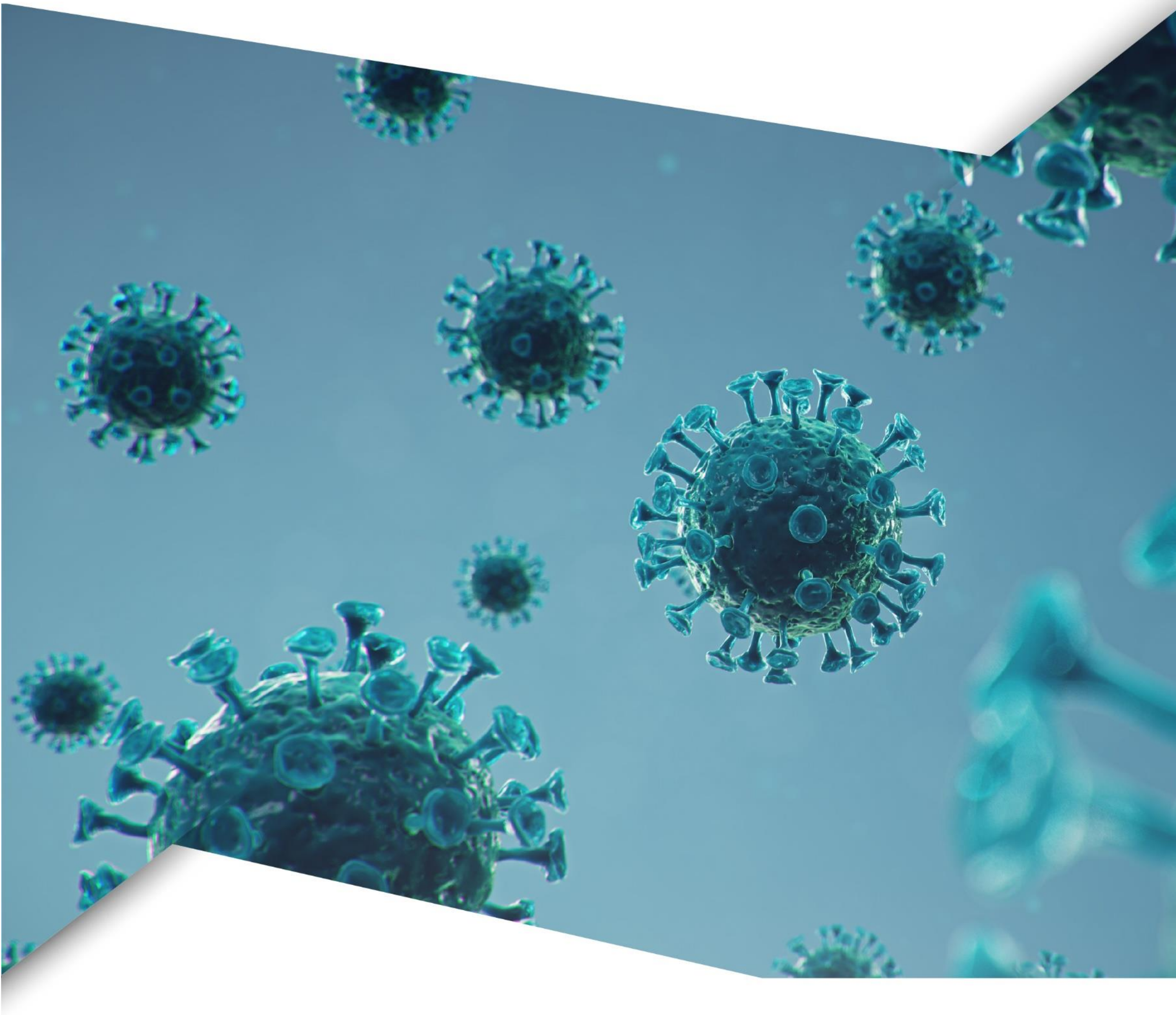

REPORT

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

Round 3
May 2021

UNITED NATIONS
KOSOVO TEAM

UN WOMEN

UNFPA

U N
D P

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List of Acronyms

ASK	Kosovo Agency of Statistics
CATI	Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing
DV	Domestic Violence
EC	European Commission
EVAW	End Violence Against Women
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HH	Household
HORECA	Hotels, Restaurants, and Cafes
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
KPST	Kosovo Savings Trust
NEET	Not employed or in education or training
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PP	Percentage point
SEIA	Socio-Economic Impact Assessment
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlement Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNKT	United Nations Kosovo Team
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
UNW	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this document are those of the opinion poll respondents that took part in the Household Survey as well as the Business Survey in Kosovo[1], and do not necessarily represent the views of either UNKT, UNDP, UNFPA or UN Women."

Authors: Laura Petrak, Nora Jusufi

Prishtinë

April 2021

[1] For UNDP, references to Kosovo should be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

1. Executive Summary

This report presents the third[2] iteration of the Rapid Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (SEIA) implemented in March 2021 by UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA and UNKT on the impact of the pandemic and related institutional measures in Kosovo. The goals of this assessment were to examine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on households (HH) and businesses over time and to understand in which areas the engaged agencies, Kosovo institutions, and other stakeholders should focus their assistance. Overall, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on households and businesses in Kosovo was still evident in March 2021. However, comparative findings show that some positive trends have formed. Compared to 2020, the impact of the pandemic on household income has been less severe and the number of respondents that reported issues with mental or psychological health due to the pandemic has decreased. On the other hand, fewer people perceived compliance among their communities with pandemic measures, while more experienced physical illness than in 2020. Job loss and businesses that had to stop their activities were equally common in March 2021, as in November 2020 when the second round of the SEIA was conducted.

Kosovo started the COVID-19 vaccination campaign on 29 March 2021 with the first 24,000 doses of vaccine made available through the COVAX advanced market commitment. The availability of vaccines throughout the month of April has been limited and subsequent immunization progress has been slow. As of May 2021, the overall situation in Kosovo has improved considerably and further progress in the vaccination campaign has been made.[3] Vaccination readiness among the population has also increased since the conduction of the last SEIA in November 2020.

Below the main findings of the third SEIA round are presented. The household survey has been conducted with a sample of 1,417 respondents from the 3 March until the 19 March 2021, while the business survey was implemented with 609 businesses from the 4 March to the 22 March 2021.

Adhering to Restrictive Measures and Vaccination Readiness

Throughout the course of the past year, people in Kosovo faced various types of measures and restrictions implemented by the government institutions to curb the spread of the virus. In March 2021, less people believed that such measures were being respected than before (a drop from 3.8 points in November 2020 to 3.4 points).[4] On a positive note, vaccination readiness among the population appeared to have increased. While in November only 21% planned "to definitely get vaccinated", in March 2021 29% stated the same. More respondents also declared that they "leaned towards" getting vaccinated (21%) than before (16%). It stood out that Kosovo Albanian (K Albanian) respondents were significantly more inclined to "definitely get vaccinated" (31%), than Kosovo Serb (K Serb) respondents (5%). Men (32%) showed a higher level of willingness to get vaccinated for COVID-19 compared to women (26%). Around 20% each of women and men were leaning towards getting vaccinated (20% and 22% respectively). Older respondents also showed a higher vaccination readiness, compared to the younger generations.

Education and Distance Learning

As of March 2021, the majority of educational institutions in Kosovo resumed in-person teaching. This is also reflected by the round 3 data results of the assessment; 86% of children attended school in-person. Around 13% of children were part of a rotation system and attended school in-person on some days, and remote on others. Only 1% of children were attending school fully online (compared to 8% in November 2020).

Employment Prior to the Pandemic[5], Current Employment and Changes in Paid Working Hours

The COVID-19 pandemic influenced the employment and livelihoods of people in Kosovo in many ways and to varying extents. However, comparative data results suggest that changes regarding employment and working hours became

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[2] In May and November 2020, the first two SEIAs were conducted. Throughout the report the terminology "round 1" refers to data from May 2020, "round 2" to data from November 2020 and "round 3" to data from March 2021.

[3] This report focuses on the time span during in which the data collection was conducted (March 2021). It aims to contextualize the findings accordingly. This report does not go into further detail on events after March 2021.

[4] Measured on a scale from 0.0 to 5.0 points, where one equals strongly disagree and five strongly agree.

[5] The term "prior to the pandemic" refers to the time before March 2020 when COVID-19 was officially declared as a pandemic by the WHO.

less radical in March 2021. Prior to the pandemic, 59% of men and 29% of women were either employed or self-employed. While 22% of women refrained from working to be able to take care of household and family duties, none of the men reported to do the same. In March 2021, 72% of the respondents did not experience a change in working hours. In comparison, during round 2 and round 1 only 50% and 22% respectively did not encounter a change in their working hours. It should be noted that no significant differences were observed between changes in working hours for women or men. As of March 2021, 11% of men and 10% of women declared that they had lost their job. Most that had searched for work prior to the pandemic, remained unemployed (83%). However, on a positive note, slightly more respondents received unemployment benefits from the government in March 2021 (12%) than in November 2020 (8%). Still, 87% of respondents that lost their job, did not receive any unemployment benefits.

COVID-19 Impact on Business Operations

While the general negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on businesses in Kosovo is still clearly visible, it seems to have been less severe in March 2021. 41% of the business respondents that took part in the survey felt that the overall impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been very negative. However, compared to the data results of round 2, this portrays a decrease of 14 pp. More felt that the impact has been somewhat negative (50%), when compared to the situation in November 2020 (37%). The lack of customers (54%) remained the top reason causing negative impacts on businesses in 2021. Changes in the restrictive measures and gradual re-opening of the society between May and June 2020 in Kosovo were visible in the comparative data of round 1 and round 2 of the assessment, where a large difference was observed in business respondents that had to stop their business activities in May 2020 (56%) and November 2020 (13%). In March 2021, the ratio of businesses that had to stop their business activity due to COVID-19 remained the same as in November 2020 (13%). Businesses that experienced a total halt in activity cited the shortage of clients and difficulties in organizing work activities as the most common reasons (84% and 41% respectively). Moreover, businesses that remained operational also mentioned the shortage of clients as the top issue given the current pandemic situation (84%), 30% cited difficulties in paying salaries .

Support of Businesses towards Restrictive Measures

The support for restrictive measures to curb the spread of the virus, through closing or limiting business activity, had dropped significantly between May 2020 and November 2020. In March 2021, however, the results did not differ greatly when compared to the situation in November 2020; around 39% still strongly opposed the measures and 22% somewhat opposed them. The support for the restrictive measures stood at 20%, similar to the results in November 2020 (21%).

Remote Work

88% of household respondents worked at their work premises prior to the pandemic as well as during it, hence not witnessing any change in their typical place of work. Around 10% of women and 7% of men reported to have worked temporarily from home, but had returned to their usual place of work by the time of interview in March 2021. Only 2% reported to work part or full time from home (3% women, 1% men), similar to the results of round 2 in November 2020. Business survey findings reiterate these results, with 91% of business respondents that declared that all employees were working at the business premises in March 2021. Those household respondents that worked remotely felt especially challenged by an increased workload (48%), the simultaneous caring for children or the elderly while working (46%), and general multitasking (41%). Indicative data results also suggest that women were especially challenged with increased workloads and having to take care of children and the elderly while working (54% each), when compared to only around 40% of men. The majority of those that worked remotely said they would not prefer continuing to work from home post-COVID-19 (54%). This portrays an increase of 17 pp compared to those that stated the same in November 2020. More women would preferred to continue to work from home (38%) compared to men (22%).

Impact of COVID-19 on Household Income and Changes in Spending Behaviour

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on personal and household income, while undeniably still existent, appeared to be less drastic in 2021. Fewer respondents reported decreases in regard to most resources in March 2021, when compared to the situation in May and November 2020. Furthermore, in March 2021, 75% of the respondents declared that the paid working hours of the main income earners of the household was not impacted by COVID-19 . In November 2020, only 55% and in May 2020 just 30% declared the same.

Data further suggests that in March 2021 the pandemic prompted fewer to reduce spending in certain areas of their lives in order to compensate for income losses or potential income losses. While 57% reduced their spending on leisure activities, compared to round 2 this portrays a decrease of 17 pp. Around 40% utilized savings, compared to 49% in November. Around one third relied on consuming cheaper food (35%), while 41% did so in November 2020. Important to highlight is that while 23% reported to have reduced spending on education in November 2020, in March 2021, only 11% reported the same. The percentage of respondents that reduced spending on health to compensate from losses decreased only by 5 pp and still stood at 12% in March 2021.

Impact on Revenues, Costs and Investment Plans for Businesses

Similar to the results of round 2 of the assessment, many businesses still suffered from negative financial impact of COVID-19 in terms of revenues and costs. 88% and 82% of the respondents respectively declared that their sales of products or services, as well as the revenues had decreased (whereas during round 2 both amounted to 88%). Around 25% and 39% witnessed an increase of costs and expenditures respectively (compared to 44% and 19% respectively, during round 2). Results also showed that 55% of businesses had investment plans prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and similar to the situation in November 2020, 76% of business respondents had decided to refrain from making any investment (decrease of 3pp).

Impact on Social Dynamics and Accessibility of Services

The distribution of household chores and social dynamics within families were also affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Measuring increased or decreased burden of unpaid domestic and care work provides important insight into such dynamic changes. Compared to the situation in 2020, overall trends suggest that increases in activities related to unpaid domestic work became less discernible. For instance, in May 2020, 46% of the respondents reported an increase of hours spent on emotionally supporting other adult family members, in November 2020, 37% declared the same, while in March 2021 just 30% did so as well. Only 12% reported an increase of hours spent on cleaning and maintenance work around their dwelling, a drop of 36 pp compared to round 1 and a further drop of 6 pp compared to round 2. Despite these positive trends, ingrained gender roles continue to be clearly visible in 2021. Twice as many women reported increased hours spent on cleaning and maintenance work (16%) than men (8%). Women also devoted more hours on playing with or teaching children (9%) compared to men (6%). 51% of men also stated to usually not engage in cooking at all and 37% declared to usually not help with cleaning or maintaining of their home.

While psychological effects of the COVID-19 pandemic seemed to have eased, more respondents experienced physical illness of a family member or themselves in March 2021 compared to the situation in 2020. Only 23% declared that their psychological or mental health was affected, compared to 36% during round 2 and 28% during round 1. Conversely, more respondents declared to have witnessed the illness of a family member in March 2021 (28%), compared to November 2020 (16%) and May 2020 (5%), or experienced physical illness themselves (15% round 3, 11% round 2 and 2% round 1). Here it should be highlighted that some significant differences were observed when analysing regional disaggregated data, while gender disaggregated data showed that women and men were nearly equally affected in terms of mental or psychological health in March 2021.The illness of a family member or personal physical illness was much more commonly reported in Gjakovë/Đakovica (60% and 33% respectively) and Ferizaj/Uroševac (50% and 19% respectively), when compared to the other regions of Kosovo.

Comparative data between May 2020 and March 2021 further indicated that fewer respondents had difficulties in accessing social and health services, public transportation, and basic health products. Nonetheless, it should not be disregarded that still 18% of respondents experienced major or some difficulties in accessing food products, and 17% reported the same regarding health services or medical supplies.

Domestic Violence

The increase of domestic violence since the spread of COVID-19 has been a severe issue all over the world and, as of March 2021, 52% of the respondents claimed that domestic violence has increased. Compared to the results of the previous two rounds of the assessment, this portrays a slight decrease of 7 pp compared to November 2020. However, the perceptions differ based on gender, more women perceived that domestic violence has increased (55%, round 2: 63%) compared to men (49%, round 2: 55%), while at the same time 30% of women did not know where to seek help and support in case of experiencing domestic violence (32% during round 2, 28% during round 1).These data results indicate that the overall perceived increase of domestic violence has slight decreased compared to the situation in November 2020 according to both women and men. However, findings of all three rounds suggest that the knowledgeability among women where to seek help has not improved.

Future Outlook for Businesses

Comparative data between the three rounds of the business survey also show that businesses in Kosovo appeared to be slightly more confident in their coping abilities with the implications of the pandemic in March 2021. 21% predicted that their business would be able to cope with the current situation for more than six months, this portrayed an increase of 8 pp compared to round 2 and an increase of 17 pp compared to round 1. 31% believed that their business could afford the current situation for another three to six months (35% round 2 and 8% round 1). Here it should be highlighted that considerably fewer women-owned businesses declared that their business could afford the current situation for more than six months (21%), compared to business owned by men (32%). More respondents belonging to women-owned businesses felt that their business could afford the current situation only for one to two more months (13%) or less than one month (7%), when compared to respondents that were part of men-owned businesses (10% and 3% respectively).

Suggestions towards the Government and International Institutions

When asked about suggestions to Kosovo institutions on measures that could help the businesses, 52% mentioned financial assistance and implementation of economic recovery packages. 21% did not have any suggestions. In relation to this, it remains relevant to highlight that, as in November 2020, 22% expected that economic relief packages would be somewhat unfairly distributed and 17% expected that it will be completely unfairly distributed. Only 5% believed that economic relief will be completely fairly distributed among businesses in Kosovo. A staggering 59% believed that fraud and corruption will occur in relation to the distribution of relief packages (55% in November 2020). Most did not have any suggestions to international organizations in Kosovo on measures that could help businesses to deal with the ongoing situation, while 37% of business respondents mentioned financial support through economic packages.

Expectations for the Return to Normality

While some positive trends were visible in round 3 of the assessment, hope for a swift return to normality was not common among businesses respondents in March 2021. 54% estimated that it will take more than six months to return to normality, this portrays an increase of 14 pp compared to November 2020. Fewer believed that this process will take three to six months (17%, decrease of 14pp), or that it will take only one to two months (4%, decrease of 2 pp). In March 2021, none believed that Kosovo will return to normality within one month.

2. Introduction

2.1. Background

Kosovo and COVID-19 Key Milestones

March and April 2020: On March 13th 2020 the first two COVID-19 cases were registered in Kosovo, the public health emergency was announced on March 15th,[6] and on March 23rd and 26th first government measures were put in place to counter the spread of the virus. The government introduced its virus preparedness and response plan and subsequent action plan. Educational institutions closed their doors, air and land travel was largely suspended. Restaurants and bars, gyms, and shopping malls were prohibited to operate. Only essential businesses such as supermarkets and pharmacies remained open. Private companies were ordered to enable remote work where possible. Inter-urban transport to more affected areas was halted and curfews from 17:00 to 06:00 were introduced.

The Emergency Fiscal package was approved on March 30th, and included a doubling of the payment for the social and pension scheme, financial support for companies with financial difficulties, providing interest-free loans and additional financial support for the municipalities as well as increased budgets for ministries.[7] Distance learning for educational institutions was also implemented.

May and June 2020: Gradual reopening begins after fewer positive cases were registered. A "gradual removal of restrictions was implemented in May 2020. During June 2020, most restrictions had been lifted, while rules such as physical distancing and bans on mass gathering remained in place. Kindergarten and nurseries opened, land borders were gradually opened as well.

July to September 2020: 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 and outdoor spaces, among others. In August, the economic recovery plan for 2020 as well as the law for preventing the spread of COVID-19 were approved as well as the master plan for the development of learning under pandemic conditions 2020-2021. In September 2020, the decision was made to re-open schools and largely resume in-person learning, while some students were part of rotation systems attending school in-person on some days while studying remotely on others.

October-December 2020: During October 2020, the situation started to significantly worsen, with increased number of new infections and deaths among those that had contracted the virus. This lead in the following month to retaining previous measures (mandatory mask wearing and social distancing among others) and imposing of new measures such as further curfews for municipalities with high numbers of positive cases (see below for details) as well as for risk groups (e.g. persons over the age of 65). Limitations related to indoor sports and cultural and religious activities, ban of gatherings of more than five persons, mandatory public transportation operating at half capacity, and decreased business hours and new curfews for retail and culinary businesses.

As of December 2020, municipalities were classified into three categories based on COVID-19 infection rates, namely the green zone, yellow zone, and red zone.

Green Zone: Municipalities with fewer than 75 confirmed cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 inhabitants. All businesses must close by 20:00; restaurants may remain open for takeout and delivery after 2000.
Yellow Zone: Municipalities containing 76 to 150 confirmed cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 inhabitants. All businesses must close by 18:00; restaurants may remain open for takeout and delivery after 1800.

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[6] Government Decision (March 2020) Available at: https://kryeministri-ks.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Vendimi-nr.01-11.pdf
[7] Government Decision (March 2020) Available at https://kryeministri-ks.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Vendimet-e-Mbledhjes-s%C3%AB-15-t%C3%AB-t%C3%AB-Qeveris%C3%AB-s%C3%AB-Republik%C3%ABs-s%C3%AB-Kosov%C3%ABs.pdf and https://kryeministri-ks.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Vendim-i-Mbledhjes-s%C3%AB-16-t%C3%AB-t%C3%AB-Qeveris%C3%AB-s%C3%AB-Republik%C3%ABs-s%C3%AB-Kosov%C3%ABs.pdf

Red Zone: Municipalities with more than 150 confirmed cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 inhabitants. A daily 19:00-05:00 curfew will be in place; persons may leave their homes only for essential work and health emergencies in that period.[8]

Furthermore, after several failed attempts, in December 2020 the parliament passed the "Law on Economic Recovery" which entailed a 30 million Euro unemployment assistance fund in addition to several measures aimed at supporting business in Kosovo,[9] such as *"various tax incentives, public guarantees to enable businesses to access credit, government subsidies for some expenditure on electricity originating from renewable resources, and positive discrimination in favour of local producers in government public procurement, etc"[10].*

January and February 2021: In January the economic recovery plan for 2021 was approved which included a 222.5 million Euro recovery package aimed at supporting mainly the health sector, the police, and low-income families. More specifically, additional funds were allocated for doctors, nurses and other medical support staff, more financial means allocated for increasing the funds spent on social assistance and pension schemes, as well as mitigation measures for taxpayers, postponement of loan payments etc.[11]

In February 2021, the government of Kosovo decided[12] to remove the curfews in place, most pupils and students started to attend in-person teaching and economic operators were allowed to work until 22:00. Public and private employers were instructed to enable remote work for their employees were possible, and to follow the "Manual for protection against the spread of Covid-19" to create safe work environments. Furthermore, in February 2021, restrictions by zones were updated as follows:

Green Zone: All businesses must close by 22:00; restaurants may remain open for takeout and delivery after 22:00. Public transport operates at 50% capacity, entertainment businesses (e.g. cinemas) are allowed to operate at 40% capacity etc.

Yellow Zone: All businesses must close by 22:00; restaurants may remain open for takeout and delivery after 22:00. All public and private institutions are advised to reduce staff based on their specifics and the "Covid-19 Protection Manual". Public transport operates at 50% capacity, entertainment businesses (e.g. cinemas) are allowed to operate at 40% capacity etc.

Red Zone: All businesses must close by 22:00; restaurants may remain open for takeout and delivery after 22:00. Public and private institutions are obliged to work only with essential staff, which staff is determined by the decision of each institution in particular; Public transport operates at 50% capacity, entertainment businesses (e.g. cinemas) are allowed to operate at 40% capacity etc.[13]

March 2021

[8] Kosovo: Authorities update list of municipalities with increased COVID-19 activity as of December 4 /update 15 (December 2020) Available at: https://www.garda.com/crisis24/news-alerts/407811/kosovo-authorities-update-list-of-municipalities-with-increased-covid-19-activity-as-of-december-4-update-15

[9] ESPN Flash Report 2021/08, EC, (January 2021) Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/348788120_Kosovo_a_new_Law_on_Economic_Recovery_to_address_the_socio-economic_impact_of_the_COVID-19_pandemic

[10] ibid

[11] Kosovo approves €222.4mn recovery package for 2021 (January 2021) Available at: https://www.intellinews.com/index.php/kosovo-approves-222-4mn-recovery-package-for-2021-200482/?source=kosovo

[12] UNKT, RECAP of the government decisions (February 2021) Available at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mLCGV0Bvgtf91aKvxocwk5PiDmV2U6Jc/view

[13] UNKT, RECAP of the government´s decision, (February 2021) Available at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mLCGV0Bvgtf91aKvxocwk5PiDmV2U6Jc/view

In March 2021[14] decisions and restrictions put forward by the Government in February remained in force, the Government declared that COVID-19 trends had stabilized despite a worsening epidemiological situation in Kosovo. Towards the end of the months, the Ministry of Health announced that no new decision had been made despite rising number of daily COVID-19 positive cases. By the end of the month COVID-19 positive cases rose to 700 to 800 a day. Hospitalizations have also been on the rise throughout the month of March.[15]

COVID-19 daily cases, as per 24 March 2021

(Source: UNKT COVID-19 Update Sitrep. 60, March 2021, see link below)

Kosovo started the vaccination of the population on the 20th of March 2021. In March, Albania donated 500 doses of AstraZeneca´s COVID-19 vaccines for Kosovo health and medical workers[16]. While, on the 29th of March the Ministry of Health announced that the vaccination process officially started.[17] Reportedly, 24,000 AstraZeneca vaccines, part of the COVAX vaccine sharing scheme arrived in Kosovo. Doctors and nurses as well as people aged 80 years and older were foreseen to be vaccinated first.[18]

A survey conducted by UNICEF among 1,454 young people in Kosovo which aimed at measuring the perceptions on vaccinations and the COVID-19 vaccines revealed that fewer than half (40%) would consider getting vaccinated, should the vaccine be available, while 25% stated they would not get vaccinated. Most commonly a lack of information as well as safety concerns were mentioned for reasons to refuse the vaccination[19]. Findings like this highlight the importance of information campaigns in Kosovo regarding vaccines, their characteristics, and safety.

Kosovo institutions have made various efforts and implemented numerous policy measures to support households and businesses. International actors and other countries have also made efforts to support Kosovo. While international actors supported Kosovo institutions throughout the first year of the pandemic through various efforts aimed at

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[14] As this section aims to provide background context to the data findings of this report, the recap does not go beyond March 2021 as the fieldwork for data collection was conducted within March 2021. It should be nonetheless highlighted that the situation has improved as of May 2021 in regard to positive cases as well as vaccination progress.

[15] UNKT COVID-19 Update Sitrep. 60, (March 2021) Available at: https://kosovoteam.un.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/SITREP%2060%20-%20Kosovo%20-26032021.pdf

[16] Albania Donates COVID-19 Vaccines to Kosovo Health Workers (March 2021) Available at: https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2021-03-20/albania-donates-covid-19-vaccines-to-kosovo-health-workers and Albania begins vaccinating Kosovo medics against COVID-19 (March 2021) Available at: https://www.euronews.com/2021/03/20/albania-begins-vaccinating-kosovo-medics-against-covid-19

[17] Ministry of Health in Kosovo, (March 2021) Available at: https://msh.rks-gov.net/sq/kosova-ka-nisur-sot-vaksinimin-kunder-covid-19/

[18] Reuters, (March 2021), Available at: https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-kosovo-vaccine-idUSKBN2BL2BI

[19] Perceptions on Vaccination, Opinions of U-Reporters on overall vaccination and COVID-19 vaccine, UNICEF (January 2021) Available at: https://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/media/1971/file/U-Report%20Vaccine%20Acceptance.pdf

supporting the health and educational sector among others, in 2021 the focus lays on supporting the recovery process of Kosovo.

Socio-Economic Impact Assessments (SEIA)

In 2020, UNDP, UN Women and UNFPA cooperated to conduct two Rapid Socio-Economic Impact Assessments (SEIA) of 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 in Kosovo. The first round was conducted in May 2020, the second in November 2020. 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.

This report presents the findings from the third round of the SEIA, conducted in March 2021 (strictly anchored in the methodology and standardization of the first and second SEIA). The goal hereby was to produce comparable data over time and enabling an updated understanding of the effects of the ongoing crisis. The results of the three SEIA rounds 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.

The assessment utilises a combined approach to reach out to different groups in Kosovo 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.

3. Survey Findings

3.1. Household Survey

This chapter presents the findings of round 3 of the household survey conducted in March 2021 with 1,417 respondents. Where applicable, the data is compared to the results of the first and second round of the assessment conducted in May and December 2020.

3.1.1 Household Profile and Demographics

The gender distribution of the respondents that took part in the household survey was nearly equal (51% men and 49% women). Over 40% were between the age of 25 and 44 years old, while 21% belonged to the youngest age group of 18 to 24 years old. Almost one in six (16%) were between the age 45 and 54 years old, while 9% where 65 and older.

Figure 1 Gender of respondents

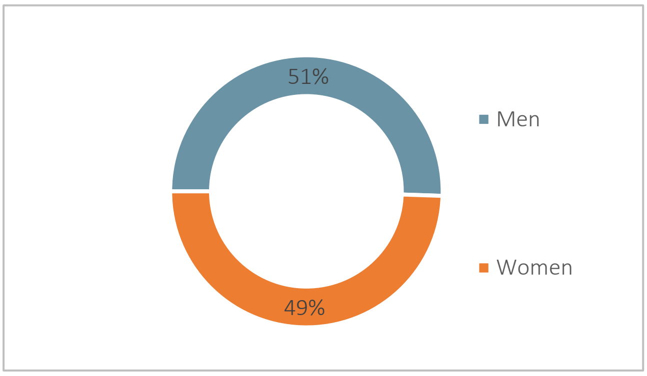
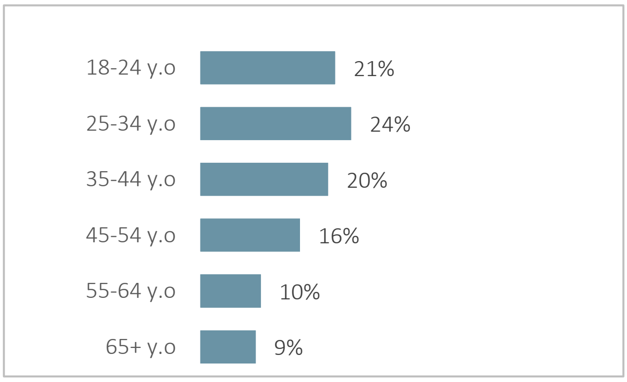


Figure 2 Age of respondents



As during the first two rounds of the assessment, the selected sample was also representative of the Kosovo population structure. Around 60% were living in rural areas and 40% in urban areas. Nearly one third were from the region of Prishtinë/Priština (28%) and 18% from Prizren, whereas 13% were from Mitrovicë/Mitrovica. Around 11% each of the respondents were from Ferizaj/Uroševac, and Gjakovë/Đakovica, while 10% each were from Pejë/Peć and Gjilan/Gnjilane.

Figure 3 Regional distribution of the respondents

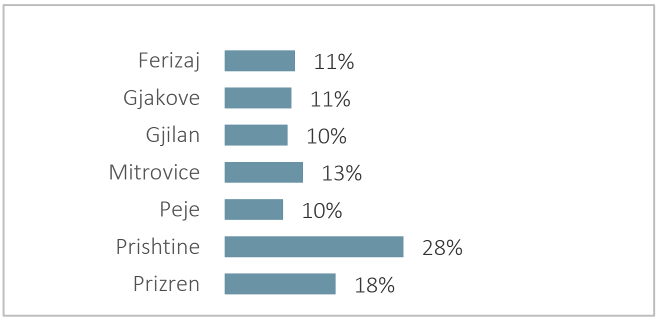
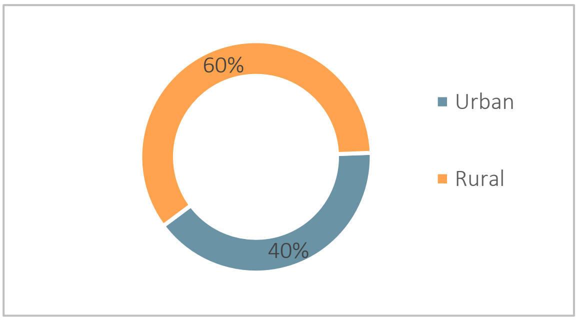


Figure 4 Urbanity of the respondents



The educational level of the respondents varied: The majority had a secondary school degree (53%), almost one in four had a university degree or equivalent (23%), and 19% had only completed elementary school. While four percent had completed a post-university degree, two percent reported having no education at all.

The ethnicity of the respondents was 92% K Albanians 7% K Serbs while one percent belonged to other ethnicities than those aforementioned.

Figure 5 Education level of respondents

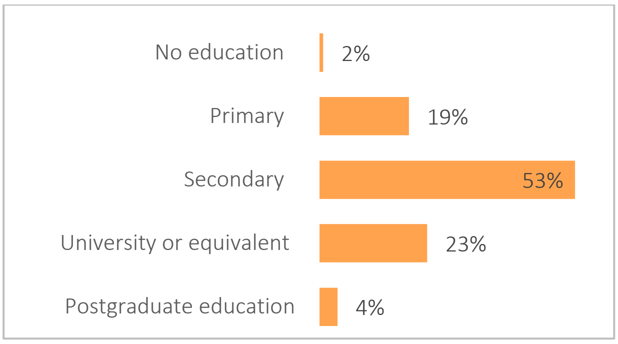
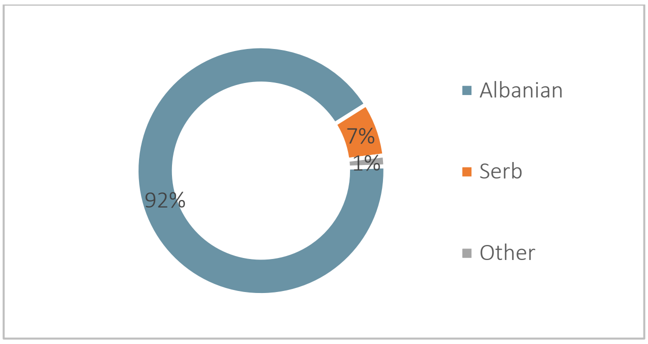
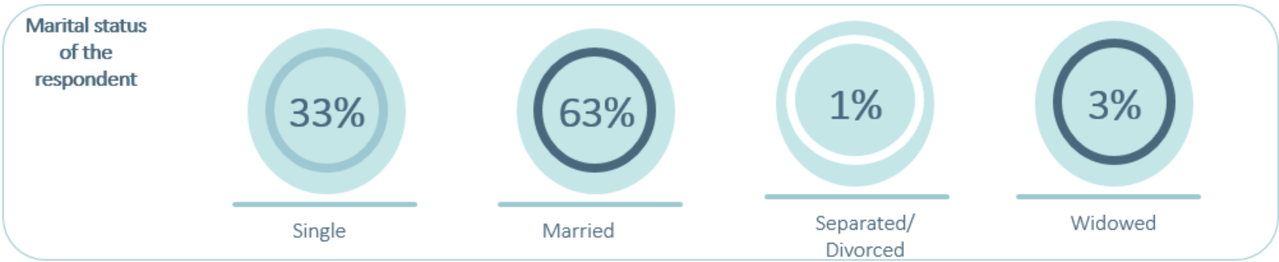


Figure 6 Ethnicity of respondents



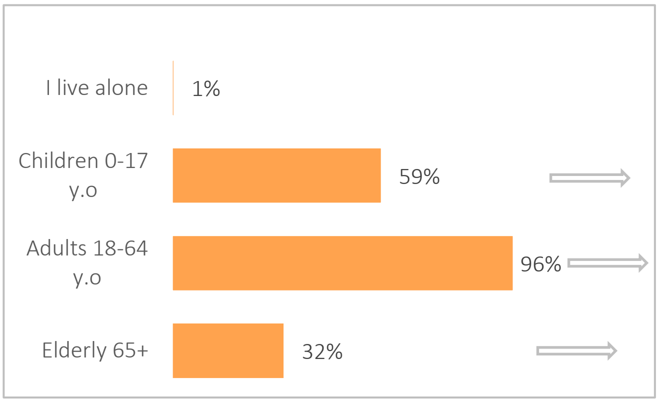
Nearly two in three respondents declared to be married (63%), while one third stated to be single (33%). Around three percent reported to be widowed and only one percent declared to be separated or divorced.

Figure 7 Marital Status of the respondents



Nearly all families of the respondents consisted of adults between 18 and 64 years old (96%). Over half of the families included children (59%), and around one third had elderly family members as part of their households (32%). 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. As during the previous round, only four percent of the families had a family member that was pregnant at the time of interview and the great majority declared to live in a residential flat (95%).

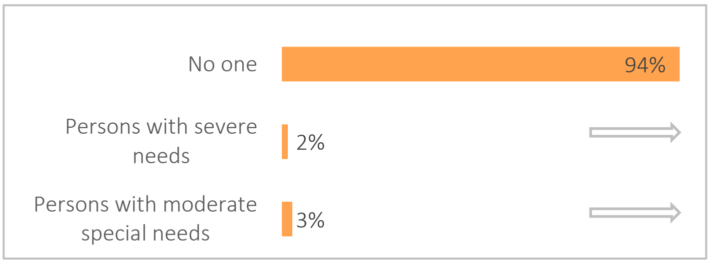
Figure 8 Family composition



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

The great majority of households did not have a family member with disabilities (94%), while 3% stated to have a person with moderate disabilities (1.3 average) and 2% with severe disabilities (1.1 average) in their household.

Figure 9 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	1.3

Cumulative monthly income per household (HH) commonly revolved around 400 to 799 Euro (30%). Around 22% declared an HH income between 250 and 399 Euro, while nearly as many stated that their income was situated between zero and 249 Euro (17%). Around 13% declared to accumulate 800 to 1,199 Euro a month. Only 3% of all respondents had a total monthly HH income of 1200-2000 Euro or more. It should be noted that 14% of all respondents did not provide an answer to this question.

Personal monthly income of more than half of the respondents (52%) was between 0 and 249 Euro, while 19% declared that their personal income revolved around 250 to 399 Euro, and 15% stated that their personal income was between 400 to 799 Euro per month.

Figure 10 Household income per month

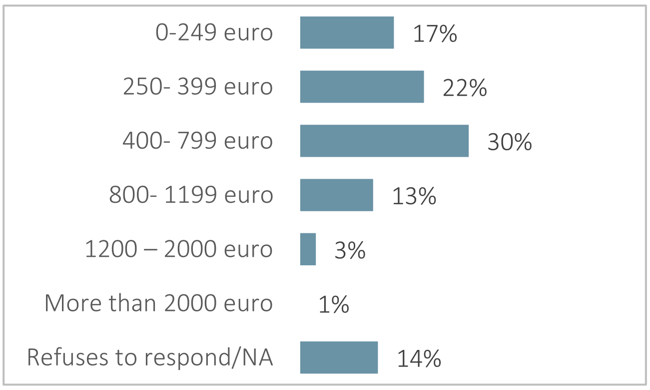
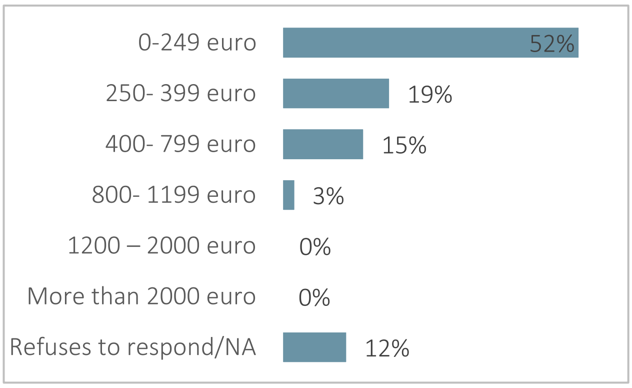


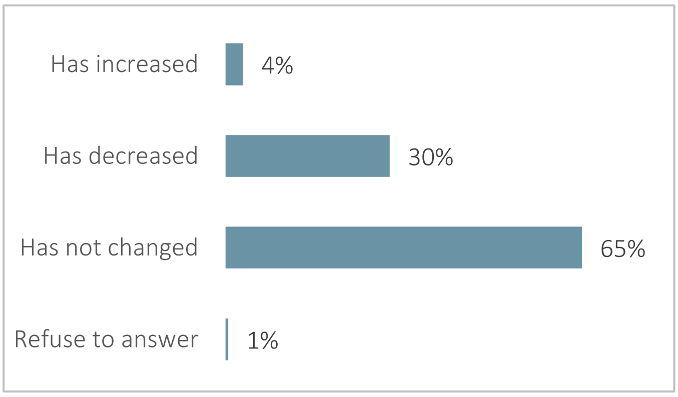
Figure 11 Personal income per month



Around one third of the respondents indicated that their income had decreased (30%) since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. On average, income has decreased by 268 euro per month. The most common response (mode) was a decrease of 100 euro.

Only four percent had seen an increase in their income since the beginning of the pandemic, while nearly two thirds indicated that their income situation had not changed (65%).

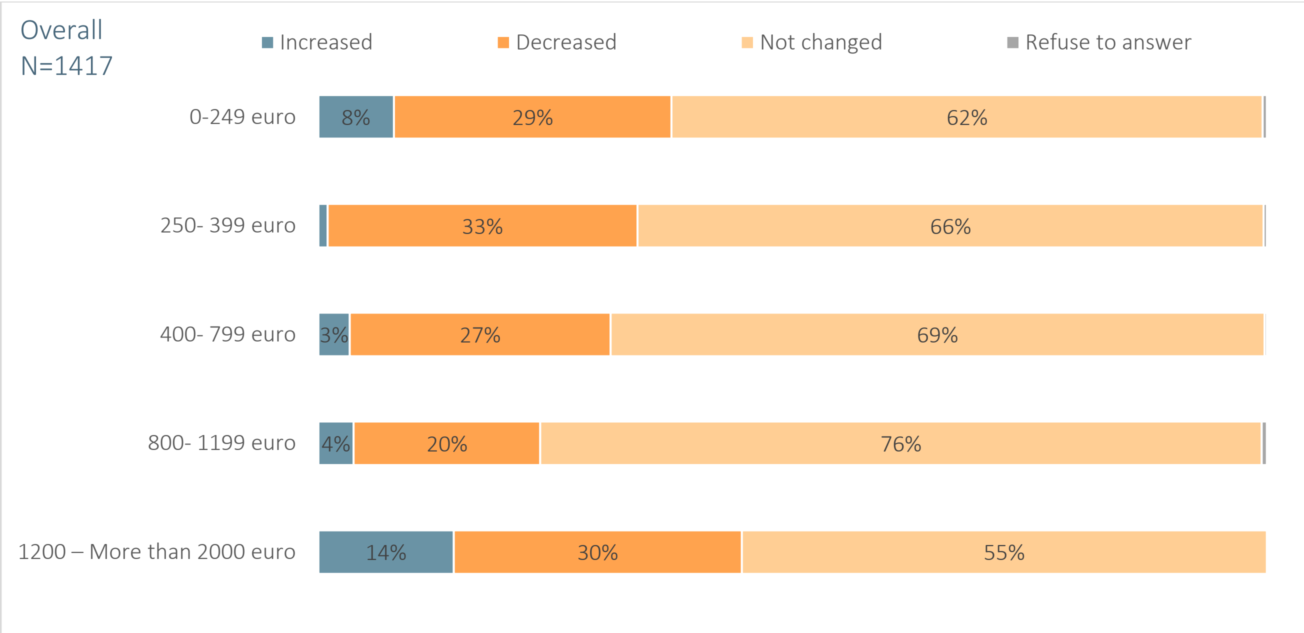
Figure 12 Changes in family income since the COVID-19 pandemic per month



Family income change		
	Average	Mode
Has increased (Monthly)	221 Euro	30 Euro
Has decreased (Monthly)	268 Euro	100 Euro

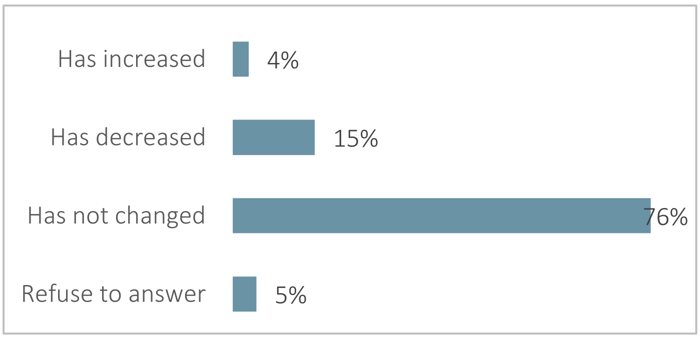
When taking a closer look at changes in household income by income groups, it can be observed that especially those with a higher income of 1200 to more than 2,000 Euro (30%) and those with 250-399 Euro (33%), as well as those with the lowest HH income (29%), were more prone to have witnessed decreases than others. The highest and lowest income groups also more commonly reported increases in family income than other groups. Thus, the conclusion can be drawn that variation in these two groups were more likely to occur than in others. Those that earned 800 to 1199 Euro per month were least likely to have experienced changes in their household income (76%).

Figure 13 Changes in family income since the COVID-19 pandemic per month, by income groups



Decreases in personal income has been slightly less common when compared to the above described decrease in HH income. Only around 15% reported a decrease in personal income, with an average of 256 Euro reduction. Around three in four respondents (76%) declared no change in their personal income, while 4% witnessed an increase of their personal monthly income.

Figure 14 Changes in personal income



Personal income change		
	Average	Mode
Has increased (Monthly)	196 Euro	30 Euro
Has decreased (Monthly)	256 Euro	100 Euro

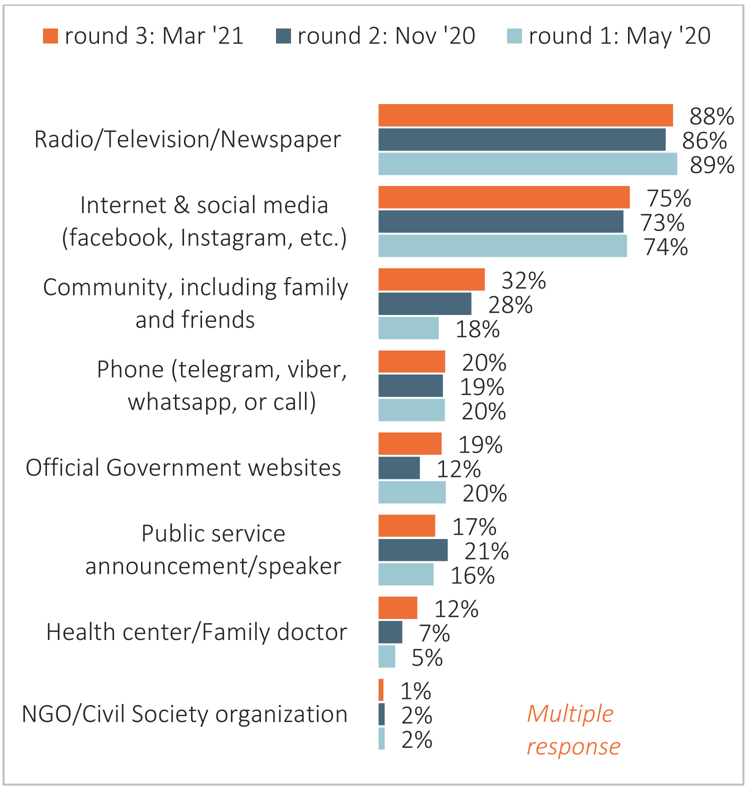
3.1.2 COVID-19 Awareness and Information

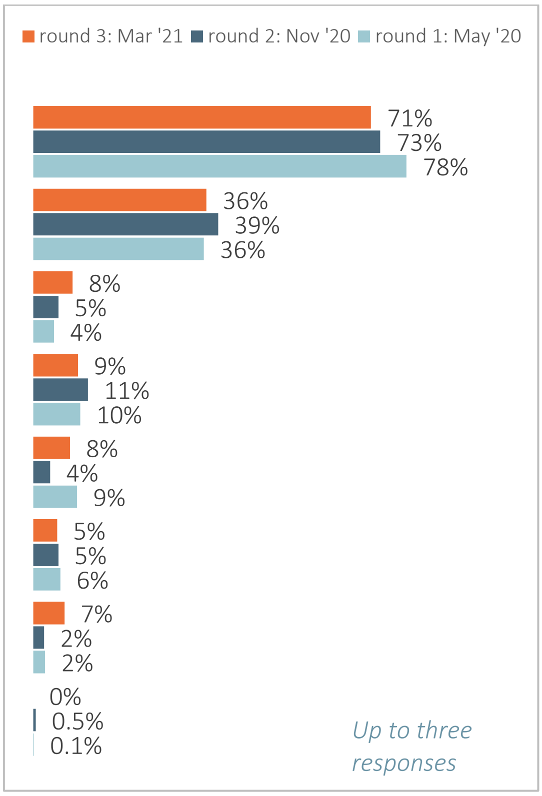
One important part of the household survey was aimed at understanding how people in Kosovo educate themselves about COVID-19 and related risks, if they trust the sources they typically consult, and whether existing restrictive measures and rules are being followed. The respondents' willingness to receive a COVID-19 vaccine should it become available to them was also assessed.

Radio, Television and Newspapers remained to be the most used (88%) and most trusted (71%) sources of information in March 2021. However, trust in these sources slightly declined throughout the course of the past year (by 2 pp compared to round 2 and 7pp compared to round 1). Internet and social media were still the main source for around three in four respondents (75%), while the trust remained fairly low (36%, decrease of 3 pp). Compared to the past two rounds of the assessment, more respondents mentioned their community, including family and friends, as their main source of information (32%). This portrays an increase of 14 pp compared to the first round. However, trust in the information received from the communities increased only marginally (4pp since the first round).

The usage of phone apps as well as trust in them has remained largely the same, while the use of government websites appears to have increased in March 2021 (19%) compared to November 2020 (12%). The trust in government websites has also slightly increased compared to the last round of the assessment (4 pp). Fewer of the respondents mentioned public service announcements as a source of information (17%), while slightly more reported health centres and family doctors as their main source of information (12%). NGOs were only mentioned by around 1% of the respondents, similar to the results of the past two rounds of the assessment.

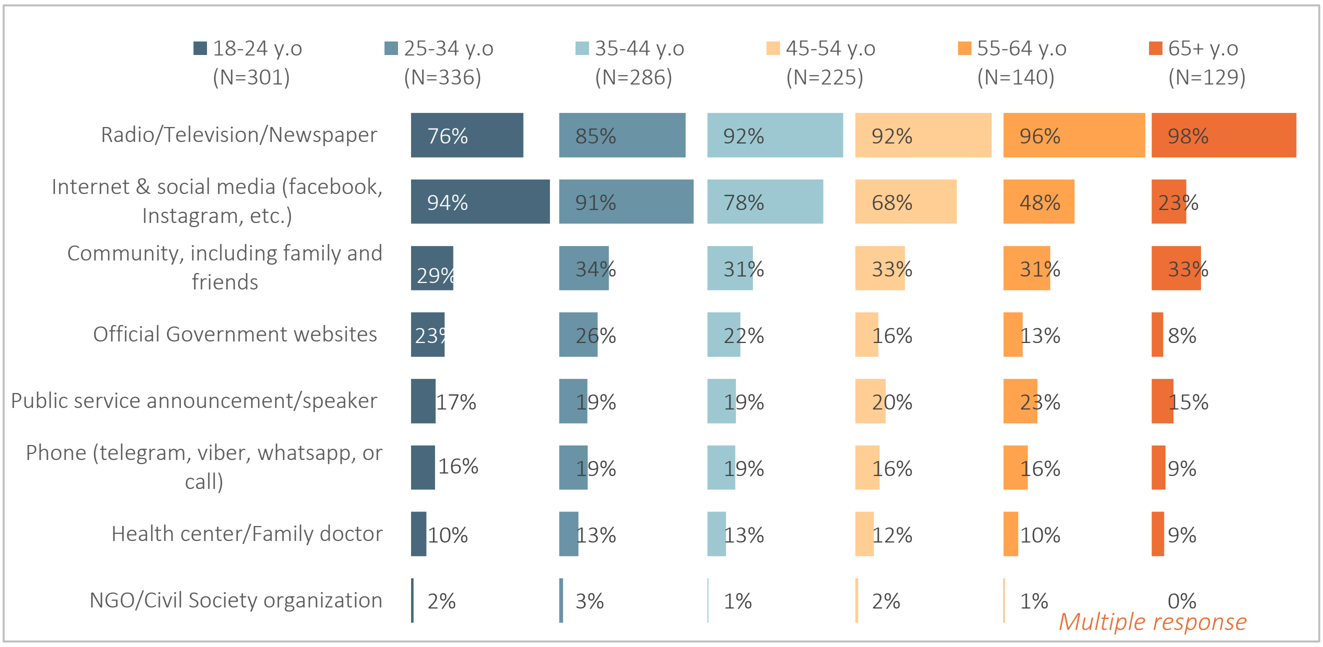
Figure 15 Main sources of information and most trusted sources of information





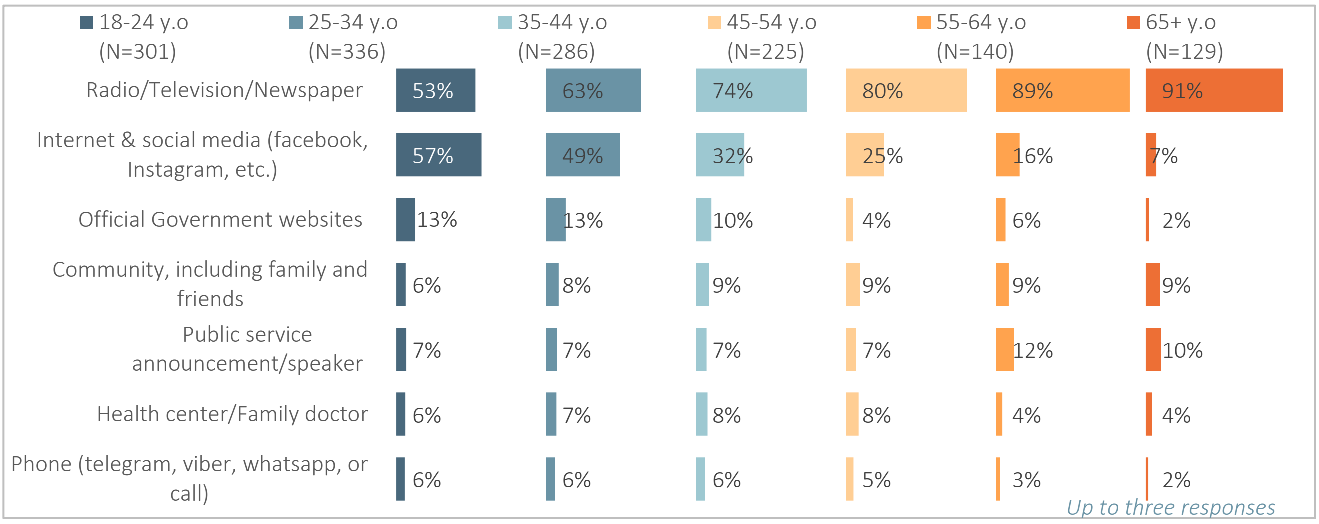
Younger respondents tended to use internet and social media as their main source of information more commonly, while older respondents were more inclined to use radio, television, and newspapers. Around one third of each of the age groups mentioned their community as their main source of information, only the youngest age group laid slightly below one third in this regard (29%).

Figure 16 Main sources of information, by age



Data also suggests that trust in internet and social media decreases with age, while trust in radio, television and newspaper increases with age. The websites of official government institutions were trusted more often by younger respondents, than by those over 45. Despite a significant number of middle-aged respondents citing the community as their main source, trust appeared to be low at only 5-13%.

Figure 17 Most trusted source of information, by age



Data further revealed that women and men showed similar behaviour patterns when choosing main information sources. However, small differences can be observed with slightly more men that made use of radio, televisions and newspapers (89%), as well as international and social media (76%) and government websites (23%) than women (86% and 74%, 17%respectively). Marginally more women mentioned their community as the main source of information (33%) compared to men (31%). Women expressed slightly less trust towards radio, television and newspapers (70%) than men (72%), otherwise level of trust towards listed sources were similar regardless of gender of the respondent. Data disaggregated by urbanity and education did not reveal significant deviations in source usage or trust.

Figure 18 Main sources of information, by gender

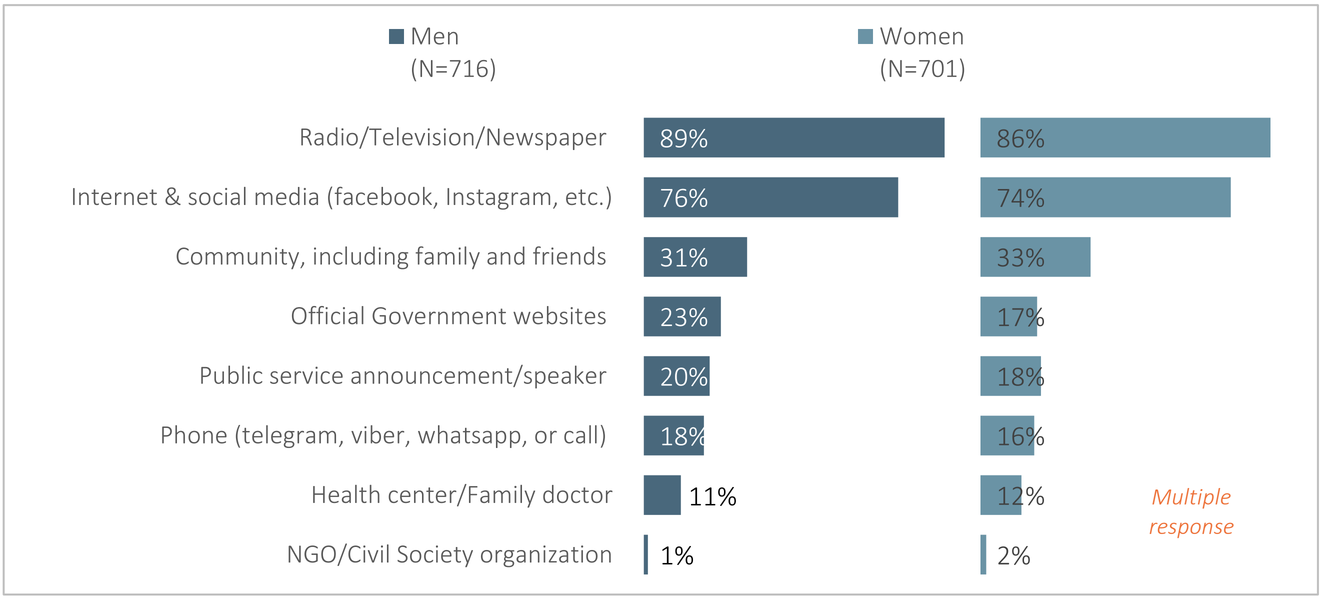
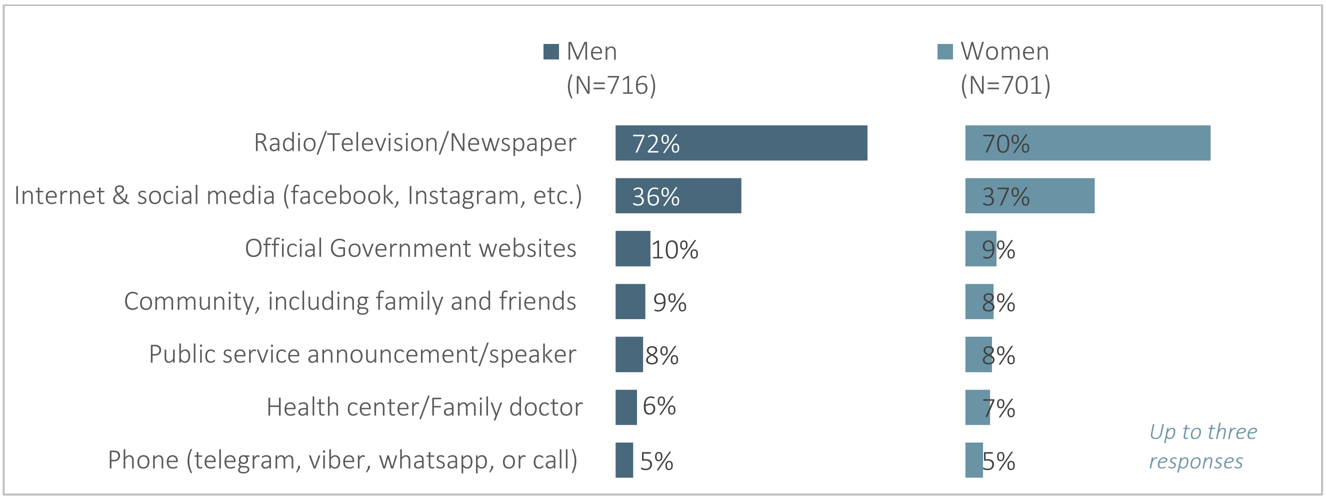


Figure 19 Most trusted source of information, by gender



Observing comparative data results between the three rounds of the assessment, a declining trend can be observed with fewer respondents that strongly agreed that COVID-19 information helped them protect themselves and family from the virus. While the majority was still in agreement with the statement, compared to the first round it had dropped from 4.3 to 3.9 out of 5.0 points. No deviation in opinions of women and men was observed in this regard.

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

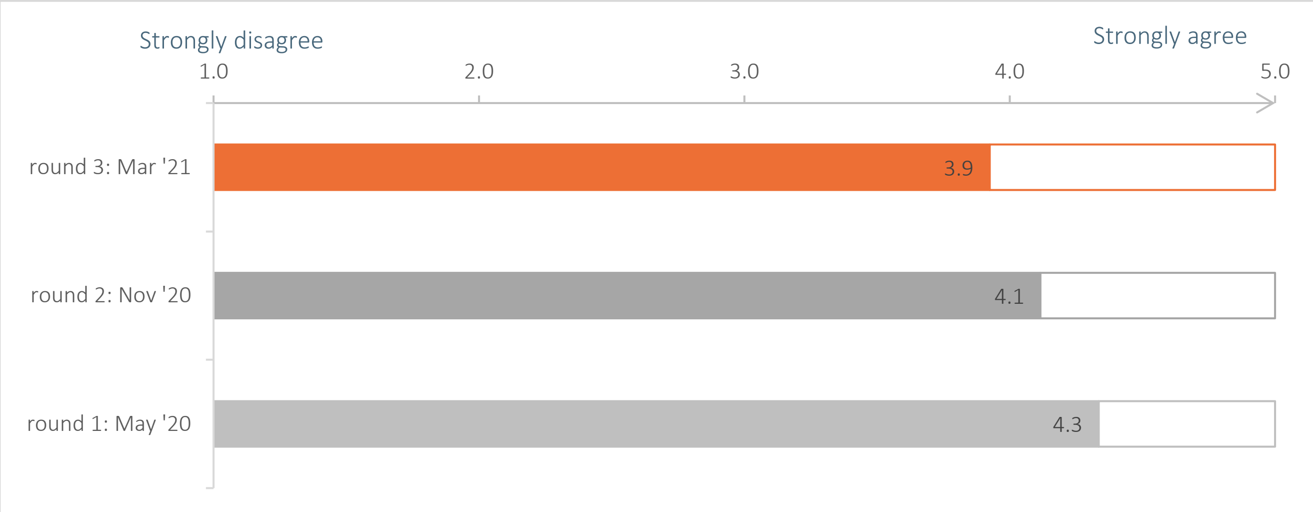
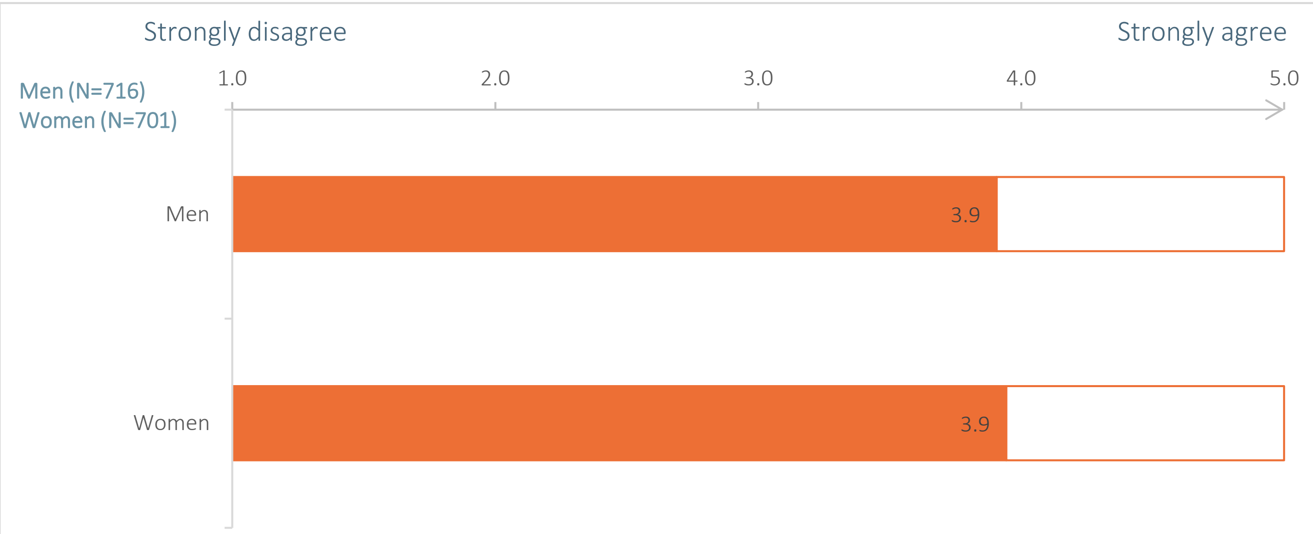
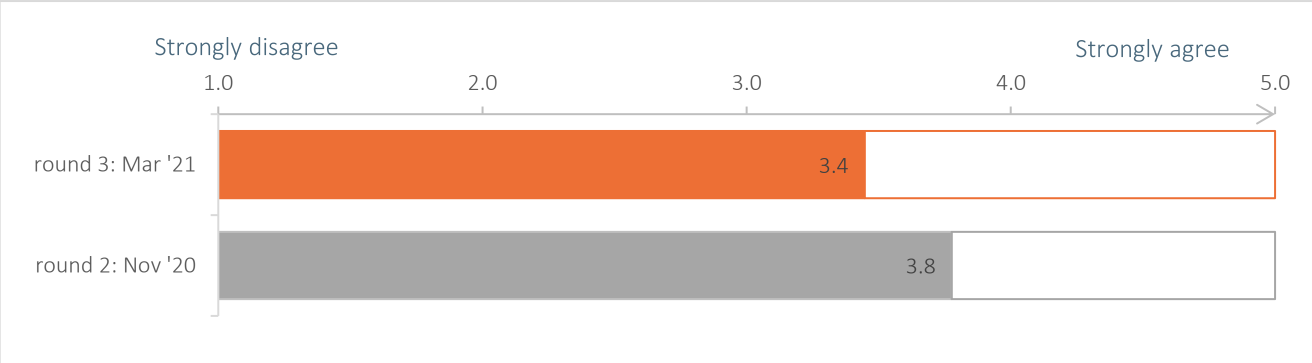


Figure 21 Agreement with: "COVID-19 information helped me protect myself and family from the virus"?



In March 2021, fewer respondents (women and men alike) expressed strong agreement with the statement *"People in my community respect preventive measures against COVID-19"* (3.4) when compared to the results of the previous round conducted in November 2020 (3.8)[20].

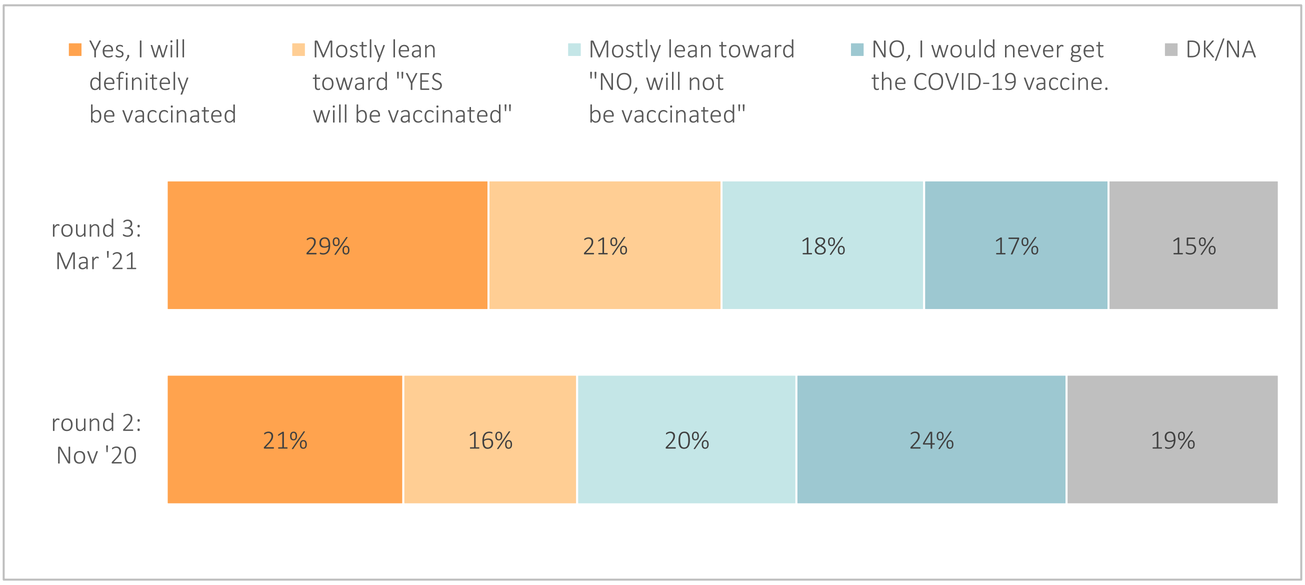
Figure 22 Agreement with: "People in my community respect preventive measures against COVID-19



Compared to November 2020, the readiness of Kosovans to get vaccinated appears to have increased. While in November only 21% stated to plan to definitely get vaccinated, in March 2021 nearly one third stated the same (29%). More respondents also declared towards leaning to get vaccinated (21%) than before (16%).

While almost one in four stated that they would not consider getting the vaccine in November 2020 (24%), in March 2021 this rate dropped to 17%. It should be noted that 15% refused to provide an answer for this question.

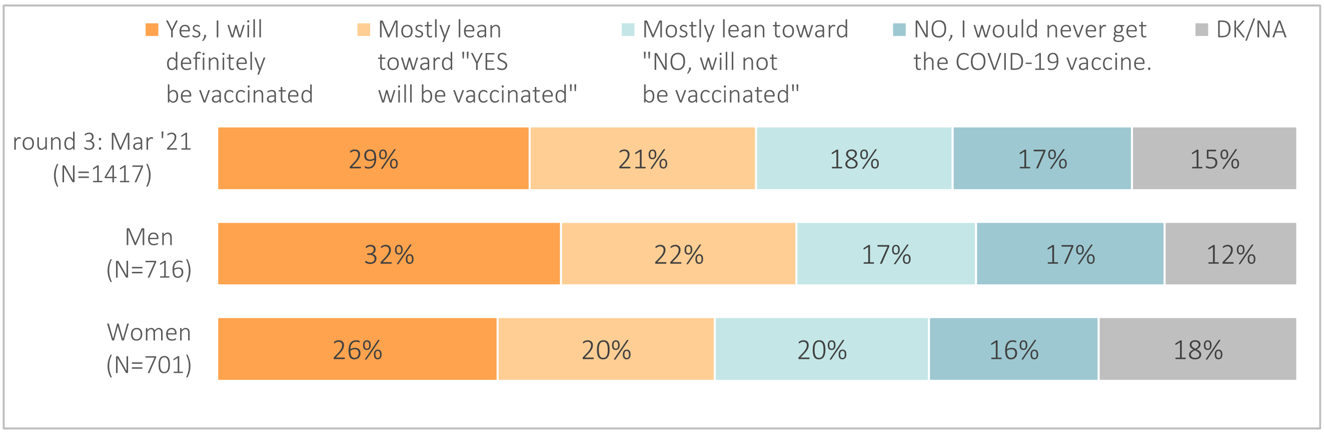
Figure 23 Readiness to get vaccinated for COVID-19, by round



[20] This question was added during the second round of the assessment and is therefore not compared to round 1.

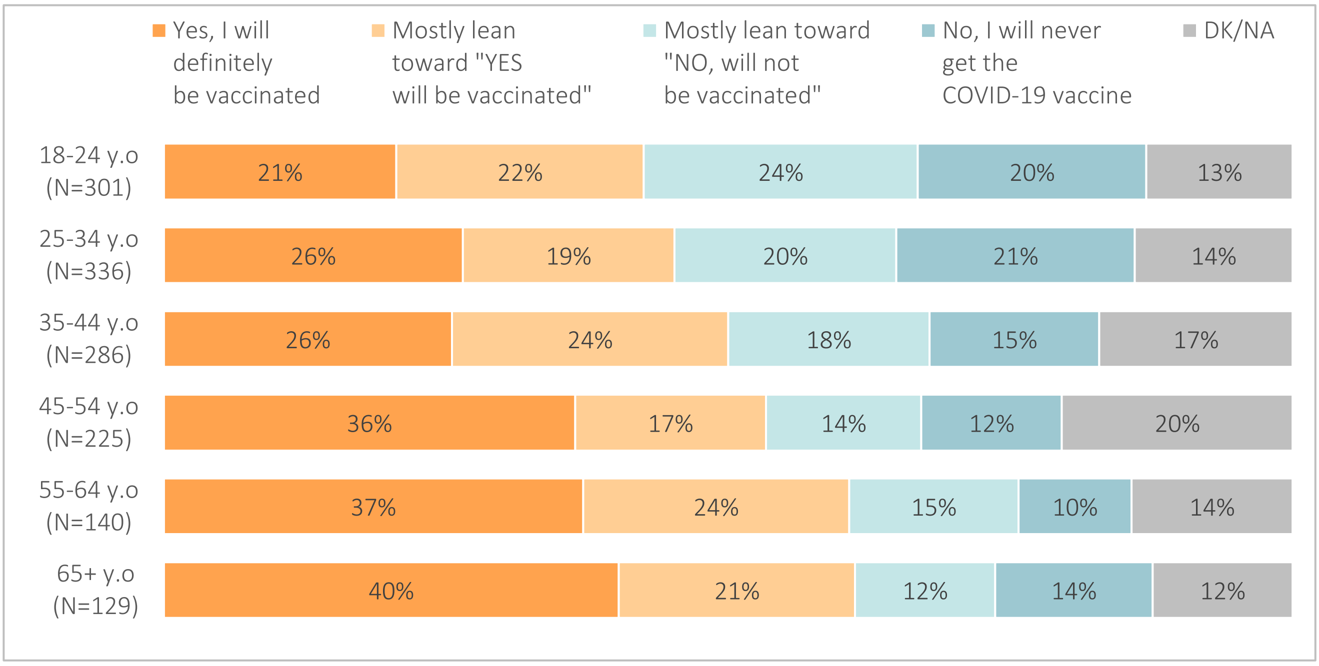
Similar to the situation in November 2020, men showed a higher level of willingness to get vaccinated for COVID-19 compared to women. While almost one third of men were certain to get vaccinated (32%), only 26% of women expressed the same. Around 20% of women and men, respectively, were leaning towards getting vaccinated (20% and 22%, respectively). More women leaned towards not getting vaccinated (20%) than men (17%), however, no significant difference was observed regarding those that ruled out getting vaccinated (17% men, 16% women). It should be noted that women more commonly refused to provide an answer to this question (18%) than men (12%).

