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Kosova Center for Distance Education

**Canada** 

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# THE GENDER GAP IN DISTANCE EDUCATION IN KOSOVA

## DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

2020/21

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CANADA FUND FOR LOCAL INITIATIVES  
EMBASSY OF CANADA TO CROATIA AND KOSOVO

**Financed by:** 

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**The original is written in English**

**Published by:**  **KCDE - Mëso Online**  
Kosova Center for Distance Education

Kosova Center for Distance Education-Meso Online  
[www.mesoonline-ks.org](http://www.mesoonline-ks.org)

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# Definitions

## **DISTANCE EDUCATION**

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Institution-based, formal education where the learning group is separated, and where interactive telecommunications systems are used to connect learners, resources, and instructors

## **DIGITAL GAP**

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The gap between individuals, households, businesses and geographic areas at different socio-economic levels with regard both to their opportunities to access ICT and to their use of the Internet for a wide variety of activities

## **GENDER DIGITAL GAP**

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The difference between how many men and how many women are online, as a proportion of how many women are online

## **GENDER GAP**

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Relative disparity between people of different genders, reflected in a variety of sectors in many societies.

## **DIGITAL COMPETENCES**

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The capacity to acquire, process and communicate digital information, which is affected by socio-cultural background, including the home environment, cultural capital and academic orientation; such factors explain differences in digital competence between students

## **DIGITAL INEQUALITY**

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The disparities in knowledge and ability of using digital and information technology among individuals with different demographics, socioeconomic backgrounds, and digital and information technology experience and competencies

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Missing out on education has serious repercussions, both on a personal and collective level. However, there are times when education systems are unable to ensure continuous education for all, such as during a pandemic. History has shown that during an outbreak, education is one of the most negatively affected public sectors. While some countries may have the resources to ensure that school-aged children are still able to receive education during these times, other countries can experience challenges to ensure accessible and quality education for all students. As a result, global crises are often followed by gender gaps in education, causing middle-and-lower income countries to fall short in their progress towards achieving gender equality in education.

The Covid-19 pandemic has pushed many countries to seek solutions to provide quality distance education to all students. Some have used traditional media, such as TV and radio, while others have used more contemporary methods such as online classrooms and other online platforms. This variance in approaches has sharpened the divide for access to education among countries as well as among gender. While some countries have been able to provide education using sophisticated technology, children are experiencing the results of a massive digital divide in others.

An analysis of our secondary data suggests that at the global level, the digital divide among gender favors boys who have better access to distance education. However, an analysis of our primary data suggests that at the national level, the gender divide for access to education decreases. It is evident that in Kosova, many children have missed months of education during the outbreak. This includes boys and girls, with more boys missing out than girls in some cases, although this depends on the municipality and the type of educational institution.

### Key findings:

- Approximately 5 percent, or 8,414 out of 180,469 of the registered students in both primary and secondary schools from 12 municipalities in Kosova were reported to have missed online school during Covid-19 between March and June 2020.
- The percentage of students who did not resume their online education during the pandemic was noticeably higher in the minor municipalities than in the major municipalities.
- The gender gap in the major municipalities was around 1 percentage point in disfavor of boys. Meaning that boys' attendance in distance education was one percent less than girls.
- The minor municipalities overall (Obiliq, Klina, Fushe Kosova, Vushtrri, and Kamenica) reported an insignificant gender gap of 0.13 percent difference in disfavor of boys.
- Within non-participating students of the secondary schools in the minor municipalities, there was a gender gap of roughly 3 percent difference in disfavor of girls.

Lastly, the findings highlight the need to strengthen the resilience of the education system through leveraging digital opportunities to bring digital solutions to education, available for all. Our education system should also increase its focus on inclusion and equity measures. This includes gender equality and ensures vulnerable students are supported with the necessary study skills to return to school. Finally, to ensure education stakeholders work towards ensuring equal access to distance education, policy measures should be in place to guide all actors to work towards creating an adequate distance education environment.

# INTRODUCTION

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Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the world was confronting difficulties in ensuring education as a basic human right to all children (UN, 2020). The pandemic led to even more problems for global education by putting around “1.53 billion students out of schools,” affecting 87.6 percent of students worldwide (Education Cannot Wait, 2020). According to the Ministry of Education and Science (MES, 2020), at the beginning of the lockdown in March 2020, around 32 thousand pre-university students, or approximately 11 percent of the total pre-university student population, did not have access to distance education at all in Kosova. Another fourteen thousand were reported to have missed education mainly due to a lack of digital assets or internet infrastructure.

As schools worldwide were gradually closing due to the spread of COVID-19, countries rapidly tried switching to distance education. However, due to the lack of connectivity, equipment, and direct student-teacher interaction, it was particularly challenging for governments to ensure that all learners continued learning and did not drop out (UNESCO, 2020). This pandemic has further revealed most countries’ educational systems were largely unprepared to ensure the continuity of an inclusive education for all.

COVID-19 has also put a focus on gender inequalities in education. From an August 2020 UNESCO’s Issues Note, “In 46 countries, 735 million students – including 356 million girls – are uncertain when they will sit in a classroom again.” (UN, 2020) This includes distance learning. The longer students are out of school, the more likely they are to drop out of school or delay their return. This is due to numerous factors, including: “a) financial constraints and pressure to take up employment, b) household chores, c) childcare, especially when parents or caregivers are ill or have passed away, d) early and forced marriage and/or early and unintended pregnancy” (UN, 2020). Girls are particularly vulnerable to the last factor.

Gender equality in education does not simply mean access to education, but equal empowerment during the entire education (UNESCO, 2020). While there has been good progress in girls’ enrollment in school over the last two decades, this progress is at risk of dissolving due to school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic. While schools are closed, “gender norms may preclude girls from accessing the household infrastructure and digital platforms needed for remote learning” (UNICEF, 2020).

