



REPORT

Results of the survey on the potential impact of visa liberalization on the labor market in Kosovo.

Prishtinë, July 2023

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Introduction

Kosovo, as the youngest country in Europe, since 2008 is following with confident steps its path to the aspirations for EU membership. On April 18, the European Parliament adopted the final decision to liberalize visas. Citizens of Kosovo will be able to move freely in Europe from January 1, 2024.

In anticipation of visa liberalization next year, there is a need to think critically about how this development will affect the economic, political and social conditions in the country. Taking in consideration the challenges that Kosovo will be facing, there is an inevitable need to be prepared in advance with the changes that the EU visa liberalization will bring, especially in the labor market.

The Headhunter Karriera LLC – Kosovo, as one of the leading companies in the field of employment, has conducted a research study on the perception of citizens of the Republic of Kosovo regarding the impact of visa liberalization on the labor market in Kosovo. This study is prepared in collaboration with the students of “Pjeter Budi” College.

The aim of this research was to understand the risks and potential benefits of visa liberalization with the European Union (EU) on the job market in Kosovo. Through this survey, the opinions of the respondents regarding the potential impact of visa liberalization on the job market, as well as their concerns related to the shortage of qualified workforce, implementation of labor law, and employers’ approach to employees were analyzed.

In this study, demographic data were collected for the respondents, including their education level, age, profession, and location. These data helped create a comprehensive view of the potential impact of visa liberalization on different population groups in Kosovo.

The results of this study will serve as an important basis for the development of tailored policies to address the needs and specific circumstances of different groups within the job market in Kosovo. The study aims to help various governmental institutions as well as small, medium and large businesses to further design the steps they need to take in order to properly manage the challenges that will be created in the field of employment in the future. This will help ensure better economic and social integration with the countries of the European Union, thus enhancing the benefits and reducing potential risks in this process.

A complete description of the research results will be available on the website of The Headhunter Karriera LLC (www.theheadhunter.com), results presented [Click here](#) as well as on the official website of “Pjetër Budi” College (www.pjeterbudi-edu.com). Additionally, the results will be shared with all interested parties.

Methodology

The methodology used for this report is based on the development of an electronic questionnaire through the SurveyMonkey platform, involving various stakeholders such as university professors, researchers, field experts, and students.

The questionnaire consists of a total of 27 questions divided into 5 different sections, which were distributed electronically to gather data from interested participants.

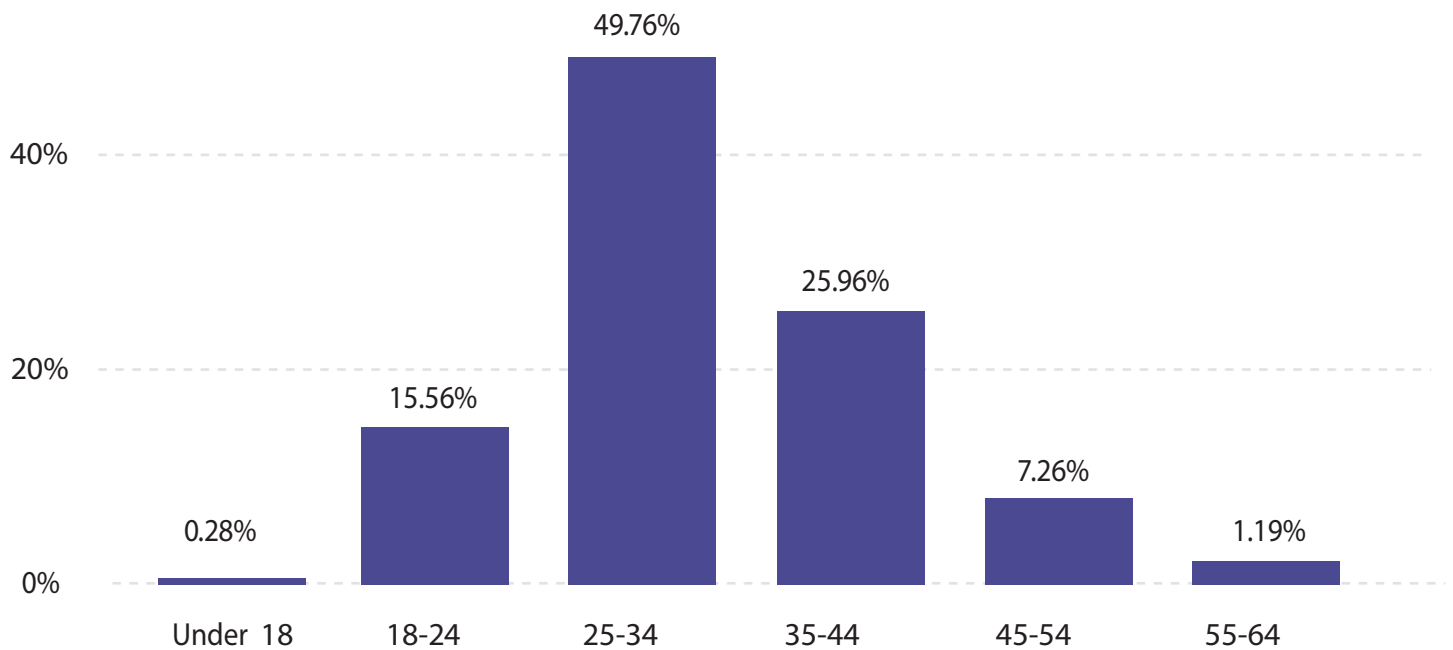
In total, 1433 individuals participated in this study, with 1207 of them fully completing the questionnaire, resulting in a response rate of 84.2%.

