Gender Budget Watchdog Network

for a gender equal region

An In-Depth Analysis of the Transport Sector: Advancing Gender- and Climate-Sensitive Policies

NATIONAL REPORT
Albania

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"An In-Depth Analysis of the Transport Sector: Advancing Gender- and Climate-Sensitive Policies"

Report for Albania

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
BGA	Balkan Green Agenda
CAA	Civil Aviation Authority
AFMIS	Albanian Financial Mὶanagement Information System
NEA	National Environmental Agency
ARA	Albanian Road Authority
SPA	School of Public Administration
EU	European Union
WB	World Bank
CO	Carbon Monoxide
CO_2	Carbon Dioxide
CRPM	Center for Research and Policy Making
GRDTS	General Road Transport Services Directorate
TD	Transport Decarbonization
ECAA	European Common Aviation Area Agreement
EEA	European Environment Agency
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
EV	Electric Vehicles
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GIZ	German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ Albania)
ILO	International Labour Organization
INSTAT	Institute of Statistics of Albania
IPA	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
ITS	Intelligent Transport Systems
MoFE	Ministry of Finance and Economy
EGD	European Green Deal
MoHSP	Ministry of Health and Social Protection
MoTE	Ministry of Tourism and Environment
MoIE	Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy
SUM	Sustainable Urban Mobility
NOx	Nitrogen Oxides
WHO	World Health Organization
PM	Particulate Matter (PM10 & PM2.5)
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
GBWN	Gender Budget Watchdog Network
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
COPD	Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
TEN-T	Trans-European Transport Networks
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
LSG	Local Self-Government

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A special thanks goes to our research team and collaborators, whose dedication and expertise contributed to data collection, analysis, and documentation.

We also thank policymakers, urban planners, and transport experts for their insightful suggestions and recommendations, which helped shape practical solutions for improving transport infrastructure and sustainability.

This report is the result of collaborative efforts, and we hope its findings will serve as a useful resource for policymakers, stakeholders, and the wider public in enhancing transportation systems.

INTRODUCTION

Transport is a vital factor for economic development, social cohesion, and environmental protection. It directly affects access to education, employment, public services, and civic participation. However, transport challenges in Albania remain significant, including the lack of reliable public transportation, high travel costs, and the environmental consequences of using internal combustion vehicles.

This study aims to analyze the impact of transport access on citizens' lives, with a particular focus on gender disparities and the role of transport in climate change. It explores how the absence or poor quality of transport influences educational opportunities, employment decisions, and participation in policymaking processes.

Through a combination of quantitative and qualitative data, the report examines citizens' perceptions of public and sustainable transport alternatives, identifying key barriers that hinder the adoption of greener transport modes such as electric cars, bicycles, and improved public transit. The recommendations drawn from this study aim to offer concrete measures to increase transport access, improve infrastructure, and reduce environmental impacts.

This study intends to contribute to the development of more effective and inclusive transport policies in Albania, ensuring a fairer, safer, and more sustainable system for all citizens.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report analyzes the impact of transport on socio-economic opportunities, access to services, and its contribution to climate change. It highlights the barriers citizens face in using public and alternative transportation, with a particular focus on gender disparities and environmental effects. The key findings underscore how the lack of adequate transport affects education, employment, and civic participation, as well as public perceptions of alternative transport options.

A total of 1,100 individuals from across the Republic of Albania responded to the survey. Among them, 491 were girls and women (44.6% of the total), and 598 were boys and men (54.4%). Eleven individuals (1.0%) chose not to disclose their gender.

The analysis of distribution by rural or urban areas and gender shows that 137 women (47.7%) live in rural areas and 354 women (43.5%) live in urban areas. Meanwhile, 149 men (51.9%) reside in rural areas compared to 449 men (55.2%) in urban areas. Eleven individuals preferred not to respond.

Transport and Its Environmental Impact

- The transport sector is a major contributor to air pollution and climate change, particularly in large cities such as Tirana.
- Road transport is dominant, while sustainable alternatives remain underdeveloped.
- A significant share of respondents—64% of women and 53.7% of men—believe that vehicles contribute substantially to air pollution.
- Urban residents (68%) perceive a greater impact of cars on air pollution compared to rural residents (62.4%).

Accessibility and the Challenge of Public Transport

- The lack of public transport near residential areas is a major concern. 47.5% of women and 38% of men report difficulties accessing public transport close to where they live.
- Time spent commuting is a greater concern for men (31%) than for women (29.3%), suggesting men may have longer travel distances for work.
- Women experience more insecurity while using public transport (33.3%) compared to men (28.2%), raising concerns about safety in public transit environments.
- Many citizens (28.8% of women and 28.6% of men) highlight the lack of accessibility for people with disabilities, indicating the need for infrastructure improvements.
- A higher percentage of women (26.3%) than men (22.9%) express a preference not to use public transport daily, possibly due to unpleasant experiences or lack of comfort.

The Impact of Transport on Education and Employment

- A total of 265 individuals (92 women and 171 men) discontinued their education due to the lack of adequate transport.
- Inadequate transport has significantly affected employment opportunities:
- 487 individuals (223 women and 263 men) declined a job offer because of the absence or unsuitability of public transport.
- The issue is more prominent among men (263), suggesting a higher dependency on transport for employment.
- Transport limitations have also hindered civic engagement, with 446 individuals (198 women and 245 men) reporting they did not participate in policymaking processes for this reason.

Perception and Use of Alternative Transport

There is growing interest in alternative transport options, yet economic and infrastructural barriers remain the main obstacles.

- **Electric vehicles:**
  645 individuals consider them a good option, but high cost remains the main barrier for 114 respondents.
- **Carpooling:**
  Supported by 315 individuals, but key concerns include coordination difficulties (174 people) and a preference for independence (100 people).
- **Buses:**
  Endorsed by 365 respondents, while 452 find the service unsuitable due to a lack of routes (114 people) and limited schedules (75 people).
- **Bicycles and e-bikes:**
  Widely supported (561 for standard bikes and 537 for e-bikes), yet infrastructure issues remain a major barrier (67 respondents for e-bikes and 56 for standard bikes).
- **E-scooters:**
  Supported by 313 people but rejected by 352 others, citing concerns over safety (157), lack of infrastructure (113), and personal dislike (154).

Recommendations for Improvement

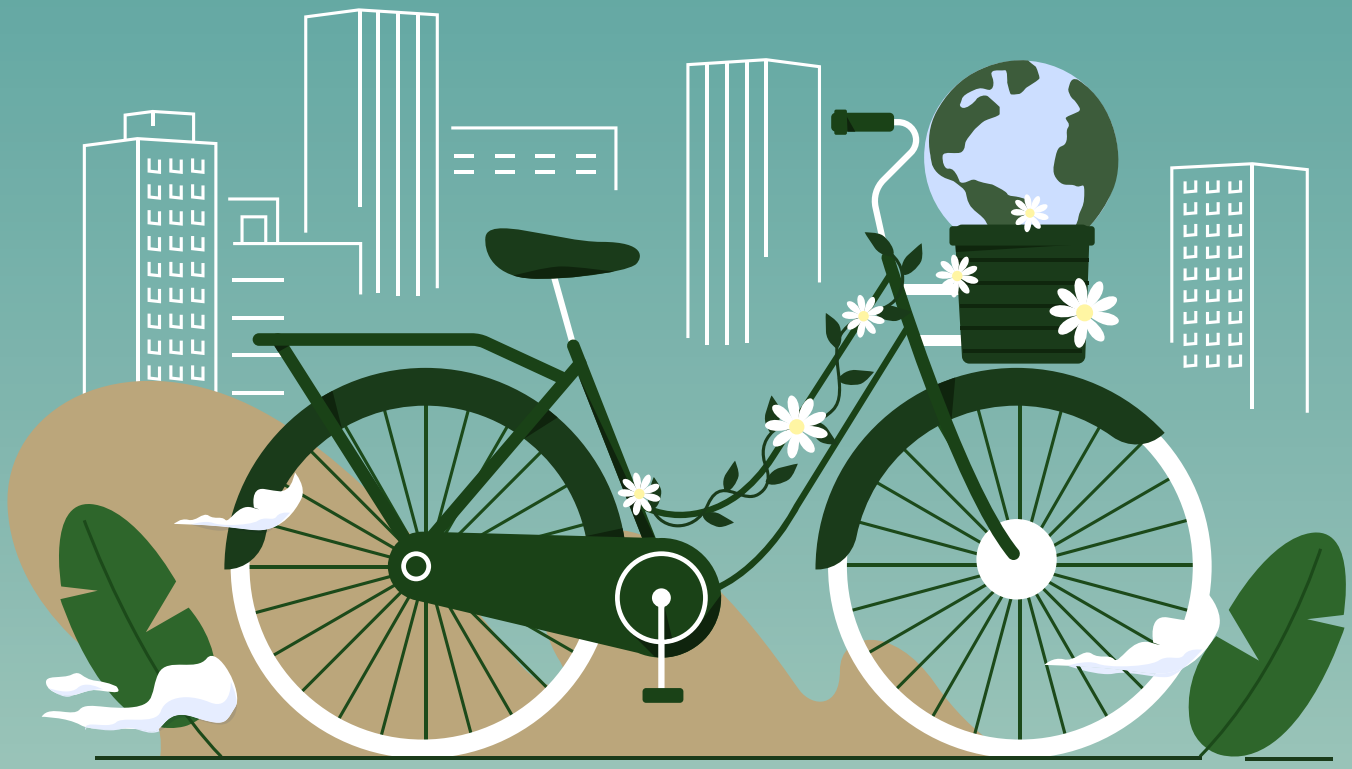
To enhance access and the quality of transport, the report suggests the following measures:

- Invest in sustainable public transport – including the electrification of buses, development of bike and scooter lanes, and improvement of public transport infrastructure.
- Improve safety in public transportation – especially for women, through better monitoring and the creation of safer conditions for passengers.
- Enhance accessibility for people with disabilities by upgrading infrastructure and dedicated services.

- Introduce subsidy policies for green transport to make it more affordable for citizens.
- Raise awareness about alternative transport options to promote more sustainable travel behavior.

The report highlights that the lack of adequate and affordable transport negatively affects education, employment, and civic participation. Women report higher levels of insecurity in public transport, while men face greater challenges in accessing jobs and engaging in policymaking due to transport limitations.

Investments in sustainable transport and measures to increase access and safety are essential to reducing barriers and improving citizens' quality of life. Through policies focused on green and inclusive mobility, Albania can reduce the transport sector's impact on climate change and build a fairer, more efficient system for all.



CHAPTER I

THE LINK BETWEEN GENDER, TRANSPORT, AND CLIMATE CHANGE

THE ROLE OF TRANSPORT IN CLIMATE CHANGE IN ALBANIA

The transport sector plays a significant role in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Albania, contributing to climate change and environmental degradation. It is the largest energy-consuming sector in the country and accounts for a substantial share of energy resource usage. Since 1990, there has been a considerable increase in transport activity—particularly road transport—which has led to a major rise in fuel consumption, primarily diesel and gasoline.

The transport sector has significant negative impacts on the environment and human health. It is responsible for about one-quarter of the European Union's total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and contributes to air pollution, noise pollution, and the fragmentation of habitats.

More specifically, it is the only major economic sector in Europe where GHG emissions have increased since 1990, and it is also the largest contributor to nitrogen oxide emissions, which harm both health and the environment. Road transport, in particular, is one of the main sources of environmental noise pollution in Europe.

To estimate future energy demand in the transport sector, it was divided into two sub-sectors: freight and passenger transport. For this sector, two key indicators are used to project demand: passenger-kilometers and ton-kilometers. It is projected that ton-kilometers will increase by 85% by 2030 compared to 2014, while passenger-kilometers will grow by 37%. The majority of transport is carried out by road vehicles.

Albania's transport sector has expanded rapidly since 2000. Although road infrastructure is improving day by day, the number of vehicles in circulation has increased, leading to a steadily growing burden on total traffic. The transport sector consumes significant amounts of energy, primarily in the form of diesel and gasoline.

According to recent reports, the transport sector is one of the largest emitters of carbon dioxide (CO_2), driven by increasing reliance on private vehicles, an aging vehicle fleet, and limited investment in sustainable transport systems. Urban areas like Tirana experience particularly high emissions, as traffic congestion and outdated public transport infrastructure exacerbate the problem.

Urban centers in Albania are facing worsening air quality, primarily due to old diesel vehicles and industrial emissions, particularly from agriculture. Key issues include pollution from nitrogen-based fertilizers affecting both water and air, as well as open burning practices that release fine particulate matter and ash into the atmosphere.

The total number of road vehicles in Albania increased by approximately 220,000 between 2015 and 2022—a rise of 30%. Diesel-powered vehicles accounted for the largest share of this increase, growing by around 158,000 during the same period. This surge in vehicle numbers, particularly diesel vehicles, has contributed to deteriorating air quality in the country's major cities.

Transport-related air pollution is associated with elevated levels of fine particulate matter (PM2.5), nitrogen oxides (NOx), and carbon monoxide (CO), all of which not only contribute to global warming but also degrade air quality and pose serious risks to public health. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that air pollution in Albania's urban areas leads to various respiratory diseases and contributes to increased rates of premature mortality—particularly among vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly, and individuals with pre-existing health conditions.

Table 1. Impact of Air Pollution on Population Health in Albania

Country	Population-weighted mean (PM2.5)	Attributable deaths (PM2.5)	Population-weighted mean (NO2)	Attributable deaths (NO2)	Population-weighted mean (O3) (O3)	Attributable deaths (O3)
Albania	15.8	3,460	12.4	310	95	680
EU27	11.4	239,000	14.1	48,000	92	70,000
Total	**11.5**	**269,000**	**15.7**	**66,000**	**91**	**81,000**

Source: European Environment Agency

Air pollution from transport is an urgent challenge in Albania, with emissions of nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, and other pollutants contributing to poor air quality in urban centers. Moreover, air pollution has become a serious public health issue in the country. According to a World Bank report, air pollution is responsible for approximately 10% of all deaths in Albania. In 2019 alone, this translated to 2,257 deaths directly linked to exposure to polluted air.[1]

According to the 2022 Environmental Status Report published by the National Environmental Agency (NEA), the increase in the number of vehicles—especially diesel-powered ones—has had a negative impact on air quality, particularly in urban areas like Tirana. For instance, air quality measurements in Tirana show that PM10 and PM2.5 levels frequently exceed the permitted limit values, posing risks to public health. The report also emphasizes the urgent need for measures to improve air quality, including promoting public transport and encouraging the use of low-emission vehicles.

BOX 1

The Ministry of Health and Social Protection conducted an ecological study to analyze the effects of socio-economic factors and air pollution on the prevalence of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) at the population level in Albania.

According to the methodology, data were collected from 61 municipalities across the country to assess the relationship between environmental exposures, living conditions, and socio-economic factors with the prevalence of COPD. The regression analysis concluded that for every 1% increase in PM2.5 concentration in Albanian cities, there was a 32% increase in COPD prevalence.

1 World Bank report, Air pollution causes 10% of deaths in Albania – Social

The study also found a correlation between rising COPD prevalence and increases in urban population and the number of registered vehicles per city. The regression results show that the link between COPD prevalence and PM2.5 levels is strong and consistent with findings from existing literature. This means that cities with higher concentrations of air pollutants also experience higher COPD prevalence. Furthermore, these cities tend to have the highest population densities and the greatest number of vehicles.

Source: Ministry of Health and Social Protection, 2022*. Air Pollution and Socio-Economic Determinants of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease in Albania, Ministry of Health and Social Protection. (Authors: Shehu E., Farruku H., Smaili H.).*

Note: PM10 and PM2.5 are solid particles or liquid droplets suspended in the air and are significant pollutants for both the environment and public health. PM10 refers to particles with a diameter of up to 10 micrometers, including dust, pollen, and mold, primarily affecting the upper respiratory tract. PM2.5, with a smaller diameter (≤ 2.5 micrometers), consists of harmful chemicals that can penetrate deep into the lungs and enter the bloodstream.

The main sources of these particles include activities such as construction, wood burning, motor vehicles, power plants, and industrial operations. PM10 can cause respiratory irritation and asthma, while PM2.5 is more harmful, contributing to cardiovascular and pulmonary diseases, and increasing the risk of lung cancer.

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that annual average concentrations of PM10 not exceed 20 µg/m³ and PM2.5 not exceed 10 µg/m³. In Albania—particularly in cities like Tirana—these thresholds are often exceeded, posing a serious risk to both health and the environment.

Studies show that air pollution levels in Tirana often exceed the limits recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO), with vehicle emissions accounting for a significant share. The health consequences of this pollution are severe, especially for vulnerable populations. Increased cases of respiratory illnesses such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), as well as cardiovascular problems, have been reported in areas with high transport activity.

The economic burden of healthcare costs related to air pollution is also rising, adding further pressure on public health systems.[2]

Table 2. Total Deaths and Deaths per 100,000 Inhabitants Attributable to Exposure to PM2.5, NO_2, and O_3, 2021

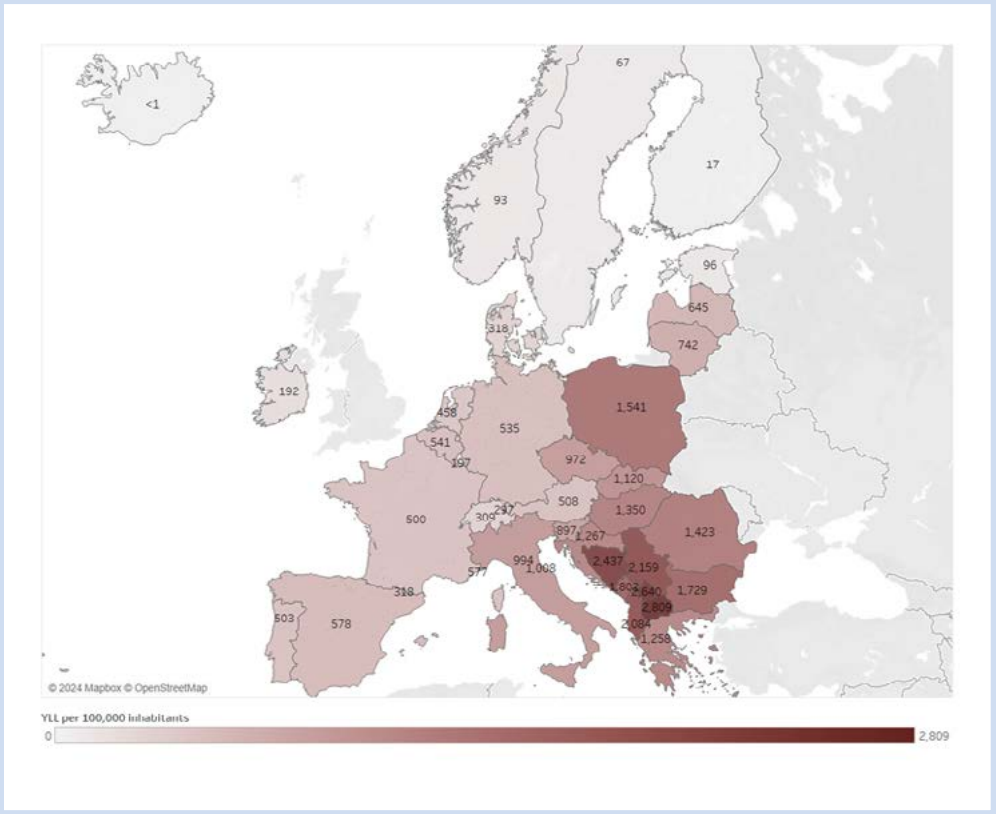
	PM2,5		NO2		O3	
Country	Deaths	Deaths/ 100,000 inhabitants	Deaths	Deaths / 100,000 inhabitants	Deaths	Deaths/ 100,000 inhabitants
Albania	37,000	1,308	3,100	109	3,600	127

***Source:** European Environment Agency*

2 European Environmnet Agency, 2023. Harm to Human Health from Air pollution. Burden of disease 2023 - Table 2 and 3, European Environment Agency, https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/harm-to-human-health-from-air-pollution/table-2

Climate change and transport emissions intersect with gender in complex ways. Women in Albania often face mobility challenges due to social and economic factors, including limited access to affordable and safe transport options. Climate-induced disruptions—such as extreme heat or flooding—further strain transport systems, disproportionately affecting women, particularly those living in rural areas.

Figure 1. Years of Life Lost per 100,000 Inhabitants Over 30 Years (EEA)



Source: *European Environment Agency*[3]

Moreover, women are less likely than men to own private vehicles and are more reliant on public transportation. This dependence makes them more vulnerable to the negative impacts of inadequate transport systems, including delays, safety concerns, and exposure to polluted environments. Addressing these gender-specific challenges is essential for creating an equitable and sustainable transport system.

Albania has begun aligning its transport policies with the European Union's climate goals, including the introduction of incentives for electric vehicles and investments in public transport. However, much work remains to integrate gender considerations into these initiatives. Key issues include: promoting gender-sensitive urban planning to ensure that transport systems meet the needs of all users; supporting the transition to low-emission vehicles through subsidies and infrastructure improvements; and addressing transport-related emissions as a critical step toward Albania's climate and public health goals.

By incorporating gender-sensitive approaches into transport planning, Albania can ensure that the shift toward sustainable mobility is inclusive and equitable.

Climate change has a significant impact on public health and hygiene, contributing to the worsening of various chronic diseases. Asthma, for example, is exacerbated by shifts in pollen seasons,

3 New EU air quality rules: Air pollution still the top environmental health risk to Europeans | Euronews

increased allergenicity, and exposure to air pollutants. Climatic factors such as temperature, humidity, and air circulation have a direct influence on air quality and the presence of pollutants that affect human health.[4] On the other hand, transport plays a significant role in deteriorating health and hygiene in regions affected by climate change, including areas that until recently had not experienced high levels of pollution—such as the Vlora region. According to a WHO study, in 2005, the annual concentrations of fine particulate matter (PM2.5) in all selected cities across the Western Balkans—except Vlora, Albania—exceeded the recommended air quality threshold of 10 $\mu g/m^3$.[5]

Emissions from the transport sector are a major source of air pollution, significantly worsening conditions such as asthma and cardiovascular diseases. The Vlora region, due to seasonal tourism and heavy traffic, is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of transport, as congestion during the tourist season increases both air pollution and urban noise.

