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# Gender perspective on the socio-economic risks in the time of coronavirus in Albania

## Policy Paper

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The situation created by Coronavirus (COVID-19) affects almost every area of people's lives and economic activity, is heading towards significant interruptions in the world trade chain, with significant consequences for the Albanian economy. In the face of this crisis, various companies are facing economic difficulties into providing payments.

Most businesses, especially large ones that have been temporarily closed due to emergency measures are facing many difficulties. Some of them are holding social responsibility for their employees who have brought them a lot of income and profits before this situation. Unfortunately, the human rights and especially the rights of women and girls working in such enterprises are being seriously jeopardized these days.

The closure of many businesses, due to the situation created by the coronavirus, is endangering the jobs of thousands of men and women in Albania today. It is not only about textile and shoe manufacturing enterprises, an industry with over 60 thousand employees, where over 80% of them are women, but also for many other activities. Official data from the Institute of Statistics show that 26% of women are salaried employees, 13% are self-employed and 14% of them are unpaid workers in the family business.

**Figure 1. Women aged 15-64 according to activity status in%**

Gratë në moshën 15-64 vjeç sipas statusit të aktivitetit në %  
Women aged 15-64 by activity status in %

Gratë në moshën 15-64 vjeç sipas statusit të aktivitetit							
Women aged 15-64 by activity status							
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	
<b>Forca e punës</b>	<b>521.844</b>	<b>521.894</b>	<b>552.079</b>	<b>580.299</b>	<b>573.591</b>	<b>592.504</b>	Labour force
<b>Të punësuar</b>	<b>449.075</b>	<b>441.024</b>	<b>455.985</b>	<b>495.530</b>	<b>499.987</b>	<b>519.499</b>	Employed
<b>Të vetëpunësuar</b>	<b>78.525</b>	<b>76.103</b>	<b>79.950</b>	<b>125.463</b>	<b>131.436</b>	<b>124.463</b>	Self employed
<b>Punëtorë pa pagesë në biznesin e familjes</b>	<b>199.494</b>	<b>181.155</b>	<b>178.008</b>	<b>152.156</b>	<b>129.479</b>	<b>141.908</b>	Contributing family workers
<b>Të punësuar me pagë</b>	<b>171.050</b>	<b>183.700</b>	<b>198.026</b>	<b>217.911</b>	<b>239.072</b>	<b>253.008</b>	Employees
<b>Të papunë</b>	<b>72.189</b>	<b>80.870</b>	<b>96.094</b>	<b>84.769</b>	<b>73.604</b>	<b>73.005</b>	Unemployed
<b>Në %</b>							Në %
<b>Të vetëpunësuar</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>12.5</b>	Self employed
<b>Punëtorë pa pagesë në biznesin e familjes</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>14.3</b>	Contributing family workers
<b>Të punësuar me pagë</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>25.5</b>	Employees
<b>Të papunë</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7.4</b>	Unemployed

Burimi i informacionit: Anketat e Forcave të Punës  
Source of information: Labour Force Surveys

**Source: INSTAT 2018, Labor Force Survey on Women and Men in Albania 2019<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.instat.gov.al/media/6413/burra-dhe-gra\\_2019.pdf](http://www.instat.gov.al/media/6413/burra-dhe-gra_2019.pdf)

## THE MAIN SECTORS WHERE WOMEN WORK

If we look at the main structure of businesses where women are involved, we get the answer from the table below.

The sector with the most employed women is the agricultural sector where about 42% of women and girls are employed. Employed here according to INSTAT are all those who work on their small farm, who do not sell their products, but only produce for self-consumption, are considered employed<sup>2</sup>. The second sector with the most employed women, about 21% is public administration, social services and other activities and services. Almost the same number of employees work in the trade, hotels transport and business and administrative services sector. The third sector with 14.3% of employed women and girls is that of production, which includes textile and shoe factories, agro-processing, fish processing, etc. Out of these sectors, the public administration sector remains the less risked, while the private sector are at high risk due to their financial instability, small operating budgets, informality, customers after the closure of COVID-19 pandemic will not have financial means they had before to spent in these business etc. Mass layoffs and and exclusion from the payroll have already begun.<sup>3</sup>