Since the beginning of the pandemic, countries have been implementing online and distance education programs to keep children learning. However, many children have limited means to continue education due to the lack of technological devices or internet access (UNICEF, 2020). Worldwide, girls are twice as likely to be out of school (Education Cannot Wait, 2020), and the continuation of school closures will shatter the gains girls have made in education over the last two decades, particularly in enrollment (UNICEF, 2020). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to quantify the effects of the gender gap between students in Kosova who did not continue their education through distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.



# RESEARCH OVERVIEW

*Today's most frequent question is whether online learning is as effective and whether distance education will persist post-pandemic.*

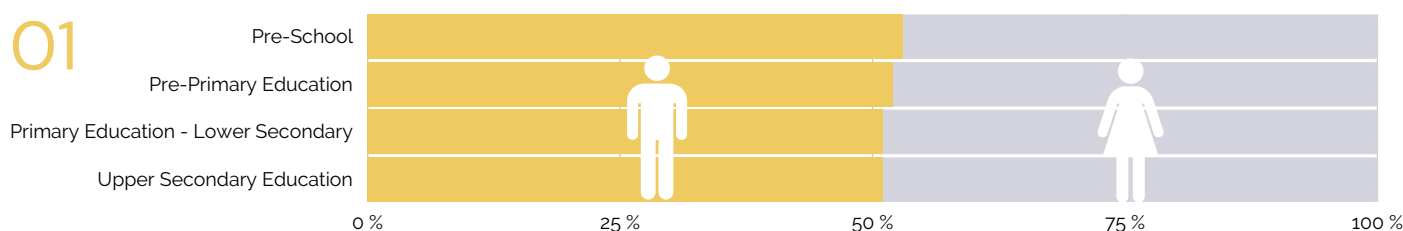
There is evidence that for those with access to technology, online learning can be more effective in a number of ways. This is mostly due to students being able to “learn at their own pace, going back and re-reading, skimming, accelerating through concepts as they choose” (Gutierrez, K., 2016). However, due to the lack of access to technology for all – also known as the digital divide – learning loss and learning gaps incurred during COVID-19 may drive disadvantaged learners further away from the same level of education as their peers.

Drawing on data from the Ebola outbreak, the Malala Fund estimated the potential impact of the current school closures on girls' dropout numbers in low and lower-middle-income countries. The research estimated that about 10 million secondary school-aged girls could be out of school following the COVID-19 crisis (Malala Fund, 2020). The risk of not returning to school after a pandemic is evident for both girls and boys, with a higher percentage of girls being more likely to be affected at pre-primary and upper secondary levels, while a higher percentage of boys being at a greater risk of not returning to schools at primary and lower secondary levels, as well as universities (UNESCO, 2020).

According to data from The World Bank, the gender gap in primary school completion persists in low-income countries in general. According to these data, in low-income countries, the primary completion rate for boys reached 67 percent by 2018, while for girls it persisted at 62.7 percent. In the 90s, the gap was for about 35 percent, with 39.6 million boys out of primary education around the world, while at the same period 62.1 million girls were out of school. In the 2000s, 42 million boys and 57.1 million girls were out of school. In 2018, this gap narrowed with a difference of 5 million, or 26.7 million boys and 31.4 million girls out of primary education across the world. A similar situation persists in lower secondary education, while the gender gap varies more in tertiary education (World Bank Data, 2020).

Until 2012, half of the Kosovar population aged 15 and older had up to nine years of schooling. Girls' educational attainment was much lower than boys', with 62 percent of women and 37 percent of men having only basic education, while 6 percent of women and 12 percent of men having university degrees (World Bank, 2012). However, this gender gap has narrowed over seven years. Based on 2018/19 data, 48 percent of girls and 52 percent of boys attended pre-primary education.

There is a similar gender structure (Fig.1) in primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary education, with 49 percent of girls and 51 percent of boys in attendance (ASK, 2019).



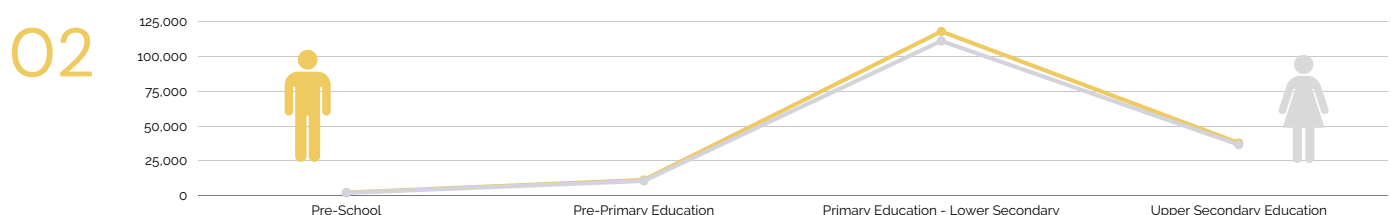
Therefore, the calculated share of male and female participation in pre-university institutions shows that male attendance is 1.13 percentage points higher than female attendance in preschool, in pre-primary education male participation dominates for 1.08 percentage points higher in pre-primary education, and 1.04 percentage points higher in primary and upper secondary education. Generally, there is a slight discrepancy between female and male participation in all levels of pre-university education.

If we look at the share of male and female students in educational institutions by level and municipality, we can see that the total number of children in preschool education (0 to <5 years of age) in seven major municipalities in Kosova in the 2019/20 academic year is 4,164. This includes 2,206 male students and 1,958 female students. The number of children attending pre-primary education (ages 5-6 years) is ten times higher than that of preschool with 11,244 boys and 10,416 girls attending pre-primary education. In primary through lower secondary education, there are 118,085 male students and 111,253 female students (Fig. 2).

It is evident, both around the world and locally, that there is a gender gap in education with girls having a disadvantage. But out of those male and female students that do attend school, studies show that girls often outperform boys in elementary and secondary levels. Female students also tend to have higher educational aspirations, take more advanced placement courses, and participate in more extracurricular and out-of-school activities. Male students typically have an advantage in math. However, this advantage is shrinking almost to the point of disappearing. Boys are falling farther and farther behind, thus creating a gender gap in educational attainment in disfavor of boys (Melnick, R. Shep. 2018).