By 2031, rising emissions from transport are expected to contribute to an increase in cases of asthma and heat stress, especially among sensitive population groups. An estimated 800 to 1,200 cases of asthma or cardiovascular diseases are projected, with Gjirokastër identified as the most severely affected area.[6] Additionally, the spread of infectious and parasitic diseases is expected to increase due to rising temperatures, further challenging efforts to protect public health in the region.

4 Air Pollution and Human Health: The Case of the Ëestern Balkans, UN Environment, 2019. Online: https://api.developmentaid.org/api/frontend/cms/file/2019/06/Air-Quality-and-Human-Health-Report_Case-of-Ëestern-Balkans_preliminary_results.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

5 Air Pollution and Human Health: The Case of the Ëestern Balkans, UN Environment, 2019. Online: https://api.developmentaid.org/api/frontend/cms/file/2019/06/Air-Quality-and-Human-Health-Report_Case-of-Ëestern-Balkans_preliminary_results.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

6 Ibid.

The Growing Importance of Transport

Transport in Albania is gaining increasing importance as a cornerstone of economic development and social connectivity. However, understanding its growing impact requires an examination of trends in vehicle ownership, driver demographics, and employment in the transport sector.

The number of registered motor vehicles in Albania has steadily increased over the past decade, reflecting rising economic activity and personal mobility demands. The table below presents the number of road vehicles in circulation in Albania, categorized by type.

Table 3. Road Vehicles by Type

Road vehicles by type	TR III-2023	TR IV-2023	TR I-2024	TR II-2024	TR III-2024
Total	848,127	867,765	887,321	914,925	939,152
Cars	682,806	699,337	715,700	738,299	758,690
Mixed transport vehicles	53,121	53,915	54,627	55,767	56,522
Motorcycles	46,855	48,027	49,377	51,890	53,937
Trucks	15,431	15,651	15,878	16,134	16,296
Buses	8,456	8,562	8,640	8,758	8,829
Special transport vehicles	8,281	8,441	8.585	8,832	9,002
Special purpose vehicles	4,453	4,540	4,600	4,674	4,759
Freight trailers	1,856	1,888	1.929	1,972	1,993
Other	26,868	27,404	27.985	28,599	29,124

Source: General Directorate of Road Transport Services. Calculations by INSTAT

According to data from the General Directorate of Road Transport Services and calculations by INSTAT [7] In the third quarter of 2024, the total number of road vehicles with an "active" or "temporarily deregistered" status circulating in the territory of the Republic of Albania reached 939,152 vehicles as of September 2024.

Among road vehicle categories, the highest share of the total is held by "Passenger Cars" (80.8%), followed by "Mixed-Use Vehicles" (6.0%) and "Motorcycles" (5.7%).

According to the same sources, in the third quarter of 2024, the highest number of road vehicles was recorded in Tirana County, accounting for 34.9% of all vehicles in the country, followed by Durrës County with 13.5%. The counties with the lowest number of road vehicles were Gjirokastër (2.2%) and Kukës (2.3%).

"Mercedes-Benz" is the most circulated brand in the country, representing 18.0% of all vehicles, followed by "Volkswagen" with 16.3%, and "Daimler Chrysler" with 8.2%.

7 Institute of Statistics of Albania, 2024. Online: Transporti, Aksidentet dhe Karakteristikat e Mjetet Rrugore | Instat

Despite this growth, Albania continues to face challenges in modernizing its vehicle fleet. A large portion of the fleet consists of older, used vehicles—many of which are high-emission diesel models imported from other European countries. This trend poses both environmental and health risks and highlights the need for policies that promote cleaner and more efficient vehicles.

The gender distribution of driver's license holders and vehicle ownership in Albania reveals significant inequalities.: Data from the Ministry of Interior indicate that approximately **73.9 %** of driver's licenses are held by men, while women account for only **26.1%**. This gap highlights the cultural and socio-economic barriers that limit women's mobility.

According to studies by GIZ Albania, in Tirana, the typical car driver is a middle-aged man. The population group that most frequently reports car use consists primarily of men aged 30 to 45, who are employed and have sufficient income.

In contrast, individuals from other categories—such as women, youth under 30, seniors over 45, and those living in low-income or unemployed households—have fewer opportunities to drive a car. Notably, 26% of women who use public transport report that they could use a car but choose to travel by bus instead.

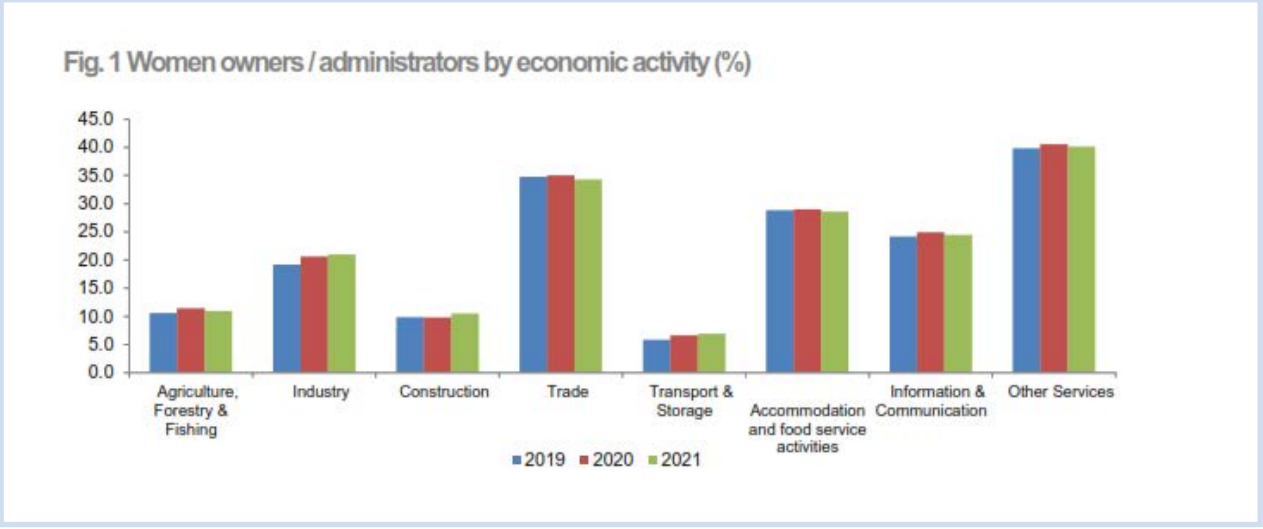
The groups least likely to drive a car include young people under 30, individuals over 45, students, housewives, pensioners, and those struggling to meet basic needs. On the other hand, the groups most likely to drive a car are men and women aged 30–45 who are employed and have sufficient income.

The transport sector in Albania is highly significant—not only for transport users but also for logistics, public transit, and road maintenance—and plays a vital role in the country's economy. However, gender-disaggregated employment data for this sector remain limited.

Women are predominantly represented in administrative and managerial roles within the transport sector, while men dominate technical and operational positions. This gender division is linked to gender stereotypes and social norms that influence career choices. For example, the lack of public transport has been identified as a barrier to women's participation in the labor market, particularly for those living in rural and peripheral areas.

Women are actively contributing to shaping Albania's future, yet they remain underrepresented in the transport sector. Despite overall progress in gender equality, transport remains a male-dominated field, with women significantly underrepresented outside of administrative and managerial roles.

Figure 2. Women Entrepreneurs by Economic Activity (in percentage)



Source: INSTAT, Press release (Professional design)

Transport and Gender

To address the challenges women face as transport users, it is essential to first understand how women travel. Generally, due to gendered roles and learned behaviors, women carry the majority of responsibilities related to caregiving, household tasks, elder care, shopping, and access to education and health services. As a result, women often travel with children, the elderly, people with disabilities, or goods.

This remains true even when both partners in a heterosexual relationship are employed, with women typically bearing the greater share of unpaid domestic and caregiving duties alongside their professional work. Women are more likely to engage in shorter, more complex travel patterns and "trip chaining," which involves using multiple modes of transport and making several stops in a single journey to balance these responsibilities.

[8] Women bear the burden of poorly planned, designed, and maintained transport infrastructure that fails to accommodate their specific needs and travel patterns. Such limitations have significant consequences for women's lives, including their ability to access education and employment, and to meet their daily needs.

Safety concerns are a major issue for women and sexual and gender minorities, particularly in relation to sexual harassment. These concerns influence decisions such as avoiding going out alone, traveling before dark, choosing well-lit areas, avoiding public transport at certain times, and selecting specific routes.

From small towns to large cities, in both developed and developing countries, sexual violence—including unwanted sexual comments, staring, gestures, touching, attempted rape, rape, and even murder—can occur while walking or cycling, on public transport, and in surrounding transit spaces.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has estimated that safety concerns in transport are the greatest barrier to women's participation in the labor market in developing countries, reducing their likelihood of participation by 16.5 percentage points.[9]

Safety aspects in Albania's transport systems remain largely unaddressed. Women frequently experience harassment or feel unsafe during their journeys—particularly when using public transport or traveling through isolated areas. The main challenges include poor lighting and limited surveillance in transport hubs, along with inadequate mechanisms for reporting harassment or violence.

Investing in gender-sensitive urban planning—including improved lighting, monitoring systems, and safe waiting areas—could reduce these risks and encourage more women to use public transportation.

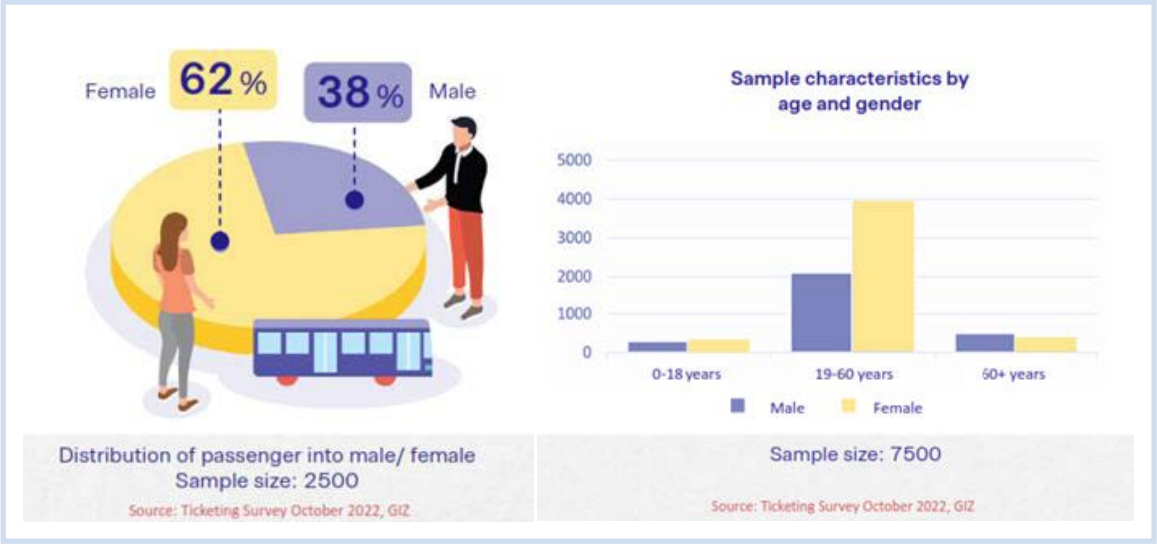
On the other hand, time-use surveys related to transport are nearly nonexistent in Albania. Early findings suggest that Albanian women carry a disproportionate burden of unpaid domestic and caregiving responsibilities. As a result, women often rely on public or shared transportation, which is generally less efficient compared to private vehicles.

8 Gender Mainstreaming in the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme, UNECE, 2021. Online: Gender Mainstreaming in the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme | Policy Commons

9 International Transport Forum, 2018. Women's Safety and Security: A Public Transport Priority, OECD Publishing, Paris. Online: Women's Safety and Security: A Public Transport Priority

According to a GIZ Albania study, over 60% of bus passengers in Tirana are women—particularly female students and working-age women, who rely heavily on the public transport system.[10]

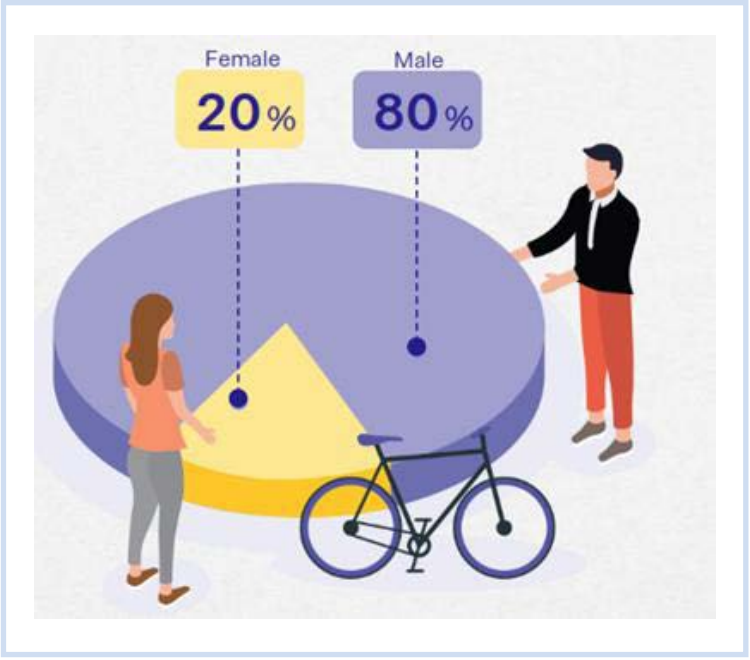
Figure 3. Passenger Distribution



Source: Sustainable Urban Mobility through a Gender Lens in Tirana, GIZ Albania, 202311

Only 20% of cyclists in Tirana are women. More than half of the women interviewed said they do not use bicycles because they feel unsafe, while 25% reported lacking cycling experience. If more women had the opportunity to use bicycles, the total number of cyclists in Tirana would increase—along with the overall share of bicycles in urban transport.

Figure 4. Bicycle Users in Tirana



Source: *Sustainable Urban Mobility through a gender lens in Tirana, GIZ Albania, 2023*

10 Sustainable Urban Mobility through a gender lens in Tirana, GIZ Albania, 2023. Online: https://transformative-mobility.org/ëp-content/uploads/2023/09/2023-09-Gender-Data-Urban-Mobility-Tirana.pdf

11 Ibid.

79% of women report that they walk always or very often, compared to 69% of men. A similar pattern is observed both in the region and across European countries. A 2021 study conducted by UN Women in Kosovo found that women face major challenges in public transport due to safety concerns and harassment. Poor lighting at bus stations and the absence of security personnel were among the main issues identified.[12] In Zagreb, Croatia, a report prepared by the Institute for Mobility Studies (2020) highlighted that women use public transport more than men due to family and caregiving responsibilities. A sense of insecurity during evening hours and difficulties in access for parents with strollers were among the most significant challenges.[13] A study conducted by the organization "WeWorld Onlus" in 2022 revealed that 56% of women in Rome have experienced harassment on public transport. The main issues included overcrowding on buses and trains during peak hours and poor lighting at certain peripheral stations.[14] An analysis by the Polytechnic University of Milan (2021) showed that only 28% of cyclists in Milan are women. The reasons include the lack of safe bike lanes and the risk of accidents.[15]

It is well known that women's travel patterns on public transport often differ significantly from those of men, reflecting different needs, responsibilities, and priorities. While men may prioritize longer commutes to work, women are more likely to take shorter trips related to errands, caregiving, and other daily activities in addition to their work commute. These trips frequently involve multiple stops at essential locations. However, public transport planning does not always adequately address these distinct travel patterns, potentially leading to inequalities in service provision[16]. According to the 2023 Gender Equality Index by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE),[17] Women are more likely to experience limited access to sustainable transport options, restricting their opportunities to engage in paid employment and to seek a better work-life balance. Limited access to transport or to specific modes of transport can hinder access to employment, education, and essential services, thereby reinforcing gender gaps in poverty and social exclusion.

Conclusions

The transport sector has a significant impact on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and air pollution in Albania. Despite efforts to improve infrastructure, the increasing number of vehicles—primarily powered by diesel and gasoline—has led to higher levels of air pollution and a decline in quality of life. CO_2 emissions and pollution from transport have direct consequences for public health and the environment.

Climate change, combined with rising transport-related pollution, contributes to the worsening of respiratory illnesses and cardiovascular conditions. Most of this pollution is concentrated in urban

12 UN Women Kosovo, 2021. Gender-Responsive Urban Planning and Mobility in Kosovo.

13 Institute of Mobility Studies, Zagreb, 2020. Women and Urban Mobility: Challenges in Public Transport.

14 WeWorld Onlus, 2022. Safety and Accessibility for Women in Public Transport. Report focused on safety problems for women in Rome. Online: WeWorld Onlus

15 Politecnico di Milano, 2021. Cycling Safety and Gender Dynamics in Milan.

16 Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces, UN Women, 2023. Online: https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Hoë%20Ëe%20Ëork/flagship%20programmes/UN-Ëomen-Flagship-programme-Safe-cities-public-spaces-en.pdf

17 Gender Best Practices in Public Transport, EIB & UITP, 2024. Online: https://ëëë.eib.org/attachments/documents/explore-gender-best-practices-in-public-transport.pdf

centers such as Tirana, where levels of fine particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10) frequently exceed permitted limits, resulting in serious health risks. Diseases such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) are directly linked to these high pollution levels.

Climate change and the impacts of transport are strongly influenced by gender factors. Women, who often rely more heavily on public transport, are more vulnerable to the negative effects of inadequate transport systems. This includes exposure to air pollution and safety concerns during travel, underscoring the need for transport policies to incorporate a more gender-sensitive approach.

Albania has begun taking steps to address transport and pollution-related issues, including promoting the use of electric vehicles and investing in public transport. However, greater commitment is needed to improve transport infrastructure and address its impacts on public health and the environment. Progress in this area will support the achievement of climate goals and enhance quality of life.

The growing number of road vehicles has contributed to increased pollution and declining air quality, with direct consequences for public health—particularly for vulnerable populations such as children and the elderly. This trend is driving a rise in respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses and demands urgent measures to control emissions and promote more sustainable transport options.

Regions such as Vlora and Gjirokastër are particularly affected by the impacts of transport and climate change, including air pollution and urban noise. The growth of tourism and heavy traffic has exacerbated air quality issues, creating environmental and health challenges that require targeted strategies to mitigate impacts in these areas.

Recommendations

To address the negative impacts of transport and climate change, Albania should take action to improve air quality, support public transport and the use of low-emission vehicles, and promote sustainable transport policies that advance gender equality.

Improvement of Public Transport Infrastructure:

- Investing in sustainable public transport—such as electric buses and trains—will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution.
- Developing an integrated transport system that connects cities and rural areas with affordable and efficient options for all users, especially women and vulnerable groups.
- Aligning transport policies with EU objectives to reduce pollution and support the adoption of low-emission vehicles.

Promotion of Electric and Green Vehicles:

- Subsidizing and providing fiscal incentives for the purchase of electric and hybrid vehicles, offering a more sustainable and less polluting alternative.
- Developing a widespread network of charging stations for electric vehicles, supporting citizens' transition to cleaner and more sustainable transport options.
- Adapting transport policies to support the replacement of old vehicle fleets with low-emission vehicles, in order to reduce air pollution and CO_2 emissions.

Raising Public Awareness and Education:

- Organizing educational campaigns for citizens on the impact of air pollution and transport on public health, including the specific risks faced by women, children, and the elderly.
- Raising awareness about the use of sustainable transport modes and public transportation, offering incentives for public transport users and those who travel by bicycle or on foot.
- Development of Infrastructure for Sustainable Mobility:
- Creating infrastructure for bicycles and safe pedestrian pathways to promote non-motorized mobility and reduce pollution.
- Adapting urban planning to encourage the use of public transport and improve accessibility for all users, especially in rural and peripheral areas.

Improvement of Traffic Management and Reduction of Congestion

- Implementing modern traffic management systems that optimize traffic flow and reduce congestion and air pollution.
- Promoting traffic segregation systems and expanding mobility lanes for public transport, while creating conditions for easier and faster transportation.

Gender Policies in Transport Planning

- Integrating a gender-sensitive approach into transport policy and planning to ensure that women and vulnerable groups have equal and safe mobility opportunities.
- Enabling women's access to sustainable transport options by addressing barriers related to cost and safety in public transportation.

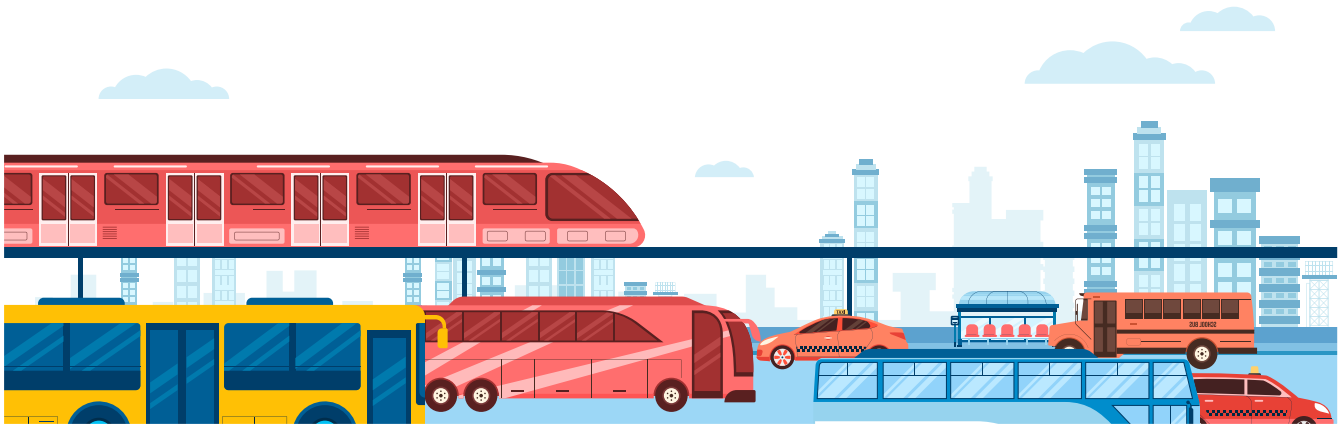
Support for the Development of Regions Affected by Climate Change

- Developing policies that support regions like Vlora, where transport impacts are more severe, by creating opportunities to reduce pollution through investments in sustainable transport and environmental policies.
- Increasing support for infrastructure improvements in rural and peripheral areas to enhance accessibility and reduce the negative impact of air pollution and noise.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Pollution and Public Health

- Improving air quality monitoring systems in major cities and affected areas to provide accurate and timely information on pollution levels.
- Implementing health impact assessment programs related to air pollution and transport to address potential effects on respiratory illnesses and other health conditions.

