

INTIMATE PARTNER
VIOLENCE AND
SEXUAL VIOLENCE
AMONG YOUNG
PEOPLE IN ALBANIA







INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE IN ALBANIA

This research study was conducted by the Albanian Women Empowerment Network (AWEN) in framework of the program "Protection and promotion of women's rights in Albania 2019-2021", with the financial support of the Swedish government.

"This material is fully funded by the Swedish International Development and Cooperation Agency (Sida). Sida does not necessarily agree with the opinions expressed."

Authors

Elona Dhëmbo Veronika Duci

The following persons contributed at all stages of the study

Irena Shtraza Ines Leskaj

Graphic design

Eduart Cani

@Albanian Women Empowerment Network

Publication reference: *Dhëmbo E., Duci V.,* Intimate partner violence and sexual violence among young people in Albania, AWEN, 2021..

Table

of contents

Executive Summary		
1. Introduction	13	
2. Literature review	15	
2.1. Definitions and facts	15	
2.2. Risk factors	17	
2.3. Violence against boys and men	20	
2.4. Intimate partner violence among young people	20	
2.5. Intimate partner sexual violence among young people	22	
2.6. Technology-facilitated sexual violence	23	
2.7. IPV during the COVID-19 pandemic	24	
3. METHODOLOGY	25	
3.1. Scope of the study and research questions	25	
3.2. Methodological approach	25	
4. Findings	31	
4.1. General data	31	
4.2. Gender stereotypes and gender-based violence	39	
4.3. Harassment and sexual violence	49	
4.4. Virtual violence – pornography and technology-facilitated sexual violence	63	
4.5. Social crisis and violence: The Covid-19 pandemic	73	
5. Conclusions	76	
6. References	79	
7. Annexes	86	
7.1. Questionnaire	86	
7.2. FG guidelines	113	
7.3. The list of field researchers	115	

List of figures

Figure 3.1.1. Planning and implementation of the survey	26
Figure 4.1.1. Place of residence	31
Figure 4.1.2. Gender	31
Figure 4.1.3. Education	32
Figure 4.1.4. Employment	32
Figure 4.1.5. Type of employment	33
Figure 4.1.6. Personal incomes	34
Figure 4.1.7. Civil status	34
Figure 4.1.8. Involvement in intimate relationships .	35
Figure 4.1.9. Having children	35
Figure 4.1.10. Alcohol consumption	36
Figure 4.1.11. Use of narcotic substances	37
Figure 4.1.12. Mental health issues	38
Figure 4.2.1. Perspectives on gender stereotypes	39
Figure 4.2.2. Perspectives on the roles of man and women in the society	40
Figure 4.2.3. Concerns from potential physical or sexual assaults	42
Figure 4.2.4. Behaviours adopted due to fear from physical or sexual violence	44
Figure 4.2.5. Perceptions on the prevalence of violence against women and awareness on this issue	45
Figure 4.2.6. Rate of known cases of domestic violence against women	46
Figure 4.2.7. Perceptions on the level of information needed to address situations of sexual violence	47
Figure 4.2.8. With whom would a woman share the fact she has been subject to violence?	47

Figure 4.2.9. To which institution would you address in cases of intimate partner violence	48
Figure 4.2.10. Perspectives on the involvement of health services in identifying violence against women	49
Figure 4.3.1. Sexual intercourse	50
Figure 4.3.2. Forced sexual intercourse	50
Figure 4.3.3. Use of birth control methods	51
Figure 4.3.4. Perceptions on the prevalence of sexual violence against women in Albania	52
Figure 4.3.5. Indirect and direct exposure towards cases of harassment/sexual violence against women	54
Figure 4.3.6. Experiencing sexual violence in intimate relationships	55
Figure 4.3.7. Experiencing different forms of violence	57
Figure 4.3.8. Seeking help	58
Figure 4.3.9. Reasons to seek help	59
Figure 4.3.10. Reasons not to seek help	60
Figure 4.3.11. Attitudes on the causes of sexual violence in intimate relationships	61
Figure 4.3.12. Perspectives on the tolerance towards sexual violence	62
Figure 4.4.1. Prevalence of pornography: respondents' perceptions on peers and on themselves	64
Figure 4.4.2. Pornography "consumption" and the gender aspect	64
Figure 4.4.3. Sending/receiving nude photos/photos with sexual content from known persons	65
Figure 4.4.4. Factors that would prevent the online posting of photos or videos with sexual content	66
Figure 4.4.5. Personal nude photos/videos or photos/videos with sexual content	67
Figure 4.4.6. Handling personal nude photos/videos or photos/videos with sexual content	68

Figure 4.4.7. Measures that should be taken against persons who post photos/videos without the consent of persons involved and websites that allow such postings	68
Figure 4.4.8. Most commonly used platforms by blackmailers	69
Figure 4.4.9. Relationship with the blackmailer	69
Figure 4.4.10. Forms and purposes of blackmail	70
Figure 4.4.11. Reporting blackmail	71
Figure 4.4.12. Sources providing support in addressing blackmail situations	72
Figure 4.5.1. Impacts of social crisis at the level of violence	72
Figure 4.5.2. Impact of the isolation and pandemic at the level of domestic violence, couple relationships and the society .	73
Figura 4.5.2. Ndikimi i mbylljes dhe situatës së pandemisë në nivelin e dhunës së familje, marrëdhëniet në çift, komunitet	74

List of tables

Table 3.1.1. Sample distribution, by region	28
Table 4.2.1. Violence, domestic violence and the community	41

List of Abbreviations

AWEN	Albanian Women Empowerment Network		
IBSA	Image-based sexual abuse		
CDC	Centre for Disease Control and Prevention		
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women		
DFG	Discussions in focus groups		
IPV	Intimate partner violence		
TFSV	Technology-facilitated sexual violence		
GREVIO	Group of Independent Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence		
INSTAT	Institute of Statistics		
LGBT+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender		
WHO	World Health Organization		
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights		
NPO	Non-profit organizations		
UN	United Nations Organization		
CSO	Civil society organizations		
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals		
USA	United States of America		
UN WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women		
UNICEF	United National International Children´s Emergency Fund		

Executive Summary

The study "Intimate partner violence and sexual violence among young people in Albania" is carried out in the context of issues related to gender-based violence, the increased number of challenges as a result of the Covid–19 pandemic and the addressing of less studied aspects and age groups. This study follows the one carried out by AWEN on the same issue in 2019.

The purpose of this study is to provide an inclusive overview on issues related to intimate partner violence among young people in Albania, from the gender perspective, in framework of gender-based violence in general. This study was conducted using a mix methodology: the national survey with N = 1095 respondents was followed by discussions in focus groups with young people from different regions of Albania and with experts working in this area. The research questions of the study are:

- **1.** What is the rate of intimate partner violence among young people in Albania and what are its characteristics?
- **2.** How can we interpret the situation of intimate partner violence among young people in Albania from a gender perspective?
- **3.** What are the factors of risk and resilience against intimate partner violence for men and women?

Main findings

- 56% of the participants in the study were women and 44% were men. Most of them were inhabitants of rural areas (63%). Almost half of the respondents had completed higher education and 1 out of 3 was employed. However, they had low personal incomes, especially women.
- Young men are more likely to consume alcohol and narcotics compared to young women. On the other hand, women comprise the majority in all forms of mental health issues. For example, 30% more girls, as compared to boys, have reported having anxiety issues;

Gender stereotypes and gender-based violence

- Although there is a general trend towards the reduction of gender prejudice, 28% of the respondents agree or partially agree with the statement that women are not as smart as men, and 19% disagree that women have the same logical thinking as men.
- 33% of the respondents believe that marriage functions better if the husband is not involved in household chores, or that mothers are more suitable to change the baby or supervise the baby's activities (respectively 51% and 36%). People have a more open attitude towards gender equality in the public sphere, employment, social relations and education (over 75% of the respondents believe that it is important for men and

- women to have similar education levels and opportunities).
- Although in general it appears that there still exists a sense of community, its level is higher when it comes to identifying violence related issues and lower when it comes to reacting towards such issues, especially when it comes to neighbours taking the initiative to intervene or act (34%) if someone in the community is involved in a domestic violence situation.
- Gender differences are wider and to the disadvantage of women, especially when analysing answers related to the lack of threat or safety level. 85% of the men state that they have never felt threatened by a stranger, as compared to only 55% of the women. Even when it comes to former partners, 90% of the men report that they have never experienced threats, as compared to 78% of the women, which means that 22% of the women have felt threatened at least once by their former partners.
- At least 15% of the respondents stated that they have avoided going out alone from their home or another place, or staying alone with someone else, as a result of fear/uncertainty related to a potential physical and/or sexual assault. Only 53% of the women stated that they have never hesitated to leave their home alone, as compared to 85% of the men. In addition, only 43% of the female respondents stated that they have never avoided certain streets or places, as compared to 77% of the male respondents. The number of women that have avoided staying alone with their colleague/boss at work is three times higher compared to the number of men.
- 88% of the respondents report that violence against women is a spread phenomenon and none of the respondents has denied the existence of such issue (none has selected the

- option "not spread at all"). Women comprise the majority (50% of them) of people believing that violence against women is a widespread phenomenon in Albania, as compared to men (37% of them).
- It appears that the work carried out through different awareness-raising campaigns has contributed in these results. 67% of the respondents have come across/heard about different awareness-raising campaigns on violence against women, of which 75% of the total number of female respondents, as compared to 59% of male respondents, and 72% of the respondents living in urban areas, as compared to 59% of the respondents living in rural areas, have come into contact with an awareness-raising campaign on the violence against women, in the last 12 months.
- In about 47% of the cases respondents know someone in their neighbourhood that has experienced gender-based violence in the family and in 41% of the cases they have encountered similar situations among their friends or relatives. Although differences are small, women, respondents living in urban areas and those that have completed higher education comprise the majority of people that are more likely to report/identify violence against women in the family/social circle.
- The level of information is also one of elements hampering the identification/ reporting of gender-based violence. One out of four respondents did not have any type of information (8%) or did not think he/she was well informed (18%) on how to react in violence situations.
- Family remains the first "shelter" for seeking help (83%), followed by friends and civil society organizations, which occupy a similar percentage

(respectively 62% and 61%). More than half of the respondents do not believe that reporting domestic violence at religious institutions representatives is a viable option (51% of them disagree). It is important to emphasize that more than 1/3 of them believe the same thing when it comes to reporting violence to police officers (35%).

- Family is also the first option to seek help in cases of IPV. More than half of the respondents state that they would seek help from one of their parents if their partner threatened them (68%). used physical violence (75%) or forced them to perform sexual intercourse (56%). When it comes to sexual violence, the importance of parents/ family is similar to the importance of NGO-s and the police (respectively 56%, 52% and 51%). Psychologists or other professionals providing counselling are another prevalent choice in this case (59% would address to such professionals in cases of sexual violence in intimate relationships).
- The role of health services in identifying gender-based violence is considered as appropriate and useful. 68% of the respondents agree that during routine checks, doctors identifying physical injuries/wounds in women should ask them if such injuries are a consequence of violence exercised against them. 76% of female respondents agree with this fact, as compared to 58% of male respondents.

Harassment and sexual violence

An overwhelming majority of the respondents believe that sexual violence against women in Albania is a spread phenomenon (80%), whether from partners, trusted persons or strangers, although there are still uncertainties regarding the clear definition of sexual violence, especially

- in intimate relationships;
- Almost half of the respondents have heard about cases of violence against women in their city or village, while 1 out of 5 have heard about such cases in their neighbourhood.
- The average age of first sexual intercourse is rather higher compared to other studies, respectively 18 years old for girls and 17 years old for boys;
- Almost 1 out of 10 female respondents have been forced to perform sexual intercourse for the first time against their will. Women are almost three times more likely, as compared to men, to be forced to perform sexual intercourse due to fear from their partner/former partner;
- Women have experienced more often sexual violence, as compared to men (with a considerable difference of up to 30%), from known persons, most often from their close family/social circle, as well as from strangers.
- 41% of the respondents have declared that they have not used any birth control method during their last sexual intercourse, due to the lack of information and/or shame. The use of birth control methods was lower among those people who had performed forced first sexual intercourse.
- 2 out of 3 respondents have not sought any type of help for the violence experienced, whether physical or sexual, due to the lack of trust at different institutions (police and other services), feeling of shame and confusion, as well as fear of damaging their family's reputation;
- Stereotypes towards some "provocative/ambiguous" behaviours of women are still present among men and women. For example, 23% of them justify sexual violence against the person will when such thing is

preceded by flirting; 22% in the case of a provocative behaviour and 16% when someone is walking alone at night.

Virtual violence – pornography and technology-facilitated violence

- Pornography is considered as a spread phenomenon (47% believe it is a widespread phenomenon and 31% believe it is a rather spread phenomenon) among young men and women of the age group 20-24 years old. However, the percentage of respondents who believe that pornography is prevalent among their peers is higher compared to the percentage of respondents who accept that pornography is prevalent in their lives (only 25% of them accept that they watch pornography at least several times a month). 55% of the male respondents and 40.3% of the female respondents think that pornography is a widespread phenomenon among their peers. Respondents from urban areas and those with a low education level comprise the majority of people who think pornography is a widespread phenomenon among their peers. A considerable difference exists between the number of men and women that reported never watching pornography. About 59% of the female respondents state that they never watch pornography, as compared to only 16% of the male respondents.
- On average, respondents state that they have watched pornography for the first time around the age of 15. About 26% of them have watched pornography for the first time at the age of 13 or even younger and 10% of them at the age of 18+. Based on a scale of 1 (not at all) to 10 (absolutely), respondents believe that the impact of pornography on their perceptions toward sex is 5.4 (average value) but the most frequent answer is 1 (not at all), which shows the

- low level of awareness on the impact of pornography.
- Only 16% of the respondents (24% of the male respondents and 9% of the female respondents) accept that they have taken or received nude photos or any other photo or video with clear sexual content of a known person, as compared to 80% that deny such fact.
- The awareness that posting such materials online may hurt the persons involved (58%) or their friends (33%) were among the main reasons that would prevent the respondents from posting such materials online. The third reason in this list is fear that they might get caught or arrested/prosecuted (24%).
- About 17% of the respondents report taking photos with sexual content or nude photos/videos that included themselves. In this case, there is a lower difference between the women (14%) and men (22%) accepting such fact.
- In most cases, the respondents stated that they have shared the nude photos or videos with sexual content. Only 42% of those taking such photos/videos of themselves have not shared them, while 58% of the respondents have sent them to someone with which they were involved in a romantic/sexual relationship (30%) or to someone else (24%) or have done something that they do not wish to share (28%).
- 78% of the respondents request that persons posting images and/ or videos without the consent of persons involved must be prosecuted and sentenced to prison and only 2% believe that there should be no consequences. Similarly, 67% of the respondents believe that websites, which allow the online posting of such materials should also be subject to criminal prosecution. 52% believe that

these websites should face financial sanctions (fines) and only 3% do not think they should face consequences for allowing the posting/sharing of such images.

- Almost 1 out of 10 respondents in this study have reported that at least once, photos/videos or other materials with sexual content were used to blackmail them. 12% of the women and almost 5% of the men have had such experience.
- Instagram is reported as the most commonly used application by blackmailers (44%), followed by Facebook/Messenger (26%). The respondents have also listed phone calls or messages as commonly used instruments.
- The most common form of contacting with blackmailers is through false profiles (41%). In 39% of the cases, the blackmailer was a known person. In 69% of the reported cases the blackmailer was a male, in 17% of the cases a female and in almost 14% of the cases the gender of the blackmailer was not determined.
- The most commonly stolen or misused intimate materials by blackmailers are images (59%) and sex-talks (33%). In 39% of the cases, the intention of the blackmailer was to continue having sexual relationships with the victim (for e.g. after being rejected, after break-up etc.).
- In about 29% of the cases, the intention of the blackmailer was to use materials with sexual content to threaten and keep the victim under control. Experiences related to blackmailing have usually lasted up to 3 months (71%), but in several cases blackmailing has lasted up to one year (8%) or even longer (3%).
- Even though it is acknowledged that blackmail has a very serious impact at

- its respective victims, the reporting of such phenomenon is at low levels This phenomenon was mainly reported in the platforms where the blackmailing occurred (32%) and at the police (29%).
- During their efforts to report/address the blackmail situation, 37% of the respondents have sought/found support at their family and friends and 24% have received professional counselling. Young females comprise the majority of the respondents selecting these options. Young men that have been involved in such situations, have reported seeking/ finding "other" forms of support.
- Different organizations have been an option in only 7% of the cases, and the most of the respondents selecting such option were from rural areas. Based on the discussions in focus groups, this is related to the low level of knowledge/support from family/friends in these areas or the lower range of services and the lack of trust towards organizations in these areas.

Covid-19 pandemic

- 62% of the respondents believe that crisis, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, impact the level of violence in Albania.
- Most of them believe that social crisis lead to a higher level of violence in general (83%) and half of the respondents think that such crises are only related to an increased risk of domestic violence.
- Similarly to the report on violence, even when it comes to the impact of the pandemic, respondents state that violence has mostly aggravated (highly aggravated) in their community (11%) and their neighbourhood (10%) rather than in their families (5%) or couple relationships (5%).

1. Introduction

In September 2015, 193 UN member states, including Albania, determined that one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG-s) would be to achieve gender equality and empower girls and women, including by combating and eliminating genderbased violence against girls and women. In spite of the priority given to this issue and continuous efforts, gender-based violence remains one of the most widespread and harmful violations of human rights and a concern to all societies (UNDP. 2020). In addition, it appears that the Covid-19 pandemic has aggravated this issue. While trying to address the Covid-19 situation, the data collected at global level indicated the emergence of another pandemic called gender-based violence. Apart from the traditional difficulties in identifying, preventing and addressing GBV, the Covid restrictions have aggravated the situation of gender-based violence almost all over the world.

In 2020, it was reported that approximately 243 million women and girls (15-49 years old) throughout the world had been subject to sexual and/or physical violence in the last 12 months (UNDP 2020). The variety of mid-term and long-term effects of Covid-19 on the economic, social and political aspects, is expected to further increase the level of gender-based violence. The impacts of the pandemic will be felt for several years (O'Leary & Tsui, 2021; Truell & Crompton, 2020) and in order to mitigate such impacts special attention should be paid to those groups mostly affected by the pandemic (i.e. to groups whose well-being and safety is at risk), such as the elderly, unemployed, victims of domestic violence and persons with disabilities (United Nations Albania, 2020).

AWEN, as expressed in its mission and activities, has been and remains determined in addressing issues related to genderbased violence as well as to manage the new challenges arising. Therefore, in 2019, AWEN conducted the first in-country study shedding light on the issues of intimate partner violence among teenagers. This initiative also addressed one of the gaps identified both in the local literature and in the legal and institutional framework of the country. The GREVIO's (Group of Independent Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence) baseline evaluation report on Albania, published in November 2017, emphasizes that the legal and institutional reaction in Albania is mainly focussed at domestic violence. The other forms of violence, although provided as criminal offences, have not received the necessary attention with regards to prevention and civil protection measures. On the other hand, the studies carried out during the last years confirm that intimate partner violence, among all ages but especially among voung people, is a social issue that should be addressed (Foshee et al., 2007, Barter et al., 2017). A high number of young men and women are subject to violence within their romantic relationships. Studies have shown that this type of violence may have serious consequences (Romito, Beltramini and Escribà-Agüir, 2013). Their study and the provision of evidence that will feed policy-making and decision-making are an essential step towards addressing such issues.

This study is carried out in the context of the persisting issues related to genderbased violence, the increased number of challenges as a result of the Covid-19

pandemic and the addressing of less studied aspects and age groups (as presented in Chapter II "Literature Review"). Given the lack of national studies on the impact of gender nature, different forms of risk and risk factors on the level of intimate partner violence among young people in Albania, through this study, AWEN aims to enrich the national map of studies addressing issues related to gender-based violence in the country. This study follows the one carried out in 2019 focussed on teenagers, and targets IPV among young men and women in Albania.

The purpose of this study is to provide an inclusive overview on issues related to intimate partner violence among young people in Albania, from the gender perspective and in framework of genderbased violence in general. Through the use of a mixed approach of research methods (as explained in Chapter III), the study aims

to answer the following questions:

- **1.** What is the rate of intimate partner violence among young people in Albania and what are its characteristics?
- **2.** How can we interpret the situation of intimate partner violence among young people in Albania from a gender perspective?
- **3.** What are the factors of risk and resilience against intimate partner violence for men and women?

Gjetjet e studimit paraqiten të organizuara sipas tematikave dhe çështjeve kryesore të shqyrtuara në Kapitullin IV dhe pasohen nga përfundimet e paraqitura në kapitullin përmbyllës të këtij raporti studimor.

2. Literature review

Violence against girls and women is the most common form of gender-based violence. It refers to any violent action that results (or is likely to result) in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to girls and women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life results (WHO, 2013). It encompasses different forms of violence. including violence by an intimate partner, rape, sexual assault and other forms of sexual violence perpetrated by someone other than a partner, child sexual abuse, forced prostitution, trafficking of women, as well as harmful traditional practices such as early forced marriage, genital mutilation and honour killing (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2015).

Gender-based violence against women constitutes a violation of human rights and it is a widespread phenomenon throughout the world, including Albania. It is estimated that 35% of the women throughout the world have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from intimate partner, or sexual violence by someone other than a partner during their lifetime (WHO, 2013). But, most of these experiences comes from partners in intimate relationships. Furthermore, 38% of the cases of murdered women have been perpetrated by intimate partners. In the US, approximately 1 out of 4 women and nearly 1 out of 10 men have experienced contact sexual violence, physical violence and/or stalking by an intimate partner during their lifetime and have reported one of the consequences of intimate partner violence (Smith et al., 2018).

2.1. Definitions and facts

The World Health Organization defined intimate partner violence as "a behaviour by an intimate partner that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm, including physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviour".

The frequency and severity of intimate partner violence may vary. It may vary from a single episode of violence that might have long-term effects, up to frequent and chronic episodes over multiple years with very severe consequences. It may appear in one of the following forms:

- Physical violence: is when a person hurts or tries to hurt his/her partner by hitting, kicking, or using another type of physical force.
- Sexual violence is forcing or attempting to force the partner to take part in a sexual act, sexual touching or a nonphysical sexual event (sexting) in cases when the partner has not provided consent.
- Stalking is a pattern of repeated. unwanted attention and contact by a partner that causes fear or concern for one's own safety or the safety of someone close to the victim.
- Psychological violence is the use of verbal and non-verbal communication with the intent to harm another person emotionally or mentally and/or to exert control over this person (CDC, 2015).
- "Intimate partner" means the current and previous spouse/partner.

Pursuant to Article 3 of Law 9669/2006 "On measures against violence in family relations", as amended by Law 47/2018, violence is defined as: "Any act or failure to act of a person against another person, resulting in a violation of physical, moral, psychological, sexual, social, economic integrity". The same law provides the definitions of intimate relationship which is "the interpersonal relationship that involves physical or emotional intimacy" and intimate partner violence which is "any behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological or sexual harm to the persons involved in the relationship, including physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviour".

In September 2015, 193 UN member states adopted the Sustainable Development Agenda, comprised of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG-s), 169 targets and 232 indicators. The 2030 Agenda encompasses numerous global challenges, such as eradicating poverty, reducing complex inequalities, addressing climate changes, ending conflicts etc. Gender equality is an important issue in this Agenda. The aim of SDG 5 is to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, and it encompasses clear targets on gender equality as well as on violence against girls and women (Beyene, 2019).

The two most important targets in this regards are:

- Eliminate all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.
- Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and other forms of exploitation.

Albania has ratified several international documents on violence against girls and women in general, including, among others, the Convention on the Elimination of All

Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), which are the main instruments to guarantee clear obligations for Albania in order to comprehensively address all forms of violence against women (IDRA and UNWOMEN, 2018). Upon endorsement of the COMMIT declaration. the Albanian Government committed to intensify its efforts to reduce violence against women and girls as well as domestic violence, by ensuring the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, national legislation, strategies and action plans on domestic violence. In addition to the above legal framework, the Albanian Government has prepared different strategies and policies, including the latest National Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Equality 2016-2020 adopted in 2016, which include the specific goal of reducing gender-based violence and domestic violence, as well as the specific actions. In January 2017, the General Assembly of the Republic of Albania adopted resolution no. 1, dated 04.12.2017, "On punishing violence against women and girls and improving the effectiveness of preventive legal mechanisms", which apart from its findings, establishes a permanent subcommittee "On gender equality and the prevention of violence against women" within the Commission responsible for Labour, Social Affairs and Health. This is a very important document, which focusses the attention and strengthens the supervisory role of the General Assembly of Albania, not only on measures addressing domestic violence but also on all forms of violence against women, in compliance with the Istanbul Convention.

