



Qendra Kosovare për Studime Gjinore
Kosovar Gender Studies Center

2021 PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS of Gender Equality and Violence against Women



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Kosovar Gender Studies Center (KGSC) (www.kgscenter.net)

KGSC has been contributing to gender mainstreaming since 2002 and continuously makes efforts to achieve gender equality in Kosovo. It has been pioneering changes to the discriminatory system, social norms, and double standards, and is very active in monitoring public institutions. KGSC mission is to integrate gender-sensitive analysis, programs, and policies in all sectors of Kosovar society by increasing gender awareness and focus on gender issues, developing gender studies and ensuring the inclusion of gender-sensitive policies through research, policy development, advocacy, and lobbying.

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Table of Contents

Introduction	7
Methodology	7
The questionnaire	7
Survey Sample.....	8
Data Collection.....	9
Brief Overview of the Legal Framework in Kosovo regarding Gender Equality and Gender-Based Violence	10
Survey Findings	13
Respondent Profile	14
Knowledge about Legislation and Policies on Gender Equality and Violence against Women	16
General Perception regarding Gender and Different Social Issues.....	24
General Perceptions regarding Gender-Based Violence.....	27
General Perceptions regarding Acceptable Behavior of Women and Men in the Home	30
Exposure to Violence Prevention Messages	33
Attitude Towards Changing/Improving Gender Equality and Violence Against Women & Domestic Violence Issues in the Future	37
Summary.....	39
Recommendations	41
References	42

List of Acronyms

ASK	Kosovo Agency of Statistics
CATI	Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing
DV	Domestic Violence
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GE	Gender Equality
KGSC	Kosovar Gender Studies Center
NGO	Non-governmental organization
RROGRAEK	Network of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Women's Organizations of Kosovo
UN WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNDP	United Nation Development Program
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNKT	United Nation Kosovo Team
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls

List of Tables

Table 1 Sample distribution by region	8
Table 2 Sample distribution by urbanity	8
Table 3 Sample distribution by gender	9
Table 4 Sample distribution by age	9
Table 5 Sample distribution by ethnicity.....	9
Table 6 Weighting procedure.....	10

List of Figures

Figure 1 Respondent profile by region.....	14
Figure 2 Respondent profile by urbanity	14
Figure 3 Respondent profile by gender	14
Figure 4 Respondent profile by age	14
Figure 5 Respondent profile by religion.....	14
Figure 6 Respondent profile by marital status.....	15
Figure 7 Respondent profile by employment	15
Figure 8 Respondent profile by education.....	15
Figure 9 Respondents by physical health status, showing only 'no difficulty' category	16
Figure 10 Do you know if there is any law for gender equality in Kosovo? - by gender and age, showing only "yes" category.....	17
Figure 11 Do you know if there is any law for gender equality in Kosovo? - by ethnicity, showing only "yes" category	17
Figure 12 Do women have the same legal rights as men to? – overall, showing only "yes" category	18
Figure 13 Do women have the same legal rights as men to? – by gender, showing only "yes" category ...	19
Figure 14 Do women have the same legal rights as men to? – by age, showing only "yes" category.....	20
Figure 15 Do women have the same legal rights as men to? – by ethnicity, showing only "yes" category	21
Figure 16 Do you know if there is any law for violence against women (VAW) and/or domestic violence (DV) in Kosovo? – by gender, showing only "yes" category	22
Figure 17 Do you know if there is any law for violence against women (VAW) and/or domestic violence (DV) in Kosovo? – by ethnicity, showing only "yes" category	22
Figure 18 Which forms of VAWG are punishable by law in Kosovo? – overall, showing only "yes" category	23
Figure 19 Which forms of VAWG are punishable by law in Kosovo? – by gender, showing only "yes" category	23
Figure 20 Would a person be punished if he/she: - overall, showing only "yes" category	24
Figure 21 What do you think about the following sentences?	25
Figure 22 What do you think about the following sentences? – by gender	26
Figure 23 What do you think about the following sentences? – by ethnicity	27
Figure 24 What do you think about the following sentences? – overall	28
Figure 25 What do you think about the following sentences? – by age, scale from 1 to 4 where 1 means "Strongly disagree" and 4 means "Strongly agree"	29
Figure 26 What do you think about the following sentences? – by gender, scale from 1 to 4 where 1 means "Strongly disagree" and 4 means "Strongly agree"	30

Figure 27 What do you think about the following sentences? - overall	31
Figure 28 What do you think about the following sentences? – by gender	32
Figure 29 Figure 28 What do you think about the following sentences? – by age.....	33
Figure 30 In the past (e.g., 12 months), have you heard about issues related to the prevention of violence against women and girls, and/or the equality between men and women, boys and girls through: - overall, showing only “very often” and “often”	34
Figure 31 In the past (e.g., 12 months), have you discussed issues related to the prevention of violence against women and girls, with: - part 1/2	35
Figure 32 In the past (e.g., 12 months), have you discussed issues related to the prevention of violence against women and girls, with: - part 2/2	35
Figure 33 In the past (e.g., 12 months), have you discussed issues related to the prevention of violence against women and girls, with: - by ethnicity, scale from 1 to 4 where 1 means “Not at all” and 4 means “Very often”	36
Figure 34 In the near future, would you be willing to: - overall, showing only “yes” category.....	38
Figure 35 A door-to-door campaign has recently been launched to prevent early marriages of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian girls. How do you evaluate this campaign? - asked only Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities	39

Introduction

Gender (in)equality and gender-based violence are complex issues that need to be addressed through a multi-dimensional approach. It has been established that different gender roles which become the norm within a society and the respective attributes associated with such roles are contributors to gender inequality and gender-based violence. In most societies, there are different social expectations towards men – who are often thought as tough, bread-winners, head of the family, aggressive, among others and towards women – who are often thought as submissive, supportive, gentle, and care-givers, among others.

Societies often regard women as inferior to men in which case men have higher decision-making power and exert control over women in different aspects of life. This contributes to gender inequalities in spheres of life such as access to healthcare, representation in the public life, employment opportunities, income levels, and security. Gender inequality also contributes to an increased violence against women by men since it is believed that men have the right to control women physically, emotionally, and sexually. Because women are often economically worse off than men and the expectations that come from them, it makes it difficult to leave abusive relationships or seek help.

These different social roles based on gender are therefore the basis for the creation of human relationships within the family and the workplace and they are perpetuated generation after generation, leaving women in a disadvantageous position while carrying the load of housework and child and elderly care, unequal pay, unequal opportunities for work promotions, and of being the main victims of gender-based violence.

Today, many organizations are trying to help societies re-shape gender roles and to create a safe environment for all humans to thrive without the burden of social expectations. Indeed, therefore, the Kosovar Gender Studies Center (KGSC), supported by UN Women have commissioned IDRA Research and Consulting – Kosovo to conduct a survey which assessed Kosovar citizens' knowledge, opinions, perceptions, attitudes and beliefs regarding gender equality and violence against women and girls (GE & VAWG).

The findings from this survey will support the aim of UN Women programme “Implementing Norms, Changing Minds” to prevent Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).

Methodology

The methodology of this research includes a legal framework review of gender equality in Kosovo and gender-based violence issues and a Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) survey.

The questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed to capture basic knowledge of Kosovar citizens regarding the gender equality and gender-based violence legal framework in the country, to understand their perceptions regarding gender, social roles, gender-based violence, acceptable behavior of women and men in the home, and their attitudes towards changing or improving gender equality, violence against women, and domestic violence in the future. An additional portion of the questionnaire assessed whether the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities in Kosovo were reached through a door-to-door campaign which had lately been launched by the Network of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Women's Organizations of Kosovo (RROGRAEK) to prevent early marriages.

The questionnaire contained closed-ended questions which were either single-choice or multiple-choice questions with predefined answers like ‘yes’, ‘no’ and ‘I do not know’ or offered the respondents the possibility to choose and rank among several options on a scale such as ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’ at a 5-point Likert scale.

Survey Sample

To conduct the survey, we prepared a sample of 978 interviews based on the Census 2011 data under the Kosovo Agency of Statistics (ASK)¹. In a national representative sample, the minority communities in Kosovo such as Serbs, Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian, Bosniaks, Turks, Gorani would be captured by a very small number of interviews. The respective subsample would not be large enough to analyze the findings based on ethnicity. Therefore, for Albanian citizens, we used a representative sample and for other ethnicities we used a quota sample (over-sample). The sample distribution below shows the representative sample of K-Albanians. The over-sampled ethnicities may slightly differ from population composition; however, after weighting, the overall respondent profile coincides with Kosovo’s population composition as seen in the Survey Findings section. For more details on the final sample of the survey please refer to the tables below:

Table 1 Sample distribution by region

Region	Percentage (official data)	Interviews
Gjakovë	11%	86
Prishtinë	28%	218
Gjilan	11%	86
Prizren	19%	148
Pejë	10%	78
Ferizaj	10%	78
Mitrovicë	11%	86
Total	100%	780

Table 2 Sample distribution by urbanity

Urbanity	Percentage (official data)	Interviews
Rural	60%	468
Urban	40%	312
Total	100%	780

¹ Kosovo Agency of Statistics. Census 2011 Tables. <www.askdata.org>

Table 3 Sample distribution by gender

Gender	Percentage (official data)	Interviews
Women	50%	390
Men	50%	390
Total	100%	780

Table 4 Sample distribution by age

Age	Percentage (official data)	Interviews
18-24	20%	156
25-34	25%	195
35-44	20%	156
45-54	15%	117
55-64	10%	78
65+	10%	78
Total	100%	780

Table 5 Sample distribution by ethnicity

Ethnicity	Proposed quota	Interviews N=1000
K Albanians	80%	780
K Serbs	8%	80
K Roma		
K Ashkali	8%	75
K Egyptian		
K Gorani		
K Bosniaks	4%	43
K Turks		
K other/not specified		
Total	100%	987

With an estimated population of 1,870,981 people in Kosovo based on the Census 2011 and KAS estimations, the margin of error for a total sample of 987 interviews in Kosovo is $\pm 3.12\%$ for a representative sample.

Data Collection

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures that were in place during April, the survey was conducted via Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) which was implemented by a system of random generation of mobile numbers. This system functions based on a 'built-in' algorithm which detects segments of mobile numbers which are in use.

Once the number is generated, a call was attempted with the newly generated mobile phone number. After introduction and providing the necessary information about the survey such as the aim and the fact that the selection is random, the operator asked for the respondent a verbal consent to participate in the survey. The interview was terminated if the respondent did not give the consent and willingness to be included in the study. The data was collected from April 19 to April 23, 2021.

There were 780 interviews conducted with Albanians (80%), 80 interviews conducted with Serbs (8%), 75 interviews with Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptians (8%) and 43 interviews with Gorani, Bosniaks, Turks, and others (around 4%).

The data was weighted for analysis which means that although there was a higher percentage of a certain ethnicity, the weight it took in the overall analysis of the data is that which is equal to national representativeness of that community or group of communities.

In short, the overall results in the graphs are shown as weighted. No weighting is applied when analyzing the results by ethnicity. The data interpretation was done the same way.

Table 6 Weighting procedure

Ethnicity	Percentage (official data)	Survey (interviews)		After Weighting
		Percentage of interviews	Interviews (Quota)	Percentage
K Albanians	89.23%	80%	780	89.23%
K Serbs	5.27%	8%	80	5.27%
K Ashkali				
K Roma	1.98%	8%	75	1.98%
K Egyptian				
K Gorani				
K Bosniaks				
K Turks	3.52%	4%	43	3.52%
K other/not specified				
Total	100%	100%	978	100%

Overall results in the graphs are shown as weighted. No weighting is applied when analyzing the results by ethnicity.

Brief Overview of the Legal Framework in Kosovo regarding Gender Equality and Gender-Based Violence

This section of the report offers a brief overview of the legal framework concerning Gender Equality and Gender-Based Violence in Kosovo.

Gender equality entails equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of all people within a society regardless of their gender. Gender-based violence (GBV) is any type of physical or mental violence against a person on the basis of sex and gender identity which usually affects members of a particular gender due to societal norms.

GBV is largely targeted to women which is a violation of human rights and discrimination against them, and it entails physical, sexual, psychological, or economic violence and it has lasting effects on them, their potential children, families, and communities.

Violence against women is prevalent as a result of largely patriarchal societies in attempts to keep them obedient, suppressed, unopinionated, and away from the public sphere. Violence allows social constructs about gender, which are largely unequal and disadvantageous to women, to keep being perpetuated in a society. The extent of gender-based violence which is both a cause and effect of inequality differs from country to country, but it is existent everywhere.

Kosovo also faces countless challenges in ensuring gender equality. Though social and legal division still exists against women and girls; there are still barriers to women's political participation. Women still carry an unfair load of housework and are the primary victims of gender-based violence (GBV). Nonetheless, Kosovo has an inclusive legal base regarding gender equality.

*"The Republic of Kosovo ensures gender equality as a fundamental value for the democratic development of the society, providing equal opportunities for both female and male participation in the political, economic, social, cultural and other areas of societal life."*²

The Constitution of Kosovo stipulates that international conventions including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women are directly applicable to the country.³ No Kosovar citizen "shall be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, relation to any community, property, economic and social condition, sexual orientation, birth, disability or other personal status."⁴ Considering representation in public sphere, the constitution specifies that the composition of the Assembly of Kosovo, Civil Service, the Judiciary, Kosovo Judicial Council, State Prosecutor, Kosovo Prosecutorial Council, and the Constitutional Court shall reflect the diversity of the people of Kosovo and take into consideration internationally agreed principles of gender equality⁵.

² The Office of the Prime Minister. Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo. Article 7 [Values].

<<http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Constitution1Kosovo.pdf>>

³ Ibid. Article 22 [Direct Applicability of International Agreements and Instruments]

⁴ Ibid. Article 24 [Equality before the law]

⁵ Ibid. Article 101 [Civil Service], Article 104 [Appointment and Removal of Judges], Article 108 [Kosovo Judicial Council], Article 109 [State Prosecutor], Article 110 [Kosovo Prosecutorial Council], Article 114 [Composition and Mandate of the Constitutional Court]

Notwithstanding, Kosovar society is still a cradle of gender inequality. In such cases, affirmative action or positive discrimination through a group of policies and within a government is essential to guarantee the representation of particular marginalized groups which are underrepresented in public and private life. Equality before the law, which is guaranteed in the constitution, accordingly, does not prohibit the undertaking of necessary measures “to protect and advance the rights of individuals and groups who are in unequal positions.”⁶

“It is prohibited the direct or indirect gender discrimination, including less favorable treatment of women for reasons of pregnancy and maternity, marital status, nationality, race, disability, sexual orientation, social status, religion and belief, age or any other basis defined by law or agreement and international instruments into force.”⁷

The Kosovo Law on Gender Equality requires that the principle of gender equality and integration be considered in planning, budgeting, and implementing of policies and programs (including those related to child birth and compensation) by public and private entities. Moreover, harassment and sexual harassment are also prohibited by the law.⁸

“Gender based violence is a form of discrimination that seriously inhibits women’s and men’s ability to enjoy rights and freedoms on a basis of equality and is prohibited.”⁹

Some of the most prominent forms of Gender-Based Violence in Kosovo are domestic violence, and sexual violence and harassment. In certain communities, child marriages are also quite prevalent.

