



# **GIVE WOMEN THE CHANCE IN POLITICS**

through leadership positions

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Prishtina



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## Summary

The discourse on gender representation in political processes in Kosovo is dominated by the topic of gender quota of 30% in legislative institutions, at both local and central level. Gender quota in the legislative institutions is used as justification as if women have enough space in politics and that Kosovo cannot do more than this.

This analysis, however, discusses gender representation in politics beyond legislative institutions. This analysis looks into the opportunity for inclusion in the executive branch, in appointed positions in executive branches, where there is stronger decision-making power, particularly in Kosovo, and gender representation in political parties, which are responsible for appointing people in these political positions. Furthermore, this public policy analysis provides concrete proposals for promoting policies of gender representation in the executive branch at central and local level. It is encouraging at this time that, firstly, there is enough space in the executive branch, at both levels, to promote gender representation and secondly, Kosovo is currently in the phase of reviewing the legislation which may have an impact in this regard.

In this analysis, you may find the level of representation in the executive branch of Government of Kosovo and more concretely, in the three leadership positions where selection entirely depends from the party and leadership structures of the party: the positions of deputy prime ministers, ministers and deputy ministers. This analysis also addresses the appointments of political entities within coalitions, which is an important factor in addressing gender representation in this branch of government.

Whereas, at the municipal level, we analyze gender representation in municipal departments and party candidacies for Mayor's position, and appointments of parties for deputy mayors and chairpersons of municipal assemblies. Then, analysis addresses the gender representation in main political entities in the country since it is there where the problems of gender representation in executive branch and other appointed positions begin. In addition to bodies of party presidencies and steering councils as decisive bodies for delegating party officials in leadership positions, this analysis also addresses branches of parties and situation of gender representation at this level.

Findings in this analysis indicate that situation of gender representation in leading political positions is far from being good, but that is often blamed on women. For the purpose of this analysis, we have interviewed women in political positions from all main parties, who have expressed main challenges they have faced in political life in getting such political positions.

Finally, this analysis aims to advance policies of gender representation in appointed positions in the central and local level, so the same provides concrete proposals that would ensure better gender representation.

## Why women in politics?

**K**osovo population consists of an almost equal number of people from both genders, females and males<sup>1</sup>. Thus, it would be natural that a representative democracy would produce institutions with similar gender structure. In reality, this rarely happens in any country of the world. Even in the Scandinavian countries, where gender representation in public institutions is exemplary, they needed a long time and focus in order to achieve the results they have today. European cities with more developed democracy and emancipated society that are led by women, such as Paris, Rome, Madrid, Barcelona, Sofia and Prague<sup>2</sup>, but also countries like Germany and United Kingdom, have gone through challenges and have made many efforts to achieve an atmosphere of equality between the two genders.

Though it is unrealistic to expect that soon there will be a complete gender balance in policymaking institutions, current situation is too discouraging and indicates that a special attention is required in order to, at least reach the minimum gender quota. What is encouraging about the future of women in politics is that the survey of Democracy Plus shows that 89.3% of the people see women as less inclined to corruption than men<sup>3</sup>. When considering that the same survey shows that the element that 60.6% of the people evaluate most in a governance is governance without corruption, it shows that women in Kosovo are able to be successful in Kosovo if they would be given the chance.

Beyond gender representation, inclusion of women in politics is required for public policies and for governing the country. Women in politics pay more attention to policies that foster healthy families, social policies and achievement of political consensus.

In order to address this situation, however, it should be admitted that there is an issue that emerges from a problem. If you listen to many politicians, and even more citizens, they are not under the impression that Kosovo is challenged by the low gender representation in political decision-making positions. Reason for such impression is the fact that Kosovo has a gender quota of 30% in legislative institutions at the central level, Assembly of Kosovo and the local level, municipal assembly. While this is true and there is a progress in gender representation, on the other hand, in the appointed positions in the executive branch, where there is greater decision-making power in Kosovo, women representation is rather limited (this may be easily seen by looking at this publication). Without the gender quota, quite easily the executive branch would have had a low gender representation, both in ministries and municipalities.

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<sup>1</sup> Official statistics indicate that the gender structure of population in Kosovo is 50.3% men and 49.7% women.

<sup>2</sup> iNews. Meet the new female mayors of Europe's major cities (June 20, 2016) <https://goo.gl/7hWZWt> Accessed on: 15 November 2018

<sup>3</sup> Democracy Plus (D+) Survey on Civic Engagement conducted on December, 2018.

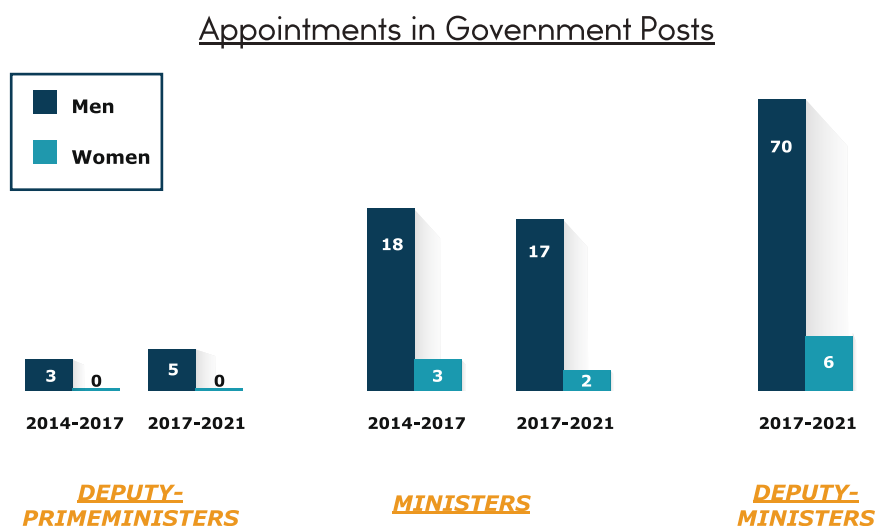
It is true that gender representation in appointed positions is made difficult by government coalitions that consist of many parties, because if one party appoints only three or four people in the coalition, chances are that all of them would be men. Therefore, it is necessary for women to be given the opportunity in politics, which is also the aim of this analysis and its findings and recommendations.

## Appointed posts

### - Government of Kosovo

In order to make it through in politics, women have numerous challenges, which will be addressed below. Gender quota of 30% in legislative institutions contributes in overcoming these challenges for some time. However, as we have stated above, in the executive political institutions where appointments are made by the political entity and which are important decision-making positions and the most powerful ones, there is almost no gender representation. This said, there are many political positions for which the head is appointed by the political entity that has won or which is part of the winning coalition. Here, there is a possibility for women to be given a chance for representation in politics and in the civil service, in decision-making branches, considering societal, family and economic challenges they face on daily basis in the party and society.

