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SAFE CITIES

A REPORT ON WOMEN AND GIRLS SAFETY FROM SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND OTHER FORMS OF VIOLENCE IN PUBLIC SPACES

TIRANA, FEBRUARY 2020



This study on safe cities focused on women and girls' safety from sexual harassment and other forms of violence in public spaces was prepared by "Observatory for Children and Youth Rights" through the support of Canada Fund for Local Initiatives. The opinions and views presented in this report are the responsibility of authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of "Canada Fund for Local Initiatives".

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ABBREVIATIONS

EU	European Union
GGB	General Gender Budgeting
DPH	Directorate of Public Health
CFLI	Canada Fund for Local Initiatives
INSTAT	Institute of Statistics
IPH	Institute of Public Health
UN	United Nations
CPD	Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex
MESY	Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth
MI	Ministry of Interior
MJ	Ministry of Justice
CRM	The Coordinated Referral Mechanism
MD	Ministry of Defense
MHSP	Ministry of Health and Social Protection
CPU	Child Protection Unit
LGU	Local Government Unit
Observatory	Observatory for the Rights of Children and Youth
WHO	World Health Organization
NPO	Non-for-Profit Organizations
CSO	Civil Society Organization
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
ID	Individuals with Disabilities
MBP	Mid-Term Budget Plan
NAP	National Action Plan
NSGE	National Strategy for Gender Equality 2016-2020
PO	Protection Order
IPO	Immediate Protection Order
OPPIP	Order for Preliminary Precautions for Immediate Protection
UN Women	United Nations Agency for Gender Equality and Women Empowerment
DCM	Decision of Council of Ministers
ITT	Inter-disciplinary Technical Team

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Dear colleague! Dear readers!

This report contains findings and data from the research done in two neighborhoods/areas of Tirana regarding women's and girls' public space safety from sexual harassment and other forms of violence. This report is the work result of a dedicated team of experts, partner institutions, and collaborators who contributed to the consultation and evaluation process of the preliminary findings of this research.

The preparation of this report is of particular importance to our organization. First and foremost, it will provide meaningful and necessary information to the Municipality of Tirana to encourage and support infrastructural interventions in the two targeted areas of the research. Also, being the organization that piloted this type of research and study for the first time (in 2016), we felt the responsibility to improve the practice created in this field and replicated by other partner organizations.

One of the primary purposes of Observatory for the Rights of Children and Youth is to make cities and public spaces friendly for children and safe for anyone using them (regardless of age, gender, disability, religion, or ethnicity).

We want to express our highest consideration to all institutions, partners, and experts who contributed to this study, such as the staff of Tirana Municipality, the staff of target areas' administrative units, the representatives of Tirana Police authorities, health care institutions, education institutions, residents that were interviewed in the field, and many others who provided vital information for our research.

Last but not least, we would like to thank the team of experts who worked tirelessly to prepare this study. We want to thank them for their professionalism, availability, and accountability throughout the journey of this project.

We are hopeful that the findings and recommendations of this report will be put into concrete actions and investments in both piloted areas. We remain wishful that Tirana and our entire country becomes safe for girls, women, men, and boys wherever they live!

Sincerely,
Elma Tershana
Executive Director
Observatory for the Rights of Children and Youth

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is a severe infringement of human rights, a punishable crime. For many years the evaluation and analysis have focused only on some forms of VAWG, mainly in the one experienced domestically. Recently other forms of violence experienced by women, such as sexual harassment in public spaces, have come to the focus of attention. Although the Penal Code of the Republic¹ includes provisions about this type of crime, very few of such cases get followed and resolved. Some of this due to the stigma and victims' hesitation to press charges.

Sexual harassment or sexual violence or other forms of violence experienced in public areas/spaces pose a critical problem to the women and girls all over the world. The incidents could happen anywhere, from streets to building entrances, parks, schools, shops or malls, public transportation, playgrounds, in front of governmental institutions, less lighted areas, and construction sites. Regardless of location, timing and severity of such incidents (from whistling to staring intently, to touching, to sexual assault), these forms of VAWG impact the safety of women and girls in public spaces.

Municipality of Tirana is continuously working to transform the city into a friendly and safe place for children and adults, girls and boys, women and men, residents, and visitors. For this reason, the Municipality plans periodic infrastructure interventions and dedicated services. In this framework, taking into consideration and implementing the findings and recommendations of this report would help the Municipality create safer and more accessible public spaces in both targeted areas.

There are four chapters in this report. *The First Chapter* contains general information and data on violence incidence towards women and girls. *The Second Chapter* contains information on the methodology and the tools used to conduct the study in both targeted areas. Data analysis, women's and girls' perception of safety in public spaces, and some other elements that impact safety in these areas are presented in the *Third Chapter*. *Chapter Four* contains conclusions and recommendations focused on factors that help increase the level of safety in the two targeted areas. An essential part of this report is the appendixes' section. The tools used to collect the information, part of the methodology explained in Chapter Two, get introduced in this section.

The two target areas of the study are suggested by the Municipality of Tirana, based on the Municipality's infrastructure and service improvement intervention's plan. These areas are "Lapraka" and "21 Dhjetori".

Some findings and main recommendations are based on the analysis of 384 surveys, administered to the citizens of target areas (182 in each area); 10 interviews conducted with service providers and business representatives (5 in each area); 5 focus groups with mixed representation (age-groups of 18-19 years old, 20-29 years old, 30-49 years old, 50+ years old, and representatives of vulnerable groups); 5 observation missions and 5 audit missions. Main findings and recommendations are presented below.

¹ These offenses are provided for in a number of articles of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Albania, such as: Article 102, Article 102 / a, Article 103, Article 104, Article 105, Article 106, Article 107 / a and Article 108 / a. For more refer to the full updated Code at http://www.pp.gov.al/web/kodi_penal_2017_1200.pdf

General findings:

1. Only 32% of interviewees in Laprakë and 56% of interviewees in "21 Dhjetori" feel safe in the public space of these areas. The women and girls are more vocal about the lack of safety because they experience a higher level of harassment and sexual assault in the targeted areas.
2. 73% of interviewees in Laprakë and 48% of interviewees at "21 Dhjetori" think that there are places in the area where one can hide and thus endanger the safety of passers-by or residents.
3. Bus stations (for 42% of interviewees in "21 Dhjetori" and 41% of interviewees in "Laprakë"), streets and back streets of the area (for 53% of interviewees at "21 Dhjetori" and 23% of interviewees in "Laprakë") are deemed less secure compared to entrances to apartment buildings, institutions, shops, bars, and restaurants, or even parks and playgrounds.
4. 80% of interviewees at "21 Dhjetori" and around 60% of interviewees in "Laprakë" can be quickly oriented to access public services such as health institutions or a police station. Meanwhile, only 18% of interviewees from "21 Dhjetori" and 14% of interviewees from "Laprakë" are quickly oriented to access non-for-profit organizations or other institutions that offer specialized, supporting services for different forms of violence towards women and girls including sexual harassment or violence.
5. The leading personal factors that impact the safety or the lack of it in public spaces are: Being a woman (for 57% of interviewees in "21 Dhjetori" and 68% of interviewees in "Laprakë"), age (for 46% of interviewees in "21 Dhjetori" and 58% of interviewees in "Laprakë"), attire (for 55% of interviewees in "21 Dhjetori" and 51% of interviewees in "Laprakë") and walking alone, unaccompanied (for 45% of interviewees in "21 Dhjetori" and 61% of interviewees in "Laprakë").
6. Other factors that impact safety in public spaces have to do with physical maintenance (e.g., streets lights – for 61% of interviewees from "21 Dhjetori" and 68% of interviewees from "Laprakë"; street barriers - for 52% of interviewees from "21 Dhjetori" and 75% of interviewees from "Laprakë"), the presence or absence of police patrols (for 54% of interviewees from "21 Dhjetori" and 69% of interviewees from "Laprakë"), overcrowded bus stops (for 68% of interviewees from "21 Dhjetori" and 75% of interviewees from "Laprakë"), etc.
7. Women and Girls from the target areas experience more episodes of sexual harassment in public spaces (such as whistling, honking – for 35% of interviewees from "21 Dhjetori" and 48% of interviewees from "Laprakë"; indecent sexual comments about their looks – for 38% of interviewees from "21 Dhjetori" and 56% of interviewees from "Laprakë"; intensive staring - for 39% interviewees from "21 Dhjetori" and 51% of interviewees from "Laprakë"), rather than physical assaults (for 10% of interviewees from "21 Dhjetori" and 9% of interviewees from "Laprakë") or sexual assaults (for 7% of interviewees from "21 Dhjetori" and 9% of interviewees from "Laprakë").
8. Some actions/measures that would make the interviewees feel safer in public space are: frequent police inspections (for 63% of interviewees from "21 Dhjetori" and 48% of interviewees from "Laprakë"), improved street lighting system (for 56% of interviewees from "21 Dhjetori" and 51% of interviewees from "Laprakë"), demolition and removal of abandoned buildings and debris that serve as hiding places for perpetrators (for 32% of interviewees from "21 Dhjetori" and 55% of interviewees from "Laprakë").

Main recommendations:

1. Improving the general conditions in both areas. The municipality of Tirana should take into consideration the findings of this study when planning infrastructure interventions and extending services to these areas. The overall improvement of the lighting system is significant. The improved system must be functional and robust throughout the hours of dusk, evening, and night. The entryways to public and private institutions, buildings, businesses, and shops must be well lighted, and possibly with illuminated signs. Road/street barriers should be eliminated as much as possible (e.g., pedestrian crossings are overtaken by parking on one or both sides of the road, shops or bars overtake sidewalks). It is also vital to demolish and remove all the abandoned/unused buildings which could be used as hiding places for perpetrators. Regular maintenance and cleaning should also be accompanied by the illumination of spaces between waste bins, to avoid the possibility of someone hiding between them.

The bus stations should be well lighted and marked. They should have bus schedules and maps of bus itineraries. It is advisable to have the bus stops where women, elderly, and children, who use the public transportation the most can easily access them (e.g., close to school, women's places of work, close to hospitals). It is suggested to increase the number of busses that circulate, and also to extend the service schedule. It will help to avoid overcrowding at bus stations and inside buses, but also enable people to access public transportation in later hours of the night.

2. Increasing security in target areas through coordinating the actions and collaborating with Albanian State Police. The findings of this study must be shared with the Albanian State Police, so they could take special measures to (i) increase the frequency of police patrols during day time and especially during the late hours of the night, particularly in Lapraka area (ii) increase the community's trust in police forces, especially for cases involving specific forms of violence such as sexual harassment and sexual violence, using community education and policing strategies. Encourage discussions on such topics in schools; provide necessary information to audiences in a language and format appropriate for their age groups; explain the importance of seeking police assistance, specifying information sources (including replicating the experience of the "Virtual Policeman"). All of these mechanisms will be helpful to increase the community's trust in police forces and the protection or services it provides and would reduce the sense of insecurity in the target areas.

3. Planning new intervention and continuing to maintain these areas. When planning new interventions for these neighborhoods, the Municipality of Tirana and the Agency for Territory Adjustment should take into account that spaces between buildings and roads are already limited and restricted; therefore, the interventions should not restrict them further. The municipality should also plan to expand the green areas, playgrounds for children, recreational areas for different age groups, suitable spaces for individuals with disabilities. There should be ongoing maintenance, which should be done periodically and responsibly in order to increase the value of investments.

4. Monitoring and evaluating the interventions to improve and maintain a high level of security perception in public spaces in target areas. Intervention plans for target areas intended to improve infrastructure conditions should take into consideration the information provided by women, girls, men, and boys of different age groups who live in these areas or visit

them often. When present and possible, the conclusions drawn from similar studies should be taken into consideration. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of previous interventions are of utmost importance also. Meetings and observation missions to monitor previous investments and monitor the community's perceptions for public spaces' security should be done regularly. Findings of such missions and of similar studies should act as guidance for planning future interventions in these areas to transform them into places safe from any form of violence, including sexual harassment and violence.

5. Including discussions on harassment and sexual violence in public spaces, as part of regular meetings of the Interdisciplinary Technical Team (ITT) of the Coordinated Referral Mechanism (CRM) on domestic violence cases in the Municipality of Tirana.

Including discussions on harassment and sexual violence in public spaces, as part of regular meetings of the Interdisciplinary Technical Team (ITT) of the Coordinated Referral Mechanism (CRM) on domestic violence cases in the Municipality of Tirana. Although the primary responsibility of the CRM is to manage cases of domestic violence and to take concrete preventive actions to reduce this form of violence, the management or prevention of other forms of violence against women, including sexual violence, still remains within its focus of attention. As such, discussions on sexual harassment and assault experienced by women in public spaces should be conducted during periodic meetings of CRM. They would precede the preparatory work for the education that would prevent and manage such cases. The Awareness raising campaign "16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence" of last year (2019) focused on raising community awareness on sexual violence and breaking the silence and taboos around it. Consequently, the educational and awareness-raising activities that should be undertaken by the members of ITT during this year should include discussions on sexual harassment and violence in public spaces.

I. INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Violence against Women and Girls is an infringement of basic human rights and a punishable crime. The violence takes different forms and has become a pressing issue worldwide. Although statistically, women are more likely to be violated by their intimate partners, sexual harassment, and other forms of sexual violence are common in many places, including public spaces. Different studies demonstrate that violence against women and girls in public spaces is a daily phenomenon experienced by women all over the world, especially in the cities. On the global level, 7% of women have been sexually assaulted by someone else besides their partner².

Women and girls are scared, and they experience different types of sexual harassment and violence in public spaces, starting from derogatory comments or unwanted sexual touch to rape and murder. These types of assaults could happen anywhere, in the street, while waiting or using public transportation, in schools or working places, in public toilets, parking areas, above or under overpasses, in parks, playgrounds, shopping areas, or recreational spaces. According to a UN Women study (2013), this reality decreases women's and girls' freedom of movement, their ability to study and work, their approach to basic services, their participation in public life, or different recreational activities. It impacts their health and wellbeing negatively³.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), approved in 2015, emphasize the importance of focusing attention and efforts on this issue. Apart from objective 5.2 for the "Elimination of all forms of violence towards women in public and private spheres, including trafficking for sexual exploitation or other types of exploitation," MDG include a specific objective (MDG 11) to "make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable." Under MDO 11 there are a series of indicators intended to measure the safety of women and girls in public spaces (Under objective 11.2 or objective 11.7).⁴

A safe city enables all its citizens to live and move freely, safe from sexual harassment or assault, safe from other forms of violence in public spaces. It takes all the necessary actions to eliminate gender-based violence. It offers equal opportunities and access to both women and men in all spheres of life – social, economic, cultural, and political ⁵

Third National Survey on Violence against Women and Girls in Albania (INSTAT, 2018) in relations to issues of sexual harassment identified that: "18,1% of 18-74 years old women have experienced "sometimes" or "actually" one or more of the six types of sexual harassment, identified by the survey. More specifically, women have reported that at least someone, other than their husband/partner has commented on their bodies or physical appearance, making them uncomfortable or insulted (12,2%); has asked them personal questions related to their sexual, intimate or private life making them feel uncomfortable, or insulted (5,9%). Women have also reported that someone other than their husband/partner has exposed their private body parts or exposed their genitalia in front of them (4,5%), or has touched, hugged, or kissed them sexually

² World Bank Group 2016: "Women, Business and Law - Advancing Equality". See <http://wbl.worldbank.org/~media/WBG/WBL/Documents/Reports/2016/Women-Business-and-the-Law-2016.pdf>

³ Check: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/creating-safe-public-spaces>

⁴ Target 11.2 by 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons. Target 11.7: " By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities."

⁵ Adapted from: <http://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/237-what-are-safe-cities-and-communities-for-women-and-girls-.html>

without their consent (4,0%). Fewer women reported that they had received unwanted and sexually explicit emails or text messages and / or received inappropriate comments on social networking sites (1,9%) and were given pictures, photos or explicit sexual or pornographic gifts that made them feel bad, embarrassed or insulted (1,4%). Women aged, 18-24 years old (22,2%), 25-34 years old (19,7%) and 35-44 years old (21,0%) were more likely to ever experience sexual harassment compared to women aged 45-54 years old (18,0%), 55-64 years old (15,9%) and 65-74 years old (9,5%). Similarly, women aged 18-24 years old (12,6%), 25-34 years old (12,6%) and 35-44 years old (10,7%) were more likely to have experienced sexual harassment during the last 12 months before the survey, compared to women aged 45-54 years old (7,0%), 55-64 years old (4,3%) and 65-74 years old (2,1%). It should be noted that women aged 45-74 years old had not experienced sexual harassment during the last 12 months before the survey. Majority of sexual harassment cases had occurred in streets/alleyways (82,9%), followed by schools, (42,3%), markets/shops (38,3%), at the woman's home (29,1%), working place (25,8%), in cars, buses and other means of transportation (19,9%), bars, restaurants and/or disco/clubs (17,5%), in somebody's else home (15,7%), in fields, or in nature (14,4%), at sea, lake, river or other place by the water (13,5%). Only 1,2% of women have experienced sexual harassment in the house of the perpetrator. Locations of the sexual harassment varied, depending on the type of harassment..."

Concern over sexual harassment and violence in public spaces is also raised in the *National Report for the implementation of the Beijing Action Platform in Albania (Beijing +25)* prepared by the Albanian Government in April 2019. According to this report: These past five years, higher importance is given to sexual harassment and violence in public spaces in educational institutions and workplaces. In this context, since 2016, several units of local governance have been supported to conduct studies/researches on sexual harassment and other types of gender-based violence in public spaces in Albania⁶. The studies⁷ conducted in several neighborhoods of Tirana Municipality (3 neighborhoods in 2016 and two other in 2018), Durrës Municipality (2018), Fier Municipality (2018), Korçë Municipality (2019) and Shkodër Municipality (2019), identify a series of factors (including individual ones) that impact the safety or lack of it in public spaces. The same studies recommend a series of actions that need to be taken to create urban areas safe from sexual harassment and assault towards women⁸. Meanwhile, sexual harassment and violence cases in educational and employment settings have come to the attention of responsible institutions several times during this period, mainly through investigative journalism..."⁹

The issue of sexual harassment and violence in public spaces is a serious problem worldwide and in Albania. It is true that the studies focused on these issues and carried out in several neighborhoods of Tirana, Durres, Fier, Shkodra, and Korça, in their entirety, draw almost the same conclusions. However, the extension of this study to all neighborhoods of Tirana and other cities (ideally to all 61 municipalities in the country) where interventions have initiated is a

⁶ Support provided by UN Women as part of the UN Women Global Program for Safe Cities without Violence against Women and Girls.

⁷ In partnership with Local Government Units and in cooperation with the Children's and Youth Rights Observatory (for 2016) and IDRA (for 2018 and 2019), with the support of UN Women and funding from the Swedish Government

⁸ For more information and the main findings of the study, see: <http://www.un.org.al/publications/sexual-harassment-and-other-forms-gender-based-violence-urban-public-spaces-Albania>

⁹ For more see Final Report, pp. 30-31 at: www.shendetesia.gov.al/gender-equality/

necessity to inform all interventions or infrastructure improvements and services planned by local governments.

The findings have demonstrated that this phenomenon exists. They have provided us with key data on the most common forms of sexual harassment and violence experienced by Albanian women and girls in public spaces.

There is also a unified methodology of the study, based on the international experience of this field, prepared and adapted for Albania for the first time by the Observatory (in 2016). The same methodology was followed by IDRA in 2018-2019 and redefined and simplified on some of its components by the Observatory (2020).

Regardless of the main trends of this phenomenon, each area/neighborhood in Tirana or other Municipalities in the country has its infrastructure characteristics. Likewise, the residents or visitors of a certain area have their perceptions of security. These characteristics combined in a study (like the one we are presenting on this report), conducted prior to the Municipality's infrastructure improvement plan, will best guide the Municipality to invest in the type of infrastructure or service that will impact and increase the perception of safety.

Similarly, periodic updates of such studies would help assess the investment done as well as the level of satisfaction among citizens.

II. METHODOLOGY

The methodology¹⁰ used by the Observatory to conduct the study consists of a combination of desk reviews with an empirical study for collecting the initial data. Data collection was made possible through the combination of several strategies such as:

a) Desk Review – information collected in the target areas; information on the municipality's priorities for investments; information on the legal framework, information on policies related to gender-based and domestic violence cases management.

b) Field Quantitative Survey – Questionnaires completed through surveys administered in the streets were used to collect general information, such as women's perception of safety in public spaces and their usage of public space. The tool used is a questionnaire with fixed questions. The respondents, who should be older than 16 years old, were selected randomly (the third or fourth random passerby was selected). Their consent was requested before they were asked the questions. Among other criteria, the familiarity with the area and the time spent there was considered. (i.e., the reason for being in that area was due to residence, employment, regular visits for a particular activity, not casual). A total of 384 questionnaires were administered with citizens, residents or regular visitors of the two study areas (192 questionnaires for each of the target areas: "Lapraça" and "21 Dhjetori").

c) Semi-structured interviews (in total: 10) conducted with the groups of interests (mainly service providers and businesses) in order to identify the most widespread cases of gender-based violence and discrimination against women and girls in public spaces (from interest groups) as well as their recommendation for improving safety in these areas.

d) Focus group discussions, with participants from both genders, from vulnerable groups and different age groups (18-19 years old, 20-29 years old, 30-49 years old, 50+ years old).

e) Structured Observation Missions (in total: 5) conducted during hours of day and evening in targeted areas. They served to collect data (without the direct engagement of participants) that couldn't be collected through employing typical research tools such as surveys or interviews.

f) Street safety inspections (audits) (in total: 5). These were done to help women and girls identify safe and secure spaces and identify ways - from a gender perspective to improve the environment and guarantee women's and girls' safety.

Unlike previous efforts, this study did not research respondents' knowledge on different forms of violence against women, prejudice and discrimination, traditional stereotypes that go hand in hand with this phenomenon, or details of the various forms of violence experienced before and after the age of 15. The methodological simplification is done on purpose. The main goal was to collect information on those elements, mainly infrastructural, but also personal that affect the perceptions of safety on public spaces: This information is complemented by the findings of the third national survey on the extent and prevalence of different forms of violence, as well as the attitudes and gender stereotypes that accompany it. The preliminary findings of the research were discussed in a round table with representatives of Tirana Municipality CRM and the main institutions that provide services to the target areas. The round table was held in November 2019.