Through these measures, Albania can reduce the impact of transport on climate change and improve air quality, ensuring a healthier environment for its citizens while supporting environmental and public health sustainability for the future.

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CHAPTER II

GENDER RESPONSIVENESS OF POLICIES AND BUDGETS

THE BALKAN GREEN AGENDA AND TRANSPORT: RELEVANCE TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)

The Balkan Green Agenda[18] is an ambitious strategy aiming to align the region with the European Green Deal[19] and to accelerate the transition toward sustainable development. It focuses on addressing immediate environmental challenges through various mechanisms such as carbon emission reduction, biodiversity protection, and the sustainable use of natural resources. This agenda is not only about environmental protection but also about fostering inclusive economic growth and regional stability.

Transport is identified as a key pillar in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure). The transport sector plays a significant role in carbon emissions and environmental degradation, making it essential to align transport systems with sustainable practices in order to mitigate the ongoing environmental crisis.

The Balkan Green Agenda, as part of the European Green Deal, aligns with the SDGs by emphasizing sustainable transport as a cornerstone of both economic and environmental transformation.

18 Ballkani i bashkuar për ajër të pastër. Online: https://ëëë.balkanfund.org/podatci/uploads/Green_Agenda_ALB.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

19 Green European Foundation. Online https://gef.eu/ëp-content/uploads/2022/04/Akademia-e-Gjelber.-Report_AL.pdf

In Albania, the agenda calls for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, promoting greener infrastructure, and advancing environmentally friendly mobility solutions.

In addition to the SDGs mentioned above, the Balkan Green Agenda is also linked to the following SDGs:

- **SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being):** Reducing air pollution through sustainable transport contributes to improved public health.
- **SDG 5 (Gender Equality):** Gender-responsive transport policies can empower women by enhancing access to education, employment, and essential services.
- **SDG 13 (Climate Action)**[20]: Green transport initiatives contribute to the reduction of emissions and enhance climate resilience.

Within the Green Agenda, several specific initiatives have been outlined, though it remains unclear to what extent Albania has taken concrete steps to implement them:

Decarbonization of Transport: This involves shifting from fossil fuel-based transport to low-carbon alternatives such as electric vehicles (EVs) and biofuels. The primary goal is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector, which significantly contributes to climate change. This transition to cleaner technologies also aligns with SDG 13 (Climate Action), supporting the global movement toward zero emissions.

Promotion of Sustainable Urban Mobility: The Green Agenda emphasizes the importance of public transport systems, pedestrian-friendly urban designs, and cycling-supportive infrastructure. Investments in public transport are essential to address urban challenges such as congestion, poor air quality, and limited access to sustainable mobility. This approach directly contributes to SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities)[21], by improving **accessibility and urban livability**.

Improving Regional Connectivity and Integration: By improving **cross-border infrastructure**—particularly *railway systems*—the Green Agenda aims to **create efficient and sustainable trade routes and foster regional economic integration**. This effort aligns with **SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure)**[22], by promoting **economic growth** and **regional cooperation** through sustainable transport solutions.

In addition to these strategic actions, the Green Agenda in the Balkans—and in Albania in particular—faces several significant challenges. Some of these challenges include:

- **Funding Gaps:** Transitioning to sustainable transport requires substantial investment in infrastructure, EV charging networks, and the integration of renewable energy sources. However, there is a significant lack of funding to meet these needs.
- **Policy Harmonization:** Aligning national policies with regional and EU objectives remains a complex challenge. Countries in the region face difficulties in unifying standards and implementing best practices, particularly in the absence of consistent technical regulations.
- **Technological Barriers:** Limited access to advanced technologies and expertise hinders the widespread adoption of innovative solutions that are essential for a green transition.
- **Low Public Awareness:** A general lack of awareness regarding the environmental and economic benefits of sustainable transport options slows down the necessary shifts in consumer behavior.

20 https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal13

21 https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal11

22 https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal9

In the case of Albania, which is part of the Western Balkans, several efforts have been undertaken to improve the sustainability of the transport sector. Key initiatives include:

- **Railway Development:** Projects such as the rehabilitation of the Tirana–Durrës railway line and its connection to the Blue Corridor aim to increase the use of rail transport as a cleaner alternative.
- **Electrification of Transport:** Albania is increasingly supporting the use of electric vehicles (EVs), with initiatives to develop charging stations and provide incentives to promote EV adoption.
- **Improvement of Public Transport:** Investments in bus and tram networks in major cities such as Tirana and Durrës are a priority to enhance the quality of public transport and provide more sustainable mobility options.

Albania and the wider Western Balkans region face challenges such as:

- **Outdated Infrastructure:** Much of the existing infrastructure is old and inadequate to support a sustainable transition to more efficient transport systems.
- **Dependence on Road Transport:** The region is heavily reliant on road transport, which contributes to high levels of pollution and traffic congestion.

However, there are numerous opportunities for growth, including:

- **EU Funding:** The region can leverage European Union funds—particularly through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA)—to invest in green transport infrastructure.
- **Private Sector Engagement:** The private sector can play a key role in financing and implementing sustainable transport projects, especially through Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs).
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Increasing public awareness of the environmental and economic benefits of sustainable transport can help shift consumer behavior and support the transition to cleaner mobility options.

Albania's Transport Policy

Transport Policies and Strategies in Albania: Main Development Direction In Albania, transport is a strategic sector for economic and social development, with clear objectives to improve infrastructure, promote sustainable transport, and foster regional integration. National transport policies and strategies have been aligned with the objectives of the European Union, including the Green Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The main development direction in Albania's transport sector includes:

- **Modernization and expansion of infrastructure:** Construction and rehabilitation of national roads, railway connections, seaports, and airports to improve accessibility and efficiency.
- **Sustainable Transport:** Reducing greenhouse gas emissions through the promotion of public transport, electrification, and the integration of renewable energy sources. This aspect aligns with SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy)[23] and SDG 13 (Climate Action).

23 https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/energy/

- **Regional Integration:** Connecting Albania to the Western Balkans transport corridors and the Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T). This objective supports SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).
- Digitalization of Transport Systems: Utilizing advanced technologies for smart traffic management and improved transport services, contributing to the achievement of SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure).
- Transport priorities in Albania are outlined in strategic documents such as:
- **National Action Plan for the Green Agenda:** Its main goal is the decarbonization of the transport sector, supporting SDG 13 (Climate Action).
- Transport Infrastructure Master Plan: Prioritizes investments in road networks, railways, and seaports.
- **National Energy and Climate Plan (2020–2030):** Foresees a shift toward clean energy in transport and improved energy efficiency, contributing to SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) and SDG 13 (Climate Action).

Analysis of Transport Policies in Albania Using the Traffic Light Method

To analyze gender integration in transport policies and legislation in Albania using the traffic light method, we assessed the measures taken to incorporate a gender perspective into the development of transport policies and infrastructure. This included an analysis of the legal and policy framework, as well as semi-structured interviews with officials from the Ministry of Energy and Transport and the Ministry of Finance to evaluate actions taken regarding safety and accessibility in transport, as well as efforts to eliminate gender stereotypes.

Table 4. Analyzing Gender Integration in Transport Policies and Legislation in Albania Using the Traffic Light Method

Aspect	Traffic Light Rating	Reason
Inclusion of Gender Perspective in Infrastructure Planning	Yellow	Transport policies do not sufficiently emphasize the integration of a gender perspective, but there is room for improvement in safety and equal opportunities
Safety in Transport and Prevention of Gender-Based Violence	Yellow	Some measures exist to ensure women's safety, but more commitment is needed to create a secure environment, including specific measures for women.
Access to Transport Opportunities for Women and Men	Yellow	There is not enough inclusion of women in decision-making and the management of transport policies. There is room for improvement in opportunities for women.

Aspect	Traffic Light Rating	Reason
Inclusion of Women in Transport Decision-Making	Yellow	Women's participation in decision-making and the management of transport policies is limited. There is significant potential for improvement.
Adaptation of Transport Services to Women's Needs	Yellow	Some initiatives are oriented toward services suitable for women, such as public bus transport and opportunities for greater safety.
Regional Connectivity and the Impact of Transport Policies on Women	Yellow	Policies related to international connections and regional corridors do not include many aspects for women. There is room for improvement in cross-border travel.
Strategies for Sustainable Urban Mobility	Red	There is a general sense of gender inclusion in sustainable urban transport strategies, but there are still many opportunities to address women's needs.

This table uses the traffic light colors to assess the level of gender integration in the transport sector, clearly highlighting where progress has been made and where there is still room for improvement.

Environmental Policies Related to Transport

In the context of Albania's integration into the EU, transport is a key sector for both economic and ecological development. The EU has a broad set of regulations covering technical standards, safety, state aid, market liberalization, and public services for road, rail, inland waterways, multimodal transport, aviation, and maritime transport.

National Transport Strategy and Action Planning
Albania has been working to improve its transport policies to align with EU standards. However, the National Transport Strategy and Action Plan for the 2021–2025 period has not yet been adopted. In 2023, guidelines were approved for public passenger transport services by road and rail, and efforts were made to fully implement the Directive on Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) to promote multimodality and ensure harmonization with EU legislation.

Participation in the Transport Community
Albania has actively participated in the work of the Transport Community, but the implementation of the five action plans under the Transport Community Treaty remains limited. This includes support for developing a sustainable transport system and smart mobility in the Western Balkans. However, significant efforts are still needed to improve administrative capacities and infrastructure.

Monitoring Centers and Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS)
In 2024, the construction of the traffic monitoring center and the installation of ITS (Intelligent Transport Systems) across 200 km of the main road network are expected to be completed. However, for urban agglomerations, Albania needs to develop sustainable mobility plans that meet environmental and social standards, following EU best practices.

Efforts to Align Transport Legislation

In road transport, Albania still needs to advance work on electronic tolling systems, road charges, and social and market rules. Road safety remains a major concern, as the country has a number of traffic fatalities above the EU average.

Rail and Maritime Transport
Albania has made progress in both rail and maritime transport. Two secondary acts on railway safety and the licensing of railway undertakings have been adopted, and a railway safety authority has been established. In maritime transport, Albania has also made notable improvements to its fleet and has moved from the blacklist to the grey list of the Paris Memorandum.

Air Transport and Multimodality
For air transport, Albania has conducted an assessment mission to evaluate its readiness for accession to the next phase of the European Common Aviation Area (ECAA) Agreement. In terms of multimodal transport, however, Albania has not yet made progress in aligning with the relevant EU directive, and national legislation remains only partially harmonized.

ALBANIA'S PROGRESS AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS (2024)

In the latest report from the European Commission, it is noted that Albania has made some progress in the field of transport and integration with the Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T).

The EU highlights several concerns regarding Albania's transport sector, emphasizing the need for stronger alignment with EU standards across various areas. Key issues include:

1. **General Transport Policy:** The national transport strategy for the 2021–2025 period has not yet been adopted. Although some guidelines for public passenger transport by road and rail were approved in December 2023, greater progress is needed in implementing Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS), advancing multimodal transport, and aligning with the Transport Community action plans.
2. **Administrative Capacity:** Administrative capacity—particularly in the railway sector—needs to be strengthened. Despite the existence of a five-year action plan to improve infrastructure planning and implementation in rail transport, financial constraints have resulted in insufficient funding for infrastructure maintenance.
3. **Road Transport:** Albania needs to further align with EU rules on electronic road tolling systems, the implementation of road charges, and social and market regulations in road transport. Road safety remains a major concern, with a fatality rate higher than the EU average. Moreover, Albania must improve inter-institutional coordination and establish a dedicated road traffic safety agency.
4. **Rail Transport:** Although progress has been made with laws on safety and the licensing of railway operators, full operability of the rail network and the separation of infrastructure management from operations have not yet been achieved. Financial constraints and limited human resources continue to hinder progress toward full compliance with EU rail safety and interoperability regulations.

5. **Maritime Transport:** Albania has made progress in improving the quality of its flagged fleet and has been removed from the blacklist for poor flag performance. However, full alignment with EU vessel traffic monitoring systems is still pending.
6. **Aviation:** While Albania's Civil Aviation Authority has introduced a new structure aimed at improving operations, oversight remains external, and there is a need to further strengthen institutional capacity.
7. **Multimodal Transport:** Albania has not yet aligned with the EU directive on multimodal transport, and progress on passenger rights remains slow—although passenger rights in aviation are largely in line with EU legislation.

Overall, the EU emphasizes the need for greater efforts to align Albania's transport systems with EU standards, to strengthen infrastructure maintenance, improve administrative capacity, and reinforce safety measures across all modes of transport.

Institutional Framework for Transport

The Institutional Framework for Transport in Albania includes several bodies and structures responsible for the development, regulation, and oversight of various transport sectors. This includes:

1. **Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (MIE):** The main institution responsible for transport policies, strategies, and coordination among other institutions. MIE develops and approves strategies and action plans for the transport sector.
2. **Ministry of Tourism and Environment:** Integrates transport strategies with environmental objectives.
3. **Ministry of Finance: Supports budgeting and financial oversight.**
4. **Civil Aviation Authority (CAA):** Responsible for the supervision and regulation of the civil aviation sector, including flight safety and licensing standards for air carriers.
5. **Albanian Road Authority (ARRSH):** Responsible for the management and maintenance of national roads, the development of road infrastructure, and ensuring compliance with road safety standards.
6. **Albanian Railway Company (Hekurudha Shqiptare):** Manages the railway network, including construction, maintenance, and operations, as well as implementation of safety regulations and efficiency in rail transport.
7. **Transport Committee:** This body coordinates transport activities and policies among various institutions and oversees the implementation of international agreements, such as the Transport Community.
8. **Transport Safety Agency:** Regulates and oversees safety in road, rail, and maritime transport, including setting safety standards and enforcing relevant laws and regulations.

9. **Local Authorities:** At the local level, municipalities are responsible for urban infrastructure and transport development, implementing sustainable mobility plans, and ensuring the enforcement of transport regulations for citizens.

This decentralized institutional structure aims to ensure the efficient and safe management of transport systems in Albania, while striving for alignment with European Union standards and regulations.

Albania's national transport framework is guided by strategic documents such as the National Transport Plan and sectoral policies developed by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy.

KEY PRIORITIES:

- Development of sustainable and efficient transport systems, including urban public transport and rural connectivity.
- Promotion of digitalization in logistics and traffic management to reduce environmental impacts.
- Integration into the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T).
- Commitment to emission reductions in line with the Balkan Green Agenda and EU standards.

Relevant Policies:

- **National Energy and Climate Plan:** Addresses the role of transport in achieving energy efficiency and emissions reduction.
- **National Sustainable Development Strategy:** Emphasizes investments in environmentally sustainable transport solutions.
- **Gender Action Plans:** Include provisions for transport, but remain underdeveloped in terms of specific, actionable gender-sensitive measures.

TRANSPORT GOVERNANCE AT THE CENTRAL LEVEL

Priority Areas:

- Improvement of urban and interurban public transport.
- Infrastructure upgrades, including road safety measures and modernization of rail networks.
- Gender-sensitive policies to promote equal access to transport.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT (LSG) AND TRANSPORT PROVISION

Under the Law on Local Self-Government, municipalities are mandated to manage urban transport, including:

- Regulation of public transport services.
- Maintenance of roads and local infrastructure.
- Licensing private operators and overseeing vehicle standards.

Challenges:

- Insufficient budget allocations at the local level for gender-related transport initiatives.
- Limited municipal capacity to implement sustainable transport solutions or address gender-responsive mobility needs.

GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING IN TRANSPORT

Despite Albania's commitments to gender equality under the Law on Gender Equality, gender-responsive budgeting in the transport sector remains underdeveloped. Aligning fiscal policies with the SDGs and addressing the specific mobility needs of women requires dedicated financial resources and accountability mechanisms.

Conclusions

The Balkan Green Agenda is an ambitious strategy aimed at aligning the region with the European Green Deal and accelerating sustainable development. Transport plays a critical role in this process, directly tied to several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure). Reducing carbon emissions through transport electrification and promoting sustainable urban mobility are key priorities. These efforts—which include electrification, railway rehabilitation, and the promotion of public transport—not only benefit the environment but also enhance economic and social access across the region.

However, challenges such as funding shortages, policy harmonization, and low public awareness remain major obstacles to successful implementation.

In Albania, steps toward sustainable transport include the development of railway projects like the Tirana–Durrës line and the promotion of electric vehicles through incentives and investments in charging infrastructure. National policies have been aligned with European standards to reduce pollution, improve infrastructure, and increase efficiency. Still, heavy dependence on road transport and outdated infrastructure call for substantial investment and better institutional coordination.

With support from EU funds and private sector engagement, Albania has the potential to accelerate its transition toward a greener transport system—contributing meaningfully to the achievement of the SDGs and deeper regional integration.

Rekomandime për Përshpejtimin e Agjendës së Gjelbër në Sektorin e Transportit

Improving Transport Infrastructure

- High priority should be given to the rehabilitation and electrification of existing railway lines, including the completion of strategic projects such as the Tirana–Rinas–Durrës line.
- Expansion of urban public transport networks and connections with rural areas to offer sustainable alternatives to private transport.

Promotion of Sustainable Vehicles

- Providing greater incentives for the purchase of electric and hybrid vehicles, including tax reductions and subsidies.
- Investing in the expansion of charging networks across the country, including the installation of stations in rural areas and along main roads.

Utilizing Funding and Strategic Partnerships

- Increased engagement with EU funds and international programs for the development of sustainable transport.
- Collaboration with the private sector to build partnerships that facilitate investment in infrastructure and green technologies.

Policy Harmonization and Public Awareness

- Creation of a clear and harmonized transport policy framework, ensuring alignment with EU standards.
- Awareness campaigns promoting the advantages of sustainable transport and reducing private car use.

Use of Advanced Technologies and Data

- Implementation of AI-based transport management systems to optimize traffic and reduce energy consumption.
- Use of data to identify critical locations for infrastructure interventions and improvements in public access.

Support for Public-Private Partnerships and Financing

- Involvement of the private sector in financing sustainable transport projects through public-private partnerships (PPPs).
- Maximizing the use of EU and international institutional funds for the development of green transport and sustainable infrastructure.

Integration of Gender and Social Sensitivity in Transport

- Development of gender-sensitive projects, including specific gender indicators in transport policies and monitoring.

- Increasing funding for sustainable and accessible local transport for marginalized groups.
- Capacity building within local governance to integrate gender approaches and sustainability into transport planning.

Monitoring, Reporting, and Awareness-Raising

- Establishment of monitoring mechanisms for the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, improvement of energy efficiency, and alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Development of educational and awareness-raising campaigns for the public on the benefits of sustainable transport, to reduce private car use.

CHAPTER III

GENDER PATTERNS AND THE GENDER DIMENSION OF TRANSPORT BEHAVIORS IN ALBANIA

OWNERSHIP OF TRANSPORT VEHICLES

This section analyzes the transport preferences of men and women by examining their access to different types of transport, including cars, regular bicycles, electric bicycles, and electric scooters.

According to the results illustrated in Graph 1, most respondents reported owning a car, which remains one of the most preferred transport options—especially among men. The data show that 61.4% of men own a car, compared to only 37.5% of women. A small percentage (1.1%) of respondents chose not to answer.

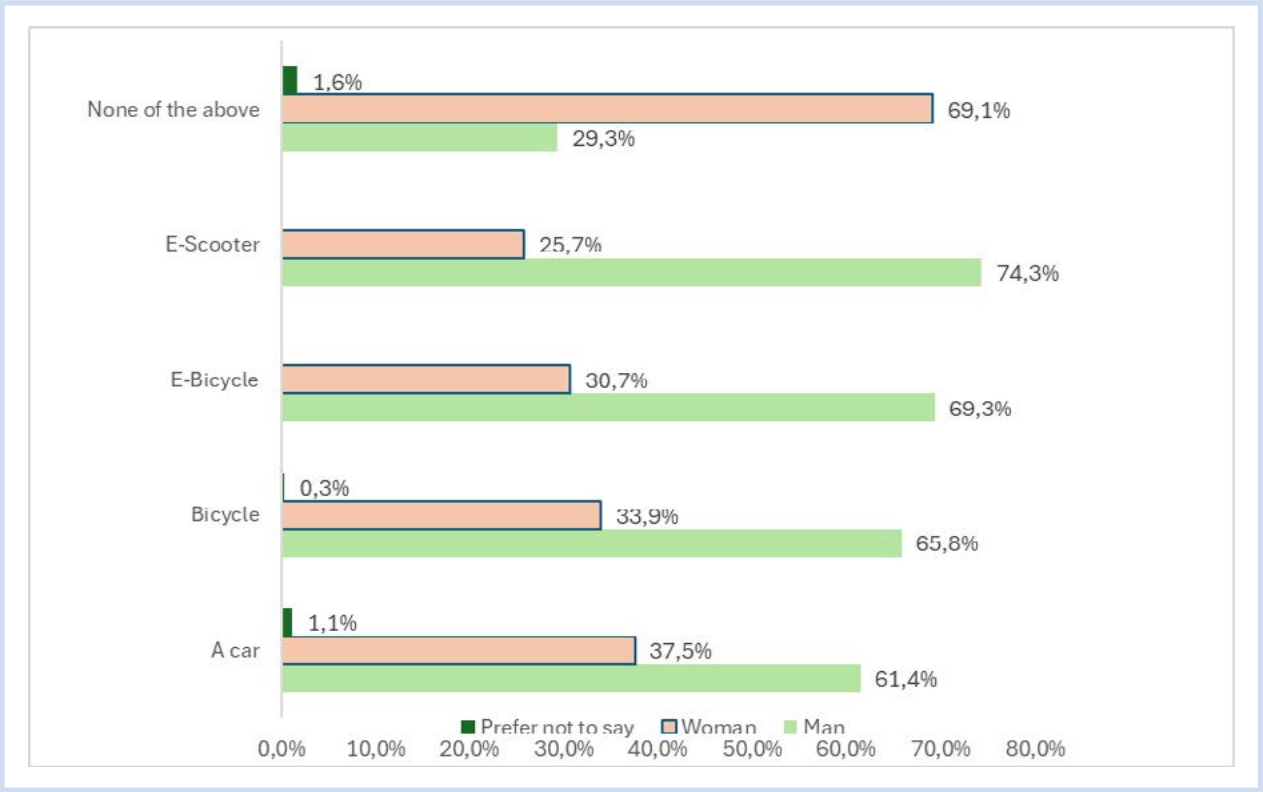
Regarding bicycle ownership, 65.8% of men use regular bicycles, compared to only 33.9% of women. Just 0.3% of participants declined to answer. The use of electric bicycles is also more common among men: 69.3% of male respondents use electric bikes, while only 30.7% of women reported doing so.