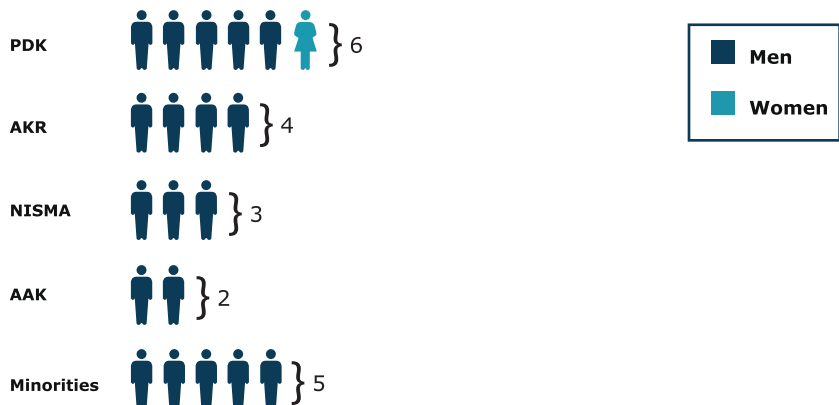
At the central level, in the executive branch of the government, there are three leadership positions where selection completely depends from the party and leading structures of the party: positions of deputy prime ministers, ministers and deputy ministers. Even in the legislative branch, in the Assembly of Kosovo, position of the Speaker of the Assembly belongs to the party that wins the highest number of votes in elections.



In this same institution, leadership positions of parliamentary group and representative of parliamentary group in the Presidency of the Assembly are appointed positions.

Whereas at the local level, appointed positions are the position of deputy mayor and municipal directors, while in municipal assemblies the position of chairperson is elected from among members of the assembly. Furthermore, municipal directors lead quite important municipal sectors starting from education, culture and health to local economic development, finance and public services. These positions before the elections of 2007 were civil service positions, but with the changing of direct election for mayors, the same became political positions that are decided by the entity/entities that win local elections.

### Gender Representation in the Haradinaj Government



The data indicate that although there are enough opportunities for appointment in these leadership positions for which decision is taken by political entities, representation of women is very low. Even when the number of positions in these levels was increased, women representation was low. This is proved by the last two terms of the Government, where we see that no women was appointed to any position of a deputy prime minister.

### Gender Representation in the Mustafa Government






In the term 2014-2017 there were three deputy prime ministers and all of them were men. In the current term, though number of deputy prime ministers increased to five, again no woman was appointed. Whereas, it is known that position of the Prime Minister was never held by a woman in Kosovo and there were no women candidacies for prime minister by parties. This is also because all major parties in the country are led by men.

In previous terms, women held position of prime minister, such as Mimoza Kusari-Lila and Edita Tahiri, but the situation is not the same in the last two terms, though the number of such positions has increased.

Positions of ministers are even more important as they lead specific sectors with executive competences. Here maybe remains the most problematic part of women representation in politics. Though in the election campaign of 2007, the leader of pre-election coalition that won majority of votes had promised that future government would have 50% of women representation<sup>4</sup>, a promise that was realized extremely poorly.



*"Women will make 50% of the future government of Kosovo"*

**- Kadri Veseli**  
(28 May, 2017)

Following establishment of the Government, only two women were appointed in ministerial positions, in contrast of the other gender, which took 17 such positions, a number which does not include five positions of deputy prime ministers and the Prime Minister, which as we said earlier, are headed by men. Furthermore, the party of Mr. Kadri Veseli, PDK, which has the highest number of ministerial positions, appointed only one woman in ministerial position.

It should be mentioned that a year later, the Government remained with only one woman in position of minister, i.e., in the Ministry of European Integration, which has more of a coordination rather than executive role.

Gender structure of these parties may justify non-appointment of women in ministerial positions; however, such justification is not valid for positions of deputy ministers. Here, though people speak of 100 deputy minister positions in current government, out of 70 of those that we were able to identify, only five are women, while we were not able to identify the other 30, due to the lack of transparency in their appointment. In previous government (2014-2017) which had 47 reported deputy ministers<sup>5</sup>, women representation was not even close to the number of male ministers. Out of 28 first deputy ministers whose names were made public, only four of them were women<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> *Gazeta Express*. "Veseli: Next Government, 50 percent woment" (28 May, 2017). <https://goo.gl/SFwQJm>. (Translated from Albanian). Accessed on 5 November 2018

<sup>5</sup> *Lajmi.net*. "How Many Deputy- Ministers Were in Mustafa Government" (28 July, 2015). <https://goo.gl/82Ntcg>. (Translated from Albanian). Accessed on 19 November 2018

<sup>6</sup> *Bota Sot*. *Mustafa Government is Complete: 28 Deputy-Ministers are Appointed* (8 December, 2017). <https://goo.gl/xyzurk>. (Translated from Albanian). Accessed on 18 November 2018

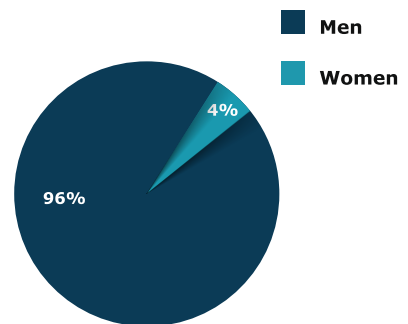
It can be clearly seen that even in positions where political parties have the possibility to appoint people, gender aspect is neglected. Many political officers may ask why it is so important to appoint women in positions in the government cabinet. The answer to this question may be given easily if we analyze carefully the effect of women representation as ministers, deputy prime ministers or deputy ministers. Incumbents of these positions receive media attention, take decisions that draw people's attention and challenge persons to get politically prepared. This experience in ministerial positions makes women more competitive in elections. Just take any woman that has served as a minister in Kosovo and you will see the popularity that she has acquired either among the people or concretely among voters.

## - Municipal Government

It may seem hard to believe, but local level in general is not any better than the central level regarding the appointment of women in leadership political positions. However, a positive development in this regard is the will of some individual municipalities to give importance to the appointment of women in leadership positions.

The rate of women running for the position of Mayor is by far the worst. Out of 208 persons that were selected by political entities to stand for local elections 2017, only eight were women. Therefore, only 4% of candidates were women. Standing for mayors of municipalities depends on local party structures and internal competition. However, it is obvious that there is a lack of support for women in political parties.

