



# **NATIONAL REVIEW FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION**

## **BEIJING+25**

**30 APRIL 2019**

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## SECTION ONE: PRIORITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES AND SETBACKS

### 1. What have been the most important achievements, challenges and set-backs in progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women over the past 5 years?

The Government of Albania over the last five years has undertaken a number of important steps that contribute to the progress towards gender equality and empowerment of women. The main achievements in this regard are:

✓ **Improving national legal framework aiming at updating and completion of the legal framework in line with ratified international documents, as well as its approximation with European Union legislation.**

Legislative measures taken by Albania over the past five years are indicative of the government's commitment to combat and eliminate the causes leading to gender inequality and violence against women. In its entirety the legal framework has undergone changes and improvements that affect almost all areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action. Thus, in amendments to legislation on employment we can identify, among others, measures to prevent sexual harassment, the prohibition of discrimination against pregnant women, as well as significant improvement of the working conditions for pregnant women and young mothers with breastfeeding babies. Legal actions and measures undertaken by Albania to promote participation of women in politics, in public life and decision-making during these five years, have been limited to the local government level. Upon amendments to the Electoral Code, women candidates have been promoted by increasing gender quotas on candidate lists running for municipal councils at 50%, changing the gender in each second name. In addition, in case of announcing a vacancy in the council, replacement should be made with the subsequent candidate of the same gender listed above on the list. In the context of reducing poverty of women and their involvement in social care services, the applicable legislation and the relevant employment programs, are specifically targeted at vulnerable groups such as: victims of gender-based violence or domestic violence, victims of trafficking / potential victims of trafficking, new mothers, etc. While the law on notary and that on cadastre place emphasis on the rights of women's ownership by guaranteeing spouse's property rights for assets acquired during the marriage, when the spouses are under the community marital property regime. Improvements to the law on social insurances and assistance gave rise to the provision of the right to seek and withdraw the economic assistance from adult women. Amendments to the social insurance law brought, inter alia, the social pension scheme, which can benefited by anyone older than 70 years of age and who is not eligible for obtaining any other type of pension, or, income from any other source is smaller than the income that social pension scheme provides. Amendments to the law on social care services stipulate provision of specialized services for abused, raped or trafficked women and girls, and all categories that need such services, as well as shelter service for pregnant women and girls or women single parent with children aged up to 1 year old. Meanwhile the law on social housing reflects new international standards that precede the fulfilment of the Albanian state obligations to protect and support the social strata, and in particular victims of violence. Amendments to the law on mandatory health care insurance, among others, identify also the victims of trafficking as beneficiaries of health care services. The draft law on social assistance recognizes as beneficiaries of economic aid specifically the victims of trafficking, after leaving the social care institutions till their employment and victims of violence in family relations, for the duration of the protection order or the emergency protection order, who are not dealt with in social care institutions. Regarding the prevention and elimination of violence against women, to be singled out are the amendments to the law on domestic violence which has strengthened safeguards for a more effective response to domestic violence and protection of victims of violence, by providing the mechanism of issuing the Order for

the Preliminary Measures of the Emergent Protection for a more urgent treatment of domestic violence cases, emphasizing the protection of people with disabilities and the importance of sign language interpreter, risk assessment, etc. Also, victims of domestic violence, along with victims of trafficking are subjects that benefit from the law on legal aid, such as legal counselling and representation in the competent institutions. Improvements of legal rights for women who are victims of sexual violence and trafficking, have been reflected in the Code of Criminal Procedure which grants special rights to be questioned and heard without delay and to refuse answering to questions about privacy. As to the elimination of discrimination and violation of the girl child's rights, to be mentioned is the adoption of the law on the rights and child protection which designates the State Agency for the Protection of Children's Rights as a monitoring institution of children's rights violations and any other form of exploitation and abuse. The Code of Criminal Justice for Children also guarantees legal, social, psychological and medical protection for children in conflict with the law and children as victims of criminal offenses appropriate to their gender. It is worth mentioning as very important in this regard also the Resolutions prepared and adopted by the Parliament, similar to the one on punishment of violence against women and girls and increase of the effectiveness of legal mechanisms for its prevention, resolution for promotion, implementation and monitoring of the Agenda 2030 and SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals), through comprehensive development processes, in line with Albania's development priorities and EU integration, etc.

✓ **Improving national and local policies and plans, aimed at planning and implementing concrete actions for empowerment of women and progress towards gender equality.**

Albania has prepared the Economic Reform Programme covering the period 2019-2021, with 15 reform measures reflecting the government's priorities, among which the employment and social inclusion, professional trainings and vocational training, businesses improvement, consolidation and defragmentation of land, water and sewage management, etc., are not lacking. Meanwhile, over the past five years a whole set of important strategies, in which gender perspective has been mainstreamed or through the implementation of which empowerment of women and gender equality has been enabled, has been overlooked. So, among the most important strategies, we can mention the National Strategy for Development and Integration 2015 -2020, the National Strategy for Employment and Skills 2014-2020, Sectoral Strategy for Social Protection 2015-2020, the Policy Document of Social Inclusion, Health Strategy 2016 2020, etc. But the main strategy guiding actions to achieve gender equality in Albania is the Third National Strategy on Gender Equality (NSGE) and its Action Plan 2016-2020, with strategic goals, specific objectives and concrete activities focused on (i) economic empowerment of women and men, (ii) guaranteeing participation as well as factual and equal engagement of women in political and public decision-making, (iii) reduction of gender-based violence and domestic violence, and (iv) strengthening the coordinating and monitoring role of the national gender equality mechanism, as well as awareness-raising of the society for the advancement of gender equality. To be mentioned for their importance are also national action plans, such as the one on support of women entrepreneurs (2014-2020), the action plan on involvement of men and boys as partners of women and girls for gender equality and against domestic violence (2014-2019), for youth 2015-2020, for the integration of roma and egyptians (2016-2020), for LGBTI persons (2016-2020 the national action plan on Resolution 1325, or action plans on gender equality drafted by several Ministries. At the local level, we can mention, among others, signing of the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life by seven country's municipalities and the preparation and approval of the Gender Equality Local Action Plans 2018 - 2020 in the Municipal Councils of five of these Municipalities, in accordance with the implementation of this Charter.

✓ **Mainstreaming gender-responsive budgeting in all stages of public budgeting, at central and local level.**

Gender-responsive budgeting is clearly outlined in the Public Finance Management Strategy 2015-2020. The gender-responsive budgeting has become, for the first time, part of the National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI) 2015-2020. In 2016, gender equality was included as one of the fundamental principles of the Albanian Budget System, to provide equal access to rights and opportunities for men and women in Albania. Accordingly, in the 2019 budget, gender inequality problems have been mainstreamed into 37 budget programs in 14 Ministries, affecting some of the most important sectors, such as: education, health, agriculture, etc.

✓ **Adding / increasing specialized support services for the treatment of victims/survivors of domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence.**

Expansion of existing services, improvement of their standards of functioning and the addition of specialized support services have been the focus of interventions of the Albanian state, in cooperation with international organizations and specialized NGOs as service providers. So, as the most important for the last five years, we can mention the functioning of National Counselling Line (Hotline) for victims of domestic violence; extending in several municipalities of the country, of the counselling service for men and boys; in several municipalities of the country, emergency shelters have been set up; establishment of the Coordination Office Against Domestic Violence, at the Ministry of Justice; establishment of the first national treatment centre for victims of sexual assault "Lilium", etc. An important work worth mentioning in this regard is the improvement or preparation of the functioning standards of these service centres, as well as work for preparation of protocols and standard operating procedures within a coordinated multi-sectoral response.

The main challenges:

1. Economic empowerment of women in urban and rural areas, aiming to enhance their independence. Economic empowerment is a proactive strategy to prevent violence against women and their trafficking.
2. Implementation and monitoring of the existing legislation creating effective mechanisms to guarantee de facto equal rights between men and women.
3. Preventing and combating all forms of violence against women by raising awareness, providing integrated multidisciplinary services and specialized support services for victims / survivors, and establishing / strengthening services and programs for the treatment of men and boys.
4. Strengthening the gender equality mechanism at central and local level aiming gender mainstreaming in policies and strategies to achieve a society of equal opportunities.

**2. Which of the following have been the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country over the past five years through laws, policies and/or programmes? (please check relevant categories)**

- ✓ Eliminating violence against women and girls
- ✓ Equality and non-discrimination under the law and access to justice
- ✓ Political participation and representation
- ✓ Right to work and rights at work (e.g. gender pay gap, occupational segregation, career progression)
- ✓ Gender-responsive budgeting
- Quality education, training and life-long learning for women and girls
- Poverty eradication, agricultural productivity and food security
- Access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights
- Women's entrepreneurship and women's enterprises

- Unpaid care and domestic work / work-family conciliation (e.g. paid maternity or parental leave, care services)
- Gender-responsive social protection (e.g. universal health coverage, cash transfers, pensions)
- Basic services and infrastructure (water, sanitation, energy, transport etc.)
- Strengthening women's participation in ensuring environmental sustainability
- Digital and financial inclusion for women
- Gender-responsive disaster risk reduction and resilience building
- Changing negative social norms and gender stereotypes
- Other

**3. Over the past five years, have you taken specific measures to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of women and girls who experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination? (please check relevant categories)**

- Women living in remote and rural areas
- Indigenous women
- Racial, ethnic or religious minority women
- Women living with disabilities
- Women living with HIV/AIDS
- Women with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities
- Younger women
- Older women
- Migrant women
- Refugee and internally displaced women
- Women in humanitarian settings
- Other (abused women)

As mentioned in the achievements described above, a set of measures reflected in the improvement of legislation addressing the protection of their right, the design or implementation of strategies and action plans dedicated to concrete measures to improve their situation, the establishment or expansion of specialized support services and the assessment of the needs for appropriate and accessible services have been taken into consideration for the listed groups of women experiencing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

**4. Has the increasing number of humanitarian crises—caused by conflict, extreme weather or other events—affected the implementation of the BPfA in your country?**

**YES**

Similar to other Western Balkan countries, Albania is also affected by mixed migratory flows which among others, comprise refugees, asylum seekers, migrants, victims of trafficking, minors unaccompanied and separated, as well as stateless persons. Some of them are included in more than one of these categories. They come from different nationalities, predominantly Syrians and Afghans and often enter the country without entry permits. In most cases, these migrants are in a particular situation of vulnerability due to the situation in their countries of origin from where they left because of the difficult conditions or exploitation and abuse suffered during the journey<sup>1</sup>. A rapid assessment<sup>2</sup> in 2018, shows a steep increase in the number of persons detained on the border crossing points – 5,401 people have been detained until November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018, as opposed to 1,049 in 2017. This increase is accompanied also by an increase in the number of asylum applications – 4,095 requests for 2018 as opposed to 309 in 2017<sup>3</sup>. Despite measures taken towards the institutionalization of asylum and

<sup>1</sup> Program of Cooperation for Sustainable Development 2017-2021

<sup>2</sup>The UN Country team "Joint Assessment Asylum and Mixed Migration, Situation in Albania 2018: Initial Rapid Assessment, August 2018, updated in December 2018

<sup>3</sup> UNHCR data on asylum in mixed migration

immigration procedures, several problems are identified directly related to the areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action, such as: (i) The presence and availability of interpreters for cross-border interviews remains a challenge and especially women interpreters available are rare; (ii) There are no specialized shelters for women and children at risk and referrals in residential care centres managed by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection have resulted challenging for foreign nationals; (iii) Interviews with accompanied minors are reported to have been conducted in the presence of and as part of the whole family or group of adults even when their relationship is not proven, which limits identification of unaccompanied minors who do not declare themselves as such; (iv) Lack of comprehensive assessments, mechanism of case management and referral also indicates that children were not entitled to services they might have needed, such as psycho-social support; (v) It is not possible to identify victims of gender-based violence, because selection interviews do not provide sufficient information for this purpose; (vi) Workers of the authority providing shelter to women and girls who have applied for asylum on the border area, do not have the necessary technical skills to identify survivors of gender-based violence or victims of trafficking (identification is further complicated because of insufficient period of the women's and girls's stay in the center, i.e. 7-10 days, due to the transitory nature of their movement); (vii) Regional Directorates of the Immigration and Border Management, social services and NGOs dealing with migrants coordinate their actions on a case by case basis, but their cooperation is not formalized. Besides, contingency plans for managing the emergency situation regarding refugees and immigrants, are lacking, etc. To address the foregoing, a series of measures are under way based on recommendations from the rapid assessment conducted in 2018, a significant part of which is also envisaged in the National Strategy on Migration, Governance and Action Plan 2019- 2022, as per the draft submitted for public consultation in November 2018<sup>4</sup>.

The Minister of Health and Social Protection issued Order nr.428, dated 04.10.2016 "On approval of the strategy document on sexual and reproductive health in the event of crisis and humanitarian emergency", through which, coupled with the General Platform of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, work proceeds in cases of civil emergencies. This order requires that in cases of civil emergency, the healthcare service shall pay special attention to pregnant women, women with children up to 6 years of age, raped and violated women. In this connection, certain minimum initial service packages (MISP) with which these vulnerable groups must be provided in case of emergency, are made available. These packages should be ready preferably at 30% by the Regional Health Departments and those of the District Public Health. Regarding the reporting period, it was not necessary to put MISP packages into use<sup>5</sup>. The Ministry of Health and Social Protection performs also periodic checks by working groups, as well as training<sup>6</sup> in many Health Departments, such as: Korça, Gjirokastra, Saranda, Shkodra, Kukës, Dibra, etc. Planning on training continues for other districts already thought and known to have the presence of crises, such as: snowstorms, fire-related problems, floods, droughts, landslides, etc. Every 3 months, MoHSP (Ministry of Health and Social Protection) collects information from all RHD / PHD about the number of pregnant women, women with children up to 6 years of age, violated and raped women, as well as pregnant women tested for HIV / AIDS.

## **5. Which of the following does your country consider to be the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country for the coming five years through laws, policies and programmes? (please check relevant categories)**

- ✓ Eliminating violence against women and girls
- ✓ Gender-responsive budgeting
- ✓ Equality and non-discrimination under the law and access to justice
- ✓ Quality education, training and life-long learning for women and girls

<sup>4</sup>For more, see: [https://konsultimipublik.gov.al/documents/RENJK\\_116\\_Strategjia%20Migracioni%2019.11.2018\\_AL.doc](https://konsultimipublik.gov.al/documents/RENJK_116_Strategjia%20Migracioni%2019.11.2018_AL.doc)

<sup>5</sup> However, the initial rapid assessment of the United Nations Team on asylum and mixed migration, in 2018 highlighted the problems of regional authorities in connection with the health care coordination, notably sexual and reproductive health and providing mainstreaming services in emergency / crisis situation.

<sup>6</sup>In cooperation with the Albanian Center for Population and Development (ACPD) and the United Nations Fund for Population (UNFPA)

- ✓ Women's entrepreneurship and women's enterprises
- Poverty eradication, agricultural productivity and food security
- Access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights
- Political participation and representation
- Right to work and rights at work (e.g. gender pay gap, occupational segregation, career progression)
- Unpaid care and domestic work / work-family conciliation (e.g. paid maternity or parental leave, care services)
- Gender-responsive social protection (e.g. universal health coverage, cash transfers, pensions)
- Basic services and infrastructure (water, sanitation, energy, transport etc.)
- Strengthening women's participation in ensuring environmental sustainability
- Digital and financial inclusion for women
- Gender-responsive disaster risk reduction and resilience building
- Changing negative social norms and gender stereotypes
- Other

## SECTION TWO: PROGRESS ACROSS THE 12 CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN

### I. INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT, SHARED PROSPERITY AND DECENT WORK

#### Critical areas of concern:

- A. Women and poverty
- F. Women and the economy
- I. Human rights of women
- L. The girl child

#### 6. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to advance gender equality in relation to women's role in paid work and employment?

- ✓ **Strengthened / enforced laws and workplace policies and practices that prohibit discrimination in the recruitment, retention and promotion of women in the public and private sectors, and equal pay legislation**
- ✓ **Introduced / strengthened gender-responsive active labor market policies (e.g. education and training, skills, subsidies)**
- ✓ **Taken measures to prevent sexual harassment, including in the workplace**
- ✓ **Strengthened land rights and tenure security**
- ✓ **Improved financial inclusion and access to credit, including for self-employed women**
  - Improved access to modern technologies (incl. climate-smart technologies), infrastructure and services (incl. agricultural extension)
  - Supported the transition from informal to formal work, including legal and policy measures that benefit women in informal employment
  - Devised mechanisms for women's equal participation in economic decision-making bodies (e.g. in ministries of trade and finance, central banks, national economic commissions)
  - Other (explain)

Increasing participation of women in the labor market and reducing the gender gap is one of the objectives<sup>7</sup> of the National Strategy on Gender Equality 2016-2020, the successful fulfillment of which requires mainstreaming of gender perspective in the implementation of measures envisaged as part of the National Employment and Skills Strategy 2014-2020. The National Employment and Skills Strategy

<sup>7</sup> Objective 1.1, National Strategy on Gender Equality 2016-2020

2014-2020<sup>8</sup>, has as its general goal, to encourage quality jobs and opportunities for acquiring skills to all albanian women and men throughout their life cycle. Attention is paid to taking concrete measures for the inclusion of certain groups such as persons with disabilities, Roma women, youth, etc. National Employment Service (NES), Regional / Local Employment Offices, Public Vocational Training Centers and the Inspectorate of Labor and Social Services, comprise the chain of executive institutions<sup>9</sup> of active labor market policies, which include employment services, programs for new jobs openings, mediation for employment, orientation and counseling for work and occupation, as well as vocational training programs.

The legal framework for the advancement of gender equality in relation to the role of women in employment and paid work has been subject to changes over the last five years.

The Law no. 93/2014 "On the inclusion and accessibility of persons with disabilities" stipulates fundamental rights related to inclusion and accessibility of persons with disabilities in order to guarantee their equal opportunities and conditions with others. Among the basic principles of this law is also gender equality ensuring that women with disabilities have equal opportunities like men with disabilities to benefit from the rights guaranteed by this law. In terms of institutional aspect, the law provides for the establishment of the National Council on Disability Issues as an advisory body established by order of the Prime Minister, composed of 17 members appointed by the Prime Minister, giving due regard to the inclusion of different categories of disability, age and gender representation. Based on this law, it was adopted the Decision of Council of Ministers no. 708, dated 26.08.2015 "On types, frequency and method of reporting statistical data on disability by the state responsible structures at central and local level," that requires gender-based disaggregation of indicators for issues of persons with disabilities.

Law no. 136/2015 "On some additions and amendments to Law no. 7961, dated 12.07.1995 "Labor Code of the Republic of Albania" obliges employers to take measures to prevent sexual harassment and concerns of sexual nature as well as avoiding the penalization of the victim due to reporting incidents of violence in the workplace. Even though the responsibility of the employers in preventing violence against women at work was already specified in the law "On gender equality in society" of 2008, there is no evidence for contribution of this law to encouraging victims and employers to stand up and take measures against this violence. This means that amendments made recently to the Labor Code regarding sexual harassment were necessary. In addition to the above, legislative amendments to the Labor Code, entailed improvements in terms of protection issues of pregnant women from discrimination and protection of motherhood. The law has reflected proposals made by social partners, and aims approximation with the legislation of EU *acquis communautaire*, on occupational safety and health, prohibition of discrimination and special protection of women. Some of the provisions proposed are in line with the recommendations of the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on Social Law, Albania's national reports on the implementation of the European Social Charter, as revised, and ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations. Concretely, Article 9 of the Labor Code explicitly stipulates that the term "discrimination" means any differences, exclusions, restrictions or preferences based on pregnancy, family situation or marital status. Moreover, the employer is obliged to ensure reasonable adaptation of the workplace for persons under conditions of discrimination. In cases of claimed violation of non-discrimination principle, the Labor Code refers to the appeal procedures laid down in the special law on protection from discrimination. In all cases of the appeal procedures, the employer has the burden of proof to provide evidence that the principle of equal treatment at work, has not been violated.

Significant steps have also been taken towards lobbying and trilateral agreement, Government - employers - employees, in support of the new ILO Convention on "Ending Violence and Harassment in the World of Work" expected to be adopted in the 108<sup>th</sup> International Labor Conference due to be held on the 100<sup>th</sup> ILO anniversary in June 2019.

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<sup>8</sup>Approved by DCM No. 818, dated 26.11.2014

<sup>9</sup>Under the subordination of the former Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth, passed in September 2017, under the subordination of the Ministry of Finance and Economy.

The State Labor and Social Services Inspectorate, which operates under Law no. 9634 dated 30.10.2006 "On Labor Inspection" and Law no. 10433. dated 16.06.2011 "On Inspection in the Republic of Albania" is the competent institution which provides for the protection of the employees' rights under the Labor Code and by-laws issued pursuant there to. The law expressly confers upon the inspectorate the powers to ensure protection of pregnant women, minors, etc. Pursuant to Law no. 9634, dated 30.10.2006 "On Labor Inspection", the State Labor Inspectorate is obliged to ensure the implementation of legal provisions on labor conditions and protection of employees in the exercise of their profession, duration of work, wages, insurance, hygiene and well-being, employment of children, minors and women, as well as other closely related issues, to the extent that labor inspectors are assigned to ensure the implementation of these provisions. The law obliges also the Inspectorate to particularly ensure respect of the employment rights of minors, pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers.

In line with the legal framework and policies described above, positive results have been noted over these five years. Thus, in terms of employment and vocational training, in implementation of the National Employment and Skills Strategy 2014-2020 and its Action Plan, the reform on employment services was achieved. This reform consisted of opening new employment offices based on the new model of employment services, on improvement of the information system of employment services, as well as the realization of its interaction with other governmental platform systems, including gender equality and diversity criteria as an integral part of all monitoring and evaluation processes and procedures, etc. The staff of labor offices has been trained on gender equality issues<sup>10</sup>. All indicators of monitoring services and programmes offered by the National Employment Service include indicators of gender equality, reflected in the statistical programme revised at each year-end, and reflected in all periodic reports. Even indicators in the information system on the labor market, which realizes the creation of a state database for the Employment Service System while ensuring interoperability with other state databases, contain sex-disaggregated data. Results from the implementation of active labor market policies, account for annual improvement. So, only for 2017<sup>11</sup>: From Employment Offices, an average of 90,000 unemployed jobseekers were received, offering employment, information, interviewing and counseling services to them. By the end of 2017, from all employment offices, 23,136 persons result to have been mediated for work, namely out of them: 50.5% are women and girls; 7,982 are young people aged up to 29 years. Out of vulnerable/facing challenges groups, result: 2,250 persons employed under the economic assistance scheme; 632 persons employed under the unemployment scheme; 112 unemployed jobseekers with special needs; 880 employed jobseekers from Roma and Egyptian communities. Under the National Employment Service, 7 employment promotion programmes have been implemented: (1) The employment promotion programme for specific groups; (2) The work-based training programme; (3) The employment promotion programme for young graduates (bachelor or master) aged up to 30 years; (4) The employment promotion programme for single mothers with dependent children and child-mothers; (5) The employment promotion of persons with disabilities; (6) Internships of up to six months to newly graduates; (7) The employment promotion programme for orphans. From implementation of these programmes, a total of 5,264 unemployed jobseekers have been employed. Disaggregated according to categories of special groups, outcomes are: 62% are women and girls; 51% are youth aged up to 29 years; 598 newly graduates have attended internships; 94 persons with disabilities mainly aged up to 40 years and with secondary education; 396 unemployed jobseekers under the income support schemes or 8% of total participants; 2,477 or 47% of total participants are long-term unemployed jobseekers; 110 unemployed jobseekers from Roma and Egyptian communities; 96 returned migrants; 3 victims of human trafficking and 6 unemployed orphan jobseekers.<sup>12</sup>

During 2017, based on data from the Directorate General of Taxation, the Gender Wage Gap (GWG) amounts to 10.5% as opposed to 6.3% of a year ago. In this year, the economic sector with the highest

<sup>10</sup>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH to the account of German Federal Government.

<sup>11</sup>More detailed data regarding the entire period of reporting about employment, are presented in Appendix III of this report.

<sup>12</sup>Ministry of Health and Social Protection: "Monitoring Report of the National Strategy on Gender Equality and its Action Plan 2016-2020" for 2017

gender wage gap, is the manufacturing sector with GWG at a value of 22.7%. Meanwhile the economic sector where GWG reaches the lowest value of 3.3%, is the trade, transport, hotel service, business and administrative services sector. Viewed as per the main occupational groups, the gender wage gap reaches the highest value for craftsmen as well as machinery and equipment installation workers, with 28.4%. GWG reaches the lowest value for armed forces personnel, in which case gender wage differences are practically zero<sup>13</sup>.

Meanwhile, with regard to sexual harassment at the workplace, a survey conducted by the People's Advocate in 2017, highlights that, despite legislative improvements to Labor Code in 2015, further steps are still needed. Punitive legislation for this phenomenon is not complete and needs improvement. The Criminal Code does not penalize moral harassment, while sexual harassment is generally punished, is related to the element of violence and is not regarded as related to the work relationships. On the other hand, a matter of concern is the fact that the courts' jurisprudence by far in this regard is almost entirely lacking. Cases of sexual harassment are very limited, while those of moral harassment are more closely related to claiming compensation for moral or non-pecuniary damage. Factors influencing in this regard are related to educational background and social conscience, position of women in society, lack of knowledge and awareness about this phenomenon, lack of trust in institutions, the need to improve the Code of Ethics in Institutions, lack of training for employers and managers of institutions, etc<sup>14</sup>.

In April 2019, at a meeting with representatives of the Alliance of Women Members of the Parliament, the Minister of Health and Social Protection highlighted the importance of taking over commitments aimed at assessing a situation of discrimination at work for women diagnosed with breast cancer. This reaction came as a result of this concern raised by an organization<sup>15</sup> focused in this regard, and based on preliminary assessments conducted by them that evidenced potential problems faced by this group of women in employment.

An important role towards improvement of women's role in employment and paid work, is played by civil society organizations<sup>16</sup> specialized in providing services to specific groups of women. Through increased cooperation with relevant state-owned institutions and signed agreements with these institutions, civil society organizations facilitate provision of information, vocational training courses taking place also at the workplace, as well as employment mediation<sup>17</sup>, enabling improved access of women and girls into the labor market, through implementation of legislation and policies in force.

The Project "Promoting employment, self-employment and entrepreneurship through regional cooperation for women and youth" was aimed at establishing bridges of cooperation and exchange of experiences among the best municipalities in the region. Through this project, women (12) and youth (12) participated in a training program during which they developed their skills to write a business plan, to manage a small business and to understand the entrepreneurship in concrete terms. In conclusion of the training program, all participants developed a business plan, which was subject to evaluation by the National Development Agency. The project was also engaged in the awareness-raising campaign among women and youth for potential sources of financing ideas of entrepreneurship and the best practices in the region<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup>INSTAT "Men and women in Albania, 2018", p. 64

<sup>14</sup> "Moral and sexual harassment in the Public Administration" prepared by the People's Advocate (2017) by the Albanian Center for Economic Research, with financial support of the Government of the Kingdom of Denmark

<https://www.avokatipopullit.gov.al/media/manager/website/reports/Studimi%20p%C3%ABr%20nqacmimin%20moral%20dhe%20%20seksual%20n%C3%AB%20administrat%C3%ABn%20publike%20Shqiptare.pdf>

<sup>15</sup>Young Women's Christian Association of Albania (YWCA)

<sup>16</sup> Here we can mention the important role of the Organization "Different and Equal" for integration into the labor market of the victims to human trafficking, the role of the Center "Human Rights in Democracy", mainly for mediation into the labor market of victims of domestic violence, Women's Center Light Steps, etc.

<sup>17</sup> An important role here is played also by the Community Development Center "Today for the Future", through its projects it has supported 1,391 beneficiaries in the districts of Shkodra, Lezha and Korça, starting from 2014; 67% of them are integrated and re-integrated into the formal labor market (through employment and self-employment.); 139 women and girls on the Durrës region are supported with formalization of work, especially in the field of services and manufacturing enterprises, where a focus was given to the provision of salaries, especially in cases where informal payments were provided to them below the minimum wage and the coverage of social insurance, making them moving from informalized work and payment under the minimum wage

<sup>18</sup> Information forwarded by OSCE Albania

In the 2018 Progress Report on Albania, the European Commission has positively assessed the legislative measures in the employment environment and in the workplace for women, but expresses concerns as regards the proportion of women in the informal labor market, especially in the textile industries and footwear, without proper labor protection and without social protection. Concerns were also expressed about the lack of disaggregated data on the number of women working in the informal economy<sup>19</sup>.

Meanwhile, the index of this year for gender conciliation in central banks shows that Albania has a rating scale of 83%, ranking third in the world after Iceland and Rwanda. The index is compiled by calculating the presence of women in executive positions and it turns out that in the Central Bank of Albania, 57% of mid management positions are held by women, and the institution employs convincingly more women than men. Regarding the banking system as a whole, it is not the same, since less than 20% of the executive positions are held by women<sup>20</sup>.

## 7. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to recognize, reduce and/or redistribute unpaid care and domestic work and promote work-family conciliation?

- Included unpaid care and domestic work in national statistics and accounting (e.g. time-use surveys, valuation exercises, satellite accounts, etc.)
- Expanded childcare services or made existing services more affordable
- Expanded support for frail elderly persons and others needing intense forms of care
- Introduced or strengthened maternity/paternity/parental leave or other types of family leave**
- Invested in time- and labor-saving infrastructure, (such as public transport, electricity, water and sanitation), to reduce the burden of unpaid care and domestic work on women**
- Promoted decent work for paid care workers, including migrant workers
- Conducted campaigns or awareness activities to encourage the participation of men and boys in unpaid care and domestic work
- Introduced legal changes regarding the division of marital assets** or pension entitlements after divorce that acknowledge women's unpaid contribution to the family during marriage
- Other

The National Strategy on Gender Equality and its Action Plan 2016-2020 sets as an objective "Reducing the unpaid household work of women by increased access to and quality of social services". Results from successful implementation of the actions envisaged under this objective, are expected to bring by the end of 2020, a reduction of 10% of women's unpaid work due to increased access to social services such as nurseries, kindergartens, third age services (notably elderly women), services for women and children with disabilities; services for Roma and Egyptian women, as well as women from marginalized groups <sup>21</sup>.

Under the Law no.104/2014 "On amendments and additions to Law No. 7703, dated 11.05.1993 "On Social Insurance in the Republic of Albania", as amended, the right to child care permit was also entitled to the father, following a 63-day period after child birth and when the mother does not exercise this right or is under no conditions to benefit it. This legal amendment will help young women and mothers who do not meet the conditions to benefit from the maternity leave thus allowing continuation of professional career or labor relationships, while the care needed for the newborn is provided by her husband.

For pregnant women, the prohibition period of work after childbirth has been increased from 42 days (that was before adoption of the legal amendment) to 63 days. If the pregnant woman, a woman who has recently given birth and/or is breastfeeding decides to go back to work after the 63-day period and her workplace is not deemed appropriate, the employer should take the necessary measures by temporarily adjusting the working conditions and/or working hours in order to avoid the risks concerning

<sup>19</sup> Progress Report 2018 of the European Commission to Albania, p 79.

<sup>20</sup> [www.scan-tv.com/femrat-ne-krve-te-politikave-monetare-shqiperia-eshte-e-treta-ne-bote-per-barazine-qjimore-ne-banken-qendrore/](http://www.scan-tv.com/femrat-ne-krve-te-politikave-monetare-shqiperia-eshte-e-treta-ne-bote-per-barazine-qjimore-ne-banken-qendrore/)

<sup>21</sup> The National Strategy on Gender Equality and its Action Plan 2016-2020, p. 28

the employee and/or child. If the adjustment of the working conditions and/or working hours is not technically and/or objectively feasible or cannot reasonably be required on duly substantiated grounds, the employer should take the necessary measures to transfer the woman concerned to another similar job. If even the transfer, according to paragraph 4 of this article is not technically and/or objectively feasible or cannot reasonably be required on duly substantiated grounds, the woman shall be granted with beneficiaries according to the social security legislation in force for the whole period necessary to protect her safety and health and / or child. If the woman decides, upon her own will, to work after the 63-day post-birth period, in agreement with the employer, for the child's nutrition she is entitled that until the child reaches the age of 1 year old, to choose: a) a 2-hour paid leave within normal working hours; or b) 2-hour reduced working time, with the same wage, as if she had worked for the normal daily working time. Upon termination of the maternity leave, the employee is entitled to return to her job or an equivalent workplace, under no less favorable conditions to her and to benefit from any improvement in employment conditions she was due to benefit during her absence. Also, by DCM Nr. 740, dated 12.12.2018 "On determining the immediate financial assistance for mothers with newborns and the granting procedure", the bonus application for mothers with newborns, entered into force on 1 January 2019 ranging from 40,000 ALL for the first child<sup>22</sup>, 80,000 ALL for the second child and 120,000 ALL for the third child. This bonus benefits even mothers who give birth to their children abroad provided that the child is registered under legal deadlines. The measure of immediate financial aid is granted as a check on behalf of the mother's name at the maternity hospital where she gave birth to her child.

As regards protection of women's employment during childbearing period, the woman is entitled, in agreement with the employer, to payable leave for conducting medical examinations if necessary during the working hours.

