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Gender Quotas and Women's Substantive Representation in the Local Councils of Albania

RESEARCH REPORT

Gender Quotas and Women's Substantive Representation in the Local Councils of Albania

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Prepared by: Marsela Dauti, PhD and Geldona Metaj, MSW*

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Summary

This study examines the relationship between gender quotas and women's substantive representation in the local councils of Albania. Drawing on interviews with 410 councilors, and the observation and recording of 30 council meetings, this study provides insights into the following aspects: (1) individual characteristics (e.g., age, profession, income); (2) previous experience and goal in the local council; (3) participation in the election campaign of 2015; (4) knowledge of local governance and rural development; (5) participation in the meetings of the local council; (6) decision-making initiatives in the local council; (7) role and experience in the local council; (8) perception of decision-making power; (9) attitudes toward gender quotas; (10) reflecting the problems of women and girls in the local council agenda; (11) public investments; (12) relationships with councilors; (13) collaboration in the local council; (14) collaboration with community actors; (15) future plans; and (16) participation in capacity-building programs. Below is a summary of the main findings:

- The number of mandates ranged from 1 to 7 ($M = 1.58$, $SD = 1.01$). Men ($M = 1.9$, $SD = 1.21$) reported longer experience in the council than women ($M = 1.27$, $SD = .63$).
- The mean number of years in the party was 9.34 ($SD = 8.03$, range: 1-35). Men ($M = 10.71$, $SD = 8.19$) reported longer experience in the party than women ($M = 8.00$, $SD = 7.65$).
- The mean value of age was 42.26 ($SD = 11.73$, range: 19-72). The mean value of age for women ($M = 38.86$, $SD = 11.64$) was lower than for men ($M = 45.62$, $SD = 10.84$).
- The majority of councilors (55.64 percent) had college education. Women were more likely than men to have a Master or doctoral degree. Around 30 percent of women ($n = 60$) had a Master degree; meanwhile, the percentage for men was close to 21 ($n = 42$).
- The majority of councilors (77.83 percent) were married. Men were more likely than women to be married. Specifically, 87.06 percent of men ($n = 175$) and 68.37 percent of women ($n = 134$) were married.
- The majority of women were teachers (28 percent), followed by economists (22 percent) and lawyers (8 percent). Meanwhile, the majority of men were economists (21.29 percent), followed by teachers (15.35 percent) and lawyers (14.36 percent).
- The mean value of monthly income was 67,016 ALL ($SD = 78,155$, range: 0-700,000). Men ($M = 85,375$, $SD = 103,387$) reported higher levels of income than women ($M = 53,162$, $SD = 47,406$).
- The majority of women elected by gender quotas had college education, were party members, members of commissions, and economists. Women who were elected by gender quotas, compared to their non-quota counterparts, had less experience in the council as well as party experience. Also, they were younger, had lower levels of income, and were less involved in commissions.
- 33.50 percent of councilors ($n = 137$) reported that they were council members in the past (i.e. before the local elections of 2015). Specifically, 19.02 percent of women ($n = 39$) and 48.04 percent of men ($n = 98$) reported that they were council members in the past.

- 26.06 percent of women (n = 43) who did not have previous experience in the council reported that they never thought of becoming a member of the local council but they were proposed because of gender quotas. 34.91 percent of men (n = 37) who did not have previous experience in the council reported that they never thought of becoming a member of the local council but their colleagues proposed them.
- 45.12 percent of councilors reported that they had relatives involved in politics. Women were more likely than men to report that they had relatives involved in politics. More than half of women (117 or 56.80 percent) reported that their relatives were involved in politics; 33.33 percent of men (n = 68) reported that their relatives were involved in politics.
- Councilors reported the following sources of support during the election campaign of 2015: community members (75.61 percent), party members (51.46 percent), spouse (45.12 percent), relatives (42.93 percent), and party leaders (39.51 percent). Women were more likely than men to rely on the spouse. Specifically, 54.37 percent of women (n = 112) and 35.78 percent of men (n = 73) relied on their spouse. Women were also more likely than men to rely on party leaders. 49.03 percent of women (n = 101) and 29.90 percent of men (n = 61) reported that they relied on party leaders.
- Women were less likely than men to be involved in the election campaign of 2015. Specifically, 82.52 percent of women (n = 170) and 93.14 percent of men (n = 14) were involved in the last year's election campaign. The main reason for not being involved in the election campaign of 2015 is that "election results do not depend on campaign involvement." Other explanations include: the lack of time, difficulties in reaching remote areas, lack of experience in running election campaigns, and *obligime familjare* (lit: family obligations).¹
- Councilors were more likely to report better knowledge of duties and competencies of the municipal council than functions and competencies of the municipality. Women reported lower levels of knowledge than men.
- The majority of councilors (240 or 58.54 percent) reported that they take the floor 1 – 2 times. Women were less likely than men to report that they take the floor more than 2 times. 18.14 percent of men (n = 37) and 6.31 percent of women (n = 13) said that they take the floor more than 5 times.
- The majority of councilors (192 or 46.83 percent) reported that they speak 3 – 5 minutes. Women were less likely than men to report that they speak more than 2 minutes. Around 5 percent of women (n = 11) reported that they never speak.
- The average council meeting lasted 88 minutes (range: 4 – 234; *SD* = 60). The average number of words spoken by councilors per meeting was 4575 (range: 356 – 19947; *SD* = 3988). The average number of words spoken by men was 3.3 times higher than the average number of words spoken by women. Specifically, the average number of words spoken by women was 1063 (range: 0 – 7120; *SD* = 1376) and the average number of words spoken by men was 3512 (range: 356 – 12827; *SD* = 2818). The proportion of words spoken by women ranged between 0 and 0.63. There were 5 instances of meetings (out of 30) where women did not speak

¹ "Family obligations" indicates that women are expected to fulfill several tasks, such as taking care of children, doing the laundry, ironing clothes, cleaning the house, shopping, cooking, and washing dishes.

any word.

- 14 council meetings were attended by community members. Overall, 72 community members (30 women and 42 men) attended council meetings. In the councils where meetings were held, the average number of community members was 5 (range: 1 – 19; $SD = 5.26$). Community members spoke up only in 5 meetings. The number of community members who took the floor during council meetings was 14. The average number of words spoken by community members in the 5 meetings was 325 (range: 8 – 936; $SD = 386$). The following groups participated in meetings: the unemployed, businessmen, farmers, students, representatives of local organizations, members of the citizens' commission, and a group of citizens contesting a decision of the council.
- 27.80 percent of councilors ($n = 114$) reported that they have initiated draft decisions. Men were more likely than women to report that they have initiated draft decisions. Specifically, 19.90 percent of women ($n = 41$) and 35.78 percent of men ($n = 73$) reported that they have initiated draft decisions. The mean value of draft decisions proposed by women ($M = 1.64$, $SD = .79$) was lower than the mean value of draft decisions proposed by men ($M = 2.21$, $SD = 1.28$). Women have been more responsive to health services, especially for women, business support for women, persons with disabilities, LGBT, and youth. Meanwhile, men have been more responsive to disasters and emergencies, transportation, tourism, honorary titles, culture, sports, and animals.
- Approximately, 37 percent of councilors ($n = 43$) who reported that they have initiated draft decisions said that such decisions have focused on women. There were statistically significant differences between women and men. Specifically, 48.89 percent of women ($n = 22$) and 28.77 percent of men ($n = 21$) who have initiated draft decisions reported that such decisions have focused on women's status.
- Women were more likely than men to report that they have initiated draft decisions that focus on improving women's status. Women have proposed diverse draft decisions that focus on leisure activities for women, parks, kindergartens, employment opportunities, economic aid, business support, support for women in rural areas, and social housing. Meanwhile, the draft decisions initiated by men have mostly focused on employment opportunities, economic aid, and social housing. Even when women and men focused on the same issue (e.g., social housing, economic aid), women paid greater attention to women's concerns and the impact of draft decisions on women.
- Approximately, 46 percent of councilors ($n = 188$) have submitted requests to the municipality or the secretary of the local council. Men were more likely than women to submit requests: 51.47 percent of men ($n = 105$) and 40.29 percent of women ($n = 83$) reported that they have submitted requests. Requests have mostly focused on education, access to information, public investments, disasters and emergencies, public services, tax support, economic aid and social assistance, transparency and verifications.
- Approximately, 76 percent of councilors ($n = 310$) reported that they meet with community members. Men were more likely than women to report that they meet with community members. Specifically, 66.99 percent of women ($n = 138$) and 84.31 percent of men ($n = 172$) reported

that they meet with community members. Councilors in rural areas, compared to those in urban areas, were more likely to report that they meet with community members.

- Women were more likely than men to rely on party leaders for information. Specifically, 37.38 percent of women ($n = 77$) and 25.12 percent of men ($n = 51$) reported that they rely on party leaders for information. Men were more likely than women to rely on community members for information. 95.07 percent of men ($n = 193$) and 84.95 percent of women ($n = 175$) reported that they rely on community members for information.
- The mean value of perceived power in the council ($M = 3.46$, $SD = .92$) is lower than in commissions ($M = 3.77$, $SD = .98$) and party ($M = 3.90$, $SD = .92$). Compared to women ($M = 3.79$, $SD = .91$), men ($M = 4.0$, $SD = .93$) reported greater power in the party.
- More than 90 percent of councilors ($n = 375$) reported that they agree with gender quotas. Women were more likely than men to agree with gender quotas. Specifically, 98.54 percent of women ($n = 203$) and 84.31 percent of men ($n = 172$) reported that they agree with gender quotas. Perceptions of women and men tend to converge on the impact of gender quotas on political tensions. There was more skepticism on the impact of gender quotas on the quality of governance.
- In explaining their attitudes toward gender quotas, women referred to “women’s qualities,” opportunities introduced with quotas, and the representation of women’s interests. Similarly with women, men referred to “women’s qualities” and the representation of women’s interests. However, men did not view gender quotas as a mechanism of breaking women’s

exclusion from politics. Rather, they viewed gender quotas as a mechanism of undermining meritocracy.

- Men were more likely than women to discuss economic development, local businesses, water supply, agriculture and farming, public investments, law and order, tourism, sports, and road maintenance service. Women were more likely than men to discuss the topic of education.
- Women were more likely than men to report domestic violence as a problem faced by women and girls in the community: 58.74 percent of women ($n = 121$) and 38.24 percent of men ($n = 78$) reported the problem of domestic violence. Women were also more likely than men to report the problem of poor access to health services.
- Men were more likely than women to demand the improvement of water supply systems, sewage systems, irrigation systems, roads, and sports center. Women were more likely than men to demand the improvement of schools and kindergartens.
- Women reported better relationships with councilors than men. Compared to men, women reported better relationships with councilors who shared the same gender and belonged to the opposition.
- 40.49 percent of councilors ($n = 166$) reported that they have participated in collaborative initiatives. The difference between women and men was not statistically significant. 37.86 percent of women ($n = 78$) and 43.14 percent of men ($n = 88$) reported that they have participated in collaborative initiatives. The focus of women’s collaborative initiatives extends to domestic violence, business support for women, women’s organization, and gender budgeting.

- 51.81 percent of councilors (n = 86) who have participated in collaborative initiatives said that such initiatives have addressed the problems faced by women and girls in the community. Women were more likely than men to report that they have participated in such initiatives. 65.38 percent of women (n = 51) and 39.77 percent of men (n = 35) reported that they have participated in collaborative initiatives to address the problems faced by women and girls in the community.
- 48.78 percent of councilors (n = 200) reported that their council has organized public hearings.
- 32.52 percent of councilors (n = 130) reported that they have collaborated with civil society organizations. The difference between women and men was not statistically significant. 32.68 percent of women (n=67) and 32.34 percent of men (n = 66) reported that they have collaborated with civil society organizations.
- 54.39 percent of councilors (n = 223) have participated in training sessions. Women were more likely than men to participate in training sessions. 64.08 percent of women (n = 132) and 44.61 percent of men (n = 91) reported that they have participated in training sessions. Councilors in rural areas, compared to those in urban areas, were less likely to participate in training sessions.
- 90.29 percent of women (n = 186) and 80.88 percent of men (n = 165) reported that they would like to participate in training sessions.
- More than half of council meetings (16 out of 30 meetings) were not attended by community members. In the councils where meetings were held, the average number of community members was 5 (range: 1 – 19; *SD*=5.26). The average number of women and men was 2 (range: 0 – 11; *SD* = 3) and 3 (range: 0 – 8; *SD* = 2.54), respectively. The following groups have participated in meetings: the unemployed, businessmen, farmers, students, representatives of local organizations, members of the citizens' commission, and a group of citizens contesting a decision of the council.

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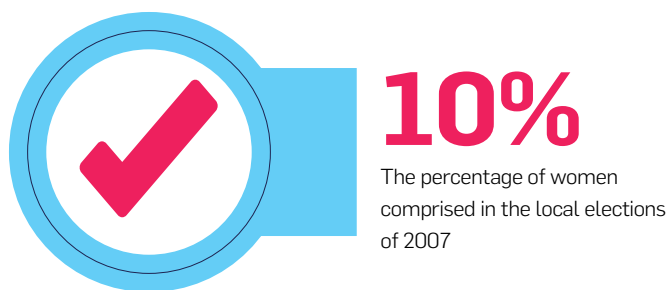
SIGNIFICANT PROPORTION OF WOMEN IN LOCAL COUNCILS

A recent decision of the Albanian Parliament has established that women must comprise 50 percent of local council candidates (Electoral Code, 2008, revised in 2015).

In the local elections of 2015, 49.36 percent (17937 out of 36341) of candidates were women. Elections resulted into a significant proportion of women in local councils.

In 2015, women comprised 34.80 percent (555 out of 1595) of local council seats (Central Election Commission, 2015). This result constitutes a divergence from the past. In the local elections of 2007 and 2011, women comprised 10 percent and 12.2 percent of council seats, respectively (Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, 2011). The percentage of women in local councils has increased almost threefold. But what difference

will women's numbers make in local councils? Evidence shows that the increased presence of women will have a positive impact within the council and the broader community (Beckwith & Cowell-Meyers, 2007; Mansbridge, 1999). A critical mass of women will result into better representation of women's interests, improved communication and dialogue, increased opportunities for collaboration, greater engagement of women and girls in



local decision-making, and improved access to public goods and services, especially water and education. Furthermore, the increased presence of women will enhance accountability and transparency, strengthen local democracy, and promote gender equality (Beckwith & Cowell-Meyers, 2007; Cowell-Meyers & Langbein 2009; Pande & Ford, 2011; Phillips, 1995; Swers, 1998). For instance, Beaman et al. (2010) found that reservation for women leaders in the rural councils of India led to increased investments in water infrastructure. Furthermore, political reservation led to increased participation of women in council meetings and responsiveness to women's concerns. Franceschet & Piscopo (2008) found that in the case of Argentina, gender quotas resulted into a significant increase in the number of women's rights bills introduced into the Congress. However, opponents of gender quotas argue that women's numbers will not make a difference. Indeed, gender quotas might reinforce patronage politics. One of the

concerns is related to "the quality" of women elected by gender quotas. A commonly held assumption is that women elected by quotas are not qualified. Franceschet & Piscopo (2008) argue that gender quotas are associated with a "label effect," which reinforces the belief that women elected by quotas are less experienced and independent than men. This belief affects how women are received by their colleagues and the general population. The authors emphasize that the labeling of "quota women" creates double standards because women, not men, must demonstrate that they are capable and challenge clientelism. This reinforces gender bias and also undermines women's ability to organize and affect change as a group. However, many authors have challenged the assumption that women elected by gender quotas are not qualified (Allen, Cutts, & Campbell, 2016; Beer & Camp, 2016; Nugent & Krook, 2016). In studying the impact of gender quotas in Mexico, Beer & Camp (2016) found that women had more graduate education and legislative experience than men.

Another concern is that party leaders do not select women to promote gender equality and strengthen party democracy. Quite the contrary, they select women to preserve the status quo. Hence, the decision making of women might reflect the interests of party leaders rather than community interests (Beer & Camp, 2016; Childs, 2006; Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2010; Krook, 2014). Gender quotas also decrease political opportunities for men, which might lead to hostility and opposition, such as withholding information and ridiculing women during meetings (Franceschet & Piscopo, 2008; Krook, 2015, 2016). One of the main explanations for such attitudes and behaviors is that gender quotas threaten the existing distribution of political power. As Krook (2016) mentions, gender quotas “threaten the reigning rules, practices, and norms of political life, long premised upon women’s exclusion” (p. 279).

Franceschet & Piscopo (2008) argue that to gain a better understanding of the impact of gender quotas, it is important to differentiate between policy processes and outcomes. The authors found that in the case of Argentina, gender quotas have improved women’s substantive representation² as process (e.g., introducing bills that address women’s issues, establishing connections with women’s organizations, putting women’s issues on committees’ agenda), not outcome (e.g., transforming political practices, enacting new policies). This is because “quotas do not change the institutional features and gender bias in the legislative environment, and therefore do not enhance women’s ability to transform policy outcomes” (p. 396). This study will differentiate between processes and outcomes. To capture

processes, councilors will be asked about their contribution in council meetings (e.g., participation in council meetings, draft decisions proposed, public investments demanded) and the outcome of their contribution (e.g., draft decisions approved by the council, public investments approved, collaborative initiatives undertaken).

Only a few studies have been conducted on women’s representation in the local councils of Albania (see for example, Dauti & Gjermeni, 2015; Institute of Political Studies, 2015; UNDP, 2015). A study conducted by UNDP (2015) before the local elections of 2015 found that the relationship between the proportion of women in local councils and their perceived decision-making power was not positive. Councilwomen were more likely to report *raising their voice* in councils with a high proportion of women. Yet, the relationship between the proportion of women and *having the voice heard* was not statistically significant. To explain the low levels of decision-making power, women referred to their limited competencies in the council, the lack of funds, the influence of party leaders, and the poor organization of women as a group. These findings raise questions on the difference that the newly introduced *kuota gjinore* will make. How will the increased presence of women affect local representation? What are the characteristics of women elected by gender quotas? How do their characteristics differ from the characteristics of their non-quota counterparts? What is the contribution of councilors in decision-making processes and outcomes? What differences exist between women and men? What attitudes do councilors hold toward gender quotas?

To address these questions, a mixed methods study was conducted in 30 local councils. Women and men were compared on several

2 Substantive representation refers to “the effect of quotas on the performance and effectiveness of women politicians, on agenda building and on policy outcomes” (Dahlerup & Freidenvall, 2010, p. 407).



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Were the number of local councils where a mixed methods study was conducted . Women and men were compared on several aspects

aspects, such as previous experience and goal in the local council, participation in the election campaign of 2015, knowledge of local governance and rural development, participation in the meetings of the local council, decision-making initiatives in the local council, role and experience in the local council, perception of decision-making power, attitudes toward gender quotas, relationships among councilors, collaboration in the local council, collaboration with community actors, future plans, and participation in capacity-building programs.

This study builds on the research project conducted by UNDP before the local elections of 2015. However, there are several differences between the two studies. First, the current study taps into many dimensions of representation, not just decision-making power. Several additional modules were included in the questionnaire: previous experience and goal in the local council, contribution in the electoral campaign of 2015, knowledge of local

governance, attitudes toward gender quotas, public investments demanded and approved by the local council, and collaboration with community organizations. Also, this study focuses on the impact that the increased presence of women has on community participation during council meetings. One of the arguments is that women who hold leading positions serve as role models for other women (Beaman et al., 2012; Beaman et al., 2010; Pande & Ford, 2011; Phillips, 1995). Beaman et al. (2010) found that political reservation in India led to increased participation of women in village meetings. To capture the impact of gender quotas on community participation in decision making, information was collected on community attendance of council meetings. Second, this study draws on multiple methods of data collection, including interviews, participation observation, and data recording. Meanwhile, the study conducted in 2015 focused on interviews alone. One of the shortcomings of focusing on self-reports is that they might not correspond to the actual

behavior. For instance, councilors might report a high level of decision-making power; meanwhile, they might not speak during council meetings. To address this concern, this study draws on multiple methods of data collection.

Third, this study focuses on women and men. This is important because the increased presence of women does not only affect women as a group, but also men. Do men welcome the increased presence of women or do they act strategically to undermine women's power? What differences and similarities exist between women and men in local councils?

Research findings challenge some of the assumptions on the characteristics of women, such as women are not qualified or they do not represent the interests of women and girls in the local council.

In addition, they raise several concerns on women's route into local councils and their reliance on party leaders. Gender quotas are often used to sustain political patronage and clientelism rather than strengthen party democracy and promote gender equality. The study provides several suggestions for local, national, and international actors committed to gender equality and local development in Albania. Findings call for greater efforts in monitoring the implementation of gender quotas and translating women's numbers into better representation in decision making.

The rest of the report is divided into the following sections. Section 2 introduces the methodology; section 3 presents research findings; section 4 provides a summary of the main conclusions; and section 5 introduces the suggestions provided by councilors.

COMBINING BOTH QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE APPROACHES

The study was conducted in 30 local councils³. Below is the description of the study design, sampling, methods, measurement, and analysis. A mixed methods design was used to address research questions. One of the advantages of the mixed methods design is that it allows an in-depth examination of representation. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches – interviews, participant observation, and data recording – were combined.

Design

A mixed methods design was used to address research questions. One of the advantages of the mixed methods design is that it allows an in-depth examination of representation. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches – interviews, participant observation, and data recording – were combined. Different data sources were triangulated with the purpose of enhancing research rigor. One of the disadvantages of interviews is that respondents might provide socially desirable answers to the

questions. For instance, when asked about the number of times that they speak during council meetings, councilors might overreport the number due to social desirability. The attendance of council meetings offers a more objective way of measuring the contribution of women and men. *Concurrent procedures* were used to integrate both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 2003). Specifically, all types of data were integrated to explain representation in local councils.

³ See Appendix 1 for the list of local councils.

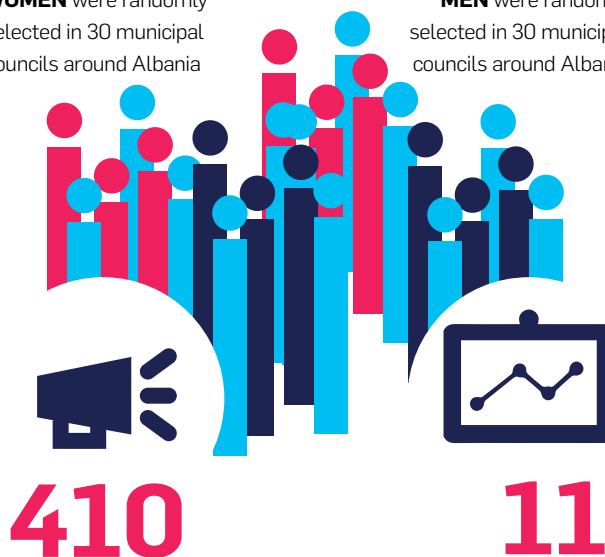
SAMPLING



WOMEN were randomly selected in 30 municipal councils around Albania



MEN were randomly selected in 30 municipal councils around Albania



INTERVIEWS (206 interviews with women and 204 interviews with men) were conducted in the selected councils.

TRAINING SESSIONS were organized with interviewers during the period July – September 2016. 54 interviewers (32 women, 22 men) were involved in the process

Sampling

Thirty municipal councils were randomly selected. Then, 220 women were randomly selected in municipal councils. The same number of men (220) was selected in each council. The sampling frame was obtained from the Central Election Commission.

Councilors were contacted on the phone. They were introduced to the purpose of the

study and then asked to schedule an interview. When the selected councilor was not part of the council anymore, he or she was replaced with one of the colleagues in the same council. This procedure, again, was based on random selection. Informed consent was obtained from each councilor.

Overall, 97 replacements were made (22.04 percent of councilors were replaced). These

efforts resulted in a sample of 206 women and 204 men (response rate = 93.18 percent). The majority of women who were replaced (overall, 37 women were replaced) said that they did not want to participate in the study. Usually, they said that they do not have time or they agreed to participate but then changed their mind. Others left the community, found a job in the municipality, became the head of the council, or had health problems.

A higher number of men was replaced (overall, 60 men were replaced). There were more instances of men who left the council because they found a job in the municipality or administrative units. Others did not want to participate in the study, left the community, or had health problems. There were instances of men who did not live in Albania anymore; they lived in the United States, Greece, or Macedonia. There were also instances of men who were in prison for dealing drugs, stealing energy, or failing to submit the form of decriminalization. In the field, interviewers reported several instances of men leaving big parties and joining small parties to increase their chances of being elected in the council.