Mayoral Candidates  
Elections 2017



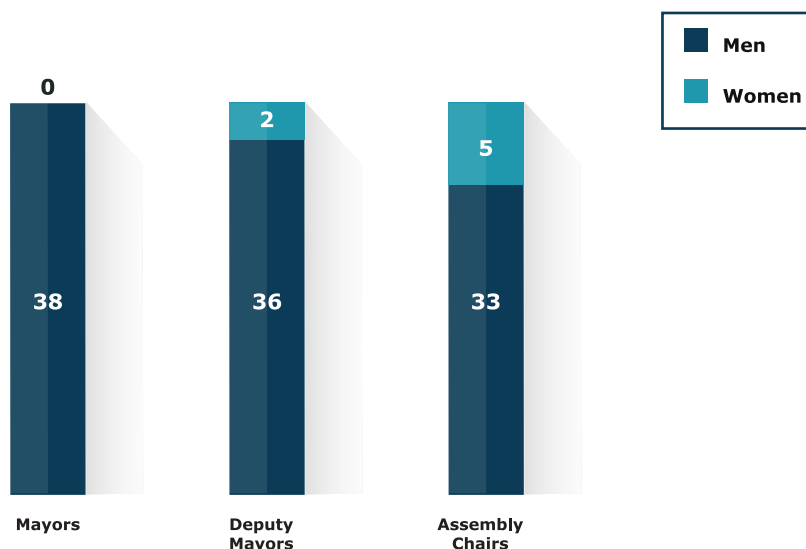
Considering the fact that 2,398 women ran for municipal assemblies in 38 municipalities, then it is clearly seen that there were many women that sought public positions<sup>7</sup>. Election of the mayor, of course, depends from voters. Due to many factors that go beyond gender issues, in these elections none of female candidates that ran for mayor in eight municipalities were elected by voters. In fact, in the history of democratic elections in Kosovo, only one woman was ever elected as a mayor of a municipality<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> EU Observation Mission. "Preliminary Statement: Two faces of Kosovo municipal elections" (24 October 2017). <https://goo.gl/DGYaoS> Accessed on: 12 November 2018

<sup>8</sup> In 2013 Mimoza Kusari-Lila was elected in Gjakova municipality and she remains the only woman ever elected in the position of the mayor.

However, other important leadership positions in the municipality depend from political entities, which can give good example for voters to support women politicians. But this chance was not given to women by the parties they belonged to. In 38 municipalities of Kosovo, there are only two female deputy mayors, in Suhareka municipality and Mamusha, while only five chairwomen of assemblies in Ferizaj, Gjilan, Skenderaj, Shtime and Fushe Kosova.

### Leading Positions in Municipalities 2017 - 2021 Mandate

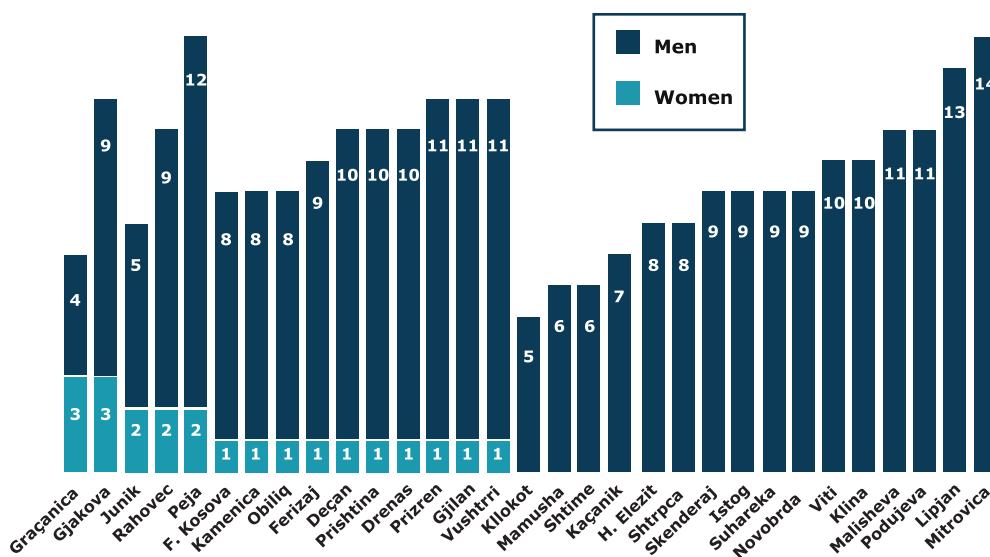


Greater opportunities for appointment of women in leadership positions at the local level are in municipal departments. These departments as of 2007 are political positions and people are appointed to these positions by political entities with whom the mayor is in coalition. Number of these departments is not regulated by law and is at the discretion of the mayor. Number of departments differs from one municipality to another, where for example Municipality of Mamusha operates with six departments, while the Municipality of Prishtina with 16. Thus, there are enough opportunities to appoint professional women, but this opportunity is not being given to them.

However, in the term 2009-2013, only 22 out of 303 municipal departments that were identified in 31 municipalities were led by women (7%). No woman was head of department in 17 municipalities, while in 11 municipalities only one department was led by a woman. Municipality of Gračanica was the only one that has had a gender balance in municipal departments, with three women and four men.

2009 - 2013 Mandate

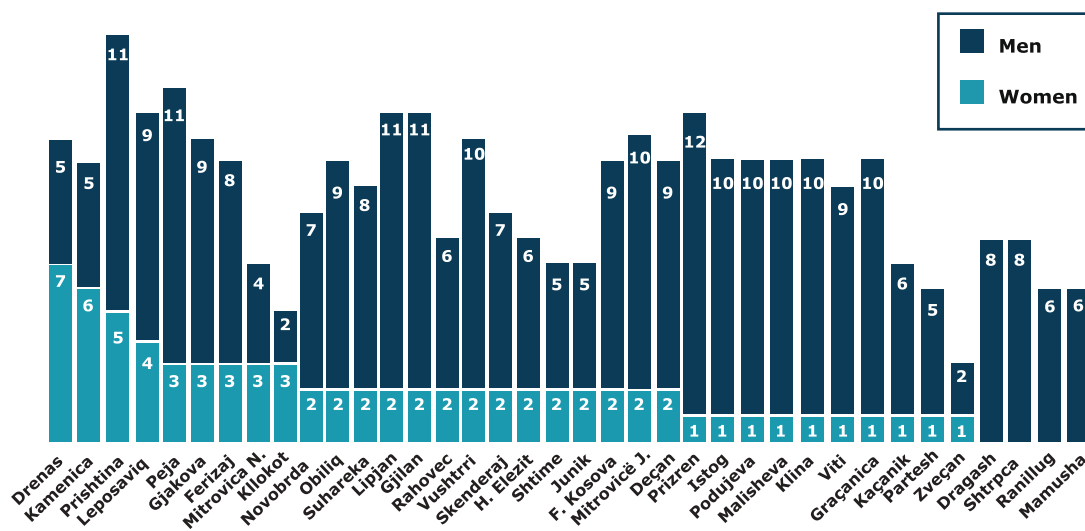
Municipal Directorates and Gender Representation



In the current term, appointment of women in municipal departments has improved a little, but it is still at the level of 19% and this is because 2 municipalities have appointed the same number of women and men to municipal departments. From 316 municipal departments identified in 30

