

ALBANIA: COUNTRY GENDER PROFILE

February 2010

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---------|---|
| ADC | Austrian Development Cooperation |
| ADHS | Albanian Demographic Health Survey |
| ANC | Antenatal Care |
| CEDAW | Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women |
| DEO | Department of Equal Opportunities |
| EU | European Union |
| FP | Family Planning |
| GADC | Gender Alliance for Development Center |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GE | Gender Equality |
| GEL | Gender Equality Legislation |
| GFP | Gender Focal Point |
| GOA | Albanian Government |
| GP | General Practitioner |
| GTZ | German Technical Cooperation |
| IEC | Information, Education and Communication |
| IIWG | Inter- Institutional Working Group |
| INSTAT | National Institute of Statistics |
| IPH | Institute of Public Health |
| LFS | Labour Force Survey |
| LGE | Law on Gender Equality |
| LSMS | Living Standard Measurement Survey |
| MADA | Mountain Areas Development Program |
| MES | Ministry of Education and Science |
| MOH | Ministry of Health |
| MOLSAEO | Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities |
| NCGE | National Council on Gender Equality |
| NDI | National Democratic Institute |
| NGO | Non Governmental Organization |
| NSDI | National Strategy for Development and Integration |
| NSGE&DV | National Strategy for Gender Equality and Domestic Violence |
| OSCE | Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe |
| PM | Prime Minister |
| RED | Regional Educational Directorate |
| RHS | Reproductive Health Survey |
| SDC | Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation |
| SME | Small-medium Enterprises |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Program |
| UNFPA | United Nations Population Fund |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |
| UNIFEM | United Nations Fund for Women |
| VET | Vocational Education and Training |

1. BASIC PROFILES

Executive Summary

In Albania, patrilineal and patrilocal social organization have dominated gender relationships in the private sphere. During the communist era, the Albanian state imposed another structure within the public sphere, one that promoted equal opportunities for men and women in education and the labour market. Women were given a number of key, high-level positions. As a result, literacy rates rose from low levels at the beginning of the communist regime to nearly 100 percent by 1989. Nonetheless, women in the communist regime had a double burden: at home they had complete responsibility for childcare and housework while men contributed much less; and women were expected to contribute at work as much time and effort as men. The socio-economic changes during 1990 highlighted several stereotypes of gender roles and the patriarchal nature. Still many women and men do not recognize gender discrimination as it is, but see it as a “way of life”. Required reforms undertaken in the early 90's further worsened women's life for two main reasons; on the one hand the privatization of state owned companies significantly increased unemployment among women and on the other hand, a massive withdrawal of women from the labour market took place due to the closure of kindergartens and daycares and a significant reduction of spending on social protection.

In the last 20 years, health and social policies tried to give a special attention of reproductive healthcare services, with improved maternal health and reduced maternal mortality, and morbidity in Albania, to advance gender equality, eliminate violence against women and ensure women's ability to control their own fertility. However, the use of modern family planning methods by women is still low and abortion is still used as a method of family planning. The prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases among women is on the increase, particularly among youth. Likewise, incidences of breast cancer and cervical cancer is on the rise. The rights of young women to access reproductive health education and services are not fully realized.

The education system in Albania has equal access for boys and girls. In terms of enrolment in schools, it's easily noticeable that, the group that has a lowest chance of attendance is girls from rural areas, while this chance is likely to decrease during upper-secondary education. Two of the most apparent factors that may have an impact here are the combination of the patriarchal mentality over women and education, in some rural areas, as well as the safety/security of roads to schools. At the national level, drop-out rates are the same for males and females. But the same could necessarily apply to certain districts. In several areas the drop-out levels are higher among females and in some other it stands much higher for males.

While there is an increased understanding among decision-makers about the linkages between the advancement of gender equality and the realization of democratic governance there remains a lot to be done. Women constitute more than half of the population in Albanian rural areas, however in many areas their participation falls behind compared to men. Inequality is particularly seen in the fields of politics (leadership and decision making), economics (employment and income), and in marital and family relations. It is encouraging that Albania has taken several important steps in developing policies and laws that promote gender equality. In 2004, the country's first Gender Equality Legislation (GEL) was adopted¹ and a revised draft GEL with significant advances was approved by the Council of Ministers in early 2008 and is now before the Parliament for adoption. In 2006, the GoA adopted the country's first legislation on Domestic Violence.² In addition, the GoA adopted the National Strategy on Gender Equality and Domestic Violence (NSGE-DV 2007-2010), the first of its kind in the country. A number of international commitments towards gender equality have also been made, which include: the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1993; a commitment to gender equality with the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995; the signing of the Millennium Declaration in 2000, and the signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the EU in 2006.

- There are 3.1 million people living in Albania; 49 percent are women
- More than half of Albania's population lives in rural areas - 57 percent of them women
- Poverty is more widespread in rural areas, where 4 out of 5 people are poor
- Unemployment affects 21 percent of women and 16 percent of men
- About 70 percent of employed women work in agriculture, 20 percent in the public sector, and about 10 percent in the private sector
- Only 18 percent of managers are women
- On average, a woman in Albania earns 20 percent less than a man
- Women occupy less than 10 percent of Albania's assembly seats, down from 30 percent in the 1970s
- More trafficked women come from Albania than any other country in southeastern Europe
- Widowed women and women living alone are 60 percent closer to the poverty line than households headed by men

¹ Law No. 9198 dated 1.07.2004 "On Gender Equality in Society", amended in 2006.

² Law No. 9669 dated 18.12.2006 "On Measures Against Violence in Family Relations"

1.1. SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

Table 1: Macroeconomic indicators

| | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| GDP Current prices ALL | 583,369 | 622,711 | 694,098 | 750,785 | 814,797 | 891,000 | 980,064 | 1,064,000 | 1,176,349 |
| GDP Current prices US\$ | 4,065.3 | 4,444.8 | 5,694.0 | 7,303.4 | 8,156.1 | 9,082.6 | 10,841.4 | 12,681.8 | |
| GDP growth rate % | 7.9 | 4.2 | 5.8 | 5.7 | 5.7 | 5.5 | 6.3 | 7.2 | 3.0 |
| CPI end of period % | 3.5 | 1.7 | 3.3 | 2.2 | 2.0 | 2.5 | 3.1 | 2.2 | 2.5 |
| CPI average % | 3.121 | 5.218 | 2.344 | 2.869 | 2.363 | 2.371 | 2.937 | 3.359 | 2.127 |
| PPI end of period% | -5.4 | -1.4 | 14.6 | 10.8 | 5.1 | 0.1 | 4.1 | 6.5 | |
| PPI average % | | | | | | | | | |
| GDP deflator | 144.820 | 148.313 | 156.290 | 159.971 | 164.64 | 170.437 | 176.516 | 182.698 | 185.476 |
| Budget Deficit % of GDP | -6.9 | -6.1 | -4.9 | -5.1 | -3.5 | -3.3 | -3.5 | -5.6 | -6.4 |
| Current account million \$ | -301 | -422 | -399 | -428 | -726 | -591 | -1,152 | -1,924 | |
| Current account % of GDP | -8.2 | -10.4 | -8.1 | -6.9 | -9.9 | -6.5 | -10.4 | -14.6 | -17.1 |
| Trade balance million \$ | -146,059 | -162,877 | -171,496 | -173,951 | -196,373 | -221,742 | -279,023 | -327,322 | |
| Trade balance % of GDP | 25.2% | 26.0% | 24.6% | 22.9% | 23.8% | 24.8% | 28.5% | 30.1% | |
| Capital and Financial Account (million \$) | 232 | 326 | 359 | 512 | 555 | 706 | 1,167 | 2,180 | |
| Foreign Direct Investment (million \$) | 208 | 135 | 178 | 338 | 262 | 325 | 662 | 937 | |
| GDP per capita \$ | 1,323 | 1,437 | 1,830 | 2,336 | 2,598 | 2,883 | 3,429 | 3,963 | 4,021 |
| Exchange rate ALL/US\$ | 143.5 | 140.1 | 121.9 | 102.8 | 99.9 | 98.1 | 90.4 | 83.9 | |

Source: INSTAT 2009

Table 2: Public expenditures to sectors (% of GDP)

| | 2001 | 2005 | 2008 | 2010 |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Health (excluding reserve expenditures) | 2.1% | 2.65% | 2.51% | 2.88% |
| Education | 2.94% | 3.24% | 3.57% | 3.46% |
| Social Welfare | 7.37% | 7.48% | 7.62% | 8.02% |
| Defense (excluding reserve expenditures) | 1.14% | 1.03% | 1.12% | 1.43% |

Source: INSTAT 2009

Table 3: Share of economic activities to GDP

| Years | Agriculture | Industry | Extracting Industry Oil/gas | Manufacturing Industry | Construction | Service |
|-------|-------------|----------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|---------|
| 1996 | 36.6 | 9.9 | 1.0 | 8.9 | 5.1 | 48.5 |
| 2000 | 25.5 | 7.8 | 0.9 | 6.9 | 8.3 | 58.5 |
| 2007 | 18.9 | 9.3 | 0.9 | 8.4 | 14.6 | 57.2 |

Source: INSTAT 2009

1.2. LABOUR INDICATORS

Table 4: Population – Basic indicators

| INDICATORS | 1990 | 1995 | 2000 | 2005 | 2008 |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Population as of December 31 | 3,286,600 | 3,037,100 | 3,058,500 | 3,135,000 | 3,170,000 |
| Sex ratio (female to male) | 1.08 | 1.12 | 1.09 | 1.13 | 1.12 |
| Urban/rural population ratio (percentages) | 36% | 43% | 47% | 45% | 49% |
| Average age of population | | 28.8 | 29 | 31.7 | 32.8 |
| Crude Birth rate (per 1000 population) | 25.23 | 22.64 | 16.74 | 12.61 | 11.4 |
| Average age of mother at childbirth (years) | - | - | - | - | - |
| Extramartital births (percentages) | - | - | - | - | - |
| Mortality (per 100 thousands inhabitants) | 555.82 | 559.93 | 536.5 | 554.7 | 505.5 |
| Average life expectancy (years) | 72.4 | 71.4 | 74.1 | 75.4 | 75.3 |
| Average life expectancy for males (years) | 69.3 | 68.5 | 71.7 | 72.1 | 72.9 |
| Average life expectancy for females (years) | 75.4 | 74.3 | 76.4 | 78.6 | 77.8 |
| Infant mortality (per 1000 live births) | 28.3 | 30 | 16 | 14.7 | 11 |
| No of abortion (per 1000 live births) | 318 | 447.7 | 334.1 | 242.42 | 268.8 |

Source: MOH, Statistics Department 2009

Table 5: Unemployment rate / LFS

| Years | Unemployment | Unemployment Rate | Minimum Wage (LEK ALL) |
|-------|--------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| 2007 | 184,780 | 13.5 % | 16,000 |
| 2008 | 166,927 | 13 % | 17,000 |

