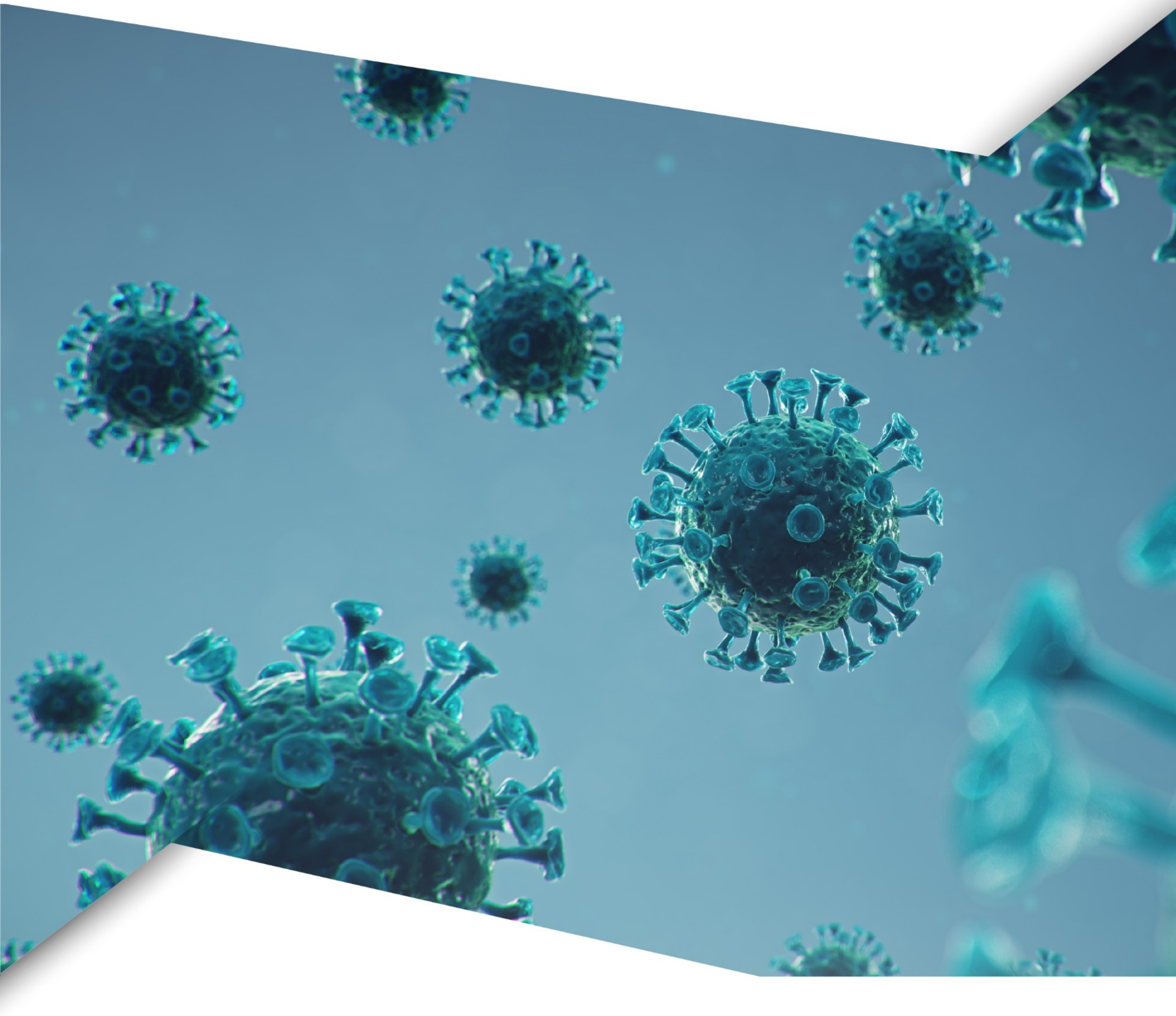

REPORT

RAPID SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESEMENT OF COVID-19 IN KOSOVO

Wave 2
January 2021

UNITED NATIONS KOSOVO TEAM

UN WOMEN

UNFPA

UNDP

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Disclaimer

The views expressed in this document are those of the opinion poll respondents who took part in the Household Survey as well as the Business Survey in Kosovo*, and do not necessarily represent the views of either UNDP, UNFPA or UN Women."

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Prishtinë/Priština
January 2021

1. Executive Summary

Since March 2020, Kosovo[1] has been coping with the multidimensional implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has and still is, in a significant way impacting households and businesses in Kosovo, including people's daily lives and activities, physical and mental health, as well as household income and business operations.

The past nine months have been marked with different stages of restrictive measures to slow down the spread of the virus in Kosovo. After enduring a strict lockdown period in the springtime - which included the closure of land borders, halting of business activities, and restricting people's movement - Kosovo started to gradually open up again in June 2020. Since then, various spikes in COVID-19 cases have led to the reinstatement of measures across Kosovo impacting the people and the economy of Kosovo. As elsewhere in Europe, since October 2020, the situation has significantly worsened again with high numbers of new infections and deaths due to COVID-19. The total registered number of infections in Kosovo, as of late December, is 49,306 out of 173,986 tests and there are a total of 1,161 deaths due to the virus.[2]

In May 2020, UNDP, UN Women, and UNFPA conducted the first Rapid Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (SEIA) on the impact of the pandemic in Kosovo and the related institutional measures. The objective of this assessment is to examine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on households and businesses and understand in which areas (individuals, households, and businesses) the engaged agencies, Kosovo institutions, and other stakeholders should focus their assistance. Considering the multi-dimensional effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was deemed vital to continue and repeat data gathering with two additional waves of the SEIA. The goal hereby is to produce comparable data over time and enable a comprehensive understanding of the effects of the crisis in Kosovo. This report presents and analyses the findings of the second wave of the SEIA conducted in November 2020 and draws comparisons to the data findings of the first wave of the SEIA conducted in May 2020, where applicable.

During the second wave of the SEIA, the business sample was increased by a threefold (from 202 to 601). This enabled more accurate and precise data analysis. Furthermore, a number of new questions have been added to the survey questionnaires in order to capture themes that have become relevant in the recent months.

The new household survey also included questions regarding willingness of people to be vaccinated should they have the opportunity. Moreover, it included a new set of questions regarding employment since the outbreak of the pandemic COVID-19 to assess both the challenges and the opportunities, if any, in working in this period. In addition, questions on preference of physical or online workplace were added, as well.

The household survey was conducted with 1,425 respondents from November 11, 2020 until November 27, 2020. The business survey was conducted with 601 businesses from November 13, 2020 until November 30, 2020.

Traditional media was considered as the most trusted and frequently used source in obtaining information on COVID-19 for people in Kosovo in regards to risks, recommended preventive action, and coping strategies. Similar to the results of the SEIA wave 1, respondents relied mostly on radio, television, and newspapers (89%) as a primary source of information on COVID-19. These sources were also considered as the most trusted ones (78%). Internet and social media were mentioned by nearly three in four respondents as the main source of information regarding COVID-19 (73%), however, only 39% trusted them. For businesses, internet and social media remained the most commonly used sources of information according to around two-thirds of business respondents (67%). During wave 2, fewer business respondents responded using radio, television and newspapers (25%) as compared to wave 1 (33%).

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[1] *References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999)*
[2] NIPHK. COVID-19 daily update. https://www.facebook.com/IKSHPK/photos/a.527771290684213/3354325781362069/
Last accessed on 22.12.2020

In order to curb the spread of COVID-19, various measures have been introduced in Kosovo. Data shows that most respondents felt that their community respected the preventive measures introduced (3.8 out of 5.0 points[3]), but at the same time showed a high level of reservation towards a potential vaccine. Around 44% of all respondents stated that they either would not consider getting the vaccine (24%) or indicated to lean towards not getting vaccinated (20%). Respondents who were 65 years old or older were the age group that leaned towards getting a vaccine or would definitely get a vaccine (51%). While 31% respondents that were 25-34 years old would do the same.

In September 2020, after six months of restrictive measures, the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) opened schools based on two scenarios: some grades were to attend school physically at premises in all of Kosovo, some were to attend them on rotation basis, both online and physically, depending on the situation at municipal level[4]. Survey results also revealed that nearly three in four children were physically attending school at the time of interview in November 2020 (72%). Around 20% of children were part of a rotational system and attended school physically on some days, while learning remotely on others. Only 8% of children studied entirely remotely in November 2020, out of these, only in eight cases (15%) children who studied remotely were not able to attend distance learning regularly.

Prior to the pandemic, 65% of men and 31% of women were employed. Half of all respondents declared in November 2020 that they did not experience differences in their working hours (50%) after the onset of the pandemic, compared to wave 1 of the assessment, where only 22% reported no variation in working hours. One in five respondents experienced decreased working hours without losing their jobs (20%), while 11% reported that they lost their job (as compared to 8% that reported loss of employment during wave 1 of the SEIA). The majority of those who experienced loss of work, did not receive financial support or unemployment benefits from the central institutions (81%) or municipalities (91%). It should be also noted that the vast majority (89%) of those who searched for employment prior to COVID-19 remained unemployed as of November 2020.

The SEIAs also measured the impact COVID-19 has had on businesses thus far. Data clearly shows that negative impacts have increased over time. In May 2020, around 23% of businesses declared the impact of the pandemic to be very negative. This number rose to 55% in November 2020, with an increase of 32 percentage points (pp). Shortage of clients (89%), difficulties with salary payments (39%), and difficulties to comply with tax obligations (33%) stood out as the top three challenges for businesses in November 2020.

However, loosening of the restrictive measures and the gradual re-opening of Kosovo in June 2020 were visible in the data obtained from the second wave of the survey. During wave 1, over half of the survey respondents reported that their business activities had fully stopped due to the COVID-19 situation (56%), while in November 2020, only 13% reported the same. Conversely, partial stops of business activities were more commonly reported during wave 2 (40%) than during wave 1 (31%).

Businesses which had to partially stop their activities most commonly mentioned restrictive measures (44%, decrease of 37pp compared to wave 1) or lack of clients and demand (25%, increase of 14pp compared to wave 1) as the main reasons. Only 28% of those which fully or partially stopped their activities paid full salaries to their employees. Those businesses who had to fully stop their business activities mainly did so due to the shortage of clients (70%).

Nonetheless, the support of businesses towards restrictive measures to close or limit business activity dropped significantly. In May 2020, over half of the business respondents declared to somewhat support (44%) or strongly support (16%) the restrictive measures. In November 2020, only 21% somewhat

[3] Measured on a scale from 0.0 to 5.0 points, where one equals strongly disagree and five strongly agree.
[4] Ministry of Education and Science. Decision to start school in the new school year 2020/2021 in pandemic conditions. https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2020/09/vendimi-me-nr-01-b-1280-per-fillimin-e-mesimit-ne-vitin-e-ri-shkollor-2020-2021-ne-kushte-pandemie.pdf Last accessed: 22.12.2020

supported and 6% strongly supported these measures. Strong opposition to said measures increased by 30 pp from 8% in May to 38% in November 2020.

Household respondents that remained employed during the pandemic most commonly worked at their work premises (89%). Only 3% worked full-time from home in November 2020, as opposed to 27% in May 2020. Three in four respondents of those working remotely reported a significant increase in their workload and having to multitask as challenges (60% and 58% respectively). When asked whether they would prefer to continue to work from home after the pandemic, the responses varied with 34% not knowing an answer, 35% not preferring to continue remote work, and 31% preferring to continue to work from home. Furthermore, findings from the business survey underlined the household results regarding this matter; the majority of businesses respondents declared that at the time of the interview all employees worked at the business premises (91%), as opposed to some working from home (6%) or all working from home (3%).

The survey also assessed the effects of COVID-19 on personal and household income. One in four reported a decrease in paid working hours of the main income earner of the family (25%) and 43% declared that their overall household income had decreased (49% of households reported a decrease was reported during wave 1). Most families did not receive any in-kind support (such as food, personal, or family hygiene supplies or protective supplies) from the central institutions (99%), municipalities (96%), or NGOs/International Organizations (97%). Nearly three in four households reduced their spending on leisure activities and non-essential commodities to compensate for the loss, or a potential loss of income (70%), while almost half utilized their savings (49%).

Businesses also suffered from negative financial impact of COVID-19 in terms of revenues and costs. More than eight in 10 businesses reported a decrease in sales of products or services, as well as in revenue (88% each). Expenditures and labour costs, on the other hand, increased for a significant number of businesses (44% and 19% respectively). Around 43% of all businesses that took part in this assessment stated to have had plans for investments prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Out of these, more than three in four respondents said they had decided to refrain from making any investment since the onset of the pandemic (79%).

COVID-19 has also affected a range of social dynamics for families in Kosovo. An increase of hours devoted to emotional support for adult family members stood out with the highest share of respondents mentioning an increase regarding this activity (37%). Data revealed that women were more likely to have spent increased time on cleaning (24%) and cooking (18%) as compared to men (13% and 6%, respectively). Furthermore, a significant number of men declared that they usually did not engage in cooking (58%) or cleaning (35%) at all. While more than one in three men reported that their partner helped more with the household chores since the onset of the pandemic (63%), only 36% of women reported the same.

Comparative data results between wave 1 and wave 2 clearly show that the psychological effects caused by the COVID-19 situation have increased. Over one third (36%) declared that their mental or emotional health has been affected, compared to 28% who stated the same in May 2020. More women have experienced negative effects on their mental health (40%) than men (32%). Cases of physical illness and illness of a family member have also increased by 9 pp (from 2% to 11%) and 11 pp (from 5% to 16%), respectively.

Difficulties pertaining to the accessibility of basic utilities, social and health services, public transportation, and basic health products significantly decreased when comparing results from wave 1 and 2. Nonetheless, some difficulties appeared to have persisted. For example, a considerable number of respondents reported some or major difficulty in regard to accessing food products (26%), protective personal equipment (PPEs; 24%), and health services (24%).

An increase in domestic violence since the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic has been observed in many countries around the world. Recently, Kosovo Police published data on the cases of domestic violence reported between January and September 2020. The number of cases amounted to 1,571, around 144 more cases as compared to the same period in 2019[5]. The perception of increased domestic violence is also clearly visible in the results of the household survey. Around 59% of the respondents that took part in the second wave of the SEIA felt that domestic violence had increased since the beginning of the pandemic. This portrays a slight increase by 3 pp compared to May 2020. Concerningly, while 63% of women believed that domestic violence had increased, nearly one in three of them declared not to know where to seek help and support in case of experiencing domestic violence (32%).

The business survey also engaged with questions pertaining to future outlook of businesses. Underlining the general uncertainty that is present around the world, more than one-third of the business respondents did not have an answer when asked how much longer their business could afford the pandemic situation (36%). During wave 1 this percentage amounted only to 13%. Nearly just as many predicted that their businesses could afford the situation for only around 1-2 more months (35%).

When asked about suggestions to Kosovo institutions on measures that could help the respondents' businesses, around half mentioned that the adoption of the law on economic recovery (51%) would help them.[6] Nearly half did not have any suggestion for international organisations on measures that could help their businesses (44%). However, one in three business respondents suggested that financial support through economic packages by international organisations would help (33%). In relation to this, it is important to note that over half of the business respondents believed that fraud and corruption in connection with relief packages for businesses would take place (55%). Two in five business respondents believed that it will take more than six months until life in Kosovo will return to normal (40%, increase of 13pp compared to wave 1).

[5] Balkan Insight, November 2020, https://balkaninsight.com/2020/11/25/women-of-southeast-central-europe-protest-rise-in-male-violence/ *Last accessed 08.12.2020*
Kosovo Police. Email Response to official request by IDRA.
[6] After seven failed attempts, the adoption of the law on economic recovery took place in December 2020, Balkan Insight: https://prishtinainsight.com/economic-recovery-package-passes-at-kosovo-assembly/ *Last accessed: 10.12.2020*
The Assembly approved the Draft Law on Economic Recovery - COVID-19, Kosovo Assembly http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/shq/lajmi/kuvendi-miratoi-projektligjin-per-rimekembjen-26325/# *Last accessed: 19.12.2020*

2. Introduction

2.1. Background

Ever since the emergence of COVID-19 in Kosovo, its people and economy, had to face and cope with various implications caused by the pandemic. Similar to other countries, in March 2020 strict restrictive measures were put in place to curb the spread of the virus. These measures put a strain upon people and businesses across Kosovo, while the central and health care institutions made great effort to handle the novel situation.

A “smart return to normality” was implemented in May 2020, through a step-by-step plan to gradually lift the restrictive measures and reopen the society in a safe manner. During June 2020 most restrictions had been lifted, while rules such as physical distancing and bans on mass gathering remained in place. However, by July 2020 a spike in case numbers became evident and lead to the introduction of new measures, entailing night-time curfews, and mandatory mask wearing in public indoor/outdoor spaces, among others. In September 2020, the decision was made to re-open schools and continue in-person learning. The situation in educational facilities is being monitored and may result in changes of rules again should clusters of cases emerge. During October 2020, the situation started to significantly worsen, with increased number of new infections and deaths among those who had contracted the virus. This lead in the following month to the imposing of new measures such as further curfews for municipalities with high case counts as well as for risk groups, limitations related to indoor sports and cultural activities, ban of gatherings of more than five persons, public transportation operating at half capacity, and decreased business hours for retail and culinary businesses.

Kosovo institutions have made various efforts to support households and businesses, international actors and other countries have also made effort to support Kosovo. Nonetheless, social and economic disruption are severe, affecting people and the economy alike. The COVID-19 pandemic has had multidimensional impacts on Kosovo and its people, including vast socio-economic implications. The effects are already evident and also are projected to continue to vary from increasing unemployment, aggravated poverty, income loss, job insecurity, increasing inequalities, lags in education, and reverse in gender gap progress.

In May 2020, UNDP, UN Women and UNFPA cooperated to conduct a Rapid Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (SEIA) the pandemic and the related institutional measures on (1) the health, financial and emotional well-being of people, as well as the affected vulnerable groups and (2) the private sector economic performance and the related implications for the small and medium enterprises. The overall aim of the assessment was to gather reliable information which enables a better understanding of the effects of COVID-19 and provide evidence for policymakers, researchers, and development partners to be able to better target the response.

As the crisis continues, the UN Kosovo Team decided to continue assessing the impacts through conducting two more waves of the SEIA, strictly anchored in the methodology and standardization of the first SEIA. The goal hereby is to produce comparable data over time and enabling an updated understanding of the effects of the crisis.

The results of the two additional waves of assessments will assist in further defining the nature and extent of the systemic impact of the COVID-19 crisis, define its scope, intensity and threat to vulnerable groups and the local economy in Kosovo.

More specifically, the assessment utilises a combined approach to reach out to vulnerable groups and local economy and include:

1. Rapid assessment of the socio-economic impact of the crisis on households

2. Short-term impact assessment on the performance of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, opportunity losses, and business recovery needs

The assessment is rapid in nature to allow for design and delivery of response measures to reduce negative impacts for households and businesses. The survey findings allow for a better understanding of which groups are impacted the most, the range of resources needs, as well as for better targeting of service provision and access gaps.

2.2. Methodology

In order to explore the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on the general public as well as businesses in Kosovo, UNDP commissioned IDRA Research and Consulting Kosovo to conduct two more waves of the SEIA through quantitative surveys strictly adhering to the previous developed methodology established during the first wave of the SEIA in May 2020. The fieldwork of the second wave was conducted in November 2020 and was composed of the following samples

1. Household survey, N= 1,425 interviews
2. Business survey, N= 601 interviews. (compared to wave 1, the business sample has been increased by a threefold enabling more accurate and precise data analysis.)

The samples of the first wave of the SEIA were composed of:

1. Household survey, N=1,412
2. Business survey, N=202

Household Survey

The data collection for the household survey was conducted via CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) method. A system which randomly generates mobile numbers was used as a first step of selection of the respondent. The system has “built-in” algorithms which detect segments of mobile numbers which are in use based on the information given by the operator when the randomly generated number comes out to be non-existent. Throughout years of operation of the system, information has been constantly added to the database about the geographical locations of numbers that have been called for surveys in the past. Hence there is a possibility to predict the “location” of the number that will be called after being generated. This tool ensures the contacts are generated randomly.

Once the number is generated, a screening questionnaire was used to determine whether the respondents are suitable for the sampling requirements:

- Geographical location (municipality)
- Urban/Rural
- Age
- Gender
- Education level
- Employment status

Once the quota was checked and verified, then the main interview was conducted. The interviews for the Household Survey were conducted from 11 November to 27 November 2020. The screening helps the monitoring of data collection phase as it ensures each interview conducted fits in the planned distribution of interviews.

Sample distribution

Sample distribution of interviews is based on official data from Kosovo Agency of Statistics[7]. The percentages in the table which show the proportion of population (18+ years old) are obtained by Census 2011 data. Also, the urbanity, gender and age distribution were based on Census 2011 data, as shown in the tables below.

Based on these data, the interviews per each region were projected:

Table 1. Sample Distribution by Region

Region	Percentage	Interviews
Gjakovë/Đakovica	11%	150
Prishtinë/Priština	26%	376
Gjilan/Gnjilane	11%	150
Prizren	18%	252
Pejë/Peć	10%	139
Ferizaj/Uroševac	11%	162
Mitrovicë/Mitrovica South and Mitrovica North[8]	14%	196
Total	100%	1425

Table 2. Sample Distribution by Urbanity

Urbanity	Percentage[9]	Interviews
Rural	56%	797
Urban	44%	628
Total	100%	1425

Table 3. Sample Distribution by Gender

Gender	Percentage	Interviews
Women	48%	688
Men	52%	737
Total	100%	1425

[7] Kosovo Agency of Statistics. Population breakdown by age, gender, urbanity, employment status. Source: <https://bit.ly/36ICPCw>;
[8] We use the phrase Mitrovica South and North since the analysis in this report is done on a regional level and includes respondents from all municipalities within the region

Table 4. Sample Distribution by Age

Age	Percentage	Interviews
18-24	19%	276
25-34	24%	336
35-44	21%	301
45-54	17%	236
55-64	10%	144
65+	9%	132
Total	100%	1,425

The data collection process was closely monitored in order to reach a sufficient distribution regarding the employment status as the unemployed are perceived a particularly vulnerable group. The below tables show the calculations for the number of interviews.

Table 5. Sample Distribution by Employment

Status	Percentage	Interviews
Self-employed	11%	163
Contributing family workers and working abroad	1%	9
Employee	39%	555
Unemployed	9%	129
Pupils, students, further training, unpaid work experience	7%	95
In retirement or early retirement or has given up business	10%	146
Permanently disabled	1%	5
Fulfilling domestic tasks	9%	127
Discouraged /other inactive	13%	196
Total	100%	1,425

The margin of error for a total sample of 1,425 interviews in Kosovo is calculated with ±2.6%.

Business Survey

A survey was also carried out with N=601 micro, small and medium sized businesses. The data collection was also conducted by applying CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) and took place between 13 November and 30 November 2020.

A multistage sampling procedure was used in order to identify suitable businesses. The businesses were identified from the Kosovo Business Registration Agency (KBRA), which consists of the following information:

1) NIPT (equivalent to tax identification number)
2) Name of Business
3) Date of Registration
4) Type of Business (Ltd, JSC, Physical Person, etc.)
5) Location Address

6) Founding Capital
7) Legal Representative
8) Status (Active, Passive, under bankruptcy)

Based on this database, businesses were randomly selected by location and then went through a Screening procedure which is as follows:

1. Contact the business (using different sources of contacts from databases, extracts from NRC (National Research Council), Chambers of Commerce, yellow pages, etc.)
2. Screen the business (through a mini survey over the phone) in terms of:

   a. Size
   b. Region

3. If the business suited the quota, (interlocking quota – region, size, ownership) then an appointment was set for the main questionnaire.

It should be noted that Kosovo's business sector is made up almost entirely of MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises). There are around 38,000 registered enterprises operating in Kosovo;

- 93.1% of which are micro enterprises,
- 5.9% are small and
- 0.9% are medium sized.
- Only 0.1% of the total business population are classified as large enterprises.

Kosovo's classification of MSMEs is defined by the law on foreign investment which entered into force in 2014. Regarding the geographic distribution of enterprises, around one-third of all registered enterprises are located in the district of Prishtinë/Priština. Below is the distribution of businesses in Kosovo, according to the Kosovo Agency of Statistics (2018).

Table 6. Distribution of Businesses in Kosovo

Region	Micr0 (1-9)	Small (10-49)	Medium (50-249)	Large (250+)	Total	Share
Gjakovë/Đakovica	3,408	162	17	2	3,589	9%
Gjilan/Gnjilane	3,580	233	20	0	3,833	10%
Mitrovicë/Mitrovica South and Mitrovica North	3,069	146	23	2	3,240	8%
Pejë/Peć	3,189	185	23	2	3,399	9%
Prizren	5,625	317	34	3	5,979	16%
Prishtinë/Priština	12,605	1,111	216	47	13,979	37%
Ferizaj/Uroševac	3,898	231	28	1	4,158	11%
Kosovo	35,374	2,385	361	57	38,177	100%

Source: Statistical Agency of Kosovo, 2018

As illustrated by the table above and the one below, if the sample distribution were based on the official data, then it would not be possible to analyse the data by business segment (micro, small and medium) due to a very low number of interviews for small and medium companies proportionally. Hence, in order to accurately reflect the business landscape in Kosovo, the following quotas and weights were applied for the business survey sample. In addition to the business size, quotas were implemented for regional distribution as well as for the main business activity or sector. The quota approach allows to analyse and provide findings for all three business segments separately. Hence, in this report, the overall results are weighted. The weighting procedure ensures that the results represent the business landscape in Kosovo, meaning that the business segment contributes with the same share or weight that it overall has in Kosovo.

Hence, the following quotas and weights were applied for the business survey sample.

Table 7. Sample and Weighting for Business Survey Sample

Business size	Percentage of businesses in Kosovo (official data)	Survey (interviews)		After Weighting[10]
		Percentage	Businesses	Percentage
Micro (1-9)	93.10%	55%	328	93.10%
Small (10-49)	5.90%	33%	199	5.90%
Medium (50+)	1.00%	12%	74	1.00%
Overall	100%	100%	601	100%

[10] Overall results in the graph are shown as weighted.

3. Survey Findings

3.1. Household Survey

This chapter presents the findings of wave 2 of the household survey. Where applicable, the data is compared to the results of the first wave of the assessment conducted in May 2020.

3.1.1 Household Profile and Demographics

The gender distribution of the respondents that took part in the household survey was nearly equal (52% men and 48% women). Over 40% were between the age of 25 and 44 years old, while 19% belonged to the youngest age group of 18 to 24 years old. Nearly one third were between 45 and 54 years old, while 9% where 65 and older.

Figure 1 Gender of respondents

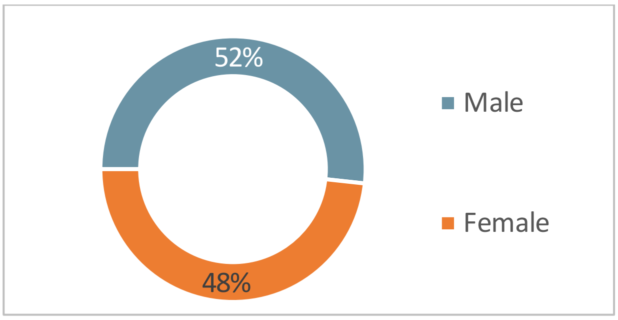
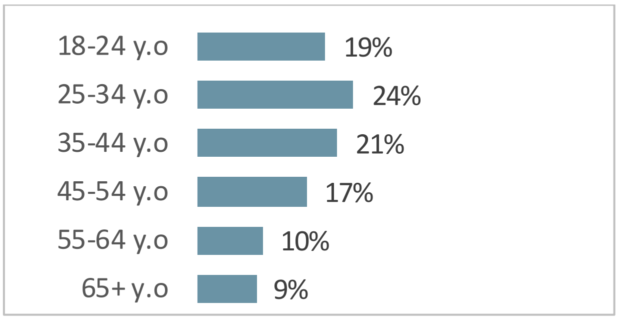


Figure 2 Age of respondents



As during the first wave of this assessment, the selected sample was also representative of the Kosovo population structure. Around 26% were from Prishtinë/Priština and 18% from Prizren, while 14% were from Mitrovicë/Mitrovica. Around 11% each of the respondents were from Ferizaj/Uroševac, Gjakovë/Đakovica and Gjilan/Gnjilane, while 10% were from Pejë/Peć. Corresponding to the overall urban/rural distribution of the population in Kosovo, the majority of respondents were from urban areas (56%), while 44% came from rural areas.

Figure 3 Regional distribution of the respondents

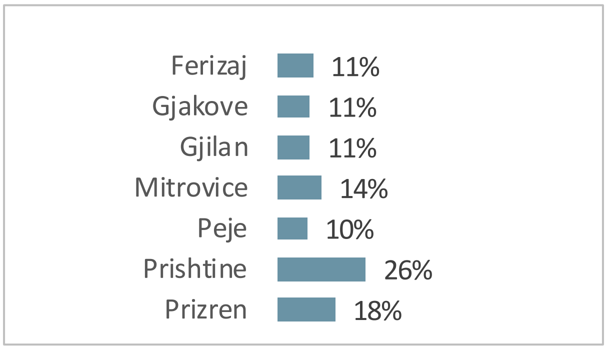
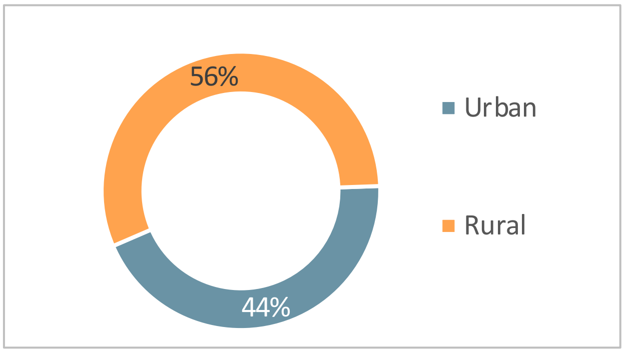


Figure 4 Urbanity of the respondents



The educational level of the respondents varied with the majority having obtained secondary education (53%), nearly one in four have completed a university level degree or equivalent (24%) and 18% have completed primary school. While four percent have completed a post university degree, two percent declared to have no education at all.

The ethnicity of the respondents resulted in 92% Kosovo Albanians (K Albanians), 7% Kosovo Serbs (K Serbs) while one percent belonged to other ethnicities than those aforementioned.

Figure 5 Education level of respondents

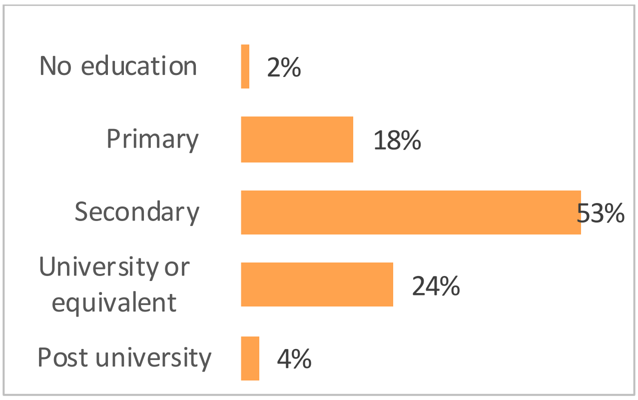
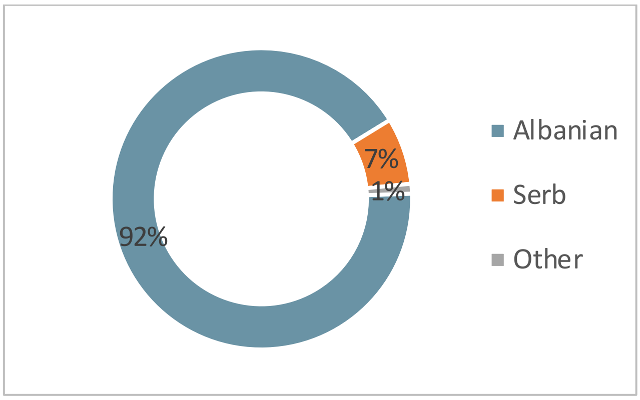
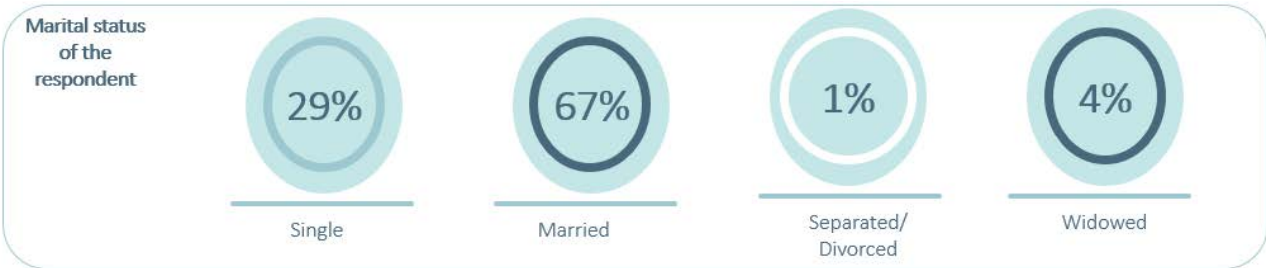


Figure 6 Ethnicity of respondents



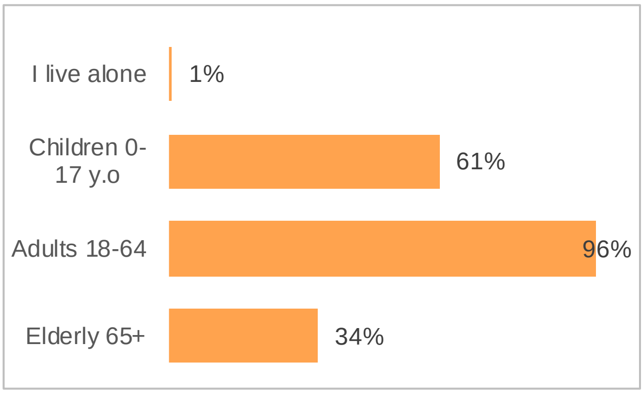
More than two in three respondents declared to be married (67%), while nearly one third stated to be single (29%). Around four percent reported to be widowed and only one percent declared to be separated or divorced.

Figure 7 Marital Status of the respondents



Nearly all families of the respondents consisted of adults between 18 and 64 years old (96%). Almost two thirds of the families included children (61%) and around one third had elderly family members as part of their households (34%). The average number of children was 2.1, while the average number of adults and elderly were 3.6 and 1.4, respectively, in each family. Only three percent of the families had a family member that was pregnant at the time of interview. The great majority declared to live in a residential flat (95%).

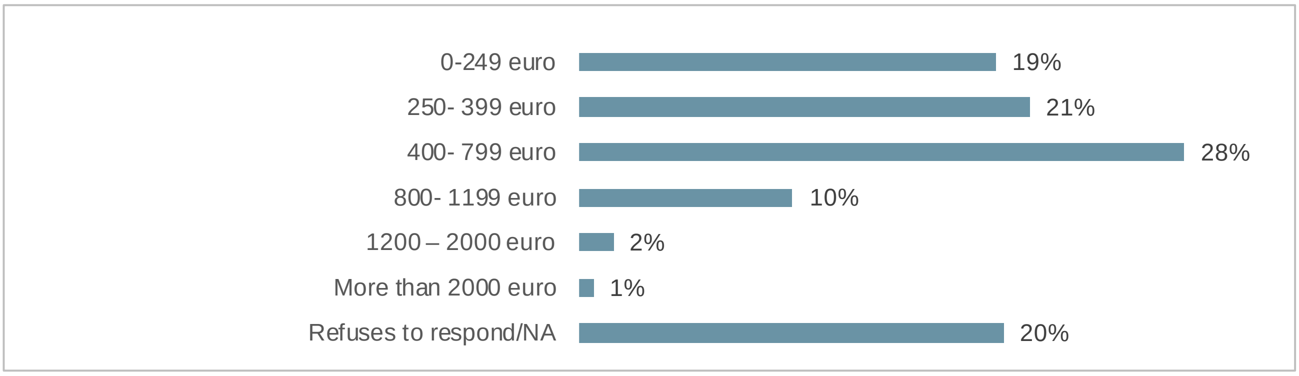
Figure 8 Family composition



Family composition		
	Average	Mode
Number of children 0-17	2.1	2
Number of adults 18-64	3.6	2
Number of elderly 65+	1.4	1

Cumulative income per household (HH) commonly revolved around 400 to 799 Euro (28%) per month. Around 21% declared an income between 250 and 399 Euro, while nearly as many stated that their income only is situated between zero and 249 Euro (19%). One in ten declared to accumulate 800 to 1,199 Euro a month (10%). Only 3% of all respondents had a total monthly HH income of 1200 Euro or more. It should be noted that 20% of all respondents did not provide an answer to this question.

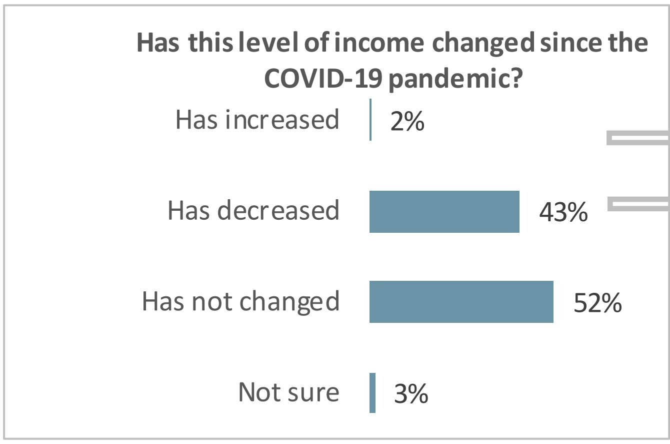
Figure 9 Household income per month



When asked whether the household income has decreased or increased since the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, more than two in five of the respondents declared that their income had decreased (43%). On average, the income has decreased by 199 Euro per month. The most common response (mode) was a decrease of 200 Euro.

Only two percent had witnessed an increase in their income since the start of the pandemic, with an average of 244 Euro per month. The majority stated that their income situation did not change (52%).

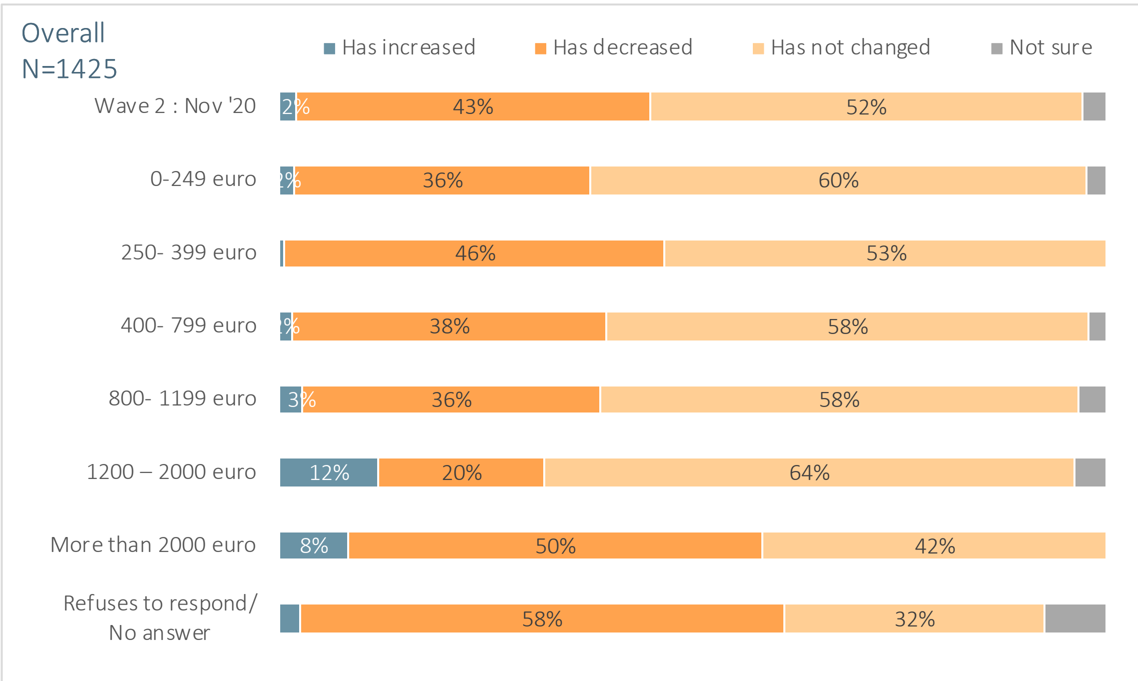
Figure 10 Changes in income since the COVID-19 pandemic per month



Family income		
	Average	Mode
Has increased (Monthly)	244 Euro	300 Euro
Has decreased (Monthly)	199 Euro	200 Euro

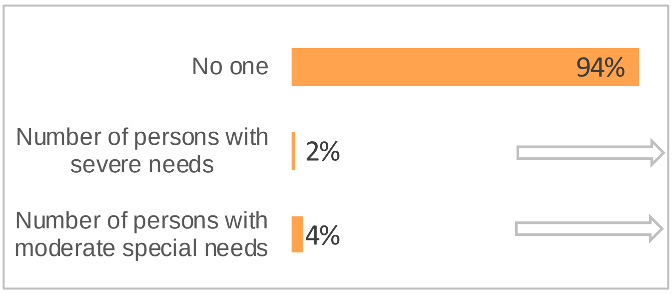
Broken down by bracket of income the biggest increase in income happened to households whose monthly income is 1200-2000 Euro (12%) and more than 2000 Euro (8%). Interestingly, the biggest decrease in household income was perceived also by those families with cumulative earning of 2000 Euro or more (50%), followed by those who earn 200-399 a month (46%).

Figure 11 Has the household income changed after the COVID-19 pandemic? by current household income



The great majority of households did not have a family member with special needs (94%), while 4% stated to have a person with moderate disabilities (1.1 average) and 2% with severe disabilities (1.1 average) in their household.

Figure 12 Number of people with disabilities in the household



Persons with disabilities	
	Average
Number of persons with severe disabilities	1.1
Number of persons with moderate disabilities	1.1

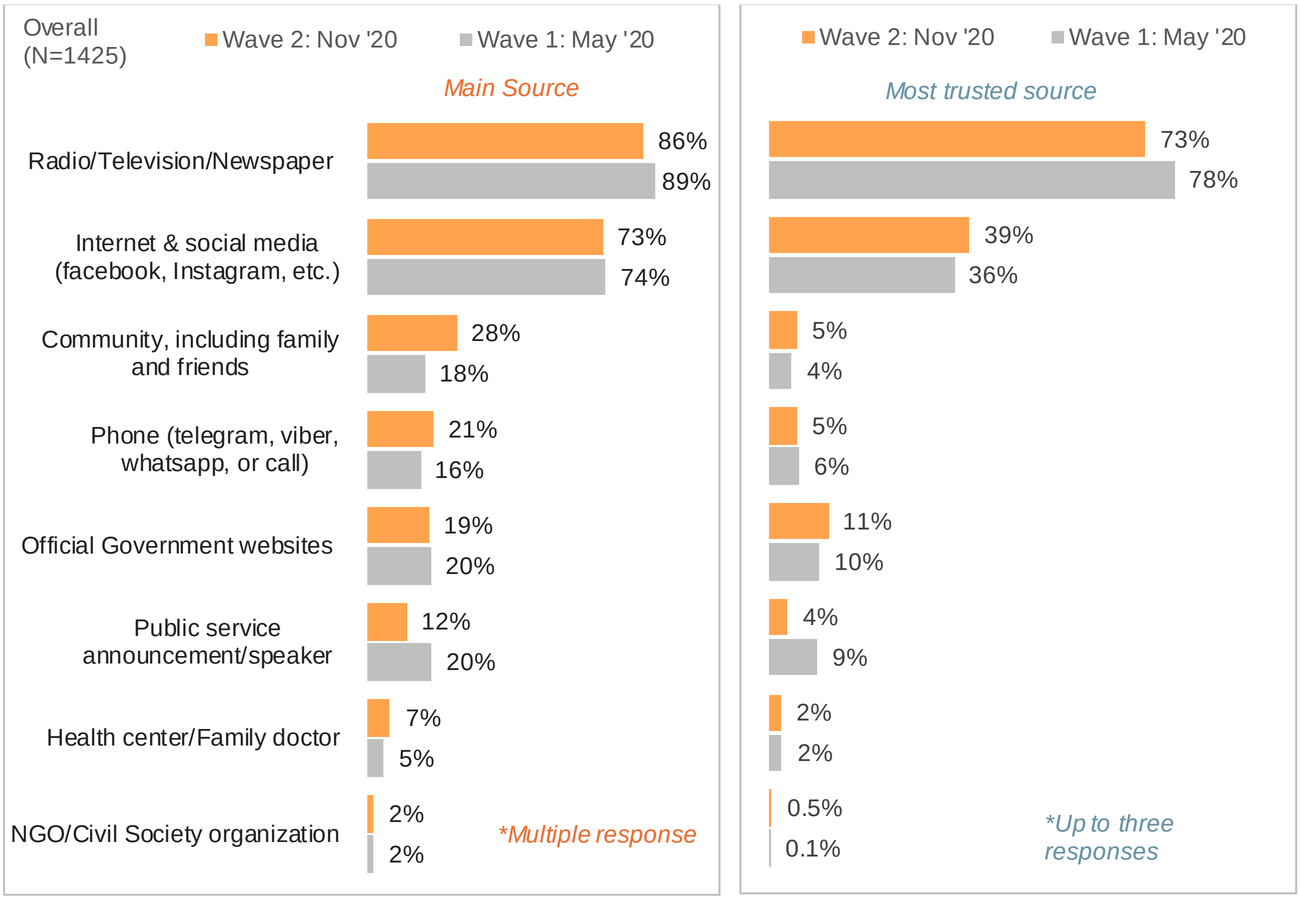
3.1.2 COVID-19 Awareness and Information

The objective of this section of the survey is to understand how people in Kosovo inform themselves about the COVID-19 virus, whether they trust respective sources and analyses, and whether restrictive measures in place are respected. It also assesses the readiness of respondents to receive a vaccine for COVID-19, should it become available to them.

First, respondents were asked about their main source of information used to gain knowledge about COVID-19. The questionnaire also captured which of the sources are most trusted. Similar to the results of wave 1 of the SEIA conducted in May 2020, respondents made the most use of radio, television and newspapers (89%). These sources are also the most trusted ones according to 78% of the respondents. Usage and trust towards these sources have somewhat decreased by 3 and 5 percentage points (pp) respectively.

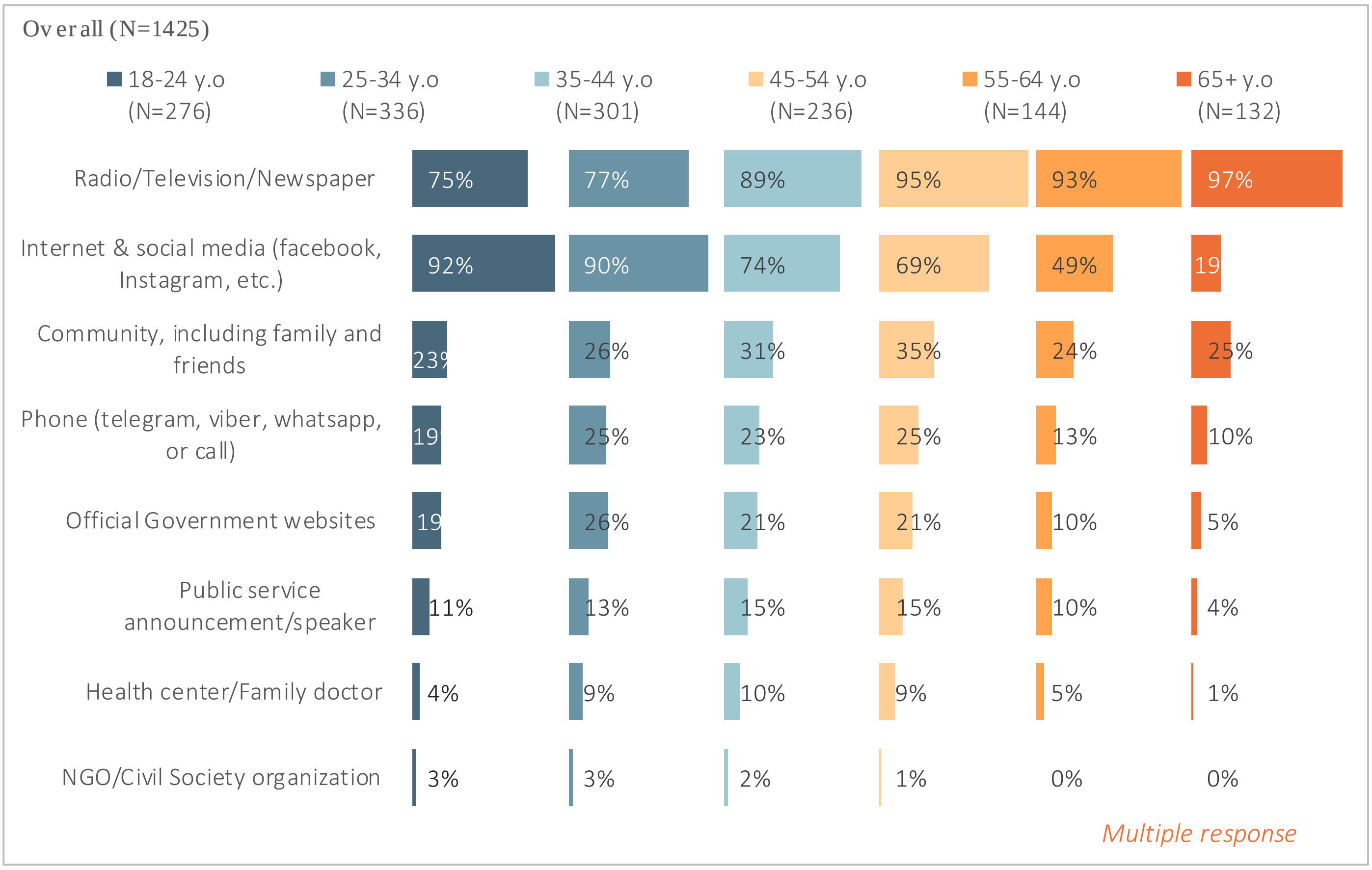
Internet and social media were mentioned by nearly three in four respondents as the main information source regarding COVID-19 (73%). Trust in these sources have slightly increased since May 2020 (3pp). While the respondent´s community has been the main source of information for almost a third (28%) in wave 1, in November 2020 only 18% declared the same. Conversely, the usage of phone apps to obtain information has increased. No substantial change has been observed regarding usage (19%) and trust (11%) in Kosovo institutions' webpages, however, public service announcements were cited by fewer (12%) compared to wave 1 (20%), trust in this source has decreased as well (5 pp). Obtaining information from NGOs was mentioned by only 2% of respondents (see Figure 13).

Figure 13 Main sources of information and most trusted sources of information



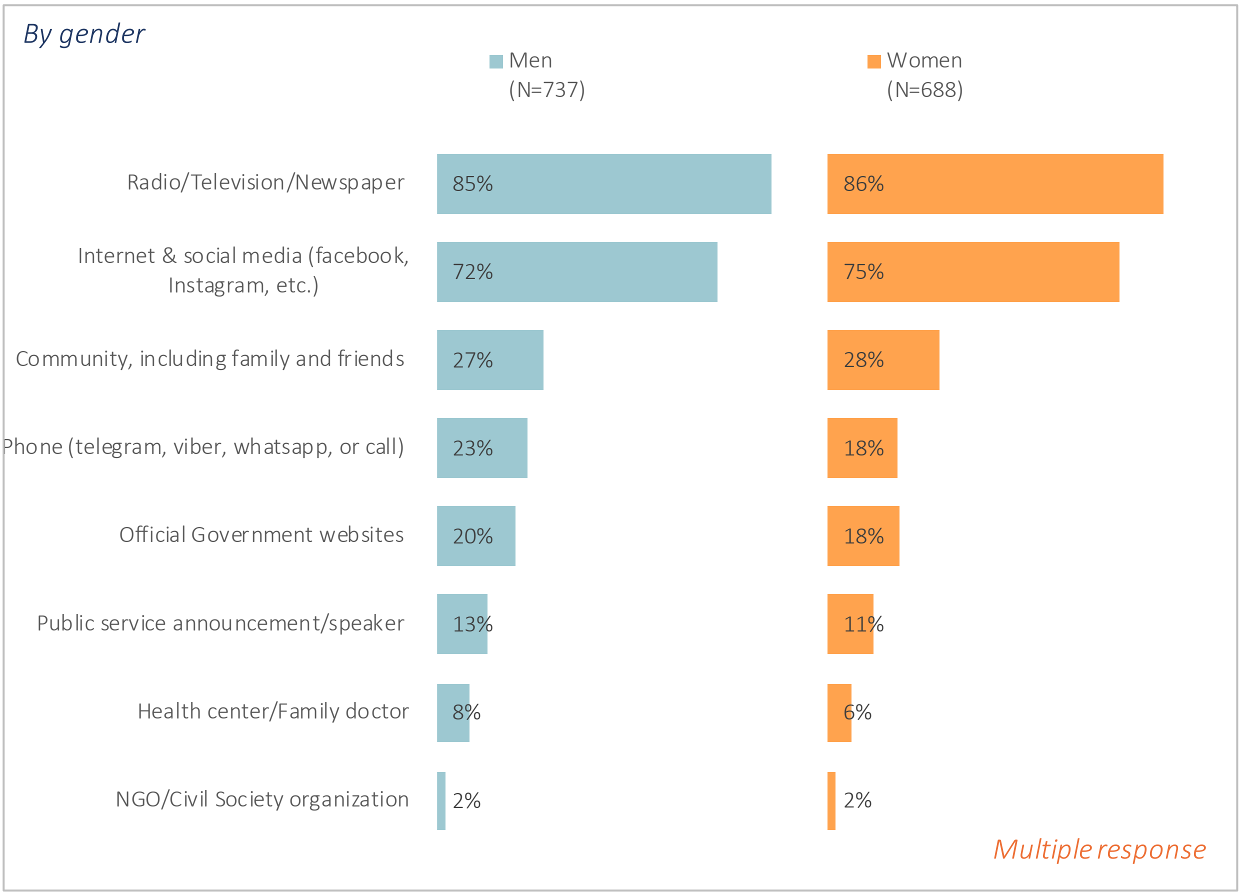
When analysing the main sources of information disaggregated by age of the respondents, it can be observed that younger respondents were more likely to make use of internet and social media as their main source of information. Older respondents are more inclined to make use of radio, television and newspapers. Making use of the community as the main source of information for COVID-19 appeared to be most common among middle aged respondents (45 to 64 years old) with around one in three who mentioned it.