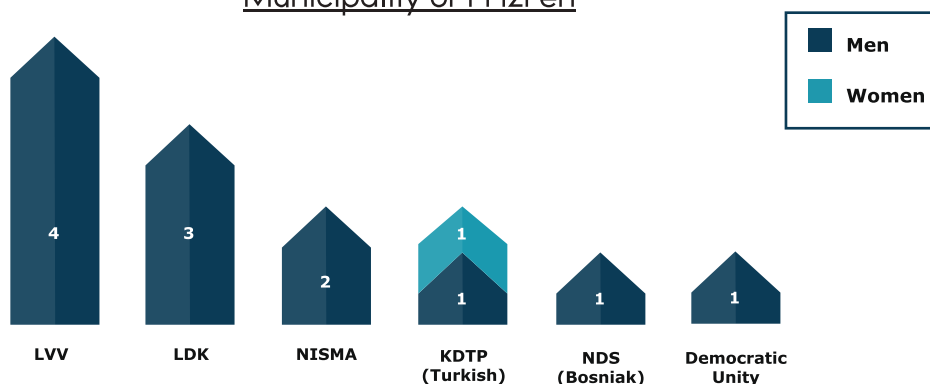
2017 - 2021 Mandate

Municipal Directorates and Gender Representation



municipalities, 60 departments are led by women. A good example in this term was given by Municipality of Kamenica and Municipality of Drenas which have a complete gender balance in positions of heads of departments. These two municipalities show that when there a will, gender representation may be ensured even at the level of 50% women and 50% men.

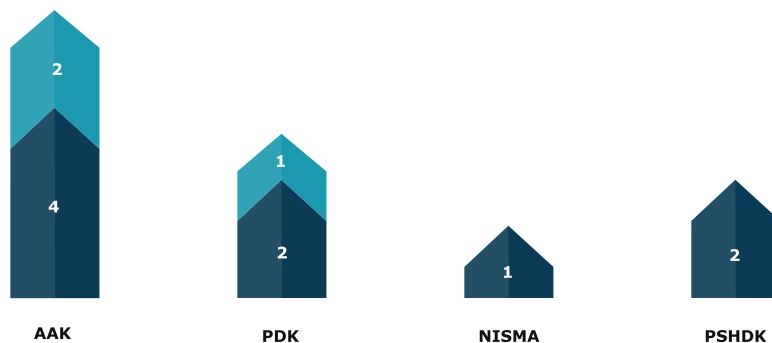
Municipal Directorate  
Municipality of Prizren



Municipal Directorate  
Municipality of Ferizaj



Municipal Directorate  
Municipality of Gjakova



## Elected posts

### - Central level

In the Assembly of Kosovo there is a gender quota of 30% and is the only central institution whose members are elected with direct vote. One way to illustrate that not every elected woman has come to her position through gender quota is the identification of 10 most voted deputies by political parties. The data are not satisfactory; however, they indicate that there is support for women inclusion in politics, though it is rather small. Inappropriate support is observed mostly among deputies from PAN and LAA coalition - only two out of 10 most voted deputies were women. A slightly better situation is with LVV and LS. In LVV we see that three out of 10 most voted deputies were women, whereas in LS four out of nine deputies were women.

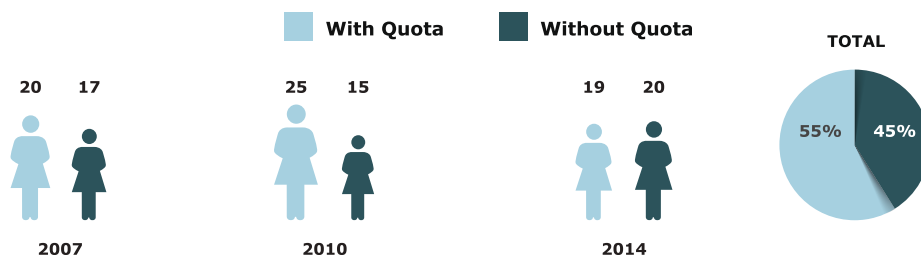


If we analyze the Assembly of Kosovo as a whole, we see a situation that does not coincide with the prejudices of the society. Due to numerous counter campaigns or because of ignorance, there is a perception in the society that vast majority of female deputies have managed to become deputies only through the quota, and that if there was no quota women participation would have been even lower. On the other hand, this opinion does not exist for the central level since in the last three government terms, 45% of female deputies were elected purely from the votes of citizens and not from the quota<sup>9</sup>. In fact, there are improvements observed in this regard along the years. While in elections 2010 we have the biggest number of female deputies elected with the support of quota;

<sup>9</sup> National Democratic Institute (NDI). Kosovo: Overcoming Hurdles on Political Participation of Women. February 2015 <https://goo.gl/ZFTx5M>

2014 indicates a significant improvement, with 51% of female deputies elected by the votes of citizens - without the help of quota. This does not mean that the data are satisfactory, but it is encouraging to see an increasing trend of citizens trust for women candidates.

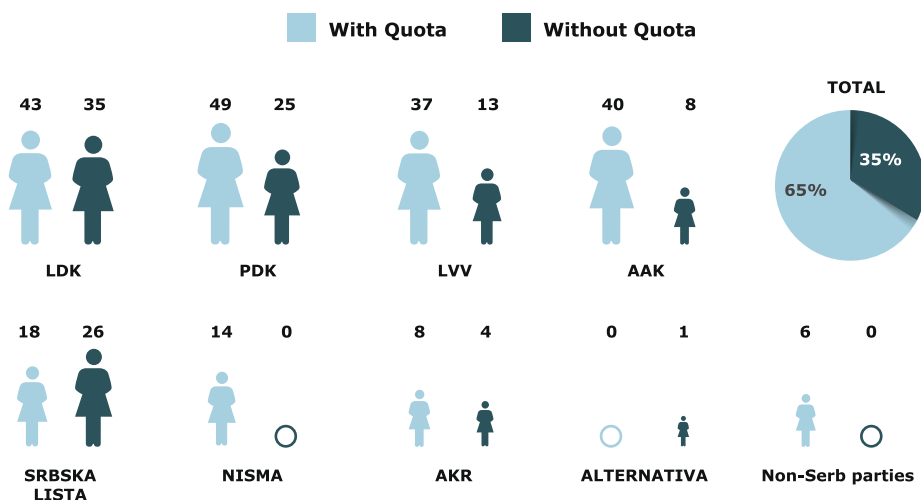
### Women Elected in the Assembly of Kosovo



### - Local Level

Situation is not the same at the local level. The data from local elections are even more concerning. Starting with candidates in local elections of 2017, where only 34% of 6,887 total candidates were women. While we see that after elections for municipal assemblies, the gender quota has played a very important role. 65% of all female members of municipal assemblies have reached there thanks to the gender quota<sup>10</sup>.

