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| WOMEN IN DECISION-MAKING IN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR IN  KOSOVO |
|  |
| December 2022 |

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| AGE | Agency for Gender Equality |
| IPA | Agency for Information Society |
| Riinvest | Institute for Development Research Riinvest |
| WSC | Commission on the Status of Women |
| GK | Government of Kosovo |
| MIAPA | Ministry of Internal Affairs and Public Administration |
| LGE | Law on Gender Equality |

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Women’s inclusion in all aspects of political, economic and social life is important not only because women represent half of the Kosovo population, but also because achieving balanced participation of women and men according to the applicable laws is a key indicator of progress towards building a democratic society equally respecting the human rights. The equal representation of women and men in political, public, and private sector decision-making positively affects the country’s democratic and socio-economic development.

The low participation of women in decision-making positions in the public and private sector triggered the initiation of research to identify the challenges women face in being part of decision-making. Considering that an assessment of the situation was carried out in 2016, this was seen as a necessity to look after a certain period of time and which would identify outstanding challenges or emerging opportunities. This research was foreseen in the Kosovo Programme for Gender Equality Action Plan 2020-2024 of AGE and approved by the Government of Kosovo in May 2020. Against this background, the Riinvest Institute, through the AGE public call for funding independent researches by non-governmental organizations, conducted a research to assess the situation of women in decision-making positions in the public and private sectors.

The key purpose of the study is to draft a research report on the women's role in decision-making positions in the public and private sectors in Kosovo and it aims to achieve the following objectives; (i) analyze the position of women in the public and private sectors based on primary data collected through the survey and focus groups (ii) descriptively analyze the decision-making positions in ministries and central publicly-owned enterprises (iii) make concrete recommendations and advocate to public institutions for supporting women in senior decision-making positions in the public and private sectors.

This study relies on a mixed quantitative and qualitative methodology. The quantitative methodology included a survey with about 670 women in the public and private sectors, while the qualitative methodology included the organization of three focus groups with women who hold decision-making positions in the public and private sectors. In order to have a clearer picture of women in decision-making and their positions, the Riinvest Institute team analyzed the inclusion of women in decision-making positions at the political level, namely in ministries and publicly-owned enterprises at the central level. A detailed explanation of the methodology can be found in the Research Methodology Chapter.

* 1. Key research findings
* This outcomes of this study show that women employed in the public sector have a higher level of education compared to those in the private sector.
* There are differences between the public and private sectors in terms of women’s interest in taking decision-making positions. Women in the private sector are more interested in taking decision-making positions compared to those in the public sector.
* The lack of interest of women and the probability of taking decision-making positions in the public sector relates to several factors: (i) the reluctance of women to take a decision-making position due to the lack of support (ii) the family obligations that women have, (iii) and the perceptions that they will not be selected for the position even if they apply.
* As for the reasons why women do not apply for decision-making positions, women in the private sector estimate that there are still perceptions that men are more suitable managers. Other reasons are related to family obligations and the institution’s vision to encourage women in decision-making positions.
* In the public sector, we find that appointments through competition to decision-making positions with a fixed term discourage women from assuming decision-making or even managerial responsibilities.
* The power of women in decision-making positions in the public and private sector is high. One-third of women in the public and private sectors estimate that they have decision-making power and that their decisions are fully enforceable.
* The challenges faced by women in decision-making are mainly related to the support from the institution in discharging their duties, lack of trust, and experience in management.
* The survey findings show that among the measures that should be taken to enhance the participation of women in decision-making are: (i) promoting successful women in decision-making positions, (ii) training women in the area of management and leadership; (iii) training in motivating and encouraging women to aim for decision-making positions. Training, especially in career orientation, can increase the number of women aiming for decision-making positions and can positively affect their motivation. The Government of Kosovo should also amend the Law on Public Officials, which discourages women from applying for decision-making positions.
* Regarding the women’s role in the gender equality agenda, the survey findings and focus groups show that more than 60 percent of women in the two sectors are active or partially active.
* The barriers women face in the workplace in the public and private sectors include low salaries, lack of benefits, lack of initiatives to support women, gender stereotypes, lack of flexible hours, law on labour and maternity leave provisions. The findings show that these barriers are evident in both sectors, which discourage women from aiming for decision-making positions and taking on additional responsibilities.
* The findings show that approximately 75 percent of the positions of board chairpersons in central publicly-owned enterprises are held by men, and we also have similar percentages for the position of chief executive officer and chief financial officer. However, we have a much more favourable situation between women and men in the position of board directors, with about 54 percent of board positions currently held by men compared to 46 percent by women.

# KOSOVO CONTEXT AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Despite the fact that the legal infrastructure in the Republic of Kosovo requires the central and local level institutions to take affirmative measures to enhance the participation of women in decision-making positions, where, inter alia, provisions providing for equal opportunities are applied, the results in practice are far from what is required by the applicable legislation to ensure a 50% representation as provided by Law No. 05/L-020 on Gender Equality (LGE). Women’s representation on the boards of publicly-owned enterprises, although not meeting 50 percent quota of representation, remains at the desired level with about 46 percent. Similarly, even in the private sector, the level of representation of women in decision-making positions is very low.