With regard to extra hours and nighttime work, this is prohibited for pregnant women and following childbirth until the child reaches the age of 1 year old. In addition, it is prohibited for an employer to order the performance of nighttime work for pregnant women and after childbirth until the child is 1 year old, if it is detrimental to the safety and health of the woman concerned and / or child, this confirmed by a medical report. When the pregnant woman and / or breastfeeding woman, who decides to go back to work after the 63-day period following childbirth, becomes unfit for nighttime work, this confirmed by a medical report, but who is not unfit for daytime work, she shall be transferred to a similar daytime workplace, for which she is fit. If the transfer, according to paragraph 2 of this article is not technically and/or objectively feasible or cannot reasonably be required on duly substantiated grounds, the woman shall be granted with beneficiaries according to the social security legislation in force for the whole period necessary to protect her safety and health and / or child.

Another key addition with regard to improvement of employment conditions is the introduction of Parental Leave to care for dependent children. According to the amendments to the Labor Code, the employee, having more than one uninterrupted year of work with the same employer is entitled to an unpaid leave, not less than 4 months, until the dependent child is 6 years old. The right to seek parental leave is individual for each parent and is not transferable, except in cases when one parent dies. The leave can be granted separately, but not less than one week a year. Duration is determined by written agreement between the employer and the employee. In the case of child adoption, parental leave is given within 6 years from the child's adoption date, but no later than when the child is 12 years old.

The Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 634, dated 15.07.2015, on approval of the Regulation "On the introduction of measures for safety and health at work of pregnant women and new mothers" sets out detailed rules for the protection of safety and health at work of pregnant women employees and new mothers. This regulation aims to define employers' obligations in relation to risk assessment and informing employees, specifying the exposure limit values at work and the working time. Accordingly, the employer is obliged to carry out risk assessment under Regulation Annex, which provides for non-exhaustive list of agents, processes and working conditions, and employees shall in no case carry out

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<sup>22</sup> So, it is eight-fold larger as compared with the immediate financial aid granted before the entry into force of this DCM.

jobs for which risk assessment indicates exposure to agents and working conditions which put safety and health at risk.

Notwithstanding improvement of the legal framework cited above, still much more efforts are needed to make it more applicable in practice, particularly to engage more men and boys in redistribution of unpaid care and domestic work. A survey conducted in 2016 with 450 interviews in four areas of Albania, showed that: women are usually the ones that do laundry and ironing, cleaning the house, cooking and washing dishes. Two houseworks that men were more likely to engage than women related to home repairs and paying bills. Women were mostly the ones who care for children, often without any support, but also men were involved and shared responsibilities with women in caring for children. This was evidenced mostly in health emergency situations. Public perceptions vary by gender. Compared to women, men were more likely to agree or strongly agree with the statement "a good wife should obey to her husband to maintain harmony and well-being in the family", respectively with 78.95% versus 71.17%. Women were more likely than men to disagree or totally disagree with the statement "the woman should sacrifice her career about the family"<sup>23</sup>.

Investing in infrastructure, especially in water supply, sanitation services, etc., are also time saving and reduce women's housework load. Under Decision No.63, dated 27.01.2016 "On the reorganization of operators offering services of potable water supply, collection, disposal and treatment of sewerage", water supply and sewerage enterprises offer water supply/sanitation and sewerage services to the population, including women, in their service area, as per the administrative territorial division. Planned investments in water and sewerage service from the state budget and foreign financing for 2019 amount to 9,919,500,000 ALL, for 2020 are 10,737,060,000 ALL and for 2021 are 11,541,290,000 ALL. In the area of wastes referred to in Law Nr.10463, dated 22.09.2011 "On integrated waste management" the service is again provided to the entire population, i.e. including women. Planned investments in the integrated waste management from the state budget and foreign financing for 2019 amount to 1,380,000,000 ALL, for 2020 are 1,450,000,000 ALL and for 2021 are 1,450,000,000 ALL. Awareness campaigns and training have so to been undertaken with house wives and schools on waste management and disposal<sup>24</sup>.

## **8. Has your country introduced austerity/fiscal consolidation measures, such as cuts in public expenditure or public sector downsizing, over the past five years?**

✓ **YES.**

As an example of austerity towards public sector downsizing, the reorganization of key ministries following central elections of 2017 can be set forth, which resulted in the merger of some ministries and dissolving certain sectors, or transferring / intertwining tasks with other sectors. For instance the responsibility on issues related to gender equality and the fight against domestic violence was attributed to the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, while it had earlier been the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth<sup>25</sup>, which was dissolved as a Ministry. Currently, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, apart from responsible for health, is also responsible for developing policies in addressing gender-based violence, abuse with child, women and other groups, gender equality, protection of children's rights, non-discrimination because of sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity and minority, etc.,<sup>26</sup>. Reorganization and downsizing of the public sector was performed even earlier, following adoption of the administrative-territorial reform (in 2015), reflected in the merger of certain structures of former municipalities which today are Administrative Units with a reduced staff. Also moves and reorganization, i.e. within structures of an institution or overloading an individual with a set of additional obligations and responsibilities depending on amendments in the legal framework, but not accompanied by wage increase, bonuses on leave, etc., are not lacking. Typically, this can be

<sup>23</sup>"Public Perceptions and Attitudes towards Gender Equality in Albania" (2016) prepared by UNDP with the financial support of the Government of Sweden.

<sup>24</sup>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH to the account of German Federal Government

<sup>25</sup> For the period September 2013-September 2017

<sup>26</sup> While the responsibilities for youth have passed to the former Ministry of Education and Sports – currently, the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth, responsibilities for employment have passed to the former Ministry of Finance – currently, the Ministry of Finance and Economy, etc.

illustrated with the structure of a municipality where the responsibility to cover the duties and functions of the Gender Equality Employee, Local Coordinator against Domestic Violence, the specialist for Minority, Diversity, or Persons with disabilities, or employees of Child Protection Unit, not infrequently can be found as responsibilities assigned to a single person (all, or most of them), irrespective of whether or not they are reflected in the description of the first job position for which this person is paid. There appears to have been no nation wide assessment of the impact of these measures on women / men, while there have been attempts to conduct assessments of the impact of these measures, once in place, more in the framework of the administrative-territorial reform implementation (local assessments, mostly related to the way of benefitting services in relevant municipalities and administrative units). In this context, we can bring as an illustration the assessment of the functioning and effectiveness of the Coordinated Referral Mechanisms at local level (2015), where one of the problems identified is exactly the overload of the person covering the Local Coordinator position against domestic violence. The assessment conducted highlights the reflection of consequences of this overload on the time, manner and the approach to addressing the case (i.e. in the woman's life primarily, but also children's or men's, victims / survivors of domestic violence), and on a decrease in the effectiveness of the mechanism in practice (rare multi-disciplinary meetings, data on cases addressed, not always systematic, etc.)<sup>27</sup>.

## II. POVERTY ERADICATION, SOCIAL PROTECTION AND SOCIAL SERVICES

### **Critical areas of concern:**

- A. Women and poverty
- B. Education and training of women
- C. Women and health
- I. Human rights of women
- L. The girl child

### 9. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to reduce/eradicate poverty among women and girls?

- ✓ **Promoted poor women's access to decent work through active labor market policies (e.g. job training, skills, employment subsidies, etc.) and targeted measures)**
- ✓ **Broadened access to land, housing, finance, technology and/or agricultural extension services**
- ✓ **Supported women's entrepreneurship and business development activities**
- ✓ **Introduced or strengthened social protection programmes for women and girls (e.g. cash transfers for women with children, public works/employment guarantee schemes for women of working-age, pensions for older women)**
- ✓ **Introduced/strengthened low-cost legal services for women living in poverty**
- Other (explain)

Reduction of poverty of women and girls is one of the specific objectives<sup>28</sup> of the National Strategy on Gender Equality (NSGE) and its Action Plan 2016-2020, upon fulfillment of which a number of positive results in terms of economic strengthening of women in urban and rural areas are expected to be achieved.

Albania is a party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). This Convention and General Recommendation 21 of the CEDAW Committee on Marriage and Family Relationships guarantee the women's rights to participate and benefit on an equal basis with men, putting special emphasis on the women's rights to own, manage, enjoy and dispose of property. This

<sup>27</sup> Final Report: Analysis of the functioning of the Coordinated Community Response to domestic violence at local level in Albania (2015), prepared by E. Metaj, drafted with the support of UNDP Albania and funded with the financial support of the Swedish Government. See: <http://www.al.undp.org/content/albania/en/home/library/poverty/functioning-of-the-coordination-mechanism-for-referral-and-treat.html>

<sup>28</sup>National Strategy on Gender Equality 2016-2020, specific objective 1.4, p. 23

right, as underlined by the Committee "is essential to women's right to enjoy financial independence and is key to its ability to provide livelihood and housing, as well as sufficient nutrition for themselves and their families" .

Studies<sup>29</sup> show that Albania should do more to properly respect women's property rights. Data collected from these studies show that the situation of women in rural areas is less favorable. The main factors that contributed to this situation were limited knowledge of women on their property rights, problems and deficiencies in the legislation (as it is the case of cohabitation), inaccuracies in judicial and administrative practices, and lack of monitoring the implementation of law in respecting gender equality. This situation should be improved by guaranteeing and developing women's property rights. Improvements in legislation, increasing women's access to institutions for property rights (the property reform, institution today Cadastre) monitoring the implementation of legislation, training of central and local staff who deal with property rights, as well as awareness campaigns to inform and promote women's rights. These measures should be planned in accordance with NSGE 2016-2020.

Law No. 110/2018 "On the Notary" has brought novelty in matters of gender equality regulation towards protection of women's and girls' property. More specifically, notarial acts that contain transfer of immovable property, shall necessarily contain the statement of the matrimonial property regime, by expressly qualifying the presumption of legal co-ownership, in cases when the property has been acquired during marriage and the spouses have not specified the separate assets regime by Contract. According to Article 112 of the Law "On the Notary", as regards the content of the inheritance certificate, the notary shall necessarily specify in the content of the act that, irrespective of the circle of heirs at the time of registration of the Inheritance Certificate at the institution responsible for the registration of immovable property, it may not violate the part of the spouse presumed co-owner for the assets obtained during the marriage. Also, the notary shall necessarily attach to the relevant act the marriage certificate(s) of the surviving spouse. The same protection is found in this law in connection with procedures for the alienation of the immovable property under the marital property regime in community. Accordingly, in the cases of alienation or recognition of ownership over immovable properties or of the real rights over them by natural person, the notary attaches to the relevant notary act the family and/or marriage certificate of the purchasing party. The notary makes the relevant description in the contract citing, as purchaser/co-owner the non-present spouse, *ipso jure*, due to gaining the ownership rights during the marriage, in the marital property regime. Also, in cases when finding that the immovable property acquired during the marriage, for which the notary act on the alienation or the recognition of the ownership on the immovable objects or the real rights on them is claimed, results having been registered only in the name of one of the spouses and, the spouse presumed as the co-owner has passed away, shall require the issuance of the inheritance certificate for the spouse presumed co-owner and the registration of the heirs in the certificate of property ownership, for which the property alienation or recognition is claimed. Legal measures provided for in this law shall assist the competent authorities to prevent the arbitrary actions of the head of the household (men) to dispose of the property of women and girls while preserving the properties of the latter from abusive alienation. The National Chamber of Notaries has adopted "Guidelines on strengthening gender equality in notarial practice - South East European Countries"<sup>30</sup>. The implementation of this guideline in notarial practices shall ensure addressing gender equality issues by notaries in property transaction cases.

Law no. 111/2018 "On cadastre", regulates gender equality issues related to the registration of the legal ownership property. If the property, subject to the transfer of ownership contract, is a property acquired during the marriage, in accordance with Article 76 of the Family Code, registration in the relevant section of the property card is made jointly owned by both spouses, as long as they do not prove being subject to a separate marital property regime. This measure shall avoid the practice of registering the

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<sup>29</sup>For more information, see: "Women's property rights in Albania", second edition, 2016, prepared with the support of UN Women and the financial support of the Swedish Government.

<sup>30</sup>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH to the account of German Federal Government

property in the name of the head of the household and shall limit the numerous practical cases of transferring ownership of the family immovable property from the head, who in practice does not obtain or does not deem it reasonable to obtain the spouse's consent. Also, this law entitles the local Department to correct or update cadastral data on immovable property in joint ownership of both spouses, acquired during the marriage prior to the entry into force of this law, if this is required in writing by the spouse in whose name the property is not registered. This provision shall also apply to registration of legalized properties, and for registration of the Contract Agreement, Order Contract and promise of sale contract, when the latter aim to transfer in the future the ownership of the facility under construction.

As regards gender policies and relevant legal measures, the Albanian government has been particularly active adding subsidies to employers hiring women from specific groups. Concretely, by decision of the Council of Ministers Nr.189, dated 02.04.2014 "On some amendments and additions to the Decision No.27 dated 11.01.2012" of the Council of Ministers, "On employment promotion programme for women of specific groups" incentives were increased for employers to create and maintain working relationships with women from specific groups for long duration. Specifically, monthly financing up to 100 per cent of the compulsory social and health insurance contributions (part of the employer's contribution) was limited to the availability of labor contracts with women from specific groups, at least for one year. In addition, by decision of the Council of Ministers No. 73, dated 27.01.2016 "On some amendments and additions to the Decision no. 27, dated 11.01.2012 of the Council of Ministers "On employment promotion programme for women of specific groups", as amended, incentives were further increased for employers to hire women from specific groups. Concretely, the state undertook to pay for the employee up to six wages at a rate of 115 per cent of the minimum wage at national level, for the first year of employment of women from specific groups, who are designated to be head of the household and child-mothers with dependent children aged under 18.

Law No.15 / 2019 "On Employment Promotion" has foreseen some specific groups, which the law calls disadvantaged groups as opposed to the other labor force, such as<sup>31</sup>: l) victims of trafficking / potential victims of trafficking; j) victims of gender-based violence and victims of domestic violence; k) mothers aged under 18. Identification of specific groups expressed by the Law "On employment promotion" is an indicator of the Albanian government focus on certain women's groups, which will be subject to future employment promotion policies. The National Employment Service periodically assesses the measures used by the Methodology for Participatory Inclusive Assessment<sup>32</sup>.

Under the Law No. 65/2016 on "Social Enterprises in the Republic of Albania", Social Enterprises are also recognized in Albania as non-profit organizations aimed at hiring people disadvantaged in the labor market, such as: persons handled with social assistance, persons with disabilities, orphans, women victims of violence and trafficking etc. Pursuant to this law, it was approved DCM. 56, dated 31.01.2018 "On determining specific categories of disadvantaged groups", which in article 1 stipulates that Social Enterprises contribute to social protection and support of the persons and disadvantaged groups through employment and facilitating access to the labor market. This DCM defines as disadvantaged groups, among others: (i) social assistance beneficiaries; (ii) women living in rural areas: a) where the average unemployment rate exceeds 50% of the national average rate for at least two calendar years, b) where the female's unemployment rate is over 150% of the male's average unemployment rate for at least two of the last three calendar years; (lii) women and girls victims / potential victims of trafficking, exploitation and domestic violence.

Improvements in these five years are also noted in support of women's entrepreneurship. The "Action Plan for supporting women entrepreneurs 2014-2020<sup>33</sup>", consists of five main pillars aimed at

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31 During the consultation phase of this Law, the Center for Legal Initiatives proposed to specify better the term "victims of gender-based violence" respectively in: (I) victims of human trafficking; (ii) victims of domestic violence, (iii) victims of sexual violence, (iv) other victims of gender-based violence. But this proposal was not accepted.

32 PIA- Participatory Inclusive Assessment, ILO

33 Drafted with the support of UN Women and approved by Order of the Minister of the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Entrepreneurship, no. 339, dated 19.06.2014

promoting policies for women entrepreneurs; training and educational programmes; increased access to finance through greater involvement in current schemes / new financial support; setup of network stakeholders in support of women entrepreneurs; as well as support of women in rural areas. Coordination and implementation of this Action Plan is realized through the Advisory Group<sup>34</sup> with representatives (e) institutions and interested stakeholders, including associations in support of women entrepreneurs and other civil society organizations. Implementation of this plan has resulted in a number of positive developments related, among other things, to: providing training for women as part of the first activity for the establishment of a business center for women; development of fundraising programmes<sup>35</sup> and designing project fiches to be applied and involved in EU IPA funds<sup>36</sup>; efforts to create a database for women entrepreneurs<sup>37</sup>, etc. Further, in the framework of the cooperation agreement between the Albanian Government and the Italian Government in support of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) a change of procedures was enabled<sup>38</sup> to finance projects for women entrepreneurs, granting a bonus to all projects proposed by women entrepreneurs. Hence, 14% of the winning projects went in favor of women entrepreneurs for 2016.

By Decision of the Council of Ministers No.592, dated 10.09.2014 "On the establishment of the fund in support of women entrepreneurs", a fund with a total value of 26,500,000 ALL was created for an implementation period of four years. This fund is aimed at subsidizing the loan interest rate to micro, small and medium enterprises, which are run by women as owners or administrators. As a result, in 2015 an amount of 5,000,000 ALL was foreseen for implementation out of the state budget. In 2016, the disbursement of state budget funds managed by the Albanian Investment Development Agency (AIDA) was enabled in the amount of 16,087,723 ALL, of which benefited 36 women entrepreneurs. AIDA also reports that for the period 2014 – 2017, out of four active funds managed by this Agency, benefited 77 (seventy seven) women entrepreneurs<sup>39</sup>, namely: 31 beneficiaries from the creative economy fund, 14 beneficiaries from the competitiveness fund, 5 beneficiaries from the innovation fund and 27 beneficiaries from the start-up fund. Concrete measures targeted at women entrepreneurs, for all four funds, according to the latest forecasts of the "Support for Economic Development" programme, in the Medium Term Budget Plan (MBP) 2019-2021 (Objective 1: Increase the competitiveness of the economy in the regional market by providing grant funds), are outlined below:

<b>Output 1: Subsidized handicrafts subjects</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Forecast</b>
Amount	10	20	20	20
Total cost (in thousand ALL)	5,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Performance Indicator: the number of businesses owned by women, benefiting from the scheme 3 (Creative Economy Handicraft)	90%	92%	94%	95%
<b>Output 2: Start Up subsidized subjects</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Forecast</b>
Amount	14	20	20	20
Total cost (in thousand ALL)	7,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Performance Indicator: The number of businesses owned by women, benefiting from the scheme 2 (Start-Up)	50%	55%	60%	65%

<sup>34</sup>By Order nr.340 / 2014 of the Minister of the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Entrepreneurship

<sup>35</sup> With the support of UN Women and referring to the Croatian experience

<sup>36</sup> In this context, during 2017 with the support of the UN Women was prepared the project "Entrepreneurship of women" with 4,000,000 EUR grants and 2,000,000 EUR technical assistance, trainings and advice to women entrepreneurs.

<sup>37</sup>Upon statistics reflected in the Register of Enterprises, INSTAT report, NRC and GDT

<sup>38</sup> Change implemented by the Italian Cooperation with the contribution of the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Entrepreneurship

<sup>39</sup> <http://aida.gov.al/images/ckeditor/AIDA%20NE%20MBESHJETJE%20TE%20GRAVE%20SIPERMARRESE.pdf>

<b>Output 3: Subjects subsidized by the Competitiveness Fund</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Forecast</b>
Amount	0	20	20	20
Total cost (in thousand ALL)	18,000	28,000	28,000	28,000
Performance Indicator: The number of businesses owned by women benefiting from the scheme 1 (Competitiveness)	20%	22%	25%	30%
<b>Output 4: Subjects subsidized by the Innovation Fund</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Forecast</b>
Amount	0	25	25	25
Total cost (in thousand ALL)	5,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Performance Indicator: The number of businesses owned by women, benefiting from the scheme 4 (Innovation)	40%	43%	50%	55%

Economic empowerment of women has been the focus of economic promotion projects, where women have been beneficiaries of trainings for start-ups, innovation, entrepreneurship, career counseling, vocational courses etc., up to financial support for their businesses, in sectors such as agriculture, fishery, agribusiness, tourism, etc.<sup>40</sup>. Even non-profit organizations have made a significant contribution in this regard<sup>41</sup>

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development also plans measures that address poverty reduction and economic empowerment, especially for women in rural areas. Guidelines for use of the Fund for Agriculture and Rural Development for National Schemes foresees 5 points (bonus) for women applicants for Investment Schemes. Regarding National Schemes Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development for 2018 several measures were implemented, such as: (i) support for investment in agro-tourism versus the business plan, at 50% of the total value of tax bills, but not more than 20 million ALL - of which benefited 5 women applicants; (ii) support for the establishment of incubators about production of traditional products of the area, at a value of 70% of the tax bills total value, but no more than 15 million ALL, versus the business plan - of which benefited 5 women applicants; (iii) support for the establishment or reconstruction of facilities for activities on rural tourism from 6 to 10 rooms, at 50% of tax bills value but no more than one million five hundred thousand ALL - of which benefited 5 women applicants. Meanwhile, through Extension Service programmes, for 2018, 7,300 women farmers have been contacted and offered extension services, or 11% of the total number of farmers already contacted and offered this service. Pursuant to the Joint Instruction with the Ministry of Finance no. 11, dated 21.06.2018 "On procedures and method of management of the programme fund for agriculture and rural development" the number of women applicants at the National Support Schemes for 2018 was 779, of which 734 women in direct schemes and 45 in investment schemes; the number of beneficiaries of these schemes was 627 women, of which 607 in direct schemes and 20 women in investment schemes. The budget dedicated to trainings with women farmers for 2018 was 1.4 million ALL and for 2019 is projected to be 1.55 million ALL. The number of women beneficiaries of the National Schemes and those having benefited access to agricultural information for all of the reporting period, results as follows:

<b>No.</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
1.	Women beneficiaries of the National Schemes	511	540	479	159	627
2.	Women with access to agricultural information	7500	7500	7100	7300	7300

<sup>40</sup>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH to the account of German Federal Government

<sup>41</sup> The Women's Center "Light Steps" in Shkodra has been working for years for women's economic empowerment and especially in promoting their entrepreneurship. In this context, together with the two other organizations Reggio Terzo Mondo and Partners for Development, with European Union funds, has awarded grants for 24 women's groups in three municipalities, respectively in Puka, Fushë Arrëz and Vau-Dejes, supporting them in their business activities as well as enabling the purchase of various working tools and materials, thus increasing the quality and quantity of their products

Economic empowerment of women and the creation of better self-employment opportunities<sup>42</sup> remains a priority domain of work for civil society organizations as well, which, among others, have also contributed to the creation of women's economic or agro-tourism clusters<sup>43</sup> capacity building and networking<sup>44</sup> dedicated to rural development, promotion of LEADER<sup>45</sup> approach, establishment of community structures to address community problems, etc. As a result of advocating efforts, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development has drafted the draft law "On the establishment and functioning of Local Action Groups" with the aim of facilitating implementation of the LEADER approach, as well as strengthening the voice of rural communities and the most vulnerable groups in these areas, notably women and youth.

## 10. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve access to social protection for women and girls?

### ✓ Introduced/strengthened social protection for unemployed women (e.g. unemployment benefits, public works programmes, social assistance)

- Introduced or strengthened conditional cash transfers
- Introduced or strengthened unconditional cash transfers
- Introduced or strengthened non-contributory social pensions
- Reformed contributory social protection schemes to strengthen women's access and benefit levels
- Improved access to the above for specific populations (e.g. women in informal employment, including domestic workers; migrant and refugee women; women in humanitarian settings)
- Other (explain)

Albania has approved the National Social Protection Strategy 2015- 2020<sup>46</sup>, which addresses issues related to: a) economic assistance and disability; b) the existing social care services and those proposed; and c) any other issues in the field of social care. Through policies and strategic objectives for the development of social care services, the output aimed till 2020 is that every individual and family, as a category in need, has progressively equal access to and benefit from an operational service system based on the principles of decentralization and deinstitutionalization. This strategy has prioritized families and vulnerable groups such as female-headed households; families at risk of exclusion, including Roma ones; children and adults with disabilities; children living and working on the streets and not attending school, children in conflicts with the law, children and women affected by domestic violence, the long-term unemployed; individuals infected with HIV or narcotic substance abusers; the elderly lacking support<sup>47</sup>. In the forecasts for the implementation of the economic assistance scheme, consideration and assessment is given to the impact of the decision to grant economic aid for women, in relation to the women's position in the family, as well as the administration of economic payments from them.

Law no. 47/2014 "On some additions and amendments to Law no. 9355, dated 10.03.2005, "On social assistance and services", brought legal improvements by providing for the right to seek and receive economic aid from old women and each of the spouses, in cases they are in the process of marriage dissolution. These provisions serve to a better management of economic assistance for women in need.

Under Decision of the Council of Ministers No.955, dated 7.12.2016 "On the criteria, procedures, documentation and a measure of economic assistance benefit" rules and safeguards are laid down to

<sup>42</sup> An important role here has played the Community Development Center "Today for the Future" through awareness of women on unpaid work, the role of women in the rural area and further support of productive women groups in the areas of Tirana, Durrës, Lezha, Puka, Shkodra, Pogradec and Korca. Over 150 women in these areas participated in campaigns undertaken in cooperation with UN Women and the Ministry of Agriculture during 2016; as a result the supportive measures of 2017-2018 resulted in a score for application of women farmers.

<sup>43</sup> Created by the Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM) with the support of UN Women in the Municipality of Belsh, 2015-2016.

<sup>44</sup> For example. Albanian Network for Rural Development (ANRD), established in 2016. In September 2017, the First Albanian Rural Parliament was held – an advocating, capacity building and networking platform for rural development.

<sup>45</sup> Instrument of the Common European Agricultural Policy (CAP), promoted by IDM through ANRD

<sup>46</sup> Approved by DCM. 1071, dated 23.12.2015

<sup>47</sup> National Social Protection Strategy for 2015-2020

ensure that the woman is an important actor both in the application for and benefiting from the economic assistance. Specifically, it is expressly recognized the right of the victims of domestic violence to benefit economic assistance for the duration of the protection order or emergency protection order. The benefit of economic assistance from female-headed households, with at least one child attending basic education, will not be time limited. For families in need, application is required to be jointly filed with the spouse. In cases where there is a process for dissolution of marriage, application shall be filed separately from each spouse. Also, the right to receive and handle the financial assistance for families in need is attributable to the wife. Hence, the role of women was recognized as primary in family care and management of household income.

The draft law "On Social Assistance in the Republic of Albania" aims to regulate the method of granting economic assistance, disability payments and babies bonus, to ensure social protection for all citizens. In addition, the draft law guarantees support for families and individuals in need who can not meet their basic vital needs due to limited social economic opportunities and skills. According to Article 7 of the draft law, beneficiaries of social assistance will be specifically the victims of trafficking, after leaving the social care institutions, till their employment, as well as victims of domestic violence, for the duration of the protection order or the emergency protection order, which are not handled in social care institutions. Law no.104 / 2014 "On some Amendments and Additions to Law No. 7703, dated 11.05.1993, "On Social Insurances in the Republic of Albania", as amended, brought as a novelty the social pension scheme. This law, among others, had two basic goals: (1) to build a fair pension system where pension amount depends directly on paid contributions, which among other things, will stimulate increased participation in the contribution scheme; (2) by resetting the system parameters, to achieve a gradual improvement of its financial stability. Article 5/1 of this law stipulates that the Social Pension is a benefit granted to every albanian citizen who: (i) has reached the age of 70 years; (ii) is a permanent resident in Albania for at least the last five years; (iii) is not eligible for any pension from the mandatory scheme and (iv) has no income, or, income from any other source is smaller than the income earned from the social pension. The amount of the social pension is equal to the minimum income from the partial retirement pension of 15 years ensured upon a minimum wage, calculated on 31.12.2014. The social pension amount for persons having income from other sources, constitutes the difference between the social pension and other income owned by the beneficiary. Therefore, the social pension is always a minimum base amount. In 2015, when it was decided for the first time, the social pension amount as approved by DCM, was 6,750 ALL. Currently, due to annual indexation according to the inflation index, *the social pension amount since 01.07.2018 has reached to 7,283 ALL per month*. Exception shall be those cases of individuals having partial income from ownership, bank interest, shares, etc. In these cases, the social pension amount granted is less than 7,262 ALL per month. The deduction is made depending on income.

<b>Social pensions</b>	<b>T1 2018</b>	<b>Q2 2018</b>	<b>T3 2018</b>
New beneficiaries	93	74	74
Additional amount (new - out of the scheme)	29	0	13
total beneficiaries	2,618	2,618	2,631
Fund (thousand ALL)	38.880	43.902	43.629
The minimum social pension	7.064	7.064	7.262
The average monthly benefit ALL	4.978	5.590	5.541

According to data from the Institute of Social Security, since the entry into force of this law (2015), about 2,173 women have been benefiting social pension. Another amendment to this law that has affected women has to do with increased retirement age for women (from 60 to 65 years) with a progressive increase by two months each year until reaching the maximum retirement age. In 2056, the retirement age for both men and women will be 67 years old.

Upon the Council of Ministers Normative Act no. 1, dated 25.01.2017 "On amendment of the Law no. 9136, dated 11.9.2003, "On the collection of mandatory contributions to social and health insurance in the Republic of Albania", the lawmaker has prescribed the new procedure for calculating mandatory contributions to the unpaid household employer. Mandatory contributions to health insurance for the self-employed person, including the self-employed employer and the unpaid household employee are now calculated according to the level envisaged as a percentage of twice the minimum wage at national level, adopted by Decision of the Council of Ministers.

In addition, Law no. 121/2016 "On Social Care Services in the Republic of Albania"<sup>48</sup>, derived as a necessity of the current needs to have a well-organized and functional system of delivery and benefit of social care services and was therefore developed according to the principles on gender equality. It sets out the provision of specialized services for abused, raped or trafficked women and girls, for categories that need such services, as well as sheltering service for pregnant women and girls or single parent with children aged up to 1 year. In addition, a Social Pact has been signed for the first time, thereby promising 70 new services across the country, especially for 27 municipalities where social services have not been previously offered. The Social Pact aims to bring together all agencies operating in this field with the purpose of ensuring for every citizen equal access to the services offered by the state and other licensed providers offering such services. Steps have been taken in support of LGUs (Local Self-government Units) to develop, implement and monitor social care plans and to raise a social resource fund. The aim is also to support the operation of integrated social protection programmes for families and children, through the establishment of appropriate social protection structures in municipalities and recruitment of a qualified staff<sup>49</sup>.

Following efforts to meet the standards of the Council of Europe Convention "On Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence" (Istanbul Convention), the Parliament of Albania adopted the Law no.22 / 2018 "On social housing" which is the most important act for the implementation of social housing programmes, and which constitutes its natural purpose<sup>50</sup>. The law reflected the new international standard preceding fulfillment of obligations by the Albanian state for protection and support of the social strata, and in particular victims of violence. One of the obligations stemming from the Istanbul Convention for member states, is taking the necessary steps to ensure that victims have access to services such as housing, which is one of the main support services for them (Article 20 of the Convention). Referring to the terms "victim of domestic violence", as defined in the Istanbul Convention (article 2/46), the law has broadened and strengthened support for categories of victims stipulated by this Convention. Concretely, the law provides as beneficiaries of this service three categories of violated women and girls: 1) Victims of domestic violence; 2) Victims of trafficking; 3) Potential victims of trafficking. In addition to the above, the law handles: (i) Specialized housing for victims of trafficking/potential victims of trafficking and victims of domestic violence: 1. Specialized housing for victims of trafficking/potential victims of trafficking and victims of domestic violence is provided with the service of specialized social workers and is guaranteed protection by the state police officers in cases of danger to life and health; 2. Specialized housing for victims of trafficking/potential victims of trafficking and victims of domestic violence must be equipped with the necessary infrastructure for police notification in cases of risk or emergency; 3. Specialized housing for victims of trafficking /potential victims of trafficking and victims of domestic violence shall be leased, subject to compliance with conditions, rights and obligations arising from the social housing rental programme, enshrined herein. These categories benefit from the specialized housing programme until benefiting from other social housing programmes. (ii) Specialized housing for child-mothers: Specialized housing for child-mothers provide accomodation of child-mothers during and after childbearing until the child is 5 years of age, when they are single mothers, have no housing opportunities due to rejection of their situation by their families and when they do not have enough income to ensure housing. Regarding

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<sup>48</sup> Prepared with the support of UNICEF

<sup>49</sup>Coordinated efforts of UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA and UN Women, under a joint UN project "Leave no one behind", funded by the Swiss government.

<sup>50</sup> Even civil society organizations, such as HRDC, CLI, "D&E", etc., have given their contribution in drafting this law.

requirements about applications for housing subsidies, it has been noted that applicants have difficulty in collecting all required documentation, costs for obtaining information and delays in providing response as to whether or not they are beneficiaries. Decisions of the Council of Ministers which will deal with procedures and criteria for the housing of disadvantaged women, are currently subject to the drafting process<sup>51</sup>.