Domestic violence is defined as “one or more intentional acts or omissions when committed by a person against another person with whom he or she is or has been in a domestic relationship.”¹⁰ Whoever commits physical, psychological or economic violence shall be punished by fine and imprisonment of up to three (3)

⁶ The Office of the Prime Minister. Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo. Article 7 [Values].

<<http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Constitution1Kosovo.pdf>>

⁷ Official Gazette of The Republic of Kosova. Law No. 05/L -020 On Gender Equality. Article 4 [Prohibition of gender discrimination]. <<https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=10923>>

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Official Gazette of The Republic of Kosova. Law No.03/L –182 on Protection Against Domestic Violence.

<<https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=2691>>

years.¹¹ The Kosovo Police is in charge of investigating domestic violence crimes.¹² The Kosovo Police is also responsible for responding to any report of domestic violence, threat thereof, or any violation of a protection order or emergency protection order.¹³ However, the police reports that domestic violence cases are on the rise from 1,541 in 2018 to 1,915 in 2019, to over 2,000 in 2020; while around 165 cases are reported until April 2021.¹⁴

Sexual harassment is defined as “any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature which aims at or effectively constitutes a violation of the dignity of a person, which creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment.”¹⁵ Moreover, whoever sexually harasses another person shall be punished by a fine or imprisonment of up to three (3) years.¹⁶

According to the Kosovo Criminal Code, a child is anyone who is under 18 years old.¹⁷ People in Kosovo can only get married if they are at least 18 years old.¹⁸ The Law on Family, however, allows competent courts to decide on marriages between minors who are 16 years old if it determines that the involved parties have reached the necessary maturity to exercise marital rights and to fulfill marital obligations. However, the law does not provide any clear stipulation whether the married minor of 16 years old gains adult rights and responsibilities and is treated as such in other family law issues.¹⁹ All in all, child marriages are illegal and if adults (over 18 years old) cohabit with underage people it is considered a crime.

The next section of the report highlights the findings from the survey which show the level of awareness of Kosovar citizens concerning the legal framework on gender equality and gender-based violence, their own perceptions and beliefs regarding these issues, and their future endeavors to change any potential unfavorable situation.

Survey Findings

This section of the report presents the findings from the survey with 987 Kosovo citizens. The structure of this section follows the structure of the questionnaire administered on perceptions of GE and VAW.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Official Gazette of The Republic of Kosovo. Criminal Code of the Republic of Kosovo.

< <https://www.refworld.org/docid/6012e70d4.html> >

¹³ Official Gazette of The Republic of Kosovo. Law No.03/L –182 on Protection Against Domestic Violence.

< <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=2691> >

¹⁴ Adelina Ahmeti. BIRN. In Kosovo, System ‘Failing to Protect’ Domestic Abuse Victims.

< <https://balkaninsight.com/2021/04/06/in-kosovo-system-failing-to-protect-domestic-abuse-victims/#:~:text=The%20number%20of%20cases%20of,allocated%20105%2C000%20euros%20for%20shelters> >

¹⁵ Official Gazette of The Republic of Kosovo. Criminal Code of the Republic of Kosovo. Article 183 [Sexual Harassment]

< <https://www.refworld.org/docid/6012e70d4.html> >

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid. Article 113 [Definitions]

¹⁸ Official Gazette of The Republic of Kosovo. Law No. 06/L-077 on Amending and Supplementing the Family Law of Kosovo No. 2004/32. <<https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=18420>>

¹⁹ Ibid.

Respondent Profile

The respondent profile corresponds to the national population composition with 28% of the respondents being from the region of Prishtina, 18% from the region of Prizren, 12% from the region of Gjakova, 11% each from the region of Mitrovica, Peja, and Gjilan, and 10% from the region of Ferizaj. Moreover, 59% of the respondents reside in rural areas and 41% of them in urban areas.

Figure 1 Respondent profile by region

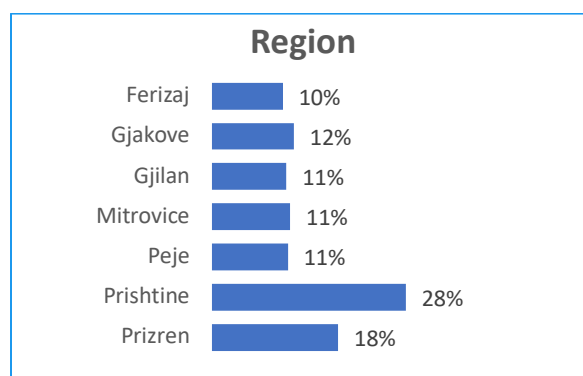
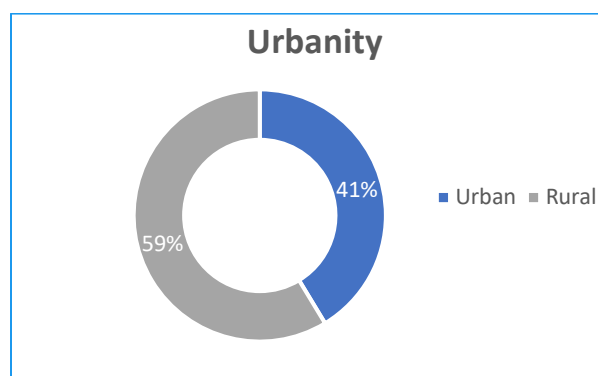


Figure 2 Respondent profile by urbanity



Half of the respondents are women, and the other half are men. Pursuant to the age distribution of the population, 21% of the respondents are 18-24 years old, 26% of the respondents are 25-34 years old, 19% of the respondents are 35-44 years old, 15% of the respondents are 45-55 years old, 9% of the respondents are 55-64 years old, and 9% of the respondents are 65 or more years old. Most respondents are Muslim (90.6%), 3.8% of them are Christian, 1.8% are Catholic, 1.6% are Evangelist, 1.5% are Bektashi, and 0.1% are Atheist.

Figure 3 Respondent profile by gender

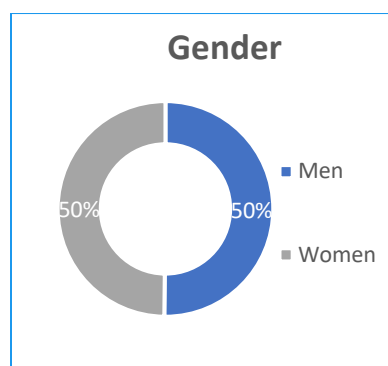


Figure 4 Respondent profile by age

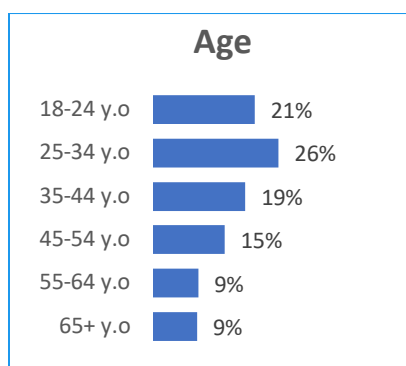
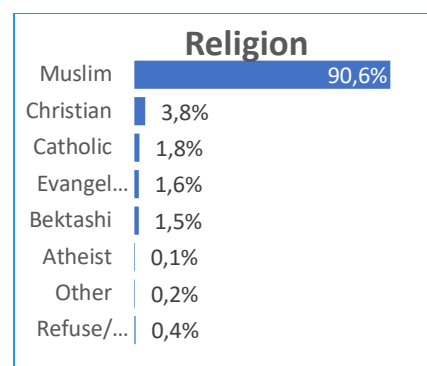


Figure 5 Respondent profile by religion



More than half of the respondents (57.8%) are married, about a third are single (32.4%), and a few of them are widows (3.3%), cohabiting (2.4%), have a partner with whom they do not live (2.4%), have no stable partner (0.6%), and are either divorced or separated (0.5% each). Thirty percent of the respondents are employed in the formal sector, 10% of them in the informal sector while 7% are self-employed, and 1% are employed and studying. On the other hand, 29% of the respondents are unemployed, 7% of them have

never been employed, 8% are studying, and 9% have retired. More than a fourth of the respondents each have a bachelor or a high school degree (27.1% and 26.3% respectively). About a fifth of them have completed a vocational training school (18.9%), while almost 17% of them have finished middle school. Smaller portions of the respondents either have a master's degree or a doctorate (5.5%). While only 3.8% of the respondents have only finished elementary school and 1.4% of them have no education.

Figure 6 Respondent profile by marital status

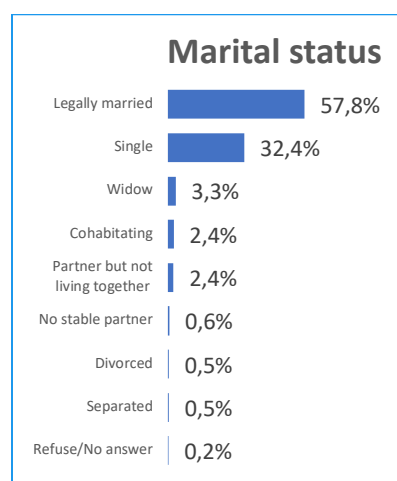


Figure 7 Respondent profile by employment

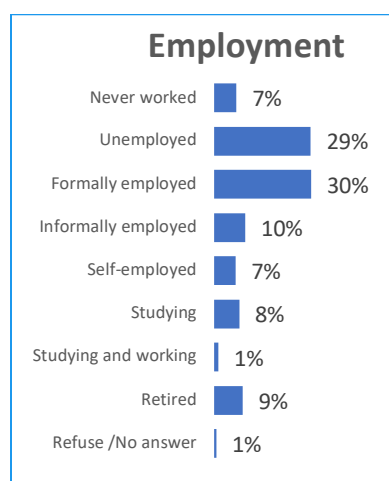
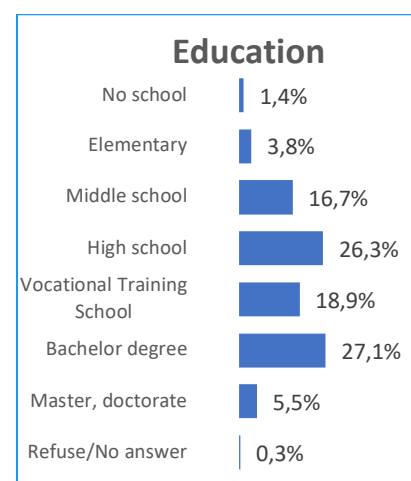
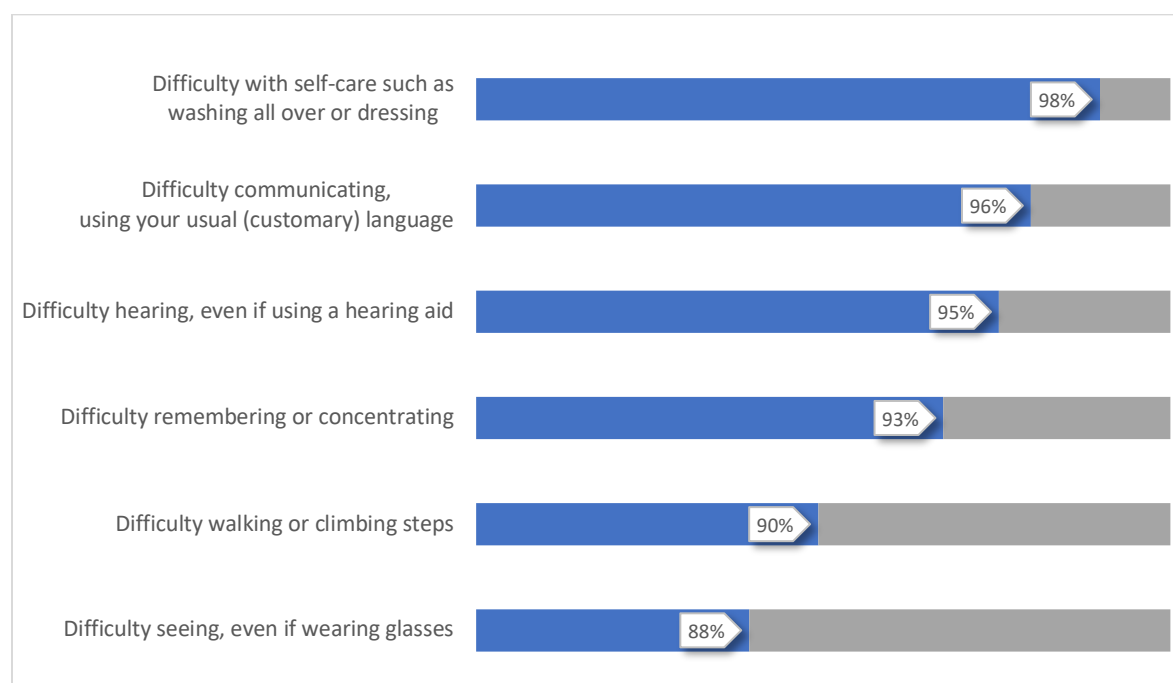


Figure 8 Respondent profile by education



The majority of the respondents do not have any difficulty with self-care such as washing all over or dressing (98%), communicating using their usual language (96%), hearing (95%), and remembering or concentrating (93%). However, about one in 10 respondents claim to have difficulty walking or climbing steps (10%), and slightly more than that claim to have difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses (12%).