The participation of men and women in public administration and representation in decision-making positions still remains a challenge for women in Kosovo. The women’s representation at the central level in public administration, according to the AGE research report, shows that the participation of women in ministries kept increasing over the years. In 2022, according to MIAPA, the employment of women in public institutions in Kosovo paid from the RKS budget is 44.5 percent compared to 2017, which was 40.6 percent. However, the increase in the number of women’s representation in general in public administration has not been reflected in the representation of women in decision-making positions at the central level. Thus, according to MIAPA, in 2022, when it comes to senior management positions at the executive level covered by women, there is only one woman1 holding a secretary general position by decision and two other women holding secretary general positions2, while two women are holding the position of chief executive officer3 and another one serving as an acting chief executive officer4.

* 1. Legal framework

Gender equality in Kosovo is based on internal legislation, starting from the Constitution of Kosovo as the highest legal act and the Law on Gender Equality 05/L-020 and the international convention CEDAW applicable in Kosovo and a wide range of other laws and by-laws, where equal rights are defined for women and men. Article 7.2 of the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo stipulates5 *that “The Republic of Kosovo ensures gender equality as a fundamental value for the democratic development of the society, providing equal opportunities for both female and male participation in the political, economic, social, cultural and other areas of societal life”.* Furthermore, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms

1. Secretary General in the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Public Administration
2. Acting Secretary General in the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation and in the Ministry of Economy. 3 Agency for Gender Equality and Agency for Free Legal Aid

4 Acting CEO in the Kosovo Cadastral Agency

5 Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo: <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=3702>

of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)6, adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly and described as an international draft law on women’s rights, is also enshrined in Article 22 of the Constitution of Kosovo. CEDAW recalls, inter alia, discrimination against women violates the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity, is an obstacle to the participation of women, on equal terms with men, in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries.

In addition to the Constitution, the Law on Gender Equality7 adopted in 2015 protects and promotes equality between the sexes, as a fundamental value for the democratic development of society. Article 3, point 1.15 of this law stipulates that unequal representation – *“is when the participation or representation of one gender is  
less than fifty percent (50%) at any level of decision-making body in political and public life”.*

In addition to the Constitution and the Law on Gender Equality, Kosovo has also adopted the Law on Protection from Discrimination8 which prohibits all forms of discrimination in society, including gender-based discrimination based. All institutions must act in accordance with the principles of this Law, during the exercise of their duties and during the drafting of policies and legislation. While the Law on Labour obliges employers to create equal conditions for both sexes, but also to respect maternity leave. Furthermore, Kosovo Programme for Gender Equality 2020-2024 aims to ensure that gender equality is at the centre of transformation processes in Kosovo within all structures, institutions, policies, procedures, practices and programmes of the Government, agencies, civil society, the private sector and the donor community. Likewise, its action plan obliges the institutions of the Republic of Kosovo to undertake affirmative measures to increase the participation of women in decision-making9.

6 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW): [https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications/2016/CEDAW-for-](https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications/2016/CEDAW-for-Youth.pdf) [Youth.pdf](https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications/2016/CEDAW-for-Youth.pdf)

7 Law on Gender Equality: <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=10923>

8 Law on Protection from Discrimination <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=10924>

9 Kosovo Programme for Gender Equality 2020-2024

# AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Recent studies have mainly focused on women’s economic empowerment, increasing participation of women in the labour market, unpaid work and time constraints to do so, but far fewer studies have focused on women in decision-making positions. For this purpose, the full participation of women in decision-making in public life and the elimination of violence by achieving gender equality, empowering women and girls have been the main topics for the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in 2021. The participation of women in decision-making is the joint responsibility of both sexes, men and women, through cooperation at the societal level in order to ensure equal participation of women in decision-making. This requires a systematic review of institutions, policies, procedures, written and unwritten rules, as well as social norms and cultures, which can potentially be barriers preventing women’s involvement in decision-making (UN Women, 2021).

Studies show that women hold leadership positions, such as managerial positions, decision-making positions in corporations, associations and social initiative organizations, but are underrepresented in organizations that are not focused on gender issues. (Domingo et al., 2015). The 2030 Sustainable Development Goals aim to ensure the full and equal participation and leadership of women at all decision-making levels, the elimination of violence and the inclusion of specific objectives to achieve such goals (O'Neil and Domingo, 2015 ). Considering the current situation, the Commission on the Status of Women concluded that the inclusion of women in leadership positions, and the empowerment of women are emphasized (United Nations, 2020).