## 11. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve health outcomes for women and girls in your country?

- ✓ **Promoted women's access to health services through expansion of universal health coverage or public health services**
- ✓ **Expanded specific health services for women and girls, including sexual and reproductive health services, mental, maternal health and HIV services**
- ✓ **Undertaken gender-specific public awareness/health promotion campaigns**
- ✓ **Provided gender-responsiveness training for health service providers**
- ✓ **Strengthened comprehensive sexuality education in schools or through community programmes**
- ✓ **Provided refugee women and girls as well as women and girls in humanitarian settings with access to sexual and reproductive health services**
- Other (explain)

In 2014 Albania's government began implementation of the national free check-up programme for the population aged 40-60 years. In 2016, this check-up was extended to all individuals aged 35-70 years. More than one thousand citizens a day benefit this programme and the opportunity for free check-up is extended to over one million citizens falling in this target group. The "National Health Strategy, 2016-2020" was drafted in the framework of the Government Programme for the protection and improvement of population health. Even though formally limited to five years, this Strategy projects the underlying objectives for improvement of the health care for the next decade, i.e. until 2025. The strategy provides for increasing investment in health infrastructure and medical equipment to ensure universal access to and quality of health care delivery<sup>52</sup>.

Health care for women and reproductive health constitute one of the main chapters of the Basic Primary Healthcare Service Package<sup>53</sup>, reviewed and approved by DCM. No. 101 dated 04.02.2015. This package is offered by the primary health care services extended across the country. Integrated health care for women in health care centers covers services in the domain of prevention, promotion, treatment and rehabilitation. These services include: care pre-, during- and post-partum about the mother and child, family planning, prevention and early detection of breast cancer and cervical cancer, sexual health, management of violence and abuse of women, domestic violence, prevention and management of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) as well as other infections of the reproductive system. This service aims to reduce maternal and prenatal morbidity and mortality, unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions and early pregnancies, premature and underweight births, to offer safe abortion services and checking STIs and other infections of the reproductive system. Care for safe motherhood is focused on providing quality care for women concerning the childbirth, including pre-conceiving care, pregnancy care, delivery and post-partum care. Prenatal/antenatal care includes education, counseling, screening and treatment to monitor well-being of the mother and fetus. Postnatal care (confinement period), determined to end 6-8 weeks post-partum, includes 3 postnatal necessary visits<sup>54</sup> to prevent, detect and manage potential complications and, as necessary, to refer them in due time. In cases of a Cesarean section delivery, an additional visit may be needed within 8-15 days after

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<sup>51</sup>Preparation of bylaws regarding the Law on social housing, is being carried out with the support of UNDP

<sup>52</sup> National Health Strategy 2016-2020 (draft) February 2017. See:

[http://www.nationalplanningcycles.org/sites/default/files/planning\\_cycle\\_repository/albania/draft\\_strategt\\_albania\\_2016-2020.pdf](http://www.nationalplanningcycles.org/sites/default/files/planning_cycle_repository/albania/draft_strategt_albania_2016-2020.pdf)

<sup>53</sup> [www.shendetesia.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Paketa\\_e\\_rishikuar\\_e\\_miratuar.pdf](http://www.shendetesia.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Paketa_e_rishikuar_e_miratuar.pdf)

<sup>54</sup> Respectively, the first visit within 24 hours following hospital discharge after childbirth, b) the second visit in the first week after birth (between 2-7days), c) the third visit by the second week until the eighth week after birth.

birth. Women who need additional care should be identified, evaluated and be cared for to provide additional care during pregnancy according to an individual visit, check-up and follow-up plan by the health care staff along with the relevant specialist. Prevention, detection and case management of violence or abuse - constitutes a set of rules to be followed in this regard, with the aim to conduct during the first medical visit, screening for domestic violence that may have occurred to a girl/woman at different periods of her life or at the present moment, starting from the age of 14 years. Still, any girl/woman starting from the age of 14 years, during health visit at home or at the center should once a year be screened in her anamnesis as to whether she has experienced physical, sexual or emotional abuse. Any pregnant woman in the first antenatal visit, during each quarter of pregnancy visit and post-natal check, should also be asked about problems of violence and abuse. This chapter of the Package describes also measures to be taken towards counseling for taking HIV tests, the use of emergency contraception, referral to a gynecologist, social worker, psychologist or other specialized services, referral of cases to members of the Coordinated Referral Mechanism, information and written materials on violence (leaflets, brochures, contacts, etc.). The family planning service consists of counseling, standardized, updated and important information on family planning methods currently available and their use to help a client choose a particular method. Prevention and management of the reproductive IST tract infections and HIV/AIDS, prevention and check of reproductive tract cancers, care for women going through menopause, care for women with gynecological problems and care for sexual health for girls/women and boys/men are also prescribed in the Basic Service Package. In connection with service for screening and early detection of cervical cancer in women of reproductive age, based on changes in this package, guidelines and clinical protocols have been outlined for primary health care; trainings to medical staff at the primary level have been offered; the most appropriate strategies to invite women in the screening program for cervical cancer have been tested and, as a result of these interventions, the Ministry of Health launched in January 2019 "The National Cervical Cancer Screening Programme", based on the HPV test. Over the years 2015-2018, capacities and structures in major regions have been evaluated for the provision of cervical cancer screening and treatment services and, initiatives have been taken to strengthen the capacity of specialist physicians offering the coloscopy service. Testing of pregnant women for HIV is another new component added in the revised primary health care package. Youth-friendly services are also strengthened in the new revised primary health care package. Guidelines and standards for these services have been designed and are in the process of distribution to the major regions across the country. In the course of 2014-2018, services and opportunities for voluntary testing at 8 penitentiary institutions, including women and girls in prisons (pre-trial detentions), have been strengthened as well. Support has been offered on the continuity of services provided to key populations groups at risk of HIV and AIDS (commercial sex workers, intravenous drug users, the LGBT community)<sup>55</sup>. In support of the services described in the Package above, "Guidelines for the early detection and screening of breast cancer in health care"<sup>56</sup> and "Clinical practice handbook for safe abortion" have been adopted and also sheets to obtain the informed consent by the patient in the hospital for performing surgical abortion using a curettage or by other medical means<sup>57</sup>.

In 2016, for the first time in Albania, the Prenatal Class service for pregnant women was offered at the Women's Health Center at Obstretic Gynecologic University Hospital "Queen Geraldine"<sup>58</sup>.

While regional maternity hospitals in Albania, through multidisciplinary teams of physicians, nurses and midwives are dealing with the treatment of serious complications during pregnancy and childbirth, and are also adopting the analysis of "high risk" cases for the benefit of improving perinatal care, as a routine procedure in their hospitals. This initiative emphasized the importance of team work and placed

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<sup>55</sup>These services are provided by civil society organizations, Action Plus, Stop AIDS and UNFPA support has been particularly important during the transition process of the Global Fund.

<sup>56</sup>Adopted by Order no. 284 dated 02.07.2015 of the Minister of Health

<sup>57</sup>Adopted by Order no. 491 dated 17.11.2015 of the Minister of Health

<sup>58</sup>Made possible in cooperation with the Mother and Child Hospital Foundation. See: [www.suogjeraldine.gov.al/index.php/lajme-dhe-evente/203-per-here-te-pare-ne-shqiperi-shepbimi-i-klasave-prenatale-per-grate-shtatezana-04-nentor-2016](http://www.suogjeraldine.gov.al/index.php/lajme-dhe-evente/203-per-here-te-pare-ne-shqiperi-shepbimi-i-klasave-prenatale-per-grate-shtatezana-04-nentor-2016)

mothers and newborns at the center of hospital work, making a difference for mothers and newborns receiving services at these hospitals. Access<sup>59</sup> is based on "Beyond the numbers" (BTN) methodology for examining maternal complications and mortality.

Apart from implementation of the legal and policy framework outlined above, improvement of health outcomes for women and girls is also enabled through training and strengthening of health workers' capacities in this regard. Thus, for the period 2016 - 2018 a number of 1,626 primary and secondary health workers were trained<sup>60</sup>, in all 12 counties, with modules accredited by the National Center for Continuing Education. Trainings are focused on issues related to sexual and reproductive health, prevention and control of cervical cancer, reproductive rights and sexual health, care for mother and child, quality HIV services and their stigma, prevention and treatment of sexual violence, etc.

Albania has made significant steps in strengthening comprehensive sexual education in schools, through efforts of the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth, Institute of Continuing Education, partnerships with specialized organizations of the civil society and financial support of international organizations. Starting from 2015, around 3000 (three thousand) teachers were trained<sup>61</sup> to professionally teach the subject of sexuality education. The teacher training programme contains 110 training hours spanning over a one-year period, taking place on 3-4-day modules, after hd, between which individual assignments are given to support their training in this regard. Meanwhile, the sexuality education programme entitled "Life Skills and Sexuality Education" consists of a number of modules included in the content of subjects: biology, physical education and health education. Programmes for age groups of 10-12, 12-16 and 16-18 years are mandatory and the total number of teaching hours is 140. Some civil society organizations are focused on the fight against addiction to narcotic substances, or protection of LGBTI community rights, and also deliver educational hours on such topics, youth-friendly and non-discriminatory services against youth, etc.<sup>62</sup>. It is similarly supported<sup>63</sup> the creation of awareness-raising platforms especially for areas of ICPD, such as: reproductive health, gender equality, empowered youth through the creation of the platform "Voice of youth" including 20 youth organizations and civil societies, as well as the creation of youth clubs, the peer educators network and media platform for sexual and reproductive health and gender issues.

The Ministry of Health and Social Protection in collaboration with the Institute of Public Health, undertake each October the awareness and sensibilization campaign<sup>64</sup> for all women and girls of all ages, on early detection of breast cancer and prevention according to a well-defined programme. Breast tumor is one of the tumor types mostly occurring in women, with about 550 new cases per year. In the fight against tumors, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, is working in several directions in view of the implementation of the National Cancer Control Program 2011-2020, which envisages measures in four main areas: (i) primary prevention, (ii) screening or early detection of the disease, (iii) diagnosis and treatment, and (iv) palliative care. A total of 17 mammography units have been installed at national level. With 15 stationary mammography units and 2 portable mammography units, provision of services is enabled from north to south. For 2018, the number of mammographic examinations in public institutions was 17.748, of which 5351 were mobile mammography units.

Under the Law No. 141/2014 "On some amendments to Law no. 10383, dated 24.02.2011, "On Compulsory Healthcare Insurance of the Republic of Albania", as amended, victims of trafficking, as identified by the structures of the Ministry of Interior, are covered by the Compulsory Healthcare Insurance Scheme. The health card has provided victims / potential victims of trafficking with the opportunity to benefit the whole compulsory health care insurance package including: check ups,

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<sup>59</sup>By UNFPA in close partnership with the Ministry of Health, the National Center of Quality, Safety and Accreditation of Health Institutions (NCCAHI), and other key stakeholders. See: <https://albania.unfpa.org/sq/news/përmirësimi-i-kujdesit-shëndetësor-dhe-standartizimi-i-shërbimeve-të-kujdesit-prenatal-përmes>

<sup>60</sup> The training was facilitated by the Albanian Center for Population and Development with the support of International Planned Parenthood Federation and UNFPA

<sup>61</sup> With the support of UNFPA, in collaboration with civil society organizations, such as ACPD, etc.

<sup>62</sup> Facts "Sexual Education in Albania", prepared by the Federal Centre for Health Education IPPF

<sup>63</sup> From the UNFPA Office of Albania

<sup>64</sup>These awareness campaigns are joined by a number of civil society organizations

consultations with medical specialists, taking all necessary analysis and examinations as per relevant pathologies, etc. In the framework of cooperation of a civil society association already specialized on trafficking issues with the Institute of Public Health, screening for sexually transmitted diseases (HIV / AIDS, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, Syphilis), has been made possible and the resulting positive cases have received appropriate medications and have been periodically attended to by the infectionist doctor, the family practitioner, and the organization's physician<sup>65</sup>.

The Institute of Public Health in collaboration with relevant Departments of Public Health, and with the support of international and national organizations<sup>66</sup>, continuously organizes trainings and awareness-raising activities for enhancing the employees' and health workers' capacities to deal with cases of violence against women and domestic violence.

Similarly, activities<sup>67</sup> for improving the curricula and involving gender equality issues and especially aspects dealing with violence against women and domestic violence, are organized by the Faculty of Technical Medical Sciences, as a result of which inclusion of topics on violence against women and domestic violence was made possible in some of the curricula of the Bachelor and Master level studies for the academic year 2018-2019. The final goal is to include in the curriculum of this Faculty a complete module on this issue.

Finally, Albania's positive efforts towards facilitating access to health services and ensuring approach to life preservation and safe reproductive health during humanitarian crises should be underlined. The "Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) for Emergency Reproductive Health" provides guidance on how some key interventions influence to save lives and restore comprehensive care once the acute phase of the crisis ends. MISP is a tool to save lives through the main activities to be implemented at the outset of every humanitarian crisis. In 2015, Albania officially adopted the working group on sexual and reproductive health<sup>68</sup>, which mainstreamed MISP in the Ministry of Health Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction. The training package on MISP was prepared<sup>69</sup> and accredited as well. Following this work, during 2017-2018 the Standard Operating Procedures were prepared for health workers to reduce the risk of experiencing gender-based violence in civil emergency situations. This package was made available for approval to the Ministry of Health and Social Protection (together with the Essential Services Package and standard operating procedures for handling cases of gender-based violence through multi-disciplinary approaches) and is expected to be adopted within 2019. In the meantime, steps are being taken to provide training and strengthen capacities for the implementation of these procedures, activities to be launched immediately after their adoption and entry into force.

In December 2018, the results of the second Albania Demographic and Health Survey 2017-2018 were made present and implemented by the Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) and the Institute of Public Health (IPH), under the guidance of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection<sup>70</sup>. This study provides data on demographic patterns, fertility, family planning, maternal and child health, knowledge about HIV and

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<sup>65</sup>Information forwarded by the Organization "Different and Equal" (D&E), with the primary focus on the treatment of victims/potential victims of human trafficking. In its programmes, aimed at improving health conditions of the beneficiaries, D&E has collaborated with the Albanian University - Dentistry Branch, through which free dental services are provided to beneficiaries. D&E has provided financial support for the purchase of non-reimbursable drugs to the programme beneficiaries. Periodic follow-up of beneficiaries with mental health problems and regular intake of medication, is performed by the organization's physician and the psychiatrist. Similarly, D&E organizes ongoing information sessions on various health issues offered by D&E's physician as well as other medical specialists.

<sup>66</sup>An important role here has been the UNFPA support, which upon the preparation of the relevant module and subsequent continuation of health workers' training. UNDP has also contributed to the training of representatives of health care institutions - member of Coordinated Referral Mechanisms in several municipalities of the country. The Center "Human Rights in Democracy" has also provided training for capacity building of the staff in some of the largest health centers in Tirana Municipality and Kamza Municipality about responsibilities assigned by the legislation against domestic violence and gender-based violence. This center, as an organization monitoring for years the women's/girls' pre-trial detention institution, has consistently lobbied to improve their medical treatment in pre-trial detention facilities and in the prison's hospital.

<sup>67</sup>This UNFPA initiative implemented through the partner organization Albanian Center for Population and Development (ACPD) was launched in 2017, enabling trainings of academic staff of this Faculty with international and national trainers. In addition, a whole set of support materials was made available and responsible trainers were assisted to prepare specific information about additional topics in their subject programmes. One of the training activities with this Faculty consisted in discussing the draft Essential Guideline Services and the Standard Operating Procedures for Health in handling cases of gender-based violence and domestic violence, translated and adapted to Albania by UNFPA with the support of UN Women.

<sup>68</sup> An interdisciplinary team set up by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, UNFPA, Institute of Public Health and the Center for Population and Development.

<sup>69</sup> SOPs are prepared by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection in collaboration with ACPD, with UNFPA financial support.

<sup>70</sup> With technical and financial support of the Swiss Cooperation Office (SDC), the Government, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Agency for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women).

AIDS, nutrition, empowerment of women, risk factors associated with lifestyles and Non-Communicable Diseases. This study contributes to the enrichment database both at national and international level with key demographic and health indicators, noteworthy for drafting fair policies in the service of health and well-being of citizens<sup>71</sup>.

## 12. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve education outcomes and skills for women and girls?

- ✓ **Taken measures to increase girls' access to, retention in and completion of education, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and skills development programmes**
- ✓ **Strengthened educational curricula to increase gender-responsiveness and eliminate bias, at all levels of education**
- ✓ **Provided gender equality and human rights training for teachers and other education professionals**
- ✓ **Promoted safe, harassment-free and inclusive educational environments for women and girls**
- Increased access to skills and training in new and emerging fields, especially STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and digital fluency and literacy
- ✓ **Ensured access to safe water and sanitation services and facilitated menstrual hygiene management especially in schools and other education/training settings**
- ✓ **Strengthened measures to prevent adolescent pregnancies and to enable adolescent girls to continue their education in the case of pregnancy and/or motherhood**
- Other

Legal and sub-legal acts adopted in 2014, pay particular attention to the implementation and operation of students' inclusion, with each of them being entitled the right to quality education and equal opportunities. Emphasis is also placed on the students' education of families in need, students with disabilities, Roma/Egyptian students and those with learning difficulties, offering special care to them. DCM No. 376 dated 11.06.2014, "On some additions and amendments to the Decision No. 787 regarding the addition to education and vaccination for beneficiaries in non-pilot areas, provides additional benefit of Economic Aid to enable at 100% vaccination and education for children. The implementation of this DCM has also an impact on upgrading inclusion of students from all groups in the health care education system. The purchase price of school textbooks for primary education is covered at 100% by the budget of the Ministry of Education, while some other categories of pre-university students is foreseen to benefit free textbooks, namely: a) for school-age children of basic education, victims of trafficking, who are offered assistance and support from national service centres for this group; b) school-age individuals of basic education who are in pre-trial detention /penitentiary institutions; c) for school-age children of basic education, hospitalized in the oncology service; d) for children of police officers fallen on duty; any child that comes third and above in terms of the schooling order from the same family.

In view of promoting a comprehensive and non-harassment environment for girls, a network of coordinators for gender equality and protection from discrimination has been set up in each regional education directorate and education office, extended to every school in the country. Education Departments draft on a yearly basis the annual plan of activities and trainings on issues of gender equality and against domestic violence, and they also plan concrete activities to be implemented as part of national awareness campaigns.

Directive no. 14, dated 12.02.2015 "On criteria and procedures for admission to education-oriented schools" stipulates that regarding admission to foreign language schools, the school principal, in

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<sup>71</sup> For more information see: <http://www.instat.gov.al/media/5050/adhs-2017-18-pdf.pdf>

cooperation and following consultation with the Council of Teachers, announces the criteria taking into account the gender ratio.

Directive no. 25, dated 17.08.2015 "On the academic year 2015 - 2016 in the pre-university education system", stipulates in Chapter 7, the annual training plan on gender stereotypes in education drafted by the Institute of Education Development (IED). These trainings were planned also for the non-teaching staff (inspectors) and with the participation of at least one representative from Regional Education Directorates and Education Offices. On focus of these trainings were also issues of non-discrimination. Directives of 2016 also aim addressing issues of equality and non-discrimination. Thus: Guideline No.16, dated 03.08.2016, "On the academic year 2016 - 2017 in the pre-university education system" underlines the responsibility of Regional Education Directorate/ Education Office and departments of education institutions to schedule and implement: a) trainings with teachers and the parents' community on gender stereotypes in education; b) evasion of gender stereotypes in selecting the branches and affiliations of further study in the development of education for career in education both in basic and high education. The Order No.195, dated 25.04.2016 - On approval of the document "Education and training of teachers for inclusion - Profile of inclusive teachers", defines the teacher's profile working with standards for inclusion. In addition, pursuant to DCM No. 547, dated 27.07.2016, "On the appointment of members for the composition of the National Council of Pre-University Education", selected by public competition, out of 6 members selected, 5 are women.

Directive No.16, dated 31.07.2017 "On the academic year 2017-2018 in the pre-university education system", chapter IV, section 3, "Implementation of cross-cutting strategies" stipulates that local educational units and departments of education institutions schedule and conduct training sessions with teachers and parents' community and appoint a responsible teacher in every kindergarten/school to cover and coordinate activities under the action plan, including the Action Plan of the National Strategy on Gender Equality 2016-2020. With the purpose of strengthening co-governance between the educational institution and parents, the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth, has drafted the Directive No. 24, dated 30.10.2017 "On the setup of the National Parents Council", in which has provided gender representation in the setup of this Council (paragraph 11, Article 7). Article 5 of Law No. 79/2017 "On Sports", determines prohibition of discrimination in sports activities for reasons such as political or religious belief, race, ethnicity, language, gender, sexual orientation, economic or social status.

The Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth pays due regard to the training of teachers staff and psychosocial workers and the creation of a friendly learning environment away from stigmatization and social prejudices. School directors and representatives of regional education departments took part in 2017 in the training entitled "Anti-discrimination and protection from forms of discrimination"<sup>72</sup>, which addressed also the gender-based discrimination module. The training was organized with the presence of the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination.

Increased years of schooling to 9 years, compulsory education to 16 years old, and secondary education to 21 years old, has affected the girls' duration at school thereby improving their education, their withdrawal from early work, providing further opportunities to vocational education and to some extent avoidance from early marriages. Extending and improving the service provided by the social worker and psychologist affects also the protection of girls, who require security and support due to family or social status.

The Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth has co-chaired or supported various studies, while taking into consideration the relevant findings in planning steps to improve the situation regarding treatment of inequalities and gender discrimination. For instance, in cooperation with the Institute of Public Health, a study was conducted on sound behaviors in schools. MoESY has supported the study "Discrimination of adolescents at school due to their sexual orientation and gender identity"<sup>73</sup> thus

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<sup>72</sup>In the framework of the project "Enhancing the Effectiveness of the Albanian System of Human Rights Protection and Anti-Discrimination", a joint project of the European Union and the Council of Europe, 2017.

<sup>73</sup> Performed by Pink Embassy in 6 municipalities that comprise 2/3 of the Albanian population and have urban and rural populations.

enabling and creating a more suitable environment for conducting this study. In addition, MoESY acknowledged also the study "Violence in intimate relationships among adolescence in Albania"<sup>74</sup>.

In the framework of tracking the professional knowledge, the Ministry of Tourism and Environment has completed the certification process of the "Tourist guides" and has equipped with a certificate, respectively<sup>75</sup> for: a) the year 2017 – a total of 252 guides, 65 of them (25.8%) are women and young girls; b) the year 2018 – a total of 36 guides, 14 of them (38.9%) are women and young girls; c) for the first three months of 2019 – a total of 72 guides, 28 of them (39%) are women and young girls.

In its efforts to extend the concept of inclusive education nationwide and to increase enrollment rates in preschool and school institutions of children from vulnerable groups, MoESY was supported by partners and collaborators, with an important place taken by international organizations<sup>76</sup> and civil society organizations focused on children's rights. In this context, care has been taken to create a more inclusive and tolerant environment especially for Roma girls and boys in school, addressing also harassment at school and cases at risk of school dropouts. At the same time, the Institute of Education Development is supported<sup>77</sup> in the process of developing preschool curricula from drafting to reviewing the final document, by looking at them with gender and non-discrimination lens. International and national expertise is ensured also for training a group of 20 national experts, who would serve as preschool curriculum drafters. In addition, curriculum drafters were also introduced to the Early Childhood Development (ECD) resource pack, including its gender modules, which served as a referral model for the development of preschool curriculum framework (2016). Following the adoption of this framework, work proceeded also with training of preschool teachers, and discussion with Faculties of Education Sciences to integrate this curriculum into their programmes. A number of 544 principals and pre-school teachers were exposed to the new framework curriculum and its contents. Gender equality, non-discrimination, human rights and diversity elements were also part of the Schools Directors Training Programme. The review of the first to ninth grade curricula was performed even in 2018, through research methods on research work, classroom observations and stakeholders interviews. In particular, this analysis highlighted once again the concern over gender stereotypes and recommendations in this regard emphasize the importance of turning the curriculum into a deliberate mechanism to promote a culture of non-discrimination and equality between men and women, boys and girls.

From the information conveyed by civil society organizations, it turns out that they are organizing a series of awareness-raising campaigns mainly in areas where members of the Roma / Egyptian community are located in order to raise awareness among women / girls of the community about the importance of vocational training as a prerequisite to be included in the labor market. Ongoing trainings with women / girls of the community have been carried out as well, not only to raise awareness and information on their rights and protection mechanisms but also to get familiar with programmes of socio-economic support and involvement procedures in them.<sup>78</sup> Significant projects implemented in this regard are those of CSOs that focus on increasing the number of girls and women in vocational education and training, direct support of vocational training centers and vocational schools, curriculum design for career orientation and accredited guesthouse service for public vocational training centers, review of the vocational education curriculum framework of the Vocational Education and Training Agency, revising curricula from a gender perspective, etc<sup>79</sup>.

After assessing the situation of vocational training public providers for women's accessibility, the curricula of certain vocational training public providers have been revised, and new ones are proposed, making them more accessible and attractive to women. Sensibilization campaigns are underway to

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<sup>74</sup> Conducted by the Albanian Women Empowerment Network (AWEN), 2017-2018.

<sup>75</sup> Data available from the Directorate General of Policies and Development of Tourism at this Ministry.

<sup>76</sup> In particular UNICEF, which focuses on its work and has provided technical and financial support precisely about all of the actions described in this paragraph of the report.

<sup>77</sup> Support provided by UNICEF

<sup>78</sup> Specifically, support in this regard is provided through activities carried out by the Human Rights in Democracy Centre, mainly in the areas of Tirana and Kamza Municipalities.

<sup>79</sup> An important role through such projects has played the Community Development Center "Today for the Future".

increase participation of women and girls in vocational education. Reconstruction of vocational schools is made by taking into consideration aspects of gender equality, including hygienic and sanitary conditions, gyms, dressing rooms, etc.<sup>80</sup>.

For teachers, trainings focused on promoting an inclusive educational environment were also conducted, combating hate speech and strengthening skills to resolve conflicts in a non-violent manner<sup>81</sup>. In the framework of the National Action Plan for Countering Violent Extremism, it is foreseen to improve the girls' access to education and to increase employment opportunities through vocational training and skills building activities.

### III. FREEDOM FROM VIOLENCE, STIGMA AND STEREOTYPES

#### **Critical areas of concern:**

- D. Violence against women
- I. Human rights of women
- J. Women and the media
- L. The girl child

#### 13. In the last five years, which forms of violence against women and girls, and in which specific contexts or settings, have you prioritized for action?

- ✓ **Intimate partner violence/ domestic violence, including sexual violence and marital rape**
- ✓ **Sexual harassment and violence in public places, educational settings and in employment**
- ✓ **Violence against women and girls facilitated by technology (e.g. cyber violence, online stalking)**
- ✓ **Femicide/ Feminicide**
  - Violence against women in politics
- ✓ **Early and forced marriages of children**
  - Female genital mutilation
  - Other harmful practices
- ✓ **Trafficking in women and girls**
- ✓ **Other (crimes in the name of honor, forced abortion)**

Actions undertaken by the Albanian state to address violence against women and girls are guided by a set of international legal instruments, the domestic legal framework, as well as the existing policies and strategies. Most of them state clearly the different forms of violence against women and girls and the importance of tackling priority and accountability of all these forms. Likewise, in the various analyzes and evaluations undertaken over the past five years, there have been presented suggestions upon priority treatment of all forms of violence against women and girls. One of the recommendations given in this regard is that of GREVIOs (2017) which emphasizes "... the need to ensure that all the measures taken in accordance with the Istanbul Convention should be able to address all forms of violence against women in a comprehensive and thorough way ..."<sup>82</sup>. However, although acknowledged and mentioned, it should be recognized that not all forms of violence against women and girls have been prioritized and addressed equally by the state over the last five years.

Violence by intimate partner/ domestic violence remains one of the main forms of violence against women and girls which is addressed in priority, though not in all its dimensions. Thus, although there is an improved legal framework, or strategies and mechanisms for addressing this form of violence, the treatment of sexual violence by intimate partner or marital rape is still in the shadows (low number of

<sup>80</sup>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH to the account of German Federal Government

<sup>81</sup> These trainings are conducted by the Albanian Center for Countering Violent Extremism

<sup>82</sup>Albania: GREVIOs report on legislative measures and others which implement the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, published on 24 November 2017.

denunciations, high level of prejudice and blame on the victim / survivor, reluctance to make this form of violence an open public discussion, etc.).

Sexual harassment and sexual violence in public spaces, educational settings and in employment have also been given a great importance in the last five years. In this context, since 2016, several local self-governmental units have been supported in conducting studies on sexual harassment and other types of gender-based violence in public spaces in Albania.<sup>83</sup> Studies carried out<sup>84</sup> in several neighborhoods of Tirana Municipality (3 neighborhoods in 2016 and 2 others in 2018), Durres Municipality (2018), Fier Municipality (2018), Korca Municipality (2019) and Shkodra Municipality (2019) have found out several factors (including individual ones as well) that affect the lack of security in public spaces, and they recommend a series of actions that can be undertaken by relevant institutions in order to improve security and create safe urban spaces for women and girls free of sexual harassment and sexual violence.<sup>85</sup> Meanwhile, sexual harassment and sexual violence in educational settings and employment<sup>86</sup> have been taken into consideration several times by the responsible institutions during this period, mainly by denouncing the cases which have experienced these forms of violence on television investigative programs. Based on Law 173/2014 “On the discipline in the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania” there have been taken measures to prevent acts of sexual harassment, including the definition of sexual harassment committed by the military during or outside working hours, as a serious disciplinary offense. In order to create a safer and more secure working environment, in February 2015, the General Director of the State Police approved a document against harassment and sexual harassment in the State Police,<sup>87</sup> which was followed by several capacity building activities<sup>88</sup>. Violence against women and girls facilitated by technology (e.g. cyber violence, online stalking) has also taken place in those forms of violence being treated in priority. In co-operation with international<sup>89</sup> or local organizations which focus mainly on the rights of children and young people, awareness-raising of responsible institutions has been increased and concrete actions have been taken to ensure security while using technology.<sup>90</sup>

Femicide, unfortunately, continues to be a form of violence that cannot be ignored and that should be discussed along with crimes in the name of honor, due to the causes of these murders and the number of victims which are present year after year. Only during the first two months of 2019, there were killed seven women in Albania, while domestic crime has resulted in victims year after year (17 domestic crimes with 22 victims, out of which 10 women in 2014; 18 domestic murders with 20 victims, out of which 10 women in 2015; 16 domestic murders with 17 victims, out of which 11 women in 2016; 15 domestic murders with 16 victims, out of which 11 women in 2017 and 11 domestic murders with 20 victims, out of which 11 women in 2018.)<sup>91</sup>

Early and forced marriages of children. The statistics of the Institute of Statistics (INSTAT), as well as the small number of qualitative studies conducted in the last five years<sup>92</sup>, show that: a) child marriage is

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<sup>83</sup>Support provided by UN Women, as part of the UN Women's Global Program for Safe Cities without Violence against Women and Girls.

<sup>84</sup>In partnership with Local Self-Government Units and in cooperation with the Observatory on Children and Youth Rights (2016) and IDRA (2018 and 2019), supported by UN Women and Swedish Government Funds.

<sup>85</sup>For more information and for the main findings of the study, see: <http://www.un.org.al/publications/sexual-harassment-and-other-forms-gender-based-violence-urban-public-spaces-albania>

<sup>86</sup> This issue was discussed above in this report, in the information provided for the thematic field I, point 6.

<sup>87</sup> With the initiative and technical support of UN Women

<sup>88</sup>Activities supported by international organizations such as UNDP, UN Women, etc.

<sup>89</sup> Mostly UNICEF

<sup>90</sup> In this context, UNICEF has drafted its 2017-2020 Work Program to support the Government of Albania and the leading institutions of the organizations of civil society to strengthen the child protection system by addressing a comprehensive response against children's online violence.

<sup>91</sup>Source: Data from the Albanian State Police, reflected in the annual monitoring reports of the NSGE and its Action Plan 2016-2020, prepared by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection

<sup>92</sup> Studies undertaken by the Observatory on the Rights of Children and Young People, namely:

a) In 2015 with the support of the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI), focusing on Roma community in three selected areas: Shkoza, Tufina and Lake - published report is available at: [http://observator.org.al/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/2015-Martesat\\_e\\_hershme\\_ne\\_Shqiperi.pdf](http://observator.org.al/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/2015-Martesat_e_hershme_ne_Shqiperi.pdf)

b) In 2016, supported by CFLI, piloted in Korca and Vlora - the published report is available at: [http://observator.org.al/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/ZEB\\_Studimi\\_al\\_12Shk2016.pdf](http://observator.org.al/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/ZEB_Studimi_al_12Shk2016.pdf)

c) two study reports which focus on identifying and analyzing judicial practices on “claim for early marriage” – accessible at: [http://observator.org.al/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Raporti-martesat-nen-moshe\\_al.pdf](http://observator.org.al/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Raporti-martesat-nen-moshe_al.pdf) and [http://observator.org.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Raport2-Analiza-liqjore-dhe-sociale-e-martesave-n%C3%ABn-mosh%C3%AB\\_Qershor2018.pdf](http://observator.org.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Raport2-Analiza-liqjore-dhe-sociale-e-martesave-n%C3%ABn-mosh%C3%AB_Qershor2018.pdf)

an important issue, little-explored, affecting mainly girls from different social groups; b) it is mainly driven by gender inequality, as well as poverty and social exclusion; and c) there is a number of harmful effects. According to INSTAT, in 2017, 16.9% of registered marriages included a wife under 19 years of age and 0.5% included a husband under 19 years of age. INSTAT data analysis shows that there is a significant trend of marriages at an older age in Albania.<sup>93</sup> Under the auspices of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, in December 2018, it was presented the report “Child Marriage - Knowledge, Attitudes and Perceptions among the Affected Communities in Albania”<sup>94</sup>. This qualitative study was undertaken to collect data on knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and perceptions, social expectations, incentives, sanctions, and norms related to child marriage in Albania. The study, which was conducted between Autumn 2017 and Summer 2018, focused mainly on Roma populations as well as rural and/ or poor populations where the phenomenon appears to be more widespread. Findings and recommendations will ensure the incorporation of the child marriage issue into the national programs and strategies of both governmental and non-governmental actors, as well as the Agencies of the United Nations. The findings will help these actors understand the issue of child marriages and they will build a common ground to undertake actions<sup>95</sup>.

