

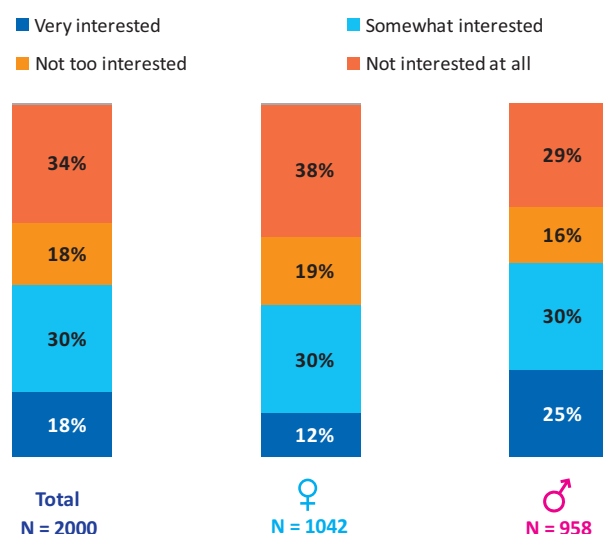
FREEDOM OF VOTE and FAMILY VOTING in ALBANIA

National Study
2014

Politics and Women

- The majority of the population, especially women, take little interest in politics.** One in three respondents (34%) is “non at all interested” in politics while an additional 18% show very low levels of interest towards these matters (“not too interested”). Only 18% of respondents declare to be “very interested” in matters of politics and government. The breakdown by gender clearly shows that women are particularly less interested in politics (38% of women vs. 29% of men declaring to be “not at all interested”). About 25% of male respondents declare to be “very interested” compared to only 12% of females who state alike.
- Civic engagement,** measured by respondent-declared membership levels in different political and civil society organizations, **is weak overall.** Only 1 in 10 people declares to be a member of a political party, 1 in 30 people declares to be part of a religious group and negligible numbers declare to be part of civil society organizations/NGOs. Women’s level of participation in these organizations is even lower. **Almost 9 in 10 adult women declare to have never been a political party member,** compared to 7 out of 10 men declaring the same. 93% of women have never been part of any women’s organization and 95% have never been part of any other NGOs or community organized groups.
- Women show much lower levels of civic activism** even in terms of using various instruments/ways to express their opinions on political or social issues. Only 12% of women declare to have contacted a public official in the last 12 months to express their concerns. Such figure is two times lower than the percentage of males who declare the same (25% of male respondents have contacted a public official during the last 12 months). An even more concerning issue is that **41% of women declare that they would never contact or visit a public official** in order to express their opinion on political or social matters, far more than the number of males who declare the same (25%). **The use of social networks (Facebook, Twitter etc.) to express**

General interest in politics/government matters



Membership in....	Currently a member	
	Male	Female
Political party	16%	6%
Religious groups	4%	2%
Charity organizations	0.4%	0.6%
Women organizations	0%	0.9%
NGOs	0.4%	0.3%

Activities to express your opinion	Would never	
	Male	Female
Contact/Visit a public official	25%	41%
Use Social media networks (Facebook or Twitter)	62%	71%
Call in a TV Talk Show or write to a newspaper	56%	65%
Send in an SMS vote to express your political or social opinion	56%	65%
Sign a written or electronic petition	55%	69%
Take part in a protest/march/demonstration	44%	64%

opinions on political or social issues is also very low (8% of males and 6% of females declare to have used them for this purpose). Petitions, protests/demonstrations or media are also among the least used instruments to express one's opinion on political or social matters.

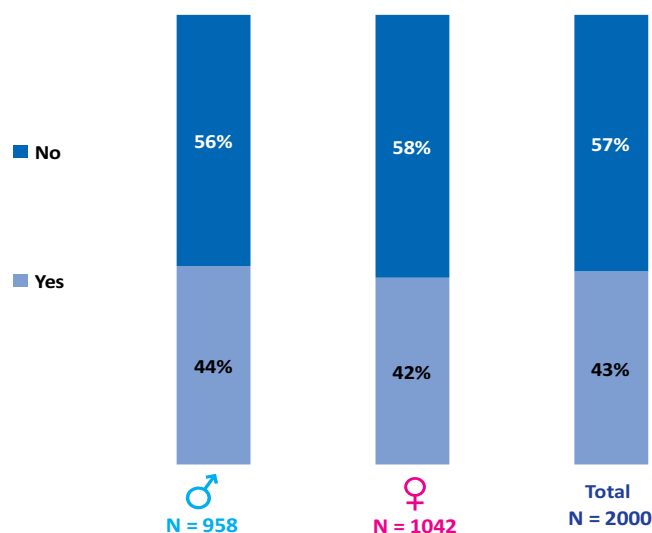
- While the majority of Albanians would support a greater participation of women in politics, there is a considerable part of the population, even

among women, who think that **“men make better political leaders than women”**. 58% of male and 38% of female respondents agree that “men make better political leaders than women”. Such findings may suggest that while **higher participation of women in politics may be the correct political stance, it is not a widespread and fully acceptable belief**. It resembles more to *“talking the talk but not walking the walk”*.

Voting and Women

- Overall, there is a **high level of voter participation among Albanian residential population**. About 88% of respondents declare to have participated in the 2013 elections, without any gender-based differences.
- The vast majority of respondents declare that they felt “completely free”** when making their decision on whom to vote on 2013 elections (95%). No differences were noted between men and women respondents. Such findings suggest that direct, obvious or violent pressure on voters to vote against their will, has not been highly present. It **does not however rule out the possibility that votes were promised in return for various favors**. Indeed, **about 43% of respondents declare to know cases in which votes were promised in return for favors**. Particularly, voting “to keep the current job”, to “get a job after elections” and voting in return “for money or for gifts” are mentioned **as frequent phenomena encountered by more than one third of respondents**.

