

## **How do Women in Kosova Vote 2**

Publisher: Kosovo Gender Studies Center (KGSC)

The research was conducted by the Kosovar Gender Studies Center team.

Author: Luljeta Vuniqi

Technical realization, design and printing: Drin Kryeziu

© 2014 Kosovar Gender Studies Centre

All rights reserved.

[www.kgscenter.net](http://www.kgscenter.net)

## **Contents**

Introduction .....	
Acknowledgements .....	
List of Abbreviations .....	
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	
RECOMMENDATIONS .....	
SURVEY RESULTS .....	

## **Acknowledgements**

The research project "How do Women in Kosova Vote?" is an initiative of the Kosovar Gender Studies Center. On behalf of KGSC, I would like to express thankfulness and gratitude to Kvinna Till Kvinna for making this research possible.

KGSC would like to thank all interviewers for their dedication and willingness to cooperate, and all participants in the workgroups, who have enriched this study with information and recommendations.

Special thanks for the continuous support during project implementation go to the KGSC staff members: Sibel Halimi, Luljeta Demolli, Merita Fona and Driton Parduzi.

Luljeta Vuniqi,  
Executive Director  
Kosovar Gender Studies Centre

## **INTRODUCTION**

Gender equality is a fundamental human right, a common value of democratic societies and a prerequisite for Kosovo in its efforts to further develop democracy, ensuring equal participation of men and women in political and public life.

The report "How do Women in Kosovo Vote II" analyzes the situation and trends in attitudes, priorities, and perceptions of women in Kosovo on politics, politicians, gender relations and roles, as well as public policies that promote and reinforce equal participation of men and women in decision-making.

The research aims to increase both public and institutional awareness on the current situation regarding the position of women in the Kosovar society. Data and recommendations from this report will serve policymakers, politicians, researchers, media, and institutions as a knowledge base for concrete actions which would improve the women's position and role in the family and society. The research findings show that there has been a degree of progress, however, despite efforts to increase women's participation in decision-making they are still underrepresented in all spheres of governance.

This remains a major challenge for the development of our democracy. Since inclusion and equal representation of women in politics and decision-making continues to be a slow process, strategic actions by all stakeholders are needed to improve the current situation.

On the other hand, we believe that this report will also be a continuing contribution of KGSC in accurately presenting our social and political context, bringing out the views and assessments of women and girls to a range of issues elaborated in this report. In particular, we consider that the collection, analysis and dissemination of comparable data for the views, priorities and expectations of women from politics, politicians and society, are a further step towards finding solutions to improve the position of women in the future.

We hope that this report will contribute to keep the issue high on the political agenda and will inspire all stakeholders to accelerate the progress towards gender equality in our society.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Between tradition and modernity

### **How do women in Kosova vote?**

- Greater involvement of the Kosovar woman in political life can have an impact on her behavior as a voter, because she would not treat the vote as a matter of fathers, husbands and brothers, but as an important part of its role as a woman.
- Women in Kosovo do not have a tendency to change parties, which is proved by the fact that most of them had voted for the same party in the two last elections. The decision is taken long before the election campaign. Therefore it can be said that women belong to the unvarying part of the electorate. It is worth noting the reluctance to openly declare the name of the party they would vote in the next elections, as over half of the respondents refused to answer.
- In the relationship between political participation and residence, the percentages of respondents from cities and villages do not differ much between them (city: 49 percent; village: 48.6 percent; town: 2.4 percent)
- More than half of the women respondents stated that the gender aspect, respectively the level of engagement of their favorite parties on issues of women's rights and gender equality - are not the main criterion in the decision to vote for a certain party.
- Having had three options to declare why they vote the way they do, in the first option they chose the electoral campaign, or because of frustration with other parties. In the second option, their vote was determined by the confidence in the leader of the party, and only in the third option they have stated that the decision to vote for a certain party was taken because of its program.
- Three most urgent issues, categorized into three possible choices, which were identified by the women and girls of Kosovo

as the issues which should be dealt by the elected politicians in the near future are:

First choice:

- a) Economic Development
- b) Eradicating Poverty
- c) The Kosovo – Serbia dialogue

Second choice:

- a) Unemployment
- b) Corruption and Rule of Law (equal percentage)
- c) Organized Crime

Third choice:

- a) Poverty
- b) Corruption
- c) Unemployment

## **Information**

The level of information in terms of knowledge about the leaders of the most important institutions of the country is quite good. But when it comes to leaders of international institutions in Kosovo, knowledge of the respondents is significantly lower. On the other hand, 41.9 percent of women have chosen the option "Do not know" regarding to whom the leaders of the Kosovo institutions report.

- There is a lack of information regarding the Kosovo state budget, because only 26.9 percent gave the correct answer on the amount of the Kosovo budget for 2013.

- On the issue of which women politicians from parliamentary parties best represent the interests of women, respondents showed good knowledge of the work of women politicians, identifying the majority of women MPs in Parliament and Ministers who have been more vocal in public on a number of issues that have been raised and are considered women specific issues.

- Although for women in Kosovo television is still the primary source of information, a novelty which must be highlighted in comparison to our previous research (2005) is that over 30 percent of respondents use the Internet and social networks like Facebook as a second source of information for current events.

### **Personal situation**

The level of education of women and girls remains a challenge to the educational institutions in Kosovo due to the fact that only 15 percent of respondents say they have completed university education, while 37.1 percent have a secondary education.

- The fact that more than 14 percent of the respondents say that they are currently studying is consistent with the percentage of graduates (15 percent), and also indicates the need to increase the number of women with a university degree.

- A discouraging fact is that only about 32 percent of the women surveyed were employed, while the rest declared themselves as housewives or unemployed.

- Asked about the level of satisfaction with the financial situation in their families, the highest percentage goes to the options "Very satisfactory" (17.4 percent), and "Satisfactory", (74.6 percent), which offers a very interesting insight into their positive frame of mind despite an evident unemployment.

### **Attitudes on the role of women**

- In some cases the women interviewed tend to exhibit traditional attitudes regarding the role of women in society, especially in politics, as a large number of them think that for women family is more important than a political career. But, on the other hand they also express progressive views expressing the need to increase the number of women involved in politics and decision-making, at both levels of government.

Asked about what should be the number of women in decision-making positions, 40 percent stated that "About half of decision-making positions should belong to women," which is a clear stand in favor of gender equality in our society.

- Women are quite skeptical as to the experience, confidence and interest of women in order to successfully build a political career because they consider that women politicians do not have adequate support from the parties to whom they belong.

### **The electoral system**

- When asked to express their stand on the application of gender quota in politics, where political parties are legally obliged to have 30 percent of women candidates, most of the women interviewed (70 percent) are in favor of its application.

- They are also in favor of open voting lists, which is the case currently in Kosovo. The same stands were provided in our previous research (2005). Therefore, women have not changed their position on this issue.

- Women are also clear as to the manner of electing the President of the Republic of Kosovo, as over 80 percent have chosen the option of the President being elected by the public.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The report aims to raise public and institutional awareness regarding the current situation of the position of women in society. Kosovo Gender Studies Center hopes that the following recommendations will contribute to achieving this goal:

- To develop and implement employment policies which would contribute in increasing the level of employment of women and young girls in order to enlarge the level of their social inclusion.
- To invest in the economic empowerment of women, by encouraging and supporting women's entrepreneurship. There is a need for additional commitment by the Government to address the poverty of women and their inactivity in the labor market.
- To increase the level of information the women have about the work of politicians, institutions and their rights.
- To increase the level and quality of communication, consultation and cooperation between women politicians and voters.
- The media to provide more space for awareness raising campaigns aimed at eliminating all forms of discrimination against women.
- Organizations that make regular monitoring of media in Kosovo to include a gender perspective in their analysis.
- During the election campaigns the media to be monitored in all its segments (news editions, interviews, debates, front pages of newspapers, election stories, etc.) regarding the presentation of women politicians.
- To increase the level of representation of women in decision-making, politics and other sectors of society.
- To promote and strengthen women's leadership at the local level of government.
- Gender quotas should remain as an effective mechanism of increasing women's political representation.

- The gender quota to be applied not only in the political representation, but also in the decision-making structures of the political parties.

- Women's organizations and the institutional mechanisms for gender equality to organize awareness campaigns and activities which will contribute to addressing issues pertaining to gender roles and relations, and the promotion of values that further gender equality.

