



Qendra Kosovare për Studime Gjinore
Kosovar Gender Studies Center



ECONOMIC SITUATION OF ROMA, ASHKALI AND EGYPTIAN WOMEN



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova-Republic of Kosovo
Qeveria - Vlada - Government
ZYRA E KRYEMINISTRIT / OFFICE OF THE PRIME
MINISTER / URED PREMIJERA
AGJENCIA PËR BARAZI GJINORE / AGENCIJA ZA
RAVNOPRAVNOST POLOVA /
AGENCY OF GENDER EQUALITY

Financed by:

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

This research conducted by the KGSC, through IDRA Research and Consulting, within the implementation of the project “Addressing the needs of single mothers and women of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in economy”, funded by Agency for Gender Equality (AGE), Office of the Prime Minister, within the financial support for projects and initiatives to strengthen the role of women in society and economy - 2021 Economic Recovery Program, Measure four of the second phase.

Disclaimer: This research paper has been produced with the financial support of the European Union. The contents of this paper are the sole responsibility of the Kosovar Gender Studies Center and do not necessarily reflect the views of the AGE.

Author © Kosovar Gender Studies Center (KGSC), May 2021. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission of KGSC.

CONTENT

Introduction	6
Methodology of the Survey.....	6
Profile of the Respondents.....	8
Education, Information, and Employment.....	10
Economic, Social and Health Welfare	18
Conclusions and Recommendations	30
References	33

LIST OF FIGURES

Table 1 Target Sample by Gender	7
Table 2 Target Sample by Age	7
Table 3 Target Sample by Region	7
Table 4 Target Sample by Location (Urban or Rural)	7
Figure 1 Women surveyed according to region.....	8
Figure 2 Women surveyed according to age	8
Figure 3 Women surveyed according to ethnicity	8
Figure 4 Women surveyed according to location	8
Figure 5 Women surveyed according to education.....	9
Figure 6 Women surveyed according to civil status	9
Figure 7 Number of family members	9
Figure 8 Number of family members over 14 years-old.....	9
Figure 9 Current living situation	9
Figure 10 Who do you live with?.....	9
Figure 11 Reasons for dropping out of primary and secondary school	10
Figure 12 Reasons for dropping out of primary and secondary school according to age group.....	11
Figure 13 Most used sources of information.....	11
Figure 14 Most used sources of information on issues of politics, economy, other current events by age	12
Figure 15 Most used sources of information on issues of politics, economy, other current events by education level	12
Figure 16 Possession of work contract by employed respondents.....	13
Figure 17 Working hours of employed respondents	13
Figure 18 Method of payment of employed respondents	13
Figure 19 Age when respondents started to work	13
Figure 20 Employment challenges of respondents by group age	14
Figure 21 Employment challenges of respondents by ethnicity	14
Figure 22 Reasons why unemployed women do not work and do not seek a job by age group	15
Figure 23 Reasons why unemployed women do not work and do not seek a job by ethnicity	15
Figure 24 Desire to work of unemployed women, women who seek a job, and women who are not seeking a job by age group	16
Figure 25 Preferred sector to work of unemployed women who want to work	16
Figure 26 Unemployed women who have applied for a job by age group	16
Figure 27 Unemployed women who have applied for a job by ethnicity	16
Figure 28 Registration with the employment agency.....	17
Figure 29 Information on vocational training programs in their communities.	17
Figure 30 Attendance of respondents in trainings	17
Figure 31 Participation of girls/women in training that respondents attended	17
Figure 31 Economic situation of respondents' families	18
Figure 32 Concern about wellbeing by income level.....	18
Figure 33 Concern about wellbeing by region	19
Figure 34 Urgent institutional engagement on different issues	19
Figure 35 Deterioration of economic situation after spreading of Covid-19	20
Figure 36 Sources of information about Covid-19 by age group	20
Figure 37 Sources of information about Covid-19 by employment status	21
Figure 38 Perception of increase of prejudice or discrimination since the spreading of Covid-19 by age group.....	21
Figure 39 Perception of increase of prejudice or discrimination since the spreading of Covid-19 by region	22

Figure 40 Perception of increase of prejudice or discrimination since the spreading of Covid-19 by ethnicity	22
Figure 41 Perception on increase of domestic violence since the spread of Covid-19 by age group	22
Figure 42 Perception on increase of domestic violence since the spread of Covid-19 by region	22
Figure 43 Access to reproductive health services after Covid-19	23
Figure 44 Employment of unemployed women or with unstable employment before Covid-19	24
Figure 45 Reasons for losing their jobs since Covid-19	24
Figure 46 Economic wellbeing since the beginning of Covid-19 by age group.....	24
Figure 47 Economic wellbeing since the beginning of Covid-19 by region.....	24
Figure 48 Economic wellbeing since the beginning of Covid-19 by ethnicity	24
Figure 49 Assistance received since the beginning of Covid-19.....	25
Figure 50 Assistance received since the beginning of Covid-19 by donors	25
Figure 51 Statements on gender dynamics in the family	26
Figure 52 Statements on gender dynamics in the family by age group.....	27
Figure 53 Statements on gender dynamics in the family by level of education	28
Figure 54 Statements on gender dynamics in the family by ethnicity	29

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Target Sample by Gender	7
Table 2 Target Sample by Age	7
Table 3 Target Sample by Region	7
Table 4 Target Sample by Location (Urban or Rural).....	7

INTRODUCTION

Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian are among the most underprivileged social categories, whose status is conditioned by the existing racism and sexism in Kosovo. They are significantly in more vulnerable position compared to the women of majority community and compared to the men of their own ethnic communities. Due to racist and sexist practices in all spheres of organisation of public and private life, women from these communities encounter significant barriers to engagement and participation in social, economic, and political life.

Participation in economy of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women remains one of the main challenges that hinder them to affirm their subjectivity and position in private and public life. This happens because these women have significantly fewer opportunities to education, employment, and engagement in public activities.

The main elements taken into account to measure the economic empowerment of women include access to education, employment, inheritance from their families, and in taking personal and family decisions. If we consider the employment and unemployment rate for 2020, only 14.1% of women are employed; women's unemployment rate is 32.3%. Moreover, apart from lower rate of employment and high rate of unemployment, women are the most inactive group regarding job seeking (79.2%). Even though open data from Kosovo Agency of Statistics do not reveal employment data by gender and ethnicity, situation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities is worse.

Kosovo's legal framework contains a number of laws aimed at guaranteeing equal rights for minorities and promoting opportunities to achieve decent representation, well-being, and a favourable economic situation. Specifically, this is done by protecting and promoting the rights of communities and their members in Kosovo, by ensuring the use of official languages, by ensuring access to education and by respecting the cultural heritage of every community.

To assess the economic situation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women in Kosovo, Kosovar Gender Studies Center (KGSC), supported by Agency for Gender Equality (AGE), Office of the Prime Minister, has developed a questionnaire to evaluate the views and experiences of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women regarding their social and economic situation. This questionnaire was implemented by IDRA Research and Consulting.

This paper includes the research methodology and the survey results on the economic situation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women.

METHODOLOGY OF THE SURVEY

In order to assess the economic situation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women, a survey was conducted with 250 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women in Kosovo to gather their opinions, perceptions and experiences in social relations, and especially related to employment. Data were collected through in-person surveys using tables, conducted from 30 September 2021 until 8 October 2021.

This paper used proportional and random sampling methodology to interview women from the aforementioned communities. There are two types of quota samples: proportional and disproportional. This study uses the proportional sample, which method determines the main characteristics of the population in question, by taking a proportional amount according to each category, e.g. by region, municipality, age, or even gender (although this study was focused only on women). The sample size of this study provides the possibility of analysing the findings not only at the general level, but also according to the main demographic categories. In addition, attention was paid so that the region's

parameters are most representative for this paper. Regional quota was used having in mind the lack of official data on distribution of target communities according to Kosovo regions. Other sampling parameters, such as age or location, are also represented here respecting distribution of population throughout Kosovo. In cases where quota sampling methodology was used, people were chosen on random bases, however the quota or a certain number of interviews were always respected. This method is used to ensure that the smallest groups are adequately represented in our samples.

Initially, according to official statistics, municipalities in Kosovo where there is more Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population were identified, which turned out to be municipalities in six administrative regions in Kosovo. Then, the paper refers to general demographic data for the rest of demographic characteristics. As a result, the interviews were distributed.

Table 1 Target Sample by Gender

Gender	Percentage	# of surveys
Women	100%	250
Total	100%	250

Table 2 Target Sample by Age

Age Group	Percentage	# of surveys
18-24	20%	50
25-34	25%	63
35-44	15%	38
45-54	15%	38
55-64	15%	38
65+	10%	25
Total	100%	250

Table 3 Target Sample by Region

Region	Percentage	# of surveys
Gjakova	18%	45
Prishtina	30%	75
Prizren	13%	33
Peja	11%	28
Mitrovica	11%	27
Ferizaj	28%	70
Total	100%	7250

Table 4 Target Sample by Location (Urban or Rural)

Type of Location	Percentage	# of surveys
Rural	60%	150
Urban	40%	100
Total	100%	250

As the research focused only on experiences and opinions of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women, interviewers were sent to those municipalities with higher density of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian, and a woman per household was interviewed so that a certain quota was reached. In locations where a

larger number of these communities lives, the method of knocking on one in three house doors was applied to enable the best possible representation of the case. IDRA also applies quality control techniques of collected interviews by conducting field monitoring or telephone calls for verification purposes.

PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

First part of this paper shows demographic characteristics of the women surveyed. As described in the methodology of this paper, respondents are from six regions of Kosovo. More precisely, about 28% of them live in Prishtina region; 20% in Ferizaj region; 18% in Gjakova region; 13% in Prizren region; 11% in Peja region, and 10% in Mitrovica region.

In terms of age, 32% of women surveyed are 18-30 years-old, 36% are 31-44 years-old and 33% are over 44 years-old.

Figure 1 Women surveyed according to region

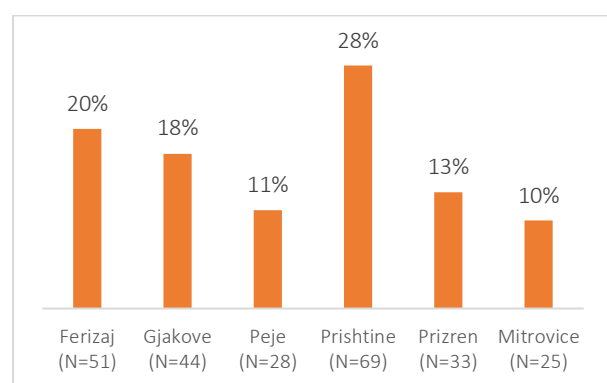
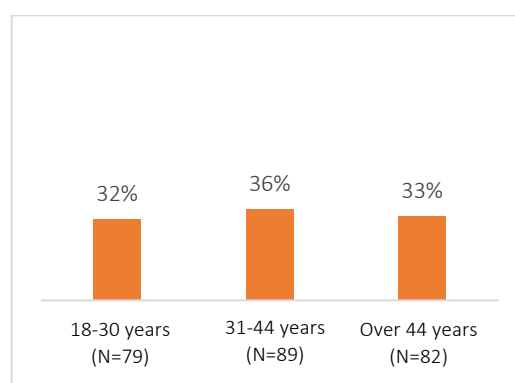


Figure 2 Women surveyed according to age



In terms of ethnicity, 63% of women surveyed are Ashkali, 23% are Egyptian, and 14% are Roma. Further, half of the women living in cities have lived in the same place since they were born, and half of them do not. Whereas, 30% of the women surveyed living in villages have lived in the same place since they were born, and 70% of them do not.

Figure 3 Women surveyed according to ethnicity

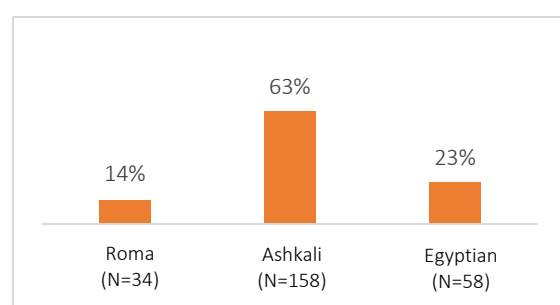
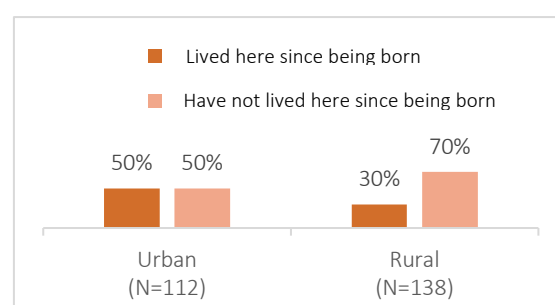


Figure 4 Women surveyed according to location



In regards to education, over the half of respondents have completed or not completed primary school, 33% have no education, and 13% have graduated from secondary school or have higher education. Whereas, 79% of respondents are married, and 21% are single, divorced or widowed.

Figure 5 Women surveyed according to education

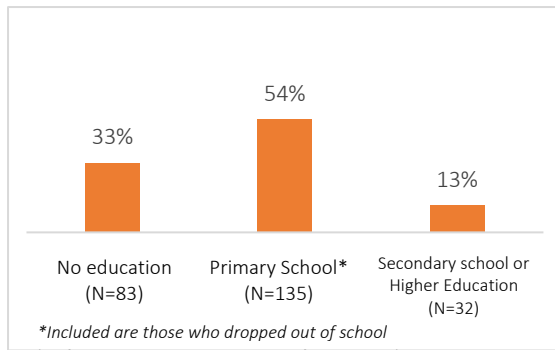
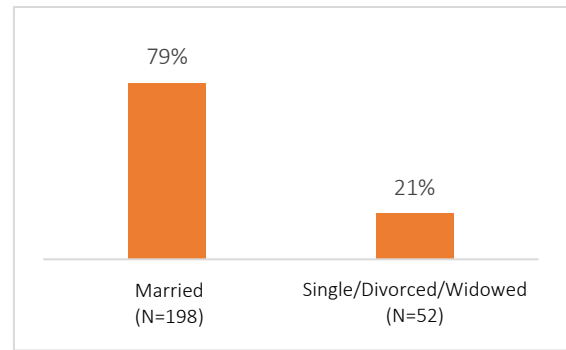


Figure 6 Women surveyed according to civil status



Families of 27% of respondents have 5-6 members, 33% of respondents have families of 1-4 members, and 28% of them have more than 6 family members. As far as family members over the age of 14 years-old, 42% have 3-4 family members over this age, 30% have 0-2 family members over 14 years-old, and 28% have more than four (4) family members over this age.

