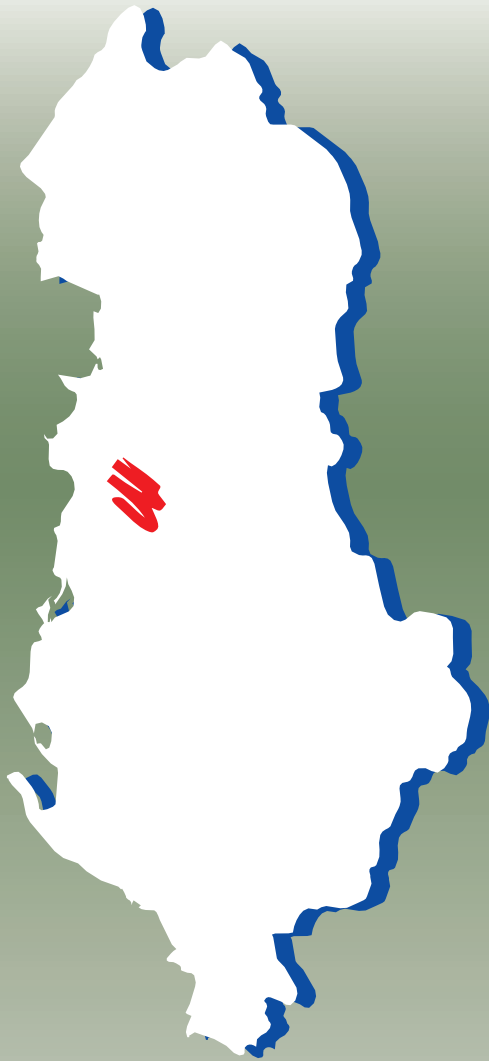




**CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY**  
OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL



# ALBANIA IN THE EYES OF THE WORLD 2021

REPORT



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## *The European Centre of Peace Science, Integration and Cooperation (CESPIC)*

The European Centre of Peace Science, Integration and Cooperation (CESPIC) is a research centre within the Catholic University 'Our Lady of Good Counsel' and it is intended to develop, spread and support Peace science. Peace science is now developing as interdisciplinary social science in different excellence universities, centres and think-thanks drawing heavily from different disciplines: economics, international relations, political science, in the first place, but also sociology, anthropology, religious anthropology, psychology. Peace science is both a positive and normative science. That is, Peace science focuses first on the roots and causes of conflicts and on the design of policies to establish a lasting peace.

In particular, CESPIC approach to Peace is based on conceptual three pillars: (i) Peace 'from within'; (ii) Peace among states, polities and communities; (iii) Peace as global public good.

(i) First, CESPIC favors activities centred on micro-foundations of Peace within societies. Consider among others: local development, fight against poverty, inequality, conflict and conflict resolution between ethnic and religious minorities, social justice, empowerment of civil society and economic policies for the construction of peace.

(ii) The second pillar focuses on the issues and the dynamics that subtend the achievement of a lasting peace between states and polities within the global system. In particular, CESPIC focuses on models of interaction between states which go beyond deterrence and arms race but emphasizes cooperation and integration between states.

(iii) The third pillar considers Peace as a global public good and therefore it emphasizes the role and the attitude of the global institutions capable of (a) maintaining the peace in post-conflict scenes; (b) developing global economic policies; (c) tackling global issues as climate change, terrorism, forced migrations and transnational crime.

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## *Foreword*

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**Albania in the Eyes of the World** is a yearly report which collects, and analyses different socioeconomic metrics drawn from international reports and studies. The aim of ‘Albania in the Eyes of the World’ is to describe where Albania is heading concerning different social, economic and political topics. It is intended to be a kind of *vade mecum* providing guidance on Albanian development path. The pros of such approach are evident. In only one document it is possible to find a set of information whose combination eventually turns to be extremely valuable for students, scholars, journalists, policymakers, entrepreneurs and investors. This report is at its 4<sup>th</sup> edition. In the report the reader will delve into these topics and others connected to the socioeconomic development of Albania, and to a lesser extent of the Western Balkans Six – Serbia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Kosovo, in addition to Albania.



Raul Caruso

Director

European Centre of Peace Science, Integration and Cooperation

Catholic University ‘Our Lady of Good Counsel’

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## *Abbreviations*

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ASP	Albanian State Police
CPI	Corruption Perceptions Index
ETI	Energy Transition Index
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GGGR	Global Gender Gap Report
GHS	Global Health Security
GPI	Global Peace Index
GPO	General Prosecution Office
HCI	Human Capital Index
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human Development Report
IEP	Institute of Economics and Peace
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
INSTAT	The Institute of Statistics (Albania)
IO	International Organisation
KOF	Konjunkturforschungsstelle
LSI	Lëvizja Socialiste për Integrim
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
ND-GAIN	Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OCCPO	Organised and Corruption Prosecution Office
ONAC	National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator
PD	Democratic Party of Albania
PP	Positive Peace
PS	Socialist Party of Albania
RoL	Rule of Law
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SPAK	Special Anti-Corruption Prosecution
TIP	Trafficking in Persons
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations International Children Emergency Fund
US	United States
WB6	Western Balkans Six
WEF	World Economic Forum
WHO	World Health Organisation
WJP	World Justice Project



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# 1. Global Peace Index

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The *Global Peace Index* is a yearly report issued by the *Institute of Economics and Peace* which focuses on peace levels achieved by world countries based on different indicators and topics. The index explores 3 main domains: (i) Level of Safety and Security Inside the Society; (ii) Gravity and Extent of Internal and External Conflicts; and finally (iii) Levels of Militarization – in turn disaggregated in 23 indicators<sup>1</sup> - and covers 99.7% of the world population.

As claimed by the *Global Peace Index 2021* (15<sup>th</sup> edition of the report), for the 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive year has been registered a reduction concerning global peacefulness. On average, world peace level deteriorated by 0.07% in 2021, and the outlook elaborated because of the pandemic suggests that peace condition will be even worse in the coming years (see box 1). In the past year, 73 countries recorded a deterioration and 87 an improvement, while three countries experienced no changes in their performance. In the same year, peacefulness deteriorated in two domains: militarization, and safety and security, with the first one registering the largest downturn for the first time. Military expenditure recorded an increase for the second consecutive year with 105 countries performing poorly on this indicator. The overall impact of violence on global economy was \$14.96 trillion or 11.6% of world GDP – an improvement of 0,2% in 2020. Since 2009, peacefulness has declined by 2.5%.

Middle East and Northern Africa region (MENA) confirms its status as the least peaceful region, regardless of the improvements registered on *Ongoing Conflict*, while Europe renews its conditions as the most peaceful. Concerning the first, three of the five least peaceful countries of the world are located there. Europe, despite being the most peaceful region, registered the largest number of protests, riots and strikes (1,600) over the 2011-2019 period.

With reference to the countries of interest of this report, the Western Balkans perform better in the ranking than last year. This is mainly due to the deterioration of peacefulness in other regions of the world. North Macedonia has considerably improved its ranking (+11), followed by Montenegro (+3) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (+2). Albania (-2) ranks at position 48 and registered a score of 1.824. Serbia ranks 44<sup>th</sup> (-3), Bosnia & Herzegovina 72<sup>nd</sup> (+2) and Kosovo 80<sup>th</sup> (=). Albania's profile is provided in chart 1 together with the overall score and results for every domain of the GPI from 2015 to 2021.

---

1 GPI domains and indicators are: “Ongoing internal and external conflict” domain – number and duration of internal conflict; number of deaths from external organized conflict; number of deaths from internal organized conflict; number, duration and role in external conflict; intensity of organized internal conflict; relations with neighboring countries; “Social safety and security” domain – level of perceived criminality in society; number of refugees and internally displaced people as a percentage of the population; political instability; political terror scale; impact of terrorism; number of homicides per 100,000 people; level of violent crime; likelihood of violent demonstrations; number of jailed population per 100,000 people; number of internal security officers and police per 100,000 people; “Militarization” domain – military expenditure as a percentage of GDP; number of armed services personnel per 100,000 people; volume of transfers of major conventional weapons as recipient (imports) per 100,000 people; volume of transfers of major conventional weapons as supplier (exports) per 100,000 people; financial contribution to UN peacekeeping missions; nuclear and heavy weapons capabilities; ease of access to small arms and light weapons.

## Albania and Global Peace 2015-2021

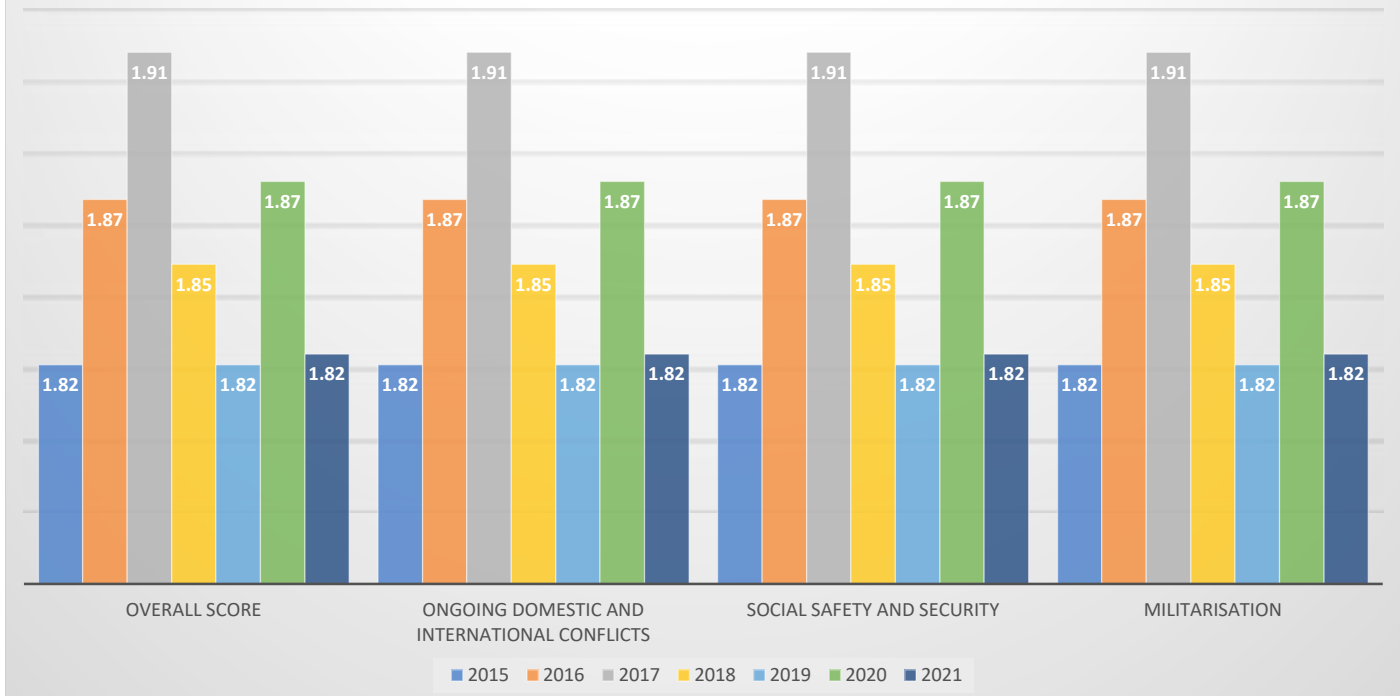


Chart 1

Taking as reference the 2015-2021 timeframe, it is possible to observe that Albania has made no overall improvement in peace levels, and this could be partly since there has been a clear decay both in “Ongoing and Domestic conflicts” and “Militarisation”. The decay highlighted by the first domain may be connected to the wave of protests, which characterized the first semester of 2019, when thousands of government critics invaded the streets asking the resignation of PM Edi Rama and the restoration of the path towards democratic institutions and access to the European Union. The situation was normalized especially thanks to an agreement reached by the ruling Socialist Party and the opposition about the long-requested electoral reform – amongst the main points on which European Institutions insisted. In addition, the diplomatic relationship with Serbia is problematic and linked to the negotiations the latter is having within European offices regarding the *de jure* recognition of Kosovo and their respective borders.

The impact of violence on the Albanian economy has been estimated in a 6% of Gross Domestic Product (\$2,257.3 millions). The country ranks 29<sup>th</sup> in the European region (out of 36). Charts 2 and 3 present the same analysis for the other WB6.

## WB6 in the Global Peace index 2015-2021

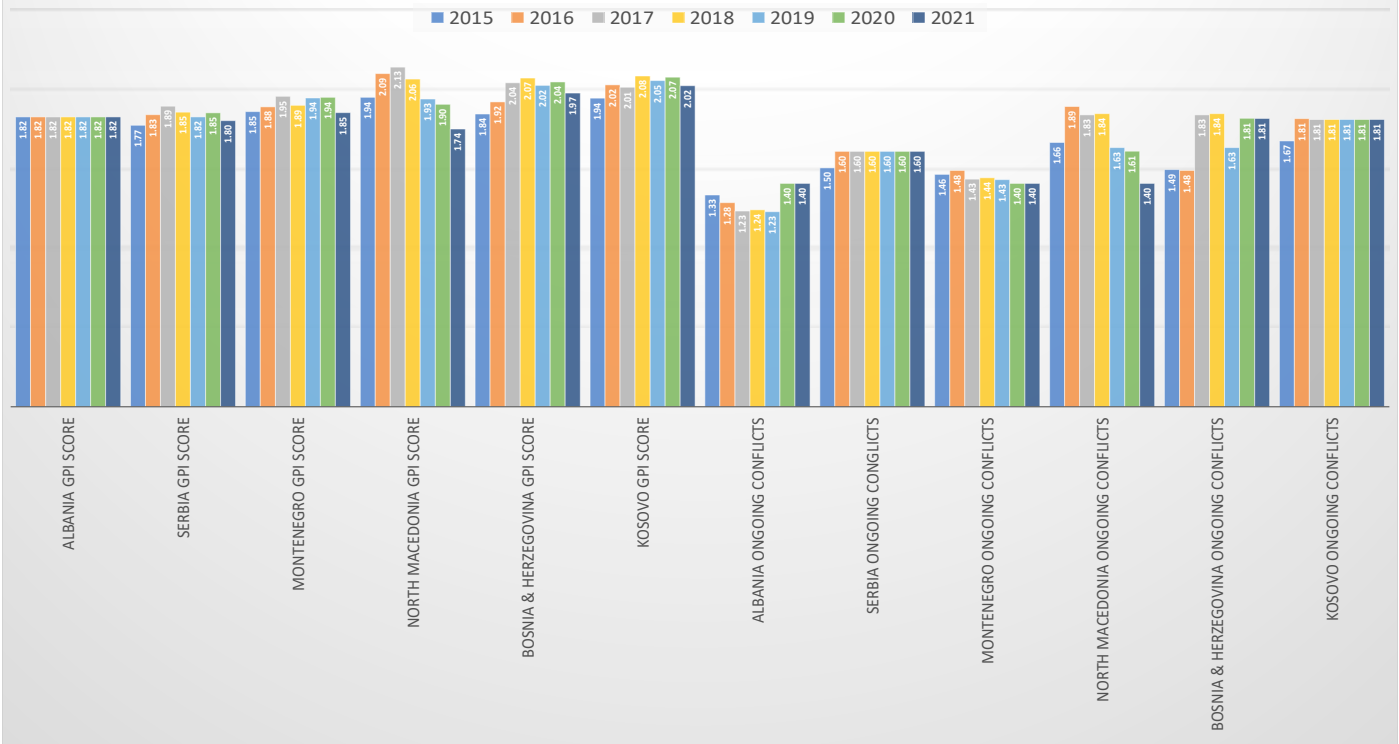


Chart 2

## WB6 In the global peace index 2015-2021

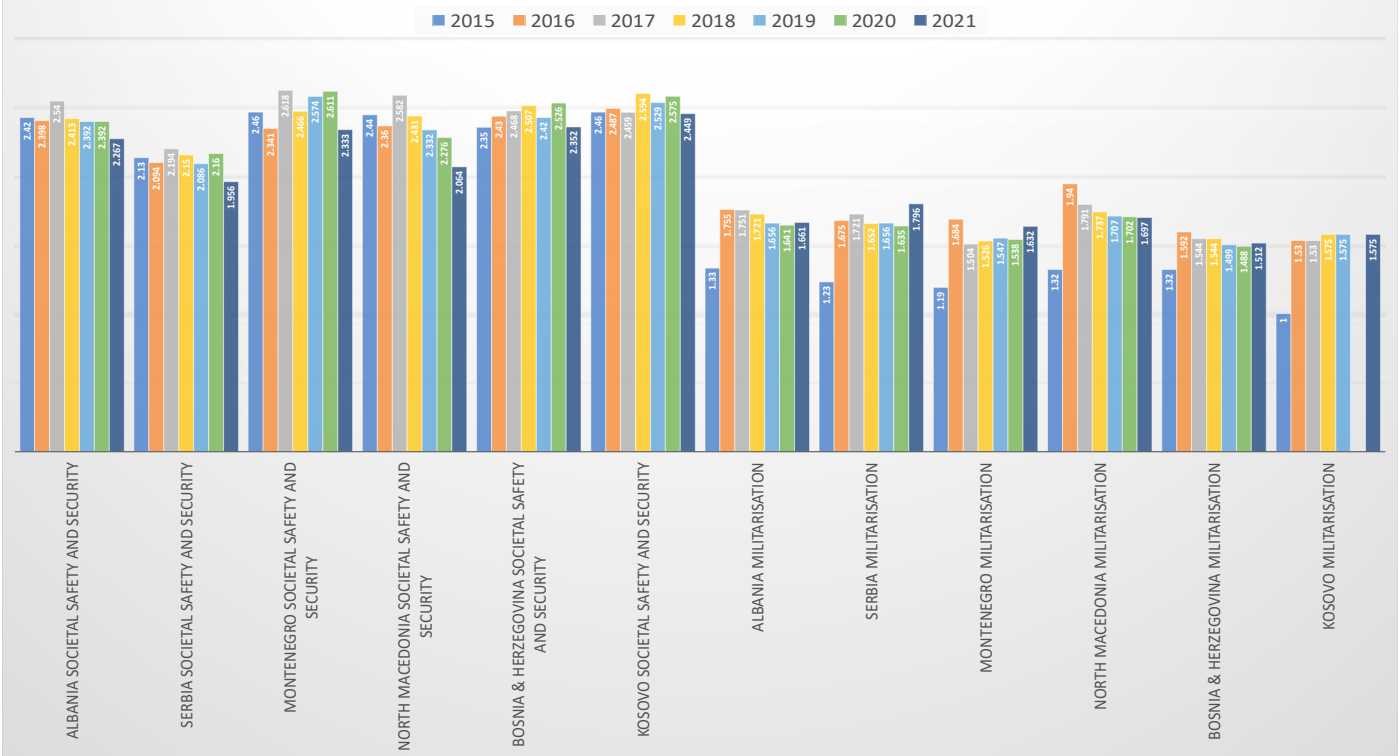


Chart 3

Country from the WB6 group registered an improvement of the comprehensive GPI score.

Considering the peacefulness levels of the WB6 over this period, it is possible to argue that, lately, there is a negative peacefulness trend. With the forthcoming issues of the GPI, the shape of this pattern will be better defined, particularly considering the consequences of the pandemic and the political process of the EU accession.

## 2. Positive Peace Index

The *Positive Peace Index* is a yearly publication issued by the *Institute of Economics and Peace* conceptually developing the thematic of global peace. The positive peace concept, in the words of the *IEP*, is defined as “the attitudes, institutions and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies”. These strong and effective sociopolitical structures endow the national community with the means to embed justice and equity in the social system. According to the report, higher levels of positive peace led to better performances concerning environmental outcomes, *United Nations Sustainable Development Goals*, wellbeing of the population, higher per capita income and a stronger resilience.

The *Positive Peace Report* evaluates positive peace through eight indicators (pillars): (i) Well-functioning Government; (ii) Sound Business Environment; (iii) Equitable Distribution of Resources; (iv) Acceptance of the Rights of the Others; (v) Good Relations with Neighbors; (vi) Free Flow of Information; (vii) High Levels of Human Capital; (viii) Low Levels of Corruption.

The 2022 report highlighted a few trends that deserve attention; since 2009, 126 countries improved their positive peace – 36 worsened their statuses; globally positive peace improved by 2.4%, particularly due to an increase in Free Flow of Information, Sound Business Environment, Good Relations with Neighbours, and Equitable Distribution of Resources; Low Levels of Corruption is the only pillar to have deteriorated while Well Functioning Government and High Levels of Human Capital have made little and slow progress, remaining almost unaltered. Eight out of nine world regions ameliorated their positive peace levels - Russia and Eurasia, Asia Pacific and South Asia - with the only exception of North America; the largest deterioration of positive peace occurred in Syria, Libya, Yemen, Venezuela and South Sudan.

With regard to Albania, its comprehensive positive peace score deteriorated <sup>2</sup> (2.927 in 2020) by -2.9, and it ranks 59<sup>th</sup> (losing seven positions from 2019). As one can observe in chart 4, Albania is clearly showing a negative trend concerning its peace levels - its overall positive peace has deteriorated significantly mainly due to COVID-19 pandemic.

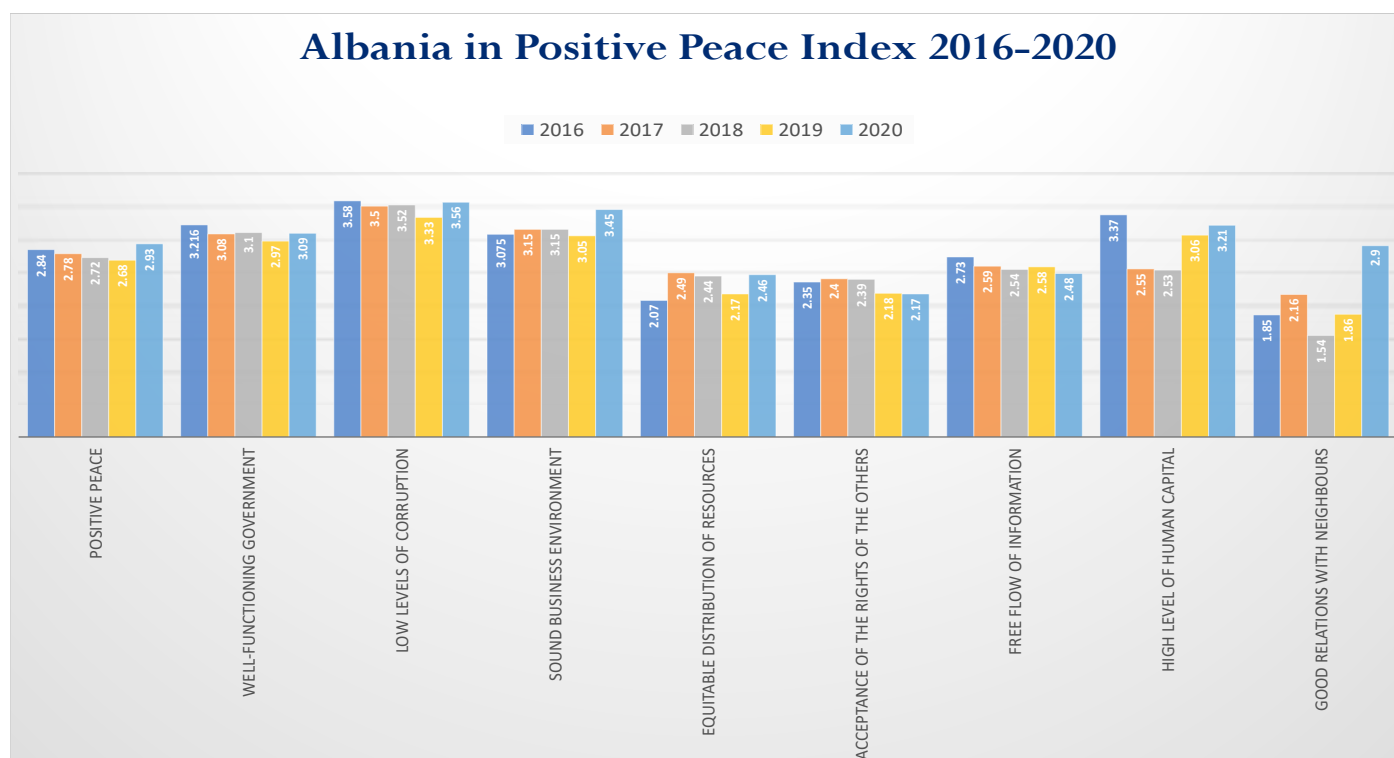


Chart 4

The country, compared to 2019 performances, recorded a worsening of seven of its PP pillars except

<sup>2</sup> Positive Peace assessment is based on a 1-5 ratio where a range score of 1-2.38 means very high positive peace level, 2.39-3.26 high, 3.27-3.68 medium, and 3.69-5 low.

for Free Flow of Information (+0.10) and Acceptance of the Rights of the Others (+0,01). As aforementioned, the last pillar could be linked to the delicate handling of the Kosovo issue and that of the treatment of Albanian minorities across the Balkans region (especially in North Macedonia). Concerning Free Flow of Information, an increase in these specific realms could have been hindered by the fact that the Government was discussing at the end of 2019 a law (passed in Parliament in December of the same year), which institutes an authority that has the power to judge and fine online media sources. The act has been strongly criticized by local and international groups, and the European Commission. In chart 5 and 6 the same analysis is provided with reference to the WB6 in general.

