be collected. In some cases, data needs to be updated (e.g. regarding vulnerable groups and minorities). In other areas, the absence of agreed measurement requirements and standards has resulted in a lack of gender statistics, especially in the areas of land ownership, intra-household poverty, violence against women/domestic violence, and the delivery of social services. In line with the requirements ensuing from the HGI, data collection is also required on minority women, rural women, and dedicated services provided by government institutions.

While there has been some progress in gender research, the corpus of research required for supporting data analysis is still lacking. So far, international donors have supported most of the currently available research, with some involvement by local universities and national institutions. Further and intensified research on gender issues is needed.

Despite existing gaps, the analysis of available and accessible data provides clear evidence that in Albania, significant progress has been made. The status of women has improved with regard to the legal framework, the new strategy, and the national gender mechanisms. Gaps

have been narrowed in education, maternal and reproductive health, parliamentary representation, and through service provision in the area of domestic violence. At the same time, significant gender gaps and inequalities remain, evident in the high prevalence of domestic violence, women's significant under-representation in public and political life, and in the labour force. For example, women's unemployment and inactivity rates remain higher compared to men's, and subject to a growing gender gap. Data, therefore, does not only reflect the current status quo but also tells us much about the perspectives offered to girls and women in the coming years. Furthermore, they draw our attention to areas where re-prioritisation, the revision of laws, and policy responses are required in order to realise the vision of the national strategy, as well as achieve the goals laid down in international gender policy.

### ● Development indicators

Albania is classified among the countries with a high level of human development and occupies rank 70 (of 173 countries). Between 2002 and 2011, the Human Development Index (HDI) increased; however, progress has not been uniformly spread throughout Albania's regions and is more pronounced in urban areas, particularly in the capital. Similarly, improvements in Human Poverty Indexes (HPI) occurred primarily in the more developed parts of the country, with no change in mountainous areas. Between 2006 and 2010, overall inequality between women and men decreased. However, gender inequality as measured by the Gender

Inequality Index (GII) is still higher in Albania when compared with other countries in the region.

## ● Demographics

For the first time, results of the 2011 census are showing a higher percentage of people living in urban rather than rural locations, reflecting pronounced internal migration trends. Data shows that internal migration is characterised by the relatively high movement of women. For the first time, the census revealed a surplus of men, even though in the vast majority of countries in the world, there are more women than men. Albania's population also shows the first signs of becoming an aged population. While in 1960, there was a higher proportion of young people, nowadays, the population is characterised by a low birth rate, an increase in older generations, and a surplus of women in the 20-44 age group, due to male emigration. The recent economic crisis has resulted in an increase in the number of returnees due to economic conditions in previous host countries; however, returnees are met with increasingly poorer or impoverished households.

## ● Legal frameworks and institutional mechanisms

Albania's gender legislation and policy reflect the steps taken in the framework of accession to the EU and the Albanian government has developed a comprehensive legal and institutional framework for the promotion of gender equality and the protection of women's rights. Since 2006, there has been a significant increase in the adoption of legislation and by-laws on

gender equality, anti-discrimination, and domestic violence. However, alignment is still required in the electoral, labour and penal codes, in anti-discrimination laws, and regarding women's property rights. Structures and mechanisms for promoting gender equality and responding to domestic violence are being gradually established but need strengthening. Furthermore, contents of the cross-cutting National Strategy on Gender Equality, Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence (NSGE-GBV-DV) still need to be reflected in, and mainstreamed into, all existing national policies. Policy gaps remain on the issues of women's economic rights, women's entrepreneurship, and rural women. In general, implementation is required in all sectors. The adoption of the HGI in 2010 was a significant step forward in building the basis for monitoring progress. Respective mechanisms and procedures for co-ordinated data collection, processing and analysis still need to be established within all sectors at national and local levels.

## ● Health

The 1995 Beijing Platform for Action emphasizes that women have the right to enjoy the highest standard of physical and mental health. Tackling gender-specific needs and gender inequalities in the provision of health services will enable all women and men to enjoy healthier lives and contribute to greater equality in all other areas. The past two decades have seen a considerable reduction in child mortality and maternal mortality in Albania. Still, figures are higher compared to other countries in the Balkan region and in EU countries.

Progress has also been made in the overall proportion of women receiving prenatal care; however, the percentage of pregnant women receiving antenatal care at least four times prior to delivery is low. While there has been an increase since 2002 in the use of modern contraceptives, the use of male condoms is very low and also insufficient for the prevention of communicable diseases, such as STIs and HIV/AIDS. Access and exposure to reliable and professional reproductive health and family planning information remain limited. Men's health needs have not yet been considered as a gender issue and preventive care still needs to be addressed as an essential aspect of public health. Data on preventive routine reproductive health checks are currently unavailable.

In general, costs, opportunity costs and access barriers are significantly higher for unemployed women; women and men with more than three children; women and men in rural and the Central and Mountain areas; poor, marginalized and vulnerable individuals; and members of ethnic minorities. Universal access to good quality care still needs to be ensured. While the financial burden paid privately by individuals for health services in addition to the public expenditure is significantly higher in a regional comparison, Albanian public expenditure on health remains significantly lower than the regional average and common national shares of EU countries.

For monitoring progress on women's and men's health in a comprehensive way, all health data would have to be provided disaggregated by sex, and data gaps need to be closed, particularly with respect to routine

Pap tests, mammograms, cervical cancer diagnoses, and access to primary health care. Furthermore, sex-disaggregated statistics require further refinement by the introduction of additional characteristics like residence, marital and economic status, and ethnicity.

## ● Education

Education has long been recognised as a fundamental right with far-reaching consequences for human development and progress. Education is also essential for empowering women and closing the gap between women and men in accessing socio-economic opportunities. On an annual basis, the Albanian education sector produces a wealth of educational statistics, and all main indicators are disaggregated by sex and age. In some fields, data is also broken down by urban-rural residence. However, further disaggregation by socio-economic background, ethnicity, and minority status still needs to be introduced.

Data available shows marked differences between girls and boys in various aspects related to education. Differences in achievement are evident at pre-school, compulsory and high school level: a significantly higher percentage of boys are attending public pre-school facilities whereas girls' enrolment fell, especially in urban Tirana. After compulsory education, boys are 10 per cent more likely to proceed with high-school education. However, at the end of high school, a significantly higher number of girls than boys obtain a secondary school diploma. Pronounced gender differences are also apparent in higher and tertiary education: while males constituted the vast majority of

all registered students in vocational schools, roughly two thirds of all full-time university students in Albania are female. In both types of education, there is marked sex segregation of courses and disciplines along traditional gender roles. Access to education is not yet fully ensured for minority groups: the drop-out rate of children with disabilities is approximately ten times higher compared to the general drop-out rate; and the school participation rate of Roma girls is significantly lower than that of Roma boys. Despite the large share of female staff in the educational system, the distribution of women in decision-making positions follows the traditional pyramidal pattern: the share of women directors does not exceed 30 per cent at any of the educational levels.

With regard to the national set of harmonized gender indicators, educational data still needs to be further refined by additional identity markers such as residence, ethnicity, disability and socio-economic background. This is particularly relevant for the gender-sensitive monitoring of access to education for girls and boys belonging to vulnerable groups. Moreover, in order to understand the reasons for current trends and to develop effective policy responses, data needs to be confirmed and supported by qualitative research. For example, more recent data, as well as supporting studies, are required in the areas of net enrolment, literacy, and school drop-out. Furthermore, in line with obligations under the national legal and policy framework, the gender stereotyped character of vocational education needs to be addressed. Concrete temporary measures are required in order to

increase women's share at upper management levels.



### ● Work, entrepreneurship and property rights

Women constitute roughly half of Albania's population and thus half of its labour force. However, the types of work they do, the conditions under which they work, and their access to opportunities for advancement differ from men's. National statistics provide sex-disaggregated data and thereby allow an overall depiction of the status quo, as well as trend analysis. Women's inactivity rate is twice as high as men's, as indicated by the recent tightening of the labour market in terms of availability of jobs for women, and their simultaneous withdrawal from the labour market. Since 2007, women's participation in the labour market declined while men's remained almost constant at around 73 per cent, resulting in a gender gap of roughly 20 per cent. In parallel, women's unemployment rate rose slightly, whereas that of men's decreased. Unemployment is highest among young women between 20-24 years of age, and remains higher for women compared to men's in

all subsequent age groups from 30 to 59 years. Women have fewer and unequal employment opportunities in comparison to men with the same level of education. A higher share of female employment is only observed in jobs that require academic training, as reflected by women's significant employment in the finance and public sectors.

Informal employment is a prevalent feature of Albania's labour market, in which the vast majority of workers are female. However, a high percentage of workers have no legislative or social insurance; therefore, this has a disproportionately negative effect on women.

Women are under-represented in jobs with status, power and authority, and particularly over-represented in a few sectors, primarily health and social work, education, agriculture, finance, and manufacturing. In all other sectors, men dominate, illustrating far greater diversification in men's employment. Horizontal and vertical occupational segregation of women and men has resulted in a persistent and significant gendered wage gap. Although women start off with higher education levels and maintain the educational advantage throughout age cohorts, women's average salary is 17.63 per cent lower than that of their male counterparts. The gender wage gap is even larger among workers with lower educational attainment and almost twice as large, compared to the national average, in rural areas.

Women also continue to bear the vast majority of responsibilities for work related to the maintenance of household and family, revealing the persistence of highly gender-

stereotyped roles in the use of time. Low access to credit and collateral/property, and the lack of supporting policies promoting women's entrepreneurship have accounted for a relatively low number of women entrepreneurs.

Currently employed administrative land registration and property legalisation procedures establish an almost invariably male head of household or family head as the sole agent and land representative. This contributes to the systematic reduction of female property owners in Albania. If no measures are taken, chances are high that property (housing and land) will be increasingly male-owned, depriving Albanian women of their assets and rights, and negatively impacting women's economic independence, negotiation capacities, self-employment, access to credit, and entrepreneurship, especially in rural areas.

With regard to the HGI, data gaps still need to be filled on informal employment; women accessing credit, microcredit and loans; and land ownership. In general, existing data needs to be further refined by the introduction of additional characteristics like rural-urban residence, socio-economic background, education status, and, in certain circumstances, age (e.g. in the case of unpaid family workers).

## ● Social policies and social services

In general, publicly available administrative gender data on poverty, social protection, social insurance, economic aid, and access to social services is scarce. Assessing the degree

of poverty is also impeded by the fact that currently available information on poverty focuses on the household as an aggregate of individuals and needs to be categorised by sex, age, urban/rural residence, civil and health status, education, ethnicity, number of children, and household size. While recently, some progress has been made on collecting sex-disaggregated data on beneficiaries of social insurance, recipients of pension, and single-headed households, comprehensive gender data on women, girls, men and boys is currently unavailable. Since a higher percentage of women than men are estimated to work in the informal sector, women's coverage by the system is particularly weak. This significantly and negatively impacts a range of entitlements, including maternity leave, as well as employment and pension benefits, thereby increasing women's overall vulnerability to economic risk, dependence, poverty, and social exclusion during child-bearing and child-caring, as well as in old age. Similarly, gender data on social service delivery needs to be established in order to monitor equal access to services, with a special view to responding to the needs of excluded, marginalized and vulnerable groups, particularly girls and women.

### ● Political representation and equal participation

Ensuring women's access to decision-making in all areas and at all levels is central to international and national efforts aimed at more inclusive and democratic governance. This right is not limited to politics, but extends to women's participation and leadership in public life in general, in the private

sector, and in civil society. With respect to the HGI, significant progress has been made in the collection of statistics (e.g. regarding civil servants, the police and armed forces, the juridical system, and local and central government in Albania). Data shows that in public decision-making, women continue to be seriously under-represented. In the majority of institutions, women are found at middle and lower levels of power, while men predominantly occupy the higher ranks.

As a result of the introduction of the 30 per cent quota in the electoral code, the number of women parliamentarians more than doubled following the 2009 elections. This places Albania slightly ahead of Montenegro and Romania, but still far behind the majority of European countries. At the local level, the 30 per cent quota has remained an ineffective means for enhancing women's representation: in the 2011 local elections, the percentage of elected women councilors increased only slightly, while the number of female mayors actually decreased. Women's representation in leadership positions at private companies has not yet become an issue, and no data exists on their representation as executives, heads of companies or members of managing boards.



Data gaps remain on women's representation at all levels of political parties and unions, and in several sectors of the public service. On issues where sex-disaggregated statistics exist, comprehensive analysis and interpretation is required (e.g. in the case of the Central Election Commission). In order to serve as a monitoring, accountability and advocacy tool, the processing, publishing, dissemination, and use of such data needs to be strengthened. Furthermore, revision of the electoral code should turn it into an effective means of safeguarding women's democratic rights. Finally, in line with national legislation, affirmative action needs to be introduced in any area and at all levels where low levels in women's representation are being identified.

### ● Violence against women

Violence against women is an obstacle to the achievement of equality, development, and peace, and both violates and impairs the enjoyment of women's human rights and fundamental freedoms. In Albania, domestic violence remains widespread in all social strata. In the majority of cases the perpetrator is the intimate partner. Progress in data collection has been made, but currently focuses on counting the number of reported cases; from 2008 to 2010, the number of immediate protective measures/ immediate protection orders issued by the Albanian State Police increased

by 70 per cent. The highest number was reported in 2010, indicating that laws are being enforced. Progress in responding to domestic violence has been made, particularly by establishing in approximately one in four municipalities in the country the Co-ordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence (CCR). However, replication in the remaining 75 per cent of municipalities, installation of 24-hour hotlines, the establishment of emergency shelters, the provision of free legal aid, and the response to domestic violence in the country's 311 communes are still pending.

Significant data gaps exist with regard to the HGI, which oversee a range of specific indicators depicting the prevalence, incidence, background and context of domestic violence. Such statistical evidence is gradually emerging through the framework of the CCR; however, procedures and mechanisms for the nation-wide harmonizing, synchronizing and channelling of data collected within this system still need to be established. Such gender data will also be crucial in developing specific target-group prevention measures.

While international trafficking has declined in recent years, preliminary data show that internal trafficking, primarily of women and girls, is increasing. Being a rather recent phenomenon, currently available data is scarce, and research and policy responses are missing.

# Introduction

## Introduction

In recent years, a number of significant achievements have been made by the Government of Albania (GoA) to move towards a more pro-active implementation of the standards and norms laid out in the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), in the Beijing Platform for Action, in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and in EU directives and policies addressing gender equality.

The legal framework was established through the adoption of the law "On Measures Against Violence in Family Relations" (No. 9669, dated 18.12.2006), the law "On Gender Equality in Society" (No.9970, dated 24.07.2008), and the Law "On Protection against Discrimination" (No. 10221, dated 04.02.2010).

In Albania's most comprehensive policy document addressing gender equality and violence against women – the National Strategy on Gender Equality and Domestic Violence 2007-2010 – the GoA clearly states the key priorities for advancing women's human rights and ensuring gender equality. The revised framework, the National Strategy on Gender Equality, Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence 2011-2015 (NSGE-GBV-DV), foresees as an explicit outcome of its first strategic goal the compilation of "updated data and information on progress regarding the status of men

and women in society, evidenced through quarterly and annual statistics produced by INSTAT<sup>1</sup>, government ministries and local government units, as well as the National Report on the Status of Women and Gender Equality".

Essential to the monitoring and evaluation of the above-mentioned national frameworks and international gender equality commitments is the improved collection, analysis, and use of qualitative and quantitative indicators regarding women and men. Such sex-disaggregated data are vital to the accurate representation of the condition of women and men, and enable the evidence-based identification of issues, concerns and needs related to each. Based on this body of evidence, analysis can then be conducted for the purpose of understanding dynamics and trends, and particularly for responding to their medium- to long-term implications with regard to ensuring equal access to rights and opportunities. Such data and analyses are essential for the competent and effective design of policy responses and programs (such as those pertaining to employment and social protection), which in turn contribute to the development of the country as a whole.

With the aim of improving overall monitoring of the implementation

<sup>1</sup> The Institute of Statistics

of Albania's gender policy, in 2008, MoLSAEO convened the "Inter-Ministerial Working Group on Monitoring Gender Equality in Albania" (IMWG). Comprised of directors from various government departments, as well as statistical experts, and gender equality focal points from line ministries and central government institutions, the IMWG developed a comprehensive collection of indicators, which reflect the country's gender policy, as well as national and international commitments. This allowed the creation of linkages with broader monitoring and statistical processes undertaken by the government, including the monitoring of the MDGs. INSTAT was a member of the working group, as well as its technical advisor. The process was supported by UN Women and UNFPA. By developing the National Set of Harmonized Gender Indicators (HGI), MoLSAEO had previously initiated the creation of a co-ordinated, systematized inter-governmental mechanism for the monitoring of gender equality goals in Albania. This document was endorsed by the National Council on Gender Equality (April 6, 2010) and adopted through the Order of the Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (Ministerial Order no. 1220, dated May 27, 2010). The National Set of Harmonized Gender Indicators is a collection of qualitative and quantitative indicators across diverse, but inter-related, realms, which is used to monitor the status of women and men. There are economic indicators, as well as those marking social protection; access to health services; access to education, media representation and participation; decision-making power; and the prevalence of domestic violence.

The establishment of the IMWG and the adoption of the HGI are two important steps towards establishing improved and co-ordinated responses by the government. First, the process facilitated the adoption of a concerted approach to the implementation of the GoA's gender equality commitments. Second, it put forth the basis for coherent monitoring of these commitments by government institutions at central and local levels. Both steps are envisaged to subsequently feed into more systematic, evidenced-based policy development, and to support women and civil society groups in holding decision-makers to account.

It is in this context that the first National Report on Gender Equality and the Situation of Women (NRGESW) was produced. Using the HGI, the NRGESW summarizes key achievements and highlights substantive issues that still need to be addressed. The overall aim of the NRGESW is to facilitate the continuous monitoring – by government, civil society, and development partners – of the GoA's implementation of its commitments to gender equality and women's human rights in a transparent, harmonized, and simplified manner.

Albania's first NRGESW presents statistics and analysis in a format that non-gender specialists can readily understand. It is organized into nine chapters: development indicators; demographics; legal frameworks and institutional mechanisms; health; education; work, entrepreneurship and property rights; social policies and social services; political representation and equal participation; and domestic violence. Each chapter begins with a description of the issues within the

framework of international documents and commitments. The NRGESW presents statistics and analyses on the status of women and men in Albania, and highlights the current situation and recent changes. It also points to specific areas where improvement is required, in terms of data provision, as well as the enjoyment of de facto equality between women and men. Each chapter concludes with a collection of actions and recommendations.

The statistics and indicators contained in this report are drawn primarily from administrative sources, such as INSTAT and ministerial bodies<sup>2</sup>. In a few cases, statistics provided by the United Nations and other international organisations complement available data. In some cases, research Papers and qualitative analyses (to explain trends) are used to complement the analysis. However, there remains a large gap in terms of research on gender issues undertaken by ministries

and universities. The data presented in the NRGESW was cross-checked and validated by an advisory board; and every effort has been made to fully cite all sources. Due to data revisions and changes in methodology, differences between data drawn from different sources may exist. Still, careful comparison, analysis and the interpretation of currently available data enables the identification of national trends, highlights data gaps, and indicates areas where the harmonization of statistics is required.

The overall NRGESW process was guided and directed by a multidisciplinary advisory board,

convened by MoLSAEO and comprised of national gender experts from central and local governments, as well as academia and civil society. UN Women and representatives of the Government of Spain acted as observers. The piloting of the NRGESW process has been technically supported by UN Women and was made possible with funding from the Embassy of Spain and the One UN Coherence Fund.

<sup>2</sup> These include the Annual Statistical Yearbook, the Labour Force Survey, the Living Standard Measurement Survey, etc.

A

# Main Development Indicators in Albania

## Human development index

The **Human Development Index (HDI)**, which does not take differences between women and men into account, captures three major dimensions of human development (life expectancy; literacy and enrolment in education; and GDP per capita), and thereby provides a rough snapshot of the general development of a country. Between

2002 and 2011, the HDI increased in all three areas. Albania is classified among the countries with a high level of human development and occupies rank 70 (out of 173 countries) which is comparable to neighbouring transition countries. However, progress has not been uniformly spread between Albania's regions and is higher in urban areas, particularly in the capital.

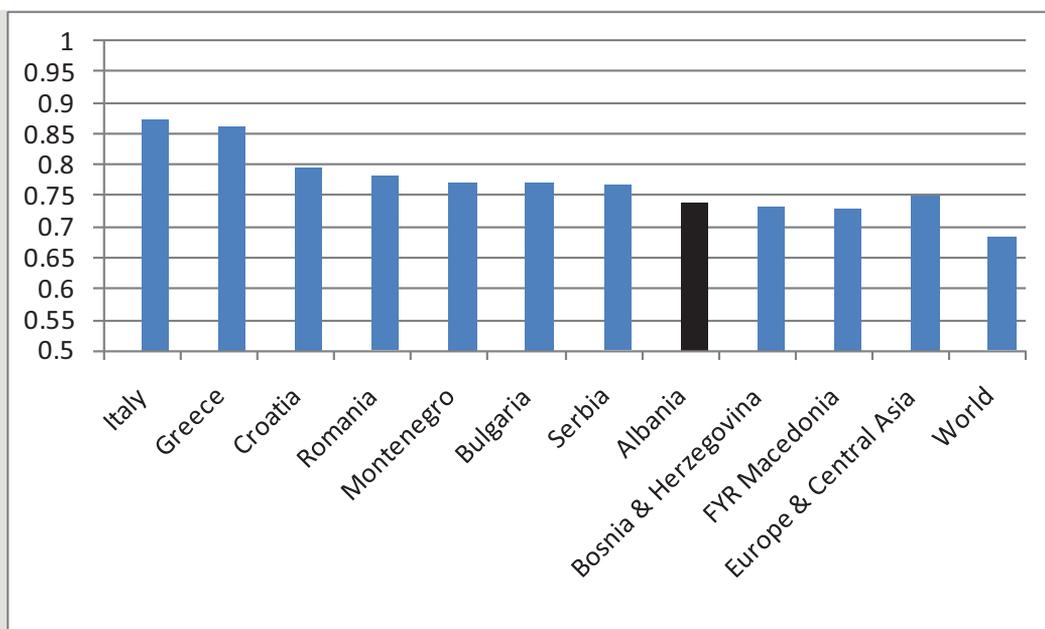


Figure 1: International comparison of human development

Source: Human Development Report, 2011

## Human poverty indexes

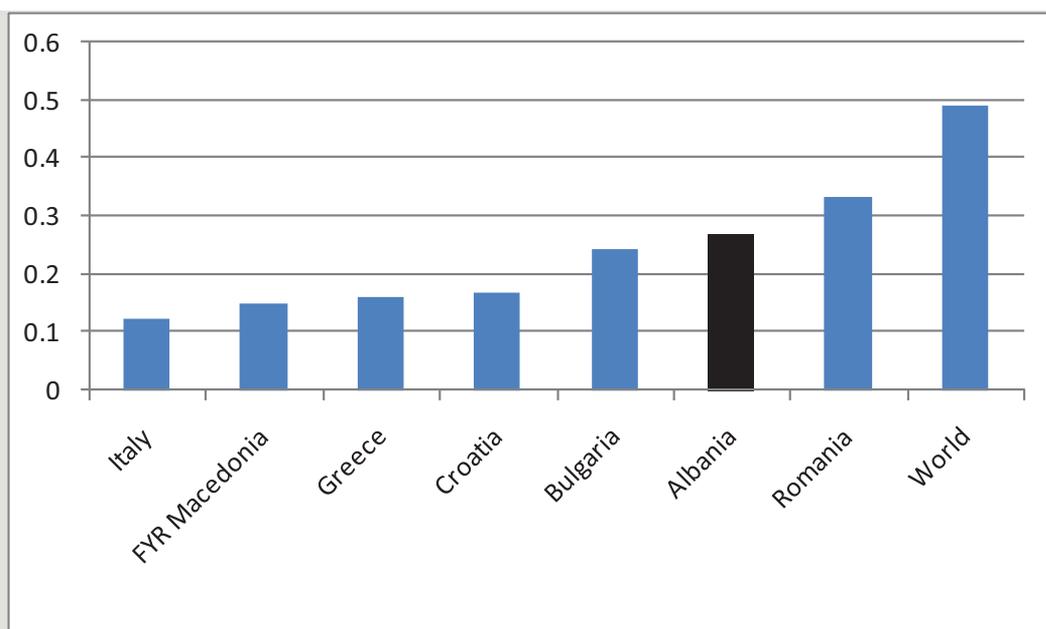
**Human Poverty Indexes (HPIs)** use additional subcomponents in developing and transitional countries, capturing some vital aspects of human development that are more relevant in these countries. Between 2005 and 2008, HPI-1, which includes

subcomponents such as access to drinking water sources, weight of children under five years of age, and probability of surviving to 40 years of age, improved primarily due to improved access to sustainable water sources in rural areas. The second

poverty index, HPI-2, outlines the shift of the population living below the poverty line and changes in unemployment rates, and includes illiteracy rates, as well as the probability of death before reaching 60 years of age. During the same period, HPI-2 indicators improved, primarily due to the reduction in the population living below the poverty line. However, improvement was observed in the more developed parts of the country,

between women and men is multi-dimensional and therefore requires more composite measurement. Towards this end, the **Gender Inequality Index (GII)** was introduced in 2010. GII reflects inequality between women and men regarding education, reproductive health, empowerment, and the labour market. Between 2006 and 2010, improvement in these areas was evident in Albania, mainly because of the increased proportion

Figure 2: Regional variation in gender inequality expressed by the Gender Inequality Index.



Source: Human Development Report, 2011

with no change in mountainous areas.<sup>3</sup> More recent data on poverty levels in Albania is currently unavailable.

## Gender inequality index

Between 2002 and 2008, the Gender-related Development Index, which describes inequality between women and men related to literacy, life expectancy, and education, increased from 0.771 to 0.816, reflecting progress in these areas. However, inequality

3 UNDP National Human Development Report - Albania 2010

of female students, higher number of women in diplomatic service, and some improvement in women's salaries.<sup>4</sup> According to the global Human Development Report 2011, Albania occupies rank 41 out of 146 countries. However, compared with other countries in the region, gender inequality remains higher in Albania than in Macedonia and Bulgaria, but lower than in Romania.<sup>5</sup>

4 ibid

5 Comparison with neighbouring countries cannot be made since Gender Inequality Index values for Bosnia & Herzegovina, Montenegro, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Serbia are currently unavailable.

# Demographics

## Population

**A**lbania's official population registered in the 2011 census was 2,831,471, of which 1,421,810 were male and 1,409,931 were female. This corresponds to 50.2 per cent men and 49.8 per cent women. Compared to 2001 figures, when the number of males per 100 females was reported to be 99.5, the sex ratio has been reversed and is now 100.8. This difference in sex ratio is more pronounced in rural areas (103) than in urban areas (100.3).

There are currently no straightforward explanations for this phenomenon, and the underlying reasons for the relative increase in the male population are being investigated.

For the first time, results of the 2011 census are showing a higher percentage of urban (53.7 per cent) than rural population (46.3 per cent), reflecting the pronounced internal migration trends from rural areas to peri-urban centers. The trend clearly poses challenges to urban planning





with regard to infrastructure, services, as well as employment. While international migration has been predominantly male-dominated, internal migration is characterized by a relatively high share of women: based on LSMS 2008 data, 20 per cent of women and 12 per cent of men were shown to have migrated within Albania.<sup>6</sup> This study also provides evidence for the fact that women's internal migration is positively correlated with their engagement in paid employment. In response to a changed social environment and in the absence of agricultural land, women make deliberate efforts to support their families by integrating into the peri-urban or urban area. As a result, internal migrant women were found to engage more in paid employment, and their involvement in unpaid labour decreased compared to women with a family member living outside Albania.

Out-migration from rural to urban areas poses challenges to rural development, as well as to urban planning. The lower population density in rural areas has led to the recent introduction of economizing measures, for example the closure of government offices and schools. Since particularly mountainous and remote areas are characterised by higher poverty levels, this recent trend raises concerns in how far access to services can be guaranteed for rural populations, especially women and girls, in the future. Clearly, services delivered by the local government also need to be ensured and safeguarded for those who do not migrate to urban centers. In this context, reproductive health care needs and care for the increasingly female share of elderly

6 Agolli, M., Ani Plaku & Ermira Danaj (2011) *Dealing with integration – the case of internal migrants in Albania.*

people in remote and mountainous areas are of particular concern.

## Population Growth

Compared to 2001 figures, Albania's overall population has decreased by 7.7 per cent. Between 1950 and 1990, the Albanian population grew by an average rate of 2.4 per cent. Based on INSTAT's evaluation, since 1990, the natural growth rate of Albania's population after transition has decreased to 1.9 per cent, primarily resulting from emigration and lower birth rates.

## Fertility

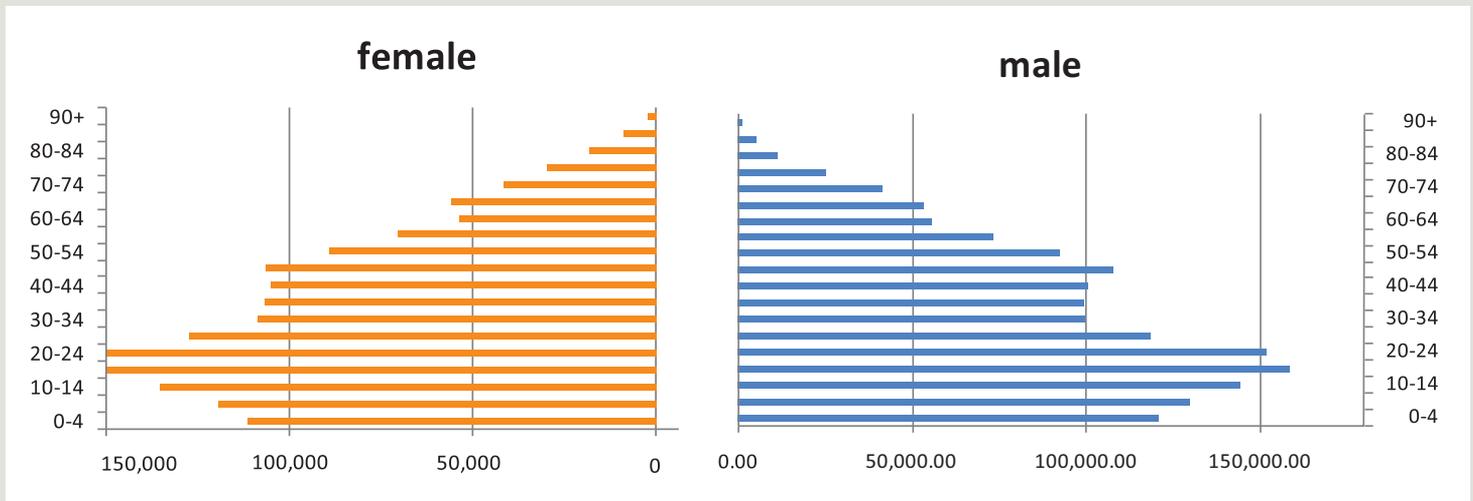
There has been a 50 per cent decrease in women's fertility rates, down from three children per woman in 1990 to 1.4 children per woman in 2008,<sup>7</sup> considering the current low pensions and low social insurance coverage of the working age population, the inter-generational economic burden for the young generation is increasing.

## Population structure per age

The most striking aspect of Albania's population is the relatively rapid transformation of its age structure during the past 40 years. While in 1960, there was a broad base of the very young, in 2008 the population pyramid is characterized by a low birth rate, an increase in the older generation, and a gender imbalance in those aged 20-44 years, due to male emigration.

7 Women and Men 2008, INSTAT

Figure 3:  
Population Pyramid 2008



Source: INSTAT, 2008

Projections based on the 2001 census data suggest that the Albanian population is showing the first signs of ageing. This is reflected by the increased average age of Albania's population from 27 years for males and 27.9 years for females in 1990 to 32.3 years for males and 33.3 years for females) respectively in 2008<sup>8</sup>. Likewise, the adult dependency rate, which is the ratio of a population aged 60 and above in relation to those aged 15-59 years, increased from 14.8 per cent in 1990 to 20.5 per cent in 2010.

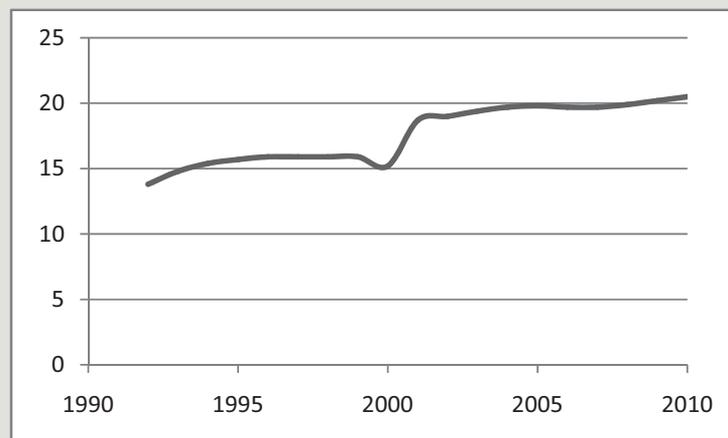


Figure 4:  
Increase  
in the  
percentage  
of population  
aged 60+ to  
population  
15-59 during  
the period  
1992-2010.

Source: UNICEF TransMonEE database<sup>9</sup>

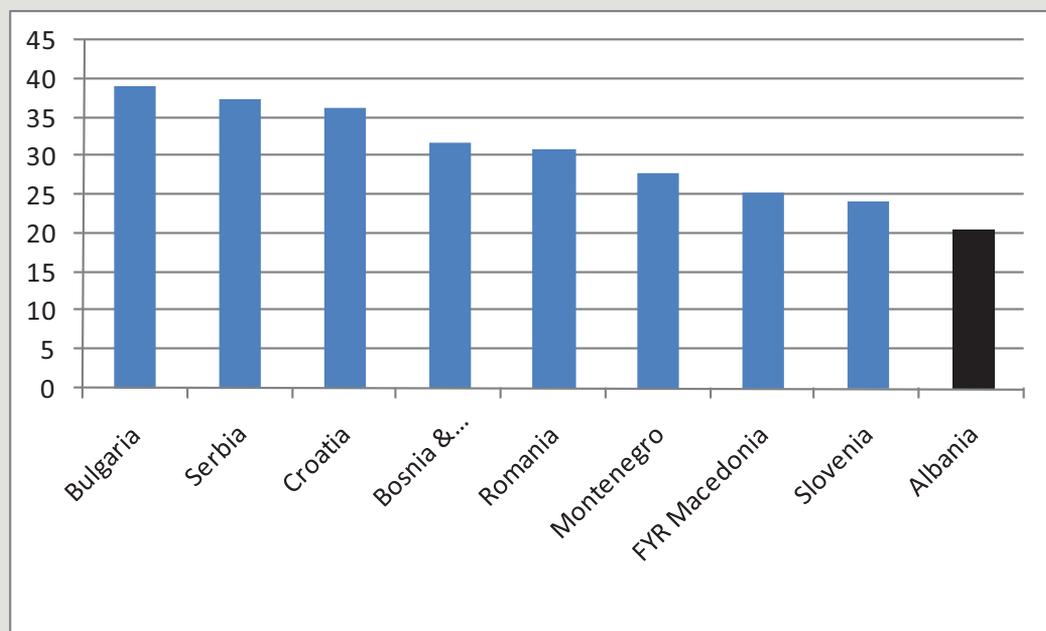
8 Ibid

9 Monitoring the Situation of Women and Children in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. <http://www.transmonee.org/index.html>

The average adult dependency rate of Albania is still significantly lower than that of the majority of countries in the region. However, the overall trend in all countries indicates that due to the increased life expectancy

and concomitant reduced birth rates, the number of elderly people - and their concomitant dependence on the younger generations - is steadily increasing.