Figure 7 Number of family members

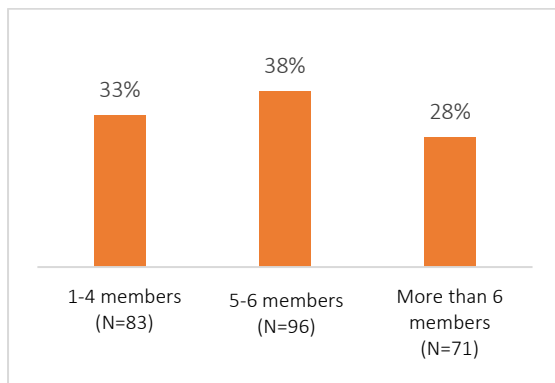
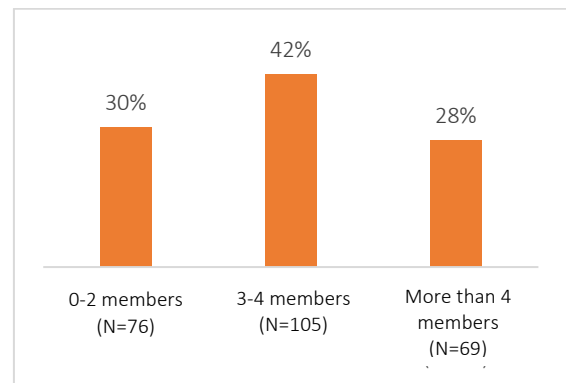


Figure 8 Number of family members over 14 years-old



Respondents were then asked where and whom do they currently live with. 91% of them live in a house or apartment, 6% live in a rented house or apartment, and 3% live in a temporary accommodation. As for who they live with, 70% live with their core family, 23% live with extended family, 4% live with their partner/boyfriend, 2% live alone, and 1% live with friends.

Figure 9 Current living situation

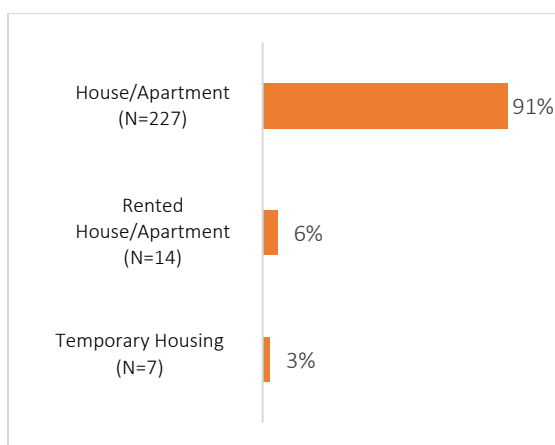
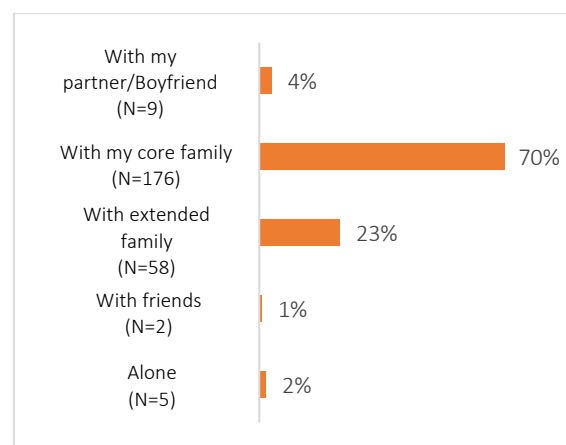


Figure 10 Who do you live with?

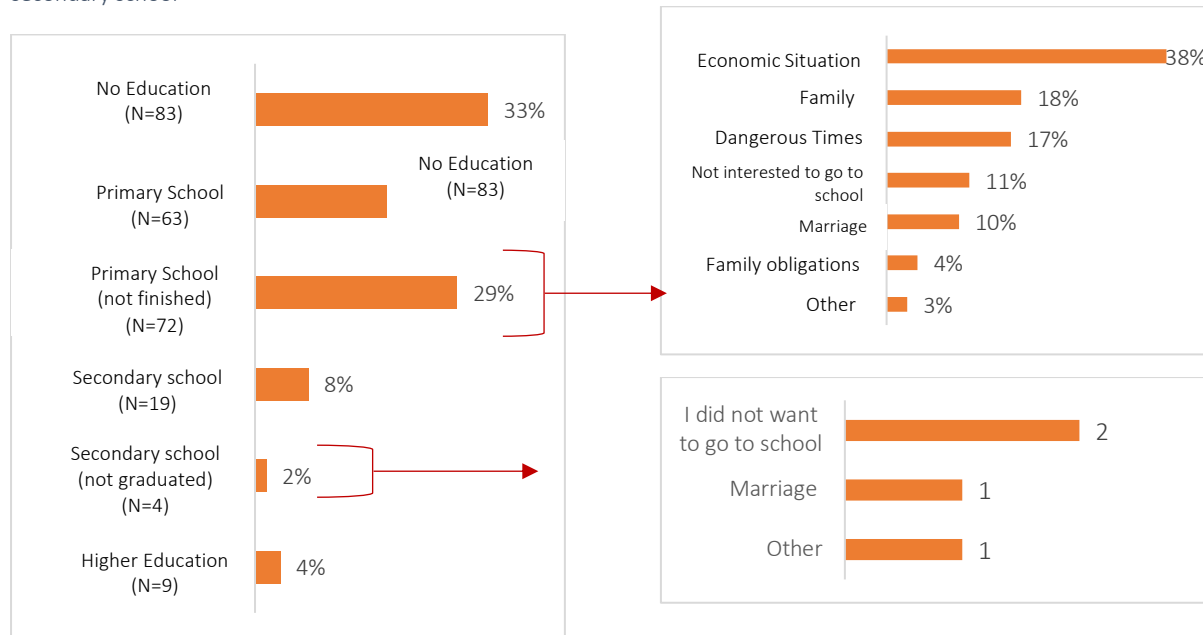


EDUCATION, INFORMATION, AND EMPLOYMENT

The second part of the paper displays results of the survey related to the education and employment status, as well as sources of information of these women. A special emphasis in this section is given to challenges that women from these communities face, and which determine the decisions they take in regards to education, family, and employment.

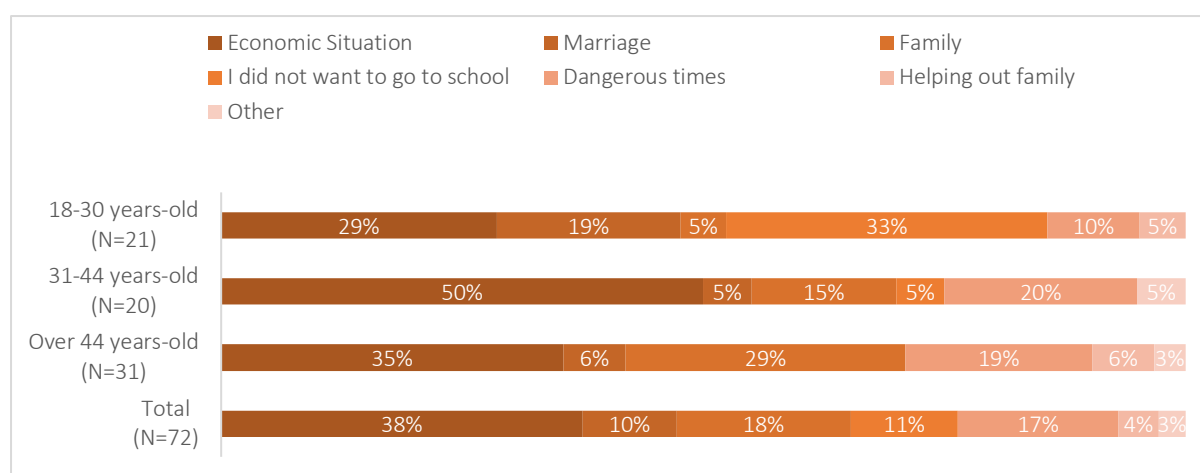
The low level of education among Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian remains a concern. A high percentage of the respondents, 33% of them, reported to have no education. This percentage is even worse for other levels of education, with only 4% of women from these communities reporting to have completed university studies. Reasons for not enrolling in school or not finishing the school, show that the occurrence of not enrolling and/or dropping out of school is closely linked to economic situation and social norms, which further affect their decision-making. Most of the women surveyed who did not finish primary school, did so due to economic situation (38%). Some of them mentioned family (18%), dangerous times for education (17%), that they did not want to continue education (11%), got married (10%) and family issues (4%). However, the number of women who dropped out of secondary school is lower; two of them stating that they did not want to continue their education, and one of them stated that she dropped out of secondary school because of marriage.

Figure 11 Reasons for dropping out of primary and secondary school



If we analyse reasons for dropping out of primary school according to age group, we notice that more women among the 18-30 years-old age group state that the main reason was that they simply did not want to continue to go to school (33%), whereas women aged 31-44 and over 44 years-old state economic condition as the reason to drop out of school (50% and 35% respectively).

Figure 12 Reasons for dropping out of primary and secondary school according to age group

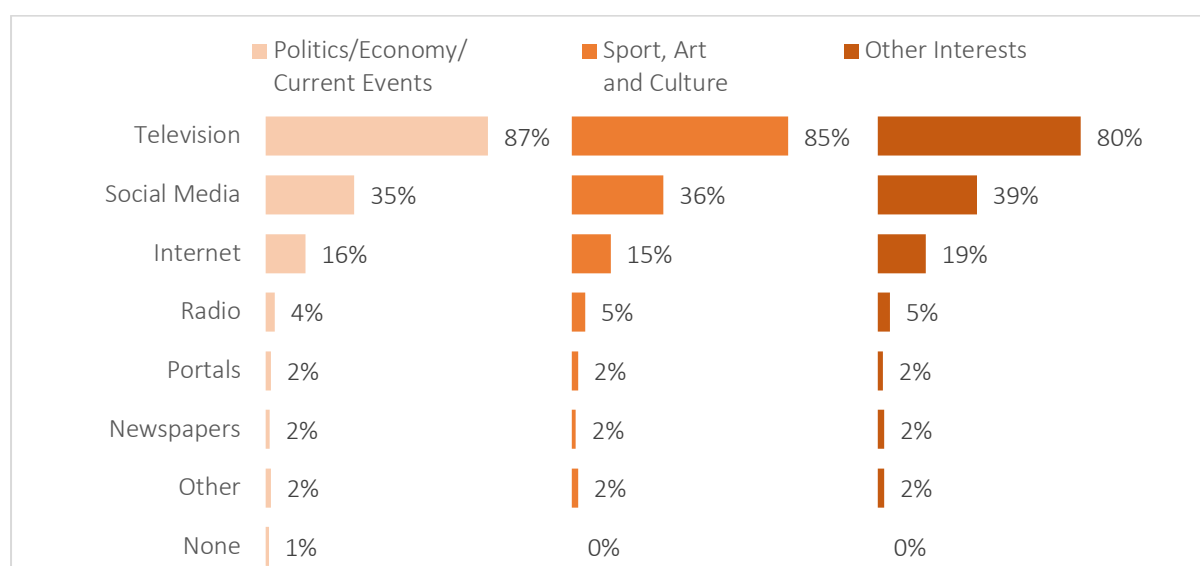


INFORMATION

This part displays the findings regarding identification of sources of information among the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women. Having in mind that now more than ever, the job seekers market is technological, it is necessary to find out how much access these women have to job advertisements by recording how much they use the technological means. On the other hand, it is fundamental to find out the level of access to means of communication and information among women of these communities in order to also assess the level of their wellbeing.

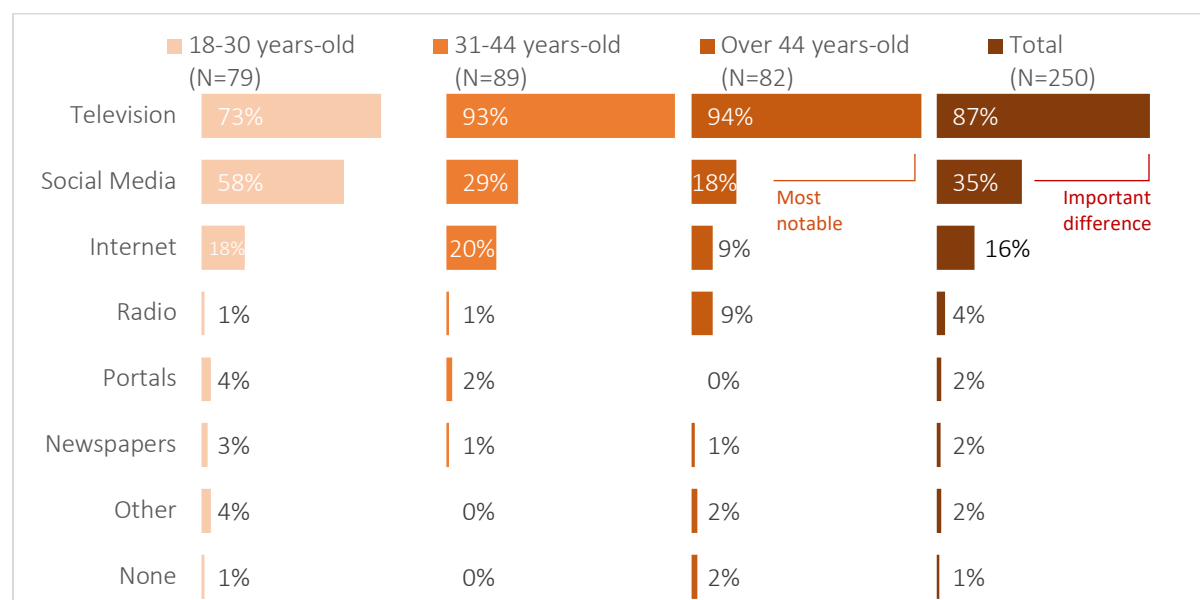
Regardless of the type of information received, majority of respondents use television for information on politics, economy, and other current events (87%), sport, art and culture (85%), and for other issues of interest (80%). Social media is the second preferred means of information (35%, 36% and 39% for each type of information respectively). And internet in general is in the third place, so below social media (16%, 15%, 19% for each type of information respectively). Other means of information are less mentioned. Furthermore, one per cent of respondents state that they do not use any means of information on politics, economy, and other current events.