Source: INSTAT 2009

Table 6 : Female unemployment rate / LFS

| Years | % of total unemployment | Unemployment Rate | Minimum wage |
|-------|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 2007 | 39.5 % | 12.2% | 16,000 |
| 2008 | 44.5% | 13.5% | 17,000 |

Source: INSTAT 2009

Table 7: Female Proportions in Sectors /LFS

| Years | Agriculture | Industry | Service |
|-------|-------------|----------|---------|
| 2007 | 56.1 % | 40.48 % | 39.09 % |
| 2008 | 56.5 % | 40.07 % | 34.88 % |

Source: INSTAT 2009

Table 8: Structure of the employed by occupation category and by sex/ LFS

| OCCUPATION CATEGORIES/YEARS | 2007 | | 2008 | |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| Legislators, senior officials and managers | 79.5 % | 20.5 % | 76.3 % | 23.7 % |
| Professionals | 41.1 % | 58.9 % | 43.4 % | 56.6 % |
| Technicians and associate professionals | 54 % | 46 % | 46.3 % | 53.7 % |
| Clerks | 56.1 % | 43.9 % | 56.9 % | 43.1 % |
| Service workers and shop and market sales workers | 56.7 % | 43.3 % | 56.1 % | 43.9 % |
| Skilled agricultural and fishery workers | 42.9 % | 57.1 % | 43.2 % | 56.8 % |
| Craft and related trades workers | 80.9 % | 19.1 % | 82.6 % | 17.4 % |
| Plant and machine operators and assemblers | 82.2 % | 17.8 % | 88.3 % | 11.7 % |
| Elementary occupations | 69.3 % | 30.7 % | 68.3 % | 31.7 % |

Source: INSTAT 2009

Table 9: Employment in public and private sector / LFS

| Sector | | | | | | Total 2007 | Total 2008 |
|------------------------------------|--|--------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| | | Male 2007 | Male 2008 | Female 2007 | Female 2008 | | |
| Public | | 100,048 | 110,140 | 80,843 | 92,711 | 180,891 | 202,851 |
| Cooperation (Agricultural private) | | 249,130 | 214,933 | 319,419 | 281,257 | 568,549 | 496,190 |
| Non agricultural Private | Employee | 141,513 | 152,844 | 72,726 | 71,987 | 214,239 | 224,831 |
| | Self-employed with employees | 27,078 | 15,307 | 2,984 | 1,976 | 30,062 | 17,283 |
| | Self-employed without employees (own-account worker or free-lancer) | 136,746 | 120,678 | 29,891 | 29,679 | 166,637 | 150,352 |
| | Unpaid family worker | 16,046 | 9,096 | 21,260 | 22,518 | 37,306 | 31,614 |

Source: INSTAT 2009

Table 10: Structure of the employed by sex and economic sector (%)

| ECONOMIC SECTORS/YEARS | 2007 | | 2008 | | TOTAL | |
|---|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| | Male | Female | Male | Female | 2007 | 2008 |
| Agriculture, forestry, and fishing industry | 37.77 % | 60.78 % | 35.1 % | 56.5 % | 47.90 % | 44.7 % |
| Industry | 11.33 % | 9.39 % | 10.10 % | 8.42 % | 10.47 % | 9.35 % |
| Services | 5.79 % | 4.73 % | 7.02 % | 4.68 % | 5.32 % | 5.98 % |

Source: INSTAT 2009

Table 11: Employed persons by the type of labour contract and sex

| | 2007 | | | 2008 | | |
|----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female |
| Permanent labor contract | 340,330 | 198,933 | 141,397 | 367,658 | 215,213 | 152,445 |
| Civil (temporary) contract | 68,405 | 55,342 | 13,063 | 78,395 | 64,199 | 14,196 |

Source: INSTAT 2009

Table 12: Unemployed looking for a job

| | 2007 | | | 2008 | | |
|--|---------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|
| | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female |
| Registration with state employment office | 57,711 | 34,275 | 23,436 | 59,814 | 29,117 | 30,697 |
| Direct contact with employer | 39,838 | 26,139 | 13,699 | 66,528 | 39,277 | 27,251 |
| Seeking assistance from family and friends | 152,638 | 95,755 | 56,883 | 131,213 | 72,497 | 58,716 |

Source: INSTAT 2009

1.3. HEALTH PROFILE

Table 13: Life Expectancy at Birth (estimate)

| Year | 1990 | 1995 | 2000 | 2005 | 2008 |
|--------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Male | 69.3 | 68.5 | 71.7 | 72.1 | 72.9 |
| Female | 75.4 | 74.3 | 76.4 | 78.6 | 77.8 |

Source: INSTAT 2009

Table 14: Maternal Mortality Ratio per 100,000 Live Births

| Year | 1990 | 1995 | 2000 | 2005 | 2008 |
|------|-------|------|------|------|------|
| | 37.75 | 29.1 | 22.6 | 23 | 21 |

Source: Ministry of Health, Department of Statistics

Table 15: Expansion of health service

| No. of Physicians | No. of Hospital Beds | Public expenditure on health (% of GDP) |
|---------------------------|----------------------|--|
| (per 100,000 inhabitants) | | |
| 114 | 287 | 2.5% |

Source: Ministry of Health, Department of Statistics

Table 16: Infant's Mortality Rate (per 1,000 live births)

| Years | 1990 | 1995 | 2000 | 2005 | 2008 |
|-------|------|------|------|------|------|
| | 28.3 | 30 | 16 | 14.7 | 11 |

Source: MOH, Department of Statistics

Table 17: Child's Vaccination (% of the vaccinated (1-year- old children)

| Years | BCG | DPT | Polio | Measles |
|-------|-------|-----|-------|---------|
| 1990 | 94% | 90% | 80% | 85% |
| 1995 | 97% | 97% | 98% | 91% |
| 2000 | 95% | 95% | 96% | 92% |
| 2005 | 97.7% | 98% | 98.1% | 97.2% |
| 2008 | 99.5% | 99% | 99% | 98% |

Source: Ministry of Health, Department of Statistics

Table 18: Family Planning

| | Contraceptive prevalence rate (modern methods-married women age 15-44) | Birth attendance rate | Median Age at first marriage | | Median Age at first birth | Total fertility rate |
|----------------|--|-----------------------|------------------------------|------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| | | | female | male | female | |
| ADHS 2008-2009 | 11% | 93% | 21.8 | 26.7 | 23.4 | 1.6 |
| DHS 2002 | 8% | 99.3% | 21.9 | 26.5 | 23.4 | 2.1 |

Source: INSTAT 2010

Table 19: HIV/AIDS

| | Identified (HIV/AIDS) cases |
|--------|-----------------------------|
| Male | 250 |
| Female | 109 |

Source: Institute of Public Health

Table 20: Nutrition

| | % of infants with low birth weight | Oral re-hydration therapy use rate |
|----------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ADHS 2008-2009 | 6% | 68% |

Table 21: Knowledge of HIV prevention methods

Percentage of women and men age 15-49 who, in response to prompted questions, say that people can reduce the risk of getting the AIDS virus by using condoms every time they have sexual intercourse, by having just one partner who is HIV negative and has no other partners, and by abstaining from sexual intercourse, by background characteristics, Albania 2008-09

| Background characteristic | Women | | | | | Men | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|--|--|------------------------------------|-----------------|--|--|--|------------------------------------|---------------|
| | Percentage who say HIV can be prevented by: | | | | | Percentage who say HIV can be prevented by: | | | | |
| | Using condoms and limiting sexual intercourse to one HIV-negative partner ² | | | | | Using condoms and limiting sexual intercourse to one HIV-negative partner ² | | | | |
| | Using condoms ¹ | Using condoms and limiting sexual intercourse to one HIV-negative partner ² | Using condoms and limiting sexual intercourse to one HIV-negative partner ^{1,2} | Abstaining from sexual intercourse | Number of women | Using condoms ¹ | Using condoms and limiting sexual intercourse to one HIV-negative partner ² | Using condoms and limiting sexual intercourse to one HIV-negative partner ^{1,2} | Abstaining from sexual intercourse | Number of men |
| Age | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15-24 | 77.1 | 80.1 | 70.6 | 74.2 | 2,454 | 82.2 | 80.5 | 74.0 | 74.7 | 1,062 |
| 15-19 | 76.7 | 79.9 | 69.6 | 72.8 | 1,478 | 81.1 | 77.9 | 71.8 | 73.2 | 670 |
| 20-24 | 77.8 | 80.4 | 72.0 | 76.4 | 976 | 84.0 | 85.0 | 77.7 | 77.2 | 393 |
| 25-29 | 74.4 | 81.2 | 69.7 | 70.6 | 848 | 89.9 | 86.1 | 82.2 | 81.2 | 269 |
| 30-39 | 74.2 | 78.6 | 67.0 | 70.9 | 1,962 | 84.9 | 83.4 | 78.4 | 78.4 | 644 |
| 40-49 | 69.5 | 74.7 | 62.4 | 70.3 | 2,319 | 81.8 | 79.8 | 73.6 | 75.5 | 1,037 |
| Residence | | | | | | | | | | |
| Urban | 85.7 | 88.2 | 80.9 | 78.5 | 3,380 | 89.7 | 88.4 | 83.7 | 82.4 | 1,391 |
| Rural | 64.1 | 70.1 | 55.9 | 66.3 | 4,204 | 77.8 | 75.4 | 68.5 | 71.2 | 1,622 |
| Education | | | | | | | | | | |
| No education/Primary 4-year | 41.2 | 50.1 | 35.1 | 46.6 | 127 | 40.7 | 37.4 | 28.9 | 42.2 | 55 |
| Primary 8-year | 61.4 | 68.9 | 53.2 | 64.9 | 3,712 | 75.2 | 73.9 | 65.8 | 68.5 | 1,183 |
| Secondary, professional, technical | 84.0 | 86.0 | 78.2 | 77.5 | 2,740 | 88.8 | 86.4 | 81.8 | 80.9 | 1,415 |
| University+ | 95.3 | 94.5 | 91.6 | 84.8 | 1,005 | 95.1 | 92.9 | 89.8 | 89.6 | 361 |
| Wealth quintile | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lowest | 53.2 | 62.4 | 44.9 | 59.2 | 1,513 | 61.3 | 60.4 | 51.4 | 56.3 | 475 |
| Second | 66.1 | 72.0 | 58.4 | 68.0 | 1,486 | 79.1 | 73.4 | 66.9 | 72.1 | 600 |
| Middle | 75.9 | 78.1 | 67.6 | 74.3 | 1,533 | 87.6 | 85.6 | 79.5 | 78.9 | 661 |
| Fourth | 81.7 | 84.2 | 75.4 | 76.6 | 1,480 | 89.5 | 88.7 | 83.6 | 81.0 | 625 |
| Highest | 91.1 | 93.6 | 88.2 | 80.5 | 1,573 | 93.2 | 92.8 | 89.1 | 87.9 | 652 |
| Total | 73.7 | 78.2 | 67.1 | 71.8 | 7,584 | 83.3 | 81.4 | 75.5 | 76.4 | 3,013 |

Note: An asterisk indicates that a figure is based on fewer than 25 unweighted cases and has been suppressed.