Trafficking of women and girls is one of the forms of violence against women that has continued to be addressed in priority in the last five years. During 2016, the Interior Ministry drafted an Action Plan<sup>96</sup> for the social-economic reintegration of women and girls who have been victims of trafficking. Moreover, during 2018, it was adopted the 2018-2020 National Action Plan for Combating Trafficking in Persons.<sup>97</sup> Forced abortion is another form of violence against women, which cannot be excluded and addressed in the Albanian context, and based on the figures, that although not discussed properly, indicate a phenomenon which should be taken into consideration. Thus, according to INSTAT data, during 2017, the gender ratio at birth is 1.11, which indicates 100 born girls to 111 born boys. This ratio is higher than the natural ratio, which is 1.05<sup>98</sup>, while in 2014 this gender ratio resulted in 108 boys to 100 girls. These data may be indicators of the application of forced abortion due to the baby’s sex selection before birth, and the concern about the existence of this phenomenon has been raised much earlier<sup>99</sup>, although no further research has been conducted for data collection this respect.

Organizations of civil society specialized in providing services to violated women and girls<sup>100</sup> face and address all forms of violence including physical, psychological, sexual, economic, stalking, trafficking, etc.

#### 14. What actions has your country prioritized in the last five years to address violence against women and girls?

- ✓ **Introduced or strengthened laws on violence against women, as well as their enforcement and implementation**
- ✓ **Introduced, updated or expanded national action plans on ending violence against women and girls**

<sup>93</sup> INSTAT, Women and Men in Albania 2017 (Tirana: INSTAT, 2017), p. 36,

<sup>94</sup> In close cooperation with UNICEF and UNFPA in Albania and with the financial support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

<sup>95</sup>The published report can be accessed at: <http://observator.org.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Raporti-Martesa-e-Femijeve-Versioni-final.pdf>

<sup>96</sup> Supported by UN Women through a project funded by the European Commission

<sup>97</sup> DCM 770, dated 26.12.2018 “On the adoption of the National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings 2018-2020”, published in the Official Journal no. 191, dated 31.12.2018. It is available at: <https://qbz.gov.al/eli/fz/2018/191/e6e379ce-879f-4b47-8a7e-ba652700574d;q=vendim%20770%20date%2026.12.2018>

<sup>98</sup>INSTAT, Women and Men in Albania 2017 (Tirana: INSTAT, 2017), p. 15,

<sup>99</sup> UNFPA: “Juvenile Marriages in Albania: Overview”, pg.5, published in 2012 <http://eeca.unfpa.org/publications/child-marriage-albaniaoverview>.

<sup>100</sup>In this regard it is important to mention the services provided by the Center for Legal Initiatives, “Different and Equal” Center, the Center for “Human Rights in Democracy”, the Community Center Network “Today for the Future”, the Women’s Center “Light Steps”, the Children’s Human Rights Center (CRCA), etc.

- ✓ **Introduced or strengthened measures to increase women's access to justice (e.g. establishment of specialist courts, training for the judiciary and police, protection orders, redress and reparations, including femicide cases)**
- ✓ **Introduced or strengthened services for survivors of violence (e.g. shelters, help lines, dedicated health services, legal, justice service, counseling, housing)**
- ✓ **Introduced or strengthened strategies to prevent violence against women and girls (e.g. in the education sector, in the media, community mobilization, work with men and boys)**
- ✓ **Monitoring and evaluation of impact, including evidence generation and data collection, including even the particular groups of women and girls**
- Introduced or strengthened measures for improving the understanding of causes and consequences of violence against women among those responsible for implementing measures on ending violence against women and girls
- ✓ **Other (increasing or strengthening the capacity of professionals to effectively address cases of abused women and girls)**

Reducing gender-based violence and domestic violence is one of the strategic goals highlighted in the National Strategy on Gender Equality and its Action Plan 2016-2020 was formulated in accordance with the pillars of the Istanbul Convention, as reflected in the specific objectives of: i) raising awareness of society to refuse and to not tolerate the practice of gender-based violence and domestic violence; ii) strengthening of referral mechanisms as well as the addition / improvement of specialized support services for the protection and treatment of cases of gender-based violence and domestic violence; and iii) punishment of perpetrators and provision of rehabilitation opportunities through specialized programs. This is the third national strategy prepared during the reporting period (the National Strategy for Gender Equality and the Reduction of Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence 2011-2015 was still in force from 2014 to 2015, in which the reduction of violence was once again one of the strategic goals). The National Action Plan for the involvement of men and boys as partners of women and girls on gender equality and against gender-based violence and domestic violence 2014-2019 was also an important document which was adopted at the meeting of the National Council on Gender Equality in November 2014, but since no further steps were taken to cover the actions envisaged in it, the implementation of this document was not carried out as it was planned. Therefore, during the preparation of NSGE 2016-2020, the main actions that had started to be piloted as part of this plan<sup>101</sup> were included in the Action Plan of the new National Strategy on Gender Equality.

On the 05.03.2018, the Albanian Parliament adopted a Resolution on recognizing and supporting the activity of human rights defenders in promoting, encouraging and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, strengthening the rule of law and consolidating democracy.

Upon Order no. 32, dated 12 February 2018, by the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister was appointed as the National Coordinator for Gender Equality and he was authorized to strengthen the national gender equality mechanism at the central level and to undertake a coordinating role.

In December 2017, the Albanian Parliament adopted Resolution no. 1 dated 04.12.2017 "On punishing violence against women and girls and increasing the effectiveness of legal mechanisms for its prevention", which among other things enabled the establishment of a Subcommittee "On gender equality and the prevention of violence against woman" as part of the Commission responsible for Labor, Social Affairs and Health<sup>102</sup>. This is a very important document that draws the attention and enhances the oversight role of the Albanian parliament, not only regarding the measures to address domestic violence, but also for all forms of violence against women, in accordance with the Istanbul Convention.

Upon approval of the Law no. 47/2018<sup>103</sup> "On some additions and amendments to Law no. 9669, dated 18.12.2006 "On measures against violence in family relations", amended", measures have been added

<sup>101</sup> Mainly with the support of United Nations Agencies through the work of CSOs

<sup>102</sup> Established by Assembly Decision 117/2017. For more see: [www.parlament.al/Strukture?kategoria=6&struktura=1021](http://www.parlament.al/Strukture?kategoria=6&struktura=1021)

<sup>103</sup> Preparations and consultation of this law were supported by UNDP.

to provide immediate protection for women and girls and other members of the family who experience violence. This Law entered into force on 1 September 2018 and has strengthened the protective and procedural measures for a more effective response to domestic violence and the protection of victims of violence by providing the mechanism of issuing the Order of Precautionary Measures of Immediate Protection. It is the first time that the law protects women and girls in intimate relationships, without having a formal relationship with the offender, such as marriage or cohabitation. In addition, new changes provide better services not only to victims of domestic violence, but also to the perpetrators by providing them with rehabilitation services. Support programs for perpetrators of domestic violence have been presented in Albania recently. Currently, these programs are offered only by some NGOs, not by any public institution. Consequently, their development has remained at the very first stage, both in terms of the number of services available and geographic coverage. It seems that existing programs follow different approaches, which do not always coincide with the best prevailing practices.<sup>104</sup>

This legal amendment has harmonized Law No.9669, dated 18.12.2006 “On measures against domestic violence”, as amended by the Council of Europe Convention “On preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence”<sup>105</sup>, (Istanbul Convention). It has been partially harmonized with Directive 2012/29 / EU of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe dated 25 October 2012: “Establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime”. In order to implement this legal change it has been approved<sup>106</sup> the Joint Directive of the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Health and Social Protection No. 912, dated 27.12.2018 “On the procedures and the model of the order for preliminary measures of emergent protection”. This directive aims to establish the procedures that should be followed by the responsible State Police structure for issuing the “Order for preliminary measures of emergent protection”, as well as its model. Moreover, it is approved the Joint Directive of the Minister of Interior and the Minister of Health and Social Protection No. 866, dated 20.12.2018 “On the procedures and model of risk assessment for cases of domestic violence”. This directive will assist the State Police to effectively enforce legal changes. This directive also presents a concrete model of risk assessment.

Adoption<sup>107</sup> of the Law no. 111/2017 “On state-guaranteed legal aid” constitutes an important development for the improvement of the legal framework regarding the provision of legal assistance to victims of domestic violence. Article 11 of the Law “On Legal Aid” defines the special categories of legal aid beneficiaries who are offered free legal aid, among which are: a) victims of domestic violence; b) sexually abused victims and victims of trafficking in human beings at any stage of criminal proceedings; c) juvenile victims and juveniles in conflict with the law, at any stage of criminal proceedings; d) children who live in social care institutions. The above groups result to be consistently composed of women and young girls who have become mothers. This law has brought very positive changes regarding the exclusion of certain social categories from court expenses, but there are still not adopted the relevant by-laws that would make the implementation of this law effective. Besides that, the list of lawyers, who will provide secondary legal aid, has not yet been approved by the National Chamber of Advocates. The implementation of the law “On state-guaranteed legal aid” is in its early stages and there are still expected evidences about its success.

Upon the Law no. 35/2017 “On some additions and amendments to Law No.7905, dated 21.03.1995 “The Code of Criminal Procedure of the Republic of Albania”, as amended<sup>108</sup>, there are expressly introduced legal provisions providing for special procedural rights for the juvenile victim, the sexually abused victim and the victim of trafficking in human beings. Amendments to criminal procedure

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<sup>104</sup>GREVIO report on legislative and other measures which implement the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on the Preventing and Combating against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence.

<sup>105</sup> Ratified by the Law No.104, dated 8.11.2012 by the Assembly of Albania.

<sup>106</sup> The preparation of sub-legal acts needed to implement the changes to Law 47/2018 was made possible by UNDP support and expertise,

<sup>107</sup> With the support and expertise of UNDP.

<sup>108</sup> With the support and expertise of UNDP

legislation ensure that victims are systematically informed of their right to seek redress and the procedures to be followed in accordance with Article 58, point 1, letter g of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Article 58/ b of the Code of Criminal Procedure is specifically dedicated to the rights of juvenile victims. In addition to the rights enjoyed by any victim of criminal offenses, juvenile victim also enjoys the following rights: a) To be accompanied by a trusted person; b) Preservation of confidentiality and protection of personal data; c) He/she has the right to demand a trial which can be conducted without the presence of the public; d) He/she has the right to be treated in accordance with his/ her age and to be asked by specialized persons. Sexually abused victims and victims of trafficking in human beings are also entitled to: a) be asked without delay by a judicial police officer or a prosecutor of the same sex; b) refuse to answer questions related to private life, which has clearly nothing to do with the offense; c) seek to be heard through audiovisual means. The amendment of the Code of Criminal Procedure regulates the issues of the victim's rights of the criminal offense, in the criminal procedural aspect, who have the right to receive medical care, psychological assistance, counseling and other services provided by the authorities, organizations or institutions which are responsible for assistance to the victims of the criminal offense. Given the fact that women are widely victims of the criminal offenses of violence, this legal amendment will have a positive impact on the protection of women's life and health.

Victim access to information is further improved since the adoption of Law no. 97/2016 "On the organization and functioning of the Prosecution Office in the Republic of Albania". According to Article 61, point 4 of the Law in each respective prosecution office it is assigned a Public Relations Coordinator who is responsible for informing the victims.

According to the Report of the High Council of Justice "On the situation of judicial matters of domestic violence" dated 15.1.2018 it results that for the period 2014-2017 the following measures have been taken by the Courts of First Instance and Appeal: (i) the tribunal of each court has been informed with the best and worst practices of the implementation of the law on domestic violence in order to avoid them, as well as discussing violations found. (ii). Courts have begun the registration of the lawsuits in a special register with the object "Issuing the protection order", which reflects each case separately, as well as the progress of the decision. (iii) A lawsuit filed with the object "Issuing a protection order" which is referred to a court shall be assigned to judges for trial by electronic lot. (iv) The courts have followed with priority all criminal and civil cases related to domestic violence, and they aim at a quick judgment for these cases. In 19 courts, all judges have rigorously respected the legal deadlines and the standard deadlines of the Assessment System in the judgment of civil cases with the object of "Issuing a protection order" or "Issuing an immediate protection order." (V) Only one court (The Judicial District Court of Lezha) reports on strengthening inter-institutional cooperation, organization of joint working meetings with the Police Commissariat, the Municipality and the Local Chamber of Advocacy. (vi) One of the Courts - The Judicial District Court of Fieri - reports that it has been created a register in which are listed general and special data for for recidivists on of these cases.

Upon decision of the Council of Ministers no. 50, dated 06.02.2019, it was adopted the Strategy for the control of small arms, light weapons, ammunition and explosives for 2019-2024 and the Action Plan for 2019-2021. This document contains specific measures in order to improve the institutional and political response to the use of firearms in domestic violence situations. The Strategy envisages activities aimed at increasing the participation of women in the control of small Arms and Ammunition and improving the capacity of competent institutions for the inclusion of gender equality in the control policies of light weapons. In this regard, soon it will be conducted a training<sup>109</sup> on gender inclusion for representatives of member institutions of the National Commission on Light Weapons Control.

Pursuant to the "United Nations Convention against transnational organized crime" and its two additional protocols, as well as the Council of Europe Convention "On measures against trafficking in persons", the Council of Ministers has adopted Decision No. 499, dated 29.08.2018 "On the adoption of standard procedures for the protection of victims and potential victims of trafficking". Their main

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<sup>109</sup> With the support and expertise of UNDP

objective is the provision of protection, including timely and appropriate identification of potential victims of trafficking, adults or children, Albanians, foreigners or stateless persons, for all types of exploitation, internal or international trafficking, linked to organized crime or not. At any specific moment in which state institutions, during their activity, come into contact with a person who is suspected to have been trafficked or if they are informed that he/she is a victim / potential victim of trafficking, they should immediately contact the responsible authority and consult with it. They also imply co-operation with analog structures in other countries. The procedures are drafted in the same spirit as international instruments dealing with issues of prevention and combat against trafficking in persons, as well as they reflect the recommendations given to the same field of action by international bodies<sup>110</sup>.

In addition, the Assembly of Albania, upon Decision No.61 / 2018 dated 05.04.2018, adopted the Code of Conduct for the Deputies of the Assembly of the Republic of Albania, stating the prohibition of the Deputies to use discrimination speech and incitement of hate based on race, gender, or any other cause specified in this Code.

In addition to the improvement of the legal framework, over the last five years, work has been carried out to increase and improve specialized support services for women and girls who are victims / survivors of violence and to prepare or update standards for these services. To keep it short we can mention: a) Establishing and starting of the operation of the "National Counseling Line for women and girls who are victims of violence 116 117<sup>111</sup>", a 24/7 service, whose operation was approved in advance by relevant standards, upon DCM no. 430, dated 8 June 2016<sup>112</sup>; Local telephone service has been established earlier by non-profit organizations and currently such services are part of the Coordinated Referral Mechanisms in the local units where they are applied<sup>113</sup> b) Improving the housing service in existing centers<sup>114</sup> and establishing the emergency shelters in some of the local self-government units (there were 4 of these during the reporting period), as well as discussing the draft standards for their operation<sup>115</sup>. It is important to notice the service provided beyond the moment of the crisis, aiming at reintegration, which consists in providing a long-term housing opportunity<sup>116</sup>. Regarding long-term housing, as explained above in this report, it is thought that a viable solution will be provided through the implementation of Law 22/2018 "On Social Housing"; c) Establishment of the first crisis management center for sexual violence cases ("Lilium" Center) with the main focus on services that are emergent, one-stop, integrated, 24/7 and short-term (24 hours to 72 hours), for victims/survivors of sexual violence, as well as for other members of their families. The establishment of this service was preceded by an assessment of the situation regarding the need to set up the service, as well as by the presentation of the most suitable models of its application in Albania, based on international models<sup>117</sup> and followed by a study visit to South Korea. Meanwhile, simultaneous work has continued for the standards preparation in order to make this service operable.<sup>118</sup> d) Steps have been taken to pilot programs for abusers. During 2018, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection has signed cooperation agreements with civil society organizations that are specialized in providing services to abusers and through several projects offer them in several regions of the country such as: Tirana, Elbasan, Shkodra

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<sup>110</sup> Such as: United Nations Agencies, US State Department, Council of Europe, IOM, OSCE, ICMPD, etc.

<sup>111</sup> Launched as a service during the campaign of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence in November 2016 and it started functioning on February 2, 2017. During 2017, the National Counseling Line received 1489 calls and conducted 636 face-to-face counseling sessions ; whereas in 2018 there were received 2540 calls (on average 7 calls per day) and were conducted 708 face-to-face counseling sessions,

<sup>112</sup> The preparation of the operation standards of this service was carried out with the support of UNDP

<sup>113</sup> So i.e. we can mention here the Free Telephone Helpline on the number 08009888 a 24/7 service in Tirana and Durres Municipalities, managed by the Community Development Center "Today for the Future", through which 3,248 cases were advised in the last five years; etc.

<sup>114</sup> The National Center for the Treatment of Domestic Violence Victims with the support of UNDP approved the rehabilitation and reintegration programs with state and non-state service providers. As a result, nearly 58% of the survivors accommodated in the national center are integrated through employment, social housing and legal empowerment in 2017, compared to 38% in 2014,

<sup>115</sup> The services established in the municipalities of Pogradec, Permet, Saranda, Roskovec with the support of UNDP. Draft standards for the operation of these shelters have been prepared with the support of UNDP and in 2018 it was organized a consultation meeting about them.

<sup>116</sup> An example in this regard is the support provided by the "Different and Equal" Center for Victims / Survivors, enabling rental payments for long-term housing, after leaving the shelter service. There are also made efforts to provide housing services by some local self-government units through the application of the rental bonus.

<sup>117</sup> A study prepared for the Ministry of Health and Social Protection during 2018, with the support of UN Women.

<sup>118</sup> The study visit and also the preparation of standards of functioning of this center were made possible with the support of UNDP. The establishment of the center and the approval of its standards are reflected in the Guideline no. 816, dated 27.11.2018

and Vlora. Likewise, the Counseling Line for Boys and Men has been operating since 2014 with a certified staff, and it focuses on addressing and preventing the phenomenon of domestic violence. An Office for Men and Boys has also been established in Shkodra<sup>119</sup>.

Starting from 2014, domestic violence and trafficking victims receiving social care services in public residential centers that do not have a personal income, receive a payment of 3,000 ALL. Since 2015, the victims/survivors of violence against women receive the payment through the economic aid scheme for the period of the protection order or immediate protection order validity, in cases when they do not receive that payment through social care institutions.

In the framework of the protection of women's rights, especially for women who suffered domestic violence, on November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2017, on the occasion of the International Day for the elimination of Violence against Women, the Ministry of Justice launched the establishment of the Office of Coordination against Domestic Violence, which puts the coordination of support and service for all violated women at the core of its mission. The Office of Coordination against Domestic Violence functioning is based on a partnership between the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Health and Social Protection and will be the main referral of cases and problems of domestic violence with the aim of resolving them at the legislative level. It is an initiative that aims at preventing domestic violence, protecting victims of violence and addressing cases of domestic violence exhaustively through free legal counseling and proper addressing of domestic violence issues.

Handling cases in practice continues to be done through the application of a well-coordinated multi-sectoral response, reflected in the establishment of Coordinated Referral Mechanism (CRM) at the local level. Until the end of 2018, this mechanism appears to be set up in 39<sup>120</sup> of the 61 municipalities of the country. While simultaneously working on setting up the CRM where absent, efforts to increase the effectiveness of the existing CRMs are constant. Likewise, in order to increase the effectiveness and improve the work of the members of these mechanisms, the Guidelines on Essential Services as well as Standard Operating Procedures for Police and Justice, Health Services and Social Services have been prepared and forwarded for approval to the Ministry of Health and Social Protection<sup>121</sup>. The document of standard operating procedures<sup>122</sup> for health services is also attached to this guideline to reduce the risk of experiencing gender-based violence in civil emergency situations. Prior to being forwarded for approval, this guideline was discussed in a two-day training session<sup>123</sup> with members of one of the successful CRMs in Albania, and reviewed and adapted by a group of six experts from different fields. With the approval of this guideline, a range of activities will be planned to strengthen the capacity of professionals to implement them practically.

The data recording on cases treated in a multi-functional way from the CRM at the local level is done through an electronic data collection system REVALB<sup>124</sup>, which has been operational since 2014. Over the past five years, efforts have been made to strengthen the capacities of local coordinators to collect data and to maintain and update the system as a whole. The difficulties encountered so far in practice, as well as updating the system based on the latest law amendments, are thought to be addressed in the following steps. Meanwhile, regarding the data collection, during 2018, INSTAT<sup>125</sup> conducted the Data Collection National Survey on Violence against Women in Albania, a survey aimed at updating the previous edition of national data on prevalence of domestic violence in Albania, conducted in 2013. The methodology and tools for data collection are similar and aimed at gathering reliable data on the nature and prevalence of violence by intimate partner, domestic violence, violence by a non-partner person,

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<sup>119</sup>By the Woman to the Woman association

<sup>120</sup>Much of this has been raised with the support of United Nations Agencies and financial support from the Swedish Government. Thus, UNDP has offered its support for the establishment or strengthening of 19 CRCs during the reporting period, UN Women in 2 of them, the Swedish Project Strengthening Community Policing in Albania (SCPA) in 3 of them, and so on

<sup>121</sup>Prepared by UNFPA in cooperation with UN Women. The full and updated package is expected to be adopted during 2019.

<sup>122</sup>Prepared by UNFPA in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection and the Albanian Center for Population and Development (ACPD)

<sup>123</sup>Organized in CRM of Korca, with the support of UNFPA and in cooperation with UNDP

<sup>124</sup>Established with UNDP support

<sup>125</sup>With the support of UN Women and UNDP

sexual harassment, persecution and social norms related to violence against women and girls. Survey results are expected to be released during May 2019.

Capacity building and strengthening of professionals responsible for addressing gender inequalities and cases of violence against women, as well as domestic violence is one of the ongoing activities implemented over the last five years. Such activities are planned and implemented as a cooperation of key central and local institutions with international organizations and civil society organizations. Here are some of the groups of professionals who have been trained over the last five years:

1) gender equality officers and local domestic violence coordinators - trained throughout the 2014-2018 period, mainly on their job position and responsibilities, increasing the effectiveness of CRM and use of REVAB<sup>126</sup>, as well as on gender-responsive budgeting and its practical application<sup>127</sup>; Trainings on gender budgeting with GEEs at the central and local level have been carried out also by ASPA<sup>128</sup>

2) State Police employees on several issues, namely: a) Sexual harassment at the workplace for the period: 252 police officers with enforcement role and leading role trained during 2016; 69 senior executives trained during 2017; 47 employees of the Witnesses and Justice Collaborators Directorate trained during 2017 as well as local leaders of the Tirana Local Police Directorate, trained during 2018<sup>129</sup>; b) to respond to domestic violence: 224 trainees through 13 trainings, for the period March-May 2014<sup>130</sup>, 210 police officers trained in 2016<sup>131</sup>; 139 trainees through 7 trainings in 2017<sup>132</sup>, 60 specialists trained in 2018 to investigate sexual violence;

3) 23 trainers from the Police Academy were trained<sup>133</sup> to acquire pedagogical skills in their upcoming capacity building work with police staff using improved curricula and training modules;

4) over 400 judges and other legal professionals<sup>134</sup> (lawyers, bailiffs, medical-legal staff) were introduced to new legislative changes from the perspective of gender equality and international instruments on women's rights; about 150 judges and prosecutors trained during 2017 by the School of Magistrates on topics related to gender discrimination, trafficking in human beings, etc.

5) The staff of "Lilium" center was trained<sup>135</sup> in 2019 for an effective functioning of this center

6) At the end of 2018, a new curriculum for the training program "Gender and Non-Discrimination Justice" was drafted in ASPA, which contains 5 modules to be developed in 5 training days, with a total of 30 training hours, etc.

Regarding the actions taken by Albania in addressing violence against women and girls, the European Commission's Progress Report 2018 estimates that domestic violence still remains a serious concern. While the number of local mechanisms which report gender-based violence has increased, efforts should be made to establish them in all municipalities. There is also a need to ensure cross-sectoral coordination with child protection and anti-trafficking mechanisms at local and regional level. In general, it is needed more work to ensure that women have access to justice<sup>136</sup>.

## 15. What strategies has your country used in the last five years to prevent violence against women and girls?

- ✓ **Public awareness and change of attitudes and behaviors**
- ✓ **Work in primary and secondary education, including comprehensive sexual education**
- ✓ **Grassroots and community-level mobilization**
- ✓ **Increasing the representation of women and girls in the media**

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<sup>126</sup>With the support of UNDP

<sup>127</sup>With the support of UN Women

<sup>128</sup> With the support of UN Women - 16 GEEs trained for 2018 at the central level as well as 13 GEEs at local level from 3 municipalities (Cërrik, Himarë, Lezhë). These GEEs have been mentored for 10 months for the development of a gender budget. There were 7 trainings, out of which 3 were devoted to training of trainers' competences, totaling 35 hours of training.

<sup>129</sup>With the support of UNDP and UN Women

<sup>130</sup>With the support of the Swedish Strengthening Community Policing in Albania Program

<sup>131</sup>Through training provided by the Council of Europe (25 trained), OSCE (10 trained), UNDP (100 trained)

<sup>132</sup>With the support of OSCE

<sup>133</sup>With the support of UNDP

<sup>134</sup>With the support of UNDP

<sup>135</sup>With the support of UNDP

<sup>136</sup>Progress Report 2018 of the European Commission for Albania, p. 29

- ✓ Working with boys and men
- ✓ Perpetrator Programs
- Other

Raising public awareness is one of the strategies that has been used for years in Albania and has brought its own results through the organization of awareness raising campaigns, as well as informative and educational activities. For years, Albania has been involved in organizing awareness-raising activities within the framework of the 16 Days Activism of the world campaign against gender-based violence (25 November - 10 December). Coordination of activities through the Ministry responsible for gender equality and gender-based violence (i.e. MoHSP) in partnership with line ministries and local institutions and civil society organizations, as well as with the support of United Nations Agencies and other international organizations, has become a tradition. Over the last five years, the activities under this campaign have been coordinated. The main slogans used in these campaigns were: 2014-2015: "Boys and Men Part of Solution - Show that you are against violence!", 2016: "Violence is unacceptable, denounce it!", 2017 - "Stop Violence Against Women and Girls" and 2018 - "Hear Me Too!" Awareness raising campaigns and activities are also carried out during March each year, while awareness activities continue to be organized regularly during the orange days (every 25<sup>th</sup> of the month)<sup>137</sup>.

During these five years, a great focus has been put on activities that aim at engaging men and boys, as well as changing mindsets. Although the Action Plan for engaging men and boys as partners of women and girls on gender equality, and against gender-based violence as well as domestic violence was not budgeted, and consequently (as mentioned above) parts of it were included in the NSGE Action Plan 2016-2020, it is important to note that the efforts of the United Nations Agencies<sup>138</sup> to promote responsible authority or civil society organizations to take steps in this direction are indeed significant. As a result: (1) In July 2014, the former Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth (actually MoHSP) was actively involved in the HeforShe campaign<sup>139</sup>. A group of interns of the Ministry were engaged in finalizing "Boys and Men for Gender Equality" themed video messages. About 65 messages were posted via the "One Story"<sup>140</sup> page, featured by well-known public figures as well as ordinary people. HeforShe campaign continued in 2015-2016 as well. For example, during 2016, it was possible to reach out to 7,260 men/boys, and 2,013 women/girls - in the summer tour and 4,575 people - at the stadium<sup>141</sup>, through HeforShe - Summer Tour and HeforShe in Stadiums.

(2) In November 2015, the former Minister of Social Welfare and Youth<sup>142</sup> (actually MoHSP) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the highest representatives of religious communities in Albania (Muslim, Catholic, Orthodox, Bektashi communities) for engaging in joint activities in the fight against domestic violence, titled "Religious Communities Together for the elimination of Violence against Women". Following that, intensive work continued for nearly three years with young people from these communities<sup>143</sup> through various capacity building activities, to prepare them to be agents of change in the efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls in Albania. For this purpose, about 40 young leaders of religious communities were trained and devised a calendar of activities, as well as a TV commercial against domestic violence<sup>144</sup>. Actions for engaging boys and men have continued and are still in place through other activities developed during the reporting period.<sup>145</sup> (3) A very interesting effort, which started in 2017, is to work with school boys to turn them into educators and agents of

<sup>137</sup>Mainly from civil society organizations supported by UN agencies.

<sup>138</sup>UN Women, UNFPA and UNDP

<sup>139</sup>With the support of UN Women

<sup>140</sup><https://www.onestory.com/stories?search=Albania>

<sup>141</sup>The campaigns were conducted by the Children's Rights Observatory in collaboration with "Family in Families" supported by UN Women. For more information, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/observator.org.al/?fref=ts>

<sup>142</sup>UN Women, UNFPA and UNDP

<sup>143</sup>From the Center "Children Today", with the support of UN Agencies, namely UN Women, UNFPA and UNDP

<sup>144</sup>[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPC6sp2PN\\_Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPC6sp2PN_Y)

<sup>145</sup>A good job in mobilizing the community and changing attitudes and behaviors is being made possible thanks to the implementation of the UN Women's Three Year Program, "We Implement Rates, We Change the Minds 2017-2019" being implemented in six Western Balkan countries and in Turkey, with the financial support of the European Union.

change through a training cycle and awareness raising activities on the role and support that boys and men can and should give to gender equality and domestic violence<sup>146</sup>.

Other awareness-raising activities under the UNiTE campaign are also: (1) messages on how to leave violence behind and start living a life without violence conveyed by women, survivors of violence, as agents of change in communities,<sup>147</sup>; (2) engagement of various groups, e.g. Roma women or persons with disabilities, who suffer multiple discrimination;<sup>148</sup> (3) members of the CRMs who convey messages against violence as well as on the supporting role they provide<sup>149</sup>; (4) Various advocacy platforms, including the young people, the media as well as networks of civil society organizations lobbying together to address harmful practices, gender-based violence, the ODS and ICPD<sup>150</sup>; (5) the use of innovative tools to attract as much public attention and to include them in actions against gender-based violence. The video that won the boot camp held with students of the University of Tirana for the preparation of awareness raising campaigns was titled "Not only on March 8th"<sup>151</sup>; (6) the orange lighting of various state or symbolic buildings at the opening of each campaign for the 16 Days of Activism, etc.

State Police, as one of the key elements in the chain of institutions responsible for dealing with domestic violence and gender-based violence, is also engaged in awareness-raising campaigns organized with the support of organizations and institutions that focus on prevention of violence, as their main duty<sup>152</sup>.

The Audiovisual Media Authority reports that it has observed the Awareness Raising Strategy of audio and audiovisual newsrooms regarding the change of attitudes and behaviors to reporting on domestic violence and trafficking.

Civil society organizations also play an important role through educational and awareness-raising activities that are constantly being developed as part of their community interventions<sup>153</sup>.

There have also been continuous efforts towards comprehensive sexual education in primary and secondary education<sup>154</sup> (as explained above). Local self-government units play an important role in education and awareness, through the organization and involvement in the above-mentioned campaigns.

The Center for Extremism is based on the approach of integrating the whole society in preventing violent extremism where front line actors play a key role. They are the first to respond at the basic level to address the safety of women and girls in public and private life.

## 16. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls facilitated by technology (online sexual harassment, online stalking, non-consensual sharing of intimate images)?