¹⁰ The proposed methodology was developed based on the "UN Women Global Program: Safe Cities without Violence Against Women and Girls - Guidance for Analytical Studies" (2011) and "Tools for Gathering Information on Women's Security and Their Inclusion in Cities: Experience from the Gendered Cities Program," prepared by 'Women in Cities International' (2011). This methodology was an update to that explored and used earlier by the Observatory in 2016 and followed by IDRA in 2018-2019

Ethical principles and limitations of the study

Taking into consideration the sensitivity of the topic and the data collection process, this entire study was prepared based on the ethical principles used when studying violence against women and girls' issues. The Observatory team working in the field was made of professionals, experienced in administering a variety of quantitative and qualitative tools to collect information on issues related to the violence against women and girls. Nevertheless, the project team had to attend training to discuss the ethical principles that should be taken into consideration when using data collection instruments. Also, receive additional information on the definition of basic terms and terminology, current services for women and girls - survivors of violence, and other information needed on the field. The fieldwork of the team was facilitated, coordinated, and monitored continuously by the Project Coordinator, who helped to overcome unexpected challenges.

However, like any study, this has its limitations:

- This is a perception study, despite the combination of several data collection strategies, including consultation with stakeholders to evaluate key findings. The respondents' perceptions may differ from those of other women and girls living or visiting the target areas, and from the perceptions of decision-maker(s) and service provider(s). So, the findings of this study, although generalized based on statistical estimates of the sample randomly selected and verified through stakeholders' meetings and round tables, maybe contradictable by the broader community of Lapraka and 21 Dhjetori.
- The perception of safety depends on gender, age, and several other, individual, and social characteristics. Therefore, the generalization of findings may still be debatable, although the statistical principles needed for this purpose were all respected.
- General hesitation in speaking out about this form of violence against women and girls and respondents' limited information on the topic is another aspect of the limits of this study.

The Observatory has been careful in addressing these limitations. It has reflected the suggestions provided by the consultation meetings in the study itself.

III. THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The target areas

The selection of target areas was done in close consultation with the Municipality of Tirana, based on their priorities and plans for investment on specific areas. The study was focused in the areas of “Laprakë” and “21 Dhjetori”.

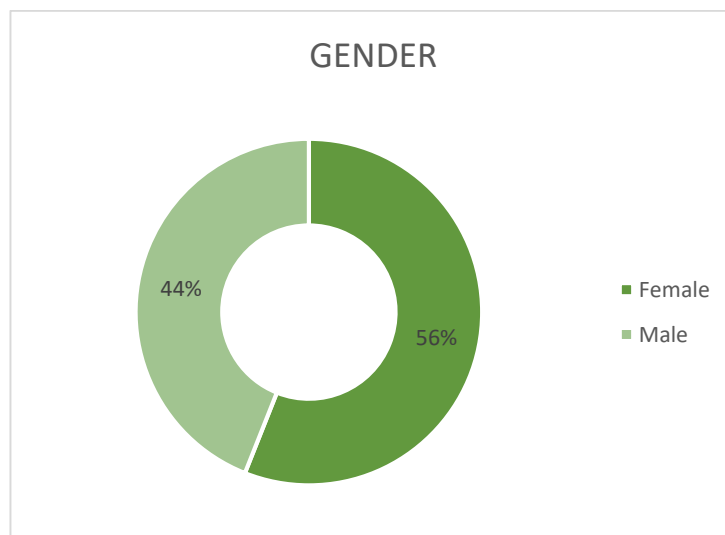


Photo 1: Study area “21 Dhjetori”



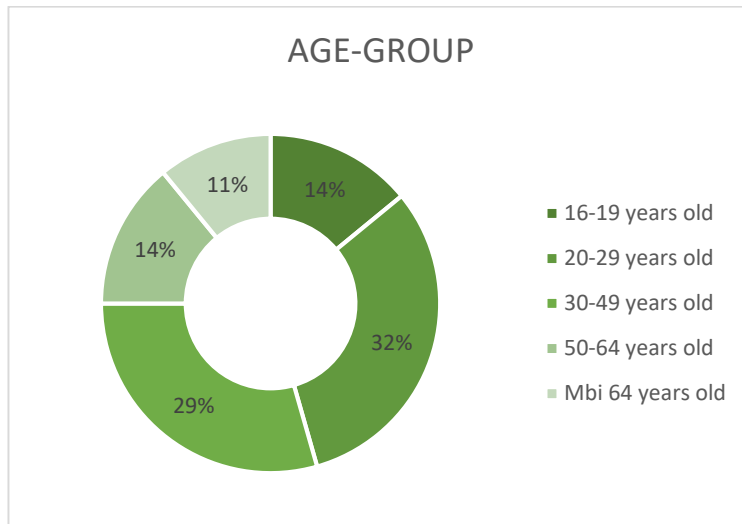
Photo 2: Study area “Laprakë”

General respondents’ demographics:



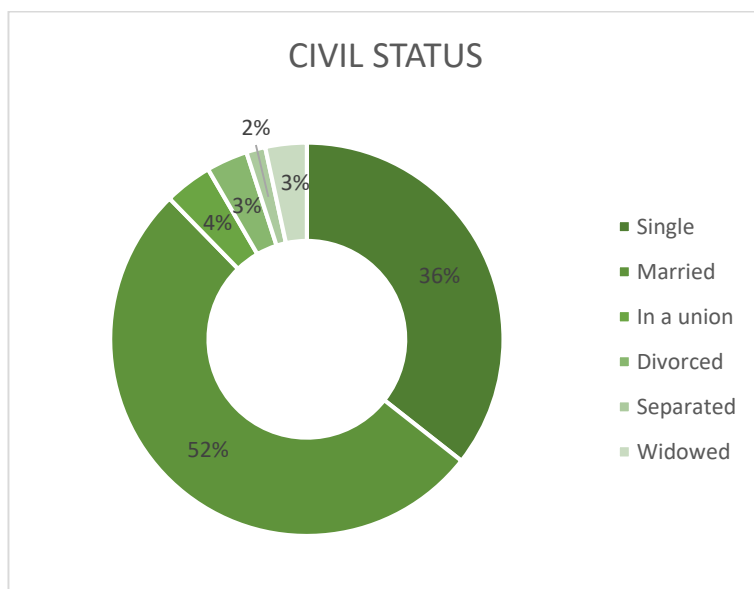
Graph 1: Percentage of total respondents by gender

As was explained above, the quantitative data were collected through the administration of 384 questionnaires, thus surveying a total of 384 persons, respectively, 192 persons in each target area. 56% of respondents were women and girls.



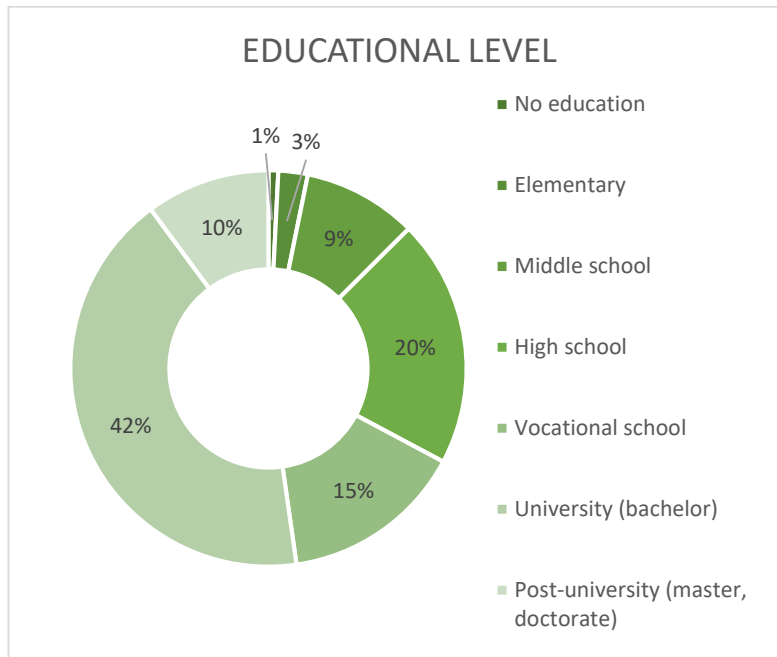
Graph 2: Percentage of total respondents by age group

Within the total of respondents, the higher percentage is taken by those of 20-29 years old (32%) age group, followed by those of 30-49 years old age group. Other age groups were less represented in more or less equal proportions.



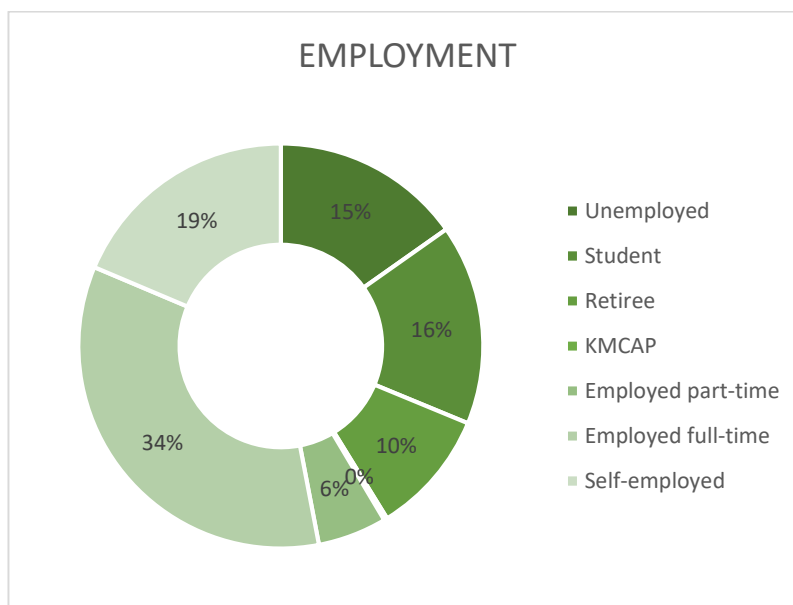
Graph 3: Percentage of total respondents by civil status

52% of the respondents were married, and 36% were single. There has also been representation from respondents that were divorced, separated (living separately but not yet legally divorced), cohabiting, even widowed.



Graph 4: Percentage of total respondents by education level

The respondent with University level of education dominate the sample of respondents - 42%, followed by those with general high school education (20%), vocational education (15%), post-university education (10%), mandatory education 8-9 years (9%), elementary education (3%) and with no education at all (1%).



Graph 5: Percentage of total respondents by employment status

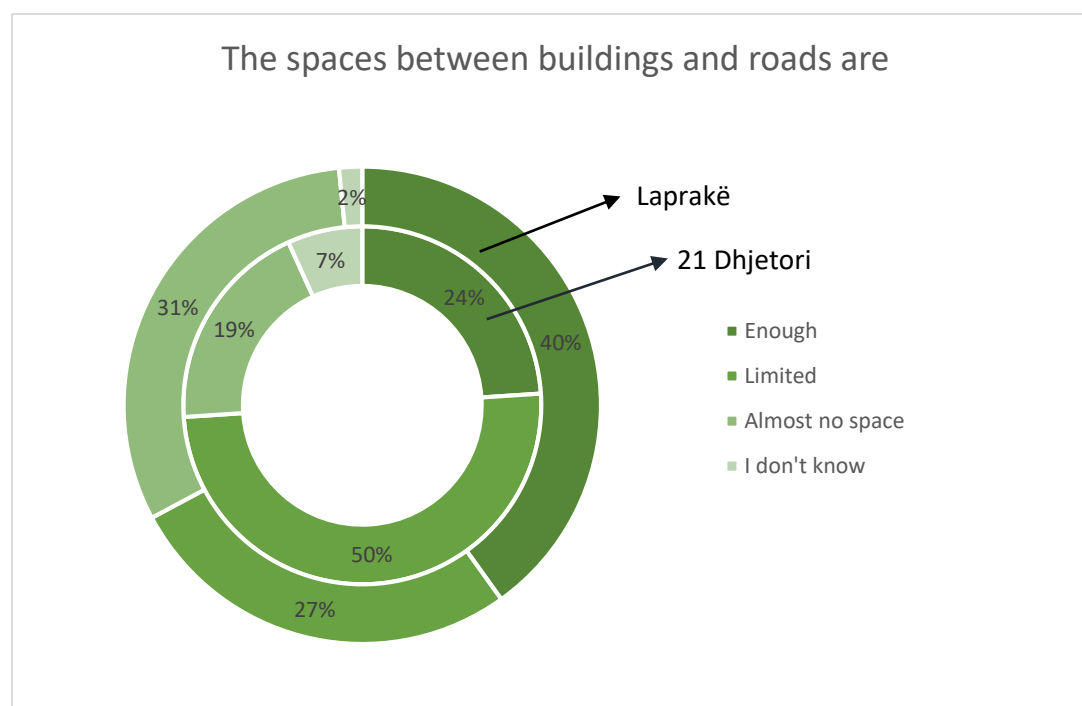
34% of respondents were employed full-time. Part-time, self-employed, retired, students and unemployed categories were also represented.

III.1. Common findings for both target areas

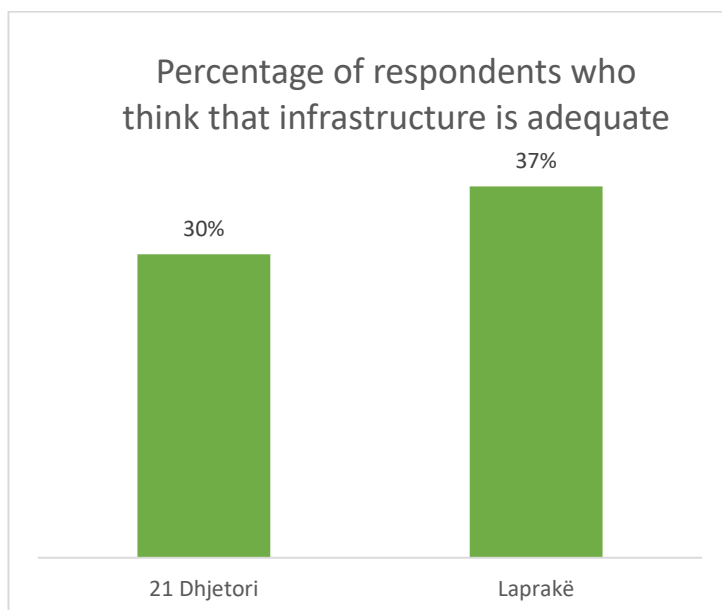
To explore different elements of security in the target areas, the main questions made to the respondents related to their perception of spaces between buildings and roads, their opinion on the infrastructure as a whole, street lighting, main and secondary road conditions, etc.). Data analysis resulted as follows:

- Only 24% of respondents at the “21 Dhjetori” area and 40% of respondents in “Laprakë” think that the space between buildings and streets in their area is sufficient.
- 50% of respondents at the “21 Dhjetori” area and 27% of respondents in “Laprakë” think that the space between buildings and streets in their area is limited.
- 19% of respondents at the “21 Dhjetori” area and 31% of respondents in “Laprakë” think that there is no space at all between buildings and streets in their area, as presented in the following chart.

The issue with insufficient free space is present in both target areas. This issue is more pronounced at the “21 Dhjetori” target area.

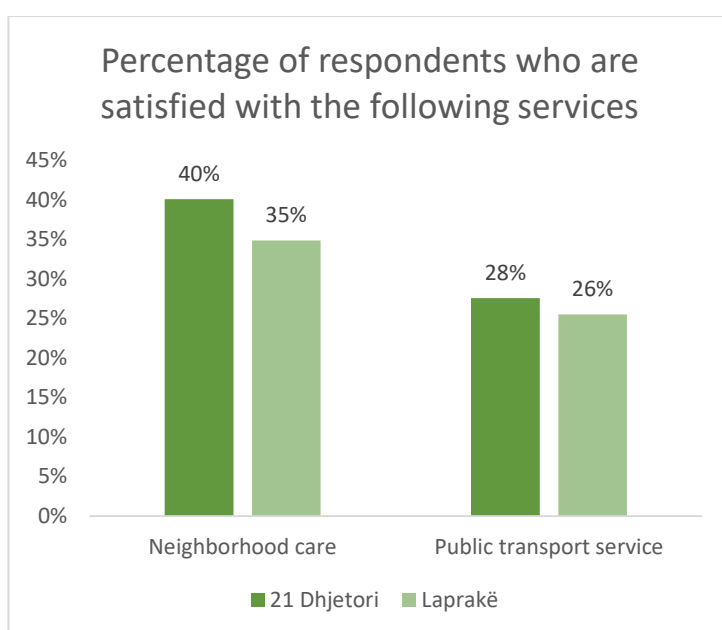


Graph 6: Perception of total respondents on the spaces between buildings and streets in the respective areas



Graph 7: Percentage of respondents satisfied with the infrastructure in their neighborhood

Respondents express their concerns for the infrastructure as a whole on their target area (considering the lighting system, free space, roads and backroads conditions, etc.). Only 30% of respondents in "21 Dhjetori" and 37% of respondents in "Lapraka" think that the infrastructure in their area is appropriate.



Graph 8: The percentage of respondents satisfied with the quality of services provided for the maintenance of the neighborhood and public transport

Concerning services provided for area maintenance or public transport services, less than half of the respondents are satisfied with the service provided. The most pressing problem seems to be the public transportation service, of which only 28% of respondents in the "21 Dhjetori" area and 26% of the respondents in "Lapraka" are satisfied. 40% of respondents in "21 Dhjetori" and 35% of respondents in "Lapraka" are satisfied with the quality of maintenance provided in the area.



Photo 3: A fragment from quality of maintenance at "21 Dhjetori"

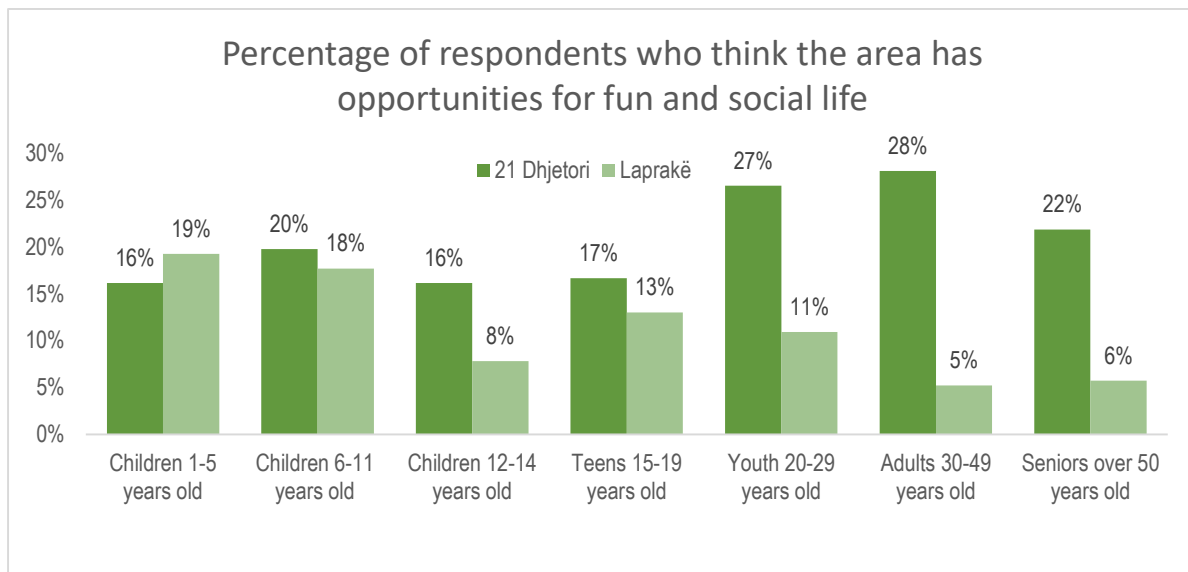


Photo 4: A fragment from quality of maintenance in "Laprakë"

The respondents were also asked about the entertainment opportunities for specific age groups in their area. Although at a representation level of less than one-third of the total number of respondents in each area, it results that the respondents from "21 Dhjetori" area are more satisfied with the entertainment opportunities offered in their area for specific age groups, mainly of the following types:

- "Playground", "Parks" or "Bars with Toys" for children age group 1-5 years old (for 16% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 19% of respondents from "Laprakë"),
- Playground", "Parks" or "Bars with Toys" and "Various Courses," for children of age group 6-11 years old (for 20% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 18% of respondents in "Laprakë"),
- "After class activities or courses offered by the school" for children of age group 12-14 years old (for 16% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 8% of respondents from "Laprakë"),
- The school, "Sports center", "Mini football fields" and "Bars" for teenagers of age group 15-19 years old (for 17% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 13% of respondents from "Laprakë"),
- "Mini Football Fields", "Shopping Malls" and "bars" for the youth of age group 20-29 years old (for 27% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 11% of respondents from "Laprakë"),
- "Bars" for adults of age group 30-49 years old (for 28% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 5% of respondents from "Laprakë"),
- "Bars" or "Parks" for adults above 50 years old (for 22% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 6% of respondents from "Laprakë").

One thing noted in the description above, and the chart below is the low percentage of respondents who believe that there are entertainment possibilities in their areas and the limited variety of potential entertainment venues. "Bars" were mentioned by almost all age groups as one of the main places for entertainment.



