



# A Men's Perspective on Gender Equality in Kosovo

Main findings from the  
International Men and Gender Equality Survey  
(IMAGES)



# **A Men's Perspective on Gender Equality in Kosovo**

Main findings from the  
International Men and Gender Equality Survey  
(IMAGES)

This report is the result of a co-operation between the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Mission in Kosovo, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Kosovo Office and UBO Consulting. The research and report production is financed by the Permanent Representation of the Netherlands to the OSCE, Folke Bernadotte Academy and UNFPA core funding.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent the views of the OSCE, UNFPA, the United Nations or any of its affiliated organizations.

**© OSCE/UNFPA 2018 All rights reserved.**

The contents of this publication may be freely used and copied for educational and other non-commercial purposes, provided that any such reproduction be accompanied by an acknowledgement of UNFPA and the OSCE as the source.

*Published by:*

**OSCE Mission in Kosovo**

Abdyl Frasheri 37  
10000 Prishtinë/Priština  
Tel. +383 38 240 100  
press.omik@osce.org  
www.osce.org/kosovo

**UNFPA Kosovo**

Zagrebi 39  
10000 Prishtinë/Priština  
Tel. +383 38 249088  
kosovo.unfpa.org

*Proposal for reference/cite as:*

OSCE Mission in Kosovo/UNFPA Kosovo (2018): A Men's Perspective on Gender Equality in Kosovo.  
Main Findings from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES).  
Prishtinë/Priština.

*Acknowledgements*

The OSCE Mission in Kosovo and UNFPA express gratitude to the following individuals and organisations for their contributions and/or support: Promundo Institute, Ruti Levtov, Care International Balkans, Besnik Leka, John Crownover, Youth Education Center Sinergija, Peer Educators Network, all experts which took part in the research, focus group participants and the whole UBO Consulting team.

All references in this report should be understood in the context of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).

# Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	6
1.1. Why analyse men’s attitudes and practices? .....	6
1.2. Background to gender equality situation in Kosovo .....	8
<b>2. Methodology</b> .....	10
2.1. Conceptual framework .....	10
2.2. Analytical strategy .....	12
2.3. Limitations .....	12
<b>3. Main Results</b> .....	13
3.1. Who were the men and women who participated? .....	13
3.2. Gender norms and attitudes toward gender equality.....	14
3.3. Childhood experiences .....	23
3.4. Relationship dynamics and domestic duties.....	29
3.5. Violence and criminal practices.....	35
3.6. Health practices.....	39
3.7. Policies and laws related to gender equality .....	42
<b>4. Conclusion</b> .....	47
<b>5. Recommendations</b> .....	48
References.....	50
Annex I - List of Interviewees for In-Depth Interviews.....	52

# Executive Summary

This study is primarily based on the results of the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES). A mixed methodology approach was used which included desk research, a quantitative survey with 1001 men and 500 women, four focus group discussions and 26 in-depth interviews with key stakeholders and experts. The research has been conducted from February until June 2017. The main goal was to gain a comprehensive understanding on men's attitudes and practices – along with women's opinions and reports of men's practises - on a variety of topics related to gender equality in Kosovo.

## *Gender norms and attitudes toward gender equality*

An internationally accepted measurement, the Gender Equitable Men Scale, has been used in this report to measure attitudes toward gender norms in Kosovo. The majority of men (and women) lie within the moderate equity norms. However, about 13 per cent of men belong to the low equity category in gender norms as opposed to only one per cent of women belonging to that category. Most men agreed with statements that expressed an aversion towards sexual diversity, while women showed a milder reaction. When asked about their opinion on adult and underage women working as sex workers, men were less likely than women to consider it as morally wrong even when considering only underage girls. The self-reported rates of transactional sexual relations among men were slightly higher than those reported by women.

## *Childhood experiences*

In the majority of men's childhood experiences, taking care of children and household chores were their mother's obligation. Male figures were rarely seen preparing food or doing housework as these were typically labelled as women's duties. Men belonging to younger age groups were more likely to have seen their fathers or other male figures becoming actively engaged in household duties. Higher household involvement of men's fathers or other male figures was more common when the respondents' parents had higher educational attainment. It was very rare that the mother had the final word or even equal say related to decisions on spending money on large household investments. Slapping and spanking were often considered as part of disciplining children in the past as well as now, albeit less frequently. Around 40 per cent of men admitted that there was bullying or teasing and harassment in school or neighbourhood in which they grew up. Those who experienced such violence at school and at home were more likely to be averse towards gender equality.

## *Relationship dynamics and domestic duties*

In most cases, household decision-making is done jointly by both partners, but the share of men who have said that their wife or partner has the final say is significantly low. Men who saw their parents decide together on important family decisions were more likely to do the same with their partner. The allocation of household tasks is also not equally distributed whereby women carry most of the burden. The share of both men and women taking paid maternity or paternity leave is relatively low. Childcare tasks were typically either shared between both partners or taken over by the mother. The men who were taught how to take care of their siblings during their childhood were more likely to be involved in the daily care of their own children.

### *Violence and criminal practices*

The survey results show that two in ten men have witnessed their mother being beaten by their father or her partner at least once while growing up. Moreover, around 12 per cent of men have at least once slapped, hit with a fist or thrown something at their female partner. Men were slightly more likely than women to agree with norms of a rape culture. Additionally, one in 20 men admitted having engaged in unconsented sexual relations with a woman at least once in their life and one in 25 men reported to have at least once forced their girlfriend or wife into having sex.

### *Health practices*

About 11 per cent of women and 16 per cent of men had never visited a doctor about a health concern. The survey results also showed worrying statistics regarding mental health. During the last month, 31 per cent of men had experienced stress. Another 14 per cent of them have experienced depression and five per cent have admitted feeling suicidal at least sometimes. About 14 per cent of men drink alcohol beverages twice a month or more frequently. Out of this group, 28 per cent of them binge drunk (drinking more than five drinks on one occasion) at least weekly. Prevalence of drug usage was substantially lower than that of alcohol drinking. Seeking help for mental health issues was found to be considered taboo in the society due to a traditional and prejudiced mentality.

### *Gender equality policies and laws*

An unanimous agreement among all interviewed stakeholders is that the legal framework for gender equality in Kosovo is well-established and formulated. Nonetheless, the major problem lies within the implementation of these laws and policies according to the representatives of institutions and non-governmental organisations. Awareness on maternity leave regulation was higher than that on paternity leave. The latter as well as laws, which regulate the prohibition of discrimination and family relations, were generally considered fair by the population. However, respondents thought that legal provisions on domestic violence did not provide sufficient protection to victims of abuse.

# 1. Introduction

The first thought that will spring to many people's minds when picking up this report may be: Here is another study on gender equality done by women, and for women. Gender equality has often been categorised as a woman's issue, therefore, studies, discussions, debates on the topic have typically been far from men's concerns. Yet, one wonders how differences can be reconciled when one of the parties sometimes dismisses the issue as a trivial matter, while for the other it plays a vital role in their public and private life. Men and women need to have a closer look and attempt to comprehend one another's viewpoints, experiences and problems. This inclusive approach is aimed at granting gender equality the overarching importance it deserves beyond the domain of women and onto that of all society. The following sub-sections explain in detail the concept and rationale for this study, and provide background information on current state of gender equality in Kosovo<sup>1</sup>.

## 1.1. Why analyse men's attitudes and practices?

If we are to believe that gender equality is not confined within the domain of women's concerns, then it follows that this issue is as important from a woman's as it is from a man's perspective. Given that for decades, gender equality discussions and policies have been propelled by women and for women, the foundational concept of this project is to focus precisely on that part which has often been overlooked – the **men's perspective on gender equality**.

This approach has become increasingly more popular in the agendas of various international organisations throughout the past decades. For instance, the United Nations **Beijing Declaration**, which aims to ensure the implementation of the human rights of women in a mainstreamed way, has a specific point to "Encourage men to participate fully in all actions towards equality."<sup>2</sup> Striving toward gender equality for the benefit of both men and women is a priority in the 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).<sup>3</sup> The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), guided by the 1994 Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development<sup>4</sup>, has also taken a series of steps in their efforts to include men in the struggle for gender equality. Among some of UNFPA notable efforts is the toolkit *Engaging Men and Boys in Gender Equality and Health - A Global Toolkit for Action*, which presents conceptual and practical information on engaging men and boys in promoting gender equality and health<sup>5</sup>.

“*Even in my earliest work experiences with gender equality organisations, we tried to include men as much as possible in our activities. This was especially important for Kosovo's society as men would pay more attention to other men. When a father uprooted the education of his daughters, it had a much larger impact on others than when mothers did the same.*”

Igballe Rogova  
Executive Director  
Kosovo's Women Network

---

<sup>1</sup> The draft report is prepared by Donika Limani (author), Kujtim Koci, Ebru Süleyman, Anila Qehaja, Eneida Aliu and Valon Feka from the UBO Consulting team, who also did the entire field work. The report is edited by Saša Gavrić, Gender Adviser at the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, and Visare Mujko-Nimani, Programme Specialist at UNFPA Kosovo Office, proofread by Alex Sales, designed by Yllka Fetahaj and illustrations by Florentina Pllana. The report covers developments until the end of 2017.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations (1996). *The Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action: Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, China, 4-15 September 1995*. United Nations.

<sup>3</sup> OSCE (2004). *OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality*. Ministerial Council Decision No. 14/04. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. Available at <https://www.osce.org/mc/23295?download=true>

<sup>4</sup> United Nations (2014). *Programme of Action adopted at the International Conference on Population and Development Cairo, 5-13 September 1994. 20th Anniversary Edition*. UNFPA.

<sup>5</sup> Ricardo, C., & Verani, F. (2010). *Engaging Men and Boys in Gender Equality and Health: A Global Toolkit for Action*. Brazil: Promundo/UNFPA.

The UN Commission on the Status of Women, in their Agreed Conclusions No. 4, *The Role of Men and Boys in Achieving Gender Equality*, emphasised the responsibility of both women and men to promote and contribute to gender equality in various domains of society<sup>6</sup>. In addition, the European Commission's *Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015* and its follow-up *Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality 2016-2019* stressed the indispensability of men's active contribution to advance gender equality<sup>7</sup>.

The question is: are men on board with the international setting of the gender equality agendas? Are they taking ownership for the messages and policies calling for greater equality for girls and women in education, income and work, political participation and health? Are men changing their attitudes, practices and the ways they live their lives in relation to women? What experiences are men making when it comes to health, employment or private life? Many of these questions have been researched across multiple studies; however, the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) provides a more comprehensive mechanism to capture all of these aspects in one study.

IMAGES in Kosovo is part of a global initiative to offer a more balanced and inclusive view of issues pertaining to gender equality. The **IMAGES Survey** was created and coordinated by the Promundo Institute and the International Center for Research on Women. This survey, one of the most comprehensive household studies ever carried out on men's and women's attitudes and practices related to gender equality, has been administered in more than 20 countries to date, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Moldova<sup>8</sup>. In Kosovo, IMAGES is part of a joint initiative of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo and UNFPA Office in Kosovo. The main goal is to gain a comprehensive understanding on the current perceptions and attitudes revolving around gender roles in Kosovo. These results will build the evidence base on how to address gender inequality through public awareness raising campaigns as well to advocate for changes in public institutions and, more importantly, involve men in gender equality programmes.

---

<sup>6</sup> UN Commission on the Status of Women. (2004, March). *The Role of Men and Boys in Achieving Gender Equality* - CSW48 Agreed Conclusions (A). United Nations.

<sup>7</sup> European Commission. (2010, September 21). *Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015*. and European Commission (2011). *Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality 2016-2019*.

<sup>8</sup> Learn more about the project globally at the Promundo Institute web page: <https://promundoglobal.org/programs/international-men-and-gender-equality-survey-images/>

## 1.2. Background to gender equality situation in Kosovo

In 2004, Kosovo adopted its first Law on Gender Equality. Since then, institutions have taken further steps to improve the **legal and institutional framework** to promote gender equality. In 2015, the Assembly of Kosovo adopted new legislation on gender equality and the prohibition of discrimination and a new Law on the Ombudsperson Institution<sup>9</sup>. Institutional mechanisms were set up to lead, support and/or monitor the implementation of gender equality enhancement. In the legislature there is an assembly committee to deal with gender equality, while in the executive there is the Agency for Gender Equality, located in the Prime Minister's Office. All ministries have gender equality officers. On local level there are also municipal assembly committees to deal with gender equality and municipal gender equality officers. The Ombudsperson Institution is responsible for dealing with complaints related to gender based discrimination.

There have been relevant developments on the **policy level** as well. Still, in the currently applicable Kosovo Development Strategy only two out of 34 objectives are related to gender issues<sup>10</sup>. The first one is about increasing the enrolment rate of children in pre-school as a mechanism for facilitating the employment of women and the second is on broadening women's access to their property rights. Edi Gusia, the director of the Agency for Gender Equality, noted that these objectives are too meagre to address Kosovo's gender equality problems and that there was undoubtedly more space for using a gender perspective in other areas.

An evaluation of the government strategy on gender equality, the Programme of Kosovo for Gender Equality 2008-2013<sup>11</sup>, showed that despite progress reached in some of the **socio-economic indicators**, by 2013, women in Kosovo were at a disadvantageous position in comparison to men<sup>12</sup>. While the unemployment rate in the population over all is staggeringly high at about 33 per cent, the difference in overall rates for women and men is not vast (32 per cent for men and 37 per cent for women)<sup>13</sup>. However, the gap in unemployment rates expands when accounting for educational attainment. Unemployment is more present among women of higher educational level than for men of the same group; 28 per cent of women who have an advanced education degree are unemployed as opposed to 15 per cent of men of the same category<sup>14</sup>. The gap in labour participation rates is even more striking. The participation rate for women is 21 per cent in 2013, which is considered low.<sup>15</sup> Women tend to hold lower paid positions and almost no top managerial positions in the private sector (only 7 per cent)<sup>16</sup>, and the proportion of women in senior and middle management was at about 16 per cent in 2014<sup>17</sup>. Among Kosovo's 70,326 public servants, only 38 per cent of them are women. Women account for only 9 per cent of the high decision-making positions such as Secretary Generals and Chief Executive and 23 per cent of other mid-level decision-making positions<sup>18</sup>.

---

<sup>9</sup> All three laws are available in Albanian, English and Serbian on the Official Gazette webpage at [gzk.rks-gov.net](http://gzk.rks-gov.net)

<sup>10</sup> Office of the Prime Minister of Kosovo (2016, January). *Development Strategy 2016-2021*.

<sup>11</sup> A new Programme for Gender Equality is still not adopted. Its urgent finalization and adoption is needed in order to systematically lead the work of different government institutions.

<sup>12</sup> Agency of Gender Equality (2016). *Evaluation of the Kosovo Program for Gender Equality*.

<sup>13</sup> International Labour Organization (2017) *ILOSTAT database*.

<sup>14</sup> International Labour Organization (2017) *ILOSTAT database*.

<sup>15</sup> The World Bank (2017) *Gender Statistics DataBank*.

<sup>16</sup> The World Bank (2017) *World Bank Enterprise Surveys*.

<sup>17</sup> International Labour Organization (2017) *ILOSTAT database*.

<sup>18</sup> United Nations Development Programme (2014). *Gender Equality Related Corruption Risks and Vulnerabilities in Civil Service in Kosovo*.

Even with equal **inheritance rights** by law and affirmative measures to register property on both spouses, the number of women with property registered in their name represents about 20 per cent of the population as of 2017<sup>19</sup>. Furthermore, according to the results derived from the Census of Agriculture in Kosovo in 2014, only five per cent of agricultural land is owned by women. Even in the commercial sector women are much less pronounced as only 13 per cent of businesses belong to them<sup>20</sup>. This situation is rooted in traditional social norms among men and women as well, which subvert women to less equal residents and allow for patrilineal secession of family resources.

The gender gap is also evident in the **education and health sectors**, which are closely related to the topics covered by this research. For instance, the data for 2011 shows that only 11 per cent of women, compared to 30 per cent of men, have (higher) secondary school education<sup>21</sup>. The majority of women have only primary or lower secondary school education but no formal vocational training. It must be noted that during the academic year 2015/2016 the share of women enrolled in public universities was consistently higher for all municipalities and almost at all public university the number of female graduates was higher as well<sup>22</sup>. Unlike in other areas, women fare better than men in terms of health indicators. As of 2015, the life expectancy for women was 73.6, while for men it was 69.2<sup>23</sup> years. A study conducted by Kosovo Women's Network found that women are more likely than men to seek out health services<sup>24</sup>.

Despite the legal and policy framework for gender equality, **gender based violence** continues to be present. Beside the conflict related sexual violence, domestic violence and other forms of gender based violence continue to be prevalent in post-conflict times. A study conducted by the Kosovo Women's Network identified various issues with the legislation on domestic violence as a result of interviewing civil court judges<sup>25</sup>. These issues included discounting of evidence, rare perpetrator imprisonment, delayed issuance of protection orders, inadequate follow-up of protection orders, and mild sentencing in cases of violating protection orders. However, studies have found numerous failures in the institutions' response to such cases, some of which are: lack of capacity to properly handle domestic violence cases, shortage of financial and human resources, unstable situation of the existing shelters, failures to properly coordinate responses amongst different agencies, and a general lack of sensitivity by the institutions and society as a whole towards gender-based violence<sup>26</sup>. A strong commitment from the government institutions for the implementation of the Strategy for the Protection against Domestic Violence 2016-2020 is strongly needed.

---

<sup>19</sup> Joireman, S. (2017). *Midterm National Survey on Property Rights in Kosovo*. USAID & Tetra Tech.

<sup>20</sup> Kosovo Agency of Statistics (2016). *Women and Men in Kosovo 2014-2015*.

<sup>21</sup> Kosovo Agency of Statistics (2016). *Women and Men in Kosovo 2014-2015*.

<sup>22</sup> Ministry of Education, Science and Technology/Kosovo Agency of Statistics (2016). *Education Statistics in Kosovo 2015/2016*.

<sup>23</sup> International Labour Organization (2017) *ILOSTAT database*.

