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The Youth of Today –
The Generation of the Global Development

Gender Equality in Albania Based on Evidences

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Abstract: The main objective of this study is related to examining the reality of gender equality in Albania according to the optics of relevant statistical data. Despite the consolidated legal and strategic framework in terms of gender equality, evidence shows that efforts are still needed to achieve the strategic objectives set in terms of actualizing the gender equality. This study used a qualitative research method, which consists of analyzing INSTAT statistical data in relation to the actions and initiatives foreseen in the National Strategy for Gender Equality Based on 2021-2030. According to INSTAT data in the field of the employment, regarding the level of the average gross monthly salary, the gender gap in 2022 was 6.2%, with an increase of 1.7% compared to 2021. In 2022, the average monthly salary for men was 63,773 *lekë*, while for women it was 59,813 lekë. In terms of decision-making power in 2022 women occupied 36% of the seats in parliament compared to men who occupied 64% of the seats. Finally, it is worth highlighting the gender inequality index which in 2022 was 0.06 with a decrease of 0.03 compared to 2021.

Keywords: Index; Inequality; Gap

1. Strategic Context and Evidences on Gender Equality in Albania

The Gender Equality Strategy 2021-2030 foresees several strategic goals such as: Fulfilling the economic and social rights of women, young women, girls and men, young men, boys in society and empowering women, young women and girls; Fulfilling the rights of women and men, young women and young men, girls and boys from all groups, for equal participation, representation and leadership in political and public decision-making at the local level; Reducing all forms of harmful practices, gender-based violence and domestic violence (National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2030). Based on these objectives and the consolidated legal basis for gender equality in Albania, it is expected that the real conditions of the gender equality context will move towards the implementation of the policies undertaken, but the data show that much work is still needed in this direction. Based on the INSTAT publication Men and Women 2023, some of the areas where gender inequality appears are: education,

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employment, justice, decision-making, etc. Regarding the field of education, the data are shown in the chart below.

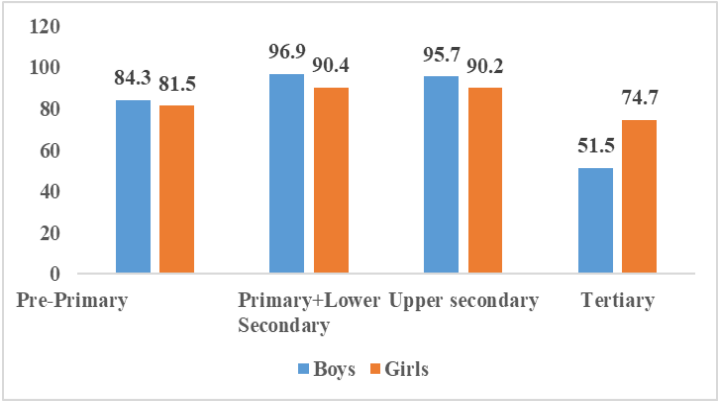


Figure 1. Participation in education by education level / enrolment rate (GER) (%), 2022-2023. (INSTAT, Men and Women, 2023

The graph shows a marked dominance of girls in higher education 74.7% compared to boys 51.5%. These are actions towards the education of girls, which is such a prerequisite for themselves on their positive rights in society. The level of education of women in societies determine their opportunities to integrate into the labour service and consequently increase the independent progress of the women's finances.

Regarding the field of employment, there are still significant inequalities in terms of health levels in the workforce. The graph below shows INSTAT data regarding the labour force participation by gender for the years 2016-2022.

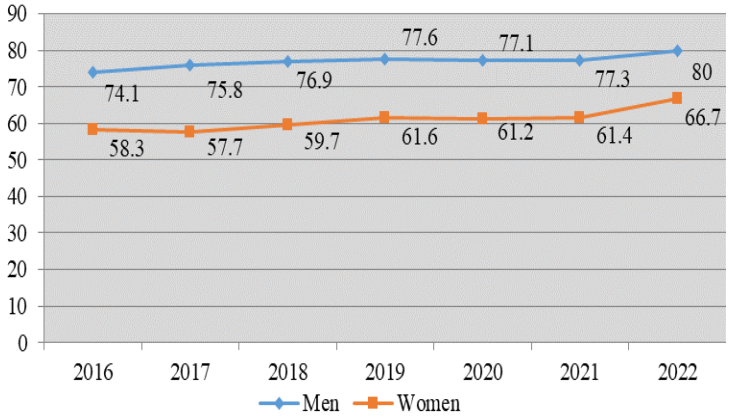


Figure 2. Labour force participation rate (15-64 years), (%). (INSTAT, Men and Women, 2023)

