



Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe
Réseau des Associations de Pouvoirs Locaux de l'Europe du Sud-Est

NALAS Gender Data

Report 2021

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About NALAS Gender Data Survey

NALAS conducts Gender Data Survey on a biannual base. The previous surveys were conducted in 2017 and 2019, based on the same methodology and questionnaire for the comparison purposes to be ensured. However, the base line survey was initiated in 2012 with a smaller number of indicators. The first part of the survey focuses on collecting general information about each of the economies¹ in which the NALAS member associations operate. In that context, the survey is related to the actual number of men and women Mayors, members of the Municipal Councils/Assemblies as well as the context with gender equality in the respective economies. The second part of the survey focuses on the gender equality within each of the NALAS member associations examining their internal structure, while the third part looks at the level of gender mainstreaming applied in policies of the associations.

Data Findings

Gender in local government management, policy making and budgeting

The survey gathered data on the number of women and men mayors in the NALAS member economies. The data show very low representation of women in the position of Mayor, actually, only 8,35% of the total number of mayors in the surveyed economies are women. The percentage of the of women mayors in the EU member states is 15,4%². The associations from North Macedonia, Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*³ and Romania reported percentage of women mayors below the NALAS average. Moldova has the highest percentage of 22.05% followed by Albania with 16.4% and Bulgaria with 14.34% of women Mayors (Figure 1).

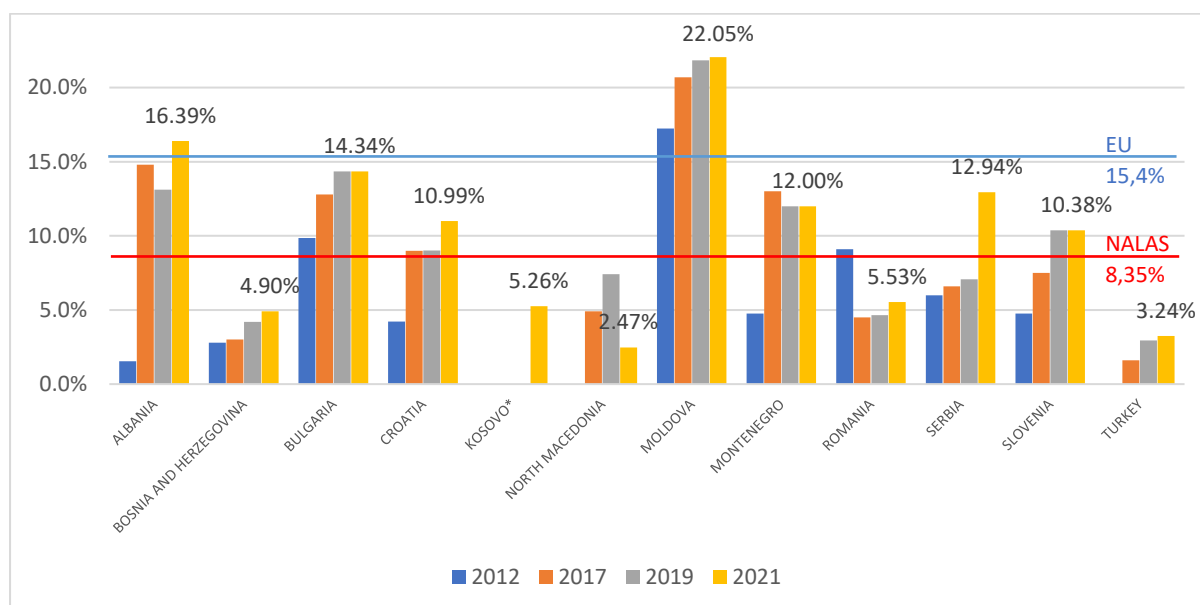


Figure 1 - % of Women Mayors

¹ Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and Turkey.

² https://cor.europa.eu/sk/events/Pages/Webinar_Gender-parity-in-politics_the-state-of-play.aspx (may 2020)

³ *This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

An increase is noted in the average percentage of women Mayors in SEE economies for 2021 compared to significantly lower average percentage of 7,55 % in 2019.

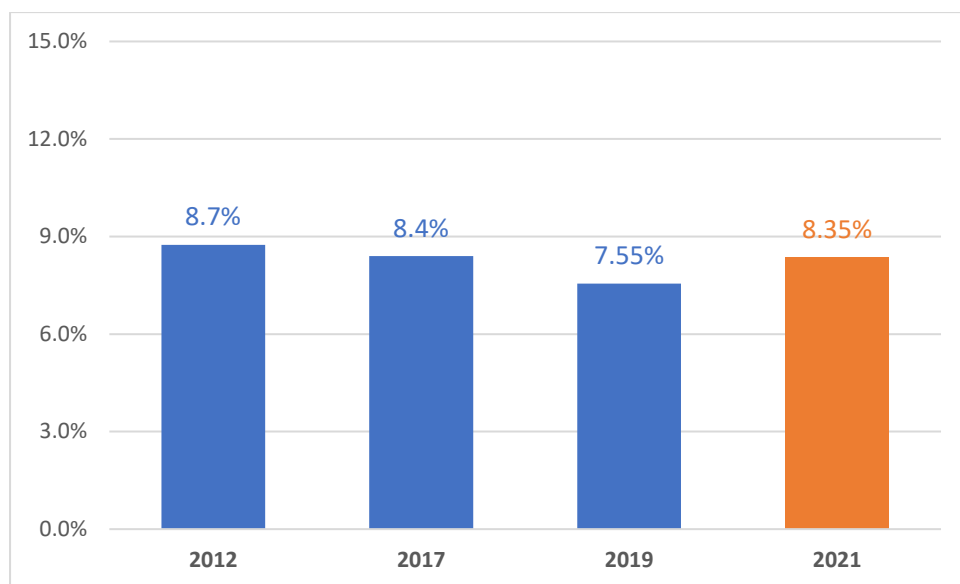


Figure 2 - Average % of women mayors in SEE

Out of 12 capital cities in the economies of the NALAS region, only 3 are managed by women mayors: Sofia in Bulgaria, Sarajevo in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Skopje in North Macedonia.

Hence, a modest increased average number of women is noted in the local councils/assemblies⁴ from 28,3% in 2019 to 28,5% in 2021 (Figure 3).

