

Gender in the sustainable management of natural resources

Fiorela Shalsi

Senior Gender Advisor



OVERVIEW

- Gender and sustainable management of natural resources
 - gender roles and differences in access and rights
- Balkan Barometer - Attitudes towards environment issues and participation in decision making in the Region
- Gender and Nexus related sectors: water-energy-food

Gender and sustainable management of natural resources

- **SMNR** is defined in the Environment Act as: *“using natural resources in a way and at a rate that maintains and enhances the resilience of ecosystems and the benefits they provide”*.
- **Use** - Women and men use natural resource in a different way due their gender roles, rights, and responsibilities at the household and community.
- **Impact** - Environmental changes, including biodiversity loss, climate change, natural disasters, and energy development.
- This understanding is **essential** if we're to promote sustainable development and effective conservation and management of natural resources.

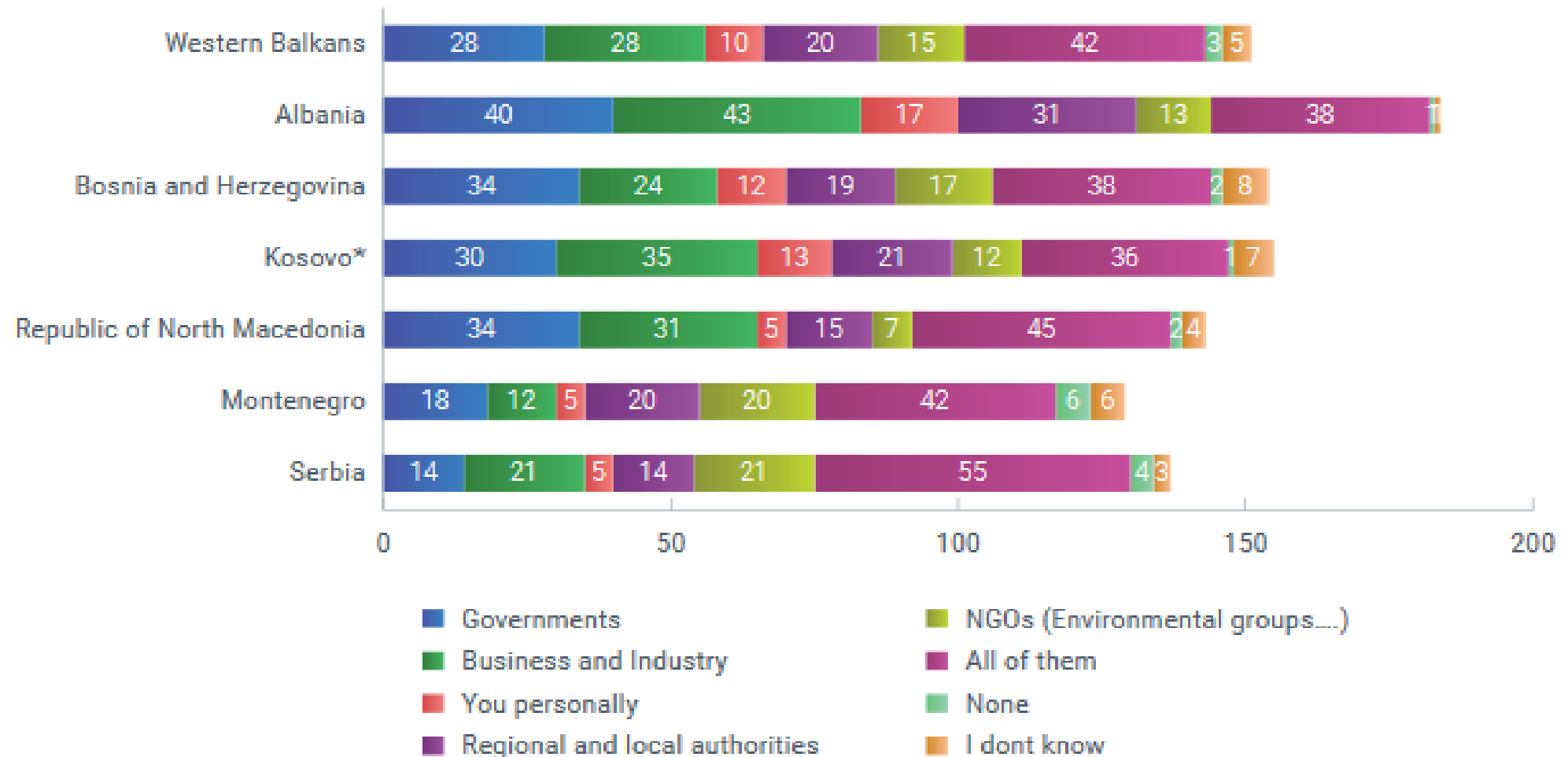
Differences in access, rights and knowledge