### Women Elected in Municipal Assemblies Elections 2017



<sup>10</sup> Women Leadership Academy (WLA). Gender (In) Equality in Decision Making at the Local Level. May 2018 <https://goo.gl/bAsAzT>

Such data become even more concerning by the fact that even the biggest parties in Kosovo are facing the same problem - their female candidates are elected through gender quota and not entirely because of high number of votes. This implies that support for female candidates within the party continues to remain low, even though these parties have much more influence on citizens and financial resources than smaller parties do.

What may be seen from the election result data is that the higher the number of members of a party in municipal assemblies the higher the percentage of members elected by quota. If we analyze three parties with most female members, LDK, PDK and VV, we see that percentage of women elected with the help of gender quota is at a very high scale. LDK stands a little better, with little more than half of female candidates (565) elected thanks to the quota. Whereas, PDK and LVV are relatively the same, with 67% of female members elected with the help of quota.

*2,398 women ran for municipal assemblies in local elections 2017, from 6,887 total candidates.*

Local level should have had a different overview, considering the fact that candidates are closer to citizens compared to Kosovo Assembly deputies. Therefore, it should be easier to win citizens trust, subsequently having more elected female members only with the votes of citizens and not the quota. On the other hand, lack of female candidates for municipal assemblies cannot be justified merely by their hesitation, since engagement and work requirements in this institution are much lower compared to those in the Parliament of Kosovo. Therefore, what should be understood is that the biggest fault for non-inclusion of women in politics lies with the political parties by not supporting and not giving them proper trust.



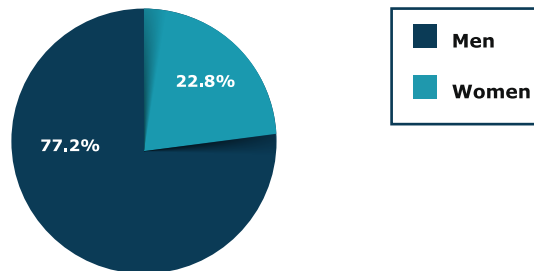
## Party positions

### - Central level

In the organizational aspect, in addition to their leader - presidency, political parties have the General Council and party branches. Functionality of the party depends on the functioning and cooperation of these structures with each other. While the presidency is responsible for orientation of the party, this presidency is elected by the General Council, whereas in the latter participate members who have been promoted from their positions in party branches. Thus, party structures are steps that should be passed to come to key positions in the party. But how many women pass through all these steps to come to key desired positions?

There is a perception in Kosovo not only that women are not represented sufficiently in public institutions, but they lack support even within their own political parties. For various reasons, a number of women in key party positions is very small, particularly when compared to number of men in such positions.

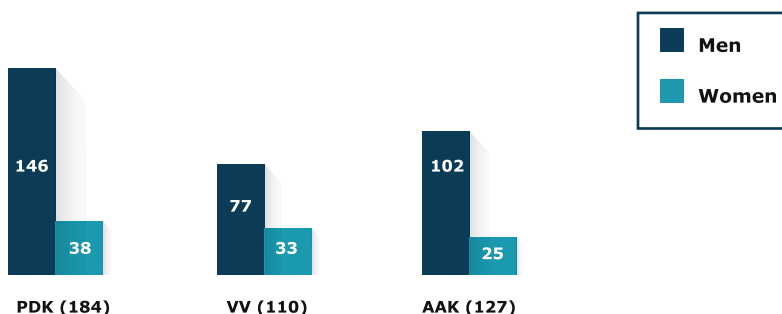
General Councils of Parties  
(Gender Representation)



In General Councils, according to the data published by political parties, women are represented with only 22.8% of members, which in numbers is only 96 female members. It is concerning the fact that out of three political parties, PDK, VV and AAK, whose data were accessible, parties with highest number of members in General Council have the least female members. VV is an exception, as it is the closest to having equal representation of women and men in this structure, with 33 female members or 30% of the total. PDK is the worst, as it has the Council with the highest number of members (184) and the lowest women representation, with only 38 female members or 20% in total.

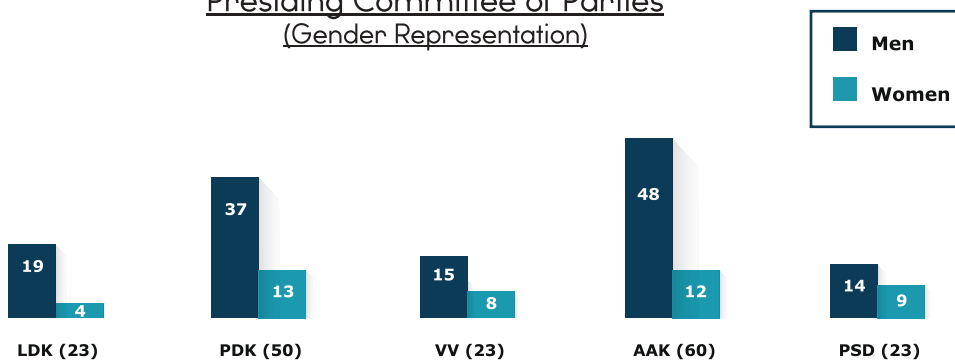
Of course, these figures have an impact also on figures of women representation in higher levels in the party. We may assume that these councils, which lack women representation, will elect the presidency that will have the same problem and gender structure. In fact, if we analyze political parties in Kosovo we see that this in fact corresponds with the reality. AAK as the party with a presidency with highest number of members has only 12 women out of 60 members. Same situation is with PDK that is ranked after AAK regarding the total number of members of presidency, which out of 50 members has only 13 women, or 26%.

### General Councils by Party



LDK is significantly different from above mentioned parties by the total number of members in the presidency, but similar to previous parties, it does not have equal representation of women and men in this aspect. The closest to the required 50% representation are VV and PSD with a representation of 37.5% and 39.1% respectively, of women in the presidency. In these parties, the data that are open for the public indicate that situation is similar both in the General Council and in the presidency. Low women representation in key party positions is alarming, and this could also be one of the factors why this women non-representation also reflects in institutions.

