

Gender Assessment, Recommendations and Action Plan

**Enhancing women's labor force participation in road
construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance in Albania**

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Standard Disclaimer

The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed in the paper do not necessarily reflect the views of the Executive Directors of The World Bank or the governments they represent. The World Bank does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this work.

Abbreviations & Acronyms

GoA	Government of Albania
LGU	Local Government Unit
ADF	Albanian Development Fund
GE	Gender Equality
GBV	Gender Based Violence
DV	Domestic Violence
VET	Vocational Education Training
NCGE	National Council on Gender Equality
NSES	National Cross-Cutting Strategy for Employment and Skills 2014-2020
MHSP	Ministry of Health and Social Protection
DSIGE	Directory of Social Inclusion and Gender Equality
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination
GEE	Gender Equality Employee
CSO	Civil Society Organization
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
INSTAT	Institute of Statistics
GPI	Gender Parity Index
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internatioanle Zusammenarbeit GmbH (German International Cooperation)
IPH	Institute of Public Health
LFS	Labor Force Survey
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

Executive Summary

Building and maintaining roads have significant economic and social benefits in terms of increased production, lower transport costs, and increased access to markets, as well as to a range of services citizens depend on. In addition, road construction and maintenance provide employment and generate significant income opportunities.

The construction sector in Albania generates 7 percent of total employment and is male dominated—just a small fraction of employees are women. This report, undertaken as part of the Albania Regional and Local Roads Connectivity (RLRC) Project supported by the World Bank, explores, for the first time, the less-studied situation of women in road construction and maintenance in Albania. It provides a characterization of the female and male workforce and identifies the concrete challenges for increasing women’s employment opportunities in this sector. Stakeholders involved in this study included construction companies, local government units, educators, and women working in the sector. Findings from the field research were complemented by administrative data.

The report reveals that men’s engagement in the construction sector is diverse, while women’s employment is limited and covers a narrow spectrum. Men working in the construction sector cover a wide range of age groups, professions, and job classifications, and they are also more mobile, since primary responsibility for family care is assigned to women. The recruitment process in private companies is mainly conducted through informal channels and men’s networks that have been present since university studies and which make it easier for men to find employment after obtaining a university degree. Collaboration between Vocational Education and Training (VET) institutions, faculties, and private and public businesses in the sector is found to be missing, which negatively impacts internship opportunities for female students and recruitment of female graduates. Training responds primarily to ad hoc needs instead of following a human resource development plan with the aim to foster professional development of workers and improve overall standards and work conditions in the sector.

Differences in the human resources and recruitment practices between public road maintenance companies and private companies/contractors determine the type of women’s employment in the construction sector. They have a direct impact on the female labor supply and on the key entry point in the sector. The public sector offers secure jobs for women in terms of receiving no less than the minimum salary, regular contracts, paid social insurance, and convenient working schedules that the private construction sector does not always fully provide. The lack of childcare is another obstacle for women, and by being employed in the public sector, women may have greater access to public childcare near their place of work.

Interestingly, current procurement practices/outourcing to private construction/maintenance companies, which hire external labor, negatively impact local employment in general and women’s employment opportunities in particular. As a consequence, they diminish the socioeconomic benefits municipalities could gain from road construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance projects. Clauses that refer to obligatory social deliverables, such as the share of locally contracted workers per category, and the share of women to be employed, are not yet common practice. Direct collaboration with municipality labor offices is not a routine requirement. Local communities thereby lose out on employment, income, strengthening of the local skill base, ties with professional networks, and the sense of ownership. This in turn raises questions regarding community engagement and ultimately the sustainability of current road construction/rehabilitation/maintenance projects.

The findings of this gender assessment point to a range of strategies and activities for enhancing equal opportunity outcomes for the women and men working in road construction and maintenance. They refer to human resources policies and practices, recruitment, procurement

practices, and skills management and career development. The report provides recommendations and an action plan for promoting women's employment opportunities in the sector.

Some of the recommendations have already been actioned by the Albanian Development Fund (ADF) which is implementing the RLRC project. For example, the ADF amended the procurement documents and delivered an information session and guidance package for bidders with the aim to increase the gender responsiveness of the procurement process in upcoming civil works of the project. This is in itself a great milestone since the procurement process is rarely revised for this purpose.

1. Purpose and methodology

The World Bank is working with the Government of Albania (GoA) on the implementation of the Albania Regional and Local Roads Connectivity Project ('the Project' hereafter), which includes investment and technical assistance. The main goal of the Project is to improve access to agricultural and tourism centers by the rehabilitation of a number of regional and local roads, and to strengthen the capacity of selected municipalities to manage their road assets. In this context, management of road assets should relate not only to the maintenance of road conditions, but to human resource practices, which imply engaging both men and women in locally managed road maintenance work. So, in addition to road maintenance, identification of women's roles in enhancing the supply of skilled workers and management staff of the companies contracted to rehabilitate the roads as part of the Project was taken into consideration. The purpose of this assessment is to explore women's current employment situations at all levels in the contractor workforce, as well as in road maintenance work, and to identify ways in which the involvement of women can contribute to socioeconomic development and hence the sustainability of the Project.

The World Bank mobilized technical assistance funded by the State and Peacebuilding Fund (SPF) to provide support on gender to the Project Implementing Agency, the Albanian Development Fund (ADF) to promote women's employment opportunities in the Project by working closely with ADF, a number of contractors, and the municipalities. As the first deliverable of the Project, this assessment aims to provide a solid analysis of the role of women and the nature of women's labor in the construction workforce and identifies bottlenecks to women's employment as well as the opportunities that the Project can create in the sector.

The methodology used for this report included the following:

- (i) Literature review of the national legal and policy framework for gender equality and the main gender issues such as employment, education, health, and violence against women;
- (ii) Analysis of sex-disaggregated data from the Labor Force Survey and administrative data from the tax office;
- (iii) Questionnaires for ADF contractors;
- (iv) Focus groups with women working in the road maintenance sector;
- (v) Focus groups with construction companies;
- (vi) In-depth interviews with responsible employees in the municipalities of Shkodra, Pogradec, and Fier; and
- (vii) In-depth interviews with the professors of the Polytechnic University in Tirana.

The methodology used for this assessment has the following main limitations that should be accounted for when interpreting the findings:

- Only four contractors out of 14 responded to the questionnaire: The collection of data and information about the current situation regarding staff, training, internal/HR policies, and equal opportunities among the ADF contractors is, therefore, limited and primarily based on the findings obtained through focus-groups.
- Potential selection bias: Participants in focus groups were not selected randomly but were those who wanted to participate and were willing to provide information.
- Quantification of findings is not the scope of this study: The study used qualitative methods to provide an initial snapshot of the situation of women in the construction sector and to identify key gender issues. Further systematic investigation would be

needed for quantifying the extent to which the identified issues on women in road construction and maintenances apply to the entire sector and at the national level. The quantitative analysis is focused on the construction sector data, because data for the subsector of road construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance are currently unavailable.

The structure of this assessment report is as follows: The second section provides an overview of the country context—it covers the legal and policy framework for gender equality and addresses main gender issues in areas with immediate relevance for the construction sectors, such as education. The third section specifically looks into the gender dynamics of the labor market in Albania. The specific situation of women in the constructions sector is described in the fourth section. The fifth section describes the results of the qualitative research. Section six provides a summary of main findings. The seventh section provides recommendations and the associated action plan.

2. Country context

Albania has a population of 2.9 million (INSTAT 2017). The female population accounts for 49.9 percent of inhabitants compared to 50.1 percent of the male population. The median age of the population is 35 years; for men, the median age is 34 while for women it is 37 years. In 2016, life expectancy at birth was estimated at 77.1 years for men and 80 years for women, explained by women’s biologically higher life expectancy. The GDP is US\$12.5 billion, and GDP per capita is US\$4,297. Main areas of the economy contributing to GDP are agriculture, energy, mining, manufacturing, construction, and services including tourism. The most recent poverty measurement was conducted in 2012, and the poverty rate was found to be 14.3 percent.

Since the first multiparty election held in 1991, Albania has undergone a dramatic transition from a centrally planned totalitarian regime to a democratic state and market economy. Basic reforms have been carried out in the political and administrative system, the judiciary, all economic sectors, and social services such as education and health. The reform process is to a large extent driven by Albania’s ambition to join the European Union. The Albanian economy has grown at a relatively steady pace, and poverty levels have been reduced. However, economic growth has been concentrated in the Tirana and Durrës regions, resulting in significant, although gradually decreasing, income disparities and inequalities between urban and rural areas, as well as between different population groups and genders.

Despite overall growth, the labor market is characterized by marked gender disparities in terms of gender segregation and employment outcomes for women and men. Over the last decade, gender inequality as measured by the Gender Inequality Index (GII) has been decreasing, mainly as a result of higher numbers of women in the national parliament. Recent EU and international reports mention women’s systemic disadvantage and lack of gainful employment opportunities among the country’s key development challenges.