<sup>24</sup> Farnsworth, N., & Goebbels, K. (2016). *Access to Healthcare in Kosovo*. Kosovo Women's Network.

<sup>25</sup> Farnsworth, N., Qosaj-Mustafa, A., Berisha, A., & Morina, D. (2015). *No More Excuses: An Analysis of Attitudes, Incidence, and Institutional Responses to Domestic Violence in Kosovo*. Kosovo Women's Network.

<sup>26</sup> Kelmendi, K. (2015). Domestic Violence Against Women in Kosovo: A Qualitative Study of Women's Experiences. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 30(4), 680-702. See also OSCE Mission in Kosovo React Report <http://www.osce.org/kosovo/203051?download=true>

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework applied in this study follows that of the original IMAGES research as designed by Promundo Institute and the International Center for Research on Women. The research instruments originally used are adapted to Kosovo's local context. The viewpoints of both women and men are neutrally analysed whereby one does not take more importance than the other. Based on this conceptual framework, the study covers a series of topics, which is by no means exhaustive of all the factors related to gender norms and gender equality. The following areas were included into the survey:

- **Childhood experiences:** experience of violence; witnessing of gender-based violence; gender-related attitudes perceived in family of origin; changes perceived from previous generation to the present; gender balance in work/child care in family of origin.
- **Relations at home:** marital/cohabitation status; division/participation in household chores; perceived satisfaction in family life; household decision-making; time use in specific domestic chores and family care, including child care.
- **Parenting and men's relationships with their children:** number of children; living situation of each child; time/money spent in care of each child; use of paternity/maternity leave; perceptions/attitudes toward existing parental leave; and child care arrangements.
- **Attitudes toward women and masculinity:** attitudes toward gender equality (using the Gender Equitable Men Scale and other measures); attitudes toward various gender equality public policies.
- **Health and quality of life:** lifestyle questions; use of health services; sexual and reproductive behaviour; sexually transmitted infections; satisfaction with sexual relations; mental health issues; social support.
- **Partner relations and spousal relations:** current relationship status and satisfaction; use of services/help-seeking in times of violence or relationship stress; relationship history.
- **Violence in relationships and transactional sex:** use of violence (physical, sexual, psychological) against partner; victimization of violence by partner; men's use of sexual violence against non-partners; men's self-reported purchasing of sex or paying for sex, including with underage individuals<sup>27</sup>.

Some topics covered by the **two questionnaires (one for women, one for men)** were particularly sensitive. Thus, special attention was paid to the selection of questions to be included and their wording, while simultaneously trying to not deviate from the original questionnaires used by Promundo Institute and the International Center for Research on Women. The latter was especially crucial to achieve results that are internationally comparable. After their adaptation, the translation of questionnaires was done based on the back translation method. Questionnaires were then programmed into handheld tablets that were given to enumerators for household interviews. In addition, a pilot test was conducted to test the quality, relevance and clarity of the questionnaire. The feedback and comments were incorporated in the final versions of the questionnaire.

---

<sup>27</sup> It is important to point out that some of the research questions are related to issues that can be considered as illegal within the current legal framework. The role of social science research is also to look into such phenomena and to present results in an anonymous way. UBO Consulting, the OSCE and/or UNFPA are not taking any responsibility for such data.

The **sampling frame** was constructed using the Kosovo Agency for Statistics 2011 Census population data for all 38 municipalities. First, two separate samples were generated, one for men and the other one for women. In line with previous IMAGES methodologies, the sample size for men is larger as they are the target group of the study. The two samples were based on the population of each of the 38 municipalities in Kosovo while also allowing for representative samples of three ethnic subsets: Kosovo Albanians, Kosovo Serbs and other non-majority communities.

The sample was designed based on the probability proportionate to size (PPS) method, which also allowed us to allocate quotas for variables such as: municipalities, and urban and rural settlements. Community representatives, who were not Kosovo Albanian, were oversampled in order to be able to provide representative opinions of members of those communities, which will allow for sub-sample level analysis. At the general level of the sample (generalization of findings to the population), ex-post sample adjustments, such as applying weights, were applied to correct for oversampling. The following table presents the overall sample for the survey with both men and women.

	Total	Kosovo Albanian	Kosovo Serb	Kosovo Other
Men	1001	667	198	136
Women	500	333	102	65
<b>Total</b>	<b>1501</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>201</b>

Table 1 - IMAGES sample by ethnicity and gender

In addition to the quantitative survey, this research also incorporated **qualitative methods**, which were primarily concerned with providing an in-depth explanation of the results of the survey as well as other key gender related issues happening in Kosovo. Four **focus group** discussions with residents in Kosovo were conducted after the first analysis of the survey data. Given the language barriers, two focus groups were conducted with Kosovo Serb speakers and another two with Kosovo Albanian speakers. These discussions were held separately with men and women given the local context as well as the subject's sensitivity. The primary goal of the focus groups was to explore explanations, inferences, and better grasp the men's attitude towards gender equality from both their perspective and that of women.

Twenty-six **in-depth interviews** were conducted with stakeholders who work on gender equality issues (representatives from public institutions, civil society organisations, and academia). The full list of those interviewed can be found in Annex I. The information from the in-depth interviews has enabled us to obtain a multilateral perspective on the current developments, awareness and major barriers regarding gender equality in Kosovo. All research activities have been conducted between February and June 2017.

## 2.2. Analytical strategy

The analytical strategy applied in studying the data obtained in this research is in line with other IMAGES studies conducted. The findings presented in the next chapter do not address all the questions covered by the quantitative and qualitative research. The study presents only the most relevant results based on previous studies in this thematic area and, more importantly, the local context in Kosovo. The survey results are complemented with the conclusions from the in-depth interviews as well as feedback from the focus group discussions. The data is presented separately for men and women due to the different questionnaires and sample sizes. Some of the key results for men are analysed further in order to capture trends based on the respondents' socio-economic background and attitudes towards gender equality. Only significant results at 99 per cent confidence interval are reported in the study, unless stated otherwise.

## 2.3. Limitations

This type of research is among the first of its kind in Kosovo considering the large scale of coverage and, especially, the sensitive type of topics it addresses. Hence it was natural to run into several difficulties while conducting this research. For instance, a high chance of refusal and questionnaire abandonment rates was predicted based on the length and, more importantly, the sensitivity of the questionnaires. Various measures were undertaken to overcome these limits. First, an adequate number of men and women enumerators were hired and a same-gender interviewing policy was adopted. In other words, only women could interview women and likewise for men. A second measure was to move extremely personal and sensitive questions towards the final part of the questionnaire, which was self-administered by the respondent. This eased the process as interviewees were not shocked right away from the candid questions and it gave them the privacy to provide more honest answers. Nevertheless, in the most sensitive and personal questions, there are significant cases where no answers were given. Another limitation was the length of the questionnaires. It often led to fatigue on the part of interviewers and respondents. In order to overcome this hurdle, the questionnaire was adapted to remove redundant questions and the dedicated time for fieldwork was lengthened substantially to not rush the process.

## 3. Main Results

### 3.1. Who were the men and women who participated?

#### *Social background*

As it was previously explained in the methodology, the ethnic background of respondents was predetermined by quotas to maintain an ethnically representative sample. Table 2 shows that the age breakdown of both male and female respondents is skewed towards the younger age groups, reflecting the structure of the population in Kosovo. The majority of male and female respondents have completed at least high school or some type of professional school. Very few people declared that they did not belong to any religion (six per cent of men and four per cent of women). Table 2 provides the data for religious background of only those who claimed to be part of a religion. The marital status of both male and female respondents was predominantly married. Very few of the respondents live alone and about 70 per cent of respondents' family/household size ranged from four to seven members. These household members are typically their partner, children or parents for men and in-laws for women.

Demographic Characteristics						
Age group	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-60	
Men	28.6%	26.5%	18.9%	13.9%	12.1%	
Women	24.7%	25.0%	22.9%	19.2%	8.2%	
Highest Level of Education	No schooling	Primary school	High school/ Professional School	First university-level degree(Bachelor/diploma)	Second university-level (Master/PhD) or higher	
Men	0.5%	11.9%	64.1%	20.7%	2.8%	
Women	3.8%	30.4%	43.4%	19.5%	2.9%	
Religious	Yes			No		
Men	94%			6%		
Women	96%			4%		
Religion	Muslim	Orthodox	Catholic	Agnostic	Protestant	No Answer
Men	93.7%	4.0%	1.8%	0.4%	0.0%	0.1%
Women	94.5%	3.4%	0.9%	0.6%	0.1%	0.6%
Marital status	Single	In a relationship	Engaged	Cohabiting, but not married	Married	Widow/er
Men	32.4%	7.5%	4.1%	0.3%	53.5%	2.3%
Women	28.5%	3.3%	3.1%	2.2%	58.4%	4.5%

Table 2 – Socio-demographic characteristics of male and female respondents

Lastly, self-reported rates of sexual orientation show that 94 per cent of men are attracted to women, two per cent are attracted to both men and women, while only 0.3 per cent (3 out of 1001) stated that they prefer men. Another four per cent did not want to answer this question. The data for women show that, 84 per cent prefer men, two per cent are attracted to both sexes and 14 per cent did not want to answer this question. The results of the research shown henceforth are based on a heterosexual concept of relationships.

### *Economic background*

The **unemployment rate** in the sample is at around 26 per cent for men and 31 per cent for women. Among employed men, about 41 per cent of them work informally (i.e. have no formal work contract). The main source of income in the household was mostly the male respondents themselves (51%) or their parents. Only about two per cent of male respondents stated that their partner provided the main financial source. On the other hand, 55 per cent of women declared that their partner provides the main source of income in their household. The average household income was 565 euros (median 450), while the average personal income was 299 euros (median 278) for men and 188 euros (median 161 euros) for women.

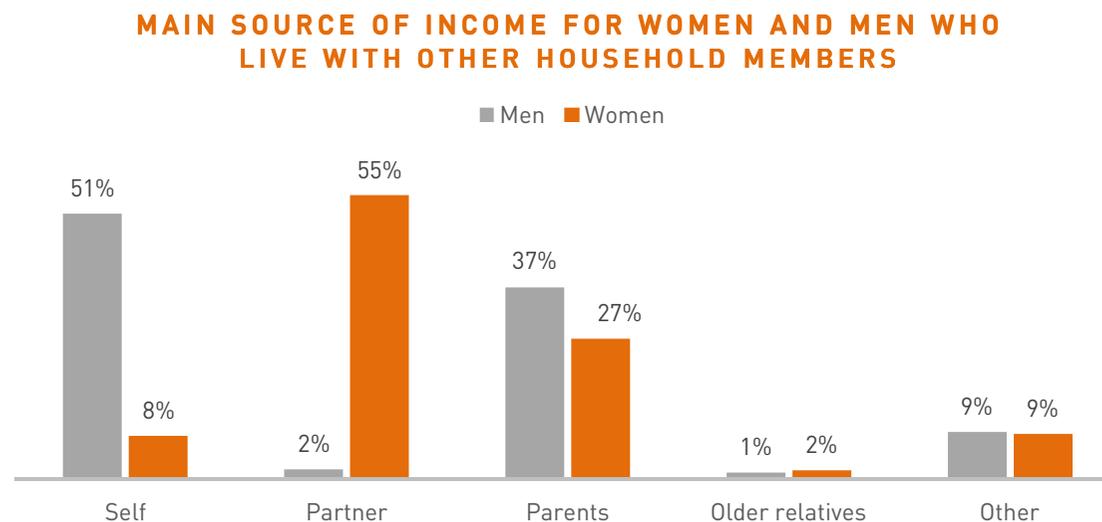


Figure 1 – Main source of income for women and men who live with other household members

### 3.2. Gender norms and attitudes toward gender equality

This section focuses directly on the opinions of men and women about gender equality. The latter is measured through various statements which portray both equal and unequal perceptions on gender norms and relations. The self-reported scales of agreement are intended to capture the average norms which guide men and women in Kosovo. These norms are quantified in a metric known as the Gender Equitable Men (GEM) scale. After providing an overall picture of gender norms and attitudes in Kosovo, the following sections delve deeper into various gender-related domains which may serve as the building blocks to the prevailing gender norms and attitudes.

#### *The Gender Equitable Men Scale*

The Gender Equitable Men scale is based on the **social perspective of gender norms**<sup>28</sup>. What this means is that the culture of a society sets out the proper way or multitude of ways of behaving, thinking and acting for men and women. This is done through an array of channels, such as norms being passed on by families and/or institutions. However, these standards are not simply received, they are also internalised, reconstructed and then passed on to others<sup>29</sup>. The conceptual framework of the Gender Equitable Men scale focuses on models of manhood or masculinity which spring from the society, but can take different levels for distinct groups of people. It also tries to incorporate the power relations existing in gender norms<sup>30</sup>. The main objective of the scale is to **measure attitudes toward gender norms in intimate relationships** or differing social expectations for men and women. In past studies, it has been used to predict various related outcomes such as condom use, contraceptive use or partner violence<sup>31</sup>.

The scale for Kosovo consists of **15 out of 24 questions** from the original Gender Equitable Men Scale methodology (see table 3). After performing a reliability test, it was decided to include all the questions in construction of the scale (based on the Cronbach Alpha results). The questions where no answer was given were coded as missing in order not to bias the scale. The options disagree, partially agree and totally agree received scores of 1, 2 and 3 respectively. Only one question has positive implication for gender equality, so the responses were reverse coded for uniformity of weights for each response category. The Gender Equitable Men scale was calculated as a sum of the scores for each statement. It was then trichotomized into “High equity”, “Moderate equity” and “Low equity” by splitting the scale into three equal parts. The range is based on thirds in the range of possible scores. The ranges for our Gender Equitable Men scale were: Low Equity 15-24; Moderate Equity 25-34; High Equity 35-45.

<sup>28</sup> Kimmel, M. S. (2011). *The gendered society* (4th ed). New York: Oxford University Press.

<sup>29</sup> Barker, G., Contreras, J., Heilman, B., Singh, A., Verma, R., & Nascimento, M. (2011). *Evolving Men: Initial Results from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES)*. International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) and Instituto Promundo.

<sup>30</sup> Pulerwitz, J., & Barker, G. (2008). Measuring Attitudes toward Gender Norms among Young Men in Brazil: Development and Psychometric Evaluation of the GEM Scale. *Men and Masculinities*, 10(3), 322–338.

<sup>31</sup> Singh, A., Verma, R., & Barker, G. (2013). *Measuring Gender Attitude: Using Gender-Equitable Men Scale (GEMS) in Various Socio-Cultural Settings*. UN Women.

Table 3 – Men’s results for each of the 15 questions of the Gender Equitable Men Scale

	Disagree	Partially agree	Totally Agree	No Answer
1. A woman should tolerate violence in order to keep her family together.	67.9	21.0	7.1	4.0
2. There are times when a woman deserves to be beaten.	54.5	32.7	8.7	4.1
3. I would be outraged if my wife asked me to use a condom.	52.6	23.8	12.1	11.4
4. It is a woman’s responsibility to avoid getting pregnant.	45.7	35.5	8.8	10.1
5. Men don’t talk about sex; they just do it.	32.6	44.9	17.3	5.1
6. Men need sex more than women do.	31.9	39.7	23.3	5.1
7. Men should be embarrassed if they are unable to get an erection during sex.	31.5	30.6	24.4	13.5
8. To be a man, you need to be tough.	27.9	34.4	33.3	4.4
9. A man should have the final word about decisions in his home.	26.3	40.6	28.9	4.3
10. Men are always ready to have sex.	25.7	36.2	32.7	5.4
11. A woman’s most important role is to take care of her home and cook for her family.	25.7	40.7	32.1	1.5
12. Changing diapers, giving kids a bath, and feeding the kids are the woman’s responsibility.	25.4	35.8	36.7	2.2
13. If someone insults me, I will defend my reputation, with force if I have to.	21.8	32.4	40.3	5.5
14. I would never have a gay friend.	17.9	17.0	55.4	9.7
15. A man and a woman should decide together what type of contraceptive to use.	11.8	24.0	59.4	4.8

The Gender Equitable Men scale is primarily oriented at men as its name also indicates, but it was also calculated for women to show the differences in attitudes towards gender norms between these two groups. Figure 2 shows that most men and women lie within the moderate equity norms. However, a **significantly higher share of men has shown to have low equity** at about 13 per cent as opposed to only one per cent of women belonging to that category.

### GEM SCALE FOR MEN AND WOMEN

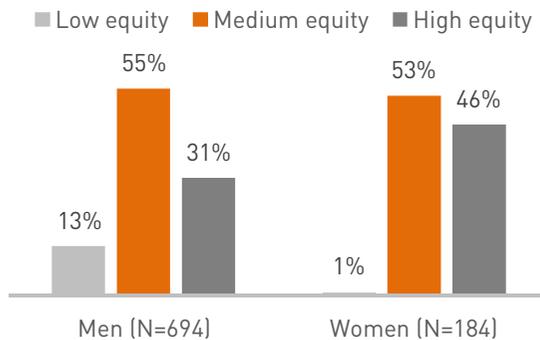


Figure 2 - GEM Scale for men and women

### GEM SCALE FOR MEN BY AGE GROUPS

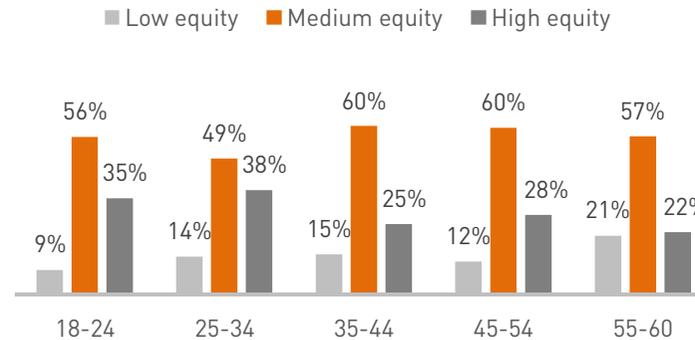


Figure 3 - GEM Scale for men by age groups

“When women themselves accept oppressive norms, it shows that not only men can exhibit patriarchal characteristics. Patriarchy suppresses men too, but it also grants them privileges. Women as the oppressed ones are often the fanatic guardians of the patriarchal morality not only because they are socialised into this system, but also as a means to their survival.