Methods

Three methods of data collection were used: interviews, participant observation, and recording of council meetings.

Interviews. 410 interviews (206 interviews with women and 204 interviews with men) were conducted in the selected councils. 11 training sessions were organized with interviewers during the period July – September 2016. 54 interviewers (32 women, 22 men) were involved in the process. Interviews were conducted during the period August – October 2016.

The interviewer and the interviewee shared the same gender. Studies show that interviewer's gender affects responses (see e.g., Huddy et al., 1997; Walker, 1992). This is especially the case in societies characterized by traditional division of gender roles (Benstead, 2014). We were concerned that the answers to certain questions, such as "Do you agree with gender quotas?" or "Do you think it is your responsibility to represent the interests of women and girls in the council?", would be affected by interviewer's gender. For example, if the interviewer was a woman, men would say that they agree with gender quotas or they view it as their responsibility to represent the interests of women and girls in the council, even if they thought the opposite.

Attendance of council meetings. 30 meetings were attended in 11 councils, which were selected to represent regional diversity.⁴ Two methods of data collection were used: data recording and observation.

Recording council meetings. Eleven individuals were trained on the process of data recording. Prior permission to record council meeting was received by the head of the council. Meetings were recorded during the period August – December 2016.

Meeting data were recorded and then transcribed to gain an in-depth understanding of councilors' role during council meetings and the differences that exist by gender. One of the main advantages of using recorded data is that objective measures of representation can be used. For instance, councilors might report that they advance women's concerns during council meetings. However, their responses might be influenced by social desirability and

⁴ See Appendix 1 for the list of local councils.

therefore they will not reflect what happens in the council. This concern was addressed by recording the meetings.

Observing council meetings. Individuals who attended council meetings were asked to distribute a list of participants, which was used to collect the following information on individuals who attended council meetings: gender, institution, and position in the institution. The same list was distributed in each council meeting. Individuals were also asked to keep notes on each meeting where they would record the following information: number of participants, number of women participants, topics discussed by women and men, and differences on the topics discussed by women and men.

Participant observation was used to gain insights into how women and men deliberate during council meetings. For instance, how often do women and men speak? How many people attend meetings? Who initiates discussions?

Measurement

Data were collected on the following aspects: (1) individual characteristics (e.g., age, profession, income); (2) previous experience and goal in the local council; (3) participation in the election campaign of 2015; (4) knowledge of local governance and rural development; (5) participation in the meetings of the local council; (6) decision-making initiatives in the local council; (7) role and experience in the local council; (8) perception of decision-making power; (9) attitudes toward gender quotas; (10) reflecting the problems of women and girls in the local council agenda; (11) public investments; (12) relationships with councilors;

(13) collaboration in the local council; (14) collaboration with community actors; (15) future plans; and (16) participation in capacity-building programs.

Individual characteristics. Information was collected on the number of mandates, political party representing in the council, number of years as a member of the political party, position in the party and party structures, participation in commissions, types of commissions, position in commissions, age, education level, civil status, number of children, profession, employment status, organization, position in the organization, monthly income, minority member, beneficiary of social assistance for persons with disabilities, and name and type of the administrative unit where the councilor resides.

Previous experience and goal in the local council. Councilors were asked if they were council members before the local elections of 2015, the type of council (urban vs. rural), goal in the council, and if their family members or relatives were council members or were involved in politics.

Election campaign of 2015. Councilors were asked about the support they received during the local elections of 2015, who provided the support (e.g., the spouse, party members, party leaders, community members), if they were involved in the electoral campaign, the intensity of involvement, and barriers to involvement.

Knowledge of local governance. Councilors were asked to assess their knowledge of local governance on 5-point Likert scales (1 = *I do not have knowledge at all* and 5 = *I have a lot of knowledge*). Specifically, they were asked on knowledge of duties and competencies of the

municipal council, functions and competencies of the municipality, and social and economic development of rural areas.

Participation in council meetings. To measure participation in council meetings, councilors were asked to report their presence in meetings, speech participation (i.e. the number of times they take the floor) and speech length (i.e. the number of minutes they speak) in a council meeting.

Decision-making initiatives in the local council. Councilors were asked if they have initiated draft decisions, the number of draft decisions, and the focus of draft decisions. They were also asked if they have initiated draft decisions that focus on enhancing the social and economic status of women, the number of draft decisions, and the focus of draft decisions.

Role and experience in the local council. Councilors were asked if they have submitted a request to the municipality or the secretary of the local council, the type of request, the focus of requests, the number of requests, and the number of responses. Councilors were also asked to evaluate the response that they have received. Questions focused on their experience in the community: if they have organized meetings in the community, the barriers they face, the amount of money they spent (per month) on organizing community meetings. Other questions focused on the sources of information that they rely on during council meetings (e.g., party leaders, social media, and journals). Questions also focused on the types of activities that councilors have accomplished during their mandate (e.g., participating in protests, participating in awareness-raising campaigns, and lobbying).

Perception of decision-making power.

Interviewers introduced the definition of decision-making power and then asked councilors to assess their power in the council, commission, and political party on 5-point Likert scales (1 = *I do not have power at all* and 5 = *I have a lot of power*). The definition of decision-making power was based on the study of 2015. In the study, women were asked to provide their own definition of power. One of the frequently used definition of power was “freely expressing what you think and having the power to act.” This definition was used in the study.

Attitudes toward gender quotas. Councilors were asked if they agree or disagree with the gender quota of 50 percent. They were also asked if they agree or disagree with the following statements: The gender quota of 50 percent “Has resulted into the selection of unqualified women,” “Has damaged men’s interests,” “Will improve relationships between councilors,” “Will result into a better representation of community interests,” “Will improve the situation of women and girls,” “Will lead to open and transparent governance,” “Will reduce political tensions in the council.”

Reflecting the problems of women and girls in the local council agenda. Councilors were shown a list of topics that are usually discussed in council meetings. Then, they were asked to select the topic for which they have taken the floor. Examples of topics include economic development, health services, education, public services, environment, agriculture, public investments, tourism, and culture. Then, councilors were shown a list of problems that women and girls face in Albanian communities and they were asked to select the five main problems that women and girls face in their community. This question was followed by another one that focused on the problems of

THE ASPECTS ON DATA COLLECTION



PARTICIPATION IN CAPACITY-BUILDING PROGRAMS.
FUTURE PLANS
COLLABORATION WITH COMMUNITY ACTORS
COLLABORATION IN THE LOCAL COUNCIL
RELATIONSHIPS WITH COUNCILORS
PUBLIC INVESTMENTS
REFLECTING THE PROBLEMS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN THE LOCAL COUNCIL AGENDA
ATTITUDES TOWARD GENDER QUOTAS
PERCEPTION OF DECISION-MAKING POWER
ROLE AND EXPERIENCE IN THE LOCAL COUNCIL
DECISION-MAKING INITIATIVES IN THE LOCAL COUNCIL
PARTICIPATION IN THE MEETINGS OF THE LOCAL COUNCIL
KNOWLEDGE OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
PARTICIPATION IN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS
PREVIOUS EXPERIENCES
INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS

women and girls for which councilors have taken the floor in the council.

Public investments. Councilors were shown a list of public works (e.g., water supply, health centers, hospitals, irrigation systems, transportation, kindergartens, schools) and they were asked about the public works that they have demanded to be implemented during 2015 – 2016. Then, they were asked to indicate those public works that have been approved by the municipal council.

Relationships with councilors. To capture relationships within the council, councilors were asked to assess their relationships in

the council on 5-point Likert scales (1 = *very tense* and 5 = *very good*). Specifically, they were asked to assess their relationship with councilors (women and men separately) who belong to the same political party, councilors (women and men separately) who belong to the same political alliance, councilors (women and men separately) who belong to the opposition, all councilors despite their gender and the political party that they belong to. Councilors were also asked if they agree or disagree with a set of statements. For instance, “I speak up in the council,” “My voice is heard,” “Councilors interrupt me while I share my opinions,” “Councilors use sexist language.”

Collaboration in the local council. Councilors reported if they have participated in collaborative initiatives (e.g., a group of councilors propose a draft decision or establish connections with local organizations), the number of initiatives, the focus of initiatives, and the actors with whom they have undertaken collaborative initiatives. They were also asked if they have participated in collaborative initiatives that address the problems faced by women and girls in the community (e.g., unemployment, domestic violence, and the lack of social housing), the number of initiatives, the focus of initiatives, and the actors with whom they have undertaken collaborative initiatives.

Collaboration with community actors. Councilors were asked if the local council has organized public hearings with community actors (e.g., citizens, representatives of civil society organizations, and businesses) and the focus of public hearings. Councilors were asked if they have initiated the organization of public hearings with community actors, the focus of public hearings, community actors involved, and the number of public hearings. They were also asked if they have collaborated with civil society organizations, the focus of collaboration, and the number of organizations that they have collaborated with.

Future plans of running for office. Questions focused on councilors' plans of running for office.

Capacity-building programs. Councilors provided information on their participation in training programs and their training needs.

Analysis

Quantitative and qualitative analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between gender quotas and substantive representation.

Univariate analysis was conducted to obtain a general understanding of the sample, for instance, the average age, number of mandates, and years in the council. Bivariate analysis, including chi-square, t-test, and correlation, was conducted to look at two variables simultaneously. A comparison between women and men was conducted for each variable. Regression analysis was conducted to predict substantive representation from individual-level characteristics.

Council meetings were transcribed and then analyzed. Transcripts were typed up following a predetermined format that identified the speaker's title (e.g., head of the council, councilor, government official), number (or name) of speaker, gender, and then the dialogue. Pauses and emotions were also indicated in the text. The text was analyzed for the proportion of words spoken by councilors and community members. Furthermore, the proportion of words spoken by councilors was divided by gender.

The information collected on community participation in council meetings was analyzed on the number of community actors attending meetings, the number of community actors attending meetings by gender, and position and organization of employment.

THE STRATEGY OF MEN TO PRESERVE THEIR POSITION

While the majority of women (37.86 percent) were members of the Socialist Party, the majority of men (38.24 percent) were members of small parties. This difference is explained by the deliberate strategy of men to preserve their position in the local council. They joined small parties to increase their chances of being elected.

The number of mandates ranged from 1 to 7 ($M = 1.58$, $SD = 1.01$). Men ($M = 1.9$, $SD = 1.21$) reported longer experience in the council than women ($M = 1.27$, $SD = .63$). The difference between women and men was statistically significant (Table 2).

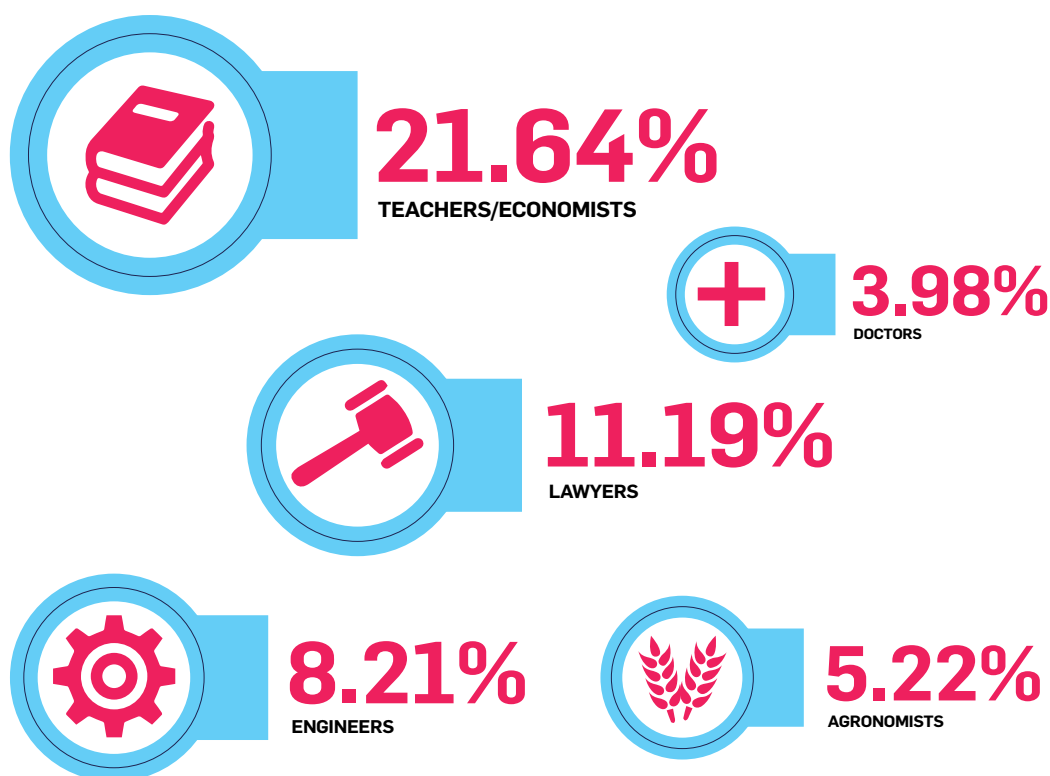
Individual-level characteristics

The majority of councilors (32.20 percent) were members of the Socialist Party, followed by the Socialist Movement for Integration (22.2 percent), and the Democratic Party (18.78 percent). However, there was a statistically significant difference between women and men

(Table 4). While the majority of women (37.86 percent) were members of the Socialist Party, the majority of men (38.24 percent) were members of small parties. This difference is explained by the deliberate strategy of men to preserve their position in the local council. They joined small parties to increase their chances of being elected.

The mean number of years in the party was 9.34 ($SD = 8.03$, range: 1-35). Men ($M = 10.71$, $SD = 8.19$) reported longer experience in the party than women ($M = 8.00$, $SD = 7.65$). The difference between women and men was

COUNCILORS BY PROFESSION



statistically significant (Table 2). 52.47 percent of councilors ($n = 202$) were party members, followed by unit head, coordinator, secretary, and vice head. Around 8 percent ($n = 31$) of councilors did not hold any position in the party.

The mean number of commissions was 2.20 ($SD = .77$, range: 1-6). The difference between women and men was not statistically significant (Table 2). The mean number of commissions for women and men was 2.21 ($SD = .75$, range: 1-4) and 2.19 ($SD = .80$, range: 1-6), respectively. The majority of councilors (65.26 percent) were members of commissions. Differences between women and men were not statistically significant (Table 2).

The mean value of age was 42.26 ($SD = 11.73$, range: 19-72). The difference between women and men was statistically significant (Table 2).

The mean value of age for women ($M = 38.86$, $SD = 11.64$) was lower than for men ($M = 45.62$, $SD = 10.84$).

The majority of councilors (55.64 percent) had college education. Women were more likely than men to have a Master or doctoral degree. Around 30 percent of women ($n = 60$) had a Master degree; meanwhile, the percentage for men was close to 21 ($n = 42$). Men were more likely than women to have a high school degree. Six percent of women ($n = 12$) had a high school degree. Meanwhile, this percentage for men was 18.63 ($n = 38$). The difference between women and men was statistically significant (Table 4).

The majority of councilors (77.83 percent) were married. Men were more likely than women to be married. Specifically, 87.06 percent of men ($n = 175$) and 68.37 percent of women ($n = 134$) were married. The relationship between

gender and civil status was statistically significant (Table 4). The number of children ranges from 0 to 4 ($M = 1.64$, $SD = 1.15$). The average number of children for men ($M = 1.93$, $SD = 1.14$) was higher than for women ($M = 1.35$, $SD = 1.10$).

The majority of councilors were teachers (21.64 percent), economists (21.64 percent), lawyers (11.19 percent), engineers (8.21 percent), agronomists (5.22 percent), and doctors (3.98 percent). The majority of women were teachers (28 percent), followed by economists (22 percent) and lawyers (8 percent). Meanwhile, the majority of men were economists (21.29 percent), followed by teachers (15.35 percent) and lawyers (14.36 percent) (Table 1).

The mean value of monthly income was 67,016 ALL ($SD = 78,155$, range: 0-700,000). Men ($M = 85,375$, $SD = 103,387$) reported higher levels of income than women ($M = 53,162$, $SD = 47,406$). The average income of men is 1.6 times higher than the average income of women. The difference was statistically significant (Table 2).

24 councilors (5.88 percent) reported that they are minority members. 5 councilors (1.23 percent) reported that they benefit social assistance for persons with disabilities. The majority of councilors (67.97 percent) lived in urban areas. The percentage of women and men who live in urban or rural areas was almost the same (Table 3).

Comparing women elected by gender quotas with other councilors on individual-level characteristics

To obtain a better understanding of the characteristics of women elected by gender

quotas, comparisons were drawn between them and their non-quota counterparts. The following differences were observed:

- A greater percentage of women elected by gender quotas belonged to the Socialist Movement for Integration. Overall, 22.20 percent of councilors ($n = 91$) belonged to the Socialist Movement for Integration. The percentage for women and men was 25.73 ($n = 53$) and 18.63 ($n = 38$), respectively. Meanwhile, the percentage for women who were elected by gender quotas was 35.11 ($n = 33$). The percentage for women who were not elected by gender quotas was 17.86 ($n = 20$).
- A smaller number of women elected by quotas held the position of commission head. Overall, 18.11 percent of councilors ($n = 73$) held this position. The percentage for women and men was 16.67 ($n = 34$) and 19.60 ($n = 39$), respectively. Meanwhile, the percentage for women elected by gender quotas was 10.75 ($n = 10$). The percentage for women who were not elected by gender quotas was 21.62 ($n = 24$). The same conclusion holds for the position of vice head.
- The majority of women elected by gender quotas were economists, followed by teachers and lawyers. Meanwhile, the majority of women who were not elected by gender quotas were teachers, followed by economists and lawyers.
- A greater percentage of women who were elected by gender quotas came from rural areas. 32.03 percent of councilors lived in rural areas. Meanwhile, the percentage of women elected by gender quotas who lived in rural areas was 39.36. The percentage of women who were not elected by gender quotas was 26.79.
- Women elected by gender quotas had

less experience in the council than men or women who were not elected by gender quotas. The average number of mandates for women elected by gender quotas was 1.01 (SD = .10). The average number of mandates for men and women who were not elected by gender quotas was 1.90 (SD = 1.21) and 1.48 (SD = .79).

- Women elected by gender quotas had less party experience than men or women who were not elected by gender quotas. The mean value for women elected by gender quotas was 4.06 (SD = 3.95). Meanwhile, for women who were not elected by gender quotas was 11.21 (SD = 8.42). However, there were instances of women who had a long party experience but joined the council for the first time in 2015.
- Women elected by gender quotas were less involved in commissions. The mean value of commissions for women elected by gender quotas was 1.98 (SD = .61). Meanwhile, for women who were not elected by gender quotas was 2.40 (SD = .81).
- Women elected by gender quotas were younger (M = 36.88, SD = 11.33) than women who were not elected by gender quotas (M = 40.57, SD = 11.68). 33.70 percent of women elected by gender quotas were less than 30 years old.

Previous experience and goal in the local council

Previous experience in the council. 33.50 percent of councilors (n = 137) reported that they were council members in the past (i.e. before the local elections of 2015). The relationship between gender and previous experience in the council was statistically

significant (Table 6). Women were less likely than men to report that they were council members in the past. Specifically, 19.02 percent of women (n = 39) and 48.04 percent of men (n = 98) reported that they were council members in the past (Figure 1).

The majority of councilors with previous experience in the council reported that they used to be part of municipal councils.

Joining the local council. 26.06 percent of women (n = 43) who did not have previous experience in the council reported that they never thought of becoming a member of the local council but they were proposed because of gender quotas. 34.91 percent of men (n = 37) who did not have previous experience in the council reported that they never thought of becoming a member of the local council but their colleagues proposed them. 30.91 percent of women (n = 51) who did not have previous experience in the council reported that they had previously thought of joining the council and gender quotas provided the space. 17.92 percent of men (n = 19) who did not have previous experience in the council reported that they had previously thought of joining the council but they obtained strong support in the local elections of 2015. 30.91 percent of women (n = 57) and 17.92 percent of men (n = 19) who did not have previous experience in the council reported that the idea of joining the council emerged after many years of involvement in politics (Table 5).

Often, women distanced themselves from gender quotas by emphasizing that they did not benefit from them. Some of their comments were: "I was nominated but not because of gender quotas," "I never thought of becoming a member of the council. I was nominated but not because of gender quotas," "My party proposed me. This was not a quota issue."

Figure 1: Previous experience in the council by gender

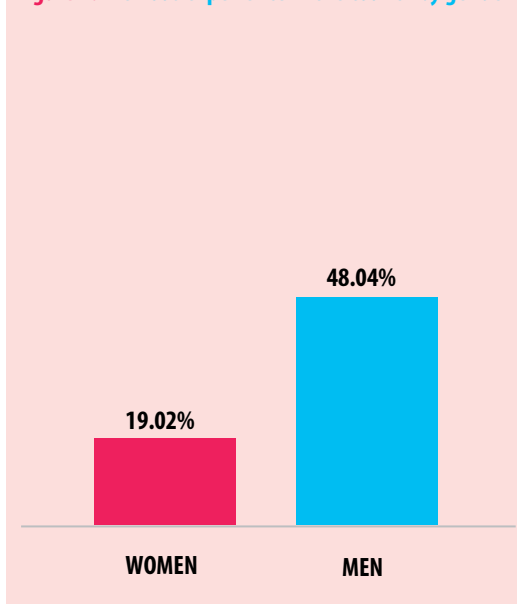
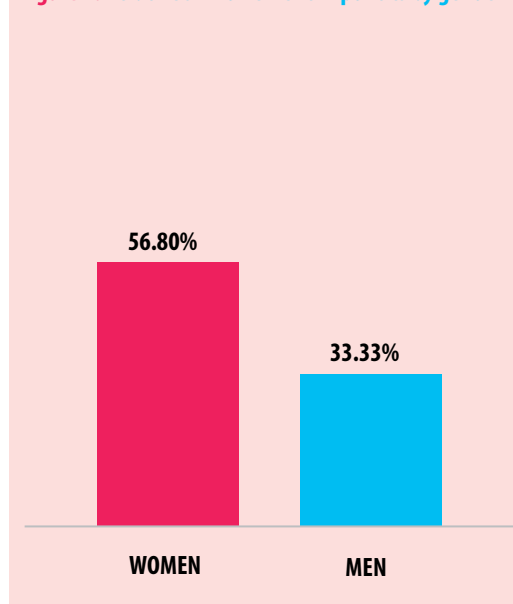


Figure 2: Relative's involvement in politics by gender



The role of relatives. Twenty-five councilors (6.10 percent), 11 women and 14 men, reported that they had relatives who were members of the municipal council. A greater number of councilors (185 or 45.12 percent) reported that they had relatives involved in politics. The relationship between gender and relatives' involvement in politics was statistically significant (Table 6). Women were more likely than men to report that they had relatives involved in politics. More than half of women (56.80 percent or 117) reported that their relatives were involved in politics; 33.33 percent of men (n = 68) reported that their relatives were involved in politics (Figure 2).

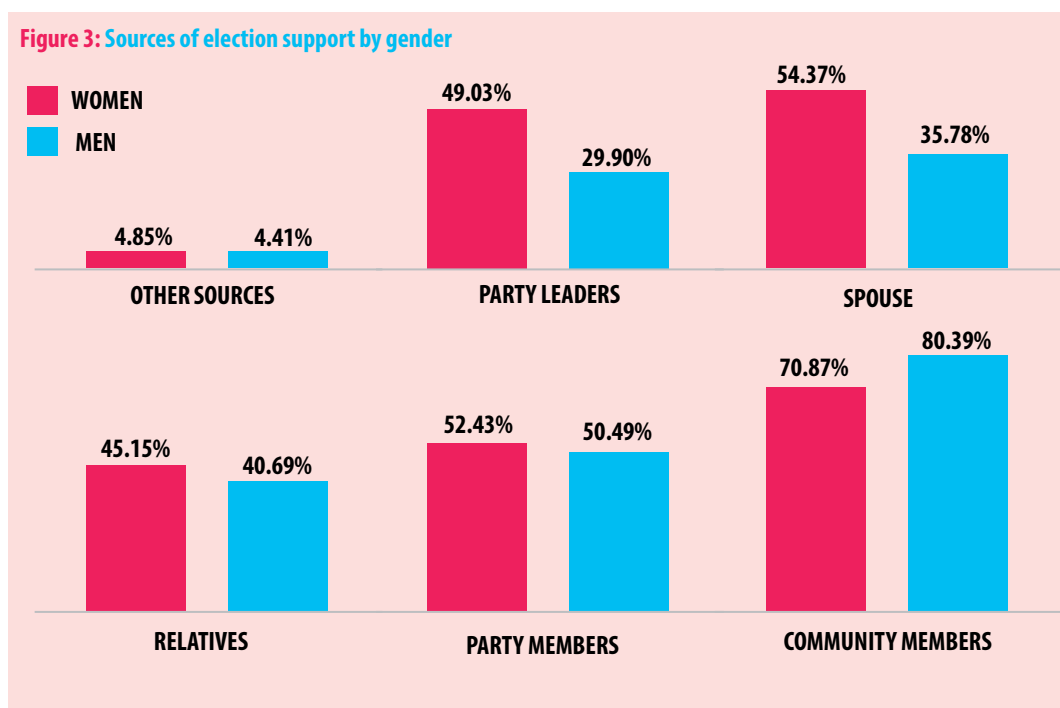
Goal in the local council. The majority of councilors (92.68 percent) reported that their goal in the council is to improve the quality of life in the community. Women were more likely than men to report that their goal in the council is to influence decisions (Table 6).