¹ Using condoms every time they have sexual intercourse

² Partner who has no other partners

1.4. EDUCATION PROFILE

Table 22: Educational System (Years)

| Mandatory education system |
|-----------------------------------|
| 9 years |

Table 23: Net enrolment at each level of education system 2002-2005-2008

| | Male | female | Tirana | Urban other | rural | total |
|-------------------------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------|
| LSMS 2002 | 2002 | | | | | |
| Pre-scholling (3-5 years) | 28.7 | 30.1 | 19.8 | 46.5 | 23.6 | 29.3 |
| | | | | | | |
| Mandatory 9 years (6-13 year) | 89.0 | 87.7 | 85.4 | 88.2 | 88.9 | 88.4 |
| Secondary (14-17years) | 34.0 | 34.7 | 61.3 | 49.7 | 23.0 | 34.3 |
| University (18-22 years) | 6.5 | 8.6 | 20.2 | 14.7 | 2.2 | 7.7 |
| LSMS 2005 | 2005 | | | | | |
| Pre-scholling (3-5 years) | 41.0 | 42.7 | 39.5 | 54.4 | 35.8 | 41.8 |
| Mandatory 9 years (6-13 year) | 90.0 | 90.1 | 90.9 | 91.5 | 89.2 | 90.1 |
| Secondary (14-17years) | 48.5 | 45.7 | 60.3 | 61.2 | 37.6 | 47.1 |
| University (18-22years) | 13.4 | 20.2 | 25.1 | 31.7 | 8.1 | 17.1 |
| LSMS 2008 | 2008 | | | | | |
| Pre-scholling (3-5 years) | 51.5 | 28.2 | 62.2 | 50.6 | 41.3 | 46.4 |
| Mandatory 9 years (6-13 year) | 91.0 | 87.9 | 86.5 | 91.4 | 89.4 | 89.5 |
| Secondary (14-17years) | 48.0 | 50.3 | 67.4 | 62.4 | 37.0 | 49.1 |
| University (18-22years) | 16.9 | 30.4 | 40.4 | 34.4 | 11.7 | 23.8 |

Source: INSTAT 2009 (LSMS 2002-2005-2008)

Table 24: Graduated by level of education

| | 2002-2003 | 2003-2004 | 2004-2005 | 2005-2006 |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| basic 9 years educated | 53,185.00 | 56,513.00 | 59,519.00 | 58,216.00 |
| Male | 49.6% | 51.0% | 51.0% | 51.0% |
| Female | 50.4% | 49.0% | 49.0% | 49.0% |
| secondary education | 22,182.00 | 24,840.00 | 29,380.00 | 27,905.00 |
| Male | 47.0% | 49.0% | 50.0% | 46.0% |
| Female | 53.0% | 51.0% | 50.0% | 54.0% |
| university degrees | 5,229.00 | 5,977.00 | 5,752.00 | 7,630.00 |
| Male | 28.0% | 30.0% | 29.0% | 28.0% |
| Female | 71.9% | 70.0% | 71.0% | 72.0% |

Source: INSTAT 2008

Table 25: Teacher of basic - 9 year education and secondary education by sex

| | 2002-2003 | 2003-2004 | 2004-2005 | 2005-2006 |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| teacher of basic - 9 year education | 26,850.00 | 26,208.00 | 26,888.00 | 27,157.00 |
| Male | 35.4% | 35.3% | 33.6% | 33.0% |
| Female | 64.6% | 64.8% | 66.3% | 67.0% |
| teacher of secondary education | 6,396.00 | 6,873.00 | 7,477.00 | 7,997.00 |
| Male | 40.3% | 38.9% | 42.7% | 41.5% |
| Female | 51.2% | 50.4% | 57.3% | 58.4% |

Source: INSTAT 2008

Table 26: Professors, lecturers and assistants

| | 2002-2003 | 2003-2004 | 2004-2005 | 2005-2006 |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Total | 1704 | 1759 | 1882 | 1017 |
| Professors | | | | |
| Male | 233 | 214 | 244 | 269 |
| Female | 23 | 36 | 39 | 43 |
| assistants professors | | | | |
| Male | 228 | 234 | 234 | 236 |
| Female | 100 | 100 | 103 | 106 |
| Pedagogues | | | | |
| Male | 550 | 526 | 577 | 598 |
| Female | 570 | 649 | 685 | 765 |

Source: INSTAT 2008

Table 27: Labor Force by level of education and sex in %

| | male (%) | female(%) |
|--------------------------------------|----------|-----------|
| 8/9 years school | 51.89 | 60.38 |
| upper secondary vocational 2-3years | 3.56 | 1.50 |
| upper secondary-vocational 4-5 years | 16.17 | 11.08 |
| upper secondary general | 19.61 | 17.11 |
| University | 8.76 | 9.93 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

Source: INSTAT 2008 (LFS 2007)

2. GENERAL SITUATION OF WOMEN AND GOVERNMENTAL POLICY

2.1. GOVERNMENT POLICY ON GENDER

In July 2006, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, and Equal Opportunities undertook the initiative, along with relevant civil society actors, to draft the National Strategy for Gender Equality and against Domestic Violence and the Action Plan. The result was a document with policies in favour of gender equality and against domestic violence, harmonized with civil society initiatives.

This strategy marks a step forward toward the harmonization of demands and standards with regard to gender issues mainstreamed into public policies and programmes: from the Beijing Conference in 1995, the process of harmonizing Albanian legislation with EU legislation, the Millennium Development Goals, etc. Nevertheless, the implementation of the strategy remains a challenge, with MOLSAEO being the principle authority responsible for the implementation of the Strategy, in coordination with all line ministries, civil society, and other relevant actors. Furthermore, the inclusion of the NSGE-DV into the GOA's National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI) requires significant practical adaptation..

The **Goal** of the Strategy is *“to present the ways and institutional mechanisms for mainstreaming gender issues into public policies, alleviate gender differences, and discourage and prevent domestic violence.”*

The **Vision** of the Strategy is to *“achieve economic and social development of the country and draft and implement policies appropriate for the realization of gender equality, which would be the premises for programming objectives related to gender equality, men and women's equal access to decision making at the national and local level, in the area of education, health, employment, public services, the prevention of domestic violence, etc.”*

The **strategic priorities** listed in the associated Action Plan are:

- Strengthen protective legal and institutional mechanisms with a view to ensuring gender equality in Albania
- Women's empowerment through increasing their participation in decision making
- Women's economic empowerment and expansion of their opportunities for employment and professional qualification
- Promotion of equal women and girls' access to quality education
- Improvement of the social situation of women and girls at risk through increasing their access to quality social services
- Improvement of the population's health by increasing the readiness of the health system for the special health needs of women and men
- Improvement of the media's role for a new mentality that would respond to the needs of the time with regard to gender equality in the society and the increase of women and girls' representation in this profession
- Increase awareness about the phenomenon of domestic violence and take measures to help victims through changing attitudes

- Legal and administrative protection as well as support for individuals affected by domestic violence and violators.

National Strategy for Development and Integration (2007-2013)

This Strategy was approved by the Council of Ministers in March 2008.

The **Goal** of this Strategy in the area of gender equality is to *“achieve gender equality through mainstreaming the gender perspective into all aspects of policy drafting and implementation. This would mean equal participation of women/girls and men/boys in the country’s social, economic, and political life, as well as equal opportunities for public services, ensuring equal results for both sexes, in order for them to enjoy all of their rights and make use of their individual potentials for the good of the society.”*

A special focus is dedicated to the importance of treating victims affected by domestic violence, the provision of information about their protection through penal and civil legislation, health counselling and social support, prevention and treatment of the early signs of violence, as well as holding violators accountable.

Its **Vision** over the next seven years is the development *“of a country with a high standard of living, integrated into European and Euro-Atlantic structures, that is a democracy and guarantor of fundamental human rights and freedoms.”*

Its **Strategic Priorities** are:

- Improvement and implementation of the legal and institutional framework, which guarantees gender equality
- Increase of women and girls’ representation in the decision making process through amendments to the electoral law
- Women’s economic empowerment through increasing their number as entrepreneurs
- Avoiding gender differences in education
- Support for vulnerable women and girls through the empowerment of public structures
- Improvement of the work of the health system
- Prevention of domestic violence
- Protection and justice for domestic violence victims
- Social support for domestic violence victims.

The Strategy for Development and Integration also reflects important gender equality elements. Nevertheless, as stressed above, the *de facto* implementation of the legal framework and existing policies on gender equality in Albania remains problematic.

The National Strategy Against Trafficking of Human Being (2008-2010) aims to establish a national mechanism to support victims of trafficking. The national document considers different aspects of the phenomenon, trying to link them with criminal prosecution, social protection, the integration of victims as well the prevention of the phenomenon. The implementation of the strategy involves many local and national stakeholders, which is reflecting within the action plan. Priorities of the strategy are the inclusion of trafficking

children into school, the inclusion of trafficked women, support of groups at risk and their integration by increasing the cooperation of regional stakeholders (state agencies and local NGO).

Legislation

Albania has ratified several international conventions and regional instruments related to human rights. The legal framework includes ratification of the European Convention for Human Rights and its Protocol,³ CEDAW⁴ and the CEDAW Additional Protocol⁵. Albania accepted the Stabilisation and Association Agreement in June 2006 as an important step towards EU membership. Since December 2006 Albania has in power the Temporary Agreement⁶. **1 – Constitution of Republic of Albania (1998)** it does not have a specific definition of equality between men and women however in general it can guarantee this impartiality. Article 18 forbids any kind of discrimination based on gender, Article 18.1. All are equal before the law. 2. No one may be discriminated unjustly for reasons of gender, race, religion, ethnicity, language, political, religious and philosophical beliefs, economic, education, or social situation and parental situation. 3. No one may be discriminated against for reasons mentioned in paragraph 2 if reasonable and objective legal grounds do not exist.

2 – The Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), ratified in May 11, 1994 by the Albanian Government. Article 11 emphasizes that states that have ratified the convention should take the necessary measures to ensure equal rights between women and men.

Article 7: State parties take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the country's political and public life. It particularly ensures, in conditions of equality with men, that women:

- Vote in all elections and all public referenda, as well as be elected in all publicly elected bodies;
- Participate in the elaboration of government policies and their implementation; work in public positions and carry out all public functions in all government levels;
- Participate in non-governmental organizations and associations that deal with the country's public and political life.