Figure 13 Most used sources of information



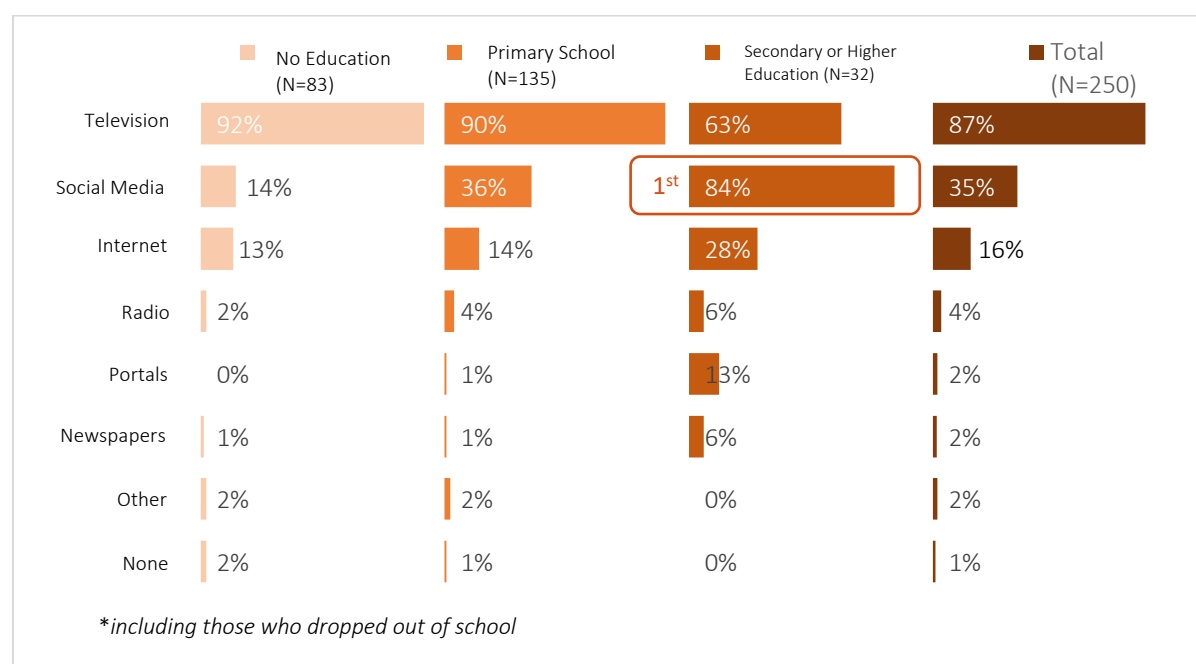
Analysing by age, more respondents over 44 years-old use television (94%), then 31-44 years-old (93%), and finally those in the group age 18-30 years-old (73%) for information about politics, economy and current events. The results about use of social media is reversed though, with more respondents in the group age of 18-30 years-old (58%) using social media, then those 31-44 years-old (29%), and finally those over 44 years-old (18%).

Figure 14 Most used sources of information on issues of politics, economy, other current events by age



Analysing by level of education, more uneducated women (92%) or only with completed and not completed primary school education (90%) than women who have graduated from secondary school or higher education (63%) use television as a source of information on politics, economy, and current events. However, more women with secondary school or higher degrees (84%) use social media, then women who have completed or not completed primary education (36%) and then those without any education (14%).

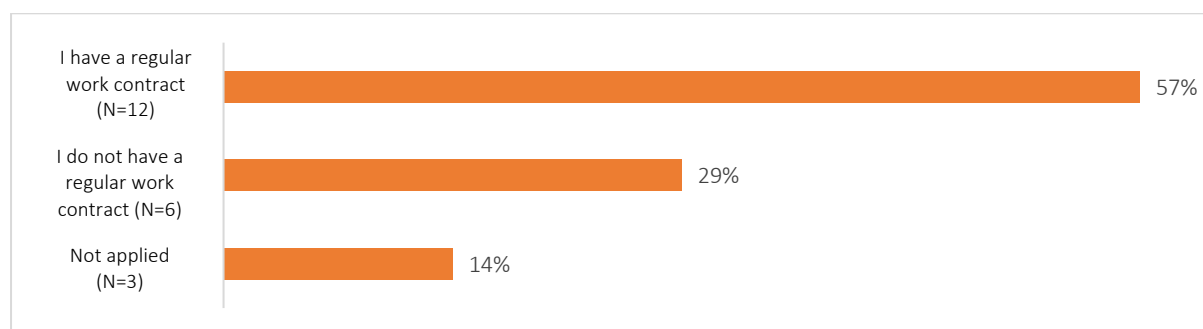
Figure 15 Most used sources of information on issues of politics, economy, other current events by education level



EMPLOYMENT OF ROMA, ASHKALI AND EGYPTIAN WOMEN

Employment level among Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian remains below overall employment level of women in general in Kosovo. Only 8% of respondents are employed (including self-employed or partially self-employed), whereas the rest are unemployed (more respondents are housewives, do not seek employment, and fewer are students or retired). Out of the employed respondents, only 12 (or 57%) have a regular work contract, 6 (or 29%) do not have a regular work contract, and 3 (14%) are self-employed.

Figure 16 Possession of work contract by employed respondents



In regard to working hours, 17 (or 81%) work full time and 4 (or 19%) work part time. Two-thirds of them (13 women or 62%) are paid through bank transfers, and about five of them (24%) are paid cash.

Figure 17 Working hours of employed respondents

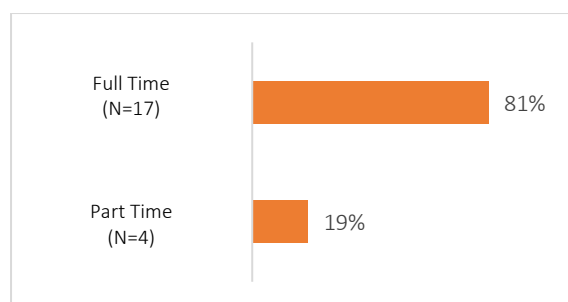
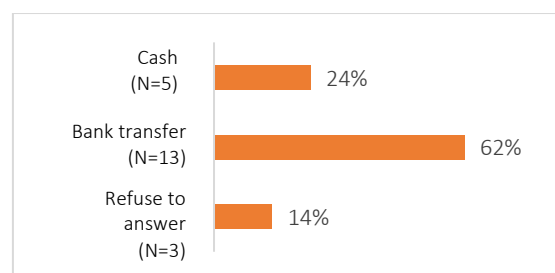
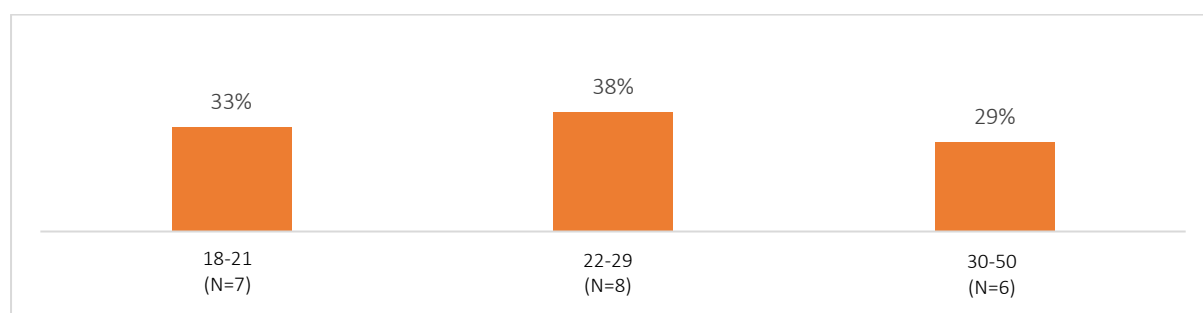


Figure 18 Method of payment of employed respondents



Furthermore, employed respondents were also asked at what age they began to work and 7 (or 33%) stated that they started working between 18-21 years-old, 8 (or 38%) started working between 22-29 years-old, and six (or 29%) started working at an older age - 30-50 years-old.

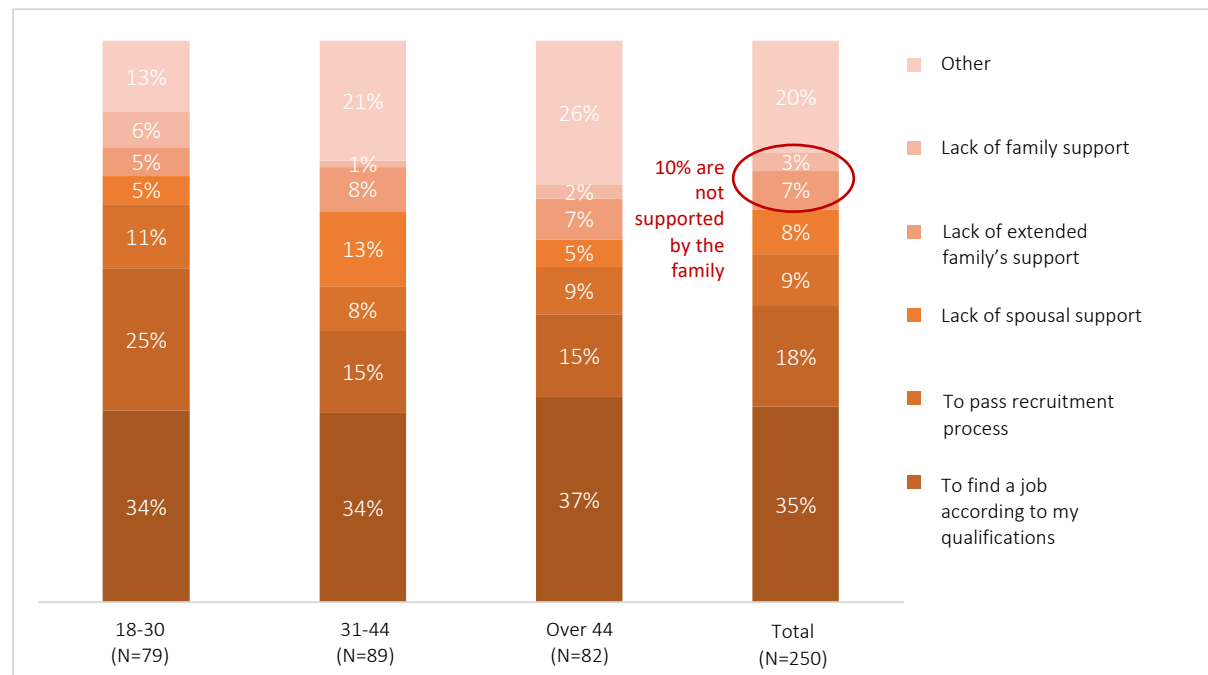
Figure 19 Age when respondents started to work



All the respondents were asked about the main challenges they faced while seeking potential employment. More respondents (35%) stated that they failed to meet work criteria for as per job description, followed by difficulties to find a job that meets their qualifications (18%). Fewer women stated that they were not short-listed (9%), did not have spousal support (8%), lack extended family's

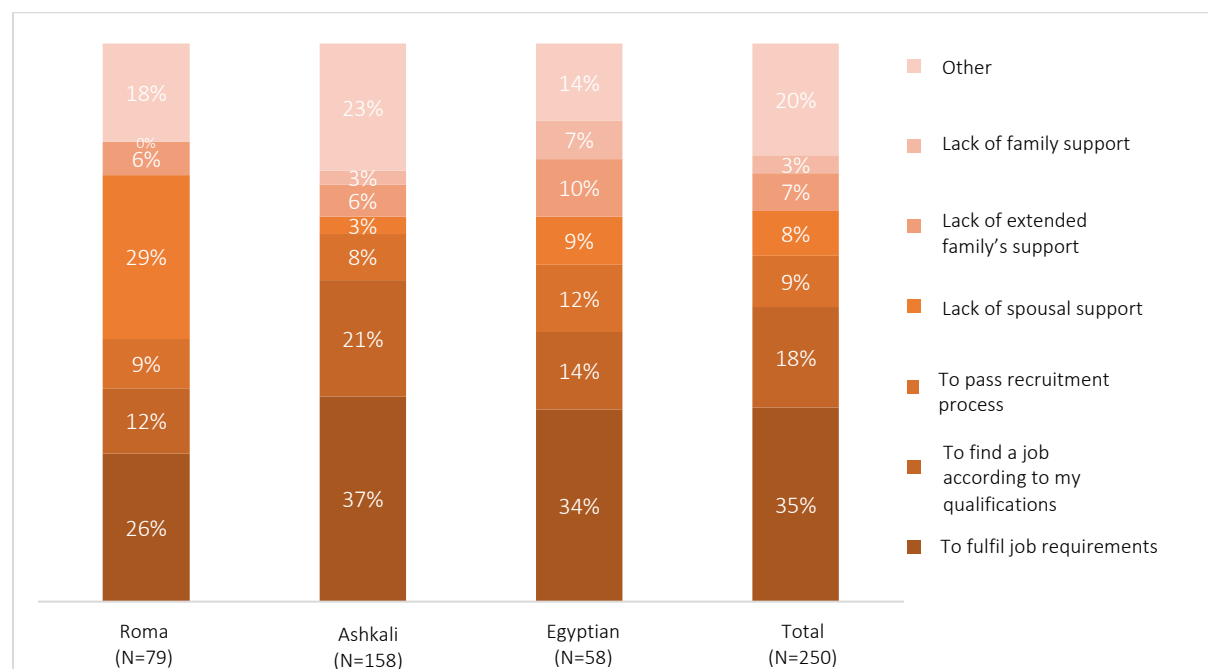
support (7%) or core family's support (3%). The rest state that they had medical issues, did not need to find a job or they had to take care of the children. If we analyse these data by age, we notice that more young women, 18-30 years-old (25%), faced difficulties in finding a job according to their qualifications compared to those aged 31-44 years-old and over 44 years-old (15% respectively). A bit more women of the same age group, 18-30 years-old, state that they did not have family support (11%) than other age groups (9% respectively).

Figure 20 Employment challenges of respondents by group age



If we analyse the data by ethnicity, more Roma women (29%) did not have spousal support regarding employment than Egyptian (9%) and Ashkali (3%) women. Whereas, the Egyptian women interviewed had less core and extended family's support (17%) than Ashkali (9%) and Roma (6%) women.

