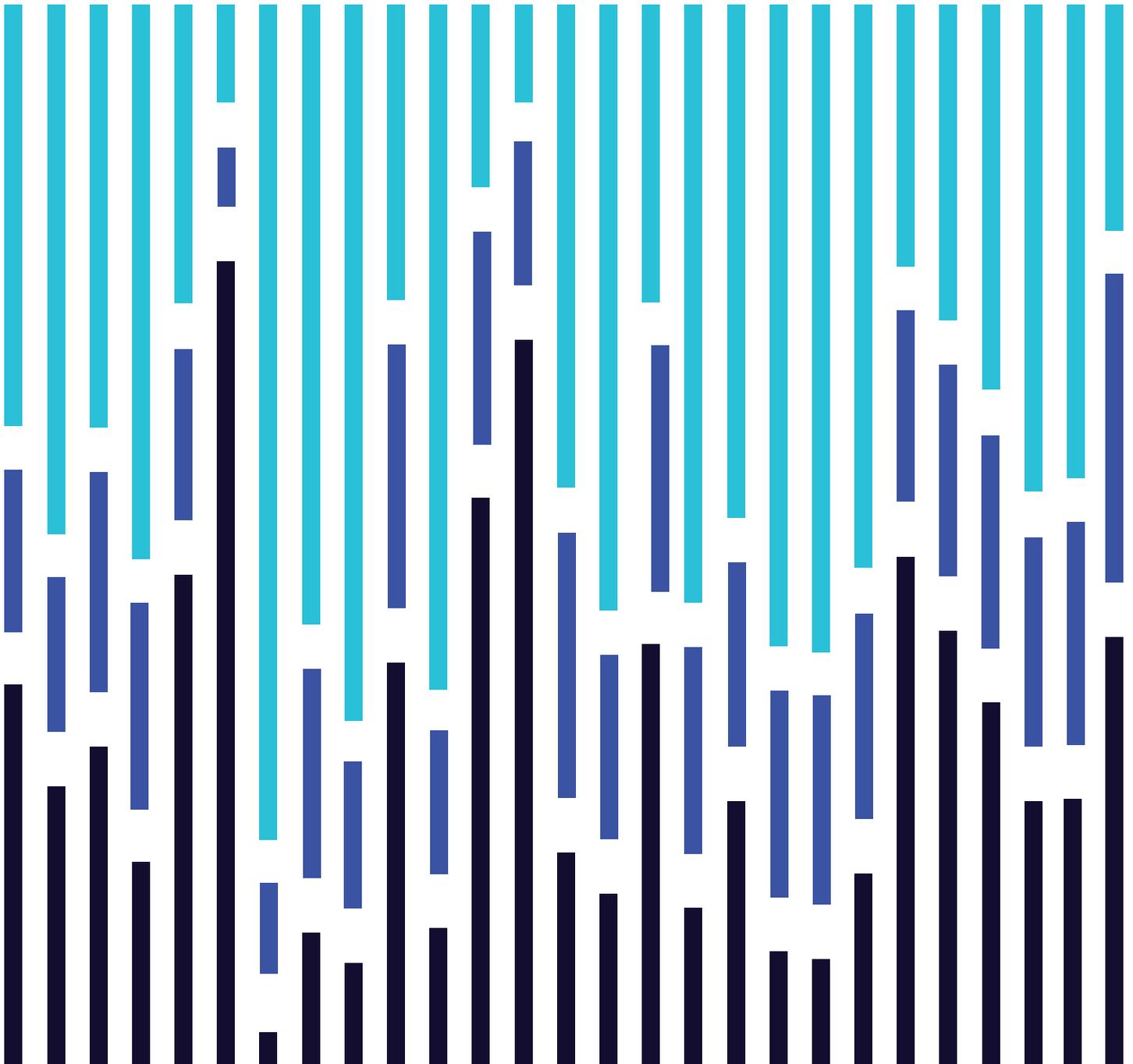


## National Study



## Women in the Macedonian Economy

***“..investing in women is not only the right thing to do. It is the smart thing to do. I am deeply convinced that, in women, the world has at its disposal, the most significant and yet largely untapped potential for development and peace.”***

Ban Ki Moon, UN Secretary General, 8 March 2008

**Publisher:** REAKTOR Civil Association – Research in Action  
**Circulation:** 200  
**Date:** Skopje, December 2010

**This Report is a result of the Project "Women in Economy" funded by the European Union through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights. Reactor takes full responsibility for this report, which in no way reflects the views of the European Union.**

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# Introduction

Equality between women and men is one of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the constitutional system of the Republic of Macedonia<sup>1</sup>. In 1998 the Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Promotion of Gender Equality in the Decision-Making Process. Since then, numerous legal solutions have been adopted that are aimed at promoting gender equality in various social segments. In addition, many international conventions and agreements that guarantee gender equality, which have been ratified by the Republic of Macedonia are an integral part of our legal system. The Assembly has also adopted the Law on Equal Opportunities, in May 2006, and the Law on Discrimination Prevention and Protection<sup>2</sup>, in February 2010, and thus, the domestic legal framework is compliant with both the international and the European standards promoting gender equality.

In addition to the adopted legislation, specific steps are being taken that are aimed at improving the position of women in all segments of society; institutional mechanisms which should ensure gender equality have also been established. Thus, the Sector for Equal Opportunities at the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy is in charge of the implementation of the policies in this area. Additionally, equal opportunities coordinators have been appointed within each ministry, Commissions for equal opportunities established within the units of Local Government, and Coordinators for equal opportunities have been elected within the local government units. The Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia has also set up a Commission for equal opportunities for women and men, and this Commission is in charge of gender mainstreaming the legal regulations that are being reviewed and adopted by the Assembly.

The Government's commitments for gender equality are set forth in the National Action Plan on Gender Equality, which is a strategic document of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia for the period 2007-2012, which defines ten strategic areas of action, activities, indicators, as well as the responsible institutions.

Although significant efforts have been made in the last decades aimed at promoting gender equality, gender inequality prevails, most often to the detriment of the women. There is still a disproportion between the legally guaranteed and the actual equality between women and men in the Republic of Macedonia. There is still much to be done to eliminate the prevailing stereotypes, to increase the number of women holding positions of responsibility and reduce the number of unemployed and economically inactive women.

The large number of unemployed and inactive women on the Macedonian labour market is what prompted the design of the project "Women in the Macedonian Economy", which was implemented over the course of 2010 in four municipalities : Tetovo, Karpos, Strumica and Suto Orizari. This Project was funded by the European Commission through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights – EIDHR) and the Foundation Open Society Institute-Macedonia.

This Report is based on the survey conducted as part of the project, which set out to measure the perception of gender equality among women in four municipalities in 2010 and their perceptions on gender-based discrimination on the labour market. The Report presents the findings in five major parts:

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<sup>1</sup> The citizens of the Republic of Macedonia have equal rights and freedoms irrespective of their gender...", Article 9 of the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia.

<sup>2</sup> Published in Official Gazette No. 50/2010

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**I. Perception of gender equality**

The first part of the Report attempts to assess the current perceptions among women regarding the existence of gender inequality, as well as their self assessment on how much they are familiar with their rights.

**II. Gender equality at work**

The second part of the Report addresses various aspects that may affect gender equality in the work place.

**III. Measures to increase employment of women**

The third part of the Report is focused on the role the Government of the Republic of Macedonia can play in increasing gender equality in the Macedonian economy.

**IV. Gender equality in the future**

The fourth part of the Report gives an overview of the predictions of the respondents regarding the future of gender equality.

**V. Conclusions and Recommendations**

The data in this report are analyzed at two levels: the averages at the national level of the Republic of Macedonia and the average on the municipal level. Additionally, the data have been analyzed to determine possible differences between the ethnic groups, in particular the differences between ethnic Macedonian, Albanian and Roma women. In addition, we have also given brief comments about the way the replies differ compared to the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents (age, education, employment, place of residence, etc).

The data on the perceptions of gender equality were collected by way of field research in the period between 23rd of June to 23rd of July 2010, where structured door-to-door interviews were conducted in randomized households. The following four municipalities were covered: Suto Orizari, Strumica, Karpos and Tetovo. Owing to the low response rate in the field research in the municipality of Karposh which would have affected the representativeness of the sample, the survey was carried out subsequently in August and September 2010 by means of telephone interviews on a representative sample for the urban part of the Karpos municipality, while the rural part was again covered by field research.

The field research was conducted and coordinated by Reactor – Research in Action. A total of 1,600 women were interviewed, i.e. 400 women from each municipality. In the Municipality of Tetovo the research was conducted in cooperation with the Forum of the Albanian Woman, in Strumica with Struma and in the Municipality of Suto Orizari with the Roma Center of the City of Skopje.

In order to compare the survey results with the ones in the European Union, the questionnaire was prepared loosely based on the Study on Gender Equality in the EU conducted in 2009 by Eurobarometer.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Special Eurobarometer, Gender equality in the EU in 2009, February 2010, available at: (add link)

An access to the full database of the survey and a copy of the questionnaire is available upon request. Please send your requests by e-mail at: [info@reactor.org.mk](mailto:info@reactor.org.mk) or to this address: Apostol Guslarot 40, 1000 Skopje.

*We would like to take this opportunity to thank the respondents from all municipalities who spared their time to participate in this research. Without their active and sincere participation, this survey would not have been possible.*

This report is available electronically on the Reaktor website:

<http://www.reaktor.org.mk>



## SUMMARY

### 1. Perception of gender equality

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- The respondents do not have a formed opinion on whether they are discriminated against. The results are controversial because the women respond almost identically to two opposite statements: *"men and women are given the same opportunities for success"* and *"men have always had more opportunities to succeed"*.
- Most of the respondents stated that they are not aware of their rights regarding gender equality. In addition, there are differences in their awareness of various rights. The respondents are most familiar with the right of equal access to education, and are the least knowledgeable when it comes to the rights that protect them from gender discrimination.

### 2. Gender equality at work

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- The women believe that they have equal opportunities with men in finding a job or do not have a formed opinion on the subject. However, the majority of the respondents think that it is a problem that there are less employed women than employed men.
- Employment and having their own pay are very important to women. More than half of our respondents think that women who do not work are isolated from the world and more than two thirds of them agree that it is indispensable for a woman to have her own pay.

### 3. The role of the government in increasing gender equality

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- According to the respondents, the government should place the highest priority on interventions in the social care infrastructure. The measure that was chosen most frequently by the survey participants was increasing the number of care facilities for children and dependent family members.
- The women are unaware of the differences in pay between men and women. Measures for reducing the gender pay gap are almost unrecognized by the respondents as a matter that should be given high priority.
- Women disagree that they are not interested in positions of responsibility or that they lack knowledge and qualifications. Instead, they recognize that the business community is dominated by men who have no confidence in women, and tend to agree that their responsibilities in the household limit their freedom.

### 4. Gender equality in future

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- Looking ahead over the next twenty years, the women's predications are generally optimistic. The majority of the respondents expect greater equality between men and women in a period of 20 years, and they are most skeptical about the changes in the private sphere.