3 – The Civil Code (approved on 03.05.2001, Law No. 8781) recognizes equal rights in all legal proceedings, such as the right to file a suit against someone or the right to trial. The Civil Code states that all individuals possess skills to act when 18 years old and since that moment she/he can freely execute any juridical act. The Civil Code, banking legislation and other laws use impartial language related to gender issues, such as "every person", "parties", "physical person" etc. In other sections the law uses male gender terms such as "creditor" or the term "owner". The use of this language is evident in other laws as well.

4 – The Penal Code (approved on 21.03.1995, Law No. 7905) ensures equality between men and women in all areas of life, health, ownership, and dignity. Women receive the same punishment as men for the same offences.

5 – The Labour Code contains a more detailed definition of discrimination in employment relations, whereas during the years 2003-2007, there was no legislative initiative recorded to review the respective definition in the Labour Code regarding gender balance. Article 9, paragraph 1 of the Labour Code prohibits all forms of discrimination in work and professional life, while paragraph 2 of this article defines discrimination in employment

³ Law nr.8137/31.7.1996

⁴ CEDAW. Law Nr. 7767/9.11.1993

⁵ CEDAW Additional Protocol (Law. nr.9052/17.4.2003)

⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2007/nov/albania_accession_partnership_en.pdf

relations, pursuant to which, “Discrimination is the distinction, exclusion, or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, age, faith, political opinion, ethnic belonging, or social origin, physical or mental impairment that infringe the right of the individual to be equal in employment and training”⁷.

6 – The Family Code (approved on 08.05.2003, Law No. 9062, enacted at the beginning of 2004) is one of the most important laws concerning family rights, in order to eliminate the discrimination of women in issues that deal with marriage and family relations. The Family Code envisions equal rights regarding the age of marriage being 18 for both men and women, as well as reciprocal rights and duties in the family and for the education and upbringing of children. The Code states that the equal rights of the spouses to customary or common administration of mutual properties and the right to resolve property status without limitations based on gender. Article 74 of the Family Code states that: The marital estate consists of:

- a) the wealth obtained by the spouses, together or separately, during the marriage;
- b) income from specific activities of each spouse during the marriage, which were not consumed, before the termination of joint ownership⁸;
- c) profits from the properties of each spouse, which have been acquired and not consumed before the termination of joint ownership;
- d) trade activity created during matrimony.

As regards to the rights and obligation that parents have to children the Family Code treats both spouses equally.

7 – The Law on Gender Equality in Albania (approved on 01.07.2004) completes the legal framework with regard to equal rights between women and men. The law consists in placing both sexes in equal conditions in the area of employment, education, decision making, non-discrimination, and sexual harassment. The Law envisions legal punishment in the case of such violations. The Law on Gender Equality brought for the first time the concept of specific temporary measures into Albanian Legislation.

8 – The Law on Measures Against Domestic Violence (2007), No. 9669, approved in June 2007, represents one of the most successful initiatives for bringing Albanian legislation inline with international standards, in the area of legislation against domestic violence. The Law is an essential part of Albanian anti-discrimination legislation, drafted in the process of implementing different compulsory international acts, such as CEDAW, or other acts approved by the European Union. The Law was presented to Parliament following a petition signed by 20,000 Albanian citizens.

9 – The Law on Gender Equality in the Society, no. 9970, was approved by the Albanian Assembly on 25.07.2008. The Law completes in a visible manner the legal framework on gender equality in Albania and, for the first time, includes the application of a minimal representation quota for each of the sexes (30 percent) in the multi-name lists of candidates for members of parliament in general elections.

The purpose of the Law, as expressed in article 2, is to: a) ensure effective protection against discrimination due to gender and any form of behaviour that encourages gender-based

⁷ See ILO Convention provisions, No. 111

⁸ Law No.9062,dt.08.05.2003, Article 74

discrimination; b) determine measures for guaranteeing equal opportunities, between women and men, to eliminate gender-based discrimination, in any form it may appear; c) determine the responsibilities of state authorities, national and local, to draft and implement normative acts as well as policies that support the development and encouragement of gender equality in society. The novelties of this law deal with the introduction of new definitions: gender-based discrimination; gender mainstreaming; equal gender representation of 30 percent; the definition and allowance as non-discriminatory of special temporary measures; the creation of new policy-making, executing, and protective structures such as the National Gender Equality Council; gender employees at ministries and local employees on gender issues; the inclusion of special temporary measures on political and public decision making (expressed through the 30 percent quota). Concerning education and employment; the introduction of the concept and recognition of unpaid work, which is presently becoming increasingly one of the main themes regarding gender equality in many countries of the world; as well as the obligation to determine gender statistics and gender indicators in all areas.

With regard to the inclusion in the multi-name lists of candidates for members of parliament, it is noted: no less than 30 percent of each of the sexes shall be included in the list of candidates presented by the political parties in the proportional system for the elections to the Assembly of the Republic of Albania.

Furthermore, the Law determines the sanction for parties that fail to respect this legal obligation: political parties pay a fine of up to one tenth of the state fund for their campaign financing, if they violate the provisions of this law, until the violation is corrected. This sanction is one of the items debated in discussions about the Electoral Code, considering also that it is one of the things that will change after discussions in the Special Commission for the approval of the Code.

10- The Electoral Code approved on November 29, 2008, Nr 10019. The new electoral code finally sanctioned the application of gender representation quotas in the multi-name lists of political parties for the general elections. Furthermore, the Code attempts to establish a listing of the sexes as follows in article 65: *For every electoral zone, at least thirty percent of the multi-name list and/or one of the three first names in the multi-name list should belong to one of the sexes.* It should be emphasized that the inclusion of the words “and/or” gives the parties the opportunity to not observe the listing of one of the first three names, but only observe the 30% minimum in the entire multi-name list. Unlike the Law on Gender Equality, no. 9970, the Electoral Code includes a strengthening of the sanction for failure to observe article 65, item 5. Article 175 of the Electoral Code notes: *Failure to meet one of the conditions envisioned in article 67, with regard to the makeup of the multi-name list for elections to the Assembly, as a result leads to the CEC’s rejection of the list.*

2.3. NATIONAL MACHINERY

The institutional gender equality mechanism in Albania dates from 1991 when the Women’s Sector in the Committee of Labour and Wages, established in 1991, was transferred in 1994 to the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the time (Fico, 2007). Immediately after the Beijing Conference, the mechanism was replaced by the Secretariat for Women and Youth in the Ministry of Culture, and in 1997 it was again made part of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection as the Directory for “Women and the Family.”

Based on the first and second report of Albania, prepared and submitted by Albania in session no. 28 (2003) of the CEDAW, the national mechanism for the protection and

encouragement of women's rights, underwent a series of changes since its creation in 1992. In July 1998, the Council of Ministers expanded the competencies of the Department of Women and the Family at the level of the Council of Ministers. In this context, the Chairperson of the Committee reports directly to the Deputy PM and the budget of the Committee is part of the Council of Minister's budget. In March 2001, the Committee Women and the Family, upon decision of the Council of Ministers, became the Committee for Equal Opportunities.⁹ In 2003, the Committee was again subordinated to the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, and Equal Opportunities (Fico, 2007).

In 2004, upon approval of the Law "On an Equal Gender Society," the hierarchy of the Committee rose again, together with the obligation to report directly to the Deputy Prime Minister. In the spring of 2005, the Committee for Gender Equality was dismissed and most of its responsibilities were transferred to the General Directory of Equal Opportunities at the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, and Equal Opportunities.

Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MOLSAEO) is the responsible authority at central level for ensuring gender equality in Albania, women's empowerment and advancement. MOLSAEO is responsible for enforcing and monitoring the implementation of Gender Equality Law in labour and employment relations.

The Ministry supervises and monitors the work of its subordinate institutions in charge of labour relations, which have regional offices as well with the following main functions:

- National Employment Service observes the implementation of measures concerning equal opportunities policy in employment and vocational training process and alternatives.
- The Labour Inspectorate is responsible for monitoring employment contractual conditions, gender parity, social and health and safety norms applied to employees in the public and private sector. The Inspectorate has developed some basic monitoring standards concerning corporate social responsibility.
- The Inter-Ministerial Committee is responsible for monitoring the implementation of NSGE-DV.

MOLSAEO in particular is aware of the need to strengthen governmental mechanisms for gender mainstreaming. Since 2006, MOLSAEO has carried out the work on gender through the Department for Equal Opportunities and Policies (DEOP). DEOP's mandate is to design and develop policies for promoting gender equality and addressing problems of ethnic, ethno-cultural and linguistic minorities, as well as fighting racial discrimination. DEO works to encourage and promote gender equality in all walks of life and to increase the overall participation of women in economic, political and cultural life of the country.

Since 2006, at the central and local levels, progress has been made with the appointment of a gender focal point (GFP) in 14 line ministries, who contributes to mainstreaming gender into sectoral development policies. It is important to mention that the GFP has this duty in addition to another full time position that they hold. In almost all ministries gender is not written in their job description. It is expected that with the enforcement of the Law on Gender Equality line ministries will appoint full time GFPs in the near future.

⁹ Council of Ministers Decision, No. 415, dated 01.07.1998.

In the Parliament, a Sub-Committee for Juvenile and Equal Opportunities was established within the parliamentary Commission of Labour, Social Issues and Health. The Sub-Committee cooperates with MOLSAEO on issues of gender equality and child rights.

Based on the GEL, GFPs must be appointed at the regional and local levels as well. Their task will be to support the development of policies by ensuring gender mainstreaming at the local level. The network of GFPs is supposed to support the DEO in integrating a gender perspective into governmental policies at the national and local level. Presently only 5 out of 65 GFPs at the local level have been appointed.

The implementation of labour relations at the local level is closely monitored and supervised by regional offices of the National Employment Service, State Labour Inspectorate and State Social Service.

3. CURRENT SITUATION OF WOMEN BY SECTOR

3.1. EDUCATION

Government Policy

There are different laws that deal with the right to education. These laws include Law No. 9741 On Higher Education in the Republic of Albania dated 21.05.2007 (amended), Law No. 7925 On Secondary Education in Albania, dated 21.06.1995 (amended), Law No. 8872 On vocational education and training in the Republic of Albania, dated 29.03.2002 etc. Articles 24-25 of the Law on Gender Equality are focused at issues that deal with equal treatment and protection against gender discrimination in the media and education. The Law prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender on individuals working in educational institutions of all levels; both private and public through the expressive prohibition of cases leading to discrimination. According to the Law, the following is considered as discrimination; the introduction of restraining norms based on gender difference and when proper educational facilities are not established in both public and private institutions which supply teaching or other training and instruction services; ensuring different opportunities which are objectively unjustified to men and women regarding their choice of a specific area of study, trainings and graduation and the length of study. The GoA has also approved the National Education Strategy 2004-2015 which aims to improve the quality of teaching, the development of vocational and secondary education as well as the integration of gender concepts in the curricular. In June 2009, the GoA approved the National Strategy of Science, Technology and Innovation 2009–2015, with the main goal of doubling the number of researchers in Albania within the strategy's implementation timeframe for both genders, while the obtaining of scientific degrees by women is considered a priority.