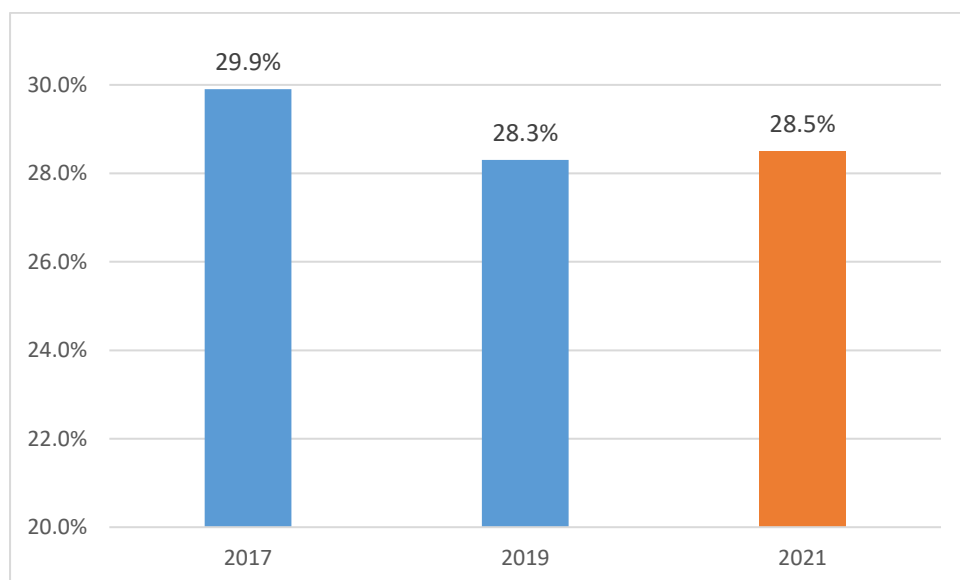


Figure 3 - Average % of Women members in the municipal councils/assemblies in SEE

The lowest percentage of women members in the municipal councils is detected in Turkey with 11%, and the highest percentage in Albania with 44%, North Macedonia, Kosovo and Moldova with 36%.

⁴ Data from Romania for 2021 are not provided

Women’s participation rate in other economies follows a trend at around 30%, particularly Slovenia with 33%, Montenegro 31%, Croatia 30% and Bulgaria with 27%.

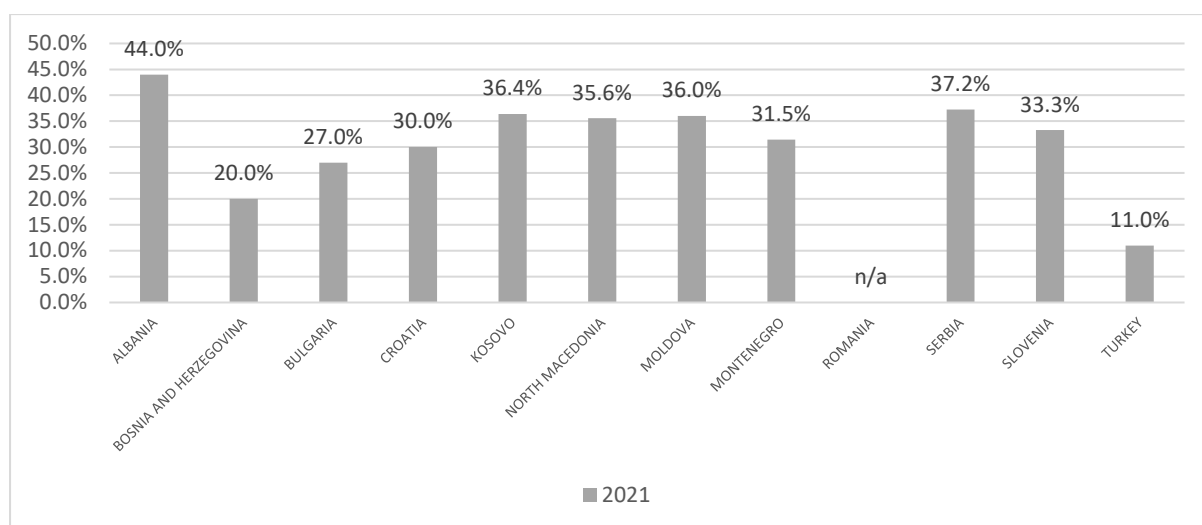


Figure 4 - % of Women members of Municipal Councils/Assemblies

In some economies, this increase can be directly linked to existing legislation that requires quotas for election lists or introduces quotas within political parties.

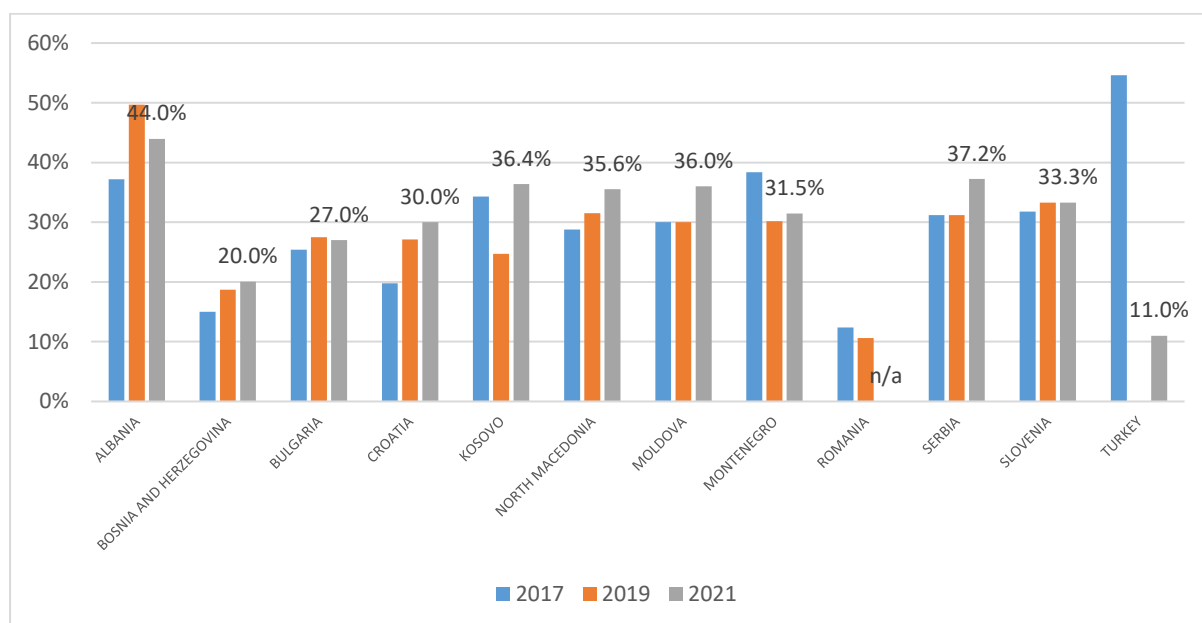


Figure 5 - % of Women members of Municipal Councils/Assemblies – comparison 2017/19/21

Progress towards Gender Equality

A key part in creating an enabling environment for gender equality within any given context is adoption of relevant laws and strategies for gender equality. These documents provide a significant basis for action in regard to gender mainstreaming and raise the importance of the issue of gender equality taking into account that they are adopted by the highest representative body in the respective economy.