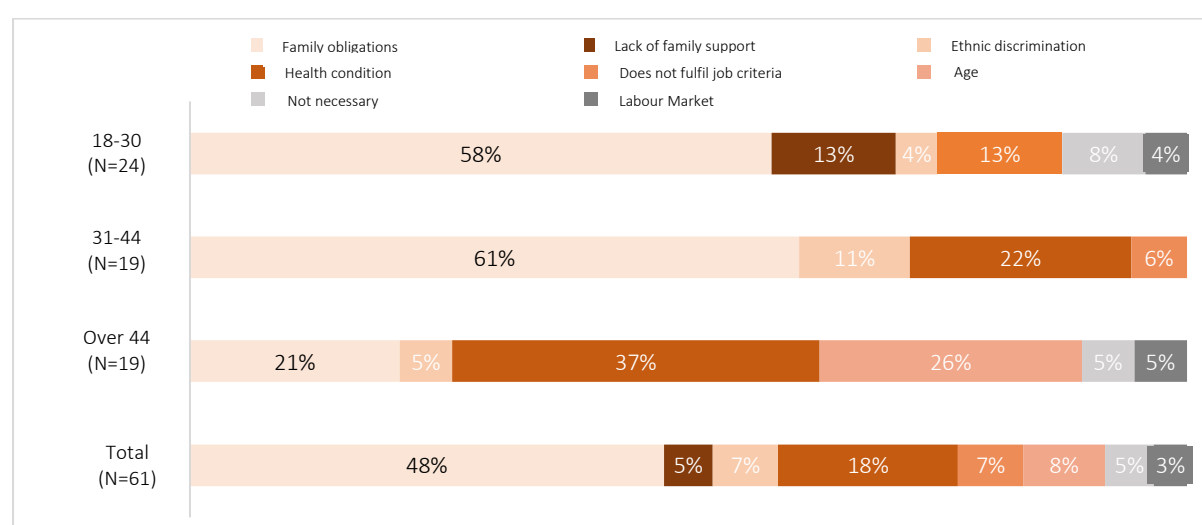
Figure 21 Employment challenges of respondents by ethnicity



Unemployed women, who do not seek a job, were asked about the reasons why they do not work. In general, more respondents stated that they do not work and do not seek a job because of family obligations (48%), and then that they do not meet job criteria (18%). Fewer of them responded that they do not work because of age (8%), health condition (7%), or because they faced ethnic discrimination (7%). Also, a smaller portion of respondents stated that they do not consider necessary to work (5%) or cited job market as the reason why they do not seek to work (3%).

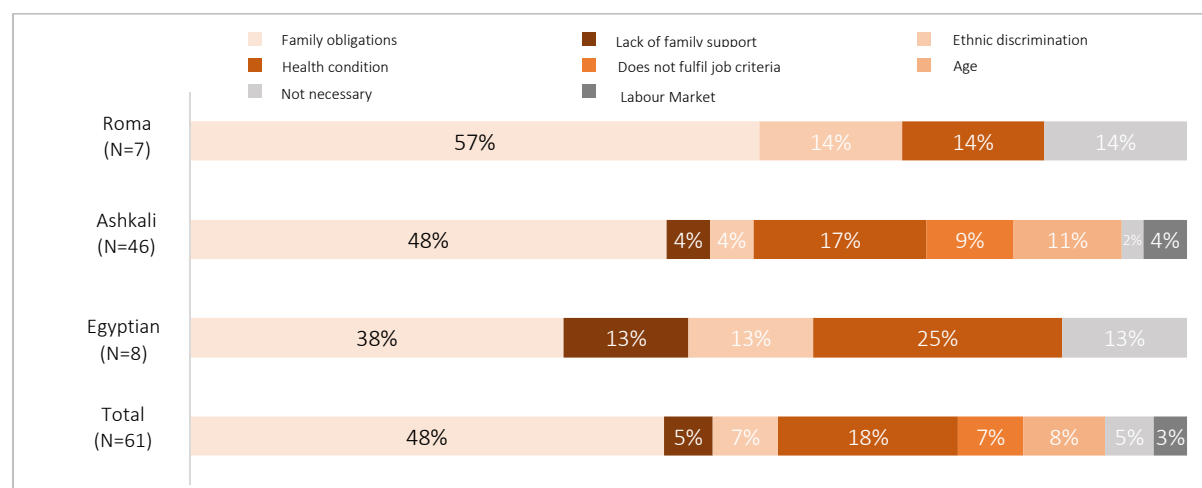
Almost a third of the respondents 18-30 years-old (58%) state family obligations as the reason for not working. However, only a portion of the respondents of this age group cite lack of family support (13%) as the reason they do not work; other age groups do not cite it. About two-thirds of the respondents 31-44 years-old (61%) state family obligations as the reason for not working. More than a third of the respondents 31-44 years-old (61%) state family obligations as the reason for not working. More than a third of women over 44 years-old (37%) and about a quarter of them (26%) cite health condition and age as the reason why they do not work.

Figure 22 Reasons why unemployed women do not work and do not seek a job by age group



If we analyse the reasons why some of the respondents do not work and do not seek a job by ethnicity we notice that more Roma (14%) and Egyptian (13%) women and fewer Ashkali (4%) women cite ethnic discrimination as the reason. Further, only a portion of Ashkali respondents (9%) cite inability to fulfil job criteria as the reason, whereas Roma and Ashkali women do not cite that at all. However, these data should be handled as indicative and not representational since there are only few surveys realised with Roma and Egyptian women for this group.

Figure 23 Reasons why unemployed women do not work and do not seek a job by ethnicity



Respondents who are unemployed and who are seeking or not seeking a job were then asked would they want to work. Majority of them (78%) stated that they want to work, and only 22% stated no. Younger the respondents, more they wanted to work. So, more women between 18-30 years-old (84%), then between 31-44 years-old (77%) and finally over 44 years-old (70%) stated that they want to work.

Out of unemployed women who want to work, 75% of them want to work in private sector, 21% in public sector, and 4% in civil society organisations.

Figure 24 Desire to work of unemployed women, women who seek a job, and women who are not seeking a job by age group

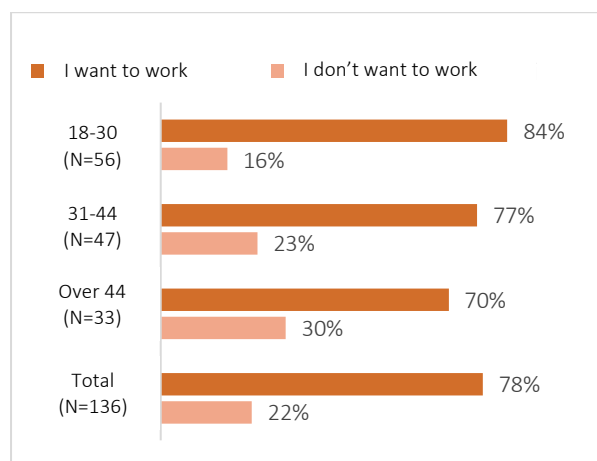
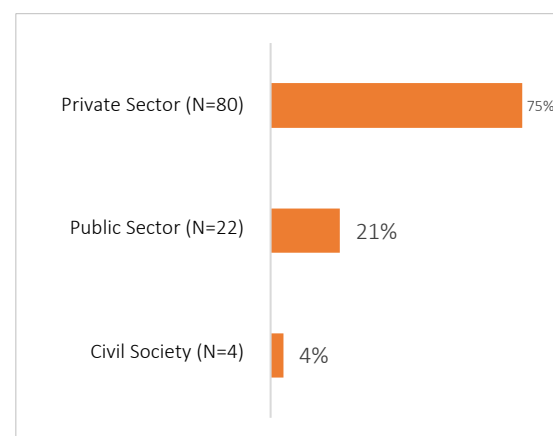


Figure 25 Preferred sector to work of unemployed women who want to work



Also, unemployed respondents were asked whether they had ever applied for a job. Two-thirds of them (66%) had never applied, about 29% had applied, but were not hired, and 4% were reluctant to apply. More women of age group 31-44 years-old (74%), then those over 44 years-old (67%) and fewer of 18-30 years-old (59%) have never applied for work.

More Roma women (33%) than Ashkali (31%) and Egyptian (18%) state that they have applied, but were not hired. Whereas, more Egyptian women (77%) than Roma (67%) and Ashkali (64%) have never applied for a job.

Figure 26 Unemployed women who have applied for a job by age group

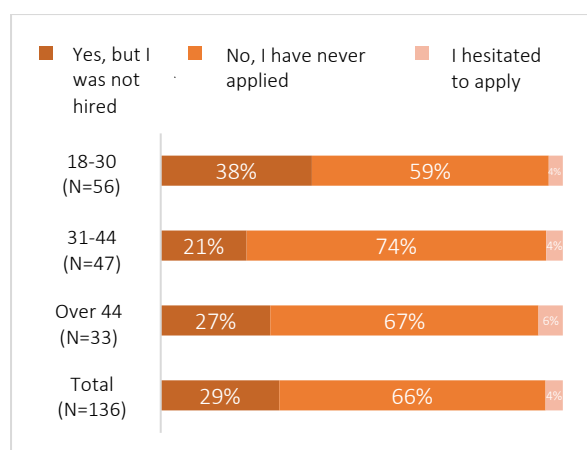
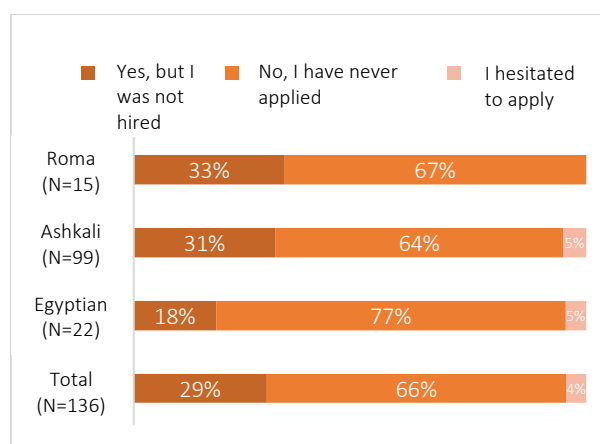
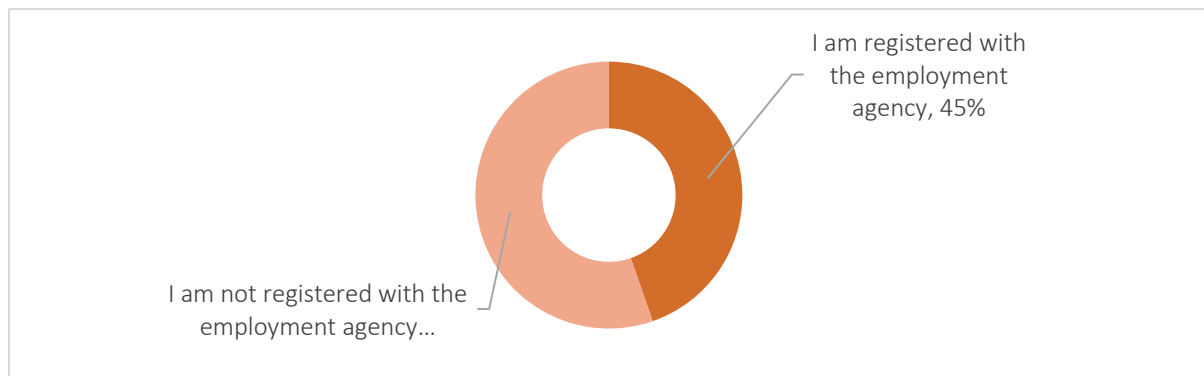


Figure 27 Unemployed women who have applied for a job by ethnicity



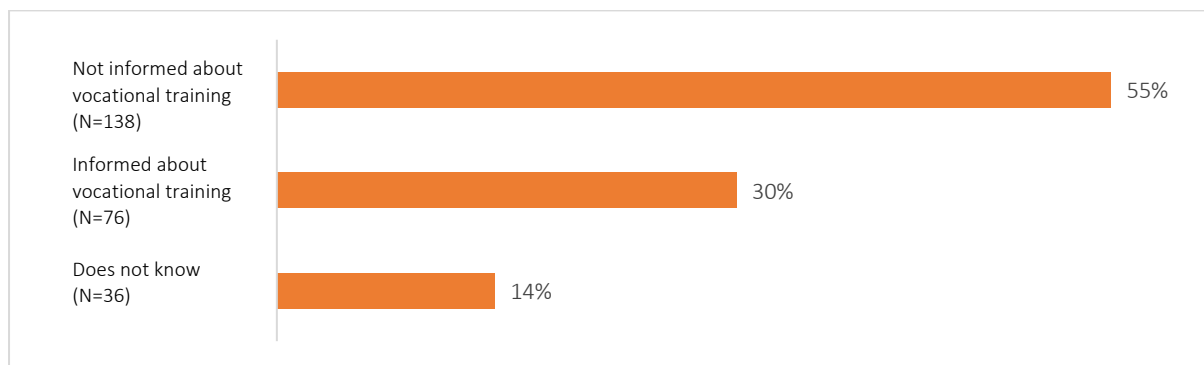
In general, the respondents were asked if they were registered with the employment agency, and 45% stated yes, while 55% stated no.

Figure 28 Registration with the employment agency



Regarding the increase of employment opportunities, the respondents were asked if there is any vocational training program in their communities. About 55% of them stated no, there are no such vocational training programs, 30% said there are such programs, and 14% stated that they do not know whether there are such programs in their communities.

Figure 29 Information on vocational training programs in their communities.



All respondents were asked if they had completed any training program, with 29% stating that they had completed vocational training, and 71% had not. Asked if other women and girls attend such trainings, 46% said yes, and 24% no.