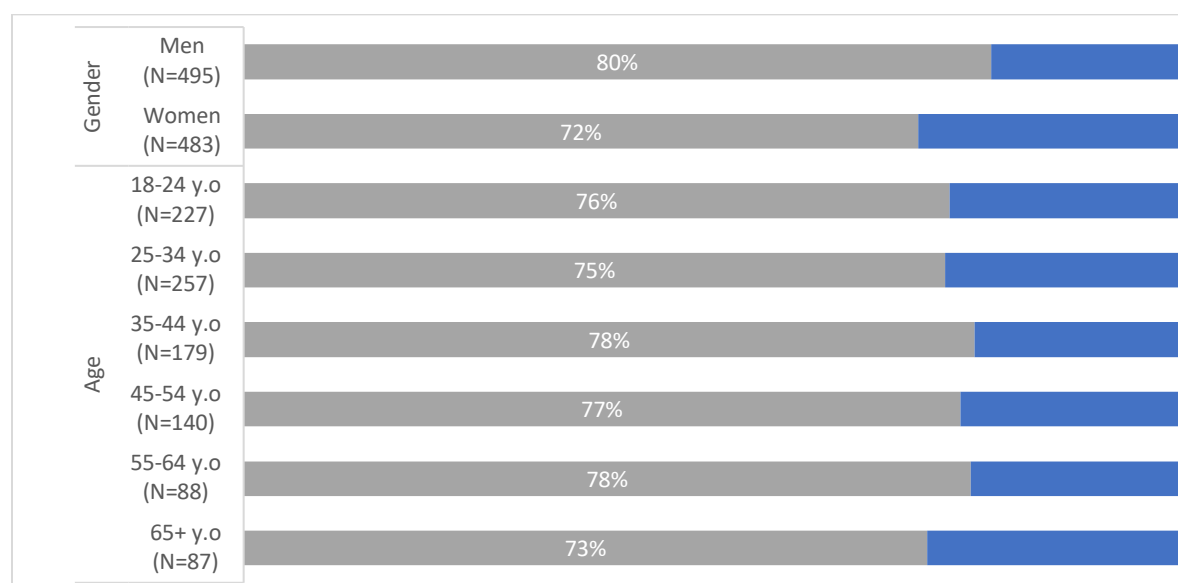
Figure 9 Respondents by physical health status, showing only 'no difficulty' category



Knowledge about Legislation and Policies on Gender Equality and Violence against Women

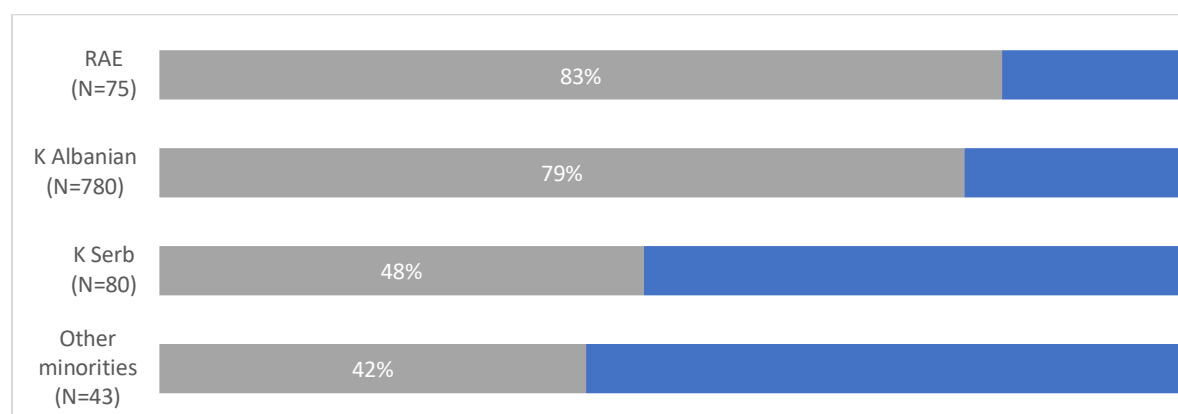
Despite Kosovo having a specific Law on Gender Equality and having gender equality issues on property rights, employment, among others, embedded in the constitution, about one in four (24%) Kosovar citizens do not know whether a law on gender equality in Kosovo exists. Fewer women (72%) than men (80%) are aware of the existence of a gender equality law; making one in four women and one in five men not aware of a law on gender equality. When compared by age, there is less variation where about 14% up to 17% of all citizens of different age groups do not know about such legislation.

Figure 10 Do you know if there is any law for gender equality in Kosovo? - by gender and age, showing only “yes” category



The most aware of a gender equality law are the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian (83%) communities, followed by Albanians (79%), Serbs (48%), and then other (42%) minorities. About one in five citizens of the RAE communities (17%) and almost the same amount of the Albanians (21%) is not aware of such a law. More than half of Serbs (52%) and other minorities (58%) are not aware of a gender equality law though. The work done through campaigns with more marginalized communities such as Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptians seems to have worked to inform citizens of important equality laws.

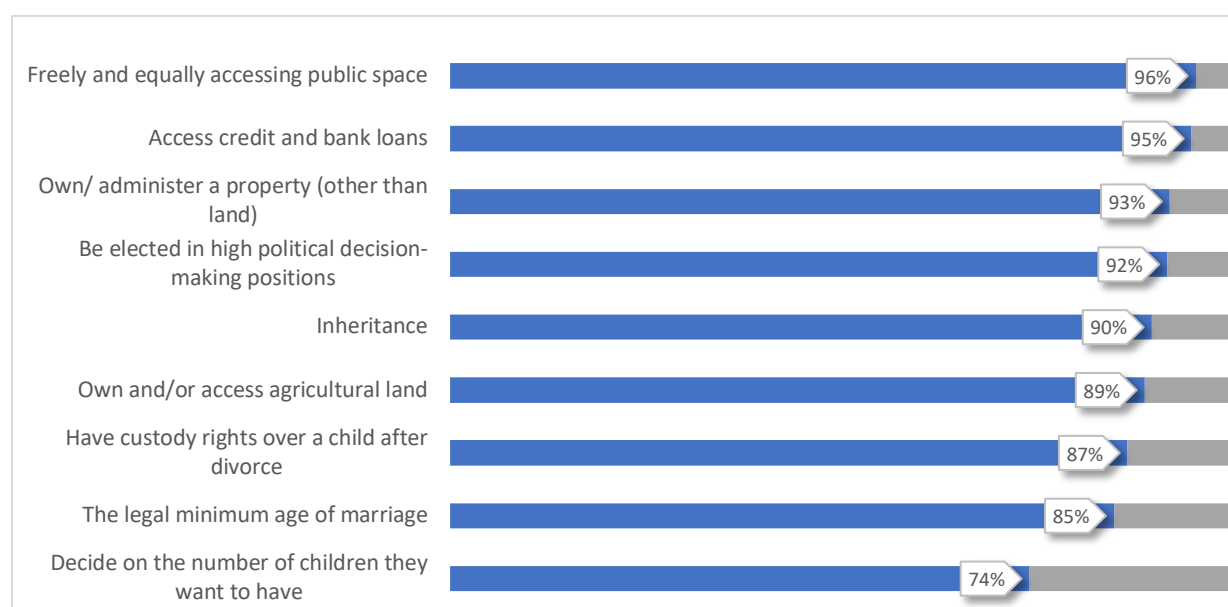
Figure 11 Do you know if there is any law for gender equality in Kosovo? - by ethnicity, showing only “yes” category



Kosovo’s legal framework also ensures equal access to men and women to public spaces, loans, opportunity to own property and land, as well as to inherit. There is still a portion of Kosovars who think men and women do not have such same rights regardless. Up to a tenth of Kosovar citizens believe that women do not have the same rights as men to freely and equally access public space (4%), credit and bank loans (5%), own or administer a property (7%), be elected in high political decision-making positions (8%), inherit (10%), and own or access agricultural land (11%).

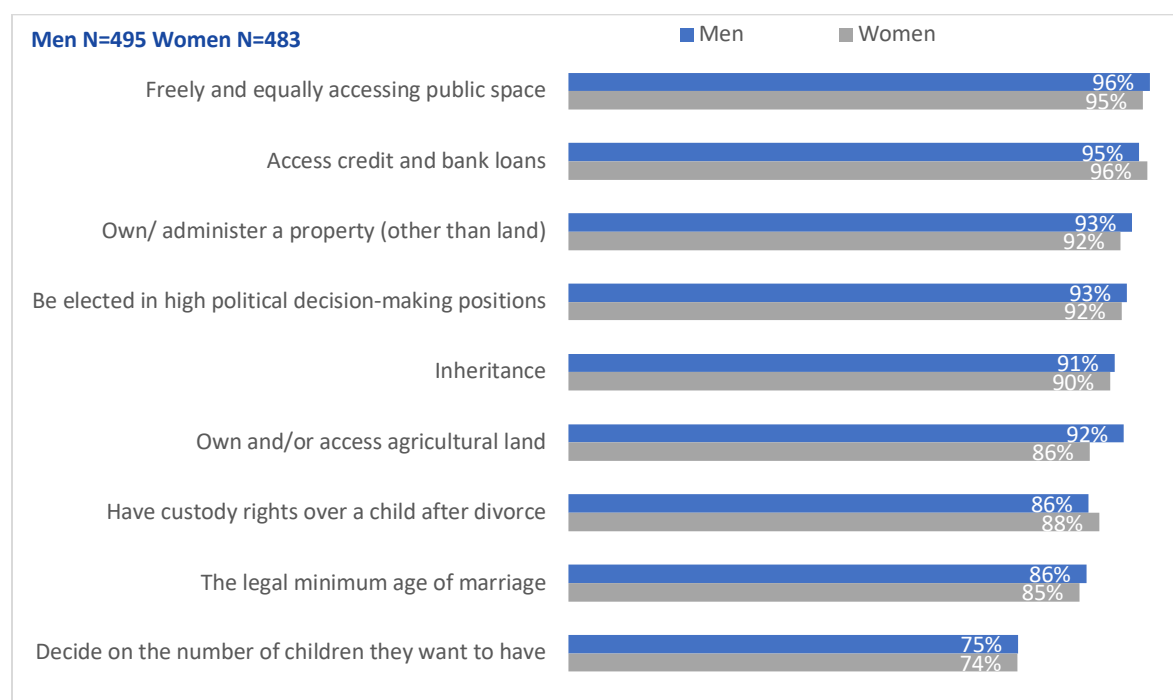
By law, men and women have agency over their own bodies and their civil and parental status, as well as to make decisions for their children until the age of 18. Regardless, more than one in four Kosovar citizens (26%) believe women do not have the same legal rights as men to decide on the number of children they want to have. Although the minimum age of marriage is 16 under court decision on specific circumstances and 18 in general, 15% of Kosovar citizens claim that women do not have the same legal minimum age of marriage as men. Slightly more than one in 10 Kosovar citizens (13%) claim that women do not have the same legal custody rights over a child after divorce.

Figure 12 Do women have the same legal rights as men to? – overall, showing only “yes” category



Fewer women than men claim that women have the same legal rights as men for a myriad of issues discussed above, except for custody rights over children after divorce and access to credit and bank loans. A notable difference was on the claim of whether women have the same legal rights as men to own or have access to agricultural land where only 8% of men and 14% of women think the latter do not. About 1.5 men and 1.6 women in 10 think that women do not have the same legal rights as men to decide on the number of children they want to have and on the minimum legal age of marriage.

Figure 13 Do women have the same legal rights as men to? – by gender, showing only “yes” category



Different age groups are more aware of certain legal rights of women and men in Kosovo without a linear trend, meaning some are more aware of certain rights and vice versa. More of the elderly (65+ years old) are not aware that women and men have the same rights to in different aspects of life. It is alarming that more of the youngest group are not aware that men and women do not have the same legal rights in sensitive matters such as being in politics, rights to inherit, own land, on the age of legal marriage, and on custody of children after divorce.

Despite having a woman for a president, 10% of the youngest and 9% of the oldest citizens do not believe that men and women have the same rights to be elected in high political decision-making positions. The rights to inherit are also perceived as legally unequal by a higher portion of the elderly (16%) and the youngsters (11%). About one in five (22%) of the elderly and one in 10 (10%) of the youngsters also think women and men do not have the same legal rights to access or own agricultural land.

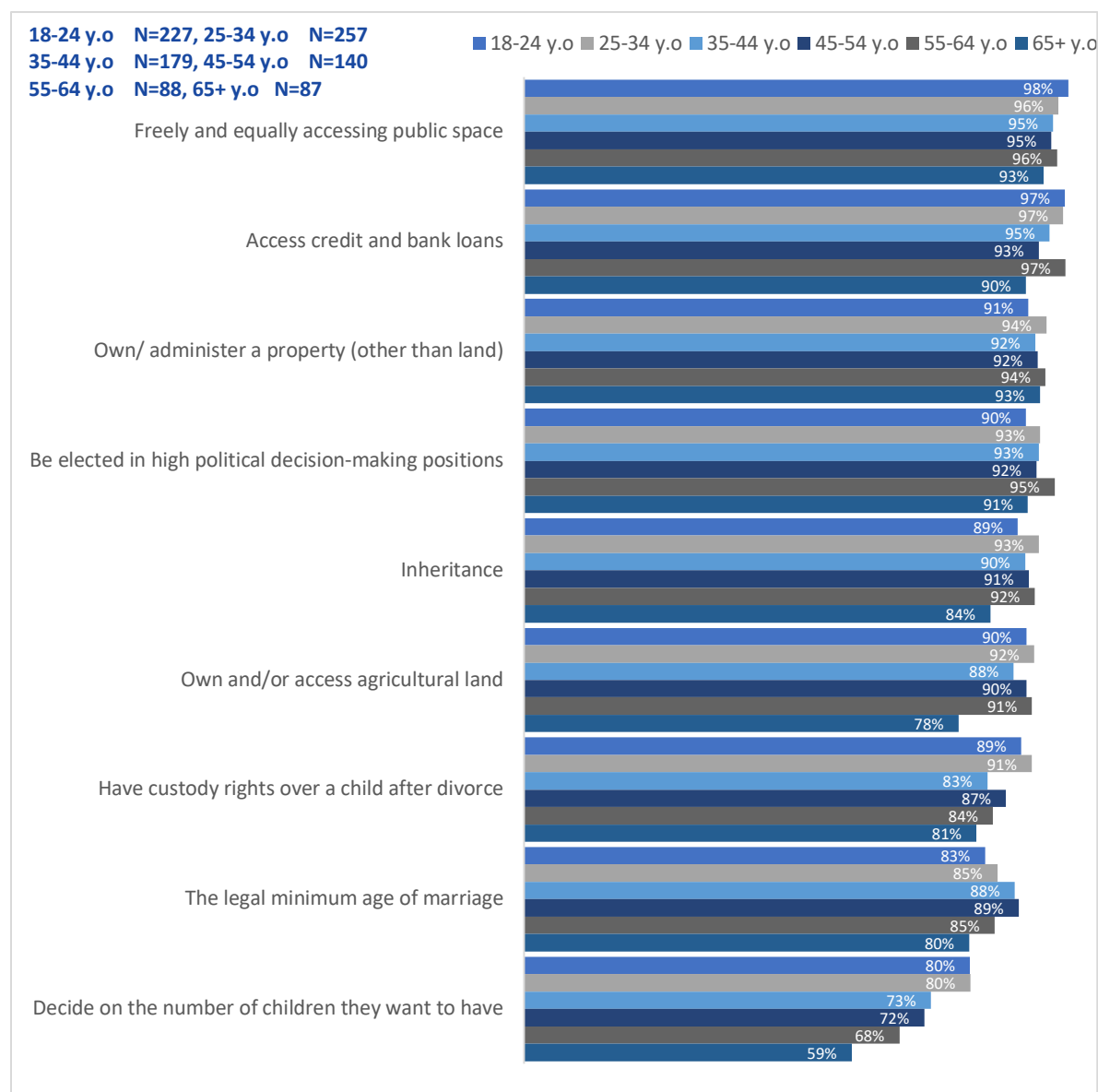
When it comes to custody rights of children after divorce, more citizens of different age groups think women and men do not have the same rights, 19% of the 65+ years old group, 17% of the 35-44 years old group, 16% of the 55-64 years old group, 13% of the 45-54 years old group, 11% of the 18-24 years old group, and 9% of the 25-34 years old group.