According to international studies, in 21 countries, women serve as heads of state or government; among them, 10 women are heads of state and 13 women are heads of government, while in 119 countries women have never been appointed as heads of state. In 40 countries, 10 percent of ministerial positions are held by women, while in 54 government cabinets, women hold 10 to 19.9 percent of ministerial positions. Based on these trends with only 0.52, inclusion and equality in ministerial positions will not be achieved before 2027 (United Nations, 2020; UN Women, 2020). In 2021, across 156 countries, women are represented by just 26.1 percent of parliaments and 22.6 percent of ministries worldwide. There are 81 countries that have never had a woman as head of state. Based on these estimates according to the World Economic Forum, it will take 145.5 years to achieve gender equality in politics (World Economic Forum, 2021).

The progress of women’s involvement in decision-making is related to the quotas that many countries have implemented (Berevoescu and Ballington, 2021). The regions that have the highest percentage of women in decision-making positions in public administration are Latin America and the Caribbean region (UNDP and University of Pittsburgh, 2021). In Europe, studies show that men are

better represented in decision-making positions in public administration, where there is a gender gap of 14 percent for junior positions and 38 percent for senior positions (United Nations, 2020), a similar picture is presented in African countries (Abate and Woldie, 2022). Barriers involving the participation of women in decision-making are related to organizational, cultural and personal factors. Also, the lack of resources and empowerment are considered barriers for women (Al-Ahmadi, 2011) and social and cultural norms (Abate and Woldie, 2022). It is similar in the private sector, where women’s involvement in decision-making is linked to their ownership in the company and their involvement in senior management. Studies show that the inclusion of women on boards of directors positively affects CSR reporting (Fernandez‐Feijoo et al., 2014) and the implementation of gender policies within businesses (Furlotti et al., 2012), and that the diversity of boards, especially boards composed of different genders, is related to the sustainable behaviour of companies (Valls Martínez et al., 2020).

There is a difference regarding the gender gap in relation to political empowerment in the Western Balkans. Serbia and North Macedonia have the highest percentage of women in parliament with 39.2 percent, followed by Albania with 29.5 percent. The country with the lowest percentage of women in parliament is in Montenegro. Regarding the percentage of female legislators, senior officers and managers in the public administration, Montenegro leads with 35.8 percent, followed by Albania with 34.1 percent (World Economic Forum, 2021). Regarding firms having senior female managers, North Macedonia leads with 21.30 percent, followed by Serbia with 18.20 percent and the country with the lowest percentage of women in senior management positions is Montenegro with 15.0 percent (World Economic Forum, 2021).

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this section is to provide a description of the methodology applied in this study. A quantitative and qualitative methodology was used to analyze the decision-making positions of women in the public and private sectors. The quantitative methodology included the collection of data through a survey in the public and private sectors, while the qualitative methodology contains the outcomes from the organization of focus groups with women who hold decision-making positions in the public and private sectors. In order to have a clearer picture of women in decision-making and their positions, the Riinvest Institute team analyzed the inclusion of women in decision-making positions in some public institutions, namely in ministries and publicly-owned enterprises.

* 1. Quantitative Methodology (Survey)

Primary data were collected through a survey of women employed in the public and private sectors. In order for the sample to be as representative as possible and the results to be comparable, around 670 women were surveyed in both sectors. In the public sector, about 420 women who hold senior decision-making positions at various managerial levels and women in other positions in the administration were surveyed. The survey in the public sector was conducted through a standardized electronic questionnaire distributed via email by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Public Administration in cooperation with AGE. On the other hand, in the private sector, 250 women were surveyed who also hold decision-making positions in the businesses where they are employed. The survey in the private sector was conducted in the entire territory of Kosovo and mainly medium and large-size businesses were surveyed.

After determining the sample, the Riinvest Institute team drew up a draft questionnaire with questions mainly about women in decision-making, obstacles during decision-making, gender discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace. The questionnaire was forwarded to AGE for consultation and approval, and after the approval of the final questionnaire, it was translated into the Serbian language in order to collect data from non-majority communities as well.

To conduct a field survey in the private sector, Riinvest engaged 20 experienced surveyors and organized a two-day training to enable the surveyors to familiarize themselves with the survey objectives, methodology, and the content of the questionnaire. On the first day of training, the surveyors were briefed on the general purpose of the survey and the importance of the survey outcomes, while on the second day of training the focus was mainly on survey methodology, questionnaire questions and other data collection procedures. To make sure that the surveyors understood the methodology and content of the questionnaire, the survey was piloted. During the pilot phase, the operation of the data collection software (Kobotoolbox) was also tested to eliminate possible technical problems. A total of 30 surveys were conducted during the pilot phase.

The data collection process has been fully digitalized. To control and monitor data collection in the field, small groups (up to 5 surveyors) are monitored by a supervisor appointed by the survey manager, while to ensure the quality of the data collected, the Riinvest Institute team used several techniques: (i) *checking by phone:* About 30% of the surveys were re-verified by supervisors and the survey manager by phone to ensure that the survey was conducted with the relevant respondents and/or that the answers correspond to those completed by the respondents (*ii) logical control:* which is practiced to check for irrational or inappropriate responses. (iii) *interview duration:* since field data collection was done in real-time with Kobotoolbox, this enabled us to see the duration of the survey. Surveys that lasted less than 10 minutes were checked again to assess their authenticity.