- Due to **gender roles**, women and men have disparities in economic opportunities, access to productive resources and knowledge; engage differently in household care and public life and decision-making processes.
- Women **don't enjoy the same rights** as men to land – crucial resource for poverty reduction, food security and rural development.
- The different roles women and men have leads to different bodies of knowledge about the environment. Due to their roles in using resources like wood, water and forest products, not to mention subsistence agriculture, **women have a unique understanding** of the natural resources.

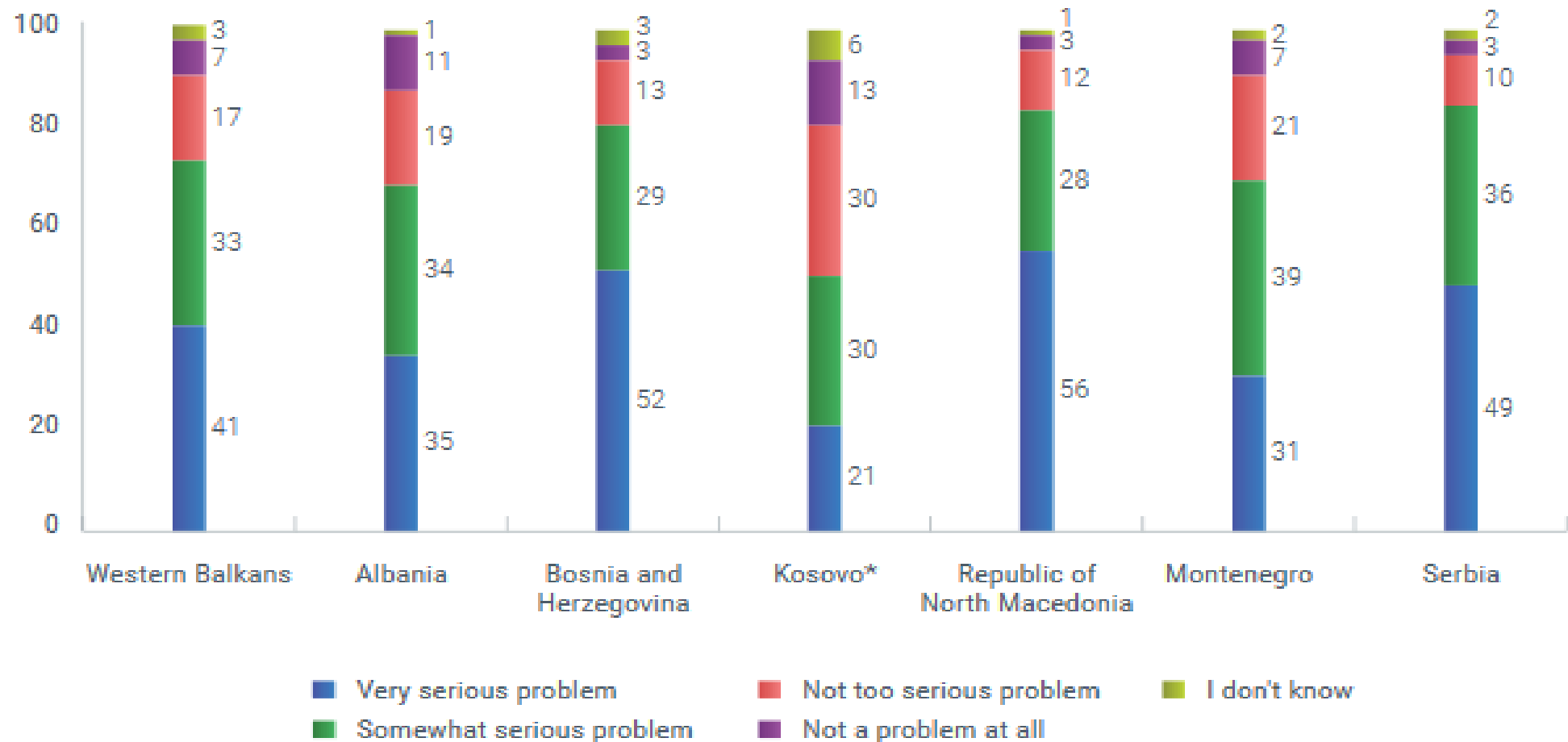
Attitudes towards Climate Change and Energy ... Balkan Barometer 2020