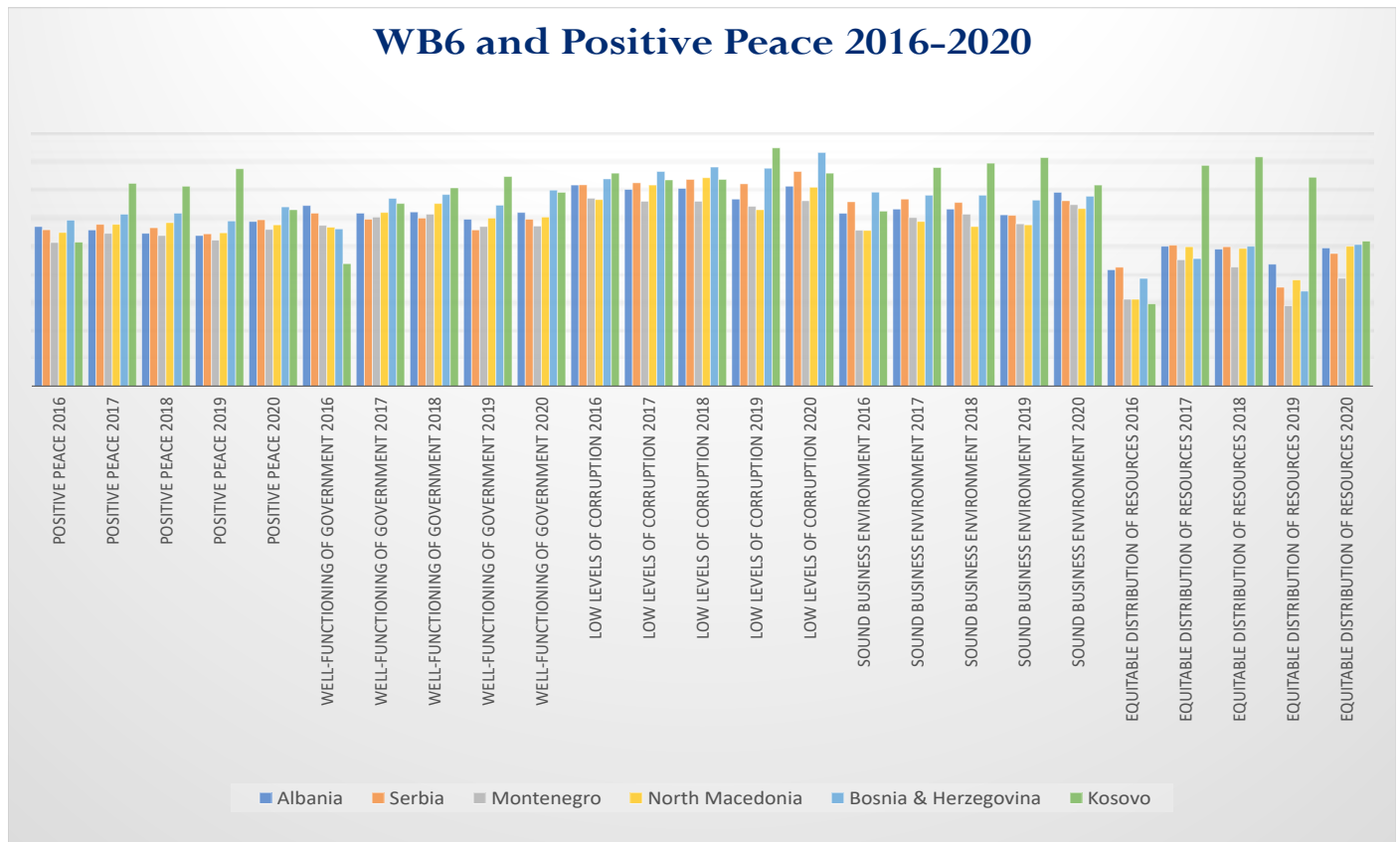


Chart 5

## WB6 and Positive Peace 2016-2020

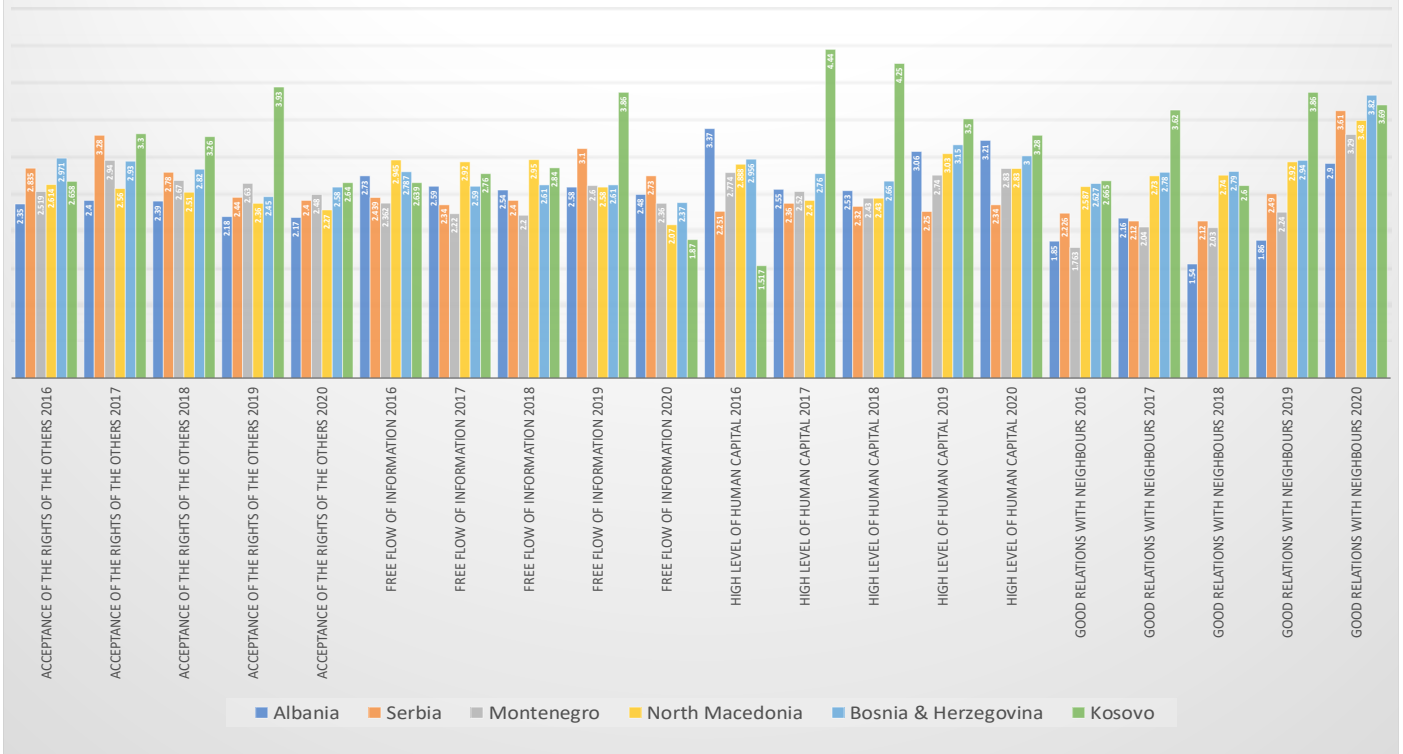


Chart 6

Montenegro is the best performing country out of the WB6 (position 52 and PP score of 2.79.) despite the worsening of its score (-0,19) compared to 2019. Almost the whole region has registered a deterioration in its PP score, with the only exception of Kosovo, which ranks 77<sup>th</sup> gaining 61 positions compared to the previous year. Kosovo is the only country to register an improvement in Well-functioning of Government (+0,28), Low Levels of Corruption (+0,45), Sound Business Environment (+0,49), Equitable Distribution of Resources (+1,14).

With reference to Acceptance of the Rights of the Others, almost all WB States experience an improvement, with the only exception of Bosnia and Herzegovina (-0,13). Free Flow of Information is the only indicator in which the region has improved its performance with Kosovo outperforming all the other countries (+1,99).

North Macedonia (+0,2), Bosnia & Herzegovina (+0,15), and Kosovo (+0,22) show a positive trend about High Level of Human Capital. Particularly severe has been the decay in Good Relations with Neighbours during 2020. With the sole exception of Kosovo (+0,17) all WB countries have worsened their score with regard to Good Relations with Neighbours.

Confirming a difficult period of good relations within the WB6, almost all the countries of the cluster worsened this pillar – Albania (-1,04), Montenegro (-1,05), North Macedonia (-0,56), and Bosnia & Herzegovina (-0.88), and Serbia (-1,12). Positive peace is still a long process for the area, and this latter pillar can be critical in boosting the others.

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### 3. *Human Capital Index*

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According to the definition given by the *World Bank*, The *Human Capital Index* (HCI) is an international metric that benchmarks key components of human capital across countries. Measuring the human capital that a child born today can expect to attain by her 18th birthday, the HCI highlights how current health and education outcomes shape the productivity of the next generation of workers.”

This new *World Bank*'s effort highlights important progress made by countries in improving their human capital in the last decade (+4% on average), particularly due to improvements in the access to education and health – in turn boosted by economic growth; nonetheless, a special warning comes from the importance of defending the advances obtained from the current crisis brought by the pandemic.

Despite increase in human capital levels, considerable gaps still exist. For instance, on average, a child born in the pre-Covid era could expect to fulfil a 56% of his/her potential productivity at work. This gap affects with still greater intensity low-income countries and those involved in conflicts, violence and institutional fragility, where a child could expect to reach 37% of his or her human capital – compared to the 70% that can be reached by a child from a high-income country.

The 2020 update of the *Human Capital Index* gathers data for the HCI components<sup>3</sup> as of March 2020. Components are calculated on a 0-1 range – 1 represents full human capital utilisation –, and a lower value and upper value for every country are also presented – any country measured value could swing, given the availability and accuracy of a full set of data, between a lower and a higher score. The report assessed a total of 174 countries.

With respect to the main country analysed by this draft, Albania ranks 50<sup>th</sup> (56<sup>th</sup> in 2018) with an HCI value of 0.63 (0.63 in 2018), a lower value of 0.62 and a higher value of 0.64. This means the country is above the world average and confirmed a positive trend starting from year 2010 – during this period Albanian improved from an initial 0.54 to the actual 0.63. An important peculiarity of the country is that, on average, girls have a higher HCI (0.66) than boys (0.61).

Given the different standards of measurement for the HCI indicators, charts 7 and 8 show a comparison between WB6 pondered to ease the reading of the values. Under a time perspective, a comparison will be presented concerning data from 2020 and 2018.

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3 HCI components are Survival: this measure intends to assess the possibility for children to pass the year -5 threshold and to start the human capital accumulation process – which is the beginning of the education career; Expected Years of Learning-adjusted School: this indicator mixes the expected years of schooling at age of 18 with a quality component which comes from a comparison of how much children learn in school and the relative attainment in international student achievement tests – “Harmonised Test Score”; Health: it is composed of two main indicators which are “rate of stunting of children under age 5” and “adult survival rate” – proportion of 15-year old persons who survive until age of 60.

## WB6 in HCI 2020-2018 comparison

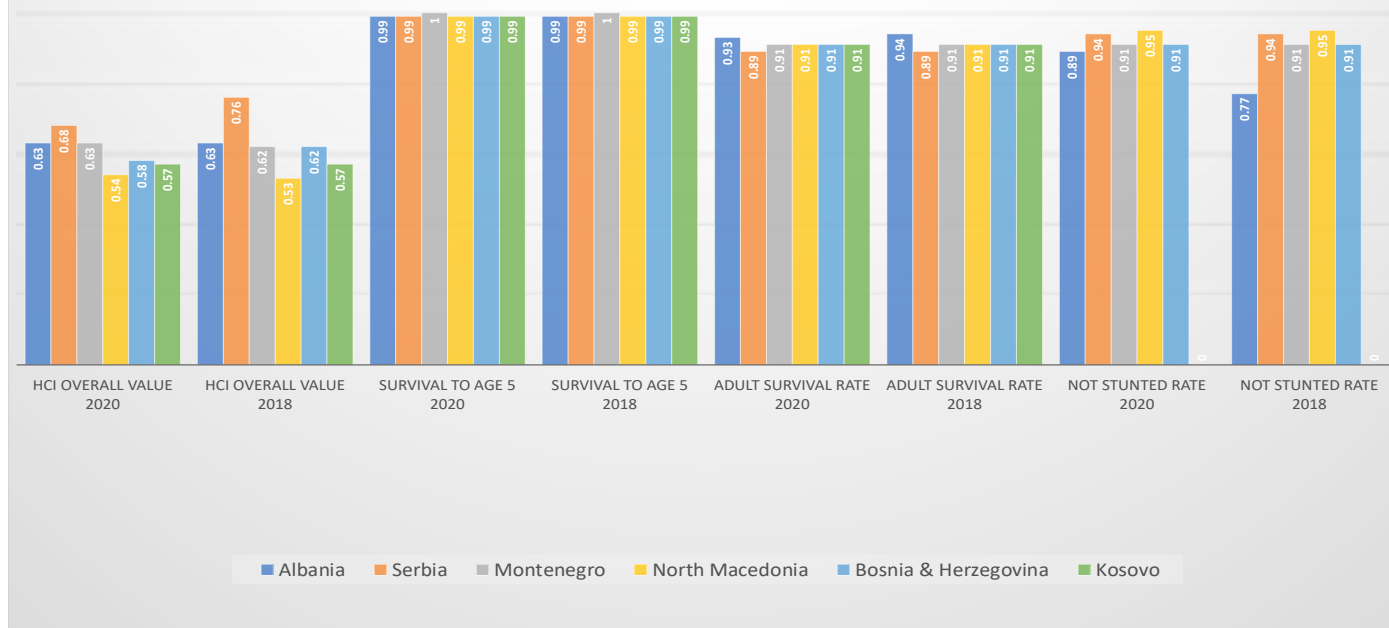


Chart 7

## WB6 in HCI 2020-2018 comparison

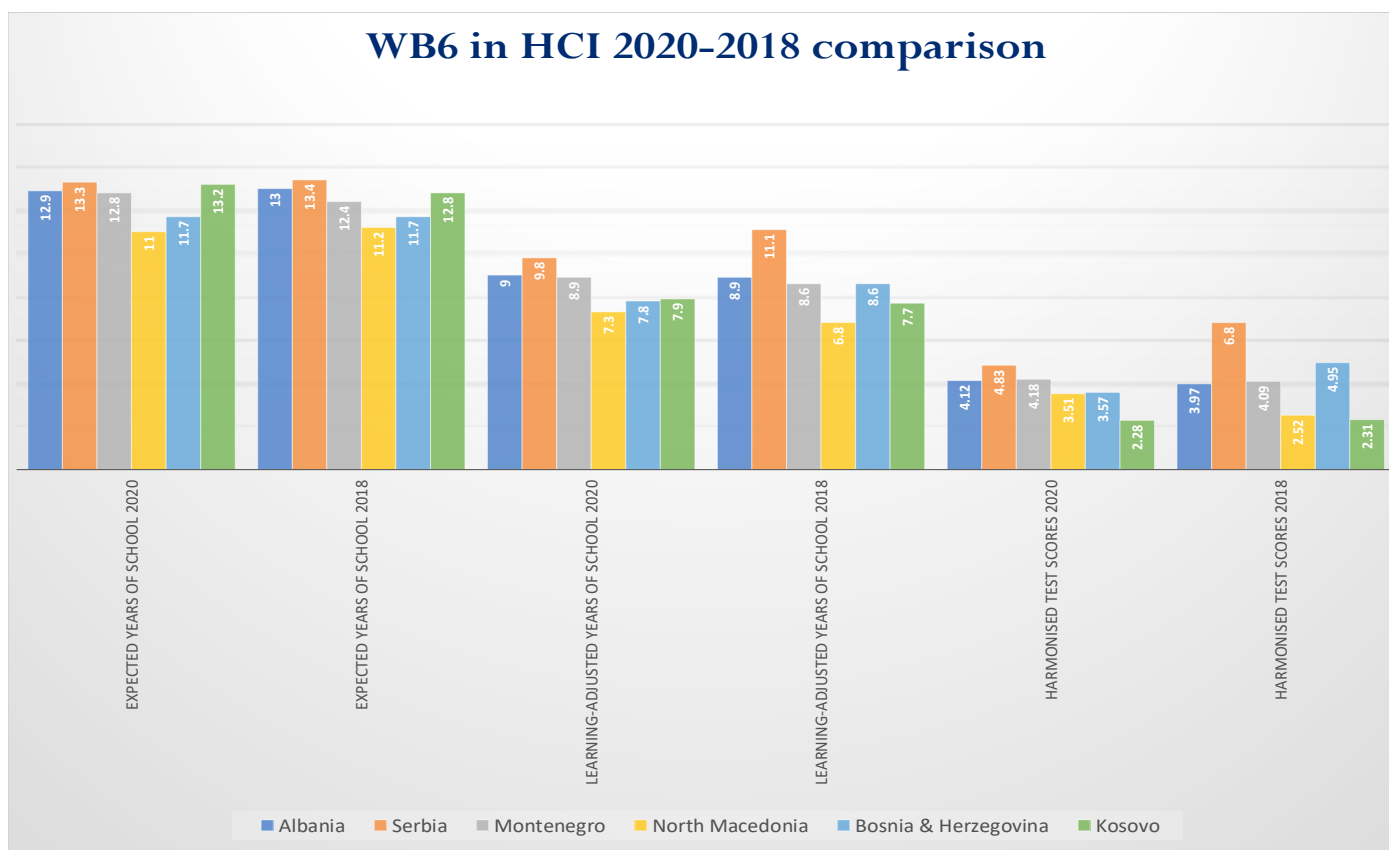


Chart 8

Concerning the HCI overall score, between 2018 and 2020 only two countries registered a slight improvement – North Macedonia and Montenegro (+0.1) – while Serbia (-0.8) and Bosnia & Herzegovina (-0.4) experienced a serious decay. No change can be detected in Albania and Kosovo HCI comprehensive value.

With regard to the three main categories of the HCI, the WB6 disclosed good performances in Survival to Age 5 and Health – with Albania highlighting a significant change in its Not Stunted Rate (from the 0.77 of 2018



to the 0.89 of 2020). However, in the Expected Years of Learning-adjusted School domain, the situation gives us a worse picture. Basically, each of the WB6 – Montenegro excluded – registered a deterioration in at least one indicator: Albania, despite a very slight decrease in Expected Years of School (-0.1), experienced an amelioration of both Learning-adjusted Years of School (+0.1) and Harmonised Test Scores (+5 – calculation range for this indicator is 300-625 –). In contrast to the advances achieved by Montenegro – +0.4 in Expected Years of School, and +0.3 in Learning-adjusted Years of School –, Serbia exhibited a grievous worsening of Learning-adjusted Years of School (-1.3) and Harmonised Test Scores (-64). North Macedonia improved its Learning-adjusted Years of School (+0.5) and Harmonised Test Scores (+32) while decaying in Expected Years of School (-0.2); Kosovo increased its values in Expected Years of School (+0.4) and Learning-adjusted Years of School (+0.4) experiencing a not very significant change (-0.1) in Harmonised Test Scores; Bosnia & Herzegovina worsened in Learning-adjusted Years of School (-0.8) and Harmonised Test Scores (-45). Considering these values, access to education and quality schooling appears as a fundamental issue to tackle for boosting human capital in the WB6.

## 4. State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World

The FAO's *State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World* – jointly prepared with IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO – is “[...]an annual flagship report to inform on progress towards ending hunger, achieving food security and improving nutrition and to provide in-depth analysis on key challenges for achieving this goal in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[...]”.

According to FAO, the world is encountering several obstacles to meet targets set by *United Nations’ Development Goal 2 – Zero Hunger*. The 2021 report highlights that the world is still off track to end hunger by 2030. Data show that target 2.1 – Ensuring Access to Safe, Nutritious and Sufficient Food for All People All Year Round – and 2.2 – Eradicating All Forms of Malnutrition – are still a chimera and while in 2019, due to recalculation of data concerning China, the number of undernourished lowered to 690 million, in 2020 the total number of undernourished was between 720 and 811 million people, 161 more than the previous year. New estimates, after Covid crisis, foresee an increase in absolute number by 2030 (840 million). Within this scheme, children appear the most affected age group. In fact, in 2020 about 149.2 million children under 5 years of age (22%) were estimated to be stunted. The pandemic must be added to the other well-known factors contributing to hunger such as climate change, conflicts and economic recessions.

In addition, a growing number of people are experiencing reduction in quantity and quality of food; in 2020, one in three people in the world did not have regular access to sufficient food, an increase of 320 million people than the previous year.

Since 2000, stunting is the only indicator showing substantial improvement in multiple regions of the world. An additional 3.4 million cases of stunting may be caused by Covid-19 pandemic for 2022.

With respect to Albania (and the WB6 in general), data of previous reports highlighted food security and nutrition levels beyond standards required by a high human development country or state from the Southern Europe region. Chart 9 provides Albania’s profile in the *State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021*.