After checking the data quality, they were coded using EXCEL tables prepared with the data fields and tables displaying the corresponding codes. Then, the data were analyzed and interpreted using SPSS statistical software.

* 1. Qualitative Methodology (Focus groups)

In addition to the quantitative data collected through the survey, the Riinvest Institute team also used qualitative data through focus groups to complement the survey data in order to provide a different perspective on the topics covered by this study. To complete the survey data, three focus groups were organized; (i) a focus group with women who hold high decision-making positions in public administration - civil service (ii) a focus group with women who work in civil servant positions in local institutions and

(iii) a focus group with women who are engaged in the private sector.

Initially, two semi-structured questionnaires were drawn up by the Riinvest Institute team, one for the public sector and the other one for the private sector. The questionnaire was structured in such a way as to generate as much information as possible for the purpose of the research and is drawn up in three main chapters (i) women’s involvement in decision-making (ii) obstacles in decision-making

(iii) gender equality. After the approval of the questionnaire by AGE, focus groups were organized through Google Meet, which were recorded and then transcribed and processed using NVivo software.

For this purpose, the Riinvest Institute team analyzed the gender structure in senior positions in ministries and publicly-owned enterprises. The data for these institutions are only for the institutions having information on their official websites. After collecting data, a detailed report was prepared from primary and secondary research, which includes analysis and giving recommendations on the findings. The research analyzes in this report are based primarily on descriptive statistics using cross-sectional techniques.

# RESEARCH OUTCOMES

This section presents the key findings from the survey and focus groups, which is divided into three main parts. Sub-section 5.1 presents some demographic data from the research. Sub-section 5.2 compares the outcome for women in decision-making in the private and public sectors. Sub

-section 5.3 gives an explanation of the outcomes related to gender equality and at the end of the section

5.4 highlights the research outcomes by public institutions, such as ministries and sub-section 5.5 presents the outcomes in central publicly-owned enterprises. Outcomes from the focus group discussion are also incorporated into this chapter.

* 1. Demographic data

The table below presents the demographic data of the survey. The age of women who are employed in the public sector is approximately 39 years compared to the private sector which is 32 years. Regarding the work experience that women have in the public and private sector, we see that the average in the public sector is 9.3 years, compared to 3.9 years in the private sector. On the other hand, the distribution of the sample in terms of ethnicity indicates that 91.5 percent of respondents in the public sector are Albanian, compared to 97.2 percent in the private sector, the rest of the respondents are from the non-majority community. Married women or those who cohabit with their partners in the public sector consist of about 69 percent compared to 62 percent in the private sector

Table 1. Demographic data

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Demographic data** | | | |
|  | | **Public Sector** | **Private Sector** |
| **Age** | years | 38,9 | 32,0 |
|  | | | |
| **Working experience** | years | 9,3 | 3,9 |
|  | | | |
| **Ethnicity** | Albanian | 91,5 % | 97,2 % |
| Serbian | 5,0 % | 0,0 % |
| Bosniak | 1,9 % | 0,4 % |
| Turkish | 1,2 % | 2,4 % |
| Egyptian | 0,2 % | 0,0 % |
| Gorani | 0,2 % | 0,0 % |
|  | | | |
| **Marital status** | Cohabiting | 4,3% | 6,4 % |
| Single | 24,4% | 32,4 % |
| Divorced | 1,7% | 2,0% |
| Married | 64,9% | 58,4 % |
| Widow | 2,1% | 0,4 % |
| No answer | 2.6% | 0,4 % |

Source: Authors’ estimates based on survey data

The outcomes of this study show that women employed in the public sector have a higher level of education compared to those in the private sector. Slightly more than half of the women surveyed in the public sector have a Master degree compared to 14.4 percent of women in the private sector. Whereas the percentage of women having Bachelor degree is higher in the private sector with a total of 46 percent, compared to 31.5 percent in the private sector.

Figure 1. Successfully completed education or training level

57.6

46.0

37.2

31.5

14.4

7.3

2.8 0.0

0.0 2.0

0.0 0.4

0.7 0.0

Public sector

Private Sector

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ph.D. | Higher education | Higher education | Secondary education | Primary education | No education at all | I refuse to |
|  | (Master or | (Bachelor degree) | (Secondary |  |  | answer |
|  | equivalent) |  | school) |  |  |  |

Source: Authors’ estimates based on survey data

* 1. Women in decision-making in the public and private sector

Women’s interest in taking decision-making positions in the future in the public and private sectors is similar in the two sectors, 34.4 percent of women in the private sector are very much interested in taking decision-making positions in the future, compared to 32.2 percent of women in the public sector. Currently in decision-making positions in the private sector there are 9.6 percent, while in the public sector 9.4 percent (Table 2). The lowest percentage of women who are not interested in taking decision-making positions is in the public sector at 15.4 percent, compared to 13.2 percent in the private sector.