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



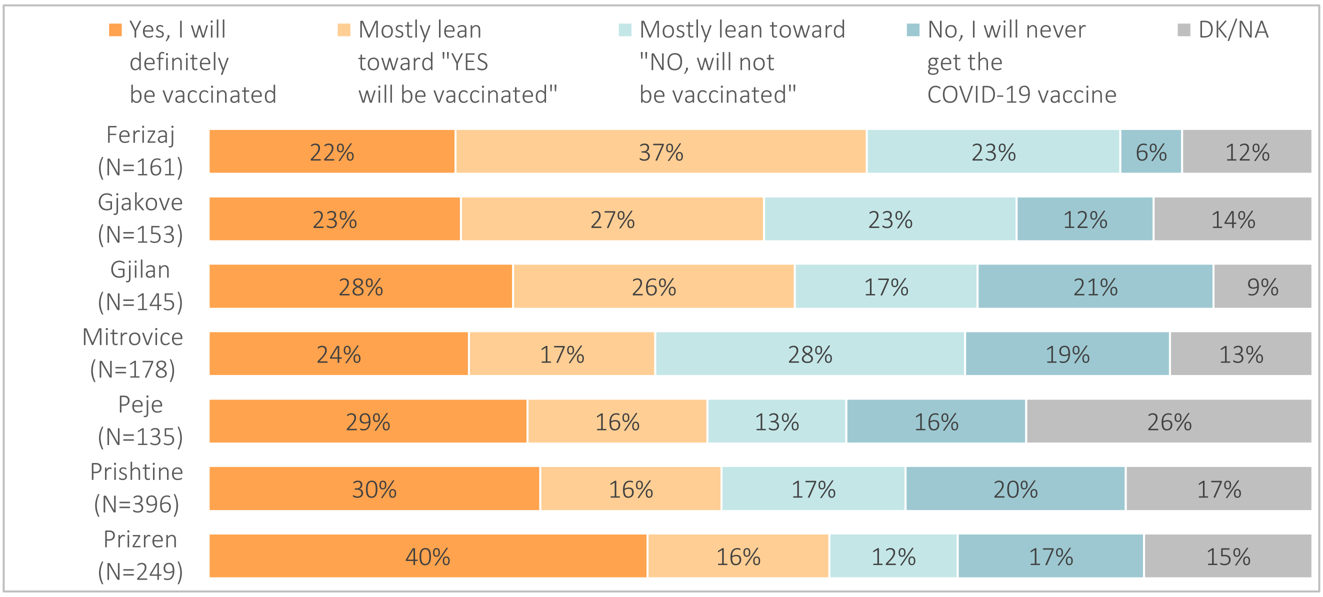
Disaggregated data by age show that the older the respondent, the higher the willingness to receive a vaccine for COVID-19. Respondents above the age of 65 years old showed the highest vaccine readiness with 40% being certain to get vaccinated and 21% leaning towards it. In comparison, among the youngest age group, only about 21% planned on definitely getting vaccinated and 22% leaned towards it. The low level of vaccination readiness among younger people in Kosovo was also confirmed by a UNICEF study, as discussed in the background section of this report.

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



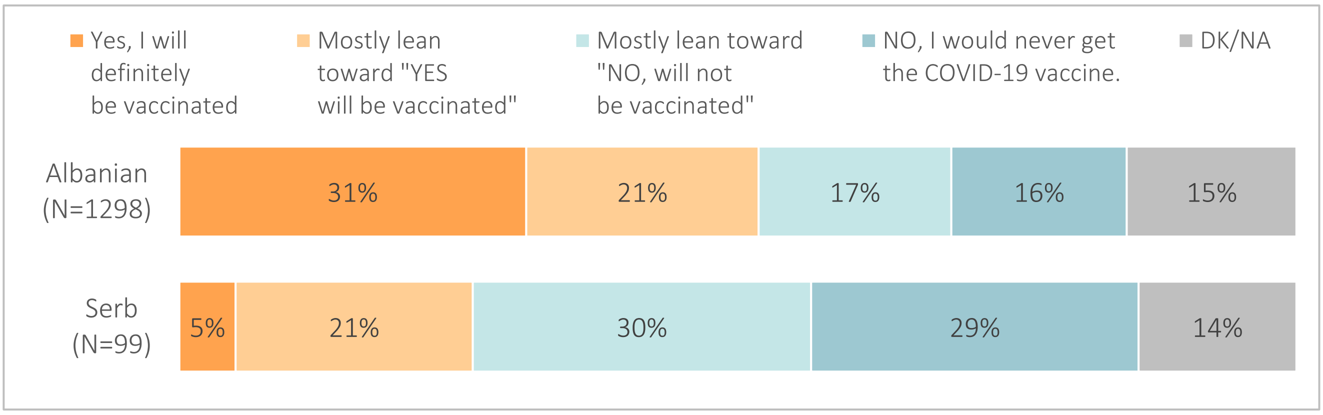
Respondents that resided in the Prizren and Prishtinë/Priština regions showed the highest readiness to get vaccinated or leaned towards getting vaccinated (56% and 46% combined respectively). Conversely, in Pejë/Peć and Mitrovicë/Mitrovica only 45% and 41% respectively stated the same. The highest number of respondents that declared they would not get vaccinated were from Gjilan/Gnjilane (21%).

Figure 26 Readiness to get vaccinated for COVID-19, by region



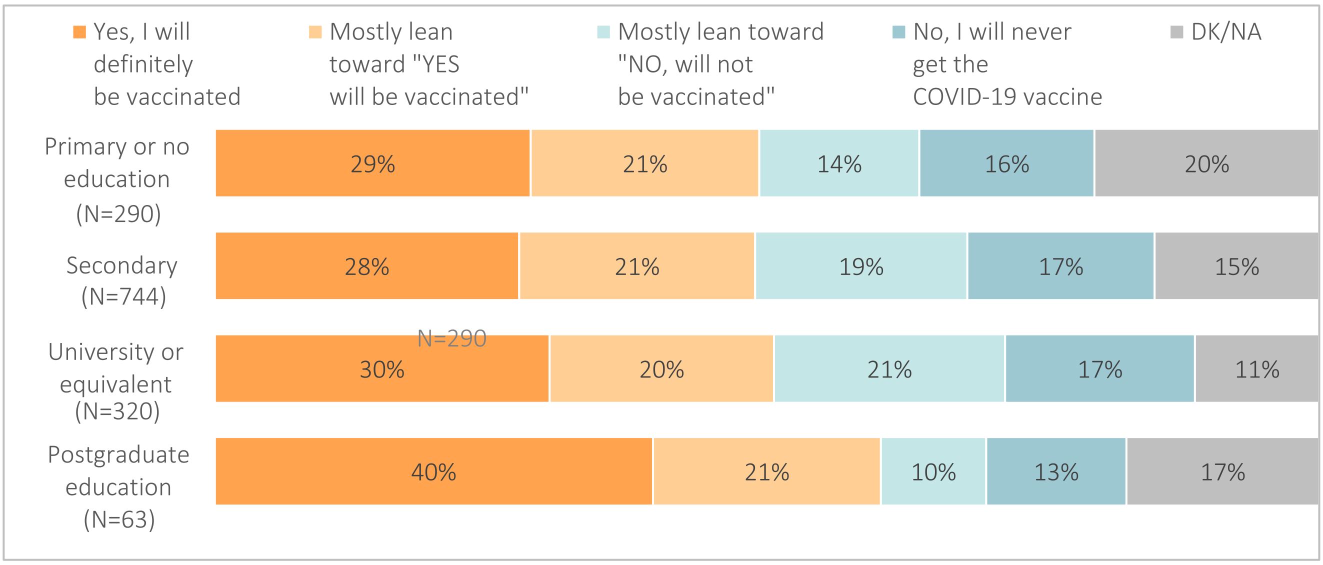
Significant differences can be observed when consulting data results pertaining to vaccination readiness disaggregated by ethnicity. It clearly stands out that K Albanian respondents showed a higher willingness to receive a vaccine for COVID-19 (31% would definitely get vaccinated, 21% lean towards getting vaccinated) than K Serb respondents. Only 5% of K Serbs planned to definitely get vaccinated, while 21% leaned towards that option. Nearly two thirds of K Serbs were either leaning towards not getting vaccinated (30%) or were certain not to get vaccinated (29%).

Figure 27 Readiness to get vaccinated for COVID-19, by ethnicity



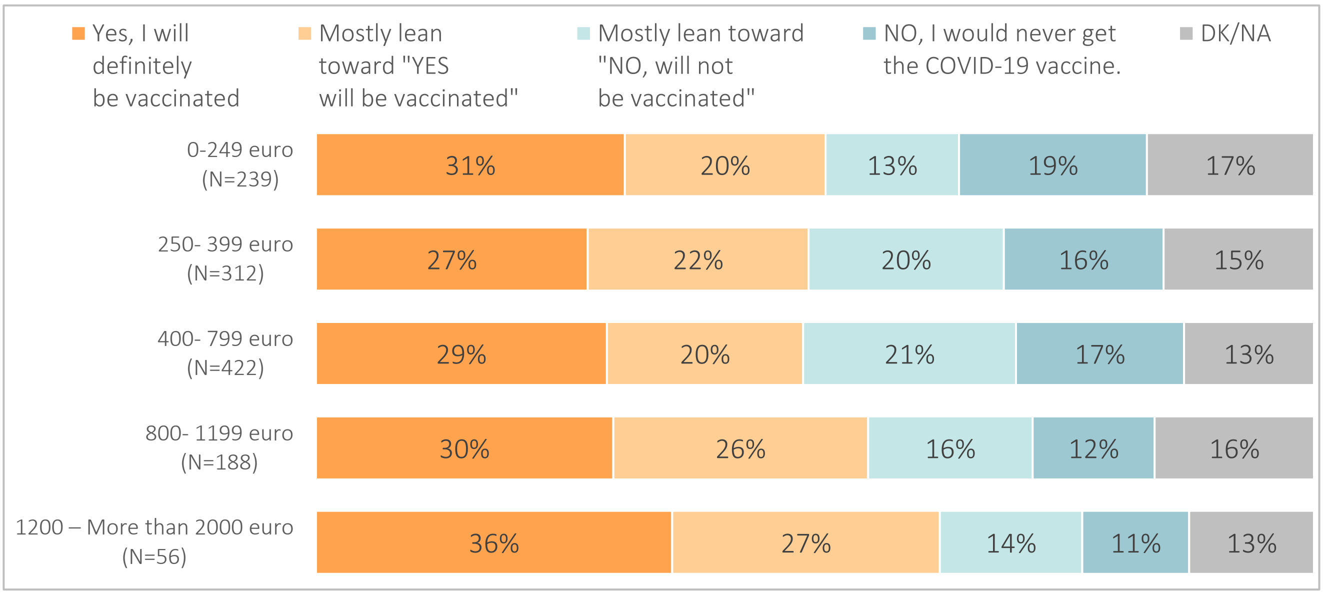
Data further revealed that education levels may impact vaccination readiness. Those respondents that had obtained a university degree (30%) or postgraduate degree (40%) showed the highest levels of certainty to get vaccinated for COVID-19. However, it should be noted that around 20% leaned towards getting vaccinated regardless of education level. While vaccination refusal (respondents that would never consider a getting vaccinated) was not common among respondents with a post graduate degree, the results for other education levels all revolved around 16-17%. Respondents with primary or no education more commonly refused to provide a response to this question (20%).

Figure 28 Readiness to get vaccinated for COVID-19 by education



Results suggest that respondents with higher income were more likely to consider getting vaccinated than those belonging to lower income groups. However, the lowest income group stood out with nearly one third expressing to plan to get vaccinated (31%). At the same time, this group also had the highest ratio of respondents that would refuse receiving a vaccine for COVID-19 (19%).

Figure 29 Readiness to get vaccinated for COVID-19 by family income



3.1.3 Education and Distance Learning

During the first lockdown phase in Kosovo, between March and May/June 2020, schools and kindergartens were closed and Kosovo institutions were offering distance learning online and by transmitting it via the public broadcaster. In September 2020, most children in Kosovo returned to schools and were attending school in-person again or were part of a rotation system. In March 2021, the majority of educational institution were open despite raising numbers of infections.

Around half of the households that took part in the survey had school aged children (48%), out of these about eight in 10 children were attending school in-person in March 2021 (86%). Compared to November 2020, this portrays an increase of 14 pp. Around 13% of the children were part of a rotation schedule and attended school in-person on some days and remote on others. In November 2020, in comparison, 20% of children were part of a rotation schedule. Only 1% were attending school fully online as of March 2021.

Figure 30 Households with school aged children

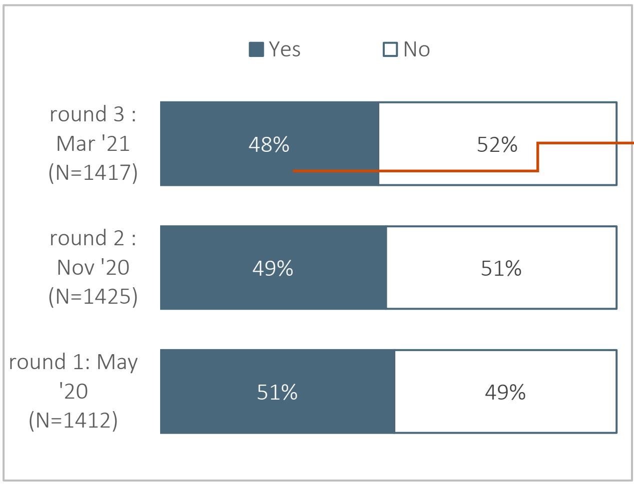
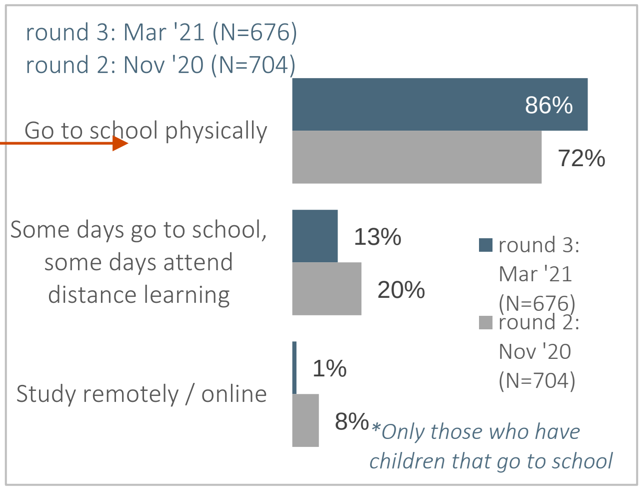
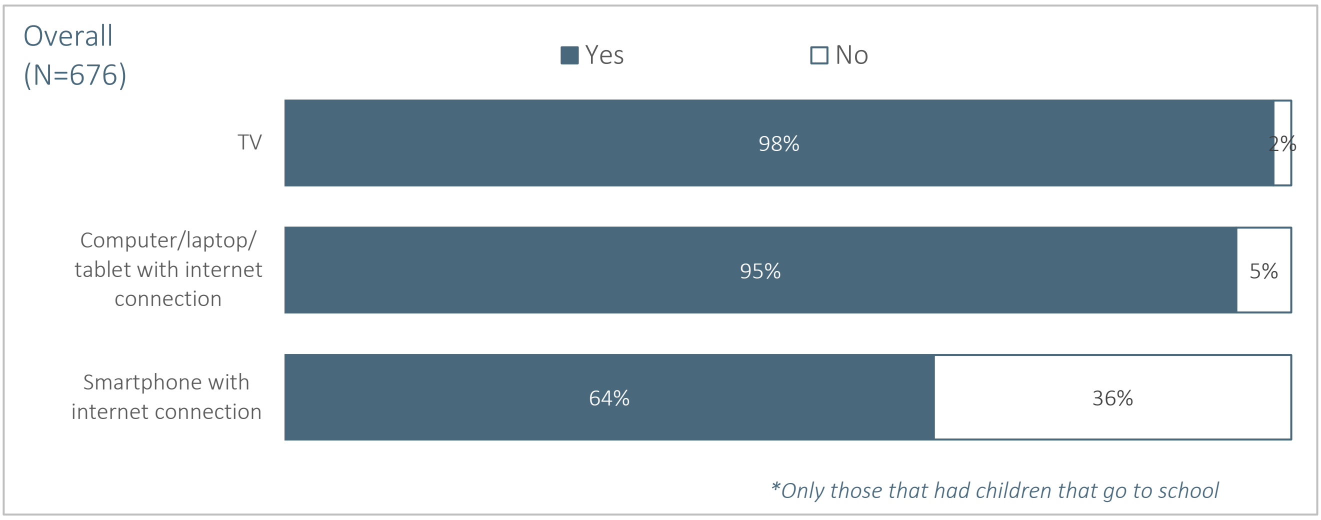


Figure 31 School attendance physical or remote



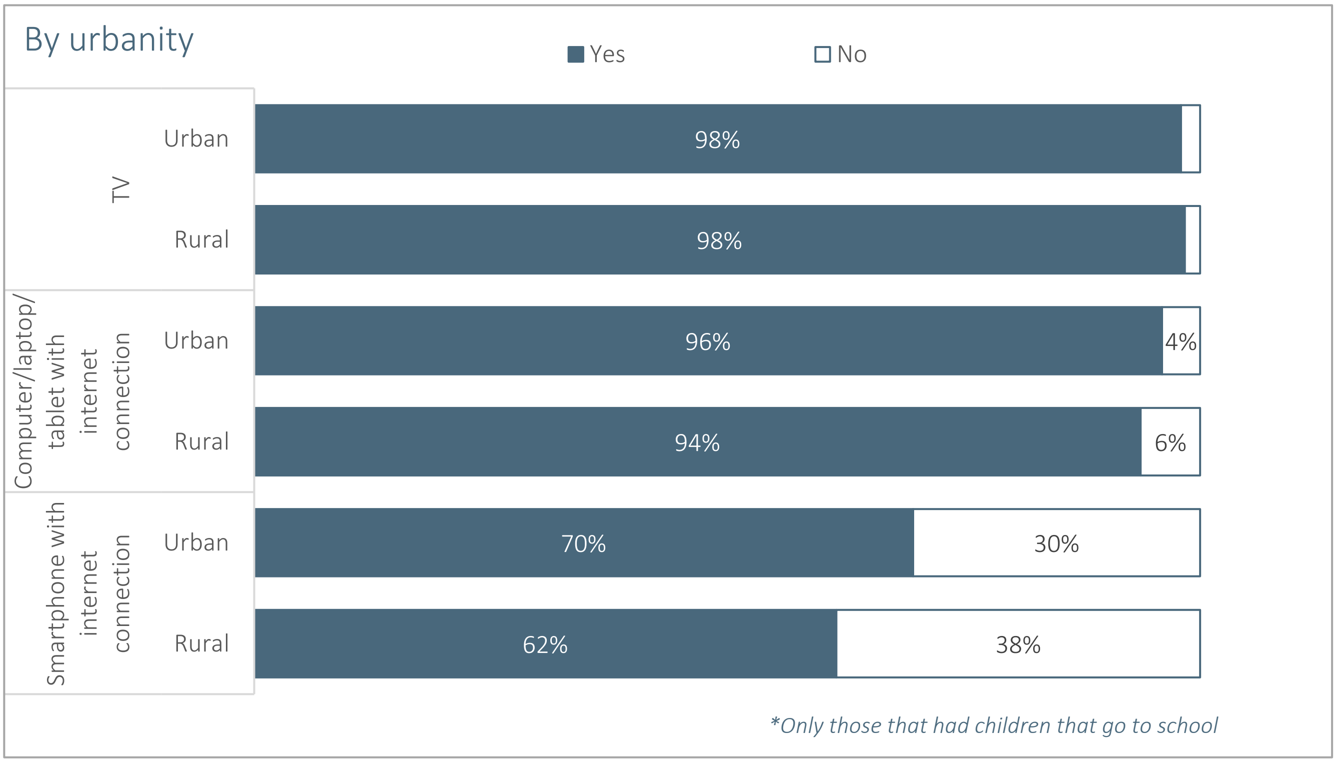
The majority of households with school aged children possessed necessary technical equipment for children to be able to follow distance education programs. Nearly all (98%) owned a TV and 95% had a computer, laptop and/or tablet with internet connection. Almost two thirds were in possession of a smart phone with internet connection (64%).

Figure 32 Possession of necessary technical equipment for children to be able to follow a distance education program



Taking a closer look at data results disaggregated by urbanity, it can be seen that the great majority of both urban and rural households were in possession of a TV and computer, laptop and/or tablet with internet connection. Slightly fewer rural households owned a smartphone with internet connection (62%), compared to urban ones (70%).

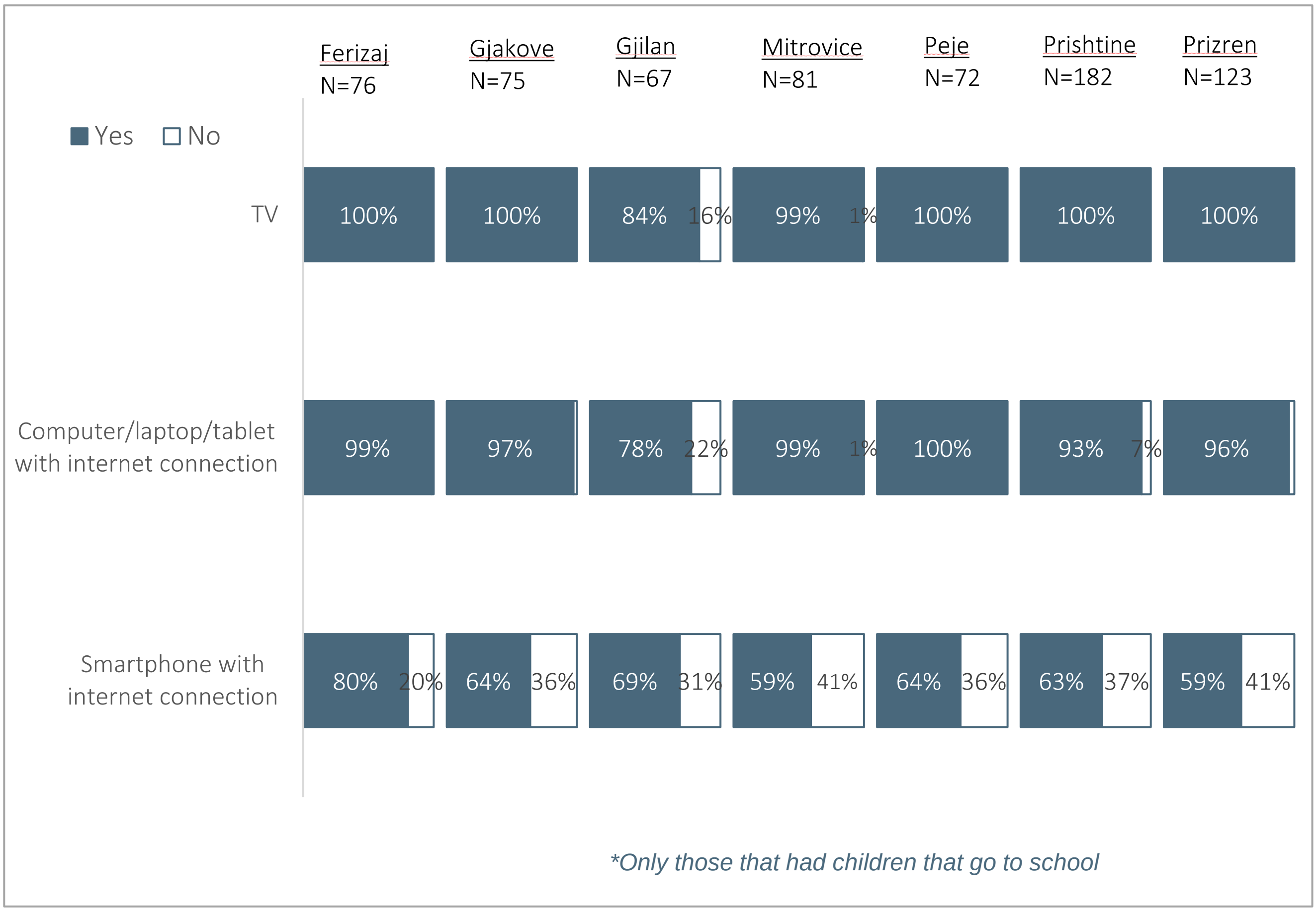
Figure 33 Possession of necessary technical equipment for children to be able to follow a distance education program, by urbanity



Regional data results show that households in Gjilan/Gnjilane were less likely to own a TV (84%), as well as a computer, laptop and/or tablet with internet connection (78%) compared to all other regions where nearly all were in possession of these types of technical equipment.

Smartphones with internet connections were least commonly available in households in Mitrovica and Prizren (59% each), while households in Ferizaj/Uroševac were most likely to be in possession of a smartphone (80%)[21]. The bigger the regions, the higher the possibility that some households will lack technology especially smartphones with internet connection.

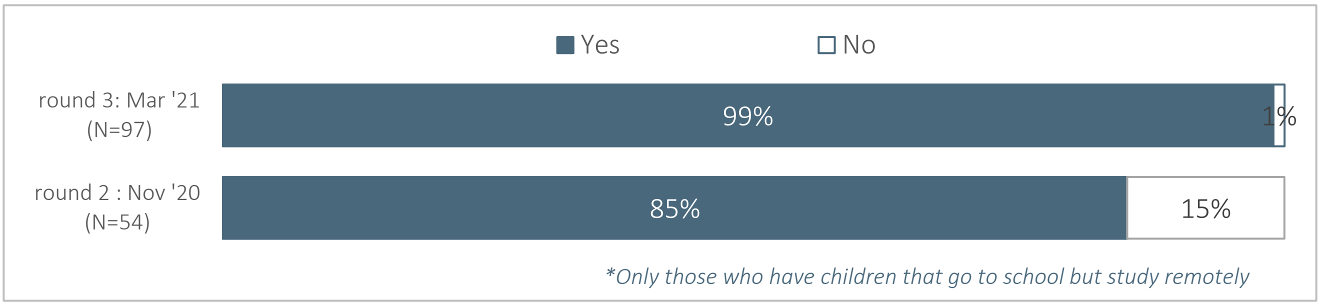
Figure 34 Possession of necessary technical equipment for children to be able to follow a distance education program, by region



[21] Please note that these data are on a regional level, hence all urban and rural households are considered. The bigger the regions, the higher the possibility that some households will lack technology especially smartphones with internet connection

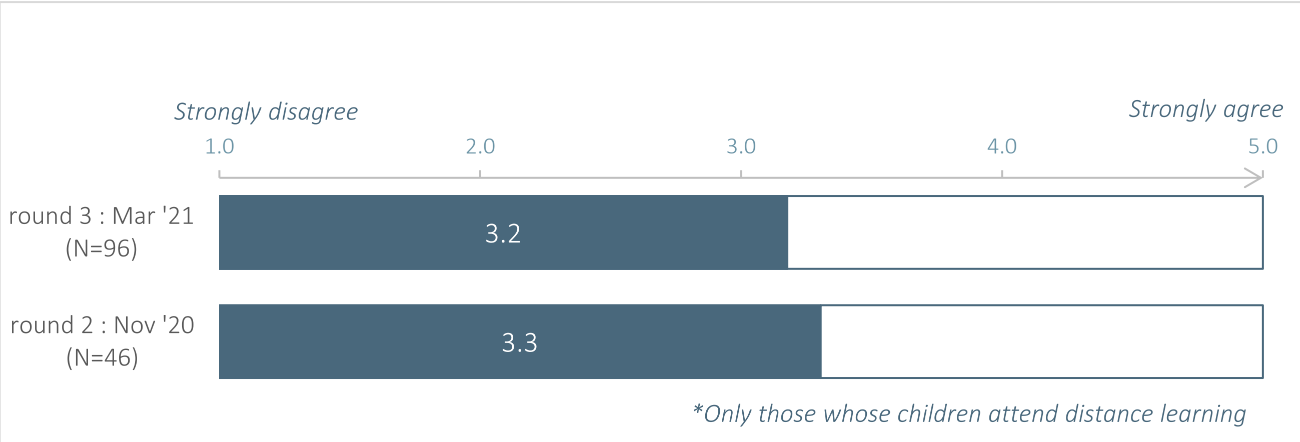
Nearly all children that were still studying remotely in March 2021, were able to attend distance learning regularly (99%). Compared to November 2020 this portrays an increase of 14 pp.

Figure 35 Child/Children was/were able to attend distance learning regularly



Similar to the results of November 2020, on a scale from 1.0 to 5.0, the majority of respondents with children in their household rated the quality of the education offered through distance learning with 3.2 points. This evaluation translates into a neutral rating of the quality (neither good nor bad).

Figure 36 Agreement with "The quality of the education offered through distance learning was good"?



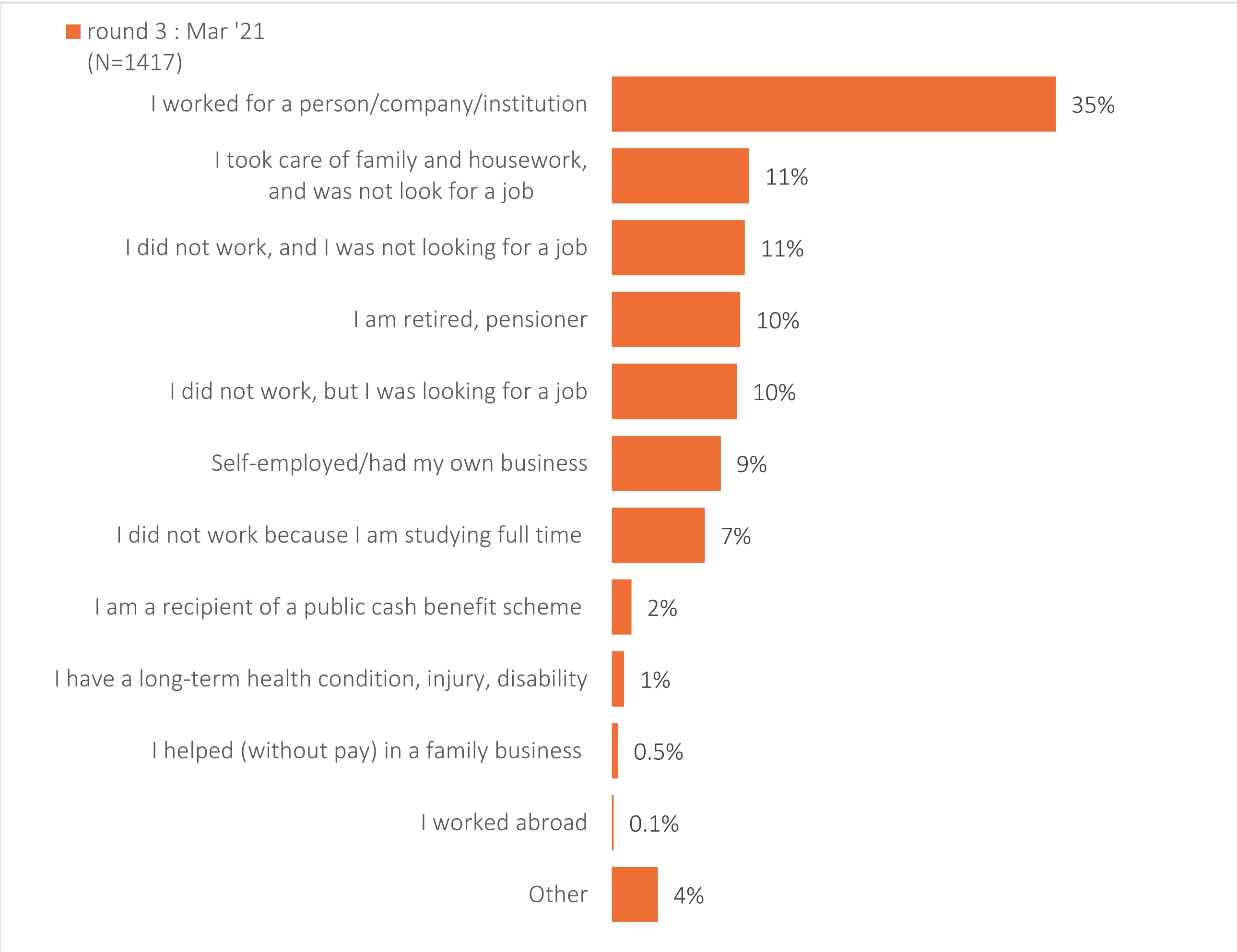
3.1.4 Employment and Livelihood

The COVID-19 pandemic has influenced the employment and livelihoods of people in Kosovo in many ways and to varying extent. Therefore, exploring changes related to employment status and type, change in working hours, as well as payments and leave days, offer important insights into the challenges people in Kosovo are facing in their daily life during the ongoing pandemic.

More than one in three of the respondents reported to have been employed and either worked for a person, company or institution prior to the pandemic (35%). Around 9% of the respondents stated that they were self-employed.

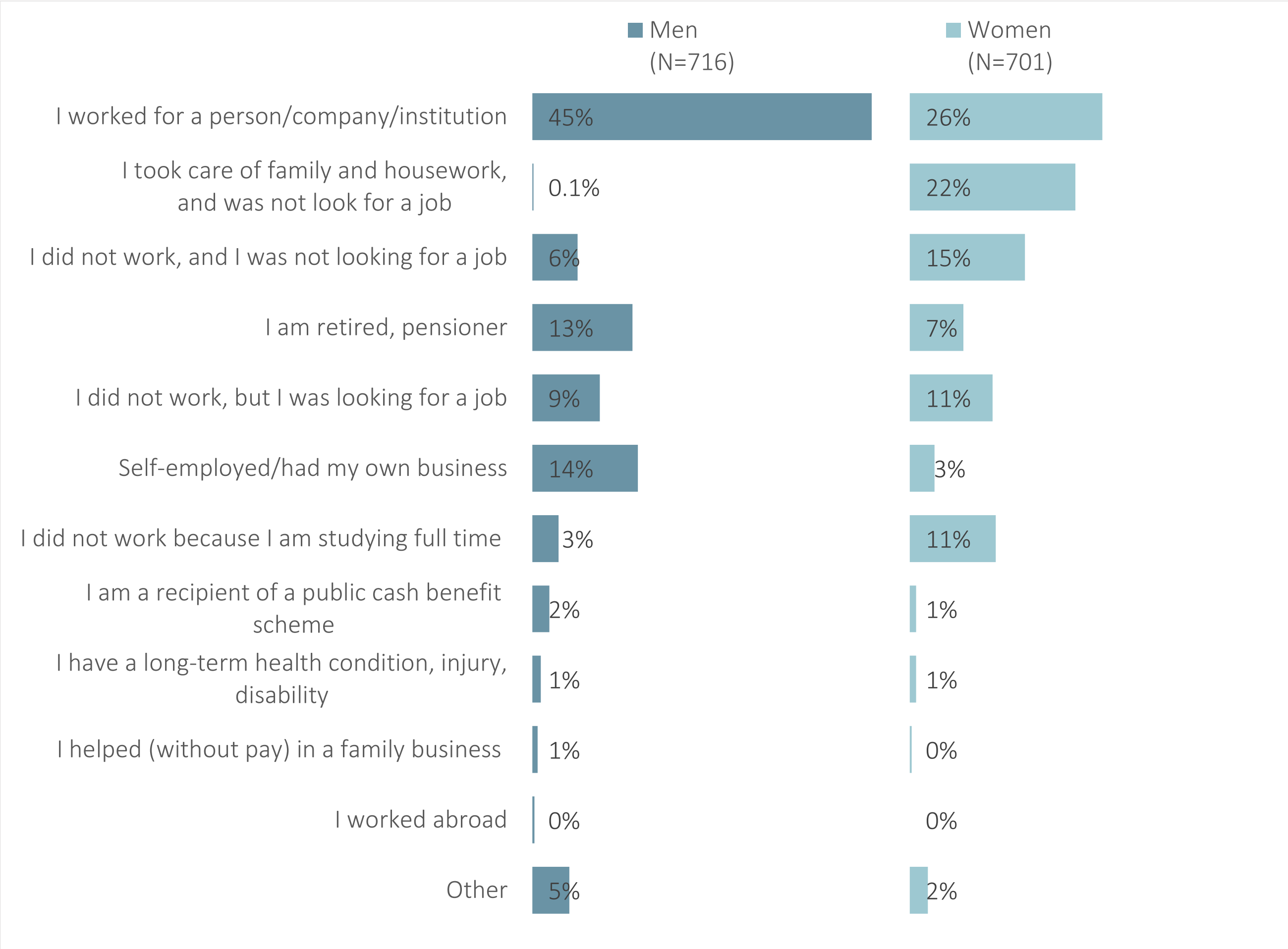
On the other hand, 11% of the respondents were unemployed without actively seeking a job, 10% were unemployed but looking for a job, another 11% were taking care of the family and household duties and did not look for employment. 10% of the respondents declared to be retired and 7% were full time students and did not work due to that.

Figure 37 Employment status prior to the pandemic



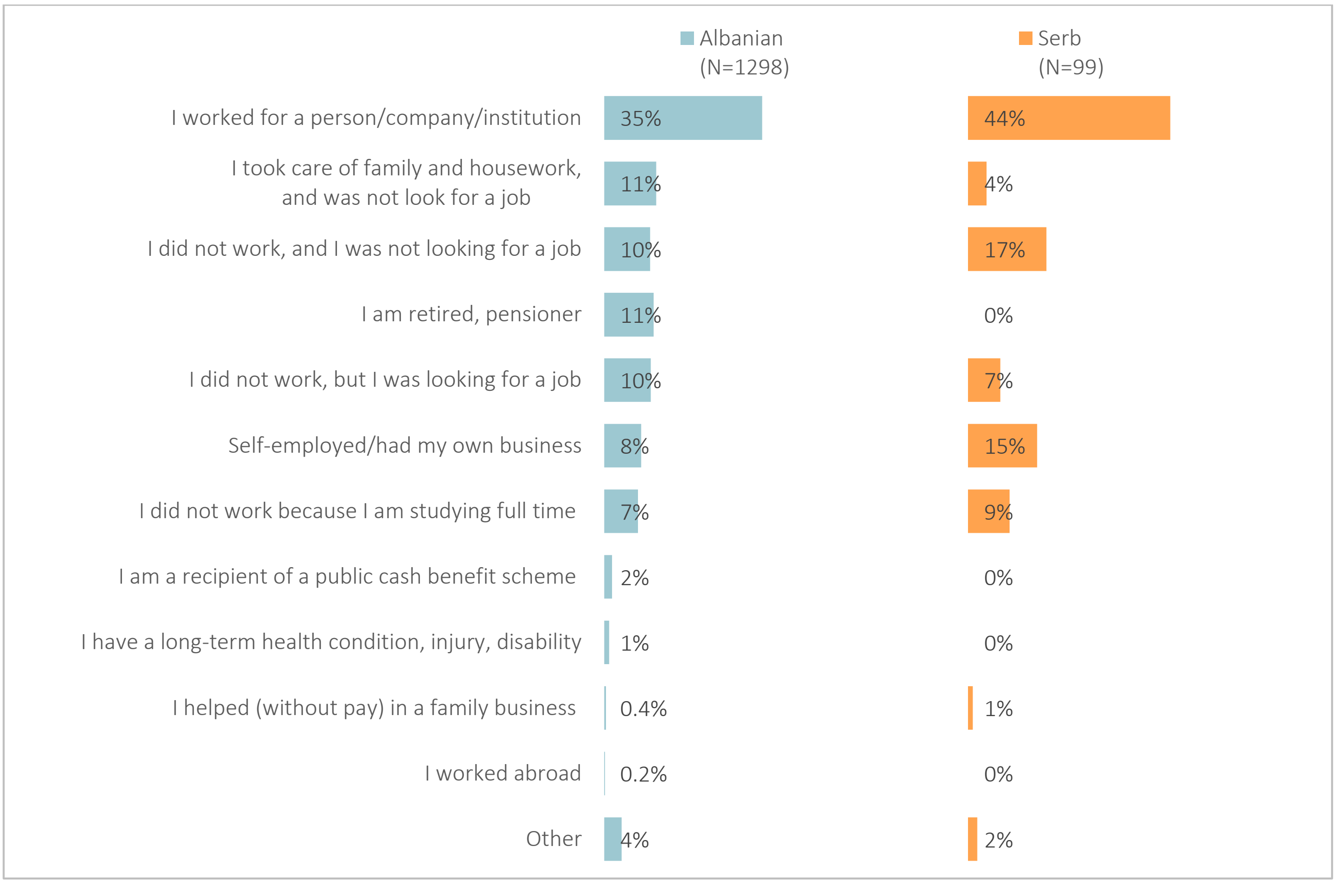
When assessing the employment status prior to the outbreak of COVID-19 disaggregated by gender, it stood out that while the majority of men were either employed (45%) or self-employed (14%), less than one third of women were employed (26%) or self-employed (3%). While nearly no men reported to have taken care of the household instead of looking for work, about 22% of the women did. Another 15% of women were not working and not looking for work either, while the percentage of men that gave the same response amounted to only 6%. Conversely, more women (11%) reported not to have worked due to studying full time when compared to men (3%).

Figure 38 Employment status before COVID-19, by gender



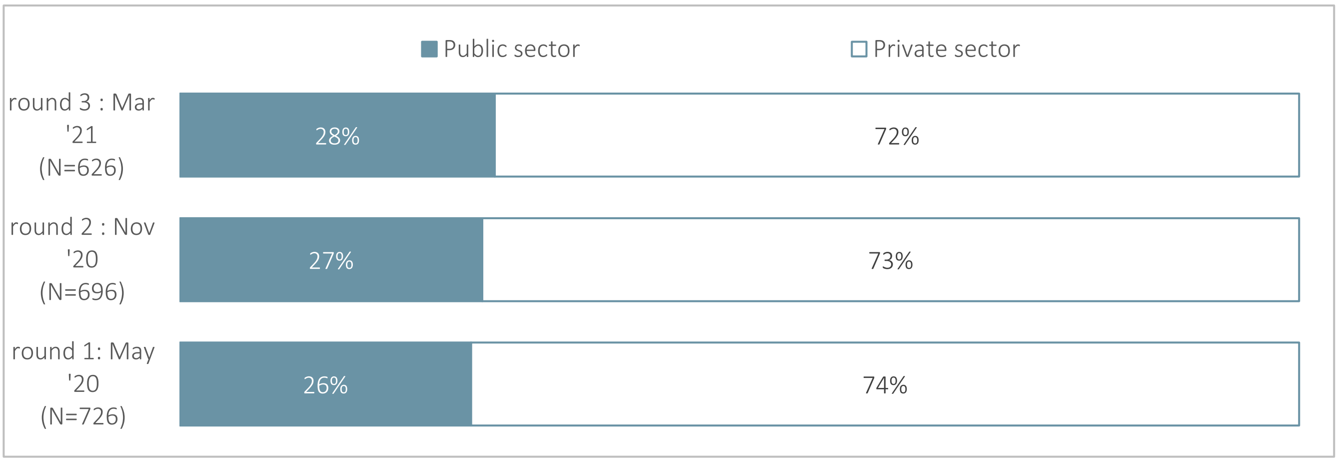
Data findings disaggregated by ethnicity suggest that employment (44%) as well as self-employment (15%) was higher among K Serbs prior to the pandemic, when compared to K Albanian respondents (35% and 8% respectively). More K Albanian took care of family and housework instead of searching for a job (11%) than K Serbs (4%). However, more K Serbs were not working while not searching for work (17%) than K Albanian respondents (10%).

Figure 39 Employment status before COVID-19, by ethnicity



Prior to the COVID-19 emergence, the majority of household survey respondents were working in the private sector (72%), while almost one third worked for the public sector (23%).

Figure 40 Employment sector before COVID-19, by round



It stood out that over half of the K Serbs that took part in the survey were engaged with work for the public sector prior to the pandemic (53%). Subsequently, data shows the highest share of respondents employed in the public sector in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica (51%) where most K Serbs resided. Around one third of respondents from the region of Gjilan/Gnjilane and Pejë/Peć were also employed in the public sector (34% and 31% respectively). Lowest public sector employment was observed in Prizren (13%).

Figure 41 Employment sector before COVID-19, by ethnicity

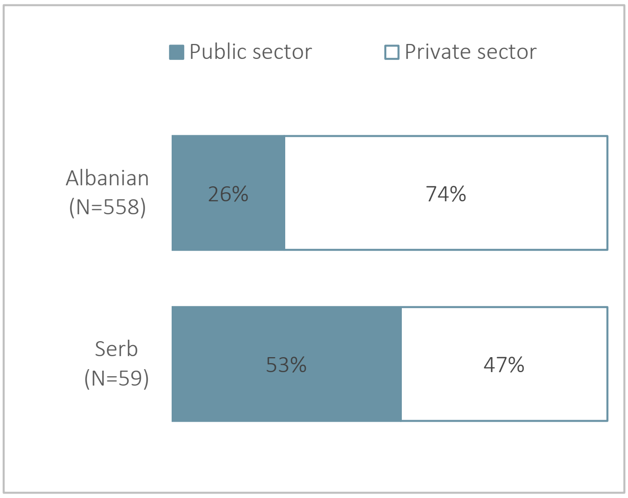
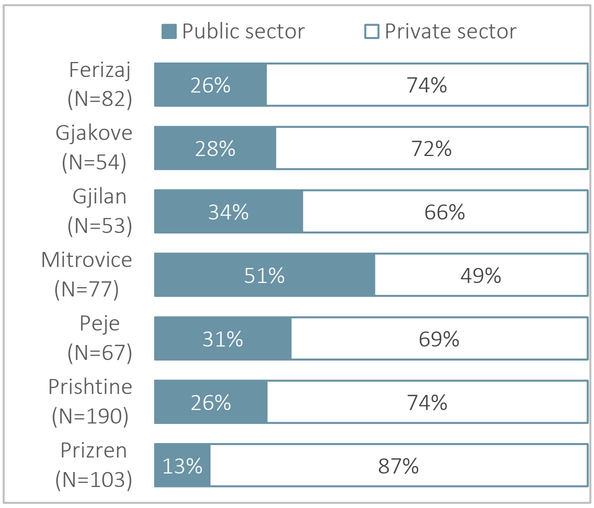
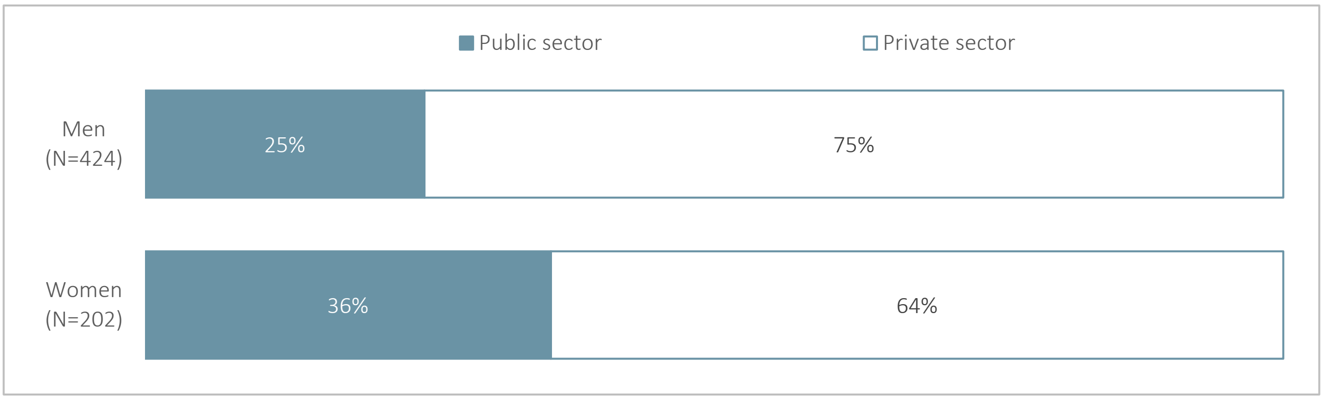


Figure 42 Employment sector before COVID-19, by region



More than one in three women were employed in the public sector (36%), while 25% of men also worked in the public sector.

Figure 43 Employment sector before COVID-19, by gender

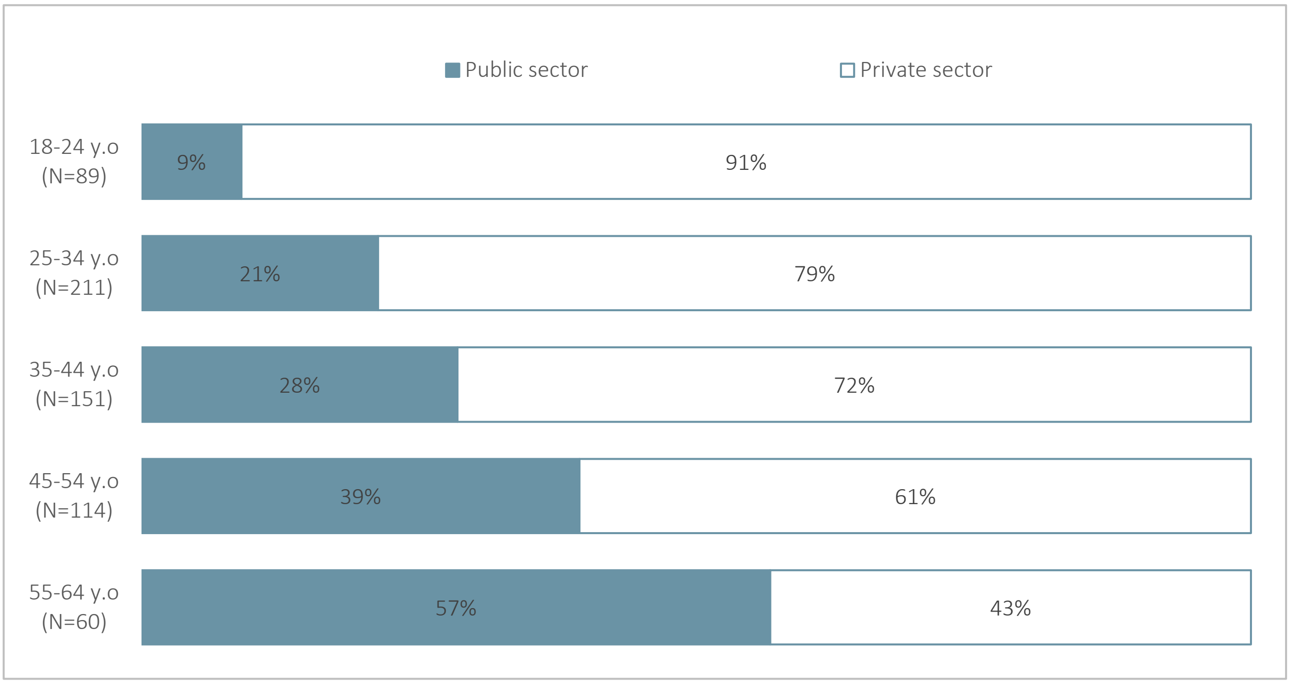


Furthermore, respondents that resided in urban areas were more frequently employed in the public sector (30%), than those that lived in rural areas (26%).

Figure 44 Employment sector before COVID-19, by urbanity

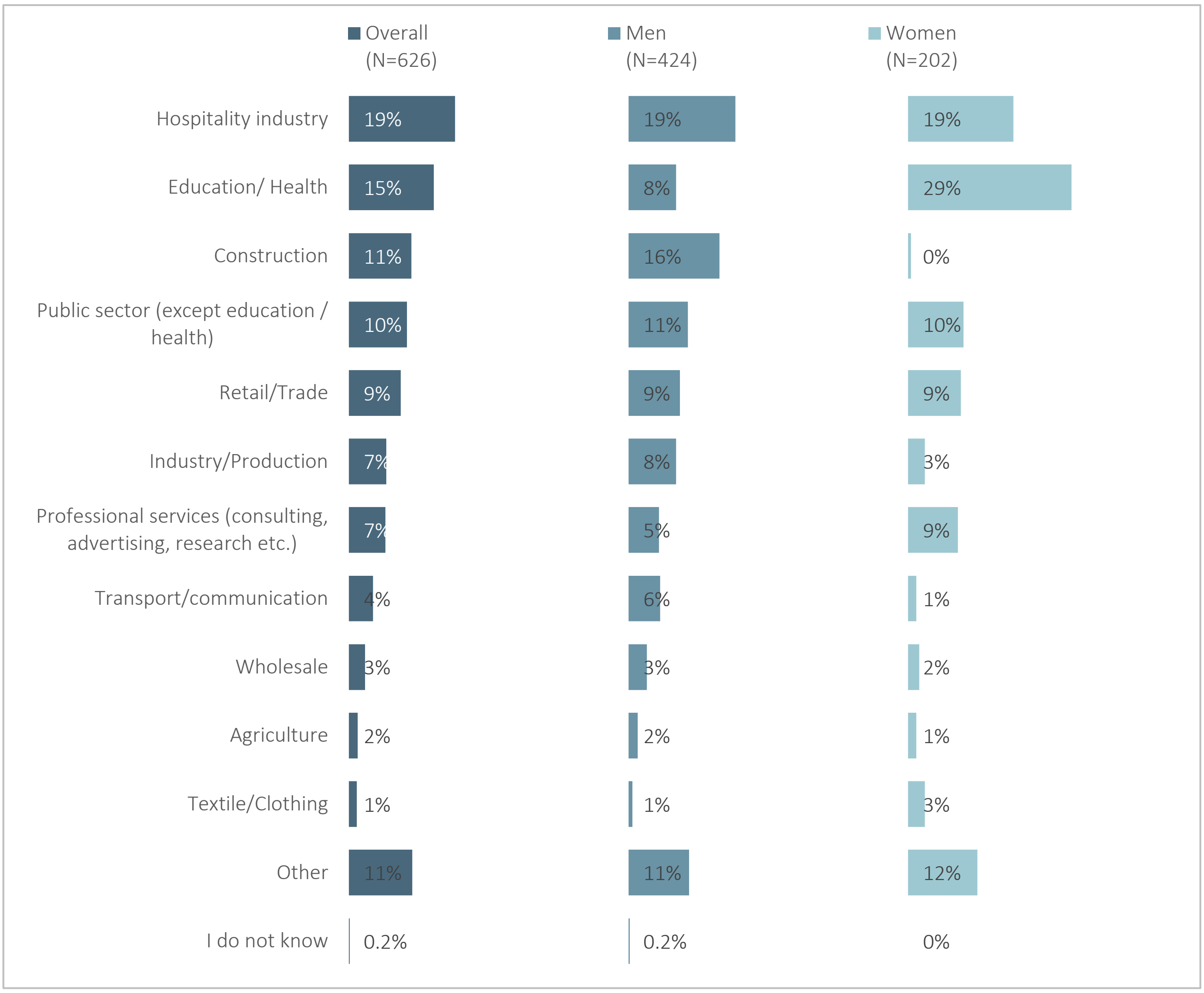
The data results also showed that younger respondents were more prone to work in the private sector, than older respondents. The great majority of 18-24-year-old respondents worked in the private sector (91%), as well as 79% of those within the age group of 25 to 34 years old. Middle aged respondents were more likely than the younger respondents to work in the public sector, albeit the majority also worked in the private sector. Respondents aged 55-64 years old stood out with over half (57%) that declared to have worked in the public sector.

Figure 45 Employment sector before COVID-19, by age



The hospitality industry employed 19% of all women and men that were working prior to the outbreak of COVID-19. Nearly one third of women was employed by in education and health (29%), while on 8% of men were as well. Men were often employed by construction businesses (16%), while none of the women were.

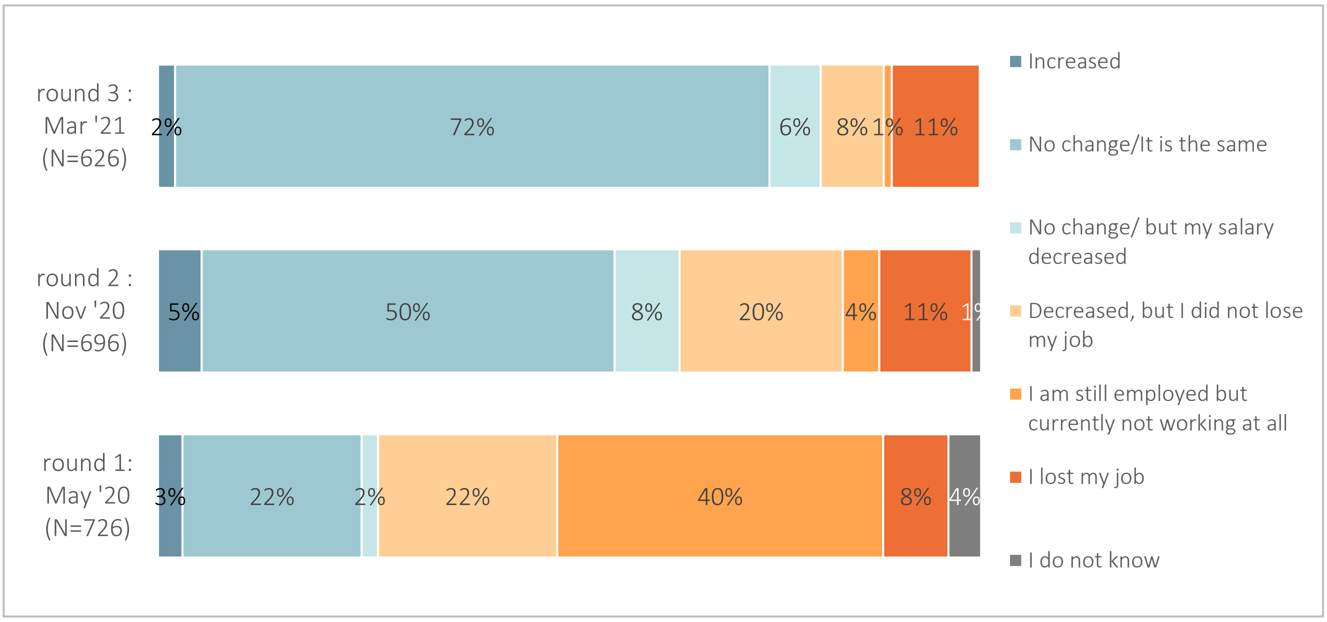
Figure 46 Employment by business activity before COVID-19, by gender



In March 2021, around three in four respondents stated that their hours devoted to work did not change since the onset of the pandemic (72%), compared to November 2020 where 50% had stated the same (this portrays an increase of 22 pp). Only 2% reported an increase in hours, while 8% declared that their hours decreased. On average, those that increased their hours, did so by 4.3 hours and those that had decreased their hours did so by around 3.0 hours. Around 6% reported that their hours did not decrease, but that their salary did. As during round 2 of the assessment, 11% had lost their job.

In March 2021, only 1 % reported to be employed while not working, in November 2020, about 4% stated the same. In comparison, during the first round in May 2020, 40% reported to have remained employed without engaging in any work.

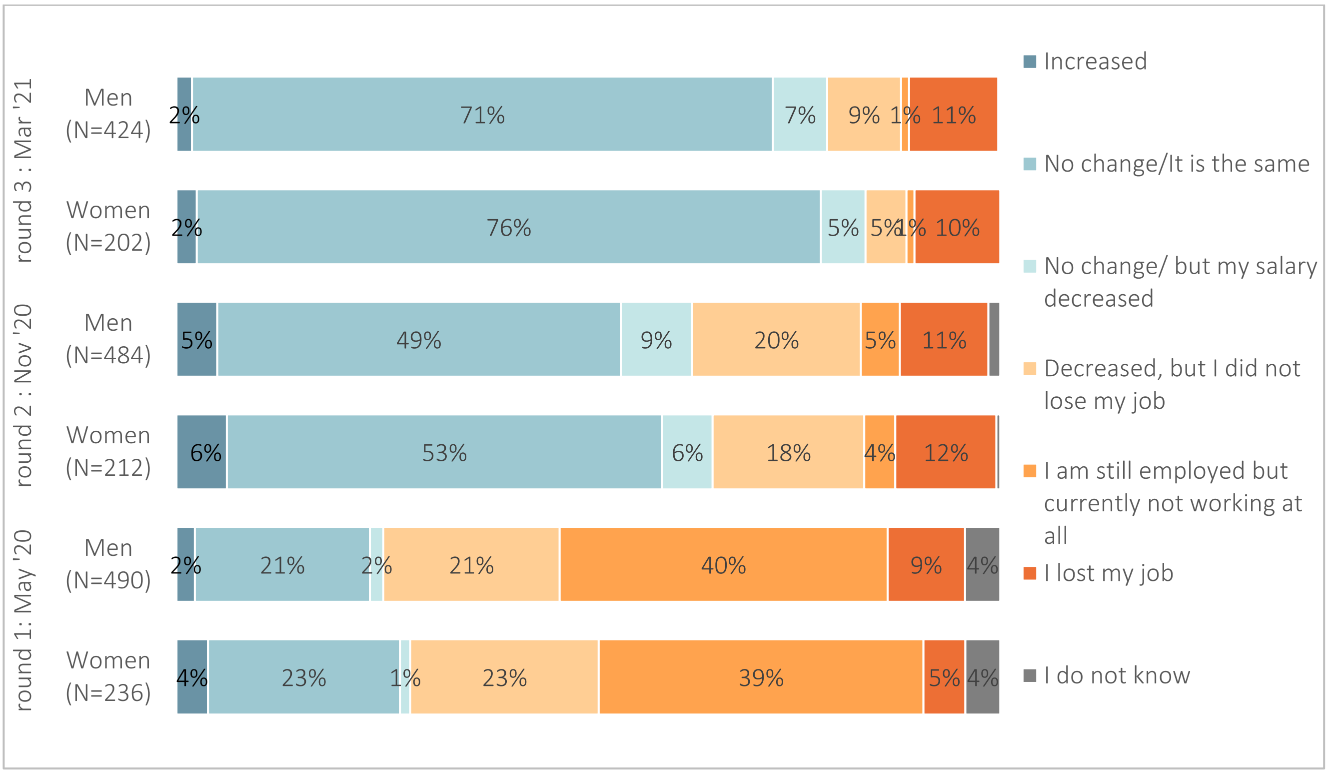
Figure 47 Changes in hours devoted to work as compared to the pre-COVID-19 situation, by round



Data results disaggregated by gender and round reveal that in March 2021 slightly more women (76%) than men (71%) reported no change in their working hours since the onset of the pandemic. Conversely, slightly more men witnessed a decrease in their working hours (9%) or salary (7%) compared to women (5% each). Around one in 10 women (10%) and men (11%) had lost their job.

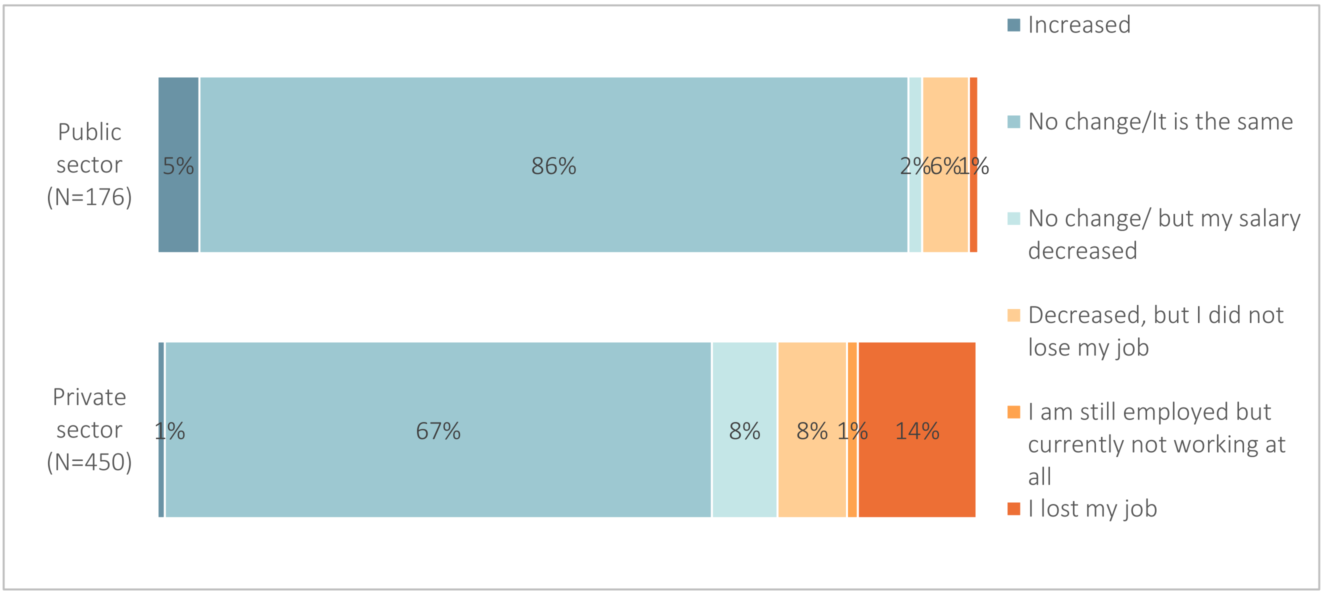
In comparison to the two previous rounds of the assessment it can be observed that while women were slightly more likely to have witnessed an increase in working hours in May and November 2020 (4% and 6% respectively), in March 2021 only 2% reported an increase.

Figure 48 Changes in hours devoted to work as compared to the pre-COVID-19 situation, by gender and round



Data further suggests that the public sector was less impacted by changes in working hours due to the pandemic; 86% publicly employed respondents reported no change in working hours since the onset of the pandemic. Around two thirds of respondents working in the private sector also reported no change in hours (67%), however, more reported that they had lost their job (14%). In comparison, only 1% reported a job loss in the public sector.

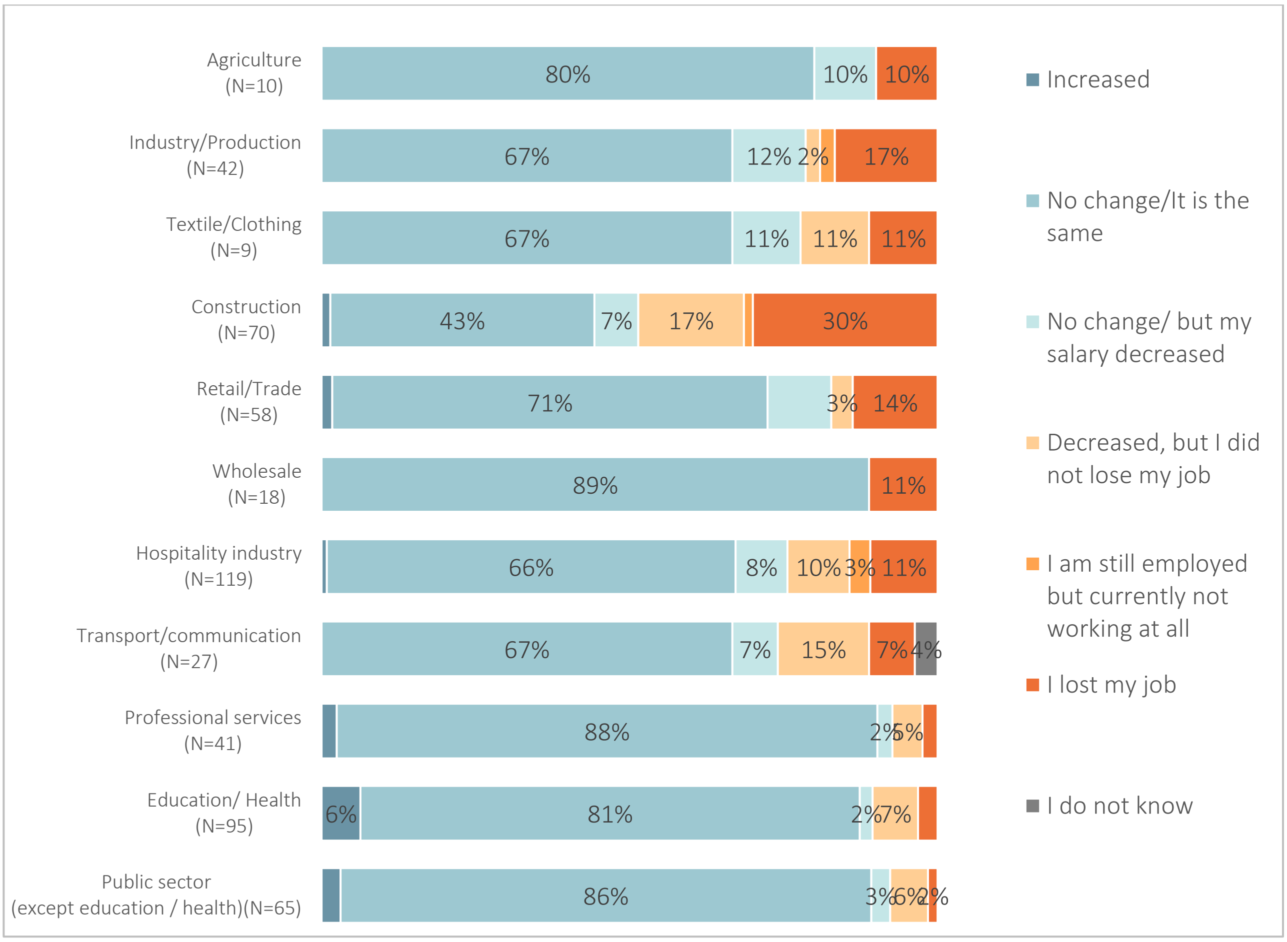
Figure 49 Changes in hours devoted to work due to COVID-19 pandemic, by employment sector



The pandemic has had different impacts on employment and working hours within different business activities. Examples of business activities which did not face high levels of decreased hours or job loss as of March 2021 were professional services, education and health, the public sector, whole sale, and agriculture.

By contrast, nearly one third of those employed in construction (30%) lost their job, as well as 17% employed in industry/production, 14% in retail/trade and 11% each in hospitality, wholesale, as well as in textile and clothing.

Figure 50 Changes in hours devoted to work due to COVID-19 pandemic, by business activity



Different coping mechanisms were implemented by institutions and businesses to handle the impact of COVID-19 on Kosovo. One of these coping mechanisms related to imposing leave on employees. In March 2021, more respondents reported fully paid leave (18%) than compared to round 2 and round 1 of the assessment (9%). While 18% were imposed to take unpaid leave in May 2020, this figure dropped to 10% in November 2020 and rose again slightly to 13% in March 2021. The majority however did not take any type of leave (64%). Respondents employed by the public sector more commonly took fully paid leave (33%), compared to the private sector (13%). Conversely, unpaid leave was significantly more common in the private sector (19%) than in the public sector (2%).

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

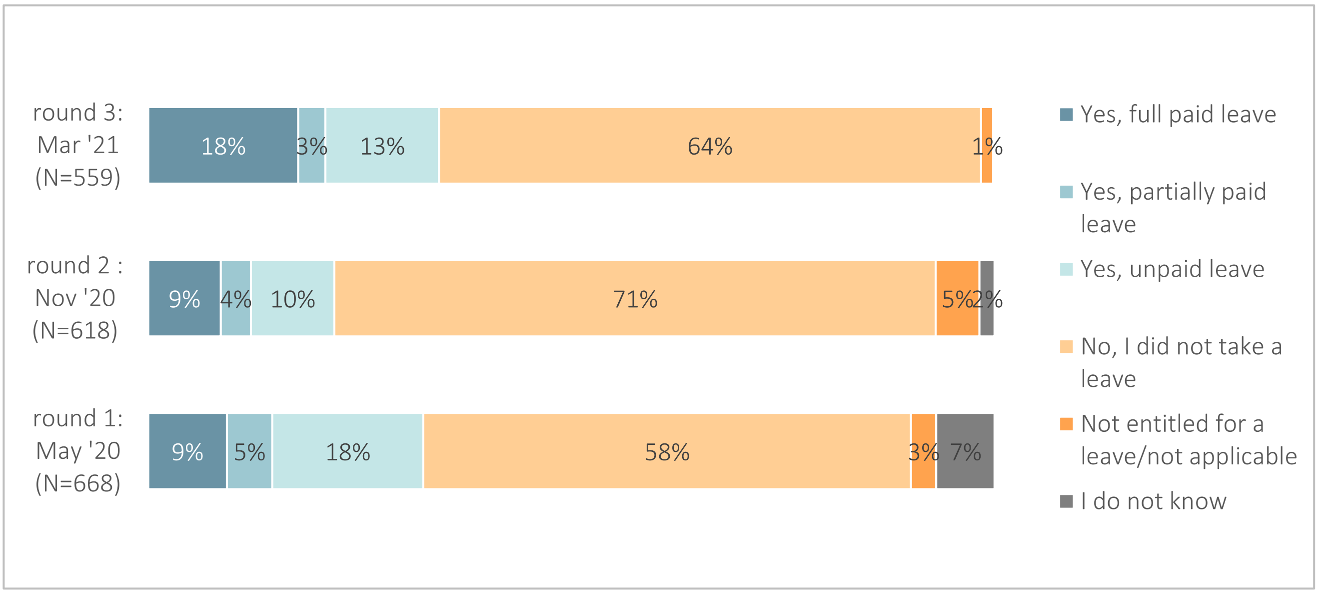
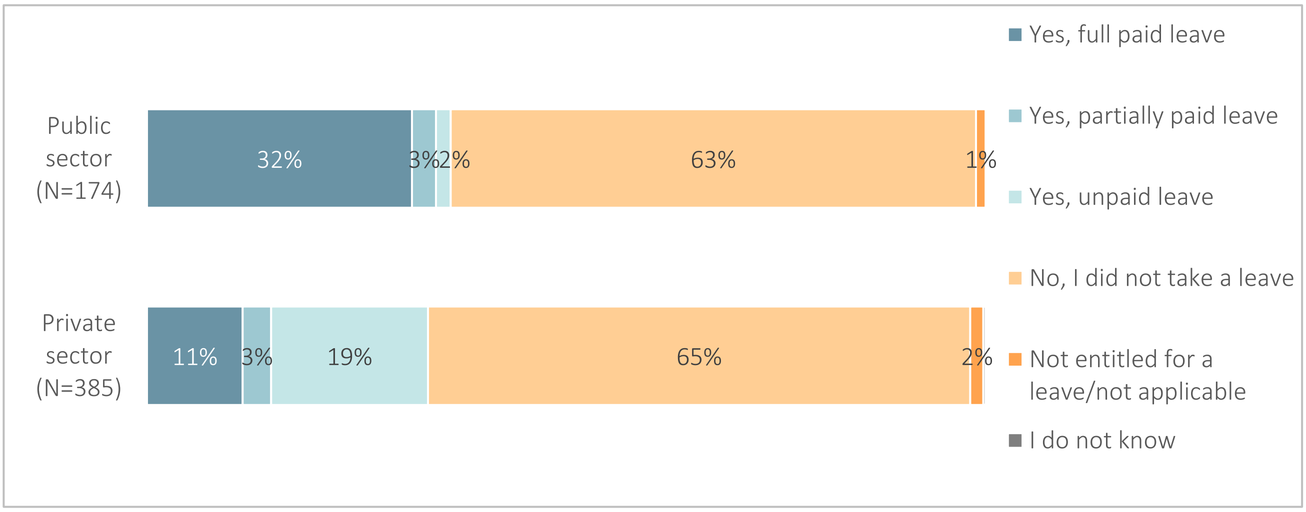
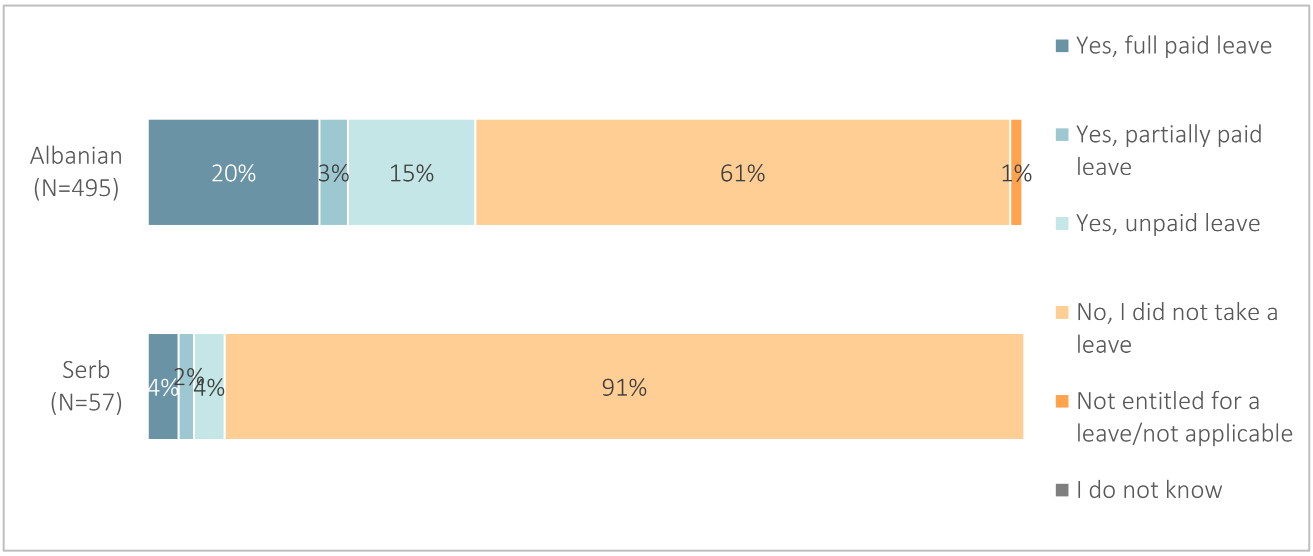


Figure 52 Imposition to take leave due to the pandemic, by sector



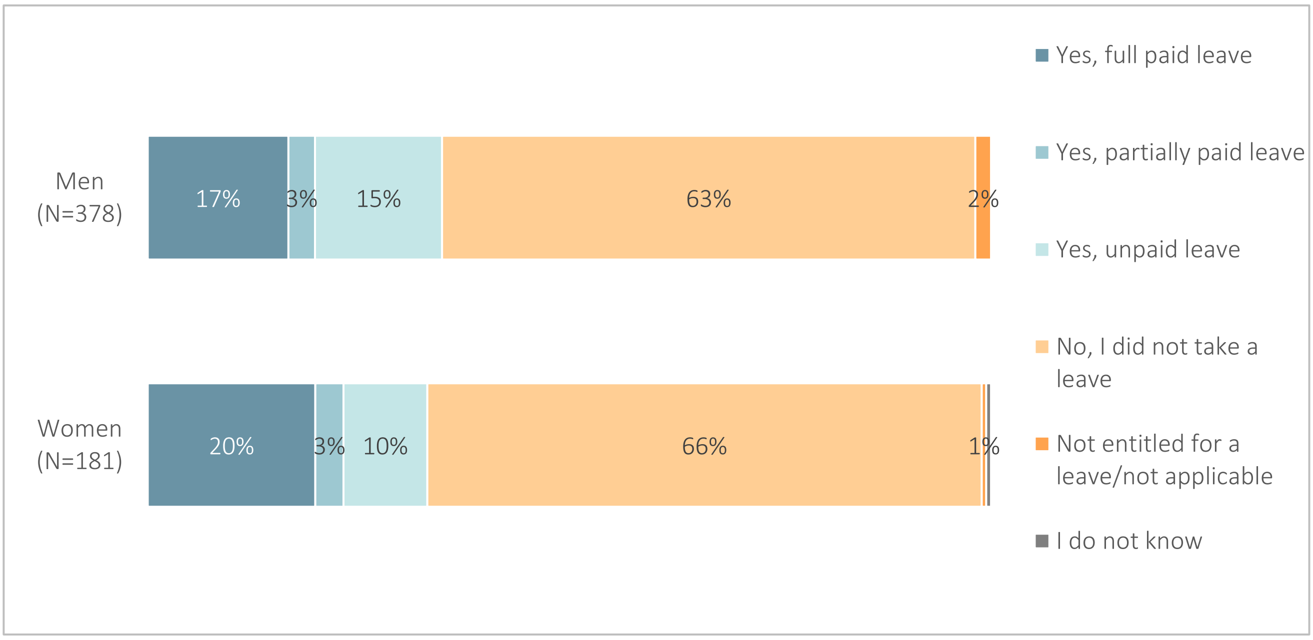
Data results from March 2021 further show that nearly all K Serb respondents were not obligated to take any leave (91%), while only 61% of the K Albanian respondents reported the same. Around 20% of K Albanians took fully paid leave, while 15% were forced to take unpaid leave.

