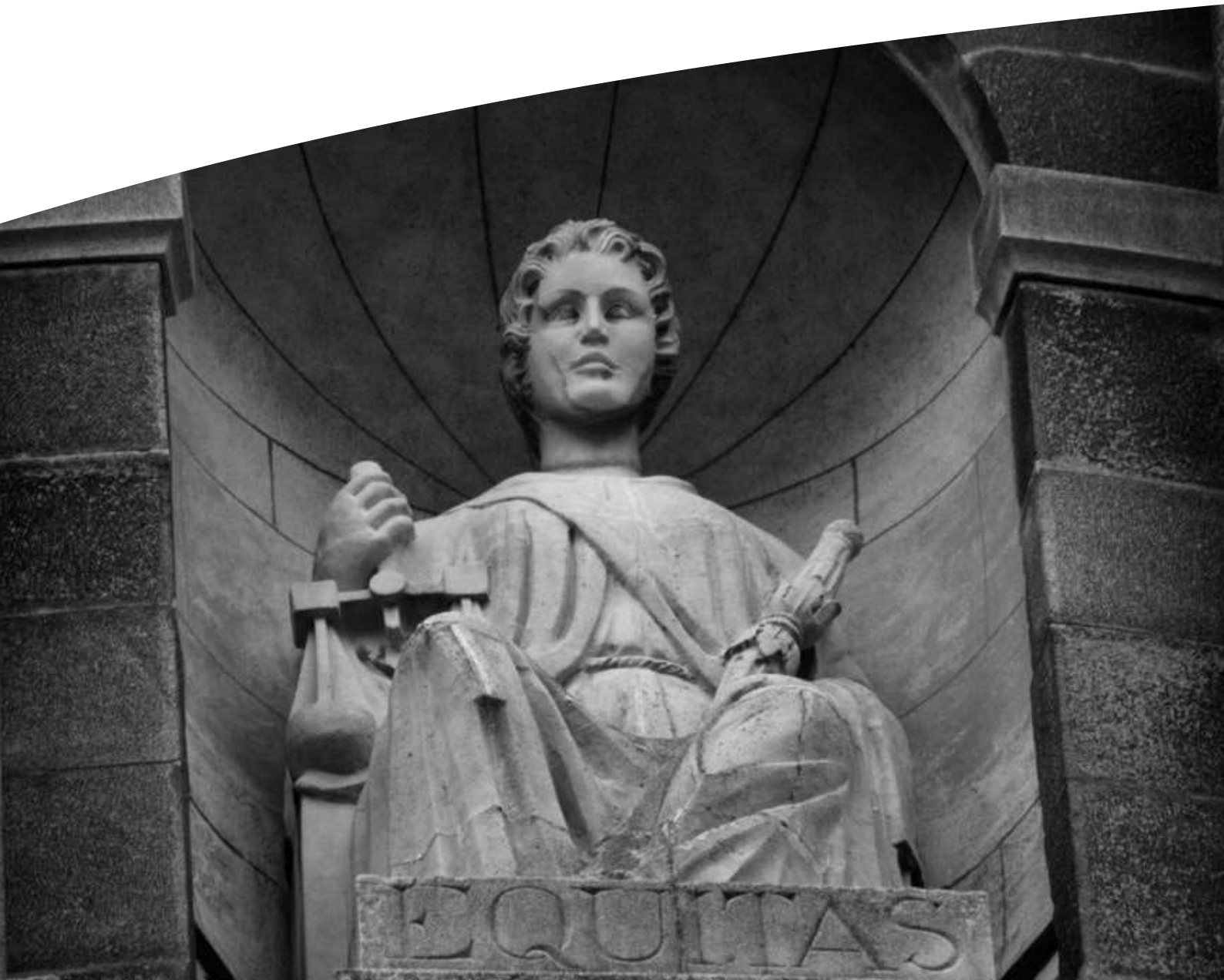

Women in decision making in public institutions in Kosovo

RESEARCH PAPER



Women in decision making in public institutions in Kosovo

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ACRONYMS

USAID - UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT
ASK - AGENCY OF STATISTICS OF KOSOVO
AGE - AGENCY FOR GENDER EQUALITY
ATRC - ADVOCACY TRAINING AND RESOURCE CENTER
KWN - KOSOVO WOMEN'S NETWORK
ERAC - EQUAL RIGHTS FOR ALL COALITION
KCGS - KOSOVO CENTER FOR GENDER STUDIES
BPRG - BALKAN POLICY RESEARCH GROUP
LGE - LAW ON GENDER EQUALITY
MCC - MILLENIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION
MGO - MUNICIPAL GENDER OFFICER
KIPRED - KOSOVO INSTITUTE FOR POLICY, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
MAPL - MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION
MCYS - MINISTRY OF CULTURE, YOUTH AND SPORTS
MRD - MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
MPA - MINISTRY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
MAFRD - MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
MEI - MINISTRY OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION
MRD - MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
MIE - MINISTRY OF INNOVATION AND ENTERPRENEURSHIP
MD - MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MIA - MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS
MSF - MINISTRY OF SECURITY FORCES
MOJ - MINISTRY OF JUSTICE
MFA - MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
MCR - MINISTRY OF COMMUNITIES AND RETURNS
MED - MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
MF - MINISTRY OF FINANCES
MT - MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT
MH - MINISTRY OF HEALTH
MTI - MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY
MESP - MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND SPATIAL PLANING
MPA - MINISTRY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

INTRODUCTION

Gender equality in public sphere remains a challenge for many countries across the world. This is because women are lagging behind men especially in holding leadership positions in both public and private sector. The degree of challenge varies across countries and as a society undergoing transition, these challenges are more critical for Kosovo society.

The report is a direct result of the conversations we had through three focus groups with 22 women who work in public institutions in decision-making positions in Kosovo. Therefore, this report represents their voices on bringing forward the challenges women face in attaining leadership position in public institutions. These challenges are mainly of cultural, political and legal nature. What we heard throughout these conversations is that while there has been some improvement in the last 10 years, in general women do not feel equal in Kosovo society. They are underrepresented in all spheres of public life and are not given a chance in leadership positions.

The first part of this report will provide information about trends in women participation between 2008 to 2018. These trends show that in general women continue to be underrepresented in public institutions, with some slight improvements over the years. Moreover, acknowledging the information that data provide to us, we move beyond numbers to identifying challenges and opportunities addressed by women working in public institutions. We also bring forward success stories of women working in leadership positions to show that women can be leaders in public institutions.

The challenges and opportunities for women in central and local governments are the same. However, this report brings forward two case studies from municipalities in Kamenica and Gillogoc as two municipalities with best gender parity in leadership positions. The report includes a discussion of key findings and recommendations provided by focus groups. However, the report doesn't end here. The last section of this reports includes practices from two countries who are world leaders in the field of gender equality and gender parity. These case studies are brief because we focused on practices Kosovo can learn from in addressing some of the main challenges identified by our focus groups.

The last part of the report includes a discussion on what Kosovo can learn from the best practices of these countries and draw practical examples for Kosovo public institutions.

1. METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

This report combines qualitative and quantitative research methods, through: collection and review of documentary data such as reports and publications on gender representation in leadership positions in Kosovo and focus groups and semi-structured interviews with relevant institutions; and analyses of the statistical data collected directly from public institutions.

We have held three focus groups with representatives of central and local institutions, particularly officials serving in decision making positions. The aim of these focus groups was to gather primary data about the current representation of women in leadership positions in Kosovo, the challenges and opportunities as well brainstorm on ideas on what needs to be done to improve the women representation in decision making positions.

In addition to the key findings and recommendations from the focus groups, we have looked at the best practices in the leading countries in gender equality with a focus in the gender parity in leadership roles. This part of the research aims to provide an outlook on actions other countries have taken to advance gender equality.

In addition, we have collected data trying to analyze trends in women participation since 2008-2018. Open gender disaggregated data are not available online or in any easily accessible for researchers. Therefore, substantial amount of time was spending in collecting the data which were provided by the Ministry of Public Administration (MPA), Ministry of Local Government Administration (MLGA), Agency for Gender Equality (AGE) and respective Municipalities.

For this report, women in decision-making positions means women appointed in political leadership and women employed in decision-making positions in civil service such as: Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Secretary Permanent, Chief Executive, Heads of Departments/Divisions etc. Although we will refer to findings of other reports on women representation of women in central and local assemblies and Presidency, this report has collected data only on women representation on the following institutions: Central Government including Ministries and Local Governments/Municipalities.

The key findings and recommendations from all the primary and secondary data are compiled in the discussion section of the report. Based on the discussion of findings we draw on the overall recommendations considering the recommendations provided by the focus groups as well as the best practices found in the leading countries.

2. ANALYSING POST INDEPENDENCE TRENDS 2008-2018

Fair representation and participation of women and men in public life is critical for gender equality. An equal representation improves the i) democracy legitimacy by giving an opportunity to women to participate in public affairs, ii) fairness by making fair policy decisions that take into account women needs, iii) transparency by being open and taking input from women when conducting policy decisions and iv) inclusive policy outcomes by taking everyone's needs into account including women.

However, gender equality in Kosovo, particularly in decision-making positions remains a challenge. Women mark the most underemployed group in the society with only 12.7 percent of women are employed compared with 46.6 percent of men, amounting to potential economic losses of around 28 percent of gross central income—the highest among the countries of the Western Balkans¹. This shows that women in Kosovo are underemployed and as result, the losses in the gross income are the highest in the region.