Figure 14 Main sources of information, by age



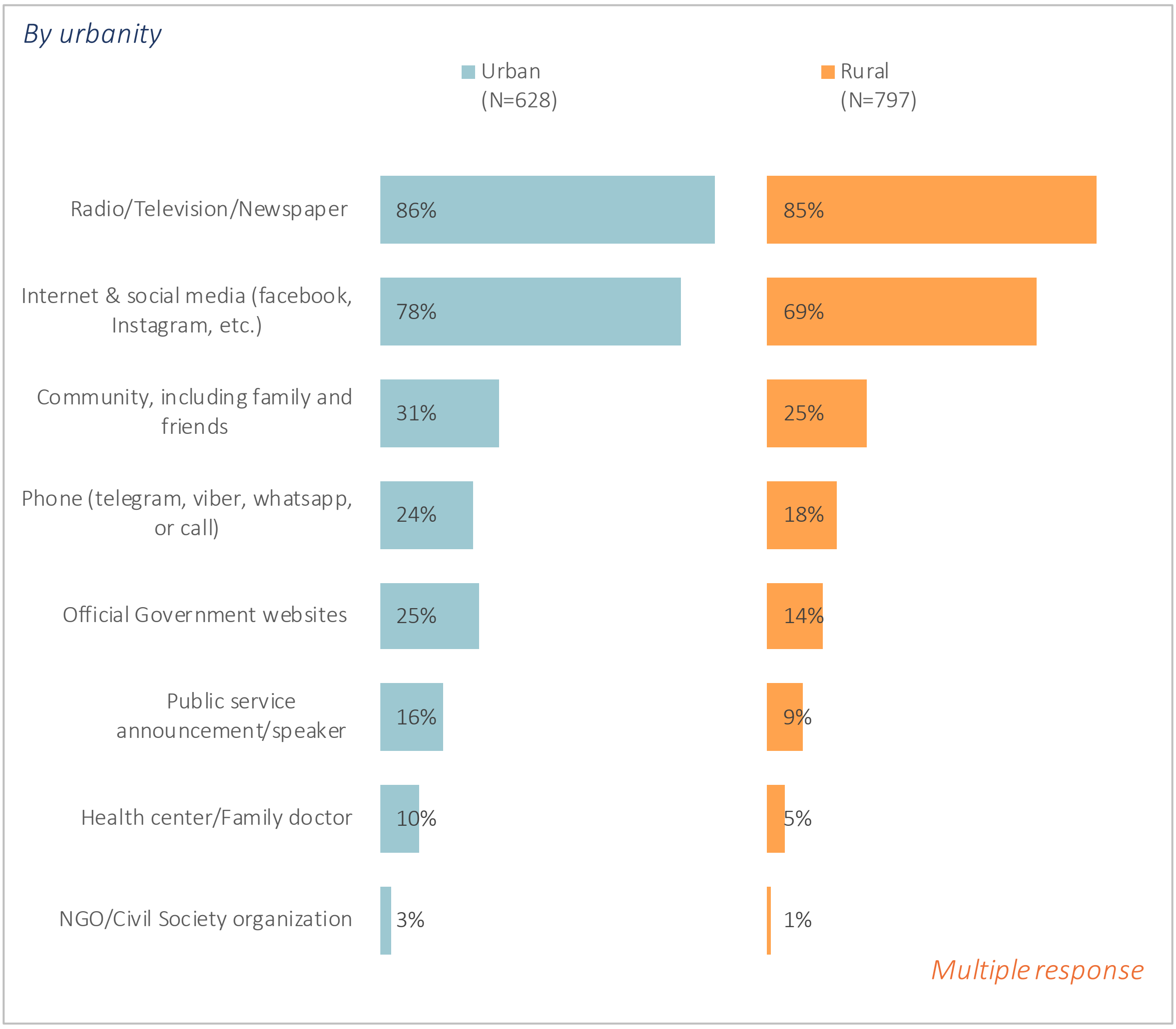
The most used sources of information for men and women were radio/television/newspaper and the internet and social media. Eighty-five percent of men and 86% of women use radio/television/ newspaper; 72% of men and 75% of women use internet and social media. The third most used source of information regarding COVID-19 news for both men and women were their communities, including families and friends, albeit in smaller portions (27% and 28% respectively) (see Figure below).

Figure 15 Main sources of information, by gender



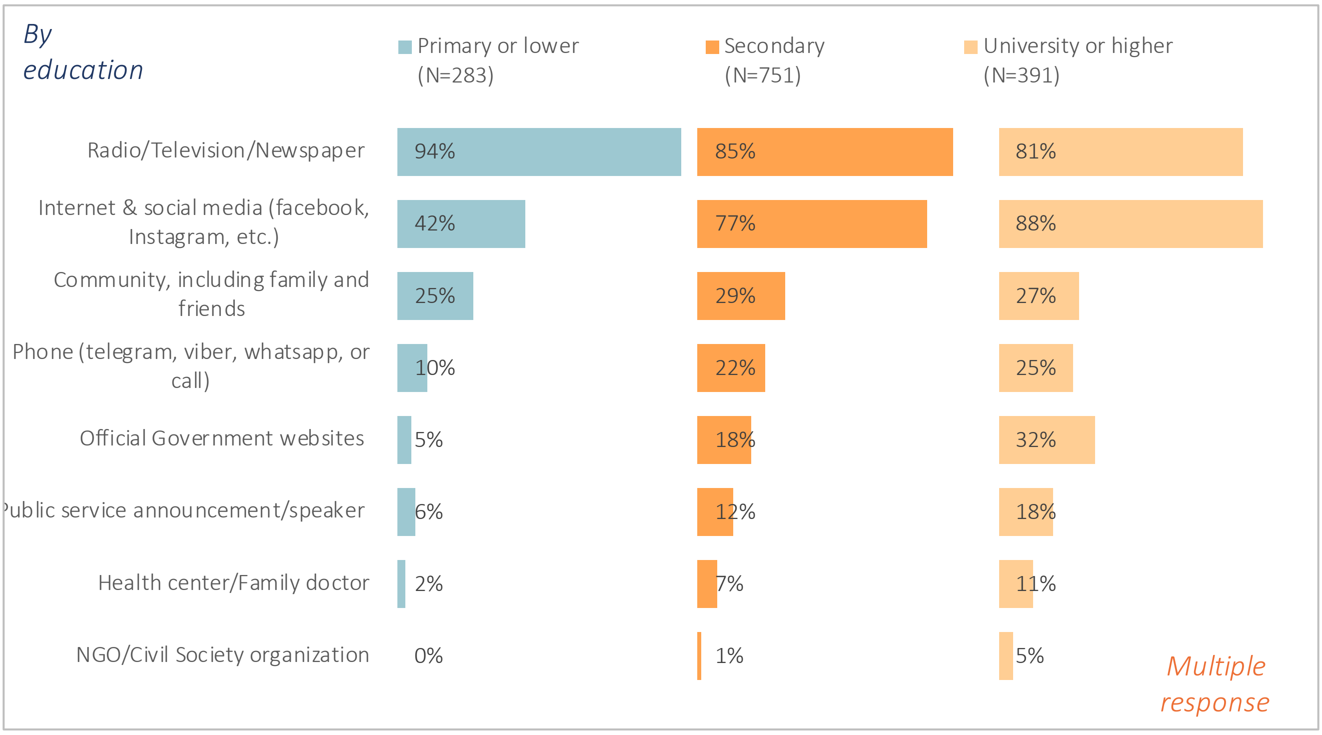
In terms of type of settlement, 86% of people living in urban areas and 85% of those living in rural areas use traditional media the most (radio/television/newspaper) for COVID-19 information purposes. Seventy eight percent of people in urban areas also use internet and social media, while only 69% of those in rural areas use these channels of information. There's a bigger difference in the use of phone through various communication apps (Viber, Telegram, WhatsApp, among others) where 24% of urban residents and 18% of rural residents use them. Although smaller portions of both urban and rural residents use Kosovo institutions' websites as sources of information, one in four residents living in urban areas (25%) and about one in seven residents living in rural areas (14%) use them (see Figure 16).

Figure 16 Main sources of information, by urbanity



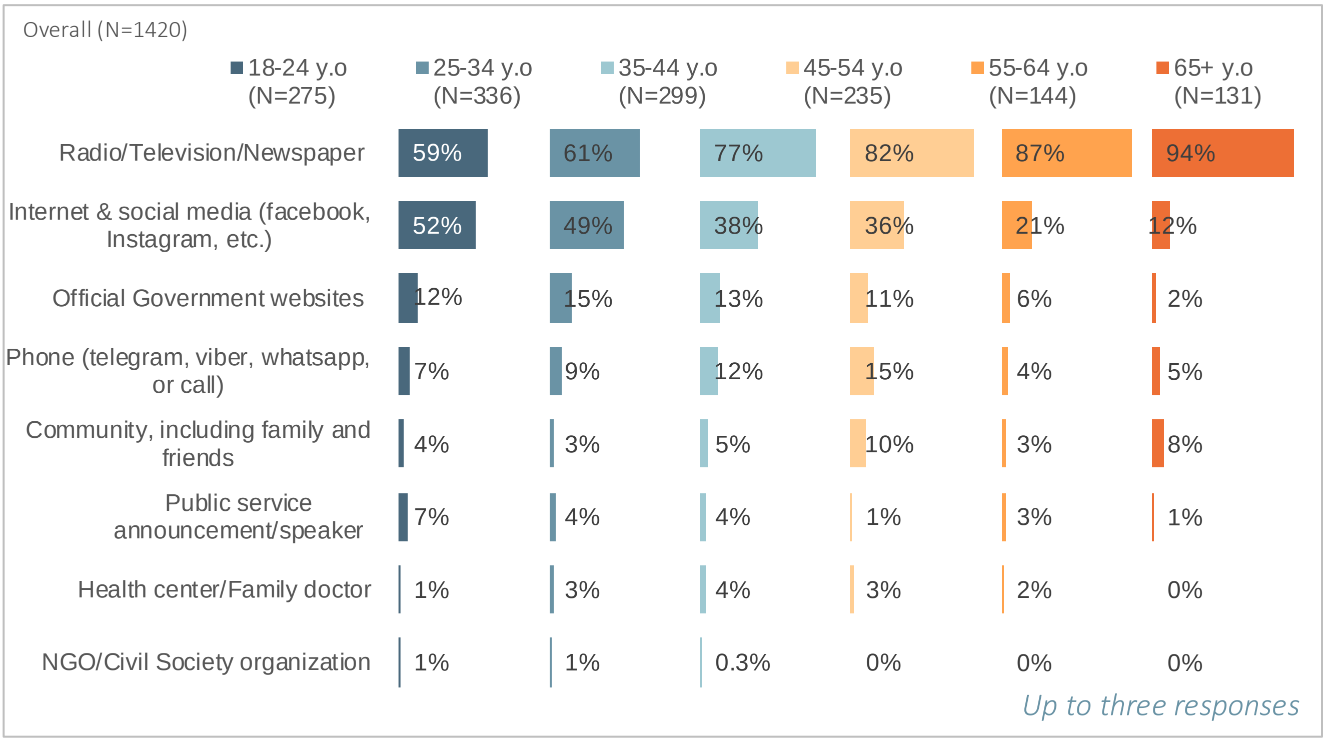
Considering the education level of respondents, the most used sources of information remain the same irrespective of education level. However, there are differences in the share of people with a primary or lower education, secondary education, and university or higher education which use them. More people with a primary or lower education (94%) used traditional media than those with secondary education (85%) and with university or a higher education (81%). About two in four people (42%) with a primary or lower education use internet and social media, while slightly more than three in four (77%) people with a secondary education, and about seven in eight people (88%) with a university or higher education use them.

Figure 17 Main sources of information, by education



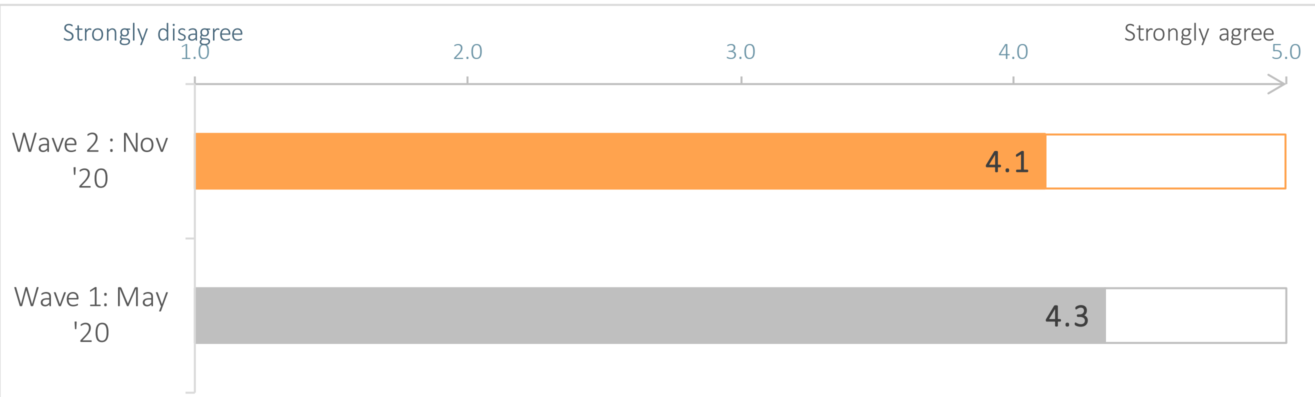
In terms of most trusted sources of information, data suggests that trust in internet and social media decreases with age, while trust in radio, television and newspaper increases with age. Official Kosovo institutions' webpages were more commonly trusted by younger respondents, than by those above 45 years old. Despite a considerable number of middle-aged respondents who mentioned community as their main source, the trust appears to be low with only 5 to 10%.

Figure 18 Most trusted source of information, by age



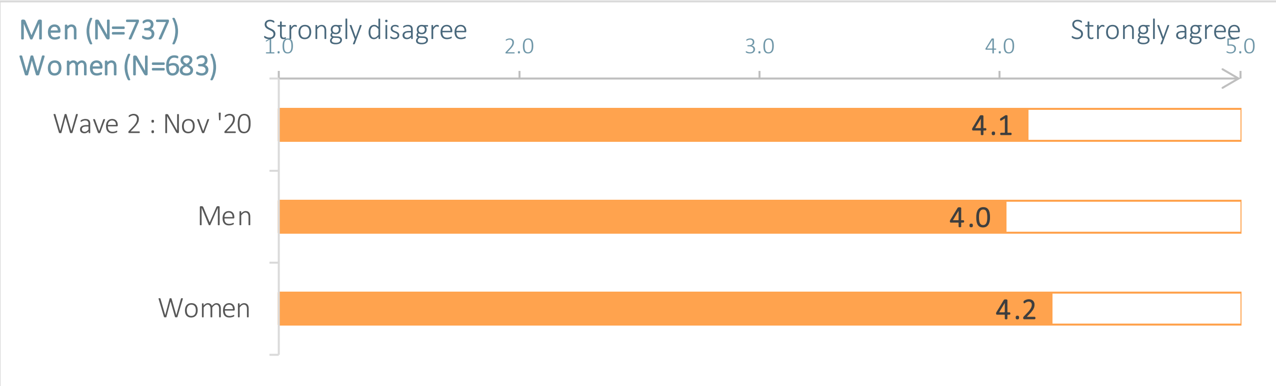
In order to assess whether obtained information about COVID-19 has been perceived as helpful, respondents were asked to express their level of agreement to the statement "COVID-19 information helped me protect myself and family from the virus". Akin to the results of wave 1, the majority of respondents expressed agreement or strong agreement to the statement on the scale of 1.0 to 5.0 (4.3 out of 5.0 points).

Figure 19 Agreement with: "COVID-19 information helped me protect myself and family from the virus"



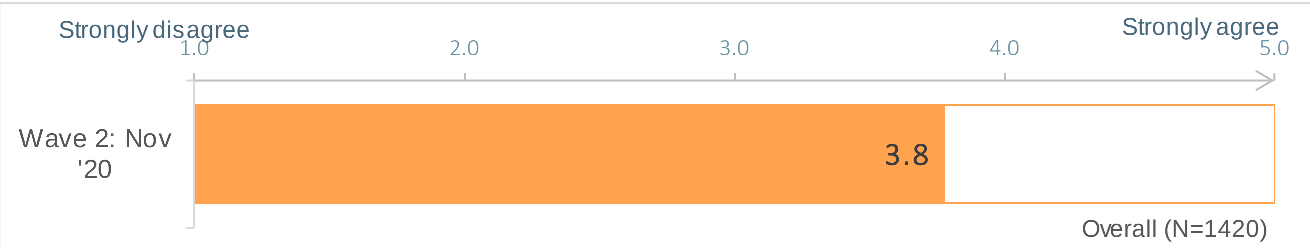
Considering the gender of respondents, women agreed slightly more than men that information regarding COVID-19 helped them protect themselves and their families from the virus, rating the "COVID-19 information helped me protect myself and family from the virus" statement 4.2/5 as compared to men who rated it at 4/5 on an agreement scale.

Figure 20 Agreement with: "COVID-19 information helped me protect myself and family from the virus"



Respondents were also asked to rate on a scale from 1.0 to 5.0 whether they felt that the people in their community respected the preventive measures against COVID-19 thus far. Overall data findings suggested that respondents perceived that their community overall respected the measures (3.8 out of 5.0 points).

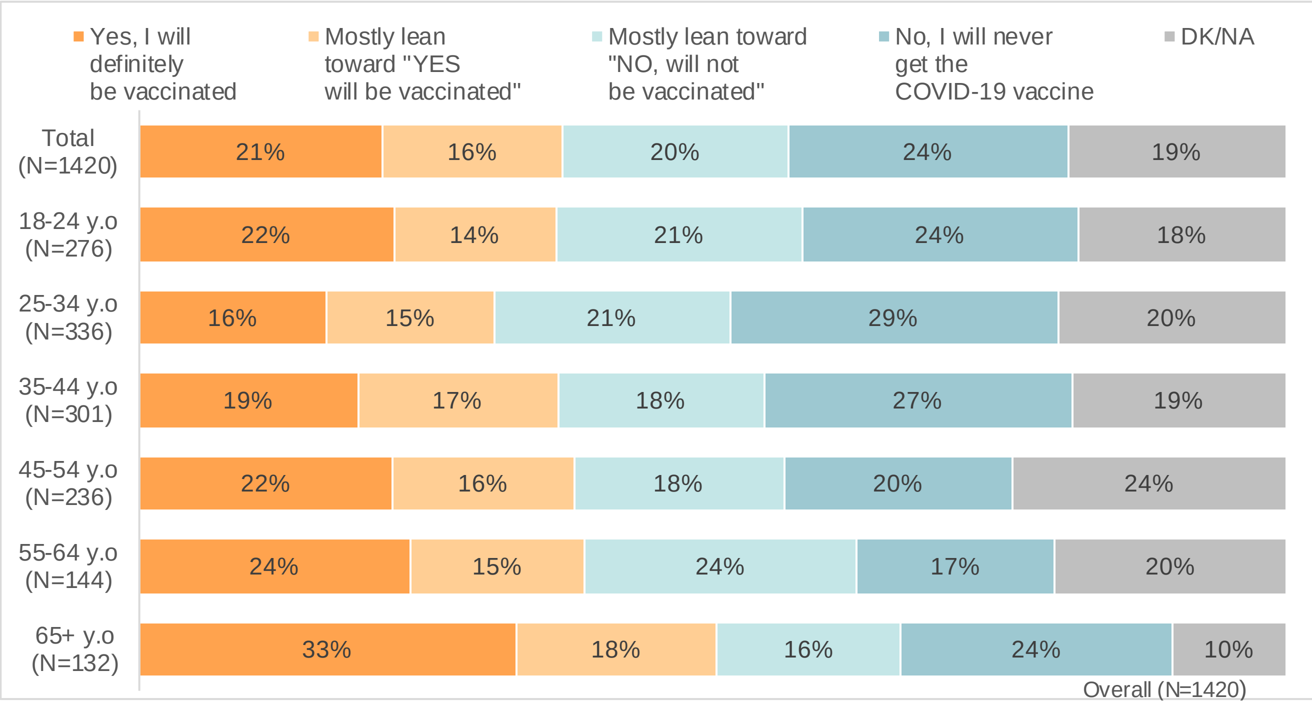
Figure 21 Agreement with: "People in my community respect preventive measures against COVID-19"



With the world racing to start the vaccination campaigns for COVID-19, a question was included in the survey to find out whether respondents would be willing to get vaccinated once vaccines are available. Overall, around one in four respondents stated that they would never consider getting the vaccine (24%), an additional 20% declared to lean towards not getting vaccinated. On the other hand, 21% declared to definitely get vaccinated and 16% stated to lean towards getting vaccinated. It should be noted that 19% did not know an answer to this question.

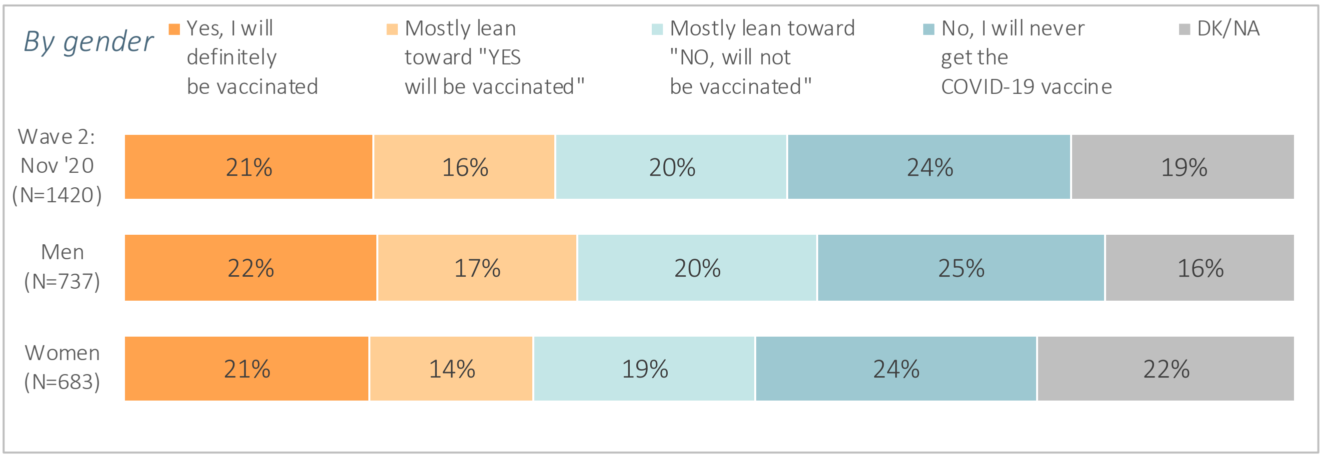
Taking a look at data results by age, it can be observed that respondents who were 65+ years old represented the group which were most inclined to get vaccinated, while those between the age of 25 to 34 were the least inclined. The age group 25 to 34 showed the highest negative response rate for this question (50%).

Figure 22 Readiness to get vaccinated for COVID-19, by age



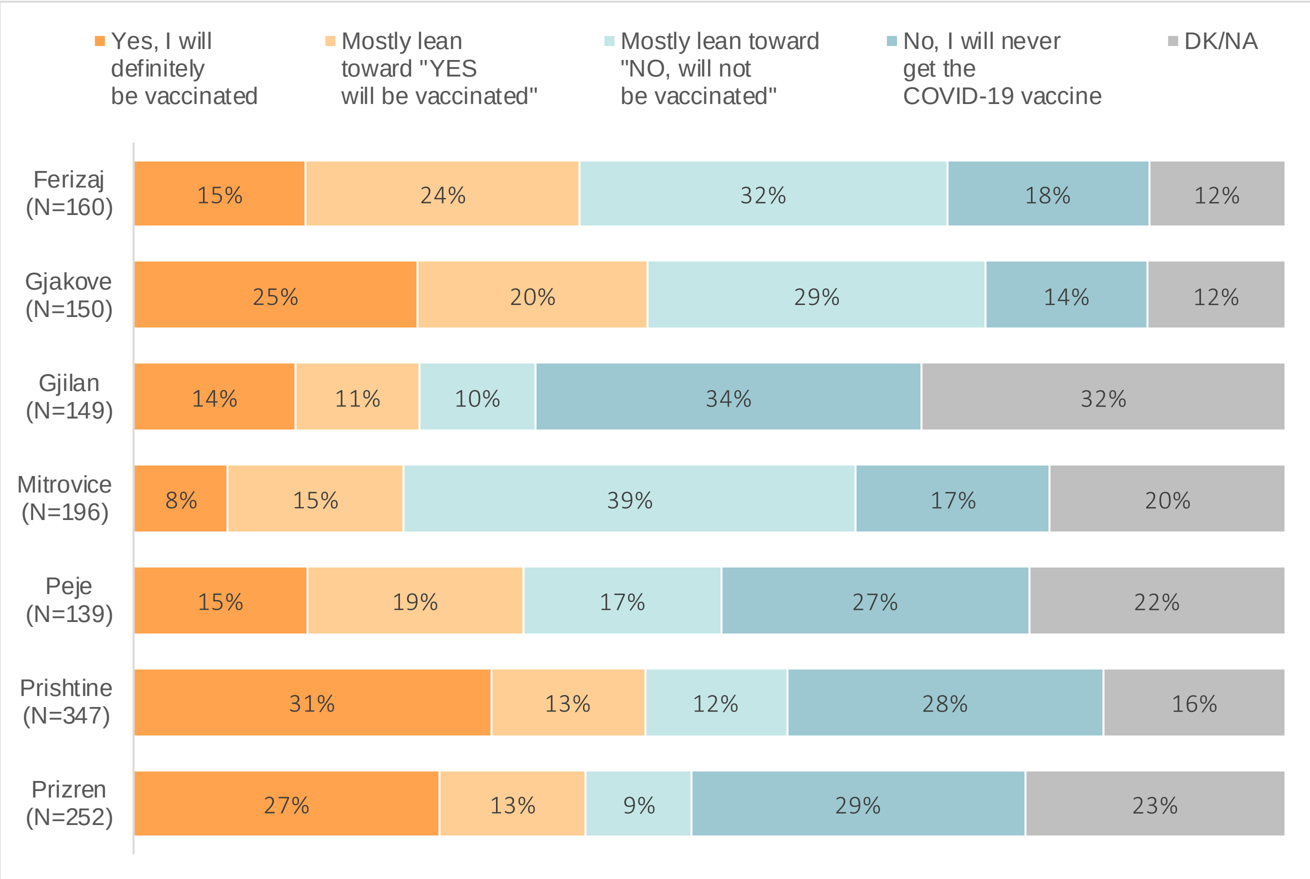
Men were more willing to get vaccinated if given the opportunity than women. About 39% of men and 35% of women would either definitely get vaccinated or mostly lean towards getting vaccinated. Forty-five percent of men either will not get vaccinated or lean towards not getting vaccinated compared to 33% of women. More women (22%) than men (16%) are not sure whether they would get vaccinated or not.

Figure 23 Readiness to get vaccinated for COVID-19, by gender



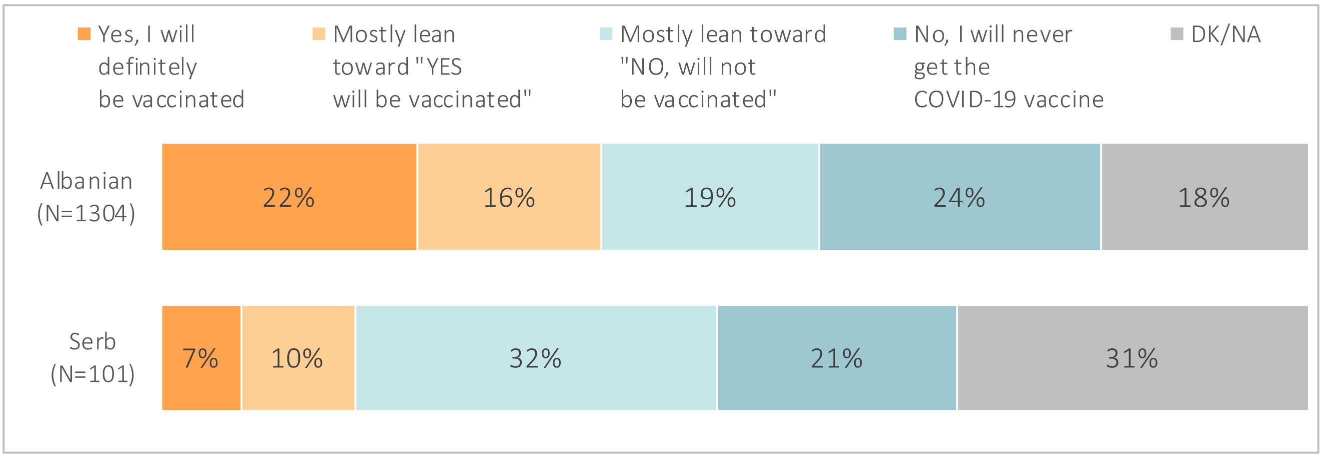
Respondents residing in the Gjakovë/Đakovica and Prishtinë/Priština regions showed the highest readiness of respondents who definitely will get vaccinated or leaned towards getting vaccinated (45% and 44% respectively). Conversely, in Gjilan/Gnjilane and Mitrovicë/Mitrovica only 24% and 23% respectively stated the same. The highest number of respondents who mostly leaned towards not getting vaccinated or declared they would never get the vaccine were from Mitrovicë/Mitrovica (39% and 17% respectively).

Figure 24 Readiness to get vaccinated for COVID-19, by region



Furthermore, when consulting data results pertaining to vaccination readiness disaggregated by ethnicity, it clearly stands out that K Albanian respondents were more likely to agree to receive the COVID-19 vaccine (22% would definitely get vaccinated, 16% lean towards getting vaccinated) than K Serb respondents. Only 7% of K Serbs plan to definitely get vaccinated, while 10% leaned towards that option. It should be however noted that nearly one third of K Serbs did not know an answer to this question (31%).

Figure 25 Readiness to get vaccinated for COVID-19, by ethnicity



3.1.3 Education/Distance Learning

Since September 2020 most children in Kosovo were attending school in-person again or were part of a rotation system. Before, Kosovo institutions were offering distance learning by transmitting it via the public broadcaster during the stricter lockdown period between March and May 2020. In this section respondents were asked whether their children still engage in distance learning or whether they are back to in-person education, and whether they were able to attend distance learning. The perceived quality of the distance learning is also assessed in this section among other aspects.

Out of the 1,425 respondents, 704 (49%) declared to have children that go to school. Nearly three in four children were attending school physically at the time of interview (72%). Around 20% were part of a rotation system and attended schools physically on some days, remotely on others. Only 8% in total studied entirely remotely in November 2020 (see Figure below).

Figure 26 Households with school aged children

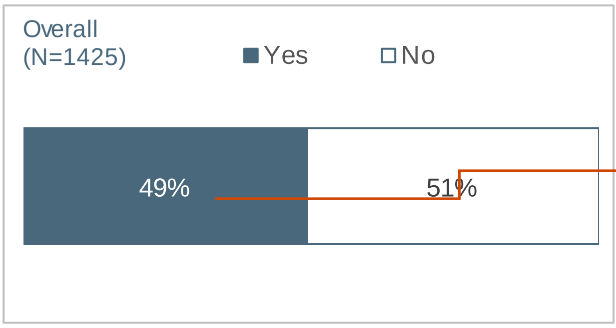
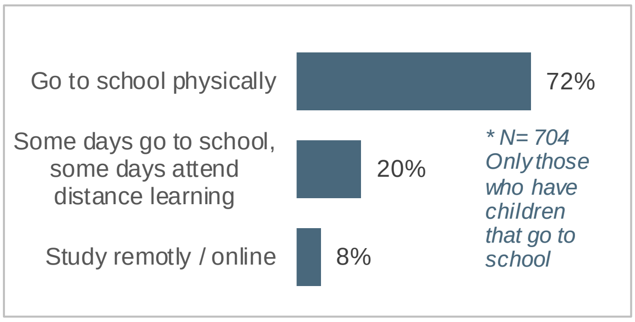
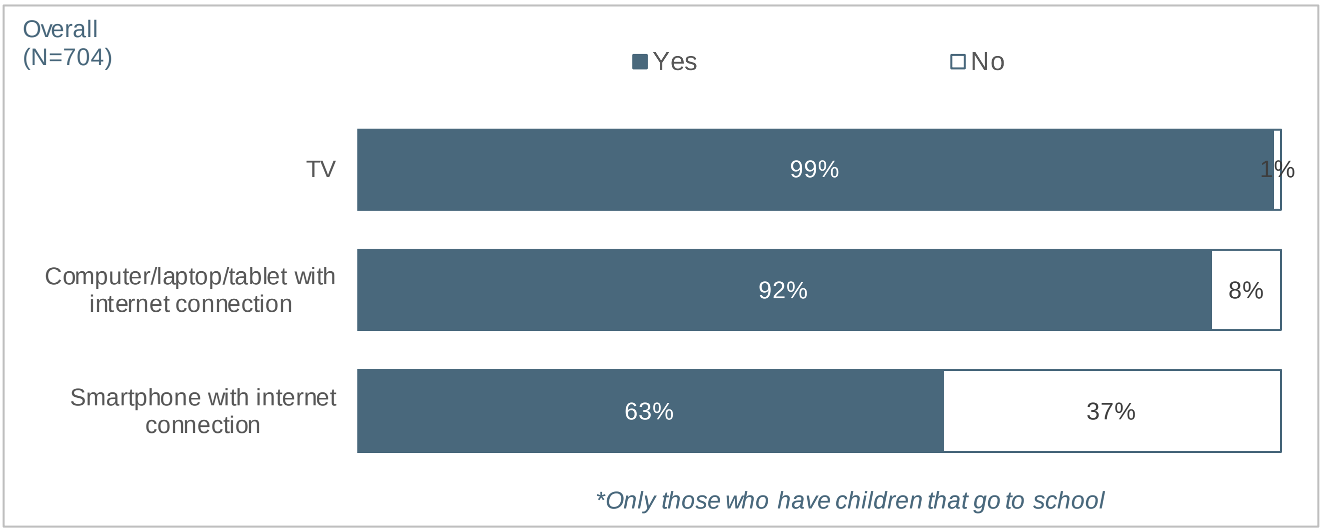


Figure 27 School attendance physical or remote



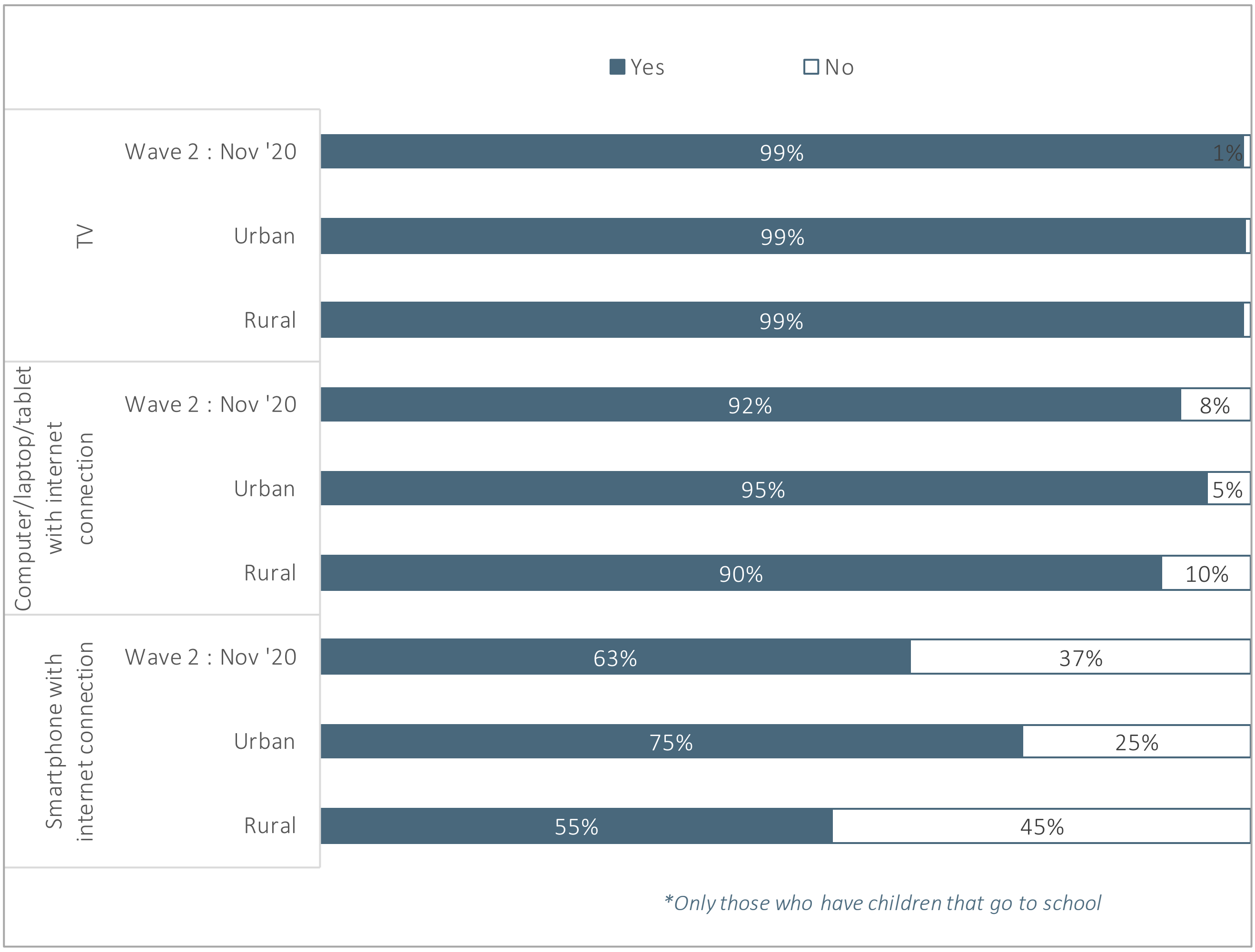
Respondents where next asked whether their household possessed technical equipment necessary for their child/children to follow a distance education program. Nearly all had a TV in their household (99%), while 92% had a computer/laptop or tablet with internet connection. Nearly two thirds also possessed a smart phone with access to internet (63%).

Figure 28 Possession of necessary technical equipment for children to be able to follow a distance education program



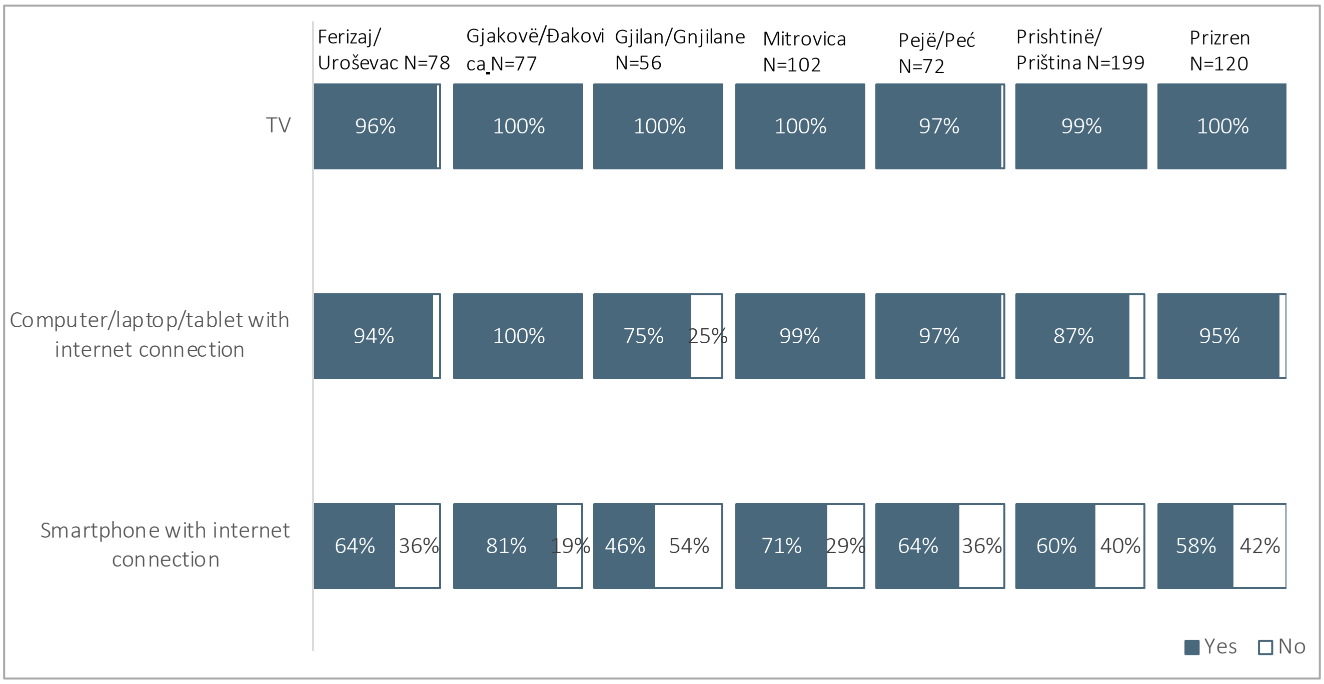
Ninety-nine percent of both urban and rural households had a television; whereas 95% of urban and 90% of rural households had either a computer, laptop, or tablet with internet connection. More difference is observed in terms of possessing a smartphone with internet connection where 75% of urban households declared to have one and only 55% of rural households declared the same (see figure below).

Figure 29 Possession of necessary technical equipment for children to be able to follow a distance education program, by urbanity



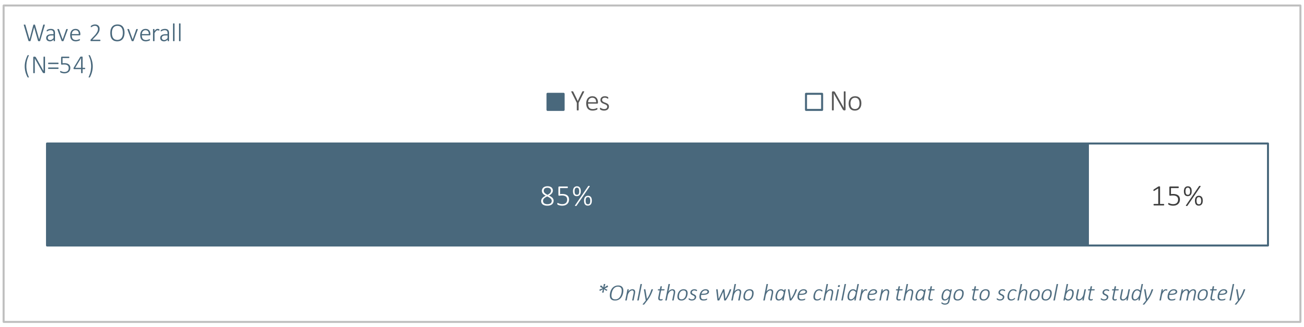
When looking at regional differences, all people in Gjakovë/Djakovica, Gjilan/Gnjilane, Mitrovica, and Prizren have a television. Whereas a few people in Ferizaj/Uroševac (4%), Pejë/Peć (3%), and Prishtinë/Priština (1%) do not have a TV. Respondents in Gjilan/Gnjilane have less computers, laptops, or tables with internet connection (only 75% of them), and in Prishtinë/Priština (87%). About 54% of households in Gjilan/Gnjilane, 42% in Prizren, 40% of Prishtinë/Priština households, and 36% of both Ferizaj/Uroševac, and Pejë/Peć households do not have smartphones with internet connection. Please note that these data are on a regional level so all urban and rural households are considered. The bigger the regions, thus seems that the higher the possibility that some households will lack technology especially smartphones with internet connection (see figure below).

Figure 30 Possession of necessary technical equipment for children to be able to follow a distance education program, by region



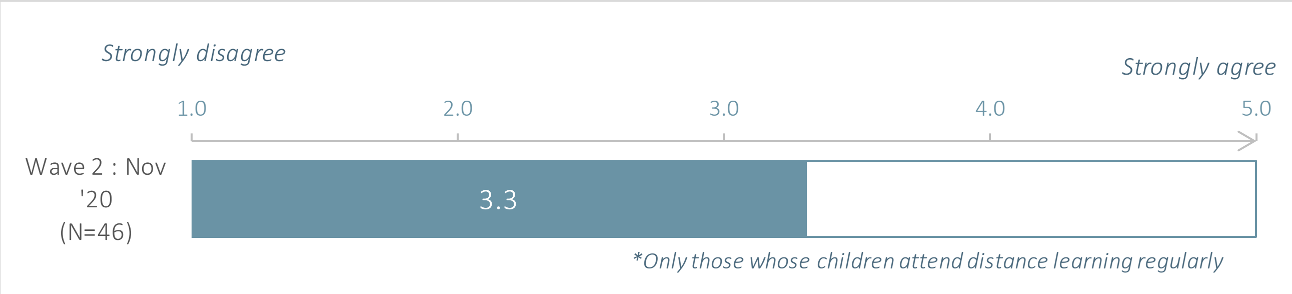
Those respondents who had children in their household still taking part in distance learning were also asked whether they were able to attend distance learning regularly. Only in eight cases (15%) children were unable to regularly follow the distance learning (indicative result only). The most common reason was that several children had to use the same equipment, or another household member needed to use the equipment for remote work.

Figure 31 Child / Children was able to attend distance learning regularly



On a scale from 1.0 to 5.0 the respondents that have children regularly attending distance learning rated the quality of the distancing learning with 3.3 points which translates into a neutral evaluation.

Figure 32 Agreement with “The quality of the education offered through distance learning was good”



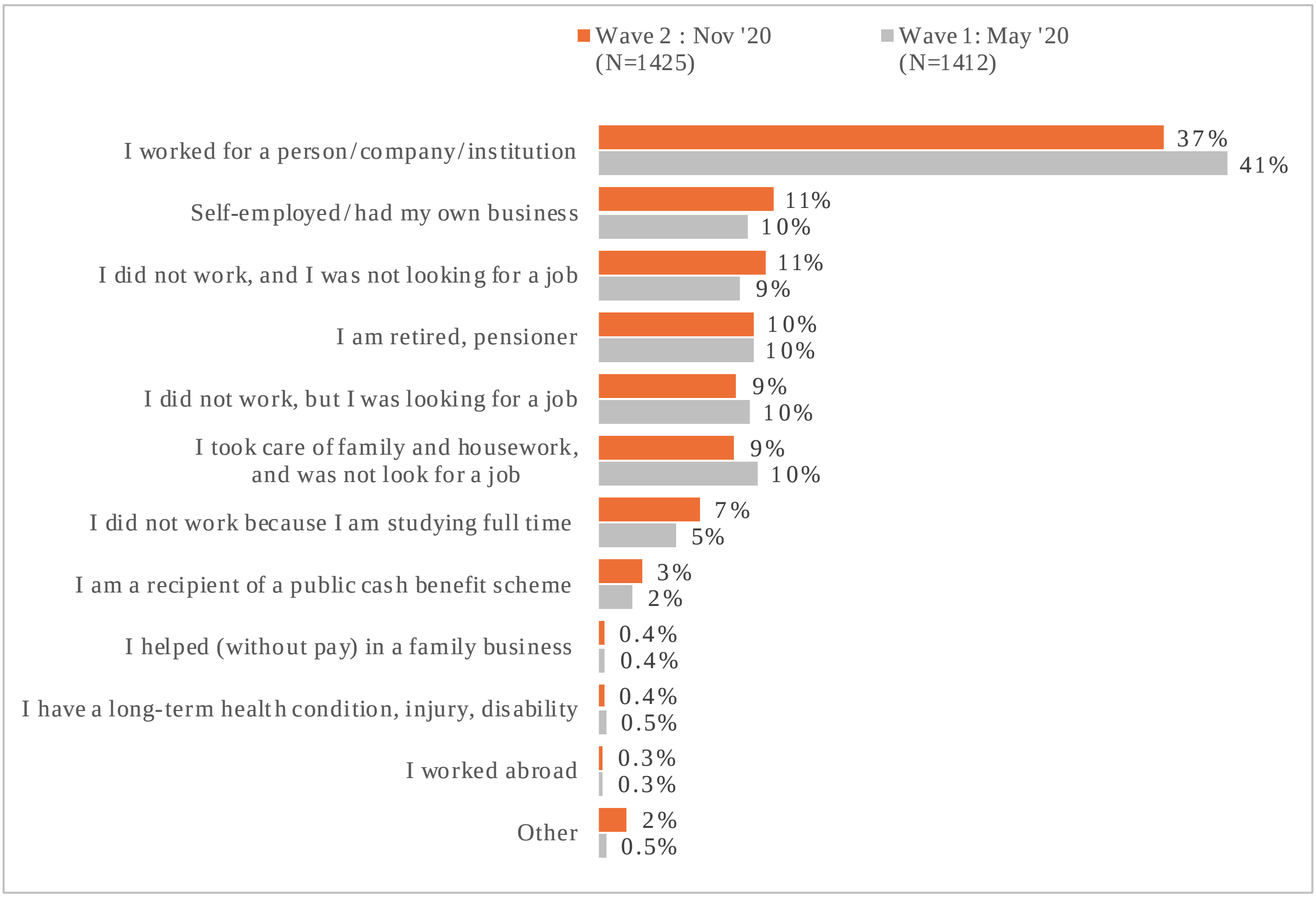
3.1.4 Employment and Livelihood

This section examines how the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced the employment and livelihood of the respondents. It compares inter alia changes related to employment status and type, change in working hours, payments and leave days.

Nearly two in five respondents reported to have been employed and either worked for a person, company or institution prior to the pandemic (37%). In addition, another 11% of the respondents were self-employed. Whereas, 11% of the respondents were unemployed without actively seeking a job, 9% of them were unemployed but looking for a job, and 9% were responsible for taking care of the family and household duties and thus did not look for employment. Ten percent of the respondents declared to be retired.

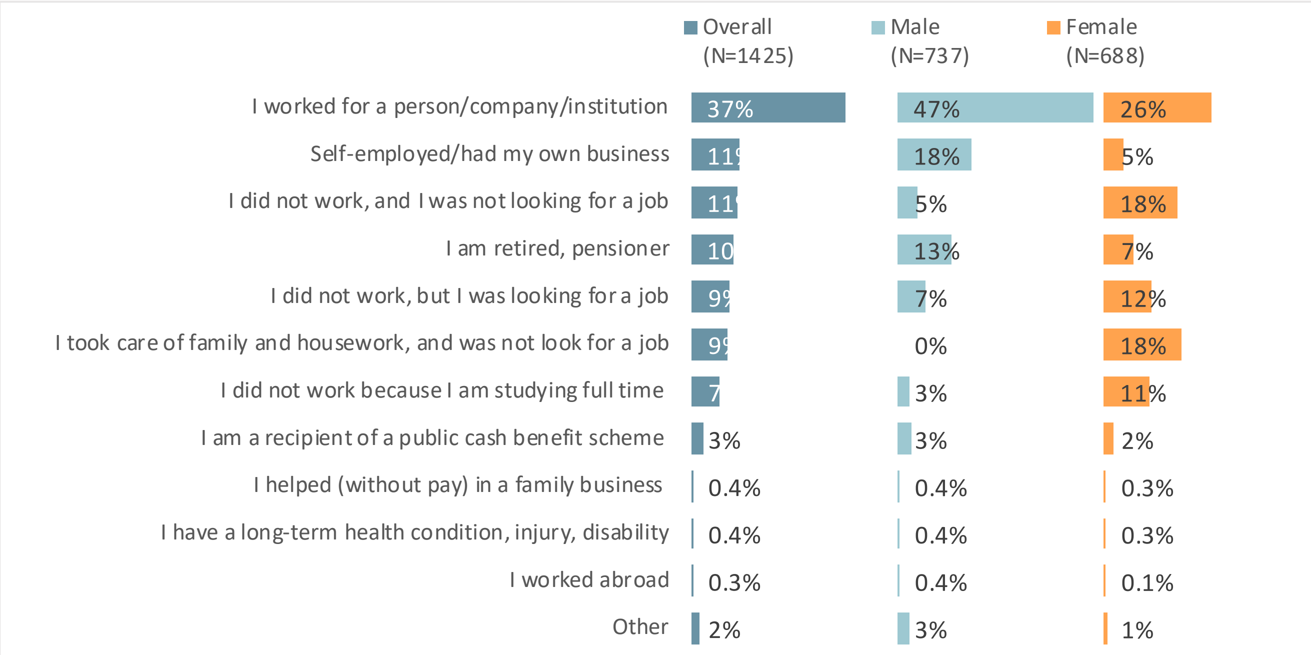
The difference in employment status between wave 1 and wave 2 is small, within the margin of error of 4%, where for most statuses there’s a 1% difference between the two waves.

Figure 33 Employment status before COVID-19, wave 1 vs. wave 2



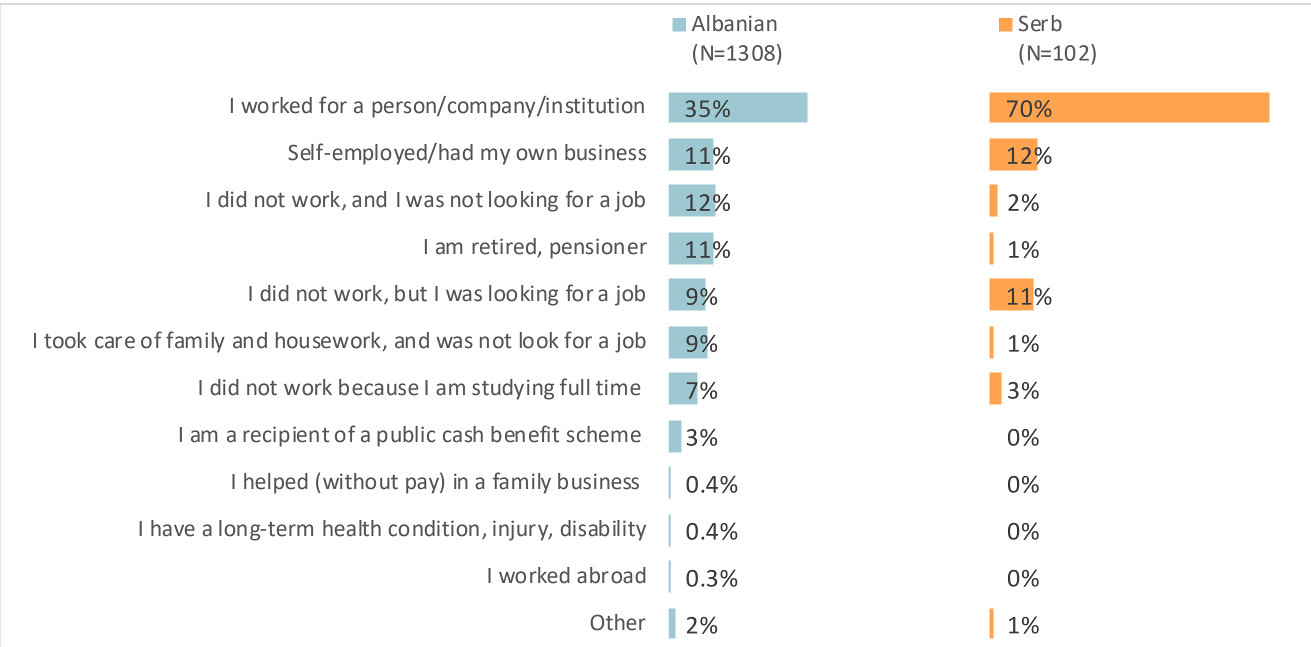
When assessing the employment status before COVID-19 divided by gender, it stood out that 48% of the women did not work, out of these 12% were looking for a job. In comparison, only 12% of men were not working, out of these 7% were searching for a job. Furthermore, none of the men stated to take care of household duties while not looking for employment, compared to 18% of women who did.