Although girls in many countries around the world have reached equal enrollment with boys in both primary and secondary education, girls in many more countries are at risk of not achieving this, while distance education may have further exacerbated this discrepancy. Evidence from low-and middle-income countries shows that parents give girls access to digital technology at a later age than their male peers and that their access is “more curtailed or surveilled” (Livingstone, S. et al., 2017). More men than women have access to the internet in all regions in the world, with the COVID-19 pandemic widening this gender digital divide, particularly in developing countries.

Consequently, there is no surprise that girls are 25 percent less likely than boys to know how to leverage technology for basic purposes such as enrolling in distance education (UNESCO, 2020). In other words, in the context of distance education, the use of digital solutions can further deepen the gender gap of educational attainment. However, digital solutions can also be used as an opportunity to close this gender gap by building digital skills for girls and boys alike and ensuring all students have the skills they need to stay safe online and enroll in distance education (UNESCO, 2020).





# METHODOLOGY

This section provides a general description of the methodological approach used in this study. In order to analyze the gender gap in access to distance education in Kosova, we first had to identify the total number of school-aged children who did not attend distance education during the first phase of transition in March 2020. Information was gathered by mobilizing municipal directorates of education in Kosova to share data on the number of children unable to attend distance or e-learning due to different factors, such as a lack of digital equipment or other socio-economic factors.

To ensure that this research produces representative data, the original sample has included seven major municipalities Table 1. throughout Kosova, while some minor municipalities were included based on their responsiveness. In total, 18 municipalities (7 major and 11 minor) were contacted for the study. Out of total municipalities contacted, 12 (7 major and 5 minor) of them have responded to our request. Calculations show that our sample is statistically significant with a less than 1 percent margin of error even at 99 percent confidence interval.

Respectively, the first category included the data coming from major municipalities, such as: Prishtina, Prizren, Peja, Gjilan, Mitrovica, Gjakova, and Ferizaj. The second category included the data coming from minor municipalities, such as: Fushe Kosove, Vushtri, Obiliq, Kamenice, and Kline. Nine out of the 12 municipalities shared complete information as per our request; while three municipalities shared limited information. Six out of the 18 contacted municipalities did not respond to our data requests.

TABLE 1. Total number of students registered for the 2019/2020 academic year

2019/2020	Primary			Secondary			Total		
Municipalities									
<b>Major</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Total</b>
Prishtinë	15300	14540	29840	4904	5096	10000	20204	19636	39840
Prizren	10862	10182	21044	3566	3207	6773	14428	13389	27817
Pejë	6371	5986	12357	2120	2113	4233	8491	8099	16590
Gjakovë	6019	5366	11385	2181	2061	4242	8200	7427	15627
Mitrovicë	5352	5261	10613	1938	2201	4139	7290	7462	14752
Gjilan	5553	5326	10879	2311	2367	4678	7864	7693	15557
Ferizaj	8006	7816	15822	3061	3159	6220	11067	10975	22042
<b>Minor</b>									
Obiliq	1567	1514	3081	380	353	733	1947	1867	3814
Fushë Kosovë	3624	3346	6970	755	809	1564	4379	4155	8534
Klinë	2771	2730	5501	773	789	1562	3544	3519	7063
Kamenicë	1490	1447	2937	593	480	1073	2083	1927	4010
Vushtri	5105	4687	9792	1489	1326	2815	6594	6013	12607
<b>Total</b>	<b>72020</b>	<b>68201</b>	<b>140221</b>	<b>24071</b>	<b>23961</b>	<b>48032</b>	<b>96091</b>	<b>92162</b>	<b>188253</b>

Source: ASK, 2020

Relevant reports and statistical agencies were also utilized to complement the primary research. From the Kosovo Agency of Statistics, the number of pupils by gender in public education in the respective municipalities for the academic year 2019/2020 is 92162 girls and 96091 boys. The total number of pupils in pre-university public education counts for 329589 in all 37 municipalities in Kosova (ASK).

This study is broken down into three sections for analysis. The first section presents results per municipality or local results; the second section presents the data and analysis based on the size of the municipality; and the third section presents the overall or national results.



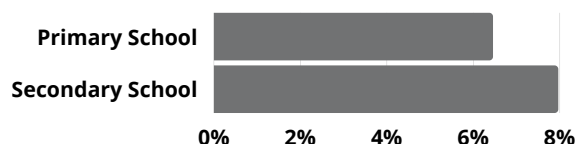
# LOCAL RESULTS

## PRISHTINË



During the first phase of the pandemic in Kosova, a total of 1722 students in Prishtina did not continue their education online. This number represents 13.7 percent of the overall enrolled students in the Municipality of Prishtina, the highest percentage from all the cities.

The percentage of high school students who did not continue online education was higher than the percentage of elementary school students. More specifically, around 6.45 percent of registered students in the primary schools of the Municipality of Prishtina could not continue online education. The number of secondary school students in the Municipality of Prishtina who could not continue their education during the pandemic reached 7.96 percent.



03

Percentage share among non-participants, Municipality of Prishtina

In terms of gender, in the Municipality of Prishtina around 1376, or 7.0 percent, of girls and 1346, or 6.7 percent, of boys did not participate in online education. This gender gap, however, changes according to school level. For instance, around 7.24 percent of boys in primary schools and 6.71 percent of girls in primary schools did not continue their education online, while 8.08 percent of secondary school boys and 7.85 percent of secondary school girls did not continue their education online during the pandemic. This shows that while the overall percentage of girls who did not pursue their online education was higher than the percentage of boys, the results are switched when considering the school level since the percentage of boys who did not continue their primary education is higher than that of girls. The same applies for the secondary level.