Women in Kosovo are treated differently than man in employment and economy:

“There is a persistent gender pay gap in Kosovo and less than 10 per cent of businesses are owned or led by women. Insufficient access to credit or loans impedes the growth of businesses led or owned by women: this is partly a result of the lack of property owned by women. Although men and women have equal property rights under law, women reportedly often forfeit their inheritance in favor of their brothers to protect perceived family interests². In 2017, women owned only 20 percent of property and land³”.

The patriarchal culture on gender roles in Kosovo society continues to give men a dominance role in the family and public life. Unfortunately, women are often mistreated and stigmatized even when they are victims. About 46 per cent of women reported having suffered domestic violence at least once while many women (about 20,000) that were sexually assaulted during the 1998-1999 war continue to remain stigmatized, shamed and silenced by traditional views on this issue⁴. This culture has left women without the necessary support and confidence it takes to take on a greater role in society.

The lack of women's empowerment and discrimination in various sectors as mentioned here, are a serious obstacle to women reaching decision making positions. Kosovo institutions took several actions on enacting a comprehensive legal framework on gender equality. For example, the article 6.8 of the Law No. 05/L -020 on Gender Equality specifically states that “equal gender representation in all legislative, executive and judiciary bodies and other

¹ Cuberes, D., and M. Teignier. 2015. “How Costly Are Gender Gaps? Estimates for the Balkans and Turkey.” Policy Research Working Paper 7319. World Bank, Washington, DC.

² UNICEF, Analyses of the situation of children and women in Kosovo (UNSCR 1244), 2017. https://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/Raporti_unicef_anglisht_web.pdf

³ USAID, Property Rights Program, Midterm National Survey on Property Rights in Kosovo, 2017

⁴ Ibid.

public institutions is achieved when ensured a minimum representation of fifty percent (50%) for each gender, including their governing and decision-making bodies”⁵. As such, women in Kosovo should represent 50% of the workforce in all branches of the Kosovo government.

Despite this affirmative action, women remain underrepresented in decision-making positions at the government level. According to a report from Kosovar Gender Studies Centre, women representation in senior decision-making positions in ministries has declined over years ranging from 6.7% in 2014, 5.2% in 2015 and 4.9% in 2016⁶. Moreover, a recent study of the Balkans Research Policy Group indicates that women’s representation in senior decision-making positions in 2017 was 9.8% and in year 2018 is 11.9%. Also, the report indicated that the increase of number of women holding senior decision-making positions in Government in the last seven years is inconsequential considering that the current Government has created extra ministries, but with no seized opportunities for more inclusion of women⁷. Therefore, although the size of the government in Kosovo keeps increasing, a similar increase is not reflected in the number of women attaining decision-making positions.

In 2011, Kosovo Assembly appointed the first women president making Kosovo one of first countries in the region to entrust the presidential duties to a woman. During this time, the number of women involved in advisory positions was equal to men. However, currently the Kosovo Presidency has no women appointed in senior decision-making positions or as advisors to the President⁸. This shows that women in political leadership positions trust other women to take on decision-making positions. However, the situation shifts when man acquire those positions since they prefer to assign man on positions that deal with important decisions.

A relatively similar picture is presented in local governments/municipalities. Reports suggest that the total number of women representations in senior decision-making positions in municipalities in 2014 was 4.4%, in 2015 was 10.1 % and 11.4% in 2016. In general women continue to remain below the 50% threshold of quota representation and decision-making processes in local level also. Despite the quota of 30 percent representation for women in local assemblies under Law on General Elections in Kosovo⁹ that has for the most part been applied; on the appointed local government positions, women continue to remain well below

⁵ Law No. 05/L -020 on Gender Equality in Kosovo, article 6.8

⁶ Kosovar Gender Studies Centre, Women in Decision-Making Positions in Public Sector and Political Parties, May 2017

⁷ Balkan Policy Research Group “Women in Politics: Gender (In)Equality in Politics and Decision-making, February 2019

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Law on General Elections in Kosovo provides a gender quota of 30% be introduced in Law on General Elections in Kosovo that reserves also 30% of the seats for women in local and central parliaments. However, this Law is conflicting with the Law on Gender Equality that requires 50% equal representation of all genders in Kosovo.

this threshold of 50% representation as required under Law on Gender Equality¹⁰. Therefore, the provisions of the LGE are currently not being implemented in Kosovo.

Reports suggest that women feel they are not given opportunities to take leaderships or decision making roles due to their gender. A report from Agency for Gender Equality conducted a survey with women in 2014 and has concluded that one of the main reason women are not offered equal opportunities in decision making roles in central and local institutions is the belief that men are better leaders and that women have no political support. In addition, 30% of surveyed women felt that gender was the reason for having fewer possibilities for promotion. In addition, (54%) think that women are not given the same possibilities as men are given for a promotion, while 46% consider that possibilities are the same regardless from the gender¹¹. Therefore, a higher number of respondents felt that women are not promoted because of their gender.

In addition, women are not supported by political parties. A recent report from Kosovo Centre for Gender Studies in 2018, suggests that “an analysis of election campaigns at local and central level testify to the limited space and attention given to women. Consequently, most leadership positions at both central and local level are held by men”¹². As result, there was a very low number, of women (6 candidates) running for mayoral position and none of them was elected in the mayoral position. The first women to be elected as a Mayor in Kosovo was in year 2013 when Mimoza Kusari-Lila won the local elections in Gjakova Municipality. Also, it shall be noted the leadership of political parties are dominated by men leaders, out of 56 registered political parties in Kosovo, only 3 are led by women¹³. This means less than 2% of political party leaders are women.

Research also indicates, that the interest on political issues among Youngers and especially young women in Kosovo is declining. Young people account for about 50% of the entire population and only about 18% are very interested in political issues. A breakdown on gender shows that young women are less interested than young man in political issues with 16.1% being ‘very interested’ in politics as compared to 18.7% of men¹⁴. This shows that young women are less interested in politics and this may be an indicator of the future trends of women in decision-making positions in public sector.

¹⁰ National Democratic Institute (NDI) (2015), Kosovo: Overcoming Barriers to Women’s Political Participation. <https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/Gender-Assesment-report-eng.pdf>

¹¹ Agency for Gender Equality (2014), Research report: Participation, the role and position of women in central and local institutions as well political parties in Kosovo, Pristina 2014

¹² Kosovar Gender Studies Centre, Publication “Women in Politics and Governance: The Perceptions of Youth, April 2018

¹³ Office for Political Parties Registration and Certification, Report “Registry of Political Party in Kosovo” 28.12.2018

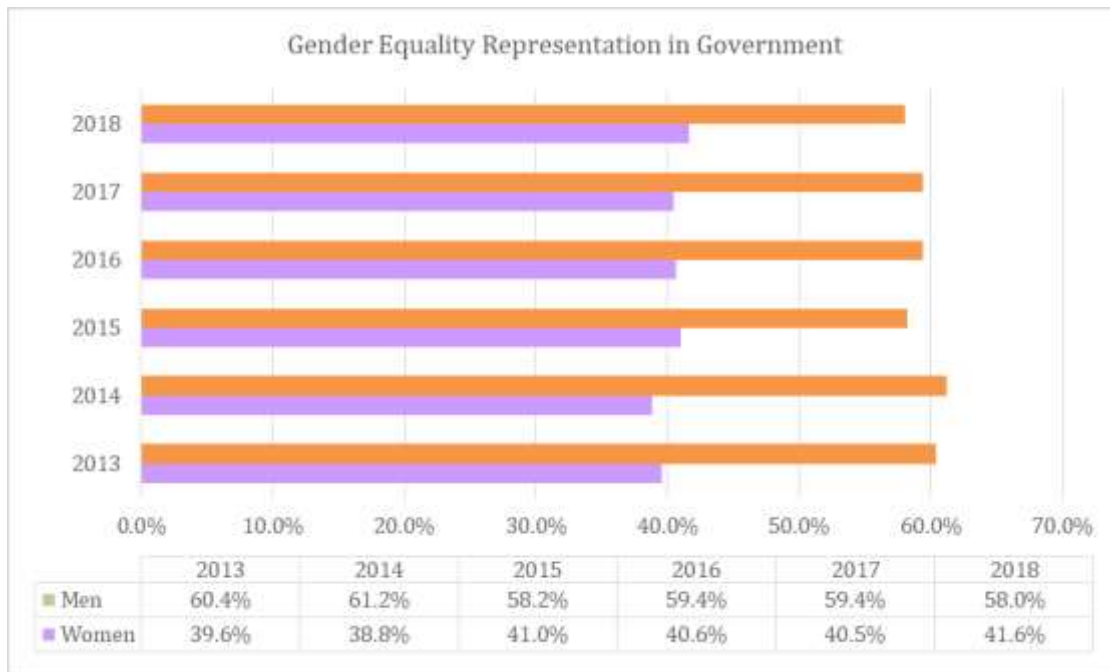
¹⁴ Ibid, p. 28

2.1 Current Trends-Central Level

To build on the findings of the above-mentioned reports and add the data for the years 2017, 2018, and 2019, we have relied primarily on the data provided by MPA, MLGA and municipalities. There is lack of open data on gender equality in Kosovo government. We had to contact several Ministries, several times to receive access to the data. In addition to these data we also used other data from already published relevant reports and incorporated them into this section as necessary.

The statistical reports show that from 11,392 employees in civil service in public institutions at central level in year 2018, only 4,934 were women, or 43.3%¹⁵. In year 2017 the percentage of women was 43%.

Also, when analyzing the general trends in gender equality representation in Government and its ministries (civil service), over the years there are no major improvement, with constant remaining below 50% representation. The latest reported representation of women in the government institutions is at 41.6%. Whereas, in year 2017 the percentage of women was 40.5%.