In that context, it is encouraging to see that majority of the associations reported that Law on Gender Equality have been adopted. This was noted by 12 out of 14 Associations (Figure 6), which implies that only 2 out of 12 economies of SEE have no adopted law on gender equality (Republic of Srpska in BiH and Turkey).

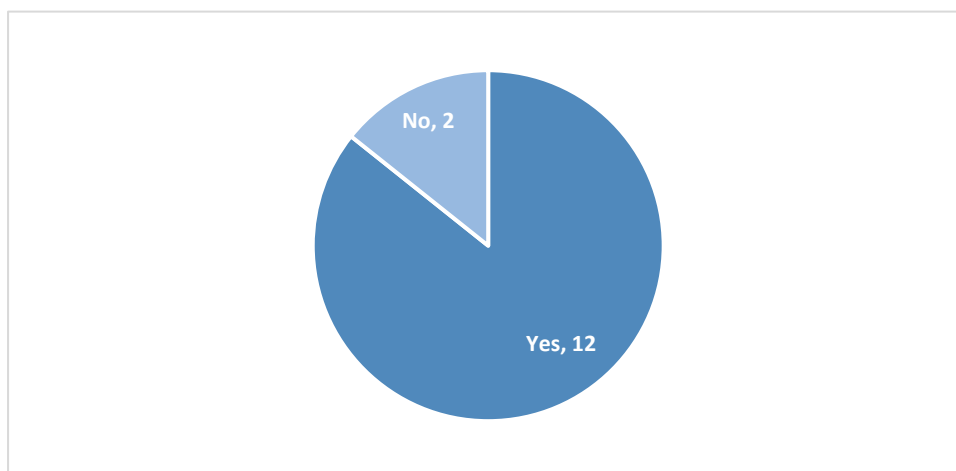


Figure 6 - Has your economy adopted Gender Equality Law?

Adopting Law on gender equality provides the legal basis for adoption of consequent strategic documents. The economies that have adopted a Law on gender equality usually follow it up to development and adoption of key strategic documents.

Most of the associations reported that gender strategic documents have been adopted, respectively 9 out of 14 (Figure 7). The associations from Croatia, RS-BiH, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Montenegro have no strategic documents in place.

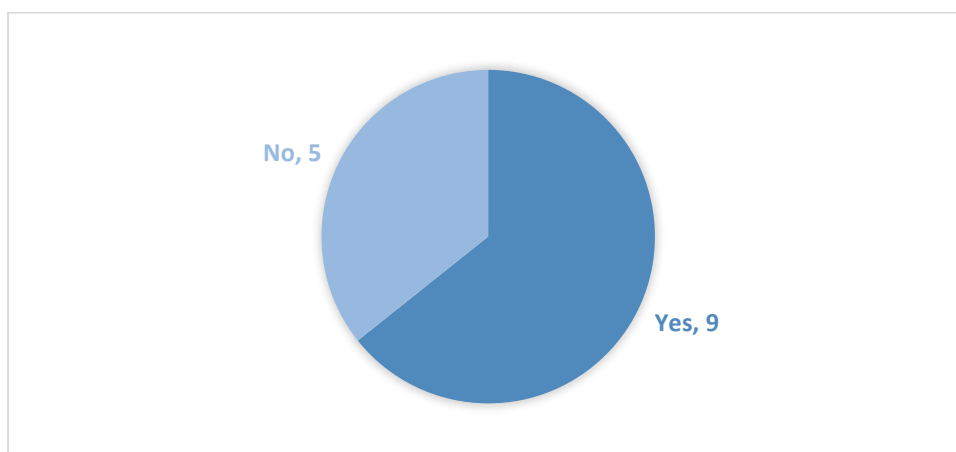


Figure 7 - Has your economy adopted Gender Equality strategic documents?

Gender responsive budgeting

The survey gathered data on adoption of Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) at central and local government level. Hence, assessing whether a country has adopted GRB at central and local government level proved to be based on individual understanding and perception of the person filling-in the questionnaire. This is reasonably challenging since in some economies GRB has been fully embraced and incorporated in the financial procedures of budget developing and adoption while in

others it has been piloted in a number of (limited) central government entities or local government units or is based on partial interventions in the budget process.

GRB at central and local government level

8 Associations from 7 out of 12 economies in SEE answered negatively in regards to whether their economy have adopted GRB at a central level. Moreover, half of the associations answered positively regarding the adoption of GRB at a local government level.

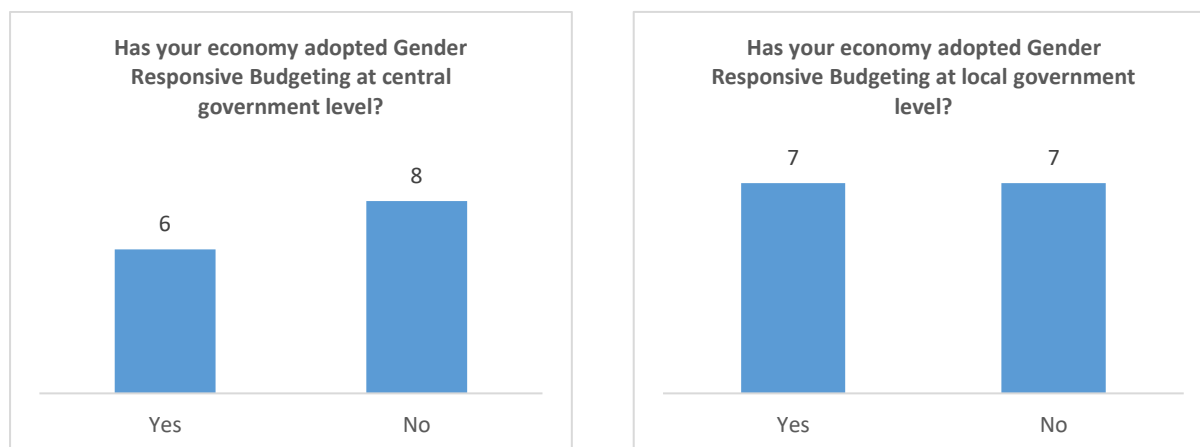


Figure 8 - Has your economy adopted Gender Responsive Budgeting and central and local level?

Gender provisions (indicators)

On the issue of whether the economy uses a budget circular which includes gender provisions, according to 8 out of 14 associations confirmed the budget circular/budget instructions at central government level include gender provisions, while only 7 out of 14 confirmed that their economies use a gendered version of the budget circular for local level budgeting.