Figure 53 Imposition to take leave due to the pandemic, by ethnicity



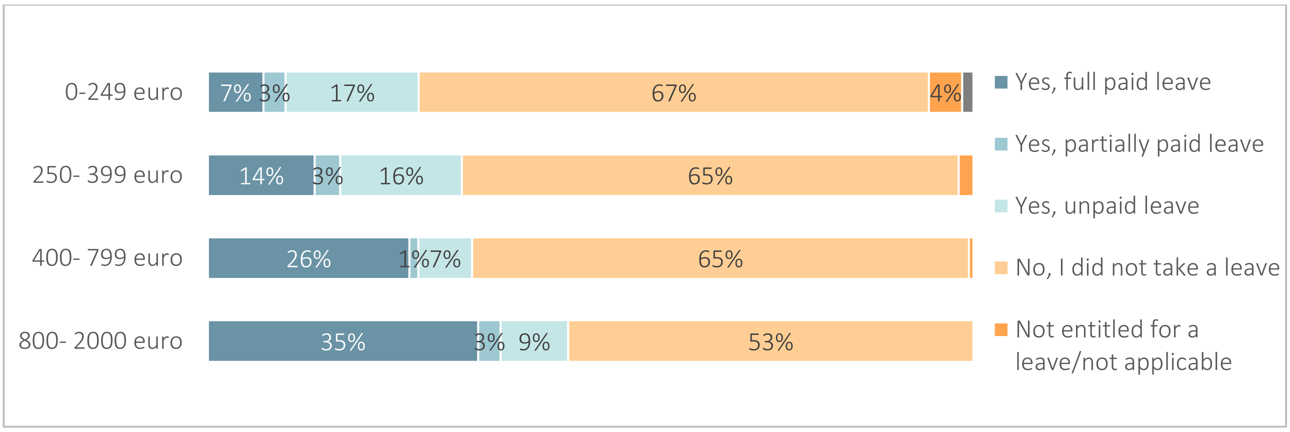
Data further revealed that women were slightly more likely to have received paid leave (20%) than men (17%). While men on the other hand more commonly had to take unpaid leave (15%) compared to women (10%). Around two thirds of women (66%) and men (63%) did not take any leave.

Figure 54 Imposition to take leave due to the pandemic, by gender



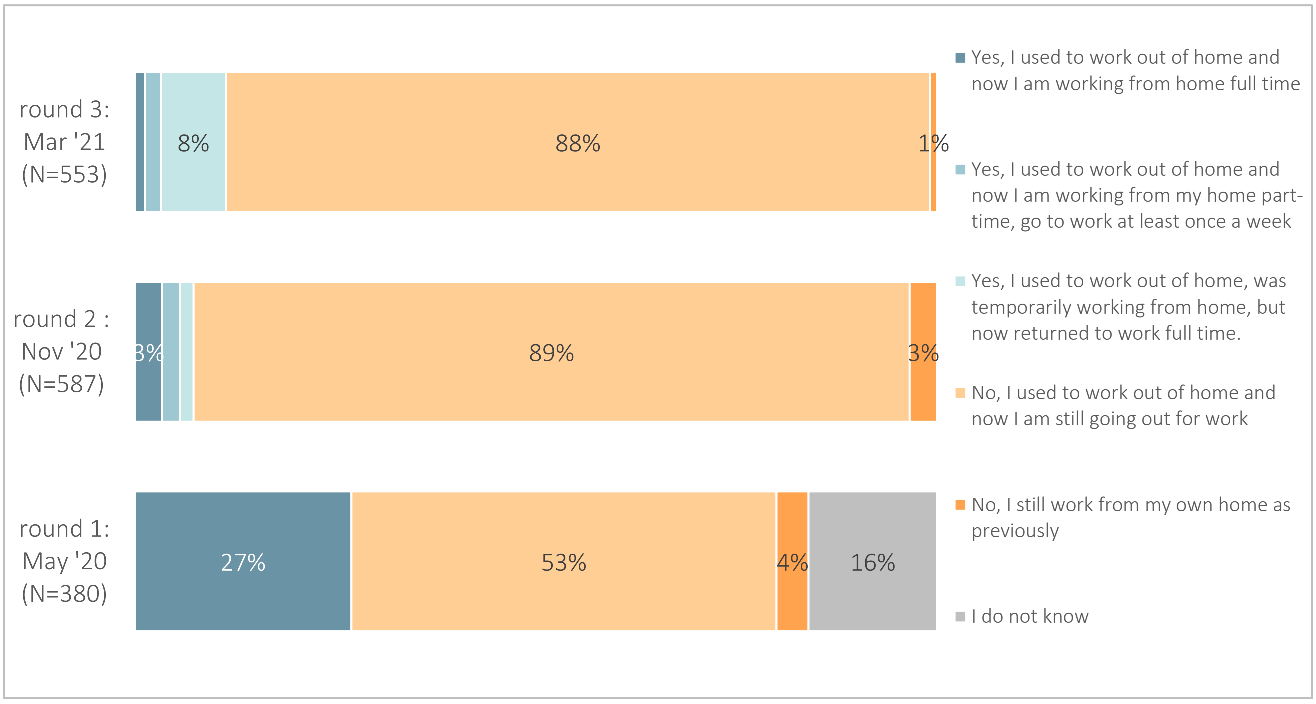
Furthermore, results show that the higher the personal income of the respondents the higher the likelihood that she/he was offered paid leave instead of unpaid leave. Especially the two low income groups stood out with 17% and 16% that were imposed to take unpaid leave. The majority of all income groups did not take any leave.

Figure 55 Imposition to take leave due to the pandemic, by personal income



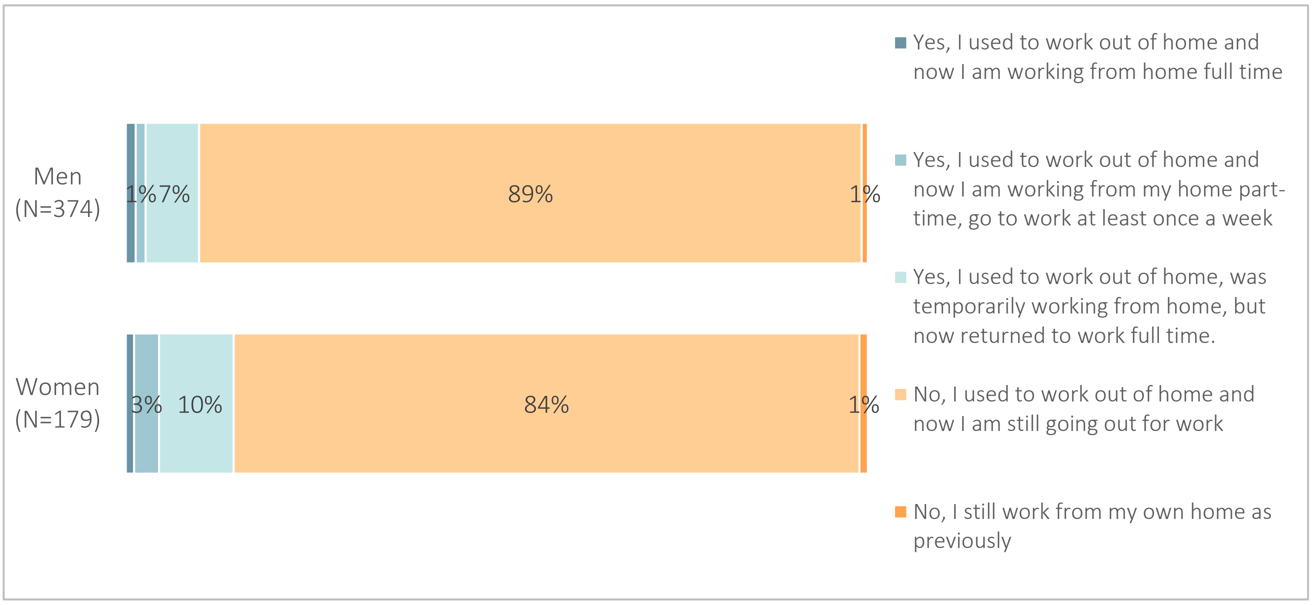
Next, respondents were asked whether their typical place of work changed since the onset of the pandemic. More than eight in ten respondents stated to have worked outside their home prior to the pandemic, and did so as well at the time of interview (88%). Around 8% reported to have worked temporarily from home, but had returned to their usual place of work by the time of interview in March 2021. Two percent each reported to work partly from home or fully from home. These results are similar to the round 2 results of the assessment conducted in November 2020 and differ strongly from the results of the first round in May 2020 when strict lockdown restrictions were in place.

Figure 56 Changes in typical place of work, by round



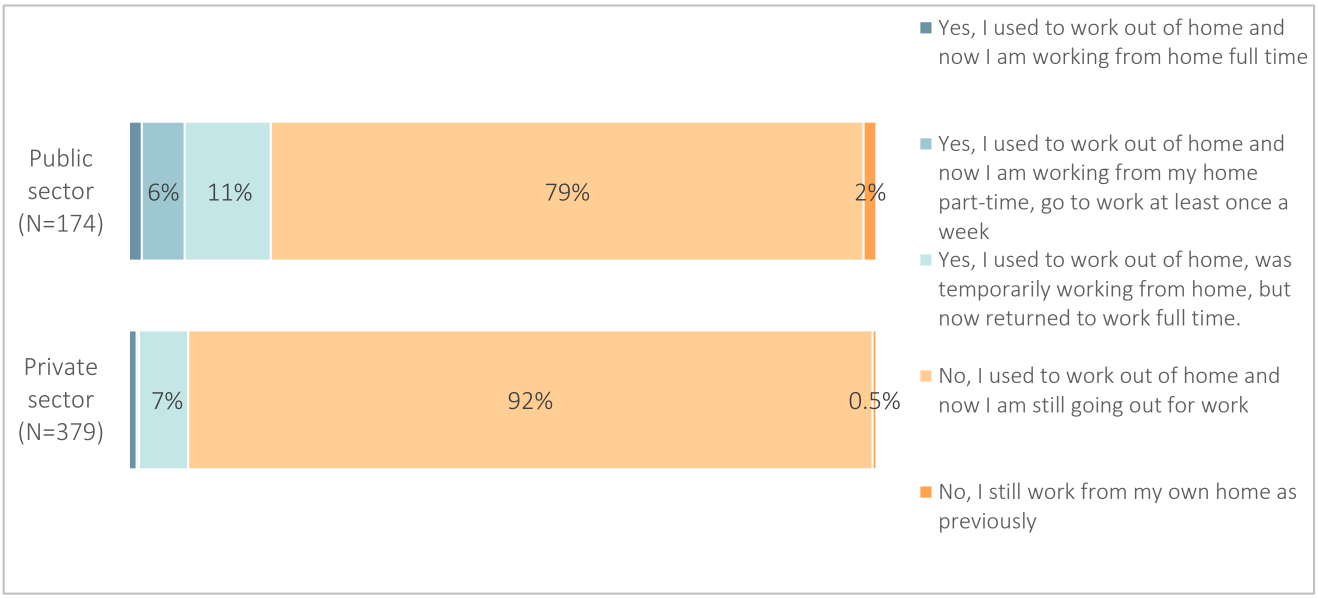
The majority of both women and men did not experience a change in their typical work place and worked prior the pandemic at their work´s premises and did so as well before the onset of the pandemic (84% and 89% respectively). Slightly more women temporarily worked from home (10%) or were partly working from home at the time of interview (3%) when compared to men (7% and 1% respectively).

Figure 57 Changes in typical place of work, by gender



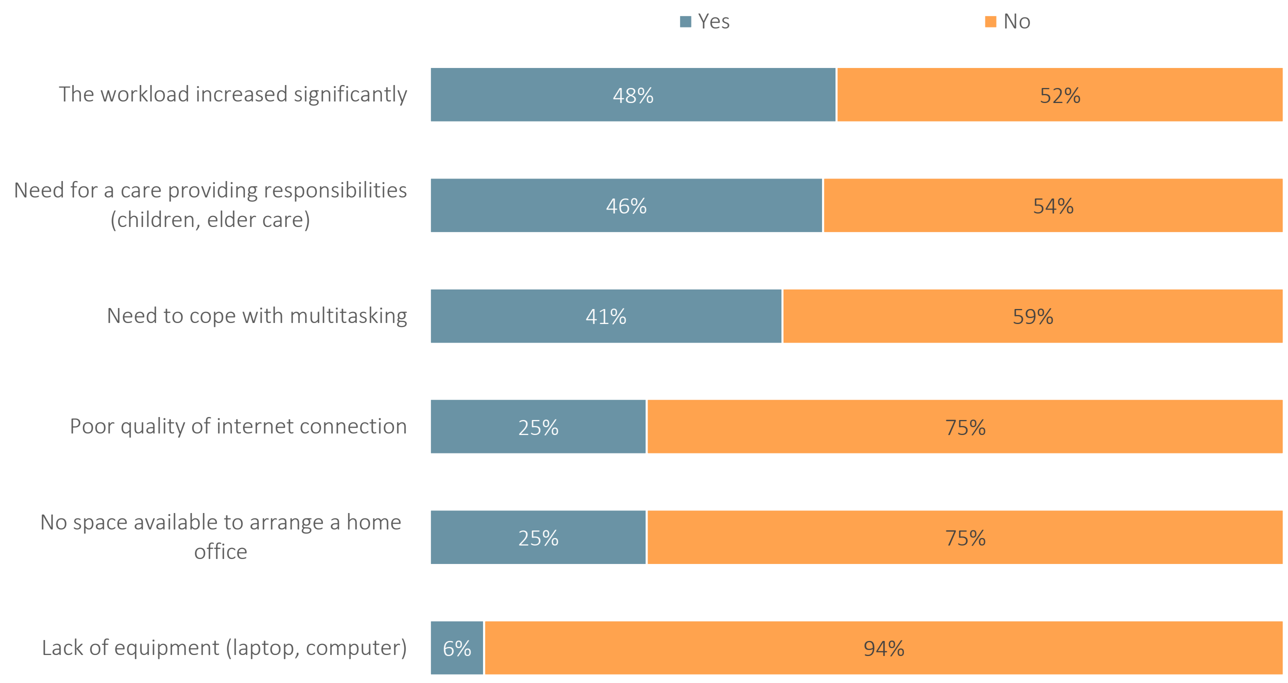
Temporarily working from home was more common among respondents employed in the public sector (11%) when compared to the private sector (7%). Also, more public sector employees were partly working from home at the time of interview (6%) then private sector employees (0.5%).

Figure 58 Changes in typical place of work, by sector



Those respondents that worked remotely were also asked about challenges that they encountered due to the remote work. Nearly half mentioned a significant increase of the workload (48%), while almost as many mentioned caring for children or elderly while working remotely as a challenge (46%). Another 41% felt that the general need to cope with multitasking was a challenge (41%). One in four mentioned poor quality of internet or the lack of suitable space to arrange a home office (25% each).

Figure 59 Challenges of working remotely

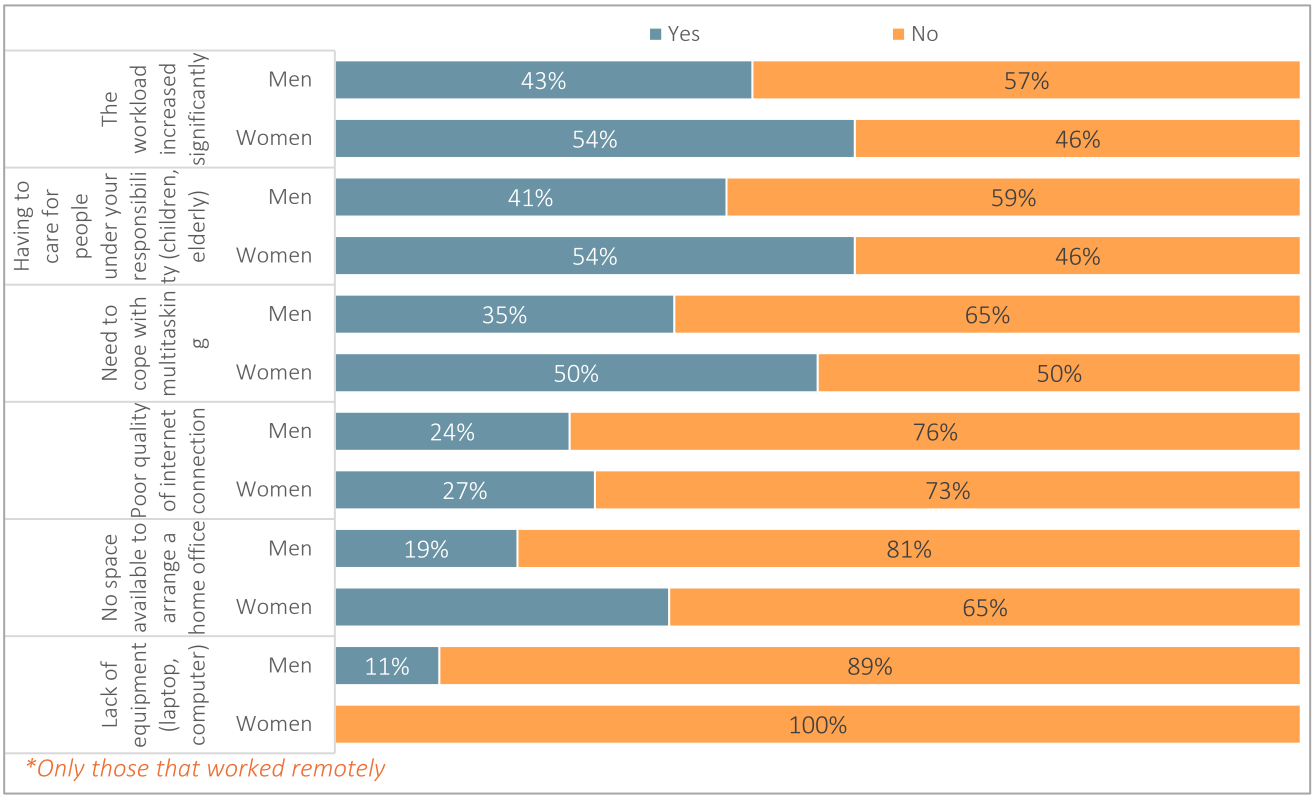


**Only those that worked remotely*

Over half of women declared that their workload increased significantly when working from home and that taking care of children and/or elderly was challenging while working at the same time (54% each). In comparison, only around 40% of men reported the same.

More women also faced challenges due to having to multitask (50%), while only around one third of men declared the same (35%). Women also more commonly suffered under the lack of a suitable space for a home office (35%) than men (19%), while around one in four women and men faced challenges due to poor internet quality (27% and 24% respectively)[22].

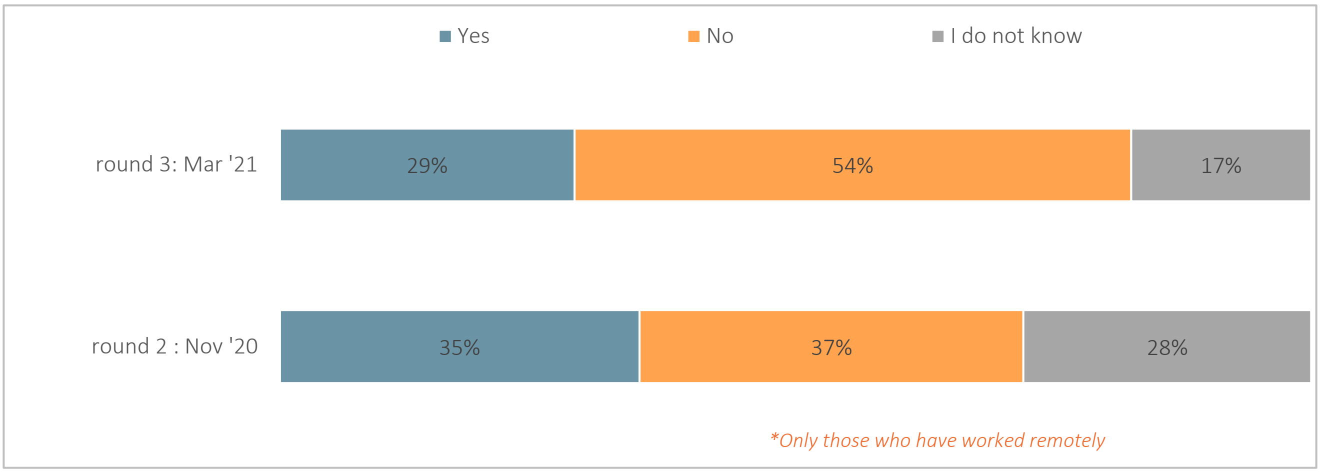
Figure 60 Challenges of working remotely, by gender



[22] *Please note that the sample for those that worked remotely in this survey is small (N=63) therefore results further disaggregated by gender are interpreted as indicative only.*

Those respondents that had changed their work place and worked for some time from home or worked from home at the time of interview, were asked whether they would prefer to continue to work from home even after the pandemic. Albeit indicatively only, data suggest that the majority would not prefer to continue working from home after the COVID-19 pandemic (54%). During round 2 of the assessment only 37% stated the same.

Figure 61 Preference in continuing working from home after the pandemic, by round



Indicative data also suggest that women (38%) were more likely to prefer to continue working from home when compared to men (22%). Also 32% of respondents that were single voiced preference to continue to work from home, while 27% of married respondents did so as well. [23]

Figure 62 Preference in continuing working from home after the pandemic, by gender

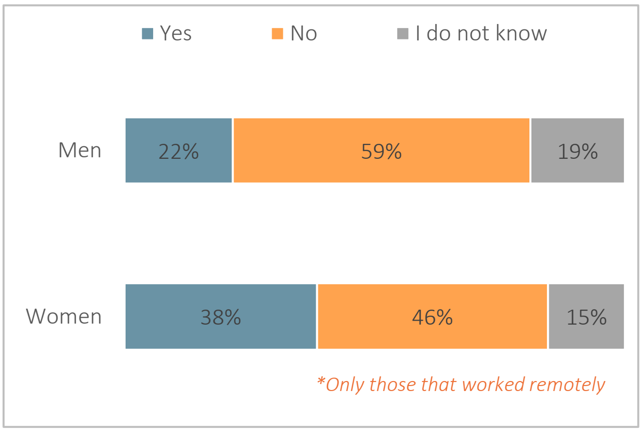
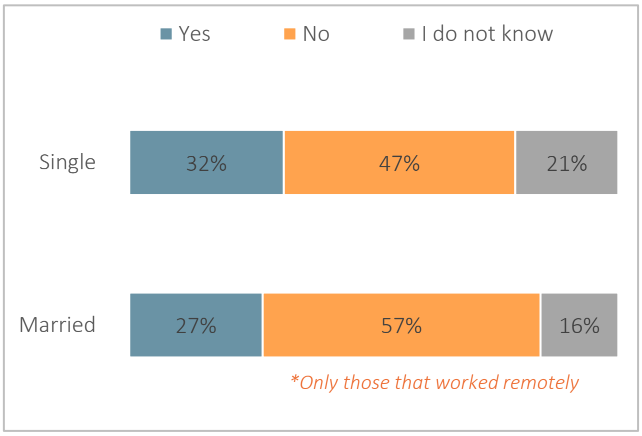


Figure 63 Preference in continuing working from home after the pandemic, by marital status

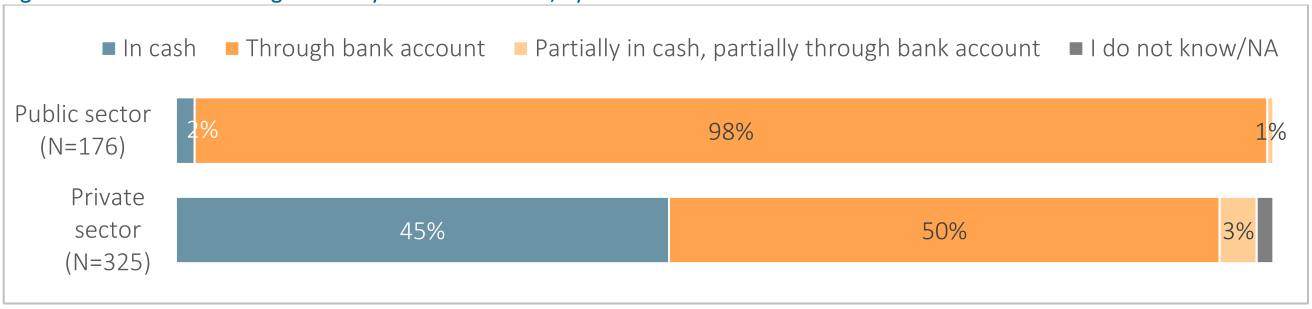


Informal cash payment to pay salaries of employees are still a common phenomenon in Kosovo. Nonetheless, data results from March 2021 revealed that two thirds received their salary through a bank account (67%), while less than

[23] *Please note that results shown in this graph are indicative only due to the low number of cases of respondents that worked remotely (N=63) and respondents that worked from home and declared to be single (N=19).*

one third stated to receive their salary in cash (30%). However, informal payment appeared to be a lot more common in the private sector, where 45% said they received their salary in cash. In the public sector payment in cash was only reported by 2% of the respondents.

Figure 64 Means of receiving the salary before COVID-19, by sector



When analysing survey results disaggregated by gender, it becomes apparent that men more commonly received their salary in cash (34%) than women (22%). Furthermore, nearly one third of K Albanian and K Serbs reported to receive their salary in cash (29% and 30% respectively), while rural respondents were significantly more prone to receive cash payments (35%) than those in urban areas (24%).

Figure 65 Means of receiving the salary before COVID-19, by gender

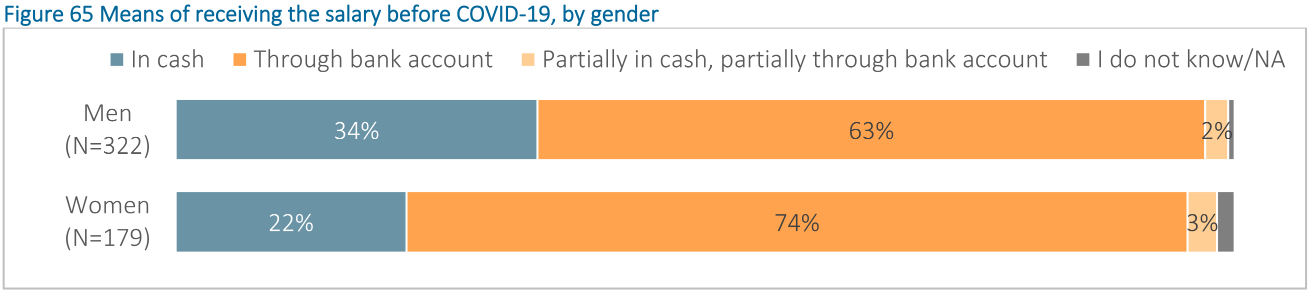


Figure 66 Means of receiving the salary before COVID-19, by ethnicity

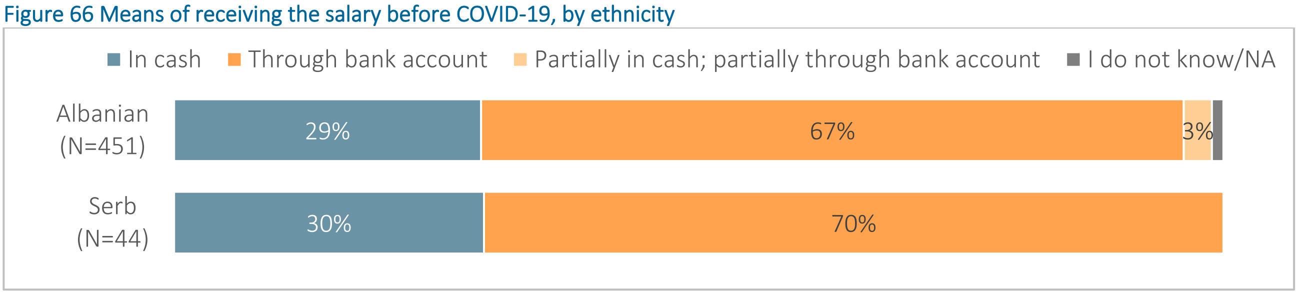
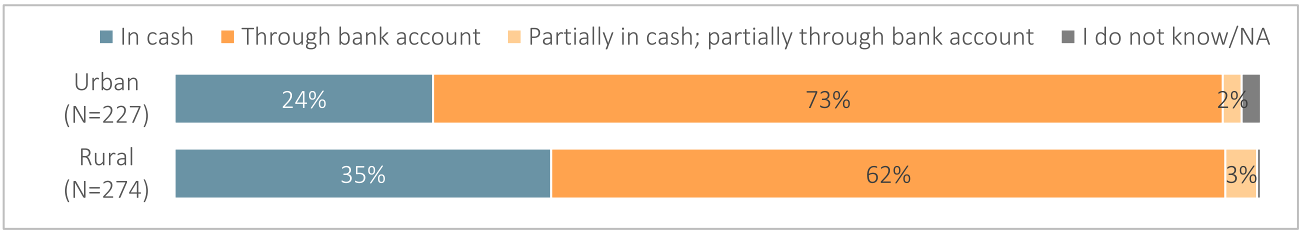


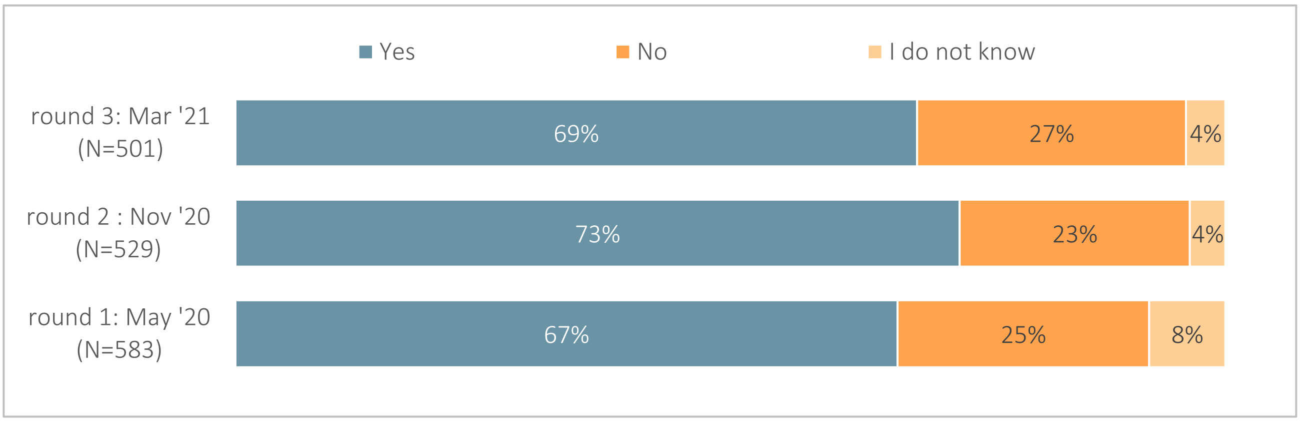
Figure 67 Means of receiving the salary before COVID-19, by urbanity



The Kosovo Labour Law dictates that employers are obliged to pay pension contributions for all their employees at 5% of their gross wage to the Kosovo Pension Savings Fund. Regardless of that, nearly one third of the respondents declared that their employer did not follow this respective law (27%) prior to the begin of the pandemic.

Refraining from paying pension contributions appeared to be a lot more common in the private sector (38%) than in the public sector (6%). This finding indicates a high level of informality in the private sector.

Figure 68 Employer pension contribution payments before COVID-19, by round



Lastly, more employed women (72%) than men (67%) declared that their employer paid pension contributions to them which might indicate a higher level of formal employment for women than men.

Figure 69 Employer contribution payments before COVID-19, by gender

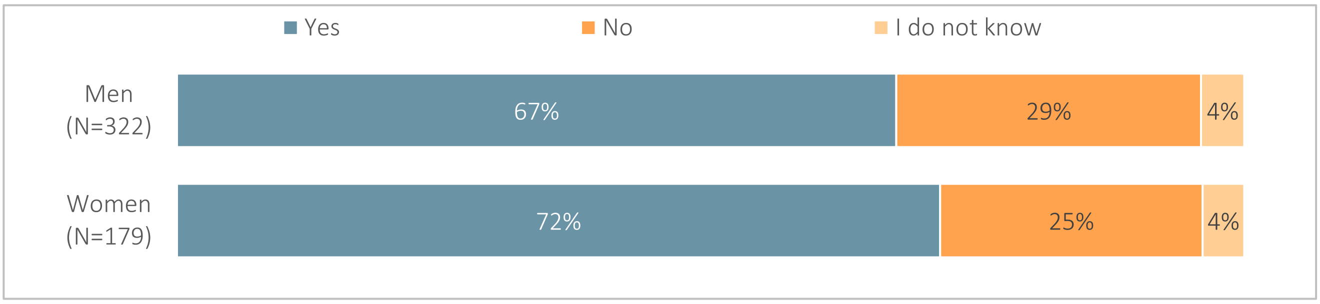
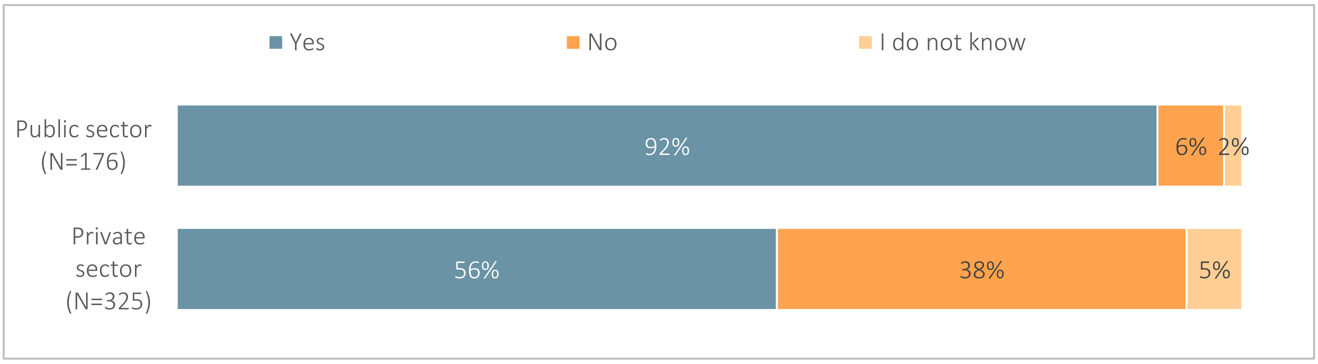
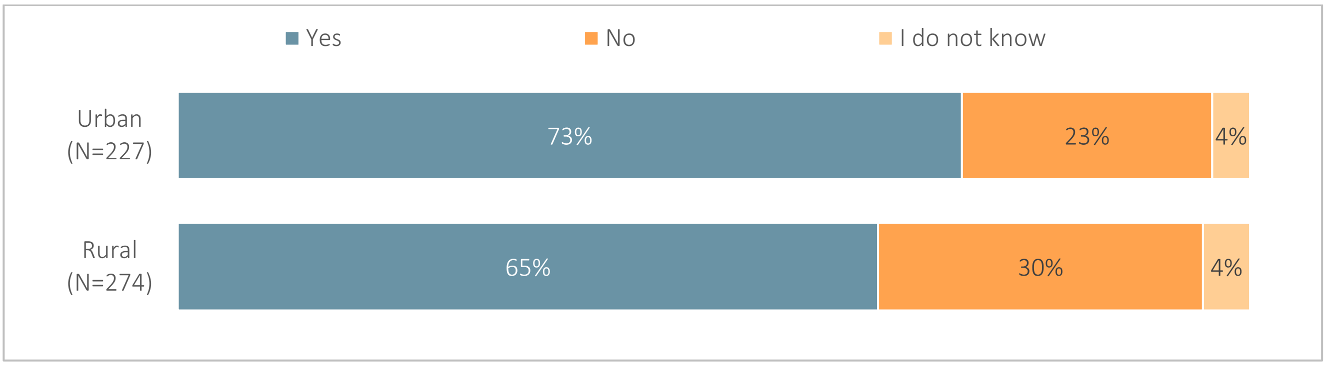


Figure 70 Employer pension contribution payments before COVID-19, by sector



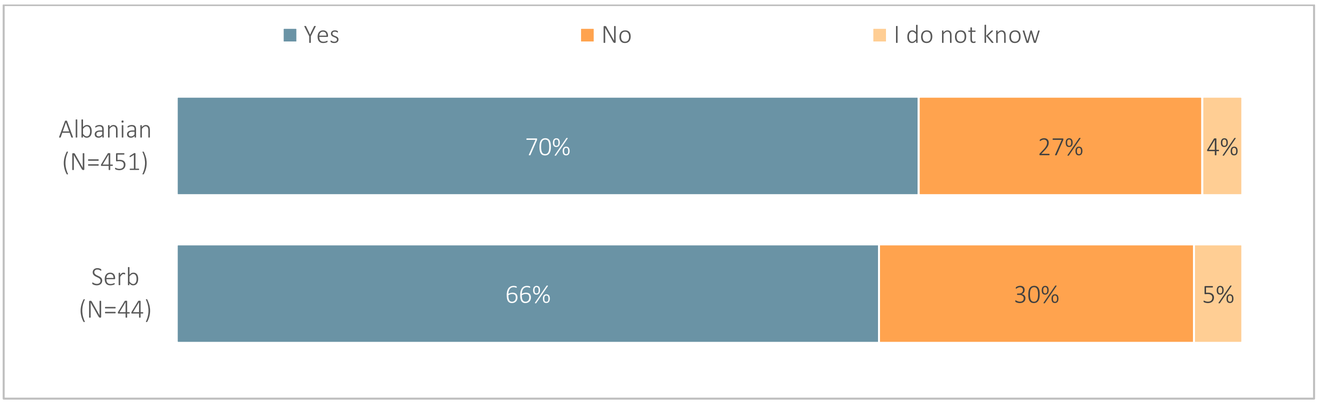
Employers of respondents residing in urban areas more commonly paid pension contributions prior to the pandemic (73%) than those respondents employed in rural areas (65%).

Figure 71 Employer pension contribution payments before COVID-19, by urbanity



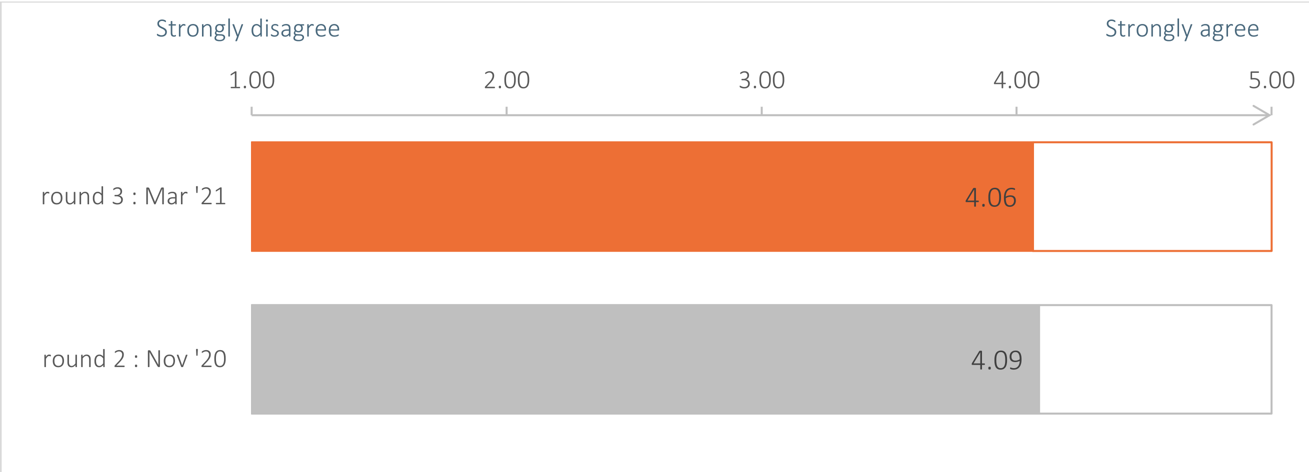
Employers of K Albanians in Kosovo seemed slightly more likely to pay pension contributions (70%), when compared to K Serb employers (66%).

Figure 72 Employer contribution payments before COVID-19, by ethnicity



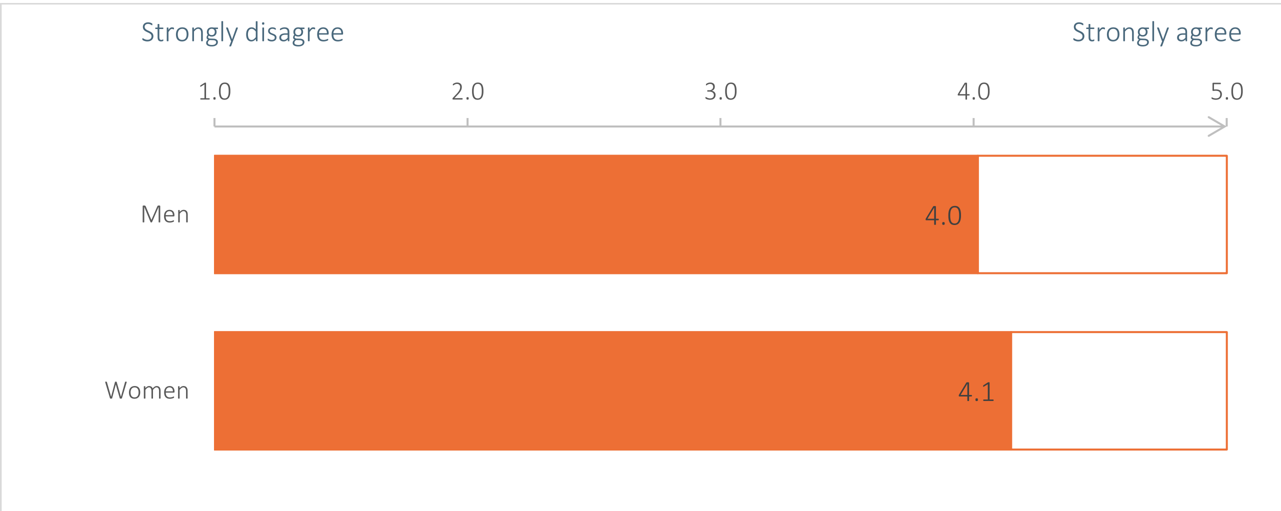
Next respondents were asked to rate the statement *“my employer has taken preventive measures to stop the spread of COVID-19 at my work place”* on a scale from 1.00 to 5.00 where 1.00 equals strongly disagree and 5.00 strongly disagree. Similar to the previous round of the assessment, respondents showed agreement towards the statement with an average of 4.06 points out of 5.0 points.

Figure 73 Agreement with “My employer has taken preventive measures to stop the spread of COVID-19 at my work place”



Men and women appeared to have made similar experiences at their work place, as the majority of both genders showed agreement with the statement *“my employer has taken preventive measures to stop the spread of COVID-19 at my work place.”* (Women 4.1 and men 4.0 out of 5.0 points)

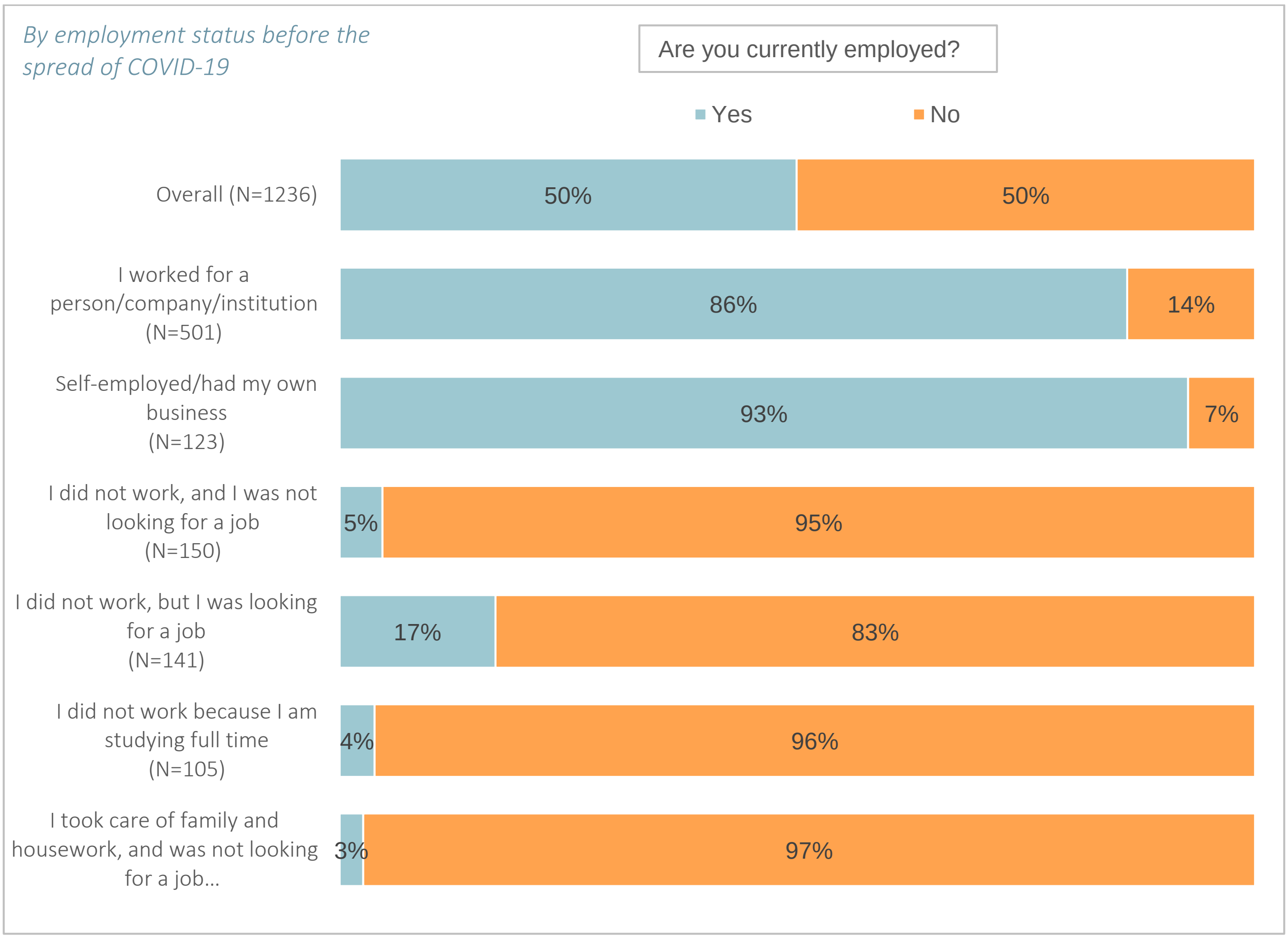
Figure 74 Agreement with “My employer has taken preventive measures to stop the spread of COVID-19 at my work place” by gender



Next, data results revealed that half of the respondents declared to be currently employed (50%)[24]. The great majority of respondents that were self-employed prior to the pandemic was still self-employed at the time of interview (93%). The same applies for 86% of those that worked for a person, company or institution.

However, it should not go unnoticed that 14% of those that used to work for a person, company or institution was not employed anymore in March 2021. Around 95% that declared that they were not working as well as not looking for work prior to the emergence of COVID-19 remained unemployed. Few respondents that were unemployed and searching for work prior to the pandemic were employed at the time of interview (17%).

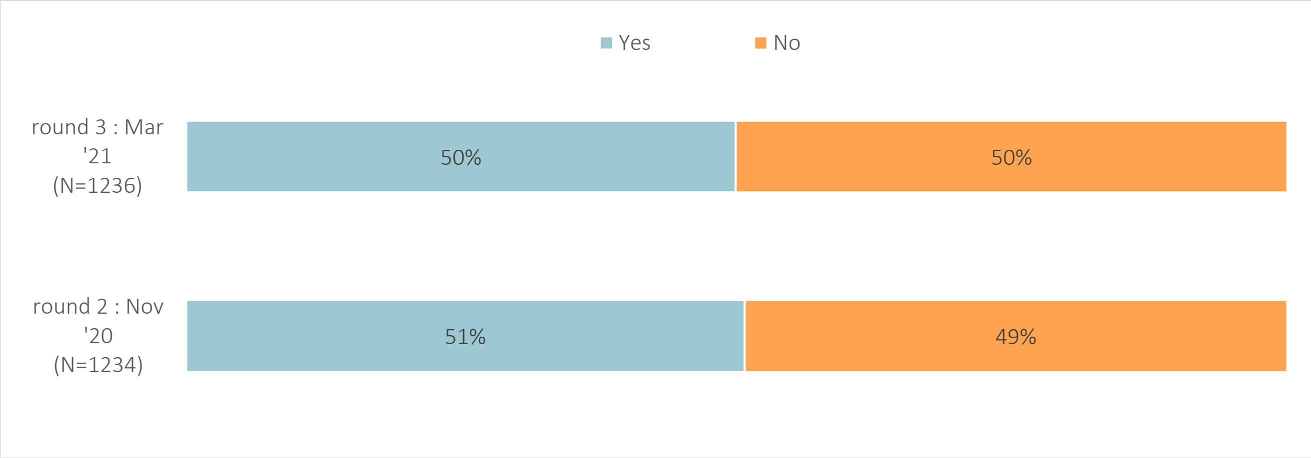
Figure 75 Current employment, by employment status prior to the spread of COVID-19



[24] *i.e., at the time of interview in March 2021.*

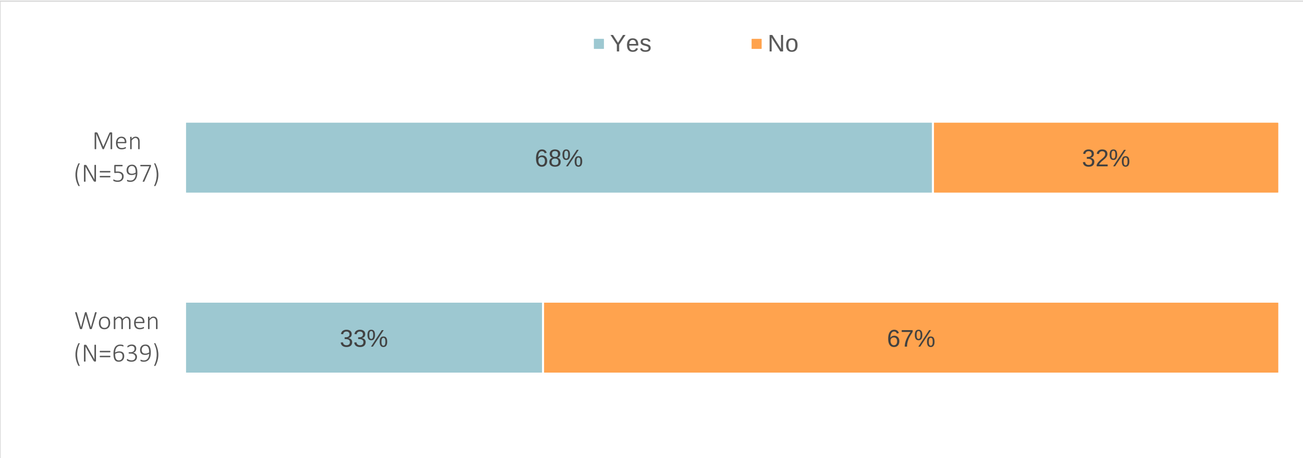
General employment at the time of interview in March 2021 stood at 50%, during round 2 in November 2020 it also stood at about the same (51%).

Figure 76 Current employment, by round



It should be highlighted that while over two thirds of men (68%) reported to be employed at the time of interview in March 2021, only about half as many women declared to be employed as well (33%).

Figure 77 Current employment, by gender



Around eight in 10 respondents worked in the same sector as before the pandemic (87%). Similar to the round 2 of the assessment, around 8% from the private sector and 5% from the public sector have either found new employment or have changed their work sector compared to prior to the pandemic. Slightly more women reported employment in a different sector than prior to the pandemic when compared to men.

Figure 78 Current employment sector

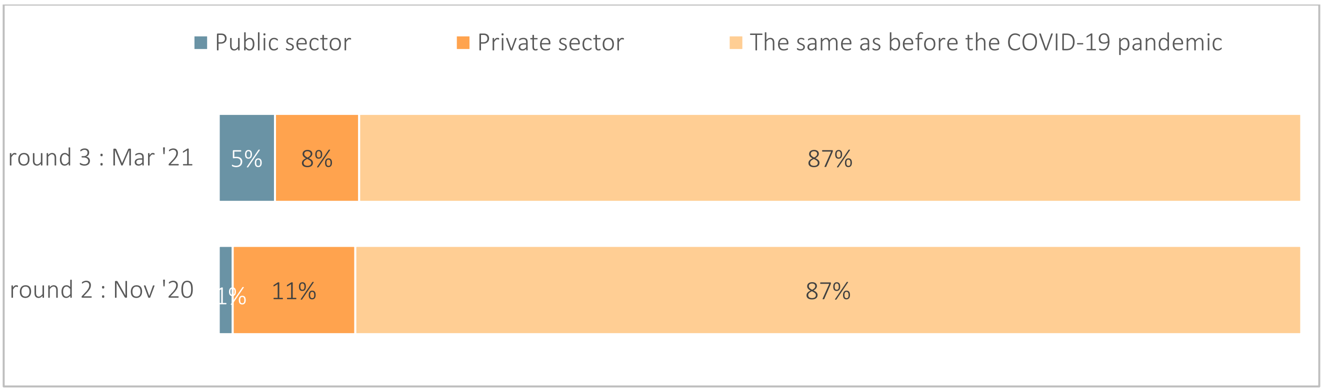
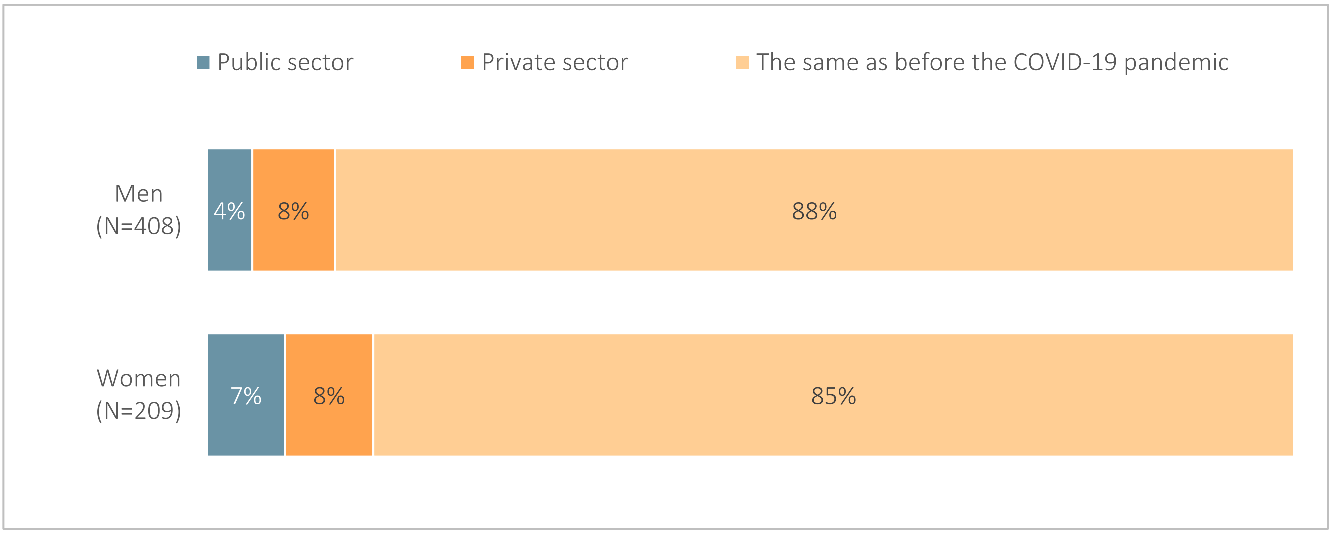
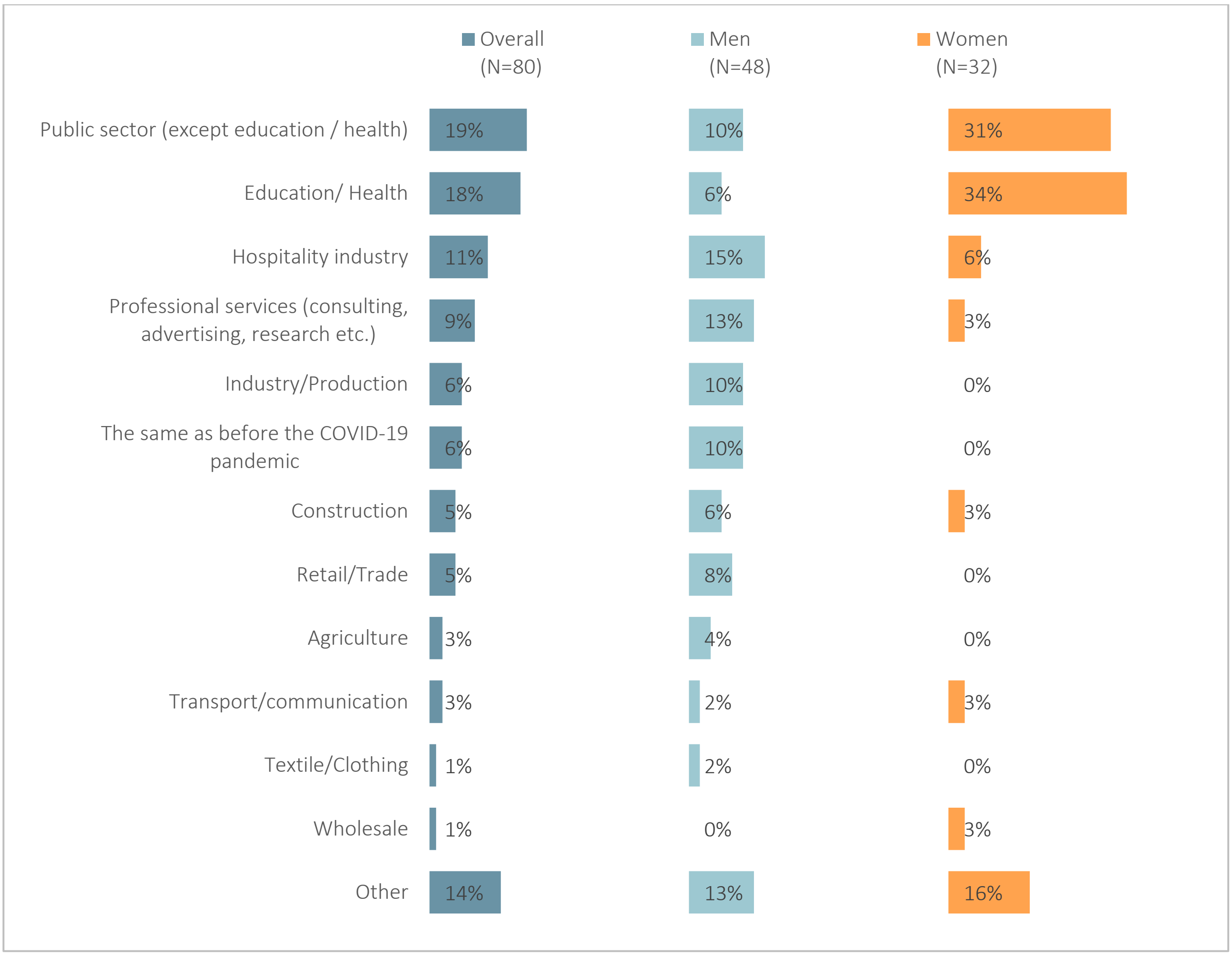


Figure 79 Current employment sector, by gender



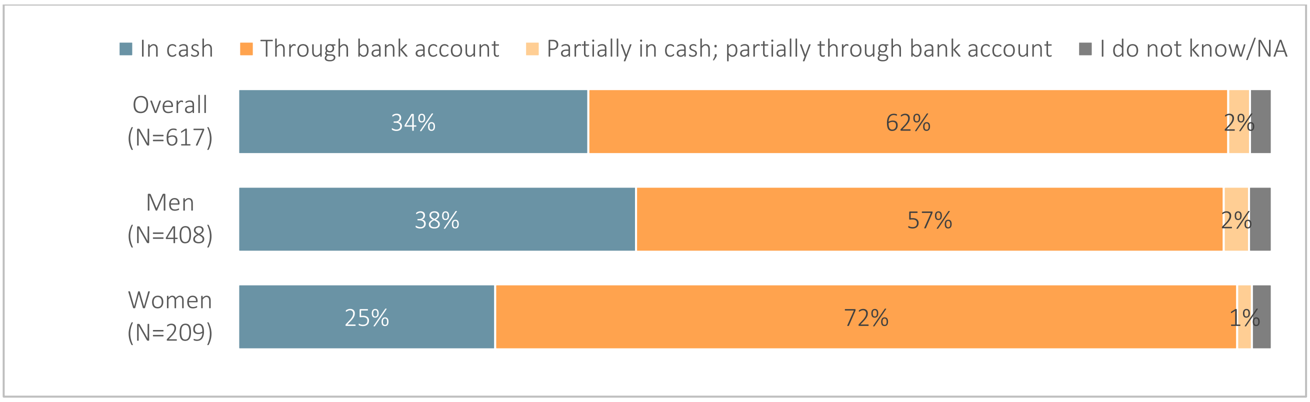
Most respondents that changed their sector of work, have also changed the type of business activity they engaged with. Overall, 19% were employed by the public sector, 18% within education and health, 11% in hospitality, 9% engaged with professional services and 6% with industry/production. Only 6% of those respondents that have either found new employment or have changed their work sector compared to prior to the pandemic reported to have worked within the same business activity area as before COVID-19. Significantly more women had changed their business activity area to education and health (34%) than men (6%), the same applies to those that changed their engagement into working in the public sector (women 31% and men 10%). Men on the other hand were more likely to have changed to hospitality (15%) or professional services (13%) when compared to women (6% and 3% respectively).

Figure 80 Current employment by business activity



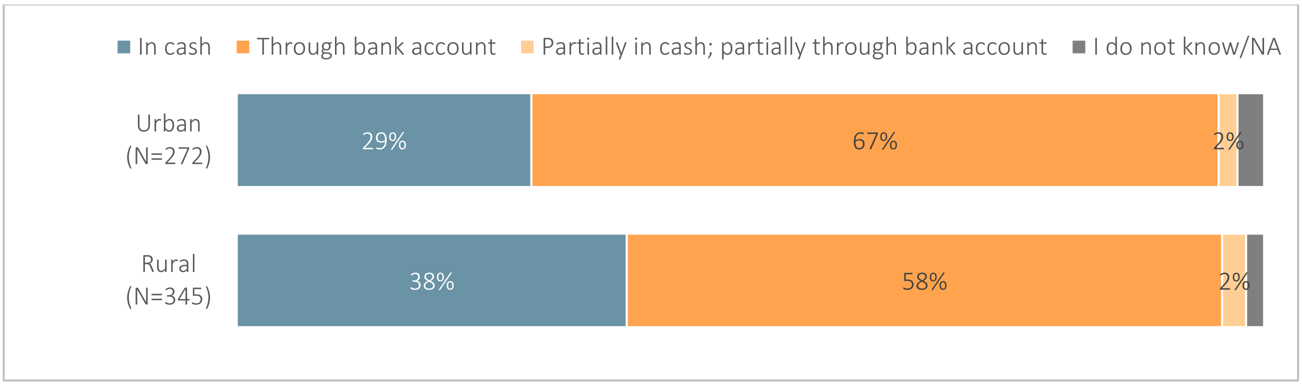
As discussed above, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, 30% reported to have received their salary in cash (34% men and 22% women). In comparison, at the time of interview in March 2021, more than one third (34%) reported to have received their salary in cash, an increase of 4 pp (4 pp increase for men and 3 pp increase for women). This finding may suggest that informal payment have increased due to the pandemic.

Figure 81 Means of receiving current salary



While 24% of urban and 35% of rural respondents reported to have received their salary in cash prior to the pandemic, as of March 2021, 29% of urban and 38% of rural respondents reported the same. An increase of 5pp and 3 pp respectively.

Figure 82 Means of receiving current salary



Respondents that were employed, were in 40% of the cases the main income earner of the household. Data disaggregated by gender revealed that only 18% of women were the main income earner of the family. In comparison, nearly two thirds of men reported to be the main income earner (61%).

Figure 83 Respondents that are main income earner of the household

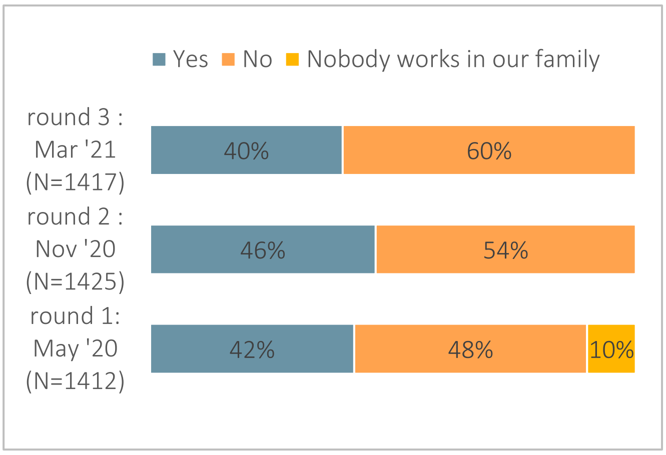
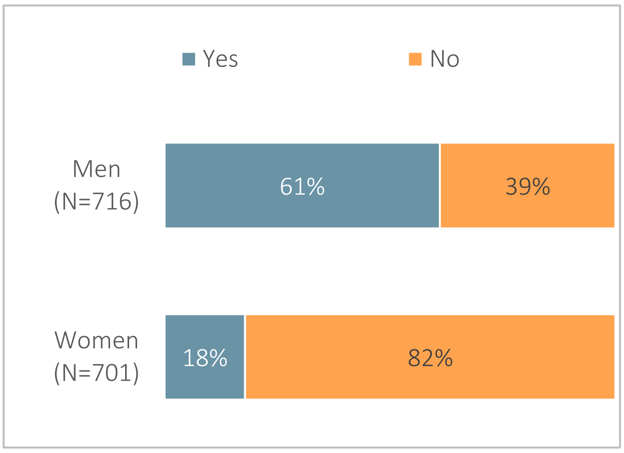
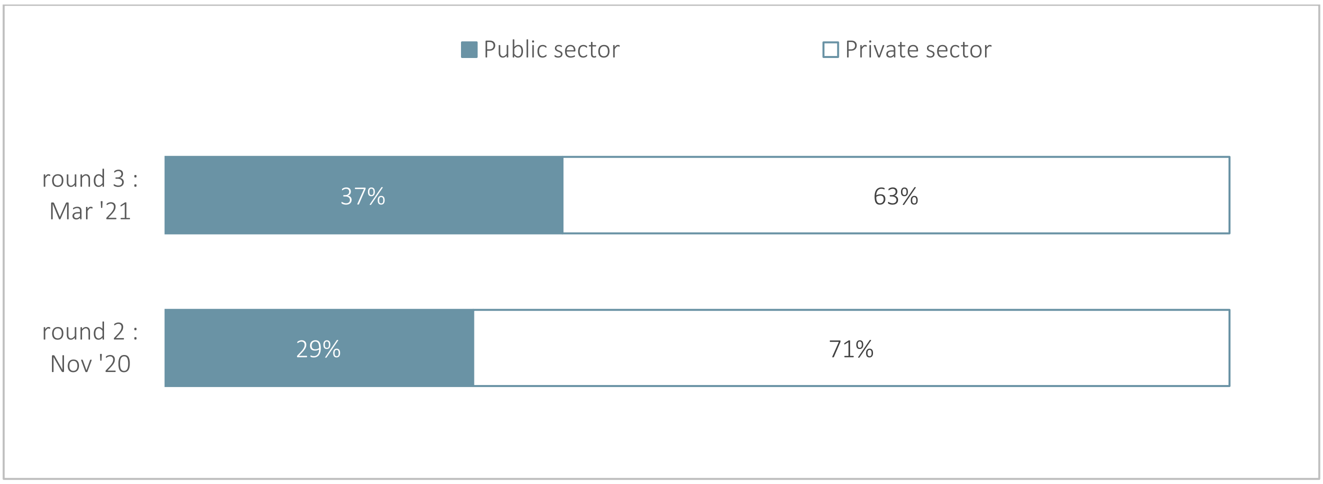


Figure 84 Respondent that are main income earner of the household, by gender



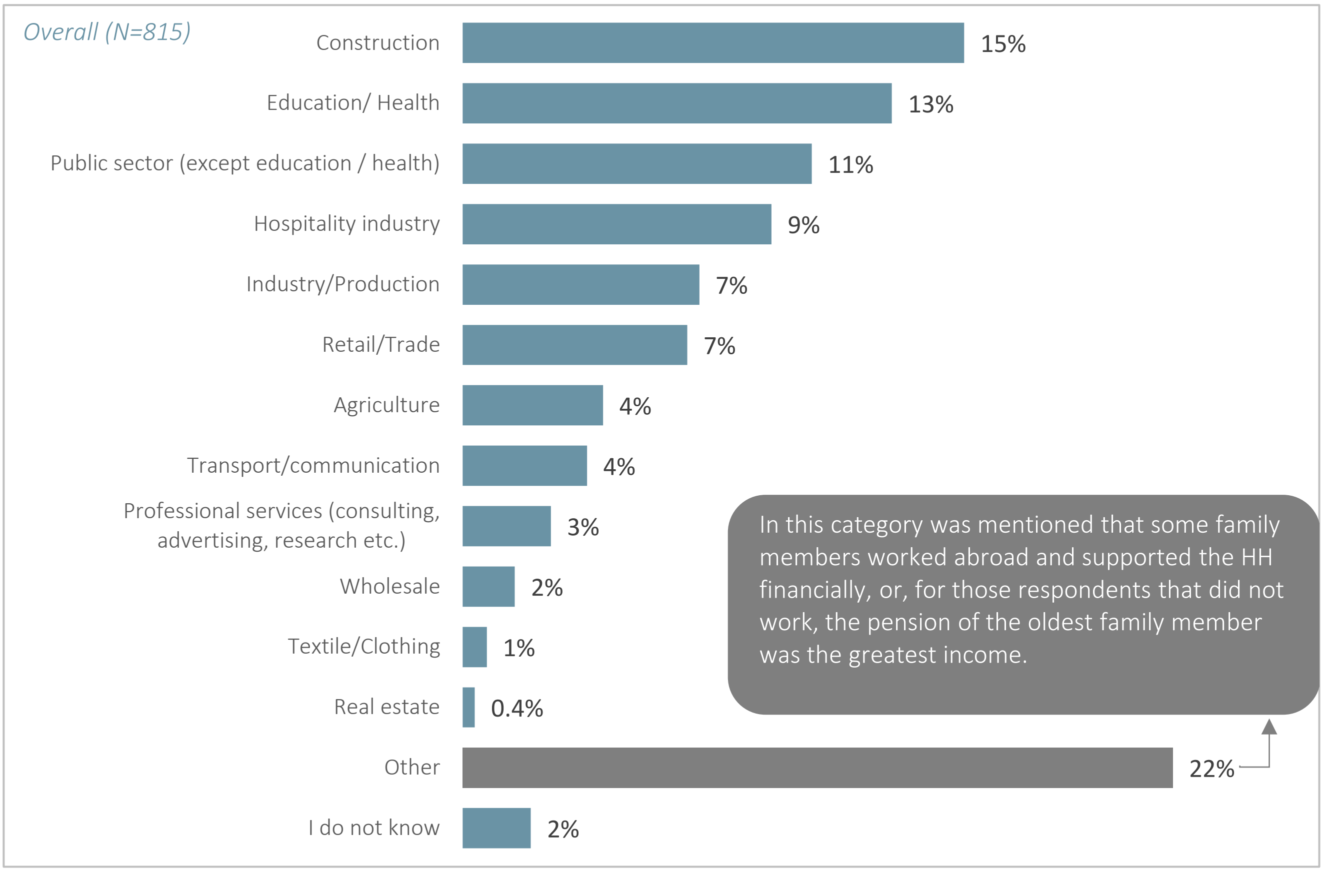
More than one in three of the main income earners of the household were employed by the public sector (37%), compared to round 2 this portrays an increase of 8 pp.