Education levels are an important indicator that illustrates the status of women and girls in Albanian society. The INSTAT report "Women and men in Albania 2006" as well as the survey data (LSMS 2002-2005-2008) show that in all grades of education girls are more successful than boys. According to statistics from the Department of Education at the end of every school year there are more girls students than boys, despite the fact that at the beginning of the year there are more boys registered. This phenomenon is explained by the fact that families oblige boys to work and generate income for the family rather than going to school.

Girls constituted 72 percent of all university graduates over the last four years. In 2004 this percentage was higher in particular faculties. 78 percent of students studying education were girls, 71 percent were girls in health studies, while 68 percent of students of the human sciences and the arts were girls.

In rural areas of the country the participation of girls in school is low. Often girls in rural areas after completing elementary education, drop out of school and do various kinds of housework.

According to administrative data, women teachers at the basic year 9 education level represent 67 percent of the entire teaching staff, which decreases to 58 percent in secondary education. In university education women with professor grade education make up only 13 percent of university staff, while 56 percent of lecturers are women.

Literacy

There are more illiterate females than males aged over 34 years. For the age group from 6 to 34 there are more illiterate males than females. While for the age group 6-10 the illiteracy rate is high for both males and females. Taking into account the population decline over 14 years of age, it emerged that the illiteracy rate for men over 14 is 0.81%, while the rate of women over 14 is 1.75%. Data on the young population in the 15-25 years old range, showed a insignificant difference between the illiteracy rates of males at (0.57%) and the illiteracy rates of females (0.51%). (UNDP, 2005:28).

Vocational Education

In vocational programmes males constitute 66% of registered students. (INSTAT, 2006: 9). One of the main characteristics of general education is the fact that, in terms of the profiled upper secondary education, women lean towards higher participation in social profiles. Approximately 62 percent of pupils who attend the social profiles are female, and about 55 percent of pupils in natural profiles are female. (UNDP, 2005:23).

In the academic year 2005-2006, there were 138.788 student enrolled, 57.210 of whom were female students enrolled in public high schools, while 9,739 were enrolled in professional high schools. There has been a drastic decline in the enrollment rate in upper-secondary technical-vocational education, for both sexes (UNESCO, 2005), but there is a pronounced participation of males over females. (UNDP, 2005:23). In vocational programme males constitute 66 percent of registered students. (INSTAT, 2006: 9).

3.2. HEALTH

Government Policy

Albanian legislation provides special support and health services to women. Important legislative and policy progress related to women's health and gender equality has been made in Albania including the Pregnancy Interruption Law, Reproductive Health Law, HIV/AIDS Law; Anti Smoking Law, Health Care Law, Universal Salt Iodization Law, National Law against Domestic Violence, the National Strategy and Action Plan against Gender-based Violence and the Strategy Promoting Gender Equality and Public Health Law that have affected and influenced reproductive and the overall health of women in Albania.

Albania is among the countries that have signed the International Conference on Population and Development and it is also one of the countries that aims to meet the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. In addition, Albania has ratified the most important Conventions, which have a direct or indirect relation to maternal health.

Currently, the health system is undergoing reform, focusing on the improved quality of care and addressing the fragmentation of health financing, and shifting the burden from hospitals to primary healthcare. The ten year Strategy for the reform of the health system 2000-2010, gives priority to health improvement of the mother and child.

In the context of this reform and recognizing the complex interrelationships between population, gender, environment, population demographics, reproductive health, and HIV/AIDS, the GoA has developed a new Reproductive Health Policy Document. This policy document stipulates specific interventions for quality services for maternal health care such as:

- Improving and strengthening the legal framework for protection of maternal health;
- Improvement and integration of maternal healthcare in the three levels of health care;
- Development of protocols for safe motherhood care;
- Strengthening of human resources capacities through lifelong learning to provide qualitative maternal health care;
- Equipment;

Engagement of general practitioners in the service provision for mother, child and family planning;

- Awareness and advocacy;

HEALTH STATUS OF WOMEN

With improved socio-economic development, the health status of women in Albania has significantly improved. Life expectancy is higher than men by almost by five years, 79.8 years to 72.9 years respectively. Access to healthcare is equal for both men and women. In fact, in some cases, legislation is tailored to women due to the specifics of women's health, including diseases of the reproductive organs, examinations, mammography and the Pap Test, that helps in the diagnosis of diseases to which women are prone. Healthcare services for women are offered free of charge at all three levels of healthcare and are integrated into health services.

In this context, the nutritional status of Albanian women during pregnancy has gradually improved. However there still remain serious problems, particularly in rural areas. Anemia caused by iron deficiency among women and adolescents girls and low birth weight are major concerns. Nineteen percent of women in Albania are anemic and it is more common in rural areas than urban areas, 23 and 15 percent, respectively. Although iron and folic acid is prescribed by the ANC provider and reimbursed by healthcare insurance only one-third (34 percent) of pregnant women receive iron supplements, with coverage varying by background characteristics (ADHS 2008-09). The percentage of women who receive iron during pregnancy increases with levels of education and wealth status. For example, the percentage of women taking iron supplements ranges from 21 percent among women with no education or with only primary (4 years) education to 56 percent among women with university or higher education. Likewise, women in the lowest wealth quintile are the least likely to receive iron during pregnancy (21 percent), while women in the highest wealth quintile are the most likely to receive iron (55 percent).

There has been a steady decline in fertility rates during the 1990s and into the present decade, from 3.3 children per woman in 1993-1995 to the current level of 1.6 children per woman in 2006-2008. Childbearing begins relatively late in Albania; three-fourths of women age 20-24 years have never given birth. High levels of abortion is one of the main factors that have affected the decline in fertility and this in turns causes higher maternal and newborn morbidity.

Women as the main caregivers in the family are the main family representative interfacing with the medical community especially for childcare. However, they do not receive the same level of care themselves. Women's healthcare is often restricted to their reproductive health, while the general health of women is neglected. ADHS 2008-09 revealed that 44 percent of women visited public hospitals compared to 54 percent of men.

Maternal Mortality

Despite the fact that maternal mortality has declined from 37.75 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 21 deaths per 100,000 live births, it remains one of the highest in Europe.

Based on data from maternal death cases reported by the Ministry of Health, over 50 percent of deaths occur during the period from the start of labour until the end of the first week postpartum. The study of the direct causes of maternal deaths in recent years in Albania reveals that the main causes of maternal deaths are:

- Hemorrhage during and after birth, 40 percent of the cases;
- Eclampsia 25 percent;
- Difficult births 10 percent;
- Existing pathologies and overlapping pregnancy 10 percent;
- Other indirect causes 15 percent.

Low access to and control of financial income, low uptake of services and infrastructure, lack of basic emergency care and trained providers in rural areas, together lie at the root of these causes that implicate mortality.

Family Planning

Albania has achieved a considerable increase in contraceptive use over the last 20 years, after the collapse of communist regime and the end of a pronatalist policy. Nonetheless, the country follows the model of Central/Eastern European countries that feature a high prevalence of contraceptive use, but a low level of the use of modern methods. Traditional methods make up 59% and modern methods only 11 % among married women. Albanian couples try to meet family planning needs with withdrawal, periodic abstinence, and a heavy reliance on abortion.

The major factors contributed to the increase in contraceptive use are:

- Strong political commitment to family planning programmes;

- Liberalized provision of family planning services based on three criteria: the presence of trained health providers, the availability of multiple modern methods of contraception, and the availability of IEC materials for clients;
- Family planning is actively promoted through social marketing and behavioural change/social mobilization efforts;
- Strong international support.

Family Planning was legalized under Government Order no. 226, in May 1992. Today contraceptives are available from three sources: at no cost from the government; at subsidized prices from social marketing programmes; and at market prices from the commercial for-profit sector. Family planning counselling, services, and contraceptives are part of the Basic Health Benefit Package. At the primary healthcare level contraceptives are provided to all women, regardless of their ability to pay in over 431 public health facilities—hospitals, polyclinics and health centres, and some health posts (ambulances)—and tubal ligations and intrauterine device insertions in facilities with trained obstetricians/gynecologists. The Ministry of Health covers 80 percent of contraceptive procurement costs for the public sector. As of 2010; Albania will be completely self-reliant and independent of outside donor support for the provision of contraceptives.

Contraceptive use among married women

| Age group | Current use of contraception by age (married women 15-44 years) RH Survey 2002 | | | Current use of contraception by age (married women 15-49 years) DHS 2008-09 | | |
|-----------|--|-------------------|------------------------|---|-------------------|------------------------|
| | Any method | Any modern method | Any traditional method | Any method | Any modern method | Any traditional method |
| 15-19 | 48.9 | 2.5 | 46.4 | 54.7 | 12.9 | 41.8 |
| 20-24 | 62.4 | 3.7 | 58.7 | 52.8 | 8.4 | 44.5 |
| 25-29 | 67.4 | 5.3 | 62.1 | 62.2 | 14.3 | 47.9 |
| 30-34 | 78.7 | 9.4 | 69.3 | 72.9 | 13.4 | 59.5 |
| 35-39 | 81.9 | 9.3 | 72.6 | 75.4 | 10.5 | 64.9 |
| 40-44 | 82.7 | 10.9 | 71.8 | 76.1 | 10.0 | 66.1 |
| 45-49 | | | | 64.3 | 7.7 | 56.6 |
| 15-44 | 75.1 | 8.0 | 67.1 | 70.6 | 11.4 | 59.2 |
| 15-49 | | | | 69.3 | 10.6 | 58.7 |

The level of contraceptive use differs between married women in urban and rural areas. Seventy four percent of urban married women use a method of contraception compared with 66 percent of rural married women. Urban women are slightly more likely than rural women to use modern methods, while urban women are more likely than rural women to use traditional methods. Contraceptive use increases with the level of education. With the exclusion of a relatively small group of women with no education or only primary (4 years) education, contraceptive use rises with the level of education, from 66 percent of women with primary (8 years) education to 74 and 73 percent, respectively, in the secondary, technical, professional and the university or higher education groups.

Provider bias, misinformation, limited access in rural areas and cultural norms are among the greatest challenges faced by women in the use of modern contraceptive methods in

Albania. These factors contribute to abortion rates that are higher than those found in many other developing countries, and negatively impact women's health.

HIV/AIDS

Albania is estimated as a low HIV/AIDS prevalence country with a declared cases rate of less than 0.1%. However, there is an upward trend in the number of new case diagnosed, and estimates indicate higher numbers of undiagnosed cases. As of December 2009, a total of 359 HIV/AIDS cases were reported. From the year 2000 onwards there has been an increase in the number of cases with approximately 50 new diagnosed cases each year. The majority of infected persons are in the age group 20-39 years old, with most being males. Vertical mother to child transmission has been reported in 4% of cases. Women represent almost 30 % of the HIV/AIDS cases in Albania (109 cases). The largest number of cases belongs to the 25-35 years old age group and over 35, with 32% and 53% respectively. The age group 15-25 years old represents 8% of the cases. Since 1993, 129 AIDS cases have been reported where 67 of them have died.