Figure 30 Attendance of respondents in trainings

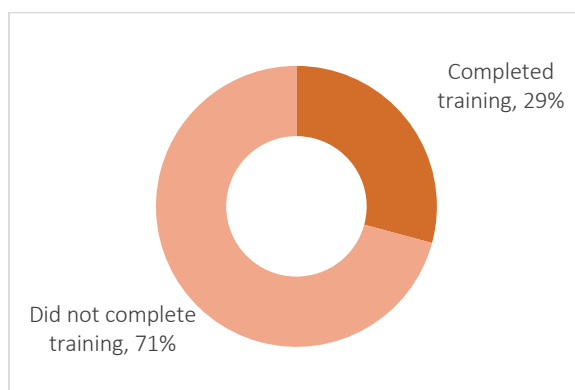
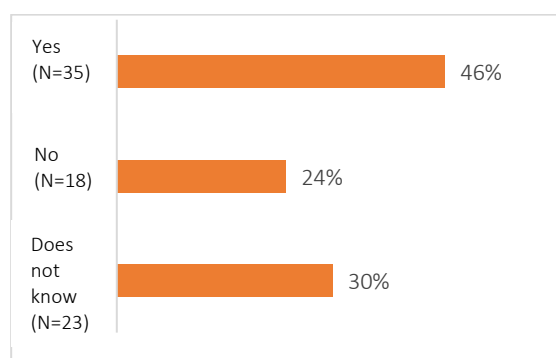


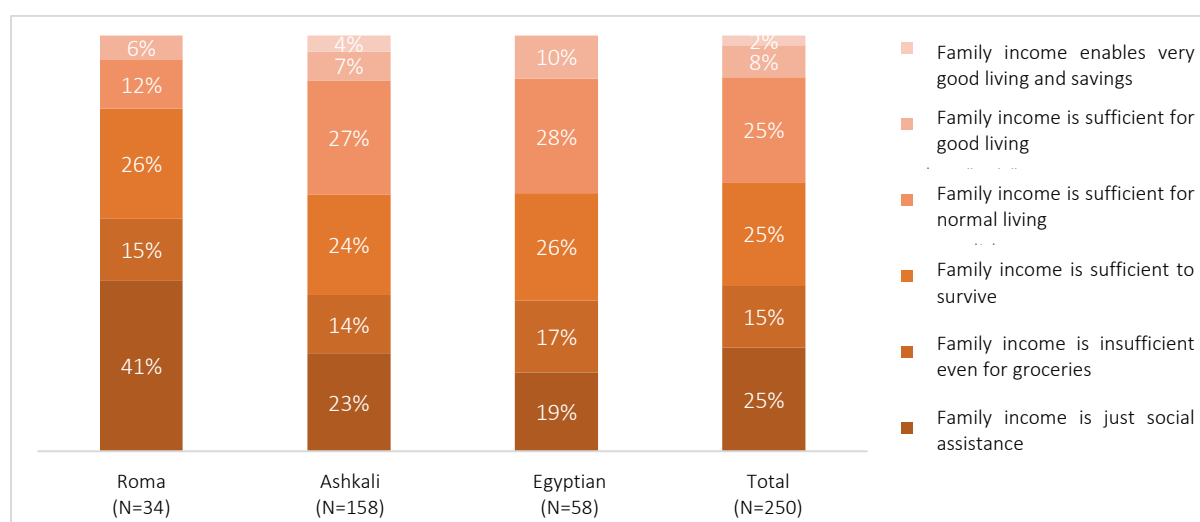
Figure 31 Participation of girls/women in training that respondents attended



ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND HEALTH WELFARE

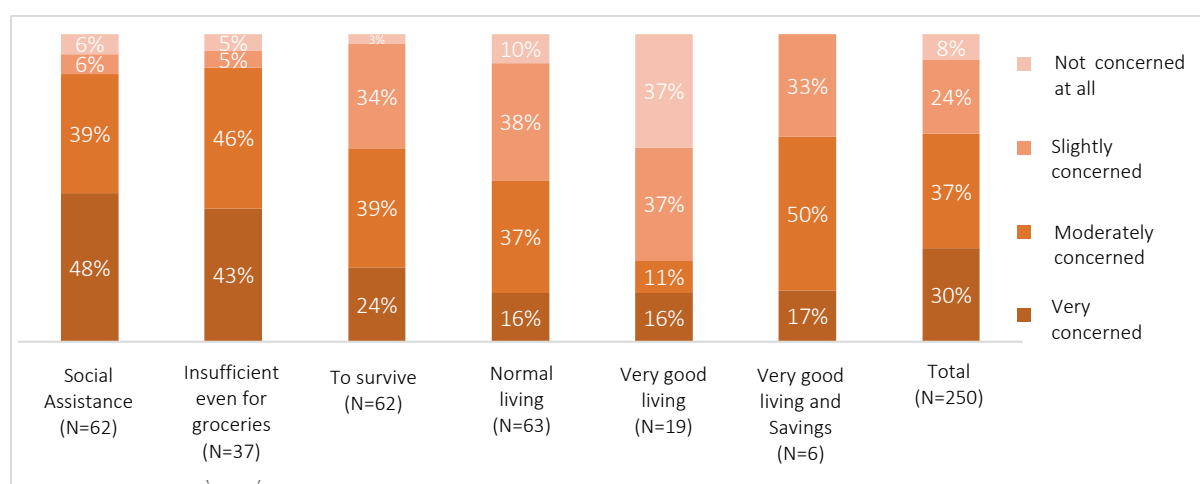
Regarding their family economic situation, 25% believe that family income is sufficient to live a normal life, or that family income is sufficient to survive or that their family only receive social assistance. About 15% believe that their family income is insufficient even for groceries. Far fewer of respondents state that family income is sufficient to live very well (8%) or that family income enables them to have a very good life and savings (2%). Significantly more Roma women surveyed state that they live only on social assistance (41%) compared to Ashkali (23%) and Egyptian (19%) women. On the other hand, more Egyptian (28%) and Ashkali (27%) women than Roma (12%) women state that family income is sufficient to live a normal life. As for the cases in better economic situation, only a small number of Ashkali women (4%) state that family income enables a very good life and savings.

Figure 31 Economic situation of respondents' families



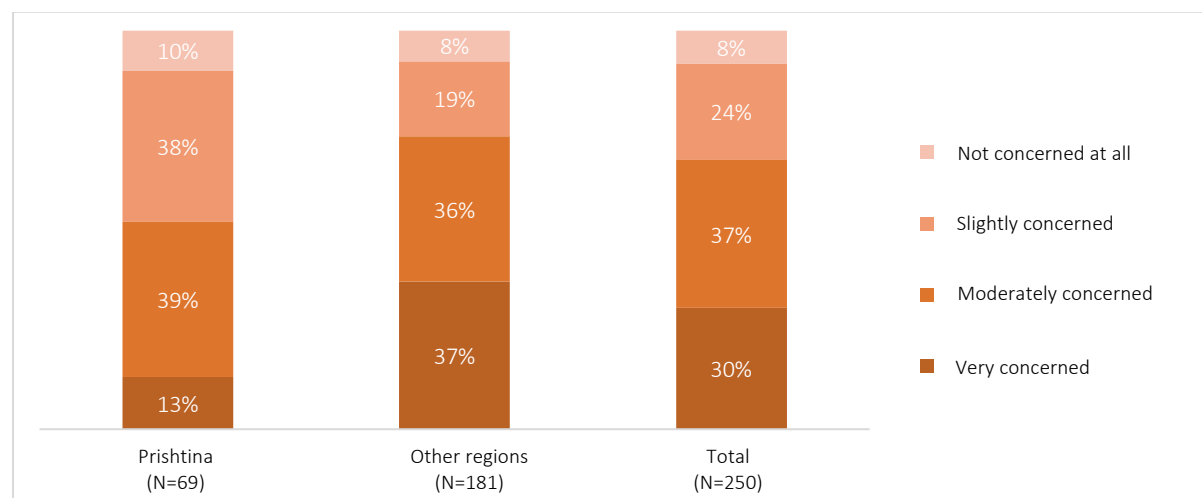
In addition to being asked about their family economic situation, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women were also asked how concerned they were about their wellbeing. In total, 37% of respondents are moderately concerned, 30% are very concerned, 24% are slightly concerned, and 8% are not concerned at all about their wellbeing. More women in difficult economic situation, such as those who receive social assistance (48%) and those whose income is insufficient even for groceries (43%) are very concerned about their wellbeing.

Figure 32 Concern about wellbeing by income level



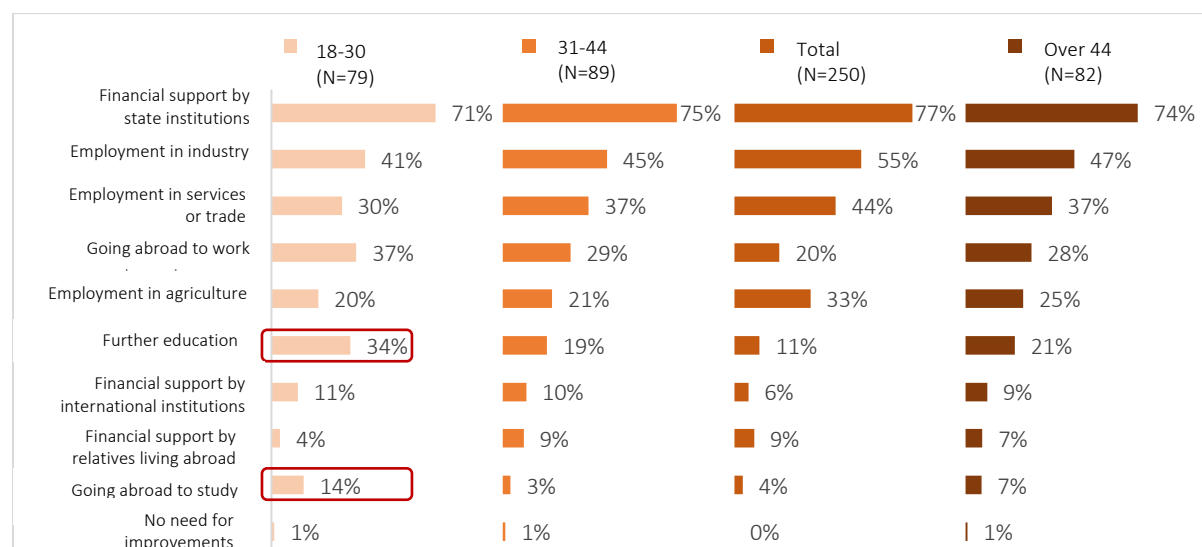
Also, if we compare Prishtina, as the region with the largest population and with more opportunities than other regions, we find out that respondents living in other regions (37%) are significantly more concerned about their wellbeing than those living in Prishtina region (13%).

Figure 33 Concern about wellbeing by region



Having in mind that institutional approach is essential in fighting social and economic inequalities, this research also measured the feelings of respondents towards institutional obligations in improving their economic situation. The majority of respondents (74%) believe that financial support from state institutions is urgently needed. Then, respondents cite employment in industry (47%), employment in services or trade (37%), going abroad to work (28%), employment in agriculture (25%), and further education (21%). Financial support from international institutions (9%), financial support from relatives living abroad (7%), or going abroad to study (7%) were less cited. Young women surveyed, i.e. 18-30 years-old cite the need to address further education (34%) and going abroad to study (14%) compared to the other two age groups.

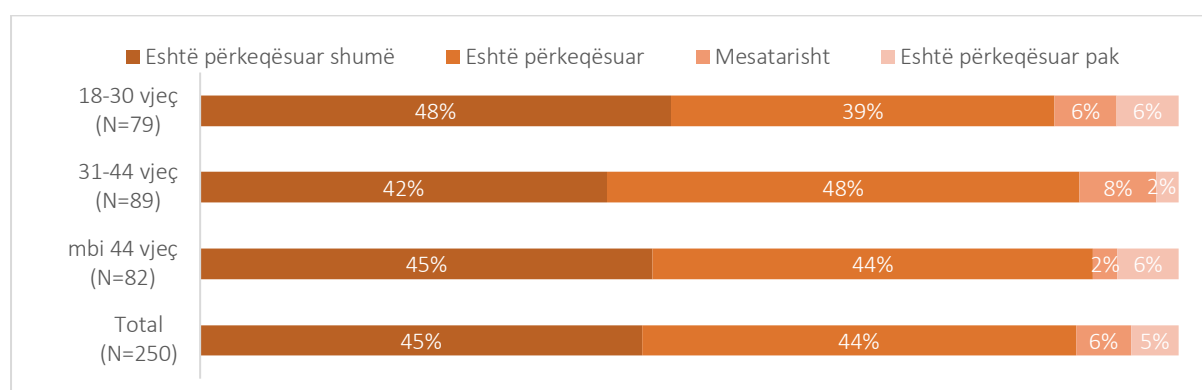
Figure 34 Urgent institutional engagement on different issues



ECONOMIC SITUATION OF ROMA, ASHKALI AND EGYPTIAN WOMEN DURING THE PANDEMIC

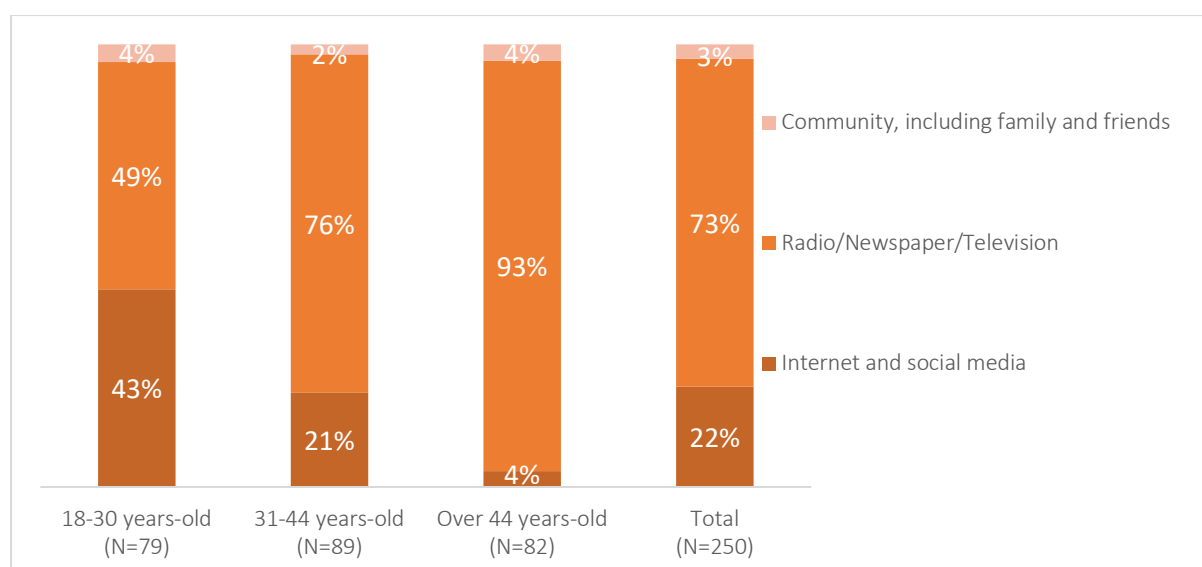
One of the main dimensions that the research aimed to highlight was the impact Covid-19 pandemic had on the economic wellbeing on Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women, and possible deterioration of their position and increase of violence. It has already been identified that the Covid-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on respect of human rights by worsening their economic and psychological condition. This was even more evident among underprivileged social groups, which have faced multiple discrimination. In this regard, having in mind that there is still no accurate data on the Covid-19 implications on the lives of different social groups, the research aimed to assess the feelings and experiences of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women during the pandemic. Asked if their economic situation had deteriorated since the outbreak of Covid-19 in Kosovo, 45% believe that it severely worsened it, 44% has worsened it, 6% has moderately worsened it, and 5% that it had slightly worsened it.