- Public Opinion - Analytical Report, implemented by the Regional Cooperation Council supported by EU
- The sample in all countries has been gendered balanced, unfortunately the data and findings are not sex-disaggregated

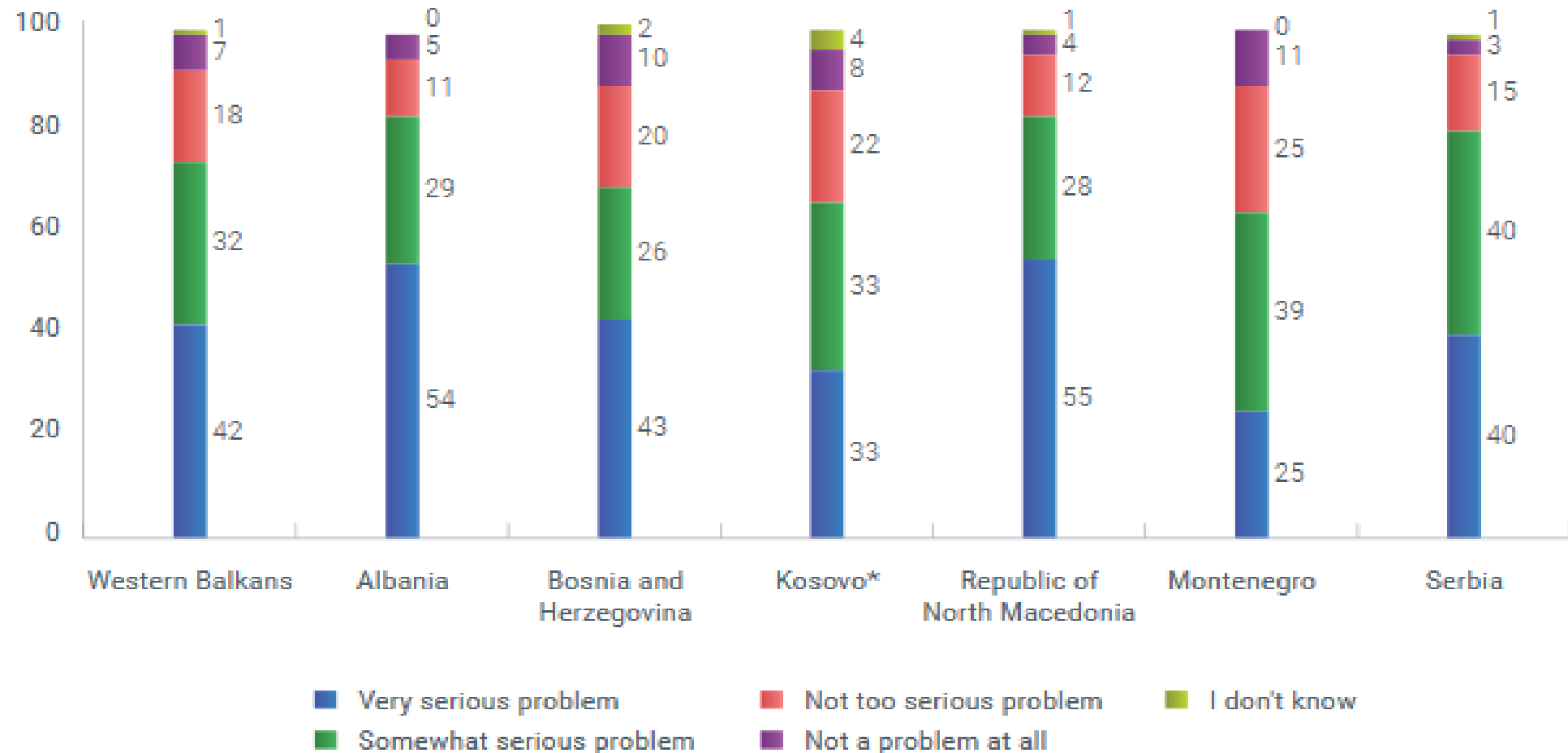
In your opinion, who within your economy is responsible for tackling climate change?