Figure 5: Average adult dependency rate (per cent) in Albania and the region.



Source: UNICEF TransMonEE database<sup>10</sup>

## Migration

The population pyramid in particular reflects the effect of international migration as a marked loss of males aged 20 to 44. International migration shows a significant gender composition: according to LSMS 2008 data, during the period 1990-2007, 19 per cent males but only 2 per cent females migrated internationally<sup>11</sup>.

While overall international migration has passed its peak, two strands of international migration can be distinguished currently: (i) a higher share in less educated migrants from rural areas; and (ii) an increase in migration rates of higher educated women<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

<sup>11</sup> Agolli, M., Ani Plaku & Ermira Danaj (2011) Dealing with integration – the case of internal migrants in Albania.

<sup>12</sup> Azzarri, C. and Calogero Carletto (2009) Modeling Migration Dynamics in Albania. Policy Research Working paper 4945. The World Bank

However, female international migration patterns have been shown to remain strongly entrenched in household ties and dynamics and cannot be automatically interpreted as a sign of women's empowerment and independence.<sup>13</sup>

As mentioned above, 2011 census data identified a decrease in the percentage of the female population. However, due to women's low participation in international migration, this decrease in female population cannot be explained by emigration effects alone and requires further investigation.

The recent economic crisis has enriched Albania's migration

<sup>13</sup> Stecklov, G., Calogero Carletto, Carlo Azzarri, and Benjamin Davies (2008). Agency, Education and Networks: Gender and International Migration from Albania. Policy Research Working Paper 4507. The World Bank.

dynamics by an increase of returnees as a result of economic conditions in host countries, mainly Greece. Recent studies investigating their overall welfare conditions revealed that returnees are coming back to increasingly poorer or impoverished households.<sup>14</sup> Unfortunately, sex-disaggregated data on repatriation is currently unavailable, and the dynamics and gender dimension of reintegration require further research and study.

## Life expectancy

A comparison of figures from 2005 and 2008 indicates that life expectancy has increased. According to 2005 estimates<sup>15</sup>, females had a life expectancy of 77.2 years and men of 72.4 years. In 2008 life expectancies were reported to be 79.8 years and 73.4 years, respectively<sup>16</sup>. Higher life expectancy in women is biologically determined, resulting in an invariably higher female population in those aged 60 and above. Compared with other countries in the region, in Albania life expectancy for both women and men is slightly higher<sup>17</sup>. At the same time, when life expectancy is analysed in conjunction with health indicators, the share of lifetime spent in a healthy state is significantly lower for the Albanian population compared both with the European and the regional average<sup>18</sup>.

- 14 Azzarri, C. and Calogero Carletto (2009) Modeling Migration Dynamics in Albania. Policy Research Working paper 4945. The World Bank
- 15 LSMS 2002-2005
- 16 Global Human Development Report 2010 <http://europeandcis.undp.org/gender/beijing/show/2A329A38-F203-1EE9-BBF58C13BF9D5064#lifeexpectancy>
- 18 According to the UNDP Human Development Report 2009 the share of unhealthy life expectancy is 16 per cent of total life expectancy in Albania.

## Mortality

Statistical indices on mortality according to gender indicate that values for mortality in men are higher compared with those of women: the male-to-female mortality ratio is 1.3 where men account for 56 per cent, and women for 44 per cent of deaths<sup>19</sup>.

## Families

Figures related to marital status reflect pronounced differences between women and men. As a result, they point to the requirement for respective gender-sensitive policies that respond to the needs of specific groups of women, in particular single, divorced, widowed women, and women who manage households. In Albania, the average age of marriage is 23.3 years for women and 29 years for men. Within the young population up to 34 years, the number of married women and men is almost equal. In the age group 34-39 years old, a significantly lower number of women are married compared to men in each of the age sub-groups<sup>20</sup>.

Furthermore, the population data of the 2001 census show that over 12 per cent of women older than 20 years are widowed, compared to 2 per cent of men above 25 years<sup>21</sup>.

There has also been a sharp increase in divorces from 19.1 divorces per 100 marriages in 2006 to 27 divorces per 100 marriages in 2009<sup>22</sup>.

The percentage of registered female-headed households is 13 per cent, according to LSMS 2008. However, due to male out-migration, estimates of de-facto numbers are significantly higher. The extent to which de-facto female-headed households are affected by male

- 19 INSTAT, Women and Men 2008: 8-9
- 20 INSTAT, Women and Men 2008: 8-9
- 21 Women and Men 2008, INSTAT
- 22 Albania in Figures 2010, INSTAT

returning as a result of the economic crisis, particularly in neighbouring countries, remains to be investigated.

Demographic changes and internal rural-to-urban migration have also influenced the size of the average household. Comparing figures from 1979 and 2011, the decrease has been more pronounced in rural areas (from 6.2 to 4.1 household members) than in

urban areas (from 4.6 to 3.6 household members). The more moderate decrease in household members in urban areas can be explained by the influx of people from rural areas as well as by prevailing housing arrangements; which are generally, not based on the nuclear family but characterised by inter-generational co-habitation<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>23</sup> Census 2011, preliminary results. INSTAT 2011:15

# Legal Frameworks and Institutional Mechanisms

## Legal framework

The Albanian government has developed a comprehensive legal and institutional framework for the promotion of gender equality and the protection of women's rights. The equal rights of women and men are enshrined in Albania's highest legal act, the **Constitution**, which was adopted in 1998; Article 18 guarantees equality of women and men before the law as well as the principle of non-discrimination. The country ratified the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women** (CEDAW) in 1993, and its Optional Protocol in 2003. Albania regularly reports to the CEDAW Committee on Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its progress in complying with and implementing CEDAW provisions. The government's 2010 country report was supplemented by two shadow reports, prepared by civil society. The Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, provided in 2010 in response to Albania's latest reporting, serve as a guideline for follow-up and address the main areas where improvement of gender equality is required<sup>24</sup>.

They focus, in short, on the need for government to develop inclusive

24 Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women – Albania. CEDAW 2010. Accessed February 17, 2012 at: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/cedaws46.htm>

policy approaches and to increase its efforts that ensure women's and girls' enjoyment of substantive (*de facto*) equality in all spheres of life.

Albania's gender legislation and policy reflect the country's process of accession to and integration into the European Union. By signing the **Stabilisation and Association Agreement** in 2006, Albania has committed itself to adopting the *acquis communautaire*, the legal heritage of the European Union. This, in turn, requires the approximation of domestic legislation with EU legislation, and the continuing harmonization of the national institutional framework with EU standards. Equality is one of the guiding principles of the EU; it is also a goal and task and an integral part of the **EC Treaty** and the **EU Charter on Fundamental Rights**. Albania's gender mainstreaming obligations are also derived from the five priority areas spelled out in the **EU strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015**<sup>25</sup>.

The government uses the *acquis communautaire* as a reference points for assessing the alignment of national legislation with EU requirements and for monitoring compliance with laws

25 Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015. European Commission, 2010. Accessed February 24, 2012 at: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=6568&langId=en>



by the state. Albania's progress in the areas of gender equality and human rights is monitored and covered in EU country progress reports on an annual basis.

Equality between women and men in all spheres of private and public life is further delineated in legislation, such as in law No. 9970 "**On Gender Equality in Society**" (GEL), which entered into force in 2008. The aim of this law is to: a) ensure effective protection against gender-based discrimination; b) define measures to guarantee equal opportunities for men and women in order to eliminate gender-related discrimination; and c) specify the responsibilities of state authorities at all levels for drafting and implementing normative acts and policies that support gender equality. The GEL mandates gender mainstreaming as the strategy for achieving gender equality to integrate a gender perspective in all legislative, policy-making, planning, implementing and monitoring processes. The law also addresses discrimination and harassment, and introduces specific temporary measures in political and public decision-making positions to guarantee at least 30 per cent participation of the under-represented sex. The law addresses gender equality and protection from discrimination in the sectors of education, employment,

and the media; and makes specific reference to the need for evaluating unpaid work. Furthermore, the GEL prescribes the obligatory collection of sex-disaggregated data by all state bodies, and foresees the establishment of institutional structures and mechanisms for furthering gender equality goals.

Since 2008, seven specific temporary measures ensuing from national gender legislation were implemented, including the equal participation in decision making, the implementation of the electoral code, and on the Law on the Safety and Health in the Work-Place. Meanwhile, there is also an instruction by the Ministry of Education, which aims at increasing the number of women at management level of schools.

Two other laws explicitly regulate gender equality in Albania: law no. 9669 "**On Measures against Violence in Family Relations**" (LMVFR), adopted in 2007 (with amendments in 2007 and 2010); and law no. 10221, "**On Protection against Discrimination**", adopted in 2010. This law has been hailed internationally for its comprehensiveness; it prohibits discrimination in political, economic and social spheres not only on the grounds of race, ethnicity, disability or religion, but also on the grounds of sex, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation. The LMVFR is designed to prevent and reduce domestic violence, and prescribes the adequate response to, as well as services for, victims. Domestic violence can be prosecuted under the general crime of assault in the Criminal Code<sup>26</sup>. Section VI, entitled "Sexual Crimes" addresses rape, while article 110a explicitly

<sup>26</sup> See <http://www.legislationline.org/documents/action/popup/id/6683>

penalizes the trafficking of persons. Furthermore, the Family Code<sup>27</sup> and the Labour Code<sup>28</sup> specifically refers to various aspects of women's rights and entitlements in the private sphere as well as in economic life.

**Law revision.** Triggered by gender-sensitive analysis and fuelled by experience in the actual implementation of laws, since 2008, there has been a significant increase in the drafting and approval of secondary legislation on gender equality, anti-discrimination, and domestic violence. The Law on Measures against Violence in Family Relations includes the highest number of bylaws; which themselves address inter-institutional coordination and involve different line ministries, including the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Health.

One particularly significant achievement in terms of ensuring women's equal access to social services is amendment to the law no. 9355, date March 10, 2005, on "Social Assistance and Services" which provides priority treatment to women-headed households, women in the process of divorce, victims of trafficking after leaving the institutions of social care, victims of domestic violence, mothers with several children, Roma and Egyptian families as well as families with orphans<sup>29</sup>.

Furthermore, two amendments of Albania's penal code in March 2012 are of relevance to women's rights: punishment for perpetrators of

27 See [http://www.mpcs.gov.al/dpshb/images/stories/files/kodet/3.3.2\\_Albanian\\_Family\\_Code.pdf](http://www.mpcs.gov.al/dpshb/images/stories/files/kodet/3.3.2_Albanian_Family_Code.pdf)

28 See <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/SERIAL/41344/63433/F1167646799/ALB41344.PDF>

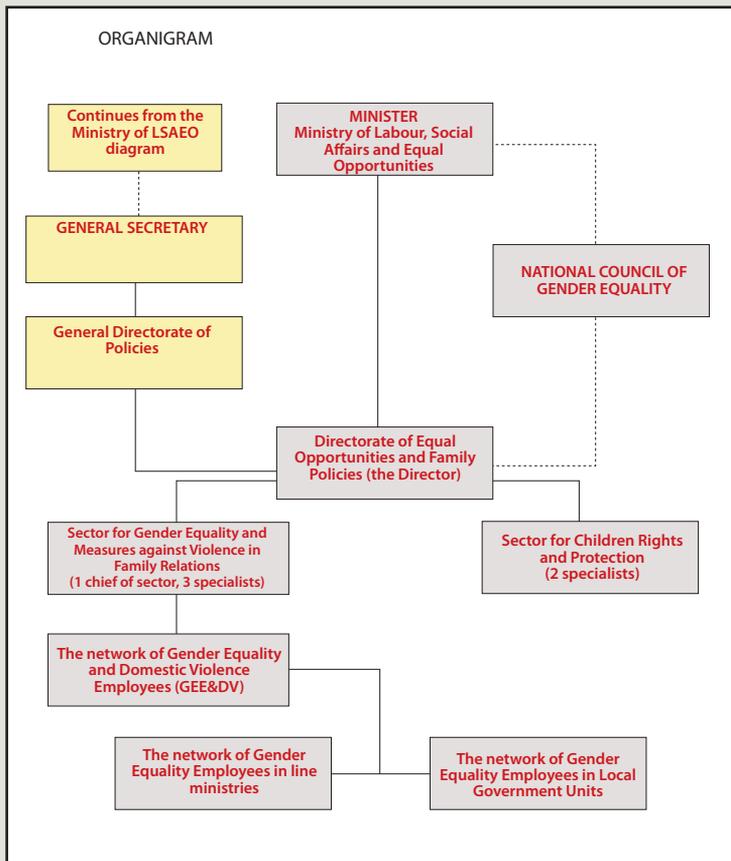
29 Amendment of Law no.10 399, on "Economic Aid and Social Services", 17.03.2011

domestic violence/ violence against women (VaW) was significantly increased; and family voting was established as a criminal act, thereby strengthening and safeguarding women's democratic right to cast their vote freely.

At the same time, there are still gaps. For example, and as also pointed out in the CEDAW Concluding Observations as well as in EU annual progress reports, the following legislation requires gender sensitive revision: (i) the electoral code regarding the application of the 30 per cent quota; (ii) the labour code and anti-discrimination law regarding the burden of proof; (iii) the penal code regarding criminalization of prostitutes and victims of trafficking, and regarding prosecution of traffickers and conspiring officers; (iv) the penal code regarding the punishment of internal trafficking; and (v) women's property rights.

## Institutional mechanisms

The GEL identifies the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MoLSAEO) as the authority responsible for issues of gender equality. The Ministry's main function is to monitor compliance with relevant laws and the principles of nondiscrimination and equality between men and women by the state. The Minister of MoLSAEO carries out these functions with the assistance of specialized structures, namely the **Directorate for Equal Opportunities and Family Policies (DEOFP)**. Operating since 2006, DEOFP's overall mandate is to mainstream gender equality within MoLSAEO, then within the line ministries. DEOFP engages in: (i) drafting and



formulating programs, policies, and sub-legal acts; (ii) assessing, analyzing and prioritizing policy and programs drafts; (iii) monitoring and implementing policies and programs; iv) initiating studies and analysing equal opportunity area, (v) evaluating policies and programs on gender equality, and vi) preparing the meeting of the National Council on Gender Equality. DEOFP is composed of two sectors: the Sector for Gender Equality and Measures against Violence, and the Sector for Children's Rights and Protection. A recent functional analysis of DEOFP revealed not only the need for an increased in financial, human and technical resources but primarily concluded that the administrative legal and organisational frameworks within which DEOFP operates need to be better matched and consolidated with DEOFP's actual mandate, functions, and day-to-day work<sup>30</sup>.

30 Hanife Kurti, "Functional Analysis" (2011). Prepared in the framework of the UN Joint

Key recommendations therefore included the introduction of more adaptable and dynamic management systems and standard operating procedures that focus on process management as the guiding principle for the fulfillment of DEOFP's functions. This is particularly important for DEOFP's future role in the coordination and supervision of gender mainstreaming activities in other ministries, the gradual assembly of a national body of statistical evidence on gender issues, for gender analysis in general, and for the introduction of a performance monitoring system. The development of standard operating procedures on DEOFP's five core functions would also have to be reflected by similar frameworks in all other line ministries in order to standardize and unify functions related to the implementation of gender equality policies across all line ministries.

MOLSAEO has also drafted a guide and a set of regulations for the inter-institutional cooperation required for implementation of the GEL. However, existing institutional arrangements, structures, responsibilities, methodologies and instruments within the administration do not yet encourage effective coordination and collaboration across sectors. They are also insufficient for performing the wide range of functions MoLSAEO is supposed to assume in the promotion of gender equality and the prevention of domestic violence.

The duty to propose gender equality policies rests with the **National Council for Gender Equality**<sup>31</sup>. This council

Programme on Gender Equality in Albania, Support to the Implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality and Domestic Violence (NSGE-DV)- Advancing Democratic Governance in Albania

31 Exempted are issues discussed by the

advises the government in setting the direction of state policies on gender mainstreaming and gender equality, and ensures gender mainstreaming in all areas. The council is composed of nine deputy ministers and three civil society members and is headed by the Minister of MoLSAEO. Since its establishment in 2009, the National Council on Gender Equality has taken six decisions and approved several recommendations related to the national set of harmonized gender indicators, the creation of a national referral mechanism for victims of domestic violence, and the drafting of specific action plans. The National Council for Gender Equality is a particularly significant structure, since it is strategically positioned to advocate for the mainstreaming of gender equality goals in various sectors and across all ministries. In the future, it is envisaged that the NCGE will play a special and pro-active role in promoting concerted gender policy implementation, such as gender-responsive budgeting, the establishment of the Gender Equality Employee structure, and the collection of gender-specific data in each of the ministries.

At the parliamentary level, the **Committee on Labour, Social Affairs and Health**<sup>32</sup> is responsible for women and family issues, in addition to labour relations, social affairs, social insurance, and health. This commission examines draft laws, undertakes legal initiatives in the areas of its expertise, and establishes co-operation with MoLSAEO on issues of gender equality and children. During 2011, the committee was convened eleven times and voted on all gender-related draft-laws and

32 National Labour Council.  
See: [http://www.parlament.al/web/Perberja\\_10065\\_1.php](http://www.parlament.al/web/Perberja_10065_1.php), accessed February 24, 2021

relevant draft law amendments<sup>33</sup>. With the introduction of the anti-discrimination law, the **Commissioner** institution was set up in 2010. The Office of the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination operates with several sub-commissioners dealing with various aspects of discrimination. It examines complaints by individuals, groups of individuals or organizations on issues of discrimination, including gender, but also gender identity, pregnancy, sexual orientation, family or marital status, and parental responsibility. It will also conduct investigations, monitor the implementation of the law, and impose sanctions. Furthermore, through awareness-raising and education activities the Commissioner institution is envisaged to assist law enforcement by the state. However, the Office has become operational only very recently (2011) and its capacity to manage cases and encourage potential victims to come forward was found to be limited<sup>34</sup>.

The institution clearly needs strengthening and support in order to become an effective mechanism through which citizens, especially women, can challenge the wide range of gender discrimination that remains prevalent in the country.

Article 13/3 of the GEL stipulates the appointment of **Gender Equality Employees (GEE)** in every line ministry<sup>35</sup>; Article 14 obliges the appointment of GEEs in all local governing bodies (i.e. municipalities, communes, prefectures,

33 See: [http://www.parlament.al/web/Veprimtaria\\_10067\\_1.php?evn=srm&rpp=2&rp=15&msv=msvSrc&ser=376](http://www.parlament.al/web/Veprimtaria_10067_1.php?evn=srm&rpp=2&rp=15&msv=msvSrc&ser=376), accessed February 24, 2021

34 Albania 2011 Progress Report Albania. European Commission, 2011. See: [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key\\_documents/2011/package/al\\_rapport\\_2011\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2011/package/al_rapport_2011_en.pdf), accessed February 20, 2012

35 MoLSAEO/DEOFP GEE database 2011



and qark). The GEEs replace the previous and informal system of Gender Focal Points. GEEs at central (ministerial) and local government unit (LGU) levels are mandated to guide gender mainstreaming efforts and are foreseen to assume monitoring and promotional roles. GEEs are envisaged to support the mainstreaming of gender equality issues into policies, programs, and plans, and to monitor the implementation of gender equality commitments at central and local level. GEEs are also foreseen to play a key role in monitoring the national set of harmonised gender indicators; conducting gender analyses to inform policy development; and in fostering partnerships with other governmental and non-governmental actors and gender advocates.

Regarding the gender equality structure at the central level, only the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Defense have formalized a Gender Equality Employee (GEE) in compliance with the obligations resulting from the Law on Gender Equality in Society. The diversity specialist within the Albanian State Police operates in a similar function. There is an informal Gender Focal Point in several of the other ministries.

Prior to the May 2011 local elections, roughly one fifth of all municipalities had a formalised GEE. Given the limited human and financial resources available at the local level, one individual has often filled two positions – the GEE and the domestic violence expert. Such GEEs are often known as Gender Equality and Domestic Violence employees (GEE/DV), and play a key role in co-ordinating the response to domestic violence at the local level. The local elections in

May 2011 resulted in a significant staff turn-over. In 11 of 13 municipalities, the previous and formalised GEE was removed or replaced by a person appointed by the new administration. Institutional memory, experience and expertise were lost. While several prefectures have appointed one of their staff members as informal Gender Focal Points, there are no GEEs at commune or qark levels. The establishment of GEEs at central and local levels is materialising very slowly. At the municipal level, some positive pilot experiences exist in the establishment of GEEs. However, a concerted effort is required that addresses and clarifies the following: (i) the source of financial resources allocated for GEEs and their work; (ii) responsibilities regarding GEE formalisation on the part of the Ministry in charge of local government; (iii) managerial issues and mechanisms for GEEs' reporting (including the feeding of information from the local to the central level); and (iv) concrete development of work plans. Not all central and local institutions currently have command over the human, financial, managerial and technical resources required for the effective functioning of the gender equality mechanism. The apparent gap between the purpose of such a structure on the one hand, and the actual state of implementation and impact on the other, needs to be closed.

## Gender policy framework

As a cross-cutting strategy, the **National Strategy for Gender Equality and Eradication of Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence**

**2011-2015** (NSGE-GBV-DV) outlines the institutional strategies and mechanisms to guide the inclusion of gender equality in public policy, reduce gender-based discrimination, as well as prevent and counter gender-based violence. The NSGE-GBV-DV is the outcome of a thorough evaluation and revision process of the previous strategy. The value added of this new strategy lies in the clear re-focusing on key issues through the reduction from previously eight to four objectives. Along its improved structure, concrete action plans were devised, based on which costing could be undertaken. Involved actors were explicitly assigned roles and responsibilities, which further enable implementation. Furthermore, efforts towards monitoring and evaluation are supported by the existence of a comprehensive national set of national gender indicators, which mirrors the key issues and actions contained in the strategy.

Numerous activities are undertaken towards implementing the NSGE-GBV-DV. The majority of activities are initiated, supported and implemented by national non-state actors and donors, in collaboration with government institutions at central and local levels. The strategy aims to contribute to the achievement of four strategic outcomes:

Strategic Outcome 1: All Albanian citizens (women and men) enjoy freedom from violence and rights in practice and take on responsibilities in society;

Strategic Outcome 2: All Albanian citizens (women and men) have employment and economic, social and political activity aligned with and appropriate to their abilities and experiences;

Strategic Outcome 3: State institutions and practices protect all citizens (women and men) from violence and support them to facilitate their full participation in society regardless of gender;

Strategic Outcome 4: All Albanian citizens (women and men) contribute to the economic, social and political development of Albania and the integration processes to the EU.

The NSGE-GBV is guided by four priority areas and is accompanied by its action plan with interventions and indicators specified for each of them. The priority areas are:

- Strengthening Institutional and Legal Mechanisms (National Gender Machinery): Activities are aimed at (i) improving the National Gender Machinery at the central and local level to fulfill their duties as foreseen in the GEL; (ii) reviewing Albanian legislation to determine compliance with international and national gender equality standards; and (iii) increasing the capacity of central and local government to implement and monitor the legal framework for gender equality in Albania.
- Increasing Women's Participation in Decision-Making: This goal is to be achieved by (i) taking measures



that ensure the full access of women to politics; (ii) increasing the representation and participation of women in decision-making capacities to 30 per cent at all levels through temporary special measures; (iii) increasing the participation of women in peacekeeping and police structures; and (iv) increasing the capability of women as citizens to participate in decision-making and leadership.

- The “30 per cent quota” (a minimum proportion of at least 30 per cent of the lesser-represented sex in candidates’ lists of political parties) was applied in the national elections in 2009 and the local elections in May 2011. A detailed analysis is presented in the chapter on “Equal Participation and Political Representation”.
- Empowering Girls and Women Economically: Activities will include (i) increasing women’s economic independence by improving access to loans, support programs, and social care and protection services; (ii) professional training of women through measures to support the participation of women in the labour market; and (iii) expanding employment programs for women and girls.
- For a detailed analysis of the current situation, see the chapter on “Economic Empowerment and the Life of Work”.
- Reducing Gender-Based Violence: This goal will be achieved by: (i) punishing gender-based violence (GBV) through legislative means; (ii) preventing GBV via awareness-raising campaigns; (iii) protecting and supporting victims of violence

and abusers with services that rehabilitate and re-integrate victims; and (iv) building public administration capacities at all levels to respond to GBV.

Rich material exists on the issue of domestic violence in Albania, including prevalence rates and circumstances, and to a lesser degree on all other forms of violence against women. Since 2010, there has been a gradual increase in the number of municipalities that have established a referral system known as the co-ordinated community response to domestic violence (CCR). There are currently 12 municipalities with a domestic violence help-line, operated by the municipality itself or by a local NGO. A detailed analysis of progress and the challenges is presented in the chapter on “Domestic Violence”.

**National alignment.** As a cross-cutting strategy, the NSGE-GBV-DV has implications for a wide range of government institutions in various sectors. In order to effectively work towards the over-arching goal of gender equality amongst women and men, as well as girls and boys in Albania, responsibility for respective tasks and activities must be taken by each of the sectors. Simultaneously, the contents of the cross-cutting NSGE-GBV-DV still need to be reflected in, and mainstreamed into, all existing sector policies and, in fact, into several other cross-cutting strategies as well.

**Policy gaps.** Policy area number three of the NSGE-GBV-DV focuses on women’s participation in economic life and deserves special attention. For the moment, women’s economic empowerment is being addressed

in terms of increasing women's employment, and towards this end, specific programs exist. However, gender-sensitive approaches to economic empowerment must include, and be based on, the wider aim of reducing poverty and promoting social inclusion. As also reflected in the CEDAW Concluding Observations and the EU Strategy for Equality between Women and Men, economic empowerment policies need to aim at women's economic independence through expanding and improving women's agency, access to loans, support programs, training, and structures for care and social protection. There is also a lack of policies geared towards (i) entrepreneurship of women; and (ii) the empowerment of rural women as an integral part of rural development. In future policy revision processes, the following aspects should be addressed:

- Employment policies for women and young women, as well as women in need do not yet spell out the specific and concrete steps of how such policies will be implemented, and the mechanisms and tools to be used in their implementation.
- Policies on professional training need to be gender-responsive and based on studies investigating the status of women in the labour market, including formal and informal employment.
- Policies for increasing the equal economic independence of women are narrowly focused on increasing women's access to soft loans. To be inclusive, however, policies would specifically need to target vulnerable and poor women, and minority women,



including women with disabilities.

- The rural development strategy of Albania makes reference to women. However, concrete plans and actions are limited, and gender equality concepts still need to be mainstreamed into the strategy.

**Monitoring implementation.** With support by UN Women and the Inter-Institutional Working Group on Statistics, the national set of harmonized indicators on gender equality and status of women in Albania was established<sup>36</sup>. The Set is in line with Albania's national and international obligations regarding gender equality and provides a detailed and comprehensive collection of indicators required for monitoring progress on the implementation of NSGE-GBV-DV.

**Financing gender equality.** The previous strategy was significantly under-budgeted, and the shortcoming of costing had been noticed from the very beginning. Funding of activities was also jeopardized by the lack of planning of required financial and human resources and by the moderate, and at times weakly aligned, donor support for gender equality. Against this background, costing of the new NSGE-GBV-DV was undertaken in 2011. Results will have to be reflected by respective adequate allocations within the national budget for 2013.

Capacity building towards gender

<sup>36</sup> Adopted by order no. 1220 date May 27 2010 of the Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.

responsive budgeting has been initiated in the Ministry of Finance, and with the Council of Ministers and MoLSAEO. At municipality level, gender responsive budgeting was successfully piloted under UN Women support. The results and impact of this activity clearly point to the need for replication (see Chapter on "Access to Social Services").

#### **Gender equality at the local level.**

Overall, the NSGE-GBV-DV and the national set of harmonised indicators put the emphasis on the central government. In order to be effective; however, national policy goals must also be translated into action at the local level. While some pilot projects exemplify what municipalities can do in concrete

terms in order to fulfill gender equality obligations in line with the national strategy, the extent to which gender equality is currently being mainstreamed into local policy-making and governance is very low. The European charter for equality between women and men can serve as a reference point for communes, municipalities and qarks, and may assist policy-makers responsible for Albania's decentralisation process<sup>37</sup>. Support is required for communes, municipalities and qarks, as well as for establishing mechanisms that would ensure the monitoring of gender policy implementation at local and regional levels.

<sup>37</sup> The European Charter for equality between women and men in local life. Council of European Municipalities and Regions, 2006.

## » Recommended actions

### **Capacities**

- Increase the human resources, skills and capacities at central and local administration level in order to ensure mainstreaming of gender equality goals and the implementation of the NSGE-GBV-DV

### **Structures and mechanisms**

- Accelerate the operationalisation and formalisation of GEEs in ministries and local government units
- Develop concrete and specific GEE work-plans, and foresee actions in the annual budget of ministries and LGUs
- Strengthen capacities and efficacy of inter-ministerial collaboration and co-ordination in the implementation of actions which derive from GEL, DV Law and NSGE-DV-DV
- Increase efficacy of Ombudsperson structure and mechanism
- Strengthen the collection, processing, analysis and interpretation of sex disaggregated statistics and gender data at central and local level

### **Policy**

- Mainstream gender equality goals into all sector and cross-cutting strategies, including their action plans

- Mainstream women's economic empowerment and equal economic independence into employment policies
- Mainstream gender equality goals into all strategies relevant for local governance and development, particularly into the Rural Development Strategy
- Devise a policy on rural women
- Support LGUs in mainstreaming of gender equality goals into their local development plans and respective budgeting and implementation

### **Financing gender equality**

- Determine share of national budget for implementing GEL and DV Law
- Strengthen capacities and procedures for determining, on an annual basis, the proportion of national budget and sector wide budgets to support implementation of GEL, DV Law and NSGE-GBV-DV
- Strengthen capacities and procedures for determining, on an annual basis, the proportion of budgets within line ministries and local public authorities allocated to support gender equality commitments in their ministry/their territories
- Allocate sufficient national funds for the implementation of GEL DV Law and NSGE-GBV
- Support municipalities in engaging in GRB
- Support the Ministry of Finance in undertaking GRB

# Health

The enjoyment of the right to the highest standard of health is vital to women's and men's life and well-being and their ability to participate in all areas of public and private life. However, women's and men's health is determined by the social, political and economic context of their lives, as well as by their biology. As a result, women's and men's health needs are specific, and they are different. For example, women's reproductive health needs are of particular concern.

A major barrier to the realization of women's right to health is inequality - between men and women and among women in different rural and urban settings, socio-economic strata and ethnic groups. Discrimination against women, men, girls and boys - particularly from vulnerable groups - in the delivery of affordable high quality health care must therefore be addressed, as are the specific health needs of boys and men.

Adequate responses to women's and men's health needs depend on four preconditions: (i) the existence of sex-disaggregated data for all health-related issues; (ii) the harmonization and streamlining of data collection and processing undertaken by different government institutions involved in health responses; (iii) gender-sensitive analysis and interpretation of such data; and (iv) the inclusion of gender-sensitive data and analysis for evidence-based planning and gender-sensitive policy making.

This chapter has limitations. Few sex-disaggregated data are available, and where they exist, they are not categorised into age, ethnicity, spatial residence, and educational, economic, and marital status. Furthermore, different sources (administrative data, surveys, UN statistics, etc.) cite different numbers and sometimes divergent trends in discussing the same issue. Throughout this chapter, such discrepancies are highlighted and, where possible, explained. There are also gaps in



knowledge regarding various gender issues and health, including those that are of high relevance for vulnerable groups. Though some studies exist on the Roma<sup>38</sup>, gaps in research and information are evident regarding the health needs of women (and men) with disabilities, as well as members of the Egyptian and gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) communities. No information exists on the share of

38 Ibid

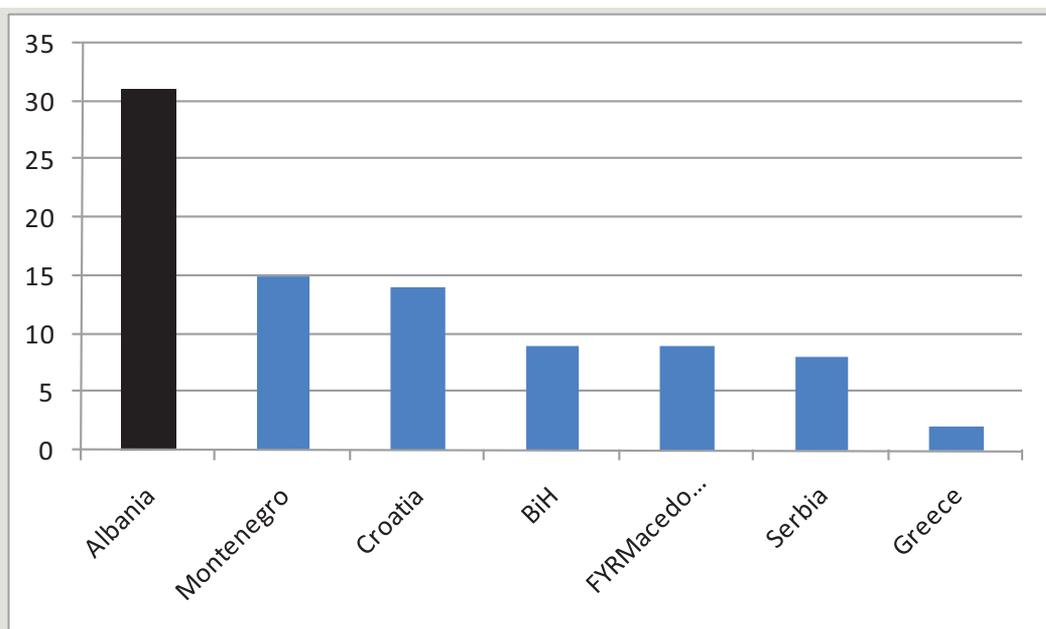
the state budget spent on women's and men's health needs, as they relate to the HGI.