## **1 SURVEY RESULTS**

### **1.1 FAMILY**

The survey sample for this research consisted of 1050 women and girls, of whom 49.9 percent were surveyed in villages and 47.3 percent in cities, while 2.6 per cent in towns. Regarding marital status, 66.6 percent were married, unmarried were 30.4 percent and 2.7 percent were widowed. The level of education of women and girls in Kosovo remains a challenge to education institutions in Kosovo due to the fact that only 15 percent of respondents say they have completed university education, while 37.1 per cent have a secondary education. The fact that more than 14 percent of the respondents say that they are currently studying is consistent with the percentage of graduates (15 percent), and also indicates the need to increase the number of women with a university degree. 28.9 percent of respondents said they were in elementary school, 1.8 percent had Masters Degrees, 0.3 percent had PhD's and 2.3 percent had no schooling. This situation in the field of education significantly affects the position of the Kosovar women and girls in the difficult economic and social situation.

The employment level of women in Kosovo is discouraging, because according to the figures of the Kosovo Agency of Statistics the unemployment rate for women is 55.5 percent, versus 40.5 percent of men. Meanwhile, 49.4 percent of employed women work in the public sector.

This situation in the labor market is reflected in the KGSC research also, where women surveyed claim that 14.4 percent are employed in the private sector, 9.3 percent in the public sector, 8.2 percent are self-employed, 7.7 percent work from time to time, 2,6 percent are retired, while 32 percent declared themselves as housewives, and 25.8 percent are unemployed. Women's economic inactivity is obvious, because about 75 percent of working-age women are not seeking work.<sup>1</sup>

Asked about the level of satisfaction with the financial situation in their families, the highest percentage goes to the options "Very satisfactory"

---

<sup>1</sup> Agon Maliqi, *How rare the employed women are*, Gazeta JNK, 23 September, 2013, [www.gazetajnk.com/index.php?cid=1,1067,6485](http://www.gazetajnk.com/index.php?cid=1,1067,6485)

(17.4 percent), and "Satisfactory", (74.6 percent), which offers a very interesting insight into their positive frame of mind despite an evident unemployment.

Regarding decision-making within the family, 54.3 percent of women say they are "Satisfied" with the weight of their decision-making, 33.6 percent are "Very Satisfied", while 8.4 percent are "Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied," and only 2.9 percent are "Dissatisfied".

Although the majority of responses make it clear that women and men decide together on the family issues, a higher proportion of women decision-making is identified in decisions about the education of children, 22.3 percent, compared with 2.8 percent of men, or to the decisions dealing with household chores (cleaning, preparing food for the family, buying groceries) with 47.3 percent, compared to 6.2 percent of men.

However, when it comes to the large family spending, the situation changes. Men have greater decision-making power over women when deciding about great expenses, which is shown by the fact that 19.2 percent of men versus 6.6 percent of women decide the major expenses such as buying a house, a car, an apartment, land, etc.

## **1.2 INFORMATION**

Even though for women in Kosovo television is still the primary source of information, a novelty which must be highlighted in comparison to our previous research (2005) is that over 35.8 percent of respondents use the Internet and social networks like Facebook as a second source of information for current events.

Other mass media such as radio, newspapers, web portals, are used significantly less by women as sources of information. Only 9.8 percent of women stated that they receive information from radio, 3 percent from newspapers, and 1 percent from web portals.

**How often you use the following sources for information to be informed about current issues in Kosovo?**

No.	Source	Never	Rarely (1-2 times per week)	Often (3-5 times per week)	Regularly (every day)	Ref / NA
1	Newspaper	24.0%	51.7%	17.0%	6.2%	0.8%
2	Internet	13.3%	21.5%	28.3%	35.8%	1.1%
3	Television	1.3%	7.2%	29.6%	61.1%	0.8%
4	Radio	20.7%	44.0%	24.5%	9.8%	1.0%
5	Conversations in the family	2.9%	16.9%	55.3%	23.9%	1.0%
6	Conversations outside the family (friends, etc..)	9.3%	43.9%	37.7%	8.1%	1.0%
7	Web portals	32.9%	23.7%	26.3%	16.1%	1.0%
8	Facebook	36.9%	12.9%	18.3%	31.0%	0.9%

**Information on the institutional leaders**

Level of information related to the leaders of the most important institutions of the country is quite good: 76 percent of women stated that Atifete Jahjaga is the President of Kosovo, 77 percent knew that Kosovo's Prime Minister is Hashim Thaci, and 70.4 percent of the women surveyed cited Jakup Krasniqi as the Speaker of the Assembly of Kosovo. It is interesting that 64.8 percent of the women did not know who the Chief of the Kosovo Security Forces is, which probably can be explained by the change of name from the KPC (Kosovo

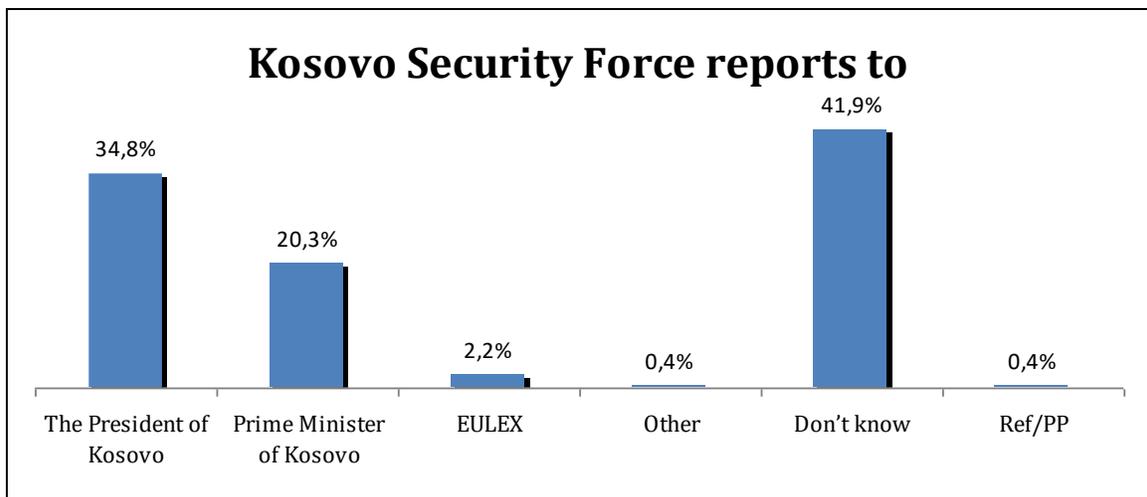
Protection Forces) to KSF (Kosovo Security Forces), but also with the lack of interest of women on issues relating to security in the traditional sense.<sup>2</sup>

However, when it comes to the leaders of international institutions in Kosovo, the respondents' information are significantly lower. When asked who is in charge of the EULEX Mission, 89.9 percent of respondents admitted they did not know, and only 1.2 percent mentioned its head Bernd Borchardt.

### **Inter-institutional relations and Accountability**

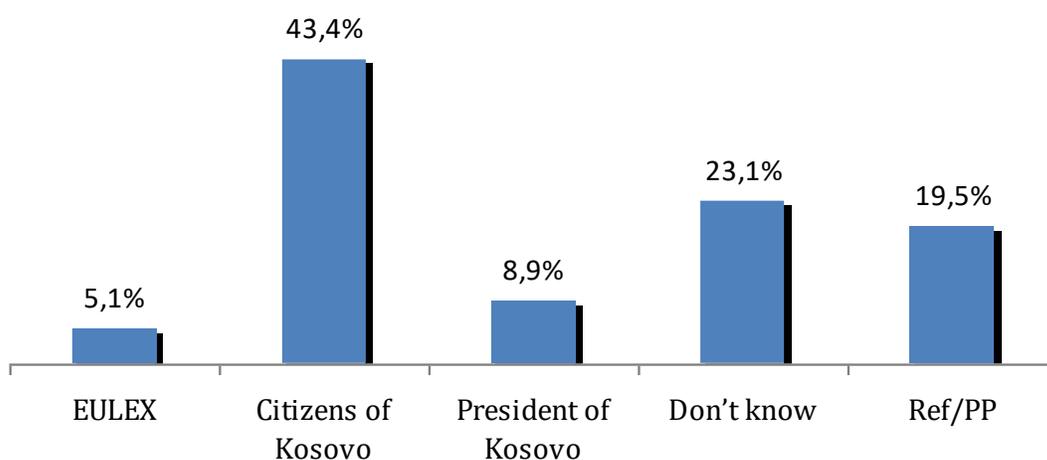
When asked to whom the leaders of Kosovo institutions report, there is a general lack of information about who is accountable to whom in the institutional governance sphere.