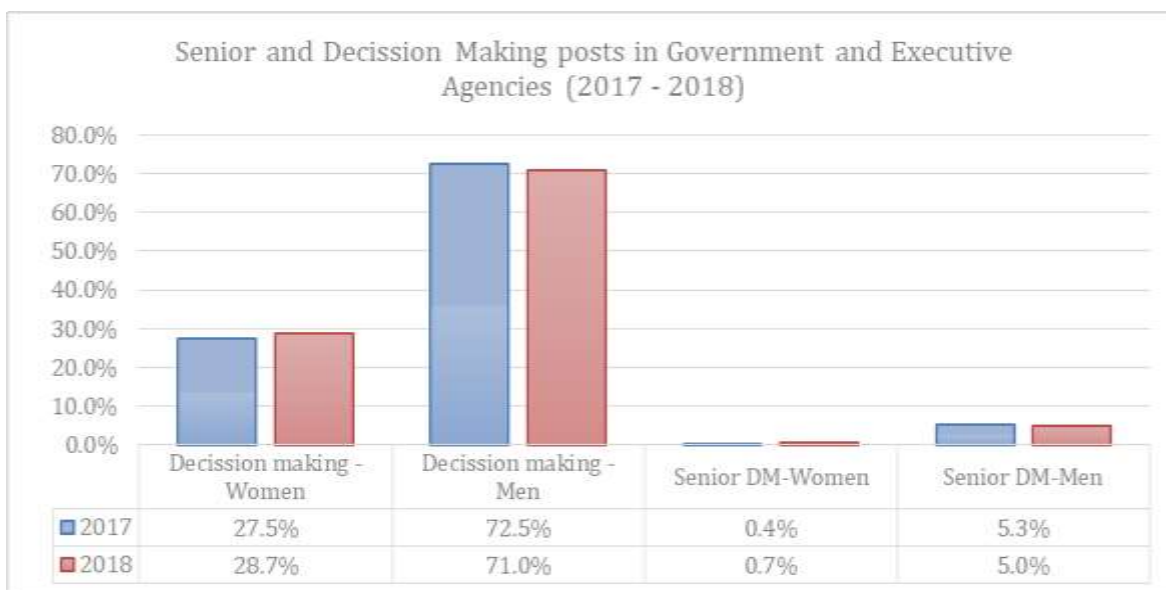


Graph 1: Gender Equality representation in Government 2013-2018¹⁶

¹⁵ MAP statistical data of 2018 does not include reports from: National Assembly of Kosovo; Election Commission; Ombudsperson; University of Pristina; Constitutional Court; Kosovo Unit for Financial Intelligence and Energy Regulatory Office

¹⁶ Year 2017 includes data for civil staff of National Assembly, whereas in 2018 such data are not reflected.

Importantly, in government decision making positions in Ministries and Executive Agencies, total employees in civil service in year 2018 were 1,421 from which only 28.7% were women. A comparison with the previous year 2017 shows that women working in civil service in decision making positions has increased with only 1.2%¹⁷. Whereas, in senior decision-making positions (posts of Secretary Permanent; Chief Executive and Executive Director) the representation of women is very low, in 2018 (0.7%) and in 2017 (0.4%).



Graph 2: Gender equality in senior and decision-making civil service posts in Government and Executive Agencies

It is important to mention that data provided by MAP does not include the political posts in what is reported above. Considering that such data is very difficult to obtain and collect¹⁸, for this report we have relied on statistical reports of existing published reports of KGCS and BPRG. Thus, findings from these reports indicate that percentage of women who held senior decision making positions¹⁹ in central government in 2017 was 8.3% whereas in 2018 was 11,9%²⁰.

The situation of women’s representation in Ministerial level is very unsatisfactory. In the current government, out of 21 Ministries, women hold only 2 ministerial positions. Minister Dhurata Hoxha leads the Ministry of European Integrations (MEI) and the recently appointed Minister Dijana Zhivic leads the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development (MAFRD).

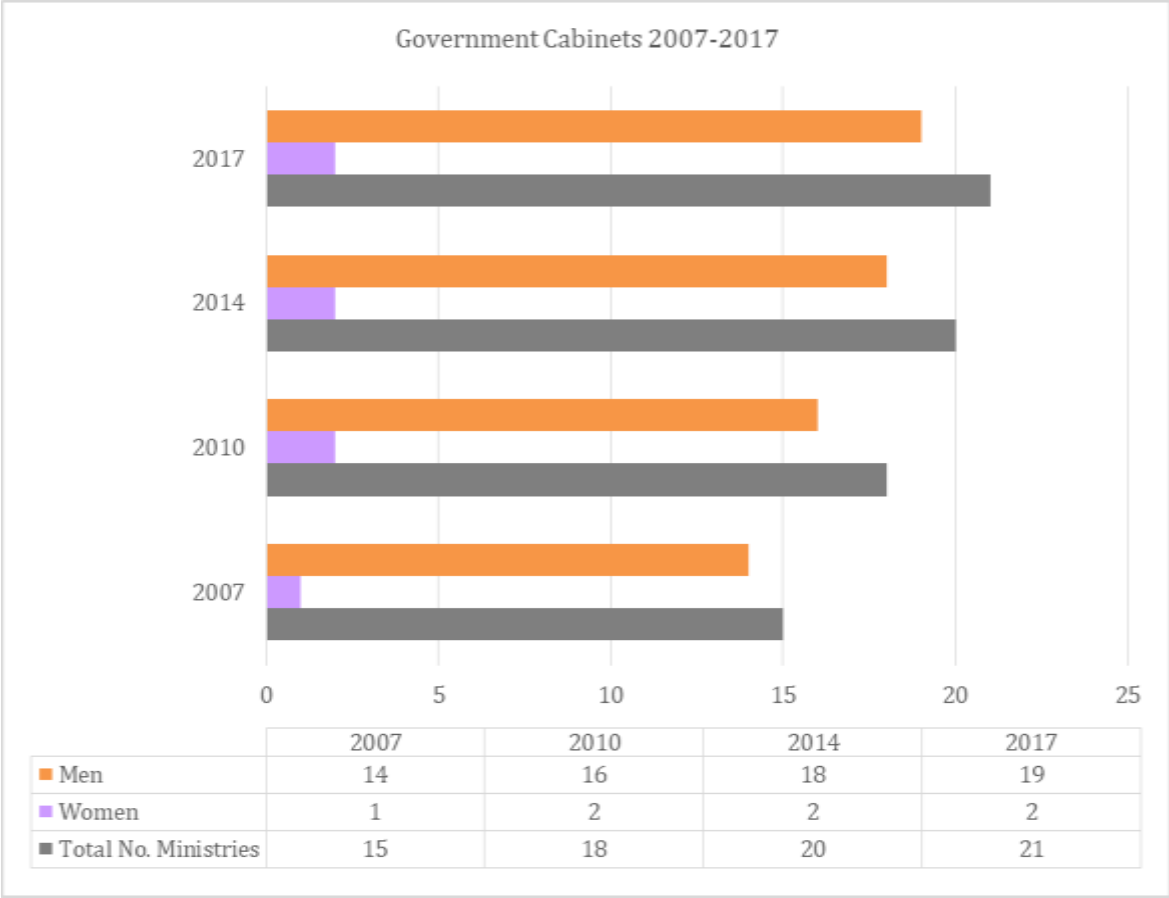
¹⁷ According to MAP, such government decision making positions include: Director of Department/Division; Deputy Director; Office Director; Chief of Division; Chief of Unit; Manager and Auditor.

¹⁸ MAP does not collect statistics on political posts e.g Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Political Advisors, Chief of Cabinet etc.

¹⁹ Senior decision-making positions in Government of Kosovo include: Secretary General, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer.

²⁰ Balkans Policy Research Group, Report ‘Gender (IN) Equality in Politics and Decision Making, February 2019.

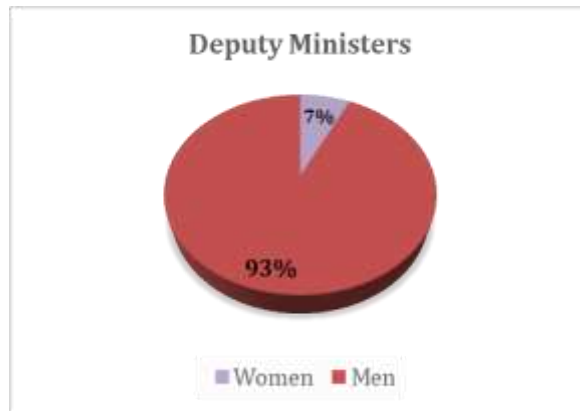
When comparing government cabinets over 10 years period, the number of women’s representation in ministerial positions was constantly at the lowest level of representation. The graph below provides trends in government cabinets 2007-2017.