In particular, the baseline evaluation report on Albania, published in November 2017 by GREVIO (Group of Independent Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence), which is an independent body tasked with the monitoring of human rights and authorized

to monitor the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, emphasizes that the legal and institutional reaction in Albania is mainly focussed at domestic violence. The other forms of violence, although provided as criminal offences, have not received the necessary attention with regards to prevention and civil protection measures. GREVIO encourages the Albanian authorities to indicate more clearly cases related to domestic violence against women and the nature of others forms of genderbased violence against women in the crime statistics made available to the public, to conduct surveys measuring the extent of different forms of violence against women that have not been previously assessed. especially sexual harassments, sexual violence and forced marriages, to develop data categories, which would enable a more accurate documentation of the type of relationship between the perpetrator and the victim, for all forms of violence against women (GREVIO, 2017).

Different studies have been conducted in Albania focussed on domestic violence and gender-based violence, including on the elements of intimate partner violence (Home Office, 2016). A recent study conducted by AWEN on intimate partner violence among teenagers aged 16-19 showed that 22% of them have experienced this phenomenon at least once during their lifetime. 28% of the female respondents had suffered this type of violence as compared to 20% of the male respondents. Another study conducted by IDRA and UNWOMEN (2018) showed that almost half of the female respondents (44%) have had a friend or family member that has been sexually violated or harassed. The overall findings showed that the situation is alarming considering that 38% of the 750 respondents reported being in danger of or exposed towards sexual violence and harassment before or after the age of 15 (some have experienced both).

Studies carried out during the last years

confirm that intimate partner violence, among all ages but especially among young people, is a social issue that should be addressed (Foshee et al., 2007, Barter et al., 2017). A high number of young men and women are subject to violence within their romantic relationships. Studies have shown that this type of violence may have serious consequences (Romito, Beltramini and Escribà-Agüir, 2013). Unhealthy relationships may actually begin at an early age since teenagers and young boys/girls do not always perceive certain behaviours as violent. However, these behaviours may become abusing and deteriorate into the most severe forms of violence. Furthermore, phenomenons such as sexual violence. stalking and intimate partner violence are serious issues that have a considerable and long-term impact on the victims mental and physical health.

2.2. Risk factors

Intimate partner violence and sexual violence are associated to factors on an individual, family, community or society level. Some factors are related to being an abuser, others to being abused and some are related to both.

Men that are more likely to use violence usually have a low level of education, may have a history of being abused as children, may have been exposed towards domestic violence as a result of their fathers abusing their mothers and may use alcohol and/ or narcotic substances. In addition, they usually support gender inequality norms that accept violence and have a sense of "ownership" towards women. Girls and women that are more likely of becoming victims of intimate partner violence usually have a low education, have been exposed to the violence used against their mothers by their spouses/partners, have been exposed to violence during childhood and have accepting attitudes towards violence. They believe that men are more privileged

in society and family and that the role of women is to be submissive (WHO, 2017). These findings are also supported by the previous study of AWEN (2019), according to which young people that had been victims of domestic violence were three times more likely to also become victims of intimate partner violence. Furthermore, young men/women, who know someone from their close circle that is either an abuser or victim of violence, were approximately two times more likely to become victims of violence as compared to those who do not know such people from their close circle. (AWEN, 2019)

Other factors that may lead to intimate partner violence are: disagreements and unhappiness during marriage/relationship, communication issues among partners and controlling behaviours of men towards women. In particular, factors associated to sexual violence include, among others: norms on family honour and sexual purity, a sense of ownership towards women and insufficient punishments against sexual violence (WHO, 2017). In particular, other risk factors associated with violence among young people in Albania are the tolerance towards violent behaviours, drug abuse and being from rural areas. The study of AWEN (2019) concluded that there is a strong link between tolerance towards violent behaviours and experiencing intimate partner violence. More specifically, people tolerating violent behaviours were two times more likely to experience intimate partner violence. In addition, young people in rural areas are more affected by domestic violence as compared to young people in urban areas, which increases their probability of suffering from intimate partner violence.

Rigid stereotypes towards on masculinity and femininity and gender stereotypes are among the main causes of genderbased violence against women and girls. To eradicate violence against girls and women it is important to transform gender norms and stereotypes and to promote non-violent relationships, based on mutual respect and equality among men, women and persons with different sexual orientation. Such transformation can be achieved through measures such as responsible gender education since early childhood. incorporation of gender equality in all education curricula and age-appropriate sexuality education. Furthermore, such measures may include promoting equal responsibility sharing in unpaid work, including parental leave policies, increasing flexibility at the workplace as well as reducing stereotypes on sexual and reproductive health (OHCHR, 2018).

Four types of factors:

a. Cultural factors

The abovementioned patriarchal and sexist attitudes that legitimize violence to ensure the dominance and superiority of men, have an impact on gender-based violence. Other cultural factors include gender stereotypes and prejudice, expectations on femininity and masculinity, gender socialisation, an understanding of family as a private property under the authority of men, a general acceptance of violence in public life (e.g. harassment of girls and women in public premises), and/or accepting violent means to solve conflict.

Religious and historical traditions have legitimized the sense of ownership of men towards women. In many societies, sexuality is also linked to the concept of "family honour". Social norms in these societies allow the killing of women as a result of forbidden sexual relationships. The same norms tolerate and promote sexual violence against women.

A study carried out by INSTAT (2019) explains that the roots of domestic violence in Albania lie deep within "strict"

gender identities and roles, patriarchal authority, promoting an honour and shame system and customs family hierarchy with intergenerational control.". The study adds that Albanians "consider domestic violence as a private issue that happens behind closed doors and that is neither discussed openly nor addressed. Therefore, its victims suffer in silence". In the same line, the study of AWEN (2019) stated that young men/ women believe that violence is a result of discriminating behaviours and attitudes. sexist attitudes and psychological issues.

b. Legal factors

In many societies being a victim of genderbased violence is perceived as a shame or weakness. A lot of girls and women are considered "guilty" because it is believed that they seduce boys and men through their behaviour. These attitudes and perceptions also explain the low levels of reporting and further investigation of gender-based violence.

Until a few years ago, the legislation in some countries was different for violence in public spaces and violence in private spaces, which made women more vulnerable to domestic violence.

The Istanbul Convention ensures the right of everyone, particularly women, to live free from violence in both public and private spheres. Most forms of gender-based violence are considered criminal offences in European countries and beyond. However, it has been noticed that law enforcement practices tend to favour the perpetrators. which further increases the public's lack of trust towards responsible authorities and explains the fact that most of these crimes go unreported.

c. Economic factors

The lack of economic resources generally

increases the vulnerability of women and LGBT+ groups to violence. It creates models of violence and poverty that become selfperpetuating, making it extremely difficult for the victims to pull themselves out of this situation. When men are affected by unemployment and poverty they may express their stress through violence.

d. Political factors

The under-representation of women and LGBT+ people in decision-making and politics means that they have fewer opportunities to shape the agendas and discussions in order to change the way of combating gender-based violence. Insufficient resources and attention are provided to the topic of gender-based violence and domestic violence (Council of Europe). During the last decades, Albania has developed a package of solid and updated policies on gender equality and gender-based violence, but it still lacks funds for their implementations, especially at local level (AWEN, 2016).

2.2.1. Consumption of alcohol and narcotic substances

The use of alcohol or narcotic substances leads to a higher level of domestic violence. intimate partner violence and violence against women and girls (for e.g. see Leonard, 2008). Inter-sectional studies have shown that men consuming alcohol exhibit higher levels of intimate partner violence as compared to those who don't consume alcohol (Chermack, Fuller and Blow, 2000) and that heavy alcohol consumption at the beginning of marriage is an important factor leading to IPV. However, other studies have shown that individuals who have a higher predisposition towards violence, such as higher anger levels, are more likely to become abusers (Eckhardt, Parrott and Sprunger, 2015). The use of narcotic substances has a strong correlation with

IPV, especially when both partners are regular users of such substances (Chase et al., 2003).

A study analysing unintended pregnancies among women that have given birth, showed that physical abuse has a strong correlation with unintended and unwanted pregnancies (D'Angelo, Gilbert, Rochat, Santelli, and Herold, 2004). Women seeking to abort comprised the majority of people reporting IPV cases as compared to the wider population (Woo, Fine and Goetzl, 2005; Williams, Larsen, McCloskey, 2008). These findings are also supported by the previous study of AWEN (2019), which showed that young men/women who used narcotic substances were more likely to experience intimate partner violence.

2.3. Violence against boys and men

Even though gender-based violence usually affects girls and women disproportionally, we cannot ignore the violence exercised against men and boys, especially in intimate relationships. A study analysing the help sought by violated men and the barriers in this process showed that these experiences had an impact on their physical and mental health, on the development of future relationships as well as on the relationship with their children. The participants in the study reported that due to the perceptions of the society, people usually did not believe them or they were perceived as "weak" or as the "abusers". These perceptions have prevented them from seeking help and ending the relationship (Bates, 2020)

2.4. Intimate partner violence among young people

There are several differences between intimate partner violence among teenagers and young people and intimate partner violence among adults. IPV appears more

frequently before the age of 25 therefore it is more frequent before this age. Most IPV victims experience violence for the first time before the age of 25 (Faulkner, Goldstein and Wekerle, 2014). In addition, IPV among teenagers may have a more reciprocal nature, which means that both genders may abuse or experience abuse (Whitaker et. al., 2007). During adolescence and early youth, relationships do not have well-defined norms and are not consolidated, there is a low level of commitment towards building and consolidating relationships, and the perception on dominance is different as compared during adulthood. Therefore, in most cases, IPV at this age may not be considered a problem (Faulkner, Goldstein and Wekerle, 2014; Katz, Courtney and Sapiro, 2017).

Several studies have showed that there is a strong correlation between young age and being an IPV victim. (Abramsky et. al., 2011; AWEN, 2019). Findings on young women have shown that in some countries. figures on IPV may reach up to 66%. For example, the analysis conducted by Stöckl and others (2014) in nine countries, on IPV among teenagers and young girls of 15-24 years of age, showed that IPV was highly prevalent at a level of 19% up to 66%. The study conducted by Decker et. al., (2014), with teenagers living in the urban communities of five big cities, showed that the level of IPV among women that had at least one partner, was 10.2% up to 36%. Young women that had been exposed to IPV were also likely to experience such violence in their future relationships; However, an additional risk factor for young women is that experiencing IPV at a developmental age increases the risk of being violated in future relationships (Bruce, 2011). The study conducted by Exner-Cortens et. al., (2013), on "the long-term links between experiencing teen violence and impacts on health" discovered that teenage girls that had experienced intimate partner violence during adolescence had suffered from several health impacts on the future,

such as narcotics abuse, suicide thoughts and higher risk of further experiencing IPV. These studies underline the short-term and long-term consequences of IPV among teenagers and young women. Young women from families with low economic income face an even higher risk. (United Nations Children's Fund, 2012; Onanubi, Olumide and Owoaje, 2017).

2.4.1. Risk and protective factors for intimate partner violence among teenagers and young people

Researchers have tried to identify the risk factors that affect teenagers and young people to become abusers or victims of IPV. Risk factors are related to several demographic variables (race, gender etc.), and in the case of IPV among adults, to individual (mental health, substance abuse etc.) and family variables (violence during childhood, IPV among parents etc.). Men and women exercise IPV for different reasons in their relationship (Johnson, Giordano, Longmore and Manning, 2014). Both men and women identify anger as the main reason leading to violent behaviour, however women use violence mostly to protect themselves or as a response to emotional pain while men use it as a tool to control their partners or as a response to jealousy. (Hickman et. al., 2004). In addition, male IPV perpetration against females has more severe physical and psychological consequences than female IPV perpetration against males (Capaldi, Kim and Shortt, 2004). Young women face a higher risk of sexual violence during a date with their partner (Foshee et. al., 2004). Domestic violence, whether violence against children or amongst parents, is a risk factor that increases the chance of experiencing IPV during adolescence. Several studies have shown that young people who were victims of domestic violence during childhood are more likely to react towards a perceived conflict, especially in their first relationships during adolescence or youth (see for

example, Fang & Corso, 2007). Fang and Corso (2007) concluded that young men/ women abused during childhood were 9% up to 17% more likely to become abusers or victims in another relationship (Sabina, Cuevas and Cotignola-Pickens, 2016).

Men and women with symptoms of depression and a history of suicide are more likely to be victims of IPV (Renner and Whitney, 2012). Teenagers experiencing unhappiness in life may adopt dangerous behaviours in order to cope with stress; sadness and loneliness may encourage teenagers and young people to tolerate intimate partner violence as a result of fear of being abandoned or rejected (Vézina and Hébert, 2007). The literature on substance abuse indicate that the use of alcohol is a risk factor both for becoming an abuser and a victim. The consumption of marijuana and narcotics by young people increases the risk of becoming an abuser and a victim. The regular use of narcotics may reduce the necessary level of judgement and communication to solve conflicts (Reves, Foshee, Bauer and Ennett, 2014).

The previous study on intimate partner violence conducted by AWEN showed that young people who have experienced domestic violence are three times more likely to enter the cycle of intimate partner violence during adolescence. The data in this study showed that 43 percent of the voung men/women who have been victims of domestic violence are also victims of intimate partner violence. On the other hand only 16 percent of the young people who have not experienced domestic violence have experienced intimate partner violence. Furthermore, teenagers who know someone from their close circle that is either an abuser or victim of violence are almost two times more predisposed (24) percent) to be victims of domestic violence as compared to those who do not know such people from their close circle (13 percent) (AWEN, 2018).

Only a few studies have been conducted on the protective factors for IPV among young men/women. Richards, Branch and Ray (2014) concluded that social support from friends (but not from parents) leads to a reduced risk of becoming an abuser/victim of IPV. However, Staggs et. al., (2007) showed that social support cannot prevent future exposure towards IPV. Other studies have shown being close to your parents and being supervised by them reduces the risk of exposure towards IPV (Yan et.al, 2010).

2.5. Intimate partner sexual violence among young people

Intimate partner sexual violence among young people has not been greatly explored, especially in the Albanian context. A metaanalysis conducted in other countries showed that 1 out of 10 teenagers of 13 to 18 years of age have reported sexual violence, and girls occupy a higher percentage than boys (Wincentak, Connolly and Card, 2017). These numbers are concerning taking into account that victims of intimate partner sexual violence display higher psychological stress, post-traumatic stress disorder, symptoms of depression and suicide thoughts. The assessment of sexual consent is a complex issue, especially in an intimate relationship (Muehlenhard, Humphreys, Jozkowski and Peterson, 2016). Some acts of sexual violence may be hidden or ambiguous, which makes it difficult to clearly understand whether or not we are dealing with sexual violence. The definitions of sexual violence or coercive behaviours may greatly vary while studying the phenomenon. Wilson and Miller (2016) concluded that 60% of young girls that were victims of sexual violence (not necessarily from an intimate partner) did not consider their experience as rape and did not think that they were victims of sexual violence. Instead, they mostly used the terms "bad sex" or "miscommunication" to describe their experiences. The level of "unidentified"

rape is higher among young girls (Wilson and Miller, 2016). Another study concluded that the closer the victim is to the abuser, the lower is the possibility of considering an act as sexual violence (Orchowski, Untied and Gidycz, 2013).

Numerous factors may explain why young women do not consider these experiences as sexual violence: tactics used by the abusers, level of sexual intrusion, previous sexual intercourse with the abuser, use of narcotics by the abuser and the victim, stereotypes related to rape, victim's resistance, uncertainties about the abuser's intentions, a desire not to label the perpetrator as a "bad guy" or to admit that a loved can hurt you (Dardis, Kraft and Gidycz, 2017; Peterson and Muehlenhard, 2011). These uncertainties are stronger among young people due to the lack of experience in intimate relationships, the desire to keep an "ideal" relationship and cultural norms that tolerate and consider. some sexual behaviours as normal, and as an unavoidable part of sexuality at youth (Weiss, 2013). Weiss (2013) discovered that teenagers are more uncertain and ambiguous when it comes to sexual violence exercised by an intimate partner/ friend. One of the reasons explaining this fact may be the difficulty of young people to understand and identify different forms of intimate partner sexual violence (Toscano. 2007). The insufficient identification of different forms of sexual violence by young people may lead to hesitation to report such cases and isolation feelings (Fernet, Hébert, Couture and Brodeur, 2019).

2.6. Technology-facilitated sexual violence

The increasing use of information and communication technologies during the last decade has led to the emergence and proliferation of a new form of gender-based violence. As a result of the increasing use of ICT, girls and women are more

vulnerable than ever towards abuse and violence. Women face multiple forms of technology-related violence including sharing of intimate images without consent, blackmailing, bullying, stalking and sexual harassment (Aceng, 2017). Some forms of intimate partner violence, such as aspects of sexual violence, psychological violence, coercive tactics, and stalking may also be perpetrated through mobile devices and social media sites (CDC, 2017).

Therefore, technology-facilitated sexual violence (TFSV) (also known as "revenge pornography", image-based sexual abuse. non-consensual pornography or electronic sharing of other people's images/videos with sexual content) is more frequent; the possession of cellphones and the easy access to internet have made it easier for individuals to become abusers or victims of TFSV. The data from the study of Powell et. al., 2019 show that 1 out of 10 individuals display an abusive behaviour. Therefore. it is necessary to better understand this phenomenon in order to provide specific treatment to both the victim and the abuser. The negative consequences of TFSV include, among others, mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety and lowself-esteem (Kamal and Newman, 2016). In some cases, victims may experience social and professional consequences, such as losing their job, dropping from school and facing challenges to stay anonymous in their community while their private life has become "viral" (Citron and Franks, 2014). Similar issues have also been identified in studies conducted on the psychological consequences of other forms of sexual violence, including sexual harassment (Nielsen et. al., 2010), sexual assault (Nickerson et. al., 2013) and rape (Campbell et. al., 2009).

Even though numerous empirical studies have been conducted in this area. researchers have not reached a consensus on the definition of TFSV. Most of the studies are focussed on the sharing of

different forms of sexual explicit materials (Henry and Flynn, 2019). Other authors have also been focussed on the cases where such images are created by the abusers themselves and are later shared with others. (Powell and Henry, 2019).

Image-based sexual abuse (IBSA) and TFSV are the most commonly used terms since they cover a wide range of behaviours and emphasize that their nature is similar to the nature of sex crimes (Henry and Powell. 2018). Traditionally, IBSA is associated to visual media, such as images and videos. whereas TFSV have broadened the criteria by including behaviours such as digital sexual harassment, which includes any form and degree of behaviours that are harassing, of a sexual nature and that take place online (Henry and Powell, 2018).

A study conducted in Albania in 2014 by World Vision, with teenagers of 13-18 years of age, showed that 44% of them use the internet to watch porn on a daily basis while 62% confirmed that they have friends who do the same. 47% reported that they have been contacted by a strangers during the last two years, who in some cases was from another country (World Vision, 2014). In 2019, UNICEF conducted a study on the online safety of young people of 9-17 years of age. With regards to teenagers, 9% of those aged 12-14 and 12% of those aged 15-17 reported that they have experienced at least one unwanted online sexual experience (UNICEF, 2019). No national studies focussed only on young people have been conducted in Albania.

2.7. IPV during the COVID-19 pandemic

Studies show that girls and women will suffer more from the consequences of the pandemic in several directions. Even though the official data reported by the Albanian State Police show a decline in the number of reported domestic violence cases compared to the previous year.

the number of phone calls addressed to human rights organizations has tripled. The data published by AWEN, the Albanian Women Empowerment Network, show that about 2000 phone calls have been received to the National Hotline for Women and Girls 116117 during the quarantine period, respectively 10 March – 18 May 2020. This number is three times higher compared to the previous year. Furthermore, cases published in the media show that gender-based violence, which is a current phenomenon in the Albanian families and society, has escalated, without doubt due to the quarantine and the consequences of COVID-19 on the country's economy and on the people's psychological health.

The lower number of official reports filed at the State Police does not necessarily imply a decline in domestic violence. On the contrary, it might be related to the increased fear of women to report violence as a result of the higher level of uncertainty in the future and in such insecure times for everyone. A report of UNWomen showed that man comprised the majority of people (17% of the respondents in the study) losing their jobs during this period as compared to women (12%). However, women are more often employed in the informal economy sector, which does not enable them to benefit from further support (for e.g. from the "war salary").

3. Methodology

3.1. Scope of the study and research questions

This study came as a result of the gap identified in the literature and evidence on intimate partner violence among young people in Albania. In view of the analysis of the literature presented above in this report and the identified gap, the main purpose of this study is to provide a comprehensive overview on issues related to intimate partner violence, and especially to sexual violence, among young people in Albania. from the gender perspective.

The research process to fulfil this purpose was based on several research questions:

- **1.** What is the rate of intimate partner violence among young people in Albania and what are its characteristics?
- **2.** How can we interpret the situation of intimate partner violence among young people in Albania from a gender perspective?
- 3. What are the factors of risk and resilience against intimate partner violence for men and women?

3.2. Methodological approach

This study was conducted using the Explanatory Sequential Methodology "Quan-Qual" (Halcomb and Hickman, 2014), which implies the sequential combination of quantitative and qualitative methods for gathering and analysing data, in order to address the research questions to the highest extent possible. The mixed research methods are ideal to better understand the

connections/common points or differences between qualitative and quantitative data: These methods enable the participants to have an important role throughout the entire research process, and provide additional research opportunities that improve the data, and also enable the provision of in-depth and detailed answers for the research questions (Wisdom and Creswell, 2013). In this study, the quantitative methodology prevails towards the qualitative one. Both these components of the research approach are detailed in the following paragraphs by providing the data collection strategy, the instruments used to collect such data, the analysis strategy, the data interpretation as well as other important issues related to the planning. implementation, professional and ethical reporting of the scientific research.

3.2.1. Quantitative component

The quantitative research methods are suitable especially when it comes to studying research questions that require accurate, precise, reliable and valid results as well as the possibility to replicate the process. Taking into account the above elements and the purpose of the study, it was assessed that a survey would be the most appropriate research model to provide answers to the abovementioned research questions, while the qualitative model would enable us to better understand the findings.

Even though surveys are not the best research models to explore the cause-effect relationship, they continue to be the most appropriate model to map the prevalence of issues/phenomenon and to examine

relationships among several relevant concepts (variables). Furthermore, surveys provide the possibility of covering large populations and territories, with higher flexibility and anonymity as well as lower costs (Bryman, 2008).

Quantitative research model

The model used for the quantitative component of this study is the cross-

sectional survey, which is the most appropriate model to collect and analyse data from a target population, at a specific time. To implement this model, we drafted and administered a questionnaire (structured interview) with young men and women aged 20-24, in the Republic of Albania during October-November 2020.

The survey planning and implementation process are provided in Figure 3.1.1

Figura 3.1.1. Planifikimi dhe zbatimi i sondazhit

1 PLANNING

- 1. Collection and reflection on specific requirements.
- 2. Finalization of specific objectives.
- 3. Finalize the research approach.

2 EXPLORING

- 1. Exploring topics through literature review.
- 2. Understanding of problems, issues, implications.
- 3. Identification of key factors / concepts / variables.

3 DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT THE SURVEY

- 1. Development of questions and hypotheses for testing.
- 2. Development of the tool for data collection questionnaire.
- 3. Development of strategy for data collection and analysis.
- 4. Development of reporting strategy.

Data gathering instrument - questionnaire.

The main instrument used to collect primary quantitative data is the questionnaire. Several studies use the questionnaire as an instrument to assess issues related to intimate partner violence (Russle et. al., 2014; NISVS, 2012; WHO, 2005; Trucker-Harper, 2009). Upon reviewing the methodological approaches and the research instruments in the area of intimate partner violence, as well as the known issues at a local context and the specific developments during 2020, the questionnaire used in this study comprises the following topics and sections:

Section 1 – General data/questions.

This section comprises all the general demographic data, socio-economic data as well as data on the family/social context of the respondents.

Section 2 – Gender stereotypes and **violence** (gender-based violence). This section explores and gathers data on the perceptions of the respondents regarding gender stereotypes and also explores experiences and perceptions on genderbased violence at an individual, family and community perspective.

Section 3 – Harassment and sexual violence.

This section focusses on exploring sexual experiences and their link to intimate partner violence. In addition, it explores the perceptions on the causes of intimate partner violence.