In a convex like trend, more of the elderly (20%) and of the youngsters (17%), with the other age groups falling between these two poles, think that women and men do not have the same legal age of marriage.

The situation with the perception of equal rights of women and men when it comes to the number of children they may want to have is worse. In a linear upward trend from the oldest to the youngest, 41% of

the elderly up to 20% of the youngest think women and men do not have the same legal rights on this matter.

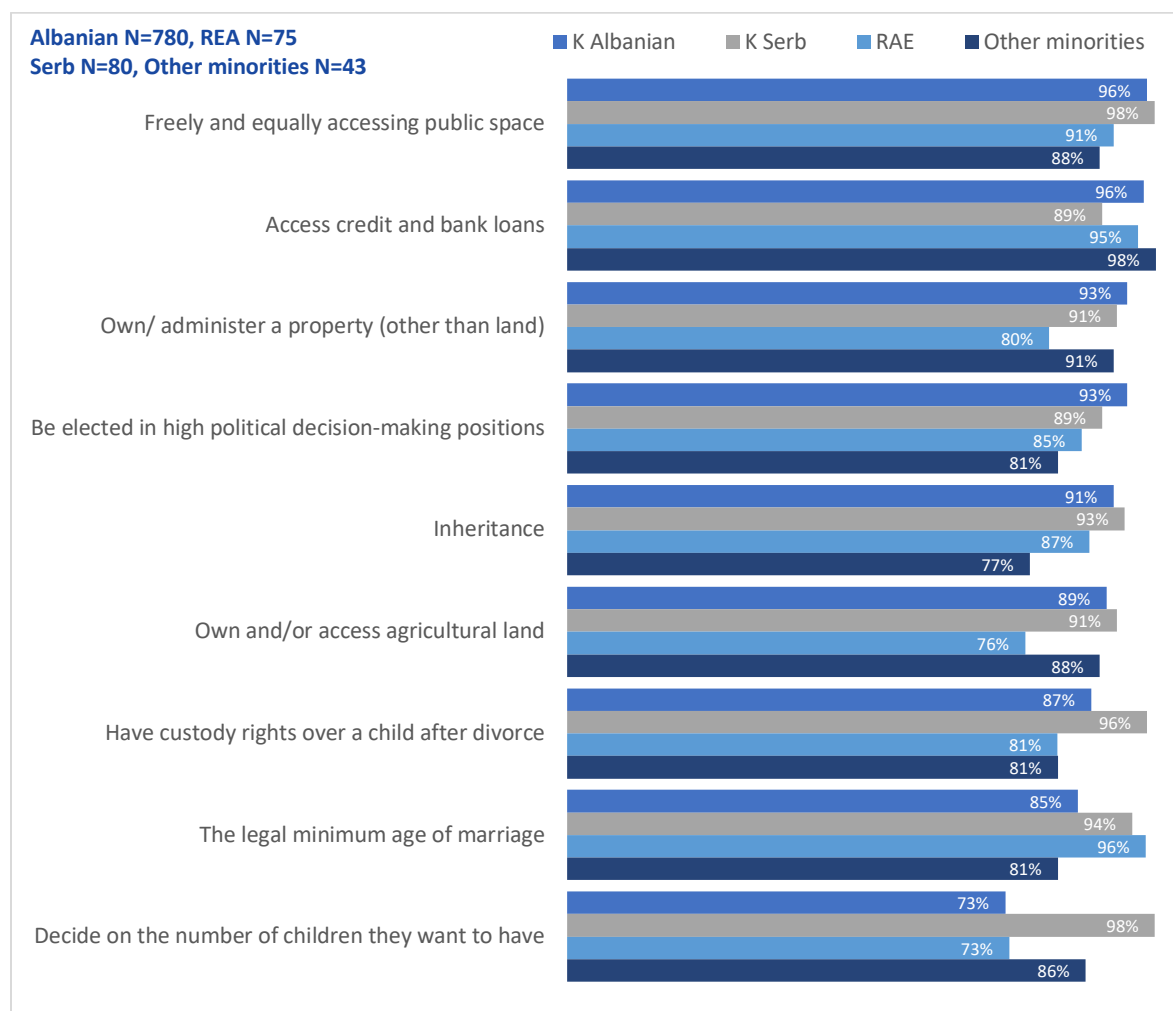
Figure 14 Do women have the same legal rights as men to? – by age, showing only “yes” category



When compared by ethnicity, in general, more Albanians and Serbs think that women have the same rights as men on the same issues discussed above when compared to the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities and other minorities. About 12% of other minorities and 9% of the RAE communities think women do not have the same rights as men to freely and equally access public spaces. About 11% of Serbs think women do not have the same right to access credit and bank loans. Twenty percent of the RAE communities believe women have less rights to own or administer a non-agricultural property. Nineteen

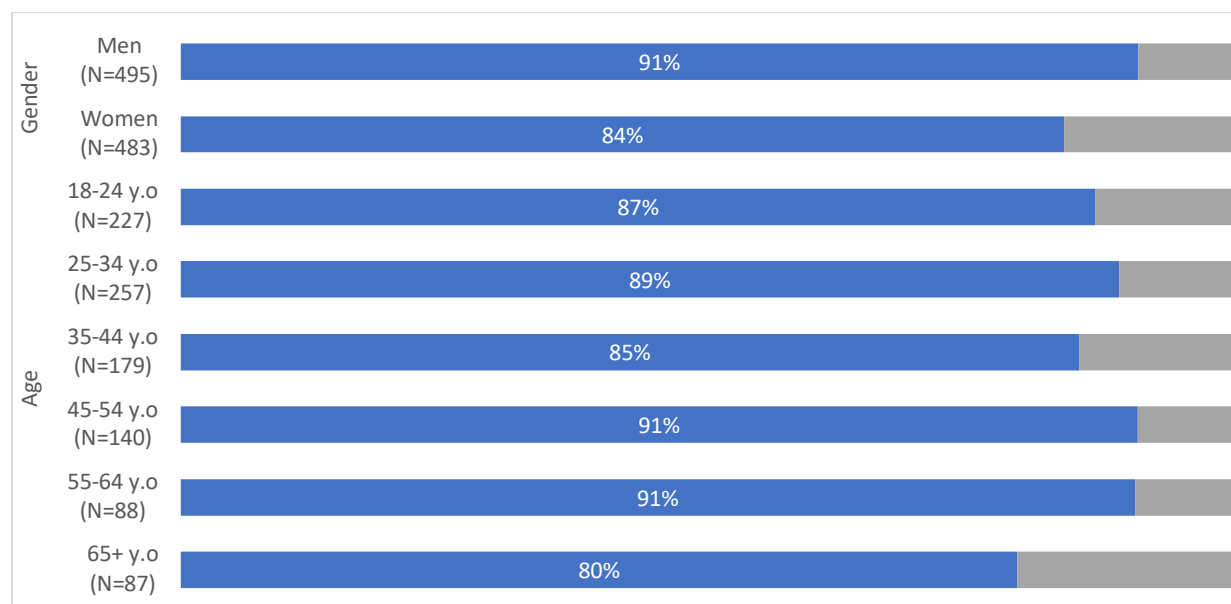
percent of the other minorities, 15% of the RAE communities, and 9% of Serbs, and 7% of Albanians, think women cannot be elected in high political decision-making positions the same as men.

Figure 15 Do women have the same legal rights as men to? – by ethnicity, showing only “yes” category



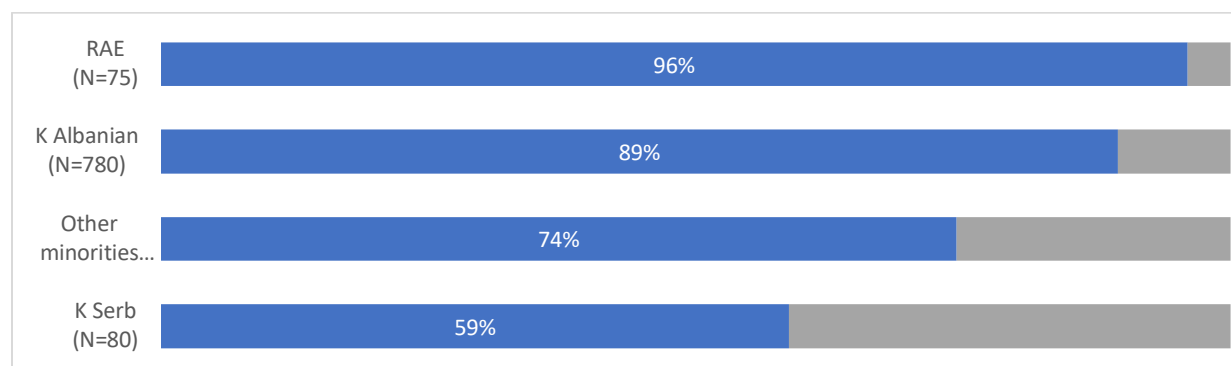
Most Kosovar citizens (87%) claim to know there is a law regarding violence against women and domestic violence in Kosovo. When compared by gender, more men (91%) know about legislation regarding violence against women and domestic violence than women (84%). Whereas compared by age, people aged 45-64 (91%) are more knowledgeable about legal stipulation regarding violence against women and/or domestic violence than younger or older groups. Specifically, about 89% of the 25-34 years old group, 87% of the 18-24 years old group, 85% of the 35-44 years old group, and 80% of the 65+ years old group claim to know that there is a law on either VAW or DV.

Figure 16 Do you know if there is any law for violence against women (VAW) and/or domestic violence (DV) in Kosovo? – by gender, showing only “yes” category



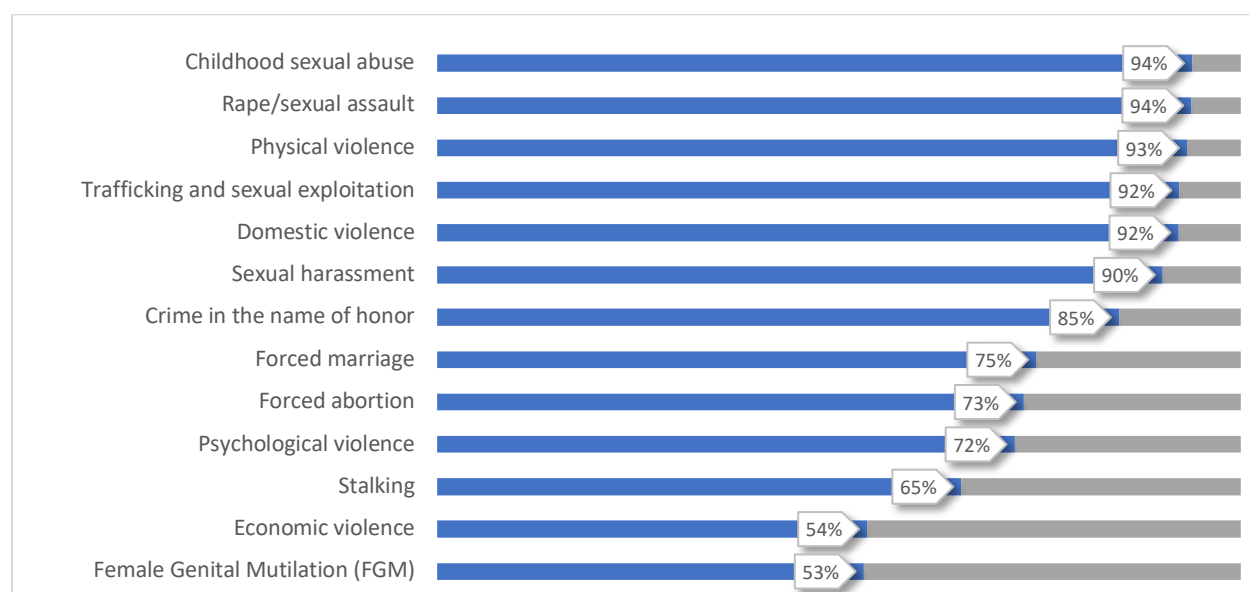
Based on ethnicity, the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities and Albanians (96% and 89% respectively) claim to know such legislation more than other minorities and Serbs (74% and 59% respectively).