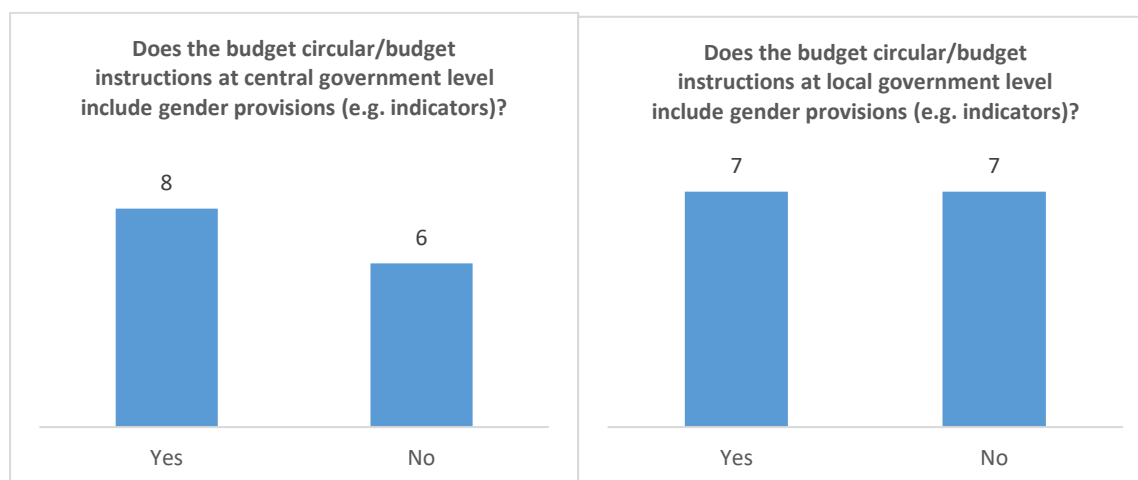


Figure 9 - Does the budget circular for central/local level include gender provisions?

GRB implementation

Based on the respondents of the questionnaire for 2021, a low percentage of 14.3 think that the process of the GRB implementation is successful, illustrating similar perception of the respondents in 2019 (15.4%). The GRB process of implementation is considered not successful by 35.7% of the respondents in 2021, contrariwise more than half of the respondents held the same view in 2019. Similarly, 50% in 2021 and 30.8% in 2019 deemed that the GRB implementation is somewhat successful.

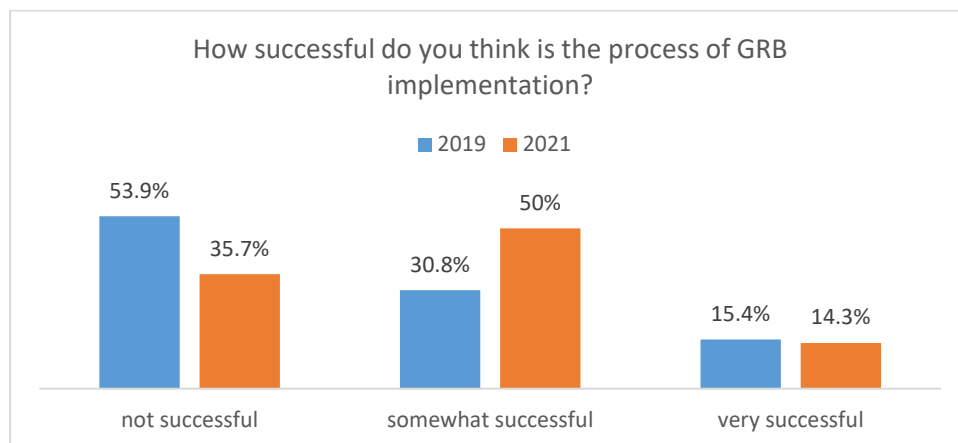


Figure 10 - How successful do you think is the process of GRB implementation?

This suggest that in the last two years implementation of GRB on local level was slightly improved which can be explained by the increased perceptions assessing GRB reforms as somewhat successful and decreasing the number of those who perceive it as not successful.

Gender participation in the Associations

Introducing gender in local government work takes two directions: i) increasing gender participation and ii) gender mainstreaming in policies and budgets. To this end the NALAS Member-Associations were initially surveyed on the number of women and men they employ.

The data gathered show that especially high percentage of women are employed in the Association of Municipalities and Towns of Slovenia and in the Association of Local Authorities of Albania, respectively 87.5%. Within four Associations there is equal balance of men and women employees (50%-50%). These figures lead to the conclusion that within more than half (64.7%) of Associations the administrative staff is predominantly women.

If we compare the aforementioned data with the data obtained in 2017 and 2019, we can conclude that the average percentage of women in administrative positions increased. (Figure 11)

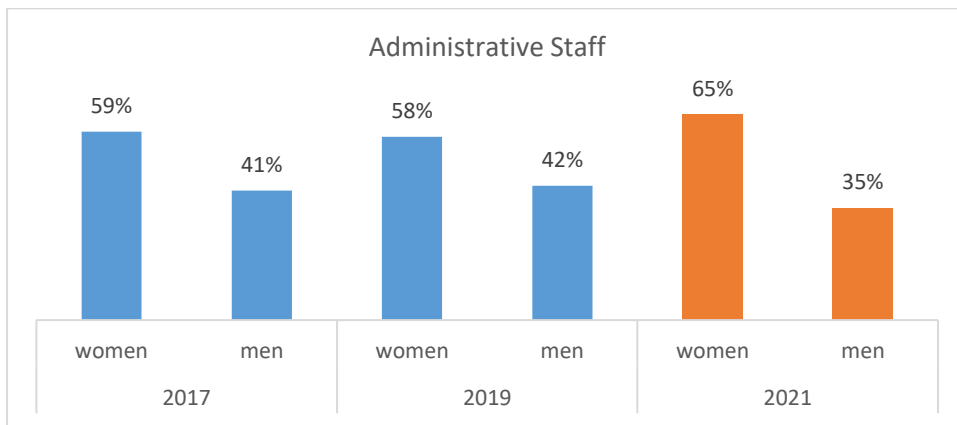


Figure 11 - Number of administrative staff in the Association (executive office)

General Assembly of the Association

The balanced participation of women in the work of the Associations does not guarantee that the decisions made by the Associations are reflecting needs of women, and in that respect are gendered, but how gender-aware and sensitive are those who make the decisions. What is more, the decisions are made by the general assemblies of the associations and therefore the participation of women in the assemblies was the next issue we were interested in.