Electric scooters have recently become a popular mode of transport, despite their associated safety concerns. The study found that among all listed transport modes, electric scooters are the most male-dominated: 74.3% of male respondents use them, compared to only 25.7% of female respondents.

Men's higher usage of electric scooters may be linked to their practicality and speed for short distances, as well as the appeal of new technology, which may be more attractive to men than women. For women, challenges such as lack of safe infrastructure and comfort may influence their lower use of this transport option.

An interesting finding of the study is that a large percentage of women (69.1%) did not choose any of the listed options, compared to only 29.3% of men. A small percentage (1.6%) preferred not to answer. This suggests that women may favor other forms of transport—such as greater use of public transportation, walking, or unlisted modes. It may also reflect barriers related to access, or differing perceptions around safety and comfort.

Graph 1. Do you own any of the following means of transport... By gender (in percentage)



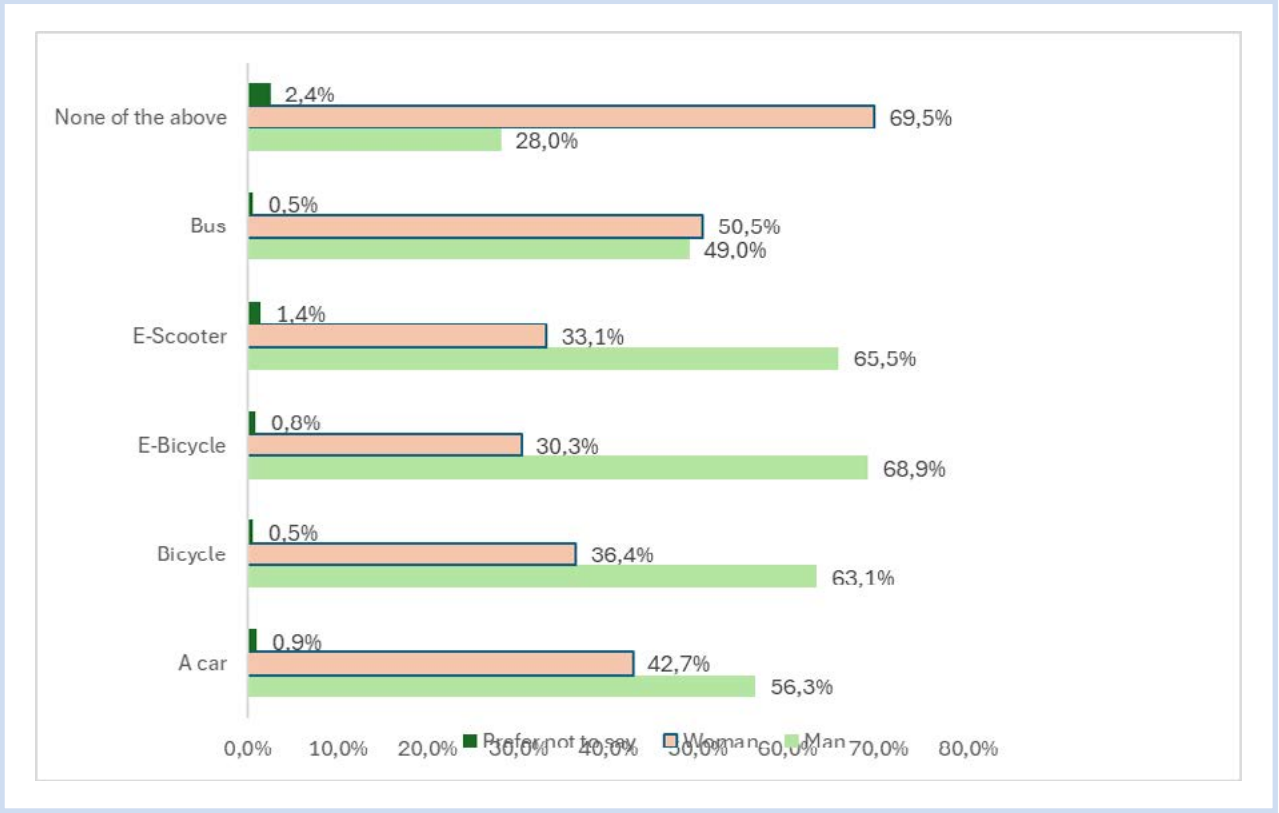
Access to Means of Transport

From the analysis of Graph 2, "Access to Means of Transport by Gender," a clear disparity is observed between men and women in terms of access to transport modes. Women represent the overwhelming majority (69.5%) of those who have no access to any of the listed means of transport, while men make up only 28.0% of this category.

Bus usage is almost evenly distributed between women (50.5%) and men (49.0%), indicating a similar pattern of access to public transportation. On the other hand, men dominate access to personal transport modes such as electric scooters (65.5% vs. 33.1% for women), electric bicycles (68.9% vs. 30.3%), and regular bicycles (63.1% vs. 36.4%). A similar trend is observed with cars, where men represent the majority (56.3%), compared to 42.7% for women.

Overall, men have significantly greater access to personal transportation, while women face greater limitations, particularly in the use of individual transport means. The bus remains widely used by both genders, but women show a notably higher percentage of those lacking access to any transport option.

Graph 2. Access to Means of Transport, by Gender (in percentage)



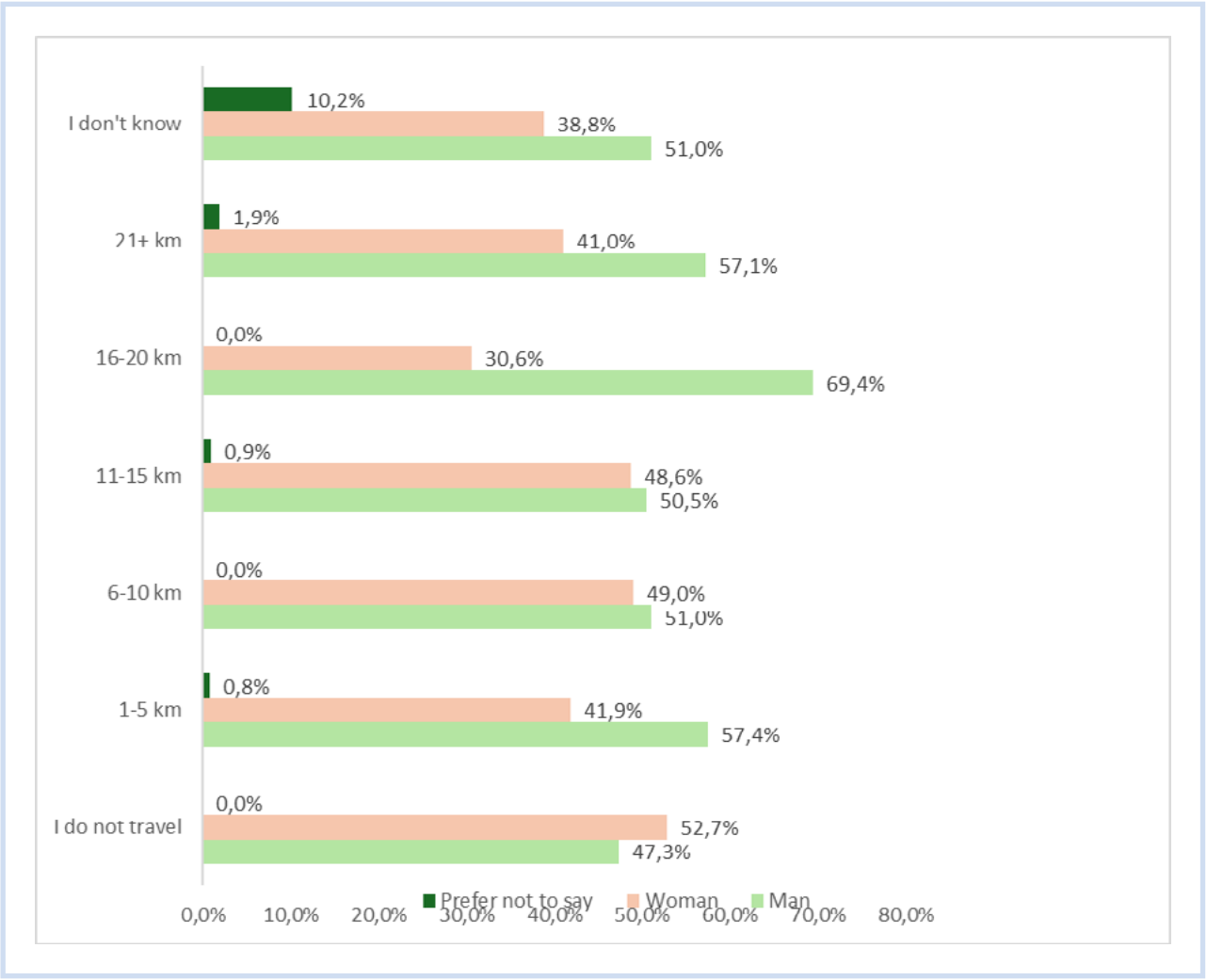
Daily Travel Distance for Work or School

From the analysis of Graph 3 on travel distance for work or school by gender, several key trends emerge. In the category "I do not travel," women make up 52.7% compared to 47.3% men, indicating a relatively balanced distribution. For short distances of 1–5 km, men (57.4%) report a higher percentage than women (41.9%), while for distances of 6–10 km, the percentages are nearly equal, with 51.0% men and 49.0% women.

In the 11–15 km category, men (50.5%) travel slightly more than women (48.6%). For distances between 16–20 km, men represent a significant majority (69.4%) compared to women (30.6%). For trips over 21 km, men again lead with 57.1% versus 41.0% for women.

A notable portion of both women (38.8%) and men (51.0%) state they do not know the exact distance they travel. This suggests that men tend to make longer commutes to work or school, while women are more likely to travel shorter distances or not travel at all.

Graph 3. Daily Travel Distance for Work or School by Gender (in percentage)



Average Travel Time

From the analysis of Graph 4 on average travel time by gender, several notable differences emerge. For shorter trips—under 30 minutes—men represent the majority (53.4%) compared to women (45.0%), while a small portion (1.6%) chose not to answer.

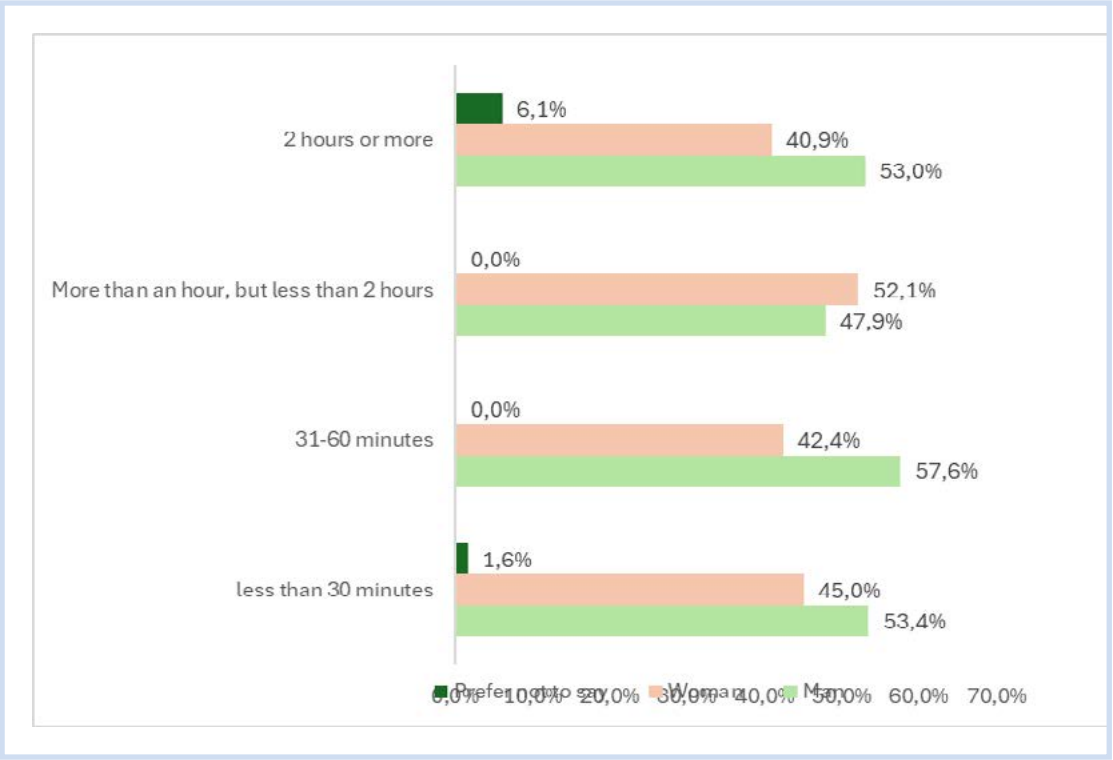
For trips lasting 31–60 minutes, men again have a higher share (57.6%) than women (42.4%), indicating a slight tendency for men to travel longer within this range.

When the travel time exceeds one hour but is less than two, women make up the majority (52.1%), while men are slightly less represented (47.9%).

For trips lasting two hours or more, men once again account for the majority (53.0%) compared to women (40.9%), with 6.1% of respondents opting not to answer.

Overall, men are more likely to take shorter trips, while women are more represented among those whose journeys last over an hour.

Graph 4. Average Travel Time by Gender (in percentage)



Affordability of Transport Costs

Study data show that the ability to afford transport varies by gender and region, across several transport modes such as bus, bicycle, car, taxi, and electric scooters.

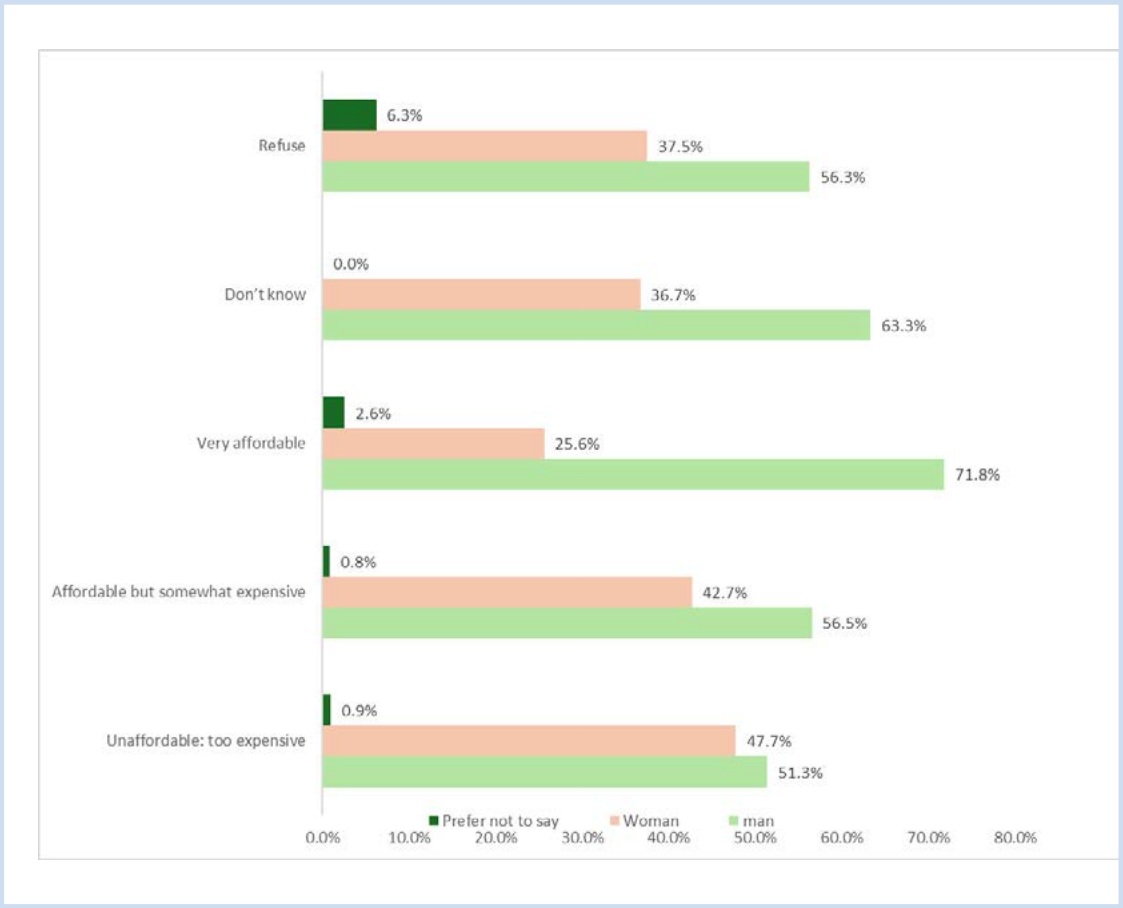
Bus: 40.8% of respondents consider bus transport to be very affordable, while 13.7% find it unaffordable due to the price. Urban residents are more likely to consider bus transport affordable compared to rural residents, where 35.2% rate it as unaffordable.

Bicycle and Skateboard: 34.9% of participants find bicycles and skateboards very affordable, while 13.8% consider them expensive. Urban residents view these options more favorably (35.8%), while rural residents are more likely to perceive them as costly (38.7%).

Car: Car transport is considered unaffordable by 36.1% of participants, while 50.8% find it affordable but somewhat expensive. Perceptions between women and men are similar, with slight differences. Rural residents are more likely to find car transport affordable but costly (55.4%).

Taxi: 57.7% of participants view taxis as unaffordable due to high prices, while only 3.5% see them as very affordable. Women are more likely to consider taxis expensive than men (61.7% vs. 54.5%). Regionally, there are minor differences between urban and rural residents—taxis are widely perceived as expensive by both groups, though rural residents are slightly more inclined to consider them affordable.

Graph 5. Taxi Affordability by Gender (in percentage)

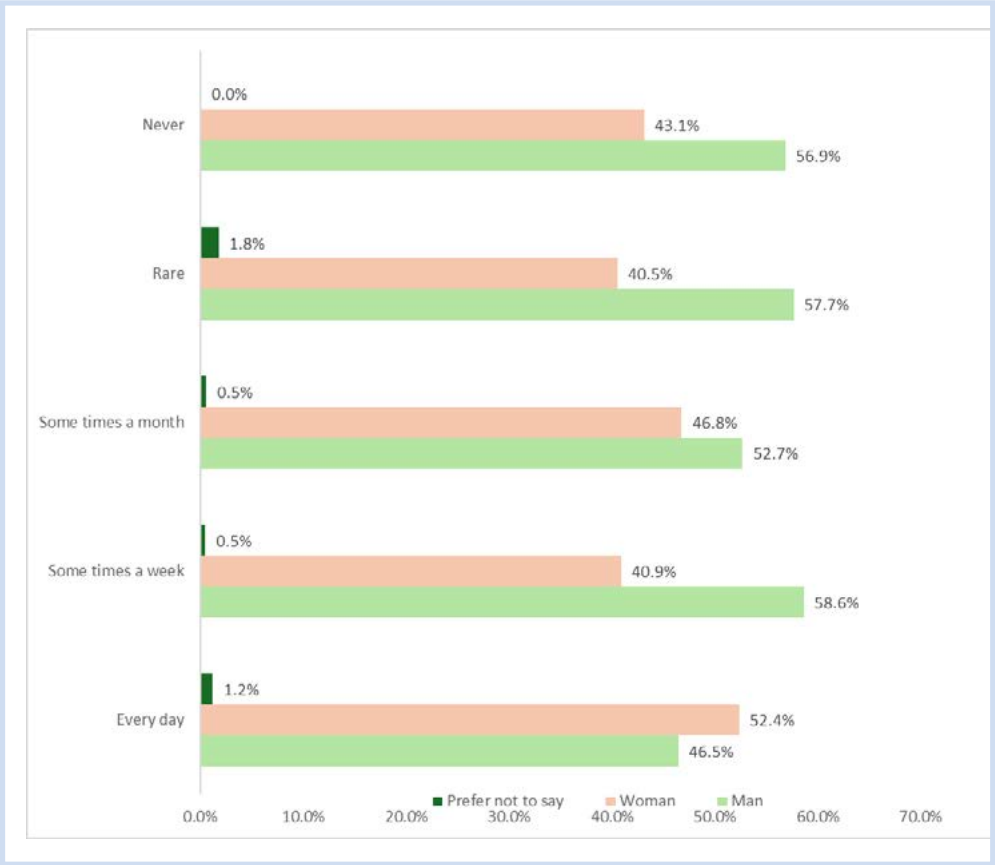


Electric Scooter: 20.6% of respondents consider electric scooters unaffordable, while the majority (38.1%) see them as affordable but somewhat expensive. Women have a slightly more negative perception of this mode of transport compared to men, with 20.2% of women considering it unaffordable versus 19.8% of men.