- ✓ **Introducing or strengthening legislation and regulatory provisions**
- ✓ **Implemented awareness raising initiatives targeting the general public and young women and men in educational settings**
- ✓ **Worked with technology specialists and providers to set and adhere to good business practices**

Other

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<sup>146</sup>The Young Men Initiative Project is being implemented by the ACT for Society Center with the support of CARE

<sup>147</sup><http://abcnews.al/grise-masken-folfushata-kunder-dhunen-ne-familje/>

<sup>148</sup><https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rejoAqVHIB4>

<sup>149</sup><https://www.facebook.com/PNUDSHQIPERI/photos/pcb.1669355986456504/1669355389789897/?type=3&theater/https://twitter.com/PoliciasShtetit/status/943867810295566341?s=19>

<sup>150</sup>In particular, UNFPA has worked on this issue for informing young people and youth and civil society organizations, as well as advocating with women as members of parliament on issues related to gender-based violence and ICPD

<sup>151</sup>[www.al.undp.org/content/albania/en/home/presscenter/articles/2016/03/08/on-international-women-s-day-students-launch-an-innovative-campaign-to-end-violence-against-women-and-girls.html](http://www.al.undp.org/content/albania/en/home/presscenter/articles/2016/03/08/on-international-women-s-day-students-launch-an-innovative-campaign-to-end-violence-against-women-and-girls.html)

<sup>152</sup>An important contribution to this is given by the Swedish Community Policing Project (SCPA)

<sup>153</sup>Here we can mention the work of the Network of organizations AWEN, the work of the Monitoring Network against Domestic Violence, the work of the Network of organizations in the protection of children, the work of the Network of Anti-Trafficking Organizations

<sup>154</sup>With the support of UNFPA

In addition to the actions outlined in the response to point 13 of this report, we can add actions taken to prepare the draft law on cyber security management (in 2015) as well as the review of Broadcasting Code of the Audiovisual Media Authority (2017<sup>155</sup>). Also during 2018, an assessment of the legal, institutional and human resources framework on Violence against Children in Albania, focusing on Sexual Exploitation of Children and Abuse in the Virtual Space has been carried out. The Government of Albania and Civil Society (ALO 116, [www.isigurt.al](http://www.isigurt.al)) have been supported to establish reporting and awareness mechanisms for boys, girls and parents for online abuse and to invest in empowering peer educators that can help boys and girls to better understand and protect themselves from online dangers. Thus, the U-Report platform was created, which, besides being a mechanism for hearing the voice of children and adolescents on issues related to them, was conceptualized as a safe, convenient and accessible place for adolescent girls to participate in public opinion and decision-making. Since May 2018, 438 teenage girls and 471 boys have become regular U-Reporter. The Municipality of Tirana is about to launch a Wi-Fi Child Friendly Spaces initiative in the coming days<sup>156</sup>. Meanwhile, the first report on online safety of children and young people in Albania shows that gender, though apparently does not pose any specific cause for violence, bullying or pornography on the Internet, it actually presents some characteristic that need to be considered. Hate speech and calls for sexual violence in most cases are directed towards girls and very rarely against boys. During 2018, girls consist about 43 percent of the children who have complained and asked for help on the platform [www.isigurt.al](http://www.isigurt.al)<sup>157</sup>

#### **17. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to address the portrayal of women and girls, discrimination and/or gender bias in the media?**

- ✓ **Strengthening and implementing legal reforms to fight discrimination and / or gender bias in the media**
- ✓ **Introducing a mandatory media regulation, including advertising, to avoid portraying, discriminating, or stereotyping women**
- ✓ **Supporting Media Institutions to Prepare Sensitive Behavior Codes from a Gender Perspective**
- ✓ **Training for media professionals to encourage the creation and use of non-stereotyped, balanced and diverse images of women and girls in the media**
- ✓ **Encourage participation and leadership / representation of women in the media**
- Establish / strengthen consumer protection services to receive and review complaints about discriminatory / gender bias presented in the media
- ✓ **Other (Awareness raising to address gender stereotypes that perpetuate discrimination against women)**

Law no. 18/2017 "On the Children's Rights and Protection" defines the media obligations regarding the reporting on children. Following the consultation process, in 2017 the new Audiovisual Media Broadcasting Code was approved, integrating the provisions and the relevant protection, in accordance with Law no. 18/2017.

Law no. 18/2017 gives the State Agency for the Protection of Children's Rights (SAPCR) the competence to monitor children's rights violations and ethical standards when reporting on children. For the period 2016-2017, 237 cases of children (in need of protection), which became public/were identified by the media, were referred to in the child protection structures to continue with the case management. Likewise, 70 complaints were filed for print and audiovisual news media in violation of children's rights (19 complaints were referred to the AMA) and 51 to newspapers, portals and the Albanian Media Council.

Media monitoring by the SAPCR shows a major improvement of news coverage for children. However, challenges remain, especially for print media, online media and online portals that have extensive

<sup>155</sup>Both with UNICEF support

<sup>156</sup>All of these actions were carried out with UNICEF support

<sup>157</sup> Hazizaj A., 1st National Report on Online Safety of Children and Young People in Albania, CRCA Albania, 2019.

coverage and use. In 2018, 9 complaints were referred to AMA for publishing news in violations of children's rights.

Through Decision no. 228, of 11.12.2018, the Audiovisual Media Authority has approved the Broadcasting Code for Audiovisual Media, which instructs that audiovisual information broadcasts should not directly contain or imply discriminatory messages for reasons such as: gender or any other discriminating cause. Audiovisual broadcasting of all kinds respects the right to equality and non-discrimination.

The Audiovisual Media Authority reports that it has been training media professionals to encourage the creation and use of non-stereotyped, balanced and varied images of women and girls in the media.

In more specific terms, AMA has spent 800,000 ALL on the project "Fake news and the challenges of reporting in the audiovisual media"<sup>158</sup> in 2018. Part of the project were the training sessions on balanced and professional information on aspects of gender equality and hate speech, since a part of the audiovisual media still reflects the traditional meanings of masculinity, femininity and gender roles. The focus was on parents and children advertisements, in which mothers appear four times more than fathers, or when media contributes to gender discrimination and hate speech that is fueled by stereotyping and sexist interpretations. About 90 journalists, reporters and editors from audiovisual newsrooms in Vlora, Gjirokastra, Elbasan, Korça, Shkodra and Tirana were trained.

In 2017, AMA has spent 475,000 ALL to fund the project "Raising the Journalists' Capacity to Improve Reporting on Victims of Gender-Based Violence, Domestic Violence and Trafficking"<sup>159</sup>. People who profited from this project were about 40 journalists from audiovisual newsrooms in Tirana, Shkodra, Lezha and Vlora. In addition to qualifications to improve reporting in audiovisual media on gender issues, domestic violence, and trafficking, the implemented organization also prepared a handbook addressing diverse issues that should be taken into account by reporters, associates and editors.

From March 2019, AMA is spending 1,119,000 ALL, to fund a project that focuses on the finalizing "Studying and Performance Analysis in the Albanian Audiovisual Market, based on program content evaluation by the public, to eliminate gender-based discrimination and the violence of any form against women and girls"<sup>160</sup> by the end of the year.

Similarly, journalists of social issues in Albania have been trained mainly in better understanding the phenomenon of trafficking and have been given specific advice/recommendations about reflecting trafficking cases in such a way that it does not affect the lives of victims but also it properly raises the awareness of the community. To this purpose, a manual has been prepared<sup>161</sup>.

An analysis on the impact that the law on consumer protection has on gender equality was carried out. The commentary on consumer protection law focuses on gender-based discrimination as well as other forms. To this purpose, members of the Consumer Protection Committee were trained on unfair forms of publicity.<sup>162</sup>

## **18. Has Albania taken any actions in the last five years specifically tailored to address violence against specific groups of women facing multiple forms of discrimination?**

**YES**

The People's Lawyer reports that s/he has recommended the addition of legal clinics to enable access to free legal aid, especially for abused women and those from vulnerable groups. Recommendations have been made for senior women, and women with disabilities, to improve their status in society and increase access to social and health services. The Commissioner for Protection against Discrimination (CPD) has also improved data collection and analysis through a gender-sensitive database to address

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<sup>158</sup>The project was implemented by the Women and Girls Counseling Line

<sup>159</sup>Realized by the Women's Democracy Network Albania, WDN

<sup>160</sup>Project "Gender Development Alliance"

<sup>161</sup>With the support of UN Women, IOM and the expertise of local organizations such as "D & E"

<sup>162</sup>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH for the account of the German Federal Government

discriminatory practices against women in the legal review process. For example, the CPD has reviewed over 113 complaints in 2016 compared with 15 in 2011 and issued 10 ex-officio cases<sup>163</sup>.

In support of groups that suffer multiple discrimination a number of strategies/action plans have been adopted, reviewed, implemented in the field of health, education, property, social protection, anti-discrimination and anti-trafficking. Here we can mention: "National Action Plan for the Integration of Roma and Egyptians in the Republic of Albania 2016-2020"<sup>164</sup>, "National Action Plan for LGBT Persons in the Republic of Albania 2016-2020"<sup>165</sup>, National Plan for Persons with Disabilities, adopted in June 2016, etc., which have foreseen specific measures for women belonging to these categories, which aim at their inclusion and integration into society, employment, participation and access to all services. A series of studies highlighting the problems faced by these groups, such as: "Invisible Violence - An Overview of the Violence Against Women and Girls with Disabilities in Albania" (2015)<sup>166</sup>, Study "Reducing violence against women with focus on LBT community in Albania" (2015)<sup>167</sup>, Study on "Being LGBT in Albania"<sup>168</sup>, with concrete recommendations for legal and political improvements and better implementation of the law, including the rights of lesbian and bisexual women, etc.

To provide access to equitable and inclusive justice to the most vulnerable individuals, the Ministry of Justice<sup>169</sup>, in close cooperation with specialized courts and CSOs, has undertaken actions aimed at improving the legislative and regulatory framework and the appropriate law. The amended legal aid law that provides access to equitable and inclusive justice for the most marginalized individuals was followed by the establishment of six legal aid centers in Tirana, Fier, Lezha, Durrës, Shkodra and Peshkopi districts<sup>170</sup>. For the period from the end of September 2017 to the end of April 2018, 778 vulnerable persons (401 women (52%), 377 men (48%) benefited from the two primary (644 beneficiaries) and secondary free legal aid services.

Figures show an average of 23 free primary legal assistance services per month for each center, and an average of 4.8 cases per month. Various cases related to family law are by far the most common, followed by retirement and disability insurance benefits, property law, and criminal cases. From November 2018, the Legal Aid Center in Peshkopi has covered 153 cases and the Legal Aid Center in Shkodra has covered 147 cases. There is potential to enhance good practices already established in six centers of this kind, therefore responding to the growing demand for qualitative, comprehensive, and equal legal aid services for the most vulnerable people. MoJ has planned to establish 4 new legal aid centers during 2019 in the national cross-cutting strategy of justice.

Civil Society Organizations have been particularly active in addressing the issues of women's groups experiencing multiple discrimination and have offered their assistance by submitting proposals and comments during discussions on legal changes, attending hearings, commissions, and subcommittees in the Assembly, or preparing shadow reports. Here we can mention: "Shadow Report in the Field of Health - Albania Case" for the CEDAW Committee (2015)<sup>171</sup>, Shadow Report on the Istanbul Convention (2016)<sup>172</sup>, Shadow Report on UPR on Women's Advocacy Recommendations (2019)<sup>173</sup> Shadow report on the CEDAW Convention (2019)<sup>174</sup>, etc.

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<sup>163</sup>Information forwarded by UNDP during consultative roundtables.

<sup>164</sup>Approved by DCM no. 1072, dated 23.12.2015. See: [http://www.qbz.gov.al/botime/fletore\\_zyrtare/2015/12/241.pdf](http://www.qbz.gov.al/botime/fletore_zyrtare/2015/12/241.pdf)

<sup>165</sup>Approved on May 25, 2016

<sup>166</sup> Prepared by Dr. B.Çani, Dr. N. Ballhysa, S.Fortuzi, F.Kalemi, December 2015. Realized by the Albanian Disability Rights Foundation with the support of UNDP, with funds from the Swedish Government. Look: <file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/disabilities%20shqip.pdf>

<sup>167</sup> Prepared by PhD. B.Balli, November 2015. Realized by LGBT Alliance Albania, with the support of the UN Trust Fund. Look: <http://historia-ime.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Libri-Shqip.pdf>

<sup>168</sup><http://www.al.undp.org/content/albania/en/home/library/poverty/te-jesh-lgbiti-ne-evrope-n-lindore--raporti-per-shqipierine.html>

<sup>169</sup>With the support of UNDP

<sup>170</sup>Currently, these two last centers continue to function with UNDP support

<sup>171</sup> Prepared by ACPD <http://acpd.org.al/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/shqip-raporti-hije-3.pdf>

<sup>172</sup> Prepared by the Women's Network AWEN

<sup>173</sup> Prepared by the Gender-Based Violence Monitoring Network with the support of UN Women

<sup>174</sup> Prepared by the Gender-Based Violence Monitoring Network with the support of UN Women

#### IV. PARTICIPATION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND GENDER - RESPONSIVE INSTITUTIONS

##### **Critical areas of concern:**

- G. Women in power and decision-making
- H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
- I. Human Rights of Women
- J. Women and the media
- L. The girl child

#### 19. What actions and measures has your country taken in the last five years to promote women's participation in public life and decision-making?

- ✓ Reformed constitution, laws and regulations that promote women's participation in politics, especially at the decision-making level, including electoral system reform, adoption of temporary special measures such as quotas, reserved seats, standards and targets.
- ✓ Measures to increase capacity, skills development and other measures
- ✓ Encouraged the participation of women from minorities and young women through sensitization and mentoring programmes too
- Provided opportunities for mentorship, training in leadership, decision-making, public speaking, self-assertion, political campaigns, etc.
- Took measures to prevent, investigate, prosecute and punish violence against women in politics
- ✓ Collected and analyzed data on women's political participation, including appointed and elected positions
- Other (clarify)

Albania's Parliament, elected on 25 June 2017 elections, has the highest number of women deputies in the last 27 years. Women are represented in the Assembly with 41 deputies from 140 in total, or 29.3% (in the legislature 2013-2017, the representation of women deputies was 23.5%). Currently, the Government Cabinet has 8 women ministers out of 14 or 57% being one of the European countries with a high gender representation in central government (the 2013 Cabinet had 8 women Ministers out of 18 ministers or 42% of it).<sup>175</sup>

Meanwhile, in March 2019, it was organized a roundtable<sup>176</sup> on the promotion of gender-sensitive legislation in Albania. Lawmakers, Assembly staff, and international and Albanian experts on gender issues (36 women and 6 men) shared their knowledge on gender equality in parliament, focusing on practical steps in drafting gender-sensitive legislation. Likewise, participants examined different ways in order to institutionalize gender analysis in the legislative process and in the work of the Assembly more widely.

In April 2015, legal amendments to the Electoral Code were adopted by setting the quota 50% men and 50% women in the local elections lists of candidates for councilors. These changes reflected the new territorial administrative division, and addressed a long-standing recommendation given by the OSCE / ODIHR to promote women candidates by increasing gender quotas in the municipal council candidates' lists to 50 percent, via changing the gender for each second name. In addition, in the event of a vacancy in the council, substitution should be done with the next candidate of the same sex ranked highest in the list. Upon completion of the electoral process on 21 June 2015 it resulted 9 women (14.7%) elected as Municipal Mayors (out of 61 total municipalities) and an increase in the representation of women in Municipal Councils at 34% (compared to 12% in the local elections of 2011).<sup>177</sup> Furthermore, according to INSTAT's assessment in December 2017, the percentage of women among municipal councilors was 36.9%<sup>178</sup>.

<sup>175</sup>Data from the Monitoring Report of the National Strategy on Gender Equality and its Action Plan 2016-2020, for January - December 2018, prepared by the MSES

<sup>176</sup>The event was organized by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), in cooperation with the OSCE Presence in Albania and the Albanian Parliament. For more information see: <https://www.osce.org/sq/odihr/414923>

<sup>177</sup>Data from the Monitoring Report of the National Strategy on Gender Equality and its Action Plan 2016-2020, for January - December 2015, prepared by the MSES

<sup>178</sup>INSTAT "Men and women in Albania, 2018", p. 93.

Referring to article 15, point 1 of Law no. 9970/2008 "On Gender Equality in Albania" states that equal gender representation in all legislative, executive and judicial authorities and in other public institutions is achieved when: "a) a representation of over 30 percent is provided for each gender, including their governing bodies". Given the importance of the implementation of positive measures to eliminate discrimination and to accelerate real equality, law no. 139/2015 "For local self-government" imposes the implementation of and respect for gender equality on the mayors when appointing their deputy mayors and administrators of administrative units. In this respect, in 2018, the CPD requested information from 61 municipalities on respecting gender quotas, the appointment of gender equality officers in all municipalities of Albania, information on the position of women in the local government bodies. The CPD has also requested information on the number of members of the governing bodies of municipality-owned corporations with the respective names and gender. The report with relevant findings and recommendations will be published shortly.

Support was also provided to the Central Election Commission<sup>179</sup> in order to respect women's rights in gender-sensitive data collection and voter turnout data; information campaigns for marginalized groups; implementation of voting reforms and mechanisms to combat family and reciprocal voting.

In strengthening the electoral supervisory bodies, support was also provided<sup>180</sup> for the establishment of a parliamentary commission to monitor the gender equality legislation and the review of parliamentary rules and procedures on increasing women's participation; the revitalization of a parliamentary group as well as the mechanisms of monitoring, control and accountability; collection, analysis and simplified data reporting, support of locally elected councilors for the creation of local alliances and the national alliance, capacity building and networking, etc. The Alliance of Women's Advisers in Tirana was established, for the first time in 2016. The Alliance, consisting of 32 women councilors from all political forces in the Tirana Municipal Council, aims at assisting the women of Tirana with their social problems and economic empowerment. This alliance is also an example for women councilors in other municipalities, who have already reached a representation of 35% in Municipal Councils, therefore meeting the expectations of the Law on Gender Equality.

Women's participation in diplomatic missions for 2018 results in 14 women ambassadors, 1 woman in charge of work (out of 72 diplomatic missions). Out of 63 MoEFA diplomats in total 52.4% (or no. = 33) are women and 47.6% (or no. = 30) are men. Likewise, women in leading positions in MoFFA result as follows: 1 Deputy Minister, 1 General Director, 4 Directors and 10 Heads of Section.

Progress in women's representation has also been made in the state police as well as in the armed forces. Thus, in 2014 they set the gender criterion of 50% men and 50% women in the recruitment campaign for the Basic Police School in order to increase the number of girls and women in police services. In 2015, after completing studies at the Basic Police School, 500 female police officers were appointed to various positions in the basic role, mainly in general patrols, traffic police, and so on. Besides narrowing the gap of male / female representation rate in the police service, the presence of female police officers in terrain had a very positive impact on the community. In addition to increasing the presence of girls and women in the police service, another State Police initiative was the appointment of female police officers in leading roles. In this framework, in 2015, the State Police<sup>181</sup> undertook the initiative to integrate female police officers into operational leadership roles. This initiative, conceived in a full training program, was intended to provide knowledge in leadership and management in order to prepare them for leading roles in the operational sector. The program had no selective procedures, and was open to all female police officers holding the ranks of Commissar, Chief Commissar and Leader, while in 2016, with the support of the Director of the State Police, the initiative was addressed to those holding the rank of Vice Commissioner too. In 2015, the training program was completed by 5 police officers, where a woman was appointed as Chief of Police Station for the first

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<sup>179</sup> From UN Women

<sup>180</sup> From UN Women

<sup>181</sup> In cooperation with the ICITAP program and with the support of UN Women Albania

time. In 2016, 28 female police officers completed the training program. So in total 33 female police officers got trained via this program.

Achievements have also been noted in the representation of women in the Armed Forces. Thus: in 2016 a woman (Ms. Manushaqe Shehu) becomes the first Brigadier General and was appointed Commander of the Doctrine and Training Command, currently Deputy Chief of General Staff of the Armed Forces; in 2014 a female Colonel was for the first time appointed ATASHE in Turkey; 6 Military women have held positions as Director of directorates, 2 military women as vice directors and one as deputy ATASHE in the Republic of Turkey; in 2018 a former military woman (colonel in reserve) was appointed to the post of Prefect of Tirana. From 2018 to 31 March 2019 a total of 9 civilian women and 4 military women performed or still perform the duties of Minister of MoD, Secretary General of the Armed Forces, Deputy Chief of General Staff of the Armed Forces, Director, Deputy Director, Deputy ATASHE.

From 2014 to March 2019, about 50 military women (officers, non-commissioned officers, soldiers) participated in missions, NATO led operations in Afghanistan, Latvia, Kosovo and the Aegean Sea. In 2019, for the first time a military woman (Mrs. Adela Bilibashi) holding the rank of Second Lieutenant participated in a mission in Afghanistan as a platoon commander. For the first time in April 2019, two women military officers became part of the UN mission in South Sudan, and so on.

In 2017, the percentage of women among business owners or administrators increased to 29.7% from 26.8% in 2016. The percentage of female owners / administrators is higher in small enterprises (consisting of 1- 4 employees) reaching 30.2%, but this number has also increased in all categories compared to the previous year. The largest increase in 2017 is recorded in enterprises consisting of more than 10 employees, with 5.0% more women owners or administrators than a year ago. The number of businesses with women owners or administrators is greater in the Service Sector than in the Production Sector, respectively 36.3 % and 16.1%. However, the biggest increase is in the Services Sector, with 9.0% compared to the previous year.<sup>182</sup>

Data from 2017 show that the number of women, who were bank loan receivers, has dropped to 38.0% from 51.0% in the previous year. Men, who were bank loan receivers, continued to follow an upward trend even during 2017, resulting in higher numbers of loans and higher values than women. In 2017, the number of women's beneficiaries from the support schemes of the Albanian Investment Development Agency has dropped slightly to 37.0% from 42.0% in the previous year<sup>183</sup>.

Regarding the encouragement of the participation of women and young women from minorities, the Law No. 96/2017 on the Protection of National Minorities, adopted by the Albanian Parliament in October 2017, significantly improves the legal framework on the protection of minorities in our country. This law aims to ensure the exercise of the specific rights of persons belonging to a national minority required to protect the distinctive identity of national minorities as an essential component of an integrated society and guarantee non-discrimination and full equality before the law. The Law on National Minorities provides for the definition of national minorities and the legal recognition of nine national minorities, including the Roma and Egyptian communities. Among other things, this law provides for provisions on participation in public, cultural, social and economic life in particular in matters relating to the preservation, protection and promotion of the culture, traditions and minority identity to which they belong. The law also guarantees the right of persons belonging to national minorities to maintain and develop their linguistic, cultural, religious and cultural heritage identity. The draft decision on "Adopting the necessary measures and policies to ensure the participation of national minorities in public, cultural, social and economic life" provides, among other things, for the involvement of persons belonging to minorities in the consultation and decision-making process in drafting legal measures and policies in terms of: preserving and promoting their culture, traditions, and identity; measures on their effective participation in institutional activities; consulting on drafting the legal framework and policies in the social aspect and economic life.

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<sup>182</sup> INSTAT "Men and women in Albania, 2018", p. 99.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid p. 100

Positive efforts to increase the participation of women in public life and decision-making have also been made by civil society organizations.

In support of improving women's participation in public and political life, a number of studies and efforts have been made<sup>184</sup> such as: a) The Research Report on Gender and Corruption in the Albanian Civil Service - addressing gender and corruption issues in the civil service, in order to assist Albania and other countries in the region on their way to more transparent civil services; b) "Strengthening the decision-making power of women councilors in Albania" - a study focused on newly elected councilors and women in political parties, which throws specific ideas on how these women should pursue: i) advancing the agenda of empowering women in politics ii) enhancing the oversight role of central and local institutions in ensuring the enjoyment of women's rights; and iii) lobbying for increasing the gender quota in the electoral code for general elections and ensuring effectiveness with safeguards administered by central election management bodies. (c). Family voting is a worrying phenomenon in Albania which affects women and girls, especially those from rural areas. "LIVING MASCOT" was the winning prototype of innovation Bootcamp, which brought together young people, students and professionals from different fields to design a product aimed at promoting women and girls in rural areas to express their free will with their vote in the general elections. Conveying the main message "Women and Girls Vote Freely! Give Power to Your Vote," a group of five young people, winners of this initiative and 20 young volunteers went out and interacted with more than 2,500 people, of whom 1,800 were women and 700 men, in the markets Rroskovec, Bishqem (Peqin), Prrenjas and Mallakaster. 800 people, 600 women and 200 men, joined their symbolic free voting in the "Voting House". Through the video campaign they could gather more than 2,000 people, and the reactions were very positive. d) Simultaneously, the Albanian School of Public Administration conducted an adopted course for 'Strengthening Leadership Skills and Decision-making Performance for Women Councilors and Women in Municipal Administration. This training course, in consultation with women in local municipal councils and administrations, has trained a total of 24 councilors and women in leading positions in local self-government units. In addition, this module has been introduced by ASPA as part of their training program.

## **20. What actions has Albania taken in the last five years to increase women's access to expression and participation in decision-making in the media, including access through information and communication technologies (ICT)?**

- Strengthened the provision of formal and technical vocational education and training (TVET) in media and ICTs, including areas of management and leadership
- Took measures to enhance access, affordability and use of ICTs for women and girls (e.g. free wifi hubs, community technology centers)
- Introduced regulations to advance equal pay, retention and career advancement of women within the media and ICT field
- Collaborated with employers in the media and ICT field to improve internal policies and hiring practices on a voluntary basis
- Provided support to women's media networks and organizations
- Other

ICT skills training is part of school curricula in elementary and secondary education. Women's representation in decision-making in the media still remains a challenge, despite the number of journalists covering different areas of print media or visual media programming. In order to promote and encourage the participation of more women in the Media, the organizations of the civil society<sup>185</sup> have undertaken an initiative focusing on increasing the visibility of women and their empowerment in the Media by creating a database of women experts, by monitoring media and by providing women's

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<sup>184</sup> With the support of UNDP

<sup>185</sup> Women's Network "Equality in Decision-making" has undertaken the initiative "Voice of Women in Media". For more information see: <http://www.platformagjimore.al/media-4-equality/>

capacity building to media access and participation as well as journalists access to gender-sensitive reporting. Media Code of Ethics on gender-sensitive reporting is envisioned as part of this initiative.

## **21. Do you track the proportion of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting)?**

✓ YES

The added value in implementing public policies to alleviate or eliminate gender inequalities or their direct impact on social welfare in general, and the importance of gender-responsive budgeting in achieving these goals is clearly outlined in the Public Finance Management Strategy 2015- 2020. For the first time, gender responsive budgeting has become part of the National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI) 2015-2020.

Law no. 57/2016 "For some amendments and additions to the Law No. 9936, dated 26.6.2008 "On the Management of the Budgetary System in the Republic of Albania" has for the first time included the concept of gender responsive budgeting in the management of the budget system in the Republic of Albania. Respect for gender equality, which refers to the situation where the husband and wife enjoy equal opportunities and access to rights and benefits of the same nature, has exactly been added as a principle to increase the functioning of the budget system.

The approval of Law no. 68/2017 "On local government finances" has created opportunities for effective Gender Responsive Budgeting in all phases of the local financial management cycle (annual and mid-term budget programming, monitoring and reporting, evaluation and auditing) by local government units. The law, inter alia, sets out the rules on the policies, instruments and procedures for managing public finances at the local level, as well as other important issues relevant to the financing of positions and duties of local self-government. Thus, one of its stated goals is to ensure that gender equality be accelerated and achieved through the creation and the dissemination of local financial resources of local self-government units. According to Article 36 of this Law, the Mid-term Local Government Budgeting Program shall include information on the last two years, the fiscal year, and the following three years in each program of each LGU, for the purpose of program policies, program policy objectives, public investment projects, program outputs and their respective costs. It is mandatory that the Local Government Unit in at least one of the program policy objectives addresses issues related to inequality based on gender, or full respect for gender equality, clearly identifying the outputs and other measurable gender-based indicators. As far as financial reporting is concerned, Article 54 of the Law obliges Local Self-Government Units to necessarily include as financial indicators: expenditures on policies that support gender equality from total expenditures. Each local self-government unit publishes financial indicators in a separate annex to the annual draft budget and to the monitoring reports on budget implementation. Regarding the annual budget monitoring, the Authorizing Officers of the local self-government units submit to the respective council, whenever required but not less than three quarterly monitoring reports on budget implementation. The budget implementation monitoring reports are published by the authorizing officer on the official website of the respective unit, within 30 days of the end of the reporting period, and a copy thereof is sent to the Ministry of Finance. Within 30 days of submitting the annual report on monitoring the implementation of the budget of the local self-government unit, the Ministry of Finance prepares a report with comments and recommendations for it. A copy of this report is sent to the Mayor and the council of the local self-government unit and is published on the official website of the Ministry of Finance. At the request of the council, the authorizing officer of the local self-government unit reports during the year on other issues related to budget implementation and internal financial control.

The introduction of the Albanian Financial Management Information System (AFMIS) will also serve as a monitoring tool for Gender - Responsive Budgeting (GRB). The Ministry of Finance and Economy has acknowledged the inclusion of a specific monitoring method in the software preparation stage, providing boxes to be marked at program / objective / product level for line ministries. In this way, at the reporting stage the line ministries will be able to identify whether there are budget programs that include the

gender aspect as well as the level of the gender element. Also, Key Gender Performance Indicators will be mandatory in AFMIS, as explained in the new Instruction on Budget Preparedness of the Minister of Finance and Economy (March 2019), Annex 5 “Gender - Responsive Budgeting”.

Since 2015, data on GRB<sup>186</sup>, derived from gender analysis of Mid -Term Budgeting Program documents produced by Line Ministries, have been provided. Since 2016, GRB has been included as a separate annex in the MTBP document. Below you will find of the value of gender budgeting through the years.

Year	No. of budget programs	No. of budget programs that include GRB	No. of Objectives	No. of Products	Budget Funds for GRB (Million USD)	% of the total of Budget Expenditures
2015-2017	84	9	11	14	38.4	1%
2016-2018	84	20	27	23	63.4	1.73%
2017-2019	84	24	32	33	90	2.3%
2018-2020	84	28	41	41	120	2.4%
2019-2021	74	33	52	52	285	6.3%

**22. Being a country that receives donations, does Albania track the proportion of official development assistance (ODA) that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting)?**

Not applicable

**23. Does Albania have a valid national strategy or action plan on gender equality?**

✓ YES

By the Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 733, dated 20.10.2016, "National Strategy on Gender Equality and Action Plan 2016-2020" have been approved. This is the third strategy approved in Albania with the same focus and was prepared based on the assessment of the implementation of the previous strategy as well as through a comprehensive consultation process. In the National Strategy on Gender Equality and the Action Plan 2016-2020, four strategic objectives with their specific objectives that are further detailed into concrete activities are defined: i. Economic empowerment of women and men ii. Insurance of women's real and equal participation and engagement in political and public decision-making; iii. Reduction of gender-based violence and domestic violence; and iv. Strengthening the coordinating and monitoring role of the National Mechanism of Gender Equality, as well as the society's awareness on advancing gender equality

The preparation process (and the Strategy itself) relied on EU commitments and standards, other international commitments and standards on gender equality, recently adopted strategies such as NSDI 2015-2020 and sectoral strategies. Moreover, during the drafting of the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2016-2020 and its Action Plan, they took into consideration the liabilities of the Albanian Government which derive from a number of international conventions, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the Beijing Action Platform (1995) and the conclusions from the

<sup>186</sup> The long and sustained support with technical assistance and expertise of UN Women has played an important role in all of the above achievements for Gender Responsive Budgeting in Albania. The National Center for Combating Violent Extremism, which promotes gender-responsive budgeting in line ministries, also contributes to this, in order to ensure that women, girls and boys benefit from resources allocated to combat violent extremism

implementation of this platform by all member states within its 20th anniversary, the Sustainable Development Objectives (SDOs), Recommendations for Albania on women's rights and gender equality presented in the Universal Periodic Review 2014, etc.

All the actions envisaged in this strategy were financially estimated along with its preparation, and the document was approved together with the budget estimate for the funds to be annually allocated for its implementation. The overall budget for the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy and its Action Plan 2016-2020 has also been specified as: Overall budget for each year, based on each activity, specific objective, strategic goal and sources of funding; detailed budget for each activity, sources of funding and responsible institutions. The calculation of the inflation rate is 2%. In the classification of the financing from the budget, the funds that the LGUs, the Political Parties, the Parliament of Albania and other budgetary institutions should allocate for the implementation of this strategy are also included. Based on the available information, funds allocated by the state budget and the funds needed to be provided by bilateral and multilateral donors have been identified. There are potential donors for financing some of the activities, but negotiations and agreements to fund certain activities are also needed. The expenditures necessary for the implementation of the National Action Plan, with sources of funding from the state budget, the budget of local self-government units, donor funds and sources of non-budgetary institutions, are about 2,785 million ALL or approximately EUR 20.5 million<sup>187</sup>.

Meanwhile, it is also important to note that at the local level, seven municipalities<sup>188</sup> have signed the European Charter for Equality of Men and Women in Local Life, and in 2018 five of them<sup>189</sup> drafted and approved the Local Action Plan for Gender Equality 2018-2020, in fulfillment of the obligations of the European Charter with goals, objectives, and well-defined and financially estimated activities.

#### **24. Does Albania have an action plan and timeline for the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, or of the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) or of other United Nations human rights mechanisms that address gender inequality/discrimination against women?**

✓ YES

The Action Plan for the Implementation of the UN Universal Periodic Review of Human Rights (UPR) Mechanism was implemented by the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEFA)<sup>190</sup>. This Action Plan which is included in an on-line platform hosted on the website of the MEFA<sup>191</sup> is aiming at the implementation of the recommendations of the UN Universal Periodic Review of Human Rights (UNSCR), Final Observations the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of All Forms Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), as well as the recommendations of the committees of UN conventions on human rights. This platform, which will be regularly updated, serves as a monitoring mechanism to facilitate the implementation and monitoring of international obligations and to enable the government to adopt the necessary policies and legal framework on the on-going implementation of the recommendations. This Plan simultaneously allows the MoEFA and the other Ministries of this line to measure the achieved progress and to fulfill efficiently and regularly their reporting obligations. The Human Rights Platform also serves as a tool for meeting international obligations on reporting on the implementation of the recommendations, within the framework of the human rights conventions, focusing on the recommendations of UPR and CEDAW. Following the steps taken in this regard, a capacity-building activity has recently been organized (April 2019) for the enhancement of capacities and employees in ministries and institutions, as well as of the civil society representatives on how to present the prepared reports.