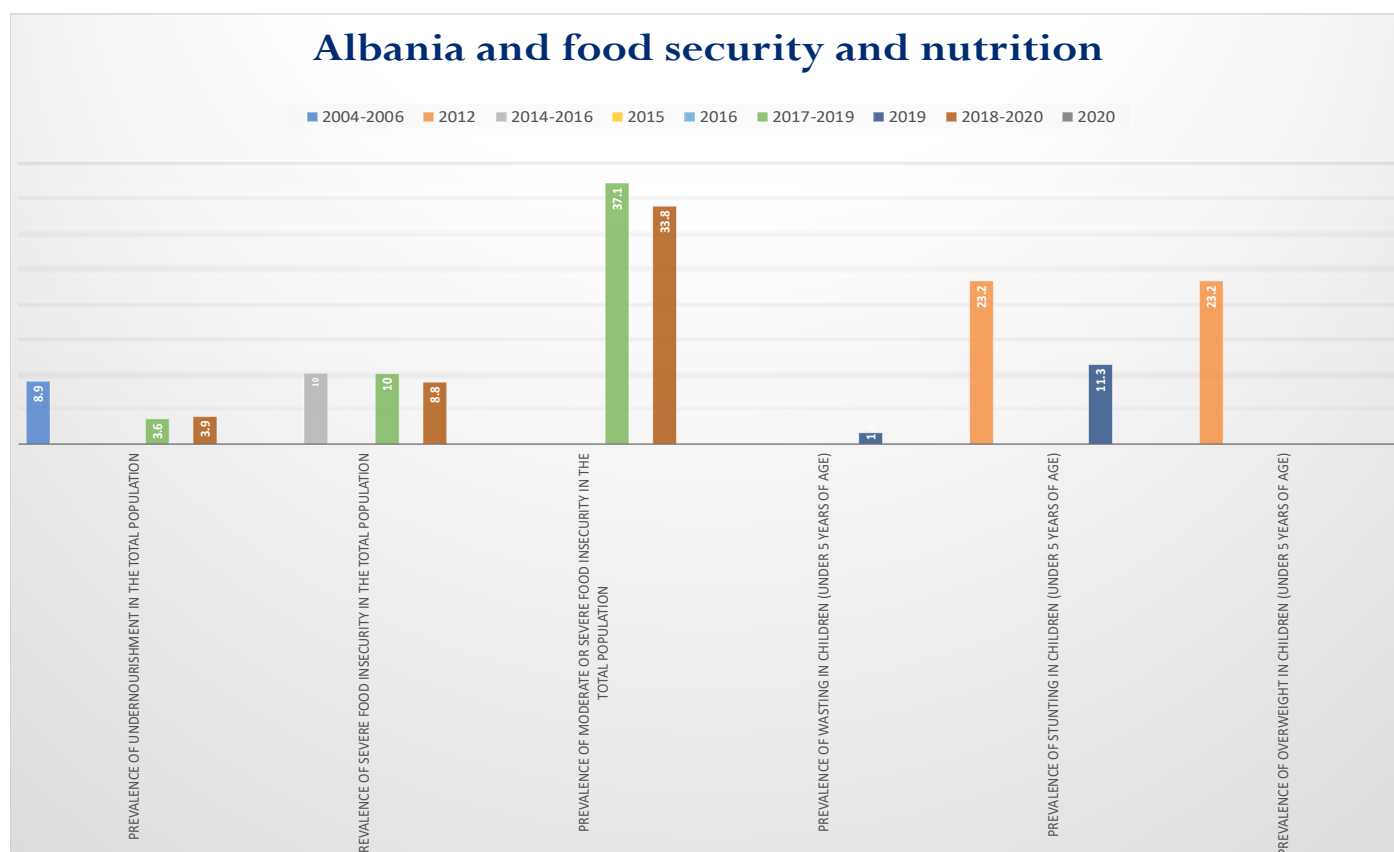


Chart 9

Among the indicators that are worthy of attention one can find: Prevalence of Undernourishment in the Total Population where Albania experienced improvements – 8.9% in 2004-2006 compared to the 3.9% in

2018-2020, although still under Southern Europe<sup>4</sup> average (<2.5%); Prevalence of Severe Food Insecurity in the Total Population registered an improvement in the period considered – 8.8 % value against the 1.9 % average of Southern Europe; Prevalence of Moderate and Severe Food Insecurity in the Total Population – Albania registered a slight improvement passing from the 38.8% of year 2014-2016 to the 33.8% of 2018-2020 (Consider Southern Europe average of 9%); a considerable improvement was registered in Prevalence of Stunting in Children Under 5 Years of Age – the country highlighted a prevalence of 9.6% in 2020 when, in 2012, it was 23.2%. Despite the positive change obtained in all indicators, Albania needs a more effective action to end hunger within its borders.

Following the analysis, in chart 10 an examination of the WB6 food security and nutrition levels is presented with the most recent data.

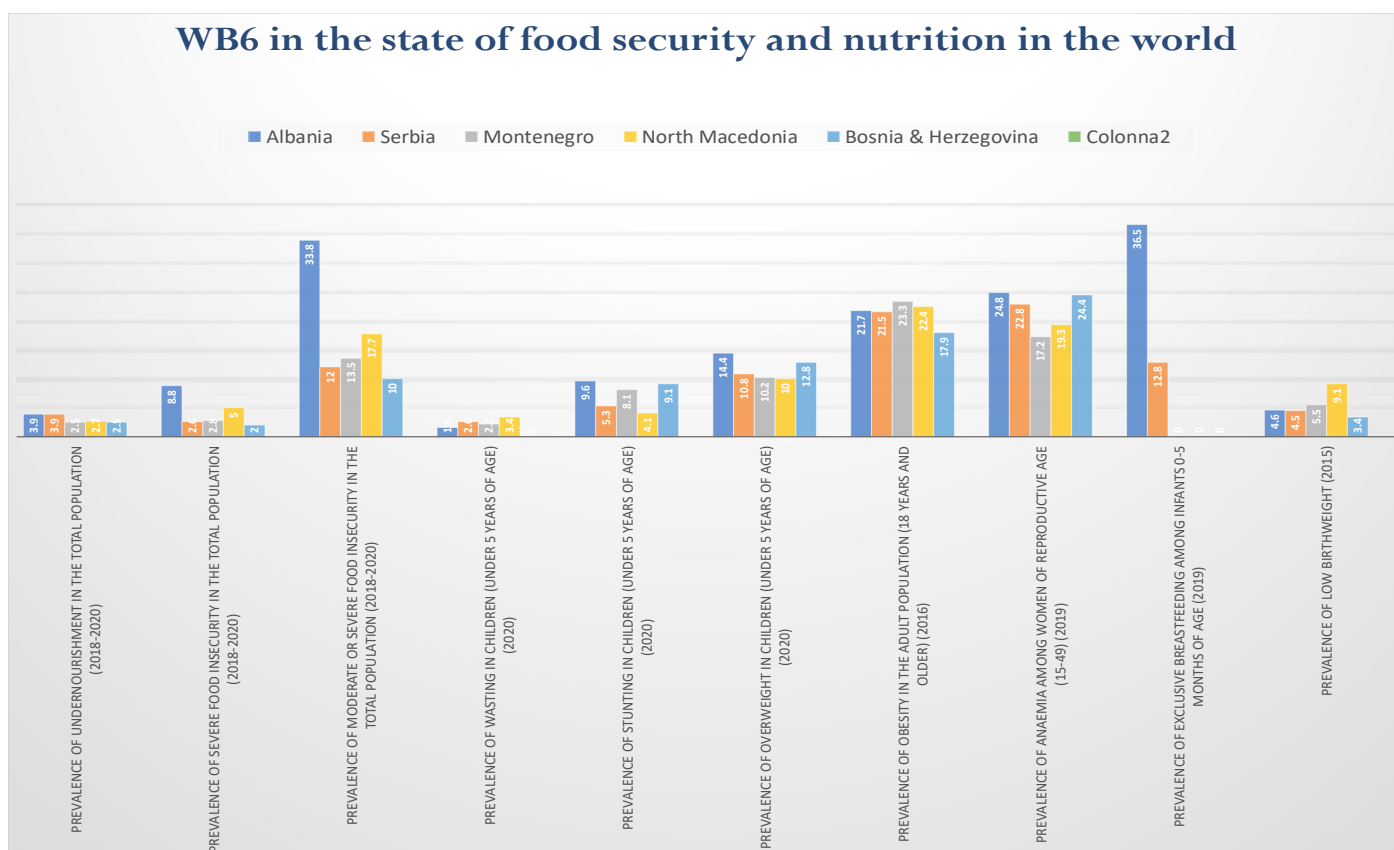


Chart 10 [Kosovo is not included in the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020]

With reference to Prevalence of Undernourished in the Total Population, the data show that only Montenegro and Bosnia & Herzegovina (<2.5%) exhibited the same levels as Southern Europe average. If one considers Prevalence of Severe Food Insecurity in the Total Population and Prevalence of Moderate or Severe Food Insecurity in the Total Population – Southern Europe average of 1.9% and 9%, respectively –, only Bosnia & Herzegovina is able to reach the regional standard. The other indicators such as Prevalence of Obesity in the Adult Population and Prevalence of Low Birthweight, the WB6 highlight results in line with or better than those registered in the region (21.8% and 7.3%). Despite some encouraging values, the WB6 show a low overall level of food security and nutrition, and interventions to decrease poverty rate<sup>5</sup> and increase access to quality food are needed.

4 Southern Europe countries are Albania, Andorra, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Malta, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain.

5 According to the *World Bank*, percentage of people living with less than 5 (PPP) dollars is 38% in Albania (2017 data), 3.9% in Bosnia & Herzegovina (2011), 21.6% in Kosovo (2017), 4.8% in Montenegro (2014), 23.1% in North Macedonia (2015) and 20.3% in Serbia (2017).

## 5. Freedom in the World

*Freedom in the World* is a yearly publication of US-based NGO *Freedom House* assessing the condition of civil liberties and political rights across the globe. First produced in 1973, the report evaluates a total of 210 countries and territories according to information and data coming from external analysts obtained through on-the-ground research, consultations with local actors and analysis of governmental and nongovernmental sources. For each country, the report evaluates the following indicators: (i) in the Political Rights domain – Electoral Process, Political Pluralism and Participation, Functioning of Government; (ii) in the Civil Liberties domain – Freedom of Expression and Belief, Associational and Organisational Rights, Rule of Law, and Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights. A rating ranging from 1 “Most Free” to 7 “Least Free” is assigned to every country<sup>6</sup>.

According to the 2022 report, in 2021, global freedom confirms its downward trend and 16<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of decline. 60 countries registered a worsening in their freedom levels while only 25 experienced an improvement. To date about 38% of the world population live in Not Free countries and only about 20% live in Free countries. Despite the strong popular demand for democracy – witnessed by people who continue to risk their lives to pursuing freedom – threats to democracies are both external and internal. The formers are well represented by authoritarian rulers, such as in Russia or China, who challenge the idea that democracy is the only viable path to prosperity and security. Internal threats are carried out by freely elected leaders who are trying to crush the same institutions who led them to power as in 2021 United States Capitol attack. The report calls for an international coordinated action in the pursuit of supporting democracy.

Regarding Albania, the country registered an overall Freedom score of 67/100 and confirmed its “Partly Free” status – Freedom rating of 3. The overall score represents a positive change from previous years’ score (66/100). Chart 11 provides a complete picture of Albania status within the *Freedom in the World* from 2018 to 2021.

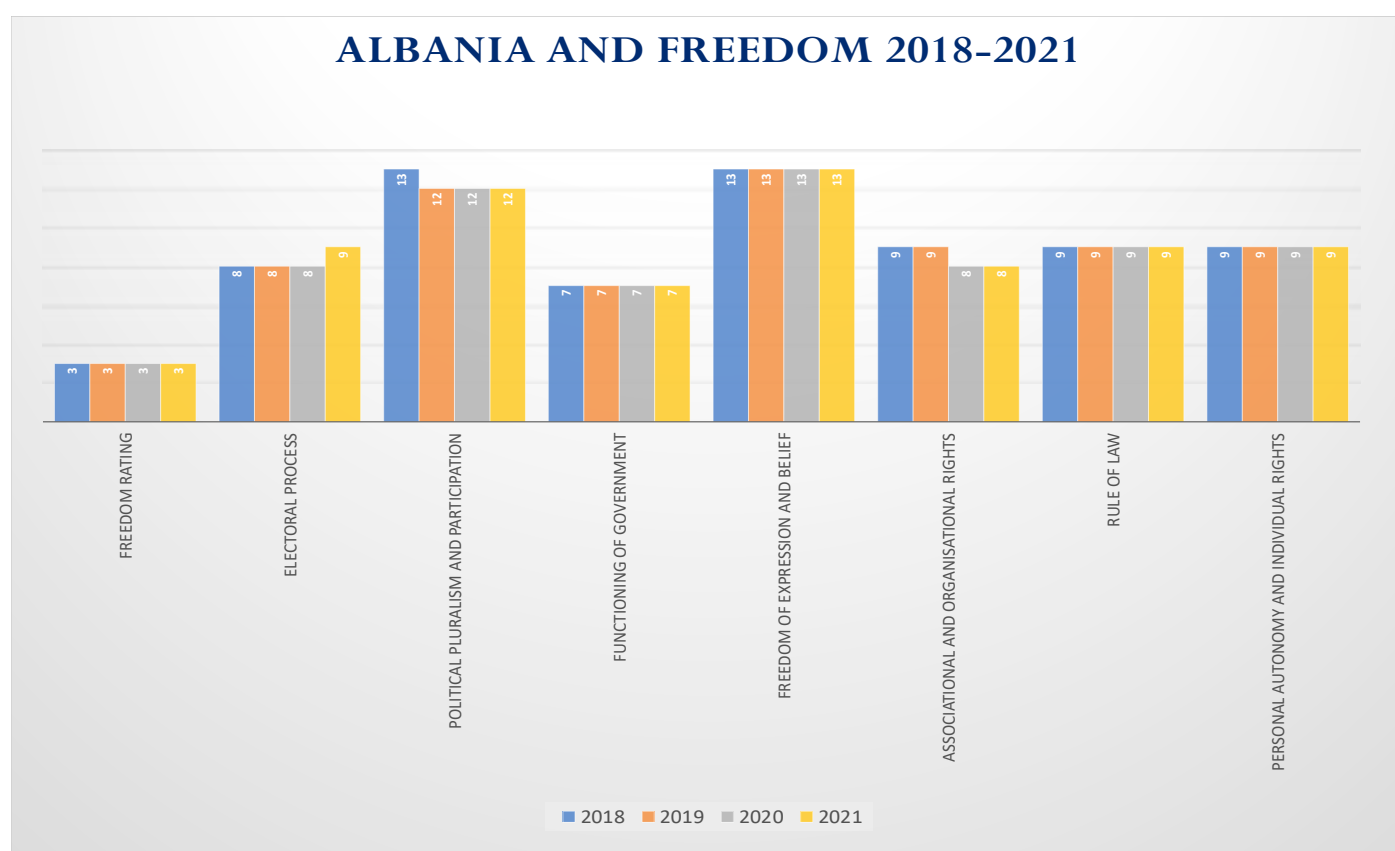


Chart 11

6 Beside the pondered freedom score, one can find an overall score ranging from 0 to 100 which is composed by Political Rights and Civil Liberties results which in turn are calculated on a 0-40 and 0-60 scale, respectively.

As highlighted in the chart, the overall increase can be attributed to an enhancement of Electoral Process – specifically due to the 2021 elections. It is worth noting that the overall score is back to 2019 level, after the turmoil in 2020. The main domains rating and scores assessed by *Freedom in the World* show that Albania registered a 28/40 in Political Rights – rating of 3 – (up from the 27/40 of year 2020), and 39/60 in Civil Liberties – rating of 3 – (this indicator is stable over the last two years).

Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia are the freest country out of the WB6 with a total score of 67/100. Below we find Serbia with a total score of 62/100, while Kosovo and Bosnia & Herzegovina registered a comprehensive result of 56/100 and 53/100, respectively. They are all considered “Partly Free”. Chart 12 contains information on the remaining Western Balkan Six, comprising overall and domain scores.

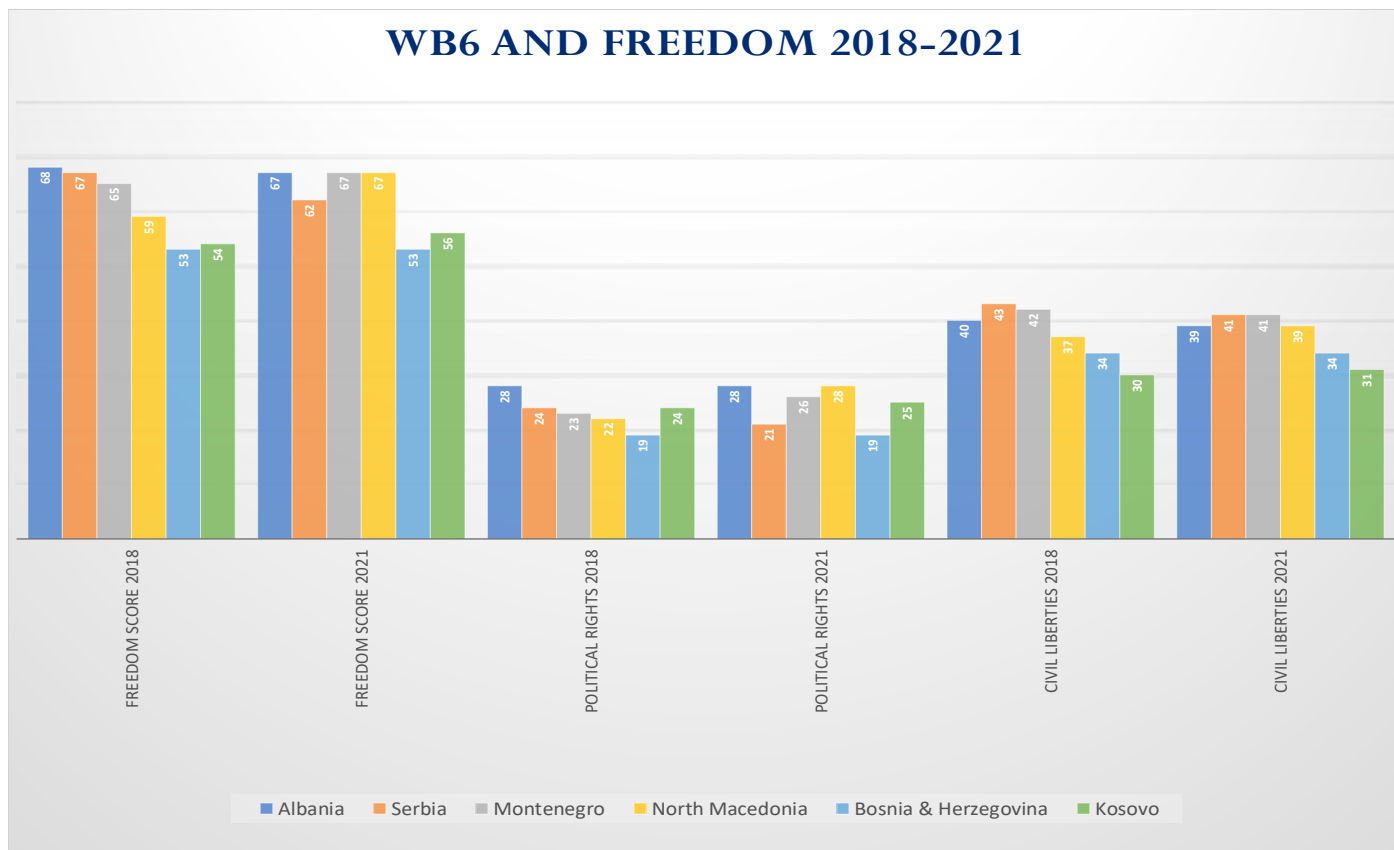


Chart 12

In the region, Albania (-1) and Serbia (-5) show a worsening of their freedom levels in 2018-2021, on the contrary Montenegro (+2) North Macedonia (+8) and Kosovo (+2) improve their performance; Bosnia & Herzegovina was stable overtime. The situation is particularly serious in Serbia, which is the only country that has experienced a worsening of its Political Rights (-3) and Civil Liberties (-2). Compared to 2028, Albania downward trend is due to a drop of one point in Civil Liberties. Concerning the improved countries, North Macedonia outperformed all WB6 because of strong positive increases in both Political Rights (+6) and Civil Liberties (+2). Kosovo increased its freedom levels; this result depends on the positive change in Civil Liberties (+1) and Political Rights (+1). Montenegro improved only its Political Rights (+3) while Civil Liberties decreases by 2 points.

Looking at WB6, one can easily state that the downward trend of global freedom can also be detected, though with few exceptions, in the Balkans. With no surprise, *Freedom of the World* highlights Functioning of Government and Rule of Law as the indicators where the WB6 expressed the lowest performances. Respectively, Albania – 7/12 and 9/16, Serbia – 5/12 and 9/16, Montenegro – 6/12 and 9/16, North Macedonia – 7/12 and 9/16, Bosnia & Herzegovina – 4/12 and 7/16 and Kosovo – 5/12 and 6/16.

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## 6. Economic Freedom

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The *Economic Freedom in the World* is a report published by the *Fraser Institute*, a research and educational organization focusing on best practices about public policies worldwide. The report covers 165 territories and states and measures to what extent countries' policies and institutions are conducive to economic freedom. According to the *Fraser Institute*, the fundamentals of economic freedom are “*personal choices, voluntary exchange, open markets and clearly defined and enforced property rights*”. In line with the definition, the measurement of economic freedom is based on 5 main areas:

- (i) **Size of Government:** it measures the government decision-making role in the market. The larger it is, the lowest is economic freedom;
- (ii) **Legal System and Property Rights:** it measures to what extent a government is able to protect individuals and their property rights. Each score is adjusted by a Gender Legal Rights Adjustment to measure disparities in economic freedom between men and women;
- (iii) **Sound Money:** it measures to what extent a government is able to protect savings and incomes are protected from volatile and high inflation rates;
- (iv) **Freedom to Trade Internationally:** it measures the degree to which national business and investors are entitled to forge economic ties with actors abroad and vice-versa;
- (v) **Regulation:** it measures to what extent regulations limit personal choices and voluntary exchange.

The 2021 *Economic Freedom of the World* shows that economic freedom is steadily increasing overtime: the average rating of EFW index move from 7.03 in 2018 to 7.04 in 2019. Overall, it has risen from 6.61 in 2000 to 7.04 in 2019. Once again, the report stresses the fact that economically free states outperform states which are not economically free in terms of well-being: countries in the top quartile of the index had an average GDP per capita of \$50,619 (2019) compared to \$5,911 for countries in the bottom quartile (PPP constant 2017). Moreover, in the top quartile, average income of the poorest 10% was \$14,400 compared to \$1,549 in the bottom quartile (PPP constant 2017). Eventually, 0.9% of the population in the top quartile experienced extreme poverty against 34.1% in the bottom quartile.

The most recent data (2019) confirm Hong Kong in the top position. Singapore comes next. In order, other best scoring countries are New Zealand, Switzerland, Georgia, United States, Ireland, Lithuania, Australia, and Denmark. The ten lowest-ranking countries are Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe, Syria, Republic of Congo, Iran, Angola, Zimbabwe, Algeria, Libya, Sudan and finally Venezuela.

Glancing at Albania, the country, with an overall score of 7.81 (0-10 scale), ranks 31<sup>st</sup> in the 2019. These performances confirm Albania positive trend: the EFW index has increased compared to the previous year (7.80 in 2018). Albania ranking increases too: the country moves from 33<sup>rd</sup> position in 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> position in 2019. Albania also confirms its status as the economically freest WB6.

Chart 13 describes Albania economic freedom profile employing 2010, 2015 and 2019 data.