### Presiding Committee of Parties (Gender Representation)

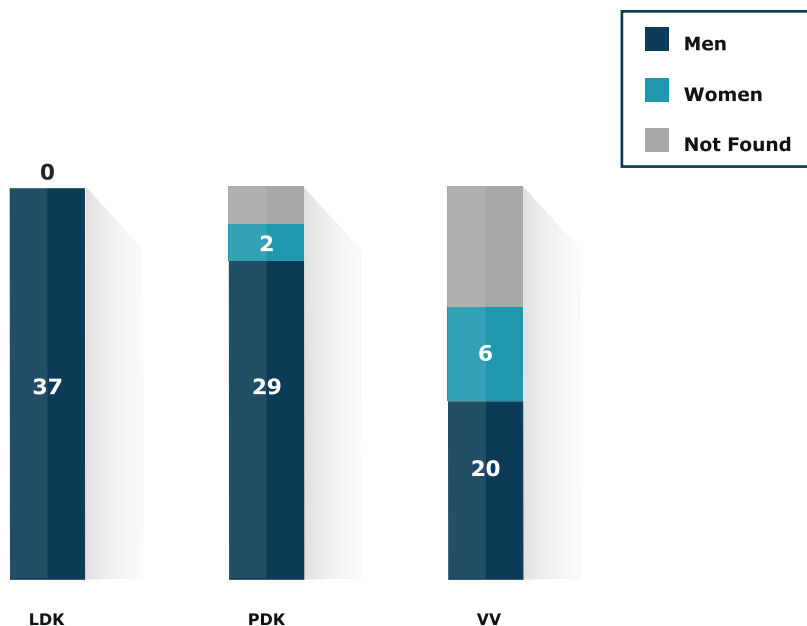


## - Local Level

A widely known fact in the political scene is that there are very little chances for a politician to be nominated for mayor, without serving previously as president of the party branch in the municipality. Thus the promotion in the party and politics starts from the branch of the party. But, how much space is given to women to take the leadership positions in these branches? From three political parties that we have analyzed, LDK, VV and PDK which together have 94 branches in municipalities of Kosovo, only 8 of them are headed by women. LDK has 37 branches in Kosovo and does not have any branch headed by a woman. It is followed by PDK, where out of 31 of its branches, only 2 branches have been trusted to be led by a woman.

Whereas VV seems to be slightly better compared to these two parties, but the data again remain alarming. Only six out of 26 branches are led by women. Reasons for such lack of women representation in politics may be attributed to different factors, but the fact remains that women continue to be underrepresented in all structures of the party - in all parties.

### Political Party Branches



## Women Representation Challenges

The findings indicate that women participation in decision-making positions within parties is very low. This affects not only political party policies but also the political world outside the parties. This phenomenon was tried to be camouflaged under the pretext that women themselves are not interested to take key position in the party, or party candidacy. However, from interviews conducted with women involved in political scene in Kosovo it may be understood that in fact, odds are against women in the very first steps. Running for elections, as one of simplest steps to come to leadership positions, requires time, energy and, above all, finances.

According to interviewed women, when it comes to female candidates, these three factors are compromised in the very beginning of the process. Double standards, men dominated party structures and unfair allocation of finances within the party are only some of the reasons why reaching leadership positions is more challenging for women than for men.

### - Running for Elections

Beyond the illustrated situation of political position of women within political parties, a continuous challenge remains the running for elections, both local and central. From interviews conducted with female deputies and female members of municipal assemblies of different political parties in Kosovo, it turned out that difficulties in running for elections begin with complete distrust of parties towards women, and continue further with electoral campaign and all the way to elections.

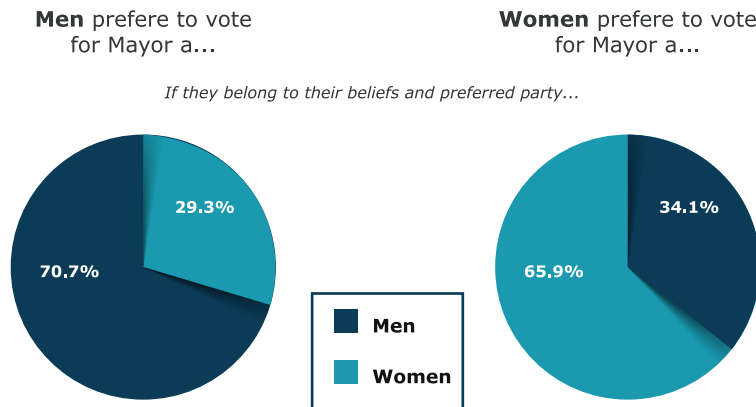
Women continue to be the target of unequal opportunities within the party. Number of women involved in political parties and who are entrusted political appointments in government institutions continues to be at a very low level. Positions as female heads of parliamentary group, representatives in presidency of Assembly, chairpersons of municipal assembly, deputy mayor are some leadership positions that we rarely see being trusted to women.

These appointments are purely political and are decided by the party, so party should be blamed for this rather than the electorate. This is also stated by the deputy Lirije Kajtazi that says "since assemblies and local and central governments derive from political parties, the problem lies with political parties, there they are not represented properly in order to have the power also to be elected<sup>11</sup>."

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<sup>11</sup> Personal interview with Lirije Kajtazi (LDK) Woman deputy in the Assembly of Kosovo 13.11.2018

In addition to the approach for female candidates for mayors, the citizens also have almost the same approach. Citizens when asked which gender they would vote more for the mayor, 52.6% stated they would vote for men, while the rest for women. At the first glance this does not seem to be high, but it is different when we focus on who would men vote for and who would women vote for. As it may be seen in the graph below, men would vote for men and women would vote for women. Respectively, 70.7% of interviewed men said they would vote for a man for mayor, whereas 65.9% of women said they would vote for women.



Apart from the general aspect of whom they would vote for, relatively same figures are observed also with other demographic aspects. Concerning the age, results of our survey show that a small percentage of age groups 25-34 and 45-54, 50% and 52.7% have stated that they would vote women for mayor rather than men. In the aspect of education, those with few years of secondary education and with completed university studies, 54.3% and 54.4% preferred women as mayors. Economy and employment turned to be factors that determine their conviction for voting. The unemployed (50.8%), those without personal (59.4%) and family income (52.9%) and housewives (65.6%) stated that they would vote women more than men. Whereas in the aspect of personal income, from those that are employed, only those with salary of €751-900, with about 57.1% said they would vote women more than men<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> Democracy Plus (D+) Survey on Civic Engagement conducted on December, 2018.

## - Campaign Finance

Running for elections is all about good marketing, promotion and media attention. Otherwise, this may also be defined only as electoral campaign. In order for the campaign to be successful and candidate's program to reach the public it is required to have a significant amount of money. Here lies one of the next problems within political parties. Interviewed women say that there is an unfair distribution of finance within the party and that their electoral campaigns did not receive enough support from the party, or in the case of LVV, support was symbolic.

The member of Municipal Assembly of Prishtina from PSD, Visare Gorani, says that the fact that budget is not allocated fairly between men and women is undisputed. She explains this with a simple theory of budget allocation within the party: "*[She] this budget 'cake', conditionally speaking, is divided between men and those who are on top of the list or among favorites, while women are not considered among favorites, since they know that anyway due to quota every third women that is in the list will be elected*<sup>13</sup>." Gorani continues by emphasizing that allocating money for electoral campaigns of female candidates is not only considered investing in vain but also a waste of time. Thus, financial support for women not only isn't viewed as something acceptable, but it is considered as obstacle for the success of other candidates in the party.