## Perceptions of gender equality

In order to measure the women's perception of gender inequality, the respondents were asked whether they "believe that [they have been] given the same opportunities for success as men." In order to avoid the leading nature of the question and control for the respondents tendency towards agreement, we gave two different formulations for the same question: 832 of the respondents or 52% of the total number were asked whether they agree that "men and women are given the same opportunities for success", while the remaining 767 or 48% responded whether they agree that "men have always had more opportunities to succeed." Unfortunately, based on the responses, we can conclude that respondents do not have a formed opinion on whether or not they are discriminated against, as there was almost no difference in the rate of agreement with the two opposing statements.

The respondents do not have a formed opinion on whether or not they are discriminated against

The results are controversial because the respondents gave identical responses to both "men and women are given the same opportunities for success" and "men have always had more opportunities to succeed". The half that answered the first question tend to agree that the opportunities for success are the same for women and men, while the other half tend to agree that men have always had more opportunities to succeed. Since we are dealing with large representative samples of more than 700 respondents for each formulation, who can by no means coincidentally and systematically differ in their replies to two opposing views, it seems that this is a classic example where the respondents do not have a formed opinion on the question at hand and their responses reflect only their tendency to agree i.e disagree.

Men and women are given the same opportunities for success				
agree	partially agree	neither agree nor disagree	partially disagree	disagree
33,7%	14,1%	20%	15,7%	14,5%
Men have always had more opportunities to succeed				
agree	partially agree	neither agree nor disagree	partially disagree	disagree
34,4%	15,5%	23,7%	11,5%	15%

The socio-demographic analysis reveals that there are no differences in the responses based on whether or not the respondents are employed or not. Similarly, when analyzing the responses to the first formulation, i.e. the statement "men and women are given the same opportunities for success" there are no differences in the answers even when considering the educational background of the respondents and uneducated women have the same opinion on this matter as those with graduate degrees. On the other hand, when the question is formulated differently, i.e. when we are suggesting inequality instead of equality, there are significant differences in the responses among the various subgroups. When asked whether they agree that "men have always had more opportunities to succeed", the respondents with uncompleted and completed elementary education give mostly affirmative responses, are then followed by high school and

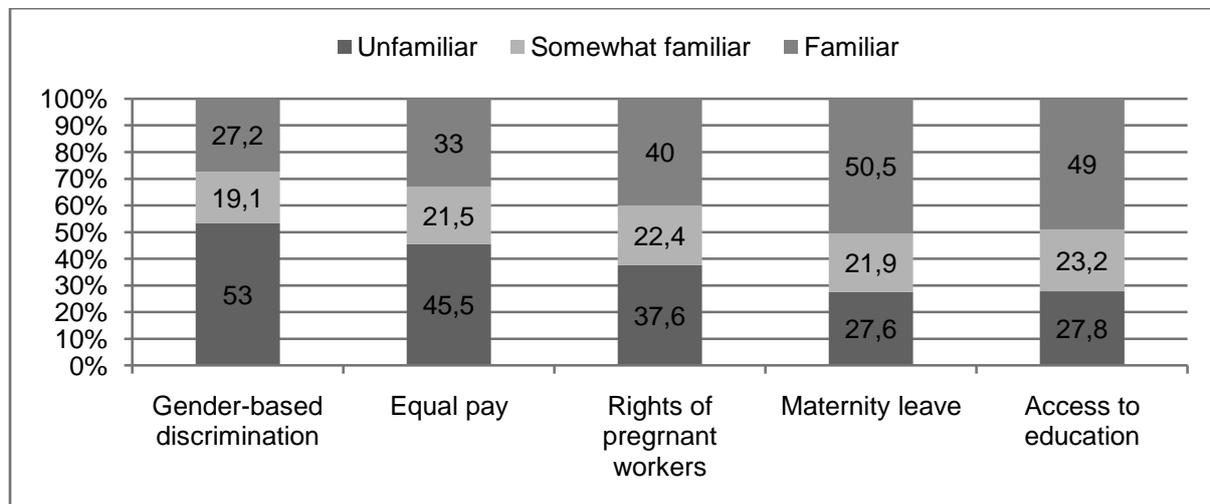
university graduates who respond towards the middle, but tend to agree, and finally we have the respondents with graduate degrees or higher, who tend to disagree with the statement “men have always had more opportunities to succeed”. The differences are of low to medium effect.

There are also differences among the respondents living in the rural parts of the municipalities compared to the ones living in the urban areas. The rural women are less likely to agree that the opportunities for men and women are the same (despite its statistical significance, this difference does not go over the threshold of practical effect  $d=0.16$ ), which seems to point to the fact that rural women are more sensitive to gender discrimination. The same was noted for women who declared financial difficulties – most of them believe that men have been given more opportunities ( $f=11$ ), and vice versa – a small number of them agree that men and women have always had the same opportunities ( $f=14$ ).

All in all, despite the fact that some subgroups (mostly the underprivileged ones) are more likely to believe that the men have always had more opportunities, the respondents have divided opinions, and they are easily misled depending on the formulation of the question, so we can conclude that the women do not have formed opinions on this issue.

### Knowing their rights

The next part of the questionnaire aims to measure whether the women are familiar with their rights regarding gender equality. The results revealed notable uncertainty on part of the respondents when it comes to their own right and a considerable percentage of the women said that they are unfamiliar with or have very little knowledge on the rights regarding gender equality. These results are drastically different than those obtained at the EU level.



#### "Gender-based discrimination"

It is a worrying fact that most of the respondents stated that they are unfamiliar with their rights in the area of gender-based discrimination. As much as 53,1% are not familiar with their rights at all, while 17,9% said they have little knowledge on the topic. This means that one in two women has stated that she lacks awareness of her rights when it comes to gender-based discrimination.

Unlike the results in Macedonia, the majority<sup>4</sup> of respondents (52%) at the EU level consider themselves to be well informed. With only 27,2% declaring that they are well informed on this issue, Macedonia would be the last one on the EU list, but not far from Romania, Hungary (28%) and France (33%), where the situation is the worst at the EU level.

At the municipal level, there are statistically significant differences with a medium to large effect ( $f=0.29$ ) where the women from Strumica are most familiar with their rights, the women from Skopje (Suto Orizari and Karpos) are moderately familiar, while the ones from Tetovo are the ones who are the least aware of their rights in this area.

The socio-demographic survey shows that there are no differences in terms of age of the respondents. As for the differences in responses in terms of their ethnicity, the Albanian women appear to be the least familiar ( $M=2.1/SD=1.57$ ), followed by the Roma women ( $M=1.91/SD=1.22$ ). According to their responses, the Macedonian women are the most familiar when it comes to rights protecting them from gender-based discrimination ( $M=2.95/SD=1.35$ ). The differences are statistically significant with a medium to large effect ( $f=0.29$ ).

Additionally, there is a great difference in the respondents' knowledge based on their educational background. It is not surprising that, on average, the uneducated are the ones who are the least familiar with their rights (88,6%). They are followed by the respondents with completed elementary education, who are partially unfamiliar, and then we have the third group, which includes the respondents with high-school and graduate degrees. The university graduates are in the last group, which is the only group that exceeds the average (partially familiar). The differences are of high practical effect ( $f=0.44$ ).

Most women in Macedonia are unfamiliar with their rights, and this is particularly true for the Albanian and the Roma women. Employment and education have a positive impact on the awareness of rights that protect gender equality.

The comparative analysis has shown that employment plays a significant role in the women's awareness of their rights. The registered employed women are considerably more informed than the unemployed and the employed but unregistered. Nevertheless, their awareness is only of an average value, while the other two groups were on average partially informed. The differences are of an average practical effect ( $f=0.27$ ).

"Equal pay for men and women"

The situation is slightly better when equal pay is concerned, but most of the respondents still stated that they are unfamiliar with their rights. More than a quarter of the women (27,4%) are completely unfamiliar, whereas 18,1% said they have limited knowledge, which means that almost half of the women (45,5%) are not aware of the right to equal pay for women and men.

Similar to the previous question, there are statistically significant differences between the municipalities with almost a medium effect of  $f=0.23$ . The women from Strumica considered themselves to be most familiar, the ones from Skopje moderately aware, and the ones from Tetovo are the ones who believe that they are the least informed when it comes to equal pay.

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<sup>4</sup> To this question, at the level of the EU obtained data, refer to the total population, i.e. both the men and women answered the same. The Report does not give information on the responses given by the women only, since their responses are not statistically significant compared to the EU average

The socio-demographic analysis once again reveals major differences among the respondents of different ethnic backgrounds, levels of education, financial power, place of residence and employment. Just like in the previous question, there are no differences among the different age groups.

In terms of educational background, the least familiar with their rights to equal pay were the women who have not completed primary education, followed by the respondents with a completed primary education, and the third group includes the respondents with completed secondary or higher education. The differences range from medium to large effect  $f=0.36$ . Furthermore, the Macedonian women again believe they are most informed ( $M=3.08/SD=1.31$ ), followed by the Roma women ( $M=2.73/SD=1.64$ ), while the Albanian women believe themselves to be unfamiliar with the right to equal pay ( $M=2.24/SD=1.41$ ). Again here the differences are statistically significant with an almost medium effect of  $f=0.24$ . Much like in the previous question, the register employed ( $f=0.24$ ), the women from the rural areas ( $d=0.71$ ) and the financially stable ( $f=0.24$ ) consider themselves more familiar with their rights.

#### "Protection of pregnant workers"

The situation is somewhat better when it comes to knowing the rights of pregnant workers, where the sample is equally divided between the two extremes (ranging from uninformed to well informed). However, there is still more than a third of the women (37,6%) who consider themselves slightly informed or completely uninformed. Unlike in Macedonia, more than half of the women in the EU (62%) consider themselves to be aware of these rights. At the municipal level, only Strumica singles itself out statistically as the municipality where the women consider themselves to be most familiar with the rights of pregnant employees ( $f=0.21$ ).

The socio-demographic analysis confirms the trend of prevailing differences between different ethnic groups, educational backgrounds, financial power, place of residence and the status on the labour market. Just like in the previous questions, the Macedonian women declared themselves as most familiar ( $M=3.36/SD=1.32$ ), considerably differing from the Albanian ( $M=2.69/SD=1.43$ ) and the Roma women ( $M=2.68/SD=1.63$ ), between whom there are no differences. This difference is of a medium effect ( $f=0.23$ ). Furthermore, the differences in the responses based on educational background are identical to those in the previous question: the more educated are more familiar with their rights. As regards the differences in the answers according to the labour market status, there are differences among all three groups, in which the unemployed are the least familiar and the employed women are most familiar, the latter revealing for the first time in this section a significant percentage of familiarity. The differences are of a medium practical effect ( $f=2.06$ ). There are large differences between the rural and urban women ( $d=0.87$ ) and between the richer and poorer respondents in the direction observed in the previous questions.