Section 4 - Pornography and revenge pornography. This section targets a relatively new but increasingly concerning issue, especially among young people, which is the use of pornography for revenge. Accordingly, this section explores perceptions and experiences related to pornography in general and revenge pornography in particular.

Section 5 - Social crisis and violence. In the context of a pandemic, the questions in the last section of the questionnaire aim at obtaining the perceptions of the

respondents regarding the impact of the pandemic on the level of violence in the society.

The draft-questionnaire consulted with a wide working group was piloted with 37 participants in order to validate and adapt it based on the context. The final questionnaire was approved after analysing the feedback received on-site, after addressing the issues identified in the pilot phase (mainly related to simplifying the completion of the questionnaire), and after analysing the pilot phase data with the aim of adapting it based on the Albanian context. The final instrument was applied on a selected sample from the target population as presented in the following section.

Survey sample and population

The population of this study is comprised by young men and women of 20-24 years of age, living in Albania during the data collection period (year 2020). This age-group of young people had not been previously studied with regards to gender-based violence and intimate partner violence. Therefore, the aim of the study is to follow the one conducted by AWEN (Argimandriti et. al., 2019) on intimate partner violence among teenagers in Albania. According to the data from INSTAT, at the beginning of 2020 the population of this age group was 226.425, with almost an equal number between genders (112.810 male and 113.615 female) (INSTAT, 2020 p. 6). This population group in the Republic of Albania was used to select the sample for this study. The necessary sample to generalize the data was comprised of 1062 young men and women with a confidence (trust) level of 95% and a margin of error of 3%. Taking into account the potential number of respondents rejecting to respond, the questionnaire was administered on 1128 participants on-site.

To select the sample we used the stratified

random sampling, as the most appropriate strategy to study certain characteristics of the target population. At first, the sample was divided proportionally based on the size of each residential area (in our context for each region). This is extremely important

taking into account the fact that over 1/3 of the population is located in the capital of the country.

Table 3.1.1. Sample distribution, by region

	%	Total sample	Number of respondents, by region
Tirana	31.8	1,100	350
Durrësi	10.2	1,100	112
Fieri	10.2	1,100	112
Elbasani	9.5	1,100	105
Korça	7.2	1,100	79
Shkodra	7	1,100	77
Vlora	6.6	1,100	73
Lezha	4.3	1,100	47
Berati	4.3	1,100	47
Dibra	4.1	1,100	45
Kukësi	2.7	1,100	30
Gjirokastra	2.1	1,100	23

To select the respondents on-site we applied the spiral strategy, starting with the urban centres of main administrative units and moving on towards rural areas.

Several tools were used during the data collection process to ensure the quality of the process. The interviewers on-site were requested to prepare and send daily reports, to report on advance before going out on the field and to determine the location. The administrative staff of AWEN carried out random and regular checks.

Data analysis

The gathered data were processed using the statistical package IBM SPSS, version 25. Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, crosstabs etc.) were used to present the findings observed at the database.

3.2.2. Qualitative component

In the context of the first study on IPV issues among young people of 20-24 years of age in Albania, and in order to better understand the issues and problems identified, it was deemed useful to apply the

sequential methodology "Quan-Qual" that combines the quantitative research component with a qualitative component. Although the quantitative method is the prevailing and dominating method in this study, the qualitative component has an added and irreplaceable value that provides opportunities for a better and deeper exploration and understanding of the issues being reviewed, as well as to validate the identified findings through the quantitative component. It has been proved that this is an appropriate methodology also in the case of topics such as sexual behaviours and gender-based violence (for e.g. see Ruark and Fielding-Miller, 2016).

Qualitative data were gathered through discussions in focus groups (DFG). Four DFG-s were organized in order to validate, break down and contextualize the findings of the quantitative component. These discussion were facilitated in compliance with the guidelines (for more information refer to the annexes of this study). The qualitative component target population comprised young people of 20-24 years of age, as well as representatives of civil society organizations that deal with young men and women and/or with issues related to gender-based violence. Based on a well-informed consent, activists of the AWEN network organizations identified and recruited 3 category of participants in DFG-s, as follows:

- FG1 young men and women of 20-24 years of age from urban areas, who have completed higher education (10 participants)
- FG2 young men and women of 20-24 years of age from rural areas (11 participants)
- FG3 young men and women of 20-24 years of age from urban areas, who did not have a university degree (10 participants)
- With regards to FG4, AWEN and the

researchers were engaged in recruiting activists and staffs from CSO-s with vast experience and knowledge on issues related to gender-based violence and/or youth in the country (11 participants).

Taking into account the restrictions imposed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all four activities were organized online, using the Zoom platform. A total of 42 participants took part in these online activities. Each DFG was facilitated by one researcher, who was assisted by another researcher and the staff of AWEN (including on technical issues) and each discussion lasted 60-90 minutes. Upon a well-informed consent by the participants, all DFG-s were registered, transcribed and prepared for a thematic analysis on the key concepts that required a deeper understanding. The findings based on the data of the qualitative component were analysed alongside the quantitative data in order to enable a detailed and comprehensive analysis of this study report.

3.2.3. Ethical issues and limitations

The ethical issues were addressed during all the study phases. The informed consent (verbal) was provided by each participant (both in the quantitative and qualitative component) before becoming part of the process. The anonymity and data confidentiality issues were addressed with priority to ensure a clear understanding by each of the participants in the study. To increase the chances of providing honest answers, the questionnaire was completed using the self-administration method, except when the participants needed assistance. However, one of the known limitation related to surveys is the possibility that the respondents may not provide sincere/honest answers. To overcome/minimize such limitations, the interviewers were trained and their work on the field was regularly monitored. In addition, the combination of methods

increases the objectivity of the findings.

The sampling strategy used in this study is the stratified random sampling based on the data of INSTAT for January 2020. However, it is important to take into account that young people are a high-mobility age group and they are differently affected by internal and external mobility.

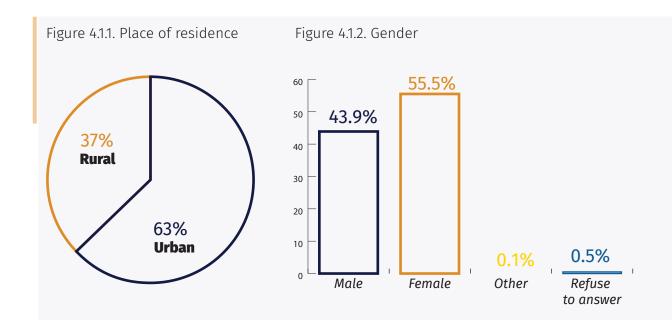
The situation created by Covid-19 and its related restrictions was also reflected during the processes of this study. During the on-site data gathering, the questionnaire was administered in compliance with the necessary physical distance and COVID-19 prevention instruments (masks, disinfectants etc.). Activities that required large gatherings (for e.g. DFG-s) were organized virtually in order not to endanger the participants and the interviewers. Of course that such limitations may have affected the participation level and nature during DFG-s, especially when it comes to young people that are less familiar with the use of technology or virtual communication.

4. Findings

4.1. General data

The respondents in this study belonged to the age group of 18-25 years. The overwhelming majority (95%) were 20-24 years old while a small percentage (5%) were 18, 19 and 25 years old. 63% of the respondents inhabited in urban areas and 37% in rural areas (Figure 4.1.1.). As shown in

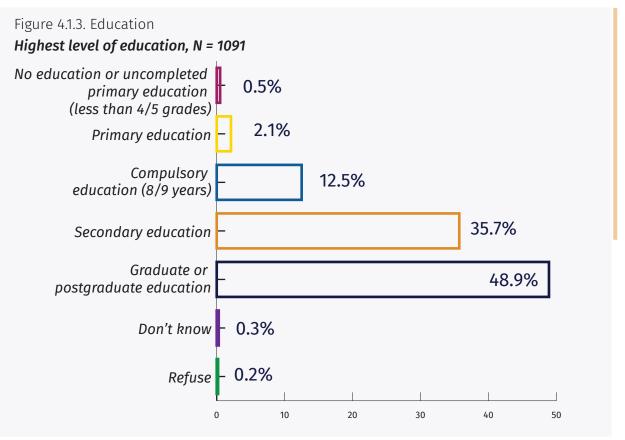
figure 4.1.2., the majority of the respondents participating in the study were young women (55.5%) while the number of young men is lower (43.9%). A small percentage of the respondents have selected the option "other" (0.1%) while several others have refused to answer (0.5%).

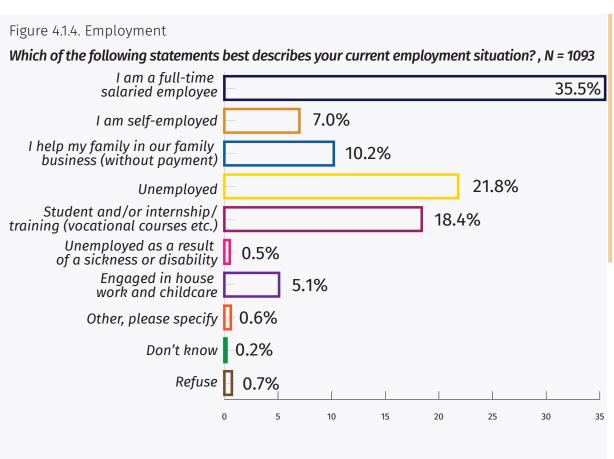


48.9% of the participants had a graduate and/or postgraduate degree, 35.7% had a high school degree and 12.5% had completed the compulsory education. A small percentage of the respondents had completed only the primary education (2.1%) or even less (0.5%) (Figure 4.1.3).

Figure 4.1.4 shows 35.5% of the respondents were salaried employees while 21.8% were unemployed. In addition, some of them were students or interns (18.4%), while others helped in their family business (10.2%) and some were self-employed

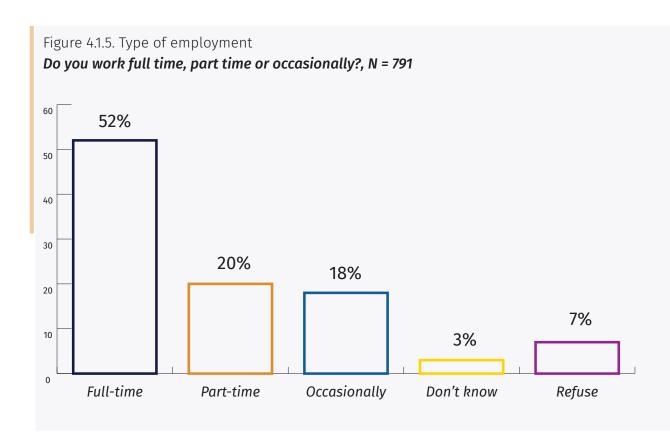
(7%) or were engaged in house work and childcare (5.1%). A small percentage were unemployed as a result of a sickness or disability (0.5%). Some respondents have selected the option "other" and have explained that they are both students/interns and employed or that they are immigrants.





As shown in figure 4.1.5, 52% of the respondents that were employed were full-time employees, 20% were part-time

employees and 18% were occasional employees, while 7% have refused to answer.



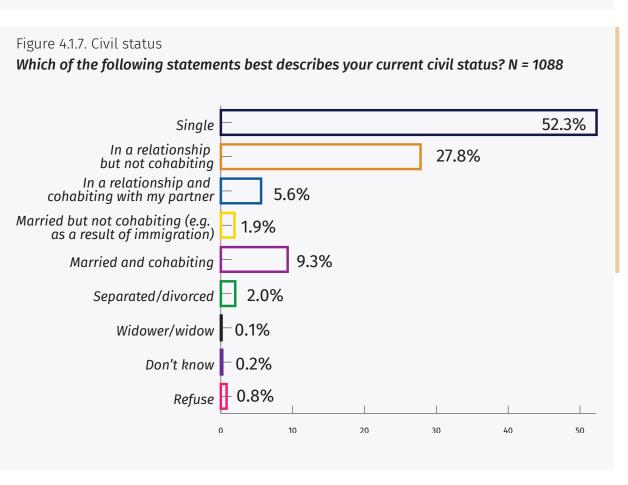
Even though a considerable percentage of the young people were employed, their personal monthly incomes were low. 36% did not have personal incomes, 28% had incomes below 26,000 ALL/month, 15% had incomes up to ALL 35,000 and only 17% had incomes higher than 35,000 ALL/ month (Figure 4.1.6). Gender differences are also present in this case. The percentage of young men that are full-time employees is higher as compared to young women (56.8% young men and 48.8% young women), which explains why women had lower monthly incomes as compared to boys (40% of the young women did not have incomes as compared to 30% of the young men).

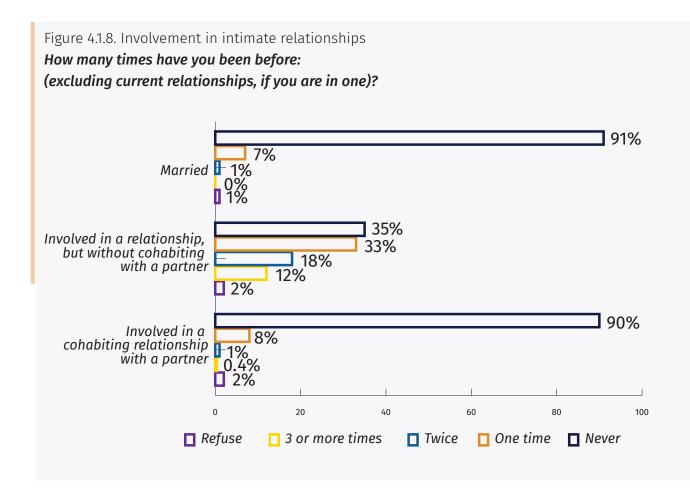
With regards to the civil status, more than half of the young people participating in the study were single (52.3%), 27.8% were in a relationship but did not cohabit, 9.3%

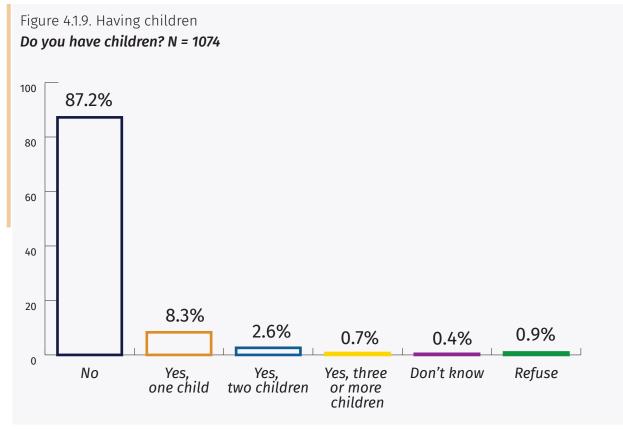
were married and lived with their spouse, 5.6% cohabited with their partner and 1.9% were married but did not cohabit. A small percentage, which however should not be ignored, were separated/divorced (2%) (Figure 4.1.7).

Following the question on civil status, the participants were also asked on the number of previous relationships and their nature. As shown in table 1, the overwhelming majority of the respondents had not been married before (91%) and had not cohabited before with their partner (90%). However, almost 2 out of 3 have had at least one previous relationship without cohabitation (65%) (Figure 4.1.8). With regards to gender differences, women comprised the majority of married respondents (6% more than men).

Figure 4.1.6. Personal incomes What is your average personal income? N = 974 No income 36% 28% Up to 26 000 ALL/month 15% 26 001 - 35 000 ALL/month 12% 35 001 - 50 000 ALL/month 4% 50 001 - 70 000 ALL/month 2% 70 001 - 100 000 ALL/month More than 100 000 ALL/month Don't know Refuse 15 25 0 5 10 20 30 35



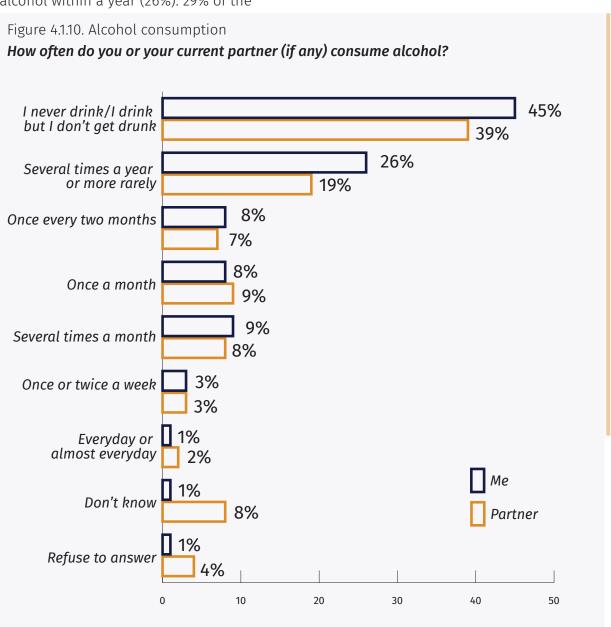




87.2% of the young men/women reported not having children and only 11% of them had 1 or 2 children, while only a small percentage of them (0.7%) had more than 3 children. With regards to gender differences, women comprised the majority of people that reported having one or more than one children. (10% more than men) (Figure 4.1.9).

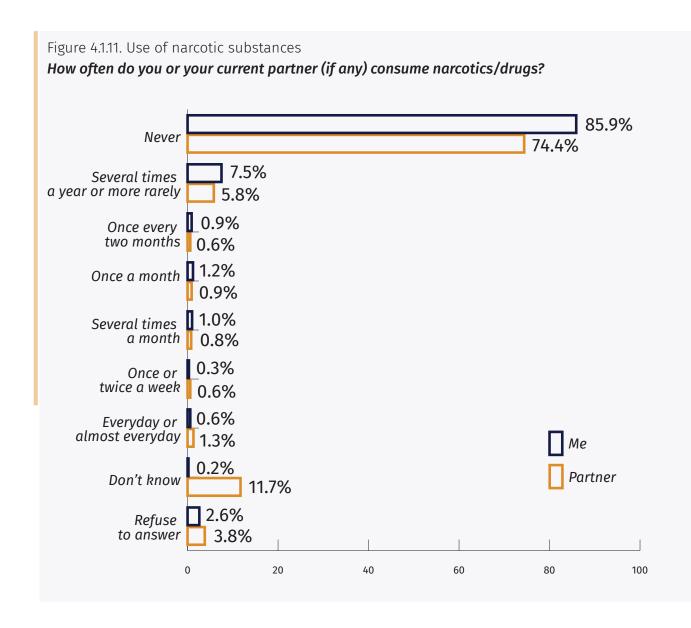
Alcohol consumption often leads to domestic violence and/or gender-based violence. Based on the data provided in figure 4.1.10 almost half of the participants do not consume alcohol or consume few amounts of alcohol but do not get drunk (45%) and 26% of them rarely consume alcohol within a year (26%). 29% of the

respondents that did not consume alcohol were young men and 71% were young women, which means that alcohol consumption is usually higher among young men. In addition, female respondents stated that their partners consume more alcohol than they do (57% of the women stated they "never drink alcohol" but 29% of them did not say the same thing when asked about their partner). Small differences have been reported among the respondents and their partners when it comes to the daily or weekly consumption of alcohol (3% for weekly consumption and 1% - 2% for daily consumption).



The use of narcotics follows the same trend however a higher percentage of the respondents have stated that they (85.9%) and their partners (74.4%) do not consume such substances. 71% of the respondents who stated that they have never used narcotic substances were women and 39% were men, therefore men comprise the majority of people using narcotics, as in the case of alcohol consumption. This is also confirmed by the reports of women on themselves and their partner. 95% of the female respondents stated that they

have never used narcotics while only 68% said the same thing about their partner. It is important to emphasize that 16% of the respondents stated that they use narcotics and 26% of them stated that their partners use narcotics at least once a year, which is a concerning fact taking into account the consequences from the use of narcotics and the risk of addiction (Figure 4.1.11). Correlation exists between the level of education and the use of narcotic substances. More specifically, people with higher education consumed less narcotics.



When asked about mental health issues N = 955 respondents confirmed experiencing such issues and N = 535 stated that their partner has experienced such issues. 45% of them reported that they had suffered from anxiety and 29% said the same about their partner: 45% stated that they have had problems sleeping and 30% confirmed the same about their partner; 35% suffered from lack of confidence and 26% reported the same about their partner; 30% had concentration issues and 24% of them reported the same about their partner; 28% of them lacked appetite or had excessive appetite and 20% stated the same about their partner; 13% suffered

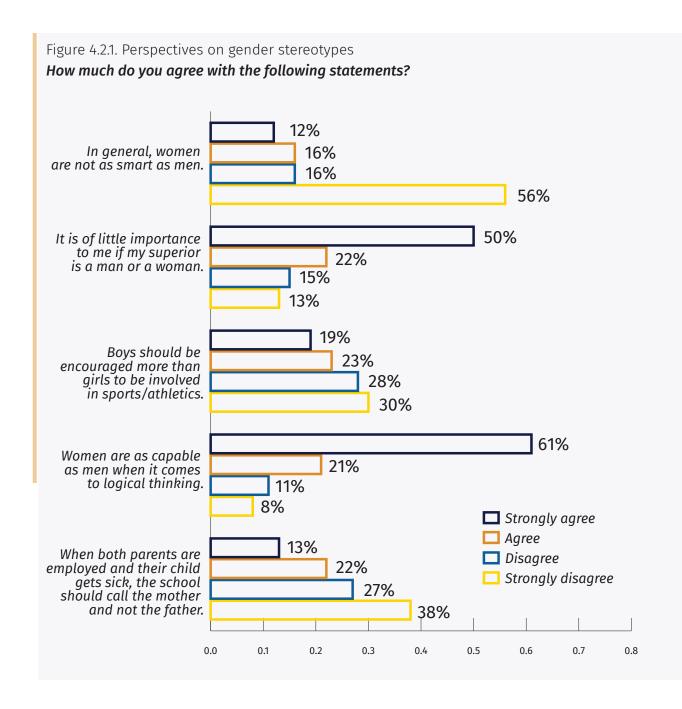
from depression and 10% stated the same about their partner. It is worth mentioning that 4% of the respondents have considered suicide, which is a high number taking into account all the other issues reported in this question (Figure 4.1.12). Young women comprise the majority in all forms of mental health issues. The highest differences were identified in the case of anxiety (a difference of 30% between men and women), lack of appetite or excessive appetite (17%) and lack of confidence (11%). Women and men have reported high levels of mental health issues both for themselves and their partners.

Figure 4.1.12. Mental health issues Have you or your current partner (if any) ever suffered from the following mental health issues? 45% **Anxiety** 29% 13% Depression 10% 15% Panic attacks 15% 35% Lack of confidence 26% 45% Sleeping problems 30% 28% Lack of appetite or excessive appetite 20% 30% Concentration issues 24% **Nightmares** 4% Suicide thoughts 3% 1% Other 6% Partner Don't know 21% Refuse 8% to answer 7% 0 10 20 30 40 50

4.2. Gender stereotypes and genderbased violence

This section presents the findings on gender stereotypes, gender-based violence as well as different gender attitudes. Through a series of statements we were able to assess the attitudes of male and female participants in the study from neutral to deeply gendered stereotypes/attitudes. The chart presented in Figure 4.2.1 displays the answers provided by the respondents

for these statements and it shows that most of the participants do not agree with statements such as "women are not as smart as men" or "childcare is usually a responsibility/task of mothers", and most of them display the same non-prejudicial attitudes when it comes to the statement on the professionalism of men and women, on their superiors or on the capability of women to have the same logical thinking as men.



Regardless of this general trend, we should not ignore and it is important to emphasize that 42% of the respondents believe that boys should be encouraged more than girls to be involved in sports/athletics. In addition, 28% of the respondents agree or partially agree with the statement that women are not as smart as men and 19% disagree that women have the same logical thinking as men. By disaggregating these findings by gender, it is obvious that the percentage of boys, who fully agree that women are not in general as smart as

men, is two times higher as compared to girls, while 76% of the female respondents and 46% of the male respondents believe that women are as capable as men when it comes to logical thinking. Differences have also been identified between urban and rural areas. For example, although 19% of the respondents fully agree that young men should be encouraged more than young women to participate in sports, this perception is more common among young people in rural areas as compared to urban areas (a difference of 5 percentage points).