## ALBANIA ECONOMIC FREEDOM 2010-2015-2019

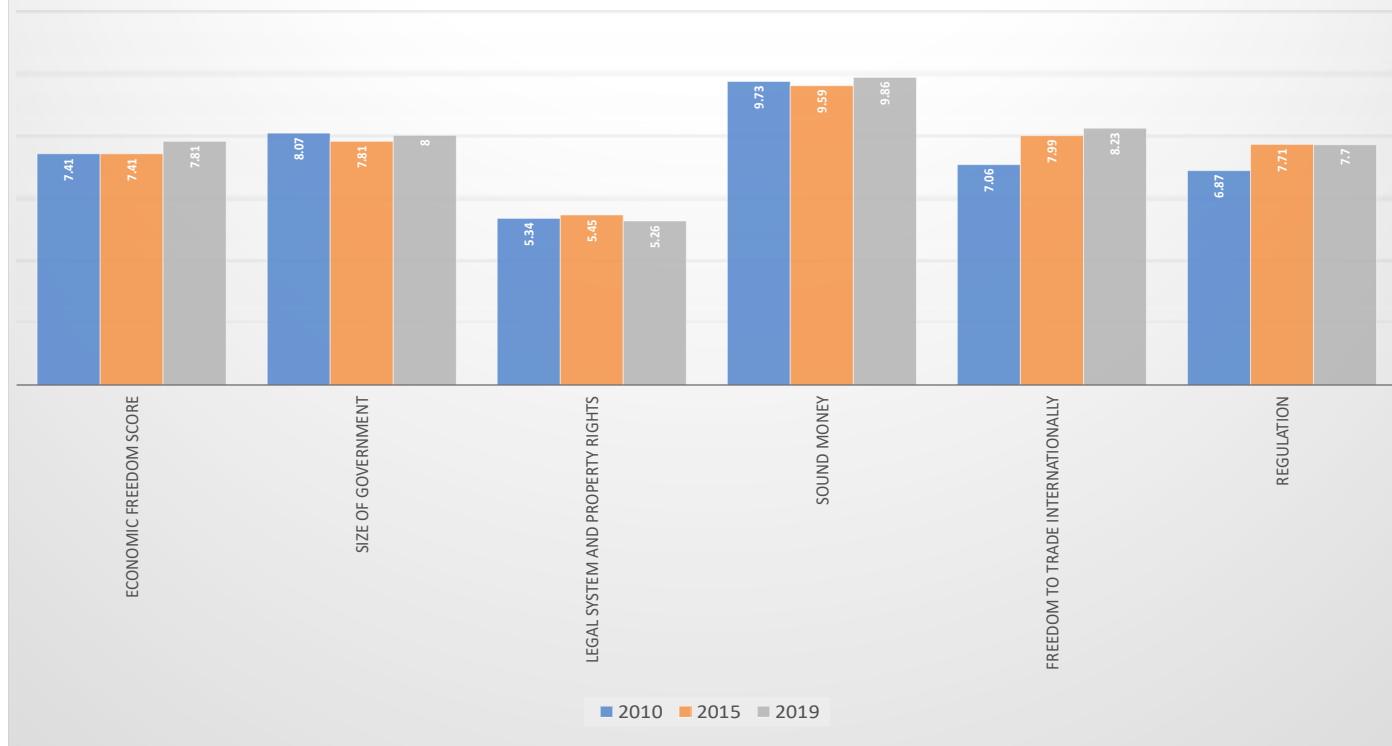


Chart 13

In the timeframe assessed, Albania shows an improvement in all the indicators composing the economic freedom compared to 2010, with the exceptions of Size of Government (8 in 2019) and Legal System and Property Rights (5.26 in 2019). This result depends on the slight deterioration of some sub-indicators such as Transfers and Subsidies (7.33 in 2019 compared to 7.39 in 2010), Government Investment (8 in 2019 compared to 8.25 in 2010), and Top Marginal Tax Rate (8 in 2019 compared to 8.5 in 2010) regarding Size of Government area. Concerning Legal System and Property Rights we also observe slight deterioration of some sub-indicators, more specifically Judicial Independence (4.13 in 2019 compared to 4.68 in 2010), Impartial Courts (4.26 in 2019 compared to 4.42 in 2010), Protection of Property Rights (3.84 in 2019 compared to 4.05 in 2010), Legal Enforcement of Contracts (3.91 in 2019 compared to 5.36 in 2010), and Reliability of Police (5.61 in 2019 compared to 5.86 in 2010). Promising are the improvements registered in Sound Money (9.86 in 2019), Regulation (7.7 in 2019) and Freedom to Trade Internationally (8.23 in 2019). With regard to Sound Money major improvements concerning Money Supply (Money Growth is 9.99 in 2019 compared to 9.86 in 2010). Concerning Regulations major improvements in 2019 compared to 2010 levels include Credit Market Regulation (9.53 in 2019 compared to 7.04 in 2010) and Business Regulation (6.85 in 2019 compared to 6.42 in 2010). Eventually, all sub-indicators of Freedom to Trade Internationally increased dramatically in the last decade. In chart 14 the same analysis is offered concerning the WB6.

## WB6 ECONOMIC FREEDOM 2010-2015-2019

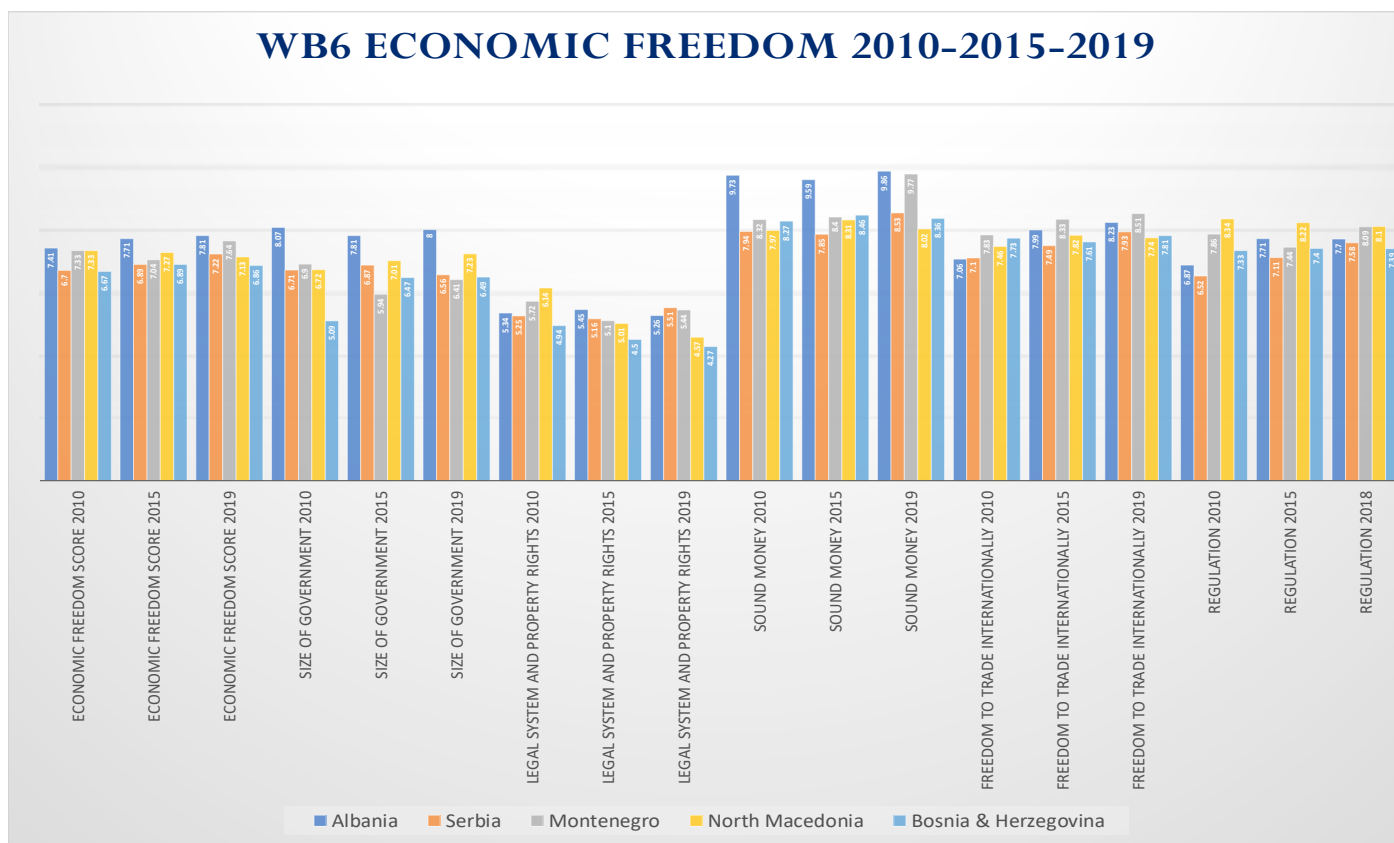


Chart 14 [Kosovo is not included as has not been assessed by the Economic Freedom in the World]

Among the WB6, excluding Albania whose economic freedom has been already discussed, Montenegro comes next as the economically freest from the Western Balkans Six – comprehensive economic freedom score of 7.64 and 42<sup>nd</sup> in the rank. The country exhibited a significant score in Freedom to Trade Internationally (8.51), where it is the best performing WB6. In Legal System and Property Rights, which is a matter of concern for every country analysed, Montenegro registered a worrying deterioration (-0.28) between 2010 (5.72) and 2019 (5.44).

Serbia, which ranks 72<sup>nd</sup>, registers the larger improvement in its overall score (7.22, +0.59 compared to 2010). With the only exception of Size of Government (6.56, -0.15 compared to 2010), the country experienced improvements of all the indicators assessed between 2010 and 2018 – Legal System and Property Rights (+0.26), Sound Money (+0.59), Freedom to Trade Internationally (+0.83) and Regulation (+1.06).

Particularly worrying is the decay occurred to North Macedonia (79<sup>th</sup>), which, in 2019, is the only country which registers a decrease in the overall score (7.13 in 2019 compared to 7.27 in 2015 and 7.33 in 2010). This result comes from a steadily decrease in Legal System and Property Right indicator (6.14 in 2010, 5.01 in 2015 and 4.57 in 2019). Between 2015 and 2019 all but Size of Government indicators have worsened.

Bosnia & Herzegovina, which is the least economically free from the WB6, ranks 90<sup>th</sup> with a score of 6.86. Between 2010 and 2019, the country improved its Size of Government (+1.4), Sound Money (+0.09), Freedom to Trade Internationally (+0.08) and Regulation (+0.06) while it worsened in Legal System and Property Rights (-0.67).



## 7. Globalisation Index

The *Globalisation Index* is delivered by KOF – *Konjunkturforschungsstelle*, a branch of the Federal Polytechnic School of Zurich. The index maintains up-to-date globalization levels of world countries since 1970. Last update refers to year 2021 (2019 globalisation data). Every globalization variable assessed by the index is measured on a 0-100 scale and it has a different weight on the calculation composing the overall globalization score. Variables fall under 12 sub-indices or indices – as the case of Political globalization – and they finally consist of 6 main indices – Economic Globalisation (de facto), Social globalization (de facto), Political globalization (de facto), Economic globalization (de jure), Social globalization (de jure), Political globalization (de jure). Each of these three domains is aggregated to the *Globalisation Index* with an equal weight of 33.3. De facto globalisation measures real flows and activities whereas de jure globalisation measures policies, conditions, and institutions in charge of facilitating activities.

According to the 2021 index, in 2019, the world highlighted an overall globalisation score of 61.59 – a slight improvement from 61.51 (2017 score). The 2021 comprehensive score is made up of a de facto globalisation of 58.46 and a de jure globalisation of 63.87 – respectively -0.09 and +0.28 compared to 2017 data. With regard to Albania, in 2019, the country ranked 77<sup>th</sup> with an overall globalisation score of 66.34, which represents an improvement of 0.22 compared to the previous year. Despite the positive change, Albania lost 2 positions in the ranking – it was 75<sup>th</sup> in the 2020 index (ranking for year 2018). A more detailed analysis of the country, inclusive of a 2015-2019 investigation, is shown in chart 15.

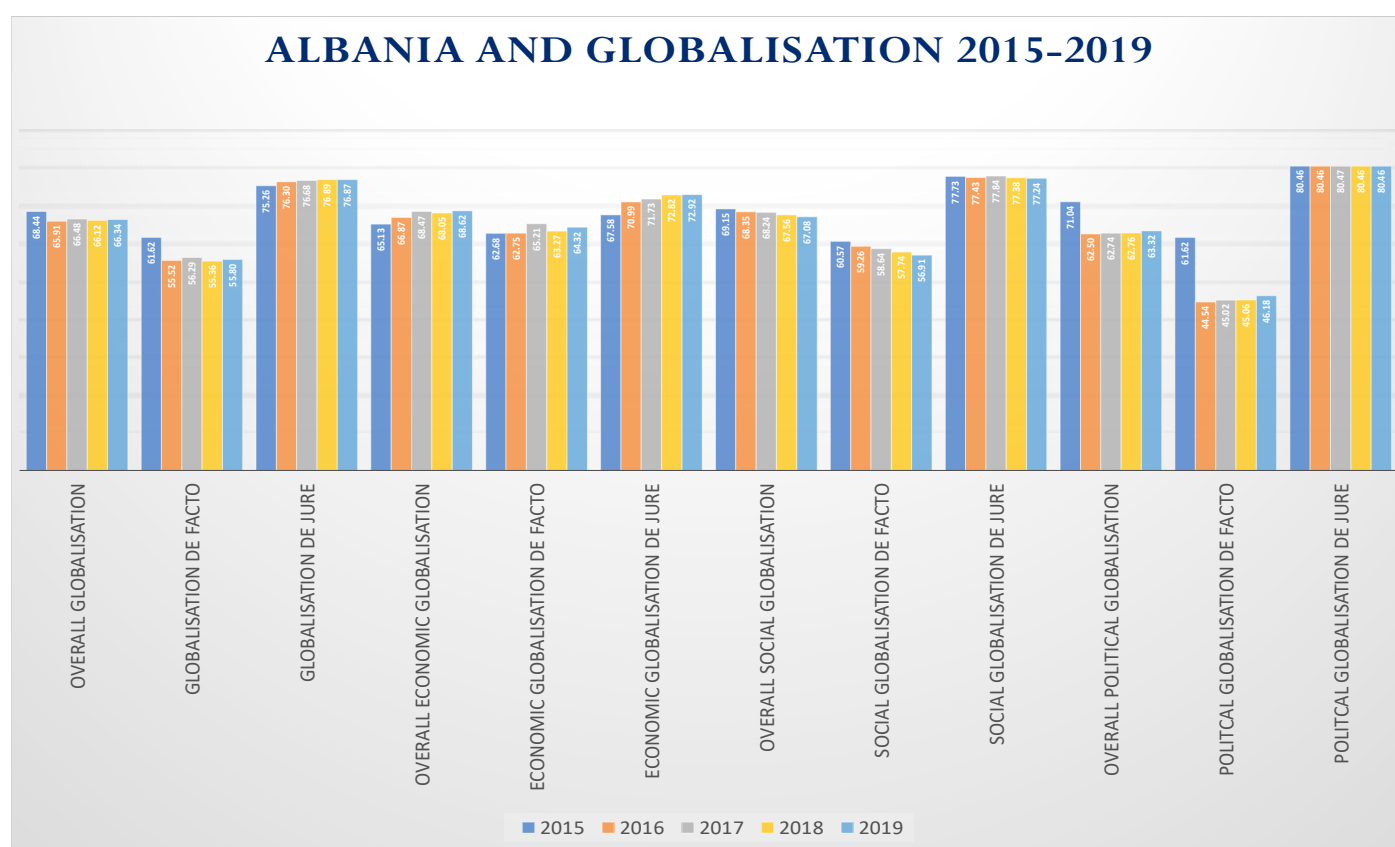


Chart 15

As shown in chart 15, Albania exhibited ups and downs in its overall globalisation score, and in the 2015-2019 period, the balance was negative (-2.1). Concerning the three domains assessed by the *Globalisation Index*, Economic Globalisation registered a significant improvement (+3.49) while Social Globalisation experienced a decay (-2.07). Particularly worrying is the deterioration manifested in Political Globalisation (-7.71). Values for this indicator are the synthesis of a negative trend regarding de facto Political Globalisation – which refers to the diffusion of governmental policies using as parameters the participation in UN peacekeeping missions and the presence of embassies and international NGOs in the country while de jure Political Globalisation – the ability

to engage in international political cooperation (i.e. number of signed treaties, memberships in international organisations and diversity amongst treaty partners) does not exhibit significant changes.

A similar analysis is provided with reference to the WB6 in charts 16 and 17.

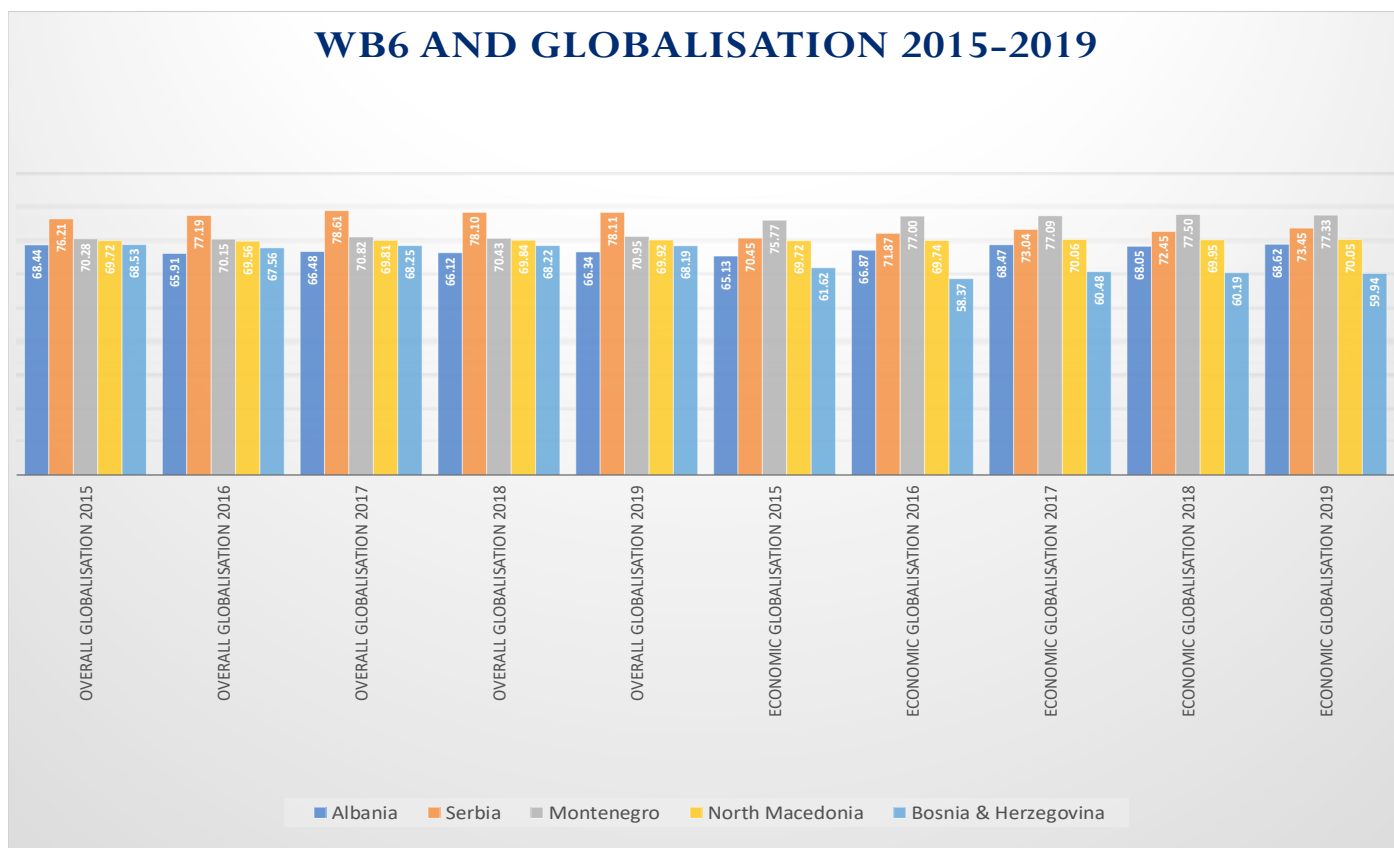


Chart 16 [Kosovo is not included as it has not been evaluated in the Globalisation Index]

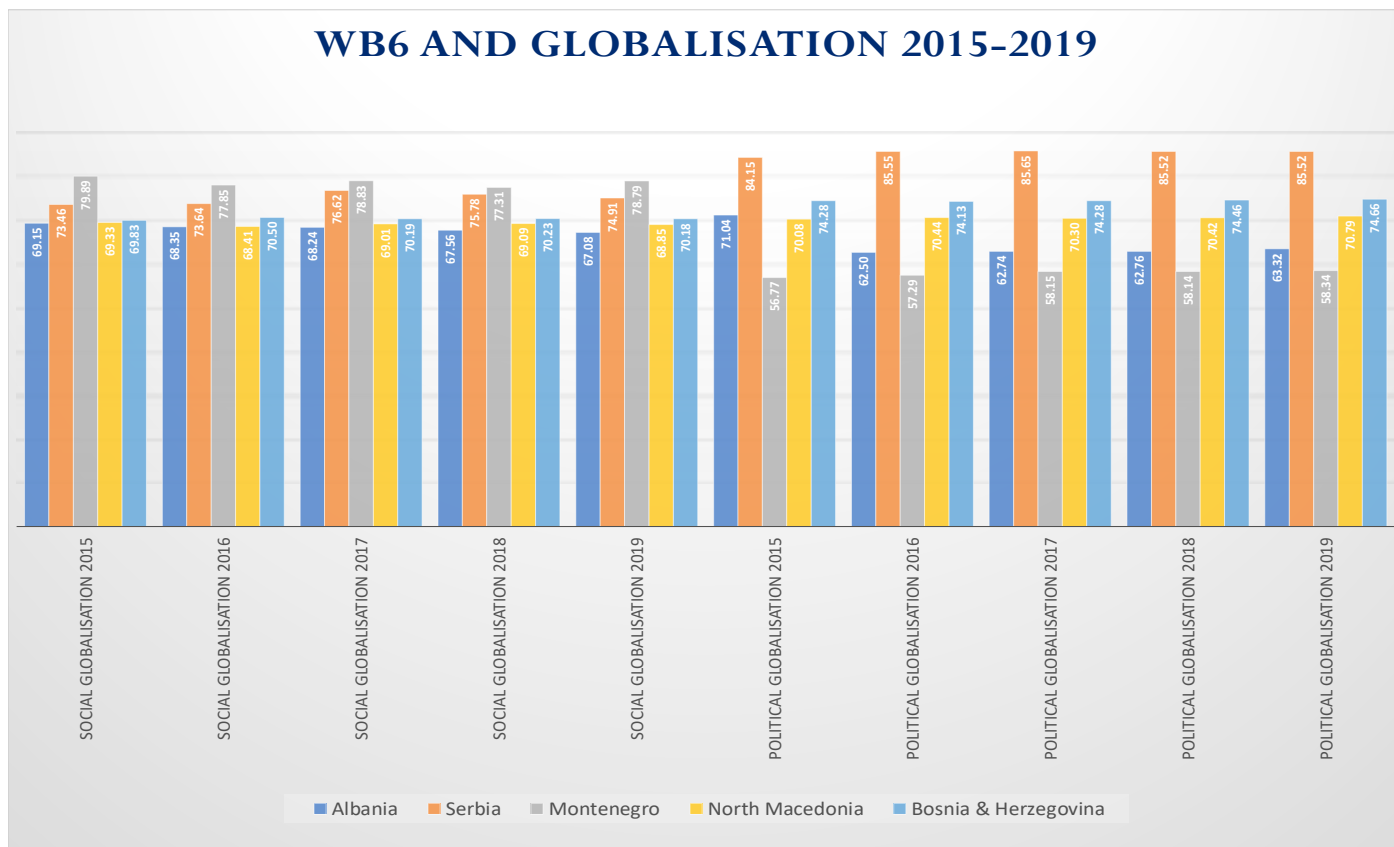


Chart 17 [Kosovo is not included as it has not been evaluated in the Globalisation Index]

As one can deduct from charts 16 and 17, Albania is the least globalised country among the WB6 while Serbia, with a comprehensive score of 78.11, ranks 37<sup>th</sup> in the index and is the most globalised in the cluster. Its values are particularly relevant with respect to Political Globalisation – here Serbia registered a score of 85.52 in 2019 compared to the world average of 61.9. Montenegro, which ranks 57<sup>th</sup>, revealed a comprehensive score of 70.95. The country performed better than the other WB6 in Economic Globalisation (77,33 in 2019) and Social Globalisation (78.79 in 2019), however, the overall value is undermined by a very low Political Globalisation score (58.34 in 2019). The analysis is completed by North Macedonia (63<sup>rd</sup>) and Bosnia & Herzegovina (68<sup>th</sup>) with respective overall scores of 69.92 and 68.19 in 2019. Concerning these countries, they exhibited important values in Political Globalisation – 70.79 for North Macedonia and 74.66 for Bosnia & Herzegovina in 2019, nonetheless, North Macedonia is only above Albania when it comes to Social Globalisation (68.85 in 2019) and Bosnia & Herzegovina highlighted low levels in Economic Globalisation (59.94 in 2019). Every country from the WB6 has globalisation levels above the world average but below, except for Serbia, Europe and Central Asia region (overall globalisation of 74.87), which is the most globalised region in the world.