2.1 Policy and legal framework on gender equality

Since 2007, the Government of Albania has adopted three national strategies on gender equality (GE) and against gender-based violence (GBV) and domestic violence (DV) (2007–2010, 2010–2015, 2016–2020, respectively). Additionally, the GoA has also undertaken a series of important steps toward developing specific national strategies and/or action plans focusing on the needs and rights of various disadvantaged, discriminated, and/or vulnerable groups.¹ So far,

¹ “National Cross-Cutting Strategy for Employment and Skills 2014–2020,” the “Action Plan for Supporting Entrepreneurial Women 2014–2020,” the “Basic Package of Primary Health Care Services,” the “Social Housing Strategy 2016–2025,” the “Action Plan and Strategy for Shelter,” the “Policy Document for Social Inclusion 2016–2020,” the “National Strategy for Social Protection 2015–2020,” the “National Action

the only policy document that addresses labor market dynamics, employment, and occupational segregation from a gender perspective is the “National Cross-Cutting Strategy for Employment and Skills (NSES) 2014–2020.” In this strategy and its action plan, occupational segregation is explicitly addressed with the aim of reducing gendered labor force gaps and the gender wage gap. NSES foresees support measures for girls in male-dominated fields of studies but does not specifically mention construction. The second pillar of the strategy—‘offering quality vocational education and training for youth and adults’—foresees specific activities for improving occupational descriptions, Vocational Education Training (VET) programs, and VET curricula. In this regard, a set of studies and assessments has been undertaken in order to understand the gendered patterns and dynamics of the labor market and to ensure that methodological approaches are increasingly gender sensitive. A concrete output of respective efforts is the consolidation of the National List of Occupations, occupational descriptions, and VET programs and curricula. Other activities in this framework are the establishment of a gender-sensitive tracer system for VET. This system is already operational in the Tirana region, including in the VET school in Kamza.²

The highest-level advisory body for issues related to GE is the National Council on Gender Equality (NCGE), established in 2009. The NCGE is composed of nine deputy ministers and three civil society organizations (CSOs) and is chaired by the Minister of Health and Social Protection. Since September 2017, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection (MHSP) has been the lead ministry in charge of issues related to GE. The ministry exercises its mandate through the Sector of Gender Equality. The sector is part of the Directory of Social Inclusion and Gender Equality (DSIGE), which falls under the General Directorate of Social Policies in the MHSP. The mission of this sector is to formulate and develop policies for promoting GE and reducing GBV and DV, to aim for better alignment of social inclusion programs, and to support and engage in gender mainstreaming. The MHSP also has the responsibility of drafting and monitoring the implementation of the government’s GE policy. In addition, Prime Minister Order No. 32, dated 12.2.2018, established the Deputy Prime Minister as the National Coordinator on gender equality and the gender mechanism at the central level. Concrete mandated tasks, responsibilities, and the division of labor between MHSP and the Deputy Prime Minister are currently in the process of being defined.

In principle, Gender Equality Employees (GEEs) at the central level (in line ministries) and the local level (in municipalities) are a core element of the national gender machinery. According to Albanian law, GEEs occupy full-time positions within the public administration. However, line ministries have not taken the required steps to establish and make them operational. At the local self-government level, out of 61 municipalities, only 44 reportedly have an appointed GEE.

The equal rights of women and men are protected in the Albanian Constitution: Article 18 guarantees the equality of women and men before the law, as well as the principle of non-discrimination. The country ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1993, and its Optional Protocol in 2003. Albania signed the Istanbul Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women on December 19, 2011 and ratified it in February 2013 (GREVIO 2017). In 2008, the parliament approved the Gender Equality Law, an encompassing law regarding gender inequalities in various fields. The legislation framework on GE is complemented with the law “On Measures Against Violence in Family Relations” adopted in 2007, the law “On Protection Against

Plan for Youth 2015–2020,” the “National Action Plan for Integration of Roma and Egyptians in the RoA 2016–2020,” and the “National Action Plan for LGBT Persons in the RoA 2016–2020.”

² Supported by German International Cooperation (GIZ), the Vocational School in Kamza has embarked on concrete efforts in integrating gender equality goals in curricula and its general operations, as a means to increase girls’ enrollment and their employability on the labor market. Unfortunately, vocational education in the construction sector is not offered in Kamza (World Bank Aide Memoire, April 2018).

Discrimination” adopted in 2010, the Labor Code, and the Family Code, as well as amendments made to the Penal Code regarding violence against women. During the period 2009–2014 further important improvements in legislation from a gender perspective included: the law “On Social Assistance and Social Services” (2011 and 2014); the law “On Social Program for Housing Inhabitants in Urban Areas” (2012); the Electoral Code (2012 and 2015); and the law “On the Registration of Immovable Property” (2012) (Kocaqi, Kelly, and Lovett 2011; Danaj 2018).

Albania’s overarching strategic document, the National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI) 2015–2020 specifies five gender equality objectives: (i) enhancing women’s role in decision making at all levels of government and politics; (ii) women’s economic empowerment; (iii) strengthening gender mainstreaming in policies, gender analysis, gender indicators, and coherent monitoring and reporting; (iv) reducing domestic violence and gender-based violence; and (v) strengthening gender equality mechanisms and structures.

So far, progress in implementing gender equality policies has been slow: the routine integration of gender equality goals into sector strategies and policy documents is in an early stage, and even where concrete actions are defined, development outcomes point to significant implementation gaps. Furthermore, gender-sensitive monitoring and planning are challenged by gaps in the availability of sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics, which still require alignment with Eurostat and international methodologies. Gender-responsive budgeting has been promoted at central and municipal levels by various actors but still needs to become routine practice and part of budgetary accountability measures.

2.2 Access to education

The educational system in Albania includes preschool education (ages 3–5, non-compulsory); primary school (ages 6–10, Grades 1–5, compulsory); lower secondary (Grades 6–9, compulsory); upper secondary (general and vocational, Grades 10–12, non-compulsory); and the tertiary or university level (UN Women, UNFPA, and INSTAT 2014). Studies show that there are no significant differences in the number of boys and girls at the primary education level. Gender differences become apparent in the upper secondary level, where the number of boys is higher than that of girls, especially in vocational education, and at the university level, where the number of girls is higher than that of boys.

2.2.1 Preuniversity education³

Preuniversity public education is free. Recently, there has been a marked increase in the number of private institutions at all levels of education, which may offer a better education but with expensive fees. An indicator of the situation of girls and boys at preuniversity levels is the gender parity index (GPI). In 2016, the GPI was 0.93 at the upper secondary level, revealing a prevalence of boys (INSTAT 2017). An even greater gender gap is noticed in secondary vocational education, where, in 2016, female students only comprised about 11 percent of students (INSTAT 2017).

Vocational Education

A 2011 report published by the GIZ office in Albania (Danaj and Wittberger 2011) shows that the low female enrollment in vocational secondary schools is uniform across the country and that there is manifested sex segregation of courses based on the traditionally stereotyped gender division of labor. Vocational education in Albania reflects and reinforces this traditional division. The majority of courses are in so-called “male professions,” such as industrial trade,

³ According the Albanian education Law the education system is composed of two levels Preuniversity and University. Pre-university includes: preschool education (ages 3–5, non-compulsory); primary school (ages 6–10, Grades 1–5, compulsory); lower secondary (Grades 6–9, compulsory); upper secondary (general and vocational). University system includes the University degrees (bachelor, master and PhD

electromechanics, and construction. This, upon graduation, offers male students higher employment rates, particularly in sectors that offer higher paying jobs and career development opportunities. Educating and training girls and women in so-called “male professions” increases the national skill base and improves their employment rates; however, due to the obstacles female graduates face in a deeply masculinized labor market, such programs require accompanying measures in the classroom, collaboration with the private sector, and mentoring, particularly during internships and the school-to-work transition period (GTZ 1997). Offering more courses oriented toward developing branches of the labor market (such as retail, trade, or IT) or those services societally considered as “female professions,” (i.e., shopkeepers, social workers, or nurses) are approaches pursued to improve the participation of women and girls in vocational education. However, even in new occupational profiles, gender-specific segregation has been shown to happen very quickly, depending on the specific context, the curriculum and materials used, the location and type of institution through which the training course is offered, and the branding and promotion of the training course and profession in general. All these elements influence the perceived gender dimension of occupational profiles and directly impact educational decisions, hiring practices, and salary levels (Danaj and Wittberger 2011).

Overall, vocational education does not represent a particularly attractive or promising option for girls to enter the labor market. According to the INWENT survey, 79.1 percent of girls who graduate from vocational education (VE) schools proceed to university, 6.4 percent are employed, and 14.5 percent are unemployed. On the other hand, 39.2 percent of boys proceed to university, 28.1 percent are employed, and 32.7 percent are unemployed (NWENT 2012). This shows that for girls the VE system is mainly used to obtain a ‘Matura’ certificate (i.e., the final VE certificate) and proceed to the university level, while for boys it provides a direct path to the labor market, which is the main purpose of VE.