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<sup>187</sup>National Strategy on Gender Equality and Action Plan for 2016-2020, p. 28

<sup>188</sup> With the support of UN Women perms project GEF I, these municipalities are: Tirana, Korça, Gjirokastra, Durrës, Shkodra, Elbasan and Përmet.

<sup>189</sup> Specifically Tirana, Durrës, Shkodra, Korça and Elbasan

<sup>190</sup> With the support of UN Women and UNFPA Albania.

<sup>191</sup> This platform was launched in December 2018, on the occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Universal Declaration. The platform is available in Albanian and English on the website: [http://tedrejtatenjeriut.punetejashemm.gov.al/WD220AWP/WD220Awp.exe/CONNECT/JUN\\_System](http://tedrejtatenjeriut.punetejashemm.gov.al/WD220AWP/WD220Awp.exe/CONNECT/JUN_System)

Also, in 2018 the Ministry of Health and Social Protection prepared<sup>192</sup> an Action Plan for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention and the addressing of 19 emergency measures recommended by GREVIO. Measures proposed in this action plan are foreseen to be taken by the deadline set for the preparation and submission of the report on the measures taken for addressing these 19 recommendations, in January 2021 (So the Action Plan has a three year time frame 2018-2020).

Also, in 2018 it was adopted the National Action Plan for the implementation of Resolution 1325<sup>193</sup>.

## 25. Is there a national human rights institution in Albania?

### YES

**The People's Advocate** protects the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of the individual from inappropriate and unlawful actions or inactions of public administration bodies, as well as third parties acting on its behalf. It is a promoter of the highest standards of human rights and freedoms in the country. The People's Advocate, with its General Section has a special mandate to focus on women's rights, gender equality and sexual / gender discrimination. The remarks given by the People's Advocate on amending the Electoral Code helped to achieve the 50% quota for the representation of each gender in the municipal councils, and also encouraged changes in the legislation on protection against domestic violence. The People's Advocate introduced for the first time the alternative (shadow) report for the CEDAW Convention at the 64<sup>th</sup> Session of the Women's Discrimination Committee of UN. A large number of problems and recommendations presented by the People's Advocate in his CEDAW Report are included in the "Concluding Observations" that the Committee has given for Albania. The Committee has also recommended to the Albanian State to continue strengthening the support of the People's Advocate by providing the necessary human, technical and financial resources with the purpose of continuously strengthening independent monitoring, and ensuring that the recommendations, in particular those aimed at promoting gender equality and combating discrimination based on sex or gender, are implemented. Following the process, the People's Advocate<sup>194</sup> has organized the launching of this report, as well as a detailed work plan for monitoring the implementation of the CEDAW Committee's recommendations by the Albanian state<sup>195</sup>.

**The Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination**<sup>196</sup> (CPD), as an independent national institution, is the national body for equality, that has a special mandate in gender equality and sexual / gender discrimination issues, including the public and private sector. CPD is an institution which provides effective protection against discrimination and any form of conduct that promotes discrimination. The Commissioner has the authority not only to review complaints from persons who claim to have been discriminated because of their gender, but also to conduct administrative investigations in case there is information on violations of the gender-based equality principle. The Commissioner's decisions are binding and can be appealed to the court. But the CPD's participation in court proceedings is multi-dimensional because the CPD has the power, with the consent of the individual, to represent the latter before the court, and to present before the court, which is reviewing a case of discrimination, a specialized written opinion, or make available to the court the results of the administrative process, in case there has been one.

For the reporting period, the CPD has promoted gender equality particularly through legal recommendations, or special recommendations aimed at protection against discrimination: a) Recommendation to regulate the burden of proof on discrimination issues in the Code of Administrative Procedures and the Code of Labour; b) The Commissioner has sent a recommendation to regulate the burden of proof in the Code of Civil Procedure, but such recommendation has not been adopted even

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<sup>192</sup> With the support of UN Women

<sup>193</sup> Adopted by DCM No. 524 dated 11.09.2018

<sup>194</sup> In cooperation with UN WOMEN

<sup>195</sup> <https://www.avokatipopullit.gov.al/media/manager/ëebbsite/reports/Raporti%20mbi%20zbatimin%20e%20konvet%C3%ABs%20CEDAW%20n%C3%AB%20Shqip%C3%ABri.pdf>

<sup>196</sup> Created based on Law No. 10221/2010

though it has been repeatedly sent; c) Recommendations for the Broadcasting Code, which aim at ensuring that audio-visual broadcasts of all kinds respect the principle of equality and non-discrimination; d) Recommendations for amendments to the Electoral Code of the Republic of Albania, which aim to increase the participation of women in the Assembly and the local government bodies, and to strengthen sanctions for non-implementation of the gender quota in the Assembly elections as well in the local government bodies; e) Recommendations for Amendments to the Law "On Measures Against Domestic Violence", whereby the Commissioner has recommended that, in accordance with the Istanbul Convention of the Council of Europe, violence against women constitutes discrimination; f) Recommendation for taking measures regarding the issue of the registration of a Legalization Permit and issuing of a certificate of ownership on behalf of both spouses or former spouses; g) Recommendations for Regulatory Entities for revision of type contracts for the provision of electricity supply services in order to avoid unequal treatment between men and women. g) In April 2019, the recommendations of EQUINET - European Network of Equality Bodies, on combating discrimination and hate speech in election campaigns were translated into Albanian and distributed to the responsible authorities.

**The Commissioner on the Right to Information and Protection of Personal Data** is an independent and responsible institution for overseeing and monitoring the right to information and protection of personal data as well as encouraging the highest standards in the protection and promotion of rights and fundamental human freedoms. The essential activity of this institution is to raise awareness of public authorities and public and private auditors on their obligations on transparency and accountability within the framework of the right to information and privacy.

## V. PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES

### Critical areas of concern:

- E. Women and armed conflict
- I. Human rights of women
- L. The girl child

**26. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to build and sustain peace, promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and implement the women, peace and security agenda?**

- ✓ **Adopted and / or implemented a National Action Plan on women, peace and security**
- ✓ **Integrated women, peace and security commitments into key national and inter-ministerial policy, planning and monitoring frameworks**
- ✓ **Used communication strategies, including social media, to increase awareness of the women, peace and security agenda**
- Increased budgetary allocations for the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda
- Taken steps to reduce excessive military expenditures and/or control the availability of armaments
- ✓ **Re-allocated funds from military spending to social and economic development, including for gender equality and the empowerment of women**
- ✓ **Supported inclusive and gender-sensitive conflict analysis, early warning and prevention mechanisms**
- Other

In 2018, Albania drafted the National Action Plan for the implementation of Resolution 1325<sup>197</sup>, a document prepared by a working group composed of representative(s) of Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, in close consultation with representatives of local authorities, international organizations, and with contributions from civil society

<sup>197</sup> Adopted by DCM No. 524 dated 11.09.2018

representatives<sup>198</sup>. During the three years of work for the preparation of this plan, civil society was maximally engaged in the creation of a National Coalition named “Women Peace Security”, comprised of 32 prestigious organizations. In order to give concrete direction to the implementation of the Action Plan regarding the Resolution, as well as to have an informative guide, the experts drafted the Guiding Strategy, which is the result of the work of organizations in the design of its structure and content. This document is a guideline which opens the way for realizing the mission and vision of the Coalition in monitoring the Action Plan as well as other aspects addressed to the security of women in our country. This strategic document provides concrete performance of the Coalition’s activities in the framework of monitoring the implementation of this action plan in our country.

The Action Plan includes nine objectives and forty measures and cooperation with CSOs that use Albania’s Resolution 1325 is set at 66% of objectives and 55% of these measures. Some of the main objectives of this Plan are: (i) improving policy documents and raising awareness on Resolution 1325; (ii) increasing the participation of women in the field of security at home and abroad; (iii) establishing a regulatory framework and capacities that enable better protection and rehabilitation of women in the field of peace and security; (iv) measures for better monitoring and reporting of Resolution 1325, etc. The Action Plan includes measures Albania intends to implement: (a) encouraging the exchange of experiences at various regional, national and international levels; (b) cooperating with civil society for the implementation of Resolution 1325; (c) raising awareness on the role of women in maintaining peace and addressing post-conflict situations, through joint activities, such as public debates, campaigns, roundtables and other forms of public information; (d) increasing women’s involvement and role in security policies and the participation of women experts in political activities in peacekeeping, security, regional co-operation in peacekeeping missions, as well as capacity building in this regard, etc.; (e) establishing a reporting system for the implementation of the Action Plan and starting work to draft the National Action Plan for the Implementation of Resolution 1325; (f) fostering general interest for Resolution 1325. In October 2018, was organized a two-day training<sup>199</sup> with 35 participants including 20 police officers and 15 civil society representatives. They discussed current challenges and lessons learned in responding to sexual and gender-based violence, seen in the perspective of the newly planned actions in the National Action Plan for the Implementation of Resolution 1325.

Also, Albania has adopted the National Strategy Countering Violent Extremism and its Action Plan<sup>200</sup>. The Coordination Center for Countering Violent Extremism in Albania was established in 2017 as the main government entity for countering violent extremism and it became fully operational in June 2018. The Center is a hub for coordination and capacity development of local stakeholders and frontline practitioners involved in efforts to counter violent extremism in Albania and the region by sharing best practices and developing effective evidence-based responses to counter the threat of violent extremism. The Center strengthens the collaboration and partnership at the local, national and international level. It coordinates the implementation of the Albanian National Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism among ministries, government agencies, civil society, the private sector, religious communities, and the media, in order to bolster local research, build community resilience and counter extremist propaganda. One of the main objectives of the Center is to support local research in preventing and fighting violent extremism in Albania. Currently, limited gender data is available to illustrate the gender dimension of opposing violent extremism in the country. Therefore, the Center will close this gap by producing studies, completing nationwide surveys, and taking estimates with a clear gender perspective. The National Plan for Countering Violent Extremism contains some elements that are directly related to the Agenda “Women, Peace and Security”.

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<sup>198</sup> The Association “Women, Peace, Security” has played an important role by strongly lobbying in adopting the National Action Plan. Support, expertise and technical assistance were provided by the Embassy of the Netherlands and Sweden in Albania, as well as the United Nations through UN WOMEN “Gender Equality Fund” in Tirana, the Presence of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Albania and the Delegation of the European Union to Albania. The most essential support was provided through the Project “Resolution 1325”, which was funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the UN Women Fund for Gender Equality.

<sup>199</sup> From OSCE Presence for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) in cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and OSCE Presence in Albania. For more see: <https://www.osce.org/odihr/399179>

<sup>200</sup> DCM No. 930 dated 18.11.2015. For more see: [https://mb.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/strategjia\\_kombetare\\_per\\_luften\\_kunder\\_ekstrimizmit.pdf](https://mb.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/strategjia_kombetare_per_luften_kunder_ekstrimizmit.pdf)

**27. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to increase the leadership, representation and participation of women in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, humanitarian action and crisis response, at decision-making levels in situations of armed and other conflicts, and in fragile or crisis settings?**

- ✓ **Promoted and supported women's meaningful participation in peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements**
- Promoted equal participation of women in humanitarian and crisis response activities at all levels, particularly at the decision-making level
- Integrated a gender perspective in the prevention and resolution of armed or other conflicts**
- Integrated a gender perspective in humanitarian action and crisis response
- Protected civil society spaces and women's human rights defenders
- Other (explain)

For the above-mentioned, information is provided in question 4 of the first part of the report, as well as in the third part, question 34/b (as well as data on representation on the second part, question 19)

**28. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to enhance judicial and non-judicial accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and violations of the human rights of women and girls in situations of armed and other conflicts or humanitarian action and crisis response?**

- ✓ **Implemented legal and policy reform to redress and prevent violations of the rights of women and girls**
- ✓ **Strengthened institutional capacities, including of the justice system and transitional justice mechanisms as applicable, during conflict and crisis response**
- Strengthened capacity of security sector institutions on human rights and prevention of sexual and gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse
- ✓ **Increased access of conflict-affected, refugee or displaced women to violence prevention and protection services**
- ✓ **Taken measures to combat illicit arms trafficking**
- ✓ **Taken measures to combat the production, use of and trafficking in illicit drugs**
- ✓ **Taken measures to combat trafficking in women and children**
- Other (explain)

By the Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 50, dated 06.02.2019 was approved the Strategy on small arms, light weapons and explosives control 2019-2024 and the Action Plan 2019-2021. The Strategy defines the activities that aim to increase the participation of women in the small arms, light weapons and ammunition control and improving the capacity of competent institutions for the inclusion of gender equality in the policies of light weapons control.

The Coordination Center for Countering Violent Extremism is currently in the process of establishing and/or strengthening of the Local Security Councils throughout Albania. In compliance with their mandate, this includes capacity building of Officers in Community Policing and Schools to build trust in law enforcement and increase safety of women and girls. In this regard, significant steps (for capacity building of specialists in community policing and education specialists in areas) have been undertaken by the State Police<sup>201</sup>. Likewise, information on the above, especially in relation to trafficking, is given in the answer to question 19.

**29. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to eliminate discrimination against and violations of the rights of the girl child?**

- ✓ **Taken measures to combat negative social norms and practices and increased awareness of the needs and potential of girl children**

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<sup>201</sup> Through the support and expertise of the Swedish Project on Community Policing

- ✓ **Strengthened girls' access to quality education, skills development and training**
- ✓ **Tackled disadvantages in health outcomes due to malnutrition, early childbearing (e.g. anemia) and exposure to HIV / AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases**
- ✓ **Implemented policies and programmes to reduce and eradicate child, early and forced marriage**
- ✓ **Implemented policies and programmes to eliminate violence against girls, including physical and sexual violence and harmful practices**
- ✓ **Implemented policies and programmes to eradicate child labor and excessive levels of unpaid care and domestic work undertaken by girl children.**
- ✓ **Promoted girls' awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life.**
- Other (explain)

The elimination of all forms of violence against children is one of the strategic pillars of the National Agenda for the Children's Rights 2017-2020. Special attention is given to prevention as a key strategy for protecting children from all forms of violence, including the promotion of non-violent positive parenting. The Agenda aims the establishment of specialized services for child victims of sexual abuse and other forms of violence as one of its specific objectives. The participation of children in all areas and processes affecting their lives and requiring children and their families to be fully informed about such issues, is one of the cross-cutting elements of all strategic pillars of the National Agenda for Children Rights 2017-2020.

The new Law 18/2017 "On the Rights and Protection of the Child" has stated the obligation of reporting cases of children in need of protection, including cases of violence, as a measure of enforcing child protection against economic exploitation. The State Agency for the Protection of Children's Rights (SAPCR) monitors violations of children's rights as well as ethical standards, respect for privacy and anonymity of the child, in reporting cases involving children during audio-visual broadcasts. Article 26 of this law states the protection of children from trafficking, sale and any form of sexual exploitation and abuse, including illegal sexual activity, child prostitution or other illegal sexual practices, exposure, display or involvement in pornographic materials or sexual abuse of children. The law provides the right of the child to be heard in any judicial or administrative proceeding concerning the child, either directly or through a legal or procedural representative, and most importantly in the presence of a psychologist. It also guarantees freedom of expression and of thought, conscience and religion. The law states the right of the child to be heard and consulted during processes related to the development and implementation of respective policies. Based on this law, it was drafted the DCM No. 129, dated 13.03.2019 "On the procedures for the identification, immediate assistance and referral of economically exploited children, including children in street situation"<sup>202</sup>. This DCM defines the responsible institutions and their obligations related to the identification and referral of economically exploited children. The National Plan for the Protection of Children from Economic Exploitation 2018–2020, which will cover children in street situation is currently being drafted.

Moreover, the National Action Plan for the Protection of Children from Economic Exploitation, including children in street situation (2019-2021) has been drafted, which aims: a) prevention of economic exploitation of children b) protection and intervention/services based on the identified needs of children; c) overcoming social and cultural barriers that promote economic exploitation; d) prosecution of criminal cases related to the economic exploitation of children. The address of the economic exploitation of children is also included in the objective of the National Agenda for the Children's Rights 2017–2020, which provides measures in this area, including: assessing the situation of child labor in Albania, guidelines for child protection structures for assessing child labor, adding the terms of reference and scope, and the number of employees of the State Inspectorate of Labor and Social Services (SILSS). Based on the new structural reform of the governmental institution in 2017, SILSS is part of the Central Inspectorate under the MFE.

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<sup>202</sup> With the support of the OSCE Presence in Albania

Regarding the protection of girl child labor, the legal amendments to the Labor Code by Law No. 136/2015 “On some additions and amendments to Law No. 7961, dated 12.7.1995, “Labor Code of the Republic of Albania”, as amended” prohibits the employment of children under the age of 16. Exceptionally, children between the ages of 15 and 16 can work during school holidays only for light works which due to the inherent nature of the particular duties and conditions in which they are carried out, do not affect: i) child security, health or development; and ii) the child’s participation in school, vocational guidance or training programmes approved by the responsible institutions or the ability of children to benefit from this training. While children under the age of 15, who are attending compulsory full-time education, may be hired for cultural or similar activities, such as cultural, sporting or promotional activities only if these conditions are met: a) do not affect the child’s security, health or development; b) do not affect the child’s participation in school, in vocational guidance or training programs approved by the responsible institutions or the ability of children to benefit from this training and c) the Labor Inspectorate gives preliminary authorization on a case by case basis. Since 2018, Albania has joined the global initiative of Alliance SDG 8.7 led by ILO which strives to end child labor until 2025.

At the local level, Children Protection Units (CPUs) have been established and operate, which have the responsibility to identify, evaluate, protect and provide services to children at risk of violence, abuse, exploitation or neglect. There are 235 child protection specialists across the country.

Meanwhile, from the SAPCR’s data on identified cases of children in street situation and economically exploited result: 304 children in 2015, 431 children in 2016, 363 children in 2017 and 318 children in 2018.

On 30 March 2017, the Assembly of Albania approved the Code of Criminal Justice for Children. This Code contains special provisions on criminal liability of children, procedural rules relating to investigation, prosecution, court proceedings, execution of criminal sentences, rehabilitation or other measures involving a child in conflict with the law, as well as a child victim and / or witness (s) of the criminal offense. The Code also contains provisions applicable even to young adults from 18 to 21 years of age as foreseen in its specific articles. This Code provides also measures to ensure the gender equality of the girl child. The rights deriving from this Code shall be guaranteed, without any discrimination, to any child in conflict with the law, victim or witness, irrespective of gender, race, color, ethnic origin, economic condition, educational or social, pregnancy, family or marital status, disability, belonging to a particular group, etc. The child victim or witness of a criminal offense shall be treated with care, kindness and sensitivity which respect their dignity throughout the process, considering their personal situation and immediate and special needs, age, gender, disabilities, where applicable, and maturity. Children are placed in separate premises by gender. The child, when in detention, where appropriate and in accordance with the age, sex and personality, shall be provided with social, educational, psychological, medical and physical assistance. The personal search shall be carried out by persons of the same sex or as per the choice of the child. In all cases, an item and/or material is taken from the child’s body in premises provided with a license to perform a medical activity, in the presence of a certified physician and nurse of the same sex as the child, and in the presence of the legal representative and defense counsel. The intimate search shall be carried out by persons of the same sex or as per the choice of the child. The child shall be examined and treated by a doctor of the same gender or gender of the child’s choice.

During 2013-2015, the SAPCR gave importance to raising awareness on children’s rights and enforcing mechanisms of direct participation of child in decision-making at the central level to bring children’s voice to the responsible institutions and authorities for the realization of children’s rights. For the purpose of strengthening the participation of children in decision-making mechanisms at the central level, various awareness-raising activities have been developed. In 2014 was organized the “Dialogue on children’s rights” between children and representatives of the Albanian government. The SAPCR, with the support of partners, starting from March 2016 implemented a National Mobilization Plan **#IProtectChildren**, to protect children from all forms of violence. The aim of the plan was to raise

awareness among the general public on denouncing and reporting cases of child violence including violence against girls. In 2016, 482 children<sup>203</sup> were engaged in four municipalities to gather views, contributions and recommendations regarding the child protection mechanism and their rights, as well as consultations on the drafting of the National Mobilization Plan #IProtectChildren. During these months, awareness raising activities took place in 26 municipalities (Tirana, Durrës, Elbasan, Fier, Lushnjë, Vlora, Shkodra, Korça, Dibra, Kamza, Lezha, Librazhd, Kurbin, Burrel, Cërrik, Përmet, etc.) in which participated 10,000 parents, 20,000 children and 2,000 teachers.

On the initiative of the Speaker of the Albanian Assembly, the parliamentary group "Friends of Children" was re-elected for the IX parliamentary legislature. "Friends of Children" is a voluntary union of Deputies of the Assembly without distinction of political conviction and affiliation with the mission to promote state initiatives and actions in support and protection of children's rights<sup>204</sup> in Albania. In particular, the parliamentary group "Friends of Children" is engaged in the national report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. With the special encouragement of the parliamentary group "Friends of Children", the Parliament has approved Law No. 69/2018 "On some additions and changes to Law No. 10129, dated 11.05.2009 "On civil status", through which was made possible the civil registration of around 10,000 unregistered children of the Roman and Egyptian communities. The amendments support the Albanian court to regulate the registration of Albanian children if they have inaccurate data; require maternity hospitals to report newborns to civil status offices through a temporary register and request that Children Protection Units start the registration procedures, if the parents do not register the child within 60 days.

The Strategy of Pre-university Education 2014-2020 aims to ensure quality and inclusive education, starting with pre-school education.<sup>205</sup> The SAPCR reports that measures have been taken to increase access to education for children in disadvantaged or vulnerable situations (including Roma children, children with disabilities, children from rural areas, etc.). These measures include free transportation for all children attending a kindergarten or school at a distance of more than two kilometers from their homes, assignment of teachers assisting children with disabilities, coverage of housing and education costs for residential schools, and the provision of scholarships and free meals. Each year is budgeted a special fund for the providing textbooks free of charge, through which free textbooks are provided for different categories of children from disadvantaged groups (children, whose parents receive economic assistance or unemployment benefits, orphans, children belonging to national minorities, migrant children, children of families with disabilities, families in need, victims of trafficking, etc.) During 2017-2018, 82.815 pupils were reimbursed for free textbooks with a value of 268.7 million ALL. From September 2018, textbooks have been provided free of charge to all pupils from the first grade to the fourth and to 16 categories of pupils from disadvantaged groups.

Early marriages are a reality both for girls and boys, though girls are most affected. For the prevention of this phenomenon, SAPCR<sup>206</sup> has organized information and awareness activities related to the phenomenon of early marriages in areas where the phenomenon is more widespread. In 2018, information and communication activities were organized with children, parents, headmen of villages and local actors in cooperation with the Children Protection Units in the municipalities of Shkodra and Malësi e Madhe. In these meetings were distributed information and awareness brochures about early marriages. Messages against the phenomenon of early marriages were also given on 12 October 2018, on the International Women's Day in the Albanian Assembly, in the framework of Global Campaign #Girl2Leader. In this Girls' Summit, which took place for the first time in Albania participated young girls aged 15-21 who were welcomed and encouraged for their participation in decision-making by 15 Women Ambassadors, politicians and representatives of civil society, academia and media. The Chair

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<sup>203</sup> With the support of World Vision

<sup>204</sup> Meanwhile, the Parliament has adopted in November 2013 the Resolution on Protection of the Rights of Children, which assigns to members of the Parliament the task to monitor the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the final recommendations that the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child addresses to Albania.

<sup>205</sup> Likewise, the Law No. 69/2012 "On pre-university education system", as amended, is inclusive and guarantees to all the constitutional right for education.

<sup>206</sup> In cooperation with the organization Caritas Albania

of SAPCR invited the participating girls to influence in the future with their activities for the realization of the rights of women and girls in the country.

Civil Society Organizations remain an important actor for protection of rights and elimination of discrimination for girl child. The protection against discrimination is achieved by filing complaints to the Commissioner for the Protection against Discrimination, increasing the level of information on their rights for protection from discrimination, use of media, etc.

For more information on this question, you can refer also to answers to questions 13-17 of this report.

## **VI. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION, PROTECTION AND REHABILITATION**

### **Critical areas of concern:**

- I. Human rights of women
- K. Women and the environment
- L. The girl child

### **30. What actions has Albania taken in the last five years to integrate gender perspectives and concerns into environmental policies?**

- ✓ **Supported women's participation and leadership in environmental and natural resource management and governance**
- ✓ **Strengthened evidence and/or raised awareness about gender-specific environmental and health hazards (e.g. consumer products, technologies, industrial pollution)**
- Increased women's access to and control over land, water, energy, and other natural resources
- ✓ **Promoted the education of women and girls in science, engineering, technology and other disciplines relating to the natural environment**
- ✓ **Enhanced women's access to sustainable time- and labor-saving infrastructure (e.g. access to clean water and energy) and climate-smart agricultural technology**
- ✓ **Taken measures to protect and preserve the knowledge and practices of women in indigenous and local communities related to traditional medicines, biodiversity and conservation techniques**
- Taken steps to ensure that women benefit equally from decent jobs in the green economy
- Monitored and evaluated the impact of environmental policies and sustainable infrastructure projects on women and girls
- Other

During the last few years, cases of media and non-governmental organizations reports of poison and health threats at work have increased, which have been prosecuted by labor and hygiene inspectorates, responsible for the respect of hygienic sanitary and environmental conditions in working environments. Only in the city of Durrës, in two events 20 employees of a textile factory in Shkozë were sent to hospitals (26 May 2018) and 40 women of a footwear factory (24 November 2018). As a result of the reports, production businesses have been temporarily suspended (up to 5 working days) to take the necessary measures to improve working environment and conditions.

Decision No. 634, dated 15.07.2015 On the adoption of the regulation "On the introduction of measures for the safety and health at work of pregnant women and nursing mothers" has been adopted.

During the last five years, the Master's degrees in environmental areas in the public universities of the country, respectively in Biology and Environment fields (University of Tirana, Faculty of Natural Sciences) and Master of Science in Energy and Water Resources Engineering (Polytechnic University of Tirana, Faculty of Civil Engineering) have accepted and studied as future environmental professionals around 75% - 85% female students (academic year 2018-2019: 34 girls from 43 Master students). This figure represents the general trend of last years of an increasing number of girls in the

specialists' fields that have traditionally been considered as professions in the field, employing mostly men.)<sup>207</sup>.

*The support of women in rural areas through the adoption of the Instruction No. 4/2014 "On the procedures and administration manner of the fund for agriculture and rural development programme", according to the competition criteria which define that in 15 out of 21 schemes if applicants are women, the profit for them is 5 points more.*

Regarding the environmental field, the budget program of "Forest Administration" includes the product with gender budgeting elements, of the "Environmental Services Project". The Gender Action Plan, as part of the Environmental Services Project in Albania attempts to address the need to increase the involvement of women and young people in decision-making at local level, such as: forest and pasture users' associations, federations and local government units, by introducing various measures involving women as same as men in planning, implementation and evaluation processes, that contribute to their economic empowerment. This goal was achieved through measures such as: raising awareness, carrying out capacity building activities, and involving women in different processes making them feel capable and ready to raise their voice in order to address their needs.

The activities carried out include trainings, workshops, capacity building and advisory activities, followed by 722 persons in total (from which 579 women and 143 men). Over 80% of participants in the organized activities were women.

The largest number of women participants in capacity building awareness activities were selected from areas with moderate management level, with basis on forest and pasture community. Over 29% of women participants in trainings were users in the forest and pasture users' associations (FPUA) identified as engaged in forest and pasture management.

Likewise, a draft Action Plan has been drafted to integrate gender equality in climate change policies and plans<sup>208</sup>.

The Albanian Women in Science Network supported by UNESCO has organized periodic meetings on important world marked days on science and role of women in science, with high school students serving as a role model for promoting them in engaging in non-traditional professions.

### **31. What actions has Albania taken in the last five years to integrate gender perspectives into policies and programmes for disaster risk reduction, climate resilience and mitigation?**

- ✓ **Supported women's participation and leadership, including those affected by disasters, in disaster risk reduction, climate resilience and mitigation policies, programmes and projects**
- ✓ **Strengthened the evidence base and raised awareness about the disproportionate vulnerability of women and girls to the impact of environmental degradation and disasters**
- Promoted access of women in situations of disaster to services such as relief payments, disaster insurance and compensation
- Introduced or strengthened and implemented gender-responsive laws and policies related to disaster risk reduction, climate resilience and mitigation (e.g. disaster laws addressing vulnerability of women in disaster)

Floods and droughts are recurrent events in Albania. During the February 2015 floods, the government approached development partners, including the European Union and the World Bank to assist with reconstruction and recovery in the affected area. In this framework, except the emergency aid for disaster relief, was realized a rapid gender assessment<sup>209</sup> of the impact of the floods. The assessment underlined: damages to crops and land were a major concern to women, as they clearly suffered significant losses of products for both personal consumption and sale, including loss of livestock and

<sup>207</sup> <https://sites.google.com/al/fshn.edu.al/departamenti-i-biologjisee/studime-master/master-shkencor/master-i-shkencave-nee-biologji-mjedisore>

<sup>208</sup> With the support of UNDP, Center for Legal Initiatives, etc.

<sup>209</sup> By UN Women, in close cooperation with a team of experts from the World Bank, UNDP, the EU Delegation and FAO. For more see: UN Women dhe UNDP (2016). Gender Brief Albania 2016. Prepared by Monika Kocaqi, Ani Plaku and Dolly Wittberger. UN Women, Albania. <http://www.un.org/al/sites/default/files/Dosja%20Gjinore%20%20per%20web.pdf>

animal feed, as well as damage to barns, which further exacerbated the situation. Damages to the home, furniture and household equipment, as well as persistent dampness were major concerns. According to 64 per cent of respondents, domestic violence increased after the floods, and unexpectedly, women heads of household reported a higher incidence of violence (73,1 per cent) than women spouses. Women were found to be affected not only by domestic violence, but also by violence outside the home. Women reported having been treated differently than men as concerns the distribution of aid by municipality officials, where men had easier access to municipality staff and benefited more from state support<sup>210</sup>.

The Armed Forces have been involved in disasters reduction by investing in community service for repair, bridges, road construction, reinforcement of river embankments, cleaning of environment from various urban waste etc.

In cases of disasters they participated in extinction of fires, accommodation of inhabitants of disaster areas, supply with medicine, food, food for livestock, transport of injured persons by transportation means etc.

In the framework of the national awareness campaign, the General Directorate of Civil Emergencies (structure of the Ministry of Defense) has organized a number of awareness and public communication events on natural disasters and prevention of risk for the population, specifically focusing on certain groups, among which women and girls. The awareness-raising days included local actors such as firefighting services, rapid aid, Red Cross, etc. The motto of the campaign has been: "The risk is not luck, but choice!"<sup>211</sup>

Another project that integrates gender aspects in climate change is the Climate Change project<sup>212</sup>, which assists the Ministry of Tourism and Environment in adopting the Fourth National Communication for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which foresees to spend around 15,000 USD allocated for the years 2019 – 2021 for the following four objectives: (i) Strengthening the capacities of relevant institutions in order to integrate gender into climate change; (ii) Identification of groups, institutions, government bodies and NGOs that will be affected or may affect climate change; (iii) Training of gender focal points in order to include gender in sectoral policies dealing with climate change; (iv) Identification of gender inequalities created by climate change in regard to the Fourth National Communication in the Vjosa river basin. The Ministry of Environment<sup>213</sup> included for the first time in the Third National Communication for the UNFCCC a chapter /specific guideline on gender integration in policies and programmes that address climate change. The guideline shall be implemented as part of the Fourth National Communication of Albania for UNFCCC, the preparation of which has started in 2019.

The gender dimension shall also be included in the First Two-Year Updated Report, where will be implemented for the first time the Guideline to mainstreaming gender in climate change adaptation and mitigation programmes and plans in Albania.

In areas having high flood risk in Shkodra, have been carried out awareness raising campaigns and trainings for women and children affected by the floods.<sup>214</sup>

Likewise, in 2017 was realized<sup>215</sup> the study "Gender differences and civic participation of local communities on environmental information". The study aims to present a general overview of the national gender policies and commitment related to the three Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs), to make evident women's and men's respective roles in a better-informed decision-making related to the environment at household and community levels. The recommendations provided emphasize the importance of understanding how men's and women's roles and gender relations

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<sup>210</sup> UN Women (2015). Gender Inequality and Floods Impacts in Albania

<sup>211</sup> The awareness campaign was conducted in cooperation with REC, as part of the PRONEWS programme supported by EU. The activities have taken place respectively in: Tirana (9 May 2018), Shkodra (12 October 2018); Vlora (21 October 2018). <http://albania.rec.org/news-item.php?id=2315>

<sup>212</sup> UNDP Project

<sup>213</sup> Supported by UNDP

<sup>214</sup> Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the German Federal Government

<sup>215</sup> With the support of UNDP. For more see: [http://www.al.undp.org/content/albania/en/home/library/environment\\_energy/gender-differences-and-civic-participation-of-local-communities/](http://www.al.undp.org/content/albania/en/home/library/environment_energy/gender-differences-and-civic-participation-of-local-communities/)

change and may complement each other when coping with climate change, land desertification and biodiversity. The need to ensure participatory planning, implementing and monitoring methods, appropriate to encourage women and men to be engaged in different processes is also made evident. Seven good practices, implemented by Albanian civil society organizations, in relation to environmental information and gender issues were presented as concrete cases of how the collection and dissemination of environmental information can be realized, taking into account gender equality and the inclusion of women in environmental issues.