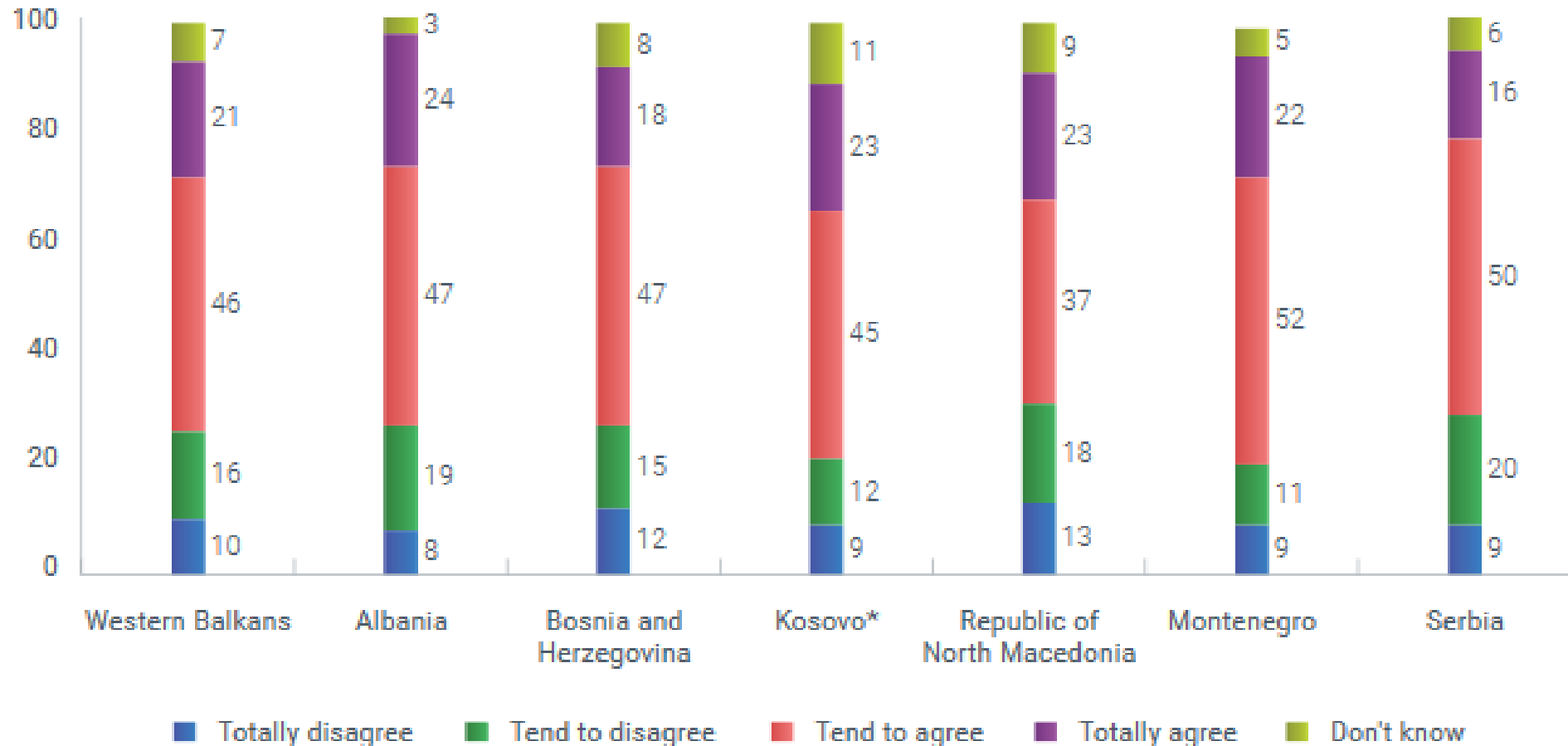
Do you consider climate change to be a problem?