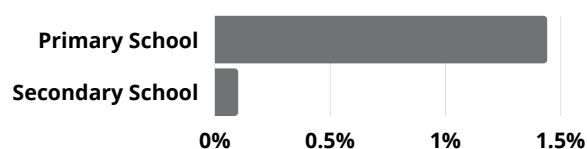
# LOCAL RESULTS

## PRIZREN



In Prizren, the number of students who did not continue their education online was significantly lower. The Municipality of Prizren reported that only 2.2 percent, or 309 students, were not included in online education, making it the municipality with the second-lowest number of students who could not participate in online education.

The number of reported high school students from the Municipality of Prizren who did not continue their online education during the pandemic was especially low. As reported, around 1.44 percent of elementary and middle school students and only 0.10 percent of high school students in Prizren did not continue their education online.



04

Percentage share among  
non-participants,  
Municipality of Prizren

In Prizren, the number of girls who did not resume their education during the pandemic was higher than the number of boys. Specifically, 205 girls or 1.53 percent of the overall enrolled girls and 104 boys or 0.72 percent of overall enrolled boys in the Municipality of Prizren did not participate in online education. The gender gap remained similar even when looking at the school level. For instance, the percentage of girls enrolled in primary school in Prizren that could not continue their education online during the pandemic was 1.95 percent while the percentage of boys in the primary schools who could not pursue their education online during the period was 0.95 percent. The gender gap, however, was smaller between high school students. More specifically, around 0.03 percent of boys and 0.19 percent of girls registered in Prizren's high schools did not continue their education online upon the schools' closure during the pandemic.

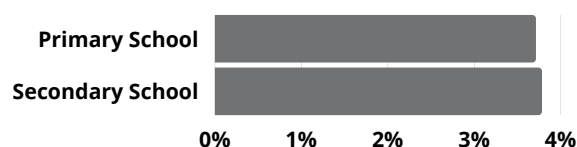
# LOCAL RESULTS

## PEJË



In Peja, the percentage of students who did not resume their education during the pandemic was higher than that of Prizren. More specifically, 620 students, or 7.3 percent, of total enrolled students in Peja did not participate in online education.

In addition, there was an insignificant difference between the percentage of primary school students and secondary school students that did not continue their education during the pandemic, with a slightly higher percentage of high school students. For instance, 3.71 percent of primary school students and 3.83 percent of secondary school students registered in the Municipality of Peja did not take part in online education.



The gender gap in access to online education in the Municipality of Peja was noticeably higher, with boys leading on nonattendance. Around 187, or 2.31 percent, of girls and 433, or 5.10 percent, of boys from the Municipality of Peja did not resume their education online. The percentage of students enrolled in primary versus secondary education also differed when controlling for gender. For instance, in primary education there was a gender difference of 1.92 percent in disfavor of boys, with around 2.72 percent of girls and 4.63 percent of boys who did not resume their education during the pandemic. The gender gap was significantly higher in secondary education. More specifically, in the secondary schools of the Municipality of Peja, the gender difference of non-attendees was 5.37 percent, with 6.51 percent of boys and 1.14 percent of girls discontinuing their education during the pandemic.



05

Percentage share among  
non-participants,  
Municipality of Peja

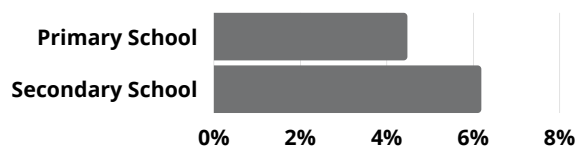
## LOCAL RESULTS

### GJAKOVË



Other than from the capital city, Gjakova had the highest reported number of students who could not resume their education online. Around 711 or 9.6 percent of total enrolled students did not participate in online education.

The percentage of registered secondary school students who did not continue their online education during the pandemic was higher than that of primary school students. Specifically, a reported 4.47 percent of primary school students and 6.18 percent of secondary school students registered in the Municipality of Gjakova did not pursue their online education during the pandemic.



The gender gap in the Municipality of Gjakova was similar to that of Peja. More specifically, around 242 or 3.2 percent of girls and 529 or 6.4 percent of boys in the Municipality of Gjakova could not attend online education. The results are significantly different when looked upon gender and school level. While in Gjakova's primary schools, the gender difference of non-attendees was 1.83 percent in disfavor of boys, with 5.33 percent of boys and 3.50 percent of girls, the gender difference in Gjakova's high schools reached 7.02 percent, with 9.64 percent of boys and 2.62 percent of girls not attending online education.



06

Percentage share among  
non-participants,  
Municipality of Gjakova



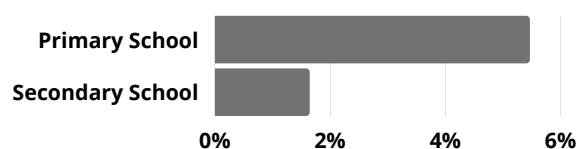
## LOCAL RESULTS

### MITROVICË



With 648 or 8.7 percent of students who did not take part in online education, the Municipality of Mitrovica is among the three leading cities with the highest number of students who did not resume their education online during the pandemic.

There was quite a significant difference in the percentage of primary school versus secondary school non-attendees from the Municipality of Mitrovica. While the percentage of primary school students that did not continue their education online reached 5.46 percent, the percentage of reported secondary school students was 1.64 percent.



The gender gap, however, was insignificantly different with boys leading in nonattendance. More specifically, around 315 or 4.2 percent of total enrolled girls and 333 or 4.5 percent of total enrolled boys in the Municipality of Mitrovica did not resume their education online. In addition, the gender gap was resistant per school level, meaning that there were no significant differences. The gender difference between non-attendees in the primary schools was 0.29 percent, with specifically 5.61 percent of boys and 5.32 percent of girls, whereas the gender difference between non-attendees in the secondary schools was 0.11 percent, with specifically 1.7 percent of boys and 1.59 percent of girls.