Elife Krasniqi, Ph.D. Candidate  
University of Graz, Austria

Some additional statistical tests were conducted to better understand why certain men were more averse or inclined towards gender equality. At first glance, figure 3 indicates that **younger age groups have showed higher equity in gender norms than older age groups**. There exists some evidence in the data to show a **generation gap in gender equality norms** among men in Kosovo. Despite these promising results, the younger generations are still under the influence of traditional norms based on the in-depth interviews conducted with representatives of relevant institutions and non-governmental organisations.

For instance, Vetone Veliu, the Executive Director of Mitrovica’s Women Association for Human Rights noted that while working with public schools in Kosovo, boys as young as 12-year-old would be categorically against their sisters inheriting part of their families’ wealth given that she will be married off when she grows up. Further analysis of the Gender Equitable Men scale showed that other socio-economic characteristics were correlated with levels of equity among men. For instance, men with lower levels of education also exhibit higher rates of low equity gender norms. Indeed, tests for statistical significance found educational background to be significantly correlated to the level of Gender Equitable Men scale at 99 per cent confidence interval. An interesting finding is that not only is men’s level of schooling relevant for the norms they embrace, but the **level of schooling obtained by parents also plays a major role**. Figure 4 shows that the higher the level of education of both mother and father, the higher the Gender Equitable Men scale. The results were significant at 99 per cent confidence interval.

### MEN'S GEM SCALE BY PARENTAL EDUCATION

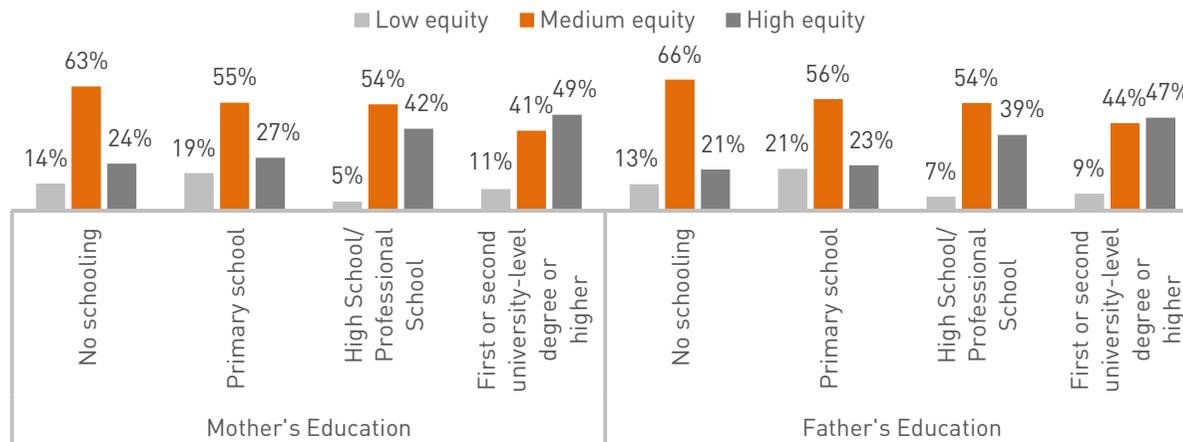


Figure 4 - GEM Scale for men by parental education

### GEM SCALE AND PERSONAL INCOME

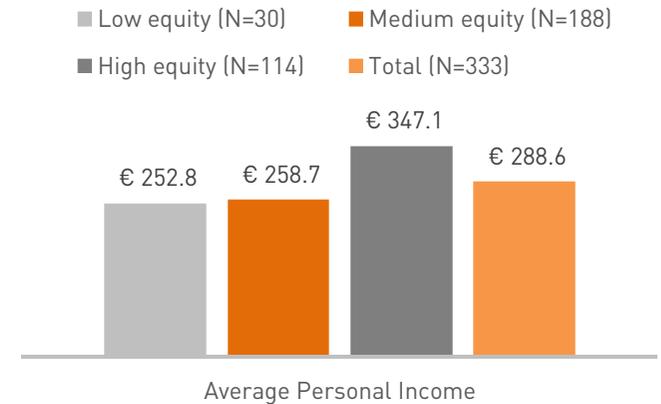


Figure 5 - GEM Scale and personal income

Both personal and household incomes were found to be positively correlated to Gender Equitable Men scale at 99 per cent confidence interval. **The higher the earnings, the more likely were men to embrace gender equitable norms.** Figure 5 shows the average personal earnings in each category of Gender Equitable Men scale for men. When considering differences in norms between settlements, the data did not show a significant difference between the norms of those who live in rural as opposed to urban areas. The large scale urban migration which has happened since the conflict in Kosovo may have made it difficult to distinguish between people with a rural versus urban background.

Figure 6 shows the **opinions of men on certain statements** that juxtapose the rights of women to those of men. About 20 per cent of men generally agreed that when women work, they are taking jobs away from men. Quite a significant share of men saw issues of gender equality as a zero-sum game. For instance, around 16 per cent believe that when women get rights, they are taking rights away from men. Similarly, 13 per cent of men also generally agreed with the statement that rights for women mean that men lose out. These thoughts are also more or less shared by female respondents; the share of women who disagree with these statements is only slightly above that of men. Naturally, men who have a higher gender equitable attitude, as measured by the Gender Equitable Men scale, are significantly more likely to disagree with the statements below which portray gender equality as a zero-sum game. Nevertheless, the majority of men believed that the issue of gender equality has already been addressed in our society. About 59 per cent of men agreed with the statement that gender equality, meaning that men and women are equal, has been mostly achieved in our society.

### OPINIONS ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS

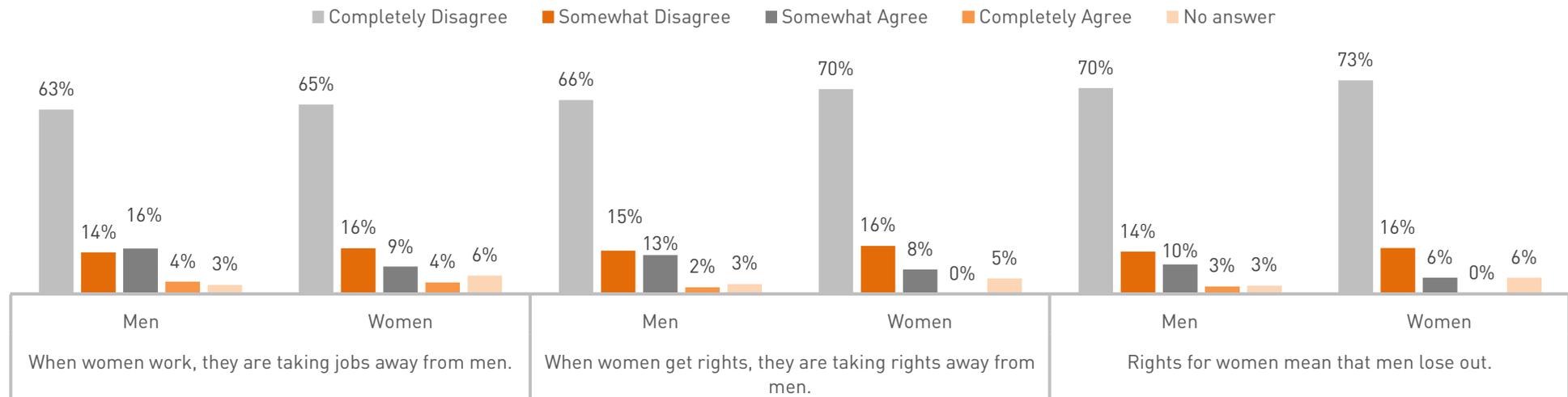


Figure 6 – Men's opinion on women's rights

#### Attitudes toward sexual diversity

Attitudes towards sexual diversity are closely related to social norms in a society. The more conservative a society is, the less are people open to accepting people with unconventional sexual orientations and/or gender identities. For instance, as Besa Luci, the editor in chief of Kosovo 2.0, pointed out in her interview as part of this research, homophobic attitudes spring from social and individual definitions of how one ought to be a man or a woman. Once a woman's sole essence of life is reproduction, then other forms of sexuality are necessarily considered deviations from the purpose of living. She further explains how people in Kosovo's traditional society still operate as a community rather than an individual, which makes it impossible to understand and accept individual choices in lifestyle and, especially, sexual preferences. Hence, gender inequality is much broader than that between men and women.

**“Gender inequality does not refer solely to the differences in roles of men and women. This is one of the biggest mistakes made by institutions and civil society right in the beginning of the fight for gender equality.”**

Blert Morina, Programme Manager  
Center for Equality and Liberty  
Prishtinë/Priština

Figures 7 and 8 show the opinions of both men and women regarding related **statements on homosexuality**. We can see that most men tend to agree with the negative statements, which express an aversion towards sexual diversity. The data on women show a milder reaction towards homosexuality. For example, about 74 per cent of men agreed with the statement that gays or lesbians should not be allowed to work with children as opposed to 41 per cent of women who shared the same thought. In a similar line of thought, the agreement rates of both men and women are also low on positive statements about homosexuality. For instance, 67 per cent of men and 55 per cent of women did not agree with homosexuality being considered as natural and normal. Moreover, 60 per cent of men and 46 per cent of women did not believe that gay or lesbian couples should be allowed to legally marry just like heterosexual couples. It should be noted that women refused to answer more often than men on all the questions related to sexual diversity.

### OPINIONS ON SEXUAL DIVERSITY

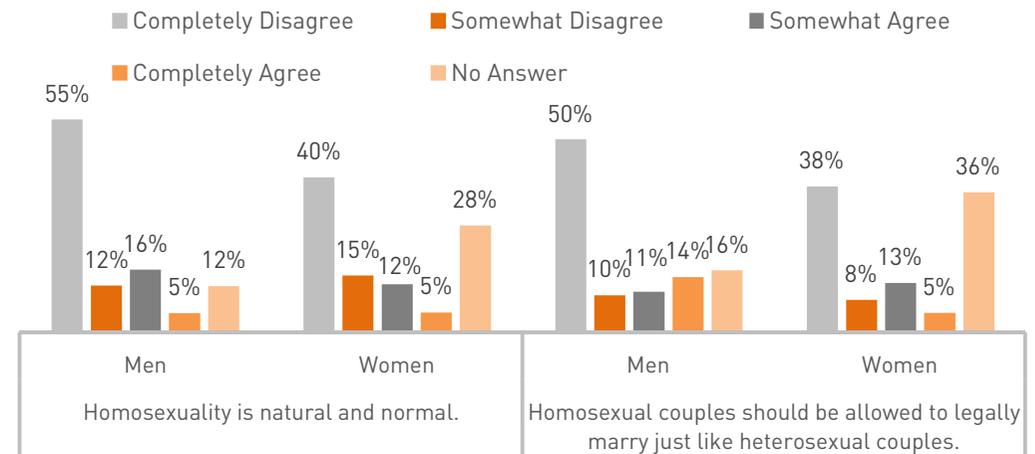


Figure 7 – Men’s and women’s opinions on sexual diversity

### OPINIONS ON SEXUAL DIVERSITY

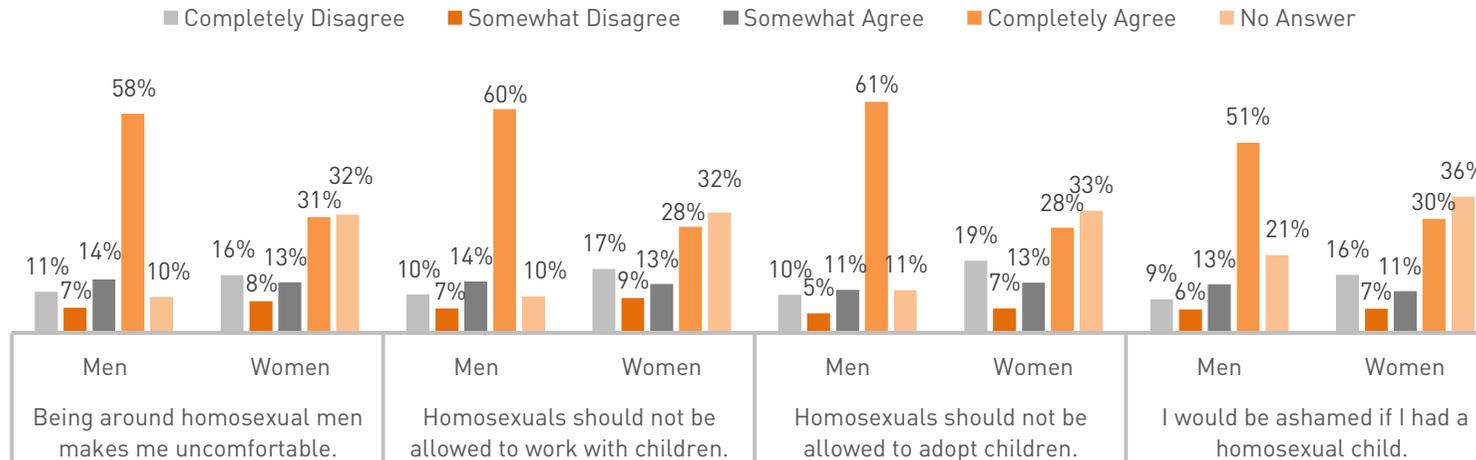


Figure 8 - Opinions on sexual diversity

A further analysis into the men’s opinions and their respective gender norms reveals that men who exhibit higher gender equity tend to be more tolerant and accepting of sexual diversity. Opinions on homosexuality do not differ substantially among various age groups. Moreover, when looking at ethnic differences in the homosexuality acceptance rates, the data does not provide any evidence for substantial divergence in thoughts.

### Attitudes toward transactional sex

The last part of the gender norms chapter includes a special section on the attitudes toward **transactional sex**. While sex work is illegal in Kosovo, transactional sex is a broader term, which includes engaging in sexual relation for other circumstantial benefits. Thus, it is important to understand how both men and women view these practices in order to understand the dynamics between genders. Prevalence of transactional sex may not be based on the free will of individuals. Research in other parts of the world has shown that engagement in transactional sex is often associated with socio-economic status, more adverse childhood experiences, more lifetime sexual partners, and alcohol use<sup>32</sup>. In addition, gender-based violence has been continuously and robustly associated with transactional sex<sup>33</sup>. Hence, this practice is closely related to men’s exercise of gendered power and control.

Figure 9 below presents and compares the answers between male and female respondents on their opinion on adult and underage **women working as sex workers**. Men are less likely than women to consider it as morally wrong even for underage girls. They also tend to put the agency on the sex worker herself more often than women. The opinions of men and women do not strikingly differ when asked instead on adult and underage **men working as sex workers**. The findings are presented in figure 10 below.

### OPINIONS ON SEX SERVICES OFFERED BY WOMEN

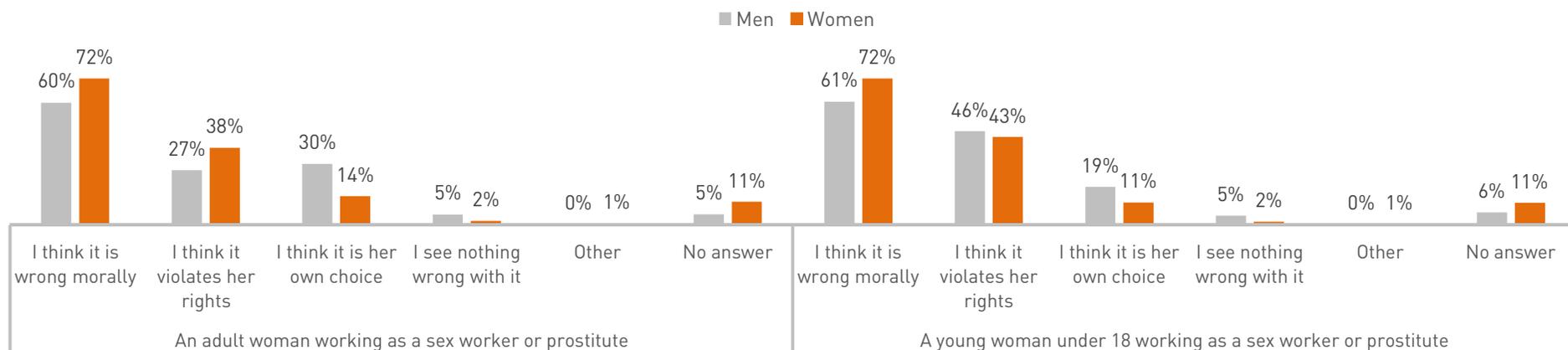


Figure 9 – Men’s and women’s opinions on sex work offered by women

<sup>32</sup> Dunkle, K. L., Jewkes, R., Nduna, M., Jama, N., Levin, J., Sikweyiya, Y., & Koss, M. P. (2007). Transactional sex with casual and main partners among young South African men in the rural Eastern Cape: Prevalence, predictors, and associations with gender-based violence. *Social Science & Medicine*, 65(6), 1235–1248.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

## OPINIONS ON SEX SERVICES OFFERED BY MEN

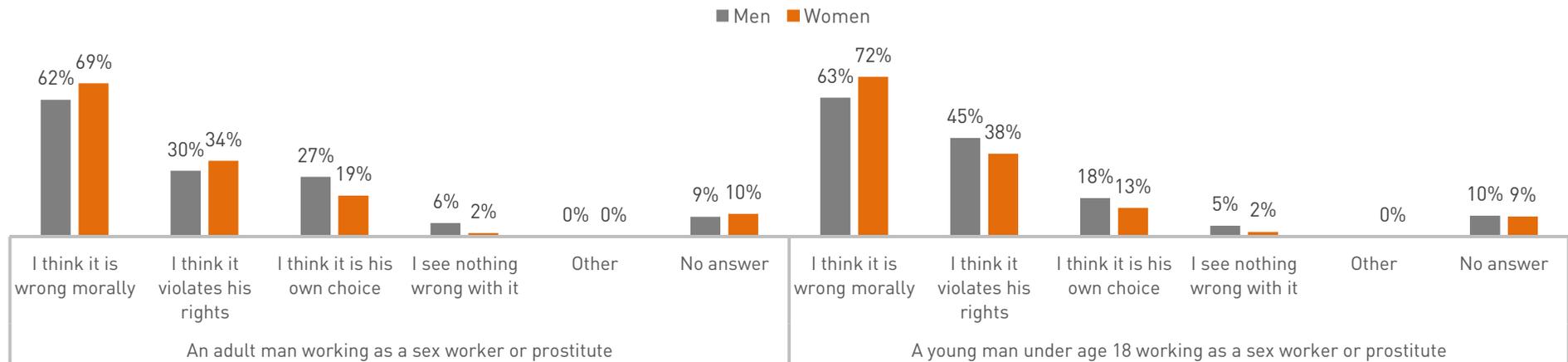
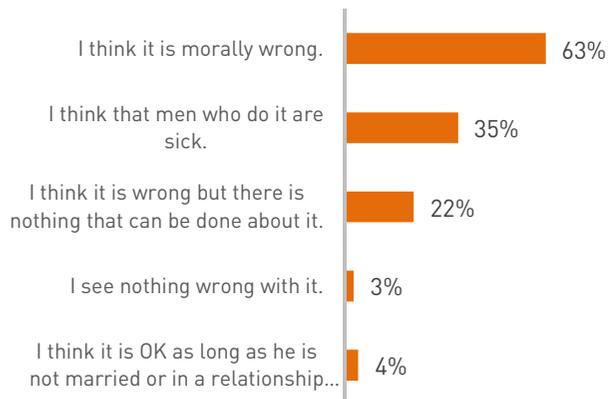


Figure 10 – Men’s and women’s opinions on sex work offered by men

Most men and women consider it to be morally wrong for a man to purchase sex as figure 11 shows. About 21 per cent of men and 35 per cent of women consider men who do buy sex as (mentally) sick. Buying sex when not committed to someone else is more often justified by men (12 per cent) than by women (four per cent). However, in general, men do not agree with either buying or selling sex. More than half of them think that it should stay against the law to both sell and buy sex regardless of the age of the sex worker.