Figure 34 Employment status before COVID-19, by gender



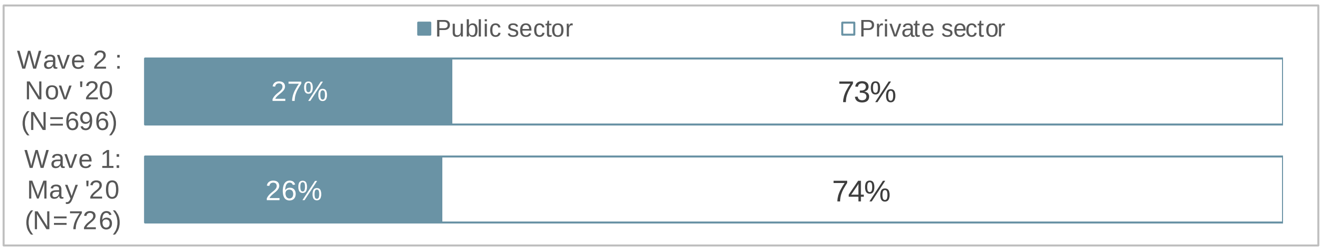
Data findings disaggregated by ethnicity suggested that significantly higher percentage of K Serb respondents were working for a person, company or institution prior COVID-19 (70%) than K Albanian respondents (35%). A higher proportion of K Albanian respondents declared to be unemployed while not looking for work (12%) than K Serb respondents (2%).

Figure 35 Employment status before COVID-19, by ethnicity



Prior to the COVID-19 emergence, nearly three in four respondents were working for the private sector (73%), while 27% worked for the public sector. These findings are in line with previous ones gathered during wave one of the SEIA.

Figure 36 Employment sector before COVID-19, wave 1 vs wave 2



K Serb respondents held a much higher share of employment in the public sector (73%) than K Albanian respondents (21%). Subsequently, data shows the highest share of respondents employed in the public sector in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica (50%) where most K Serbs reside. Nearly one third of respondents from the region of Gjilan/Gnjilane were also employed in the public sector. Lowest public sector employment was observed in Gjakovë/Đakovica.

Figure 37 Employment sector before COVID-19, by ethnicity

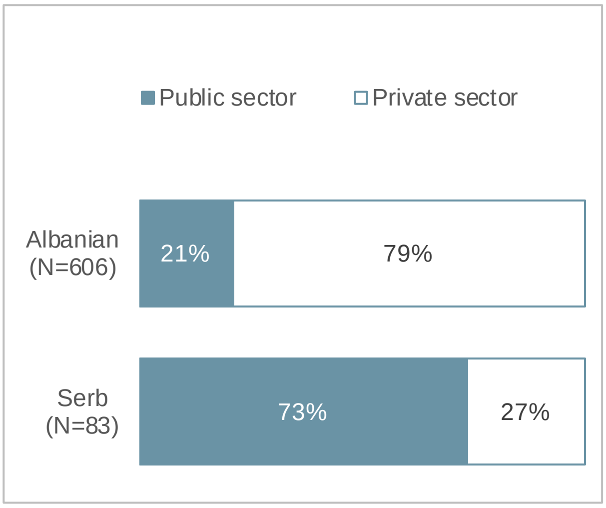
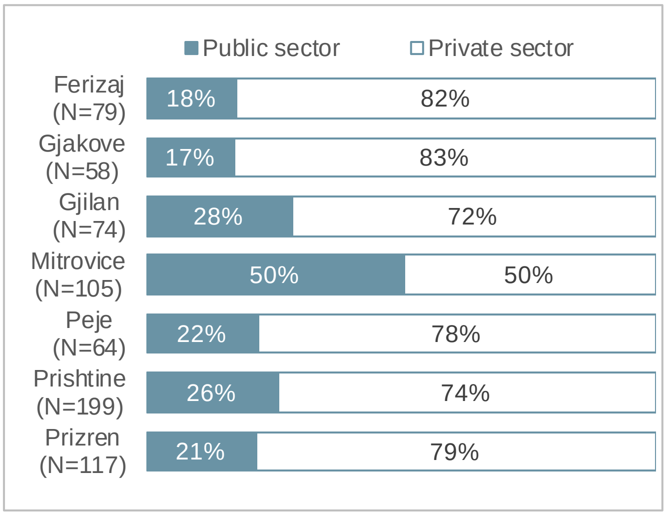


Figure 38 Employment sector before COVID-19, by region

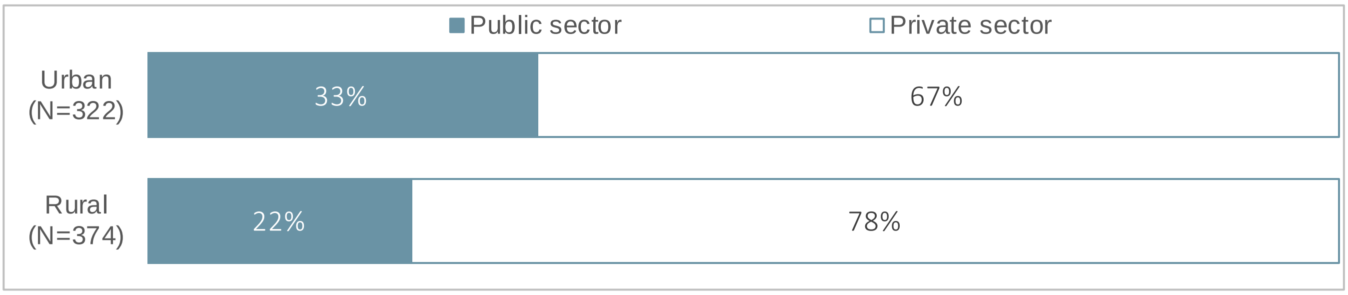


Nearly one in three women were employed in the public sector (31%), while 25% of men also worked in the public sector.

Figure 39 Employment sector before COVID-19, by gender

Respondents from urban areas were more commonly employed in the public sector (33%), than those that resided in rural areas (22%).

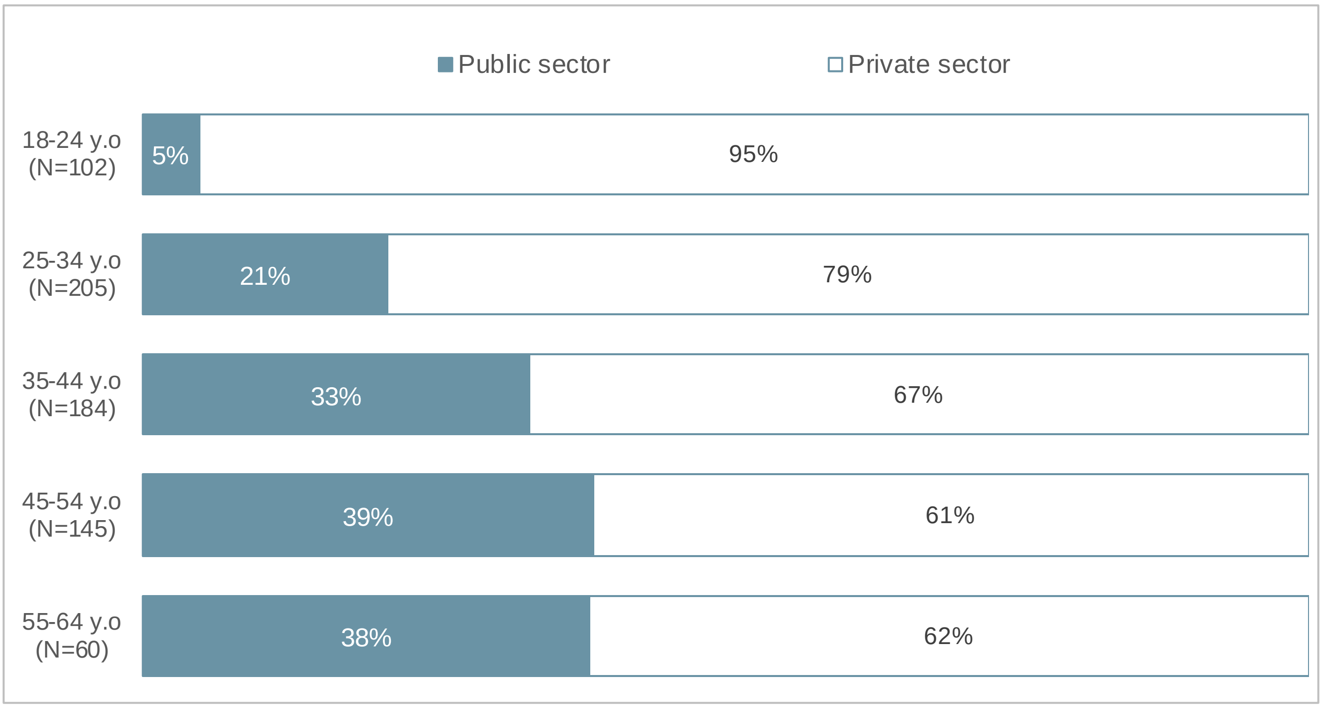
Figure 40 Employment sector before COVID-19, by urbanity



Data results further revealed that younger respondents were significantly more likely to work within the private sector than older ones. The great majority of 18-24-year-old respondents worked in the private sector (95%), as well as 79% of those within the age group of 25 to 34 years old.

More than one in three respondents above the age of 35 declared to have worked in the public sector.

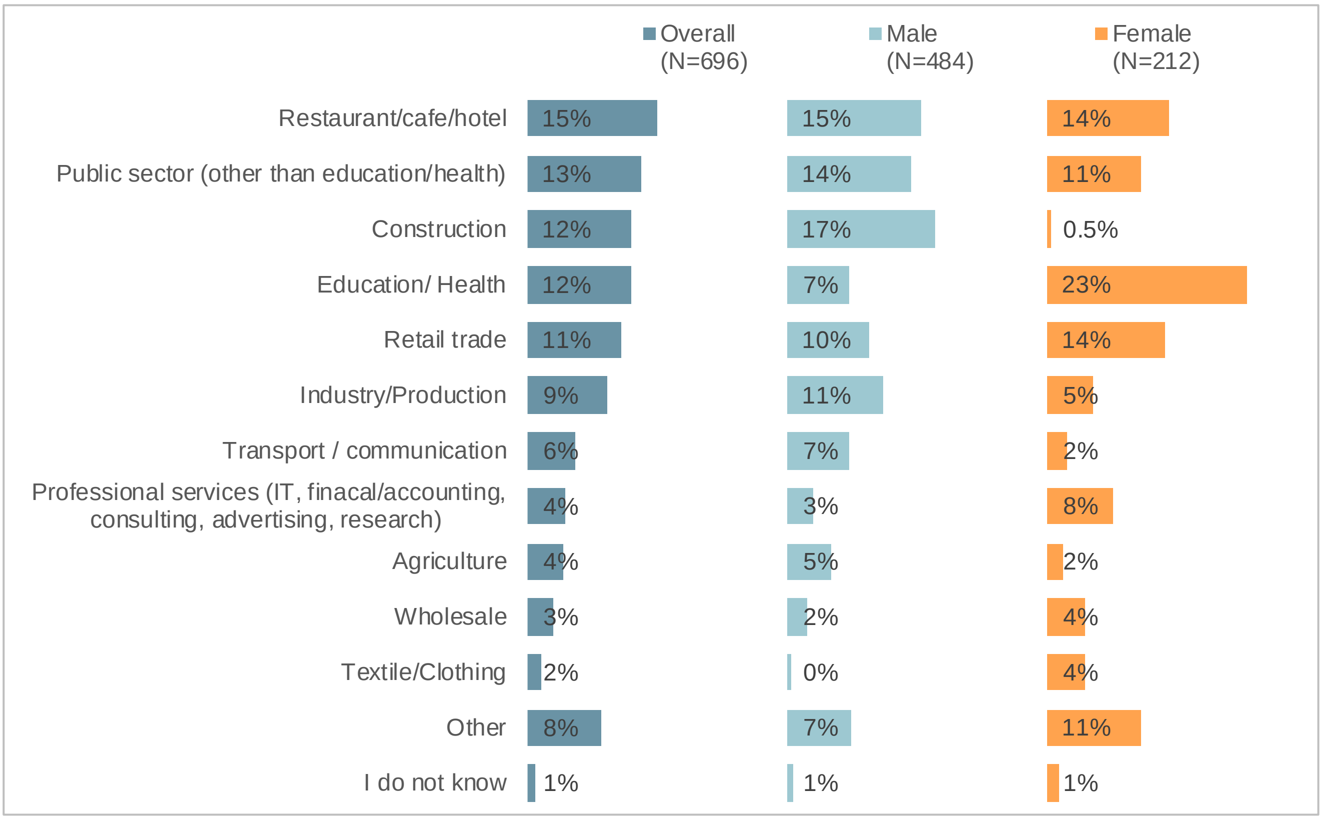
Figure 41 Employment sector before COVID-19, by age



Restaurants, cafes and hotels employed 15% of all respondents that were working prior to the outbreak of COVID-19, while 13% were employed in the public sector and 12% each were engaged in construction or education/health. Another 11% were employed in the retail trade.

Data results pertaining to different business activities disaggregated by gender show that women were significantly more present in education and health (23%) than men (7%). Construction still holds the highest share of men (17%), while only 0.5% of women declared to have worked within this business activity. Women also presented a higher share of being employed in retail trade (14%) than men (10%).

Figure 42 Employment by business activity before COVID-19, by gender

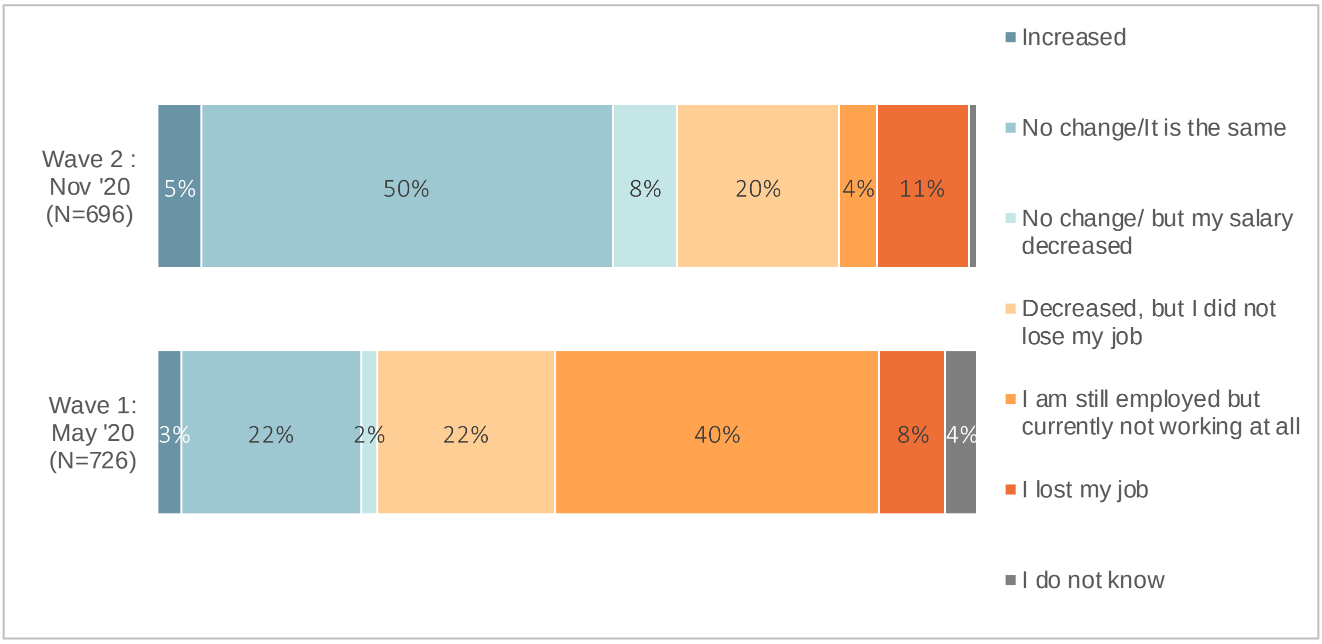


The questions posed regarding employment type, sector and within which business activities pertained to the time period of at least one week prior to the outbreak of COVID-19. Next respondents were asked about their changes in working hours due to, and since, the pandemic.

Half of all respondents declared that they did not experience differences in their working hours (50%) since the begin of the pandemic, compared to wave 1 of the assessment, where only 22% reported no variation in working hours since the begin of the pandemic. Two in ten respondents experienced decreased working hours without losing their job (20%), while 11% reported that they lost their work (only 8% reported the loss of employment during wave 1 of the SEIA).

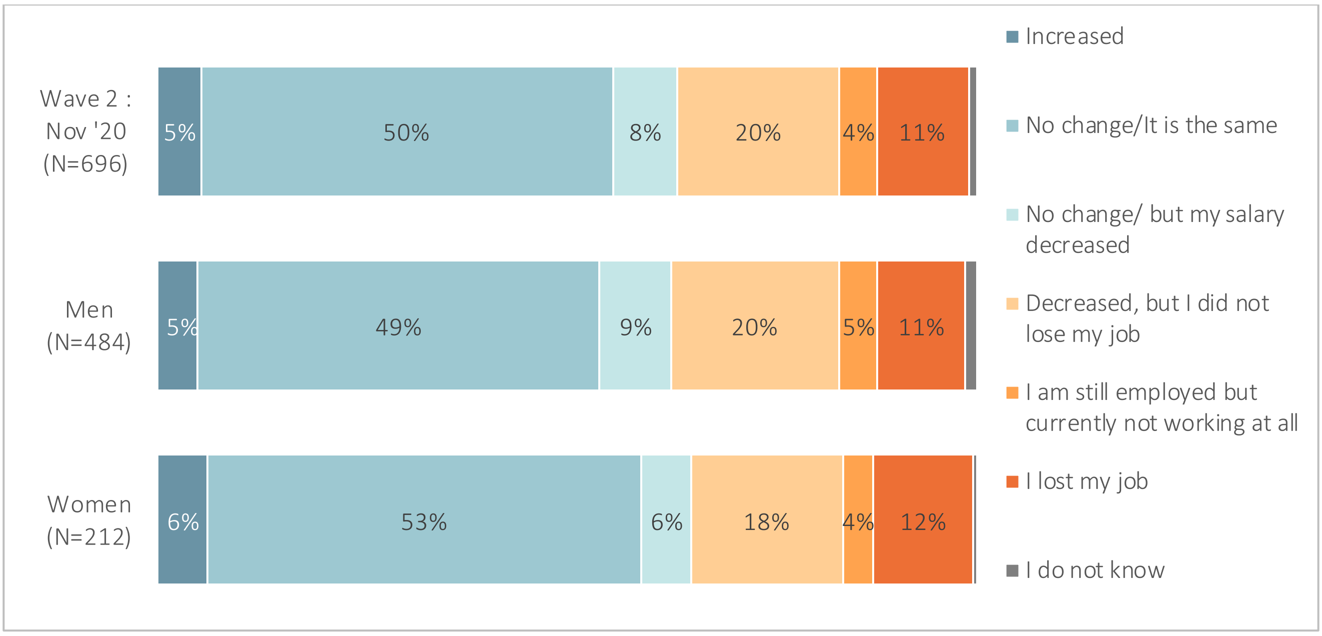
In November 2020, about 4% stated that they remained employed without conducting any work. In comparison, in May 2020, 40% reported to have remained employed without engaging in any work. The lifting of the strict lockdown phase in Kosovo and the gradual reopening of the society in June 2020 support these findings.

Figure 43 Changes in hours devoted to work as compared to the pre-COVID-19 situation, wave 1 vs wave 2



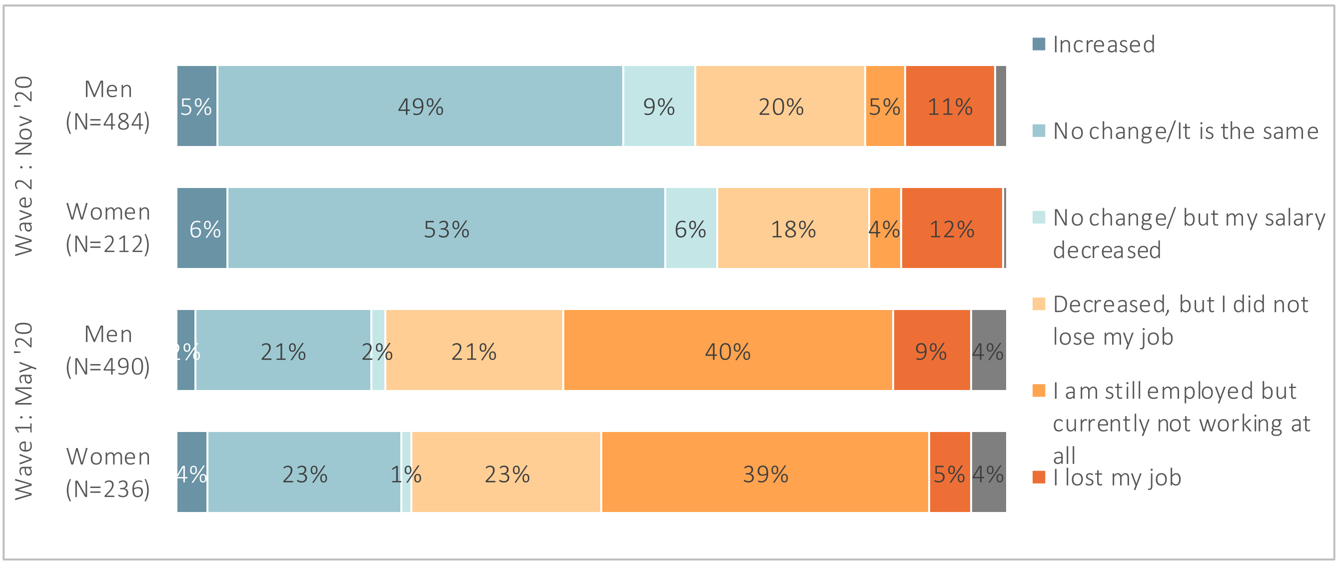
The majority of women reported no change in hours devoted to work as compared to the pre-COVID-19 situation (53%), while 49% of men also reported no change. Slightly more men declared that their working hours did not change, however, the salary of a few more of them had decreased (9%) compared to women (6%). Around 20% of men and 18% of women stated that their working hours decreased, but that they did not lose their jobs. Few of the men (5%) and women (4%) were employed, but were not working at the moment. There was no significant difference between the share of men and women who had lost their jobs (12% women, 11% men).

Figure 44 Changes in hours devoted to work as compared to the pre-COVID-19 situation, by gender



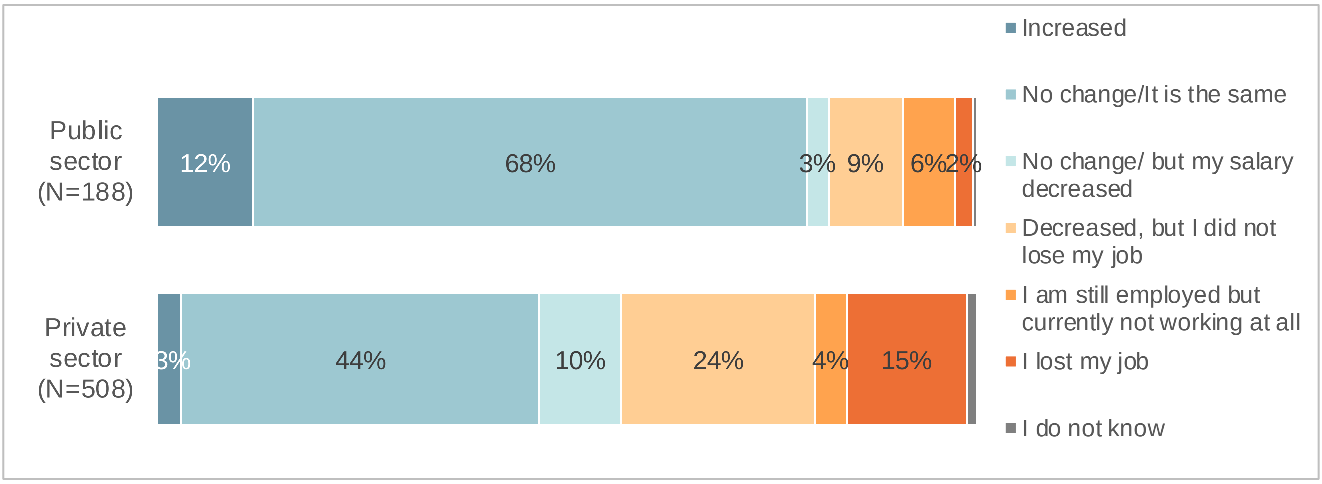
When comparing the above gender disaggregated findings with the gender disaggregation of wave 1 it can be observed that considerably more women had lost their job in November 2020 (12%) compared to May 2020 (5%). More men also lost their work in November 2020, however, the increase amounted to only 2pp while the increase for women stood at 7pp. In May 2020 significantly more women were employed while not engaging in any work (39%) when compared to November 2020 (4%), the same applies for men. Slightly fewer women (18%) and men (20%) reported decreased hours without losing work in November 2020 compared to the results of May 2020 (23% and 21% respectively). While only 23% and 21% of women and men respectively reported no change in working hours in May 2020, those percentages rose to 53% and 49% respectively.

Figure 45 Changes in hours devoted to work as compared to the pre-COVID-19 situation, by gender and wave 1 vs wave 2



More than two thirds of those respondents engaged in the public sector reported no change in working hours due to the COVID-19 pandemic (68%), compared to 44% who worked for the private sector. Decrease in working hours were more pronounced in the private sector (24%) than in the public sector (9%). The private sector also recorded significantly higher levels of employment loss (15%) than in the public sector (2%).

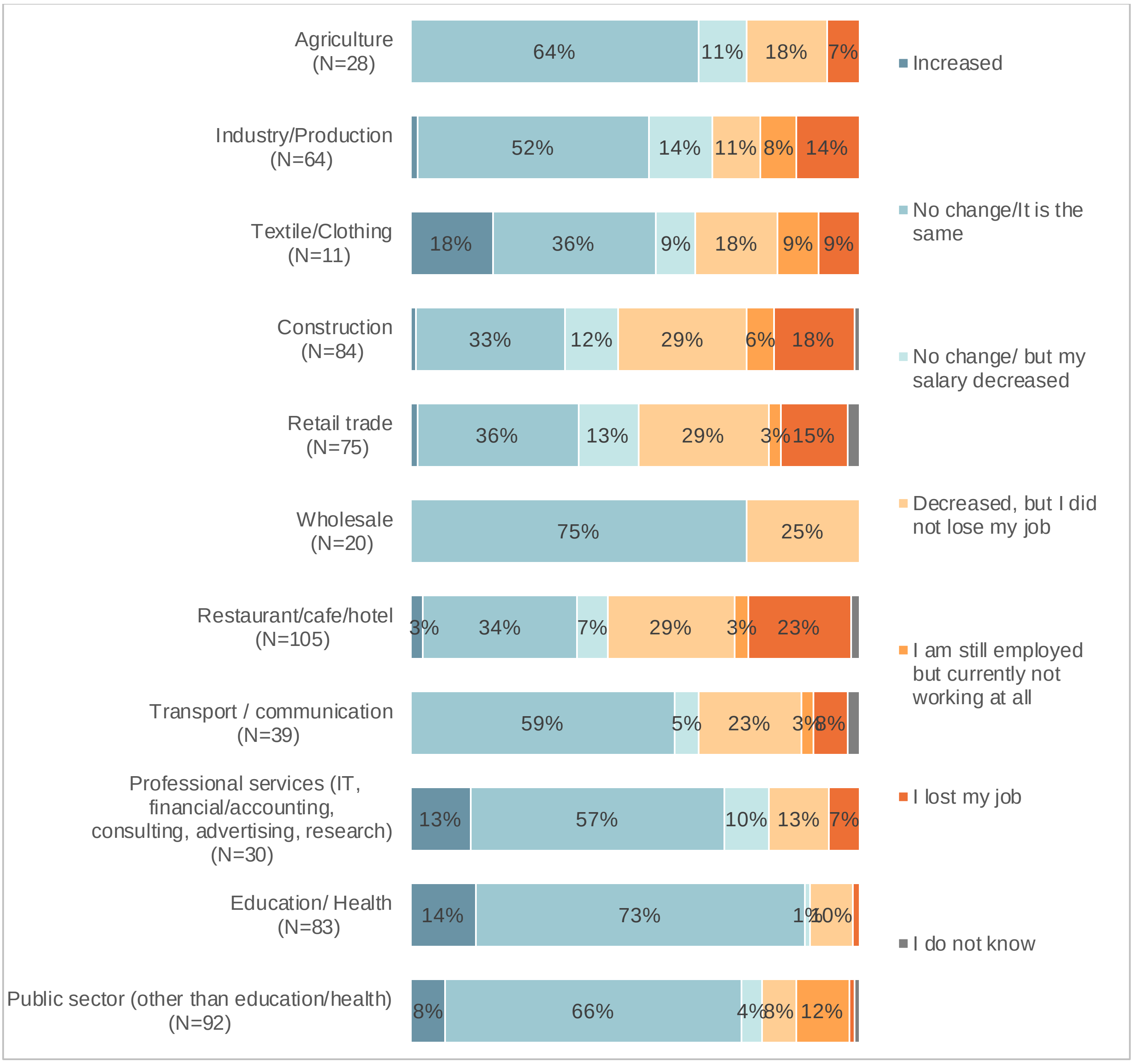
Figure 46 Changes in hours devoted to work due to COVID-19 pandemic, by employment sector



COVID-19 has had varying impacts on employment within different business activities. Examples of business activities which did not face high levels of decreased hours or job loss are professional services, education/health, the public sector, wholesale and agriculture.

On the other hand, respondents that worked in restaurants, cafes and hotels were most likely to have lost their job (23%), followed by construction workers (18%) and those engaged in retail trade (15%). Respondents engaged with textile/clothing (18%), professional services (13%) and education/health (14%) more commonly reported increased working hours than others.

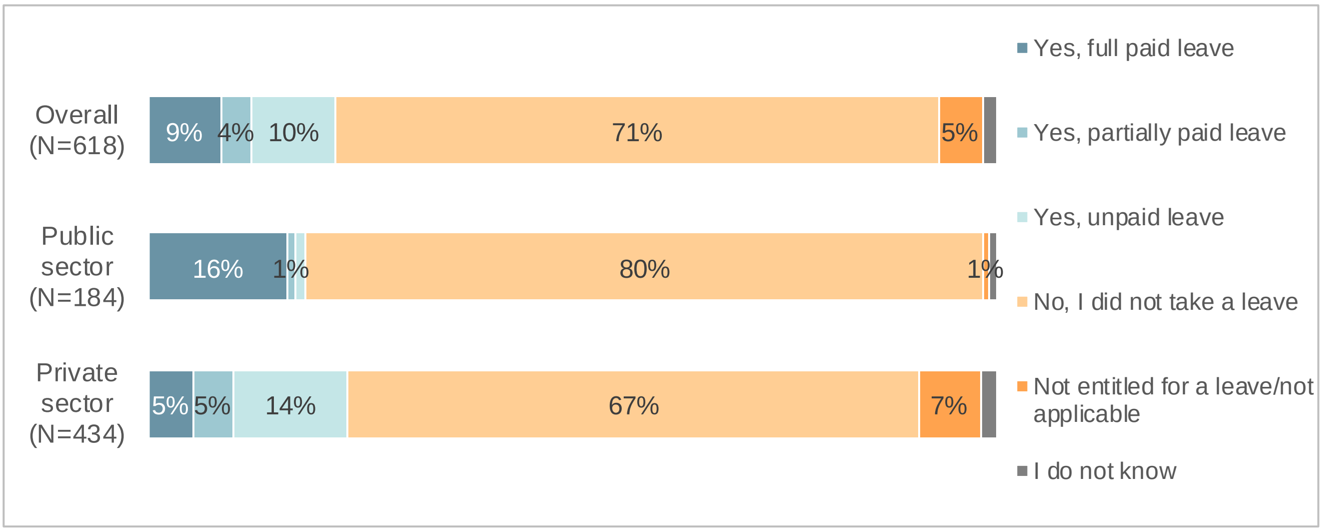
Figure 47 Changes in hours devoted to work due to COVID-19 pandemic, by business activity



In order to further assess different coping mechanisms used by institutions and companies, the survey asked next whether the respondents were obligated to take leave due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

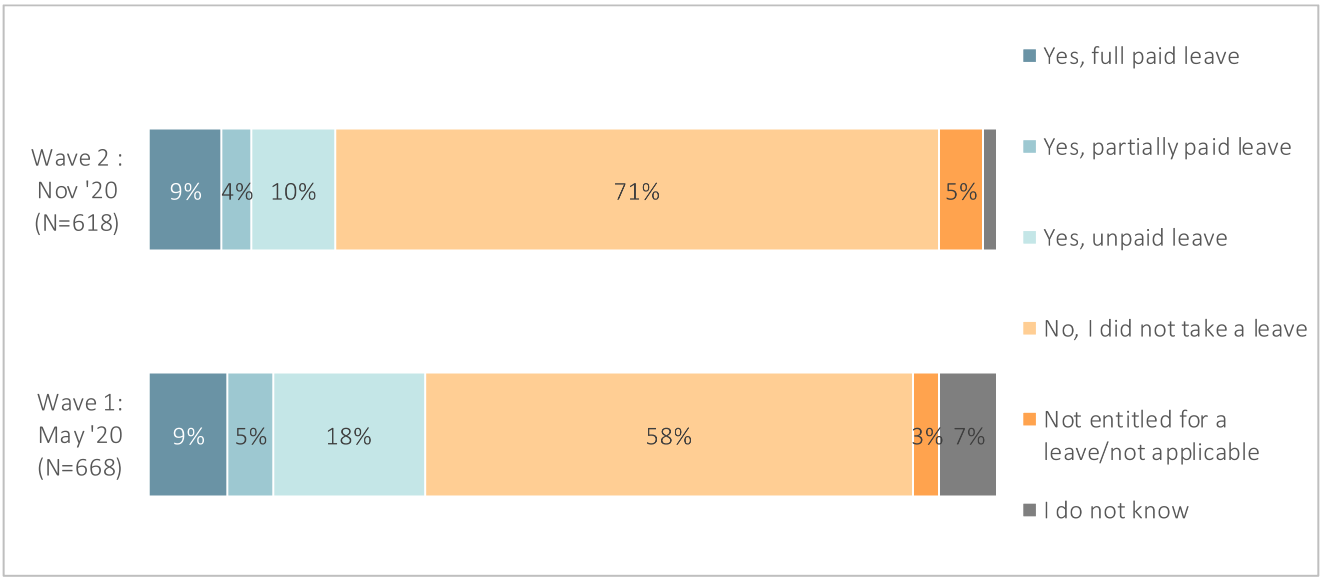
Almost three in four respondents reported that they were not forced to take any leave (71%), 10% had to take unpaid leave and 9% were asked to take paid leave. Only 4% had to take partially paid leave. Public sector employees were considerably more likely to have taken paid leave (16%) than those engaged in the private sector (5%). Around 14% of the respondents who worked in the private sector were asked to take unpaid leave, compared to only 1% in the public sector.

Figure 48 Imposition to take leave due to the pandemic, by sector



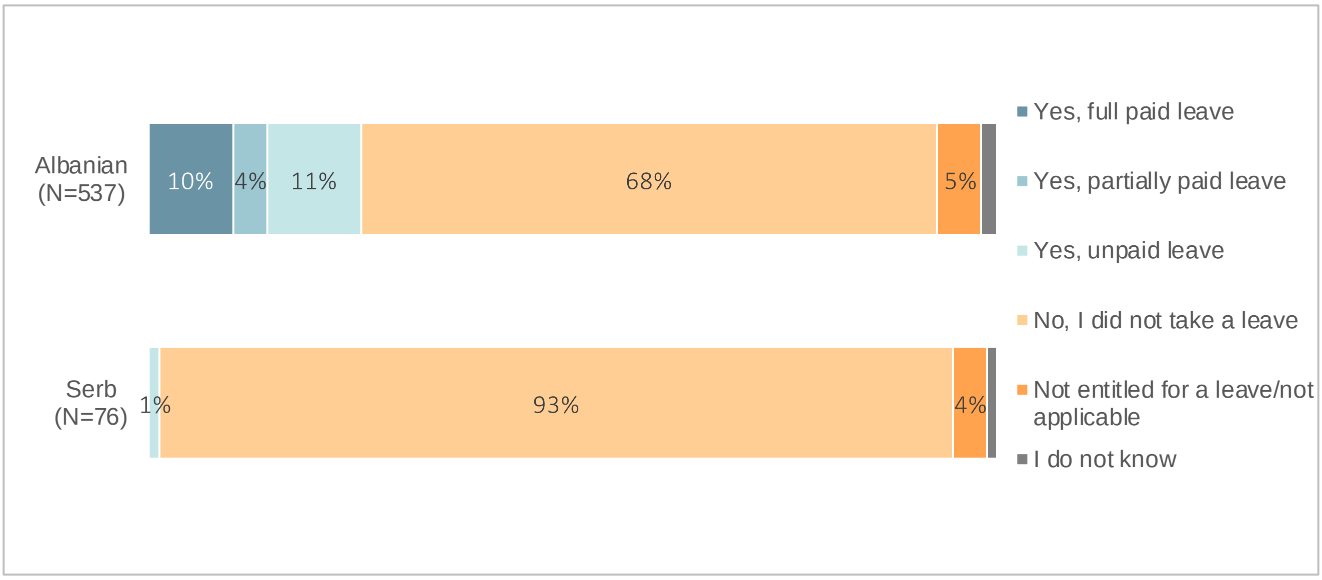
During the wave 1 of the SEIA more respondents had reported to have taken unpaid leave (18%) compared to wave 2 (10%). While 71% reported in November that they did not take any leave, only 58% had stated the same in May 2020.

Figure 49 Imposition to take leave due to the pandemic, wave 1 vs wave 2



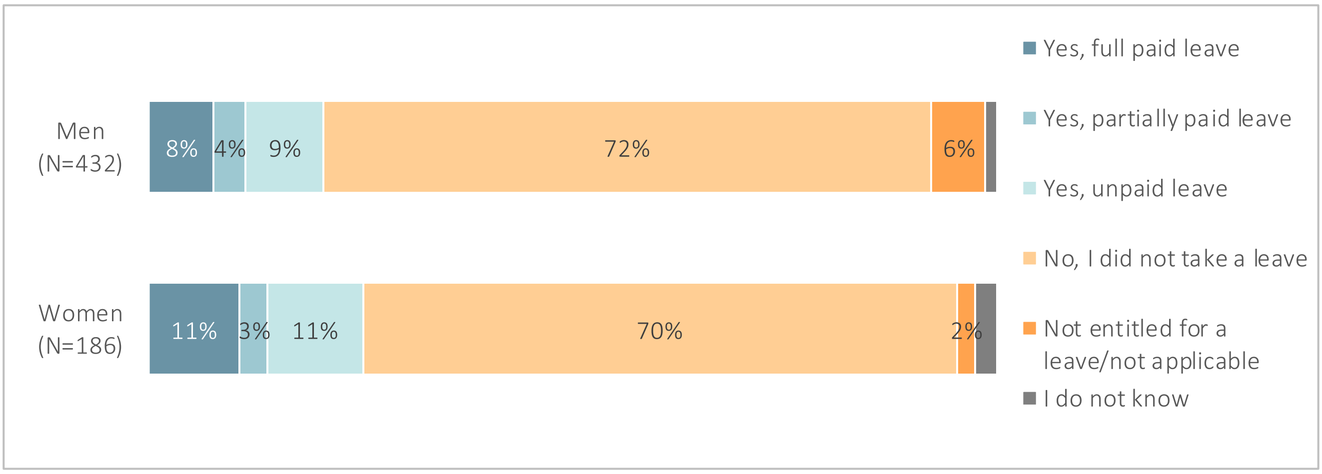
When analysing data disaggregated by ethnicity it becomes clear that nearly all K Serb respondents were not obligated to take any leave (93%), while only 68% of the K Albanian respondents reported the same.

Figure 50 Imposition to take leave due to the pandemic, by ethnicity



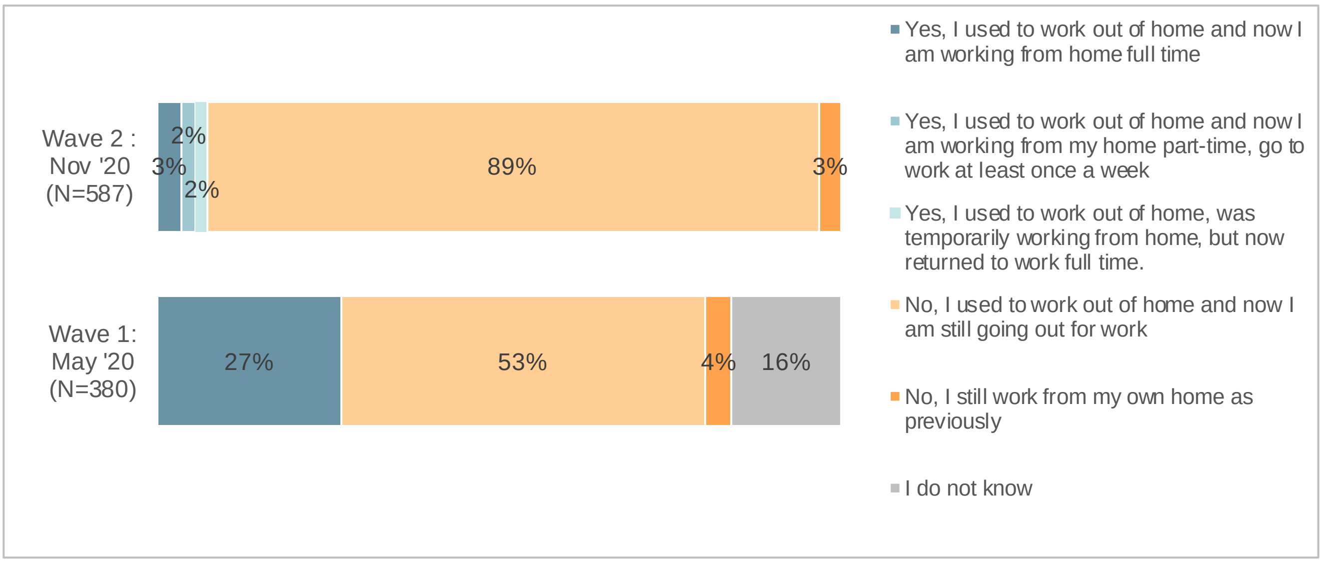
Most men (72%) and women (70%) did not take a leave by imposition. Eleven percent of women took unpaid leave while only 9% of men did. The same portion of women took a fully paid leave and 8% of men did the same. Whereas, although in small portions, more men (4%) than women (3%) took partially paid leaves.

Figure 51 Imposition to take leave due to the pandemic, by gender



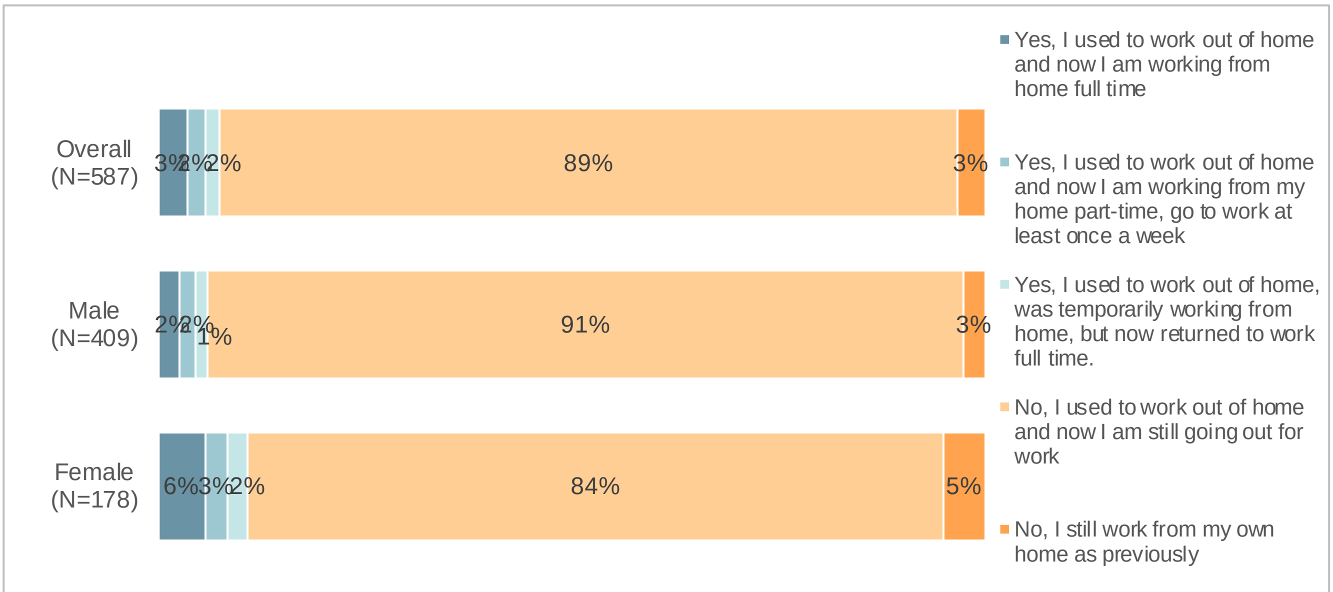
Next, respondents were asked whether their typical place of work changed since the pandemic emerged. Data indicates the overwhelming majority of people to have returned to work. Overall, 89% declared that no change occurred and the work still takes place outside of their home. While 27% reported to fully work from home in May 2020[11], only 3% reported the same in November.

Figure 52 Changes in typical place of work, wave 2 vs wave 1



Slightly more women declared that they used to work outside of their homes, but now work from home full time (6%) compared to the men (2%).

Figure 53 Changes in typical place of work, by gender

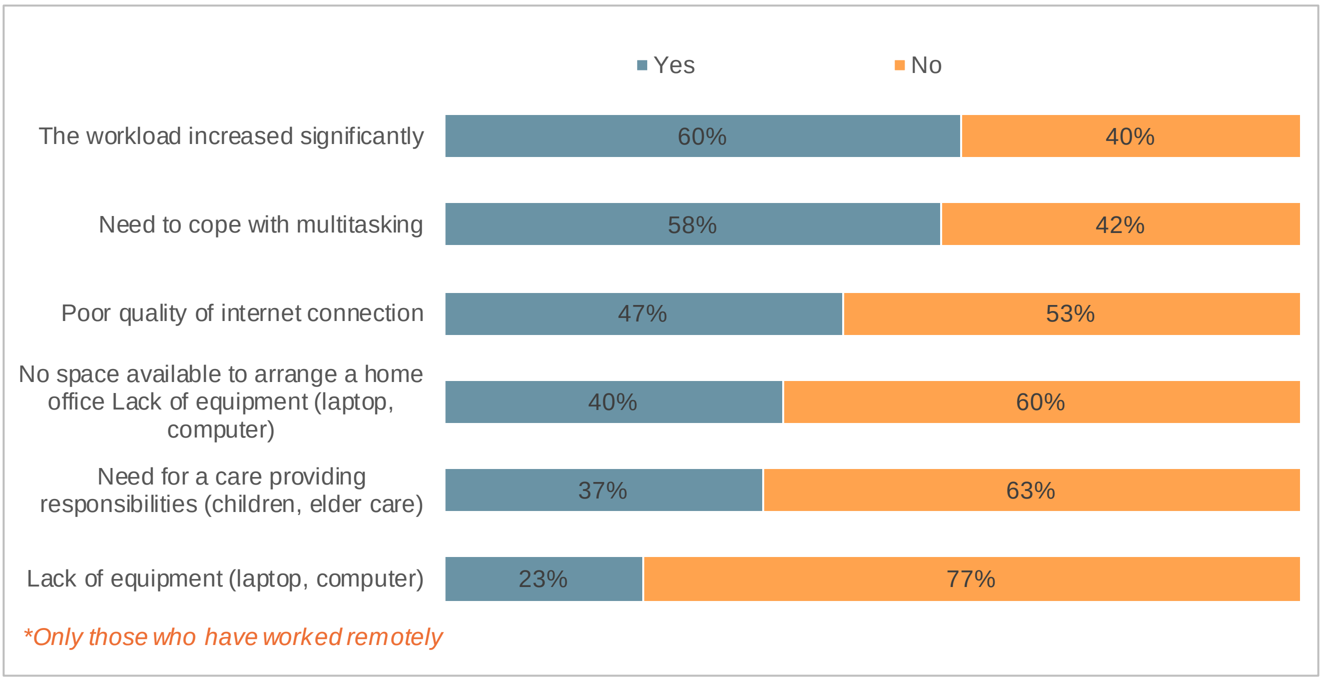


*Only those who were employed before the spread of Covid-19 ,have not lost their job and are currently working

[11] *Please note that during wave 1 this question had only four response options.*

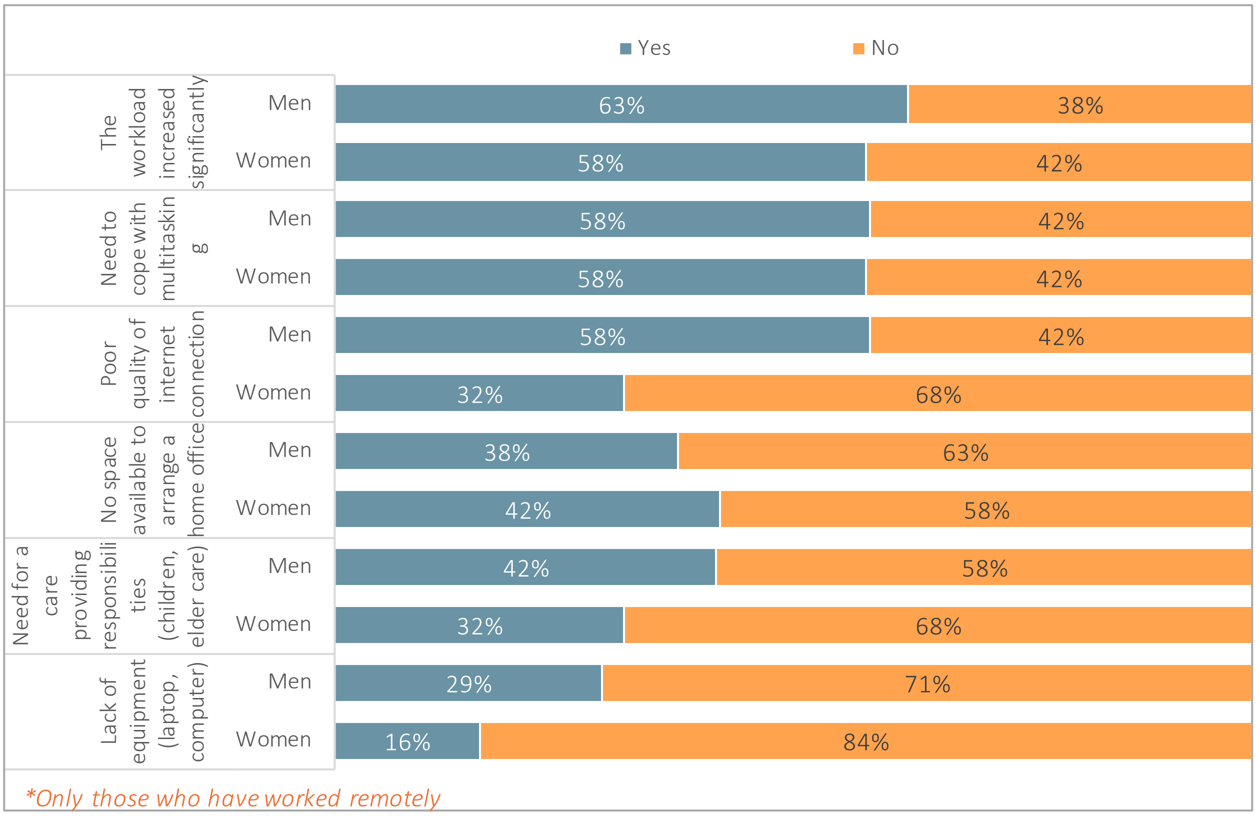
Significant increase in workload and having to cope with multitasking stand out as challenges experienced by more than half of the respondents who work remotely (60% and 58% respectively). Poor quality of internet connection (47%) and lack of space to arrange a home office space (40%) appear to also have been prominent challenges.

Figure 54 Challenges of working remotely



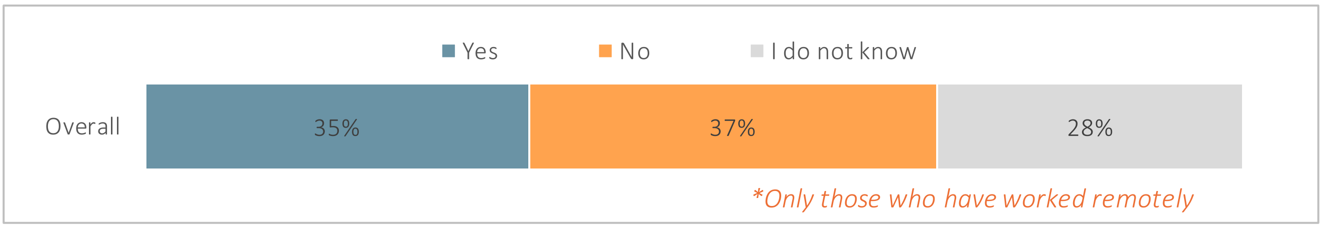
The sample for those who worked remotely in this survey is small therefore results on gender are interpreted as indicative only. Both men and women have a substantial increased workload, although 63% of men report that to be a challenge compared to 58% of women. A quite higher number of men (58%) found poor internet connection as an issue while only 32% considered that a problem. On the other hand, more women (42%) expressed that they lack available space to arrange home office than men (38%). Men (42%) also seemed to feel as though their care providing responsibilities within the household presented a challenge while working remotely quite more than for women (32%). These results albeit indicative reflect the separation of gender roles in terms of responsibilities and available sources within a household or at work that have been perpetuated and are still prevalent in the society.