07

Percentage share among  
non-participants,  
Municipality of Mitrovica

# LOCAL RESULTS

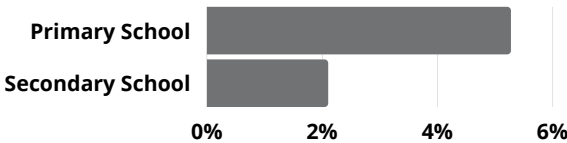
## GJILAN



In the Municipality of Gjilan, the percentage of students who did not continue their education online was similar to that of the Municipality of Mitrovica, with 657 students or 8.4 percent of the total enrolled students did not resume their education online.

There was also a significant difference according to the school level. Around 5.27 percent of the registered students in the primary schools of the Municipality of Gjilan and 1.10 percent of registered high school students did not resume their education, marking a 4.17 percent difference in the attendance according to the school level.

However, there was a gender gap between the non-attendees from the Municipality of Mitrovica. Specifically, around 200 or 2.6 percent of the girls and 457 or 5.8 percent of boys in the Municipality of Gjilan did not resume their education during the pandemic. The gender gap was significantly higher within primary school students, in boys' disfavor. Specifically, a gender difference of 3.9 percent was recorded as per the non-attendance of online education by primary school students, with 7.17 percent of boys and 3.27 percent of girls. The gender difference was lower within high school students, with 2.55 percent of the registered boys and 1.10 percent of registered girls who did not continue their education online during the pandemic.



08

Percentage share among  
non-participants,  
Municipality of Gjilan

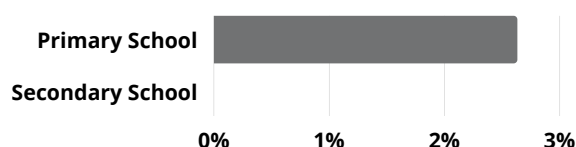
## LOCAL RESULTS

### FERIZAJ



The Municipality of Ferizaj reported only the number of primary school students that did not continue their education online during the schools' closure due to the pandemic. The total number of reported cases from primary schools was 416 making 2.63 percent of the total number of registered students.

As in the Municipality of Gjilan, the percentage of boys who did not continue their education online was higher than that of girls, but the difference was not that significant. More specifically, around 1.7 percent or 188 out of the registered girls and 2.0 percent or 228 out of total registered boys in the school of the Municipality of Ferizaj did not continue their education online.



09

Percentage share among  
non-participants,  
Municipality of Ferizaj

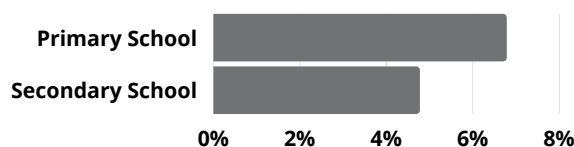
# LOCAL RESULTS

## OBILIQ



In the Municipality of Obiliq, 244 or 6.4 percent of students did not continue their education online during the pandemic.

With a 2 percent difference, the percentage of primary school students, who did not continue their education online, was higher than the percentage of secondary school students. Specifically, 6.78 percent of registered primary school students and 4.77 percent registered secondary school students in the Municipality of Obiliq did not resume their education upon the schools' closure.



In Obiliq's reporting of the online education attendance, there was an insignificant gender gap. More specifically, there were 117 girls or 6.27 percent of enrolled girls and 127 or 6.52 percent of enrolled boys did not continue their education online. Similarly, a difference of 0.02 percent within primary school students and 0.07 percent within secondary school students, it can be considered that there is no gender gap according to school level.



10

Percentage share among  
non-participants,  
Municipality of Obiliq



## LOCAL RESULTS

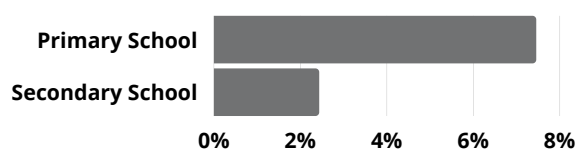
### KLINË



Similarly, in the Municipality of Kline around 448 or 6.3 percent of enrolled students were reported to not have resumed their education online after the schools' closure.

Around 7.45 percent of primary school students and 2.43 percent of secondary school students from the Municipality of Kline were reported to not have participated in online education, creating a 5.02 percent difference between non-attending students as per the school level.

However, there was a small gender gap of 1.2 percent within the group of non-attendeers. Around 201 or 5.7 percent of girls and 247 or 6.9 percent of boys enrolled in the schools of Municipality of Kline did not continue their education online. There was a slight difference in the gender gap between the school levels. In the primary schools, around 8.5 percent of boys and 6.85 percent of girls were reported absent, making a 1.65 percent difference; in the secondary schools, around 3.10 percent of boys and 1.77 percent of girls were reported absent, making a 1.33 percent gender difference between school levels.



11

Percentage share among  
non-participants,  
Municipality of Kline

## LOCAL RESULTS

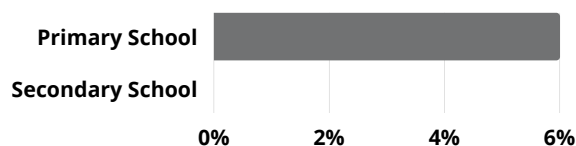
### FUSHË KOSOVË



The Municipality of Fushe Kosove reported that there were 516 students, representing 6.0 percent of enrolled students, who did not resume their education online.

These numbers, however, represent only the data derived from primary schools, meaning that the municipality did not report the number of high school students who did not continue their education online during the pandemic.

The percentage of girls who did not continue the education online was slightly higher than that of boys. Specifically, 258 or 7.7 percent of girls and 258 or 7.1 percent of boys did not continue their education online.



12

Percentage share among  
non-participants,  
Municipality of Fushe Kosova

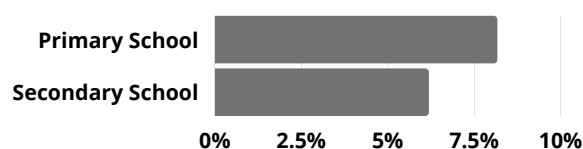
## LOCAL RESULTS

### VUSHTRRI



The reported number by the Municipality of Vushtrri for students that did not continue their education online was 973, making 7.7 percent of the total registered students.