### WOMEN'S OPINION ON MEN WHO PURCHASE SEX



### MEN'S OPINION ON MEN WHO PURCHASE SEX

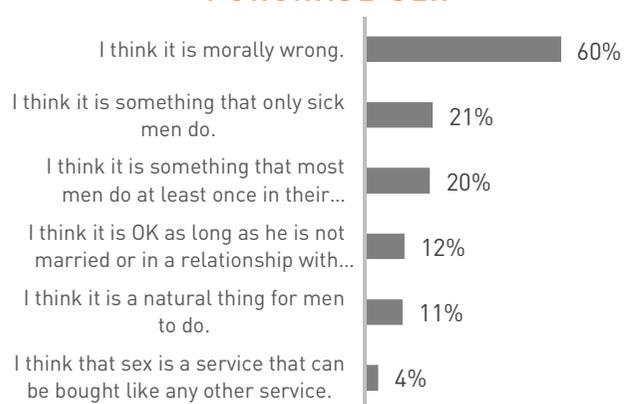


Figure 11 – Men’s and women’s opinions on men who purchase sex

Lastly, both men and women were asked on their own experiences with transactional sex. The data shows that at least one per cent of the interviewed women had engaged in a certain form of transactional sex at least once in their lifetime for various reasons, such as provision of a place to stay, payment of bills etc. However, men’s self-reported rates of transactional sexual intercourse are slightly higher than those reported by women. At least five per cent of men claimed to have had sex only once with another woman because they gave her material goods.

### 3.3. Childhood experiences

The importance of childhood experiences for a healthy adulthood has been recognized by international organisations and treaties as well as scientific research. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child sets out the civil, political, economic, social, health and cultural rights of children and recognises that “[...] the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding...”<sup>34</sup>.

Both in the field of psychology as well as neurology, research has shown that brain develops faster in the first three years of life and childhood years can have major implications for the subsequent years of development<sup>35</sup>. Thus, foundations for one’s opinions, attitudes, habits and norms are laid even before one’s first memories. Gender norms are no exception and are often visible from families’ conditioning of girls and boys into specific roles according to their sex. It can start from simple things such as colours of clothes, to more fundamental issues of what type of ambition or expectation is instilled upon them. A typical example in Kosovo is teaching boys to become successful and heads of household, while telling girls to marry in a good family and be housewives. This norm was confirmed by most of the respondents during the in-depth interviews who emphasised the importance of conscious and unconscious expectations from the society on influencing life-choices of young boys and girls. Mrika Aliu, the Executive Director of the non-governmental organisation Action for Mothers and Children, noted in her interview how even textbooks and general school subjects such as civic education place gendered roles and create certain profiles for men and women in their private (i.e. household duties) and public lives (i.e. career paths).

An analysis conducted earlier on by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) in Kosovo has also pointed that while the curricula contains cross cutting topics like gender issues and children’s rights, the absence of appropriate training of teachers may hamper the full implementation of this new approach<sup>36</sup>. Another study conducted by Kosovo Education Center, which consisted of reading and analysing 323 textbooks, found that over 90 per cent of the indicators were in favour of a dominating male role, i.e. dominance of men in figures and characters which supported stereotypical roles for boys and girls as well as men and women<sup>37</sup>. Out of the 323 textbooks covered in the study, only 45 mention women in professional roles compared to 187 mentioning men<sup>38</sup>.

Such examples are just one of the many direct ways that **gender norms are set early on**. There are other indirect ways through either behaviour of parents between themselves or from the society to influence opinions on gender equality. In order to achieve long-term gender equality in the society, it is important to understand the layers of mutual influences through people, communities and environments. Based on these arguments, the following analysis is aimed at illustrating the childhood experiences of men and how they relate to gender issues in Kosovo from a men’s perspective.

<sup>34</sup> United Nations (1989). Convention on the Rights of the Child. *Treaty Series*, 1577, 3. p. 45.

<sup>35</sup> Shonkoff, J.P. and Phillips, D.A. (2000). *From Neurons to Neighbourhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*. National Academy Press.

<sup>36</sup> Moo Sang, B., & Wenderoth, A. (2004). *Situational Analysis of Education in Kosovo*. UNICEF Kosovo.

<sup>37</sup> Hyseni, H., Lljunji, V., & Kabashi-Hima, A. (2007). *Gender Equality in the Reading Textbooks During the Nine Years of Compulsory Education in Kosovo*. Kosovo Education Center/Open Society Institute.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

**Division of roles between parents** is one of the ways which a child is socialised into specific gender norms. Taking care of children is primarily seen as the mother's obligation according to the social norms in Kosovo. The results from the survey show that 64 per cent of women and 73 per cent of men either agree or partially agree that changing diapers, giving children a bath, and feeding the children are the woman's responsibility. This is also partially confirmed by the childhood experience of men in Kosovo whereby 35 per cent of them were taken care of mostly or only by their mother. Figure 12 further shows that a substantial part of them (59 per cent) reported that they were looked after nearly equally from both mother and father, but the father is very rarely the only one who takes this duty.

Parents often play the role of educators willingly or unwillingly while caring for their children. Thus, it is important to have a picture of their **educational background** as well. The results from the survey show that the mothers of about 64 per cent of men had not even finished high school, while this rate is lower for their fathers at about 46 per cent.

The following figures and results refer to **men's experiences before they turned 18 years** old. For instance, figure 13 shows that it was slightly more common for the mother to treat the father with respect than vice versa. Male figures were rarely seen preparing food or **doing housework** (cleaning, washing clothes, etc.), which are often considered as women's duties. Figure 14 shows that more than half of the respondents never or hardly ever saw their father or another male relative do the former. Men belonging to younger age groups were more likely to have seen their fathers or other male figures becoming actively engaged in household duties. Higher household involvement of men's fathers or other male figures was more common when the respondents' parents had higher educational attainment.



### MAIN CARE PROVIDER FOR MEN DURING CHILDHOOD

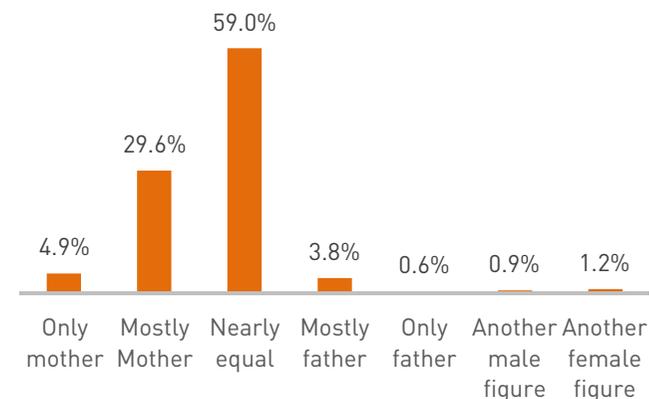


Figure 12 - Main care provider for men during childhood

### TREATMENT BETWEEN MOTHER AND FATHER

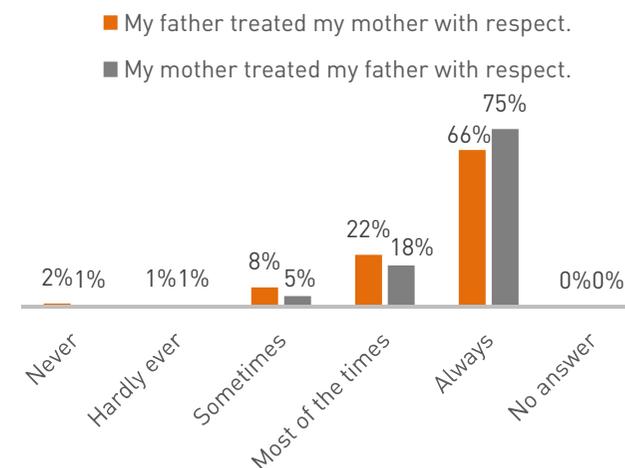


Figure 13 - Men's reports on treatment between mother and father

### HOUSEHOLD CHORES OF MEN'S FATHER OR MALE FIGURES AT HOME WHILE THEY WERE GROWING UP

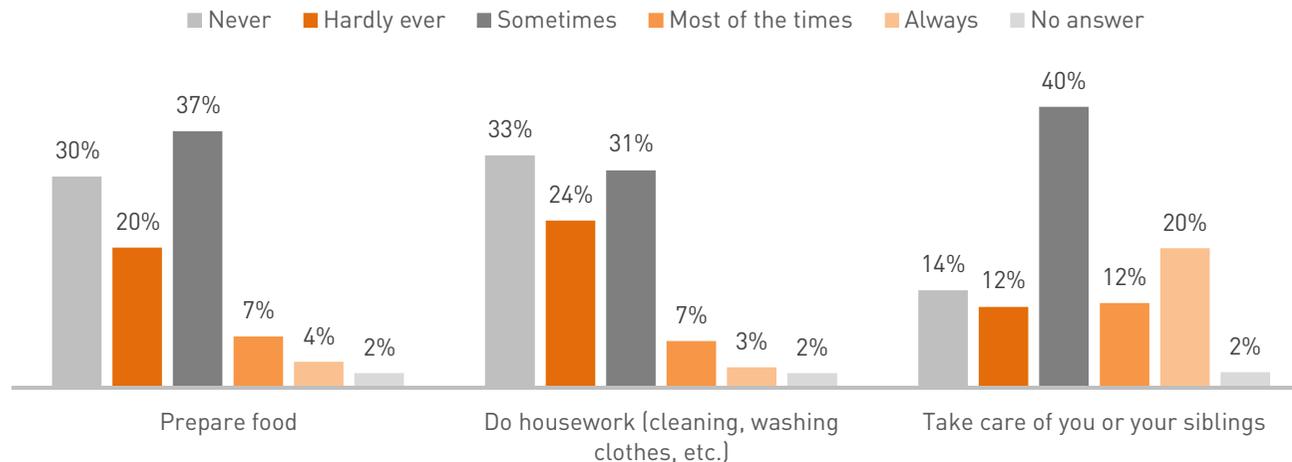


Figure 14 – Household chores of men’s father or other male figure at home during childhood

“In my work experience, I have often encountered cases where women could not decide alone about the education of their own children without the approval of someone as distant as the brother-in-law in diaspora. The latter often provide financial support to extended families, and they also claim to have a right to decide on such important issues.

Veprorë Shehu  
Executive Director  
Medica Kosova  
Gjakovë/Đakovica

The focus group discussions also confirmed and gave further explanation for these findings. Both Kosovo Albanian and Kosovo Serb women who participated in the focus groups explained how household chores were regarded as unmanly tasks, which brought shame to a man if he would engage in it. They also emphasized the rarity of employment among women in the past, which naturally confined their lives within the walls of their houses. The men who participated in the focus groups were less keen to consider housework as unmanly, but they did acknowledge the gendered nuance such tasks have. Focus group participants stated that this mentality has recently started to change, but its remnants are still transmitted from generation to generation.

Even when it came to **decision making in the family**, it was very rare that the mother had the final word or even equal say in decisions on spending money on large investments such as buying a car or a house. Male participants in the discussion were less convinced about the data about women’s lack of power on decisions regarding food and clothing as they regarded them as the ones who knew best about what was needed in the house. However, as one of them duly noted, even if women’s opinion on such issues was considered, the final say almost always lay with the men of the household. He was the one who “brought the bacon home” and, as such, he was the one to decide how the money must be spent.

When educational level of parents is accounted for, the share of men who had their mother and father equally decide on important family and household decisions rises substantially, especially when the mother and/or father had earned at least a university degree. It must be noted that even when the mother is a university graduate, the share of cases when she had the final word remains very low (seven per cent on decisions about children, 16 per cent on decisions about spending money on food and clothing and four per cent on decisions about spending money on large investments). Thus, even for the more educated population of Kosovo, it is still relatively uncommon to have women have the final word on decisions related to their family and home.

## WHILE MEN WERE GROWING UP, WHO HAD THE FINAL WORD ON:

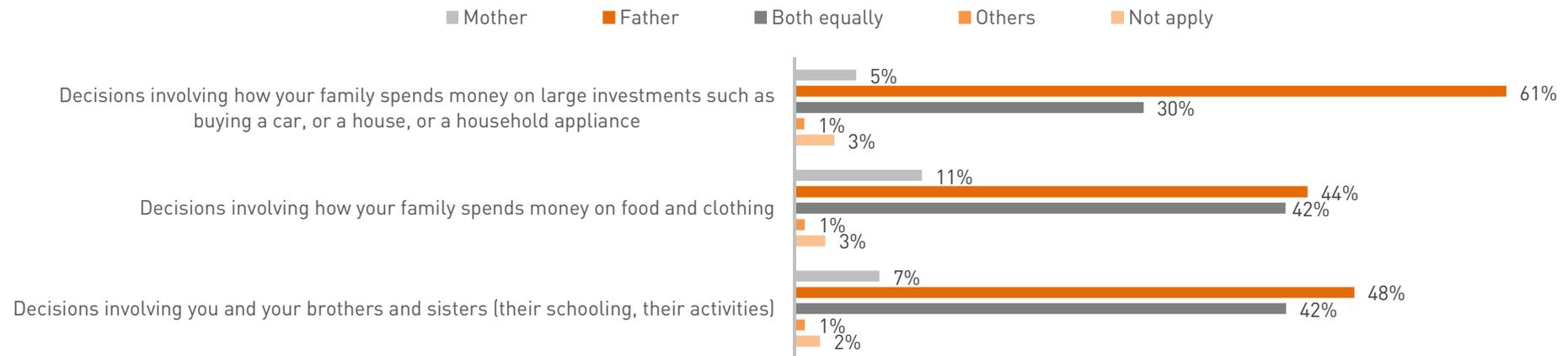


Figure 15 – Men's reports on parents' decision-making during childhood

The childhood experience does not contain only the passive observations of parental behaviour and how the household is managed, but also what the individuals themselves actively experience while growing up. For instance, while household tasks were mostly the mother's duties, more than half of the **male respondents were indeed taught to prepare food** (52 per cent) and to take care of their siblings (71 per cent). However, cleaning the house (44 per cent) or washing their clothes (25 per cent) was less often taught to them. Men with more educated parents were more likely to have been taught to do most of the listed tasks. For instance, 79 per cent of men, whose mother had at least finished university, were taught how to prepare food as opposed to 35 per cent of men whose mother had no schooling. These trends followed a similar line even with the father's level of education. Hence, these findings suggest that parental education plays an important role in teaching men at an early age to become more engaged at home. Age did not play a factor on whether men were taught to take on household duties, except for preparing food: younger men were significantly more likely to have been taught to prepare food than older men.

**Exposure to abusive practices**, such as violence, rape or intoxication, was also recorded in the survey as it is an indispensable element in the psychological well-being of the child at that point in time as well as in the future. Experiences of physical or psychological violence also leave a distinct mark on one's worldview and character. The results from the survey present an alarming situation. The findings in figure 16 show that nine per cent of the male respondents were often physically punished either at home or at school, or both. Those who experienced such violence were also more likely to be averse towards gender equality as the correlation with Gender Equitable Men scale showed. Men belonging to younger age groups were more likely to have never been spanked or slapped at home. This held true also for those men who had parents with higher education levels.