Figure 35 Deterioration of economic situation after spreading of Covid-19



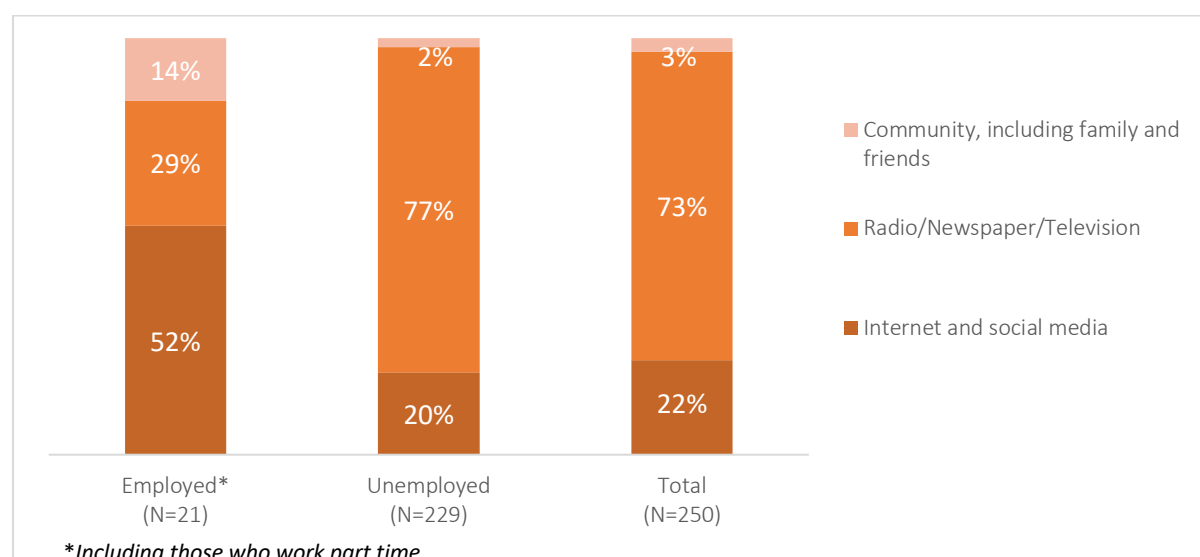
The main source of information about Covid-19, therefore about the risks, prevention, recommendations, government measures and actions against Covid-19, are radio, newspapers and television (73%), while 22% cited Internet and social media are the main source of information, and 3% cited community, including family and friends. Comparing the data by age group, younger women surveyed, 18-30 years-old, use the Internet and social media more (43%) than women of older age groups (21% - 31-44 years-old and 4% - over 44 years-old).

Figure 36 Sources of information about Covid-19 by age group



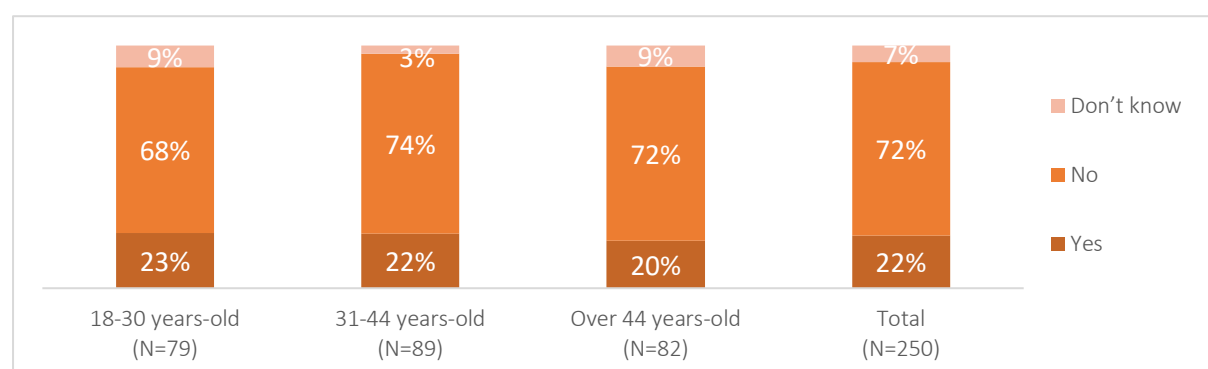
When analysing the data by employment status, employed women surveyed use the Internet and social media (52%) more than the unemployed women surveyed (20%) for information about Covid-19. Employed women (14%) use the community far more for information about this topic. Unemployed women cite radio, newspaper and television (77%) as a source of information about Covid-19 far more than employed women (29%).

Figure 37 Sources of information about Covid-19 by employment status



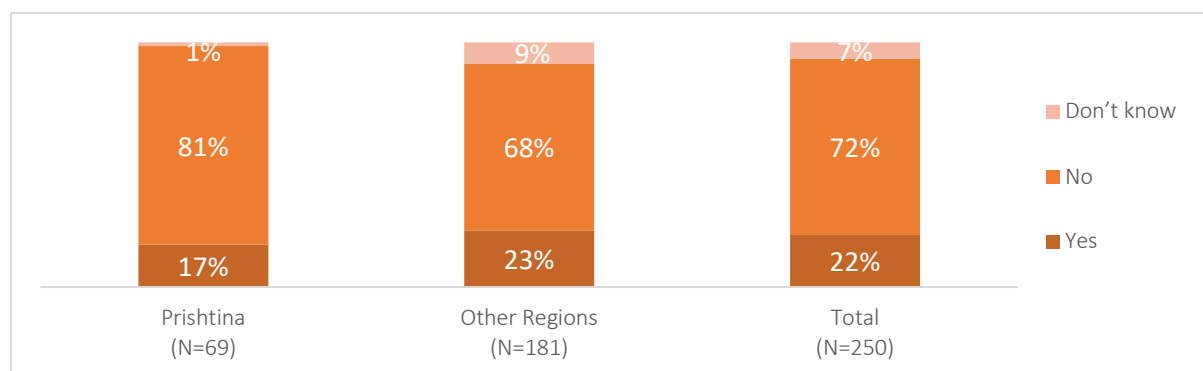
Then, the respondents were asked if they had experienced any form of increase of discrimination or prejudice in their respective hometowns after the spread of Covid-19, and 22% of them stated that they experienced an increase in discrimination. The age group 18-30 years-old (23%) felt the increase of discrimination and prejudice more than women of age group 31-44 years-old (22%) or those over 44 years-old (20%).

Figure 38 Perception of increase of prejudice or discrimination since the spreading of Covid-19 by age group



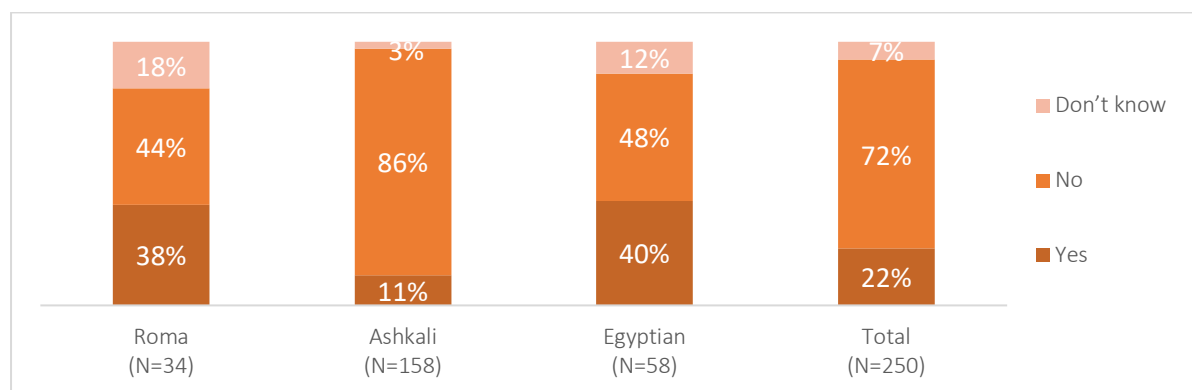
Respondents of other regions of Kosovo (23%) felt an increase of discrimination or prejudice than those from Prishtina region (17%).

Figure 39 Perception of increase of prejudice or discrimination since the spreading of Covid-19 by region



More Egyptian (40%) and Roma (38%) have felt an increase in discrimination or prejudice compared to Ashkali women (11%).

Figure 40 Perception of increase of prejudice or discrimination since the spreading of Covid-19 by ethnicity



Another topic covered through this survey was domestic violence. Respondents were asked if they had heard of an increase of domestic violence since the spread of COVID-19. More than half of all respondents said yes (53%). More women of age group 18-30 years-old (62%) and living in Prishtina region (61%) stated that they had heard about increase of domestic violence.

Figure 41 Perception on increase of domestic violence since the spread of Covid-19 by age group

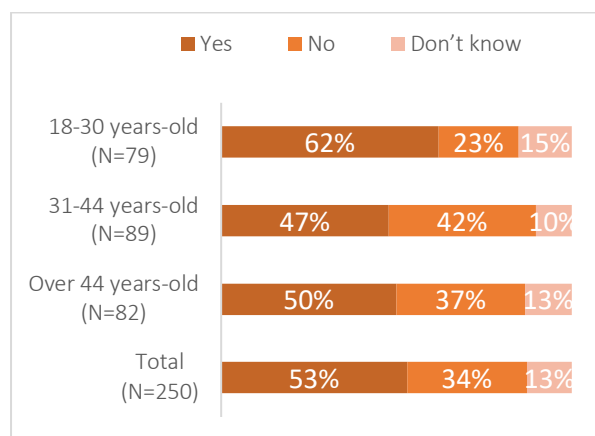
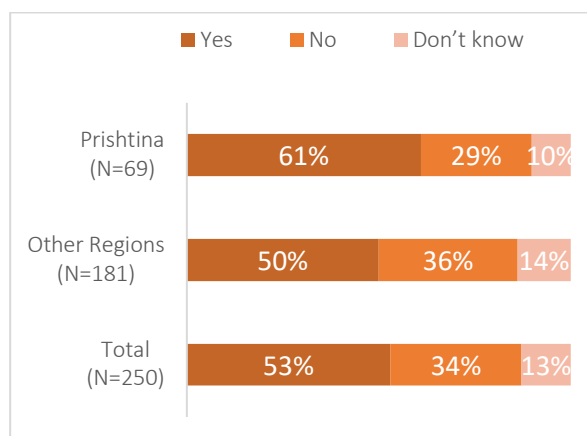
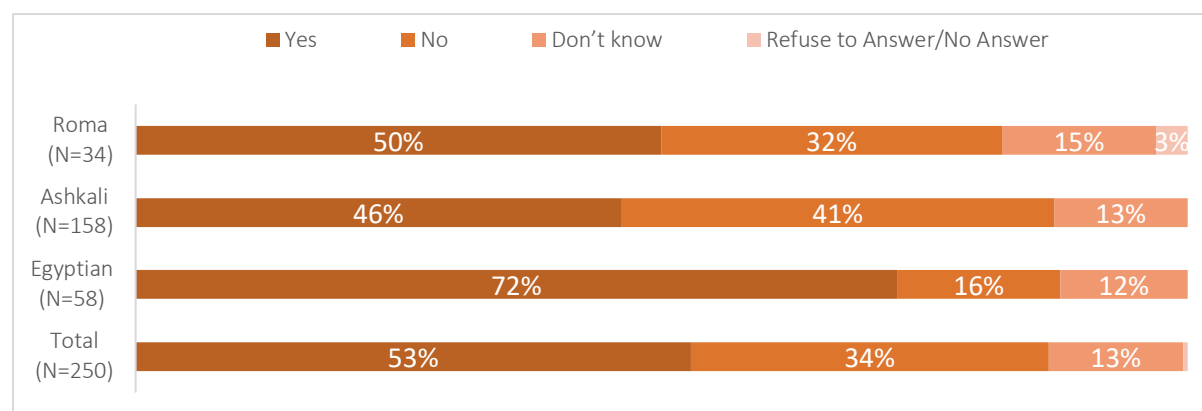


Figure 42 Perception on increase of domestic violence since the spread of Covid-19 by region

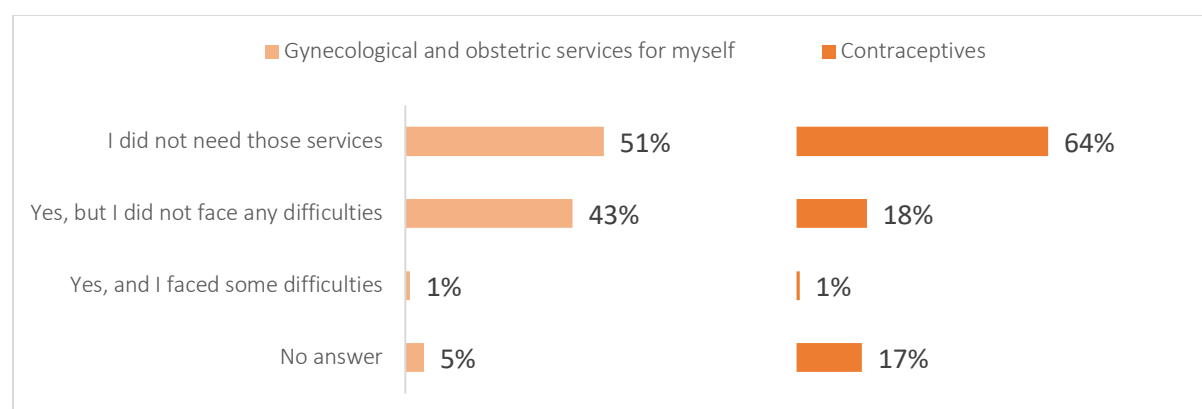


As for ethnicity, significantly more Egyptian women (2%) than Roma (50%) and Ashkali (46%) women stated to have heard about the increase of domestic violence since Covid-19 pandemic.



Due to the situation created after the spread of Covid-19 in different waves since March 2020 when citizens' movement was restricted and they had limited access to services, respondents were also asked about the difficulties they may have encountered in accessing reproductive health services. More than half of the respondents (51%) had not needed gynaecological and obstetric care services. However, 43% had needed such services, and had not encountered any difficulties, while only 1% stated that they had faced difficulties. On the other hand, more than 2/3 of the respondents (64%) needed no contraceptives, 18% needed them, but did not encounter any difficulties, and only 1% of respondents stated that they had encountered difficulties.

Figure 43 Access to reproductive health services after Covid-19



Respondents, who stated that currently are unemployed, work occasionally, engage in collection of recycled material, do seasonal work, in agriculture or other, were asked if they had been employed before Covid-19 and only 12% responded yes. The reasons for losing their jobs or according to them, quitting were related to health issues - for three of them, work conditions for four of them, and family obligations for two of them. Furthermore, five of them stated that they lost their job because of pandemics.

Figure 44 Employment of unemployed women or with unstable employment before Covid-19

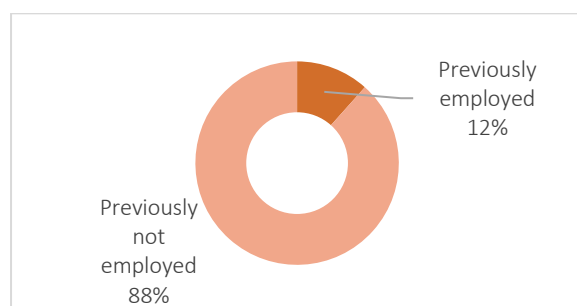


Figure 45 Reasons for losing their jobs since Covid-19



In regards to impact of Covid-19 on their economic wellbeing, 58% of respondents stated that their economic wellbeing is worse than before Covid-19, 38% stated that it remained the same, and 4% that it has improved. More women of age group 31-44 (69%) and those living in Prishtina region (65%) stated that their economic wellbeing is worse than before Covid-19.