The option "Do not know" is chosen by 41.9 percent of women in the question "To whom the Kosovo Security Forces report", and 23.1 percent do not know to whom the Kosovo Assembly reports.



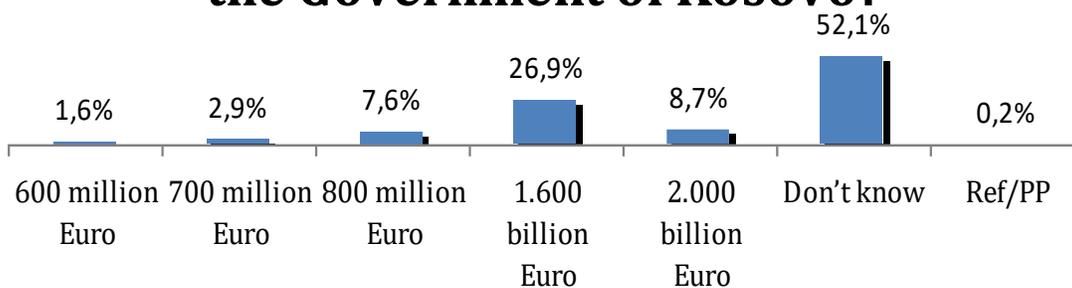
<sup>2</sup> In Kosovo, as in other countries of the world, the traditional concept of security means two key factors of country security: the army and the police. KGSC Report "Security monitoring from a gender perspective," December 2007, Prishtina.

## Assembly of Kosovo reports to

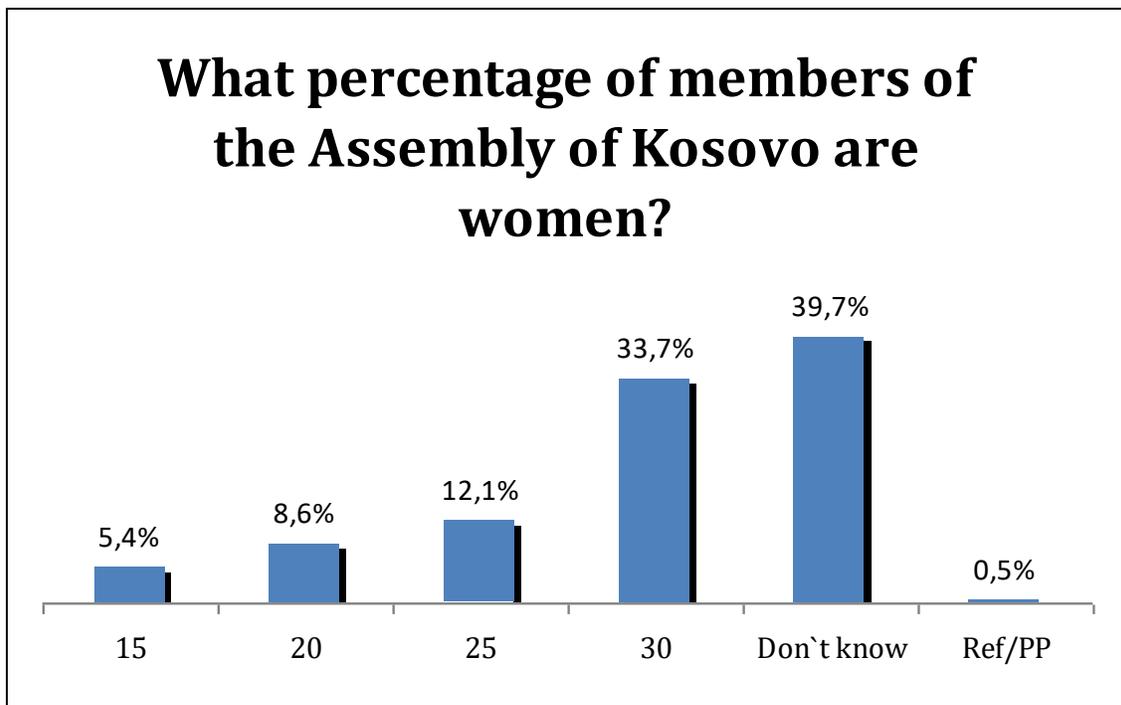


There is also a noticeable lack of information concerning the facts about Kosovo, as for example, the question about the government's budget, where only 26.9 percent gave the correct answer for the amount of the Kosovo budget for 2013.

## Can you state, what is the budget of the Government of Kosovo?



Also, when asked how many seats the Kosovo Parliament has, and which is the percentage of women in Parliament, 39.7 percent of the surveyed women did not know of how many seats the Parliament consists, while 33.7 percent were accurate regarding the percentage of women parliamentarians.



The need for raising the level of direct involvement of women in the public policy issues and institutional ones is very clear based on the data presented above.

Information and integrated strategies should be developed that would increase women's interest in this area in order for them to be motivated for gaining more education on the issues that affect their lives, such as budgeting, institutional accountability, or other issues of this nature.

### 1.3.a ATTITUDES ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN FAMILY AND SOCIETY

In this section women's attitudes regarding family issues and the role of women in the family and society have been analyzed. Through research we have tried to identify their views on marriage, cohabitation, gender roles in the family, selective abortion, violence, inheritance, etc.

From the responses a general outcome can be drawn that Kosovo society can still be characterized as a society with traditional values, especially regarding the gender roles, while it is less traditional when it comes to women employment.

#### Respondents' opinions about the statements listed in the table.

No.	STATEMENT	YES	NO	ALSO	DO NOT KNOW	Ref / NA
1	It is natural that most of the housework is a woman's duty	64.9%	26.1%	7.7%	1.3%	
2	There is nothing wrong if a couple lives together without intending to get married	34.9%	50.3%	8.6%	6.0%	0.2%
3	A preschool child is likely to suffer in his development if his mother works	36.4%	38.9%	19.1%	5.6%	
4	Caring for children is a mother's duty rather than father's	42.9%	35.0%	18.4%	3.4%	0.3%
5	Both husband and wife should contribute to household income	78.6%	8.6%	10.1%	2.4%	0.3%
6	The duty of husband is to earn money while a wife's duty is to provide care for the family and housework	26.0%	56.1%	14.4%	3.4%	0.1%
7	Women were also more likely to be managers / directors than men	34.7%	25.3%	24.1%	15.5%	0.4%
8	Men have to work at home rather than work now	44.4%	23.5%	23.7%	7.8%	0.6%
9	It is very important for a man to dress and behave as husband and wife to dress and behave as a woman	67.3%	16.8%	10.3%	5.3%	0.3%
10	When the wife earns more than her husband, it always causes problems	16.3%	57.4%	17.1%	8.9%	0.3%
11	University education is more important for a girl than a boy	40.3%	41.3%	14.0%	4.2%	0.2%
12	In general men are better political leaders than women	36.9%	40.6%	16.4%	5.8%	0.3%

13	If a company should stop employees from work, it is better to be fired than men married women	27.2%	52.7%	10.6%	9.2%	0.3%
14	Care of the elderly and the sick in the family, it is the duty of man	22.0%	56.5%	17.3%	3.9%	0.3%
15	Father and mother must decide who to marry their children, and for whom no	14.8%	69.1%	12.2%	3.8%	0.1%
16	Boys are the only heirs to family property	30.2%	51.6%	13.7%	4.3%	0.2%
17	Children need a father even when perpetrated violence against their mother	32.0%	45.3%	14.9%	7.0%	0.8%
18	Selective abortion family planning helps	12.8%	71.1%	6.0%	9.1%	1.0%

In a society where men still largely represent the public sphere and women still largely represent the private sphere, attitudes presented by the surveyed women should not be taken as a surprise. When asked about their stance regarding the following statement: "For a woman, the family is more important than a career in politics", 62.2 percent of women agree that family is more important than political career, while 28.7 percent of them disagree. Women's views on the role of women and men in the family, as two distinct roles, are reflected in the responses to the statement: "Caring for children is more a mother's duty than father's", with 43.6 percent agreeing. However, compared to the previous survey (2005), in which 56.2 percent of women agreed with this attitude, there is a tendency towards gradual change of the traditional views about the role of women in the family.