### VIOLENCE EXPERIENCED AT HOME AND SCHOOL BY MEN

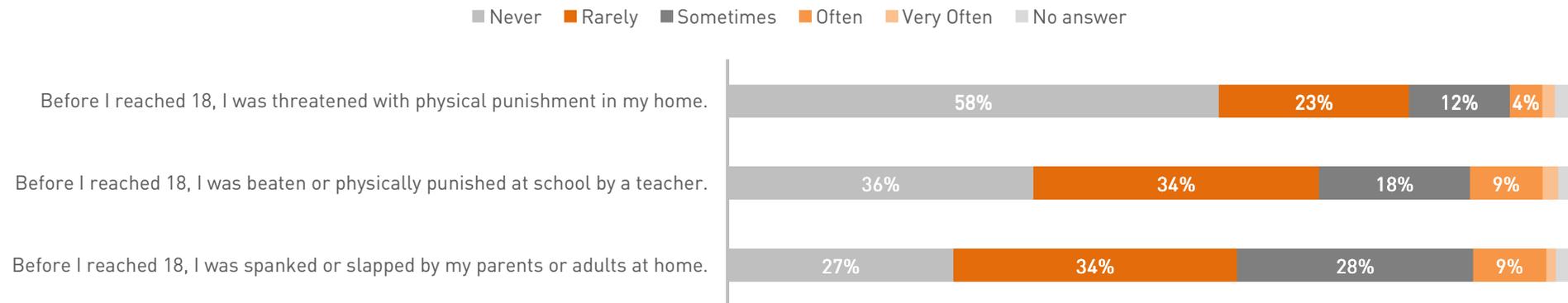


Figure 16 – Men’s reports on violence experienced at home and school during childhood

The active and passive experiences of violence extended to more extreme forms for a substantial number of those surveyed. Around 20 per cent of men have at least once heard their mother being beaten by their father or her partner. Such occasions were more common among men whose parents were poorly educated (i.e. no schooling) or among older generations. Figure 17 further shows that 11 per cent of men had at least once experienced a situation where one or both parents were too drunk or on drugs to take care of them. An even more worrying result is that about eight per cent of men admitted to had sex at least once because they were threatened, frightened or forced.

### VIOLENCE EXPERIENCED AT HOME BY MEN

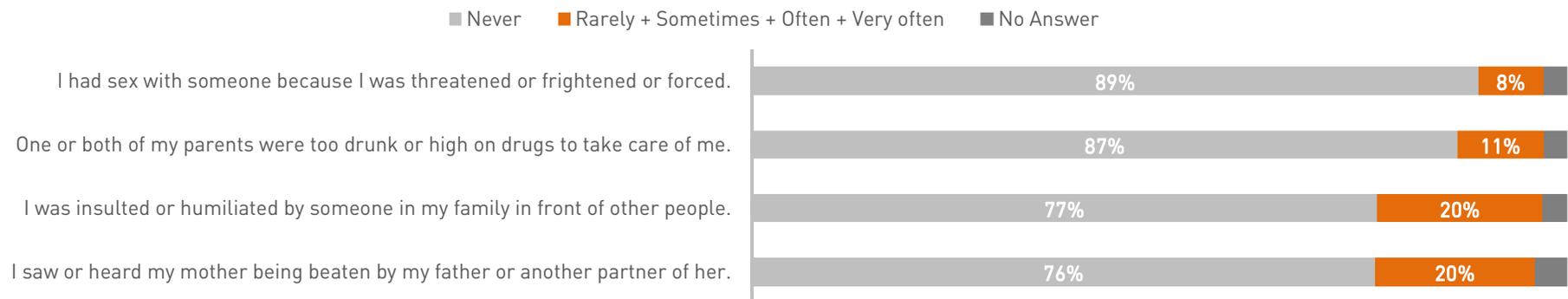


Figure 17 – Men’s reports on violence experience at home during childhood

Various forms of **violence at school** and other public spaces in which children were exposed to was also substantially widespread. Around 40 per cent of men admitted that there was bullying or teasing and harassment in school or neighbourhood in which they grew up. A similar share (39%) reported to have been bullied themselves by others, and about 33 per cent had done this to others. Moreover, 30 per cent of male respondents also claimed to have at least once been part of a group that would fight other rival groups at school. Violence often went unpunished at schools as 65 per cent of men stated that they were punished for physically bullying other children. Other self-reported unhealthy behaviour, such as using drugs, was not dramatically widespread at school. Around 87 per cent of male respondents claimed that they had never taken drugs at school.

A deeper analysis into the drivers of bullying shows that experiences at home are interrelated to this issue. The questions on being bullied as well as bullying others were cross-tabulated with experiencing violence at home, such as being spanked or witnessing their mother being beaten. Those who were spanked or slapped at home at least once were more likely to have been bullied at school than those who never experienced this type of violence at home. About 47 per cent of those who were spanked or slapped at home at least once, also experienced bullying at school. This figure falls to 16 per cent for male respondents who did not experience such violence at home. This relation also held true for bullying others. Respondents who had seen violence against their mother were more likely to bully others than those who had not; 29 per cent of male respondents who had never seen their mother being beaten bullied others as opposed to 54 per cent of those who occasionally or even more frequently witnessed domestic violence. These findings suggest that the **presence of violence from an early age normalises it as a tool of interaction with others** in the form of both accepting it upon oneself and exercising it on others.



### 3.4. Relationship dynamics and domestic duties

A part of the gender inequality happens at the private sphere in the way relationships and a shared life is arranged between partners. Power relations can dictate the **division of duties** and the perpetuation of certain roles that confine the woman within the household and outside of important decision-making process both in the private as well as the public sphere. The UN Women's flagship report on the progress of the world's women revealed that in all regions women work more than men: they do almost two and a half times as much unpaid care and domestic work as men, and if paid and unpaid work is combined, women in almost all countries work longer hours than men each day<sup>39</sup>. Even in developed economies, most housework, which is not paid work, is a woman's duty<sup>40</sup>. Even when men try to take up domestic duties in the house, it is mostly as a gesture of help rather than taking up responsibility. Thus, the **household remains a woman's domain**. Another characteristic of housework, this implicit duty of women, is that it is not paid and, thus, not accounted in economic terms, such as the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In Kosovo women cover substantial services free of charge, such as caring for children, elderly and family members with disabilities.

This subchapter attempts to provide an illustration of the above-discussed issues through the data collected in this research. After analysing the average childhood experiences of men in Kosovo (sub-chapter 3.3), the following paragraphs focus on their current behaviour and relationship towards gender equality at home. This includes the relationship dynamics with their partners and children, how domestic duties are distributed and decisions are made. Given that this chapter focuses primarily on the relationship dynamics at home, the results presented here are valid only for those who declared to have a partner and live with him or her.

About 58 per cent of the male respondents claimed to have a regular or stable partner and another 51 per cent stated that they live with their partner. Based on the survey results, it is either male respondents who are more educated than their partner or they share the same **level of education**. In only 10 per cent on cases were partners more educated than the male respondents. The gender trends in higher education enrolment rates have changed in past years, as women often make up the larger share of students in public and private universities. Nonetheless, even though more and more women enrol in universities, the post-university reality reveals the divergence in lifestyle choices for men and women as it was noted in her interview by the Editor in Chief of Kosovo 2.0, Besa Luci. Both men and women are expected to get married and create a family, but the former prioritises the career and making money, while the latter is focused on children and household. Thus, the increased potential of women due to higher education enrolment is often left unused.

The **economic status** of these couples is also highly unequal. Only 18 per cent of men had partners who are formally or informally employed. More importantly, 62 per cent of men said that their partner had never worked. Based on such differences, it is expected that there is an income gap within the couple. The survey results indeed provide proof that it is far more common for the male partner to be earning a higher income than the female one. About 41 per cent of male respondents claimed to earn a higher amount than their partner as opposed to about 21 per cent of them who stated the opposite.

---

<sup>39</sup> Sen, G. (2016). Progress of the world's women 2015–2016: Transforming economies, realizing rights. *Global Social Policy*, 16(1), 94-96.

<sup>40</sup> Cichon, R. 2014. A Long Way to Go Towards Equality: An Actuarial Estimation of Gender Specific Lifetime Income Gaps in Selected European Countries. Background paper for Progress of the World's Women 2015–2016. UN Women.

In addition to the patterns of decisions making in the male respondents' families, the study also contains information on how their current household manages **decision making**. Figure 18 show that when it comes to deciding on large investments, about 34 per cent of men stated that they are the decision-makers. While indeed it is more likely that they decide jointly with their partner on other issues as well, a striking finding is that the share of men who said that their wife or partner has the final say is significantly low. The differences in educational and economic background within the couple can have an impact on who has the final word at home about important decisions. The discussion in the focus groups with both men and women also highlighted this point. They both believe that times are changing and that more and more couples are deciding together especially those who are more educated.

### DECISION-MAKING IN THE FAMILY ON SPENDING MONEY

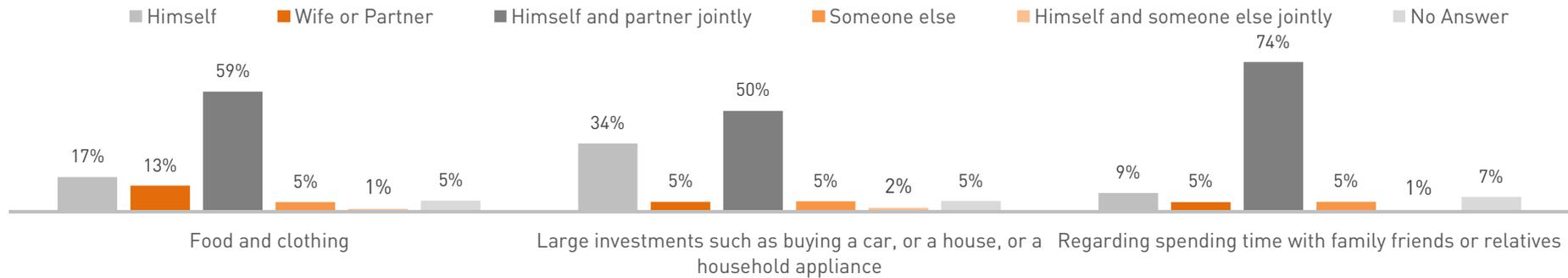
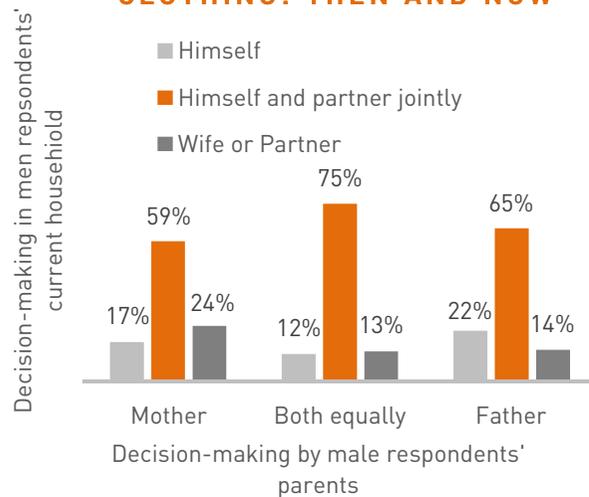
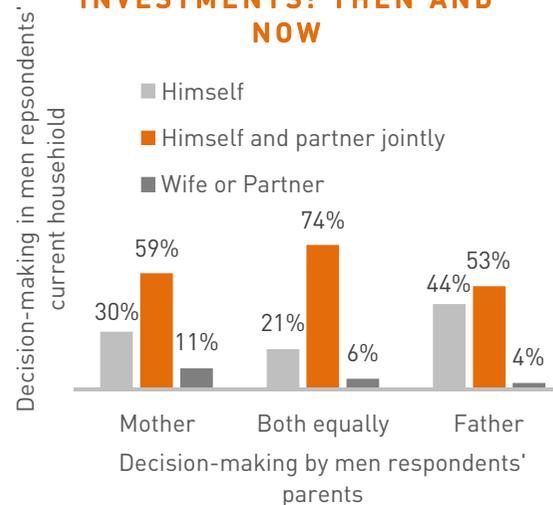


Figure 18 – Men's reports on decision-making in the family on spending money

### DECISIONS ABOUT SPENDING MONEY ON FOOD AND CLOTHING: THEN AND NOW



### DECISIONS ABOUT SPENDING MONEY ON LARGE INVESTMENTS: THEN AND NOW



The arrangement of women-men relations may be related to the **childhood experiences of men**. For instance, seeing their mother in an active role in decision-making may have harnessed in them gender inclusive norms, which can be expressed in the way their current household is organised. The data provided some proof for this hypothesis. Figures 19 and 20 show that men, whose parents had equal say on important family decisions, were also more likely to decide jointly with their partner on the same issues. Other important background variables, such as men's and their parents' educational attainment were not found to be significantly correlated to gender equality in decision-making.

In addition to household decision-making, allocation of tasks is also not equally distributed among partners as figure 21 shows. **Household chores**, such as cleaning and cooking, are almost exclusively the partner's domain according to the responses of men. Buying food is more commonly shared as a duty. Other tasks which are often regarded as men's obligations, such as repairing the house and paying bills, are indeed more often completed by men. While in decision making childhood experiences mattered, we found no correlation between patterns of division of tasks among men's parents and that of their current household.

### DIVISION OF HOUSEHOLD TASKS AS REPORTED BY MEN

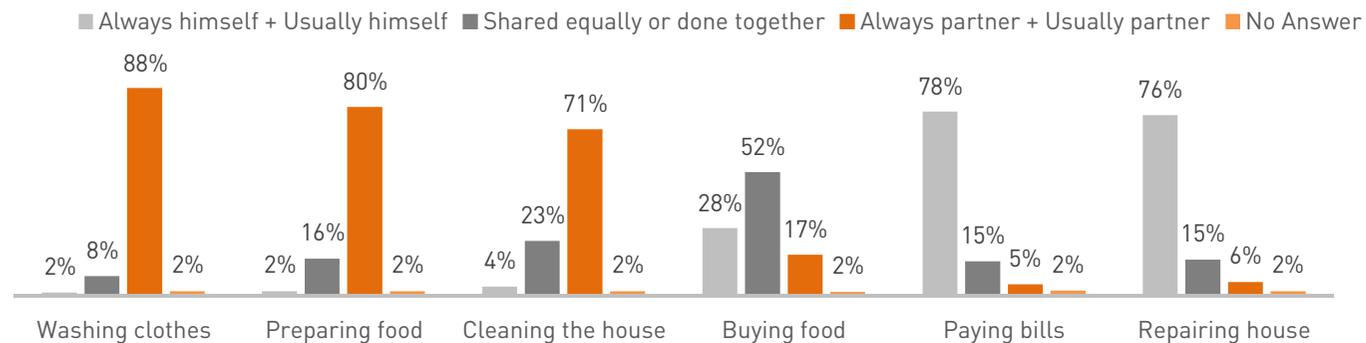


Figure 21 - Division of household tasks as reported by men

There were also no significant differences between different age groups, male respondents and parents' educational background and Gender Equitable Men scale. The exception was the task of cleaning the house. Men who had a higher Gender Equitable Men scale were more likely to undertake this task jointly with their partner than those with a lower Gender Equitable Men scale.

These gendered profiles of men and women are deeply rooted in various components of our society, according to the interviews with stakeholder from non-governmental organisations who work on gender equality. In addition to the expectation set on children from their parents, the education system is also considered to be a key factor in perpetuating the same gendered ambitions on girls and boys. This is done through teacher's biased expectations or textbooks which carry gendered nuances. The impact of a patriarchal mentality and education could be noticed in the focus group discussions. Women participants regarded themselves as innately fit for tasks in the households and regarded help from husband, partners or their sons as a favour from their side. For instance, taking care of children was considered to be a difficult task for men, while heavy lifting was inadequate for women. Sharing the responsibility of household tasks equally with their partner was so remote from these women's reality that some of them described such a partner as "having the perfect man". The focus group discussions with men reached similar conclusions, but they did place the agency of this task division upon women, subtly disregarding the impact of gendered power relations. Some of them maintained that their partners would rather complete these tasks on their own despite their own willingness to help. When asked on their opinions about the separation of tasks, a higher share of men than women thought that the burden of household chores was shared equally between them. More than half of the men (55 per cent) saw it as equal and the clear majority (91 per cent) claimed to be satisfied with this organisation of home duties. In addition, about 92 per cent of men believe that their partner is also satisfied in this regard and, indeed, 89 per cent of women admitted to being satisfied with this division. Despite the high self-reported satisfaction rates, such household task arrangements have practical implications for gender equality between men and women.

**“As long as there is no gender equality at home, there can never be gender equality in public.”**

Nicole Farnsworth  
Programme Manager  
Kosovo Women's Network

## ENJOYMENT OF JOINT ACTIVITIES WITH PARTNER

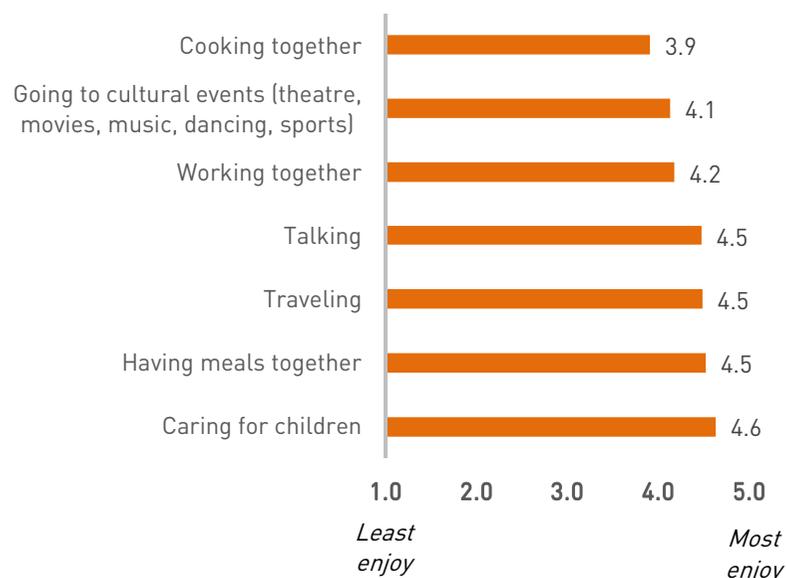


Figure 22 – Men’s reports on enjoyment of joint activities with partner

The data reported by male respondents shows that 17 per cent of them claimed to have children under 18 who do not live with them. Out of these cases, 63 per cent of them at least occasionally provide financial support for these children. The **decision on having children** is one which should be made by both partners and their presence in each phase is crucial for a healthy relationship and a proper upbringing of the child<sup>41</sup>. Out of the people who had children, around 80 per cent claimed to have both equally wanted a child. Moreover, most men (89 per cent) accompanied their partner during the prenatal visits. However, only one in ten men who had children was present in the delivery room during the birth of his last child. This figure may be affected by hospital rules which do not always allow the presence of fathers or partners in the delivery room. For instance, 65 per cent of women who had children claimed that their partner was in the hospital, but not in the delivery room. Moreover, in around 23 per cent of cases where the partner had not been present in the delivery room for the birth of the child, the women justified this as an attitude which is common in their community.