Do you consider pollution to be a problem in your place of living?



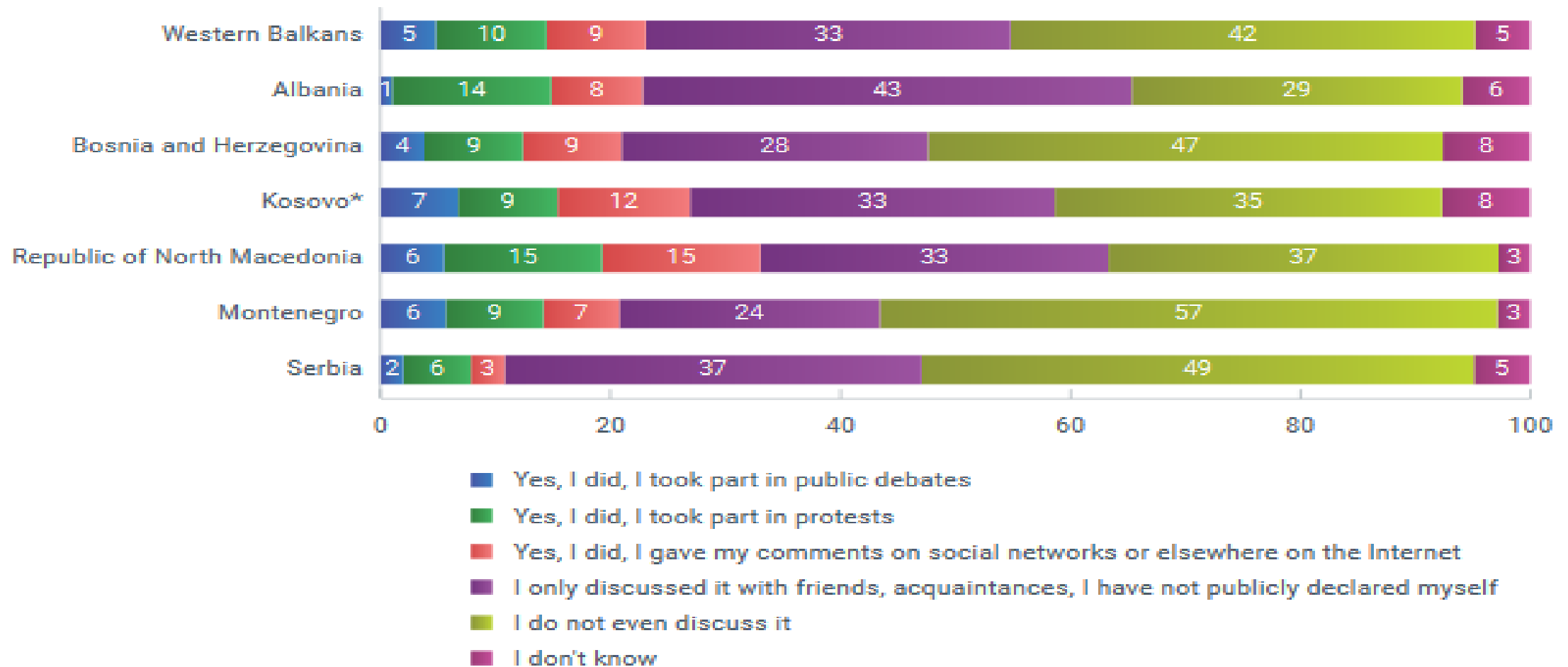
I am ready to buy environmentally friendly products even if they cost a little bit more