Election campaign of 2015. Councilors reported the following sources of support

during the election campaign of 2015: community members (75.61 percent), party members (51.46 percent), spouse (45.12 percent), relatives (42.93 percent), and party leaders (39.51 percent).

Women were more likely than men to rely on the spouse (Table 8). Specifically, 54.37 percent of women (n = 112) and 35.78 percent of men (n = 73) relied on their spouse. Women were also more likely than men to rely on party leaders (Table 8). 49.03 percent of women (n = 101) and 29.90 percent of men (n = 61) reported that they relied on party leaders (Figure 3).

Other sources of support include: the father, parents, family members, colleagues, and the youth forum. It was common for women to report that the spouse, the father or other family members run the election campaign for them. Around 90 percent of councilors were involved in the election campaign of 2015. The relationship between gender and involvement in the election campaign was statistically significant (Table 8). Women were less likely than men to be involved in the



election campaign of 2015. Specifically, 82.52 percent of women (n = 170) and 93.14 percent of men (n = 190) were involved in the last year's election campaign (Figure 4).

For councilors, the main reason for not being involved in the election campaign of 2015 is that "election results do not depend on campaign involvement." Other explanations include: the lack of time, difficulties in reaching remote areas, lack of experience in running election campaigns, and *obligime familjare* (lit: family obligations). A small number of councilors also reported that they did not perceive any benefit of organizing election campaigns because their nomination depended on party leaders. One of the councilors who joined the council of Saranda in 2015 said: "I didn't need the support of community members because I had the support of my party." Another councilor in Shijak shared his experience: "Four years ago, I organized many meetings with community members and I didn't get elected. This time, I decided to engage less."

Knowledge of local governance and rural development

Councilors were more likely to report better knowledge of duties and competencies of the municipal council than functions and competencies of the municipality. The

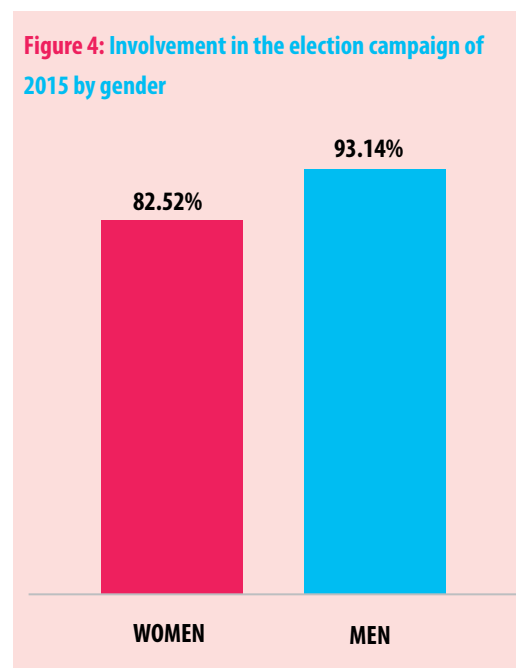
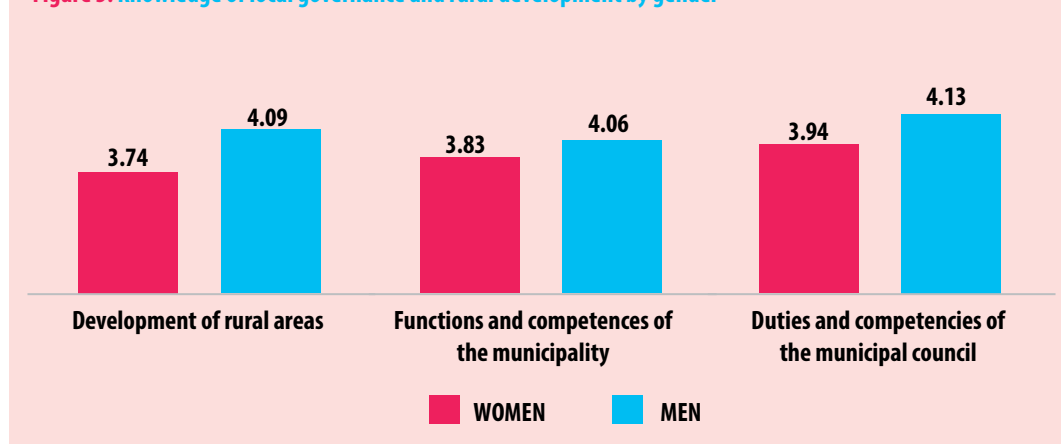


Figure 5: Knowledge of local governance and rural development by gender



mean value of knowledge on duties and competencies of the municipal council is 4.03 ($SD = .79$, range: 2-5); the mean value of knowledge on functions and competencies of the municipality is 3.83 ($SD = .82$, range: 2-5); and the mean value of knowledge on social and economic development of rural areas is 3.92 ($SD = .89$, range: 1-5). The relationship between gender and knowledge of local governance was statistically significant (Table 10). Women reported lower levels of knowledge than men (Figure 5).

We controlled for the effects of individual-level characteristics, including the number of mandates, number of years in the party, age, education, area (urban vs. rural), party affiliation, and position held in commissions. Results indicated that education is a strong predictor of the knowledge of the local council, the municipality, and rural development. Councilors with higher levels of education reported higher levels of knowledge. The number of mandates also had a strong positive effect. The higher the number of mandates, the higher the level of reported knowledge on the local council and the municipality. This was not the case for rural development. Councilors in rural areas reported better knowledge of rural development. After controlling for

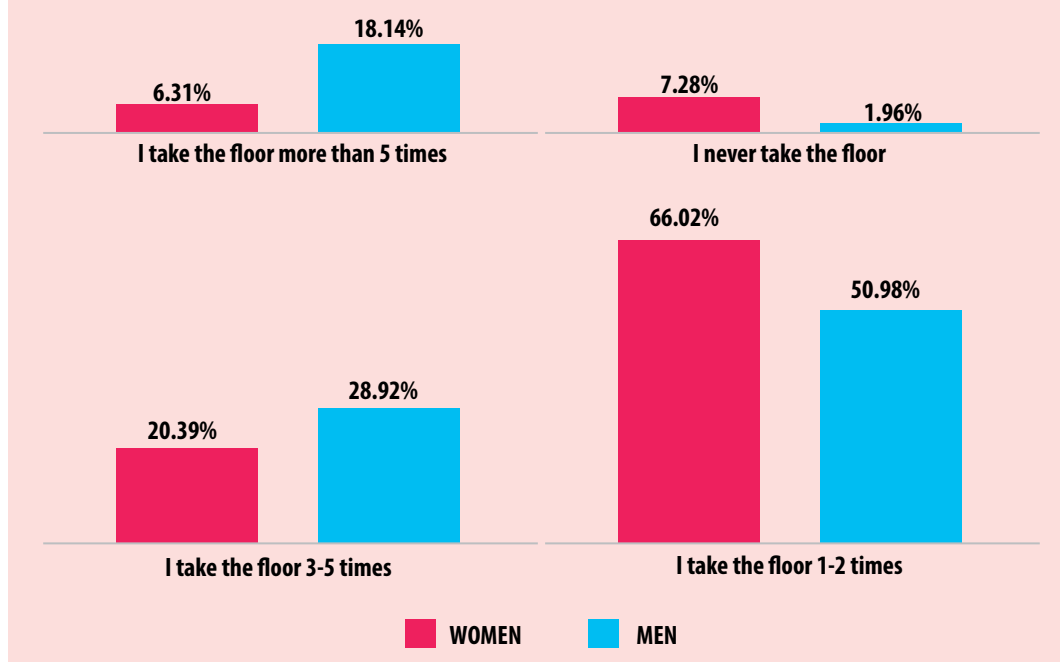
individual-level characteristics, gender was not a significant predictor of the knowledge on the local council and the municipality. However, the gender effect remained for rural areas (Table 51). Compared to men, women reported lower levels of knowledge on rural development.

Participation in the meetings of the local council

Attendance. The majority of councilors (256 or 62.44 percent) reported that they never miss council meetings. The relationship between gender and participation in council meetings was not statistically significant (Table 12). Age had a strong positive effect on participation in council meetings. In other words, older councilors were more likely to attend council meetings.

Speech participation. The majority of councilors (240 or 58.54 percent) reported that they take the floor 1 – 2 times. There were statistically significant differences between women and men. Women were less likely than men to report that they take the floor more than 2 times (Table 12). Specifically, 7.28 percent of women ($n = 15$) and 1.96 percent of

Figure 6: Speech participation by gender



men ($n = 4$) said that they never take the floor. In addition, 18.14 percent of men ($n = 37$) and 6.31 percent of women ($n = 13$) said that they take the floor more than 5 times (Figure 6).

Length of speech. The majority of councilors (192 or 46.83 percent) reported that they speak 3 – 5 minutes. There were statistically significant differences between women and men (Table 12). Women were less likely than men to report that they speak more than 2 minutes. Around 5 percent of women ($n = 11$) reported that they never speak (Figure 7).

We controlled for the effects of the number of mandates, number of years in the party, age, education, area (urban vs. rural), party affiliation, and position held in commissions. Even after these individual-level characteristics were taken into consideration, gender remained a strong predictor of speech participation and length of speech. Compared to men, women reported lower levels of speech participation and length of speech. Councilors who held

a leading position in commissions reported higher levels of speech participation (Table 52).

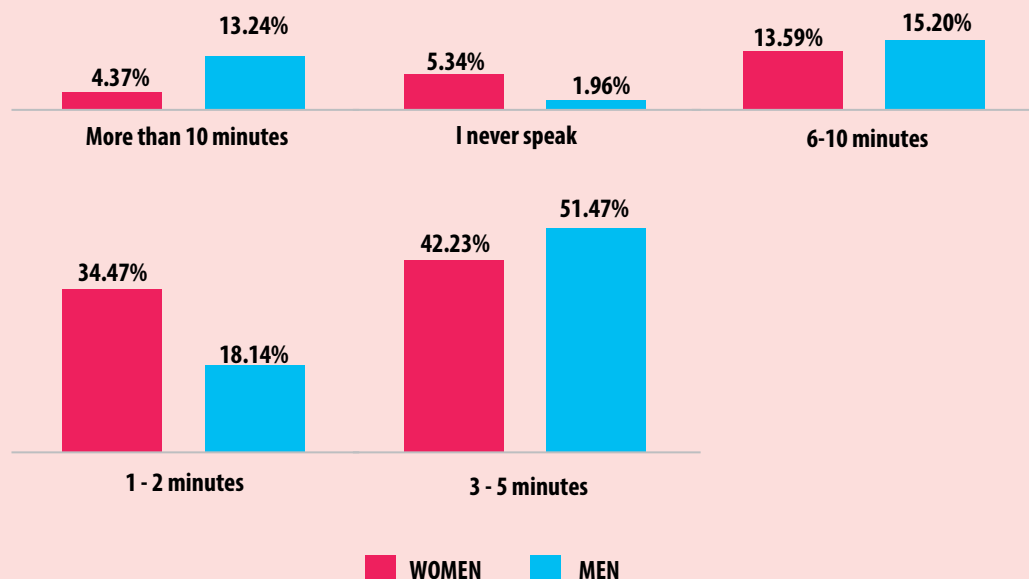
Number of words spoken by councilors⁵

The average meeting lasted 88 minutes (range: 4 – 234; $SD = 60$). The average number of words spoken by councilors per meeting was 4575 (range: 356 – 19947; $SD = 3988$). The average number of words spoken by men was 3.3 times higher than the average number of words spoken by women. Specifically, the average number of words spoken by women was 1063 (range: 0 – 7120; $SD = 1376$) and the average number of words spoken by men was 3512 (range: 356 – 12827; $SD = 2818$).

The proportion of words spoken by women ranged between 0 and 0.63. There were 5 instances of meetings where women did not speak any word.

⁵ Findings presented in this section are based on the recording of 30 council meetings.

Figure 7: Length of speech by gender



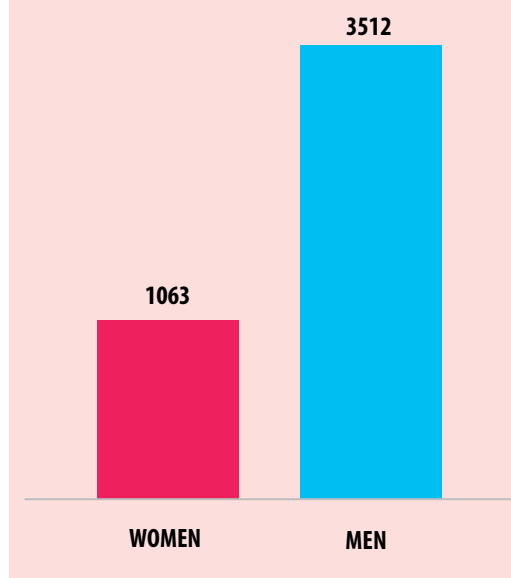
Decision-making initiatives in the local council

Initiating draft decisions. 27.80 percent of councilors ($n = 114$) reported that they have initiated draft decisions. Men were more likely than women to report that they have initiated draft decisions (Table 14). Specifically, 19.90 percent of women ($n = 41$) and 35.78 percent of men ($n = 73$) reported that they have initiated draft decisions (Figure 9).

Even after individual-level characteristics were taken into consideration, gender was a significant predictor of initiating draft decisions. Women were less likely than men to report that they have initiated draft decisions (Table 53).

Number of draft decisions proposed and approved. The mean value of draft decisions proposed was 2 ($SD = 1.15$, range: 1-5). The difference between women and men was statistically significant (Table 16). The mean

Figure 8: Average number of words spoken by gender



value of draft decisions proposed by women ($M = 1.64$, $SD = .79$) was lower than the mean value of draft decisions proposed by men ($M = 2.21$, $SD = 1.28$). The mean value of draft decisions approved was 1.34 ($SD = 1.10$, range: 0-4).

Figure 9: Initiation of draft decisions by gender

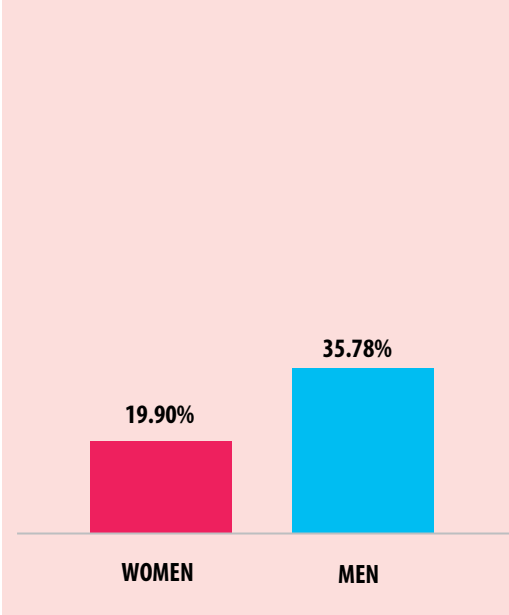
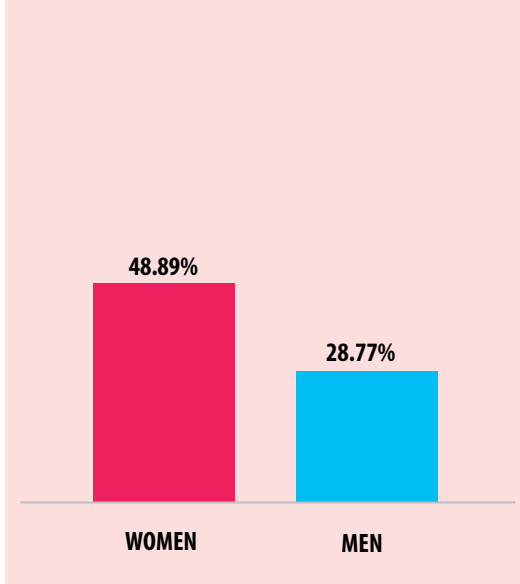


Figure 10: Initiating draft decisions that focus on improving women's status by gender



Focus of draft decisions. Women have proposed draft decisions that focus on: rural development, education, health services, infrastructure, public services, economic aid, public space, environmental protection, business support, business support for women, social housing, persons with disabilities, LGBT, Roma, and youth. Men have proposed draft decisions that focus on: rural development, disasters and emergencies, education, infrastructure, taxes, public services, public space, transportation, economic aid, Roma, tourism, honorary titles, culture, social housing, transparency and regulations, sports, and animals.

Both women and men have focused on rural areas, education, infrastructure, public services, public spaces, business support, Roma, and social housing. However, there are some differences between the draft decisions proposed by women and men. Women have been more responsive to health services, especially for women, business support for women, persons with disabilities, LGBT, and

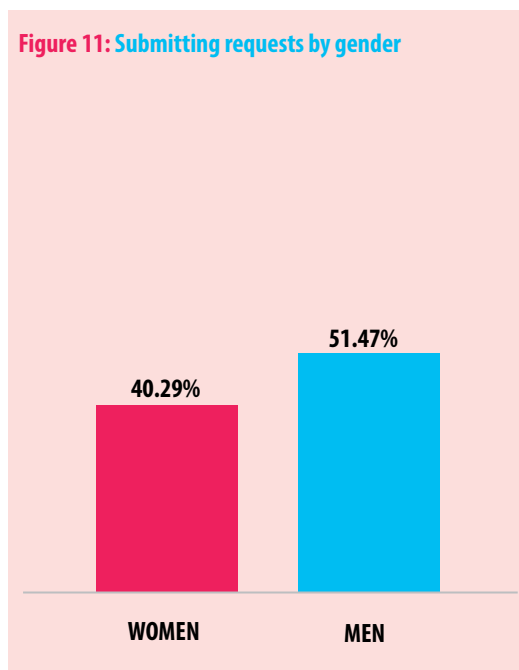
youth. Meanwhile, men have been more responsive to disasters and emergencies, transportation, tourism, honorary titles, culture, sports, and animals. In addition, some of their efforts have focused on promoting transparency in the council and affecting municipal and council regulations (Appendix 3 provides a detailed description).

Initiating draft decisions that focus on improving women's status.

Approximately, 37 percent of councilors (n = 43) who reported that they have initiated draft decisions said that such decisions have focused on women. There were statistically significant differences between women and men (Table 14). Specifically, 48.89 percent of women (n = 22) and 28.77 percent of men (n = 21) who have initiated draft decisions reported that such decisions have focused on women's status (Figure 10).

Women were more likely than men to report that they have initiated draft decisions that focus on improving women's status. The

Figure 11: Submitting requests by gender



mean value of approved draft decisions that focus on improving women's status was .83 ($SD = .67$, range: 0-3). The difference between women and men on the number of approved draft decisions was not statistically significant (Table 15).

Focus of draft decisions that address women's concerns. Women have proposed diverse draft decisions that focus on leisure activities for women, parks, kindergartens, employment opportunities, economic aid, business support, support for women in rural areas, and social housing. Meanwhile, the draft decisions initiated by men have mostly focused on employment opportunities, economic aid, and social housing (Appendix 4 provides a detailed description).

Role and experience in the local council

Approximately, 46 percent of councilors ($n = 188$) have submitted requests to the municipality or the secretary of the local

council. Requests have mostly focused on education, access to information, public investments, disasters and emergencies, public services, tax support, economic aid and social assistance, transparency and verifications (Appendix 5 provides a detailed description). A significant number of women have demanded information on the regulation of the local council, compensation for community members, the budget, fiscal indicators, parking, the increase of ticket for public transportation, procurements, the implementation of draft decisions, competencies of new administrative units, public investments, soft loans, applications for social housing. Men have demanded information on the implementation of decisions taken by councilors, the performance of municipal departments, the meeting agenda, the activities organized by the municipality, the municipal budget for health services, the performance of the local council, and the attendance of council meetings.

Men were more likely than women to submit requests: 51.47 percent of men ($n = 105$) and 40.29 percent of women ($n = 83$) reported that they have submitted requests (Figure 11).

Differences between women and men disappeared after taking into consideration individual-level characteristics – the number of mandates, number of years in the party, age, education, area (urban vs. rural), party affiliation, and position held in commissions. Number of years as party members was a significant predictor of submitting requests. Councilors with longer experience in party were more likely to report that they have submitted requests to the municipality or the secretary of the local council (Table 53).

The most common were face-to-face requests (59.04 percent) and written requests (55.32 percent). Women were more likely than men to

submit written requests. Meanwhile, face-to-face requests were more common for men.

The mean value of requests is 3.91 ($SD = 5.44$, range: 1-50). The average number of requests submitted by women was 2.94 ($SD = 2.61$, range: 1-50). Meanwhile, the average for men was 4.67 ($SD = 6.82$, range: 1-50). However, this difference disappeared after taking into consideration individual-level characteristics (Table 53). The mean value of responses is 2.52 ($SD = 4.39$, range: 1-50). The majority of councilors (44.39 percent) who have submitted requests reported that the municipality lacks resources to address requests.

Engagement with the community

Meeting with community members.

Approximately, 76 percent of councilors ($n = 310$) reported that they meet with community members. Men were more likely than women to report that they meet with community members (Table 18). Specifically, 66.99 percent of women ($n = 138$) and 84.31 percent of men ($n = 172$) reported that they meet with community members (Figure 12).

This conclusion holds after controlling for individual-level characteristics. Women were less likely than men to report that they meet with community members. Councilors in rural areas, compared to those in urban areas, were more likely to report that they meet with community members (Table 54).

Amount of money spent per month on community activities.

The average amount of money spent by councilors per month on community activities is 5,358 ALL ($SD = 7,245$, range: 0-30,000). The difference between

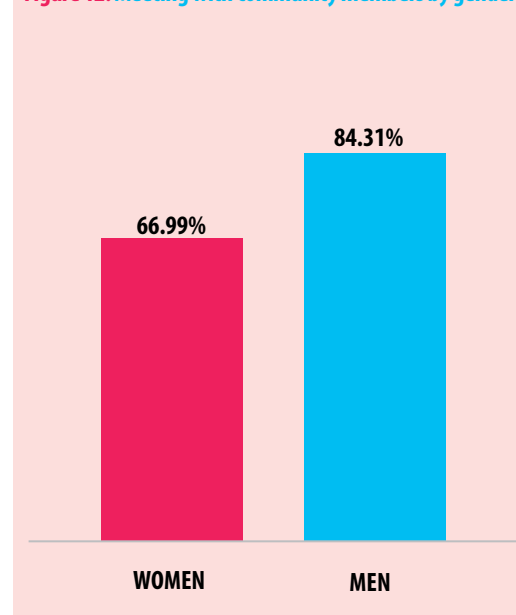
women and men was statistically significant (Table 20). Men ($M = 7,074$, $SD = 7,747$) reported spending more money than women ($M = 4,027$, $SD = 6,552$). One of the explanations for this gap is related to income differences. The average income of men is 1.6 times higher than the average income of women. If income differences are taken into consideration, then the gap between women and men shrinks. The proportion of income that women and men spent on community activities is 0.075 and 0.08, respectively.

Barriers to meeting with community members.

The main barriers were the lack of power to solve community problems and the lack of time. Specifically, 48.45 percent of councilors ($n = 47$) who have not met with community members reported the lack of power to solve community problems as a barrier and 45.36 percent of councilors ($n = 44$) reported the lack of time.

A few councilors held the belief that it is not necessary to approach community members because they already know the problems

Figure 12: Meeting with community members by gender



that community members face. One of the councilors in Mat said: "I don't need to approach community members. They approach me and discuss the problems that they face." Or, another belief is that it is easy for community members to find and communicate with councilors. One of the councilors in Saranda said: "Community members who are facing problems can find me in my husband's office who is a lawyer; it is not necessary to be in the field." Women reported several barriers to meeting with community members, including *obligime familjare*, the lack of experience, and the difficulty of coordinating community work in a large-scale territory.