Figure 55 Challenges of working remotely, by gender



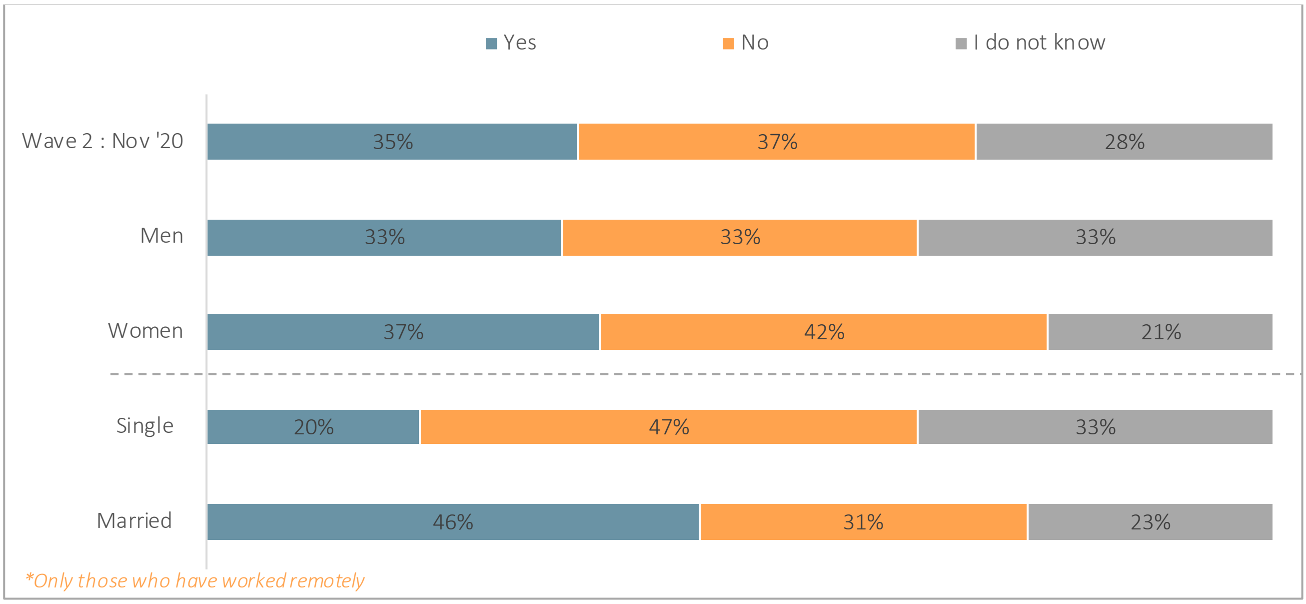
Those respondents who had changes in their work place and have worked or currently work from home, were asked whether they would prefer to continue to work from home even after the pandemic. The sample for these people is less than 50 respondents, thus results are indicative only. Responses to this question varied with 28% not knowing an answer to this question, 37% not preferring to continue to work from home and 35% preferring to continue to work from home.

Figure 56 Preference in continuing working from home after the pandemic



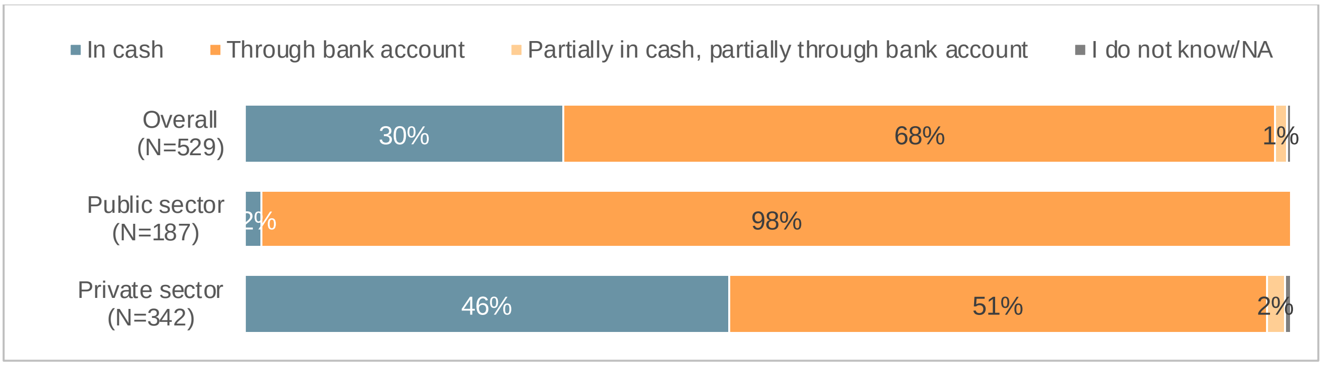
More women (37%) than men (33%) who worked remotely during the pandemic preferred to continue working from home even after the pandemic. In terms of marital status, married people (46%) would like to continue working from home after the pandemic significantly more than single people (20%). Depending on the type of job, married people could feel as though they can juggle work and home duties better while at home then in an office. *(Please note that results shown in this graph are indicative only due to the low number of cases).*

Figure 57 Preference in continuing working from home after the pandemic, by gender and marital status



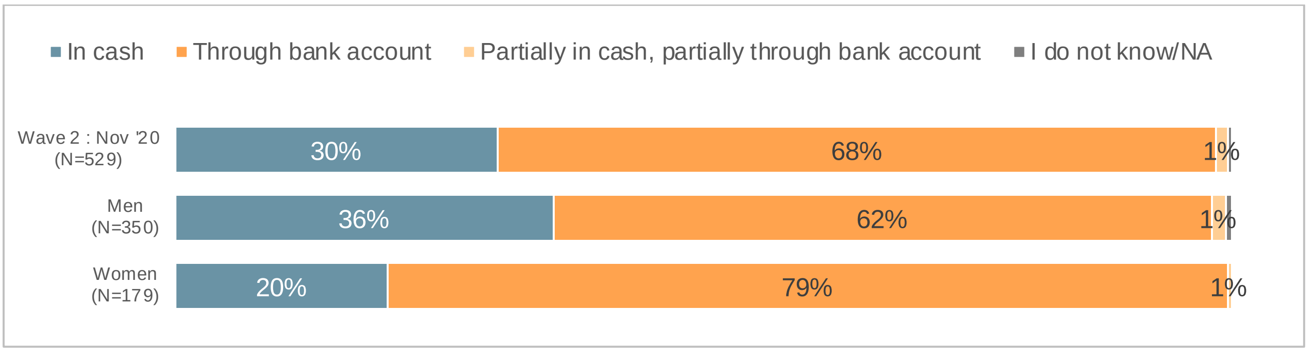
Informal cash payment to pay salaries of employees is still a widely common phenomenon in Kosovo. Data results revealed that two thirds claimed to receive their salary through a bank account (68%), while nearly one third stated to receive their salary in cash (30%). Informal payment appears to be a lot more common in the private sector where 46% said they received their salary in cash. In the public sector payment in cash was only reported by 2% of the respondents.

Figure 58 Means of receiving the salary before COVID-19, by sector



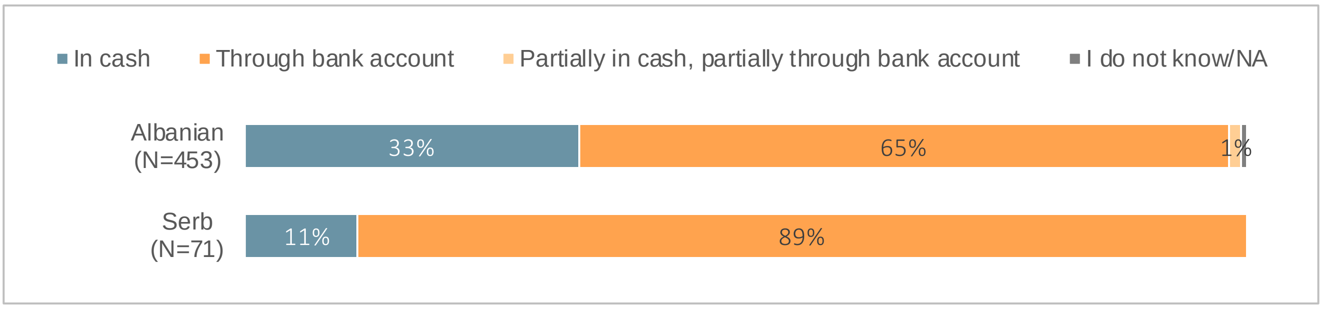
Almost two in five men (36%) and one in five women (20%) receive their salaries in cash. About 79% of women and 62% of men receive their salaries through a bank account, and 1% of each receive some of their income in cash and some through a bank account. The means of receiving the salary could explain the fact that a significant number of people in Kosovo are thought to work without contracts thus rendering their jobs insecure. Men seem to be more susceptible to this than women; even though, they are more employed in general and more of them work in less regulated business activities than women (e.g., construction and manufacturing vs. education and trade)[12].

Figure 59 Means of receiving the salary before COVID-19, by gender



Furthermore, while one in three K Albanian respondents declared to have received their salary in cash prior to the pandemic (33%), only 11% of K Serb respondents stated the same.

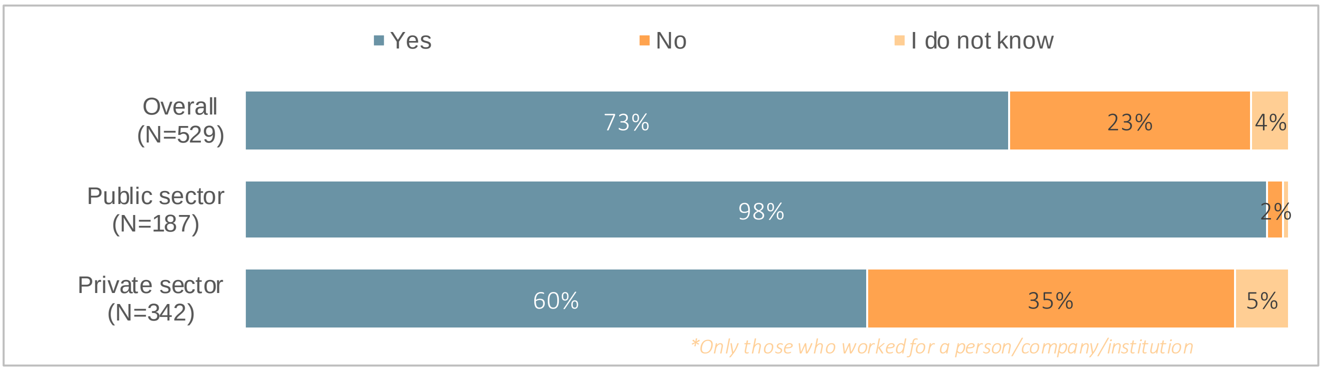
Figure 60 Means of receiving the salary before COVID-19, by ethnicity



[12] Kosovo Agency of Statistics. Employment by industry and gender. https://askdata.rks-gov.net/PXWeb/pxweb/en/askdata/askdata__Labour%20market__02%20Annual%20labour%20market__Pun%c3%absimi/lfs05.px/table/tableViewLayout1/?rxid=0b4e087e-8b00-47ba-b7cf-1ea158040712/ Last accessed on: 23.12.2020

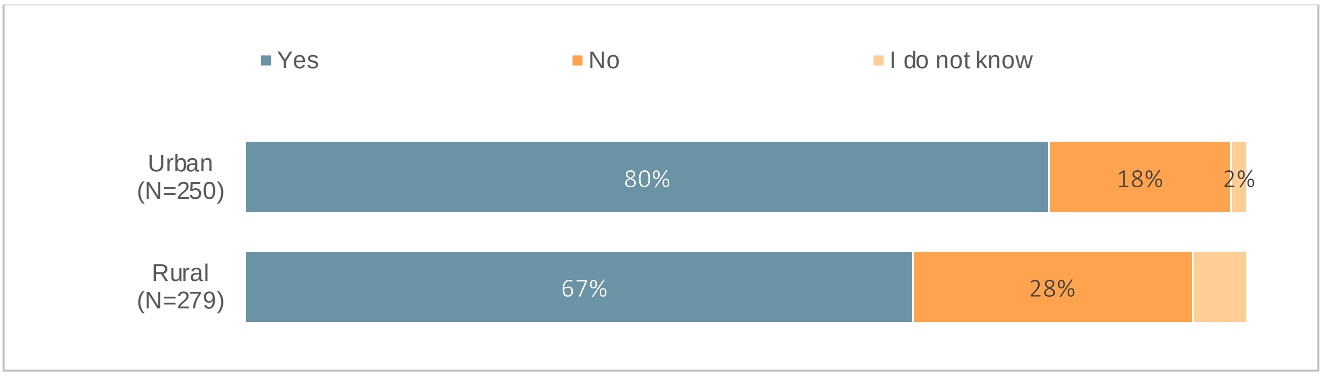
As per law in Kosovo, employers are obliged to pay pension contributions for all their employees at 5% of their gross wage to the Kosovo Pension Savings Fund. Nonetheless, only 73% of the respondents stated that their employer did pay pension contribution prior to the pandemic. It should be noted that nearly all employed in the public sector stated that their employer does pay the contributions (98%), while only 60% of those employed in the private sector stated the same.

Figure 61 Employer pension contribution payments before COVID-19, by sector



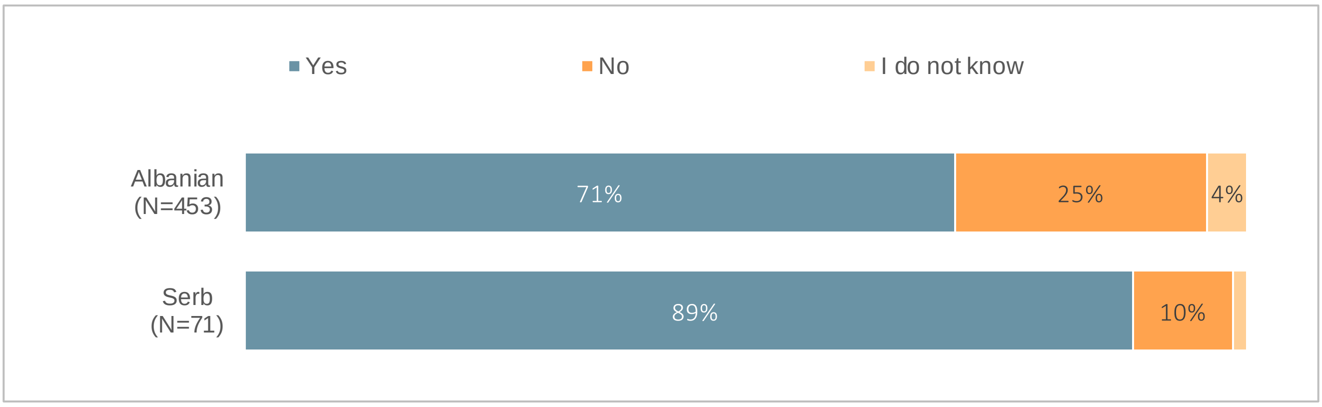
Employers of respondents residing in urban areas paid pension contributions in higher numbers prior the pandemic (80%) than those respondents employed in rural areas (67%).

Figure 62 Employer pension contribution payments before COVID-19, by urbanity



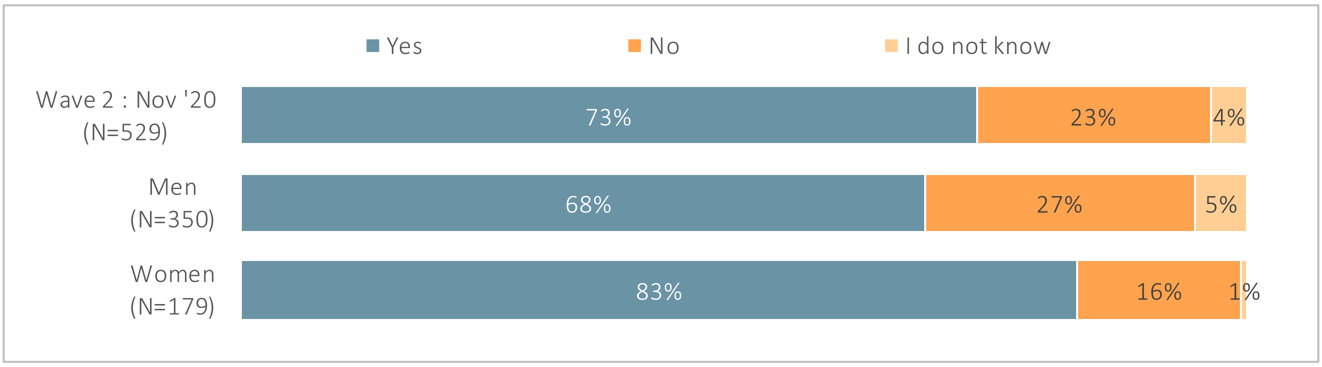
Data also showed that the employers of K Serb respondents pay more commonly pension contributions (89%) than those employers of K Albanian respondents (71%).

Figure 63 Employer contribution payments before COVID-19, by ethnicity



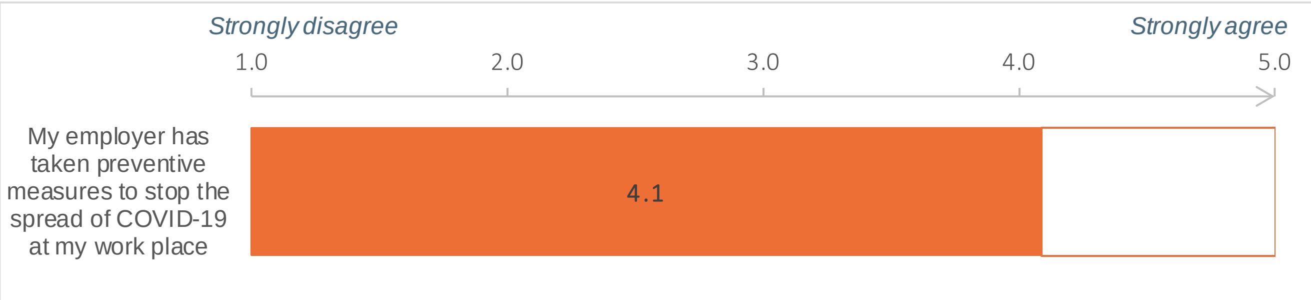
Lastly, more employed women (83%) than men (73%) declare their employer pays pension contributions to them which might indicate a higher level of formal employment for women than men.

Figure 64 Employer contribution payments before COVID-19, by gender



Data results also suggested that most employers have taken preventive measures to stop the spread of COVID-19 at work places. On average, the level of agreement by the respondents regarding whether their employers took preventive measures amounted to 4.1 points out of 5.0 points.

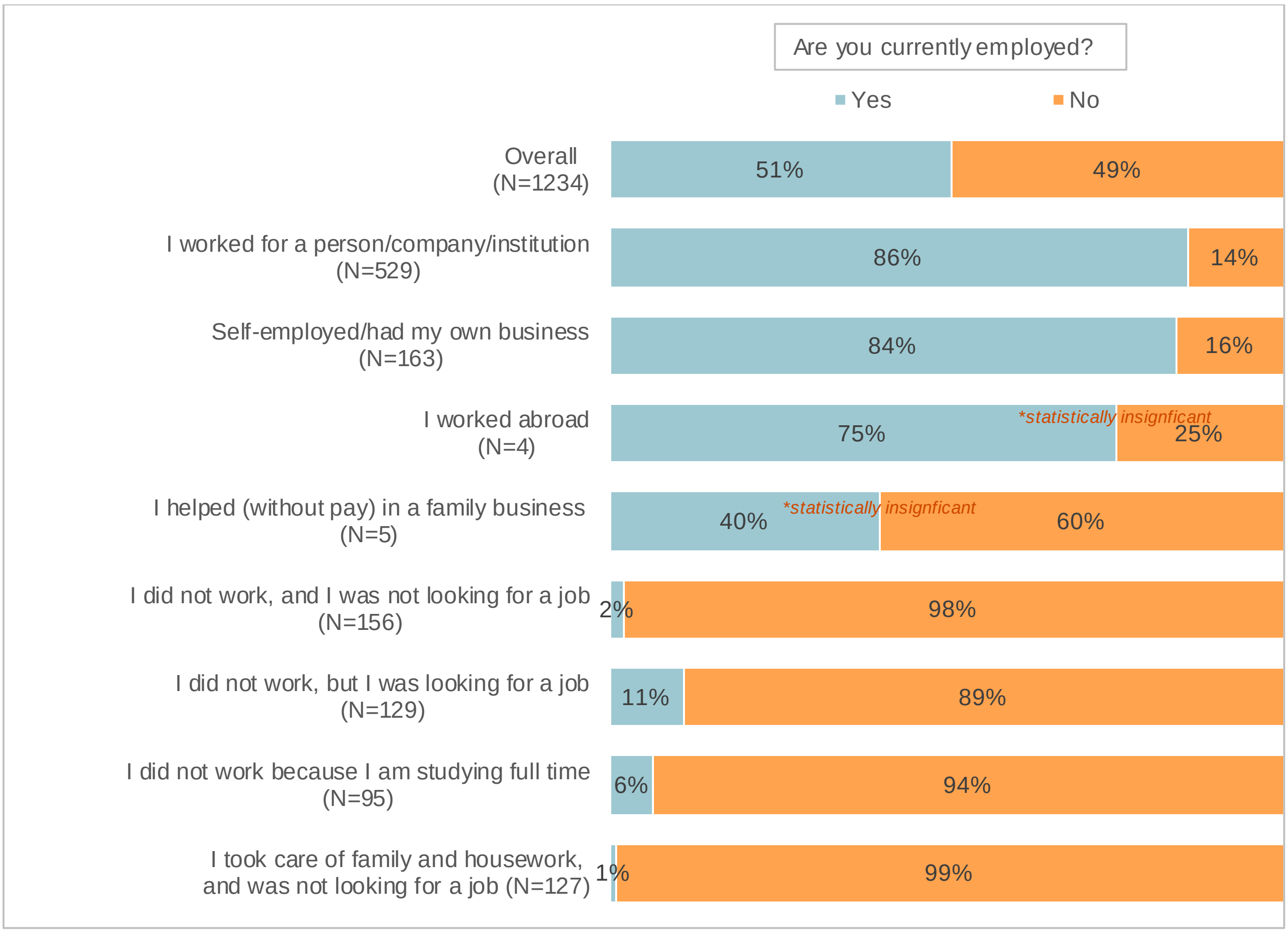
Figure 65 Agreement with “My employer has taken preventive measures to stop the spread of COVID-19 at my work place”



The majority of respondents declared to be currently employed (51%)[13]. When analysing data on current employment disaggregated by the employment status prior to the spread of COVID-19, it becomes apparent that those who worked for a person, company or institution or were self-employed were most likely to be still employed (86% and 84% respectively). Those who were unemployed prior to COVID-19, largely remained without work (98% of those who were not seeking work and 89% of those looking for work).

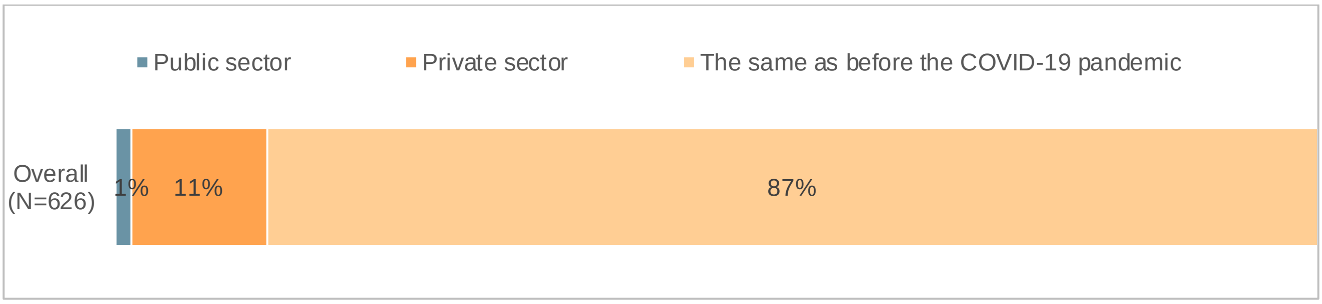
[13] i.e., at the time of interview in November 2020.

Figure 66 Current employment, by employment status prior to the spread of COVID-19



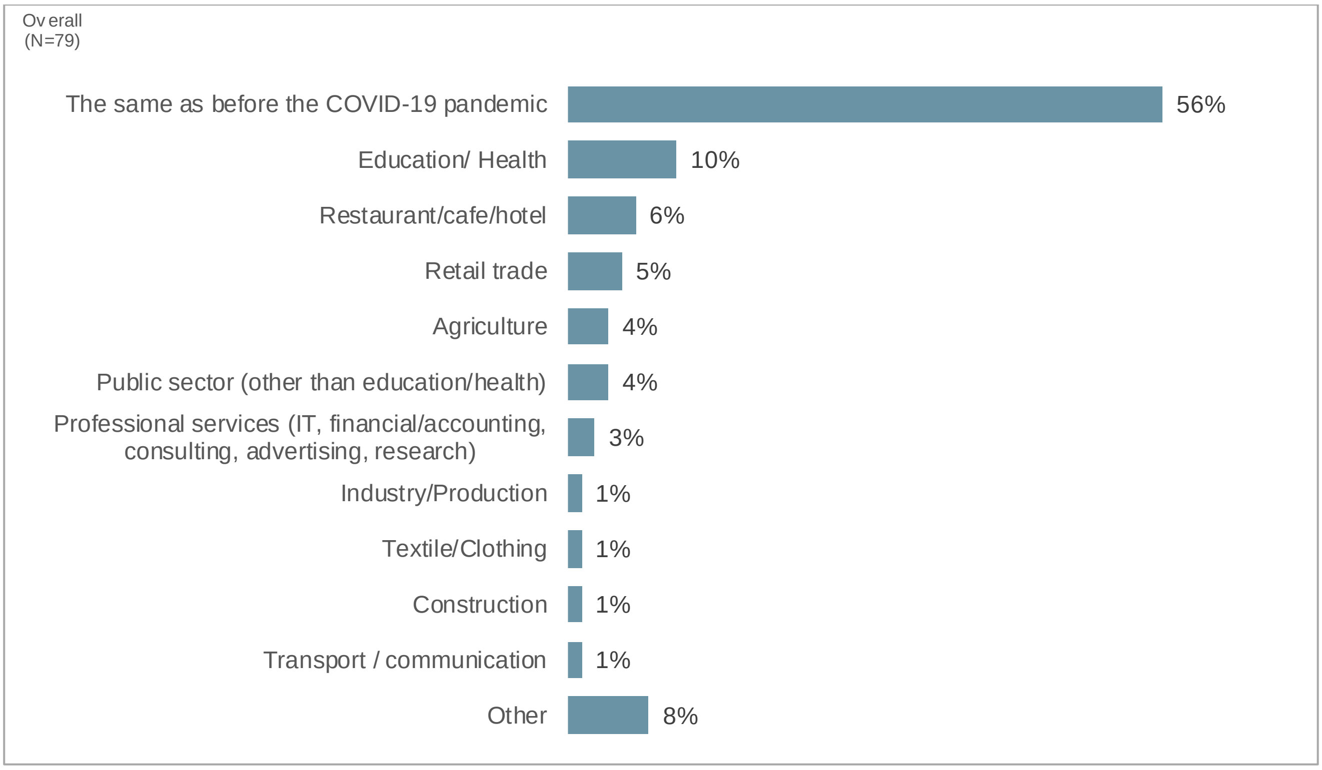
The majority of the respondents who stated to be currently employed were also employed prior to the pandemic and remained working in the same sector as before (87%). Around 11% (private) and 1% (public) have either found new employment or have changed their work sector compared to prior the pandemic.

Figure 67 Current employment sector



Respondents who have changed their sector of work still most commonly work within the same business activity (56%) as prior to the pandemic, while 10% now work within education/health, 6% within business activities related to hospitability and 5% in retail trade.

Figure 68 Current employment by business activity



Respondents who were employed (or at least had one family member who was employed), declared in 54% of cases that they are not the main income earner in their household. During wave 1 of the assessment, it stood out that 10% declared to have no family member who was engaged with work, while results pertaining to wave 2 show that no respondents was part of a household without any work engagement. Men were significantly more likely to be the main income earner of the household (71%) than women (20%).

Figure 69 Respondents who are main income earner

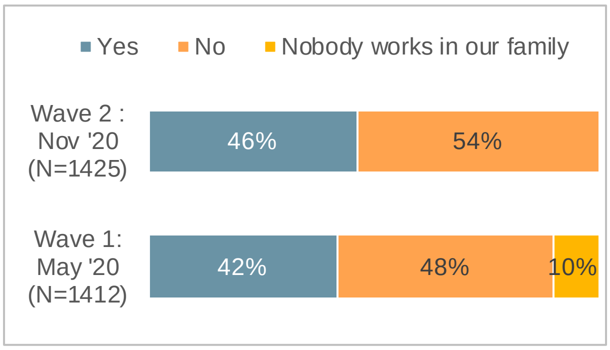
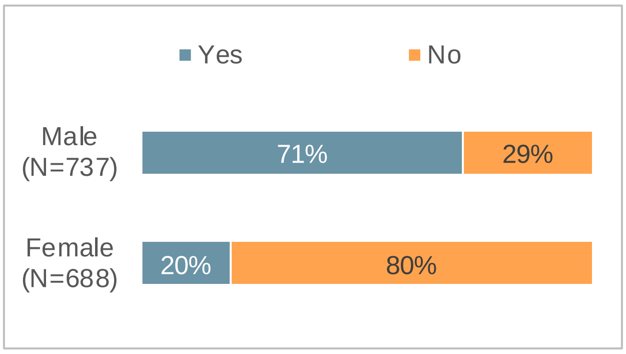
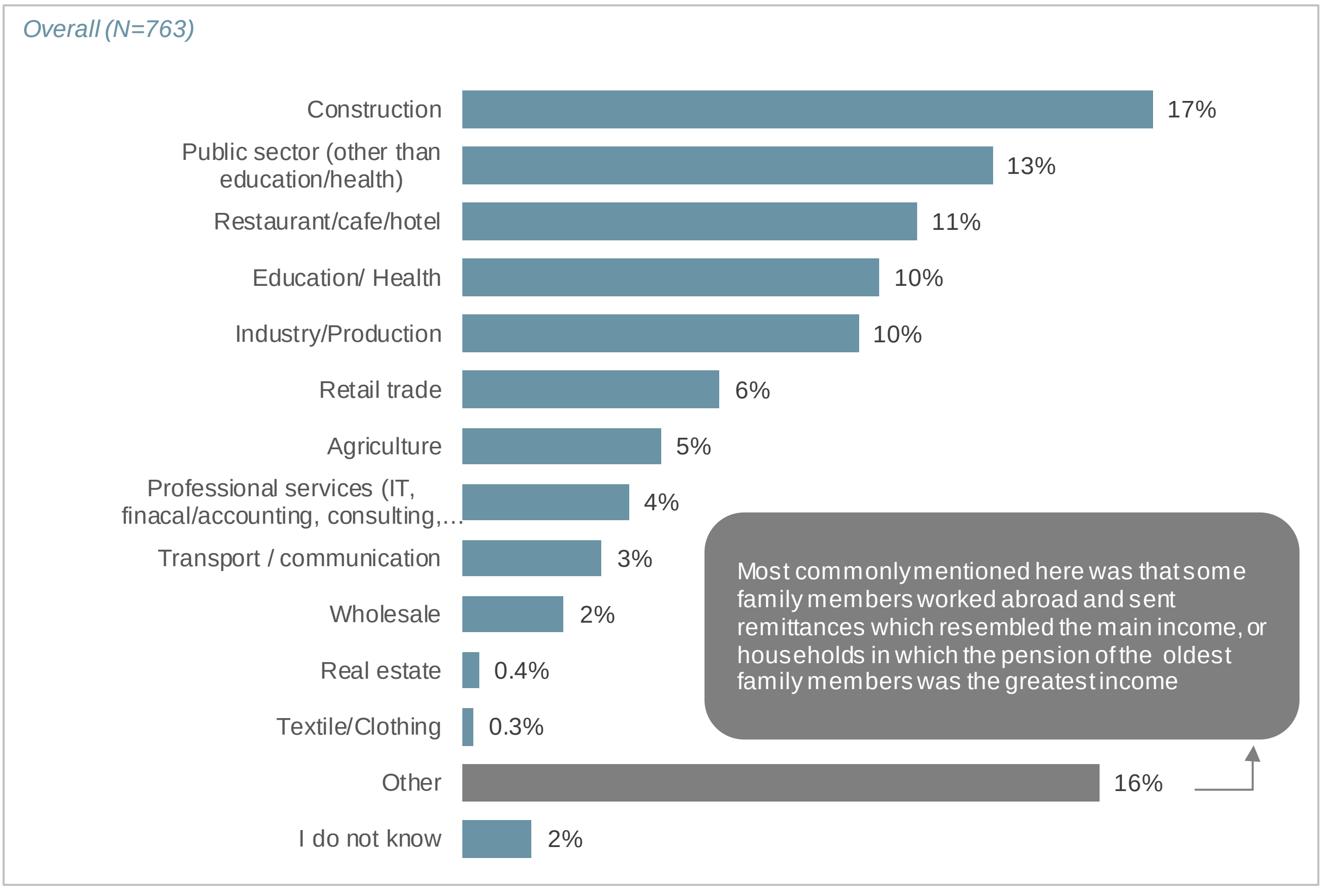


Figure 70 Respondents who are main income earner, by gender



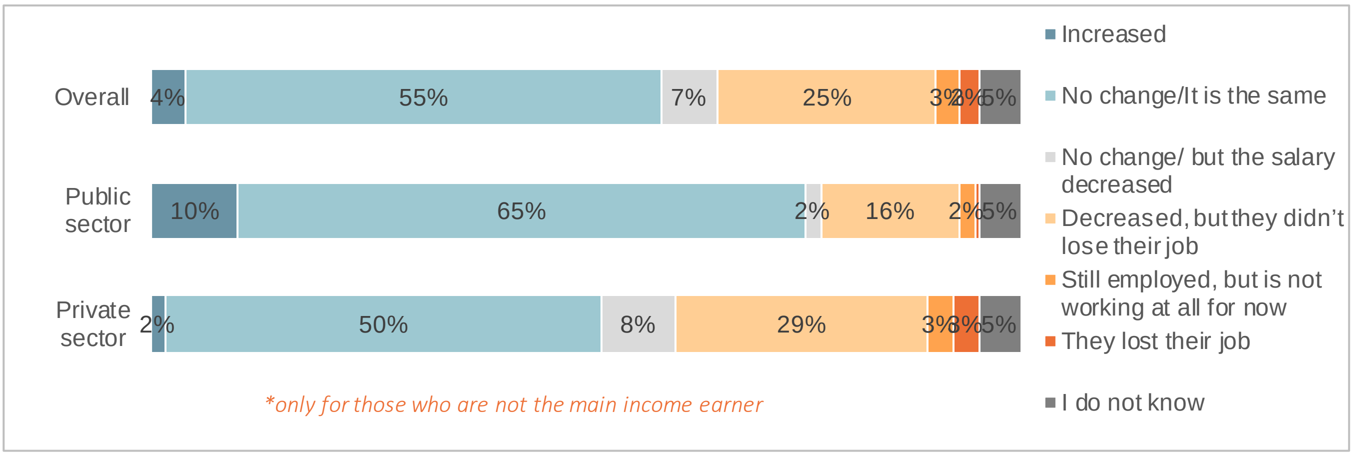
Of those HHs where the main income provider was not the respondent, the employment business activity of the main income earners most commonly has been in construction (17%), public sector (13%), restaurant, café, or hotel (11%), education and health as well as industry/production (each 10%). The smallest share of main income earners were employees in textile/clothing (0.3%) and real estate (0.4%).

Figure 71 Employment by business activity of the main income earner



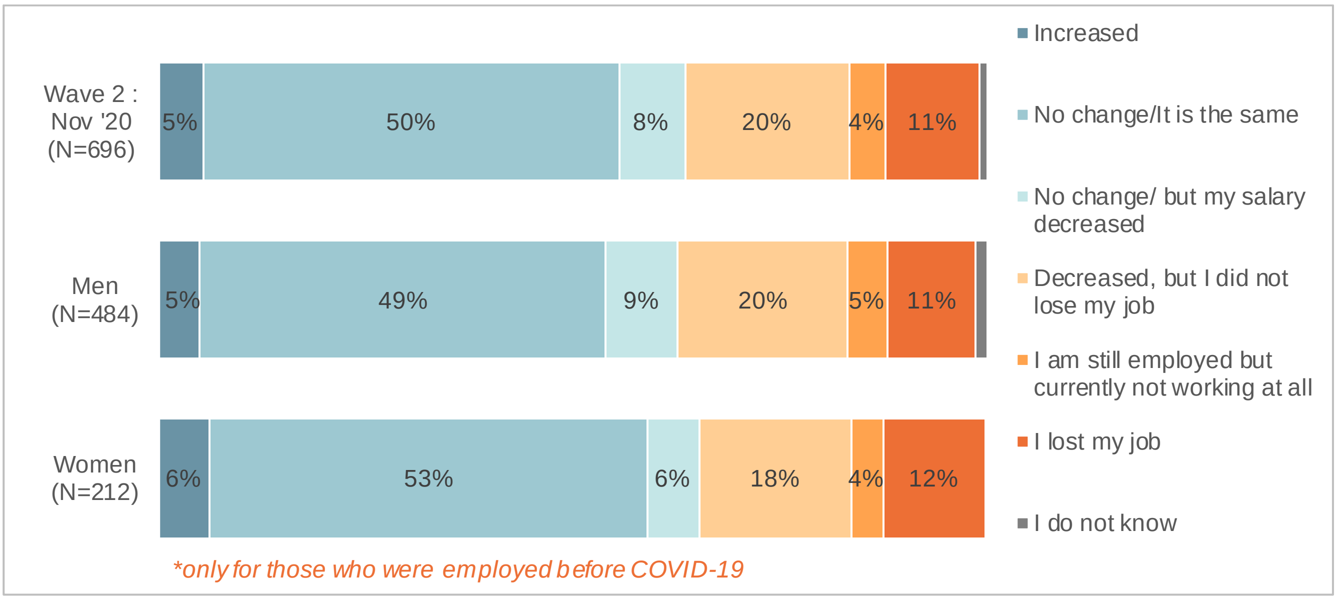
When assessing impact upon paid working hours for the main incomer earner of the families, data results showed that the majority reported no change in this regard (55%). However, one in four reported a decrease in paid working hours of the main income earner of the family (25%). No change in paid working hours were more common in the public sector (65%), than in the private sector (50%).

Figure 72 Impact on paid working hours of the main income earner of the family by COVID-19



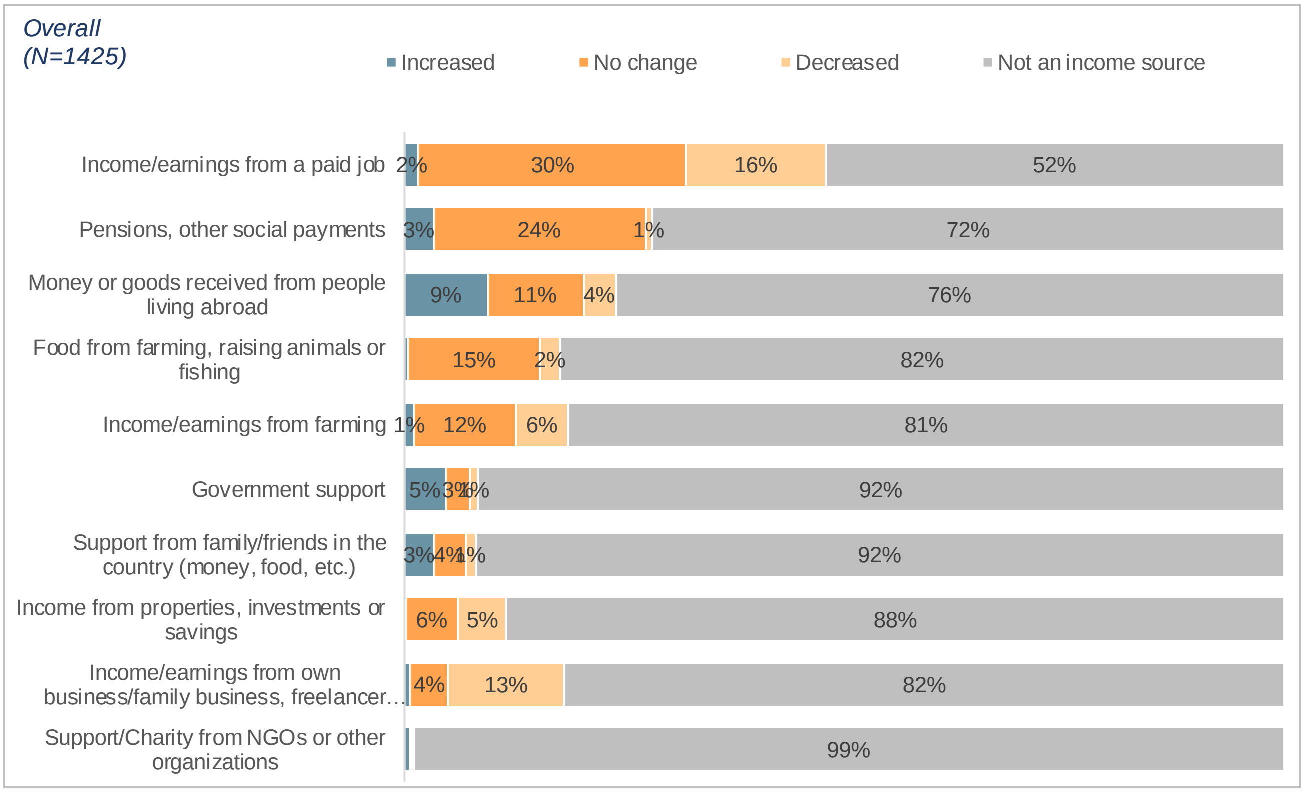
There are a few differences between the change in paid working hours of men and women. About 6% of women and 5% of men declared to have increased working hours. Six percent of women and 9% of men declare no change in working hours but a decrease in salary nonetheless. About one fifth each of both women (18%) and men (20%) work less hours after the pandemic but have not lost their jobs. Whereas more women (13%) than men (11%) lost their jobs.

Figure 73 Impact on paid working hours by COVID-19, by gender



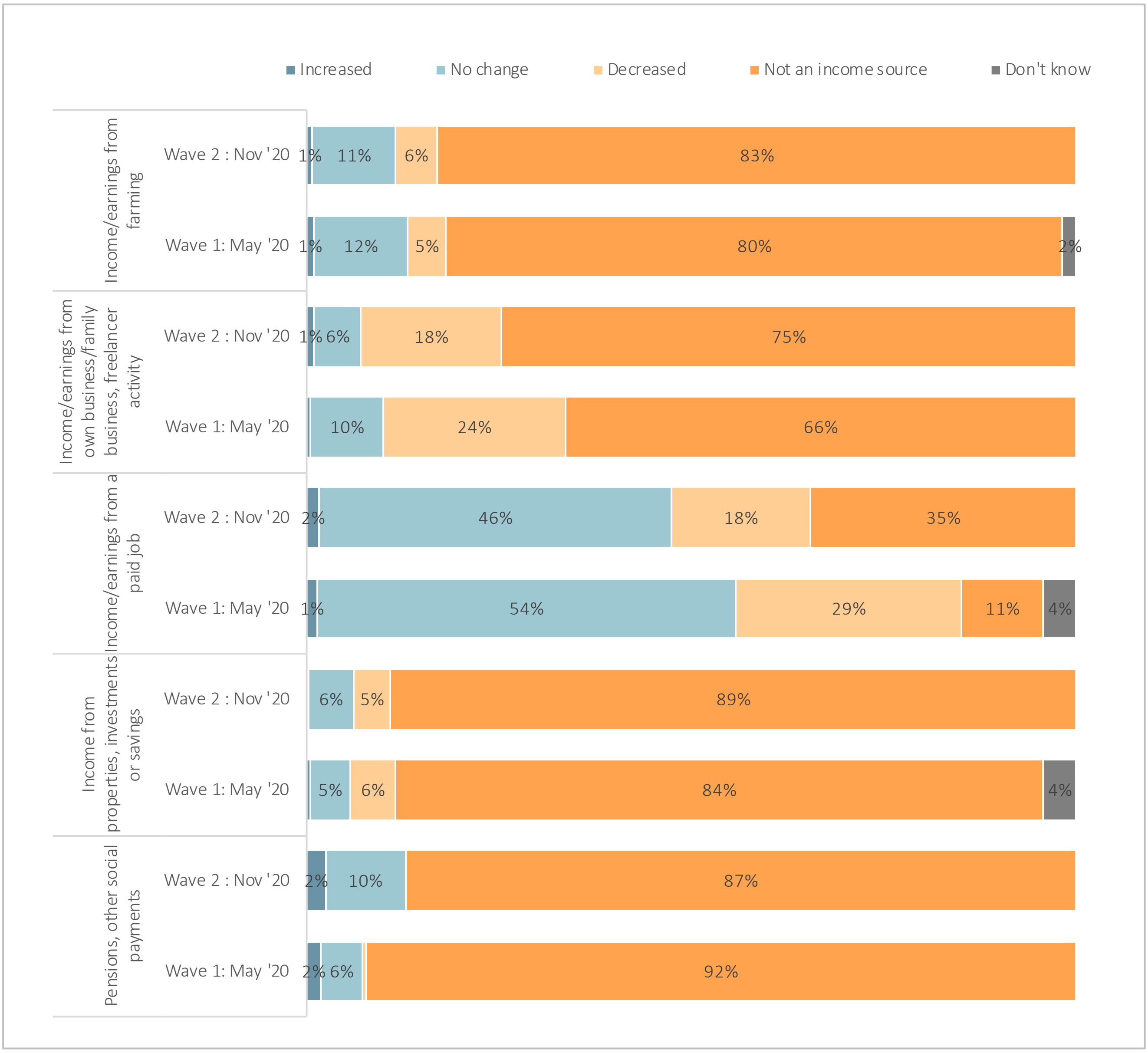
COVID-19 has impacted the employment as well as financial situation of many. Thus, measuring the impact of the pandemic on personal resources of the respondents provides an important insight on the scope of such impacts. Income from paid jobs as well as income from own businesses/family businesses/freelance work stood out with the highest number of cases where income has decreased (16% and 13% respectively). Money or goods received from people abroad have increased by 9%, also support received from Kosovo institutions (5%) increased.

Figure 74 Effects of COVID-19 on personal resources



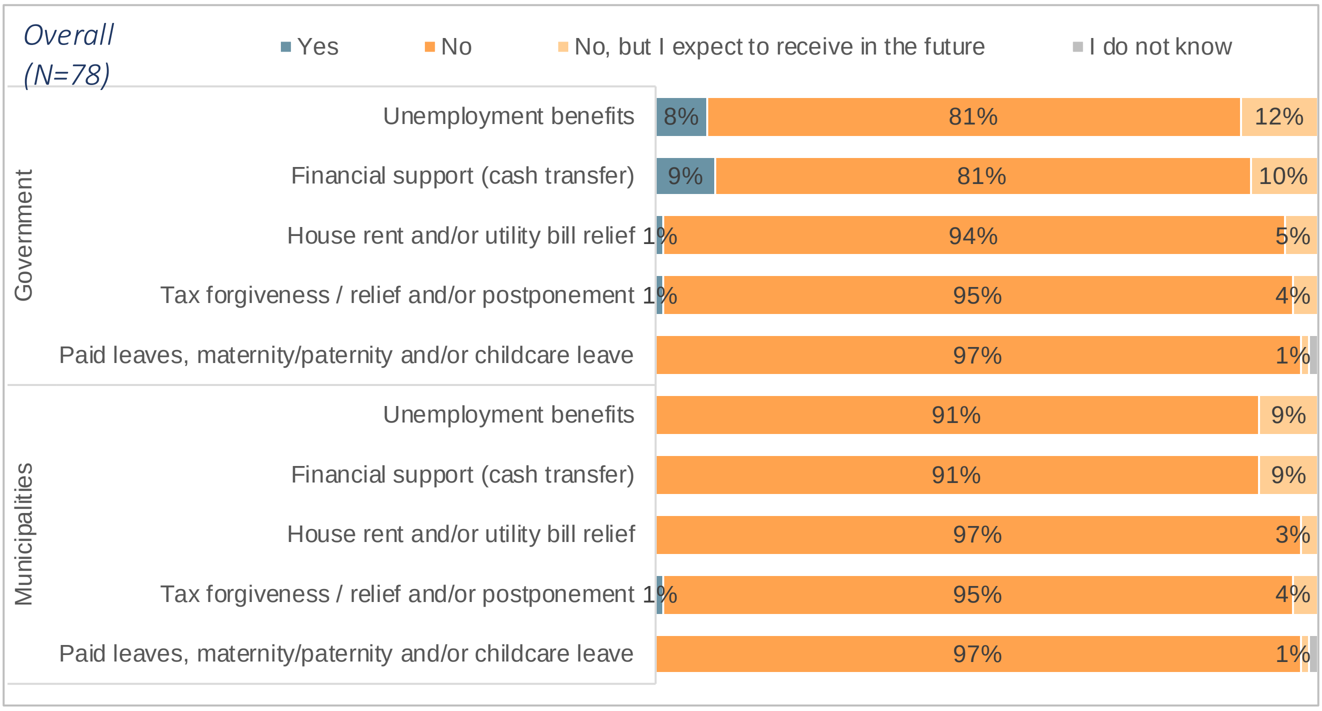
In both waves of the survey, respondents had similar experiences in income received from different means. People who have farming as one of the sources of income experienced 5% and 6% decrease in May and November. Respondents' income from businesses had decreased more during wave 1 (24%) than during wave 2 (18%). The same trend goes for income from a job where in wave 1, 29% of people experienced a decrease in salary, and only 18% of people experienced that during wave 2. However, albeit in small portions, more people during wave 1 (6%) than during wave 2 (5%) declared a decrease in income from properties, investments, or savings. Whereas, pensions or other social payments, increased for 2% of respondents in each wave, and had no change for 6% and 10% (wave 1 and wave 2), but did not experience a decrease in neither (see Figure below).

Figure 75 Effects of COVID-19 on personal resources, wave 1 vs. wave 2



Out of those respondents who reported to have lost their job, only 9% and 8% respectively report to have received financial support or unemployment benefits from Kosovo institutions. Some are hopeful to receive said benefits in the future (10% and 12% respectively). Around 9% also expect to receive unemployment benefits or financial support from the municipality in the future.

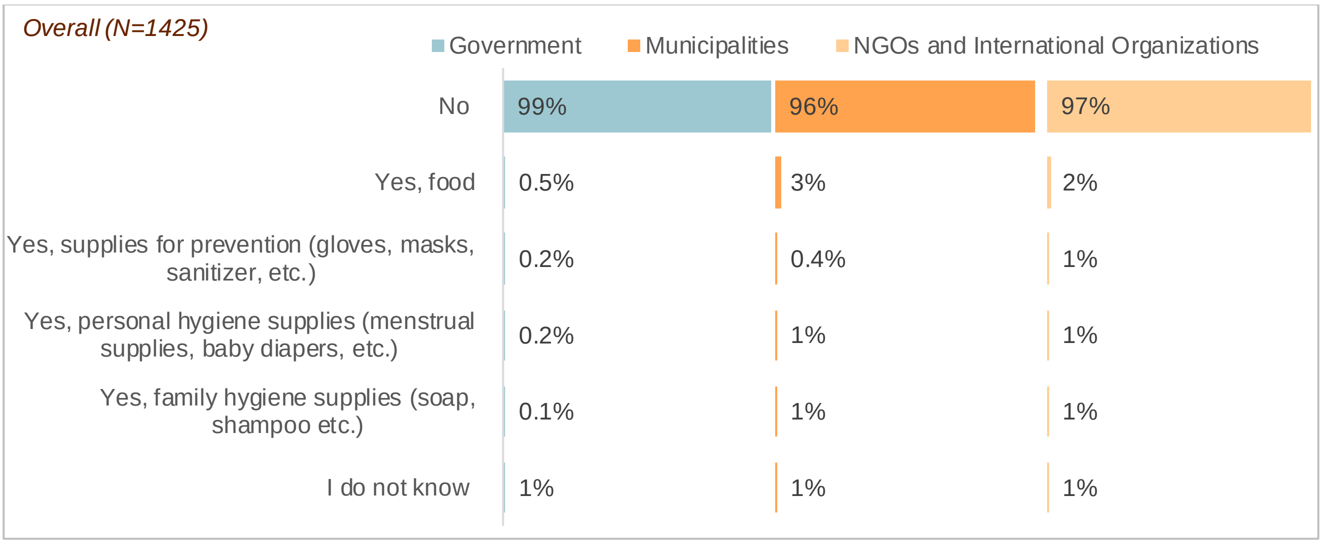
Figure 76 Respondents who received unemployment benefits and/or any financial support since the spread of COVID-19



*Only those who lost their job

Most respondents did not receive any in-kind support from Kosovo institutions (99%), municipalities (96%) or NGOs and International Organisations (97%). Very few received food from the municipalities (3%) or NGOs (2%). Near to none of the respondents received personal or family hygiene supplies. The data reflects those of wave 1 which means that the central and municipal-level programs have not reached the majority of people.

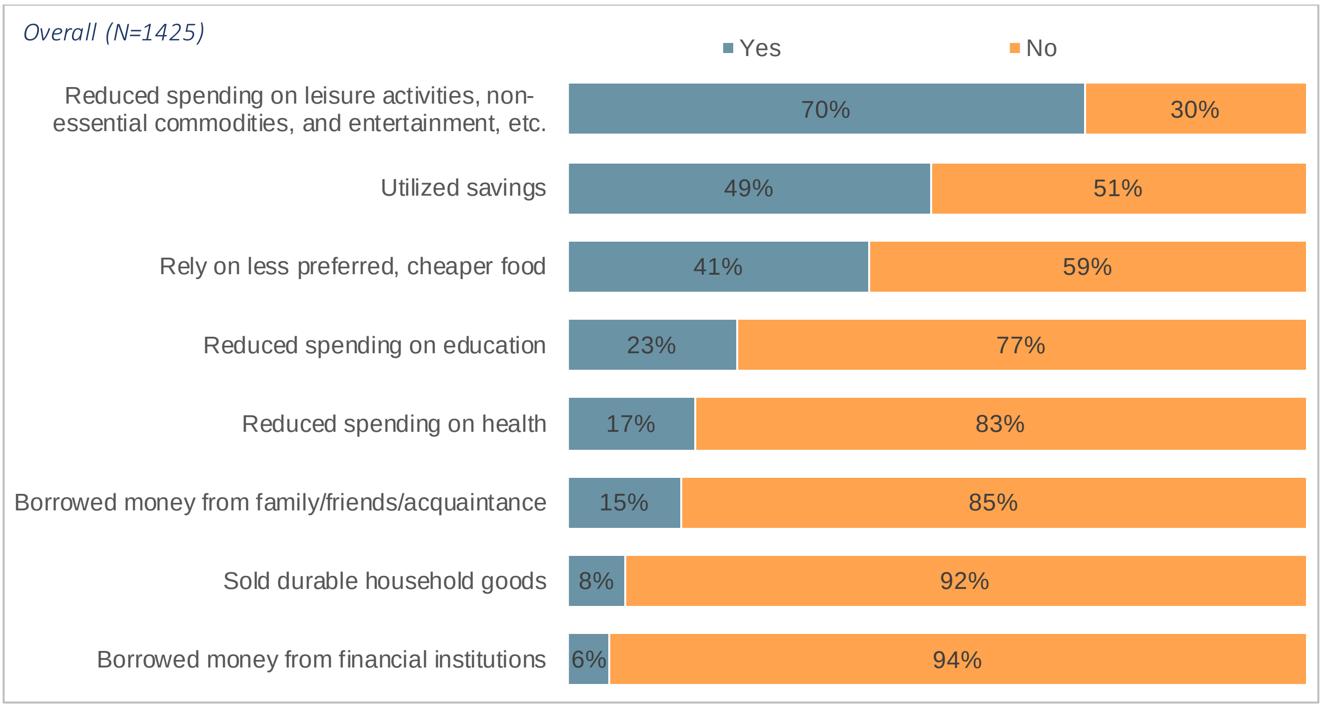
Figure 77 Respondents who received any in-kind support since the spread of COVID-19



Almost three in four respondents reduced spending on leisure activities, non-essential commodities and entertainment in order to compensate the loss of income or in preparation for potential loss of income (70%). Nearly half had to utilize savings (49%) while 41% reported to rely on less preferred or cheaper food to counter (potential) loss of income. Concerningly, 23% and 17% respectively also stated to have reduced spending on matters of education and health.