This trend has not improved recently. Data from INSTAT (2017) show that in 2016, the vast majority (90 percent) of graduates of vocational secondary schools were boys (4,705 boys versus 538 girls). Enrollment of girls from rural areas is particularly low. Moreover, the number of girls in vocational secondary schools decreased during the period 2013–2016. The most recent data from five vocational education schools show that out of 350 students in total only five are girls.

2.2.2 University level

University education is provided by public and private institutions. Entrance to public institutions is based on the Matura State Exam (obtained at the end of secondary education). Significant gender differences are evident at the university level, where in 2016, the GPI increased to 1.46, showing a high prevalence of young women. One of the explanations given for this widening gap in favor of girls is that young men engage more in paid work or emigration. In the academic year 2015–2016, females constituted 67.8 percent of all students enrolled (INSTAT 2017).

Among the total number of graduates in tertiary education, 64 percent are girls and 36 percent are boys. However, the high number of female students is not evenly dispersed across all fields of study: data show that in the field of education, 84 percent of graduates are girls and only 16 percent are boys. Similarly, in the health and welfare field and social sciences, respectively, 73 percent and 70 percent of graduates are girls. The situation is reversed in socially constructed “male professions” such as engineering, manufacturing, and construction, where in total, female graduates only make up 37 percent.⁴ Even in newer fields, such as information and communication technologies, the majority of graduates are male. It must be noted that the share

⁴ While sex-disaggregated figures for graduates in these professions are not further broken down, it is justified to assume that the number of women graduating in ‘construction’ is significantly lower.

of females involved in engineering, manufacturing and construction in Albania is in fact higher as compared to many other countries including most of the EU countries. However, as the later sections of the report reveals, it does not translate into the labor market outcomes.

2.3 Violence against women and sexual harassment in the workplace

Violence against women and girls is not a new phenomenon in Albania. Such violence is deeply rooted in patriarchal traditions and customs that have long shaped Albanian society, such as strict gender roles and identities, patriarchal authority, respect for the code of honor and shame, control over several generations in the family, poverty, and inequality among the sexes in employment and education, and gendered patterns of migration (i.e., male out-migration).

According to the 2013 national population-based survey on domestic violence, 59.4 percent of women reported having experienced domestic violence in their marriage/intimate relationships at some point, and 53 percent were currently (within 12 months prior to the interview) experiencing domestic violence. Women aged 18 to 24 were slightly more likely to have experienced domestic violence, while women with a university/post-university education were least likely to have experienced domestic violence of any type but were still not immune. Women who did not work outside of the home (64.2 percent) were significantly more likely to experience domestic violence of all types compared to women who worked outside of the home (52.9 percent), indicating a link between women's economic dependence and exposure to violence (Kocaqi, Kelly, and Lovett 2015). Women on maternity leave were found to be the group most likely to experience domestic violence (75 percent). Women in rural areas generally are also more likely to experience domestic violence of all types.

Sexual harassment is addressed in Albanian legislation. However, general awareness of sexual harassment is low, redress mechanisms and structures are lacking, and sexual harassment seems to be significantly underreported. In many cases, victims have problems gathering evidence to support their claims, or they feel ashamed because they think others will accuse them of having provoked such incidents (Kocaqi, Kelly, and Lovett 2015). Single women and single mothers are most vulnerable to sexual harassment in the workplace. When they migrate to Tirana from another city or village, this vulnerability increases. Life in Tirana is difficult and very expensive, and these women do their best to secure employment, but often find themselves in unsafe situations. Young migrant women in Tirana living on their own were found to be subjected to sexual harassment more frequently than those living with their families (Danaj 2017). So far, only a handful of institutions and companies have adopted a code of conduct and established a redress mechanism.⁵ As evidenced by efforts undertaken within the Albanian State Police, the enforcement of anti-sexual harassment policies and the processing of cases remain a challenge.

2.4 Access to health care

According to the 2017-18 Albania Demographic and Health Survey (ADHS), between 2008-09 and 2017-18 there has been an increase in the share of people covered by the insurance. The share of women protected by state insurance or social security has increased significantly, from 26% to 46%, while for men the increase has only been modest, from 34% to 37%.

The public health care system in Albania is free or subsidized for those paying with social insurance contributions and other categories (pregnant women, patients with tumors, etc.). In the largest cities, there are also private hospitals and clinics. In reality, people are often obliged to make informal payments to obtain care, even in public institutions (UNODC 2011). This

⁵ Examples are all very recent and include, e.g., the diversity policy award initiative by Headhunter, a job platform operating in the Western Balkans, or UN Women's promotion of the Global Compact, that is, Women Empowerment Principles among private businesses in the country.

affects women more than men, as women are less often employed, less covered by social insurance, and more dependent on men's incomes.

The maternal and infant mortality rates in Albania have decreased consistently since the end of socialism, yet remain still higher compared to other European countries. The 2017-2018 ADHS reports improvements regarding antenatal care in the country: 86 percent of women in the lowest wealth quintile had antenatal care from a skilled provider compared with 97% of women in the highest quintile. Also, the proportion of women who had at least four antenatal care visits increased from 67% in 2008-09 to 78% in 2017-18.

The same ADHS reports 97 percent of all women age 15-49 knowing at least one contraceptive method. Use of modern contraception among currently married women decreased from 11% in 2008-09 to 4% in 2017-18. The use of traditional methods also decreased, from 59% to 42%, so the decrease in total contraceptive prevalence among married women was 70% to 46%. Abortion is legal up to the 12th week of pregnancy and remains a method of family planning for many women. In 2014, the sex ratio at birth was found to be above the natural rate for male versus female newborns, suggesting the possibility of prenatal sex selection practices (UNFPA and INSTAT 2014).

2.5 Childcare

Primary care responsibilities combined with a lack of access to affordable and quality childcare options is generally associated with women's limited labor force participation. Ongoing quantitative and qualitative analyses of child and elder care undertaken by the World Bank in Western Balkan countries strongly supports this nexus and highlights issues of lack of availability, accessibility, quality, and affordability of childcare facilities. While a significant unmet care need is clearly evident in Albania also an analysis of child and elder care is pending (Kocaqi, Plaku, and Wittberger 2016).

According to the 2017-18 Demographic and Health Survey (ADHS), 73 percent of Albanian children aged three to five attend an early childhood education program, and the level of participation is the same for male and female children. The education of the head of the household is an important determinant factor: 63% of children living in households in which the head has a primary 4-year education or less participate in early learning programs compared to 86% of those in households in which the head has a university or postgraduate degree. It is also of note that early childhood education attendance increases from 62 percent among children in the lowest wealth quintiles to 88 percent in the highest wealth quintiles (ADHS 2017-18).

3. Access to employment

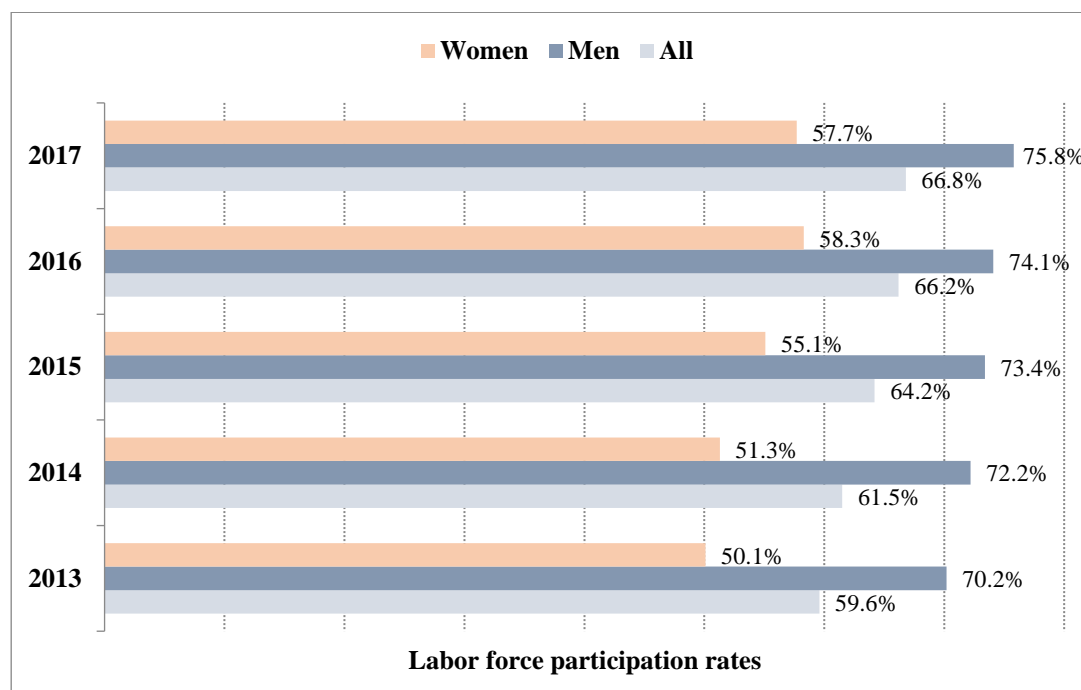
Labor market statistics provide an insight into the gender situation in the labor market. Addressing such a differentiated view is essential, not only for the life of individuals and their families, but in particular in discussions on productivity, development and economic growth of a country.