Graph 9: Percentage of respondents who think that there are possibilities for entertainment and social activities in their areas per age group

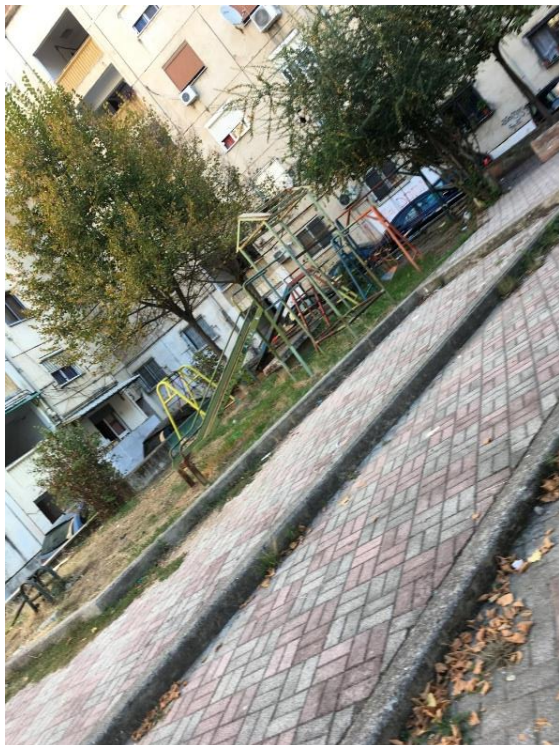
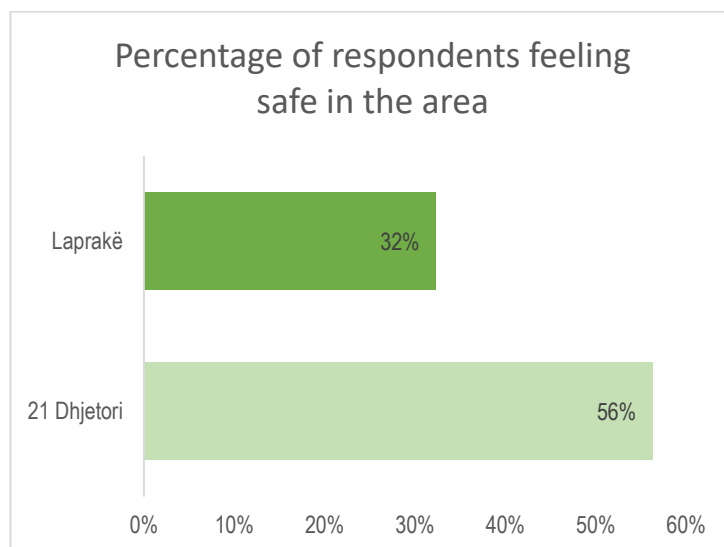


Photo 5: View of a playground in "21 Dhjetori"



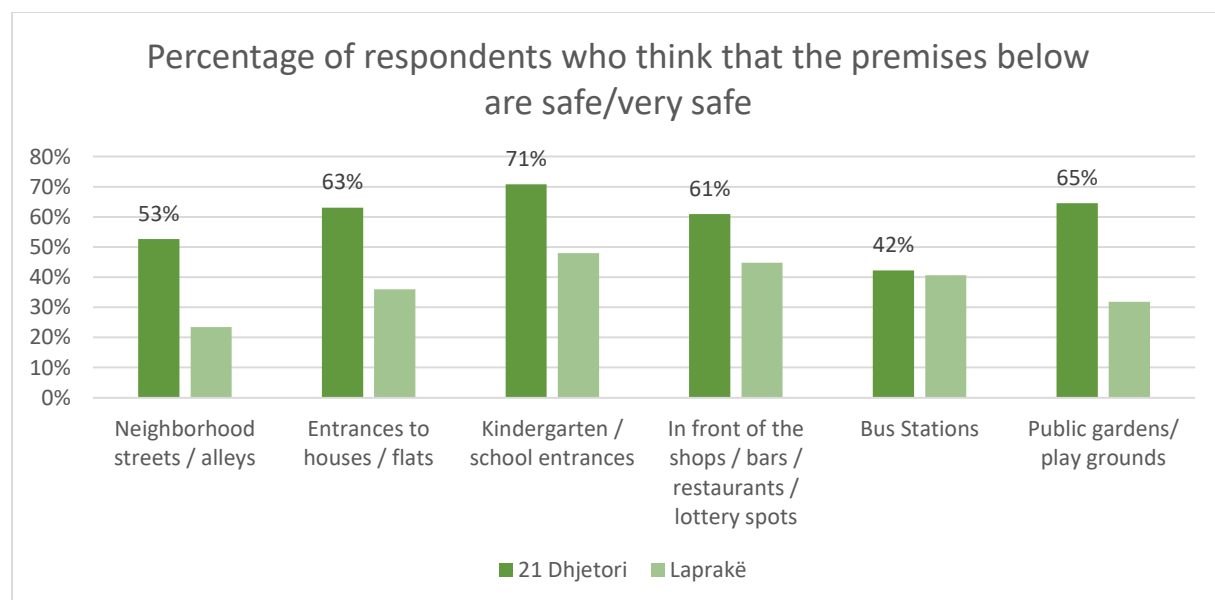
Photo 6: View of a playground in "Laprakë"



Respondents' perception on safety in the target areas identifies the area of "21 Dhjetori" as safer (based on the total of 56% of respondents in this area who classified it as safe), compared to the area of "Laprakë", which only 32% of respondents think is a safe area.

Graph 10: Percentage of respondents feeling safe in the study areas

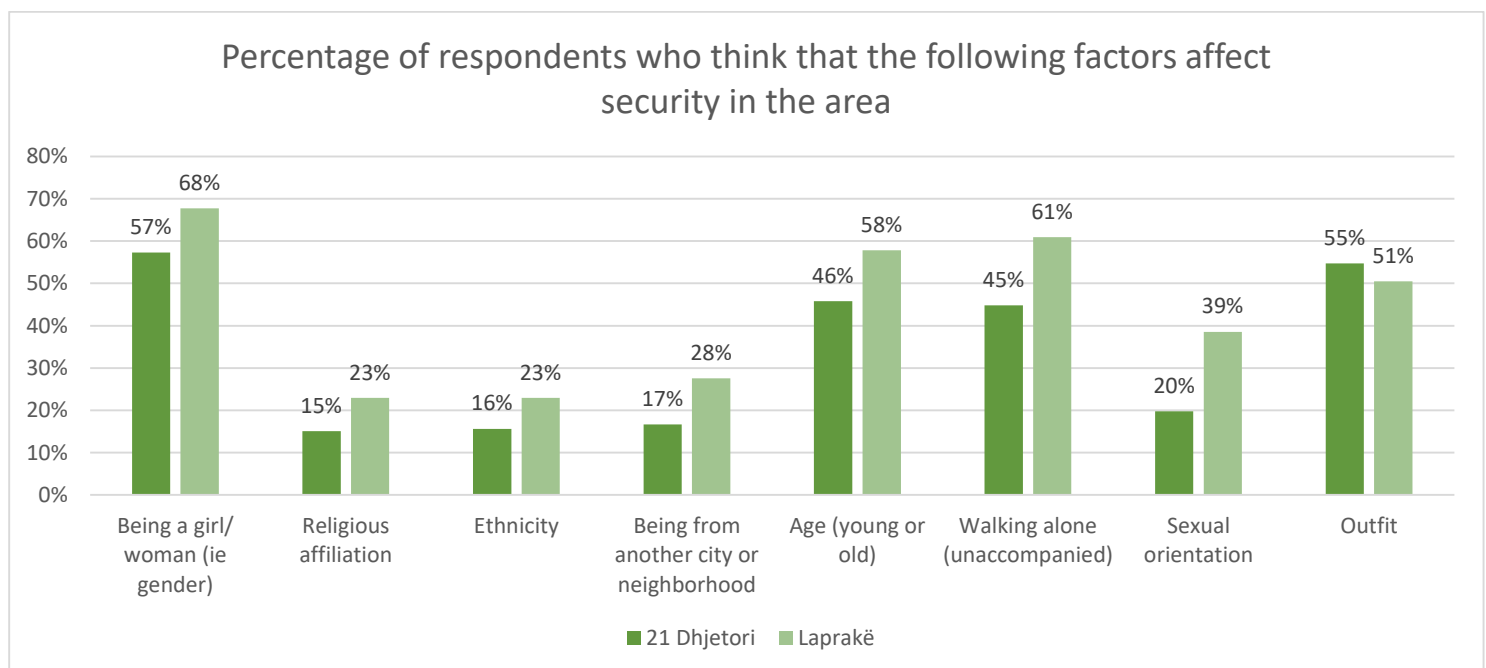
Public or private building entryways (for approximately 65% of respondents), houses entryways (for 63% of respondents), parks and playgrounds (for 65% of respondents), as well as roads to come within the neighborhood (for 53% of respondents) are classified as safer places by the respondents from "21 Dhjetori". Meanwhile, the level of safety perception at bus stops is lower for this area (42% of the respondents). In "Laprakë", the percentage of respondents who think that the places mentioned above are safe is lower than the percentage of "21 Dhjetori" respondents. Moreover, the ranking varies according to the level of safety. E.g., only 23% of respondents from "Laprakë" responded that the roads to the neighborhood are safe.



Graph 11: Përqindja e të anketuarve/ave që i mendojnë të sigurt vende të caktuara në zonën e tyre dhe specifikimi i këtyre vendeve

The respondents' perception of safety is impacted by many factors. The study explores many of these factors. Some of them, such as personal and infrastructural ones, intertwine with other behavioral factors found in the target areas. The study explores also the access to service providing institutions in the area.

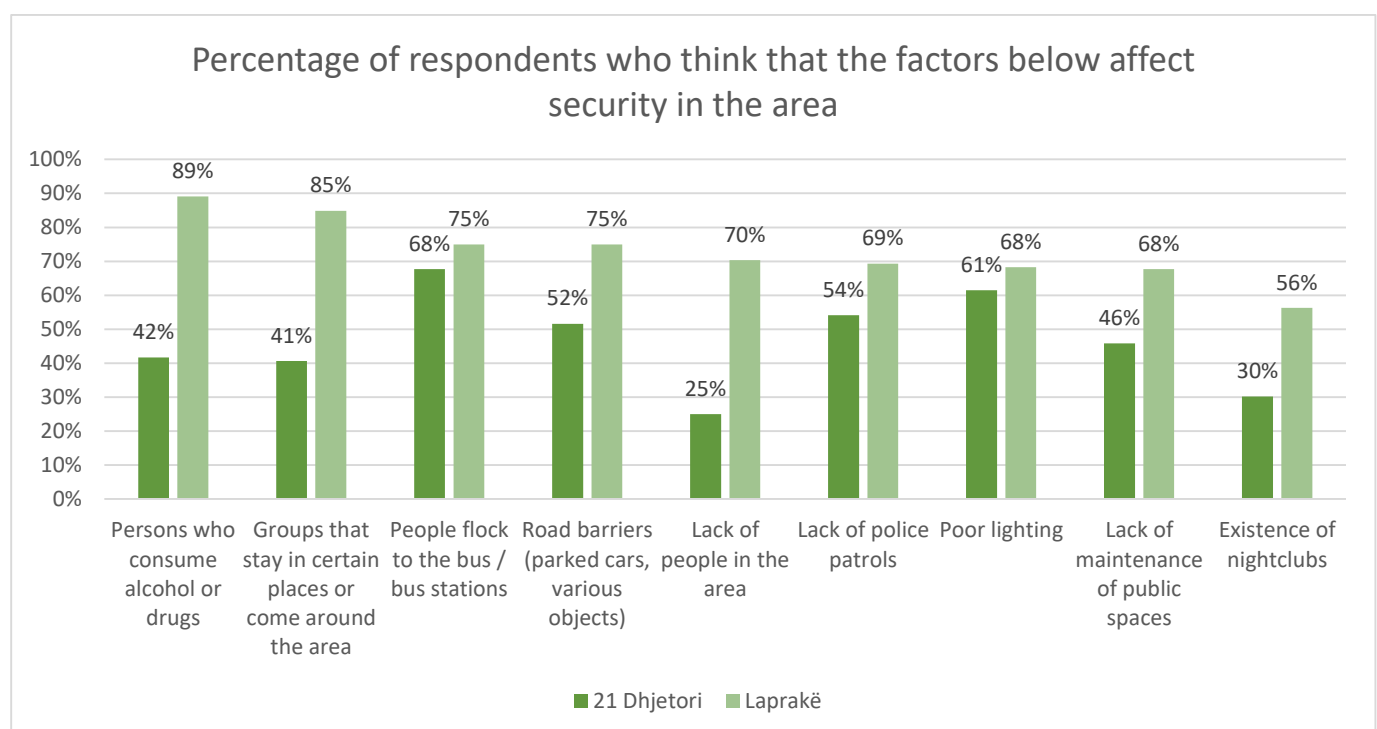
The analysis of personal factors that influence the respondents' safety perception in the target areas shows that factors such as: **being a woman, i.e., gender** (for 57% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 68% of respondents from "Laprakë"), **age** (for 46% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 58% of respondents from "Laprakë"), **walking alone/unaccompanied** (for 45% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 61% of respondents from "Laprakë") especially during certain times and certain locations, but also the **attire** (for 55% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 51% of respondents from "Laprakë"), are some of the main factors that impact the perception of safety or better the lack of it in the target areas. These factors are identified in both target areas in higher levels than for, e.g., sexual orientation (for 20% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 39% of respondents from "Laprakë"), coming from another town (for 17% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 28% of respondents from "Laprakë") ethnicity (for 16% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 23% of respondents from "Laprakë") or religion (for 15% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 23% of respondents from "Laprakë"). By comparing the data between the two target areas, we conclude that a young girl or woman who walks alone in "Laprakë" area in dusk or the first hours of the evening, dressed slightly extravagant feels less safe than the same woman walking under same conditions in "21 Dhjetori". The other personal factors which are ranked lower due to the level of influence on the perception of safety do follow the same trend; however – they have a higher impact on the "Laprakë" area.



Graph 12: The impact of different personal factors in the person of safety in the area

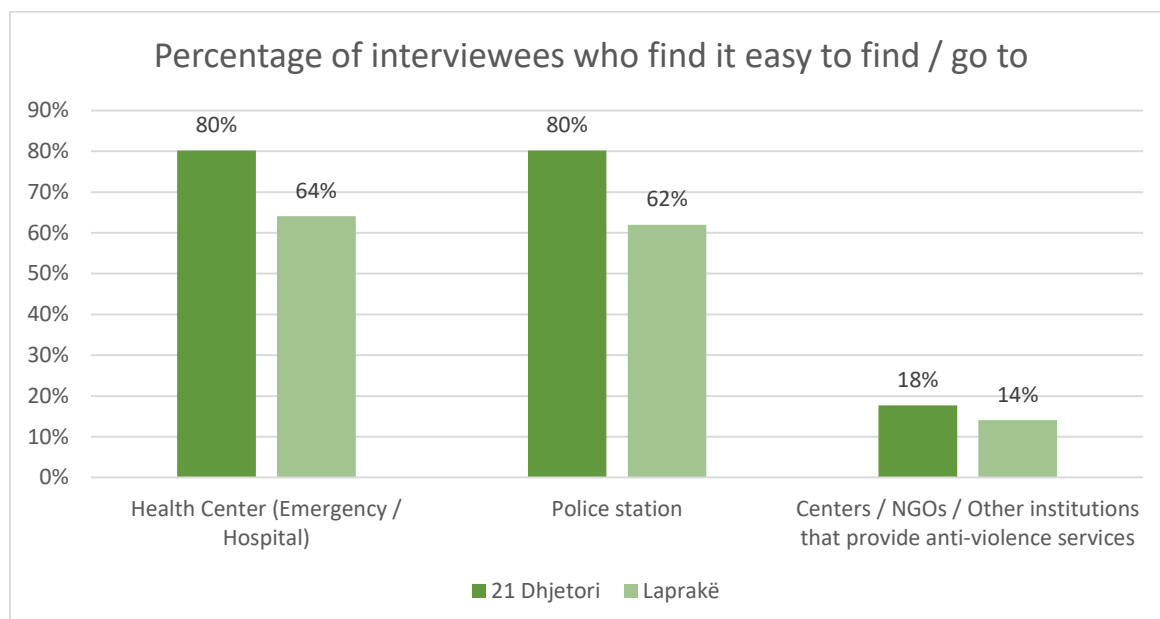
A multitude of infrastructural factors and others, of behavioral type, intertwine with personal factors, and impact the perceptions of safety or lack of it in the area. Among them, the most influential factors according to the residents of "21 Dhjetori" are the large crowds of people in bus station and inside busses (68% of respondents), poor lighting (61% of respondents), lack of police patrols (54% of respondents) and street barriers (52% of respondents). According to their opinions, other influencing factors are lack of public space maintenance (46% of respondents), Alcohol consumers or drug addicts (42% of respondents), groups of boys hanging out in certain spots or parading the streets (41% of respondents), night

clubs (30% of respondents) and the empty streets (25% of respondents). The influence of these factors is, however, lower than the ones mentioned above. In the “Laprake” area, the factors mentioned above are ranked differently, although in general, the factors impacting the sense of safety in “Laprake” are the same as the ones mentioned in “21 Dhjetori”. The respondents from “Laprakë” area emphasize that all the explored factors can be considered influential in safety perception, ranking them as follows: Alcohol consumers or drug addicts, (89% of respondents), groups of boys hanging out in certain spots or parading the streets (85% of respondents), the large crowds of people in bus station and inside busses (75% of respondent), streets barriers (75% of respondents), empty streets (70% of respondents), lack of police patrols (69% of respondents), poor lighting system (68% of respondents), lack of public space maintenance (68% of respondents), night clubs (56% of respondents). It is noted that the influence of these factors in percentage has not dropped under 56%, which demonstrates their considerable influence in the perception of safety in these areas.



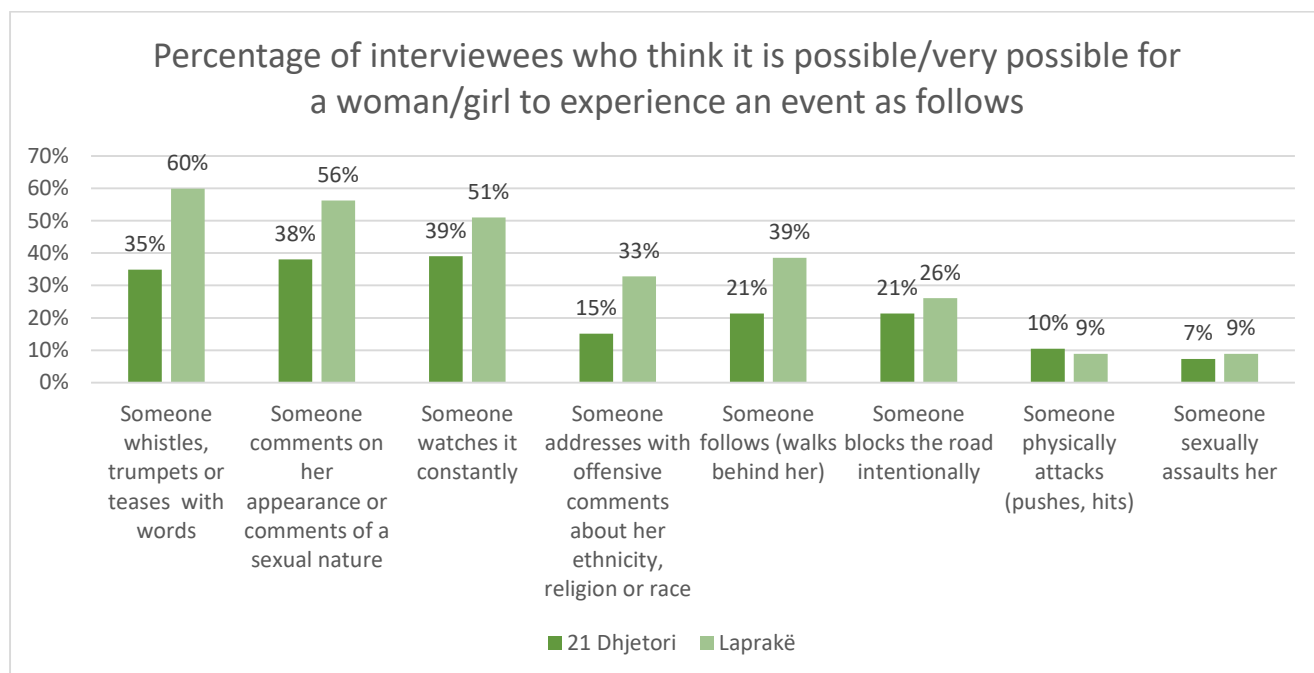
Graph 13: Infrastructure factors and others that impact the respondents' perception of safety or lack of it in both target areas

The presence of institutions providing assistance and support in the area, as well as easy access to them, is another factor that enhances the perception of security in the area. 80% of respondents from “21 Dhjetori” and 64% of respondents from “Laprakë” state that they can locate the health center or hospital easily. Similarly, 80% of respondents from “21 Dhjetori” and 62% of respondents from “Laprakë” state that it is easy for them to find the police station. The percentage of respondents from both target areas drops considerably when it comes to finding an NGO or center that provides supportive and specialized services against violence in their areas (only 18% of respondents at “21 Dhjetori” and 14% respondent in “Laprakë” state that it is easy for them to find such services).



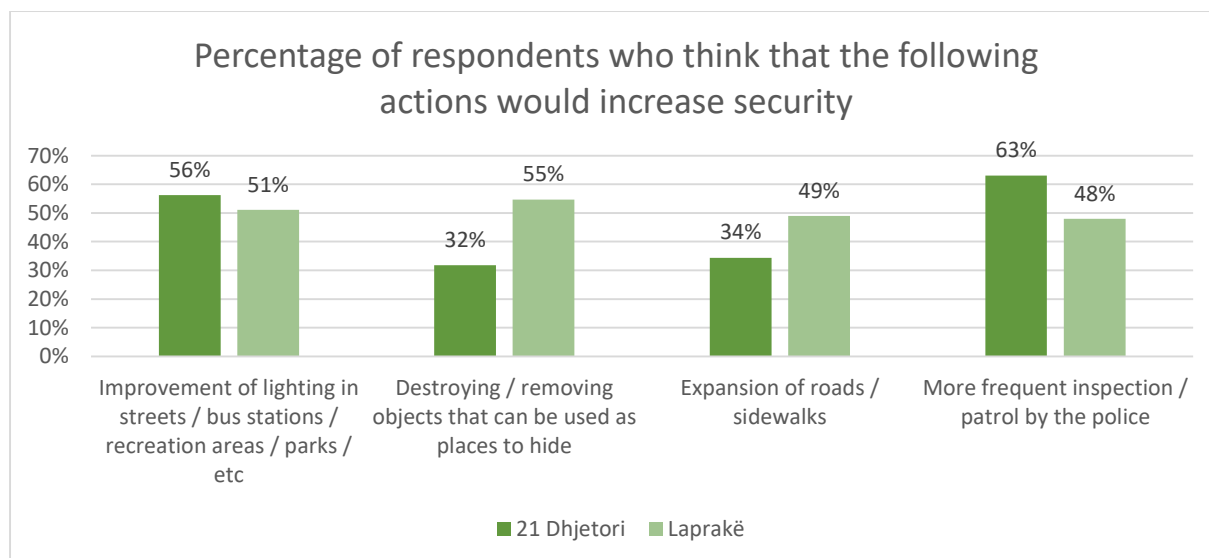
Graph 14: Percentage of respondents who identify and access easily the institutions that offer services in the area

When asked about incidents of violence in public spaces in their neighborhood, as well as the likelihood of a woman/girl being harassed or assaulted, the respondents answered that it is **possible / very possible** for a girl or woman to experience harassment/violence in both areas. These incidents could be *whistling, honking or verbal harassment from drivers*, (according to 35% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 60% of respondents from "Laprakë"), *comments on their looks, or comments with sexual connotation* (according to 38% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 56% of respondents from "Laprakë"), *staring intensively* (according to 39% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 51% of respondents from "Laprakë"), *stalking* (according to 21% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 39% of respondents from "Laprakë"), *stopping someone against their will in the streets* (according to 21% respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 26% respondents from "Laprakë") or *derogatory comments related to their ethnicity, religion or race* (according to 15% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 33% of respondents from "Laprakë"). When asked about incidents of physical or sexual violence, the percentage of respondents who think that it is "very possible" for a girl or a woman to experience physical or sexual assault in public spaces declines significantly. However, such forms of violence do exist. So, 10% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 9% of respondents from "Laprakë" agree that it is *possible/very possible for a girl/women to be assaulted physically* (pushed, hit), and 7% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 9% of respondents from "Laprakë" agree that it is *possible/very possible for a girl/women to be assaulted sexually* in their area.