Frequency of Use of Means of Transport

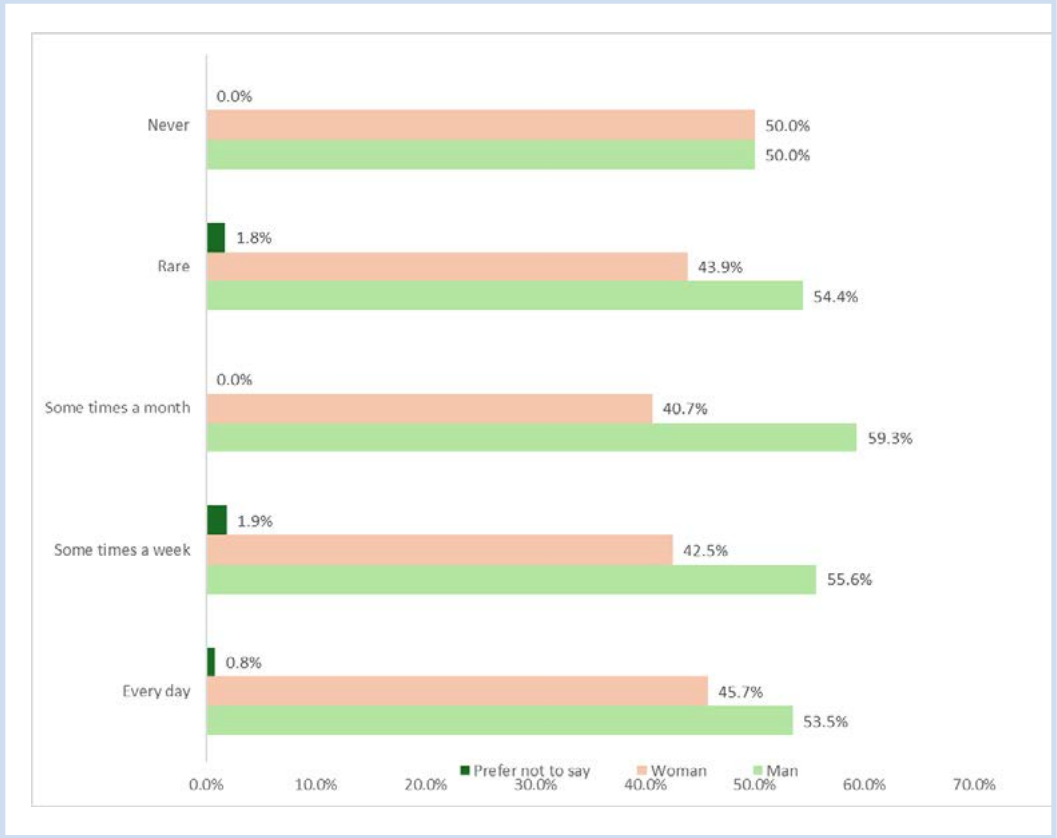
Bus: An analysis of bus use shows noticeable differences among demographic groups. 23.1% of respondents use the bus daily, 20.0% use it weekly, while 30.7% use it rarely. 9.3% do not use it at all. Women are more reliant on daily bus use (27.1%), while men tend to use it more on a weekly basis (21.6% vs 18.3% for women). Urban residents are more likely to use the bus daily (23.9% vs 20.9% in rural areas), while those living in rural areas use it more frequently on a weekly basis (23.7%).

Graph 6. Bus Usage by Gender (in percentages)



Walking: According to the analysis of the chart on walking frequency by gender, several key differences between men and women emerge. For those who never walk, the percentage is equal (50% men and 50% women), indicating both genders are equally likely not to walk at all. In the "Rarely" category, men (54.4%) walk less than women (43.9%), suggesting women may be slightly more inclined to walk compared to men. For those who walk several times a month, men (59.3%) make up the majority compared to women (40.7%). The same trend continues for those who walk several times a week—men account for 55.6%, while women are at 42.5%. In the daily walking category, men (53.5%) again outnumber women (45.7%), showing they may be more likely to integrate walking into their daily routines. This may indicate that men are more frequently required to walk, possibly due to longer commuting distances or daily activities, whereas women may have a lower tendency to walk regularly.

Graph 7. Walking by gender (in percentage)



Cycling / Skateboard: The use of bicycles and skateboards is relatively limited, with 15.6% of respondents using them daily and 29.1% using them rarely. Men are more likely to use bicycles and skateboards than women, with the difference most visible in the daily use category. Usage is slightly higher in rural areas (16.0% daily) compared to urban areas (15.5%), though a significant share of urban residents do not use these means of transport at all (32.0%).

Car: Car use is more frequent among men (29.4% use a car daily versus 26.3% of women). Women are less likely to use a car, especially rarely (20.6%) or not at all (8.8%). Urban respondents use cars more regularly, while those in rural areas report using cars less often or not at all, reflecting differences in infrastructure and access.

Taxi: Taxi use is more frequent among men, especially in the daily and weekly use categories. Women more often report using taxis rarely or never (19.3%). Taxi usage is higher in urban areas, while people living in rural areas use them far less, highlighting limited access and fewer transport options outside cities.

E-scooter: E-scooter use remains relatively low, with 3.9% of women and 9.9% of men using them daily. Overall, men are more likely to use e-scooters than women, and a significant share of women (60.9%) do not use this mode of transport at all. Urban areas show higher usage, while rural areas report minimal use—indicating that infrastructure and access in cities play a crucial role.

Reasons Why Means of Transport Are Not Used

One of the questions asked to respondents was to indicate the reason for not using various means of transport such as buses, walking, bicycles or e-bikes, electric scooters, or cars.

Graph XX shows the reasons why people do not use the bus, broken down by gender. Men report more problems across almost all categories, particularly regarding accessibility and safety. For example, 66.7% of men consider the bus inaccessible for those using wheelchairs, compared to 33.3% of women. Likewise, 60.3% of men say there are no stops near their residence, versus 38.4% of women. These data indicate that infrastructure and bus stop locations are key concerns for men.

Mr. Ali H. (73 years old, retiree, regular user of public transport)

"I use the bus every day to go to the market and visit my friends. The biggest problem for me is the high steps to get on the bus and the fact that some bus stops don't have benches where I can sit. Also, the drivers sometimes take off before we elderly people have fully sat down, which once caused me to fall. It would be much better if the buses had low floors and more space for those of us who have difficulty moving."

Ms. Drita M. (69 years old, occasional user of public transport)

"I like to walk when I can, but when I'm tired, I use the bus. A big issue for us older women is the lack of safety at night. The stations are not well lit and sometimes there are people who harass you. I don't feel comfortable using transport after 8 PM. I wish there were more security measures and more reserved seats for the elderly."

On the other hand, concerns about safety and lack of service are high for both genders, but men report them more frequently: 65.2% of men perceive the bus as unsafe, compared to 34.8% of women who share the same concern. Similarly, lack of service is reported by 64% of men and 36% of women. Factors such as low speed (63.8% men vs. 36.2% women) and unsuitability for carrying goods or children (52.2% men vs. 46.7% women) highlight the need for improvements in the efficiency and comfort of public transportation.

Graph 8. Reasons for Not Using the Bus by Gender (in percentage)

Ms. Sara V. (27 years old, employee, uses transportation for work and social outings)

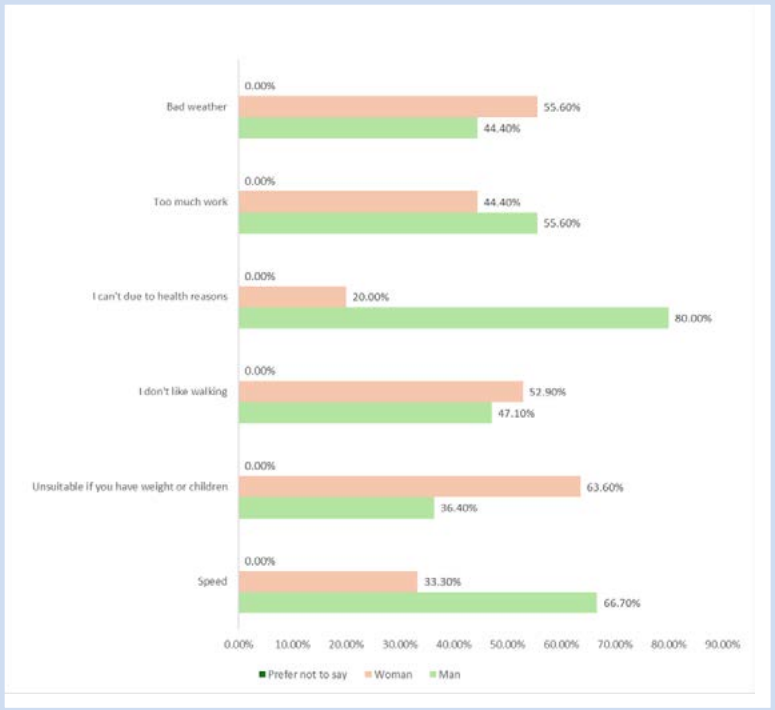
"I use the buses every day, and sometimes I feel unsafe, especially at night. The drivers don't always stop at the right places, and sometimes they don't open the doors properly. It would help if there was more lighting and supervision at the bus stations."

Walking

This graph presents the reasons why people do not walk, separated by gender. Some of the main factors for men are health reasons (80% men compared to 20% women) and speed (66.7% men vs. 33.3% women), indicating that men face more health issues or prioritize time efficiency. Also, many men report lack of time (55.6% men vs. 44.4% women), suggesting they may have less free time for walking.

On the other hand, women report higher percentages of reasons such as bad weather (55.6% women vs. 44.4% men) and unsuitability for carrying weight or children (63.6% women vs. 36.4% men), showing that environmental conditions and family burdens impact women more. Personal preference for walking is fairly balanced, with high percentages for both genders (52.9% women vs. 47.1% men). Improvements in infrastructure and time accessibility for mobility could help address these challenges.

Graph 9. Reasons for not walking by gender (in percentage)



Bicycle / Skateboard: For 33.8% of participants, safer road infrastructure would be the main driver for using bicycles or skateboards more often. Price and better connections for bike lanes are also important for a significant portion of respondents.

E-scooter: For 35.9% of respondents, e-scooters are not considered a transport option, with a more pronounced trend among women. Safety is a primary concern for 28.2% of participants, and costs are an encouraging factor for 25.1%. Improving e-scooter connections in the transport network is also important for 17.1% of respondents.

Car: The main reason individuals do not use a car is the lack of a car (53.2%), with women (61.1%) reporting this more frequently than men (46.6%), suggesting greater economic constraints for women. Another common reason is the lack of driving skills (17.1%), which affects women (20.1%) more than men (13.7%), possibly due to traditional gender norms or lack of training. Personal preferences, such as disliking car use (13%), and excessive work (13%) are additional reasons, with men reporting these more frequently than women.

Reasons for the Use of Different Modes of Transport

Bus

Improvement of connections and bus frequency is the main factor that would encourage more frequent use, emphasized by 50.2% of respondents, especially in urban areas (51.5%) and by individuals who do not declare their gender (66.7%). Reducing costs is important for 24.8%, more for women (27.1%) and rural residents (26.9%), reflecting financial challenges. While 14.1% declare that they would not use the bus despite changes, especially in rural areas (19.4%). These data suggest the need for policies addressing infrastructure improvement, cost reduction, and safety to increase the attractiveness of public transport.

Walking

Respondents informed that safety is a priority, mainly for women (20%) and urban areas (22.4%).

Bicycle and Electric Scooter

About 33.8% of respondents emphasized safety (better roads) as a key factor for more frequent use of bicycles, while 28.2% mentioned electric scooters, especially women and urban participants. Lower cost was considered by 25.1% for both modes, more important for people living in rural areas and those who prefer not to declare. Reluctance to use them was higher for electric scooters (35.9%) compared to bicycles (19.9%), with a larger percentage among women and urban participants.

Reasons for Choosing a Mode of Transport

The bus is the most common mode of transport for work, with 77.6% of respondents using it for this purpose. Women (81.6%) rely more on buses for work and access to health services (21% compared to 11% of men), while men have a higher percentage for family transport. Urban areas show a higher usage of buses for work and education (78.6%), reflecting better access to infrastructure and services.

Walking remains an essential mode of transport for work (50.3%), with women leading (53.4% compared to 48.2% of men). Walking is also used for leisure (44.1%) and health (41.2%), with a balanced gender distribution. In urban areas, walking for work is more common (51.3%) due to better infrastructure.

Bicycles are primarily used for work (51.9%), especially by men (55.7%), while women have a lower percentage (42.9%). Bicycles are also an important mode for leisure and sports (30.2%), with similar gender participation.

Cars are most commonly used for work (61.2%), with small gender differences (60.8% women, 61.3% men). Family transport (33.7%) is more common among men (36.7%), while women (27.7%) use cars more for access to health services. Women also have a higher percentage of using cars for leisure (26.8%).

Taxis show significant use for work (51.6%), with men leading slightly (53.1%). Family transport makes up 23.3%, with men (25.6%) using them more, while women rely on taxis for health services (27.7%). Leisure use is higher among women (20.5%) compared to men (11.3%), reflecting different preferences for flexibility and comfort.

Electric scooters are used for work by 50.8% of respondents, with similar gender usage. Scooters have greater potential in rural areas for leisure (30.9%), possibly due to limited access to public transport.

Perceptions on safety and protection

The collected data show significant differences in safety perceptions, influenced by gender, region, and mode of transport. A deeper analysis reveals that women face greater challenges in feeling safe, both during public transport and while walking, while urban areas report lower safety levels compared to rural ones.

Safety in Public Transport: A significant portion of men (49.6%) report feeling very safe in public transport, while only 31.0% of women share this sentiment. This gender difference reflects women's concerns about harassment, lack of lighting, and safety at transport stations. Women report feeling "somewhat safe" (61.6%), indicating ongoing insecurity. Moreover, respondents from urban areas show a lower perception of safety (42.8% very safe) compared to those from rural areas (80.0%), suggesting that urbanization creates more safety challenges for users.

Safety while Walking: While walking, 62.1% of men feel very safe, whereas this figure is lower for women (52.7%). Women also report moderate insecurity (35.4%) compared to men (28.6%), indicating challenges related to the urban environment, such as insufficient lighting, sidewalks that sometimes are completely missing or too narrow for a mother with a stroller to pass, and the risk of harassment.

The analysis of public transport safety

Safety in Bus Travel

According to the analysis, around 47.6% of respondents feel safe traveling by bus at any time, while 22.3% feel unsafe at night. Women (27.7%) feel significantly less safe using the bus at night

compared to men (17.6%). Responses from urban and rural areas are similar, although rural residents (23.3%) express a slightly higher level of insecurity compared to urban residents (21.9%).

Safety During Walking

About 48.8% of respondents feel safe walking alone at any time, while 26.8% feel unsafe at night. Women (37.3%) feel much more insecure walking at night compared to men (18.1%). Rural residents (29.3%) report a higher level of insecurity at night compared to urban residents (26.0%).

Safety During Cycling

Only 40.7% of respondents feel safe using a bicycle at any time. Furthermore, 39.0% feel unsafe during the day, while 26.6% feel unsafe at night. Women (36.9%) feel significantly more insecure when cycling at night compared to men (18.6%). Rural residents (27.9%) express a higher sense of insecurity than urban residents (26.2%) when it comes to cycling at night.

Safety During Car Travel

Around 55.3% of respondents feel safe traveling by car at any time. However, 27.9% feel unsafe during the day, and 24.6% feel unsafe at night. Women (27.7%) report a higher sense of insecurity at night compared to men (22.2%).

Safety in Using Taxis

Only 45.5% of respondents feel safe using a taxi at any time. On the other hand, 28.8% feel unsafe during the day, and 31.2% feel unsafe at night. Women (39.9%) feel significantly less safe using taxis at night compared to men (23.7%). Rural residents (33.1%) express a higher level of insecurity than urban residents (30.5%) when using taxis at night.

Women feel significantly more unsafe at night in all types of transportation, particularly while walking (37.3%), cycling (36.9%), and using taxis (39.9%). Urban residents generally feel safer in most modes of transport compared to rural residents. Walking and cycling are perceived as more dangerous at night, with a significant portion of respondents expressing concerns about safety. Taxis are perceived as less safe than cars at night, suggesting trust issues with taxi drivers or unpleasant experiences by passengers.

Analysis of Safety while Walking on Sidewalks

During the day, men feel safer than women when walking on sidewalks. 41.3% of men consider them very safe, compared to only 28.5% of women. While the majority of women (51.3%) perceive them as somewhat safe, a higher percentage of them (18.1%) consider them unsafe, compared to

only 9.2% of men. On the other hand, the perception of safety among rural and urban residents is similar, with 36.9% of rural residents and 35.4% of urban residents feeling very safe, and about 48% of both groups considering them somewhat safe. Only 13.2% of rural residents and 13.3% of urban residents consider them unsafe. Overall, women feel significantly more unsafe than men, while the differences between rural and urban areas are minimal. This highlights the need for improvements in lighting and sidewalk infrastructure to increase safety, especially for women.

Table 5. Sidewalk Safety by Gender and Area (during the day) by Gender (in percentage)

Safety level (during the day)	Woman	Man	Rural	Urban
Very safe	28.5	41.3	36.9	35.4
Somewhat safe	51.3	46.5	48.4	48.1
Unsafe	18.1	9.2	13.2	13.3
Don't know	2.0	3.0	1.4	3.2

At night, only 17.3% of respondents consider the sidewalks very safe, with men (20.6%) feeling safer than women (13.2%). 41.0% rate the sidewalks as somewhat safe, with men (46.0%) feeling safer than women (35.4%). Meanwhile, 36.2% of respondents perceive the sidewalks as unsafe, with a higher percentage of women (47.0%) feeling unsafe compared to men (27.3%). The perception of safety varies slightly between areas, with 23.0% of rural residents and 15.3% of urban residents considering sidewalks very safe, while 36.2% of both groups rate them as unsafe. These data show that women feel significantly more unsafe at night, and although the differences between urban and rural areas are small, sidewalk safety remains a concerning issue for many citizens.

Table 6. Sidewalk Safety by Gender and Area (During the Night), by Gender (in Percentage)

Safety level (during the day)	Woman	Man	Rural	Urban
Very safe	13.2	20.6	23	15.3
Somewhat safe	35.4	46	36.6	42.6
Unsafe	47	27.3	36.2	36.2
Don't know	4.3	6.2	4.2	6

Sidewalks were also analyzed in terms of accessibility for people with disabilities and strollers. The analysis showed that only 18.5% of respondents consider sidewalks very accessible for people with disabilities or strollers, with men (23.7%) reporting better access than women (11.6%). The majority of respondents (45.8%) rate sidewalks as somewhat accessible, with women (48.5%) having a slightly more positive perception than men (44.1%). However, a significant percentage (31.2%) consider the sidewalks completely inaccessible, with women (35.6%) expressing more concern than men (27.8%). As for regional differences, 19.5% of rural residents and 18.1% of urban residents consider sidewalks very accessible, while 32.4% of rural residents and 30.8% of urban residents consider them completely inaccessible. 42.9% of rural residents and 46.9% of urban residents think they are somewhat accessible. These data indicate that access remains a major issue for a large portion of the population, particularly for women and groups more affected by infrastructural barriers.

Table 7. Analysis of Sidewalk Accessibility for People with Disabilities and Strollers

Accessibility for PWD	Woman	Man	Rural	Urban
Very accessible	11.6	23.7	19.5	18.1
Somewhat accessible	48.5	44.1	42.9	46.9
Not accessible	35.6	27.8	32.4	30.8
Don't know	4.3	4.3	5.2	4.3

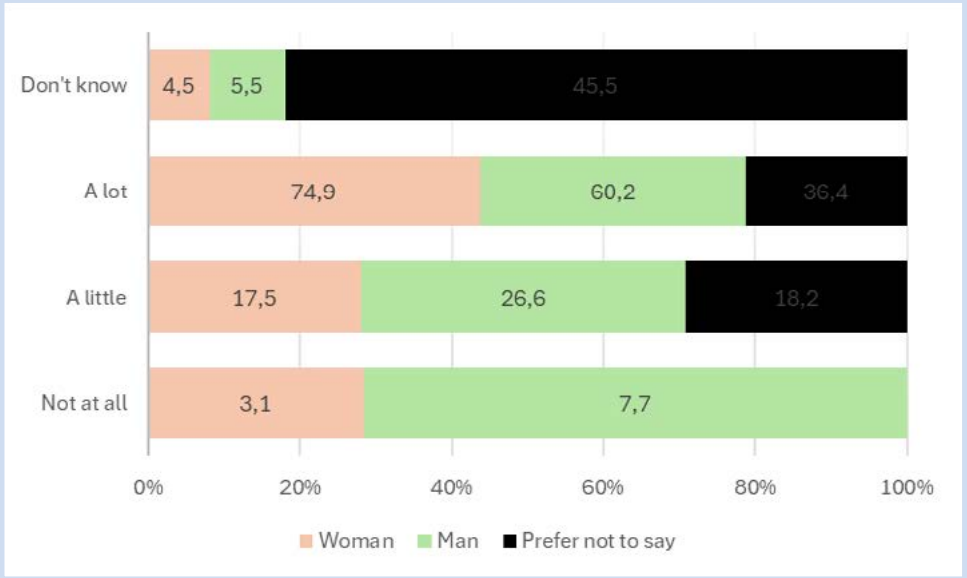
GENDER MODELS IN ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE THROUGH TRANSPORTATION CHOICES

Climate change is a global challenge that requires coordinated actions and interventions across various sectors, including transportation. Studies have shown that women and men often exhibit different patterns concerning transportation, reflecting distinct preferences, needs, and opportunities. These differences can significantly impact how they contribute to efforts addressing climate change. Below is an analysis of the perceptions of individuals who responded to our survey.

PERCEPTION OF AIR POLLUTION FROM VEHICLES

Out of 1,100 respondents, perceptions regarding the contribution of vehicles to air pollution are distributed as follows: The majority believe that vehicles significantly contribute to air pollution, with 74.9% of women and 60.2% of men sharing this view. A higher percentage of men (26.6%) compared to women (17.5%) think that the impact of cars is minimal. Only 3.1% of women and 7.7% of men believe that cars do not pollute the air at all. The "Prefer not to say" group is characterized by a very high percentage of uncertainty (45.5%), choosing the "Don't know" option, compared to 4.5% of women and 5.5% of men. These results indicate that women have a stronger perception of the significant impact of cars on air pollution, while men and the non-declared gender group show more hesitation or indifference on this issue.