Sources of information. The main sources of information were community members (89.98 percent), party leaders (31.30 percent), printed media (23.96 percent), colleagues (22.00 percent), social media (22.00 percent), visual media (21.76 percent), youth groups (20.78 percent), books (4.89 percent), and scientific journals (4.16 percent).

Other sources of information include: official sources provided by the council, court decisions,

municipal administration, laws and regulations, interactions with students, official bulletins, administrators, municipal associations, and more developed municipalities. Women were more likely than men to rely on party leaders for information (Table 18). Specifically, 37.38 percent of women (n = 77) and 25.12 percent of men (n = 51) reported that they rely on party leaders for information. Men were more likely than women to rely on community members for information. 95.07 percent of men (n = 193) and 84.95 percent of women (n = 175) reported that they rely on community members for information.

Facing uncertainties during council meetings. 41.71 percent of councilors (n = 171) said that they face uncertainties during council meetings. The relationship between gender and uncertainties faced in the council was not statistically significant (Table 18). 56.63 percent of respondents (n = 222) said that the municipality has offered support to address uncertainties.

Activities accomplished by councilors. The majority of councilors have participated in

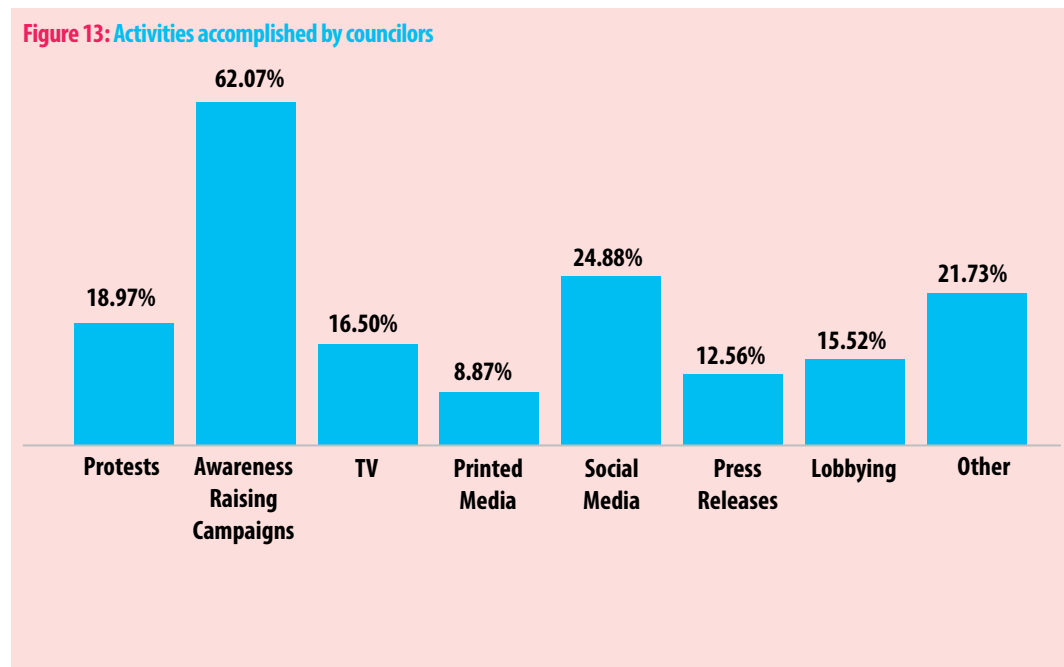


Figure 14: Agreement with gender quotas by gender

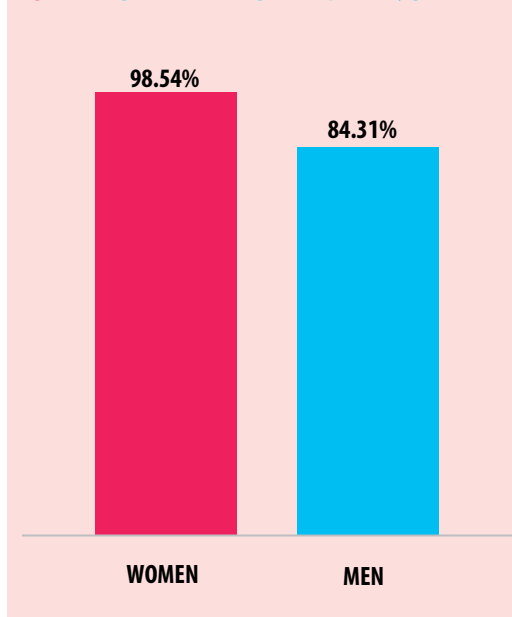
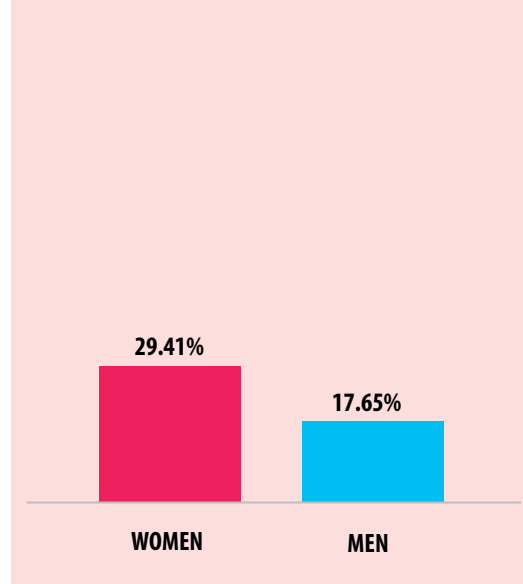


Figure 15: "Gender quotas have damaged men's interests" by gender



awareness raising campaigns (62.07 percent) followed by engaging in social media (24.88 percent), participating in protests (18.97 percent), participating in TV programs (16.50 percent), lobbying in the central government (15.52 percent), delivering press releases (12.56 percent), and publishing in the printed media (8.87 percent) (Figure 13).

Gender was not a significant predictor of participation in awareness raising campaigns and engagement in social media. Younger councilors were more likely to report that they have participated in awareness raising campaigns. Councilors in rural areas were less likely than those in urban areas to engage in social media (Table 54).

Perception of decision-making power

The mean value of perceived power in the council ($M = 3.46$, $SD = .92$) is lower than in commissions ($M = 3.77$, $SD = .98$) and party (M

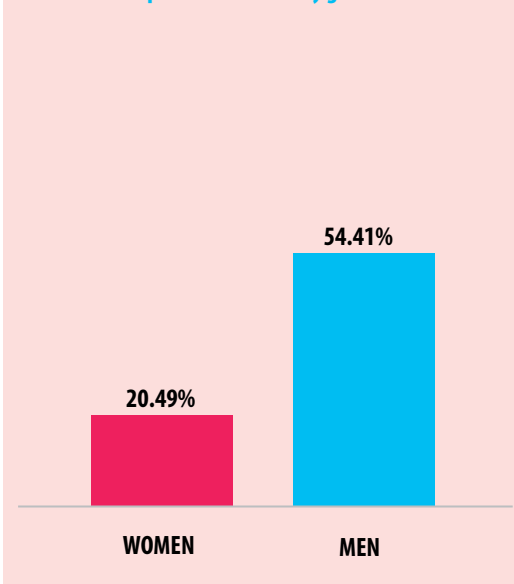
$= 3.90$, $SD = .92$). Compared to women ($M = 3.79$, $SD = .91$), men ($M = 4.0$, $SD = .93$) reported greater power in the party.

Gender was not a significant predictor of the power perceived in the council, commission, and party. Party membership was a significant predictor of the perceived power in the council. Councilors who were members of the Socialist Party and the Socialist Movement for Integration reported higher levels of power in the council than councilors who were members of other parties. Councilors who held a leading position in a commission reported higher levels of perceived power in the council and commission. Councilors with a longer experience in the party reported greater power in the party (Table 56).

Attitudes toward gender quotas

More than 90 percent of councilors ($n = 375$ or 91.46 percent) reported that they agree

Figure 16: “Gender quotas have resulted into the selection of unqualified women” by gender

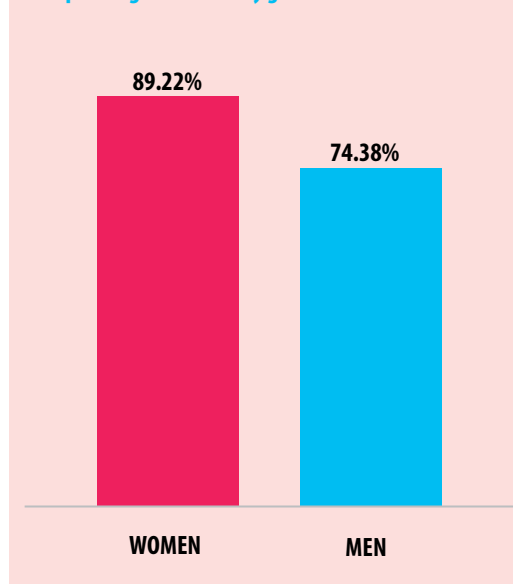


with gender quotas. The relationship between gender and attitudes toward quotas was statistically significant (Table 25). Women were more likely than men to agree with quotas. Specifically, 98.54 percent of women (n = 203) and 84.31 percent of men (n = 172) reported that they agree with gender quotas (Figure 14).

Regression results indicated that gender was a significant predictor of attitudes toward quotas. Women were more likely than men to agree with quotas. The number of mandates had a negative effect (Table 57). The disagreement mostly came from councilors with longer experience in the council and councilors from urban areas.

Approximately, 24 percent of councilors (n = 96) agreed with the statement “Gender quotas have damaged men’s interests.” Women were more likely than men to agree with this statement. Specifically, 29.41 percent of women (n = 60) and 17.65 percent of men (n = 36) agreed with the statement “Gender quotas have damaged men’s interests” (Figure 15).

Figure 17: “Gender quotas will lead to open and transparent governance” by gender



Approximately, 38 percent of councilors (n = 153) agreed with the statement “Gender quotas have resulted into the selection of unqualified women.” Men were more likely than women to agree with the statement (Table 24). Specifically, 54.41 percent of men (n = 111) and 20.49 percent of women (n = 42) agreed with the statement “Gender quotas have resulted into the selection of unqualified women” (Figure 16). Educated councilors were more likely to agree with the statement.

The majority of councilors agreed with those statements, which indicated that gender quotas will improve the situation of women and girls (97.06 percent), improve relationships between councilors (94.10 percent), reduce political tensions (91.15 percent), and result into a better representation of community interests (89.46 percent). A smaller number of councilors agreed with the statement, which indicated that gender quotas will lead to open and transparent governance (81.82 percent). There was more skepticism on the impact of gender quotas on the quality of governance (Figure 17).

Overall, women reported more positive effects of gender quotas than men. The only statement for which there were no statistically significant differences between women and men was “Gender quotas will reduce political tensions in the council.” In other words, perceptions of women and men tend to converge on the impact of gender quotas on political tensions.

Further insights into attitudes toward gender quotas

In explaining their attitudes toward gender quotas, women referred to “women’s qualities,” opportunities introduced with quotas, and the representation of women’s interests. Similarly with women, men referred to “women’s qualities” and the representation of women’s interests. However, men did not view quotas as a mechanism of breaking women’s exclusion from politics. Rather, they viewed them as a mechanism of undermining meritocracy. In addition, men listed several arguments against quotas.

“Women’s qualities.” While emphasizing their qualities, women drew comparisons with men. They mentioned that compared to men, women are closer to the community and therefore have a better understanding of community problems. Furthermore, women are more tolerant, sensitive, skillful, active, decisive, honest, committed, responsible, innovative, qualified, organized, and hardworking. Women are less corrupt, *zbut* (lit: soften) decision making and politics, make better decisions, have better communication and management skills, are less selfish, encourage debate and propose better solutions, and *sjellin një frymë tjetër* (lit: bring another spirit) into discussions. In addition, women serve as *rregullatore* (lit: regulators) of relationships in the council. They also *stabilizojnë* (lit: stabilize) difficult situations, especially conflicts. One of the

women in the local council of Shijak who held a leading position in a party organization, said: “Men want to climb the career ladder; meanwhile, women are more careful. They do a better job in addressing community problems in the council.”

Meanwhile, men mentioned that women are more peaceful, responsible, innovative, tolerant, serious, qualified, objective, and committed to solving problems. Furthermore, women are less corrupt, have better communication skills, and serve to the community. Women affect the climate of the council by making it more peaceful.

Opportunities to break the cycle of exclusion.

The argument of *opportunity* emphasizes that quotas will increase the space for women and therefore break their exclusion from politics. Women argued that quotas provided the opportunity to participate in the council, represent community interests, speak up, reveal values, and express themselves. For women, quotas helped them overcome deeply embedded barriers that they could not have addressed otherwise. One of the women who held a leading position in the Woman’s Forum and also was a party member for 12 years, said: “In a patriarchal society, this is the way to make women part of decision making. Otherwise, they won’t be visible in politics.” Similarly, a woman with 25 years of party experience characterized gender quotas as “indispensable in a masculine society.” A woman who held a leading position in a youth forum said: “In extreme circumstances, you need extreme measures.” Gender quotas were considered critical especially in rural areas. One of the women, a new party member who joined the council in 2015 and lived in a rural area, said: “It [*kuota gjinore*] is necessary in rural areas because only a few women are engaged due to mentality and distance.” She reported that gender quotas provided her the space to become part of the local council.

Advancing human rights. A common argument made by both women and men was that quotas are a means of advancing women's rights. Women constitute half of the world's population and therefore should comprise 50 percent of local councils seats. Some of their comments were: "Quotas are mandatory to prevent the violation of human rights," "It is a legal obligation," "We are equal: 50 percent women, 50 percent men," "Women comprise 50 percent of the population and should have a representation of 50 percent," "Both genders should be represented in the council." Gender equality was often discussed in line with EU integration.

Representation of women's interests. The argument of representation emphasizes that the increased presence of women will result into a better representation of women's interests. Both women and men discussed women's representation. One of the women in the council of Finiq said: "Women will better represent women's interests." Similarly, one of women in the council of Kamza said: "It is an opportunity for women to express their ideas. No one can represent their interests better than they can do." Furthermore, there will be an increased awareness of the problems that women face in the community, which will lead to more problem-solving efforts. One of the women in the council of Kukës said: "Women's representation will help women's voice and their problems be heard." Another woman in the council of Kukës mentioned that "The problems faced by women and girls will be addressed." A councilor in Kurbin said: "The community needs to hear what women and girls think."

Similarly, men emphasized that women will do a better job in representing their own interests. One of the men in the council of Fier said: "They [women] have the opportunity to demonstrate their skills. We are equal."

Similarly, a man in the council of Korça mentioned that "Women are more aware of the problems that they face."

Outcomes. Women mentioned that their increased presence in the council will result into the following outcomes: decision making will improve; politics will be less corrupt; better solutions for local challenges will be identified; attitudes toward women will be more positive; relationships between councilors will improve; language *do të zbutet*; women's voice and problems will be heard; gender-based discrimination will be addressed; community representation will improve; communication between women and men will improve; the quality of governance will improve; the number of conflicts in the council will be reduced; tolerance and understanding for solving problems will improve; and problems will be better coordinated. One of the women, a sociologist and a member of the education commission, said: "Gender equality is not just a goal. It is a precondition for sustainable development and good governance."

Men highlighted several positive outcomes of the increased presence of women in the council. Specifically, they mentioned that the council will be more peaceful; the quality of discussions will improve; decision making will improve; corruption will be curbed; justice will be promoted; representation will improve; women's voice will be heard; women's problems will be addressed; the climate of the council will improve; the council will become more tolerant; political tensions *do të zbuten*; the tone of communication *do të zbutet*; men will control the language that they use; transparency in the council will increase; diversity will increase; new strategies for development will be proposed; more problems will be solved; collaboration will improve; and power will be equally distributed.

Contesting gender quotas. There were a few instances when women were skeptical of gender quotas. The skepticism mostly derived from women's route into local councils. "The introduction of gender quotas is necessary for women's involvement in politics and decision making," said one of the women with 4 years of experience in the party. Then, she added: "But quotas should be accompanied with quality." Another woman who held the position of a secretary and had 20 years of experience in the party said: "I agree with quotas but I think that the opportunity to get elected should be the same for all women." Women raised the concern that party leaders have responded to the quota requirement by selecting women who serve leaders' interests. One of the national coordinators who joined the council for the first time in 2015 said: "It [the rule] is mandatory; it doesn't express a concern for quality and genuine commitment."

Women also raised the concern that women's numbers will not be translated into power. They provided two explanations. First, men have greater experience and confidence in themselves. One of the women who had 6 years of experience in the party said: "In theory, the gender quota of 50 percent is very good but in our municipality it is not being implemented. Men still predominate; they have high confidence in themselves because of their experience." Second, women view their participation in the council as a favor that they have to return to men (i.e. party leaders). They think that they are obliged to advance men's interests. One of the women with 4 years of experience in the party expressed her concern in the following way: "I am skeptical because in this cultural context women are even more submissive to men."

In contesting gender quotas, men made four arguments. The first argument is that women

are not qualified. In addition, they lack skills for a successful career in politics. One of the men with 4 mandates in the council said: "Women entering local politics are not qualified; they do not work, they do not fight for the place, they find it ready." Many mentioned that women are not active in politics. "I believe in the principle of selecting based on skills and men are more active in politics and everywhere," said one of the men who was the head of a party branch and had 8 years of experience in the party. Another man who joined the council in 2015 said: "Women are not very engaged in society's problems and the quota of 50 percent does a disservice to the men who are active and deserve to be in the council." Many raised the concern that quotas will lead to "incompetent councils."

The second argument refers to biological differences between male and female. Such differences were used to justify power differences between women and men in the council. One of the councilors who joined the council in 2015 said: "There are several biological differences between women and men. Men are stronger than women." Another councilor characterized decision making as "men's job." One of the councilors with 25 years of experience in the party and 3 mandates in the council said: "There should be fewer women because they give birth and leave the chair empty."

The third argument is that gender quotas undermine meritocracy. "You deprive [men] the right to run for the local council," said one of the councilors who was also a party secretary. Then, he added: "Everything should be based on meritocracy." Another councilor who held a leading position in a party branch and had 13 years of experience in the party as well as 3 mandates in the council, emphasized that because of the gender quota of 50 percent,

experienced men in rural areas have been replaced with non-experienced women. He said: "Small parties in rural areas face difficulties to implement the law because men who are knowledgeable and have greater capacity are not involved." The concern of "women lacking quality" was raised especially for rural areas.

The fourth argument is that women's route in local councils goes through party leaders and therefore women are accountable to party leaders, not the community. This concern was raised only for men, not women. One of the councilors with a long experience in the party said: "Women are appointed by party leaders, their selection is not based on their *zotësi* (lit: capability)."

Reflecting the problems of women and girls in the local council agenda

Topics discussed in the council

The most discussed topics in the local council were: economic development (62.93 percent), education (60.24 percent), economic aid (57.56 percent), water supply (51.95 percent), scholarships (50.73 percent), and public investments (47.56 percent). The least discussed topics were law and order (19.56 percent), tourism (22.93 percent), agriculture and farming (26.34 percent), sports (26.59 percent), culture (27.80 percent), and communication with community members (29.76 percent). Other topics discussed in the council include: transportation, properties, urban services, urban transportation, projects for youth, families in blood feud, and treatment of street dogs.

Men were more likely than women to discuss the topics of economic development, local businesses, water supply, agriculture and farming, public investments, law and order, tourism, sports, and road maintenance service.

Women were more likely than men to discuss the topic of education (Table 26). 57.09 percent of councilors ($n = 141$) who have addressed the topic of education were women.

Even after individual-level characteristics were taken into consideration, gender remained a strong predictor of the number of topics addressed in the council. Compared to men, women reported fewer topics addressed in the council. Councilors who held a leading position in a commission reported more topics than those who were only members or held another position.

Main problems faced by women and girls in the community

The main problems reported by councilors were unemployment (92.20 percent), poverty (72.44 percent), low representation of women in decision-making (49.63 percent), domestic violence (48.54 percent), lack of support for women's businesses (41.95 percent), and discrimination in the labor market (30.00 percent). Women were more likely than men to report the problem of domestic violence: 58.74 percent of women ($n = 121$) and 38.24 percent of men ($n = 78$) reported the problem of domestic violence. Women were also more likely than men to report the problem of poor access to health services (Table 28). Other problems include: lack of social support, gender stereotypes, lack of professional education, lack of support for widows, lack of support for children with disabilities and their mothers, discriminatory attitudes held by community members who view women and girls as inferior.

Main problems addressed in the council

The main problems addressed in the council were unemployment (86.55 percent),

poverty (66.07 percent), domestic violence (38.12 percent), lack of support for women's businesses (32.29 percent), and lack of social housing (27.80 percent). Women were more likely than men to address the lack of support for women's businesses

Public investments

The majority of councilors have demanded the improvement of roads (65.36 percent), water supply systems (64.86 percent), schools (58.97 percent), sewage systems (53.94 percent), kindergartens (41.28 percent), and nurseries (33.42 percent). Overall, women were less likely than men to demand public investments. This conclusion holds even after individual-level characteristics were taken into consideration. However, a comparison among investments reveals several differences. Men were more likely than women to demand the improvement of water supply systems, sewage systems, irrigation systems, roads, and sports center. Women were more likely than men to demand the improvement of schools and kindergartens (Table 32).

Other improvements demanded: repairing an old building that was once used for prostitution and drugs; reconstructing the municipal building; improving public transportation; building a center for youth and a shelter for victims of trafficking.

The majority of councilors reported the approval of the following public investments: roads (57.64 percent), water supply systems (55.91 percent), schools (51.23 percent), sewage systems (45.57 percent), kindergartens (32.76 percent), and nurseries (25.62 percent). There was a strong relationship between public investments demanded and approved.

Relationships with councilors

Councilors reported better relationships with their counterparts who belonged to the same party, followed by those who belonged to the same political alliance. Councilors reported worse relationships with their counterparts who belonged to the opposition.

Women reported better relationships with councilors than men. Compared to men, women reported better relationships with councilors who shared the same gender and belonged to the opposition. Women assigned a mean value of 4.37 ($SD = .72$) to their relationship with women who belonged to the opposition. Meanwhile, men assigned a mean value of 4.10 ($SD = .84$) to their relationship with men who belonged to the opposition. However, such a difference was not observed on women's relationship with men who belonged to the opposition. Men assigned a mean value of 4.20 ($SD = .78$) to their relationship with women who belonged to the opposition. Similarly, women assigned a mean value of 4.20 ($SD = .81$) to their relationship with men who belonged to the opposition (Table 36).

These conclusions did not change after individual-level characteristics were taken into consideration. Women were more likely than men to report better relationships with councilors of the same gender, despite the political party that they belonged to. Overall, women were more likely than men to report better relationships in the council.

Experience in the council

Approximately, 87 percent of councilors reported that they speak up in the council. Men were more likely than women to report that they speak up. Specifically, 95.10 percent of men ($n = 194$) and 78.05 percent of women

(n = 160) reported that they speak up in the council. 28.36 percent of councilors (n = 116) reported that they get interrupted during council meetings. A similar percentage of women and men, 28.29 percent and 28.43 percent respectively, reported that they get interrupted during council meetings (Table 37).

Collaboration in the local council

40.49 percent of councilors (n = 166) reported that they have participated in collaborative initiatives. 37.86 percent of women (n = 78) and 43.14 percent of men (n = 88) reported that they have participated in collaborative initiatives (Figure 18).

The difference between women and men was not statistically significant (Table 40). The majority of councilors reported that they have collaborated with all councilors despite their gender and political party. The mean value of collaborative initiatives is 2.33 (*SD* = 1.68, *range*: 1-15). Women reported participating in collaborative initiatives that focus on rural development, children with disabilities and their families (especially mothers), scholarships for students, employment opportunities, domestic violence, public services, city taxes, transparency and internal regulations, public investments, education, access to information, social housing, public transportation, business support, business support for women, economic aid, public spaces, sports, environmental protection, tourism, women's organization, and gender budgeting. Men reported participating in collaborative initiatives that focus on rural development, support for children with disabilities and their families, scholarship for students, public services, city taxes, public investments, education, social housing, public transportation, economic aid, sports, environmental protection, tourism,

honorary titles, culture, and consumer protection. The focus of women's collaborative initiatives extends to domestic violence, business support for women, women's organization, and gender budgeting (Appendix 6 provides a detailed description).