Figure 4.2.2. Perspectives on the roles of man and women in the society How much do you agree with the following statements on the roles of men and women in family? 69% In marriage: The husband/man should 31% be the head of the family. 34% Marriage functions better if the husband is not involved in household chores. 66% 51% *In raising children_Mothers* are more suitable than fathers 49% to change babies diapers. 36% Mothers should usually be the ones to 64% supervise children's activities. Employment_It is not suitable for a men to start a carrier that 48% is more common to women. 52% Women and men can equally 69% cope with work pressures. 31% In social/interpersonal/heterosexual relationships_A women 33% should be careful not to look 67% smarter than her partner. 51% People should be kinder to women than to men. 49% In education_Home economics 75% lessons should be equally important to boys and girls. 25% When it comes to women, the selection of the field of study is not as important 24% 76% as in the case of men. 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 0.5 0.6 0.7 0.8 Agree Disagree

These results are also supported by the perspectives on the roles of men and women in marriage, family, raising children. employment etc. So, 33% of the respondents believe that marriage functions better if the husband is not involved in household chores, or that mothers are more suitable to change the baby or supervise the baby's activities (respectively 51% and 36%). People have a more open attitude towards gender equality in the public sphere, employment, social relations and education (over 75% of the respondents believe that it is important for men and women to have similar education levels and opportunities).

Upon reviewing all elements, and especially the opposing views (fully agree and fully disagree), it has been identified that there is a considerable gender gap (most of this gap is comprised by a difference of 15 percentage points between young women and young men). The considerable differences in attitudes, especially related to different expectations on the roles of men and women in marriage, lead towards the assumption that couples/families established between young people are likely to experience pressures, which arise while attempting to balance family and work life (Knight and Brinton, 2017).

As it may be expected, respondents in urban areas are more resistant towards traditional stereotypes related to gender roles. This is also valid for the education level. For example, 73% of the respondents with primary education agree that the husband/ man should be the head of the family. while in the case of respondents who have completed higher education this percentage is 33%. The trend and differences were also similar in the other cases provided in figure 4.2.2.

In order to explore gender-based issues. at first the respondents were asked on issues related to domestic violence and violence in general, on their perceptions on the prevalence of such issues as well as on their perceptions and expectations on the level of reaction at their respective communities. As shown in the table below, although in general it appears that there still exists a sense of community, its level is higher when it comes to identifying violence related issues and lower when it comes to reacting towards such issues, especially in the case of neighbours taking the initiative to intervene or act (34%) if someone in the community is involved in a domestic violence situation.

Table 4.2.1. Violence, domestic violence and the community.

	Yes	No	I don't know	Total
In your community, do neighbours usually know each other well?	62.1%	18.2%	19.7%	100.0%
If a fight on the street were to take place in your community, would people intervene/do something to stop the fight?	55.0%	18.8%	26.2%	100.0%
If someone in your community was in trouble, would the neighbours offer their help?	46.4%	19.2%	34.4%	100.0%
If someone in your community was in trouble, would the neighbours call the police?	49.6%	19.4%	31.0%	100.0%

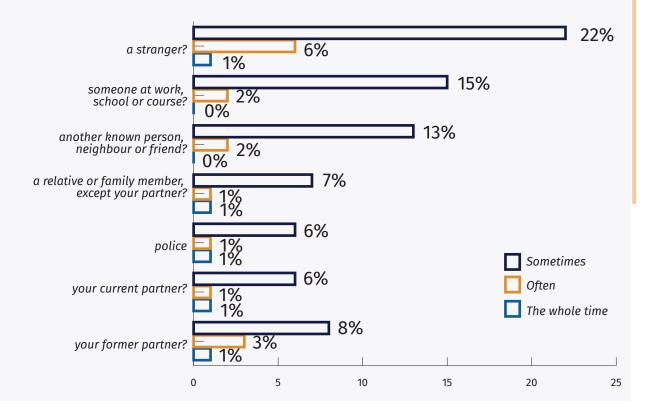
	Yes	No	I don't know	Total
If someone in your community were to be involved in a domestic violence situation, would the neighbours intervene/do something?	33.9%	27.2%	38.9%	100.0%
If someone in your community were to be involved in a domestic violence situation, would the neighbours call the police?	41.9%	20.1%	38.0%	100.0%

In all cases provided in the table, it appears that young men/women from rural areas are more inclined to intervene themselves, while the respondents from urban communities are more inclined to notify the police, although the differences between

these two groups are small. According to the representatives of civil society organizations that work with young people in these areas, some potential explanations are related to the mentality and confidence in services.

Figure 4.2.3. Concerns from potential physical or sexual assaults

During the last 12 months, have you ever been worried that you might be physically or sexually assaulted or hurt by any of the following persons? If yes, how often?



"In the past, most people from rural areas were married by arrangement. and now they say to the individuals who arranged their marriages: "You found my spouse, now deal with him/her!". On the other hand, when people find their own spouses (partners), their family tells them: "You found him/her by yourself!". This is especially true when it comes to young people (18 year old), who were asked by their families to wait a little longer before getting married. Therefore, these young people may be ashamed of asking help from their families and relatives and that is why they address to CSO-s". (DFG with CSO-s)

"They lack confidence in the police, and wish to be counselled by women. They come directly at us and afterwards they go to the police." (DFG with CSO-s)

Subsequently, the questions were focussed on the reporting of individual experiences. 7% of the total number of respondents stated that during the last 12 months. they have continuously or frequently felt threatened by a stranger. The second category reported most frequently as a continuous threat were former partners (4%)

In almost all scenarios, girls account for the majority of persons that have repeatedly or frequently felt threatened. An exemption to this are threats made by the police or a relative or family member, besides their partner, since in both these cases men account for the majority, although with small differences. Gender differences are wider and to the disadvantage of women, especially when analysing answers related to the lack of threat or safety level. So. 85% of the men state that they have never felt threatened by a stranger, as compared to only 55% of the women. Even when it comes to former partners, 90% of the men report that they have never experienced threats, as compared to 78% of the women, which

means that 22% of the women have felt threatened at least once by their former partners. Threats from former partners are more common among women as a result of the mentality, but also as a result of the hesitation (mainly of women) to seek the necessary help to prevent revictimization, or as a result of the unwillingness (mainly of men) to stop using violence.

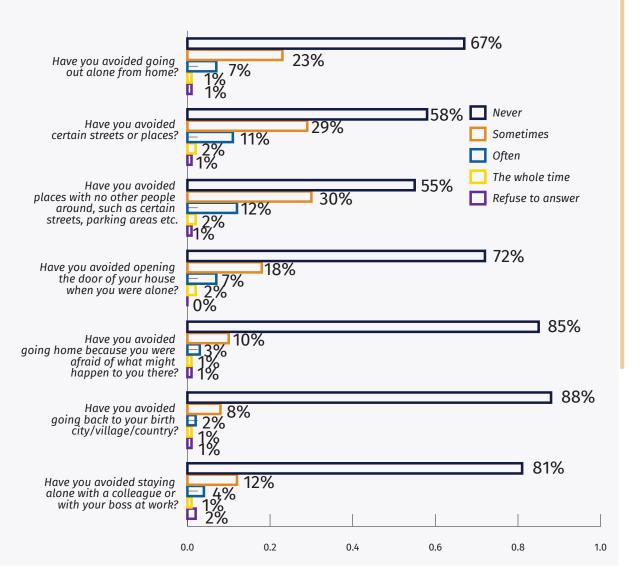
"We also have the stalking phenomenon. It is still difficult for boys and men to understand that their wife/girlfriend may need to break up... This is also a persisting phenomenon among young people." (DFG with young people)

"You have to lose a lot in order to start reflecting. We do not sufficiently punish or help the abuser in order to force him to reflect and change. On the other hand, a lot of women and girls state that: "I will never allow again what he did to me"... Often, the future partner is also an abuser." (DFG with CSO-s)

The abovementioned trends are also accompanied be certain behaviours that may prevent/protect victims from potential physical or sexual assaults. In general, at least 15% of the respondents stated that they have avoided going out alone from their home or another place, or staying alone with someone else, as a result of fear/uncertainty related to a potential physical and/or sexual assault. Only 53% of the women stated that they have never hesitated to leave their home alone, as compared to 85% of the men. In addition, only 43% of the female respondents stated that they have never avoided certain streets or places, as compared to 77% of the male respondents. The number of women that have avoided staying alone with their colleague/boss at work is three times higher compared to the number of men.

Figure 4.2.4. Behaviours adopted due to fear from physical or sexual violence

During the last 12 months, have you ever performed one of the following actions because you were afraid of physical violence or sexual attack



In general, in our country there is a high level of awareness on the issue of violence against women. The majority of the respondents (88%) report that violence against women is a widespread (45%) or spread (43%) phenomenon and none of the respondents denies the existence of such issue (none has selected the option "not spread at all"). It appears that the work carried out through different awareness-raising campaigns has contributed in these results. As presented in the following chart, 67% of the respondents have come across/

heard about different awareness-raising campaigns on violence against women.

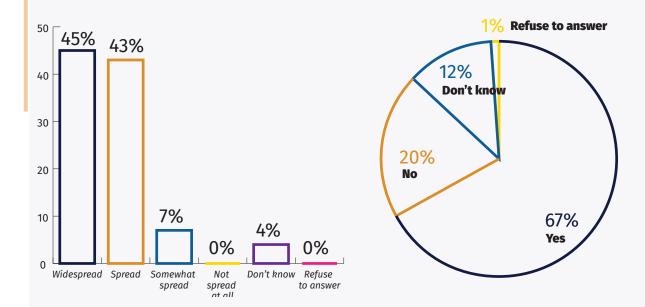
Even in this case, as a result of the personal experiences and/or the higher level of awareness towards this issue, it is concluded that the percentage of female who believe that violence against women is a widespread phenomenon (37% of them) is higher compared to male (50% of them). In addition, 75% of the female respondents, 59% of the male respondents in urban areas and 59% of the

respondents in rural areas have been in contact with an awareness raising campaign on the violence against women in the last 12 months, which shows that these campaigns should target men and rural areas in a more direct/efficient way, because, as it was also described by the participants during DFG-s, the mentality in these areas continues to pose a problem.

Figure 4.2.5. Perceptions on the prevalence of violence against women and awareness on this issue

In general, what do you think about the level of violence against women in Albania (from partners, known persons or strangers)?

Have you recently come across/heard about any awareness raising campaign on the violence against women?



"We try to include rural areas in our projects. In some projects, this has been a requirement. I think that such issues should be included in the school curricula and should be discussed regularly. Sometimes we visit schools and organize information campaigns. Teachers send the boys out and only girls receive the information." (DFG with CSO-s)

"Information in rural areas is not complete and young people in these areas are not properly informed on this issue. We are talking about remote areas where it is difficult to bring change because people are still ashamed of hearing the word sex. It is not something

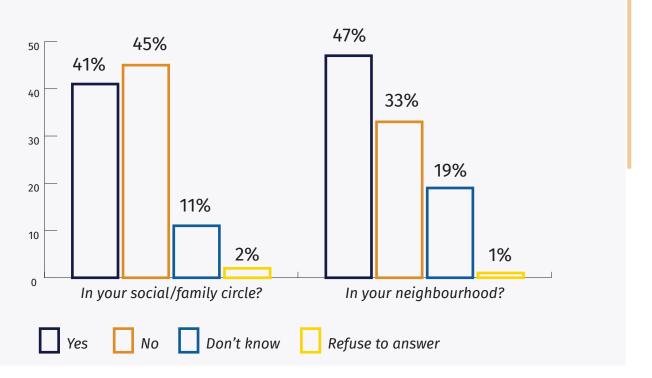
normal to them. For example, in rural areas, eighth grade biology teachers skip/do not explain the chapter on human body." (DFG with young people)

In general, it appears that domestic violence against women is identified and reported more from people in the community rather than from the respective family members. In about 47% of the cases, respondents state that they know someone in their neighbourhood that has experienced gender-based violence in the family and in 41% of the cases they have encountered similar situations among their friends or relatives. Although differences are small,

women, respondents living in urban areas and those that have completed higher education comprise the majority of people that are more likely to report/identify violence against women in the family/social circle. During the discussions in focus groups, it was concluded that the issue of blaming victims is one of the reasons leading to a reluctance to accept that violence is present in our social/family circle.

Figure 4.2.6. Rate of known cases of domestic violence against women

When you think about domestic violence against women, for e.g. from the spouse, partner, brother in law etc., does it come to your mind any woman who has experienced any form of domestic violence:



The report shows that an obstacle related to the identification/reporting of gender-based violence is also the level of information, not only on how to identify and categorize such violence, but also on how to report and seek help to address it. One out of four respondents did not have any type of information (8%) or did not think he/she was well informed (18%) on how to react in violence situations, for example in cases of sexual violence/assault. As it was also anticipated in this situation, women, respondents living in urban areas and those that have completed higher education comprise the majority of people,

who believe that they have a high level of information.

In fact, family remains the first "shelter" for seeking help (83%), followed by friends and civil society organizations, which occupy a similar percentage (respectively 62% and 61%). More than half of the respondents do not believe that reporting domestic violence at religious institutions representatives is a viable option (51% of them disagree), but it is also important to emphasize that more than 1/3 of them believe the same thing when it comes to reporting violence to police officers (35%).

Figure 4.2.7. Perceptions on the level of information needed to address situations of sexual violence

How well-informed do you think you are on the actions you would have to take if you were to fall victim to sexual violence?

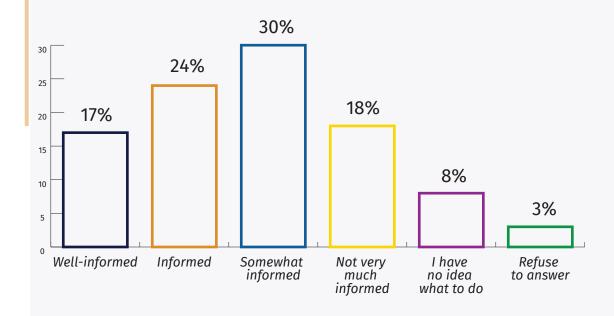
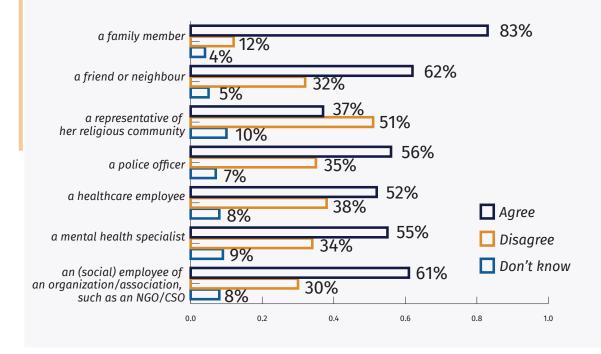


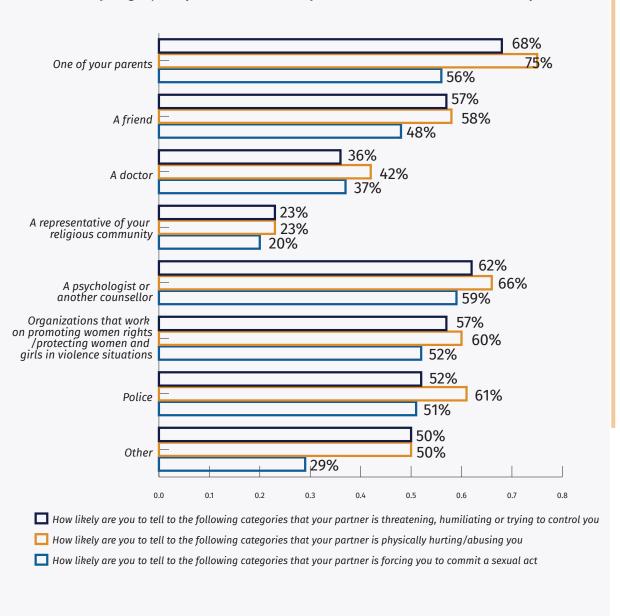
Figure 4.2.8. With whom would a woman share the fact she has been subject to violence? With whom would a woman share the fact that she has been abused from her husband or partner, even if such violence was not frequent (for example not more than once a year)?



Even when asked about IPV cases, respondents stated that family would be the first option to seek help. More than half of the them reported that (most likely) they would seek help from one of their parents if their partner threatened them (68%), used physical violence (75%) or forced them to perform sexual intercourse (56%). Even when it comes to sexual

violence, the importance of parents/family is similar to the importance of NGO-s and the police (respectively 56%, 52% and 51%). Psychologists or other professionals providing counselling are another prevalent choice in this case (59% would address to such professionals in cases of sexual violence in intimate relationships).

Figure 4.2.9. To which institution would you address in cases of intimate partner violence **Where would you go if the person with whom you are in an intimate relationship ...**

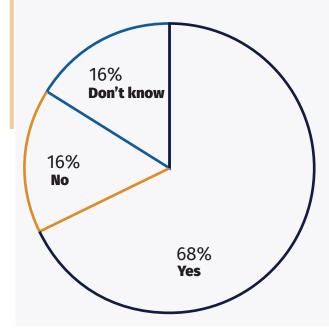


Most of the respondents believe that the role of health services in identifying gender-based violence is appropriate and useful. About 68% of them agree that during

routine checks, doctors identifying physical injuries/wounds in women should ask them if such injuries are a consequence of violence exercised against them.

Figure 4.2.10. Perspectives on the involvement of health services in identifying violence against women

Do you believe it is appropriate that during routine checks, doctors identifying physical injuries/wounds in women should ask them if such injuries are a result of violence?



About 76% of female respondents agree with this fact, as compared to 58% of male respondents. Furthermore, even though with small differences, this appears to be more acceptable by respondents in urban areas and those with higher education.

4.3. Harassment and sexual violence

The third section of findings is specifically related to intimate partner violence. 81% of the total number of respondents (N = 1095) had performed sexual intercourse while 19% of them had not. (Figure 4.3.1.). The average age of the first sexual intercourse was 17.9 years old, starting from the age of 13 (when an approval for sexual intercourse cannot be granted) up to the age of 25. The most

frequent age of first sexual intercourse was the age of 18. The average age of first sexual intercourse was 17 years old for men and 18 or 19 years old (18.5 on average) for women. With regards to those who had never performed sexual intercourse, 23% were men and 77% were women, while 41% were from rural areas and 59% from urban areas.

Figure 4.3.1. Sexual intercourse

Have you ever had sexual intercourse? N = 1095

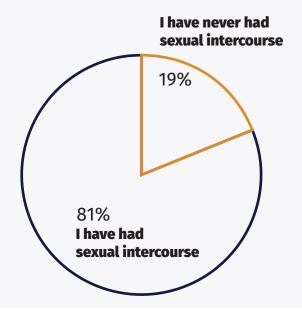


Figure 4.3.2. Forced sexual intercourse



5%

I was forced

to perform

sexual

As shown in figure 4.3.2, most of the respondents reported that they have willingly performed sexual intercourse

I wanted to

have sexual intercourse

0

3%

The sexual

intercourse

was performed

(83%). It can be noted that 8% of the respondents have performed forced sexual intercourse and women comprise

5%

Refuse

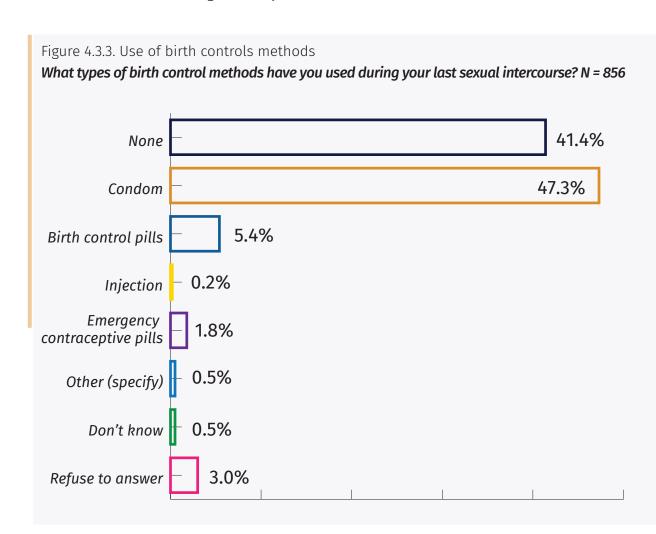
to answer

4%

Don't know

the majority of them (a difference of 8% between women and men). In addition, respondents with an elementary or primary education were more likely to report forced sexual intercourse as compared to those with a high school or university degree. The rest refused to answer or did not know how to describe their first sexual intercourse (9%) (Figure 4.3.2).

Respondents stated that the average number of sexual partners was 2.6 during their lifetime and 1.2 during the last year. The most frequent answer (mode) in both cases was 1, which means that most of the respondents have had one sexual partner during their lifetime and during last year. The number of sexual partners varied from 1 up to 20 during the lifetime and 1 up to 6 during the last year. Upon comparing men and women, it is concluded that the average number of sexual partners was Mmen = 3.3 for men and Mwomen = 1.7 for women.



The use of birth control methods remains at very low levels. 41% of the respondents have not used a birth control method during their last sexual intercourse. Condoms are the most common method with 47.3%, followed by birth control pills. However,

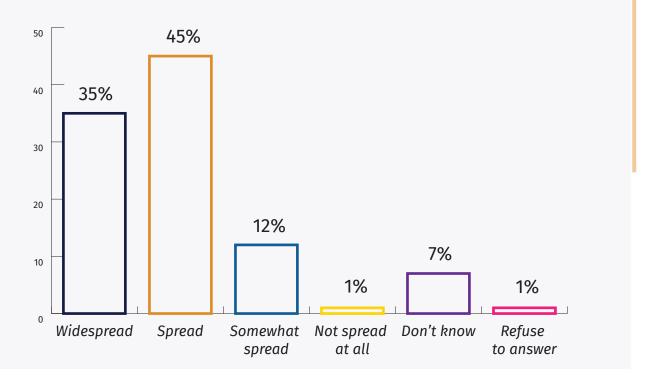
there is a high difference between these two methods considering that pills have only been used in 5.4% of the cases. Injections, emergency contraceptive pills and other methods were used very rarely. People with higher education were more likely to use

birth control methods, while people from rural areas were more likely not to use birth control methods, considering that the number of respondents from rural areas, who selected the option "none", is 5.5% higher as compared to respondents from urban areas (Figure 4.3.3.). In addition, there is a correlation between the first sexual intercourse and the use of birth control methods in the last sexual intercourse. More specifically, those who had willingly performed first sexual intercourse were more likely to use birth control methods as compared to those who had performed forced first sexual intercourse. Participants in focus groups explained why the use of

birth control methods is low, especially in rural areas:

"In rural areas, people are not familiar with these methods or are ashamed of using them. And this phenomenon is present both in rural and urban areas. Even nowadays, there are young people who feel embarrassed to buy a condom and ask the pharmacist to give them a "paracetamol" while winking. They do not know the importance of birth control methods" (DFG with young people)

Figure 4.3.4. Perceptions on the prevalence of sexual violence against women in Albania In general, what do you think about the level of sexual violence against women in Albania (from partners, known persons or strangers)? N = 1077



A very high percentage of the respondents believe that sexual violence against women in Albania is a spread phenomenon (80%), both from their partners or from known/ unknown persons (Figure 4.3.4). Of course, this opinion is based on their personal

experiences, experiences encountered in their family/social circle as well as on what they have seen/heard from time to time on the news. Young women (8% more than young men), respondents with a secondary and higher education (10%)

more) and respondents from urban areas (8% more than those from rural areas) are more likely to believe that this is a spread form of violence. The level of education and residence areas is linked to the level of information and definition on sexual violence. Often, people in rural areas and those with lower education are not clear on the definition of sexual violence against women. The main stakeholders that participated in focus groups and the young men and women confirmed this finding. However, CSO-s representatives believe that during the last years people are more prone to seek help even when they are not clear what is considered violence.

"There is a higher willingness to call or ask for information on what is happening. There are more young people, who are not in a consolidated relationship, that wish to receive information when they are not sure if a case constitutes violence or not", (DFG with CSO)

"For example, in the past, in my social circle we believed that sexual violence meant only forced sexual intercourse, while today even sexual harassment, immoral behaviours and molestation are considered as sexual violence and are taken into account", (DFG with CSO)

With regards to the above question on the prevalence of sexual violence against women and girls in Albania, the respondents had often seen/heard about cases of sexual violence or harassment in the media (TV/radio/written press, 86%), social media (79%) and online media (78%). The level of exposure towards sexual violence in close circles was lower, but still considerable. So, 23% of the respondents have witnessed/heard about sexual violence in their neighbourhood, 14% in their social circle, 10% at work and 7% in their family circle. Almost half of them (48%) have witnessed/heard about such violence in their residence area (city/village). 54% of the respondents have witnessed/heard about women/girls that have experienced sexual violence in their close circles and everyday life, such as in their family circle, social circle, neighbourhood and work (Figure 4.3.5.).