Table 2. Women’s interest in taking decision-making positions in the future

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Public Sector** | **Private Sector** |
| I am very much interested | 32.2 | 34,4 |
| I am currently in a decision-making position | 9.4 | 9.6 |
| Neutral | 19.7 | 14.4 |
| I am a little bit interested | 18.2 | 19.2 |
| I am not interested | 15.4 | 13.2 |
| I am not interested at all | 2.1 | 8.4 |
| I refuse to answer | 2,8 | 0,8 |

Source: Authors’ estimates based on survey data

Perception regarding the probability of getting a decision-making position is also among the factors related to women’s low interest in decision-making positions. Women in the private sector estimate that they are less likely to take decision-making positions with about 34 percent, compared to 56 percent of the public sector who think they are unlikely to take decision-making positions. (Figure 2). Women in the private sector think they are very likely to take such positions with about 29 percent, while in the public sector with 14 percent.

The discussions in the focused groups at the central and local level and the private sector show that in recent years a favourable environment has been created where the chances for women to take a decision-making position have increased. The findings of the focus groups at the local level show that the probability of women taking decision-making positions is small and the reasons are that there are still negative perceptions and barriers for women to take decision-making positions, where men are usually favoured more than women in such positions. Even though they have fallen in recent years, such barriers induced negative perceptions among women in terms of applying to decision-making positions.

Figure 2. Probability of assuming a decision-making position

Not likely

56.3

34.1

Very likely

14.6

29.6

Neutral

17.5

18.1

Not likely at all

9.7

11.1

I refuse to answer

1.9

7.1

0

10 Public 20

Sector

Private 30

Sector

40

50

60

Source: Authors’ estimates based on survey data

There are barriers impacting the women’s decision not to apply for decision-making positions, which are presented in Table 3. The percentage of women who believe that men are more suitable leaders is very high in the private sector at 38 percent, compared to 7.8 percent in the public sector. The perception that women due to family obligations do not have enough time is high in the private sector at 29.2 percent, in contrast to the public sector with 20.7 percent. In the public sector, 24.2 percent estimate that the institution where they work lacks the vision to encourage women to apply for decision-making positions, compared to 17.6 percent in the private sector.

In addition to the reasons listed in Table 3, the findings of the focus groups provide several other reasons why women do not apply for managerial positions. The first one is related to the limitation of the term of a decision-making position by law and not by performance appraisal. The second one is related to the small differences in salaries between a decision-making position and an administrative one.

Table 3. Reasons why women do not apply for decision-making positions

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Public Sector** | **Private Sector** |
| Lack of institutional vision to encourage women  to apply for decision-making positions | 24.2 | 17.6 |
| The belief that women do not have enough time because of family obligations | 20.7 | 29.2 |
| Lack of political support | 12.6 | 2.8 |
| The appointment to decision-making positions is for a definite term | 12.3 | 6.4 |
| Evident nepotism | 8.8 | 5.6 |
| Lack of support from colleagues | 8.8 | 0.4 |
| The belief that men are more suitable leaders | 7.8 | 38.0 |
| Other reasons | 4.8 | 0.0 |

Source: Authors’ estimates based on survey data

The decision-making power of women who currently hold decision-making positions is generally equal between the private and public sectors (Figure 3). The percentage of women in the private sector who estimate that women have decision-making power in their tasks is almost equal to about 37 percent. On the other hand, less than 10 percent of women think that they do not have any decision-making power.

The findings of focus groups in the public sector at the central and local level, and in the private sector provide a clearer perspective and show that women in decision-making positions have decision-making power. This is related to several reasons; firstly, the powers are vested by law to the position they exercise and the decisions taken must be implemented by subordinates. Secondly, the decisions are based on legal deadlines and in cases of delays in the implementation of the decision, then disciplinary measures or other forms based on the law are taken. Consequently, the decision-making power stemming from the law and enforcement mechanisms accompanied by professional experience and a high level of education ensures that women have decision-making power. Finally, women as decision-makers in the private sector perform based on plans and strategies drawn up by senior management which must be implemented.

Figure 3. Women’s decision-making power in the institution where they work

They have decision-making power

36.8

37.0

20.4

Neutral

26.4

They have a lot of decision-making power

16.4

30.4

They have no decision-making power at all

0.8

10.8

I do not know

3.6

7.1

No answer

1.2

2.3

They have a little decision-making power

0.0

6.8

Private Sector

Public Sector

Source: Authors’ estimates based on survey data

Apart from these reasons, women as decision-makers in the public and private sectors face different challenges. 30 percent of women in the public sector estimate that they do not receive sufficient support to perform their duties, compared to 20 percent in the private sector (Table 4). The highest percentage was reported in the private sector with a total of 32.4 percent regarding mistrust of others on women as decision-makers, compared to the public sector with 20.7 percent. Likewise, a higher percentage was reported regarding the perception that women lack self-confidence, 25.2 percent in the private sector and 15.9 percent in the public sector.