Graph 9. Perception of air pollution from vehicles by gender (percentage)



In analyzing perceptions of air pollution from vehicles by region, it is observed that the majority of respondents, both in rural areas (62.4%) and urban areas (68.0%), believe that cars significantly contribute to air pollution. Meanwhile, a higher percentage of rural residents (25.8%) think that the impact of cars is small, compared to 21.3% of those living in urban areas. Only a minority believes that cars do not pollute the air at all (6.6% in rural areas and 5.2% in urban areas), indicating a high level of awareness on this issue. The percentage of those who don't know or have no clear opinion is almost the same in both regions (5.2% rural and 5.5% urban).

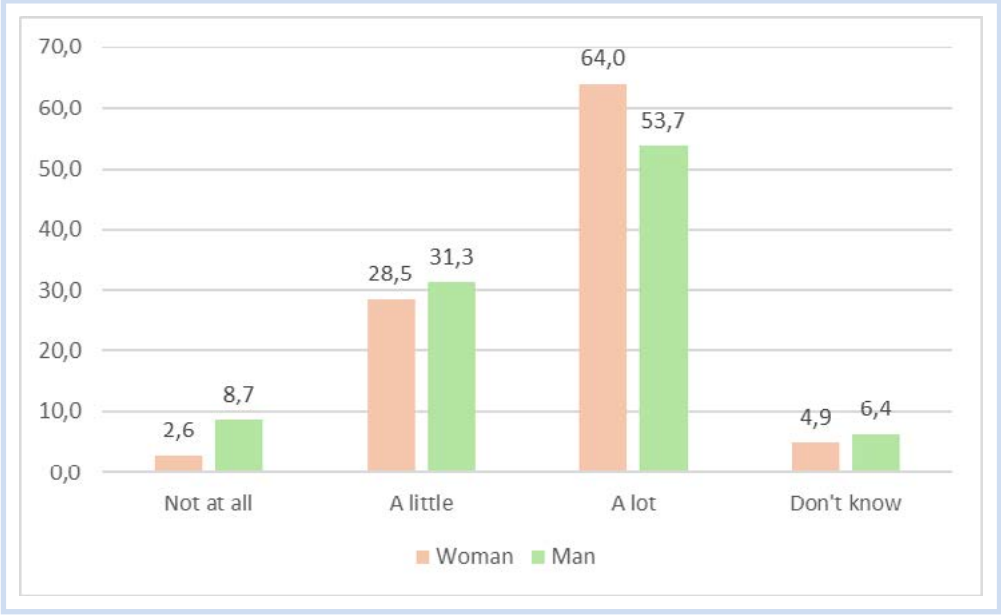
Table 8. Perception of air pollution from vehicles by area (in percentage)

	Rural	Urban
Not at all	6.6	5.2
A little	25.8	21.3
A lot	62.4	68.0
Don't know	5.2	5.5

PERCEPTION OF CLIMATE CHANGE

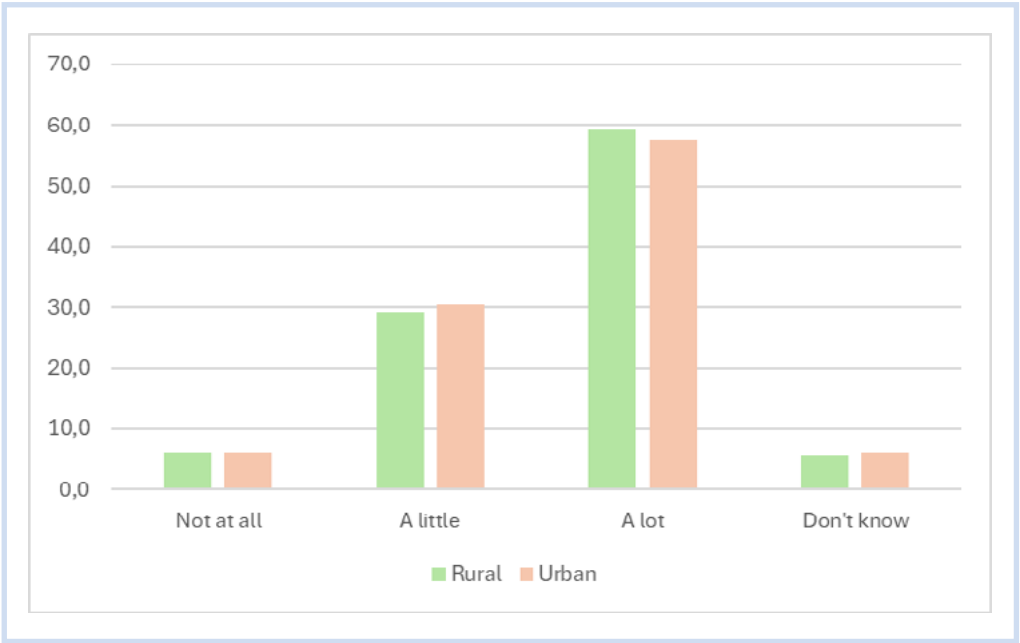
Regarding concerns about climate change, from 1,100 individuals who responded, the analysis of concern perception about climate change by gender reveals that the majority of respondents are very concerned about climate change, with 64.0% of women and 53.7% of men sharing this view. Men show a higher level of indifference or skepticism, with 8.7% not being concerned at all, compared to only 2.6% of women. The response "Slightly concerned" is more prevalent among men (31.3%) than among women (28.5%), suggesting a lower tendency among men to consider climate change as an urgent issue. The percentage of those who have no formed opinion is low, but still higher among men (6.4%) than among women (4.9%). **Overall, women show a higher level of concern about climate change, while men are more likely to be less concerned or indifferent to this issue.**

Graph 10. Climate Change Concern by Gender (Percentage)



The analysis of concern about climate change by region (rural and urban) shows that the majority of respondents are very concerned, with 59.2% in rural areas and 57.4% in urban areas sharing this view. The percentage of those who are slightly concerned is somewhat higher in urban areas (30.5%) than in rural areas (29.3%), indicating a similar trend in both regions. For those who are not concerned at all, the percentages are almost the same (5.9% in rural areas and 6.0% in urban areas), suggesting that skepticism about climate change remains limited. The percentage of those who do not have a formed opinion ("Don't know") is also the same in both regions (5.6% rural and 6.0% urban). These results suggest that concern about climate change is high in both regions, with a small percentage of people showing indifference or uncertainty on this issue.

Figure 12. Concern about climate change (by area) in percentage



Analysis of the impact of transportation on education, employment, and public participation

From the analysis of the data on the impact of the lack of suitable transport on individual decisions, it is observed that a significant number of people have experienced limitations in education, employment, and public participation due to inadequate or unavailable transportation.

- **Education: 265 individuals (92 women and 171 men)** report that they have not continued their education in the last five years due to a lack of transportation. However, the vast majority (835 individuals: 399 women and 427 men) did not face this barrier.

- **Employment: 487 individuals (223 women and 263 men)** have declined a job offer due to unsuitable transport, indicating that this factor has a significant impact on employment opportunities.
- **Public participation: 446 individuals (198 women and 245 men)** have not participated in public consultations or other policy-making processes due to a lack of transport. However, 654 individuals (293 women and 353 men) did not experience this problem, showing that for the majority, transport was not a barrier to their public engagement.

The lack of transport has affected men more than women, especially in education, employment, and public participation. Employment is the area where unsuitable transport has had the most significant impact, with 487 individuals refusing job offers for this reason. Although the majority did not experience this problem, a significant portion of the population faced substantial limitations due to inadequate transport, emphasizing the need for investments and improvements in public transport infrastructure.

Table 9. Issues Affected by the Quality of Transportation

Some issues that are affected by the quality of transport	Yes	No
In the last five years, have you decided not to continue your education because you did not have adequate transport?	265 individuals (92 women and 171 men)	835 individuals (399 women and 427 men)
	487 individuals (223 women and 263 men)	613 individuals (268 women and 335 men)
In the last five years, have you turned down a job because of inadequate or unavailable public transport?	446 individuals (198 women and 245 men)	654 individuals (293 women and 353 men)

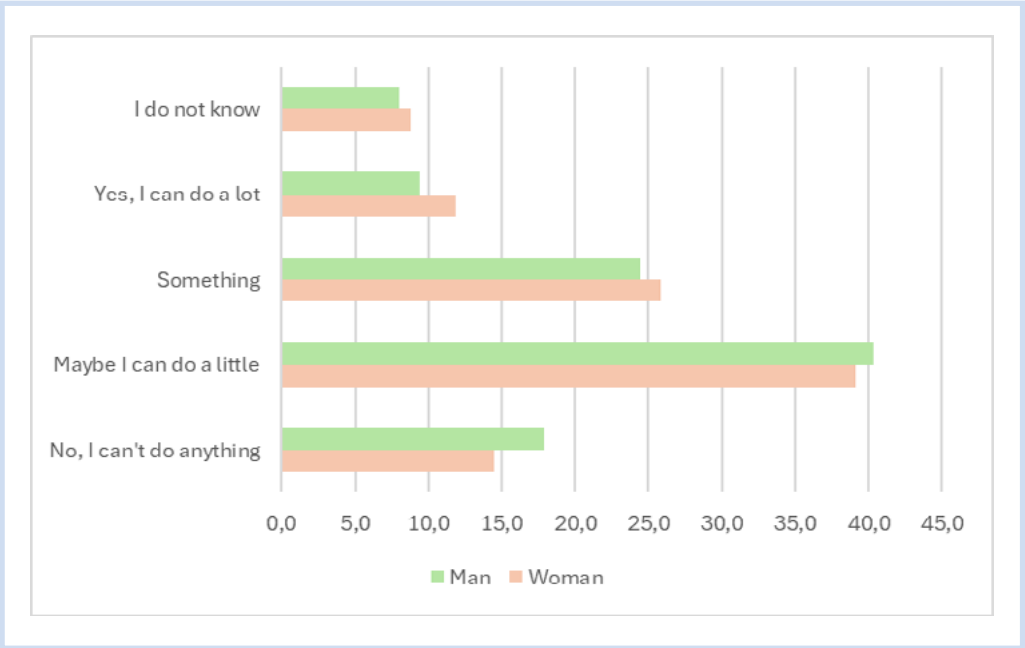
From the analysis of challenges in using public transportation by gender, it is observed that the lack of public transport near residences is the main problem for both genders, but it affects women more (47.5%) than men (38.0%). Additionally, the need to use more than one mode of transport to get to work is a major concern, especially for women (38.9%) compared to men (33.1%), suggesting a higher complexity in their daily travel routes. Another highlighted issue is the lack of safety in public transport, where women (33.3%) feel more insecure than men (28.2%), possibly reflecting concerns related to harassment or general safety conditions in public transport.

On the other hand, the type of service and routes are more concerning for men (33.5%) than for women (30.3%), possibly indicating higher expectations for the quality and flexibility of transport. The time spent on transport is a bigger concern for men (31.0%) than for women (29.3%), while the cost of public transport relative to wages is more problematic for men (26.1%) compared to women (23.7%). Regarding access for people with disabilities, the percentages are almost the same for both genders (28.8% women and 28.6% men), indicating a general accessibility issue in public transport. The desire not to use public transport daily is higher among women (26.3%) than men (22.9%), possibly due to unpleasant experiences or lack of comfort. Overall, women face more challenges related to safety and availability of transport, while men have more concerns about service quality and travel time.

The Individual's Impact on Climate Change

When asked whether they can influence climate change through individual transportation choices, responses were analyzed as follows: From the analysis of personal impact perception on climate change through transportation choices by gender, it is observed that the majority of respondents believe they can do something, but in a limited way. The highest percentage of **women (39.1%) and men (40.3%) believe** they can perhaps do something small to influence the climate, indicating a moderate sense of responsibility. About a quarter of respondents **(25.9% of women and 24.4% of men) believe they can do something more significant, while a smaller percentage, 11.8% of women and 9.4% of men, believe they can have a major impact.** On the other hand, more **men (17.9%) than women (14.5%) believe** they cannot do anything about climate change, which may suggest a higher degree of skepticism among men. The percentage of those who don't know remains similar between genders **(8.8% women and 8.0% men).** Overall, women appear slightly more optimistic about their impact on the climate, while men tend to believe they cannot make meaningful changes.

Graph 11. Perception of individual impact on climate change by gender (in percentage)



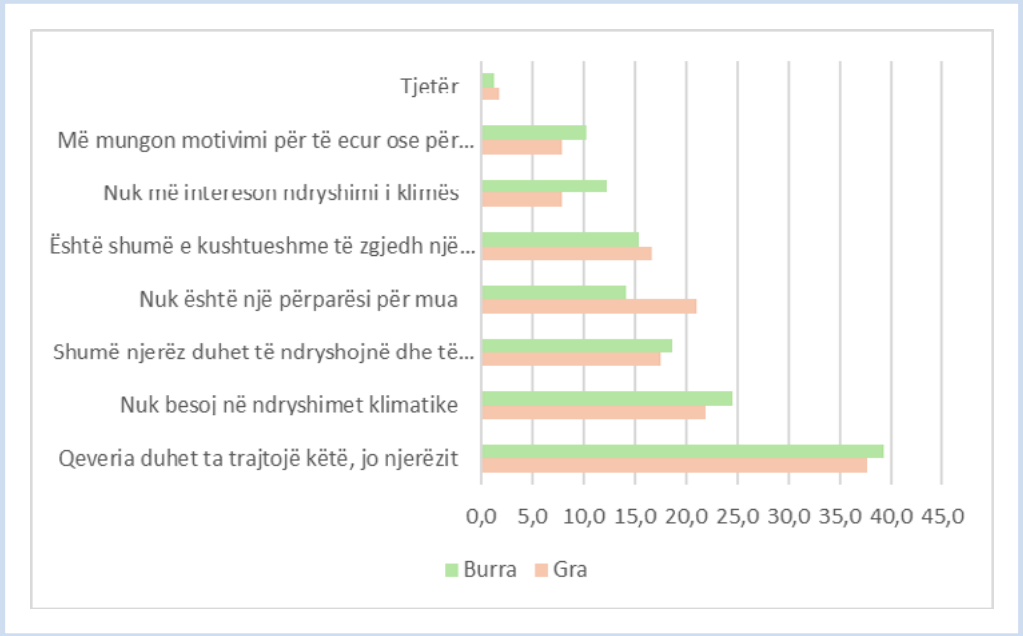
From the analysis of perceptions **regarding personal role in climate change by gender**, it is observed that the majority of respondents **believe the government should address this issue, not individuals**, with **37.7% of women and 39.4% of men** sharing this view. Additionally, a **considerable** number do not believe in climate change, with a higher percentage among men (24.5%) compared to women (21.9%), reflecting skepticism or disbelief in this phenomenon.

Another important factor is the perception **that change should come from everyone, not just the individual**, a view shared by **17.5% of women and 18.7% of men**. Furthermore, **the lack of prioritization of climate change is higher among women (21.1%)** than men (14.2%), suggesting a more pragmatic approach to other life issues.

The cost of changing the mode of transport is seen as a barrier by **16.7% of women and 15.5% of men**, indicating that economic factors play an important role. **The lack of interest in climate issues is more widespread among men (12.3%)** than women (7.9%), which may reflect a lower level of awareness or concern.

Another mentioned factor is **the lack of motivation to walk or use a bicycle**, which is more pronounced among men (10.3%) than women (7.9%). Finally, a very small percentage gave other responses (1.8% women and 1.3% men), indicating that alternative options are not significant in this discussion. **The majority of respondents believe that climate change is an issue that should be addressed by the government, not individuals**. Meanwhile, **skepticism about climate change is higher among men**, who also have a higher level of indifference and lack of motivation to change their transport behavior. On the other hand, **women are more likely to consider economic impacts and prioritize other issues** before climate change.

Graph 12. Perception of personal role in climate change by gender (in percentage)



The preferences and main reasons that hinder the use of different transportation options.

By analyzing the data on **preferences and the main reasons hindering the use of different transportation options**, the analysis of Table 10 below shows that **walking is the most preferred option**, with **786 individuals strongly in favor**, while the **e-scooter is the most rejected option** (352 individuals not interested at all). **Electric cars have high support (645 individuals in favor), but the high cost remains the main barrier to their adoption (114 individuals consider them**

too expensive). **Regular bicycles and electric bicycles** are also preferred by the majority, **but the lack of infrastructure for bicycles and the high cost of electric bicycles (104 individuals) are limiting factors.** On the other hand, **car-sharing/ridesharing faces two main challenges: difficulty in coordination (174 individuals) and preference for independence (100 individuals). Buses have balanced support**, but the **lack of available routes (114 individuals) and limited routes (75 individuals) make this option less attractive.**

The data clearly shows that the **lack of infrastructure and high costs** are the main factors limiting the adoption of alternative transportation forms, especially for electric cars, bicycles, and e-scooters**. Safety is also a major concern** for e-scooters, with 157 individuals considering this option very dangerous. Supportive policies and investments in infrastructure, such as expanding bicycle lanes, improving bus lines, and subsidies for green transport, would help increase the adoption of these options. Overall, **changing transportation habits requires not only awareness and financial incentives but also improvements in infrastructure and safety so that citizens have attractive and feasible alternatives for sustainable transport.**

Table 10. Interest in using different forms of transportation to influence climate change

Different transportation options	Not at all	A little	A lot	I do not know	If not, what is the main reason?
Electric car	171	214	645	70	114 individuals among those who said not at all think electric cars are too expensive.
Carpooling/ ridesharing	304	343	315	138	174 individuals think that using shared cars is difficult to coordinate. 100 individuals state they prefer independence.
Buses	195	452	365	88	114 individuals say bus lines are unavailable in their area; 75 think the bus routes do not cover many areas they need to reach; 51 individuals think buses are too slow.
Regular bicycles	188	285	561	66	17 individuals think they are too expensive; 56 think there are no suitable roads; 65 individuals stated they simply do not like them.
Electric bicycles	216	265	537	82	61 individuals think electric bicycles are too expensive; 67 think there are not enough proper roads; 104 individuals stated they do not like them.
Walking	105	159	786	50	73 individuals think walking is too slow for getting things done or when carrying heavy loads.
E-scooter	352	287	313	148	56 individuals think it is a very expensive device; 157 say it is too dangerous; 113 say there are not enough proper roads; 154 individuals say they do not like it.

CHAPTER IV

LESSONS LEARNED FROM LOCAL BEST PRACTICES

Public transport is one of the main pillars of urban infrastructure and plays a key role in the daily lives of citizens. Access to it, the quality of service, and how public funds are allocated to transport directly affect economic development, the environment, and social inclusion. The analysis below summarizes data and perspectives from an interview with an official from the Ministry of Finance, addressing key topics related to public transport budgeting, gender policies, safety and accessibility challenges, and priorities for future investments. The analysis below is a summary of discussions in a focus group with 10 civil society organizations advocating for human rights. It also includes 8 individual interviews with regular public transport users (2 elderly, 2 middle-aged, 2 young, 1 bicycle user, and 1 person with disabilities using public transport).

SUMMARY OF THE INTERVIEW WITH THE OFFICIAL FROM THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE.

The Ministry of Finance does not have direct responsibility for public transport, as this sector primarily falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy, as well as local government units. However, it plays a key role in drafting the national budget and allocating funds for public transport.

The budget for public transport in 2024 and 2025 was allocated as follows:

- In 2024, **36 billion lek** (4.8% of the total budget) was spent on public transport, of which **23 billion lek** (3.1%) was for road transport.
- In 2025, the planned funds are **54 billion lek** (7% of the total budget), with **33 billion lek** (4%) allocated for road transport.
- At the local level, expenditures for public transport increased from **713 million lek in 2024 to 1.9 billion lek in 2025.**

Gender-responsive budgeting is part of budgetary policies and has a separate annex in the standard guidelines. These guidelines aim to ensure that funds are allocated considering the different gender needs in transport. The Ministry recommends that coordination take place during the preparation of annual and medium-term budgets, as well as through joint roundtables between the central government and municipalities. The budget for transport also includes factors related to climate change, such as floods and fires, through specific budget codes and monitoring methodology. The Albanian government has plans for the expansion of bicycle lanes and green public transport, with several municipalities already implementing projects for electric buses and bicycle-accessible roads. During the budgeting process, the Ministry of Finance organizes meetings while drafting the budget to ensure that gender concerns and public transport issues are included in financing policies. Municipalities have autonomy in allocating funds but can also receive funds from the

central government, being involved in negotiations to meet national standards. Currently, there is no specific framework for gender budgeting in transport, but it is integrated into existing laws and guidelines. To ensure a more equitable distribution of funds, the government invests in the **AFMIS** system to collect and analyze data on transport usage by different social groups. Officials at both local and central levels are trained by international organizations such as **UN Women**, **UNDP**, the **EU**, and the **School of Public Administration (ASPA)** to implement gender budgeting in transport. This process is monitored through regular reports, which help evaluate the impact of allocated funds on gender equality and improve future policies. Municipalities receive financial support from the central government to integrate gender budgeting and enhance access to transport for all social groups, particularly for women and vulnerable groups.

Conclusions from the focused group with civil society representatives, opinions are given for the Municipality of Tirana:

Positive examples of transport and infrastructure

Within the framework of improvements in public transport in Albania, several positive initiatives have been observed:

- The addition of bicycle lanes and the expansion of pedestrian roads in several areas of Tirana, particularly on the New Boulevard and the New Ring Road.
- The introduction of ecological buses on major routes such as the Ring Road and TEG.
- The installation of signs at several urban stations to provide information on schedules and routes.
- The modernization of some bus lines with newer and more frequent vehicles during peak hours.
- Efforts to improve transport in peripheral areas by adding new routes and constructing stations suitable for users with special needs.
- The incorporation of all public transport lines in Tirana into Google Map

E.B (29 years old): *"One of the most positive developments in public transport infrastructure in Tirana in recent months has been the installation of directional signs at bus stations, enabling more accurate information for citizens about routes and schedules."*

Valbona Sulce - journalist

In March 2024, an awareness campaign against sexual harassment was launched in Tirana, which will last for one month. About 80% of the girls and women surveyed by the Fredrich Ebert Foundation said that the most unsafe environment in our country has been public transport, with the second being the workplace at 31%, and then schools. Based on these alarming figures, this campaign is a necessity to raise awareness among women and girls to report. The campaign was also joined by the Head of the Public Transport Association, who stated that cases of harassment on buses are much higher than what is reported. As part of this initiative, the Municipality of Tirana committed to installing lighting at bus stations and cameras.