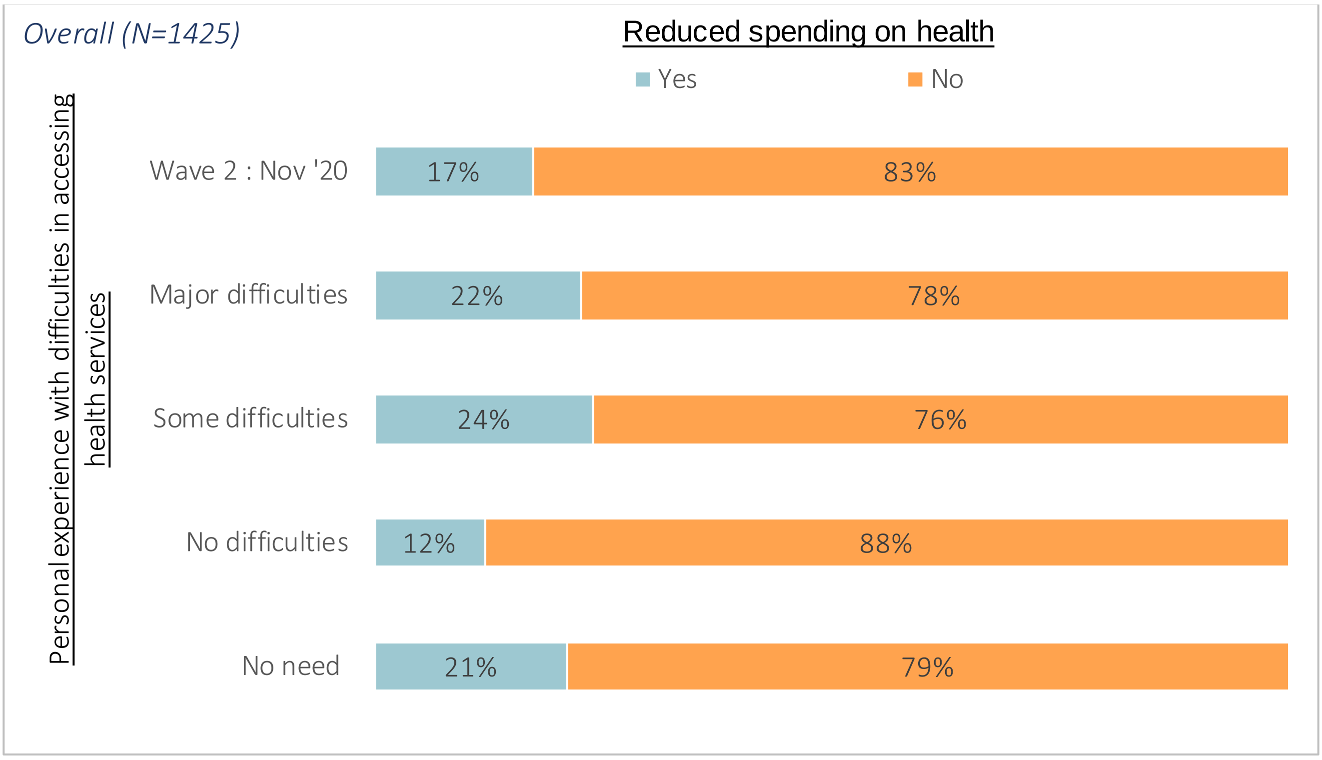
Some 15% borrowed money from family or friends in order to cope, while 8% sold durable household goods. Only 6% borrowed money from financial institutions.

Figure 78 Compensations for loss of income / potential loss of income taken by households since the onset of COVID-19



Overall, of all people who experienced major difficulties in accessing health services, 22% reduced spending on health. About 24% of those who experiences some difficulties in accessing health services, decreased their health expenditures. Only 12% of those who experience no difficulties reduced their health spending. About 21% of those who did not need health services reduced health expenses.

Figure 79 Access to health and reduction in health spending



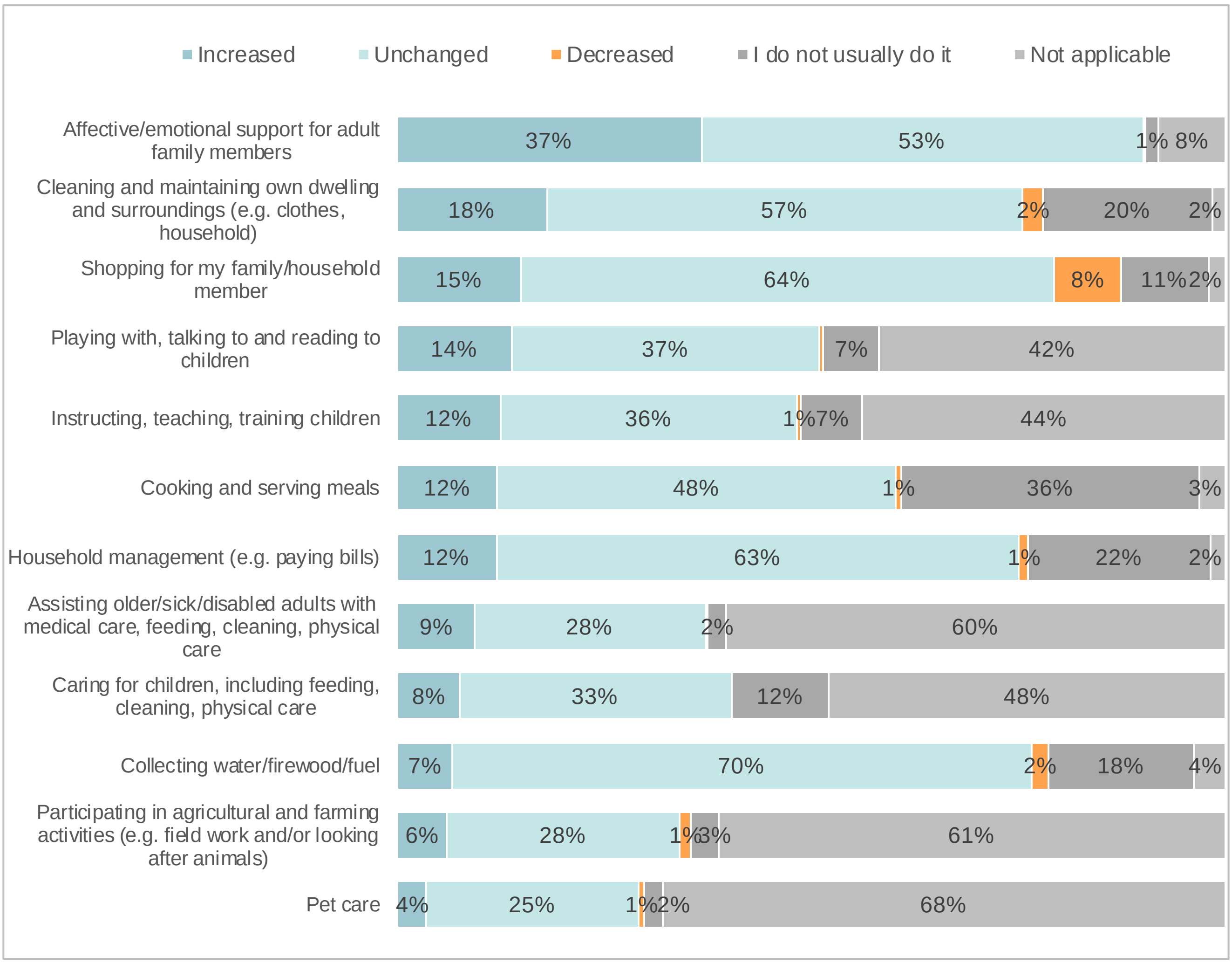
3.1.5 Distribution of Household Chores and Social Dynamics

COVID-19 is posing extensive challenges and impacts upon people not only in regard to financial and employment matters. The distribution of household chores and social dynamics within families are affected as well.

Overall, increase of hours devoted to emotional support for adult family members stood out with the highest share of respondents mentioning an increase in this activity (37%). This was followed by 18% who reported an increase of hours spent on cleaning and maintenance of their dwellings and 15% who have dedicated more time to shopping for their family.

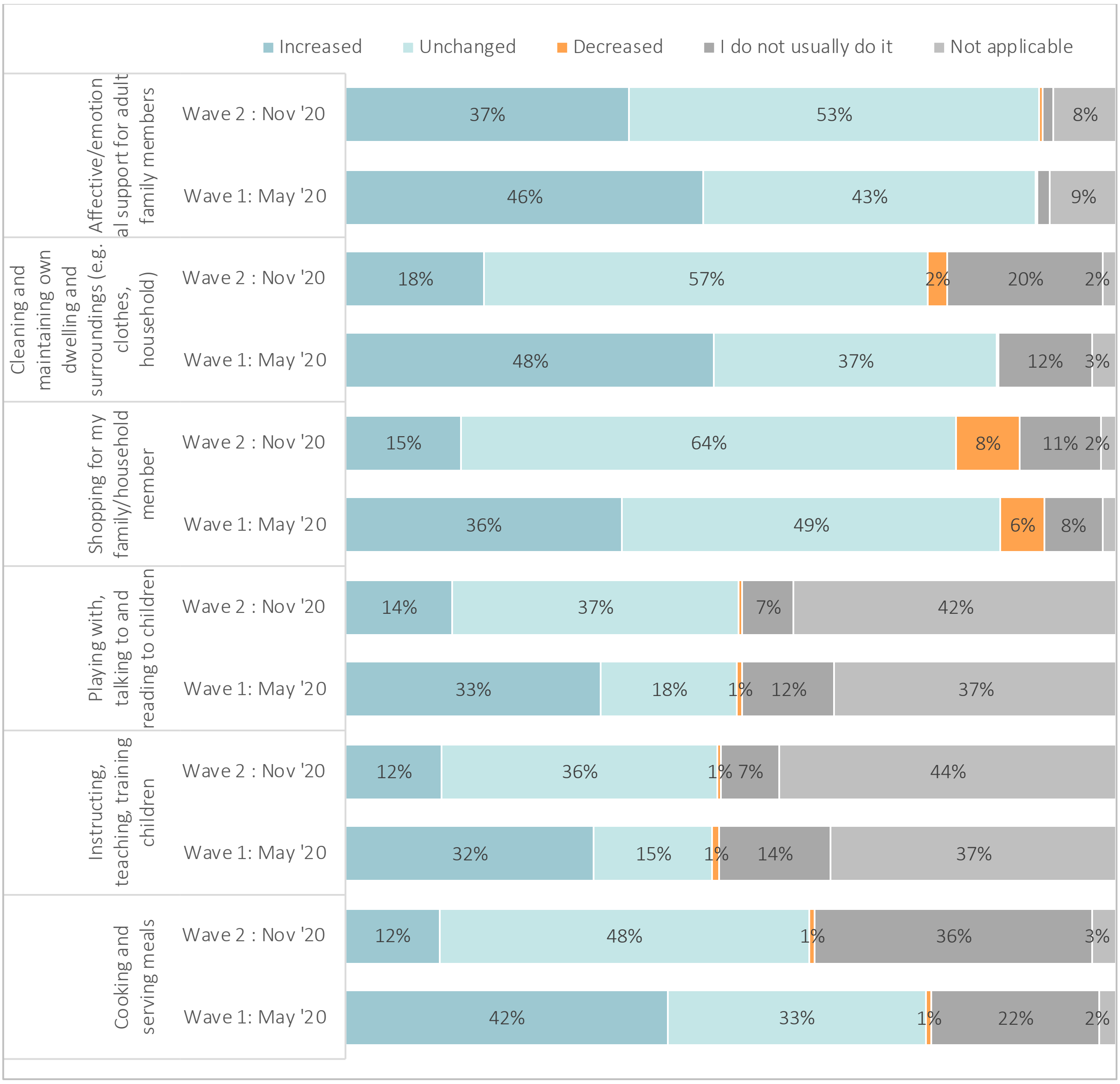
Around 12% reported an increase of hours devoted to spending time with their children as well as on cooking and serving meals and household management.

Figure 80 Changes in hours devoted to activities as a result of COVID-19



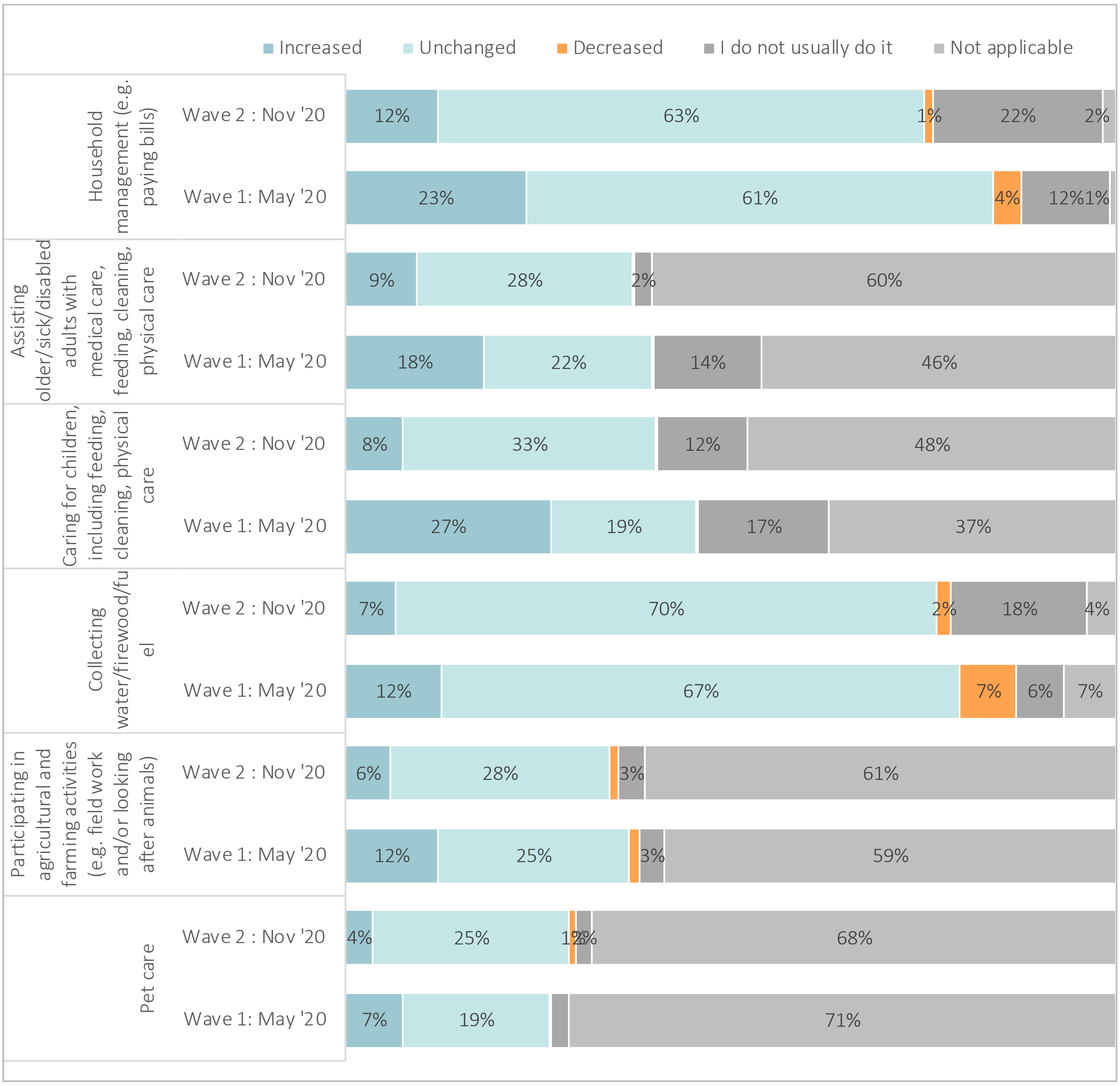
Less respondents declare to have increased hours devoted to activities within the household and for family members in November than in May. Compared to wave 1 (46%), less people have an increased emotional support for adult family members as of November in wave 2 (37%). Similarly, in May, almost half of the respondents (48%) said they spent more time in cleaning and maintaining their household and about 18% said the same in November. The increased workload with all activities is much smaller in wave 2 than wave 1. Here is included: shopping (36% wave 1, 15% wave 2), playing or doing other activities with children (33% wave 1, 14% wave 2), instructing, teaching, or training children (32% wave 1, 12% wave 2), and even cooking and meals (42% wave 1, 12% wave 2).

Figure 81 Changes in hours devoted to activities as a result of COVID-19, wave 1 vs. wave 2 (1/2)



The same holds true for the activities in the figure below. More hours for household management (23% wave 1, 12% wave 2), caring for children, feeding, cleaning, or providing other physical care (27% wave 1, 8% wave 2), or even participating in agricultural and farming activities (12% wave 1, 6% wave 2) are devoted by less people in wave 2 compared to wave 1. These data reflect the situation in Kosovo than in November there were much looser restrictive measures than from March to May 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 82 Changes in hours devoted to activities as a result of COVID-19, wave 1 vs. wave 2 (2/2)



When taking a closer look at differences in hours devoted to certain activities, disaggregated by gender, data revealed that women were more likely to have spent increased hours on cleaning (24%) and cooking (18%) han men (13% and 6% respectively). It also stood out that a significant number of men declared that they usually not engage with cooking (58%) or cleaning (35%) at all.

On the other hand, more men reported to have spent increased time on shopping for the household (19%), household management (16%) playing with their children (16%) and teaching/training their children (15%) than women (10%). [14]

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[14] The ‘not applicable’ percentages include people for whom some of the options do not apply to, for instance, for people without children or partners, taking care of HH members and children options do not apply.

Figure 83 Changes in hours devoted to care activities as a result of COVID-19, by gender (1/2)

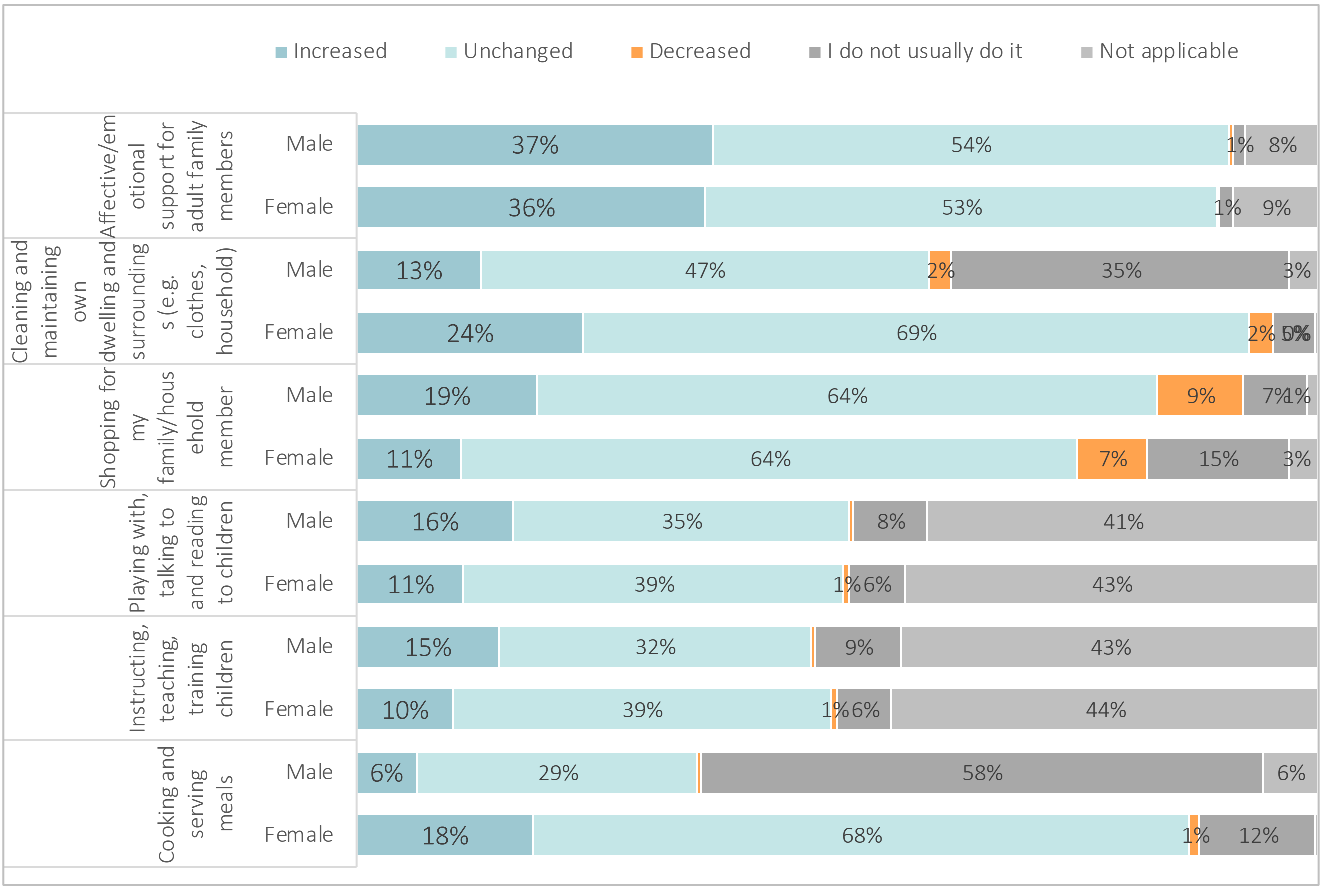
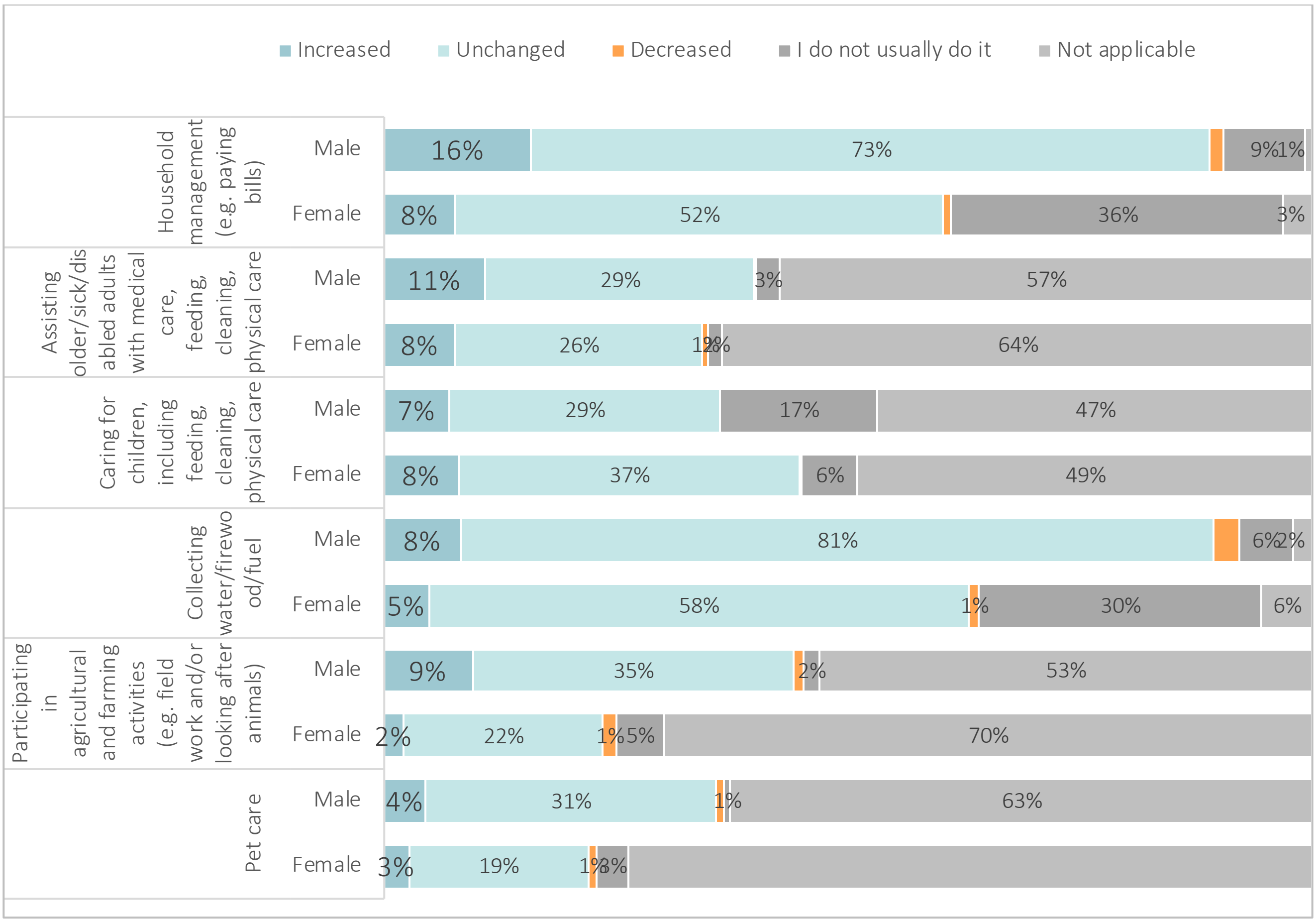


Figure 84 Changes in hours devoted to un=paid domestic work as a result of COVID-19, by gender (2/2)

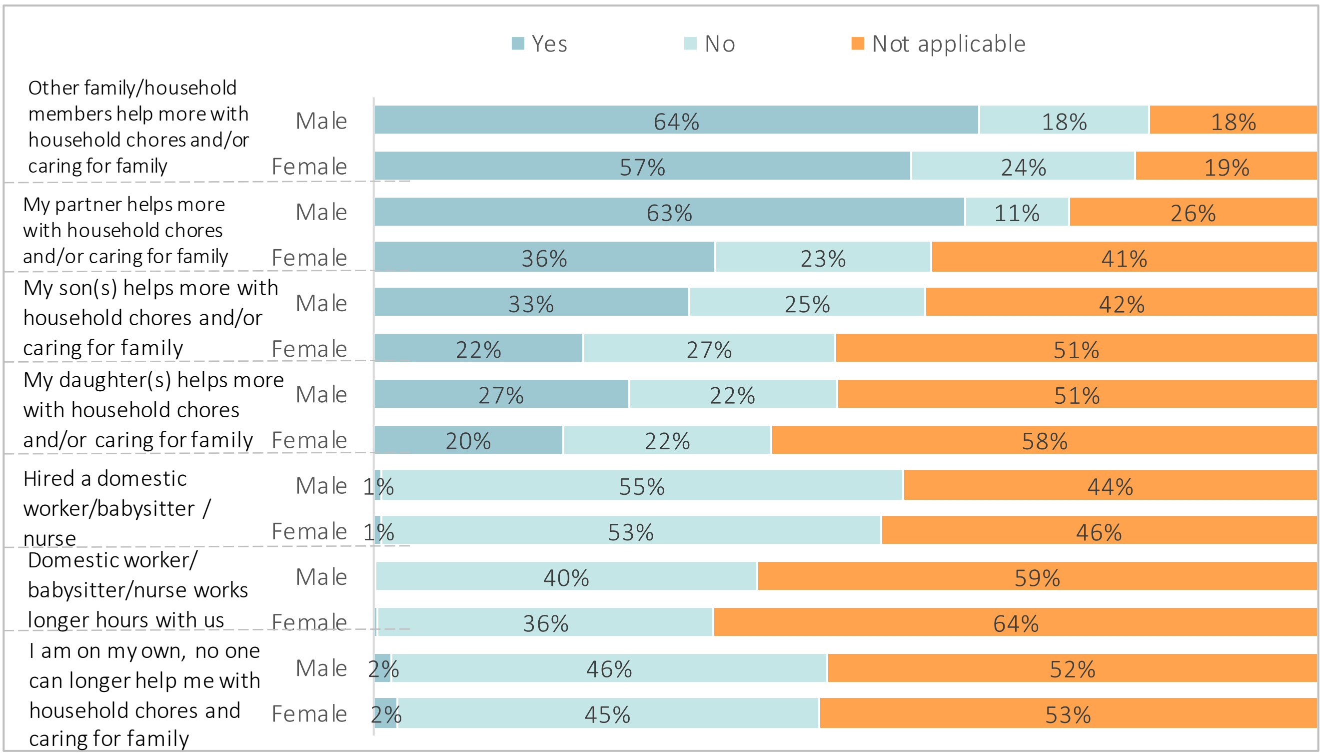


*sorted by 'increased'

Roles and responsibilities within the households have been affected as well. Overall, what stood out as positive was that other household members, partners, sons and daughters appear to have helped the respondents more since the onset of the pandemic.

Still, it should be noted that men declared to have received notably more support by other members than women did. For example, while almost two in three men reported that their partner helped more with the household chores (63%), only 36% of women reported the same.

Figure 85 Effects of COVID-19 on roles and responsibilities within the household, by gender

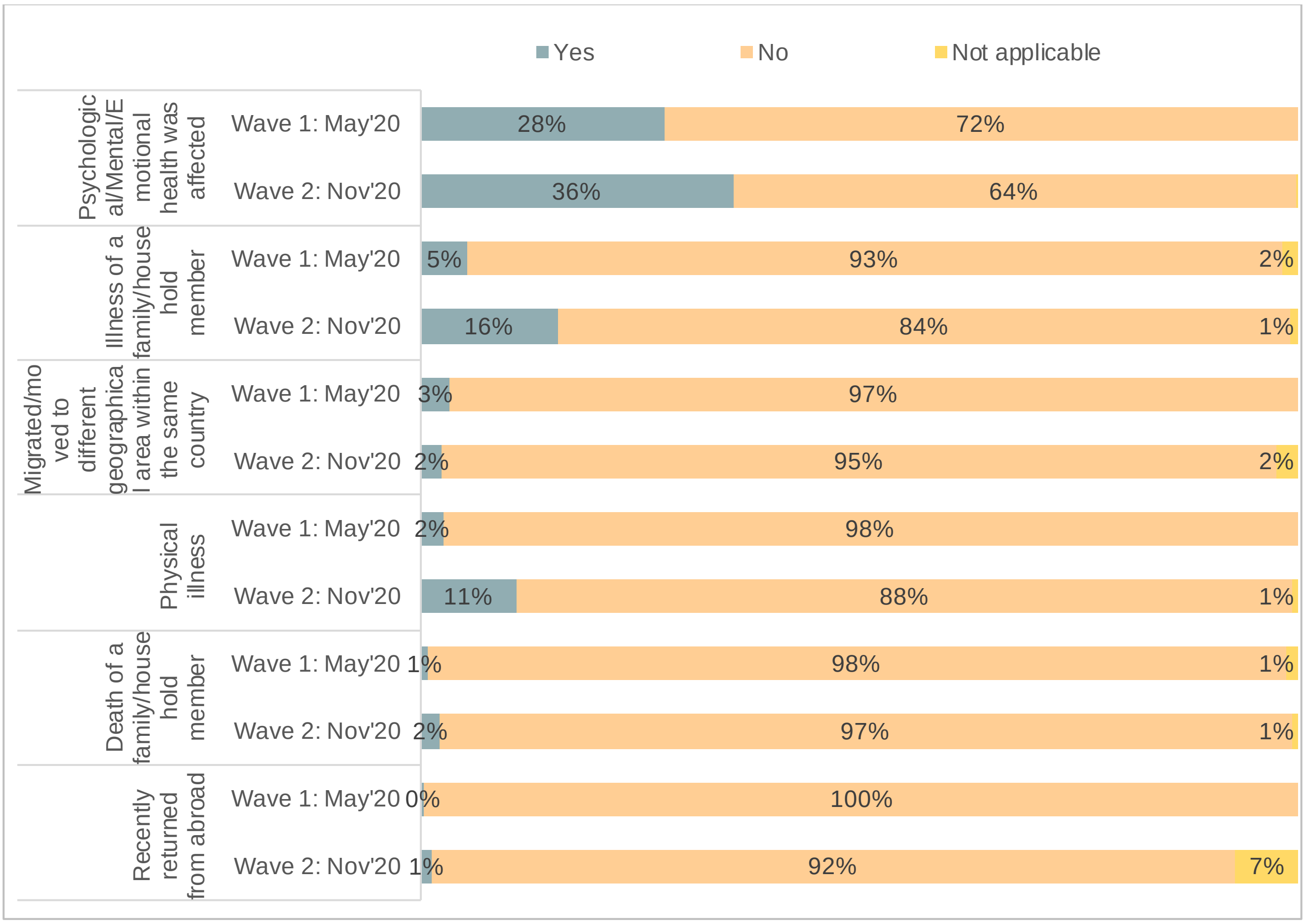


3.1.6 Access to Basic Services and Safety

The survey questionnaire included questions dedicated to the access to basic services and safety in times of the COVID-19 pandemic. It assesses whether respondents experienced psychological or physical effects stemming from the stress of the recent months, whether they faced difficulties to access certain services such as health and social services among other issues.

Comparative data results between wave 1 and wave 2 clearly show that psychological effects have increased; 36% declared that their mental or emotional health has been affected, compared to only 28% who stated the same in May 2020. Cases of physical illness and illness of a family member have also increased by 11 pp and 9 pp respectively. Cases of internal migration and return from abroad due to COVID-19 have remained largely the same when compared to wave 1. The cases of death of a family member now stood at 2% compared to 1% during wave 1.

Figure 86 As a result of COVID-19, did you personally experience any of the following, wave 1 vs wave 2

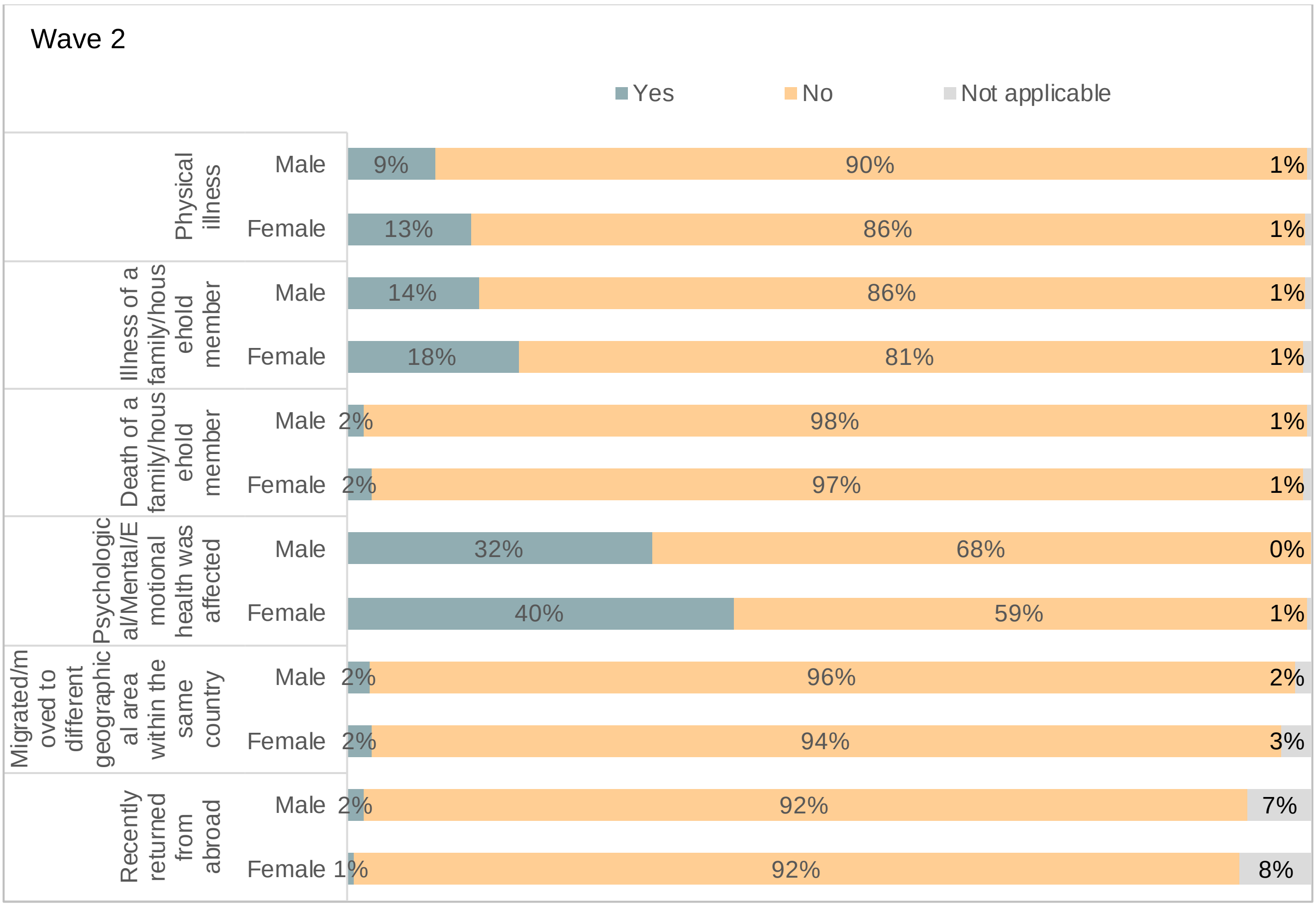


Only showing 'yes' category

Data results from wave 2 showed that both men and women felt that their psychological, mental or emotional health has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Similar to results of wave 1, women seem to be more affected in this regard (40%) than men (32%).

However, more men also reported psychological effects now in November 2020 (32%) than in May 2020 (25%), which portrays an increase of 7 pp. The increase of psychological effects reported by women amounts to 9 pp.

Figure 87 As a result of COVID-19, did you personally experience any of the following, by gender



Only showing 'yes' category

Older respondents above the age of 65 more commonly reported physical illness (15%) than respondents belonging to younger age groups. No significant differences among age groups were made in regard to illnesses or death of a family member, as well as regarding migration or returning from abroad. Effects on mental or emotional health varied slightly among respondents of different ages within the range of 11 pp. Respondents between the age of 55 and 64 as well as those between 35 and 44 years old reported more commonly effects on their mental or emotional health than others (42% and 38% respectively).

Figure 88 As a result of COVID-19, did you personally experience any of the following?, by age (1/2)

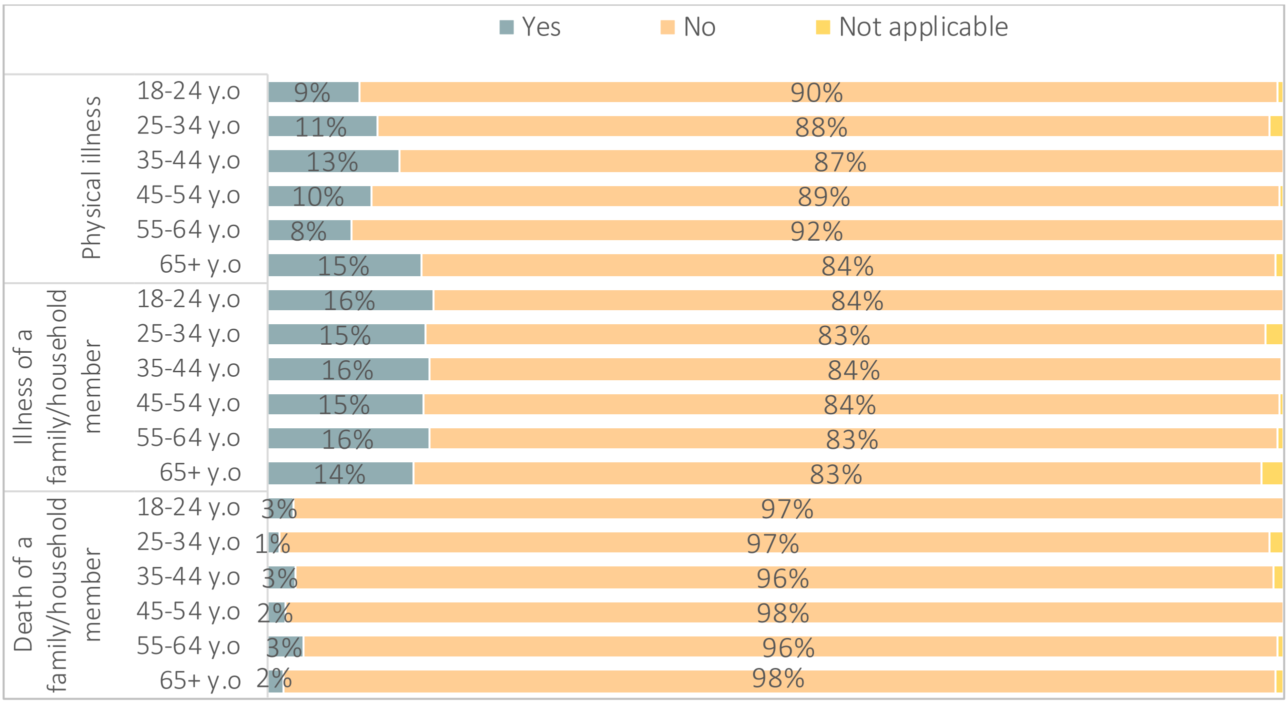
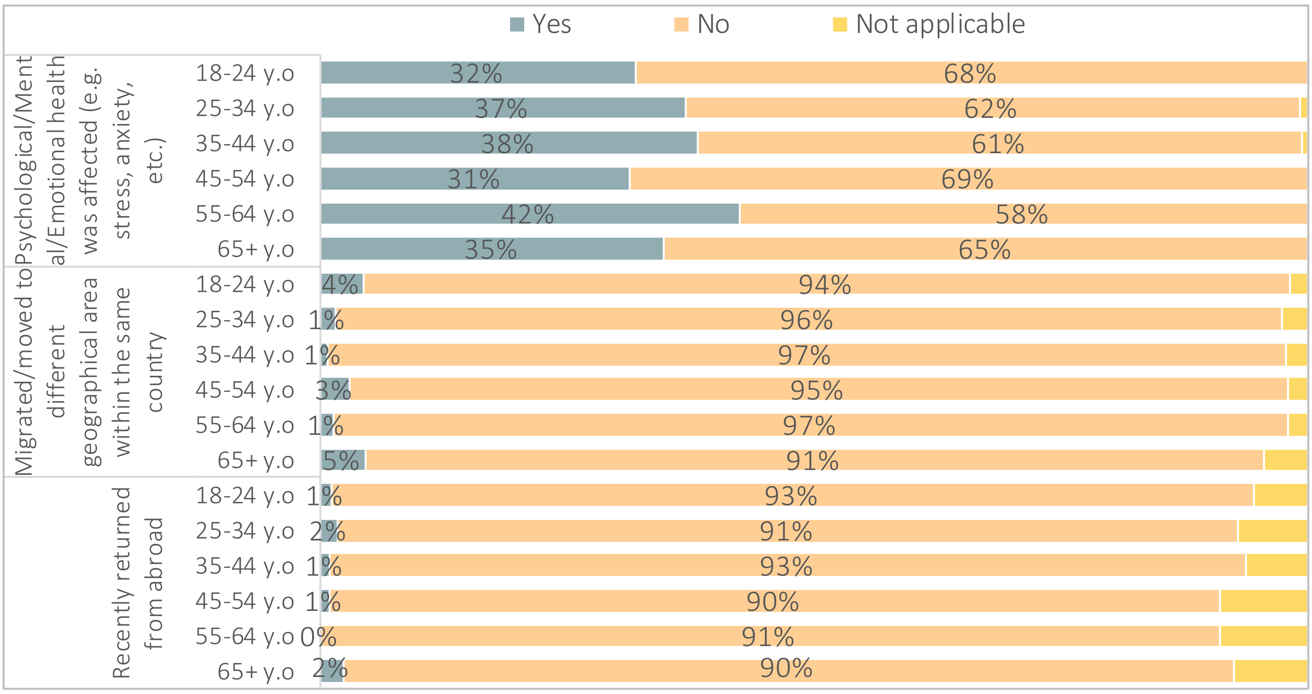
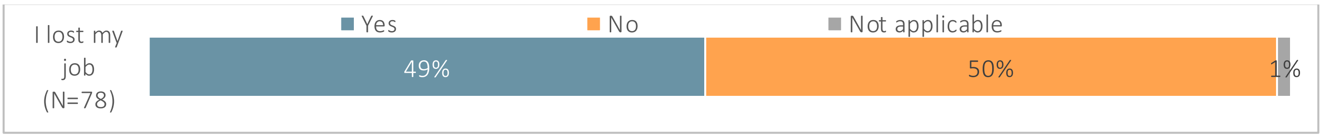


Figure 89 As a result of COVID-19, did you personally experience any of the following?, by age (2/2)



Losing jobs can increase the pressure for people especially during a pandemic. Indeed, 49% of those who lost a job since the spread of COVID-19, declared their mental and emotional health has been affected.

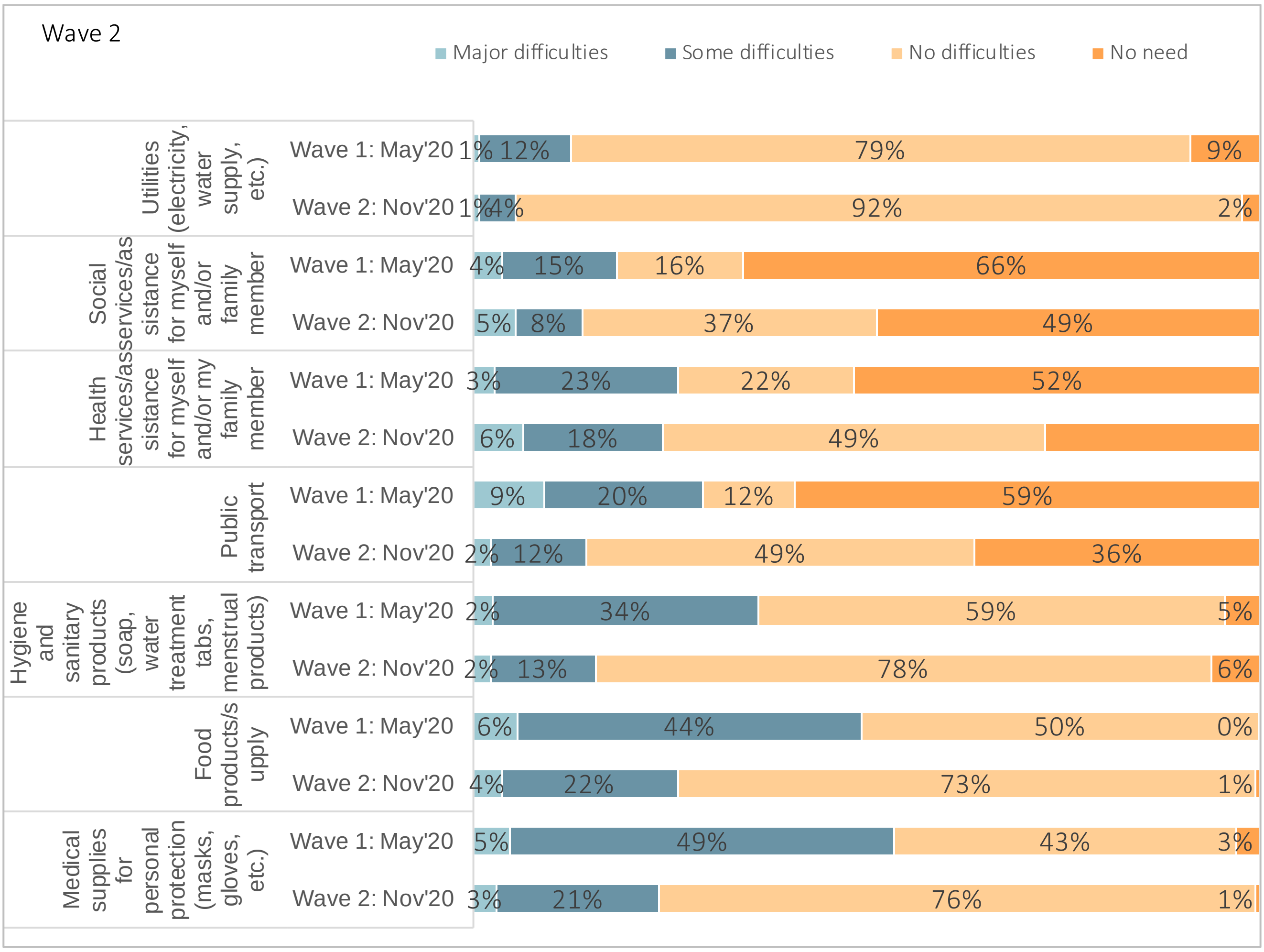
Figure 90 Respondents who lost jobs and declared mental and emotional health to have been affected



Access to basic utilities, social and health services, public transportation and basic health products was also explored within this survey. Overall, it can be observed that difficulties in accessing basic service have significantly decreased when comparing results from wave 1 and 2. These difficulties were more prone during wave 1 due to harsher restrictive measures in May 2020 compared to November 2020.

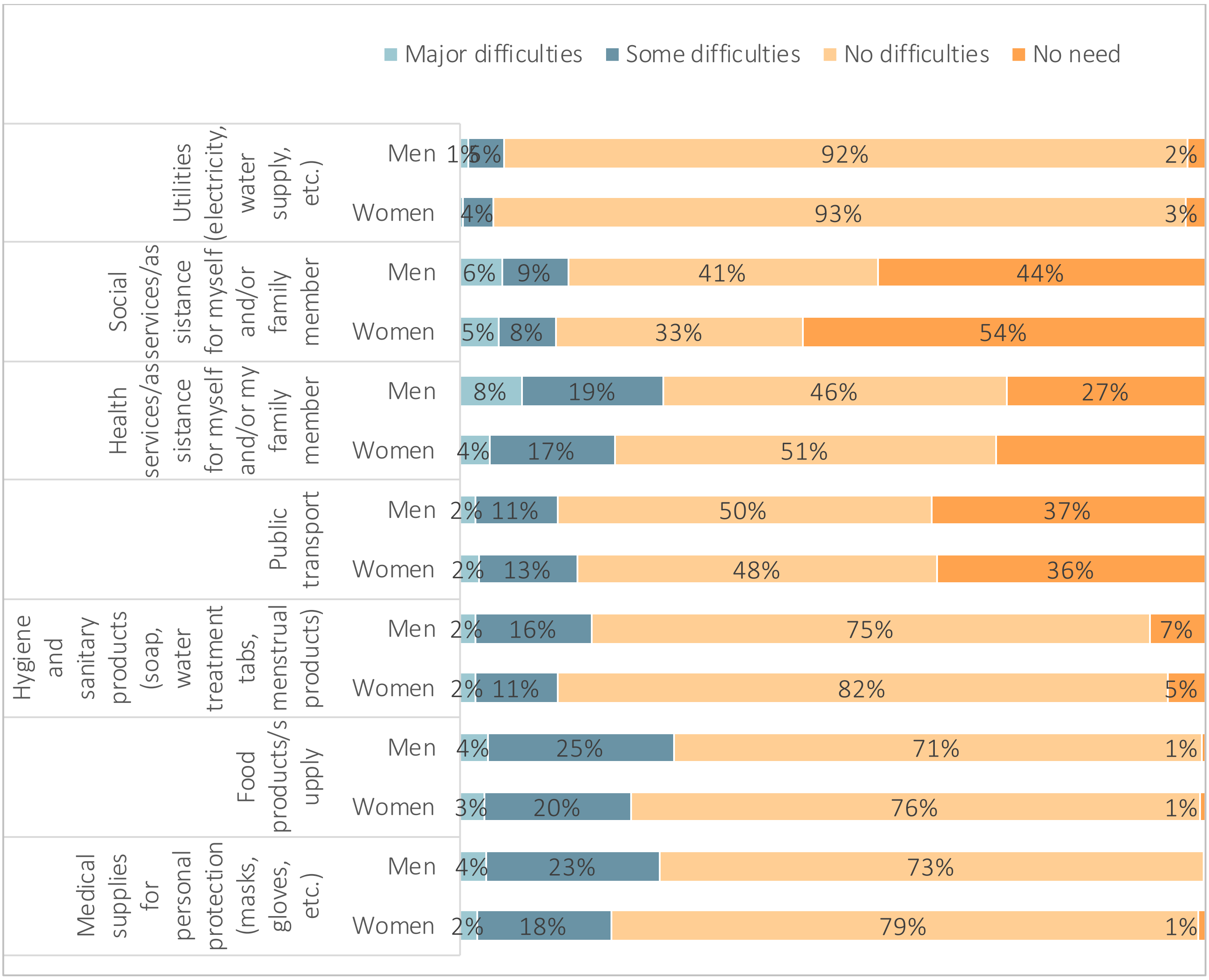
Nonetheless it is important to highlight that some difficulties appear to persist. Respondents reported some difficulties or major difficulties in regard to accessing food products (26% combined), protective personal equipment (PPEs) (24% combined) and health services (24% combined). Another 15% reported some or major difficulties in accessing hygiene/sanitary products, and 14% faced some difficulties in regard to accessing public transportation.

Figure 91 Personal experience with difficulties in accessing basic services, wave 1 vs wave 2



Results disaggregated by gender revealed that more men had major or some difficulties with accessing health services (27%) than women (21%). More men also reported major or some difficulties with accessing hygiene and sanity products as well as PPEs (18% and 27% respectively) than women (13% and 20% respectively). No significant differences were observed in regard to the access to other types of services.