Albania is vulnerable to HIV/AIDS due to the prevalence of high risk-behaviors like intravenous drug use, unprotected sex, high migration and trafficking and poverty gaps. Gender inequalities also place women and young girls at risk with limited access to information and healthcare.

The Albania Demographic and Health Survey 2008-09 shows that awareness among women and men in the 15-49 age group about the ways of preventing HIV/AIDS infection is relatively good.

About three-fourths of all women recognized the following methods to reduce the risk of HIV/AIDS infection; the use of condoms (74 percent), limiting sexual intercourse to one partner who is HIV negative and has no other partners (78 percent), and abstaining from sex (72 percent). About seven in ten women (67 percent) mentioned both using condoms and limiting sex to one HIV-negative partner who has no other partners as ways to prevent the transmission of HIV/AIDS.

There is a clear, positive relationship between respondent's level of education and knowledge of ways to prevent transmission of HIV/AIDS. For example, 92 percent of women with university or higher education say that the risk of getting the AIDS virus can be reduced by using condoms and limiting sexual intercourse to one HIV-negative partner, compared with only 35 percent of women with no education or only primary (4 years) education.

Men are more likely than women to know of ways to avoid HIV/AIDS infection. The most frequently cited way to prevent transmission of HIV was the use of condoms (83 percent). The two other methods of HIV/AIDS prevention—limiting sex to one partner who is HIV negative and has no other partners, and abstaining from sexual intercourse—were mentioned by 81 and 76 percent of men, respectively.

3.3. AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES

Government Policy

The objectives of the National Strategy on Agriculture and Food 2007 and 2013 are focused on the development of the agro-industry and the management of agriculture land as an

important approach to increase the living standard of farmers. There is no specific target for women in rural areas, despite their status as a main component of labour market supply in the private agriculture sector.

One of the objectives of the National Strategy of Gender Equality and Domestic Violence aims to achieve gender equality through mainstreaming a gender perspective within Albanian society without giving a particular approach to tackle the problematical “female role” in rural areas.

Women in Agriculture

The situation of the labor market in the rural areas contrasts significantly from the one in the urban areas as a result of the domination of agricultural activities in the rural areas.

Indicators based on data from the LSMS (2002-03-04-05) demonstrate a large participation of both women and men in the labor force. These indicators reflect various models of labor force employment in agriculture which are fundamentally different from the rest of the economy. In the case of women, participation in the labor force and employment rate in the agriculture sector are approx. 10% higher compare to the whole economy¹⁰.

Furthermore, rural women have to deal with all household chores and farm duties, especially when male members of the household emigrate in search of jobs. This shifts the burden and responsibility to women, who have to work harder and longer at home. Women lack the spare time and power to compete with men in the hierarchy, since they are too involved in unpaid and unregistered work at home.

The Data Administrative showed that rural populations represent 51% of the total population¹¹. In the agriculture sector the labour force is predominantly female, while the non-agriculture labour force in urban area is predominantly male. In the latter, male employment is double that of women. In the agriculture sector female employment is higher due to two main reasons. Firstly, there is a large emigration of men, which has consequently reduced the male workforce in rural areas. Secondly, the labour force in the agriculture sector reflects the composition of the population of working age (15 years old and over) as a whole, where women slightly prevail over men. The employment composition is also evidence that in rural areas the entire family is employed in the agriculture sector. Agriculture working conditions are difficult while salaries or revenues are modest. Furthermore, women are paid even less compared to men in both sectors. Particularly in agriculture net payment for women is 50% less than men, while in the non-agriculture sectors, despite similar working hours female salaries amount to 75% of male salaries.

Participation into the rural labor market is similar for women that live in families with children under 14 year old and those that live in families without children. This is also the same for all the different age categories including the age category from 25-49 year old when raising the children and other family related responsibilities are higher. Labor force models reflect the state that typical labor force activity is performed at family farms since family/housekeeping responsibilities can be better coordinated with farming. This leads to

¹⁰ Labour Market Assessment, World Bank 2006

¹¹ Publication “Male and Female 2006”, INSTAT 2008

high rates of part-time employment; 44% of the employed women in the rural market labor work with partial time compare to just 15% in the urban sector¹².

The incomes and number of hours working in the agriculture sector are very low. Production is subsistence based, engaged in several different and extensive agricultural activities. According to LSMS data in 2005 most farmers sell their products in a market outside their community but still within a district market (82 percent) and mostly direct to the final consumer. Consequently, the lacks of alternatives for good employment make men less prevalent in this sector due to the low income. In contrast, the picture in urban area confirms that men are engaged in the majority of income generation activities, while women are forced to stay home.

While fomenting migration out of rural areas has been seen as a potential solution to the problem of rural poverty in Albania, migration is also increasingly contributing to social dislocation and the rapid deterioration of the provision of social services in urban areas. The phenomenon has further worsened the condition of women in rural areas as their families are afflicted simultaneously from both the internal migration phenomenon as well as emigration abroad. The departure of husbands and male children has increased the burden on unpaid work in the agricultural sector to mothers and female children, increasing their responsibility to deal with family issues and decreasing their financial dependence. It is also important to note that the burden of unpaid work in the rural areas remains an unexplored area in Albania regarding the intricacy it represents.

3.4. ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Government Policy

The Strategy on Employment is the main document when it comes to labour and policies. The strategy aims to establish the basis for the improvement of employment services, the vocational training system, and the implementation of active and passive employment programmes. The Strategy also supports the Government programme of 2007-2013 in which are defined the main objectives for accomplishing full employment and the reduction of unemployment. The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MoLSAEO) published its Strategy on Employment in 2007. More concretely¹³ in the strategy is foreseen the improvement of employment services and the vocational training system which is intended to be accomplished through: (i) establishing a modern and unique system of employment services countrywide; (ii) establishing and developing partnership relations with other actors in the labour market; (iii) developing information technology in the employment services as a key factor for the improvement of the service quality; (iv) improving contacts with enterprises; (v) developing human resources; (vi) improving the cooperation with private employment services; (vii) establishing a unique and qualitative system of the Education and Vocational Training (VET), capable to contribute to the continuous development of professional capacities and active citizenship of youngsters and adults; (viii) offering professional qualifications in compliance with the requirements of the economic and social development of the country, in the framework of regional and European integration.

A part of the strategy elaborates the creation of a positive environment for business and investments. Specifically, an increase in SMEs competitiveness in the regional and global

¹² Labour Market Assessment, World Bank 2006

¹³ National Employment strategy, 2007-2013, MoLSAE pg 3

market through the development of technology and information, the reduction of administrative barriers and the creation of business facilitations.

When it comes to the law the fundamental law in the employment field is Law no. 7995, dated 30.09.2005 "On the encouragement of employment". This law supports both the implementation of programmes for the development of employment and the establishment of the National Employment Service and the National Employment Fund. The last changes of the law approved in July 2006, have improved some issues related to (i) the improvement of its definitions and the inclusion of new definitions related to different programmes and categories of persons benefiting from this law; (ii) the introduction of counselling and professional orientation concept as part of the employment services; (iii) the creation of new programmes such as the one on professional practices for young people; (iv) the change of management procedures for vocational training funds, which is a consequence of the entry into force of the Law No. 8872 dated 19.03.2002 "On vocational education and training in the Republic of Albania" and the approval of the statute template of public vocational training centres.

Women's Employment

The collapse of the old system in Albania at the end of the 1980s was accompanied by a drastic fall of GDP (10 % in 1990, 29.9 % in 1991, 10% in 1992) a great number of state owned enterprises discontinued and closed. At the same time, the changes during 1991 in agriculture's ownership increased the rate of unemployment due to the move from cities and towns by the labour force that worked in agriculture.

In 2001 the number of jobs in the public sector decreased dramatically from 850,000 in 1991 to just 189,000¹⁴. The shrink of the public sector came as a result of the transition to the market oriented economy in which the country underwent so-called shock therapy. Production facilities closed down overnight and low and medium scale privatization was launched. However, job creation from the newly born private sector could not match the drop in the labour force in the public sector. In spite of upward growth in the private sector in the years that have followed there still remains a disparity between those that were previously employed in the public sector and those that have been able to find gainful employment in the market economy

If we consider the development of employment by gender in Albania, despite the fact that historically the participation rate for men in the labour force has been higher compare to the women, it seems that the transition period has particularly worsened the employment conditions of the female labour force. This is related to the current developments in the labour market which confirm the reduction of the female employment due to the following reasons: (i) the closure of extensive state enterprise that existed prior to 1990 that employed a large number of women (ii) the development of economic activities inclined towards the engagement of the male labour force such as trade and construction (iii) the displacement from rural to urban areas and the difficulty of women originating in the rural areas to access the labour market mainly due to their low level of education, the adoption of new technologies, etc.

Women are also more vulnerable to shocks in the economy than men. For instance, in 1998, as a result of the pyramid scheme collapse and the following turmoils, the unemployment rate for men increased by 30 percent while women's by 50 percent. However, even within

¹⁴ Census 2001, INSTAT 2001

the same gender, female labour market patterns are very different in urban and rural areas. It's also important to mention that many women have a difficulty finding jobs because, in addition to high unemployment rates there is a prevalence of long-term unemployment which suggests higher levels of discouragement.

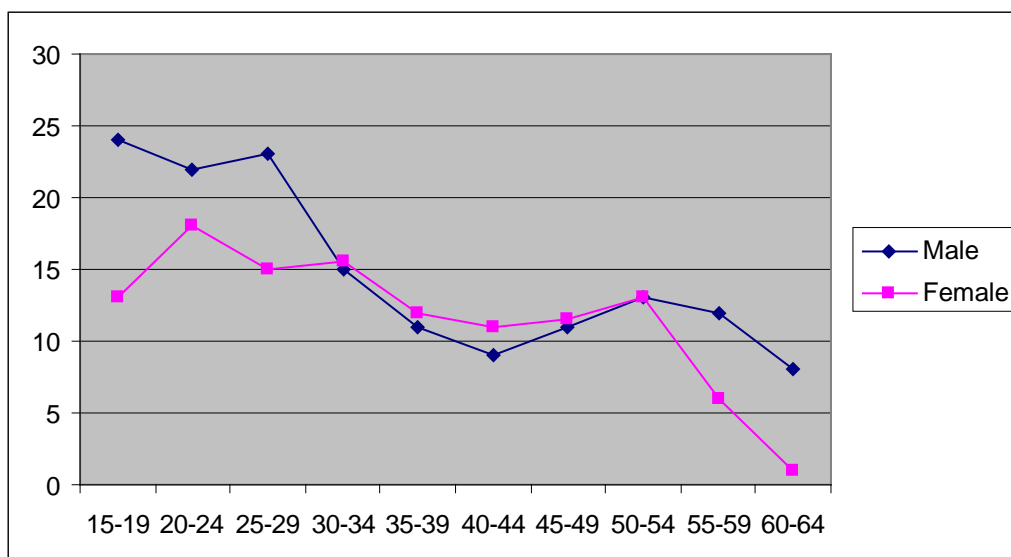
The majority of women declare agriculture as their main source of income, which proves even more the high rate of employment in the sector. Self-employed women in the non-agriculture sector work mainly (according LFS 2008/ 44%) in the retail trade. This being small business, close to the home or run from within a part of the home. Two other activities which apply to self-employed women are hotels/restaurants and fabric manufacture. This last activity is mostly characterized by the production of handcraft products made by women at home and in some specific areas of the country, where traditional products are traded at market. If we assume that self-employment is equal to a business or to a potential business, this means that for self-employed women these three activities seem to offer more possibilities in the Albanian business environment. This is true also for women working as private individuals, which confirms their managerial skills. However, in relative numbers, women are higher in number than men only in the public sector despite that in absolute figures they are a little more than half of men.