At the same time, for certain family issues and behaviors women surveyed demonstrate more modern views. For example, regarding the stand: "Father and mother have to decide who their daughter will marry," 67.8 percent were against this attitude. Nevertheless, they were not so open when it came to cohabitation, because 52 percent of women disagreed with the statement: "There is nothing wrong if a couple decides to live together without intending to get married."

Encouraging are women's views regarding selective abortion, where 67.8 percent of women disagreed with the statement "Selective abortion helps family planning," and also in terms of inheritance of the family property: "Boys are the sole inheritors of family wealth" shows

49.2 percent against this attitude with 29.6 percent agreeing, while 15.5 percent that neither agree nor disagree.

Also, 44.9 percent of the women respondents disagreed with the attitude: "Children need a father even when he perpetrates violence against their mother," as opposed to 31.6 percent who agree.

## **ROLE OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY**

In the past, men traditionally worked outside the home and were the sole supporters of their families. Women, on the other hand, have governed the domestic sphere and were expected to stay at home to raise the children, to care for the elderly, the food, household chores, etc.

However, since the time when women have entered the labor market, women's and men's roles in society have changed steadily for decades throughout the world, and these changes were noted in the Kosovar society also. Gender roles, hence the role of women in the Kosovar society, are changing, but in a slow pace, and this situation is reflected in the attitudes of women surveyed for this research. They express certain aspects of the traditional views, as 41.9 percent agree with the statement: "Men are better political leaders than women." Also, regarding the stand "It is very important for a man to dress and behave as a man, and for a woman to dress and behave as a woman", 67.2 percent agree and only 18.2 percent disagree. However, in some respects women are not so rigorous regarding distinctive gender roles and lean towards more egalitarian attitudes when it comes to employment, childcare and housework. Thus, 59 percent disagree with the statement: "The duty of a man is to earn money, while the duty of a woman is to provide for the family and housework." Also, when asked about the stand "If a company should dismiss employees from work, it is better to dismiss married women than men", 55.2 percent of women disagree, 24.3 percent agree, and 10.4 percent don't agree nor disagree. Women think that both husband and wife should contribute to household income because 78.9 percent have selected this option. While the issues such as the division of housework between men and women show more traditional approach of the women surveyed, when it comes to the women employment and their contribution to the family income they have less traditional approach supporting a more active role for women in society. Although the role of women in Kosovo society is changing, the balance between work and family obligations is a question that concern women who work and have a family. In our case, the system of children care and eldercare is

still at a low level of development and insufficient to support working women. Working women still carry the double burden of employment and housework, which among other things means caring for children and the elderly.

### **1.3.b ATTITUDES OF WOMEN ON THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN THE ECONOMY AND SOCIETY**

Kosovar society is one of the post-communist societies which are undergoing a transitional phase and systemic social changes since the 90s. In this part of the research, the goal was to make an assessment of the attitudes of women regarding how they see the role of the state in the economy and society in current transitional circumstances.

Their views on these issues seems to be quite ambivalent: on one hand, they have stands that align with the idea of a welfare state where the state should take the responsibility for the economic and social welfare of its citizens and create policies that provide health care and free education, financial assistance for the unemployed, etc. This is best reflected in the stand: "The state must ensure that all citizens have free education and health services", where 64.6 percent agree with the statement, only 13.1 percent disagree, and 13.8 neither agree nor disagree. Supportive of this conclusion is the affirmation of the strong role of worker unions, because 78 percent think that "Employees need strong unions to protect their working conditions and salaries".

Whereas, on the other hand, some of their attitudes match more with a market economy and are not disapproving of the importance of the economic development even if it damages public services: 45.9 percent of women are against this stand, but it is not a small number of women who agree with it: 30.7 percent. Also, despite constant criticism against the privatization process in Kosovo, 32.3 percent of women agree that "Without privatization, companies will be worse in the future than they are now," while 26.8 percent disagree, and 14.4 percent neither agreed nor disagreed.

This transitional phase is being accompanied by the high level of unemployment therefore the traditional solidarity of the Kosovar families for helping families in economic difficulties is still very evident. The aid mainly comes from emigrants who continue to support their

families in Kosovo despite the global economic crisis.<sup>3</sup> Asked to give their evaluation on the stand: "If an extensive family member has a much better financial situation than the other family members, he has an obligation to help them materially," 38.3 percent of the surveyed women agreed, but there was also a high percentage of women who did not agree, 32.6 percent, while 19.8 percent neither agreed nor disagreed. Overall, the answers gave a feeling of ambiguity and uncertainty about the role of the state in economic and social development of the country, often selecting the option "Do not know", while when dealing with the issues of welfare of their families the answers were much clearer, which can be explained by women's traditional role in the family.

Respondents' opinions on the statements listed in the table

No.	STATEMENT	YES	NO	MAYBE	DO NOT KNOW	Ref / NA
1	Country's economic development is the main goal, even when it is at the expense of public services	32.1%	45.7%	10.0%	11.8%	0.4%
2	Employees need unions to protect their working conditions and salaries	77.6%	6.4%	9.2%	6.7%	0.1%
3	Government should take measures to reduce differences in income	62.7%	9.1%	18.2%	9.8%	0.2%
4	Without privatization, firms in the future will be even worse than they are now	28.2%	30.9%	15.1%	25.1%	0.7%
5	Always a bad thing for workers to participate in the running of the companies	27.5%	32.3%	19.3%	20.7%	0.2%
6	The state shall provide free education to all citizens and health services	65.1%	15.3%	11.2%	8.3%	0.1%
7	If a family member has extensive financial situation much better than the others, has an obligation to help them materially	41.4%	31.1%	18.6%	8.9%	

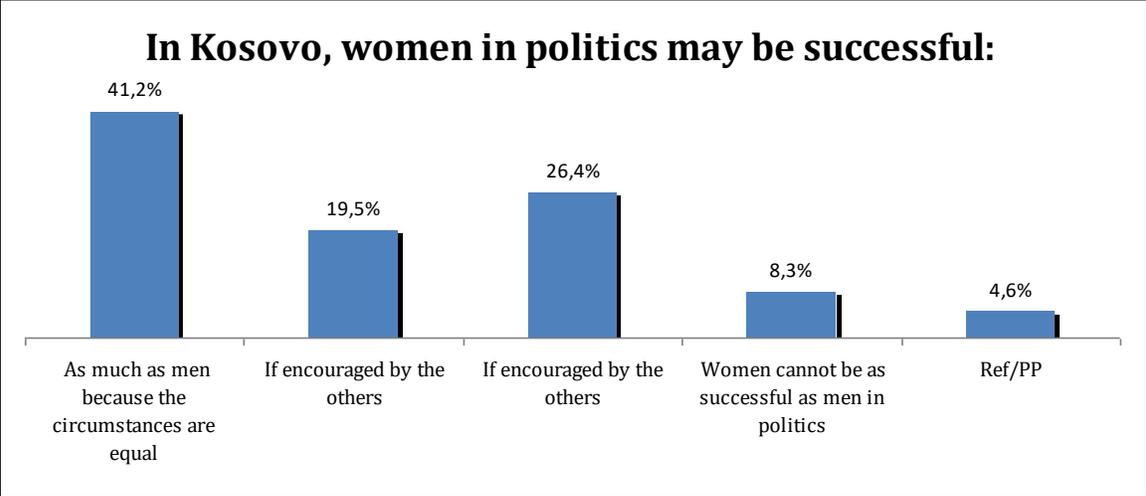
<sup>3</sup> During 2013, Kosovo nationals living in emigration sent to their country 621 million Euros. [www.telegrafi.com/ekonomi/remitencat-Itemid-to-the-higher-than-we-Albania-46-18773.html](http://www.telegrafi.com/ekonomi/remitencat-Itemid-to-the-higher-than-we-Albania-46-18773.html)