Figure 92 Personal experience with difficulties in accessing basic services, by gender



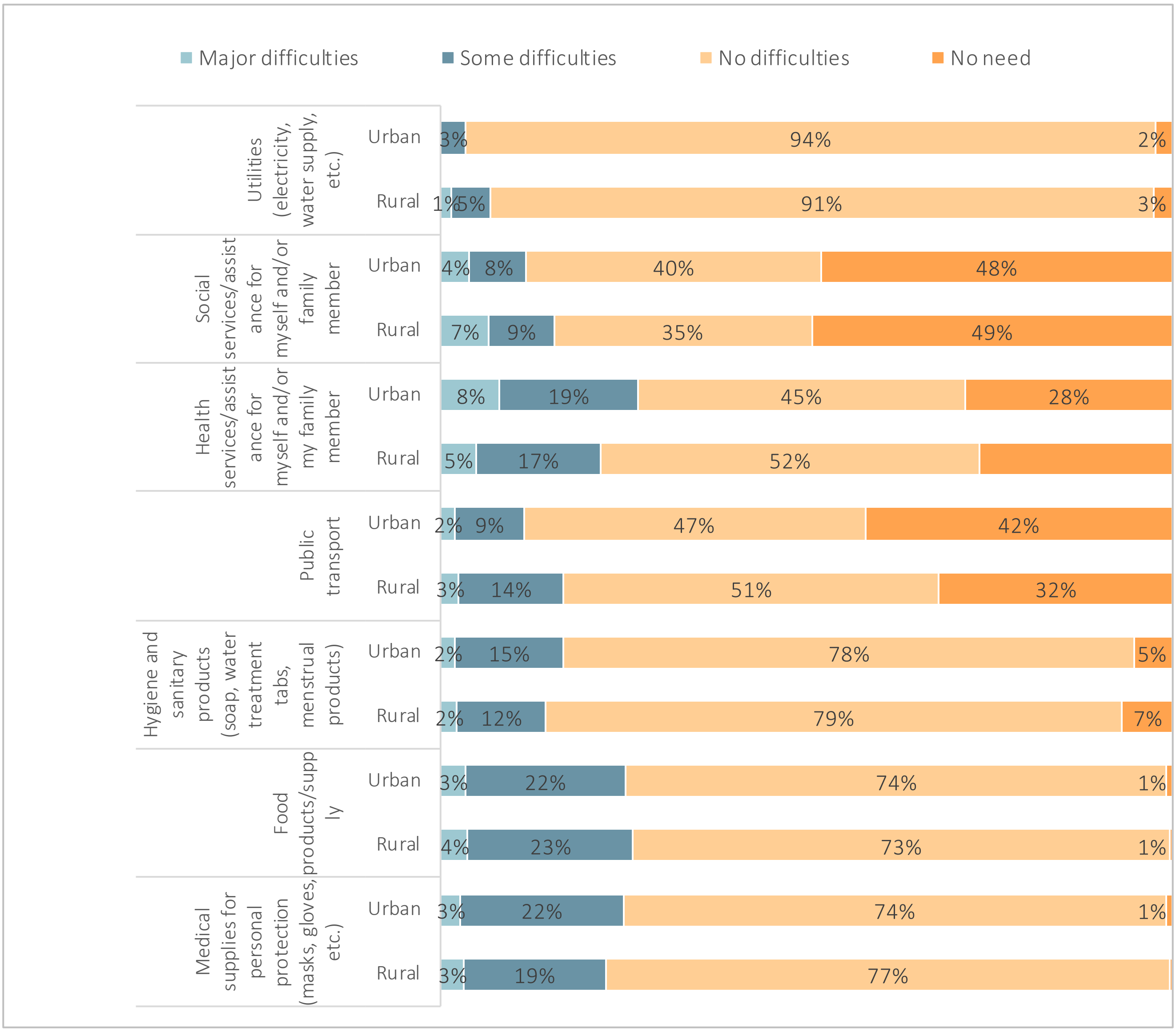
When assessing access to basic services in November 2020 by different regions some data results stood out. In the region of Gjakovë/Đakovica respondents reported difficulties to some extent with access to food supplies (42%), health services (41%), social services (37%) and medical supplies (36%). In Mitrovicë/Mitrovica difficulties in access were reported for food products and medical supplies (31% and 30% respectively), in Prishtinë/Priština as well in regard to the two afore mentioned (24% each) and in Prizren it stood out that 24% reported difficulties in accessing social services.

Figure 93 Personal experience with difficulties in accessing basic services, by region

Respondents that resided in rural areas were slightly more common to report major or some difficulties with utilities (6%) compared to those residing in urban areas (3%), the same applies to social services (16% rural vs 12% urban), and public transportation (17% vs 11%). On the other hand, more urban respondents reported major or some difficulties with accessing health services (27%) compared to those residing in rural areas (23%).

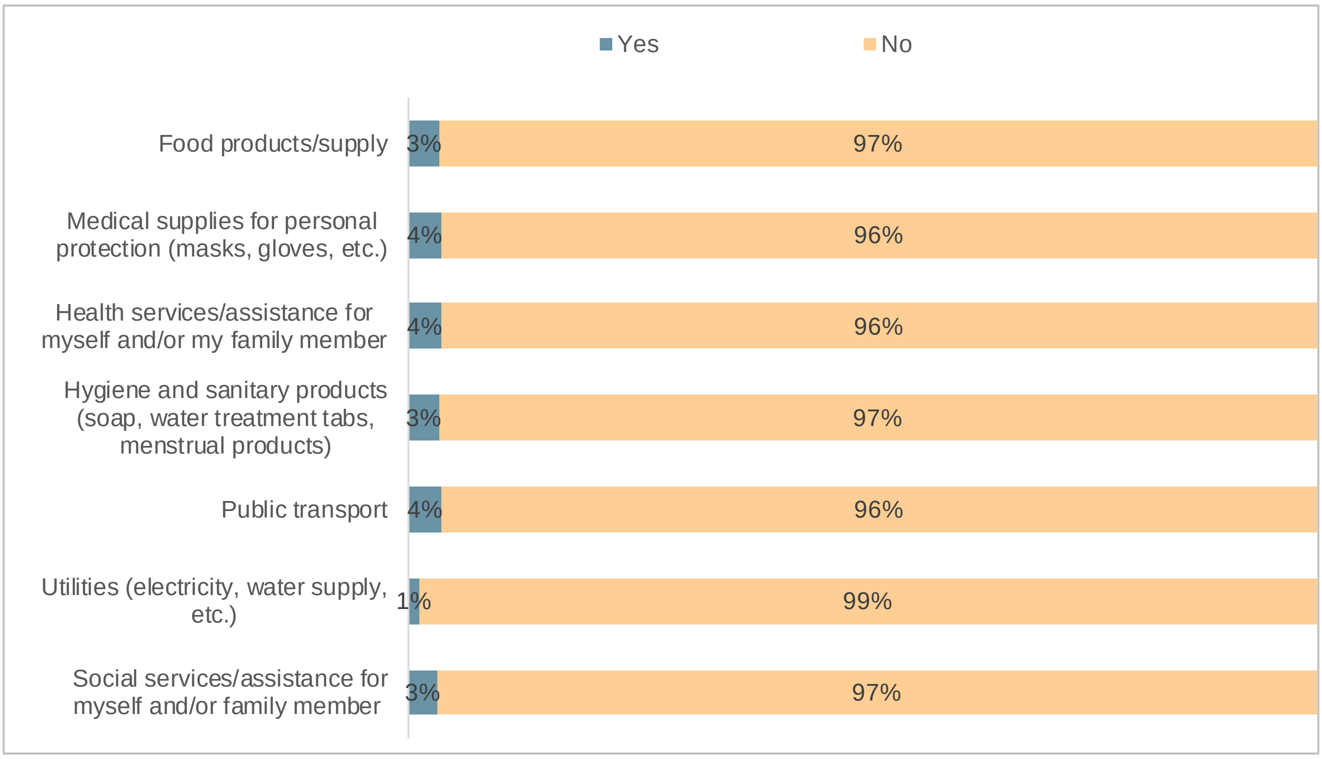
No significant differences were observed regarding the access to hygiene and sanitary products, food products and PPEs when consulting disaggregated data by urbanity.

Figure 94 Personal experience with difficulties in accessing basic services, by urbanity



Requests for favours or bribes in return for accessing basic services as a result of the COVID-19 situation appeared to be rare, however, not non-existent. Around 4% each reported request for bribes or favours in return for accessing protective medical supplies and health services as well as public transport. Three percent each reported such incident in regard to accessing food products, sanitary products or social services[15].

Figure 95 Experienced personally requests for favors or bribes for accessing basic services

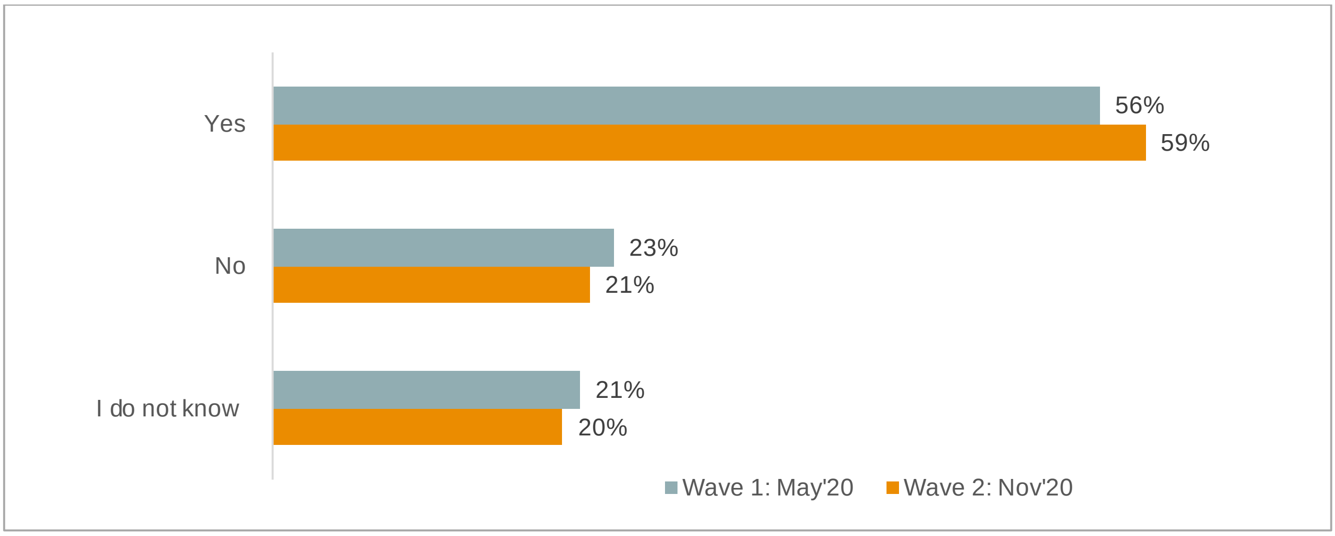


[15] This questionwas newly added to the survey questionnaire during wave 2.

The increase of domestic violence since the spread of COVID-19 has been noted in many countries over the world. Recently, Kosovo Police published the cases of domestic violence reported between January and September 2020. The number of reported cases amounted to 1,571, around 144 more cases compared to the same period in 2019.[16]

Around 59% of the respondents that took part in the second wave of this assessment felt that domestic violence has increased since the begin of the pandemic. This portrays a slight increase by three percentage points compared to the perceptions in May 2020 during the first wave of the SEIA.

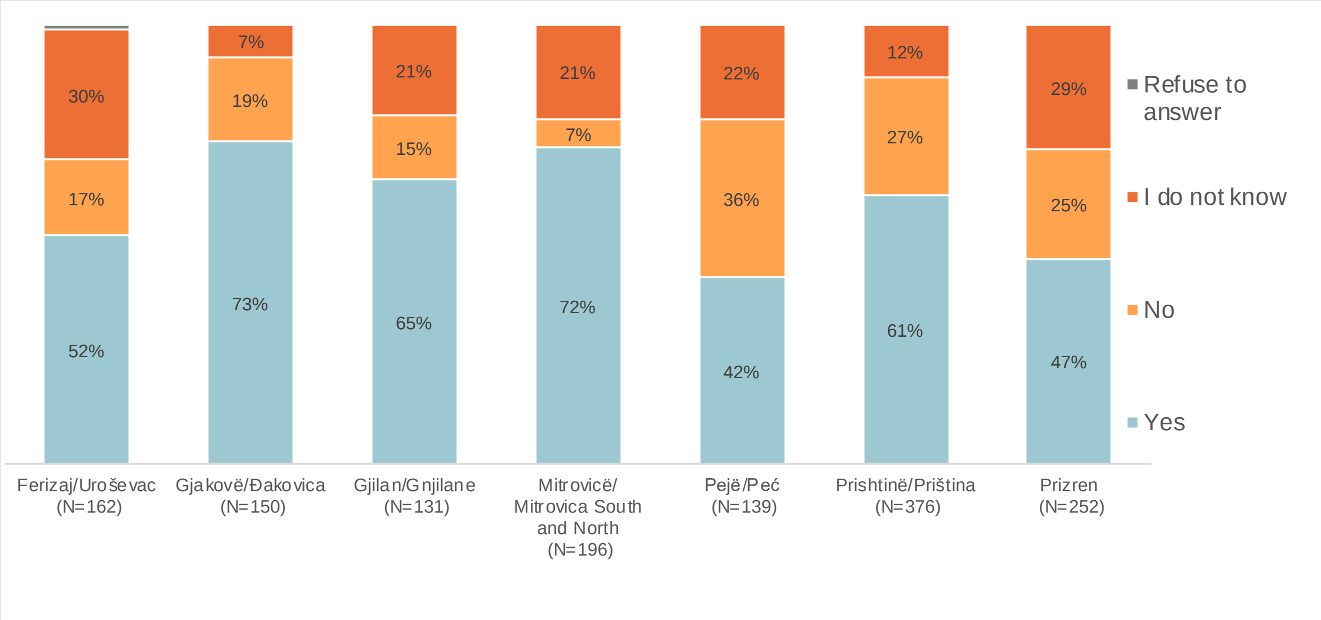
Figure 96 Perceived increase of domestic violence since the spread of COVID-19, wave 1 vs wave 2



Perception of increased domestic violence were especially high in Gjakovë/Đakovica and Mitrovicë/Mitrovica (73% and 72% respectively) followed by respondents residing in Prishtinë/Priština (61%) and Gjilan/Gnjilane (65%).

[16] Balkan Insight, November 2020, https://balkaninsight.com/2020/11/25/women-of-southeast-central-europe-protest-rise-in-male-violence/
Last accessed 08.12.2020
Kosovo Police. Email Response to official request by IDRA.

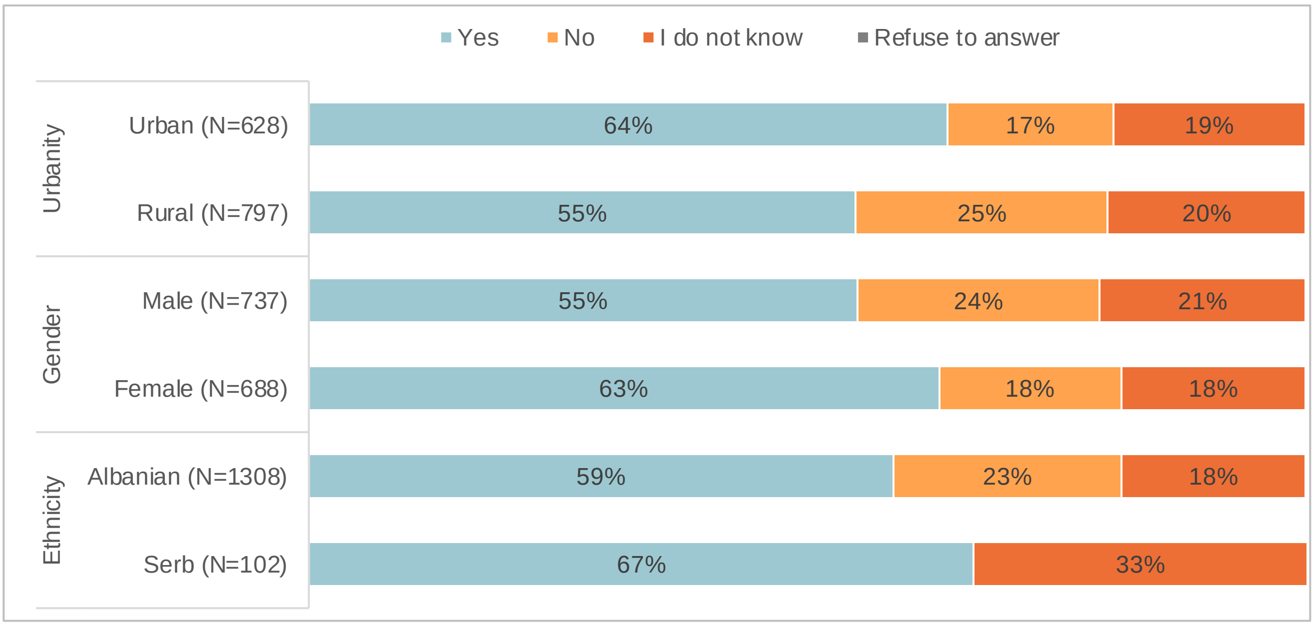
Figure 97 Perceived increase of domestic violence since the spread of COVID-19, by region



Furthermore, it should be noted that more than two in three K Serb respondents felt that domestic violence has increased since the onset of the pandemic (67%), while one third did not know an answer to this question.

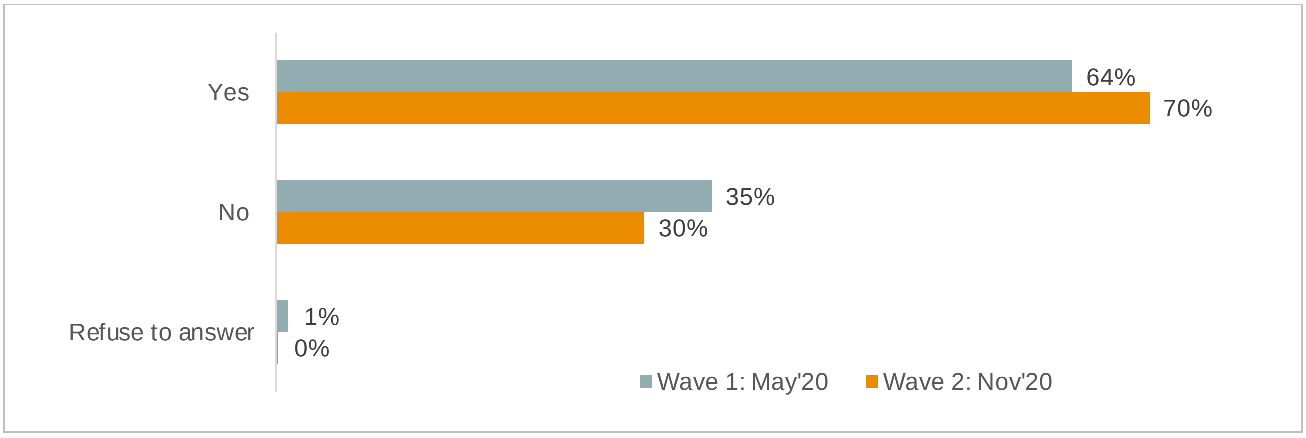
Data also showed that respondents residing in urban areas and women were more likely to believe that domestic violence has increased (64% and 63% respectively).

Figure 98 Perceived increase of domestic violence since the spread of COVID-19, by urbanity, gender and ethnicity



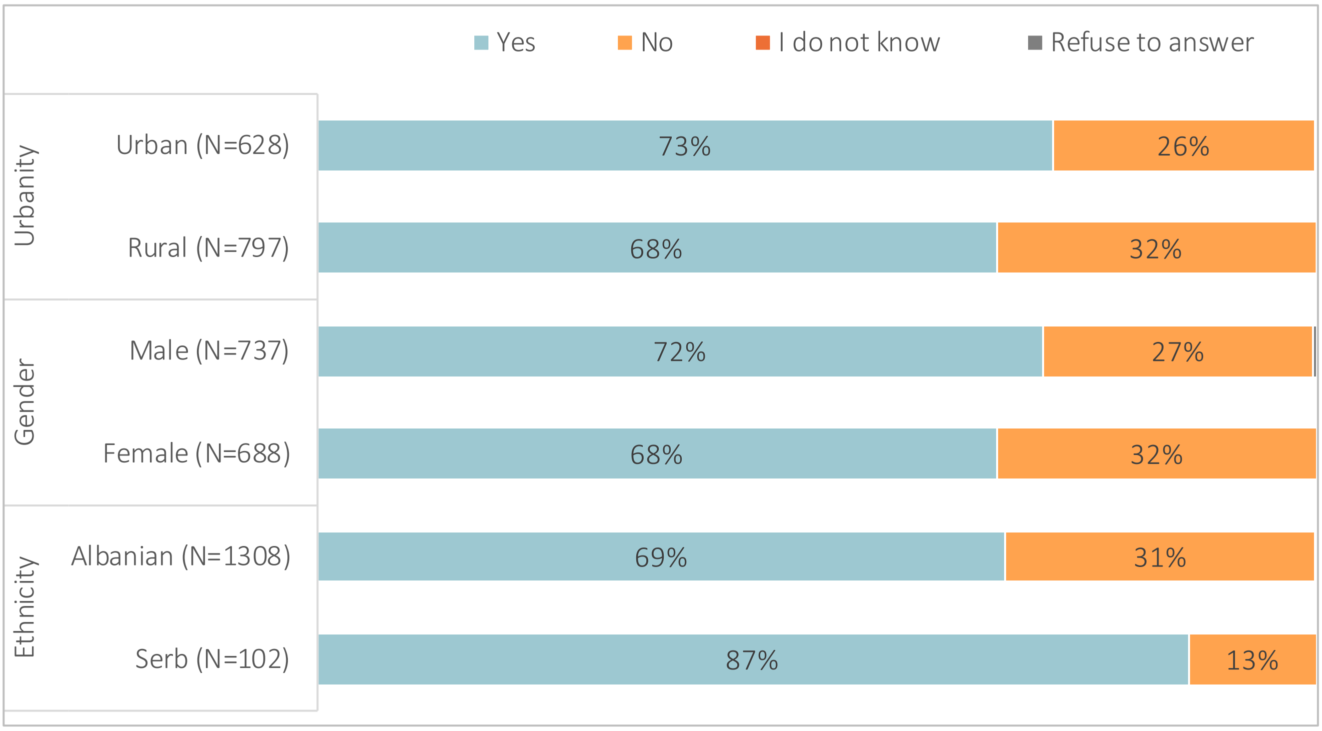
On a positive note, more respondents reported to know where to seek help and support in case of domestic violence in November 2020 (70%) than during the first wave of the assessment in May 2020 (64%). Nonetheless, it remains concerning that nearly one third did not know where to seek help in such cases (30%).

Figure 99 Knowledge where to seek help and support in case of someone experiencing domestic violence such as hotlines, psychological and police support, wave 1 vs wave 2



K Serb respondents appeared to be more knowledgeable (87%) than K Albanian respondents (69%) in regard to where one can seek help and support when domestic violence occurs. Concerningly, while 63% of women believed that domestic violence has increased (graph above), nearly one in three of them declared not to know where to seek help and support in case of experiencing domestic violence (32%).

Figure 100 Knowledge where to seek help and support in case of someone experiencing domestic violence such as hotlines, psychological and police support, by gender, urbanity and ethnicity

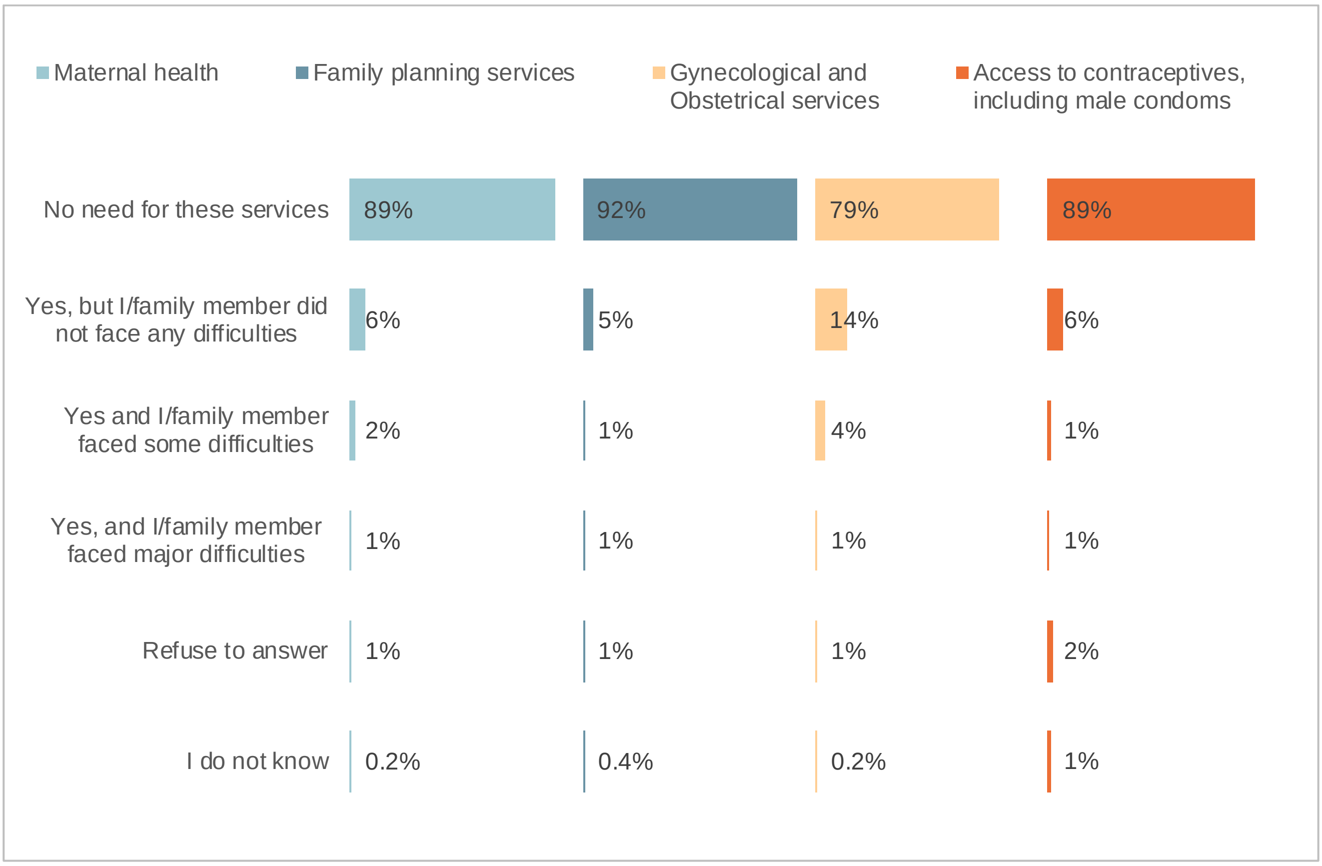


3.1.7 Sexual and Reproductive Health

The respondents were asked whether they personally experienced difficulties in accessing sexual and reproductive health services as well as contraceptives for themselves, their partner or other family members.

Data results showed that the clear majority had no need to access sexual and reproductive services. Those who responded positively did not report any difficulties when attempting to access any of the listed services. Around 4% and 2% reported some difficulties in accessing gynaecological services or maternal health services, respectively.

Figure 101 Since the spread of COVID-19, did you personally need to access and experienced difficulties in accessing the following sexual and reproductive health services and contraceptive for yourself, your partner or other family member



3.2. Business Survey

This section of the report presents the data results gained from the second wave of the business survey with 601 businesses in Kosovo. Data results are compared to wave 1 where applicable. This chapter is divided into sub-sections based on the questionnaire which was used to conduct the survey.

3.2.1 Business Profiles

Matching the overall business landscape in Kosovo, around one third of businesses who took part in the survey were located in the region of Prishtinë/Priština (36%), while 16% were based in the region of Prizren and 13% in Gjakovë/Đakovica. Around 5% to 10% were in other regions. For meaningful data analysis, disaggregation by region is divided into "Prishtinë/Priština" and "Non-Prishtinë/Priština" based businesses. Around 55% were micro businesses (1-9 employees), while 33% were small in size (10-49 employees) and 12% belonged to the medium and big category (50+ employees).

The legal status of most businesses who took part in this survey was sole proprietorship (63%), while 31% were categorized as limited liability companies. The majority had a business tenure of more than five years (74%), while 26% had a tenure of one to five years.

Figure 102. Regional business distribution

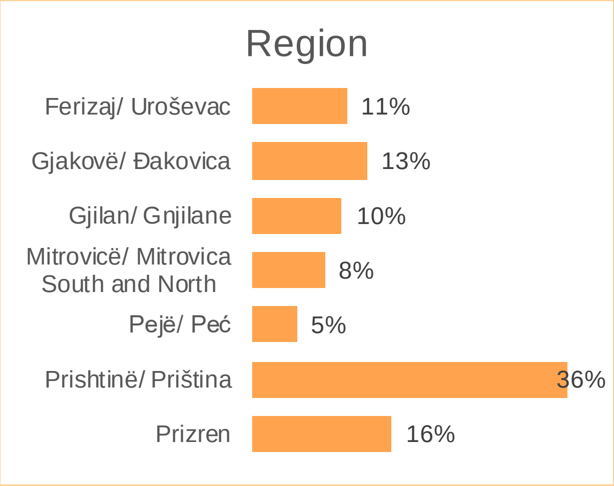


Figure 103. Business size

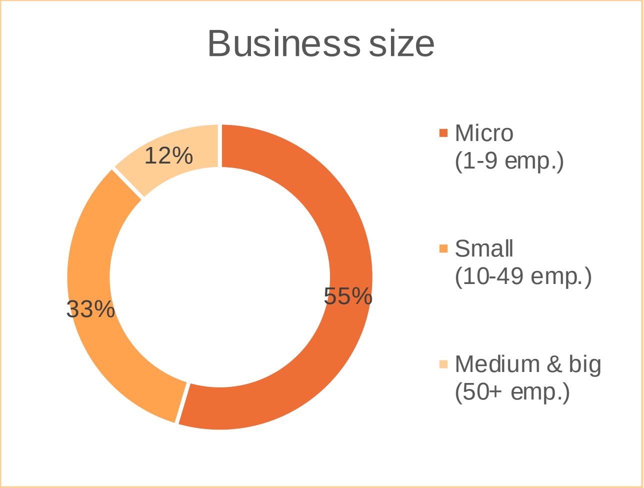


Figure 104. Business legal status

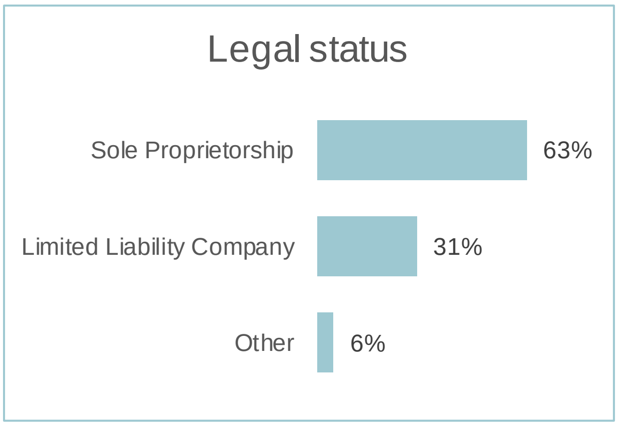
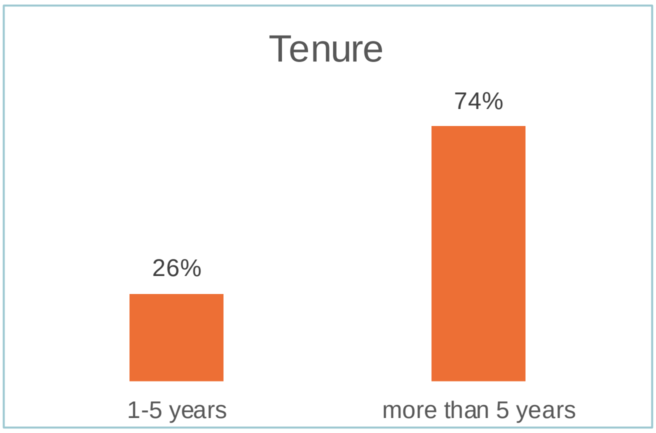


Figure 105. Business tenure



Business sectors most represented in this assessment were retail trade (22%), industry/production (18%) and construction (14%). The clear majority of businesses did not engage with exporting goods or services (77%).

Figure 106. Business sector distribution

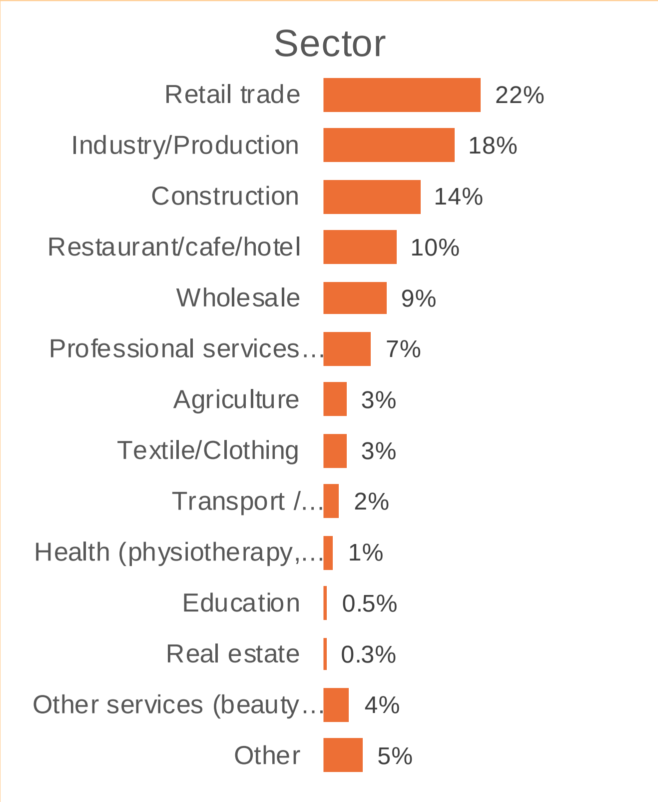
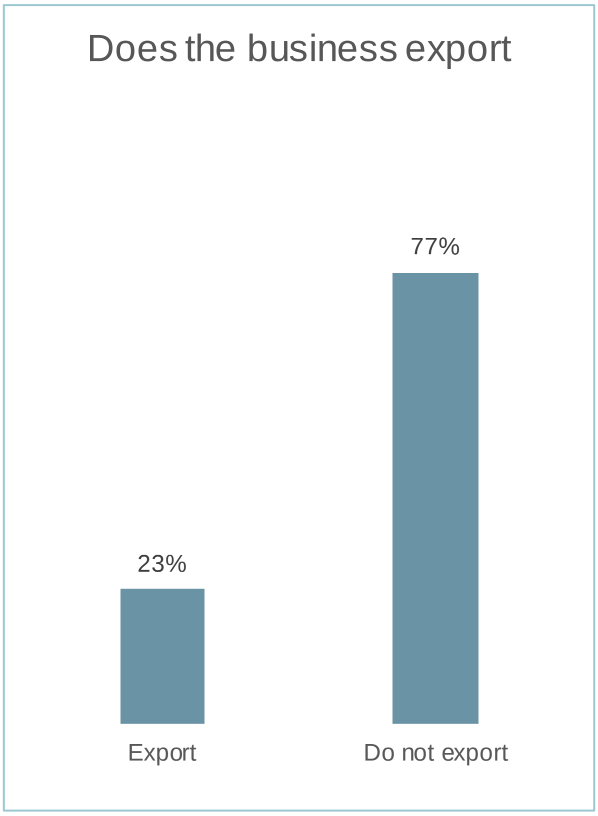


Figure 107. Businesses engaging with export

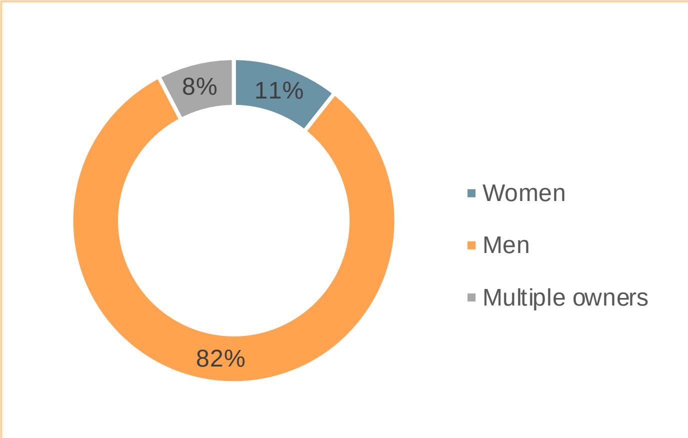


3.2.2 COVID-19 Impact on Businesses

The first section of the business survey explores the impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on businesses. It assesses the extent of impacts and compares to the survey findings of the first SEIA conducted in May 2020 where applicable.

Most of the surveyed businesses were owned by men (82%). Only 11% of the businesses were owned by women. Whereas, 8% of the businesses had multiple owners.

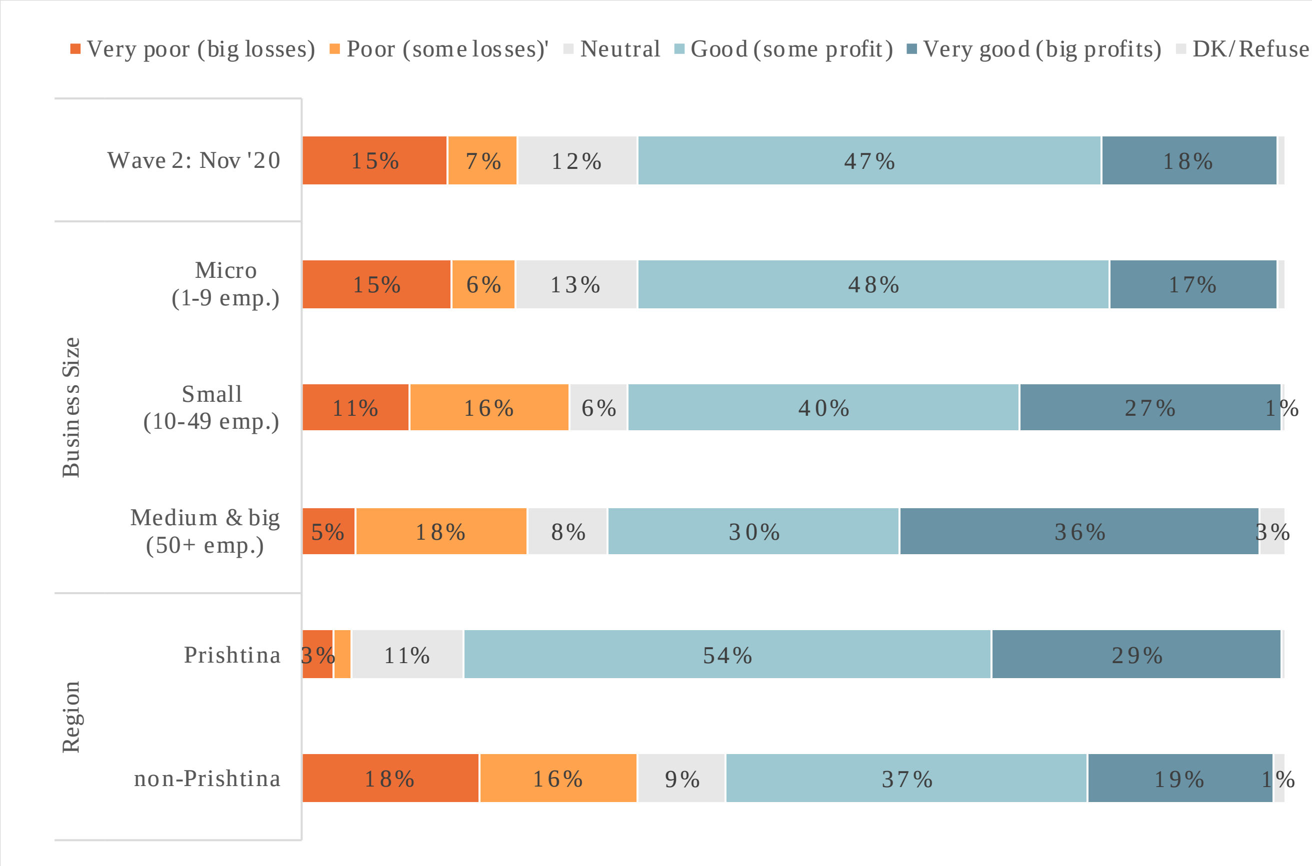
Figure 108 Gender of company owner



Most of the surveyed businesses reported that their financial performance prior the COVID-19 pandemic had been good or very good (65% combined). On the other hand, around 22% declared a very poor or poor financial performance.

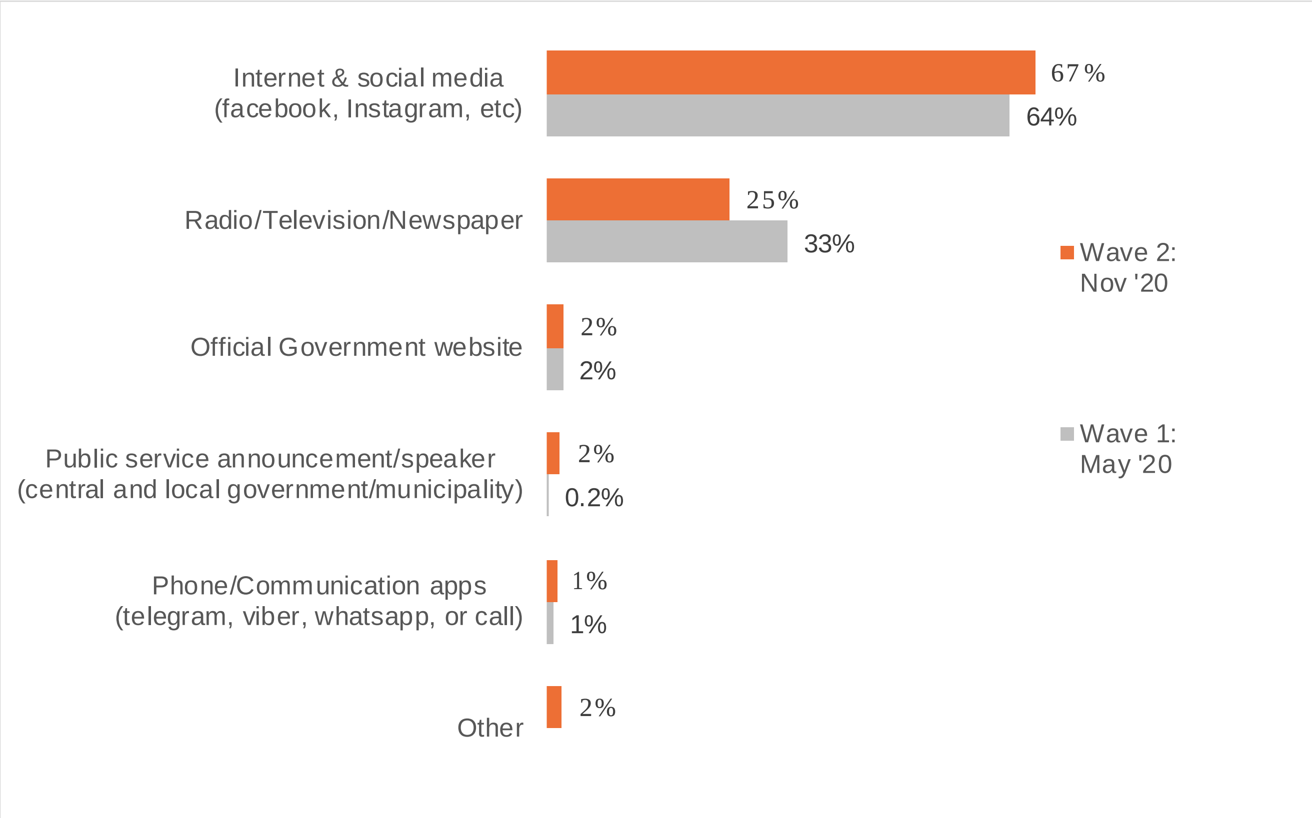
Data results showed that those businesses located in other regions than Prishtinë/Priština were significantly more likely to have performed poor or very poor before the beginning of the pandemic (34% combined).

Figure 109. Financial performance of businesses before COVID-19



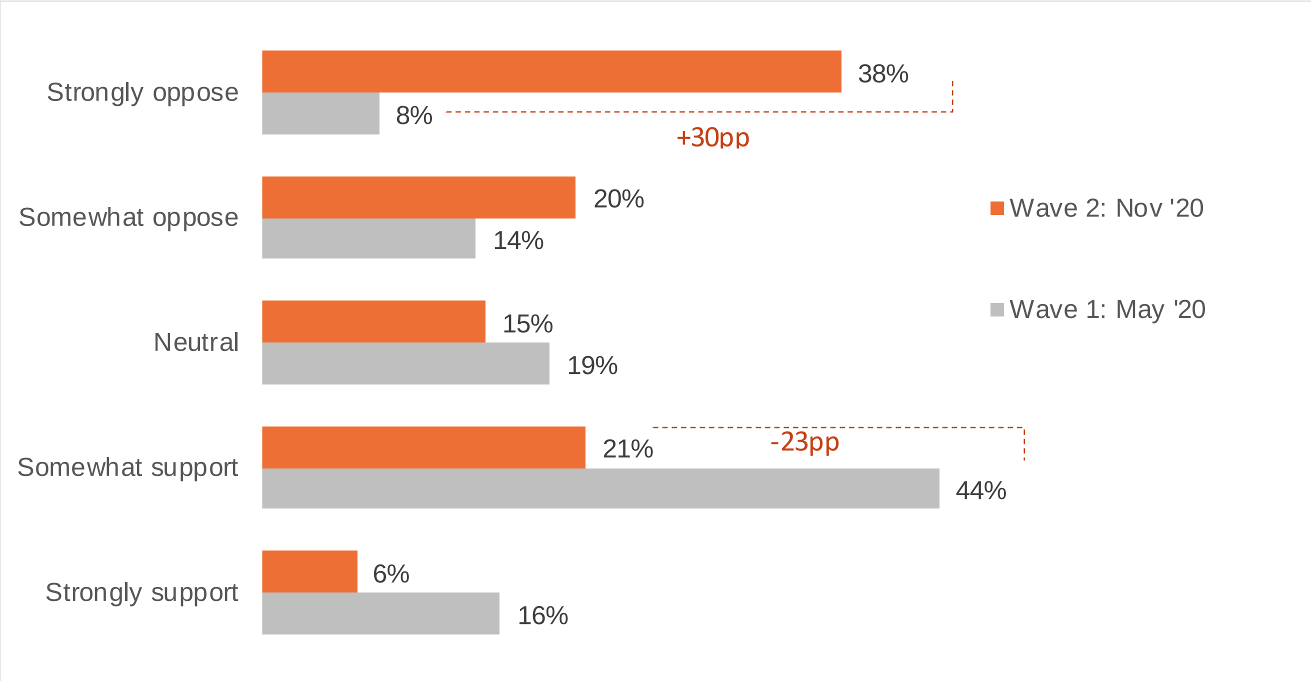
Internet and social media remained to be the most commonly used sources for around two thirds of business respondents (67%) when obtaining information regarding COVID-19. Fewer business respondents declared during wave 2 to make use of radio, television and newspapers (25%) than during wave 1 (33%). The usage of official Kosovo institutions' websites, public announcements and phone apps remained low during this wave among businesses.

Figure 110 Main source of information regarding COVID-19 (risks, recommended preventive action, coping strategies), wave 1 vs wave 2



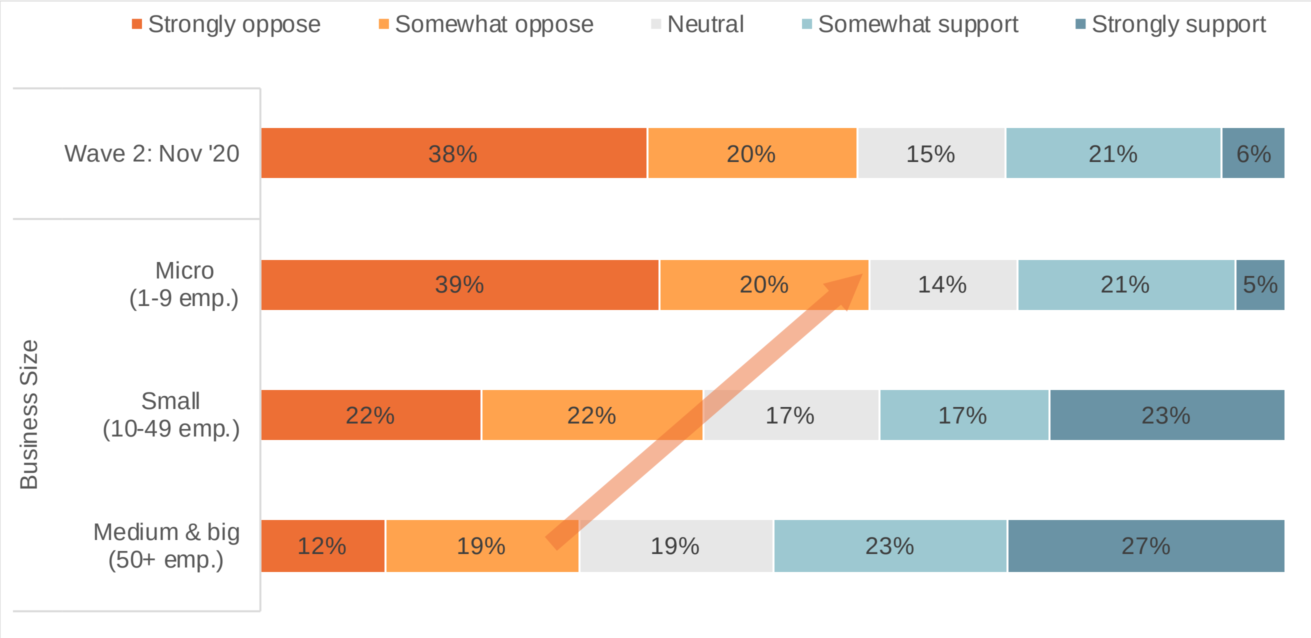
The support for restrictive measures to close or limit business activity has dropped significantly. In May 2020 over half of the business respondents declared to somewhat support (44%) or strongly support (16%) the measures. This is opposed to November 2020 where only 21% somewhat supported and 6% strongly supported the measures. Strong opposition to said measures has increased by 30 percentage points (pp) from 8% to 38%. Some reasons for this could be related to the delay of Kosovo institutions' help towards businesses; the delayed approval of the Law on Economic Recovery; and the distrust in Kosovo institutions as an ally. Moreover, the time element could be a reason here since being closed for nine months as opposed to three months fully or partially has more negative effects.

Figure 111 Support to the current restrictive measures to close/limit business activity in order to slow down the spread of COVID-19, wave 1 vs wave 2



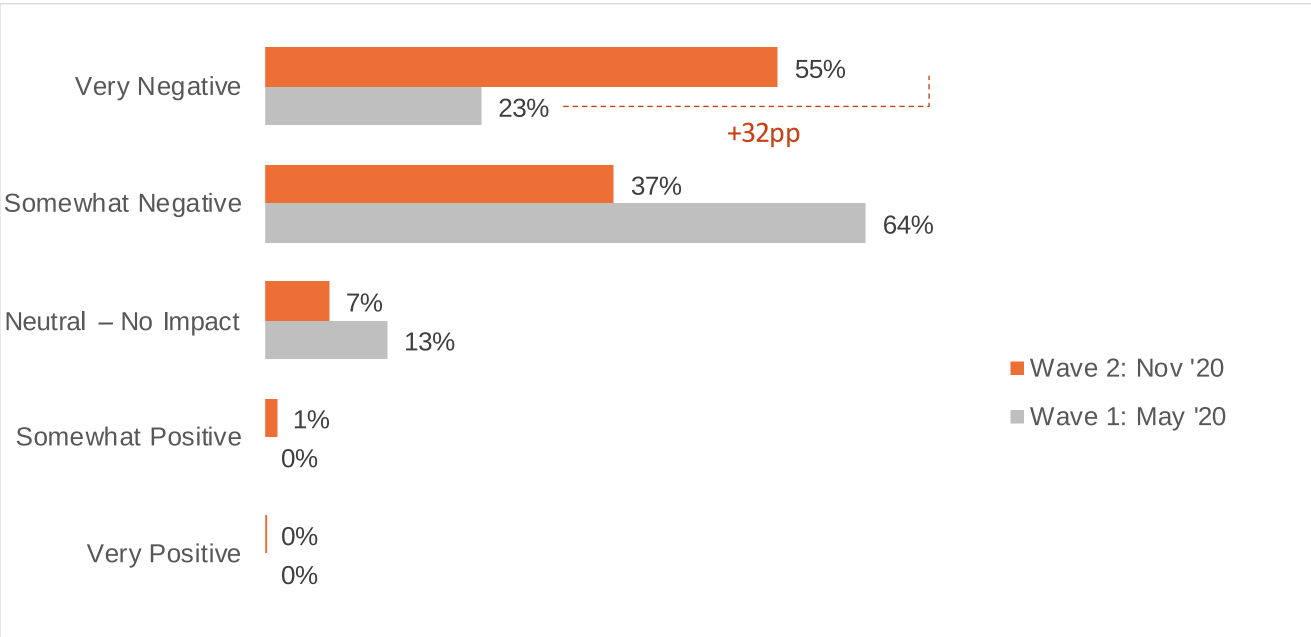
Data results further showed that the smaller the business is in size, the more they oppose the restrictive measures. While 59% of micro business respondents opposed the measures, 44% of small businesses and only 31% medium and big enterprises were against them (strong and somewhat opposed combined).

Figure 112. Level of support to current restrictive measures to close/limit business activity in order to slow the spread of COVID-19, by business size



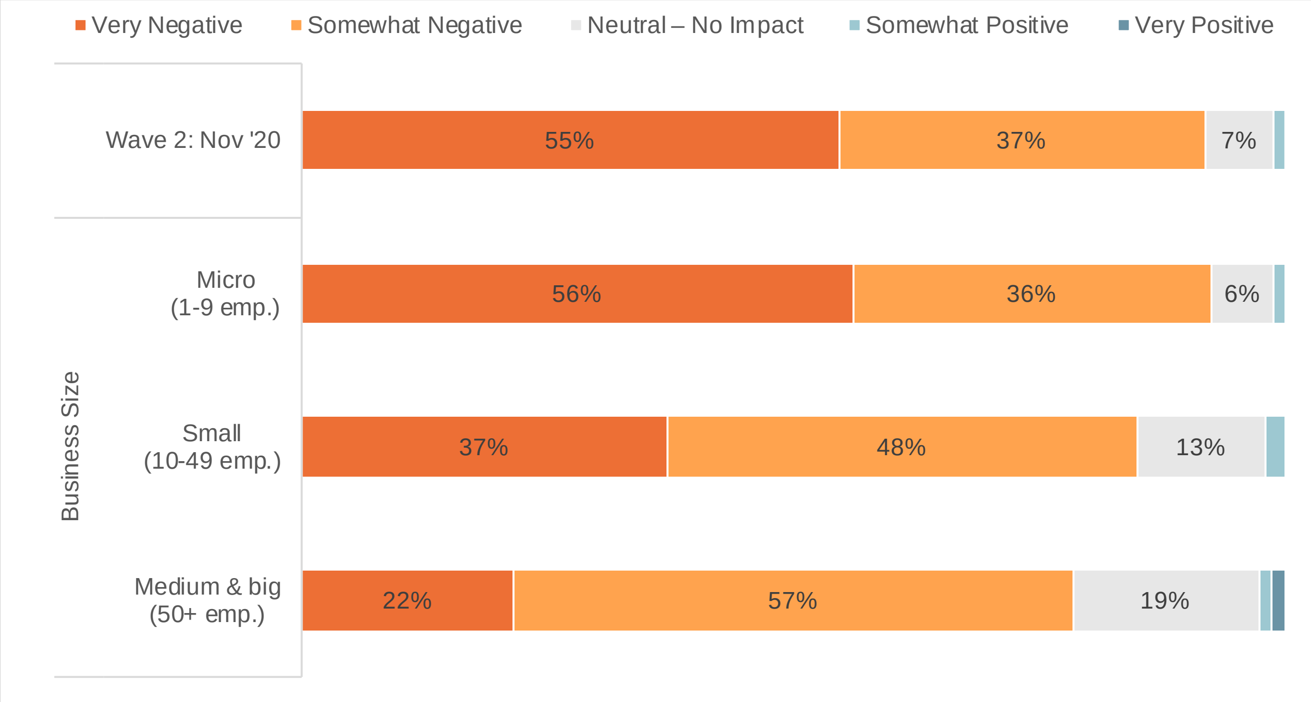
The survey also measured the general impact COVID-19 had on businesses until now. Data clearly showed that negative impacts have increased over time. In May 2020, 23% declared the impact of the pandemic is likely to be very negative, this number rose to 55% in November 2020, an increase of 32pp.On the other hand, 13% of the businesses reported not having been impacted by COVID-19 during wave 1, and only 7% of all businesses still claimed to not be impacted by the pandemic during wave 2.