In the table below we can see the employment of women based on the economic activity. Let's take a look one by one:

**Figure 2. Women's employment structure and economic activity in%**

Gra	460.861	451.382	466.000	506.970	516.176	540.215 Women
Bujqësi	53,0	50,2	47,7	45,4	42,5	42,3 Agriculture
Prodhim	9,1	10,4	11,9	13,1	14,0	14,3 Manufacturing
Ndërtim	0,4	0,4	0,7	0,6	0,5	0,5 Construction
Industri nxjerrëse, Energji, gaz dhe furnizimi me ujë	0,7	0,9	1,2	1,0	0,6	0,8 Mining and quarrying; Electricity, gas and water supply
Tregti, Transport, Hoteleri, Shërbime të biznesit dhe administrative	17,0	17,0	16,9	19,9	20,0	20,8 Trade, Transportation, Accommodation and Food, and Business and Administrative Services
Administrim publik, Shërbimet Sociale, dhe aktivitete e shërbime të tjera	19,8	20,8	21,4	20,0	22,4	21,4 Public Administration, Community, Social and other Services and Activities

Burimi : Anketat e Forcave të Punës

Source : Labour Force Surveys

Source: INSTAT 2019. Men and Women in Albania

<sup>2</sup> INSTAT 2019. Anketat e Forcave të Punës 2019, fq. 8. <file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/atfp-t4-2019.pdf>

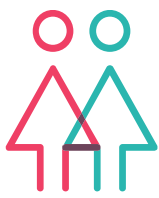
<sup>3</sup> <http://www.gazetadita.al/ministrja-do-humbasin-60-mije-vende-pune-te-tjeret-rroga-minimale/>

Detailed data of INSTAT in the publication "Women and Men in Albania" for 2019 shows that out of 540,215 employed women, about 42% of them are in the agricultural sector, equal to about 227,000 women and girls. Agriculture is one of the branches of the economy, which is very affected by the spread of the COVID-19. First, due to limited movement and transportation, this sector has problems with the collection of agricultural production and, consequently, with its sale. Although the agri-food industry is still operating today, in order to provide food to the population, this sector is still thought to be greatly affected by the situation. Farmers have started pouring their production, as they are unable to deliver it to the collectors. Consequently, the situation has left women unemployed, who work in greenhouses and consequently leave them without much or no financial opportunity for their families. In early April, the investigative show "Fiks Fare" denounced that some of the agricultural products are being dumped in canals and garbage due to the situation created by COVID-19. According to the investigative programme, the victims are farmers, collection points, traders and consumers. The entire family will suffer from these and women are the most affected due to their everyday unpaid work in the farm and in the family chores. The chairman of the Albanian Agribusiness Council, Agim Rrapaj, asked the government in mid-March to take measures in the sectors of agriculture, livestock, veterinary medicine and agricultural mechanics, following the situation created by COVID-19. The council urged that farmers, ranchers and veterinarians ought not to be limited in their movements in order to avoid agro-food collapse. Faktaje.al in an article underlined that farmers and agricultural experts are concerned because the demand for exports of Albanian agricultural products have decreased and on the other hand the product that is produced, due to lack of transport or other obstacles is not being traded even within country. From all this situation women and girls are quite at risk and their families will face a critical level of poverty due to the situation created.

## **TRADE, TRANSPORT, HOTEL, BUSINESS SECTOR**

About 22% of women and girls or about 118,000 women and girls are employed in this sector. This sector has been directly affected by the closure of businesses due to the situation created by COVID-19. Women and girls who are self-employed or employed in this sector in various professions such as cooks, bartenders, waitresses, hairdressers, cleaning, reception, travel agents, etc. They cannot receive the salary for which they have agreed with the employer. In Albania, it is known that this sector does not declare the full salaries that employees receive in order to avoid the payment of social insurance, which increases with the increase of the salary. These businesses mostly declare as payment of employees the minimum wage that today is 26000 gross ALL. So these women and girls will be reimbursed from the emergency budget of the Albanian Government, or the so-called plan A with a minimum wage of 26,000 ALL. This salary is obtained if their employer fills in the online forms they requested, the names of the employees, the IBANs of the bank accounts, the phone number and their e-mails so that the request for reimbursement can be taken into account. Since the opening of applications on April 1st to receive the "war salary"<sup>4</sup> for all businesses and self-employed, 36.419 businesses and 61.120 employees and self-employed have applied. Meanwhile, until

<sup>4</sup> "War Salary" is called this financial aid from the Prime Minister of Albania and then by all the ministers in their public appearance or interviews.