Graph 3: Present trends on the Government Cabinets post-Independence (2008-2019)

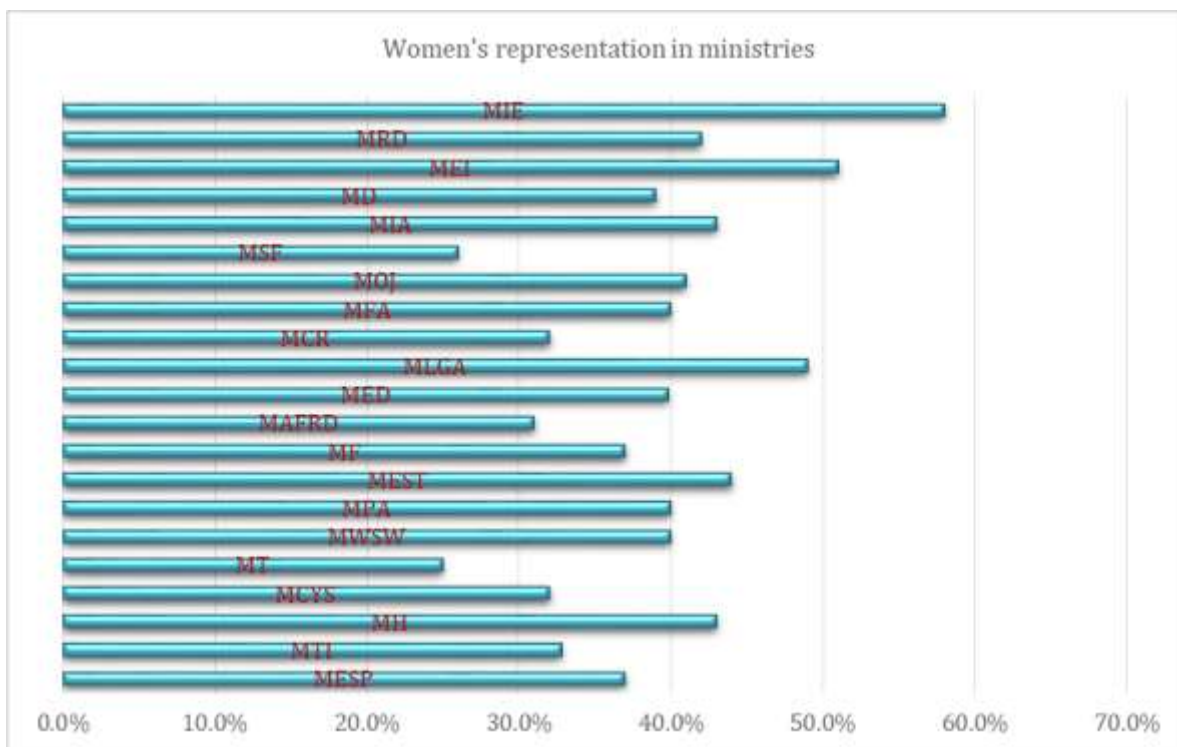
Also, with relatively large number of Deputy Ministers appointed in Kosovo Ministries, out of 70 in 2017 only 5 were women²¹.

²¹ Democracy for Development (D4D) infographics on Government Cabinets 2007-2017.



Graph 4: Gender representation in Deputy Minister posts

When looking at Ministries individually, data provide that few ministries have reached to a satisfactory level in gender equality representation. The Ministry of European Integrations, Ministry of Innovation and Entrepreneurship and Ministry of Local Government Administration (MAPL) lead in this regard.



Graph 5: Representation of women in 21 Ministries of Republic of Kosovo (2018).

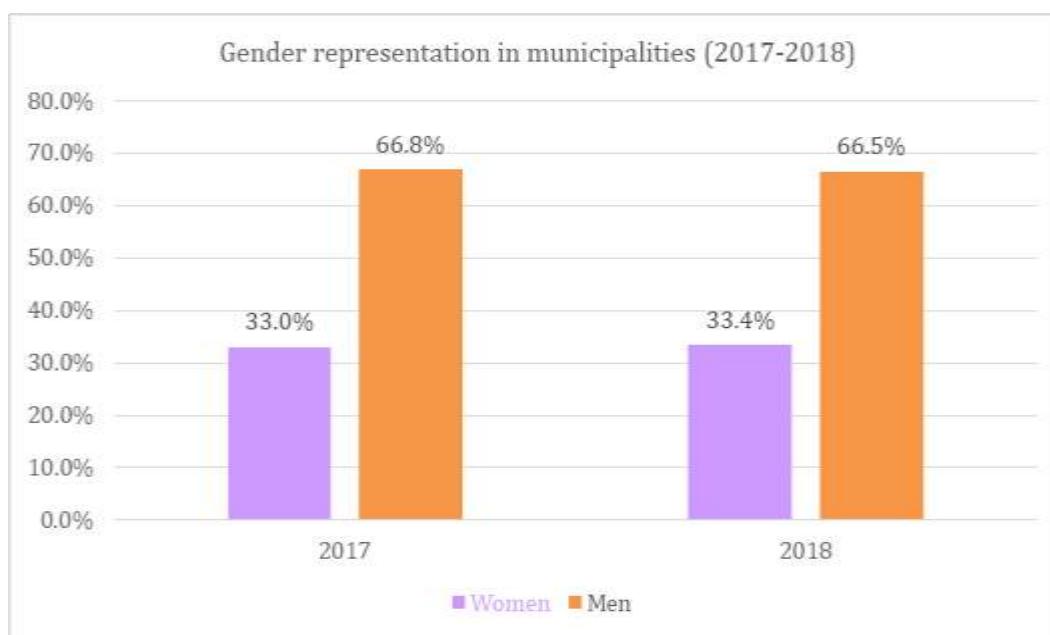
For this report, we have achieved to obtain more in-depth data from MLGA, noting also an equal representation of women in decision making positions also.

The Ministry of Local Government Administration (MLGA) as of 2018 has achieved to implement successfully the Law on Gender Equality, thus equalizing representation of women and men in

decision making positions and throughout its directorates/divisions. Besides the Secretary Permanent of MLGA that is a woman, in this Ministry women lead with 10 directorates and divisions²², whereas men lead with 9 divisions/directorates. This ministry has 125 civil servants, 63 men and 62 women. Beyond the gender equality, the Secretary Permanent of MAPL indicates that this representation is far from quantitative, as each staff member of MAPL no matter position is highly competent and deliver quality work. While trying to keep the story of MAPL positive as it is, still it shall be mentioned thought, that both Minister and Deputy Ministers in MLGA are men.

2.2 Current Trends- Municipal Level

In general, the situation with women’s representation at the municipal level civil service remains under the 50% representation threshold, including the decision-making positions. In 2018, from 6,148 civil servants employed in the municipal administrations of 38 municipalities, only 33.4% were women²³. In 2017, the percentage of women in municipal administration was 33%.



Graph 6: Employees in Municipal Administration of Kosovo municipalities, represented by gender.

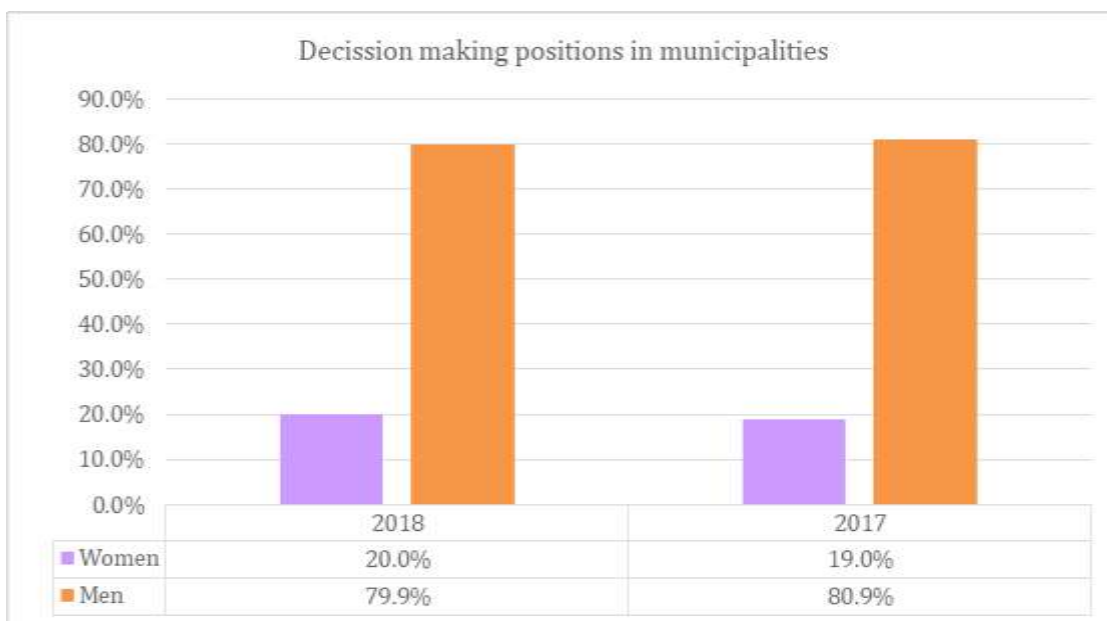
In 2018, in decision making positions²⁴ were total 829 employees in civil service, of which 20% women. When compared with year 2017, an increase of 1% is reflected in women’s representation in decision making positions in the municipal administration of Kosovo municipalities²⁵.

²² Two women leading directorates/divisions at MLGA are in temporary replacing positions.

²³ Statistical data provided by MAP, Jan-Dec 2018.

²⁴ According to MAP, decision making positions at municipal level include: Chief of Sector; Chief of Service; Chief of Office; Chief of Unit and Manager.

²⁵ MAP missing data on Municipalities of Leposavic, Zubin Potok, Zvecan and Mitrovica North.