## 8. Press Freedom

The *Press Freedom Index* is a yearly report issued by *Reporters Without Borders* since 2002. The report assesses 180 countries and regions according to the levels of freedom and safety granted to journalists, media pluralism and independence of media, and legislative frameworks. The analysis is made through the evaluation of both qualitative (questionnaire answered by experts) and quantitative data (such as abuses and acts of violence against journalists). Every country evaluated is assigned with a score ranging from 0 (free) to 100 (not free) and positioned under a specific “situation” according to its results – Good Situation, score between 0 and 15; Satisfactory Situation, between 15.01 and 25 points; Problematic Situation, between 25.01 and 35 points; Difficult Situation, between 35.01 and 55; and Very Serious Situation, for scores ranging between 55.01 and 100.

According to the 2020 *Press Freedom Index*, Albania ranks 83<sup>rd</sup> (making up one position compared with 2020 index) with an overall score of 30.59, which is an enhancement compared to 30.25 of 2020 (data for year 2019). The country stands in the Problematic Situation category, thus confirming persisting concerns over press freedom. On this issue, Albania is under the scrutiny of several organisations and institutions (e.g. *European Union*, *Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe*, or the *International Press Institute*) which lately have been carrying out investigations and research on how Albanian institutions are dealing with the issue.

Albania profile in the *Press Freedom Index* is given in chart 18 with reference to a 2014–2020 timeframe.

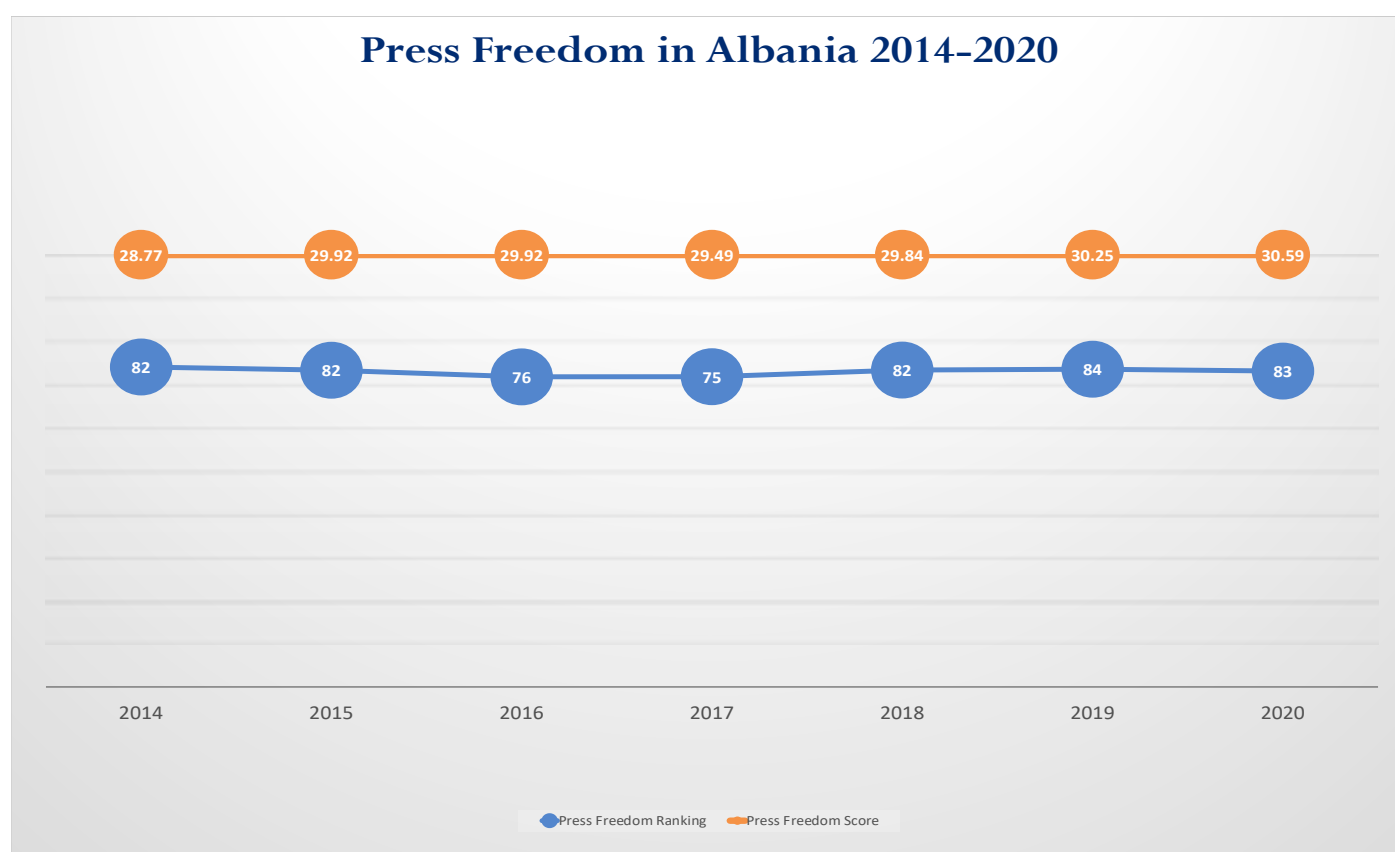


Chart 18

Chart 18 shows that the press freedom deterioration of Albania is a constant. The country was returning to levels similar to those expressed at the beginning of the decade (in 2012, overall score was 30.88).

Next, in chart 19, the same analysis is provided regarding the WB6 scores to realize if the entire region knows the same trend as Albania.

## WB6 and Press Freedom Scores 2014-2020

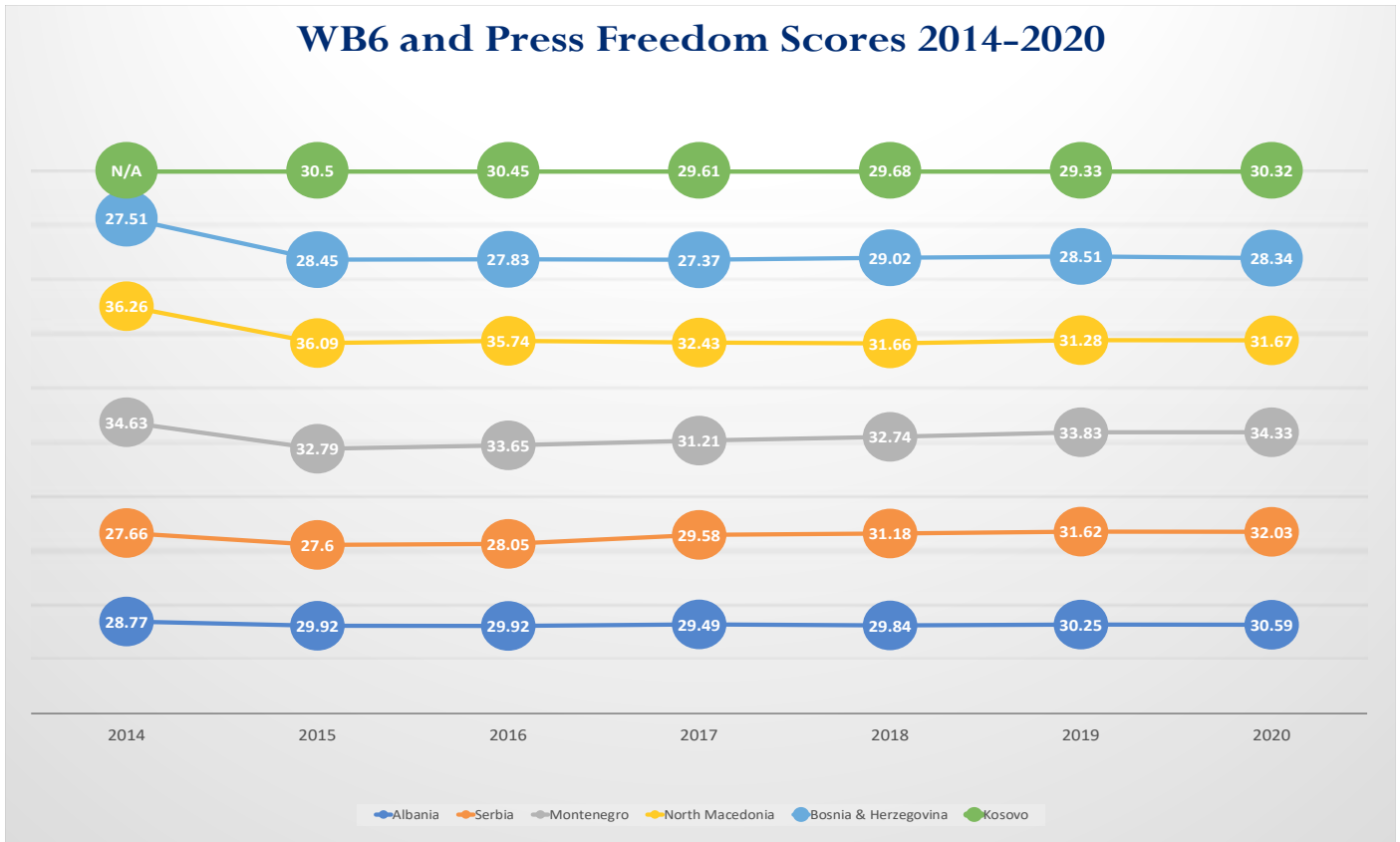


Chart 19

Chart 19 points out that in the period 2014-2020 North Macedonia (-4.59) Montenegro (-0.3) Kosovo (-0.13) and experienced an improvement in their press freedoms. Concerning the other WB6, Serbia – currently 93<sup>rd</sup> in the ranking – experienced a 0.41 points loss. Bosnia & Herzegovina (58<sup>th</sup>) registered a deterioration of 0.83 points but improved its ranking – it ranked 66<sup>th</sup> in the 2014 report. Albania, between 2014 and 2020, although exhibiting a score deterioration (+1.82), gained two positions in the ranking – it ranked 85<sup>th</sup> in 2014 *Press Freedom Index*. Every country from this cluster is in the Problematic Situation category. Press freedom remains a delicate issue for the WB6.

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## 9. Rule of Law

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In the definition of *World Justice Project*, rule of law is “the foundation for communities of justice, opportunity, and peace – underpinning development, accountable government, and respect for fundamental rights. Traditionally, the rule of law has been regarded as the domain of lawyers and judges. But everyday issues of safety, rights, justice, and governance affect us all; everyone is a stakeholder in the rule of law” (*World Justice Project, Rule of Law Index 2021*, p. 13). The *Rule of Law Index* is a yearly report published by the *World Justice Project* to assess and rank countries and territories according to the provisions and enforcement concerning specific standards of regulatory, judiciary, institutional and legal frameworks. The *Rule of Law Index* evaluates 139 countries through scores and rankings based on 8 factors – Constraints on Government Powers, Absence of Corruption, Open Government, Fundamental Rights, Order and Security, Regulatory Enforcement, Civil Justice and Criminal Justice. The index is compiled from household, legal practitioners and experts’ surveys.

Rule of Law is one of those aspects on which WB6 are required to focus to reinforce its credentials to speed up the *EU* accession process. The Western Balkan Six, to different extents, share some common issues with respect to RoL and the features of fully functioning democracies. According to a report by the *Governance and Social Development Resource Centre* – a partnership of institutes, universities and think tanks which provides applied knowledge assistance to institutions such as *United Nations* and *European Union* – the WB6 present significant critical issues in the following fundamental aspects: judicial independence – there is a significant politicization of the judiciary, influences and corruption of the system. And this reform is one of the priorities set by the *EU*; about judiciary efficiency (years of low budgeting in the judiciary ended up creating inefficiencies and excessive duration of court trials and cases; corruption) there is, due to impartiality and inefficiency of the judiciary, inadequacy in processing corruption crimes, especially those involving high-ranking officials. The depoliticization of the judiciary is essential in countering corruption and fighting organised crime. Other matters of concern are war crimes prosecutions, media freedom, minority rights and asylum frameworks. A more detailed explanation of critical issues connected to rule of law and corruption in Albania will be provided in box 4, in the chapter dedicated to the *Corruption Perceptions Index*.

Pointing the attention to the *Rule of Law Index 2021*, Albania ranks 83<sup>rd</sup> with an overall score of 0.49 – 0 representing the worst and 1 the best score possible – which means that the country gained 0.1 points and 2 positions compared to 2020 report. The profile of Albania in the *Rule of Law Index* and a time analysis of the 2015-2020 period are presented in chart 20.

## Rule of law in Albania 2015-2020

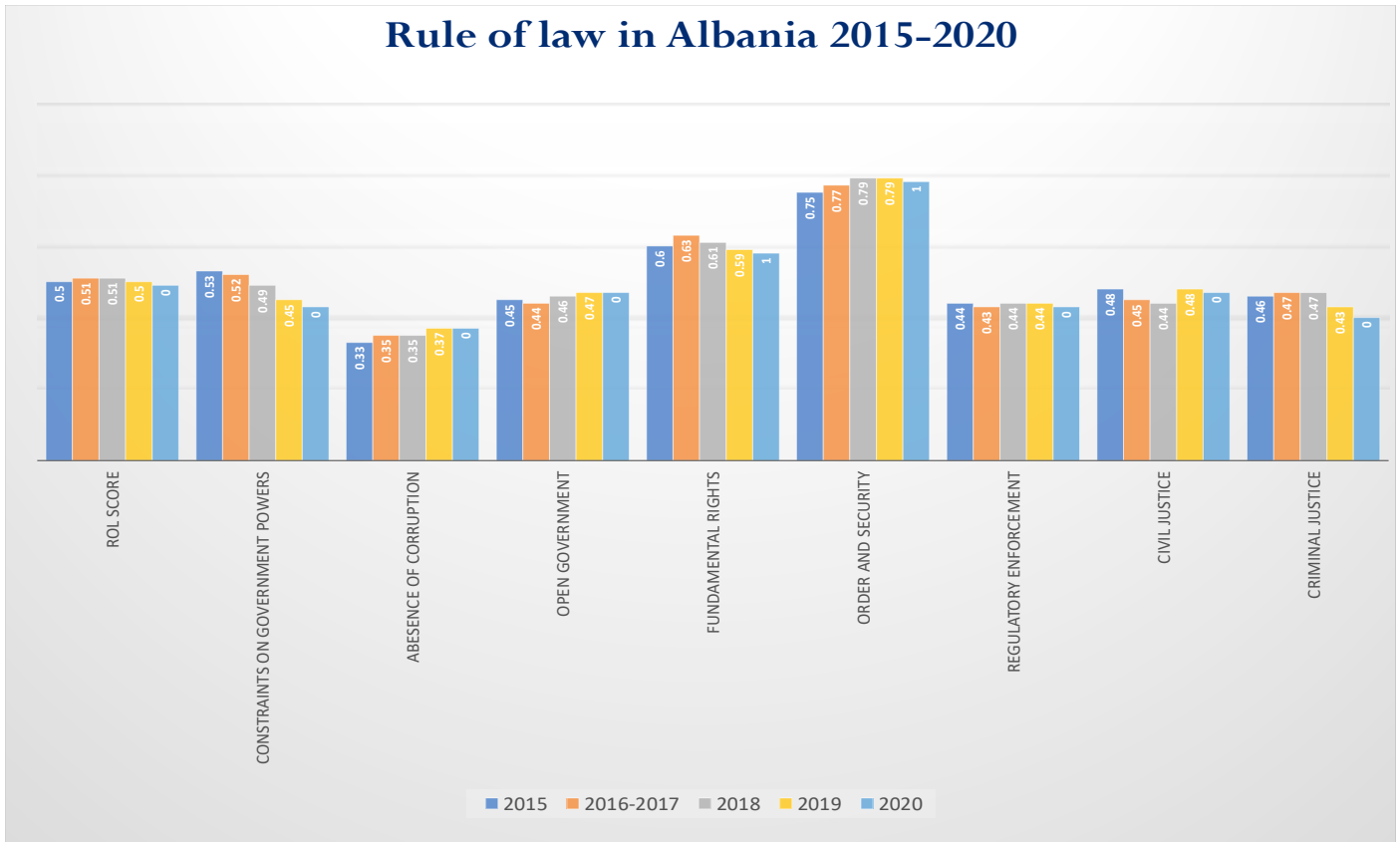


Chart 20

Over the 2015-2020 period, no major improvements can be attributed to Albania regarding its overall RoL score (0.49). Indeed, negative changes can be seen in several indicators. In 2020, Albania has made no overall improvements despite gaining two positions in the global ranking, eventually because of the inclusion of 11 other states in the evaluation of the index in comparison to the previous year. Constrain on Government Powers (109<sup>th</sup>) Absence of Corruption (107<sup>th</sup>) and Regulatory Enforcement (105<sup>th</sup>) values remain among the lowest and raise concern. Albania is better positioned only in Order and Security (47<sup>th</sup>). In addition, Albania values are below world average in every rule of law pillar except for Order and Security and Fundamental Rights (respective scores of 0.78 and 0.58). Albania performances in the *Rule of Law Index* partly confirm the critical aspects.

The status of the remaining WB6 countries is provided in chart 21, referring to data and values related to the 2021 index.

## WB6 in the Rule of Law Index 2021

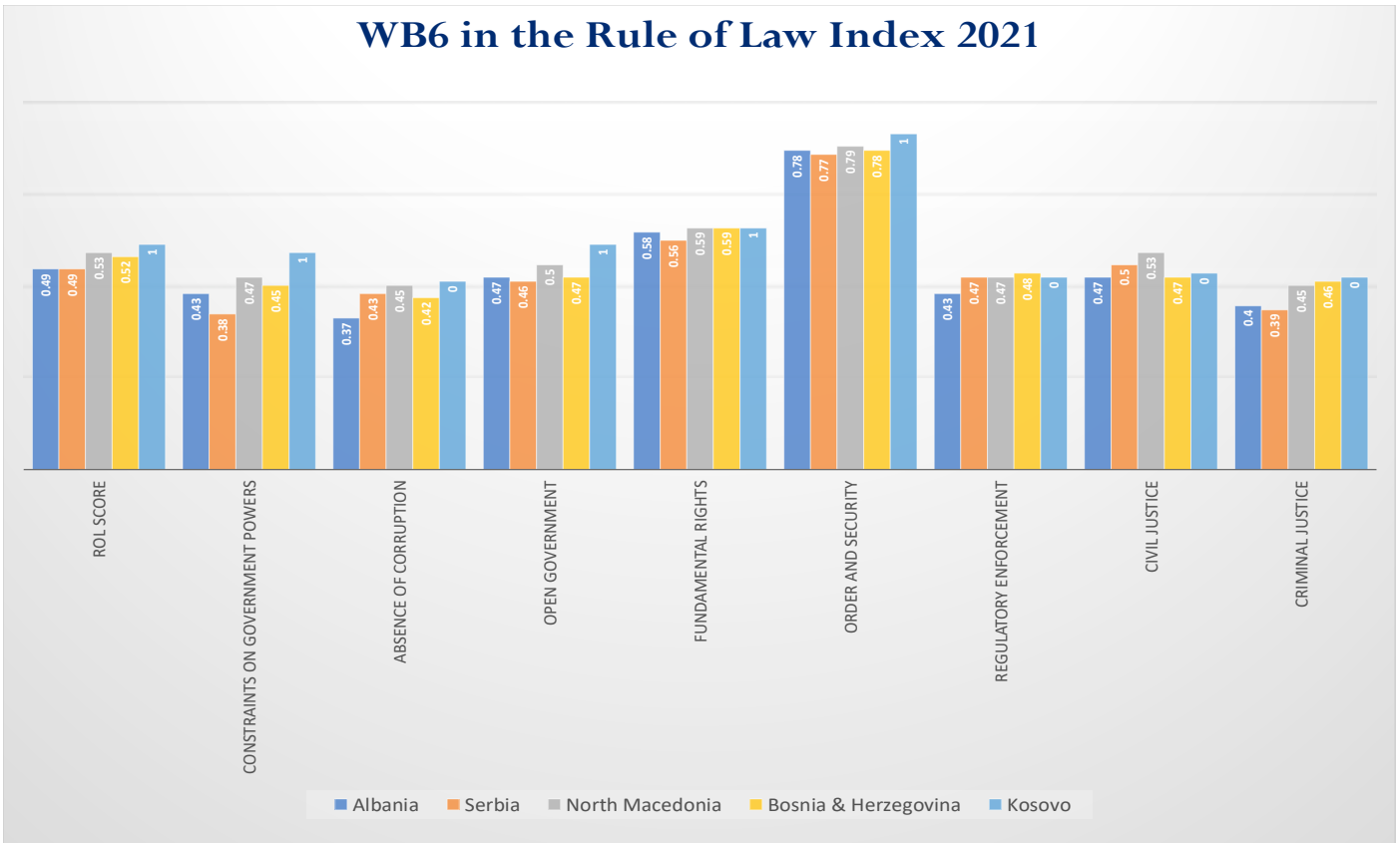


Chart 21 [Montenegro and Kosovo are not included as they have not been assessed by WJP]

The WB6 highlight similar overall score – range is between 0.49 of Serbia and Albania and 0.55 of Kosovo – and indicators values – Order and Security and Fundamental Rights are the pillars where the countries in the cluster performed relatively well and above world average – while the remaining pillars present scores relatively lower compared to global standards. Serbia (0.38) is the worst performing country among the WB6 on Constrains on Government Power, while Kosovo the best positioned (0.53). The latter performs better in the region also in Order and Security (0.82). Kosovo and North Macedonia are the best positioned countries in the ranking (60<sup>th</sup> and 64<sup>th</sup> respectively) and regionally they perform better than other countries ranking 2 and 3 respectively. Bosnia & Herzegovina ranks (72<sup>nd</sup>), while Serbia and Albania (respectively 81<sup>st</sup> and 83<sup>rd</sup>) come at the end. In conclusion, none of the WB6 evaluated by the *Rule of Law Index* disclosed comprehensive scores above the world average (0.56).



