

***IMAGE OF WOMEN POLITICIANS  
IN THE KOSOVO MEDIA***

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## Introduction

The year 1999 marks an essential change in the way of functioning of the Kosovar society. The full transformation of the political, economic, and cultural system has made for both a quantitative and qualitative restructuring of certain fields of social activity, such as gender studies and media.

During the nineties it was not possible to analyze political activity of Kosovar women by the methodology of gender studies, since it had not yet evolved into a separate discipline in Kosovo. Even the treatment of gender issues became part of the overall political resistance of the Kosovo women during the parallel system. Political engagement of Kosovo women for gender equality was suspended in favour of the struggle for human rights. Only after June 1999, more favourable conditions were created for a narrower profilization of gender studies as a separate discipline.

On the other hand, Kosovo media passed from a period of a constant struggle for survival and a negligible presence in the market of the nineties (a symbolic number of newspapers and magazines and no broadcasting media), into a stable market consisting of fast developing central and local broadcasting media (all Kosovo towns have now one or more television stations and several radio stations).

The vigorous dynamics of new circumstances have brought about the need for a more detailed analysis of the interaction between these two fields crucially important for the development of the Kosovo society. For this purpose, the Kosovo Center for Gender Studies has implemented a project through which to research the manner in which the women politicians are presented in the Kosovo media. The project was divided into two phases lasting from October 2008 until March 2009. In the first phase gender related data were collected, such as statistics of gender relations in important institutions, whereas in the second phase interviews were conducted with women politicians and with representatives of the relevant media in Kosovo.



## Acronyms

AAK – Alliance for the Future of Kosovo

AGE – Agency for Gender Equality

AKR – Alliance New Kosovo

KIJAC – Kosovo Institute of Journalism and Communication

IMC – Independent Media Commission

CEK – Central Election Commission

KTV – Kohavision

LDD – The Democratic League of Dardania

LDK – The Democratic League of Kosovo

OSBE – Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

PDK – Democratic Party of Kosovo

PD – Party of Justice

RTK – Radio Television of Kosovo

RTV21 – Radio Television 21

NRAEWK – The Network of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian Women of Kosovo



## Conclusions

- Majority of the interviewees (81 percent) think that the changed overall trend of developments after 1999 has had a positive influence on the level of participation of women in politics.
- - Inclusion of women should not be previously determined (62 percent), but merits should be the main criterion for the presence of women in politics, in stead of pre-determined quotas.
- The interviewees maintained that there should be more women in decision-making positions in the Boards of public enterprises and in other leading and policy-making bodies (90.5 percent), in government institutions (85.7 percent), at the University of Prishtina (85.7 percent) and in the institutions of justice (85.7 percent).
- Regarding the position that: "Women politicians are very capable, but they are not given the opportunities to prove themselves," 41 percent of the interviewees have opted for the modality "I neither agree nor disagree," whereas 27 percent agree with it, which is the same number with those who disagree.
- Courageous" is the key trait that should characterise a woman politician in Kosovo (71.5 percent). Other relevant traits are: "ambitious" (66.7 percent), "eloquent" (47.7

percent), "incorruptible" (42.8 percent) and "self-confident" (42.8 percent).

- Regarding the stance that: "Portraying of women in the media is in line with the reality in the Kosovo society", over 66 percent of the interviewed agree, whereas 19 percent disagree with it.
- While women politicians do not agree with the statement that Kosovo media give a fair portrayal of the women's image, most of the media representatives have a different opinion, maintaining that the presentation of the women in the media is fair.
- 52 percent agree with the statement that a grown presence of women holding leading positions in the media could make for a fairer presentation of the women's image in the media.
- The majority think that special rubrics / programs dedicated to women have a positive impact on the image of women (42 percent), whereas 29 percent see them as instruments further strengthening gender stereotypes, while 24 percent think that they do not have any impact in shaping of attitudes towards women at all.
- regulations of the Independent Media Commission lack the gender aspect.
- Inclusion of the gender aspect in the regulations of the Independent Media Commission would have a positive influence serving for

more sensibility of Kosovo media towards women activities in politics.

- 45 percent think that media do not have special editorial policies providing for a fair presentation of genders, whereas 30 percent are not informed if there are any such policies. On the other hand, 15 percent of interviewees maintain that the media have and implement policies, whereas 10 percent state that the media have such policies, but they do not implement them.
- Women politicians do not agree with the media representatives regarding special editorial policies in favour of a fair presentation of genders. They think that there “must be such policies”, while journalists maintain that “editorial policies should not be set based on gender but based on the performance of political agents and entities.”
- Kosovo media and institutional mechanisms that regulate the media landscape should become aware that sensibility towards and the way women politicians are portrayed in the media are important segments of the process of democratization of the society.
- There is general agreement that the time allocated to women in the main news editions and key articles in newspapers corresponds to their political activities. Exceptions in this regard are interviews, debates and programs in the course of election campaigns, which require an increased presence of women.
- 67 percent support the position that lack of

women in decision making is also reflected in their insufficient presence in the media.

- Vast majority of the interviewed (90 percent), agree that women politicians should come up with more initiatives and be more persistent in their demand for more space in the media.
- 48 percent of interviewees agree with the statement that “Women politicians do not have the needed self-confidence to appear in the media,” whereas 24 percent disagree with this.
- The fact that leaders of the most important institutions of the country are men and therefore targeted by the media, does not leave enough room for women politicians to become a more significant part of the journalists’ agenda.
- 62 percent of the interviewees maintain that quality of presentation of women is the same with that of the men, whereas 38 percent consider women are not presented as well as men. None of the interviewees thinks that the quality of political presentation of women is better than that of men.
- Women politicians think that their opinion is sought on issues such as family, children, issues of gender equality and in general regarding second hand issues, but not on issues of security, economy, and other paramount issues. On the other hand, journalists state that seeking of opinion of women politicians depends on the positions they hold and on their competence to contribute

meaningfully on given topics.

- 81 percent think that the main criterion for their presence in the media is the extent to which they are active in the political life.
- More than half of the interviewees (56 percent) have said that they do not see any difference between broadcasting and printed media regarding presentation of women politicians, whereas 24 percent think that broadcasting media make a better presentation of the women politicians.
- 43 percent have declared that influence of media in voters' determination is "significant", whereas 14 percent have said that media have "crucial influence" in opting for a given male or female candidate by the voters.
- Television is the main source of information for women politicians. After them follow daily newspapers, internet, radio stations, and periodicals/magazines.



## Recommendations

- In harmony with the Law on Gender Equality, the Independent Media Commission should draft a regulation to provide for a fair gender presentation, including banning of use of any sexist language and presentation of women as sex objects in the media.
- Include the gender aspect in all laws, regulations, codes of conduct, professional standards, broadcasting and other policies that regulate functioning of the media.
- Media should draft internal gender sensitive policies that would work for different portraying of men and women than the current schemes and clichés.
- Carry out more detailed analysis and research regarding ways of presentation of genders by the Kosovo media and by relevant government, non-government and international institutions.
- Organizations involved in regular media monitoring in Kosovo, should include gender perspectives in the analyses.
- During election campaigns, media should be monitored in all their segments (news programs, interviews, debates, cover pages, election chronicles, etc) pertaining to presenta-

tion of women politicians.

- Public and private education institutions organizing journalism studies should include in their curricula special modules in the fields of gender studies and media.
- Non-government women organizations should involve in organizing awareness raising campaigns targeting Kosovo media and institutional mechanisms regulating functioning of the media landscape; these campaigns would serve to increase awareness that a gender sensitive approach in presenting women politicians in the media is a very important segment of the process of democratization of every society.
- Non-governmental organizations involved in gender issues and training programs should organize continuous trainings with journalists on gender issues and on fair presentation of genders in the media.
- Non-government organizations should organize continuous training events for women politicians on the role and importance of media, on ways of communicating with journalists, etc., with the purpose to make women politicians an important part of the journalists' agenda.

- Media should offer more space to awareness raising campaigns against all forms of discrimination against women.



# 1. The general context

Development of women in the field of politics in Kosovo has gone through numerous challenges and obstacles. In the decades after the Second World War the main problems related to illiteracy and the patriarchal mindset, whereas during the nineties, due to systemic disorders in the way of functioning of life in Kosovo imposed by the Serbian regime, there was only limited space for women's political activity in Kosovo. For these reasons, there needs to be continuous institutional measures taken to correct and fill the gaps created in the past.

A significant step in improving the situation was made when quotas were introduced for representation of women in election lists, which required that 30 % of the seats in the Kosovo Assembly and in Municipal Assemblies be reserved for women. This measure yielded its results soon in the Kosovo parliamentary life and also had a positive impact in the overall image of the Kosovo politics.<sup>1</sup>

In 2000, the local elections were organized in Kosovo that were the first elections taking place in a democratic setting. There for the first time was applied the principle of participation of women by 30 % of the entire number of candidates in the lists for municipal councillors. However, election results proved to be disappointing since only 8.6 percent of women were voted for councillors of Municipal Assemblies of Kosovo. This low percentage of women voted for municipal councillors made it imperative to take affirmative measures, such as the quota of 30 % of municipal assembly members, with the purpose of increasing the number of women active in politics. Thus, with the application of the 30 % quota in the second local elections of 2004 the number of women in assemblies was increased and the gender rapport was improved in favour of women. As a result, now women hold 28 percent

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<sup>1</sup> Excerpt from the article: "Women, Constitution, Quota", Luljeta Vuniqi, Executive Director in the Kosovar Center for Gender Studies (KCGS), published at Koha Ditore, February 25, 2008.

of the seats in the thirty Municipal Assemblies of Kosovo.