#### "Maternity leave"

We have a considerably larger number of women who consider themselves to be well informed (29,1%) about their right to maternity leave, compared to the number of women who declared that they are not at all informed (13,7%). By municipalities, the situation is similar to those in the other questions and the women of Strumica are better informed than the women from the other municipalities. Similarly, again we have the highest level of familiarity reported by the ethnic Macedonian women, the employed, and the university graduates, the urban women and the financially stable ones.

#### "Equal access to education for men and women"

Out of all rights covered in the survey, the respondents reported to be most familiar with the right to "equal access to education". One third of the women (32%) believe themselves to be very well informed, while 17% of them well informed of their rights, which means that almost half of the respondents consider themselves to be sufficiently familiar with their rights when it comes to equal access to education. There are statistically significant differences at the municipal level, where the women of Strumica once again consider themselves most familiar, those from Skopje are moderately familiar, while the women from Tetovo are the ones who believe they are the least informed about the right to equal access to education for women and men.

The socio-demographic analysis shows that for the first time in this part of the report the Macedonian women ( $M=3.4/SD=1.30$ ) are not the most informed. In this case it was the Roma women ( $M=3.6/SD=1.26$ ) who declared themselves as most informed of their rights. The difference between the Roma and the Macedonian women on one side, and the Albanian women on the other one, are of a low effect  $f=0.1$ . The differences between the responses of the rural and urban women are once again substantial ( $d=0.81$ ); the differences based on financial power are of small to medium effect ( $f=0.21$ ).

As far as the level of education is concerned, the results are similar to those in the previous questions; however, the boundaries between the groups are not as sharp. Those with and without primary school education do not differ in their responses, there are no differences between those with completed primary and secondary education, and there is no statistically significant difference between the respondents with secondary, university education and graduate studies. The effect between the differences, however, is high ( $f=0.33$ ) and there is a linear correlation between the respondents' level of education and level of familiarity with their rights, which confirms again that education is the most influential factor when it comes to being aware of one's rights.



## Gender equality at work

### The economic participation of women in Macedonia

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Given that this survey was conducted within the framework of the Project entitled "The Women in the Economy", there were two questions that measured the women's perceptions of how they assess their opportunities for entering the labour market compared to the men. Eight hundred and thirty two (832) or 52% of the women answered the question "How much more difficult is it for women to find a job than it is for men". Because this is a leading question, the other 768 or 48% were asked "How much easier is it for women to find a job than it is for men?" The majority of women who answered the first question (56,1%) think that it is harder for women to find a job, every third woman thinks it is equally hard for men and women, while 12,8% do not agree that it is harder for the women to find a job. Contrary to this, almost half of the women answering the second question (43,8%) think that it is easier for the women to find a job. Therefore, even though we can conclude that there are differences in the answers to the first and the second question, this once again confirms that

Women either believe they are given equal opportunities with men or do not have an opinion on this topic.

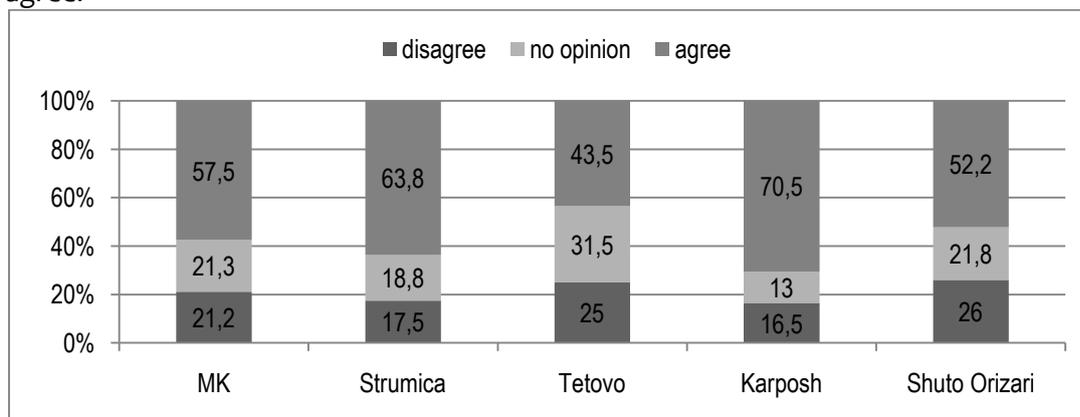
the women either have no opinion on the matter or can easily be misled with various formulations of of the same question.

To the effect of providing a more detailed analysis, we set all the questions on a continuum from much more difficult to much easier. When analyzing the responses in this manner, almost a third of the women think that it is equally hard for a women and men to find a job (29.6%), a somewhat smaller percentage (28,3) who think that it is easier for women to find a job, and a larger majority group (42,1%) who believe that it is harder for women to find a job. Despite these results suggesting that most of the respondents agree that it is harder for women to find a job, if we put together the answers of those who answered that is is equally easy/difficult and those who think that it is easier for the women to find a job, we can conclude that there is a higher number of respondents (57,9%) who believe that it is not harder for women to find a job.

The socio-demographic analysis shows differences in the answers between all ethnic groups and furthermore reveals that only the Roma women were consistent in their responses. When asked "How much more difficult is it for women to find a job than it is for men", there is a statistically insignificant difference among the groups and they all then to agree, but when asked "How much easier is it for women to find a job than it is for men?", the Roma women tend to disagreement more considerably than the Albanian and Macedonian women. It would seem then, that on average, the Roma women are most consistent in their opinion that it is not easier for women to find a job, unlike the Macedonian and Albanian women who are easily misled by various formulations of questions. On the other hand, neither education, employment nor age have a significant impact on the answers, while the place of residence has a slight effect: rural women are more likely to think that that it is harder for women to find a job (d=021).

## Women and work

More than half (57,5%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that women who do not work are isolated from the world, compared to the EU average of 49%. The difference between the Macedonian and the EU sample is more significant if we look at the respondents who disagree with the statements: 21,3% in our sample, compared to 49% in the EU. Within our sample, we noted more significant differences in the municipalities of Tetovo and Suto Orizari where one in four women disagrees, compared to the national average where one in five women does not agree.



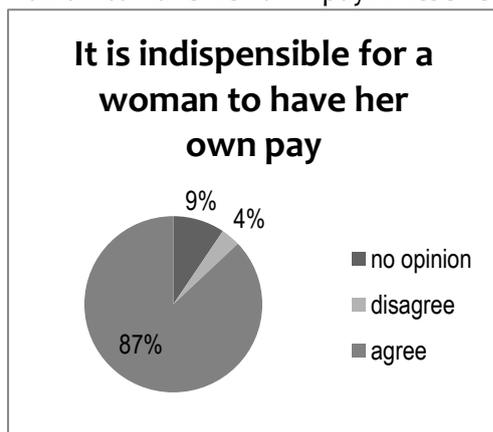
More than half of the women in Macedonia think that women who do not work are isolated from the world.

The socio-demographic analysis reveals significant differences between the ethnic groups. While the Albanian women tend towards the middle (they neither agree nor disagree, M=3.24) and the Roma

women move from the middle towards agreement ( $M=3.56$ ), the Macedonian women tend to agree with the statement (55,3% of the Macedonian women either partially or fully agree,  $M=3.83$ ). This means that the Macedonian women are more likely to agree that women who do not work are isolated from the world, followed by the Roma women who tend to agree and finally the Albanian women who neither agree nor disagree.

The sample revealed no differences in the answers based on the educational background of the respondents. Depending on the education to the question whether "*the unemployed women are isolated from the world*" and the example does not differ in the responses. Labour market status revealed a slight difference between the registered employed and the other two groups. The registered employed women are more likely to think that women who do not work are isolated from the world, but the differences are of small effect ( $f=0.11$ ). It should be noted that although compared to the employed women, the unemployed on average disagree less with the opinion that women who are unemployed are isolated from the world, as much as 38.6% completely agree that they are isolated from the world, with an additional 17.1% who partially agree. This is an alarmingly large number (half of the unemployed population) of self-declared, socially excluded women.

Even though the women from our sample were divided about whether or not a woman who does not work is isolated from the world, almost 90% of them believe that it is indispensable for a woman to have her own pay. These results are comparable to those at the EU level, where 85% agree with this statement. The percentage of women who disagree is considerably lower here at 3,7%. At the municipal level, all groups strongly agree, but the women from the municipality of Karpos agree more strongly than the women from the other three municipalities: as much as 86% of the respondents of the Karpos municipality fully agree with the view that a woman must have her own pay. These differences are of a small effect ( $f=0.16$ ).



The socio-demographic survey shows small differences between the attitudes of the ethnic groups. Generally speaking, all three ethnic groups strongly agree with this statement, but the Macedonian women more unanimously ( $M=4.64/SD=0.79$ ) than the Albanian ( $M=4.41/SD=0.94$ ) and the Roma women ( $M=4.42/SD=0.96$ ). These differences are statistically significant primarily due to the low standard deviation of the answers (great homogeneity), however with a low practical effect ( $f=0.13$ ).

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The differences in responses of those with and without completed primary education on one hand, and those with high school and university education on the other side, and those with postgraduate studies on the third side, are statistically significant with a low to medium effect  $f=0.22$ . The more educated women are unanimous in strongly agreeing that it is indispensable for a woman to have her own pay, but it should be noted that all the groups, regardless of their education, tend to agree with this statement. There are very slight differences in the views of the women depending on whether or not they are employed. Although all the groups are in agreement, the unemployed with a low effect ( $f = 0.11$ ) tend to partially agree instead of completely agree like the other two groups. There are no differences between the respondents of both the urban and the rural areas.

It is indispensable for a woman to have her own pay

## The role of gender in employment

Considering the fact that almost all women in Macedonia think that they should have their own income, it is important to understand their perceptions on the role of gender in the employment process. The following section of this Report will present the responses regarding the views on the fact that, on average, there are less employed women than men in Macedonia.

Half of the respondents (52%) or 832 of them were asked whether they agree with the statement "it is acceptable for there to be less employed women than men", while the other 767 or 48% were asked "I think that it is a problem that there are less employed women than employed men". In both cases most of the women (54,9% and 66,4% respectively) think that it is not acceptable for there to be less employed women than employed men, i.e. that this is in fact a problem.

<b>It is acceptable for there to be less employed women than employed men</b>				
се согласувам	делумно се согласувам	ниту се согласувам ниту не се согласувам	делумно не се согласувам	не се согласувам
<b>11,3%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>15,3%</b>	<b>13,3%</b>	<b>53,1%</b>
<b>I think that it is a problem that there are less employed women than employed men</b>				
не се согласувам	делумно не се согласувам	ниту се согласувам ниту не се согласувам	делумно се согласувам	се согласувам
<b>21,3%</b>	<b>7,8%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>14,5%</b>	<b>40,4%</b>

At the municipal level, Karpos and Tetovo are more convinced of this compared to those from Suto Orizari and Strumica, however the differences are small ( $f=0.13$ ) and all municipalities on average strongly agree with this point of view. On the other hand, Suto Orizari clearly stands out with its almost unanimous agreement that it is a problem that there are less employed women than men. Almost 60% of the Suto Orizari respondents fully agree with this view, compared to only 25% of the women from Strumica. These differences are almost of a medium effect  $f=0.23$ .