## 10. Corruption

*Corruption Perception Index* is a yearly publication by *Transparency International* which evaluates corruption levels in the public sector according to several business operators, professionals and experts' opinion surveys and interviews. The index does not consider distrust and disillusionment of people living in the countries. The CPI is calculated using 13 data sources<sup>7</sup>. Data collected by the CPI cover the following topics: (i) bribery; (ii) diversion of public funds; (iii) use of public office for private gains; (iv) nepotism in the civil service and (v) state capture. Moreover, when available: government's ability to enforce integrity mechanism; effective prosecution of corrupt officials; red tape and excessive bureaucratic burden; existence of adequate laws on financial disclosure, conflict of interest prevention and access to information.

According to the 2021 *Corruption Perception Index* corruption is higher in countries where money can freely flow into election campaigns – countries performing well have solid campaign financing regulations, and where Governments are more inclined to listen and protect the interests of wealthy people. Based on a 0-100 scale – 0 assigned to “highly corrupt” countries and 100 to “very clean” ones, the report emphasized that, out of 180 countries evaluated, the average score is 43/100, and 2/3 of the world countries registered a score below 50/100. Western Europe and EU is the least corrupted region (66/10) while Sub-Saharan region is the most corrupted (32/100). Eastern Europe and Central Asia (35/100), Middle East and North Africa (39/100), America (43/100) and Asia Pacific (45/100) stand all below the 50/100 threshold.

The CPI, consistent with this global corruption analysis, gives the following recommendations: manage conflict of interests; control political financing; strengthen electoral integrity; regulate lobbying activities; empower citizens; tackle preferential treatment; reinforce check and balances.

With respect to Albania, in 2021 report – 2020 data, the country ranks 110<sup>th</sup> (it was 99<sup>th</sup> in 2018 report) with an overall score of 35/100 (it was 36/100 in 2018), returning to 2013. Corruption level. One could easily state that lately Albania is experiencing a deterioration trend concerning its corruption levels. It is not by chance that, back in 2015 (*Corruption Perception Index 2016*), the country totaled a 39/100 score (83<sup>rd</sup> in the ranking). In chart 22, Albania profile is presented together with a 2013-2020 temporal analysis.

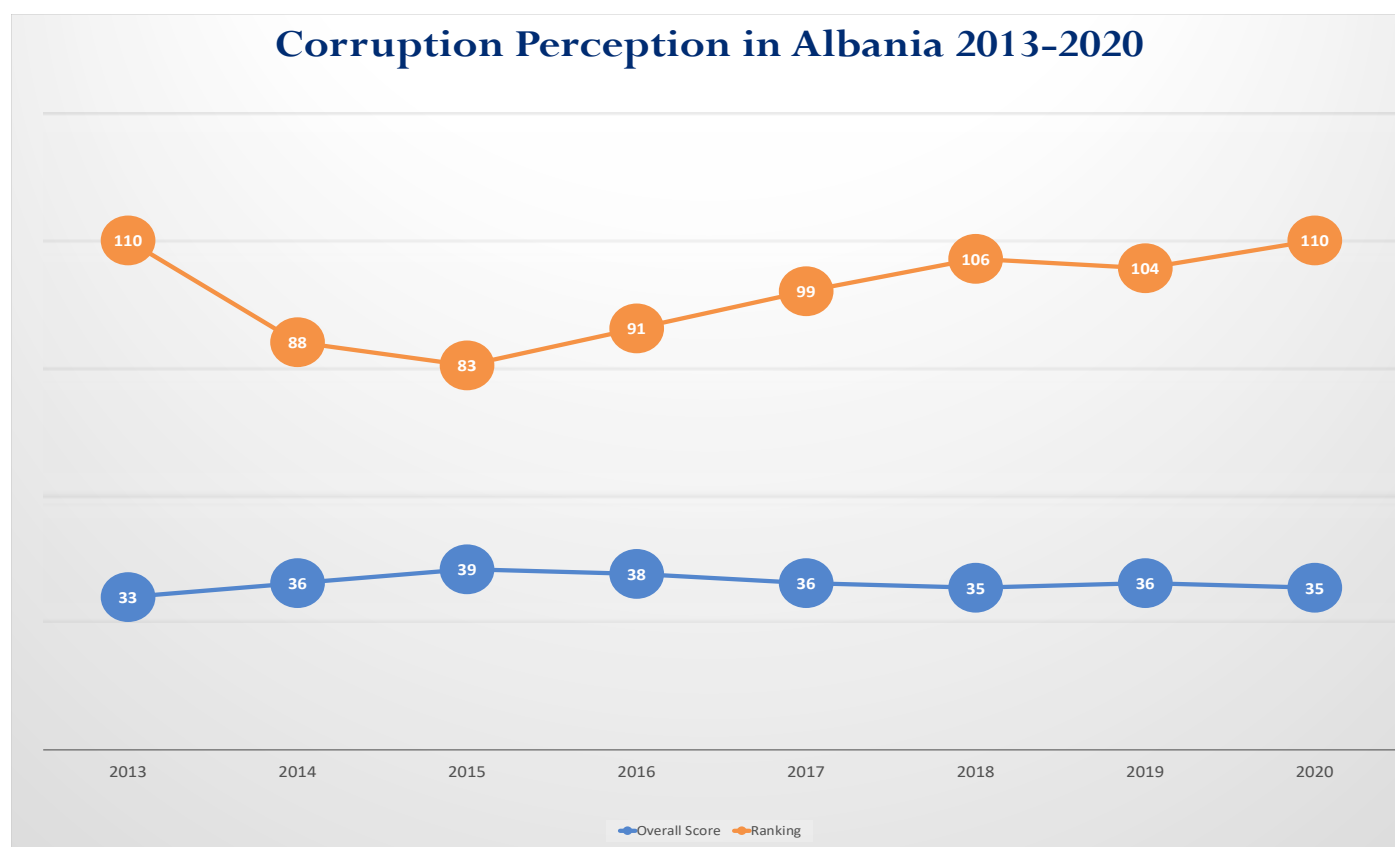


Chart 22

As one can see in chart 22, Albania registered some improvement between years 2013 and 2015. Corruption can be considered a major challenge for the country, which is constantly striving to reach regulatory and political frameworks in line with those expressed by the Western Europe region. Having assessed corruption-related issues in Albania, the attention turns to the other WB6. According to the *Corruption Perception Index 2021*, Montenegro is the least corrupted country out of the cluster with a comprehensive score of 46/100 and ranking at position 64. North Macedonia and Kosovo both come after with the same score (39/100), paired at position 87. Since 2020, the first gains four positions while the latter three positions. Serbia comes fourth (96<sup>th</sup>) with a score of 38/100. Bosnia & Herzegovina is paired with Albania at position 101 (score 35/100). Both are the most corrupted from the *Western Balkan Six*. WB6 score between 2013 and 2020 are shown in chart 23.

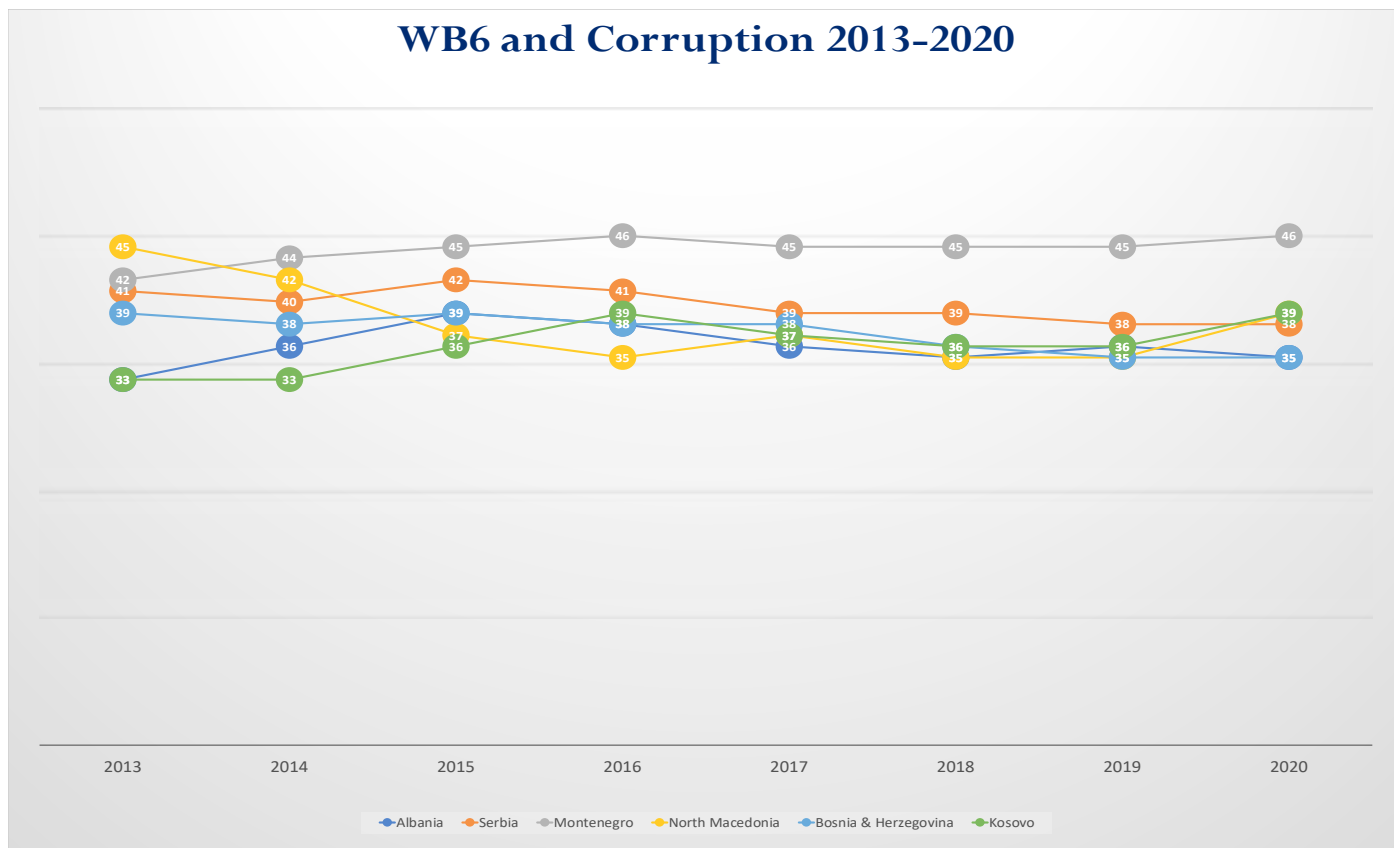


Chart 23

As highlighted by scores in chart 23, in the 2013-2020 period, only Montenegro (+4) and Kosovo (+6) registered an increase. Albania experienced a significant decay after registering its maximum levels in 2015 and 2016, respectively. North Macedonia (-6) is the country that suffered the most serious deteriorations. Symbolizing a worrying situation, all the WB6 have scores highly below the regional average (66/100). More must be done to achieve levels in line with those of European countries, especially EU members – to note that Montenegro is the only country that can compete with worst performing EU member states. It performs better than Romania (45/100), Hungary (43/100), and Bulgaria (42/100), which rank 66<sup>th</sup>, 73<sup>rd</sup>, and 78<sup>th</sup> respectively.

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## 11. Human Trafficking

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According to the *Palermo Protocol* – Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, “[...] *human trafficking shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation* [...]” (United Nations, *Palermo Protocol 2000*, art. 3).

The *Trafficking in Persons* is a report issued annually by the *United States Department of State* which appraises countries according to their capabilities to tackle and counter modern slavery within their borders and cooperate with other regional countries. According to the *Trafficking in Persons 2021*, Covid-19 had a negative impact on human trafficking tendencies. While the number of people in vulnerable position increased across and within countries, governments have been unable provide protection and assist victims as expected from anti-trafficking interventions. Human trafficking has experienced a surge since the beginning of the century due to the increase in human movements and an ever-expanding barriers-free world. Globally, governments have responded often creating effective regulatory frameworks to punish traffickers or implementing practices and standards to assist and protect victims. Among the actions underlined by the report that still need to be taken and enforced, one can find forced labour, especially when state sponsored; increase labour trafficking prosecutions; repeal laws that require force, fraud, or coercion for child sex trafficking; and stop penalizing victims for unlawful acts committed when pressed by traffickers. The long-term objective to create society where dignity and human inherent values benefit from a broad consensus is also fundamental.

The *US Department of State's Trafficking in Persons* is basically a narrative report, however a 4-tier classification, going from “fully meeting minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking” (tier 1) to “not fully meeting minimum standard and not making significant efforts for the elimination of trafficking” (tier 3), is available for every evaluated country. In the following discussion, WB6 profiles in the *TIP 2021* are provided with a description of their status and the recommendations received to fight human trafficking.

As stated by the *Trafficking in Persons 2021*, Albania confirms its presence in the tier 2 category which means that the country “does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so”. No changes can be attributed to Albania, as it was already a tier 2 country in 2018 report. Nonetheless, the government implemented several actions to tackle the issue. For instance, it established, in cooperation with the civil society, the *Advisory Board of Victims of Trafficking*, and increased victim assistance in proceedings by setting up the *Development Centre for Criminal Justice for Minors*. Overall, the country accomplished the objective to increase prison terms for convicted traffickers and identification of victims. A better training was also provided to relevant officials. Despite these improvements, the government failed in some areas. It did not convict any traffickers in 2020 (three in 2019). The government also missed to provide screening for vulnerable groups as migrants, asylum-seeker, children and individuals in commercial sex. A delay in NGO-run shelters funding was detected by the report. National services lack resources for long-term care and reintegration of victims.

Among recommendations dedicated to the country, one can find: investigate, prosecute and convict traffickers – and complicit officials, increase efforts to screen vulnerable groups, train police officials, labour inspectors, prosecutors and judicial officials. The *TIP 2021* found out that Albania has a proper legislative framework for sentencing traffickers with stringent penalties and sufficient imprisonment years. Concerning prosecutions, The *Albanian State Police (ASP)* investigated 31 cases with 32 suspects (41 cases with 62 suspects in 2019), 22 cases with 27 suspects for adult trafficking (34 cases with 45 suspects in 2019) and 9 cases with 5 suspects for child trafficking (7 cases with 17 suspects in 2019). The *ASP* also investigated 2 suspects for knowingly soliciting or patronizing a sex trafficking victim to perform a commercial sex act (2 in 2019). The *General Prosecution Office (GPO)* investigated 30 new cases with 4 defendants for adult trafficking (17 new cases with 8 defendants in 2019) and 13 new cases for child trafficking (6 cases in 2019). The government continued judicial reforms started in 2018, assigning prosecutorial jurisdiction to the *Special Anti-Corruption Prosecution (SPAK)* and jurisdiction over trafficking crimes to the *Special Court of Appeals on Corruption and Organised Crime*. On a district level, local prosecutors are

found to be lacking specialised experience and capacity to prosecute trafficking crimes. Concerning prevention efforts, the government furthered the implementation of the 2018-2020 national action plan allocating \$4.87 million. The *National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator (ONAC)* was provided with \$81,710. The *ONAC*, in cooperation with international organisations, drafted a report assessing anti-trafficking efforts in the country. *ONAC*, in cooperation with civil society organisations, conducted awareness campaigns for students, teachers and the whole population.

Regarding the other WB6, every country is in the tier 2 category. Serbia “does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so”. The country is a tier 2 since 2018 and, compared to the previous reporting period, demonstrated significant efforts to counter human trafficking. The Serbian Government adopted the 2019-2020 national action plan and allocated sufficient resources for its implementation. It also adopted standard operating procedures for the identification, referral and support to victims. However, some matters of concern remain. For instance, proactive identification is inadequate and, as a result, the government identified 48 victims (36 in 2019), of whom 21 were victims of sex trafficking, 14 of forced labour, 4 of forced criminality, and 9 of exploitation. First responders reported 130 potential victims (135 in 2019); law enforcement denounced 59 potential victims (55 in 2019), social welfare organizations reported 43 (40 in 2019), other government entities 18 (12 in 2019); and 4 victims self-identified.

Montenegro confirmed its position the tier-2 category. The government made significant efforts during Covid-19. It investigated and prosecuted more suspects and convicted two traffickers under its trafficking law and imposed significant prison terms; significantly increased the number of identified victims; eliminated the requirement for victims to cooperate with law enforcement to receive services. Nonetheless, several criticalities persist. The government adopted standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the Team for Formal Identification of Trafficking Victims (TFITV), increased resources to anti-trafficking shelters and established a coordinated body to monitor the implementation of the 2019-2024 national anti-trafficking strategy. The government increased victim protection efforts and identified 48 official victims (39 in 2019), of whom 46 victims of forced labour, 2 of sex trafficking; 7 were children (none in 2019).

North Macedonia has been a tier 2 country since 2015 (previously it was in tier 1 category). The government demonstrated increasing efforts to tackle human trafficking issues during Covid-19. The government drafted the 2021-2025 National Strategy and National Action Plan and was able to identify more victims. Notwithstanding these improvements, the government fails to meet certain standards, particularly with respect to adequate funding and equipment to police and resources to the *Organised Crime and Corruption Prosecution Office (OCCPO)*. The government kept up law enforcement efforts. Articles 418(a) and (d) of the criminal code criminalized sex trafficking and labour trafficking and prescribed a minimum penalty of four years’ imprisonment. The *OCCPO* investigated 5 cases, the anti-trafficking task force investigated one criminal group. The government did not initiate new prosecutions due the pandemic (9 defendants in three cases three cases in 2019). Courts convicted 9 traffickers (5 in 2019).

Bosnia & Herzegovina was upgraded to tier 2 i, after demonstrating significant efforts to eliminate trafficking during the pandemic. It strengthens the anti-trafficking strike forces by allocating funds, expanding membership, and facilitating coordination. The country is promoting and encouraging several initiatives to fight human trafficking. The state coordinator involved civil society organisations and other stakeholders in the draft of the national strategy. In addition, more victims were identified compared to the previous year. However, other significant improvements are still required. The government identified 80 potential trafficking victims (61 in 2019). Of these, 17 were victims of sex trafficking, 48 of forced begging, and 15 of multiple types of exploitation.

Kosovo has been a tier 2 country since 2013 and it has showed increasing efforts if compared to previous reporting period. The government was able to identify more victims and persecute more suspected cases. Funding for victims’ protection increased as well as the coordination for joint investigations and inspections. However, judges continue to issue weak sentences on traffickers and funding dedicated to NGO-run shelters decreased for the 5<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, creating a dependence from foreign donors. Due to the pandemic the National Agency Against Trafficking in Persons (NAATIP) did not work efficiently and failed to adopt the 2020-2024 Anti-trafficking and National Strategy and Action Plan. The law enforcement and criminal code (revised in

2018, went into force in 2019 and reclassified prostitutions offenses as human trafficking) provide sufficient and stringent punishment for convicted traffickers – 5 to 12 years imprisonment. Authorities received 62 new cases and arrested 10 additional suspects (43 cases and 80 suspects in 2019).

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## 12. Gender Equality

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According to *UNICEF*, “gender equality means that women and men, and girls and boys, enjoy the same rights, resources, opportunities and protections. It does not require that girls and boys, or women and men, be the same, or that they be treated exactly alike.” The concept is a top priority for the international community. It is not by chance that the *UN* sustainable development goal (*SDG*) number 5<sup>8</sup> is dedicated to gender equality and women’s empowerment. As stated by the *United Nations*, “gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world”. To understand a little more of how the world is carrying on its efforts toward gender equality one can list some facts: 1 in 5 women or girls have experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner in the last year. 49 countries do not have laws protecting women; women representation in national parliaments is at 23.7%; 750 million women or girls were married before the age of 18 and at least 200 million women and girls in 30 countries have undergone female genital mutilation. At least, one can say that more than 100 countries allocated budget funds for gender equality.

Gender equality is annually measured by the *World Economic Forum – WEF* through its *Global Gender Gap Report* (GGGR). The *Global Gender Gap Report 2021* (data for the year 2020) replaces GGGR 2020 (2019 data). It “benchmarks national gender gaps on economic, education, health and political criteria, and provides country rankings that allow for effective comparisons across regions and income groups. The rankings are designed to create global awareness of the challenges posed by gender gaps and the opportunities created by reducing them”. 2021 report found out that, globally, the average reached equality is at 68%, which is a step back (-0.6%) compared to 2020 report. The pandemic has extended the timeframe for achieving gender equality worldwide. This year’s report benchmarks 156 countries, with three countries being assessed for the first time: Afghanistan, Guyana, and Niger. Among the 4 sub-indices (Health and Survival, Educational Attainment, Economic Participation and Opportunity, Political Empowerment) Political Empowerment is the one registering the greatest gender gap (completion of only 22% of gender equality, 2.4% wider than 2020 report). Economic Participation and Opportunity comes after – 58% of this gap has been closed so far. Things appear to be much better in Health and Survival and Educational Attainment, with respective gender equality of 96% and 95%.

Regarding Albania, the country ranks 25<sup>th</sup> in the index with an impressive overall score of 0.770, where 1 represents gender equality. Even though Albania improved its score of 0.001 compared to the 2020 report it lost five positions in the ranking. In chart 24, Albania profile is provided together with scores from 2014-2020 period.