Regarding elections of 2001 for the central level of government, the Central Election Commission decided that every third candidate in the party election lists to be a woman. This decision also applied for the representation of women by 30 percent in the Kosovo Assembly which, translated in numbers, meant that 28.3 percent or 35 out of 120 members of Assembly were women.

As a result of the second parliamentary elections there were 33 women or 27.5 percent of the overall number of the members of Assembly. In the current mandate of the Kosovo Assembly (2007), women are represented by 30 percent or 37 women among the 120 members of the Assembly. Members of the Kosovo Assembly are organized in 9 parliamentary groups.<sup>2</sup> Only one out of nine parliamentary groups is chaired by a woman.<sup>3</sup> There are 21 political parties represented in the Kosovo Assembly, with two of them run by women in their electoral races.<sup>4</sup> Both these parties were involved in a pre-election coalition with the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK), which also won these elections.

The ORA Reform Party, which operates as a non-parliamentary party, is run by a woman - Teuta Sahatqija.

In the current mandate, the Assembly of Kosovo has 13 Parliamentary Committees, with two of them run by women. In the last legislation, out of 18 Parliamentary Committees, 7 were run by women.

The Government of Kosovo has 17 ministries.<sup>5</sup> Among these only two are run by women ministers,<sup>6</sup> whereas three other women hold the position of deputy-minister.<sup>7</sup>

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2 One of these parliamentary groups, is a group of individual MPs belonging to no party group.

3 Myfera Shinik – chief of the parliamentary group 7+.

4 Socialdemocratic Party with Kaçusha Jashari and Democratic Alternative of Kosovo with Edita Tahiri.

5 [www.ks-gov.net](http://www.ks-gov.net)

6 Nekibe Kelmendi – Minister of Justice and Justina Shiroka Pula – Minister of Energy and Mines

7 Vlora Çitaku – Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Lirije Kajtazi – Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, and Mybera Shala – Mustafa, Ministry of Health.

In spite of the relatively high representation of women in the Assembly of Kosovo and in the Municipal Assemblies in the capacity of members of parliament and municipal assembly councillors, we still cannot be satisfied with the participation of women in the political and public decision making. Apart from the lack of leading positions in the Assembly of Kosovo, the number of women in senior positions is proportionally low also in other institutions of local and central government.<sup>8</sup> In 2006, 20.78 percent of leading positions were held by women, whereas in 2007 this percentage rose to 22.95 percent. In 2008, 13.71 percent of senior managerial positions in the central level were held by women.

On the other hand, at the municipal level, in 2006, 10.22 percent of leading positions were occupied by women; in 2007 this participation was 12.95 percent, whereas in 2008, only 7.24 percent of senior managerial positions were held by women.<sup>9</sup>

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8 Regarding the number of women in leading positions at the central and municipal level official data have been used of the Department of Civil Service Administration, Ministry of Public Services, Government of Kosovo.

9 For the year 2008, only percentages for the managerial positions at the central and municipal level have been analysed. Data were taken from the Department of Civil Service Administration, Ministry of Public Services, Government of Kosovo.



## 2. Methodology

For the implementation of the project “Image of women politicians in the Kosovo media” a combined methodology was used with a focus on the qualitative method.

Initially, the team involved in consulting various materials, analyses, and theories (desk-research), which were relevant for the media, for the image of women in general and for the image of women in the media, in particular. Broadcasting and printed media, including internet, were used as sources of information. Various regulations, laws and professional standards, were also consulted that among others regulate issues of presentation of women.

With the purpose of collecting data, the following research instruments were utilized: semi-standardized interviews and focus group discussion.

Interviews. In total 21 interviews with representatives of various institutions have been conducted. Interviews include: women politicians (from parliamentary and non-parliamentary parties), media leaders, news editors and journalists of broadcasting and printed media, media analysts and officials of the Independent Media Commission.

Focus group. A focus group discussion was organized in order to identify positions of journalists about various aspects of women’s (with a focus on women politicians) presentation in the media. Participants were selected based on the type of media: television, radio, newspapers, web-portals.

Period of implementation of research is October 2008 – March 2009. All interviews were conducted during the months of October and November 2008.

Collaborators who helped in implementation of the research

The project “Image of women politicians in Kosovo media,” was implemented on the initiative by the Kosovo Center for Gender Studies and with the financial support by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung - Kosovo.

On behalf of the Kosovo Center for Gender Studies, the research director, Luljeta Vuniqi, expresses her appreciation to the research team consisting of Mr. Artan Krasniqi and Ms. Luljeta Demolli, as well as Mr. Artan Muhaxhiri, consultant for methodology.

Special thanks for continuous support during the project implementation go to the other members of the KCGS, Mr. Driton Parduzi and Ms. Sibel Halimi.

Apart from these, the team would like to also thank all interviewees for their readiness for cooperation.

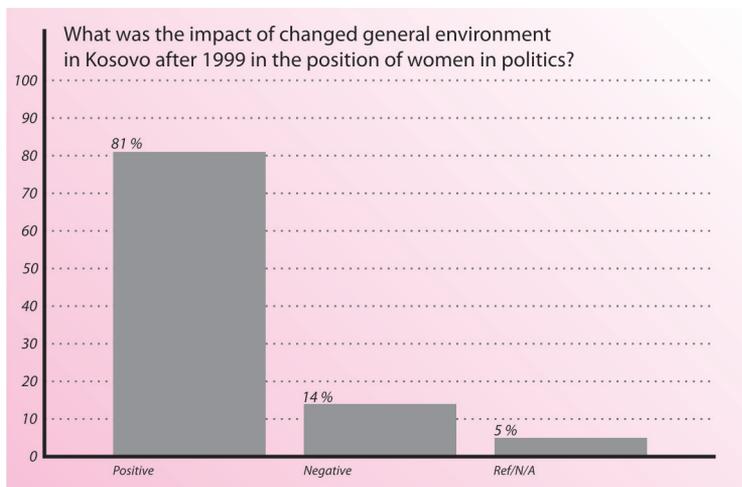
### List of interviewed persons

	Name	Institution	Position held
1.	Anita Morina Saraçi	Assembly of Kosovo, LDK	MP
2.	Antigona Baxhaku	RTV21	Editor in Chief
3.	Argjentina Grazhdani	Independent Media Commission	Chair of Commission
4.	Arlinda Desku	Express daily	Deputy editor in chief
5.	Artan Haraqija	Kosovo Television (RTK)	Journalist
6.	Artan Mustafa	Express daily	Editor /Journalist
7.	Besa Gaxherri	Kosovo Assembly, LDD	MP, Vice-president of LDD and President of LDD Women's Forum
8.	Donika Kadaj-Bujupi	Kosovo Assembly, AAK	MP, President of Kosovo Women's Alliance
9.	Gjergj Filipaj	KIJAC	Lecturer
10.	Kimete Zeqa	PD (Party of Justice)	Member of Presidency
11.	Lindita Feti	Kohavision	Journalist
12.	Mentor Shala	Kosovo Television (RTK)	Chief editor
13.	Mimoza Ahmetaj	Kosovo Assembly, PDK	MP
14.	Njomëza Emiri	Kosovo Assembly, AKR	MP
15.	Rrahman Paçarizi	AAB University	Vice-rector
16.	Sami Kastrati	Koha Ditore daily	Journalist
17.	Sebiha Ramaxhiku	Radio Dukagjini	Chief editor
18.	Shpresa Agushi	NRAEWK	Executive director
19.	Teuta Sahatqija	ORA Reform Party	President
20.	Valbona Mehmeti	Koha Ditore daily	Assistant chief editor
21.	Xheraldina Vula	RTV21	Deputy-manager

### 3. INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

#### 3.1 Participation and role of women in the Kosovo politics

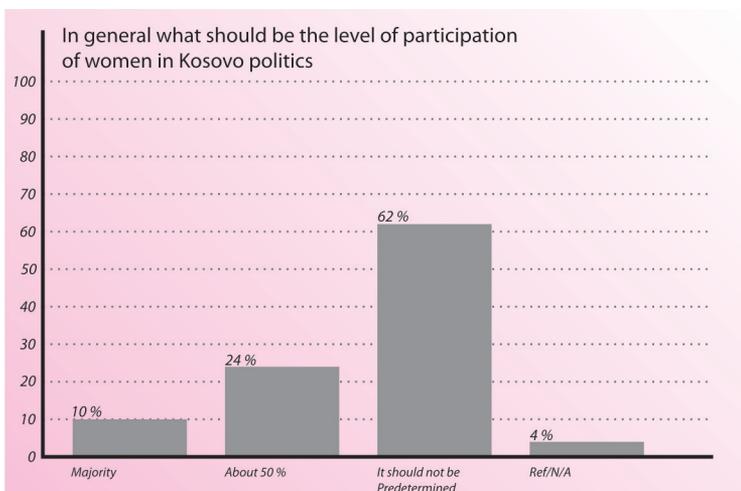
Asked about the impact of the changed environment in Kosovo after 1999 on level of inclusion of women in politics, the vast majority of those interviewed<sup>10</sup> (81 percent) consider that the change of general trends has had a positive impact, whereas 14 percent maintain that this has had a negative impact. 5 percent of interviewees held a neutral position on the issue.