The retail trade is the sub-sector of the non-agriculture sector where the majority of women are employed followed by the education, health and social sectors. Especially in the last two cases, female employees are more than male in absolute figure. Unfortunately, despite the importance of these sectors, wages in both sectors are low compared to the average salary. The government has pledged to increase the salaries in these sectors, mainly for teachers and nurses in order to improve the quality of public services. Other economic activities where women hold more jobs than men are the manufacture of textile, apparels and leather. These sectors also offer difficult working conditions, high workload and lower than average salaries. Furthermore, most of those employed are working without the provision of insurance by the employer. According to the Labour Force Assessment by World Bank 2006 most of the business of these sub-sectors are not paying social insurance fuelling the informal work.

Women's Unemployment

According to LFS 2007-2008, a higher unemployment rate is noted among females compared to males. The unemployment rate at the national level from 2007 to 2008 increased from 12.5% to 13.5%. Young people looking for their first job are particularly hard-hit by unemployment. Young people between 15-25 years old constitute 25% of the total number of unemployed jobseekers. By increasing the age we noticed an increase in female unemployment compared to males as a result of difficulties that women found in the labour market during the fertile age and the lack of social service ensured by the state. Furthermore, those women who migrate from rural areas have insufficient skills for the limited number of formal jobs available, usually in the public and banking sectors.

Graph1: Unemployment rate by sex and age-group 2007



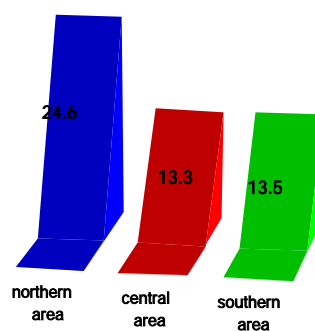
Source: INSTAT 2008 (LFS 2007)

Other sources of data from the National Institute of Statistics/LSMS 2005 show that the difference in the unemployment rate between men and women is higher in urban areas than in rural areas. This may be explained by the lower level of involvement of women in informal economic activities in urban areas, and by the higher involvement of women in subsistence agriculture as family members in rural areas.

Amongst those registered as unemployed, analysis by gender shows that women constitute 48.4 percent. In real terms, this data does not represent the actual unemployment rate of women by the fact that women are less inclined to register in the labour offices. The extent of informal employment (in agriculture or in other sectors) suggests a high level of precariousness, limited access to social rights such as pensions and low wages.

The regional dimension of unemployment is another characteristic of the country. The northern part of Albania has a higher level of unemployment due to the very limited development of the private sector and the lack of land (the terrain is predominantly mountainous), which limits agricultural activities. Kukes and Puka region remain the poorest in the country.

Graph2: Unemployment as per demographic division for 2006



Source: MOLSAEO

Increasing the competitiveness of SMEs is crucial to the Albanian economy. SMEs make up the vast majority of private businesses operating in Albania. Due to their size and adaptability they are likely to be one of the main sources of employment generation in the future. There are, however, important gender differences in the management and/or ownership of these businesses. The method of data recording does not make it possible to determine whether women are in charge of a business or own it. One of the major and possible interventions to combat unemployment would be to start a programming/designing a qualification and re-training courses for such people. An important goal for current social policies would be to promote employment through organizing or running vocational development courses in accordance with the needs of the labour market, upgrading employment services and adopting measures to formalize the labour market. (UNDP, 2005: 32)

Regarding unemployment benefit eligibility there has been a tightened in the scheme over the last few years to a maximum of one year. The percentage of recipients of unemployment benefits has decreased dramatically. This also means that once the period of unemployment benefit has expired, registering as unemployed ceases to matter unless there are other incentives for registration such as social assistance, access to health and social insurance covered by the government, active labour market policies, etc. As a result, a large number of long-term unemployed may have not been counted as part of the registered unemployed.

3.5 DESCRIPTION OF THE FAMILY FROM GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Albania has a tendency to obscure true demographics, and has done so as early as 1918. In 1918, when the country (with the exception of parts of the south) was occupied by the Austro-Hungarian army, the “first population Census” in Albania (so termed by Gruber and Pichler (2002) showed that although patriarchal structures existed, they were not as uniform as later descriptions made them out to be. Indeed, neither are these patriarchal structures so dominant in the lives of Albanian men and women today. The “clear male majority of the population,” as was suggested by censuses elsewhere in the Balkans, was not the case for Albania. Gruber and Pichler thus conclude that “(a) apparently, female under-registration did not take place systematically or on a large scale” (in the first census) (Gruber and Pichler 2002:354). The patrilocal and patrilineal patterns of household and family organization that were observed in the north according to the 1918 “first population Census” were widespread in the northern most isolated areas. By contrast, in other areas of Albania, nuclear and extended family households, constitute a larger proportion of total households than the joint-family, patrilineal household. Furthermore, the overall average age at marriage according to the 1918 Census was eighteen years for women and twenty-eight years for men (with rural-urban variations).

Thus the average age difference between spouses was ten years, suggesting a cultural pattern of male dominance. Gruber and Pichler (2002:360) argue that the differences between urban and rural marriage patterns were the result of differences in economic, social, and political organization. Using data from the 1918 Census, they conclude that it was not “... a diversified system of production, division of labour, and strongly differing social and legal conditions in urban and rural zones” that led to different patterns in household formation, but the diminishing “obligation for reproduction for cultural and economic reasons” (such as religious belief or economic dependency) (Gruber and Pichler 2002: 361) leading to a trend of decreasing complexity in households. As mentioned above, the communist period saw the modernization of Albanian society along with the attempted improvement in the status of women. Post Second World War legislation formally recognised equality between men and women. Under this legislation women won their right to vote, to speak freely, to join the labour force, to earn equal pay, etc. Paraphrasing Fullani, it is difficult to say and complicated to judge in which way the communist state really affected women. New legal rights improved their situation on paper but it is not known whether women really could exercise their newfound freedoms. It is possible that these new rights were hampered by women’s obligations in both the public and private spheres. Women may have worked night shifts along with men, enjoyed equal access to education, and had more routes to increased their social status, but in general their situation at home did not change (Fullani 2000). Communist policies helped women in terms of their economic potential and political representation, but it did not create parity in gender relations. Academic literature reveals this phenomenon in various other former communist states (Gal and Kligman 2000), and also in the memories of various women who experienced communism at different stages in life (Pritchett Post 1998).

With the fall of communism, Albanian society needed to find a new way of functioning both politically and economically. As in other countries, various agents in society began competing for legitimate authority upon the collapse of the communist regime. Two main venues of competition can be identified in Albania: the discussions reinforcing the patriarchal functioning of society and those promoting a modern understanding of the new Albanian state. “The Albanian history of ‘post-communist transition’ was marked by the withdrawal of the totalitarian state presence in the farthest corners of the country, and by

repeated processes of complete state disintegration” (Schwandner-Sievers 2001:108). Social gender perspectives in Albania (March 2004) agents searched for models that had worked in the past in Albania or that were successful abroad. Albania, weakened by the fall of the communist state, became a place where the authoritarian and patriarchal structure of traditional households had some appeal.

4. GENDER PROJECTS ONGOING

Since gender is been consider as a cross cutting issue, most of the donors in Albania do not see a separate programme of activities but rather integrate gender in their programme, while there are some donors that place a specific focus on gender equality.

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| United Nations |
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Albania is one of seven countries that are piloting Delivering as One UN. Part of this initiative is the One UN Joint Programme on Gender with participating agencies: UNIFEM, UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF. UNIFEM has a leading and coordinating role in this programme.

Title of the programme is: Support Implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality and Domestic Violence (NSGE-DV) – Advancing Democratic Governance in Albania.

Duration: 2.5 years (July 2008 – December 2010)

Short description:

Through the support of the UN, INSTAT conducted the first national population-based survey on Domestic Violence in Albania (March 2009). The survey found that domestic violence against women and children is a widespread problem in families and communities throughout Albania. For example, of the 2,590 women surveyed, 50.6 percent of surveyed women self-reported experiencing emotional abuse in their marriage or intimate, 39.1 percent experienced psychological abuse, 31.2 percent experienced physical violence, and 12.7 percent experienced sexual violence. Depending upon the type of domestic violence experienced by women there were some significant differences based upon women’s level of education, work status, age group, and marital status. There were also significant differences based between urban and rural areas and across districts. Among the 991 children surveyed, 57.7 percent reported being physically battered by a family member. Moreover, this survey illustrates that battered women and children suffer physical injuries and serious health problems related to the violence, and the injuries often disrupt women’s ability to work. ***In light of these findings, prevention of domestic violence should rank high on the national public health agenda of the Government of Albania.***

In a recent report, the International Parliamentary Union ranked Albania 115th of 142 countries monitored for women’s representation in elected positions at the national level – giving Albania one of the lowest rankings in Europe. In the local election in Albania in 2007, only 33 of the 1,073 candidates nominated for mayoral posts were women, and of these, only 9 were elected. In the 2005 national elections only, 7 percent of MPs are women. ***However, and with the support of the United Nations, with the adoption of the country’s first quota system in the Law on Equality in Society (July 2008) and within the Electoral Code (December 2008), the number of elected MPs increased to 16.4 percent.*** However, of the women elected, only one was appointed to the Cabinet, and one as the Speaker of the Parliament.