Equally important elements in the relationship dynamics at home are **communication and sharing time together** as a couple. Satisfaction with partner relationships was strikingly high, but there were slight differences among men and women. Around 99 per cent of men and 89 per cent of women would characterize their relation as either “very good” or “good”. Figure 22 on the left shows that the activity which men most enjoy doing together with their partner or wife is caring for their children. The least enjoyable activity for them is cooking which scored a mean of 3.9 on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 meant least enjoy and 5 signified most enjoy.

Survey respondents who were not single were also queried on the more **intimate aspects of their relationship**. Around 64 per cent of men and 56 per cent of women described their sexual relationship with their partner as either “very satisfying” or “somewhat satisfying”. Men also had higher satisfaction rates than women regarding the frequency of sexual relations with their partner. It must be noted that the share of people who have not answered these questions was significantly high even though this part of the questionnaire was self-administered. Nevertheless, shying away from discussing sexual relationship is not uncommon in Kosovo as well due to the conservative social and cultural norms.

The next paragraphs focus on **parenting and the relationship between both men and women and their children**. About 56 per cent of women and 50 per cent of men had children. The average number of children for both men and women was 3. There were around seven per cent women who did not live with the father of the child. Out of these cases, 28 per cent of women claimed that the father never saw the children, while 59 per cent stated that the father had passed away.

“**Paternity leave is not typical in our society, because men rarely take care of infants. For instance, my husband did not hold our son in his arms until he was six-month-old, because he said he does not know how to do that.**”

Kosovo Albanian woman – Participant in the focus group discussions

<sup>41</sup> A UNFPA study showed the presence of gender-biased prenatal sex selection in Kosovo. See Christophe Z Guilhoto (2016): Gender bias in Kosovo. UNFPA.

For the cases where the father took leave and got involved early on in the rearing of the child, the vast majority of men (91 per cent) and most women (55 per cent) agreed that this period at home had a positive impact on their relationship with the child later. Participants in the focus group discussions agreed with these findings. The low share of women who took **maternity leave** was explained mainly based on their low employment rate. In addition, both men and women emphasized the harsh policies of the private sector where it is rather common to fire women once the employer becomes aware of their pregnancy. Paternity leave where the father indeed looks after the child was considered uncommon among focus group participants<sup>42</sup>. They further maintained that this policy is more relevant for women based on their belief that it is primarily the mother’s duty to look after the new-born. One of the Kosovo Serb women even highlighted that the father’s help is required only when there is no other family member to help the mother in the house. Thus, once again the father’s role is considered more as an auxiliary one in the children’s rearing rather than playing a crucial part in that process.

Figure 23 shows that in general, the tasks related to the **care of children** are typically either shared between both parents or are taken over by the mother. The men who were taught how to take care of their siblings during their childhood were more likely to be involved in the daily care of their own children. They also more frequently reported to be involved in taking their children to leisurely activities.

### DIVISION OF CHILDCARE TASKS

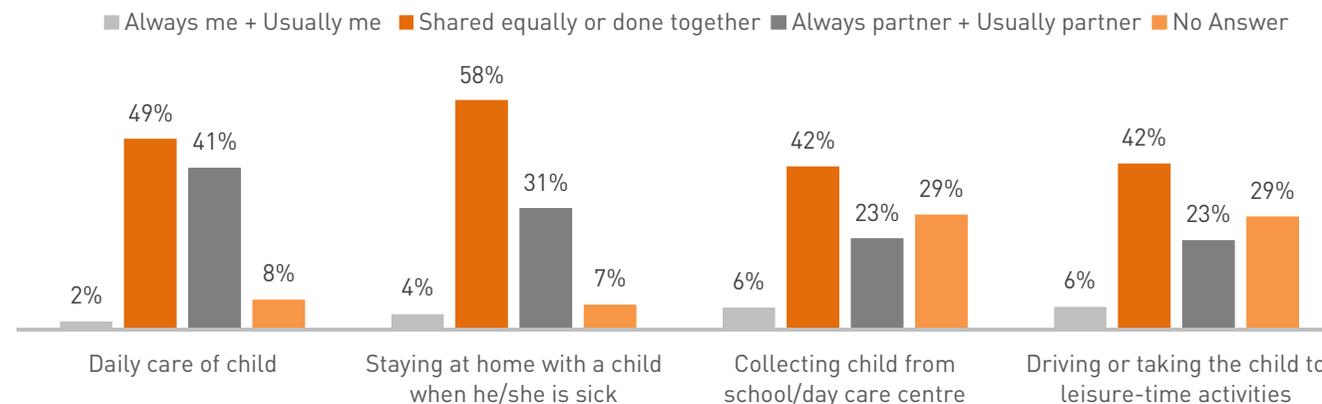


Figure 23 - Men’s reports on division of childcare tasks

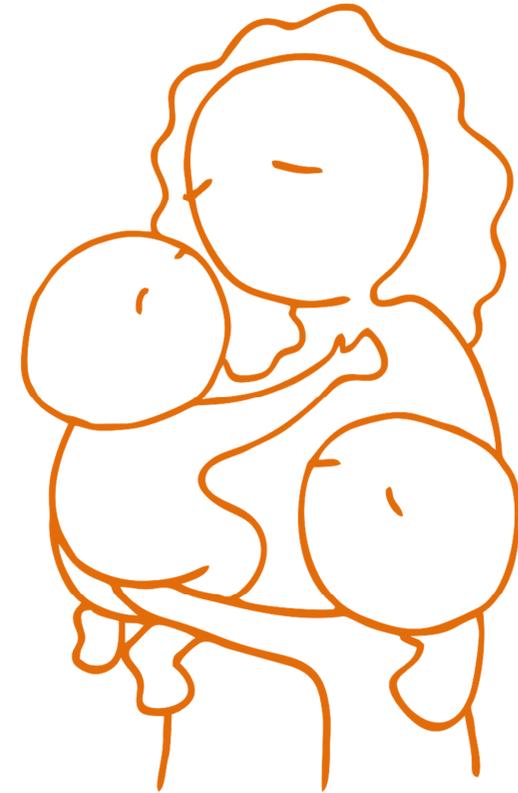
“Offering the same amount of leave for both men and women would only make sense if paternity leave could be transferred to the partner.”

Kosovo Serb woman – Participant in the focus group discussions

Moreover, men reported to be frequently involved in leisure activities with children, but rarely or never did they cook food or wash their children. Male respondents were more likely to play with their younger children (zero to four years) than with their older ones (five to 14 years). However, they would prepare food more often for their older children than for their younger ones. It is mostly uncommon for men to wash the clothes of their children; 64 per cent of them reported to have never or very rarely done that.

<sup>42</sup> It is important to point out that the current legislation in Kosovo grants only two days of paternity leave.

Delving further into the specific role of father in bringing up their children, the study shows that the core part of the father's role is to **ensure financial support for the family**. In general, 73 per cent of men feel that they have the main responsibility for providing for the family. However, most men (53%) do admit to spending too little time with their children because of their job and another significant share (56%) understand that their role in caring for children as mostly auxiliary. This clear separation of child-care tasks between men and women has roots not only in the traditional norms, but also in the economic reality of families in Kosovo. The responsibility of providing for the family rests mainly on men due to the higher employment opportunities and larger salaries they can get compared to women. The largest part of the financial burden also presents another form of gender inequality in our society as it was highlighted by Kadri Gashi, a representative of non-governmental organisation Peer Educators Network, in his interview. Men allocate most of their energy and time in working to earn money for their family, which results in them missing the opportunity to spend time with their children. It is suggested that gender equality norms also dictate certain aspects of the relationship between fathers and their children. However, our analysis of the data did not find a significant correlation between men's level of involvement as a father and their gender norms as measured by the Gender Equitable Men scale. There was also no significant difference among various age groups, education level and their roles as fathers.



### 3.5. Violence and criminal practices

Gender inequality and violence against women are closely connected to one another. Prevention of gender based violence often dominates discourses on gender inequality especially in the more patriarchal societies. This section is devoted primarily to violence committed by men against women, but it also covers other types of abusive, violent and criminal practices.

Basri Kastrati, Head of the Victims' Advocacy and Assistance Office, pointed out in his interview that in the past year **1355 cases of domestic violence** were reported and this number presented an increase in about 100 cases from the previous year. Several stakeholders who work closely with such cases were certain that the number of reported cases is significantly lower than the domestic violence incidents actually happening in families and against women. However, many indicated that the increase in reporting rates signifies improvements in awareness levels as well as potentially a higher level of trust in the responsible institutions.

The reasons for **low reporting rates** of such incidents were discussed in detail both in the focus group discussions and in the in-depth interviews. The most prominent factors for not reaching out for help were fear from abandonment and stigmatisation, low trust in institutions, economic insecurity of women and poor prospects for the future of women who were victims of violence and their children. Biljana Rexhiq, a judge in the Court of Appeals in Prishtinë/Priština, also noted the mentality as a huge barrier to addressing these issues: "Until 2001 when the first regulation for protection from violence in the family was adopted by UNMIK, this phenomenon was considered a firmly private issue and there were absolutely no reported cases. Speaking about violence in the family was strictly taboo."

Most interviewed stakeholders noticed other elements that make women who are **economically and socially dependent** on their husbands think twice before they report. Beyond the prejudice and hardship faced from the small and conservative society, women also must deal with lack of shelters and financial assistance, meagre opportunities in the labour market and scarce help with bringing up the children. What is worse, the lengthy court proceedings on top of poor enforcement of court decisions make the decision to report violence as highly economically and emotionally costly for women. Another shared belief was that harsher punishments that are adequately enforced would make men "think twice before raising their hand against women". The fear factor is, thus, seen as deterrent method in violent behaviour. However, several other stakeholders noted that institutions, non-governmental organisations and the society in general is not paying sufficient attention to the abusers themselves. There is not enough information on the factors that drive these people towards violent behaviour and, subsequently, no preventive or rehabilitative programmes.

Hence, the following findings aim to shed light on the roots of violence against women and their implication for gender equality. In the childhood experiences section, it was mentioned that 20 per cent of men have witnessed their mother being beaten by their father or her partner at least once while they were growing up. Further analysis shows that men who live in rural areas have been more likely to have witnessed violence of this form while growing up than those who are based in urban settlements. In addition, gender norms seem to be correlated to exposure to violence against women at home. Men who have lower gender equity norms were more likely to have seen their mother being beaten by their father or her partner at least once while they were growing up.

**“The expectations set for men not only instil upon them rigid views of masculinity, but also makes them victims when they cannot fulfil such expectations, often causing feelings of low self-esteem or depression. Thus, these norms that surround boys while growing up often push them towards violent behaviour and at the same time deprive them of social goods.**

Besnik Leka  
Project Coordinator  
CARE International

Looking at **self-reported rates of committing violence against women**, we found that 12 per cent have at least once slapped, hit with a fist or thrown something that could hurt their female partner. In addition, figure 24 shows that four per cent of men have committed even more extreme forms of violence such as kicked, dragged, beaten, choked or burned a partner, while five per cent admitted to having threatened to use or indeed used a gun, knife or another weapon against their female partner. These reported rates of violent incidents were also backed up by the instances of violent acts committed on women, which were reported by the women themselves as figure 25 shows.

An initial closer look at the data tells us that men who embrace more gender equitable norms are less likely to have committed an act of violence against their partner. However, observations were too few to let us establish a statistically significant relationship between the Gender Equitable Men scale score and the self-reported rates of incidents. Data also indicates that the older and the less educated the respondent, the more likely he is to have hit his partner at least once.

### SHARE OF MEN WHO COMMITTED VIOLENCE AGAINST THEIR PARTNER

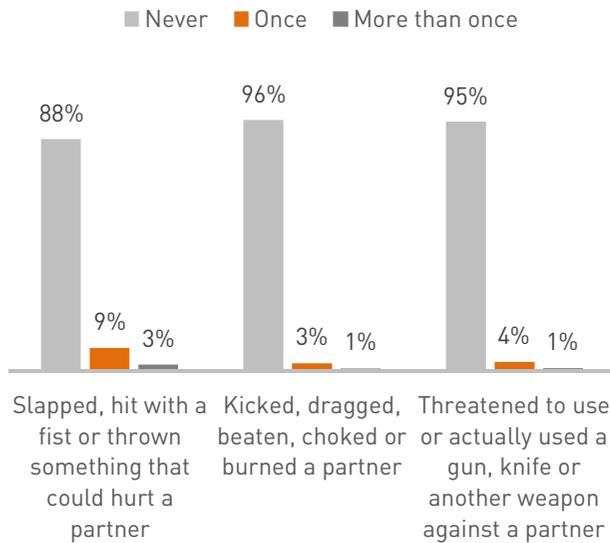


Figure 24 - Share of men who committed violence against their partner

### SHARE OF WOMEN WHO EXPERIENCED VIOLENCE FROM THEIR PARTNER

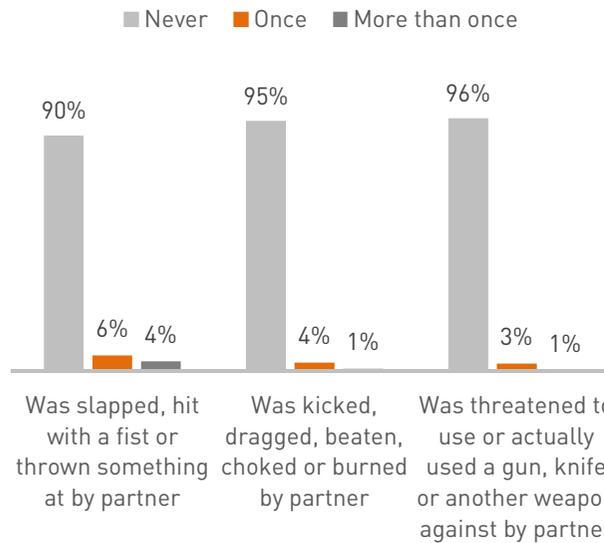


Figure 25 - Share of women who experienced violence from their partner

Discussing cases of **rape** are often a taboo in traditional societies. Ironically, both traditional and liberal societies often propagate rape culture in a multitude of forms. Rape culture can be understood as norms in a society which allow or even promote social attitudes that normalise or, even worse, trivialise sexual assault and abuse. This term was initially used in the United States in the 1970's. It has since been often used and extrapolated in feminist literature<sup>43</sup>.



<sup>43</sup> Buchwald, E., Fletcher, P. R., & Roth, M. (Eds.). (2005). *Transforming a Rape Culture*. Milkweed Editions.

In order to better understand the prevalence of rape culture in Kosovo, both men and women were asked their opinions on several related statements. Figure 26 presents and compares the perceptions of both genders on rape. Men are slightly more likely to agree with norms of a rape culture. For instance, 30 per cent of men would agree that it cannot be a rape case when the woman doesn't physically fight back. Interestingly, 25 per cent of women also agreed with this statement. Blaming the rape victim is also not unheard of. About 20 per cent of men and 23 per cent of women think that in any rape case one would have to question whether the victim is promiscuous or has a bad reputation.

### OPINIONS OF MEN AND WOMEN ON RAPE

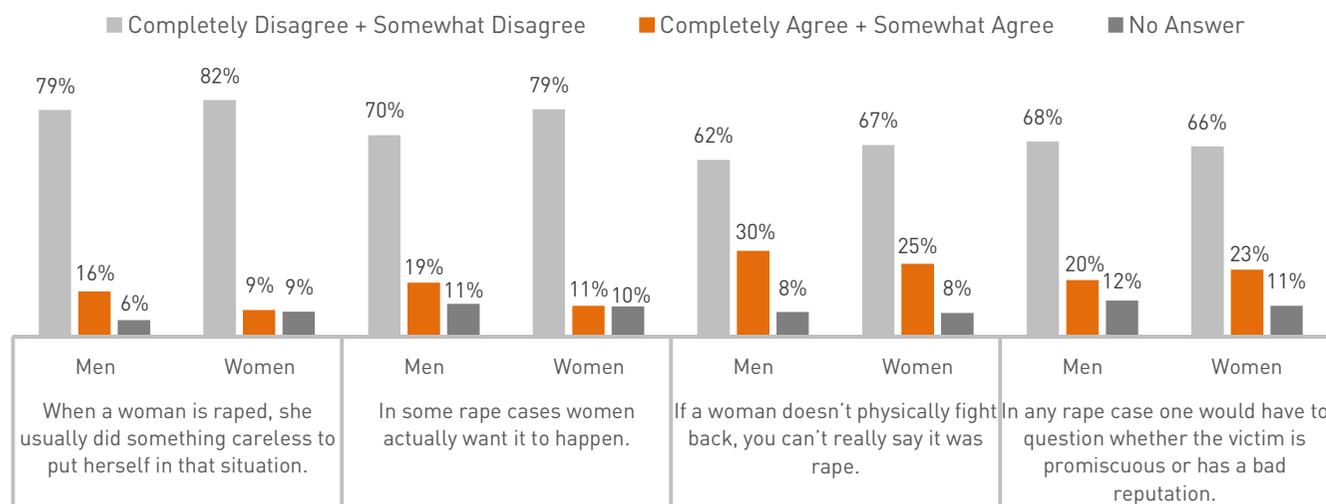


Figure 26 - Opinions of men and women on rape

“The perception of rape as a violation of the family's honour, rather than a violation of the sexual integrity of women is still prevalent in our society, albeit more common in rural than urban areas.

Veprorë Shehu  
Executive Director  
Medica Kosova, Gjakovë/Đakovica

The prevailing opinions on rape are also heavily influenced by the gender norms operating in their society. There is a significant statistical correlation between the Gender Equitable Men scale and the rate of agreement in the previous rape related sentences. 46 per cent of men with a low Gender Equitable Men scale think that the victim's reputation should be questioned in a rape case, while about 15 per cent of men with a high Gender Equitable Men scale share the same opinion. Several men and women in focus group discussion revealed attitudes compatible with rape culture as previously defined. For instance, they mentioned that women should pay attention to the way they dress, act and who they interact with if they do not want to provoke men or put themselves in dangerous situations. While certain participants did indeed strongly disagree with these statements, the discussion suggested that rape victims may have avoided the incident or they were often themselves to blame.