The findings in the focus groups show that managerial experience is not a challenge for women to reach decision-making positions. Good relations with colleagues within the institution was highlighted by focus groups as one of the factors in addition to the motivation of women to reach a decision-making position. These reports, according to the findings, establish a good environment and through them support and motivation to have a managerial position can be achieved.

The most serious problem in the focus groups is the lack of self-confidence among women listed as a challenge that women have to aspire to decision-making positions. The lack of self-confidence, which is mainly related to the presence of gender stereotypes, is followed by a lack of vision on the part of the institution to encourage women to be part of decision-making processes, and this made them lose confidence in themselves. If it is generally thought that men are better leaders even though there is no scientific evidence for this conclusion, it makes women feel inferior and lack self-confidence.

Table 4. Key challenges faced by women in decision-making positions

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Public Sector** | **Private Sector** |
| Insufficient support from others for  to perform duties | 30.0 | 20.0 |
| Lack of trust from others in women | 20,7 | 32,4 |
| Lack of self-confidence among women themselves | 15.9 | 25.2 |
| Lack of political support | 12.8 | 3.6 |
| Lack of managerial experience | 9.6 | 14.4 |
| Lack of support from colleagues | 9.6 | 2.8 |
| Other | 1.5 | 1.6 |

Source: Authors’ estimates based on survey data

In order to increase the participation of women in decision-making positions, and to eliminate barriers, it is necessary to take different measures from the public and private sectors. In both sectors, it has been reported that the best ways to enhance participation of women in decision-making positions as shown in Table 5 are: i) promoting successful women in decision-making positions, with 17 percent in the public sector and 16.6 percent in the private sector; ii) training in the area of management and leadership with 15.1 percent in the public sector and 14.9 percent in the private sector; iii) various training sessions to motivate and encourage women to aim for decision-making positions, with 12 percent in the public sector and 17.2 percent in the private sector; iv) the amendment of the Law on Public Officials is very important for officials who are engaged in the public sector for the continuation of their term based on performance and the encouragement with affirmative measures for women who have ambitions for decision-making positions.

Table 5. Measures to be taken to enhance the participation of women in decision-making positions

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Public Sector** | **Private Sector** |
| Promotion of successful women in decision-making  positions | 17.3% | 15.6% |
| Training of women in the area of management and  leadership | 15.1% | 14.9% |
| Undertaking affirmative measures to encourage  women for participation in decision-making | 13.6% | 18.5% |
| Training on motivating and encouraging women to  aim for decision-making positions | 12% | 17.2% |
| Amendment of the Law on Public Officials (LPO) - no limitation in term, continuation of the term  based on performance | 11.5% | 0.00% |
| Training for all staff in awareness raising of the importance of including women in decision-making  positions | 10.2% | 11.0% |
| Continuing education by enabling women  study without separation from work/flexibility during working hours | 9.9% | 12.3% |
| Supporting women through the provision of scholarships for  education | 9.9% | 10.3% |
| Other | 0.6% | 0.1% |

Source: Authors’ estimates based on survey data

Women in the public and private sectors face many barriers in the workplace. Approximately 42.1 percent in the public sector and 21.5 percent in the private sector report that low salary is one of the main barriers. Whereas the lack of benefits is considered with a higher percentage in the public sector at 24 percent and 13.3 percent in the private sector. As for the unsuitable schedule, the highest percentage is in the private sector with 11 percent. A similar percentage in both sectors was reported in the lack of implementation of employees’ rights, with 12.1 percent in the public sector, and 9.1 percent in the private sector.

Findings from focus groups in the public sector show that the difference in salary between the current position and the decision-making position is very small. As a result, this has an adverse impact on women’s motivation to take on additional responsibilities, and consequently discourages women from taking decision-making positions as the salary gap between lower and higher management positions is insignificant, while responsibilities can be much larger.

Figure 4. Barriers faced in the workplace

Low salary

21.5%

42.1%

Lack of benefits

13.3%

24.0%

Lack of implementation of employees’ rights

defined by law

9.1%

12.1%

Lack of flexibility in the working hours

14.0%

10,8

%

Short-term contract

Inconvenient working hours

9.6%

5.4%

11.0%

4.2%

Irregular payment

4.7%

1.3%

I have no barriers

16.8%

0.0%

Private Sector Public Sector

Source: Authors’ estimates based on survey data

* 1. Role of women as decision-makers in gender equality

The active role in the gender equality agenda means that women in decision-making positions are active through their positions or various activities to promote women’s involvement in decision-making positions and gender equality rights (Figure 5). In both sectors, more than 60% of women think they have an active role in the gender equality agenda. Although there are percentage differences between the public and private sectors regarding the gender equality agenda, in the public sector over 42.3 percent of women are active in the gender equality agenda and 68 percent in the private sector.