Collaborative initiatives addressing the problems faced by women and girls in the community

51.81 percent of councilors (n = 86) who have participated in collaborative initiatives said that such initiatives have addressed the problems faced by women and girls in the community. Women were more likely than men to report that they have participated in such initiatives (Table 40). 65.38 percent of women (n = 51) and 39.77 percent of men (n = 35) reported that they have participated in collaborative initiatives to address the problems faced by women and girls in the community (Figure 19).

59.30 percent of councilors (n = 51) who have participated in collaborative initiatives that address the problems faced by women and girls in the community were women. The mean value of collaborative initiatives addressing the problems faced by women and girls was 2.06 (*SD* = 1.38, *range*: 1-6). The difference between women and men on the number of collaborative initiatives was not statistically significant (Table 42).

Women's collaborative initiatives have focused on social housing, employment, get-together activities, domestic violence, women's businesses, public transportation, training for women in rural areas, gender budgeting, economic aid for widows, awareness-raising events, women's retirement pension, children with disabilities and their mothers, health services, collaboration with the community, Roma, orphans. One of women's

Figure 18: Participation in collaborative initiatives by gender

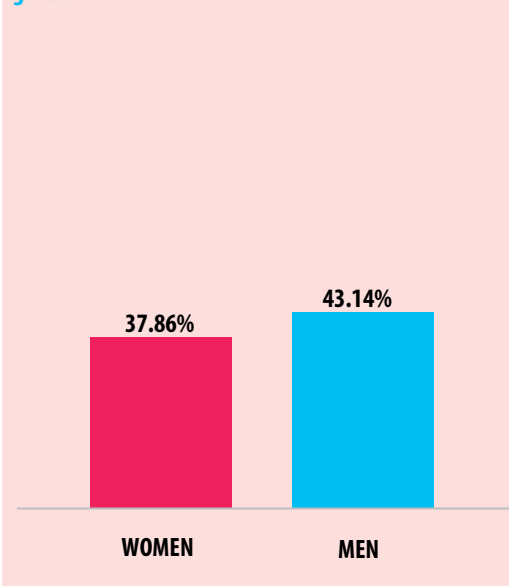
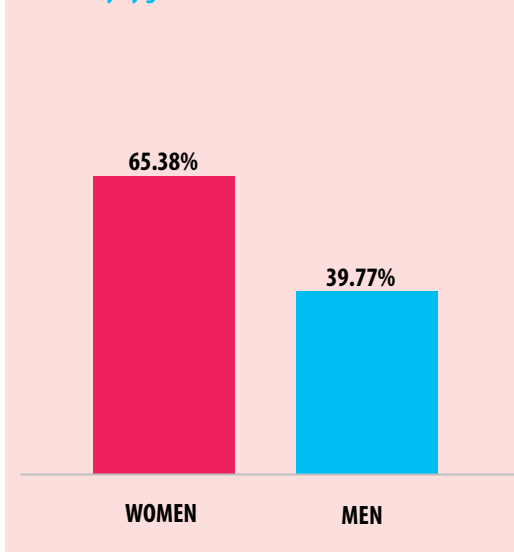


Figure 19: Participation in collaborative initiatives to address the problems faced by women and girls in the community by gender



collaborative initiatives has focused on creating a fund for women. Men's collaborative initiatives have focused on social housing, employment, domestic violence, women's businesses, and public transportation (Appendix 7 provides a detailed description).

Organization of public hearings and collaboration with civil society organizations

Public hearings

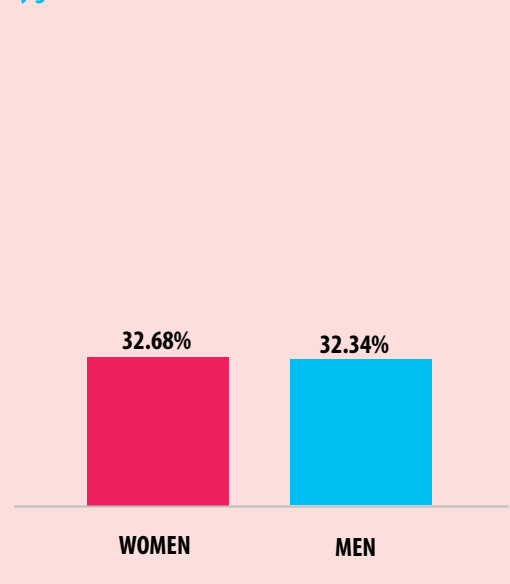
48.78 percent of councilors ($n = 200$) reported that their council has organized public hearings. 29.58 percent of councilors ($n = 121$) reported that they have initiated the organization of public hearings. However, the latter might be an overestimation. This is because in some instances councilors referred to public hearings as the initiatives that they have undertaken in the community rather than in the council. The difference between women and men was not statistically significant (Table 44). The mean number of public hearings initiated by councilors was 4.29 ($SD = 4.09$, range: 1-30).

Women reported the participation of the following actors: students, neighborhood residents, farmers, women and girls, youth, business owners, teachers, older adults, civil society organizations, urban architects, athletes, administrators, representatives of the Roma community, experts, village heads, businesswomen, organizations that focus on monitoring the environment, local media, the homeless, and municipal employees. Men reported the participation of the following actors: neighborhood residents, administrators, women, Roma community, Egyptians, business owners, village heads, municipal employees, youth groups, older adults, persons with disabilities, people living in poverty, experts, civil society organizations, residents of rural areas, and cyclists.

Collaboration with civil society organizations

32.52 percent of councilors ($n = 130$) reported that they have collaborated with civil society organizations. The difference between women

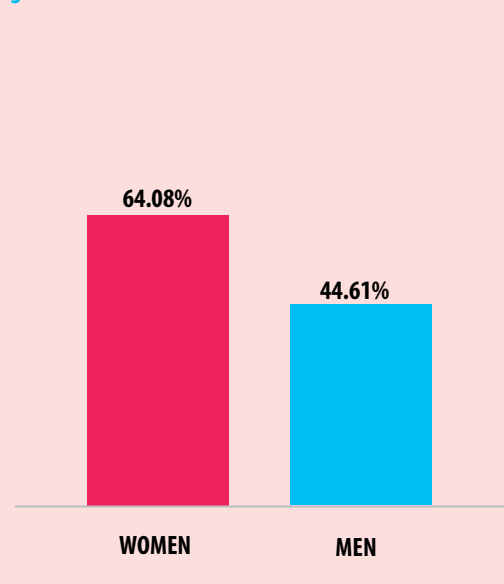
Figure 20: Collaboration with civil society organizations by gender



and men was not statistically significant (Table 44). 32.68 percent of women (n = 67) and 32.34 percent of men (n = 66) reported that they have collaborated with civil society organizations (Figure 20).

Women's collaborative efforts with civil society organizations have focused on: environmental protection, support for persons with disabilities, protection of children's rights, gender equality, awareness raising campaigns on domestic violence, women's role in the council, collaboration between councilors, women's representation in decision making, agriculture, education, parenting, culture, environmental issues, environmental protection, medical support and information, youth organizations, the engagement of youth in the design of the municipal budget, business promotion, education, awareness raising, social and legal assistance, standards of services provided by the municipality, services for children with disabilities in kindergartens, gender budgeting, awareness raising campaigns for breast cancer, social services, tourism, hospital services, the problems

Figure 21: Participation in capacity-building programs by gender



faced by the LGBT community and the Roma community.

Men's collaborative efforts with civil society organizations have focused on aid for families in need (e.g., distributing blankets, food), summer camps for children with disabilities, organic food, culture and tourism, youth integration in decision making, environmental protection, urban waste management, persons with disabilities, community well-being, women in economic difficulties, social and cultural activities, health services, housing for Roma and economic aid for Roma, vocational training, human rights, orphans, persons with disabilities, the right to information, awareness raising campaigns on environmental protection, awareness raising campaigns on domestic violence, cultural activities, youth engagement in development, agriculture, rural development, transparency, and funding for community projects.

There were instances of councilors reporting that they collaborate with civil society organizations; however, their collaboration was limited to

participation in seminars or training sessions. There were also instances where opportunities for collaboration were introduced through the place of work. For instance, one of the councilors was invited in an awareness raising campaign as a school principal. Or, another councilor, a doctor, has collaborated with a shelter for victims of domestic violence because of offering medical support and information.

Community participation and voice in council meetings⁶

14 council meetings were attended by community members. Overall, 72 community members (30 women and 42 men) attended council meetings. In the councils where meetings were held, the average number of community members who attended meetings was 5 (range: 1 – 19; *SD* = 5.26). The average number of women and men was 2 (range: 0 – 11; *SD* = 3) and 3 (range: 0 – 8; *SD* = 2.54), respectively. Community members spoke up only in 5 meetings. The number of community members who spoke up during council meetings was 14. The average number of words spoken by community members in the 5 meetings was 325 (range: 8 – 936; *SD* = 386). The following groups participated in meetings: the unemployed, businessmen, farmers, students, representatives of local organizations, members of the citizens' commission, and a group of citizens contesting a decision of the council (Table 65).

⁶ Findings presented in this section are based on the observation of 30 council meetings.

Future plans

50.49 percent of councilors (*n* = 207) reported that they will run again for the local council, 12.93 percent (*n* = 53) will run for mayor, and 36.59 percent (*n* = 150) will run for parliament. A considerable number of councilors aspire for office in the central government. Women were less likely than men to report that they will run for mayor (Table 48). Councilors were more likely to report that they will run for mayor if they had higher levels of education and lived in urban areas (Table 60).

Capacity-building programs

54.39 percent of councilors (*n* = 223) have participated in training programs.⁷ Women were more likely than men to participate in training sessions (Table 50). 64.08 percent of women (*n* = 132) and 44.61 percent of men (*n* = 91) reported that they have participated in capacity-building programs (Figure 21).

The number of mandates had a positive effect on participation in capacity-building programs. Councilors in rural areas, compared to those in urban areas, were less likely to participate in training sessions (Table 61).

Women have participated in training sessions that focus on the organization and functioning of the local council, women's role in decision making, youth involvement in politics, legislation, decision making, gender equality, management of public finances, council's regulation, gender equality, women leaders in politics, qualities of effective councilors, women's role in decision making, budgeting, gender budgeting, organizing

⁷ The following organizations have offered training sessions: NDI, OSCE, DLDP, UNDP, UN Women, Albanian School of Public Administration, "Elita Politike," Women's Network Equality in Decision Making, USAID, UNICEF, and World Bank.

awareness-raising campaigns, public speaking, gender budgeting, the new law of local governance, local tariffs and taxes, territorial reform, citizen participation in decision making, ethical communication with the community, collaboration with different political forces supporting women in politics, leadership, women in the media.

Men have participated in training sessions that focus on local governance, legal knowledge, competencies and functioning of local

governance, budgeting, territorial reform, the new law of local governance, the relationship between the municipality and the community, the organization of the association of municipalities, roles and responsibilities of councilors, the role of councilors in decision making, gender equality and decision making, collaboration between the central government and local governments, decentralization, financial management, public finances, community participation in decision making, public hearings, local budget, and marketing.

A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO EXAMINE THE DIFFERENCE

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between gender quotas and women's substantive representation in the local councils of Albania. The changes introduced with gender quotas in 2015 offer a good opportunity to examine the difference that women's presence will make in local councils and the broader community.

Even though it is too early to draw any conclusions on the impact of gender quotas, this study provides several insights. The introduction of gender quotas in 2015 has been met by resistance. One of the strategies used by men during the election campaign of 2015 was leaving big parties and joining small parties where their bargaining power and therefore their chances of being elected were higher. The same strategy has been reported by Erebara (2015). Our data indicate that this strategy has been used by a diverse group of councilors: some with long experience

and others with little experience in the party. However, it is unclear how gender quotas have affected relationships within parties.

Women were more likely than men to agree with gender quotas. Only three women disagreed with quotas. Meanwhile, the number for men was 32. While women perceive gender quotas as an opportunity to break women's exclusion from politics, men perceive them as a mechanism of undermining meritocracy. Resistance mostly came from men with long experience in the council. This result corroborates the finding of other authors who

PROPOSING DRAFT DECISIONS



emphasize that gender quotas threaten the existing distribution of political power (Beer & Camp, 2016; Krook, 2015, 2016). Another finding is that there is skepticism on the impact of gender quotas on the quality of governance. Meanwhile, councilors' attitudes converge on the impact of gender quotas on the overall climate and relationships in the council.

One of the commonly held assumptions is that women are less qualified than men. The findings of this study challenge this assumption. Women have higher levels of education than men. Around 30 percent of women had a Master degree; meanwhile, the percentage for men was close to 21. Similarly, women have more training experience than men. 64.08 percent of women and 44.61 percent of men reported that they have participated in training sessions.

Findings reveal a significant contribution of

women in the following areas: First, women were more likely than men to propose draft decisions that focus on improving women's status. Women have proposed draft decisions that focus on parks, kindergartens, employment opportunities, economic aid, business support, support for women in rural areas, social housing, and leisure activities for women. Second, even though women were less likely than men to propose draft decisions, their draft decisions were more diverse. Women have been more responsive to health services, especially for women, business support for women, persons with disabilities, LGBT, and youth. Meanwhile, men have been more responsive to disasters and emergencies, transportation, tourism, honorary titles, culture, sports, and animal protection. Third, women were more likely than men to identify domestic violence and poor access to health services as the main problems faced by women and girls

in the community. Fourth, in terms of public investments, women were more likely than men to demand the improvement of schools and kindergartens. Fifth, compared to men, women were more likely to report better relationships with councilors who shared the same gender and belonged to the opposition. Sixth, women were more likely than men to report that they have participated in collaborative initiatives addressing the problems faced by women and girls in the community. The focus of collaborative initiatives reported by women extends to domestic violence, business support for women, women's organization, and gender budgeting.

Yet, the study reveals several concerns on women's engagement in council meetings. Despite the measure of engagement used, the conclusion is that women engage less than men. Women were less likely than men to report that they take the floor more than 2 times or they speak more than 2 minutes. Meanwhile, men were more likely than women to report that they have initiated draft decisions or they have submitted requests to the municipality or the secretary of the local council. Men were also more likely to report that they meet with community members or they rely on community members for information. Women were more likely than men to rely on party leaders for information.

One of the explanations for the low levels of women's engagement is related to their experience. Women, compared to men, have less experience in the council and the party. Another explanation is related to women's route into the local council. Women shared several stories of their involvement in local councils. Often, these stories had a common characteristic: women became council members *t'i bëjnë nder* (lit: to make a favor) to

a man, especially the father or the spouse. The following stories illustrate the experience of two women who joined the local council for the first time in 2015. One of the women was not involved in the election campaign and did not organize meetings with community members. She said: "I was involved in politics because of my father. My father is an active and ardent supporter of a political party. My father wanted to have an influence in the council; this is why I got involved into the council." Another woman confided that her father was involved in politics. "I did a favor to my father, *për hir të shokëve të tij* (lit: for the sake of his friends). He got involved in politics to find me a job." She did not express any interest in council meetings.

The influence of men was also revealed during the process of collecting data. There were a few instances of women who attended the interview with the husband. While responding to the questions, one of the women would often turn to her husband, saying that "he knows best." She mentioned that "my husband registered me" in the council. Similarly, another woman would turn to her husband, asking him about the number of years that she has been a party member and the extent that she has been involved in the election campaign of 2015.

Dragoti et al. (2011) report that in selecting women candidates, party leaders do not take into consideration the preferences of party organizations working at the grassroots. Even though our study did not focus on the strategies of party leaders, we gained insights from the interviews. There is some evidence that party leaders have relied on personal ties. One of the party leaders shared his experience of selecting women: "I was filling out the list of councilors for my party and we were asked to put an equal number of women and men.

We had a lot of men, but no women. I spoke with the people I knew and I asked if I could use their names [the names of spouses, daughters], just to get the numbers right.” While it is not clear how common this type of selection is, it raises several concerns on the intentions of party leaders.

Selection processes that rely on clientelistic ties undermine the potential impact of gender quotas. This is for at least two reasons. First, women serve as proxies for men. One of the women for instance shared that she never speaks in meetings. When she was asked on how she votes, she responded by saying: “*Bëjnë me shenjë burrat për kë të votojmë* (lit: men give us signals for whom to vote).” Second, women are accountable to party leaders. Women view their participation in the local council as a favor made by party leaders; a favor that they have to return. One of the women for instance who was highly educated and vocal outside of the council, said that she was silent during council meetings because *nuk dua t’i bie kryetarit të partisë* (lit: I don’t want to hit the party leader). Women’s dependency on party leaders needs further investigation.

The selection process also undermines women’s organization. One of the women with a long experience in the council said: “When we see young women becoming part of the council, we say: you are my child. Women are totally hostile to one another.” On their side, the youngest women shared that they feel inferior during council meetings. For instance, one of the young women said that she felt insecure and didn’t speak during meetings. She feared that she would be judged by older councilors who had more experience. Another young woman said that she never thought of becoming a member of the local council but she was elected because of quotas. She has

never organized meetings with community members. Furthermore, she shared that she doesn’t speak up during council meetings.

Overall, women reported better relationships in councils than men. They were more likely than men to bridge their political party. Even though they reported that they have better relationships in the council, their good relationships did not always translate into collaborative initiatives. Only 37.86 percent of women (n = 78) reported that they have participated in collaborative initiatives. Beaman et al. (2010) found that political reservation for women leaders in the rural councils of India led to increased participation of women in local meetings. This study did not find any support for this argument. Overall, there is little participation of community members in council meetings. Less than half of council meetings were attended by community members. Furthermore, community members took the floor only in 5 meetings.

The study also found little collaboration of councilors with civil society organizations. 32.52 percent of councilors (n = 130) reported that they have collaborated with civil society organizations. In some instances, there were no opportunities for collaboration due to the lack of civil society organizations in the community. Councilors discussed three collaborative roles. First, councilors facilitate the relationship between civil society organizations and the municipality. For instance, they help civil society organizations to access information in the municipality. Or, they invite civil society organizations to share the findings of research projects. Second, councilors facilitate the relationship between the local government and citizens. Third, councilors connect citizens with civil society organizations, depending on the services that organizations offer. Councilors’

efforts should be expanded with the purpose of strengthening their relationship with civil society organizations.

The findings of this study call for greater focus on women's role within parties and party structures, especially how party structures facilitate women's participation and engagement in local politics. What is the role of women's forums in the process of candidate selection? How do women's forums interact with party leaders? What is the bargaining power of

women's organizational structures? This study shows that party leaders take advantage of gender quotas to sustain their political power. Because gender quotas challenge the existing political power, the focus should be on how to increase the bargaining power of women and their role within the party.

This is a cross-sectional study that does not measure change over time. The introduction of gender quotas in 2015 is the beginning of a long process that should be monitored over time.

TRAINING PROGRAMS THAT FOCUS ON THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

90.29 percent of women (n = 186) and 80.88 percent of men (n = 165) reported that they would like to participate in capacity-building programs. Councilors demanded different types of interventions, which are described below.

Participating in training programs that focus on the central government and the relationship of the central government with local governments.

Specifically, training sessions should focus on (a) how the central government functions; (b) laws, such as the Right to Information Law and Public Administration Law, and policies enacted by the central government; (c) the relationship between the central government and local governments, for example how power is distributed between the two levels of government, how funds are distributed from the central government to local governments, and changes introduced with the territorial and administrative reform, especially how changes will affect rural areas.

Participating in training programs that focus on the local council, and the tasks and responsibilities of councilors.

Training sessions should focus on: (a) how the local council works; (b) how the municipality works; and (c) how to demand transparency from the municipality. It was common for councilors – both women and men – to require training sessions on their roles and responsibilities in the council. “I want to learn how councilors make decisions,” said one of the councilors. Another councilor said: “I want to know how to read the papers related to the work that we do.” Councilors also emphasized the importance of understanding the relationship between the council and the institution of Prefect, especially how the decisions made by

the council are addressed by the Prefect. Specifically, the councilor raised the concern that decisions of the local council in the past have changed without consulting with councilors first: "There have been instances of changing draft decisions and councilors have not been informed about this." Other topics include: taxes, budgeting, and public finance. Councilors emphasized that they need more information on how to strengthen women's role in the community, strengthen women's role in decision making, support women's businesses, and contribute to the integration of Roma in the society.

Participating in training programs that focus on strengthening personal skills, such as public speaking skills, leadership skills, and communication skills. Councilors emphasized the importance of strengthening those skills that will increase their bargaining power with municipal officials. For example, they want to obtain information on how to analyze the municipal budget and "how to demand our rights." Women asked for information on how to organize and manage election campaigns.

Fostering collaboration. Both women and men emphasized the importance of learning about collaboration, specifically how to collaborate with civil society organizations, community members, donors, the media, the municipality, and colleagues within the council.

Developing exchange programs with the purpose of sharing experiences in the country and the region. Councilors were eager to learn about successful models of local governance as well as models of local governance in EU countries.

Developing mentoring programs. Councilors suggested that experienced councilors or former councilors offer support and guidance to those who are less experienced.

There were instances of councilors who were skeptical of training sessions, arguing that their career advancement does not depend on their participation in training sessions rather than their connection with party leaders. One of the women characterized training programs as "useless" because the majority of women who have participated in training programs in the past were not elected in the council.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1: Selected municipalities

Interviews with councilors were conducted in the following municipalities: Delvine, Divjake, Durres, Fier, Finiq, Fushe-Arrez, Kamez, Kelcyre, Kolonje, Korçe, Kuçove, Kukes, Kurbin, Lezhe, Librazhd, Lushnje, Malesi e Madhe, Maliq, Mat, Mirdite, Peqin, Poliçan, Puke, Pustec, Sarande, Shijak, Tepelene, Tirane, Ura Vajgurore, and Vore.

Observation and data recording were conducted in the following municipalities: Durres, Fier, Korçe, Kukes, Librazhd, Malesi e Madhe, Mat, Puke, Sarande, Tirane, and Ura Vajgurore.

Appendix 2: Univariate, bivariate, and multivariate analysis

Table 1: Individual-level characteristics (continuous variables)

Variable	Councilors			Women			Men		
	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range
Number of mandates	1.58	1.01	1-7	1.27	.63	1-4	1.90	1.21	1-7
Number of years in the party	9.34	8.03	1-35	8.00	7.65	1-35	10.71	8.19	1-27
Number of commissions	2.20	.77	1-6	2.21	.75	1-4	2.19	.80	1-6
Age	42.26	11.73	19-72	38.86	11.64	19-66	45.62	10.84	21-72
Number of children	1.64	1.15	0-4	1.35	1.10	0-4	1.93	1.14	0-4
Monthly income	67016	78155	0-700000	53162	47406	0-420000	85375	103387	0-700000

Table 2: Relationship of individual-level characteristics (continuous variables) and gender

	Women	Men	t	df
Number of mandates	1.27 (.63)	1.90 (1.21)	-6.61***	408
Number of years in the party	8.00 (7.65)	10.71 (8.19)	-3.41***	395
Number of commissions	2.21 (.75)	2.19 (.80)	0.28	375
Age	38.86 (11.64)	45.62 (10.84)	-6.01***	398
Number of children	1.35 (1.09)	1.93 (1.13)	-5.23***	406
Monthly income	53162 (47406)	85375 (103387.)	-3.52***	284

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Standard Deviations appear in parentheses below means.