8	Government should plan budget mainstreaming	70.0%	9.6%	9.6%	10.1%	0.7%
---	---	-------	------	------	-------	------

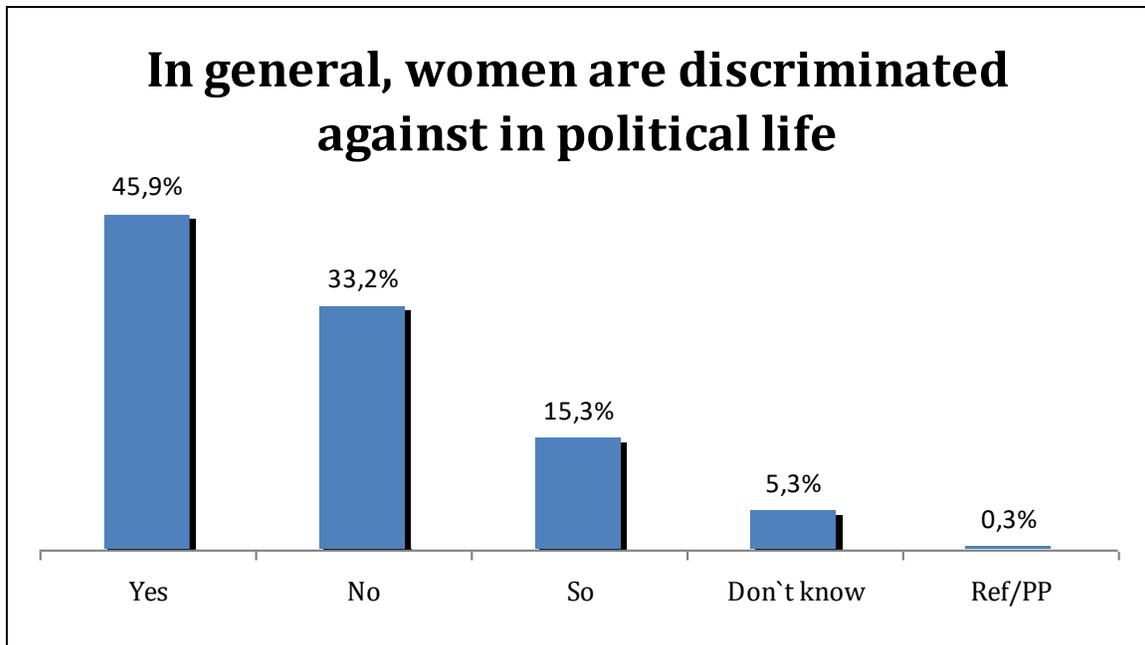
### 1.3 ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN POLITICS

Despite the positive indicators such as the application of the 30 percent quota, significant challenges remain for the meaningful participation of women in politics. They are faced with a lack of decision-making power within the institutions and political parties, which so far proves that leadership experience is still very centralized in the hands of men leaders of political parties.

Very few women engage in electoral processes as the election officials, as shown in an analysis of the 2013 Elections in Kosovo, when only 17 percent of the staffs in MEC, PSC and MQV were women. From the survey results it appears that women are quite clear about the fact that the Kosovo society and political parties are not very supportive of women politicians and in more favorable circumstances and encouraged by others they would have been as successful as men.



This graph reflects the fact that a large number of women, 45.9 per cent, believe that women in politics are generally discriminated against, but on the other hand a high enough percentage of 33.2 percent of women do not share the same opinion. These data reflect differences in opinions on this issue that can be interpreted as the result of an ongoing debate in our society about the role of women in Kosovo politics.

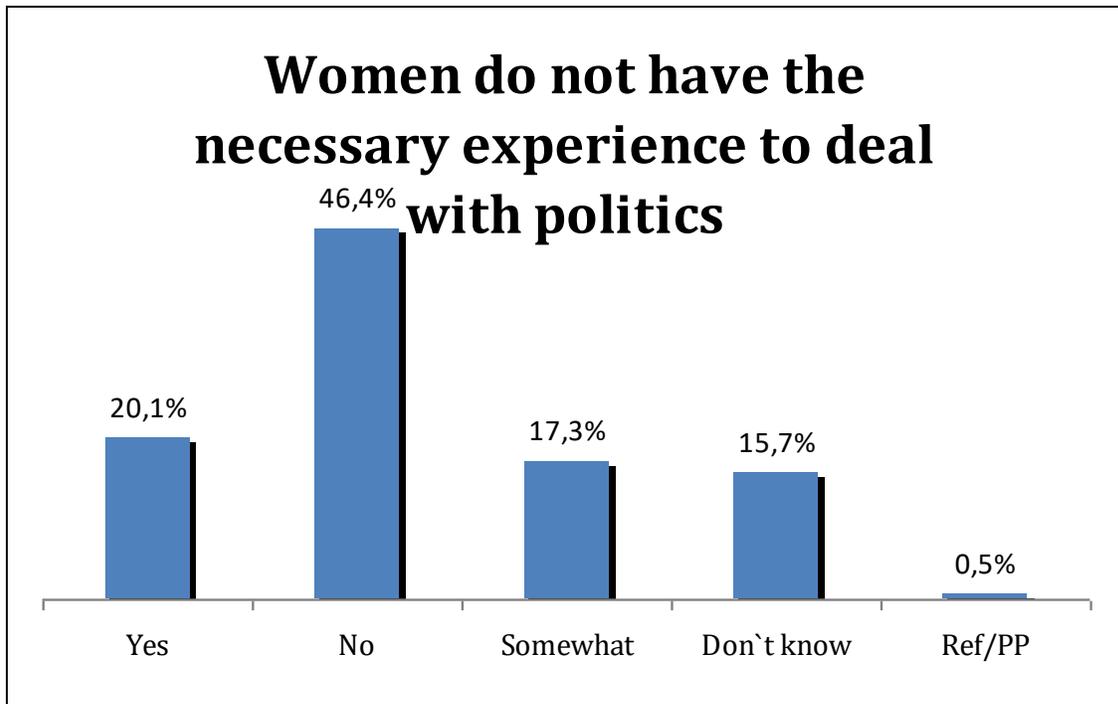


Although voters' perceptions are changing for women politicians, yet women politicians still have to fight for "credibility" compared to the men in politics. They continue to be seen as politically less powerful and this perception in the media plays an important role in the stereotyping of women politicians.<sup>4</sup>

When asked about the stand: "Only some women deserve all respect, while most do not justify the trust of voters", their responses were as follows: 34.2 percent agreed, 29.7 percent disagreed, while 24 percent answered "Not sure".

With the attitude "Women do not have the experience necessary to deal with politics," 20.1 percent agree, 46.4 percent disagree, while 17.3 percent "Neither agree nor disagree".

<sup>4</sup> KGSC Report: "The image of women politicians in Kosovo media," June 2009, Prishtina.



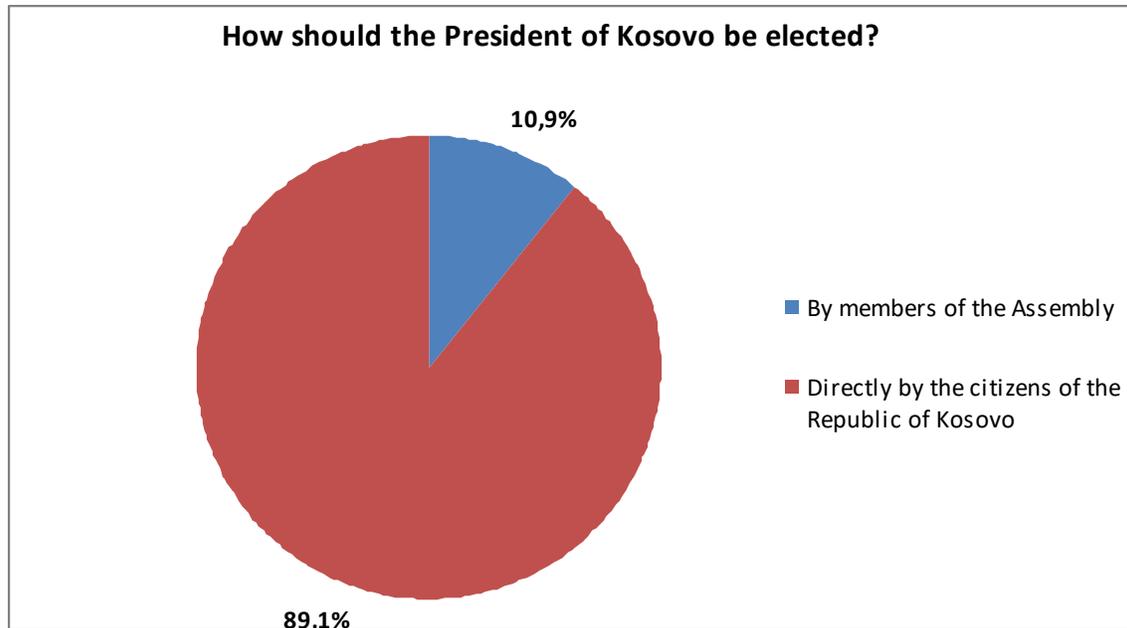
Regarding the women politicians from Kosovo parliamentary parties that best represent the interests of women, respondents showed good knowledge of the work of women politicians from the major parties in Parliament. They could correctly identify women MPs in Parliament and Ministers who have been most vocal in public on a number of issues that were raised by them. Women surveyed were asked "Which woman from the parties PDK, LDK, VV, AAK, AKR, best represents the interests of women?" Vlora Citaku with 56.4 percent has emerged the most trusted women in PDK, in LDK it was Teuta Sahatqija with 46.6 percent, in Levizja Vetevendosje Albulena Haxhiu with 62.5 percent, in AAK Donika Kadaj Bujupi with 89 percent, and in AKR Mimoza Kusari Lila by 80 percent.