Negative examples of transport and infrastructure

Despite the improvements, there are still significant issues that affect the quality of public transport:

- Buses often arrive late, especially on routes connecting the city center with the suburbs.

- Overcrowding of buses during peak hours makes travel difficult, especially for women and people with disabilities.
- Inadequate infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists in many areas of the city.
- Heavy traffic and the lack of dedicated lanes for public transport increase delays and air pollution.
- Bus stations are often uncovered and lack information boards about schedules.

M.M (47 years old): *"A bad example is the extended schedule that some urban routes have, where the waiting times often last from 45 minutes to 1 hour. The heating and cooling system during summer and winter, which in most cases is claimed to be out of order, seriously threatens the health of people with heart diseases, respiratory issues, hypertension, and pregnant women. Wrong parking on narrow streets or lanes dedicated to urban transport increases traffic, overcrowding of buses, and delays in schedules. This also makes it difficult to calculate the right time to catch an urban line."*

Gender impact of public transport

Public transport affects men and women differently, creating specific challenges for women:

- Women face insecurity in public transport, especially during late hours of the night, due to poor lighting and lack of supervision.
- Sexual harassment on buses is an ongoing problem, but it is rarely reported due to the lack of reporting mechanisms.
- Mothers with children and heavy bags find it difficult to use public transport due to the lack of appropriate spaces and overcrowding of buses.
- The lack of ramps and infrastructure for people with disabilities affects women more, especially those who care for children or elderly people with mobility difficulties.

O.Ç (37 years old): *"The use of public transport by women is more difficult than for men. Although access has improved a lot, in some families, the woman has to accompany the children to daycare, kindergarten, the doctor, courses, etc., and also go to work. The distance between these places is not close, and the use of public transport is essential. For this reason, public transport should also be ensured in the more suburb areas. While men usually go to work and return from work, which makes their movement easier. Returning home late due to transport schedules makes its use even more difficult and increases the number of abuse cases."*

Difficulties of people with disabilities in public transport.

- The lack of ramps and suitable spaces for people with disabilities on buses.
- Drivers and conductors often do not assist people with disabilities in boarding or disembarking from buses.
- Bus stations are not equipped with audio or visual signals for people with visual impairments.
- Roads and sidewalks are often not suitable for wheelchairs of people with disabilities, limiting their mobility.

L.D (39 years old): "*In many areas, I see people with disabilities who are forced to stay home or use private cars or taxis because even a bus line in this area doesn't have a ramp or dedicated support for these people.*"

Security issues in public transportation.

- Insufficient lighting at bus stations and main roads creates insecurity, especially for women and girls.
- Stray animals pose a risk in some areas of the city, especially near bus stations.
- Sexual harassment and theft in public transportation are common problems but are rarely reported due to the lack of reporting mechanisms.

E.H (45 years old): *"In many areas, such as Lapraka, Astiri, and the area below the train station, lighting is poor or nonexistent. Girls and women often face harassment on overcrowded buses, especially during peak hours. There are no clear reporting mechanisms for security incidents in public transportation, causing many cases to go unreported. In peripheral areas such as Bregu i Lumit, Kombinat, and the Elbasani Road area, there is a presence of stray dogs near bus stations."*

Case Study: Gender Equality in Albanian Railway Projects (IN BOX)

The Albanian Railway is experiencing a major wave of infrastructure investments, with strategic projects such as the reconstruction of the Durrës–Tirana–Rinas line and the rehabilitation of the Vorë–Hani i Hotit line, supported by the EBRD, the European Union, and the Albanian Government. Although this development represents a significant step towards modernizing transportation, the lack of gender and disability-disaggregated statistical data is observed, which constitutes an obstacle for inclusive and gender-sensitive policymaking.

With the support of the "Gender Alliance for Development" Center, financed by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), Albanian Railways has developed and is implementing key documents aimed at integrating gender equality at all levels of operation and management. Among them, the **Equal Opportunities Action Plan (EOAP, 2024)** outlines specific objectives for gender inclusion in recruitment, professional development, decision-making, and protection against sexual harassment. The plan aims to increase the participation of women in technical and leadership positions through measures such as inclusive job announcements, gender mentoring, and programs targeted at girls in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. It also provides clear mechanisms for complaints and gender auditing of Human Resources practices.

The accompanying document **"Action Plan"** (2023–2025) links railway projects to national and international commitments such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 5 and 9). It highlights that women are still underrepresented at decision-making levels in Albanian Railways (HSH), but emphasizes progress in establishing reporting mechanisms, inclusion in strategic groups, and in the development of social policies. Both documents form an important foundation for a more inclusive, equal, and gender-sensitive transport system in Albania.

CHAPTER V

GENDER TRANSPORT SOLUTIONS: MEASURES AND COSTS

CONCLUSIONS

The Impact of Transport on the Environment and Health

Road transport is a major contributor to air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in Albania. The increase in the number of private vehicles has worsened air quality, particularly in urban areas such as Tirana, directly impacting public health. The high concentration of pollution particles (PM2.5 and PM10) is linked to respiratory issues and cardiovascular diseases.

Gender differences in access to and use of transportation.

Women and men experience different challenges in using public transport. Women are more likely to report concerns about safety and accessibility, while men report higher percentages of dissatisfaction with public transport and concerns about speed. Furthermore, women have less access to private transport options such as cars and bicycles, making them more dependent on public options.

The main barriers to using buses.

The main factors hindering the use of buses include: lack of available services (64% of men vs. 36% of women), security concerns (65.2% of men vs. 34.8% of women), and low speed (63.8% of men vs. 36.2% of women). These findings suggest that improving security, speed, and service frequency could increase the use of public transport.

Limited access to transport for vulnerable groups.

People with disabilities and those with children face significant difficulties in using public transport. Women report higher percentages of buses being unsuitable for strollers (63.6%) compared to men (36.4%).

Improvement of transport policies

Current transport policies in Albania are linked to the Green Agenda for the Balkans and sustainable development goals (SDGs), but challenges remain in their implementation. Increasing investments in public transport, improving infrastructure for bicycles and walking, as well as supporting electric vehicles, are necessary steps to reduce the negative impact of transportation.

The study emphasizes the need for more gender- and environmentally-sensitive policies in the transport sector. Investments in fast and safe public transport, along with the promotion of alternative sustainable modes of transport, can help reduce pollution and improve access for all population groups.

RECOMMENDATIONS BY INSTITUTIONS

To improve **access, quality, and the impact of transport on climate change and socio-economic opportunities**, it is recommended **that central and local institutions, as well as the private sector and civil society, take the following steps**:

The government and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy

- Development of a national strategy for sustainable transport, including plans for the electrification of the public transport fleet and increasing the use of bicycles and electric scooters.
- Expansion and improvement of public transport infrastructure, including the addition of new routes, more convenient schedules, and subsidized fares for vulnerable groups.
- Creation of subsidy mechanisms for alternative transport such as electric cars and bicycles, to make them more affordable for citizens.
- Development of policies to improve access for people with disabilities, including investments in accessible buses and sidewalks.

Municipalities and Local Authorities

- Construction of dedicated bike and scooter lanes, particularly in urban areas and on major city roads.
- Development of an integrated public transportation system to facilitate easy transfer from one mode of transport to another.
- Increase lighting and monitoring at bus stations and on public transport vehicles to enhance security, especially for women.
- Creation of pilot programs for free or low-cost public transport during peak hours for workers and students.
- Development of awareness campaigns for the use of green transport and carpooling.

Ministry of Finance and Economy

- Introducing fiscal incentives for companies investing in green transport, such as the development of electric bus fleets or offering electric scooters for rent.
- Reducing VAT on electric vehicles and electric bicycles to encourage their purchase by citizens.
- Securing funds for improving transport infrastructure in rural and remote areas to reduce regional disparities in access to transport.

Universitete Ministry of Education and Universities

- Development of a free transportation program for students, especially for those living in remote areas and facing difficulties in accessing universities and schools.
- Integration of education on the impact of transportation on climate change into school and university programs.
- Support for research projects on sustainable transport in collaboration with universities and scientific institutions.

Ministry of Internal Affairs and the State Police

- Strengthening safety measures in public transport, including monitoring with cameras and police patrols at bus stations and lines.
- Drafting laws and regulations for the use of e-scooters and electric bicycles, to enhance road safety.
- Punishing inappropriate behavior and harassment in public transport to ensure a safe environment for all citizens, especially for women.

Civil Society and Environmental Organizations

- Promoting awareness of the impact of transportation on climate change through public campaigns and community education.
- Monitoring public transport policies and holding authorities accountable for promised improvements.
- Promoting local initiatives for carpooling, bicycle use, and expanding infrastructure for sustainable transportation.

The Private Sector and Transport Companies

- Encouraging companies to provide organized transportation for their employees, especially in sectors where public transport is limited.
- Developing bike-sharing and e-scooter sharing services in cities, creating new transport alternatives for citizens.

- Implementing sustainable transport policies in companies, such as providing green transportation services for employees or encouraging the use of bicycles for commuting.

Investment in transport infrastructure in rural areas:

- Public transport and road networks in rural areas should be improved to reduce long travel distances and facilitate access to workplaces and schools. This may include regular buses, subsidized transport, or the creation of new connecting points near settlements.

Improvement of local employment policies:

- Promoting economic development in rural areas to create more local jobs can reduce the need for long-distance travel and increase sustainability.
- Policies should be created to improve access to transport for women, such as providing more safe and affordable options, or encouraging employment closer to their homes.
- In urban areas, where short trips dominate, investment in bike lanes and pedestrian paths, as well as expanding efficient public transport, can help reduce dependency on private vehicles and improve quality of life.
- Organizing awareness campaigns on the use of public transport, carpooling, and alternative options like bicycles can reduce the cost and environmental impact of long-distance travel.
- The Albanian government and local organizations should create policies based on the specific needs of urban and rural areas, as well as address gender challenges for an equal approach to transport and economic opportunities.

The recommendations in this report aim to create a more inclusive and sustainable transportation system by reducing **gender, social, and economic barriers**. **Investments in public transport, improving safety, and integrating green transport policies** are essential steps to ensure equal access and reduce the environmental impact of transport. **Collaboration between the government, local authorities, the private sector, and civil society is crucial to bring about sustainable changes in this sector.**

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1
Summary of the Analysis of Responses on Transport and Infrastructure in Elbasan

From the interviews with public transport users in Elbasan (4 members of civil society and 4 citizens), several issues emerged related to service quality, infrastructure, security, and accessibility for the more vulnerable groups of the population.

One of the main concerns is the condition of the buses, which are old, dirty, and often lack air conditioning, making travel uncomfortable in both summer and winter. The roads, especially in the suburb areas, are damaged and poorly lit, creating difficulties for movement during the night. Furthermore, there is a lack of clear information regarding transport lines, and schedules are irregular, causing uncertainty and delays for citizens.

Another troubling issue is safety, particularly for women and the elderly. The lack of lighting in many stations and streets increases the risk of harassment, which occurs but is often not reported. A constant concern remains the presence of stray dogs, which have become a threat to pedestrians, causing incidents and physical injuries, especially for children and the elderly.

Accessibility for vulnerable groups remains a major challenge. There are no reserved seats for pregnant women, parents with young children, or people with disabilities. The buses are not equipped with ramps or adapted spaces, while sidewalks in many areas are damaged or unsuitable for wheelchair movement. These shortcomings make them dependent on the help of others and significantly limit their mobility. A particular concern is the fact that, despite the fact that people with disabilities have books that should provide free travel, many are still forced to pay for public transport tickets. This constitutes an unfair burden for their families, who are mainly supported by the payment of the social assistance benefits (KEMP).

Gender differences in public transport usage are also evident. Women often use transport to accompany children, do shopping, or go to work, but irregular schedules and overcrowded buses make this process difficult. Frequent floods in certain areas affect women more, especially those who care for children and the elderly, forcing them to face additional obstacles in their daily lives.

To improve public transport in Elbasan, it is essential to invest in increasing the number of buses and improving their quality, ensuring a cleaner and more convenient service. Road infrastructure needs to be improved, especially in suburb neighborhoods such as Krasta, Shënkoll, Katund i Ri, and Bradashesh, where roads are damaged and transport is limited. Additionally, street lighting on main and secondary roads must be improved to enhance the safety of citizens, especially in areas like Elbasan Park, where the lack of lighting encourages harassment and inappropriate behavior.

In conclusion, public transportation in Elbasan faces numerous issues that affect all citizens, but particularly women, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Investments in improving transportation vehicles, increasing accessibility, and enhancing lighting and safety in public spaces are necessary to create a more convenient and inclusive transportation system for all citizens.

BELOW THE INTERVIEWS:

Ms. M. Gj. (45 years old, regular public transport user, employee in a civil society organization focusing on gender issues)

In some places, there are informative signs with public transport schedules, which help citizens navigate better. Additionally, some stations have shelters that protect people from rain and sun, making the wait more comfortable. However, one of the main issues is the lack of bus maintenance—buses are often dirty and lack air conditioning, making the rides uncomfortable both in summer and winter. There needs to be an investment in higher quality vehicles. Pregnant women and those with young children need reserved seats, as is the case in other countries. Likewise, persons with disabilities face significant challenges, as most buses lack the necessary equipment to assist them in getting on, off, or during the ride.

From my experience, transport affects women and men differently. For example, during floods, women face more difficulties, especially those who care for children or have other household responsibilities. Safety is another major concern. In Elbasan, many areas and alleys are not well-lit, such as the Elbasan Park, where harassment by irresponsible people often occurs. Furthermore, the large number of stray dogs has caused concerns and physical injuries to children and the elderly. These are serious problems that need to be addressed to ensure a safer environment for everyone.

Ms. Dh.Gj. (61 years old, regular public transport user, employee in a civil society organization working with marginalized groups)

The bus schedules and shelters at stations help citizens, but the buses are dirty and lack air conditioning. The municipality needs to improve transport and road infrastructure, especially in the suburbs.

There are no designated spaces for pregnant women, parents with children, and people with disabilities. Safety remains a concern in poorly lit areas like Parku Rinia, where harassment occurs. Stray dogs are a serious problem, endangering citizens in every neighborhood.

Ms. V. P. (42 years old, occasional public transport user, employee in a civil society organization)

Elbasan has lines connecting the main areas, but the vehicles are insufficient and the schedules are irregular, especially in the suburbs like Krasta, Shënkoll, Katund i Ri, and Labinot. The municipality should invest in more buses, better signage, and lighting for safety.

Women face difficulties due to the lack of suitable schedules and insecurity in public transport. Harassment occurs but is often not reported. People with disabilities face difficulties due to the lack of ramps and signage. Poor lighting and stray dogs remain a concern for all citizens.

Ms. V. Xh. (42 years old, occasional public transport user, citizen)

The main boulevard is well-maintained, but the buses are old and often break down, causing delays. The municipality should invest in more lines for peripheral neighborhoods such as Katund i Ri and Bradashesh.

Women face difficulties due to overcrowded buses and the lack of dedicated spaces for pregnant women or those with small children. Public transport is more common for women, but poor lighting increases insecurity during late hours. People with disabilities do not have any facilities. Stray dogs and the lack of lighting on secondary streets remain major concerns for citizens.

Ms. J. P. (27 years old, occasional public transport user, citizen)

Some bus stations have been renovated and offer shelter, but there is a lack of schedules and information about the lines. Poor lighting in neighborhoods like Krasta and Manazdera increases insecurity, especially for women, who often avoid overcrowded buses.

Flooding hinders public transport, affecting women with family responsibilities more. The buses are not accessible to people with disabilities, and the damaged sidewalks make movement difficult. In areas like the Elbasan Park, harassment of women is a serious concern.

Mr. Sh. A. (70 years old, regular public transport user, citizen)

Some stations have schedules displayed, but the roads in suburbs are damaged and lack lighting, making movement difficult at night. The municipality should invest in sidewalks, especially near schools and hospitals.

Women feel unsafe at isolated stations, especially in the evening. Flooding affects those with young children more. People with disabilities, as well as the elderly, face difficulties moving due to lack of access. Stray dogs remain a serious problem, endangering pedestrians, especially the elderly.

Mr. V. Xh. (43 years old, rare public transport user, citizen)

The buses should be newer and more suitable for the city, as they are currently very old and pollute the environment. The road infrastructure has been damaged by recent interventions.

Transport is used equally by women and men, and I don't think there is much difference in Elbasan. I haven't experienced or witnessed harassment, but the situation with stray dogs is concerning and dangerous for pedestrians.

Mr. Kristaq (65 years old, rare public transport user, parent of two children with disabilities, chairman of the Organization for the Protection of PWDs Elbasan)

Public transport in Elbasan is extremely unsuitable for people with disabilities, both those with physical difficulties and those with mental disabilities. The buses do not have proper conditions, and infrastructure and orientation remain major challenges for them. Moreover, although people with disabilities have cards that are supposed to ease their payments, they are often forced to pay anyway, which economically burdens their families, who are primarily supported by the KEMP payment.

Annex 2 – Methodology

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this research was to identify opportunities for climate- and gender-responsive policies to improve access for both women and men to public transportation. The research aims to propose gender-responsive and sustainable solutions for state funding of an inclusive and environmentally responsible transportation sector, based on the identification of the current needs, interests, and travel practices of women and men.

The objectives include:

1. Analyzing gender patterns in access to and use of different types of transport, including travel patterns, transportation choices, personal expenses, perceptions of transport options and accessibility, and how transport impacts the socio-economic life of different gender groups (age, disability, location, ethnicity, economic status).
2. Conducting a gender analysis of current transport laws, policies, and budgets.
3. Proposing gender-responsive budgeting opportunities, including an assessment of potential state expenditures for improving access to gender- and climate-responsive transport.
4. Preparing a report with recommendations for what should be financed at the national and regional level.

Research Question:

The key research questions include:

- How much access do women and men have to different types of transport, and how are they used? How do transport options impact the socio-economic lives of women and men?
- How do power, institutions, practices, participation, ownership, and access to resources influence transport choices and the policies/budgets that have been adopted and implemented?
- How gender-responsive are the current laws, policies, and budgets in the transport sector?
- What can transport policies do to improve gender responsiveness, and what will be the costs and benefits?
- How can gender-responsive policies and budgets influence sustainability, inclusivity, and climate change?

Research Methods:

Official Research and Secondary Data Collection: This process will involve reviewing transport policies and budgets and collecting secondary data on the travel behaviors of women and men, including data on time use for transport purposes, daily commuting, workers in the transport sector, and vehicle ownership.

Primary Data Collection – Surveys: A survey will be conducted in Albania with a representative sample of 1,100 individuals to gather data on transport needs, perceptions, and expenditures. The survey will focus on factors such as availability, safety, affordability, and user-friendliness to create solutions specific to each gender.

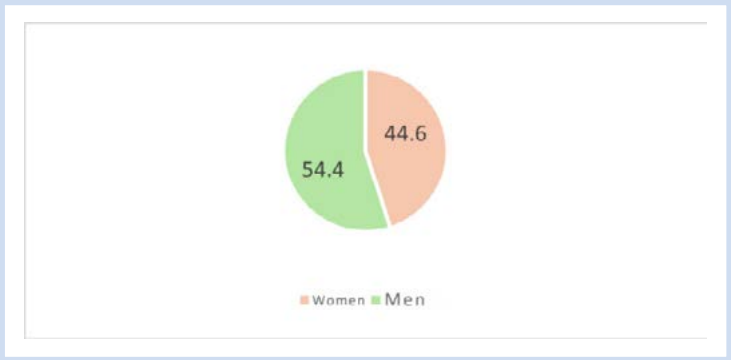
Case Studies: Each country will select two cities to conduct local studies on best practices for gender- and climate-responsive transportation. The studies will include interviews with officials and individuals who use public transport, bicycles, or have disabilities to identify needs and opportunities for improvement.

Data Analysis: The quantitative data will be analyzed by a contracted company, including cross-tabulations of data linking gender factors and other diversity factors (age, disabilities, ethnicity, etc.). The analysis will also review laws, policies, and budgets for transport using the "traffic light" methodology. This research will provide recommendations for gender- and climate-responsive public transportation policies and investments, contributing to the improvement of infrastructure and opportunities for all users, respecting gender rights, and helping to reduce the impact of climate change.

Annex 3 - Demographic Data

A total of 1,100 individuals from the territory of the Republic of Albania responded to the survey, including 491 women and girls, making up 44.6% of the total, and 598 men and boys, representing 54.4% of the total. 11 individuals, or 1.0% of the total, **chose not to answer.**

Graph 13. Distribution of the sample by gender (in percentage)



The analysis of the distribution by region and gender shows that 137 women (47.7%) live in rural areas, while 354 women (43.5%) live in urban areas. Meanwhile, 149 men (51.9%) live in rural areas compared to 449 men (55.2%). However, the analysis also revealed that 11 individuals preferred not to respond.

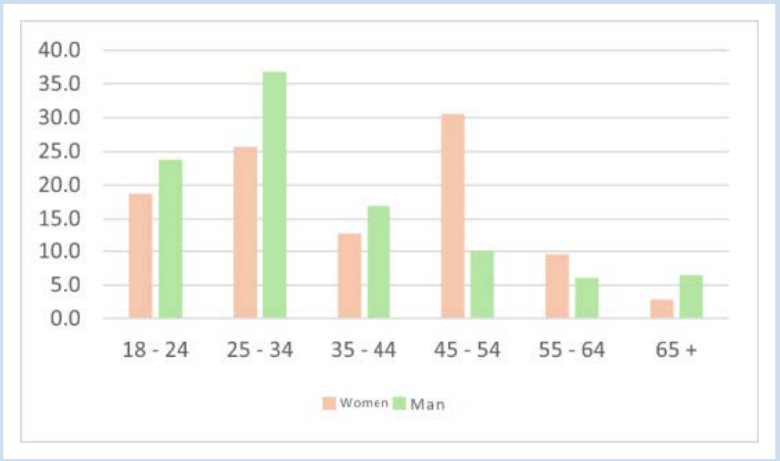
Graph 14. Distribution of the sample by gender and zones (in percentage)

The distribution of gender shows a near balance between women and men, with men having a slightly higher percentage. The urban population dominates across all categories, showing a higher tendency to live in cities. The rural areas have a lower representation, especially for those who choose not to disclose their gender.