Table 3: Individual-level characteristics (categorical variables)

Variable	Councilors		Women		Men	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Political party						
Socialist Party	132	32.20	78	37.86	54	26.47
Democratic Party	77	18.78	43	20.87	34	16.67
Socialist Movement for Integration	91	22.20	53	25.73	38	18.63
Other	110	26.83	32	15.53	78	38.24
Position in the party						
None	31	8.05	14	7.29	17	8.81
Head	96	24.94	49	25.52	47	24.35
Vice head	15	3.90	5	2.60	10	5.18
Secretary	18	4.68	9	4.69	9	4.66
Coordinator	23	5.97	7	3.65	16	8.29
Member	202	52.47	108	56.25	94	48.70
Position in the commission						
Head	73	18.11	34	16.67	39	19.60
Vice head	34	8.44	17	8.33	17	8.54
Member	263	65.26	137	67.16	126	63.32
Substitute	2	0.50	1	0.49	1	0.50
Education level						
High school	50	12.25	12	5.88	38	18.63
College	227	55.64	113	55.39	114	55.88
Master	102	25.00	60	29.41	42	20.59
Doctorate	29	7.11	19	9.31	10	4.90
Civil status						
Single	80	20.15	54	27.55	26	12.94
Married	309	77.83	134	68.37	175	87.06
Divorced	5	1.26	5	2.55	0	0
Widowed	3	0.76	3	1.53	0	0
Profession						
Teacher	87	21.64	56	28.00	31	15.35
Economist	87	21.64	44	22.00	43	21.29
Lawyer	45	11.19	16	8.00	29	14.36
Engineer	33	8.21	12	6.00	21	10.40
Agronomist	21	5.22	9	4.50	12	5.94
Doctor	16	3.98	12	6.00	4	1.98
Accountant	13	3.23	5	2.50	8	3.96
Nurse	11	2.74	6	3.00	5	2.48
Lecturer/Professor	11	2.74	2	1.00	9	4.46
Other	78	19.40	38	19.00	40	19.80
Minority member						
Yes	24	5.88	14	6.86	10	4.90
No	384	94.12	190	93.14	194	95.10
Beneficiary of social assistance for persons with disabilities						
Yes	5	1.23	1	0.49	4	1.97
No	402	98.77	203	99.51	199	98.03
Type of administrative unit						
Urban	278	67.97	139	67	139	68.47
Rural	131	32.03	67.48	32.52	64	31.53

Table 4: Relationship of individual-level characteristics and gender

	Women	Men	Chi-square
Political party			
Socialist Party	78 (59.09)	54 (40.91)	27.11***
Democratic Party	43 (55.84)	34 (44.16)	
Socialist Movement for integration	53 (58.24)	38 (41.76)	
Other	32 (29.09)	78 (70.91)	
Position in the party			
None	14 (45.16)	17 (54.84)	6.49
Head	49 (51.04)	47 (48.96)	
Vice head	5 (33.33)	10 (66.67)	
Secretary	9 (50.00)	9 (50.00)	
Coordinator	7 (30.43)	16 (69.57)	
Member	108 (53.47)	94 (46.53)	
Position in the commission			
Head	34 (46.58)	39 (53.42)	0.58
Vice head	17 (50.00)	17 (50.00)	0.006
Member	137 (52.09)	126 (47.91)	0.65
Substitute	1 (50.00)	1 (50.00)	0.0003
Education level			
High school	12 (24.00)	38 (76.00)	19.49***
College	113 (49.78)	114 (50.22)	
Master	60 (58.82)	42 (41.18)	
Doctorate	19 (65.52)	10 (34.48)	
Civil status			
Single	54 (67.50)	26 (32.50)	23.18***
Married	134 (43.37)	175 (56.63)	
Divorced	5 (100.00)	0 (0)	
Widowed	3 (100.00)	0 (0)	
Type of administrative unit			
Urban	139 (50.00)	139 (50.00)	0.829
Rural	67 (51.15)	64 (48.85)	

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Numbers in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Table 5: Previous experience and goal in the local council

Variable	Councilors		Women		Men	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Council member in the past						
Yes	137	33.50	39	19.02	98	48.04
No	272	66.50	166	80.98	106	51.96
Type of council						
Urban	80	58.39	26	66.67	54	55.10
Rural	57	41.61	13	33.33	44	44.90
Joining the local council						
I never thought of becoming a member of the local council but I was proposed because of gender quotas (only women)	-	-	43	26.06	-	-
I never thought of becoming a member of the local council but my colleagues proposed me (only men)	-	-	-	-	37	34.91
I had previously thought of joining the council and gender quotas provided the space (only women)	-	-	51	30.91	-	-
I had previously thought of joining the council but I obtained strong support in the local elections of 2015 (only men)	-	-	-	-	19	17.92
The idea of joining the council naturally emerged after many years of involvement in politics	99	36.53	57	30.91	19	17.92
Other	22	8.12	14	8.48	8	7.55
Relatives as members of the local council						
Yes	25	6.10	11	5.34	14	6.86
No	385	93.90	195	94.66	190	93.14
Relatives involved in politics						
Yes	185	45.12	117	56.80	68	33.33
No	225	54.88	89	43.20	136	66.67
Goal in the local council						
To ensure personal gains	4	0.98	2	0.97	2	0.98
To influence decisions in the council	150	36.59	87	42.23	63	30.88
To improve the quality of life in the community	380	92.68	195	94.66	185	90.69
To climb the political ladder	73	17.80	41	19.90	32	15.69
Other	10	2.44	5	2.43	5	2.45

Table 6: Relationship of previous experience and goal in the local council and gender

Council members in the past	Women	Men	Chi-square
Yes	39 (28.47)	98 (71.53)	38.64***
No	166 (61.03)	106 (38.97)	
Type of council			1.54
Urban	26 (32.50)	54 (67.50)	
Rural	13 (22.81)	44 (77.19)	
Joining the local council			
I never thought of becoming a member of the local council but I was proposed because of gender quotas (only women)	43 (26.06)	-	2.43
I never thought of becoming a member of the local council but my colleagues proposed me (only men)	-	37 (34.91)	
I had previously thought of joining the council and gender quotas provided the space (only women)	51 (30.91)	-	5.68*
I had previously thought of joining the council but I obtained strong support in the local elections of 2015 (only men)	-	19 (17.92)	
The idea of joining the council naturally emerged after many years of involvement in politics	57 (57.58)	42 (42.42)	0.72
Other	14 (8.48)	8 (7.55)	0.08
Relatives as members of the local council			0.42
Yes	11 (44.00)	14 (56.00)	
No	195 (50.65)	190 (49.35)	
Relatives involved in politics			22.79***
Yes	117 (63.24)	68 (36.76)	
No	89 (39.56)	136 (60.44)	
Goal in the local council			
To ensure personal gains	2 (50.00)	2 (50.00)	0.001
To influence decisions in the council	87 (58.00)	63 (42.00)	5.69*
To improve the quality of life in the community	195 (51.32)	185 (48.68)	2.39
To climb the political ladder	41 (56.16)	32 (43.84)	1.25

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Numbers in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Table 7: Electoral campaign of 2015

Variable	Councilors		Women		Men	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Source of support during election campaign						
Spouse	185	45.12	112	54.37	73	35.78
Relatives	176	42.93	93	45.15	83	40.69
Party members	211	51.46	108	52.43	103	50.49
Party leaders	162	39.51	101	49.03	61	29.90
Community members	310	75.61	146	70.87	164	80.39
Other	19	4.63	10	4.85	9	4.41
Involvement in the election campaign of 2015						
Yes	360	87.80	170	82.52	190	93.14
No	50	12.20	36	17.48	14	6.86
Reasons for not being involved in the election campaign of 2015						
Party leaders have required that I do not get involved	1	2.08	0	0	1	7.14
Women/men who get involved are stigmatized by the community	5	10.42	5	14.71	0	0
Election results do not depend on campaign involvement	13	27.08	9	26.47	4	28.57
I did not have financial sources	11	22.92	7	20.59	4	28.57
Other	23	47.92	17	50.00	6	42.86

Table 8: Relationship of electoral campaign of 2015 and gender

	Women	Men	Chi-square
Source of support during election campaign			
Spouse	112 (60.54)	73 (39.46)	14.30***
Relatives	93 (52.84)	83 (47.16)	0.83
Party members	108 (51.18)	103 (48.82)	0.15
Party leaders	101 (62.35)	61 (37.65)	15.69***
Community members	146 (47.10)	164 (52.90)	5.03*
Other	10 (52.63)	9 (47.37)	0.04
Involvement in the election campaign of 2015			
Yes	170 (47.22)	190 (52.78)	10.78**
No	36 (72.00)	14 (28.00)	
Reasons for not being involved in the election campaign of 2015			
Party leaders have required that I do not get involved	0 (0)	1 (100)	2.48
Women/men who get involved are stigmatized by the community	5 (100.00)	0 (0)	2.30
Election results do not depend on campaign involvement	9 (69.23)	4 (30.77)	0.02
I did not have financial sources	7 (63.64)	4 (36.36)	0.36
Other	17 (73.91)	6 (26.09)	0.20

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Numbers in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Table 9: Knowledge of local governance and rural development

Variable	Councilors			Women			Men		
	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range
Duties and competencies of the municipal council	4.03	.79	2-5	3.94	.80	2-5	4.13	.76	2-5
Functions and competencies of the municipality	3.95	.79	2-5	3.83	.82	2-5	4.06	.76	2-5
Social and economic development of rural areas	3.92	.89	1-5	3.74	.94	1-5	4.09	.80	2-5

Table 10: Relationship of knowledge of local governance, rural development and gender

	Women	Men	t	df
Duties and competencies of the municipal council	3.94 (.80)	4.13 (.76)	-2.46*	408
Functions and competencies of the municipality	3.83 (.82)	4.06 (.76)	-3.00**	408
Social and economic development of rural areas	3.74 (.94)	4.09 (.80)	-4.07***	407

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Standard Deviations appear in parentheses below means.

Table 11: Participation in the meetings of the local council

Variable	Councilors		Women		Men	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Participation in council meetings						
I never miss council meetings	256	62.44	127	61.65	129	63.24
I rarely miss council meetings	149	36.34	78	37.86	71	34.80
I often miss council meetings	5	1.22	1	0.49	4	1.96
Speech participation						
I never take the floor	19	4.63	15	7.28	4	1.96
I take the floor 1 – 2 times	240	58.54	136	66.02	104	50.98
I take the floor 3 – 5 times	101	24.63	42	20.39	59	28.92
I take the floor more than 5 times	50	12.20	13	6.31	37	18.14
Speech length						
I never speak	15	3.66	11	5.34	4	1.96
1 – 2 minutes	108	26.34	71	34.47	37	18.14
3 – 5 minutes	192	46.83	87	42.23	105	51.47
6 – 10 minutes	59	14.39	28	13.59	31	15.20
More than 10 minutes	36	8.78	9	4.37	27	13.24

Table 12: Relationship of participation in the meetings of the local council and gender

	Women	Men	Chi-square
Participation in council meetings			2.13
I never miss council meetings	127 (49.61)	129 (50.39)	
I rarely miss council meetings	78 (52.35)	71 (47.65)	
I often miss council meetings	1 (20.00)	4 (80.00)	
Speech participation			25.01***
I never take the floor	15 (78.95)	4 (21.05)	
I take the floor 1 – 2 times	136 (56.67)	104 (43.33)	
I take the floor 3 – 5 times	42 (41.58)	59 (58.42)	
I take the floor more than 5 times	13 (26.00)	37 (74.00)	
Speech length			24.80***
I never speak	11 (73.33)	4 (26.67)	
1 – 2 minutes	71 (65.74)	37 (34.26)	
3 – 5 minutes	87 (45.31)	105 (54.69)	
6 – 10 minutes	28 (47.46)	31 (52.54)	
More than 10 minutes	9 (25.00)	27 (75.00)	

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Numbers in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Table 13: Decision-making initiatives in the local council

Variable	Councilors		Women		Men	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Initiating draft decisions	114	27.80	41	19.90	73	35.78
Initiating draft decisions that focus on improving women's status	43	36.44	22	48.89	21	28.77

Table 14: Relationship of decision-making initiatives in the local council and gender

	Women	Men	Chi-square
Initiating draft decisions	41 (35.96)	73 (64.04)	12.88***
Initiating draft decisions that focus on improving women's status	22 (51.16)	21 (48.84)	4.87*

Table 15: Decision-making initiatives in the local council (cont.)

Variable	Councilors			Women			Men		
	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range
Number of draft decisions proposed	2	1.15	1-5	1.64	.79	1-4	2.21	1.28	1-5
Number of draft decisions approved	1.34	1.10	0-4	1.10	.85	0-4	1.47	1.20	0-4
Number of draft decisions that focus on improving women's status approved	.83	.67	0-3	.75	.55	0-2	.9	.79	0-3

Table 16: Relationship of decision-making initiatives in the local council (cont.) and gender

	Women	Men	t	df
Number of draft decisions proposed	1.64 (.79)	2.21 (1.28)	-2.59*	112
Number of draft decisions approved	1.10 (.85)	1.47 (1.20)	-1.68	105
Number of draft decisions that focus on improving women's status approved	.12 (.55)	.18 (.79)	-0.70	38

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Standard Deviations appear in parentheses below means.

Table 17: Role and experience in the local council

Variable	Councilors		Women		Men	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Submitting requests						
Yes	188	45.85	83	40.29	105	51.47
No	222	54.15	123	59.71	99	48.53
Type of requests						
Written	104	55.32	49	59.04	55	52.38
Face-to-face	111	59.04	44	53.01	67	63.81
Phone	10	5.32	8	9.64	2	1.90
E-mail	6	3.19	6	7.23	0	0
Other	7	3.72	2	2.41	5	4.76
Assessing the way of addressing the request						
Lack of willingness to address the request	42	22.46	15	18.29	27	25.71
Lack of resources to address the request	83	44.39	35	42.68	48	45.71
Request was addressed	57	30.48	31	37.80	26	24.76
Other	5	2.67	1	1.22	4	3.81
Meeting with community members						
Yes	310	75.61	138	66.99	172	84.31
No	100	24.39	68	33.01	32	15.69
Barriers to meeting with community members						
Lack of transportation	9	9.28	6	9.23	3	9.38
Limited financial sources	21	21.65	16	24.62	5	15.62
Lack of time	44	45.36	27	41.54	17	53.12
Community stereotypes	10	10.31	9	13.85	1	3.12
Lack of power to solve community problems	47	48.45	30	46.15	17	53.12
Other	10	10.31	10	15.38	0	0
Sources of information						
Party leaders	128	31.30	77	37.38	51	25.12
Community members	368	89.98	175	84.95	193	95.07
Youth groups	85	20.78	45	21.84	40	19.70
Printed media	98	23.96	55	26.70	43	21.18
Visual media	89	21.76	48	23.30	41	20.20
Social media	90	22.00	56	27.18	34	16.75
Colleagues	90	22.00	47	22.82	43	21.18
Scientific journals	17	4.16	12	5.83	5	2.46
Books	20	4.89	15	7.28	5	2.46
Other	26	6.36	19	9.22	7	3.45
Facing uncertainties during council meetings						
Yes	171	41.71	90	43.69	81	39.71
No	239	58.29	116	56.31	123	60.29
Municipality offering support to address uncertainties						
Yes	222	56.63	117	60.31	105	53.03
No	170	43.37	77	39.69	93	46.97
Activities accomplished by councilors						
Participating in protests	77	18.97	42	20.59	35	17.33
Participating in awareness raising campaigns	252	62.07	126	61.76	126	62.38
Participating in TV programs	67	16.50	35	17.16	32	15.84
Publishing in the printed media	36	8.87	17	8.33	19	9.41
Reactions in the social media	101	24.88	55	26.96	46	22.77
Delivering press releases	51	12.56	19	9.31	32	15.84
Lobbying in the central government	63	15.52	34	16.67	29	14.36
Other	88	21.73	54	26.60	34	16.83

Table 18: Relationship of role and experience in the local council and gender (cont.)

	Women	Men	Chi-square	
Submitting requests				
Yes	83 (44.15)	105 (55.85)	5.16*	
No	123 (55.41)	99 (44.59)		
Type of requests				
Written	49 (47.12)	55 (52.88)	0.83	
Face-to-face	44 (39.64)	67 (60.36)	2.23	
Assessing the way of addressing the request				4.95
Lack of willingness to address the request	15 (35.71)	27 (64.29)		
Lack of resources to address the request	35 (42.17)	48 (57.83)		
Request was addressed	31 (54.39)	26 (45.61)		
Other	1 (20.00)	4 (80.00)		
Meeting with community members				16.68***
Yes	138 (44.52)	172 (55.48)		
No	68 (68.00)	32 (32.00)		
Barriers to meeting with community members				
Lack of transportation	6 (66.67)	3 (33.33)	0.001	
Limited financial sources	16 (76.19)	5 (23.81)	1.02	
Lack of time	27 (61.36)	17 (38.64)	1.16	
Lack of power to solve community problems	30 (63.83)	17 (36.17)	0.42	
Sources of information				
Party leaders	77 (60.16)	51 (39.84)	7.14**	
Community members	175 (47.55)	193 (52.45)	11.62**	
Youth groups	45 (52.94)	40 (47.06)	0.28	
Printed media	55 (56.12)	43 (43.88)	1.71	
Visual media	48 (53.93)	41 (46.07)	0.58	
Social media	56 (62.22)	34 (37.78)	6.49	
Colleagues	47 (52.22)	43 (47.78)	0.16	
Scientific journals	12 (70.59)	5 (29.41)	2.90	
Books	15 (75.00)	5 (25.00)	5.10*	
Other	19 (73.08)	7 (26.92)	5.73*	

Table 18: Relationship of role and experience in the local council and gender

	Women	Men	Chi-square
Facing uncertainties during council meetings			0.67
Yes	90 (52.63)	81 (47.37)	
No	116 (48.54)	123 (51.46)	
Municipality offering support to address uncertainties			2.11
Yes	117 (52.70)	105 (47.30)	
No	77 (45.29)	93 (54.71)	
Activities accomplished by councilors			
Participating in protests	42 (54.55)	35 (45.45)	0.70
Participating in awareness raising campaigns	126 (50.00)	126 (50.00)	0.02
Participating in TV programs	35 (52.24)	32 (47.76)	0.13
Publishing in the printed media	17 (47.22)	19 (52.78)	0.14
Reactions in the social media	55 (54.46)	46 (45.54)	0.95
Delivering press releases	19 (37.25)	32 (62.75)	3.94
Lobbying in the central government	34 (53.97)	29 (46.03)	0.41
Other	54 (61.36)	34 (38.64)	5.68*

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Numbers in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Table 19: Role and experience in the local council by gender (cont.)

Variable	Councilors			Women			Men		
	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range
Number of requests	3.91	5.44	1-50	2.94	2.61	1-50	4.67	6.82	1-50
Number of responses	2.52	4.39	0-50	1.90	1.6	0-6	3.0	5.66	0-50
Amount of money spent per month on community activities	5358	7245	0-30000	4027	6552	0-30000	7074	7747	0-30000

Table 20: Relationship of role and experience in the local council and gender (cont.)

	Women	Men	t	df
Number of requests	2.93 (2.62)	4.67 (6.82)	-2.15*	179
Number of responses	1.90 (1.60)	3.01 (5.66)	-1.71	182
Amount of money spent per month on community activities	4027 (6552)	7074 (7747)	-3.54***	275

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Standard Deviations appear in parentheses below means.

Table 21: Perception of decision-making power

Variable	Councilors			Women			Men		
	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range
Council	3.46	.92	1-5	3.53	.94	1-5	3.39	.89	1-5
Commission	3.77	.98	1-5	3.86	.96	1-5	3.68	1.00	1-5
Party	3.90	.92	1-5	3.79	.91	1-5	4.0	.93	1-5

Table 22: Relationship of perception of decision-making power and gender

	Women	Men	t	df
Council	3.53 (.94)	3.39 (.89)	1.54	405
Commission	3.86 (.96)	3.68 (.99)	1.69	338
Party	3.79 (.91)	4.00 (.93)	.93*	397

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Standard Deviations appear in parentheses below means.

Table 23: Attitudes toward gender quotas

Variable	Councilors		Women		Men	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Agreeing with gender quotas						
Yes	375	91.46	203	98.54	172	84.31
No	35	8.54	3	1.46	32	15.69
Gender quotas have resulted into the selection of unqualified women	153	37.41	42	20.49	111	54.41
Gender quotas have damaged men's interests	96	23.53	60	29.41	36	17.65
Gender quotas will improve relationships between councilors	383	94.10	197	97.04	186	91.18
Gender quotas will result into a better representation of community interests	365	89.46	202	99.02	163	79.90
Gender quotas will improve the situation of women and girls	396	97.06	202	99.02	194	95.10
Gender quotas will lead to open and transparent governance	333	81.82	182	89.22	151	74.38
Gender quotas will reduce political tensions in the council	371	91.15	190	93.14	181	89.16

Table 24: Relationship of attitudes toward gender quotas and gender

	Women	Men	Chi-square
Agreeing with gender quotas			26.58***
Yes	203 (54.13)	172 (45.87)	
No	3 (8.57)	32 (91.43)	
Gender quotas have resulted into the selection of unqualified women	42 (27.45)	111 (72.55)	50.26***
Gender quotas have damaged men's interests	60 (62.50)	36 (37.50)	7.85**
Gender quotas will improve relationships between councilors	197 (51.44)	186 (48.56)	6.31*
Gender quotas will result into a better representation of community interests	202 (55.34)	163 (44.66)	39.54***
Gender quotas will improve the situation of women and girls	202 (51.01)	194 (48.99)	5.50*
Gender quotas will lead to open and transparent governance	182 (54.65)	151 (45.35)	15.04***
Gender quotas will reduce political tensions in the council	190 (51.21)	181 (48.79)	1.99

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Numbers in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Table 25: Reflecting the problems of women and girls in the agenda of the local council

Variable	Councilors		Women		Men	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Economic development	258	62.93	106	51.46	152	74.51
Education	247	60.24	141	68.45	106	51.96
Local businesses	183	44.63	62	30.10	121	59.31
Medical services	132	32.20	68	33.01	64	31.37
Economic aid	236	57.56	123	59.71	113	55.39
Water supply	213	51.95	89	43.20	124	60.78
Social services	194	47.32	100	48.54	94	46.08
Environment	150	36.59	67	32.52	83	40.69
Social housing	135	32.93	62	30.10	73	35.78
Agriculture and farming	108	26.34	36	17.48	72	35.29
Scholarships	208	50.73	113	54.85	95	46.57
Communication with community members	122	29.76	55	26.70	67	32.84
Public investments	195	47.56	81	39.32	114	55.88
Peace and security	80	19.56	28	13.59	52	25.62
Street cleaning service	191	46.59	90	43.69	101	49.51
Tourism	94	22.93	37	17.96	57	27.94
Greenery service	156	38.05	78	37.86	78	38.24
Sports	109	26.59	34	16.50	75	36.76
Road maintenance service	168	40.98	67	32.52	101	49.51
Culture	114	27.80	54	26.21	60	29.41
Street lighting service	133	32.44	62	30.10	71	34.80
Other	21	5.12	13	6.31	8	3.92

Table 26: Relationship of reflecting the problems of women and girls in the agenda of the local council and gender

	Women	Men	Chi-square
Economic development	106 (41.09)	152 (58.91)	23.35***
Education	141 (57.09)	106 (42.91)	11.63**
Local businesses	62 (33.88)	121 (66.12)	35.40***
Medical services	68 (51.52)	64 (48.48)	0.13
Economic aid	123 (52.12)	113 (47.88)	0.78
Water supply	89 (41.78)	124 (58.22)	12.69***
Social services	100 (51.55)	94 (48.45)	0.25
Environment	67 (44.67)	83 (55.33)	2.94
Social housing	62 (45.93)	73 (54.07)	1.50
Agriculture and farming	36 (33.33)	72 (66.67)	16.77***
Scholarships	113 (54.33)	95 (45.67)	2.81
Communication with community members	55 (45.08)	67 (54.92)	1.85
Public investments	81 (41.54)	114 (58.46)	11.27**
Peace and security	28 (35.00)	52 (65.00)	9.39**
Street cleaning service	90 (47.12)	101 (52.88)	1.39
Tourism	37 (39.36)	57 (60.64)	5.78*
Greenery service	78 (50.00)	78 (50.00)	0.01
Sports	34 (31.19)	75 (68.81)	21.56***
Road maintenance service	67 (39.88)	101 (60.12)	12.23***
Culture	54 (47.37)	60 (52.63)	0.52
Street lighting service	62 (46.62)	71 (53.38)	1.03
Other	13 (61.90)	8 (38.10)	1.20

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Numbers in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Table 27: Main problems faced by women and girls in the community

Variable	Councilors		Women		Men	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Poverty	297	72.44	142	68.93	155	75.98
Sexual harassment in the workplace	55	13.41	22	10.68	33	16.18
Unemployment	378	92.20	188	91.26	190	93.14
Low representation in decision making	203	49.63	109	52.91	94	46.31
Malnutrition	52	12.68	23	11.17	29	14.22
Lack of physical security	36	8.78	18	8.74	18	8.82
Lack of housing	94	22.93	55	26.70	39	19.12
School dropout	92	22.44	52	25.24	40	19.61
Domestic violence	199	48.54	121	58.74	78	38.24
Lack of support for women's businesses	172	41.95	86	41.75	86	42.16
Poor access to transportation	61	14.88	32	15.53	29	14.22
Lack of land titles	83	20.24	41	19.90	42	20.59
Poor access to health services	48	11.71	34	16.50	14	6.86
Discrimination in the labor market	123	30.00	52	25.24	71	34.80
Other	9	2.20	5	2.43	4	1.96

Table 28: Relationship of the main problems faced by women and girls in the community and gender