There is sex-disaggregated data available from the Ministry of Health, although generally the amount and quality of the data currently available in Albania is insufficient for developing gender-sensitive and inclusive responses in the health sector. Without such information, the development, planning and budgeting of targeted, needs-based responses poses a real

live births in 1990 to 31 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2008. This is still higher compared to other countries in the Balkan region.<sup>39</sup>

According to the Ministry of Health (MoH), a gynecologist or obstetrician, midwife, or trained auxiliary is present at 99.4 per cent of all births. According to APHS 2008-09, 97 per cent of all pregnant women receive antenatal care at least once during their pregnancy, with slightly lower rates among women aged 35-49 (93

Figure 6: Estimated maternal mortality rate (number of deaths per 100,000 live births) for 2008 in countries in the Balkan region.



Source: WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA and The World Bank, 2010.

challenge. As a result, this chapter can only present a general overview on women's health needs and gender issues in the health sector in Albania. In doing so, it also addresses the required policy responses and most pressing actions to be undertaken. Data presented is drawn primarily from national surveys and UN databases.

## Maternal mortality

Maternal mortality decreased significantly from 48 deaths per 100,000

per cent), those with more than four previous births (93 per cent), women in the mountain areas (92 per cent), and women in the lowest wealth quintile (93 per cent). However, multiple births, poverty, residence in remote areas, and age impact negatively on the incidence of high-risk pregnancies. Therefore, special efforts are required to ensure outreach to women in these sub-groups.

<sup>39</sup> Trends in Maternal Mortality 2000-2008 WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA and The World Bank, 2010. Accessed February 20, 2012 at: [http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2010/9789241500265\\_eng.pdf](http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2010/9789241500265_eng.pdf)

## Neonatal, infant, and under-five mortality

Figures for neonatal mortality rates are quite low, and in 2010 were reported to be nine per 1,000 live births.<sup>40</sup> Infant mortality dropped from 28.3 deaths per 1,000 births in 1990 to six deaths per 1,000 births in 2009, with no significant differences between female and male infants.<sup>41</sup> Under-five mortality was reported to be 41 deaths per 1,000 births in 1990 and decreased steadily to 18 deaths per 1,000 births in 2010. The downward trend is clear evidence of health care improvements since the 1990s.<sup>42</sup>

Both infant mortality and under-five mortality in Albania range within the MDG 2015 target and are comparable with the regional average. (The exception is Greece with the lowest mortality rates among all countries in the region).<sup>43</sup> Child mortality in Albania is connected to socio-economic status of the family. APHS 2008-09 revealed that infant and under-five mortality were twice as high in rural compared to urban areas, while overall child mortality was highest in the mountain regions, again drawing attention to the special health needs of children, mothers and care-takers in rural and mountain areas.

40 UNICEF Country Statistics Albania. Accessed March 09, 2012 at : [http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/albania\\_statistics.html#82](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/albania_statistics.html#82)

41 INSTAT data

42 Information on infant mortality is available from several sources, including UN data, Ministry of Health and INSTAT. MoH obtains information through its health information system, INSTAT through the registration of births and deaths. Both sources report lower mortality rates than the UN statistics above, reflecting differences between the data collection systems. However, all sources confirm the same downward trend.

43 World Population Prospects: The 2008 revision. UNPD 2008.



## Pregnancy

Fertility has fallen substantially over the past 20 years, and decreased from 3.4 children per woman in 1990 to 1.5 in 2010. While overall fertility dropped, childbearing is almost universal. The median age at first birth is roughly 24 years. Delivery care coverage by a skilled birth attendant is 99 per cent. However, the percentage of pregnant women receiving antenatal care at least four times prior to delivery is significantly lower, and during the time period 2006-2010 was only 66 per cent.<sup>44</sup> One of the underlying reasons might be the low coverage of pregnant women by social/health insurance in general, possibly reflecting women's high involvement in the informal sector and concomitant lack of coverage by health and social insurance. Other possible reasons for the limited use of antenatal care services include (i) the low number of reproductive health services offered by the system, rendering it insufficient and unattractive; (ii) the limited quality of these services in general; and (iii) the fact that particularly in childbirth and gynecological care, requests for informal (extra) payments are very

44 UNICEF Country Statistics Albania. Accessed March 09, 2012 at : [http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/albania\\_statistics](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/albania_statistics)



centers. As a way to estimate the national demand for contraceptives and to monitor the national family planning program, the National Information System of Logistics Management collects statistics on services provided and logistical information on contraceptives. In its efforts to provide long-term availability of contraceptives for the public, the MoH in 2003 adopted the national strategy on the availability of contraceptives.

## HIV/AIDS and STIs

Currently available data is incomplete and also shows discrepancies between administrative data and data obtained through national surveys. However, all sources agree that the level of HIV infection in Albania is low. According to MoH statistics, in 2010, there were 43 persons (29 men, 14 women) diagnosed with HIV - fewer than in the two preceding years. Table 1 shows that overall, HIV prevalence in males is twice as high as in females. There are ten times more cases in urban than in rural areas (no sex-disaggregation available). The overwhelming majority of cases are over 25 years old (no sex disaggregation available). On the other hand, the epidemiological report published by the Institute of Public Health in 2009 reports 291 diagnosed cases as of November 2008 (data not sex disaggregated); and an increase in infections amongst women. IPH figure of 2009 is five times higher respective data of the administration of 2010. According to the Epidemiological Report, estimates indicate even higher numbers of unreported cases. In addition, at the time of reporting, 16 cases of mother-to-child transmission had been identified. Further



confirmation and verification of data is required as is in-depth research on HIV/AIDS prevalence in order to close data gaps but also support adequate policy, medical, and prevention responses.

	2008	2009	2010
Total	49	61	43
<b>Sex</b>			
Male	31	43	29
Female	18	18	14
<b>Residence</b>			
Urban	45	51	40
Rural	4	10	3
<b>Age group</b>			
0-15 years	1	2	1
16-24 years	5	7	3
> 25 years	43	48	33

Source: MoLSAEO based on MoH, 2011

Table 1:  
Number of diagnosed HIV/AIDS cases 2008-2010 by sex, residence and age.

Most STI and HIV infections are a result from heterosexual contact. Therefore, knowledge about transmission and prevention are equally relevant for women and men. However, according to ADHS 2008-09, fewer than 30 per cent of women and men have comprehensive knowledge about STI transmission and HIV/AIDS prevention. Knowledge is highest in Urban Tirana and lowest in the mountain regions. The prevalence of engaging in higher-risk sex is two to three times higher among men than in women. However, never-married men (56 per cent) were more likely to use a condom than married men (15 per cent), as were men in rural areas (44 per cent) compared to men in urban areas (37 per cent).



Among women who had higher-risk sex, only one fourth had used a condom at last sexual intercourse. In general, women in urban areas, those with higher education and those in the highest wealth quintile were more likely to have had safe sex. In the ADHS, the proportion of men and women tested for HIV was very low (1-2 per cent). In order to prevent the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases, knowledge about transmission and use of safe sex practices must be increased.

The ADHS also investigated the prevalence of symptoms associated with STIs other than HIV. Overall, 11 per cent of women and 17 per cent of men reported having an STI or symptoms related to STIs. Married women, women in rural areas, those with low educational attainment and those in the lowest wealth quintile were more likely to report having an STI or symptoms related to STIs. The pattern for men was similar, pointing to a general problem in accessing health services to address reproductive health issues. Roughly half of the women (48 per cent) and the overwhelming majority of men (88 per cent) with an STI or symptoms related to STIs had not sought any treatment or professional medical advice for the infection. The fact that a significant share of women but especially men who suffer from STIs or STI related symptoms but do not seek medical advice or

treatment, deserves special attention. First, it clearly highlights women's but especially men's unmet reproductive health needs. Second, given the low incidence of condom use, the finding has significant implications for men's sexual partners and their respective health and wellbeing.

Open and fact-based discussion about sexuality is still a taboo. As a result, and as evidenced by several surveys and studies, there is a general lack of information on reproductive health and sexuality. Moreover, the ADHS results indicate that access to information about STIs transmission, diagnosis and treatment is not only insufficient, but also unequal for different groups in society. This negatively impacts on the sexual health of a significant number of women and men, and particularly on women's reproductive health, limiting their choice and agency.

In line with the latest CEDAW Concluding Observations on Health, future public health responses will have to aim at prevention, addressing female and male adolescence, and accessibility to health services for women and men in rural and remote areas as well as for vulnerable, poorer, and less well educated women and men<sup>46</sup>. This should be supported by

<sup>46</sup> Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women - Albania. CEDAW 2010

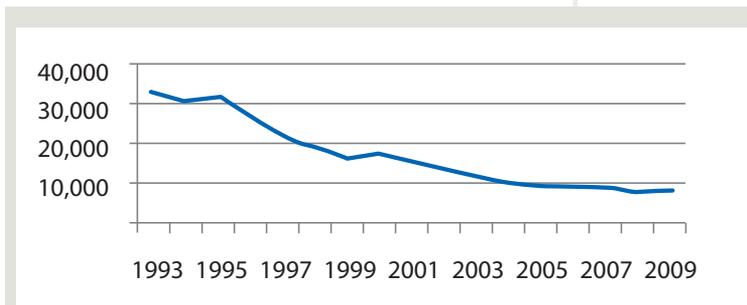
high quality health and sex education in schools and awareness campaigns targeted towards adolescent girls and boys, and women and men in rural areas.

## Men's health

As is also evident from the section on STIs, men's biology and life style open up a range of issues to be considered from a gender point of view, including cardiovascular diseases, men's reproductive health, occupational safety and accidents, nutrition habits, psycho-social wellbeing, and the abuse of drugs and narcotics. However, men's health has not yet been considered as a gender issue. General awareness for the issue should be raised by drawing up a first Men's Health report, following a Women's Health report.

## Abortion

According to data reported to INSTAT, in 2008 and 2009, there were roughly around 8.000 registered abortions per year, with steadily decreasing tendency since 1993 (Graph XX). However, until 2009, statistics do not include abortions undertaken in private clinics and hospitals, for which numbers are unavailable. According to Ministry of Health data, based only on health care institutions, abortion rate has slightly increased from 2010 to 2011. A discussion of the characteristics of abortion in Albania, as well as respective trends, is therefore impossible.



Source: INSTAT, 2011

Figure 7:  
Number of  
abortions  
1993-2009

According to APHS 2008-09, the majority of abortions occur in women between 20-34 years of age. The highest rates are found amongst women with lower levels of education and among women in urban areas. In 2009 and 2010, roughly two thirds of women who had an abortion lived in urban areas, versus 32.1 per cent in rural areas. About 44 per cent had eight years of education and 14.8 per cent held a university degree. Higher education levels of women is thus positively correlated with lower abortion rates, most likely resulting from better access to information on, and the effective use of, contraceptive methods. In 2009, the overwhelming majority of abortions (78.1 per cent) occurred among unemployed women. Employment, education, and particularly economic security can therefore be considered key factors influencing the prevalence of abortion.

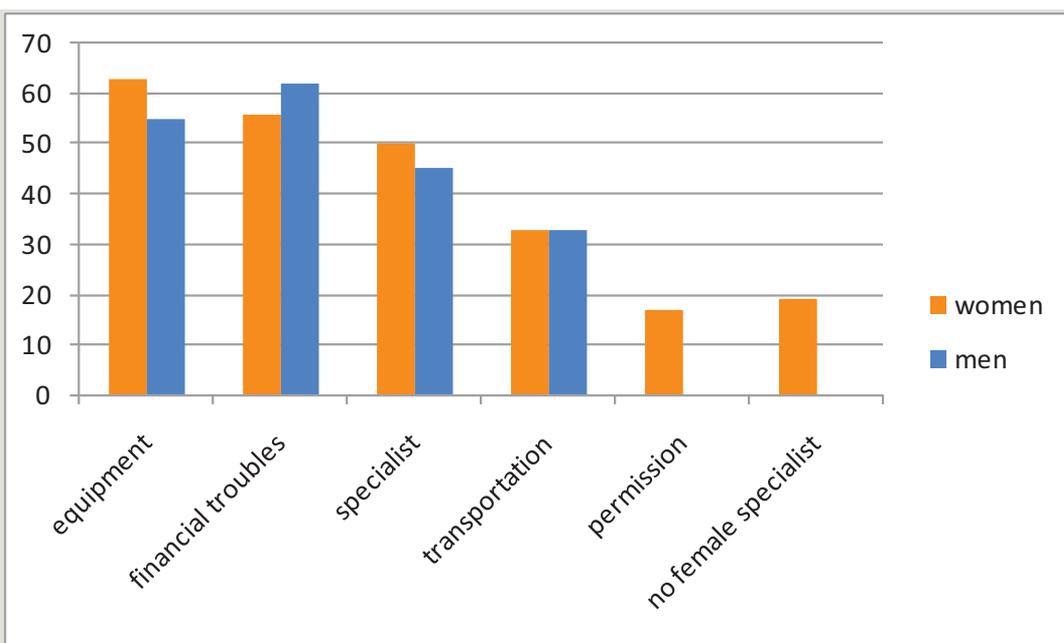
## Breast and cervical cancer

**Breast and cervical cancer** primarily affect women between 45 and 64 years of age. Mortality was roughly around 16 per cent in 2008, and 15.35 per cent in 2009. Early detection is essential for the successful treatment of cancer. The most common diagnostic methods are breast screenings (mammograms) and Pap smear tests.

According to the 2008-2009, ADHS survey, more than 77 per cent of women were aware of mammograms, whereas only 49 per cent of women had heard about Pap smears. Currently, the number of women aged 40 years old and above who undergo routine checks (once per year) offered by the public health system is unknown.

and equipment; 50 per cent women and 45 per cent men were concerned regarding the presence of a health specialist. For one third of women and men the distance to the health care facility and the need for transportation posed an obstacle. However, 17 per cent of women reported having to take permission to go for treatment, indicating power relations within the family as a determining factor in

Figure 8: Concerns of women and men when sick and about to access health care.



Source: ADHS, 2008-09

## Access to health services

Universal access to good quality care still needs to be ensured. The 2008-09 ADHS identified a series of problems women and men encounter when they are sick. As shown in figure 8, women's and men's health concerns referred to several limitations of the health system, with no particular gender differences. Fifty-six per cent of women and 62 per cent of men reported financial troubles and concerns in paying for health treatment; 63 per cent women and 55 per cent men were worried about the unavailability of supplies

women's ability to access the health system. For 19 per cent of women respondents the unavailability of a female specialist posed a problem pointing to the need for gender-sensitive health responses also with regard to staffing. The latter two concerns specifically draw attention to women's unmet gender-specific health needs. They clearly urge for an intensified follow-up of the strategic objectives contained in the health section of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which Albania adopted in 1995.

In general, the costs for treatment and medication, opportunity costs and

access barriers were reported to be significantly higher for unemployed women, women and men with more than three children, women and men in rural areas, as well as the Central and Mountain areas, and members of ethnic minorities. Future health care policies will have to respond to the reality of access inequalities and the cost burden of different groups in society. Of particular significance in this context are the ongoing economizing and downsizing measures of public services, with the concomitant shuttering of health care facilities in rural and remote areas. The gendered impact of such measures needs to be determined, and in accordance with their equal right to high-quality health care, access to such facilities for women, men, girls and boys living in these areas needs to be ensured.

## Informal payments

One particular issue investigated by ADHS 2008-09 was the prevalence of patients' informal payments to doctors and health professionals, which is a common and widespread phenomenon in Albania. More than one third of patients in public hospitals received suggestions to make such informal payments<sup>47</sup>.

According to an in-depth study of the issue, patients are requested to undertake such informal payments, or make them, irrespective of whether they are covered by medical insurance or not.<sup>48</sup>

Informal payments were reported to be particularly common in childbirth and gynecological care, thereby

increase costs particularly to women's reproductive health. An outright example of gender discrimination in the health sector, the practice negatively impacts on overall access for poorer and vulnerable women and undermines the aim of universal high-quality health care for all. Thorough reform and transparency measures are therefore required.

**Minorities.** Currently, health-specific information on female and male members of minority groups is scarce. If available, data is most commonly not sex-disaggregated or further categorised. Due to their socio-economic circumstances, members of minority groups have different and specific health care needs compared to mainstream society. Within minority groups, women are usually in a particularly vulnerable position, a result of multiple forms of oppression and discrimination. In order to ensure the rights of minority women and girls, adequate health care policy requires targeted responses in order to address gender-specific needs.

## Financing health

According to a World Bank report published in 2010, between 2007 and 2009, Albania's public expenditures on health remained constant at around 6.7 per cent of total GDP<sup>49</sup>.

This share of public investment into the health care sector is similar to that of Macedonia (6.9 per cent), but significantly lower than the regional average (8.96 per cent) and common national shares of EU countries, ranging above nine per cent of national GDP.

The financial burden privately paid by

47 Albanian Demographic and Health Survey, 2008-2009

48 Vian, Taryn, Kristina Gryboski, Zamira Sinoimeri, and Rachel Hall Clifford. July 2004. Informal Payments in the Public Health Sector in Albania: A

49 The World Bank Data. "Health expenditure, total (per cent of GDP)." Accessed Feb. 15, 2012 at: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.XPD.TOTL.ZS>

individuals for health services in Albania in addition to the public expenditure is significant and equals 4.1 per cent of national GDP<sup>50</sup>.

This is similar to Bosnia & Herzegovina (4.2 per cent) and Greece (4.0 per cent), but much higher than

50 The World Bank Data. "Out-of-pocket health expenditure (per cent of private expenditure on health)." Accessed Feb. 15, 2012 at: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.XPD.PRIV.ZS>

in neighboring countries like FYR Macedonia (2.3 per cent) and Montenegro (2.5 per cent). It reflects women's and men's high private expenditures when accessing health services, which raises questions regarding the universal provision of high-quality health care for all, including poor, marginalized and vulnerable individuals, and in particular women.

## » Recommended actions

- Ensure full health insurance coverage of men, women, and particularly pregnant women
- Devise targeted information campaigns in order to increase knowledge on human sexuality, reproduction and contraception, by women, girls, men and boys
- Train medical staff on gender equality issues and deliver gender-sensitive health services that ensure the integrity of women
- Introduce new approaches to delivery and childbirth that focus on evidence-based medical intervention and maternity practice and aim at women's physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing, agency and dignity
- Take specific measures to ensure poor and rural women's access to reproductive health care facilities as well as respective information on the issue
- Provide free and routine of Pap smears and mammograms to all women 40 years of age and above
- Strengthen and harmonise national statistics on health issues in general (public and private health sector)
- Establish sex-disaggregated statistics and gender data in the health sector
- Publish a women's health report
- Increase awareness of the gendered dimension of men's health and publish a men's health report
- Undertake all required actions for reducing the barriers women and men encounter when accessing health care, particularly those living in rural and remote areas, women and men belonging to minority groups, and those in the lowest wealth quintile
- Mainstream gender equality into all health policies
- Allocate sufficient budgets to implement gendered health policies and their respective action plans
- Estimate the proportion of the national health budget allocated for implementing explicitly gender-sensitive responses in the health sector
- Take temporary measures to ensure the implementation of the 30 per cent quota of women's representation at all decision-making levels in the health care system.

# E d u c a t i o n

This chapter provides an overview of the most apparent gender issues in the Albanian education sector and points to those areas where further analysis and study are required. Respective results are envisaged to support the upcoming revision process of the National Strategy for Pre-university Education 2009-2013 (NSPE), its harmonization with the cross-cutting NSGE-GBV-DV and its compliance with CEDAW. In particular, Article 10 obliges states to ensure that women have equal opportunities as men in all aspects of education and training - from kindergarten to tertiary education. Women should have access to all programs, especially those aimed at reducing any existing gender gaps within education; furthermore, governments are required to ensure that stereotypical concepts of the roles of men and women are eliminated.

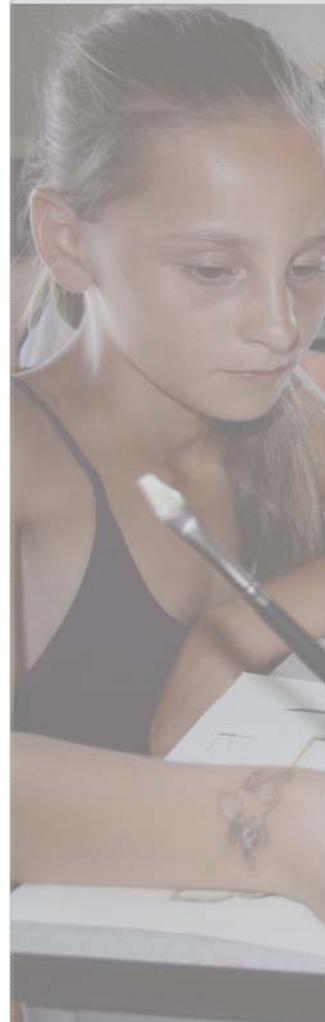
Albania's legal framework, in principle, guarantees girls and boys equal and universal access to education. Towards this end, this explicitly refers to the obligation of the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) regarding its role in the creation of equal opportunities. However, the NSPE approaches this task in generally gender-blind terms, and mainstreaming of gender equality goals has not been considered in this policy document. This is also reflected in the provision of total numbers which are not sex-disaggregated, rendering impossible the provision of a complete

picture. However, information on and analysis of gender inequalities is indispensable for developing respective policy responses in line with international obligations (e.g. CEDAW article 10 ad MDG3) and national policy frameworks (e.g. GEL and NSGE-GBV-DV).

At the same time, progress on issues related to gender equality has been made, primarily through a gender-sensitive revision of textbooks and the gender-sensitization of teachers. For monitoring the *de facto* equality of girls and boys of any age and in any location, including members of vulnerable groups, a coherent body of evidence still needs to be established.

**Data.** The MoES recently published the 2009-2010 Annual Statistical Yearbook. The publication contains a rich collection of statistical data, which is increasingly disaggregated by sex. For example, and as will be shown below, when data is broken down by gender, age, and socio-economic identity markers, gender differences in the Albanian education system become apparent. In order to understand the underlying dynamics, data needs to be further refined and categorised according to additional identity markers, such as ethnicity, disability and spatial residence. This will be particularly relevant for gender-sensitive monitoring in the areas of literacy, drop-out rates, and vocational education. The comprehensive

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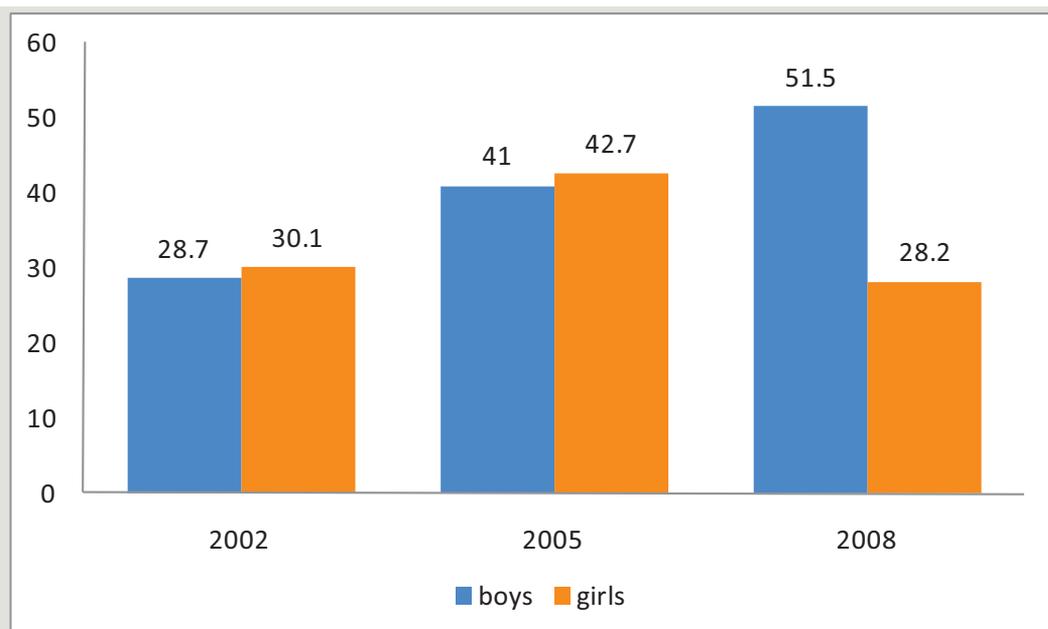


collection and analysis of these sex-disaggregated data needs to be supported by studies to investigate the underlying causes. For the time being, the Annual Statistical Yearbook presents a wealth of statistics, but does not yet engage in any analysis or interpretation of trends. However, if figures are to be used in needs-oriented and target-group specific policy responses and action plans, they

pre-school facilities almost doubled from 28.7 per cent in 2002 to 51.5 per cent in 2008<sup>51</sup>. The increase in boy's attendance in early childhood facilities was especially pronounced in Urban Tirana. At the same time, girl's enrolment fell from 30.1 per cent in 2002 to 28.2 per cent in 2008<sup>52</sup>.

While survey data contain inherent variations, the gender-specific trend of boys' significant increase in pre-school

Figure 9: Percentage of girls and boys attending pre-school facilities in years 2002, 2005 and 2008.



Source: INSTAT, 2011 based on LSMS 2002, 2005 and 2008

must be interpreted and supported by findings obtained through qualitative research and cross-validation. Harmonisation and strengthened coherence are also required with regard to administrative data provided by different institutions, such as the MoES and INSTAT.

## Early childhood education (3-5 years)

As depicted in Figure "Percentage of girls and boys attending pre-school facilities in years 2002, 2005 and 2008", between 2002 and 2008, the percentage of boys attending

enrolment compared to girls' requires further study, including an analysis of background reasons, and needs to be carefully monitored by the MoES.

## Primary education

Gross enrolment underwent a gradual downward trend for both girls and boys, with girls' enrolment at the primary level 2-4 per cent less than boys' in the academic years 2008-09 and 2009-10. This obvious and decreasing trend in girls' enrolment requires further investigation.

51 INSTAT and LSMS 2002-2005-2008

52 Ibid

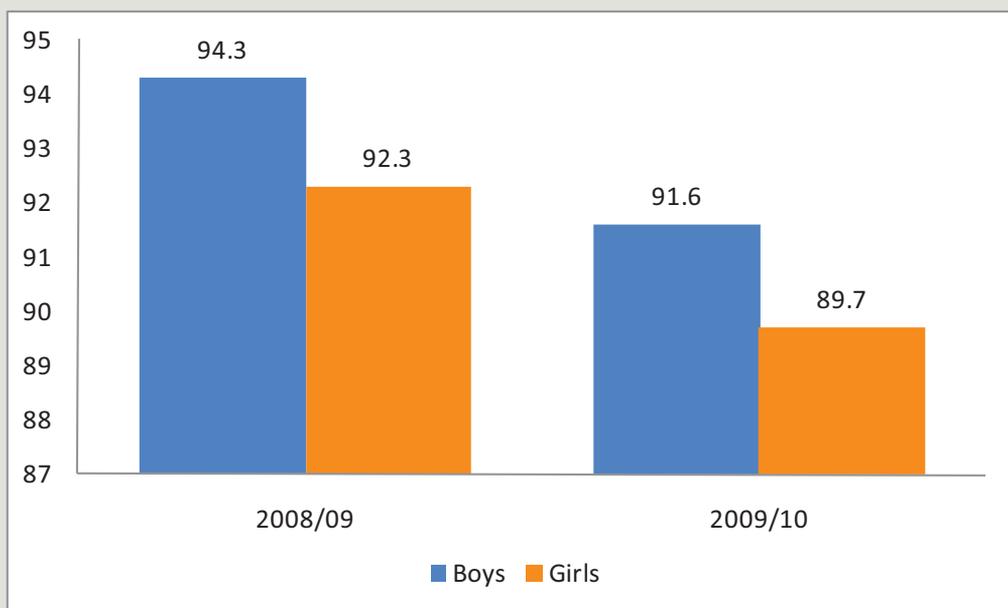


Figure 10: Girls' and boys' gross enrolment rate in primary education for the academic years 2008-09 and 2009-10.

Source: INSTAT, 2011

At the same time, it has to be kept in mind that data on primary school enrolment currently available is calculated by using population projections based on the 2001 census. However, in the meantime, there has been a significant decrease in Albania's birth rate, and as a result, 2001 projection figures cannot possibly be in line with current numbers of girls and boys. In order to explain the dynamics and illustrate the real participation of girls and boys in primary education, clearly, net figures for primary enrolment are required. Between 2003 and 2010,

net enrolment in primary education decreased by 19 per cent for boys and 16.3 per cent for girls. Dynamics over time show a gender-differentiated development: while in 2004 and 2005, boys' net enrolment in primary education was higher than girls', rates leveled in 2008, and since then a reverse trend can be observed: in 2009 and 2010, net enrolment rates in primary education was slightly lower for boys than for girls. The significance of these recent dynamics needs to be further confirmed.

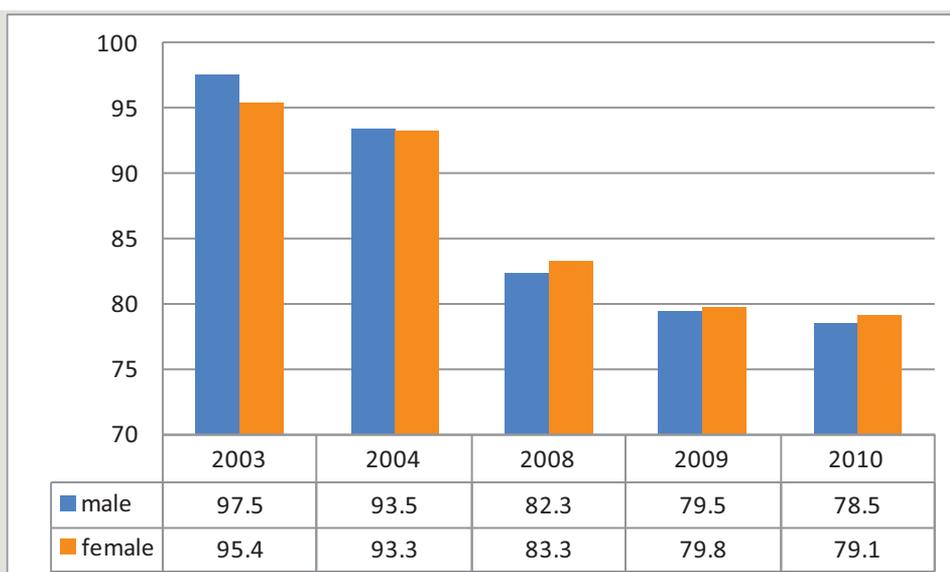


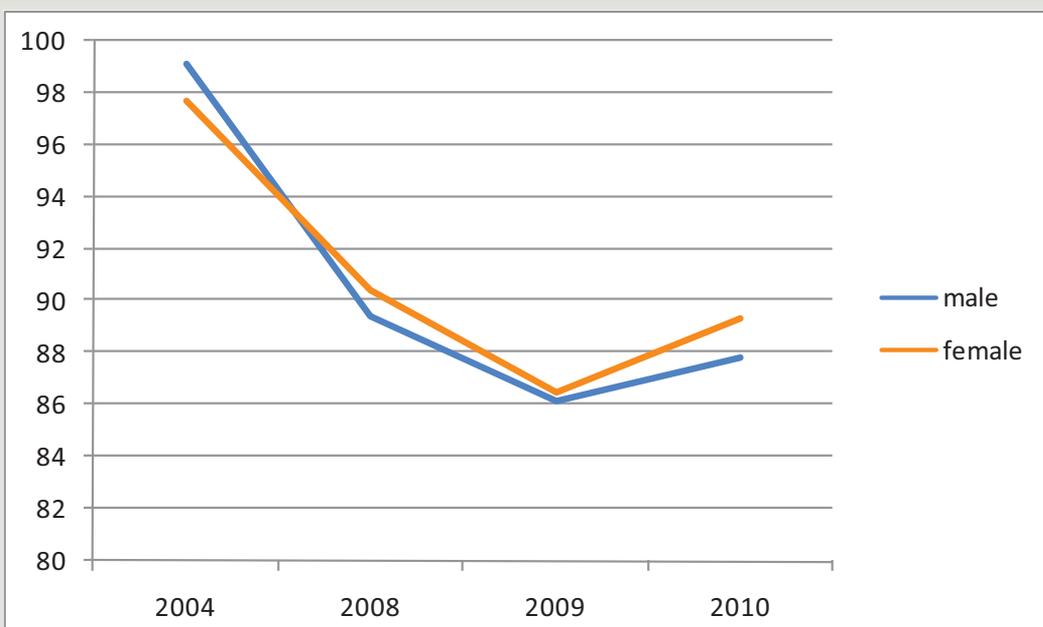
Figure 11: Girls' and boys' net enrolment in primary education, 2003-2010

Source: World Bank data-base, 2012

Net enrolment figures are also available on overall mandatory enrolment. Data obtained via LSMS 2002-2005-2008 shows a net enrolment of about 90 per cent. However, while LSMS data indicate a gradual increase in boys' net enrolment in mandatory education over time, girls' enrolment dropped to 87.9 per cent in 2008, in line with the girl-specific downward trend evident in gross enrolment figures. More recent data is currently unavailable on net enrolment rates in mandatory education for girls and boys.

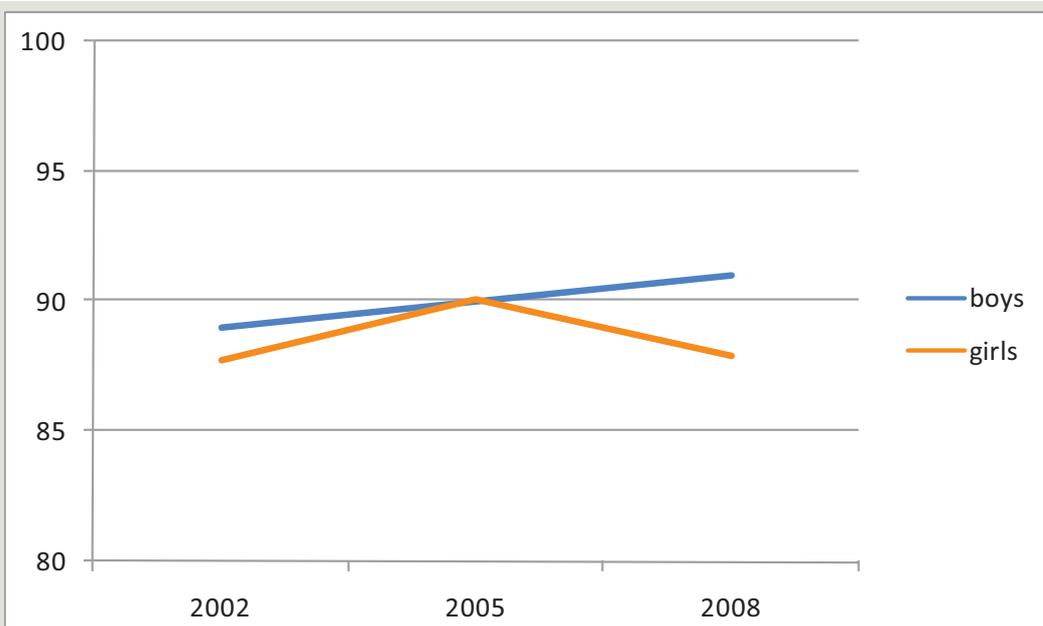
Insights into gender-specific dynamics in education can also be derived from the level of gender-specific completion rates. The primary education completion rate decreased from 99 per cent for boys and 98 per cent for girls in 2004 to 86 per cent for both boys and girls in 2009. Since then, completion rates have risen slightly; however, this positive trend is more pronounced for girls than for boys. Current dynamics and further developments in primary education require close monitoring, with special attention to gender-related, regional and socio-economic patterns.