Graph 15: Percentage of respondents who think that different incidents of violence are possible/very possible to be experienced by a girl/woman in their area

Some of the infrastructure improvement to increase the respondents' perception of safety in the target are **improving the lighting system** in streets, bus stations, public spaces, parks, etc. (for 56% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 51% of respondents from "Laprakë"), **more frequent inspections/patrolling from the police** (for 63% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 48% of respondents from "Laprakë"), **demolishing/displacing unfinished/abandoned constructions** which can be used as hiding places for perpetrators (for 32% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 55% of respondents from "Laprakë"), as well as **widening the streets/sidewalks** (for 34% of respondents from "21 Dhjetori" and 49% of respondents from "Laprakë").



Graph 16: Percentage of respondents who think that some type of intervention would increase the level of security in the area

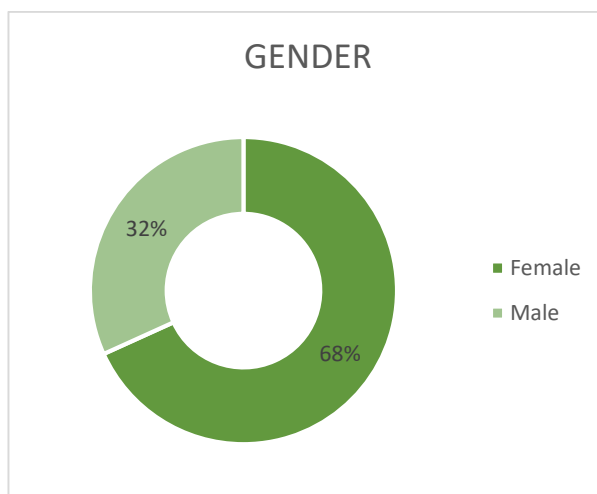
Gjetjet e mësipërme për të dy zonat, të evidentuara kryesisht nga analiza e të dhënave sasiore, mbështeten më tej edhe nga analiza e të dhënave cilësore të mbledhura si nga intervistat, ashtu edhe diskutimet me grupet e fokusuara apo misionet e vëzhgimeve dhe auditimit në terren.

III.2. Findings from the study in "21 Dhjetori" area

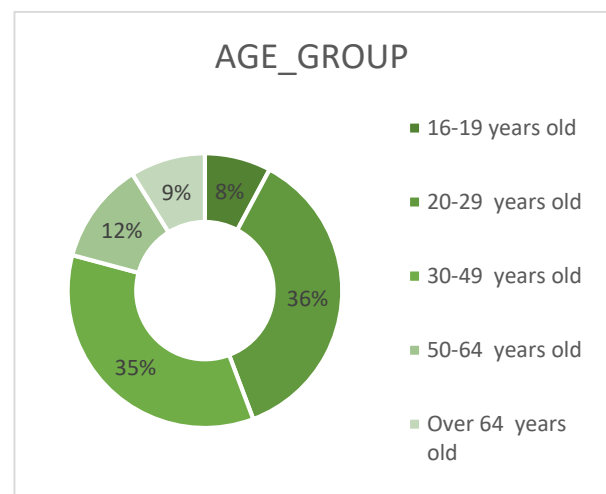
Qualitative information for the research in "21 Dhjetori" was collected through 192 questionnaires which correspond to 192 respondents, whose demographics are presented below.):

- 68% of respondents were women/girls
- 36% of respondents belonged to the age group of 20-29 years, and 35% of respondents belonged to the age group of 30-49 years old
- 55% of respondents were university graduated
- 44% of respondents were "married" and 43% "single"
- 45% of the respondents were full-time employees

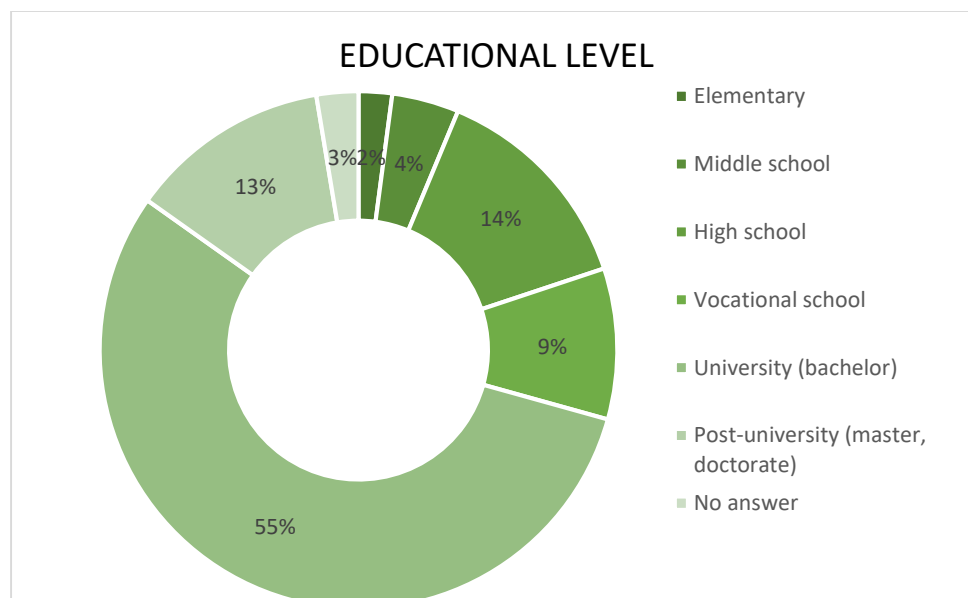
More details on respondents' demographics are presented in the charts below.



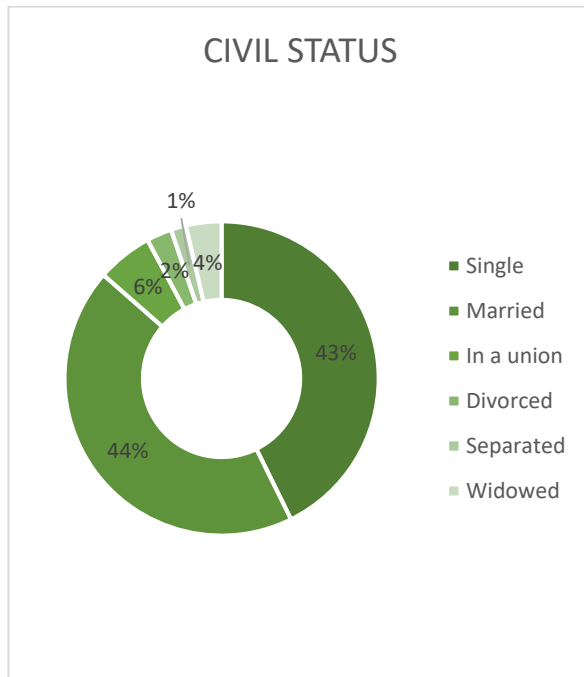
Graph 17: Gender Distribution of Respondents ("21 Dhjetori")



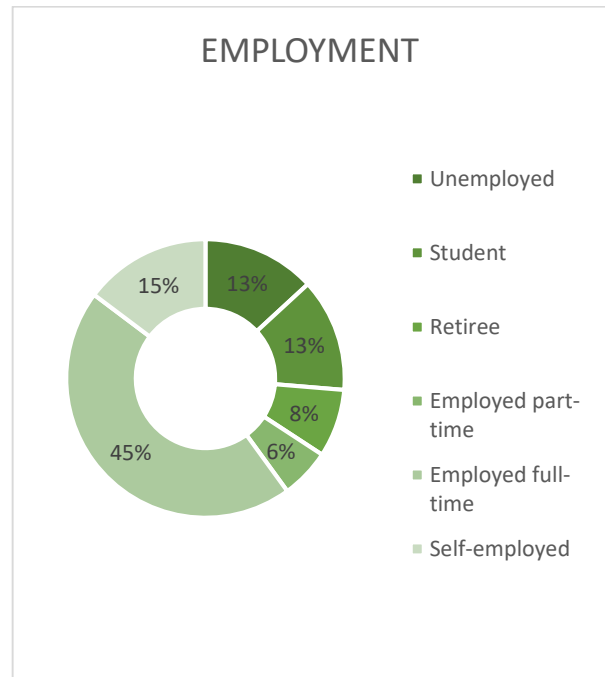
Graph 18: Age group distribution of respondents ("21 Dhjetori")



Graph 19: Distribution of respondents according to education level ("21 Dhjetori")

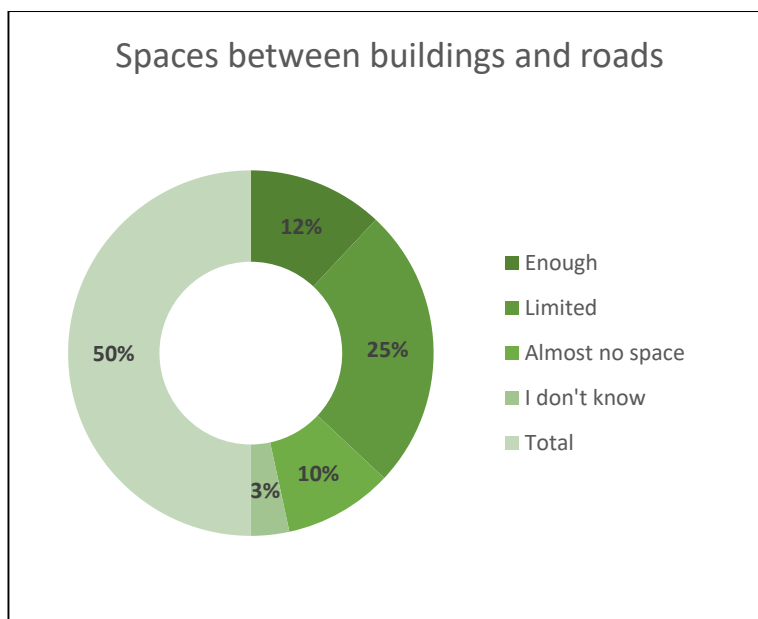


Graph 20: Distribution of respondents according to civil status ("21 Dhjetori")



Graph 21: Distribution of respondents according to their employment status ("21 Dhjetori")

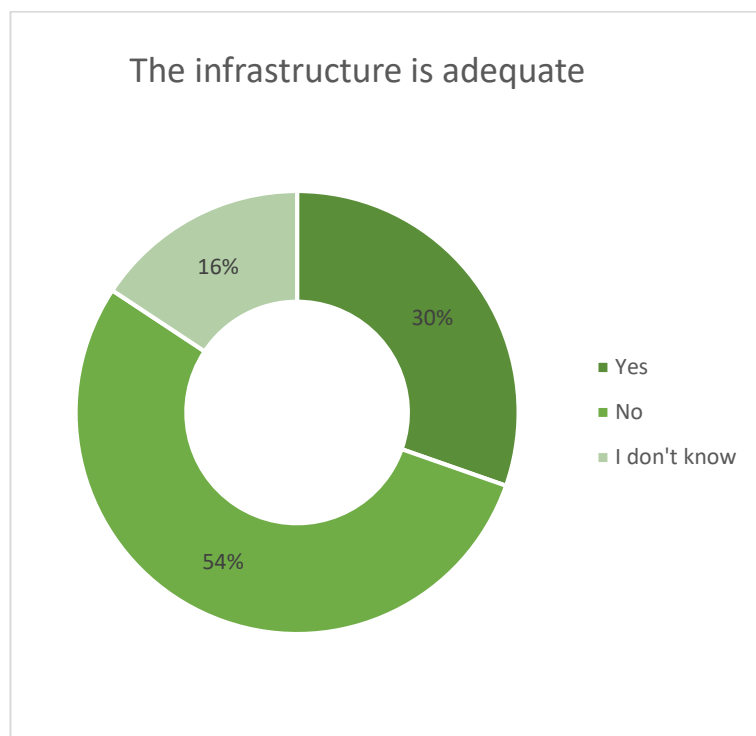
Perception of general conditions in the area ("21 Dhjetori")



Graph 22: Respondents' perception of the free space between buildings and other streets in the area

50% of respondents perceive the spaces between roads and buildings as limited, and 19% think that there are no free spaces in this area. Only 24% of respondents find these spaces to be sufficient.

These findings are also supported by observation missions and audits in the area. The first impression created when entering the area is described as: "... narrow streets, cluttered area, unorganized, numerous cars, disorderly placed ..."

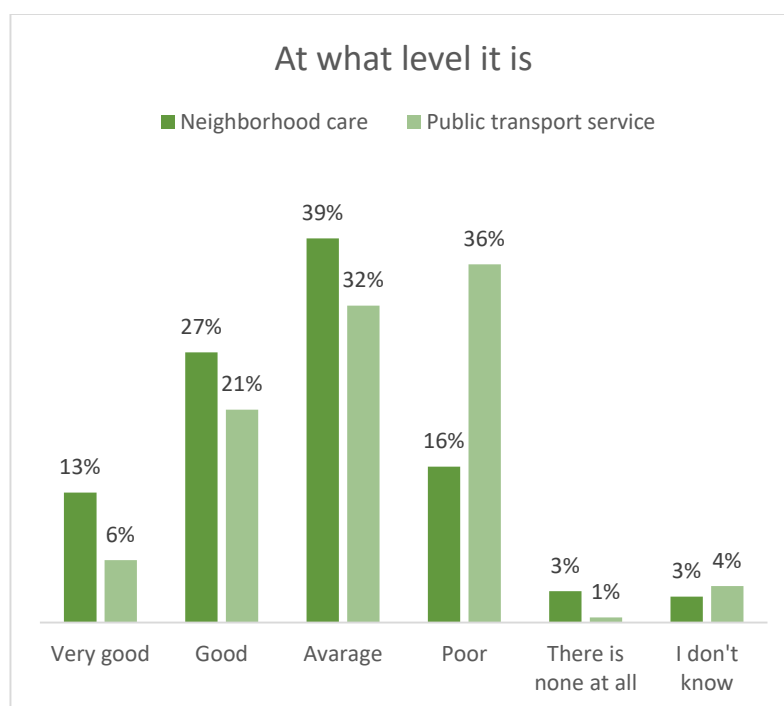


Graph 23: Respondents' perception on the area's infrastructure

54% of respondents think that the general infrastructure of the area (pedestrian crossing, lighting system, free space) is not appropriate against 30% who think it is appropriate.

“... The lighting is good to some extent, however, there are improperly illuminated areas where that create a sense of insecurity. There are also places where one can hide without being distinguished from others, such as the spaces between waste bins, construction sites, curves, hidden doors, tunnels ...”

- observation realized on October 20 afternoon in this area

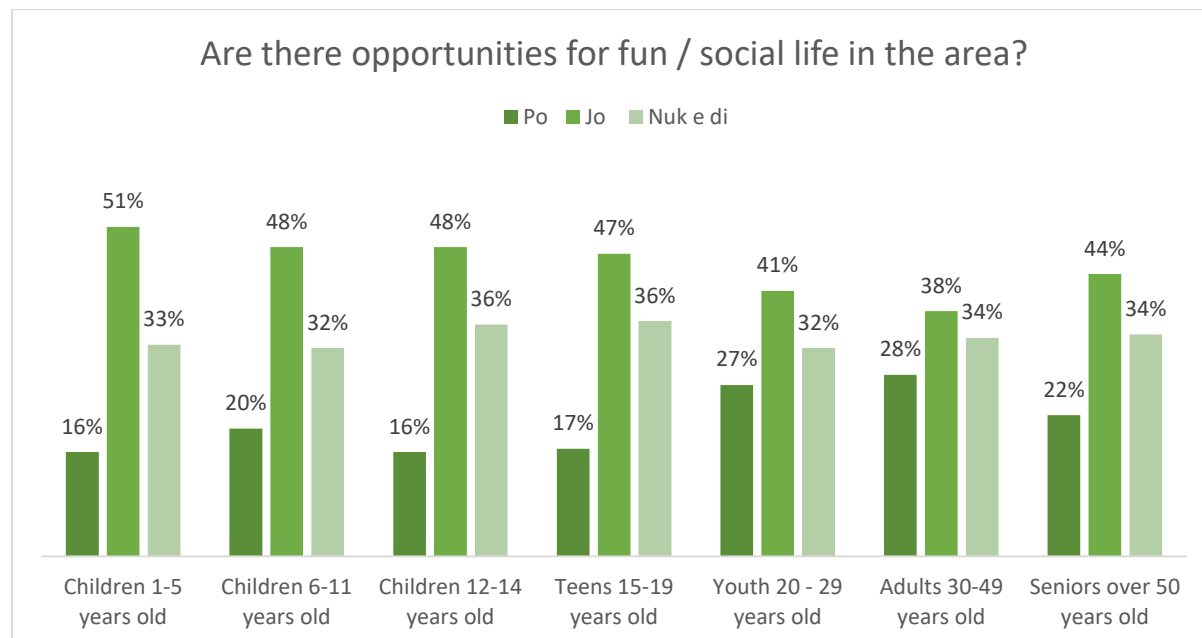


Graph 24: Respondents' perception on the services of maintenance and public transportation

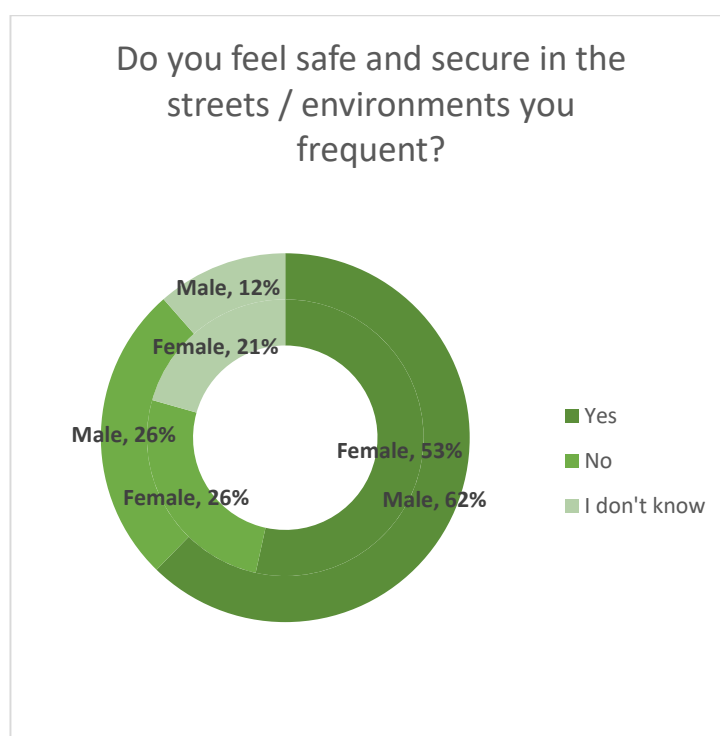
39% of respondents think that the maintenance services are at an average level, versus 13% of them who believe that these services are very good. Also, 36% of respondents complain about public transportation, considering it very poor.

“... Even at bus stations where there is lighting, signage is still missing. There is wastes in the streets and graffiti in the walls...” (audit, October 24, afternoon)

The highest percentage of respondents, when asked about entertainment/recreational of social activities in “21 Dhjetori,” think that there are no such opportunities for any of the age groups, not for children, teenagers, youngsters or adults. Those few respondents who believe that there are indeed such possibilities have cited playgrounds, football fields, and bars. Some parents cite schools, private courses, and activities that fill their children’s lives.



Graph 25: Respondents perceptions on entertainment and social life possibilities

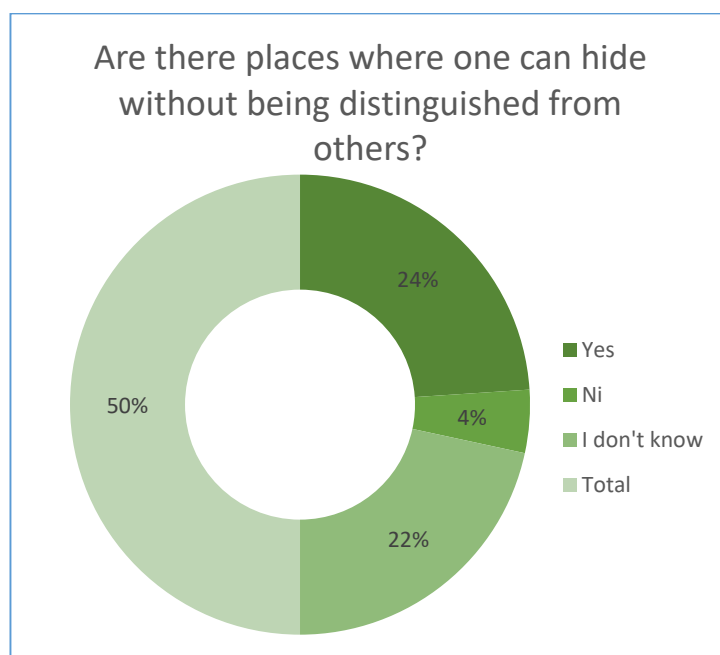


Graph 26: Perceptimi i të anketuarve/ave mbi sigurinë në zonë

When asked about their sense of safety or being safe when crossing a street or attending specific venues in “21 Dhjetori” neighborhood, 56% of respondents shared that “they feel safe, 26% “do not feel safe,” while 18% “do not know how to define/determine the sense of safety.”

Feeling of security are higher among men and boys compared to women and girls (62% compared to 53%), while women and girls have a higher level of suspicion to accurately determine their sense of well-being. neighborhood security, compared to men and boys (21% vs. 12%).