The NALAS survey showed that only 12% of representatives in the General Assembly of the Associations in South-East Europe are women, and 88% are men, being still at a standstill in comparison with 2017 and 2019. (Figure 12)

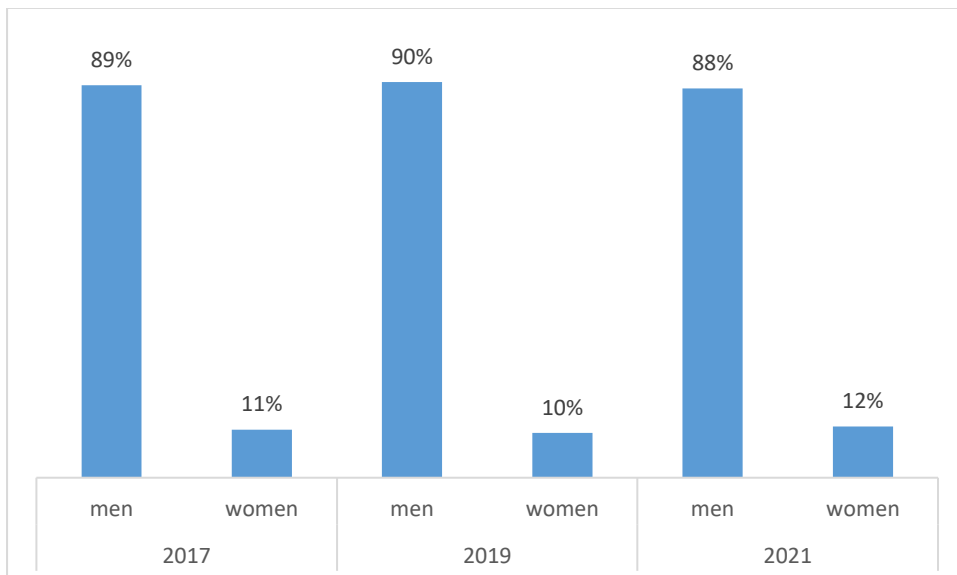


Figure 32 - Number of representatives in the General Assembly of the Association

Governing bodies of the Association

Another layer of decision making is made by the Governing bodies of the Association (Steering committee/Presidency/Oversight committee) and the survey reflects the low women's participation in them as well. The lowest percentage of women representatives in the Governing bodies of the Association of Communes of Romania (7.3%), the National Association of Municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria with 8.7% and the Association of the Units of Local Self-government of Republic of North Macedonia with 9.1% women representatives. The highest percentage of women representatives in the Governing bodies of the Association is attained by of Towns and Municipalities of Republic of Srpska with 54.5%. However, the 2021 survey detected a significant growth in women's participation in the Governing bodies of the Association compared to the data obtained in 2019.

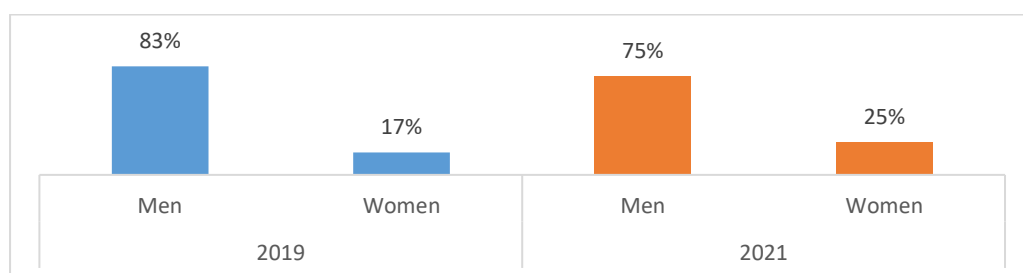


Figure 13 - Governing bodies of the Association (Steering committee/Presidency/Oversight committee)

Nonetheless, the data presented above suggests that the majority women work in the Associations, but the majority men make the decisions.

Leadership of the Associations

The same can be concluded in regard to the leadership of the Associations, out of 14 Associations, only three have confirmed having women as presidents, continuing similar trend from the previous years (Figure 14)

Three associations have confirmed that the last three presidents of the Association were women. The figure below shows no decline in terms of women in leadership of the associations in the period 2019-2021.

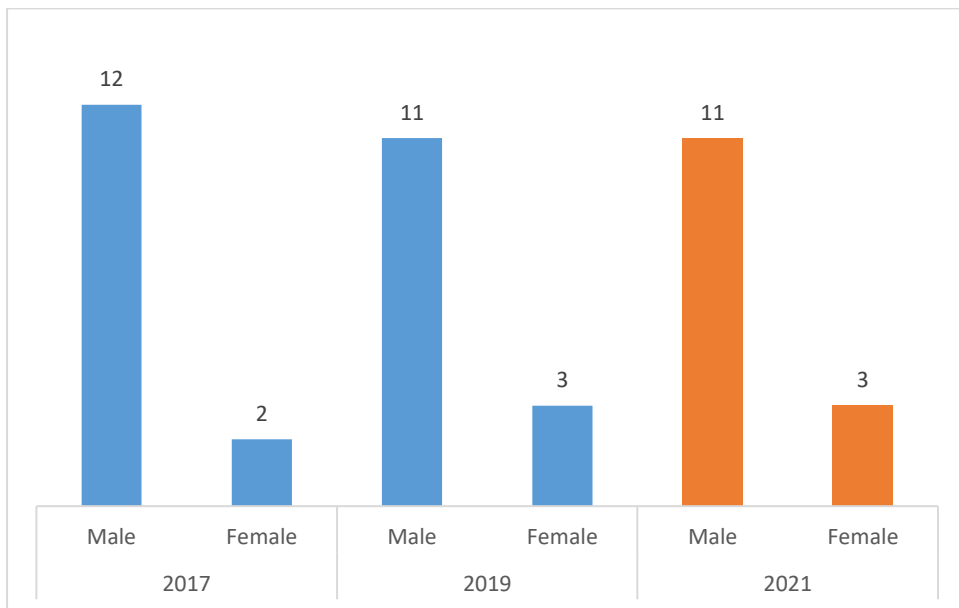


Figure 14 - President of the Association

The Vice Presidents of the associations are also predominantly men (Figure 15).

In addition, the 2021 survey showed that the representatives of the permanent bodies (commissions/committees/collegia/sekcije etc.) within the Association are dominantly men (57.14%) (Figure 16), with the balanced compositions of permanent bodies on a rise from year 2019 to 2021.