Figure 12: Primary education completion rate in percentage



Source: World Bank data-base, 2012

Figure 13: Girls' and boys' net enrolment in mandatory education 2002-2005-2008.



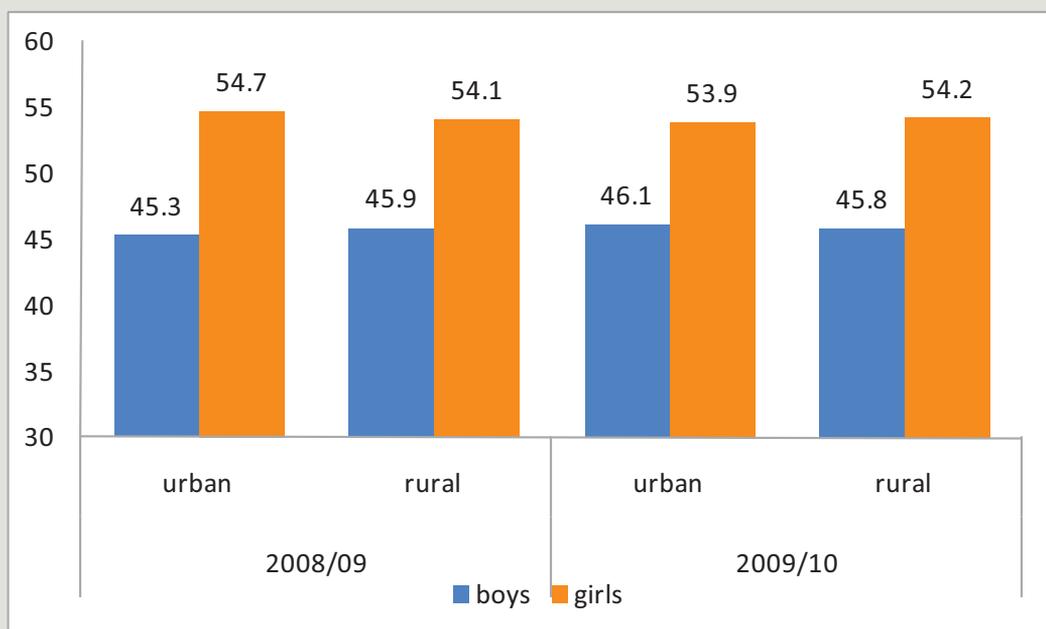
Source: INSTAT, 2011 based on LSMS 2002-2005-2008

## Secondary education (mandatory)

Gross enrolment rates at the secondary level for girls and boys are similar to those at the primary level, with 2-4 per cent fewer girls than boys. However, at the end of the academic year 2008/09, the percentage of pupils completing the 9<sup>th</sup> grade in public schools was 49.5 per cent and 50.5 per cent for girls and boys respectively. This indicates that at the time of graduation from secondary education, the initial 2-4 per cent gender gap in gross enrolment had narrowed down to one per cent due to a reduction in the number of male graduates. This trend is confirmed by a comparison of respective annual figures of recent years. It implies a higher propensity among boys compared to girls to abandon school prior to completing the secondary level.

## Upper secondary/High school

Completion of high school marks a breaking point between girls' and boys' school attendance. At the end of high school, the percentage of girls obtaining the diploma is significantly higher compared to boys. In 2008/09 figures stood at 54.5 per cent for girls and 45.5 per cent for boys, similar to results in the following academic year (54 per cent and 46 per cent respectively). Over the last four years, for males, there is a tendency of leaving education after having finished mandatory education or at the beginning of high school, which can be explained by male students interrupting studies, entering the labor market, or emigrating. The concomitant tendency of girls' higher attainment in education is reflected in the resulting higher number of female university students. The phenomenon is equally observed in rural and urban areas, and variation in girls' and boys' high school attendance between academic years is low and ranges between 0.3 - 0.6 per cent.



■ **Figure 14:** Percentage of girls and boys completing high school, by urban-rural distribution.

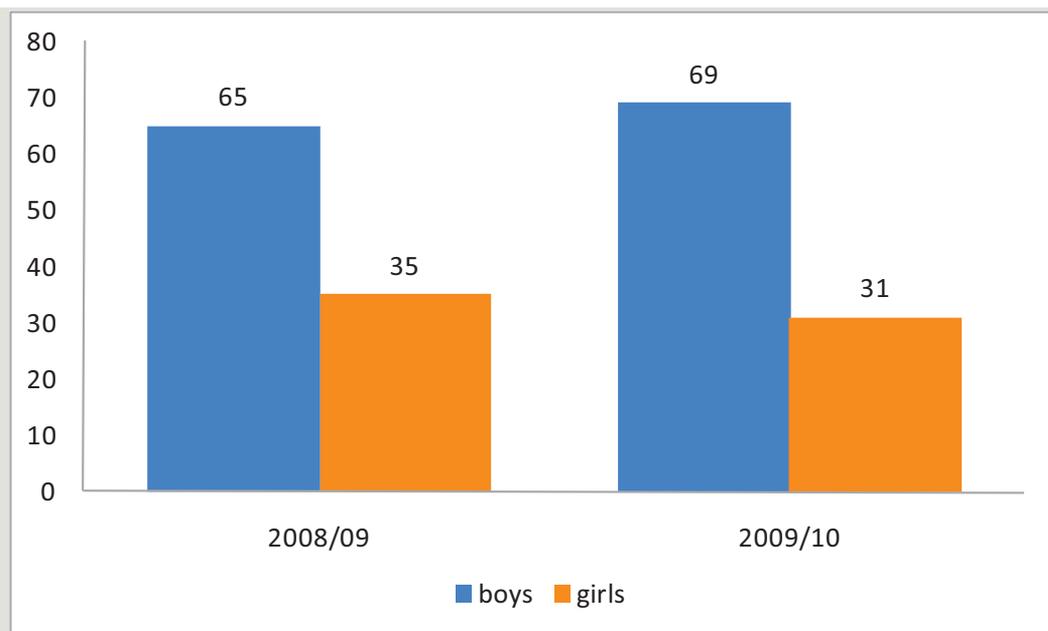
Source: MoES, 2011

## Vocational education

The trend of females' limited enrolment in vocational education is uniform all over Albania. According to INSTAT, during the academic year 2009-2010 males constituted 69 per cent of all registered students in vocational schools. Compared to the previous academic year girls' enrolment

decreased by four per cent, with a simultaneous increase by four per cent in boy's enrolment. Apparently, vocational education does not represent a particularly attractive option for girls to proceed with education after completion of the secondary level.

■ **Figure 15:** Pupils enrolled in secondary vocational education (public and private schools), disaggregated by sex, 2008/2009-2009-2010



Source: INSTAT, 2011.

The majority of courses offered in vocational schools are in so-called "male professions", such as industrial trade, electro-mechanics, and construction. As a result, they tend to attract boys. The deeply gendered occupational profiles and professions in the Albanian labour market are also reflected in pupils' attraction to, and participation in, certain courses, which follow traditional gender stereotypes. There is a sex-segregated choice of professional profiles, with girls primarily concentrated in agri-business, tourism, economics, hairdressing, and tailoring. As identified by a recent study conducted in the framework of the GIZ Human Resource Development Programme in Albania, few to no girls

attend vocational schools located in rural settings or on the outskirts of urban centers<sup>53</sup>.

According to research conducted within the framework of this study, safety and accessibility, as well as parental attitudes, were identified as determining factors for girls' enrolment and therefore access to vocational education. Overall, vocational education in Albania is characterised by marked gender segregation, which reflects and reinforces the traditional gender division of labour. Upon graduation, this offers male students greater employment opportunities, particularly

<sup>53</sup> Gender Analysis of the GIZ Human Resource Development Programme and the Vocational and Education Sector in Albania. GIZ 2011.

in those sectors that offer better paying jobs. Concrete measures are required in order to ensure girls' increased participation in vocational education, for example by incorporating into Albania's educational policy a range of professional courses aligned with the latest CEDAW Concluding Observations and the NSGE-GBV-DV.

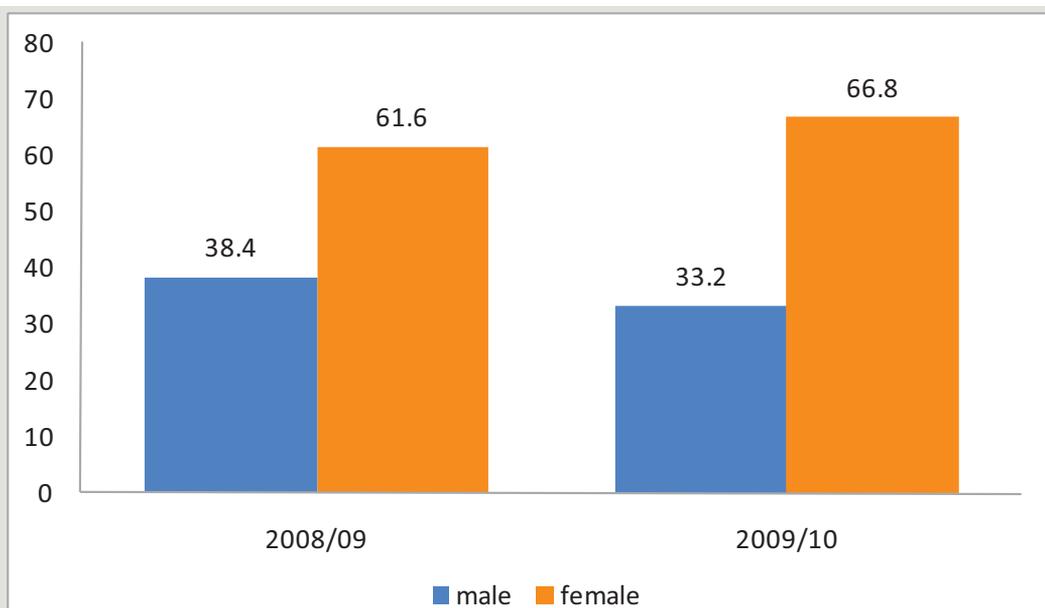
## University

In the 2008-09 and 2009-10 academic years, female graduates from public universities accounted for roughly two thirds of all full-time university students in Albania<sup>54</sup>.

As shown in Figure "Percentage of female and male public university graduates", graduation rate amongst males decreased by 6.2 per cent with a simultaneous increase of 5.2 per cent amongst females. The phenomenon can be explained by males either terminating studies or attending university part-time as a result of entering - or having to enter, the labour market due to family responsibilities and the model of the man as breadwinner

Engaging in part-time studies usually results in extended duration of studies and therefore postponed graduation for males. At the same time it provides young men with a higher degree of practical experience in the life of work, which in turn increases their chances on the labour market, and particularly their salaries. As shown in the chapter on work relations, men's greater experience in the life of work is one of the aspects fuelling the significant gap between women's and men's wages (gender wage gap).

On the other hand, the structure of the Albanian labour market offers female students significantly fewer job opportunities. As a result, and opposite to their male peers, female students may experience a higher degree of economic dependence on family members or, alternatively, scholarships. Little is known about the coping mechanisms of poor female students and the ways how they manage risks resulting from this exposed and vulnerable position. In addition, Albanian society is strongly characterised by reciprocity and familial



■ **Figure 16:**  
Percentage of female and male graduates from public universities, 2008/2009-2009-2010

Source: INSTAT, 2011

54 INSTAT, Women and men in Albania, 2008

inter-dependence. No research exists on the way how female graduates manoeuvre the phenomenon of financial indebtedness to their biological families resulting from studying, and in how far - upon graduation - this impacts on their subsequent position within their biological and, further-on, their marital family.

Analysing all full-time students enrolled at university across eight broad fields of study reveals marked sex segregation of courses and disciplines along traditional gender roles. Evidenced by enrolment rates in different types of universities, females primarily select studies in the human sciences. Female students made up 73 per cent of those enrolled in education, 68 per cent in health, and 61 per cent in the humanities and arts. On the other hand, male students made up 70 per cent of those enrolled in engineering<sup>55</sup>.

The number of male students enrolled in science, computing and math programs, as well as in service-related studies, has been increasing, altering the previous trend of male participation

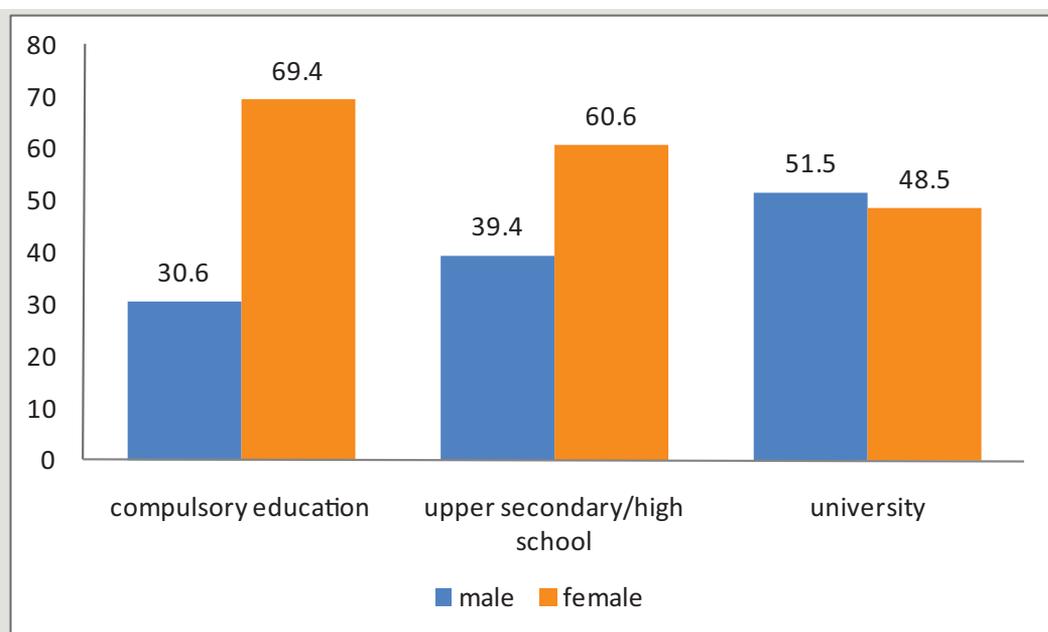
primarily in agriculture. As in vocational education, the channeling of girls and boys into typically "female" and "male" subjects and studies fuels the pronounced occupational sex-segregation in the labour market. Feminised professions offer lower wages and fewer career advancement opportunities, significantly and negatively contributing to the wage gap between women and men.

## Academic staff

As shown in the figure "Percentage of female/male academic staff in the three main levels of the educational system" in 2009-10, women made up roughly 70 per cent of academic staff in the compulsory education system. The female share is highest at the elementary level (69.4 per cent), decreases at (60.6 per cent) and is lowest in universities (48.5)<sup>56</sup>.

As evidences in the figure "Percentage of female/male academic staff in the three main levels of the educational

■ **Figure 17:**  
Percentage of female/male academic staff in the three main levels of the educational system.



Source: MoES, 2011

55 INSTAT 2011, MoES 2011

56 Women and Men in Albania, INSTAT 2009.

system”, the educational system is characterized by a high share of female staff. However, the percentage of women in decision-making positions follows the traditional pyramidal pattern with female staff crowded in lower positions and a concomitant decrease at upper management level. As shown in the Figure “Percentage of female and male directors in the Albanian education system”, the share of women directors does not exceed 30 per cent in any of the educational levels. The absence of women in decision-making positions is particularly pronounced at university level, with

no female director at all. Apparently, several factors, including systemic and institutional barriers, prevailing gender stereotypes, and women’s unpaid care-providing responsibilities limit their career chances in the education system, particularly at university level. Since the absence of role models conveys a gender-stereotyped, negative message to pupils and students, in line with Albanian legislation and latest CEDAW Concluding Observations, concrete measures are required to increase women’s share at upper management levels.

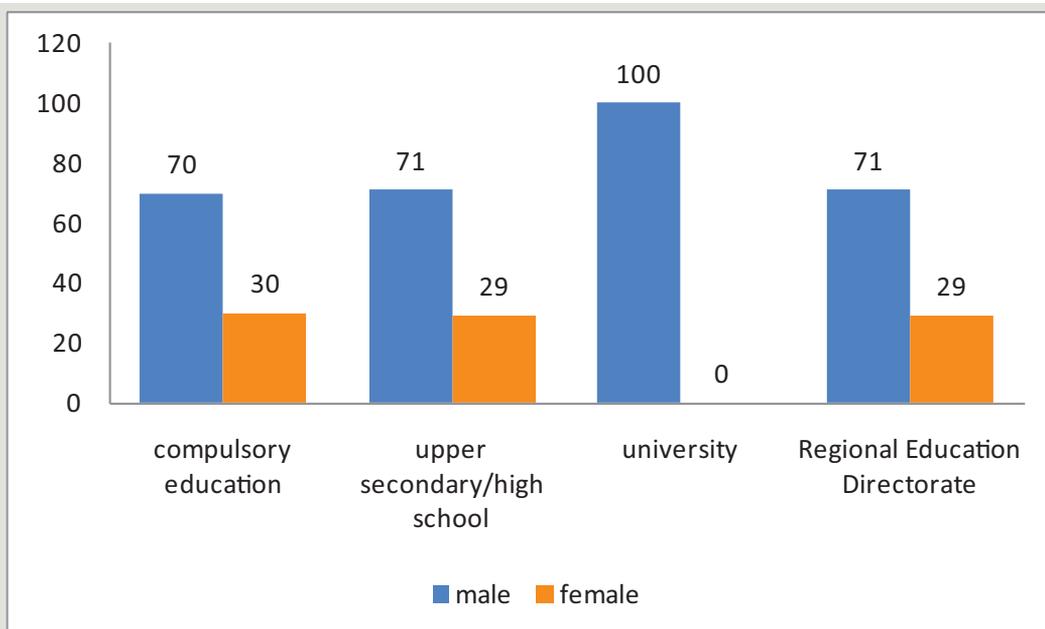


Figure 18: Percentage of female and male directors in the Albanian education system

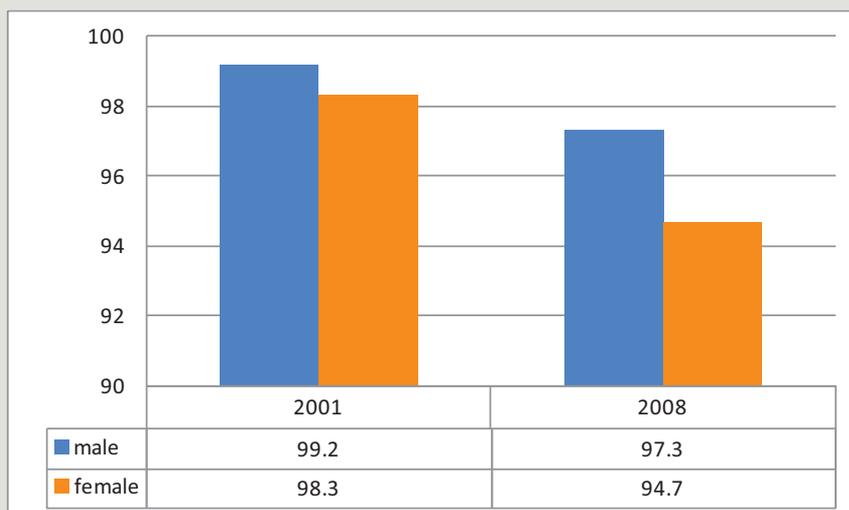
## Literacy

The overall literacy rate (of individuals aged 15 and above) was reported to have decreased from 98.7 per cent in 2001 to 95.9 per cent in 2008. During this period, the gender gap increased, resulting in an approximately four per

cent lower rate amongst females than males<sup>57</sup>.

57 World Bank Database. Accessed 12 March 2012 at: [www.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.PRM.GINT.FE.ZS/countries?display=default](http://www.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.PRM.GINT.FE.ZS/countries?display=default)

■ **Figure 19:**  
Adult female  
and male  
literacy rate  
from 2001 to  
2008 ( per cent  
of females/  
males aged 15  
and above)



Source: World Bank database, 2012

In parallel, indications regarding literacy can also be deduced from LSMS 2002. Data shows that more than 90 per cent of the population older than 14 years of age could read and write without any difficulty at that time. The majority of adults who were not able to read and write (about 5 per cent of them), or experienced difficulty, belonged to older generations. Amongst Albanian youth, 98 per cent were able to read and write without any difficulty<sup>58</sup>, compared to 95 per cent in 1992<sup>59</sup>.

The illiteracy rate varies with income, gender and place of residence. According to LSMS 2002, there were twice as many illiterates among the poor as the non-poor, and also twice as many illiterate women as illiterate men. Similarly, only 4 per cent of the people living in urban areas were found illiterate, compared to six per cent of those in rural areas. According to LSMS 2008, the illiteracy rate among the age group 15-24 was found to be twice as high for males as for females, 1.5 per cent and 0.7 per cent respectively.

58 If the literates include those that can read or write with some difficulty, this figure goes up to 99 per cent.

59 World Development Indicators, World Bank 2012

Currently, there is no further and more recent and coherent data available on either literacy or illiteracy. Calculations broken down by age, residence, income group, and ethnicity in addition to gender would help in order to identify gaps and develop responses addressing the apparent recent decrease in adult literacy. Respective trends would also have to be studied among male and female youth.

## School drop-out

Surveys indicate that similar to other transitional economies, the Albanian labour market increasingly requires higher levels of qualifications and skills<sup>60</sup>.

This situation contrasts with the fact that according to LFS 2008 data, only 12.4 per cent of the population has completed tertiary education<sup>61</sup>. Recently with the increase enrollment in the private universities it is likely that this percentage has increased since. Albanian children complete only 8.6 years of schooling on average (no sex-disaggregated data available),

60 Avenir Suisse, Think Tank for Economic and Social Issues, Zurich 2010

61 LFS 2008



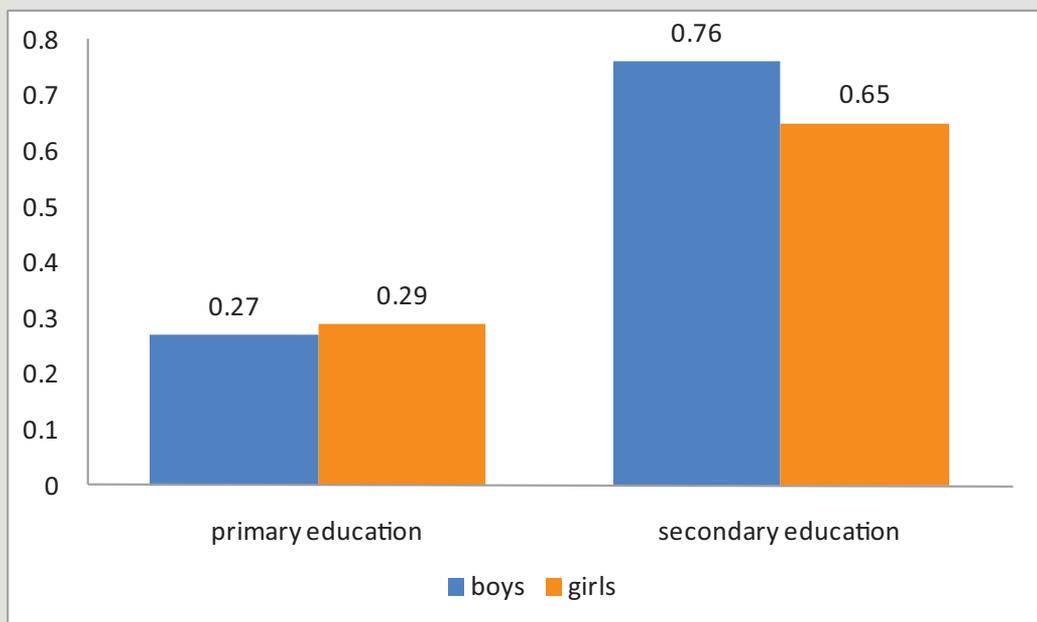
which is almost six years less than the EU Average<sup>62</sup>.

The overall drop-out rate at the level of compulsory education level has been reported to be relatively low (below 1 per cent) for both sexes<sup>63</sup>.

As can be seen in Figure "Female and male drop-out rates in primary and secondary level in the academic year 2009-2010", the drop-out rate in primary education was slightly higher for girls than for boys. This trend, however, is reversed at secondary level, where a 0.1 per cent higher drop-out rate amongst boys compared to girls is evident.

Higher male drop-out rates during secondary level may be a first indication for the similar tendency at high school and tertiary level of male adolescents terminating or interrupting studies in order to migrate, enter the labour market, or engage in income earning activities.

Drop-out rates are generally higher in rural areas than in urban centers (see Figure "Drop-out rates in primary education in academic years 2005/06 to 2008/09 according to area."). Between 2005 and 2009, there was a gradual rise in urban drop-outs, while the number of rural drop-outs decreased. However, from 2007-08 onwards there has been an increase in the number of rural drop-outs. Further investigation into the dynamics and underlying reasons is required. Furthermore, data on urban and rural drop-out rates are not yet disaggregated by sex or additional identity markers. In order to develop adequate responses to school drop-out, future analysis and study clearly must include pupils' data disaggregated by sex, ethnicity and socio-economic background.



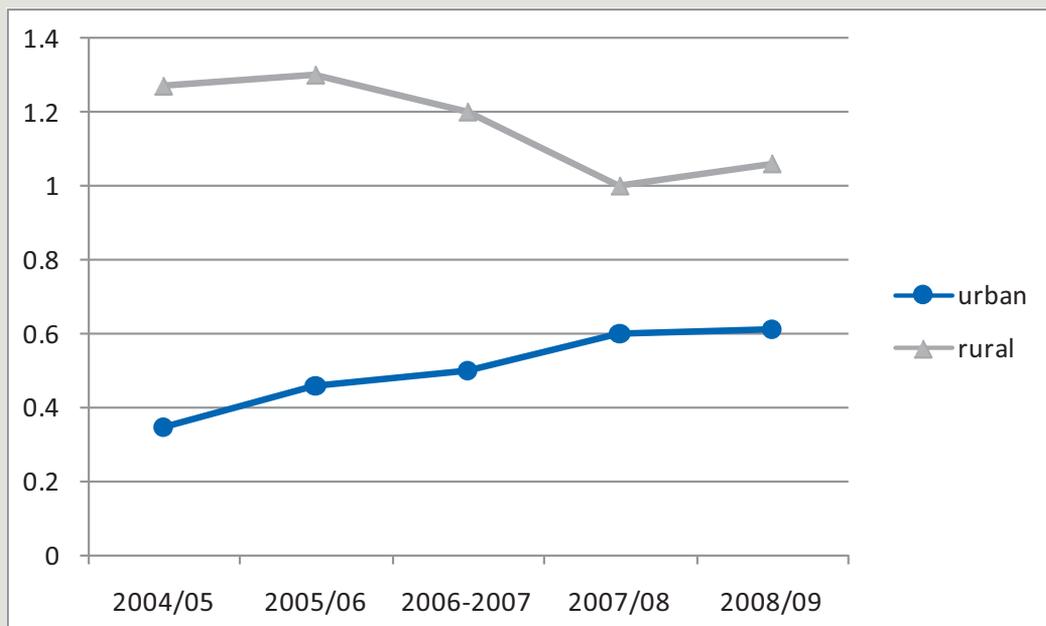
■ **Figure 20:** Female and male drop-out rates at the primary and secondary levels during the academic year 2009-10.

Source: MoES, 2011

62 Albania – Review Human Resource Development. European Training Foundation, 2010.

63 MoES 2011

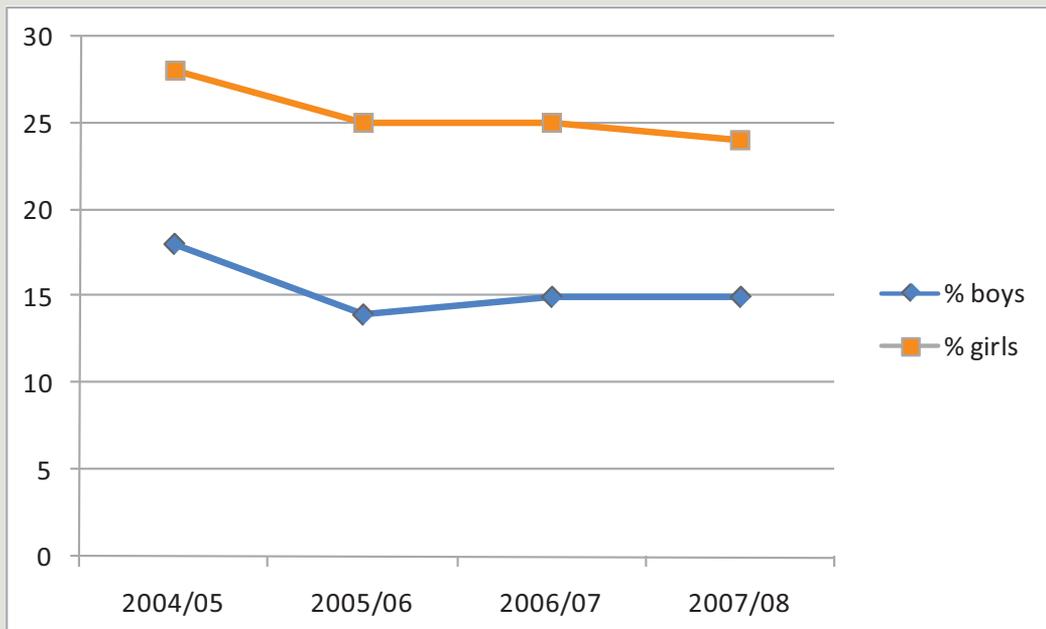
■ **Figure 21:**  
Drop-out rates from primary education during the 2005-2006 to 2008-2009 academic years, by residence area.



Source: MoES, 2011

The most pronounced gendered difference, however, is observed regarding attainment at the moment of transition from secondary level to high school. At this moment, pupils have completed compulsory education. The next step, enrolment in high school, is an important one and indicates attainment of girls and boys within the education system. Figure "Percentage of girls and boys abandoning education after completion of secondary education for the 2004-2005 and 2007-2008 academic years" shows the percentage of girls and boys not proceeding with high school, which in 2007-2008 was 24 per cent and 15 per cent respectively. This shows that the percentage of those who only complete compulsory education but do not proceed with high school, is about 10 per cent

higher for girls than for boys. While for boys, a generally decreasing trend is discernable, the percentage of girls who abandon education dropped until 2005-2006 but since then shows an in fact upward trend. This raises crucial issues regarding girls' basis for subsequent lifelong employability, adaptability and learning, which cannot be guaranteed by completion of just compulsory education. Moreover, girls' higher education is positively correlated with their future employment, earnings, career chances, health status, and position as women within society. Therefore, the higher and apparently increasing incidence of girls abandoning the school system after completion of just compulsory education requires further study and asks for measures in order to reverse this trend.



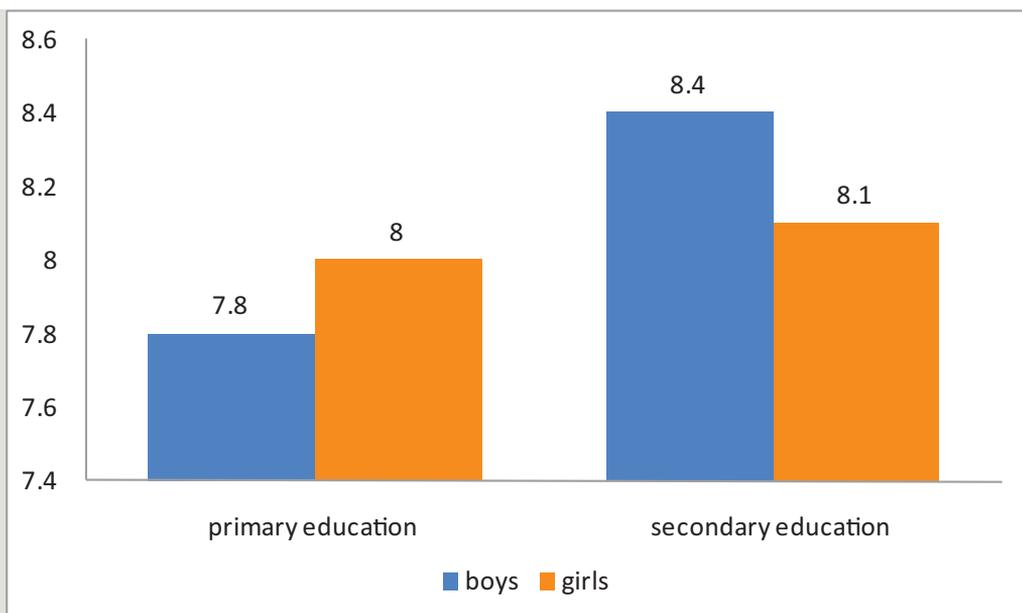
**Figure 22:** Percentage of girls and boys abandoning education after completion of secondary education for the 2004-2005 and 2007-2008 academic years.

Source: MoES, 2011

## Vulnerability

**Disability.** The drop-out rates of pupils with disabilities is about eight per cent, which is approximately 10 times higher compared to the general drop-out rate. Figures for the 2009-2010 academic year reveal a 0.2 per cent higher drop-out rate for girls with disabilities at the primary level, while at the secondary level, 0.3 per cent more boys with disabilities abandon school (see Figure "Drop-out rates for pupils with disabilities in primary and secondary education

during the 2009-2010 academic year"). In order to respond to and meet the education needs of disabled girls and boys, specific responses are required. However, available data is not yet disaggregated by disability type and rural/urban residence. In order to meet the target-group specific needs and develop adequate policy responses, underlying reasons and circumstances of drop-out in girls and boys with disabilities need to be studied.