The employed and the more educated are "blind" to the gender-based discrimination on the labor market.

The women in EU were asked whether it is normal for there to be less employed women than men and they are divided in their opinions on this issue.

More than half of them (53%) do not agree and do not accept this as normal, however; as much as 44% agree and accept this situation as a normal one.

In addition, it should be noted that in a pure female sample we find 11,3% who fully agree that it is acceptable for there to be less employed women than employed men, i.e. a high percent of 21.3% disagree that this a problem. From the significant correlation between this and the next question<sup>5</sup>, it is evident that despite the fact that the second group of questions starts with the introductory fact that in the Republic of Macedonia the number of employed women is lower than the number of employed men, still there is a large number of women (one in five, see below) who disagree with the opinion that there are not enough jobs for women.

<sup>5</sup> There is not sufficient number of work positions for women\* $r=0,368$ ;  $p<0,01$

The socio-demographic analysis looked at whether the ethnic groups differ in their answers to these questions. What are the traditional attitudes of the ethnic communities as to what is normal, what is a problem, and what is not? We want to emphasize here again that the questions are introduced with the information that the number of employed women in the Republic of Macedonia is lower than the number of employed men.

On the statement "*it is acceptable for there to be less employed women than employed men*", all the groups strongly disagree, but there are nevertheless differences between the ethnic groups that are statistically significant with a medium effect of  $f=0.25$ . Specifically, the Albanian women are the ones who agree the least with this statement and in doing so differ significantly from the Roma women who despite their disagreement, have a slight tendency towards the middle (and have a considerably higher percent of respondents who fully agree that it is acceptable for there to be less employed women than employed men). There are no differences according to the place of residence.

The other formulation of the question, i.e. "*I think that it is a problem with less employed women than employed men*" led to varying answers. The respondents differ depending on where they live, whereby those living in rural areas consider this to be a bigger problem than do the urban women ( $d=0.24$ ). In addition, the Roma women differ<sup>6</sup> both from the Albanian and the Macedonian women, in that most of agree that the difference in the number of employed women and men is a problem. The question remains whether the different formulations are differently interpreted in the translations of the questionnaires, or perhaps some ethnic groups (in this case the Roma women) show greater tendencies for agreement, or perhaps the two questions measure different dimensions and not a single dimension, i.e. a continuum of one point of view. If the latter assumption is true, then both questions measure different viewpoints and these results reveal the so-called privilege effect, where the Roma women perceive considerably more the problem of unemployment among women than the privileged ones (the Macedonian and the Albanian women).

Although the entire sample strongly disagrees that it is acceptable for there to be less employed women than employed men, the women with graduate degrees or higher tend to disagree more strongly. The differences between their answers and those of the remaining groups are of a small effect  $f=0.16$ . On the other hand, the uneducated are most unanimous in their agreement that it is a problem for there to be less employed women than employed men. The difference between them and the other groups is also of a small effect ( $f=0.15$ ).

Despite the fact that the number of employed women in Macedonia is considerably lower than that of employed men, an entire third of our respondents do not agree that "*there are not enough jobs for women*". In addition, as much as 22,8% of the women neither agree nor disagree with this view, while 44% of them agree with this statement. For the sake of comparison, although the employment rate of women in the EU is much higher than in Macedonia, 46% of the women in the EU agree that the number of employed women (in their country) is too small, while 45% of them disagree.

At the municipal level, the respondents from Karpos are the ones who agree the least, followed by the respondents from Strumica and Tetovo who are in the same group, i.e. they do not differ in their answers, and finally we have the respondents from Suto Orizari who agree the most. These differences are of a small effect ( $f=0.16$ ).

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<sup>6</sup>  $F=18.55$   $df=2,753$   $p<0.001$   $f=0.22$

There are not enough jobs for women				
agree	partially agree	neither agree nor disagree	partially disagree	disagree
26,1%	17,9%	22,8%	12,8%	20,4%

In order to reveal whether the women do not agree that there are not enough jobs for women differ in any way from those who agree, we made several correlative analyses among the various subgroups and the answers to this question. We arrived at 6 statistically significant correlations, of which, 3 with  $r > 0.1$  ( $r = 0.1$  means a small, but existing effect). Namely, the more educated respondents ( $r = 0,174^{**}$ ), the employed ( $r = 0,113^{**}$ ) and the Macedonian women ( $r = 0,132^{**}$ ) have a greater tendency to disagree with the fact that there are not enough jobs for women, which once again leads to the conclusion that the privileged women are less sensitive to gender-based discrimination on the labor market.<sup>7</sup>

The highest percentage of the registered employed and lowest number of the unemployed completely disagree that there are not enough jobs for women, and the opposite is true for those who fully agree. We also noted similar answers from the respondents with various levels of education. The number of those who do not agree with this opinion increases in line with the level of education of the respondents.

As regards the ethnicity of the respondents, both the Macedonian and the Albanian women have divided opinions and tend towards the middle ( $M_m = 2,97$ ;  $M_a = 3,13$ ), whereas most of the Roma women tend to agree with this opinion ( $M_p = 3,56$ ). These statistically significant differences<sup>9</sup> are with a small to medium effect ( $f = 0,18$ )<sup>8</sup>.

As mentioned in the first part of the analysis, this issue perhaps reflects why almost one fourth of the Macedonian women do not think that it is a problem for there to be less employed women than employed men. They simply do not agree that there is not a sufficient number of work positions for the women. Is it that the privileged majority cannot see the problem with the shortage of jobs for women? As much as 38,4% of the Macedonian women partially or fully disagree that this is the case, compared to 30% of the Albanian women and 26,5% of the Roma women.

On the other hand, those who are financially stable are more likely to disagree that there are not enough jobs for women ( $f = 0,14$ ), which again leads to the hypothesis that the privileged majority is “blind” to the discrimination of women on the labour market.

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<sup>7</sup> The other 3 significant correlations are the number of children, marital status and municipality, however it is too low to interpret the practical difference.

<sup>8</sup>  $F = 22.7$   $df = 2; 1567$   $p < 0.001$



## Gender equality at managing positions

The majority of women in Macedonia (58.8%) do not agree with the statement "women are less interested in holding responsible and managing positions". Our respondents strongly disagree on this issue, i.e. 41,3% of them "do not agree at all", followed by 17,5% of them who "partially disagree", and only 19% believe that women are not interested in these positions. The women in the EU are even more unanimous in their opinion on this issue: more than two thirds disagree with the statement. At the municipal level, the respondents from Karpos showed significantly stronger disagreement with this statement. These differences are of a medium effect  $f=0.26$ .

Women disagree that they are not interested in responsible and executive positions. The respondents are divided about whether or not they are less interested than men to fight to build a career for themselves

The socio-demographic analysis revealed that the Macedonian women ( $M=2,09$ ) tend to disagree slightly more with this statement than the Albanian and Roma women who also tend to disagree, but are closer to the middle ( $M=2,56$  and  $M=2,41$ ). These differences are significant<sup>9</sup> with a small to medium effect ( $f=0,18$ ). In addition, there are also differences regarding the level of education where those with university education and postgraduates are in one group who disagree with the opinion that the women are not interested, followed by the second group of women with completed primary and secondary education (although we can also include the postgraduates in this group, since the differences between them and the respondents with completed primary and secondary education are not significant), and finally we have the group without completed primary education who tend towards the middle. These differences are of small to medium effect ( $f=0,19$ ). Differences of medium effect ( $f=0,22$ ) were also noted based on different financial power, where the well off are more likely to disagree that women are not interested in executive positions. The place of residence does not affect the answers of the respondents and both the women from the rural and urban areas disagree with this statement.

When asked whether or not women are willing to fight to make a career for themselves, the situation is different. Even though almost half of the women (43%) disagree with the statement "women are less interested in fighting to make a career for themselves", as much as 30,8% of them agree, while one in four (25,5%) do not have a formed opinion on this issue.

Women are less interested in positions of responsibility				
agree	partially agree	neither agree nor disagree	partially disagree	disagree
9,9%	9,1%	22,2%	17,5%	41,3%
Women are less interested in fighting to make a career for themselves				
agree	partially agree	neither agree nor disagree	partially disagree	disagree
19,9%	13,9%	25,5%	15,5%	28,6%

All the municipalities differ in the answers: Karpos is most likely to disagree with this statement, followed by Strumica where the respondents tend to disagree, followed by Tetovo, and finally

<sup>9</sup> 31.77 df=2,1564 p<0.001

Suto Orizari where the respondents are very ambivalent in their answers and are inclined towards the middle. A high percentage of 37% of the women in Shuto Orizari fully agree that women are not interested in fighting to build a career, followed by almost 15% of the Strumica women who share this opinion (compared to 9,5% Tetovo and 6% Karpos). The differences are bordering on medium effect ( $f=0.24$ ).

The socio-demographic analysis reveals differences among all ethnic groups. The Macedonian women tend to disagree ( $M=2.42$ ), the Albanian move from disagreement towards the middle ( $M=2,88$ ), while the Roma women leaning towards agreement ( $M=3,28$ ). These differences are of medium to large effect:  $f=0,27^{10}$ .

As is the case with the previous question, there are differences in the answers depending on the education of the women. Agreement increases as the level of education decreases, therefore the most educated respondents are the ones who agree less with this statement, while the undeucated are more likely to agree. The differences between the various education levels are of an average effect ( $f=0,26$ ).

There are differences between the respondents depending on their status on the labor market. The registered employed women agree considerably less with this statement. The unemployed and the unregistered emplyed women tend towards the average. The differences between the registered employed and the other two groups are of a low effect  $f=0.14$ .

## The effect of household chores on women

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While the previous two topics dealt with women's opportunities and aspirations for fighting for positions of responsibility, this part of the Report will cover the impact household responsibilities have on the achievement of those aspirations. Women still take on more of the household duties such as care for children and dependents, so the survey attempted to measure the effect of the traditional division of labour in the family to a woman's freedom to find positions of responsibility outside of the home.

Two thirds of women think that their household obligations limit their freedom.

Just for illustration, the time usage survey conducted by the State Statistical Office notes that employed women spend an average of 3 additional hours per day than the employed men (1.37 versus 4:40 hour/day) on household

activities, while the unemployed women spend 4 hours more per day than unemployed men (2.11 vs. 6.15 hours/day).<sup>11</sup>

Taking this into account, it is not suprising that in our survey a significant number of women (62%) agree that "*women have less freedom because of family obligations*", of which as much as 41,6% fully agree. A relatively small number of respondents (18,2%) do not agree, however, the same number (18,9%) of respondents do not have an opinion regarding this issue. At the EU level, two thirds (76%) agree with this statement, 22% disagree and only 2% are unsure.