Figure 85 Sector of employment of the main income earner, by round



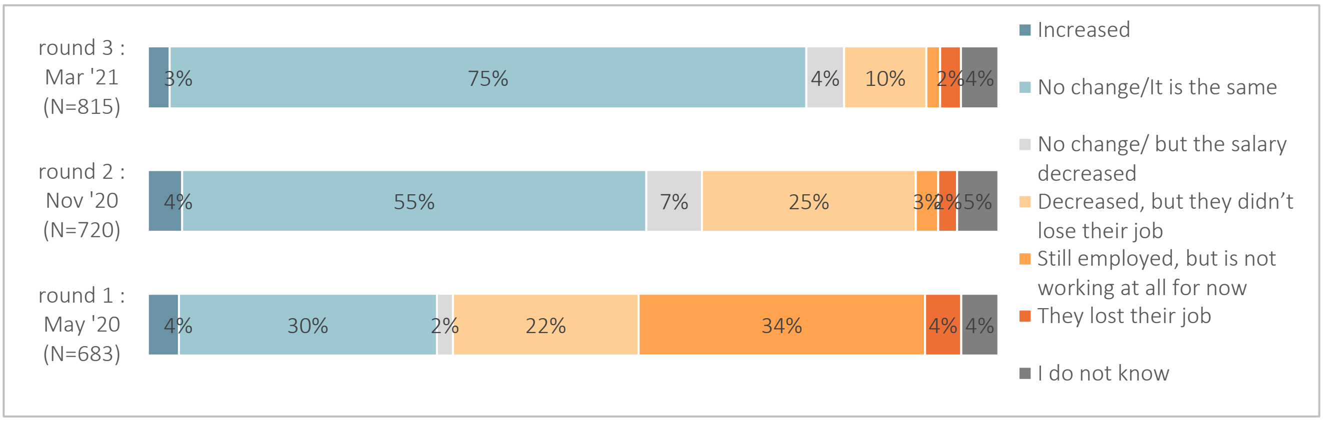
Of those HHs where the main income provider was not the respondent, the employment business activity of the main income earners most commonly has been in construction (15%), education and health (13%), public sector (11%), and in hospitality (9%). The smallest share of main income earners were employees in textile/clothing (1%) and real estate (0.4%).

Figure 86 Employment by business activity of the main income earner



Three in four respondents declared that the paid working hours of the main income earners of the household was not impacted by COVID-19 (75%). This portrays an increase of 25 pp compared to the situation in November 2020 and 45 pp compared to May 2020. Around 10% declared that the paid hours had decreased without concurrent job loss.

Figure 87 Impact on paid working hours of the main income earner of the family by COVID-19

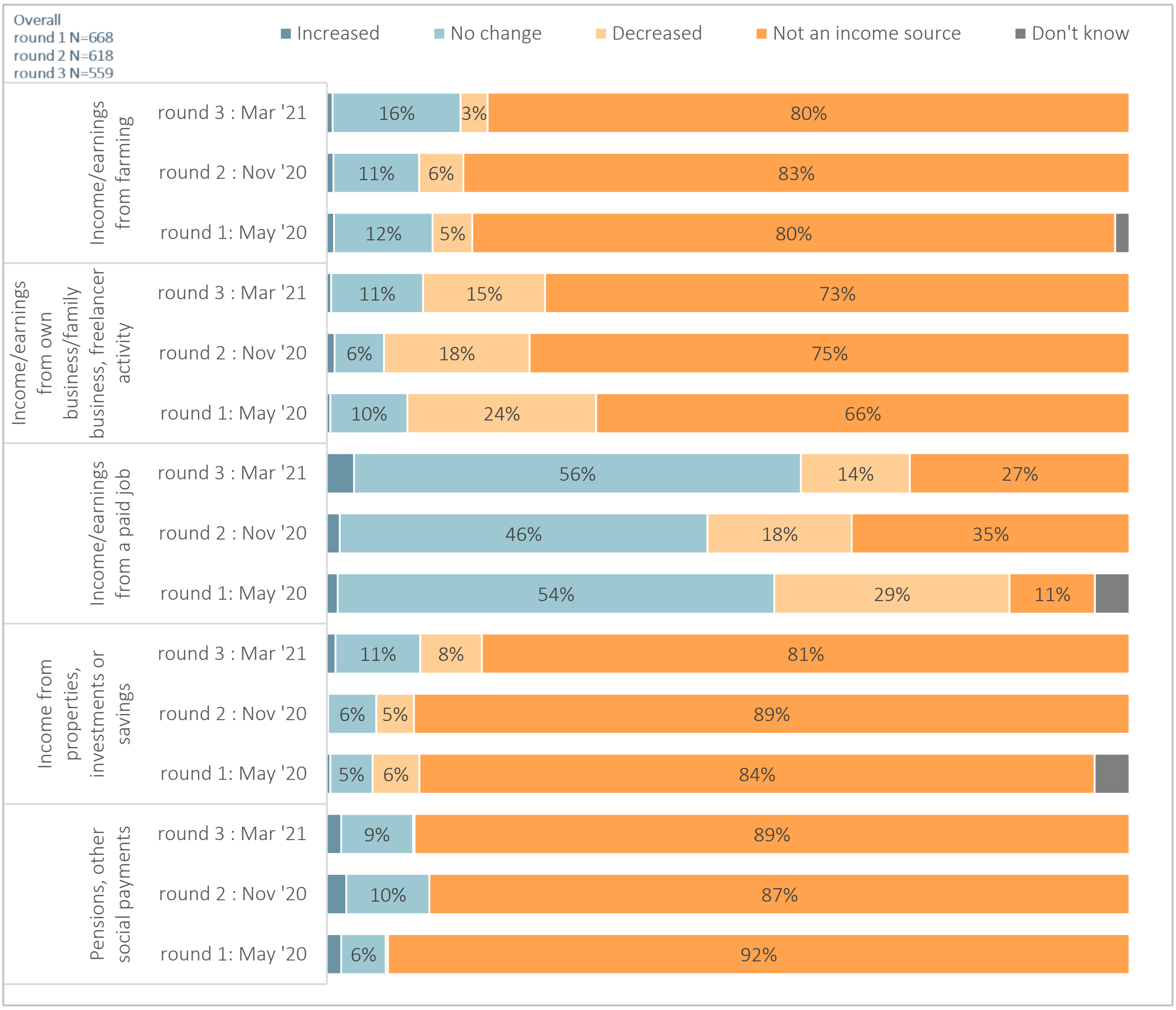


The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the personal resources of many people all around the world, in the context of Kosovo it can be observed that overall fewer people reported decreases in regard to most resources in March 2021 when compared to the situation in May 2020 and November 2020.

Only 3% of those respondents that generated income from farming reported a decrease, around 15% experienced a decrease in income from their own business, family business or freelance activities. In comparison in May 2020, 24% had declared a decrease in income from these types of activities. The majority of respondents did not experience any change regarding income earned from a paid job (56%), while 14% reported a decrease. In May 2020 nearly one third had reported a decrease in income from a paid job (29%) and 18% did so as well in November 2020.

Income generated from properties, investments or savings was not common among respondents, 11% of those that did generate income from these sources reported no change and 8% reported a decrease. None of those respondents that received pensions or other social payments reported a decrease in these resources in March 2021.

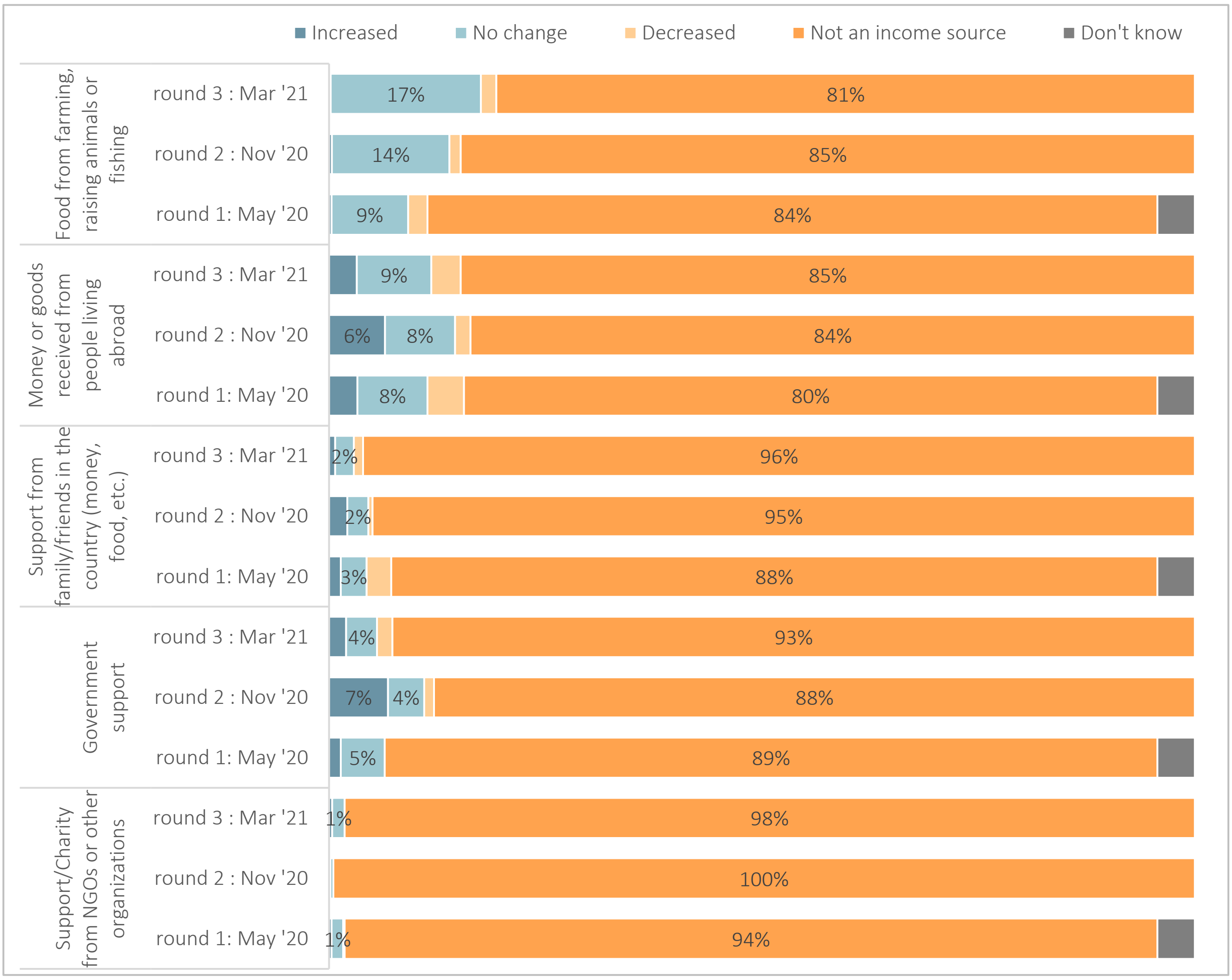
Figure 88 Effects of COVID-19 on personal resources, by round (1/2)



Furthermore, food generated by farming, raising animals or fishing also largely did not decrease, but remained the same (17%). Some respondents received support through money or goods received from people abroad, out of these 9% reported that these resources did not change, 3% each reported an increase or decrease. During the previous round of the assessment, 6% had reported an increase of these resources. A similar deviation in results can be observed in regard to those that received government support, while 7% reported an increase in November 2020, in March 2021 only 2% did so as well.

Almost none of the respondents declared that support or charity from NGOs or other organization were an income source, similar to the results of the previous two rounds of the assessment.

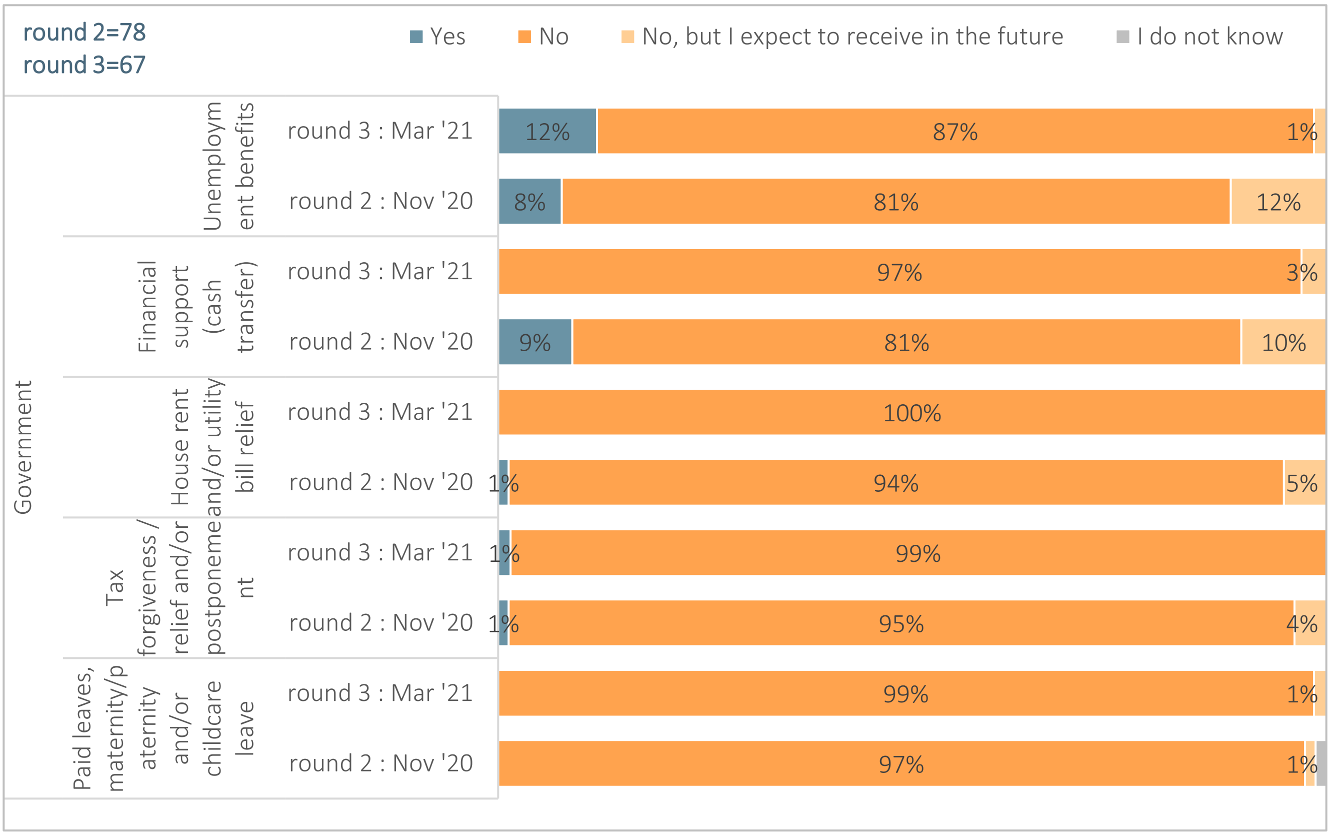
Figure 89 Effects of COVID-19 on personal resources, by round (2/2)



Taking a closer look at those respondents that received unemployment benefits and/or any financial support from the government since the onset of the pandemic, it can be observed that slightly more respondents received unemployment benefits in March 2021 (12%) than in November 2020 (8%). However, it should be stressed that about eight in 10 respondents that lost their job did not receive any unemployment benefits (87%).

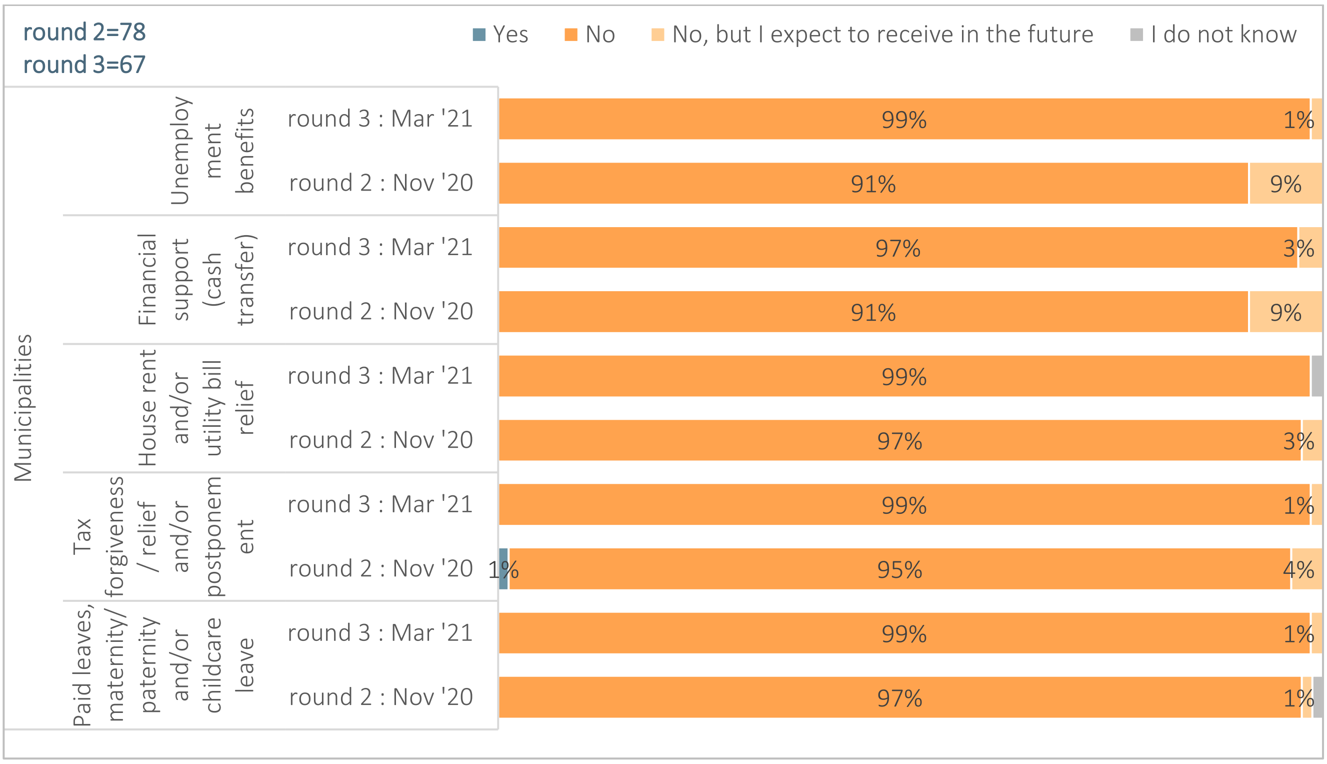
None of the respondents received financial support in form or a cash transfer, or house rent and/or utility bill relief and only 1% declared to have received tax relief and/or postponement. It stands out that while in November 2020 some respondents were hopeful to receive any of these aforementioned benefits in the future (10%, 5% and 4% respectively), in March 2021 nearly none were (3%, 0% and 0% respectively). Moreover, none of the respondents declared to have received support from the government regarding paid leaves, maternity/paternity and/or childcare leave.

Figure 90 Respondents that received unemployment benefits and/or any financial support from the government since the spread of COVID-19



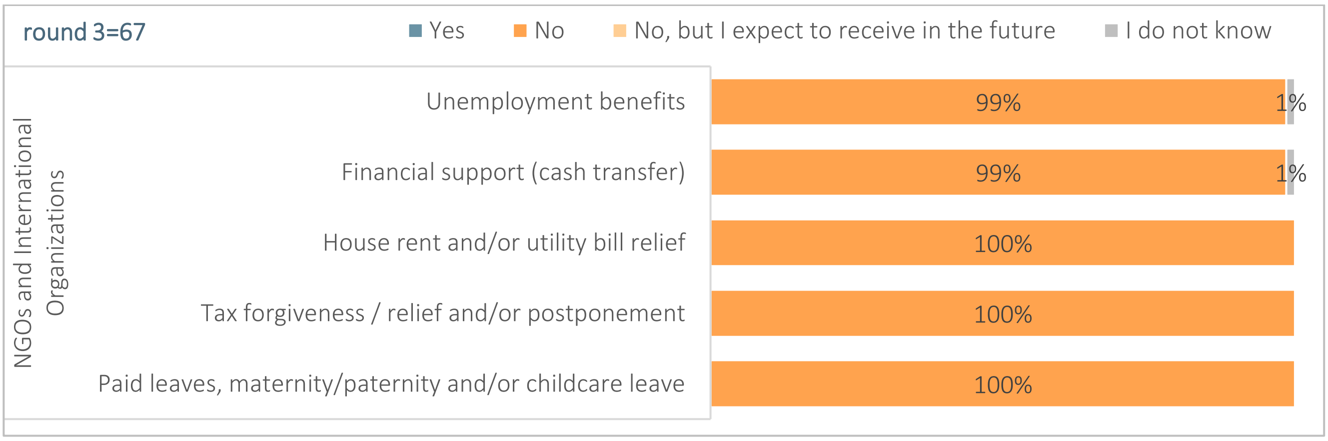
At municipal level, data results revealed that only 1% declared to have received a tax relief or postponement from their municipality, while no other types of benefits were received from the municipalities. Comparing data results to round 2 of the assessment shows that few expressed hopes to receive any such benefits in the future.

Figure 91 Respondents that received unemployment benefits and/or any financial support from the municipalities since the spread of COVID-19



None of the respondents received any type of unemployment benefits and/or financial support from NGOs or international organizations.[25] [26]

Figure 92 Respondents that received unemployment benefits and/or any financial support from NGOs and international organizations since the spread of COVID-19



[25] This question was added during round 3 of the assessment and is therefore not comparative to previous rounds.
[26] Please note that above data results regarding the receiving of benefits and/or financial supports were disaggregated by urbanity and no significant differences were observed.

Data results pertaining to any in-kind support respondents may have received from the government, municipalities or NGOs and international organizations show that the clear majority did not receive any. Around 6% reported that they received in-kind support from a municipality, out of these, food was most commonly mentioned (3%).

Figure 93 Respondents that received any type of in-kind support since the spread of COVID-19, simple

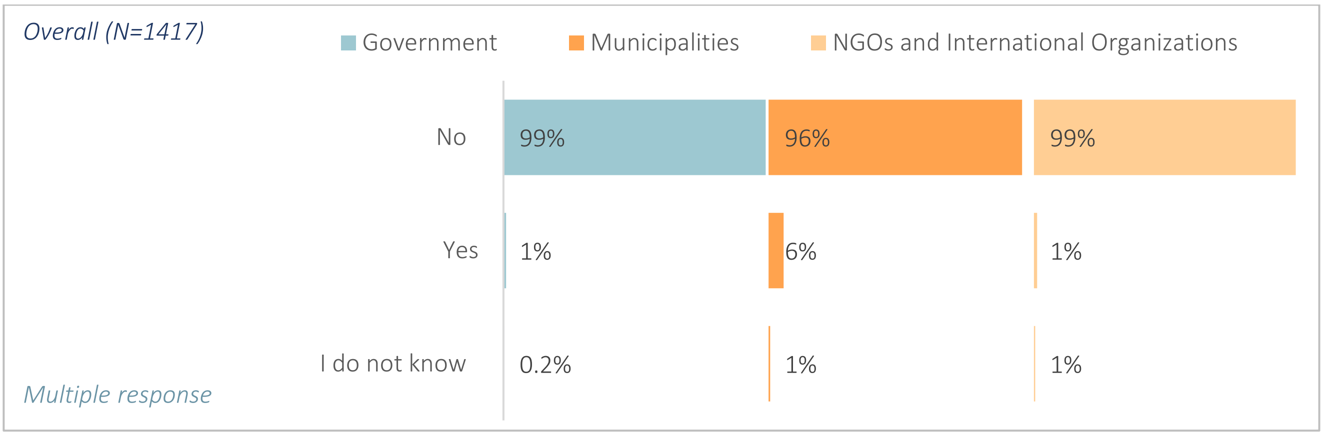
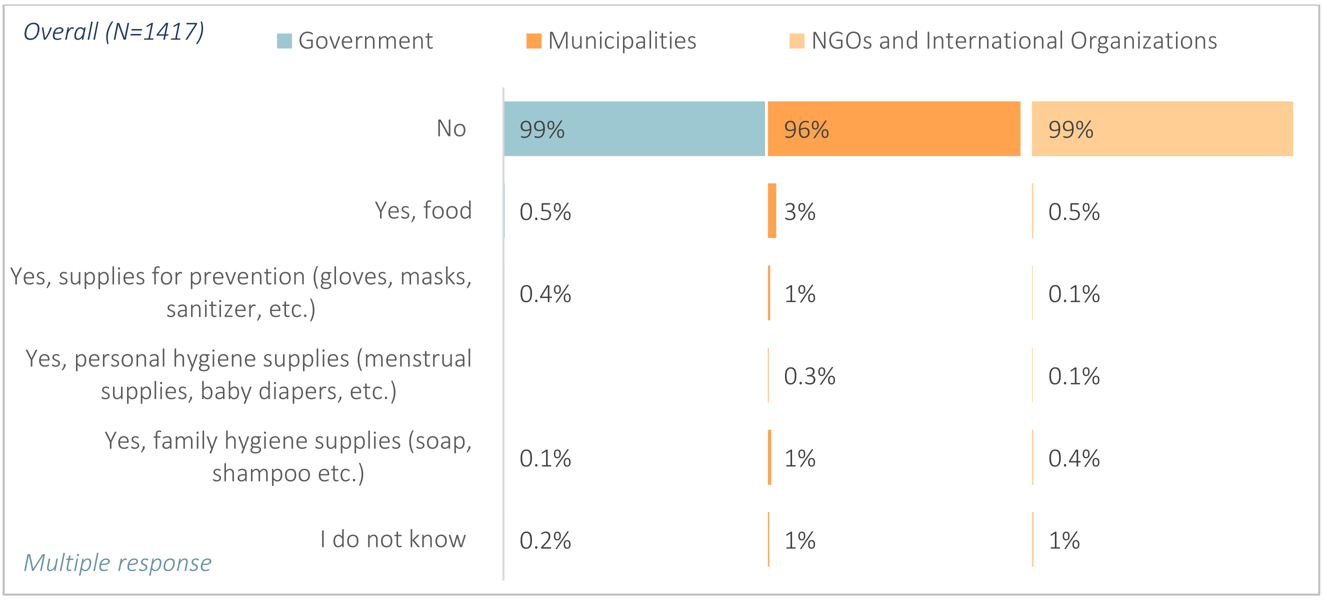


Figure 94 Respondents that received any type of in-kind support since the spread of COVID-19, detailed

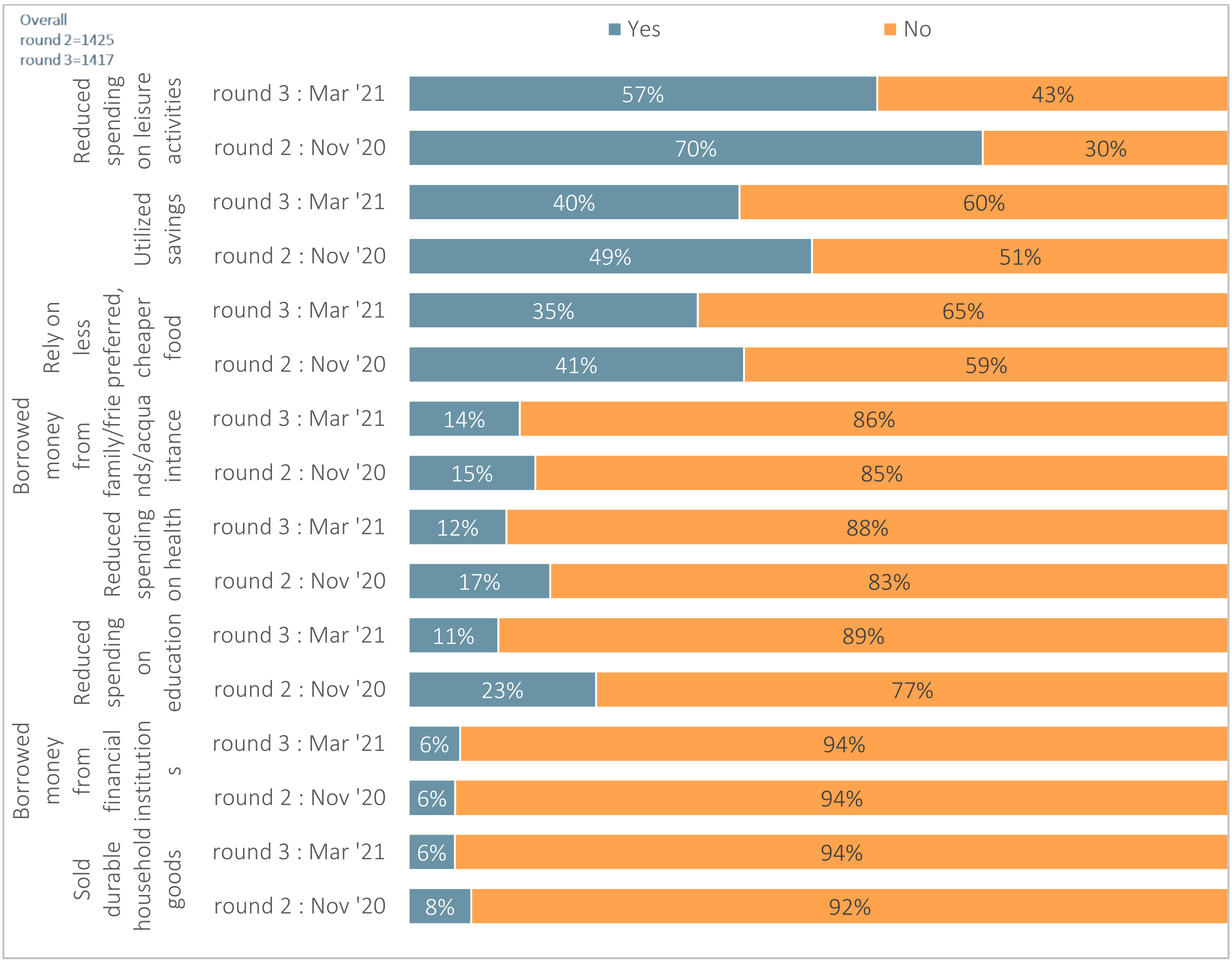


The COVID-19 pandemic prompted many to reduce spending in certain areas of their lives in order to compensate for income losses or potential income losses. However, on a positive note, when comparing data results from March 2021 to the previous round of the assessment it can be observed that in nearly all areas fewer respondents had to resort to compensative behaviour.

While still over half (57%) reduced their spending on leisure activities, compared to round 2 this portrays a decrease of 17 pp. In November 2020, 49% had utilized savings, compared to 40% in March 2021. Around two in five relied on consuming cheaper/less preferred food during round 2 of the assessment (41%), while during round 3 only around one in three did so as well (35%). Nearly the same number of respondents had borrowed money from family or friends or financial institutions or sold durable household goods in November 2020 (15%, 6% and 6% respectively) compared to March 2021 (14%, 6% and 8% respectively).

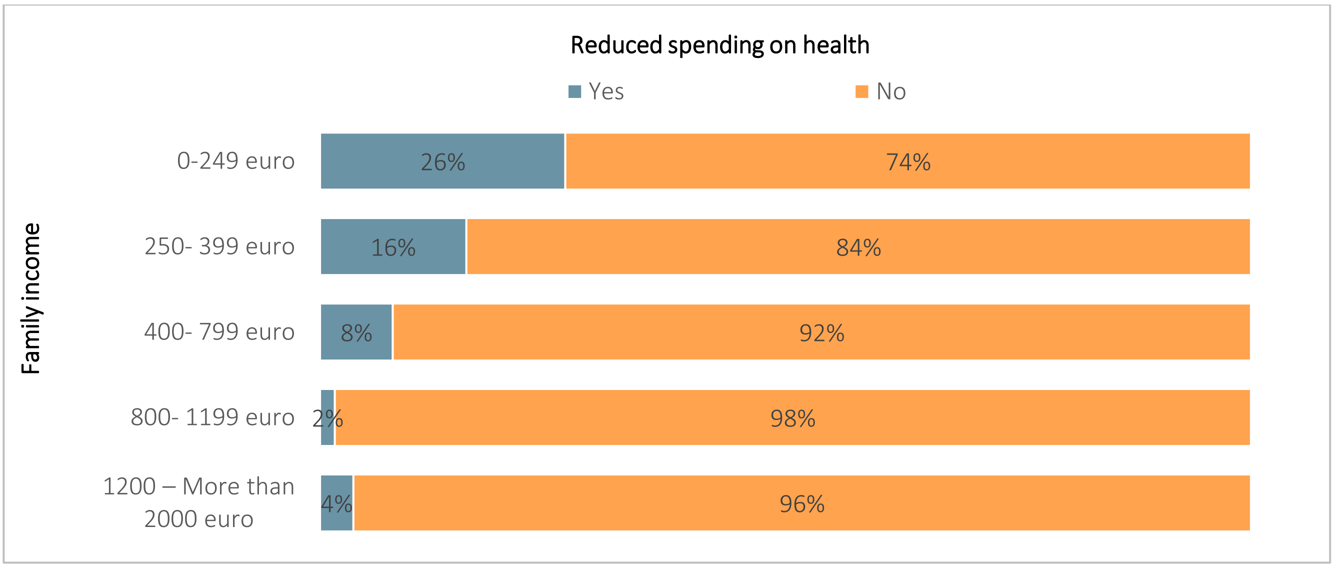
While almost one in four had reported to have reduced spending on education (23%) in November 2020, in March 2021 only 11% reported the same (decrease of 12 pp). However, the percentage of respondents that had reduced spending on health to compensate from losses decreased only by 5 pp and stood at 12% in March 2021.

Figure 95 Compensations for loss of income/potential loss of income taken by households since the onset of COVID-19, by round



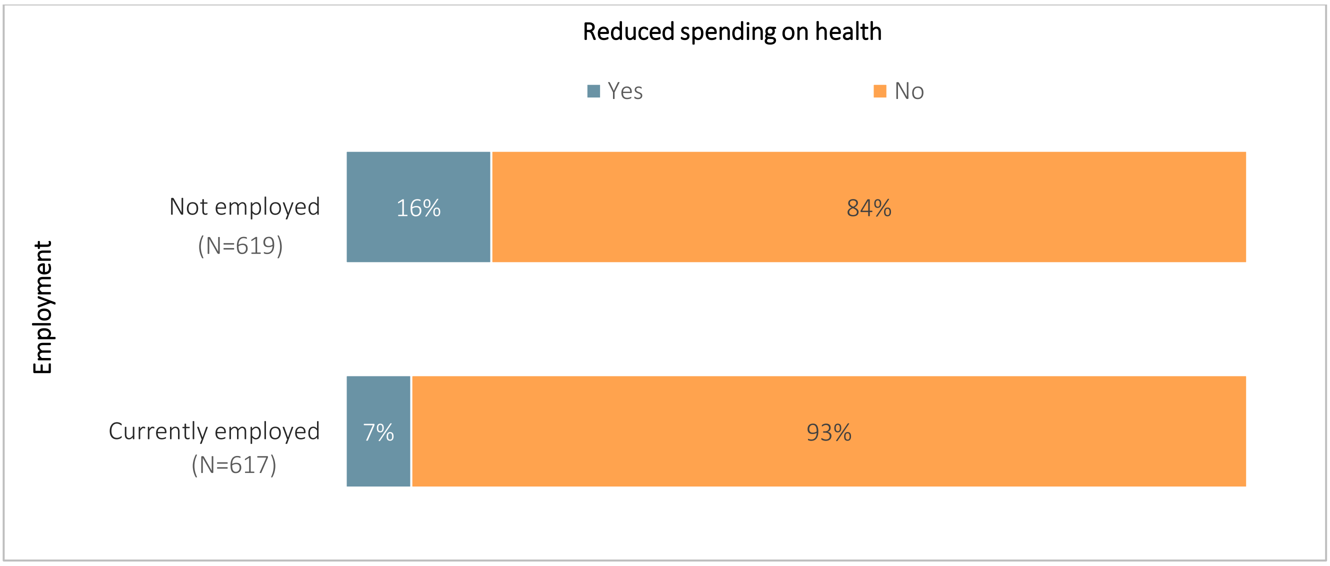
Taking a closer look at the profile of respondents that had reported reduced spending on health shows that especially those in the two lowest income groups were prone to engage with this type of compensative behaviour. Around one in four of the households with income between zero and 249 Euro per month reduced health spending (26%), while 16% of those earning 250 to 399 Euro per month did so as well.

Figure 96 Reduced spending on health, by family income



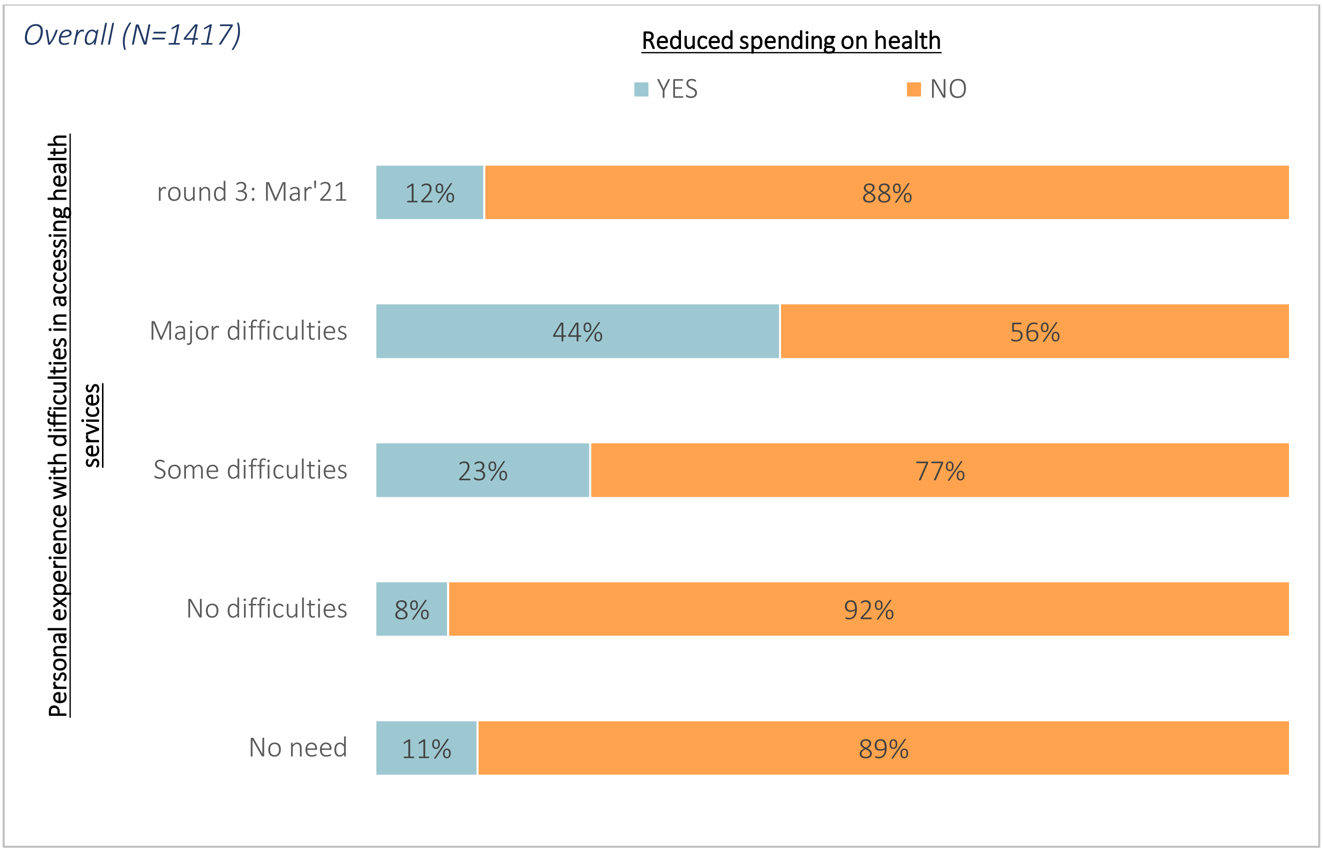
Furthermore, unemployed respondents were more than twice as likely to have reduced their spending on health-related matter in order to compensate for income losses or potential income losses (16%), when compared to employed respondents (7%)

Figure 97 Reduced spending on health, by current employment status



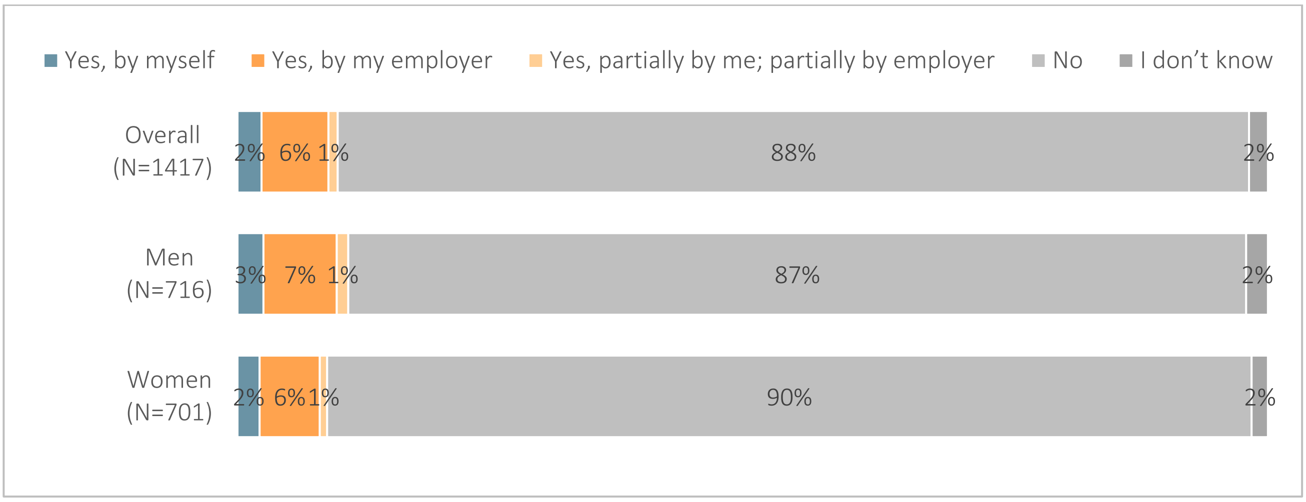
Overall, nearly half of the 12% of respondents that reported to have reduced their spending on health, had major difficulties in accessing health services (44%), another 23% reported some difficulties. This finding suggests that reduction of health spending can have long term impact on health outcomes for some, when needing to access any type of health services.

Figure 98 Access to health and reduction in health spending



Only 6% declared to have a health insurance through their employer while 2% cover insurance themselves. More men reported to have any type of health insurance (14%) compared to women (9%).[27]

Figure 99 Current coverage by any form of health insurance or health plan, by gender



Furthermore, data results also suggest that having health insurance or being covered by a health plan was more common among urban respondents (12%) than rural respondents (8%).

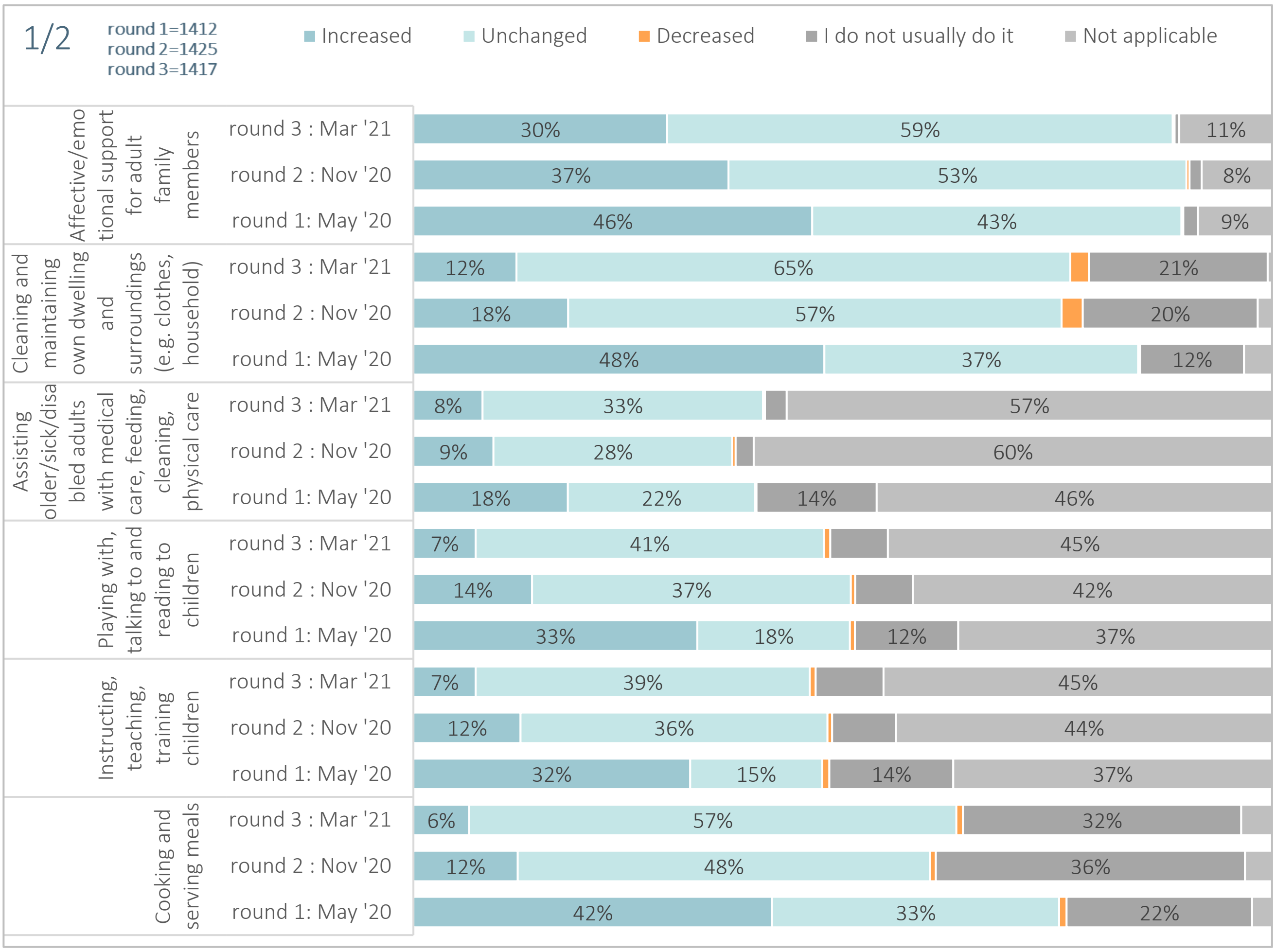
[27] This question was added during round 3 of the assessment and is therefore not comparable to round 1 and round 2.

3.1.5 Distribution of Household Chores and Social Dynamics

The distribution of household chores and social dynamics within families were also affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Measuring increased or decreased hours devoted to unpaid domestic work and care work therefore can provide an important insight into such dynamic changes.

In May 2020, nearly half of all respondents reported an increase of hours spent on emotionally supporting other adult family members (46%). In November 2020 37% declared the same, while in March 2021 less than one in three did (30%). Only 12% reported an increase of hours spent on cleaning and maintenance work around their dwelling, a drop of 36 pp compared to round 1 and a further drop of 6 pp compared to round 2. Nearly as many reported increased hours in assisting elderly, sick or disabled adults in their household (8%) as during round 2 of the assessment (9%), during round 1 around 18% had reported the same. Hours spent with playing or teaching children as well as cooking and serving meals had increased for around 7-6% of respondents in March 2021.[28]

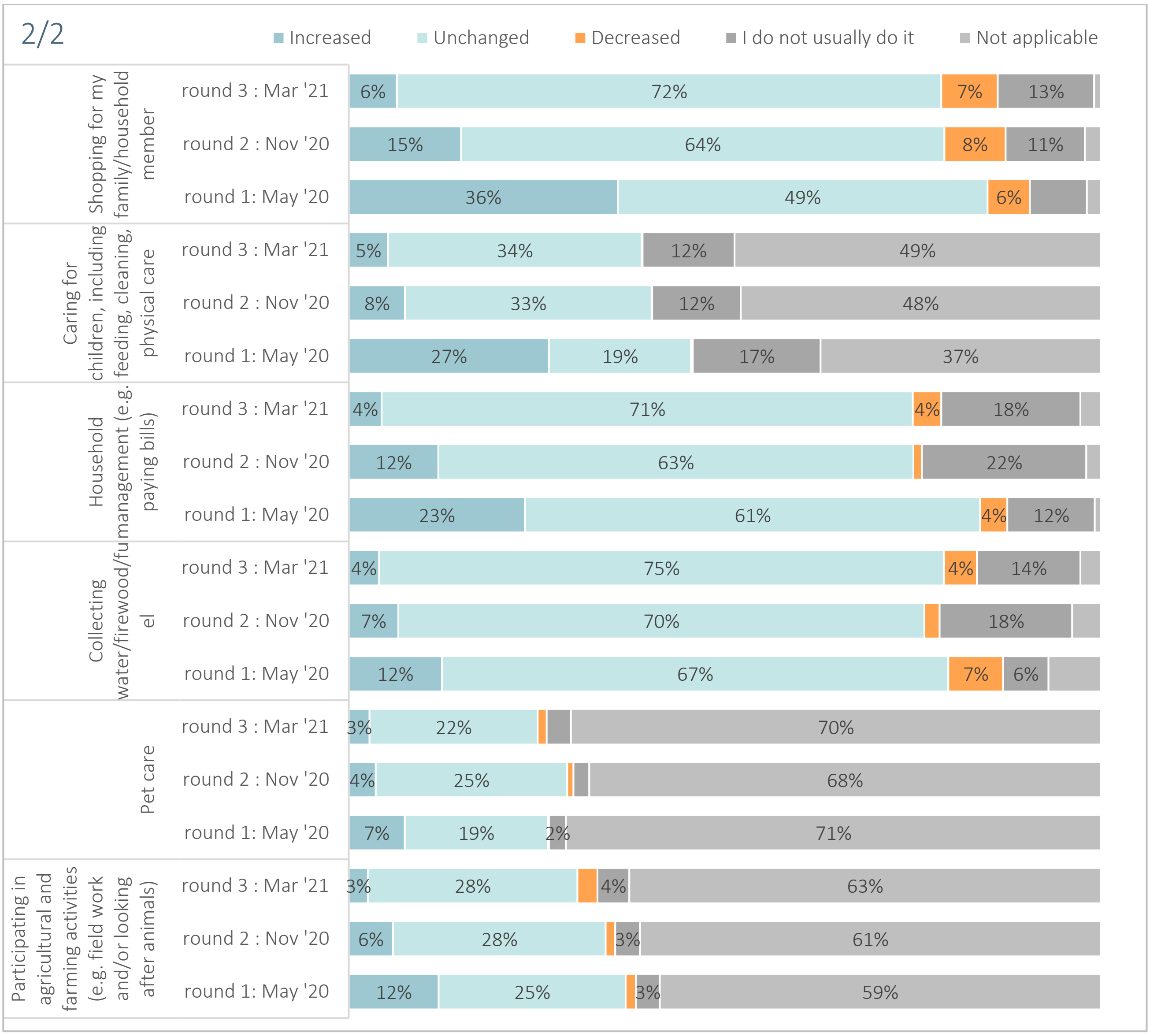
Figure 100 Changes in hours devoted to unpaid domestic work as a result of COVID-19 (1/2)



[28] 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.

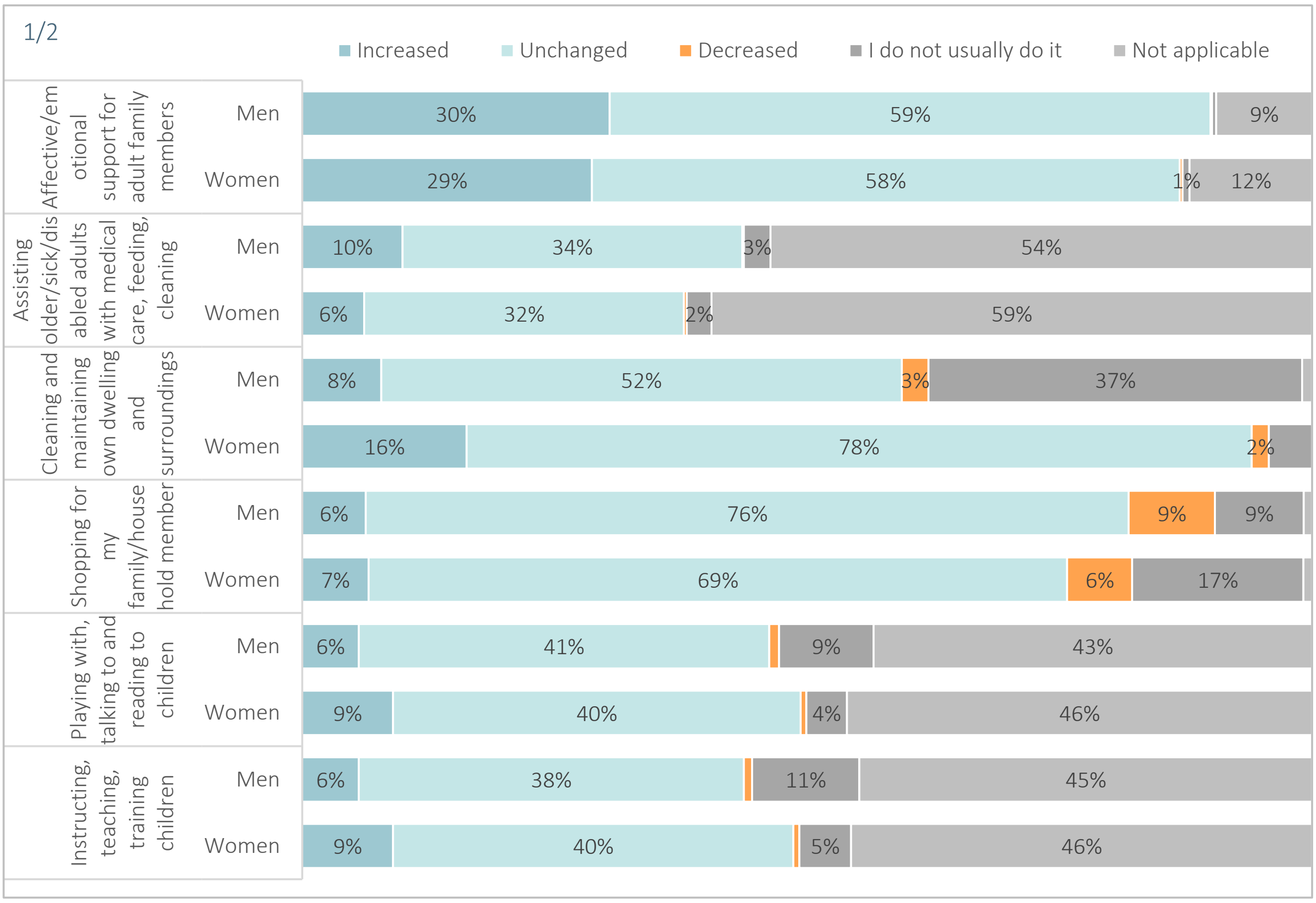
Also, hours devoted on shopping for the household, caring for children, household management, collecting water, firewood or fuel, pet care and engagement with farming activities had only increased for 3% to 6% of respondents. Compared to round 1 this portrays a significant decrease in respondents that reported increased hours spent on these activities and a moderate decrease compared to round 2.

Figure 101 Changes in hours devoted to unpaid domestic work as a result of COVID-19 (2/2)



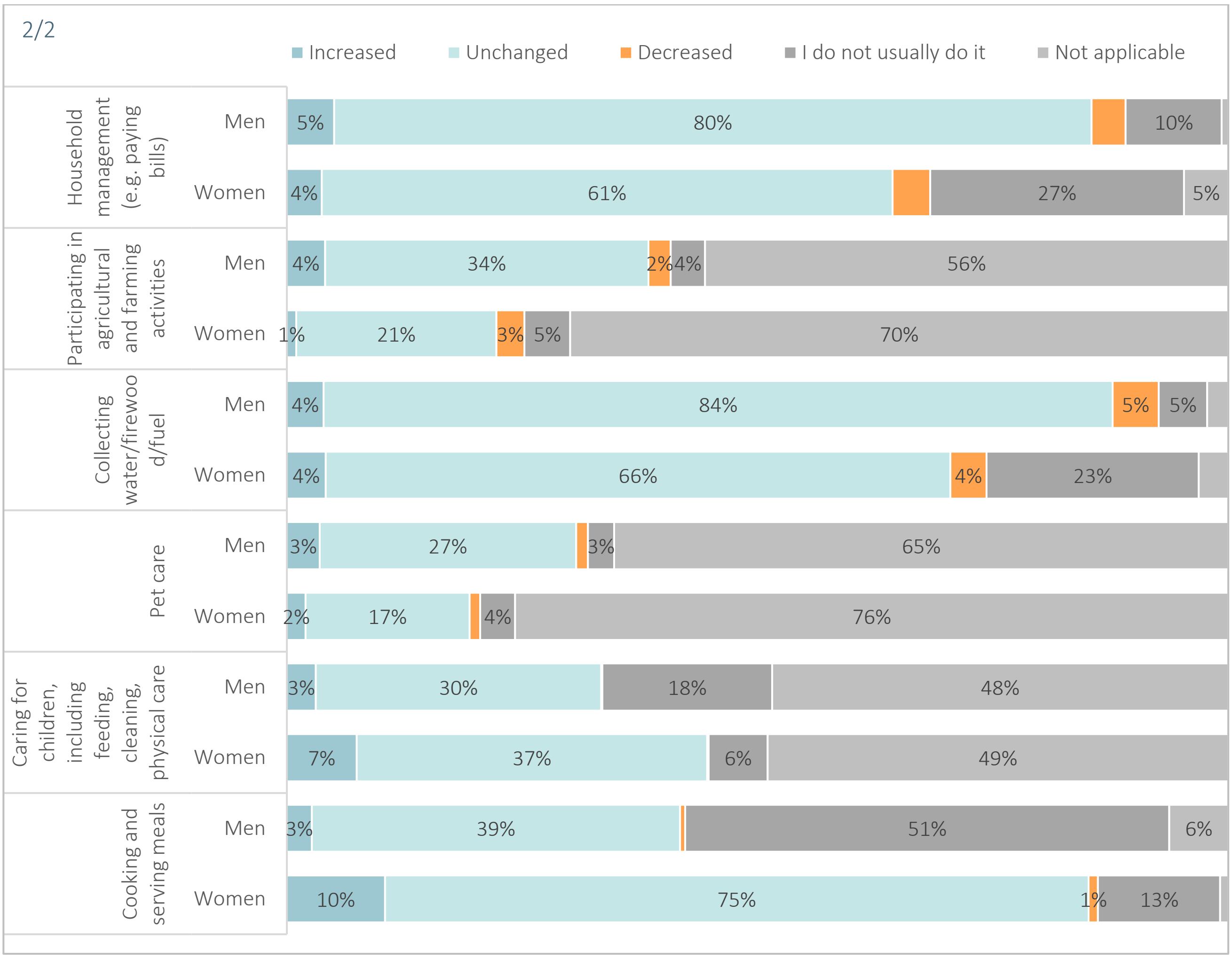
Despite the positive trends described in the above graphs, it should be noted that twice as many women reported increased hours spent on cleaning and maintenance work (16%) than men (8%). Women also devoted more hours on playing or teaching children (9% each) compared to men (6% each). Men were slightly more likely to have spent increased hours on assisting elderly, sick or disabled adults (10%) than women (6%). Nearly one third of both women and men spent increased hours on emotionally supporting other adult family members (29% and 30% respectively).

Figure 102 Changes in hours devoted to unpaid domestic work as a result of COVID-19, by gender (1/2)



Furthermore, more women (10%) reported more hours devoted to cooking and serving meals when compared to men (3%), slightly more women also reported increased hours spent on child care (7%) than men (3%). It should be further highlighted that 51% of men declared to usually not engage with cooking at all.

Figure 103 Changes in hours devoted to unpaid domestic work as a result of COVID-19, by gender (2/2)

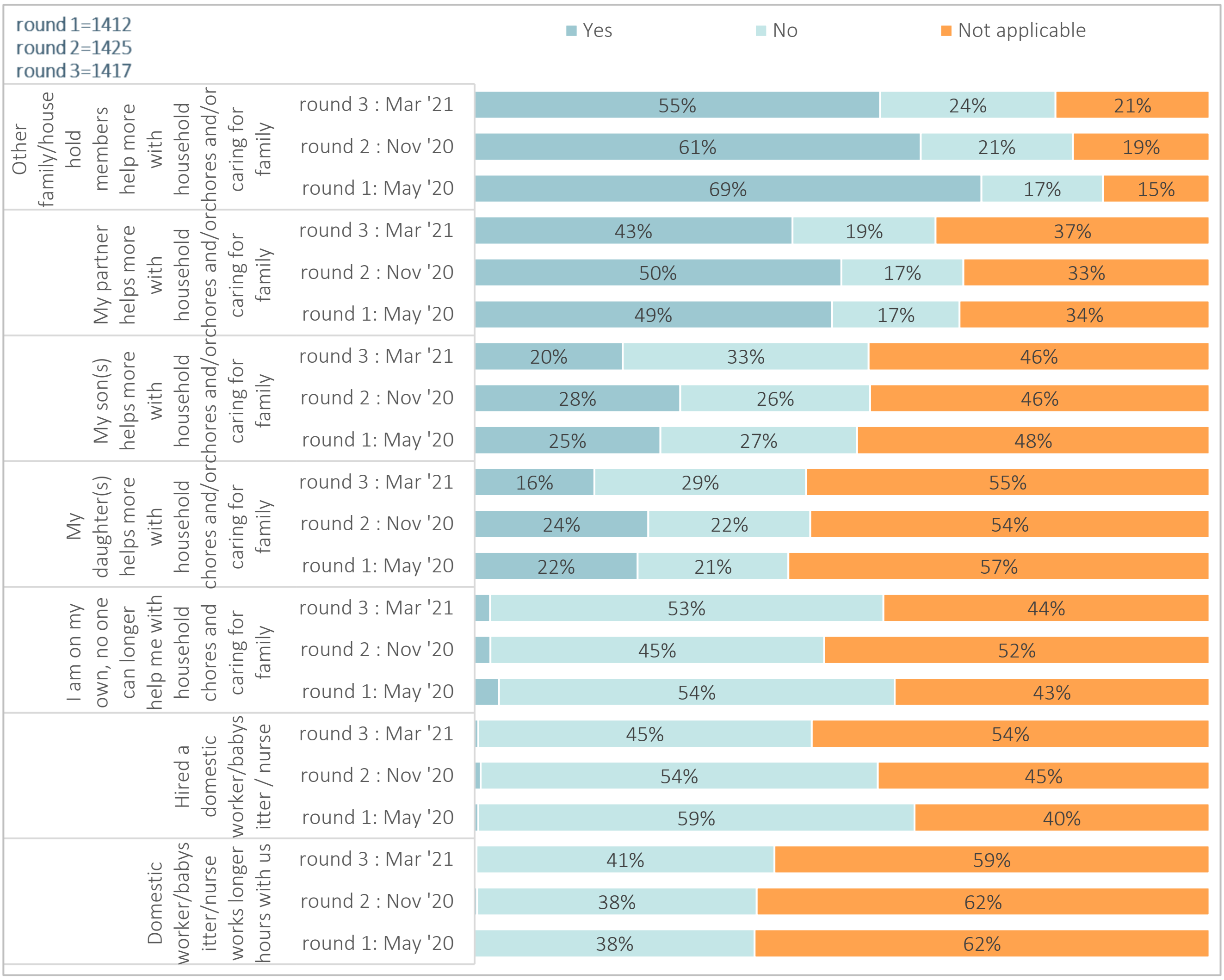


*sorted by 'increased'

Comparative data between the three rounds of the assessment on the effects of COVID-19 on roles and responsibilities within the household suggests that readiness from other household members, partners, sons and daughters to help more with household chores has decreased over time.

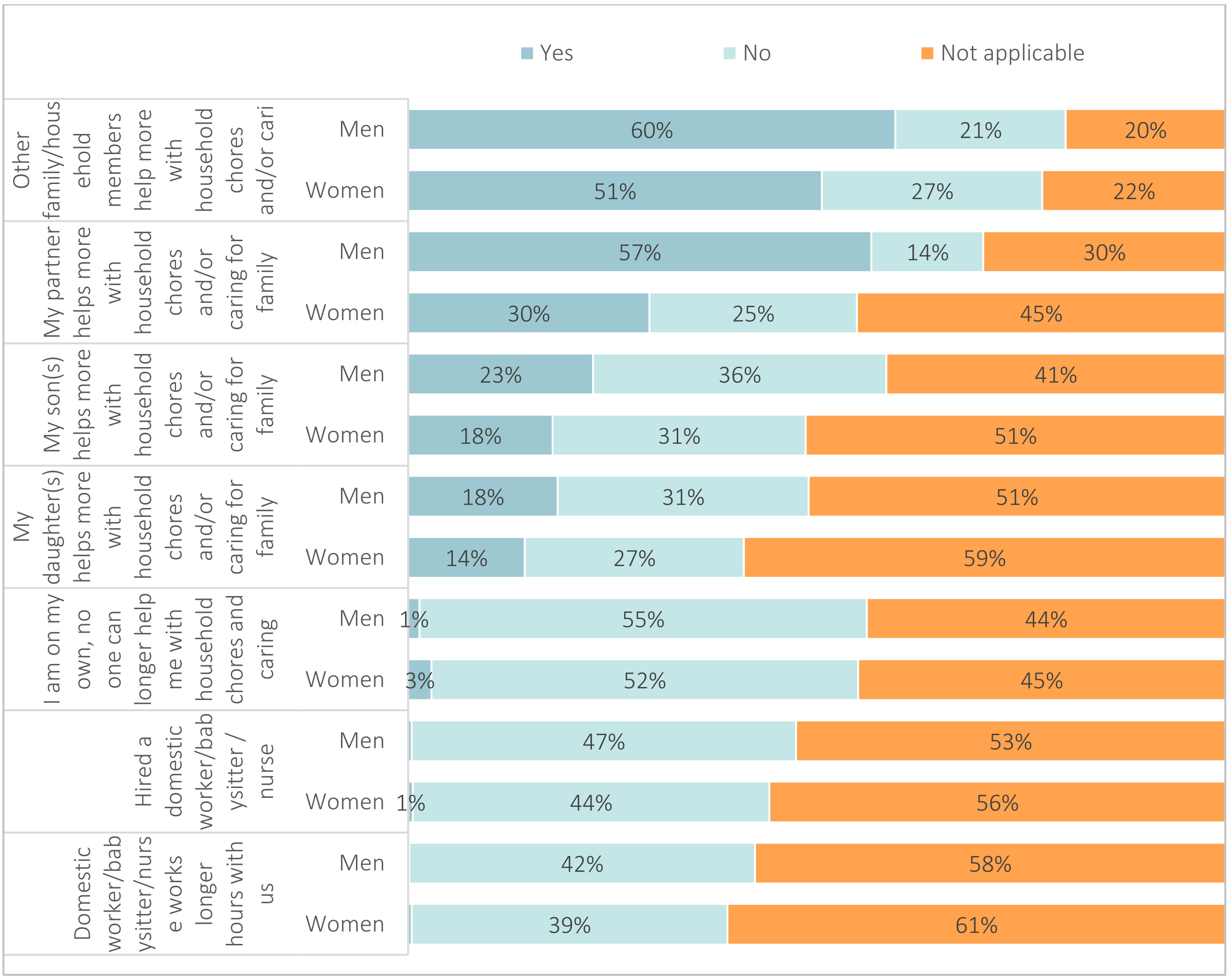
For example, while 69% reported increased help from other household members in May 2020, and 61% in November 2020, in March 2021 this ratio only amounted to 55%. The additional support by partners, sons and daughters has also decreased by 7 pp, 8 pp and 8 pp respectively compared to the previous round of the assessment.

Figure 104 Effects of COVID-19 on roles and responsibilities within the household, by round



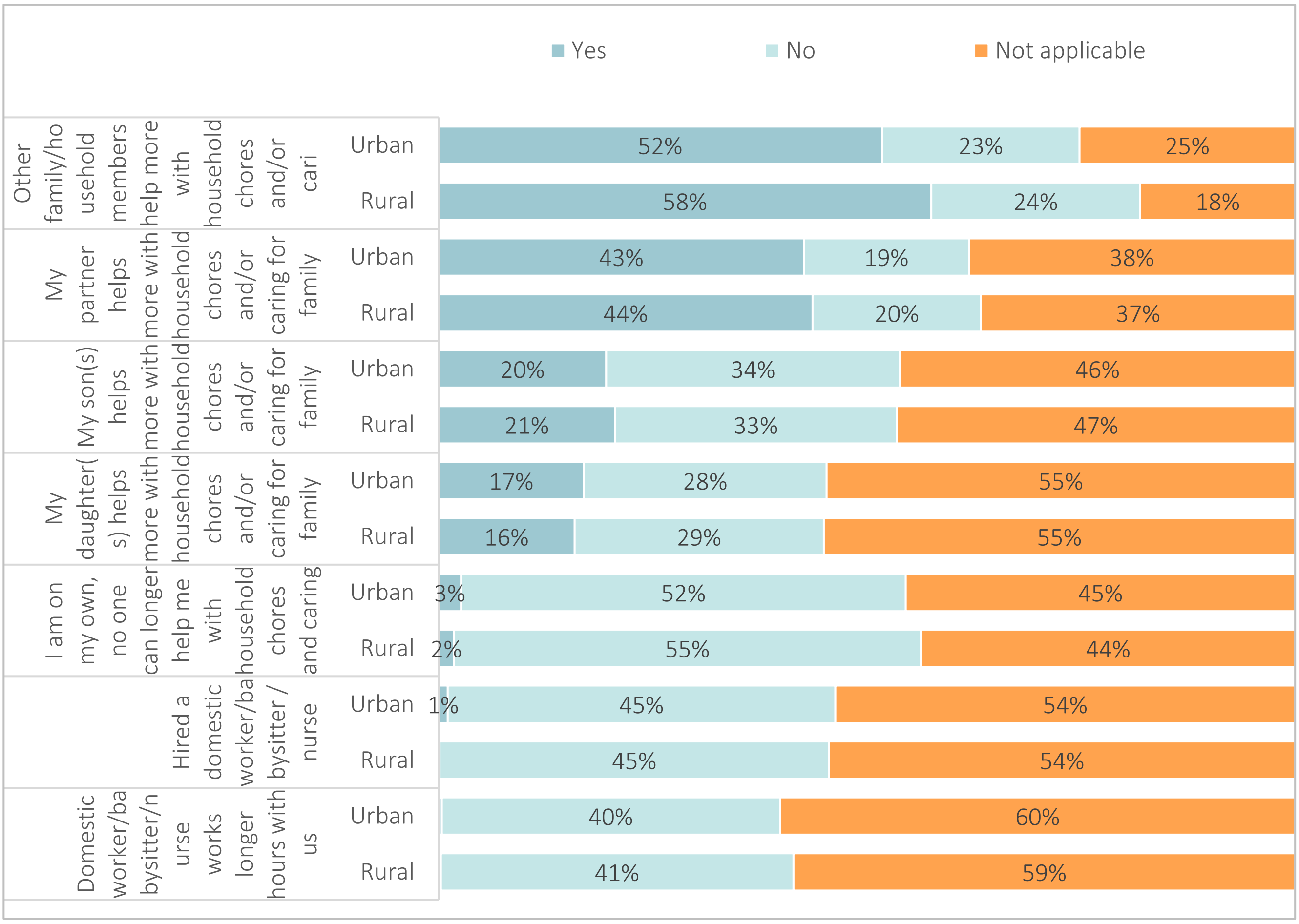
Data results from March 2021 also show that significantly more men received additional support from other household members (60%), partners (57%), sons (23%) and daughters (18%) when compared to women (51%, 30%, 18% and 14% respectively).

Figure 105 Effects of COVID-19 on roles and responsibilities within the household, by gender



Disaggregated data by urbanity suggests that rural respondents were marginally more likely to have received additional support by other household members, partners, sons or daughters when compared to urban ones.

Figure 106 Effects of COVID-19 on roles and responsibilities within the household, by urbanity

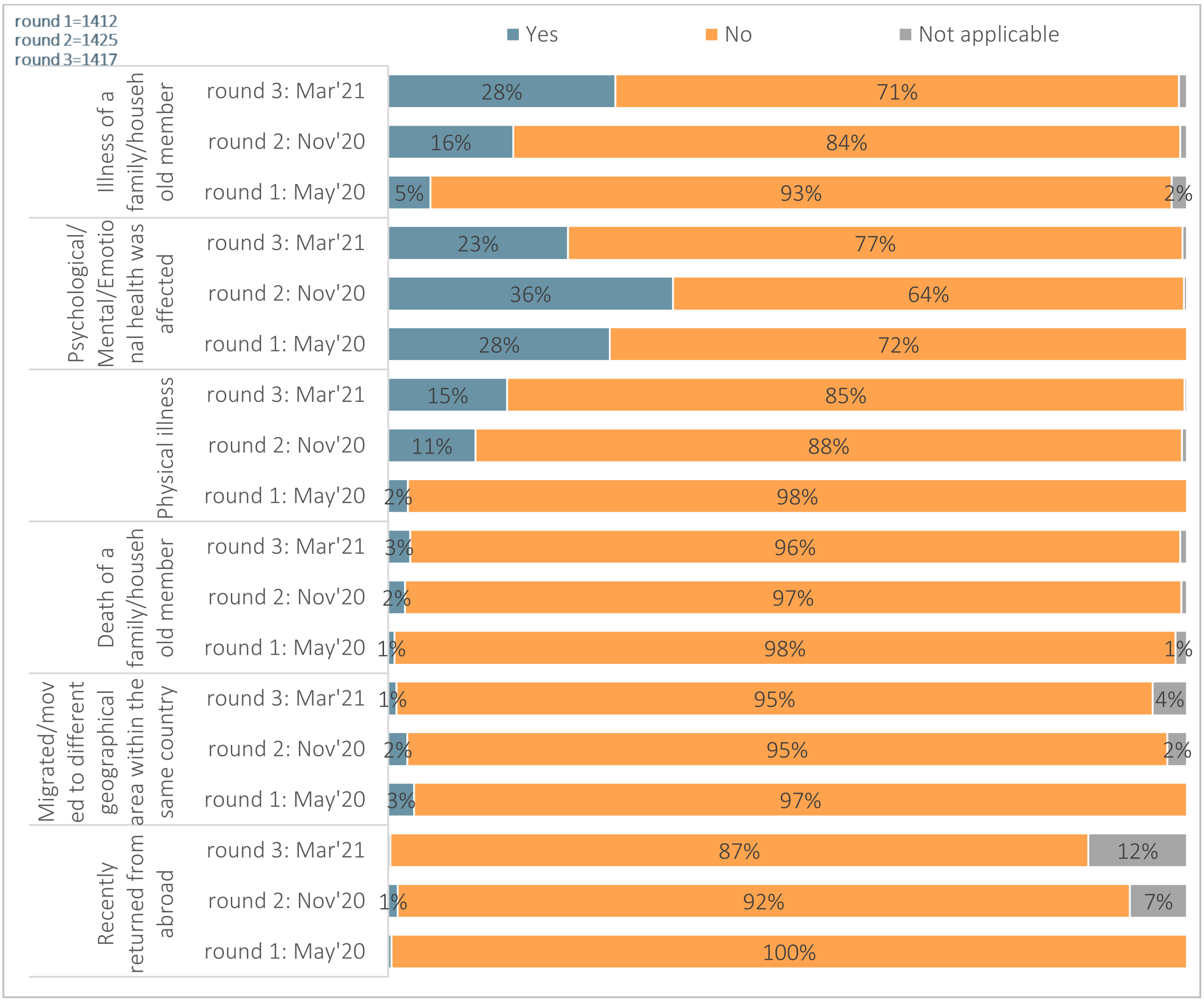


3.1.6 Access to Basic Services and Safety

Access to basic services and safety in times of the COVID-19 pandemic can be challenging, therefore it is important to identify shortcomings and problems, such as effects on physical and psychological health, people in Kosovo may face in order to develop informed response mechanisms.

In March 2021, fewer respondents declared that their psychological or mental health was affected (23%) when compared to round 2 (36%) or round 1 (28%). Conversely, more respondents declared to have witnessed the illness of a family or household member in March 2021 (28%) compared to November (16%) and May 2020 (5%). Physical illness was also experienced by more respondents (15%) when comparing to the previous rounds of the assessment (round 2, 11% and round 1, 2%). Witnessing the death of a household member remained rare (3%) similar to the previous data results. Also, few declared to have migrated to a different geographical area within Kosovo and none reported to have recently returned from abroad.