Figure 17 Do you know if there is any law for violence against women (VAW) and/or domestic violence (DV) in Kosovo? – by ethnicity, showing only “yes” category



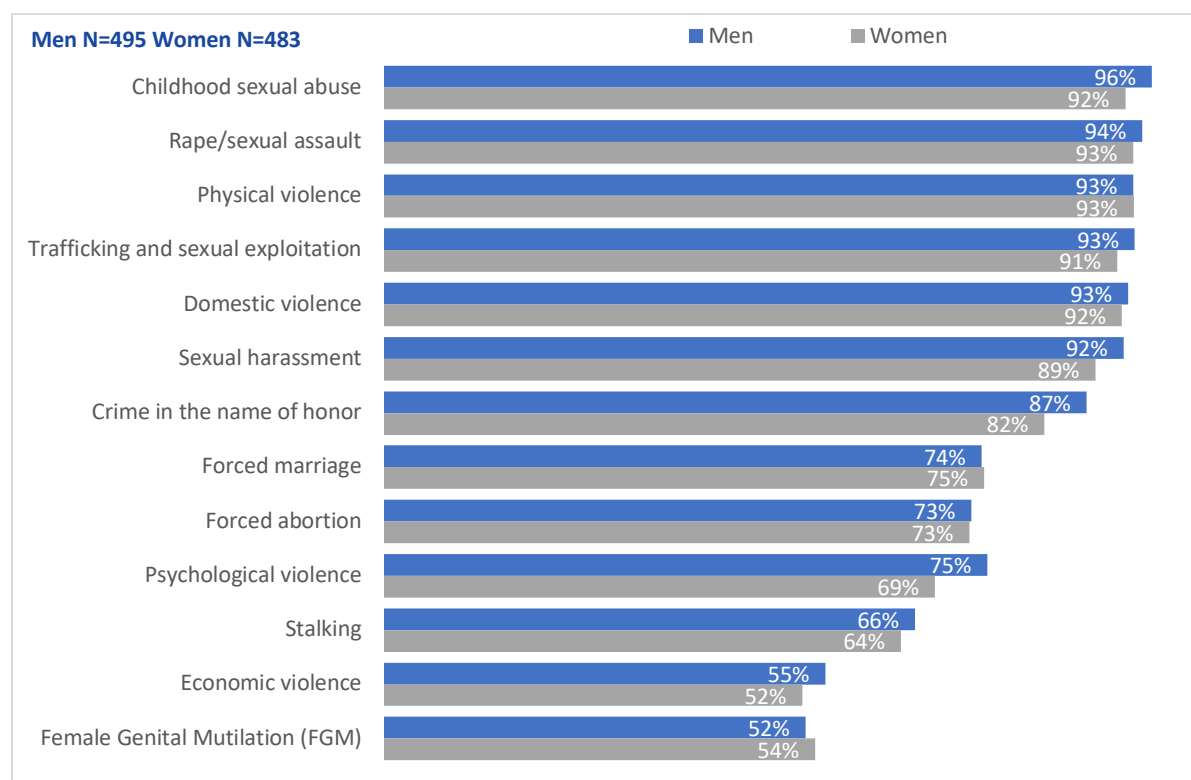
Regarding the punishable forms of violence against women and girls, most Kosovar citizens claim that child sexual abuse (94%), rape/sexual abuse (94%), physical violence (93%), trafficking and sexual exploitation (92%), domestic violence (92%), and sexual harassment (90%) are punishable by law. More than four in five Kosovar citizens (85%) believe that crimes in the name of honor are punishable by law. About three in four Kosovar citizens believe psychological abuse (72%), forced abortion (73%), and forced marriage (75%) are punishable by law. Less than two in three (65%) Kosovar citizens claim that stalking is punishable by law. Only about one in two Kosovar citizens though think that female genital mutilation (53%) and economic violence (54%) are punishable by law.

Figure 18 Which forms of VAWG are punishable by law in Kosovo? – overall, showing only “yes” category



There are few gender differences when it comes to the perception of men and women on what kinds of violent acts against women and girls are punishable. Somewhat slightly deeper differences rely on the fact that 5% more men (87%) than women (82%) think that crimes in the name of honor and 6% more men (75%) than women (69%) that psychological violence are punishable by law.

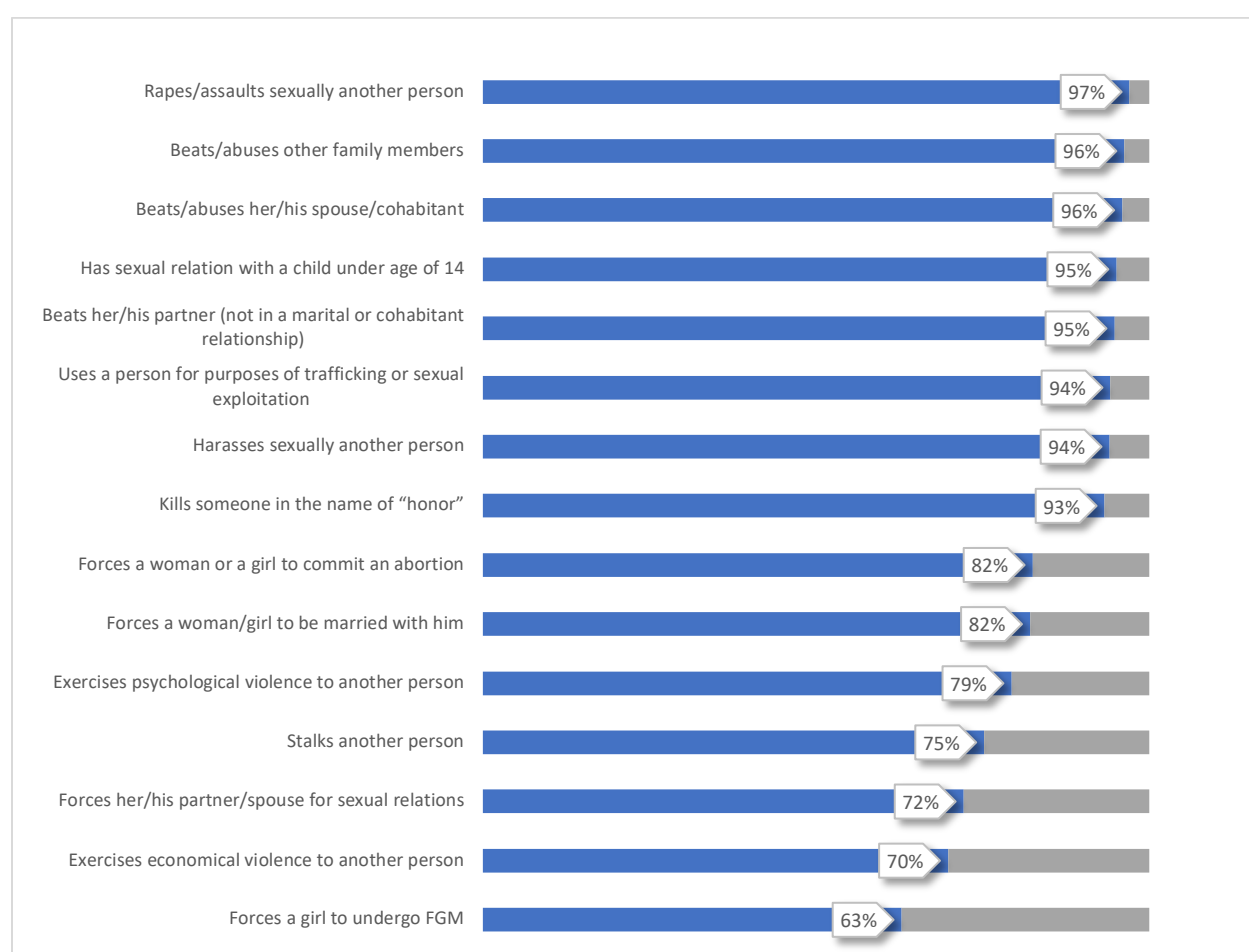
Figure 19 Which forms of VAWG are punishable by law in Kosovo? – by gender, showing only “yes” category



Most Kosovar citizens (93% and up) hold that if someone rapes someone (97%), beats other family members (96%), beats a partner in marriage, cohabiting (96%), or just dating (95%), has sexual relations with children under the age of 14 (95%), traffics or sexually exploits someone (94%), sexually harasses someone (94%), and kills someone in the name of 'honor' (93%) – would be punished.

Nevertheless, about one in 10 Kosovar citizens believe that if a man (or a woman) forces a woman or girl to abort (8%), get married to him (8%), or exerts psychological violence on someone (11%) would not get punished. Alarming, about one in four Kosovar citizens believe that if someone stalks another person (25%), forces his/her partner/spouse to have sexual relations (28%), or economically violates a partner (30%) would not get punished. About two in three Kosovar citizens believe that if someone forces a girl to undergo FGM (63%) would not get punished.

Figure 20 Would a person be punished if he/she: - overall, showing only “yes” category

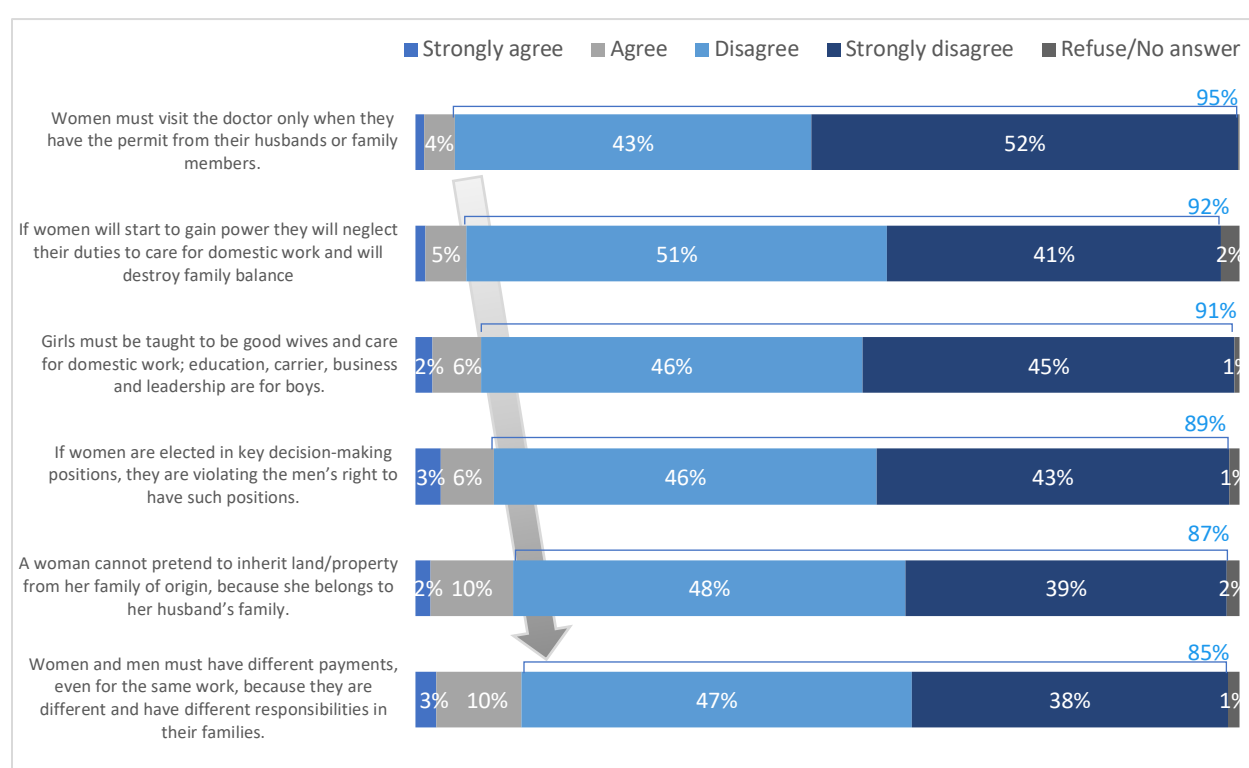


General Perception regarding Gender and Different Social Issues

Citizen perceptions regarding different social dynamics in a family or other private or public setting between men and women are telling of the current situation on equality and the way the road ahead should be paved to become a truly egalitarian society. The citizens were asked to tell us what they thought of a number of sentences regarding these issues.

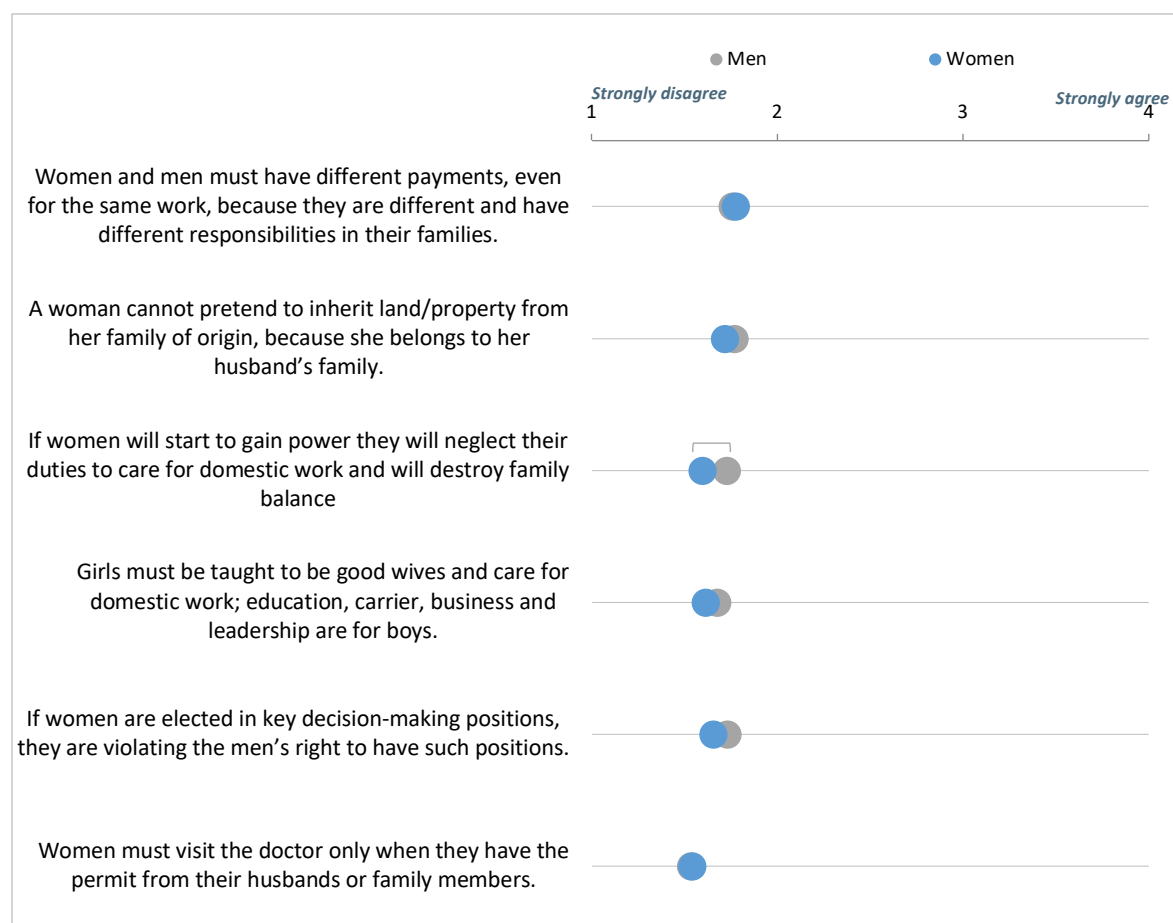
More than one in 10 (13%) Kosovar citizens agree/strongly agree that women and men must have different payments, even for the same work, because they are different and have different responsibilities in their families. A similar amount (12%) of Kosovar citizens agree/strongly agree that a woman cannot claim to inherit land/property from her family of origin because she belongs to her husband's family. Moreover, 9% of Kosovar citizens agree/strongly agree that if women are elected in key decision-making positions, they are violating the men's right to have such positions; 8% that girls must be taught to be good wives and care for domestic work; education, career, business and leadership are for boys; and 6% that if women start to gain power, they will neglect their duties to care for domestic work and will destroy family balance. While, 5% of Kosovar citizens agree/strongly agree that women must visit the doctor only when they have the permission from their husbands or family members.