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April 6th, financial assistance has been approved for over 6 thousand first businesses and for over 10 thousand employees.<sup>5</sup> 123,871 citizens are expected to benefit from the government's financial package, with financial effects over ALL 5.8 billion, in three months. Also, about 60 thousand employees and self-employed will benefit in small businesses with a turnover of 0-14 million ALL per year, they will receive a salary of 26 thousand ALL / month. Another category that benefits is those employees who have declared a salary of 0, which is about 30 thousand people, who will receive 26 thousand ALL / per month.<sup>6</sup>

## INFORMALITY

According to ILO (2018)<sup>7</sup> the share of informal employment in Albania is 61.0 % is among the highest in the region and represents more than half of the employed population. Informal employment as a percentage of total non-agricultural employment, by sex is 21,5% for women and 34.7 for men.<sup>8</sup> Having into consideration this level of informality many women will remain unemployed. According to INSTAT 51.4 % of women are employed<sup>9</sup>. So, the high level of informality means that 21.5% of these women will not profit from the aid packages of the Government of Albania. The INSTAT figure of informality does not take into account the agricultural employment. In agriculture are employed 42% women. In Albania we do not have an estimation of the level of informality in rural areas. From the contacts that GADC have with these women they are suffering from the lack of job, since places or families they were employed before are afraid from COVID-19 and told them to stay home. Some of them were employed in businesses that are closed due to measures taken by the GoA.

## TEXTILE AND FOOTWEAR FACTORIES

Another sector with a significant share in women's employment is that of production. This mostly includes clothing factories or footwear, otherwise known as the "fason" sector.<sup>10</sup> This category also includes other manufacturing enterprises in various industries, such as fishing, agro-processing, etc. According to official data from the Institute of Statistics, in 2019, the manufacturing sector employs 14% of the total or 77,000 women and girls are employed in this sector. This sector is also among the most affected by the COVID-19 crisis. The footwear and apparel processing industry are also feeling the shock because other countries from which the main orders came, such as Italy or other European countries, which are also currently facing COVID 19 pandemics, have closed borders and transport and trade routes. *Skënder Pashaj, administrator of the company FITAL, one of the larger employers in the footwear industry, with around 1080 employees, said that before COVID-19, as a businessman I was secure for the future of my company. But now my foundations are shaking. We are really at the point where we need to fire employees, to cut expenses. The government should help save jobs. I have been doing business for 15 years and I have never asked for money from the*

<sup>5</sup> <https://shqiptarja.com/lajm/paga-e-luftes-tatimet-mbi-10-mije-punonjes-nga-biznesi-i-vogel-e-moren-vijojne-aplikimet>

<sup>6</sup> ibid

<sup>7</sup>

<sup>8</sup> INSTAT, 2019. Women and Men in Albania.

<sup>9</sup> INSTAT, 2019. Labour Force Survey 2019

<sup>10</sup> Fason is the slang name used in Albania for the companies that are part of the Garment and Footwear Production Industry.



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*state, nor have I ever sent workers home. But in this case, it does not depend only on us, this is bigger than us<sup>11</sup>*

So far, the government has not planned compensation for employees in medium and large businesses, but has demanded from the company to take responsibility in this regard. The only point in support of the large enterprise in plan A of the government's measures is to make available a sovereign guarantee worth 11 billion ALL, through which businesses in financial difficulties can get loans with low interest rates in banks to pay employees. At its meeting on April 7, 2020, the government approved the DCM on the State Loan Guarantee Instrument in preferential terms for the salaries of business employees.<sup>12</sup>