The sense of “lack of safety” in the area is connected to several factors, some being infrastructure-related such as maintenance of the area, the presence of hiding places for perpetrators, weak streets’ lights (mainly during evening hours).

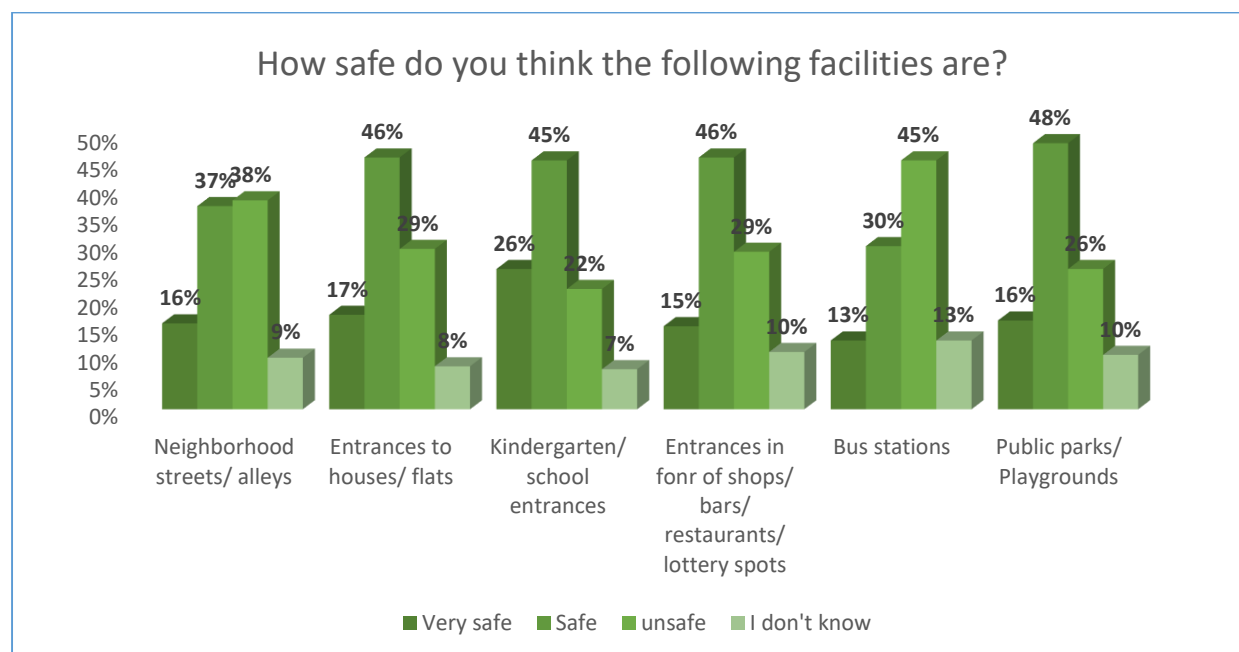


Graph 27: Respondents' perception of places where someone can hide from others

As presented above, the majority of respondents consider the area maintenance services to be average; it is noted that 48% of respondents express concern about the presence of places where perpetrators could hide.

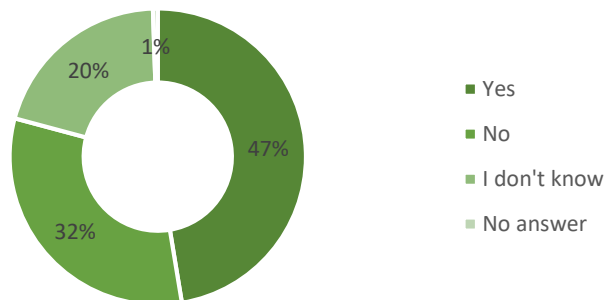
"... There are also isolated or empty spaces that create feelings of insecurity, there are some playgrounds, but they are not safe and there are no facilities for the movement of people with disabilities ..." (audit, October 20, morning)

The respondents perceive bus stations and neighborhood streets and alleys as the most unsafe places in the area.



Graph 28: Respondents' perception of the level of safety in different places of the target area

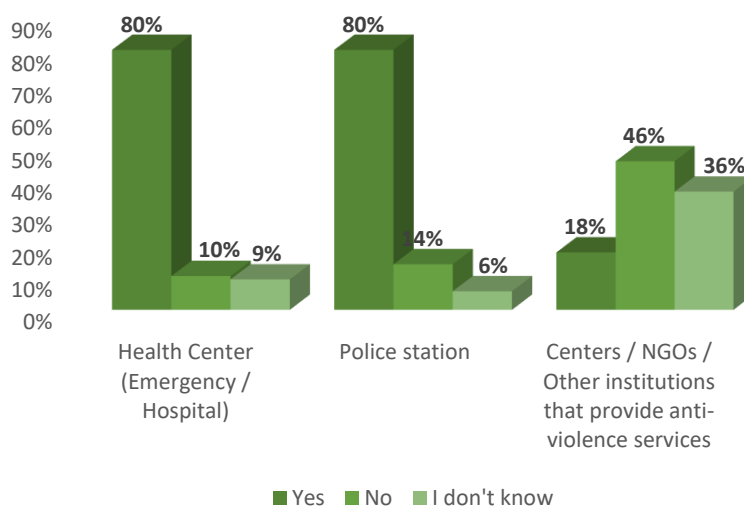
Can you choose / have access to other safer routes?



Only 47% of respondents think that they can choose or have access to another safe route.

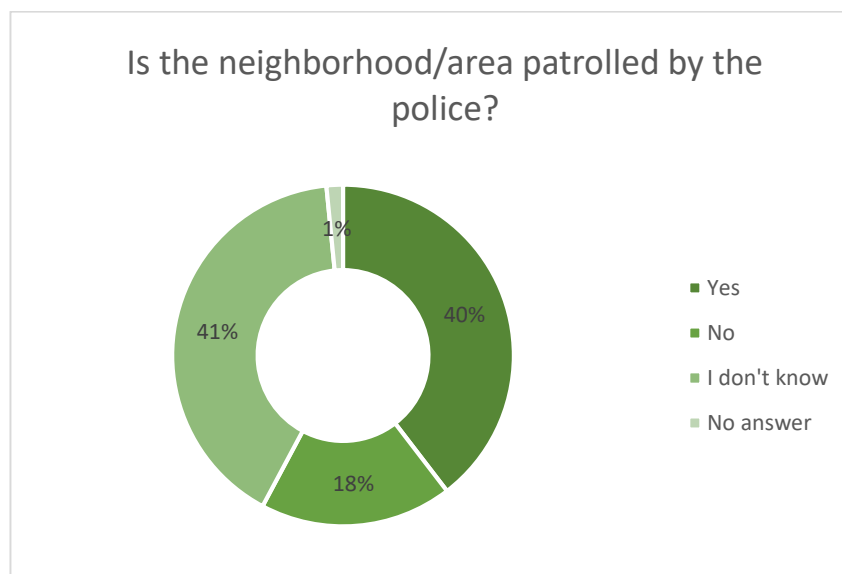
Graph 29: Respondents' perception of safe routes access

If you needed to, would you find it easy to find/go to?



80% of respondents find it easy to access health center services or locate police stations, but only 16% of them know how to look for help/support beside an organization/center that offers services against violence.

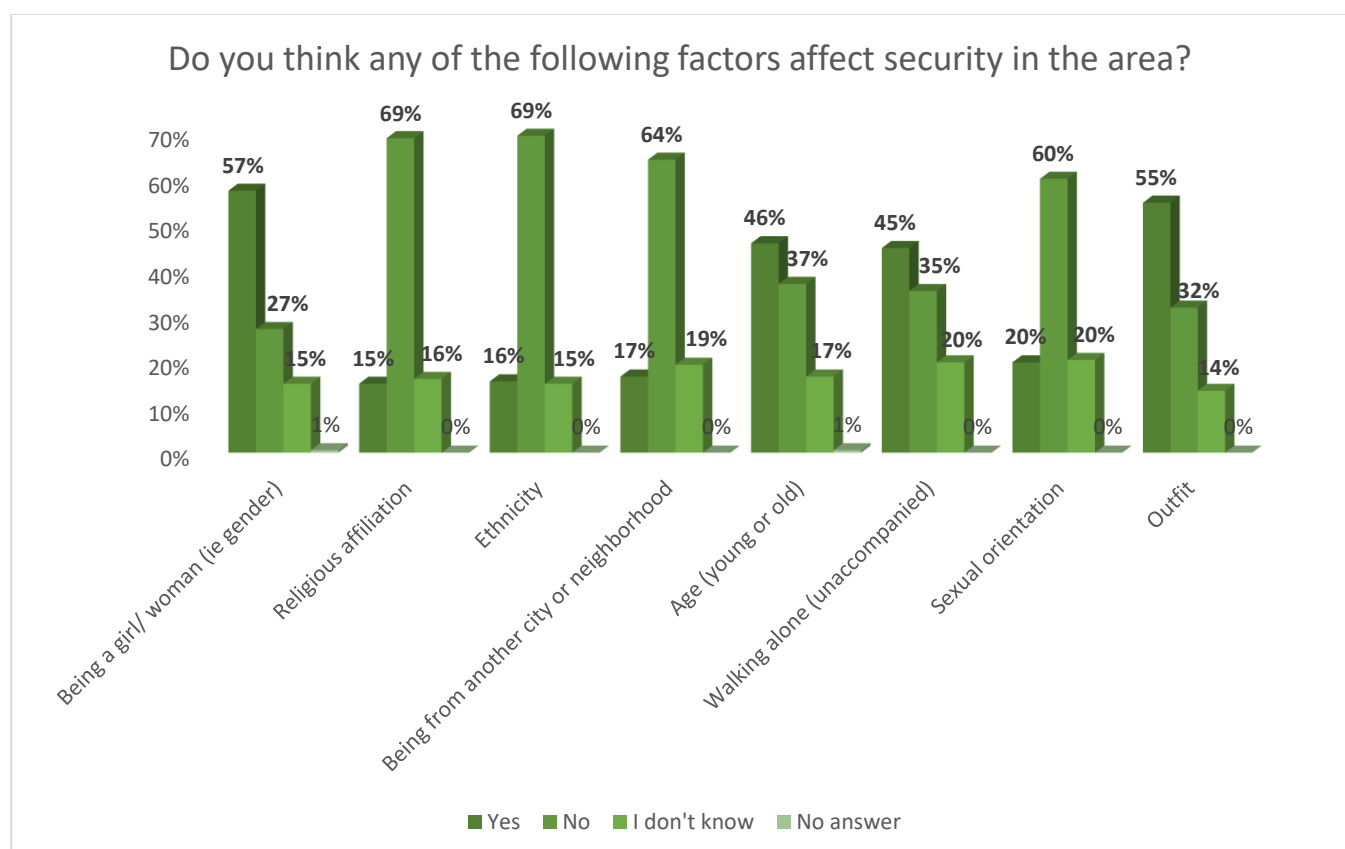
Graph 30: Respondents' perception of access to institutions which provide specialized protection services



40% of respondents agree that police patrol inspects the area regularly, 18% think that it doesn't, while 41% of respondents do not know.

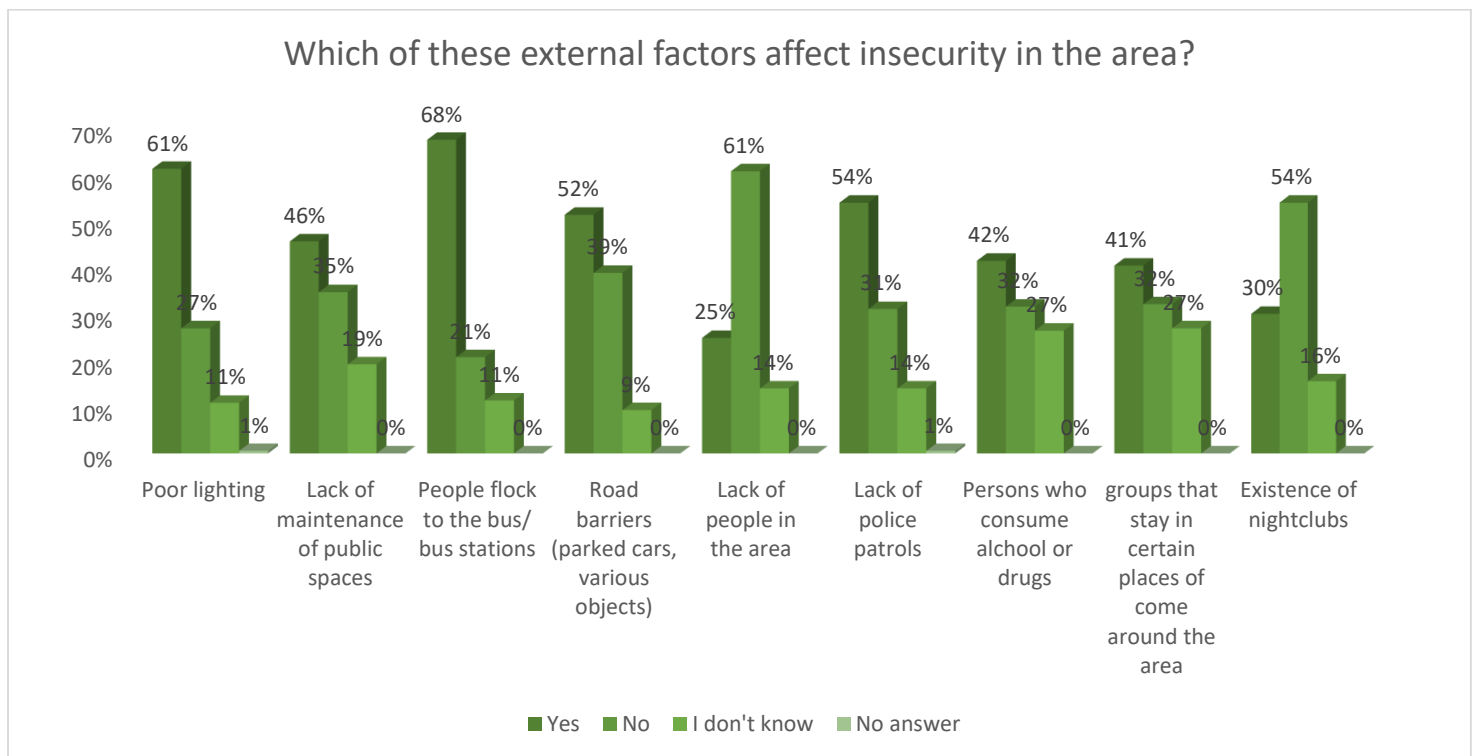
Graph 31: Respondents' perception of police inspections in the area

Of all the individual factors explored during the study, being a girl/woman (57%), attire (55%), age (46%) and just walking alone/being unaccompanied (45%) are rated by respondents as the most critical factors affecting the perception of the area being unsafe.



Graph 32: Personal factors that impact the perception of safety/unsafety in the area

Of all external factors, the main ones that affect the perception of the area being unsafe are overcrowded bus stops, or crowded buses, (68%), weak streets' lights (61%), lack of police presence (patrols) in the area (54%) as well as street barriers (51%).



Graph 33: External factors that impact the perception of unsafety in the area

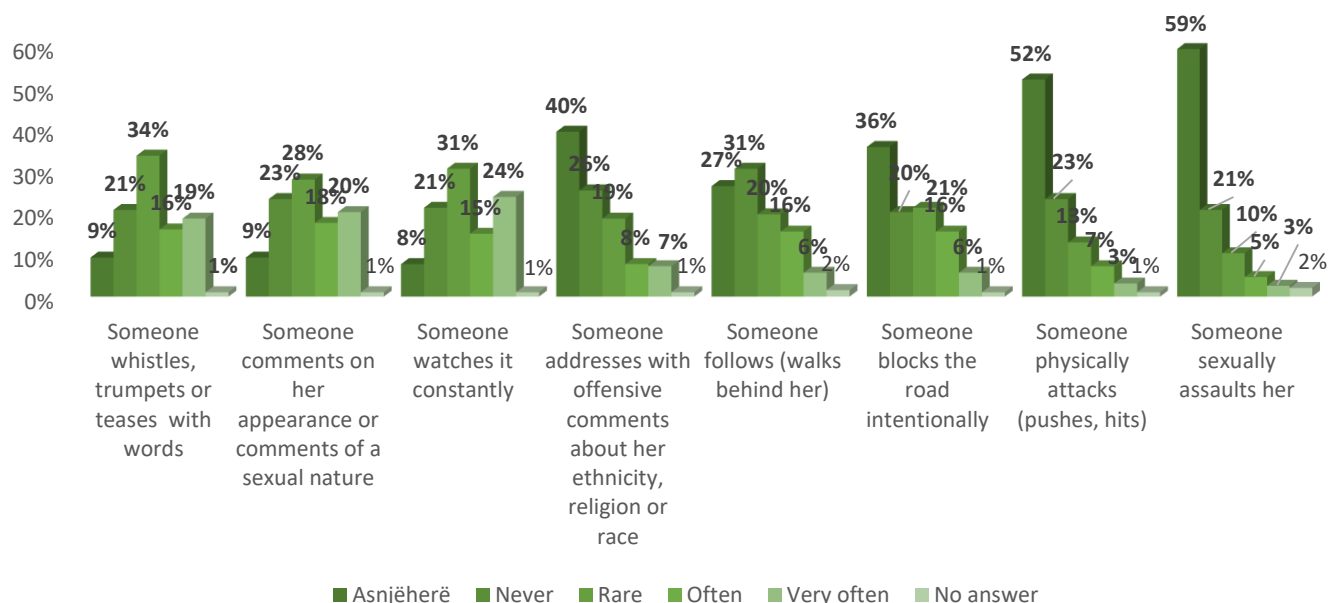
"... I think security, but also the facility of movement of people with disabilities is a bit of a problem, the old buildings have no ramps, or elevator ...", - man, participant in focus group discussion with adults 30 -49 years old.

"... Actually now that I'm thinking, we as adults know how to react, but also at the new buildings that are neatly arranged and include lighting, when it comes to the elevator you can't let children to climb themselves. There may also be someone you don't not know and we do not know what can happen. Especially girls, you can't leave them alone... "- woman, participating in focus group discussion with adults of 30-49 years old.

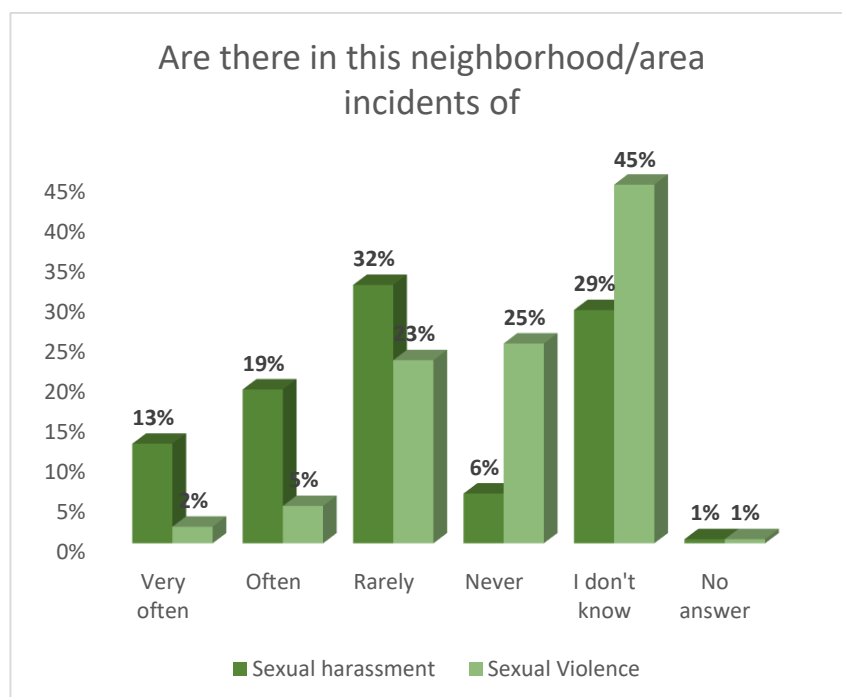
"... In our time we do not even know the neighbors and of course I also support what was said by others, you have no security either for yourself or for the child when you enter the elevator with an unknown ..." - woman, participant in focus group discussion with adults of the age group of 30-49 years.

Women and girls are more likely to experience various forms of harassment or violence in public spaces. In general, staring intensively (24%), derogatory and sexual comments on their bodies (20%) whistling or honking, or defamatory remarks by drivers (19%) are some of the public space forms of harassments which are experienced more often by them.

How feasible is (as often happens) that a girl / woman in the area to experience such an event?