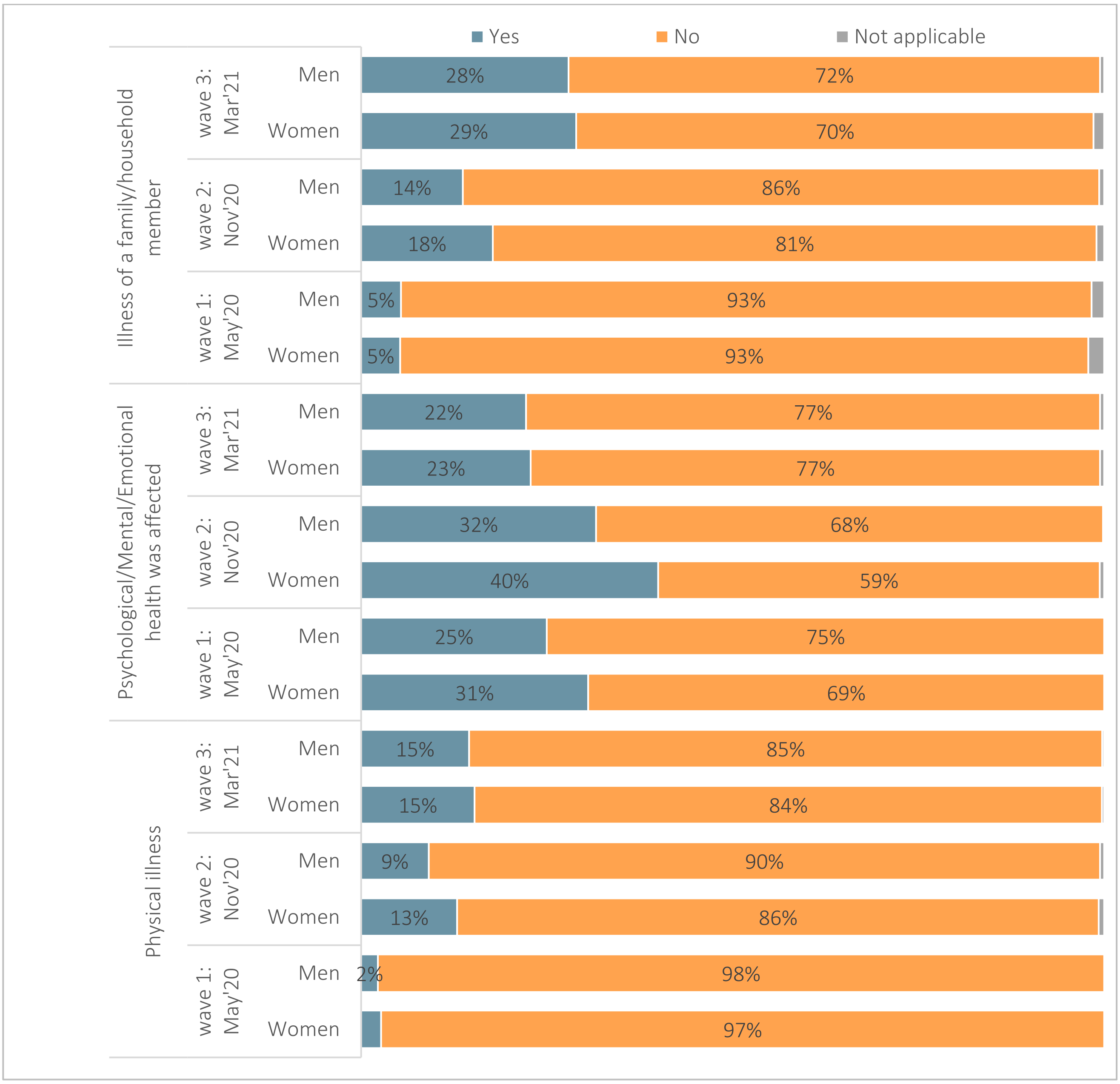
Figure 107 As a result of COVID-19, did you personally experience any of the following, by round



In March 2021, nearly one third of both women and men witnessed a family member becoming ill (29% and 28% respectively), while 15% experienced physical illness themselves.

Comparative data results between the three rounds show that more women reported effects on their psychological health in May (31%) and November 2020 (40%), than men (25% and 31% respectively). However, in March 2021, data results were similar for both women and men with 23% and 22% respectively that felt that their psychological or mental health was affected. No significant differences between the experiences of women and men were noticed regarding matters such as the death of a family member, migration, or returning from abroad.

Figure 108 As a result of COVID-19, did you personally experience any of the following, by gender and round

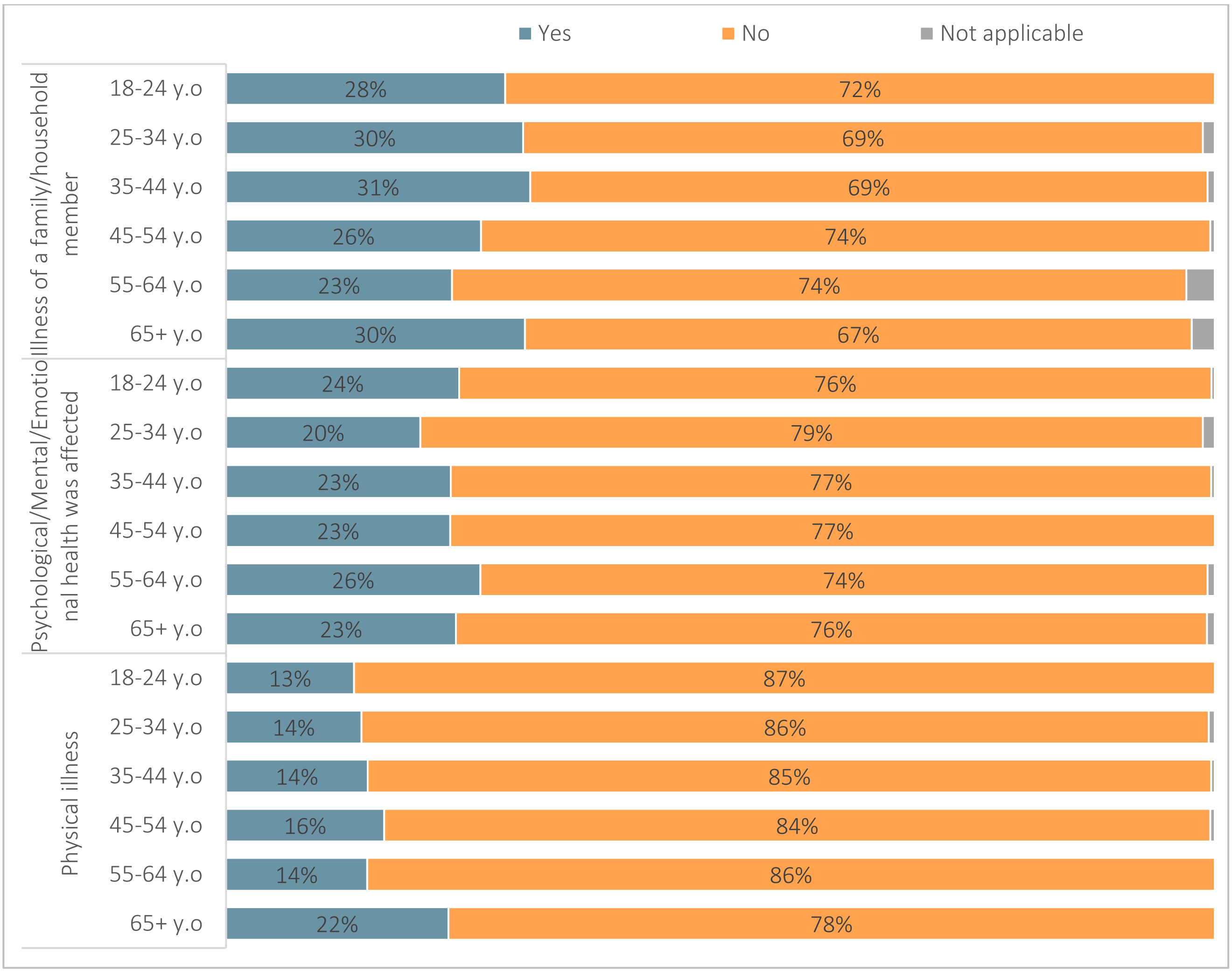


Data results disaggregated by age groups reveal that respondents that were 65 years or older were more prone to have experienced physical illness (22%) than those belonging to younger age groups. Around one third of nearly all age groups have witnessed the illness of another household member.

Respondents between the age of 55 and 64 years old slightly more commonly felt that their psychological or mental health was affected (26%), when compared to the other age groups. The age group 25 to 34 years old revealed the smallest ratio of respondents that felt that their psychological or mental health was affected (20%).

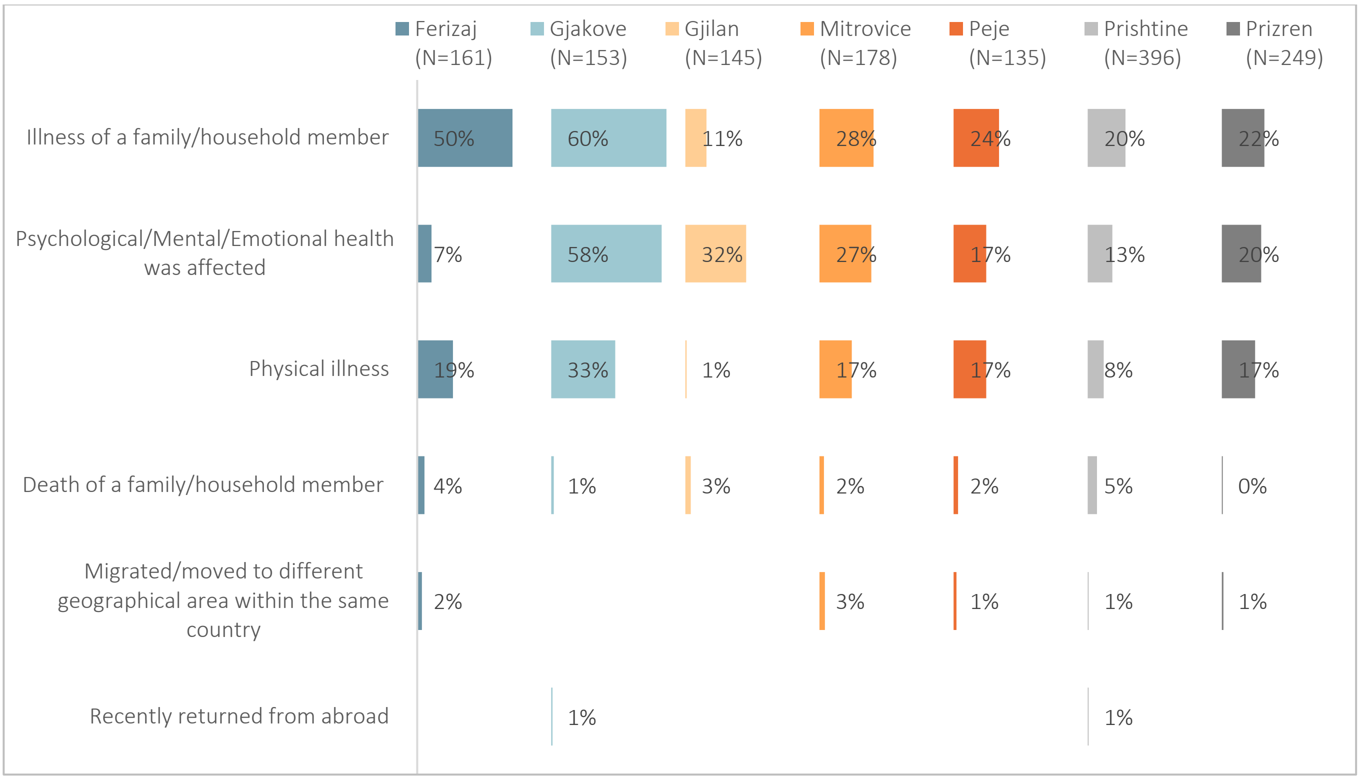
No significant differences between the experiences of different age groups were noticed regarding matters such as the death of a family member, migration, or returning from abroad.

Figure 109 As a result of COVID-19, did you personally experience any of the following, by age



Regional data results on the other hand unveiled some significant differences. Illness of a family member or personal physical illness was more commonly reported in Gjakovë/Đakovica (60% and 33% respectively) and Ferizaj/Uroševac (50% and 19% respectively) when compared to the other regions of Kosovo. Gjakovë/Đakovica also stood out with a more than half of respondents that reported that their psychological or mental health was affected (58%). Nearly one third of respondents from Gjilan/Gnjilane and Mitrovicë/Mitrovica also reported effects on the psychological or mental health (32% and 27% respectively).

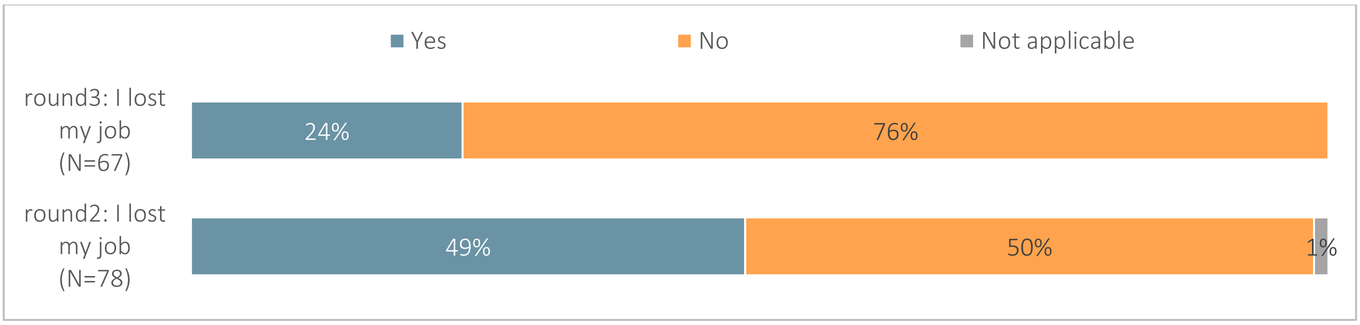
Figure 110 As a result of COVID-19, did you personally experience any of the following, by region



**only shown "yes" category*

In November 2020, 49% of those that had lost their job reported that their psychological or mental health was affected. In March 2021, around one in four respondents that had lost their work reported effects on their psychological or mental health (24%), that portrays a decrease of 25 pp.

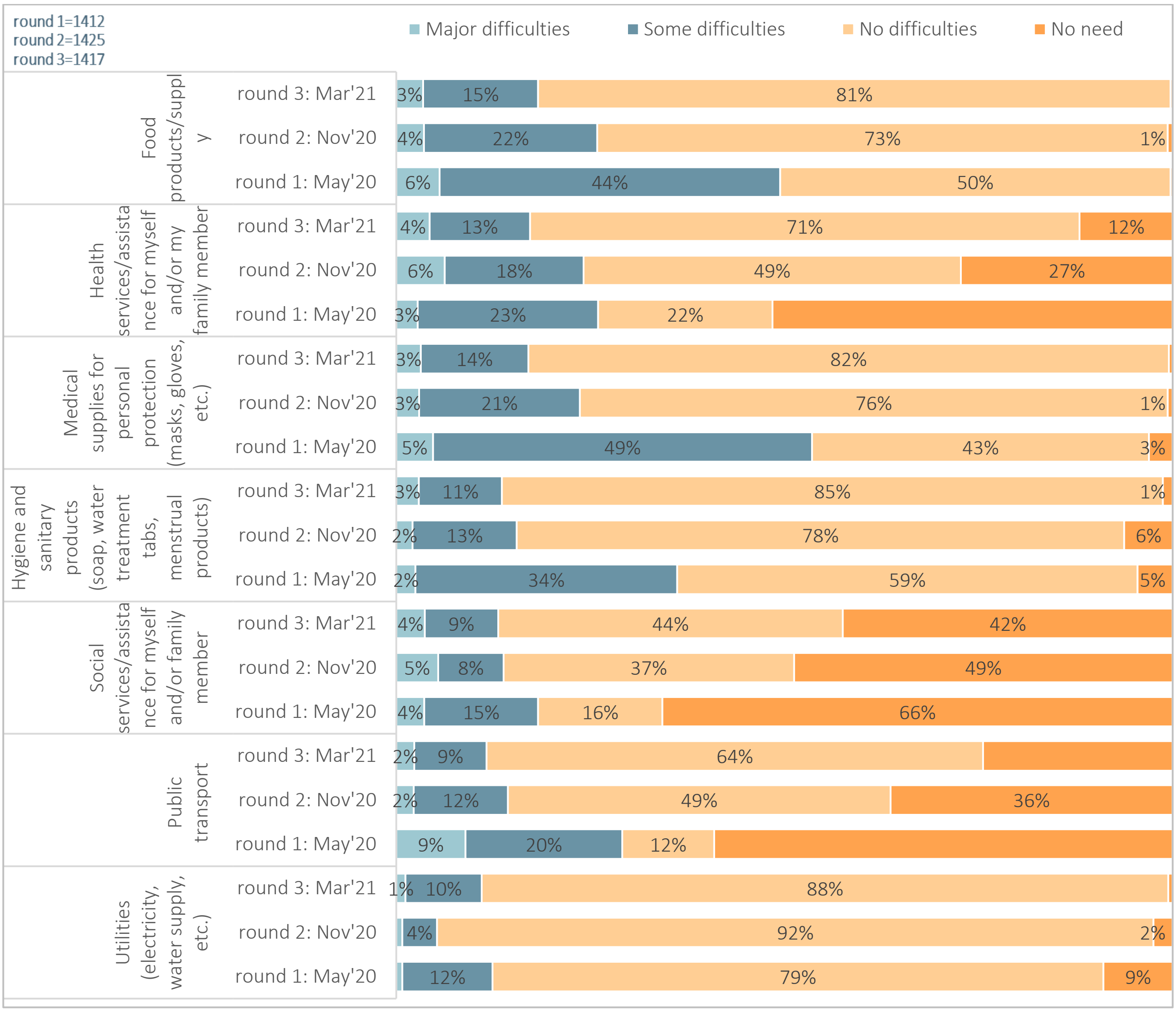
Figure 111 Respondents that lost their jobs and reported effects on their psychological or mental health



Comparative data between May 2020 and March 2021 overall indicate that fewer respondents had difficulties in accessing social and health services, public transportation and basic health products.

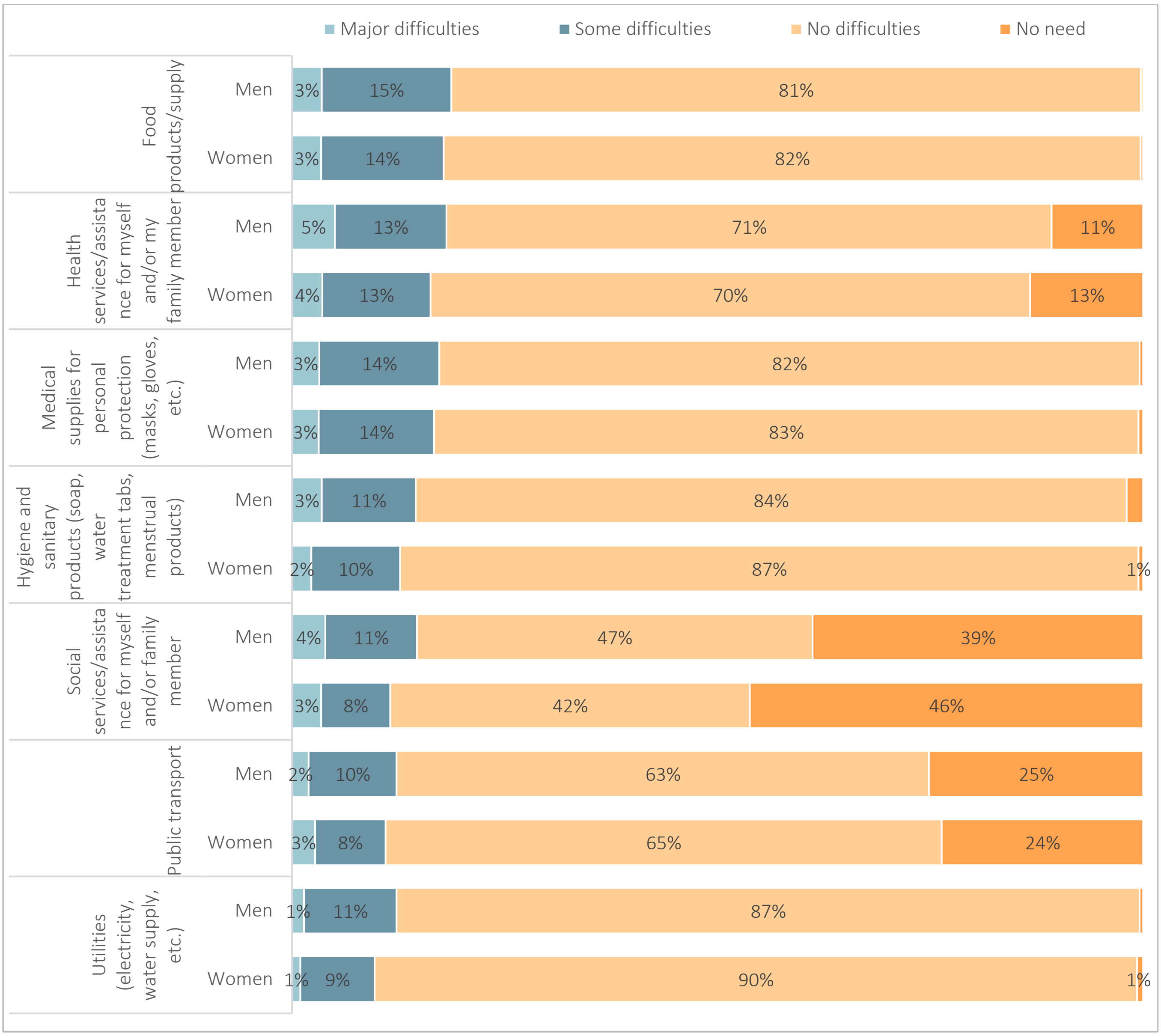
However, despite these positive trends it should not be disregarded that still 18% of respondents experienced major or some difficulties in accessing food products, and 17% reported the same regarding health services or medical supplies. Another 15% experienced difficulties in accessing hygiene and sanitary products and 13% experienced difficulties with social services. More respondents had major or some difficulties regarding utilities such as water and electricity supply in March 2021 (11%) than in November 2020 (5%).

Figure 112 Personal experience with difficulties in accessing basic services, by round



Overall, when analysing the personal experiences of respondents with accessing basic services, no significant differences were observed when comparing the results for women and men.

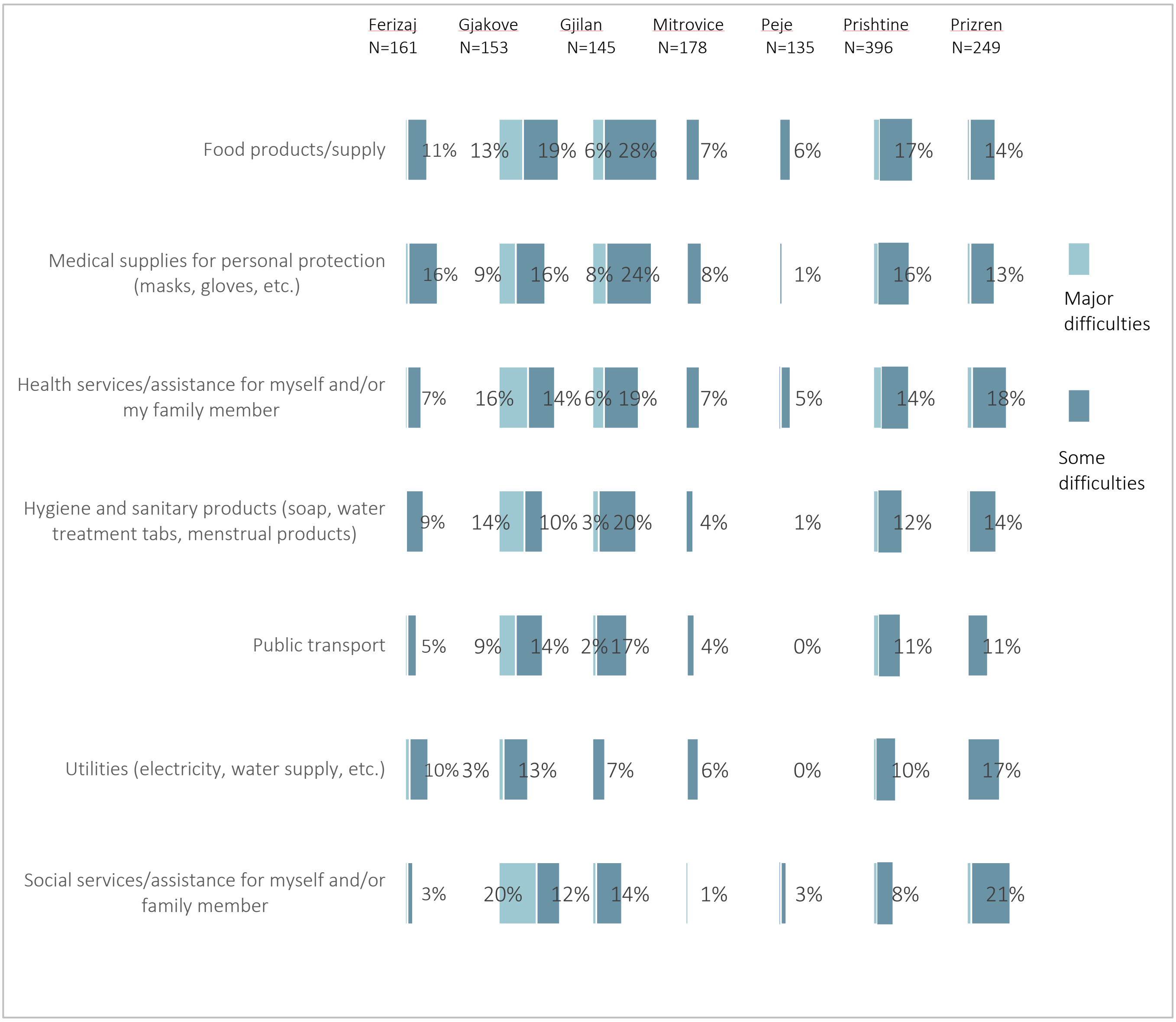
Figure 113 Personal experience with difficulties in accessing basic services, gender



When assessing access to basic services in March 2021 by different regions, data results show that respondents from Gjakovë/Đakovica and Gjilan/Gnjilane seem to have difficulties more commonly than respondents residing in other regions.

Around one third of Gjakovë/Đakovica and Gjilan/Gnjilane respondents had some or major difficulties in accessing food products (32% and 34% respectively), similar results can be observed in regard to medical supplies and health services. Around one in four respondents from these two regions also experienced difficulties in acquiring hygiene and sanitary products. Gjakovë/Đakovica further stood out with nearly one third that had difficulties with accessing social services (32%). Also 21% of respondents from Prizren reported difficulties with accessing social services. Respondents residing in Pejë/Peć or Mitrovicë/Mitrovica were least likely to have experienced difficulties in accessing basic services.

Figure 114 Personal experience with difficulties in accessing basic services, by region



Respondents that earned between zero and 249 Euro, as well as those that earn between 250 to 399 Euro, more commonly reported difficulties in accessing basic services than those earning above 400 Euro.

Figure 115 Personal experience with difficulties in accessing basic services, by personal income (1/2)

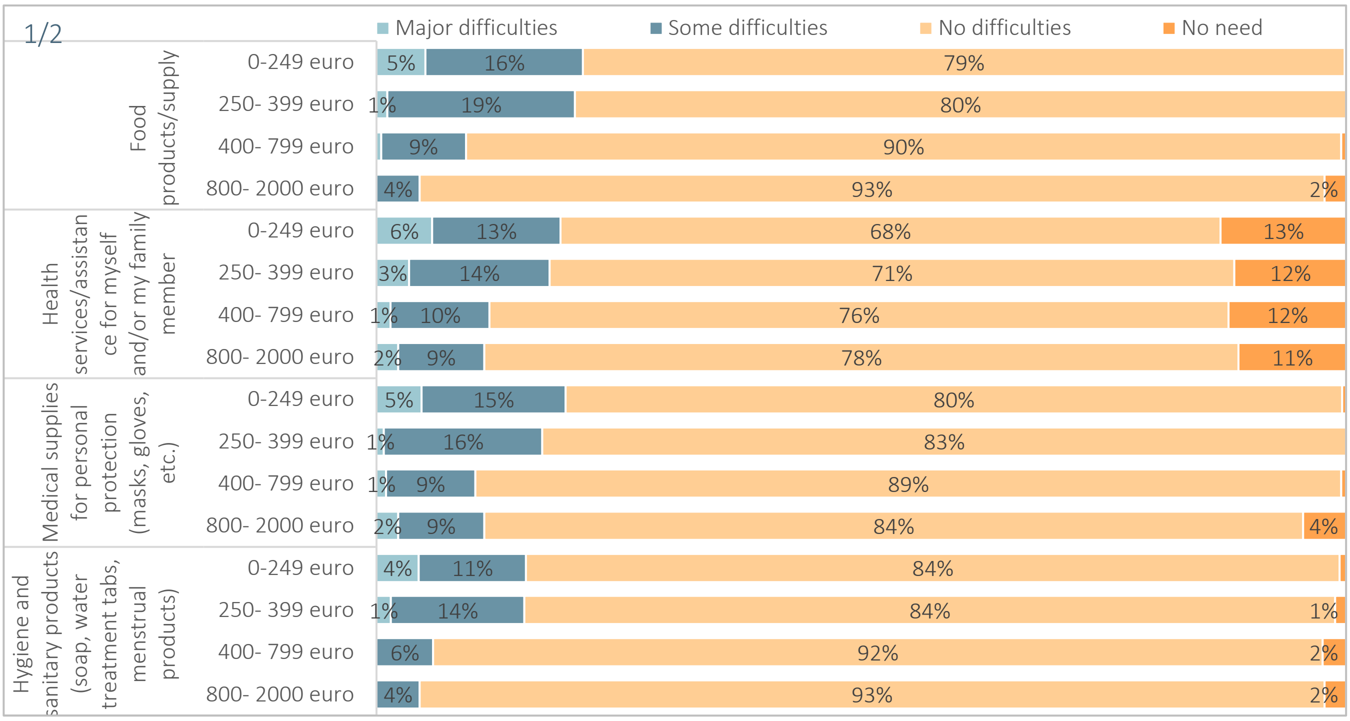
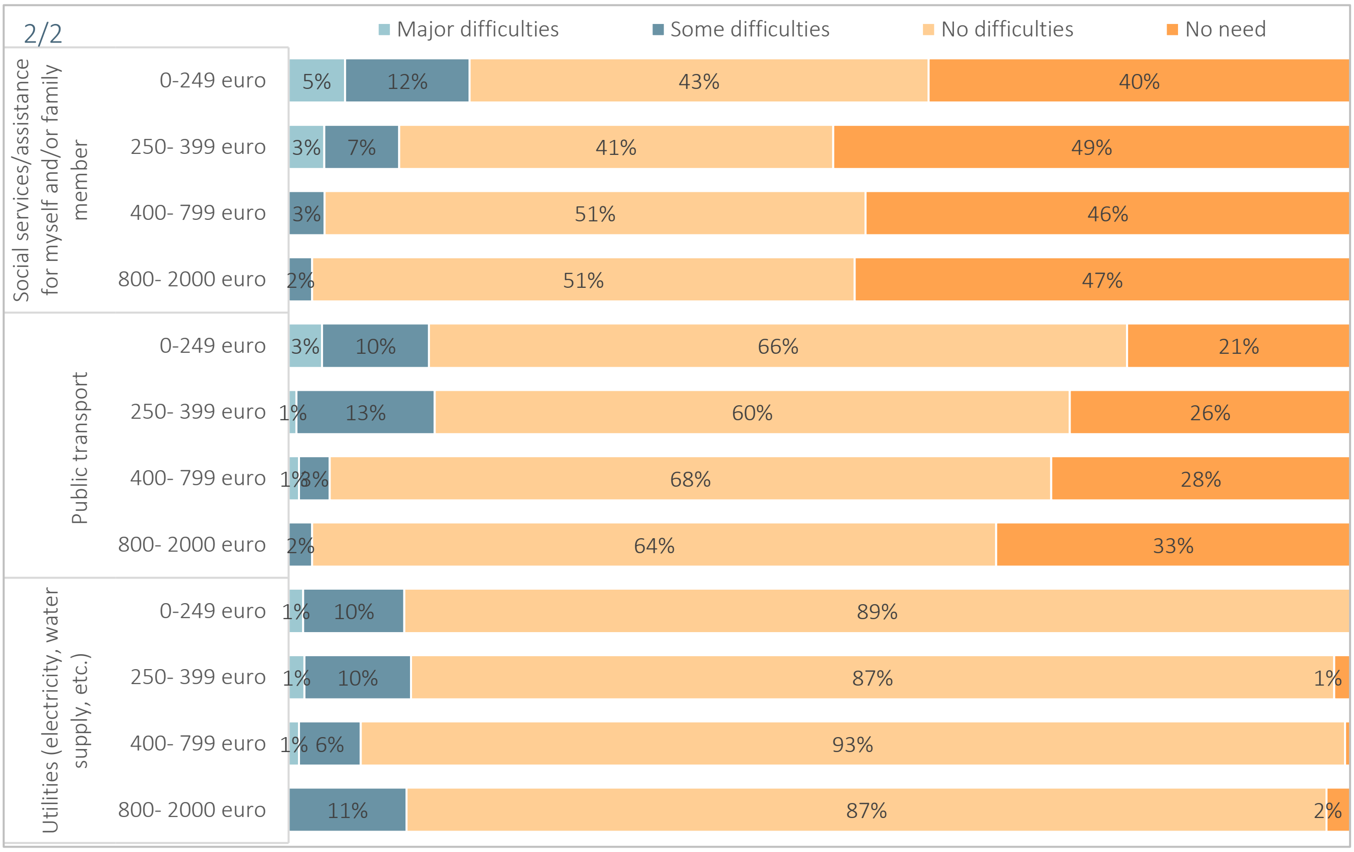
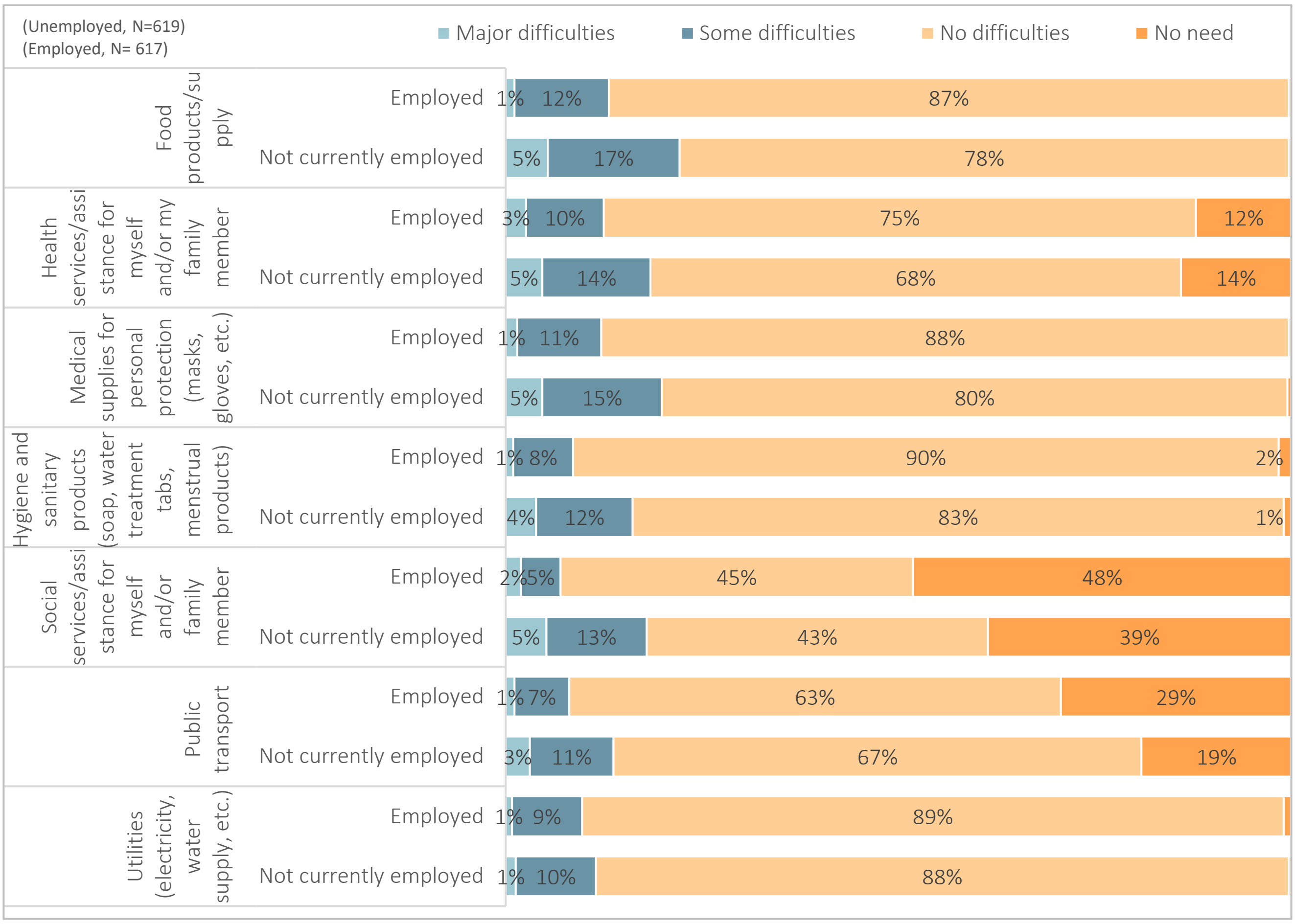


Figure 116 Personal experience with difficulties in accessing basic services, by personal income level (1/2)



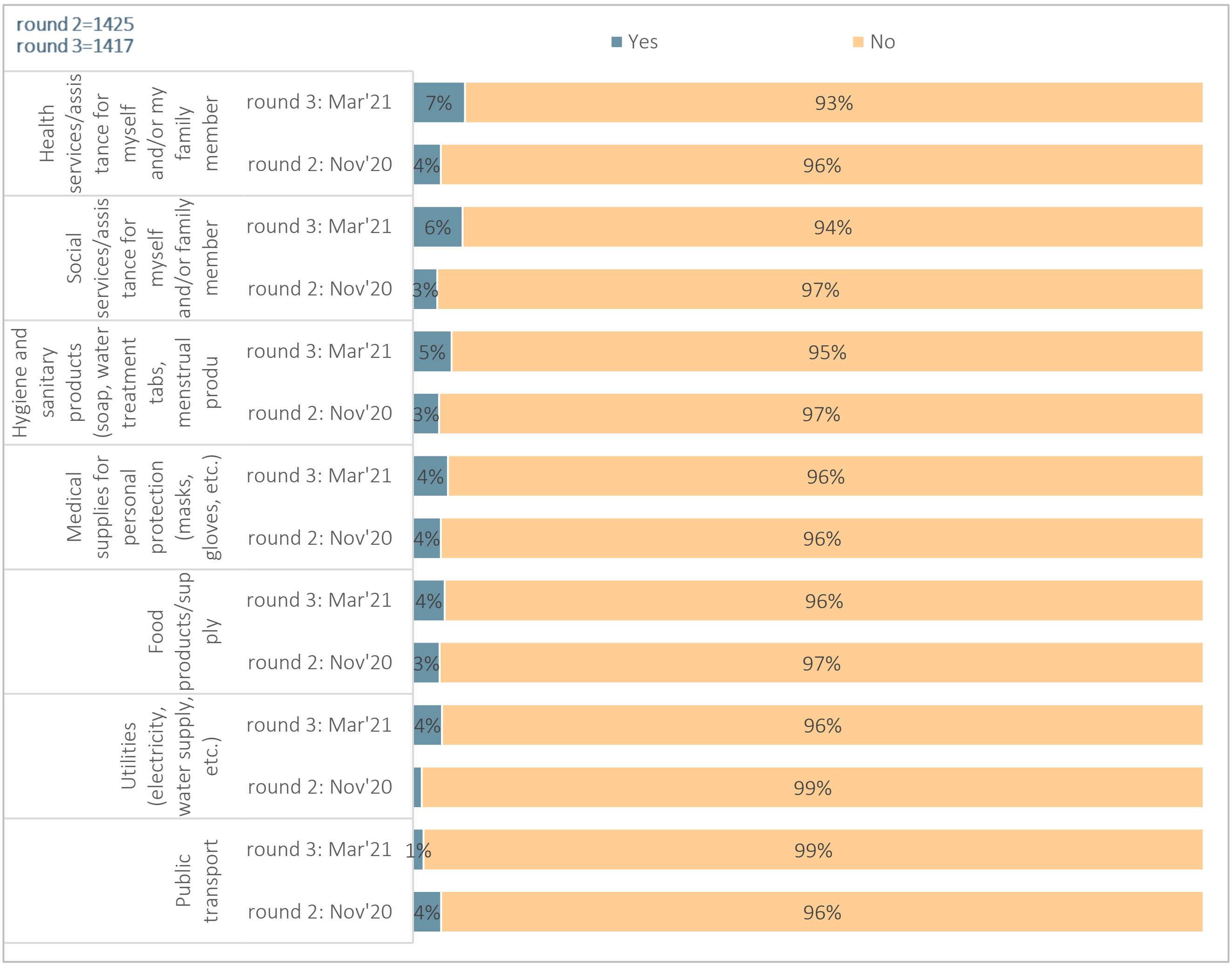
Data also show that unemployed respondents struggled more commonly with difficulties in accessing basic services than respondents that had a job at the time of interview in March 2021.

Figure 117 Personal experience with difficulties in accessing basic services, by employment



Requests for favours or bribes in return for accessing basic services as a result of the COVID-19 situation was slightly more common in March 2021, when compared to November 2020. Around 7% reported to have personally experienced a request for favour or bribes to access health services (increase of 3pp), 6% experienced these types of requests when accessing social services (increase of 3 pp) and 5% were asked for a favour or bribe when accessing hygiene and sanitary products (increase of 2 pp). Requests for bribes or favours to access food products or utilities stood at 4%, while public transport was the only service were fewer respondents experienced being asked for a favour or bribe than in November 2020 (1%, decrease of 3 pp)[29].

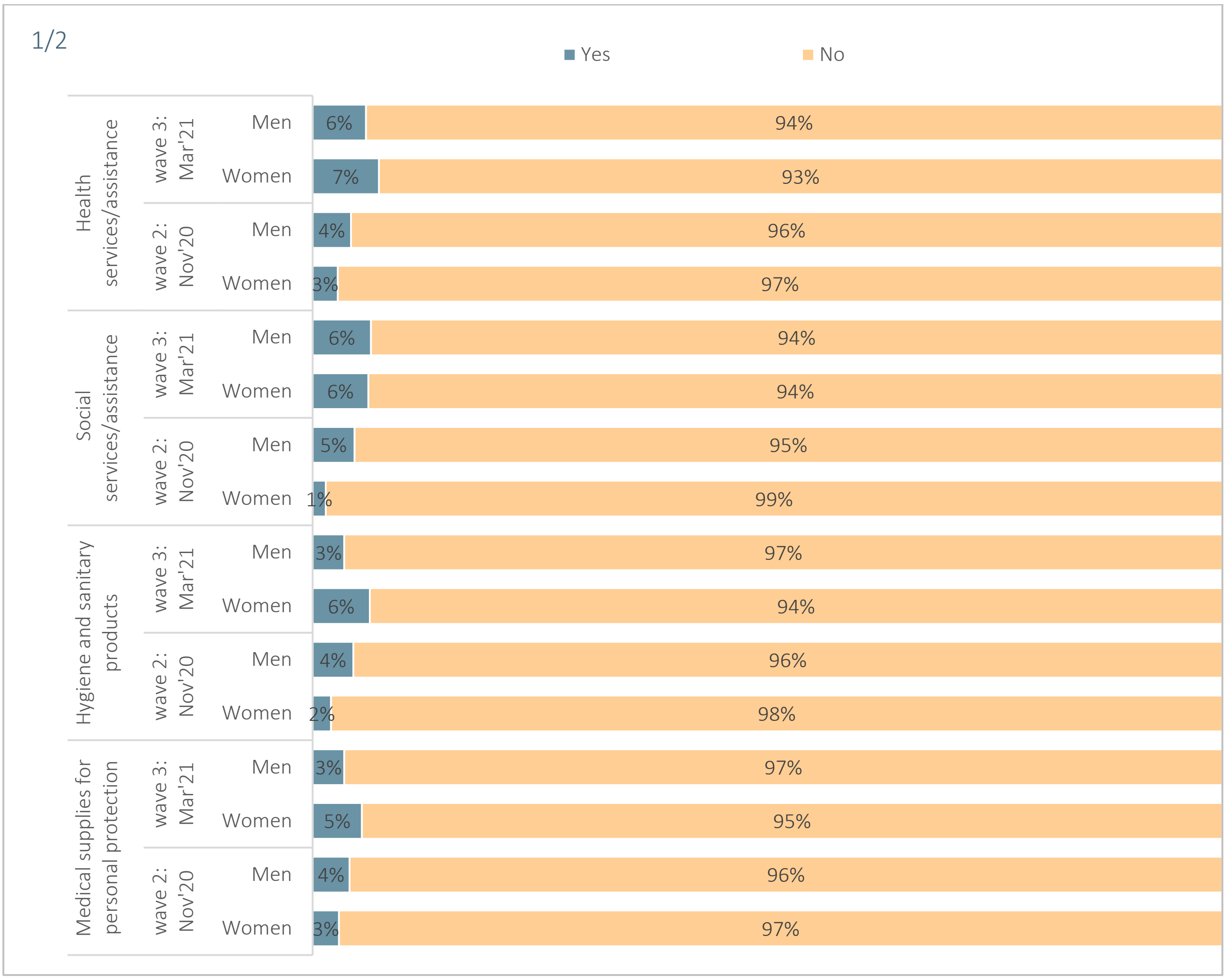
Figure 118 Experienced personally requests for favours or bribes for accessing basic services, by round



[29] *This question was newly added to the survey questionnaire during round 2 and is therefore not compared to round 1.*

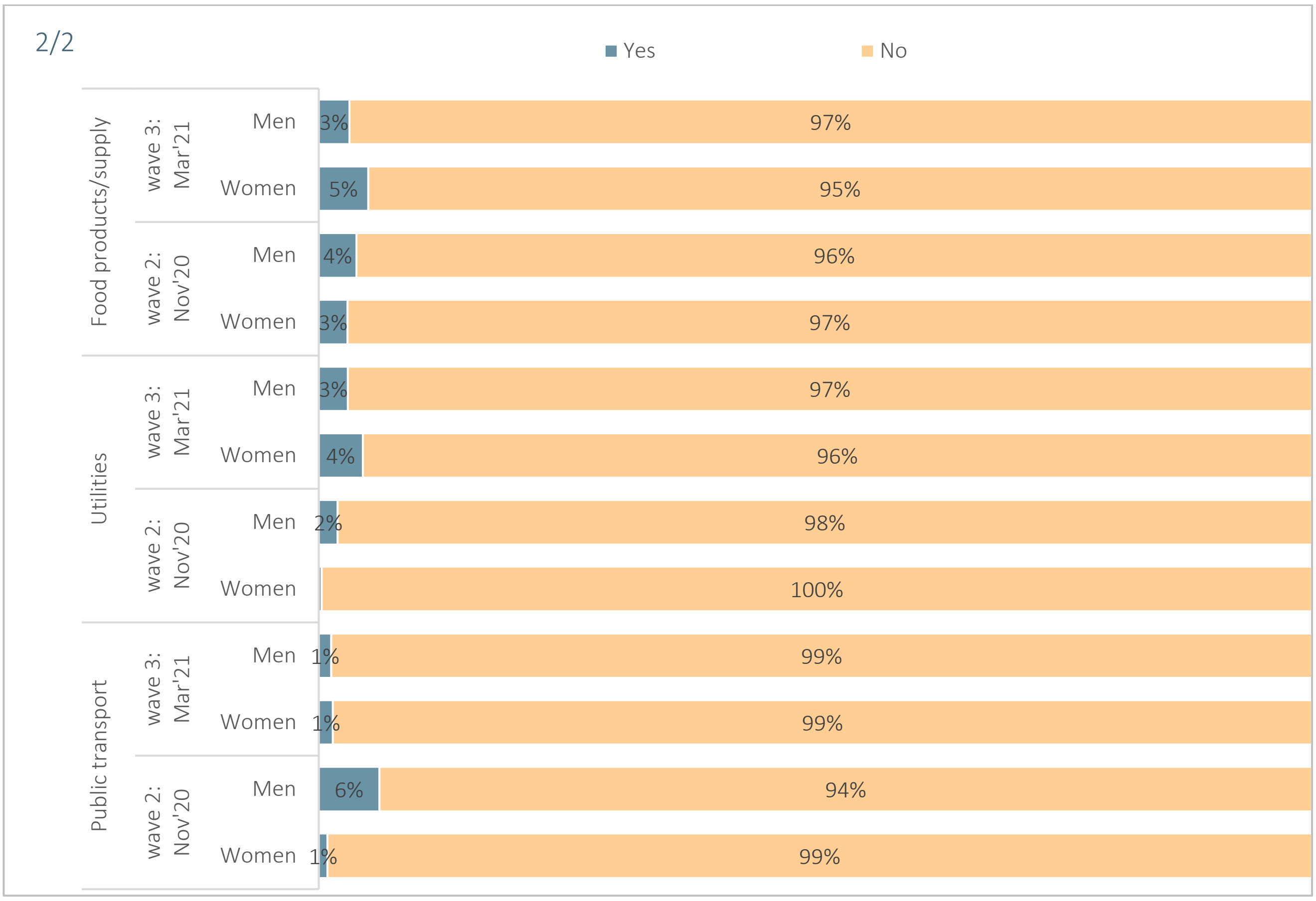
Disaggregated data by gender shows that while women were less likely to be asked for favours or bribes in November 2020, in March 2021 more women experienced such requests than men. Around 7% of women were asked for a favour or bribe to access health services (increase of 4pp compared to round 2), 6% made such experience when accessing social services or hygiene and sanitary products (increase of 5 pp and 4 pp respectively), and 5% were asked for a favour or bribe in return for access to medical supplies (increase of 2 pp).

Figure 119 Experienced personally requests for favours or bribes for accessing basic services, by gender (1/2)



Similar results can also be observed in regard to access to food products (5%, increase of 2 pp) and utilities (4%, increase of 4pp), while only 1% of women were asked for a favour or bribe in order to access public transport services.

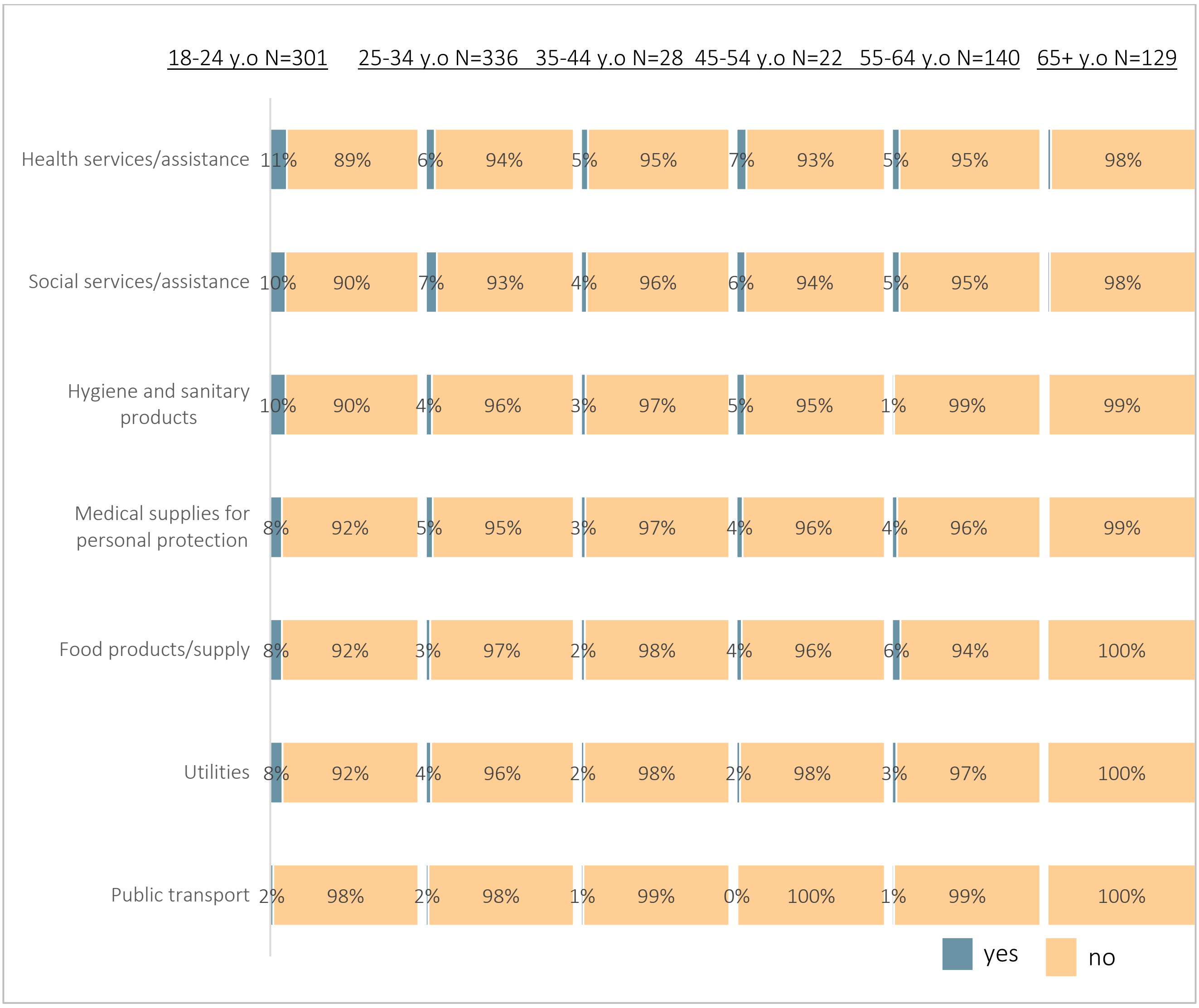
Figure 120 Experienced personally requests for favours or bribes for accessing basic services, by gender (2/2)



The younger the respondent, the more likely that she/he made an experience where a favour or bribe was requested. Around 10% of 18 to 24-year-old respondents experienced a request for a bribe or favour when accessing health or social services, as well as when accessing hygiene and sanitary products.

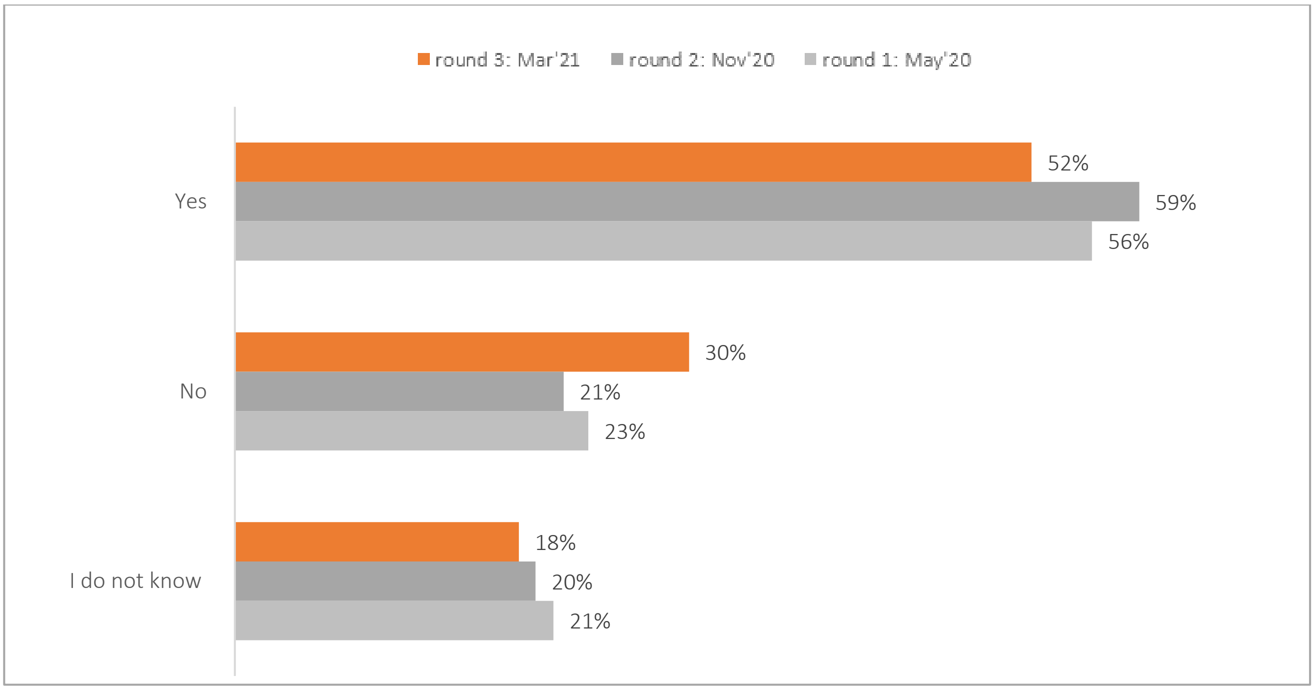
In comparison, only between 3% and 7% of other age groups made such experiences. Respondents that were 65 years or older were least likely to be asked for a bribe in order to access basic services.

Figure 121 Experienced personally requests for favours or bribes for accessing basic services, by age



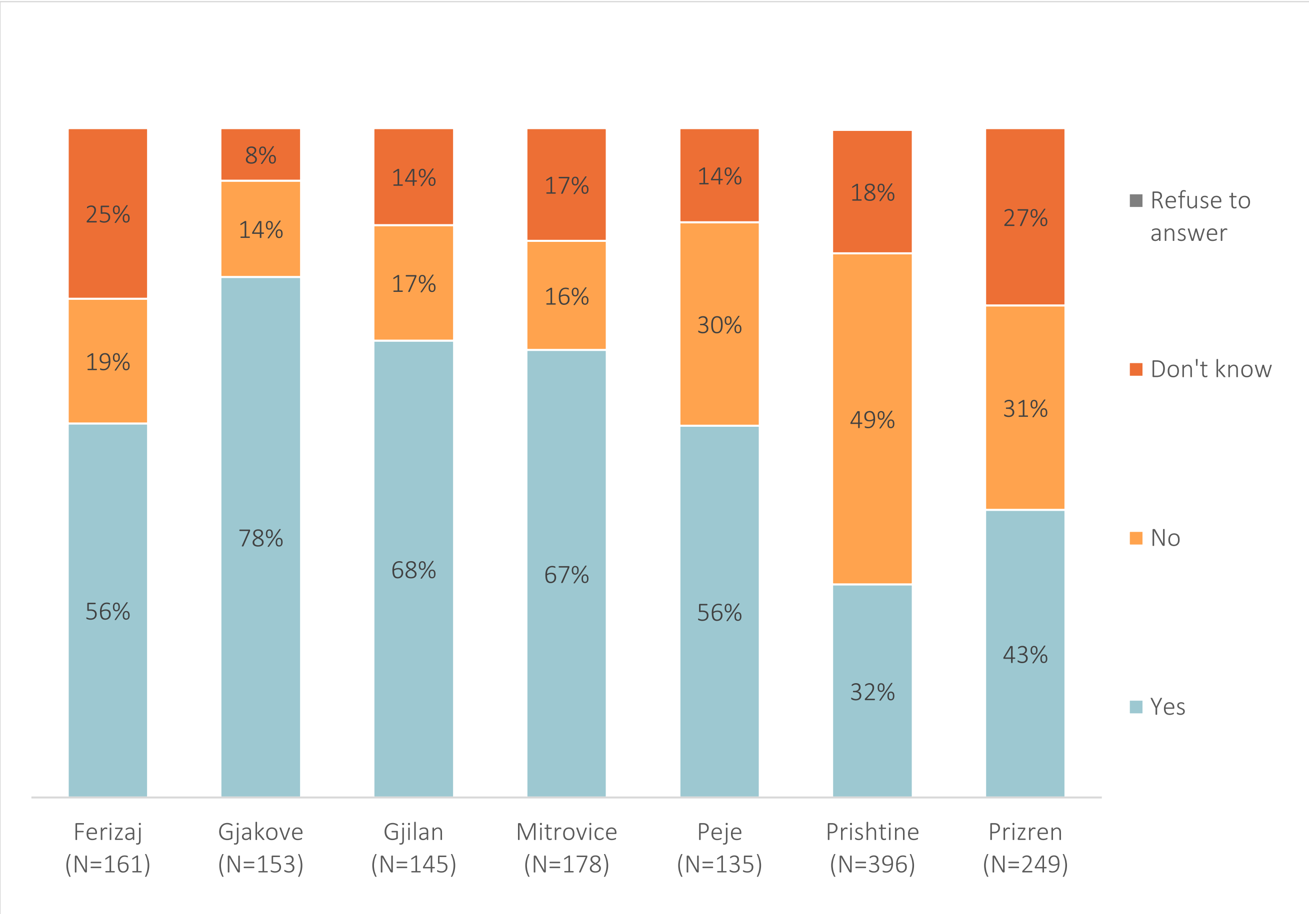
The increase of domestic violence since the spread of COVID-19 has been a severe issue all over the world. In March 2021, more than half of the respondents felt that domestic violence has increased since the onset of the pandemic (52%). However, on a positive note, compared to the data results of the previous two rounds of the assessment this portrays a slight decrease of 7 pp compared to November 2020 and a decrease of 4 pp compared to May 2020.

Figure 122 Perceived increase of domestic violence since the spread of COVID-19, by round



Perception of increased domestic violence were especially high in Gjakovë/Đakovica, Gjilan/Gnjilane and Mitrovicë/Mitrovica (78%, 68% and 67% respectively). Conversely, in the region of Prishtinë/Priština less than one third felt that domestic violence had increased (32%).

Figure 123 Perceived increase of domestic violence since the spread of COVID-19, by region

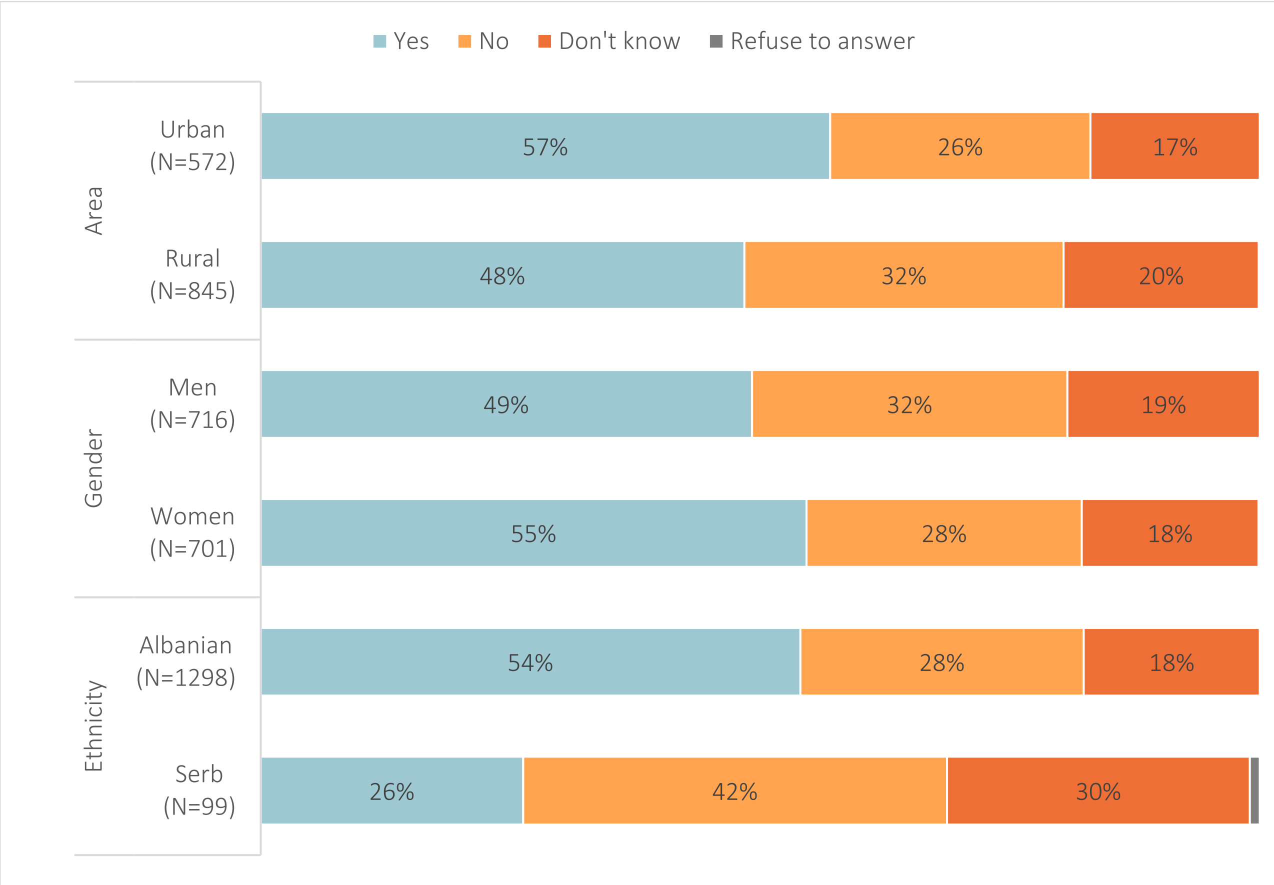


Taking a closer look at further disaggregation by urbanity, gender and ethnicity shows that especially respondents that resided in urban areas felt that domestic violence has increased since the spread of COVID-19 (57%).

K Albanian respondents were significantly more likely to believe that domestic violence increased (54%) compared to K Serbs (26%). Here it should be noted that nearly one in three K Serbs did not provide an answer to this question (30%).

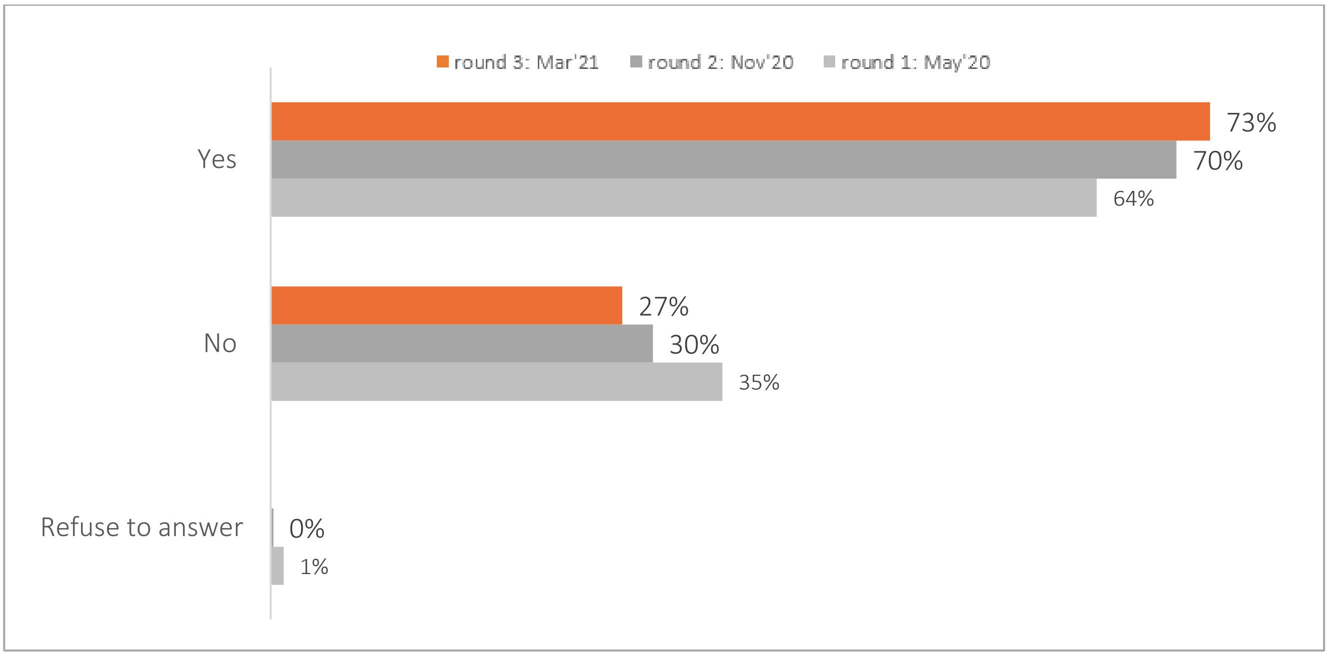
Furthermore, more women perceived that domestic violence has increased (55%) when compared to men (49%).

Figure 124 Perceived increase of domestic violence since the spread of COVID-19, by urbanity, gender and ethnicity



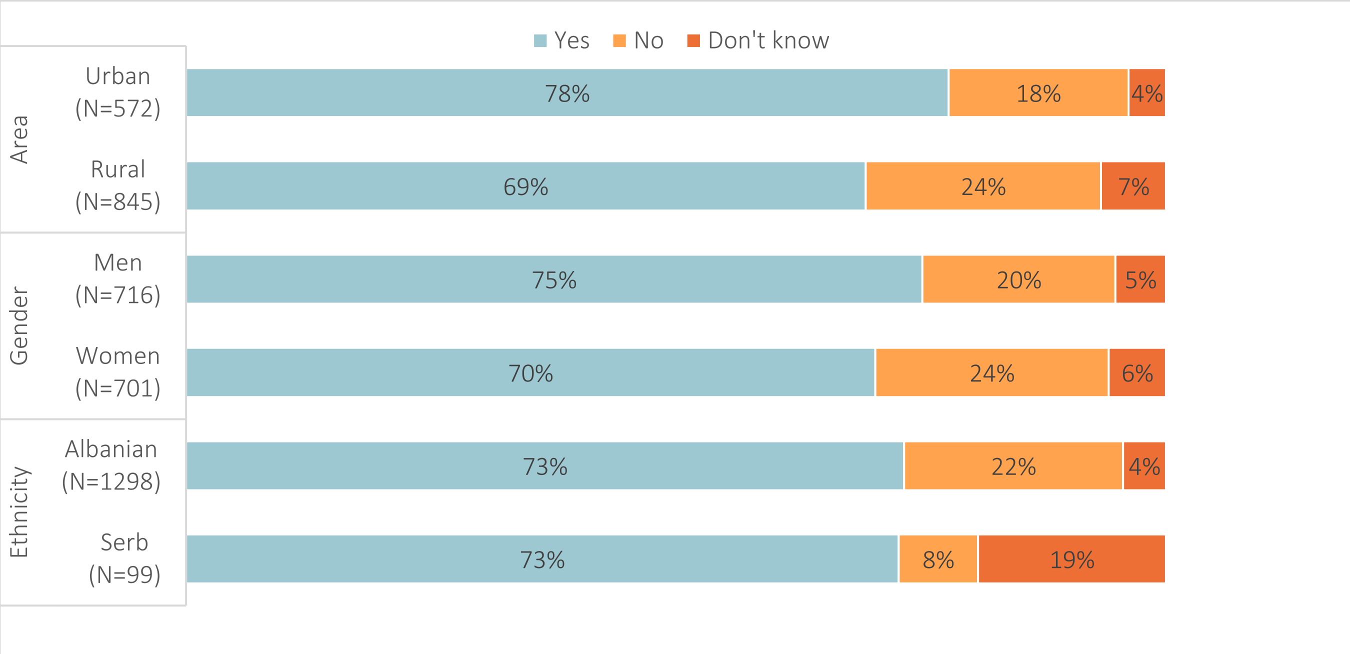
On a positive note, slightly more respondents reported to know where to seek help and support in case of domestic violence in March 2021 (73%) than in November 2020 (70%) or compared to the first round of the assessment in May 2020 (64%). Nonetheless, it remains concerning that nearly one third did not know where to seek help in such cases (27%).

Figure 125 Knowledge where to seek help and support in case of someone experiencing domestic violence such as hotlines, psychological and police support, by round



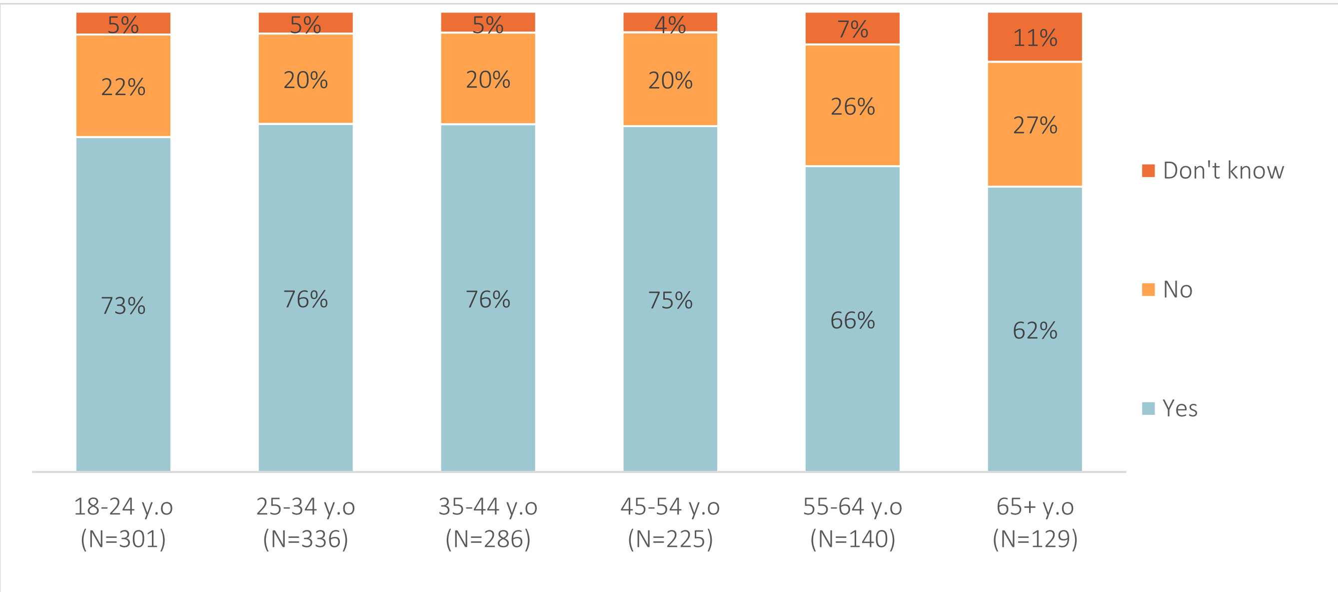
Data results further show that K Albanians and K Serbs appeared to be equally well informed with 73% each that declared to know where to seek help and support in cases of domestic violence. Respondents that reside in urban areas (78%) as well as men (75%) were more knowledgeable in this regard when compared to respondents residing in rural areas (69%) or compared to women (70%). Overall, 30% of women did not know where to seek help (no and don't know combined).