3.1 Labor force participation

According to LFS data, the labor force participation rate for the population aged 15 to 64 steadily increased from 2013–2017, reaching 67 percent in 2017. The activity rate shows the proportion of all people of working age who are either employed or unemployed, and it is interchangeable with the term “labor force participation rate.” The observed increase occurred in both men's and women's participation in the labor market. Between 2013 and 2017, the

proportion of both women and men in the labor market increased, respectively, from 50 to 57.8 percent and from 70 to 76 percent (Figure 1). Despite the increase in women’s labor force participation rates, the gender gap remained persistent at an average of 18 percentage points.

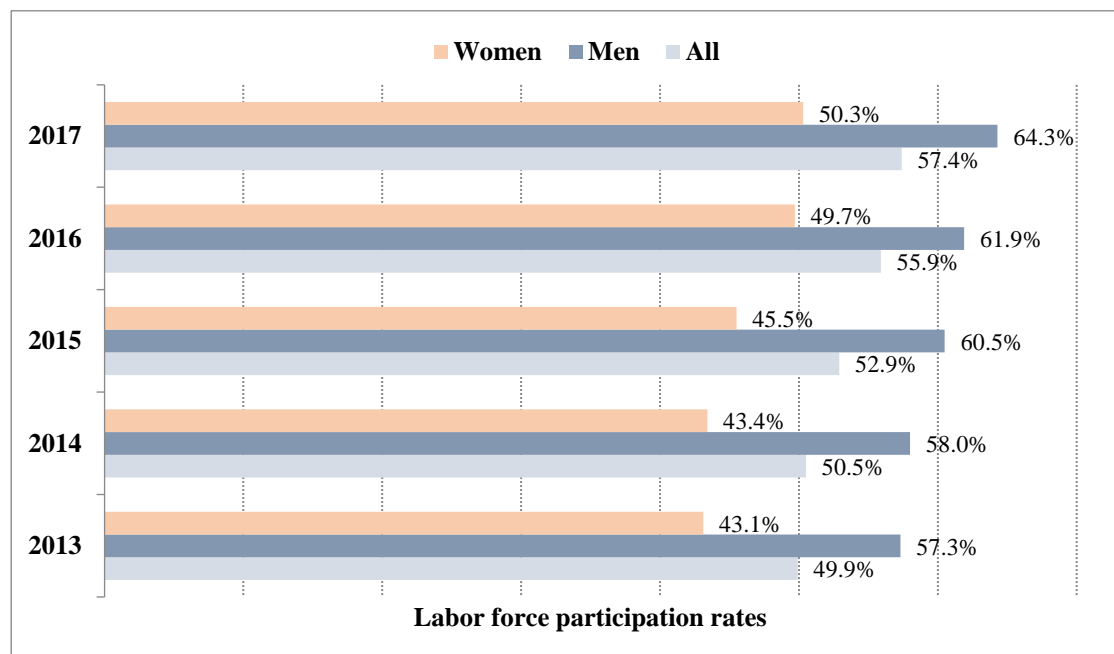
Figure 1: Labor force participation rate by sex, population aged 15–64



Source: INSTAT, Labor Force Surveys 2013–2017, Albania.

During the period 2013–2017, the proportion of the population aged 15 to 64 in employment increased for both women and men (Figure 2). Despite steady improvement of the labor market, the gender gap in employment continues to be persistent over the years. Women are less likely than men to be employed: in 2017, 50 percent of all working age women were employed, compared to 64.3 percent of all working age men. Employment-to-population rates follow a similar pattern as activity rates in all countries of the region. In comparison to men, women in the labor market are in a more disadvantaged situation. In 2017, the gender employment gap for the Albanian population aged 15 to 64 was a 14-percentage point higher for males. Montenegro and Serbia are the two countries in the region with a lower gender employment gap than Albania, while this gap is deeper in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Kosovo.

Figure 2: Employment-to-population rate by sex, population aged 15–64

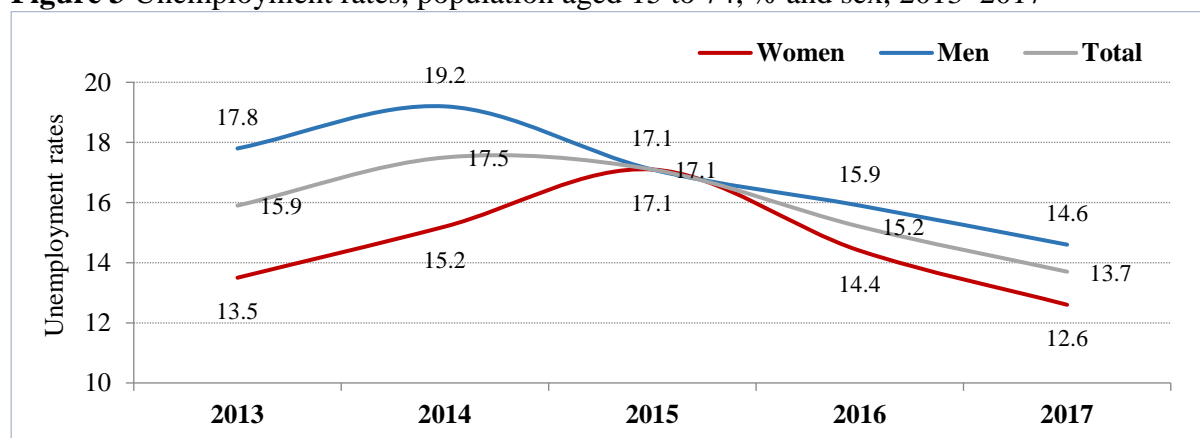


Source: INSTAT, Labour Force Surveys 2013–2017, Albania.

3.2 Unemployment

From 2013–2017, unemployment fluctuated, reaching its peak in 2014 (17.5 percent) and declining in the following years, falling to 13.7 percent in 2017. Since 2015, the rate of women’s unemployment is lower than men’s, and it has also dropped faster (Figure 3). Taking into consideration the significant inactivity rates reported for women, the effect can be partially explained by women’s withdrawal from the labor market.

Figure 3 Unemployment rates, population aged 15 to 74, % and sex, 2013–2017



Source: INSTAT, Labor Force Surveys, Albania.

In all countries in the Western Balkans, Albania has the lowest proportion of employees (under 50 percent) and the highest proportion of contributing family workers for both men and women.

This is directly related to the high rate of informal employment in Albania, which according to INSTAT data, was 36.2 percent in 2017.

3.3 Labor market segregation

The labor market in Albania exhibits horizontal and vertical segregation in relation to the type of women's and men's jobs, and the positions they hold within the hierarchy. Horizontal segregation across sectors is evident in statistics on the breakdown of Albanian employees by industry employers. Table 1 shows that in 2017, men dominated in: construction (94.4 percent); mining, energy, and water supply (88.2 percent); transportation and storage (86.6 percent); and compulsory social security (70.0 percent).

Female employees are most likely to have jobs in human health and social work activities (73.8 percent), education (73.3 percent), and manufacturing (64.0 percent). Construction is the sector with the smallest share of women employed (5.6 percent).

Table 1: Percentage of employees by sector and sex

	2017		
	Employees (in thousand)	% women	% men
Total	526	45.5	54.5
Agriculture, forestry, and fishing	14	24.9	75.1
Manufacturing	101	64.0	36.0
Construction	40	5.6	94.4
Other industry (mining, energy, and water supply)	27	11.8	88.2
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	51	40.3	59.7
Transportation and storage	17	13.4	86.6
Accommodation and food service activities	35	36.2	63.8
Information and communication	10	34.3	65.7
Professional, scientific, and technical activities and real estate	6	49.5	50.5
Administrative and support service activities	32	45.7	54.3
Public administration and defense; compulsory social security	64	30.0	70.0
Education	57	73.3	26.7
Human health and social work activities	42	73.8	26.2
Financial and insurance activities	10	46.4	53.6
Other services	20	59.2	40.8

Source: INSTAT, Labor Force Survey 2017.

Horizontal occupational segregation is one of the barriers preventing women and men from making full use of their potential in the labor market. Furthermore, it offers women lower income and fewer career development opportunities and confines women to certain professions, which consequently contributes to the gender pay gap.

In addition, Table 2 illustrates vertical segregation, showing that among those under registered employment, men are more likely to hold job positions in the armed forces (84.6 percent), as craft and related trade workers (80.5 percent), managers (69.8 percent), and as skilled agricultural, forestry, and fishery workers (69.3 percent).

Table 2: Employee distribution by occupational position and sex

Occupation groups (ISCO-08)	Men	Women	Total
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	Row percentage		
Total	54.5	45.5	100
Managers	69.8	30.2	100
Professionals	38.8	61.2	100
Technicians and associate professionals	53.3	46.7	100
Clerical support workers	56.0	44.0	100
Service and sales workers	62.5	37.5	100
Skilled agricultural, forestry, and fishery workers	69.3	30.7	100
Craft and related trade workers	80.5	19.5	100
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	46.3	53.7	100
Elementary occupations	48.4	51.6	100
Armed forces	84.6	15.4	100

Source: INSTAT, Labor Force Survey 2017.