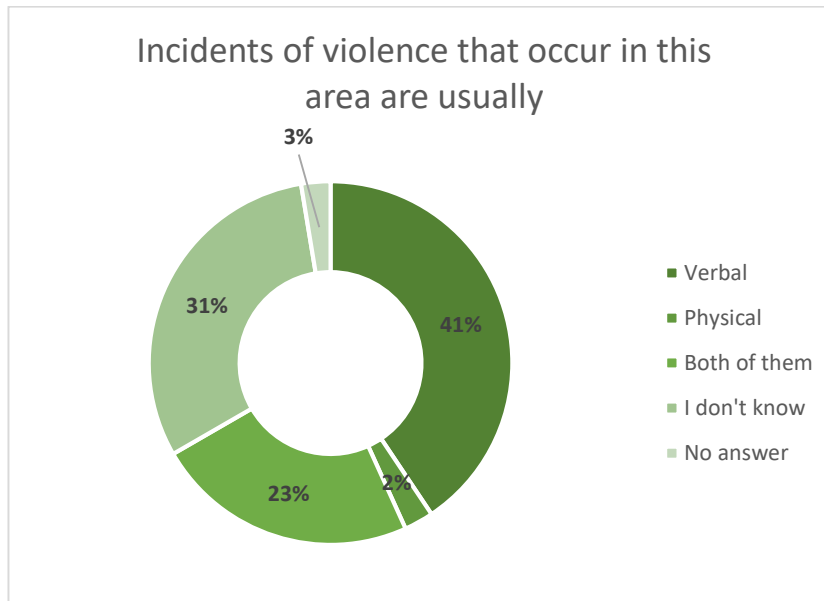


Graph 34: Frequency rate of various incidents of harassment and violence that women and girls experience



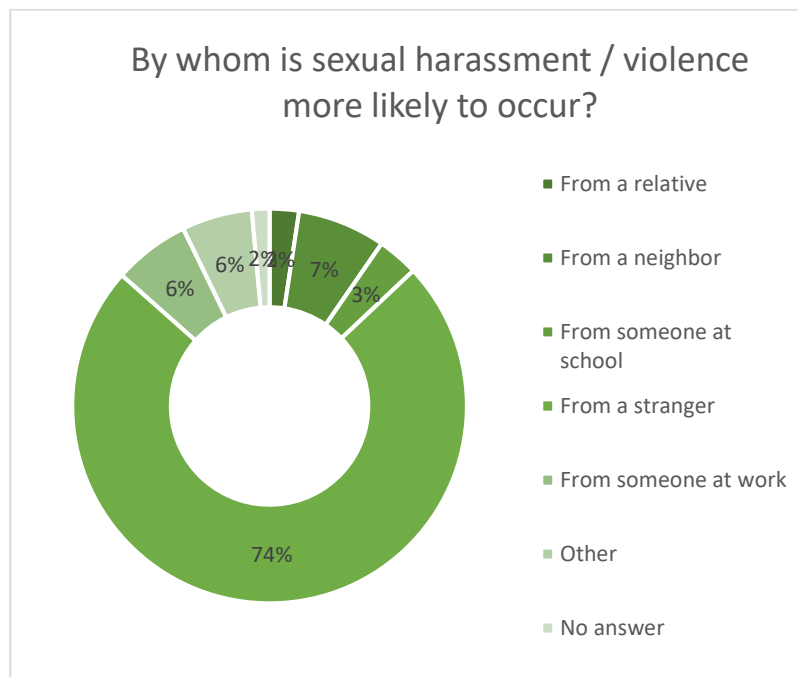
Graph 35: Respondents perception of the incidents of harassment and sexual violence that occur in the target area

Regarding security in the neighborhood, in terms of incidents of harassment and sexual violence, it is noted that 32% of respondents think that sexual harassment occurs regularly, and the same percentage of respondents (32%) think it happens rarely. There is a reluctance to talk about sexual violence (45% of respondents answered "I don't know") and only 25% of them think responded that it never happens.



Graph 36: Type of violence incidents most prevalent in the target area

Harassment and sexual violence incidents that occur in the target area are mostly verbal (41%), a combination of verbal and physical (23%).



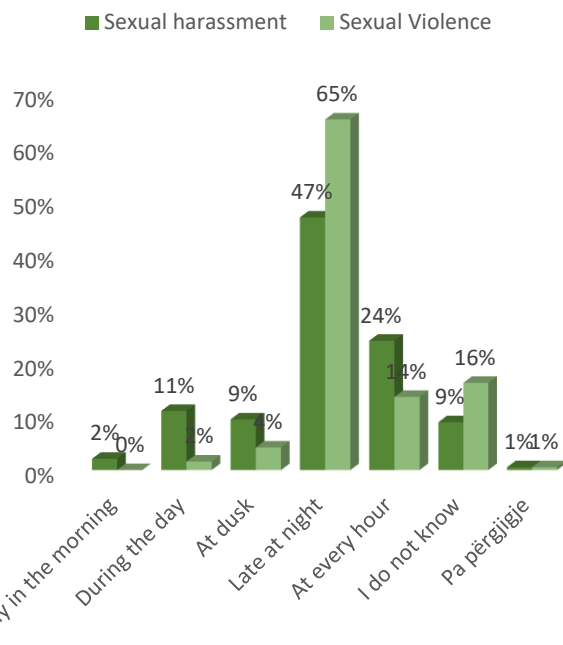
Graph 37: Perception of perpetrators

In 74% of cases, the perpetrator is unknown to the victim.

The respondents think that sexual harassment/violence most often occurs late at night. Location wise, the perception is that sexual harassment could happen anywhere, and mostly in the streets, while sexual assault mainly occurs in abandoned places.

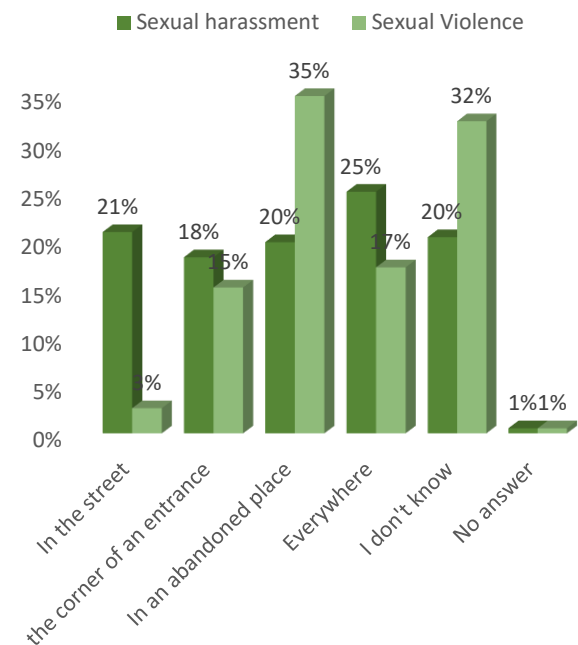
“... I have not encountered such cases. But night and morning I think they are more insecure...”- woman, discussion with the target group of 30-49 years old.

When it is most likely to happen:



Graph 38: Perceptions of when sexual harassment/violence occurs

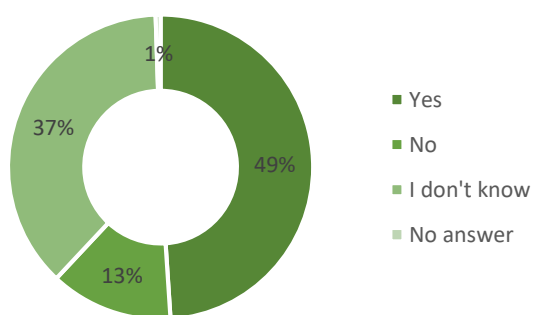
Where it is most likely to occur:



Graph 39: Perception of the location sexual harassment/violence occurs

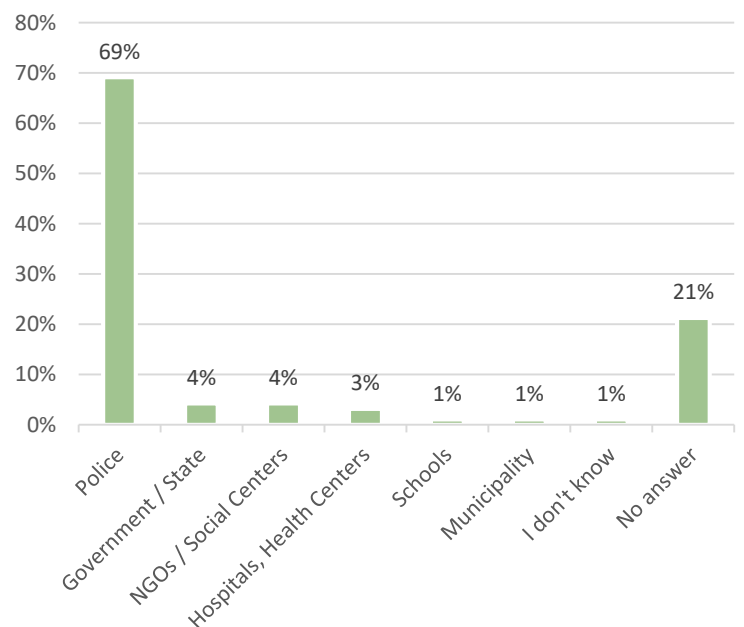
49% of respondents claim to know the institutions that provide protection and assistance, and of these, 69% cite the police.

Are there any public institutions that you know that can provide assistance in this area/neighborhood?



Graph 40: Percentage of respondents who know public institutions that provide services

If Yes, what are these institutions?



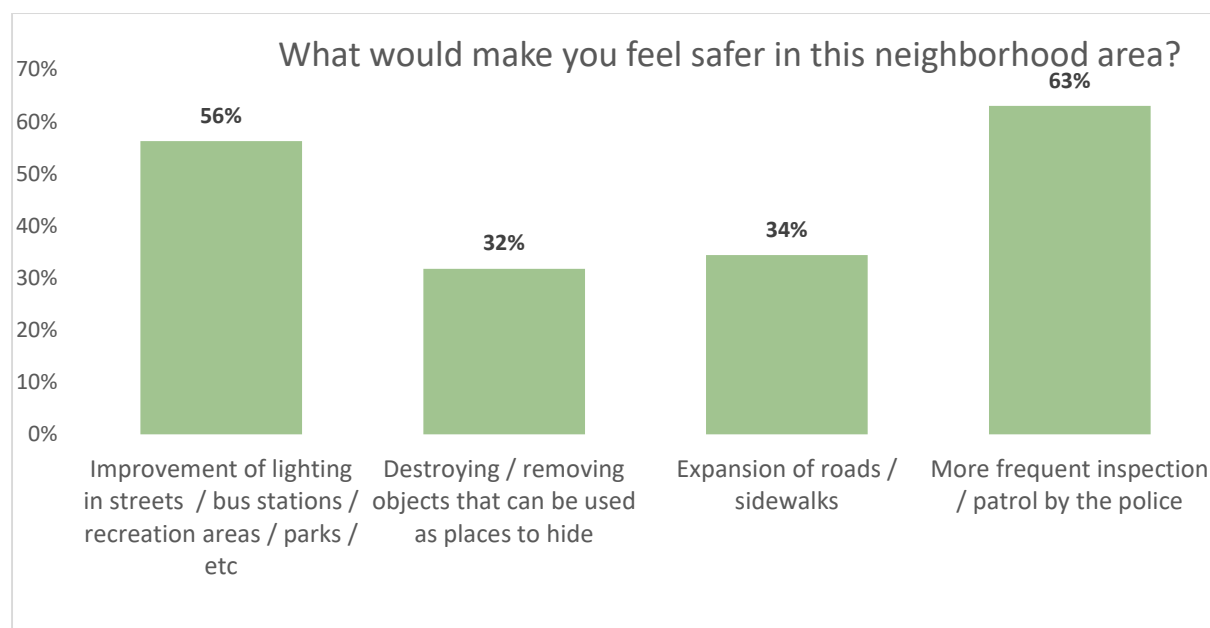
Graph 41: Perception of respondents on institutions that provide assistance



Graph 42: Respondents' level of trust in institutions providing services and assistance

38% of respondents state that they have a good level of trust in these institutions and their services, meanwhile 35% trust them somewhat, and 22% have no trust at all.

More frequent police inspections in the area, improving the lighting system, demolishing or removing abandoned/damaged constructions where the perpetrators could hide as well as widening the roads and sidewalks are some of the interventions that would increase the perception of safety in the area. Other suggested improvements would be additional services from Municipality, displaying the services to citizens in billboards in visible places, more investments in parks and playgrounds, and the disposal of waste bins in areas away from residential buildings, to avoid drug users.



Graph 43: Interventions to improve the safety in the area

"... Violators should receive the punishment they deserve, not as it happens in some cases that they come out of prison quickly ..." - woman, participant in the focus group aged 30-49

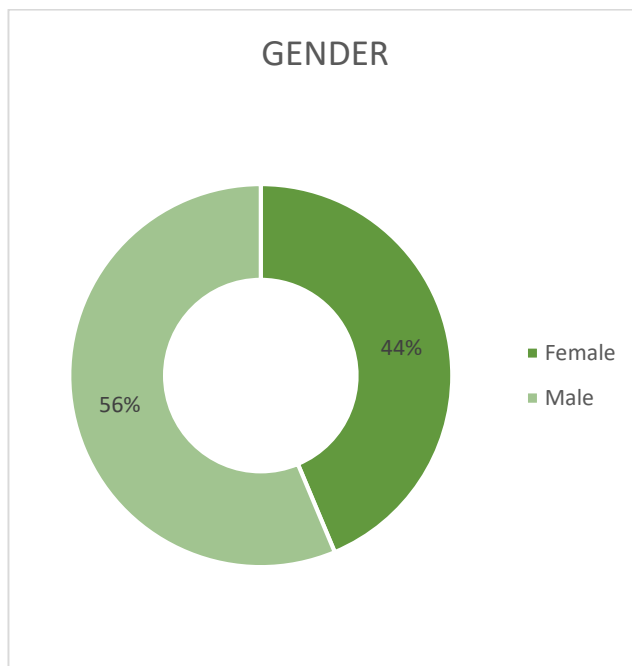
"... The police should be more at the service of the people, patrolling not to arouse fear, but to give confidence to the citizens that they are the right people to help us ..." - man, participant in the focusgroup aged 30-49 years

"... Municipal services need to be increased. There should be more investments in parks for children and the elderly..." - man, focus group participant over 50.

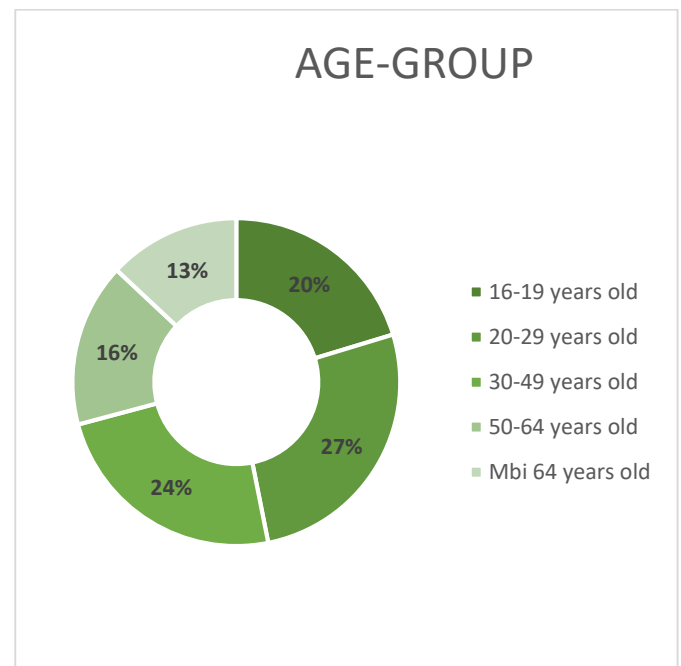
III.3. Findings from the study in “Laprakë” area

Quantitative information for the study in “Laprakë” area was collected through 192 questionnaires which correspond to 192 respondents whose general demographics are presented below (representation in highest %):

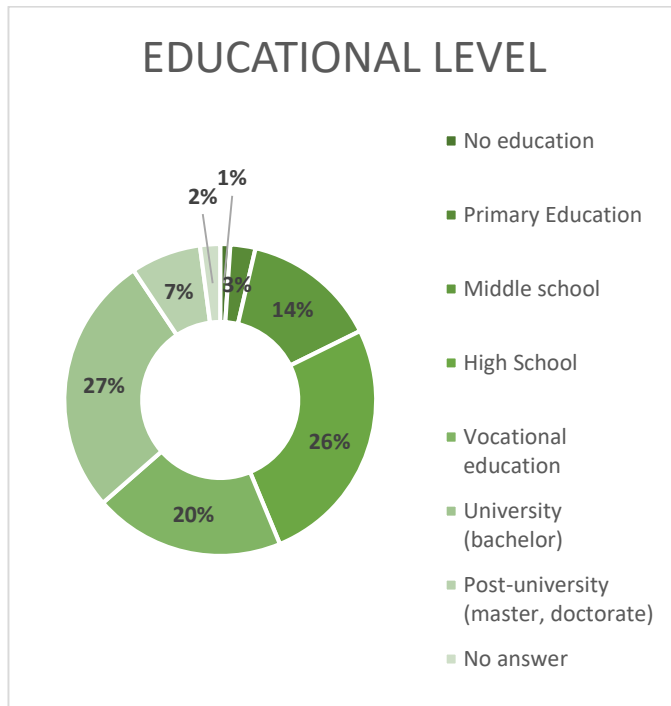
- 44% of respondents were women/girls
- 27% of respondents belonged to the age group of 20-29 years old, and 24% of respondents to 30-49 years old.
- 27% of respondents had completed university-level education
- 61% of respondents were married and 28% “single.”
- 24% of respondents were full-time employed.



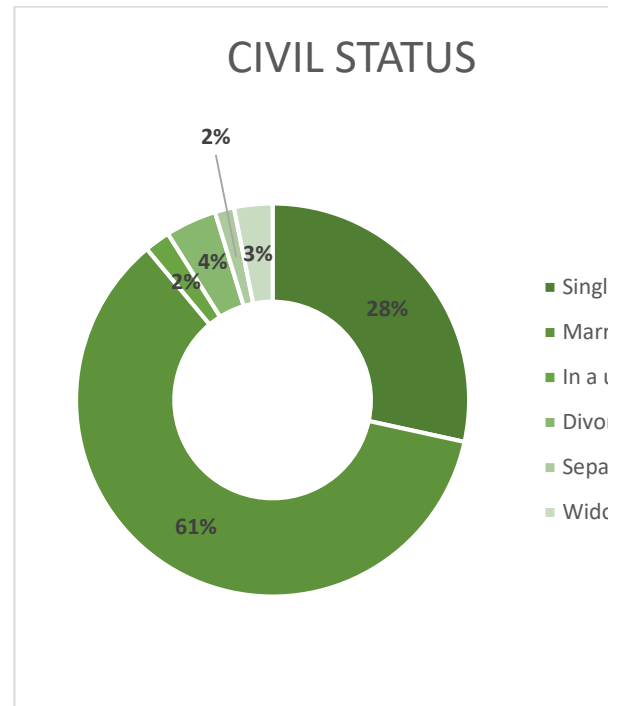
Graph 44: Respondents' Gender Distribution ("Lapraka")



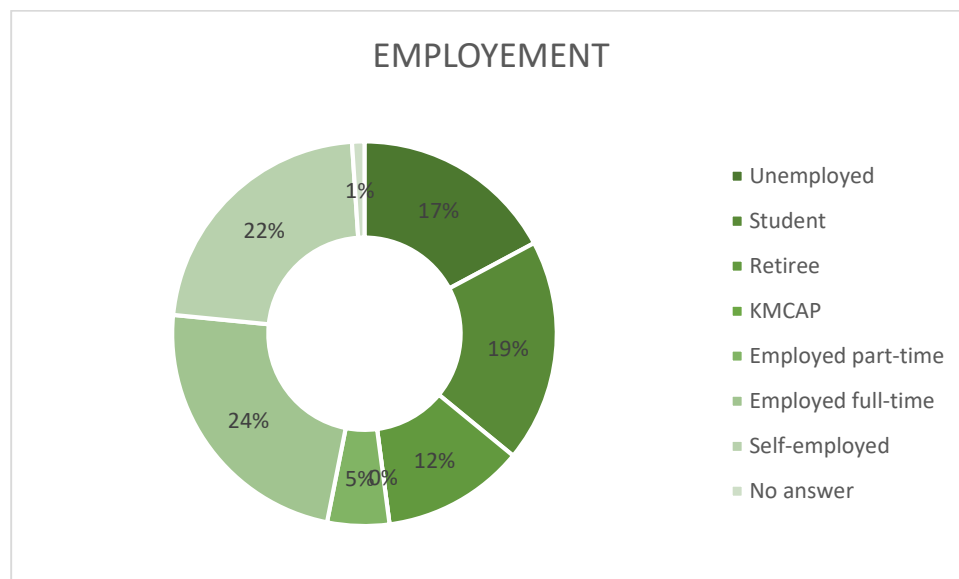
Graph 45: Respondents' age group distribution ("Lapraka")



Graph 46: Respondents distribution according to education level ("Lapra")

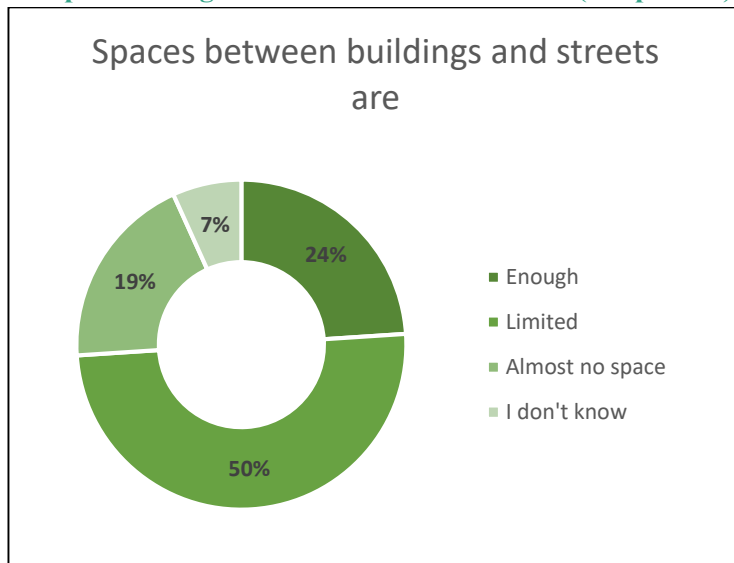


Graph 47: Respondents distribution according to civil status ("Lapra")



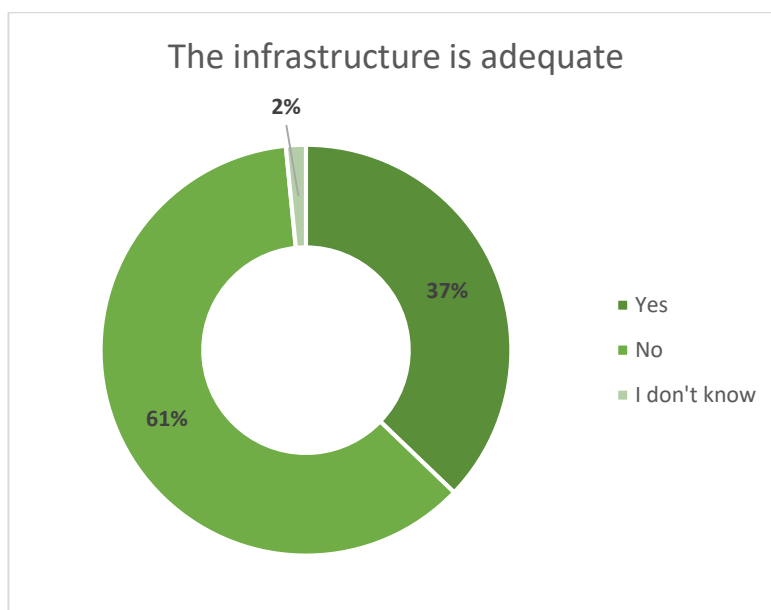
Graph 48: Respondents distribution according to employment status ("Lapra")

Perception over general conditions of the area (“Laprakë”)



Graph 49: Respondents' perception on the free space between buildings and other streets in the area

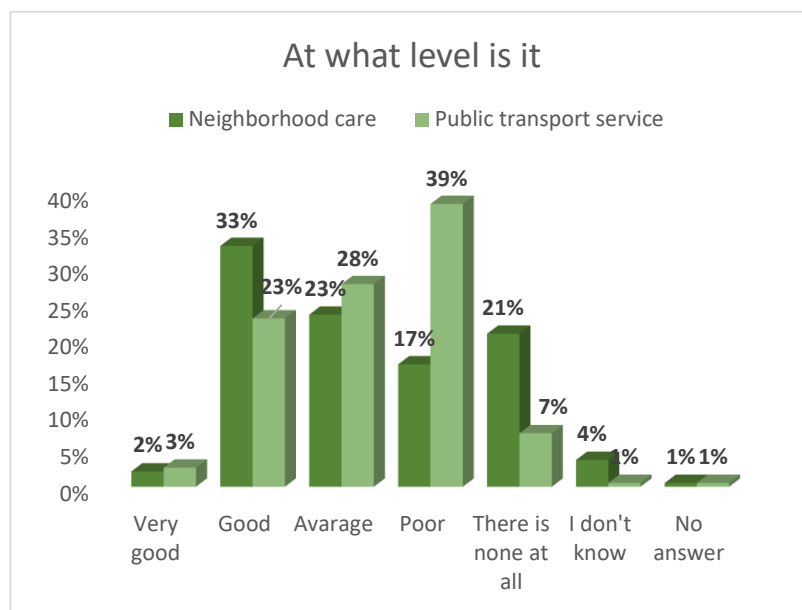
27% of respondents perceive the spaces between roads and buildings as limited, and 31% think that there are no free spaces in this area. Only 40% of respondents perceive these spaces to be sufficient.