But it remains to be seen how many businesses will use this instrument, as there is a possibility that some of them won't borrow any money to pay employees, but will make cuts, as this solution also due to lack of orders makes business feel uncertain. Anila Denaj, Minister of Finance and Economy stated that in a month and a half, as a result of the closure of economic activities 50-60 thousand job places will be lost. *"It is about an unwanted impact situation. Even the sovereign guarantee fund, which is not mandatory, but a contractual relationship between two customers, the business and the bank, was offered for this purpose so that businesses do not fire employees. But we are aware that there will be an increase in the number of unemployed. In 50 thousand -60 thousand people in 1-1.5 months. But if the situation continues, the forecasts will expand "-* said the Minister. She urged businesses to comply with the Labor Code and in particular Article 144.<sup>13</sup>

The Minister further clarified that for the sector that is currently most affected and has more employees, that of textile and footwear sector, the government planned to intervene to resize contracts. *"Today we are discussing for the textile and footwear sector industry to switch from clothes, which are no longer, due to the pandemic situation, the production of masks or other products that the market, internal and external, needs. This is done to keep people at work, not with a salary fund, but with job security,"* said the minister of finance.<sup>14</sup>

## FINANCIAL AID

The "war salary" is covered by the 6.5 billion lek fund, which also includes doubling the payment of economic assistance to poor families and treating those who will be unemployed from this situation with unemployment benefits. The fund in question is part of Plan A of the government measures. According to the data from the Institute of Statistics<sup>15</sup>, 10% of the total number of families with economic assistance have women heads of households, or about 70 thousand families who lived by financial aid during February, now they are about to receive the double of their current payment. Also, about 2,700 unemployed individuals benefit from the doubling of their current unemployment benefit.

<sup>11</sup> <https://a2news.com/video/qeveria-le-jashte-vemendjes-biznesin-e-madh/>

<sup>12</sup> <http://financa.gov.al/miratohet-vkm-per-instrumentin-e-garancise-shteterore-te-huave-me-terma-preferenciale-per-pagat-e-punonjesve-te-bizneseve/>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.gazetadita.al/ministrja-do-humbasin-60-mije-vende-pune-te-tjeret-rroga-minimale/>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.gazetadita.al/ministrja-do-humbasin-60-mije-vende-pune-te-tjeret-rroga-minimale/>

<sup>15</sup> [http://ëëë.instat.gov.al/media/6413/burra-dhe-gra\\_2019.pdf](http://ëëë.instat.gov.al/media/6413/burra-dhe-gra_2019.pdf)

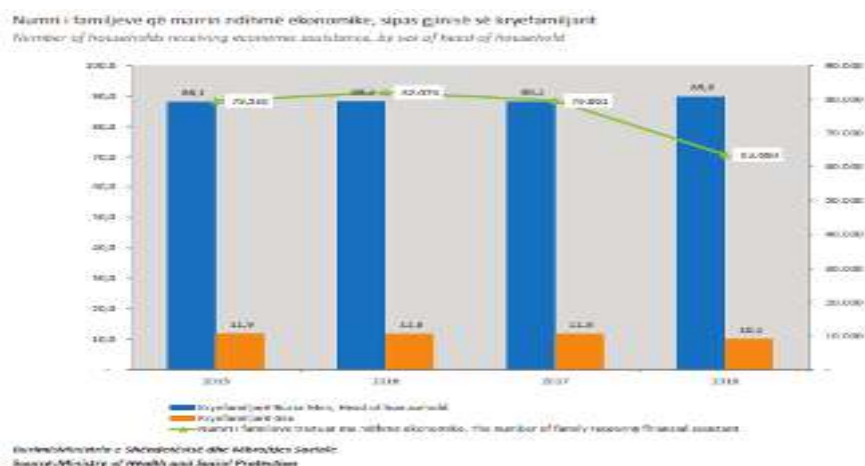






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**Figure 3. Number of families on financial aid, according to the gender of the head of the family**



**Source: INSTAT 2019. Women and Men in Albania 2019**

### THE BURDEN OF THE BANK LOANS

The data of the credit register of the Bank of Albania on the number of borrowers, the loans taken and their total value, reflect significant differences for loans between the two sexes. During the period 2013-2016, the number of women borrowers, although on the upward trend, was almost half the number of men and, the average amount of credit taken by a woman was half the average amount received by a man. The data of 2018 show that the number of women borrowers has increased from 38.0% to 41.0%. Credit men have a downward trend in 2018, compared to a year ago; from 62.2% to 59.0%.