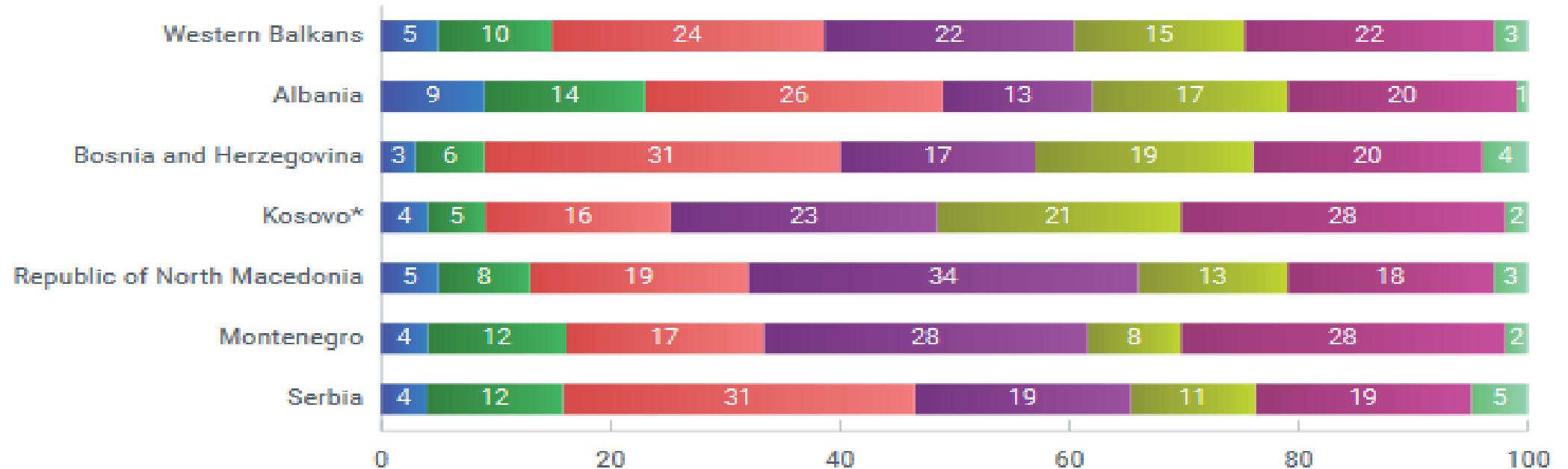
Which of the following actions have you taken if any?

Action	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kosovo*	Republic of North Macedonia	Montenegro	Serbia
You try to reduce your waste and you regularly separate it for recycling	33	38	42	27	41	37
You try to cut down on your consumption of disposal items, e.g. plastic bags, etc.	56	40	22	32	30	54
You buy locally produced and seasonal food whenever possible	72	54	23	31	49	49
When buying a new appliance, you choose it mainly because it was more energy efficient	39	14	14	23	26	20
You regularly use environmentally friendly alternatives to using your private car	8	7	8	15	10	14
You have insulated your home better to reduce your energy consumption	8	16	14	18	18	18
You have bought a new car and its low fuel consumption was an important factor in your choice	5	12	7	7	13	13
You avoid taking short-haul flights whenever possible	1	2	8	2	5	2
You have switched to an energy supplier which offers a greater share of renewables	0	1	4	2	2	1
You have installed equipment in your home (for example solar panels to generate renewable electricity)	2	1	3	8	1	0
You have bought a low energy home	1	0	2	1	1	1
None	5	11	28	21	14	12
I don't know	0	3	6	4	1	1

Have you ever done something that could affect any of the government decisions



What is the main reason why you are not actively involved in government decision making?