Women in registered employment are concentrated in primarily three occupational positions: they are more likely to work in occupations classified as “professional” (61.2 percent, including accountant, economist, and lawyer), as plant and machine operators and assemblers (53.7 percent), and in elementary occupations (51.6 percent of employees).

4. Women in the construction sector in Albania

In 2017, construction contributed 10 percent to Albanian gross domestic product (GDP)⁶. Major ongoing infrastructure projects in the tourism, transportation, and, energy sectors are expected to drive construction spending higher in the coming years. In 2017, government spending plans for infrastructure were an estimated US\$200 million, chiefly for roads (US\$137 million).⁷ in the near future, existing as well as new roads will require routine and periodic maintenance, road asset management, and introduction of safety systems, resulting in a demand for additional labor as well as additional skills, in turn opening up significant employment opportunities across the country.

Construction is a male-dominated industry worldwide. In Albania, the construction sector provides more jobs for men compared to women, reflecting global trends. The gender analyses of employment in the construction sector for Albania of this report are based on two sources of national data in order to present the reality as accurately as possible. The two sources of data are (i) the Labor Force Survey (LFS); and (ii) administrative data from tax offices. The LFS is a household-based survey and provides information on labor market supply. Being a survey, it retrieves information from a large sample of individual respondents and extrapolates for the national level, arriving at, for example, an estimated number of employed persons. The second data source is administrative data obtained from the General Taxation Directorate, which provides information on the labor market demand side. This includes, for example, the number of persons reportedly employed by the private sector. As shown in Table 3, clear discrepancies are evident between the two data sets, and both sources should be considered in discussions, for drawing solid conclusions, and in identifying recommended actions.

Table 3: Employment in the construction sector according to LFS and administrative data

⁶ Instat, 2017

⁷ Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy, www.infrastruktura.gov.al

	Men	Women	Total employed in construction
According to LFS estimates	79,795	2,346	82,140
According to administrative data	37,093	6,447	43,540
Difference (LFS-administrative data)	42,701	(4,101)	38,600

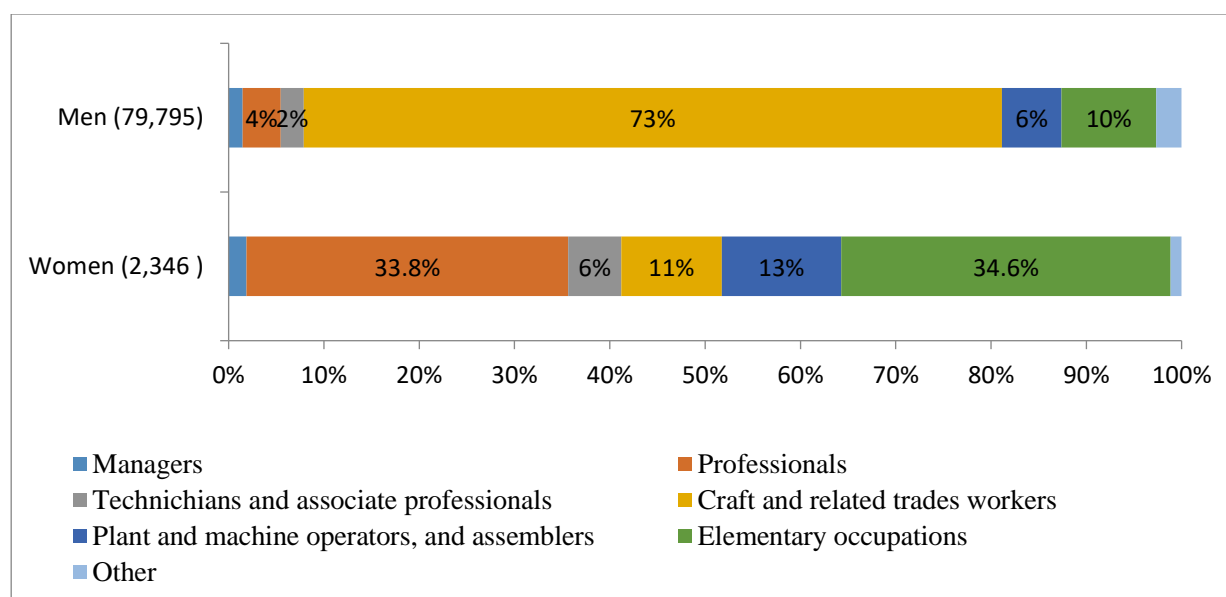
Source: LFS, General Taxation Directorate 2017.

According to LFS estimates, the construction sector employs about 7 percent of the total workforce, equaling 82,140 individuals. The vast majority of those employed in the construction sector are men. Interestingly, the LFS figures for overall and for male employment in the construction sector are almost twice the number of employees reported by administrative data,⁸ which indicates underreporting at the tax office. Most likely, LFS figures are a closer reflection of reality for men's employment by taking into consideration the informality within the sector. According administrative data by tax office though, women's employment in the construction sector is 14 percent whilst the Labor Force Surveys reports only 3 percent for the same. The very low figure identified by LFS for women's employment in the construction sector might be due to underreporting in the survey as a result of either technical survey issues or women's self-perception. As will be explained below, a large share of women employed in the construction sector work as a finance accountant, economist, HR specialist, or lawyer, and therefore might not identify with the notion of being engaged in 'construction' as such.

4.1 Occupation

Further analysis of data by occupation reveals that women in the construction sector are mostly concentrated at the two opposite ends of the ISCO-08 classification scale, namely in occupation groups which require either highly skilled workers or low skilled workers. In contrast, the vast majority of men work at manual labor. Figure 4 presents the employment structure in the construction sector disaggregated by sex and major occupation groups.

Figure 4: Employment structure in construction by sex and occupation group



⁸ According to payroll data, men in the construction sector made up 10.4 percent of the male labor force in nonagricultural sectors.

Source: Labor Force Survey 2017.

The proportion of women working in elementary occupations, such as construction laborers, is 34.6 percent. A slightly lower proportion (33.8 percent) hold professional job positions, requiring a highly skilled workforce. Women in the ‘professionals’ category usually hold job titles such as civil engineer, accountant, economist, and lawyer.⁹ The gender dimension of the observed percentage of female and male managers would require further research, which is beyond the scope of this assessment.

Within the male workforce in the construction sector, the vast majority (73 percent) are craft and related trade workers, such as bricklayers, painters, building electricians, and plumbers. **It is also of note that while women dominate men in certain occupations, speaking proportionally, significantly more men than women are employed in almost every category calculated from both the LFS and administrative data,** as shown in Figure 4.

4.2 Age

More than half of women in the construction sector are aged 25 to 39, and almost 40 percent are aged 40 and above. The age structure of the male workforce in construction has a wider spectrum: (6 percent are aged 15 to 24), and a higher share of men as opposed to women, are aged 40 and above (55.3 percent).

4.3 Education

Broken down by educational attainment, 39 percent of women in the construction sector have tertiary education, 33 percent have completed secondary education, and 28 percent have basic education. Among the male workforce in the construction sector, those with secondary education prevail at 53 percent. The proportion of men with basic education is high at 41 percent, while only 6 percent have completed tertiary education. The education level of those employed in the construction sector can only be estimated through the LFS data because no other sources of data include this information. The significant gender differences in employees’ educational attainment exist because women in the construction sector more often work as professionals like economists and accountants, while men are more present in those occupations that do not require tertiary education. As a result of the gendered skills structure of jobs available in construction, the sector accommodates men more readily in informal arrangements than women.

4.4 Wages

The vast majority of women in the construction sector are employees (95.0 percent) and only 4.8 percent are self-employed, while 51.7 percent of men in the sector are self-employed and 46.8 percent are employees. The share of unpaid family workers in the construction industry is insignificant for both men and women (less than 1.5 percent).

According to INSTAT, in 2017 the gross average monthly wage for an employee in the construction sector was 43,104 Albanian Lekë: ALL 44,057 (US\$350) for men, and ALL

⁹ The distribution of the female workforce in the construction sector by major ISCO-08 groups corroborates a convergence between survey data and administrative data, especially for the category of ‘professionals’. The top three job positions are: civil engineers (625), economists (620), and lawyers (117).

37,904 (US\$300) for women. The gender pay gap is 14 percent. Compared to the previous year, the gender pay gap in the construction sector has increased by 1.5 percentage points.

5. Findings from field research

This section focuses on the practices, experiences, and perspective of construction and road maintenance companies that participated in the gender assessment. In this context, it is important to keep in mind that general interest and hence companies' response rates were low. Out of the total of fourteen contractors initially invited to participate in filling in the assessment's questionnaire, only four contributed, namely NTPerocos, Eurokos, Arifaj, and Denis05.¹⁰ Still, the information provided by these contractors pinpoints very clear elements related to the participation of women in the construction sector that is of national relevance: women are significantly underrepresented, and few initiatives and practices exist which aim to increase their participation.