	Women	Men	Chi-square
Poverty	142 (47.81)	155 (52.19)	2.55
Sexual harassment in the workplace	22 (40.00)	33 (60.00)	2.67
Unemployment	188 (49.74)	190 (50.26)	0.50
Low representation in decision making	109 (53.69)	94 (46.31)	1.79
Malnutrition	23 (44.23)	29 (55.77)	0.86
Lack of physical security	18 (50.00)	18 (50.00)	0.001
Lack of housing	55 (58.51)	39 (41.49)	3.33
School dropout	52 (56.52)	40 (43.48)	1.87
Domestic violence	121 (60.80)	78 (39.20)	17.25***
Lack of support for women's businesses	86 (50.00)	86 (50.00)	0.007
Poor access to transportation	32 (52.46)	29 (47.54)	0.14
Lack of land titles	41 (49.40)	42 (50.60)	0.03
Poor access to health services	34 (70.83)	14 (29.17)	9.22**
Discrimination in the labor market	109 (53.69)	94 (46.31)	1.79
Other	5 (55.56)	4 (44.44)	0.10

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Numbers in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Table 29: Main problems addressed in the council

Variable	Councilors		Women		Men	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Speaking up	223	54.39	92	44.66	95	46.57
Poverty	148	66.07	64	56.14	84	76.36
Sexual harassment in the workplace	8	3.59	3	2.65	5	4.55
Unemployment	193	86.55	93	82.30	100	90.91
Low representation in decision making	74	33.18	34	30.09	40	36.36
Malnutrition	29	13.00	6	5.31	23	20.91
Lack of physical security	8	3.60	5	4.46	3	2.73
Lack of housing	62	27.80	32	28.32	30	27.27
School dropout	44	19.73	19	16.81	25	22.73
Domestic violence	85	38.12	48	42.48	37	33.64
Lack of support for women's businesses	72	32.29	45	39.82	27	24.55
Poor access to transportation	22	9.87	14	12.39	8	7.27
Lack of land titles	20	8.97	7	6.19	13	11.82
Poor access to health services	22	9.87	10	8.85	12	10.91
Discrimination in the labor market	47	21.08	22	19.47	25	22.73
Other	7	3.14	3	2.65	4	3.64
My responsibility to represent the interests of women and girls in the council	200	89.29	112	98.25	88	80.00

Table 30: Relationship of the main problems addressed in the council and gender

	Women	Men	Chi-square
Poverty	64 (43.24)	84 (56.76)	10.21**
Sexual harassment in the workplace	3 (37.50)	5 (62.50)	0.58
Unemployment	93 (48.19)	100 (51.81)	3.55
Low representation in decision making	34 (45.95)	40 (54.05)	0.99
Malnutrition	6 (20.69)	23 (79.31)	11.98**
Lack of physical security	5 (62.50)	3 (37.50)	0.48
Lack of housing	32 (51.61)	30 (48.39)	0.03
School dropout	19 (43.18)	25 (56.82)	1.23
Domestic violence	48 (56.47)	37 (43.53)	1.85
Lack of support for women's businesses	45 (62.50)	27 (37.50)	5.95*
Poor access to transportation	14 (63.64)	8 (36.36)	1.64
Lack of land titles	7 (35.00)	13 (65.00)	2.16
Poor access to health services	10 (45.45)	12 (54.55)	0.27
Discrimination in the labor market	34 (45.95)	40 (54.05)	0.99
Other	3 (42.86)	4 (57.14)	0.18

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Numbers in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Table 31: Public investments demanded

Variable	Councilors		Women		Men	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Water supply	264	64.86	116	57.14	148	72.55
Health centers	117	28.75	53	26.11	64	31.37
Sewage system	219	53.94	86	42.57	133	65.20
Hospitals	63	15.48	32	15.76	31	15.20
Irrigation system	113	27.76	37	18.23	76	37.25
Transportation	117	28.75	51	25.12	66	32.35
Roads	266	65.36	122	60.10	144	70.59
Community centers	67	16.46	34	16.75	33	16.18
Schools	240	58.97	130	64.04	110	53.92
Cultural centers	106	26.04	47	23.15	59	28.92
Kindergartens	168	41.28	94	46.31	74	36.27
Sports centers	119	29.24	49	24.14	70	34.31
Nurseries	136	33.42	67	33.00	69	33.82
Other	20	4.91	15	7.39	5	2.45

Table 32: Relationship of public investments demanded and gender

	Women	Men	Chi-square
Water supply	116 (43.94)	148 (56.06)	10.60**
Health centers	53 (45.30)	64 (54.70)	1.38
Sewage system	86 (39.27)	133 (60.73)	20.91***
Hospitals	32 (50.79)	31 (49.21)	0.02
Irrigation system	37 (32.74)	76 (67.26)	18.37***
Transportation	51 (43.59)	66 (56.41)	2.60
Roads	122 (45.86)	144 (54.14)	4.94*
Community centers	34 (50.75)	33 (49.25)	0.02
Schools	130 (54.17)	110 (45.83)	4.30*
Cultural centers	47 (44.34)	59 (55.66)	1.76
Kindergartens	94 (55.95)	74 (44.05)	4.22*
Sports centers	49 (41.18)	70 (58.82)	5.09*
Nurseries	67 (49.26)	69 (50.74)	0.03
Other	15 (75.00)	5 (25.00)	5.31*

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Numbers in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Table 33: Public investments approved

Variable	Councilors		Women		Men	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Water supply	227	55.91	109	53.69	118	58.13
Health centers	49	12.07	20	9.85	29	14.29
Sewage system	185	45.57	84	41.38	101	49.75
Hospitals	13	3.20	6	2.96	7	3.45
Irrigation system	74	18.23	30	14.78	44	21.67
Transportation	62	15.27	33	16.26	29	14.29
Roads	234	57.64	110	54.19	124	61.08
Community centers	34	8.37	19	9.36	15	7.39
Schools	208	51.23	115	56.65	93	45.81
Cultural centers	53	13.05	29	14.29	24	11.82
Kindergartens	133	32.76	76	37.44	57	28.08
Sports centers	89	21.92	48	23.65	41	20.20
Nurseries	104	25.62	53	26.11	51	25.12
Other	31	7.65	18	8.87	13	6.44

Table 34: Relationship of public investments demanded and gender

	Women	Men	Chi-square
Water supply	109 (48.02)	118 (51.98)	0.81
Health centers	20 (40.82)	29 (59.18)	1.88
Sewage system	84 (45.41)	101 (54.59)	2.87
Hospitals	6 (46.15)	7 (53.85)	0.08
Irrigation system	30 (40.54)	44 (59.46)	3.24
Transportation	33 (53.23)	29 (46.77)	0.30
Roads	110 (47.01)	124 (52.99)	1.98
Community centers	19 (55.88)	15 (44.12)	0.51
Schools	115 (55.29)	93 (44.71)	4.77*
Cultural centers	29 (54.72)	24 (45.28)	0.54
Kindergartens	76 (57.14)	57 (42.86)	4.04*
Sports centers	48 (53.93)	41 (46.07)	0.70
Nurseries	53 (50.96)	51 (49.04)	0.05
Other	18 (58.06)	13 (41.94)	0.85

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Numbers in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Table 35: Relationships between councilors

Variable	Councilors			Women			Men		
	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range
Councilors (women/men) who belong to the same party	4.61	.57	2-5	4.70	.52	3-5	4.51	.61	2-5
Councilors (women/men) who belong to the same political alliance	4.47	.64	2-5	4.58	.58	3-5	4.36	.68	2-5
Councilors (women/men) who belong to the opposition	4.24	.80	1-5	4.37	.72	2-5	4.10	.84	1-5
Councilors (men/women) who belong to the same party	4.62	.55	2-5	4.66	.51	3-5	4.57	.58	2-5
Councilors (men/women) who belong to the same political alliance	4.52	.59	2-5	4.54	.60	2-5	4.49	.60	2-5
Councilors (men/women) who belong to the opposition	4.20	.79	1-5	4.20	.81	1-5	4.20	.78	1-5
All councilors despite their gender and political affiliation	4.29	.67	2-5	4.36	.62	3-5	4.22	.71	2-5

Table 36: Relationships between councilors and gender

	Women	Men	t	df
Councilors (women/men) who belong to the same political party	4.70 (.52)	4.51 (.61)	3.29**	387
Councilors (women/men) who belong to the same political alliance	4.58 (.58)	4.36 (.68)	3.56***	403
Councilors (women/men) who belong to the opposition	4.37 (.72)	4.10 (.84)	3.56***	406
Councilors (men/women) who belong to the same Party	4.66 (.50)	4.57 (.58)	1.55	392
Councilors (men/women) who belong to the same political alliance	4.54 (.59)	4.50 (.60)	0.79	405
Councilors (men/women) who belong to the opposition	4.20 (.81)	4.20 (.78)	-0.04	403
All councilors despite their gender and political affiliation	4.37 (.62)	4.22 (.71)	2.23*	406

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Standard Deviations appear in parentheses below means.

Table 37: Experience in the council

Variable	Councilors		Women		Men	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
I speak up in the council	354	86.55	160	78.05	194	95.10
My voice is heard	366	89.71	178	87.25	188	92.16
I feel free to express what I think	396	96.82	195	95.12	201	98.53
Councilors interrupt me while I share my thoughts	116	28.36	58	28.29	58	28.43
Councilors offend me during discussions	11	2.69	4	1.95	7	3.43
Councilors use sexist language	3	1.47	3	1.47	-	-

Table 38: Relationship of experience in the council and gender

	Women	Men	Chi-square
I speak up in the council	160 (45.20)	194 (54.80)	25.54***
My voice is heard	178 (48.63)	188 (51.37)	2.65
I feel free to express what I think	195 (49.24)	201 (50.76)	3.86
Councilors interrupt me while I share my thoughts	58 (50.00)	58 (50.00)	0.001
Councilors offend me during discussions	4 (36.36)	7 (63.64)	0.86

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Numbers in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Table 39: Collaboration in the local council

Variable	Councilors		Women		Men	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Participating in collaborative initiatives	166	40.49	78	37.86	88	43.14
Collaborative actors						
Councilors (women/men) who belong to the same political alliance	17	10.30	6	7.79	11	12.50
Councilors (women/men) despite the political party that they belong to	22	13.33	19	24.68	3	3.41
Councilors (women and men) who belong to the same political alliance	45	27.27	14	18.18	31	35.23
Councilors (women and men) despite their gender and political affiliation	81	49.09	38	49.35	43	48.86
Participating in collaborative initiatives addressing the problems faced by women and girls in the community	86	51.81	51	65.38	35	39.77
Collaborative actors addressing the problems faced by women and girls in the community						
Councilors (women/men) who belong to the same political alliance	5	5.88	4	8.00	1	2.86
Councilors (women/men) despite the political party that they belong to	15	17.65	15	30.00	-	-
Councilors (women and men) who belong to the same political alliance	19	22.35	8	16.00	11	31.43
Councilors (women and men) despite their gender and political affiliation	46	54.12	23	46.00	23	65.71

Table 40: Relationship of experience in the council and gender

	Women	Men	Chi-square
Participating in collaborative initiatives	78 (46.99)	88 (53.01)	1.18
Collaborative actors			19.19***
Councilors (women/men) who belong to the same political alliance	6 (35.29)	11 (64.71)	
Councilors (women/men) despite the political party that they belong to	19 (86.36)	3 (13.64)	
Councilors (women and men) who belong to the same political alliance	14 (31.11)	31 (68.89)	
Councilors (women and men) despite their gender and political affiliation	38 (46.91)	43 (53.09)	
Participating in collaborative initiatives addressing the problems faced by women and girls in the community	51 (59.30)	35 (40.70)	10.86**
Collaborative actors addressing the problems faced by women and girls in the community			15.10**
Councilors (women/men) who belong to the same political alliance	4 (80.00)	1 (20.00)	
Councilors (women/men) despite the political party that they belong to	15 (100.00)	0 (0.00)	
Councilors (women and men) who belong to the same political alliance	8 (42.11)	11 (57.89)	
Councilors (women and men) despite their gender and political affiliation	23 (50.00)	23 (50.00)	

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Numbers in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Table 41: Collaboration in the council (cont.)

Variable	Councilors			Women			Men		
	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range
Number of collaborative initiatives	2.33	1.68	1-15	2.19	1.92	1-15	2.45	1.44	1-7
Number of collaborative initiatives addressing the problems faced by women and girls in the community	2.06	1.38	1-6	2.06	1.38	1-6	1.79	1.17	1-5

Table 42: Relationship of collaboration in the council (cont.) and gender

	Women	Men	t	df
Number of collaborative initiatives	2.20 (1.92)	2.45 (1.44)	-0.94	159
Number of collaborative initiatives addressing the problems faced by women and girls in the community	2.06 (1.38)	1.79 (.20)	0.93	81

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Standard Deviations appear in parentheses below means.

Table 43: Collaboration with community actors

Variable	Councilors		Women		Men	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Organization of public hearings by the council						
Yes	200	48.78	103	50.00	97	47.55
No	210	51.22	103	50.00	107	52.45
Initiated the organization of public hearings						
Yes	121	29.58	53	25.73	68	33.50
No	288	70.42	153	74.27	135	66.50
Collaboration with civil society organizations						
Yes	130	32.52	67	32.68	66	32.34
No	276	67.48	138	67.32	32.35	67.65

Table 44: Relationship of collaboration with community actors and gender

	Women	Men	Chi-square
Organization of public hearings by the council			0.25
Yes	103 (51.50)	97 (48.50)	
No	103 (49.05)	107 (50.95)	
Initiated the organization of public hearings			2.96
Yes	53 (43.80)	68 (56.20)	
No	153 (53.12)	135 (46.88)	
Collaboration with civil society organizations			2.39
Yes	195 (51.32)	185 (48.68)	
No	11 (36.67)	19 (63.33)	
Focus of collaboration with civil society organizations			

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Numbers in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Table 45: Collaboration with community actors (cont.)

Variable	Councilors			Women			Men		
	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range
Number of public hearings initiated by the councilor	4.29	4.09	1-30	5.06	5.28	1-30	3.68	2.71	1-15
Number of civil society organizations collaborating with	2.63	1.68	0-10	2.76	1.77	0-10	2.5	1.58	1-7

Table 46: Relationship of collaboration with community actors (cont.) and gender

	Women	Men	t	df
Number of public hearings initiated by the councilor	.42 (.03)	.31 (.03)	2.40*	408
Number of civil society organizations collaborating with	2.75 (1.77)	2.5 (1.58)	0.87	128

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Standard Deviations appear in parentheses below means.

Table 47: Running for office in the future

Variable	Councilors		Women		Men	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Councilor	207	50.49	111	53.88	96	47.06
Mayor	53	12.93	26	12.62	27	13.24
Deputy	150	36.59	69	33.50	81	39.71

Table 48: Relationship of running for office in the future and gender

	Women	Men	Chi-square
Councilor			2.06
Yes	111 (53.62)	96 (46.38)	
No	26 (49.06)	27 (50.94)	
I don't know	69 (46.00)	81 (54.00)	
Mayor			1.38
Yes	25 (43.10)	33 (56.90)	
No	121 (51.27)	115 (48.73)	
I don't know	60 (51.72)	56 (48.28)	
Deputy			2.50
Yes	44 (54.32)	37 (45.68)	
No	96 (46.38)	111 (53.62)	
I don't know	66 (54.10)	56 (45.90)	

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Numbers in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Table 49: Participation in capacity-building programs

Variable	Councilors		Women		Men	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Participating in training programs						
Yes	223	54.39	132	64.08	91	44.61
No	187	45.61	74	35.92	113	55.39
Need to participate in training programs						
Yes	351	85.61	186	90.29	165	80.88
No	59	14.39	20	9.71	39	19.12

Table 50: Relationship of participating in capacity-building programs and gender

	Women	Men	Chi-square
Participating in training programs			15.66***
Yes	132 (59.19)	91 (40.81)	
No	74 (39.57)	113 (60.43)	
Need to participate in training programs			7.36**
Yes	186 (52.99)	165 (47.01)	
No	20 (33.90)	39 (66.10)	

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$. Numbers in parentheses indicate row percentages.

Table 51: Regression results: Individual-level characteristics and knowledge of local governance and rural development

Variable	Local council	Municipality	Rural areas
Gender (reference = women)	-.08 (.08)	-.16 (.08)	-.30** (.10)
Number of mandates	.18*** (.04)	.16** (.04)	-.01 (.05)
Number of years as party members	.01* (.01)	.01 (.01)	.02* (.01)
Age	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)
Education			
College education	.44*** (.12)	.31* (.13)	.36* (.14)
Master or Doctoral degree	.57*** (.14)	.47** (.15)	.64*** (.17)
Area (reference = urban)	-.26** (.08)	-.21* (.09)	.20* (.09)
Party (reference = other party)			
Socialist Party	-.08 (.10)	.02 (.11)	-.11 (.13)
Democratic Party	.02 (.12)	.22 (.13)	-.13 (.15)
Socialist Movement for Integration	.07 (.11)	.13 (.11)	.10 (.13)
Head of commission (reference = other position)	.31** (.10)	.27** (.10)	-.11 (.12)
F	9.45	6.39	4.09
R ²	0.22	0.16	0.11

Note. Standard errors appear in parentheses below coefficients.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Table 52: Regression results: Individual-level characteristics and participation and contribution in council meetings

Variable	Participation	Speech participation	Length of speech
Gender (reference = men)	-.02 (.06)	-.30*** (.08)	-.36*** (.10)
Number of mandates	.05 (.03)	.12** (.04)	.10* (.05)
Number of years as party members	.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)
Age	.01*** (.01)	-.01* (.01)	-.01 (.01)
Education			
College education	-.02 (.09)	.28* (.12)	.41** (.15)
Master or Doctoral degree	-.03 (.09)	.13 (.14)	.19 (.17)
Area (reference = urban)	.05 (.06)	-.05 (.08)	-.16 (.10)
Party (reference = other party)			
Socialist Party	-.14 (.07)	.10 (.10)	.03 (.13)
Democratic Party	-.04 (.09)	.16 (.12)	.29 (.15)
Socialist Movement for Integration	-.05 (.08)	.18 (.11)	.21 (.13)
Head of commission (reference = other position)	-.06 (.07)	.18 (.10)	.34** (.12)
F	2.47	6.63	6.43
R ²	0.07	0.17	0.17

Note. Standard errors appear in parentheses below coefficients.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Table 53: Regression results: Individual-level characteristics and initiatives undertaken

Variable	Draft decisions initiated OR	Requests submitted OR
Gender (reference = men)	.41** (.11)	.68 (.16)
Number of mandates	.98 (.13)	1.23 (.16)
Number of years as party members	1.00 (.02)	1.03* (.02)
Age	.98 (.01)	.99 (.01)
Education		
College education	2.23 (.96)	1.65 (.62)
Master or Doctoral degree	1.88 (.90)	2.04 (.85)
Area (reference = urban)	.61 (.17)	1.07 (.25)
Party (reference = other party)		
Socialist Party	1.62 (.56)	1.23 (.38)
Democratic Party	1.25 (.52)	1.62 (.59)
Socialist Movement for Integration	1.87 (.66)	1.89 (.61)
LR	31.28	31.08

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$.

Table 54: Regression results: Individual-level characteristics and community and social media engagement

Variable	Meeting with community members OR	Participating in awareness raising campaigns OR	Engaging in social media OR
Gender (reference = men)	.38** (.11)	.77 (.19)	.75 (.21)
Number of mandates	1.21 (.22)	.86 (.11)	.73 (.14)
Number of years as party members	1.03 (.02)	.98 (.02)	1.0 (.02)
Age	.98 (.01)	.97* (.01)	1.04** (.01)
Education			
College education	.68 (.32)	.81 (.29)	1.09 (.59)
Master or Doctoral degree	1.92 (1.03)	1.41 (.58)	2.09 (1.18)
Area (reference = urban)	2.04* (.61)	.82 (.20)	.36** (.11)
Party (reference = other party)			
Socialist Party	1.95 (.72)	2.37** (.74)	1.56 (.60)
Democratic Party	1.24 (.54)	1.38 (.50)	1.66 (.72)
Socialist Movement for Integration	1.68 (.62)	2.04 (.66)*	1.40 (.56)
LR	46.53	17.96	50.32

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$.

Table 55: Regression results: Individual-level characteristics and issues addressed in the council

Variable	Topics discussed	Problems faced by women and girls discussed	Public investments demanded
Gender (reference = men)	-1.24* (.57)	-.32 (.26)	-.86** (.31)
Number of mandates	.35 (.29)	.12 (-.06)	.06 (.16)
Number of years as party members	.08* (.04)	.02 (.02)	.04 (.02)
Age	-.01 (.03)	-.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)
Education			
College education	1.23 (.87)	.12 (.40)	.01 (.48)
Master or Doctoral degree	1.33 (.98)	.36 (.44)	.23 (.54)
Area (reference = urban)	-.51 (.57)	-.06 (.27)	-.20 (.32)
Party (reference = other party)			
Socialist Party	-.25 (.74)	-.73* (.33)	.38 (.41)
Democratic Party	.43 (.88)	-.01 (.40)	.70 (.49)
Socialist Movement for Integration	1.02 (.77)	-.22 (.35)	.96* (.42)
Head of commission (reference = other position)	2.42*** (.69)	.39 (.30)	.72 (.38)
F	4.30	1.66	2.38
R ²	0.11	0.09	0.07

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$.

Table 56: Regression results: Individual-level characteristics and perceived power in the council, commission, and party

Variable	Council	Commission	Party
Gender (reference = men)	.09 (.10)	.14 (.11)	-.10 (.10)
Number of mandates	.07 (.05)	.12* (.06)	.04 (.05)
Number of years as party members	-.01 (.01)	-.02 (.01)	.02*** (.01)
Age	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)
Education			
College education	.18 (.15)	.38* (.18)	.29 (.15)
Master or Doctoral degree	.02 (.17)	.31 (.20)	.48** (.17)
Area (reference = urban)	-.04 (.10)	-.14 (.11)	-.13 (.10)
Party (reference = other party)			
Socialist Party	.48*** (.13)	.28 (.15)	-.34* (.13)
Democratic Party	-.01 (.16)	.08 (.18)	-.30 (.16)
Socialist Movement for Integration	.39** (.14)	.30 (.15)	.01 (.14)
Head of commission (reference = other position)	.34** (.12)	.61*** (.13)	-.16 (.12)
F	4.22	4.53	3.28
R ²	0.11	0.14	0.09

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$.

Table 57: Regression results: Individual-level characteristics and attitudes toward gender quotas

Variable	Agreement	Selection of unqualified women
	OR	OR
Gender (reference = men)	12.46*** (8.34)	.28*** (.07)
Number of mandates	.64* (.13)	1.23 (.16)
Number of years as party members	1.06 (.04)	1.03 (.02)
Age	.99 (.02)	.99 (.01)
Education		
College education	.41 (.29)	1.28 (.49)
Master or Doctoral degree	.89 (.74)	2.58* (1.14)
Area (reference = urban)	3.13* (1.89)	.73 (.20)
Party (reference = other party)		
Socialist Party	2.02 (1.48)	.57 (.19)
Democratic Party	.18** (.12)	.55 (.22)
Socialist Movement for Integration	1.06 (.62)	.77 (.27)
Head of commission (reference = other position)	1.10 (.59)	.82 (.26)
LR	50.24	61.90

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$.

Table 58: Regression results: Individual-level characteristics and collaboration between councilors

Variable	Councilors (women/ men) who belong to the same political party	Councilors (women/men) who belong to the same politi- cal alliance	Councilors (women/men) who belong to the opposition	Councilors (men/ women) who belong to the same Party	Councilors (men/ women) who belong to the same political alliance	Councilors (men/wom- en) who be- long to the opposition	All coun- cilers despite their gender and political affilia- tion
Gender (reference = men)	.24*** (.07)	.22** (.07)	.30** (.09)	.08 (.06)	.05 (.07)	.04 (.09)	.19* (.07)
Number of mandates	-.01 (.03)	-.02 (.04)	-.03 (.05)	-.01 (.03)	-.03 (.03)	-.06 (.05)	-.04 (.04)
Number of years as party members	.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)
Age	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)
Education							
College education	.12 (.10)	.11 (.11)	.21 (.13)	.22* (.10)	.15 (.10)	.19 (.14)	.09 (.11)
Master or Doctoral degree)	.01 (.11)	.01 (.12)	.05 (.15)	.28* (.11)	.11 (.12)	.07 (.16)	.05 (.13)
Area (reference = urban)	.08 (.07)	.14* (.07)	.10 (.09)	.06 (.06)	.05 (.07)	.17 (.09)	.20** (.07)
Party (reference = other party)							
Socialist Party	-.01 (.09)	.02 (.09)	-.04 (.11)	.05 (.08)	.07 (.09)	-.11 (.11)	.07 (.10)
Democratic Party	.01 (.10)	.16 (.11)	-.22 (.13)	.05 (.10)	-.01 (.10)	-.12 (.14)	-.11 (.11)
Socialist Movement For Integration	.07 (.09)	.08 (.09)	.11 (.12)	.12 (.08)	.10 (.09)	.14 (.12)	.24* (.10)
F	2.16	2.44	3.38	1.49	0.82	1.41	3.16
R ²	0.06	0.06	0.08	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.08

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$.