The integration of gender issues into environmental issues takes place also in the project Protecting Albania's Marine and Coastal Biodiversity<sup>216</sup>, through which: (i) women are promoted in management and technical level in the Regional Administrative of Protected Areas, encouraging their participation in Project Steering Committee of Marine Protected Areas of Karaburun-Sazani; (ii) women's participation is facilitated through small actions, according to the Strategic Plan of the Visitor Center, being the first to provide information on management, conservation, awareness, mitigation of ecosystem impacts, waste recycling, sustainable fishing practices, etc; (iii) more than 40 women directly involved in the project implementation process and/or training; (iv) women were specifically involved in Management Planning and Business Planning processes and in all activities of this project, which is intertwined with other priorities, including poverty reduction, improving governance, prevention and recovery from natural disasters, particularly by encouraging, engaging and promoting women's participation in almost every activity in the country; (v) in the area of gap analysis and data collection on habitats, species and economic social profiles of coastal areas, women from different resource users' groups are actively involved and participate by cooperating and providing relevant information to expert groups.

### SECTION THREE: NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND PROCESSES

#### 32. What is Albania's current national machinery for gender equality and empowerment of women)? Please name it and describe its location within the Government

In Albania there are several structures that address issues of gender equality and gender-based violence and domestic violence on ministerial level, local level and Parliament's level.

1. According to Law No. 9970, dated 24.7.2008 "On Gender Equality in Society" and Law No.9669, dated 18.12.2006 "On Measures Against Violence in Family Relations", the responsible state authority for gender equality and fight against domestic violence is the minister who cover the issues of gender equality.

With the organization of the new government in September 2017, based on point e) of DCM No.508, dated 13.09.2017, **the Ministry of Health and Social Protection (MoHSP)** was charged with the responsibility of gender equality issues and fight against domestic violence. The Ministry exercises this function through the leading role of the Minister at the **National Council on Gender Equality and Policies and Strategies Sector on Social Inclusion and Gender Equality**, as part of the General Directorate of Social and Health Policies.

2. According to Law No.9770, dated 18.12.2008 "On Gender Equality in Society, articles 11 and 12, the **National Council on Gender Equality (NCGE)** is the highest advisory organ on issues of gender equality and ensuring gender mainstreaming in all fields, especially in political, social, economic and cultural fields. The Council is established by order of the Prime Minister and renewed once every four years. The NCGE is chaired by the Minister of MHSP and composed of 9 representatives of line ministries at the rank of deputy minister and top management, as well as three representatives of civil society, who are selected through an open competition, having as criteria the expertise and contribution to these fields.

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<sup>216</sup> UNDP Project

3. Central and local state institutions shall have the legal obligation to collaborate with the respective minister responsible for gender equality issues for exchanging information and facilitating the accomplishment of the minister's function. For this reason, there shall be a **gender equality employee (GEE)** appointed in every **ministry** dealing with gender equality issues and **every municipality** shall appoint one or several local gender equality employees in their structures. Currently GEEs have been assigned in 11 *ministries*, a *contact point for the State Police* as well as 60 GEEs appointed at local level (out of 61 municipalities), who in most cases play the role of the local coordinator for managing cases of domestic violence. The gender employees are continuously trained through the MHSP in cooperation with the School of Public Administration.

4. **Order of Prime Minister No. 32, dated 12.2.2018 “On appointing the national coordinator for gender equality”** appoints the Deputy Prime Minister as the national coordinator for gender equality, as well as authorizes to strengthen gender equality mechanism at the central level and to undertake a coordinating role.

5-**At the level of the Assembly of Albania** – The Assembly approved on 4 December 2017 the resolution “On condemning violence against women and girls and increasing efficiency of legal mechanisms for its prevention”. In implementation of the commitments made in this resolution and based on Article 19 of this Regulation, with the Assembly's Decision No. 113/2017, dated 4 December 2017 was approved the establishment of the parliamentary sub-committee “On Gender Equality and Ending Violence Against Women”, near the permanent Committee on Labor, Social Affairs and Health. In the framework of the process of parliamentary control, this sub-committee requires continuous information on the implementation of the National Strategy on Gender Equality, reporting on the situation of domestic violence and scope and functioning of CRMs, or on issues of discrimination against women, conducts hearings with interest groups and institutions. We can mention especially the role played by the deputies of this sub-committee as members of other parliamentary committees during the legislative process for reviewing the draft law “On some additions and amendments to Law No.9669, dated 18.12.2006 “On Measures Against Violence in Family Relations”, as amended”.

**The Alliance of Women Parliamentarians (AWP)**, whose organization was introduced in 2013, is the result of a lobbying movement initiated by women deputies with the aim of promoting gender equality in Parliament and advocating for gender perspective inclusion in laws. Following the 2017 parliamentary elections, the Parliament had a greater number of women deputies with 41 women deputies from 140 deputies in total, which are organized under AWP.

### 33. Is the head of the national machinery a member of the institutional process for SDGs implementation (e.g. inter-ministerial coordinating office, commission or committees)?

✓ YES

The Inter-Ministerial Committee on the SDG is chaired by Deputy Prime Minister with members the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Minister of Economy and Finance, Minister of Health and Social Protection, Minister of Education, Sports and Youth; Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development; Minister of Tourism and Environment; Minister of Infrastructure and Energy, as permanent members of the structure.

Albania has aligned its current strategic framework with the 2030 Agenda. The National Strategy for Development and Integration 2015-2020 (NSDI), as a comprehensive document provides a combination of the European Integration Agenda with SDG 2030 Agenda. It provides the link between SDG and NSDI pillars and priority policies and ensures the involvement of the SDGs in NSDI, as well as related sector strategies and national policies and plans.

#### **Coordinating structure for SDGs achievement in national level:**

The Inter-ministerial Committee for SDGs achievement<sup>217</sup>, the main role of which is to ensure governmental dialogue with stakeholders on measures to achieve SDGs and the orientation in support

<sup>217</sup> Order of Prime Minister No. 63, dated 12/05/17, as amended by Order No. 249, dated 28/12/2017

of achieving SDGs is chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister of Albania and is composed of main governmental institutions as well as other actors from the community business, local government, civil society, academia and international organizations.

*The Inter-institutional Technical Working Group for SDGs achievement*<sup>218</sup>, the main role of which is to identify/develop instruments and tools, proposal and implementation of measures to achieve SDGs through the cooperation and coordinating the objectives and indicators with the country's strategic framework, NSDI and sectoral strategies, through the preparation of Roadmap for SDG achievement, which represents technical level for preparation of guidelines to achieve the sustainable development goals. In July 2018, Albania presented the Voluntary National Report (VNR) on SDGs, in the High-Level Forum, in New York<sup>219</sup>, part of which are: i) statistical annex, which presents in total 30 statistical indicators. Budget expenditures for SDGs for the reporting period of VNR 2015-2017; ii) provision of public expenses to achieve SDGs for 2015-2017.

### **34. Are there formal mechanisms in place for different stakeholders to participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?**

✓ YES

The Assembly in December 2017 unanimously approved a resolution committing to promotion, implementation and monitoring of Agenda 2030 and SDGs, through inclusive development processes, in line with Albania's development priorities and EU integration. A Voluntary National Report (VNR) was presented to the UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July 2018, while preparation of a budget analysis for costing SDG implementation and an INSTAT needs assessment is on-going.

Also, UN Agencies for the national implementation of Agenda 2030 started to support the preparation of NSDI II (2015-2020), as well as piloting the governance indicators in Albania for SDG 16. Working with INSTAT, UNCT has developed a number of tools and studies for compiling official data against the report of SDGs indicators. In 2016 was created a joint group of data of UN-INSTAT and in 2017 a Task Force of Albania's Government and UN for SDGs, mainly to support the preparation of Voluntary National Report, public awareness and advocacy on SDGs and Agenda 2030, as well as drafting of methodology on costs estimation for national achievement of SDGs. The UN Agencies informing efforts resulted in the signature of a commitment declaration in support of implementation of SDGs, by around 25 universities in September 2017. The Albania SDG Acceleration Fund of UN Agencies was launched in April of 2018, in support of the implementation of the National Agenda 2030.

In addition to the monitoring and evaluation system used for NSDI II, financial institutions and development agencies working in Albania also have their own monitoring systems and instruments, which the implementing agencies (government, CSOs, international organizations) use in the program and project level. Consequently, there has been an increase of monitoring systems, formats, frameworks and tools, whose coordination is further complicated by ongoing reforms to public administration and territorial administration (as well as in the framework of education, health and other sectors). The identification of the national indicators of SDG and determination of core values for the period 2018-2020 may be accompanied by the work on drafting a national harmonized monitoring and reporting system. This system may be built on the basis of the existing national system and be informed by past experience with monitoring and evaluation for development planning and EU accession. Also, it may include such innovative monitoring and evaluation approaches as giving real-time opinions, using performance controls, open data and other citizens engagement mechanisms, that allow citizens to report or provide feedback on specific policies and programs. The coordinating structure of SDGs under the Prime Minister's Office, with the support of INSTAT as technical leader, would be a good structure to guide the design of this system. These efforts should be accompanied with measures to strengthen

<sup>218</sup> Order of Prime Minister No.70, dates 22/05/2017, as amended by Order No. 248, dated 28/12/2017

<sup>219</sup> The High Level Political Forum (HLPF) for 2018 was held 9-18 July 2018, in the headquarters of the United Nations, in New York.

the role of monitoring and evaluation units/departments and evaluation at various ministries and agencies at national and local level.

**If YES,**

**a) Which of the following stakeholders participate formally in national coordination mechanisms established to contribute to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?**

<b>Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action</b>	<b>2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Civil society organizations</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Women’s rights organizations</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Academia and think tanks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Faith-based organizations</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ <b>Parliaments/parliamentary committees</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Private sector</b></li> <li>✓ <b>United Nations system</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other actors, please specify .....</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Civil society organizations</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Women’s rights organizations</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Academia and think tanks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Faith-based organizations</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ <b>Parliaments/parliamentary committees</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Private sector</b></li> <li>✓ <b>United Nations system</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other actors, please specify .....</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**b) Do you have mechanisms in place to ensure that women and girls from marginalized groups can participate and that their concerns are reflected in these processes?**

✓ **YES**

The collection and reflection in these processes of the voice of women and girls from vulnerable groups and their concerns is realized through involvement in certain mechanisms of civil society organizations, especially women’s rights organizations, starting from their involvement in National Council for Gender Equality (which includes three representatives of three civil society organizations).

The consultation the state organized with CSOs on drafting new legislation or policies and reviewing the existing ones from a gender perspective is another mechanism that provides reflection of the voice and concerns of women from vulnerable groups in these laws and policies.

Likewise, on 24 December 2014 the Assembly of Albania adopted the Resolution “On recognizing and strengthening the role of the civil society in the process of democratic developments of the country”, the first political document that recognizes and defines concrete commitments in this regard. The Assembly’s Resolution recognizes the contribution provided by civil society (which represent the voice of women and girls from vulnerable groups: in terms of: respect, promotion of human rights and freedoms, strengthening the rule of law and a fair, open and democratic society in our country; in initiating legal initiatives for drafting new laws, their improvement and implementation; in providing support to people in need; in enhancing and strengthening the professional capacities of public administration; in monitoring the observance of international and national standards in different areas; in raising public awareness of its role in a democratic society; in the integration process of the country in the European Union; in strengthening cooperation and social cohesion in the region and beyond; etc. Likewise, the Resolution highlights the decisive role of the government of the Republic of Albania and the Albanian Parliament in strengthening and expanding the participatory opportunities of civil society actors in the process of democratic developments of the country, consolidating good governance and increasing transparency in public decision-making.

**c) Please describe how stakeholders have contributed to the preparation of the present national report.**

This national report was prepared through an inclusive process led by the Albanian government and directed by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection jointly directed and in cooperation with Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs. Technical support and assistance was provided by the UN Women’s

Office in Albania. Information and key data gathered from the member institutions of the Technical Working Group composed of line ministries and several independent institutions. Written information was also gathered by the gender equality officers at the local level while INSTAT assisted in the preparation of the fourth part and annex on indicators. Other independent institutions, civil society organizations, media, academia and private sector representatives, as well as United Nations agencies and other international organizations were involved in various stages of the preparation process, from giving written information to the participation in consultative meetings<sup>220</sup> for evaluating the prepared draft report. An assessment meeting<sup>221</sup> also took place with the Parliamentary Sub-committee on Gender Equality and Ending Violence Against Women, meanwhile the Prime Minister's Office has been invited to all consultative or validating workshops organized in the framework of drafting this report. The report was reviewed and approved in principle even at the National Council for Gender Equality meeting<sup>222</sup>.

### 35. Is gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls included as a key priority in the national plan/strategy for SDG implementation?

**Yes**

As explained in answer to question 34, in 2017 the Assembly approved a resolution committing to promotion, implementation and monitoring of Agenda 2030 and SDGs, through inclusive development processes, in line with Albania's development priorities and EU integration. Gender equality and empowerment of all women are highlighted as a priority and are also reflected in a number of other national documents (mentioned during the analysis made in the second part of this report), including in NSDI II 2015-2020 or as reflected in the actions planned by the Government of Albania and United Nations Agencies Programme of Cooperation for Sustainable Development.

## SECTION FOUR: DATA AND STATISTICS

### 36. What are the top three areas in which Albania has made most progress over the past five years when it comes to gender statistics at the national level?

- Promulgated laws, regulations, or statistical programme/strategy setting out the development of gender statistics
- Established an inter-agency coordination mechanism on gender statistics (e.g., technical working group, inter-agency committees)
- Used more gender-sensitive data in the formulation of policy and implementation of programmes and projects
- ✓ **Re-processed existing data (e.g., censuses and surveys) to produce more disaggregated and/or new gender statistics**
- ✓ **Conducted new surveys to produce national baseline information on specialized topics (e.g., time use, gender-based violence, asset ownership, poverty, disability)**
- ✓ **Improved administrative-based or alternative data sources to address gender data gaps**
- Produced knowledge products on gender statistics (e.g., user-friendly reports, policy briefs, research papers)
- Developed a centralized web-based database and/or dashboard on gender statistics
- Engaged in capacity building to strengthen the use of gender statistics (e.g., trainings, statistical appreciation seminars)
- Other

<sup>220</sup> Two consultative meetings took place on 19 April 2019, concretely one with eight representatives of the UN Agencies and other international organizations and one with thirty-six independent institutions, CSO, representatives of media, academia and the private sector

<sup>221</sup> Dated 26 April 2019

<sup>222</sup> Organized on 23 April 2019

### 37. Out of the following which are your country's top three priorities for strengthening national gender statistics over the next five years?

- Design of laws, regulations, or statistical programme/strategy promoting the development of gender statistics
- Establishment of an inter-agency coordination mechanism on gender statistics (e.g., technical working group, inter-agency committee)
- Use more gender-sensitive data in the formulation of policy and implementation of programmes and projects
- Re-processing of existing data (e.g., censuses and surveys) to produce more disaggregated and/or new gender statistics
- Conduct of new surveys to produce national baseline information on specialized topics (e.g., time use, gender-based violence, asset ownership, poverty, disability)
- Greater utilization and/or improvement of administrative-based or alternative data sources to address gender data gaps**
- Production of knowledge products on gender statistics (e.g., user-friendly reports, policy briefs, research papers)**
- Development of a centralized web-based database and/or dashboard on gender statistics
- Institutionalization of users-producers' dialogues mechanisms
- Statistical capacity building of users to increase statistical appreciation on and use of gender statistics (e.g., training, statistical appreciation seminars)**
- Other

According to the calculations of INSTAT, during 2017 the value of the Gender Inequality Index is increased from 0.09 to 0.14, compared to last year. This speaks of a loss in human development as a result of a gender inequality of 14 %. This deterioration of the Gender Inequality index compared to previous years comes as a result of the deterioration of maternal mortality, even though in general other indicators have improved. Over the years, all indicators used in the calculation of GII have shown slight but constant improvements, except maternal mortality which with its oscillations has played the main role in the changes of this indicator<sup>223</sup>.

One of the plans of INSTAT on gender statistics is the calculation of Gender Equality Index (GEI), in line with the requirements of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). This Index is calculated for all European Union Member States and so far, Serbia is the only non-member country that calculates this Index. This Index is expected to be realized within 2019 by INSTAT in cooperation and with the support of EIGE experts.

### 38. Has Albania defined a national set of indicators for monitoring progress on the SDGs?

In 2017, the Prime Minister's Office published the "National Baseline Report", which provided available data on SDGs indicators. This report showed that only *32% of the global SDG indicators may be monitored based on the available national data*. The remainder require the introduction of new collection activities and technologies as well as improved statistical methodologies – particularly in light of EU accession reporting. INSTAT has called for equipment, financial and technical support to achieve this.

While the collection of sex-disaggregated data has been mandatory in Albania since 2008 and following the introduction of the Law on Gender Equality, enforcement of this obligation and the actual use of sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics for policy development, budgeting and monitoring is still far from satisfactory. Significant technical and capacity support are required at central and local levels to support coherent collection, analysis and use of sex- and age-disaggregated data and gender statistics and to ensure compliance with international and European standards.

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<sup>223</sup> INSTAT "Men and Women in Albania, 2018", p. 116

The National Baseline Report on SDGs found that 140 SDG targets (83% of the total) are directly related to NSDI II main pillars; and that 134 SDG indicators (79% of the total) are directly linked to other national strategic policy documents. The National Baseline Report also found that degrees of SDG alignment with Albania's national development policy framework are not uniform across the SDGs. The strongest alignment (measured at the target level) is concentrated in activities associated with SDGs concerning basic service delivery (SDGs 3, 4, 6, 7) and economic growth and infrastructure (SDGs 8, 9 and 11). By contrast, activities associated with natural resource management (SDGs 12, 13, 14, 15) show the smallest degree of alignment. On the other hand, the National Baseline Report finds that "the monitoring mechanism embedded in the NSDI II 2015-2020 and other national strategic documents shares very limited space with the global framework of indicators". Less than one third of the 232 global indicators are used for tracking progress in the implementation of the NSDI II and other national development documents (out of more than 1200 total indicators).

The data for many global indicators are collected and made available by INSTAT and other national institutions; data for some other indicators are published by international organizations. In at least some of these cases, these data are collected according to internationally accepted methodologies – thereby supporting the possible use of Tier I global SDG indicators in Albania. However, the Report flags concerns about the periodicity and regularity of these data – for example, the official data needed for monitoring national trends in poverty indicators have not been fully updated since 2012. In some cases, different data (or similar indicators, but showing different trends) on a given issue are reported by INSTAT and other agencies of the government of Albania. Moreover, many of the data that are reported by INSTAT are not disaggregated by vulnerability criteria – as specified in the global SDG indicators. For example, global indicators 1.3.1 (on social protection), 4.5.1 and 4.a.1 (on inclusive education), 8.5.1 and 8.5.2 (on inclusive labor markets), 10.2.1 (on income inequalities), 11.2.1 and 11.7.1 (on access to public infrastructure and transport), and 16.7.1 and 16.7.2 (on participatory governance) require disaggregation by disability status – a task that has yet to be formally undertaken by the Albanian statistical authorities<sup>224</sup>.

### **39. Has data collection and compilation on SDG 5 indicators and on gender-specific indicators under other SDGs begun?**

✓ **Yes**

So far, the National Base Report has been drafted and approved, which presents a mapping of the available data, those that can be produced and data that cannot be produced or are not relevant for Albania. Considering the fact that the line ministries are responsible for the majority of data, the methodology of indicators remains a challenge. The lack of administrative data and data disaggregation are other challenges in this regard. INSTAT has consistently offered its expertise to assist in this process.

Regarding the calculation of indicators for SDG 5 on gender equality, INSTAT with the implementation of the Survey on the measurement of violence against women and girls<sup>225</sup>, can evaluate indicators 5.2.1 (experiencing psychological, physical, sexual violence during the last 12 months from a current or former partner); 5.2.2 (experiencing sexual violence from a non-partner during the last 12 months); 5.3.1(women aged 20-24 years old in a relationship before the age of 18) and 5.6.1(women who take decisions by themselves on sexual relationships, use of contraceptives and reproductive health). Following the recommendations to conduct the survey once every five years, the next round on women and girls' violence is expected to take place in 2023, while the publication of data of this survey is scheduled to take place in May 2019.

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<sup>224</sup> "Mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support for achieving the SDGs in Albania", prepared by the Prime Minister's Office, World Bank and United Nations, September 2018 . See: [https://www.un.org.al/sites/default/files/MAPS\\_Report\\_web.pdf](https://www.un.org.al/sites/default/files/MAPS_Report_web.pdf)

<sup>225</sup>This survey was conducted according to the planning in the PSZ 2007-2021, and tends to measure violence women suffered through their life and last 12 months.

40. Which of the following disaggregation is routinely provided by major surveys in your country?

- Geographic location**
- Income
- Sex**
- Age**
- Education**
- Marital status**
- Race/ethnicity
- Migratory status**
- Disability
- Other characteristics relevant in national context (presence in the last 12 months in the family)**

The above data is usually collected in nationwide studies conducted by INSTAT. However, studies conducted by other institutions such as the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth (MESY), or Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) collect also data on race/ethnicity and disability.

## Annex I: Abbreviations

AIDA	Albanian Investment Development Agency
AMA	Audiovisual Media Authority
ACPD	Albanian Center for Population and Development
AMFIS	Albanian Financial Management Information System
ASPA	Albanian School of Public Administration
AWEN	Women Empowerment Network
CEC	Central Election Commission
CLI	Center for Legal Initiatives
CPD	Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination
CPU	Child Protection Unit
CRCA	Center for the Protection of Children's Rights Albania
CRM	Coordinated Referral Mechanism
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCM	Decision of the Council of Ministers
D & E	"Different and Equal" Organization
DPH	Directorate of Public Health
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
EO	Educational Office
EPO	Emergent Protection Order
EU	European Union
GAP	Gender Equality Action Plan
GDT	General Directorate of Taxation
GEI	Gender Equality Index
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GGs	Gender Gap in Salary
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
HRDC	Human Rights in Democracy Center
IED	Institute of Education Development
ILO	International Labor Organization
ILSA	Inspectorate of Labour and Social Affairs
INSTAT	Institute of Statistics in Albania
IPH	Institute of Public Health
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex
LGU	Local Self-Government Units
MoARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MoD	Ministry of Defense
MoEFA	Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
MoESR	Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth
MoFE	Ministry of Finance and Economy
MoHSP	Ministry of Health and Social Protection
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoIE	Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MISP	Minimum Initial Service Package
MoTM	Ministry of Tourism and Environment

MTBP	Medium Term Budgetary Plan
NAP	National Action Plan
NES	National Employment Service
NESS	National Employment and Skills Strategy 2014-2020
NGO	Non for-Profit Organization
NSGE	National Strategy for Gender Equality 2016-2020
NSDI	National Strategy for Development and Integration 2015-2020
NVR	National Voluntary Report
OGUH	Obstetric Gynecological University Hospital
OPMEP	Order for Provisory Measures of Emergent Protection
NRC	National Registration Center
PTVC	Public Training and Vocational Center
PO	Protection Order
PWD	People with Disabilities
RED	Regional Educational Directory
REO /LEO	Regional Employment Office / Local Employment Office
RHD	Regional Health Directorate
SAPCR	State Agency for the Protection of Children's Rights
SCPA	Swedish Program for Strengthening Community Policing
SDC	Swiss Cooperation Office
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency and Cooperation
SILSS	State Inspectorate of Labour and Social Services
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN Women	Agency for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women
WHO	World Health Organization
YWCA	Youth Women Christian Association

Annex II: List of global gender-related indicators, available in Albania for monitoring progress in implementation of Sustainable Development Goals

### Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms

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#### **1.1.1 Proportion of population below the international poverty line, by sex, age, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural)**

#### **1.2.1 Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age**

#### **1.2.2 Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions**

The institution responsible for producing these indicators is the Institute of Statistics of Albania (INSTAT). For calculation of poverty Institute of Statistics has conducted the Living Standards and Measurement Survey. Living Standard Measurement Survey (LSMS) is a multi-purpose survey conducted near households and until the year 2012 it was one of the main sources of information to measure living conditions, the situation of poverty and to ensure a necessary tool to help policy makers in monitoring and developing social programs. The necessary measurements are based on Household Consumption.

Since 2016, INSTAT is implementing the EU statistics on income and living conditions according to Eurostat recommendations. The data for this survey will be available by the end of this year, 2019.

#### **1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable**

The institution responsible for providing this indicator is the Ministry of Health and Social Protection. The data source is the Social Protection Program. No data provided actually.

#### **1.4.2 Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, with legally recognized documentation and who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and by type of tenure**

Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. No data provided actually.

#### **1.b.1 Proportion of government recurrent and capital spending to sectors that disproportionately benefit women, the poor and vulnerable groups.**

The institution responsible for providing this indicator is the Ministry of Health and Social Protection. The data source is GoA Annual Budget Figures, Local Government Budgets, and Financing; International Donors. No data provided actually.

### Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

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#### **2.3.2 Average income of small-scale food producers, by sex and indigenous status**

Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development).FADN. No data provided actually.

### Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

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#### **3.1.1 Maternal mortality ratio**

This indicator is produced by INSTAT and Ministry of Health and Social Protection. It is an administrative data source. The number of deaths during childbearing is produced by the obstetric-gynecologist hospitals in the country and reported periodically to the MoHSP. Then the indicator is calculated for 100.000 births during the reference period.

2014	2015	2016	2017
3.0	10.2	3.5	9.7

### 3.1.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel

This indicator is produced by INSTAT and Ministry of Health and Social Protection. It is an administrative data source. The indicator is produced by the obstetric-gynecologist hospitals in the country and reported periodically to the MoHSP.

2014	2015	2016	2017
98.5	98.8	99.1	99

### 3.3.1 Number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population, by sex, age and key populations

This indicator is produced by Institute of Public Health.

2014	2015	2016	2017
0.029	0.035	0.044	0.033

### 3.7.1 Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15–49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods.

This indicator is produced by Institute of Public Health. The data source for survey can be used Albania Demographic Health Survey 2017/18.

According to this survey the Percentage of demand satisfied by modern methods for women 15-49 is 6.3% for reference please consult ADHS survey in the link <http://www.ishp.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/ADHS-2017-18-Complete-PDF-FINAL-ilovepdf-compressed-1.pdf>

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### 3.7.2 Adolescent birth rate (aged 10–14 years; aged 15–19 years) per 1,000 women in that age group

This indicator is produced by INSTAT, using the births coming from the Civil Registration Offices. For calculation of this indicator the births only for women 15-19 years old are taken into account, and only women of this age group are considered.

#### Adolescent birth rate 15-19 years old

2014	2015	2016	2017
22.0	20.1	17.5	16.2

### 3.8.1 Coverage of essential health services (defined as the average coverage of essential services based on tracer interventions that include reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health, infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases and service capacity)

The institutions responsible for this indicator are the Ministry of Health and Social Protection and Institute of Public Health. Data source: Basic Health Care Coverage and Health Service Capacity and Access to Vaccination. No data provided actually.

Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

### 4.1.1 Proportion of children and young people (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex

PISA, Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth. No data provided actually.

#### 4.2.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex

The main institution for the production of this indicator is Ministry of Health and Social Protection. The data source is the Institute of Public Health. No data provided actually.

#### 4.2.2 Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex

The main institution for the production of this indicator is INSTAT. The data source is administrative source, coming from Ministry of Education.

##### ***The total % of participation in early childhood education of children aged 3-6 years old***

2014	2015	2016	2017
82.3	83.3	81.5	80.3

#### 4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex

The main data source for this indicator is INSTAT. For the calculation of this indicator Adult Education Survey is used. This Survey has been conducted by INSTAT in 2017, for the population 25-64 years old.

##### ***Participation in formal or non-formal education, 25-64 years old, 2017***

<b>Total</b>	<b>9.2%</b>
<b>Men</b>	<b>8.8%</b>
<b>Women</b>	<b>9.5%</b>

#### 4.5.1 Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated

This indicator is produced by INSTAT, based on enrollments by education level based on Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth data.

##### **Gender Parity Index (on Gross Enrollment Rate)**

Programme	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
<b>Primary Lower+ Secondary</b>	0.98	0.98	0.98
<b>Upper Secondary</b>	0.89	0.93	0.93
<b>Tertiary</b>	1.38	1.46	1.52

*Girls/Boys by education level*

#### 4.6.1 Proportion of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex

PISA, Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth. No data provided actually.

#### 4.7.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment

Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth. No data provided actually.

#### 4.a.1 Proportion of schools with access to (a) electricity; (b) the Internet for pedagogical purposes; (c) computers for pedagogical purposes; (d) adapted infrastructure and materials for

students with disabilities; (e) basic drinking water; (f) single-sex basic sanitation facilities; and (g) basic hand washing facilities (as per the WASH indicator definitions)

Number of educational institutions (Public+private), 2017	
With electricity	100.0
With computer(s) for pedagogical purposes	61.4
With internet for pedagogical purposes	60.2
With improved toilets	100.0
of which: single-sex toilets	91.0
of which: useable single-sex toilets	91.0
With improved drinking water source	66.3
of which: with drinking water available	60.6
With handwashing facilities	79.1
With adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities	6.3
Providing life skills-based HIV and sexuality education	84.8

Source: Ministry of Education, youth and Sport

#### Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

##### 5.1.1 Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex.

This indicator is produced every time there is a change in the legal framework. The Data source for this indicator is Ministry of Health and Social Protection.

##### 5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age

This indicator is produced by the survey of Violence against Women and Girls. This survey has been conducted during November –December 2018. This survey is conducted for the third time in Albania. The first was done in 2007, the second in 2013 and the third in 2018. According to the recommendations this survey should be done every 5 years.

Violence by ever partnered women, last 12 months				
	Psychological violence	Physical violence	Sexual violence	Domestic violence
18-24	38.7%	14.6%	14.4%	55.8%
25-34	22.2%	7.4%	3.4%	42.7%
35-44	4.3%	8.5%	3.6%	36.5%
45-54	19.0%	8.8%	4.0%	33.9%
55-64	16.5%	4.4%	1.4%	25.8%
65-74	9.4%	3.6%	1.1%	18.2%
Total	19.7%	7.2%	3.6%	33.7%

Source: Violence against Women and Girls in Albania 2018

### 5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence

According to Violence against women and girls 2018, non-partner violence the last 12 months is 0%. The same type of violence ever in life is 1.3%.

### 5.3.1 Proportion of women aged 20–24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18

#### Proportion of women age 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before 18 years

Marriage ≤ 17 years	6.1%
Marriage ≤ 15 years	0.0 %

### 5.3.2 Proportion of girls and women aged 15–49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age

This indicator is not applicable for our country.

### 5.4.1 Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location

This indicator is produced every 10 year. The Data source for this indicator is Time use survey. The last data are in 2011.

### 5.5.1 Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments.

Data source: INSTAT and Parliament and Central Election Commission. Data frequency is annually. Disaggregation units: by sex. Data Description % of seats national parliaments by sex and % of seats national governments by sex

#### Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments

	% Men	% Women
2014	79	21
2015	77	23
2016	76	24
2017	71	29

#### Proportion of women in Municipality Councils (5.5.1. b) % Women

2015	34.4
2016	36.1
2017	36.9

### 5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions

Data source: INSTAT & General Directorate of Taxes. Data frequency is annually. Disaggregation units: by sex. Data description % of women in managerial positions by sex.

Proportion of women in managerial positions	% Women
2015	32.1
2016	32.8
2017	33.8

### 5.6.1 Proportion of women aged 15–49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care.

According to AHDS 2018, the currently women 15-49, who are current users of family planning, 2.7% make their own decision to use family planning, and 81.1% make this decision wife and husband jointly.

### 5.6.2 Number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education.

The Data source for this indicator is Ministry of Health and Social Protection. No data provided actually.

### 5. a. 1 Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure.

Data source: INSTAT Census and Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. Every 10 years.

### 5.6.2 Number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education.

The Data source for this indicator is Ministry of Health and Social Protection. No data provided actually.

### 5.b.1 Proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex

According to ADHS 2018 the percentage of women 15-49 who own a mobile phone is 89.2%, and the percentage of men 15-49 who own a mobile phone is 94.1%.

### 5.c.1 Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment

The Data source for this indicator is Ministry of Health and Social Protection. No data for this indicator

[Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all](#)

### 8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in non-agriculture employment, by sex

Data source for this indicator is Labor Force Survey, conducted annually by Institute of Statistics of Albania.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Total</b>		34,1	31.9	30.3	29.4
	39.4				
<b>Male</b>		40.4	37.1	35.8	34.7
	45.7				
<b>Female</b>		24.1	24.3	22.1	21.5
	29.6				

### 8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of female and male employees, by occupation, age and persons with disabilities

Structure Earning Survey is the main data source for this indicator. In the end of April of 2019 this survey will be conducted. For this indicator administrative source, from General Directorate of taxation can be used as a proxy.