The data show that in 2023 the female participation rate in the labour force was 66.7% while the male participation rate continues to remain higher at 80%. This indicator reflects other inequalities related to the opportunities for participation in labour force. Inequality in the employment rate is another aspect to be studied. Based on INSTAT data the rate of employment in 2022 for men is 61.2%, whereas for woman is 50.1%. This aspect treated also in the UN Women report on gender equality and empowerment of women from rural areas through inclusion into the labour market, final performance audit report,

2024. According to INSTAT data, an inequality gap also results in the level of wages, where according to the INSTAT study, the data over the years result as in the graph below:

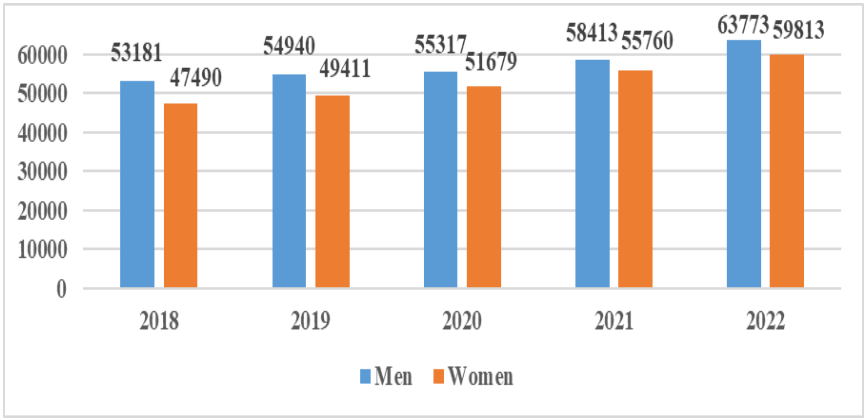


Figure 3. Gross average monthly age per employee by sex. (INSTAT, Men and Women, 2023)

The data show a dominance of men in the level of average monthly salary, where for 2022 the average salary for a salaried employee was 63,773 for men and 59,813 for women. An indicator that is very significant for the inequalities that are also reflected in the level and conditions of living, as well as in the economic independence of women in the family/society. According to the INSTAT study on Adult Education 2017, one of the factors that made it difficult to participate in non-formal education was financial difficulties, so in this context, lower salaries are also reflected in the fewer opportunities for women to increase their professional capacity and to integrate equally and under the same conditions as men.

Regarding the aspect of crime, regarding Victims of murders causes by family relationship by sex, in % the data show the following results:

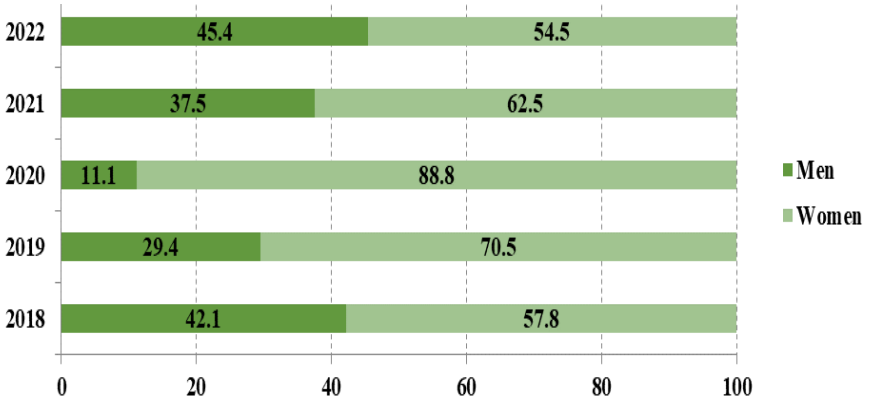


Figure 4. Victims of murders causes by family relationship by sex, in %. (INSTAT, Men and Women, 2023)