<sup>10</sup> See the list of interviewees in section on "Methodology"

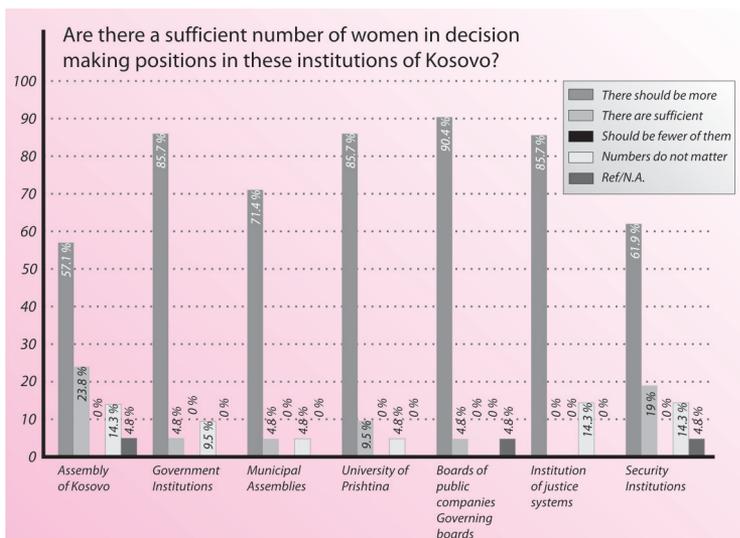
### 3.2 “What should be the level of participation of women in Kosovo politics?”

Regarding the level of participation of Kosovo women in the Kosovo politics, the majority of interviewees (62 percent) think that their level of participation should not be predetermined. According to them, in stead of preset quotas, merit should be the main criterion for the presence of women in politics. On the other hand, 24 percent think that the level of participation of women in politics should be proportional with that of men, whereas only 10 percent of those interviewed maintain that women should present the majority of those involved in politics.



### 3.3 Participation of women in decision making positions in Kosovo institutions

Apart from answering questions on the overall participation of women in politics, the interviewees also gave their opinion about individual sectors and institutions. Results show a difference between answers given pertaining to these two levels. Whereas when asked about the general level the most answers went for the option “numbers should not predetermined”, the interviewees opted for “there should be more of them” when answering about the institutional level. Thus, 85.7 percent of those interviewed have said that “there should be more women in decision making positions” at government institutions, whereas only 9.5 percent think that “number is not important.” 4.8 percent of the interviewees opted for the option “there are a sufficient number of women in government institutions.”



In the Assembly of Kosovo women are represented with 30 percent. In our survey, 57.1 percent of the interviewed think that there should be more women MPs in the Kosovo Assembly, 23.8 percent say that this number is sufficient, whereas 14.3 percent maintain that numbers do not matter. On the other hand, regarding representation of women in Municipal Assemblies, 71.4 percent of the interviewees have opted for "there should be more of them", while 19 percent think that "numbers do not matter." Only 4.8 percent have declared that the number of women in Municipal Assemblies "is sufficient."

Absolute majority of interviewees think that "there should be more women" in leading positions at the University of Prishtina (85.7 percent). Only 4.8 percent think that the current numbers are "satisfactory", whereas 9.5 percent think that "numbers do not matter."

Boards of public enterprises and steering councils are other organs that are characterised by a significant lack of women in decision making positions. There need for more women in these positions is also emphasized by the almost unanimous position of the interviewees (90.5 percent).

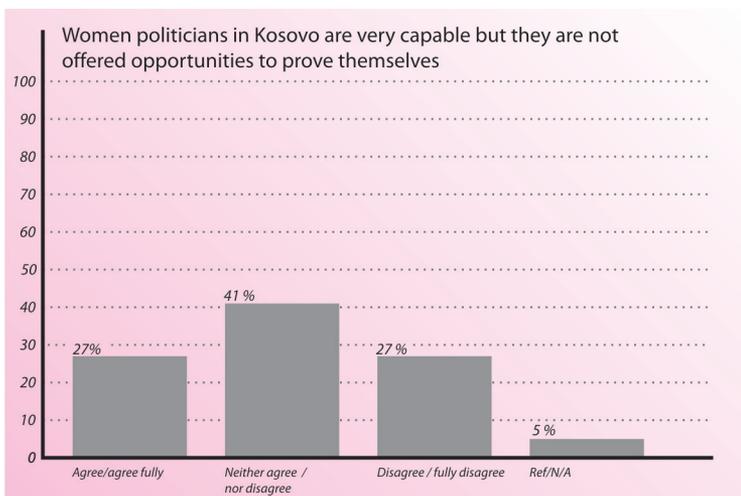
There is a similar attitude towards the situation in institutions of justice since 85.7 percent of those interviewed think that "there should be more" women in justice authorities, whereas 14.3 percent think that "numbers do not matter." More than half of the interviewed (61.9 percent), think that there should be more women in decision making positions of the security institutions.

### 3.4 The overall situation in Kosovo would be better if there were more women in politics and in decision making.

Over half of the interviewed (51 percent) have agreed with this statement, whereas 29 percent opted for the answer “neither agree, not disagree.” Only 10 percent of the interviewed “do not agree” with the statement.

### 3.5 Women politicians in Kosovo are very capable, but they are not offered opportunities to prove themselves.

27 percent of interviewees agreed with this statement, which is the same as the percentage of those who disagreed with it. It is interesting though that 41 percent of interviewees opted for alternative “neither agree nor disagree”, which makes us understand that they do not have an opinion on this issue. However, most of the interviewees agree that women politicians live up to their promises given to their voters saying that they have contributed immensely to the political processes that Kosovo went through and that therefore they deserve to be respected for their work.



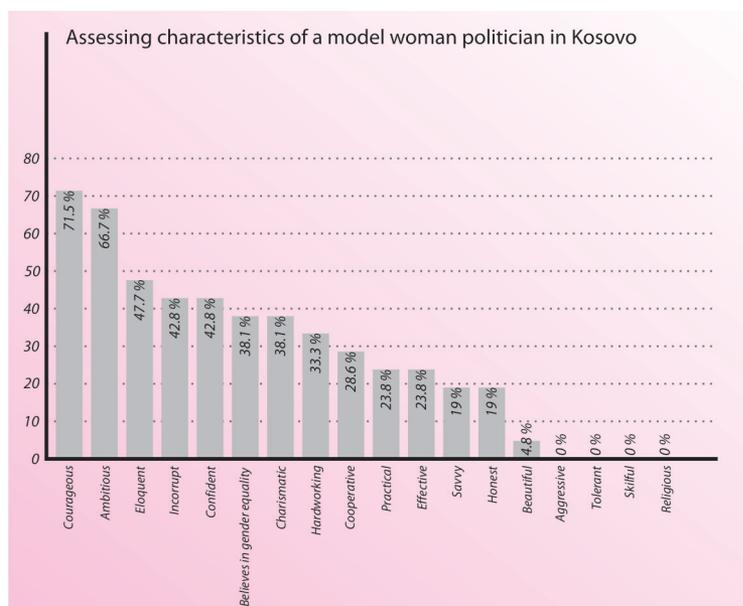
### 3.6 Characteristics of a model woman politician in Kosovo

The model represented by women in politics is closely connected to the social role she has generally come to bear. Politics is a field which has traditionally been “reserved for men” and, consequently, politics is identified with qualities commonly attributed to men. This makes it more difficult to design a model for women politicians without including in it stereotypical characteristics of men. On the other hand, the moment women politicians get hold of important leading positions, they are often criticised for impersonating attributed of male politicians.

The way in which women politicians are portrayed in the Kosovar media only helps in further strengthening the already existing gender stereotypes and in creating “predetermined” model of a male/female politician. Women will commonly be presented in the media if participating in debates on “paramount issues”. Full domination by men politicians in

the Kosovar media carries a message to the public that only men are entitled to deal with politics.

Aiming to fully address the role of media in creating a model for women politicians, the interviewees were asked to give their opinion about the characteristics of a woman politician. In Kosovo.



“Courageous” is the most important trait that should characterise a woman politician in Kosovo (71.5 percent). Another very important quality is considered if they are “ambitious” (66.7 percent) and “eloquent” (47.7 percent). Then follow “incorrupt” and “being self-confident” (with 42.8 percent each). Being “charismatic” and “believing in gender equality” are two other important qualities for a woman politician (each weighing 38.1 percent). In order for a woman politician to be considered a good politician, she has to be “hardwork-

ing" (33.3 percent) and "cooperative" (28.6 percent).<sup>11</sup>

The fact that characteristics such as "courageous", "ambitious", "eloquent", etc., are attached more importance for a woman politician in Kosovo reflects the idea that in order for women to give their full contribution in politics they should be endowed with traits which are traditionally associated with men.

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<sup>11</sup> Characteristics like "practical" and "effective" get 23.8 percent each, whereas "cautious" and "honest" get 19 percent each; "being beautiful" gets only 4.8 percent. On the other hand, features like "aggressive", "tolerant", "skillful" and "religious", were not seen as relevant traits for women politicians in Kosovo. (See Graph 5).

## 4. Image of women in the Kosovo media

Media are those who make a selection of issues that will reach public debates – in this way influencing the creation of public opinion. Role of the media in portraying gender roles is of primary importance, since it is up to them to have these roles fully and critically analysed or to address them by resorting to stereotypes inherited from the past.

The relation between women and the media, that is the way in which women are portrayed by the media, has been analysed in numerous internationally renowned studies.<sup>12</sup> Most commonly, conclusions from these studies prove a constant presence of stereotypes and prejudices on this issue.