Figure 5. Role of women as decision-makers in gender equality agenda

Somewhat active

34.5

They have an active role

41.7

They have a little active role

5.7

10.3

They have a very active role

9.6

26.3

I refuse to answer/ I have no answer

0

6.8

They have no active role at all

0.9

6.0

Private Sector

Public Sector

32.7

25.4

Source: Authors’ estimates based on survey data

Addressing cases of gender-based discrimination in the workplace is important for both sectors. However, there is a huge difference between the private and public sectors regarding the treatment of discrimination cases, with 60 percent of cases in the private sector not being treated compared to 19.4 percent of the public sector (Figure 6). The findings show that gender-based discrimination cases have been treated, but not sufficiently and there are no differences between the two sectors, public 20.9 percent and private 20.4 percent. There is also a huge difference between the sectors regarding familiarity with discrimination cases, with 27.5 percent of women in the public sector having no knowledge compared to 3.2 percent in the private sector.

Figure 6. Treatment of gender-based discriminatory cases

Public

Private

Initiated but not

completed yet 60.0

40.0

I am not aware

Yes in full compliance

with the legislation

20.0

0.0

To some extent they have been treated but not

appropriately

I am not aware of any

discriminatory case

No, they have not been treated at all

Source: Authors’ estimates based on survey data

In addition to gender-based discrimination, cases of sexual harassment and the measures taken to address these cases are significant for both sectors (Figures 7 and 8).

The percentage of women who have not become aware of sexual harassment cases in both sectors is high, 90.4 percent in the private sector have never heard of any case compared to 72.4 percent in the public sector. (Figure 6). Treatment of sexual harassment cases according to the findings indicate that 75 percent of cases in the public sector were not treated at all compared to the private sector where they were treated at 45.5 percent. The termination of the employment contract is among the most important measures taken in sexual harassment cases, with 45.5 percent in the private sector compared to about 6 percent in the public sector.

Figure 7. Have you heard of any cases of sexual harassment

Private

90.4

5.2 4.4

Public

No I have no answer Yes

12.3

15.4

72.3

Source: Authors’ estimates based on survey data

Figure 8. How sexual harassment cases are treated

They have not been treated at all

45.5

75.0

Written warning from management

0.0

13.5

Suspension from work for a certain time

9.1

5.8

Termination of the employment contract

45.5

5.8

Private Sector

Public Sector

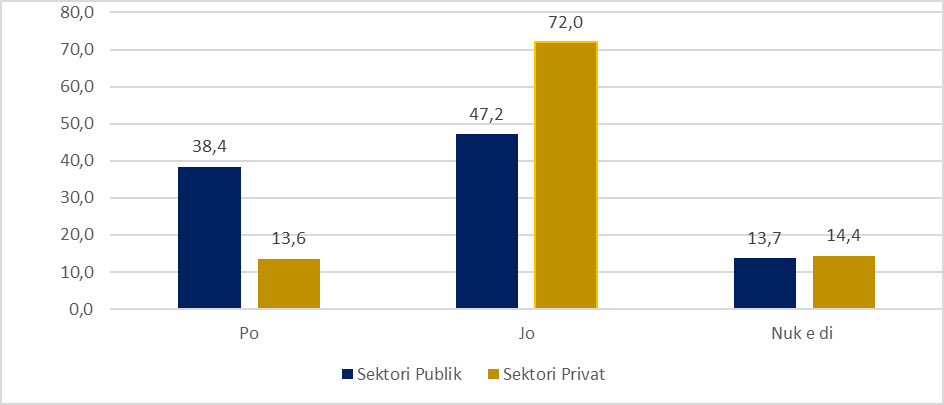
Source: Authors’ estimates based on survey data

Maternity leave, although warranted by law, can be a challenge for women aiming for decision-making positions in the public and private sectors. Data from the survey show that 38 percent of women engaged in the public sector think that maternity leave is sufficient, compared to 13.6 percent in the private sector. On the other hand, 72 percent of women in the private sector think that maternity leave is insufficient compared to

47.2 percent in the public sector (Figure 9). Maternity leave is presented as a challenge in the private sector,

Because the burden of paying maternity leave in the first six months is transferred to the private sector, compared to the public sector which is covered by the state budget.

Figure 9. Maternity leave warranted by law

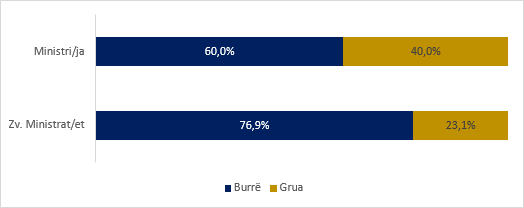


Source: Authors’ estimates based on survey data

* 1. Political decision-making

Ministries, in terms of responsibility, are the highest levels of political decision-making and are therefore required to send a positive message regarding gender equality in decision-making. Out of the total of 14 ministries in Kosovo, the number of women holding a minister position is 40 percent, compared to 60 percent of the positions held by men. Regarding the position of the Deputy Ministers, the number of women is much lower and stands at 23.1 percent, compared to 76.9 of the positions held by men.