Graph 50: Respondents' perceptions on the area's infrastructure

61% of respondents think that the general infrastructure of the area (pedestrian crossing, lighting system, free spaces) is not appropriate, versus 30% who think it is appropriate.

“... The area looks desolate, with ruined streets, old buildings, graffiti, wastes...” - audit and observations carried out in October at different times.

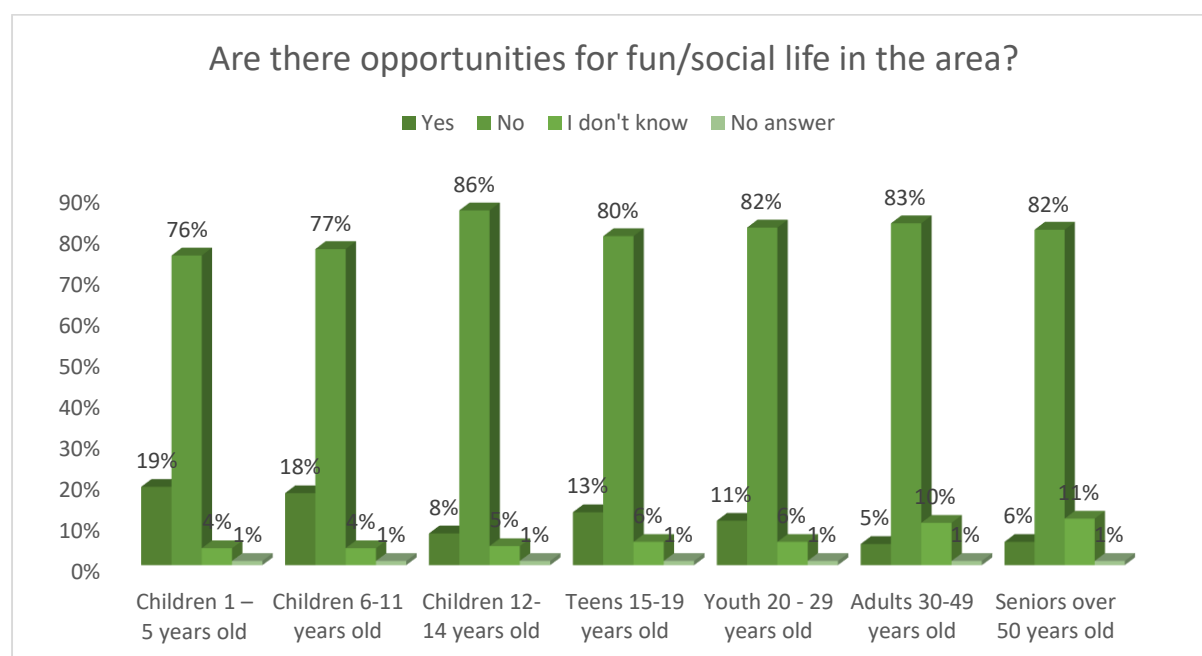


Graph 51: Respondents' perception on the services of maintenance and public transportation

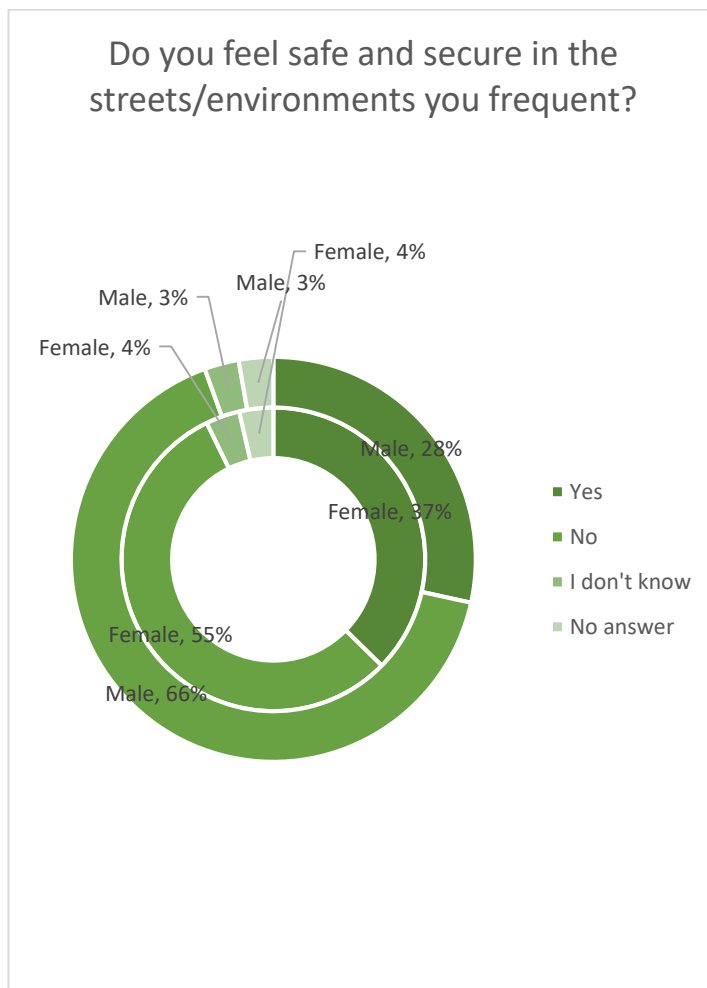
23% of respondents think that the maintenance services are at an average level, versus 2% of them who think that these services are very good. Also, 39% of respondents complain about public transportation considering it very poor.

“...There are many unlightened corners and streets, the area is not maintained at all, the bars are also empty, there is a sense of insecurity...” - audit in October, evening (22:30)

The highest percentage of respondents, when asked about entertainment/recreational or social activities in “Laprakë,” think that there are no such opportunities for any of the age groups, not for children, teenagers, youngsters or adults. Those few respondents who believe that there are indeed such possibilities have cited playgrounds, football fields, and bars. Some parents cite schools, private courses, and activities which fill their children’s lives.



Graph 52: Respondents' perceptions on entertainment and social life possibilities



Graph 53: Respondents' perception on area's safety

Kur u pyetën në lidhje me ndjesinë që kanë përsa i takon sigurisë apo të qenit të mbrojtur/a kur kalojnë në rrugë ose kur frekuentojnë ambiente të caktuara në lagjen “Laprakë”, 32% e totalit të të anketuarve/ave u përgjigjën se “ndjehen të sigurt/a”, 62% “nuk ndjehen të sigurt/a” ndërsa 3% “nuk dinë ta përcaktojnë saktë ndjesinë në lidhje me sigurinë”.

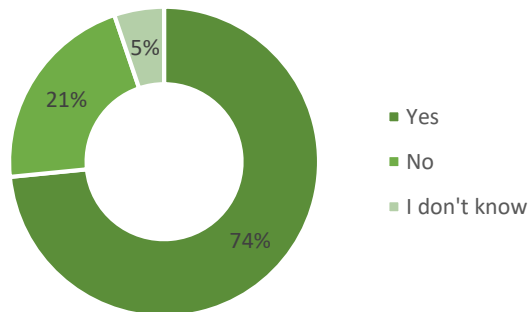
If this finding is analyzed further, it is boys and men who are most concerned about the lack of safety in the area, and this is not related to issues of harassment of sexual violence, but the feeling of unsafety in the area as a whole. Likewise, this result is influenced by the fact that boys and men move around the neighborhood unaccompanied, while women and girls, some due to the mentality that dominates a good part of this area, are less out in public spaces (consequently experience less unsafety). This finding is also reflected in the fact that more boys and men than women and girls were surveyed for this study, precisely because women and girls were not out that much.

The sense of "lack of safety" in the area relates to several factors, some being infrastructure-related such as maintenance of the area, the presence of hiding places for perpetrators, weak streets' lighting.(especially during evening hours). While, as indicated above, the majority of respondents considered the area maintenance service to be "average," it is noted that 74% of respondents also expressed concern over the existence of places where someone could hide from others.

“... There are spaces between the garbage bins, or parts of buildings where one can easily hide without being distinguished from others, the area seems desolate, with few people moving but drunk and drug users are noted, as well as boys harassing , it is difficult to find an alternative way to be safer, there are no signs showing the institutions and it is difficult to navigate where to seek help ... ”- audits and observations carried out in October, in the late evening (22:30).

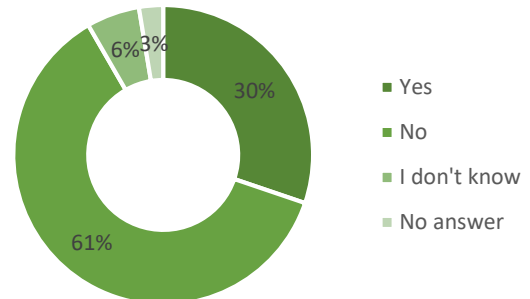
Overall, there is a sense of unsafety in various places in the target area. Slightly safer are the entrances to kindergartens, schools, and shops (they have better lighting). Meanwhile, only 30% of respondents state that they find it easier to access another safer route.

Are there places where one can hide without being distinguished from others?



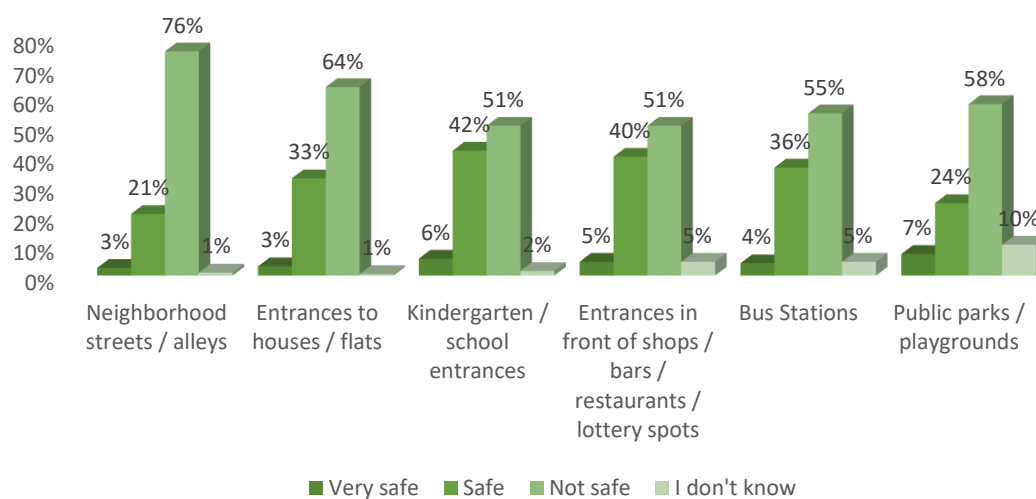
Graph 54: Respondents' perception over places where someone can hide from others

Can you choose / have access to other safer routes?

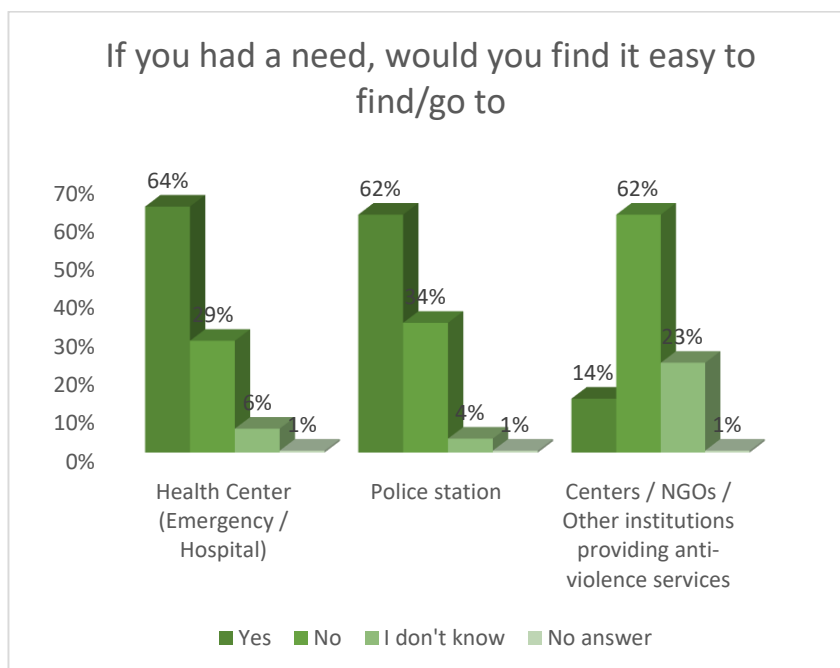


Graph 55: Respondents' perception on access to safer routes

How safe do you think the following facilities are?

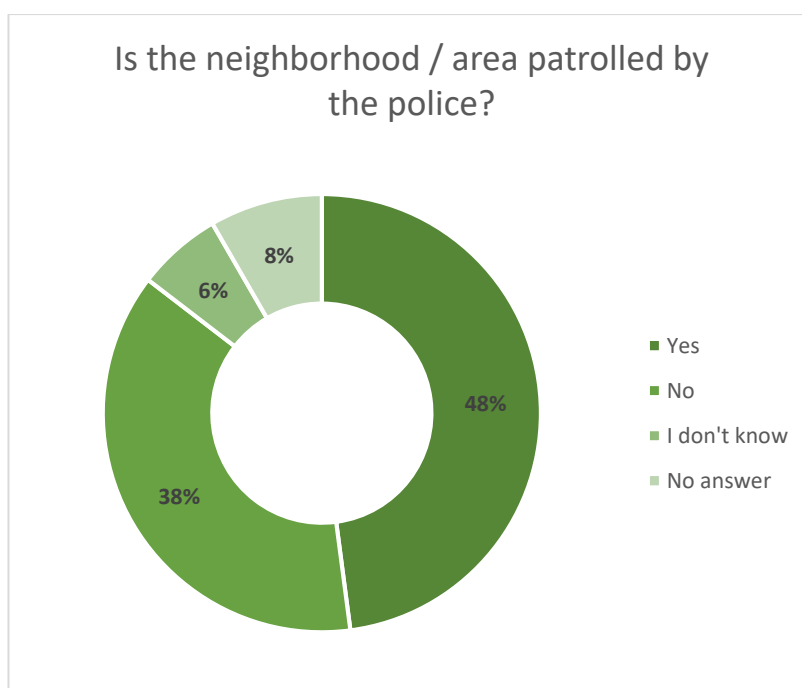


Graph 56: Respondents' perception on the level of safety in different places of the target area



64% of respondents find it easy to access health center services (or hospital) or locate police station, but only 14% of them know how to look for help/support beside an organization/center that offers services against violence.

Graph 57: Respondents' perception on access to institution which provide specialized protection services

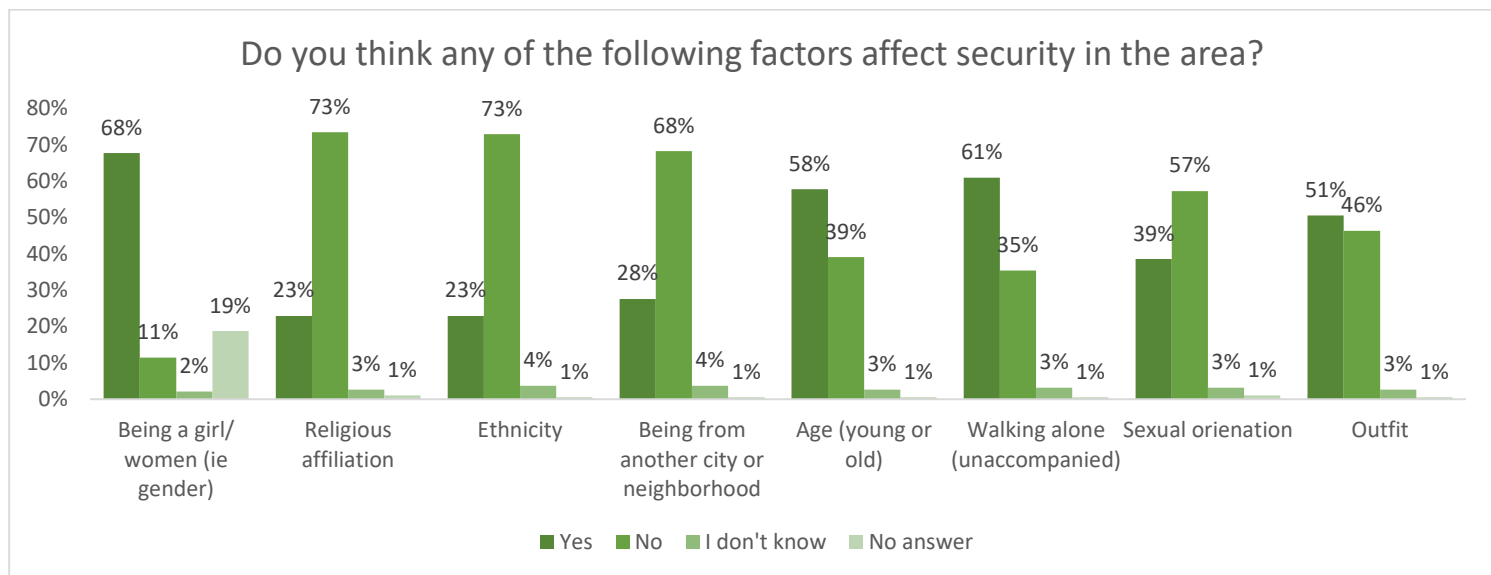


48% of respondents agree that police patrol inspects the area regularly, 38% think that it doesn't, while 6% of respondents do not know whether the police patrol checks the area periodically or not.

Graph 58: Respondents' perception on police inspections in the area

Of all the individual factors explored during the study, being a girl/woman (68%), attire (51%), age (58%) and just walking alone/being unaccompanied (61%) are rated by respondents as the most critical factors affecting the perception of the area being unsafe.

“... My house is almost the last in the alley, my Mom works in the hospital on shifts, my dad of my brother has to wait for her when she comes home...” - girl, focus group with 18-19 year olds .



Graph 59: Personal factors that impact the perception of safety/unsafety in the area

“... I live in a private house near the riverbank and in the area near Lana that joins us with the rest it is a little uncomfortable to pass during the night alone. I haven’t walked there at night. But when I pass through with my family by car it seems dark and scary place...”- girl, focus group with 18-19 year olds.

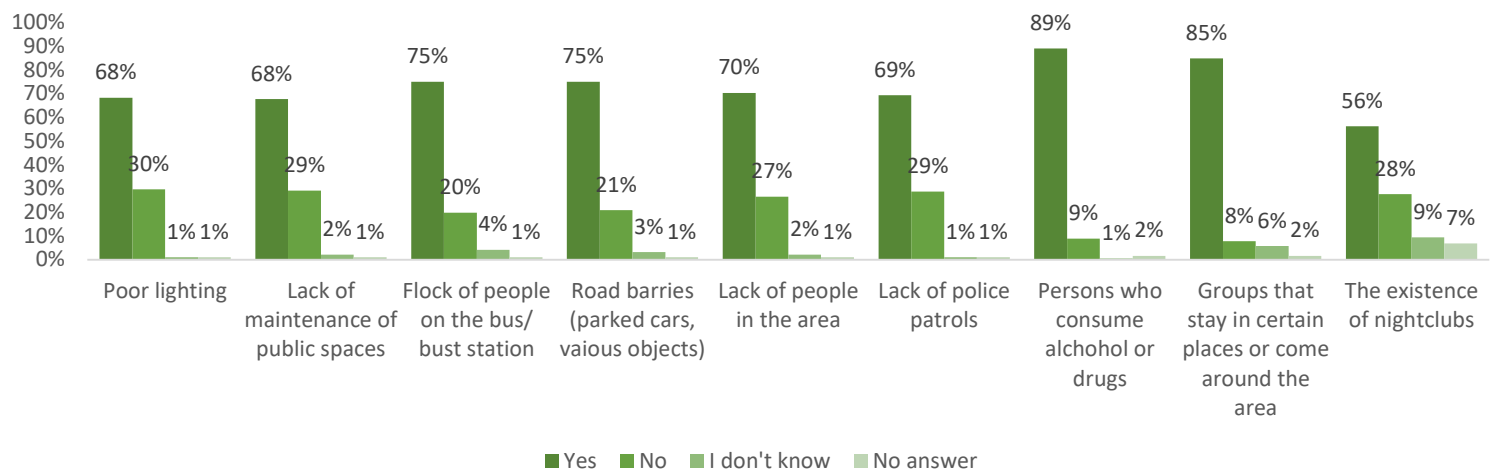
“... There are some alleys in our neighborhood that do not have good lighting. When we are out with friends and we go home late, we turn on the light by phone. We are not afraid as we are boys, but the light is needed-we can’t see the road...”- boy, 18-19 year old focus group.