Beyond perception data, the survey results also show that one in 20 men admitted to having **committed unconsented sexual relations** with a woman at least once in their life. The social norms in conservative societies often entitle men to sex within the relationship even when their wife or girlfriend does not want to. It is important to point out that during Yugoslav time marital rape was not criminalised. This issue was also brought up during the focus group with Kosovo Serb women, rape within a relationship or marriage. Two of the participants expressed how this type of behaviour is usually not even considered rape in the society, because men see sexual intercourse with their partner as their inherent right and not something which should be given consent upon. Figure 27 shows that one in 25 men did force their girlfriend or wife into having sex with them.

### RAPE PREVALENCE AS REPORTED BY MEN

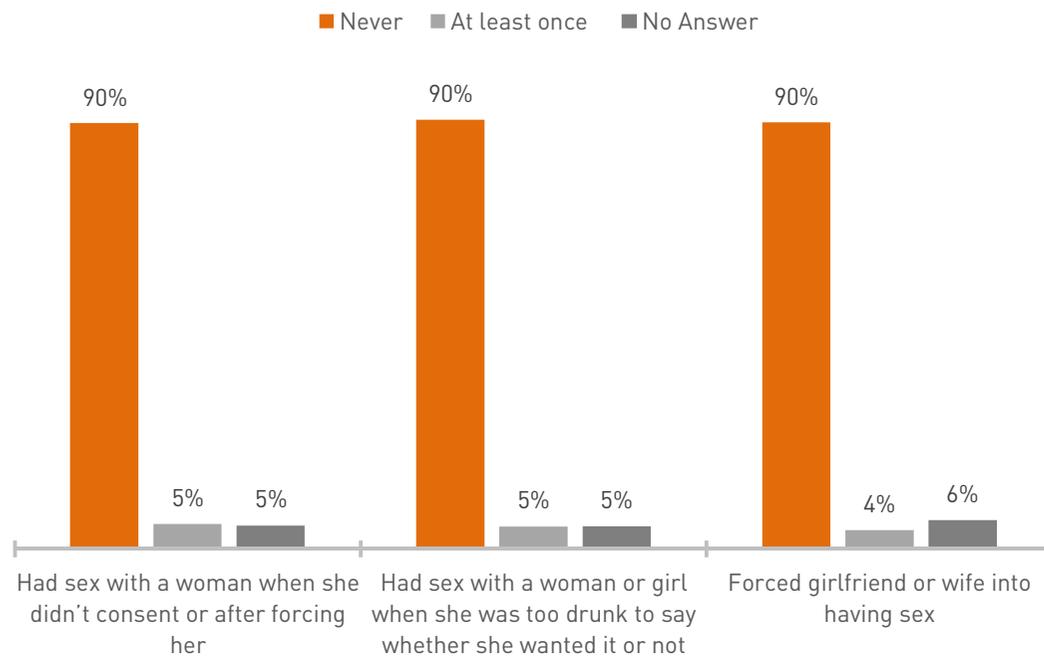


Figure 27 - Rape prevalence as reported by men



### 3.6. Health practices

Gender inequality impacts various spheres of life even the seemingly unrelated ones, such as health practices. For instance, gender norms can limit the access to healthcare or make unacceptable by the society certain health practices, which could save or improve lives of many men and women. Certain cultures may expect of men to drink alcohol in large amounts or avoid healthcare<sup>44</sup>. In a similar fashion, women may be expected to not have an equal say in family planning, avoid certain physical activity<sup>45</sup>.

The following paragraph presents the current **health practices of men and women** in Kosovo as well as how they relate to the gender norms they uphold. Most men (63 per cent) and women (67 per cent) had sought out health services at a clinic, hospital or a traditional healer within the last year. A worrying finding is that 11 per cent of women and 16 per cent of men had never gone to a doctor. The main reason for seeking health services was to undergo a medical check-up. Medical visits regarding reproductive health were rather infrequent among both genders. Self-reported rates for HIV testing are also relatively low; three per cent of women and 4 per cent of men admitted to having been tested at least once for HIV.

About two per cent of men had a partner who experienced an **induced abortion** and 32 per cent of them participated in this decision. The findings for women show that five per cent of them claimed to have had an induced abortion and their partner had a say in this decision in 43 per cent of these cases. Their partner paid for the procedure in 57 per cent of cases where women underwent an induced abortion. While a smaller share of men whose partner had had an induced abortion (31%) claimed to have paid for the procedure, most men (78%) did accompany their partner for the abortion.

**Mental health**, often overlooked in a masculine environment, is also heavily influenced from gender norms. It is also closely related to abusive behaviour and gender based discriminatory practices. In addition, research has shown a consistent correlation between gender and the prevalence of mental disorders, such as depression, anxiety, etc. For instance, studies have shown that major depression is twice as common for women than for men<sup>46</sup>. The World Health Organisation has noted the lack of emphasis placed on the detrimental role gender inequity has in mental health. For instance, gender norms dictate power relations between men and women and, consequentially, they also impact factors that are related to mental health, such as social position, treatment in society, and generally exposure to certain mental health risks<sup>47</sup>.

Given that this study focuses on men's perspectives, the findings presented here are more expansive for men than women. Men were asked about the extent to which they agree with several statements related to their **self-esteem**. For instance, figure 28 shows that regarding physical appearance, the vast majority of men (92 per cent) are relatively happy with their body. However, a smaller share of them (83 per cent) believes that they have a lot to be proud of. On the negative side, 13 per cent of men felt their life is of no use to anyone and an even larger share (24 per cent) had sometimes felt inferior in the company of friends.

<sup>44</sup>Sobal, J. (2005). Men, meat, and marriage: Models of masculinity. *Food and Foodways*, 13(1-2), 135-158. and Noone, J. H., & Stephens, C. (2008). Men, masculine identities, and health care utilisation. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 30(5), 711-725.

<sup>45</sup> Spencer, R. A., Rehman, L., & Kirk, S. F. (2015). Understanding gender norms, nutrition, and physical activity in adolescent girls: a scoping review. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, 12(1), 6. ; Li, J. (2004). Gender inequality, family planning, and maternal and child care in a rural Chinese county. *Social Science & Medicine*, 59(4), 695-708.

<sup>46</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2015). *The world's women 2015 trends and statistics*.; World Health Organisation. (2007). *Gender Disparities in Mental Health*. Department of Mental Health and Substance Dependence

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

## MEN'S SELF-ESTEEM RATES

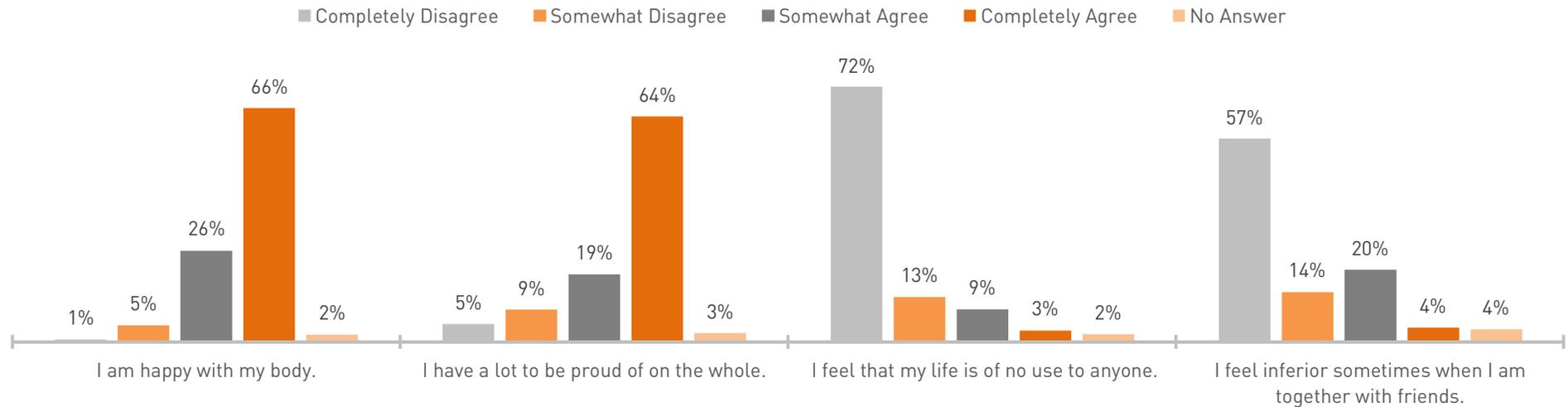


Figure 28 - Men's reports on self-esteem

The following paragraph presents the prevalence of related **mental health conditions and symptoms** in men. During the last month, 31 per cent of men had experienced stress at least sometimes or more frequently. Another 14 per cent of them have experienced depression sometimes or more frequently and, what is worse, five per cent have admitted to feeling suicidal at least sometimes within the last month. Further analysis shows that employment status was linked to feelings of stress and depression. It was typically pensioners and those who are informally employed who were more likely to feel stress or depressed at least once in the last month. About 49 per cent of pensioners felt depressed in the last month as opposed to an average 28 per cent of total men who experienced the same. According to focus group participants, one of the reasons for high levels of stress was the shocks and changes in lifestyles from socialism to conflict and then on to the current unstable economic situation.



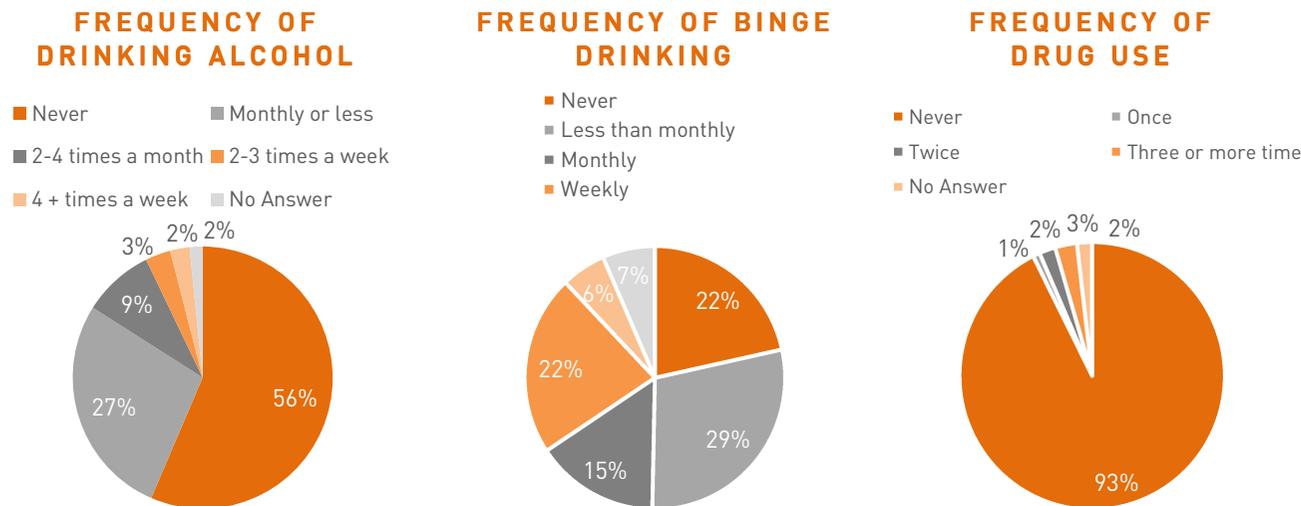


Figure 29 - Prevalence of alcohol and drug use among men

The group of men who belonged to lower gender equity norms as measured by the Gender Equitable Men scale were more likely to have experienced stress, depression and suicidal thought in the last month. In addition, we also found a positive correlation between stress and drinking habits as well as stress and violent behaviour. Another important element of health practices is the prevalence of risky behaviour such as substance abuse. Figure 29 shows that 14 per cent of men drink alcohol beverages twice a month or more frequently. Out of this group, 28 per cent of them had binge drunk (drinking more than five drinks on one occasion) at least weekly.

Prevalence of drug usage was substantially lower than that of alcohol drinking as figure 29 shows. Global research has shown that gender differences are also present in patterns of **seeking help for mental health** issues as it is more common for women than for men to ask for medical help and reveal their problems regarding their mental health to their local physician<sup>48</sup>. Overall, there is reluctance among men to discuss and accept symptoms of depression, which reinforce social stigma and constrain help seeking along stereotypical lines<sup>49</sup>. When looking at help seeking patterns for emotional issues, the data for Kosovo does not provide a striking difference between the two genders. About 54 per cent of women seek help from others when they feel sad disappointed or frustrated as opposed to 48 per cent of men. A further analysis of the data shows that men may associate help seeking with lack of masculinity. Those who embraced gender equality were more likely to seek help than those who did not. Both men and women typically seek help from their partner or relatives. Only two per cent of men and women have sought out help from a doctor regarding such issues. Focus group discussions also confirmed the suggestions on mental health being a taboo in the society due to the traditional and prejudiced mentality. According to both men and women participants, visiting a psychologist was often equated with being insane. However, they all recognized the utmost importance for men and women of addressing and seeking help for mental health problems.

<sup>48</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2015). *The World's Women 2015 Trends and Statistics*.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

### 3.7. Policies and laws related to gender equality

This section is devoted particularly to the level of awareness of Kosovo residents on policies and laws about gender equality as well as their opinion on them. Given that strategies and laws are often adopted due to external influence, it is important to understand to what extent they are implemented as well as how well they are communicated and received among the population. It is also important to understand the capacity of such laws and policies to deliver an actual impact on promoting and enhancing gender equality in the society. A unanimous agreement among all interviewed stakeholders is that the legal framework for gender equality in Kosovo is well-established and formulated.

The Constitution (Article 7) acknowledges gender equality as “a fundamental value for the democratic development of the society”. Moreover, Article 24 of the constitution maintains that all forms of discrimination are prohibited, including discrimination on the grounds of gender and sexual orientation as well. The prevention of all forms of discrimination and the fundamental value of gender equality are broadened with the Law on the Protection from Discrimination and Law on Gender Equality (both adopted in 2015).

Even though the Law on Gender Equality states that there should be no difference or discrimination based on gender in employment relations, the Law on Labour does not have the exact same provisions for **maternity and paternity leave**. In fact, there is no particularly regulated ‘paternity leave’ that usually entitles the father to the same or similar rights as the mother. However, there are provisions that include what may be called a limited form of paternity leave, which consists of two paid days and up to 14 unpaid days. The maternity leave states that the women are entitled to twelve months of maternity leave of which 6 first months would be partially compensated.

The survey results show that only 13 and 70 per cent of men were aware of the existence of laws on paternity and maternity leave respectively. Out of these men, about 76 per cent knew that the paternity leave is less than a week and 40 per cent were aware that maternity leave lasts longer than 6 months. When asked on their opinion on whether there should be laws to guarantee time-off for new parents, 65 per cent of men agreed that paternity leave should be guaranteed by law as opposed to 84 per cent who thought the same about maternity leave. The knowledge of women in Kosovo regarding these laws is comparable to that of men. For instance, about 12 and 67 per cent of them were aware of the existence of laws on paternity and maternity leave respectively. In addition, 80 per cent of the women who knew about paternity leave were also aware of that it lasts less than a week, while 42 per cent knew that maternity leave lasts longer than 6 months. About 63 per cent of women believed that paternity leave should be guaranteed by law and 71 per cent thought the same about maternity leave.

“Legal and policy developments are undertaken ad-hoc, more so to satisfy the demands of foreign organisations and institutions rather than out of the needs which are deemed crucial for the development of the state and society at large.

Hilmi Jashari  
Ombudsperson of Kosovo

### AWARENESS OF PATERNITY AND MATERNITY LAWS

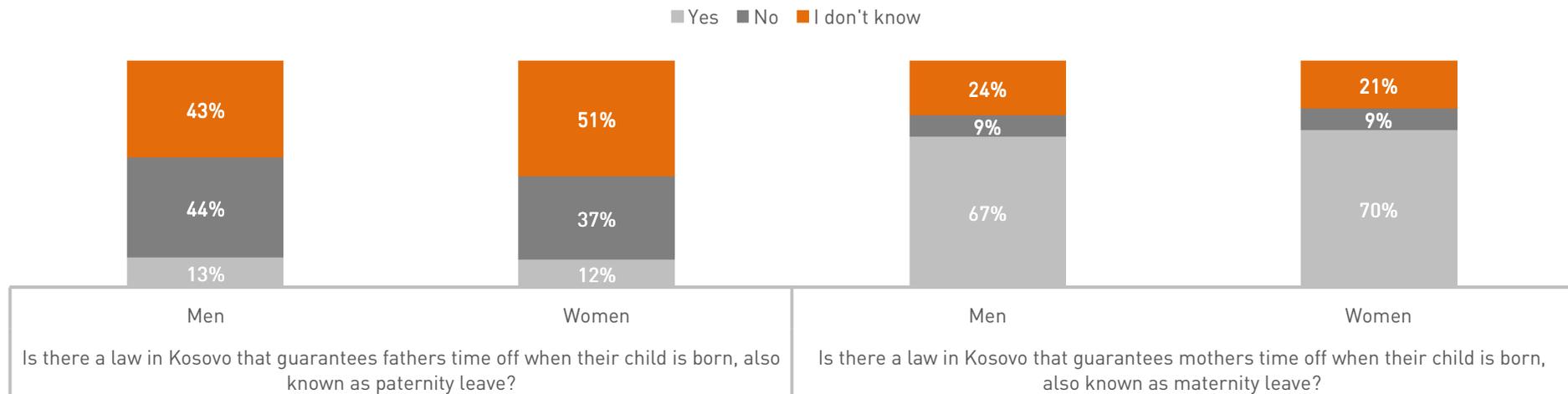


Figure 30 - Awareness of paternity and maternity laws of women and men

**Equality between spouses** is mentioned as a regulatory principle for family relations in the Family Law in Kosovo. If the marriage happens under fear, violence or serious threat, the law says that it will be annulled. The family law has measures to protect the mother and the children from the effects of the divorce and that they are going to be cared for after the divorce. The divorce can be initiated by one party or through a mutual agreement.