Based on the data of graph above in 2022 45.4% of victims due to family relationships are male, while 54.5% of victims in this context are female. Although female victims prevail compared to 2021, the inequality has reduced. The ratio of male-female victims was 37.5% male and 62.5% female victims. If we go even further in 2020, the difference is the highest in the last 5 years. The ratio is 11.1% male and 88.8% female. In this context, we can also analyse victims of domestic violence, where according to the

INSTAT study, 1371 women reported domestic violence during 2022. According to this data, in 2022 52.9% of women claim to have experienced violence from their partner at least once in their lives and 36.6% of them claim to be currently experiencing violence from their partner. According to Albania's national narrative report on the implementation of the Beijing+30 Platform for Action, violence against women and girls continues to be one of the issues that requires priority attention and intervention. Deep-rooted patriarchal norms perpetuate and justify violence, abuse and discrimination, thus creating major obstacles to achieving true equality between women and men, girls and boys (Albania's national narrative report on the implementation of the Beijing+30 Platform for Action). According to UN Women, femicide is the most extreme form of gender-based violence and means the killing of women and girls for gender-related reasons (UNODOC, UN Women, 2022). According to this study, out of 32 cases of murders of women and girls in the period 2021-2023, 24 were identified as femicide, representing a significant proportion of cases of extreme violence against women and that in 90% of cases, the victims had experienced violence from the perpetrators before committing the murder.

Another significant indicator in terms of gender equality is participation in decision-making. One of the indicators in this category is the participation of women in parliament. According to the INSTAT study, the participation of women in parliament in 2022 was 36% compared to men who occupy 64% of the seats in parliament. Finally, it is worth highlighting the gender inequality index, which in 2022 was 0.06 with a decrease of 0.03 compared to 2021.

2. Conclusion

Although the 2021-2030 Gender Equality Strategy foresees the undertaking of initiatives aimed at reducing the gender gap, INSTAT data from the publication "Men and Women 2023" show inequalities in several aspects of life. The gender equality index in pre-university education in 2022-2023 was 0.94 with a male dominance of 96.9% compared to 90.4% (female participation rate). For university education, this index takes the value of 1.45, reflecting a female dominance of 74.7% compared to 51.5% (male participation rate). Regarding the field of employment, the male participation rate in the labour force in 2022 was 80%, while the female participation rate was 66.7%, resulting in a gender gap of 13.3%. Also, regarding the level of the average gross monthly salary, the gender gap in 2022 was 6.2%, with an increase of 1.7% compared to 2021. In 2022, the average monthly salary for men was 63,773 lekë, while for women it was 59,813 lekë. Meanwhile, regarding crime statistics, in 2022 it results that 54.5% of the victims of murders due to family relationships are women, while 45.5% of the victims are men. In terms of decision-making power, it results that in 2022 women occupied 36% of the seats in parliament, compared to men who occupied 64% of the seats. This study also shows the indicator of violence against girls and women, where in 2022 52.9% of women claim to have experienced violence from a partner at least once in their lives and 36.6% of them claim to be currently experiencing violence from a partner. Finally, it is worth highlighting the gender inequality index, which in 2022 was 0.06 with a decrease of 0.03 compared to 2021.

In this context, what is recommended is the implementation of the legal basis and strategic objectives by undertaking concrete initiatives and actions towards creating real conditions for equal opportunities for both genders as gender equality represents one of the main conditions for a sustainable development of society. In response to the current situation several priorities have been set in Albania's national narrative report on the implementation of the Beijing+30 Platform for Action, such as: Placing women and girls at the centre of sustainable development and Albania's integration into the European Union (EU); Increasing funds for interventions in the field of gender equality is of essential importance for achieving sustainable development results; paying attention to existing gaps in gender statistics;

Effective leadership and efficient coordination of actors at the central and local levels; expanding the leadership role of women and girls; eliminating all forms of gender-based violence, harmful practices and violence against children; strengthening economic justice and the economic empowerment of women and girls; educational outcomes that influence the orientation of girls and young women in the selection of higher education fields, as well as their subsequent access to the labour market. The implementation of these priorities is expected to bring improvement in terms of reducing the gender-based inequalities and creating socio-economic conditions that enable equal opportunities for both men and women.

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