After the data collection period concluded, all gathered responses were carefully reviewed and analyzed. The analysis process involved evaluating answers for each question and section of the questionnaire. Additionally, a demographic analysis was conducted to determine the representation of respondents across different age groups in the report. The analysis process was directed towards identifying trends, patterns, and various relationships among the collected data.

Data Analysis

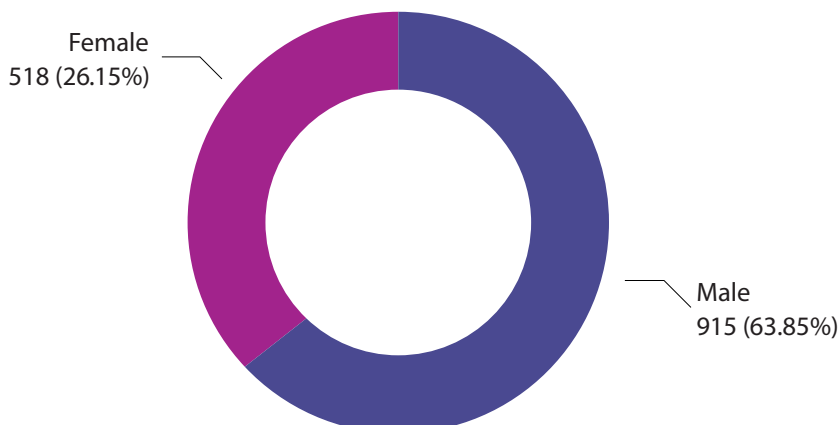
The findings of this study are based on the data gathered from a survey of 1433 participants, and the following results emerged from the collected responses.

Q1 How old are you? 1,433

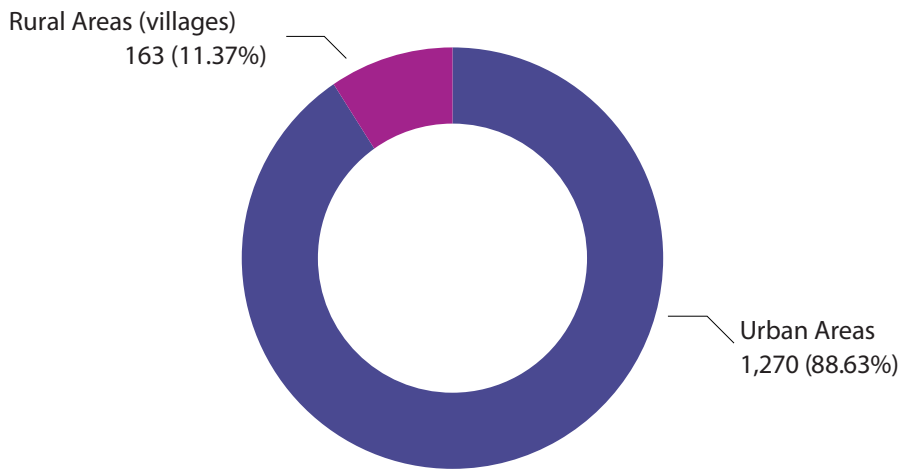


In this study, 1433 individuals participated, where approximately 50% of the respondents belonged to the age group of 25-34 years, 26% were in the age group of 35-44 years, and about 16% were aged 18-24 years. The three age groups with the least representation were 45-54 years with 7%, 55-64 years with 1%, and under 18 years with only 0.3% of the respondents. There were no respondents above the age of 64 years.

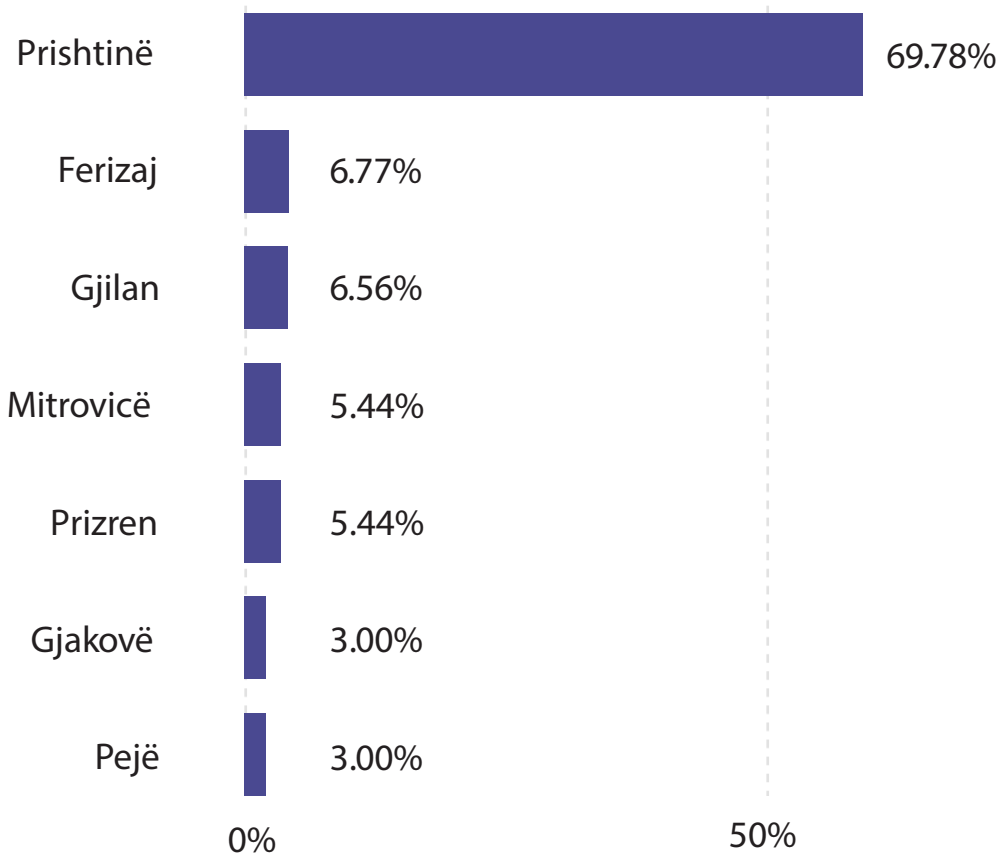
Q2 What is your gender? 1,433



Among the respondents, approximately 64% of them are male, while 36% are female.