**Table 1. Loans obtained in commercial banks divided by the sex of the borrower**

Year	Women			Men		
	Number of women	Number of loans	Loans obtained në ALL	Number of men	Number of loans	Loans obtained
2013	159,252	217,636	93,477,830,577	261,426	351,458	266,313,210,841
2014	185,148	270,426	109,350,172,468	294,663	422,995	304,516,288,530
2015	205,336	320,991	126,145,469,265	321,994	487,805	333,494,463,888
2016	240,632	307,763	97,945,376,315	232,796	513,968	220,731,488,338
2017	242,487	463,583	62,802,321,086	399,783	742,888	143,849,875,490
2018	193,201	378,364	147,376,456,594	278,483	527,297	322,324,455,849

**Source: INSTAT 2019. Women and Men in Albania 2019**

However, due to the situation created by COVID-19, these women and men risk bankruptcy, non-payment of credit and consequently loss of property or business for which they have taken a loan. The Albanian Microfinance Association raises the alarm regarding individuals and businesses that have received loans and that due to the situation of COVID-19 are not able to pay in this period. According to the Government's decision, the liabilities of those who





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cannot afford to pay will only be increased and collected for another moment. Although without penalties, they will not be forgiven. Most likely, there will be clients who will face a real risk of financial bankruptcy if 3-4 instalments are collected to be paid at once. Therefore, if customers absolutely do not have the opportunity to repay, the only alternative remains to renegotiate the loan repayment tabs, to eliminate the avalanche effect of liabilities that would be caused by their delay.

## SMALL BUSINESS WITH AN ANNUAL TURNOVER OF 2 - 14 MILLION ALL

As mentioned above, about 13% of women who work for a salary are self-employed. Under the Normative Act issued by the government in mid-March, all self-employed people have lowered the shutter of their activity and are not generating any profit. This category, which in general in Albania is mainly a family business, about 14% of women at work are unpaid workers in the family business. On March 19, Prime Minister Edi Rama publicly announced Plan A of the economic measures. In this plan, a monetary amount is foreseen, which will be used to give the minimum wage of 26 thousand ALL per month for all employees declared in the payroll of the months of February 2020. This assistance will be given to all businesses that have closed. activity by decision of the Albanian Government. The same scheme should work for the spouse engaged in free business, but only when the latter are registered in the payment list for February 2020, although with zero value.

The government called the payment a "war salary." Prime Minister Rama on April 6, 2020, has made a balance sheet of those who have benefited so far. 9,506 self-employed workers and over 5,600 businesses have benefited from the "wage war" offered as direct government support.

Over 36,400 businesses with turnover 0-14 million (140,000USD) per year, a sector that employ over 61,000 women and men, have submitted applications to the General Directorate of Taxation to receive the "war salary". Meanwhile, for all employees unable to work from the situation in other important sectors of the economy, "the government is assessing the possibilities to address their problem in another expanded package," the prime minister wrote on Facebook.

## GOVERNMENT OF ALBANIA MEASURES TO COPE WITH THE SITUATION

On the afternoon of March 19, Prime Minister Edi Rama presented Plan A of economic measures to deal with the coronavirus situation, a health emergency that risks being associated with an economic crisis, not only in Albania but around the globe. The package of measures amounts to 370 million euros, of which 250 are considered non-deductible expenses.