**Figure 23:** Drop-out rates for pupils with disabilities in primary and secondary education during the 2009-2010 academic year.

Source: INSTAT, 2011



**Roma and Egyptians.** According to the NSPE, school drop-out rates are higher amongst children of vulnerable and marginalized communities, especially the Roma and Egyptians. The overall level of school enrolment amongst Roma youth is low. In 2008, only 27 per cent attended the first grade of primary school. More than 50 per cent were found to abandon compulsory education before its completion, and amongst those aged 15 to 16 years, 43 per cent of Roma adolescents were illiterate. The problem of low enrolment and high abandonment is even more pronounced amongst Roma girls: the school participation rate of girls at the age of 12 was found to be 23 per cent lower than that of Roma boys. However, while acknowledging these facts, the NSPE does not outline plans for addressing the problem.

Two other national policy documents are of relevance for Roma issues. The National Strategy for Roma Inclusion (2003) makes explicit reference to women's and girls' subordinate social position and the resulting inequality. However, it neither discusses the need to safeguard Roma girls' right to education nor does it provide concrete figures on the topic. As a result, policy responses are missing. Mainstreaming gender issues, especially the issue of Roma girls' equal right to education, needs to be part of the implementation plan for the National Action Plan for the Decade of Roma

Inclusion 2010-2015. Similar to Roma, the Egyptian community is characterised by higher levels of poverty and vulnerability to social exclusion. However, the human rights and needs of especially Egyptian women and girls have remained invisible at, and absent from, the policy level<sup>64</sup>.

**Further vulnerability.** High drop-out rates amongst children from low-income families and amongst girls living in remote and mountain areas have been reported<sup>65</sup>.

However, there is currently no recent data available on the issue. In line with the latest CEDAW Concluding Observations, comprehensive statistical evidence is required on the educational situation of girls in rural and remote areas, disabled girls as well as those belonging to ethnic minorities, particularly the Roma and Egyptian communities. Furthermore, equality goals need to be mainstreamed into all currently existing national policies and action plans that address aspects of education and social inclusion (i.e. the NSPE, the National Strategy for Social Inclusion, the National Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2010-2015, and the Rural Development Strategy). The collection, processing and analysis of such data needs to be accompanied and supported by in-depth research on the underlying reasons for the current dynamics and inequalities. Results are expected to subsequently inform policy responses and concrete plans for responding to the educational rights and needs of vulnerable and marginalised groups, especially girls.

## Gender stereotypes

Despite progress made in textbooks

64 Social Vulnerability of Roma in Albania, UNDP 2006

65 Pro-poor and pro-women policies and development in Albania. UNDP Human Development Report 2005.

and materials, gendered stereotyping of subjects and profiles persist and require the promotion of courses and professions considered atypical for girls and boys from an early stage. At present, there is a framework curricula for pre-university education that is gender-sensitive. The approval of pre-university textbooks is also based on gender equality criteria, and the training program of teachers is sensitive to gender equality issues. University programs have started to become more gender sensitive; modules and courses on gender have been added; gender research is encouraged; and a gender studies master's program has been introduced.

The introduction of gender equality issues in education helps in gradually establishing such values in society. It is, therefore, instrumental to eliminate the gender stereotypes and behaviors that are driven by the underlying assumption of female inferiority. For the moment, achievements in creating an environment that is conducive to establishing gender equality are more evident in schools where pilot projects have been implemented. Such experiences serve as models, and need to be promoted and replicated. Insights and lessons learned need to be fed back to policy-makers in order to inform gender-responsive planning, prioritization and monitoring of educational outcomes in Albania.

## » Recommended actions

- Mainstream gender equality goals into the policies on vocational training (e.g. the Sectoral Strategy on Employment and Vocational Training 2007 – 2013; National Strategy for Pre-university Education 2009-2013)
- Mainstream girls' right to education into national policies addressing social inclusion, disability, and Roma issues
- Ensure the absence of gender stereotypes in all text books and teaching materials at all levels of the educational system
- Run special support programmes for the establishment of non-traditional occupational profiles for both girls and boys
- With respect to education statistics, include sex-disaggregated data with the additional identity markers of ethnicity, disability and spatial residence in the monitoring of illiteracy, drop-out, and VET enrolment
- Ensure gender-sensitive data and information collection on educational issues of the Roma and Egyptian communities, with specific focus on the needs of girls and female adolescents
- Supplement and support the comprehensive statistical data published in MoES statistical yearbook with gender-sensitive analyses, qualitative research and interpretation
- Investigate drop-out and school abandonment and collect data disaggregated by gender, regions, spatial residence, socio-economic background, and ethnicity
- Target drop-out and especially girls' school abandonment and their low level of enrolment in high school
- Compile the experiences and lessons learned from pilot projects regarding the development of gender-sensitive teaching, training and school management methodologies; publish the collection "Gender equality in practice - Education"
- Harmonise and coherently update all administrative data provided on key educational issues in Albania



# Work, Entrepreneurship and Property Rights

This chapter addresses the life of work. It focuses on the different types of women's economic involvement, including employment, unemployment and informal work, the way how women and men are represented in each of these fields, and the impact this representation has on economic empowerment and equal economic independence. Comprehensive sex-disaggregated data on labour market developments is available.

The degree of gender equality and the status of women in the economy are further determined by comparing women's and men's use of time, their involvement in unpaid care-work, and wage differences. One particular aspect of economic involvement is entrepreneurship. It is closely related to, and rests on, access to productive resources like land and credit. Since women face significant challenges in this field, a sub-section focuses on the current situation of women's land rights.

## Economy & growth<sup>66</sup>

Macroeconomic growth was around six per cent prior to 2008 but declined to three per cent in 2010. Exports rose by 63 per cent, mainly driven by foreign demand for electricity. Inflation remains low and stable between 3-4 per cent. Private consumption fell to 2.2 per cent. Per capita GDP in terms of purchasing power parity was estimated at 27.1 per cent of the EU-27 average in 2009. As a result of current economic conditions in host countries, remittances declined by 11.7 per cent in 2010, to 7.8 per cent of GDP.

The labour market is characterised by a high degree of informality; the official unemployment rate is around 13.5 per cent. During 2010, FDI inflows increased by 17.2 per cent, primarily as a result of new investment in exploration and drilling for oil and gas, and new concessions in the energy sector, providing primarily male employment. Net official development assistance received in 2009 was 3 per cent of GDP. Main production is from agriculture, textile and footwear industries, fisheries, construction, energy, and mining entities. The agricultural sector, which accounts for almost half of employment but only one fifth of GDP, is characterised by family-run subsistence farming.

66 Albania 2011 Annual Progress Report, European Commission, 2011; Global Human Development Report 2011

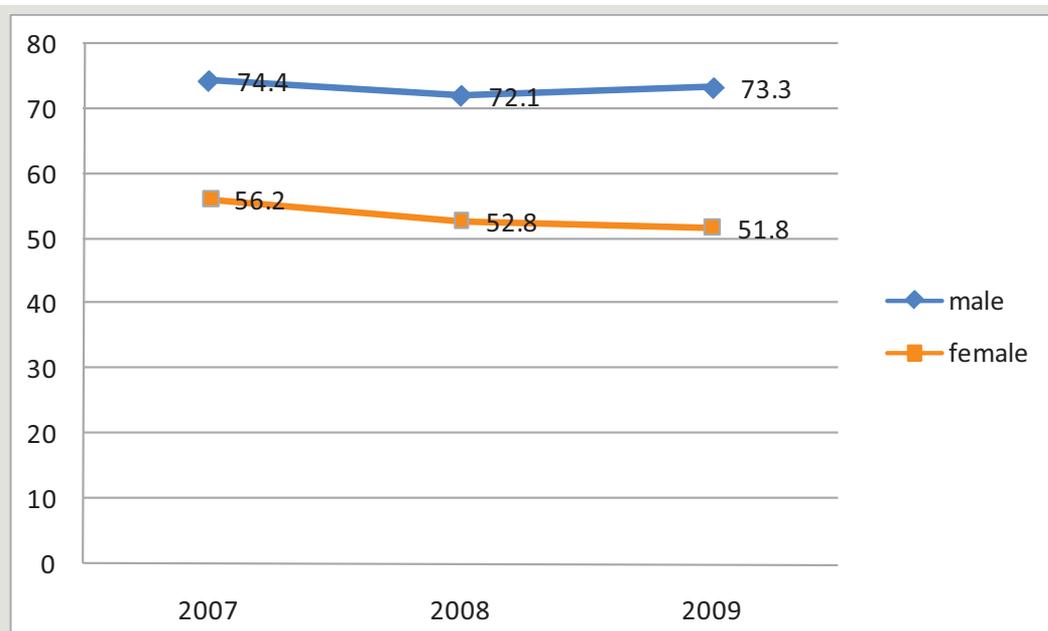


## Labour force participation

Between 2007 and 2009, the overall labour force participation rate (i.e. the ratio between the economically active population between the age of 15 to 64 and the working age population) decreased. However, while men's participation in the labour market remained stable, women's participation fell drastically. The respective gender gap widened from 18.2 per cent in 2007 to 21.5 per cent in 2009<sup>67</sup>, indicating women's lower access to the labour market relative to men's. Women's withdrawal

in the labour market. Certain groups of women may be discouraged from joining part of the labour market by the relative abundance of low-skilled jobs in agriculture and manufacturing and the limited diversity of employment opportunities in all other sectors. The pronounced and increasing gender gap in labour force participation requires careful monitoring and the development of adequate labour policy responses in order to provide women with equal opportunities in the economy.

Figure 24:  
Labour participation rates according to sex between 2007 and 2009.



Source: INSTAT, Labour Force Survey, 2007, 2008, 2009

from the labour market might be an indication of their lack of hope to find an adequate job due to the economic crisis. In this case, women's increased withdrawal would be only temporary, and the trend could be reversed at the onset of resumed economic growth. On the other hand, the phenomenon might be a clear response to the types of jobs available for women in general, indicating a structural problem inherent

The **Inactivity Rate** refers to the percentage of persons who, in principle are available for the labour market but are neither registered as employed nor unemployed. This includes persons who attend educational institutions, engage in household duties, are retired or are unavailable for the labour market due to disability or infirmity. There is a pronounced gender difference in inactivity rates of females and males

67 Ibid

and this gendered difference is largest for individuals with no education. According to the LFS 2009 data, the inactivity rate was 26.7 per cent for men, and for women almost twice as high, namely 48.2 per cent. This reflects the recent tightening of the labour market in terms of availability of jobs for women, and their simultaneous withdrawal from the labour market. Such a response is also encouraged by the prevailing traditional gender stereotypes of men as breadwinners and women as primary care-givers. Another possible factor which has been suggested to influence women's inactivity rates is migration. While there is a positive correlation between internal migration and women finding employment, the reverse has been shown for male international migration: the influx of remittances might serve as a discouraging factor for women to seek paid employment.<sup>68</sup> Many people of working age throughout Albania, mostly in urban but also in rural areas, have withdrawn from the labour market because their remittance earnings are higher than any amount generated from formal employment. This applies in particular to women of working age whose husbands or sons work abroad.<sup>69</sup> The effect was shown to be more pronounced in married than single women, indicating their primary involvement in unpaid care work at home. However, the economic crisis in receiving countries has resulted in reduced remittances and, in fact, in an increase of returnees.<sup>70</sup> This fact raises doubts on whether dependence on remittances can still be considered

68 Plaku, Agolli and Danaj (2011) based on LSMS 2008

69 Kodra, F. *The Impact of the Crisis on Wages in South-East Europe*. ILO 2011

70 Azzarri & Carletto (2009) *Modeling Migration Dynamics in Albania*. World Bank Policy Research Paper 4945



a strategy for sustaining income and economic well-being for women (and their children). A comparison of age cohorts over the years would be interesting to further investigate gender dynamics and trends over time.

The trend of withdrawing from the labour market and focusing on marital and family obligation, caring for the young and elderly, is a deeply “female” phenomenon and an apparent coping mechanism in response to the currently critical labour market situation. However, women's and girls' withdrawal from the labor market is accompanied by social isolation, confinement to their reproductive and care role, and economic dependence. In addition, the longer women remain outside the labour market, the more they are at risk of losing their human capital and therefore their economic position and their rewards of the labour market. The concomitant economic loss in terms of capacity and resources for furthering the economic development of the country are significant. In addition, this particular response also negatively impacts on women's access to rights and entitlements, and their overall position within society.

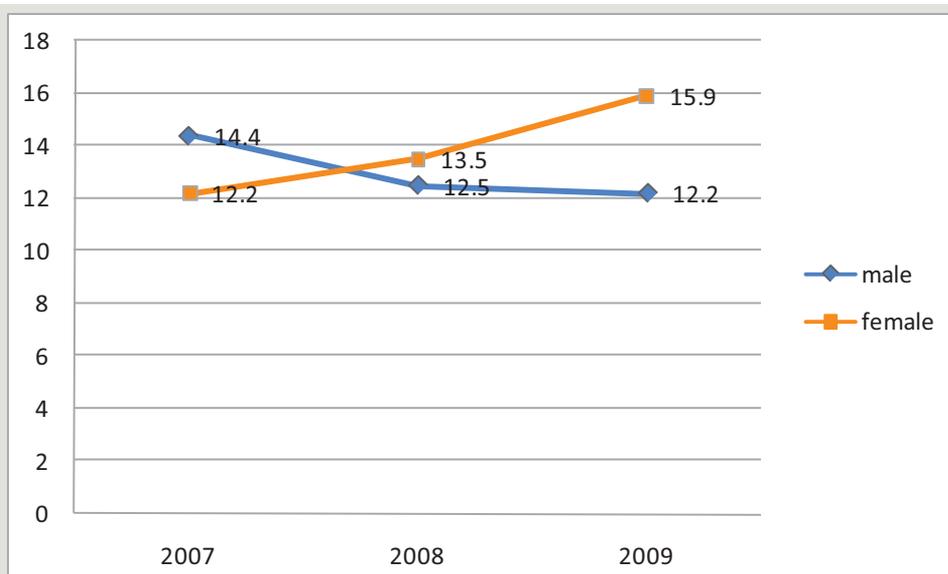
## Unemployment

According to LFS results, during the time period 2007-2009, the official overall unemployment rate increased slightly. Disaggregation of data by sex reveals that this is mainly due to an

increase in female unemployment, namely from 12.2 per cent in 2007 to 15.9 per cent in 2009. During the same time, men's unemployment rate decreased from 14.4 per cent to 12.2 per cent. A similar trend is reflected by statistics on long-term unemployment: during the same period, with male official long-term unemployment decreased by almost two per cent, in contrast to a two per cent increase in long-term unemployment among women. While in 2007, men's unemployment rate was higher than women's, since then, trends point to the deterioration of women's situation on the labour market, both in terms of employment and unemployment.

As in other post-communist and transition countries, the deterioration in women's position in the labour market can be attributed to several factors including (i) a general lack of labour due to restructuring; (ii) a focus of the economy on sectors which traditionally employ few women; (iii) the generally limited capacity of the economy for absorbing the high numbers of women released from formerly state-owned enterprises; (iv) the shift from male agricultural to non-agricultural employment; (v) adherence to the model of the exclusively male breadwinner; and (vi) lack of gender-sensitive employment policies.

■ **Figure 25:**  
Unemployment rates by sex between 2007 and 2009.



Source: INSTAT, Labour Force Survey 2007, 2008, 2009

#### Unemployment according to age.

While unemployment is high for all age groups, variability between women and men is apparent. Unemployment amongst youth is particularly pronounced and significant for both sexes. However, the highest unemployment rate occurs among women aged 15-24 indicating structural barriers like lack of adequate jobs or reduced access to jobs for young women and girls even prior to the child-bearing and -rearing age.

Throughout the age groups 30-59, women's unemployment rate remains significantly higher compared to men's, particularly over the child-raising age and in the older age cohorts of 55 years onwards, where it is almost twice as high compared to men's.<sup>71</sup>

71 No data is provided for women above 60, coinciding with the onset of pension.

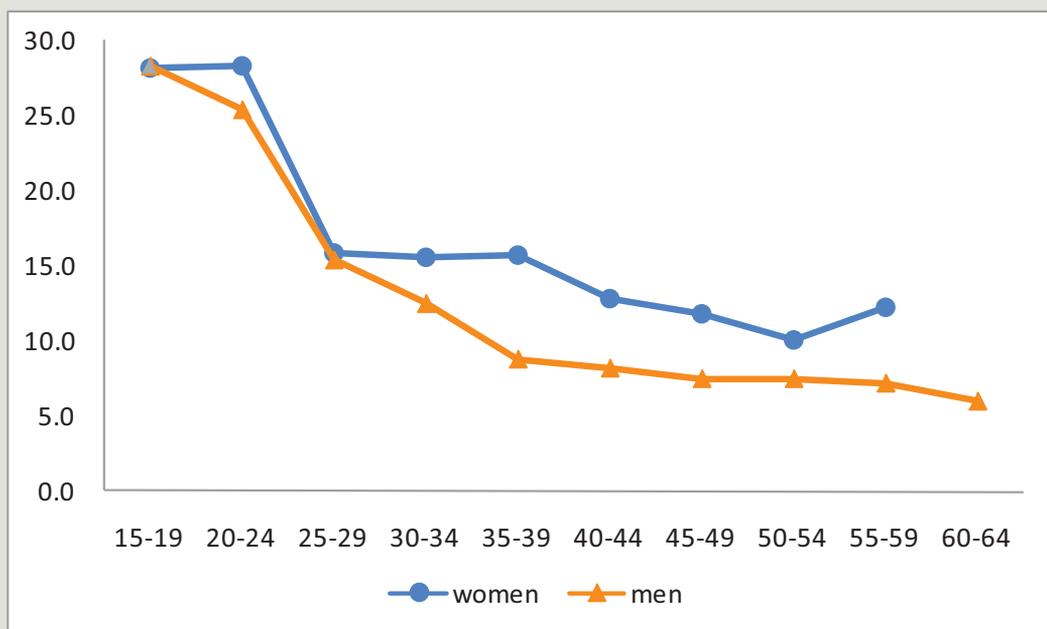


Figure 26: Unemployment rate ( per cent) according to sex and age group, 2009.

Source: INSTAT, Labour Force Survey 2009

In this context, the current role of labour offices deserves special attention. Labour offices are intended to help match the demand for and supply of labour and to offer training to job-seekers. However, according to LFS 2009, the overwhelming majority of young people continue to report “family relations and friends” as the main resource in their job search. Apparently, labour offices do not seem to play a significant role for the young unemployed, primarily due to lack of capacities of, and people’s lack of trust in, these structures.<sup>72</sup>

**Policies and Measures** Individuals registered as unemployed with the labour office receive professional training as a means to reintegrate into the labour market. For the years 2008, 2009, and 2010, the number of females receiving professional training corresponded to about 51 per cent, 56 per cent and 57 per cent of all registered unemployed, reflecting women’s high interest in such training. The majority of courses offered to women were typically “female”

72 LFS 2009 and World Bank 2006

with low-pay expectation, low skill occupational profiles like sewing, beautician, and shoe sewing, which enhance horizontal occupational segregation. In addition, these types of courses offer only limited opportunities for individual career advancement. The rate of post-training employment of females who received professional training is thus relatively low. For the time period 2008-2010, the percentage of female trainees finding employment after re-training ranged between 13 per cent and 21 per cent.

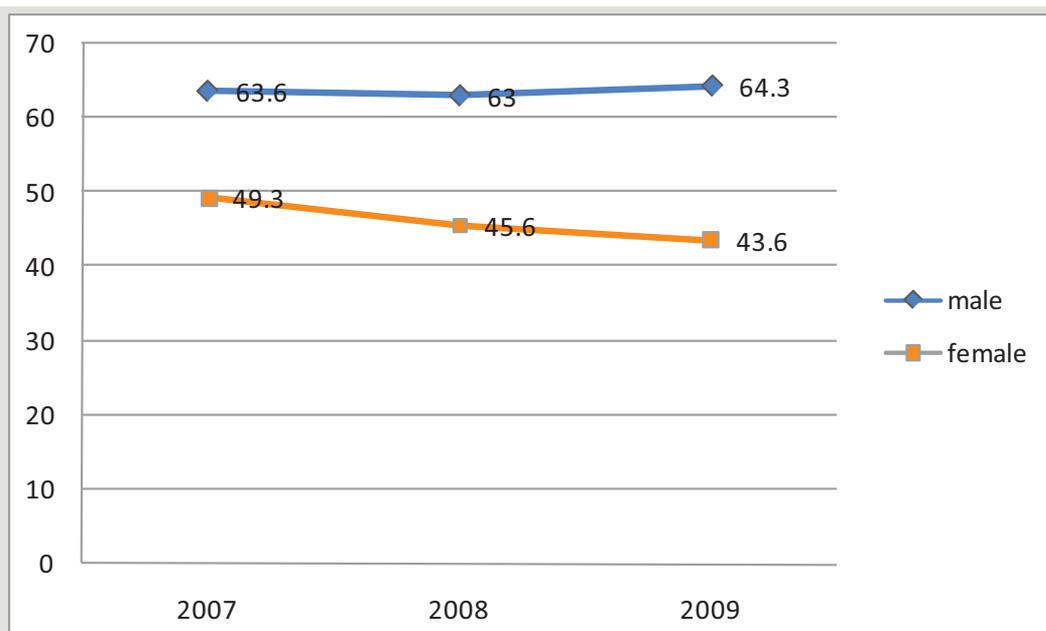
The percentage of women who benefitted from employment program schemes between 2008 and 2010 decreased from 82 per cent to 70 per cent.<sup>73</sup> Such government schemes offer incentives in the form of tax reduction or coverage of employees’ social insurance to employers in order to encourage the integration of unemployed individuals into the labour market and particularly to

73 Council of Minister Decision, date 11/01/2012, on employment program for female and vulnerable groups, see <http://www.keshilliministrave.al/?fq=preprog/arkiva/vkm&start=80>

increase the employability of vulnerable groups. Within the beneficiary group, the number of females with disabilities is very small and ranges between 0.4 per cent to two per cent. On the Roma community, only limited data is available, not yet disaggregated by sex.

**Employment according to sectors** shows marked gender differences. Agriculture remains the sector with the highest participation of women; women's share was 60.4 per cent in 2007 and since then has decreased only slightly (by 4 per cent until 2009). Men's employment in agriculture is half the one of women, with steady decreasing numbers over the years.

■ **Figure 27:**  
Male and female employment rates between 2007 and 2009



Source: INSTAT Labour Force Survey, 2009.

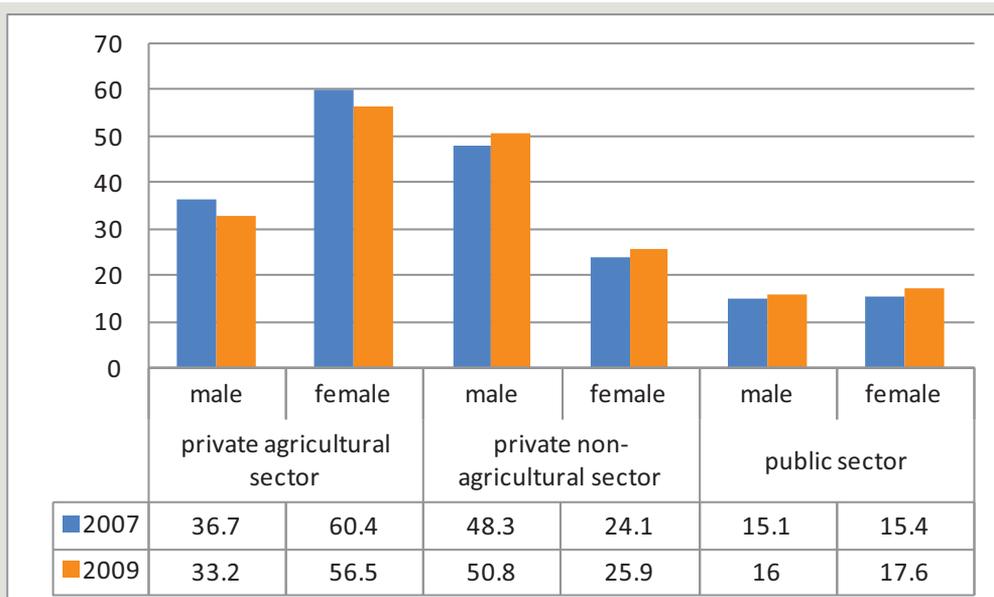
## Employment

The official employment rate is generally higher for men than for women. Between 2007 and 2009 (according to LFS data), women's employment rate decreased significantly from 49.3 per cent to 43.6 per cent. During the same time, men's employment remained stable, with a slight increase from 63.6 per cent to 64.3 per cent. Recent employment dynamics thereby resulted in a continuously widening overall employment gap between women and men of almost 20 per cent.

In 2009, two thirds of all individuals registered as "unpaid family workers" in the private -agricultural sector were women.<sup>74</sup>

Figures of the non-agricultural private sector draw a picture which is almost reversed to women's situation in agriculture, with an equally pronounced gender dimension. The private non-agricultural sector employs approximately twice as many men as women. Between 2007 and 2009, employment in the private non-agriculture sector increased roughly by 1.5 per cent for both women and men.

74 INSTAT 2009



■ **Figure 28:** Employment rates according to sectors between 2007 and 2009, disaggregated by sex.

Source INSTAT, Labour Force Survey, 2009

As shown in Figure “Employment rates according to sectors for the time period 2007-2009, disaggregated by sex”, women’s share in the public sector is slightly higher compared to men. From 2007 to 2009, employment in the public sector increased slightly for both women and men, with a more pronounced upward trend for women of about 2 per cent.

Data on employment in all sectors shows that women are predominantly employed in three sectors. In the health & social work and education sectors, women represent almost 70

per cent of total employed, and they constitute more than half of employed in agriculture. Women’s share is also substantial in finance (47 per cent) and manufacturing (47.3 per cent) (see Table “Structure of total employment by economic activity and sex”). In all other sectors, men significantly predominate, indicating far greater diversification in men’s employment. Occupational segregation of women and men in the labour market is one of the outcomes of prevailing stereotypes in education and the concomitant channelling of girls and boys into gendered courses and studies.

Economic Activities according to NACE Rev 1.1 code	per cent male	per cent female
Human health & social work activities	31.2	68.8
Education	32.3	67.7
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	44.7	55.3
Financial and insurance activities	53.0	47.0
Manufacturing	52.7	47.3
Others	61.1	38.9
Wholesale and retail trades	66.7	33.3
Accommodation and food service activities	63.5	36.5
Public administration and defence	73.1	26.9
Real estate activities	62.3	37.7
Electricity and gas supply	80.4	19.6
Transport and telecommunication	86.7	13.3
Mining and quarrying	98.8	1.2
Construction	96.4	3.6

■ **Table 2:** Structure of total employment by economic activity and sex, 2009.

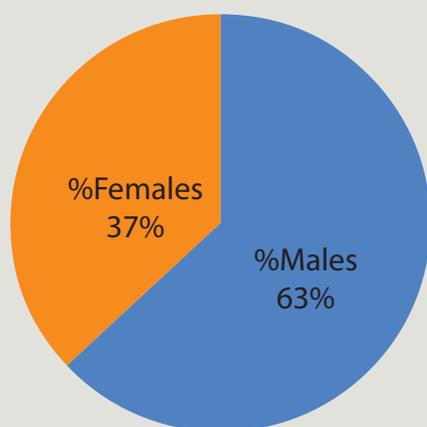
Source: INSTAT, Labour Force Survey 2009<sup>75</sup>

75 In order to enable highlighting of women’s occupational segregation, the official order of the NACE code is changed in this depiction.

**Employment according to regions.** The largest differences between women and men are found when analysing labour market characteristics within one and the same region. For example, in the mountain region, the largest differences between women and men are observed in employment (63.2 per cent for males, 36.8 per cent for females), unemployment (56.2 per cent for males, 43.8 for females), and inactivity (37.1 per cent for males, 62.9 per cent for females). Figures correlate well with the mountain area that is characterized by the highest level of poverty in the country, limited economic opportunities and access to productive resources especially for females, a more traditional societal background, and patriarchal culture.<sup>76</sup> In order to ensure women's economic security in mountainous and remote areas, special measures are required, particularly those that guarantee access to resources and services throughout their life cycle.

current labor market is focused on a work force with basic/low qualifications. According to LFS 2007, roughly 60 per cent of employed women held jobs requiring only low qualifications, which is an almost seven per cent higher share than men. However, such employment is largely low-skilled, low-paying, and frequently characterised by informality. Amongst university graduates, a higher percentage of women compared to men find employment at graduation. The completion of any other level of education; however results in a smaller percentage of women finding employment compared to men. The gender gap is particularly evident in vocational education, which indicates specific barriers for female graduates in finding employment. While still lower than for boys, completion of the general upper secondary level apparently provides girls with a fair chance of finding employment to a similar degree as their male peers: 17.5 per cent of girls of this category are employed, compared to 22.4 per cent of boys. Taken together, women apparently have fewer and unequal employment opportunities in comparison to men with the same educational attainment. The phenomenon is most pronounced in vocational education pointing to the fact that this type of education does not (yet) pay off for girls in the labour market. A higher share of female employment is only observed in either low-skilled labour or in jobs that require academic training. Both findings are in good match with women's significant employment in agriculture and manufacturing on the one hand, and in finance and the public sector on the other.

■ **Figure 29:**  
Percentage  
of women's  
and men's  
employment  
in mountain  
areas, 2008



Source: INSTAT. LSMS 2008

**Employment according to education.** The table "Percentage of employed women and men according to educational attainment" reveals that the majority of employed men and women have completed compulsory education only, illustrating how the

<sup>76</sup> LSMS 2008

	per cent male	per cent female
8-9 years compulsory school	50.8	57.2
Upper secondary professional 2-3	3.0	1.3
Upper secondary professional 4-5 years	13.7	9.2
Upper secondary general	22.4	17.5
University	10.8	14.9
total	100	100

Source: INSTAT LFS 2009.

■ **Table 3:**  
Percentage of employed women and men according to educational attainment, 2009

**Occupational segregation** The table "Total employment by economic activity" reflects persistent occupational segregation - some sectors are considered the exclusive domains of men, and some others of women. In agriculture, education, finance, and health and social work, the employment rate of women is much higher than men's. It is, however, worth mentioning that the wages in these sectors are significantly lower compared with other sectors such as construction, mining and transport, in which predominantly men find employment. As in many

"neutral", since they have not yet been stereotyped as "a man's job" or "a woman's job". In principle, such new professions would be expected to be chosen by females and males alike. Yet, 2009 figures show that there is a significant gender imbalance in the new professions, too.<sup>77</sup>

## Informal employment

**Informal employment** is a prevalent feature of Albania's labour market. In the LSMS 2004, 76 per cent of

	Male	Female
Lawmakers, high-level managers and chairs	77.5	22.5
Specialists	39.4	60.6
Assistant specialists and technicians	63.1	36.9
General servants and employees	56.4	43.6
Service and retail employees	58.4	41.6
Qualified workers in agriculture and fisheries	43.8	56.2
Craftsperson	80.5	19.5
Machine operators, in factories	98.8	1.2
Unqualified workers	71.5	28.5
Army	89.1	10.9

Source: INSTAT, LFS 2009

■ **Table 4:**  
Total employment according to professions and sex by economic activity, 2009

other countries, current patterns can be regarded as "traditionally" sex-segregated labour market, following gender-stereotyped occupational profiles. More recent professions, however, such as real estate, wholesale and retail, and also hotel-tourism could be perceived as gender

employment was defined as informal, and about 60 per cent of the informal market was composed by self-employed or unpaid agricultural workers. The vast majority of workers were female (87 per cent). Findings were confirmed by the LFS, conducted

<sup>77</sup> INSTAT, Women and Men in Albania 2008



five years later (2009), reflecting the same trend with women accounting for 57 per cent of all workers in agriculture<sup>78</sup>. Since then, developments in the Albanian economy and labour market give rise to the conclusion that the overall picture has not significantly changed. The informal sector is generally characterised by low skill levels, difficult and unprotected work conditions, absence of labour organizations, avoidance of fiscal obligations, and employers' evasion of contributing to the country's social and health insurance system, and preference for employing family members. The majority of workers are employed in arrangements outside the coverage of labor legislation and social insurance. Thus, while being part of an economic survival mechanism, informality is significantly correlated with low earnings, poverty and vulnerability<sup>79</sup>, with a disproportionately negative effect on women. At the same time, informal employment significantly contributes to household income and remains important for the economy.

Informal employment is not usually a path leading into subsequent employment in the formal sector. According to the Labour Market Assessment (World Bank 2006), only 14 per cent of informal wage employment

enters the formal sector after one year. A Gender analysis showed that 13 per cent of men and 19 per cent of women moved into formal wage employment after one year, which can be explained by women's higher probability of finding employment in the public sector. The transition from agricultural sector to formal market employment is very low (only six per cent), but there is a higher probability for men (seven per cent) than for women (five per cent) of moving into the formal market. This gender gap is even more pronounced in non-agricultural self-employment/unpaid work: only 12 per cent of women manage to move into the formal market compared to 20 per cent of men<sup>80</sup>.

## Gender wage gap

The lack of available data on wages and incomes in Albania, especially outside the public sector make the wage-gap estimation difficult<sup>81</sup>. Through various laws, Albanian legislation regulates wages in the public sector, and article 115/1 of the Labour Code of the Republic of Albania (law no. 7961) explicitly refers to equal pay for women and men for work of equal value. Although in 2008, wages increased by 8.8 per cent in the public sector and by 15.1 per cent in the private sector, with an additional increase of

78 LFS 2009

79 Albanian Labor Market Assessment, World Bank, page 62, May 2006.

80 Albania Labour Market Assessment 2006, page 68

81 Kodra, F. The Impact of the Crisis on Wages in South-East Europe. ILO 2011

16 per cent in the public sector in 2009, wage differentials still favour men. Public sector wages are on average 25 per cent higher than the overall wage in the Albanian economy including for the self-employed<sup>82</sup>. In all education categories, women receive lower monthly wages, and women's average salary is 17.63 per cent lower than that of men with the same educational attainment<sup>83</sup>.