Around **89%** of the respondents have declared that they live in urban areas, while **11%** claim to live in rural areas (villages).

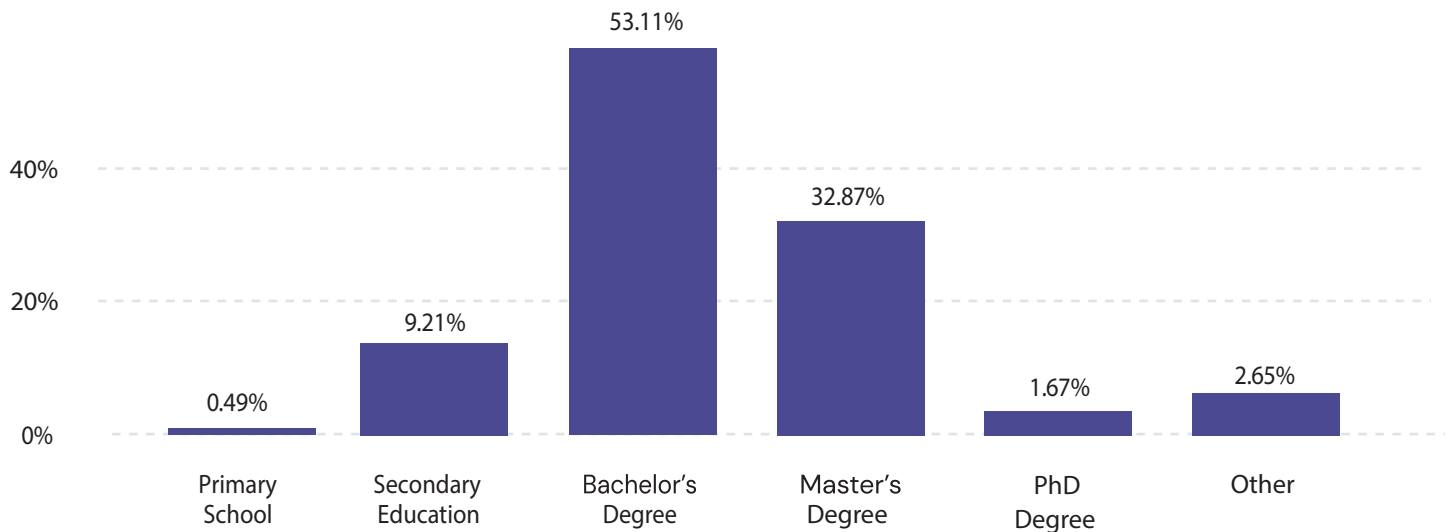


The majority of the respondents (70%) are residents of Prishtina, while the remaining portion comes from the six main regions of Kosovo. The regions of Ferizaj and Gjilan had a similar number of respondents, with 6.8% and 6.6% respectively. Mitrovica and Prizren each had 5.5% representation, while Gjakova and Peja had 3% representation.