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8 *SDG* 5 targets: 5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere. 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation. 5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation. 5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate. 5.5 Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life. 5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences 5.A Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws. 5.B Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women. 5.C Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

## Albania gender gap 2014-2020

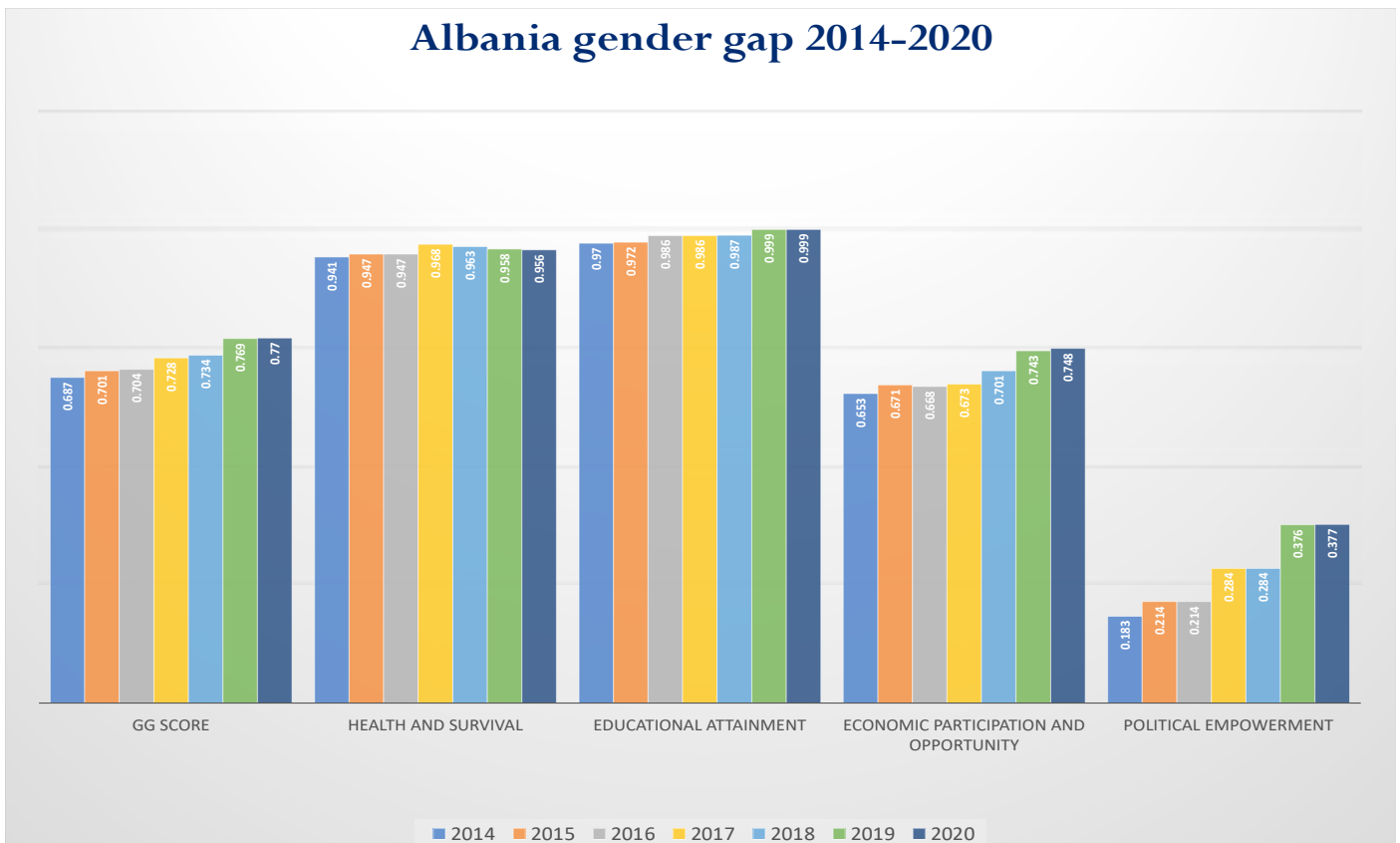


Chart 24

Looking at chart 24, one can state that the global pattern seeing Political Empowerment as the weakest sub-index remains true for Albania, too. Nevertheless, with a Political Empowerment score of 0.376 (+0.194 compared to 2014 score) Albania is clearly above world average (0.239) and it still ranks high (30<sup>th</sup>) despite losing seven positions in comparison to 2020 report. The country ranks 35<sup>th</sup> in Economic Empowerment and Opportunity – score 0.748 compared to world average of 0.583, 42<sup>nd</sup> in Educational Attainment – score of 0.999 against a global average of 0.950. In contrast with these results, the country ranks low (147<sup>th</sup>) in Health and Survival with an overall score of 0.956.

Chart 25 shows a comprehensive analysis of WB6 gender gap and sub-indices scores. Individual profiles and changes over the 2014-2020 period are discussed separately.

## WB6 and gender gap 2020 scores

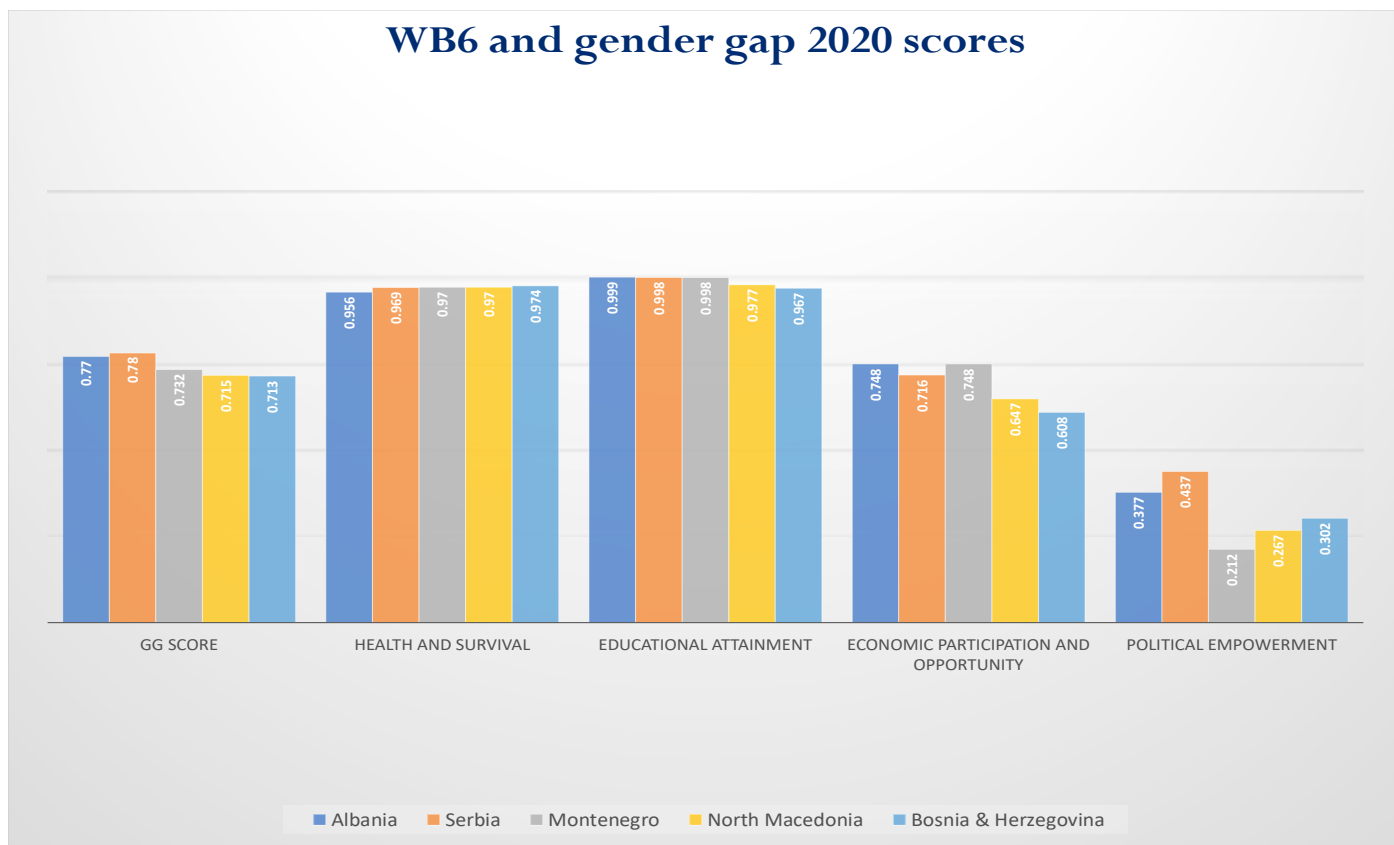


Chart 25 [Kosovo is not included as it has not been evaluated in the Global Gender Gap Report]

Out of this cluster, Serbia is the most gender equal country and ranks 19<sup>th</sup>, gaining 20 positions in comparison to the previous year. Followed by Albania, 30<sup>th</sup> and Montenegro 48<sup>h</sup> in the rank, with an overall score of 0.732. North Macedonia (0.715) and Bosnia & Herzegovina (0.713) are distant and rank respectively 73<sup>rd</sup> and 76<sup>th</sup>. All the WB6 exhibit high scores in Health and Survival and Educational Attainment. Concerning Economic Participation and Opportunity and Political Participation, and despite differences in singular country scores, all the WB6 are above world averages. The only exception is Montenegro which still hasn't reached the world average of (0.218) in Political Empowerment, despite registering some improvement in comparison to the previous year. With respect to their changes over the 2014-2020 period, all the WB6 improved their comprehensive scores (Bosnia & Herzegovina was not covered in the 2014 report). Serbia, Montenegro and North Macedonia increased respectively by a 0.072, 0.039 and 0.021. Comparing data from year 2014 with those from year 2019, improvements in the overall score are mainly due to positive changes registered in Political Empowerment. As a matter of fact, every country from this group registered the most impressive changes in this sub-index – Albania, already discussed, +0.193, Serbia +0.08, Montenegro +0.058 and North Macedonia +0.074. The first available data for Bosnia & Herzegovina (2016) confirms this general improvement as the country experienced an increase of 0.038 between 2016 and 2020.

Overall, the WB6 highlighted an impressive condition of their gender equality standards and are on the right path. Nonetheless, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Bosnia & Herzegovina are lagging if compared with Serbia and Albania, which can be regarded as two of the most gender equal countries of the world.



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## 13. Climate Change

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During the 2020 pandemic we have had confirmation of the gravity that human footprint has on the planet. It is well known that the spread of certain diseases is partly the result of the same human activities that contribute to climate change. In the words of Daniel R. Brooks, professor emeritus of ecology and evolutionary biology at the University of Toronto: “We live in a world in which human population expansion and increased density, and increased globalization of travel and trade act synergistically with climate change to produce an explosive emerging disease crisis that represents an existential threat to technological humanity.”; as the world was going beyond the first Sars-Cov-2 wave, in China authorities were once again focused on studying a new potential pandemic virus coming from pigs – strain “G4” of H1N1<sup>9</sup>. Climate change and contagious diseases are co-travelers.

The global health crisis has strongly encouraged the inclusion of environmental issue in the political discourse. One cannot know where this is heading, nonetheless, political decision makers have started to discuss initiatives to boost progress and development in a sustainable way. For instance, the *EU* approved its well-known Green Deal – the strategy drafted by the *European Commission* to make the European economy sustainable and turn environment and renewable resources into opportunities and drivers for economic development. The *European Union* is planning to invest €100 billion in the plan. The Green New Deal is likely to be resumed for debate in the United States too, where the first motions failed to pass in the US senate. Other countries are following and planning to reorient their economies toward environmental sustainability. Notwithstanding national efforts, the framework that will most likely have a global impact is the Paris Agreement – drafted and signed within the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*. However, the treaty suffered the withdrawal of the United States and misses a binding enforcement mechanism; thus, the achievement of the targets set is linked to the will of state parties. Rendering the provisions of the Paris Agreement mandatory would be a great leap forward.

Every country plays a role in the process of becoming resilient to climate change, consequently several studies are focusing on how single countries are carrying out their environmental policies. The *Global Adaption Initiative* (ND-GAIN), launched by the *University of Notre Dame* (Indiana, USA), is “a research effort designed to enhance the world understanding of the concept of adaptation to climate change”. It “summarizes a country’s vulnerability to climate change and other global challenges in combination with its readiness to improve resilience. It aims to help governments, businesses and communities better prioritize investments for a more efficient response to the immediate global challenges ahead”. The adaptation examined by the initiative follows two main indicators: I. Risk Mitigation (Vulnerability); II. Opportunities Exploration (Readiness). The country index uses 20 years of available data among a total of 45 indicators and ranks 181 countries. Assigned scores range from 0 (least likely to adapt) to 100 (most likely to adapt) while indicators fall under 2 main subjects – Vulnerability and Readiness – and 9 sectors – Food; Water; Health; Ecosystem service; Human habitat; Infrastructure; Economic; Governance; Social readiness – in turn divided into 45 sub-indicators. Sub-indicators are calculated on a 0-1 scale. While 0 represents the best score possible under Vulnerability-related indicators, 1 represents the maximum result for Readiness-related indicators.

According to the ND-GAIN (last updated in July 2021 with data referring to 2019), Albania ranks 82<sup>nd</sup> with a comprehensive score of 50.1 – Vulnerability 0.411 and Readiness 0.413. The country improved its position in the ranking (78<sup>th</sup>) and score (49.7) compared to 2017 data. Albania still has adaptation challenges but is well positioned to adapt. In chart 26 Albania profile and scores for every indicator assessed by the ND-GAIN during the 2015-2019 period are presented.

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9 H1N1 is a subtype of Influenza A virus. Some H1N1 strains are endemic in pigs and birds and can potentially cause of pandemic disease as swine influenza and avian influenza. The G4 strain of H1N1 was found in the blood of pig farm workers.

## Albania environmental adaptability 2015-2019

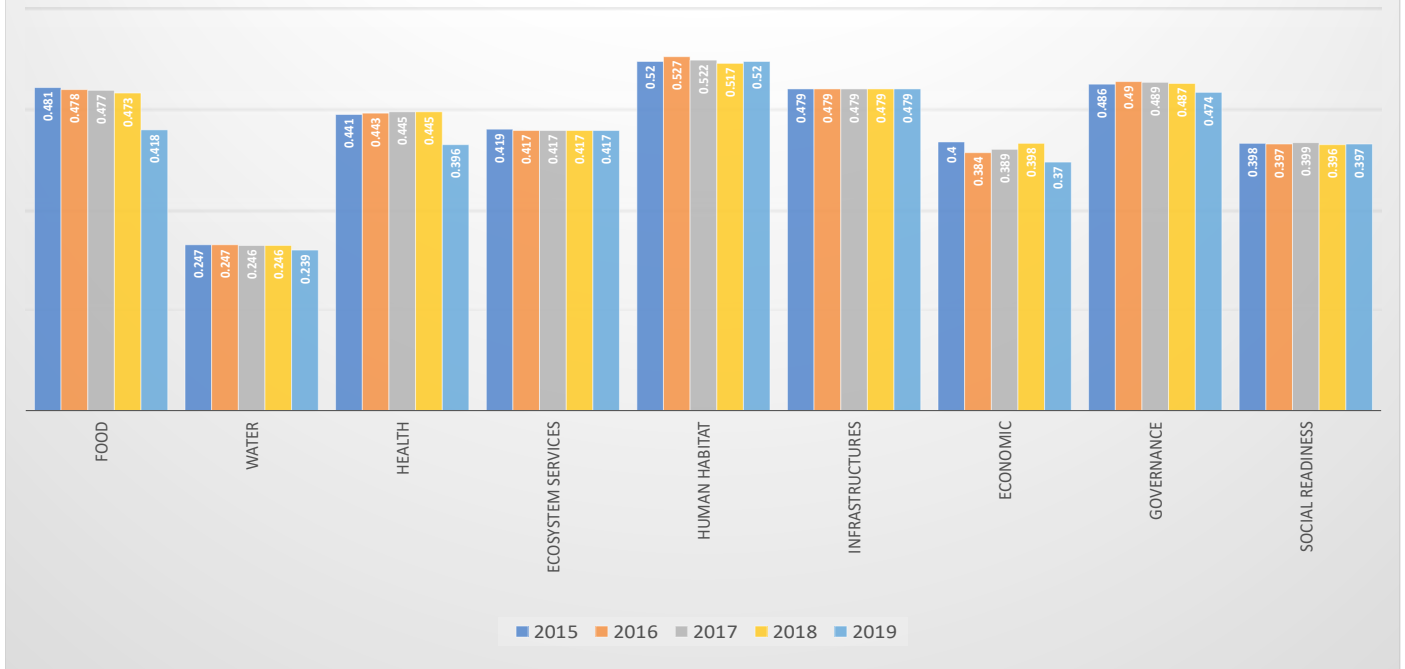


Chart 26

About indicators composing the adaptability score, Albania improved in domain except for Health, Economic and Social Readiness. A clear decrease can be seen in Food (-0.055), Health (-0.049), Economic (-0.028), Governance (-0.013), and Water (-0.007), and Human Habitat (-0.005). All the other indicators have remained almost unchanged. Sub-indices where Albania seems to be striving the most and that affect the overall performance are Agricultural Capacity (0.910) and Projected Change of Cereal Yields (0.810) – Food (Vulnerability), Engagement in International Environmental Conventions (0.793) – Ecosystem Services (Vulnerability), Control of Corruption (0.307) – Governance (Readiness), and Innovation (0.006) – Social Readiness (Readiness). In chart 27, an analysis of the WB6 is presented with scores referring to 2021 update (2019 data).

## WB6 Environmental adaptability 2019

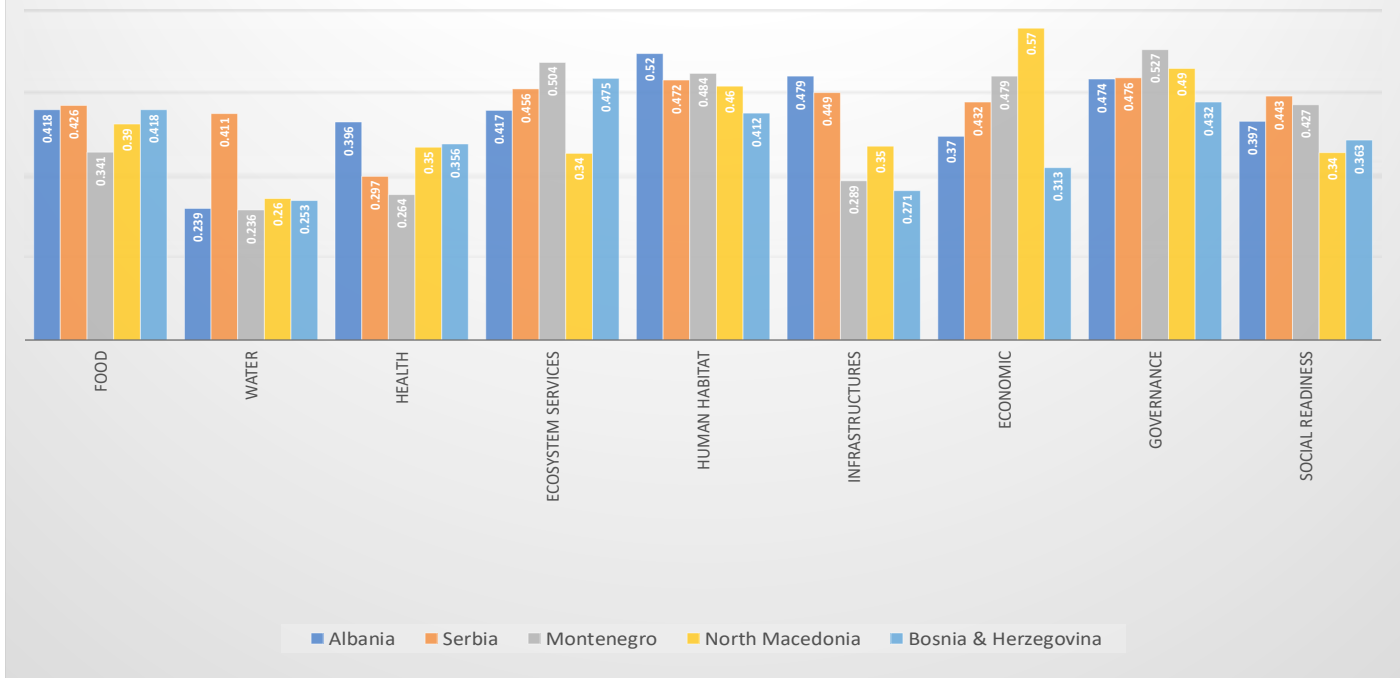


Chart 27 [Kosovo is not included as not evaluated by the ND-GAIN]

Montenegro, 55<sup>th</sup> in the ranking, with a comprehensive score of 56.2 (Vulnerability 0.353, Readiness 0.478) is the most adaptive among the countries of the cluster. The country performs particularly well in Ecosystem Services (0.504) and Governance (0.527). Montenegro is followed by Macedonia (57<sup>th</sup>) and Serbia (74<sup>th</sup>), with respective overall scores of 55.4 and 51.6. Bosnia & Herzegovina ranks 80<sup>th</sup> with an adaptability score of 50.2. Albania is the least prepared country in the region. Both Albania and Bosnia & Herzegovina need to do more to adapt.

Considering the relation between food security and climate change, as shown in chart 31, Serbia is the most food insecure from the WB6. Water, due to the significant water resources of the area, does not seem a matter of concern, nonetheless, despite having per capita availability of water above the European average, the WB6 highlighted some deficiencies in the management of water resources. In the coming future more effective legislation for protection of water and river basins and better infrastructures in the sector of water supply are expected. Overall, the WB6 are performing decently in every ND-GAIN indicator. The region's contingency to the EU environmental efforts will likely foster their position to adapt. As a matter of fact, in 2020, North Macedonia and Montenegro pledged to cut carbon dioxide emissions and align their climate policies with *European Union* standards.

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## 14. Energy Transition

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The *Energy Transition Index* is a tool designed by the *World Economic Forum*. The index, which is at its tenth edition, “[...] benchmarks countries on the performance of their energy system and their readiness for energy transition. It offers a framework for countries to design long-term energy transition roadmaps by considering current energy system performance and highlighting the necessary enablers that improve countries’ readiness for energy transition. Over the past year, developments across the three pillars of the energy triangle – economic development and growth, energy security and access, and environmental sustainability – have attested to the complexity of the energy system and highlighted the need to accelerate energy transition [...]” (World Economic Forum, *Fostering Effective Energy Transition 2021*, p. 4).

The *Energy Transition Index 2021* evaluated 115 countries according to their performance in two main dimensions: System Performance, which includes the domains Security and Access, Environmental Sustainability, and Economic Development and Growth, and Transition Readiness, in turn divided in Energy System Structure, Capital and Investment, Regulation and Political Commitment, Capital and Investments, Human Capital and Consumer Participation, Infrastructure and Innovative Business Environment, and Institutions and Governance.

The 115 countries considered represent 90% of world population, 93% of total energy supply and 98% of global nominal gross domestic product. As the world economy is going through one of its most delicate phases, the ETI, confirming the importance to adapt economic growth to the concept of sustainability, indicates that energy transition and climate change mitigation policies need to be implemented orderly to avoid systemic disruption of the financial system. The increase in oil price fostered capital investments and research project in the clean energy sector. Overall performances of the sector confirm energy as a driver for economic growth. Over the last decade, more than 70% of the countries in the ETI made progress on the energy access and security dimension and encouraging progress has been made in environmental sustainability as well. Global investment in the energy transition rose to almost \$500 billion by 2020

Global average ETI scores have increased in 8 out of the last 10 years. Overall, 25% of countries have balanced the three imperatives of the energy triangle. Only 13 out of 115 countries have made steady gains in the past decade. Despite the progress in energy access and environmental sustainability, and the fast energy transition in emerging economies, countries need to strengthen their commitments towards a more sustainable world, by multiplying policies, research and initiatives for the purpose.

According to the *Energy Transition Index 2021*, Albania ranks 25<sup>th</sup> with an ETI score of 66 out of 100 – 74.5 in System Performance and 58.3 in Transition Readiness. Compared to the previous year, Albania gained 27 positions and experienced an increase of 9 in its ETI score (+11.5 in System Performance and +8.3 in Transition Readiness). In chart 28, Albania ETI *profile* over the 2018-2020 period is presented.