*It is an unwritten law of the market economy that women should sell various products. Advertisements are full of established stereotypes wherein, for instance, women sell kitchen utensils, whereas men stay close to tools for physical work.*

**Valmir Klaiqi, journalist of Lajm daily**

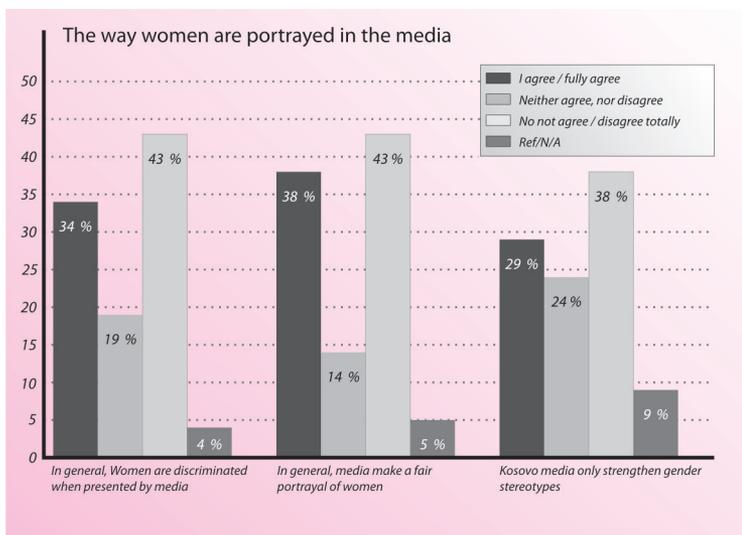
Even though no detailed studies of media have been carried out in Kosovo, we can still say that they nurture stereotypical images for women and marginalize the real and multiple noteworthy roles of women in the social and political life of Kosovo. Media ought to rectify their current approach towards women and to influence in general a more adequate and fairer portrayal, which would then also help in

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<sup>12</sup> Carolyn M. Byerly: "Women and Media: A Critical Introduction", (Wiley-BlackWell, 2006); Susan J. Douglas: "Where the Girls Are: Growing Up Female With the Mass Media", (Three Rivers Press, 1995); Ann C. Hall: "Delights, Desires, and Dilemmas: Essays on Women and the Media", (Praeger Publishers, 1998).

achieving gender equality. "The nature of relations between women and the media is a source of concern, since the way women were portrayed by the media had had an impact also in the way they were seen and treated in and by the society. At the same time, it is evident that the progress made in portraying women by the media is still far from the normal quality and orbit it should have from the perspective of gender equality."<sup>13</sup>

The interviewees think that Kosovo media have a realist approach in portraying women politicians. Responding to the statement "Portrayal of women in the media is in harmony with the reality of the Kosovar society," 66 percent of the interviewees agreed, whereas only 19 percent disagreed with it. The remaining 10 percent opted for the "neither agree, nor disagree option."



We received contradicting results on the issue of level of or lack of discrimination of women by the media.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.ikubinfor.com/ikubFEMRA> - "ikubINFO" is an information portal informativ offering a special section for women. (Access to internet 16 March 2009)

Responding to the statement that “In general women are discriminated during their presentation in the media,” 34 percent did not agree with it, 43 percent disagreed, whereas 19 percent neither agreed nor disagreed.

We got similar responses on the statement that “In general, media make a fair presentation of the women’s image” with 38 percent agreeing, 43 percent disagreeing, and 14 percent neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

These contradicting results also reflect the differences in opinion between the two groups of interviewed: women in politics and media representatives. While women politicians mainly disagree with the statement that Kosovo media make a fair presentation of women’s images, most of the media representatives maintain that there is a fair portrayal of women in the media.<sup>14</sup>

When dealing with the statement “Kosovo media in general strengthen existing gender stereotypes,” 29 percent of the interviewees agree, 24 percent neither agree nor disagree, whereas 38 percent disagree.

#### 4.1 Presence of women in leading positions of Kosovo media improves sensitivity of media towards presentation of women.

Two of the three national broadcasting companies in Kosovo are run by women,<sup>15</sup> whereas the Public Television of Kosovo must have at least two women among its members of the governing.<sup>16</sup> Of the overall number of broadcasting me-

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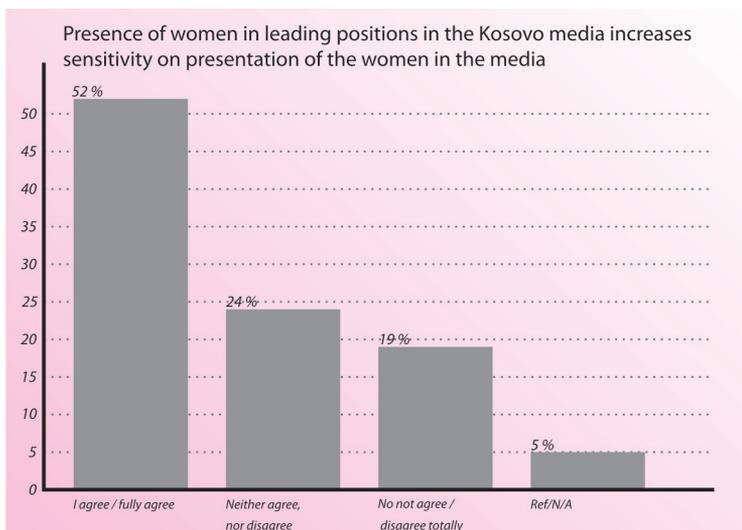
14 38 percent of the interviewees agreed, 43 percent did not agree and 14 percent opted for the alternative “neither agree, nor disagree.”

15 RTV 21 is run by Afërdita Saraçini-Kelmendi, whereas KTV by Flaka Surroi.

16 At least two members of the RTK Board will come from non-Albanian communities and at least two members will be women. At least two members will have professional qualifications in the fields of financing and business management.

dia in Kosovo (116), around 10 percent are run by women.<sup>17</sup>

This brings up an important question: does the increased presence of women in senior positions in the media have any impact in a fairer presentation of the women's image by the media. 52 percent of the interviewed agree with this statement, 24 percent are neutral ("neither agree, nor disagree"), whereas 19 percent think that presence of women in leading positions in the media does not have any influence for a fairer presentation of the women's image in the media.



Lack of any clear regulations and specific policies by the Independent Media Commission, which would provide against prejudices, customary and all other practices that are built on and support the ideas of inferiority and superiority of one gender against the other,<sup>18</sup> have made for the way of presentation of women by the media to depend exclusively on the will, commitment and understanding of individual media.

17 Address book of licensed broadcasters in Kosovo, Independent Media Commission - [www.imc-ko.org](http://www.imc-ko.org)

18 Convention for Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, (CEDAW), Article 5.

*"The mistake we make is that we see media as institutions that have to promote and work to enhance the rights of women, children etc. Media should be seen as businesses which aim to sell their product and who are not responsible to educate."*

**Muamer Hasani, Dardamedia web portal**

## 4.2 Special programs / rubrics dedicated to women in Kosovo media

Unable to be at the center of activities in the 'grand' stage, women try to find solutions by creating their "mini spaces" within bigger structures in given fields. For example, women have established their forums within political parties, whereby creating more space for their activities. Similar to this, media have provided space for special programs / rubrics dedicated exclusively to women. Women's forums within political parties and the space provided for them in the media often do not go deeper than addressing issues such as gender equality, gender based violence, participation of women in politics, family issues, fashion, etc. For this reason "pre-determined space" in politics and in media also carry with them the danger of socio-political and media seclusion of girls and women, but may also have a negative impact in the democratization of the society.<sup>19</sup>

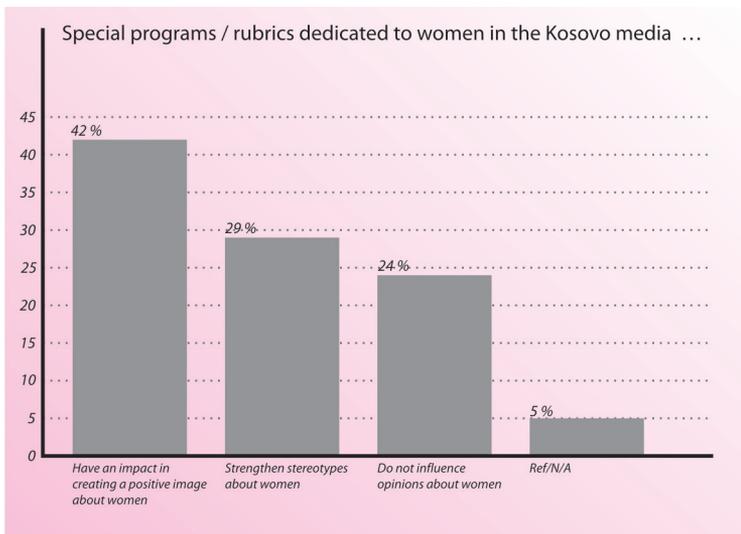
*"This happens because some feel that by presenting women in a reserved space helps to meet obligations towards women."*

**Sebiha Ramaxhiku,  
news editor in Radio Dukagjini**

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<sup>19</sup> "Gender, Women and the Media: An Overview <http://www.genderit.org/en/index.shtml?W=a&x=91365> (Access to Internet – 11 February 2009)

In this context, the interviewees have been asked if they think that special programs / rubrics in the Kosovo media have a positive impact, a negative impact, or no impact whatsoever in creating an image about women.



Majority of the interviewees, 42 percent, think that these programs / rubrics in the media have a positive impact about the women's image, while 29 percent see them as means for strengthening gender stereotypes. A similar percentage (24 percent) think that these programs / rubrics do not have any impact in shaping the opinion about women.