Information from private contractors is complemented by the findings from focus groups conducted with women working in the sector who shared the experiences from their daily work. The assessment was further enriched by discussions with public employees in the municipalities of Fier and Pogradec, who—on a regular basis—engage in the contracting of private companies for implementing public works.

5.1 Recruitment and training

In line with general labor force data for the construction sector, the share of women in the workforce of the four companies included in this assessment is very low and ranges at 5 percent. Women are found in various positions with low as well as high skill requirements. Some women are employed in highly skilled positions, such as engineers, albeit only a few and mainly in office roles. At Arifaj SHPK, women can be found in positions such as economists and engineers, but in the field there are few women, and they are mostly engaged as cleaners. The majority of field positions, which includes managerial and engineering positions, are filled by men.

5.1.1 Private construction and road maintenance companies

An interesting observation resulting from the interviews with the contractors is that women were said to often require more on-the-job training than men. This may be explained by the fact that during university years, female students are seldom exposed to practical work. On the other hand, due to their better networks and the readiness of the sector to absorb young male trainees, male students manage to get more job-site training. This results in male students being better prepared for work upon graduation, while a lack of practical work experience often confines women to office work.

In general, women's enrollment rate in the field of construction is very low. Asked for the reason, professors of the Construction Faculty relate the low number to limited employment opportunities for women in the sector, and to the general mentality of discouraging girls from enrolling in what is perceived as 'masculine' or 'nontraditional' fields of studies.

To level the playing field for all, it was suggested that the contractors consider more tailored training for women employees. Proactive referral, internship placement, and coaching of female

¹⁰ These are contractors working with ADF, and they shared their views for the purpose of the report assessment.

students prior to graduation are further possibilities but would require closer collaboration between, and joint action of, university faculties and the construction companies.

The information provided by the responding companies shows that the majority of employees who participate in trainings are men. For example, Arifaj SHPK company representatives conduct safety trainings, and participants are exclusively men because only men work in the field. Trainings are conducted once per month. However, it is important to note that there are no clearly defined long-term training policies in place. Training programs mostly respond to the immediate needs arising from contracts and not to professional development and training needs of employees, either women or men.

Regarding recruitment and employment practices, the recruitment of low-skilled local labor takes place through informal networks, and there is no formal recruitment process in place. In the absence of structured advertising and recruitment practices, let alone consideration of or targets for female recruitment, the local labor force tends to be exclusively male. As regards to the hiring of high-skilled labor, companies report that there is no cooperation with universities or vocational education institutions on the referral of adequately trained graduates. Furthermore, policies to specifically attract and recruit female candidates are lacking. According to the respondents, recruitment of women could be improved if recruitment channels were less informal and announcements/advertisements were channeled more through state employment agencies, education institutions, and Internet-based employment platforms.

5.1.2 Public and subcontracted private construction and road maintenance companies

Public employees from the municipalities of Fier and Pogradec pointed out that when services in the sector are outsourced to big national companies/contractors, the recruitment process brings in employees from other regions of the country rather than considering the locally available labor supply. This practice clearly diminishes the opportunities for local people to be employed in these projects, and negatively impacts on local income and growth. Furthermore, practices and procedures which disregard locally available labor make it particularly impossible for women to be hired or engaged: bringing in external labor to construction sites requires employees to move within the country, which is clearly not an option for women who remain the primary care providers for families. Furthermore, local contractors/subcontractors were said to also miss out on the opportunity to enlarge their professional network, engage local people, and support the establishment of locally available pools of engineers and trained workers for future investments.

So far, bid documents prepared by the municipalities for subcontracting/outsourcing road maintenance or road construction services did not contain references to the obligation to ensure equal opportunities, the gender composition of the team of engineers, quota for local recruitment, or employment targets for women. The technical documents only specify the total number of people required for each position without any gender specification.

The situation is different when local companies are contracted. The public employer of the Labor Office in Pogradec, for example, reported that in cases where a private construction company benefits from funds of the national Employment Programme, they are obliged to employ a specific number of women. She reported that construction companies are indeed implementing this criteria, and the Labor Office monitors them each month to ensure these requirements are met. In this way, local economic development, which is the process of building a community's capacity for shared and sustainable improvement in its economic well-being, is supported.

Another important aspect related to women's engagement in the construction sector is the current working conditions in terms of physical risk, hygiene, and harassment. Women interviewed raised this as one of the most significant issues. Even though, in general, much needs to be done to improve current working conditions, women still think that working in the public sector is the better option. Public officials from the municipalities did not consider these factors important, and hence respective provisions are not part of bidding and contractual documents. In discussions with private companies, this specific topic did not come up. Overall, aspects of physical risk, hygiene, and harassment as essential determinants of women's (and men's) safety and security at the workplace do not presently seem to be on stakeholders' radar.

5.2 Key gender issues in public road maintenance companies

In order to further explore the gender dimension in this male-dominated sector, the assessment included conducting focus groups and interviews with female employees and public officials, with a specific focus on the experiences with public road maintenance companies. For this purpose, the municipalities selected are those that are beneficiaries of the Albania Regional and Local Roads Connectivity Project. The three beneficiaries are the municipalities of Pogradec, Fier, and Shkodra, where 10 public officials and 18 female employees in the road maintenance sector were interviewed.

In Pogradec and Fier, public companies working in road maintenance are incorporated within the structure of the municipality. Human resources staff from both municipalities reported receiving many job applications from women seeking employment in these public companies. Data show that in Pogradec, the road maintenance sector employs 35 people in total, 20 of whom are women (57 percent). During the summer season, an additional 25 employees are hired, all of which are women. In Fier, in the public road maintenance and greening company, out of a total of 220 employees, 72 individuals—or roughly one-third—are women. Employment can be provided year-round, as a result from a seasonal shift in the work focus from maintenance and greening in summer to maintenance and cleaning from snow and ice in winter. Pogradec is an important tourism destination, and over the summer, the municipality responds to the need for providing additional services by increasing the number of women workers.

The majority of women working in the public companies belong to the age group 50+, have been employed in this sector for 10 to 34 years, and have finished only the obligatory eight years of primary and lower secondary school. Of the 19 female employees in the municipality of Fier, only one is under 30, and only two have finished upper secondary school.

Most requests for working in construction and maintenance come from unemployed women because of the security provided by working in the public sector, which is not necessarily offered in the private sector. This refers to formal contracts, paid social insurance, and working schedules that can be combined with family obligations and care responsibilities.

The situation in Shkoder is different from the other two municipalities because there public works are outsourced to a private company. **What is striking is that the number of women employed in the maintenance sector in this municipality was found to be zero.** While recruitment practices in this case might have been the main reason for the exclusion of women, it confirms the well-known fact that the security offered by the public sector is a significant enabler and incentive for women's employment. During the discussion it was found that there was no awareness of the obligation to address social deliverables when public money is used for outsourcing essential services.

Almost all women who work in the public sector and who participated in focus groups answered positively when asked whether they think other women would like to work in this sector. Again,

this may be explained by the advantages that employment in the public sector represents for women. This was supported by their answers about previous private sector employment—almost half of the respondents had worked previously as cleaning ladies, waitresses, and in manufacturing. When explicitly asked whether they preferred their job in the private sector or their current one in the public sector, all responded that they preferred the latter.

Women are attracted to the public road maintenance sector because it offers regular contracts with paid social insurance and a convenient work schedule (until 2 or 3 P.M.). Working conditions were said to be more comfortable in the public sector compared to the private one. Furthermore, employment in the public sector can also facilitate access to other services women need. For example, in Fier, women have the opportunity to leave their children at the municipality kindergarten on their way to work.

6. Summary of key findings

The key findings of this assessment of women in the road construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance sector in Albania can be summarized as follows:

- **The construction sector employs approximately 82,000 people, or 7 percent of all people employed in the country, and is male-dominated; only 3 percent are women.** One of the main reasons for employing very few women is related to the prevailing gender stereotypes of what are considered “jobs for women” and “jobs for men.” These stereotypes are also fueled by vocational and university education, which channel girls and boys into gendered professional profiles and fields of studies.
- **Men’s engagement in the construction sector is diverse, while women’s employment is limited and covers a narrow spectrum.** Men working in the construction sector cover a wide range of age groups, professions, and job classifications, and they are also more mobile, since primary responsibility for family care is assigned to women. A considerable number of jobs are still considered informal, and construction is one of the main sectors of concern for this phenomenon.
- **Women in construction work either in high-skill jobs, such as engineers and accountants, or in elementary occupations as construction laborers.** Most women employed in the construction sector are over 40, which is related to the fact that this sector employs women as professionals with tertiary education (HR specialist, accountant, but also engineer). During the communist period, women were obliged to study also in technical, male-dominated university fields, which resulted in the considerable number of female engineers found today among women over the age of 40. This tendency continued into the 1990s but since then has disappeared.
- The **gender pay gap** for employees (which includes only formal employment) in the construction sector is 14 percent, in favor of men.
- Differences in the HR and recruitment practices between public road maintenance companies and private companies/contractors **determine the type of women’s employment in the construction sector.** They have a direct impact on the female labor supply and on the key entry point in the sector. The public sector offers secure jobs for women in terms of receiving no less than the minimum salary, regular contracts, paid social insurance, and convenient working schedules that the private construction sector does not always fully provide. The lack of childcare is another obstacle for women, and by being employed in the public sector, women may have greater access to public childcare near their place of work.