- The government knows best when it comes to citizen interests and I don't need to get involved
- I vote and elect my representatives in the parliament so why would I do anything more
- I as an individual cannot influence government decisions
- I do not want to be publicly exposed
- I do not trust this government and I don't want to have anything to do with them
- I do not care about it at all
- Don't know/refuse



Gender sensitive policies

- The challenge of reversing the degradation of natural resources while meeting increasing demands for them involves significant changes in policies, practices and institutions (FAO 2007).
- Effective policies and programming requires understanding and addressing of the gender-specific relationships to natural resources use and management and specific linkages between natural resources, cultural values, and local knowledge.
- Women specific knowledge needs to be included in the design of policies and programmes. Inclusion ensures greater success and sustainability of interventions, while properly safeguarding natural resources and enhancing the shared benefits of their careful use.



WATER, ENERGY AND FOOD



Nexus WEF

- Gender-responsive planning for the Water-Energy-Food Nexus acknowledges and addresses differences in power among men and women in the water, energy and food sectors.
- For gender integration to be meaningful, government initiatives must acknowledge the different roles of women and men, and support voices and engagement in policy and decision-making processes. This should also entail creating outcomes that support functional as well as strategic gender needs.

Domestic water and sanitation – Key messages

- Water use, supply and access are conventionally associated primarily with the hydrological cycle. Understanding that there is also a “hydro-social cycle” draws attention to gender dimensions. At every stage of the hydro-social cycle there are different demands, risks and benefits for women and for men.
- It is largely women’s responsibility, everywhere, to manage household needs for water. This responsibility becomes even greater in the face of pervasive water quality problems in both developed and developing countries, which will become worse with climate disruption.
- Within households, women and men typically express different views on water priorities and the solutions to water deficits.
- Women are poorly represented at the decision-making level in the water and sanitation sectors.

Water – Gender Statistics

United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) reported on the state of gender statistics across the UN system and across national platforms. Gender-disaggregated water and sanitation statistics were among those that were least available among the sectors government collected regular statistics:

Region	Percent of sewage treated
Mortality	85 (highest)
Labour force	83
Education and training	81
Poverty	71
Agriculture	44
Access to sanitation	39
Access to clean water	37 (4th lowest % of 22 indicators)
Informal employment	37
Media	15

Source: UN ECOSOC (2013)

Food production and food security - Key messages

- Closing the gender gap in access to and control over resources such as land and production, and in access to information and technology, would increase agricultural productivity and therefore reduce poverty and hunger.
- Subsistence farming, home food production and wild food collection (sectors heavily dominated by women) are not sufficiently valued in national and global data sets, nor by research and extension services. Yet they contribute more to household food security and gender equality than does the production of commodity crops, especially in times of price and market instability.
- Women and men may be exposed to agricultural pesticides and related hazards along different pathways. The health effects of chronic pesticide exposures on women and men vary considerably.
- The prevalence and nature of food insecurity differ across types of households and within households. Within food-scarce households, women and men typically use different strategies to cope with food insecurity.

Food – Agriculture

- Women in agriculture and rural areas have less access than men to productive resources and opportunities. The gender gap exists for many assets, inputs and services, including land, livestock, labour, education, extension and financial services, and technology.
- Closing the gender gap in agriculture would generate significant gains for the agriculture sector and for society. If women had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20-30%. This could raise total agricultural output in developing countries by 2.5-4%, which could in turn reduce the number of hungry people in the world by 12-17%.