*"For centuries women were oppressed, ignored, and denied any rights to decide and choose; therefore, it will take time to reach a balance. These are some of the difficulties in making programs in this genre, which in fact help to present the real picture on the position of women in our country."<sup>20</sup>*

**Zana Kada, author of the program "Ajo" (She), RTK**

20 Zana Kada, interview given to Kosova Sot daily (Monday, Dec. 15, 2008 – Sunday, Dec. 21, 2008 - page 21).

However, special programs / rubrics do not automatically contribute to giving more realistic pictures about women in the media. Due to the lack of support from the managerial staff, authors of these programs / rubrics have to produce materials with minimum staff and equipment and can not afford to engage leading expertise available in the field of gender issues. As a result, these programs and rubrics sometimes do not have the expected impact.

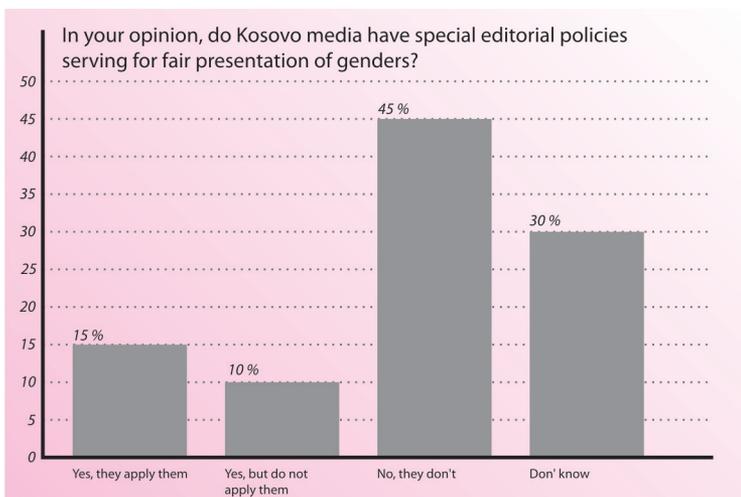
### 4.3 Special editorial policies for a fair presentation of genders

The Independent Media Commission is the institution responsible to regulate the media sector in Kosovo.<sup>21</sup> The mission of this institution is to promote development of a sound media market serving to all people of Kosovo; to encourage professionalization of media owners, editors and journalists; to protect freedom of expression, diversity of opinion, access to information for journalists and public opinion, as well as the interests media users and operators in harmony with the rule of law.

In spite of the fact that the IMC refers widely to the legislation in power in Kosovo and to European standards, it is clear that its regulations miss the gender aspect and perspective. Inclusion of gender aspect in its regulations would have a positive impact on the sensitivity and understanding of the Kosovo media also towards activities of women in politics.

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<sup>21</sup> IMC was established on June 17, 2000 by UNMIK Regulation [No. 2000/36](#) and Regulation [No. 2000/37](#) with the purpose to regulate broadcasting media and, to a lesser extent, the printed media in Kosovo. Apart from establishing the ICM, these regulations served to put in effect the ICM Code of Conduct for Broadcasting Media and the Interim Code of Conduct for the Printed Media.



Asked whether media have special editorial policies for a fair presentation of genders, 45 percent think that media do not have such policies, while 30 percent of the interviewees say that they are not aware that such policies exist that would provide for the way of presentation of genders in the media. On the other hand, 15 percent of the interviewees say that media have and implement these special policies, whereas 10 percent think that they have such policies, but they do not implement them.

There are diverging views regarding implementation of policies in cases when they exist, but also on the issue whether such policies should be developed by the media that do not have them.<sup>22</sup> Xheraldina Vula, deputy director of Radio Television 21, thinks that media do have special policies for presentation of women, yet their implementation depends on individual media. "Some media implement these policies in full harmony with agreements and accepted standards, whereas others almost completely ignore them," she says.

Artan Mustafa, editor of politics in the Express daily, says that editorial policies of the media should not be gen-

22 On this issue only opinions of the interviewees who agreed to answer the question have been analysed.

der based; in stead they should be based on the position of each and every politician. "For example, Tina Kaidanow, US Ambassador in Kosovo, is more present in the Kosovo media than a hundred members of the Kosovo Assembly," he says. On the other hand, Mentor Shala, editor in chief for news in Radio and Television of Kosovo, says that Kosovar media do not have separate editorial policies providing for this aspect of work, "because they treat women in the same way as they treat men. If they had such policies, I would consider this division as discrimination." Artan Haraqija, journalist in the same television says that: "Of course, there should be separate policies; however, first, this was never required from the media and, second, I do not think that the crux of the problem rests with the media; there is lack of resolve on the part of women to show how important they are, or should be, in the society."

Women politicians disagree with representatives of the media on the issue of separate editorial policies for fair presentation of women.

Teuta Sahatqija, president of the ORA Reform Party, thinks that "there must be such policies by all means," but media are currently not pressed to develop such policies. This opinion is shared by Besa Gaxherri, LDD Member of Parliament in the Kosovo Assembly: "Media do not have policies for a fair presentation of genders because mechanisms are missing that would impose enforcement of the law in this respect. Thus, media should definitely have such policies and at least try to strike a balance in presentation of both genders, but avoiding classifying gender specific themes." On the other hand, Mimoza Ahmetaj (PDK member of Kosovo Assembly), says that "media should get used to women involved in politics; this will however take some time. We are in the middle of a process of the media getting adapted to the presence of women in politics. It is much easier to view women as housewives, mothers, singers, TV speakers, wives of politicians, etc., but it is not so easy to accept them as politicians." This opinion is shared by Anita Morina (LDK member of Assembly): "Media should have special policies for the fair presentation of genders, since they could thus play an important positive role in changing the image of women in the Kosovar mindset."

At this point we need to stress that lack of gender aspects in the policies of the Independent Media Commission is directly reflected in the lack of gender perspective in the internal policies of the majority of Kosovar media.<sup>23</sup> As a result, the presentation of women in the Kosovar media often suffers from stereotypes, prejudices, sexism, and victimization.

In democratic countries gender issues are not seen simply as issues of women and men, but they have to do with human rights and with ensuring equality for all people, including groups at risk. Kosovo media and institutional mechanisms regulating functioning of the media landscape should become aware that level of sensitivity and understanding of the importance of presentation of women politicians in the media is a very important segment of the process of democratization of the society.

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<sup>23</sup> This position came out from the focus group discussion with journalists.

## 5. Women politicians in the Kosovar media

Media are the most important channel of communication between politics and the citizens. Thus, level of access to the media is reflected in the level of political performance and success. Lack of women in leading positions in key institutions and in the hierarchy of leading parties of Kosovo (with the exception of leading positions in some smaller parties), has resulted in their insufficient and inadequate presentation in the media.

Journalists hold a relatively different opinion compared to women politicians on the issue of gender balance when covering political events by the media.

According to Sebiha Ramaxhiku, editor in Radio Dukagjini, "presence of women politicians in the media is in proportion with their engagements in politics, because this is in line with the space that political parties allocate to their women members." Mentor Shala, news editor in chief in RTK, thinks that "women are presented in the media in proportion with their political activities; the bigger problem rests in the fact that political parties do not sufficiently promote women in their parties." Artan Haraqija, covering political news in RTK considers that "journalists run after news, whereas news are created by important persons. The problem in Kosovo is that women generally do not hold important or decision making positions – which would also make them more frequently present in the media." Rrahman Paçarizi, from the AAB University, thinks that "women should persevere in showing their real values and quality." He maintains that "in interviews, the function of women in politics degenerates and they are treated through stereotypes. Women are equal and they can offer values as well as unprincipled aspects just like men, and they should be treated in the same way; this is also how one should address the issue of their presentation in the media."

On the other hand, Mimoza Ahmetaj (PDK), member of Kosovo Assembly, commenting on the space that media allocate to women politicians, says that: "We should never be satisfied with what we have. I think that we always need more space, especially in the case of Kosovo, when we are building our institutions and our new state. There is still enough space and a lot of needs that have to be met."

Kimete Zeqa (Party of Justice), sees the problem as resting with the media who do not trust women politicians: "If there were this trust, women politicians would be given more space in the media."

"Usually media go after news that is more sensational. I have only once seen Besa Gaxherri in the cover page of Express daily, and that was the time when she wanted to break away from LDD. When speaking of newspapers, we need to bear in mind that the most important part of interviews is given on the cover page and that it rarely happens to find a woman politician on the first page. Journalists do not go after a person because she is a woman, but they go after more interesting events. For example, every journalist would run after a woman politician from the government if she dared to criticize the government. This should be related to the courage of women in politics."<sup>24</sup>

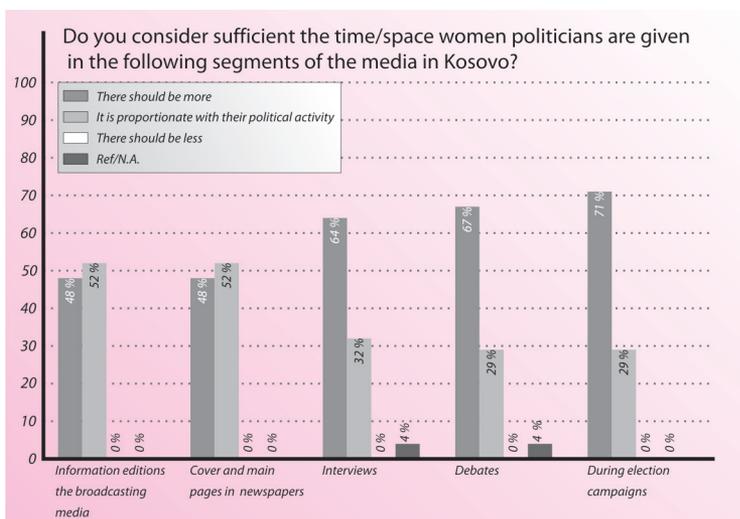
## 5.1 To what extent is sufficient the space/ time given by the Kosovo media to women politicians in given political segments?