Respondents were queried on their opinion related to **legal provisions which regulate marriage, divorce and child custody**. Men generally believe that the legal provision on divorce or child custody treat women and men equally. Women have higher rates of “don’t know” answers, showing a lower level of awareness on such laws. About 34 per cent of men believe that shared custody is not common in their society. What is more, 22 per cent of men believe that laws for establishing custody of children after divorce favour women more than men. The majority of women (62 per cent) and 48 per cent of men were not aware of laws on the establishment of paternity for a child. Those who knew about these laws generally believed them to be fair to both men and women.

## OPINIONS ON DIVORCE LAWS

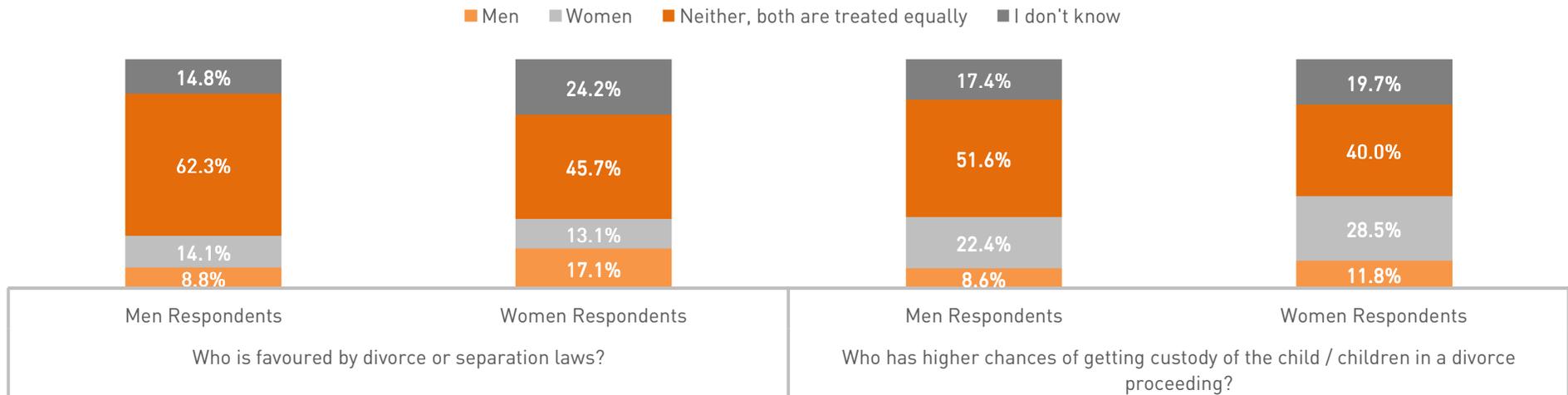


Figure 31 - Opinions on divorce laws of women and men

The issue of **domestic violence** is extensively regulated by law whereby all its forms are prohibited. For many offenses like slavery, forced labour, harassment, rape, sexual assault, degradation of sexual integrity, sexual abuse of disabled and sexual abuse of minors, the minimum punishment of imprisonment increases by a year or two if the act is committed within a domestic relationship. In the past year a specific strategy on violence in the family was adopted – The Strategy against Domestic Violence 2016-2020.

The next set of findings focus on the awareness and opinions of both men and women about **legal provisions on domestic violence** which are briefly summarised above. Around 68 per cent of men and 56 per cent of women were aware that Kosovo's justice system contains laws on this issue. On one hand, respondents who knew about these laws generally think that they make it too easy for a woman to bring a violence charge against a man. On the other hand, figure 32 shows that both men and women tend to agree with the lack of sufficient protection provided by these laws to victims of abuse. Moreover, 58 per cent of women and 48 per cent of men believed that such laws exposed the woman to even more stigmatization and pain. This was further confirmed in the focus group discussions as well as in-depth interviews with stakeholders.



### OPINIONS ABOUT LAWS ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

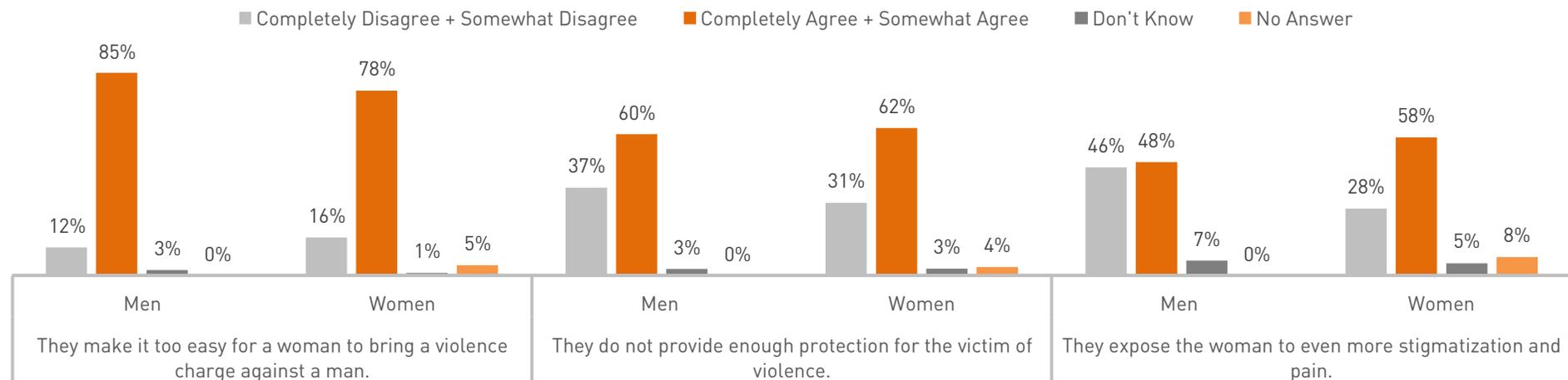


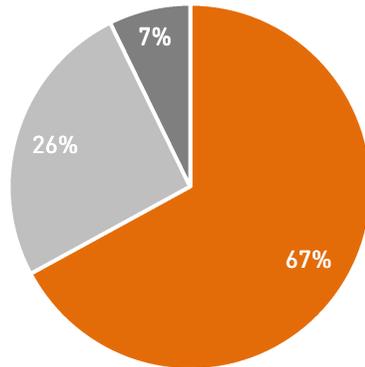
Figure 32 - Opinions about laws on violence against women

The Law on Gender Equality prohibits any type of **discrimination based on gender**. It enacts special measures like quotas to ensure equality and establishes public posts for gender equality experts in the public institutions. This law also creates institutional mechanisms for gender equality. Within this law there are provisions that ensure equal protection and treatment in employment relationships, education field and impose punitive provisions for violations of the articles.

While according to the data, men generally do not believe that gender inequality is a major concern for Kosovo, most of them still support positive discrimination policies for women. They were generally for **quota system** for women in politics and executive positions. They also tended to support equal pay for men and women in the same job position. A higher Gender Equitable Men Scale for men is also positively associated with supporting quota systems for women in public institutions as well as laws which promote equal pay. A significant finding from the in-depth interviews with stakeholders was the positive impact that the current quota system has had on improving gender equality in Kosovo. While many stakeholders did not see this policy as a long-term solution to gender inequality, they nevertheless stressed its importance for initiating this battle. As pointed out in the interview with Edi Gusia, the director of the Agency for Gender Equality, the affirmative measure allowed women to enter politics and once they were given the opportunity, the number of earned votes was substantially higher in the 2017 elections compared to previous ones. This was reached even despite the inequality they face within their own political parties. In an interview with Vlora Nushi and Linda Sanaja from UN Women, it was highlighted that electoral budget is allocated differently for women and men within the party, which immediately puts them in a disadvantageous position. Other stakeholders would even argue for a larger quota (50/50) in all public institutions. The lack of women in executive positions in many crucial public institutions and private companies was also brought up by several stakeholders.

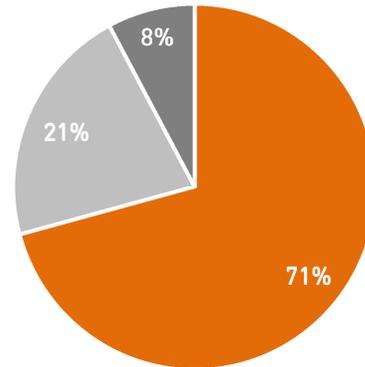
### QUOTA SYSTEM FOR WOMEN IN EXECUTIVE POSITIONS

■ For ■ Against ■ I don't know



### QUOTA SYSTEM FOR WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT, PARLIAMENT, MINISTRY OR MUNICIPALITY

■ For ■ Against ■ I don't know



### LAWS THAT PROMOTE EQUAL SALARIES FOR MEN AND WOMEN IN THE SAME POSITION

■ For ■ Against ■ I don't know

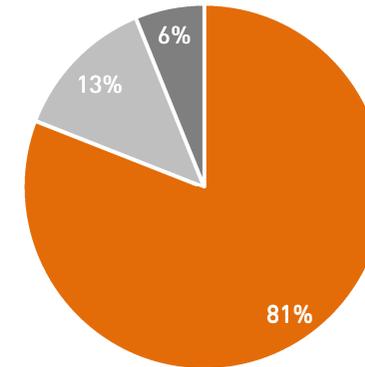


Figure 33 - Men's support for policies and laws on gender equality

Finally, one last point was surveyed within this research and it is related to same-sex marriage. Currently, under the Family Law of Kosovo marriage is a legally registered community of two persons of different sex.<sup>50</sup> However, Article 24 of the Constitution bans discrimination based on sexual orientation. That the law is unsettled in this area may to some degree account for the low numbers of people in Kosovo who are aware of laws protecting them from discrimination. This research showed that about 24 per cent of women and 26 per cent of men were aware of laws that protect people from discrimination – including those who are attracted to people of the same gender. Men were more likely to be against such laws than women. This holds true for laws which would guarantee civil union or marriage between same-sex or gay or lesbian couple. Naturally, men who belonged to the high equity Gender Equitable Men Scale were more inclined to support laws or policies against the discrimination of people who are attracted to the same gender. While there is no clear age pattern on the support for such policies, one result stands out: 80 per cent of men aged 50-60 are against such laws.

<sup>50</sup> Article 14 of Family Law: “[1] Marriage is a legally registered community of two persons of different sexes, through which they freely decide to live together with the goal of creating a family.

[2] Men and women, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and found a family as well as they are equal to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.”

## 4. Conclusion

The purpose for conducting this study was to provide a fresh perspective on gender equality in Kosovo. A pioneering document of its kind in Kosovo, the research was focused on men, their experiences and perceptions and how they shape current factors affecting gender inequality today. Through tracing childhood experiences, current relationships dynamics, attitudes towards gender, violence and health, it paints a well-rounded portrait of gender equality from the lens of men in Kosovo. The majority of men in Kosovo belonged to the medium equity group of gender norms as depicted by the Gender Equitable Men Scale. Nevertheless, this finding is based solely on the extent to which they agree with statements on gender equality. When considering their actual actions and attitudes, the situation differs substantially. Elements such as the arrangement of current households and situation of women in general provide sufficient evidence for the dire level of gender equality in Kosovo.

Men in Kosovo have grown up in patriarchal families where women were confined within the kitchen and child rearing tasks, whereas men were in charge of important decision making and providing for their families. While these characteristics were less evident in families with a higher educational level, it was nevertheless uncommon for women to have the final say in important decisions or be considered as a man's equal. Society was organised in such a way that certain roles were strictly meant for men and others for women. While growing up, violence was normalised as part of disciplining method. It was not unheard of for men in Kosovo to have witnessed violence in their family either towards themselves or their mother and other female figures. This problem-solving method was also used in schools and neighbours between men themselves or other authoritative figures.

These childhood experiences undoubtedly had an impact on the views and practices of men and women today. While things have started to slowly move in the right direction, the power relations at home for men and women today do not strikingly differ from those of their parents. In most households, women are still expected to be in charge of chores despite their employment status, while men continue to hold the complete burden of financial provision. Consequently, decision making powers are either allocated to men or shared equally, but very rarely are they on women's hands. Childcare tasks are still considered a woman's domain and, even in the best-case scenario, men can only engage as a helping hand in these tasks. Thus, paternity leave is also seen as auxiliary to maternity leave rather than a means toward increasing father's involvement in their children's upbringing. In addition, violence experienced by boys in childhood was typically accompanied with exhibition of violent behaviour when those boys grew up into men.

Gendered norms extended beyond one's families and onto expectations of other's conduct and roles. Homophobic attitudes were widespread in Kosovo given that homosexuality is still considered as unnatural and unwanted by most men and women today. Traits of rape culture were also present in the viewpoints of men and women in Kosovo, where victim blaming in rape cases was not uncommon. Sex work was mostly considered immoral while quite a few men admitted to having engaged in transactional relations. Lastly, the institutional framework for gender equality in Kosovo fared relatively well in the assessment of men and women as well as stakeholders involved. However, while good on paper, the implementation of such applauded laws, mechanisms and policies has a tremendously long way to go in reality.

## 5. Recommendations

Change in social norms, attitudes, household dynamics and decision making, and in men's and boys' daily practices and behaviours with regard to their relations with women and girls requires an integrated approach. The recommendations apply to local and central level authorities, international partners and civil society actors.

### *Overall recommendations*

#### **1. Engage key stakeholders in society to change relations and norms that uphold inequitable masculinities:**

By working with political, religious, community, business, civil society and media leaders, men and women, not just on an individual but also on a community level, change of attitudes towards the gendered roles of men as providers and women as caregivers needs to take place. Changing norms and attitudes is a precondition for change in political and public life.

#### **2. Engage men in supporting a comprehensive policy agenda for women's rights:**

The majority of men support laws and policies that promote full equality between men and women. This finding affirms the strategic importance of engaging men and boys as allies in supporting the policy agenda for women's rights. Key political and community leaders should be identified and supported to lead campaigns, making them visible as allies in women's empowerment.

#### **3. Change the way boys and girls are socialized, leading to a change in behaviour when adult:**

Results from the research confirm that patterns in childhood, from witnessing violence to witnessing men's domination of household decision-making, repeat themselves in adulthood. Men who as children saw their father or other male figures in the family more involved at home are more likely to repeat these behaviours as adults. Affirmative measures and positive actions in the educational system, media reporting and community organizations will lead to change in families and on macro-social level.

### *Specific policy recommendations*

- 1.** By building up on the success of existing gender equality policies, men's issues and engaging men for gender equality should be integrated as a cross-cutting topic into the new, multi-year Kosovo Programme for Gender Equality which is in process of development.
- 2.** Institutionalize the support to community and youth organizations that empower boys, but also girls, as agents of change for gender equality. Learning from the existing activities, such as extracurricular schoolwork, summer camps and Be-a-man clubs, should serve as the basis for the development of new programmes, to be implemented in rural and urban areas.
- 3.** Promote men's caregiving and involvement in household work and women's full involvement in the workplace as government policy priority. This will not only lead to more equitable family life, but will also support the overall economic development.
- 4.** Engage the health sector as a point of entry for engaging men as allies in gender equality. Men's health- and help-seeking behaviours should be changed and, so should their role when it comes to women's and children's health.





### Annex I - List of Interviewees for In-Depth Interviews

		Institution/Organisation	Name, Surname and Position
Institutions	1	Agency for Gender Equality, Prime Minister's Office, Prishtinë/Priština	Edi Gusia, Director
	2	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Department of Social Policy and Families, Prishtinë/Priština	Bajram Kelmendi, Interim Director
	3	Ombudsperson of Kosovo, Prishtinë/Priština	Hilmi Jashari, Ombudsperson
	4	Kosovo Police, Prishtinë/Priština	Tahire Haxholli, Head of Domestic Violence and Child Abuse Unit
	5	Victims` Advocacy and Assistance Office, Prosecutor's Office	Basri Kastrati, Head of Office
	6	Appeal Court Prishtinë/Priština	Biljana Rexhiq, Judge
International Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations	7	UN Women Kosovo Office, Prishtinë/Priština	Vlora Nushi and Linda Sanaja
	8	USAID Property Rights Program, Prishtinë/Priština	Merita Limani, Gender and Property Rights Specialist
	9	Kosovo Women's Network, Prishtinë/Priština	Nicole Farnsworth, Programme Manager
	10	Kosovo Women's Network, Prishtinë/Priština	Igballe Rogova, Executive Director
	11	Sinergija, Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North	Stefan Veljković, Programme Director
	12	Peer Educators Network, Prishtinë/Priština	Kadri Gashi, Men on Young Men Initiative Project
	13	Shelter for Domestic Violence in Pejë/Peć	Ardita Bala, Director
	14	Kosovo 2.0, Prishtinë/Priština	Besa Luci, Editor in Chief
	15	Network of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Women's Organisations	Shpresa Agushi, Executive Director
	16	Association Santa Maria, Zvečan/Zveçan	Blagica Radovanović, Executive Director
	17	Centre for Equality and Liberty, Prishtinë/Priština	Blert Morina, Programme Manager
	18	Women for Women International, Prishtinë/Priština	Iliriana Gashi, Director
	19	Action for Mothers and Children, Prishtinë/Priština	Mrika Aliu, Executive Director
	20	Medica Kosova, Gjakovë/Đakovica	Veprora Shehu, Executive Director
	21	Mitrovica Women's Association for Human Rights, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica South	Vetone Veliu, Executive Director
22	NORMA Lawyers Association, Prishtinë/Priština	Valbona Salihu, Executive Director	
Experts and Academia	23	Philosophical Faculty, University of Prishtinë/Priština	Nita Luci, Assistant Professor
	24	Kosovar Institute for Policy Research and Development	Ariana Qosaj Mustafa, Programme Director and Senior Researcher
	25	University of Graz, Austria	Elife Krasniqi, Ph.D. Candidate
	26	CARE International, Kosovo Office, Prishtinë/Priština	Besnik Leka, Project Coordinator