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<sup>10</sup>  $F= 53.41$   $df=2,1564$   $p<0.001$

<sup>11</sup> The survey for usage of the time conducted in September 2004 by the State Statistics Office, Skopje 2005, is available at <http://www.stat.gov.mk/pdf/1-2005/2.1.5.23.pdf>

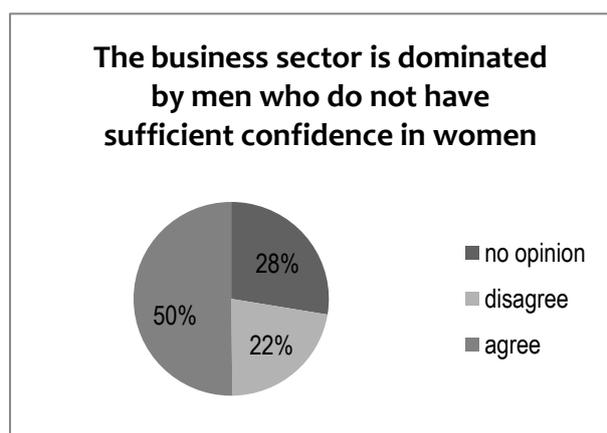
Women have less freedom because of their family obligations				
agree	partially agree	neither agree nor disagree	partially disagree	disagree
41,6%	21,3%	18,9%	9,6%	8,6%

At the municipal level, again the respondents from Suto Orizari are singled out from the other groups, but this time with strong agreement. The other municipalities also tend to agree, but with more ambivalent answers. The differences among the respondents from Suto Orizari and the other three municipalities are of small to medium effect ( $f=0.20$ ).

The socio-demographic survey has shown that the unregistered employed women are the ones who least agree with this view, even though in general they tend to agree. Here again the differences are very small, so despite their statistical significance, they do not go over the threshold of small practical effect ( $f=0.09$ ).

Significant differences were noted with regard to the educational background of the respondents. Those with completed higher education give more ambivalent answers, 3.2 for those with completed postgraduate studies (where 3 means that they neither agree nor disagree), 3.5 for those with a university education. The shift to agreement is already evident in those with secondary education (3.6) and in the third group are the respondents who agree i.e. the respondents with and without primary education. What this means is that the less educated women have considerably less freedom due to their family obligations than those with higher education. The differences are of small to medium effect ( $f=0.19$ ).

Again we have different tendencies in the responses based on the ethnicity of the participants. Even though the three groups tend towards agreement, the Roma women ( $M=4,21$ ) agree more strongly that women have less freedom because of their family obligations than do the Macedonian ( $M=3.67$ ) and the Albanian ( $M=3,54$ ) women on the other side, with small to medium effect  $f=0,21^{12}$ . The women who declared they often have financial difficulties also tend to agree more that their freedom is limited due to activities in the home, where the differences are of medium effect  $f=0,26$ .



Another aspect that may adversely affect the balance between men and women holding executive positions are the men who hold executive positions. It seems that the women in Macedonia agree that in "the business sector is dominated by men who do not have sufficient confidence in women", as more than half of the respondents (50,2%) agree with this statement, and a significant part of these (29,5%) agree fully. However, one in three women (32,2%) disagrees with this statement and one in four (27,6%) does not have an opinion on the matter.

<sup>12</sup> 32.41 df=2,1564  $p<0.001$

At the EU level we have even stronger agreement, where three in four women (74%) agree, 21% disagree and only 5% do not have a formed opinion on this question. In Macedonia, the respondents from Suto Orizari single themselves out with ambivalent responses and mostly tend towards the middle, while the remaining three municipalities are all more likely to agree. With 55% of the Karpos respondents, 50% of the Tetovo respondents and 52% of the Strumica respondents, they partially or fully agree with this statement compared to 40% of the Suto Orizari respondents. The differences are nevertheless of a small effect ( $f=0,14$ ).

The socio-demographic analysis did not identify differences in the answers according to the age of the respondents or their status on the labor market. The respondents also do not differ in their responses according to their education. On the other hand, there are small differences between the different ethnic groups. Both the Macedonian and the Albanian women ( $M=3,53$ ,  $M=3,52$ ) differ from the Roma women ( $M=3,15$ ) in that they are more likely to agree (small effect  $f=0,12^{13}$ ). The place of residence also has a small effect on the responses, where the rural women are more likely to agree that the business sector is dominated by men who do not have sufficient confidence in women.

More than half of the women believe that it is men who prevent them from getting positions of responsibility

### Qualifications of women

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Another factor of great significance and influence on the future employment are the qualifications of the women in Macedonia. This part of the report will present the perceptions of women on their own qualifications and abilities.

We concluded earlier that most of the women agree that the business sector is dominated by men who do not have sufficient confidence in women – a lack of confidence that women consider to be unfounded. Namely, more than two thirds of the respondents (75,4%) do not agree that “women do not possess the required qualities and qualifications to holding positions of responsibility”. Only 10,1% agree that women are inferior in regard to possessing qualities and qualifications for positions of responsibility, while the remaining 14,5% do not have an opinion on this issue. A similar trend was noted in the EU where 71% of the women disagree that women do not possess the necessary qualities and qualifications.

The majority of women in all municipalities strongly disagree with this statement, however, the women in Karpos disagree the most, followed by Tetovo and finally the women from Strumica and Suto Orizari are in the same group with slight reservations, but still disagreeing on average. These differences are of small to medium effect ( $f=0.21$ ).

The socio-demographic analysis again indicates differences between the ethnic group, although it should be noted that disagreement prevails in all groups. Nevertheless, the Macedonian and the Albanian women ( $M=1,67$ ,  $M=1,69$ ) reveal slightly stronger disagreement than the Roma ( $M=2,09$ ).

Women disagree that they do not possess the required qualities and qualifications

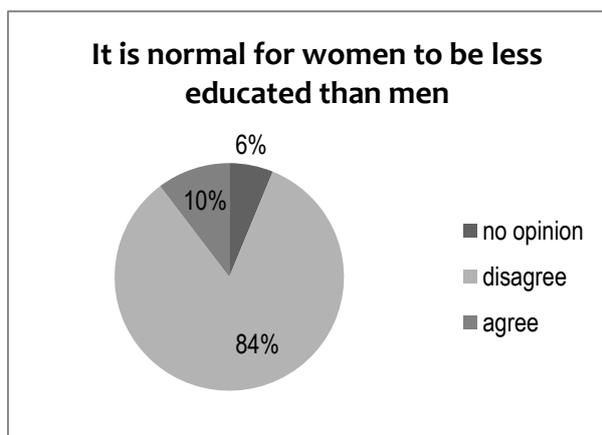
Expectedly, the respondents with completed higher education are strongly opposed to the assumed lack of qualities and qualifications. With  $M=1.3$ , the respondents with graduate degrees almost unanimously disagree with

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<sup>13</sup> 12.14 df=2,1564 p<0.001

this statement, the university and high school graduates also note strong disagreement, while in the third group the disagreement is lower and those with completed primary education only partially disagree. Again, the greatest difference in the answers is noted in the respondents with no completed primary education. With a mean value of 2.67 they tend towards the middle, although this is still on the side of disagreement. The differences are of a medium effect ( $f=0.27$ ).

In addition, unemployed women are slightly milder in their disagreement on this issue compared to the employed ones (with a small towards medium effect of  $f=0,17$ ). It is interesting to note that the financial situation has an impact on the differences of the answers. Thus, the respondents who have financial difficulties more often tend to agree with the opinion that women do not possess sufficient qualities to hold executive positions compared to the respondents who have no financial difficulties ( $f=0,17$ ).



When asked specifically whether “it is normal for women to be less educated than men”, the respondents strongly disagree (83,5% disagree, 10,3% agree and an insignificant 6,2% have not formed an opinion). With over 80% of the respondents answering that they fully disagree, Suto Orizari and Karpos differ slightly from the more moderate answers given by the respondents in Strumica and Tetovo, who fully disagree with 66% , i.e. 67%. The differences are of small effect ( $f=0.15$ ), since on average the respondents from Skopje do not agree at all, while the ones from

Strumica and Tetovo partially disagree.

The socio-demographic survey revealed homogeneity in all categories. Therefore, all three ethnic groups equally strongly disagree with the view that it is normal for women to be less educated than men ( $M=1,55$   $M=1,68$   $M=1,53$ ). In addition, there is no difference in the responses by age. Likewise, although the answers by the respondents with different educational backgrounds vary on many questions, they are unanimous when their education is concerned. All of them strongly disagree with the opinion that it is normal for women to be less educated than men.

### **Balancing between work, private and family life**

When we analyzed the reasons why the women are not sufficiently represented at executive positions in the economy and why the inactivity rate is so high, we found that women in Macedonia believe that they have greater limitations due to their family/domestic obligations. This opinion is present in all four municipalities and among all socio-demographic categories, and it is also confirmed in the above cited results from the time use survey conducted by the State Statistics Office, where we saw that both employed and unemployed women spend much more of their time on family obligations than men do.

In order to understand this, we asked several questions aimed at measuring the perceptions of women on balancing work and home life.

The Macedonian women are divided on the statement “it is not cost-effective for a woman to work if there are children or elderly members in the household who are need of care”. Thus, 42% of the respondents disagree with this view, almost one third (31%) agree, and as much as 27% have

not formed an opinion on this issue. There are significant differences in all municipalities. The respondents from Karpos and Strumica on average partially disagree, the women from Tetovo neither agree nor disagree and finally the women from Suto Orizari tend to agree, i.e. on average their answers are between neither agreeing nor disagreeing and partially agreeing. These differences are of a large practical effect ( $f=0.36$ ) and point towards discrimination against the women of Suto Orizari on the labor market, when almost 40% (compared to 12% of Strumica women, 10% of the Tetovo women and only 6% of the respondents from Karpos municipality) fully agree that it is more profitable for them to look after their children and the elderly than to have a paying job outside of the home. It is evident that the financially available care facilities would contribute towards resolving these problems, especially bearing in mind the fact that only 10-14% of all children in the country attend kindergartens.<sup>14</sup>

The socio-demographic analysis noted several significant differences. Most notably, this is one of the questions in the survey that reveals the biggest differences between the ethnic groups, as the Macedonian women tend to disagree on this point ( $M=2,33$ ), the Albanian women tend towards the average ( $M=2,94$ ), and the Roma ones tend to agree ( $M=3,51$ ). The differences among all groups are statistically significant<sup>15</sup> with almost a large practical effect ( $f=0,39$ ).

Furthermore, there are differences in the answers of the respondents based on their educational background. As expected, the respondents with completed higher educational levels believe that working is more cost-effective than staying at home. The high school graduates still disagree on average, but with a tendency towards the middle, followed by the respondents with completed primary education who are on average divided in their opinions (they neither agree nor disagree), and again, in the final group we have the respondents without completed primary education who on average believe that if there are children or dependent family members in the household in need of care, it does not pay off for the mother to have a job. The effect of the differences is medium to large ( $f=0,34$ ) and reflects the real picture on the labor market where the uneducated women cannot find a job that will bring them more income than what is needed for the care of children and the elderly.