Figure 46 Economic wellbeing since the beginning of Covid-19 by age group

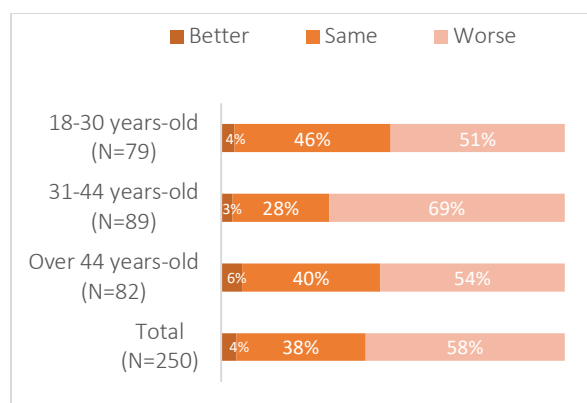
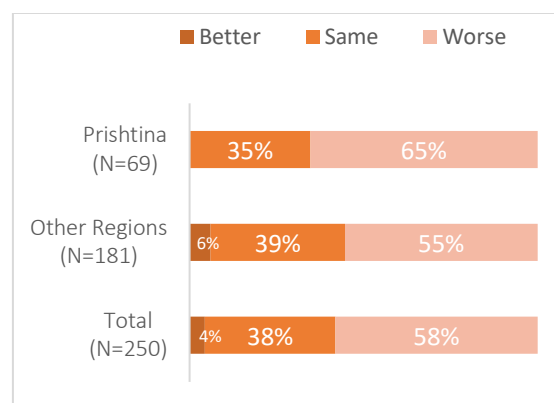
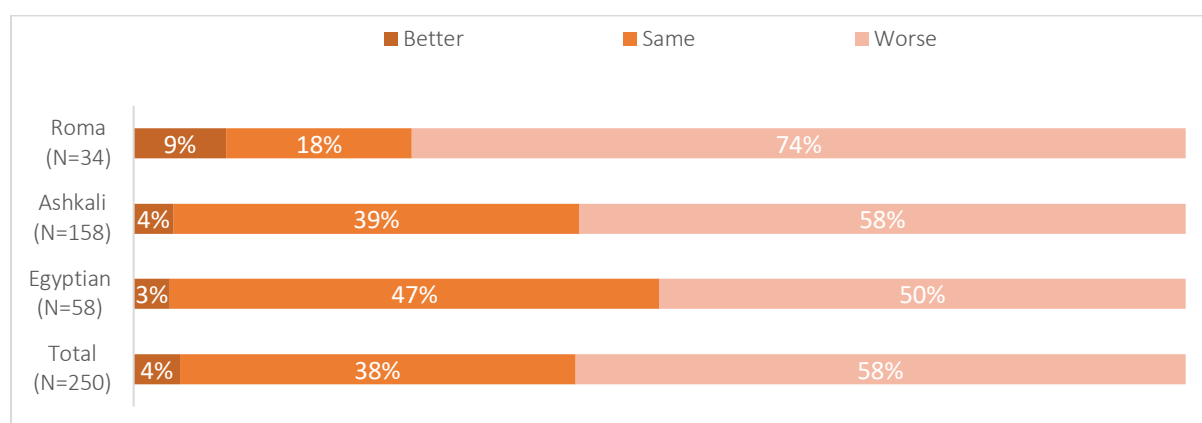


Figure 47 Economic wellbeing since the beginning of Covid-19 by region



Significantly more Roma (74%) than Ashkali (58%) than Egyptian (50%) women stated that their economic wellbeing had deteriorated compared to pre-Covid-19 period.

Figure 48 Economic wellbeing since the beginning of Covid-19 by ethnicity



Respondents were then asked if they had received any assistance from institutions or NGOs from the program for assistance to cope with Covid-19 pandemic. About 2/3 of respondents (62%) stated that they had received assistance from various organisations. Of these, 53% received assistance from humanitarian associations, 39% from municipalities, 34% from local and international NGOs, 12% from

civic initiatives/neighbourhood/community, 10% from diaspora, 3% from social centres, and 1% from political parties.

Figure 49 Assistance received since the beginning of Covid-19

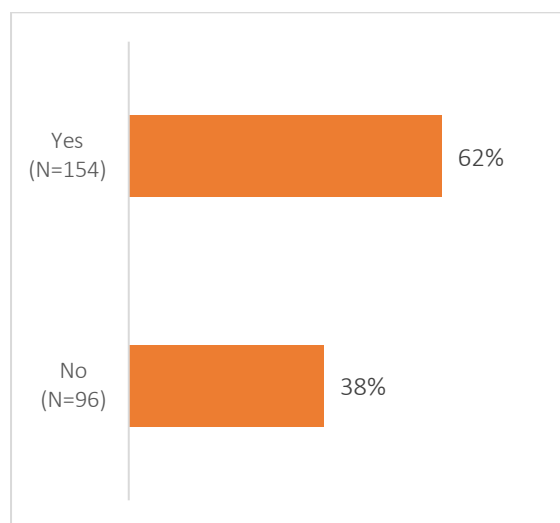
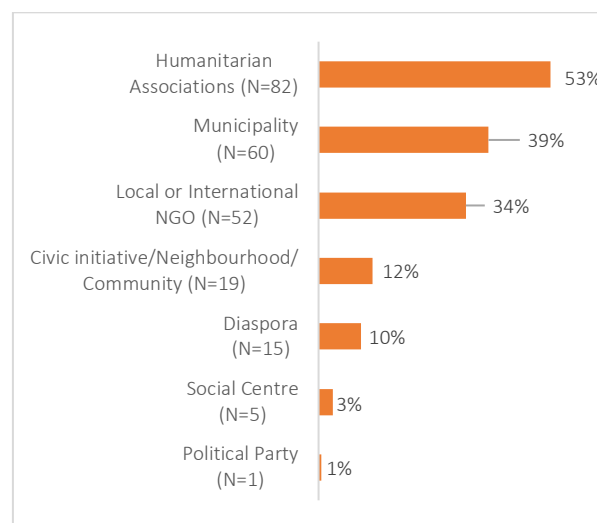


Figure 50 Assistance received since the beginning of Covid-19 by donors



PERCEPTION OF ROMA, ASHKALI AND EGYPTIAN WOMEN ON DIVISION OF HOUSEHOLD CHORES

Social norms regarding gender work remain at the core of discriminatory social and institutional practices, which not only create inequality in the labour market, but they also affect the “choices” that women and men make. In Kosovo, the labour market remains deeply divided by gender, with a low number of women being absorbed into the market. Furthermore, the labour market, at least the formal one, also remains highly racial. Since this is a standardised practice, the research has listed some statements about the dynamics of men and women within the family in relations to housework, work outside the home the husband-wife and mother-child relationship. Respondents were asked to agree or disagree to these statements. The aim of these statements was to identify whether there is a correlation between the social norms, the way the work inside and outside the home is divided, between their sexes and “choices”.

Majority of respondents (91%) agree that both husband and wife should contribute to household income (51% strongly agree, 40% agree). Also, 81% agree that having a job is the best way for a woman to be independent. (48% strongly agree and 33% agree).

However, a bit more than half (51%) agree that preschool children may suffer if their mother works (7% strongly agree, 42% agree). Similarly, almost half of respondents (49%) agree that in general, family life suffers when a woman works full-time (7% strongly agree, 42% agree).

Almost half of respondents (48%) agree that men should do more house chores than they do currently (12% strongly agree, 36% agree) About 32% of respondents agree that a working mother may establish equally warm and safe relation with her children like a non-working mother (4% strongly agree, 28% agree).

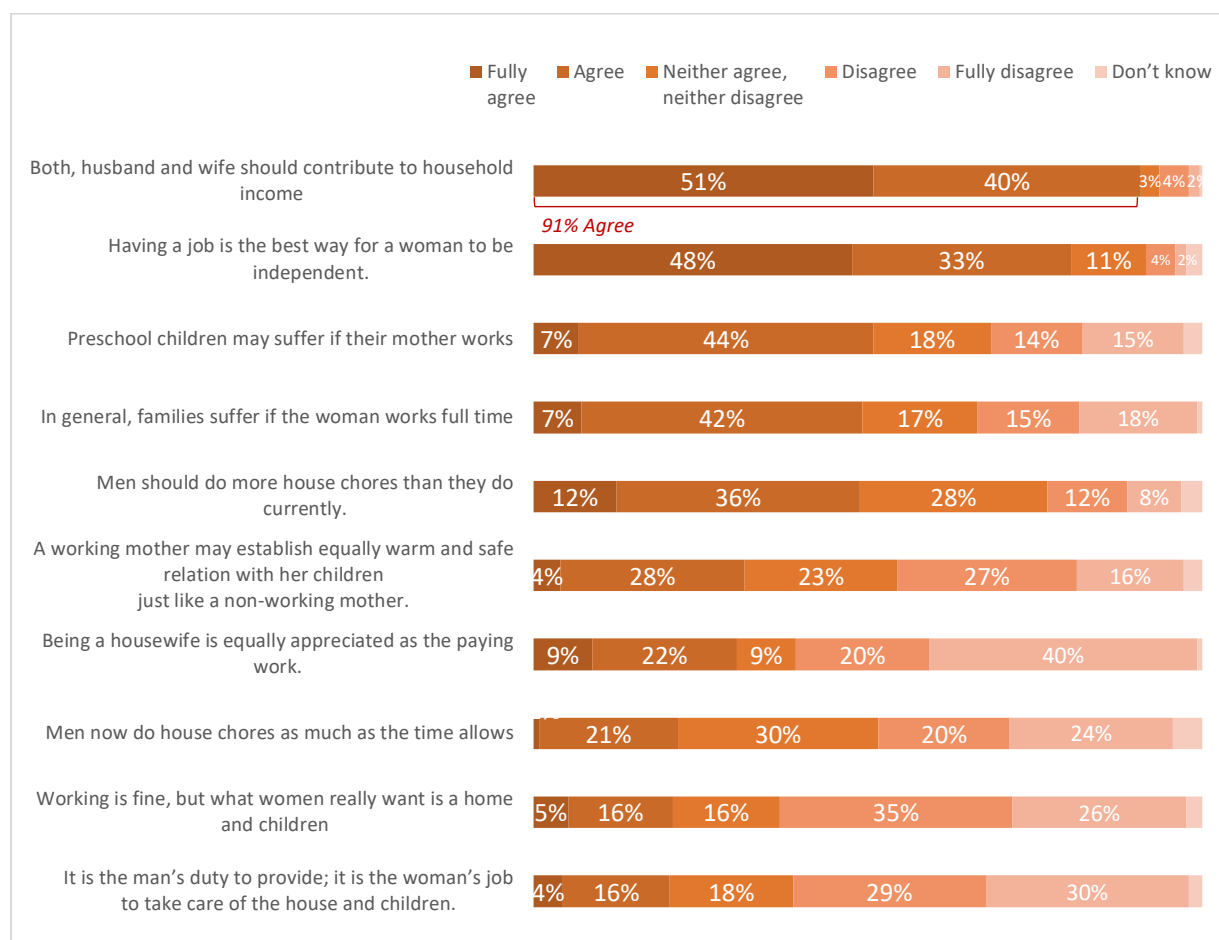
Only about 31% of respondents believe that being a housewife is as valued as paid work (9% strongly agree, 22% agree). However, in this case, more women (60%) disagree with this statement (40% strongly disagree, 20% disagree).

Only 22% of women agree that men already do as much house chores as much as the time allows (1% strongly agree; 21% agree). But again, even in this case, 44% disagree with this statement (24% strongly disagree, 20% agree).

Moreover, 21% of women agree with the statement that while work is good, what women want is home and children. But, 61% of respondents disagree with this statement (26% strongly disagree, 35% agree).

Whereas, 20% of respondents agree that is the man's job to provide; it is the woman's job to take care of the home and children (4% strongly agree, 16% agree). However, more than half of respondents (59%) disagree with this statement (30% strongly disagree, 29% disagree).

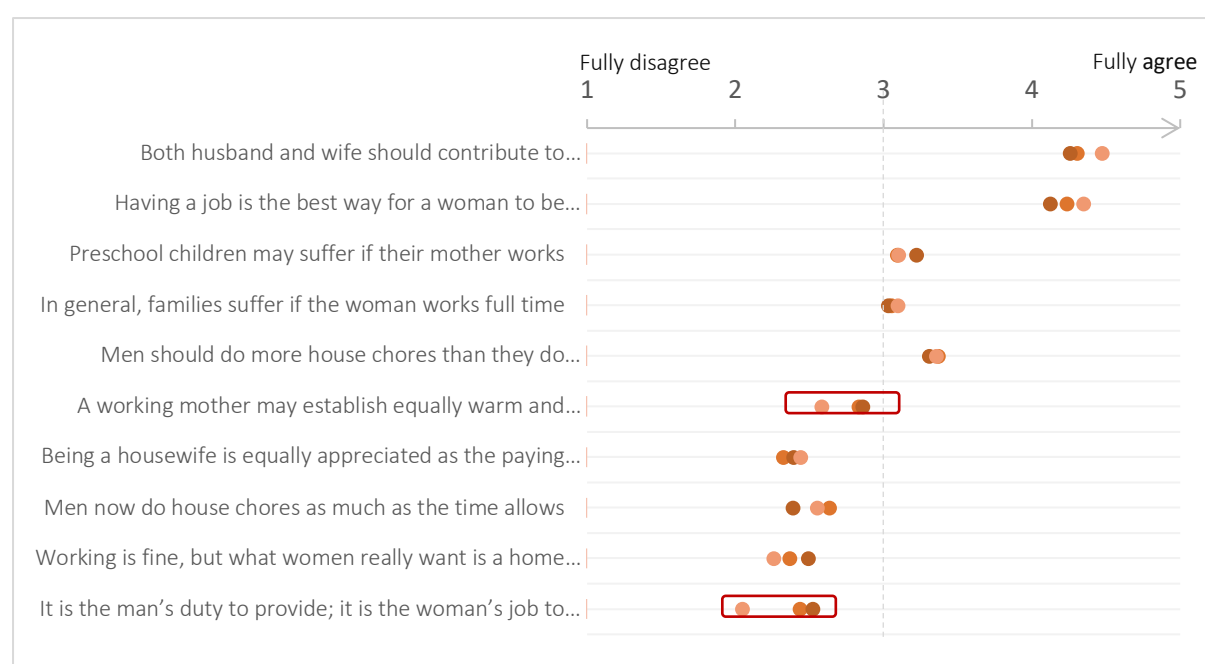
Figure 51 Statements on gender dynamics in the family



Measured on the scale of 1.0 up to 5.0 points, where 1 means "strongly disagree" and 5 "strongly agree" it is observed that women over 44 years-old have a lower degree of agreement (2.58) than those 18 to 30 years old (2.83) and 31-44 years-old (2.86) with the statement a working mother may establish equally warm and safe relation with her children as a non-working mother.