Table 59: Regression results: Individual-level characteristics and collaborative initiatives, public hearings, and civil society organizations

Variable	Collaborative initiatives OR	Public hearings OR	Civil society organizations OR
Gender (reference = men)	.78 (.18)	.52* (.13)	1.30 (.61)
Number of mandates	1.08 (.13)	.96 (.13)	.86 (.17)
Number of years as party members	1.03 (.02)	1.01 (.02)	1.02 (.03)
Age	.99 (.01)	1.00 (.01)	1.01 (.02)
Education			
College education	1.57 (.58)	.73 (.29)	1.06 (.64)
Master or Doctoral degree	1.14 (.48)	1.30 (.56)	.98 (.68)
Area (reference = urban)	.74 (.18)	.77 (.20)	.78 (.34)
Party (reference = other party)			
Socialist Party	1.11 (.34)	2.03* (.70)	2.22 (1.27)
Democratic Party	.81 (.30)	1.75 (.70)	1.36 (.88)
Socialist Movement for Integration	1.18 (.38)	2.17* (.77)	2.30 (1.44)
Constant	97.18 (2217.52)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)
LR	15.04	18.38	6.50

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$.

Table 60: Regression results: Individual-level characteristics and future plans of running for councilor, mayor, and deputy

Variable	Councilor OR	Mayor OR	Deputy OR
Gender (reference = men)	.76 (.27)	.50** (.16)	.82 (.21)
Number of mandates	.89 (.15)	1.16 (.16)	1.04 (.14)
Number of years as party members	.98 (.02)	1.04* (.02)	1.01 (.02)
Age	.99 (.02)	1.06*** (.01)	1.04** (.01)
Education			
College education	.71 (.37)	3.29* (1.63)	3.18* (1.46)
Master or Doctoral degree	1.14 (.69)	6.47*** (3.40)	7.64*** (3.77)
Area (reference = urban)	.65 (.21)	.39*** (.10)	.37*** (.10)
Party (reference = other party)			
Socialist Party	1.64 (.71)	1.05 (.35)	1.13 (.36)
Democratic Party	2.18 (1.24)	1.56 (.61)	1.62 (.63)
Socialist Movement for Integration	1.17 (.51)	2.22* (.77)	1.37 (.46)
LR	7.60	78.39	76.43

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$.

Table 61: Regression results: Individual-level characteristics and participation in training programs

Variable	Has already participated OR	Would like to participate OR
Gender (reference = men)	3.13*** (.79)	1.85 (.64)
Number of mandates	1.54** (.21)	.96 (.15)
Number of years as party members	1.00 (.02)	1.00 (.02)
Age	.98 (.01)	1.03 (.02)
Education		
College education	1.14 (.43)	.79 (.37)
Master or Doctoral degree	1.93 (.81)	1.36 (.78)
Area (reference = urban)	.54* (.13)	1.04 (.36)
Party (reference = other party)		
Socialist Party	1.64 (.52)	1.04 (.46)
Democratic Party	1.44 (.54)	.90 (.47)
Socialist Movement for Integration	1.05 (.34)	.77 (.34)
LR	49.42	18.25

Note. * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$.

Table 62: Comparisons on individual-level characteristics (categorical variables)

Variable	Councilors		Women		Men		Women elected by quota		Women not elected by quota	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Political party										
Socialist Party	132	32.20	78	37.86	54	26.47	29	30.85	49	43.75
Democratic Party	77	18.78	43	20.87	34	16.67	14	14.89	29	25.89
Socialist Movement for Integration	91	22.20	53	25.73	38	18.63	33	35.11	20	17.86
Other	110	26.83	32	15.53	78	38.24	18	19.15	14	12.50
Position in the party										
None	31	8.05	14	7.29	17	8.81	4	4.55	10	9.62
Head	96	24.94	49	25.52	47	24.35	24	27.27	25	24.04
Vice head	15	3.90	5	2.60	10	5.18	3	3.41	2	1.92
Secretary	18	4.68	9	4.69	9	4.66	5	5.68	4	3.85
Coordinator	23	5.97	7	3.65	16	8.29	4	4.55	3	2.88
Member	202	52.47	108	56.25	94	48.70	48	54.55	60	57.69
Position in the commission										
Head	73	18.11	34	16.67	39	19.60	10	10.75	24	21.62
Vice head	34	8.44	17	8.33	17	8.54	3	3.23	14	12.61
Member	263	65.26	137	67.16	126	63.32	62	66.67	75	67.57
Substitute	2	0.50	1	0.49	1	0.50	0	0	1	0.90
Education level										
High school	50	12.25	12	5.88	38	18.63	7	7.61	5	4.46
College	227	55.64	113	55.39	114	55.88	49	53.26	64	57.14
Master	102	25.00	60	29.41	42	20.59	29	31.52	31	27.68
Doctorate	29	7.11	19	9.31	10	4.90	7	7.61	12	10.71
Civil status										
Single	80	20.15	54	27.55	26	12.94	25	28.09	29	27.10
Married	309	77.83	134	68.37	175	87.06	62	69.66	72	67.29
Divorced	5	1.26	5	2.55	0	0	1	1.12	4	3.74
Widowed	3	0.76	3	1.53	0	0	1	1.12	2	1.87
Profession										
Teacher	87	21.64	56	28.00	31	15.35	22	23.66	34	31.78
Economist	87	21.64	44	22.00	43	21.29	25	26.88	19	17.76
Lawyer	45	11.19	16	8.00	29	14.36	9	9.68	7	6.54
Engineer	33	8.21	12	6.00	21	10.40	3	3.23	9	8.41
Agronomist	21	5.22	9	4.50	12	5.94	3	3.23	6	5.61
Doctor	16	3.98	12	6.00	4	1.98	6	6.45	6	5.61
Accountant	13	3.23	5	2.50	8	3.96	1	1.08	4	3.74
Nurse	11	2.74	6	3.00	5	2.48	2	2.15	4	3.74
Lecturer/Professor	11	2.74	2	1.00	9	4.46	1	1.08	1	0.93
Other	78	19.40	38	19.00	40	19.80	22	23.40	17	15.89
Minority member										
Yes	24	5.88	14	6.86	10	4.90	8	8.60	6	5.41
No	384	94.12	190	93.14	194	95.10	85	91.40	105	94.59
Beneficiary of social assistance for persons with disabilities										
Yes	5	1.23	1	0.49	4	1.97	1	1.08	0	0
No	402	98.77	203	99.51	199	98.03	92	98.92	111	100
Type of administrative unit										
Urban	278	67.97	139	67	139	68.47	57	60.64	82	73.21
Rural	131	32.03	67.48	32.52	64	31.53	37	39.36	30	26.79

Table 63: Comparisons on individual-level characteristics (continuous variables)

Variable	Councilors			Women			Men			Women elected by quota			Women not elected by quota		
	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range
Number of mandates	1.58	1.01	1-7	1.27	.63	1-4	1.90	1.21	1-7	1.01	.10	1-2	1.48	.79	1-4
Number of years in the party	9.34	8.03	1-35	8.00	7.65	1-35	10.71	8.19	1-27	4.06	3.95	1-24	11.21	8.42	1-35
Number of commissions	2.20	.77	1-6	2.21	.75	1-4	2.19	.80	1-6	1.98	.61	1-4	2.40	.81	1-4
Age	42.26	11.73	19-72	38.86	11.64	19-66	45.62	10.84	21-72	36.88	11.33	19-60	40.57	11.68	21-66
Number of children	1.64	1.15	0-4	1.35	1.10	0-4	1.93	1.14	0-4	1.31	1.11	0-4	1.37	1.09	0-4
Monthly income	67016	78155	0-700000	53162	47406	0-420000	85375	103387	0-700000	42948	28982	0-130000	62308	57906	0-420000

Table 64: Number of words spoken by councilors and community members

Municipality*	Length of meeting**	Words spoken by councilors***	Words spoken by men	Words spoken by women	Proportion of words spoken by women****	Number of community members speaking	Words spoken by community members
Municipality 1 (10)	62	1681	1130	551	0.33	0	0
Municipality 2 (09)	98	7767	6191	1574	0.20	0	0
Municipality 2 (12)	48	3799	3799	0	0.00	0	0
Municipality 3 (09)	198	8681	7130	1551	0.18	0	0
Municipality 3 (11)	56	2985	1529	1456	0.49	1	105
Municipality 3 (09)	94	4316	2186	2130	0.49	0	0
Municipality 3 (12)	86	4906	3815	1091	0.22	0	0
Municipality 3 (10)	176	11160	8415	2745	0.25	9	936
Municipality 4 (09)	112	8506	6824	1682	0.20	0	0
Municipality 4 (10)	68	2894	2219	675	0.23	0	0
Municipality 4 (11)	4	356	356	0	0.00	0	0
Municipality 4 (12)	58	3210	2912	298	0.09	0	0
Municipality 5 (08)	36	1183	1179	4	0.00	0	0
Municipality 5 (10)	151	3023	2840	183	0.06	0	0
Municipality 5 (09)	173	6305	5699	606	0.10	0	0
Municipality 5 (11)	64	2428	2183	245	0.10	0	0
Municipality 6 (09)	45	2502	2183	319	0.13	0	0
Municipality 6 (11)	48	1342	1342	0	0.00	0	0
Municipality 6 (08)	38	3028	2685	343	0.11	0	0
Municipality 6 (12)	22	1107	1107	0	0.00	0	0
Municipality 6 (12)	51	4675	3974	701	0.15	0	0
Municipality 7 (09)	194	8806	7248	1558	0.18	0	0
Municipality 7 (10)	119	5116	4177	939	0.18	0	0
Municipality 8 (10)	45	703	700	3	0.00	1	99
Municipality 9 (08)	108	4923	3473	1450	0.29	1	8
Municipality 9 (09)	140	5116	3582	1534	0.30	0	0
Municipality 9 (11)	9	510	510	0	0.00	0	0
Municipality 10 (10)	234	19947	12827	7120	0.36	0	0
Municipality 11 (09)	64	3072	1955	1117	0.36	2	476
Municipality 11 (11)	53	3199	1195	2004	0.63	0	0

*The number in brackets refers to the month when the council meeting was held.

**Length of meetings in minutes.

***Only the words spoken by councilors were calculated. The words spoken by the head of the council, the mayor, or municipal employees were omitted.

****The number of words spoken by women was divided by the total number of words spoken by councilors.

Table 65: Community participation in council meetings

Municipality*	Number of community members	Number of women	Number of men	Characteristics of community members
Municipality 1 (10)	0	NA	NA	NA
Municipality 2 (09)	1	1	0	Teacher
Municipality 2 (12)	2	2	0	Representatives of local organizations
Municipality 3 (09)	5	2	3	Students; the unemployed; businessmen
Municipality 3 (09)	9	4	5	The unemployed; farmers; students
Municipality 3 (10)	19	11	8	Citizens contesting a decision of the council
Municipality 3 (11)	2	1	1	Businessmen; the unemployed
Municipality 3 (12)	0	NA	NA	NA
Municipality 4 (09)	3	0	3	Did not specify
Municipality 4 (10)	2	0	2	Did not specify
Municipality 4 (11)	3	0	3	Did not specify
Municipality 4 (12)	7	3	4	Students; the unemployed
Municipality 5 (08)	0	NA	NA	NA
Municipality 5 (10)	0	NA	NA	NA
Municipality 5 (09)	0	NA	NA	NA
Municipality 5 (11)	0	NA	NA	NA
Municipality 6 (09)	0	NA	NA	NA
Municipality 6 (11)	0	NA	NA	NA
Municipality 6 (08)	0	NA	NA	NA
Municipality 6 (12)	0	NA	NA	NA
Municipality 6 (12)	0	NA	NA	NA
Municipality 7 (09)	3	1	2	The unemployed
Municipality 7 (10)	13	5	8	The unemployed
Municipality 8 (09)	1	0	1	High school student
Municipality 9 (08)	0	NA	NA	NA
Municipality 9 (09)	0	NA	NA	NA
Municipality 9 (11)	0	NA	NA	NA
Municipality 10 (10)	0	NA	NA	NA
Municipality 11 (09)	0	NA	NA	NA
Municipality 11 (11)	2	0	2	Farmers

*The number in brackets refers to the month when the council meeting was held.

Appendix 3: Focus of draft decisions

Women	Men
Rural development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing free transportation for rural areas, so people can visit the capital to attend professional courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconstructing the road that connects the village with the main road • Identifying families in need • Investing in irrigation and drainage systems • Demanding the transportation of children from the village to the local school • Improving road infrastructure • Improving access to potable water • Building animal stalls • Building a lab for agriculture • Initiating the expropriation of villagers' properties due to the construction of a hydropower plant
Education	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the number of scholarships for excellent students • Increasing the budget for education • Improving the technology in classrooms • Decreasing school tariffs • Reconstructing a school • Establishing an education office in the municipality • Implementing projects that focus on education • Improving access to nurseries and kindergartens during the month of August • Building a kindergarten 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demanding a public hearing with the head of the education office on the heating system of schools and kindergartens • Increasing the budget for nurseries, kindergartens, and schools • Supporting education institutions • Providing scholarships to first-year students
Infrastructure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructing roads • Reconstructing roads • Reconstructing bridges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructing roads • Building water supplies • Improving road maintenance • Building bridges • Building kindergartens • Building sewage systems
Public services	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving sewage systems • Improving water supply • Improving the greenery service • Buying an equipment for the collection and removal of urban waste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving sewage systems • Improving the greenery service • Addressing the problem of urban waste • Improving water supply • Improving lighting service
Public spaces	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconstructing a public swimming pool • Improving market places • Opening a playground for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Releasing parking lots • Creating public spaces • Building a market for fruits and vegetables
Business support	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreasing taxes for small businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreasing taxes for small businesses • Decreasing taxes for public services
Roma community	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing the problems faced by the Roma community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocating a special fund for Roma children
Social housing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing social housing for vulnerable families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building social housing units for vulnerable families
Economic aid	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing economic aid for female-headed households • Providing economic aid for families in need, especially women in difficult circumstances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing economic aid to a well-known athlete and a homeless person • Proposing new additions to the list of recipients for economic aid

Business support for women	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding women's businesses Initiating new projects that focus on medicinal plans, which enhance employment opportunities for women Introducing changes to the fiscal package that support women who are household heads Supporting women who want to open a business Removing fiscal barriers for female-headed households 	
LGBT community	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing services for the LGBT community 	
Environmental protection	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing cross-border programs for environmental protection 	
Health services	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introducing psychologists in the hospital Improving access to health examinations, such as mammography 	
Youth	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding youth projects Enhancing employment opportunities for youth 	
Persons with disabilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Omitting family income from the calculation of social assistance for persons with disabilities Providing support for children with disabilities Providing accessible infrastructure for persons with disabilities 	
Tourism	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the development of tourism in the area Cleaning the beach
Honorary titles	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivering honorary titles for community members distinguished for their contribution Assigning the name of a local library
Culture	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building cultural centers Rewarding artistic groups
Transparency and regulations	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making the allocation of public investments transparent Decreasing the number of employees in the public administration Changing the internal rules of the council Proposing changes to the budget and the organizational structure of the municipality
Sports	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investing in sports
Animals	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protecting abandoned animals
Disasters and emergencies	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing support for flooded land Removing students to another area because the school was flooded Providing financial support in cases of emergency Supporting older adults
Transportation	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making the public transportation less expensive Improving public transportation

Appendix 4: Focus of draft decisions addressing women's concerns

Women	Men
Employment opportunities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing employment opportunities for women Improving economic opportunities and employment for women in need Improving the economic situation and living standards of women Demanding that women constitute 50 percent of the municipal administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing women's employment in the health sector Increasing women's employment in the street cleaning service Increasing women's employment in kindergartens Supporting seasonal employment Supporting victims of domestic violence and their employment
Economic aid	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing economic aid for female-headed households Providing economic aid for families in need, especially women in difficult circumstances Providing support for women who are heads of households Increasing economic aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opposing the removal of economic aid from women in needs Providing financial support in cases of emergency for female-headed households
Social housing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing social housing for women in need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing social housing for widows and victims of domestic violence
Leisure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting women's participation in different leisure activities Organizing activities to support women 	
Water supply	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing access to water in administrative areas 	
Parks	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building a park where women can get together and socialize 	
Kindergartens	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening a kindergarten, so women can go to work 	
Discrimination in the labor market	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fighting against discrimination in the labor market 	
Business support	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding women's businesses Developing an entrepreneurship fund for women Providing financial support to women who want to open a business Supporting women's employment in local businesses that focus on medicinal plants 	
Support for women in rural areas	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing professional training for women in rural areas Organizing meetings with women in rural areas with the purpose of raising their awareness on social issues 	

Appendix 5: Requests submitted to the municipality or the secretary of the local council

Women	Men
Education	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the number of scholarships for excellent students Building schools, kindergartens Improving educational infrastructure Providing education supplies, desks Painting schools Reconstructing schools Building roads that connect the community with schools Providing transportation for schoolchildren 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving conditions in educational institutions Building schools Reconstructing schools
Access to information	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demanding information on: the regulation of the local council, compensation for community members, the budget, fiscal indicators, parking, the increase of ticket for public transportation, procurements, the implementation of draft decisions, competencies of new administrative units, public investments, soft loans, applications for social housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demanding information on: the implementation of decisions taken by councilors, the performance of municipal departments, the meeting agenda, the activities organized by the municipality, the municipal budget for health services, the performance of the local council, the attendance of council meetings
Public investments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investing in road infrastructure Investing in kindergartens and nurseries Improving sports fields Improving bridge conditions Reconstructing the water supply system Improving the electric power system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investing in the water supply system, roads, sewage system, irrigation and drainage systems Investing in village roads Constructing irrigation dams Reconstructing schools Improving access to potable water Building a water reservoir in a village
Disasters and emergencies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demanding support to rebuild a bridge that collapsed in a village Demanding support for people with health problems Demanding the improvement of infrastructure during the winter season Addressing problems caused by floods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helping families suffering the consequences of floods
Public services	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving access to the greenery service, the lighting service, and the street cleaning service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving the street cleaning service, the lighting service Proposing street cleaning initiatives Improving garbage collection
Tax support	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing city taxes Removing city taxes for religious and educational institutions Removing city taxes for women who are heads of households, divorced women, and widows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing city taxes Reducing taxes for small businesses

Economic aid and social assistance	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposing new beneficiaries of economic aid and social assistance for persons with disabilities Demanding the employment of community members who live in poverty Supporting 5 widows to apply for economic aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposing new beneficiaries of economic aid and social assistance for persons with disabilities Contesting the removal of poor families from the program of economic aid
Transparency and verifications	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demanding that council meetings are open for the public Demanding the organization of a meeting to approve draft decisions that concerned the community Verifying the mandates of councilors Verifying the education level of councilors Verifying persons who benefit economic aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demanding transparency from private companies contracted by the municipality to provide public services Demanding transparency on the distribution of funds in kindergartens Demanding budget transparency Demanding transparency on the quality of public works; the extent that standards have been met
Other issues	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addressing conflicts over properties Addressing violations of property rights Building a park in the community Contesting the decision of a municipality for the city park Addressing problems associated with street dogs Opening an office for veterans Fixing road signs Finding land for village cemetery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addressing damages caused by hydropower plants; the damages caused to the irrigation system, private property Demanding police officers to report on traffic safety Addressing problems associated with street dogs Addressing the pollution caused by a private business Allocating funds to a sports group Proving support to farmers Giving an old building to an association to organize courses for children in the community Allocating parking space Cleaning public beaches Solving conflicts in the community Building a sports field Employing community members Building an art gallery Reconstructing a mosque

Appendix 6: Focus of collaborative initiatives

Women	Men
Rural development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving water supply Improving irrigation and drainage systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building roads that connect urban and rural areas Improving road infrastructure Investing in agriculture Improving irrigation systems
Support for children with disabilities and their families	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing housing subsidies for people who have children with disabilities Supporting families that have members with special needs Providing accessible infrastructure for persons with disabilities Providing social services to mothers of children with autism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing economic aid and social assistance for persons with disabilities
Scholarships for students	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing scholarships to excellent students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing scholarships to excellent students
Public services	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving street cleaning services Improving access to public services Improving water supply 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving waste management Improving the street cleaning service
City taxes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing city taxes for public services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing the land tax Reducing the construction tax
Public investments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing investments in schools, housing, water supply Reconstructing health centers Building roads Building parks Building community centers Constructing kindergartens, nurseries Improving the quality of environment in nurseries and kindergartens Improving the conditions of education buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making investments in the community Building sports field Building new roads Reconstructing health centers Improving water supply Constructing kindergartens Improving road infrastructure
Education	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reconstructing schools Reconstructing schools' gyms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing firewood to schools
Public transportation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving public transportation Providing public transportation for women in rural areas Building a bus terminal Issuing passes for students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving public transportation
Economic aid	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing economic aid for families in need Supporting widows Providing economic aid for the poor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing poverty Speaking up for people who were removed from the program of economic aid because of their political affiliation
Sports	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding a sports group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investing in sports
Social housing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing housing for marginalized families Addressing the housing problems faced by the Roma community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing social housing for marginalized families

Employment opportunities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing employment in rural areas Increasing women's employment in the municipality 	
Domestic violence	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing support for victims of domestic violence 	
Transparency and internal regulations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving the transparency of municipal expenses Developing a draft decision on the internal regulation of the municipality 	
Access to information	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing information to families regarding their land rights 	
Business support	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decreasing taxes for small businesses 	
Business support for women	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing support to businesswomen Removing fiscal barriers for female-headed households 	
Public spaces	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building a parking lot Improving recreational facilities Building parks 	
Environmental protection	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting cross-border programs for environmental protection 	
Tourism	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting tourism development 	
Women's organization	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributing to the Alliance of Councilwomen 	
Gender budgeting	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participating in gender budgeting initiatives 	
Honorary titles	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awarding honorary titles
Culture	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizing cultural activities
Consumer protection	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protecting consumers' rights

Appendix 7: Focus of collaborative initiatives addressing the problems faced by women and girls in the community

Women	Men
Social housing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing protection and social housing for women in difficulties: female-headed households, widows, unemployed women • Providing social housing for victims of domestic violence • Demanding the construction of social housing units for women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introducing women in the list of social housing beneficiaries • Providing social housing for female-headed households
Employment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing employment opportunities for female-headed households • Addressing the high unemployment rate of women • Supporting women who do handwork • Asking the municipality to provide a booth where women could sell their products • Building a greenhouse where women could be employed • Supporting women's initiative of cultivating and selling medicinal plants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting women's employment in the shoe factory • Increasing the space for women in the labor market • Supporting youth employment • Supporting the employment of women and girls in the public and private sector
Domestic violence	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving the social and economic situation of victims of domestic violence • Providing psychological support for victims of domestic violence • Raising the awareness of community members on the importance of saying stop to domestic violence • Offering counseling for the prevention of domestic violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising the awareness on the importance of saying stop to domestic violence
Women's businesses	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting women's businesses in rural areas • Providing funds for entrepreneurs • Encouraging the development of business skills for vulnerable women • Supporting women's businesses • Removing fiscal barriers for female-headed households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing support for businesswomen • Proposing tax reductions for new businesses led by women
Public transportation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing free public transportation for women in rural areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventing school dropout due to the long distance of schools from communities • Providing transportation to go to work
Women's role in the household	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening women's decision-making role in the household 	
Get-together activities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing activities where women get together 	
Funding	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a special fund for women 	
Awareness-raising campaigns	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising the awareness on the importance of collaborating with the community and non-profit organizations 	
Retirement pension	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussing women's retirement pension in the municipality 	
Children with disabilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting children with disabilities • Providing supportive services for children with autism, so women can work 	
Health services	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing health check-ups for women 	
Gender budgeting	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating in gender budgeting initiatives 	



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