A comparison of recent wage gap figures reveals an apparent reduction in the wage gap from 36 per cent in 2005 to about 18 per cent in 2008. This reduction might result from general improvements on the labour market in terms of skill rewards. At the same time, it may reflect the abovementioned increase in wages in the public sector, especially in health and education, where women comprise the majority of employees. An additional factor to be considered is the impact of the financial crisis on occupations typically held by the male work force and a potential decrease in male wages in sectors like business, manufacturing and trade. In spite of the recent reduction, the wage gap is 24.73 per cent for workers with lower educational attainment (non-university degree) and almost twice as large compared to the national average, namely 32.7 per cent in rural areas, in both cases women are disadvantaged. Although women start off with higher education levels and maintain that advantage throughout the age cohorts, in terms of wages, this positive aspect and advantage - which education is supposed to play in the labour market - is outweighed. For this phenomenon two main reasons may be given:

First, women still continue to find employment primarily in the social state service sector, where in general, men predominantly occupy positions

82 *ibid*

83 Miluka, J. Gender Wage Gap in Albania, 2011.

in law-making, high-level offices, and in management. Women act as specialists, regular workers and clerks in the education, health care and public administration sectors. Occupational segregation creates wage differentials by putting downward pressure on wages for occupations that are overcrowded by a particular sex and where labour supply is readily available. As a result of this occupational segregation, and a surplus of women seeking work in these sectors, women's wages are lower.

Second, the lack of support and limited provision of state care makes women the primary caregivers of children, the sick and the elderly. Due to women's child-bearing and caring responsibilities, the female labour force is therefore characterised by discontinuity of employment, especially during the child-bearing ages, resulting, on average, in five years less experience over the course of working life, when compared to men. This additionally and negatively affects on women's position on the labour market. Women are at greater risk of being fired from work, or less likely to be employed and to retain their jobs, particularly at the child-bearing ages. Another factor that impacts women's low level of remuneration is also their low involvement in self-employment private activities.

Despite inequalities in pay between women and men with the same level of qualifications with also clear cases of discrimination against women in general, it is important to note that the Albanian Government has taken very seriously the implementation of equal remuneration by establishing a National Council on Gender Equality as an advisory board for the definition, direction and development of national policies on gender equality<sup>84</sup>.

84 Kodra, F. The Impact of the Crisis on Wages in South-East Europe. ILO 2011



## Women's unpaid labour

Due to their dual burden inside and outside of the household, recent transformations in Albania's economy and the labour market have put women in a particularly challenging position. Both women and men engage in paid and unpaid work, which contributes directly and indirectly to a household's economic situation. However, a recent Time Use Survey (TUS) for Albania revealed that the use of time amongst the population 10 years and older is highly gendered<sup>85</sup>.

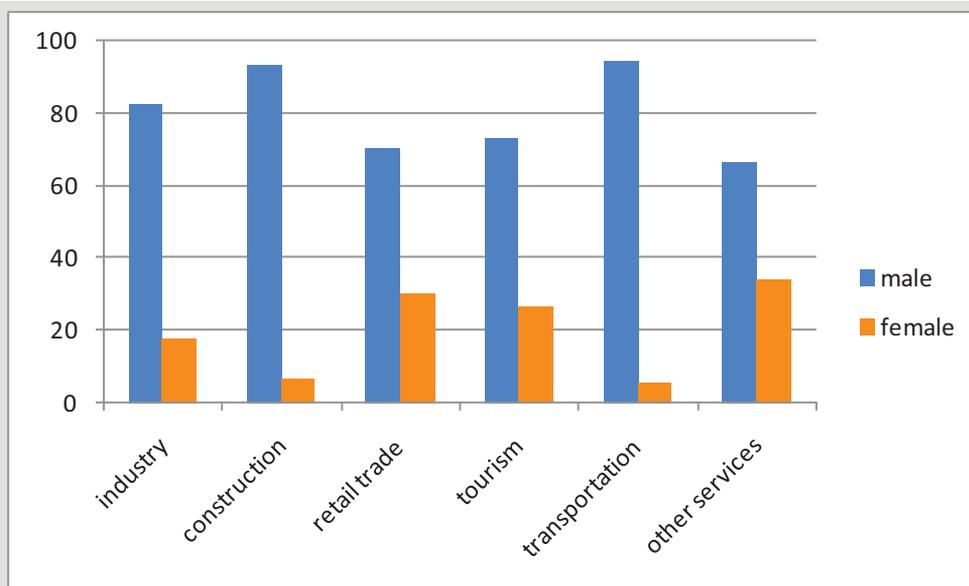
On average, women's overall contribution to paid and unpaid labour is two hours more per day than men's. The two hour difference primarily results from a gendered difference in free time. On average, men's leisure time exceeds women's by 1.5 hours per day. Work related to maintenance of household and family follows a deeply stereotyped

rural settings further increases the time burden on women. The study reveals the persistence of highly gendered roles in the use of time, corresponding to the general role model of men as individual breadwinners and workers, and of women as dependants and homemakers. Women's and men's time use patterns clearly challenge efforts which aimed at nurturing the economic independence of women as well as women's and men's joint reconciliation of the professional duty with their family responsibilities. The first TUS provides a base line against which further progress can be measured.

## Entrepreneurship

The Albanian economy continues to be dominated by small, very small and micro enterprises, each employing one to four people. These enterprises represent 92 per cent of all registered businesses. Of these, 62 per cent are active in trading, tourism and catering

Figure 30: Percentage of entrepreneurs disaggregated by sex and sector, 2010



Source: METE, 2010

pattern: women's contribution is 96 per cent, whereas men's is 4 per cent. Having small children and living in

(hotels, bars and restaurants), thereby creating jobs that are considered to be "male"<sup>86</sup>.

85 INSTAT 2011. Albania Time Use Study 2010-2011

86 [www.instat.gov.al/Economic\\_indicators/Business\\_register](http://www.instat.gov.al/Economic_indicators/Business_register)

Low access to credit and property<sup>87</sup>, and a lack of supporting policies promoting women's entrepreneurship, have accounted for a relatively low number of women entrepreneurs. Officially, women own 25.7 per cent out of 106 477 business in the country. As can be seen in Figure "Percentage of entrepreneurs disaggregated by sex and sector", women have set up their businesses mainly in economic areas like commerce, wholesale and retail; in various services such as dentistry<sup>88</sup>, notarisation, legal services, hairdressing; agro-business, dairy production, textile production, publishing, dress-making, and handicrafts production. However, women's share is generally low compared to male business and reaches significant levels only in services, retail trade, and – to some degree – in tourism.

According to INSTAT statistics, 18 per cent of private business managers are women. However, there is highly uneven spatial distribution: 61 per cent of registered businesses led by women are concentrated in Tirana and Elbasan. In 2005, only 17 per cent of all agricultural businesses nation-wide were directed by women, despite the fact that agriculture is one of the five sectors where women predominantly find employment<sup>89</sup>.

According to data provided by the METE, only 31 per cent of total value of business credit is taken by female entrepreneurs. Credit offered by non-financial institutions still remains low, with only 5.3 per cent of the total credit provided in the country<sup>90</sup>.

Usually, private banks offer credit to businesses that have existed for more

87 Official data on women's land ownership/property is currently unavailable.

88 Ministry of Economy, 2010 data

89 Albania Country Gender Profile 2010, JICA

90 Ministry of Economy, 2010 data

than two years, but not during start-up. Since women are less well integrated into business networks and usually do not have access to collateral, the start-up phase presents a particular challenge to female entrepreneurs, and access to credit during this time would be most crucial for women. Access to credit is particularly limited for small businesses. However, 96.2 per cent of enterprises owned by women belong to this category<sup>91</sup>.

Programs such as the Loan Guarantee Fund for Export have served to promote women's businesses through loan provisions and promotion programs.

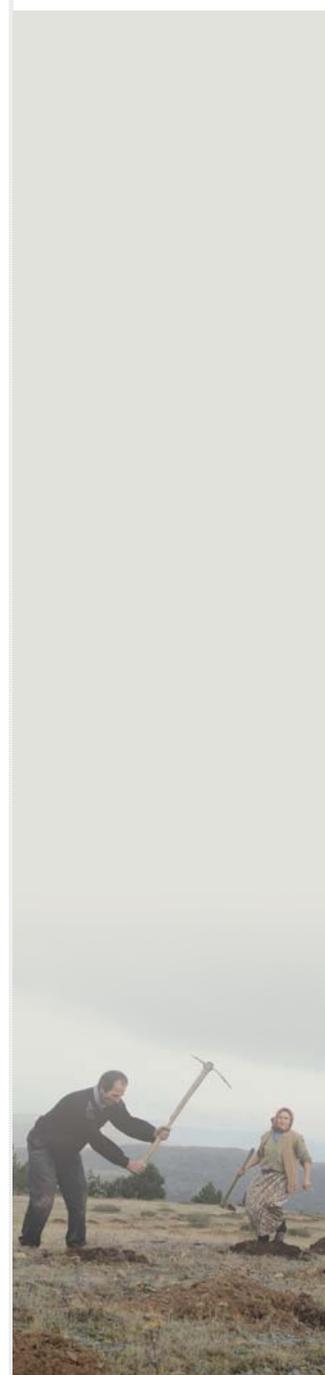
Although there have been some moderate achievements regarding women's entrepreneurial opportunities, there are few opportunities for women in rural areas. Despite the fact that more than 50 per cent of women in rural areas work in agriculture, they only own and manage six per cent of farms<sup>92</sup>. The majority of farms are small and under subsistence farming with limited production and marketing potential, and a large part of women's work on these family farms remains unpaid. However, until now, respectively required policy responses, programmes and support have remained limited.

## Property rights

Access to, and control over, productive resources are essential requirements for the economic empowerment of both women and men. There are currently two processes that significantly impact women's access to property rights, land registration and the legalisation of property. An investigation into

91 Ministry of Economy, 2010 data

92 Ministry of Agriculture 2010 data



respective legislation and current administrative provisions reveals that the related processes are inherently gender-biased and could bear significant consequences for women.

**Land registration** Since 1991, Albania has undergone a significant reform process regarding property rights. The total estimate of immovable properties is 4,230,000<sup>93</sup>, with approximately 3,530,000 properties in rural areas, regulated by several laws<sup>94</sup>.

According to law no. 7501, ownership and land division documents are to be issued in the name of the head of household as the legal representative of a farming household. However, the vast majority of registered heads of households are men. As a result, by specifying the head of household as the single legal representative in ownership certificates, the new registration process results in men's de facto advantage compared to women. Such gender discrimination is evident from current registration practice in land administration and urban management projects, like the Land Administration and Management Project (LAMP) supported by the World Bank and Sida<sup>95</sup>.

During the initial registration process, property is registered in the name of the person stated in the ownership certificate. While the head of household derives this entitlement from his position, other household members, including the wife, have to first claim their property either through a court decision document or by taking the case to court.

93 LAMP, IPRO office 2011.

94 Mainly the "Agriculture Land Law" No. 7501 (1991), the "Law on privatisation of existing building in urban area" (1993), the "Law on restitution and compensation of immovable properties" and Law no.9482 on "Legalization, urbanization, and integration of illegal constructions" (2006)

95 World Bank, Sida project on Land Administration and Management Project (2009-2013).

The process thereby heavily favours male ownership and hegemony.

**Legalisation**, the formalization of a considerable number of immovable property units (about 500,000)<sup>96</sup> is based on self-declaration by persons (families) that informally build homes, stores, etc. Such self-declaration, again, has been done by the head of the household. Subsequently, the agency in charge of legalization (ALUIZNI) issues the legalization permit. This document certifies a person as the owner and is issued invariably in the name of the person who submitted the self-declaration. Immovable property is then registered in the IPRO office, in the name of the person on whose behalf the legalisation permit was issued, i.e. the head of household. In the vast majority of cases (90 per cent), the registered, official head of the family is a man<sup>97</sup>. As a result, the ownership certificate, the sole document that makes a person an owner, contains the name of the family head, as the applicant, but not the names of other adult household members (above the age of 18). However, according to the legalisation law, a family civil certificate which includes household members is required as a legal document at the application stage. The situation is vague, however, on whether all members of the family as presented in the certificate at that time are legal owners of the family property, or whether only the person whose name is in the legalization permit retains ownership. Likely, in the case of the low on privatizing houses in 1993 or with the law on distribution of the agriculture land in 1991, but in both these laws, it was well defined that all family members at the time of privatization were owners.

96 Statistics by ALUIZNI agency

97 Estimation figures from the records of civil register in Albania

Taken together, the current administrative procedure of land legalisation/registration establishes an almost invariably male head of household or family head as the sole agent and representative of land. It thereby contributes to the systematic reduction of female property owners in Albania. As the process and practice continue, chances are high that property (housing and land) will be increasingly male-owned. Consequently, this deprives Albanian women of their assets and rights, and negatively impacts on women's access to credit, especially in rural areas<sup>98</sup>. As previously mentioned, some of women's most common obstacles in starting businesses are related to limited access to credit and a lack of collateral. This is the case when women are not registered either as owners or co-owners. In order to ensure women's

rights and their economic security, legal revisions, as well as an in-depth gender analysis of current practices and procedures, are urgently required.

Women's economic rights and security are key determinants in assessing gender equality. Therefore, specific indicators on women's property and land ownership are required for inclusion in the National Set of Harmonised Indicators on Gender Equality and the Status of Women in Albania. Sex-disaggregated data on land ownership, registrations and legalisations over the years is still unavailable and needs to be established.



98 Schmitz, Catharina; "Lessons from WEE work on Women's ownership of land and property in Kosovo/Albania", June 2010

## » Recommended actions

### Work

- Enforce policies on equal pay for equal work of equal value in conjunction with and similar to affirmative action promoting the hiring of women in fields dominated by men
- Define institutions and legal obligations regarding the routine data collection and processing on wages in the public and private sectors, including an analysis of the wage gap
- Improvement of the organization and functioning of the National Labour Council and its wage committee.
- Rigorously implement policies that fight gender segregation of the labour market
- Promote gender neutral professional profiles and implement support programs that encourage girls and boys to engage in non-traditional studies/occupations
- Provide career development and orientation to students related to their skills and the needs on the labour market and eliminate the focus on traditional vocations
- Provide social infrastructure and affordable, high-quality child care facilities for all children

- Increase rural occupational diversification and special programs for women
- Develop and implement pro-active public policies addressing the structural reasons for the decrease in women's labour market participation and their increased inactivity and unemployment rates.
- Develop and implement policies focusing on female entrepreneurs, especially in rural areas. Encourage women's entrepreneurship and self-employment, and establish respective support programs
- Increase the economic independence of women by expanding and improving access to loan, support programs and structures for care and social protection
- Ensure access to services and resources for the most disadvantaged groups
- Promote the sharing of child care and care work, between women and men including the promotion of responsible fatherhood and paternity leave
- Reduce the number of women not covered by social, health and pension insurance, particularly women working in agriculture, unpaid family workers, and women in the informal sector
- Close data gaps in the respective section of the national set of harmonized indicators, including those on sexual assault and harassment in the workplace, discrimination, child care provision, part-time work, employment schemes, and loans/funds/cred

## » Recommended actions

### Property rights

- Install a system of property registration at IPRO offices supported by the World Bank and Sida which disaggregates landownership by sex
- Collect and provide sex-disaggregated data on land ownership, registrations and legalisations on an annual basis
- Assess the gendered impact of all procedures in land registration and legalisation processes and engage in respectively required amendment of laws and revision of procedures
- Undertake gender-sensitive revisions of the draft National Strategy on Property
- Establish concrete legal procedures for the ALUIZNI agency for issuing legalisation permits specifying the name of a co-owner/wife
- Assess the gender dimension of all laws regulating land ownership in general as well as the procedures for implementation.
- In line with CEDAW article 14, implement the necessary changes in the procedures and practice of land and property registration/legalisation in order to ensure equal land and property entitlements of women and men
- Undertake wide-spread public awareness raising and particular information activities for women
- Provide free legal aid for women to claim their rights, vis-à-vis co-/ownership

# Social Policies and Social Services

In order to sustain their economic security during times of crisis, women and men rely on a range of social services. This chapter includes a discussion of various social protection instruments, such as social insurance and social assistance, and considers these in view of their particular relevance for women. The significance of gender-sensitive monitoring of service delivery vis-à-vis social inclusion is shown using the example of social housing.

## Social protection

Social security systems are defined as “the protection which society provides for its members through a series of public measures”<sup>99</sup>. This implies a system of organized legal, economic, normative and institutionalized measures and activities in response to the social needs of a person and her or his family. However, gender, age, employment, marital and social status, spatial residence, as well as ethnicity and life circumstances significantly impact on the degree to which an individual can access social security systems. Some groups within society are exposed to a greater risk of being affected by poverty and social insecurity. Therefore, this section begins with a presentation of the available statistics on poverty. According to the traditional concept, an individual is poor if his or her level of per capita

99 ILO, 2000: 29

expenditures falls below a minimum level necessary to meet basic food and non-food needs.

In Albania, poverty is measured according to this concept at household level, based on household consumption<sup>100</sup>. According to LSMS 2008, which contains the most recent data, national poverty is higher in rural than in urban areas, and is more pronounced in mountainous areas of the country. Results show a slightly higher number of females (12.9 per cent) compared to males (11.9 per cent) living in absolute poverty; figures on relative poverty depict a similar situation. However, the proportion of poor females living in extreme poverty (56 per cent) is significantly higher compared to poor males in the same category (44 per cent). Estimations also show that from all poor households, female-headed households are less poor (6 per cent) compared to poor

100 Absolute poverty is understood as the minimum set of resources a person needs to survive. It is a matter of acute deprivation, hunger, premature death and suffering. The consensual understanding is that absolute poverty is an intolerable situation, requiring prompt corrective action. Relative poverty is a measurement of the resources and living conditions of parts of the population in relation to others. It is a matter of social equity, and is associated with the development of policies for the reduction of social inequalities and the creation of mechanisms to compensate for the more extreme differences in wealth, living conditions and opportunities. Extreme poverty is defined as average daily consumption of \$1.25 or less and means living on the edge of subsistence (World Bank definition 2010).

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household headed by a man (8.9 per cent)<sup>101</sup>.

It remains to be determined whether this can be attributed to factors like the availability of remittances, family size, or women's economical management.

The dominant statistical practice for measuring poverty is at the household level. Since the methodology does not consider intra-household inequality between family members the gender gap is likely to be under-estimated. For example, women's poverty must be specifically assessed through aspects of control over household resources, reflected by property ownership, cash income, and participation in intra-household decision-making on spending<sup>102</sup>. Furthermore, the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action recognize that poverty has

and exclusion. It is also characterised by a lack of participation in decision-making in private and public life<sup>103</sup>. Women's and girl's disadvantage is therefore simultaneously economic and social, putting them at a higher risk of material deprivation and exclusion from social systems. A gender-sensitive assessment of the current state of poverty in Albania would have to take into consideration these criteria.

**Economic Aid.** In terms of financial value, poverty-related cash transfers (in Albania they are known as economic aid) are the most significant social service financed by the central government. Established in 1993 and developed at a time when the former political system was collapsing, today economic aid (EA) is the unique public instrument that addresses extreme poverty. While the overall socio-economic situation in the country has changed, poverty remains an issue. Studies by the World Bank with LSMS data (2002-2005) on cash transfers show the guiding principles currently in use in Albania focus primarily on economic aid distribution. However, in order to respond to the specific needs of women, men, girls and boys, targeted responses are required that aim to ensure social protection and inclusion, and the reduction of vulnerability. Currently available information on poverty does not yet focus on the poverty status of individual women, men, girls and boys and their specific needs. Sex-disaggregated data categorised into age, urban/rural residence, civil and health status, educational attainment, ethnicity, number of children, and household

various manifestations, including lack of income and productive resources; malnutrition; ill health; limited or lack of access to education and other basic services; inadequate housing; unsafe environments; and social discrimination

101 INSTAT 2011, LSMS 2008 (figures compiled in 2011 for the national set of harmonized gender indicators).

102 United Nations 2010, *The world's Women, Trends and Statistics 2010*

103 United Nations, 1995a, para. 47. This characterization of poverty was first stated in the Copenhagen Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development (United Nations, 1995b, Annex II, para. 19).



size is unavailable and still needs to be established. That information is required for the development of targeted policies addressing the specific needs of different groups. It also feeds into monitoring and measuring EA's contribution to poverty alleviation, social protection, and inclusion. Gaps in beneficiary entitlements to EA result in the de facto exclusion of truly poor individuals and families in need. Such gaps prevent specific sub-groups of poor women and men from accessing

EA; they need to be identified and addressed on a continual basis. Towards this end, in 2008, UN Women embarked on an investigation into vulnerable sub-groups of women in need and their actual entitlement statuses vis-à-vis the EA scheme. Findings of this gender-sensitive and inclusive assessment subsequently led to the amendment of the law on social assistance and services, thereby increasing the contribution of EA to social protection.

### **Influencing Economic Aid policies – increasing access for women in need at the local level**

While the law on social assistance and services is the remit of the central government, with municipalities having only limited administrative and fiscal responsibilities in its application, actual EA disbursement (cash transfer) is undertaken by local governments. It is, therefore, at the local level and in direct contact with citizens where shortfalls of key social assistance policies are experienced firsthand.

Concerned with the overall progress of decentralisation and with the provision of social assistance to citizens in particular, in 2008, several local authorities collaborated with UN Women, in order to undertake a beneficiary analysis of the EA scheme. The analysis aimed at assessing how this particular central government policy works on the ground, with a specific focus on its gender-related impacts. In doing so, the activity also provided a channel to raise voices and the concerns of local authorities to central authorities. Research at municipality level revealed the following:

De facto, the law on social assistance and services invariably assumes that the head of household is a man. Unlike their male counterparts, if women apply as head of household, they must first prove this status with specific documentation. For women, obtaining the respectively required documents remains a serious challenge. In addition, only certain categories of women qualify as head of households. For example, women whose husbands are living abroad, but do not send remittances, and women who have left their husbands, but have not been formally granted a divorce, do not qualify as heads of household and are not eligible for EA.

In all municipalities engaging in the collaboration, the main concern of women focus group participants was the small amount of the grant. The amount was insufficient for covering electricity, health insurance and childcare services, and was reported to be primarily spent on food and medicine. Overall, spending patterns between families with male and female heads differed. For example, male-headed households were more likely than women to spend money on cell phones, coffee and bars, leaving less money for essentials. Women-headed households were more likely to buy primarily food and essentials. Both women

and men heads of household did not fully understand how the economic aid system worked. They did not know how long it would take from the day of application until first disbursement, duration of entitlement, and way of calculation.

One of the key insight resulting from the research is the fact that the head-of-household approach, with its inherent assumption that this person is invariably a man, is deeply gender biased. In order to be accessible for those in need, the Law should first and foremost target individuals, and within this, their dependents. This of course requires a significant shift in thinking about entitlements to social assistance: in order to ensure social protection of those who are de facto in need, a shift needs to be made from family/group-oriented to individual entitlement, with women's individual entitlements on an equal footing with men's. Furthermore, under the then system, the categories of female-headed households who were eligible for EA had to be expanded.

As a result of these finding and recommendations, the Law on Social Assistance and Services was revised in 2011. Among the categories of female headed households eligible for EA, the Law now includes also victims of domestic violence; women who are separated from their husbands or in the process of marriage dissolution (when there is not yet a final court decision); elderly women who are abandoned; and victims of trafficking after leaving the social care institutions .

## Social insurance

The social insurance system is financed mainly by the contributions of the economically active population (employers, employees and the self-employed). It includes protection schemes such as social insurance, health insurance and unemployment insurance benefits. In turn, the social insurance scheme provides cash benefits to protect insured persons with respect to retirement, unemployment, maternity, disability, temporary incapacity due to sickness, and work-related injury or occupational disease. The state has the role of a contributor for special groups in need, along with the economically active population<sup>104</sup>. According to an EC report on social

104 In the health care insurance scheme for: children, pupils, full-time students, retired people, mentally or physically disabled people, beneficiaries of unemployment benefits, beneficiaries of social assistance, mothers on maternity leave and solders in military service. In the social insurance scheme for: soldiers and beneficiaries of unemployment benefit.

inclusion and exclusion in Albania, overall contribution rates in Albania are very low; some of the underlying reasons are limited formal employment, high informality, and employers' reluctance to pay their obligatory share<sup>105</sup>.

According to estimates, a higher percentage of women compared to men works in the informal sector, resulting in women's weak coverage by the system<sup>106</sup>.

However, lack of coverage significantly and negatively impacts on a range of entitlements, including maternity leave and employment and pension benefits, thereby increasing women's overall vulnerability to economic risk, dependence, poverty, and social exclusion during child-bearing and child-caring as well as in old age. Comprehensive disaggregated

105 European Commission 2008, "Social Inclusion and Exclusion in Albania"2008

106 LSMS 2005-2008

data on the women, girls, men and boys covered (and not covered) by social insurance in Albania is currently unavailable. A first indication of the generally low degree of insurance coverage women experience might be the number of pregnant women covered by health insurance; between 2000 and 2005, the share of pregnant women covered by health insurance did not exceed 30 per cent<sup>107</sup>.

Similar sex-disaggregated data on pension and social insurance in general is currently not published which points to the urgent need for in-depth study and analysis.

Demographic projections reveal that Albania's population shows first signs of aging<sup>108</sup>, gradually resulting in a proportional increase of retired women and men, eligible to receiving pension benefits. Due to their higher life expectancy, women outnumber men in older age cohorts. However, due to care-giving obligations during their younger years and their high participation in the informal sector, women collect fewer contribution years. This results in small pensions and limited entitlements to pension in old age. As a result, there is a clear need for further studies on the gendered impact of social insurance and pension entitlements on women, and the development of policies and measures that aim at increasing the share of protected citizens (regardless of their sex) throughout their life cycle. There are currently no sex-disaggregated data officially available on the extent

of social insurance coverage in Albania. Such data must include further categorisation into age, residence, social-economic status, marital status and ethnicity.

## Social services

The delivery of services is especially important for women, because of their role as mothers, housekeepers, and caregivers they are more dependent on basic services such as health, care, water supply, housing, sanitation and education for children than are usually men. The existence and accessibility



of social services at the local level is of significant importance for the implementation of public policies in the domain of equality, social protection, non-discrimination, and the fight against violence against women, poverty and exclusion. Actual service delivery to citizens takes place at local level, and local government is in charge of tasks related to assessing the need of communities, planning,

107 Social Insurance Institute cited in the National Strategy for Social Inclusion 2007-2013

108 For a discussion of the age structure of Albania's population see the chapter on Demographics.

budgeting, and monitoring the delivery of adequate services in respond to those needs.

In the framework of current decentralization legislation, provision of services can be out-sourced to implementing bodies, i.e. licensed companies or NGOs. Procurement of subcontracted services providers is undertaken according to expertise, experience, and quality of the service based in rapport with the lowest price<sup>109</sup>. In the actual operation of such public-private partnerships, special care needs to be taken that social services follow inclusive approaches and are delivered with the aim to support human rights and equality, meet people's needs, and to improve the overall living standards of women, men, girls and boys with a special attention to vulnerable individuals and groups among them. Towards this end, improved monitoring of social services in general, and of procured service delivery in particular, is required.

**Social Housing.** The Social Housing for Rent program is based upon law no. 9232, dated May 13, 2004 which provides accommodation of inhabitants in urban areas. In 2010, a new program was launched, resulting in a steady increase in the number of applications<sup>110</sup>. The general criteria in order to qualify for the housing social programs require an applicant to: (i) not own a house; (ii) currently live in conditions which are below the accommodation standards defined for the specific social and economic category to which an applying family belongs to;

109 Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 80 dated January 28, 2008 on the sectoral strategy on social services

110 <http://www.tirana.gov.al/?cid=1,161,3920>

and (iii) homelessness as a result of natural disaster.

Decisions to grant assistance are taken by the Municipal Council. According to data published, as an example, by the Municipality of Tirana, groups eligible to benefit from the social programs include the following: families which can prove that they have not benefited from the Law No 7652 dated December 23, 1992 "On the privatization of state-owned houses"; female headed families, with the head of family being either divorced or a widow; single parent families in charge of more than one child; elderly people who have reached the retirement age and do not benefit from lodging in a public care institution; individuals with disability who enjoy the status of blind people of first category, disabled, labor and war disabled; families with a large number of children; young couples with a total age up to 55 years; families which have changed their residence because of employment purpose; and individuals with orphan status from the day of release from orphanage or care center until their 30<sup>th</sup> birthday. Within these groups, priority is given to those with limited ability, recipients of economic aid, and to those facing social problems.

Gender criteria are evident from eligible groups. However, in order to identify possible gender and beneficiary gaps as well as the effects of this particular service, a comprehensive assessment of the actual implementation of social housing programmes must be undertaken. For example, currently available statistics on applicants are general and provide limited information on the type of categories applying for social housing<sup>111</sup>.

111 [www.tirana.gov.al](http://www.tirana.gov.al)

Data is not sex-disaggregated by gender, and there is no data available on the ratio between applications versus successful provision of social housing, including information on beneficiaries and dependants benefiting from the programme. However, such data and indicators are essential for delivering social housing services in a way that recognizes the different roles, needs and situations of women and men.

In line with the national set of harmonized indicators, sex-disaggregated and gender-sensitive indicators need to be developed.

Furthermore, in order to monitor equal access to this service in view of responding to the needs of excluded, marginalized and vulnerable groups, gender analysis of applicants and beneficiaries as well as of the process of granting social housing is recommended. Furthermore, a re-categorisation of those entitled to social housing is recommended, in line with obligations outlined in new laws (e.g. the law on Gender Equality in Society, the law on Social Assistance and Services, the law on Measures against Violence in Family Relations, and the Anti-discrimination law).

## » Recommended actions

- Assess the gender dimension of the law for civil registry and its impact on women's equal access to rights and services
- Ensure adequate provisions regarding the disbursement of EA to primary care giver in the secondary legislation of the law on social services and economic aid
- Allocate targeted and special funds for delivering social services to local government units in order to address poverty and inequality disparities among regions
- Improve targeting of EA in order to prevent individuals in need from living in poverty
- Ensure gender-sensitive local budgets which include all women, men, girls and boys in need and ensure targeted service provision
- Ensure social protection coverage for the entire population, taking into consideration the high number of women who are self-employed, or working in agriculture and in the informal private non-agriculture sectors
- Undertake an in-depth study on the effectiveness of social insurance (vis-à-vis men and women), including current practices, attitudes, barriers, institutional arrangements, and coping mechanisms
- Investigate the gendered impact of the current pension system
- Undertake a gender-sensitive assessment of number, type and quality of currently available services that are covered by social and health insurance; determine the degree to which women and men access and benefit from these services
- Together with municipalities, analyse their social service programs from a gender equality point of view
- Assess the implementation and

monitoring of social housing programs from a gender-sensitive point of view and cross-check current practice with obligations derived from recent laws addressing gender equality, domestic violence and discrimination

- In the future, investigate the effect and impact of privatisation of social services on women and girls, with a special focus on the most vulnerable and marginalized
- Ensure the maintenance of high standards and the adherence to inclusive practices and equality commitments in all privatized/outsourced social services

- In revising the cross-cutting National Strategy for Social Inclusion 2007-2013, ensure the coherent mainstreaming of gender equality goals and the incorporation of actions in response to the latest UN CEDAW Concluding Observations for Albania.



# Political Representation and Equal Participation in Decision-making

**W**omen's representation and participation in decision-making are key indicators of a society embracing equality between the sexes in all walks of life. Marked inequalities rest on the notion of deeply stereotyped models for women, girls, men and boys which assign authority, public agency and power to a predominantly male actor. However, sustainable socio-economic development and democratisation can only be achieved by empowering and emancipating efforts that guarantee women and men agency in all sectors and areas, and in particular in those decisions that influence their lives.

In line with the law on Gender Equality in Society and CEDAW article 5, Albanian institutions are obliged to take all appropriate measures to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices that constitute and/or result in discrimination against women, including social and customary practices that are based on the idea of women's inferiority.

The issue of women's democratic rights is covered in the EU's Annual Country Progress Report on a routine basis. The 2011 document commented that while some progress had been made in the application of the gender quota compared to the local elections in 2007, "political parties did not comply with the gender requirement quota, which resulted in a low level of

participation by women".<sup>112</sup> The report also concluded that an increase in sanctions for electoral subjects that do not respect the gender requirement would be necessary. Furthermore, the report observed that in general there was little progress to report in the area of equal opportunities; women continued to be under-represented in the labour market, policy-making and politics, and implementation of existing legislative and policy tools in this field continued to be weak. The assessment also resounds in the latest CEDAW Concluding Observations, recalling GoA's responsibilities in introducing temporary special measures in all those fields where women are underrepresented or disadvantaged in order to accelerate the achievement of substantive (de facto) gender equality.<sup>113</sup>

Although women make up approximately half of the electorate in Albania, they continue to be seriously under-represented as candidates for public office and as members of the civil service. Even in sectors with a high percentage of female staff, women occupy primarily lower positions, and are generally absent from higher management levels. One of the key factors resulting in such pyramidal patterns is women's and

112 European Commission, Albania 2011 Progress Report

113 UN CEDAW Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, July 2010.

men's socialisation along traditional gender stereotypes and gender roles. Women are conceptualised as mothers and primary caregivers, while men are assigned expertise, competence and decision-making power in public life. This in turn leads to women occupying lower and lower-paid positions, which offer fewer career advancement and promotion opportunities; it also leads to the isolation of women in higher ranks. It reinforces male's dominant roles and the lack of representation of issues and topics relevant to women in planning and decision-making. Temporary measures like affirmative action and quota for women address and aim at ameliorating the marked and highly unequal representation patterns.

The traditional working patterns of many political parties and government structures continue to be barriers to women's participation in public life. However, the increased presence of women in politics and decision-making positions in government contributes to the redefining of political priorities and places new items on the political agenda. They reflect and address women's gender-specific concerns and also provide new perspectives on mainstream political issues.

Legislation in Albania requires the representation of at least 30 per cent of the less well-represented sex in all governing and political bodies. This includes all decision-making positions of the public administration, the judiciary, the police force and peace-keeping missions, senior level political positions, and electoral processes. The "30 per cent quota" is to be achieved through temporary special measures. Since 2008, seven specific and temporary measures have been implemented ensuing from policies and national

legislation for the advancement of gender equality. These specific measures were related to equal participation in decision-making, implementation of the electoral code, safety and health in the work place, the entitlement of women heads of households to economic aid, and the number of women in management positions of schools.

The numerical increase in women's representation – be it in political or government bodies – is an achievement in itself. However, in order to ensure the sustainability of such efforts, activities must be accompanied by career development and advancement efforts for women. Specific and gender-sensitive measures are required in order to guide, coach and support the processes and dynamics of related organisational change.

The sub-set of relevant gender indicators is closely monitored by MoLSAEO, and in principle, figures are available. However, due to the complexity of the issue, numerous state- and non-state actors, including ministries and a wide range of governmental bodies, NGOs, and donors, are involved. As is evident from the chapters in this publication, the continuous collection, as well as provision of information and statistical data, remains a challenging task for various stakeholders and institutions. For example, the provision of official, comprehensive sex-disaggregated data on the 2011 local elections by the Central Election Commission is pending. At the same time, the existence of such information and subsequent analysis are indispensable prerequisites for capturing the status quo and feeding into the government's monitoring system.