Surprisingly, the same respondents (over 44 years-old) agree less (2.04) than those 18-30 years old (2.43) and 31-44 years-old (2.52) that the husband's job is to provide for the family and the wife's job is to take care of home and family.

Figure 52 Statements on gender dynamics in the family by age group

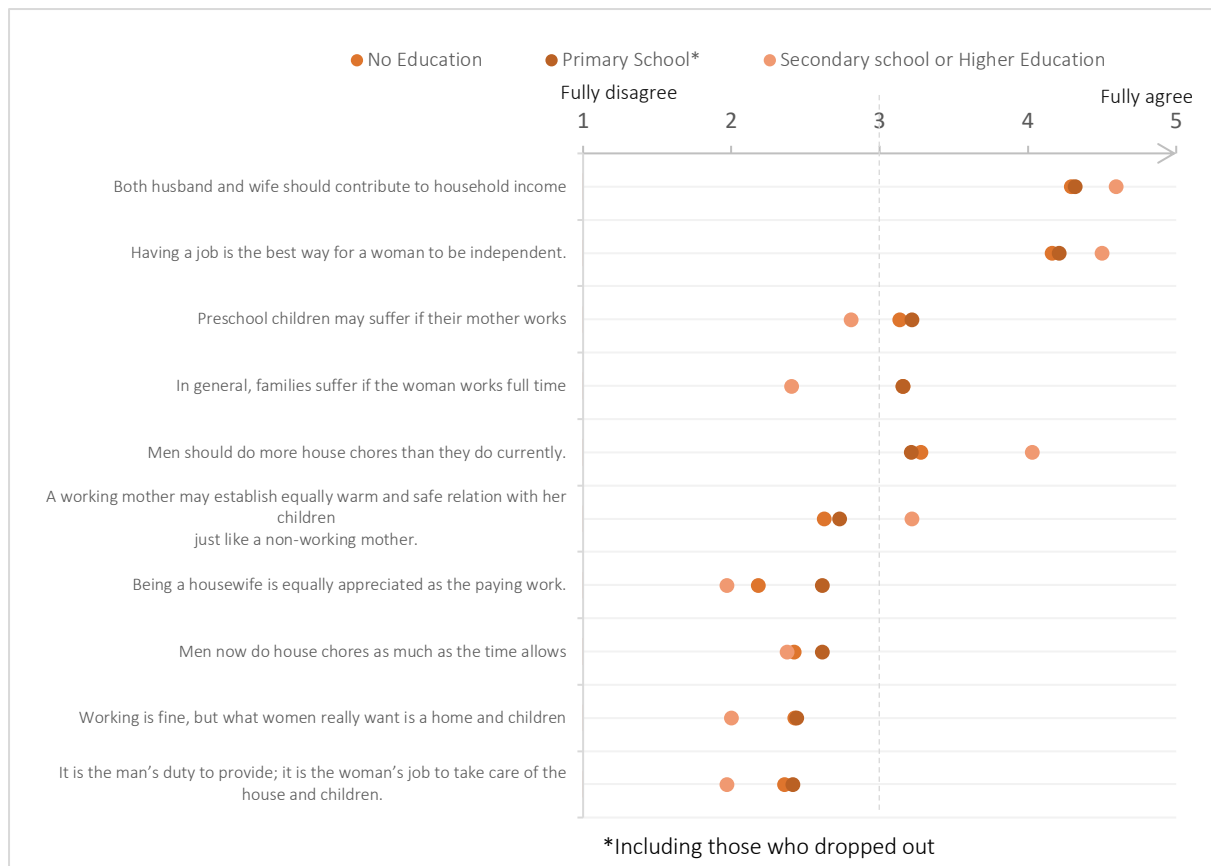


Apart from some differences by age, there are also differences by level of education. For example, far more women with secondary school or higher education agree (4.03) that men should do more house chores than they do now compared to women who have started or completed primary school (3.21) and those without any education (3.21).

There is significant difference in agreement according to the level of education for another statement too. Far fewer women with secondary school or higher education (2.40) agree that family life suffers when a woman works full-time compared to respondents with primary school (3.15) and those without any education (3.15).

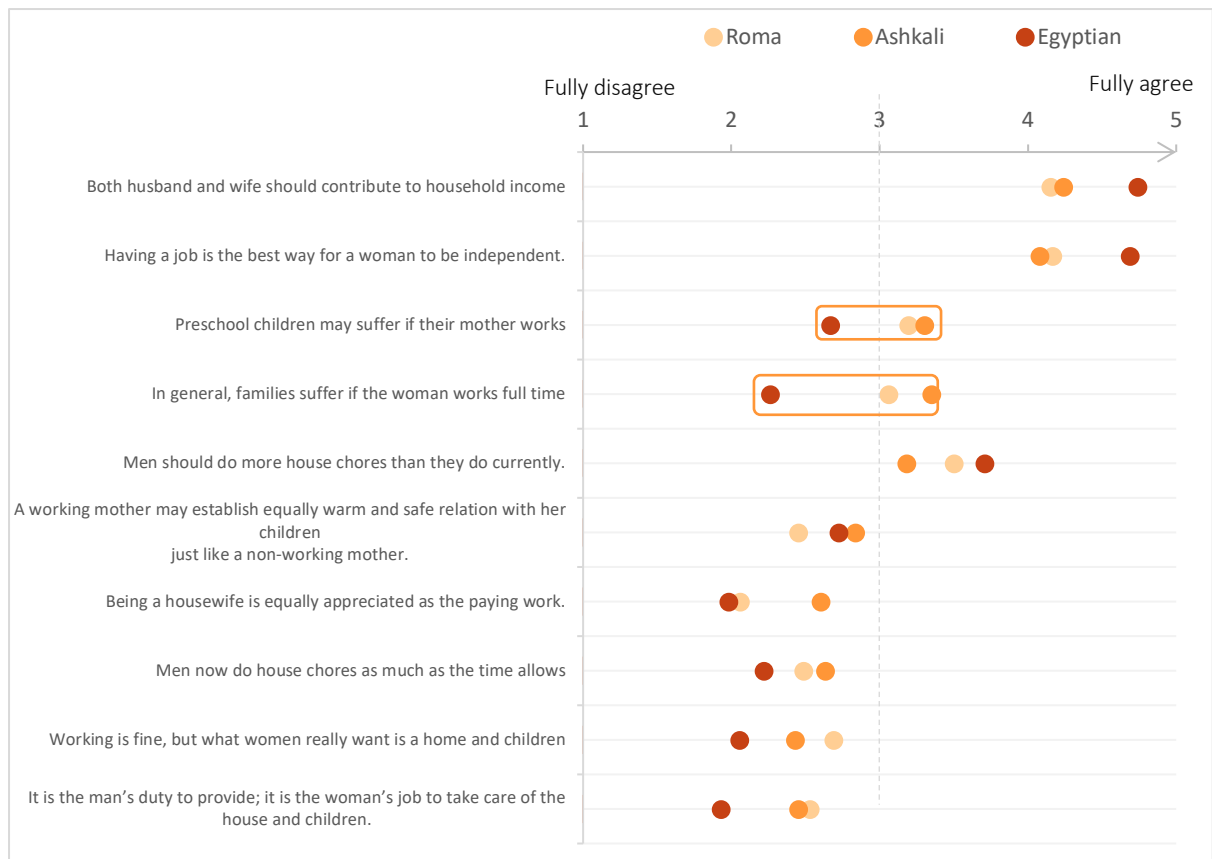
Also, more educated women agree much less that working is fine, but what women really want is a home and children (2.0) and that a man's job is to provide for the family, while the woman's job is to take care of home and family (1.96) compared to women with primary school (2.43 and 2.41 respectively) and those with no education (2.42 and 2.35 respectively).

Figure 53 Statements on gender dynamics in the family by level of education



There are also differences according to ethnicity regarding these statements and level of agreement. For example, fewer Egyptian respondents agree that preschool children may suffer if their mother works (2.66) and that family life suffer if their mother works full-time (2.26) than Roma women (3.19 and 3.06 respectively) and Ashkali women (3.30 and 3.34 respectively). Whereas, more Ashkali (2.60) women than Roma (2.06) and Egyptian (1.98) women agree that being a housewife is as valued as paid work.

Figure 54 Statements on gender dynamics in the family by ethnicity



CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper analysed and interpreted the results of a survey conducted with 250 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women to understand their economic situation by researching their level of education, employment opportunities and challenges, and economic, social and health welfare.

The analysis was conducted on a general level for all women, and occasionally highlighted differences by age, employment status, ethnicity, and region. It should be noted that in general, the results are representative for all three communities in question, whereas in some other cases, where the number of responses was too low based on the characteristics of the respondents, the results are only indicative.

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

The overall level of education of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women in Kosovo is low. Indeed, more than half of respondents (54%) have only started or completed primary school, and one in three women surveyed (33%) had no education at all. Only slightly more than one in ten women (13%) have completed secondary school or attended higher education, which suggests that access to higher education is quite limited for women of these three communities.

In addition, there are women who stated that they did not finish primary or secondary school and that they mainly had dropped out of school due to economic conditions (38%), or due to family issues (18%), and among other reasons they cited dangerous times for education, lack of interest to continue education, family obligations, or marriage.

Moreover, the type of sources of information also vary according to level of education. More women with secondary or higher education (84%) use social media than those who have started or finished primary education (36%) or hadn't attended school at all (14%), which can be considered an indication of illiteracy problem and limited access to written information whether it be on politics, economics, or current affairs.

The overall employment rate of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women in Kosovo is even lower. In fact, only 8% of women (out of 250 respondents) are employed, including self-employed or part-time employed. Of the unemployed women, majority of them are housewives or do not seek a job, and a smaller number of them are students or retirees. Only 12 of the employed women (who work for someone other than themselves) have regular employment contracts, and six have not. Also, 17 of them work full time; four work part time. And only 13 of them are paid via bank transfers; five of them are paid cash. All the respondents described the challenges they faced for employment throughout their lives, and more than one in three of them (35%) stated that they had difficulties to meet work criteria as per job description and almost one in five of them (18%) cited inability to find a job that meets their qualifications (18%).

However, the Constitution of Kosovo and a number of laws provide equal rights for minority communities in Kosovo and there are incentive mechanisms to pay special attention to marginalised groups. Based on these data, it can be noted that in terms of education and employment, there is room for improvement to access of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women to education and employment.

Consequently, in this regard, state institutions, non-governmental and international organisations should cooperate and should pay special attention to:

- ▶ Establish special mechanisms and programs to increase the number of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian in higher education, whether in general/academic or vocational education.
- ▶ Building primary and secondary school buildings near places where Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities live to facilitate access to education.

- ▶ When possible, to encourage participation of all communities in joint schools in an official language, understood by the majority and minority communities.
- ▶ Establish oversight mechanisms to monitor appropriate implementation of the programs.
- ▶ Providing financial incentives to increase the quality and number of teachers in areas where Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities live.
- ▶ Establishing continuous training of teachers to improve their capacities and to adapt those to the current market demands.
- ▶ Establishing modern mechanisms for ensuring the level of learning process at primary and secondary level.
- ▶ Establishing dual programs for education and employment through vocational training of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, especially of girls and women of these communities.

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND HEALTH WELFARE

The household economic situation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian respondents is generally inadequate. Only a quarter (25%) state that the family income is sufficient only to survive or is just social assistance, and 15% state that it is insufficient even for groceries. Another portion of women (25%) state that their income is sufficient for a normal life, and less than one in ten women (8%) state that their income is sufficient to provide for a very good life, and only 2% state that their income enables to live a very good life and for savings. In terms of concern about their wellbeing, only 8% of women stated that they are not concerned at all about their wellbeing, while 24% are slightly concerned, 37% moderately concerned, and 30% very concerned.

Due to such economic situation and concerns for their wellbeing, the vast majority of the respondents (74%) demand urgent involvement by state institutions for financial support; and a smaller group of respondents require the institutions' engagement for their employment in various sectors or industries, or for further education. Young women surveyed request from the institutions to engage more urgently to address the issue of further education (34%) and going abroad to study (14%).

Regarding the impact of Covid-19 on their economic wellbeing, more than half of respondents (58%) that their economic wellbeing has deteriorated since the spread of Covid-19. More women living in the Prishtina region (65%) state so. Furthermore, significantly more Roma (74%) than Ashkali (58%) than Egyptian (50%) women stated that their economic wellbeing had deteriorated compared to pre-Covid-19 period. In terms of access to reproductive health services, half of the respondents stated that they had not needed any such service, but when they did, mainly they hadn't encountered any problems in accessing these services.

Regarding the social welfare or position of women within the family and in relation to men, the vast majority of respondents agree that both, husband and wife should contribute to household income. Also, a vast majority of them (81%) agree that having a job is the best way for a woman to be independent.

However, although majority think that employment secures economic independence for women, over half of them agree that preschool children may suffer if their mother works. Almost half of respondents (49%) agree that in general, family life suffers when a woman works full-time. Only one in three women (32%) of respondents agree that a working mother may establish equally warm and safe relation with her children as a non-working mother.

Contrary to the view of women' economic independence through employment, about one in five women (20%) agree that it is a man's job to provide for the family, and it is a woman's job to take care of home and family, implying thus a prejudice against working women.

Therefore, in this regard, state institutions, non-governmental and international organisations should cooperate and should pay special attention to:

- ▶ Providing social assistance for the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities by treating each community as separate community;
- ▶ Providing additional financial assistance to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the economic and social wellbeing of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, especially on the women of these communities.
- ▶ Organising gender awareness campaigns, especially campaigns on gender equality, changing the meaning of division of gender roles within the families, and the role of parents, whether father or mother. This should especially have targeted at Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian with lower level of education.

REFERENCES

Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS) Population by ethnic/cultural background, gender and municipalities 2011.

Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS) 2020 Workforce Survey <<https://ask.rks-gov.net/sq/agjencia-e-statistikave-te-kosoves/add-neës/anketa-e-fugise-punetore-afp-2020>>

Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo; Law No. 02/L-37 on Use of Languages. <<https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=2440>>

Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. Law No. 04/L-032 on Pre-University Education. <<https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=2770>>

Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. Law No. 02/L-88 on Cultural Heritage. <<https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=2533>>

Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. Law No. 03/L-04 on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Communities and their

Members in Kosovo <<https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=2531>>