The interviewees were shown a table in which several important media segments are listed: information programs, cover and main pages in newspapers, debates, inter-

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<sup>24</sup> Taken from the focus group organized by the Kosovar Center for Gender Studies, October 2008.

views and chronicles from election campaigns. They were asked to give their assessment on the relationship between the presence of women politicians in the aforementioned media work segments and their political activities. The alternatives offered were: 1. “There should be more,” 2. “It is in the right proportion with their political activity,” and 3. “There should be less.”



Thus, 48 percent of the interviewees think that there should be more women politicians in the news editions of the broadcasting media, whereas the remaining 52 percent think that the space dedicated to women corresponds with their political activity. The same results were given also for the other segment – cover and main pages in the newspapers. So, while 48 percent declared that there should be more women politicians on the cover and main pages of the newspapers, 52 percent consider that the space given to women in this

segment is proportional with the political activity they involve in.

The rubric of interviews is a segment which gives the impression that does not involve women politicians sufficiently. The interviewees seem to agree with this since 64 percent of them say that there should be more interviews with women politicians, whereas 32 percent claim that women politicians are interviewed proportionally with their political activities.

We obtain similar attitudes regarding debates whereby 67 percent of the interviewees consider that there should be an increased participation of women politicians in them, whereas 29 percent think that their participation corresponds to the level of their political activity.

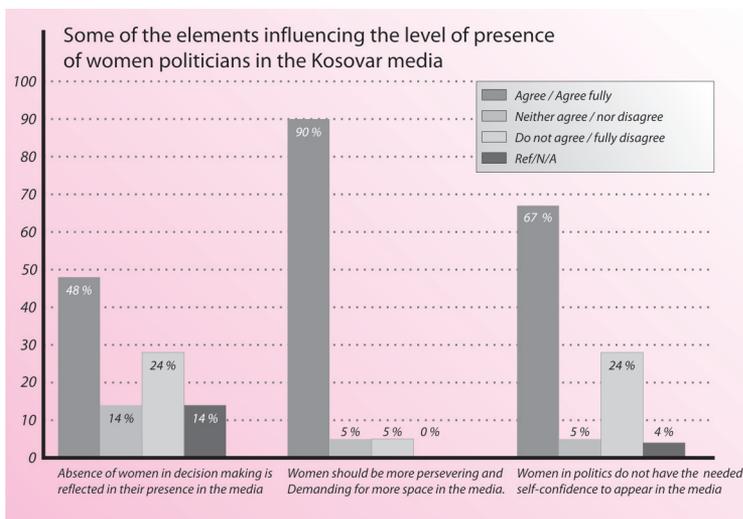
There seems to be an insufficient presence of women in the media during electoral campaigns. One argument supporting this is the fact that 71 percent of the interviewees declare that there has to be a stronger presence of the women, whereas 29 percent think that their presence is proportional with their political activity during election campaigns.

## 5.2 Absence of women in decision making is reflected in their (non)presence in the media

Official statistics show that the number of women in decision making positions in Kosovo is very low.<sup>25</sup> This absence of women in decision making is reflected in their insufficient presence in the media. 67 percent of the interviewees agree with this statement, 5 percent neither agree nor disagree, whereas 24 percent do not agree with this statement.

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<sup>25</sup> See the "Overall context."



*“Based on the institutional aspect, it is not possible to have a higher presence of women in the media, since they are not present in institutions. This means that lack of competences makes it impossible to have more space for women in the media.”*

**Majlinda Aliu, RTK**

### 5.3 Women should be more persevering and demand for more space in the media, in order to be able to carry their message to the public opinion

Absence of women in the media poses a question whether it is the media that should create more space for women, or should the women politicians be more pro-active and take the initiative to be more present in the media.

The absolute majority of the interviewees (90 percent), agree with the position that women politicians should take more initiatives and be more persistent in their demands for more space in the media. On the other hand, 5 percent do not agree with this statement, which is equal to the number of those who “neither agree, nor disagree.”

*“Both men and women in political parties submit in the same way to the authority of the party leader by doing or saying only things that have been previously approved. It is seldom that se encounter on self-initiatives from politicians for a worthy appearance that would deserve to be remembered.”*

**Artan Haraqija, RTK**

## 5.4 Women in politics do not have the needed self-confidence to appear in the media

Interviewed journalists explain relative lack of appearances of women politicians in the media also by the fact that they refuse to give statements on various political events and processes, due to the lack of self-confidence, inaptitude to articulate their positions clearly and because of the lack of experience in the political arena.

As a result, responding to the statement that “Women in politics do not have the needed confidence to appear in the media” 48 percent agreed with the statement, whereas 24 percent of interviewed journalists disagreed with it. On the other hand, 14 percent opted for the answer “neither agree, nor disagree”, which was equal to the number of those who have refused to respond.

*“When I started working as a journalist, I had the opportunity to deal with themes regarding gender equality. In that context, I interviewed women members of*

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Kosovar Center for Gender Studies

*parliament and representatives of political parties to get to know more about their representation in the parliament, if they were discriminated in their parties, about how they felt during the meetings of the party presidency, etc. I would usually get one set of answers during the free conversation, and completely different ones when the mini-corder was on."*

**Besnike Salihu, KosovaLive News Agency**

Men politicians are targeted by journalists because they hold the most important leading positions in the government institutions; as a result, women politicians usually do not find themselves as being important part of the journalists' agenda. Being absent from most of the important social and political events for Kosovo after the war, one can find women only in the margins of processes. The case of setting up of the diplomatic service of Kosovo is a good illustration since there are no women among the 10 first diplomatic appointees (for technical reasons they are not called ambassadors, even though they have that ranking and competences) to represent Kosovo in other countries.<sup>26</sup> Media and politicians explained this situation saying that there were no women capable enough to hold these positions.

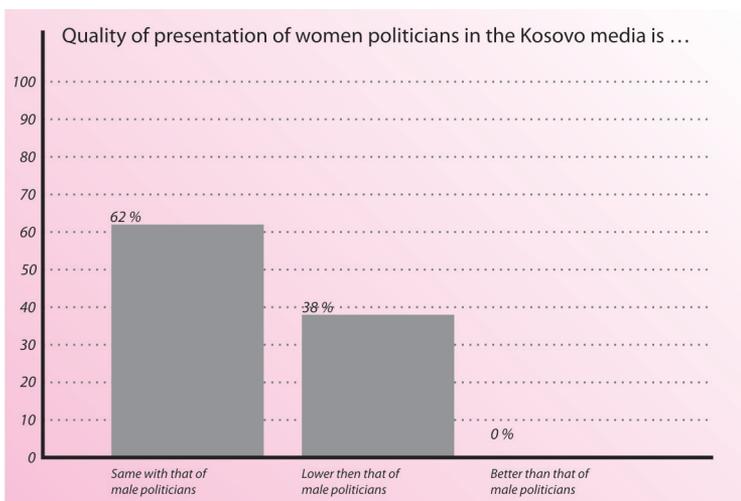
"The small number of women in leading positions tells about the general perception of the society about women, but also about the perception women politicians have about themselves when they come to hold positions traditionally reserved for men. This does not mean that women lack self-esteem, says Ms. Susan Carroll, from Rutgers University, arguing this with the fact that there are women participating in many various fields. The problem is that politics has traditionally been practices by men. She also says that when referring to politics, women often do not see themselves qualified to be included in it."<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> On September 2nd 2008, President Fatmir Sejdiu decreed the list of Charge de Affaires in the first embassies of the Republic of Kosovo.

<sup>27</sup> Susan Carroll, Rutgers University, New Jersey, USA) (Voiced of America, <http://www.voanews.com/albanian/archive/2008-06/2008-06-23-voa2.cfm> 16.09.2008)

## 5.5 Quality of presentation of women politicians in the Kosovar media

Equally important to the frequency of appearances are the way and the context in which women politicians are presented in the media. Therefore, apart from giving their views on the space and time that is dedicated to women politicians in the media, the interviewees have also answered questions about the quality of their presentation.



One of the parameters to measure the level of quality of women's presentation in the media was to compare it with the presentation of male politicians. Thus, 62 percent of the interviewees have said that quality of presentation of women politicians is equal with that of men, whereas 38 percent have declared that this presentation is lower than that of men. It is worth pointing out that none of the interviewees considered that the quality of portrayal of women politicians in the media is better than that of their counterpart men.

*“On one occasion, minister (Ms.) Nekibe Kelmendi inaugurated a vocational school for the trades of bakers, pizza makers, pastry, etc. for juvenile and women prisoners of the Lypjan correctional facility, but apart from me there was no other journalist there. Whereas only one day before and in the same place, when minister Enver Hoxhaj and minister Nekibe Kelmendi signed a Memorandum of Understanding to start education and training for juvenile inmates, over 20 journalists came from all different media.”*

**Mejreme Tahirukaj, Radio Blue Sky**

## 5.6 Issues for which women politicians are usually invited by the media

Identification of issues for which women politicians are usually consulted by the media brought to surface differences between the two groups of interviewees: women politicians, on one side, and journalists / editors, on the other.