Source: Women in Agriculture: Closing the Gender Gap for Development (FAO 2011)



Food - Health

- Pesticides in breast milk: At least 35 pesticides have been found in breast milk in a wide range of countries, indicating exposures not only of the women concerned, but also of new-born children.
- These exposures occur at a critical period in the child's development, when exposure to endocrine-disrupting substances can have profound and life-long impacts.
- More recently, the widely used herbicide glyphosate, classified by the International Agency for Research on Cancer in 2015 as a “probable human carcinogen” (IARC 2015), has been measured in breast milk in the United States (MAA and SP 2014)

Food – Technology and Knowledge

- Mobile phones are used to share information useful to farmers. Globally, the use of mobile phone technology to share agricultural information (e.g. on markets, weather conditions and farming best practices) has greatly increased in the last decade or so.
- However, women and men do not always have equal access to information or to technology such as mobile phones, internet connections and computers.
- Using mobile technology may exacerbate gender differences in access to information. A global survey of mobile phone use found that women were significantly less likely than men to own a mobile phone: in Africa, 23% less likely; in the Middle East, 24%; and in South Asia, 37%. “Household” ownership of a mobile phone did not mean women and men had equal access to it: 82% of married women reported that using these phones made their husbands suspicious and, in many cases, husbands would not allow their wives to use the phone at all (GSMA Development Fund 2012)



Energy

- Decision-making in formal energy sectors is heavily gender imbalanced, as is staffing and employment. Women are often excluded from decision-making, while the industry's energy policies are mostly gender-unaware.
- There are significant gender differences in perceptions of current energy options, and of the risks and choices relating to various energy technologies.
- In both developed and developing countries energy poverty is a large and often invisible problem, and one that is gendered.
- Pervasive lack of gender-differentiated data has implications for the assessment of technology needs for technical training and capacity-building. It has the potential to reduce development initiatives directed at gender and energy as the deep inequalities in the energy sector cannot easily be quantified.

Energy – Nuclear Power

- In EU survey more women than men said nuclear energy should provide a lower share of overall energy production (EC 2007).
- In the United Kingdom the level of support for building new nuclear power stations showed a 40% discrepancy, with considerably more men wanting to see new power plants built (Populus 2011).
- In Canada the gender preference gap on this topic was 17% points in 2003; an assertive campaign by the nuclear industry led to a higher level of acceptance by both women and men in 2005, but the gender difference remained constant (Brissette 2006).
- In the United States in 2015, 54% of men and 36% of women favored building more nuclear power plants to generate electricity.
- In Australia in the same year, 19% of men favored nuclear power as one of three energy preferences compared with 8% of women (Hasham 2015).

Energy – Biomass Air Pollution

- Exposure to household air pollution from biomass burning kills nearly 4 million people per year.
- Millions more suffer from cancer, pneumonia, heart and lung disease, blindness and burns, while smoke from cooking fires is associated with cataracts, the leading cause of blindness in the world (GACC 2013).
- The premature deaths of more than 2 million women and children annually due to household air pollution are directly related to use of solid fuels for cooking and heating (Prüss-Ustün et al. 2016; WHO 2014b; GACC 2013).
- Women spend more time cooking than men, and in the case of unsafe fuels and stoves they are more exposed to smoke from cooking with solid fuels.

Gender sensitive management of natural resources

- Business-as-usual approaches are proving disastrous for people and the planet alike. For a sustainable, equitable and just management of natural resources and ecosystems it is essential to adopt gender-and-environment approaches.
- Gender-and-environment nexus is increasingly acknowledged in international agreements and national policy documents, implementation and follow-through have so far been weak or absent.
- Gender equality cannot be measured by women's and men's "presence" alone. Presence does not necessarily mean participation, nor does it imply influence: the nature of people's participation is what makes their presence meaningful or not.
- A transformative agenda recognizes gender equality as a driver of social change, leading to more people smart environmental policies.



Thank you

Fiorela Shalsi

Senior Gender Advisor