With 8.16 percent of primary school students and 6.18 percent of secondary school students who missed their education with the schools' closure, there was a 1.98 percent difference between non-attendees from the primary versus secondary schools in the Municipality of Vushtrri.



There was a small gender gap within the non-attendees. More specifically, the percentage of girls who did not participate in online education from the Municipality of Vushtrri reached 8 percent, or 375 girls out of total registered. The percentage of boys was lower, with 7.3 percent, or 369 out of total registered boys in the Municipality of Vushtrri. Within primary school non-attendees, there was a 0.31 percent gender difference, with specifically 8.01 percent of primary school boys and 8.32 percent of primary school girls that did not resume their education online upon the schools' closure. Whereas, with 5.04 percent of secondary school boys and 7.47 percent of secondary school girls, there was a 2.43 percent gender difference between high school non-attendees.



13

Percentage share among  
non-participants,  
Municipality of Vushtrri

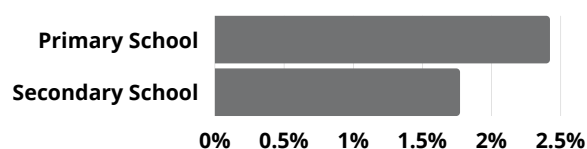
# LOCAL RESULTS

## KAMENICË



The Municipality of Kamenica reported that only 90 students, from both Albanian and Serbian schools, did not continue their education online during the COVID-19 pandemic. The reported number of students represents 2.2 percent of the registered students, a percentage similar to that of the Municipality of Prizren and Municipality of Ferizaj.

With a 0.65 percent difference, the percentage of primary school students who did not take part in online education was higher than the percentage of secondary school students. Specifically, 2.42 percent of the primary school students and 1.77 percent of secondary school students registered in the Municipality of Kamenica, could not continue their education online during the pandemic.



There was a 0.5 percent gender difference in terms of online class attendances. More specifically, 2.0 percent or 38 girls and 2.5 percent or 52 boys out of the total registered students in the Municipality of Kamenica were not able to resume their education upon the schools' closure. The gender gap in this municipality, however, has a different look when analyzed as per the school level. Specifically, the gender gap within the primary school students slightly disfavored boys, whereas the gender gap within secondary school students slightly disfavored girls. Specifically, from the registered primary school students, 2.89 percent of boys and 1.94 percent of girls did not continue their education online; whereas from the registered high school students, 1.52 percent of boys and 2.08 percent of girls did not continue their education online. .



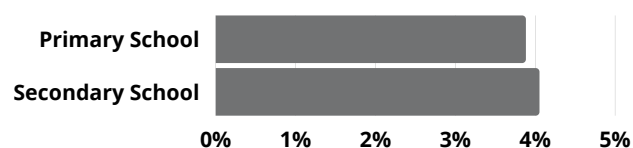
14

Percentage share among non-participants, Municipality of Kamenica

## RESULTS AS PER THE SIZE OF MUNICIPALITIES

The second stage of the result analysis was grouping the results as per the size of the municipalities: major and minor. Therefore, the first category merged the data coming from major municipalities, such as: Prishtina, Prizren, Peja, Gjilan, Mitrovica, Gjakova, and Ferizaj. The second category, on the other hand, merged the data coming from minor municipalities, such as: Fushe Kosove, Vushtri, Obiliq, Kamenice, and Kline. When comparing the results between these two categories, we see that the percentage of students who did not resume their online education during the pandemic was noticeably higher in the minor municipalities than in the major municipalities.

### MAJOR MUNICIPALITIES

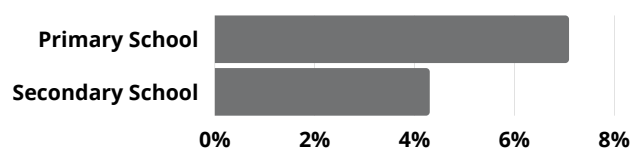


3.8%



4.6%

### MINOR MUNICIPALITIES



5.6%



7.1%

15

Percentage share among  
non-participants, as per the  
size of municipalities



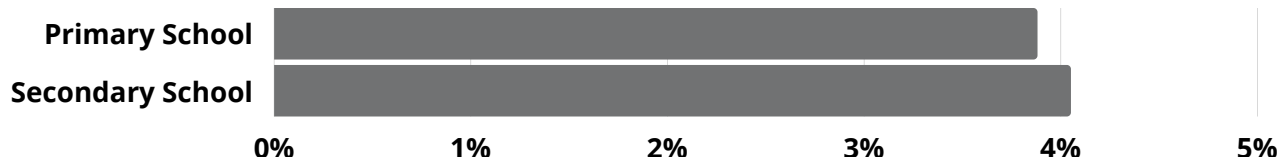
# MAJOR MUNICIPALITIES

The major municipalities reported that a total of around 4.21 percent of the enrolled students could not pursue their education during the pandemic. As per gender, the percentage of non-participating boys was higher than that of non-participating girls. Specifically, 4.61 percent of enrolled boys and 3.79 percent of enrolled girls in major municipalities did not continue their education online during the pandemic. Therefore, the gender gap in the major municipalities was 0.82 percent in disfavor of boys.

Another note from the major municipalities is that the number of high school students in the major municipalities who did not continue online education was slightly higher than that of primary school students. Specifically, around 3.88 percent of the enrolled students in the primary schools and 4.05 percent of the enrolled students in the secondary schools of the major municipalities did not participate in online education. In both levels, there was a slight gender gap in disfavor of boys. For example, in the primary schools, around 4.52 percent of boys and 3.98 percent of girls missed their chance of education; whereas in the secondary schools, 4.91 percent of boys and 3.20 percent of girls missed their chance of education.