Figure 113 Impact of COVID-19 on businesses in general, wave 1 vs wave 2



Micro businesses appeared to be hit especially hard by the pandemic and its effects which may also explain their strong opposition to restrictive measures. Over half (56%) of micro businesses respondents declared to have witnessed a very negative impact and another 36% a somewhat negative impact. While somewhat negative impacts are clearly visible across all business segments, medium and big businesses stand slightly out with 19% which reported no impact.

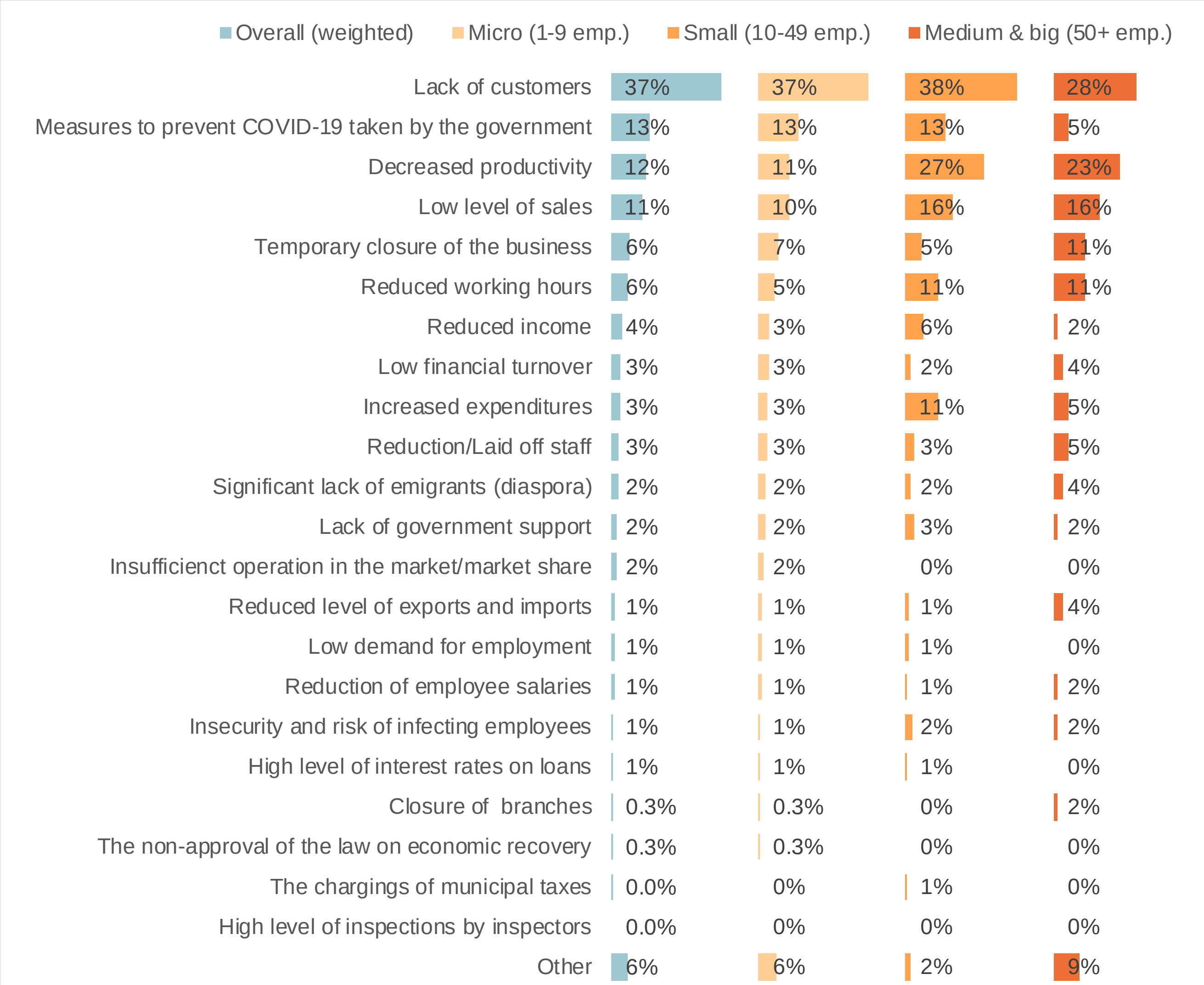
Figure 114 Impact of COVID-19 on businesses in general, by business size



Those businesses that declared that COVID-19 had negative or very negative impact upon their businesses were asked for the respective reasons for that assessment.

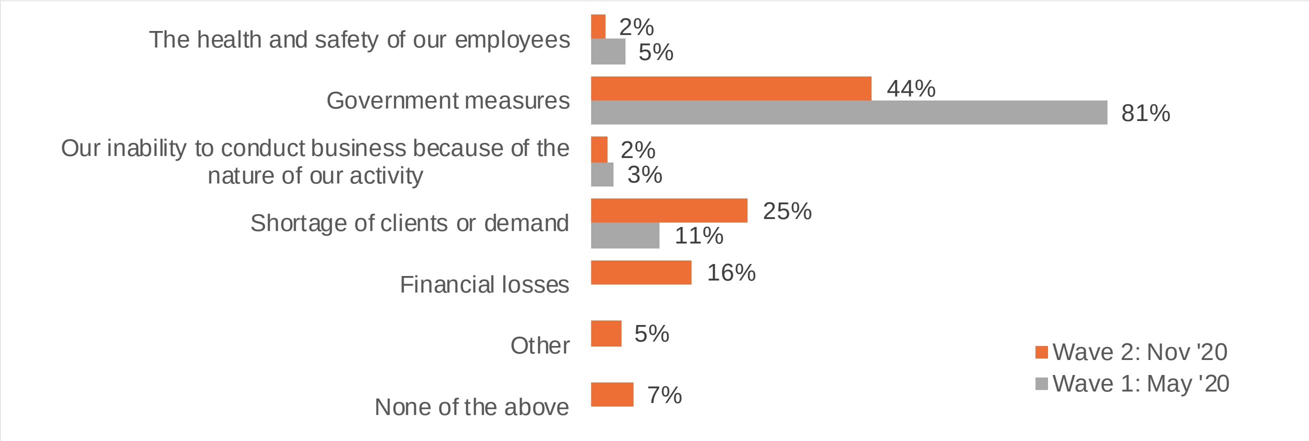
Nearly two in five businesses stated the lack of customers (37%) as the main problem stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. About 13% of them mentioned the imposition of restrictive measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 as a reason. Another 12% and 11% respectively stated the decrease in productivity and low levels of sales to be the reasons. Small businesses appeared to have especially suffered with a decrease in productivity (27%) compared to medium/big companies (23%) and micro businesses (11%). Medium and big business stand out with fewer who viewed the restrictive measures as reasons for negative impacts (5%) when compared to small or micro businesses (13% each).

Figure 115 Reasons for very negative and negative impact, by business size



Businesses that had to stop their business activities most commonly mentioned restrictive measures as the main reason (44%), however, this portrays a significant decrease of respondents mentioning this reason (-37pp) compared to the previous wave of the SEIA. During the second wave of the SEIA, the shortage of clients or demand was the main reason for one in four businesses to stop their activity (25%). In May 2020 only 11% had mentioned this reason. Whereas, albeit in May businesses did suspend activity due to financial losses, 16% of them cited this as the main reason to suspend business activity in November 2020[17].

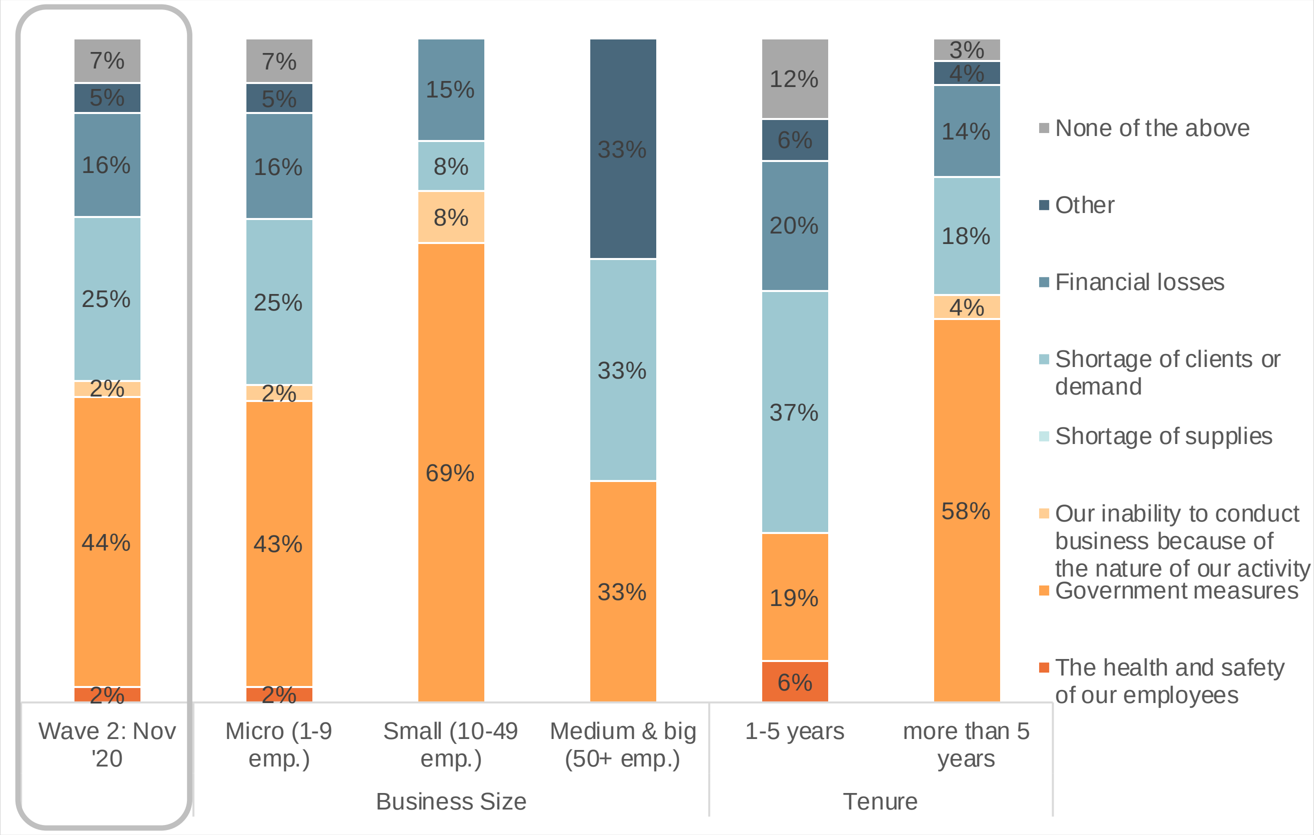
Figure 116 Main reason for suspending business activity, wave 1 vs wave 2



More than two thirds of small businesses declared to have stopped their activities due to restrictive measures (69%), compared to 43% and 33% of micro and medium/big businesses respectively. The shortage of clients or demand was more commonly a reason for closure for young businesses (37%) and medium/big businesses (33%).

[17] *This response option was added to the questionnaire during wave 2.*

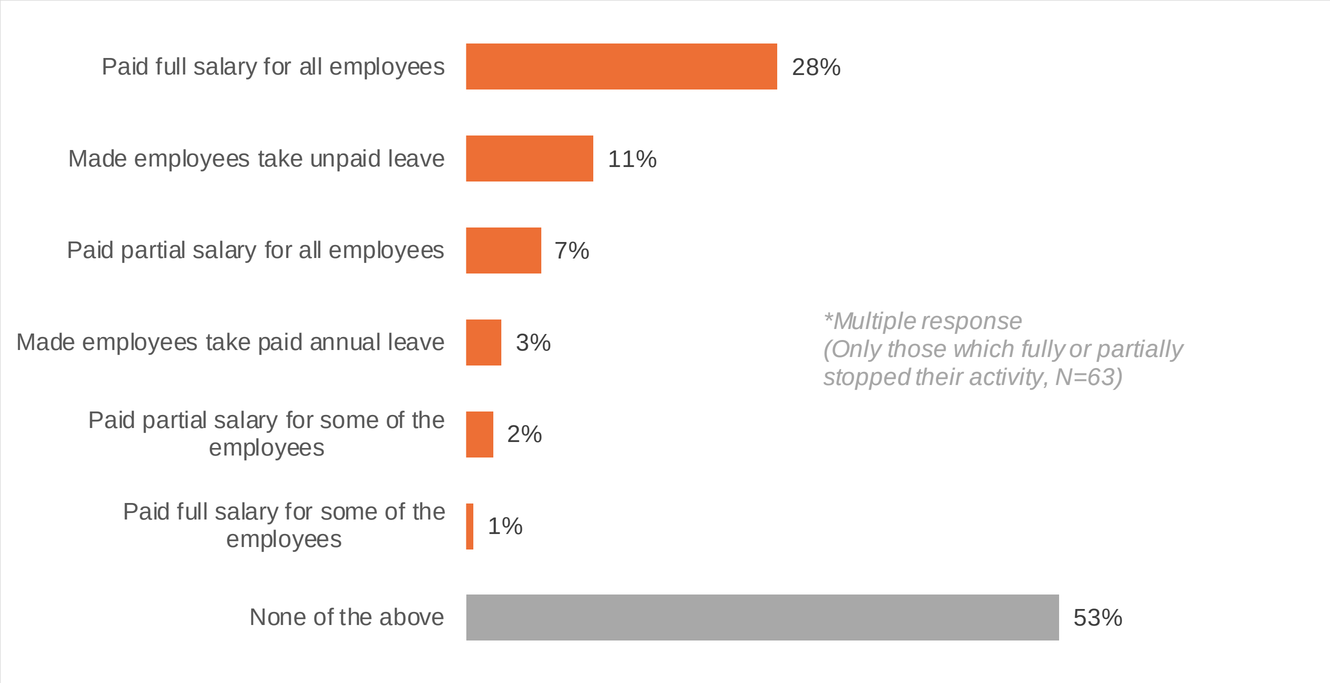
Figure 117 Main reason for suspending business activity, by business size



Only 28% of the businesses which fully or partially had suspended their activity paid full salaries for all the employees. Obligating employees to take unpaid leave occurred in 11% of cases, while 7% declared to have paid partial salaries for all their employees.

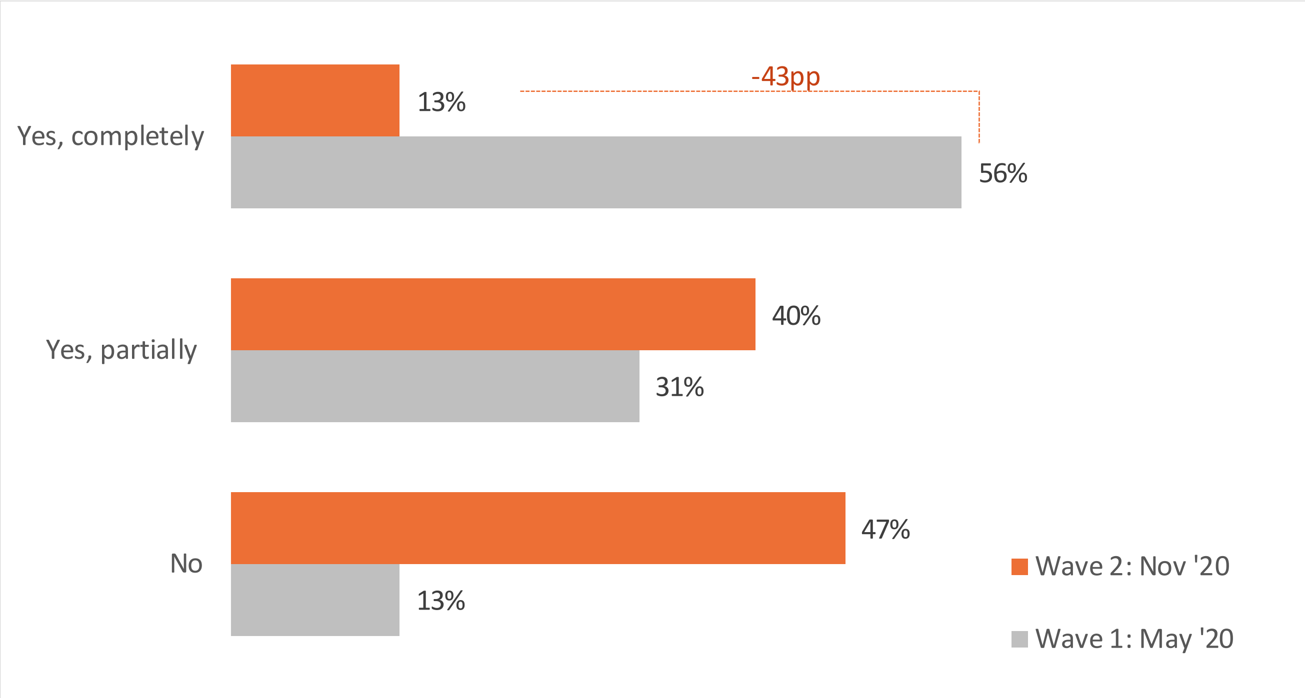
Overall, 53% of all business respondents declared that they did not impose leave upon employees and did not pay partial or full salaries for all or some employees.

Figure 118 Applicability of statements regarding the period May- September 2020



Changes in the lockdown measures and gradual re-opening of the society in June 2020 are also visible in the data obtained from this wave´s survey. During wave 1, over half of businesses reported that their business activity was fully stopped due to the COVID-19 situation, while in November 2020, only 13% reported the same. Conversely, partial stop to business activities was more commonly reported during wave 2 (40%), than during wave 1 (31%).

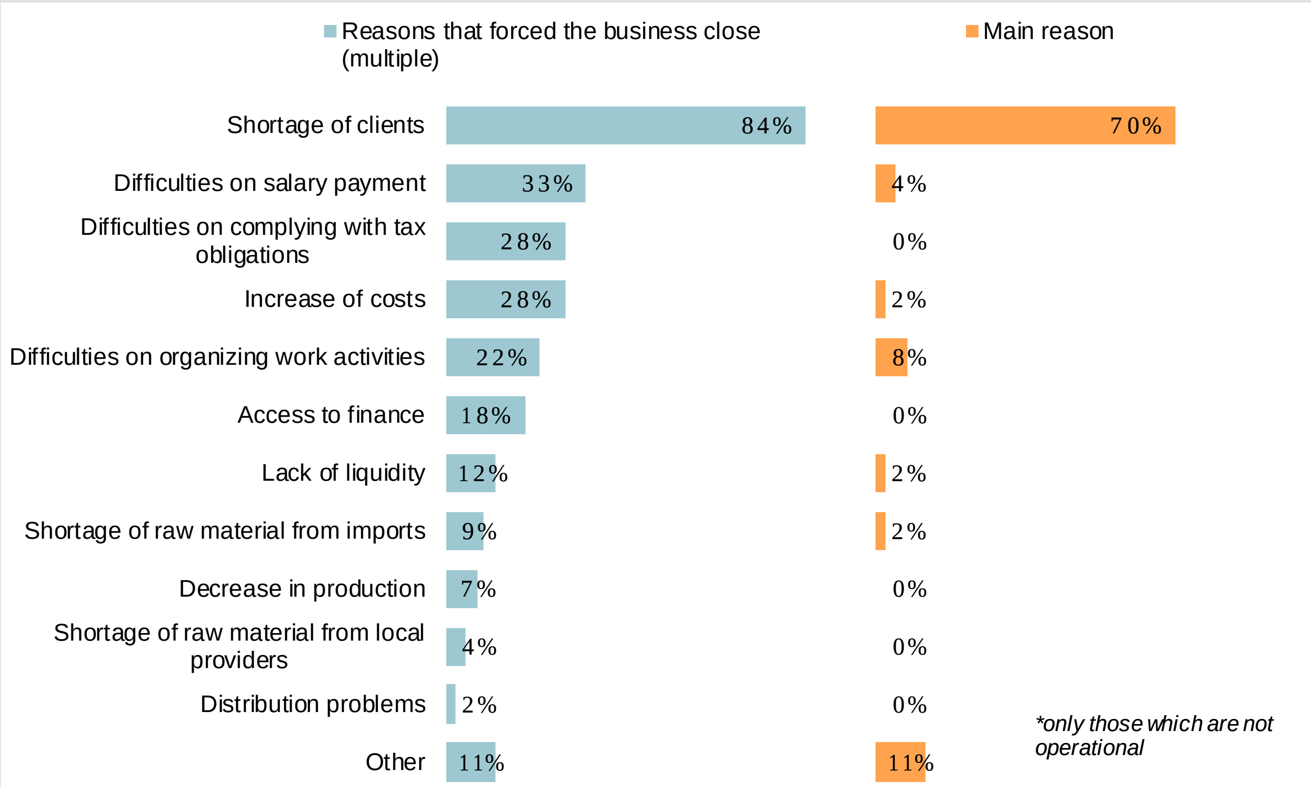
Figure 119 Full or partial stop of business activity because of COVID-19, wave 1 vs wave 2



Those businesses which experienced a full stop in their activities (13%) were next asked about the reasons causing it.

The shortage of clients stood out as a reason, with 84% who mentioned this issue and 70% who declared this to be the main reason for full stop in business activity. Another third mentioned difficulties with salary payments (33%), while 28% each declared difficulties in complying with tax obligations or an increase of costs as a reason for closure. Another 22% mentioned difficulties related to organizing work activities, while 8% also declared difficulties related to organizing work activities to be the main reason for a full stop in their business activity.

Figure 120 Reasons and main reason for full stop in business activity

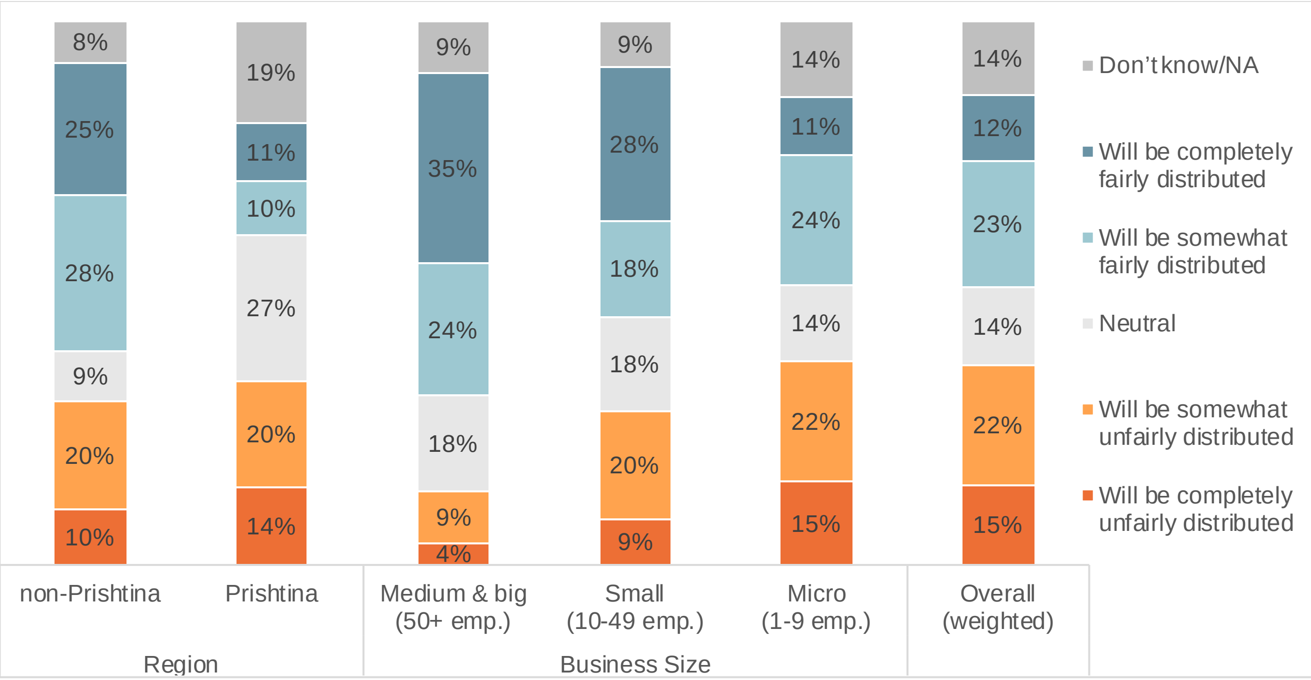


During this second wave, the business survey also assessed whether respondents believed that future economic relief packages for businesses will be fairly distributed.

Overall, data findings suggest that opinion varied regarding this matter. Around 23% believed that economic relief packages will be somewhat fairly distributed, while nearly as many (22%) believed they will be somewhat unfairly distributed. Another 15% felt that the distribution is likely to be unfair, 14% expressed themselves as neutral and 12% believed the distribution will be entirely fair.

Respondents belonging to bigger businesses and those located outside Prishtinë/Priština region were more likely to believe that the distribution will be conducted in a fair manner, than those belonging to smaller businesses or those located inside the Prishtinë/Priština region.

Figure 121 Perception if future economic relief packages for businesses will be fairly distributed, by business size and region

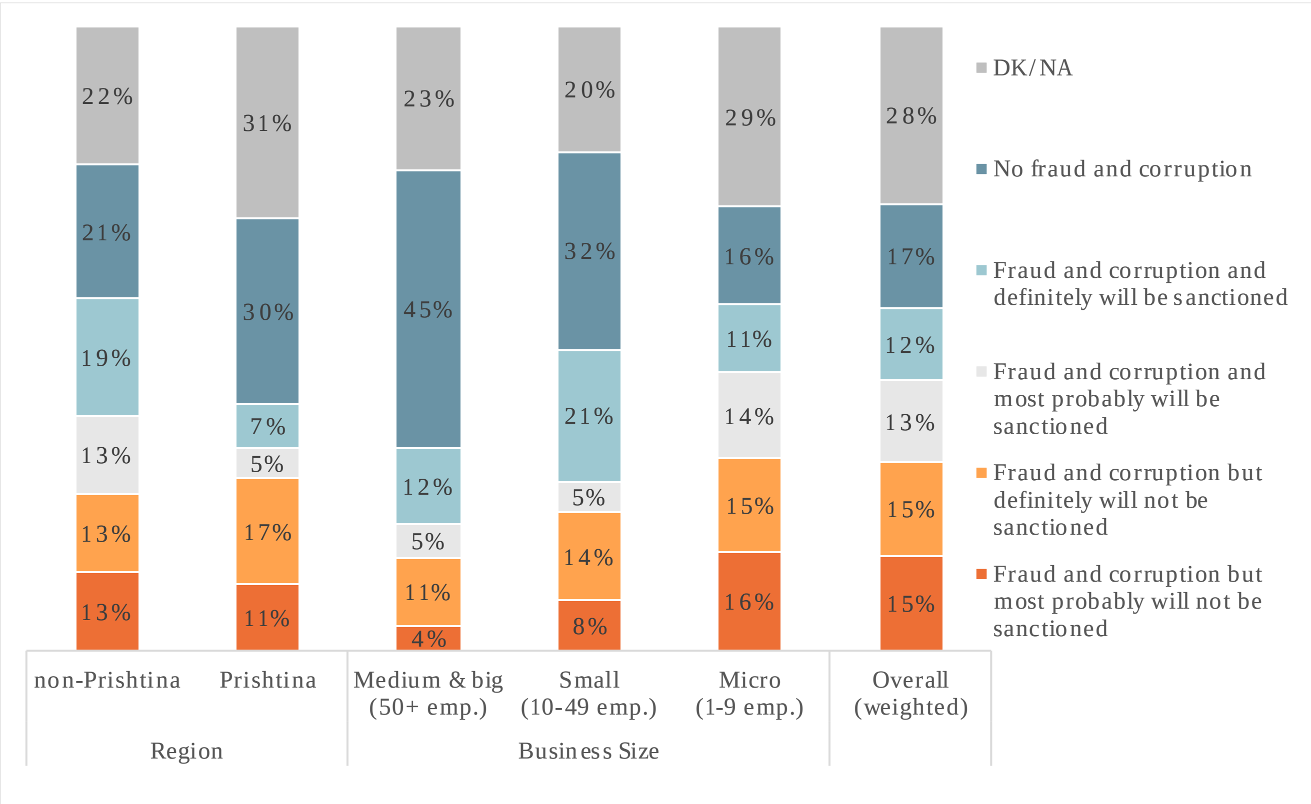


Over half of the business respondents believed that fraud and corruption in connection with relief packages for businesses will take place (55%). Out of these, some believed (15%) that such conduct most probably will not be sanctioned, while another 15% was convinced that there definitely won't be any sanction as consequence to this issue. One in four respondents (25%) who believed fraud and corruption is likely to take place, were more hopeful that sanctions will be implemented.

Only 17% believed that there won't be any fraud and corruption in connection with relief packages for businesses. Larger businesses (48%) and those located in Prishtinë/Priština (30%) were more likely to believe that fraud and corruption won't take place.

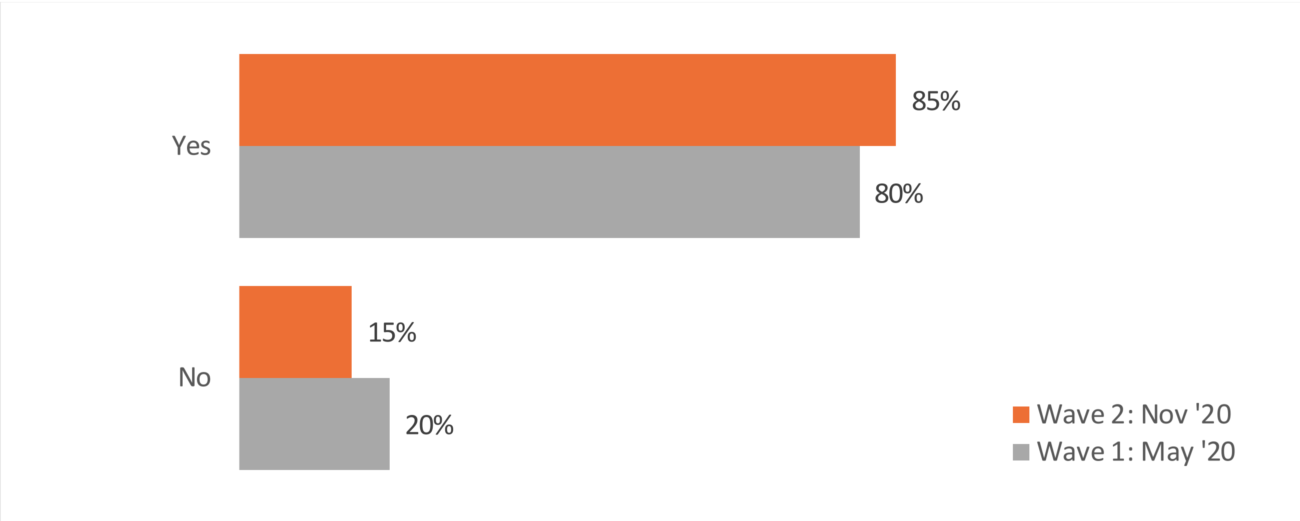
Micro businesses are those who believe that there will be attempted fraud and corruption regarding relief packages which will not be sanctioned or most probably not be sanctioned. (15% and 16% respectively), compared to 11% and 4% of medium and large companies and 14% and 8% of small companies. The larger the companies, the more trusting they are towards Kosovo institutions, where 45% of medium and large companies, 32% of small companies, and only 16% of micro companies believe there will be no fraud and corruption.

Figure 122 Perception whether there will be attempted fraud and corruption regarding relief packages for businesses, by business size and region



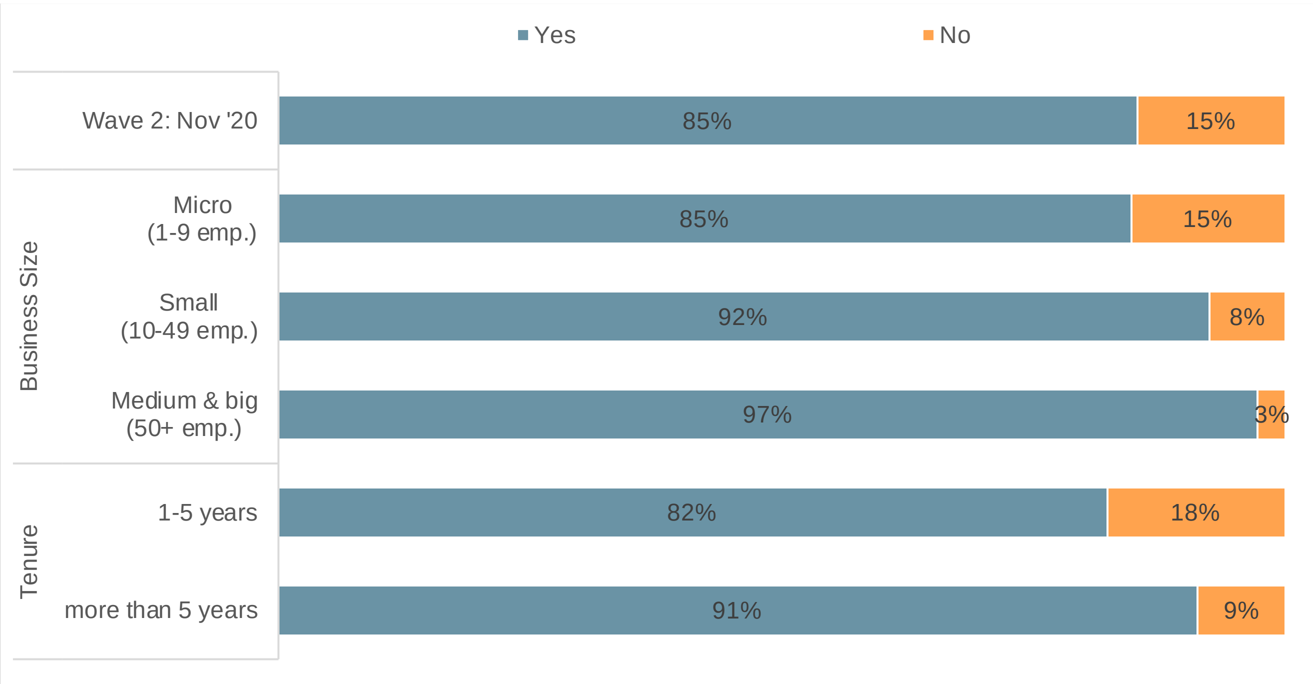
The majority of businesses seem to have continued to pay pension contributions for their employees as before the onset of the pandemic (85%) in November 2020. A close portion of businesses (80%) declared the same in May 2020.

Figure 123 Businesses which continue to pay pension contributions for their employees as before COVID – 19, wave 1 vs wave 2



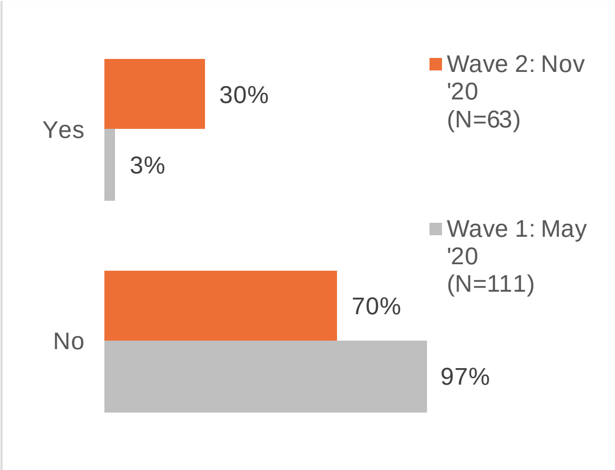
Nonetheless, it should be noted that 18% of younger businesses (tenure of 1-5 years) and 9% of businesses with a tenure of 1-5 years have paid pension contributions for their employees. Considering business size, 15% of micro businesses reported that their company did not continue to pay pension contributions as per law in Kosovo, while 9% of small businesses and only 3% of medium and large businesses reported the same.

Figure 124. Businesses which continue to pay pension contributions for their employees as before COVID – 19, by business size and tenure



The number of employees who resigned (which were part of businesses that had to stop operations) has increased when compared to the first wave of the SEIA. While in May 2020 only 3% reported that employees resigned from their job, in November 2020 this share amounted to 30%. The most common reasons for resignations were that the business was not able to pay salaries for the employees. (Indicative result only due to low number of cases).

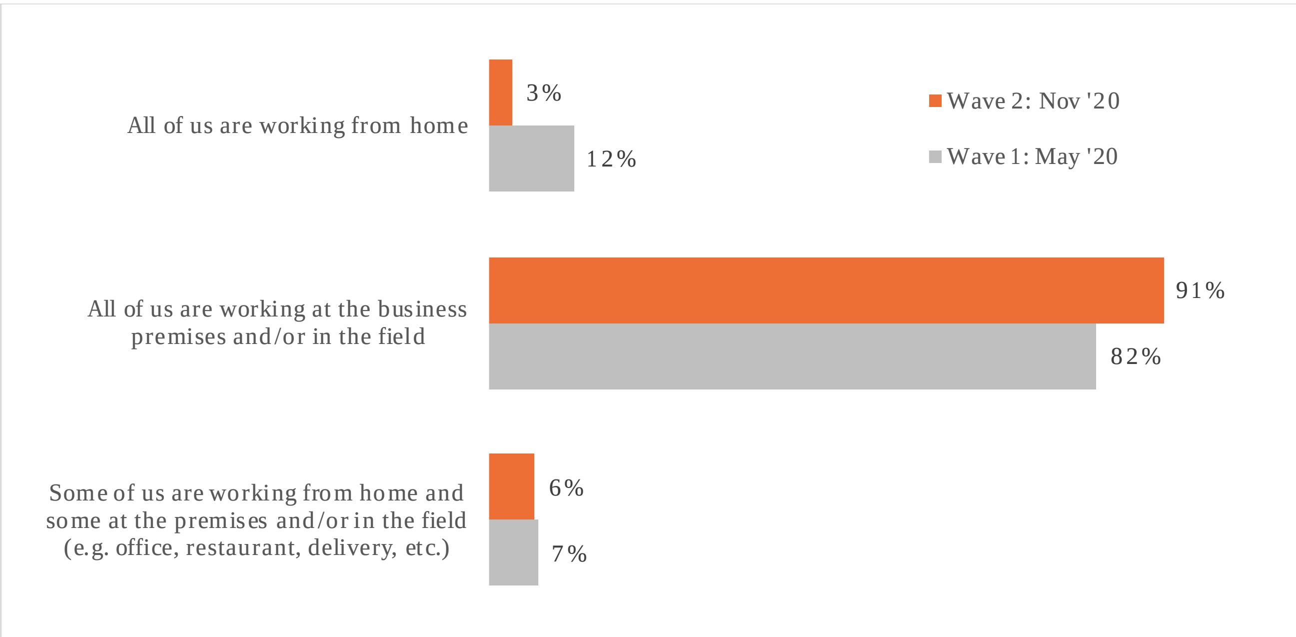
Figure 125. Employees who resigned from their job



Reason	Wave 2: Nov '20 (N)	Wave 1: May '20 (N)
We were not able to pay their salaries	14	2
They could not work due to family or/ and childcare obligations	2	
Other	6	2
Overall	22	4

The great majority of business respondents declared that, at the time of interview, all employees worked at the business premises (91%) as opposed to some working from home (6%) or all working from home (3%). Compared to wave 1, this shows an increase of 9 percentage points (pp) of those businesses where all employees were working at the premises and a subsequent decrease of -9 pp of cases where all employees were working from home.

Figure 126. Change in place of work due to COVID-19, wave 1 vs wave 2



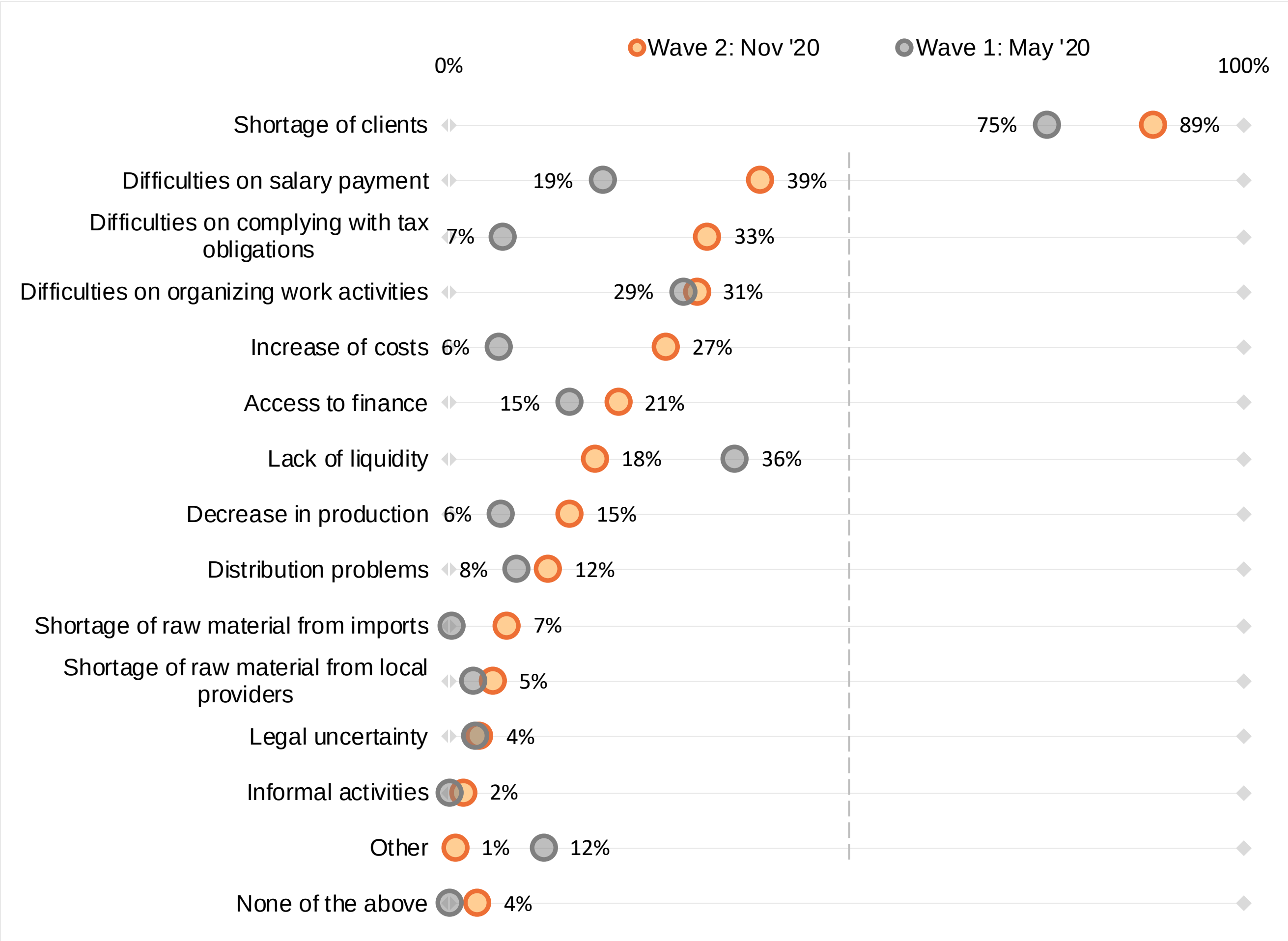
Comparative data between wave 1 and 2 also shed light on specific challenges and whether they posed an issue for businesses in May 2020 and November 2020.

Shortages of clients (89%), difficulties with salary payments (39%) and compliance with tax obligations (33%) stood out as the three top current issues for businesses in November 2020.

The extent of problems with which Kosovo businesses deal due to the coronavirus pandemic has been increasing over time. Overall, it can be observed that the number of businesses facing a range of issues has increased in wave 2, assessed nine months after the outbreak of COVID-19 as opposed to wave 1, assessed three months after the outbreak of COVID-19. Indeed, businesses reported to have had issues with shortage of clients (89% vs 75%), paying salaries (39% vs 19%) and complying with tax obligations (33% vs 7%) when compared between wave 2 and wave 1.

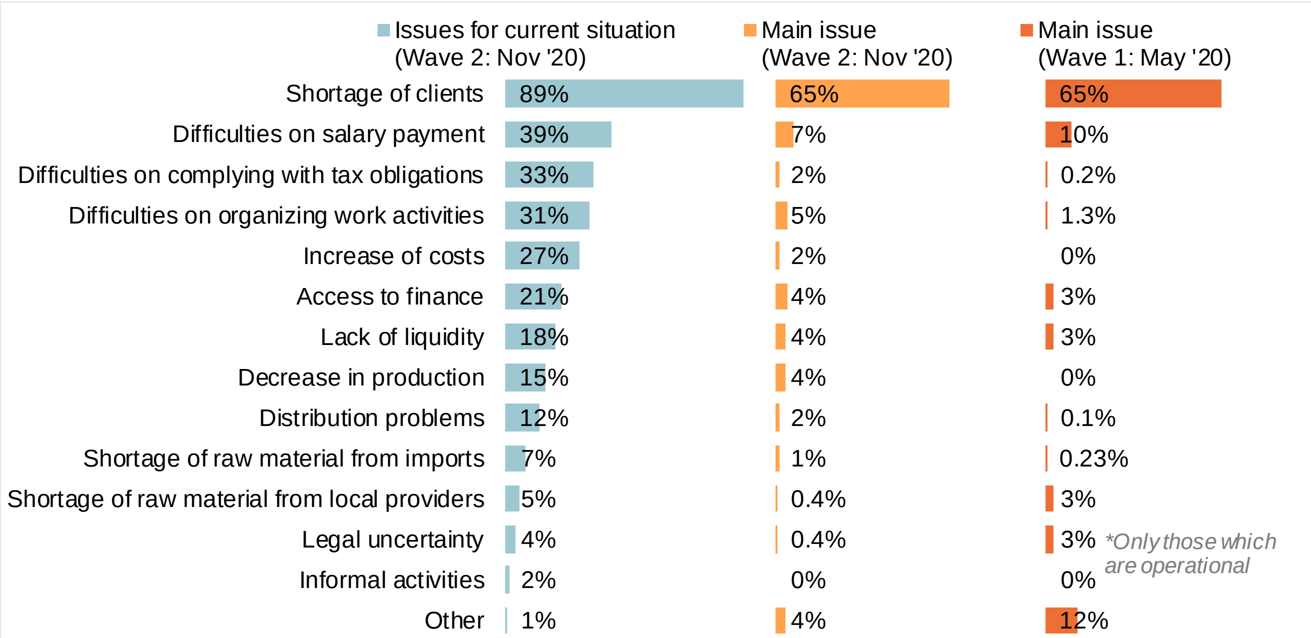
An increase in costs also posed a challenge to 27% of the businesses, whereas in May 2020 this issue only amounted to 6%. A slight increase of business which faced difficulties in accessing finance or who witnessed a decrease in production can be observed as well (increase of 6pp and 9pp respectively). These costs challenges are related to the measures in place since a lot of the business activity was restricted and new means of doing business had to be introduced which incurred more investments with less liquidity and access to finance.

Figure 127. Issues for businesses given the current situation with COVID-19, wave 1 vs wave 2



Businesses which did not fully stop their operations were next asked about the main concerns should the COVID-19 situation continue to spread over the next two to three months. While the issues of the current situation (as discussed in detail in the above graph) are varied, the main concern of businesses relate to client shortages should the COVID-19 situation continue for another two or three months (65%).

Figure 128. Current Issues vs main concern if COVID-19 continues to spread over the next two to three months, wave 1 vs wave 2



Survey results further revealed that the workforce of businesses has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent consequences significantly. On average (trimmed mean[18]), micro businesses reduced their number of full-time employees by 0.7, small businesses by 2.9 and medium and big businesses by 12.4. Part-time employment has been only affected for small businesses. Overall, the data show that Kosovo businesses have a reduced full-time staff by 3.5 employees and their part-time staff by 2.8 employees. Please note that the overall results are not the simple average of the three business segments, rather than a weighted average.

Table 8 Number of full-time and part-time staff before and after COVID-19, average (trimmed mean)

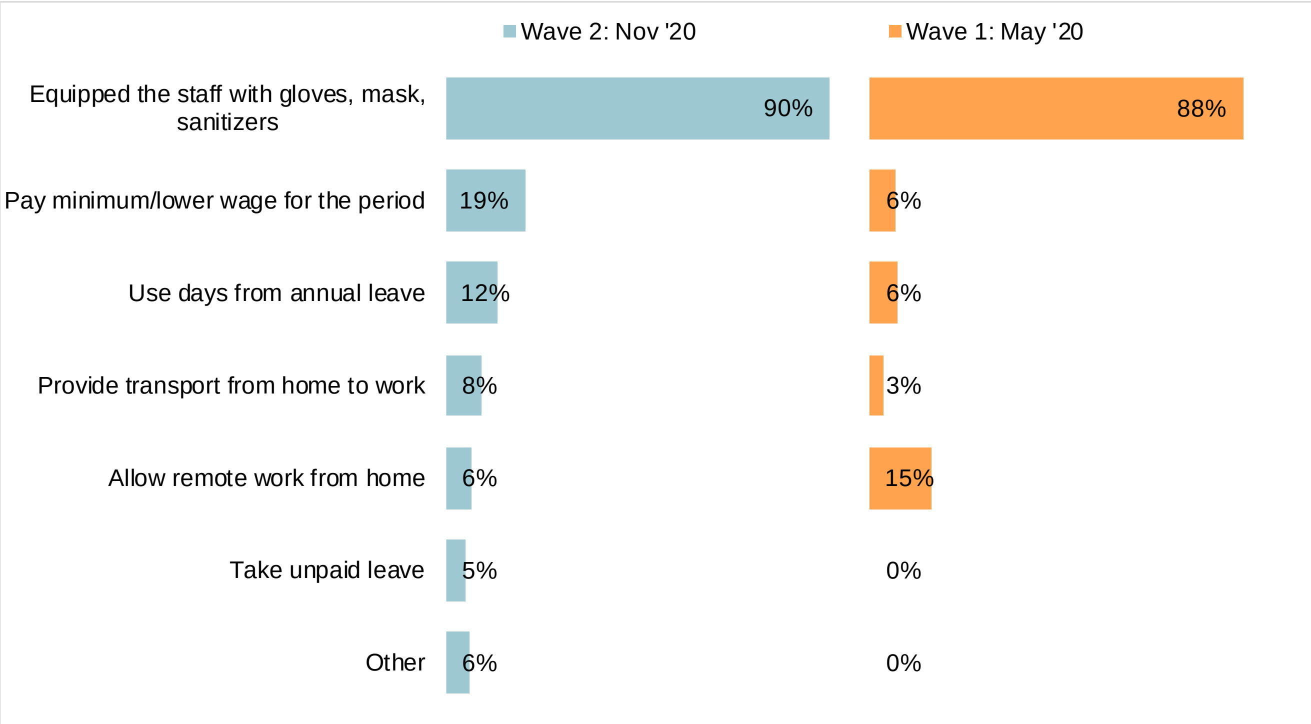
Type of contract	Business size	Before COVID-19	After COVID-19	Change in number	Change in percentage
Full time staff	Micro (1-9 employees)	3.1	2.4	-0.7	-23%
	Small (10-49 employees)	20.1	17.2	-2.9	-14%
	Medium & big (50+ employees)	132.9	120.5	-12.4	-9%
	Overall (weighted)	3.5	0.1		
Part-time staff	Micro (1-9 employees)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0%
	Small (10-49 employees)	1.2	1.1	-0.2	-8%
	Medium & big (50+ employees)	8.9	8.9	0.0	0%
	Overall (weighted)	2.8	0.0	0.0	

[18] Trimmed mean represents the mean after removing the outliers.

Next, businesses were asked what type of measures they have taken in order to avoid the spread of COVID-19 at the work place or measures to cope with the overall situation.

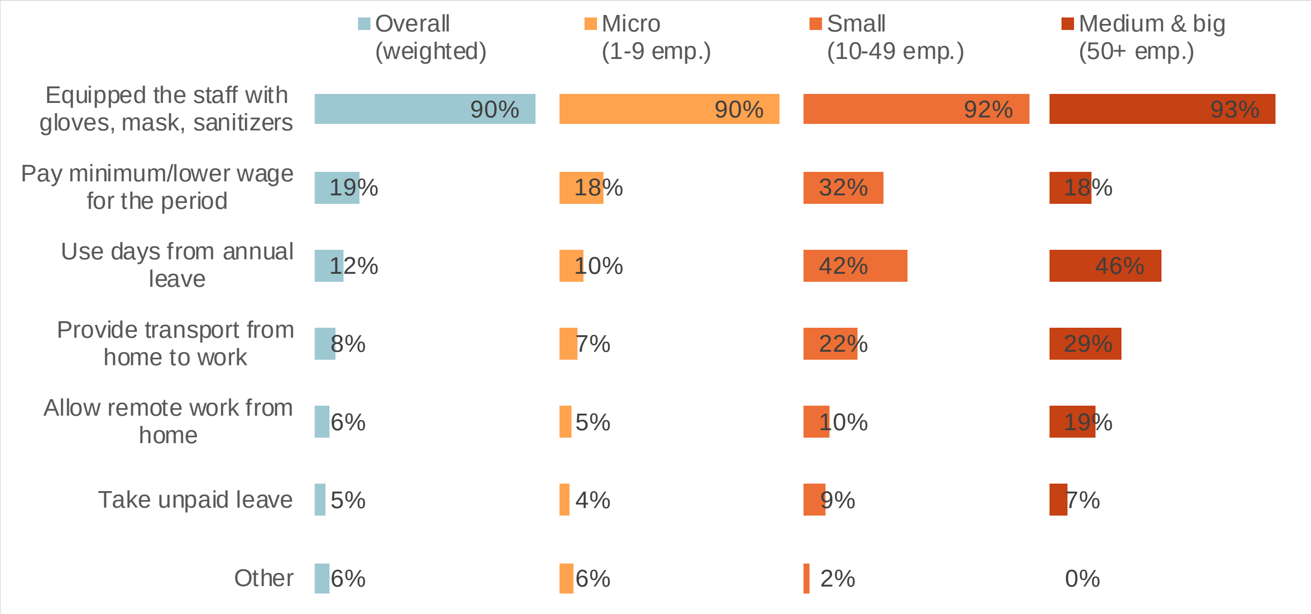
Similar to data results from wave 1, the great majority of employers have equipped the staff with gloves, masks and sanitizer (90%). More employers have paid minimum/lower wages (19%) than in May 2020 (6%). Usage of annual leave and the provision of transport from home to work have also increased by 6pp and 5pp respectively. Fewer employers allowed remote work in November 2020 (6%) compared to May 2020 (15%).