Q5

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

1,433

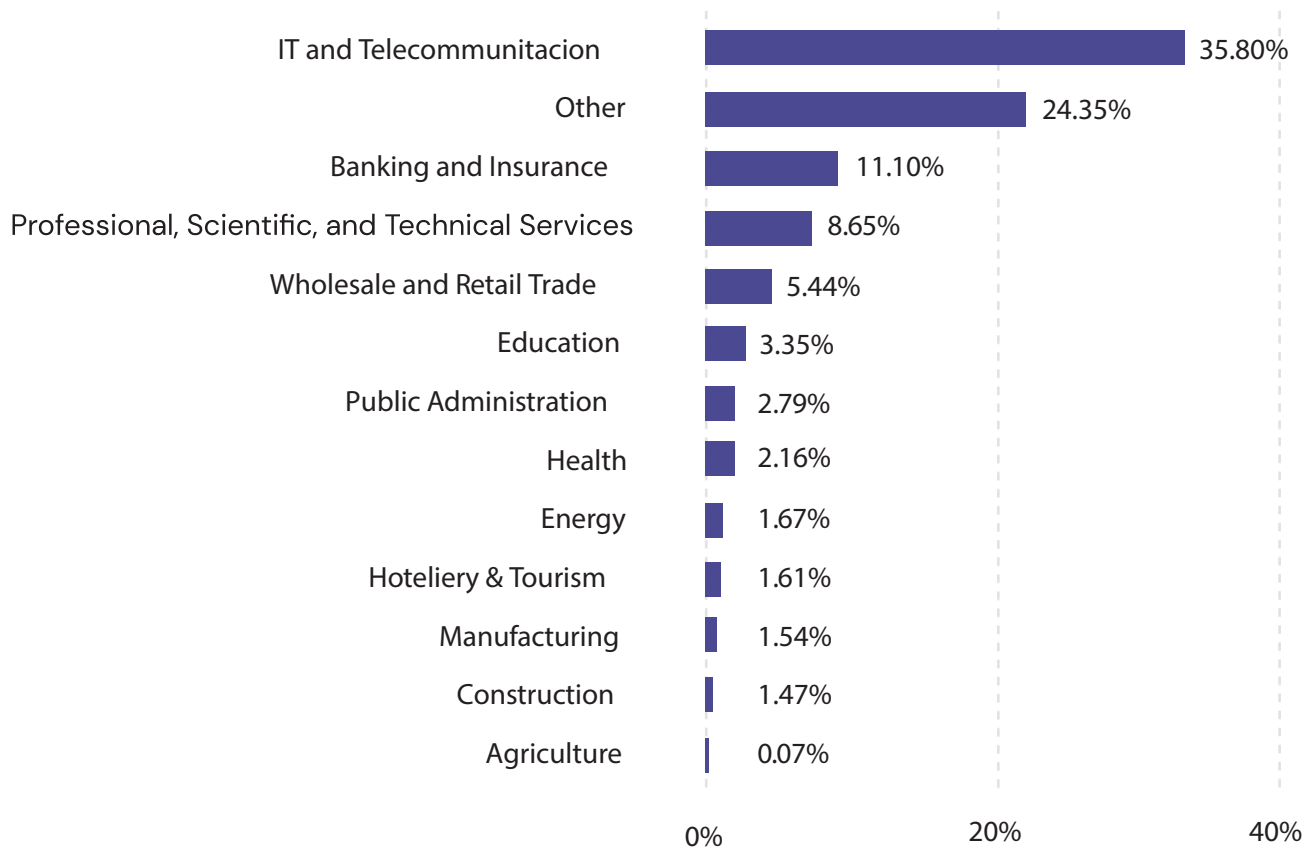


According to the data from this study, the majority of the respondents have completed their bachelor's degree (53%), followed by those with a master's degree (33%). Approximately 9% have completed their secondary education, while only around 2% have a PhD degree. Only 7 individuals declared that they have completed only primary school, while about 3% chose the option "Other".

Q6

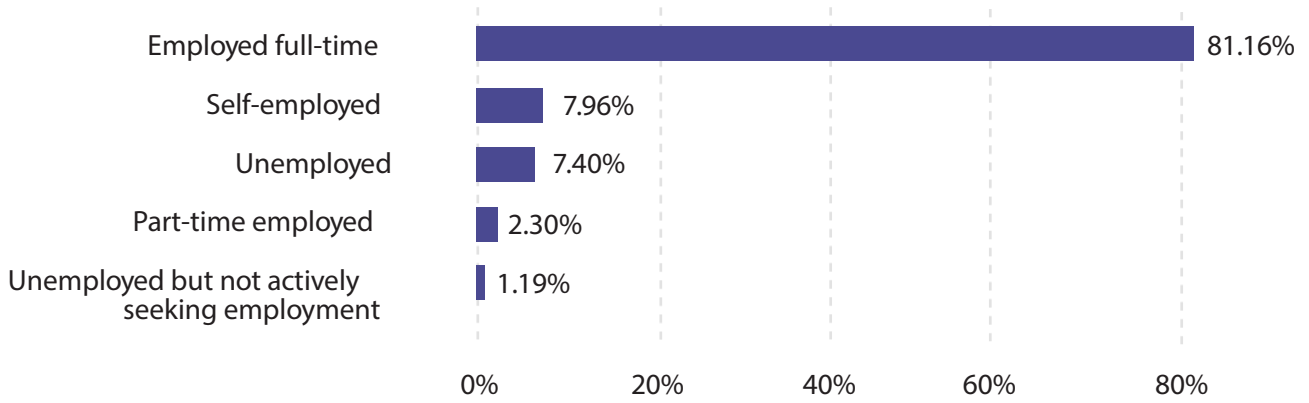
What is your current profession?

1,433



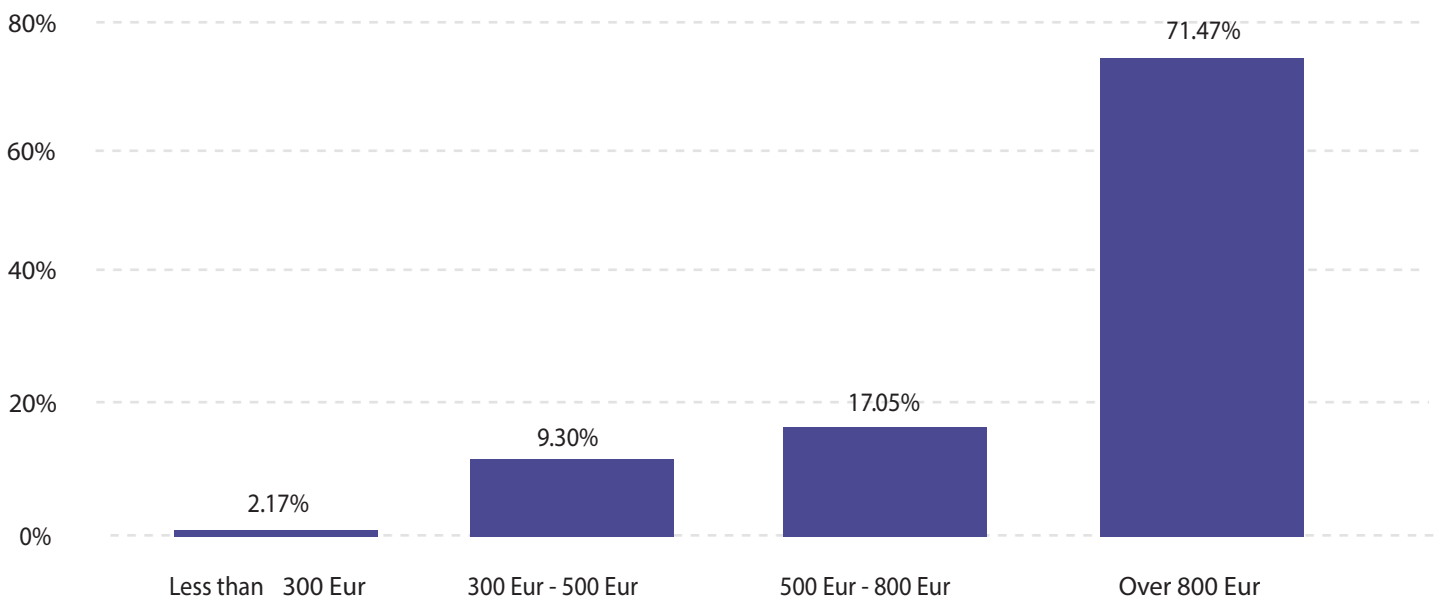
In response to the question "What is your current profession?" the IT and Telecommunication profession predominates with 36%. A significant portion of the respondents (24%) were from a different profession than the options offered in the survey. Approximately 11% were in the Banking and Insurance sector, 9% in Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, 5% in Wholesale and Retail Trade, while other professions offered as choices make up around 14%.