**TABLE 2.** The percentage of students from major municipalities that did not continue their education online

2019/2020	Primary			Secondary			Total		
Major Municipalities	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
	4.52%	3.98%	3.88%	4.91%	3.20%	4.05%	4.61%	3.79%	4.21%



# MINOR MUNICIPALITIES

In the minor municipalities, the percentages were higher. A total of around 5.93 percent of the enrolled students in the minor municipalities could not pursue their education during the pandemic.

As in the other category, the percentage of non-participating boys was higher than that of non-participating girls. Specifically, 7.06 percent of enrolled boys and 5.93 percent of enrolled girls in minor municipalities did not continue their education online during the pandemic. Therefore, the gender gap in the minor municipalities was 1.13 percent in disfavor of boys.

In contrast to the major municipalities, in minor municipalities, the number of primary school students who did not continue their education was higher than that of secondary school students. Specifically, around 7.09 percent of the registered primary school students and 4.30 percent of the registered secondary school students in the minor municipalities did not take part in online education. Within the non-participating students of the primary schools in the minor municipalities, there was an insignificant gender gap of 0.13 percent difference in disfavor of boys; 7.15 percent of primary school boys and 7.02 percent of primary school girls in minor municipality primary schools missed their chance of education. On the other hand, within non-participating students of the secondary schools in the minor municipalities, there was a gender gap of 2.67 percent difference in disfavor of girls; 2.05 percent of secondary school boys and 4.72 percent of secondary school girls missed their chance of education during the pandemic.

TABLE 3. The percentage of students from minor municipalities that did not continue their education online

2019/2020	Primary			Secondary			Total		
Major Municipalities	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
	7.15%	7.02%	7.09%	2.05%	4.72%	4.30%	7.06%	5.93%	5.93%



# NATIONAL RESULTS

## KOSOVA

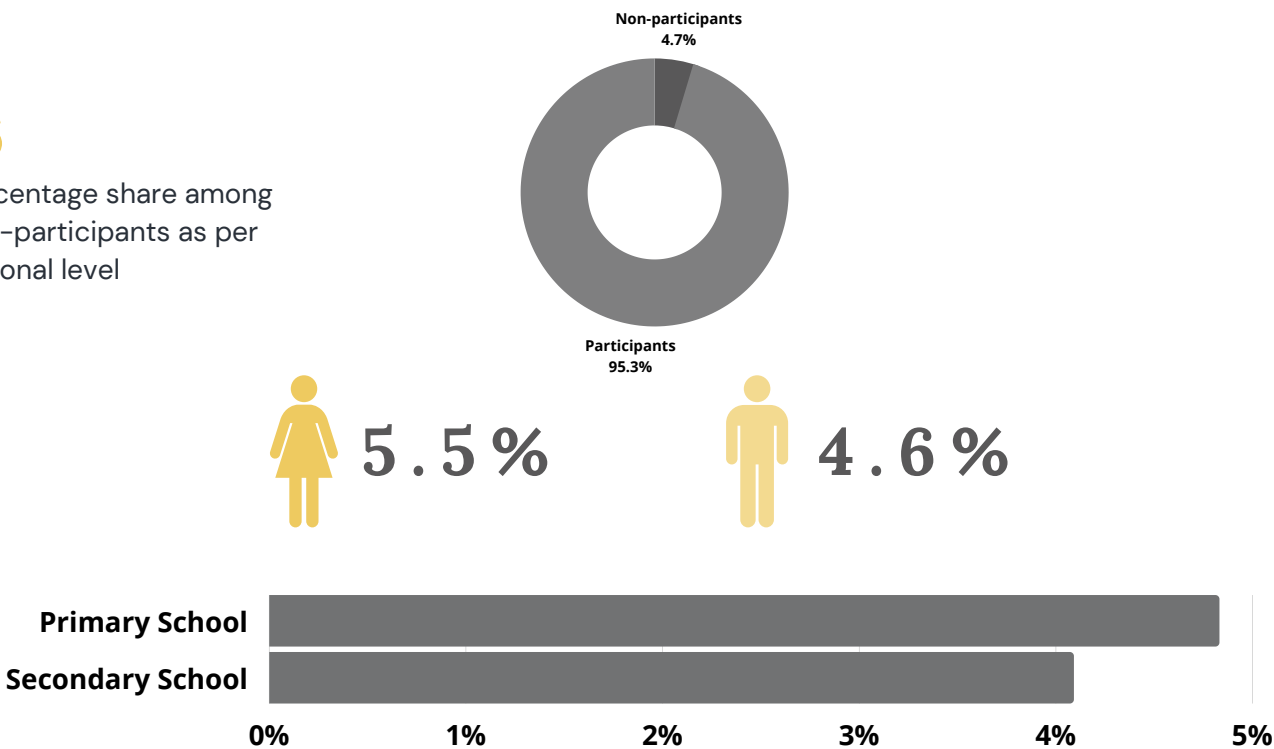
The inclusive results for the gender gap in distance education in Kosova upon the schools' closure during the COVID-19 pandemic derive from the data provided by 12 municipalities. From 12 respondent municipalities, there were two which submitted incomplete data, lacking the number of high school students who did not participate in online education.

From the available results, we could calculate that 4.83 percent of the registered students in the primary schools and 4.09 percent of the registered students in the secondary schools of the respondent municipalities discontinued their education with the schools' closure as the pandemic hit the country. Therefore, by shifting education online, a total of 4.66 percent of the registered students in both primary and secondary schools in the respondent municipalities were reported to have missed the right of pursuing their education.

Taking a closer look at the inclusive results within the grade level, we could see that there is a gender gap of 0.46 percent within the group of primary school students who did not continue their education online. Around 5.05 percent of the registered boys and 4.59 percent of the registered girls in the primary schools of the respondent municipalities were reported absent at their online classes. However, with a 1.33 percent difference, the gender gap was higher within the group of secondary school students that did not attend their online classes, but again in disfavor of boys. Specifically, 4.75 percent of secondary-school boys and 3.42 percent of secondary-school girls were reported absent at their online classes.