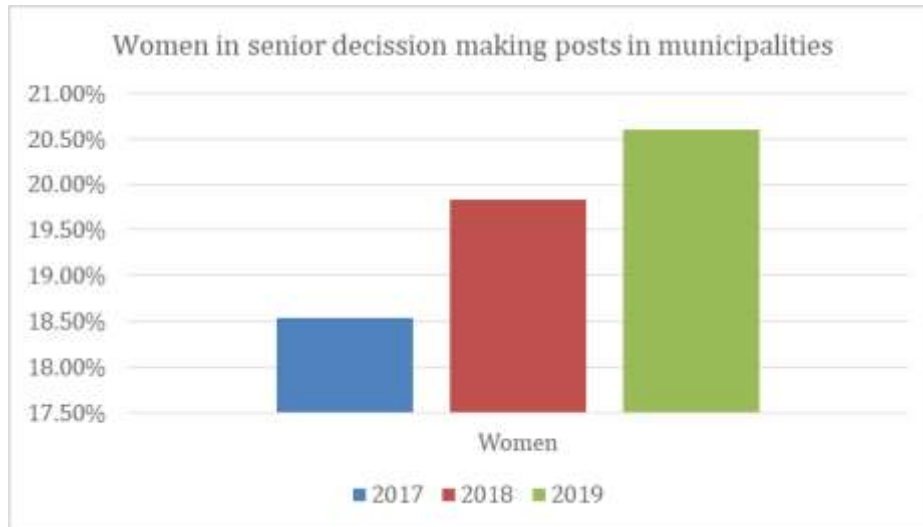


Graph 7: Decision making positions in civil service/municipalities, represented by gender.

As of last elections in year 2017, all 38 Municipalities of Kosovo are led by men in Mayor positions. Current reports show that there are only two women deputy mayors (Suhareka and Zubin Potok Municipalities). Also, 12 Municipalities have appointed Deputy Mayors for Communities, out of which 3 are women (Klokot, Mamushe and Prizren).

In the senior decision-making positions with municipal directorates, women's representation has increased over the years. In year 2017 was 18.54%. In 2018, of 364 directors in municipal directorates, women comprise 72 or 19.83%²⁶. A slight increase in women's representation can be reported early this year also, with 20.6%.

²⁶ MAPL report indicated that Municipality of Zubin Potok has not appointed directors yet, thus it is not calculated in the statistics presented here.



Graph 8: Women in senior decision-making posts/directorates in municipalities of Kosovo

Three municipalities of Kosovo shall be distinguished as success stories for women’s equal representation in senior decision-making positions/directorates. The municipalities of Klokot, Kamenica and Glllogoc have established gender equal representable directorates. Section IV provides more information about two of these municipalities.

3. FOCUS GROUPS: EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN WORKING IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

In the second section, the idea is to conduct a wide evaluation of the experiences of women working in public institutions and understand first-hand what are direct obstacles that they face. Different from the approach so far, where the idea was to focus on review of statistics, policies and legislation, this section will complement the findings of the reports published so far with the original perceptions as reported by women themselves.

We have heard the voices of women involved in decision-making positions at central and local public institutions in our three focus groups held on dates and dates 21-22 February 2019 and 05 March 2019.

The discussion with these groups aimed to look at the position of women in decision making positions, address challenges and barriers that they faced in attaining these positions as well as identify challenges they face in their role. We also discussed policies that they were able to initiate or support and the benefits and added value of having women in decision-making positions. Also, the participants of the focus groups provided recommendations on what can be done to improve the women participation in decision making positions in Kosovo.

Composition of focus groups

The first focus group included women from Ministries that currently hold decision making positions in their relevant institutions. Participants of this groups included:

- Rozafa Ukimeraj, Secretary Permanent, Ministry of Local Government Administration (MAPL)
- Burbuqe Deva-Bakija, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Youth, Culture and Sports (MCYS)
- Magbule Shkodra, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Regional Development
- Aferdita Syle Hoxha, Head of Legal Department, Ministry of Health
- Lindita Osaj, Head of Human Resources, Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport
- Shyhrete Kastrati, Assistant to Deputy Minister, Ministry of Regional Development
- Arberesha Isufi, Ministry of Economic Development

The second focus group included participants holding executive positions in Municipalities of Pristina, Obiliq, Glllogoc and Kamenica.

- Dren Kukaj, Director, Directorate of Social Welfare, Pristina Municipality
- Zarife Behluli, Director, Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development, Obiliq Municipality
- Fitore Hashani, Director, Directorate on Environment Protection, Obiliq Municipality
- Aurora Berisha, Director, Directorate of Inspections, Glllogoc Municipality
- Shqipe Zogu, Director, Directorate of Culture, Youth and Sports, Glllogoc Municipality
- Tafil Halilaj, Director, Directorate of Education, Glllogoc Municipality
- Luminje Gjoshi – Krapu, Director, Directorate of Public Services, Glllogoc Municipality
- Egzona Jetullahu, Director, Directorate for Economic Development, Glllogoc Municipality
- Shyqiri Bublaku, Director, Directorate for Budget and Finances, Glllogoc Municipality
- Anita Avdullahu, Director, Directorate of Agriculture and Rural Development, Glllogoc Municipality
- Flutura Avdiu, Director, Directorate for Urban Planning and Environment Protection, Glllogoc Municipality
- Kimete Qorri, Director, Directorate of General Administration, Glllogoc Municipality
- Nexhmedin Bislimi, Director, Directorate of Economy, Budget and Finances, Kamenica Municipality
- Qendresa Kastrati, Kamenica Municipality
- Fadil Hoti, Cadaster, Kamenica Municipality

The third working group included participants from both focus groups with the aim to discuss the findings of the research and endorse recommendations.

Challenges

The challenges identified by participants in the focus groups among others can be grouped in political, legal, cultural, and other, as presented below:

I. Political Challenges:

- In general, the focus group participants felt that the current political system and culture don't support women. This is because man is given preference over the women when it comes to appointment to decision-making positions. In addition, the work culture of making important decisions in venues other than offices somehow excludes women from important conversations as well as makes them seem unfit to hold decision making positions.
- Lack of internal democratization of political parties. Very often, the political leadership of political parties is considered as non-gender sensitive and they dominantly appoint men in decision making positions (both local and central level).
- Political interference in recruiting officials in decision making positions. As mentioned above, participants felt the political party leadership are not gender sensitive and favor man appointing man in decision making positions rather than women.
- Competition among women in decision-making and within political structures is very limited, often impacts issues of quality and professionalism for certain decision-making posts. This is mainly due to political leadership interest to favor women who tend to be less challenging for them to manage, rather than women who bring strong leadership abilities and professions.

II. Legal Challenges:

- Lack of implementation of Law on Gender Equality from public institutions – 50% quota for gender equality representation. Participants stated that the law on General Elections which stipulates 30% of candidates in the list of political parties should be women does not comply with the Law on Gender Equality.
- Lack of implementation of sanctions to respect gender quota of 50% representation in the Law on Gender Equality enables institutions not to implement such provisions.
- Lack of implementation of the Anti-Discrimination Law in employment. This law requires employers to establish and maintain anti-discrimination or anti-harassment policies to protect their employees. Participants felt that women are usually subject to discrimination and harassment in work places and the lack of implementation of this law does affect their participation in the workforce as well as in attaining decision-making positions.
- No undertaking of gender-sensitive budgeting. Public budgets represent the commitments of the government and it sets the social and economic priorities. When conducting budget planning governments should make sure their resources affect positively and equally all groups of the society. The focus group participants stated that this practice lacks in Kosovo institutions where budgets are planned without taking into account gender sensitive aspects.
- Law on Labor, in article 49, sets out the provisions of Maternity leave giving the women the right to take up to 12 months of maternity leave. The focus group participants felt the law was not favorable for women because it only gives the women the right to take the leave upon the birth of her child. They stated that the Law should be include a Parenting Leave and give the option to both parents to share their leave.
- Lacking social support for daily child care that directly impacts women's ability to seek employment and engage in politics. Focus group participants stated that the burden of childcare usually falls on

the women and the lack of financial support or subsidized childcare affects the ability of women to be active in the workforce or engage in political activities.

III. Cultural Challenges:

- Patriarchal culture continues to dominate politics and governance. The focus group participants stated that men are in authority over women in all aspects of society in Kosovo to include politics and government.
- Women in decision-making positions are often stigmatized by society because of their gender. The focus group participants felt that women are often seen as unfit to hold leading roles and when they do take these roles, their actions are scrutinized far more than men by the public. Men are seen as an appropriate / favorable gender to lead with decision-making positions, while women are viewed as the least able for these jobs.
- The existing stereotypes related to certain professions for women continue to exist in Kosovo's society. Women are seen in professions of a nurse, teacher, caregiver, etc. Whereas in the roles mainly taking care of children, the elderly (housework commitments).
- Major decisions are made by men in government, oda²⁷, cafes and other places outside the office, and this creates a barrier for women to be a part of decision-making. If women are united in such environments with men colleagues from their parties, then the public attributes toward women prejudices about morality, etc.

IV. Other challenges

- The image of women in decision making positions is relatively damaged - due to the poor performance or bad image that some women have given to their decision-making positions (poor performance of women in parliament etc.)
- Non-effective utilization of existing programs for capacity building for decision-making positions (leadership, management etc.)
- Media put a lot of pressure on women in decision-making positions. Women are mostly represented in debates about women issues, but not for major decisions for the state, institutions, etc. Women are commented on appearance, dress and very little about the professional sphere and the results achieved.
- Women in relatively low numbers apply for the decision-making positions within government institutions. Reasons given include: (i) Women are more interested to find stable jobs (permanent) than to be challenged in executive decision-making posts, which are not guaranteed positions in long terms and (ii) considering that political leadership mainly favors men for decision making positions, they feel disadvantaged in the recruitment process.

Participants of the focus groups believe that achieving greater gender equality in public sector and in decision making positions contributes to institutional strengthening and democracy development. Moreover, they tend to believe that women influence policy development that incorporates more gender equal approach; they are multitasking, creative and often less corrupt when holding decision making positions. In general, focus group participants consider women to have excellent leadership skills and acknowledge that women should be more persistent in seeking their rights and advancing their role in decision making processes in the country.