Distribution by age and gender

The age group **25-34 years** is the largest, comprising **31.7%** of the total (349 people), while the **18-24 years** group makes up **21.6%** of the total (238 people). The smaller groups are those aged **55-64 years** with **7.5%** (83 people) and **65 years and older** with only **4.8%** (53 people). This shows that younger groups make up the majority of the total population, while older groups have a much lower percentage.

Graph 15. Distribution by age and gender



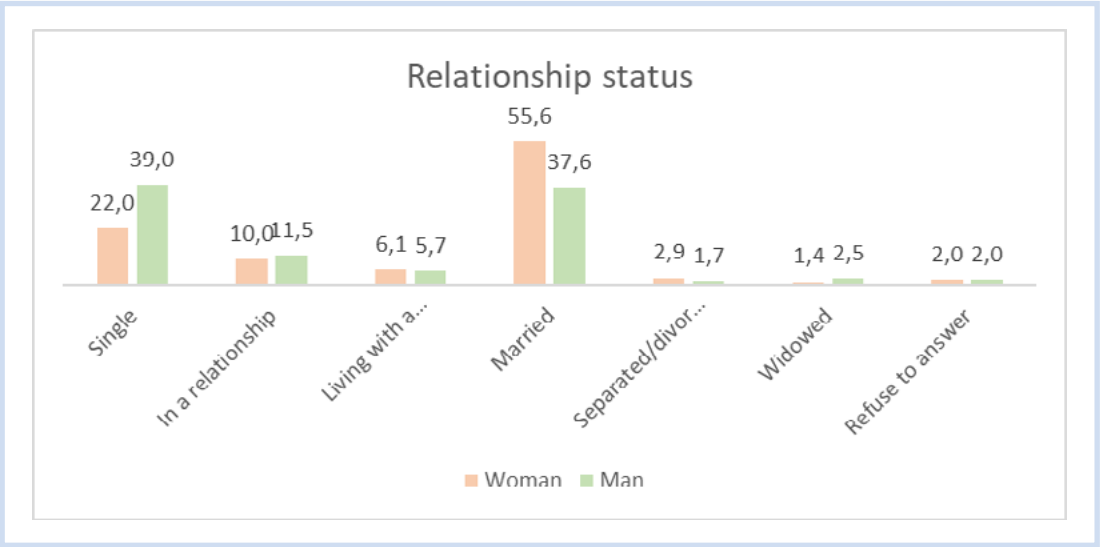
Distribution of participants by gender and regions

The gender representation shows that Tirana dominates with the highest number of participants (517), where women make up 50.3% and men 44.6%. Vlorë follows as a major contributor, where women (5.7%) significantly outnumber men (2.2%). Shkodra presents a more balanced gender distribution, with 4.5% women and 3.5% men. Smaller municipalities like Belshi, Dropulli, and Këlcyra show minor gender differences, but their contribution remains low in overall numbers.

Status by gender

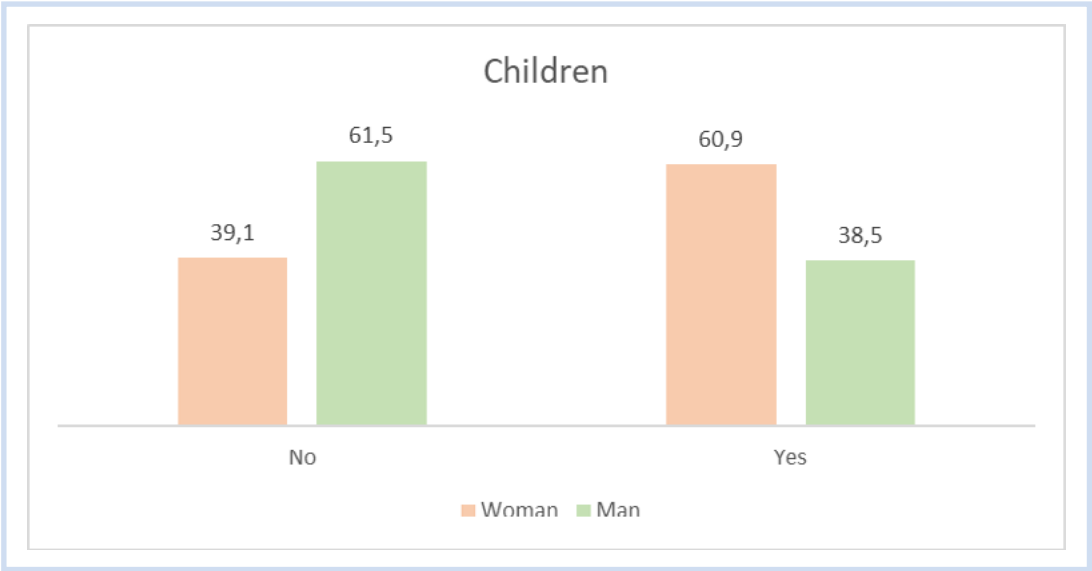
The data shows that in the sample that responded to the questions, men (39.0%) made up a higher percentage of single individuals compared to women (22.0%), while women report a much higher percentage of marriages (55.6%) compared to men (37.6%). The percentages of individuals in a relationship or living with a partner are relatively similar between genders. Women also report a higher percentage of divorces (2.9%) compared to men (1.7%), while the percentage of widows is slightly higher among men (2.5%) compared to women (1.4%). Finally, an equal number of men and women (2.0%) refused to answer.

Graph 16. Status according to gender (in percentage)



Graph 17 shows that 39.1% of women and 61.5% of men do not have children, while 60.9% of women and 38.5% of men report having children.

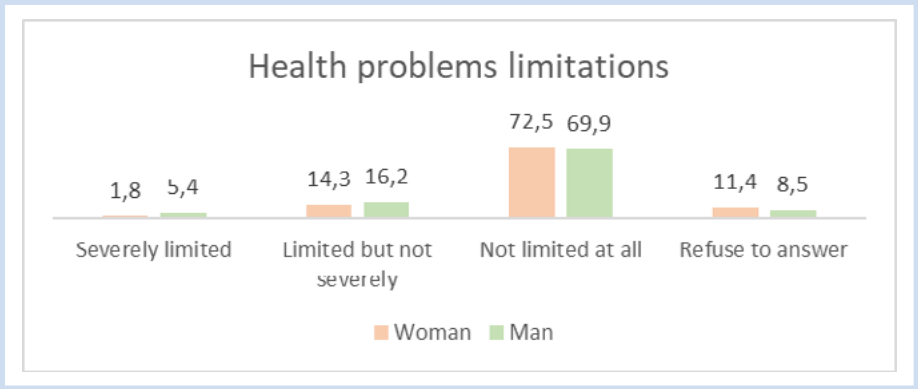
Graph 17. Do you have children by gender (in percentage)?



Health-related limitations

Graph 18 shows health-related limitations by gender, where the majority of respondents report not being limited at all (72.5% of women and 69.9% of men). A smaller percentage of participants declare being limited, but not severely (14.3% of women and 16.2% of men), while only a minority report being very limited (1.8% of women and 5.4% of men), indicating that men are more likely to report severe limitations. The percentage of those who refuse to answer is also higher among women (11.4%) compared to men (8.5%). Overall, the data suggests that most people do not feel limited by health problems, while a smaller portion, mainly men, report more severe limitations.

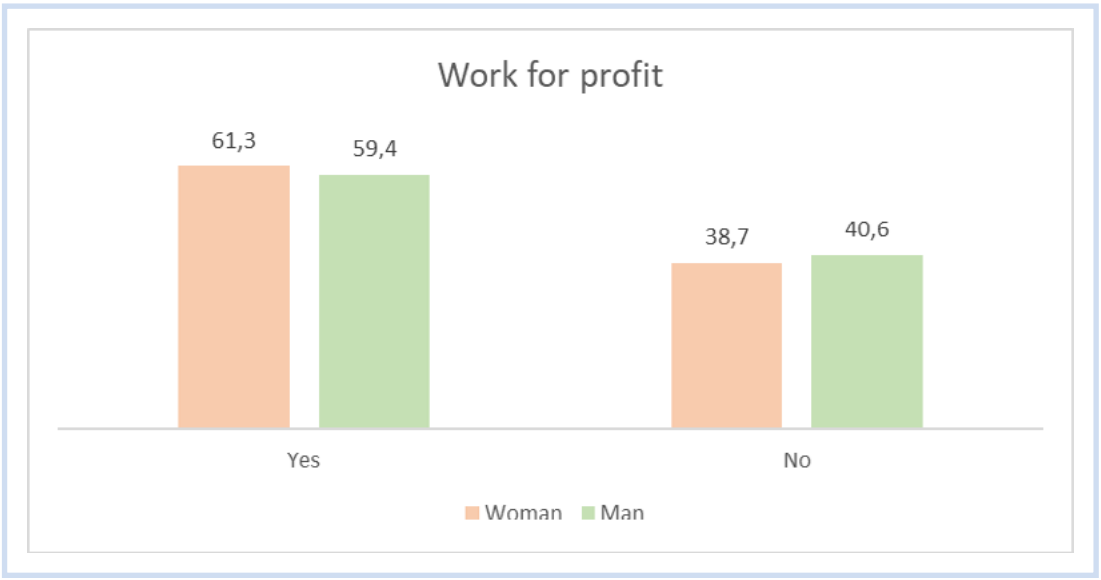
Graph 18. Health-related limitations



Employment during the last week

The chart shows the percentage of women and men who reported working for pay or profit during the last week. According to the data, 61.3% of women and 59.4% of men reported working during the last week, while 38.7% of women and 40.6% of men stated they had not worked.

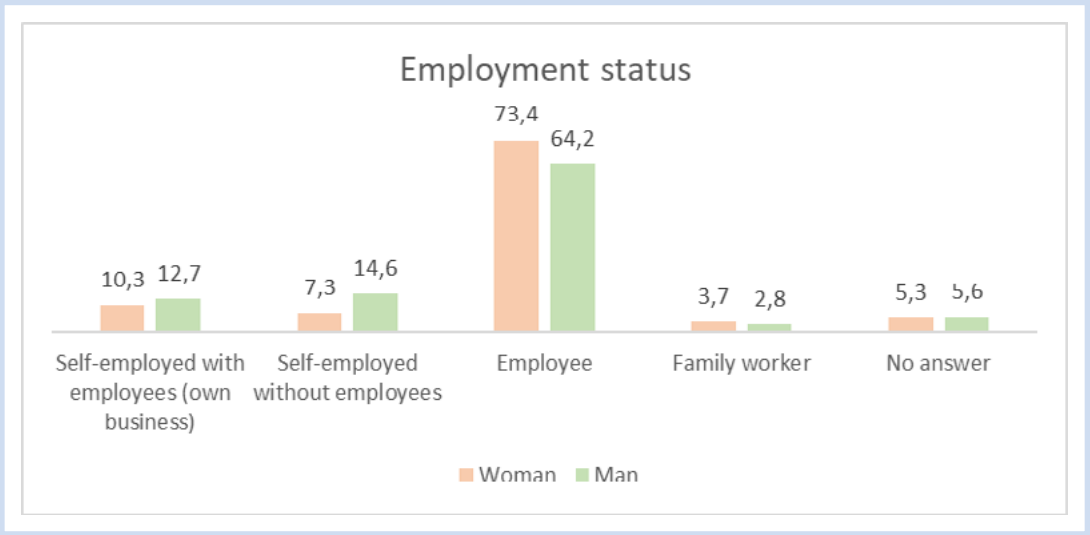
Graph 19. Employment during the last week by gender (in percentage)



Employment status

The chart shows the employment status by gender, revealing differences between women and men in types of employment. Employees make up the majority of respondents, with 73.4% of women and 64.2% of men reporting that they are employed, indicating that women have a higher percentage of regular employment. Self-employment is divided into two categories: with employees and without employees. More men (14.6%) than women (7.3%) are self-employed without employees, while a higher percentage of men (12.7%) than women (10.3%) report being self-employed with employees. This suggests that men are more likely to engage in entrepreneurial activities. Regarding family business work, the percentages are low, with slightly more women (3.7%) than men (2.8%) involved. The percentages of those who did not respond are similar (5.3% for women and 5.6% for men). Overall, the data suggests that women have a higher participation rate in regular employment, while men tend to be more involved in entrepreneurship or self-employment.

Graph 20. Employment Status by Gender (in percentage)

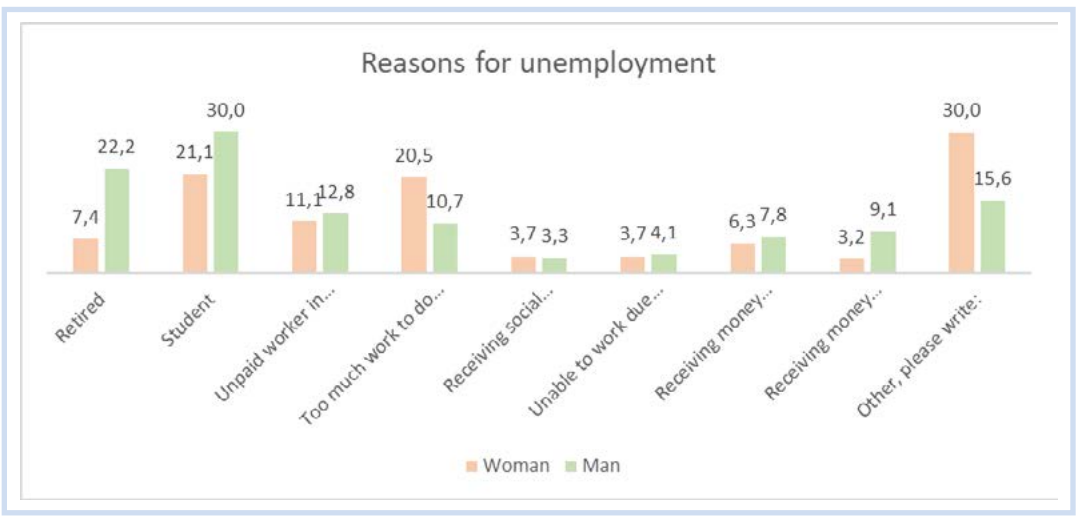


Reasons for Unemployment

From the 1,100 individuals who responded, 440 stated that they are unemployed. The reasons for unemployment are analyzed below:

Graph 21 presents the reasons for unemployment by gender, showing noticeable differences between women and men. For retirees, the percentage of men (22.2%) is significantly higher than that of women (7.4%), suggesting that men tend to retire more often or earlier. The percentage of students is similar for both women (21.1%) and men (30.0%), indicating high participation in education for both genders. Women are more likely to be unemployed due to housework and caregiving responsibilities (20.5% compared to 10.7% of men), reflecting the impact of family responsibilities on their employment. The percentages of those receiving social assistance and those unable to work are similar for both genders. Financial support from family members, both within and outside the country, is more common among men (7.8% and 9.1%) than women (6.3% and 3.2%), suggesting that men may rely more on financial assistance from family. In the "Other" category, women (30.0%) report a much higher percentage than men (15.6%), suggesting that other factors not included in the graph influence women more. Overall, the graph shows that family responsibilities and unpaid labor are a significant factor in unemployment for women, while men report more reasons related to retirement and financial support from family.

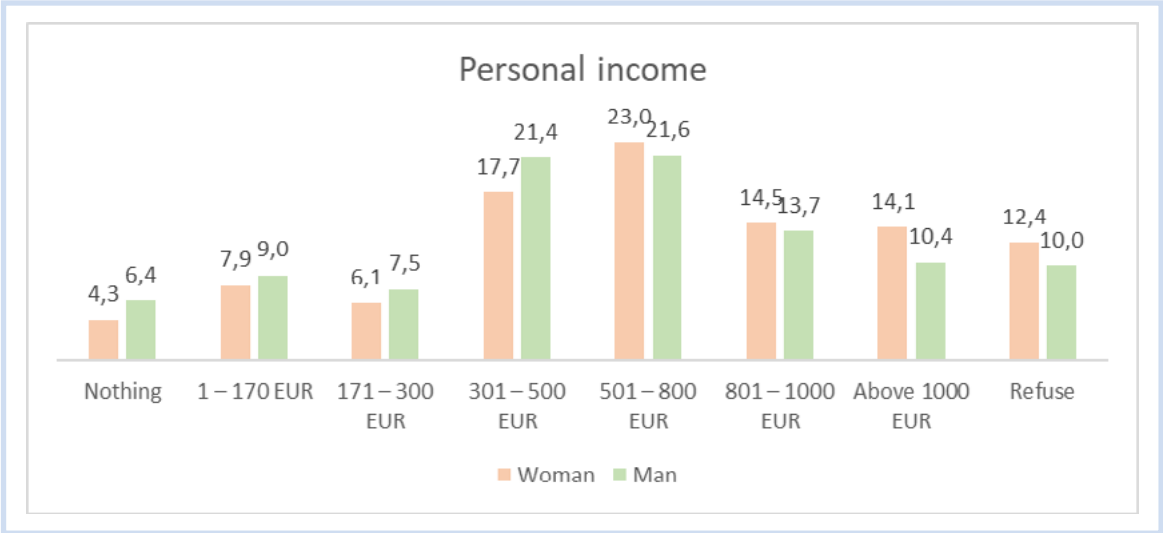
Graph 21. Reasons for Unemployment by Gender (in percentage):



Individual income

The data shows the distribution of monthly income for women and men from all sources, including financial support from others. The percentage of those with no income is higher for men (6.4%) than for women (4.3%). In the lower income categories (1 – 170 EUR and 171 – 300 EUR), men also report slightly higher percentages (9.0% and 7.5%) compared to women (7.9% and 6.1%). In the 301 – 500 EUR range, a larger proportion of men (21.4%) report this income level compared to women (17.7%). For the 501 – 800 EUR group, both genders are nearly equal (23.0% for women and 21.6% for men), indicating that this category represents a significant portion of the respondents. When it comes to higher incomes, 801 – 1000 EUR and over 1000 EUR, women report higher percentages (14.5% and 14.1%) compared to men (13.7% and 10.4%), suggesting that women are more likely to be in the higher income categories. The percentage of those who refuse to answer is higher for women (12.4%) than for men (10.0%). In general, men dominate in the lower income categories, while women tend to report higher incomes, indicating potential differences in employment structure or income sources between genders.

Graph 22. Individual Income by Gender (Percentage)



Family Income

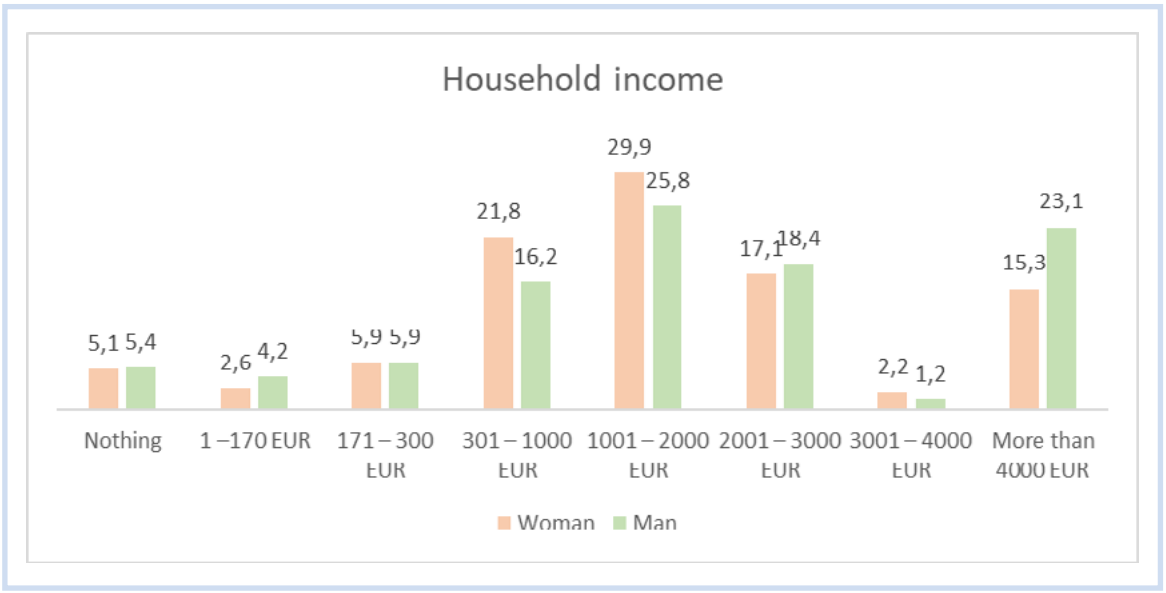
The chart displays the distribution of total household income by gender. The percentage of those without income is similar for both genders (5.1% for women and 5.4% for men). In the lowest income bracket (1 – 170 EUR), men (4.2%) report a higher percentage compared to women (2.6%), while in the 171 – 300 EUR category, both genders report the same percentage (5.9%). Regarding the 301 – 500 EUR bracket, a higher percentage of women (21.8%) report this income level compared to men (16.2%), suggesting that women may more frequently belong to middle-income households than men.

In the 501 – 800 EUR category, the percentages remain high for both genders, with women (29.9%) reporting a larger share than men (25.8%). For the 801 – 1000 EUR range, men (18.4%) report a higher percentage than women (17.1%), while for incomes above 1000 EUR, the percentage of men (1.2%) is lower compared to women (2.2%).

A significant difference is observed among those who refused to answer, with men (23.1%) showing a notably higher percentage than women (15.3%), which may indicate less willingness to share information about household income. Overall, the data suggests that most women's households

have middle-income levels (301 – 800 EUR), while men are more represented in the higher income category (801 – 1000 EUR) and in refusing to provide answers.

Graph 23. Household income by gender (in percentage).



Annex 4 – Questionnaire

(The questionnaire used for this study is available in this attachment.link: XXX)

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