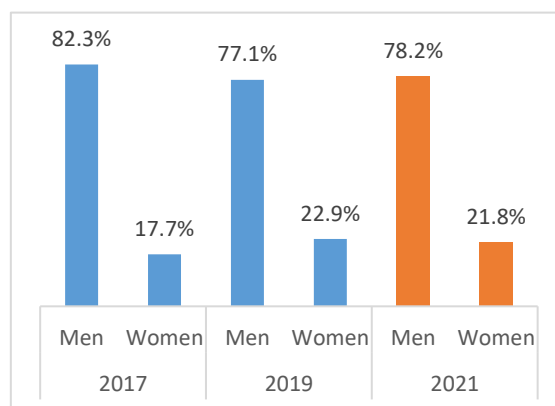


Figure 15 - Vice presidents of the Association

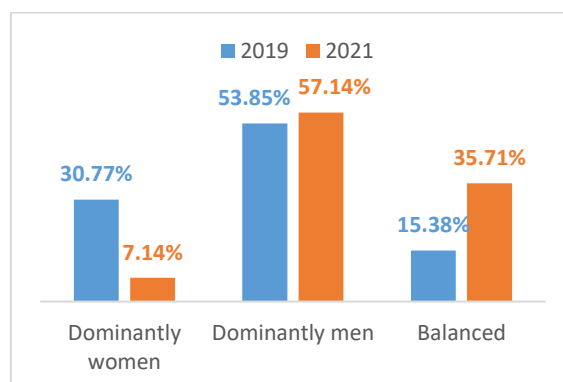


Figure 16 - representatives of the permanent bodies (commissions/committees/collegia/sekcije etc.) within the Association

Gender mainstreaming in policies of the Associations

Gender mainstreaming means reorganization, enhancement, development and evaluation of political processes in order to include the gender equality perspective in all policies, at all levels and in all phases by policy creators. Within organizations, it involves the integration of a gender perspective into the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures and spending programs, with a view to promoting equality between women and men, and combating discrimination⁵.

Hence, the survey undertook to detect how gender is mainstreamed in the structure and policies of the NALAS Member-Associations. Regarding the question "Is there a separate body within your Association whose work focuses on gender?", only 6 out of 14 have a separate body within the Association whose work focuses on gender. (Figure 17) Interestingly the survey detects a slight decline between 2019 and year 2021 in terms of special bodies on gender equality within associations.

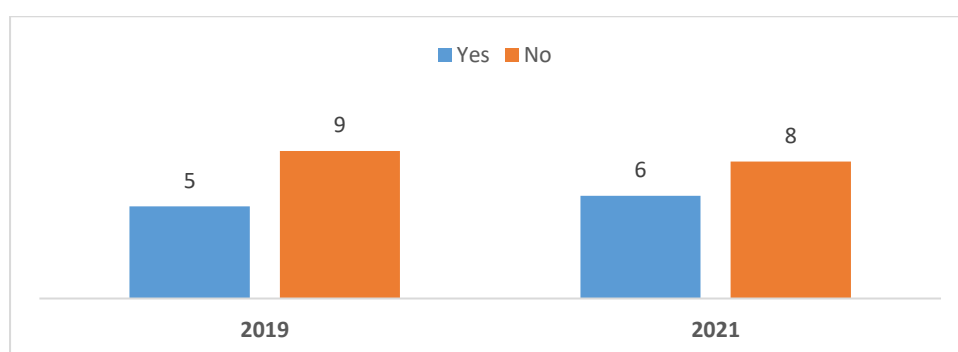


Figure 47 - Is there a separate body within your Association whose work focuses on gender?

Strategic document for Gender Equality

Those that have established such structures take the form of networks and committees, such as CALM Network of Women Mayors (Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova) and internal committees such as the Committee on Equality of Opportunity for Women and Men which is elected in every 2 years within the framework of MMU General Assembly. The Association of Communes of Romania has a body called Women's league within whose mandate is to defend the interest of women within the municipalities, ZELS has a Lobby group on gender (represented by mayors, councillors, ZELS staff) and AKM has a working group focused on gender. The 2021 survey identified four Associations that have also developed a separate internal document for gender equality, marking an increase compared to 2 in 2019. (Figure 18)

⁵ <http://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/what-is-gender-mainstreaming>

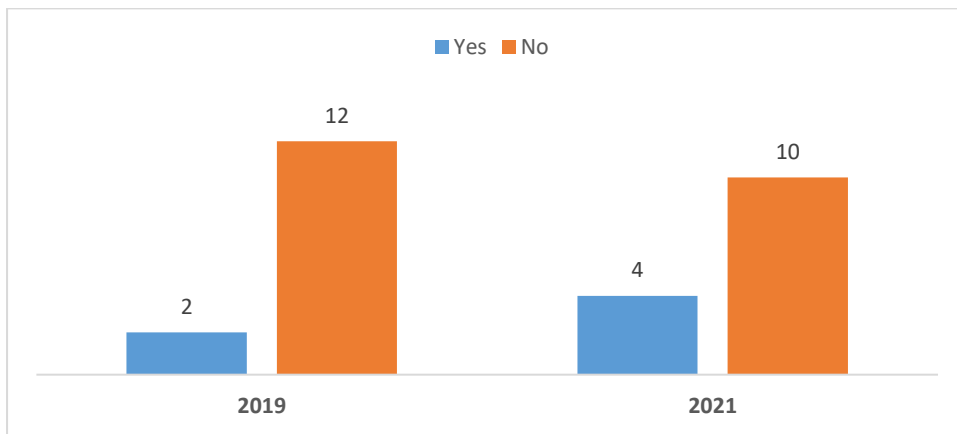


Figure 18 - Does the Association have a separate Strategic document for Gender Equality?

Strategic plans

All except one of the Member-Associations have developed Strategic Plans.

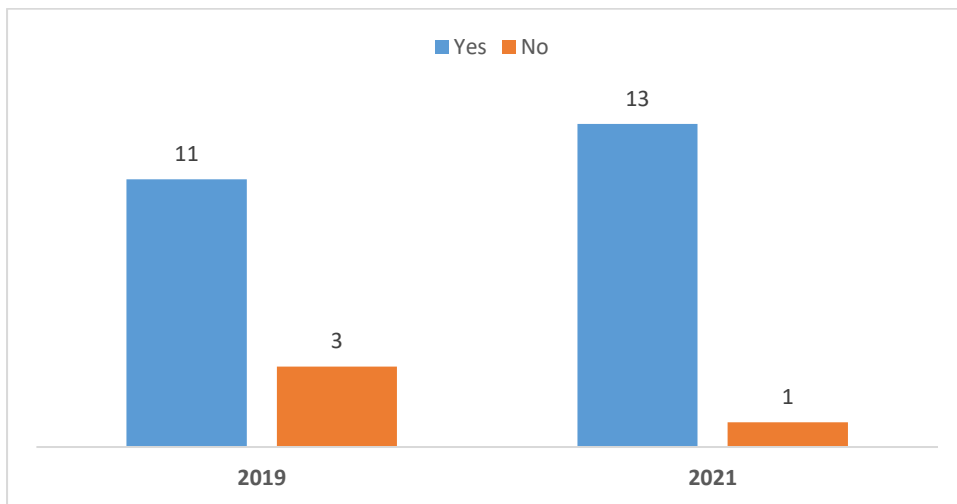


Figure 19 - Does the Association have a Strategic Plan?