Q7 What is your current employment status? 1,433

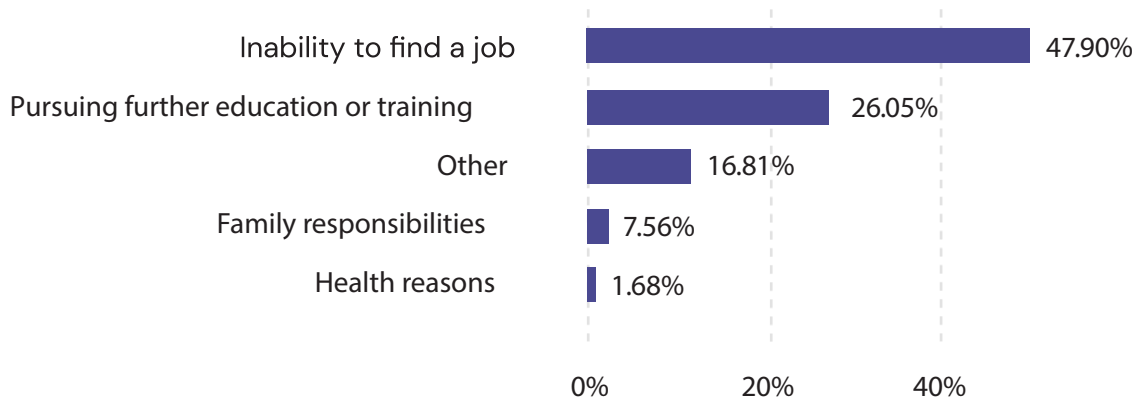


The majority of the respondents declared that they are employed full-time (81%), followed by self-employed individuals (8%) and unemployed individuals (7%). Only 2% reported having part-time employment, while only 1% were unemployed but not actively seeking employment.

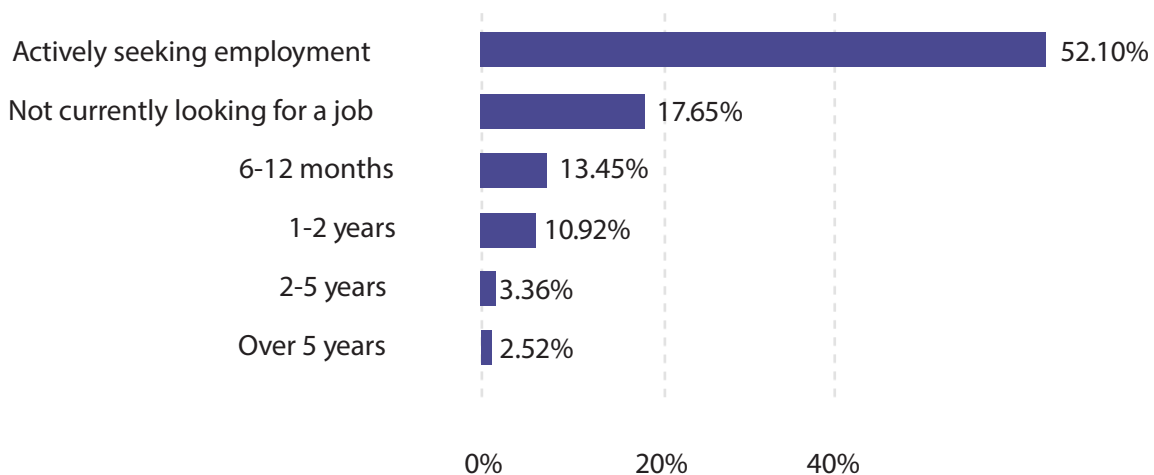
Q8 What is your average monthly income? 1,290



Over 71% of the participants in this study reported having monthly incomes of over 800 Euros. Around 17% indicated having incomes of more than 500 but less than 800 Euros monthly. Approximately 9% declared having incomes between 300 and 500 Euros, while only 2% have incomes of less than 300 Euros.



Among the unemployed respondents, the main reason highlighted for their unemployment was the inability to find a job (48% of the respondents). Pursuing further education or training was the second most chosen reason, with 26%. Family responsibilities and health reasons accounted for 8% and 2% respectively. Around 17% of the participants cited various other reasons not mentioned above.



Among the unemployed individuals, 52% were actively seeking employment. Approximately 18% of them were not currently looking for a job, while 13% were searching for a job for a period of 6-12 months. 11% expressed that they have been searching for a job for 1-2 years, while around 3% have been searching for 2-5 years and over 5 years, respectively.