Figure 126 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



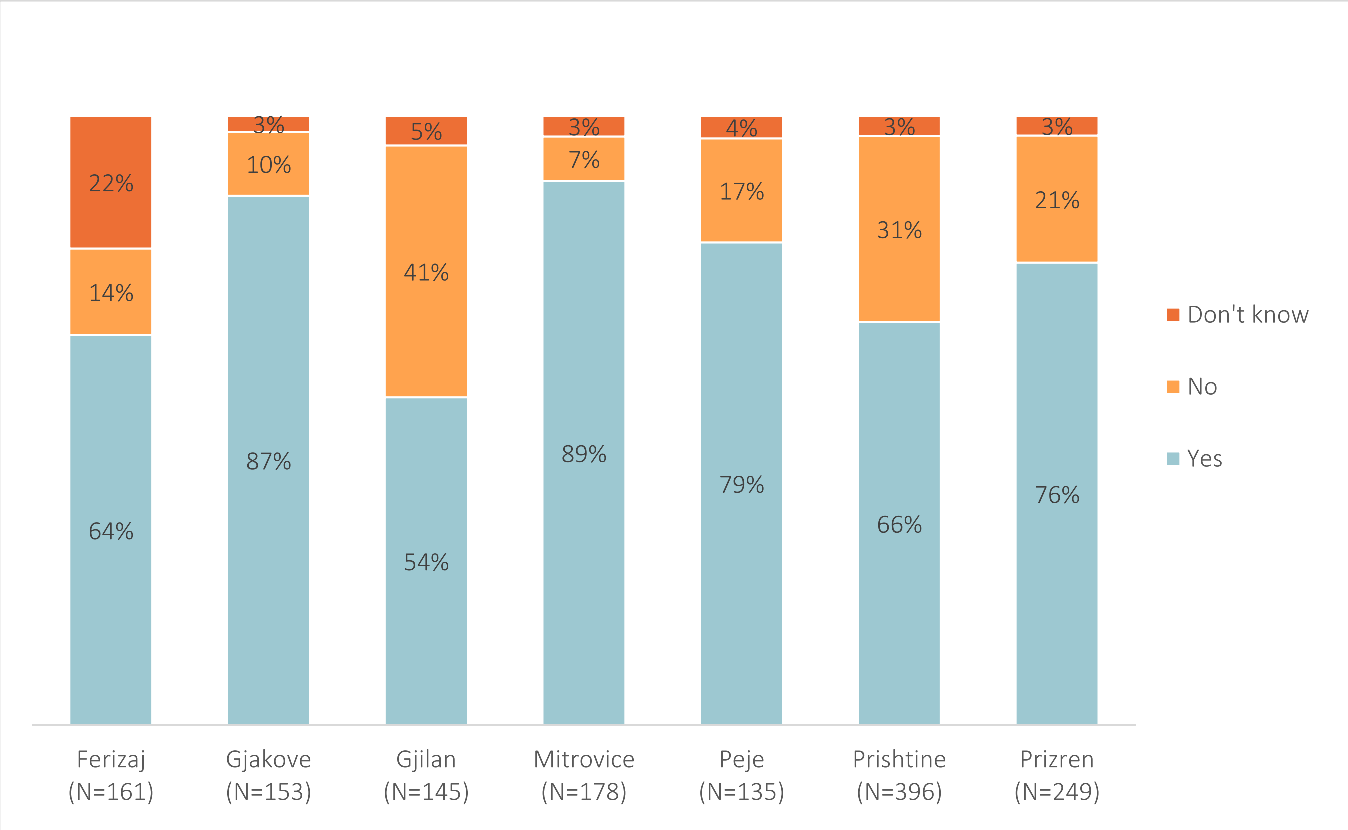
While the majority of younger age groups as well as middle aged respondents appeared equally informed with around 20% lacking knowledge where to seek help, the two oldest age group stood out with 26% and 27% respectively stating not to know where to seek help and support in cases of domestic violence.

Figure 127 Knowledge where to seek help and support in case of someone experiencing domestic violence such as hotlines, psychological and police support, by age



The majority of respondents that resided in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica (89%), Gjakovë/Đakovica (87%) and Pejë/Peć (79%) claimed to be aware where to seek help and support in case of someone experiencing domestic violence. The lowest ratio of informed respondents was observed in Gjilan/Gnjilane (54%) where just over half were aware on where to seek help in such cases.

Figure 128 Knowledge where to seek help and support in case of someone experiencing domestic violence such as hotlines, psychological and police support, by region

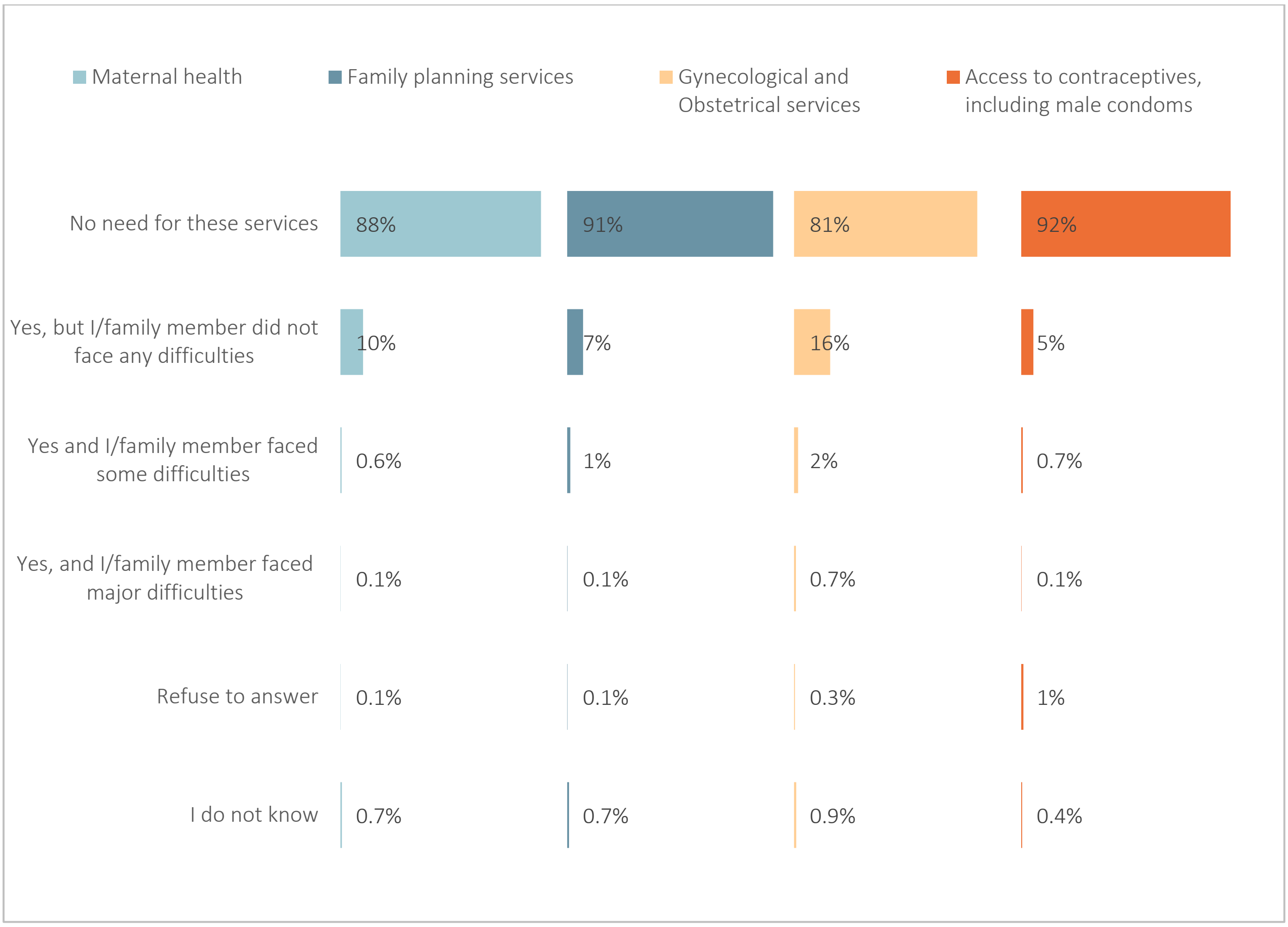


3.1.7 Sexual and Reproductive Health

The respondents that gave consent (N= 702) were also asked about their personal experiences with potential difficulties in accessing sexual and reproductive health services as well as contraceptives for themselves, their partner or other family members.

The majority of respondents declared that they were not in need of such services, while 16% made use of gynecologically and obstetrical services and did not face any difficulties. Another 10% reported to have used maternal health services and also did not face any difficulties. The same applies to 7% that made use of family planning services and 5% that accessed contraceptives.

Figure 129 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

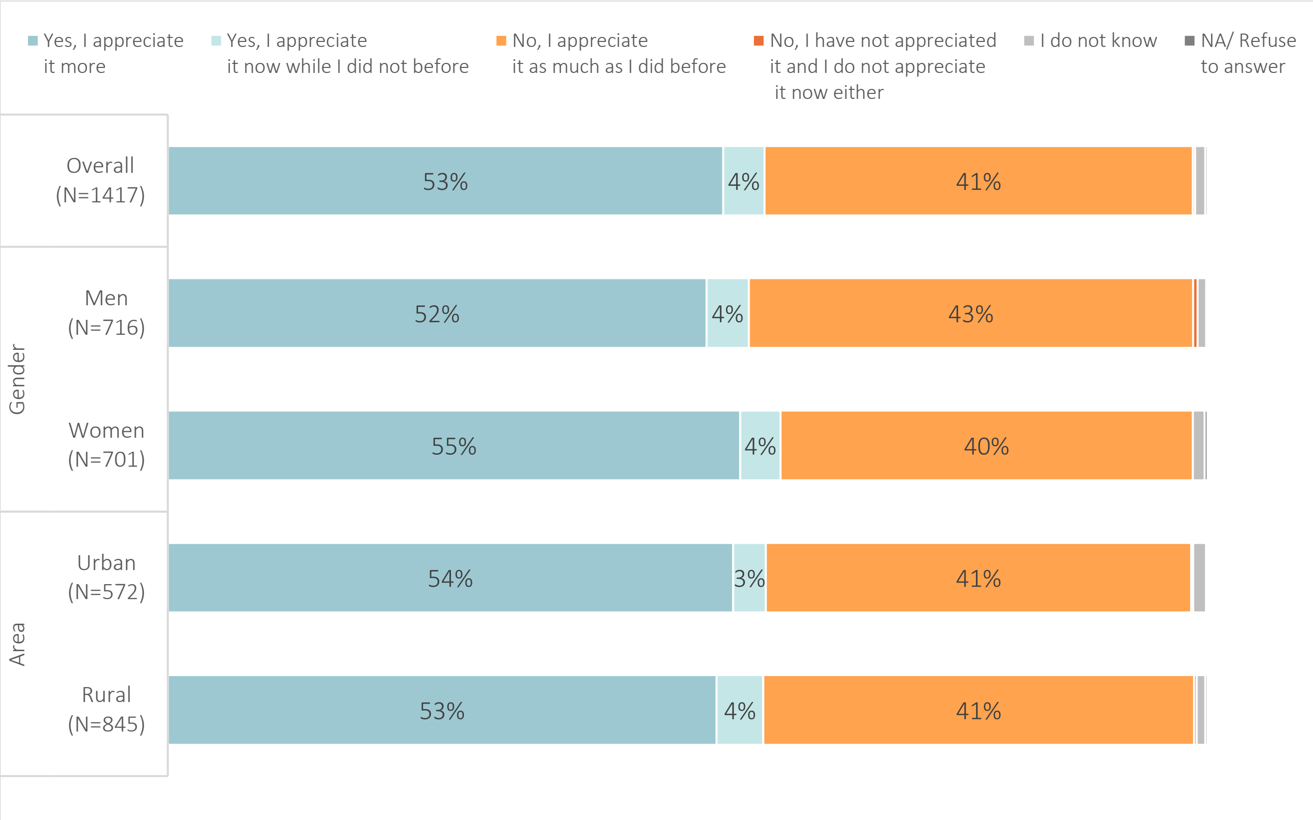


3.1.8 Environment

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic many have spent more time outdoors and in the nature in order to compensate for not being able to engage with many usual social and/or sports activities. Therefore, it was of interest to assess if people in Kosovo appreciate the environment more due to the COVID-19 pandemic[30].

Data show that around half of the respondents said that they appreciated the environment more since the pandemic started (53%), while two in five respondents declared that they appreciate it as much as they did before (41%). Slightly more women stated that they appreciated the environment more (55%) when compared to men (52%). Disaggregated data by urbanity did not show significant differences.

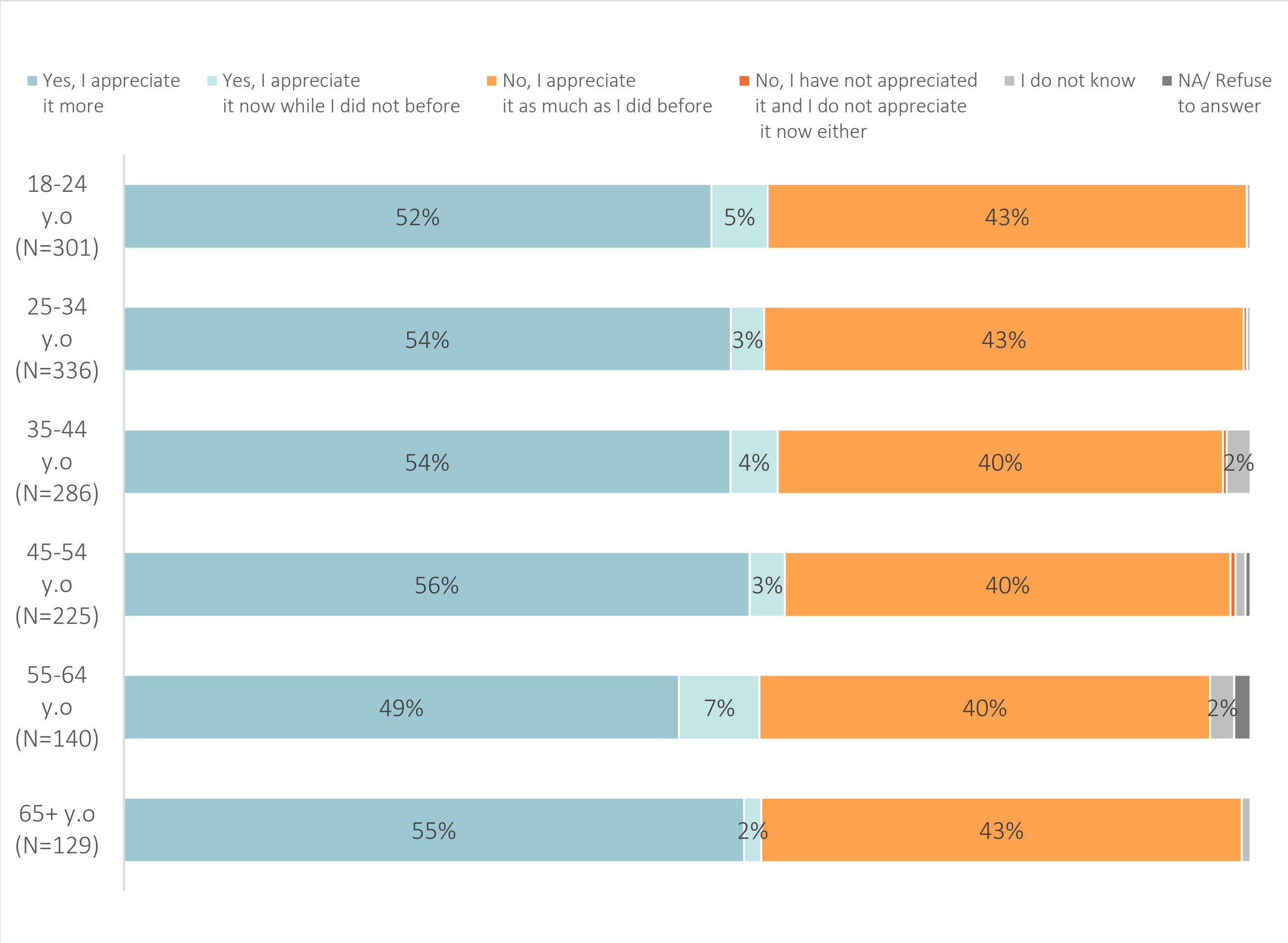
Figure 130 Increased appreciation for the environment since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, by gender and urbanity



[30] *This question was added to the questionnaire during round 3 of the assessment and is therefore not comparative to round 1 and 2.*

Variation between age groups regarding the appreciation towards the environment were minimal. Respondents aged 55 to 64 were slightly less likely to appreciate the environment more since the onset of the pandemic (49%) than other age groups.

Figure 131 Increased appreciation for the environment due to the COVID-19 pandemic, by age



3.2. Business Survey

This chapter of the report presents the findings from the third round of the business survey, conducted with 609 businesses in Kosovo. Data results are compared to round 1 and round 2 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

Consistent with the overall business landscape in Kosovo, slightly more than one in three of the businesses that participated in the survey were located in the Prishtinë/Priština region (37%), while 15% were located in the Prizren region and 11% in Ferizaj/Uroševac. About 9% to 10% were located in the other regions. For a meaningful data analysis, the disaggregation by region is divided into "Prishtinë/Priština" and "non-Prishtinë/Priština" resident enterprises.

Nearly two thirds (63%) of the businesses fell under the category of micro enterprises (1-9 employees), almost one third (27%) were small (10-49 employees) and 10% belonged to the category of medium and large enterprises (50+ employees). The legal status of most businesses that took part in this survey was sole proprietorship (65%), while 27% were categorized as limited liability companies. The majority had a business tenure of more than five years (83%), while 16% had a tenure of one to five years.

Figure 132. Regional business distribution

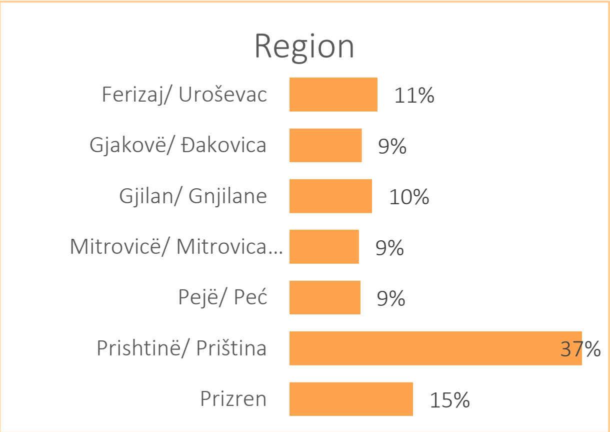


Figure 133. Business size

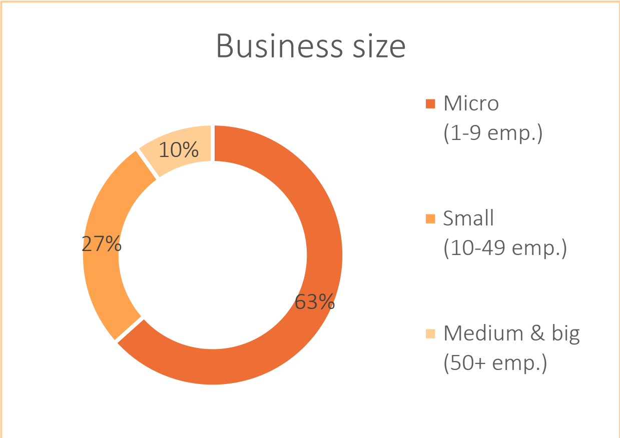


Figure 134. Business legal status

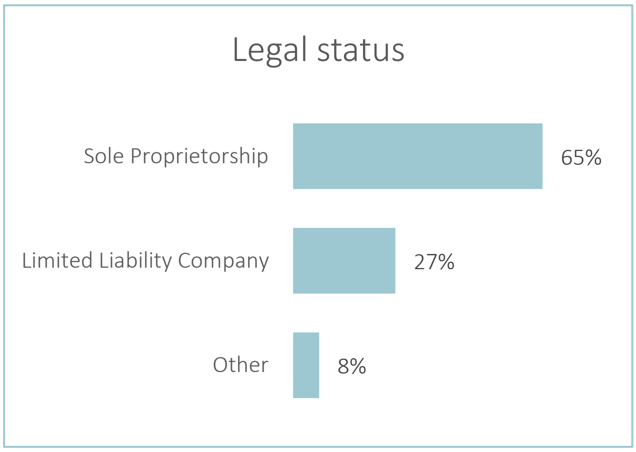
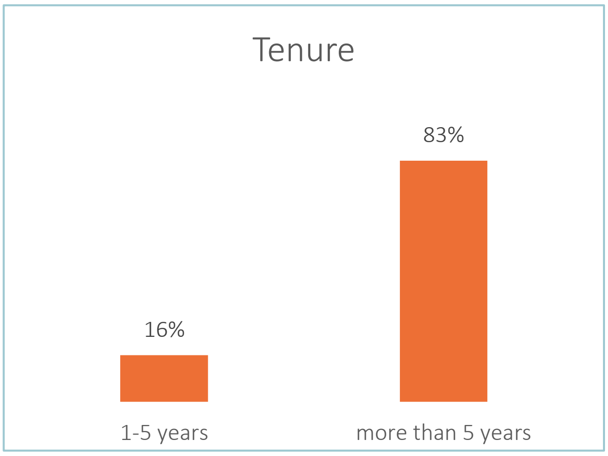


Figure 135. Business tenure



The businesses that took part in the survey were engaged with different businesses activities. The most represented one was retail trade with 32%, followed by industry and production (16%), construction (11%), hospitality/HORECA (9%) and wholesale (7%). Around 5%, or less, of the businesses were engaged with other activities. As in the reports for round 1 and 2, the businesses activities were grouped in order to enable meaningful and comprehensive data analysis with large enough sub samples[31].

Figure 136. Business activity distribution

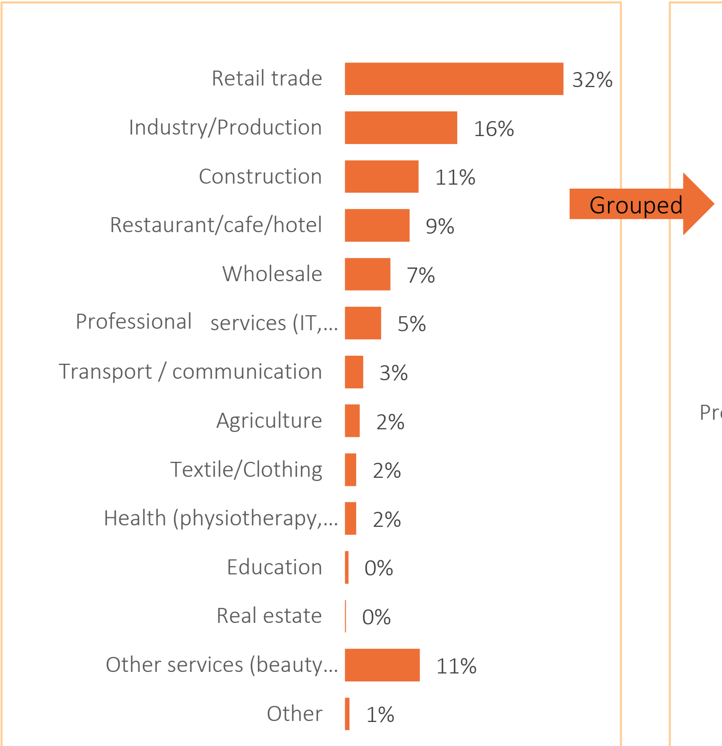
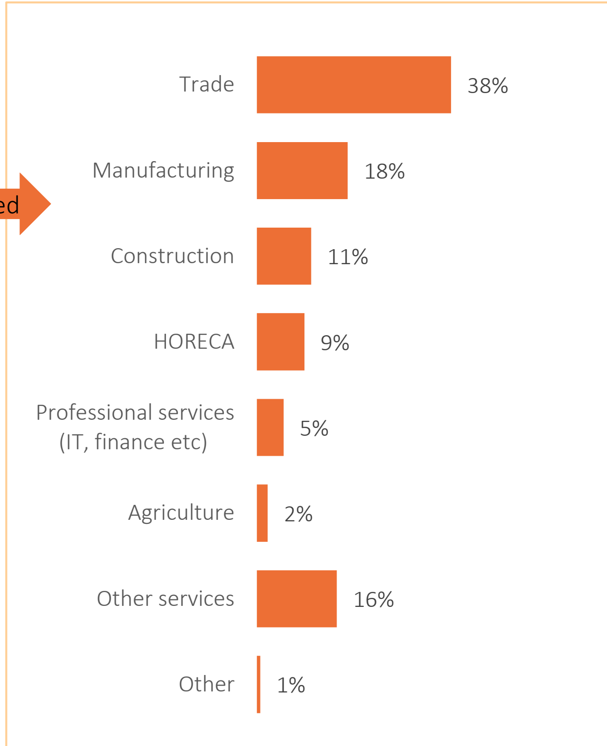


Figure 137. Businesses activity grouped



As during the previous rounds of the assessment, the majority of businesses did not export as part of their business activity (83%). The respondents position most commonly were owner of the businesses (68%) or Directors (15%). Most business owners were men (80%) and about 18% of the businesses were owned by women. Whereas, 2% of the businesses had multiple owners.

Figure 138 Respondents position

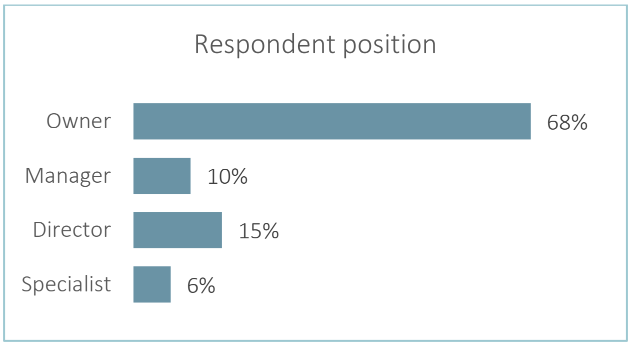
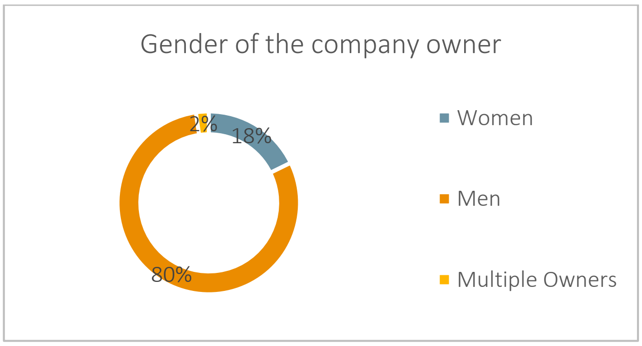


Figure 139 Gender of the company owner



[31] Trade includes: retail trade and whole sale, manufacturing includes: industry/production and textile/clothing, construction includes: construction, HORECA includes: restaurants, cafés, hotels, professional services includes: IT, finance/accounting, consulting, advertising, research), agriculture includes: agriculture, other services includes: transport and communication, real estate, health, other services such as beauty salons

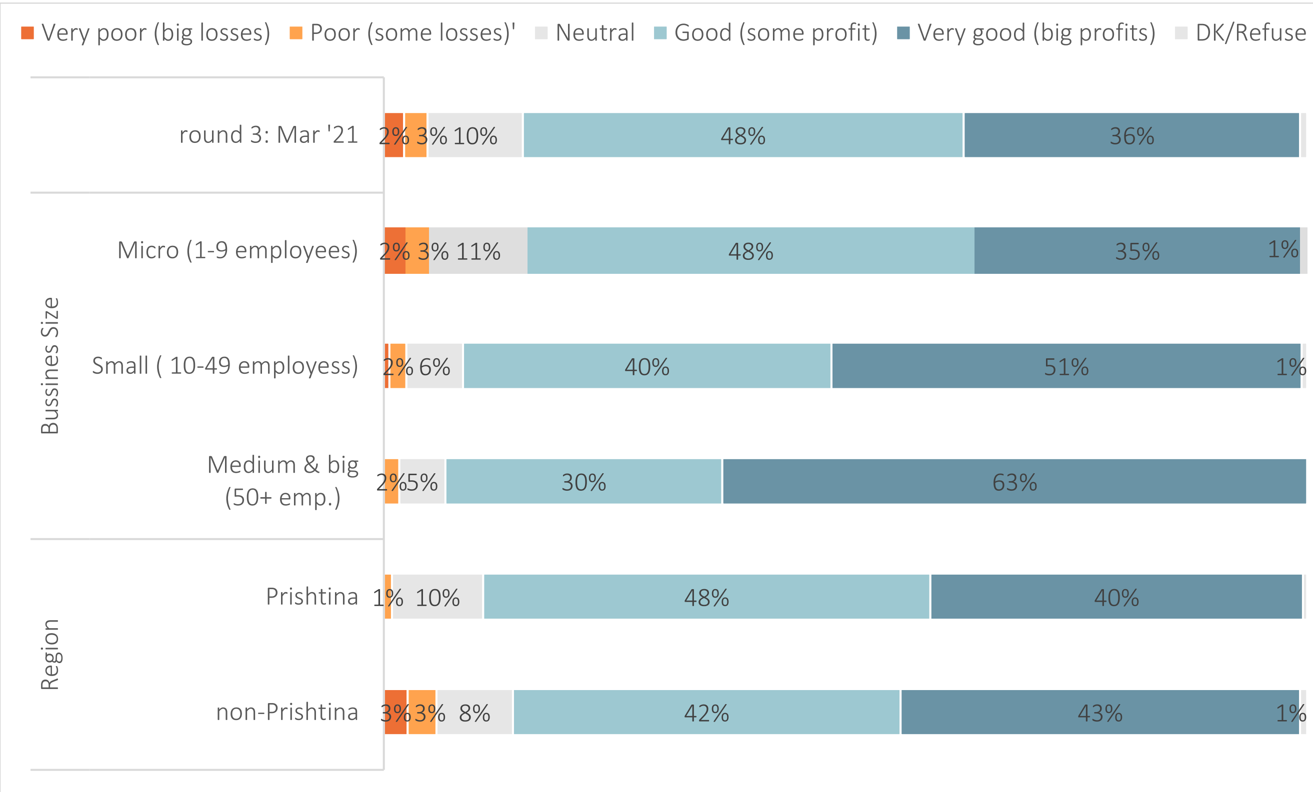
3.2.2 COVID-19 Impact on Businesses

The business survey overall aims to assess the extent and types of impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on businesses in Kosovo. In order to do that, the survey first set out to assess the financial performance of businesses prior to the pandemic.

Overall, nearly half assessed their financial performance prior to COVID-19 as good (48%), while more than one in three evaluated it as very good (36%). Only 10% assessed their pre-COVID-19 financial performance as neutral, 3% as poor and 2% as very poor.

Medium and big companies were most likely to assess their financial performance prior to the pandemic as very good (63%), when compared to small (51%) or micro businesses (35%). Businesses within the region of Prishtinë/Priština were slightly less likely to have experienced poor financial situations prior to the pandemic, while the ratio of businesses with good or very good performance did not significantly differ on a regional level.

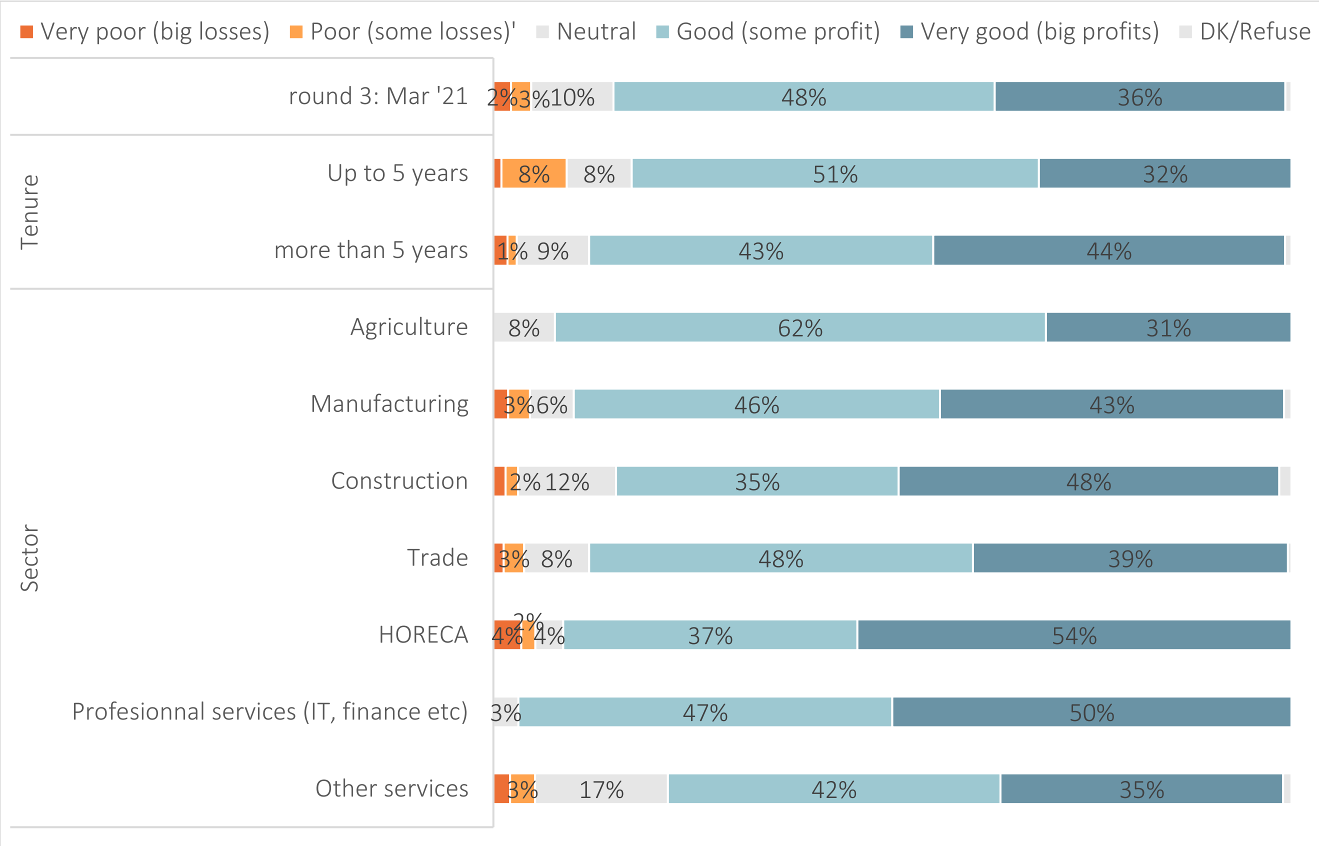
Figure 140. Financial performance of businesses BEFORE COVID-19 by business size and region



When taking a closer look at the role tenure and business activity played, data results suggest that younger businesses were less likely to have performed very good financially prior to the outbreak of COVID-19 (32%), when compared to businesses with a tenure of more than five years (44%). Younger businesses also more often reported that their financial situation was poor before (8%), than more established businesses (1%).

Data disaggregated by business activity shows that while more businesses within HORECA/hospitality reported very good financial performance (54%), combined 6% reported a very poor or poor performance which portrays a higher ratio than other businesses that engage with other activities. Overall, few businesses, regardless of type of business activity, declared to have performed poor or very poor prior to the pandemic.

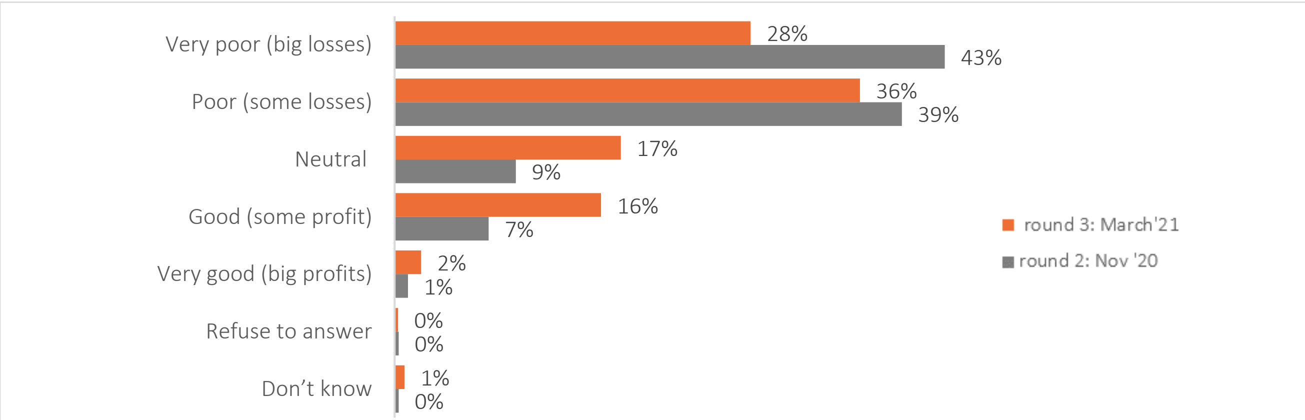
Figure 141 Financial performance of businesses BEFORE COVID-19, by tenure and business activity



As discussed above, the majority of business respondents stated that the financial performance of their business was good (48%) or very good (36%) prior to the outbreak of the pandemic. In March 2021, only 16% described the financial performance as good and 2% as very good since the onset of the pandemic.

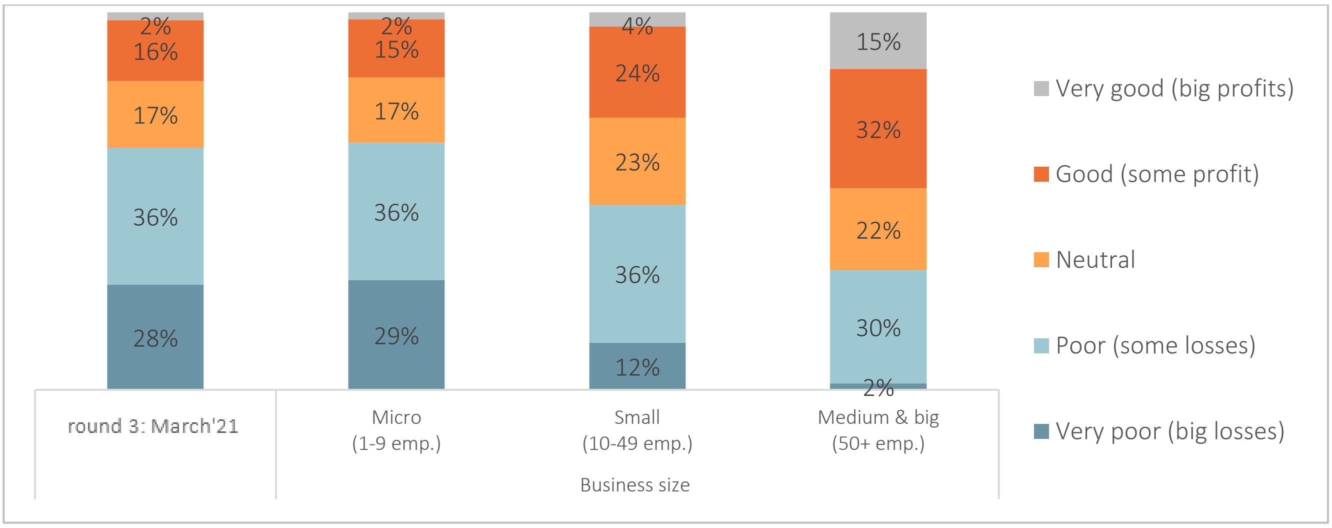
Over one third declared poor financial performance (36%), while 28% even declared very poor performance since COVID-19 emerged in Kosovo. On a positive note, when comparing these results to round 2 of the assessment, a slight decrease can be observed in businesses that marked a poor or very poor financial performance (3 pp and 15 pp). More business respondents described their financial performance as good in March 2021 (16%), when compared to November 2020 (7%).[32]

Figure 142 Financial performance of businesses AFTER COVID-19, by round



Data results disaggregated by business size show that micro businesses especially suffered financially under the pandemic, with 29% that reported a very poor financial performance and 36% a poor performance. While the same ratio of small business reported a poor performance (36%), only 12% reported a very poor performance. Over half of the medium and big businesses declared that their financial performance was either good (32%) or neutral (22%) since the onset of the pandemic.

Figure 143 Financial performance of businesses AFTER COVID-19, by business size

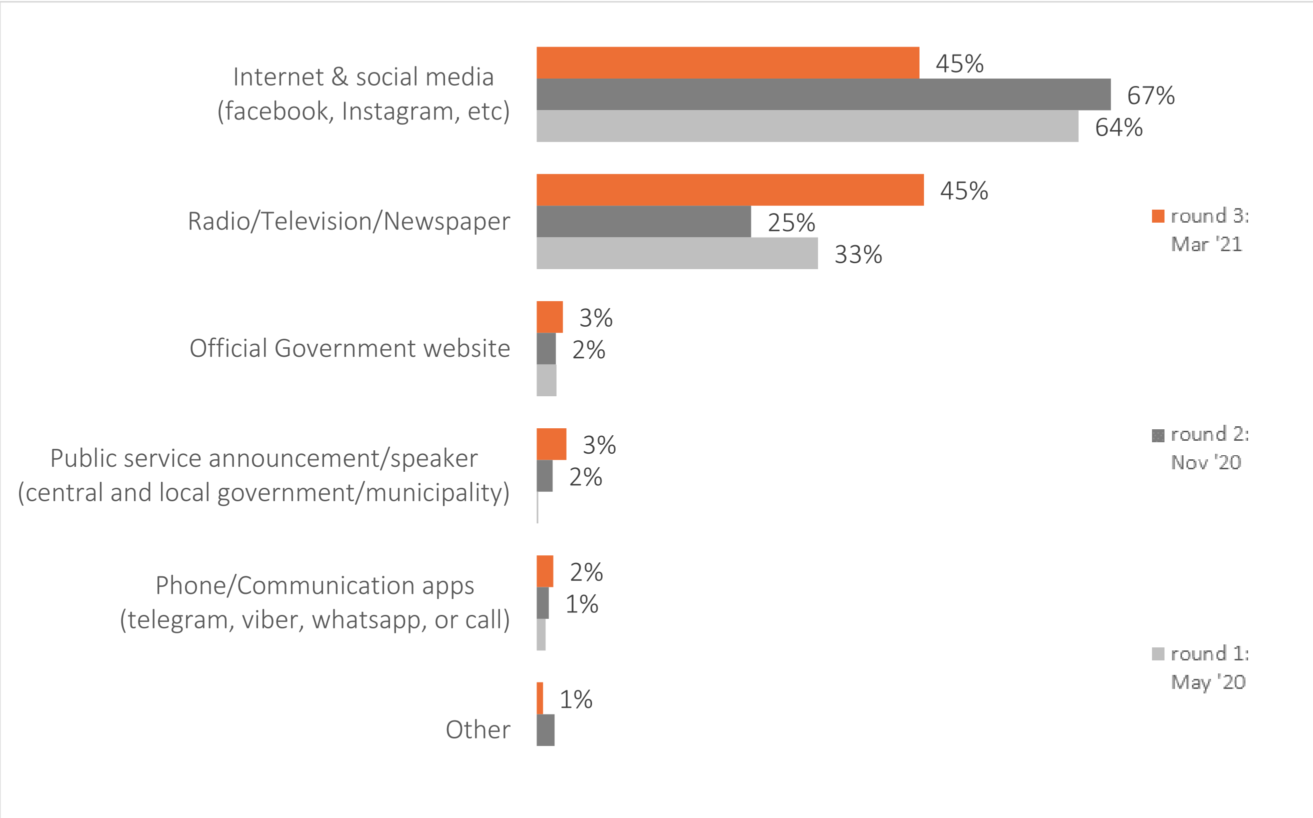


[32] *This question was added during round 2 of the assessment and is therefore not compared to round 1*

In May and November 2020, around two thirds of business respondents had declared to use internet and social media as their main source of information regarding COVID-19 (67%). In March 2021, this ratio had dropped to 45%, while more reported to make use of radio, television or newspapers (45%) compared to the previous two rounds of the assessment (round 1, 33% and round 2, 25%).

Still, few make use of official government webpages (3%), public service announcements (3%) or phone and communication apps (2%) in order to inform themselves about risks, recommended preventive actions and coping strategies related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 144 Main source of information regarding COVID-19 (risks, recommended preventive action, coping strategies), by round

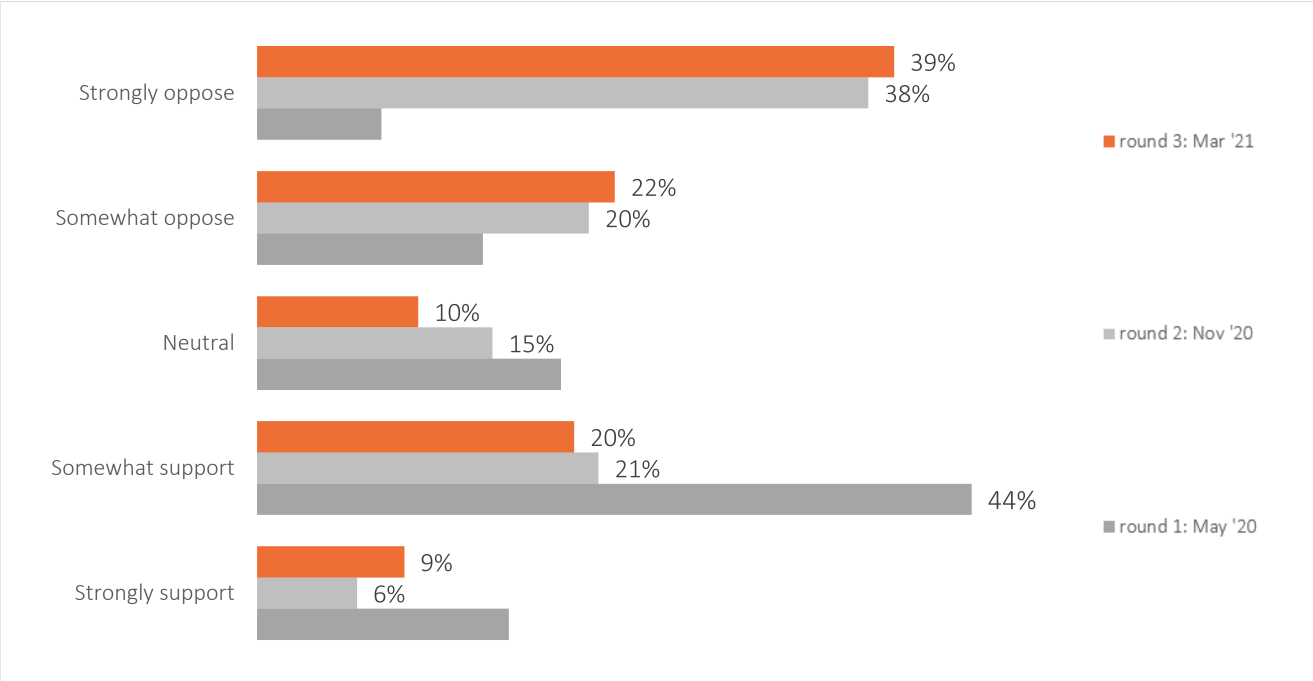


The support for restrictive measures to close or limit business activity had dropped significantly between round 1 and round 2 of the assessment, while in March 2021 during the third round, results did not differ greatly when compared to round 2.

Nearly 40% still strongly opposed the measures and 22% somewhat opposed them. This portrays an increase of 1 pp and 2 pp respectively compared to the situation in November 2020. Slightly fewer expressed themselves neutral regarding this matter (10%) compared to before (round 1, 19% and round 2, 15%).

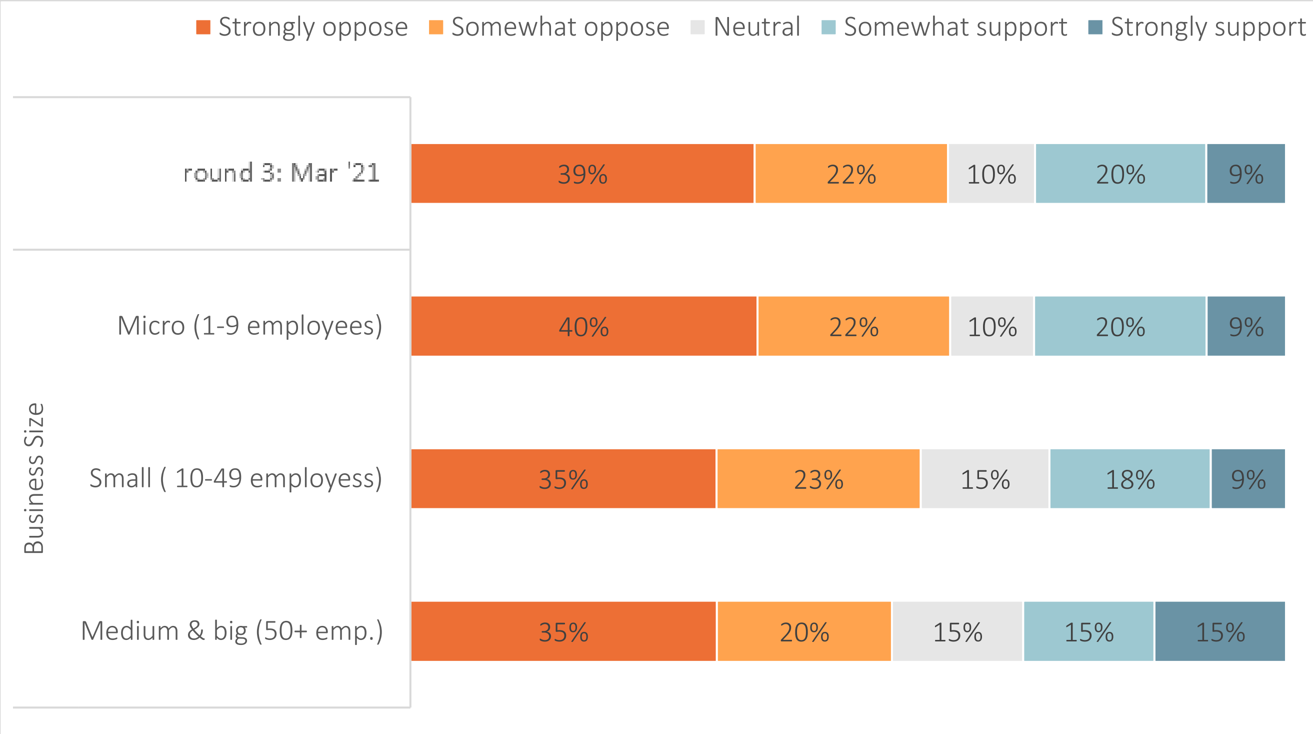
The support for the restrictive measures stood at 20%, similar to the results in November 2020 (21%). Strong support was expressed by 9% of the business respondents, an increase of 3 pp compared to round 2.

Figure 145 Support to the current restrictive measures to close/limit business activity in order to slow down the spread of COVID-19, by round



Data results further reveal that micro business respondents were more likely to strongly oppose the measures (40%) when compared to small or medium and large businesses (35% each). Around one in three medium and large businesses respondents showed themselves supportive of the measures (30%), compared to 27% of small business respondents and 29% of micro business respondents.

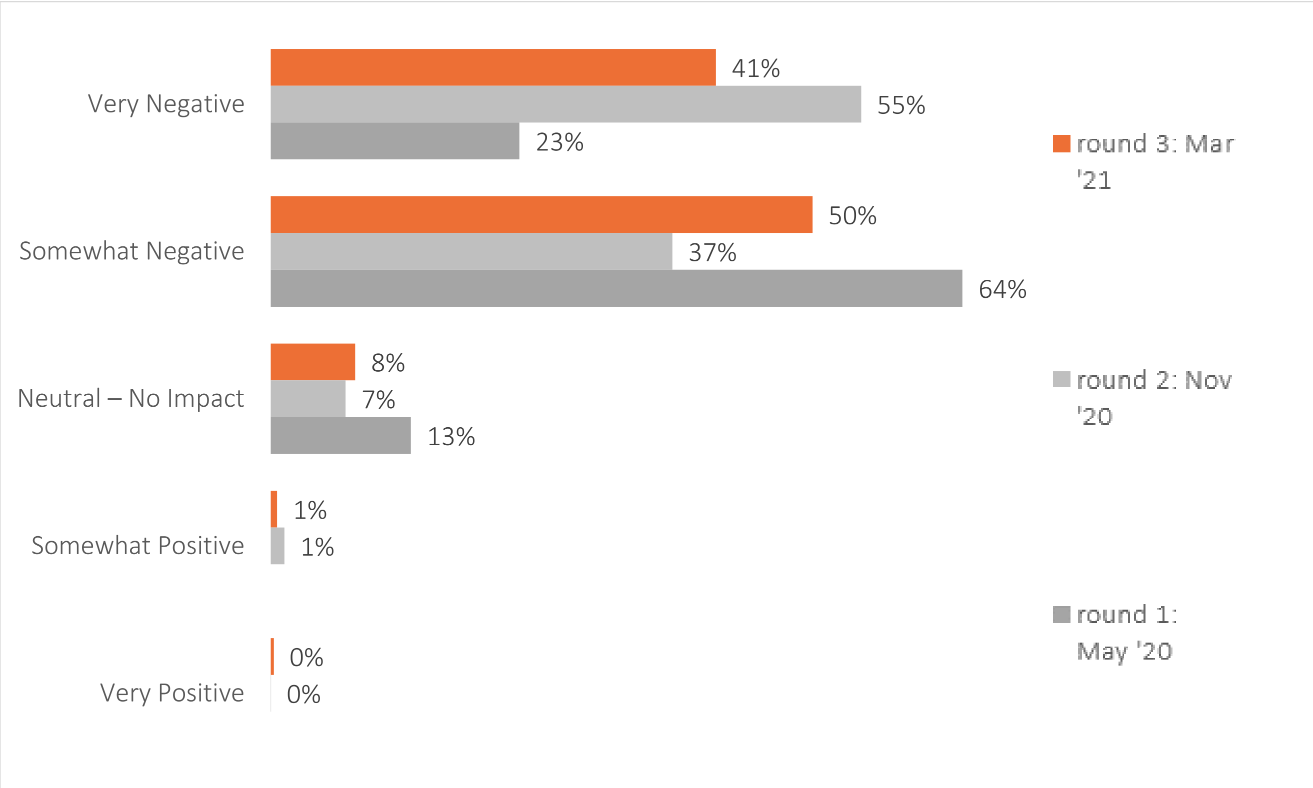
Figure 146. Level of support to current restrictive measures to close/limit business activity in order to slow the spread of COVID-19, by business size



Around two in five of the business respondents that took part in the survey in March 2021, felt that the overall impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been very negative (41%). However, compared to the data results of round 2 this portrays a decrease of 14 pp. More felt that the impact has been somewhat negative (50%), when compared to the situation in November 2020 (37%).

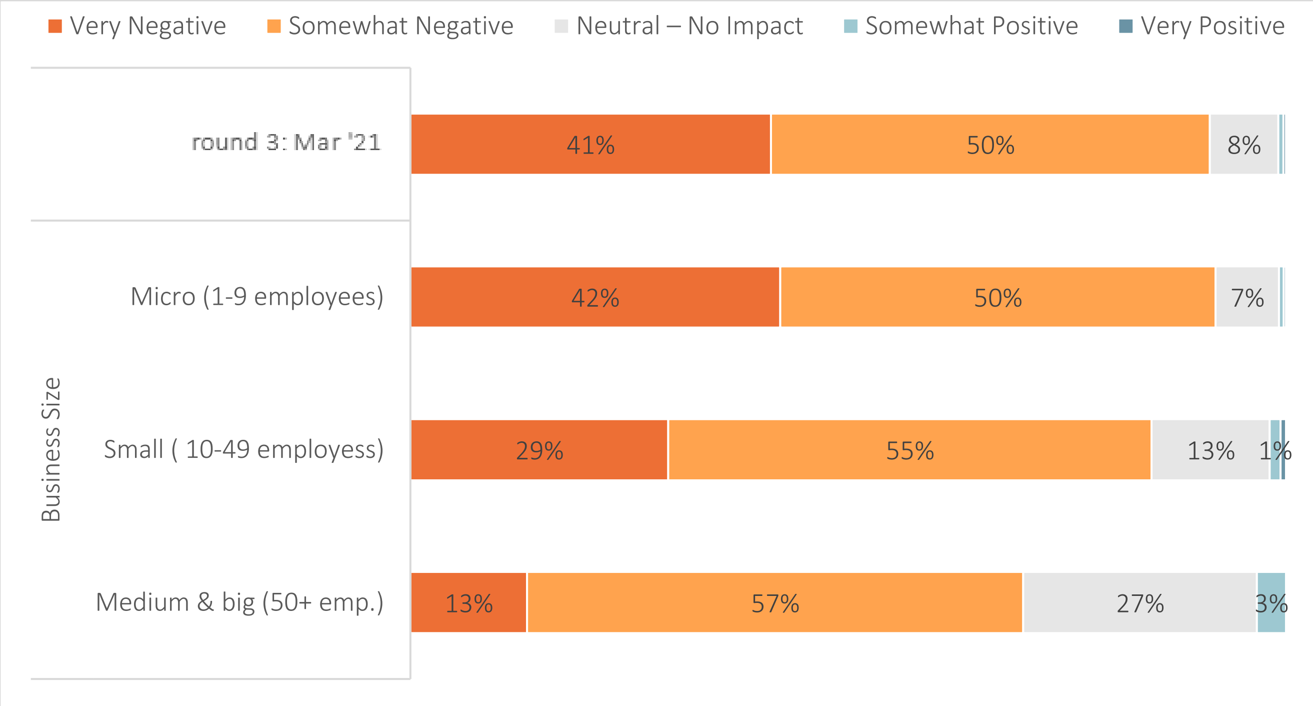
Only 8% reported that the pandemic had no impact, while 1% experienced a positive impact. None of the businesses declared that the pandemic had a very positive impact upon their business.

Figure 147 Impact of COVID-19 on businesses in general, by round



More micro businesses reported a very negative impact of COVID-19 on their business (42%) when compared to small (29%) or medium and big businesses (13%). Nonetheless, even the majority of small as well as medium and big businesses report somewhat negative impacts stemming from the pandemic (55% and 57% respectively).

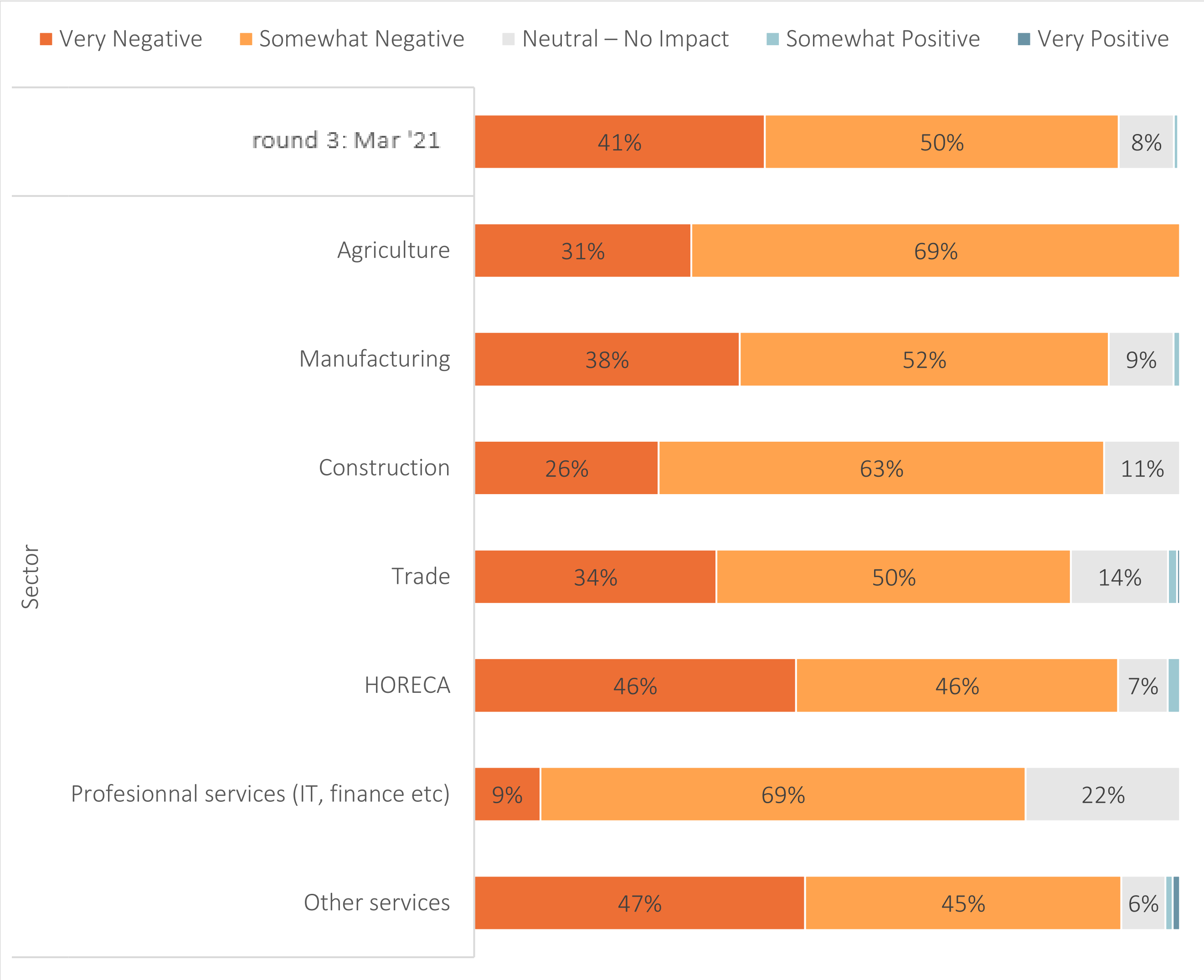
Figure 148 Impact of COVID-19 on businesses in general, by business size



HORECA/hospitality businesses, and those part of other services (that includes businesses such as beauty salons) stood out with nearly half that reported very negative impacts of COVID-19 on their business (46% and 47% respectively).

Around one third of businesses that engaged with trade (34%), agriculture (31%) and construction (26%) also reported very negative impacts due to the pandemic. Least hit were businesses that offered professional services with only 9% that reported very negative impacts. However, it should be noted that even within the professional service businesses which includes among others IT services or financial services, over two thirds still reported a somewhat negative impact (69%).

Figure 149 Impact of COVID-19 on businesses in general, by business activity

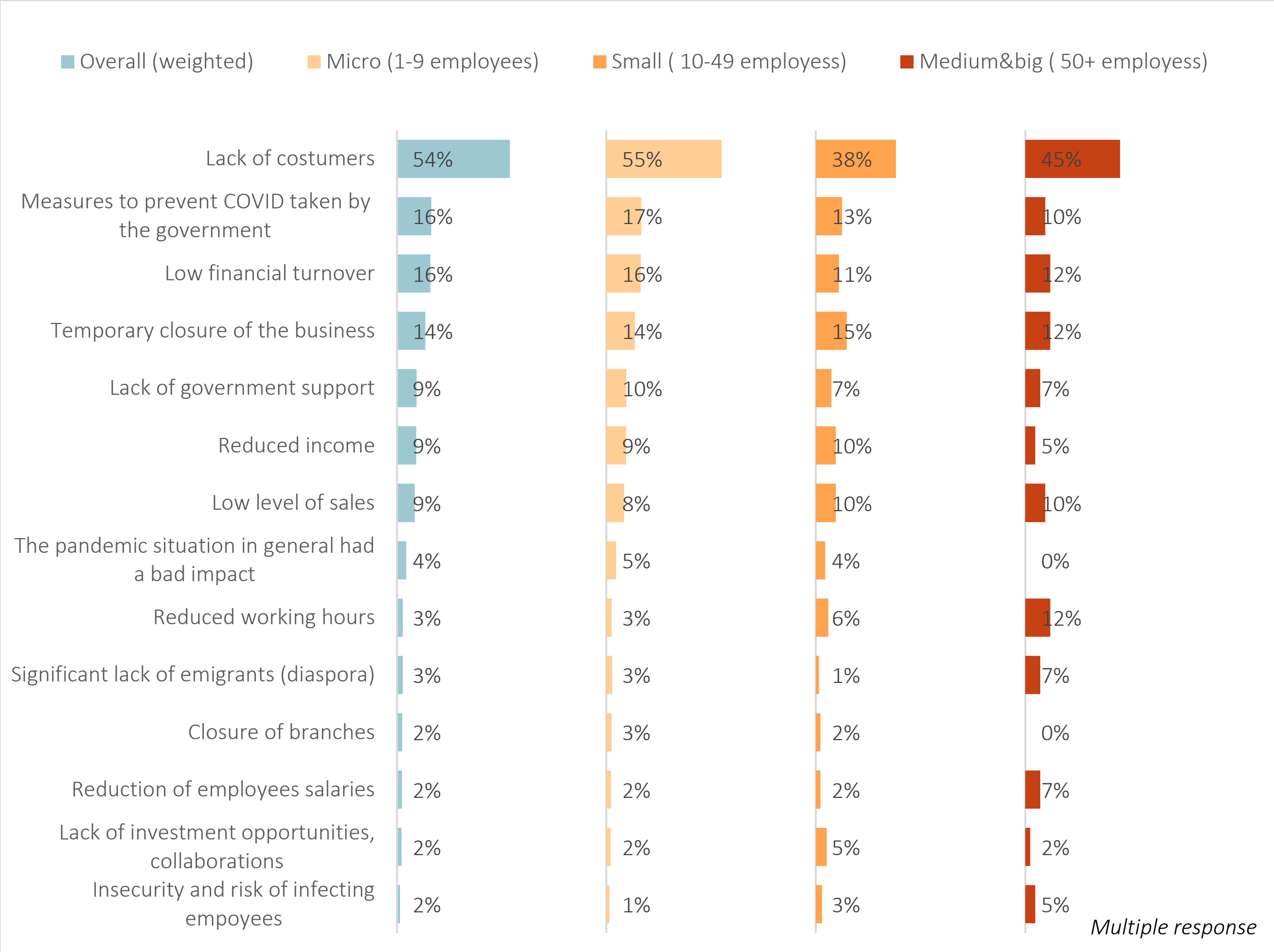


Those business respondents that declared that COVID-19 had negative or very negative impacts on their business were asked for the respective reasons. Over half mentioned the lack of customers (54%), among those were most commonly micro businesses respondents (55%) and medium and big businesses respondents (45%).

Nearly one in six mentioned the measures taken by the institutions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 were the reasons for very negative or negative impact on their business (16%). Similar to the above, more of the micro business respondents mentioned the institutional measures or a low financial turnover as reasons (17% and 16% respectively) when compared to small (13% and 11% respectively) or medium and big businesses (10% and 12% respectively).

Overall, another 14% mentioned the temporary closure of their business and 9% each declared that the lack of institutional support, reduced income and low level of sales were reasons for negative impacts on their businesses.

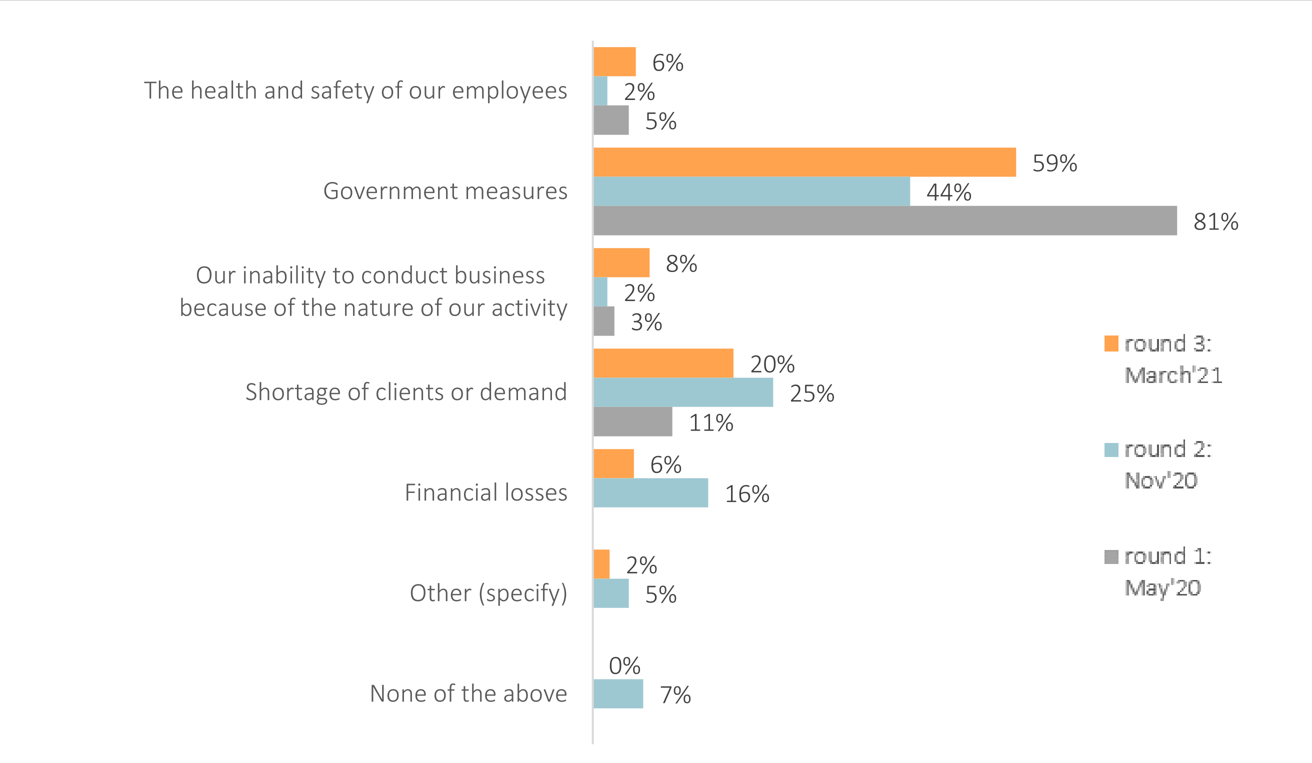
Figure 150. Reasons for very negative and negative impact, by business size



In March 2021, businesses that had to stop their business activities most commonly mentioned central institutional measures as the main reason (59%). While this was also the most mentioned reason in May 2020, during round 2 of the assessment in November only 44% had mentioned it. The shortage of clients or demand was cited by nearly one in four business respondents (20%, a decrease of 5pp compared to round 2).

Few mentioned other reasons as the main reason for suspending their business activity; 8% mentioned the inability to conduct business due to the nature of their business (increase of 6 pp compared to round 2), and 6% each cited the health and safety of their employees or financial losses[33] as the main reason (increase of 4 pp and decrease of 10 pp respectively compared to round 2).

Figure 151 Main reason for suspending business activity, by round

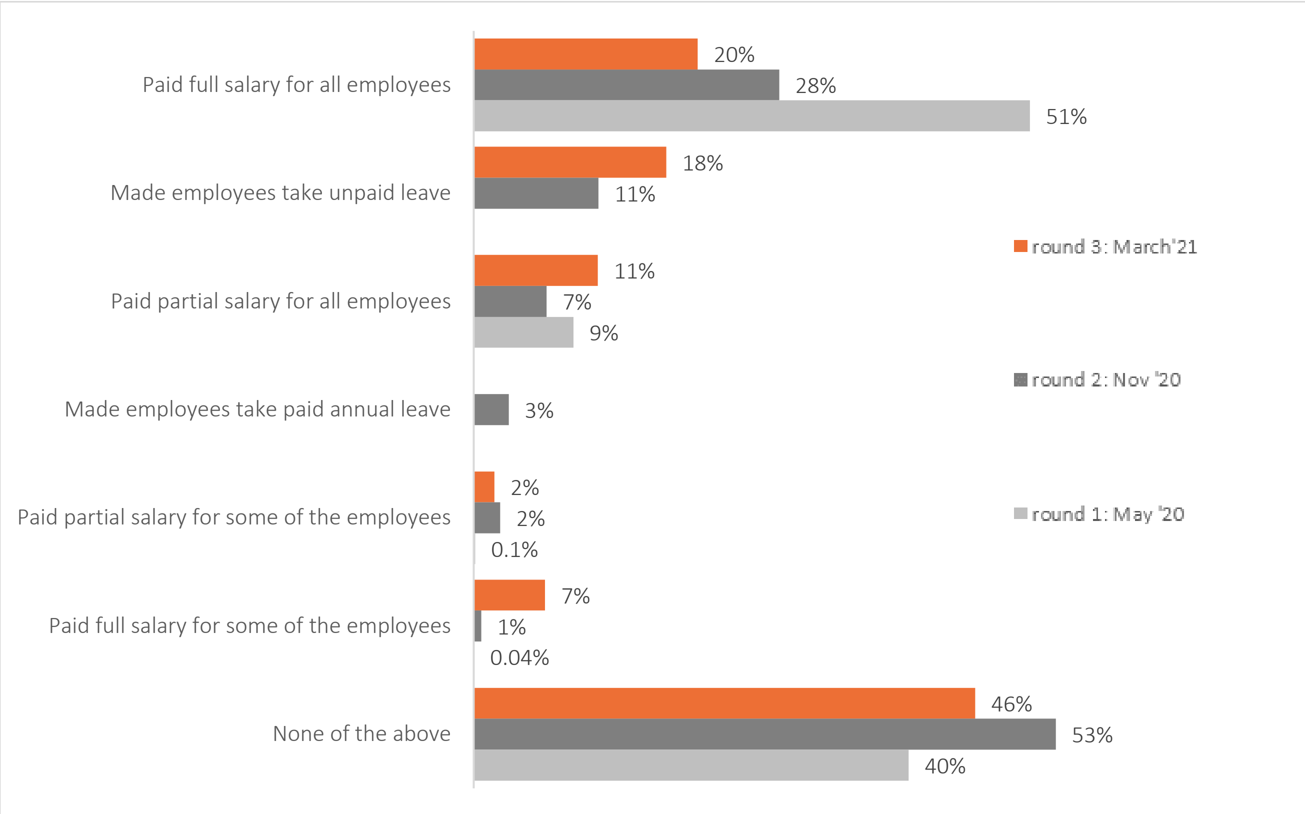


[33] *This response option was added to the questionnaire during round 2.*

Only 20% of businesses which fully or partially had suspended their activity paid full salaries for all their employees in the time period from October 2020 to February 2021, this portrays a drop of 8 pp compared to round 2 where respondents were asked the same regarding the time period May to September 2020. More businesses respondents stated that their employees were forced to take unpaid leave (18%) than during round 2 of the assessment (11%).[34]

Moreover, paying partial salaries was also slightly more common during time period October 2020 to February 2021 (11%), when compared to the time frame of May to September 2020 (7%). Still it should be noted that nearly half did not resort to any of the listed actions (46%).

Figure 152 Applicability of statements regarding the period October 2020- February 2021

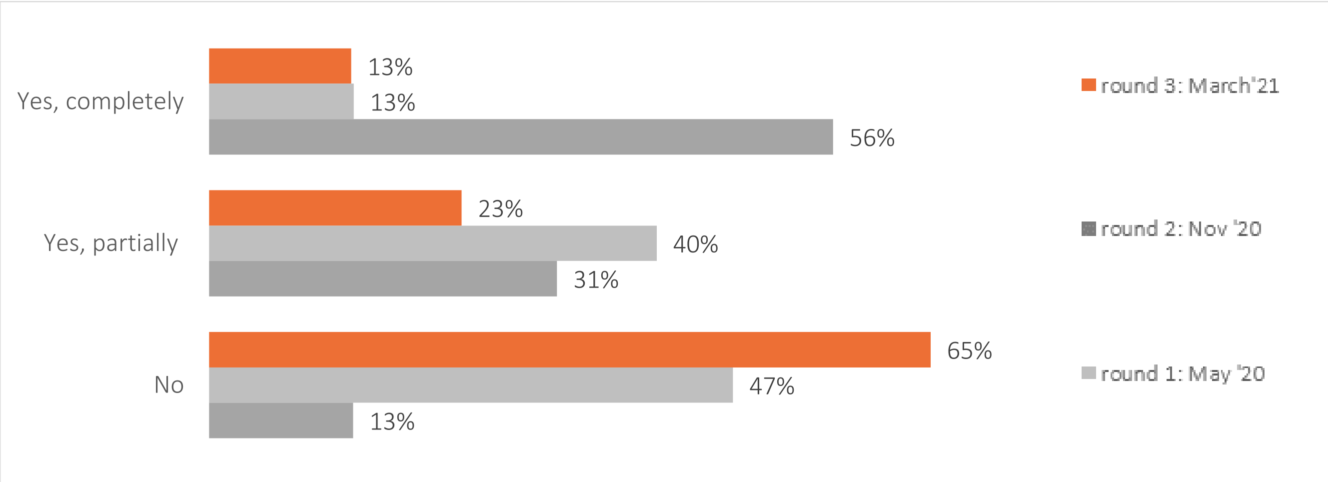


[34] This response option was added to this question during round 2.