²⁷ Oda is a traditional room used in Kosovo and Albania (from Albanian tradition).

Recommendations

The participants of the focus groups provided their feedback on what they believe will contribute to the improvement of the current situation regarding gender equality in decision making positions in Kosovo. Participants altogether acknowledged the importance of political parties undertaking reforms to improve internal democratization and gender equality inside party structures and in decision-making positions. In addition, they called for Government Institutions to insist on embracing more gender equal representation in all public institutions, taking MAPL, Gillogoc and Kamenica municipalities as positive examples of such developments. Additionally, they consider it crucial that Kosovo institutions respect and implement the quota of 50% in Law on Gender Equality, also calling for harmonization of such legal provisions in the Law on General Elections to seek higher representation of women in local and national assemblies also.

Other recommendations included:

- Affirmative legal measures to increase inclusion of women in decision-making positions are encouraged to continue – example through gender quotas for representation in Executive Boards and other Government institutions.
- Women in decision-making positions shall not be put under the pressure to perform for other women-instead they shall be kept accountable to perform on their duties and responsibilities. This role shall be distinguished in decision-making and activism.
- Advance Leadership skills for young girls.
- Seek accountability from women parliamentarians and those in decision-making positions, to perform better. Their good image will influence the improvement of image on women for leadership.
- Gender sensitive budgeting to be applied in all institutions.
- Government institutions to establish more effective mechanism for civil and political staff to access the capacity building programs, particularly those related to management and leadership.
- Enhance role of media in improving image of women in decision making positions. Avoid sexism.
- Women in decision-making processes shall work on establishing networks to push women agenda's forward.
- Women in decision-making processes shall be empowered and promoted as role models. This will help fight the gender stigma towards women in decision making processes.
- Media to be more gender sensitive and promote more gender equal programs (particularly offer more coverage on women's successes during the news time; invite more women in decision making processes in the discussion programs etc.)
- Initiatives such as the one of MAPL, to seek more accountability from municipalities to implement gender equality quota are encouraged to continue in all public institutions. AGE could play a pivotal role also.

One additional information that stands out in a conversation between the focus group members, were the programs such as Jeta ne Komune and MCC scholarship for women in energy, as two important initiatives that empower and promote gender equality policies in the country. The participants attributed success to increase in the women's appointment in decision-making positions in the municipalities to Jeta ne Komune, since this TV program in the election debates of 2017 amongst others asked candidates for Mayors on their promises to reaching gender equality if appointed Mayors. Such public promises led to some of the Mayors to be more gender sensitive when forming their government teams.

Whereas, MCC scholarship for women in energy is recent, but participants believe that such initiatives will help increase the number of women in more male dominated professions (in this case energy), that will help appoint more women in decision making positions in this sector.

4. CASES IN THE LOCAL LEVEL- MUNICIPALITIES GILLOGOC AND KAMENICA

The democratization of local governments goes hand in hand with shared opportunities and responsibilities among genders. Research in Kosovo indicates that while quota of 30% representation in local assemblies has achieved to maintain inclusion of women (even though not to a desirable level of 50%), at the municipal administration the representation of women in decision making positions continues to remain rather small²⁸. As noted in section 2 of this report, only 19,83% of Directorates are led by women in 38 Kosovo Municipalities²⁹. As of last local elections of the year 2017, three municipalities in Kosovo have achieved to establish the municipal executive on gender equal representation. Such municipalities are Gillogoc, Kamenica and Klokot. In this report, we will provide information about the first two municipalities³⁰ and success stories from women that currently hold these positions.

4.1 MUNICIPALITY OF GILLOGOC

The municipality of Gillogoc is located in central Kosovo. It covers an area of approximately 290 km² and includes Gillogoc town and 37 villages. According to the 2011 Kosovo Population and Housing Census, the total population is 58,531 inhabitants. The municipal Mayor Ramiz Lladrovci was reelected for his second term as mayor in the first round of the 2017 municipal elections. There are ten (12) municipal departments. Seven (7) directorates are led by women and 5 by men. The table below will provide statistical data regarding gender equality in decision making positions 2008-2019 in Gillogoc Municipality.

²⁸ Kosovo Gender Studies Center, Publication "Women in senior decision-making positions in public sector and political parties" May 2017

²⁹ Data obtained from MLGA internal report – municipal statistics on gender equality.

³⁰ Reasons for including Gillogoc and Kamenica as case studies is that these are beneficiary municipalities of the project "Women managers in public sector - facilitating the transformation from a quantitative to a qualitative approach".

Year	No. Directorates	Women	Men
2019	12	7	5
2018	10	5	5
2017	10	5	5
2016	10	1	9
2015	10	1	9
2014	10	1	9
2013	10	1	9
2012	10	1	9
2011	10	1	9
2010	10	1	9
2009	10	1	9
2008	10	1	9

Table 1: Senior decision-making positions of Gillogoc over the years 2008-2019 – Heads of Directorates represented by gender.

The data show there has been a significant increase between 2017-2019 on the number of women holding heads of the directorate’s positions in this municipality. In 2019, the number of women holding these positions has surpassed the number of men.

4.1.1 Aurora Berisha, Director of Inspection in Municipality of Gillogoc



Ms. Berisha has been leading the Directorate of Inspections in the Municipality of Gillogoc since 2016.

In this role, Ms. Berisha has a wide range of responsibilities that tackle all spheres of life in municipality of Gillogoc. Her unit enforces all municipal regulations and decision taken by municipality. Ms. Berisha says that her job can be done in proactive and reactive basis. She is proactive by nature.

However, this job every day brings new issues and challenges.

Therefore, Ms. Berisha says that *she has to constantly stay tuned with recent development in the field as well as be familiar with legal procedures.*

Before embarking on this important position, Ms. Berisha was used to having her hands full. While she was a full-time student, she also was a very active citizen in the cultural life of the city. She led initiatives to promote children activities in her radio programs as well as she was a very active member of other artistic and youth activities in the city. She was an avid volunteer in the organizations aiming to improve the welfare and position of people with disabilities in the society mainly through local organization called HandIKOS.

She started her professional career in private sector and in 2014 where she joined the sales and marketing team in the TEB bank. In 2016, she joined the marketing team in the private company called Solaborate. A mixture of experiences shapes her leadership skills from her educational, professional life and most importantly being an active member of Kamenica community. This led her to take a role in municipal administration a position Ms. Berisha says “*enables her to make a greater impact in her beloved community*”.

However, despite being an Economist by training, specializing in Management and Entrepreneurship, in her journey to this role Ms. Berisha has managed to defeat the stereotypes that often women face in our society:

“When I started working as a Director of Inspectorate, a lot of people were saying that she won’t be able to perform in this position because she is a woman. Given the sensitivity of responsibility and duties that this department has, they were contemplating that a man should have been appointed instead of her”.

Ms. Berisha further stated, *“The stigma that women are not good enough to perform puts a lot of pressure on us - women have to focus on doing the right work and also to convince the public that women can succeed in sensitive jobs with high decision-making responsibility”.*

Her motto on how she deals with stigma is *“People may think I am not cut to do this job because I am not a man, or I am not tall enough or they are not used to dealing with a woman in position. I have heard and can imagine thousands of other reasons they may think I am not cut to do this... but I tell myself often that I can do this; I have in my heart to do good for my community and I have the skills and experiences that have prepared me to succeed. So, I tune all negativity I hear, and I focus on the positive things I can bring to this role”.*

During the 3 years of experience in the position of Director of Inspectorate, among others Ms. Berisha was able to succeed in implementing various policies and laws that affect the wellbeing of the citizens in Glllogoc. To mention few, she has led the initiatives to “prohibit smoking in the closed environments (which has succeeded in achieving 90% of targets), maintaining clean schools and Center for Family Medicine, Control of food products and removing outdated foods including inspections on food standards, restricting illegal construction, and reached 98% in reducing inert waste and dumps. During her mandate, Ms. Berisha has also achieved to advance gender equality in the Directorate of Inspection, with four women and four men in the positions of inspectors.

4.2 MUNICIPALITY OF KAMENICA

The municipality of Kamenicë/Kamenica is located in the eastern part of Kosovo covering an area of approximately 423 km². It includes Kamenicë/Kamenica town and 56 villages. According to the 2011 Kosovo Population and Housing Census, the total population is 36,085.

The municipality is headed by Mayor Qëndron Kastrati (Social Democratic Party - PSD), elected for his first term as mayor in the second round of the 2017 municipal elections. In this mandate, the municipality has 11 municipal departments, 6 departments run by women and 5 by men.

This is a significant progress in terms of gender equality and appointing women in decision making positions. The previous government in Kamenica had only 3 women directors.

The role of political leadership in reaching gender equal representation is very important. This is particularly true for Kamenica, since Mayor Qendron Kastrati was dedicated to achieving this equality, listing it as one of his election promises.

The table below, will provide statistical data regarding gender equality in decision making positions 2008-2019 in Kamenica Municipality.

Year	No. of Directorates	Women	Men
2019	11	6	5
2018	11	6	5
2017	11	2	9
2016	11	3	8
2015	11	2	9
2014	11	2	9
2013	11	1	10
2012	11	1	10
2011	11	1	10
2010	11	1	10
2009	6	1	5
2008	6	0	6

Table 2: Senior decision-making positions of Kamenica over the years 2008-2019 – Heads of Directorates represented by gender.

The data on this table show there has been a significant increase between 2018-2019 on the number of women holding heads of the directorate's positions in this municipality. In these two years, the number of women holding these positions has surpassed the number of men.