		Gross average monthly wage				
		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	45,539	47,900	47,522	48,967	50,589
	<b>M</b>	47,664	50,451	50,084	51,392	53,181
	<b>F</b>	42,852	44,664	44,354	46,018	47,490
<b>Chief executives, senior officials and legislators</b>	<b>Total</b>	77,558	84,384	87,022	87,672	90,284
	<b>M</b>	78,602	85,434	88,484	89,019	91,733
	<b>F</b>	75,371	81,652	83,436	85,092	87,556
<b>Administrative and commercial managers</b>	<b>Total</b>	123,647	131,271	137,096	132,869	139,508
	<b>M</b>	117,133	123,285	130,814	121,053	130,165
	<b>F</b>	136,508	147,018	149,329	156,054	156,433
<b>Production and specialized services managers</b>	<b>Total</b>	95,843	97,047	99,743	98,134	104,808
	<b>M</b>	99,282	100,694	104,820	102,335	108,889
	<b>F</b>	86,277	87,462	88,596	89,248	96,560
<b>Science and engineering professionals</b>	<b>Total</b>	96,596	90,744	86,939	85,887	85,816
	<b>M</b>	110,907	102,286	97,184	96,057	95,618
	<b>F</b>	57,351	60,165	60,299	60,058	60,771
<b>Health professionals</b>	<b>Total</b>	50,915	53,137	52,959	56,895	58,689
	<b>M</b>	62,244	64,926	64,567	69,884	71,680
	<b>F</b>	45,939	48,111	48,007	51,344	53,004
<b>Teaching professionals</b>	<b>Total</b>	56,262	57,592	57,454	60,379	61,405
	<b>M</b>	63,330	64,461	64,295	67,446	68,288
	<b>F</b>	53,557	55,148	55,076	58,001	59,167
<b>Business and administration professionals</b>	<b>Total</b>	73,217	83,475	87,787	83,712	83,442
	<b>M</b>	73,671	82,054	93,773	85,352	85,845
	<b>F</b>	72,863	84,467	83,156	82,401	81,544
<b>Information and communications technology professionals</b>	<b>Total</b>	80,062	90,929	92,012	88,456	87,225
	<b>M</b>	79,191	91,977	94,591	90,983	88,369
	<b>F</b>	81,856	88,724	86,726	83,841	85,200
<b>Legal, social and cultural professionals</b>	<b>Total</b>	61,106	65,267	64,457	65,005	67,334
	<b>M</b>	64,855	70,749	69,033	69,817	71,714
	<b>F</b>	58,651	61,883	61,774	62,283	64,958
<b>Science and engineering associate professionals</b>	<b>Total</b>	63,928	62,889	63,060	65,630	70,047
	<b>M</b>	66,429	64,388	64,645	67,275	72,373
	<b>F</b>	49,892	54,196	54,287	56,779	58,676
<b>Health associate professionals</b>	<b>Total</b>	40,188	41,006	41,100	43,498	46,537
	<b>M</b>	42,772	43,712	45,655	49,106	53,768
	<b>F</b>	39,493	40,234	39,693	41,642	44,347
<b>Business and</b>	<b>Total</b>	49,563	53,407	52,657	52,384	55,863

administration associate professionals	M	48,896	52,070	50,374	49,165	53,406
	F	50,260	54,867	55,420	56,596	59,162
Legal, social, cultural and related associate professionals	Total	52,053	54,755	55,144	57,781	56,353
	M	53,834	57,193	57,974	61,978	60,157
	F	48,131	49,579	49,588	49,741	50,612
Information and communications technicians	Total	36,330	42,115	43,194	47,801	50,620
	M	39,939	45,032	46,604	50,965	53,541
	F	31,701	38,547	39,522	44,361	47,041
General and keyboard clerks	Total	71,393	48,167	49,633	52,529	51,761
	M	47,845	48,176	49,808	52,708	52,467
	F	91,656	47,743	49,018	51,898	50,961
Customer services clerks	Total	37,732	44,208	46,066	49,232	51,326
	M	35,412	40,586	43,366	47,917	50,109
	F	39,655	47,572	48,325	50,263	52,246
Personal service workers and Protective services workers	Total	35,117	38,182	36,782	39,200	38,256
	M	37,944	41,658	39,921	42,205	40,889
	F	28,803	30,607	29,993	32,673	32,764
Sales workers	Total	26,144	29,932	31,430	32,802	32,403
	M	26,782	31,536	33,451	34,572	33,926
	F	25,508	28,181	29,554	31,223	31,193
Market-oriented skilled agricultural workers	Total	25,260	27,184	27,755	29,921	31,502
	M	26,032	27,772	28,186	30,443	28,928
	F	23,454	25,432	26,428	28,291	28,928
Subsistence farmers, -shers, hunters and gatherers	Total	20,850	22,147	22,084	27,570	25,209
	M	21,260	22,263	22,134	29,311	24,592
	F	20,234	22,000	22,000	24,154	26,536
Building and related trades workers, excluding electricians	Total	25,845	29,290	28,873	30,043	31,553
	M	25,954	29,456	28,984	30,088	31,547
	F	23,985	25,664	26,230	28,739	31,196
Metal, machinery and related trades workers	Total	37,568	40,548	39,454	41,761	43,496
	M	37,651	40,425	39,442	41,800	43,539
	F	34,885	43,132	39,970	39,952	41,422
Handicraft and printing workers	Total	22,928	26,644	27,046	28,353	29,391
	M	26,059	28,814	28,605	30,359	32,263
	F	21,700	25,662	26,336	27,470	28,081
Electronics and telecommunications installers and repairers	Total	42,925	45,435	48,223	54,780	55,223
	M	42,702	45,141	47,971	54,547	54,796
	F	46,501	50,276	53,290	60,224	65,720
Food processing, wood working, garment and other craft and related trades	Total	22,828	24,763	25,447	26,959	28,392
	M	24,222	26,935	27,085	28,573	30,528

<b>workers</b>	<b>F</b>	22,459	24,195	24,979	26,504	27,786
<b>Stationary plant and machine operators</b>	<b>Total</b>	31,958	30,608	29,774	31,219	32,756
	<b>M</b>	53,008	44,174	39,178	40,296	42,102
	<b>F</b>	22,914	24,974	26,137	27,767	29,198
<b>Assemblers</b>	<b>Total</b>	32,620	35,238	36,189	37,272	36,407
	<b>M</b>	36,605	39,367	39,323	41,431	39,402
	<b>F</b>	27,656	29,936	31,480	31,304	32,147
<b>Drivers and mobile plant operators</b>	<b>Total</b>	33,329	35,398	35,524	38,722	39,608
	<b>M</b>	33,353	35,336	35,512	38,725	39,613
	<b>F</b>	25,939	45,514	32,659	34,091	36,506
<b>Cleaners and helpers</b>	<b>Total</b>	25,514	26,626	26,587	28,347	29,518
	<b>M</b>	25,173	27,130	27,178	28,553	29,825
	<b>F</b>	25,630	26,459	26,411	28,286	29,437
<b>Agricultural, forestry and – sherry laborers</b>	<b>Total</b>	24,752	28,631	27,272	30,569	31,867
	<b>M</b>	25,392	30,631	27,145	30,354	31,505
	<b>F</b>	23,898	25,475	27,425	30,850	32,408
<b>Laborers in mining, construction, manufacturing and transport</b>	<b>Total</b>	24,712	26,917	27,271	28,856	30,561
	<b>M</b>	25,287	27,499	27,895	29,514	31,396
	<b>F</b>	22,382	24,384	24,708	26,159	27,886
<b>Food preparation assistants</b>	<b>Total</b>	23,728	24,746	24,877	26,364	27,510
	<b>M</b>	22,383	24,001	24,418	25,992	27,701
	<b>F</b>	24,171	25,007	25,059	26,519	27,423
<b>Street and related sales and service workers</b>	<b>Total</b>	15,153	22,556	22,773	22,140	25,538
	<b>M</b>	15,973	22,544	22,746	23,391	26,097
	<b>F</b>	13,690	22,580	22,828	19,541	24,232
<b>Refuse workers and other elementary workers</b>	<b>Total</b>	25,664	28,086	29,001	31,218	32,410
	<b>M</b>	26,443	28,386	29,679	31,933	33,027
	<b>F</b>	24,346	27,490	27,554	29,687	30,872
<b>Commissioned armed forces</b>	<b>Total</b>	62,656	65,833	67,666	72,985	75,380
	<b>M</b>	65,133	67,739	69,863	75,419	77,927
	<b>F</b>	53,662	59,289	60,576	64,929	65,663
<b>Non-commissioned armed forces</b>	<b>Total</b>	45,916	48,394	48,171	51,817	54,438
	<b>M</b>	46,323	48,643	48,284	51,948	54,734
	<b>F</b>	42,205	45,952	47,049	50,441	51,425

Footnote: Calculations are done by INSTAT based on the data provided by General Directorate of Taxation, contributors to Social Security funds.

### 8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities

The main data source for measuring unemployment is Labor Force Survey. This survey does not permit disaggregation for disable persons.

Age group	Unemployment rate %				
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Total</b>					
<b>15-29</b>	32.5	33.2	28.9	25.9	23.1
<b>30-64</b>	13.3	12.5	11.8	10.8	9.2
<b>15-64</b>	17.9	17.5	15.6	14.1	12.8
<b>15+</b>	17.5	17.1	15.2	13.7	12.3
<b>Male</b>					
<b>15-29</b>	35.6	32.3	29.7	27.0	23.1
<b>30-64</b>	14.0	12.2	12.2	11.3	9.4
<b>15-64</b>	19.7	17.5	16.4	15.1	13.2
<b>15+</b>	19.2	17.1	15.9	14.6	12.7
<b>Female</b>					
<b>15-29</b>	27.4	34.7	27.8	24.0	23.1
<b>30-64</b>	12.3	12.9	11.2	10.1	9.0
<b>15-64</b>	15.5	17.4	14.6	12.8	12.3
<b>15+</b>	15.2	17.1	14.4	12.6	11.9

Source of information: Labor Force Surveys 2014-2018

### 8.7.1 Proportion and number of children aged 5–17 years engaged in child labor, by sex and age

The main data source Labor Inspectorate. No data provided actually.

### 8.8.1 Frequency rates of fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries, by sex and migrant status

Data source: Ministry of Finance and Economy, Labor Inspectorate. No data provided actually.

## Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

### 10.2.1 Proportion of people living below 50 per cent of median income, by sex, age and persons with disabilities.

SILC survey conducted by INSTAT. Data available by the end of year.

## Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

### 11.2.1 Proportion of population that has convenient access to public transport, by sex, age and persons with disabilities

Administrative data; Municipalities. No data provided actually.

### 11.7.1 Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age and persons with disabilities

Administrative data; Municipalities. No data provided actually.

### 11.7.2 Proportion of persons victim of physical or sexual harassment, by sex, age, disability status and place of occurrence, in the previous 12 months

Data from Directorate of Police can be a proxy for this indicator. This administrative data are according to Article 180/a, which include sexual harassment. These data include all the cases in the end of the reference period, and not only during the last 12 months.

Years	Total	Women	Men	Juvenile (<18years old )	Adult (>=18 years)	
2018		37	36	1	15	22
2017		31	30	1	15	16
2016		43	38	5	20	23
2015		28	23	5	6	22

Source: General Directorate of Police

Survey of Violence Against Women and Girls, provide data for the last 12 months, but data refer only to women, since the survey do not have target population the men.

Agegroup	Sexual harrasment last 12 months
18-24	12.6%
25-34	12.6%
35-44	10.7%
45-54	7.0%
55-64	4.3%
65-74	2.1%
Total	8.5%

Source: Violence against Women and Girls in Albania, 2018

### Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

**13.b.1 Number of least developed countries and small island developing States that are receiving specialized support, and amount of support, including finance, technology and capacity-building, for mechanisms for raising capacities for effective climate change-related planning and management, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities**

Ministry of Tourism and Environment. No data provided actually.

### Goal 16.Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

**16.1.1 Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 populations, by sex and age**

Year	Total	Men	Women	Under 18	18+
2015	2.8	4.5	1.1	0.3	3.6
2016	3.4	5.6	1.2	0.9	4.2
2017	2.4	3.9	0.8	0.2	3.0
2018	2.4	3.7	1.0	1.1	2.7

Data source: INSTAT & General Directorate of Police DPP. Disaggregation by sex of victim; suspected offender age group and sex

### 16.1.2 Conflict-related deaths per 100,000 populations, by sex, age and cause

No data for this indicator is currently available and its methodology is still under development

### 16.2.2 Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 populations, by sex, age and form of exploitation

Years	Total	Men	Women	Under 18	Rate-18+
2015	1.6	0.8	2.5	2.2	1.5
2016	1.4	0.6	2.3	2.9	1.0
2017	1.3	0.6	1.9	5.2	1.8
2018	1.3	1.5	1.2	1.1	1.4

Data source: INSTAT & General Directorate of Police

### 16.2.3 Proportion of young women and men aged 18–29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18

This data can be provided by the Victimization Survey. This survey is not conducted yet in Albania. The survey of Violence Against Women and Girls, do not ask when the violence begin and do not ask men.

### 16.7.1 Proportions of positions (by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups) in public institutions (national and local legislatures, public service, and judiciary) compared to national distributions

Administrative data: No data provided actually.

### 16.7.2 Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group

Administrative data. No data provided actually.

[Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development](#)

### 17.18.1 Proportion of sustainable development indicators produced at the national level with full disaggregation when relevant to the target, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics

No data provided actually.

**The labor market situation, according to the Labor Force Survey in percent  
(Source INSTAT)**

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Participation in the labor force</b>	17.6	17.3	66.2	66.8	68,7
<b>Male</b>	18.9	17.0	74.1	75.8	76,9
<b>Female</b>	15.8	17.7	58.3	57.7	60,6
<b>Overall employment rate</b>	45.6	47.0	56.2	58,2	60,0
<b>Overall employment rates for women</b>	39.3	40.2	49,6	50,8	53,1
<b>Overall employment rates for men</b>	52.3	53.7	62.8	65,6	66,9
<b>The employment rate of youth (15 -29)</b>	29.2	31.1	32.5	34.9	40,8
<b>Female</b>	24.5	36.3	28.6	29.7	35,1
<b>Male</b>	33.7	25.2	35.9	39.7	46,0
<b>Total registered unemployment</b>	17,9	17.5	15.2	13.7	12.3
<b>The unemployment rate of women</b>	15,5	17.4	14.4	12.6	11.9
<b>The unemployment rate of men</b>	19,7	17.5	15.9	14.6	12.5
<b>The unemployment rate of youth (15-29)</b>	32,5	33.2	28.9	25.9	22.3
<b>Female</b>	27.4	34.7	27.8	24.0	22,2
<b>Male</b>	35.6	32.3	29.7	27.0	22,4

**Administrative data from the National Employment Service (NES) and achievements for 2018**

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Total unemployed jobseekers</b>	141,342	145,147	93,889	83,497	64,781
<b>Unemployed Women</b>	71,710	73,208	49,735	44,220	34,172
<b>Unemployed people who rely on income-generating benefits of economic aid</b>	69,603	60,078	42,029	39,292	19,944
<b>Out of these are women</b>	34,814	29,996	22,166	20,204	10,189
<b>Unemployed, young, aged 15-29</b>	38435	15,995	19,174	15,767	12.258
<b>Total employment realized by employment offices</b>	16 500		25,170	23,136	32,846
<b>Out of these are women</b>			53%	50.5%	
<b>Unemployed people involved in employment promotion programs</b>	4046	5744	5,211	5,264	4844
<b>Out of these are women</b>	66%	70%	56%	62%	54%
<b>Job vacancies advertised in employment offices</b>	30 600	2373	38,511	40,013	58,475
<b>Unemployed job seekers who attend free professional courses at public centers</b>	8.098	13.887	12,710	9,461	8.407
<b>Out of these are women</b>	3.358	5,672	5,678	4,454	4,779

Data for the period 2014-2018 from Albanian State Police

Year	Domestic violence cases / evidences	Request for PO/EPO	Women / Girls damaged by Domestic Violence	Women spouses damaged by domestic violence	Women / girls killed by domestic violence spouses	Authors / Perpetrators arrested for domestic violence (130/a)
2014	4121	2422	3090	1798	10/6	551
2015	3866	2174	2945	1392	10/9	588
2016	4163	2207	3060	1532	11/9	742
2017	4547	2593	3246	1627	11/6	654
2018	4951	3037	3690	1801	11/3	608

Ministry of Interior: Relevant data on ranks according to grades for the years analyzed:

2014			
No	Name by rank	Sex	
		male	Female
1	General Director	1	
2	Deputy General Director	3	
3	First Leader	19	
4	Leader	115	12
5	Chief commissary	265	34
6	Commissary	467	39
7	Deputy commissary	1145	139
8	Chief Inspector	1633	122
9	Inspector	4432	216
10	Deputy Inspector	93	
11	Civil	434	456
<b>Total</b>		<b>8607</b>	<b>1018</b>
2015			
No	Name by rank	Sex	
		Male	Female
1	Chief Executive Officer	1	
2	Senior Leader	6	
3	First Leader	22	
4	Leader	113	11
5	Chief commissary	264	30
6	Commissary	473	37
7	Deputy commissary	1219	152

8	Chief Inspector		
9	Inspector	6700	715
10	Deputy Inspector		
11	Civil	446	515
<b>Total</b>		<b>9244</b>	<b>1460</b>
<b>2016</b>			
<b>No</b>	<b>Name by rank</b>	<b>Sex</b>	
		<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
1	Chief Executive Officer	1	
2	Senior Leader	6	
3	First Leader	27	
4	Leader	114	11
5	Chief commissary	272	26
6	Commissary	458	37
7	Deputy commissary	1302	169
9	Inspector	6417	678
11	Civil	469	568
<b>Total</b>		<b>9066</b>	<b>1489</b>
<b>2017</b>			
<b>No</b>	<b>Name by rank</b>	<b>Sex</b>	
		<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
1	Chief Executive Officer	1	
2	Senior Leader	6	1
3	First Leader	34	
4	Leader	112	10
5	Chief commissary	293	29
6	Commissary	446	36
7	Deputy commissary	1357	184
9	Inspector	6417	676
11	Civil	474	577
<b>Total</b>		<b>9140</b>	<b>1513</b>
<b>2018</b>			
<b>No</b>	<b>Name by rank</b>	<b>Sex</b>	
		<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
1	Chief Executive Officer	1	
2	Senior Leader	5	1
3	First Leader	29	
4	Leader	107	10
5	Chief commissary	277	28
6	Commissary	417	35
7	Deputy commissary	1313	176

9	Inspector	6431	681
11	Civil	484	577
<b>Total</b>		<b>9064</b>	<b>1508</b>
<b>31.03.2019</b>			
<b>No</b>	<b>Name by rank</b>	<b>Sipas Gjinise</b>	
		<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>
		<b>a</b>	<b>a</b>
1	Chief Executive Officer	1	
2	Senior Leader	6	1
3	First Leader	27	
4	Leader	106	11
5	Chief commissary	307	31
6	Commissary	378	32
7	Deputy commissary	1297	175
9	Inspector	6293	679
11	Civil	466	585
<b>Total</b>		<b>8881</b>	<b>1514</b>

Ministry of Defence: The percentage of military women serving in the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania by the end of 2018 was 13.01% of the total number of military personnel.

Year	Women Civil + Military	%	Military Female	%	Total Armed Forces
<b>31. 12. 2018</b>	1380	17.4%	827	13.01%	7923
<b>2017</b>	1401	17.2%	854	13.08%	8113
<b>2016</b>	1344	18.3%	829	14%	7358
<b>2015</b>	1398	17.5%	889	13.6%	7956
<b>2014</b>	1407	16.2%	863	13.2%	8042

The Defense Ministry's budget for spending on the Autism Center

In ALL				
Expenditures for staff of the Autism Center				
No.	Year	Salaries and social insurance	Transport	TOTAL
1	2014			-
2	2015			-
3	2016	1,368,670	167,280	1,535,950
4	2017	3,218,820	167,280	3,386,100
5	2018	2,693,111	167,280	2,860,391
6	2019	807,284	41,820	849,104
<b>SHUMA</b>		<b>8,087,885</b>	<b>543,660</b>	<b>8,631,545</b>

**Agency for the Protection of Civil Society: Wining projects of the fifth call (30 May - 30 June 2014 ) focused on gender equality, violence against women and domestic violence**

No.	NGO	Project' title	Time frame	Total approved from the Board (in ALL)
1	Center for Rehabilitation and Integration	Together against Domestic Violence	Municipalities of Kruje, Fushe Kruje, communes Nikel, Bubq and Thumane	500,000
2	Counseling Line for Women and Girls	Strengthen the institution of the fight against violence and discrimination through increasing capacities and providing services to victims	Tiranë, Elbasan, Burrel, Bathore	1,200,000
3	ASSA - Zeitgeist	Together against Domestic Violence!	Berat city and Kuçova	2,000,000
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>3,700,000</b>

**Agency for the Protection of Civil Society: Wining projects of the seventh call (5 February – 6 March 2015) focused on gender equality, violence against women and domestic violence**

No.	NGO	Project' title	Time frame	Total approved from the Board (in ALL)
1	Alliance of Civil Society	Do not raise your hand - Stop violence against women	Kukës	2,000,000
2	Counseling Line for Women and Girls	Establishing the National Helpline for Domestic Violence Victims. Enhance information and dialogue on more women's rights	All over the country	2,000,000
<b>Total</b>				<b>4,000,000</b>

**Agency for the Protection of Civil Society: Wining projects of the ninth call (22 February – 25 March 2016) focused on gender equality, violence against women and domestic violence**

No.	NGO	Project' title	Time frame	Total approved from the Board (in ALL)
1	Association for Community Integration and Development	Empowerment of women and girls of the periphery of Tirana through professional training	Allias - Bregu i Lumit, Tirana	1,000,000
2	Forum of Albanian Professional Journalists	I have killed....	Tiranë, Berat, Vlorë, Shkodër, Durrës, Elbasan	2,000,000
3	Prentice Learning Center	Raising awareness of women to recognize and respond to the physical and psychological initiate partner'	Sub-urban area of Tirana	5,000,000

		violence		
4	TED	Mainstreaming gender at local level	Tiranë, Gjirokastër	2,000,000
			<b>Total</b>	<b>10,000,000</b>

No.	NGO	Project' title	Time frame	Total approved from the Board (in ALL)
	Center for Studies and Developments	Social integration of young people and women in rural areas in the city of Kuçova.	Municipality of Kuçova	1,500,000
	AGENDA	Analysis of comprehensive economic development policies as a new instrument for the economic and social integration of disadvantaged groups in society and the labor market	Tirana	3,300,000
			<b>Total</b>	<b>4,800,000</b>

Annex IV: List of state institutions, independent institutions and civil society organizations involved in the provision of information, assessment and consultation roundtables for the preparation of the Beijing Report + 25

1. Parliamentary Subcommittee on Gender Equality and Prevention of Violence against Women
2. Women's Deputies Alliance
3. Prime Ministers' Office
4. Ministry of Health and Social Protection
5. Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
6. Ministry of Finance and Economy
7. Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth
8. Ministry of Justice
9. Ministry of Interior
10. Ministry of Tourism and Environment
11. Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
12. Ministry of Culture
13. Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy
14. Ministry of Defense
15. Audiovisual Media Authority
16. INSTAT
17. Agency for the Protection of Civil Society
18. People's Advocate
19. State Advocacy
20. Commissioner for Protection against Discrimination
21. State Agency for the Protection of Children's Rights
22. Albanian School of Public Administration
23. Department of Public Administration
24. National Center for the Treatment of Victims of Domestic Violence
25. National Reception Center for Victims of Trafficking
26. Social Insurance Institute
27. Municipality of Bulqizë
28. Municipality of Dervoll
29. Municipality of Elbasan
30. Municipality of Divjakë
31. Municipality of Gjirokastër
32. Municipality of Kavajë
33. Municipality of Klos
34. Municipality of Kuçovë
35. Municipality of Lezhë
36. Municipality of Roskovec
37. Municipality of Selenicë
38. Municipality of Shijak
39. Municipality of Tepelenë
40. Municipality of Tiranë
41. Municipality of Vlorë
42. Municipality of Mat
43. Municipality of Skrapar
44. Municipality of Shkodër
45. UNICEF
46. UNDP

47. CNVP
48. UN Women
49. UNHCR
50. UNFPA
51. UNEP
52. SCPA
53. SIDA
54. OSBE
55. Save the Children
56. GIZ
57. ILO
58. University of Medicine
59. Center for Legal Initiatives
60. Albanian Center for Population and Development
61. Liliun Center
62. Association of Women with Social Problems
63. Association "The Voice of Children calls us"
64. CRCA
65. REC Albania
66. KDIMDP
67. Other Vision
68. Center for the Community Development "Today for the Future"
69. Human Rights in Democracy Center
70. AWEN
71. ANRD
72. Coordination Center against Violent Extremism
73. Faculty of Social Sciences
74. Gender Alliance for Development Center
75. Different and Equal
76. Association of Judges

## Annex V: Additional Resources and References

1. Program of Cooperation for Sustainable Development 2017-2021
2. The UN Country team "Joint Assessment Asylum and Mixed Migration, Situation in Albania 2018: Initial Rapid Assessment, August 2018, updated in December 2018
3. Law no. 93/2014 "On the inclusion and accessibility of persons with disabilities" Decision of Council of Ministers no. 708, dated 26.08.2015 "On types, frequency and method of reporting statistical data on disability from the state responsible structures at central and local level,
4. Law no. 136/2015 "On some additions and amendments to Law no. 7961, dated 12/07/1995 "Labor Code of the Republic of Albania"
5. National Employment and Skills Strategy 2014-2020
6. National Strategy on Gender Equality 2016-2020
7. INSTAT "Men and women in Albania, 2018",
8. "Moral and sexual harassment in the Public Administration" prepared by the People's Advocate (2017) by the Albanian Center for Economic Research, with financial support of the Government of the Kingdom of Denmark
9. Progress Report 2018 of the European Commission to Albania
10. Law no.104/2014 "On amendments and additions to Law No. 7703, dated 11.5.1993 "On Social Insurance in the Republic of Albania"
11. DCM Nr. 740, dated 12.12.2018 "On determining the immediate financial assistance for mothers with newborns and the granting procedure"
12. DCM no. 634, dated 15.7.2015, on approval of the Regulation "On the introduction of measures for safety and health at work of pregnant women and new mothers"
13. DCM No.63, dated 27.01.2016 "On the reorganization of operators offering services of potable water supply, collection, disposal and treatment of sewerage"
14. Public Perceptions and Attitudes towards Gender Equality in Albania" (2016) prepared by UNDP with the financial support of the Government of Sweden.
15. Final Report: Analysis of the functioning of the Coordinated Community Response to domestic violence at local level in Albania (2015), prepared by E. Metaj, drafted with the support of UNDP Albania and funded with the financial support of the Swedish Government.
16. "Women's property rights in Albania", second edition, 2016, prepared with the support of UN Women and the financial support of the Swedish Government.
17. Guidelines on strengthening gender equality in notarial practice - South East European Countries
18. Law no. 111/2018 "On cadastre"
19. DCM No.189, dated 02.04.2014 "On some amendments and additions to the Decision No.27 dated 11.1.2012" of the Council of Ministers" "On employment promotion programme for women of specific groups"
20. DCM No. 73, dated 27.1.2016 "On some amendments and additions to the Decision no. 27, dated 11.1.2012 of the Council of Ministers "On employment promotion programme for women of specific groups"
21. Law No.15 / 2019 "On Employment Promotion"
22. Law No. 65/2016 on "Social Enterprises in the Republic of Albania"
23. DCM. 56, dated 31.1.2018 "On determining specific categories of disadvantaged groups"
24. "Action Plan for supporting women entrepreneurs 2014-2020, Drafted with the support of UN Women and approved by Order of the Minister of the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Entrepreneurship, no. 339, dated 19.06.2014
25. DCM No.592, dated 10.09.2014 "On the establishment of the fund in support of women entrepreneurs
26. National Social Protection Strategy 2015- 2020

27. Law no. 47/2014 "On some additions and amendments to Law no. 9355, dated 10.3.2005, "On social assistance and services"
28. DCM No.955, dated 7.12.2016 "On the criteria, procedures, documentation and a measure of economic assistance benefit"
29. Law no.104 / 2014 "On some Amendments and Additions to Law No. 7703, dated 11.5.1993, "On Social Insurances in the Republic of Albania"
30. Council of Ministers Normative Act no. 1, dated 25.01.2017 "On amendment of the Law no. 9136, dated 11.9.2003, "On the collection of mandatory contributions to social and health insurance in the Republic of Albania"
31. Law no. 121/2016 "On Social Care Services in the Republic of Albania"
32. Council of Europe Convention "On Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence"
33. Law no.22 / 2018 "On social housing"
34. National Health Strategy 2016-2020
35. Basic Primary Healthcare Service Package, reviewed and approved by DCM. No. 101 dated 04.02.2015
36. Law No. 141/2014 "On some amendments to Law no. 10383, dated 22.2.2011, "On Compulsory Healthcare Insurance of the Republic of Albania" changed
37. DCM No. 376 dated 11.06.2014, "On some additions and amendments to the Decision No. 787 regarding the addition to education and vaccination for beneficiaries in non-pilot areas"
38. Directive no. 14, dated 12.02.2015 "On criteria and procedures for admission to education-oriented schools"
39. Directive no. 25, dated 17.08.2015 "On the academic year 2015 - 2016 in the pre-university education system"
40. DCM No. 547, dated 27.07.2016, "On the appointment of members for the composition of the National Council of Pre-University Education"
41. Directive No. 24, dated 30.10.2017 "On the setup of the National Parents Council"
42. Directive No.16, dated 31.07.2017 "On the academic year 2017-2018 in the pre-university education system"
43. Law No. 79/2017 "On Sports"
44. Albania: GREVIOs report on legislative measures and others which implement the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, published on 24 November 2017.
45. Law 173/2014 "On the discipline in the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania"
46. DCM 770, dated 26.12.2018 "On the adoption of the National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings 2018-2020", published in the Official Journal no. 191, dated 31.12.2018
47. Law 47/2018 "On some additions and amendments to Law no. 9669, dated 18.12.2006 "On measures against violence in family relations", amended"
48. Joint Directive of the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Health and Social Protection No. 912, dated 27.12.2018 "On the procedures and the model of the order for preliminary measures of emergent protection"
49. Joint Directive of the Minister of Interior and the Minister of Health and Social Protection No. 866, dated 20.12.2018 "On the procedures and model of risk assessment for cases of domestic violence"
50. Law no. 111/2017 "On state-guaranteed legal aid"
51. Law no. 35/2017 "On some additions and amendments to Law No.7905, dated 21.3.1995 "The Code of Criminal Procedure of the Republic of Albania"
52. Law no. 97/2016 "On the organization and functioning of the Prosecution Office in the Republic of Albania"

53. Report of the High Council of Justice "On the situation of judicial matters of domestic violence" dated 15.1.2018
54. DCM no. 50, dated 6.2.2019, for the adoption the Strategy for the control of small arms, light weapons, ammunition and explosives for 2019-2024 and the Action Plan for 2019-2021.
55. DCM No. 499 , dated 29.8.2018 "On the adoption of standard procedures for the protection of victims and potential victims of trafficking"
56. Law no. 18/2017 "On the Children's Rights and Protection"
57. "National Action Plan for the Integration of Roma and Egyptians in the Republic of Albania 2016-2020"
58. "National Action Plan for LGBT Persons in the Republic of Albania 2016-2020"
59. National Plan for Persons with Disabilities
60. "Shadow Report in the Field of Health - Albania Case" for the CEDAW Committee (2015), prepared by ACPD
61. Shadow Report on the Istanbul Convention (2016), prepared by the Women's Network AWEN
62. Shadow Report on UPR on Women's Advocacy Recommendations (2019); prepared by the Gender-Based Violence Monitoring Network with the support of UN Women
63. Shadow report on the CEDAW Convention (2019) Prepared by the Gender-Based Violence Monitoring Network with the support of UN Women
64. "Invisible Violence - An Overview of the Violence Against Women and Girls with Disabilities in Albania" (2015), prepared by Dr. B.Çani, Dr. N. Ballhysa, S.Fortuzi, F.Kalemi, December 2015. Realized by the Albanian Disability Rights Foundation with the support of UNDP, with funds from the Swedish Government
65. Study "Reducing violence against women with focus on LBT community in Albania "(2015) prepared by PhD. B.Balli, November 2015. Realized by LGBT Alliance Albania, with the support of the UN Trust Fund.
66. Law no. 139/2015 "For the Local Self-government Units"
67. Law No. 96/2017 on the Protection of National Minorities, adopted by the Albanian Parliament in October 2017
68. Law no. 57/2016 "For some amendments and additions to the Law No. 9936, dated 26.6.2008 "On the Management of the Budgetary System in the Republic of Albania"
69. National Agenda for the Children's Rights 2017-2020
70. Law 18/2017 "On the Rights and Protection of the Child"
71. DCM No. 129, dated 13.03.2019 "On the procedures for the identification, immediate assistance and referral of economically exploited children, including children in street situation"
72. Mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support for achieving the SDGs in Albania", prepared by the Prime Minister's Office, World Bank and United Nations, September 2018