- **The recruitment process in private companies is mainly conducted through informal channels** and men's networks that have been present since university studies and which make it easier for men to find employment after obtaining a university degree. Collaboration between VET institutions, faculties, and private and public businesses in the construction sector was found to be missing, which negatively impacts internship opportunities for female students and recruitment of female graduates.
- **Private construction companies show limited interest in equal opportunity policies, and only women with tertiary education consider the private construction sector as an attractive employment opportunity.** Only four private companies/ADF contractors out of fourteen decided to participate and share their views and information with the research team. In general, female withdrawal from the construction sector is mainly caused by the high degree of informality and lack of childcare facilities close to the work place. As revealed in the comparison of data sources, women with tertiary education are predominantly working under formal contracts in this sector.
- **Lack of safe working conditions** in terms of physical risk, hygiene, and (sexual) harassment are disincentives to women's engagement in the construction sector but were found to be assigned limited (or no) importance by respondents.
- **Training was found to respond primarily to ad hoc needs** instead of following a human resource development plan with the aim to foster professional development of workers and improve overall standards and work conditions in the sector.
- **Current procurement practices/outsourcing to private construction/maintenance companies, which hire external labor, negatively impact local employment in general and women's employment opportunities in particular.** As a consequence, they diminish the socioeconomic benefits municipalities could gain from road construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance projects. Clauses that refer to obligatory social deliverables, such as the share of locally contracted workers per category, and the share of women to be employed, are not yet common practice. Direct collaboration with municipality labor offices is not a routine requirement. Local communities thereby lose out on employment, income, strengthening of the local skill base, ties with professional networks, and the sense of ownership. This in turn raises questions regarding community engagement and ultimately the sustainability of current road construction/rehabilitation/maintenance projects.
- Discussions on women's employment in road construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance are characterized by deeply ingrained gender attitudes and a **general lack of understanding** why equal opportunities for women and men are important for household income and resilience, and how this is linked with sustainable socioeconomic development and growth at local levels.
- For some individuals, promoting women in "nontraditional" jobs is reminiscent of former communist practice, when promoting women in technical fields was partially forced on people. Especially men can be very quick in **refuting efforts toward women's employment/empowerment** just on these grounds.
- **Lack of law enforcement**, such as the Labour Code and Occupational safety and health (OSH) regulations, remains to be addressed in procurement and practice in road construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance projects. This is also of relevance in view

of the foreseen opening of EU Chapters, in particularly Chapters 19, 23, and 24 of the EU *acquis*.

7. Recommendations and Gender Action Plan

Drawing from the findings of the above assessment and international best practice examples, this report sets out recommendations that stakeholders can consider implementing, in order to improve employment outcomes for the women and men working in road construction, rehabilitation and maintenance in Albania. For coherence, the recommendations and the associated actions are spread across the following six tracks.

Track 1: Contractual Obligations: Bidding Documents				
Recommendation		Action	Stakeholder	Comment
In bidding documents, include the requirement for a Gender Action Plan	1.1	Inclusion of the requirement for contractors to submit a Gender Action Plan (GAP) in the bidding documents, showing how contractors will reach out, recruit and retain women and thereby reach the targets for women's employment.	ADF	Action has been included in the Bidding Document (BD)
	1.2	Inclusion of the requirement for contractors to include gender indicators in ESHS metrics for measuring progress.	ADF	Gender indicators have been included in the Environmental, Social, Health and Safety (ESHS) Metrics of the BD
In bidding documents, include the requirement of a Code of Conduct	1.3	Inclusion of the requirement of a Code of Conduct (CoC) in bidding documents, applying to contractors, sub-contractors and workers involved in the road works.	ADF	Requirement for contractor to have CoC and to train staff on CoC has been included in BD
Conduct information session for potential bidders on all aspects related to gender requirements	1.4	Information session for potential bidders to explain all gender-related requirements contained in the bidding documents (including GAP, CoC) prior to bidders submitting their bids.	ADF	Information session has been delivered to the potential bidders
Promote women's employment by setting targets in bidding documents	1.5	Setting of targets for women's employment. ¹¹	ADF	LGUs aware of the role that public procurement can play in promoting women's employment

¹¹ Gender Equality Law, Article 16: "Obligations of the employer", para 4: Promote equal distribution of males and females in different job positions and within various categories of employees, through training and development of professional skills and other temporary measures".
Gender Equality Law, Article 22: "Temporary special measures in the area of job relations" (on vacancies advertisements and selection/hiring).

	1.6	Putting aside provisional sums to be paid to contractors against the agreed quantitative targets for women's employment (for future bidding).	ADF	
Revise legislation on public procurement	1.7	Amending and/or issuing a new public procurement law that foresees appropriate mechanisms (e.g. quotas, targets, provisional sum, etc.) to promote women's employment in future procurement. ¹²	GoA Public Procurement Agency	PPA aware of the role that public procurement can play in generating a gender-equal playing field in the private sector.

Track 2: Recruitment and Training

Recommendation		Action	Stakeholder	Comment
Recruit through formal channels and ensure outreach to women	2.1	Official advertising of vacancies - particularly in media which women access - and in places where women can see them.	Contractors Employment offices	
	2.2	In vacancy announcements , inclusion of equal opportunities statement and explicit statement that women are encouraged to apply for jobs at private construction companies.	Contractors Employment offices	
	2.3	Pro-active promotion and referral of women job seekers/candidates in the wider construction sector (beyond public companies).	Employment Offices	
	2.4	Development, approval, budgeting and implementation of specific active labor market programs for women at local level, focusing on the variety of jobs women can assume in the road construction, rehabilitation and maintenance sector.	Local Economic Councils [decision] Employment Offices [cooperation] Ministry of Finance [funds]	
Increase the share of hired labour who are residents in the area/place of project development.	2.5	Definition of a target for women and men who will be hired from the area where road construction/maintenance is undertaken.	Local Government Units	
	2.6	Routine sharing of vacancies with local labor offices and placement of requests for referrals especially of female labor.	Contractors Employment Offices	
	2.7	Establishment of a referral system for graduates of engineering faculties and VET institutions/schools; pro-active recruitment of female students/graduates through this system.	Contractors VET institutions	

¹² Gender Equality Law, Article 8, para 2: "Cases when the state takes temporary special measures, including legal provisions, which aim at speeding up the establishment of a factual equality between females and males shall not constitute gender discrimination. Such measures shall stop existing once the gender equality goals for which they were taken are reached."

			Faculty of Engineering	
Improve the training curricula for each of the positions and roles in the company.	2.8	Expansion and intensification of the training courses /opportunities offered to women (beyond common courses on job safety and security).	Contractors VET institutions Local Labor Offices	
	2.9	Skills and career advancement trainings for women and men workers with high potential.	Contractors	
	2.10	Meetings with local labor offices and VET institutions on adapting their curricula so they are in accordance with the needs of the sector as well as of those of the workforce, and for conducting respective trainings.	Contractors VET institutions Local Labor Offices	

Track 3: Human Resource Policies and Practices

Recommendation		Action	Stakeholder	Comment
Implement the Labor Code and explain working arrangements with all current workers and potential employees	3.1	Awareness sessions for all current employees, and full disclosure of information for potential future employees, on the contractual working arrangements, including remuneration, pay scales, health and safety regulations, applicability of parental leave, vacation and sickness benefits, and similar.	Contractors	
	3.2	Adoption of a Code of Conduct that includes the conditions of employment, in line with the labor code.	Contractors	
Develop and implement the Code of Conduct and Gender Action Plan, and monitor compliance/implementation	3.3	Familiarization of new workers with the contents of the CoC at the moment of recruitment, explaining ways of monitoring and consequences in case of violation.	Contractors	
	3.4	Information sessions on CoC provided to all existing staff , explaining ways of monitoring and consequences in case of violation.	Contractors	
	3.5	Development of the company-specific Gender Action Plan defining measures and temporary special measures to increase women's participation in the construction sector, with defined timeline, indicators, and budget.	Contractors	Document pack includes suggestions on actions that GAP is expected to cover. Together with the detailed recommendations and associated actions covered in the final round-table session, this should be sufficient for