Around 36% of the unemployed families in this study reported having monthly incomes between 500 and 1000 Euros. Approximately 26% indicated having around 500 Euros of family income per month, 23% declared having family incomes between 1000 and 1500 Euros, while 15% stated that their average monthly family income is above 1500 Euros.

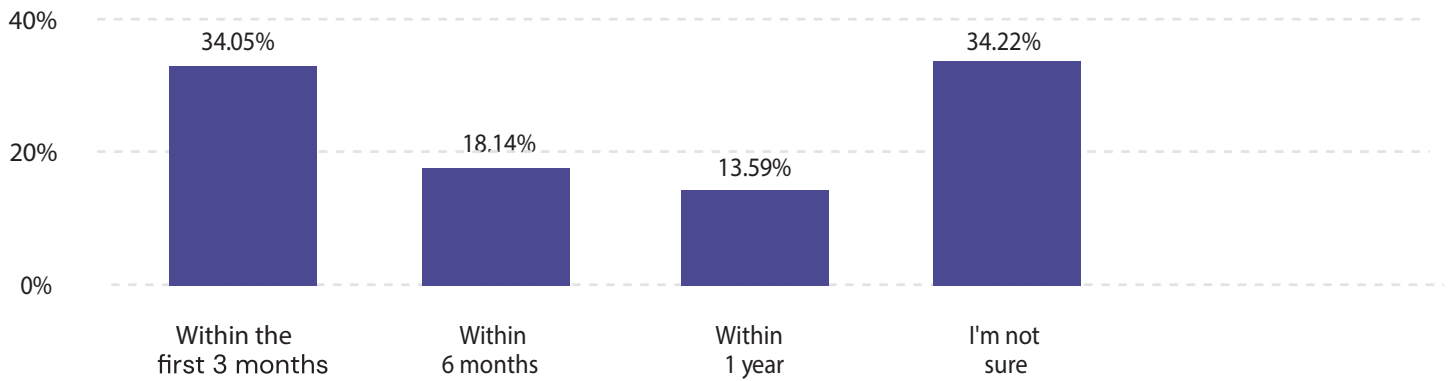
Purpose	Amount	Amount in %	% according to the respondents
Tourism	857	37.26%	71.00%
Visiting family	497	21.61%	41.18%
Business purposes	383	16.65%	31.73%
To find a job	340	14.78%	28.17%
For studying	185	8.04%	15.33%
Other	38	1.65%	3.15%

The main reason for traveling to EU countries appears to be Tourism (37%), followed by visiting family as the second most chosen reason (22%). Approximately 17% stated traveling for Business purposes, while 15% mentioned traveling to find a job. Around 8% mentioned studying in EU countries as the purpose of their studies, and about 2% cited various other reasons not mentioned above.

Q13

Will you travel to the EU after visa liberalization?

1,207

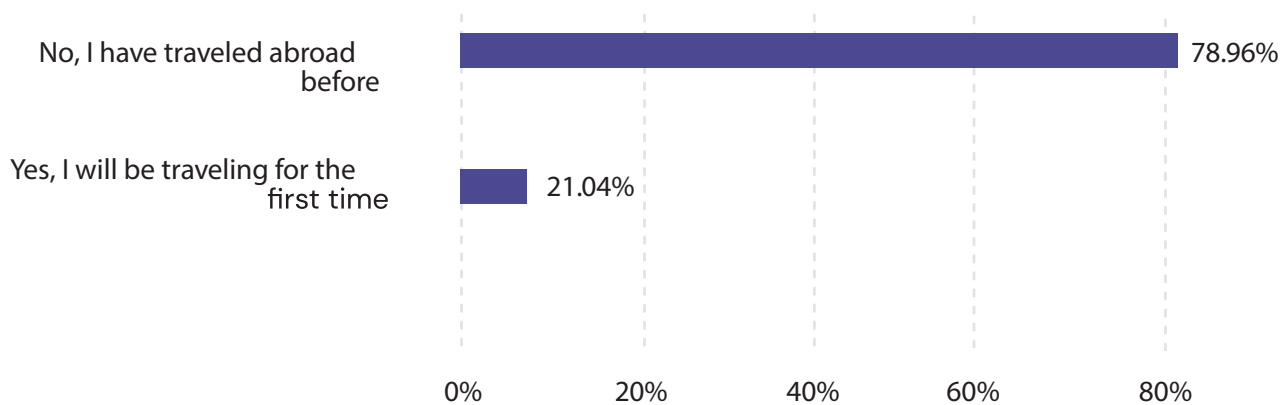


Approximately 34% of the respondents expressed their intention to travel to EU countries within the first 3 months after the visa liberalization. The same percentage (34%) was unsure about the exact timing of their travel to the EU. Around 18% said they plan to travel within 6 months after visa liberalization, and 14% of them stated they would travel within one year.

Q14

Will this be your first time traveling to an EU country?