Figure 21 What do you think about the following sentences?



Women and men seem to be in agreement regarding issues of remuneration, property inheritance, domestic work, careers, and so on. The majority disagreed on the preferential treatment of men over women, nonetheless. There's a slightly higher divide regarding women gaining power and neglecting domestic care duties which leads to destroying family balance where more men than women agree on the matter.

Figure 22 What do you think about the following sentences? – by gender



When comparing what different communities in Kosovo think of the dynamics between men and women in general, and as husbands and wives, in particular, the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian are the least tolerant to men having more power and rights than women in all aforementioned areas. Second come Serbs, third Albanians, and fourth the group of other minorities.

Figure 23 What do you think about the following sentences? – by ethnicity



General Perceptions regarding Gender-Based Violence

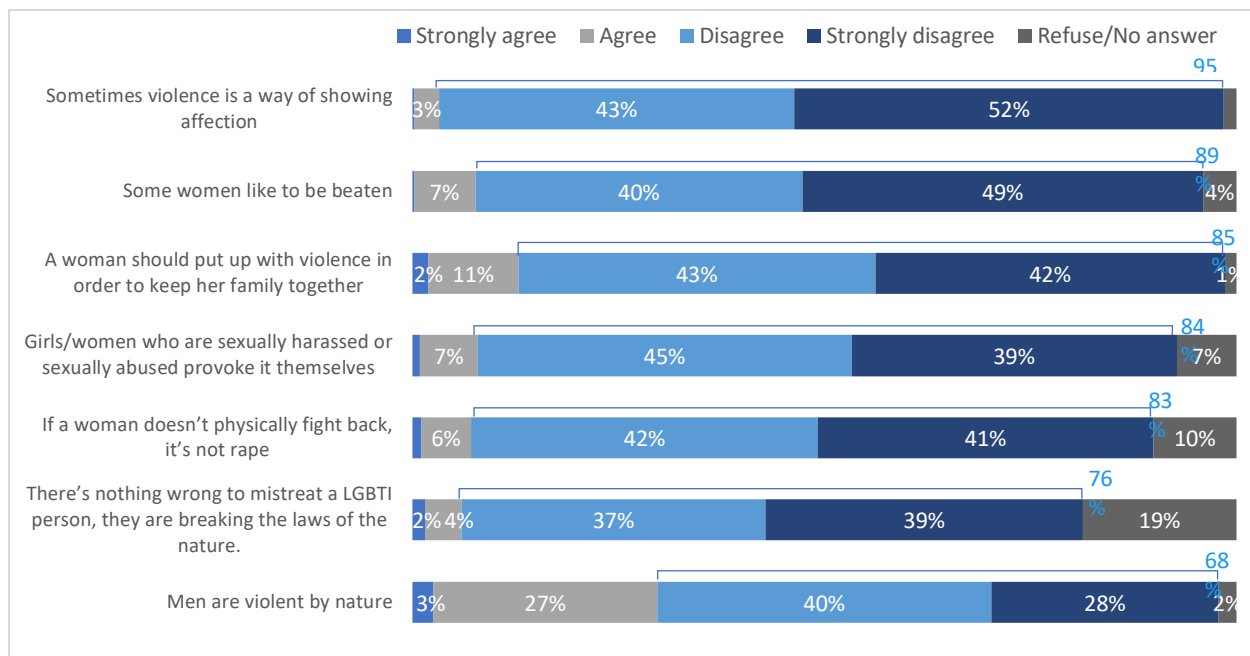
Opinions on gender-based violence in terms of what violent behavior citizens tolerate or condemn is of utter importance. Again, the citizens were asked to tell us what they thought of a number of sentences concerning GBV.

The most worrisome of these perceptions is that almost a third of Kosovar citizens agree/strongly agree that men are violent by nature (30%), and more than a tenth of Kosovar citizens agree/strongly agree that a woman should put up with violence in order to keep her family together (13%).

There are still almost one in 10 Kosovar citizens that think agree/strongly agree that girls/women who are sexually harassed or sexually abused provoke it themselves (8%) and that if a woman does not physically fight back, it is not rape. Additionally, they agree that some women like to be beaten (7%).

Six percent of Kosovar citizens agree/strongly agree that there's nothing wrong to mistreat a LGBTI person since they are breaking the laws of nature. Further, 3% of Kosovar citizens agree that sometimes violence is a way of showing affection.

Figure 24 What do you think about the following sentences? – overall



On a scale from 1 to 4 where 1 is strongly disagree and 4 is strongly agree, older generation have more negative views regarding perceptions of violence. Besides of the fact that men are violent by nature where the 55-64 years old group agreed the most, on other issues such as perception on rape, sexual abuse, mistreatment of the LGBTI, tolerance of violence for family's sake, and so on, the 65+ years old agreed the most. For most issues, the tolerance towards violence, mistreatment, and the women-obedient culture, increased with age. The one thing that stood out that younger generations do not necessarily have different views on the mistreatment of LGBTI compared to older ones.

Figure 25 What do you think about the following sentences? – by age, scale from 1 to 4 where 1 means “Strongly disagree” and 4 means “Strongly agree”



On a scale from 1 to 4 where 1 is strongly disagree and 4 is strongly agree, slightly more women (2.1) than men (2.0) agree that men are violent by nature. On the other hand, more men (1.7) than women (1.6) agree that there's nothing wrong to mistreat a LGBTI person since they are breaking the laws of nature and that girls/women who are sexually harassed or sexually abused provoke it themselves. Moreover, more men (1.6) than women (1.5) also agree that some women like to be beaten.

Figure 26 What do you think about the following sentences? – by gender, scale from 1 to 4 where 1 means “Strongly disagree” and 4 means “Strongly agree”



General Perceptions regarding Acceptable Behavior of Women and Men in the Home

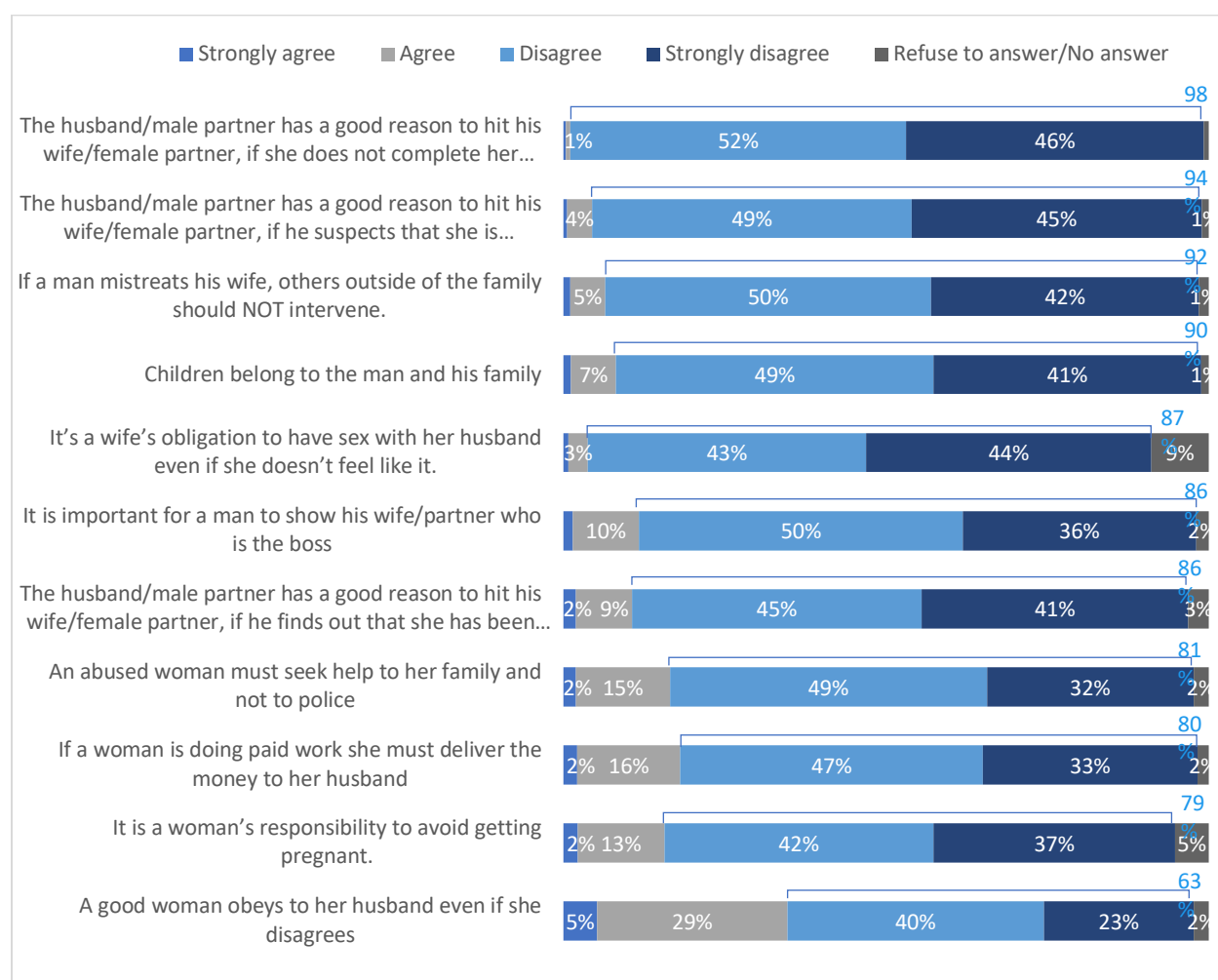
The dynamics between a man and woman in a family are indicators of a society's democratic standing. One percent of Kosovar citizens agree/strongly agree that the husband/male partner has a good reason to hit his wife/female partner, if she does not complete her household work to his satisfaction, 4% of them agree/strongly agree that it's a wife's obligation to have sex with her husband even if she doesn't feel like it, and 5% of them agree/strongly agree that that the husband/male partner has a good reason to hit his wife/female partner, if he suspects that she is unfaithful.

Moreover, 7% of Kosovar citizens agree/strongly agree if a man mistreats his wife, others outside of the family should not intervene, and 8% of them agree/strongly agree that children belong to the man and his family.

More than one in 10 Kosovar citizens agree/strongly agree that the husband/male partner has a good reason to hit his wife/female partner, if he finds out that she has been unfaithful (11%) and that it is important for a man to show his wife/partner who is the boss (12%).

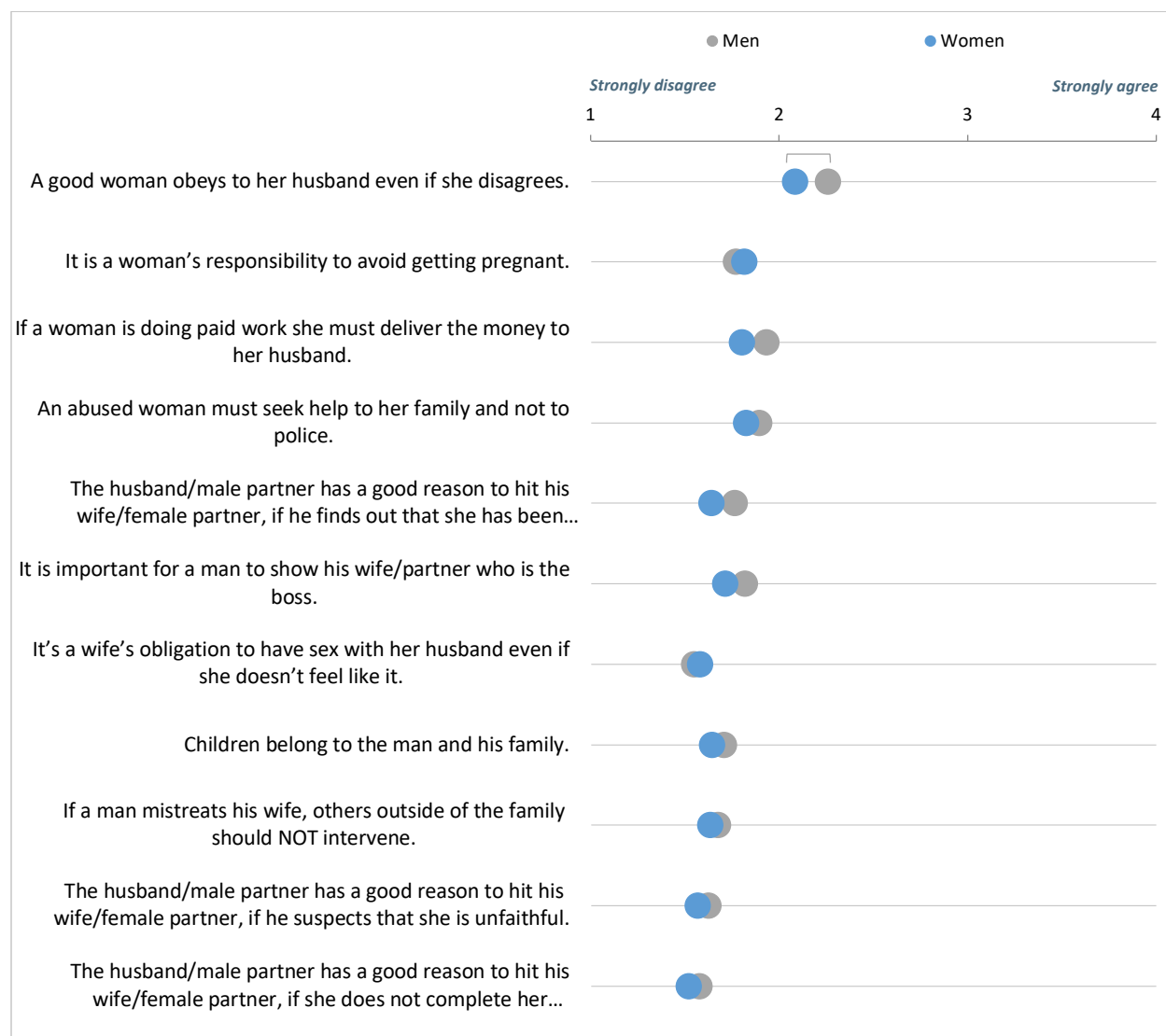
Regarding responsibility in sexual interaction, domestic quarrels, and family-related financial obligations, 15% of Kosovar citizens agree/strongly agree that it is a woman's responsibility to avoid getting pregnant, 17% of them agree/strongly agree that an abused woman must seek help to her family and not to police, and 18% of them agree that if a woman is doing paid work, she must deliver the money to her husband. Strikingly, a third of Kosovar citizens agree/strongly agree that a good woman obeys her husband even if she disagrees (34%).