Some of the most important measures of PLAN A are listed below

- An amount of 2.5 billion lek, or 25 million dollars is earmarked for the Ministry of Health and Social Protection (MOSP), medical equipment and for the health personnel support.
- 10 billion lek, or 100 million dollars will be provided through a sovereign guarantee instrument to private companies facing objective in paying their employees' salaries.
- 6.5 billion lek, or 65 million dollars will be made available to cover immediate needs:
  - the neediest social categories;







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- small business;
- potential layoffs due to the war
- 2 billion lek, or 20 million dollars will be made available to the Ministry of Defense to cover the ongoing humanitarian operation.
- 1 billion lek, or 10 million dollars will be set aside as the Council of Ministers' contingency fund to cover possible unforeseen future emergencies.
- Also, the Government of Albania permanently will write off late payment interest charges on outstanding unpaid electricity bills for domestic and small business customers, a move with an estimated financial effect of 15 billion lek, or 150 million dollars, benefiting as many as 211 024 consumers.
- Will reschedule in the second half of 2020 and onwards the profit tax on all business with an annual turnover of up to 2-14 million lek, or 20, 000 to 140, 000 dollars.
- Will postpone submission of the business balance sheets for a period up to June 1 this year.

The second aid package launched in April 13<sup>th</sup> 2020 includes:

1. Employees of entities with annual income over 14 000 000 (fourteen million) ALL, closed according to the Order / s of MOHSP, who have been at work on the date when entry into force of the Order / orders of MOHSP, receive financial aid of 40,000 (forty thousand) ALL.
2. Employees of the subjects allowed to exercise activity, who have been dismissed from the date of entry into force of the Order / orders of the MOHSP until April 10, 2020, receive financial aid of 40,000 (forty thousand) ALL. The delivery date of the E-sig 027 form must not be later than 10 April 2020.
3. Employees of entities with annual income up to 14 000 000 ALL, allowed to exercise activity according to the order / s of MOHSP, who have been at work on the date of entry into force of the Order / s of MOHSP, receive financial assistance of 40,000 (forty thousand) ALL. (Beneficiary employees are not included according to point 2).
4. Employees of entities that exercise activity in the sector of accommodation structures, which appear in the payroll of entities, until the date of the Order / MOHSP, benefit financial aid of 40,000 (forty thousand) ALL. If the entity carries out several types of activities, only employees from the activity of the accommodation structure will benefit.

Economic experts argue that in the conditions where the Albanian economy is, but also from what is at stake, a comprehensive package of measures is needed, which will support all categories of business. The situation created by the Corona Virus will be reflected in the structure of consumption, some citizens have begun to consume only the basic elements, but also for businesses this period will have a cost that will extend in the coming years.<sup>16</sup>

The government's economic measures package also envisions redefining the dates for declaring profit tax in the second half of the year for the entire small business with a turnover of 2 to 14 million lek, as well as postponing the delivery of balance sheets until June 1st of this year. Part of the measures is the three-month deferral of loan installment payments for individuals and businesses in difficulty due to the situation with coronavirus, as well as the

<sup>16</sup> <https://a2news.com/2020/04/01/civici-kriza-ekonomike-do-te-arrije-pikun-kur-kurba-e-koronavirusit-te-filloje-zbritjen/>





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two-month deferral of leases for businesses with a turnover of up to 14 million ALL per year (businesses of small), as well as for dwellings.

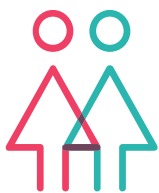
Among the measures taken by the Albanian Government, what stands out is the lack of gender-based data. Once the process of these packages is completed by the end of April 2020, the Gender Alliance for Development Center will submit a request to the General Directorate of Taxation for gender data regarding the beneficiaries of these packages Domestic Violence. According to our legislation, 'domestic violence' is any act of violence of one person against another, which can be physical, moral, psychological, sexual, social, economic violation, exercised between family members who are or have been in a family relationship<sup>17</sup>. In Albania the rate of women suffering from Domestic Violence is relatively high and for these women, such mandatory lockdown trapped them in their homes with their abusers, isolated them from the people and the resources that could help them. However, during March and April 2020, no growth has been marked compared to that of a year ago in the number of domestic abuse cases in several municipalities (referring to the lock down period due to COVID-19). This is a conclusion from the monitoring of the referral mechanisms in 11 municipalities of Albania, that GADC has been doing, supported by UN Women Albania, under the framework of the project: "Building capacities of CSOs to monitor the implementation of activities related to reduction of gender-based violence and domestic violence of the National Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Equality 2016-2020, under the Regional Program "Ending Violence against Women: Implementing Norms, Changing Minds". In order to be sure and convey to the government our concern about the safety of women and girls targeted at domestic violence, a letter initiated by a group of civil society organizations, was sent on the findings of the monitoring and related recommendations that the government should take as steps to protect the safety of life for women and girls at risk, victims of domestic violence, by taking inter-institutional measures at the central level.