## Albania ETI scores 2018-2020

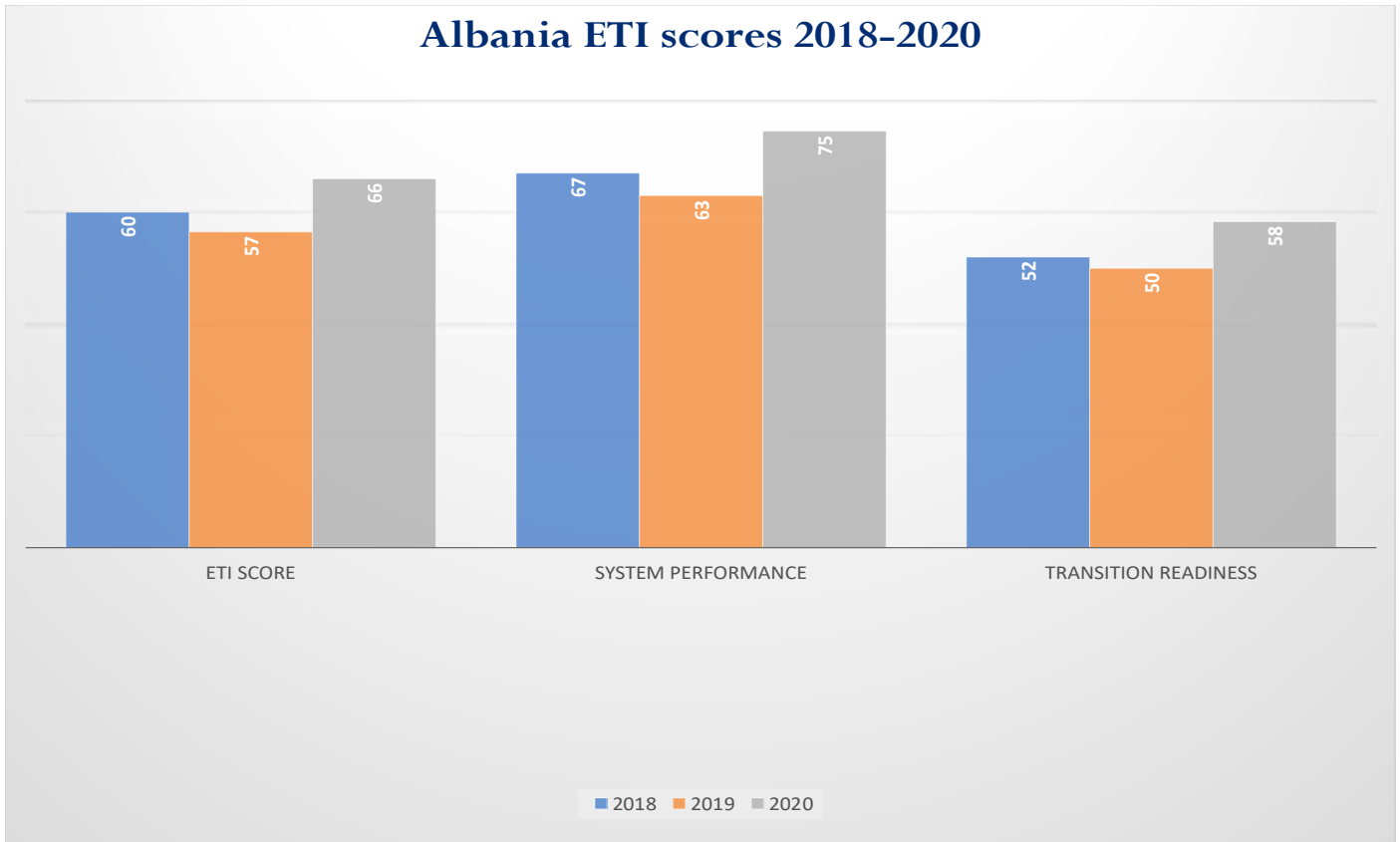


Chart 28

In chart 29, the same analysis is provided referring to the WB6.

## WB6 ETI scores 2018-2020

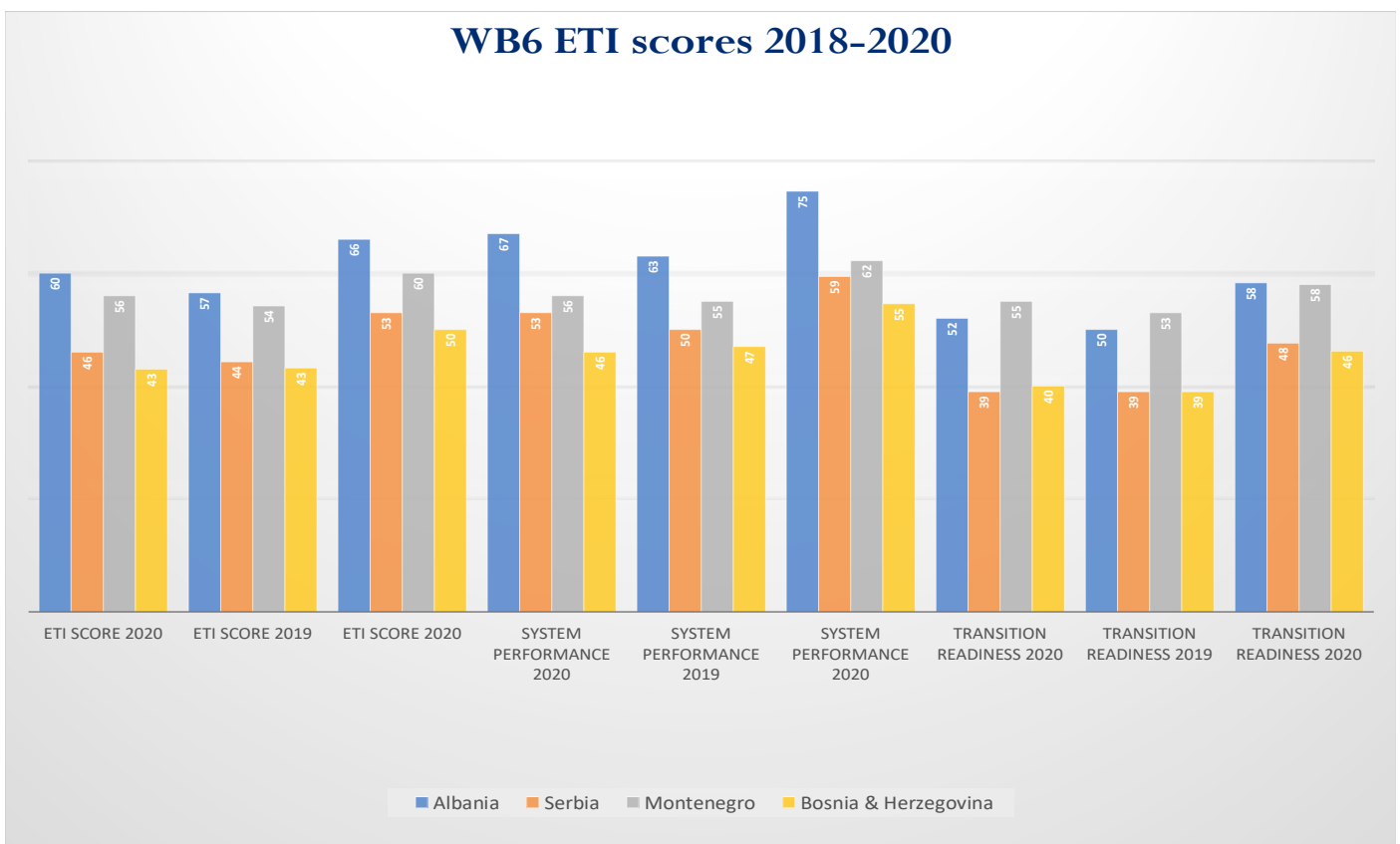


Chart 29 [North Macedonia and Kosovo are not included as not evaluated by ETI]

Albania is confirmed as the most advanced in the clean transition, followed by Montenegro – 52<sup>nd</sup> in the index. Serbia and Bosnia & Herzegovina remain distant at position 84 and 98, respectively, despite the overall progress made in 2020.

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## 15. Health

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Health, these days, is a major theme. Concerns raised by the COVID-19 pandemic showed how even the strongest democracies, lately, have been neglecting national health services. Anti-epidemic or pandemic plans' updates were discarded by national authorities as something that could be postponed. As the pandemic suggests, health sector needs a constant monitoring and evaluation by national and international institutions. The *Global Health Security Index* is designed by the *Johns Hopkins University*, the *Nuclear Threat Initiative* (a Washington-based NGO working for high quality of life, environment and the health of future generations) and the *Intelligence Unit of The Economist*. The Index is prepared with the support of the *Open Philanthropy Project*, the *Bill and Melissa Gates Foundation* and the *Robertson Foundation*. The *GHS Index 2021* evaluated 195 countries according to their levels of health security. In an era where urbanization, climate change, massive migrations and displacement are knowing unprecedented levels, pathogens are more likely to spread. Countries are often unprepared for such outbreaks. Thus, the *GHS Index* “[...] seeks to illuminate those gaps to increase both political will and financing to fill them at the national and international levels. Unfortunately, political will for accelerating health security is caught in a perpetual cycle of panic and neglect. Over the past two decades, decision makers have only sporadically focused on health security, despite concerns stemming from the 2001 anthrax attacks, the emergence of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome coronaviruses, and the looming threat of a pandemic caused by a novel strain of influenza [...]” (Johns Hopkins University and Nuclear Threat Initiative, *Global Health Security Index 2019*, p. 6).

The *GHS Index* is based on open data published at a national level or reported to and by an international organisation. The index prioritizes, in addition to health security and country capacities, the capabilities for stopping outbreaks. The evaluating framework prepared by the *GHS Index* consists of 140 questions, organized across 6 categories<sup>10</sup>, 34 indicators, and 85 sub-indicators.

As stated by the index, Albania ranks 59<sup>th</sup> with an overall score of 45 out of 100 and is in the orange countries' category (i.e., “more prepared”) – the other two categories are yellow, “most prepared”, and red “least prepared”. Albania is the most prepared country in theWB6. In chart 30, Albania profile with scores for each category of the *GHS Index 2021* is provided.

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10 Prevention, Detection and Reporting, Rapid Response, Health System, Compliance with International Laws and Risk Environment.

## Albania in global health security index 2021

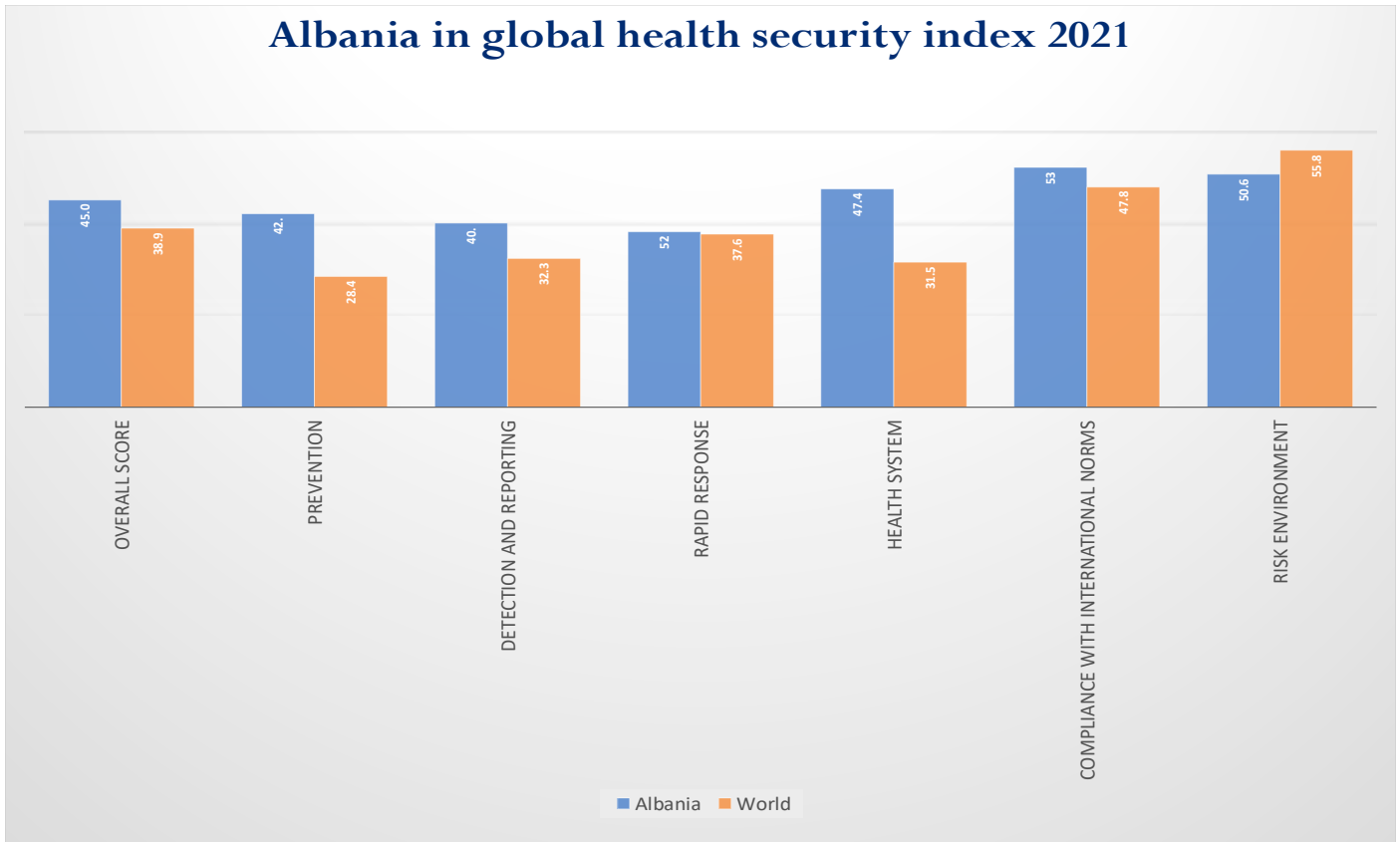


Chart 30

As one can excerpt from chart 30, Albania has an overall health security superior to world average (45.0). In addition, the country outperforms average scores for 5 out of 6 indicators. In chart 31, an analysis of the WB6 health security levels is presented.

## WB6 in global health security index 2021

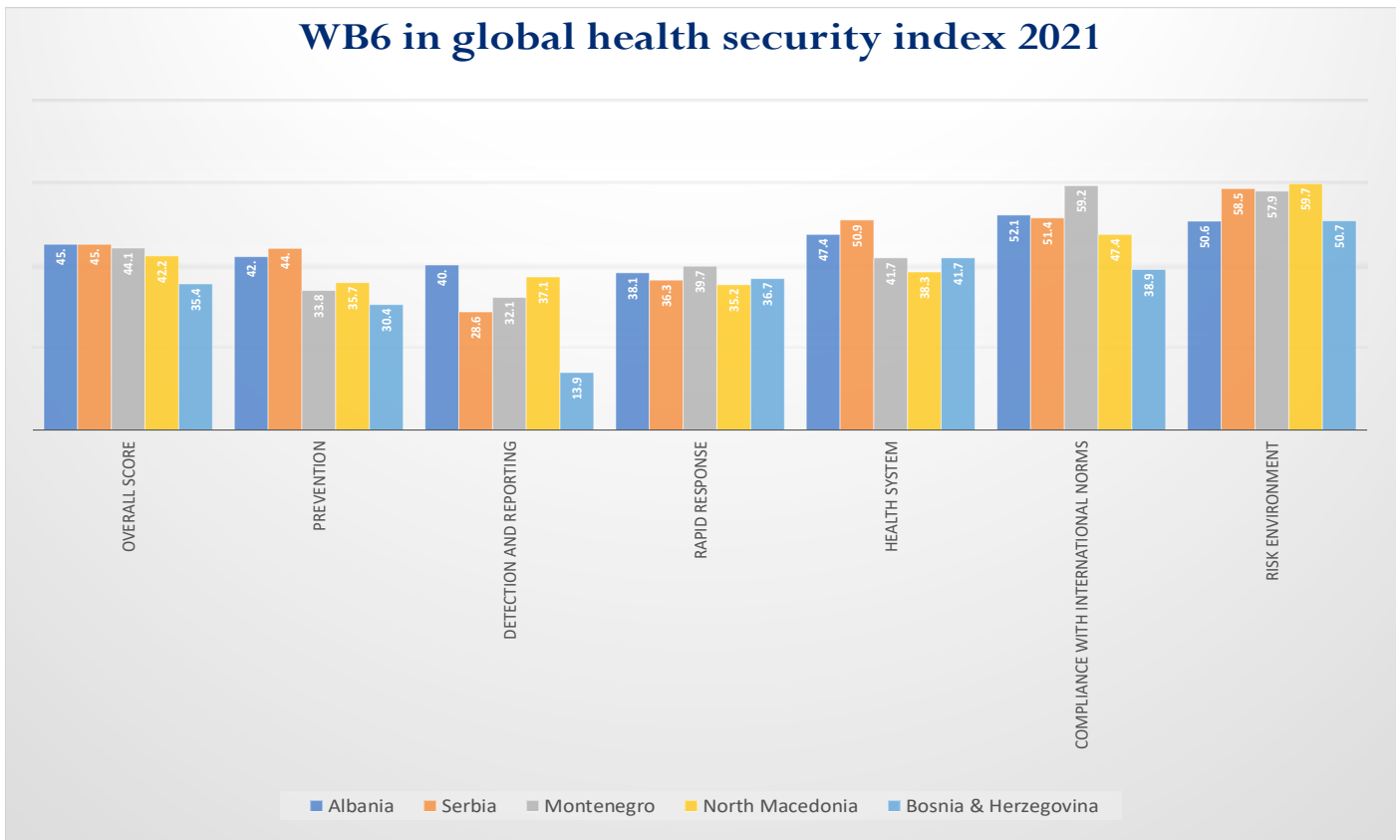


Chart 31 [Kosovo is not included as not assessed by the GHS Index 2021]

Serbia as well as Albania are 59<sup>th</sup> in the global ranking. The country is above world average in every indica-

tor except for Detection and Reporting—Serbia scored 28.6 against the world average (32.3). Montenegro is the second country in the WB6 group (62<sup>nd</sup> in the ranking) with overall scores of 44.1. North Macedonia positioned itself not far from Albania and Serbia, it ranks 69<sup>th</sup>— with a total score of 42.2. Bosnia & Herzegovina is the lowest ranking WB6 (96<sup>th</sup>) with a comprehensive score of 35.4 and is the only country below world average (38.9). Generally speaking, the WB6 highlighted sufficient levels in every indicator and present a good, yet improvable, health security.



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## 16. Human Development

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The *Human Development Report* (HDR) and its respective index is issued yearly by the *United Nations Development Programme* since 2010. The *Human Development Report* ranks world countries according to their level of development considering three major indicators: (i) Health-life expectancy at birth; (ii) Education-expected years schooling for school-age children and average years of schooling in the adult population; (iii) Gross National Income per capita (PPP US\$).

The *Human Development Report* marks its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a 2020 edition that focus heavily on the human footprint, that is why is named “The Next Frontier: Human Development and Anthropocene<sup>11</sup>”. As stated by the report “[...] *To survive and thrive in this new age, we must redesign a path to progress that respects the intertwined fate of people and planet and recognizes that the carbon and material footprint of the people who have more is choking the opportunities of the people who have less [...]*” (UNDP Human Development Report 2020, 2020, p. iii). According to the report, temperature increase at the level that characterized the 1986-2005 period would worsen inequalities in human development, and countries with high ecological threats are bound to know greater social vulnerability. For this reason, the HDR devised a new tool, Planetary pressures–adjusted Human Development Index, which hooks the development of world countries to the impact they have on the planet.

As reported by the 2020 HDR (2019 values), Albania ranks 69<sup>th</sup> out of 189 countries. This does not represent an improvement of 2019 position, nonetheless, the country improved its 2020 *Human Development Index* (0.795) compared to previous year’s score (0.791). Regarding the new Planetary pressure-adjusted Human Development Index, Albania registered a 0.756 score which virtually makes the country gain 28 positions in the ranking. In addition, the country ranks 41<sup>st</sup> in the Gender Inequality Index. In chart 32, Albania’s profile from 2018 to 2020 (2017-2019 values) is presented. Gender Inequality Index (this indicator is to be read in reverse where 0 represent the best and 1 the worst value possible) and Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index<sup>12</sup> scores are also included.

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11 According to the *National Geographic* definition the Anthropocene Epoch “is an unofficial unit of geologic time, used to describe the most recent period in Earth’s history when human activity started to have a significant impact on the planet’s climate and ecosystems”.

12 The Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index measures intra-generational inequality and regulates the overall value accordingly.

## Albania in the human development report 2018-2020



Chart 32

Concerning the other WB6, Montenegro confirmed its status as the country with the highest human development (0.829) and ranks 48<sup>th</sup>. It is followed at position 64 by Serbia (0.806 HDI value). Bosnia & Herzegovina (0.780) and North Macedonia (0.774) close the group ranking respectively 73<sup>rd</sup> and 82<sup>nd</sup>. Regarding the Planetary Pressure value, Albania is the WB6 country with the lightest footprint on the planet. Montenegro comes second (0.738) followed closely by Serbia (0.732). In this domain too, North Macedonia (0.720) and Bosnia & Herzegovina (0.718) close the loop. Concerning the Gender Inequality Index, Montenegro (26<sup>th</sup>) is the most gender-equal country out of the WB6, and it is followed by Serbia (35<sup>th</sup>). Bosnia & Herzegovina (38<sup>th</sup>) and North Macedonia (37<sup>th</sup>) also showed significant values in this specific domain. Every WB6 country showed significant values concerning this specific domain. Looking at the ranking, Albania and North Macedonia remained stable, while Montenegro (+4) and Bosnia & Herzegovina (+2) improved. On the contrary, Serbia lost one position. In chart 33, WB6 profiles are provided with reference to the 2020 *Human Development Report*. The entire group improved its 2020 HDI compared to 2019 report: Montenegro and Serbia by 0.013 and 0.07 respectively; Bosnia & Herzegovina and North Macedonia registered an increase of 0.011 and 0.015.

## Albania in the human development report 2018-2020

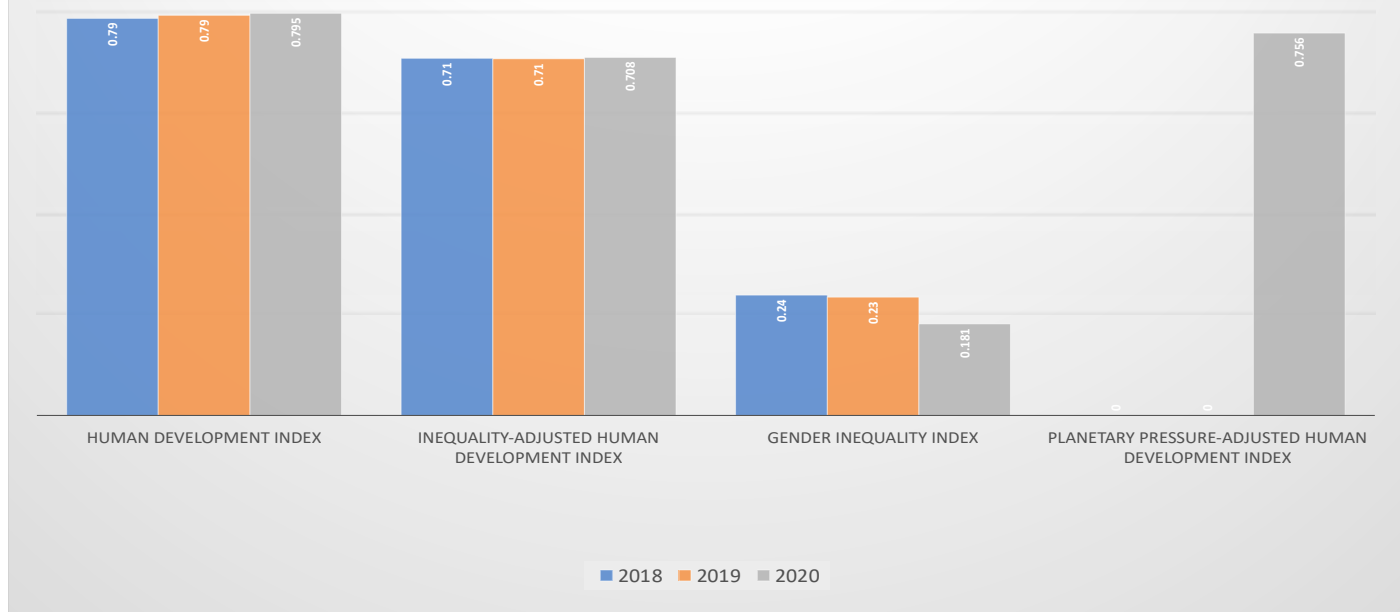


Chart 33 [Kosovo is not included as not evaluated by the HDR]



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