This approach towards women is concerning because it makes one understand that unequal treatment of women begins from the impressions or social prejudices, and is strengthened even within the parties.

## - Structures Dominated by Men

Gender representation is hardly considered in decision making, when in these processes most relevant actors are men. Lack of gender balance in politics cannot be regulated without the inclusion of women in decision making processes and taking positions with more executive competences at both local and central level. If viewed from hierarchical aspect, the higher the position and higher the decision-making powers, the lower is the number of appointed women.

Stimulating policies are proposed and adopted in order to reduce this discrepancy between men and women, such as the gender quota in public institutions. Nevertheless, in many cases, this policy only continues to harm women, as in most cases men use this as counter-campaign for female candidates, even though they come from the same party.

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<sup>13</sup> Personal interview with Visare Gorani (PSD) Member of Municipal Assembly of Pristina. 14.11.2018.

Besa Gaxherri says that *"Men are using the quota as anti-campaign, saying not to vote this or that woman because she will be elected anyway through the quota, not that she does not deserve, because she deserves, but you don't need to vote her as she will go with the quota, please vote for us<sup>14</sup>."*

However, this is not the only viewpoint related to the gender quota. Deputy Shqipe Pantina from PSD welcomes this policy saying, *"Again women have justified much more the support they have received or place they have taken than men. And if you put it into percentage, again women are more engaged than men, but quota has helped, since the taboo was broken, it was difficult to think, it was almost impossible for them<sup>15</sup>."*

In case of political appointments, leaders justify that they take decisions taking into account the interest of the party, as primary thing. Somehow, these leaders think that party interests are best served by appointing men in these positions, as number of women continues to be very low. This is widely observed at local level, such is the case with Municipality of Prishtina. Member of Prishtina Assembly from LVV, Leonora Bajrami says, *"If we take Municipality of Prishtina as example, of course the mayor has made a coalition with many parties and each party should be given a position that is very important, and they do not put forward women but men in order to satisfy their lust for power<sup>16</sup>."* In a similar way expresses the member of AAK who states that the most difficult thing to be accepted is the fact that in the society *"Firstly they see you as female and then as a professional<sup>17</sup>."*

## - Social Impressions

The origin of all these challenges in the end turns out to be society as a whole – this, of course, is an inevitable opponent. Society already has its impressions and expectations from women in politics and these political leaders are all part of this same society. Until now, what is observed is that instead of these prejudices to be mitigated or improved, they only get legitimized once the men come to power - either in the party, local or also central government. The problem becomes even deeper when we take into consideration that our society is known traditionally as a patriarchal society. According to Gorani, as result of this decision-making processes do not lack sexist language, and masculine attitudes, which in a way in the very beginning discourage women from trying to become part of these processes.

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<sup>14</sup> Personal interview with Besa Gaxherri (LDK) Woman deputy in the Assembly of Kosovo 13.11.2018.

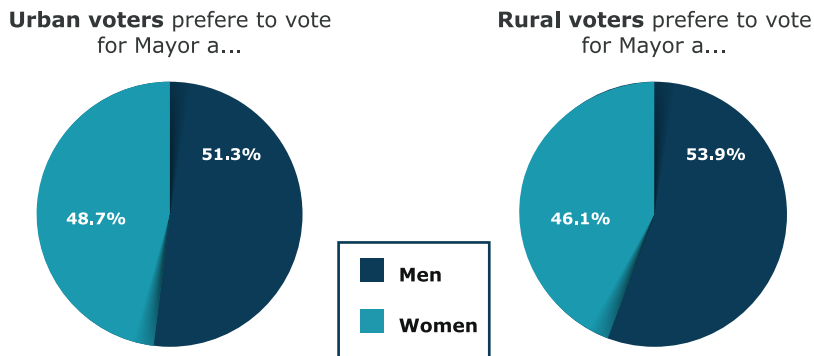
<sup>15</sup> Personal interview with Shqipe Pantina (PSD) Woman deputy in the Assembly of Kosovo 08.11.2018.

<sup>16</sup> Personal Interview with Leonora Shabani Bajraktari (LVV). Member of Municipal Assembly of Pristina. 12.11.2018.

<sup>17</sup> Personal interview with Fitnete Bejta (AAK) Member of Municipal Assembly of Pristina. 14.11.2018.

Unfortunately, influence of society and mentality created in the patriarchal society are seen even when women get senior decision-making positions. Mrs. Fitnete Bejta sheds light to the reality that we have often seen in Kosovo that even when a woman is in a senior decision-making position, e.g., minister, team that she establishes for herself is again dominated by men, thus not taking into account gender equality. This is only one of many forms how society influences the policy making and decision making processes - both with men and women.

Geographic aspect of what are the convictions of people living in urban and rural areas, presents an element that, to a certain extent, determines the voting preferences. However, there are no major differences and both the urban and rural areas would prefer men for mayors rather than women. As we may see from the numerical and graphical presentation below, 51.3% of people in urban areas would prefer men, while in rural areas the percentage is slightly higher, which translated in percentage is 53.9%<sup>18</sup>.



## - Family Obligations

It is from the society that derive family obligations - expectations that are totally different for men and women. Numerous family obligations, that even women take upon themselves, turn out to be obstacles. In fact, the obstacle is not necessarily their performance but doubts about their performance by peers around them. Having too many roles at the same time, particularly the role of a mother as custodian of her children is the reason why those responsible for political appointments do not consider women as potential candidates. They are convinced that her political performance would be poor, without any fact to corroborate it. That is why Mrs. Jeta Rafuna from LDK says, *"There are too many challenges with the representation of women in all levels, taking into consideration that a woman is a wife and a mother at the same time, so it should always be given three times more than a man in a leadership position<sup>19</sup>."*

<sup>18</sup> Democracy Plus (D+) Citizens Attention: Deficiencies and Opportunities.

<sup>19</sup> Personal interview with Jeta Rafuna (LDK) Member of Municipal Assembly of Pristina. 09.11.2018.



However, there are cases when requirements of a position may be more challenging and if such positions are in the offer, women must refuse them. "Let us take the Department of Public Services as example; it requires being on stand-by 24 hours a day. If there is a flooding in the middle of the night, you as a director should go out there, and if you are a mother of one or more children that is a problem<sup>20</sup>" says Mimoza Sylejmani from PSD.