Changes in the lockdown measures and gradual re-opening of the society between May and June 2020 were visible in the comparative data of round 1 and round 2 where a large difference was observed in businesses respondents that had to stop their business activity in May 2020 (56%) and November 2020 (13%) in comparison.

In March 2021, data results show that the ratio of businesses that had to stop their business activity due to COVID-19 remained the same as in November 2020 (13%). Fewer reported a partial stop of business activities (23%) when compared to the situation during round 2 of the assessment (40%).

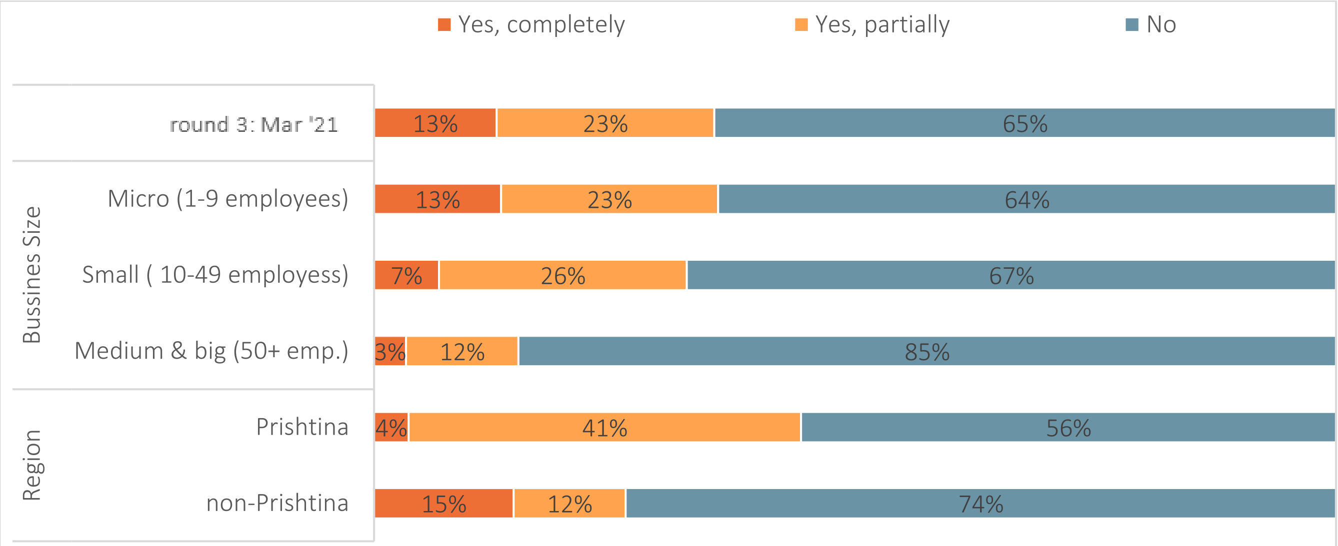
Figure 153 Full or partial stop of business activity because of COVID-19, by round



Disaggregated data of round 3 by business size and region show that micro businesses were significantly more likely to have experienced a full (13%) stop in businesses activities compared to small (7%) or medium and big businesses (3%).

Around one in four micro and small businesses had to partially stop their business activity (23% and 26% respectively), while only 12% of medium and big businesses reported the same. Around two in five businesses located in Prishtinë/Priština had partially stopped their business activity (41%), compared to only 12% of those located in other regions. However, businesses located in other regions more commonly reported a full stop in businesses activity (15%), compared to those in the capital region (4%).

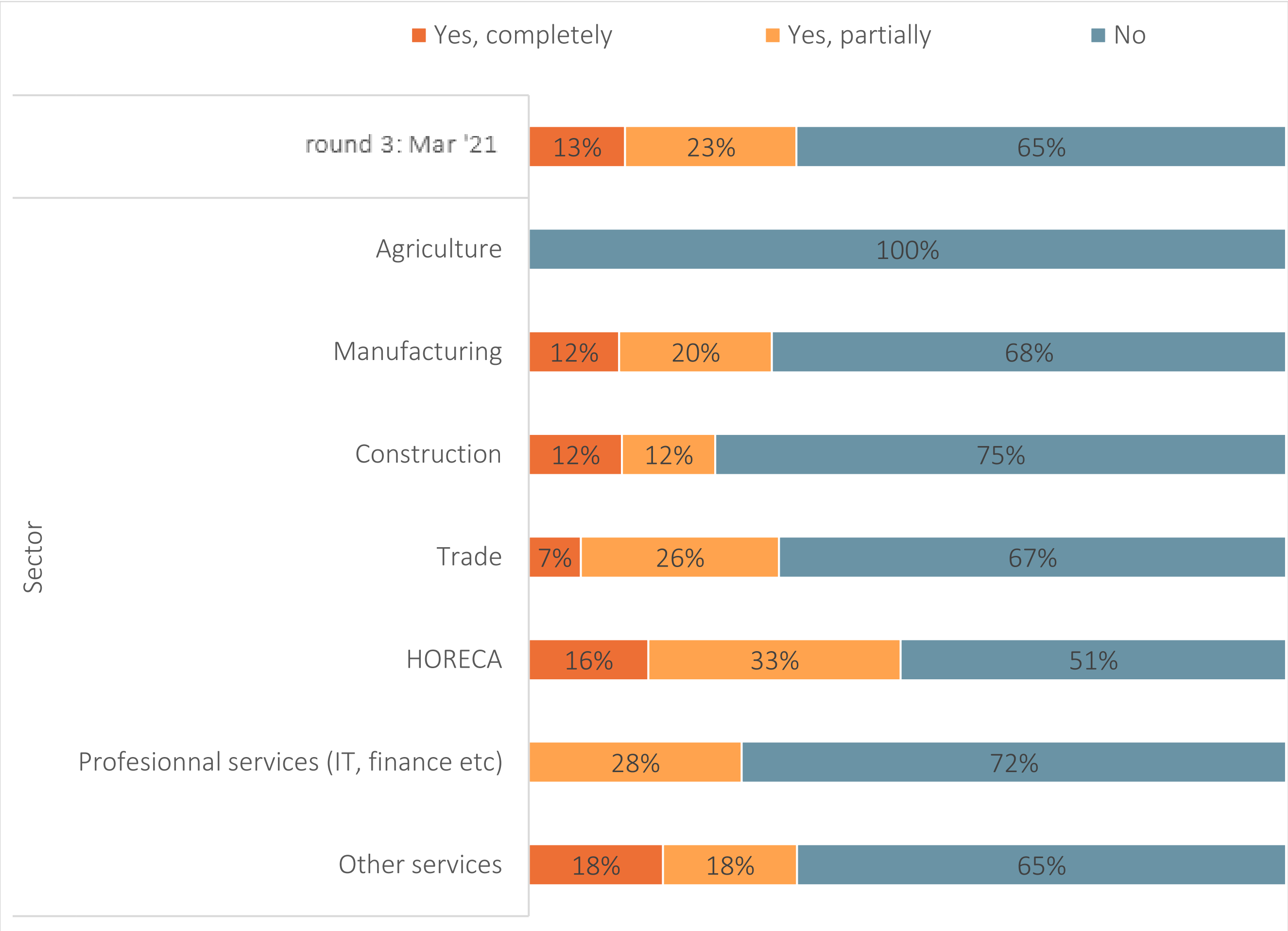
Figure 154 Full or partial stop of business activity because of COVID-19, by business size and region



Businesses part of HORECA/hospitality most commonly experienced a partial stop in activity (33%), compared to other types of businesses. A full stop in activities was reported most commonly from 18% of businesses belonging to the other services category and 16% of HORECA/hospitality businesses. Businesses offering professional services did not experience a full stop in business activities, however, 28% reported a partial stop.

The agricultural businesses were not impacted by partial or full stop of businesses activities according to the businesses respondents that took part in this survey.

Figure 155 Full or partial stop of business activity because of COVID-19, by business activity

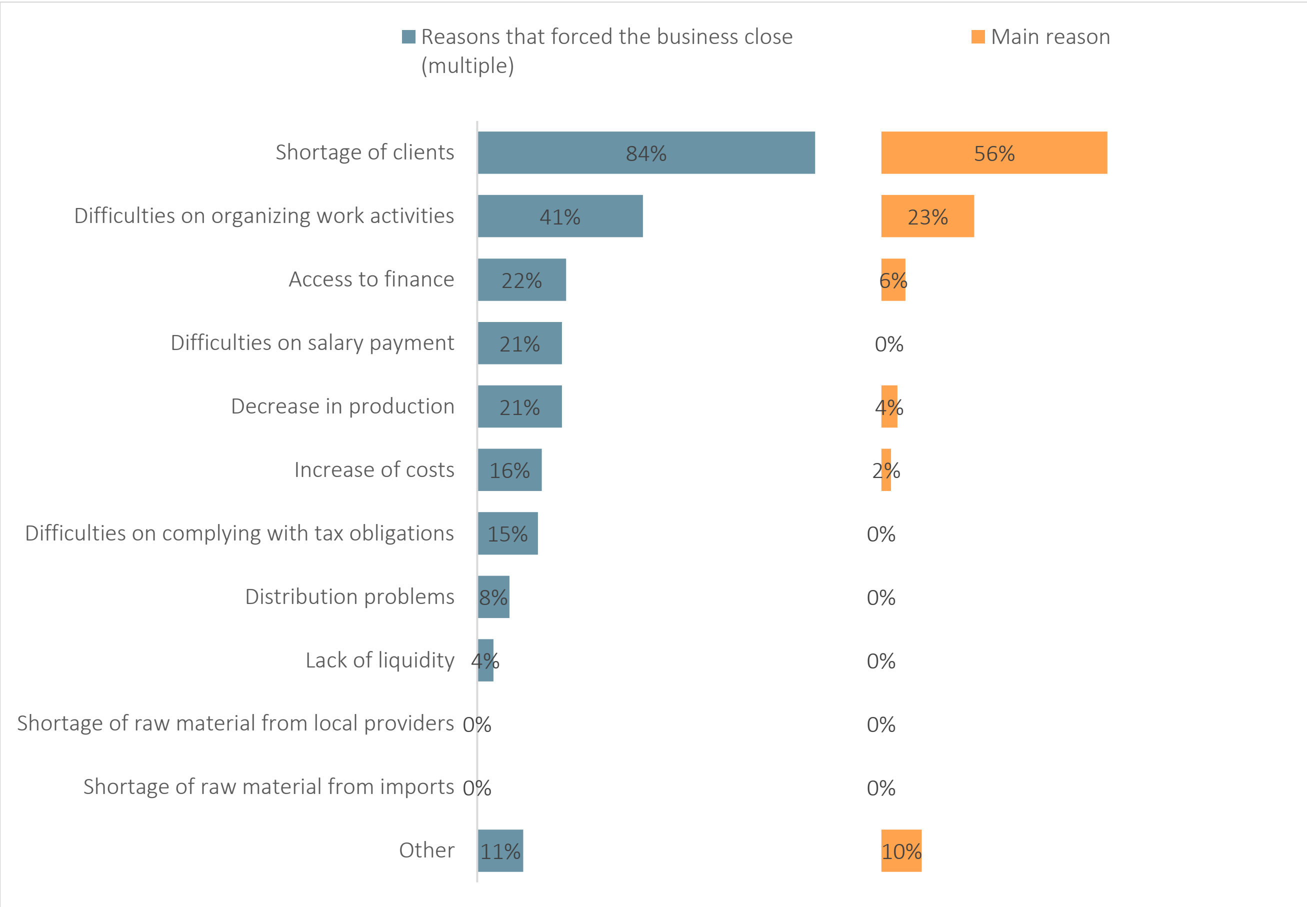


Those businesses respondents which experienced a full stop in their activities (13%) of their business were next asked about reasons and the main reason that caused it.

Around eight in 10 businesses respondents declared the shortage of clients as a reason for the full stop in business activity (84%). Most also mentioned this issue as the main reason (56%). Two in five mentioned difficulties in organising work activities (41%), but few mentioned it as the main reason (23%).

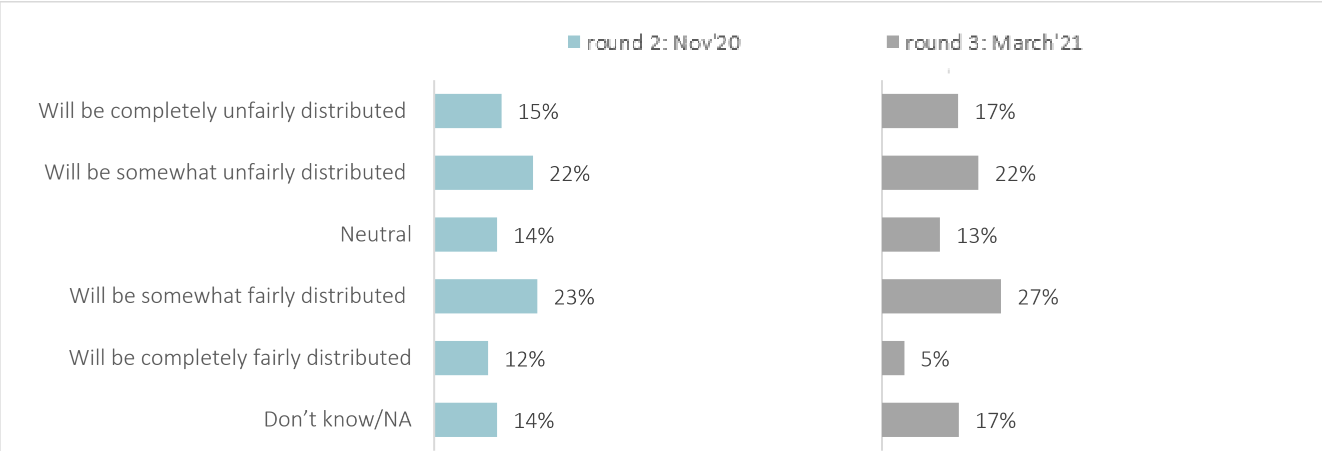
Access to finances, decrease in production and difficulties with salary payments were also mentioned by around 20% of the businesses respondents as reasons that lead to the stop in business activities. The increase of costs and difficulties with tax obligations were mentioned by around 15-16%, however, nearly none mentioned those factors as the main reason.

Figure 156 Reasons and main reason for full stop in business activity



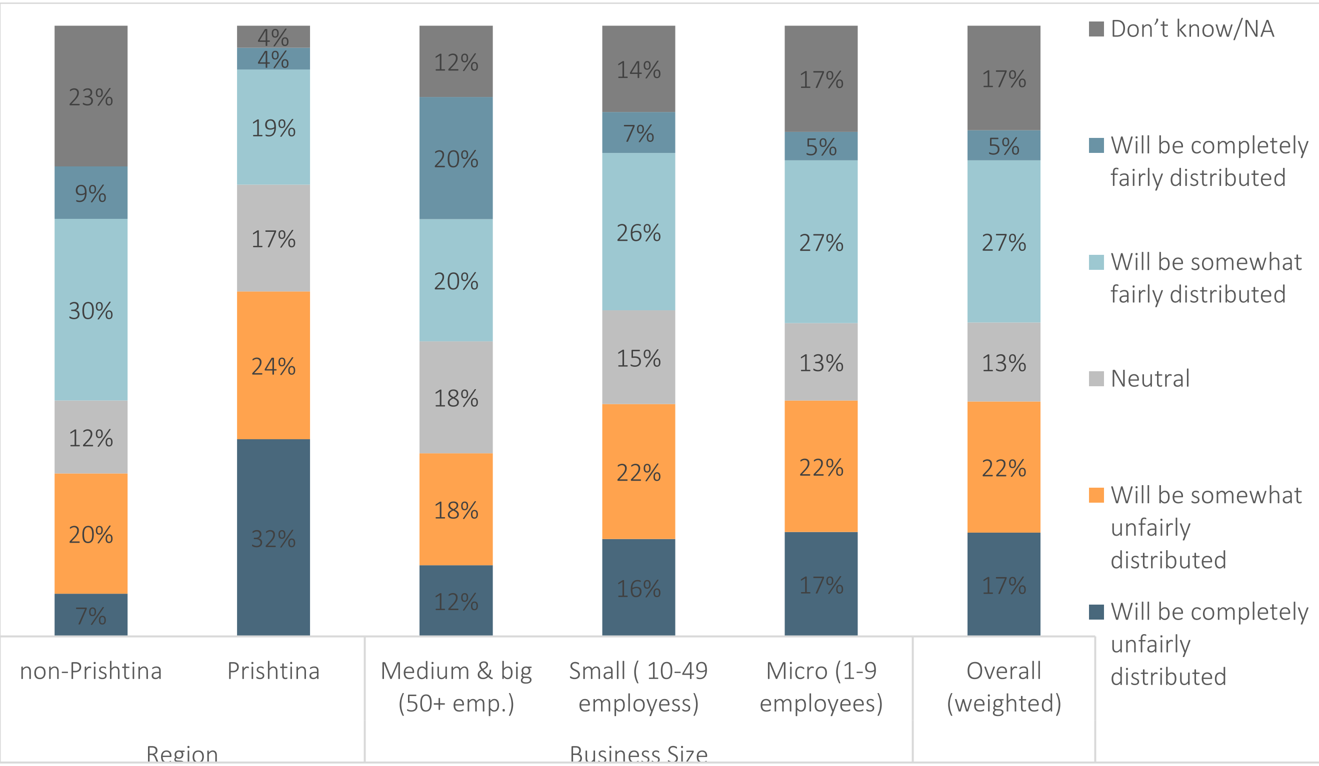
Many businesses in Kosovo may have to rely on economic assistance or relief to counter the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, it was important to assess whether respondents believed that future economic relief packages for businesses will be fairly distributed. In March 2021, around 27% believed that economic relief will be somewhat fairly distributed (23% believed the same in November 2020). However, similar to findings in November 2020, 22% felt that it would be somewhat unfair distributed and 17% expected that it will be completely unfairly distributed. Only 5% believed that economic relief will be completely fairly distributed, that portrays a decrease of 7 pp compared to round 2 of the assessment.

Figure 157 Perception if future economic relief packages for businesses will be fairly distributed, by round



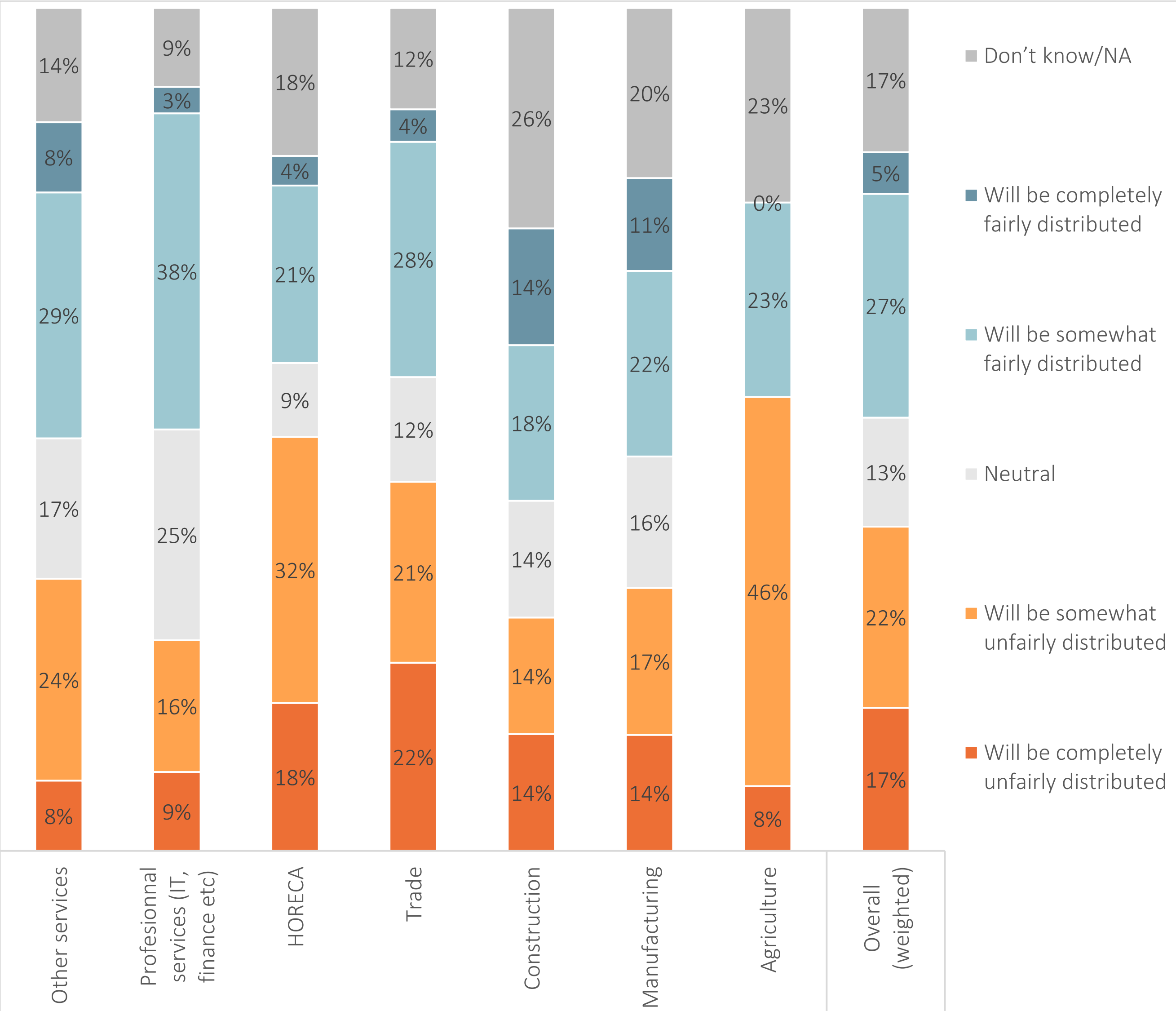
Respondents belonging to bigger businesses and those located outside Prishtinë/Priština region were more likely to believe that the distribution will be conducted in a fair manner, than those belonging to smaller businesses or those located inside the Prishtinë/Priština region.

Figure 158 Perception if future economic relief packages for businesses will be fairly distributed, by business size and region



Data disaggregated by business activity reveals that especially respondents with businesses part of HORECA/hospitality were not confident that economic relief packages will be fairly distributed; around one in three believed that this process will be somewhat unfair (32%) and another 18% expect it to be completely unfair. Also, many of those respondents belonging to an agricultural business mostly believed that the distribution of economic relief will be somewhat unfair (46%).

Figure 159 Perception if future economic relief packages for businesses will be fairly distributed, by business activity

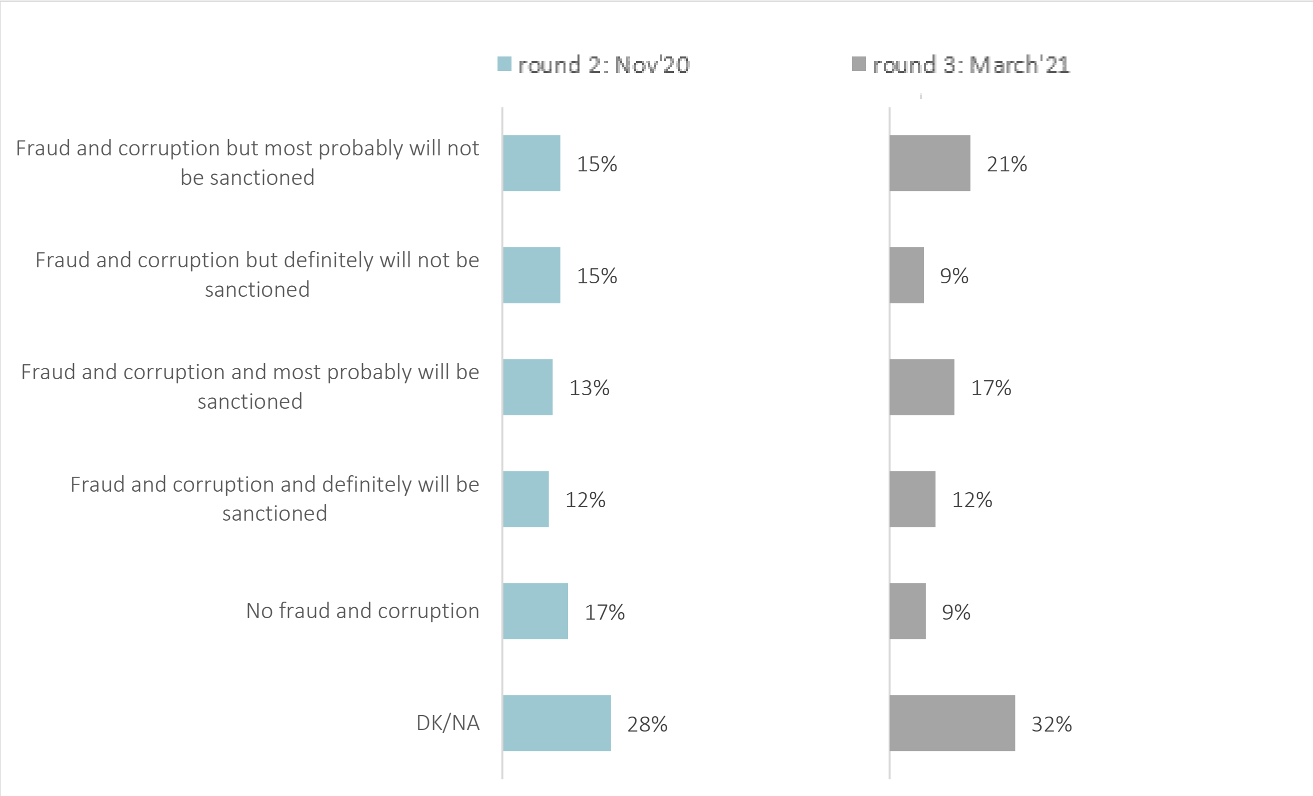


Overall, in March 2021, 59% believed that fraud and corruption in connection with relief packages for businesses will occur, this portray an increase of 5 pp compared to round 2. Only 9% believed that fraud and corruption won't happen, while this ratio stood at 17% in November 2020.

Nearly one fourth believed that fraud and corruption will happen and probably will not be sanctioned (21%, compared to 15% during round 2). Another 9% expected that there will definitely not be any sanctions.

On the other hand, around 17% believed that fraud and corruption in connection with relief packages will probably be sanctioned (13% during round 2) and another 12% expected that such activities will definitely be sanctioned (12%). It should be noted that nearly one in three did not provide an answer to this question (32%).

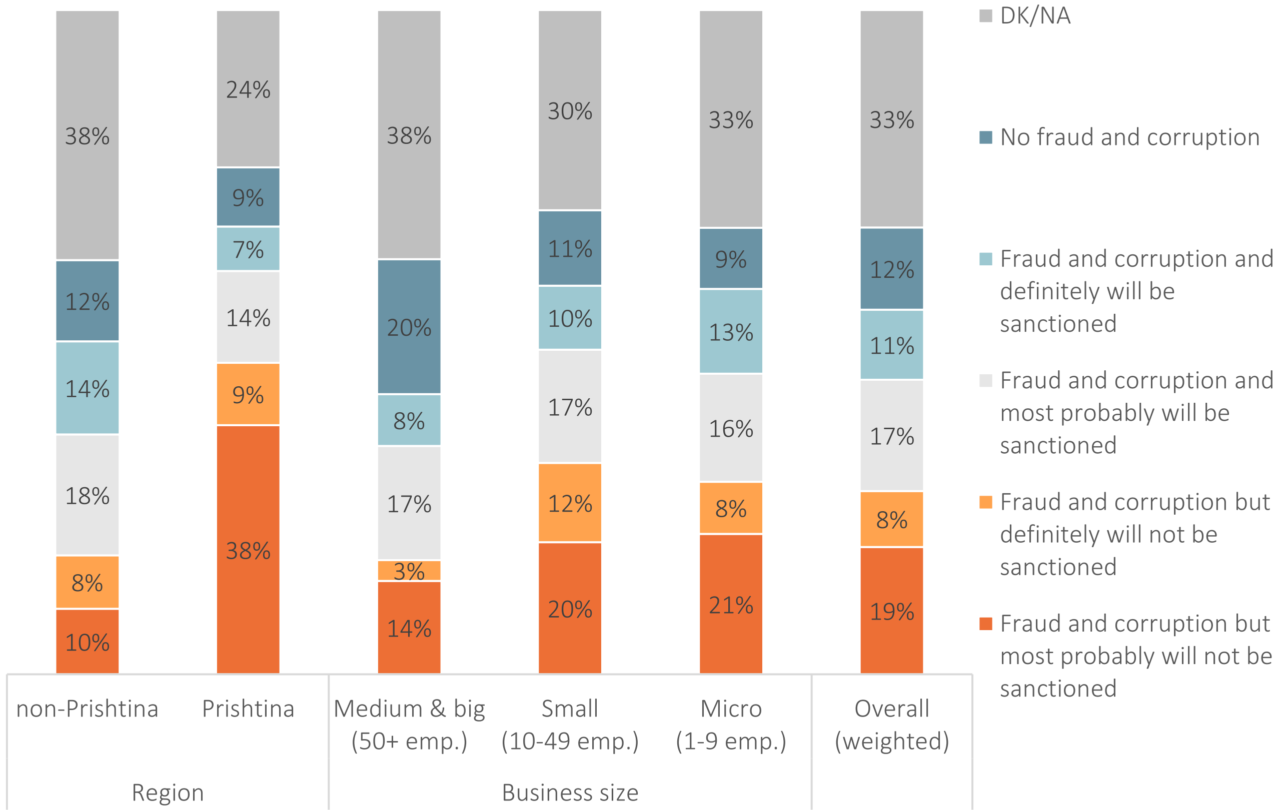
Figure 160 Perception whether there will be attempted fraud and corruption regarding relief packages for businesses, by round



When taking a closer look at disaggregated data by region it can be observed that businesses respondents belonging to businesses in the region of Prishtinë/Priština most commonly perceived that fraud and corruption will take place and most probably will not be sanctioned (38%). In comparison, only 10% businesses respondents from other region shared the same opinion. However, it should be noted that 38% of respondents from other regions than Prishtinë/Priština did not provide an answer to this question.

Nearly one third of all micro and small business respondents believed that fraud and corruption connected to relief packages will take place (29% and 32% respectively). Out of these, around 20% believed that such actions will not be sanctioned. Medium and large business respondents were more positive in this regard with only 17% that believed that fraud and corruption will take place.

Figure 161 Perception whether there will be attempted fraud and corruption regarding relief packages for businesses, by business size and region



Next the business survey set out to assess whether businesses continued to pay pension contribution within the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to the outbreak, 83% declared to have paid pension contributions for all their employees at 5% of their gross wage at the Kosovo Pension Savings Fund. Considering that this is required by law, the 15% that reported not to have paid such contributions should still be noted.

Overall, 87% declared that they continued to pay pension contributions for their employees as before COVID-19. This portrays a slight increase of 2 pp compared to round 2 and an increase of 7 pp compared to the first round of the assessment.

Figure 162 Businesses paying pension contributions for all their employees at 5% of their gross wage at the Kosovo Pension Savings Fund

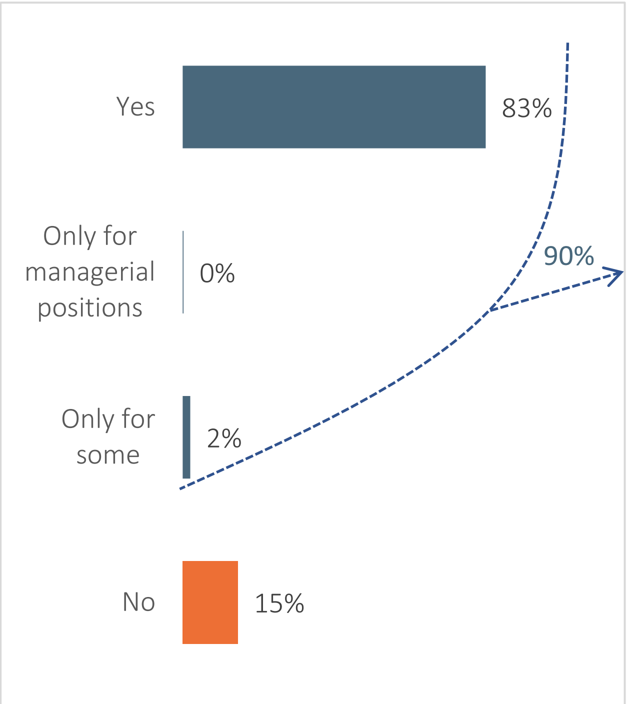
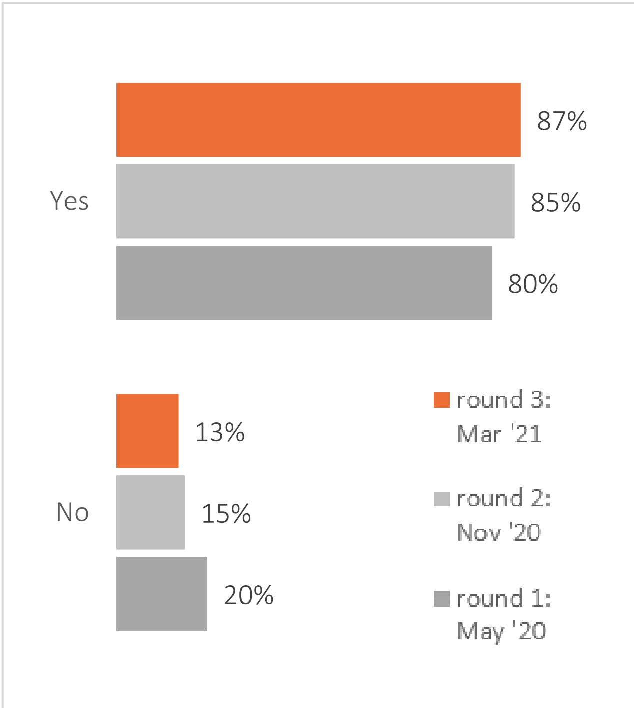
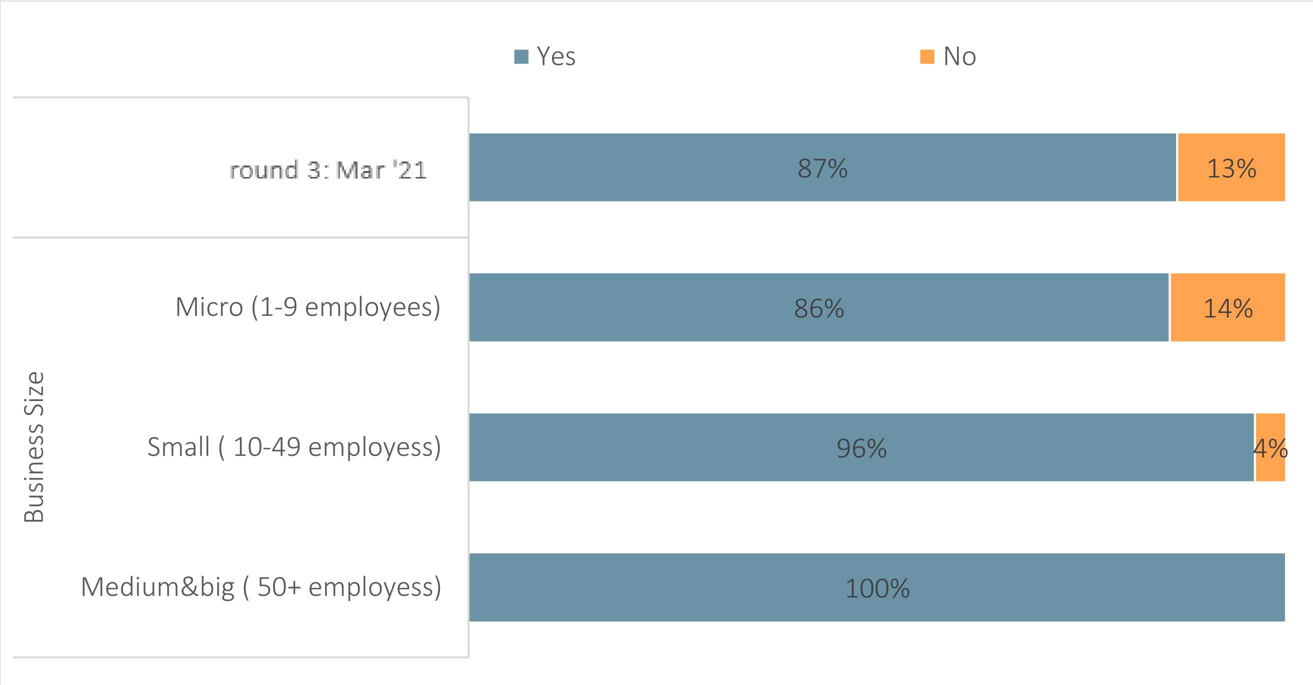


Figure 163 Businesses which continue to pay pension contributions for their employees as before COVID – 19, by round



Nonetheless, it should be noted that 14% of micro business respondents stated that their business did not continue to pay pension contributions. In comparison, only 4% of small businesses did not continue the payment, while all medium and big business respondents declared that their company continued to pay the contributions as before.

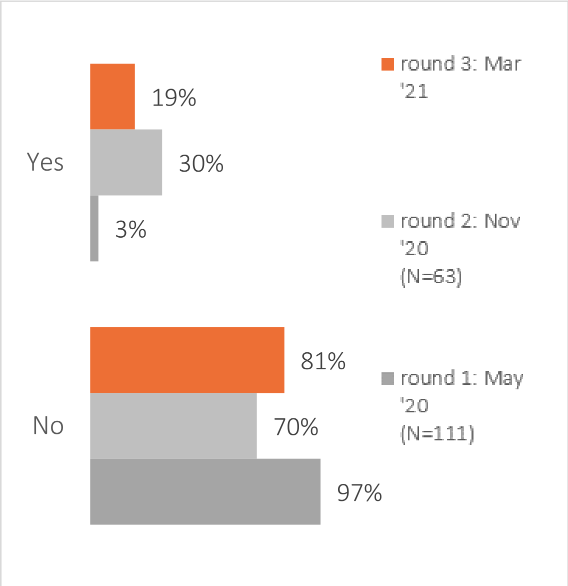
Figure 164. Businesses which continue to pay pension contributions for their employees as before COVID – 19, by business size



The number of employees that resigned[35] has decreased when compared to the situation in November 2020. Only 19% of businesses respondents witnessed an employee resigning, while during round 2 this ratio stood at 30% (decrease of 11 pp).

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 165. Employees that resigned from their job

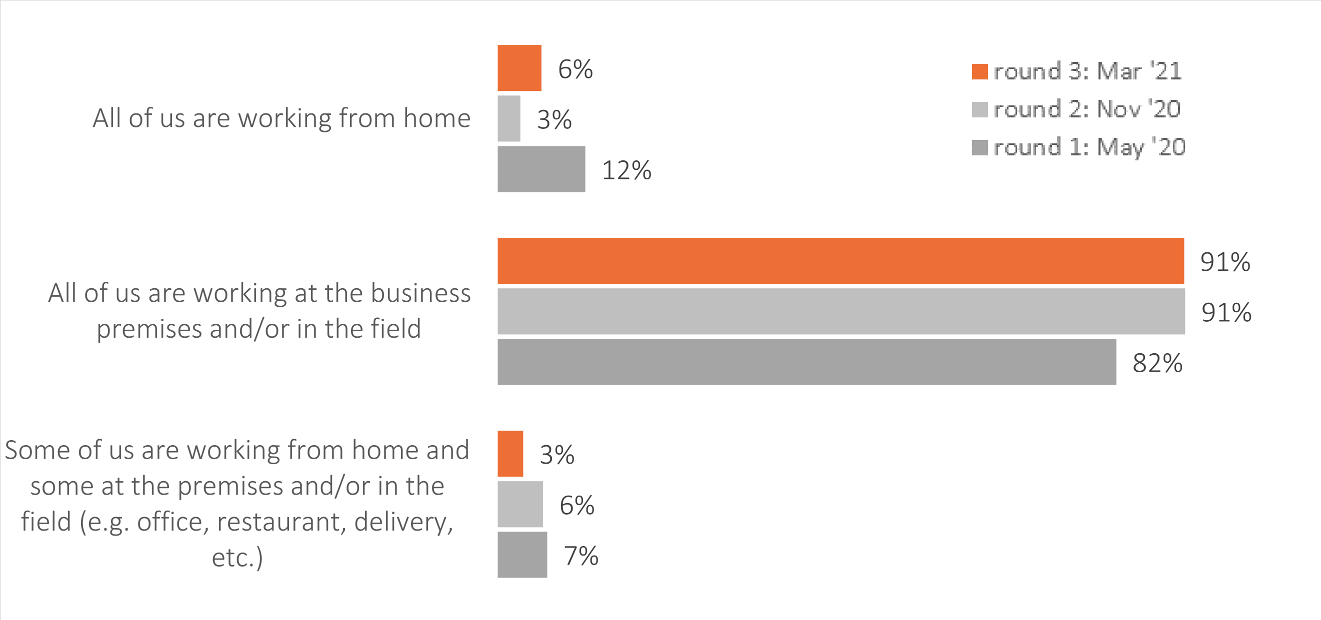


Reason	Round 3: Mar '21	Round 2: Nov '20	Round 1: May '20
We cut their salaries	1		
We were not able to pay their salaries	11	14	2
They could not work due to family and/or childcare obligations	2	2	
Other	7	6	2
Overall	21	22	4

[35] Here only respondents were asked that were part of a company that had halted their business activities.

Similar to the results of round 2, the great majority declared that all employees were working at the business premises and/or in the field (91%) as of March 2021. Around 6% stated that their employees were all working from home, a slight increase compared to the previous round where only 3% of business respondents declared the same. Only 3% reported that some were working from home while others worked at the business´ premises.

Figure 166. Change in place of work due to COVID-19, by round

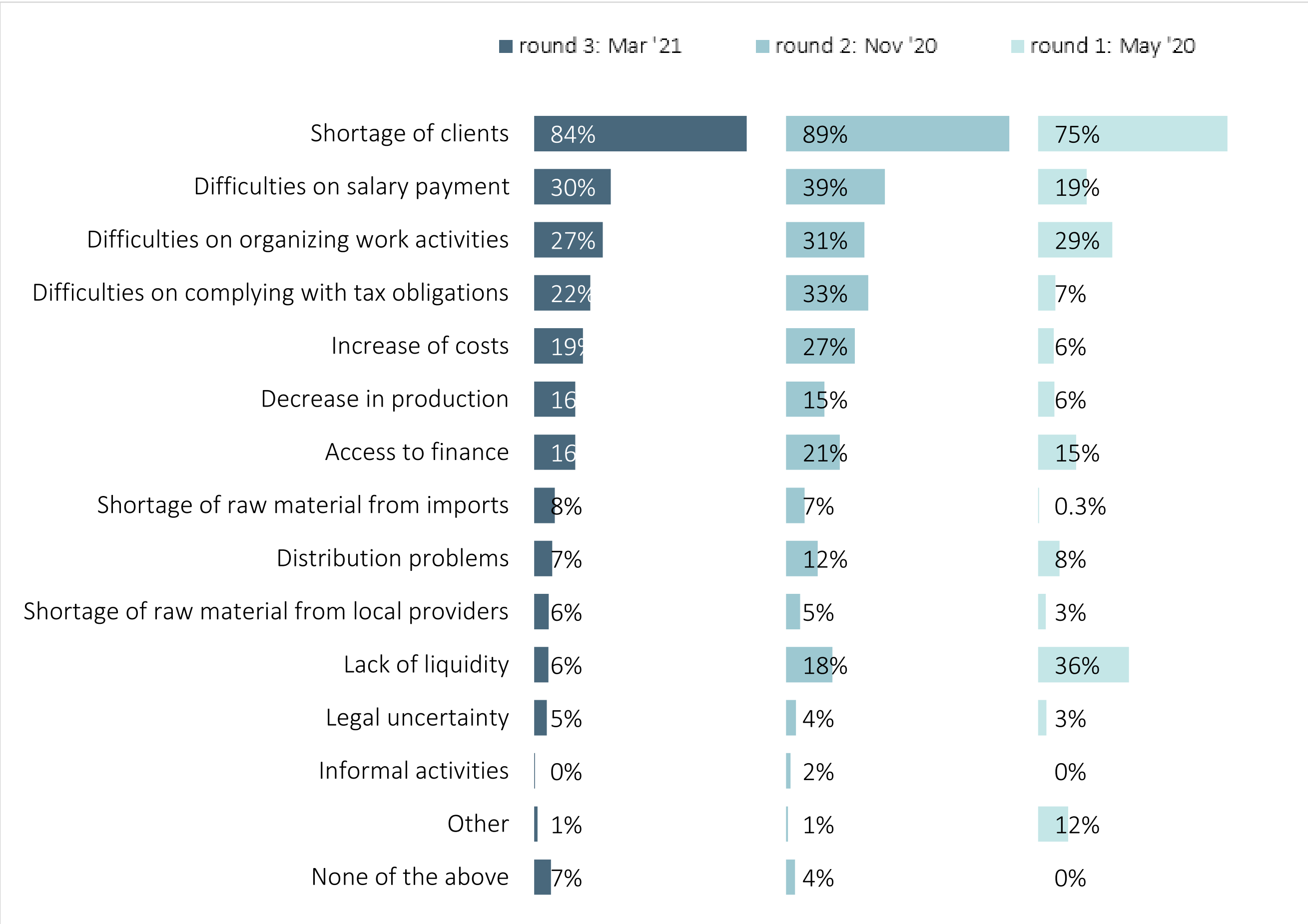


Businesses all over the world had to deal with a variety of challenges and issues caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The respondents that took part in the business survey, and were part of an operational business, were therefore presented with a list of 13 potential challenges in order to assess which issues were particularly relevant in the Kosovo context.

Comparative data between rounds show that the shortage of clients remained to be the most commonly mentioned issue given the current situation with COVID-19 (84%), compared to round 2 this portrays a slight drop of 5 pp. Almost one in three still mentioned difficulties with salary payments (30%), and difficulties in organizing work activities (27%). (a decrease of 9 pp and 4 pp respectively when compared to round 2). Fewer business respondents also mentioned difficulties related to tax obligation (22%, decrease of 11 pp) and the increase of costs (19%, decrease of 8 pp) in comparison to the situation in November 2020.

Overall data results indicate that fewer business respondents faced the listed issues in March 2021, when compared to the situation in 2020. Results disaggregated by business size in this regard did not reveal significant differences.

Figure 167. Issues for businesses given the current situation with COVID-19, by round

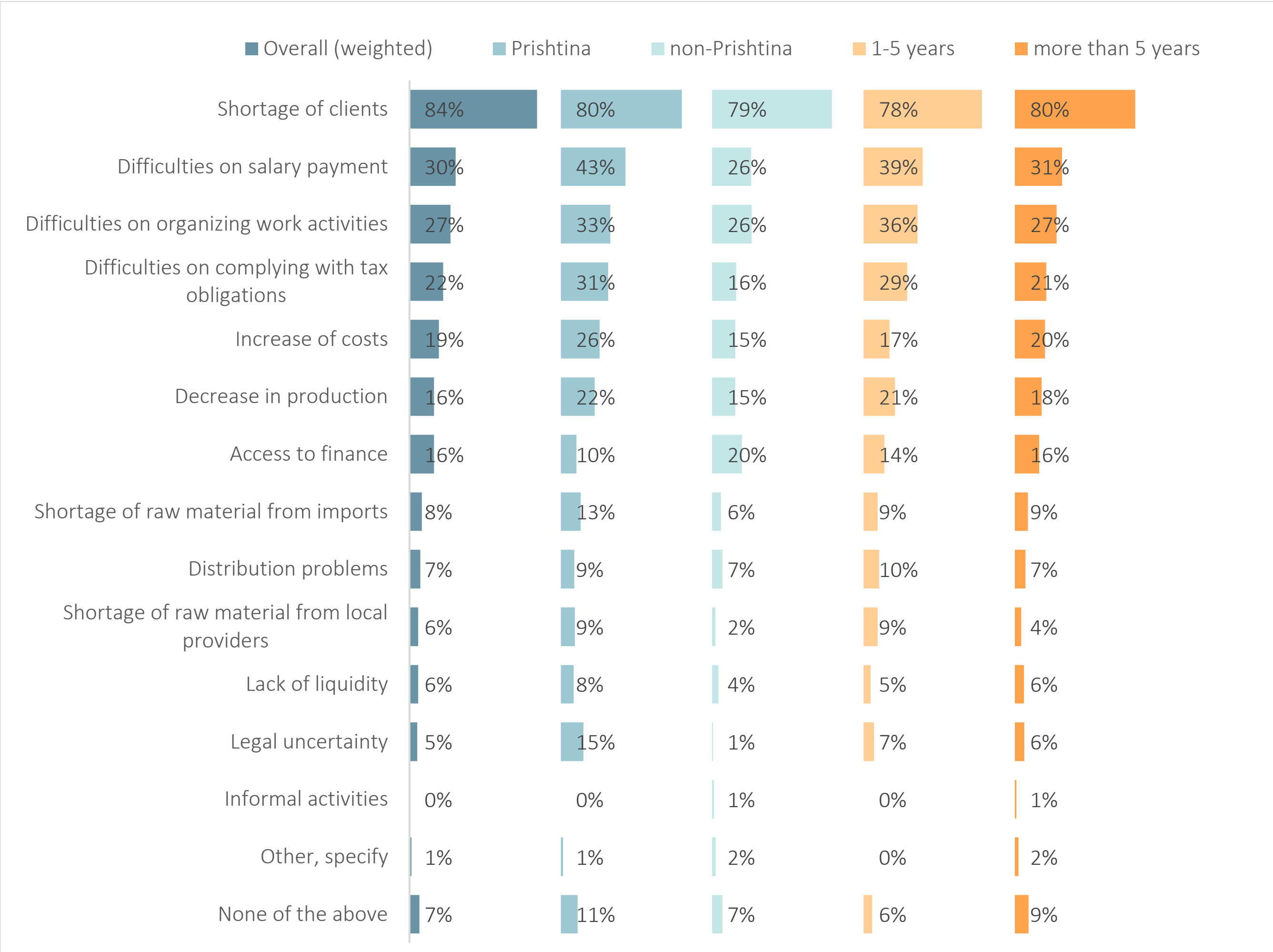


*only those that are operational

Data results also showed that difficulties in paying salaries were more common among businesses situated in the Prishtinë/Priština region (43%) and those with a tenure of one to five years (39%), compared to those in other regions (26%) or with tenure of more than five years (31%). While businesses in Prishtinë/Priština also more commonly faced issues related to tax obligations (31%), access to finance was more frequently mentioned as an issue among businesses in other regions (20%).

In general, younger businesses were more prone to have faced a variety of issues than more established ones. However, some issues were slightly more frequently mentioned by businesses with a tenure of more than five years when compared to those with a tenure of one to five years, i.e. the shortage of clients (80% vs 78%), increase of costs (20% vs 17%) and access to finance (16% vs 14%).

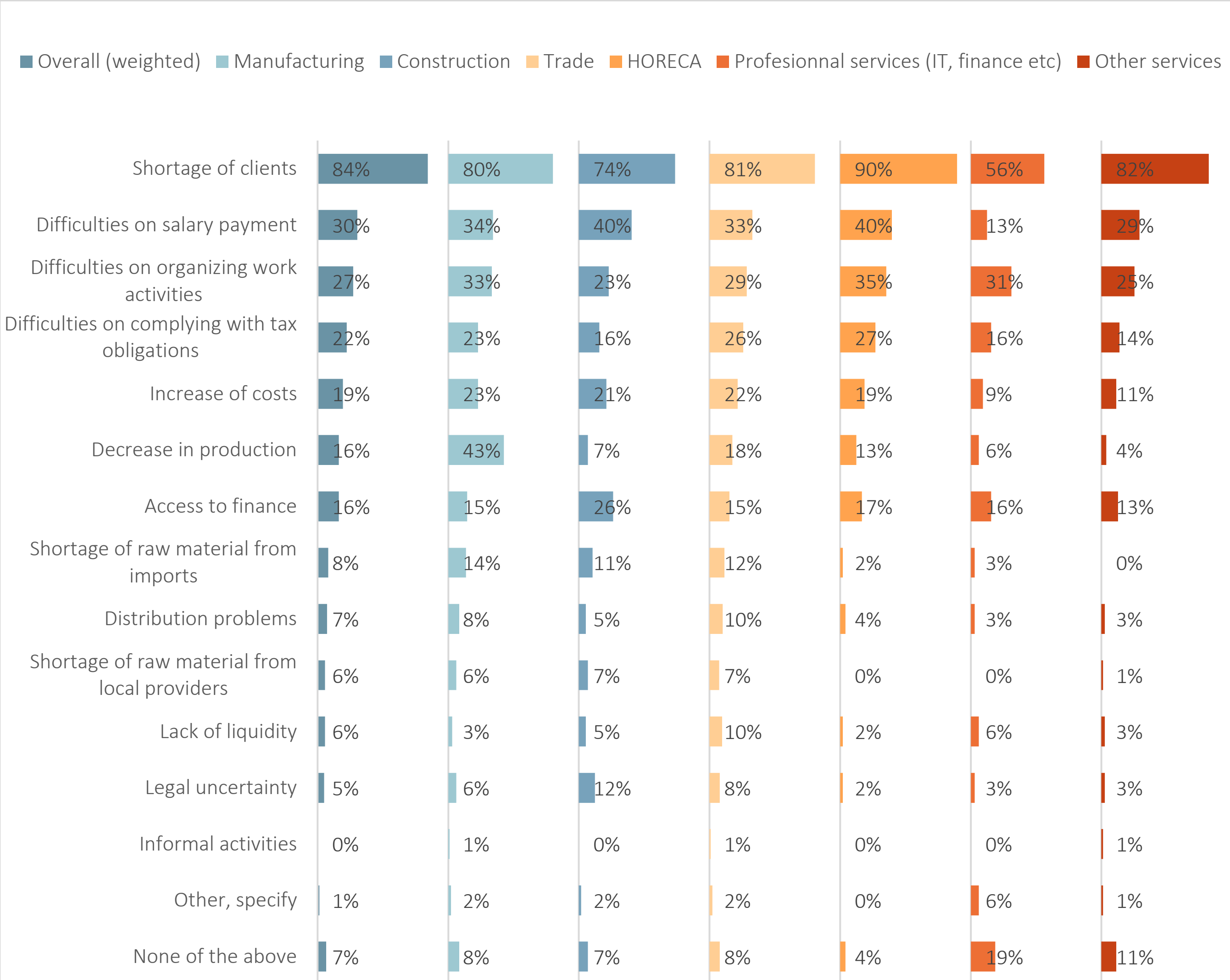
Figure 168 Issues for businesses given the current situation with COVID-19, by region and tenure



On the other hand, data disaggregated by business activity does reveal some deviations. While all businesses regardless of the activity type most commonly felt that the shortage of clients was an issue, HORECA/hospitality businesses stood out with 90% that reported this issue. Businesses offering professional services least commonly mentioned the shortage of clients as an issue (56%).

Difficulties with paying salaries were most visible among construction businesses and HORECA/hospitality businesses (40% each). Organizing work activities was more commonly an issue for manufacturing businesses (33%) and HORECA/hospitality businesses (35%) when compared to others. The manufacturing businesses also stood out with 43% of businesses respondents that belonged to this type of business that reported a decrease in production as an issue given the current situation with COVID-19. Business respondents that were part of a construction company more often mentioned the access to financing as an issue (26%) compared to other business activities.

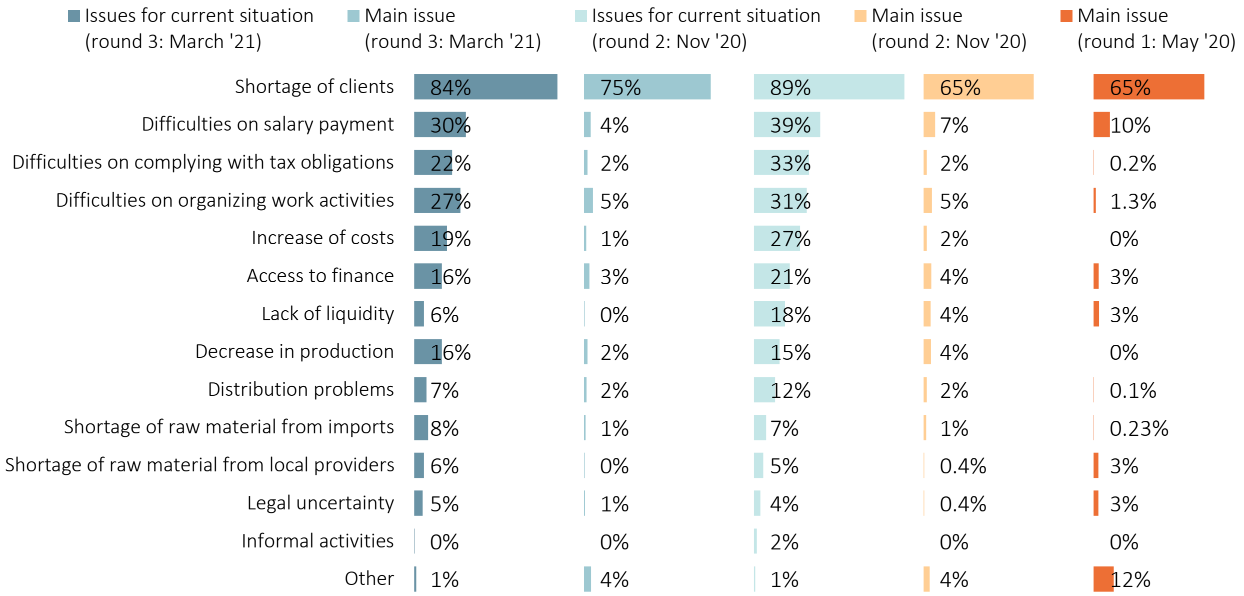
Figure 169 Issues for businesses given the current situation with COVID-19, by business activity



** shown only those that are operational and only those business activities that have a significantly large number of businesses part of this survey*

Businesses that did not fully stop their operations were also asked about their main concerns should the pandemic situation continue to last for another two to three months. While the issues of the current situation (as discussed in detail in the above graphs) for businesses were varied, the main concern of businesses still related to client shortages should the COVID-19 situation continue for another two or three months (75%). This portrays an increase of 10 pp when compared to the main issues mentioned during round 2 and round 1 of the assessment (65% each). During round 1, 10% were mainly concerned about difficulties related to salary payments, while this ratio dropped to 7% in round 2 and 4% in round 3.

Figure 170. Current Issues vs main concern if COVID-19 continues to spread over the next two to three months, by round



Survey results from March 2021 further suggests that the workforce of businesses may have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, albeit not negatively for all. On average (trimmed mean[36]), micro businesses reduced their number of full-time employees by -0.2, while small businesses and medium and big businesses increased their full-time workforce by 3.3 and 15,8 respectively. Part-time employment did not change on average for micro businesses, while small business witnessed a decrease of -0,6 and medium and large businesses and increase by +2.2. Please note that the overall results are not the simple average of the three business segments, rather than a weighted average.

Table 1 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
Full time staff	Micro (1-9 employees)	2,9	2,7	-0.2
	Small (10-49 employees)	15,3	18,6	+3,3
	Medium & big (50+ employees)	145,3	161,1	+15,8
	Overall (weighted)	**6,2**	**5,2**	**-1**
Part-time staff	Micro (1-9 employees)	0,1	0.1	0
	Small (10-49 employees)	0,8	1.4	-0,6
	Medium & big (50+ employees)	4,0	6,2	+2,2
	Overall (weighted)	**0,2**	**0,2**	**0**

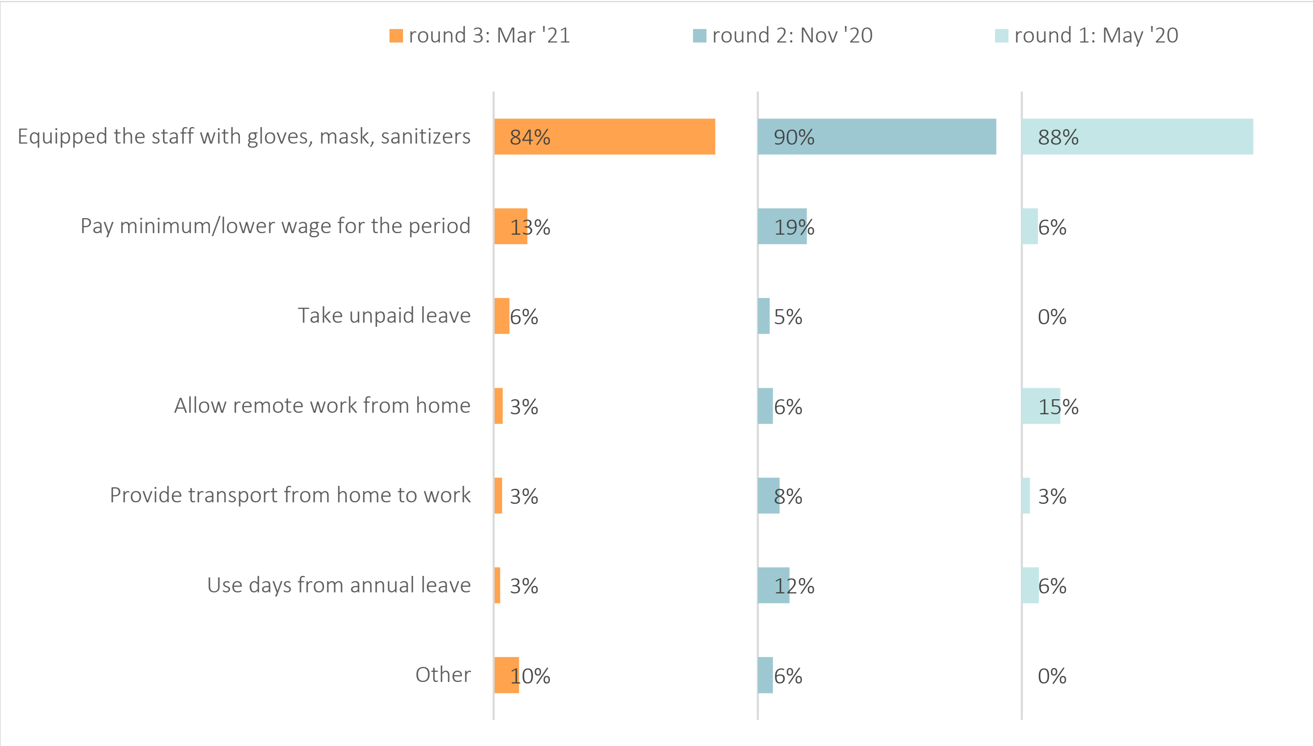
[36] Trimmed mean represents the mean after removing the outliers.

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

About eight in 10 business respondents reported in March 2021 that they had equipped the staff with gloves, masks and sanitizers (84%). However, this portrays a decrease of business that engaged with this measure when compared to the data results in November 2020 (90%).

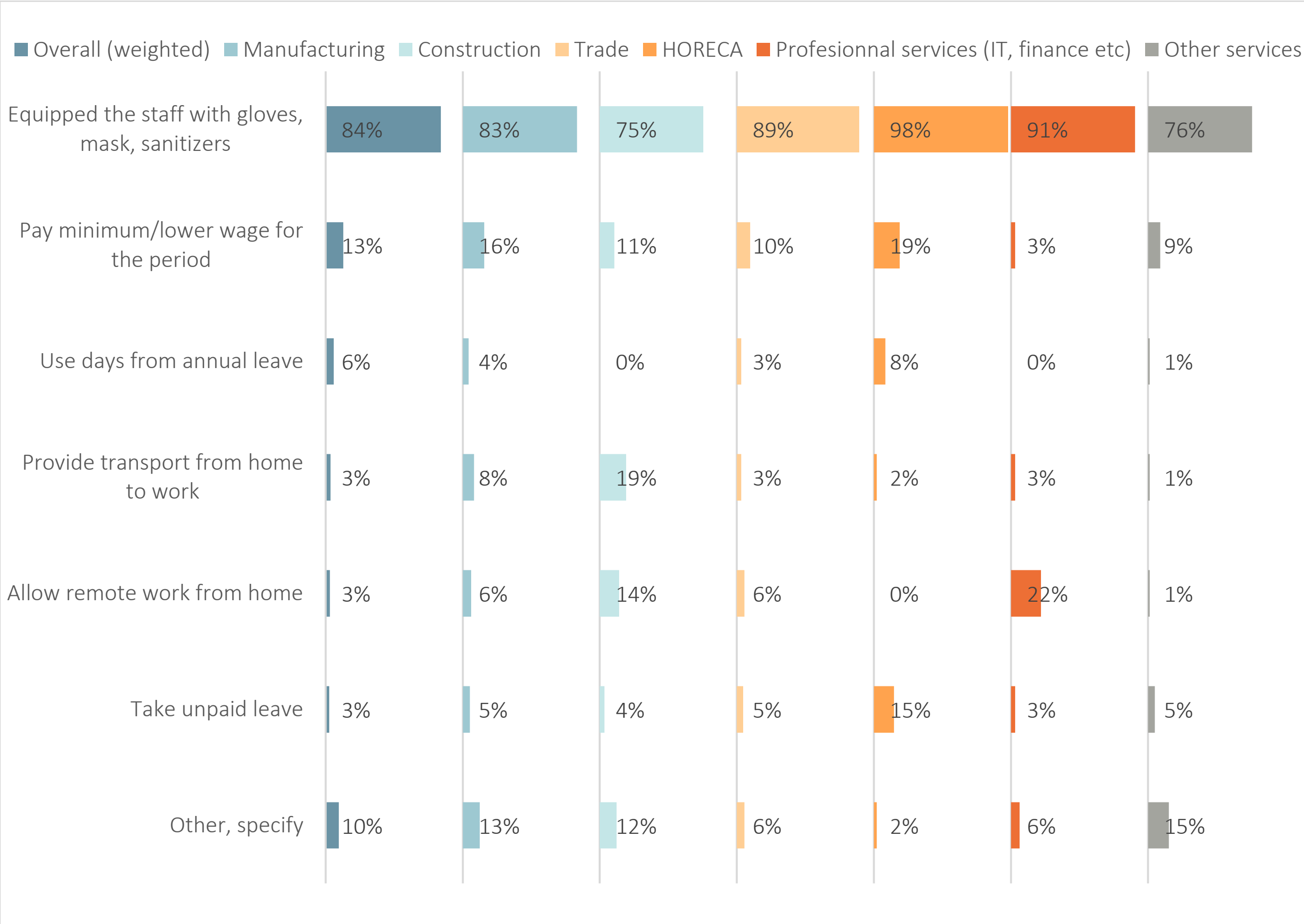
Fewer business respondents also reported that they had resorted to paying minimum wage (13%) compared to before (19%), while roughly the same number of business respondents reported that their business enforced unpaid leave for their employees (6%). Allowing remote work was not common in March 2021 (3%), while this ratio stood at 6% in November 2020 and 15% in May 2020.

Figure 171. Measures taken by businesses for employees, by round



Data results also show that businesses offering professional services more commonly allowed remote work for their employees (22%) compared to other types of businesses. Whereas businesses part of HORECA/hospitality more commonly resorted to paying minimum wage (19%) or enforcing unpaid leave (15%) than other businesses. It further stood out that construction businesses were more likely to have provided transport from home to work (19%) than others.

Figure 172 Measures taken by businesses for employees, by business activity

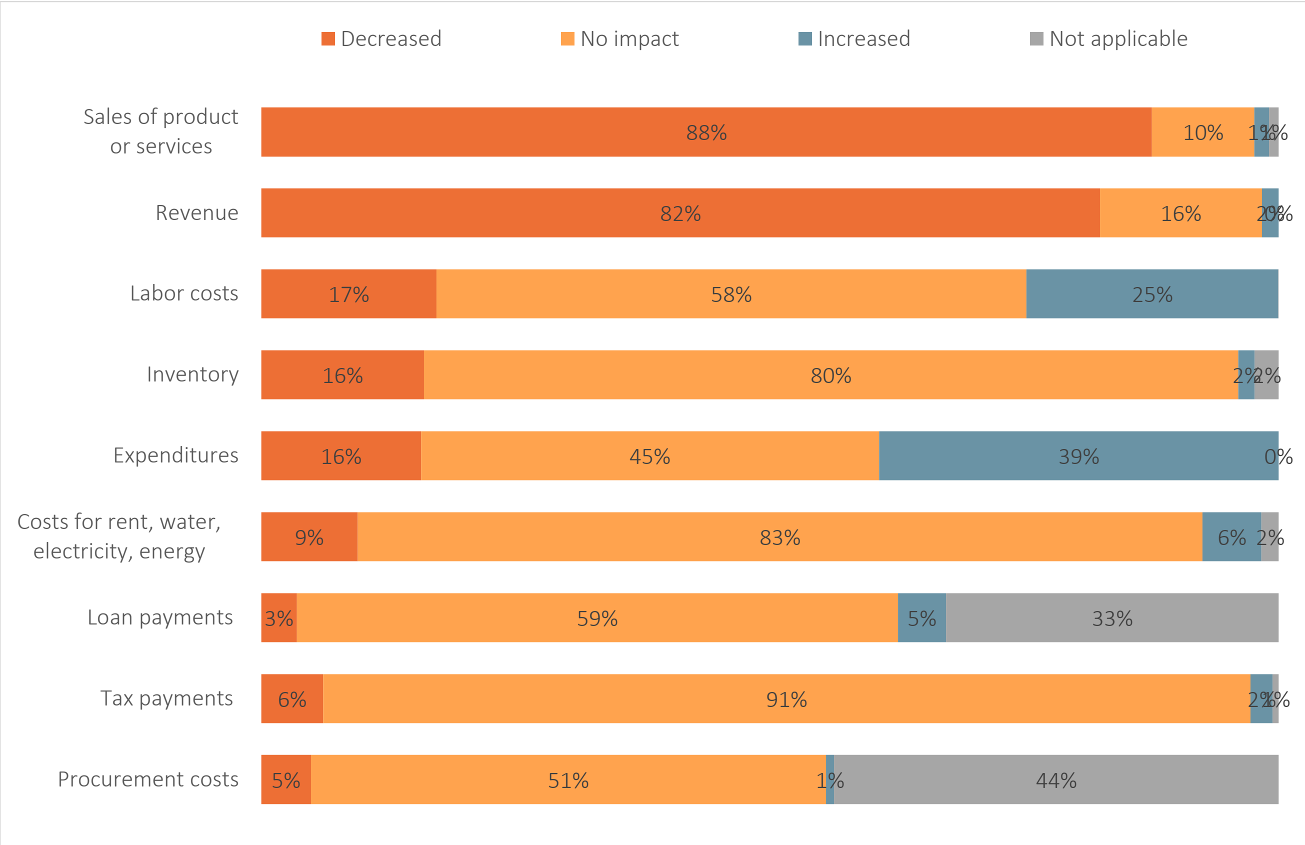


Businesses that were partly or fully operational were also asked whether their revenues, expenditures, sales and inventory have decreased, increased or stayed the same since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Data results show that around eight in 10 business respondents declared that their sales of products or services, as well as the revenues had decreased (88% and 82% respectively).

Around one in six experienced decreases in labour costs, inventory and expenditures (17%, 16% and 16% respectively), while 25% and 39% witnessed an increase of costs and expenditures respectively. Overall, most did not experience any impact on labour costs, inventory or expenditures.

Costs for rent, water, and electricity as well as tax payments were the least impacted issues in March 2021 according to the survey respondents (83% and 91% respectively).

Figure 173. COVID-19 impact on revenues, expenditures, sales and inventory



Corresponding to above discussed findings, further data underline why micro businesses mostly reported a poor or very poor financial performance. Compared to other businesses of larger size, micro businesses stood out with the highest frequency of those that reported a decrease in sales of products and services as well as revenues. Respondents belonging to small businesses stood out slightly with more that reported an increase in costs for rent, water and electricity as well as loan payments, than respondents belonging to micro or medium and big businesses.

On the other hand, labour costs, inventories as well as expenditures and procurement costs increased the most for medium and big businesses.

Figure 174 Covid-19 impact on revenues, expenditures, sales and inventory, by business size

Data further shows that businesses with activities within HORECA/hospitality as well as construction and manufacturing have experienced the highest decrease in sales of products or services, whereas businesses offering professional services have been the least affected in comparison.

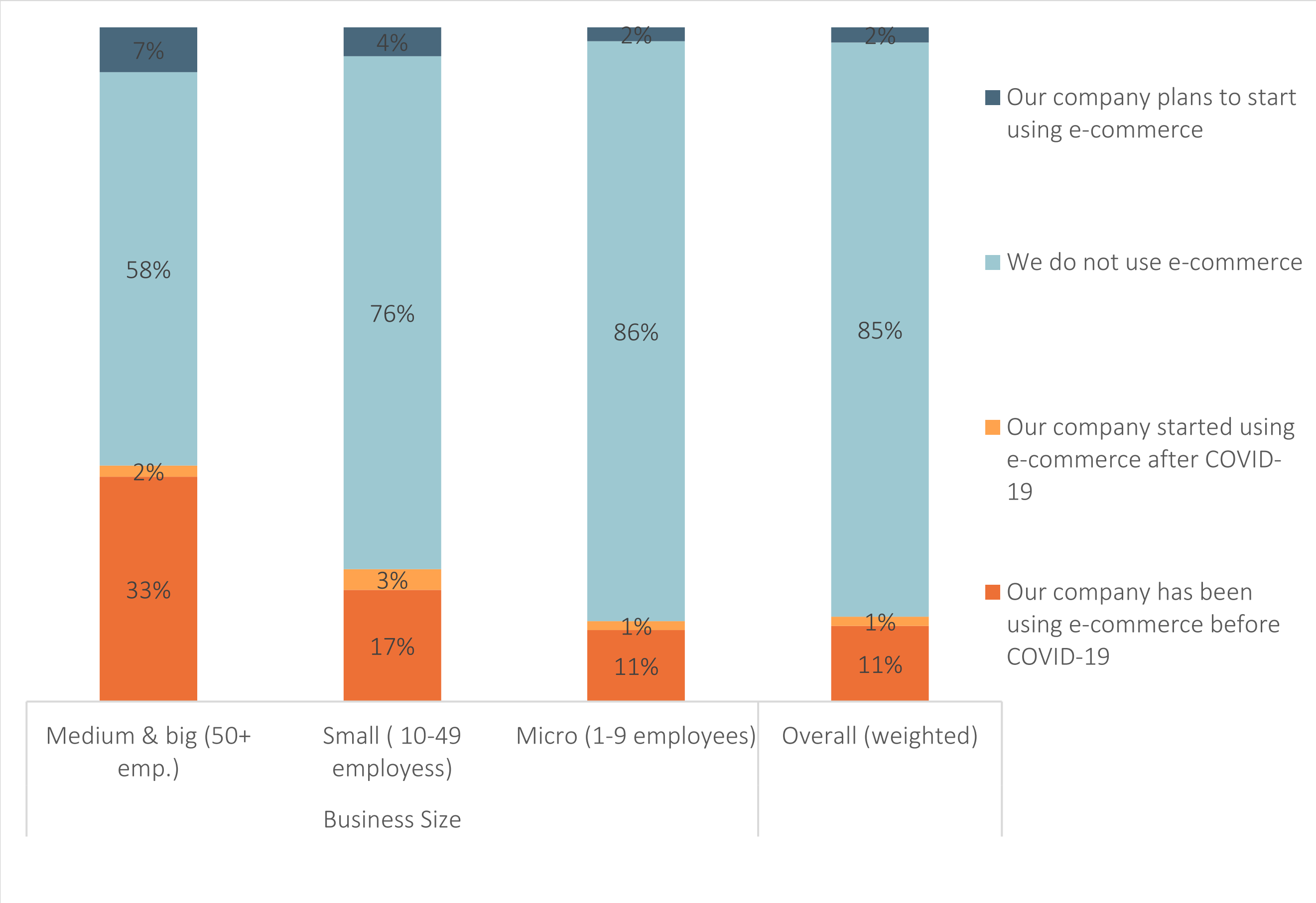
The manufacturing businesses stood out as the one which had the biggest increase in labour costs, while businesses which offer professional services witnessed a higher increase in expenditures, compared to others.