1,207

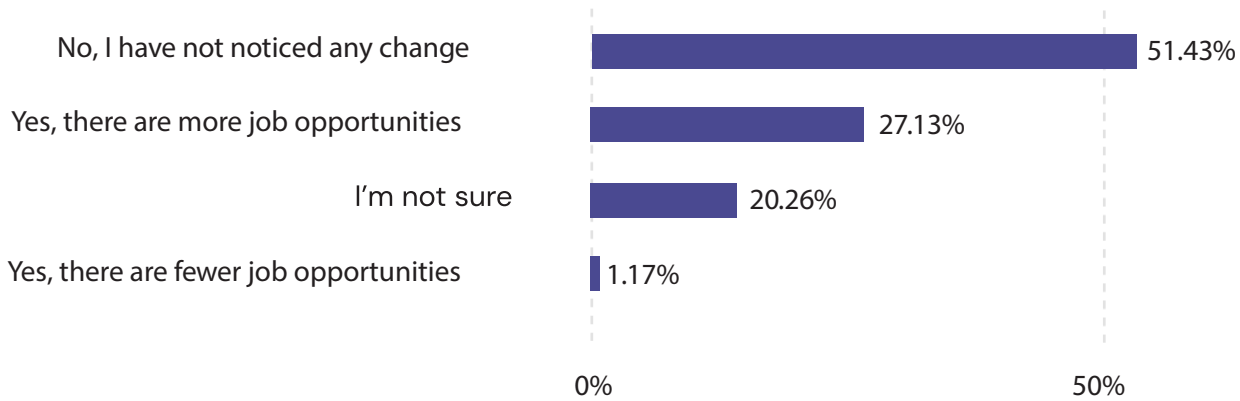


According to this research, approximately 79% of the respondents have traveled abroad before, while 21% will be traveling for the first time to EU countries.

Q15

Have you noticed any difference in job opportunities since the official announcement about visa liberalization for Kosovo?

1,207

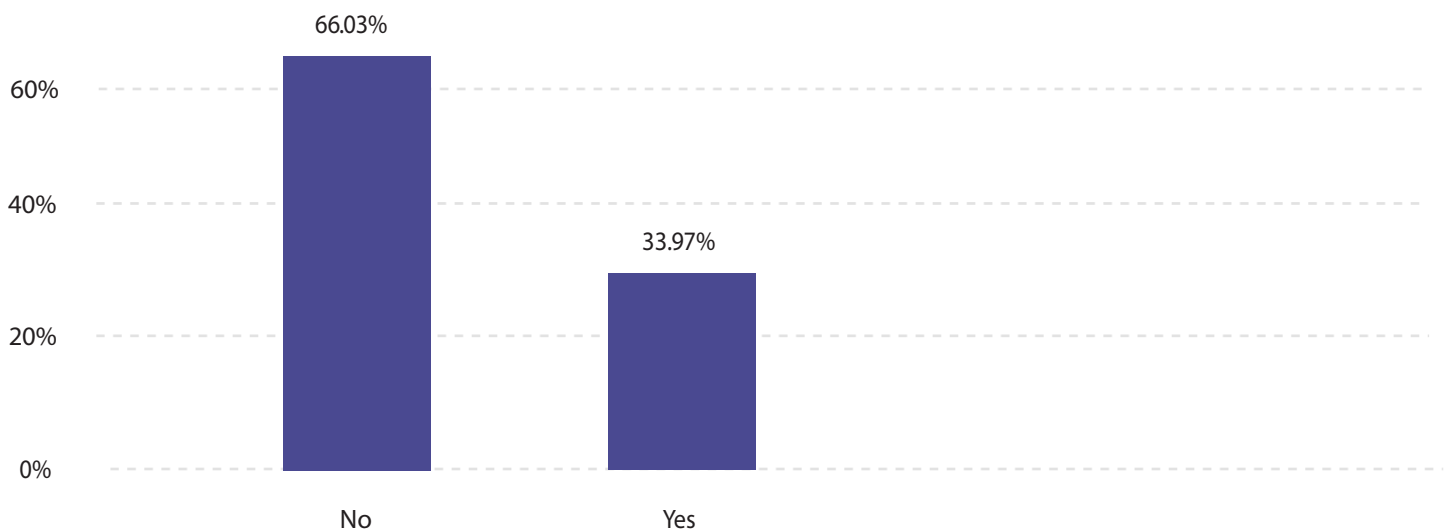


According to the survey, 51% of the participants stated that they have not noticed any change in employment opportunities since the announcement of visa liberalization. On the other hand, 27% declared that they believe there are more job opportunities, while 20% were unsure, and 1% reported observing fewer job opportunities.

Q16

Since the official announcement about visa liberalization for Kosovo, have you considered finding a job outside the country?

1,207

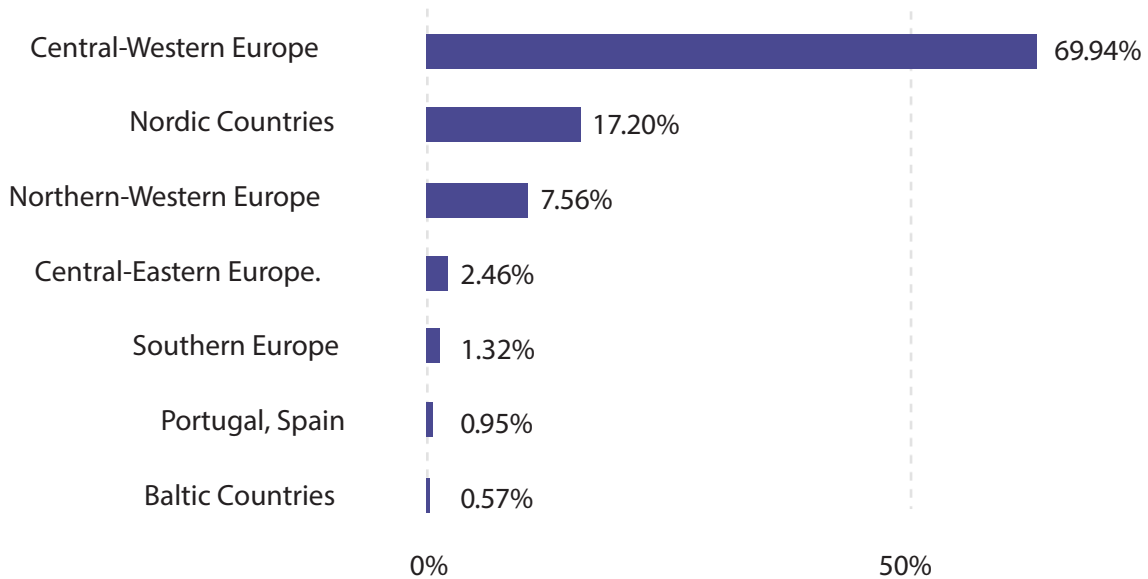


According to the data from this survey, 66% of the respondents have not considered finding employment outside the country since the news of visa liberalization for Kosovo. On the other hand, approximately 34% have stated that they have considered seeking job opportunities in EU countries.