As expected, the employed and registered women are singled out again, this time in their disagreement that it does not pay off for the mother to go to work if she has children and elder persons to care for. It is surprising for us that the unregistered employed respondents do not differ in their answers from the unemployed and have divided answers which on average are near the middle of agreement or disagreement. This means that a great number of the employed women in the gray economy (over 30% irrespective of the number of children) despite being employed, believe that what they are doing is not cost-effective. The effect of these differences among the registered employed, the unregistered employed and the unemployed ranges from small to medium ( $f=0.19$ ).

The effect of the differences is much higher if we take a look at the financial difficulties of the respondents. Those who are frequently faced with financial difficulties believe that it is not cost-effective to work in the case presented with the question than those who do not have financial difficulties. The explanation for this depends on several factors. The respondents that declared frequent financial difficulties are on average less educated and have more children compared to the others and they have also smaller expectation in terms of income (they significantly differ when answering the question "which would be the lowest salary you are prepared to work?"). All these factors also affect the opinions of the respondents, and also on the real situation and the possible outcome of their placement on the labour market.

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<sup>14</sup> Number of children in kindergartens, State Statistics Office, 2009

<sup>15</sup>  $F=111.61$   $df=2,1564$   $p<0.001$

The next question deals with the balance between the career and parenthood depending on the gender of the parent. When asked whether they agree with the opinion that "a mother should put the her care for the children ahead of her career", three of four women (74,1%) agree and more than half of them (54,1%) agree fully, whereas only 10,9% disagree partially or fully. There are no differences among the municipalities and the situation is similar in the EU. In the EU, 70% of the respondents agree that children should be given priority, while 26% do not share this opinion.

Women in Macedonia are divided on whether or not it is cost-effective for the woman to work if there are children and elderly family members in need of care in the household

A mother must put looking after her children ahead of her career				
agree	partially agree	neither agree nor disagree	partially disagree	disagree
<b>54%</b>	<b>20,1%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>4,6%</b>	<b>6,3%</b>
A father must put looking after her children ahead of her career				
agree	partially agree	neither agree nor disagree	partially disagree	disagree
<b>45%</b>	<b>19,6%</b>	<b>21,5%</b>	<b>3,4%</b>	<b>10,6%</b>

In order to check whether the women in Macedonia share this opinion even when the father is concerned, 767 or 48% of the respondents were asked if they agree with the statement "a father should put the care of his children ahead of his career". Once again we nota a smaller majority (54,5%) that agrees with this statement, with 45% in full agreement. Additionally, 14% of the respondents disagree, while one in five (21,5%) does not have a formed opinion on this issue.

Although the answers reveal a similar tendency, the differences are statistically significant. The size of the effect is small  $d=0,21$ , however, the difference in answers is evident, and thus, while 54,1% fully agree that a mother should put the care of her children ahead of her career, agreement drops to 45% when the fathers are concerned. This also applies to the other end of the answers where only 6,3% do not agree at all that the mother should place the care of her children before her career, which rises to 10,6% when the father is concerned. However, in both cases, the sample tends towards agreeing that the parents should first care for their children, and then for their careers.

The socio-demographic analysis did not reveal significant differences among the various subgroups when the mothers are in question. As for the fathers, there are differences depending on the education of the respondents, where those with completed primary education are less likely to agree that the father should put the care of his children ahead of his career ( $f=0.36$ ). The same was also noted for the rural women, who are significantly less likely to agree that a father should place his children before his career, compared to women living in urban areas ( $d=0.24$ ).

Likewise, the women from various municipalities give different answers to the question about the father, and thus Suto Orizari and Tetovo tend to agree less, Strumica tends to agree more, but more moderately and Karpos strongly agrees that the father should put the care of his children ahead of his career. The differences between the municipalities is with an almost large effect ( $f=0.36$ ).

Women agree that parents should put the care of their children ahead of their careers

If the previous questions are related to women and the difficulties related to being forced to choose between having a family and having a job, we also have to review the role that men can have in overcoming possible conflicts between the family and the work life. Therefore, the following question tests the opinion of women for the role of men and whether "men who do not work should take care of the children and the household". The women in Macedonia strongly agree on this point with 71%, in which more than half of them (52,6%) agree fully. Only 14,4% disagree with this opinion, and roughly the same percentage (14,6%) do not have an opinion on this issue. For comparison, given a slightly different question, 48% of the women in the EU women agree that men should quit their jobs and take care of the children if they earn less than their wives.

Owing to the considerably higher number of respondents from Suto Orizari who answered that they fully disagree with the view that men who do not work should take care of the children and the household (21% vs. 5%, 3% and 7,5% in the other municipalities), they differ considerably from

Except for the Roma, the unemployed and the uneducated, the women agree that men who do not go to work should take care of the children and the household

the other 3 groups who strongly agree with the opinion that men should look after the children if they do not have a job. These differences are of small to medium effect ( $f=0.19$ ). An encouraging fact is that the larger number of respondents from Suto Orizari who disagree with this statement belong in the older age

categories.

The socio-demographic analysis shows differences also in terms of ethnicity, education, financial situation and the status on the labour market, where education has the biggest influence, as was the case with many other questions.

Though the women from all ethnic groups tend to agree, the Roma women ( $M=3,53$ ) differ from the Macedonian women (4,15) and the Albanian women (4,16) who agree more strongly with this opinion. The differences between the Roma women on one side, and the Albanian and the Macedonian women on the other side, are statistically significant<sup>16</sup> with an almost medium effect ( $f=0,21$ ).

The respondents who reported frequent financial difficulties also more seldom agree that men who do not have a job should take care of the household. However, the financial situation only has a small effect on the respondents' answers ( $f=0,15$ ).

The women without completed primary education, on average, tend to disagree that men who do not work should take care of the household. The women with completed primary or secondary education already move towards agreeing with this statement, and in the third group we have the respondents with a university education who, on average, partially agree. The differences are of medium to large effect ( $f=0,31$ ). As for the differences according to employment, the unemployed women tend to agree less that men who do not go to work should take care of the household compared to the employed women. These differences are of a low effect ( $f=0.13$ ).

The equality of women not only at work, but also at home, is of substantial importance to reaching the balanced work/family arrangement. Therefore, the following question measures the

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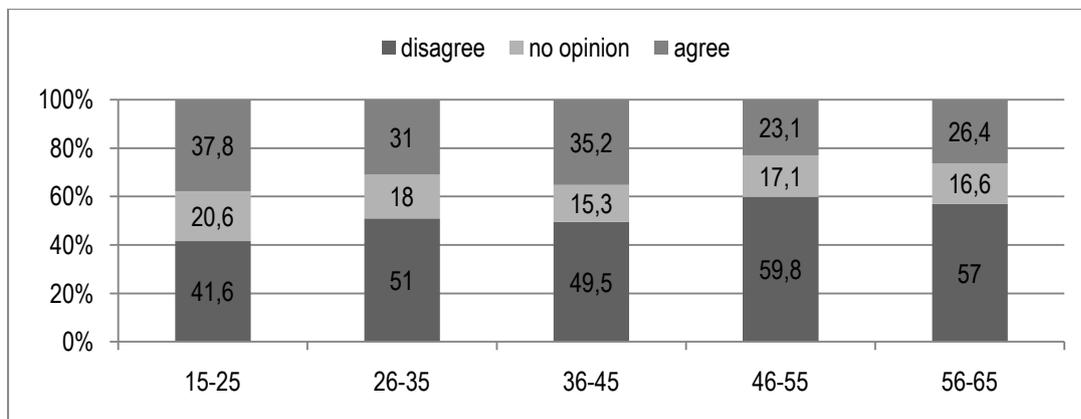
<sup>16</sup>  $F=35.62$   $df=2,1564$   $p<0.001$

opinions of the women as to whether it is "normal for men to participate less in the household chores". More than half of the women (51,3%) disagree with this view, where more than one third (39,3%) fully disagrees. However, one third (31,2%) of the respondents agree and 17,5% have not formed an opinion on this issue. The European Union is even more divided on this issue: 50% do not think it is normal, and for 48% of them this is very normal. Only 2% of them have no opinion on this issue.

The municipalities differ on this issue. Karpos and Tetovo strongly disagree, followed by the women of Strumica women who have divided opinions and tend towards the middle, and in the last group we have the Suto Orizari respondents who also tend towards the middle, but with a tendency to agree. The differences among the groups are of a medium effect  $f=(0.31)$ .

Most of the women think that it is not normal for men to be less involved in the household chores; however, as much as a third of them think that this is normal

On the other hand, the socio-demographic analysis notes another significant difference. Though the sample tends to be homogenous in the answers in terms of the age of the respondents, there is a difference in the answers to this question, with defeating results. Divided in five age categories (1st one age from 15 to 25; the 2nd from 26 to 35 years of age; the 3rd from 36 to 45 years of age; the 4th from 46 to 55; and the 5th from 56 to 65 years of age), the groups differ only on very few of the 28 questions covered with this survey. The first and the only remarkable question to which the groups give different answers is in their agreement with the statement "it is normal for men to participate less in the household chores". It is surprising that the differences are in the opposite direction of the expected one, i.e. the younger women (from 15 to 25 years of age) are more likely to agree with this statement than the women in the older groups (both groups are from 46 to 65 years of age). The differences are literally moving from stronger agreement in the youngest groups to lower agreement in the older ones, which means that this is more normal for the young women than it is for the older ones.



In terms of ethnicity, both the Macedonian and the Albanian women have the same trend of responses: most of them disagree ( $M=2,38$   $M=2,23$ ) and differ from the Roma women who are with divided opinions; however, more of them tend towards agreement ( $M=3,35$ ). As more than 40% of both the Macedonian and the Albanian women do not agree that it is normal that the men

be involved in the domestic obligations, and almost 40% of the Roma women fully agree, it is no wonder that these differences are statistically significant<sup>17</sup> with a medium to large effect ( $f=0,30$ ).

There are drastic differences regarding this issue and the answers are almost of a high practical effect ( $f=0,38$ ) when we consider the level of education of the respondents. Those with completed postgraduate studies strongly disagree with this statement, followed by those with a university education and a secondary education who tend to disagree, followed by the ones with completed primary education who are in the middle (neither agree nor disagree), with the last group made up of the respondents who have not completed primary education, who tend to agree with the opinion that it is normal for men to be less involved in the household chores.

Women differ in their answers also depending on their status on the labour market and their financial capabilities. The respondents with more frequent financial difficulties, as well as the unemployed are more likely to agree that it is normal for men to be less involved in household activities. Both effects range from small to medium:  $f=0.20$  for the financial position and  $f=0.15$  for the status on the labour market. The place of residence did not have any effect on the answers of the respondents.