Figure 175 COVID-19 impact on revenues, expenditures, sales and inventory, by business activity

In March 2021, the majority of companies still did not make use of e-commerce. Overall only 1% reported to have started to use e-commerce since the onset of the pandemic and 11% had made us of it already prior to COVID-19.

Small businesses were slightly more likely than micro businesses to have used e-commerce since before the pandemic (17% vs 11%), while one in three medium and big business were using e-commerce before COVID-19 emerged (33%).

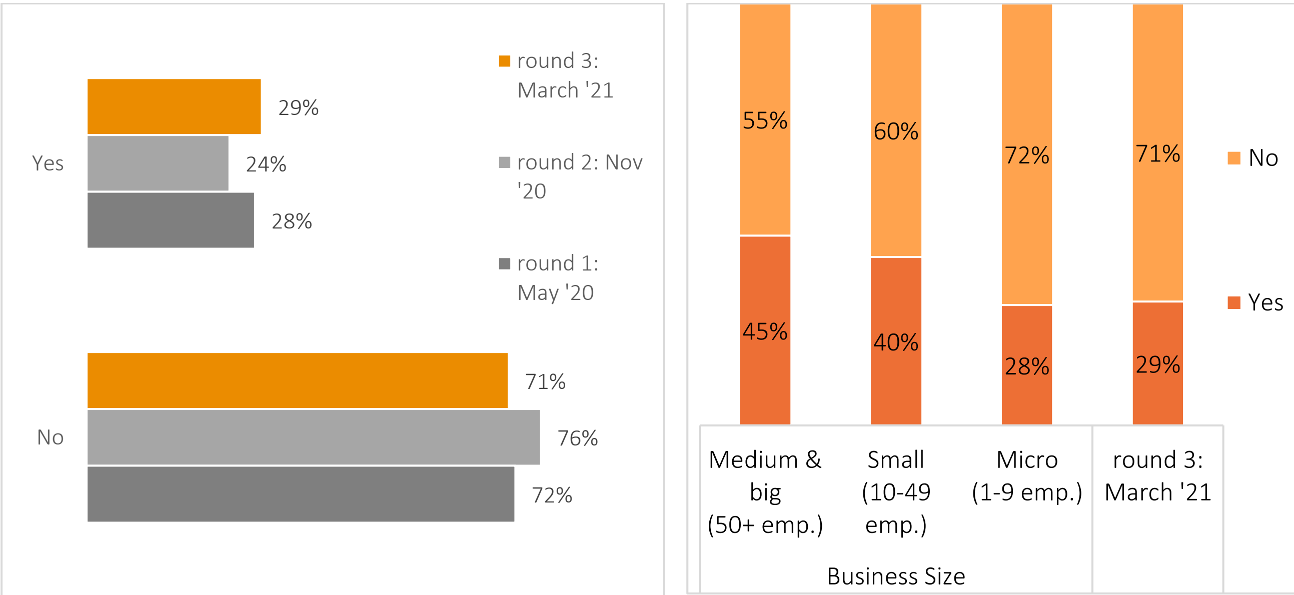
Figure 176 Companies using e-commerce



In order to deal with the ongoing pandemic, many businesses around the world had to make use of different types of coping mechanism in order to deal with the situation especially in terms of finances. Taking loans is one of such coping mechanism, but does not appear to be wide spread in the context of Kosovo in March 2021; Around 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 (71%).

However, nearly one in three did consider obtaining a loan (29%), an increase of 5 pp compared to the situation in November 2020. Readiness to take a loan in general decreases with company size, while more than two in five medium and big businesses were considering to take a loan to deal with the effects of COVID-19 (45%), fewer business respondents belonging to small (40%) or micro (28%) businesses declared the same.

Figure 177. Consideration of businesses to obtain a loan to deal with the current effects of the COVID-19 situation, by round and by business size

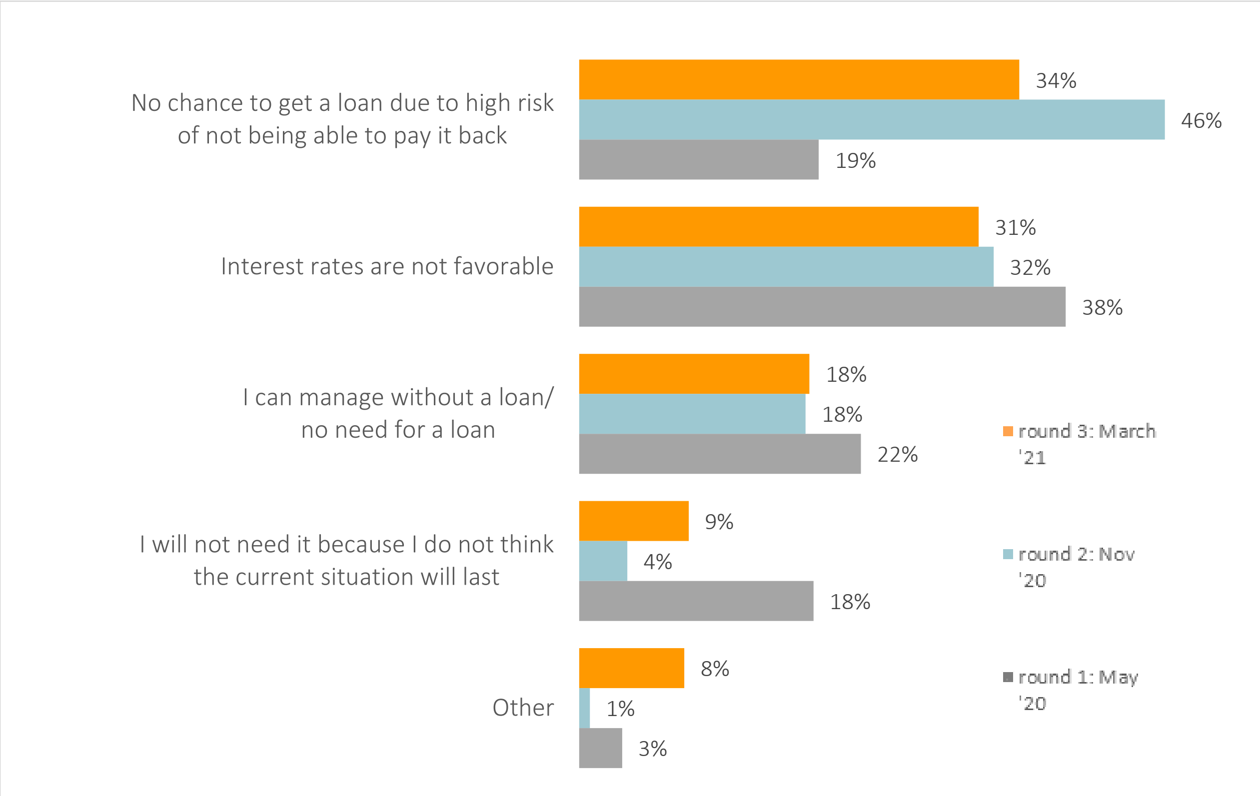


Respective reasons for not obtaining a loan were varying among the respondents. Around one third did not believe they would have a chance to obtain a loan due to the high risk of not being able to pay it back (34%). Compared to the data results of round 2, this portrays a decrease of 12 pp of business respondents that cited this particular reason for not obtaining a loan.

Similar two round 2, 31% declared that the interests of the potential loans were not favourable enough and 18% declared that they did not have a need for a loan.

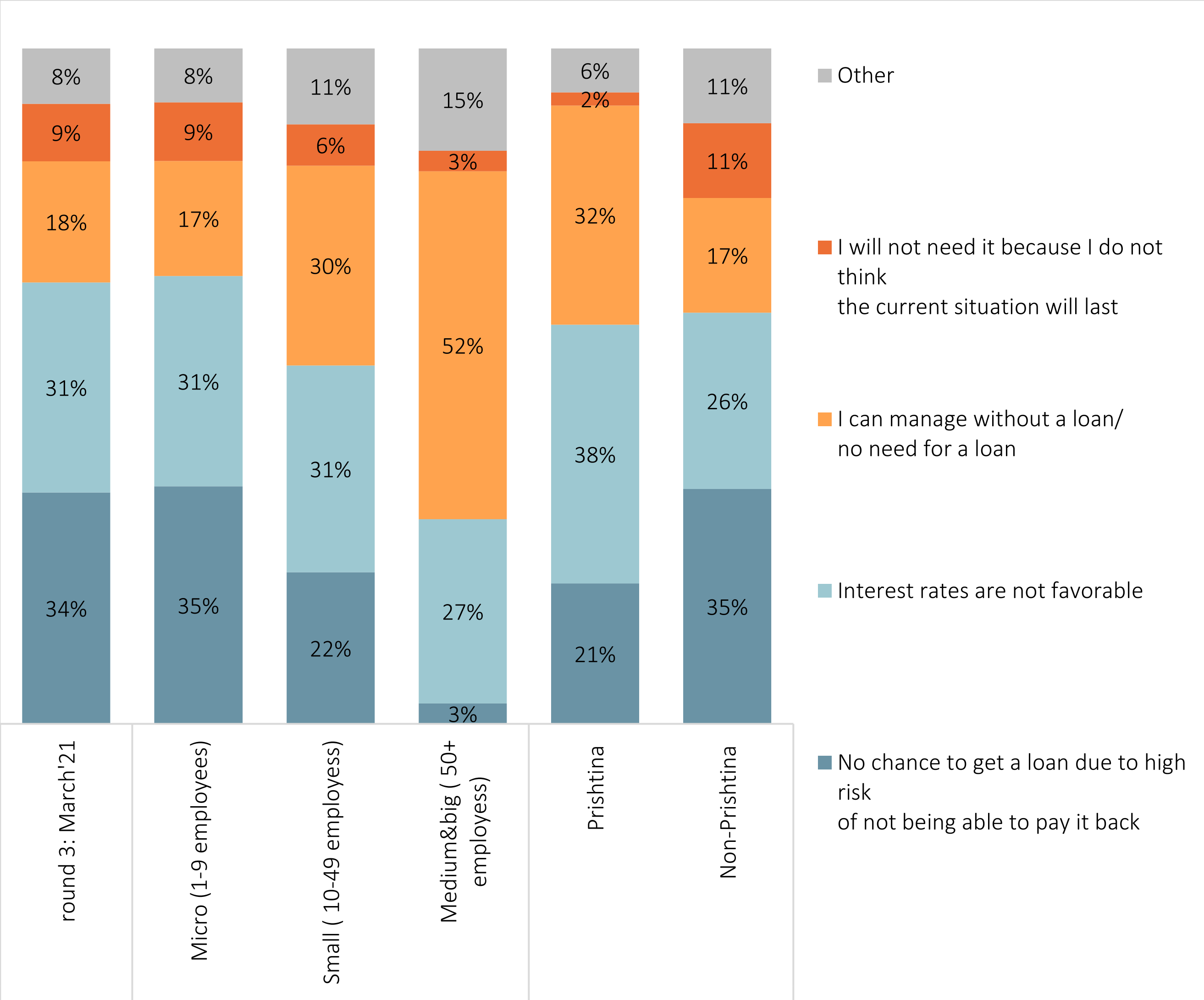
Worth mentioning is that in March 2021, 9% did not consider taking a loan due to the belief that the current situation will not last, only 4% had declared the same in November 2020.

Figure 178. Main reason for not considering to take a loan, by round



The inability to take a loan due to high risks of not being able to pay it back was more commonly mentioned by micro (35%) and small (22%) businesses, than by medium and big ones (3%). Also, over one third of the businesses outside the region of Prishtinë/Priština did not consider taking a loan due to potential inability to pay it back (35%), compared to only 21% which were located inside the capital region. Businesses in Prishtinë/Priština cited the unfavourable interest rates more commonly (38%) than those in other regions (26%).

Figure 179 Main reason for not considering to take a loan, by business size



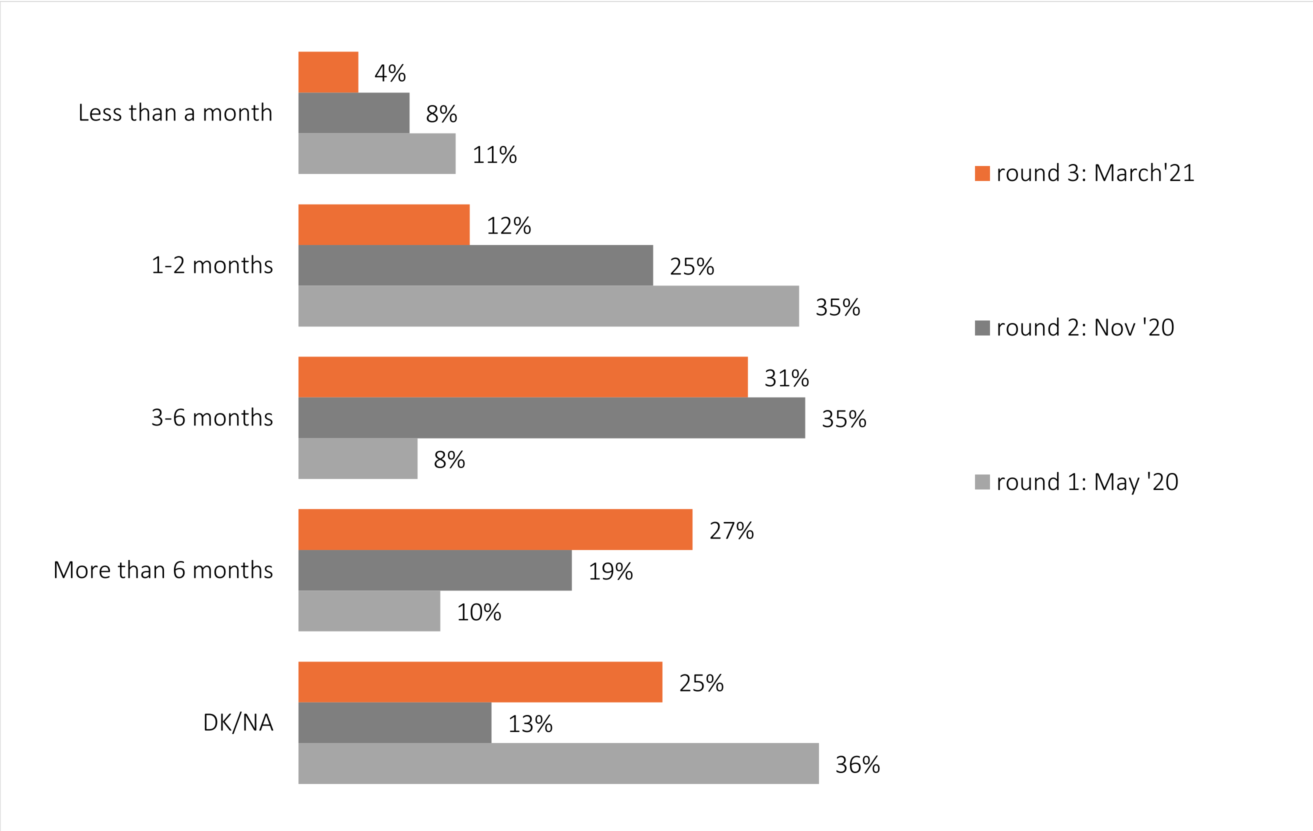
3.2.3 Future Outlook

The last module of the business survey questionnaire revolved around the future outlook of businesses in Kosovo. It assessed how much longer businesses estimated to be able to afford the current situation, and whether businesses made changes in future investment plans. Suggestions towards institutions as well as international ones on how businesses can be best supported were also assessed among other topics.

Comparative data between the three rounds of the assessment shows that businesses in Kosovo appear to be more confident in their coping abilities in March 2021. Nearly one third (27%) predicted that their business would be able to cope with the current situation for more than six months, this portrays an increase of 8 pp compared to round 2 and an increase of 17 pp compared to round 1. Around 31% believed that their business could afford the current situation for another three to six months, which portrays only a small difference in ratio compared to the situation in November 2020 (35%).

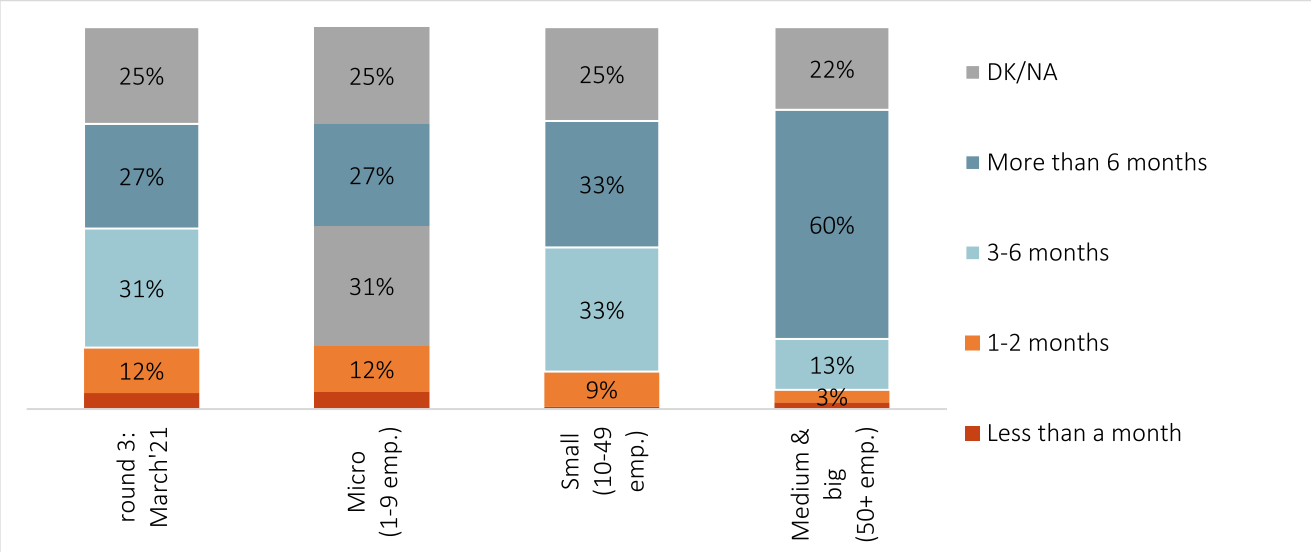
About 12% estimated that their business can afford the current situation for another one to two months, in November 2020 this result stood at 25% and in May 2020 at 35%. Only 4% declared that their business could cope with the current situation for less than one more month, during round 2 and round 1 of the assessment 8% and 12% respectively declared the same. It should be noted that one in four of the business respondents did not provide an answer to this question (25%).

Figure 180. All considered, how much longer can businesses afford the current situation, by round



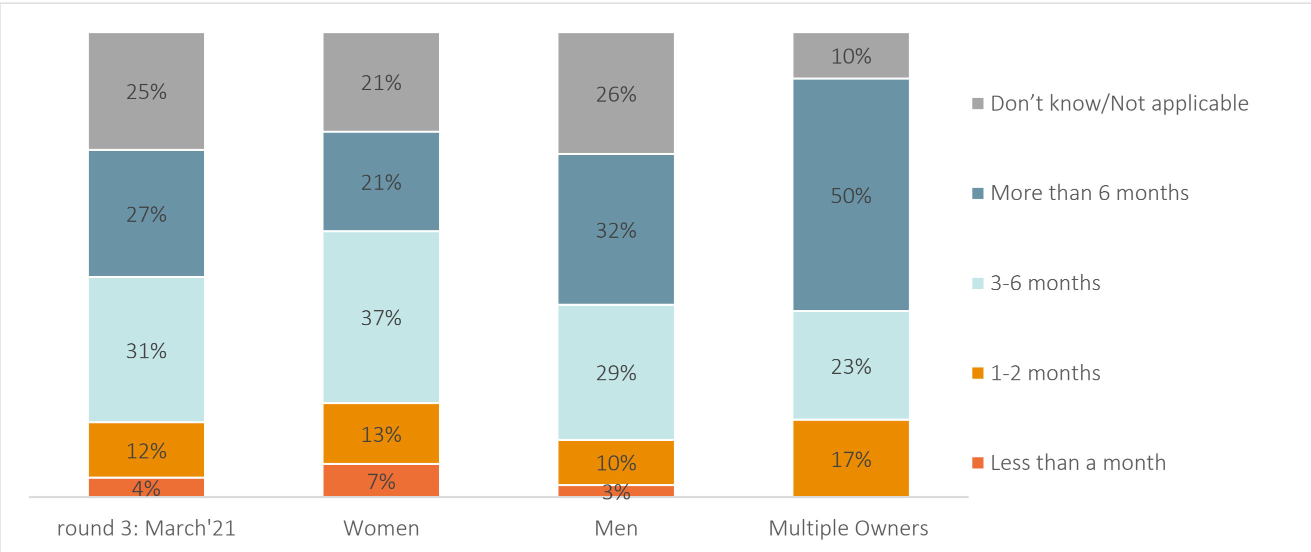
Data disaggregated by business size shows that despite the overall positive trend, micro businesses still appeared to struggle the most; 12% and 4% respectively declared that their business can only cope for either one to two more months, or less than one month. In comparison, only few of the small as well as medium and big businesses declared the same. Nearly two thirds of the medium and bug business believed that their business can cope with the current situation for more than six months (60%), while one third of small businesses (33%) and 27% of micro businesses declared the same.

Figure 181 All considered, how much longer can businesses afford the current situation



Considerably fewer women-owned businesses declared that their business can afford the current situation for more than six months (21%), compared to business owned by men (32%). Conversely, more women-owned business respondents estimated that their business can cope for another three to six months (37%) than men-owned business respondents (29%). More respondents belonging to women-owned businesses felt that their business can afford the current situation only for one to two more months (13%) or less than one month (7%) when compared to respondents that were part of men-owned businesses (10% and 3% respectively).

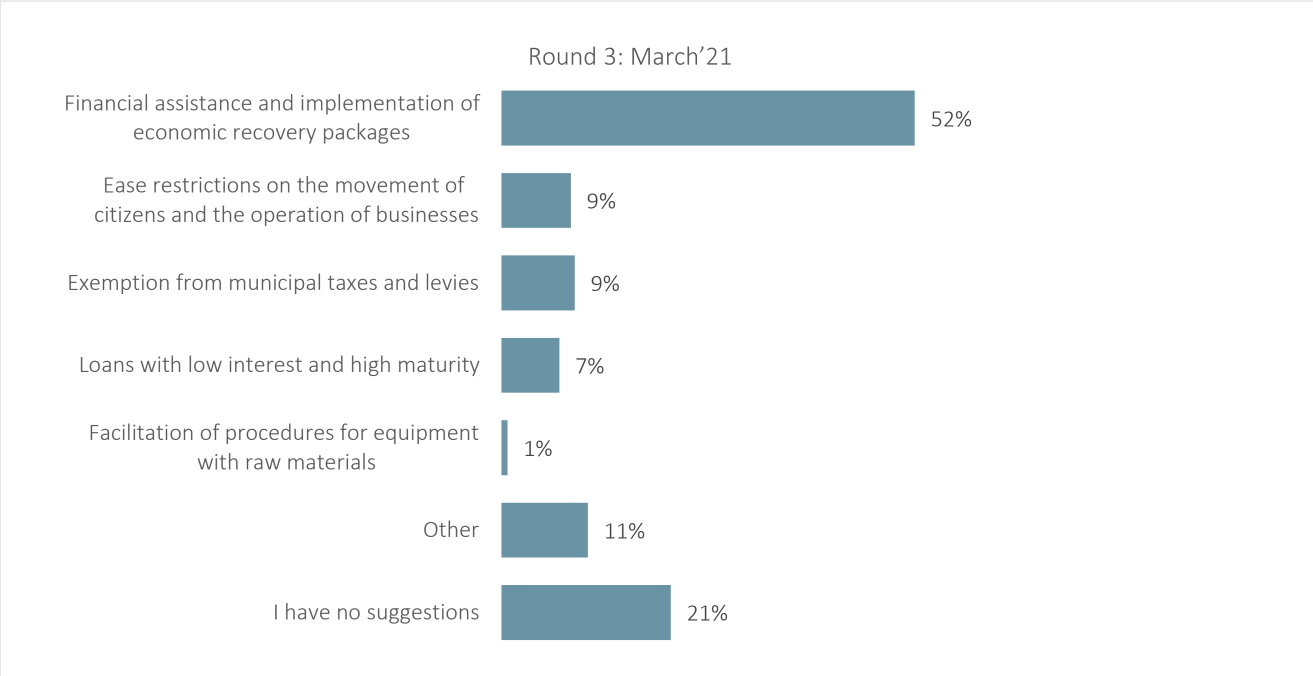
Figure 182 All considered, how much longer can businesses afford the current situation, by gender of business owner



When asked about suggestions to Kosovo institutions on measures that could help the respondent's businesses, around half mentioned financial assistance and implementation of economic recovery packages (52%).

Another 9% suggested that the restrictions on the movement of people and the operation of businesses should be eased, while also 9% mentioned tax exemptions and loans with low interests. Overall, 21% had no suggestions.

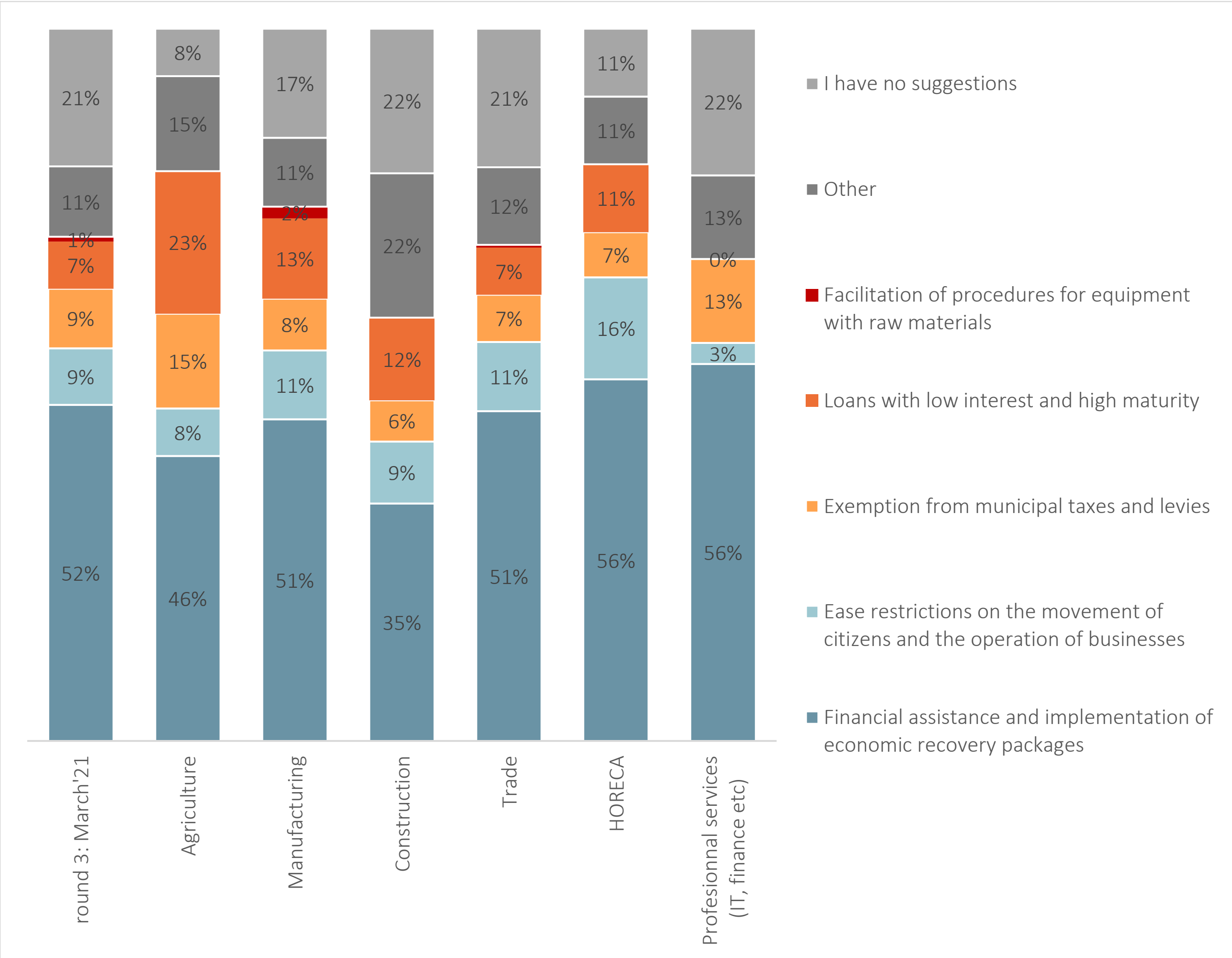
Figure 183. Suggestions to Kosovo institutions on measures that can help businesses to deal with the situation



Taking a closer look at the different types of businesses, it can be observed that respondents belonging to agricultural businesses more commonly felt that loans with low interest and high maturity (23%), as well as exemption from municipal taxes (15%) would help them to deal with the current situation, when compared to others.

Respondents part of businesses offering professional services more frequently mentioned tax exemption as a helpful measure for their business (13%), while businesses respondents part of HORECA/hospitality mentioned the ease on restriction of movement and business operations (16%) more commonly than others.

Figure 184 Suggestions to Kosovo institutions on measures that can help businesses to deal with the situation, by business activity



During round 3 of the assessment, business respondents were also asked whether they thought that the support from institutions should prioritize environmentally responsible (sustainable) development and the great majority responded with yes (89%). Especially medium and big businesses as well as respondents that were part of women- owned businesses were in favour of such prioritization (98% and 93% respectively).

Figure 185 Agreement whether government support should prioritize environmentally responsible development, by business size

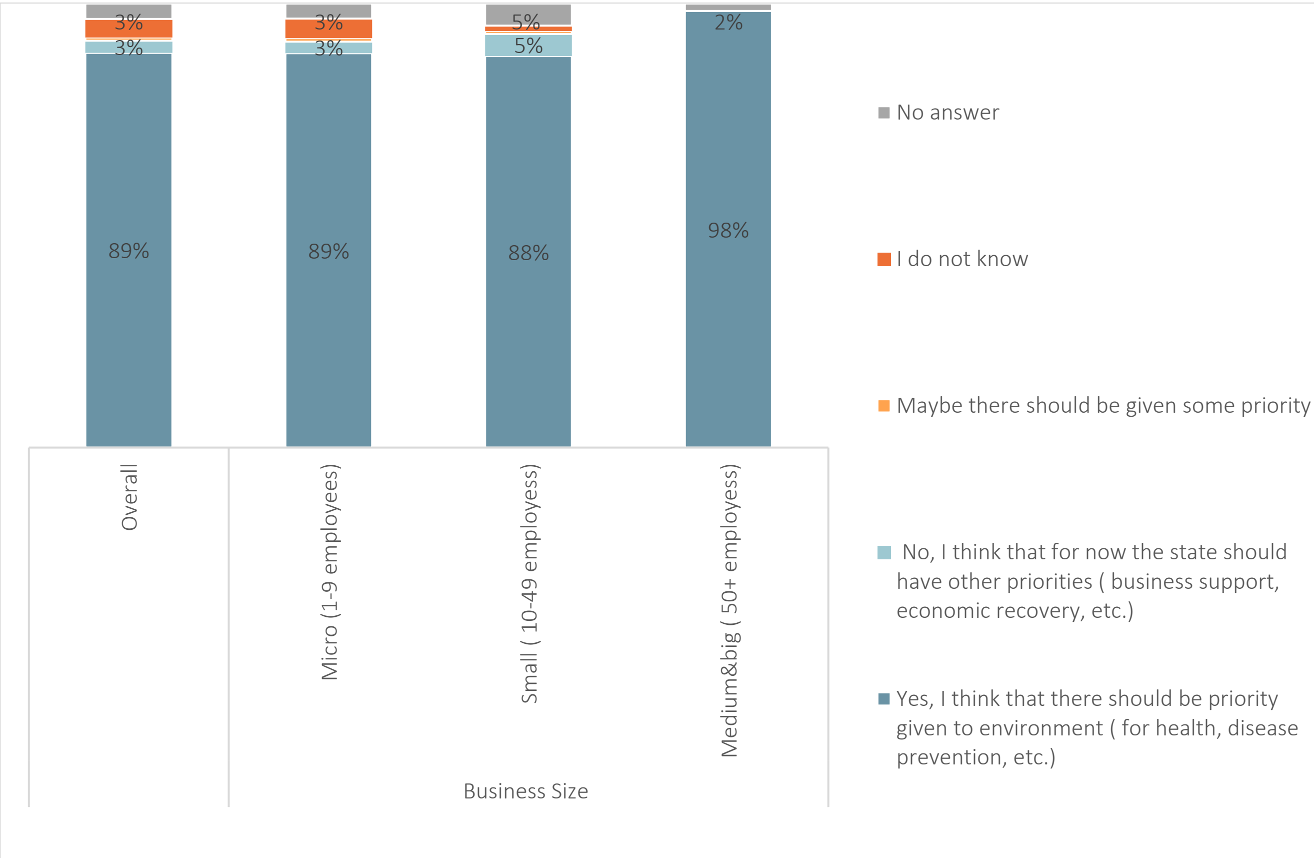
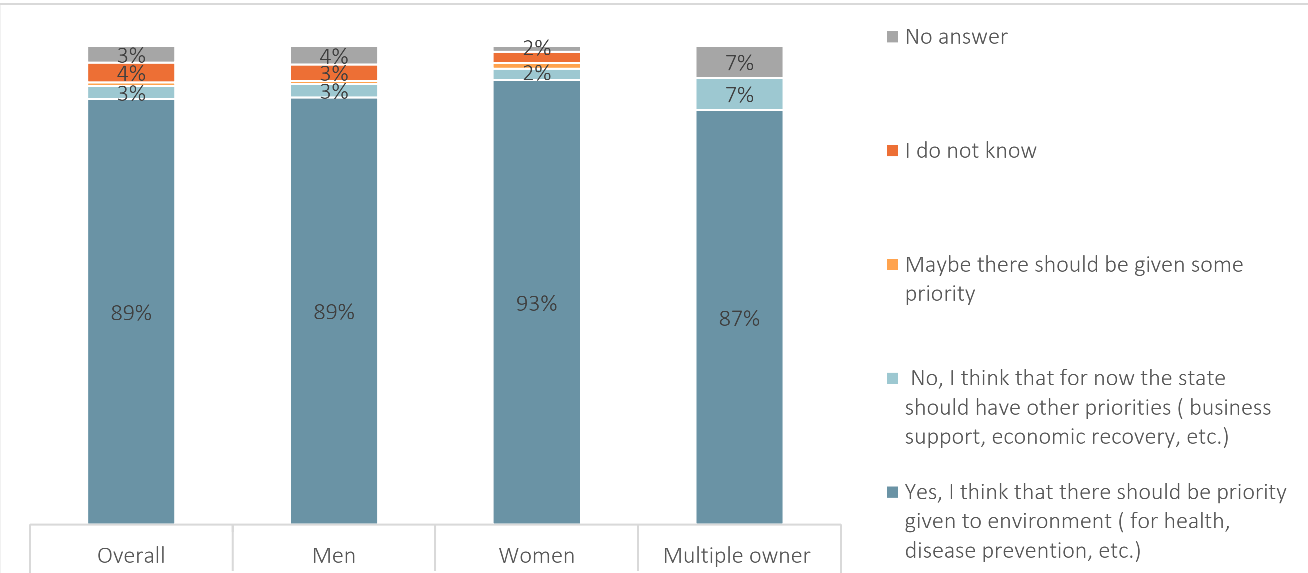
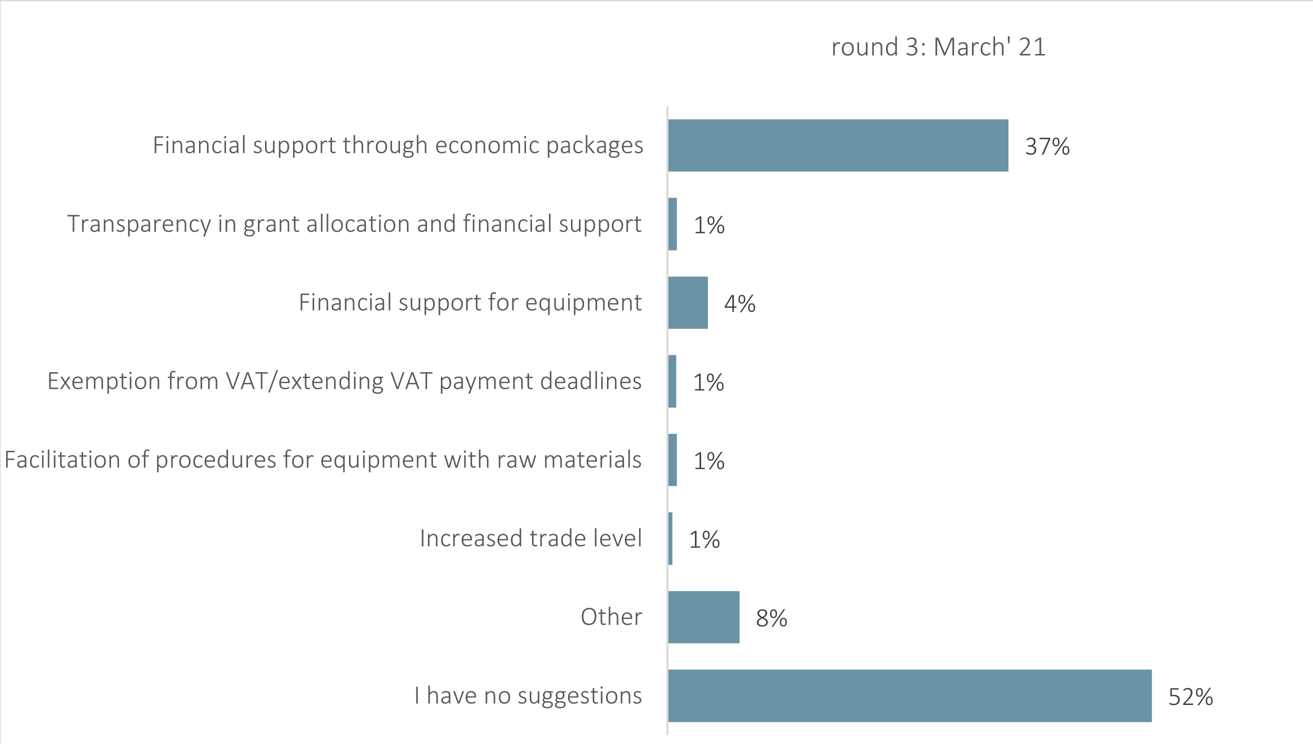


Figure 186 Agreement whether government support should prioritize environmentally responsible development, by gender of business owner



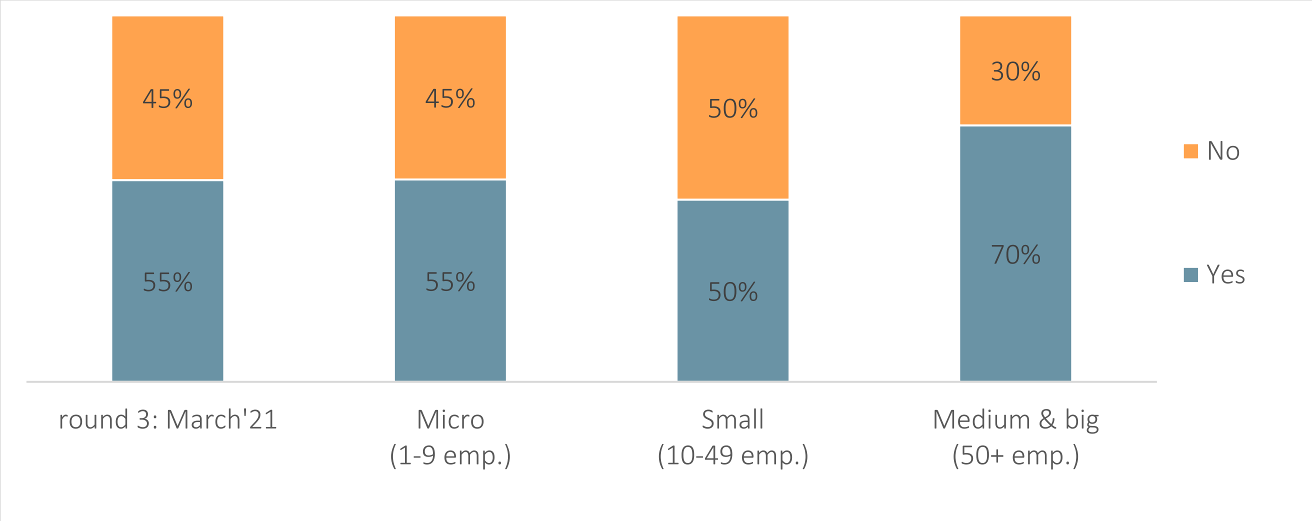
Suggestions to international organizations in Kosovo on measures that could help businesses to deal with the ongoing situation were scarce. Overall, more than half did not have any suggestion (52%), while nearly two in five business respondents mentioned financial support through economic packages (37%). Around 4% mentioned financial support for equipment.

Figure 187. Suggestions to the international organizations on measures that can help businesses to deal with the situation, by business size



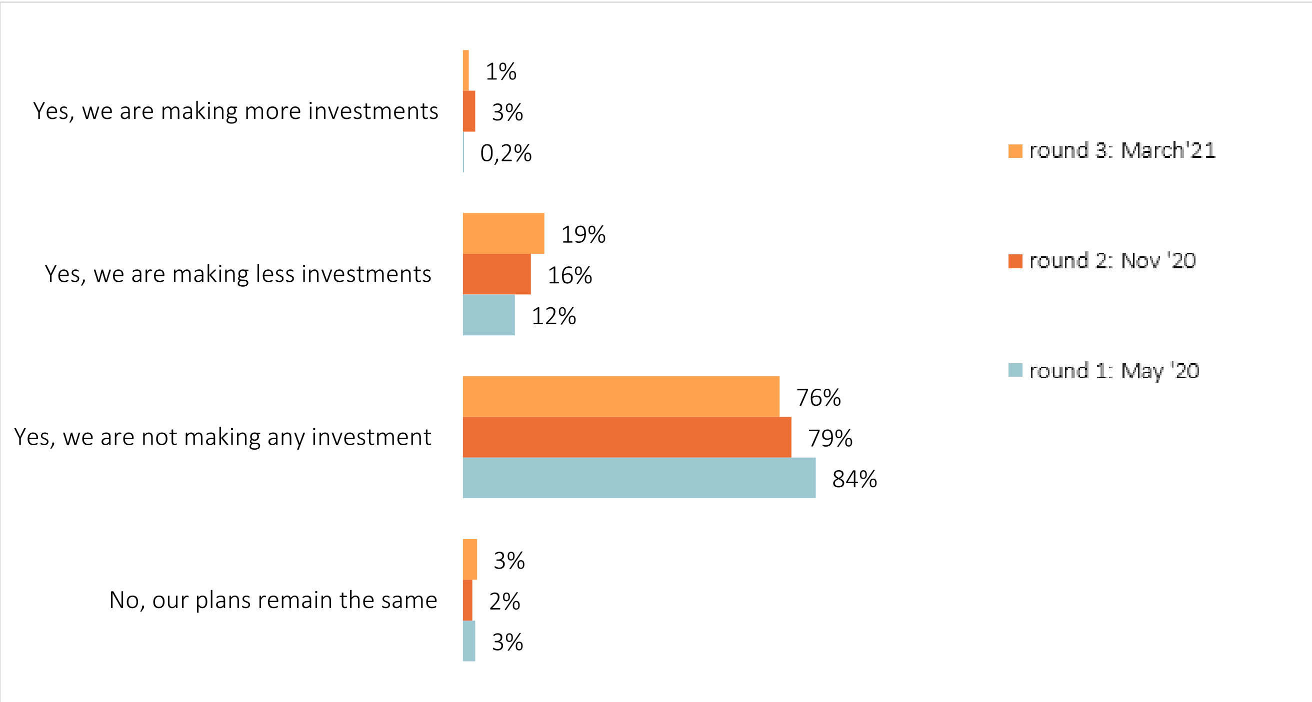
The survey also assessed whether businesses had investment plans prior to the COVID-19 situation and whether these plans had changed since the onset of the pandemic. Data results revealed that more than half of all business had investment plans (55%). It stood out that nearly three in four medium and big businesses had investment plans prior to the pandemic (70%), compared to 55% of micro businesses and 50% of small businesses.

Figure 188. Business that had investment plans prior to the COVID-19 situation, by business size



The businesses that had planned to make investments prior to the COVID-19 situation, were next asked whether these plans have changed. Similar to the situation in November 2020, more than three in four respondents said they had decided to refrain from making any investment (76%, decrease of 3pp). Slightly more stated that they were planning fewer investments (19%) instead of fully refraining from them, when comparing to round 2 data results (16%). Only 3% declared that their investment plans had remained the same.

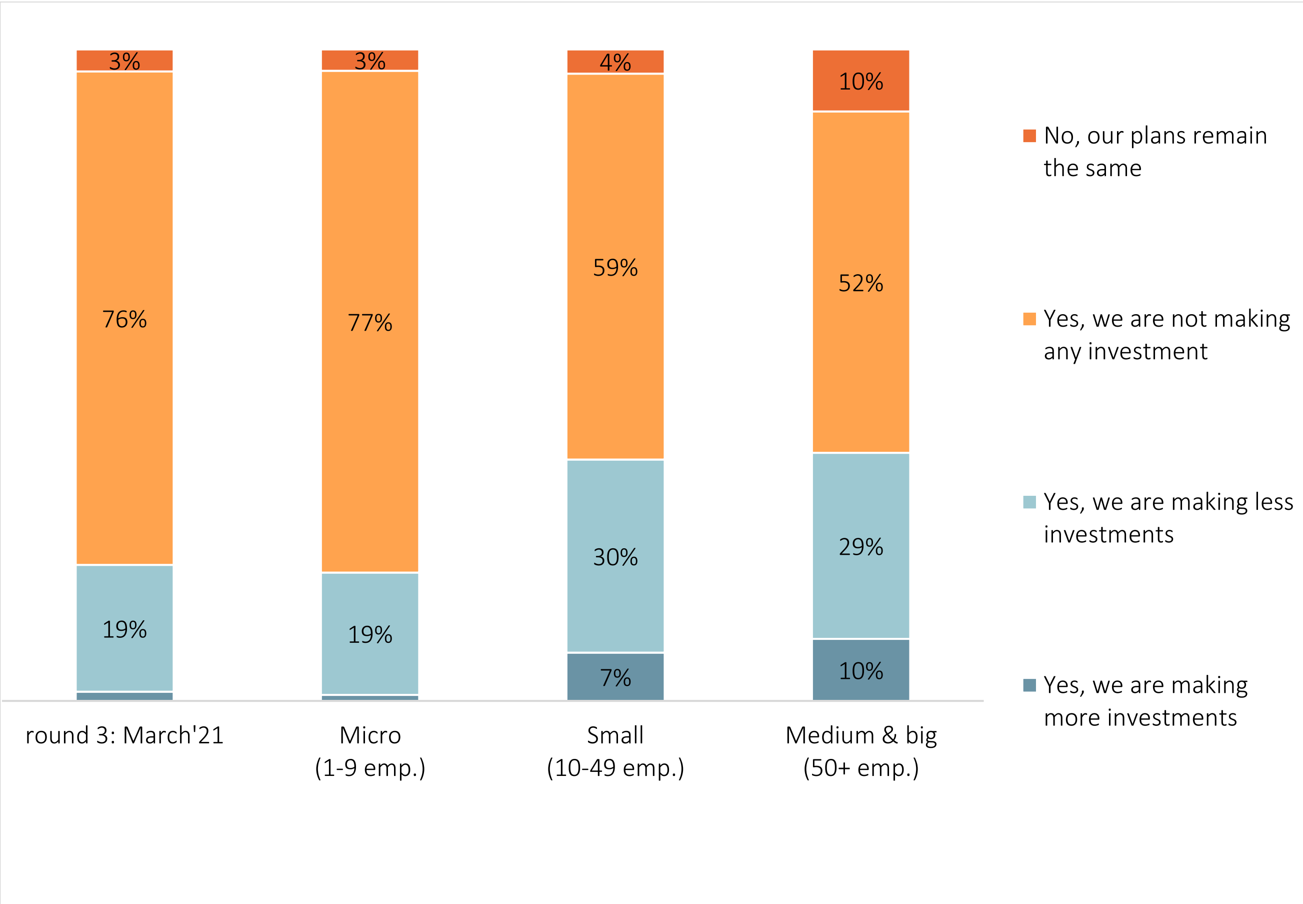
Figure 189. Change of plans to invest due to COVID-19, by round



While around three in four micro businesses changed their plans and fully refrained from making any investment (77%), less than two thirds of small business (59%) and only around half of medium and big businesses declared the same (52%).

Small as well as medium and big businesses were more likely to invest less than planned (30% and 29% respectively) when compared to micro businesses (19%). Around 10% and 7% respectively of medium and big businesses, as well as small businesses respectively planned to invest more than planed prior to the onset of the pandemic.

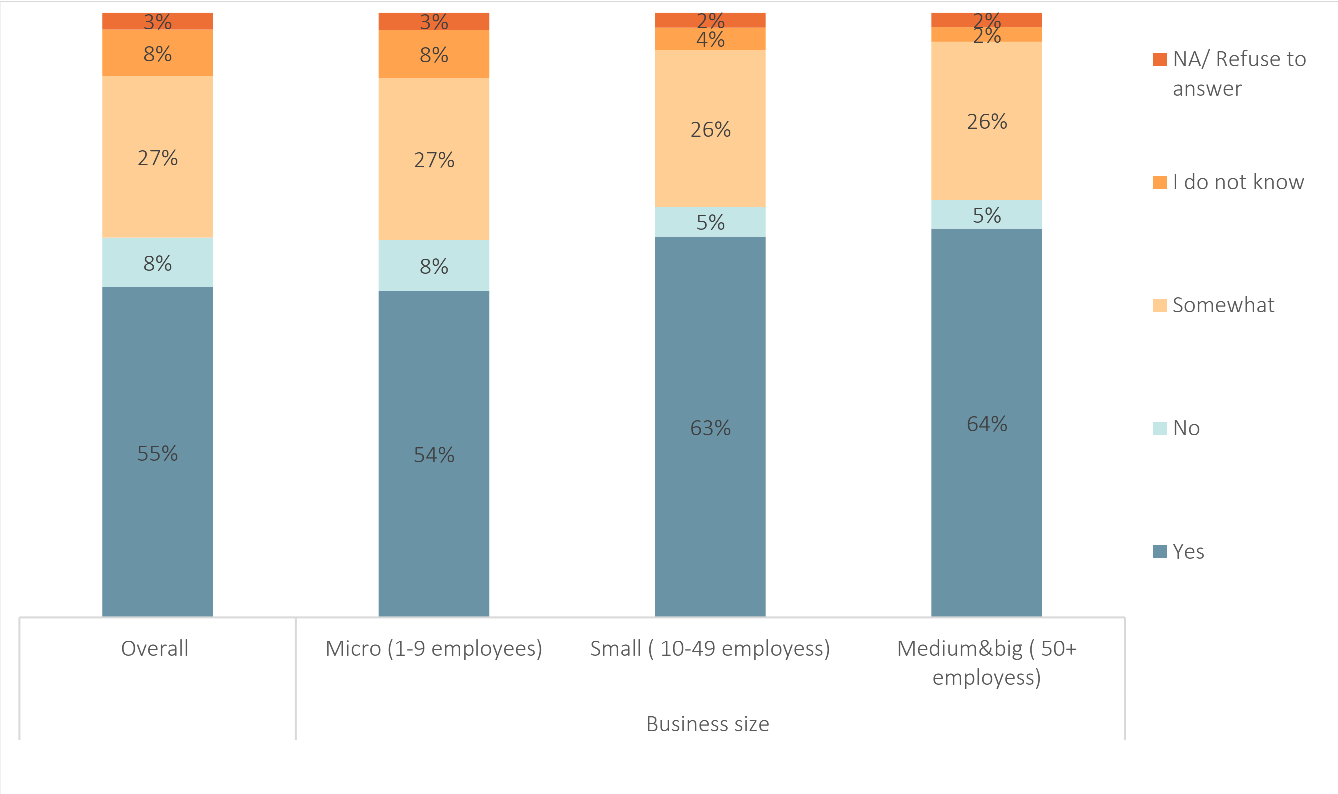
Figure 190 Change of plans to invest due to COVID-19, by business size



Business respondents that had planned to make an investment prior to the outbreak of COVID-19 were also asked whether these investments were focused on environmental sustainability[37]. Overall, 55% declared that their planned investments were focused on environmental sustainability, while nearly one third stated that they were somewhat focused on it (27%). Only 8% stated that their investment plans were not focused on environmental sustainability.

Data further shows that the large the business size, the more likely that planned investments were focused on environmental sustainability.

Figure 191 Investments planed prior to COVID-19 that were focused on environmental sustainability, by business size

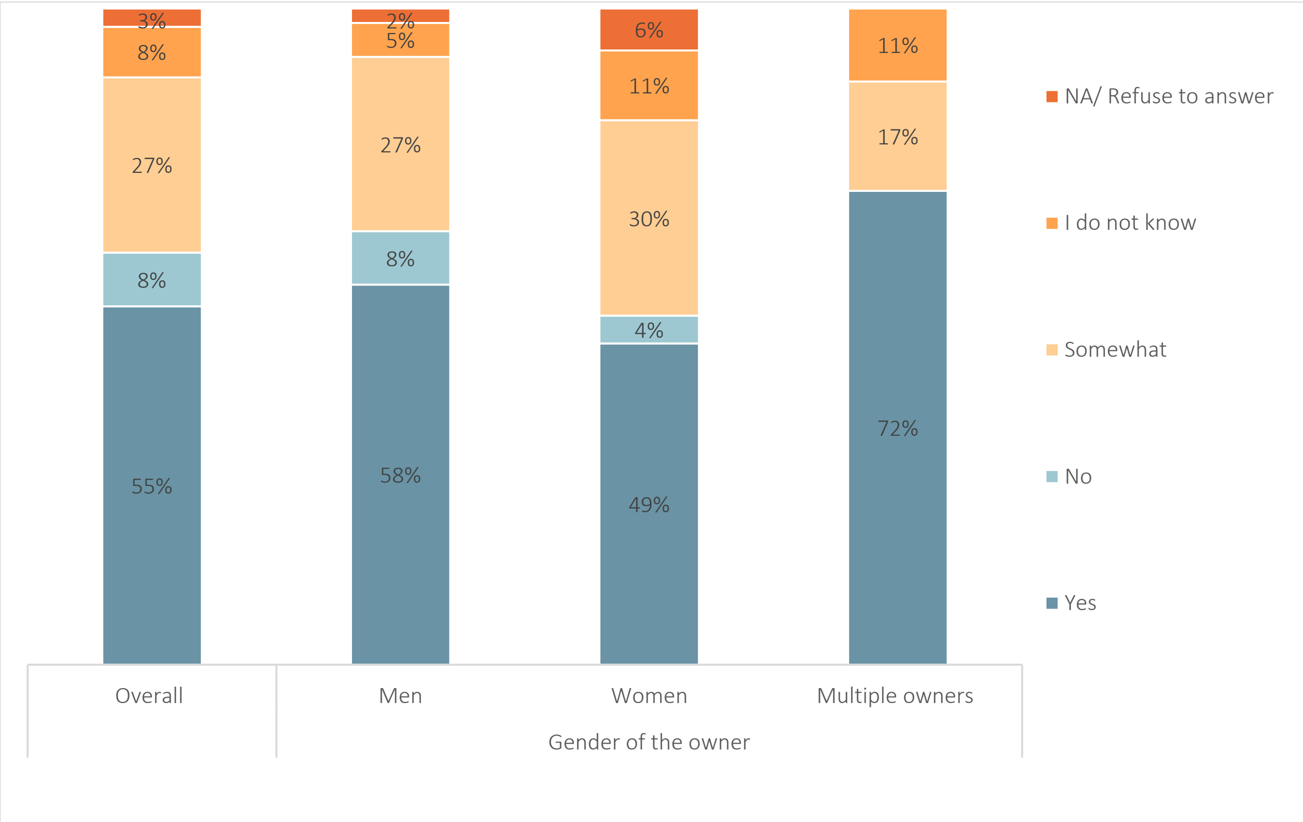


[37] *This question was added during round 3 of the assessment and is therefore not compared to the previous rounds.*

Nearly three in four respondents belonging to businesses with multiple owners declared that their investment plans were focused on environmental sustainability (72%), whereas the respondents of 58% of men-owned and 49% of women-owned businesses declared the same.

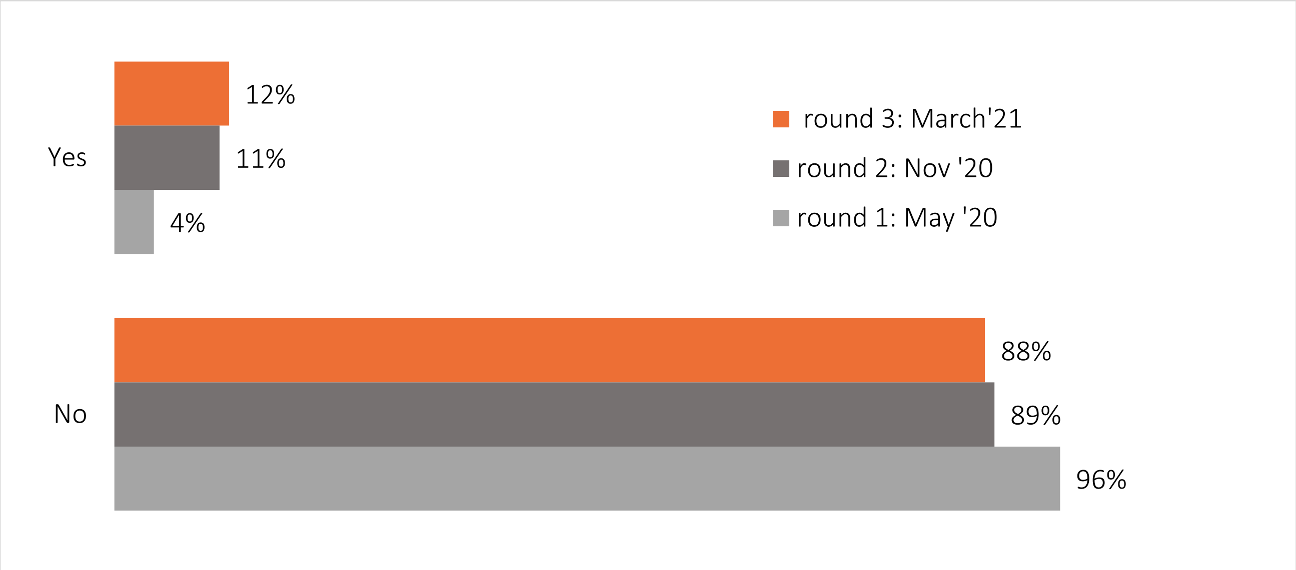
Slightly more women-owned businesses stated that their investment plans were somewhat focused on environmental sustainability (30% vs 27% men-owned businesses). Conversely, more respondents of men-owned businesses declared that their investment plans were not focused on environmental sustainability (8%), when compared to women-owned businesses (4%).

Figure 192 Investments planed prior to COVID-19 that were focused on environmental sustainability, by gender of business owner



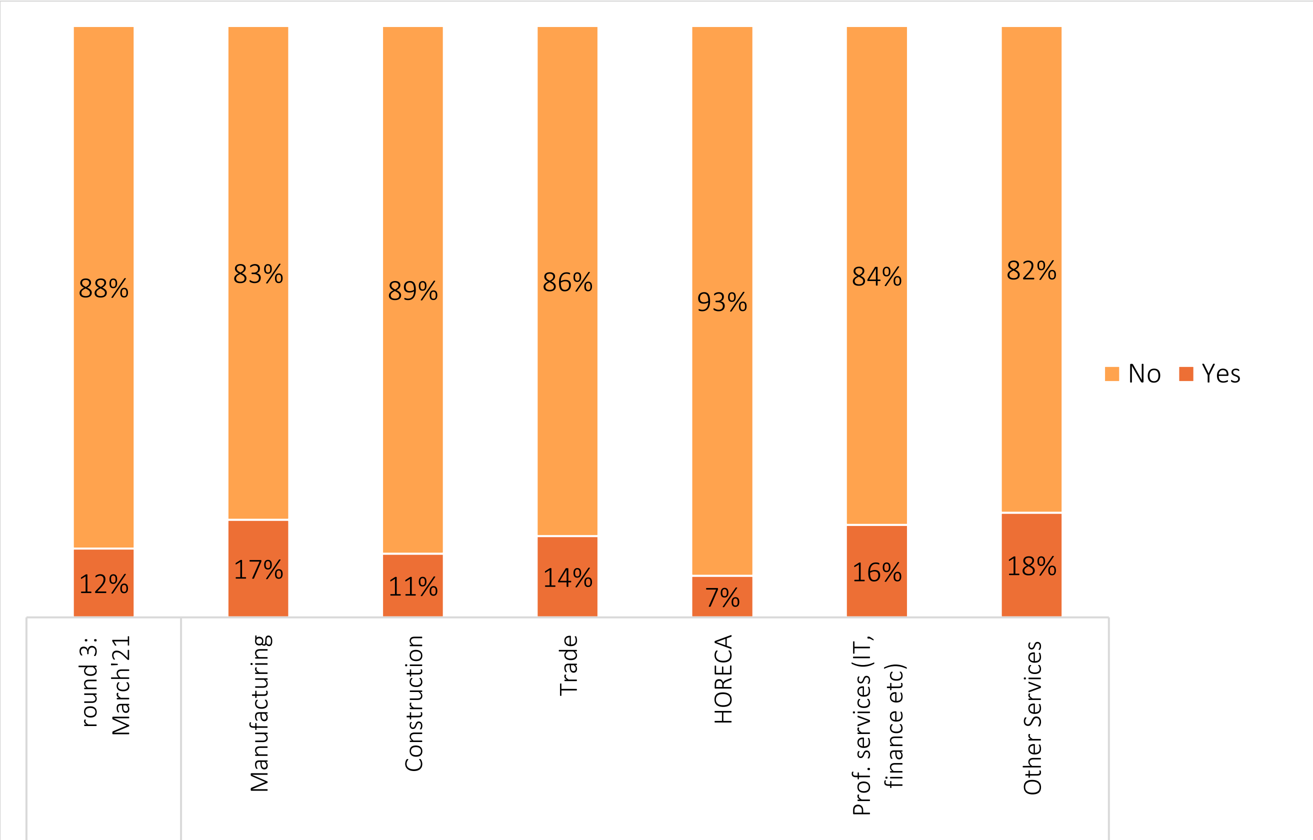
Throughout the data results of the three rounds it is visible that few saw new business opportunities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic (12%). Although, when comparing results of round 3 and round 1, it becomes apparent that over time more businesses have found new opportunities by March 2021 (12%) compared to May 2020 (4%).

Figure 193. Business that found new opportunities related to COVID-19, by round



Businesses with business activities within the other services category (18%), manufacturing (17%) and professional services (16%) more commonly found new opportunities when compared to other types of businesses.

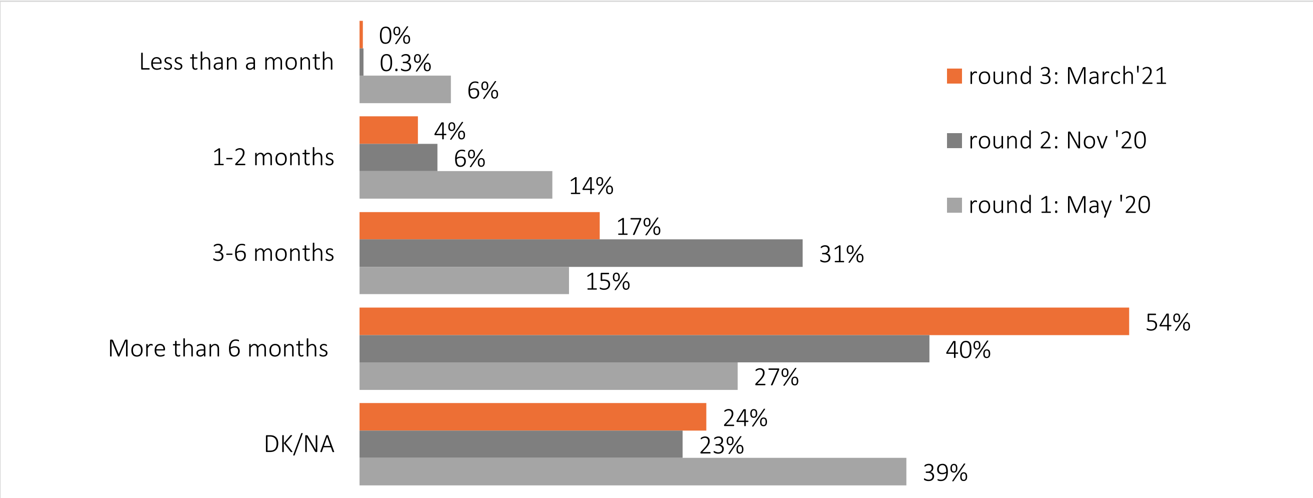
Figure 194 Business that found new opportunities related to COVID-19, by business activity



Last, businesses were asked about their assessment when Kosovo will return to "normal life" as prior to the pandemic. Over half of the business respondents estimated that it will take more than six months to return to normality (54%), this portrays an increase of 14 pp compared to November 2020.

Fewer believed that this process will take three to six months (17%, decrease of 14pp) or one to two months (4%, decrease of 2 pp). In March 2021, none believed that Kosovo will return to normality within one month.

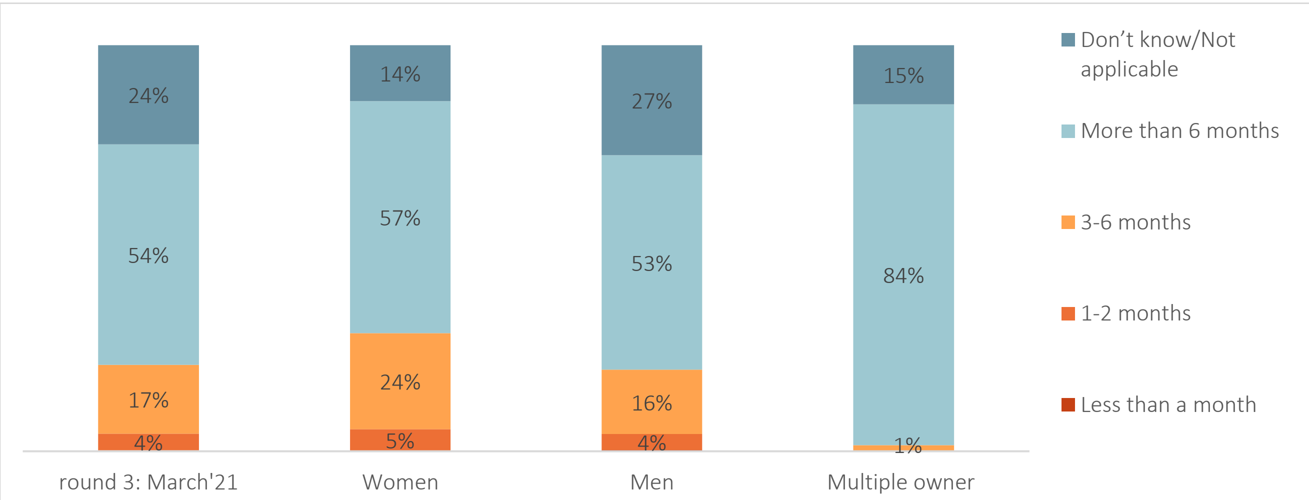
Figure 195. Business perception on when Kosovo will get back to the normal life, by round



Around one in four women-owned business respondents believed that Kosovo will return to normality within three to six months (24%), while only 16% of men-owned business respondents shared the same perception. More than half of business owned by women and men alike expected that it will take more than six months to return to normality (57% and 53% respectively) while 84% of business respondents with multiple business owners believed the same.

Men-owned business respondents were more likely not to know an answer to this question (27%) than those belonging to businesses owned by women (14%).

Figure 196 Business perception on when Kosovo will get back to the normal life, by gender



4. Conclusion

This report examined the multidimensional impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on households and businesses in Kosovo as of March 2021. Findings were based on two surveys conducted with 1,417 households and 609 businesses across Kosovo. Comparative data findings stemming from the three rounds of the assessment enabled the identification of potential trends over the course of the first year of the pandemic.

Household Survey Conclusions

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on households in Kosovo was still evident in March 2021. However, comparative findings suggested some positive trends emerging. The severity of impacts and subsequent consequences appeared less drastic, when compared to the previous round of the SEIA assessment conducted in November 2020.

While fewer respondents shared the perception that people in their community adhered to restrictive measures and rules, vaccination readiness among respondents increased. Over half expressed themselves as being either certain to get vaccinated or declared that they were leaning towards it. However, younger respondents showed a lower level of vaccination readiness compared to older generations. These findings suggest that information campaigns about the safety of vaccines should especially be aimed towards the younger part of the population.

Distance learning in the context of the pandemic was not an issue to households with children in Kosovo in March 2021, as nearly all children engaged with in-person teaching again. Only one percent declared to have children that studied remotely full time. Also, remote work among adults in Kosovo was nearly non-existent among respondents in March 2021, suggesting that unlike in many other countries around the globe, no major shift in working modalities has yet taken place in Kosovo. Only two percent of respondents declared to partly or fully work from home. Preference to continue working from home among those that did work remotely further decreased, when compared to previous data results. Women that worked remotely especially stressed the challenges stemming from increased workloads, multitasking, and managing the household and child care while working at the same time.

The pandemic negatively impacted the progress in terms of gender equality, as evidenced by changes in social dynamics and increase in unpaid domestic and care work. While the third assessment shows that unpaid care work has not increased as compared to the previous round, women were still faced with a significantly higher number of hours spent on household duties and child care than men. Also, the proportion of women that were not aware of where to seek help and support in cases of domestic violence remained concerningly high (30%). Interventions and information campaigns targeting ingrained gender roles and issues such as domestic violence therefore remain highly relevant.

In March 2021, fewer people - as compared to November 2020 - felt that their psychological or mental health was affected by the pandemic. On the other hand, a higher proportion of respondents had experienced physical illness themselves or witnessed other family members getting physically ill. As the end of the pandemic is not yet over, it remains relevant to continue with public awareness campaigns, focusing on the importance of adhering to rules and measures in order to protect themselves and others. It appears that there has been an improvement in the access to social and health services when observing results throughout the first year of the pandemic.

Results pertaining to employment, paid work as well as household income and spending behaviour, showed that in March 2021, the impact of the pandemic seemed less severe than during the earlier rounds of assessment. The percentage of people that had lost their job due to the pandemic remained the same as in November 2020 (11%). Also, fewer reported decreases in financial resources, or the necessity to resort changes in consumption behaviour for income losses. Nonetheless, it should be noted that reduced health-related spending was still a common coping mechanism especially among low income groups. Covering medical costs privately appeared to be the norm among people in Kosovo, with only 9% that had any type of health insurance.

Business Survey Conclusions

Similar to the main findings from the household survey, impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on businesses in Kosovo were still concerning, but less severe when compared to the situation in November 2020.

During the first two rounds of the assessment, most business respondents felt that the overall impact of the pandemic was "very negative", while in March 2021, an increased percentage of respondents perceived it as "somewhat negative". The ratio of businesses that had to stop their business activity remained the same as in November 2020 (13%). The shortage of clients persisted to be the most prevalent reason for negative impacts. Support to restrictive measures implemented by the authorities remained at similar levels compared to the previous round of the assessment; the majority "strongly" or "somewhat" opposed them.

Negative impacts of the pandemic were still severe in terms of decrease in revenues and sales among at least 80% of all surveyed businesses. Subsequently, the majority of businesses that had made investment plans prior to the COVID-19 outbreak still refrained from doing so in March 2021.

Financial assistance and the implementation of economic recovery measures were seen as the most beneficial institutional measure in order to support struggling businesses across Kosovo. However, while it was felt that these were suitable measures, nearly two in five business respondents expressed doubt that the implementation of economic recovery measures would be conducted in a fair manner. Over half felt that fraud and corruption would be likely to occur. These findings highlight the importance of effective oversight and enhanced transparency in the implementation of economic recovery efforts.

During the first year of the pandemic, data shows that businesses´ confidence in being able to cope with the ongoing crisis increased. One in three felt that their business could cope with the impacts of the pandemic for another six months, or at least for three to six months. Micro businesses and women-owned businesses stood out with fewer respondents showing high confidence in their ability to cope for an extended period. At the same time, there was little optimism among businesses respondents that Kosovo would return to normal in the near future. More believed in March 2021 that the situation may last for another six months (54%) than in November 2020 (40%). Only few believed that normality will return within one to two months (4%).

ANNEX

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 additional rounds of the SEIA through quantitative surveys strictly adhering to the previous developed methodology established during the first round of the SEIA in May 2020. The fieldwork of the second round was conducted in November 2020 and the fieldwork of the third round was conducted in March 2021. This report presents the findings of round 3, the samples were composed as follows:

1. Household survey, N= 1,417 Interviews
2. Business survey, N= 609 interviews

The samples of the second round of the SEIA were composed of:

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

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

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

Please note; During the second round of the SEIA, a number of questions related to vaccination willingness, employment since the outbreak of the pandemic, and preference of physical or online workplaces were added. During this third round of the assessment, questions regarding environmental appreciation due to the pandemic (HH survey), as well as questions related to environmental sustainability of planned investments and sustainable governmental development (business survey) have been added.

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 3rd of March till 19th of March 2021. 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[38]. 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 2. Sample Distribution by Region

Region	Percentage	Interviews
Gjakovë/Đakovica	11%	153
Prishtinë/Priština	28%	396
Gjilan/Gnjilane	10%	145
Prizren	18%	249
Pejë/Peć	10%	135
Ferizaj/Uroševac	11%	161
Mitrovicë/Mitrovica	13%	178
Total	100%	1417

Table 3. Sample Distribution by Urbanity

Urbanity	Percentage[39]	Interviews
Rural	60%	845
Urban	40%	572
Total	100%	1417

Table 4. Sample Distribution by Gender

Gender	Percentage	Interviews
Women	49%	701
Men	51%	716

[38] Kosovo Agency of Statistics. Population breakdown by age, gender, urbanity, employment status. Source: <https://bit.ly/36ICPCw >;

Total	100%	1417

Table 5. Sample Distribution by Age

Age	Percentage	Interviews
18-24	21%	301
25-34	24%	336
35-44	20%	286
45-54	16%	225
55-64	10%	140
65+	9%	129
Total	100%	1417

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 6. Sample Distribution by Employment

Status	Percentage	Interviews
Self-employed	9%	123
Contributing family workers and working abroad	1%	9
Employee	39%	553
Unemployed	10%	141
Pupils, students, further training, unpaid work experience	7%	105
In retirement or early retirement or has given up business	10%	145
Permanently disabled	1%	14
Fulfilling domestic tasks	11%	155
Discouraged /other inactive	12%	172
Total	100%	1417

The margin of error for a total sample of 1,417 interviews in Kosovo was calculated with ±2.6%.

Business Survey

A survey was also carried out with N=609 micro, small and medium sized businesses. The data collection was also conducted by applying CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) and took place between 4th of March and 22nd of March 2021.

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 7. 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 8. Sample and Weighting for Business Survey Sample

Business size	Percentage of businesses in Kosovo (official data)	Survey (interviews)		After Weighting[40]
		Percentage	Businesses	Percentage
Micro (1-9)	93.10%	63%	386	93.10%
Small (10-49)	5.90%	27%	163	5.90%
Medium (50+)	1.00%	10%	60	1.00%
Overall	100%	100%	609	100%

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

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