## CONCLUSIONS

Until now there is no gender segregation of beneficiaries to understand how many women and how many men will benefit from the Albanian Government Aid due to COVID-19 situation. The amount that employees will receive according to the packages is in the limit of survival considering the prices of the goods and the uncertainty of the situation. With this payment one cannot feed healthy a family with 4 persons considering that the families have other payments such as water, electricity, rent, etc. On the other hand, there is a large category of women who work in informal sectors and who do not benefit at all from the measures taken by the government, because all measures are related either to families who were in the economic assistance scheme or to certain businesses. that women work mostly in informality, especially women who serve the elderly or are family workers. This group, in addition of being unemployed, will not receive any remuneration from the Government Plans because they are not recognized as a workforce. So gender differences in government plan rewards will be deepen.

<sup>17</sup>Law No. 9669, date 18.12.2006 "For measures against violence in family relationships"





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One of the largest groups that is excluded from the aid is the women workers in textile and footwear sector, the so-called "fason" sector. These women would benefit if the respective companies had fired them before announcing the two aid packages. They will either continue to be paid for shortened hours as happened during March and April, a salary which is insufficient for their needs, or they will risk if the companies where they work will not have new contracts from the customers who in 70% of cases are from Italy. Given that our country suffers from a lack of gender segregated data, it is quite difficult to understand the impact of the conditions set due to COVID-19 and government aid packages.

Women and girls who work in agriculture and livestock will also find it difficult to afford a good living for their families. They are also part of the informal sector and have no way of being compensated by current aid packages.

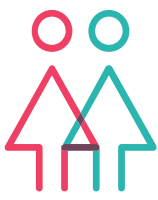
In this extraordinary period caused by COVID-19 we are worried about Albanian women who live in remote areas, are pregnant, in old age, with disabilities, heads of families and many other problems, will find it very difficult to cope with the livelihood, well-being of themselves and their families. All this difficult situation is accompanied by domestic violence which is still present in Albanian families.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Despite the fact that the Albanian Government is facing an unusual situation, the collection and processing of data will make the official socio-economic responses to cope with the situation and help the neediest people, especially women and girls, be more informative and handier.

- Municipalities with their administrative units must already have accurate data on what is happening in their territory with the citizens. This information must be officially obtained and processed.
- While some groups are being helped with the "war salary" it is unclear how other groups will benefit. How will informal, unregistered employees' benefit?. Especially women and men who are working in informal sector. Therefore, the Government of Albania must be very clear publicly for different strata of population.
- In conditions when the minimum standard of living is incalculable and the prices of basket goods in Albania have very little difference from the markets of neighbouring or European countries, many families will suffer from some minor rights under the articles below taken from the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which Albania ratified in 1991: The right to social security (Article 9) ; The right to an adequate standard of living (Article 11) which includes the right to food and shelter. The right to enjoy / have the highest standard of mental and physical health (Article 12). Therefore, we urge the Albanian government to calculate the minimum standard of living wage and set minimum wages based on this standard.
- We urge the Government of Albania to produce gender disaggregated data and to produce reports on the impact over Albanian population of COVID-19 measures
- Regional employment offices should report on employment opportunities and the number of jobseekers.





ENHANCING  
WOMEN'S  
ACCESS TO  
EMPLOYMENT

- We urge the Albanian Government to design a plan based on financial projections and gender data, post COVID-19, to restore the socio-economic life of Albanian families, especially the lives of women and girls.
- In order to strengthen the Albanian family after COVID-19, we suggest to the Albanian Government to take measures to empower Albanian women and encourage their business and employment, in cooperation with organizations that protect women's rights.

*The Gender Alliance for Development Centre (GADC) is an Albanian feminist non-profit organization operating all over Albania and in the region. GADC is a voice for Albanian women and a force for change. Our organization works to empower women and to create an equal and just future for low-income girls and women to get out of poverty and exclusion all over Albania.*

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