With regards to gender differences, women have usually seen about cases of violence (4% up to 6%) on TV, online and social media, while men have usually encountered such form of violence on their city/village and neighbourhood (10% more than women). There are differences among people with different levels of education and people living in different areas. More specifically, people with a higher level of education and people from urban areas comprised the majority of the respondents that had encountered sexual violence on TV. online and social media. However, these differences were lower in cases of sexual violence encountered at the village/city or family circle.

The respondents were asked if they had experienced sexual violence from their partner/former partner, for example if they were forced to perform sexual acts or sexual intercourse.

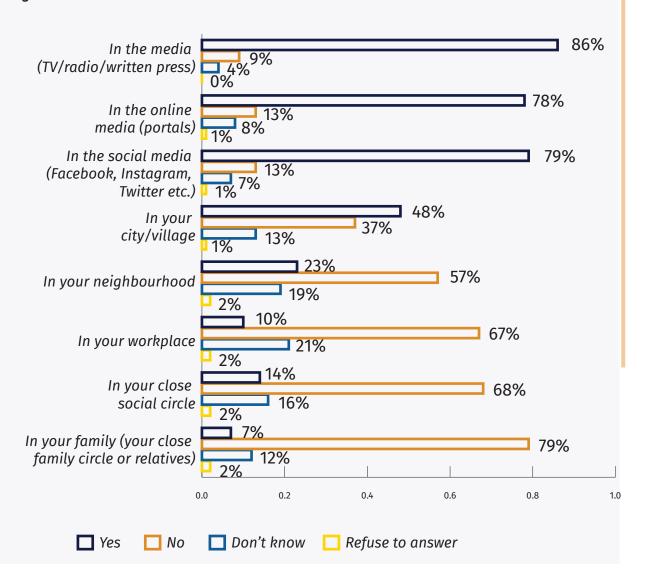
In this question, 7% of the respondents stated that they have been forced, at least once, by their current partner to perform sexual intercourse, while 11% of them had been forced by their former partner. The same number of respondents stated that they were forcefully held by their current/ former partner in order to perform sexual intercourse or were involved in a sexual activity against their will. It is important to emphasize that a higher number of respondents accepted that they had performed sexual intercourse because they were afraid from their partner/former partner, respectively 12% and 16% (Figure 4.3.6). This shows that some persons may be subject to sexual violence and not oppose because they are afraid of their partners, even though such actions are

against their will. In addition, it is important to highlight the fact that the respondents

have experienced this type of violence more often in their previous relationships.

Figure 4.3.5. Indirect and direct exposure towards cases of harassment/sexual violence against women

Have you recently seen or heard about any case of sexual violence/harassment against girls/women?



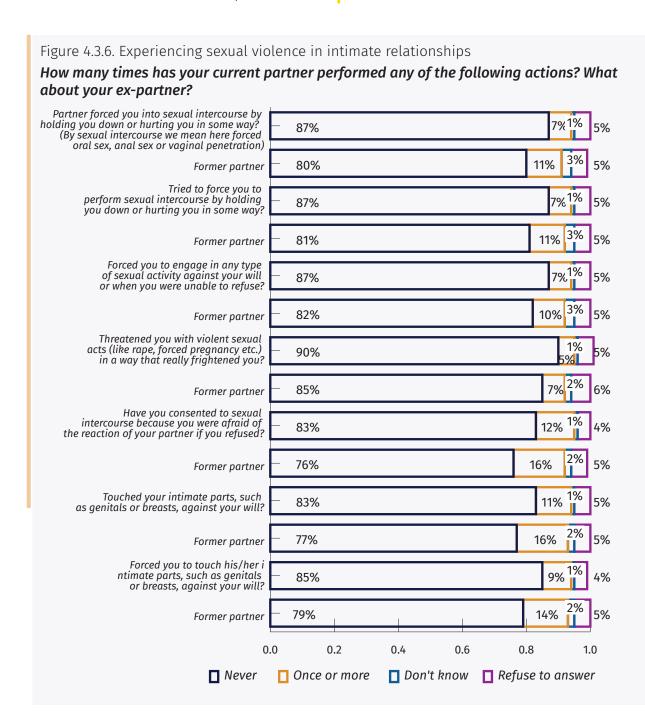
Gender differences are higher in all the questions related to this issue. In the first questions, women comprise the majority of the respondents that have been forced to perform sexual intercourse (12% more women, as compared to men, have been forced by their current partner and 20% by their former partner). The other questions

follow the same trend. Differences are higher when it comes to number of respondents that have accepted performing sexual intercourse because they were afraid from their partners (26% more women, as compared to men, were afraid from their current partner and 27% more women from their former partner). Even in this case,

a correlation exists between the level of education and the provided answers. People with higher level of education comprised the majority of the respondents who selected the option "never" in all questions. Participants in focus groups provided two different explanations on the differences related to current and former partners: it may be related to a higher awareness of women or to the shame that they might have another failed relationship.

"A woman that has experienced this form of violence may have a higher level of awareness and may tell her partner to stop", (DFG with young people)

"A woman might not report the second abuser because she feels prejudiced by the opinion of others, i.e. "she broke up with her first partner and now she broke up with another one". (DFG with young people)



The respondents were also asked if they have experienced other forms of physical or sexual violence from other people, in addition to sexual violence from their partner/former partner. Based on their answers, the following was concluded: 26% of them were hit or their hair were pulled by someone, 20% were hit and suffered injuries, 12% were kicked, 9% were hit with an object, 4% were hit or cut with something. In 15% of the cases, their partners had threatened to hurt them badly or kill them. A wide range of people had exercised this form of violence, including the following: father, mother, brother, teachers, cousins, friends. In addition, violence had been exercised by the current/ former partner or husband, and even from the former mother in law and other relatives on the husband's side of the family. The age of abuse varied from early childhood (5 years old), up to the current mature age (23 years old). Furthermore, the most extreme forms of violence, such as stabbing or cutting, were usually committed by their former partners, father and friends (Figure 4.3.7.).

17% of the respondents stated that someone had touched or hugged them at least once in their lifetime. These people were usually relatives, neighbours, strangers, people on buses etc. People have experienced this form of abuse starting from the age of 5 up to their current age, but the highest occurrence was encountered during the age of 13-20. 28% of the male and female respondents in this study were made uncomfortable by stares or desiring looks. Different people have committed this act but most of them were strangers, pedestrians and people in public premises, while also including their father, uncles and classmates. Once again, the most exposed age group was 13-20 years old. 17% of the respondents stated that, since the age of 10, they have found themselves in different situations where someone has made a sexual comment or joke, mainly from their social circle. More than 1 out of

10 respondents have received photos or gifts with clear sexual content, or have been shown intimate body parts that have made them feel offended, mainly from former partners and people in their social circle, as well as from their cousins or stepfather, starting from the age of 10 and even more frequently during adolescence (Figure 4.3.7.).

6% of the respondents have been forced to look at porn materials and 3% have also been forced to pose nude. The circle of people that have forced respondents to commit these acts is comprised only by former partners, friends and relatives. The respondents reporting such issue were 17, 18 and 19 years old.

Based on the last 3 questions related to sexual violence with physical contact, 11% of the respondents have stated that someone has touched their intimate parts them without will, 9% have been forced to touch someone else and 8% (almost 1 out of 10) have been forced to perform sexual intercourse (Figure 4.3.7). The range of perpetrators committing these acts (touching someone or forcing someone to touch them) was comprised by brothers, cousins, people from social circles and former partners. In some reported cases, the abused people were only 10 years old, while most of the abused were 13-14 and 17-20 years old. The same categories are also mentioned in cases related to forced sexual intercourse: the former/current partner. brother, stepfather, friends or father in law, which shows that physical violence and sexual violence often occur together, as it was also confirmed in the previous study of AWEN (2019). People who have been subject to forced sexual intercourse belong to the age group of 13-23 years old. In some cases, the violence has been recurrent throughout the years.

The answers provided for questions related mainly to physical violence, show that women have suffered less from this form of violence. Moreover, when it comes to serious forms of physical violence, such as severe injuries, female respondents comprise the majority of those selecting the option "never" (a difference of 10% compared to male respondents). When it comes to sexual violence, women comprise the majority of the respondents that have experienced such harassments (10%-30%). There are no differences between men and women with regards to online sexual violence. Once again, the level of education is correlated to experiencing violence. Respondents with

higher levels of education are less likely to be exposed towards different forms of violence, in all questions related to this issue. Respondents from rural areas are more exposed towards physical violence, as compared to respondents from urban areas. However, such differences do not exist in the case of questions referring to sexual violence.

Figure 4.3.7. Experiencing different forms of violence Has any other person treated you in a way that felt unwanted or offensive? Slapped or pulled your hair so that it hurt you? 70% 26% 76% 20% Hit you hard so that it hurt you? 84% 12% Kicked you hard so that it hurt you? Beat you with a hard object, such as a stick, cane or belt so that it hurt you? 88% 9% Stabbed or cut you with 93% 4% something so that it hurt you? 81% 15% Threatened to hurt you badly or kill you? 80% 17% Touched, hugged or kissed you without your will? Stared or leered you in a way that made you feel uncomfortable? 69% 28% Made a sexually suggestive comment 79% 17% or joke that made you feel offended? Has sent or shown you sexually explicit pictures, photos or gifts that made you feel offended? 86% 11% 11% 85% Indecently exposed intimate body parts to you? Forced you to watch pornographic 91% material against your will? Forced you to pose nude in front of a person 3% 94% or in photos, videos or webcams against your will? Touched your intimate parts, such 11% 86% as genitals or breasts, against your will? Forced you to touch his/her intimate parts, 9% 88% such as genitals or breasts, against your will? Forced you to perform sexual intercourse 88% 8% with him/her against your will? 0.0 0.4 0.6 0.2 8.0 1.0 ■ Never Once or more

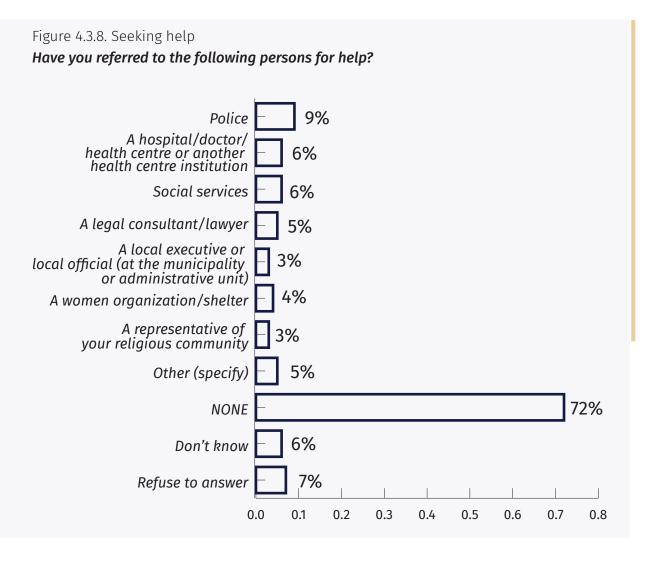


Figure 4.3.8 shows that 72% of the respondents have not sought help for neither form of violence mentioned above. A small percentage of them (9%) have sought help by the police and even less have sought help at a doctor/hospital (6%) and at social services (6%). Legal consultants (5%), local government officials (3%), women organizations/shelters (4%) and representatives of religious communities (3%) were the less likely institutions and entities for people to seek help. The option "other" usually includes family members, such as father and mother, or friends. It is clear that there is a low tendency to seek help at the responsible institutions. These percentages are even lower in rural areas (about 4% lower in the case of hospitals, social services, legal consultants and

local government officials). Participants in focus groups provided different reasons on why people don't address to respective institutions for protection. The most important factors, among others, are the impunity of the abusers and lack of support for the victim:

"Insufficient punishments for people using violence. In another country, the punishments for abusers are so severe that they would never think to use violence again (for example, they would have problems with their mortgage, would lose their jobs etc.). A single measure, such as the restraining order used in our country, is not as effective. If abusers do not face severe punishments,

they will not think their actions through. Another element is support for the victim: services, care, transport would facilitate their lives. Victims of violence do not find sufficient support in our country" (DFG with CSO-s)

The most frequent reason to seek help is that they couldn't take it any more (47%), were encouraged by their friends/family (22%) or had sustained severe injuries and were afraid that their partner would kill them (18%, 7% more women). Even though in small percentages, some people reported that they were afraid because their partner

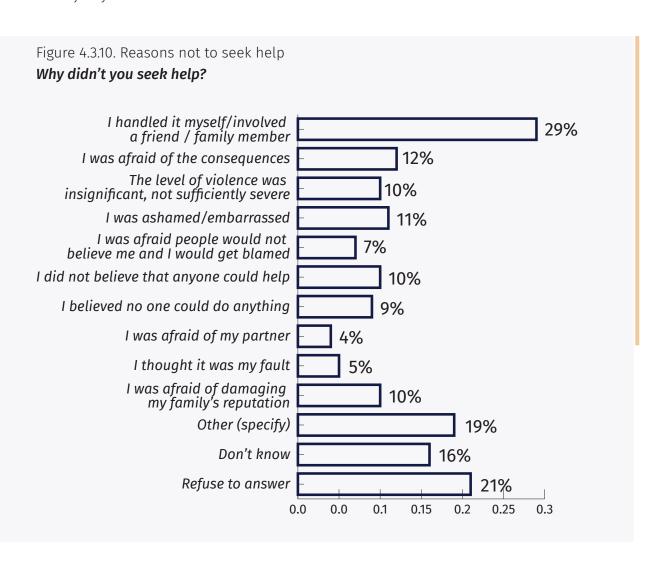
had threatened them or had tried to kill them (12%), or had threatened their children (6%). The percentage of respondents who rejected answering this question is high (20%), which shows that these continue to be sensitive issues for the people that have experienced them (Figure 4.3.9). Respondents from rural areas comprised the majority of people who stated that they sought help because they couldn't take it any more, they had severe injuries, the abuser threatened to kill them and kicked them out of the house (differences between these respondents and those from urban areas varied from 4% to 10%)

Figure 4.3.9. Reasons to seek help Which are the reasons that encouraged you to seek help? I could not take it any more_ 47% I was encouraged by my family/friends 22% I had sustained severe injuries and was afraid 18% that my partner or the abuser would kill me My partner or the abuser 12% threatened me or tried to kill me My partner threatened my children 6% 7% I was kicked out of the house I was afraid I could kill 5% my partner or the abuser 8% Other (specify) 15% Don't know Refuse to answer 20% 0.0 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 0.5

With regards to the respondents that did not seek help, they handled the situation themselves (29%) and had other reasons (19%), such as low-level violence, violence was not concerning, but also because they did not trust the police. In addition, some of them were afraid of the consequences (12%). were ashamed/confused (11%), believed that the level of violence was insignificant (10%), were afraid they would not get any help (10%) and were afraid of damaging their family's reputation (10%). "I was afraid of the consequences", "I was ashamed", "I was afraid of damaging my family's reputation", were some of the most common options selected by women (a difference of 10% compared to men), while men comprise the majority of those who selected "the

level of violence was insignificant", with a difference of 6% compared to women (Figure 4.3.10). However, even men may often feel uncomfortable or ashamed of seeking help for such phenomenon, as explained below. Participants in focus groups confirmed such findings and provided the following explanations:

"An abused women in rural areas does not make efforts to go to the city because there are different conditions etc. In rural areas, if your family or neighbourhood finds out then everyone will find out... therefore women follow orders and stay silent". (DFG with young people)



2 out of 3 respondents believe that the main reason leading to sexual violence among partners is drug/alcohol abuse, 42% believe such violence is a result of mental health issues. 41% believe it is a result of the economic situation of the abused woman/ partner. 37% believe it is a result of social norms on the status of men and women in the society. Respondents have also provided other reasons, such as conflicts among partners (29%), the fact that intimate partner violence is not considered as violence (28%) and low level of education (27%) (Figure 4.3.11). Gender differences were evident in the following options: "violence among partners is not considered as violence" (10% more women as compared to men) and "lack of punishments against the abuser" (6% more women as compared to men). Respondents in rural areas comprise the majority of those who believe that sexual violence is related to "the economic situation of the abused women/partner" (a difference of 7% compared to respondents in urban areas).

Some of these findings are in line with the findings for other countries presented in the report of WHO (2017), according to which some factors associated to sexual violence include, among others: norms on family honour and sexual purity, a sense of ownership towards women and insufficient punishments against sexual violence.

In addition, as it was also confirmed in the focus groups, it is even more difficult for young men to seek help:

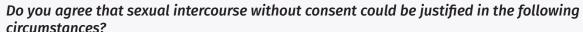
"It is more difficult for boys, because most organizations are focussed in protecting women and girls and there are no organizations focussed specifically in the protection of men and boys. On the other hand, this is also related to the men's ego. This is also a reason! And it is even more difficult within the family" (voung girl, rural area)

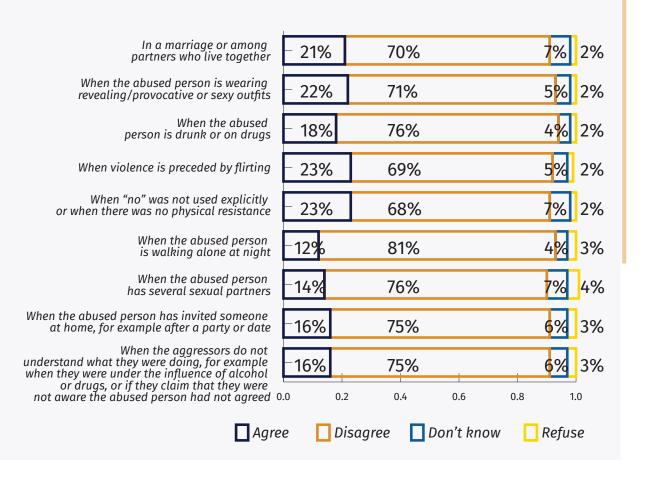
Figure 4.3.11. Attitudes on the causes of sexual violence in intimate relationships According to your opinion, which are the 3 main reasons of sexual violence among partners? Social norms related to 37% the status of men and women Alcohol/drug abuse 71% Poor economic situation 41% of the abused woman/partner 42% Mental health issues Violence among partners 28% is not considered as violence 29% Conflicts among partners 20% Personality traits Lack of education/low 27% lével of education Lack of punishments 12% against the abuser Women portrayal in the media Other (specify) Don't know H 2%

Respondents have very tolerant attitudes when it comes to justifying certain cases of sexual violence. For example, 23% justify such violence when preceded by flirting and 23% justify it when the word "no" was not used explicitly, 22% when the abused person is wearing a provocative outfit. 21% of them stated that such violence is justified when it occurs among partners in an intimate relationship, 18% when the abused person was drunk or on drugs, 16% when the abused person invited someone in his/her house, 16% when the abuser was drunk or on drugs, 14% when the abused person has several sexual partners and 12% when the abused person is walking alone at night (Figure 4.3.12). Based on these answers, it appears that there are still prejudices that justify sexual violence

in specific circumstances. In this question there are no considerable differences among respondents from urban and rural areas. On the other hand, it appears that men have a higher level of prejudice and are more inclined to justify sexual violence in all the above circumstances (differences among men and women vary up to 13%). In addition, respondents with lower level of education often agree with these justifications. These findings are in line with the data provided in the WHO study (2017), according to which the most frequent factors leading to intimate partner violence are disagreements and unhappiness during marriage/relationship, communication issues among partners and controlling behaviours of men towards women.

Figure 4.3.12. Perspectives on the tolerance towards sexual violence





As described in the desk review, one of the most difficult things is to clearly understand intimate partner violence, even among authors studying the phenomenon. This was also confirmed by the findings and during the focus groups.

"Another reason is that sexual violence is not perceived as such. Abusers do not think they are committing such act. In general, sexual violence occurs not only among couples but also among strangers that want to get what they desire even from someone who is not their partner." (DFG with young people)

"[on intimate partner violence] it exists and it is actually quite ordinary. Often it is perceived as something normal by one of the partners and sometimes this violence is not reported...because people consider it normal. But it is a present phenomenon among most women in Albania...in most cases sexual violence is taken for granted...even though women don't want to do something at a specific moment, they are forced by their partner." (DFG with young people)

4.4. Virtual violence – pornography and technology-facilitated sexual violence

The last years and decades have shown an immense increase in the use of internet. technology and virtual communication. Technology occupies a part of our lives (or most of our lives, especially during the pandemic) and gender based violence and intimate partner violence has also followed this trend. In general, cybernetic crime has marked a significant increase, especially during the pandemic. More specifically in 2020. 240 denunciations were filed. while there are only 5 cybernetic crime investigations in the country¹. In addition, there is an increased number of cases of

continuous blackmail and technologyfacilitated violence, which implies the blackmailing of victims through nude images, videos and/or conversations of a sexual character, reported at the media, police or civil society organizations. In these context, this section is focusses on analysing the experiences and perspectives of young men/women with regards to pornography and revenge pornography.

In general, it appears that pornography is a spread phenomenon (47% believe it is a widespread phenomenon and 31% believe it is a rather spread phenomenon) among young men and women of the age group 20-24 years old. However, similarly to the previous individual/family reports on other issues addressed in the above sections, the percentage of respondents who believe that pornography is prevalent among their peers is higher compared to the percentage of respondents who accept that pornography is prevalent in their lives (only 25% of them accept that they watch pornography at least several times a month, as shown on the right side of figure 4.4.1.).

So, 55% of the male respondents and 40.3% of the female respondents think that pornography is a widespread phenomenon among their peers. Furthermore, a lot of respondents from urban areas and those with a low education level believe the same. but it is difficult to determine if this shows that this is a widespread phenomenon in this category or if it indicates that people are more open-minded towards accepting/ reporting it. The individual level reporting follows the same trend. A considerable difference exists between the number of men and women that reported never watching pornography. About 59% of the female respondents state that they never watch pornography, as compared to only 16% of the male respondents.

Albanian State Police, data reported by Top Channel media, on 7 February 2021.

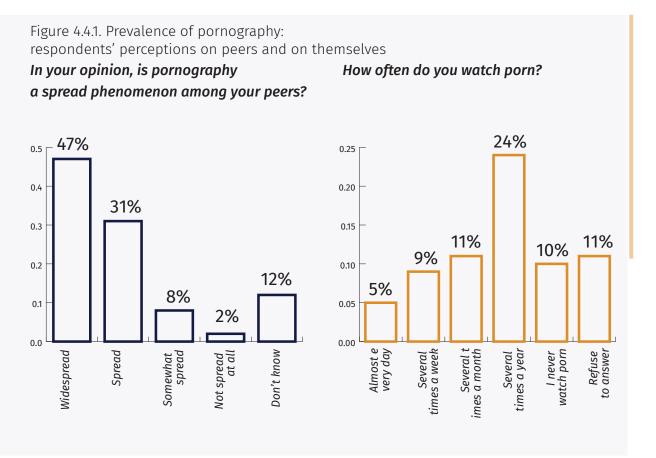


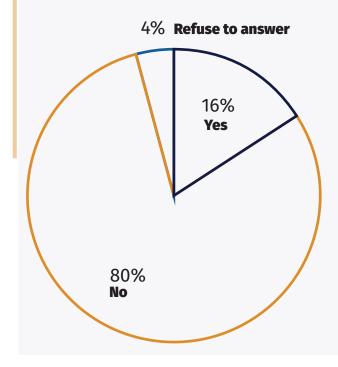
Figure 4.4.2. Pornography "consumption" and the gender aspect How often do you watch porn according to your gender? 9.7% Almost every day 1.0% 16.6% Several times a week 2.7% 18.9% Several times a month 3.4% 24.9% Several times a year 23.9% 16.6% I never watch porn 59.0% 13.3% Refuse to answer 10.0% 0.2 0.3 0.4 0.5 0.6 ■ Male ☐ Female

On average, respondents state that they have watched pornography for the first time around the age of 15. About 26% of them have watched pornography for the first time at the age of 13 or even younger and 10% of them at the age of 18+. Respondents were asked to determine, on a scale of 1 (not at all) to 10 (completely) the similarity between porn films and sexual intercourse in reality. Based on their answers, the average value is 3.5, the median is 3, but the most frequent

answer (mode) is 1 (not at all). While, based on the same measuring scale, when asked about the impact of pornography on their perceptions and attitudes towards sex, the answers provided by the respondents show that the average value is 5.4 and the median is 5, but the most frequent answer is once again 1 (not at all), which shows the low level of awareness on the impact of pornography.