In addition to incorporating the quota into the Electoral Code, potentially the most significant step in increasing women's presence in decision-making is the adoption by the Albanian Parliament of the Law, "Gender Equality in Society" in July 2008. In addition to strengthening the mechanisms in government tasked with promoting and protecting gender equality, and ensuring the protection of women and men against discrimination in the workplace, with the adoption of the gender equality legislation (GEL) the State has made impressive commitments towards ensuring equal representation in appointed and elected positions in Government. Despite advances, the current lack of institutionalized processes and capacities in place in government to adequately monitor and implement the NSGE in a manner which ensures integration and linkages to the relevant sectoral policies contained within the NSDI remains a concern of the Government of Albania. Further, ***given the scope of the NSGE-DV, it is important that the core actions within the strategy which are essential to support integration of gender equality into broader policies and the improved alignment with EU Standards are first prioritized.***

In light of the above, considerable and broad-based technical support is needed to ensure the effective implementation of the newly adopted NSGE-DV and the recent advances in the country's legal framework. Further, *the inclusion of the NSGE-DV into the Government of Albania's National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI) provides an important opportunity for the UN to support a cross-sectoral approach to advancing gender equality and increasing women's participation in public life.*

Programme Goal: The coordinated implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality and Domestic Violence (2007-2010).

Expected outcomes of the Joint Programme:

- **Outcome 1:** National Government has capacity to more effectively monitor and implement the, NSGE-DV;
- **Outcome 2:** Improved public sector response to women's needs and priorities at the local level;
- **Outcome 3:** Women participating in the accountability processes which impact the advancement of gender equality; and
- **Outcome 4:** Improved coordination of external support to government and civil society in advancing gender equality.

Implementing and partner organizations: Implementing Partners: the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, line ministries, INSTAT, the Parliamentary Sub-Committee on Equal Opportunities and Juvenile Issues, municipalities and local authorities, national/local level civil society organizations, media, and international organizations working on gender in Albania.

OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) Presence in Albania

The department responsible for Gender mainstreaming is the Democratization Department.

- OSCE worked in 2006-2008 on supporting MOISAE0 draft the NSGE-DV and Gender Equality Law.
- OSCE works with MoLSAE0/DEOP in the capacity building of staff, exchange and study visits (this year in Vienna) and raising the visibility of DEOP through supporting the bi-monthly newsletter.
- Supporting a stronger role of women, the Presence started the implementation of a three-year "Women in Governance" project funded by the Embassy of the Netherlands and Embassy of Sweden/Swedish Development Co-operation Agency (SIDA), to identify

and train women willing to take up politically responsible roles in central and local government. A German-funded Women Counselling Centre in Kukes assists vulnerable women in the Northeast of Albania as well.

- Enhancing Women's role in governance
 - **Summary of Project Strategic Tasks/activities**

1. Advocacy campaigns at community level:

- Training sessions on advocacy, public speaking, message development.
- Competition on advocacy campaign (1 call for proposal 9 locations 2008-2009).
- Advocacy campaigns on relevant issues to women and better access to social services
- Coaching selected female candidates in the 2009 Parliamentary elections and the 2011 local elections.

Expected results:

Women participants from politics, national program officers from international organisations, public administration and business trained in advocacy campaigning; women's skills in advocacy and lobbying increased; women's potential in the community empowered throughout a competitive process.

2. "Get out women voters" - 2009 and 2011 elections:

- Public debates with female candidates in pre-election periods
- Regional awareness events in university and high-schools
- Awareness raising activities on the problem of family voting
- Public surveys.

Expected results:

Supported and acknowledged women's participation in the electoral process; raised women candidates' participation and platforms; reduced family voting.

3. Half-day regional forums on leadership and advocacy:

- Half-day forums in 9 regions during 2010.

Expected results:

Public awareness of women leadership increased; visibility for elected women, local government leaders and other women leaders raised.

4. Community Town Hall meetings:

- Training sessions on gender mainstreaming for officials of administration and political leaders.
- Community discussions for men and women on local public service (gender perspective) and women's rights (rights within the family, right to work, education health, participation).
- Distributing material on women's rights (e.g. family code, the GEL).

Expected results:

Established informal dialogue with public authority on the quality of public services and local development planning (gender perspective).

5. Work with media outlets to encourage content-based reporting about women leaders:

- Newspaper articles, radio and television talk show, yearly TV campaigns.

Expected results:

Improved media reporting on women; increased public debate on equal opportunities.

6. Create networking opportunities with MPs and Government officials:

- Public Forums in 12 regions within a period of three years 2008, 2009, 2011.

Expected results:

Awareness among government officials about gender equality as a public good raised; relations between women local councillors, community leaders and MPs established; MoLAEO supported in developing secondary legislation to the GEL throughout the consultation sessions.

7. Support networking opportunities at the regional level:

- Support existing networks of women leaders, NGOs, trade unions, etc.
- National conferences in 2009, 2010 and 2011.
- Establishing new regional networks.

Expected results:

National network and coalition of women' organizations established; contacts with local party branches established; increased representation of women in voting commissions.

8. Create network opportunities at the international level:

- Yearly events to celebrate the International Woman's Day (3 receptions).
- Experience sharing with neighbouring countries.
- Scholarship opportunities and study trips in European Union countries.

Expected results:

Female leaders have gained international recognition; potential female leaders have improved their public policy and administrative skills; informal networks have been formed and experiences have been shared; personal and professional development training has been promoted.

Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC)**Gender**

Gender is an ADC priority in Albania, with the focus being on women's rights in accordance with the ADC guidelines on gender equality and the empowerment of women. ADC endeavours to raise awareness in the whole of society– men and women alike – and improve the actual living conditions of Albanian women.

2 These terms refer to sub-processes of the EU integration process in the areas of higher education (Bologna process: consolidation of the European area of higher education; all signatories of the European Culture Convention of the Council of Europe, i.e. 45 states, have committed themselves to the Bologna process) as well as growth and the labour market (Lisbon process: the EU as a leading knowledge-based, innovative and dynamic business location) and define the criteria for the EU integration of the Western Balkans (Copenhagen criteria: democracy, rule of law, protection of human and minority rights, existence of a functioning market economy, acceptance of the *acquis communautaire*). Comprehensive gender mainstreaming and, in individual cases, the support of projects directly aimed at promoting women are part of the ADC country programme with Albania. ADC concentrates on improvements in the core areas of qualifications (education and training) as well as economic and political opportunities.

Albania Gender Horizont 3000 Equity in Governance project financed by ADA

The goal of the envisaged project is to provide support to state as well as non-state actors in Albania to jointly engage in gender-sensitive processes of governance at the central as well as local levels. This entails support for the implementation of new laws and strategies (Gender Equality Law, National Gender Action Plan, Regional Development Plan. Some of the activities done during 2009 are:

- Basic gender training for Local Government
- Trainings Basic of gender for Local Government in 16 municipalities
- Organizing the first national meeting of Gender Focal Points in Tirana

National Democratic Institute

NDI is a non-profit, nonpartisan, nongovernmental organization that has supported democratic institutions and practices in every region of the world for more than two decades. One of the programmes implemented in Albania that target specifically women is:

Women's Political Participation

With National Endowment for Democracy (NED) support, NDI is helping politically active women organize for the elections, in preparation for a possible new gender candidate quota. Albania has among the lowest levels of women elected officials in Europe, even though women occupy senior elected and appointed positions in government.

With funding provided by NED, NDI is working with a politically and geographically diverse group of women to improve their advocacy and leadership skills, providing them with the tools necessary to become more fully engaged in the political process. As part of the programme, participants have attended workshops on voter targeting, issue identification and message development, and campaign planning, among other topics, and have surveyed community members to identify priority issues. In the coming months, participants will travel to Kosovo as part of an NDI-organized study mission, and will utilize survey results to conduct local advocacy campaigns.

SDC in Albania

Even though 'gender' was not an explicit transversal theme in the SDC-Country Strategy for Albania (2002-2005), it has been reflected as a learning issue in the programs of the Swiss Cooperation Office since 2003. As a first step, COOF Tirana elaborated a concept paper and then, based on this, commissioned a sector assessment and a project analysis from the "Gender Alliance for Development Center (GADC)" in Tirana. These documents were presented in a workshop organised for SDC partners in Albania in order to sensitise them to SDC's gender policy goals, and to come to a common understanding and definition of the gender concept in Albania.

Currently, COOF Tirana in close collaboration with the GADC has started a new project aimed at introducing instruments in SDC projects in Albania that will facilitate gender mainstreaming. The project activities consist of translating the "SDC Toolkit Gender in Practice" and at adapting it into the Albanian context for the use of COOF partners in the project implementation cycle. Thus, COOF Tirana provided a training workshop for its partners on how to use the SDC Toolkit 'Integrimi Gjinator në Praktikë' and mainstream gender in their project cycle management framework. Furthermore, COOF Tirana, through its line of Small Action, aims to promote initiatives and activities that advance gender equality.

Other Donors active through grants to the NGOs or mainstream gender in their projects are:

GTZ (German Technical Cooperation), MADA (Mountain Areas Development Programme).

5. GENDER INFORMATION SOURCE

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>1) Gender Alliance for Development Center Mirela Aqimandriti Rr.Abdyl Frasheri, P.10, Sh.1/3 Postal Box 2418, Tirana Fax: 04 255 515 Tel: 04 255 514 info@gadc-al.org mirela@gadc-al.org www.gadc-al.org</p> | <p>2)MILLENIUM WOMEN NETWORK Jeta Katro Cel: 069 21 54 874 jkatro@albmail.com</p> |
| <p>3)Refleksione Monika Kocaqi Rruga e Elbasanit, P. e Fraterit, P3, Sh2 Postal Box: 2412/1, Tirana Tel: 04 340 433 Fax: 04 340 434 refleksione@icc-al.org</p> | <p>4)Independent Forum Albanian Women Rr."Barrikada VIII", P. 2, "Teknoprojekt" Sh.1, Ap. 5/3 Tel: 00355 4 22 83 09 E-mail: fpgsh@albnet.net fpgsh@ngo.org.al</p> |
| <p>5)Gender Union and Development Rr."Mihal Grameno", Nr. 55/3, Tirana Tel: 4 272 889 lajla@albmail.com www.icc-al.org-fgsh</p> | <p>6)Albanian Group for Human Rights Rr. 4 shkurti, P. 7/1 Shk.2 Ap.1, Tirana Tel: 4 251 995 E-mail: info@ahrg.org www.ahrg.org</p> |
| <p>7)Human Rights Albanian Center Kozara Kati Cel: 068 20 23 881 kozara@albmail.com</p> | <p>8)The Albanian Helsinki Committe Aurela Anastasi- Executive Director Rr."Gjin Bue Shpata", PII 5/1, Ap.4, Tirana P.O. Box No. 1752 Tel/Fax: 4 233 671 office@ahc.org.al www.ahc.org.al</p> |
| <p>9) Albanian Center for Population and Development Bulevardi "Gjergj Fishta" Komp."Tirana 2000", Tirana Elona Gjebrea Tel: 4 253 839 Fax: 4 251 479 egjebrea@acpd-al.org www.acpd-al.org</p> | <p>10)Association for women and children-Kombinat Center Rajmonda Prifti Tel: 4 363 016 Cel: 068 21 52 667 mondaprifti@albmail.com</p> |

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