Since 2011, Kosovo's President is Ms. Atifete Jahjaga and thus Kosovo is ranked among the few countries in the world to have a woman president. Since Kosovo for the first time has a woman in an important state institution, it was interesting to have the opinions of women and girls on their assessment of her performance so far and in particular their satisfaction with the representation of interests of women and girls in Kosovo. Thus, in the question "How satisfied are you with the work of the President of Kosovo?" 5.5 percent of the respondents said they were very satisfied, 35.6 percent were satisfied, 47.6 percent

were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied are expressing, while completely dissatisfied were 11.3 percent. When asked to estimate the contribution of the President in representing the interests of women in the country, 5.8 percent were "very satisfied", 32.5 percent were "satisfied", 50.7 percent were "nor satisfied nor dissatisfied", and "completely dissatisfied" were 11 percent of the women surveyed.

### **The manner of election of the President**

Currently, according to the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo, the President is elected by the Parliament by secret ballot with the votes of two-thirds (2/3) of all members of the Assembly. But there has been a debate about the need for constitutional changes that were followed with proposals for amendments under which it was proposed that the election of President of the country to be done by the votes of the citizens. Justifications for this way of direct public election of the President of the country were that the votes of the citizens would avoid possible political crises; would give more legitimacy and would avoid calculations with the MP's votes, and thus would represent national unity. These amendments were not adopted by the Kosovo Assembly, but it is expected that in the frame of constitutional changes these amendments to be approved in subsequent legislation. In the course of this discussion, KGSC team asked the women for feedback regarding their preferences regarding the manner of electing the President of the country.



Women are unambiguous - 89.1 percent - that the President of the Republic of Kosovo should be elected directly from the citizens of Kosovo.

Greater involvement of women in political life can have an impact on their voting behaviors, since they would not treat politics more as a matter of fathers, husbands and brothers, but as an important part of their roles as women.

### **The Last Local Elections**

In late 2013, local elections were held in Kosovo. These elections were generally considered as free and democratic by the Kosovar and international institutions, and by the international observer missions, such as EU EOM (European Election Observation Mission) who described these elections in reports as a positive step for democracy in Kosovo.

These elections for choosing mayors and municipal assemblies had two features. First, they were the first to be held under the Kosovo laws in the entire territory of Kosovo, including four northern municipalities with Serb majority. Secondly, for the first time a woman was elected a city mayor – Mimoza Kusari Lila in the municipality of Gjakova.

Thanks to the gender quota, out of the total number of municipal councilors, 338 are women, and 665 men, or 34 percent women and 66 percent men. As of the 224 mayoral candidates only 9 candidates

were women, of which only one candidate was elected. From 38 municipalities, only one woman was chosen as the Speaker of the Municipal Assembly - Valentina Bunjaku Rexhepi in Gjilan. Even though the first woman Mayor in Kosovo should be seen as a positive development, the overall gender imbalance is evident. Also, after the constitution of the assemblies and local governments, women are under-represented in decision-making positions within municipalities. From a total of 315 departments, 301 are managed by men, while 14, or 4.4%, are managed by women.<sup>5</sup>

## **2. PRIORITIES OF WOMEN**

Lack of data on the demographic composition, i.e., the exact number of women voters participating in the elections, makes it impossible to have information on the voting power of the women in determining the final outcome of the elections. In the 2012 Presidential Elections in the United States women were the defining force for Barack Obama's victory. According to the study of the Center for American Progress on the 2012 elections, 53 percent of voters were women, and women who voted for Obama were a third of the entire electoral body. According to this study, they decided to vote for Obama because he was considered the leader who would address women's priorities like the economy, healthcare and abortion.<sup>6</sup>

Based on our survey results, women in Kosovo have highlighted three priorities. They were asked: "In terms of your needs and interests, which are the three main issues which require urgent commitment by Kosovo's elected representatives?"

The first modality was listed the "Economic development" with 50 percent. The second modality was "Poverty" with 16.9 percent, and the third issue was the "Dialogue between Prishtina and Belgrade", with 6.4 percent.

If we compare these results with the ones from the previous research, we can see that the economic development now is the first priority while before it was the second (39.3 percent).

---

<sup>5</sup> Retrieved from Ministry of Local Government. January 2014

<sup>6</sup> How Women Changed the outcome of the Elections, Margie Omero and Tara McGuinness December, 2012.

<http://cdn.americanprogress.org/wpcontent/uploads/2012/12/GenderGap-4.pdf>

Whereas regarding the issue of unemployment there is a big difference with the previous research, because 40.8 percent of women now consider the unemployment as a priority as compared with 7.6 percent in the previous research.

It is apparent that issues such as low pensions, with 4.7 percent, and domestic violence, with 1.6 percent, are not considered urgent issues. These low percentages on the issues where the women see the role of the state decisive for their solving reflect an outlook that domestic violence is still an inner family problem.

	<b>PDK</b>	<b>LDK</b>	<b>VV</b>	<b>AAK</b>
<b>Pristina-Belgrade dialogue</b>	6.1	5.1	4.7	3.1
<b>Economic development</b>	43.9	51.3	48.8	57.8
<b>Environmental pollution</b>	8.3	6.8	2.3	1.6
<b>International representation of Kosovo</b>	3.8	1.7	2.3	4.7
<b>Recognition of Kosovo state</b>	2.3	1.7	0	1.6
<b>Low pensions</b>	5.3	5.1	9.3	4.7
<b>Poverty</b>	16.7.1	17.9	25.6	20.3
<b>Illiteracy</b>	0.8	0.9	0	0
<b>European Union Integration</b>	0	0.9	0	1.6
<b>Domestic violence</b>	3	1.7	0	1.6
<b>Corruption</b>	5.3	3.4	2.3	1.6
<b>Healthcare</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Gender inequality</b>	0.8	0	0	0
<b>Caring for children</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Caring for persons suffering from war</b>	0	0	2.3	1.6
<b>Unemployment</b>	3	1.7	2.3	0
<b>Northern Mitrovica</b>	0	0.9	0	0
<b>Expensive public services</b>	0.8	0	0	0
<b>Rule of law</b>	0	0.9	0	0

## 2.1 WOMEN'S POLITICAL PREFERENCES

Women in Kosovo do not have a tendency to change parties, which is proved by the fact that most of them had voted for the same party in the two last elections. The decision is taken long before the election campaign. Therefore it can be said that women belong to the unvarying part of the electorate.

It is worth noting the reluctance to openly declare the name of the party they would vote in the next elections, as over half of the respondents refused to answer.

Regarding voting trends, there is a difference between the voters who live in the village and those who live in the city. The city women voters are more likely to change the party than the village women voters. Preferences of the women voters in towns are closer to those in the villages.

In the relationship between political participation and residence, the percentages of respondents from cities and villages do not differ much between them (city: 49 percent; village: 48.6 percent, town: 2.4 percent)

The answers of respondents regarding the context in which they take the decision to vote for a specific party are presented in the following table.