## Public administration

Women's representation follows a pattern that is observed in the majority of institutions in many countries: even in sectors with a high overall percentage of female employees, as in public administration, women's are found at middle and especially lower levels, with men predominantly occupying higher ranks. As can be seen in the

table below, in the Albanian civil service, women's representation at management level (25 per cent) is still significantly lower than at steering (57 per cent) and executive level (64 per cent). At the ministerial level, there is currently only one female minister out of 15, and 8 vice ministers out of a total of 37, which corresponds to a female representation of seven per cent and 21 per cent respectively.

Classes of Civil Servants 2011	per cent Male	per cent Female
Civil servant in senior management	75.7	24.3
Civil servant in the middle management	60.8	39.2
Civil servant of low-level steering positions	42	58
Executive-level civil servants	35.1	64.9
<b>Total:</b>	<b>41.3</b>	<b>58.7</b>

Source: Department of Public Administration, 2010

Table 5: Percentage of women and men in the civil service, according to the four classes of civil servants, 2010

## Security sector

The police and the armed forces are state institutions that have traditionally been dominated by men, and in the higher ranks, there are almost no women. Comparing figures in the Albanian Armed Forces the overall number of women increased by roughly 13.6 per cent between 2008 and 2010. However, the relative share of women did not increase uniformly across all ranks: the highest proportional increase in women's representation can be observed at the rank of lieutenant

(+50 per cent) and sub-colonel (+94 per cent). While this marks a significant achievement in terms of hierarchical advancement, the 200 per cent increase at the rank of colonel is a result of two individuals, and the numerical impact on overall statistics is low. On the other hand, during the same period, the number of women compared to men dropped in the ranks of major (-5.7 per cent) and captain, and significantly decreased in the rank of sub-lieutenant (-12.1 per cent) with a concomitant

121.9 per cent increase in male sub-lieutenants. While the low advancement tendency for women at the medium ranks of major and captain draws attention to the need for promotion and retention policies, the marked gender gap at the rank of sub-lieutenant raises questions regarding recruitment. In line with UNSCR1325, inherent challenges and medium-term dynamics regarding the promotion of women within the Albanian armed forces require further study and close monitoring.

#### The Albanian State Police (ASP).

Similar to the armed services, the police force is traditionally male institution. At present, the overall

representation is of women is merely 10 per cent. However, as shown in Table below, women police officers are predominantly concentrated in the civil rank. The male/female ratio is particularly alarming in the ranks of chief inspector, inspector and vice inspector, and between 2008 and 2010, the representation of women in these ranks dropped even further.<sup>114</sup> This raises concerns of how to ensure the future supply side of women police officers for ranks involved in police operations? It also indicates a serious recruitment problem, which the ASP, in collaboration with ICITAP, decided to tackle.

114 Albanian State Police 2011

Table 6: Number of female officers in the Albanian armed forces, according to grade; and trends for the time period 2008-2010. M=men, F=women

Ranks	2008		2009		2010		2008-2010 trend	
	M	F	M	M	M	F	M	F
General	8	-	12	-	12	-	+ 50 per cent	-
Colonel	80	-	82	1	79	2	-1.3 per cent	+200 per cent
Sub-colonel	297	17	348	22	371	33	+25 per cent	+94 per cent
Major	542	70	544	77	499	66	-7.9 per cent	-5.7 per cent
Captain	310	24	327	22	475	24	+53.2 per cent	-
Lieutenant	732	89	528	138	336	134	-54.1 per cent	+50.6 per cent
Sub-lieutenant	128	124	238	96	284	109	+121.9 per cent	-12.1 per cent
	2097	324	2079	356	2056	368	-1.9 per cent	+13.6 per cent

Source: Ministry of Defence, 2010

Table 7: Percentage of women and men in the Albanian State Police, according to rank, 2012

Rank	F	M
General Director	0 per cent	100 per cent
Deputy Director	25 per cent	75 per cent
First Director	0 per cent	100 per cent
Director	9.4 per cent	90.6 per cent
Chief Superintendent	10.7 per cent	89.3 per cent
Superintendent	10.3 per cent	89.7 per cent
Deputy Superintendent	11.7 per cent	88.3 per cent
Chief Inspector	6.5 per cent	93.5 per cent
Inspector	2.7 per cent	97.3 per cent
Deputy Inspector	8.8 per cent	91.2 per cent
Support staff (civilians)	53.4 per cent	46.6 per cent

Source: Albanian State Police, 2012

## Increasing women's representation – the case of the Albanian State Police (ASP)

In 2011, triggered by the requirements under UNSCR 1325, the Law on Gender Equality in Society, apparent gender statistics, and ASP's internal diversity policy and respective action plan, ASP launched its first recruitment campaign in order to increase the percentage of female students/recruits. The activity had been preceded by a profound analysis on the obstacles inhibiting girls' and women's application for, and subsequent entry into, the police academy. This was complemented by a survey on the perception of the public as well as of police staff towards women police officers. The key application obstacle identified in the study – a driver's license which still few women and girls hold in Albania – was removed, and a nation-wide recruitment and information campaign launched. The campaign was intensively covered by national and local TV and, established a positive, self-confident and empowered image of women in the police force.

This activity had two major impacts: first, it made gender-stereotyped and "atypical" occupations – like being a police woman – a public issue, contributing to the conscientization and sensitization of girls, as well as parents, family members, male police, and the general public; second, it informed interested aspirants about life as a police person and the application process, thereby reducing wrong assumptions and illusions. As a result of this campaign, ASP received a total of 1,651 applications from all regions of the country. This figure represents a more than 800 per cent increase in female applicants compared to previous application rounds. Roughly 11.3 per cent, or 186 applicants, succeeded in passing the subsequent tests. Officers on the panel were impressed by applicants' high educational background, maturity, strong inter-personal and communication skills, and especially their natural and strong self-confidence. This aspect had not been apparent in previous application rounds and positively contributed to women applicants scoring high. Representatives of ASP link this to the fact the campaign was explicitly pro-women and women-only, which created a positive atmosphere. Candidates knew from the very beginning they were welcome and did not have to compete directly with men, which had apparently been an obstacle in previous application rounds.

While ASP's efforts towards increasing the number of female recruits represents a clear success story, further affirmative action is required in order to (i) retain female recruits, and (ii) offer opportunities for career development and promotion (e.g. leadership training once recruits start their career). Furthermore, strong alliances will have to be built with open- and like-minded male police officers, including at senior levels, and there is a clear need for female role models within ASP. The recent appointment of a senior police woman into the position of deputy director of the training department is a positive signal towards this end.

An increase of women in formerly male-dominated spheres places new items on the agenda and contributes to the overall revision and redefinition of institutional policy and practice. In the case of ASP, such dynamics are embedded into the wider transformation of the police – from being a mere disciplinary organ into an organisation that is part of the

community, catering to the needs and concerns of all its members. Change is also evident from ASP's efforts to reflect new legislation, like the Law on Gender Equality in Society, the Law on Measures against Violence in Family Relations, and the Anti-Discrimination Law, in its day-to-day operations. As a consequence, ASP plans to draft anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies. Furthermore, in line with ASP's diversity policy, the 2009-11 action plan requires revision and updating. Such efforts will have to be supported by internal sensitization and the continued training of existing staff, in order to address the recurring question of why it is necessary to have female police officers. At the content- and teaching levels, a revision of curricula is foreseen, as is the introduction of specific training modules that have direct implications for gender equality and diversity issues in police operations. In line with the Law on Gender Equality in Society and Ministerial Instruction no.1220 on collecting and processing sex-disaggregated data, the statistical division of ASP will have to revise current collection and processing aspects of data, in order to ensure the accurate depiction and description of ASP's capacity-building activities, staff, and operations.

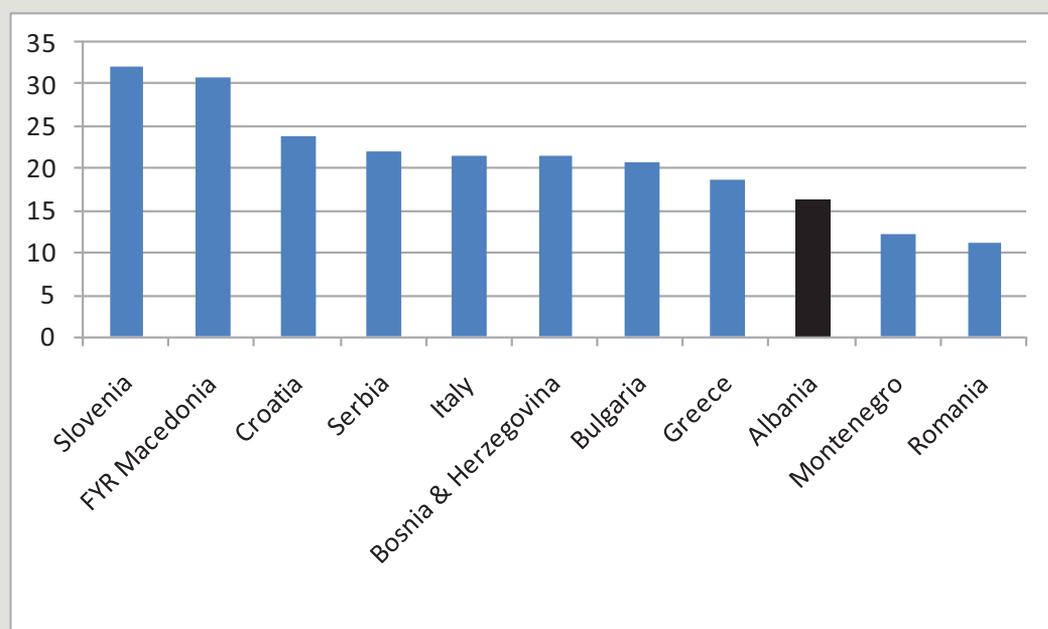
The ASP experience serves as an excellent case for studying the dynamics, achievements, as well as obstacles and challenges, encountered when mainstreaming gender equality concerns into all aspects and all levels of a traditionally male-dominated organisation; further research is recommended.

## Diplomatic service

Between 2005 and 2008, there was a noticeable increase in the representation of women in Albania's diplomatic service. In 2008, the

proportion of women was 38.5 per cent; this positively contributed to Albania's improved rank in the Gender Empowerment Measure<sup>115</sup>.

Figure 31: Regional variation in the percentage of women in parliament.



Source: IPU, 2012

115 UNDP National Human Development Report 2010.



## Political representation

Parliament. The “30 per cent quota” was applied for the first time in the parliamentary elections in 2009, and out of 140 mandates, women earned 23, representing 16.4 per cent of seats in the Albanian parliament. As shown in figure “Regional variation in the percentage of female parliamentarians”, this result places Albania on rank 82 (out of 143) on the IPU World Classification, slightly ahead of Montenegro (12.3 per cent) and Romania (11.2 per cent), but far behind the majority of European countries<sup>116</sup>.

However, although women gained fewer than the 30 per cent target, it remains the highest representation of women achieved so far since the communist period.

The 23 mandates held by women were divided between the Democratic Party (10 women elected) and the Socialist Party (13 women elected). There were no women elected from smaller parties. Geographically, the women elected represented 10 of the 12 districts in Albania (there were no female representative from Kukës and Dibra). Initially, candidate lists had not been in compliance with the 30 per cent target, and a revision was requested by the Central Elections Commission. In the end, only five parties out of nine

studied met the 30 per cent target<sup>117</sup>.

Parties were free to choose their own methodologies of placing women candidates on their list. Across parties, women’s names predominantly featured in the middle and towards the bottom of the list, while some parties had a few women among the top names of their list. Adjustments were also made to the election commissioners’ lists, and females replaced male commissioners in order to meet the quota.

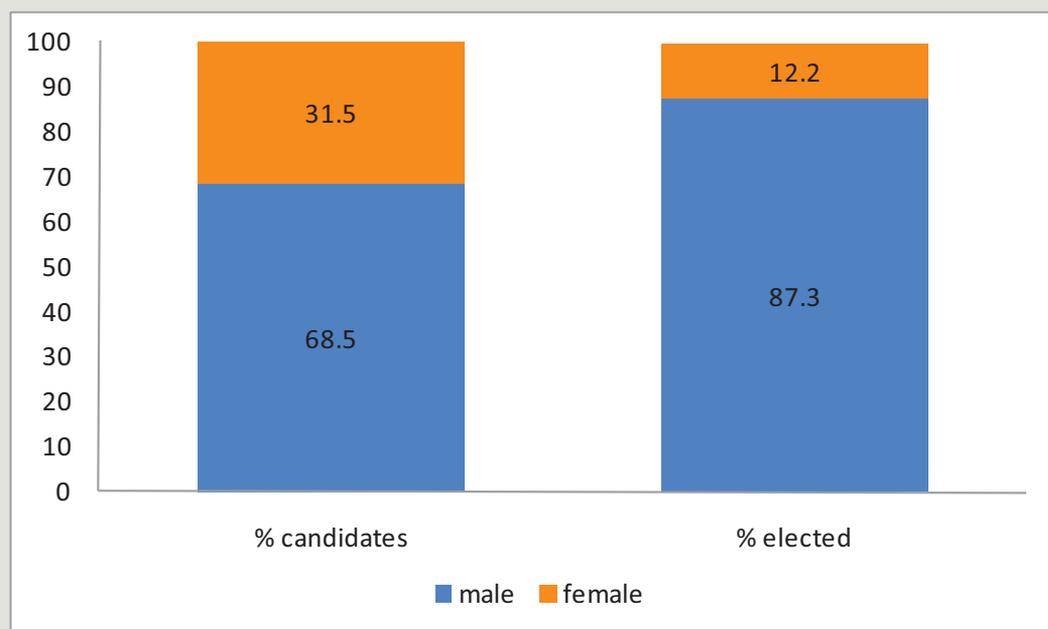
**Councillors.** In the run-up to the local elections in 2011, the 30 per cent quota had been established as a general consensus issue and was supported by a wide range of actors. Roughly 30 per cent of candidates who ran for council in multi-name lists were women, which is a considerable increase compared to previous elections. This is partially attributed to the intensive coaching and support activities that had been undertaken during the run-up to the elections.

As shown in the graph below, in total, 74,492 candidates competed for the city and commune councils on May 8, 2011. Of these candidates, 31.5 per cent (23,477) were women and 68.5 per cent (51,015) were men. A total of 6,600 mandates were won, 12.2 per cent (759) by women and the

116 Women in National Parliaments. Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). Accessed February 20, 2012 at: <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>

117 Albania’s 2009 Parliamentary Election: Monitoring the Implementation of Gender Quota and Women’s Participation. CEC (2009) and ACER

■ **Figure 32:**  
Results of  
women's  
candidature  
compared  
to men in  
the local  
elections  
2011.



Source: CEC, 2011

overwhelming majority, namely 87.3 per cent (5,441) by men<sup>118</sup>.

A comparison between 2007 and 2011 of the absolute numbers of elected women councilors in local elections reveals that very little progress has been made: in 2007, 10 per cent of elected councilors were women, indicating only a two per cent increase in 2011<sup>119</sup>.

There are two underlying reasons for this outcome:

- First, in the run-up to the elections, political parties had not provided for forums like internal pre-elections, where women would have had the opportunity to effectively campaign for themselves. Therefore, they started from a relatively weak position within their party. Furthermore, decisions on the composition of candidates' lists were made at party headquarters, not locally, and there was little local

candidates could do to influence their position. In fact, these actions, which were highly centralised, exclusionary and opaque, were the key bottlenecks limiting women's equal representation in the local elections in May 2011.

- Second, parties had relative freedom in choosing the position where a female candidate was placed. An analysis of those candidates' lists that were in compliance with the 30 per cent quota revealed that, in general, women candidates were placed in positions three to six, requiring a party to win at least three seats in order to have one woman elected. However, of the 54 parties that ran in the elections, the vast majority received fewer than one per cent of the public vote. As a result, women who ran did not win due to their unfavourable placement on the list. In order to ensure that women candidates have a real chance in future elections, changes in the electoral code are required, prescribing a "1 in 3" rule or a "zebra list" for all parties.

118 CEC (2011). The list of the city and commune council members in the 2011 local elections. Accessed January 23, 2012 : [http://\\*\\*\\*.cec.org.al/images/stories/zgjedhje-vendore/2011/html\\_lshumemerore/110919\\_-\\_DTI\\_-\\_lista\\_keshill\\_2011.htm](http://***.cec.org.al/images/stories/zgjedhje-vendore/2011/html_lshumemerore/110919_-_DTI_-_lista_keshill_2011.htm)

119 CEC 2011



**Mayors.** In the May 2011 local elections, there were 22 female candidates for chairs of the local units (3.5 per cent of the total number of candidates), of which 11 candidates ran for mayor (6.8 per cent of total candidates), and 11 for commune chairs (1.6 per cent of the total). While the number of candidates was low from the very beginning, the final results are even bleaker. As shown in Figure 33 below, compared to 2007, there were generally fewer women candidates for these two positions in both rural and urban areas; however, the decrease was particularly pronounced in rural areas where the number of women candidates dropped by almost 50 per cent. This finding raises questions regarding barriers and disincentives, which apparently discouraged women in rural areas from running for mayor. Of those who did run, five female mayors and two female chairs of commune were elected (CEC, 2011)<sup>120</sup>.

120 CEC (2011). The winning candidates for mayors, chair of communes and in the local election of May 8, 2011. Accessed on January 24, 2012 from: [http://\\*\\*\\*.cec.org.al/images/stories/Legjislacioni\\_2011/Vendime\\_2011/VENDIM\\_per\\_cent201229/Lidhja\\_per\\_cent201.pdf](http://***.cec.org.al/images/stories/Legjislacioni_2011/Vendime_2011/VENDIM_per_cent201229/Lidhja_per_cent201.pdf)

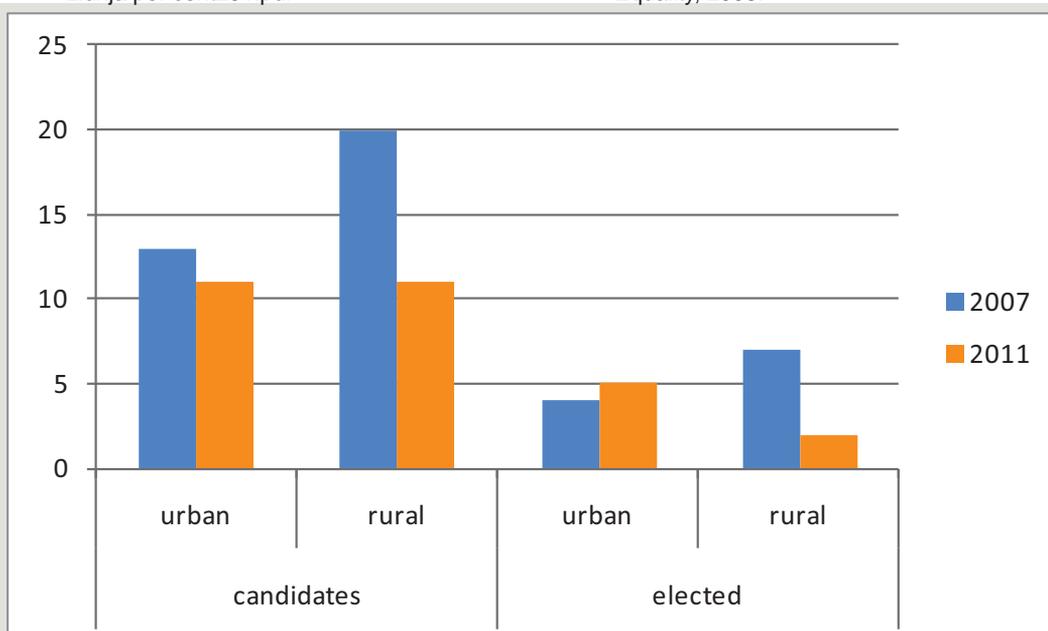
While in 2011, the number of women elected in urban areas increased slightly compared to the local elections in 2007, there was a significant drop in the number of women elected at local level. The overall number of women elected in these positions dropped from 2.4 per cent in 2007 to roughly 1.4 per cent in 2011<sup>121</sup>.

The type of electoral system used by a country greatly affects the extent of representation of women in politics. The two main types of electoral systems – proportional representation and the majoritarian/pluralistic type – produce different outcomes for women. Studies show that proportional representation (PR) generally results in higher numbers of women winning seats<sup>122</sup>.

Countries in the world that have reached a critical mass of 30 per cent women in local governments – Sweden, Denmark, and Finland – have electoral systems based on proportional representation.

121 CEC 2007, CEC 2011

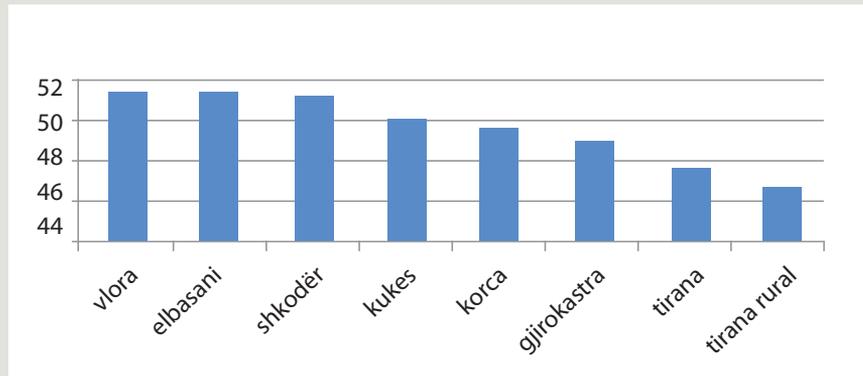
122 Electoral Gender Quota Systems and their implementation in Europe. Study commissioned by the European Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, 2008.



Source: The local elections bulletin in 2007 & CEC 2011.

**Figure 33:** Number of female candidates elected for mayor in rural and urban areas in the 2007 and 2011 local elections.

■ **Figure 34:**  
Percentage of female voters by regions in the local elections 2011.



Source: Forum of Local Observers, 2011

The 10 countries with the highest percentage of women in Parliament also use the PR electoral system<sup>123</sup>. In the majoritarian/pluralistic system, there is usually only one seat per district and the candidate or individual that wins the plurality or majority of votes cast gets elected. In this winner-take-all electoral system, women have a much smaller chance of success. The majoritarian/pluralistic system is used in about 40 per cent of countries which also have the lowest numbers of women elected.

Taken together, the various efforts undertaken in Albania towards increasing women's political representation at local level need to be carefully reconsidered. The disappointing results of the local elections in 2011 raise questions regarding approach and methodology and particularly sustainability of interventions vis-a-vis the actual needs of women candidates. While the majority of interventions still focus on empowering women and building

123 Inter-Parliamentarian Union, cited in "Women in Government", Center for Legislative Development & UNDP Asia Pacific Gender Equality Network. Accessed February 20, 2012 at <http://www.capwip.org/readingroom/5050sourcekit.pdf>. WEDO Fact sheet "Barriers to Women's Representation: Electoral Systems". Accessed on March 09, 2012 at: [http://www.wedo.org/wp-content/uploads/electoralsystems\\_5050\\_factsh3.htm](http://www.wedo.org/wp-content/uploads/electoralsystems_5050_factsh3.htm). For a discussion on EU member states see also: [www.europarl.europa.eu/workingpapers/femm/w10/2\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/workingpapers/femm/w10/2_en.htm)

their capacities, the most evident challenges and bottlenecks are posed by political parties and various mechanisms and procedures which easily sideline women candidates and are inbuilt into the electoral system. This is where future intervention and reform has to occur.

**Women's political participation.** The participation of women and girls as voters in the 2011 local elections was calculated at 50.2 per cent of total voters. In these elections, women and girls were considered an electorate with a specific weight. The percentage of women's and girl's participation was high (approx. 50 per cent) in all districts under observation with the striking exception of the capital Tirana (47.6 per cent) and its surrounding rural area (46.8 per cent)<sup>124</sup>.

There exists no comparable gender-sensitive monitoring data for previous years to which to compare female voters' participation. What can be said is that in various regions of Albania, the participation rate of women was as high as or even higher than that of men. Therefore, women's unexpectedly low participation rate in the Tirana area deserves special attention. Underlying

124 Women's participation and representation in the 2011 Local Elections in Albania. Overview prepared by Klea Faniko on behalf of the "Forum of Local Observers for Monitoring Women Participation in Elections". The Institute of the Electoral System Development, 2011.

reasons need to be investigated and responses developed.

**Group/family voting.** According to the OSCE/ODIHR final report on the May 2011 local elections, “group/family voting, which violated the secrecy of the vote, was observed in 21 per cent of VCs [voting centers] visited”<sup>125</sup>.

In 2007, ODIHR reported on the issue in a similar manner and commented that family voting continued to be an issue in the local elections, which raised serious concern of the disenfranchisement of some women and other family members affected by it<sup>126</sup>.

Four years later, women’s and girls’ standing as voters in their own right – instead of dependant group members – still requires further strengthening. At the legislative level, a March 2012 amendment of the penal code criminalised family voting, thereby strengthening and safeguarding women’s right to cast their vote independently from familial ties.

In 2011, two projects drew particular attention to the role of women as voters: the UN Women supported Community Score Card activity (CSC) and the Forum of Local Observers initiative (FLO). Since the role of women in the political life of the country is rarely discussed, CSCs aimed at publicly addressing the specific needs of women and girls in municipalities and communes. The FLO initiative aimed at monitoring, using a gender-sensitive paradigm, the actual occurrences on

125 OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report on the Local Elections in Albania, May 2011. Accessed on 14 February 2012 at: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/81649>

126 OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report on the Local Elections in Albania, February 2007. Accessed on 09 March 2012 at: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/albania/25470>

election day. Both activities received a fair share of attention by local and national media.

## Media



Media play an important role in conveying messages about women as legitimate decision-makers, leaders, candidates and citizens on an equal footing with men. As a result, reporting and coverage of female candidates in the run-up to elections is being closely monitored. Since 2009, there has been a positive trend of more fair and positive coverage. This has also been made possible by increased gender consciousness of journalists; a framework co-operation agreement (FCA) between the Union of Journalists and NGOs working on gender equality; training opportunities for journalists; and public awareness-raising campaigns on the 30 per cent quota. For the first time, gender equality issues and the need for an increased number of women in leadership positions were explicitly expressed in the run-up to the 2011 local elections in several comments and editorials in the country’s main



print media. Still, the relatively low number of female candidates and lack of issue-based TV debates reduced the opportunities of women candidates to present themselves as competent and powerful actors.

## Private sector

Evidence suggests that companies with a strong female representation at board and top management levels perform better than those without, and that gender-diverse boards have a positive impact on performance<sup>127</sup>.

It is also clear that boards make better decisions when a range of voices, drawing on different life experiences, is heard. However, according to the European Commission's findings, the proportion of women on the (supervisory) boards of listed companies in the EU currently hovers at about 12 per cent<sup>128</sup>.

The issue of gender diversity in economic decision-making is being addressed in a comprehensive manner by the EC in its "Strategy for

127 "Women Matter: gender diversity, a corporate performance driver", McKinsey & Company (2007), cited in: Women on Boards. 2011

128 European Commission, Database on women and men in decision-making. <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=764&langId=en>.

equality between women and men 2010-2015" of September 2010<sup>129</sup> as well as in the follow-up provided to this strategy by the Commission<sup>130</sup>.

The importance of improving the gender balance of corporate boards is increasingly recognised among members states: some countries, including France and Italy, are considering significant action and some, including Norway and Spain, have already taken significant steps<sup>131</sup>. The EC is also debating what measures might be taken to bring about gender parity within boardrooms, including the introduction of targeted measures to improve the representation of women in senior positions, as well as legislative proposals<sup>132</sup>.

Despite increasing discussion of women's equal representation and efforts in raising the number of women

129 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, "Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015", COM(2010) 491 final.

130 See details in the Commission Staff Working Paper "The Gender Balance in Business Leadership", SEC(2011) 246 final.

131 *ibid.*

132 The EU corporate governance framework (2011) Green Paper of the European Commission. Accessed 13 March 2012 at: [ec.europa.eu/internal\\_market/company/docs/.../com2011-164\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/company/docs/.../com2011-164_en.pdf)

in decision-making positions in the public and political arenas, in Albania, women's representation in leadership positions at private companies has not yet become an issue. Little is known about their representation as executives, heads of companies or members of managing boards. Further investigation is required on the prevalence of women in high-level positions in private business; their particular career patterns, networks and needs; and the identification of entry points for increasing their share in male-dominated environments. Due to women's general higher educational attainment, they represent a significant human resource base for Albania's economy. Furthermore, promoting women to boards contributes to an increased talent pool that is available to a company. In parallel, the national legal and policy framework in Albania addresses several aspects that bear high relevance for efforts made to increase the percentage of women in business. Provisions include the following:

- The creation of equal opportunities for women;
- The establishment of family-friendly policies (flexible working hours, parental leave for men and women, child care facilities, etc.);
- Enforcement of anti-discrimination legislation at the workplace;
- Implementation of sexual harassment policies;
- The provision of education to combat sexual harassment, in order to promote a climate of respect within a company;

- Integrated packages that support career advancement for women.

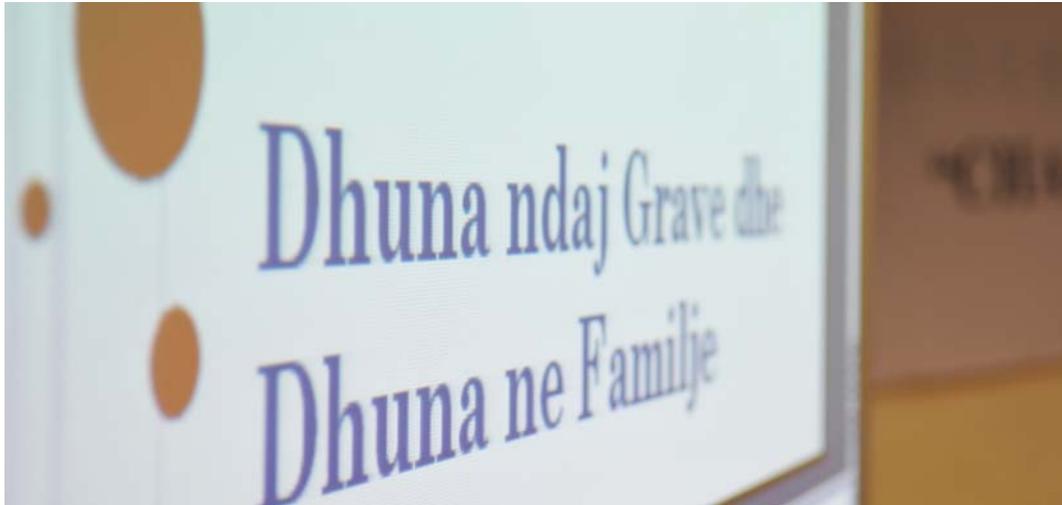
For example, in Albania, the Union of Chambers of Commerce and Industry would be strategically positioned to promote codes of conduct and diversity management principles amongst the business community. Innovative approaches with proven results taken by companies to address the recruitment, development, and advancement of all managerial women should be awarded. An annual Albanian award would provide the business community with replicable models in order to help corporations and professional enterprises create pro-women and family-friendly policies and initiatives that are beneficial for women and good for businesses. As a first step, the systematic aggregation of precise information on women in professional and managerial positions is required, on which to base further involvement and action. In line with the increasingly common EU practice, companies should be required to disclose each year the proportion of women on their board, the number of women in senior executive positions, and the number of female employees.



## » Recommended actions

- In the general revision of the electoral code, introduce and ensure measures that enable de facto implementation of the 30 per cent quota; assess all amendments suggested in the overall revision process for their impact on gender equality
- Establish obligatory adherence to the 30 per cent quota for parties
- Apply strict policing of the 30 per cent quota by the Commissions of Electoral Administration Zone
- Support projects and activities that explicitly aim at increasing equal participation in politics, decision-making and governance, in order to establish true local and national ownership of the 30 per cent quota as a tool for good governance, democracy and human rights, which is embraced by all actors
- Strengthen democratic processes within political parties that increase transparency and control over candidate lists
- Rigorously implement the 30 per cent quota within political parties: take concrete measures to increase the number of women and girls within political parties at all levels
- Provide technical and human resources to CEC in order to provide full data sets of required sex-disaggregated information and data required under the national set of harmonised gender indicators
- Further support the initial efforts of the Albanian State Police to increase and mainstream gender equality in trainings, decisions regarding promotion, and the practices of police operations
- Support the Albanian security sector in implementing obligations under UNSCR1325
- Ensure transparent hiring and selection processes, and adherence to the 30 per cent quota in senior level positions at public administration, academic and research institutions
- Provide sufficient budgets, skills and human resources for accelerating the implementation of temporary special measures initiated in Albania
- Conduct situational analyses of women executives, heads of companies, or members of managing boards; systematically aggregate precise information on women in professional and managerial positions in the private sector, and devise strategies and plans towards increasing their representation
- On an annual basis, monitor companies for the proportion of women on their boards and in senior executive positions, as well as the number of female employees.

# Violence Against Women



As per the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, the term “violence against women” means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.<sup>133</sup> Violence against women and children is thus a violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms.<sup>134</sup> The phenomenon is associated with a high social, health, and economic cost to the individual and to society, and thus, failure to promote and protect the human rights of women and children is a serious concern that must be addressed as a precondition for the achievement of equality, development, and peace. As a widespread and serious problem,

133 UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women. General Assembly resolution 48/104 of 20 December 1993

134 UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

violence against women and children occurs across all social and economic strata in all sectors of society. Women and children who are members of vulnerable groups, including ethnic minorities, victims of trafficking, and those with disabilities, require additional consideration for their needs and circumstances.

With explicit reference to the recent CEDAW Concluding Observations for Albania, this chapter addresses the particular issue of domestic violence, which is understood as violence inflicted predominantly on women and children within family relations. In the Albanian context, the key issue remains implementation of the existing legal framework, including the establishment of required services for victims, compilation of comprehensive data, and enforcement of preventive measures.<sup>135</sup>

135 CEDAW Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, July 2010.

## Prevalence of violence against women

Violence against women remains widespread across all social strata in Albania. According to the first ever government survey, out of a nationwide sample of 2,590, no less than 56 per cent of women between the ages of 15 and 49 have experienced at least one type of domestic violence. The report concluded this prevalence rate was most likely underestimated.<sup>136</sup> Between 2007 and 2010, when the NSGE-DV was implemented, the number of individuals that went to court denouncing violence increased, as well as the number of protection orders issued by the courts<sup>137</sup>. However, the number of those experiencing violence, but not filing reports, is estimated to be much higher.