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Percentage share among non-participants as per national level



## CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

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The purpose of this study was to quantify the gender gap between students in Kosovo who did not continue their education through distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results of the study were derived from the data submitted from 7 major municipalities and 5 minor municipalities, making a representative sample size with a small margin of error (<1).

Our data analysis shows that the municipality with the lowest percentage of non-participating students in online education is the Municipality of Prizren with a total of 1.11 percent of the enrolled students who did not continue their education during the pandemic. The Municipality of Fushe Kosove, on the other hand, with 7.40 percent of the enrolled students not continuing their education, is the municipality with the highest percentage of non-participating students in online education. As for the gender gap, the largest difference was within the non-participating students from the Municipality of Gjilan, with a 3.21 percent difference in disfavor of boys, whereas the smallest difference was within the non-participating students from the Municipality of Obiliq, with 0.26 percent difference in disfavor of boys. The number of non-participating students is higher in minor municipalities compared to major municipalities. Specifically, 4.21 percent of students enrolled in primary and secondary schools in major municipalities and 5.93 percent of students enrolled in primary and secondary schools in minor municipalities did not continue their education online during the pandemic. This difference was larger when analyzed by school level. The gender gap was also larger in the minor municipalities. In the major municipalities, the gender gap was 0.81 percent in disfavor of boys whereas in the minor municipalities, the gender gap was 1.12 percent, again in disfavor of boys.

Our data calculations and analysis reveal that around 4.66 percent of the enrolled students from the respondent municipalities did not continue their education online during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results show that there is an insignificant gender gap of 0.66 percent between non-participants, in disfavor of boys. Around 4.86 percent of the enrolled boys and 4.20 percent of the enrolled girls in primary and secondary education in the respondent municipalities were reported to not have pursued their education online upon the schools' closure. The gender gap, however, varies as per the school level. For instance, there's a gender gap of 0.46 percent between non-participating primary school students and a gap of 1.33 percent between non-participating secondary school students. This, however, could indicate that the larger gender gap in disfavor of boys is not a result of discrimination but a result of other factors, such as high school students' motivation and interest.

The results of the study show that the gender gap within the non-participating students in online education was not significant. The number of boys who missed the chance of pursuing the education online was generally slightly higher. The results also show that the difference of non-participants from major versus minor municipalities was indeed more significant. As expected, students from minor municipalities were more deprived from online education as opposed to their

peers from major municipalities.

However, one major limitation of the study is that the number of non-participating students in online education, including the gender gap, is hard to be quantified in the conditions that the online learning was conducted in Kosova. The first measure undertaken by the Ministry of Education to respond to the closure of schools was the TV transmission of classes. Online classes, on the other hand, were not mandatory. As such, online classes were mainly organized based on teachers' personal schedules and there were a lot of cases where teachers only set up assignment submissions and did not organize online classes. This happened due to the lack of a national policy and a common or unified platform for proceeding to online education set by the Government. d not just from the municipalities.

Therefore, a recommendation for further research would be to investigate more deeply how online education has been organized in Kosovo. In this regard, it would be interesting to have information and data coming directly from teachers or school leaders and not just from the municipalities.

# POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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From a policy perspective, it is clear that demand-side interventions that address not only accessibility but also digital literacy and education more widely are as critical to distance education as supply-side access and connectivity measures. Closing the gender gap in distance education is not out of reach, but we need to accelerate this progress. The commitment of the G20 ministers in charge to foster digital gender inclusion, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the range of measures devised to address the root causes of this divide are important steps in the right direction.

Another crucial national policy measure that would accelerate the adequate implementation of distance education, as well as increase attendance in distance education, is the drafting of administrative instructions that would make distance education mandatory, similar to traditional education. This would influence both supply-side and demand-side interventions to be more rapidly implemented and would push education stakeholders to meet the needs for digital equipment, digital literacy, and teacher professional development in distance education.



# APPENDIX

## CALCULATIONS

**TABLE 4.** The percentage of non-participating students in distance education as per school-level and municipality

2019/2020	Primary			Secondary			Total		
Municipalities									
Major	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Prishtinë	7.24%	6.71%	6.45%	8.08%	7.85%	7.96%	6.66%	7.01%	6.83%
Prizren	0.95%	1.95%	1.44%	0.03%	0.19%	0.10%	0.72%	1.53%	1.11%
Pejë	4.63%	2.72%	3.71%	6.51%	1.14%	3.83%	5.10%	2.31%	3.74%
Gjakovë	5.33%	3.50%	4.47%	9.54%	2.62%	6.18%	6.45%	3.26%	4.93%
Mitrovicë	5.61%	5.32%	5.46%	1.70%	1.59%	1.64%	4.57%	4.22%	4.39%
Gjilan	7.17%	3.27%	5.26%	2.55%	1.10%	1.82%	5.81%	2.60%	4.22%
Ferizaj	2.85%	2.41%	2.63%	//	//	//	2.06%	0.85%	2.63%
Minor									
Obiliq	6.89%	6.67%	6.78%	5.00%	4.77%	4.77%	6.52%	6.27%	6.40%
Fushë Kosovë	7.12%	7.71%	7.40%	//	//	//	5.89%	6.21%	7.40%
Klinë	8.05%	6.85%	7.45%	3.10%	2.43%	2.43%	6.97%	5.71%	6.34%
Kamenicë	2.89%	1.94%	2.42%	1.52%	1.77%	1.77%	2.50%	1.97%	2.24%
Vushtri	8.01%	8.32%	8.16%	5.04%	6.18%	6.18%	5.60%	6.24%	5.90%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5.05%</b>	<b>4.59%</b>	<b>4.83%</b>	<b>4.75%</b>	<b>4.09%</b>	<b>4.09%</b>	<b>4.86%</b>	<b>4.20%</b>	<b>4.66%</b>

Source: Authors' calculations based on the total number of registered students and the municipalities' reported number of students to not have continued their education online during the pandemic



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