<b>DECISION</b>	<b>PDK</b>	<b>LDK</b>	<b>VV</b>	<b>AAK</b>
<b>Early (earlier than two years ago)</b>	<b>56.7%</b>	<b>62.3%</b>	<b>31.3%</b>	<b>41.9%</b>
<b>Before the election campaign</b>	<b>15.6%</b>	<b>23.2%</b>	<b>16.7%</b>	<b>20.9%</b>
<b>During the election campaign</b>	<b>15.6%</b>	<b>5.8%</b>	<b>27.1%</b>	<b>27.9%</b>

<b>A few days before the election (1-3 days)</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>6.3%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>
<b>On the Election Day</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>
<b>Ref / NA</b>	<b>11.1%</b>	<b>7.2%</b>	<b>16.7%</b>	<b>4.7%</b>

## **REASONS**

Having had three options to declare why they vote the way they do, in the first option they chose the electoral campaign, or because of frustration with other parties. In the second option, their vote was determined by the confidence in the leader of the party, and only in the third option they have stated that the decision to vote for a certain party was taken because of its program.

Asked about the reasons that have contributed most in determining their vote, the women surveyed said that the main reason was "The party's election campaign" (24.3 percent), whereas 13.5 percent said that "Disappointment with other parties" was the reason that influenced their vote. Two other aspects that are important to voters are "Quality of party cadres" (10.8 percent) and "Family connections with party activists" (7.1 percent).

Finally, it is noteworthy that the second main reason for determining the vote is "The leader of the party", with 12.3 percent.

**What are three reasons that have contributed mostly in determining your vote?**

No.	Reasons	First Choice	Second choice	Third choice
1	The party's election campaign	24.3%	0%	0%
2	Family connections with party activists	7.1%	0.8%	0%
3	Disappointment with other parties	13.5%	3.5%	0%
4	The quality of party cadres	10.8%	10.4%	0.8%
5	Better representation of women's interests	3%	8.8%	1.3%
6	The contribution of the party proved so far	2.6%	10.8%	7.0%
7	The leader of the party	2.9%	12.3%	9.0%
8	The work of the local branch	0%	4.4%	3.9%
9	International support party	0%	1.5%	3.0%
10	Party program	0.8%	0.5%	25.6%
11	Something else	0.5%	0.4%	1.1%
12	Ref / NA	34.6%	46.9%	48.4%

Categorized by the parties, the voters of Vetevendosje (32.1 percent) are mostly influenced by the party leader, followed by the voters of AAK (18 percent), while the voters of LDK (14.7 percent) and PDK voters (11.3 percent) are less influenced by the leader of the party.

"The election campaign of the party" is the most important reason for the voters of PDK (28.9 percent), LDK (37.3 percent), Vetevendosje (37.9 percent) and AAK (54 percent).

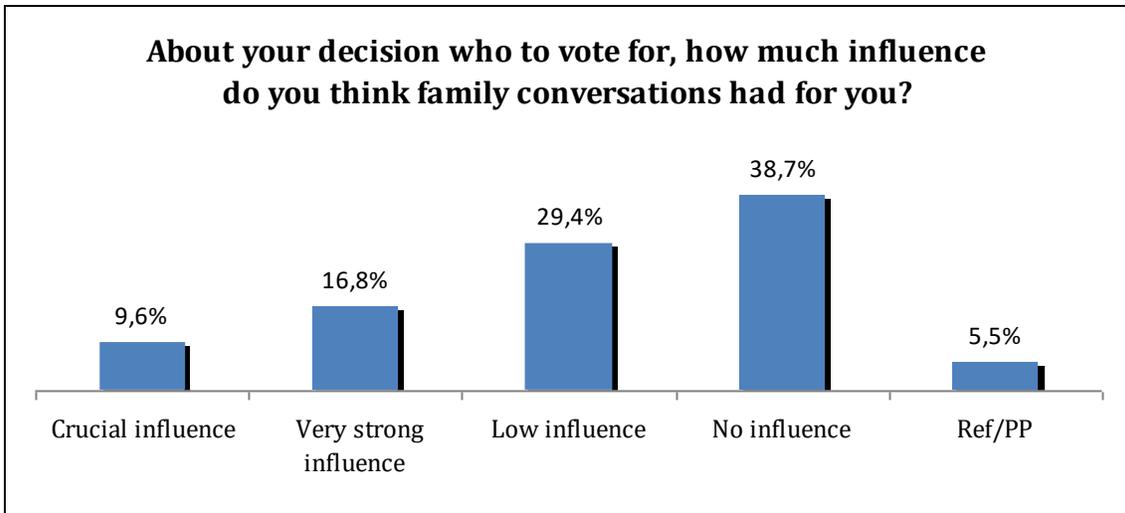
The next reason as to the importance is "Quality of party cadres": LDK (25.3 percent), PDK (17.5 percent), Vetevendosje (17.2 percent) and AAK (10 percent).

	<b>PDK</b>	<b>LDK</b>	<b>VV</b>	<b>AAK</b>
<b>The party's election campaign</b>	<b>28.9</b>	<b>37.3</b>	<b>37.9</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Family connections with party activists</b>	<b>15.5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Disappointment with other parties</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>13.3</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>The quality of party cadres</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>25.3</b>	<b>17.2</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Better representation of women's interests **</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>18.7</b>	<b>24.1</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>The contribution of the party proved so far</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>The leader of the party</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>32.8</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Work local branch</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>International support of the party ***</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Party program</b>	<b>37.1</b>	<b>49.3</b>	<b>41.4</b>	<b>26</b>

Regarding the impact of the family on the vote of the women surveyed, our research has found that in most cases the family does not decide their vote.

Conversations in the family have "No impact" on the vote of 40.1 percent of respondents, and "Very little impact" for 28.1 per cent of the voters.

On the other hand, these conversations have a "Decisive influence" on 10.1 percent of the voters, and "Huge impact" on 13.8 per cent.

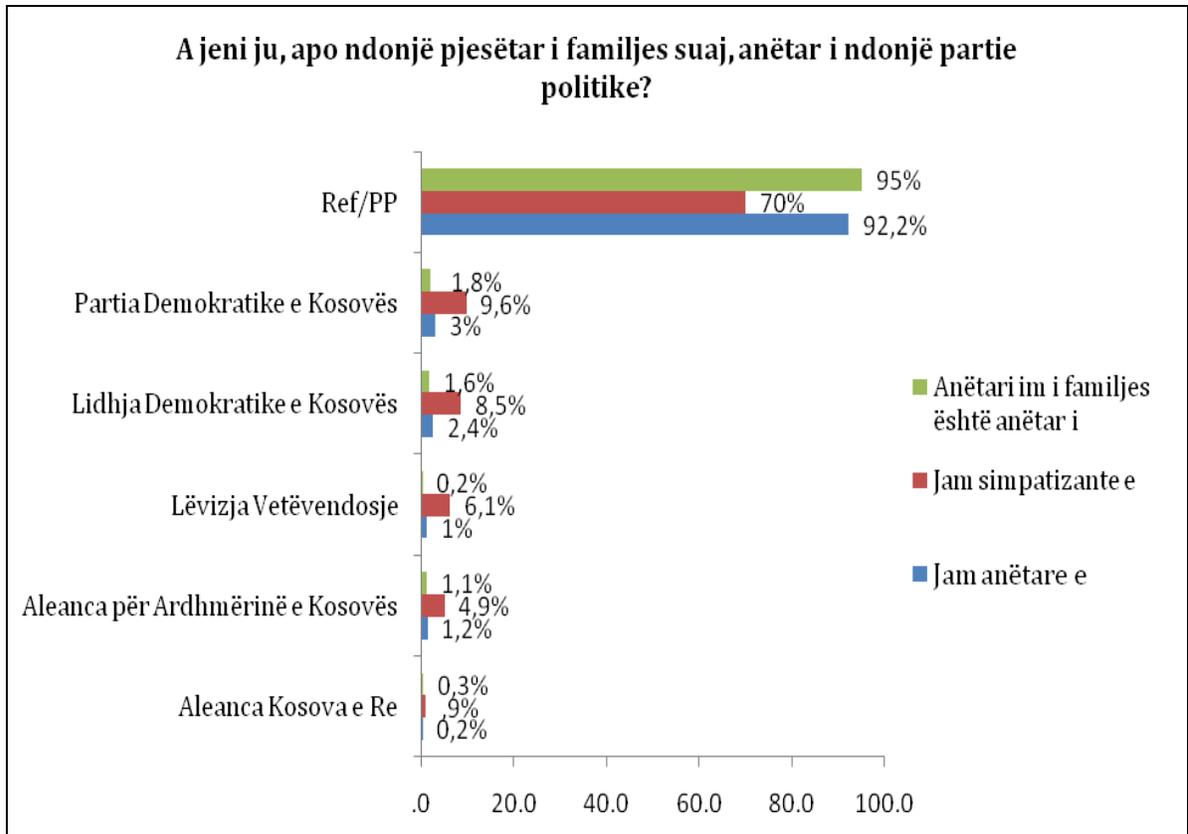


## **POLITICAL PARTICIPATION**

A very small number of respondents claimed they were members of a political party, while 93.3 percent were not affiliated to any party. Of those who were party members, 1.8 percent claimed to be members of LDK, 2.4 percent of PDK, 1.3 percent of AAK, 0.3 percent of AKR, and 1.1 percent of Vetevendosje.