Are you aware of any cases when votes were promised in return of a favor?

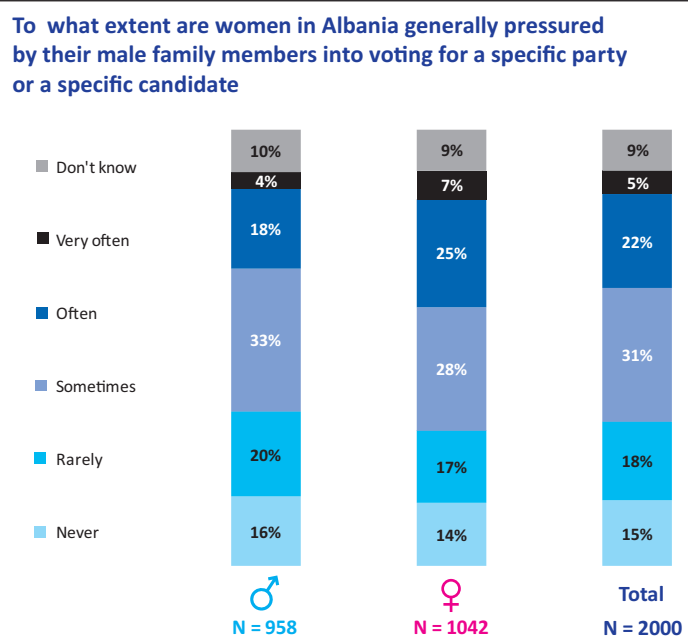


Family Voting

- Traditionally, Albanian families head to voting centers together. However, **the survey results show that “Family Voting” does not appear to happen inside the Voting Center (VC)**. It may happen in the household premises, before people get to cast their votes. **Only 5% of the respondents indicate that they have noticed cases in which VC Commission allowed more than one person in the voting room** during the 2013 elections. Despite being just a proxy for “family voting”, (as there are cases allowable by law when somebody can be accompanied in the voting booth) this figure appears to be lower than the figures reported in different

election monitoring reports of the past elections (2009, 2011 or 2013). The OSCE Election Observation Report on the 2013 General Elections claimed *“instances of group/family voting were observed in 13% of VCs and more frequently in rural areas”* while in the 2011 OSCE/ODHIR Report this figure was *“26% of the visited VCs”*. The comparison is however not fully compatible. The figure reported by the IDRA National Survey of 2014 indicates the cases where citizens have encountered this phenomenon in the voting centers, whereas figures reported by the monitoring missions are based on observations of the visited voting centers.

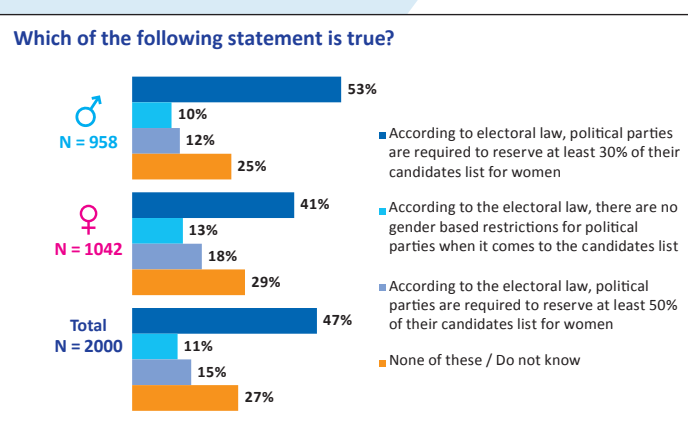
- In regard to “family voting”, women are most often subject of pressure by their male family members to vote in a certain way. Hence, a more direct figure for proxy measurement of this phenomenon would be **the number of women declaring to have been accompanied by somebody in the voting booth. About 7% of the female respondents say that they were accompanied** by a family member to the voting booth during the last elections. In 82% of these cases, women were accompanied by a male member of the family (usually husband or father).
- When asked for their opinion “to what extent are women in Albania pressured by their male family members to vote for a specific party or candidate”, about 27% of respondents declare that such **pressure occurs “Often” or “Very Often”**. On the other hand, **31% of the respondents declare that this practice occurs “Sometimes”**. Even more worrisome is the opinion of female respondents, wherein **about 1 in 3 female respondents (32%) says that such pressure happens “Often” or “Very Often”**. Such findings are an indication that “Family Voting”, as a phenomenon where male family members pressure female members to vote in a certain way, does not necessarily happen at the premises of the voting centers but rather before the Election Day, during family discussions/gatherings.



Gender Quota Awareness

Albanians are **not properly informed on the purpose of gender quotas in politics, or how they are to be implemented**. Only 1 in 2 respondents knows that it is a requirement for political parties to reserve at least 30% of their candidates' list for women. The others either **are not aware of the existence of such quota or they are not able to mention the correct quota number**.

Women appear to be less aware of the gender quota requirement than men. Only 41% of female respondents correctly state the legal requirements. About one third (29%) say they “don't know”, and an additional 13% say “there are no gender-based restrictions on political parties regarding their candidate lists”. There is however, **a generally high support about the introduction of gender quota in politics or elected bodies**. About 83% of respondents would support such quota with 45% “strongly supporting” and 38% “somewhat supporting” it. Only 9% of respondents would oppose such quota.



Sample Size & Margin of Error

Sample Frame	Number of Respondents	Time of Fieldwork	Margin of error
General Public Sample National Representative	2000 (18+ years old)	November – December 2013	± 2.2% 95% Confidence Interval