4.2.1 Brikena Ramabaja, Director of Administration, Municipality of Kamenica



Ms. Ramabaja has been leading with Directorate of Administration in Municipality of Kamenica since February 2018. In this capacity, Ms. Ramabaja among other responsibilities oversees all civil servants employed in the municipal administration, including municipal strategic priorities for digitalizing administration services, transfer of directorates in new municipal buildings and overseeing general service provision of administration towards citizens of Kamenica.

By profession, Ms. Ramabaja is a Psychologist and the lessons she took from her class on organizational behavior came in handy for her political and management career. She is a typical example why, as women, you should consider becoming members of a political party. Her political engagement has enabled her to build her leadership and management skills over the years.

Her political career started since her student years in 2007, when she joined the political party, Levizja Vetevendosje, branch in Kamenica. From a political activist, she became the administrator of this party's center in Kamenica. She recalls this time:

It was quite a challenge to perform in the role of the administrator of the political party center in Kamenica. A lot of activities had to be planned from organizing public meetings in various locations, organizing protests etc. Moreover, I was the only women who administered a Centre of our party in Kamenica.

In 2010, Ms. Ramabaja was appointed member of the General Council of the party and in 2015 she was elected as a member of National Party Committee of Levizja Vetevendosje. In 2017, Ms. Ramabaja was elected as a member of local assembly in Kamenica municipality.

When she was appointed in the Municipal Directorate Administration, Ms. Ramabaja has to hit the ground running. In a short period, she succeeded in leading the delivery of training for municipal directors and other municipal staff in utilizing online System for Management of Human Recourses. She also led the process of establishing the online system of municipal staff presence at work including planning municipal staff services towards citizens.

Through an agreement with the Postal Services she created a postal service point inside the municipal building where citizens can easily perform their payments in due time towards the municipality. She managed the process of transfers of directorates and municipal staff to the new municipal building and helped to install the system of a One Stop Shop aiming to offer effective and quality services to Kamenica citizens.

As an assembly member she has been part of continues efforts to advance gender equality in Kamenica municipality. In the Director position, she continues to build on her previous and that's why she has dedicated an office in the municipal building for Assembly Women's Caucus in Kamenica.

Ms. Ramabaja believes that her successes in leading Directorate of Administration in Kamenica and her political activism will motivate other women to engage in politics and public sector in Kamenica.

5. POLICY ACTIONS IN BEST-RANKED COUNTRIES FOR WOMEN IN PUBLIC SECTOR LEADERS

Women's representation in leadership roles in public sector is a significant indicator of the gender parity. Having a good understanding of policies and actions that advanced women's representation in leadership positions, in countries that are leaders in this field, is a starting point for gender parity discussion in Kosovo.

The top five countries in the G20 with the highest number of women occupying senior civil service leadership positions across federal and central governments are: Canada with 46.4%, Australia with 43.3%, South Africa with 41.1%, Brazil 37.8% and United States 34.4%³¹. The EU states have a better representation of women in senior positions and Nordic countries such as Sweden and Finland are leaders in the field of gender equality in many domains. However, interestingly, five EU countries – Slovenia, Romania, Latvia, Greece and Bulgaria - have already surpassed parity, with more than half of their most senior official's women³². Some of the factors that may be influencing this positive result are childcare assistance, additional income for working mothers, paid parental leave, obligatory and voluntary gender quotas in public and private entities, and targeted subsidies to female businesses.

To have a better understanding of how these countries are influencing positively the increase of women in leadership positions, we will look into the best practices of women representation in decision-making positions on how Sweden tackles gender equality as a leading country in this regard

³¹ Global Government Forum Women Leaders Index, 2016

³² Ibid, Global Government Forum Women Leaders Index, EU Analyses, 2016

from EU. Also, we will look at the actions taken by Slovenia that put it at the top of the countries that have surpassed gender parity.

5.1 SWEDEN – a holistic approach to Gender Equality

Gender equality is one of the cornerstones of Swedish society. In Sweden, the term gender equality became established when the issue of legislation against gender discrimination entered the political debate in the early 1970s. Sweden's first gender equality law was passed in 1979, mandating equality between women and men in the labor market.

The aim of gender equality policies in Sweden is to ensure that everyone enjoys the same opportunities, rights and obligations in all areas of life. For Sweden's, gender equality implies not only equal distribution between men and women in all domains of society. It is also about the qualitative aspects, ensuring that the knowledge and experience of both men and women are used to promote progress in all aspects of society.

The Swedish Education Act sets the framework that challenges gender roles since pre-school. The aim is to counteract traditional gender patterns and gender roles and give all children same opportunities in life. In the past, boys did better in central tests and they dominated at the University level too. Today, girls do equally well in central tests and the numbers of women and men in postgraduate and doctoral studies is equal.

An extensive welfare system supports a work-life balance providing parents with 480 days, or around 16 months, of paid parental leave when a child is born or adopted with nearly 80% of their salary. Three months of the leave are mandatory for each parent and cannot be transferred to the other. In addition, parents receive tax relief in an amount of 6 euros per day if they distribute parental leave equally³³.

The Swedish Discrimination Act³⁴ deals with gender equality at work. First, there is the requirement that all employers must actively pursue specific goals to promote equality between men and women. In 2017 preventive measures have been extended to include harassment related to all grounds for discrimination such as discrimination based on an employer's sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation and age.

One domain that Sweden is working to improve is the wage gap between women and man. On average, women's monthly salaries in Sweden are currently around 88 per cent of men's – 95.5 per cent when differences in choice of profession and sector are considered. However, women fill only 6 % of CEO positions in listed companies, and 5 % of board chairpersons and 29 % of board members were women³⁵.

³³ L. Eigenmann, Y. Holl, E. Kovats, J. Menge, K. Nink, A. Rosenplanter, A. Salles, C. Schildmann., "One Way to Gender Equality" Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2016, pg 39 (online) <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/id/ipa/12476.pdf>

³⁴ The Swedish Discrimination Act
https://www.government.se/contentassets/6732121a2cb54ee3b21da9c628b6bdc7/oversattningdiskrimineringslagen_eng.pdf

³⁵ https://www.scb.se/Statistik/_Publikationer/LE0201_2015B16_BR_X10BR1601.pdf

The Swedish government, in January 2018 has commissioned the Swedish Gender Equality Agency³⁶ to support 58 government agencies with the work of integrating a gender perspective in all of their operations. The initiative is called the Gender Mainstreaming in Government Agencies (GMGA) programme³⁷, and its goal is to integrate gender equality in all aspects of each agency's work³⁸. While women (64%) hold the majority of executive positions in the public administration, the proportion of women in supervisory boards and executive boards of listed companies is a mere 4%³⁹. Policy measures are being discussed aimed at increasing the proportion of women in executive positions in the private sector.

Considering the challenges identified by our focus groups and also the economic and social circumstances in Kosovo, we think the following policy actions would yield positive results in Kosovo:

- The Policy: Paid mandatory parental leave

When more men take paternity leave, it will help lift the family workload from women and give them the space to access workforce and focus on their career. As provided earlier, in Sweden, parents with 480 days, or around 16 months, of paid parental leave when a child is born or adopted with nearly 80% of their salary. Three months of the leave are mandatory for each parent and cannot be transferred to the other. In addition, parents receive tax relief in an amount of 6 euros per day if they distribute parental leave equally

- The Policy: Gender Mainstreaming in Government

As mentioned, 58 government agencies in Sweden are integrating a gender perspective in all of their operations. This will allow Kosovo public institutions to conduct gender analyses in their domain and include gender perspectives in their everyday work. As provided in the example of Sweden, this will enable each institution to identify their weaknesses and address them accordingly. This habit of continuous improvement will help institutions yield better results in gender equality in Kosovo.

- The Policy: Gender Mainstreaming in Education

As mentioned, the Swedish Education Act sets the framework that challenges gender roles since pre-school. The aim is to counteract traditional gender patterns and gender roles and give all children same opportunities in life. This is a very important aspect for Kosovo, considering the feedback from our focus group about the lack of support for women to attain skills that would build their confidence and skillset to attain leadership roles. Considering the substantial amount of work that this policy action would carry we recommend that future

³⁶ Swedish Gender Equality Agency <https://www.jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se/en/>

³⁷ <https://www.jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se/en/gender-mainstreaming/government-agencies-higher-educationinstitutions/government-agencies-in-the-gmga-programme>

³⁸ <https://www.jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se/en/gender-mainstreaming/government-agencies-higher-educationinstitutions/government-agencies-in-the-gmga-programme>

³⁹ Fredrich Ebert Stiftung (2016) On the way to gender equality? Reports from Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/id/ipa/12476.pdf>

<https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/id/ipa/12476.pdf>

research and analyses be done in Kosovo that would target Education Laws and practices of early education from a gender equality perspective.

5.2 SLOVENIA – fast forward to gender equality in decision-making positions

Slovenia has made a remarkable progress in gender equality as one of the highest-ranked countries in the world when it comes to gender equality and parity⁴⁰.

It is in an excellent fourth place (of 152 countries) on the Global Women, Peace and Security Index, for example, and is fifth, immediately after the Scandinavian countries and Canada, on the index produced by the American Woodrow Wilson Institute and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) on women in leading positions in the public sector. According to the European Institute for Gender Equality, Slovenia is top-ranked in the area of equality between women and men, due in part to the high proportion of women in decision-making positions⁴¹.

Slovenia has adopted legislated gender quotas in politics, which led to an increased participation of women in political and institutional life. The gender quota regulations affected three levels of governance – central, local and European level (electoral system for EU Parliament)⁴². The first electoral law that included gender quotas was in 2004, the law on election to the European Parliament. This act requires at least 40 per cent representation of each gender in any list of candidates. The second electoral law to adopt quotas was in 2005, the law on local elections which accounts for at least 40 percent of each gender in any list of candidates. The third, electoral law that included gender quotas was in 2006, the electoral law for Central Assembly, which accounts for at least 30 percent of each gender in any list of candidates⁴³.