Figure 4.4.3. Sending/receiving nude photos/photos with sexual content from known persons

Have you ever taken or received a nude photo or any other image or video with clear sexual content of a known person (EXCLUDING yourself)?



In addition, only 16% of the respondents (24% of the male respondents and 9% of the female respondents) accept that they have taken or received nude photos or any other photo or video with clear sexual content of a known person, as compared to 80% that deny such fact.

"Girls do not accept losing their virginity. It is a taboo. It is difficult to accept that they spend time looking at porn videos. So, just like Kim Kardashian is a role model for a lot of girls, maybe a woman appearing in porn films may be considered as a partner by a lot of boys. The fact that a girl accepts to do anything to please her partner, shows that we are in a crisis... It is easier to talk about others..." (DFG with CSO-s)

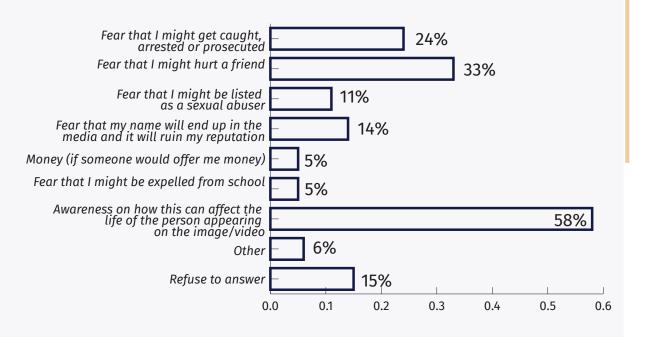
Only 54% of the people who possessed such materials have not shared them. The rest have shared the materials with someone (with whom they had a sexual relationship/ interest), posted them online or refused to tell what they have done with them (23%).

The awareness that posting such materials online may hurt the persons involved (58%) or their friends (33%) were among the main reasons that would prevent the respondents from posting such materials online. The third reason in this list is fear that they might get caught or arrested/prosecuted (24%). Often, these forms of violence are associated to bullying which occurs in other forms simultaneously.

"I know of a case where the perpetrator used a girl's personal photos and created a fake account with her photos. They asked me to "report" such account. Girls are reluctant and feel very bad in these situations, especially in front of their family. The support of family and society is very important. This is highly related to bullying, especially among teenagers. *In time, people become more mature and* focus more on the future and not on such elements." (DFG with young people)

Figure 4.4.4. Factors that would prevent the online posting of photos or videos with sexual content

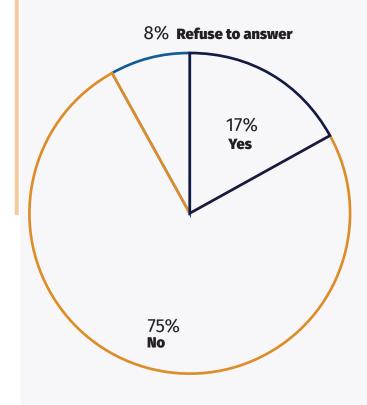
If tomorrow you were to receive a nude photo or a sexual image or video, which of the following would encourage you NOT to post it online?



The number of reports related to photos/ videos with clear sexual content made by the persons themselves, is similar to the number of cases related to photos/videos taken by known persons. About 17% of the respondents report taking photos with sexual content or nude photos/videos that included themselves. In this case, there is a lower difference between the women (14%) and men (22%) accepting such fact. There are no significant differences with regards

to different areas of residence or education levels.

Figure 4.4.5. Personal nude photos/videos or photos/videos with sexual content Have you ever taken nude photos or sexually explicit images/videos of yourself?



In most cases, the respondents stated that they have shared the nude photos or videos with sexual content. Only 42% of those taking such photos/videos of themselves have not shared them. while 58% of the respondents have sent them to someone with which they were involved in a romantic/sexual relationship (30%) or to someone else (24%) or have done something that they do not wish to share (28%).

Personal experiences and a higher level of awareness on the potential consequences of sharing such images on the persons involved, may be the main reasons why over 78% of the respondents think that people

posting images and/or videos without the consent of the persons involved should be prosecuted and sentenced to prison, while only 2% think that there should be no consequences. Similarly, 67% of the respondents believe that websites, which allow the online posting of such materials should also be subject to criminal prosecution. 52% believe that these websites should face financial sanctions (fines) and only 3% do not think they should face consequences for allowing the posting/ sharing of such images.

Figure 4.4.6. Handling personal nude photos/videos or photos/videos with sexual content **What have you done with these images or videos?**

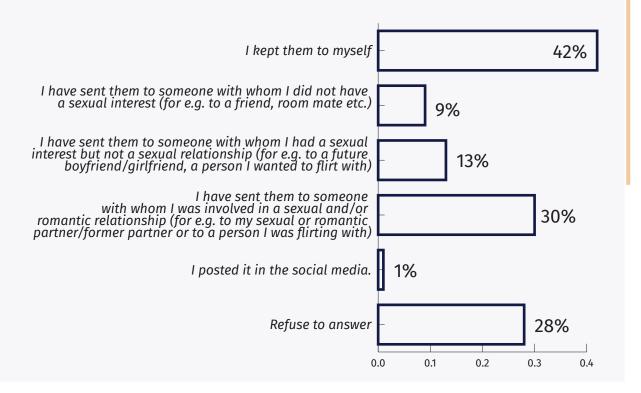


Figure 4.4.7. Measures that should be taken against persons who post photos/videos without the consent of persons involved and websites that allow such postings

Do you think that people posting images and/or videos without the consent of the persons involved, should face consequences? If yes, what consequences?

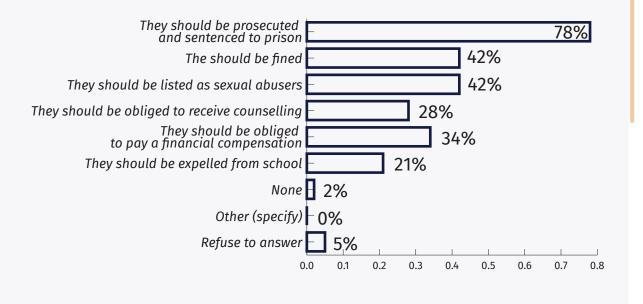


Figure 4.4.7. Measures that should be taken against persons who post photos/videos without the consent of persons involved and websites that allow such postings

Do you think that websites/social media, which allow such postings, should face consequences? If yes, what consequences?

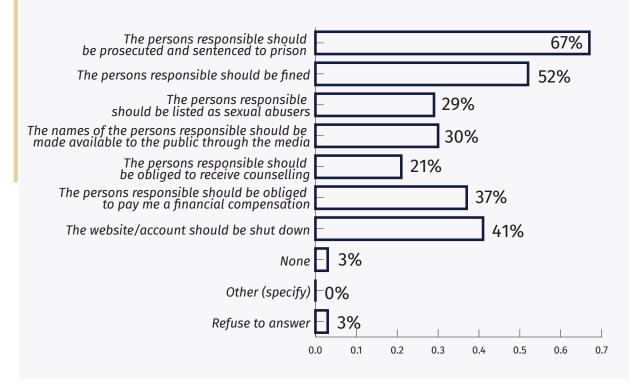
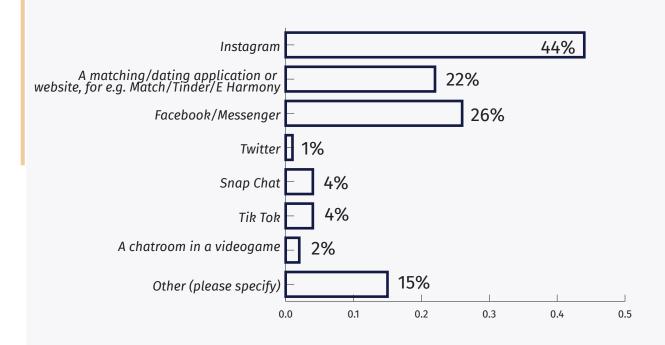


Figure 4.4.8. Most commonly used platforms by blackmailers

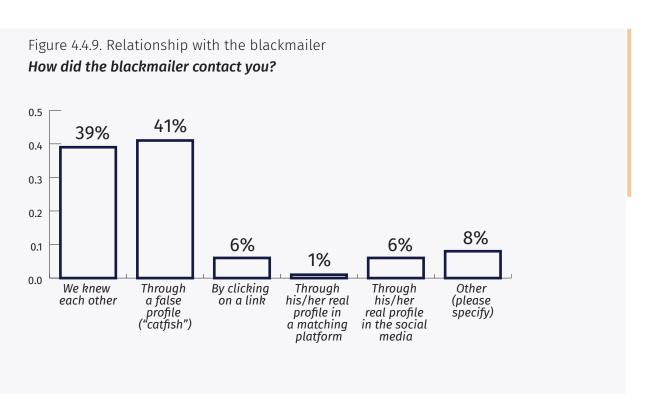
Which was the platform used by the person who blackmailed you?



Almost one out of 10 respondents in this study have reported that at least once, photos/videos or other materials with sexual content were used to blackmail them. About 12% of the women and almost 5% of the men have had such experience. Instagram is reported as the most commonly used application by blackmailers (44%), followed by Facebook/Messenger (26%). The respondents have also listed phone calls or messages as commonly used

instruments.

Meanwhile, the most common form of contacting with blackmailers is through false profiles (41%). In 39% of the cases, the blackmailer was a known person. In 69% of the reported cases the blackmailer was a male, in 17% of the cases a female and in almost 14% of the cases the gender of the blackmailer was not determined.

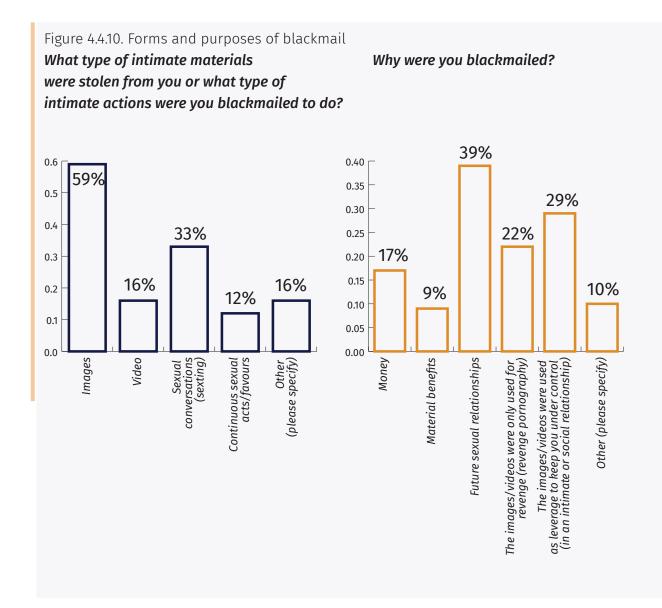


The most commonly stolen or misused intimate materials by blackmailers are images (59%) and sex-talks (33%). In 39% of the cases, the intention of the blackmailer was to continue having sexual relationships with the victim (for e.g. after being rejected, after break-up etc.). In about 29% of the cases, the intention of the blackmailer was to use materials with sexual content to threaten and keep the victim under control. Experiences related to blackmailing have usually lasted up to 3 months (71%), but in several cases blackmailing has lasted up to one year (8%) or even longer (3%).

Situations related to blackmailing have significantly affected the lives of the victims subject to this phenomenon. On a scale of 1 to 10 (where 1 implies the lowest level), in 22.5% of the cases, the highest level (10) was selected to determine the impact of blackmails on the lives of the respective victims. In spite of that, blackmail has been reported in only 32% of the cases. 37% of the women and 9% of the men who have had experiences related to blackmails, have understood reported such phenomenon. In addition, it is interesting to mention that blackmailing has been reported on a larger scale by respondents from rural areas (35%)

rather than from urban areas (26%). This phenomenon was mainly reported in the

platforms where the blackmailing occurred (32%) and at the police (29%).



During their efforts to report/address the blackmail situation, 37% of the respondents have sought/found support at their family and friends, and 24% have received professional counselling. Young females comprise the majority of the respondents selecting these options. Young men that have been involved in such situations, have reported seeking/finding "other" forms of support.

It is important to emphasize that even though different organization have been an option in only 7% of the cases, most of the respondents selecting such option were from rural areas. Based on the discussions in focus groups, this is related to the low level of knowledge/support from family/ friends in these areas or the lower range of services and the lack of trust towards organizations in these areas, as also shown above.

71

Figure 4.4.11. Reporting blackmail *If so, where?*

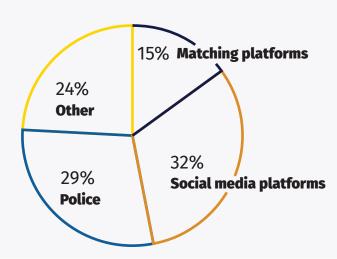
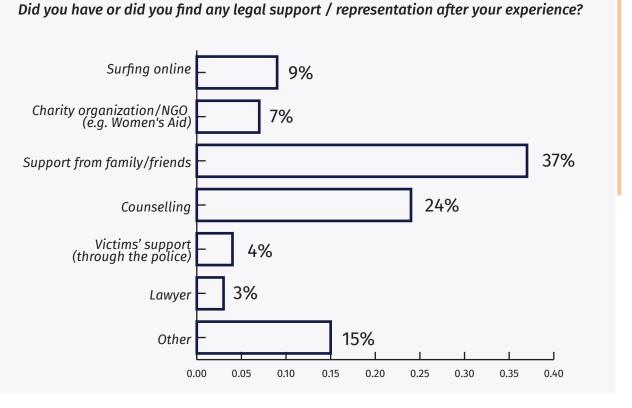


Figure 4.4.12. Sources providing support in addressing blackmail situations



"I think that there is a lack of trust in institutions and the police, and that's why people feel more comfortable to address to organizations and they receive more support there" (DFG with young people)

"organizations maintain confidentiality and provide counselling. A police station is less hospitable." (FG with young people)

4.5. Social crisis and violence: The **Covid-19 pandemic**

Different studies have documented the adverse impacts of different crisis and catastrophes on social relations at all levels (Le Masson, 2016)2. When such crisis are accompanied by deficiencies in the social protection system (often there is a total lack of this system) then this may lead to a aggravation of issues related to gender inequalities, including gender-based violence (f.3). This study was conducted in 2020, under the circumstances of a global pandemic, with local and significant impacts on the lives of young people and other age groups, both in the public and private spheres. In this context, the last section presenting the findings of this study, analyses the perceptions on the impacts of

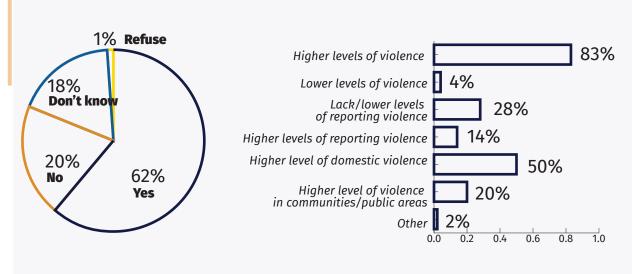
the Covid-19 crisis on violence in general and gender-based violence in particular.

About 62% of the respondents believe that crisis, such as the Covid-19 pandemic. impact the level of violence in Albania. Most of them believe that social crisis lead to a higher level of violence in general (83%) and half of the respondents think that such crises are only related to an increased risk of domestic violence. Although differences are small, women, respondents living in urban areas and those that have completed higher education comprise the majority of people, who believe that social crisis lead to a higher level of violence.

Figure 4.5.1. Impacts of social crisis at the level of violence

Do you think that social crisis, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, affect the level of violence in a society?

If yes, do you think that social crisis are more likely to



For a summary, please refer to Virginie Le Masson, Sheri Lim, Mirianna Budimir, Jasna Selih Podboj 2 (2016) Disasters and violence against women and girls Can disasters shake social norms and power relations? Overseas Development Institute

The focus groups organized with young men and women, as well as with representatives of civil society, confirmed the findings and perceptions for a higher level of violence. Similarly to 28% of the respondents, discussions in focus groups also confirmed that the number of reports has decreased, even though the rate/severity of violence has increased. Fear from Covid-19, the restrictions imposed, decreased number of services and overload were among the main reasons that discouraged/hindered the reporting of violence.

"I think that the level of violence has been higher and more evident. Economic problems and the isolation over a long period have led to a higher level of violence." (DFG with young people)

"I think that the level of violence has decreased because people have focussed

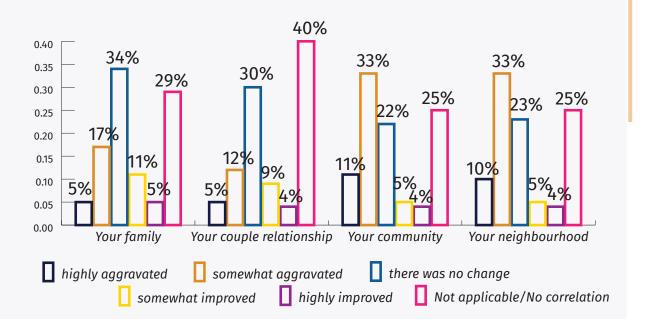
more on how to protect themselves from Covid. But this may not be true." (DFG with young people)

"During the pandemic, we have had a record number of calls from girls and women all over Albania. We have tried to address them. Since we focus a lot on online posts, hashtags etc., a lot of women have not been limited by where they live. They have come from all over Albania." (DFG with CSO-s)

In some cases, the lack of information or the inaccurate information has been an additional barrier towards reporting and addressing issues related to violence during the pandemic. The following example illustrates that even some CSO-s operating in this area have provided inaccurate information on how the courts issue restraining orders.

Figure 4.5.2. Impact of the isolation and pandemic at the level of domestic violence, couple relationships and the society

Based on your perception and experience since March 2020 and up to date, how has the lockdown and the crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, affected the level of violence in:



"Not a lot of reports have been filed because people were worried about their economic situation. As a result of the uncertainty, a lot of people have requested help on how to manage their relationship. They have received legal counselling or information, but they have not filed reports because the courts were closed". (DFG with CSO-s)

Similarly to the report on violence, as previously analysed in this report, even when it comes to the impact of the pandemic, respondents state that violence has mostly aggravated (highly aggravated) in their community (11%) and their neighbourhood (10%) rather than in their families (5%) or couple relationships (5%). There are no significant differences with regards to gender, residence area and education level.

5. Conclusions

The study was carried out at national level with 1095 respondents. Most of them were young girls and inhabitants from rural areas. Almost half of the respondents had completed higher education and 1 out of 3 was employed. However, they had low personal incomes. The respondents had a wide range of civil status: single, married, in a relationship, whether or not cohabiting etc. Most of those having children were girls, which shows that, on average, women continue to get married and have children sooner than man, before the age of 24.

The level of consumption of alcohol and narcotic substances was higher among young men compared to young women, which once again confirms the social norms that accept or promote alcohol consumption by men as opposed to women and girls. Other studies have shown that men consuming alcohol exhibit higher levels of intimate partner violence (Chermack, Fuller, & Blow, 2000) and that heavy alcohol consumption during the beginning of marriage is an important factor leading to IPV.

Although it was noticed that man, women, boys and girls have distanced themselves from traditional stereotypes, this fact appears to be more common among girls, young educated people and persons living in urban areas. The attitude gap is higher in the areas of private and interpersonal relationships. The considerable differences in attitudes, especially related to different expectations on the roles of men and women in marriage may lead towards the assumption that couples/families established between young people are likely to experience pressures, which arise while attempting to balance family and work life (Knight and Brinton, 2017).

Although in general, we have noticed a persisting community sense, in time it has shifted from simply identifying violence related issues to reacting towards such issues, especially when it comes to taking the initiative to intervene or act if someone in the community is involved in a domestic violence situation.

It was reported that most violence-related threats come from foreigners and former partners and they are usually addressed to girls. Girls account for the majority of persons that have repeatedly or frequently felt threatened, except in cases where the respondents have felt threatened from the police or from a relative or family member, besides from their partner. The mentality that men are superior in making decisions in intimate relationships continues to be present among young people, who find it difficult to accept the independent decision-making and initiative of their partners/former partners.

This perceived risk further affects and limits girls during their daily life, therefore they account for the majority of persons that have changed their behaviour to prevent/avoid sexual and/or physical harassments or assaults.

Awareness on GBV related issues and on the frequency of GBV is relatively high. However, it appears that girls and people in rural areas have frequently been the target of different awareness campaigns and initiatives. Therefore, these target groups have improved their awareness level and approaches on preventing/addressing this issue. In spite of these efforts, the study has showed that young men and women consider the identification and reporting of GBV and IPV as "someone"

else's problem", which also shows a certain level of reluctance to accept that violence is present in our families and social circle. This happens, among others, due to the phenomenon of blaming the victims, which continues to be a problem with regards to GBV in general.

The report shows that an obstacle related to the identification/reporting of gender-based violence is also the level of information. not only on how to identify and categorize such violence, but also on how to report and seek help to address it. Family remains the first "shelter" for help when young men/women feel threatened or when they are involved in IPV situations, followed by friends and civil society organizations, which occupy a similar percentage.

The analysis conducted by Stöckl and others (2014) in nine countries, on IPV among teenagers and young girls of 15-24 years of age, showed that IPV was highly prevalent at a level of 19% up to 66%. 1 out of 10 girls (10%) participating in this study stated that she has been forced to perform sexual intercourse for the first time against her will and the percentage of girls forced to perform sexual intercourse after the first time was even higher, especially when talking about their ex partners. Considering that in the early phases of an intimate relationship it is difficult to clearly define intimate partner sexual violence, these percentages may be even higher. As it was also concluded in the study carried out by Wilson and Miller (2016), 60% of young girls that were victims of sexual violence (not necessarily from an intimate partner) did not consider their experience as rape and did not think that they were victims of sexual violence. Instead, they mostly used the terms "bad sex" or "miscommunication" to describe their experiences. For example. even in this study it was concluded that a high percentage of girls performed sexual intercourse out of fear from their partner/ former partner, but they did not necessarily consider this as sexual violence.

Furthermore, uncertainty exists on the clear definition of sexual violence, especially in intimate relationships, which are perceived as a part of private life where others should not intervene. This study showed that TV, social media and social networks are the most common sources of information on violence against girls and women, which inform young men and women on such cases. The level of exposure was different in the neighbourhood or city/village of residence, where the identification of intimate partner violence was at lower levels.

In the study carried out by Sweahn and Saltzman (2007) and in other similar studies. it was noted that IPV among teenagers may be of a more mutual nature, which means that both male and female may abuse or experience abuse. This study showed that young men were more likely to have experienced severe physical violence during their life. On the other hand, young women had experienced more sexual violence and harassment, both in their intimate relationships as well as by other people such as family members, friends and/or strangers.

In this study, the percentage of young men and women that have not sought help even though they had experienced violence was very high. The lack of trust at different institutions (police and other services). shame and confusion, as well as fear of damaging the family's reputation are some of the main reasons for not seeking help. These findings are consistent with the previous study of AWEN (2018) as well as with other studies in this area (IDRA and UNWOMEN, 2018). It appears that there is still a lot of work to be done to establish confidence among victims of sexual and physical violence, and also to disassociate oneself from the taboo related to this phenomenon.

The use of alcohol or narcotic substances. patriarchal social norms, the economic status of the victims and conflicts between partners were the main reasons leading to intimate partner sexual violence. Young people participating in the study displayed more tolerant and stereotyping attitudes that justify sexual violence in some circumstances, for e.g. when preceded by flirting, when the word "no" was not used explicitly, when the abused person is wearing a provocative outfit etc. On the other hand, the same social norms discourage young abused people from seeking help since it is expected that they should be strong enough to defend themselves.

The use of birth control methods continues to be at low levels. Embarrassment and lack of information are the two main reasons of not using birth control methods, especially among young men and women living in rural areas. The respondents that have performed sexual intercourse for the first time against their will were more likely not to use birth control methods. It appears that the lack of setting boundaries during the first sexual intercourse affects the approach of young women in future sexual intercourses.

The last years and decades have shown an immense increase in the use of internet, technology and virtual communication. Technology occupies a big part of our lives, even more now due to the restrictions, isolation and social distancing related to the Covid-19 pandemic, and gender based violence and intimate partner violence has also followed this trend.

It was reported that pornography was widespread among peers but the level of acceptance was lower at an individual perspective. This gap was mostly notable among girls. In general, there was a low level of awareness regarding its impact in the lives of young men/women and to some young people, especially to girls and people living in rural areas, it continues to be topic, the elaboration and examination of which remains a taboo.