“... When you need to go to the store you can't go alone during the night. We have no security. There is no light. We are afraid...”- woman, focus group with Roma community, 16-24 years old.

Of all external factors, the main ones that affect the perception of the area as unsafe are: individuals who consume alcohol or drugs (89%), groups of boys or men wandering in the streets (85%), overcrowded bus stops, or crowded buses (75%), weak street lighting (68%), lack of police presence (patrols) in the area (69%) as well as street barriers (55%).

SAFE CITIES: WOMEN AND GIRLS SAFETY FROM SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND OTHER FORMS OF VIOLENCE IN PUBLIC SPACES

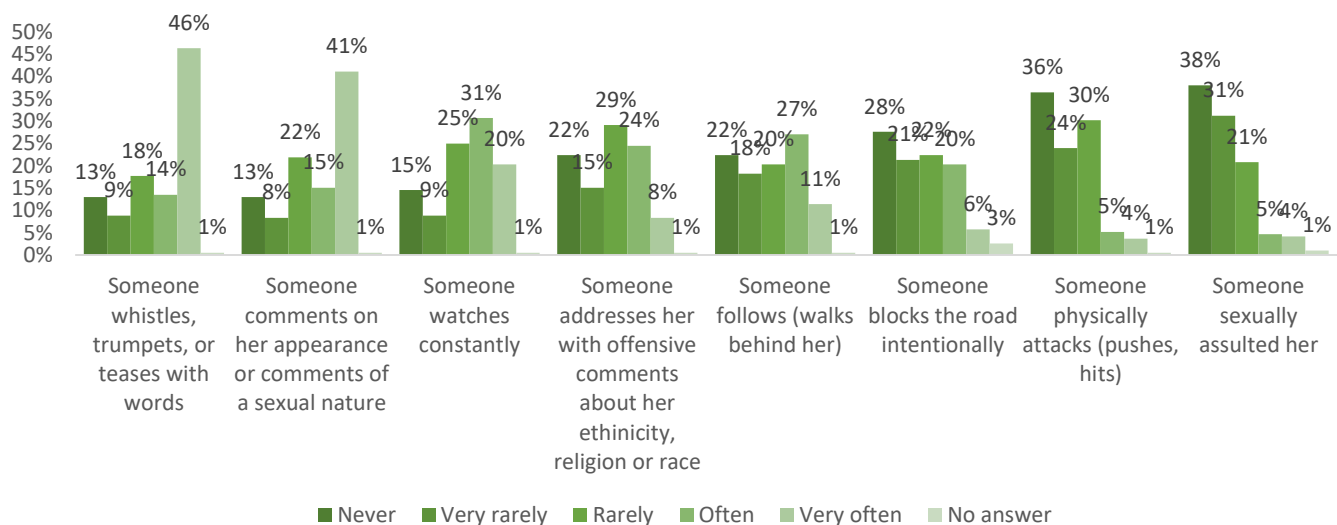
Which of these external factors affect your insecurity in the area?



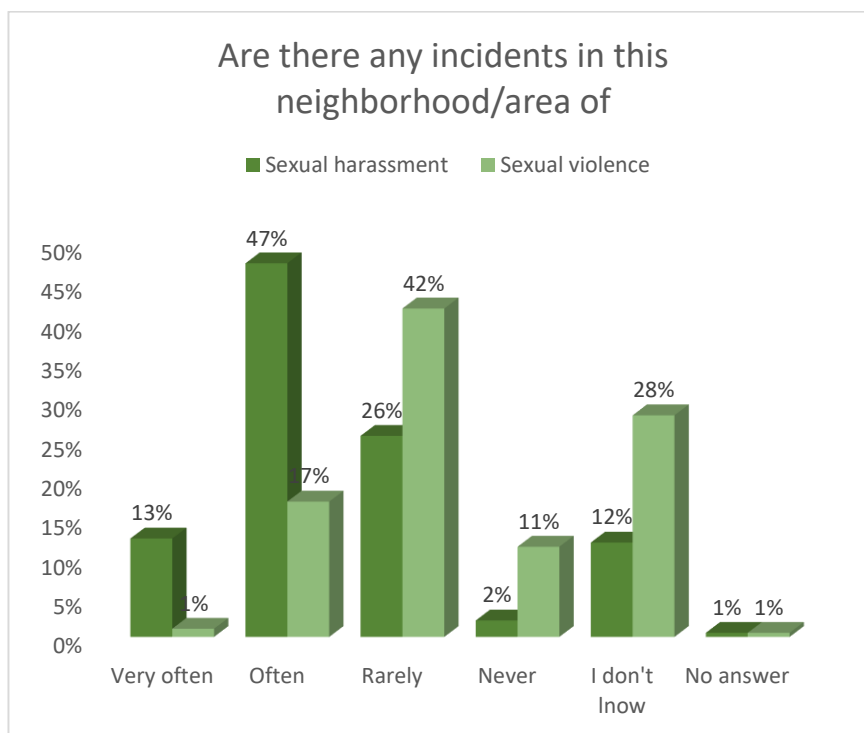
Graph 60 External factors that impact the perception of unsafety in the area

Women and girls are more likely to experience various forms of harassment or violence in public spaces. In general, derogatory and sexual comments on their bodies (41%) whistling or honking, or defamatory remarks by drivers (46%) are experienced very often by them.

How feasible is (how often happens) that a girl/ woman in the area to experience such an event?



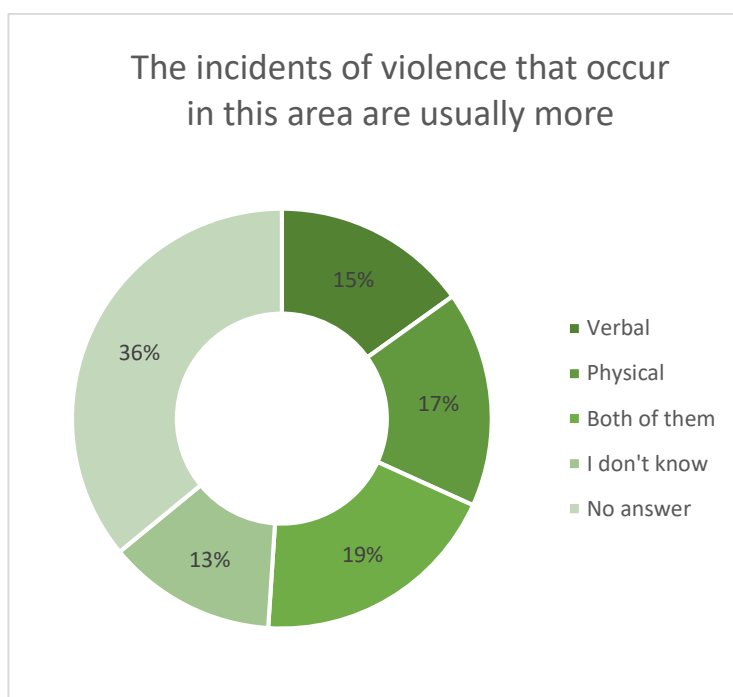
Graph 61: Frequency rate of various incidents of harassment and violence that women and girls experience



Graph 62: Respondents perception on the occurrence of harassment and sexual violence incidents in the target area

Regarding security in the neighborhood, in terms of incidents of harassment and sexual violence, it is noted that 60% of respondents think that sexual harassment occurs regularly, and 26% of respondents think it happens rarely.

Meanwhile, for sexual violence, 17% of respondents think that it occurs often, 42% think that it happens rarely and 11% think that it never occurs.

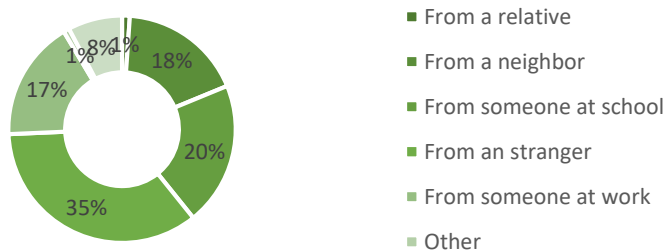


Graph 63: Type of violence incidents most prevalent in the target area

Harassment and sexual violence incidents that occur in the target area are mostly a combination of verbal and physical nature (19%). However, 36% of respondents answer that they don't know.

"... I've heard that an elderly person harassed a friend of mine, but only when she was passing by, he hasn't harassed her continuously. did she constantly nag. Sometimes it happens that someone touches you in intimate places - this is harassment I believe - and that friend got really upset that day ... "- girl, discussion with the 18-19 age group.

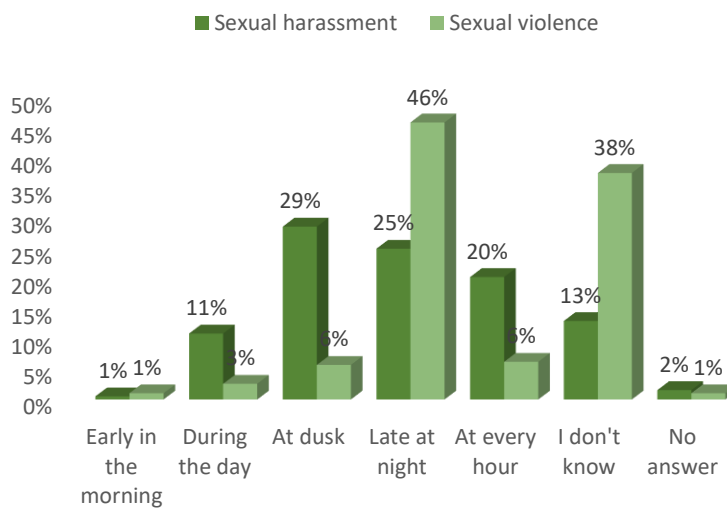
By whom is sexual harassment/ violence more likely to occur?



In 35% of cases, the perpetrator is unknown to the victim.

Graph 64: Perception on perpetrator

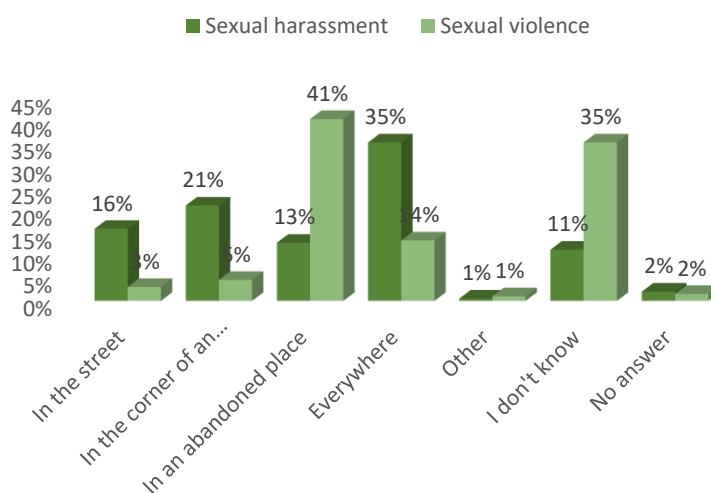
When it is most likely to happen



The respondents think that sexual harassment and violence is more likely to happen late at night.

Graph 65: Perception of when harassment and sexual violence may occur

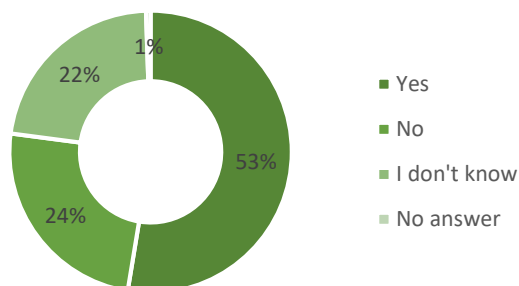
Where it is most likely to occur



Perception of when harassment and sexual violence may occur.

Graph 66: Perception of the location where sexual harassment or violence occurs

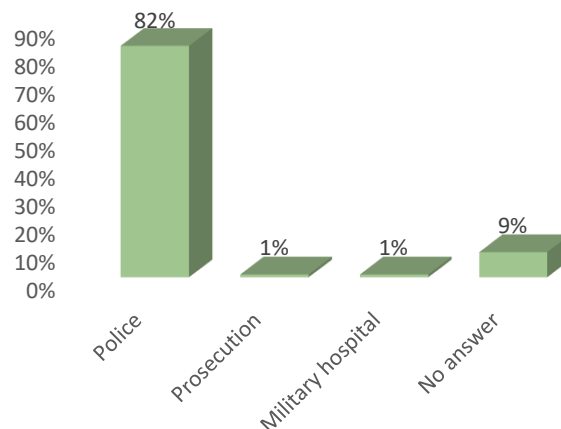
Are there any public institutions that you know that can provide assistance in this area/neighborhood?



Graph 67: Percentage of respondents who recognize public institutions that offer assistance

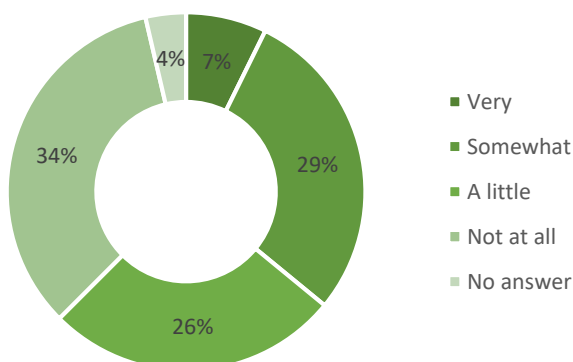
53% of respondents claim to know institutions that provide protection and assistance and of these, 82% mention the police.

If Yes, what are these institutions?



Graph 68: Respondents' perception of the institutions that could offer assistance

How much confidence do you have in them?

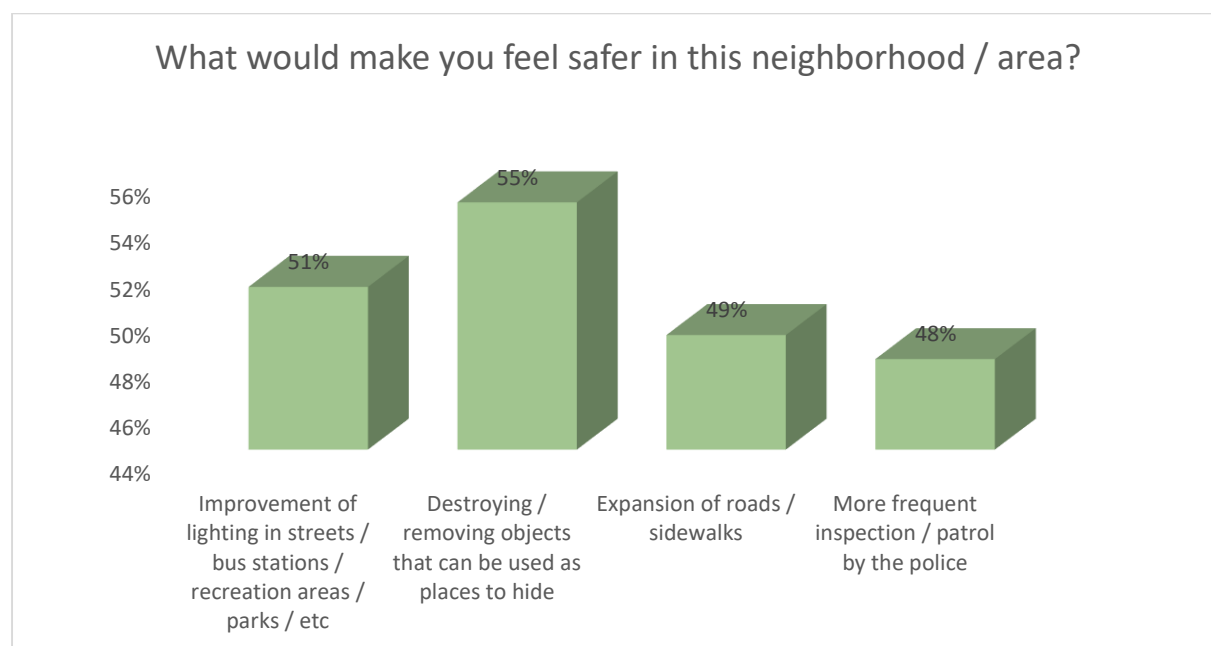


Graph 69: Respondents' level of trust at institutions that provide services and assistance

7% of respondents state that they have a good level of trust on these institutions and their services; meanwhile 29% trust them somewhat, and 34% have no trust at all.

“... There was a case when the shop of a friend of mine was robbed at night and he called the police. He had come out to catch them on the street, but they run away. Police had delayed arriving and the thieves had not yet been apprehended. The police takes time to come even when you call them...”- boy, discussion with the focus group of 18-19 year olds.

More frequent police inspections in the area, improving the lighting system, demolishing or removing abandoned/damaged constructions where the perpetrators could hide, as well as widening the roads and sidewalks are some of the interventions that would increase the perception of safety in the area. Other suggested responses included removing antennas/factories that increase the noise and pollute the environment, creating a community center / adding services / creating gardens / opening cafes for the elderly, improving cleaning services, improving the buses schedules and increasing their frequency, creating youth entertainment venues, placing a traffic light at school, etc.



Graph 70: Interventions that would serve to improve the safety of the area

“... I would say adding sidewalks, the road to my house is narrow, many people are barely passing...” - girl, participating in a focus group discussion with 18-19 year olds.

"... I would suggest adding lights, white lines, and organizing the nearby park since there is no place to sit, I have a little brother, but there are no toys for him to play ..." - girl, participant in the focus group discussion with 18-19 year olds.

“... In my neighborhood I see road adjustments being made, noises are heard and there is a little commotion and traffic jams in the morning because the road is narrow. There is few lighting. Hopefully, since adjustments are being made, lights will be added. The police should come more often...” - girl, participating in focus group discussion with 18-19 year olds.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions:

- None of the targeted areas is perceived as being safe from the participants in the study.
- Some of the identified concerns are related to:
 - Limited space in the areas between roads or buildings
 - Poor maintenance of the area
 - Poor lighting in particular places, especially during dusk and night hours
 - Inadequate public transportation service (overcrowded bus stops/busses, limited busses, and busses schedules.)
 - Lack of entertainment facilities for specific age groups (there are some playgrounds, but they are not suitable for every age group, while entertainment for teenagers, youngsters and adults are limited to bars or mini-football fields).
- Personal factors that affect the respondents' perception of safety are mainly: being a woman, i.e., the gender, age, being alone/unaccompanied in the streets, especially in particular places and during specific times, but also the attire. When comparing the data between the two target areas, we conclude that a girl or young woman who walks alone in "Laprakë," especially in the dark, dressed slightly extravagantly, feels less safe than the same girl or young women in "21 Dhjetori" area. Similarly, other personal factors - less influencing, have a more significant impact on the perception of safety in "Laprakë" compared to 21 Dhjetori.
- A multitude of infrastructure factors or behavioral ones observed in the area intertwine with personal factors and impact the perception of safety or unsafety in the target areas. The most dominant among them are overcrowded bus stops and crowded busses, poor street lighting, lack of police patrols.
- The presence of service providing institutions in the area enhances the perception of safety in the area. Other elements such as trust in these institutions, and access to them is also factored in.
- Some forms of violence that women or girls encounter in public spaces such as *whistling, honking or verbal abuse from drivers, intense staring, derogatory comments on their looks or comments of sexual nature, stalking*, stopping them by force on the streets, insulting comments about their ethnicity, religion or race.
- Some common interventions and investments that should take place to enhance the perception of safety in these areas can be *improving the lighting system* in the streets, bus stops, open areas, and parks; *increasing the frequency of police patrols inspection*; *demolishing/removing unfinished constructions/objects*, used as hiding places, as well as *widening the streets/sidewalks*.

Recommendations:

- The Municipality of Tirana should take into consideration the findings of this study before planning infrastructure improvement and service extension investments in these areas.
- The overall improvement of the lighting system, which must be functional and robust throughout the hours of dusk, evening, and night is very important. All entrances to public and private institutions, dwellings, businesses, and other venues, must be well lit and possibly marked by illuminated signs or billboards.

- Street barriers/blockages should be eliminated as much as possible (for, e.g., restricting pedestrian crossing or blocking sidewalks due to parking or bars). It is also imperative to demolish and dispose of the debris of unfinished/abandoned/broken-down buildings, which serve as hiding places and shelters for perpetrators.
- Regular maintenance and cleaning of areas should also be accompanied by the reorganization or installation of lights in the spaces between dumpsters, to avoid the possibility of someone hiding between them.
- The bus stops should be well lit and should display the busses' circulations schedules and itineraries. Bus stops should be located in places accessible by women, elderly, and children who use mostly public transportation (e.g., close to schools, or women's places of work, close to hospitals, etc.). It is also suggested to increase the frequency of bus trips as well as to extend the bus service time, in order to avoid overcrowding at bus stops or within busses, but also to avoid/limit the circulation constraints, caused by the lack of transportation in late hours.
- The findings of this study must be shared with Albanian State so they could take special measures to (i) increase the frequency of police patrol inspections during daytime and especially during the late hours of night, particularly in "Laprakë"; (ii) work to increase community's trust in police forces, especially for cases related to sexual harassment and violence, through using appropriate community education and policing strategies.
- The Municipality of Tirana and the Agency for Territory Adjustment - when planning new interventions in these neighborhoods, should take into account that a large proportion of the space between buildings and roads is limited; thus, a further limitation of this space should be avoided. New green spaces, playgrounds for children, other recreational venues for different age groups, and suitable for people with disabilities should also be planned. The maintenance of these areas should be done regularly and responsibly in order to increase the value of the interventions done.
- Interventions plan to improve infrastructural conditions in the two target areas should also be based on the perceptions and information provided by women, girls, men, and boys of different ages groups who reside or visit these areas often. Ongoing initiatives should consider conclusions of studies like the one presented in this report.
- Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of implemented interventions are of utmost importance. Meetings and observation missions to monitor and evaluate the investments done and the community's perceptions of safety in public spaces should be done regularly. The results of these monitoring and evaluation missions, as well as studies of this nature, should serve as guides for additional interventions in these areas so that they could transform into safe havens from all forms of violence, including sexual harassment and violence.
- Although the primary responsibility of the CRM is to manage domestic violence cases and take concrete, preventive actions to reduce it, the prevention of other forms of violence against women, including sexual ones, remains within its focus of attention. As such, including issues of sexual harassment and violence experienced by women and girls in public spaces during regular ETN meetings with members of CRM, would precede the preparatory work for the education that should be done to prevent and manage such cases.

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