In 2002, the Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act introduced the advocacy of equal opportunities for women and men. This Act requires the government to submit to the parliament a proposal of the Resolution on the National Program for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. The first program was adopted in 2005 and general strategic objectives, as well as specific objectives, to be achieved in the field of gender equality for the given period. In 2004, the National Assembly adopted the Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment Act, the umbrella act in the field of non-discrimination. This act requires equal treatment of all persons in performing their duties and enjoy their freedoms in every field of social life, and especially in the fields of employment, labour relations, participation in trade unions and interest associations, education, social security, access to and supply of goods and services.

Currently, the tasks of the national gender machinery are performed within the recently established Department for Equal opportunities at the renamed Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and

⁴⁰ Global Government Forum Women Leaders Index, EU Analyses, 2016

⁴¹ Government of Slovenia:

http://www.vlada.si/en/media_room/news_from_slovenia/news_from_slovenia/article/slovenia_high_on_the_list_according_to_numerous_gender_equality_indicators_61074/

⁴² Milica ANTIĆ GABER, Irena SELIŠNIK (2017) Research Publication “The Slovene version of a “Fast Track” to Political Equality” https://www.fdv.uni-lj.si/docs/default-source/tip/tip_02_2017_gaber_selisnik.pdf?sfvrsn=2

⁴³ Milica ANTIĆ GABER, Irena SELIŠNIK (2017) Research Publication “The Slovene version of a “Fast Track” to Political Equality” https://www.fdv.uni-lj.si/docs/default-source/tip/tip_02_2017_gaber_selisnik.pdf?sfvrsn=2 pg. 341-347

Equal Opportunities. In addition, each Ministry and local government appoints one coordinator for equal opportunities that coordinates the activities by ministries with a view to gender equality perspective and cooperates with the national body responsible for gender equality policy. In addition to these measures, Slovenia undertook following initiatives to improve the women participation in decision-making processes. The Office for Women Policy undertook the initiative Women can do it. Educational training seminars to improve the representation of the needs for female voters and six parliamentary political parties participated in this initiative. In addition, the Network of women mayors was established in 2011. It is an informal network of women mayors connected women of all political persuasions at two meetings per year, each time organized by a different woman mayor. In addition, Mentor Day with a Female Politician were organized to get young females interested into politics.

In summary, the following policy decisions and activities taken in Slovenia should be considered in Kosovo to support women in attaining leadership positions:

- The Policy: Gender Quotas in all levels of government

Slovenia has incorporated gender quotas in all levels of government. Kosovo has a similar policy. Although there was a long process until Slovenia decided to adopt quota into their legislation, once the decision was made and the laws were approved, Slovenia has implemented and enforced the law.

- Activities: Projects targeting specific areas of gender equality

Most strategic actions in Slovenia have been through gender equality projects and awareness activities. As mentioned above, Slovenia undertook several advocacy campaigns for equal opportunities for women and men, educational and training opportunities for women in political parties, informal networks of women mayors and mentorship days for young women interested in politics.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the number of women employed in civil service in public sector has improved at 42% of the total workforce. However, it still remains under the 50% gender quota representation. Main challenges remain in representation of women in decision making and senior decision-making positions both in civil service and politically appointed posts.

Our findings indicate that over the years no significant progress is achieved in Kosovo regarding women's representation in decision-making, and particularly in politically appointed positions. The government leadership positions, in central level continue to be dominated by men, with very few women in the position of ministers, deputy ministers and general secretary positions.

Currently, out of 21 Ministries, only 2 ministries are led by women. There are only 5 women deputy ministers (out of 70 male deputy ministers). In addition, out of 21 General Secretaries, 2 are women.

The representation of women in civil service in the government institutions at central level in 2017 was 40.5% and in 2018 was at 42%. From these, in decision making positions in 2017 were 27.5% and 2018 were 28.7%. Whereas, women's representation in senior decision-making positions in civil service is even more concerning, with 0.4% in 2017 and 0.7% in 2018.

When analyzing women's representation in senior decision-making positions in the government institutions to include political posts also, women represented 9.8% of such positions in 2017, and 11.9% in 2018.

Three ministries stand out for implementation of Law on Gender Equality 50% threshold on gender equality representation such as MEI (51%), MLGA (49%) and MIE (58%). However, other ministries are falling behind and have not achieved to implement the law. The implementation of this Law from Kosovo institutions remains ambiguous, as so far, no sanctions are recalled to having been undertaken towards the institutions who do not implement the law.

At the local level, women's representation in municipal administration in years 2017 (33%) and 2018 (33.4%) was relatively steady, even though still below the 50% gender quota representation. Similar to central government, the unsatisfactory representation of women continues to be prevailing more in representation in decision-making positions.

Out of 38 municipalities none is led by a woman. Current reports show that there are only two women deputy mayors (Suhareka and Zubin Potok Municipalities). Also, 12 Municipalities have 32 appointed Deputy Mayors for Communities, out of which 3 are women (Klokot, Mamushe and Prizren). In 2017, the percentage of women in senior decision-making positions within municipal directorates was 19%, whereas in 2018 was 19.83%. Three municipalities stand out in the representation in senior decision-making positions/directorates. The municipalities of Klokot (62%), Kamenica (54%) and Gillogoc (41%) have established gender equal representable directorates.

Our focus groups have identified challenges women face when acquiring leadership positions and most of them come down to lack of support from family, from colleagues in political parties, societal stigma towards women and in general a work culture that puts man first in all spheres of life. The family duties, child care, lack of parental leave and limited opportunities for professional programs to support women-built leadership and management skills are other challenges that influence the women ability to attain decision-making roles. In addition, the role of political parties in appointing decision-making posts remains as one of the biggest challenges because political leadership tends to see man as better fit for such positions.

Also, our research about the best practices in other countries shows that Kosovo is no exception when it comes to challenges of achieving gender parity in all domains of society and in particular in decision making positions. Gender equality is not achieved without leadership commitment and implementation of laws in this field. Thus, Kosovo can learn from these countries on how to establish equal gender representation in the government (the case of Canada) and how to foster gender mainstreaming policies in public service throughout government administration (the case of Australia). In addition, Kosovo can learn on how to foster gender parity in leadership position in a country in transition (the case study of Slovenia) and how to tackle gender equality in all spheres of society (the case of Sweden).

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations deriving from the focus groups are listed under section 3 of this report. Also, the findings included in the conclusions section are substantial and there are things that can be done to enhance representation of women in managerial and leadership positions. Therefore, in our call for action, we encourage you to consider the following:

- Empower Women who currently hold leadership positions: The focus group participants acknowledged importance of improving the image and confidence of women in attaining leadership positions at central and local level. This can be done by empowering women who currently hold decision-making positions by giving them space and support to succeed in these positions. This is important because, as participants in focus group mentioned, these women are seen a role model that can positively influence women to seek higher positions and prove that women can do succeed.
- Enforce implementation of the LGE: The relevant public institutions shall ensure that 50% gender quota is implemented accordingly. As provided in our analyses, there are many public institutions that have not achieved the 50% of gender representation in their staff. In addition, the Law on General Elections in Kosovo that currently reserves 30% of the seats for women in local and central parliaments should comply with LGE to increase the quota in 50%.
- Establish gender targets for senior public service positions: as mentioned early the LGE requires 50% gender equal representation at every level in public institutions. We understand reaching this quota is a process however; we think it should be a planned process. Each public institution should establish targets on how to reach equal representation and compile plans on opportunities and positions that can be filled in by women in near future. This can be done through identifying targeted positions to be filled by women and charting the path to leadership for women. Clear steps shall be defined for career development for the actual employees. Also, establishing mentorship programs is very important – example connecting junior level employees with women senior leader mentors.
- Make data available: as mentioned in the analyses section, when compiling this report, we put tremendous effort to collect statistical data and analyzing them. MPA and MLGA staff have been extremely open and helpful in sharing the gender-aggregated data they have available for central and local level, but it took time and efforts of both sides to collect what was needed for this report. Of particular challenge were data collection on political appointed staff with national governments as MAP was not responsible to collect such data. Thus, it would be very helpful for anyone conducting research on gender equality in Kosovo to have these data publicly available.

Based on the policy actions taken in Sweden and Slovenia we recommend exploring the use of the following practices in Kosovo:

- Take a holistic approach with continuous identification of areas of improvement – Kosovo can learn from Sweden and their holistic approach to gender equality. For example, the Swedish Education Act challenges the traditional gender patterns and gender roles from the childcare giving children an early start on life with no gender bias. In addition, it has

identified the areas where girls do less well than boys do and has provided teachers with means to focus on improving the situation. The parental leave mandatory for each parent and the tax release if the parental leave is shared is another action that provides an incentive for fathers to take some share on the child-care. In addition, the continuous identification of new areas for improvement is another lesson 34 that Sweden brings forward. As mentioned in the case study, Sweden is currently focusing on improving the wage gap and increasing women's representation in leadership positions in boards and agencies.

- Make gender parity in decision-making positions a priority– The case of Slovenia shows that great results will be achieved if sincere efforts are put in supporting women in attaining leadership positions. As provided in the case study, Slovenia put its efforts in boosting women representation in political life by undertaking the following actions: (a) gender quotas in politics, (b) advocacy campaigns for equal opportunities for women and men, (b) educational and training opportunities for women in political parties, (c) informal networks of women mayors and (d) mentorship days for young women interested in politics.



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