According to the Law on Measures against Violence in Family Relations (LMVFR), MoLSAEO and local governments are charged with collecting administrative data on the implementation of the law. However, due to its specific role during case treatment, the Albanian State Police is also tasked with regular reporting, and until now, is the only government body operating a country-wide reporting system. Registered cases, protective orders (PO)<sup>138</sup> and immediate protective orders (IPO)<sup>139</sup> are reported

136 Domestic Violence in Albania: A National Population-Based Survey. INSTAT 2009.

137 Center for Legal and Civic Initiatives, Civil Rights Defenders Report – Implementation of law on Measures against Violence in Family Relations, 2010

138 A Protection Order is a decision issued by the Judicial District Court which provides protection measures for victims/survivors of domestic violence. The Judicial District Court decides on issuing a Protection Order within 15 days following the request to the court.

139 An Immediate Protection Order is a

temporary decision issued by Judicial District Court until a Protection Order is issued. The Judicial District Court decides on issuing an Immediate Protection Order within 48 hours following the request to the court.

to the General Directory of Police by its regional offices on a monthly or bi-monthly basis; a copy of POs and IPOs is provided to the Municipality, as well. It is important to keep in mind that figures include those cases in which individuals have filed an official case at the police station and/or the court. These figures represent cases that are reported to the authorities and do not reflect the number of actual cases.

According to figures provided by the general directory of the ASP (see Table 8 below), in 64 per cent of domestic violence cases, the person on whom violence is inflicted is the wife, followed by children, parents and other individuals present in the household (their relationship to the perpetrator is not further specified). Far less frequently reported are instances of violent acts inflicted against the husband, and violence between brothers and sisters.

**Table 8:**  
Number of registered DV cases disaggregated by person on whom violence is inflicted, 2008-2010.

Person on whom violence is inflicted	2008	2009	2010
Wife	427	801	1279
Husband	114	39	97
Sister	6	20	36
Brother	28	38	38
Child	47	59	154
Parent	43	79	139
Other	157	181	255
<b>Total</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>1217</b>	<b>1998</b>

Source: General Directory of Police 2010.

temporary decision issued by Judicial District Court until a Protection Order is issued. The Judicial District Court decides on issuing an Immediate Protection Order within 48 hours following the request to the court.

Between 2008 and 2010, the number of immediate protective measures/ immediate protection orders issued by the ASP increased by 70 per cent. The highest number of orders was reported in 2010, coinciding with the latest amendment.

■ **Table 9: Number of protection orders in 2008, 2009 and 2010.**

	2008	2009	2010
Protection order	377	841	1234

Source: General Directory of Police, 2010.

During this period, intensive public sensitization and awareness-raising took place, and the ASP received extensive training about the implementation of LMVFR. A total of 623 employees were trained in 2008 (compared to only 119 in 2010). The police directory collects administrative data, including the victim's age, sex, educational and employment status, rural/urban residence and type of action undertaken. According to 2009-10 statistics, there was an overall increase in the number of cases reported to the police (the difference of 93 cases in the total figures calculated for 2010 between Tables 8 and 10 means that services are offered in parallel from the prosecution as well as from the district courts). In the majority of cases, the police issued a PO or IPO (see Table 10 below). While consultations and the provision of information to victims has more than doubled, the number of cases referred to the prosecutor's office dropped by five per cent. The reasons for this trend require a thorough investigation.

According to the 2008-09 ADHS study<sup>140</sup> the likelihood that a woman perceives

140 ADHS study 2008-2009, Module of Domestic violence in the household

spousal beating as justified in some circumstances decreases markedly with increasing level of education, occupational and wealth status, and urban residence. Women between the ages of 15 and 19, who work for wages, are in the highest wealth quintile, are unmarried, have no children, and have post-secondary education are the least likely to agree with spousal battery. Women in rural areas are twice as likely as their urban counterparts to justify battery. Consequently, investing in girls' education and women's economic independence – particularly in rural areas and among economically weak members of society – are key to preventing domestic violence.

■ **Table 10: Number and nature of actions to protect victims of DV by police 2009-2010**

	2009	2010
Information/Consultancy for victim	145	418
Procedure for Protection Order/ Immediate Protection Order	841	1234
Referral of case to Prosecutor's office	472	439
<b>Total</b>	<b>1458</b>	<b>2091</b>

Source: General Directory of Police, 2010

Men are six per cent more likely than women to justify spousal battery.<sup>141</sup> Marital status does not appear to influence men's attitudes. Men in rural, and particularly mountain areas, are more likely to justify domestic violence. As with women, men with higher levels of education and higher socio-economic statuses generally have unfavourable attitudes towards spousal abuse. Future efforts to prevent and combat domestic violence and violence against women must focus on the social norms and values Albanian society transmits to boys and male adolescents. Such efforts will have to address prevalent notions of masculinity, men's roles in society and in the home, gender stereotypes,

141 *ibid*

and support for male perpetrators. Towards this end, a comprehensive study addressing the issue of men, masculinity and violence in Albania is recommended.

**Social costs.** The phenomenon of violence against women/domestic violence is still largely considered a “private” issue between a husband and wife. The far-reaching effects on women’s well-being, self esteem, and productivity are not as widely known; and little is known about the links between domestic violence and children’s behavior, their psychological development, and their performance in school. In order to address this knowledge gap, a study on the social costs of domestic violence is highly recommended.

## Human trafficking

Trafficking in women and girls represents a specific case of gender-based violence and needs to be discussed in relation to the vulnerability of victims, including their limited access to employment, education, health, social services, and justice. While international trafficking has declined in Albania in recent years, internal trafficking is increasingly common. According to a 2010 UNHCR report, half of all victims referred for care within the country in 2009 were Albanian. These were primarily women and girls forced into prostitution in hotels and private residences in Tirana, Durrës, and Vlora.<sup>142</sup> In line with the latest CEDAW Concluding Observations for Albania<sup>143</sup>, responses must follow a three-pronged approach, which includes improved

142 UNHCR Trafficking in Persons Report 2010 - Albania

143 Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. CEDAW 2010.

prevention, prosecution and protection for trafficked individuals. So, in 2011 a Council of Ministers decision no. 582 is adopted on “Standard operation procedures (SOP) for identification and referral of victims/at-risk victims of trafficking”.

First, in order to address vulnerability, intensified prevention measures are required that address all root causes for destitution in women and children in Albania.

Second, protection must be guaranteed for victims who testify against their traffickers (in line with the Witness Protection Law). Several recommendations address measures related to strengthen prosecution of labor trafficking offenders and law enforcement officials who are complicit in human trafficking. Furthermore, proactive identification of persons exploited within Albania’s sex trade and labor sectors is required. Current legislation cover internal (non cross-border) trafficking under the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings, as in the Criminal Code<sup>144</sup>. Similarly, under the Penal Code victims of trafficking and prostitutes currently remain subject to criminal prosecution and punishment. In line with the latest CEDAW Concluding Observations, the Penal Code requires respective amendment.

Finally, addressing the process of re-integration of trafficking victims, access to existing but rarely used compensation schemes needs to be strengthened; targeted responses would also include an increase in the provision of reintegration assistance to shelters, and the delivery

144 Article no. 110/a “Human Trafficking”, article no. 114/b “Female Trafficking”, and article no. 128/b “Minors Trafficking”

of specialized services for child trafficking victims.

Efforts to improve the national monitoring system by providing comprehensive data, particularly on internal trafficking, must complement other activities related to combating and preventing the trafficking of women and girls. Since there is limited recent literature on the issue, an in-depth study investigating the dynamics of internal trafficking, including an analysis of current responses to the phenomenon, is recommended.

## Legal framework

The LMVFR was adopted in 2006, and further amended in 2007 and 2010. Several bylaws were adopted, and regulations and orders issued to regulate implementation of the law, as well as inter-institutional co-operation. The establishment of a cross-referral system is obligatory by law for all local government units. In early 2011, a Council of Ministers' decision (no.334) was signed, reconfirming the mandatory character of the CCR at the local level. The Ministry of Health (MoH) has issued several orders regarding reporting, evidencing, and providing care to persons who experience domestic violence.<sup>145</sup> The General Directorate of State Police has issued a manual on "Standard operation procedures for police officers for measures to prevent DV", which includes tasks, duties and procedures a police officer must follow to ensure public order, prevent crime, investigate and interview, protect and care for survivors of violence in family relations, and implement protection orders.

<sup>145</sup> MoH Order No.13, on 23 January 2008; Order No.14, on 23 January 2008; and Order No.15, on 24 January 2008



In May 2011, the Council of Europe adopted the **Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence**. The convention is the first legally-binding instrument in the region requiring governments to prevent, stop, and sanction the crime of violence against women<sup>146</sup>. With the treaty in force, governments are required to provide financial and human resources to implement comprehensive measures, such as establishing shelters and national help lines, providing counselling services, and monitoring police conduct. As of March 2012, 18 countries had signed the convention. Albania's ratification of the convention would be a significant step towards aligning national with EU frameworks as part of the EU accession process.

Effective implementation of the LMVFR requires the co-operation of all responsible institutions, as well as the congruency of those laws which are linked to implementation. Amendments of the penal code – which would criminalize domestic violence, and systematic psychological and economic abuse – would relieve victims of domestic violence from the responsibility of initiating criminal proceedings in cases of "minor physical injuries", and would strengthen the law regarding the violation of protective orders.

<sup>146</sup> CoM decision no. 723, dated Oct. 20, 2011, for approval in principle of the CoE convention, signed in Strasbourg by the MoLSAEO on Dec. 19, 2011

## Services

In order to respond to, support, and monitor cases of domestic violence in their region, as of the end of 2011, 17 municipalities were working from the CCR philosophy and model, undertaking all required legislative steps. Supported by the UN Trust Fund, Shkoder, Rreshen, Berat, Pogradec and Vlora were the first local government units where the Network against DV and Human Trafficking established the system.<sup>147</sup> Puka, Lezha, Elbasan, Manza, and mini-municipality no. 6 of Tirana (Kombinat) followed. The CCR was further established in Korça, Kamza, and Durrës; with Austrian funds in Gramsh, Lushnja and Lac; and in Shijak. In all of these municipalities, stakeholders established a referral mechanism, known as the Council Against Domestic Violence (CaDV), as well as the interdisciplinary Technical Working Group (TWG).

In order to manage DV cases, the majority of the abovementioned municipalities have installed an electronic data collection system. Several have also established a local help line. Local co-ordination is increasingly linked to the position of a municipality's GEE, who assumes the role of co-ordinator. The first national government-run shelter for victims of domestic violence was opened in Tirana in 2011.

There are a considerable number of NGOs across the country working on domestic violence. They provide support, services and counseling to victims; conduct public information and awareness-raising campaigns; and offer training to stakeholders involved in the CCR. In addition to the government-run shelter, there are currently four shelters in Albania providing services to victims of DV, which are managed by local NGOs.

■ **Table 11: CCR establishment in Albania, 2008-2011**

Year	Municipality	Donor
2008	Shkoder, Rreshen, Berat, Pogradec Vlora <sup>148</sup>	UN Trust Fund
2009	Korça, Durrës, Kamza	UNDP
2010	Puka, Lezha, Elbasan, Manza, mini-municipality nr.6 in Kombinat – Tirana	UN Trust Fund
2011	Gramsh, Lushnje, Laç	ADC
2011	Shijak	USAID
2012	Lezha, Korça, Gjirokaster, Permet	UNDP

**Costing of DV.** From the table "CCR establishment in Albania, 2008-2011" it is evident that until now, funding for the establishment of CCRs at the local level has been primarily donor-supported. However, in order to ensure sustainability, operating expenses, maintenance, and the provision of human resources and materials need to be reflected in local and central budgets on a routine basis. Towards this end, comprehensive information on the actual costs derived from DV responses is required. Such calculations include all actions associated with implementation of the LMVFR, including prevention, protection, legal aid, court costs, and rehabilitation measures. Currently, such comprehensive costing data is unavailable in Albania; however, recent research, conducted with support by UN Women, analysed

147 As the Administrator of the UN Trust Fund to End VAW, UN Women in Albania has been overseeing the Trust Fund's support to the project "Making it Real: Implementing the Law against Domestic Violence in Albania", implemented by the Network against Gender-Based Violence and Trafficking. Under the lead of "Refleksione Association", the Network has been supporting the establishment of the community-based referral system (CCR) to support survivors of domestic violence in Albania.

148 With the exception of Rreshen, in 2009, these municipalities dedicated funds from their local budgets to DV.

the costs for the issuance of POs and IPOs<sup>149</sup>. The study aimed to build the knowledge base on domestic violence, policy and budgetary decisions in the future.

### How to go from law to reality – A study towards costing of DV in Albania

By 2009, findings of the national survey on domestic violence in Albania had established a rich body of evidence on how survivors of domestic violence utilize services of state police and judicial district courts. Such services had been established relatively recently in response to DV legislation, and little information existed on the actual costs related to DV cases. However, in order to guarantee sustained service delivery in the future, costs incurred from DV law implementation needed to be known and subsequently reflected in budget allocations by central and local government.

Towards closing this knowledge gap, in 2011, CLCI embarked on the first-ever costing exercise of DV in Albania. Two particular services related to LMVFR implementation were analysed: the issuance of POs and IPOs. The study was undertaken in four districts of the country (Tirana, Durrës, Korça, and Kukës) and focused on the immediate actors involved in a DV case, including state police, district prosecution, judicial district court, and the DV victim/survivor. Overall cost was calculated as a sum of time invested for issuing a PO or IPO. This composite figure includes office hours, administrative overhead, and staff time. Due to the explicit focus on PO and IPO issuance, expenditures were not included in the preliminary calculations for technical services, medicine, psycho-social and legal aid, fuel and telephone usage, as well as opportunity costs on the part of the DV survivor incurred from travel, time spent in court, and loss of income during absence from work.

During the three-month survey period, a total of 101 cases were studied. In terms of time, the minimum amount of time required by the police, the judge and the DV survivor in order to deal with a DV case ranged from 19 hours (best case scenario) to 30 hours (for complicated cases). Fifty per cent of all DV cases fall under the latter category. This time requirement for judges and police can further be translated into financial costs as a reflection of salary. In 2011, the implementation of LMVFR, of simply PO and IPO issuance, accrued a monthly average cost of ALL 34,000- for judiciary services and ALL 4,000,- for police services.

The results of CLCI's costing study provide clear evidence that responses to domestic violence have enormous costs and drain significant amounts of time and money. As mentioned above, costs that were not calculated include those incurred by the court administration, the secretaries, the officials who present the subpoena to the plaintiff, NGOs, and ultimately the DV survivor and her dependants. Still, the costing exercise provided a first step for calculating and budgeting the overall and comprehensive national response to DV. By costing out the response, it is increasingly possible to secure the required funds, infrastructure and personnel.

Furthermore, by undertaking a step-wise analysis of PO and IPO issuance, CLCI's study also revealed highly valuable information on those factors of the procedure that still impede swift service delivery to DV survivors. Specific aspects where further improvements are required include: (i) the provision of free legal aid and psycho-social support; (ii) the improvement of currently available infrastructure (phone, transport, office space); (iii) the establishment of a reliable local address system to reach parties involved in a DV court case; (iv) training opportunities for judges, prosecutors and police officers; and (v) improved co-ordination amongst actors involved in responses to DV.

149 A study of the costs of domestic violence in Albania. Center for Legal and Civic Initiatives. 2012 (unpublished).

**24-hour hotline.** The nation-wide 24-hour hotline, outlined in the DV law, has not yet been established, primarily due to amendments that are still pending, which will regulate hotline maintenance and operation. In order to bridge this gap, since late 2010, several municipalities involved in CCR establishment have installed local (municipal) help-lines. Alternatively, in some municipalities, an NGO-operated helpline exists. While this is an important first step, in none of the cases does the helpline operate 24 hours, seven days a week, as actually indicated in the law. However, the number **129** is accessible 24/7 and is free of charge. Currently, there is limited information available on the use of such help-lines by women, and regarding their feedback on this new service. Towards this end, comprehensive monitoring of the help-line institution is necessary.

**Free legal aid.** The LMVFR and the anti-discrimination law stipulate state-sponsored legal aid to women seeking redress from acts of domestic violence and in cases of discrimination. However, the current level of support remains unsatisfactory, especially for women in remote and rural areas, and poor and ethnic-minority women. Efforts must be accelerated to guarantee access to free legal aid and to remove any other impediments women face when accessing justice in cases of domestic violence<sup>150</sup>.

## Indicators and statistics

Further information is required in order to obtain a more in-depth picture on the prevalence of domestic violence,

<sup>150</sup> CEDAW's concluding observations Albania 2010

the management and follow-up of cases, and the services and support provided. In addition to data collected by the police, local governments also collect indicators through the referral system database. Furthermore, in some municipalities, Child Protection Units (CPU) exist, which operate a database recording and monitoring cases of abused children and of pupils within educational institutions. Such CPU data would also have to be considered and consulted when a municipality is determining its CCR.

Information on the following is still required for monitoring the degree of LMVFR implementation (under the responsibility of the MoLSAEO):

- The effectiveness of awareness-raising methods
- The number of judges enrolled in continuous education training courses on LMVFR and LGE in the School of Magistrates
- The number of women victims receiving free legal aid
- Information on support provided to, and functioning of, the government-run national shelter (under the Ministry of Interior and MoLSAEO)

Funding propositions are made to the Ministry of Finance by both ministries (the Ministry of the Interior and the MoLSAEO) through their respective LMVFR implementation programs. Clearly, inter-ministerial co-operation is required between the Mol, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Education, and the MoLSAEO regarding statistics and the proportion of state/local budgets allocated to prevent and combat VaW.

## Inter-institutional co-operation

Monitoring the co-operation between responsible institutions, such as the MoI and the Ministry of Justice, has started with the collection of sex-disaggregated data, the calculation of ethnicity-based indicators, reporting of DV cases, as well as further actions, including criminal prosecutions and/or requests for POs. There is still a need to establish stronger links between ministries, and between central and local government units. An integrated system would provide information on the overall prevalence and characteristics of domestic violence, thereby strengthening informed policy- and decision-making on the part of government, as well as responses in practice.

## Local government

Due to their proximity to the citizenry, local governments remain the most important actors in responding to, preventing, and addressing domestic violence. In collaboration with donors and the MoLSAEO, civil society has realized several pilot projects. However, only a limited number of municipalities have actually established the referral mechanism, and there are no concerted efforts underway to address DV at the commune level. Therefore, co-operation between local government bodies and civil society organizations needs to be further strengthened, supported, and replicated in order for governmental bodies to fulfill their duties, vis-à-vis the LMVFR and their populaces. Public-private partnerships established with local NGOs to deliver services responding to domestic violence also need to be carefully monitored in order to ensure the maintenance of high standards and adherence to national protocols.



## Developing sustainability in addressing violence against women and girls in Albania

### UN Trust Fund 2010-2013

Following the successful completion of the first project in Albania, which was financed by the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence Against Women (UN Trust Fund), between November 2007 and March 2010, the Network against Gender-Based Violence and Trafficking embarked on an expanded effort to support the implementation of the law against DV in Albania.

The three-year project, which is administered by UNIFEM as part of UN Women, was launched in July 2010. It is being implemented in close partnership with local authorities and NGOs in 10 municipalities, and with the support of the central government. It continues the work initiated by the UN Trust Fund in five municipalities – Shkodër, Rrëshen, Berat, Vlorë and Pogradec – and expands into Pukë, Lezhë, Elbasan, Manzë, and Tirana District 6.

The project aims to produce a significant and sustainable imprint in addressing violence against women and girls in Albania by:

- Replicating and strengthening the local-government-led Councils Against Domestic Violence, as comprehensive referral and co-ordinated community response systems for victims of gender-based violence, as well as expanding the use of the accompanying electronic tracking system and database of cases of violence against women, as a tool to map their functioning;
- Supporting skills development of central and local government actors to implement their responsibilities under the law against domestic violence;
- Engaging in the completion of the legal framework for preventing and combating gender-based violence in Albania, in the introduction of needed amendments, and in the updating of relevant strategies and work plans;
- Campaigning for the allocation of a permanent and significant budget line at central and local government institutions for initiatives to prevent and combat domestic and gender-based violence, as well as services for its survivors;
- Advocating for the establishment of the necessary legal and regulatory framework, and work processes, to enable government institutions to sub-contract NGOs for services related to combating violence against women in Albania;
- Providing tailored technical assistance to a project-supported network of counseling centers and shelters that support survivors of violence, which are focused on the adoption of common standards of service, information management, and monitoring and evaluation, making them eligible for sub-contracts;

- Increasing societal awareness and support in combating violence against women and girls;
- Working with community members, especially men and boys, including religious leaders, teachers, university and high school students, to make gender-based violence socially unacceptable;
- Promoting and advancing the discussion on effective education programs for perpetrators in Albania.

The implementing partners are Refleksione Association, the Counseling Line for Women and Girls, the Centre for Legal Civic Initiatives, the Gender Alliance for Development Center, and the Shelter for Abused Women and Girls. These groups comprise the Network against Gender-Based Violence and Trafficking.



## » Recommended actions

- Spread out the establishment of specialized procedures and structures responding to domestic violence at local government unit to all municipalities in Albania
- Provide continuous support and coaching to municipalities that have recently established specialized structures and procedures responding to domestic violence
- Address the need for emergency shelters in municipalities
- Identify adequate procedures for establishing a CCR in communes, similar to the one in municipalities, which is adjusted to the legal and procedural local context; pilot such a response to domestic violence in communes
- Establish a monitoring and cooperation network between the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities for monitoring case management at local level

- Ensure sufficient allocation of financial and human resources at central and particularly local level in order to reduce violence against women and children (MDG 3 target for Albania: 50 per cent increase by 2009-2015)
- Develop responses to the needs of perpetrators of domestic violence and men
- Conduct a nation-wide study on men, masculinity and violence in Albania
- Conduct an in-depth study on the social cost of domestic violence
- Establish and ensure access to free legal aid for all women and girls in need, including poor women, women in rural and in remote areas, and minority women
- Increase efforts for identifying victims of internal trafficking, ensure their access to compensation schemes, and provide reintegration services through shelters and specialized services for trafficked children
- Increase the identification and punishment of traffickers and collaborating officials
- Ensure protections for witnesses who testify against their traffickers
- Amend the Penal Code to include internal trafficking under the criminal offense of trafficking
- Amend the Penal Code so that victims of trafficking and prostitutes remain subject to criminal prosecution and punishment
- Improve the current monitoring system on internal trafficking and collect comprehensive national data on the phenomenon
- Conduct an in-depth study investigating the dynamics of internal trafficking in Albania, including required responses to the phenomenon
- Improve the skills and technical infrastructure (i.e. telephone services, transportation, office space, etc.) of state institutions that are responsible for combating DV, especially in rural and remote areas, in order to ensure access to justice by victims of domestic violence.

# Glossary

**De facto and de jure gender equality:** *De jure* equality (sometimes called formal equality or “paper governance”) refers to equality under the law. *De facto* equality refers to equality in practice.

**Empowerment** implies people - both women and men - taking control over their lives: setting their own agendas, gaining skills (or having their own skills and knowledge recognized), increasing self-confidence, solving problems, and developing self-reliance. It is both a process and an outcome. Empowerment implies an expansion in women’s ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them. (UN INSTRAW)

**Gender** refers to the array of socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes to the two sexes on a differential basis. Whereas biological sex is determined by genetic and anatomical characteristics, gender is an acquired identity that is learned, changes over time, and varies widely within and across cultures. Gender is relational and refers not simply to women or men but to the relationship between them. (UN INSTRAW)

**Gender analysis** is a systematic way of looking at the different impacts of development, policies, programs and legislation on women and men that entails, first and foremost, collecting sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive information about the population concerned. Gender analysis can also include the examination of the multiple ways in which women and men, as social actors, engage in strategies to transform existing roles, relationships, and processes in their own interest and in the interest of others. (UN INSTRAW)

**Gender and (GAD).** The GAD approach was developed as a response to the failure of projects to effect qualitative and long-lasting changes in women’s social status. GAD focuses on social, economic, political and cultural forces that determine how men and women participate in, benefit from, and control project resources and activities differently. This approach shifts the focus from women as a group to the socially determined relations between women and men. (UN INSTRAW)

**Gender-based discrimination** means that girls and women do not have the same opportunities as boys and men for education, meaningful careers, political influence, and economic advancement. Also, when women and men perform the same tasks for pay, women are often paid less and receive fewer benefits from their work than men. (CIDA)

**Gender-based violence (GBV)** is an umbrella term for any harm that is perpetrated against a person’s will; that has a negative impact on the physical or psychological health, development, and identity of the person; and that is the result of gendered power relations that exploit inequalities and subordination between males and females, among males, and among females. Although not exclusive to women and girls, GBV principally affects them across all cultures. Violence may be physical, sexual, psychological, economic, or sociocultural. Categories of perpetrators may include

family members, community members, and those acting on behalf of or in proportion to the disregard of cultural, religious, state, or intra-state institutions.<sup>151</sup>

**Gender blind:** A person, policy, or an institution that does not recognize that gender is an essential determinant of the life choices and opportunities available to women, men, girls and boys in society.<sup>152</sup>

**Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB)** is an application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process. It means a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality. Gender responsive budgeting involves examination of the gender distributional outcomes of budgetary allocations, that is, how these allocations affect the social and economic opportunities of men and women. Reallocations in revenue and expenditure and restructuring of the budgetary process may be necessary in order to promote gender equality. (ILO, 2004)

**Gender equality** describes the concept that all human beings, both women and men, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles, or prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviours, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally. It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born female or male. (UN Women, 2011)

**Gender equity** means that women and men are treated fairly according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities. In the development context, a gender equity goal often requires built-in measures to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages of women. (UN Women, 2011)

**Gender mainstreaming** is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres, such that inequality between women and men is not perpetuated. (UN Women, 2011)

**Practical Gender Needs (PGNs)** are identified by women within their socially defined roles, as a response to an immediate perceived necessity. PGNs usually relate to inadequacies in living conditions such as water provision, health care and employment, and they do not challenge gender divisions of labour and women's subordinate position in society.<sup>153</sup>

**Strategic Gender Interests (SGIs)** are identified by women as a result of their subordinate social status, and tend to challenge gender divisions of labour power and control, and traditionally defined norms and roles. SGIs vary according to particular contexts and may include such issues as legal rights, domestic violence, equal wages, and women's control over their bodies.<sup>154</sup>

**Gender-Neutral, Gender-Sensitive, and Gender Transformative.** The primary objective behind gender mainstreaming is to design and implement development projects,

151 Gender Matters. Manual on gender based violence affecting young people. Council of Europe 2007.

152 Based on Parker 1993, Available at [http://www.awid.org/ywl/glossary/index.php?term=Gender per cent20Blind](http://www.awid.org/ywl/glossary/index.php?term=Gender%20Blind)

153 Vainio-Mattila, A. *Navigating Gender: A framework and a tool for participatory development.* Helsinki: Finland Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1999. [http://global.finland.fi/julkaisut/taustat/nav\\_gender/glossary.htm](http://global.finland.fi/julkaisut/taustat/nav_gender/glossary.htm)

154 *Ibid.*

programmes and policies that: (i) do not reinforce existing gender inequalities (Gender Neutral); (ii) attempt to redress existing gender inequalities (Gender Sensitive); and (iii) attempt to re-define women and men's gender roles and relations (Gender Positive / Transformative). The degree of integration of a gender perspective in any given project can be seen as a continuum:<sup>155</sup>

Gender Negative	Gender Neutral	Gender Sensitive	Gender Positive	Gender Transformative
Gender inequalities are reinforced to achieve desired development outcomes	Gender is not considered relevant to development outcome	Gender is a means to reach set development goals	Gender is central to achieving positive development outcomes	Gender is central to promoting equality and achieving positive development outcomes
Uses gender norms, roles and stereotypes that reinforce gender inequalities	Gender norms, roles and relations are not affected (worsened or improved)	Addressing gender norms, roles and access to resources in so far as needed to reach project goals	Changing gender norms, roles and access to resources as key component of project outcomes	Transforming unequal gender relations to promote shared power, control of resources, decision-making, and support for women's empowerment

**Gender oppression** means the undervaluing of what is seen as feminine. Gender oppression can be experienced by women and men. However, since patriarchal norms dominate our society, all women and girls experience gender oppression to a greater or lesser degree.<sup>156</sup>

**Gender Wage Gap (Gender Pay Gap).** Despite the recognition of the fundamental right to equal pay for equal work<sup>157</sup>, the wage gap between women and men, measured as the "relative difference in average gross hourly earnings between women and men", is estimated to be 17.4 per cent to women's disadvantage in the European Union at the moment. Measured over the lifecycle rather than on the basis of hourly earnings, the wage gap grows wider still, explaining the feminisation of poverty - in particular for single mothers and in old age. Several factors are usually put forward to explain the wage gap between women and men: horizontal and vertical gender segregation in the labour market (commonly referred to as "glass walls" and "glass ceilings"), women's supposedly lower qualifications and lesser experience, and their atypical working hours and career structures due to childbirth and care responsibilities. However, over half of the typical gender wage gap cannot be objectively explained through such "structural" factors and is, in reality, due to old-fashioned discrimination against women: to differences in access to education, training, and the labour market itself, to biased evaluation, pay and promotion systems, and to discriminating gender stereotypes and outdated gender roles.<sup>158</sup>

**Gender perspective.** A gender perspective or "gender lens" can be defined as a focus that brings a framework of analysis in order to assess how women and men affect and are affected differently by policies, programmes, projects and activities. It enables recognition that relationships between women and men can vary depending

155 Adapted from Eckman, A, 2002

156 Available at AWID website [http://www.awid.org/ywl/glossary/index.php?term=Gender per cent20oppression](http://www.awid.org/ywl/glossary/index.php?term=Gender+per+cent20oppression)

157 Enshrined in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the 1957 Treaty of Rome which founded the European Community. Enlarging this right, going further, the right to equal pay for work of equal value was enshrined in the 1961 Council of Europe Social Charter (as well as in the 1996 revised charter) and in the 1975 European Community Directive devoted to the subject.

158 The wage gap between women and men. Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. Parliamentary Assembly 8 February 2010, Council of Europe. Accessed on 1 April 2012 at: <http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/WorkingDocs/Doc10/EDOC12140.pdf>

on the context. A gender perspective takes into account gender roles, social and economic relationships and needs, access to resources, and other constraints and opportunities imposed by society or culture, age, religion, and/or ethnicity on both women and men. (UN Women, 2011)

**Gender-sensitive indicator.** This can be a measurement, a number, a fact, an opinion or a perception that focuses on a specific condition or situation, and measures changes in that condition or situation over time. The difference between an indicator and a statistic is that indicators should involve comparison with a norm. Gender-sensitive indicators measure gender-related changes in society over time; they provide a close look at the results of targeted gender-based initiatives and actions. (UN Women, 2011)

**Gender stereotypes** arise from (often outdated) presumptions about the roles, abilities and attributes of women, men, girls and boys. While in some specific situations, such stereotypes can be found to have a basis in reality, stereotypes become problematic when they are then assumed to universally and obligatorily apply to all men or all women. This can lead to both material and psychological barriers that prevent women and men from making choices and fully enjoying their rights.<sup>159</sup>

**Gender roles** are the roles assigned to women, men, girls and boys respectively according to cultural norms and traditions. They vary among different societies and cultures, classes, ages and during different periods in history. Most often, gender roles are not based on biological or physical imperatives, but rather result from stereotypes and presumptions about what women, men, girls and boys can and should do. Gender roles become problematic when a society assigns greater value to the roles of one gender – usually men's.<sup>160</sup>

**Good governance** is the transparent and accountable management of human, natural, economic and financial resources for the purposes of equitable and sustainable development, in the context of a political and institutional environment that upholds human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law (ACP-EC, Cotonou Agreement, 2002)

**Men and Masculinities**, refers to better understanding the “male side” of the gender equation. It involves questioning the masculine values and norms that society places on men's and boys' behaviour, identifying and addressing issues confronting men and boys in society, the family, and the world of work, and promoting the positive roles that men and boys can play in attaining gender equality. (ILO, 2004)

**Occupational segregation** is the distribution of groups defined by ascribed characteristics, mostly gender, both across and within occupations, industries, and firms. Occupational segregation is most often caused by gender-based discrimination that occurs in patterns, either across occupations (horizontally) or within the hierarchy of occupations (vertically). Both of these forms of occupational segregation make the phenomenon a leading factor of the gender wage gap.

**Reproductive labour** refers to work in the domestic sphere or other caring work (for the young, sick and elderly). It is predominantly done by women and performed without pay or the expectation of pay, and is not calculated as part of a country's gross domestic product. However, it ensures the maintenance of social and family structures upon which productive labour (work for money) depends. It is also referred to as social reproduction.<sup>161</sup>

159 Gender Mainstreaming in Practice: A Handbook. UNDP Regional Centre for Europe and the CIS (UNDP RBEC), 2005.

160 Ibid.

161 Ibid.

**Sex** refers to the biological characteristics that define humans as female or male. These sets of biological characteristics are not mutually exclusive as there are individuals who possess both, but these characteristics generally differentiate humans as females and males (UN Women 2011).

**Sex-disaggregated data** can be defined as data that is collected and presented separately on women and men. It is quantitative statistical information on the differences and inequalities between women and men. There is widespread confusion over, and misuse of, the terms “gender-disaggregated data” and “sex-disaggregated data”. Data should necessarily be sex-disaggregated but not gender-disaggregated since females and males are counted according to their biological difference and not according to their social behaviours. The term gender-disaggregated data is frequently used, but it should be understood as sex-disaggregated data. (UN Women, 2011)

**Social justice** is a goal of sustainable human development. It refers to the situation of fairness and equality of treatment of all peoples. It is specifically „social,“ since it refers not only to equality before the law, but of just treatment in practice. According to social justice, people and their well-being take priority over other (economic) concerns. Gender equality is a critical and indivisible component of social justice. Social justice cannot exist if men or women are being discriminated against.<sup>162</sup>

**Unpaid care work** (reproductive labour) includes caring for children, elderly and sick people. It also includes washing, cooking, shopping cleaning and helping other families with their chores. It is primarily done by women. (SIDA)

**Violence Against Women** is defined in Article 1 of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993). The term refers to “any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether in public or in private life”.

**Women’s Empowerment** A ‘bottom-up’ process of transforming gender power relations, through individuals or groups developing awareness of women’s subordination and building their capacity to challenge it.<sup>163</sup>

**Women’s rights.** The rights of women and the girl child as inalienable, integral, and indivisible part of universal human rights. (European Commission)

**Women’s triple role** Women’s triple role refers to the reproductive, productive and community managing role. The way these forms are valued affects the way women and men set priorities in planning programs or projects. The taking or not taking into consideration of these forms can make or break women’s chances of taking advantage of development opportunities.<sup>164</sup>

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162 Ibid.

163 Bridge Institute of Development Studies Available online: <http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports/re55.pdf>

164 Moser, C. O., 1993

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