However, it is important how gender is mainstreamed in the strategic plans. The 2021 NALAS survey shows that in 35.7% of the Associations have gender reflected in their values, 28.6% Associations have gender included as cross-cutting issue in all goals of the Association and 21.4% have gender specific goals. (Figure 20). If we compare these results with the data obtained in 2019, a vast difference is visible. More specifically gender in 2021 is less mainstreamed in the values and is not as much included as cross-cutting issue in all goals.

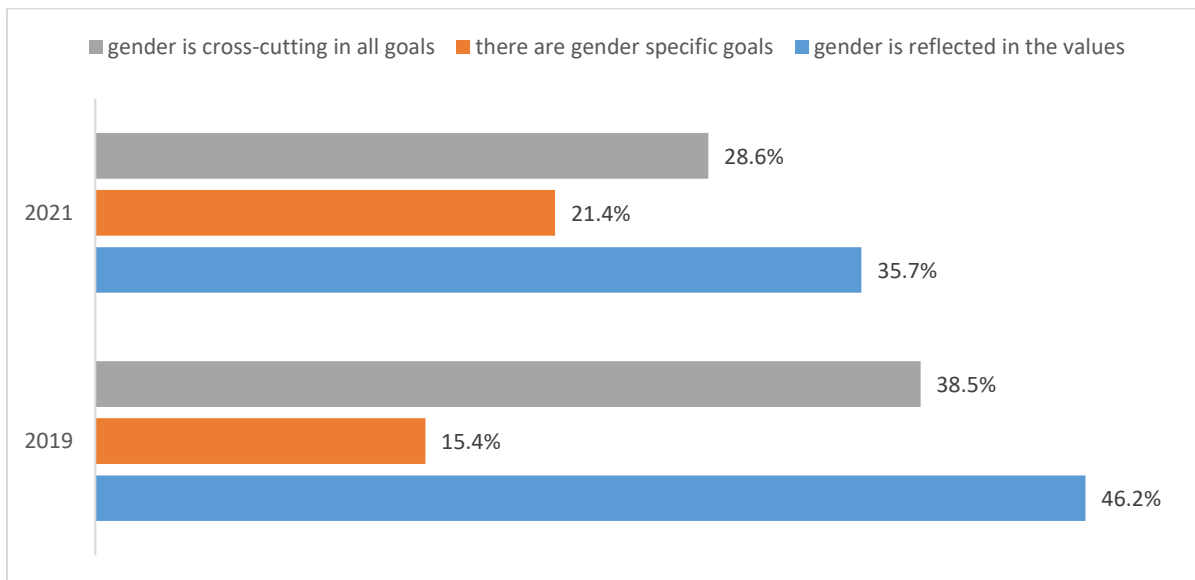


Figure 20 - Is gender mainstreamed within the Strategic Plan?

Each Association except one (92.9%), confirmed the development of annual work plans (Figure 21). Half of the Associations have mainstreamed gender within the action/work plans, representing an increase of 61.3% in comparison to the results from 2019.

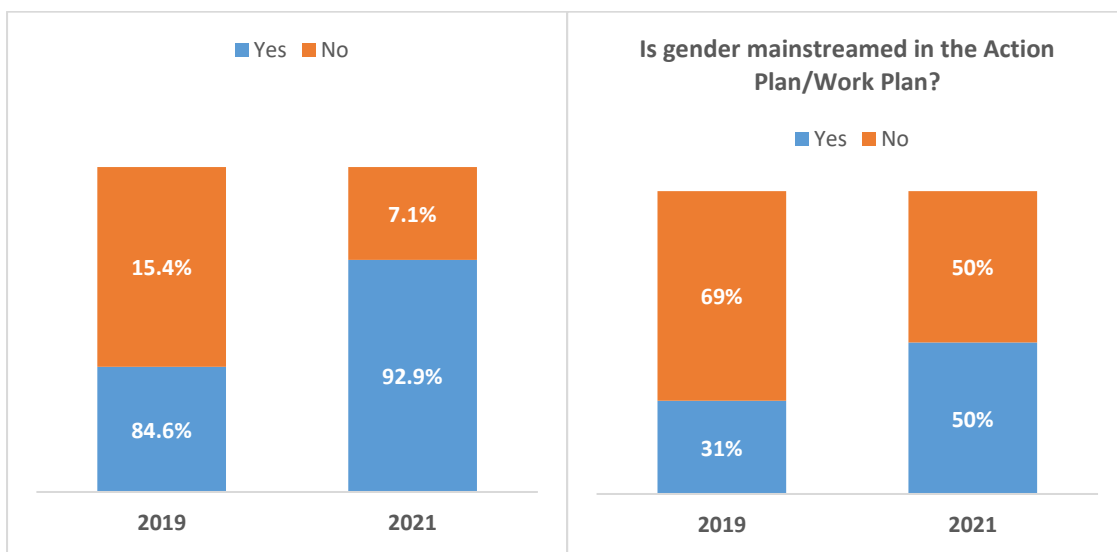


Figure 21 - Development of annual work plans & Is gender mainstreamed in the Action Plan/Work Plan?

Gender Equality focal point

For gender mainstreaming to happen there is a need of institutional mechanism that is knowledgeable and in position to introduce gender in all Association's policies. The recommended approach for this is to have a designated person – a gender equality focal point, which the majority of Associations have according to the NALAS 2021 survey. (Figure 22)