On the other hand, Deputy Albulena Balaj from Nisma për Kosovën, speaking about this, takes herself as an example to illustrate challenges of women in politics. *"In the first elections of 2014 when Nisma participated for the first time in elections three months after its establishment, I was on the fourth month of maternity leave. So, I was breastfeeding by baby girl and imagine, I had to rush from an electoral rally that we had back home to breastfeed my daughter, and then go to another rally, then go home and repeat the same procedure<sup>21</sup>."* Challenges from personal experience of deputy Balaj do not end here. Balaj continues her story: *"This was one challenge, whereas in the elections of 2017 when I managed to become deputy I was in the ninth month of pregnancy; imagine in that condition I went campaigning together with men, side by side, not giving way and I managed to be where I am now. Yes, there are challenges. As soon as I was elected a deputy I gave birth to the other daughter and immediately started political activities as deputy in the Assembly."*

All these challenges and expectations from women, not only by the society but also by women themselves, have an impact on their hesitation to engage in politics. Unfortunately, this affects the performance of women who already are part of political scene, since they will have another battle that they should fight - gender stereotypes. Therefore, we continue to have the situation as it is, with these quite concerning statistics.

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<sup>20</sup> Personal interview with Mimoza Sylejmani (PSD) Member of Municipal Assembly of Pristina. 13.11.2018.

<sup>21</sup> Personal interview with Albulena Balaj (Nisma). Deputy in the Assembly of Kosovo. 22.11.2018

## Proposal for Appointed Positions

### - Appointed Positions in the Government Cabinet

**L**aw on Government, which is in the drafting process, is rightly expected to regulate the government cabinet, including the number of ministries and of deputy ministers. Because of the problem that Kosovo has with gender representation in decision making positions at the government level and challenges that exist with the women representation, this law provides for a better gender representation in the government cabinet. We propose that this law should contain two provisions that are implementable and required for each government that will be created.

Firstly, considering the challenges of gender representation in the government cabinet, problems that occur at the moment government coalitions are created with many parties, political entities of the coalition should be required to provide for every third person appointed to a position of a minister or a deputy minister to be from the opposite gender. This does not mean a quota of 30% in the government cabinet, as it might be interpreted. This means that if a party will have the right to appoint three ministers, at least one should be of the opposite gender, or in every six ministers that are appointed, two should be from the other gender. However, if an entity has to appoint two ministers, then it is not required to have any from the opposite gender, as this would present an insurmountable challenge for entities at this phase of their development. Therefore, the quota of 30% would be at the level of appointments by the party.

Secondly, depending on the number of ministries that are determined with the Law on Government, a number representing a quota of at least 20% of ministerial positions must be provided for the opposite gender. However, in most cases if entities in the coalition are required to appoint every third minister of opposite gender, this quota of 20% would be automatically achieved. Only in extreme cases, when government coalition would consist of many smaller parties which will have one or two ministries, than it would be necessary to ensure the quota of 20% at the level of the entire government cabinet.

### - Appointed Positions in Municipal Departments

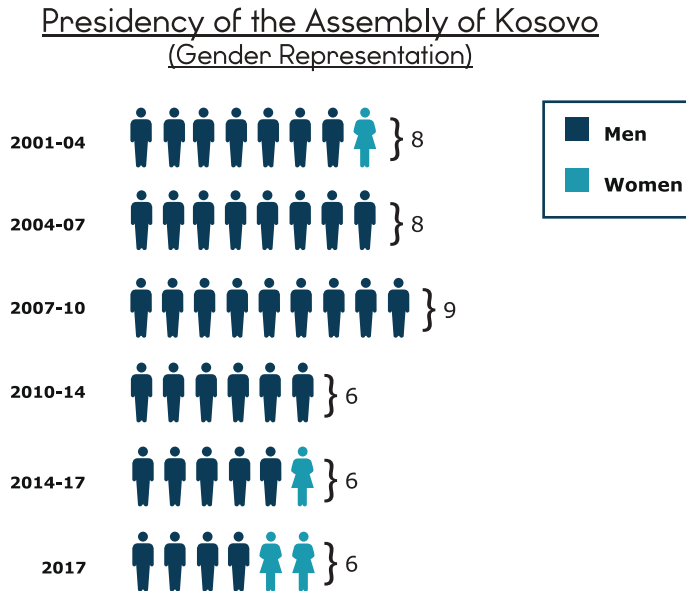
Positions of municipal directors are very important for decision making at the municipal level. Same as ministries at central level, municipal departments oversee specific sectors that are under jurisdiction of municipal government. In the same way as ministries, municipal departments are not regulated with any special act, while the Law on Local Self-Government leaves that to the discretion of the mayor. That is why some smaller municipalities like Deçan and Rahovec have more municipal departments than some bigger municipalities like Ferizaj or Podujeva.

Therefore, similar to the government cabinet, we propose that municipal departments should be regulated with the Law on Local Self-Government and the number of departments per municipality should be regulated based on the number of seats in the municipal assembly (which is regulated for each municipality based on the population). In this effort for regulating municipal departments better gender representation should be ensured. Since at the local level completing the executive branch falls completely under the responsibility of the winning candidate for Mayor, minimum quota for departments should be determined based on the number of departments that a municipality will have.

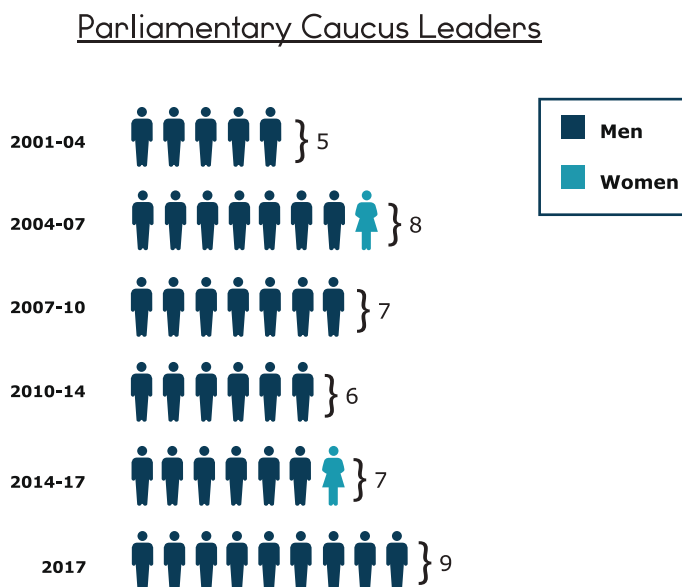
For municipalities with 15 or 19 seats in the assembly, it should be regulated for them to have five municipal departments and at least two of them should be for the opposite gender. For municipalities with 21, 27 or 31 seats in the assembly they should have 9 municipal departments, where at least three of them should be for the opposite gender. For municipalities with 41 or 51 seats in the assembly it should be regulated for them to have 12 municipal departments and at least four of them should be for opposite gender. This is similar to gender quota of 30% in municipal departments that is achievable.

## Annexes:

### - Women appointed in the Presidency of Assembly



### - Women heads of parliamentary caucuses



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### - Interviews

1. *Personal interview with Albulena Balaj (Nisma). Woman deputy in the Assembly of Kosovo 22.11.2018;*
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