Figure 27 What do you think about the following sentences? - overall



In all of the abovementioned statements, more men agree with the higher control and decision-making power of men over the family and women, than the surveyed women. In the occasion of wife's obligation in having sexual relations with the husband, slightly more women than men agree on this.

Figure 28 What do you think about the following sentences? – by gender



Moreover, when assessing the statements from an age group standpoint, the men dominance over women is more agreed upon by the older generations than the younger ones, on average. In general, there is a higher agreement that women shall obey their husbands even if they disagree by all age groups with the most support on this statement by people 65 and over.

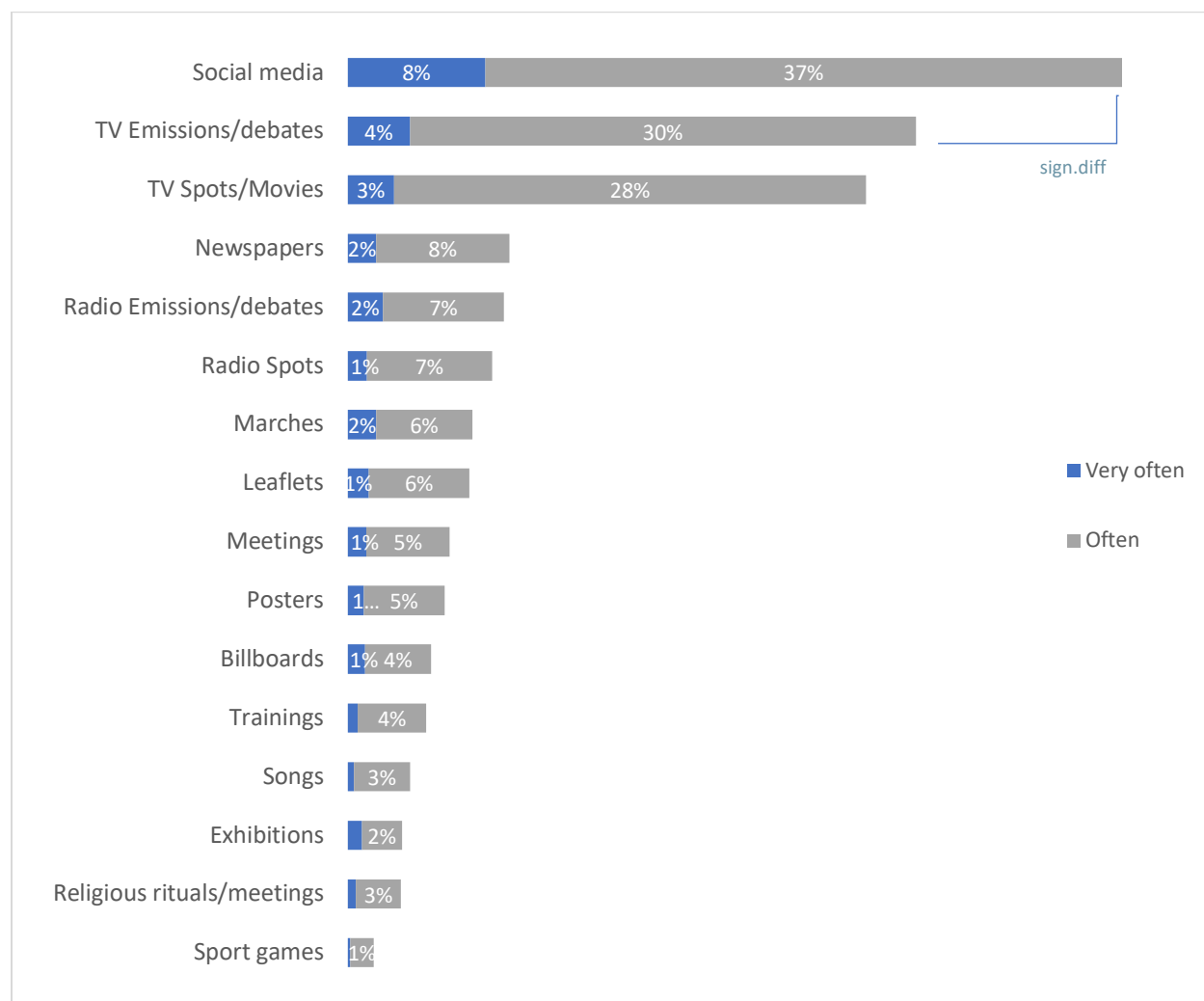
Figure 29 Figure 28 What do you think about the following sentences? – by age



Exposure to Violence Prevention Messages

Regarding exposure to messages related to the prevention of violence against women and girls, and/or the equality between men and women, boys and girls in the past 12 months, 46% of the Kosovar citizens claim to have heard such messages often/very often through social media, 34% through TV shows/debates, 32% through TV spots and/or movies, 10% through newspapers, 9% through radio shows/debates, 8% through radio spots, 8% through marches, 7% through leaflets, 6% through meetings and posters, and so on.

Figure 30 In the past (e.g., 12 months), have you heard about issues related to the prevention of violence against women and girls, and/or the equality between men and women, boys and girls through: - overall, showing only “very often” and “often”



Regarding discussions related to the prevention of violence against women and girls in the past 12 months, most have not talked to anyone about such topics besides close family members and friends. About one in four (25%) Kosovar citizens have discussed often/very often with their husband/wife/partner issues related to the prevention of violence against women and girls. About one in four (21%) Kosovar citizens have discussed often/very often with their female friends, 18% with their relative, 15% with their biological female children, 14% their male friends, 13% with their biological male children, 12% with their parents, 11% with their female colleagues, 8% with their male colleagues, and less than 4% with others issues related to the prevention of violence against women and girls.

Figure 31 In the past (e.g., 12 months), have you discussed issues related to the prevention of violence against women and girls, with: - part 1/2

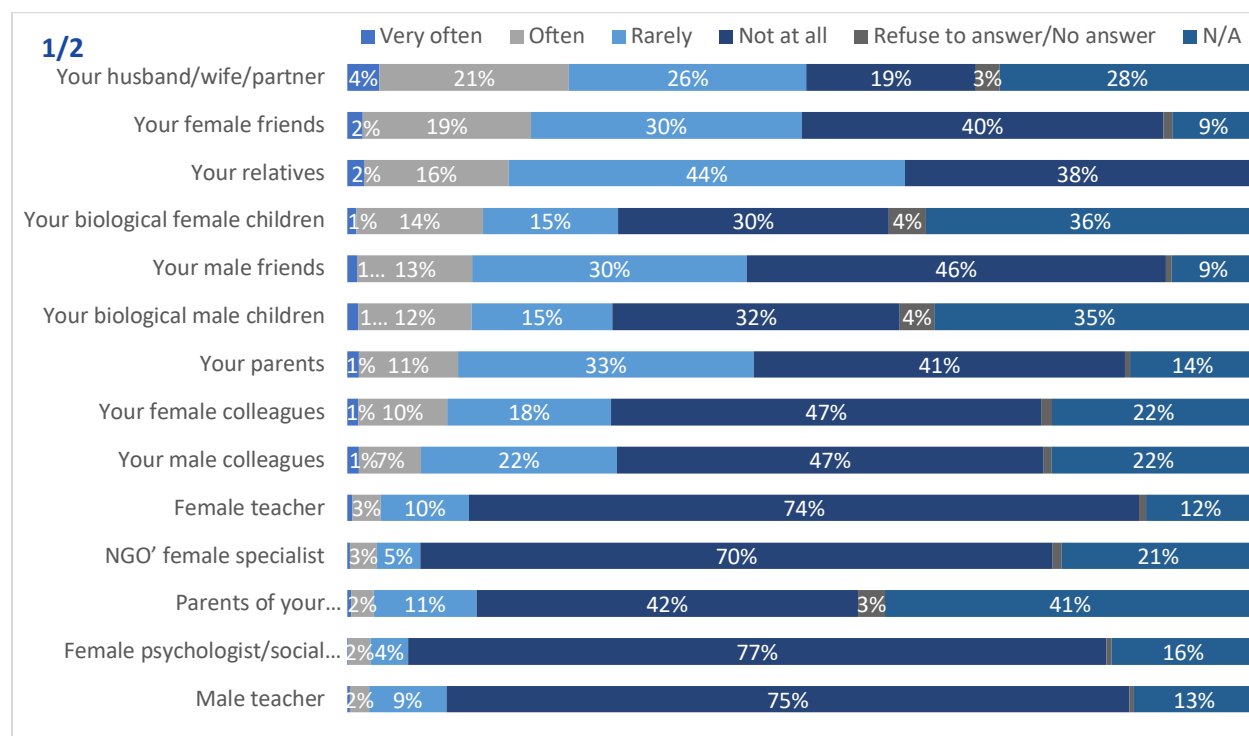
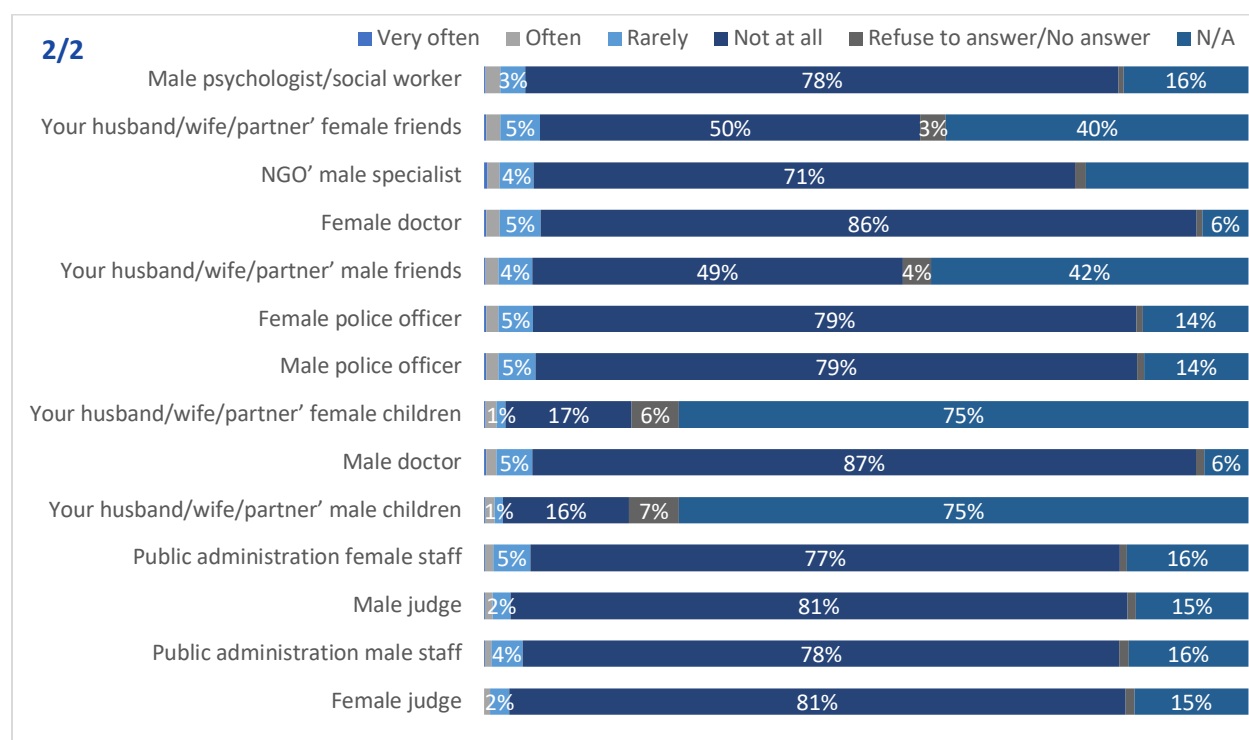
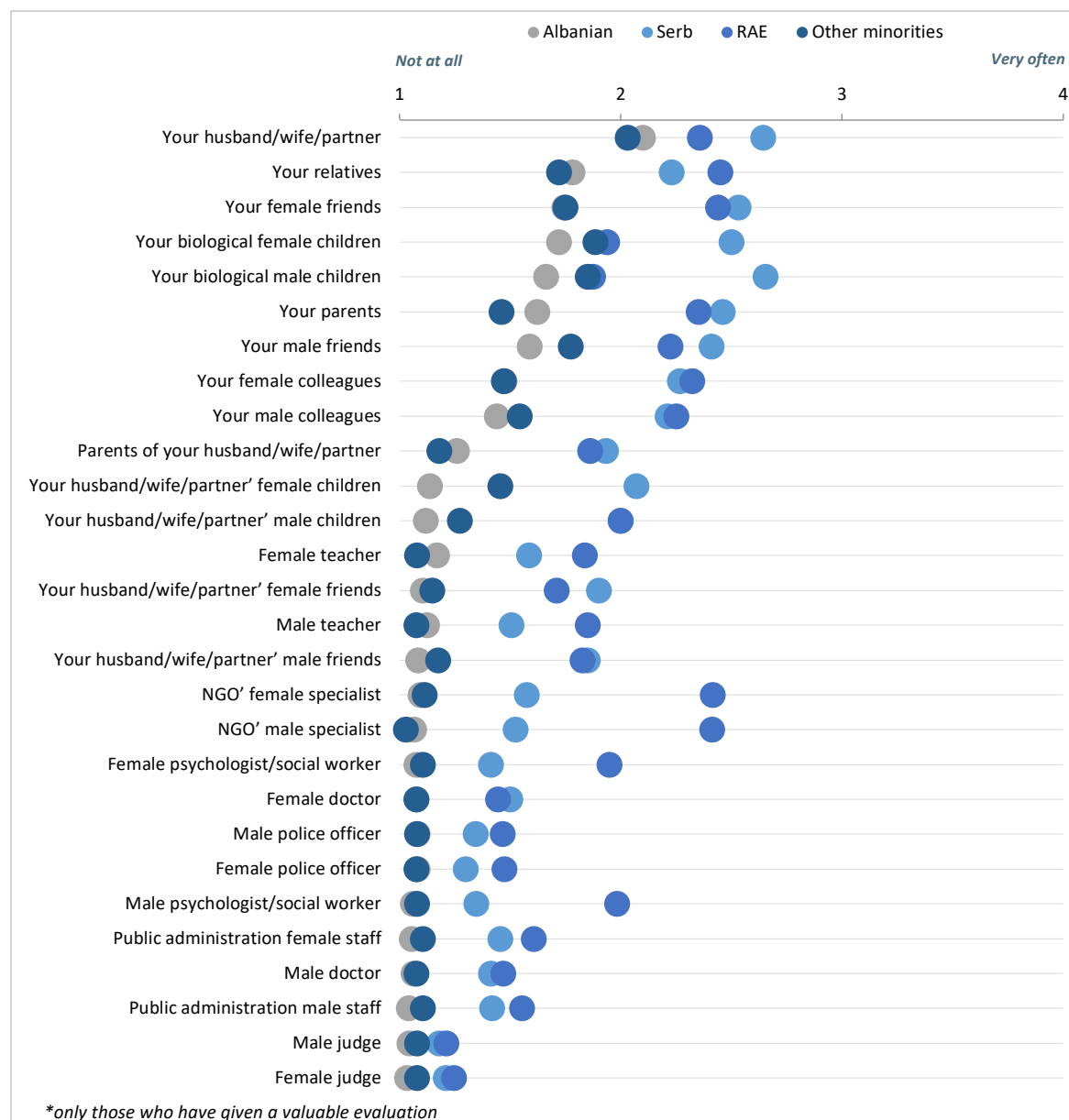