## Measures for increasing employment among women

This part of the questionnaire aimed to answer the question which measure the respondents think should be given priority in order to increase the number of employed women. Several options were given and the respondents were asked to choose only one, in addition to which they were given space to add a measure which was not listed, or chose the option that there is no need to increase the number of employed women at all. Most of the women answered that the increasing the number of kindergartens and pensioner centers should be a priority measure which would bring about higher employment rates among women, followed by introducing flexible working hours and improving access to better paid jobs.

The socio-economic factors contribute to differences in the answers, most of them based on the educational background and the municipality the respondents live in, while the differences are insignificant based on the status of the respondents on the labour market. Thus, although the groups statistically differ in the answers, these differences are not very big. The measure of introducing flexible working

Daily institutions for children's and elderly care are far more priority

hours prevailed within the group of employed women, while the unemployed women were more likely to choose increasing the number of care facilities.

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<sup>17</sup>  $F=70.57$   $df=2,1562$   $p<0.001$

When the educational background is taken into consideration, what is most interesting is that the measure for increasing the number of kindergartens and centers for retired people is very important for those with lower educational levels, while the women with completed higher education have lower needs in this regard. In the context of the question “If there are children or elderly people in the household who need care, it is not cost-effective for the mother to work”, it is not clear whether the women with higher education can afford to pay for care services and do not perceive the need for affordable care facilities, or perhaps there are other reasons behind this. An argument supporting the first hypothesis is the fact that the wealthier respondents choose kindergartens and pensioners centers less frequently.

If the answers are analyzed on basis of the municipality the respondents come from, it can be noted that increasing of the number of care facilities is a measure frequently chosen in all four municipalities (about 30% of the respondents in each municipality chose this option as a priority measure). Apart from increasing the number of care facilities, the respondents from the municipality of Karsposh prefer the measure of introducing flexible working hours. In Tetovo, priority is given to improving access to sectors in which women are underrepresented, while in Strumica and especially Shuto Orizari, improving access to better paying jobs.

It is interesting to compare our results with those in the EU, where we find huge differences in regard to the priority given to the measures. Although it is similarly important to increase the number of care facilities, in EU this measure takes the second place, immediately after the reduction of the differences in the salaries of men and women. What surprises is that the number one priority measure in EU is the least important for the Macedonian women, and taking into consideration that these differences do exist in Macedonia, it indicates that women are not aware of the gender pay gap, which on the other hand is treated as a serious problem in the EU. The differences in the answers between the women from Macedonia and those in the EU are shown in the table below.

<b>European Union</b>	<b>Priority rank</b>		<b>Macedonia</b>
Reducing the differences in the salaries men and women receive for equal positions and with equal qualifications	1	5	Reducing of the differences in the salaries men and women receive for equal positions and with equal qualifications (1,4%)
Increasing the number of care facilities	2	1	Increasing the number of care facilities (26,8%)
Introduce more flexible hours	3	2	Introduce more flexible hours (21,1%)
Improving access to better paid jobs	4	3	Improving access to better paid jobs (19,9%)
Improving access to sectors in which women are underrepresented	5	4	Improving access to sectors in which women are underrepresented (16,7%)



# Gender Equality in the Future

## The Perception of the Future of Gender Equality

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The last group of questions considers the women's expectations for the future, i.e. their points of view on how much the position of women will improve in 20 years. We asked five questions, four of which are related to the public sphere (equal pay, increase participation in positions of responsibility, political representation, the possibility of electing a female Prime minister or

Highest optimism about an increased number of women at managing positions

President) and one question was related to the private sphere (participation of men in household chores). Unlike the EU sample, where skepticism is at its highest in regard to achieving equal pay by the year 2030, in Macedonia women are most skeptical when it

comes to the participation of men in household chores. However, like the women in the European Union, women in Macedonia are optimistic about the improved position of women in the future and their answers reveal that they tend to believe that changes will occur in all the areas covered in this section.

If the answers are analyzed based on the ethnic structure, when it comes to the future equality between men and women, the ethnic Macedonian women are most optimistic about equality at work and political and economic empowerment. In these same areas, the ethnic Albanians were the most skeptical. The opposite occurs when it comes to the division of household chores between men and women. Here, the ethnic Albanian women are very optimistic while the ethnic Macedonian women are very skeptical. The predictions of Roma women move between the two other ethnic groups.

In regard to the differences between the municipalities, it can be concluded that the high skepticism among Macedonian women comes from Strumica. The women from Strumica are very skeptical about men's increased participation in the household, while the women from Skopje are somewhere in between the skeptical respondents from Strumica and the optimistic respondents from Tetovo.

While the respondents are generally most skeptical about the question concerning the future participation of men in the household, they show the highest optimism with regard to breaking the glass ceiling, where 67,2% of the women believe that "*the number of women at managing positions will be increased in 2030*". Accordingly, the percentage of skepticism is lowest in this question: only 11,2% believe that women will not progress more easily at work.

Ethnic Macedonian women are most optimistic ( $M=4.07$   $SD=1.04$ ) when it comes to increased participation in higher management, with the Roma women ( $M=3.79$   $SD=1.23$ ), the Albanian women ( $M=3.57$   $SD=1.06$ ) revealing less confidence for change in their predictions. The differences among all groups are statistically significant with low to average effect ( $f=0.18$ ).

If we look at the answers according to the level of education of the respondents, only the women who have not completed primary education differ from the others. While the least educated are skeptical and have mixed opinions, all the others tend to believe that the number of women at managing positions will increase.

Similarly, there is difference in regard to this question in the answers provided by the unemployed and the employed respondents, as well as those who declared financial difficulties, but with very low practical effect.

When it comes to the differences between the municipalities, this time the respondents from Tetovo were the most skeptical, those from the municipality of Karposh were the most optimistic and the women from Strumica and Shuto Orizari were somewhere in between.

Unlike the women in the European Union, where one in two women agrees with the statement „In 2030 men and women will earn the same pay“, our sample showed higher optimism with as much as 62,2% of the respondents agreeing that 20 years are enough time as to eliminate the gender gap. On the other hand, in the EU 41% of the women do not believe that this is possible, compared to only 16,7% of the women in Macedonia. The number of undecided women once again marked the huge difference between the European and Macedonian sample: in Macedonia 21,1% are undecided, whereas this number is at only 9% in EU. It is important to take this into consideration, because although we have a high percentage of agreement, the percentage of undecided respondents influence the median value of the responses (3,77), so agreement is not so unanimous as in the previous questions.

Women are generally optimistic in regard to the future, they are most skeptical about the private sphere

In regard to the differences based on ethnicity, the Albanian women ( $M=4.16$ ) are most optimistic about equal earnings in the future, in which they differ significantly from the Macedonian ( $M=3.59$ ) and Roma women ( $M=3.76$ ). The differences in the optimism i.e. skepticism are with low to average effect  $f=0,19$ .

Two thirds of the women expect increased participation in the central and local governments by the year 2030, but optimism is lower when it comes to electing a female Prime Minister or President

According to the educational structure of the sample, we noted that the women without completed primary education are the most skeptical, with completely differing opinions ( $M=3.3$ ). Next are the respondents with completed elementary, secondary and higher education, who have a tendency to agree (from 3.75 to 3.94). In the last group, the most optimistic are the respondents with completed graduate studies, with an average response rate between more probably and most probably (that men and women will earn equally). However, the differences are with low effect ( $f=0.14$ ).

The differences between the municipalities indicate that the skepticism of Macedonian women comes from Strumica. The women from Skopje are again somewhere in the middle, and the women from Tetovo are highly optimistic.

Much like with the question of equal pay, the respondents are optimistic when it comes to increased representation in the central and

Almost two thirds of the women expect equal pay by 2030

local governments. Skepticism is lower in comparison with the previous question, so only 12% of the women consider that there will not be increased participation of women in the political sphere.

This question did not reveal any differences in the answers from the different ethnic groups, as all three groups are relatively optimistic with no significant differences in the answers ( $M=3.8289$   $M=3.8005$   $M=3.7526$ ). The same is true if look at the sample according to their educational background, their status on the labour market or the municipality they live – optimism is present among all the respondents regardless of their socio-demographic factors.

Although the sample showed high optimism in regard to increased representation of women in the central and local governments, when asked specifically whether the country is likely to elect a female Prime minister or President, the respondents were not as optimistic. Although the sample tends to agree (58,4%), a significant decrease of agreement is noted when compared to the previous question (66,6%). Additionally, unlike in the previous questions, the ethnic background was a factor in the responses, with the Macedonian women revealing the highest optimism ( $M=3.83$   $SD=1.19$ ), followed by the Roma women ( $M=3.6010$   $SD=1.47380$ ), and finally the Albanian women who are the most skeptical in regard to his question ( $M=3.1499$   $SD=1.2443$ ). The differences among all the groups are statistically significant with low to medium effect ( $f=0.21$ ). The educational background and the on the labour market status did not influence the answers and there are no differences based on these factors. In terms of municipalities, Tetovo is the most skeptical one, while Strumica is the most optimistic one.

As mentioned above, the sample showed most skepticism in their expectations for increased participation of men in the household chores. Even though more than half of the sample (53,4%) have a tendency to believe that changes will occur, the percentage of women who do not share this belief should not be ignored, with a high 27,5% of the respondents who believe that traditional gender roles in the household will not change over 20 years.

The socio-economic analysis reveals differences based on all factors.

The Albanian women are the most optimistic ( $M=4.06$ ), whereas the Macedonian and the Roma women practically do not believe that the participation of men in household activities will increase (both groups show very different opinions:  $M=3.19$   $M=3.23$ ). These differences are with a medium practical effect ( $f=0,26$ ).

When it comes to the educational background, again we have higher skepticism among the uneducated. The women who have not completed elementary education have an absolutely ambivalent stand ( $M=3.00$ ), this time in the same group with women with completed elementary and secondary education. The most optimistic are those with graduate degrees (in the same group as those with completed higher education). The respondents with completed elementary, primary and higher education are all in the middle and show no statistical differences. The differences among the groups are small and just over the threshold of visible effect.

Looking at the responses based on the municipalities the women live in, the highest skepticism was recorded among the women from Strumica, followed by the women from the municipality of Karposh and Shuto Orizari, while the women of Tetovo were most optimistic and are the only group that believes men will participate more in the household chores over 20 years. The differences have a medium effect ( $f=0.26$ ).

If we compare the national sample results with those from the European Union, we can conclude that the skepticism is even greater in the EU (34% compared to 58% who expect changes). However, the responses in this report should be analyzed in the context of the other questions in the group, which shows that the women are most skeptical when it comes to this issue. We can thus conclude that the respondents believe that we are more likely to have more women at managing positions, equal pay and increased political representation than have men become more involved in the household chores. What this reveals is a troubling skepticism about changes in the private sphere, i.e. skepticism in the women's own power to influence change in the traditional division of labour in the households.



## Conclusions and recommendations

The labour market in the Republic of Macedonia is characterized with extremely low employment rates and very high unemployment rates. Additionally, the inactivity rate is among the highest in Europe, second after Turkey. However, the position of women is far more unfavourable than those of men.