Donika Kadaj – Bujupi (AAK), deputy in the Kosovo Assembly, says that women are invited by the media to discuss “only gender issues.” The same opinion is shared also by deputy Anita Morina (LDK): “Journalists usually ask from us to give our opinion on gender equality.” Even though Mimoza Ahmetaj (member of parliament from PDK), admits that there are cases when women give statements about other issues, depending on the assembly committee they belong to, she still thinks that “mainly they are invited to talk about gender equality.” Njomëza Emini, from AKR, agrees with her colleagues saying that “women politicians are invited when media are addressing issues such as position of women, gender equality, domestic violence, and other themes related to women.” More critical in this respect is the president of the ORA Reform Party, Teuta Sahatqija, who believes that women

are invited by the media to give statements on “family, children, issues of gender equality and other secondary issues. However, they are not invited to discuss issues of security, economy and other paramount issues.”

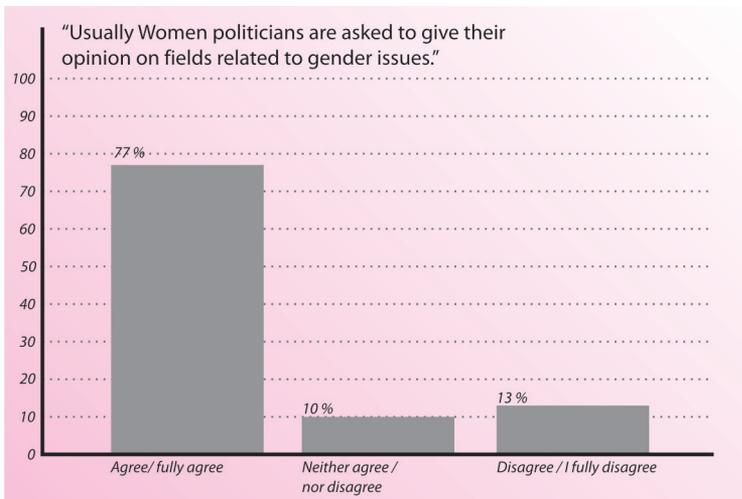
While women politicians are unanimous in their opinion that they are mainly called to discuss issues that are traditionally related to women, media managers, editors and journalists covering politics seem to disagree with them.

Arlinda Desku, deputy chief editor of Express daily, considers that content of consultations with women politicians “depends the positions they hold and on answers they can give on given topics.” Xheraldina Vula and Antigona Baxhaku (RTV 21), say that women politicians are invited to give their opinion “important political and social themes,” whereas Artan Mustafa, editor of politics in the Express daily, thinks “women would be consulted and answers asked from them on more sensitive and important issues had they been holding decision making and leading positions. This, essentially, hasn’t got to do with their gender.” We ask for a statement from a politician “when she is competent for a given issue,” says Lindita Fetiu, a KTV journalist, whereas Mentor Shala, news editor in RTK, says that women are invited to give their opinion on “almost themes addressed, as long as they are active and relevant agents in the field.”

Media analysts consider that women politicians are presented in a wrong and stereotypical way. Rrahman Paçarizi thinks that “there is not much discrimination in daily statements, but the positive discrimination that often takes place is in fact underestimating towards women; this happens, for instance, when women politicians are asked how they can manage to stay in politics when having in mind their family obligations. We are dealing here with a wrong distribution of duties.” Gjergj Filipaj, on the other hand, says that journalists ask women’s opinion when they are addressing issues such as “abortion, domestic violence and similar topics.”

## 5.7 Women are commonly asked to give their opinion on fields related to gender issues

When journalists and editors were asked to give an answer on an open question (without multiple choice alternatives), on kinds of invitations that media send to women politicians, the dominating answer was that they are called to give their opinion on various political issues, too. However, when the same persons were asked to express their views on the statement that “Women are commonly asked to give their opinion on fields related to gender issues,” we received different answers since 77 percent of all interviewees agreed with this statement, whereas only 14 percent disagreed.



## 5.8 Boycott as an option

Relations between journalists and politicians are relationships of mutual interest. Having in mind the vital importance of sources of information for their daily work, journalists often establish friendly relations with politicians. On the other hand, politicians, too, aware of the immense importance of media for a successful political career, utilize these relations by giving journalists information in trade offs for their presence in the media. In this context, women politicians are in a more unfavourable position since, in most of the cases, they do not hold decision making positions and consequently, are not a relevant source of information and not very interesting for journalists. However, it is also possible for these relations to be characterised by tensions, misunderstandings, and prejudices that can sometimes even lead to mutual boycotts.

The interviewees were asked to express their opinion on the issue of the possibility of mutual boycotting between women politicians and media.

Xheraldina Vula, deputy director of Radio Television 21, says that she does not remember any case when she boycotted anyone, or when she was boycotted by any woman politician, but she admits that “in some cases it took a lot of efforts to convince some women politicians to participate in programs and to talk about their work.”

Editors of other media talk about cases when they had difficulties in getting statements form women involved in politics. Mentor Shala, editor in chief responsible for news, says that in general, RTK was not boycotted: “If we found ourselves in such a situation, we would invite another woman politician until we got a solution.” Sebiha Ramaxhiku, editor in Radio Dukagjini, thinks the same and adds that “it is in the best interest of both sides to have women politicians present in the media and, therefore, there is no reason for any boycotts.” Arlinda Desku, deputy chief editor in Express daily, says that in situations when there is threat for a boycott to happen, “the media should still insist in getting the information from

the woman politician, as long as this was in the best interest of the public,” whereas Valbona Mehmeti, deputy chief editor of the Koha Ditore daily, tells that in cases when they were boycotted by any woman politician, they reacted by ignoring her activities: “Later, that woman politician would come to us and offer her cooperation to our newspaper.”

Majority of the woman politicians say that they have never been boycotted by the media.

Member of Kosovo Assembly, Anita Morina of LDK, says that says that in case of boycott we need to keep insisting and to find other forms to present political activities of the women politicians in the media. Assembly members Donika Kadaj-Bujupi (AAK) and Njomza Emini (AKR), and Mimoza Ahmetaj (PDK) say that they have never been boycotted, with the latter adding that if such a thing would ever happen, she would “refuse any future invitations by that medium to give statements for them.”

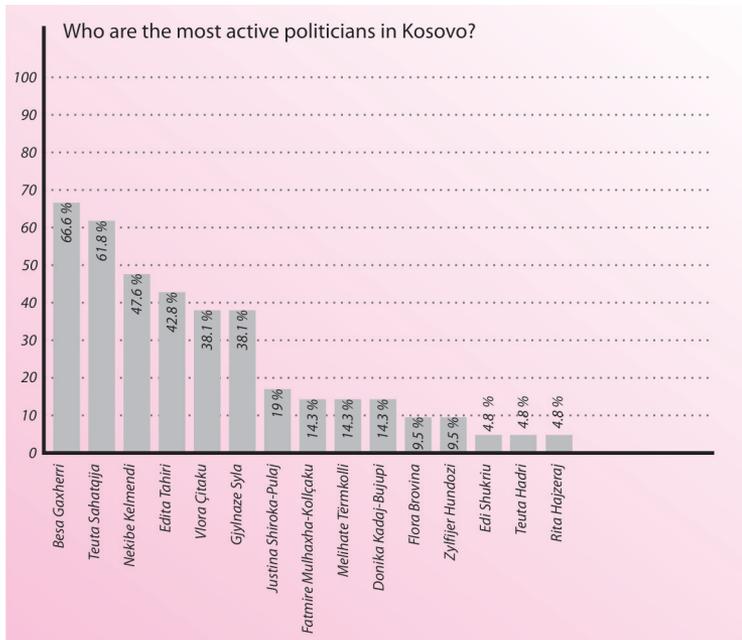
Besa Gaxherri (LDD) tells about her experience with boycotting from media. “Yes, I have been and I am still being boycotted by a national television channel. I do not know the reasons for this. I have not insisted to solve this problem since I do not see it as a big problem. I think that there is a mutual interest between media and women politicians. During my whole political career, I have never asked any media to interview me or to invite me to any of their radio and television studios. In spite of the way of functioning of the media in Kosovo, I have convinced myself that it is my work not my name that should go to the media.”

## 5.9 Correlation between political activities and presence in the media

The interviewees were asked to fill in the names of five most active women politicians in the political stage of Kosovo. They were not given any list with names of women

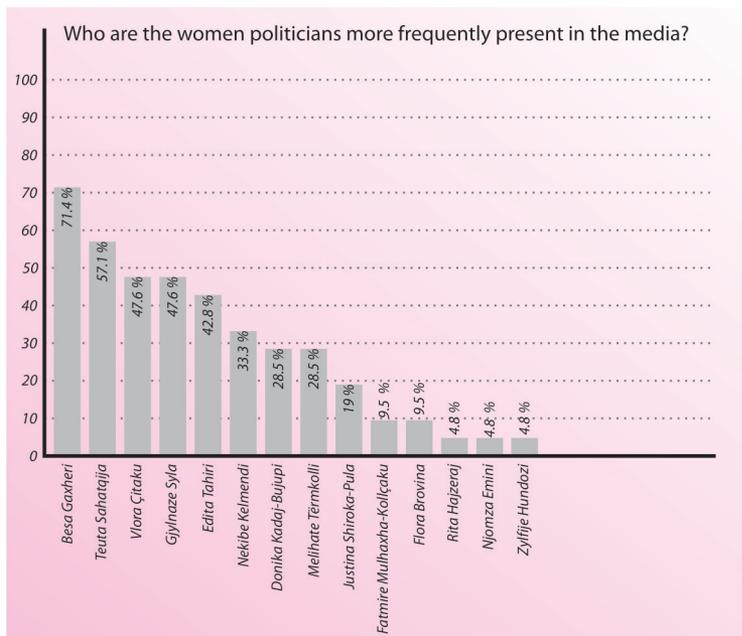
politicians, but they had to recall them on their own.