Regarding the party membership of the family members, there was no big change identified between respondents' membership and their spouses' (See table).

When asked "Do you feel close to any party?" 29.9 percent claimed to be close to LDK, 28.2 percent cited PDK, 18.8 percent mentioned Vetevendosje, 17 percent AAK, and AKR 1 percent.

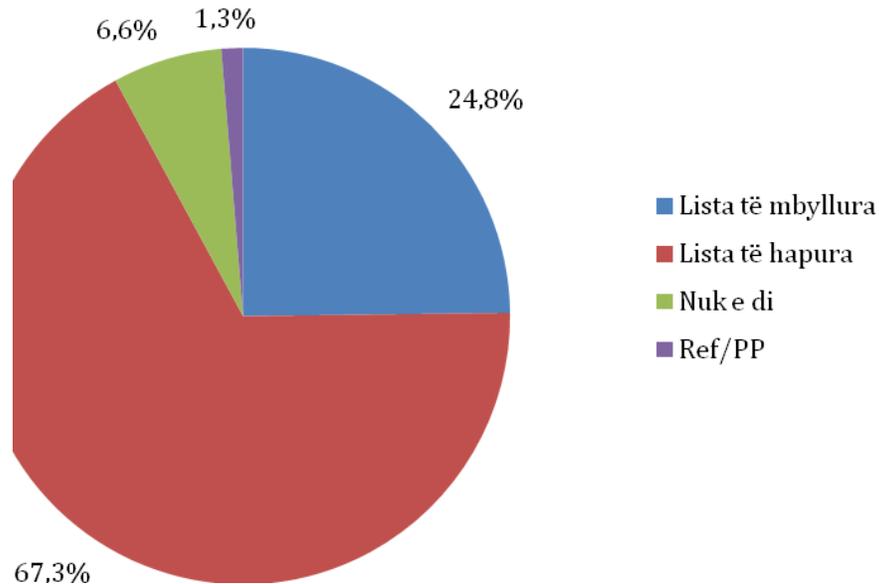


### Open Lists vs. Closed Lists

In Kosovo the voting is done by choosing from an open list of candidates. This practice has sparked public debate on whether the voting should be done with open or closed candidates' lists. The issue of which option suits more the democracy in the country has always created divided opinions.

The women voters in our survey are clearly in favor of open-lists voting. 64.9 percent of the respondents prefer the open lists, while 25.1 percent prefer closed lists, 8.7 percent say they do not know, and 1.1 percent did not answer.

### Me cilën mënyrë preferoni të votoni?



## GENDER QUOTA

Application of gender quotas in politics as a strategy or mechanism for raising the participation and representation of women in politics is being applied in many countries. This has led to rapid changes wherever they currently apply, and in all cases they have affected the overall increase of women's representation in parliaments in the world.<sup>7</sup>

When asked about their attitude regarding gender quotas in politics, 19.5 percent of the surveyed women have declared that they strongly agree, followed by 48.6 percent which agree, while 13.4 percent disagree and only 3.8 percent strongly disagree.

The research shows that most women are in favor of gender quotas and that the introduction of gender quotas in the Elections Law corrects the underrepresentation of women in Kosovo politics. Although gender quota until now has "survived" the electoral reforms so far, at first glance it appears that a social consensus on them has been reached, as it is understood from the statements of the respondents. However, there have been critical voices towards the quota coming not only from politics and politicians but also from other social strata.

---

<sup>7</sup> Women occupy a mere 18.5 percent of the seats in national Parliaments around the world. "Mandated Spaces for marginalized Faces: Gender Quotas in the Middle East", by Kristine H. Goulding.

The most common criticism made to the application of gender quotas is the lack of "legitimacy" of women elected through quotas and "quality" of representation.

## **FAMILY VOTING**

There are many factors that influence the voters, such as age, gender, level of education, occupation, economic status, ethnicity and religion, but there are other factors such as family and other groups. In some researches carried out in Kosovo in which the issue of family voting was addressed, it was considered as a phenomenon which has resulted on the violation of the rights of women, girls and the elderly to vote freely.<sup>8</sup>

Based on a definition provided by the Venice Commission, "Family Voting" is present when a male member of the family accompanies one or more female relatives in the voting booth. Such practices are justified by the illiteracy of female voters and assistance from their relatives during the vote. The argument that most members of the same family vote the same party and that the majority are illiterate does not sound very convincing and should be challenged.<sup>9</sup>

For the purposes of our study, we have made some inquiries which could give us answers on how women and girls in Kosovo vote and how affects their family in determining which party or candidate they vote.

The responses of women and girls surveyed on the question "Do you vote in person or someone from your family votes for you" were as the following: only 4.9 percent of respondents admitted that someone from their family has voted in their name, and 8 percent refused to answer. In the question "In your opinion, what impact did family conversations have had on your decision to vote", 9.6 percent said they were crucial for them in orienting their vote, 16.8 percent admitted that they have a strong influence, 29.4 percent said they have a weak impact, while 38.7 percent said they did not have any impact on how they vote.

It is evident that the impact of the family and of the conversations in the family determine to some extent the vote, but at the same time it is also necessary that women and young girls to raise their awareness that the right to vote is undisputed and that its violation is a violation of their rights and is sanctioned by law.

---

<sup>8</sup> (<http://kfos.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Top-Problems-Election-alb.pdf>).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

### **3 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESEARCH**

#### **3.1. Sample**

In this research there were surveyed only women who are entitled to vote, i.e., 18 years and older.

KGSC research sample was 1,050 women and girls, of whom 49.9 percent were surveyed in villages, 47.3 percent in cities and 2.6 percent in towns. 66.6 percent of them were married, unmarried were 30.4 percent and 2.7 percent were widowed.

#### **2.2. Survey Instruments**

The survey was based on the questionnaire which was developed by the Kosovo Gender Studies Centre. In designing the questionnaire local and international experts from the fields of sociology, psychology and gender studies have participated. Thematic sections of the questionnaire included the following issues:

- FAMILY INFORMATION
- ATTITUDES ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE FAMILY AND SOCIETY
- ATTITUDES ON THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN SOCIETY
- SOURCES OF INFORMATION
- ATTITUDES ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN POLITICS
- HOW DO WOMEN VOTE?

#### **2.3. Field research and data processing**

The research was conducted by the KGSC team, among whom there were also several volunteers. The team consisted of 20 pollsters. As an element of its capacity building mandate, KGSC hired inexperienced pollsters which have undergone professional trainings and regular supervision. Fieldwork took 20 days, and it was carried out between June and July 2013.

The survey was quality-checked by four supervisors, and has proven to be of high quality. In general, respondents were very well received by respondents, especially in rural areas.

Data processing was done in SPSS 14.0 software package, and the results were presented in the form of synthetic tables (containing frequencies and percentages).

### **KGSC Team**

The research "How do Women in Kosova Vote? – Part 2" was conducted at the initiative of Kosovo Gender Studies Center. The research was made possible by financial means of Kvinna Till Kvinna (KTK).

Research participants:

Project management, data analysis and questionnaire design: Luljeta Vuniqi.

Questionnaire design, training and fieldwork: Sibel Halimi

Data input and presentation in the tabular form: Donjeta Demolli

Survey team: Aferdita, Armend, Dhurata, Fexhrie, Hana, Ilir, Kenan Kushtrim, Lumturie, Marigona, Muhamet, Nadire.