Figure 129. Measures taken by businesses for employees, wave 1 vs wave 2



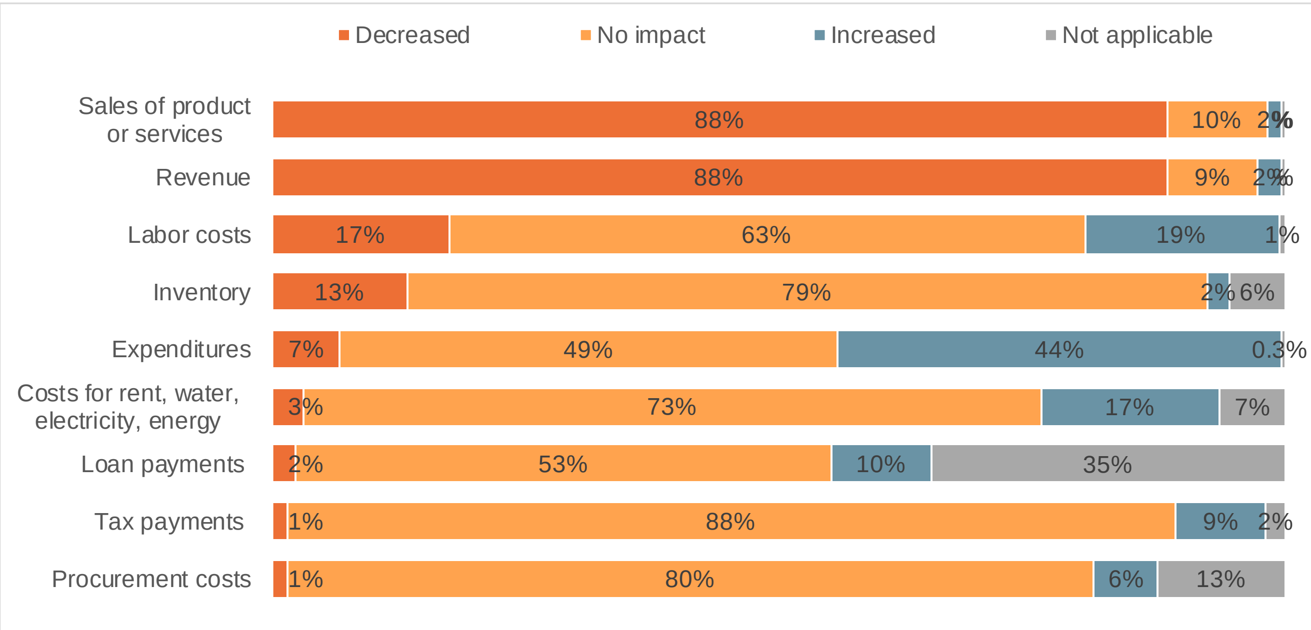
Data disaggregated by business sizes showed that medium and big companies resorted more commonly to using annual leave (46%) than small (42%) or micro sized businesses (10%). More of the small businesses chose to pay minimum/lower wages (32%) than micro or medium and big businesses (18% each).

Figure 130 Measures taken by businesses for employees, by business size



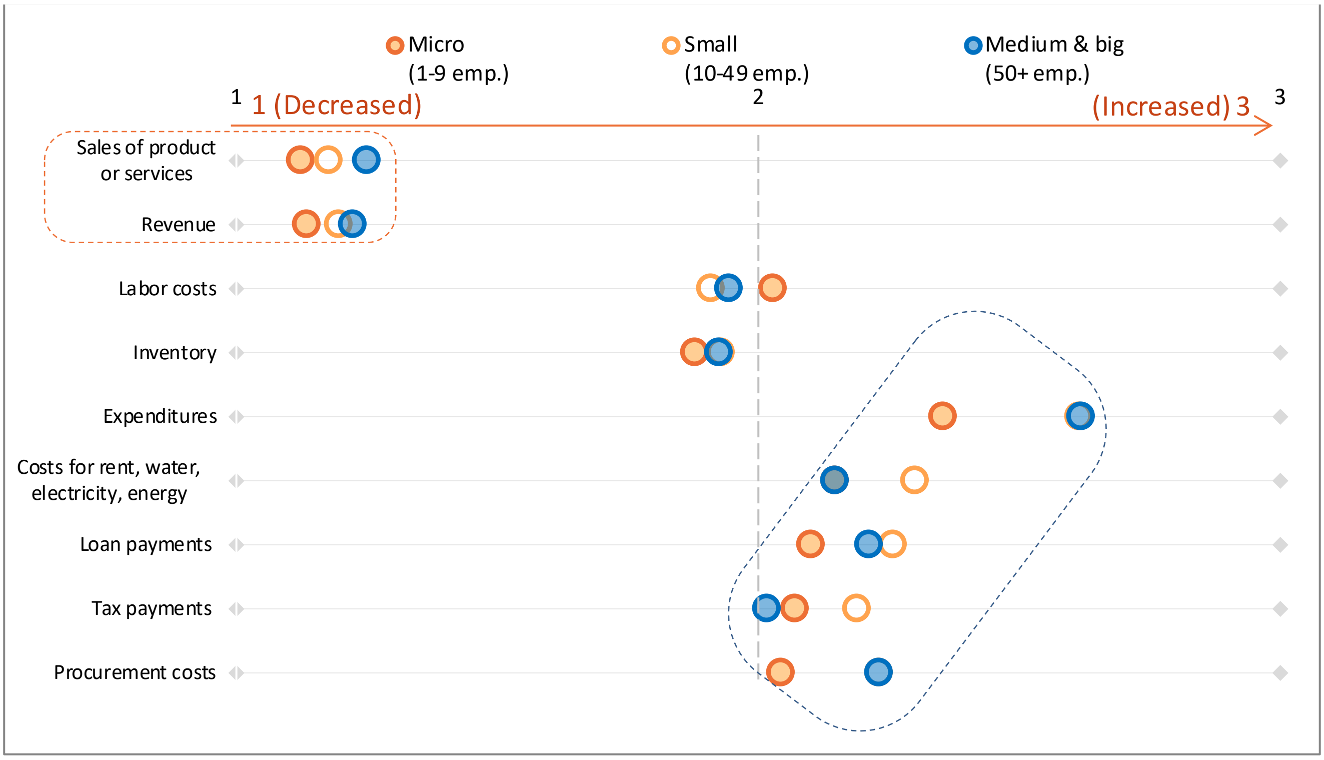
Business who are still operational (or partially operational) were further asked whether their revenues, expenditures, sales and inventory have decreased, increased or stayed the same since the emerging of COVID-19. More than eight in 10 businesses reported a decrease in sales of products or services, as well as in revenues (88% each). Expenditures and labour costs and on the other hand have increased for a significant number of businesses (44% and 19% respectively).

Figure 131. Impacts on revenues, expenditures, sales and inventory



Micro businesses experienced the biggest decrease in sales of products or services, followed by small businesses, and lastly by medium and large businesses. Decrease in revenue by businesses is also mostly felt by micro businesses, then small, and medium and large businesses. Medium and large businesses have experienced the largest increase in overall expenditures and procurement costs, whereas small businesses the largest increase in costs for rent, water, electricity and tax payments compared to other business sizes.

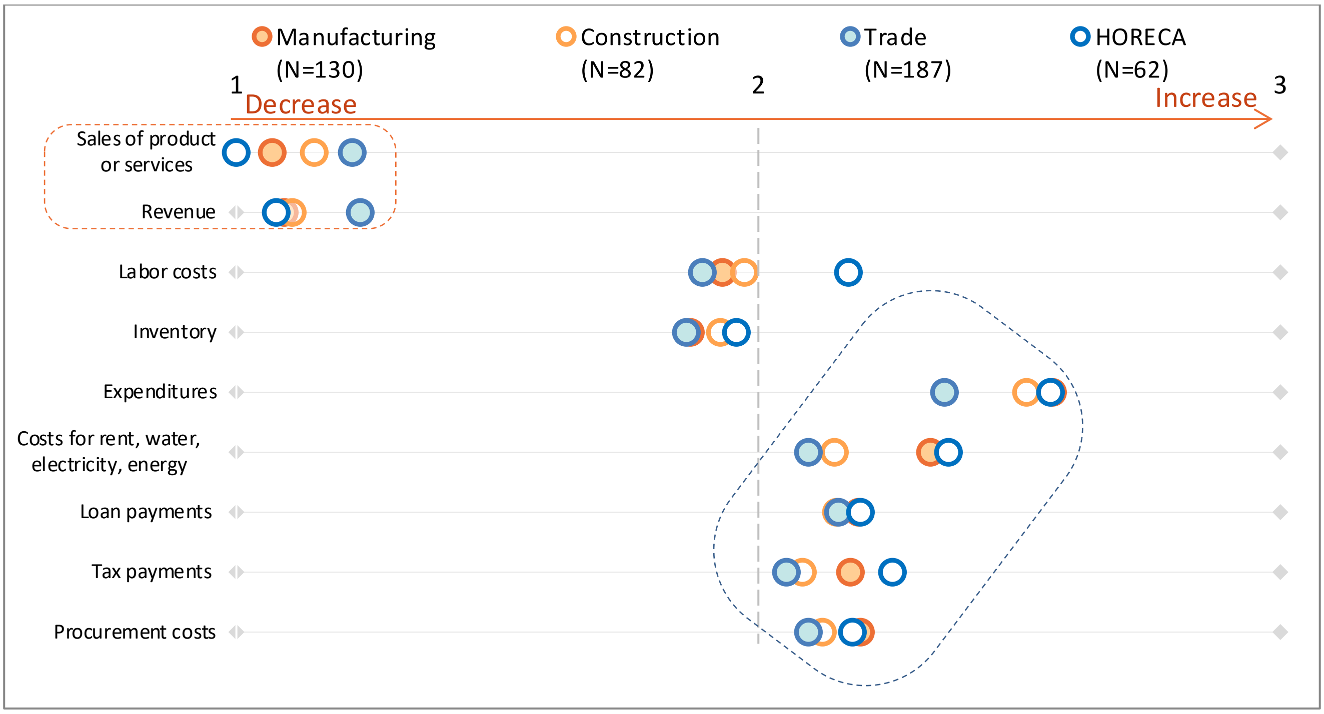
Figure 132 Impacts on revenues, expenditures, sales and inventory, by business size



Based on business activity, hotel, restaurants, cafes (HoReCa) have experienced the highest decrease in sales of products or services, followed by manufacturing, construction, and lastly trade. These data reflect the restrictive measures where HoReCa have been hardest by not being able to operate for a long time, with reduced capacity, and for shorter amount of time. Whereas online sales have increased during the pandemic which has eased the decrease of total sales of trade companies.

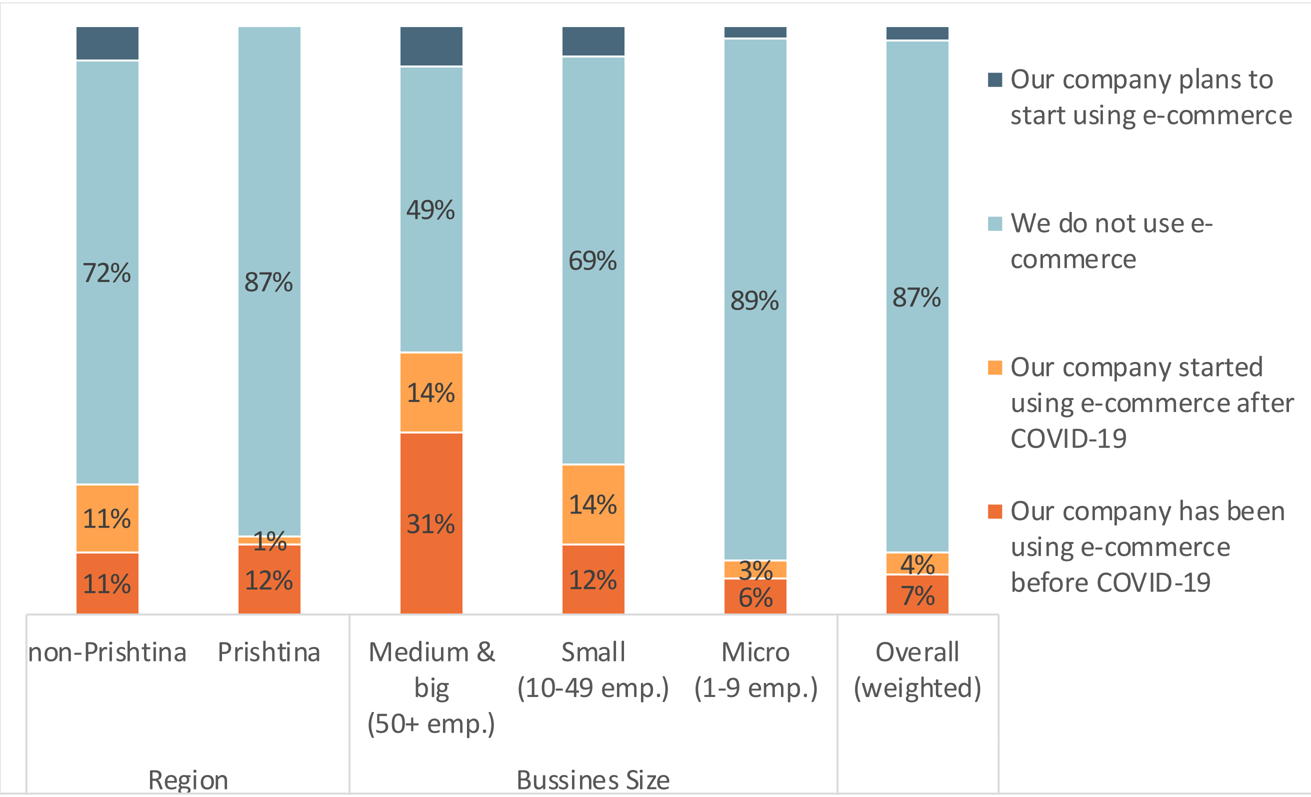
The HoReCa business activities stand out as the one which has the biggest increase in labour costs as well as costs on rent, water, electricity, leaving behind the increases in construction, manufacturing, and lastly trade.

Figure 133 Impacts on revenues, expenditures, sales and inventory, by business activity



E-commerce became quite prevalent after COVID-19 pandemic. The survey results show that overall, 4% of businesses started using e-commerce after the new coronavirus outbreak. Of those, 14% new medium and large companies, 14% small companies, and 3% of micro companies.

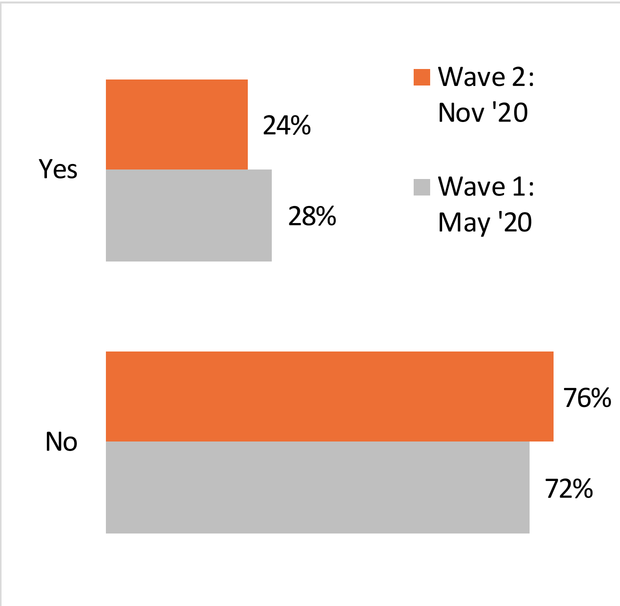
Figure 134 Companies using e-commerce

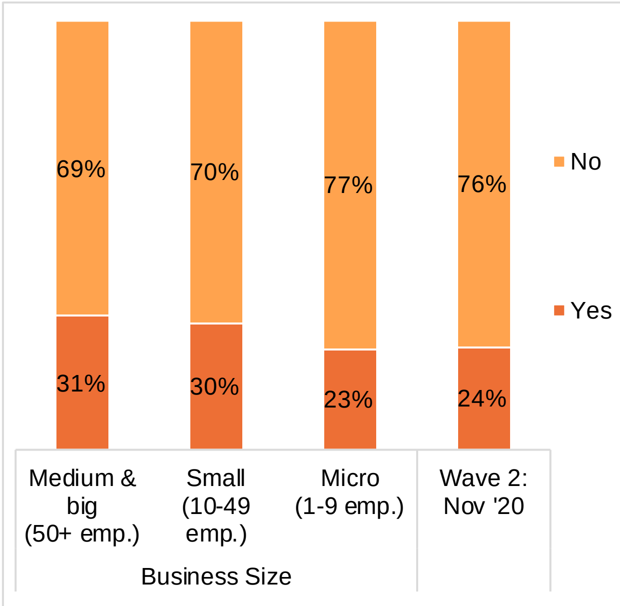


More than two out of three business respondents stated that their business was not considering to take a loan to cope with the effects of COVID-19 (76%). This portrays a slight increase of businesses who did not plan to take a loan compared the results of wave 1 (4pp).

However, it should still be noted that nearly one in three respondents belonging to a medium or big business declared that their company was considering taking a loan (31%). Readiness to take a loan in general decreases with company size.

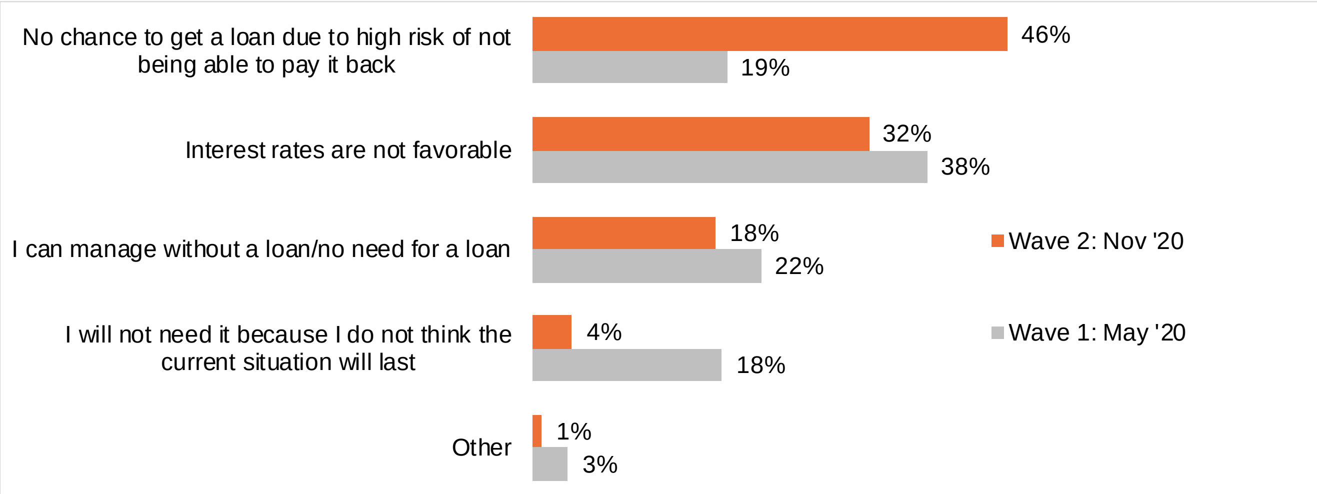
Figure 135. Consideration of businesses to get a loan to deal with the current effects of the COVID-19 situation, wave 1 vs wave 2 and by business size





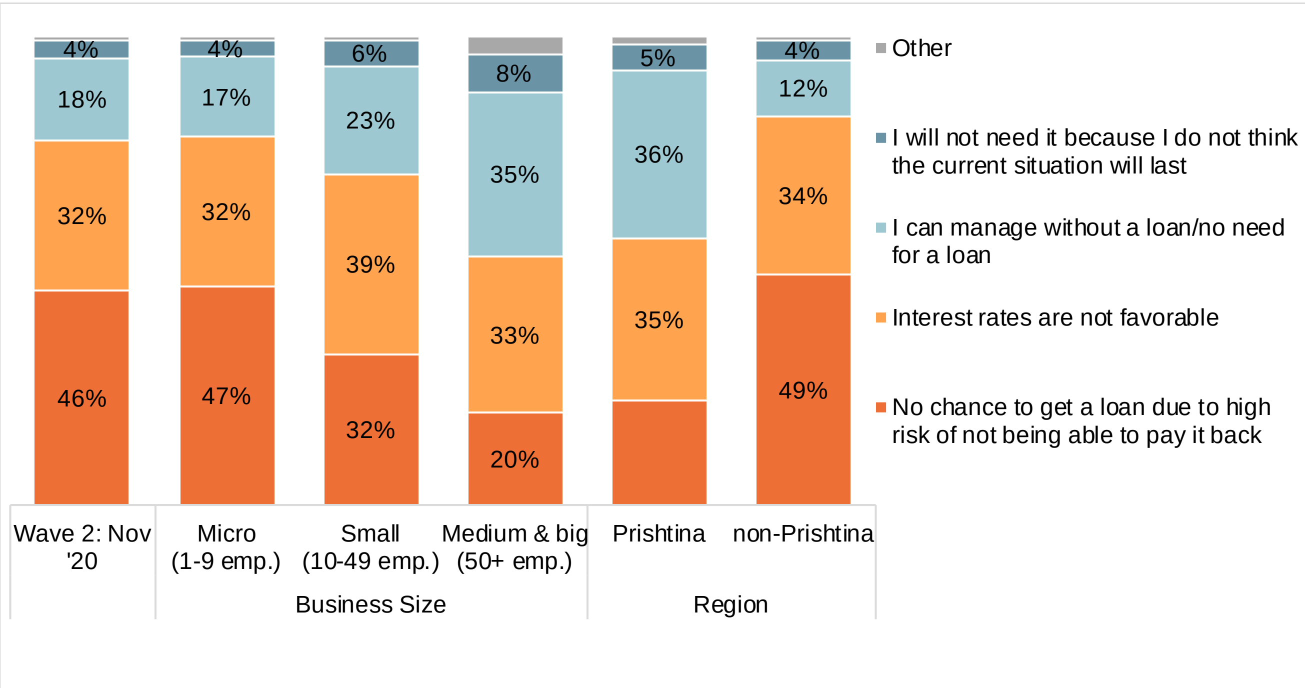
Businesses that stated that they did not consider making use of a loan, were asked for the respective reasons. The inability to get a loan due to high risks of not being able to pay it back, stood out during wave 2 as the main reason mentioned by 46% of the respondents. Only 19% stated the same in May 2020. While 38% mentioned unfavourable interest rate in May 2020 as the main reason, in November 2020 slightly fewer did so as well (32%). Around 18% expressed no need for a loan, compared to 22% who stated the same during wave 1. It should be also noted that the share of respondents who stated that their business has no need for a loan as the current situation is not expected to last, has dropped from 18% to 4%.

Figure 136. Main reason for not considering to take a loan, wave 1 vs wave 2



The inability to take a loan due to high risks of not being able to pay it back was more commonly mentioned by micro (47%) and small (32%) businesses than by medium and big ones (20%). Nearly half of the businesses outside the region of Prishtinë/Priština did not consider taking a loan due to potential inability to pay it back (49%), compared to only 22% which were located inside the capital region.

Figure 137 Main reason for not considering to take a loan, by business size



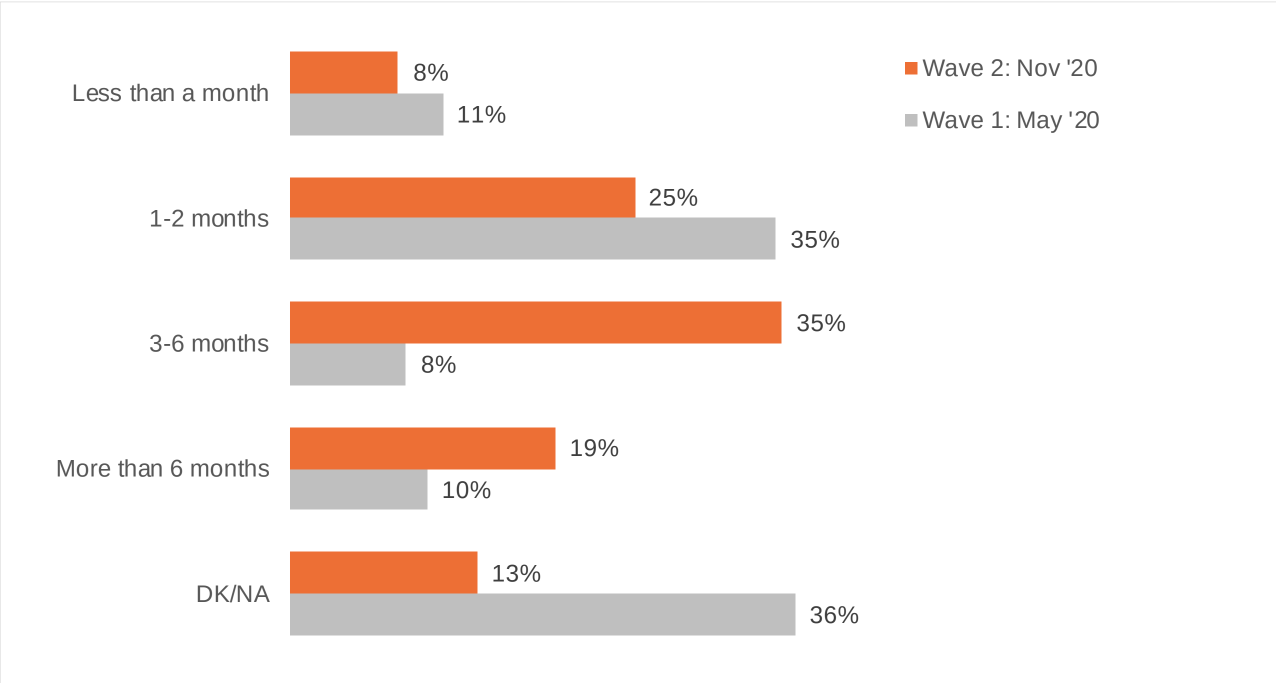
3.2.3 Future Outlook

This section engages with questions, among others, related to the future of businesses during the ongoing pandemic, as well as suggestions on how businesses could better be supported in the current situation.

Underlining the general uncertainty that is present around the world, more than one third of businesses did not know an answer when asked how long their business can afford the pandemic situation (36%). During wave 1 this percentage only amounted to 13%.

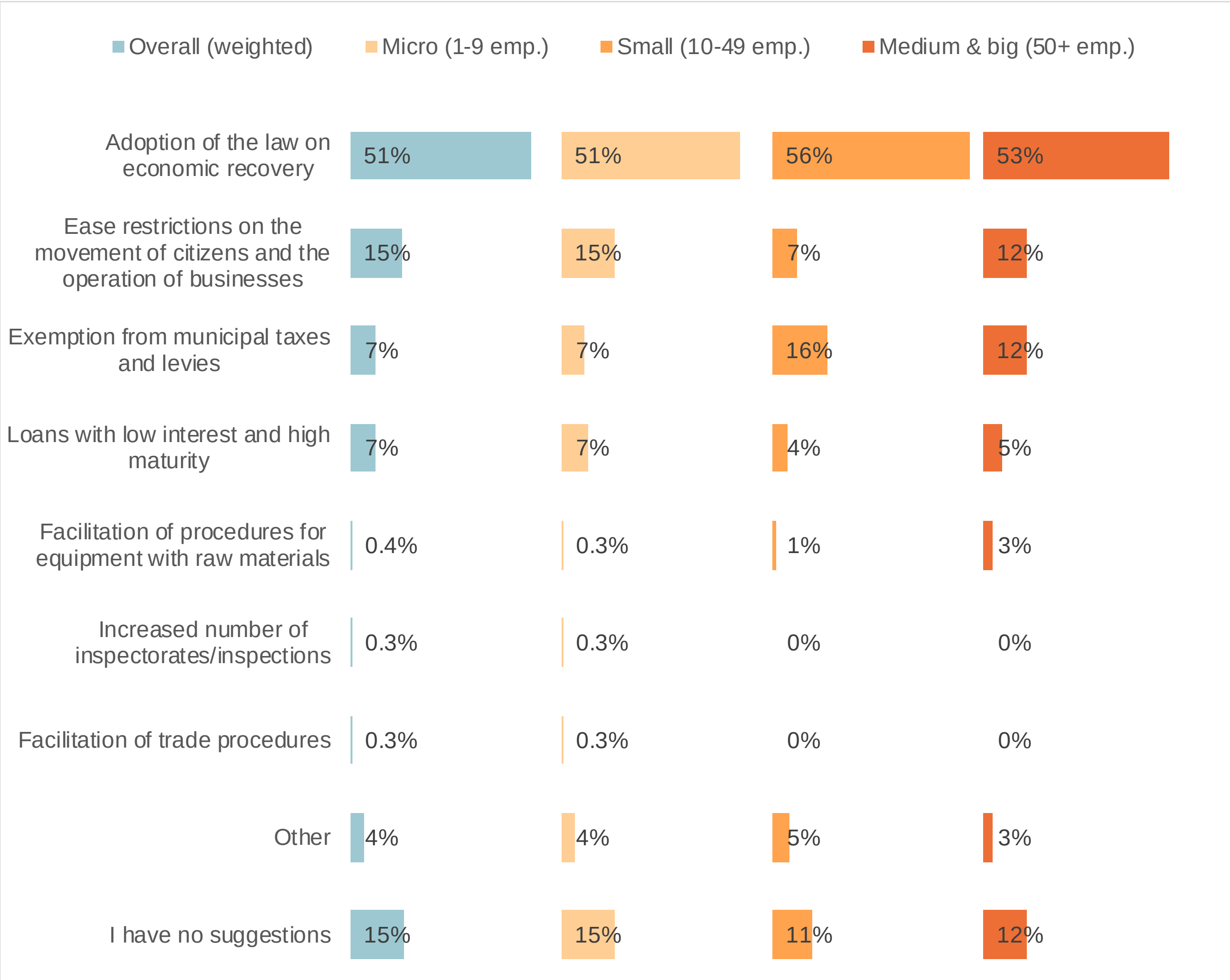
Nearly as many predicted that their business could afford the situation for additional 1-2 months (35%) an increase of 10pp compared to the results of the first wave. In May 2020, significantly more stated that they predict their business´ can cope for at least 3-6 month more than in November 2020 when only 8% declared the same. However, it should be noted that 19% felt that their business can hold out for more than 6 months (19%), an increase of 9pp.

Figure 138. All considered, how much longer can businesses afford the current situation, wave 1 vs wave 2



When asked about suggestions to Kosovo institutions on measures that could help the respondent's businesses, around half mentioned the adoption of the law on economic recovery (51%)[19]. Another 15% suggested that the restrictions on the movement of people and the operation of businesses should be eased, while 7% each mentioned tax exemptions and loans with low interests. Overall, 15% had no suggestions.

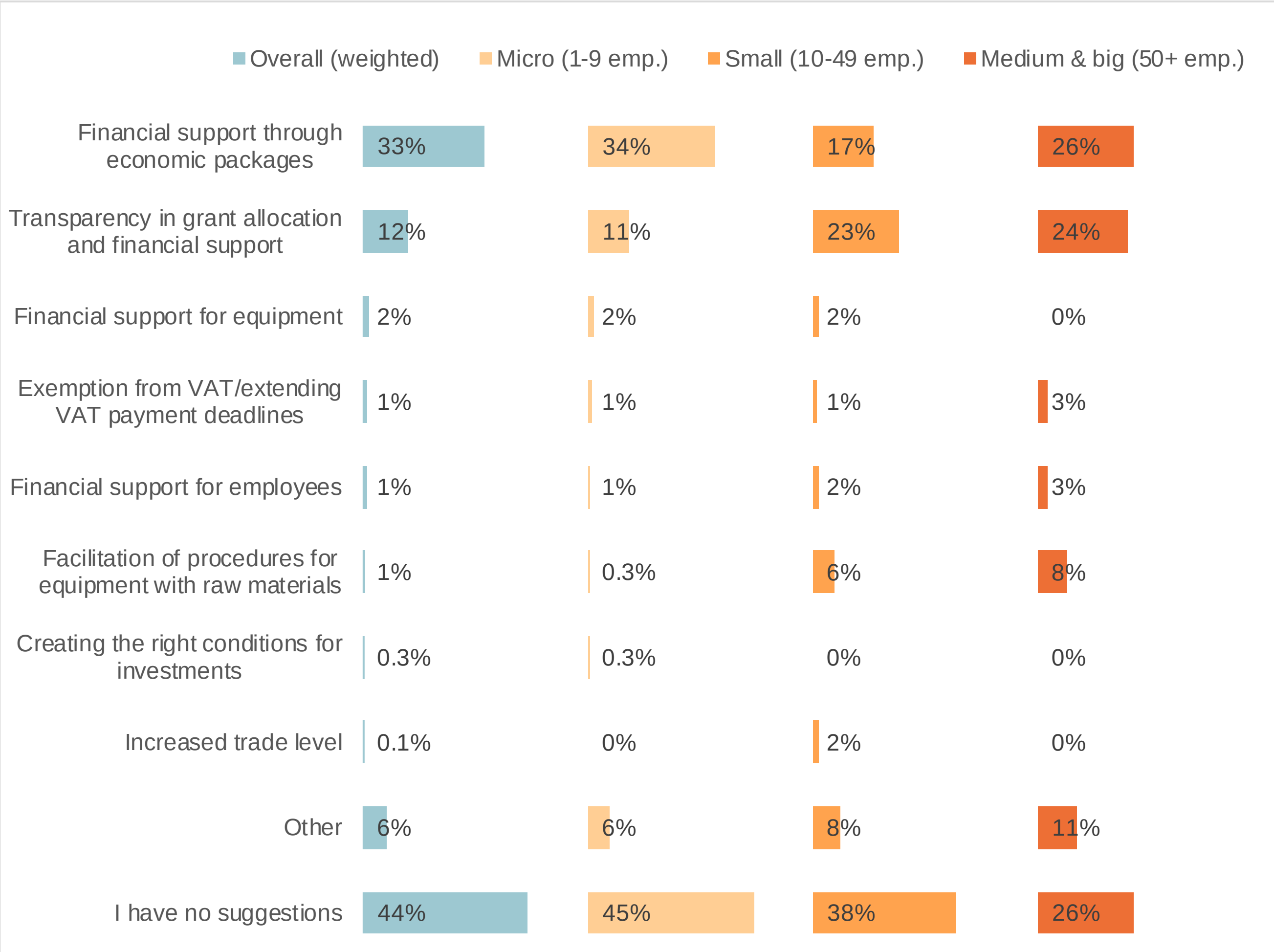
Figure 139. Suggestions to Kosovo institutions on measures that can help businesses to deal with the situation



[19] After seven failed attempts, the adoption of the law on economic recovery took place in December 2020, Source: https://prishtinainsight.com/economic-recovery-package-passes-at-kosovo-assembly/ Last accessed: 10.12.2020
After seven failed attempts, the adoption of the law on economic recovery took place in December 2020, Balkan Insight: https://prishtinainsight.com/economic-recovery-package-passes-at-kosovo-assembly/ *Last accessed: 10.12.2020*

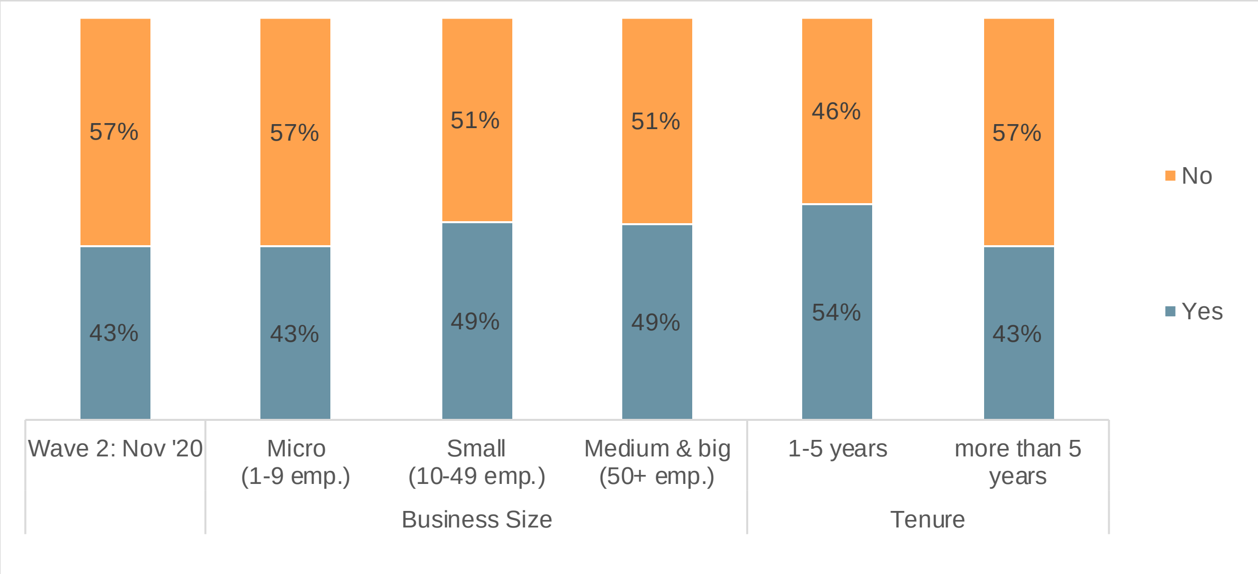
Nearly half did not have any suggestion for international organisations on measures that could help their businesses (44%). However, one in three business respondents suggested that financial support through economic packages would help (33%). This suggestion was most commonly expressed by micro business respondents (34%) compared to medium and big businesses (26%) and small businesses (17%). Respondents who belonged to medium and big as well as small businesses were more likely to suggest transparency in grant allocation and financial support as a helpful measure (24% and 23% respectively).

Figure 140. Suggestions to the international organizations on measures that can help businesses to deal with the situation, by business size



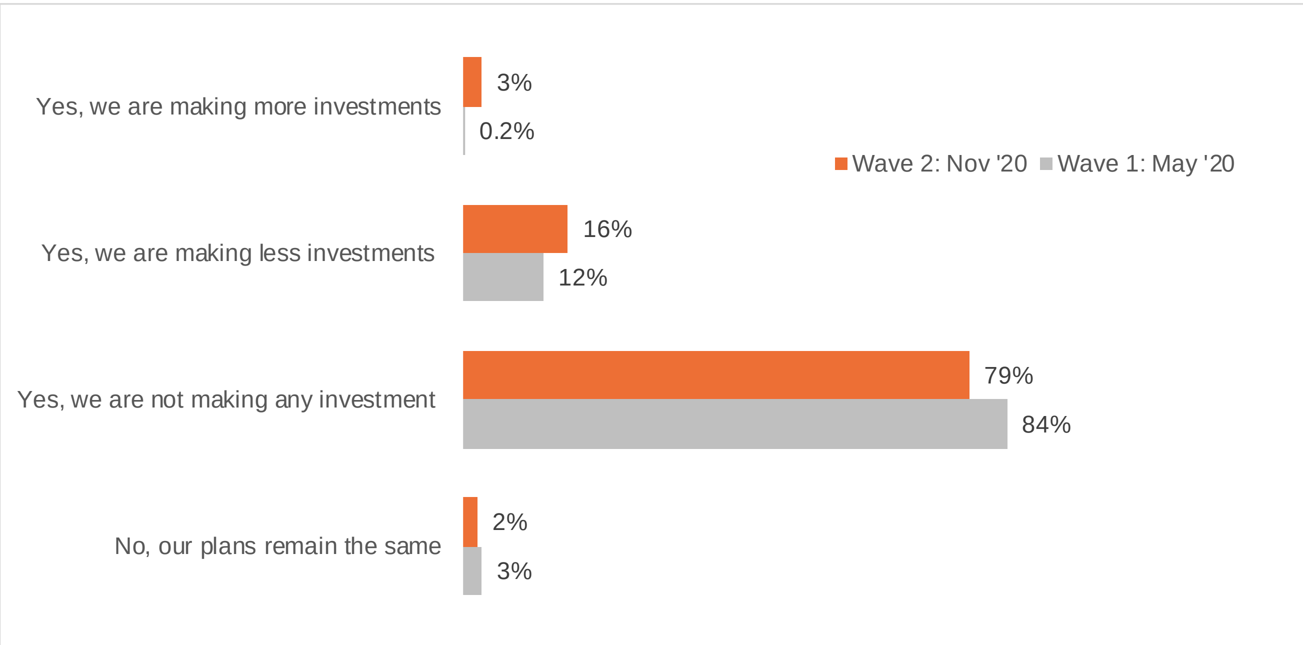
Around 43% of all businesses that took part in this survey stated to have had plans for investments prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Younger businesses with a tenure of one to five years (54%) as well as small and medium and big companies (49% each) more commonly had planned investments before COVID-19 emerged.

Figure 141. Business that had investment plans prior to the COVID-19 situation, by business size and tenure



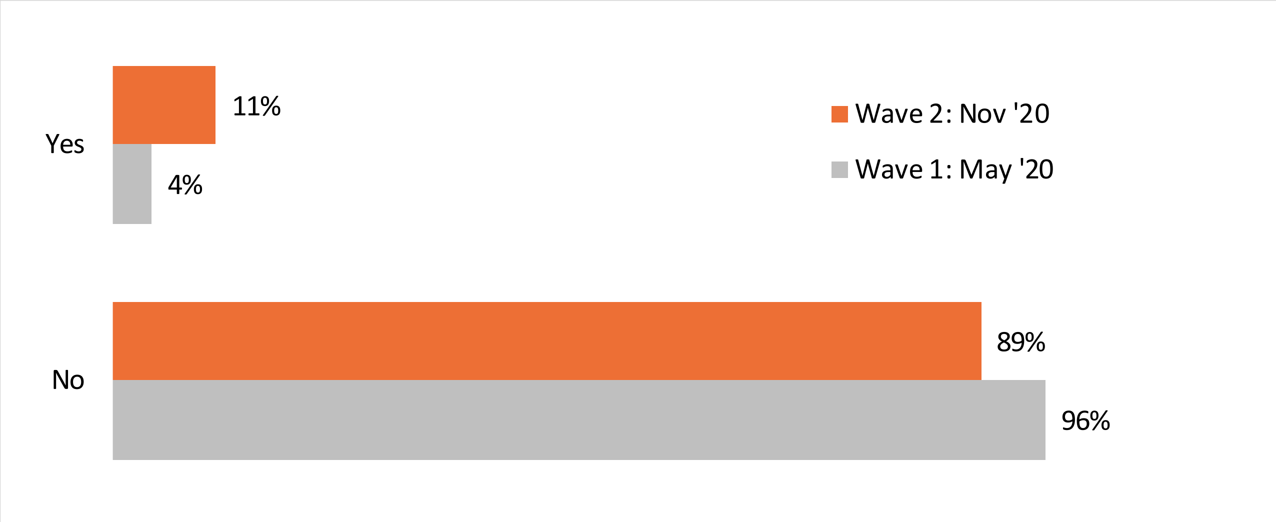
The businesses that had planned to make investments prior to the COVID-19 situation, were next asked whether these plans have changed and more than three in four respondents said they had decided to refrain from making any investment (79%). Nonetheless, this portrays a small decrease compared to wave 1, where 84% had stated the same. Slightly more stated that they were planning fewer investments (16%) or that they were planning to increase investments (3%) compared to wave 1.

Figure 142. Change of plans to invest due to COVID-19, wave 1 vs wave 2



Similar to the last wave of the SEIA, the great majority of the surveyed businesses did not see new businesses opportunities related to COVID-19 (89%). However, data revealed a slight increase of businesses which did see new opportunities related to the emergence of COVID-19 (11%). This portrays an increase of 7pp.

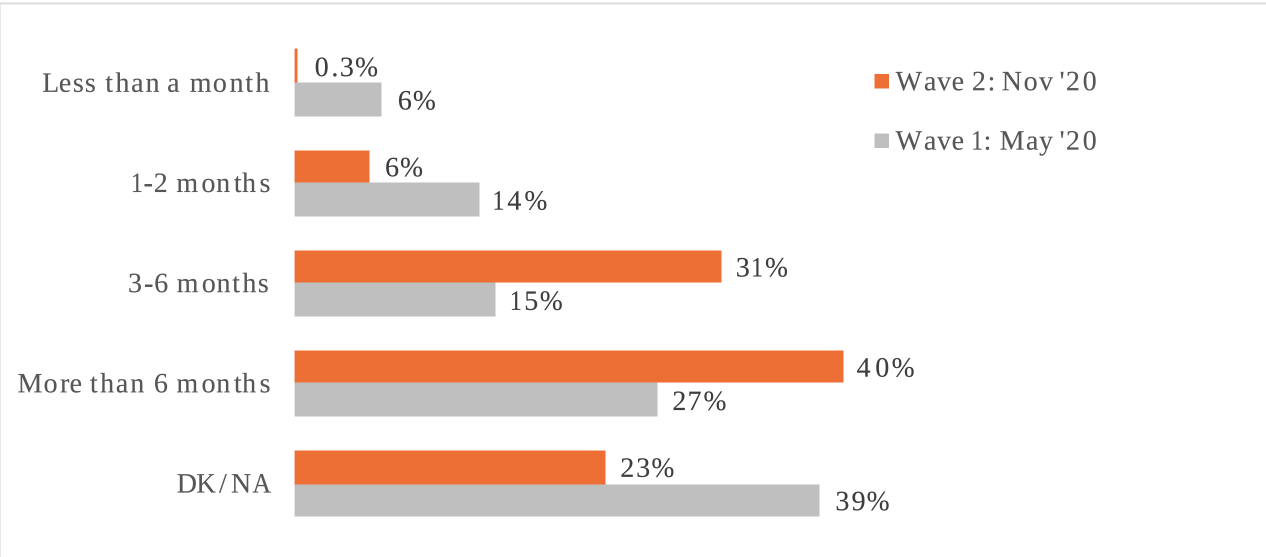
Figure 143. Business that found new opportunities related to COVID-19, wave 1 vs wave 2



Last, businesses were asked about their assessment when Kosovo will return to “normal life” as prior to the pandemic. In November 2020, two in five business respondents believed that it will take more than six months until Kosovo gets back to normal life (40%), this portrays an increase of 13 percentage points compared to May 2020.

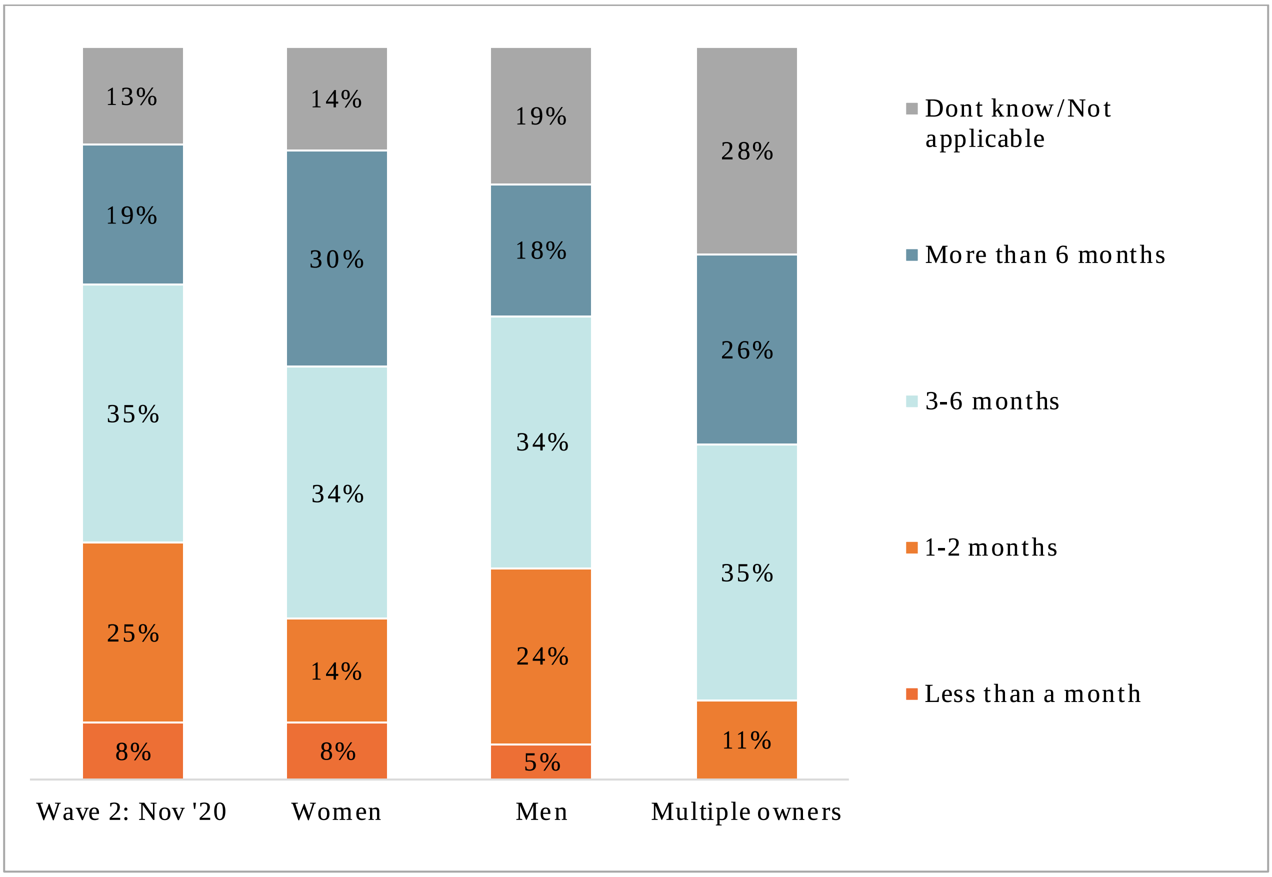
Furthermore, as opposed to data results from May 2020 (15%), over twice as many (31%) also believed that it may take three to six months until the situation normalizes again.

Figure 144. Business perception on when Kosovo will get back to the normal life, wave 1 vs wave 2



Almost one in three businesses owned by women (30%) and 26% of businesses with multiple owners perceive that Kosovo will get back to normal life in more than six months, whereas 18% of the businesses owned by men think the same. Similar portions of each group, that is business owned by women (34%), by men (34%), and by multiple owners (35%) think that Kosovo will get back to normal life in 3-6 months. More men-owned businesses think Kosovo will get back to normal in 1-2 months (24%) than women-owned businesses (14%) and multiple owner businesses (11%). Smaller portions of all businesses think things will get back to normal in less than a month.

Figure 145 Business perception on when Kosovo will get back to the normal life, by gender of company owners



4. Conclusions

4.1. Conclusions

This report set out to explore the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the health, financial and psychological well-being of people in Kosovo, as well as the impacts on the private sector economic performance and related implications for businesses across Kosovo. The report also assessed changes in data results over time, comparing findings of the first wave of the SEIA conducted in May 2020, with the findings of the second wave implemented in November 2020.

HOUSEHOLD SURVEY CONCLUSIONS

The implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on households in Kosovo became especially evident when analysing data on social dynamics, and the effects on the psychological and mental health of the respondents in November 2020.

Compared to data findings from May 2020, the share of respondents that declared to have experienced effects on their psychological, emotional and mental health has considerably increased (from 28% to 36%). An increase of time devoted to emotionally supporting other adult household members further underlines the severity of psychological impacts resulting from the pandemic. Data also suggests that gender gap progress may be stalling – or even reversing - with the increased hours on household chores performed by women, such as cleaning and cooking remained high, while at the same time, increased support by partners were only reported by 36% of women. Furthermore, findings from November 2020 suggest that domestic violence continues to be on the rise in Kosovo. Nearly two thirds of all women perceived an increase of this phenomenon, a perception which has been evidenced also by official police statistics which showed an increase in reported cases in Kosovo during the pandemic.

Financial implications, stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, on households in Kosovo continued to be a concern. More respondents declared to have lost their jobs in November 2020 (11%) as compared to May 2020 (8%). Most of those who had lost jobs did not receive financial support or unemployment benefits. In-kind support for households remained nearly non-existent. The utilization of savings and spending fewer financial resources on leisure and non-essential commodities is evident across most households, further deteriorating the quality of life of people in Kosovo. A considerable number of households also reported reduced spending on health (17%) and education (23%).

Employed adults in Kosovo most commonly performed their jobs at the employer´s premises, while also the majority of children attended school in-person in November 2020. Only 3% of those employed worked remotely full-time, while preference to continue working remotely stood at only 31%. Few children attended distance learning; the great majority was able to take part in physical learning on regular basis.

While the access to basic services posed difficulties to many households in May 2020, as of November 2020, significantly fewer reported problems in this regard. The ease of restrictive measures throughout the summer of 2020 may have facilitated easier access. Nonetheless, the fact that around 25% of respondents reported difficulties in accessing food, personal protective equipment and health services as of November 2020 calls for attention.

With the world racing to launch large-scale vaccination campaigns for COVID-19, the wave 2 of the SEIA also set out to assess whether respondents would be willing to get vaccinated once vaccines are available. Data revealed a staggering 44% of all respondents that expressed unwillingness to take part in the vaccination processes.

BUSINESS SURVEY CONCLUSIONS

Continued negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on businesses in Kosovo were obvious when assessing the data results obtained from the second wave of the SEIA.

The overall increase of businesses which reported negative or very negative effects due to the pandemic stood out. Over half of all businesses assessed the effects on their businesses to be very negative (55%), as opposed to only 23% in May 2020. Top three issues pertaining to the current situation were the shortage of clients, difficulties in paying salaries and in complying with tax obligations.

Significantly fewer businesses reported a full stop in activities during the second wave of the SEIA. Those that did fully stop their operations most commonly mentioned the lack of clients as the main reason, while in May 2020 restrictive measures were the main reason. Despite the easing of restrictive measures in Kosovo, the general opposition to restrictive measures increased drastically between the two surveys. While 27% of businesses opposed restrictive measures to some extent in May 2020, during the second wave 58% expressed opposition.

Decrease in sales of products or services, as well as revenues, posed a major challenge to most businesses in November 2020, while simultaneously experiencing an increase in costs and expenditures. Similar to findings from May 2020, most businesses which had planned investments prior to COVID-19 outbreak decided to refrain from doing so. An increased number of businesses were unsure of how much longer their operations can cope with the current situation. There was an increase of those respondents that believed that it will take more than six months until Kosovo will be able to return to normal life.

The adoption of the Law on Economic Recovery stood out as the main measure that would help businesses in Kosovo. Financial support through economic packages by international organisations was also mentioned as a measure which could relief troubled businesses in Kosovo.

After several failed attempts, the Law on Economic Recovery was adopted in December 2020. The third wave of the SEIA, planned for Q1 in 2021, may reveal whether the economic relief measures will have produced positive effects by then on the businesses in Kosovo.