The most active politician according to them came out to be Besa Gaxherri, whose name appeared in 66.6 percent of all lists. Teuta Sahatqija is the second most active woman politician in today's politics in Kosovo with 61.8 percent of votes from the interviewees, with Nekibe Kelmendi coming next with 47.6 of votes. Another very active politician according to our interviewees is also Edita Tahiri, who came fourth in the list with 42.8 of votes. The full list of most active women politicians in Kosovo, according to our interviewees, is given in the following graph.



The interviewees were later asked to write the names of women politicians who are more frequently present in the Kosovar media. This list is too lead by Besa Gaxherri with 71.4 percent and Teuta Sahatqija with 57.1 percent. Vlora

Çitaku and Gjylnaze Sylja come next in positions 3 and 4 in the list with 47.6 percent each.



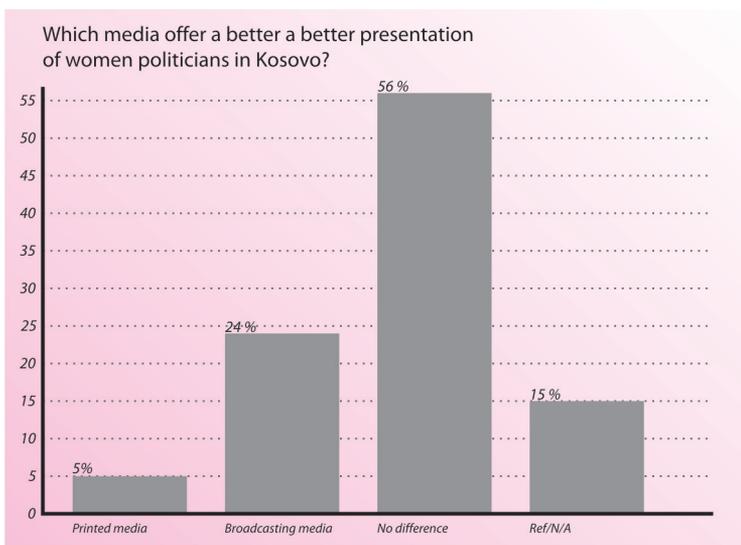
The interviewees were also asked an additional question: “Why are these particular women politicians more frequently present in the media?” The vast majority of the interviewees (81 percent) mention as the main reason the fact that these women are more active in politics, whereas 14.2 percent think that they have more influence in their political parties. Only 4.8 percent of those interviewed have declared that they are more charismatic.<sup>28</sup>

The data above show that more frequent presence of women politicians is determined by their activity in politics, but also that there is an undisputed and close connection between the level of political activity of women politicians and the decision making positions they hold in government institutions and in their political parties.

<sup>28</sup> It needs to be pointed out that neither interviewed women politicians, nor journalists have declared that these women were more often in the media because they had friendly relations with media owners / editors / journalists.

## 5.10 Differences between printed and broadcasting media regarding the way of presentation of women politicians

It is a well known fact that the broadcasting media are much more powerful than the printed media. For this reason, both quantity and quality of portrayal of given social groups (portrayal of women in our case) in the broadcasting media is of key importance due to the level of their influence.



The interviewees were asked if they see any difference between the printed and electronic media regarding the presentation of women politicians. More than half of the interviewees (56 percent), have said that they do not see any difference, whereas almost one fourth of them (24 percent), think that broadcasting media make a better presentation of women politicians. Five percent of the interviewees declare that printed media are more careful and more professional in this regard, whereas the remaining part (15 percent), did not have any opinion or answer to this question.

### **An illustration of the presentation of women politicians in the media**

In one of the assembly sessions, Deputy Besa Gaxherri had come up with an initiative for a protest by parliamentary women in response to the total lack of women among the first appointees for Kosovo ambassadors in the first round of nominations. In the main news of the Kosovo Television, the parliamentary session was divided into two news stories. In the first one, the RTK showed “important” issues that were addressed in the session, whereas in the second part, titled “Jokes in the Kosovo Assembly” several comic arguments between the deputies were given and then the initiative for a protest by parliamentary women was included in the ‘funny part’.

The other national television channel Kohavision, gave a story about this protest in its main news, accompanying it with the comment that these are “favours that women receive from the law on gender equality.”

In the way this and other similar events are presented, we notice a clear tendency to minimize, ridicule, and twist the real purpose of the messages given by women politicians.

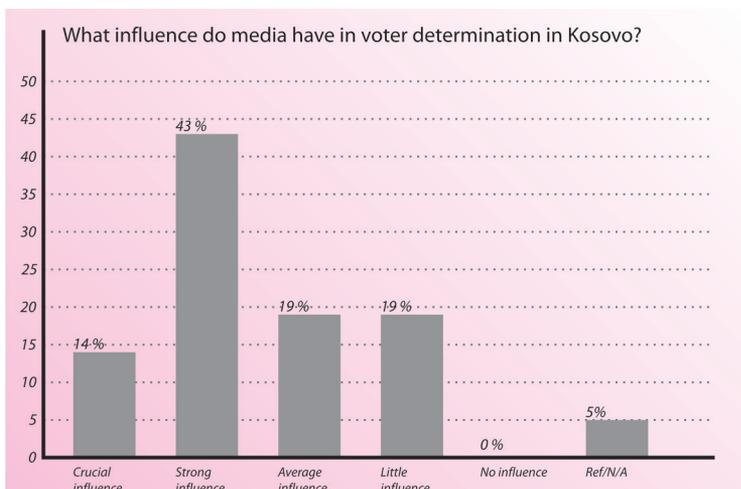
## **5.11 Influence of on voters’ determination**

One of the main challenges of the women politicians in Kosovo is building of the right relations and ways of communication with their voters. For various reasons (such as lack of women in the hierarchy of political parties and government institutions, lack of financial support for women candidates, limitation and marginalization of women politicians within the limits of predetermined issues like gender equality and other women related issues, etc.), it is more difficult for women politicians to obtain the needed media space, which is one of the main aspects of communication with the public.

Most of the media space, including debates, interviews, information programs, and presentation of party programs and candidates is dominated by male politicians.

In spite of their declared mission, media in Kosovo have not shown any serious efforts to support women politicians, during election campaigns, in particular. A similar approach was manifested by institutions that were directly responsible for elections (OSCE, CEC), since their campaigns in the media to sensitize the public opinion for going massively to vote have targeted selected sectors of the society, such as youth and minorities, but they ignored the female voters, in particular. More so, institutional mechanisms for achievement of gender equality (AGE), have repeatedly shown lack of any effective strategy for increasing voters' awareness to vote in large numbers and the need of participation of women in the political life in Kosovo. As a result, there is an ongoing trend of voting for the same candidate / party that is voted by the husband / family.

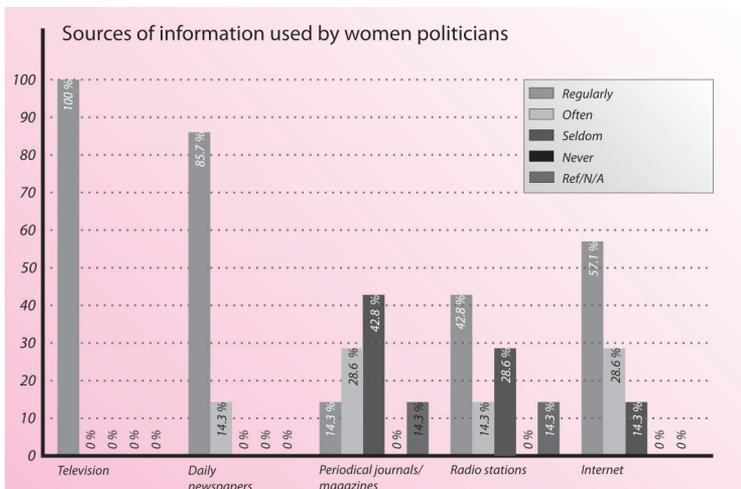
The way campaigns are organized (selection of slogans, use of masculine language, as well as promotion of traditional values), is a sign of difficulties women politicians have to overcome in order to succeed in their efforts. The system of values continues being effective also with the support of the media, who are playing their emancipating role.



The strong influence of the media in voter determination is also reflected in the attitudes expressed by the interviewees, since 43 percent of them have declared that “there is strong influence,” whereas 14 percent have said that media have “crucial influence” in the selection of candidates by the voters. On the other hand, 19 percent of the interviewees have said that media have an “average influence”, which is the same number as those who maintain that media have “little influence” in voter determination.

## 5.12 Sources of information for women in politics

Interviewed women politicians were asked to tell about frequency of utilization of sources of information.



By receiving 100 % of answers, television is the main source of information for women politicians. Daily newspapers are used regularly (85.7 percent), whereas 57.1 percent of women politicians regularly utilize internet to get informed. Radio stations are also an important source of information for women politicians, having received 42.8 percent of votes as a source that is used regularly. The lowest percentage goes to printed periodicals / journals, with only 14.3 percent of women politicians ticking it as a regular source of information.



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