A considerable number of the respondents in this study had exchanged images and other materials with sexual content and almost 1 out of 10 of them reported that at least once, photos/videos or other materials with sexual content were used to blackmail them. Social media such as Instagram and Facebook/Messenger, play a special role in this phenomenon considering that they are reported as the most common applications or platforms used by blackmailers. The effects of blackmail have considerably affected the lives of its victims. Girls not only occupy the majority of victims of blackmail but they also occupy the majority of persons that have needed assistance from different institutions, apart from their family or friends, to report and/or seek help to address the situation.

As mentioned at the beginning of this report, the crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has negatively affected the GBV situation throughout the globe. In addition, the perceptions shared by young people in this study showed that the situation related to violence in general, as well as to gender and domestic violence in particular, has worsened. The increased level of violence was not accompanied by an increase in the number of reports. Fear from Covid-19, the restrictions imposed, decreased number of services and overload were among the main reasons that discouraged/hindered the reporting of violence. These reasons, in combination with issues related to virtual violence, which were amplified by this new "normal" virtual life, have brought the need for more and continuous attention to GBV issues in general and IPV issues in particular, especially among younger age groups of the population.

6. References

- Abramsky, T., Watts, C. H., Garcia-Moreno, C., Devries, K., Kiss, L., Ellsberg, M., . . .Heise, L. (2011). What factors are associated with recent intimate partner violence? Findings from the WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence. BMC Public Health, 11(1)
- Aceng, S. (2017). "Revenge porn" the understanding and impact of non consensual intimate images violence. E marrë nga https://impakter.com/revenge-porn-theunderstanding-and-impact-of-non-consensual-intimate-images-ncii-violence/ e aksesuar në shkurt 2021
- Argimandriti M., Lena O., Uka A., Kapllanaj M., (2018). Dhuna në marrëdhëniet intime në adoleshencë në Shqipëri, AWEN.
- Barter, C., N. Stanley, M. Wood, A. Lanau, N. Aghtaie, C. Larkins, and C. Øverlien (2017). Young People's Online and Face-to-Face Experiences of Interpersonal Violence and Abuse and Their Subjective Impact Across Five European Countries. Psychology of Violence 7 (3): 375–384.
- Bates, E. A. (2020). "No one would ever believe me": An exploration of the impact of intimate partner violence victimization on men. Psychology of Men & Masculinities, 21(4), 497-507.
- Beyene, A.S., Chojenta, C., Roba, H.S. e të tjerë (2019). Gender-based violence among female youths in educational institutions of Sub-Saharan Africa: a systematic review and meta-analysis. Systematic Reviews, 8 (59).
- Bruce, J. (2011). Violence against adolescent girls: A fundamental challenge to meaningful equality. New York: The Population Council, Inc. E marrë nga http:// www.popcouncil.org/ uploads/pdfs/2012PGY_GirlsFirst_Violence.pdf e aksesuar në shkurt 2021
- Bryman, A. 2008. Social Research Methods. Second edition, Oxford University press
- Campbell, R., Dworkin, E., & Cabral, G. (2009). An ecological model of the impact of sexual assault on women's mental health. Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 10(3), 225-246.
- Capaldi, D. M., Kim, H. K., Shortt, J. W. (2004). Women's involvement in aggression in young adult romantic relationships. In Putallaz, M., Bierman, K.L. (Eds.), Aggression, Antisocial Behavior and Violence Among Girls. New York: Guilford.
- CDC (2017). Preventing intimate partner violence across the lifespan: a technical package of programs, policies and practices. E marrë nga https://www.cdc.gov/ violenceprevention/pdf/ipv-technicalpackages.pdf e aksesuar në shkurt 2021
- Center for Disease Control, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (2015). Intimate Partner Violence Surveillance Uniform Definitions and Recommended

- Data Elements. E marrë nga https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/ipv/intimatepartnerviolence.pdf e aksesuar në shkurt 2021
- Chase, K.A., O'Farrell, T.J., Murphy, C.M., Fals-Stewart, W. dhe Murphy, M. (2003). Factors associated with partner violence among female alcoholic patients and their male partners. Journal of Studies on Alcohol.64:137–149.
- Chermack, S. T., Fuller, B. E., Blow, F. C. (2000). Predictors of expressed partner and non-partner violence among patients in substance abuse treatment. Drug and Alcohol Dependence, 58, 43-54.
- Citron, D., & Franks, M. (2014). Criminalizing revenge porn. Wake Forest Law Review, 49, 345–391.
- D'Angelo, D.V., Gilbert, B.C., Rochat, R.W., Santelli, J.S., Herold, J.M. (2004). Differences between mistimed and unwanted pregnancies among women who have live births. Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health, 36(5):192-7. doi: 10.1363/psrh.36.192.04. PMID: 15519961.
- Dardis, C. M., Kraft, K. M., Gidycz, C. A. (2017). "Miscommunication" and undergraduate women's conceptualizations of sexual assault: A qualitative analysis. Journal of Interpersonal Violence. Advance online publication.
- Decker, M. R., Peitzmeier, S., Olumide, A., Acharya, R., Ojengbede, O., Covarrubias, L., . . . Brahmbhatt, H. (2014). Prevalence and health impact of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence among female adolescents aged 15–19 years in vulnerable urban environments: A multi-country study. Journal of Adolescent Health, 55(6), 58-67.
- Eckhardt, C.I., Parrott, D.J., Sprunger, J.G. (2015). Mechnisms of Alcohol-Facilitated Intimate Partner Violence. Violence Against Women. 21(8):939-957.
- Exner-Cortens, D., Eckenrode, J., & Rothman, E. (2013). Longitudinal associations between teen dating violence victimization and adverse health outcomes. Pediatrics, 131, 71-78.
- Fang, X., Corso, P. S. (2007). Child maltreatment, youth violence, and intimate partner violence: Developmental relationships. American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 33, 281-290.
- Faulkner, B., Goldstein, A.L. dhe Wekerle, C. (2014). Pathways from Childhood Maltreatment to Emerging Adulthood: Investigating Trauma-Mediated Substance Use and Dating Violence Outcomes Among Child Protective Services—Involved Youth. Child Maltreatment.19 (3-4):219-232.
- Fernet, M., Hébert, M., Brodeur, G., Théorêt V. (2019). "When You're in a Relationship, You Say No, but Your Partner Insists": Sexual Dating Violence and Ambiguity Among Girls and Young Women. Journal of Interpersonal Violence.
- Fernet, M., Hébert, M., Couture, S., Brodeur, G. (2019). Meeting the needs of adolescent and emerging adult victims of sexual violence in their romantic relationships: a mixed methods study exploring barriers to help-seeking. Child abuse & neglect, 91, 41-51.

- Foshee, V. A., Benefield, T. S., Ennett, S. T., Bauman, K. E., Suchindran, C. (2004). Longitudinal predictors of serious physical and sexual dating violence victimization during adolescence. Preventive Medicine, 39, 1007-1016.
- Foshee, V. A., Bauman, K.L., Linder, F., Rice, J. dhe Wilcher, R (2007). Typologies of Adolescent Dating Violence. Identifying Typologies of Adolescent Dating Violence Perpetration. Journal of Interpersonal Violence 22 (5): 498–519
- García-Moreno, C., Zimmerman, C., Morris-Gehring, A., Heise, L., Amin, A., Abrahams, N., Montoya, O., Bhate-Deosthali, P., Kilonzo, N. dhe Watts, C. (2015). Addressing violence against women: a call to action. Lancet, 385 (9978):1685-95.
- Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) (2017). Baseline Evaluation Report Albania. E marrë nga https://rm.coe. int/grevio-first-baseline-report-on-albania/16807688a7 e aksesuar në shkurt 2021
- Halcomb E., Hickman L. (2014) Mixed methods research. Nursing Standard. 29, 32, 41-47.
- Henry, N., & Flynn, A. (2019). Image-based sexual abuse: Online distribution channels and illicit communities of support. Violence against Women, 25(16), 1932–1955.
- Hickman, L. J., Jaycox, L. H., Aronoff, J. (2004). Dating violence among adolescents: Prevalence, gender distribution, and prevention program effectiveness. Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 5, 123-142.
- Home Office (2016). Country Information and Guidance Albania: Women fearing domestic violence. E marrë nga https://www.justice.gov/eoir/file/844791/ download e aksesuar në shkurt 2021
- IDRA dhe UNWOMEN (2018). Mbi ngacmimin seksual dhe llojet e tjera të dhunës me bazë gjinore në hapësirat publike në Shqipëri E marrë nga https://idracompany. com/files/Sexual%20HarassmentGBV%20-2018%20ALB 0.pdf e aksesuar në shkurt 2021
- INSTAT (2019). Violence against women and girls in Albania national population survey. E marrë nga http://www.instat.gov.al/media/6123/publication-violenceagainst-women.pdf e aksesuar në shkurt 2021
- Johnson, W. L., Giordano, P. C., Longmore, M. A., Manning, W. D. (2014). Intimate partner violence and depressive symptoms during adolescence and young adulthood. Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 55, 39-55.
- Kamal, M., & Newman, W. J. (2016). Revenge pornography: Mental health implications and related legislation. The Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law, 44(3), 359-367.
- Katz, C.C., Courtney, M. E. dhe Sapiro, B. (2017). Emancipated foster youth and intimate partner violence: an exploration of risk and protective factors. Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 35 (23-24)
- Këshilli i Evropës (n.d.). What causes gender based violence? E marrë nga https:// www.coe.int/en/web/gender-matters/what-causes-gender-based-violence e aksesuar në shkurt 2021.

- Knight, C. R., & Brinton, M. C. (2017). One egalitarianism or several? Two decades of gender-role attitude change in Europe. American Journal of Sociology, 122(5), 1485–1532.
- Le Masson, V., Lim, S., Budimir, M. dhe Podboj, J. S. (2016) Disasters and violence against women and girls Can disasters shake social norms and power relations?, Overseas Development Institute.
- Leonard, K. E. (2008). The role of drinking patterns and acute intoxication in violent interpersonal behaviors. In Grant, M., Fox, M., Leonard, K. E., O'Conner, C. M. (Eds.), Alcohol and violence: Exploring patterns and responses (fq. 29-55). Washington, DC: International Center for Alcohol Policies.
- Ligj nr. 9669, datë 18.12.2006 "Për masat ndaj dhunës në marrëdhëniet familjare", i ndryshuar në vitin 2008, 2010 dhe 2018.
- Muehlenhard, C. L., Humphreys, T. P., Jozkowski, K. N., Peterson, Z. D. (2016). The complexities of sexual consent among college students: A conceptual and empirical review. The Journal of Sex Research, 53, 457-487.
- Nickerson, A., Steenkamp, M., Aerka, I. M., Salters-Pedneault, K., Carper, T. L., Barnes, J. B., & Litz, B. T. (2013). Prospective investigation of mental health following sexual assault. Depression and Anxiety, 30(5), 444–450.
- Nielsen, M. B., Bjørkelo, B., Notelaers, G., & Einarsen, S. (2010). Sexual harassment: Prevalence, outcomes, and gender differences assessed by three different estimation methods. Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma, 19(3), 252–274.
- OBSH (2005). WHO multi country study on women's health and domestic violence against women. E marrë nga http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/24159358X/en/ e aksesuar në gershor 2020
- OBSH (2017). Key facts Violence against women. E marrë nga https://www.who.int/ news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women e aksesuar në janar 2021
- OHCHR (2018). How gender stereotyping affects the enjoyment of human rights. E marrë nga https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Women/WRGS/Pages/WrongfulGenderStereotyping.aspx e aksesuar në shkurt 2021
- O'Leary, P., & Tsui, M. (2021). A long-distance wake-up call for the social work profession: From hardship to friendship. International Social Work, 64(1), 3–4. https://doi.org/10.1177/0020872820980906
- Onanubi, K.A., Olumide, A. O. dhe Owoaje, E. T. (2017). Prevalence and Predictors of Intimate Partner Violence Among Female Youth in an Urban Low-Income Neighborhood in Ibadan, South-West Nigeria. Sage Open, 1-11
- Orchowski, L. M., Untied, A. S., Gidycz, C. A. (2013). Social reactions to disclosure of sexual victimization and adjustment among survivors of sexual assault. Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 28, 2005-2023
- Organizata Botërore e Shëndetësisë, Departamenti i Shëndetit Riprodhues dhe Kërkimit Shkencor, Shkolla e Higjienës dhe Mjekësisë Tropikale në Londër, Këshilli i Kërkimeve Mjekësore të Afrikës së Jugut (2013). Vlerësimet globale dhe rajonale

- të dhunës ndaj grave: Përhapja dhe efektet shëndetësore të dhunës nga partneri intim dhe dhunës seksuale nga jopartneri/ët.
- Peterson, Z. D. dhe Muehlenhard, C. L. (2011). A match-and-motivation model of how women label their nonconsensual sexual experiences. Psychology of Women Quarterly, 35, 558-570.
- Powell, A. dhe Henry, N. (2019). Technology-facilitated sexual violence victimization: Results from an online survey of Australian adults. Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 34(17), 3637–3665.
- Powell, A., Henry, N., Flynn, A. dhe Scott, A. J. (2019). Image-based sexual abuse: The extent, nature, and predictors of perpetration in a community sample of Australian residents. Computers in Human Behavior, 92, 393–402.
- Renner, L. M., Whitney, S. D. (2012). Risk factors for unidirectional and bidirectional intimate partner violence among young adults. Child Abuse & Neglect, 36, 40-52.
- Richards, T. N., Branch, K. A., Ray, K. (2014). The impact of parental and peer social support on dating violence perpetration and victimization among female adolescents: A longitudinal study. Violence and Victims, 29, 317-331.
- Romito, P., L. Beltramini, dhe V. Escribà-Agüir (2013). Intimate Partner Violence and Mental Health Among Italian Adolescents: Gender Similarities and Differences. Violence Against Women 19 (1): 89–106
- Ruark, A., dhe Fielding-Miller, R. (2016). Using Qualitative Methods to Validate and Contextualize Quantitative Findings: A Case Study of Research on Sexual Behavior and Gender-Based Violence Among Young Swazi Women. Global Health: Science and Practice, 4(3):373-383
- Russell, M., Cupp, P. K., Jewkes, R. K., Gevers, A., Mathews, C., LeFleur-Bellerose, C., & Small, J. (2014). Intimate partner violence among adolescents in Cape Town. South Africa. Prevention science: the official journal of the Society for Prevention Research, 15(3), 283-295.
- Sabina, C., Cuevas, C. A., Cotignola-Pickens, H. M. (2016). Longitudinal dating violence victimization among Latino teens: Rates, risk factors, and cultural influences. Journal of Adolescence, 47, 5-15.
- Smith, S. G., Zhang, X., Basile, K.C., Merrick, M.T., Wang, J., Kresnow, M., Chen, J. (2018). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2015 Data Brief-Updated Release. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. E marrë nga https://www.cdc. gov/violenceprevention/pdf/ipv/IPV-factsheet 2020 508.pdf e aksesuar në shkurt 2021
- Smith, S.G., Chen, J., Basile, K.C., Gilbert, L.K., Merrick, M.T., Patel, N., Walling, M., & Jain, A. (2017). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010-2012 State Report. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. E marrë nga https://www.cdc.gov/ violenceprevention/pdf/NISVS-StateReportBook.pdf e aksesuar në qershor 2020
- Staggs, S. L., Long, S. M., Mason, G. E., Krishnan, S., Riger, S. (2007). Intimate partner

- violence, social support, and employment in the post-welfare reform era. Journal of Interpersonal Violence. 22. 345-367.
- Stöckl, H., March, L., Pallitto, C., & Garcia-Moreno, C. (2014). Intimate partner violence among adolescents and young women: Prevalence and associated factors in nine countries—A cross-sectional study. BMC Public Health, 14(1)
- Toscano, S. E. (2007). A grounded theory of female adolescents' dating experiences and factors influencing safety: the dynamics of the Circle. BMC nursing, 6(1), 7.
- Tucker Halpern, C., Spriggs, A., Martin, S., dhe Kupper, L. (2009). Patterns of Intimate Partner Violence Victimization from Adolescence to Young Adulthood in a Nationally Representative Sample. Journal of Adolescent Health, 45 (5): 508 5016
- Truell, R., & Crompton, S. (2020). To the top of the cliff: How social work changed with COVID-19. Marrë nga https://www.ifsw.org/to-the-top-of-the-cliff-how-social-work-changed-with-covid-19/
- UNICEF Albania (2019). One click away: children's experience of Internet use in Albania. E marrë nga https://childhub.org/sites/default/files/library/attachments/one_click.pdf e aksesuar në shkurt 2021.
- United Nations Children's Fund. (2012). State of the world's children 2012: Children in an urban world. New York, NY: Author.
- United Nations Albania. (2020). UN Albania COVID-19 socio-economic recovery and response plan. Marrë nga https://www.unicef.org/albania/media/3101/file/UN%20 ALBANIA%20COVID-19%20SOCIO-ECONOMIC%20RECOVERY%20&%20RESPONSE%20 PLAN.pdf
- UNDP (2020). Gender-based violence and COVID-19 https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/womens-empowerment/gender-based-violence-and-covid-19.html
- Vézina, J., Hébert, M. (2007). Risk factors for victimization in romantic relationships of young women: A review of empirical studies and implications for prevention. Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 8, 33-66
- Weiss, K. G. (2013). "You just don't report that kind of stuff": Investigating teens' ambivalence toward peer-perpetrated, unwanted sexual incidents. Violence and Victims, 28, 288-302.
- Whitaker, D. J., Haileyesus, T., Swahn, M., & Saltzman, L. S. (2007). Differences in frequency of violence and reported injury between relationships with reciprocal and nonreciprocal intimate partner violence. American Journal Public Health, 97, 941-947.
- Williams, C.M., Larsen, U., McCloskey, L.A. (2008). Intimate Partner Violence and Women's Contraceptive Use. Violence Against Women, 14(12):1382-1396.
- Wilson, L. C., Miller, K. E. (2016). Meta-analysis of the prevalence of unacknowledged rape. Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 17, 149-159.
- Wincentak, K., Connolly, J., Card, N. (2017). Teen dating violence: A meta-analytic review of prevalence rates. Psychology of Violence, 7, 224-241.

- Wisdom, J. dhe Creswell, J.W. (2013) Mixed methods: integrating quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis while studying patient-centered medical home models. Rockville, MD: BMJ Publishing Group, 2013.
- Woo, J., Fine, P., Goetzl, L. (2005). Abortion disclosure and the association with domestic violence. Obstetrics and Gynecology, 105(6):1329-34.
- World Vision in Albania and Kosovo (2014). A study on child online safety in Albania. E marrë nga https://childhub.org/sites/default/files/library/attachments/child_internet_safety_wva_study_report.pdf e aksesuar në shkurt 2021
- Yan, F. A., Howard, D. E., Beck, K. H., Shattuck, T., Hallmark-Kerr, M. (2010). Psychosocial correlates of physical dating violence victimization among Latino early adolescents. Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 25, 808-831.

7. Annexes

7.1. Questionnaire

Intimate partner violence

Questionnaire

Letter of Informed Consent

Hello! This is a questionnaire prepared by the Albanian Women Empowerment Network (AWEN), which conducts studies on various topics related to women and gender equality issues. It is being conducted in the framework of the program "Protection and Promotion of Women's Rights in Albania", with the financial support of the Swedish Government. We would be grateful if you could answer our questions based on your opinions and experiences regarding the safety, health and well-being of men / women and their intimate relationships. We will interview women and men across the country to better understand their opinions and experiences in this regard.

We would like to assure you that all the information we collect will be kept completely confidential and will only be used for research purposes. It will not be possible to identify any particular individual or address at any stage of the research/survey. Your participation in the survey is entirely voluntary and you may in any case refuse to answer any questions. If you have any question or are unclear, please address your questions to the person that has given you this questionnaire. If you have any further questions about this research, you may contact AWEN at info@awenetwork.org.

The questionnaire will take from 30 to 40 minutes to complete.	
Thank you!	
Note to the interviewer! Please before conducting the interview, fill out the following information:	
Respondent's Municipality Residence Respondent's Administrative Unit	

SECTION 1. GENERAL QUESTIONS

100.	Your	age	in	years	
------	------	-----	----	-------	--

101. Gender

1. Male

2. Female 3. Other 99. Refuse to answer

102. Your highest level of education:

No education or uncompleted primary school (4th grade level)	1
Primary school	2
Compulsory level (8/9th grade)	3
High school/Upper secondary education	4
University degree or higher	5
Don't know	97
Refuse to answer	99

103. Which of the following describes best your current situation of employment?

I am employed in paid work	1
I am self – employed	2
I am helping my family in our family business (unpaid)	3
Unemployed	4
I am student and/or in training	5
Not working due to illness or disability	6
Fulfilling domestic tasks and care responsibilities	7
Other, please specify	8
Don't know	97
Refuse to answer	99

If you answered 1-3 to Q103, continue with Q104.

104. Is that full-time, part-time or just occasionally?

Full – time	1
Part – time	2
Occasionally	3
Don't know	97
Refuse to answer	99

If you answered 4-99 to Q103, continue with Q105.

105. What is your average personal income?

No income	1
Up to 26.000 ALL/month	2
26.001 – 35.000 ALL/month	3
35.001 – 50.000 ALL/month	4
50.001 – 70.000 ALL/month	5
70.001 – 100.000 ALL/month	6
Over 100.000 ALL/month	7
Don't know	97
Refuse to answer	99

106. Which of the following best describes your current relationship status?

Single	1
In a relationship, without living together	2
In a relationship, living together with my partner	3
Married, without living together (e.g. due to migration)	4
Married, living together	5
Separated/Divorced	6
Widow/er	7
Don't know	97
Refuse to answer	99

107. Before your current relationship, how many times have you been:

		Never	Once	Twice	3 or more times	Don't know	Refusal
A.	Married	1	2	3	4	97	99
В.	Involved in a relationship, without living together with the partner	1	2	3	4	97	99
C.	Involved in a relationship, living together with a partner	1	2	3	4	97	99

108. Do you have children?

No	1
Yes, one child	2
Yes, two children	3
Yes, three or more children	4
Don't know	97
Refuse to answer	99

109. How often do you or your current partner drink (use alcohol) (in case you have a partner)?

	A. Me	B. My partner
Never drink(s) / drink(s) but doesn't get drunk	1	1
A few times a year or less	2	2
Once every two months	3	3
Once a month	4	4
A couple of times a month	5	5
Once or twice a week	6	6
Every day or almost every day	7	7
Don't know	97	97
Refuse to answer	99	99

110. How often do you or your current partner use drugs (in case you have a partner)?

	A. Me	B. My partner
Never	1	1
A few times a year or less	2	2
Once every two months	3	3
Once a month	4	4
A couple of times a month	5	5
Once or twice a week	6	6
Every day or almost every day	7	7
Don't know	97	97
Refuse to answer	99	99

111. Have you or your current partner (if you have one) ever suffered any of the following mental health issues? (Check ALL THAT APPLY)	A. Me	B. My part- ner
Anxiety (ongoing stress, tension, feeling of ongoing alertness of something bad happening, often and easily irritated, lack of concentration, sleep con-cerns etc.)		
Depression (you feel sadness that lasts over time, you do not experience pleasure from various activities, you do not have the energy to work / study / do things, you get irritated or passive, you have low self-esteem, you can-not sleep or sleep more than usual, you have no appetite or you have a lot of appetite etc.)		
Panic attacks (suddenly you feel a great tension, as if you are in an alarm, your heart beats very fast, it seems as it is pumping very much, you have rapid breathing or shortness of breath / blockage, you feel as if you are "dy-ing" or "going crazy" etc)		
Lack/low self – esteem (you experience lack of trust on your abilities, you have the feeling that you are not competent to do things)		
Sleep problems (lack of sleep or too much sleep)		
Lack of appetite or too much appetite accompanied by weight loss or gain		

Problems with concentration (you cannot focus on a job / task, you feel like your mind does not stay in one place / flies, you have difficulty completing a task)	
Nightmares	
Suicidal thoughts	
Other, please specify	
NONE	
I don't know	
Refuse to answer	

SECTION 2. GENDER STEREOTYPES AND (GENDER-BASED) VIOLENCE

The statements listed below describe stereotypes and attitudes toward the women and men in society which different people have. There are no right or wrong answers, only opinions. To what extent do you agree with the following on a scale from 1 to 4, where (1) agree strongly and (4) disagree strongly.

200. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	1 Strongly agree	2 Agree mildly	3 Disa- gree mildly	4 Strongly disagree
A. In general, women are not as smart as men.	1	2	3	4
B. I would be equally as comfortable having a wom-an or a man as a boss.	1	2	3	4
C. It is more important to encourage boys than to en-courage girls to participate in athletics/sports.	1	2	3	4
D. Women are just as capa-ble of thinking logically as men.	1	2	3	4
E. When both parents are employed and their child gets sick at school, the school should call the mother rather than the fa-ther.	1	2	3	4

201. To what extent do you agree with the fol-lowing statements on the role of men and women in the family?	1 Strong-ly agree	2 Agree mildly	3 Agree mildly	4 Strongly agree
Marital Domain:				
A. The husband should be the head of the family.				
B. Things work out best in a marriage if a husband stays away from housekeeping tasks.				
Parental Domain:				
C. It is more appropriate for a mother, rather than a father, to change their baby's diapers.				
D. Keeping track of a child's activities should be mostly the mother's task.				
Employment Domain:				
E. It is wrong for a man to enter a traditionally female career.				
F. Women can handle job pressures as well as men can.				
Social-Interpersonal-Heterosexual Domain:				
G. A woman should be careful not to appear smarter than the man she is dating.				
H. A person should be more polite to a woman than to a man.				
Educational Domain:				
I. Home economics courses should be as acceptable for male students as for female students.				
J. Choice of college is not as important for women as it is for men.				

GB Violence

20	2. Community	Yes	No	IDK
1.	Do neighbors in your community generally tend to know each other well?	1	2	97
2.	If there was a street fight in your community, will people intervene/do some-thing to stop it?	1	2	97
3.	If someone in your community is in trouble, would neighbors offer to help?	1	2	97
4.	If someone in your community is in trouble, would neighbors call the police?	1	2	97
5.	If someone in your community is in a domestic violence situation, would neigh-bors intervene/do something?	1	2	97
6.	If someone in your community is in a domestic violence situation, would neigh-bors call the police?	1	2	97

Personal experiences with (GB)Violence

12 off ha wo of mi	3. In the past months, how ten, if at all, ve you been orried that any the following ght physically sexually attack hurt you?	Never	Some-times	Often	All of the time	DK	RF
1.	Someone you don't know?	1	2	3	4	97	99
2.	Someone from work, school or train-ing?	1	2	3	4	97	99
3.	Another acquaintance, neighbor or a friend?	1	2	3	4	97	99

4.	A relative or family member other than your partner?	1	2	3	4	97	99
5.	Police	1	2	3	4	97	99
6.	Your current partner?	1	2	3	4	97	99
7.	Your previous partner?	1	2	3	4	97	99

12 r any fear sex use	At any time in the past months, have you done of the following for of being physically or ually assaulted? Please the options of this le to answer.	Never	Some- times	Often	All of the time	DK	RF
1.	Avoided leaving your home on your own?	1	2	3	4	97	99
2.	Avoided taking certain streets or going to certain areas?	1	2	3	4	97	99
3.	Avoided going to places where there are no other people around, for example some streets, car parks, etc.?	1	2	3	4	97	99
4.	Avoided opening your door when you are alone at home?	1	2	3	4	97	99
5.	Avoided going home because of what might happen there?	1	2	3	4	97	99
6.	Avoided going back to your home city, village, and region?	1	2	3	4	97	99
7.	Avoided being alone with a colleague or boss at work?	1	2	3	4	97	99

205. In general, how common do you think violence against women (by partners, acquaintances or strangers) is in Albania?

Very common	1
Fairly common	2
Not very common	3
Not at all common	4
Don't know	97
Refuse to answer	99

206. Have you recently seen or heard any advertising addressing campaigns against violence against women?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	97
Refuse to answer	99

207. Thinking about domestic violence against women -e.g. from their husband, partner, brother-in-law etc. – do you know of any women who have experienced any form of domestic violence:

a. In your circle of friends and family? 1. Yes 2. No 97. Don't know 99. Refuse to answer

b. In your direct neighborhood? 1. Yes 2. No 97. Don't know 99. Refuse to answer

208. How well informed do you feel about what to do if you experienced physical or sexual violence? For example, how to get immediate help from a shelter, how to protect yourself and your children in the future, or how you would be financially supported.

	1
Very well informed	1
Well informed	2
Somewhat informed	3
Not well informed	4
Don't know at all what to do	5
Refuse to answer	99

209. People have different ways of thinking about whether or not it is acceptable for a woman who is experiencing violence by her partner to talk about the violence with others. People also have different ways of thinking about when it is appropriate for other people to become involved in a situation in which a woman is experiencing violence by her husband, partner or ex. We would like to ask you some questions about this by asking if you totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or totally disagree with the following statements...

A woman whose husband or partner is using violence against her would tell about it even if it is not very often, for example no more than once a year?	Totally agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disa-gree	Totally disa-gree	DK	RF
a family member	1	2	3	4	97	99
a friend or neighbor	1	2	3	4	97	99
a religious leader	1	2	3	4	97	99
a police officer	1	2	3	4	97	99
a health care worker	1	2	3	4	97	99
a mental health case worker	1	2	3	4	97	99
a NGO/CSO (so- cial) worker	1	2	3	4	97	99

210. On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is "Very unlikely" and 5 is "Very likely" what is the likelihood for you to go to the following people/workers/institutions in case the person you are in an intimate relationship threatens you, or physically or sexually abuses you?

1 Very	2 Unlikely	3 Neutral	4 Likely	5 Very likely
unlikely				

If the person with whom you are in an intimate relation- ship	Threatens, humiliates or tries to control you, what is the like-lihood you tell?	Hurts/physically abuses with you, what is the likelihood you tell?	Forces you to do a sexual act against your will, what is the likelihood you tell?
A. A parent			
B. A friend			
C. A doctor			
D. A representative of your religion			
E. A psychologist or another counsellor			
F. NGOs working for women's rights/ protect women and girls in violence situations			
G. Police			
H. Other			

211. Would you find it acceptable if doctors routinely ask women who have certain injuries, whether they have been caused by violence?

1. Yes 2. No	IOW
---------------------	-----

SECTION 3. SEXUAL HARASSMENT/VIOLENCE

1	
1 years	
2. I haven't had sexual intercourse	
302. How would you describe your first sexual interest to have sex, you did not want but it happened anyw	
I wanted to have sex	1
I did not want, but I had sex	2
I was forced to have sex	3
Don't know	97
Refuse to answer	99
304 With how many partners did you have sexual in	atercourse during the last 12 months?
304. With how many partners did you have sexual in (number of partners) 305. What contraceptive methods did you use durin	·
	·
(number of partners) 305. What contraceptive methods did you use durin	·
(number of partners) 305. What contraceptive methods did you use durin 1. None	·
(number of partners)305. What contraceptive methods did you use durin1. None2. Condom	·
 (number of partners) 305. What contraceptive methods did you use durin 1. None 2. Condom 3. Contraceptive pills 	·
 (number of partners) 305. What contraceptive methods did you use durin 1. None 2. Condom 3. Contraceptive pills 4. Injection 	·
 (number of partners) 305. What contraceptive methods did you use durin 1. None 2. Condom 3. Contraceptive pills 4. Injection 5. Next day pill 	·

306. In general, how common do you think sexual violence against women (by partners, acquaintances or strangers) is in Albania?

Very common	1
Fairly common	2
Not very common	3
Not at all common	4
Don't know	97
Refused	99

307. Have you recently seen/heard any episode of sexual harassment/violence against women?

	Yes	No	Don't know	Refusal
A. In the media (TV/radio/printed press)	1	2	97	99
B. In online media (portals)	1	2	97	99
C. Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter etc.)	1	2	97	99
D. Your town/village	1	2	97	99
E. Neighborhood	1	2	97	99
F. Work	1	2	97	99
G. Network of close friends	1	2	97	99
H. Family (nuclear or extended)	1	2	97	99

The next questions are sensitive and may make you feel uncomfortable which is understandable. Your responses are confidential but remember you do not have to answer any questions you don't wish to.

308. How often has your current partner done any of the following to you? What about any previous part-ner/s?	Never	Once	Sometimes	Many times	Don't know	Re-fusal
A. Forced you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way? (By sexual inter-course we mean here forced oral sex, forced anal or vag-inal penetration)						
Current partner	1	2	3	4	97	99
Previous partner	1	2	3	4	97	99
B. Attempted to force you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way?						
Current partner	1	2	3	4	97	99
Previous partner	1	2	3	4	97	99
C. Made you take part in any form of sexual activity when you did not want to or you were unable to refuse?						
Current partner	1	2	3	4	97	99
Previous partner	1	2	3	4	97	99
D. Threatened you with violent sexual acts (like rape, forced pregnancy, etc.) in a way that really frightened you?						
Current partner	1	2	3	4	97	99
Previous partner	1	2	3	4	97	99
E. Have you consented to sexual activity because you were afraid of what your current partner might do if you refused?						
Current partner	1	2	3	4	97	99
Previous partner	1	2	3	4	97	99
F. Touch your private parts – genitals or breasts – when you did not want them to?						
Current partner	1	2	3	4	97	99
Previous partner	1	2	3	4	97	99

G. Make you touch their private parts – genitals or breasts – when you did not want to do this?						
Current partner	1	2	3	4	97	99
Previous partner	1	2	3	4	97	99

309. Have you had experiences with other people (besides partner or ex) that have treated you in an unwanted or humiliating way? By whom? When?

	Never	Sel-dom	Sometimes	Fre-quently	Always	Don't know	Refuse	310. By whom, mainly?	311. How old were you?
A. Slap you or pull your hair so that it hurt you?	1	2	3	4	5	97	99		
B. Hit you very hard so that it hurt you?	1	2	3	4	5	97	99		
C. Kick you very hard so that it hurt you?	1	2	3	4	5	97	99		
D. Beat you very hard with an object like a stick, cane or belt so that it hurt you?	1	2	3	4	5	97	99		
E. Stab or cut you with some-thing so that it hurt you?	1	2	3	4	5	97	99		
F. Threaten to hurt you badly or kill you?	1	2	3	4	5	97	99		
G. Touched, hugged or kissed against your will?	1	2	3	4	5	97	99		
H. Stared or leered you in a way that made you feel awkward?	1	2	3	4	5	97	99		

I. Made sexually suggestive com-ments or jokes that made you feel offended?	1	2	3	4	5	97	99	
J. Sent or showed you sexually ex-plicit pictures, photos or gifts that made you feel offended?	1	2	3	4	5	97	99	
K. Expose their genitals to you when you did not want them to?	1	2	3	4	5	97	99	
L. Forced you to see porno-graphic materials against your will?	1	2	3	4		97	99	
M. Make you pose naked in front of any person or in photo-graphs, video or an internet webcam when you did not want to do this?	1	2	3	4	5	97	99	
N. Touch your private parts – genitals or breasts – when you did not want them to?	1	2	3	4	5	97	99	
O. Made you touch their private parts – genitals or breasts – when you did not want to do this?	1	2	3	4	5	97	99	
P. Make you have sexual inter-course with them when you did not want to? (Note: By sexual intercourse we mean here forced oral sex, forced anal or vaginal penetration)	1	2	3	4	5	97	99	

312. Did you ever go to any of the following to ask for help? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

1. Police	
2. Hospital/doctor/health center or other health facility	
3. Social Services	

4. Legal advice/lawyer					
5. A local government administrator/official (in a municipality or LGU)					
6. A women's organization/Shelter					
7. Religious leader					
8. Other, please specify					
J. NONE	Go to Q. 314				
K. Don't know					
L. Refuse to answer					

313. If you answered 1 to 8 in Q312, what were the reasons that made you ask for help? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

A. Could not endure more	
B. Encouraged by friends/family	
C. I was badly injured and afraid that my partner/offender would kill me	
D. Partner/offender threatened or tried to kill me	
E. Partner threatened the children	
F. I was thrown out of the house	
G. I was afraid that I would kill my partner/offender	
H. Other, please specify	
I. Don't know	
J. Refuse to answer	

314. If you answered NONE to Q312 what were the reasons you did not ask for help? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

A. Dealt with it myself / involved a friend / family member	
B. Fear of threats/consequences	
C. Violence is/was minor, not serious enough	
D. Embarrassed/ashamed	
E. Afraid they would not believe me and blame me	
F. I did not think they would do anything	

G. I did not think they could do something	
H. Afraid of the partner	
I. I believed it was my fault	
J. Afraid to bring a bad name to the family	
K. Other, please specify	
L. Don't know	
M. Refuse to answer	

Attitudes and perceptions

315. In your opinion, which are the 3 main reasons for sexual violence among partners? (CIRCLE 3 STATEMENTS THAT YOU THINK ARE THE MAIN REASONS)

A. Societal norms related to women and men status	
B. Alcohol/drug abuse	
C. Low economic status of women/abused partner	
D. Mental health issues	
E. It is not considered sexual violence if it is within a couple	
F. Conflicts among partners	
G. Personality characteristics	
H. Lack of education/low educational level	
I. Lack of penalties for the perpetrator	
J. Women portrayal on media	
K. Other, please specify	
L. Don't know	
M. Refuse to answer	

316. Do you personally agree or disagree that sex without consent could be justified in the following circumstances?	Totally agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Totally disagree	Don't know	Refuse
A. In a marriage or among part-ners who live together	1	2	3	4	97	99
B. Wearing revealing, provocative or sexy clothing by the abused per-son	1	2	3	4	97	99
C. When the abused person was drunk or used drugs	1	2	3	4	97	99
D. Flirting beforehand	1	2	3	4	97	99
E. Not clearly saying "no" or not physically fighting back	1	2	3	4	97	99
F. Being out walking alone at night	1	2	3	4	97	99
G. Having several sexual partners	1	2	3	4	97	99
H. When the abused person volun-tarily goes home with someone, for example after a party or date	1	2	3	4	97	99
I. If the assailant does not realize what they were doing, for example because they were under the influ-ence of alcohol or drugs or said they didn't know the woman had not agreed	1	2	3	4	97	99

SECTION D - PORNOGRAPHY AND REVENGE PORN

401. In your opinion how popular is pornography among your peers?

Very popular	1
Somewhat popular	2
Not that popular	3
Not popular	4
I don't know	97
Refuse to answer	99

402. How often do you watch porn?

Almost daily	1
Few times a week	2
Few times a month	3
Few times a year	4
I never watch porn	97
Refuse to answer	99

403. What was your age when you were exposed to porn for the first time (including involuntary)? _____years old

404. To what extent do you think that what is portrayed in porn resembles/should resemble sexual relations in reality?

1___2__3__4__5__6__7__8__9__10

(not at all) (totally)

405. To what extent do you believe that what is shown in porn films influences the perceptions and attitudes towards sex for the ones that watch them?

1	2_	3_	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
(no	ot at	all)							(tota	llv

406. Have you ever taken or received a nude or sexually explicit image or video of someone you know (NOT including yourself)?

1. Yes 2. No 3. Refuse to answer

407. What did you do with the image(s) or video(s)? (Check all that apply)

A. Kept it to myself

- B. Sent it to someone I did not have a sexual interest in or a sexual relationship with (e.g. friend, roommate, fellow athlete, etc.)
- C. Sent it to someone I had a sexual interest in but did not have a relationship with (e.g. potential boyfriend, potential girlfriend, potential hook-up)
- D. Sent it to someone I was sexually and/or romantically involved with (e.g. current or former boyfriend/girlfriend/hook-up)
- E. Contacted the person who was in the image(s)/video(s)
- F. Posted it on a social media or online site. Specify _____
- G. Other (Please specify)_____
- H. Refuse to answer

408. If you received a nude or sexual image or video tomorrow, which of the following would influence you NOT to post it online? (Check all that apply)

A. Fear of being caught, arrested, or prosecuted	1
B. Fear of hurting a friend	2
C. Fear of having to become a registered sex offender	3
D. Fear of ending up on media and getting a bad reputation	4
E. Money (if they offered me money)	5
F. Fear of being dismissed from school	6
G. Being more aware of how it might affect the person in the im-age/video	7
H. Other	8
I. Refuse to answer	99

409. Have you ever taken a nude or sexually explicit image or video of yourself?

1. Yes

2. No

3. Refuse to answer

410. What did you do with the image(s) or video(s)? (Check all that apply)

A. Kept it to myself	
B. Sent it to someone I did not have a sexual interest in or relationship with (e.g. friend, roommate, etc.)	
C. Sent it to someone I had a sexual interest in but didn't have a relationship with (e.g. potential boyfriend, potential girlfriend, potential hook-up)	
D. Sent it to someone I was sexually and/or romantically involved with (e.g. current or former sexual/romantic partner/hook-up)	
E. Posted it on a social media website. Specify	
F. Refuse to answer	

411. What, if anything, do you think should happen to the person(s) who post image(s)/and/or video(s) against the will/consent of those involved in them? (Check all that apply)

A. They should be prosecuted and sent to jail or prison	
B. They should be given a fine	
C. They should become a registered sex offender	
D. They should be forced to undergo counseling	
E. They should be forced to pay financial compensation	
F. They should be expelled from school	
G. Nothing	
H. Other (Please specify)	
I. Refuse to answer	

412. What, if anything, do you think should happen to the web/social media site that allowed the image(s)/ and/or video(s) to be posted? (Check all that apply)

A. The people responsible should be prosecuted and sent to jail or prison	
B. The people responsible should be given a fine	
C. The people responsible should become registered sex of-fenders	
D. The people responsible should be known to the public through media	
E. The people responsible should be forced to undergo coun-seling	
F. The people responsible should be forced to pay financial compensation to me	

G. The website should be forced to shut down	
H. Nothing	
I. Other (Please specify)	
J. Refuse to answer	

413. Have you ever been subject of extorters?

1. Yes 2. No 3. Refuse to answer

(if yes continue to other questions)

414. Which platform was used by your extorter?

Instagram	1
Dating application or Website E.g. Match/Tinder/E Harmony	2
Facebook/Messenger	3
Twitter	4
Snap Chat	5
Linked In	6
You Tube	7
Tik Tok	8
Gaming Chatroom	9
Other (please specify)	10

415. How did your extorter access you?

Known to you	1		
Through a fake profile (Catfish)			
Through a Click Link	3		
Paid service (through live sex platform)			
Genuine Profile Dating			
Genuine Profile Social Media			
Other (please specify)			

417 Which type of intimate property did you have extorted from you through your experience? (Tick all that apply)

A. Images	
B. Videos	
C. Sexual conversation (sexting)	
D. Continued sexual acts/favors	
E. Other (please specify)	

418. What were they extorting these for? (Tick all that apply)

A. Blackmail for money	
B. Blackmail for material gain	
C. Blackmail for further sexual activity	
D. Using images/videos for revenge only (re-venge porn)	
E. Using images/video as threat for control (within a relationship or friendship)	
F. Other (please specify)	

419. How long did the experience last?

- 1-3 months 1.
- 2. Up to 6 months
- 3. Up to 9 months
- 4. Almost one year
- 5. More than one year

420. On a scale of 1-10 (with 1 being the lowest), how much has the experience impacted your life? _____ (in numbers)

421. Did you report your extorter?

1. Yes 2. No

4210	a. If yes, where:	
1.	Dating Platform	
2.	Social Media Platform	
3.	Police	
4.	Other	
422.	. Did you have or find any support/legal repre	sentation following your experience?
1.	Online research	
2.	Charity organization/ NGO (E.g. Women's A	iid)
3.	Peer/Family support	
4.	Counselling	
5.	Victim Support (through Police)	
6.	Solicitor	
7.	Other (please specify)	
SOC	CIAL CRISIS AND VIOLENCE	
501. the	. Would you say that social crisis, such as the level of violence in a society?	he Covid-19 pandemic, have an impact on
1. Ye	es (go to Q502) 2. No`3. I don't know	99. Refuse to answer
502.	. If yes, what do you think is most likely for	social crisis to cause: (Tick all that apply
1.	Increase level of violence	
2.	Decrease level of violence	
3.	Non/under reporting of violence	
4.	Over-reporting of violence	
5.	Increase level of domestic violence only	

6. Increase level of violence in the com-munity/

7. Other. Please specify _____

public domain only

503. In your opinion, based also on your experience from March 2020 on, how have lockdowns and the overall Covid-19 pandemic influenced:

						97 NA
	1 (worsened significantly)	2 (wors-ened)	3 (has not changed)	4 (im-proved)	5 (improved significantly)	
Your family	1	2	4	4	5	
Your inti- mate/couple relationship	1	2	4	4	5	
Your communi-ty	1	2	4	4	5	
Your neighbor- hood	1	2	4	4	5	

7.2. FG guidelines

Focus group - Intimate partner violence

Information letter

This focus group is being organized in framework of a study on "Intimate Partner Violence", carried out by the Albanian Women Empowerment Network (AWEN), which conducts regular studies on different topics related to women and gender based issues. This study was conducted in framework of the program "Protection and promotion of women's rights in Albania", with the financial support of the Swedish government. We would be grateful if you were to answer our questions based on your opinions and experiences regarding the safety, health and well-being of men/women, their intimate relationships and the respective sociocultural developments in our society.

We would like to assure you that all the information gathered will be subject to full confidentiality and will be used solely for research purposes. No specific individual or address will be identified in any stage of the research/study. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to answer to specific questions or may withdraw your participation from this study at any time.

	•	•	
Gender:			
Age:			

Area: _____

Data on the participants in the discussion.

Obtaining a permit for registering focus groups

Questions

- 1. What is considered gender-based violence? What about sexual violence? In which cases would you confirm the existence of intimate partner violence? (analyse gender differences and other types of differences such as between rural and urban areas. levels of education etc.)
 - What is the difference between men and women when it comes to their (lack of) tolerance towards violence in general? What about towards intimate partner violence? (analyse different situations: married couples, when one of the partners has consumed alcohol, extravagant outfit, when violence was preceded by flirting, when "no" was not used explicitly etc.)
- 2. What are the factors leading to:
 - Domestic violence in general?

- Gender-based violence? Intimate partner violence?
- Sexual violence in particular?
- Analyse perspectives on alcohol, use of drugs, mental health, economic factors, women's economic inequality, social norms.
- 3. Do you believe that the level of gender-based stereotypes/prejudice in your community/neighbourhood has changed?
 - If yes, what has improved and what hasn't? May you provide a few examples? What has caused this change?
 - If no, provide examples and explain the reasons why there have been no changes.
- 4. Findings show that people in the community have reported more cases of violence as compared to family members/victims themselves. What are the barriers that prevent people to report violence at individual/family level?
 - Gender-based violence
 - Sexual violence
 - Online violence?
- **5.** Do you believe that you/your peers are well-informed to report violence? To whom would you address in such situations? What about people you know, to which institution do you think they would address? Why? (specific institutions/people)
 - Do you believe it would be effective to organize campaigns that focus on conveying messages to men and people in rural areas, who are less informed/familiar with awareness campaigns?
 - NPO-s are more known in rural areas rather than in urban areas. How do you explain this?
- 6. According to the results of the study, the use of birth control methods remains at low levels. Why do you think this happens? (gender differences, other types of differences such as residence area, levels of education, relationship status etc.)
- 7. Why is the rate of violence higher when it comes to relationships with former partners?
- 8. Are there any elements that are still considered a taboo when it comes to reporting violence? (e.g. sexual violence from family members or other relatives). Are there any gender differences or differences related to the area of residence with regards to these taboos.
- **9.** Why do you think people accept that pornography is a widespread phenomenon but find it difficult to accept its presence at a personal level?
- **10.** What is the impact of pornography on intimate relationships? What are its consequences?
- 11. What do you think are the risks related to sharing personal/sexual images/videos or related to online sexting? (social networks, portals, dating applications etc.)

- **12.** Do you have sufficient information to deal with such situation? What about your peers? What would help you in these cases? (to deal with blackmails or involvement in something which you might regret later).
- 13. What do you think is the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the issues we have discussed so far? Which specific issue has been affected more? Why?
 - Is there anything else you would like to add?
 - Closure and gratitudes.

7.3. The list of field researchers

CITY	NAME OF THE FIELD RESEARCHER		
Vlorë	Klodiana Xhelili		
Fier	Xhensila Murati		
Saranda	Xheni Shehu		
Gjirokastra	Xheni Shehu		
Shkodra	Besara Podgorica		
Lezha	Sindi Kola		
Kukes	Sindi Kola		
Dibra	Sidorela Horeshka		
Pogradec	Ina Blaceri		
Korça	Olgerta Demelli		
Elbasan	Nertila Tole		
Tirana Megi Zylali			
	Lirie Dina		
	Vjollca Kekezi		
Berat	Zoica Bardhi		
Durrës	Leonora Rexha		
	Aida Zyka		

INTIMATE PARTNER
VIOLENCE AND
SEXUAL VIOLENCE
AMONG YOUNG
PEOPLE IN ALBANIA