In order to contribute to overcoming gender inequality on the labour market, the present report aims to provide answers to the reasons for the large inactivity rates among women in Macedonia. Our starting point was the 'tradition' that is often cited as the official explanation for the inactivity rates among women in Macedonia.

*„One of the main reasons for this situation are the traditional customs followed by part of the Macedonian citizens and the **traditional role of the woman in the Macedonian family**”.*

*National Employment Strategy, MLSP, 2006*

*„One of the main reasons for inactivity among women is **the numerous household obligations women have..**“*

*Labour Market Profile, World Bank, 2008*

*One of the possible explanations ... the fact that a lot of woman accept the **traditional role as housewife.**“*

*Millennium development goals report, Government of RM, 2005*

The research results indicate that there is a need for change in discourse in public policies, as it seems that traditions cannot be the answer to the high unemployment rate. The key conclusions point to the following:

**WOMEN IN MACEDONIA WANT TO WORK. Women in Macedonia want to work** even when they are given the option not to. As much as 91% would choose work over staying at home and only 9% would choose to be „voluntary housewives“. Additionally, 87% of the respondents believe it is **indispensable for a woman to have her own pay** and only 4% of the women disagree with this statement. Therefore, it is not surprising that half of the Macedonian women (57,5%) consider that **women who do not work are isolated**. Despite the fact that unemployed women, compared to the employed participants in our survey, on average agree less with the view that women who do not work are isolated, it should be pointed out that 38.6% of them completely agree that they are isolated, and 17,1% of them partially agree with this statement. **This is an alarming number** (half of the unemployed population) **of self-declared, socially excluded women**.

**EDUCATION IS THE CRUCIAL FACTOR FOR DIFFERENCES IN THE RESPONSES.** The analysis of the results revealed that education is the key factor contributing to differences in the answers. It seems that the ethnic background is not as important, i.e. that the **women in Macedonia have similar views**

**with women of similar educational backgrounds, regardless of which ethnic group they belong to.**

**GENDER INEQUALITY ON THE LABOUR MARKET IS BEEN RECOGNIZED.** Apart from the fact that women are in a far more unfavourable position than men, **women are not aware of the discrimination.** Women do not have a formed opinion about whether or not they are discriminated. Furthermore, **women either think that they have equal opportunities as men in regard to employment or they do not have an opinion regarding this issue.** However, the employed and more educated women are often “blind” in regard to discrimination of women on the labour market, more so than the less educated and unemployed participants in the survey.

**WOMEN ARE NOT FAMILIAR WITH THEIR RIGHTS.** Most women responded that they do not know their rights, and this is especially true of the uneducated and the women from the rural areas. Moreover, the ethnic background, the employment status and the age are factors in how they assessed their knowledge of their rights. The employed, the younger, and the Macedonian women (compared to the Roma and Albanian women), as well as women living in urban areas, are more familiar with their rights. The right to maternity leave is a right that almost all the respondents declared they are familiar with, although 27% of the women are slightly familiar with or are not familiar with it at all.

**UNEMPLOYMENT IS A PROBLEM FOR WOMEN IN MACEDONIA.** The majority of women think that the fact that there are more employed men than women is a problem and consider this to be unacceptable. Most of the women (54,9%) consider that it is a problem that more men are employed than women and that it is unacceptable (66,4%) to have more employed men than women.

**IT IS NOT THE LACK OF QUALIFICATIONS BUT THE MEN THAT ARE HOLDING WOMEN BACK.** Women disagree (75,4%) that they do not possess the necessary qualities and qualifications and strongly disagree (83,5%) that they are less educated than men. Half of the women (50,2%) think that the business sector is dominated by men who do not have confidence in women.

**WOMEN ARE INTERESTED IN POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY, BUT ARE NOT SURE WHETHER FIGHTING TO BUILD A CAREER IS AS IMPORTANT TO THEM AS IS TO MEN.** Women do not think that there is no interest among women for executive and managing positions, with almost two in three women (58,8%) disagreeing with the statement that women are not interested in positions of responsibility. However, the respondents are divided when it comes to whether women are interested in careers as much as men are. Less than half of the respondents (43%) disagree that women are less interested than men in fighting to build a career and as much as 30,8% agree that women are less interested in a career than men. Every fourth woman (25,5%) does not have an opinion on this question.

**HOUSEHOLD CHORES ARE A BURDEN FOR WOMEN.** Two thirds of the women (62%) consider that household chores limit their freedom. The majority (51,3%) think that it is not normal for men to participate less in household chores, but still a third (31,2%) of the respondents believe that this is perfectly normal. Almost every fifth woman (17,5%) has no opinion on the notion what a normal division of household chores should be.

**UNPAID WORK MORE COST-EFFECTIVE THAN PAID WORK?** Our respondents were divided when asked whether it is cost-effective for women in Macedonia to work if they have small children or elderly members in need of care in the household. The results of the survey showed that 42% of the women disagree with this statement, 31% agree, while 27% have no opinion.

**PARENTS SHOULD PUT THEIR CHILDREN AHEAD OF THEIR CAREERS.** Women agree that both parents should put the care of their children ahead of their careers, but when asked about mothers, they tend to agree more (74.1%) than when asked about fathers (64.5%). This is especially true for the Roma and the unemployed women, where we noted larger differences in the responses depending on whether it is the mother or the father that should put the children ahead of the career. Despite this, the respondents strongly agree (71%) that men who do not work should look after their children and households.

**CHILDCARE FACILITIES AND CENTERS FOR THE ELDERLY ARE THE HIGHEST PRIORITY.** According to our respondents, the measure for increasing employment among women that should be given the highest priority is increasing the number of childcare facilities and centers for the elderly (26,8%). The introduction of flexible working hours is the next priority measure, which was chosen as the most important measure by one in every five women (21,1%). Next on the list was increasing access to higher paying jobs (19,9%) and increasing access to sectors in which they are underrepresented (16,7%). Reducing the differences in salaries for men and women for equal work and equal skills is last on the list, with only 1,4% of the respondents choosing this measure as highest priority. It seems that this is an indicator that women in Macedonia may not be aware that they earn less than men<sup>18</sup>. For comparison, this measure was given the highest priority by respondents in the EU.

**WOMEN ARE GENERALLY OPTIMISTS IN REGARD TO THE FUTURE AND MOST SKEPTICAL ABOUT CHANGES IN THE PRIVATE SPHERE.** When asked about gender equality in the future, the respondents were most optimistic (67,2%) about the increased number of women in managing positions. Almost two thirds of the women (62,2%) expect to have equal salaries by the year 2030. Two thirds of the women (66,6%) also expect increased representation in the central and local government by the year 2030. The optimism decreases when it comes to electing a female Prime minister or a female President (58,4%). The skepticism is the highest when it comes to changes in the private sphere, where one in two women (53,4) believes that men will participate more in the household chores, as opposed to one in three (27,5%) who do not believe that this change will occur.

**GREAT PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS DO NOT HAVE FORMED OPINIONS, ESPECIALLY THE ALBANIAN WOMEN.** A large percentage of the respondents declared that they have no opinion on many of the questions they were given. The percentage of women who neither agree nor disagree varies from 15 to 25% which represents a significant portion of the sample, and this is especially true of the Albanian women who tend to neither agree nor disagree on many of the topics discussed. An exception from this trend is only the question of whether it is normal for women to be less educated than men, where only 6,3 % have no opinion. For comparison, at the EU level the numbers of those who do not have an opinion range between 2 and 5%, and anything above 5% is considered cause for concern.

**SMALL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE YOUNG AND THE OLD.** The results from the research indicate that there are no differences between the opinions of the younger and older respondents. In generally, age is not a factor in the responses. Paradoxically, the only question where there is a significant difference was the statement “it is normal for man to participate less in household chores”. What is even more surprising is that the differences are contrary to the expected ones, i.e. the younger the women (from 15 to 25 years of age), the more they agree with the statement

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<sup>18</sup> Although detailed information are not available, World Bank assesses that women earn 28% more than men in the Labour Market Profile for the year 2006, and the last Gender Gap Report for 2010 indicates that women in Macedonia earn 20% more than men.

and the older the women (from 46 to 65 years of age), the more they disagree with it. The differences literally move from higher agreement from the younger age group to lower agreement from the older age groups, which means that it is more normal for younger women than men participate less in the household chores.

As part of the project, we organized four local debates and one national roundtable discussion, in which we presented the conclusions of the present research. The aim of these debates was to discuss the results of the research with the relevant organizations active in this field, as well as with representatives of the central government and the local self-governments, as well as with various stakeholders involved in gender equality. The recommendations presented here are the result of these debates.

- The progress made in the field of gender equality is not sufficient. Gender equality can be achieved only with strong determination at the highest political levels. The Government must first promote gender equality within the government itself. Additionally, in order to achieve improvements in the key areas identified with the present research, what is necessary is improved governance and cooperation at all levels: among institutions, the Parliament, municipalities, social partners and civil society.
- The progress made by women in the field of education has not yet reflected on the status of women on the labour market. This represents loss of human capital which the Republic of Macedonia cannot afford. Women are still put in a situation to choose between having children and having a career, which results from the lack of flexible working conditions and appropriate childcare facilities, as well as from the perseverance of gender stereotypes and unequal division of household chores.
- Women from the minority ethnic groups are often in a much more difficult position because they are often subjected to double discrimination. This means that gender mainstreaming should be given high priority in integration policies.
- Women are still primary caretakers of children and dependent family members. Men should therefore be encouraged to take on some of the household obligations, especially through incentives such as parental leave and sharing parental leave with the mothers. The social, health and care centers should be modernized both in terms of improvement access, as well as in terms of tending to the new and specific of women and men.
- The persistent low representation of women in the political decision making processes is a democratic deficit. Active female citizenry, political participation and the participation of women in positions of responsibility within the public administration at all levels (local, regional, national, European) should be further promoted.
- The balanced participation of women and men in the economic decision making processes can contribute to a more productive and more innovative working environment and culture, as well as to better economic operation. Transparency in the processes of promotions, flexible working conditions and improved care facilities will be essential for achieving this.
- Education, training and culture continue to reinforce gender stereotypes. It seems that new traditions are being created in Macedonia which place women in traditional female roles. This is a negative trend that has to be nipped in the bud. The media can play a crucial role in the fight against gender stereotypes. Their contributions can include portraying a less stereotyped and more realistic picture of the skills and potential women and men in the modern society have and avoid offensive stereotyping. Discussions with relevant stakeholders, as well as awareness raising campaigns should be promoted at all levels.

- Women are still faced with both horizontal and vertical segregation. Most of them still get employed in the less-valued sectors traditionally known to employ women. In addition, women are still employed in the lower echelons of the organizational culture. As much as it is important to facilitate the access of women to the untraditional sectors, it is also important to promote the employment of men in the sectors traditionally known to employ woman, especially in care services.
- Finally, knowledge in the field of gender equality should be improved. Statistical analyses and gender equality indicators should be further developed and employed. The cooperation among research centers and the state authorities should be improved.