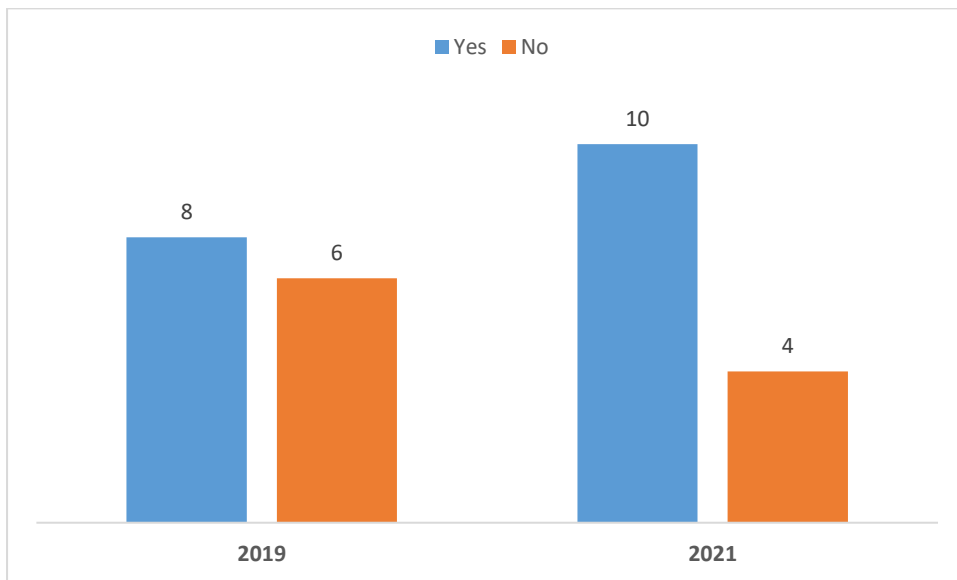


Figure 22 - Does the Association have a gender focal point?

Other policy documents for promotion of gender equality

Promotion of gender equality is not a specific angle applied by the communication strategies of more than half of the Associations as they do not have specific policy documents referring to promotion of gender equality. The NALAS survey shows that only 5 Associations have documents that promote gender equality, such as analyses, position papers, mapping and strategic documents etc.

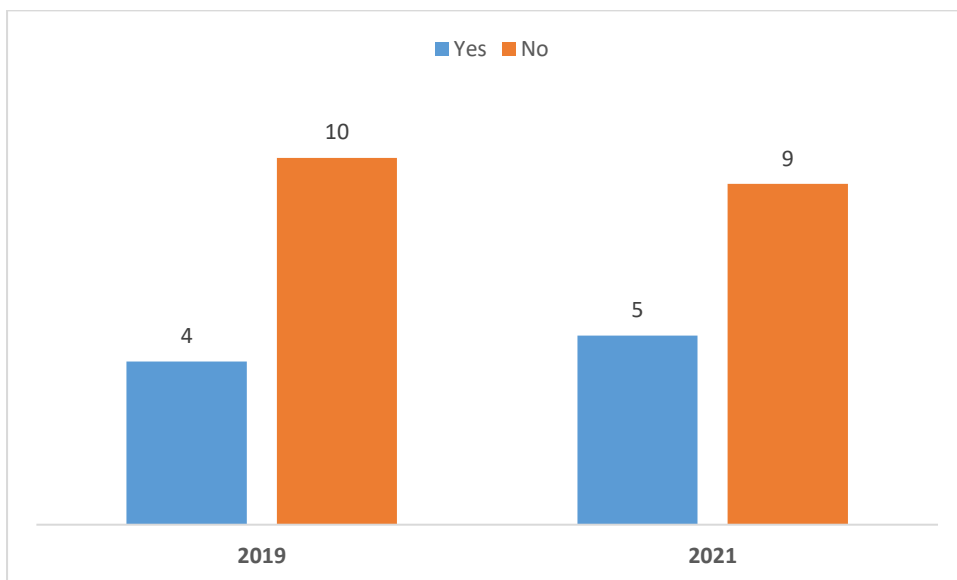


Figure 23 - Does the Association have other policy documents for promoting gender equality?

Conclusions

The NALAS 2021 survey depicts a modest increase in the average percentage of women Mayors in SEE economies from 7,5% in 2019 to 8,35% as well as increased number of women is noted in local councils for 2021. This upward trend can be directly linked to existing legislation that requires quotas for local elections of councillors and introduced quotas for women's representation in political parties' bodies.

The survey demonstrates that enabling environment for gender equality exists across SEE, as a majority of the countries from where the NALAS member associations come have adopted the Law on Gender Equality. Most of the associations have followed with the adoption of strategic documents. Half of the associations confirmed adoption of Gender Responsive Budgeting - GRB at local government level, as well as using budget circulars that include a gender perspective in the budgeting process. However, implementation of GRB on the local level is lacking as the NALAS survey observes modest improvement trends.

The NALAS survey depicts an increase in the average percentage of women in administrative positions of the associations, as well as a slight increase in the women representatives in municipal Assemblies. The NALAS 2021 survey also detected a significant growth in women's participation in the Governing bodies of the Association compared to the data obtained in 2019. However, the general conclusion remains that the majority of women are at the administrative level in the Associations, but in the majority, men make the decisions, as only 3 Associations are led by women, and slightly over 20% of the Associations have a woman Vice president.

In terms of gender mainstreaming in policies and budgets, there is a lot to be done, as less than half of the Associations have a separate body that focuses on gender equality, and only one-third of the Associations have adopted Gender equality policy document/strategy. In 2/3 of the Associations' Strategic Plans gender is mainstreamed, but there is a declining trend in incorporating gender in the values and objectives of the strategic plans. Half of the Associations have mainstreamed gender within the action/work plans, and 10 of them have appointed a gender focal point.

However, gender equality is not part of the communication strategies of more than half of the Associations.

Gender in local government management, policy making and budgeting

8.35% average women mayors in SEE – Moldova highest 22.05% / North Macedonia lowest 2.5%
3 capital cities managed by women mayors – Sofia, Sarajevo and Skopje
28,5% women municipal councilors – Turkey lowest 11%; Albania highest 44%

10 out of 12 economies in SEE have adopted Law on Gender Equality
5 out of 12 economies have no Gender Equality strategic documents in place

7 out of 12 economies in SEE have no Gender Responsive Budgeting adopted at central government level.
The Gender Responsive Budgeting is applied in local governments in half of the economies of SEE.

Gender participation in the Associations of Local Governments

65% of the administrative staff in the NALAS member Associations are women.

Only 12% of the representatives in the General Assembly of the Associations in SEE are women, and 88% are men.

Women constitute 25% of the representatives in the Governing bodies of the Association (Steering committee/Presidency/Oversight committee), whilst men 75%.

Only 3 out of 14 Associations have a women Presidents. Almost 80% of the Vice Presidents of the Associations are men.

Only 35% of the Associations' permanent bodies (commissions/committees/collegia/sekcije etc.) are gender balanced, the rest are dominantly men.

Gender mainstreaming in policies of Associations

In 6 out of 14 Associations a separate body whose work focuses on gender is established.

The vast majority of the Associations (10 out of 14) do not have a separate Strategic document for Gender Equality.

Gender is reflected in Strategic Plans of 8 of the Associations.
50% of the Associations mainstream gender in their Action/Work Plans.

In 10 out of 14 Associations a gender focal point is assigned.