Figure 10. Decision-making positions in ministries



* 1. Decision-making in publicly-owned enterprises

Publicly-owned enterprises are regulated by the Law on Public Enterprises. Based on this law, public enterprises are organized as joint stock companies. The boards consist of five or seven members elected by the shareholders, who may be the government or the municipalities. Most publicly-owned enterprises and independent agencies are governed through boards, as the highest decision-making bodies. Figure 11 shows the number of women in decision-making positions in central publicly-owned enterprises10. The findings show that approximately 75 percent of the positions of board chairpersons are held by men, and we also have similar percentages for the position of chief executive officer and chief financial officer. Regarding the positions of board members, we have a much more favourable situation between women and men. Currently, about 54 percent of board positions are held by men compared to 46 percent held by women.

Figure 11. Decision-making positions in publicly-owned enterprises

30.0%

22.2%

25.0%

30.0%

45.9%

70.0%

77.8%

75.0%

70.0%

54.1%

Chairperson of the Board

Board members

Chief Executive Officer

Secretary

Chief Finance

Officer (CFO)

Man Woman

10 Public-owned enterprises at the central level: Kosovo Energy Corporation of (KEK JSC), the Transmission System Operator and Electricity Market of Kosovo (KOST JSC), Kosovo Telecom JSC, Post of Kosovo, Iber Lepenc, InfraKos JSC, TrainKos JSC Regional Water Supply Company Prishtina JSC, Trepça JSC.

1. CONCLUSIONS

Improving the position of women in society and decision-making is important for democratic and economic development, and applicable laws warrant that the Kosovo institutions must ensure the participation of 50% of gender equality not only in terms of equal rights to education, employment, but also through their involvement in decision-making positions. The inclusion of women in decision-making positions represents one of the challenges since there are still different legal or socio-cultural perceptions and barriers.

The number of women in decision-making positions in the public and private sectors, although it has improved over the last few years, still remains small. This is an indication that gender stereotypes regarding the role of women and men still dominate in our society, and this is also related to non-compliance with the applicable laws. The research findings are mainly related to the non-implementation of the applicable legislation, the reluctance of women to apply for high positions, the perceptions of women that they will not be selected for decision-making positions, the difficulties they face in creating a balance between career and family and the lack of institutional vision in the public sector and the private sector to promote women in decision-making positions.

The reasons why women do not apply for such positions are mainly related to gender stereotypes, women’s perception that men are more suitable leaders, the obligations women have in the family, the lack of self-confidence and the lack of an institutional strategy for their motivation. However, one-third of women in both sectors are interested in taking a decision-making position. If the women with ambitions for decision-making positions in the public sector do not have sufficient experience, they are challenged from the very beginning because they cannot fulfil the initial condition, and those who hold decision-making positions face various challenges during the exercise of the position, such as insufficient support, trust of others on women and lack of managerial experience which present the main barriers. Moreover, the low salary and lack of benefits are factors that diminish women’s interest in aiming for decision-making positions.

Thus, in order to have a greater number of women in decision-making positions, a commitment of all stakeholders is needed, such as governmental institutions at the central and local level, the business community, civil society and other important stakeholders in Kosovo.

* 1. Recommendations

### To the central level Institutions

Central-level and local-level institutions jointly with other agencies with other relevant agencies must implement the Law on Gender Equality which guarantees 50% equal representation between men and women.

Undertaking affirmative measures is a step towards establishing mechanisms to develop adequate policies which would enable women to be encouraged to apply for decision-making positions in the public and private sectors. Special consideration should be given to the drafting of vacancies to reflect gender sensitivity.

Law on Public Officials should bring about stability, continuity of term through performance appraisal, so that retaining a senior decision-making position is not being conditioned based on certain terms.

Accelerate the process of incorporating parental leave into the Law on Labour (according to the modalities proposed by civil society) which would minimize private sector incentives to discourage women from aiming for decision-making positions.

Undertake an awareness-raising campaign regarding the importance of women’s involvement in decision-making and combating gender stereotypes. Also, promote successful cases in order to encourage even more women to aim for decision-making positions.

Salary gaps between managerial and administrative positions are one of the main barriers that discourage women from taking managerial responsibilities, so we recommend that this barrier be addressed through the Law on Salaries and the Law on Public Officials.

### To the private sector

Conduct training sessions in the area of management (stress, team management) and leadership, in general, to encourage women to apply for decision-making positions.

Business owners should create a friendly environment and encourage women to take on managerial responsibilities within businesses.

Business associations in cooperation with the private sector to organize training sessions to enhance women’s capacities in management and leadership

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