				contractor to build its GAP.
	3.6	Close collaboration with local subcontractors on the requirements ensuing from Gender Action Plan and Code of Conduct ; and in undertaking joint affirmative measures for increasing and maintaining a pool of women professionals and workers.	Contractors	
	3.7	Establishment of a system for monitoring progress in implementing the company-specific Gender Action Plan.	Contractors	BD document includes a number of indicators that should be reported through ESHS metrics for progress reports. Contractors are expected to build on the proposed indicators and elaborate the full set of indicators that correspond to the GAP submitted by them
	3.8	Establishment of a system for monitoring sub-contractors' gender equality obligations , in parallel to technical and financial ones.	Contractors	
Prevent any forms of gender-based violence including sexual harassment. (Track 4, 'Health & Safety')	3.9	Development/distribution of the anti-harassment policy to all new and existing workers.	Contractors Sub-contractors Public construction companies	
	3.10	Explanation sessions on the anti-harassment policy to all new and existing workers.	Contractors Sub-contractors Public construction companies	
	3.11	Incorporation of a session on harassment – including sexual harassment - and on the company's policies and responses in the sequence of the training sessions workers attend.	Contractors Sub-contractors Public construction companies	
Set up a practice of regular direct communication with workers as	3.12	Periodic meetings with women and men road workers , where workers can raise concerns, ask questions related to their employment, and voice gender-sensitive issues such as breach of code of conduct or (sexual) harassment (separate meetings with women and men groups, in addition to mixed general meetings).	Contractors Sub-contractors	

a first step towards establishing a grievance redress mechanism for workers				
Establish a company employee grievance mechanism that is accessible to women and men	3.13	Setting up of a workplace grievance mechanism (or using/updating existing company mechanism, if any) for all workers, in case they encounter problems and issues in the workplace that may come from illegal actions such as discrimination, sexual harassment, concerns about wages etc. ¹³ Note: Workplace concerns are usually different from issues raised by project-affected parties and other stakeholders. Project has a separate grievance mechanism to address them.	Contractors Sub-contractors	
	3.14	Inclusion of the grievance mechanism into the internal procedure for workers' complaints.	Contractors Sub-contractors	
	3.15	Gender training for all individuals involved in managing the grievance mechanism.	Contractors Sub-contractors	
Establish female role models by investing in and promoting experienced female workers on all levels	3.16	Development of concrete measures to increase the number of women in specific positions in construction companies.	Contractors in collaboration with VET institutions and the Faculty of Engineering	
	3.17	Coaching and mentoring session for young women professionals as engineers and technicians.	Contractors in collaboration with VET institutions and the Faculty of Engineering	
	3.18	In all electronic and hard-copy materials promoting or informing about the company/sector/field of study (web-site, leaflets, posters, banners, spots, social media postings, etc.): inclusion of reference to equal opportunities for women, and preparation and use of visuals with equal depiction of men and women at work .	Contractors in collaboration with VET institutions and the Faculty of Engineering	

Track 4: Health & Safety and Physical Infrastructure

Recommendation		Action	Stakeholder	Comment
Improve safety and security at	4.1	Trainings for all key management staff on workplace health and safety provisions.	Contractors Sub-contractors	

¹³Workplace grievance mechanism, which is a part of the Environmental and Social Standard 2 (ESS2) on Labor and working conditions of the World Bank's new Environment and Social Framework, is now a requirement for all World Bank supported projects approved from October 1 2018. <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/149761530216793411/ESF-GN2-June-2018.pdf>. Whilst this project was approved before this date, workplace grievance mechanism is suggested to be developed as a good practice.

the work place for all workers			Public construction companies	
	4.2	Information sessions for personnel and workers about internal policies/regulations on workplace health and safety provisions.	Contractors Sub-contractors Public construction companies	
	4.3	Routine training sessions to all <u>new</u> workers on health and safety hazards and the ways how to protect themselves.	Contractors Sub-contractors Public construction companies	
	4.4	Provision of adequate working conditions and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to workers of both sexes.	Contractors Sub-contractors Public construction companies	
	4.5	Purchasing and distributing the required number of PPE customized by the anthropometric specifications of women and men workers.	Contractors Sub-contractors Public construction companies	
	4.6	Production and installation of posters/information boards with information about the respective policies in effect at the working sites.	Contractors Sub-contractors Public construction companies	
	Provide basic infrastructure in the workplace.	4.7	Installation of separate toilets for male and female workers with access to water and soap close to the actual places where women work.	Contractors Sub-contractors Public construction companies
4.8		Installation of lighting inside toilets and in the area through which women access these facilities.	Contractors Sub-contractors Public construction companies	
4.9		Provision of adequate premises where women can get ready before starting work, i.e. accessible and clean places equipped with changing room and a toilet (in case work takes place at night, provision of facilities in an area that is well illuminated).	Contractors Sub-contractors Public construction companies	

Improve workers' access to childcare facilities.	4.10	Adoption of a regulation on women employed by public road maintenance companies to register their children in the Kindergartens close to the workplace/close to their home.	Local Government Units Contractors Private construction companies	
	4.11	Negotiations between private companies and municipalities on modalities for subsidizing municipal child care as part of companies' corporate social responsibility (CSR) engagement.	Local Government Units Contractors Private construction companies	

Track 5: Developing the Talent Pipeline

Recommendation		Action	Stakeholder	Comment
Establish Memorandum of Understanding between construction companies, VET institutions, and the University /Faculty of Engineering	5.1	Establishment of a formal network and a mechanism that links female students with companies and support them in finding internship placements and successfully submit job applications .	Contractors VET institutions University /Faculty of Engineering	
	5.2	Setting of an obligation for international contractors to train/retrain young national talent, including a target for female talent , to gradually enhance local female and male capacity.	ADF (International contractors)	
Enhance implementation of gender-responsive actions in the VET system.	5.3	Inclusion of a construction curriculum in the program of the Multifunctional Center (VET school) in Kamza, or in another relevant public VET institution.	Ministry of Finance & Economy MFCs	
Organize road work site-visits for young girls and boys from local communities	5.4	Road work site visits for young girls and boys at local level.	Construction companies, in collaboration with secondary schools and Local Government Units	
Participate in Girls' Day	5.5	Organizing of Girls' Days in fields of studies relevant for road construction/maintenance.	Construction companies in collaboration with VET institutions	

Track 6: Institutional Capacity to address Gender Equality systematically

Recommendation		Action	Stakeholder	Comment
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Tasks related to the engagement of gender specialists	6.1	Oversight by ADF’s gender specialist of implementation, drafting of high-quality documents, and provision of guidance to colleagues as well as potential and actual contractors.	ADF	
	6.2	Establishment of liaison and exchange between ADF gender specialist and Gender Equality Employees at municipal level.	ADF	
	6.3	Involvement of the municipality’s Gender Equality Employee on the issue of addressing gender issues related to gender in the infrastructure sector and in procurement. (If this is not feasible, nomination of a gender specialist in charge of ensuring that gender equality goals are consistently incorporated into the municipality’s operations in the infrastructure sector).	Local Government Units	
Address women’s employment in public companies under local government and in public projects outsourced to private companies.	6.4	Preparation of concrete regulations with gender-sensitive criteria for recruitment in public companies engaging in road construction/maintenance.	Local Government Units	
	6.5	Prior to advertising jobs in public projects, identification of the positions that women will be encouraged to apply for , their social category, and the skills they require.	Local Government Units	
	6.6	Preparation of training modules for these specific positions in collaboration with VET institutions and conduct respective trainings for interested women.	Local Government Units VET institutions	
	6.7	Introduction of gender balanced composition of the Municipality’s supervision team (one woman, one man).	Local Government Units	
	6.8	Introduction of gender sensitive indicators into currently used performance monitoring formats/methods.	Local Government Units	
	6.9	Development of the Municipality’s Equal Opportunity policy document or updating current ones to include issues such as anti-(sexual) harassment, equal pay policy and code of conduct	Local Government Units	
	6.10	Monitoring of enforcement of Equal Opportunity policy in public companies.	Local Government Units	
	6.11	Trainings on gender-related aspects - including provisions/regulations on anti-(sexual) harassment, equal opportunities, equal pay, gender-sensitive monitoring and code of conduct - to all key management and decision-making LGU staff.	Local Government Units	
	Build internal gender capacity for understanding, absorbing and supporting measures described across all Tracks.	6.12	Gender training for management.	Contractors Sub-contractors
6.13		Training on gender-sensitive performance indicators.	Contractors Sub-contractors	
6.14		Training on monitoring compliance with provisions in Equal Opportunity Policy, Code of Conduct, Gender Action Plan; and for effective operation of the grievance redress mechanism, including referral and follow-up action.	Contractors Sub-contractors	

Strengthen external communication	6.15	Presentation of men as well as women road workers in visual PR materials.	ADF Construction companies Local Government Units	
	6.16	Consistent usage of images which represent the entire client base serviced , i.e. women and men of local communities benefiting from road construction/maintenance.	ADF Construction companies Local Government Units	
	6.17	Use of non-sexist, gender-sensitive language, the respectful non-sexualized depiction of women, and provision of female role models based on women's competence and professional skills in all public presentations, print and visual media .	ADF Construction companies Local Government Units	
	6.18	Public reporting on the sex and age composition of workers in progress reports.	ADF Construction companies Local Government Units	
	6.19	Promotion of the success achieved in increasing women's employment in the road construction/maintenance sector.	ADF Construction companies Local Government Units	

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