Figure 32 In the past (e.g., 12 months), have you discussed issues related to the prevention of violence against women and girls, with: - part 2/2



Considering the campaigns undertaken by local NGOs with international support, it is apparent that such campaigns have reached more marginalized communities in Kosovo. Evidently more Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptians have discussed issues related to the prevention of violence against women and girls with NGO female specialists and NGO male specialists, followed by Serbs, whereas Albanians and other minorities have not discussed such issues with them almost at all. A similar situation is for female and male colleagues. Serbs are the ones who most frequently discuss such issues with their partners and other family members, followed by Roma, Ashkali, Egyptians, and then Albanians and other minorities.

Figure 33 In the past (e.g., 12 months), have you discussed issues related to the prevention of violence against women and girls, with: - by ethnicity, scale from 1 to 4 where 1 means “Not at all” and 4 means “Very often”



Attitude Towards Changing/Improving Gender Equality and Violence Against Women & Domestic Violence Issues in the Future

When it comes to willingness of Kosovar citizens to take action in changing and/or improving gender equality and combating violence against women and domestic violence in the future, there were some issues with which most were more willing and prone to take action, especially regarding their own kids, relatives, and friends. Less citizens showed willingness to help combat stalking, or forced abortion, help migrant women, or of the Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian communities, and the LGBTQI+ community – which remain taboo topics in the society or which pertain to marginalized groups of people.

Specifically, about nine in 10 Kosovar citizens would protect their children from violence by calling the police (93%), request a protection order in case they would be subject to violence (92%), report a personal violent incident to the police (92%), support actions against child marriages (91%), would not marry their daughter(s) before the age of 18 (90%), request the punishment of the perpetrator (send them to prison) despite of the relation you might have with them (90%), report a violent incident happening to someone else to the police (89%), would not force their female partner/wife/daughter to an abortion (86%). About two in three citizens would not have any of their daughter(s) undergo Female Genital Mutilation (70%).²⁰

Unfortunately, about one in four Kosovar citizens would not leave an abusive relationship by seeking support from family/relatives (28%) or from service providers (27%).²¹ Likewise, a similar amount would force their partner/wife/husband to have sexual relation even if they do not want to (24%).

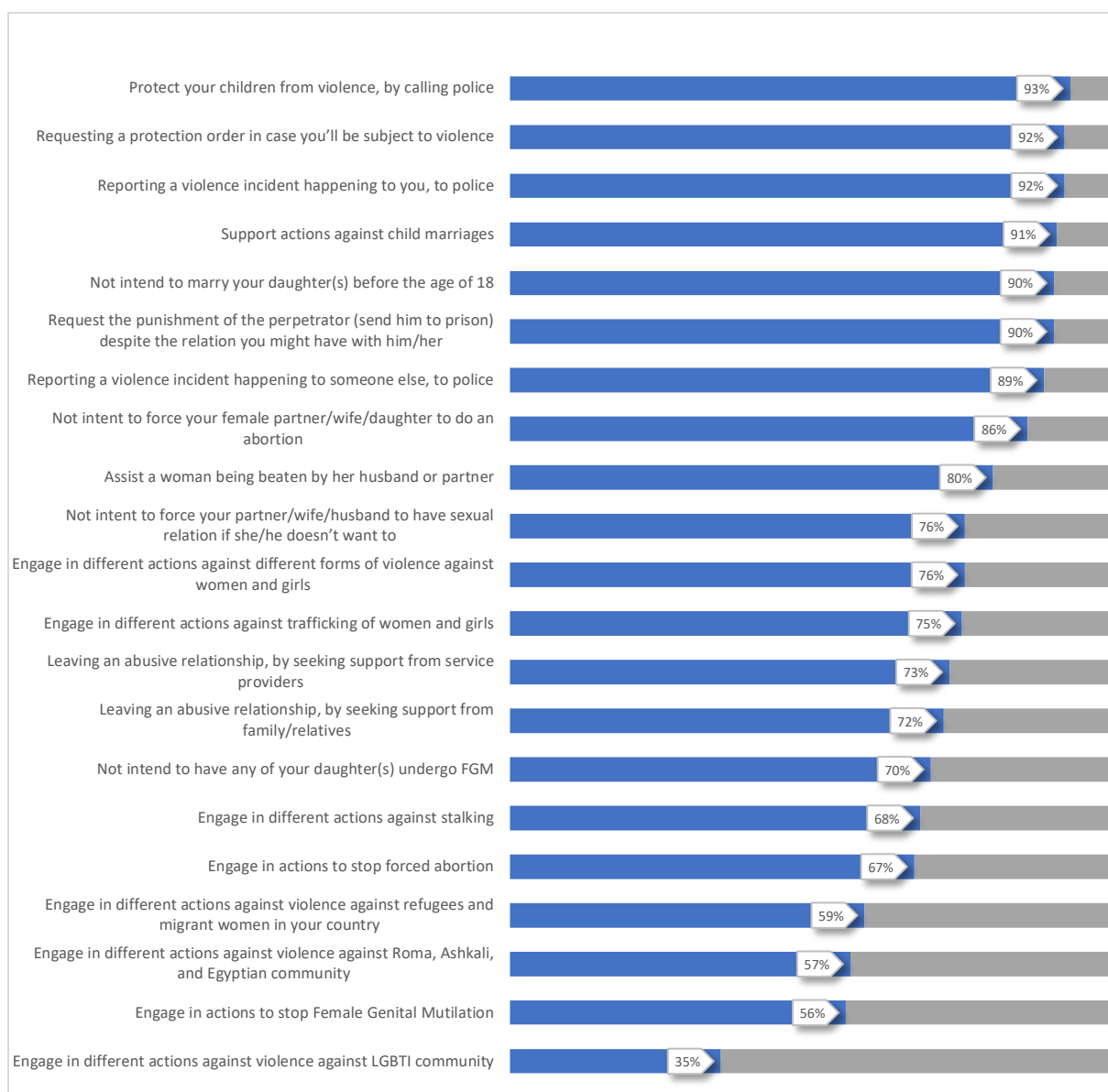
Whereas when it comes to helping others in unequal or violent situations, about one in five Kosovar citizens would not assist a woman being beaten by her husband or partner (20%), and about one in five would not engage in different actions against different forms of violence against women and girls (24%), or against trafficking of women and girls (25%). About one in three Kosovar citizens would not engage in different actions against stalking (32%), or to stop forced abortion (33%)

More than four in 10 Kosovar citizens would not engage in different actions against violence against refugees and migrant women in your country (41%), the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian community (43%), nor in actions to stop Female Genital Mutilation (44%). While, about two in three Kosovar citizens would not engage in different actions against violence against LGBTI community (65%)

²⁰ It shall be noted that FGM is not a prevalent problem in Kosovo and knowledge of it remains scarce.

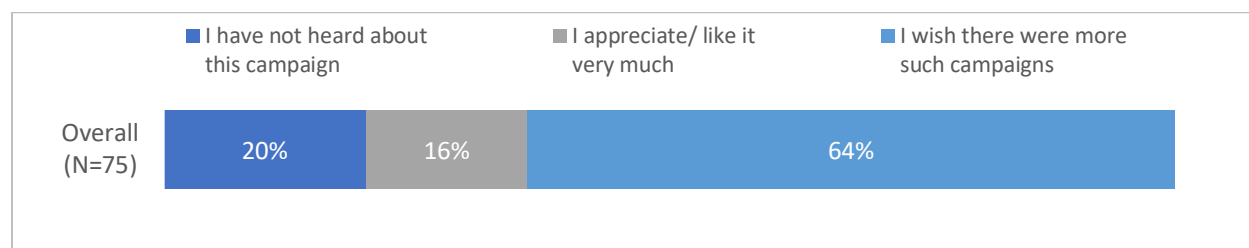
²¹ Only about 1% difference in gender, hence not portrayed in the report.

Figure 34 In the near future, would you be willing to: - overall, showing only “yes” category



The Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities (N=75) were asked whether they were aware of a door-to-door campaign which had recently been launched to prevent early marriages of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian girls and what they thought of it. About 64% of the Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian communities that had heard of it said they wish there were more such campaigns, 20% of them had not heard about the campaign, 16% said they appreciated the campaign very much. Moreover, the RAE communities were the only ones asked whether they thought early marriages should be banned, and the entire sample agreed they should.

Figure 35 A door-to-door campaign has recently been launched to prevent early marriages of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian girls. How do you evaluate this campaign? - asked only Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities



Summary

Gender equality and gender-based violence are multifaceted problems that require special attention. In Kosovo, there is a legal framework that secures gender equality on the basis of human rights and a number of international conventions; however, there is still a lot of work needed to ensure the implementation of such laws and more so to foster a gender-equal society. Kosovo is a patriarchal society in which men are regarded as the heads of households, more aggressive, and more powerful and women are viewed as caregivers within the household, gentle, and less powerful in household decision-making. With increased numbers of sexual harassment, violence, and domestic violence, the roles are further perpetuated which limit women in living in safe conditions.

This report briefly overviewed the main legal documents which stipulate gender equality and punishments related to gender-based violence as well as interpreted the results of a survey prepared for the Kosovar Gender Studies Center and supported by UN Women.

About one in four Kosovar citizens are not informed whether a law on gender equality in Kosovo exists. It shall be noted that a significant amount of them think that women do not have the same legal rights as men to decide on the number of children they want to have and also, they do not have the same legal age of marriage as men. More than one in 10 Kosovar citizens also believe that women do not have the same legal custody rights over a child after divorce.

Almost a tenth of Kosovars do not know that there is a law regarding violence against women and/or domestic violence in Kosovo. Regarding gender-based violence, the survey revealed some troubling results as about one in four citizens think that if someone stalks another person, forces his/her partner/spouse to have sexual relations, or economically violates a partner would not get punished.

Now when we add the perceptions of the citizens in the mix, it is highly disturbing that about one in three of Kosovars agree that men are violent by nature and that a good woman obeys her husband. More than one in 10 citizens expect a woman to tolerate violence in order to save the family.

One in 10 Kosovar citizens also agrees that women would be violating men's rights if they were to be elected in decision-making positions. The same amount still think that women belong to their husband's family and as such should not claim inheritance from the family in which she was born. The equivalent portion of Kosovars also agree that women shall earn less than men due to their different family responsibilities.

Almost one in five citizens further agree that women who work and earn wages must give their own money to their husbands.

Women are also expected to seek help to their family and not the police (17%) should they be abused by their husbands. The burden of using contraception falls on the woman since about 15% of the citizens believe it's her responsibility not to get pregnant.

Kosovar citizens showed readiness to engage in gender equality and combating violence against women and domestic violence issues in the future especially if those directly affected their children, acquaintances, and friends. Unfortunately, fewer citizens showed reluctance to help fight against stalking, or forced abortion, help migrant women, or of the Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian communities, and the LGBTI community. In general, older generation have more adverse opinions regarding perceptions of violence. However, when it comes to the LGBTI maltreatment, there is no age divide.

On a more positive note, the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities appreciated the door-to-door campaign to prevent early marriages of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian girls with two thirds of them having heard of it and wishing there were more such campaigns. All of the respondents from these communities were of the opinion that early marriages should be banned.

Recommendations

Given the results of the survey and focusing on most pressing issues, local organizations, UN Women, other partners, and the government should work with creating:

- ▶ **Awareness campaigns on the Kosovo legal framework** pertaining to gender-equality and gender-based violence. It would help that citizens of the majority communities and minority communities are all aware of the existence of such laws and how they can use those laws if needed. Break the information down, use different forms and channels of communications.
- ▶ **Awareness campaigns on the understanding of concepts and individual autonomies** regardless of gender or sexual orientation in terms of what consists of non-verbal or non-physical violence and on non-wanted sexual relations within a marriage.
- ▶ **Awareness campaigns on stopping the sexualization of women's' and girls' bodies** by providing materials that explain that men are not to have power over women's bodies regardless of the clothes they wear or the lifestyle they lead.
- ▶ **Sex education campaigns to teach about sexuality and consent** among other things in schools and at workplaces for all children, youngsters, and adults in an inclusive manner that is informational and compassionate with clear language.
- ▶ **Victim support campaigns** directed to key professionals such as medical doctors, social workers, psychologists, police officers, lawyers, prosecutors, and judges to make sure they remain gender unbiased and focus on providing support and reassurance to the victims by removing themselves from potential victim blaming.

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