Q17

If you answered 'yes' to the previous question, in which countries have you considered working?

529

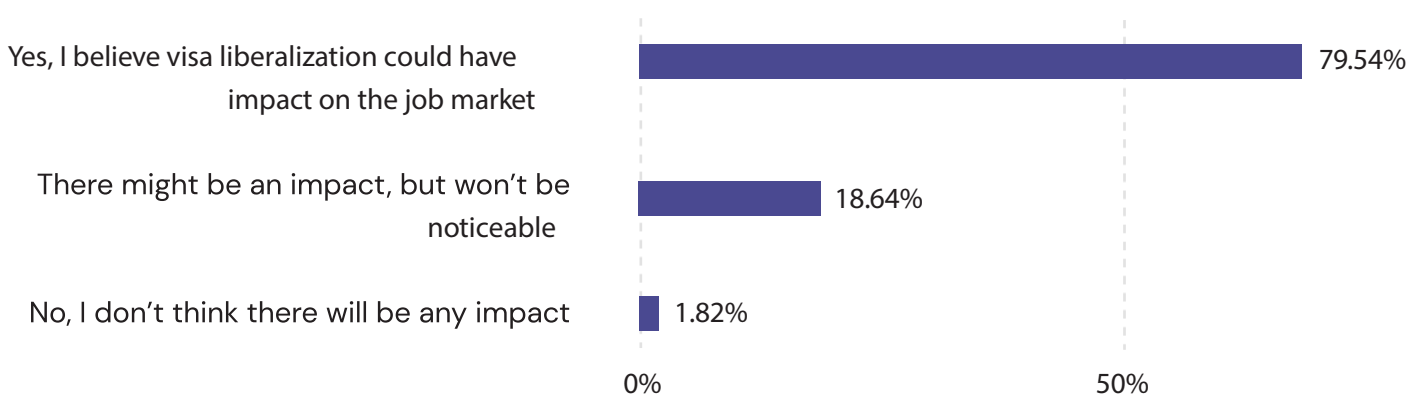


Out of the 34% of respondents who have stated that they have considered finding employment in EU countries, approximately 70% declared that their destination would be Central-Western Europe, 17% prefer Nordic countries, and 7% would work in Northern-Western Europe. Only 2% would work in Central-Eastern Europe, while less than 1% of the respondents chose Portugal, Spain, and the Baltic countries as their preferred destinations for work.

Q18

Do you believe that visa liberalization can impact the Kosovo labor market?

1,207

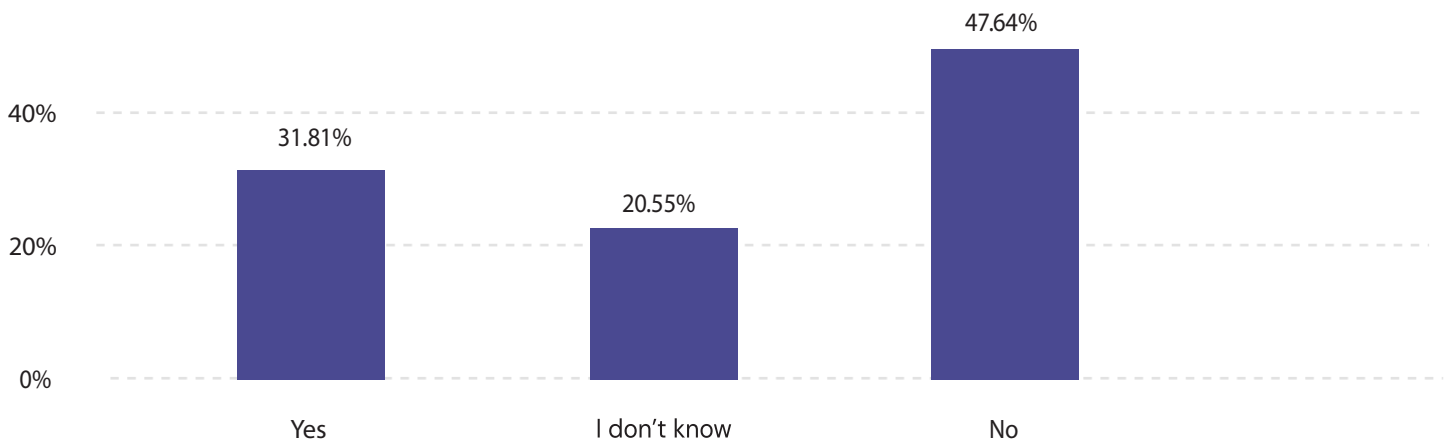


Approximately 80% of the respondents declared that they believe visa liberalization could have an impact on the job market in Kosovo. Around 19% stated that there might be an impact, but it won't be noticeable. Close to 2% declared that they don't think there will be any impact.

Q19

A year from now, do you believe the job market in Kosovo will be able to compete with labor markets in other European countries?

1,207

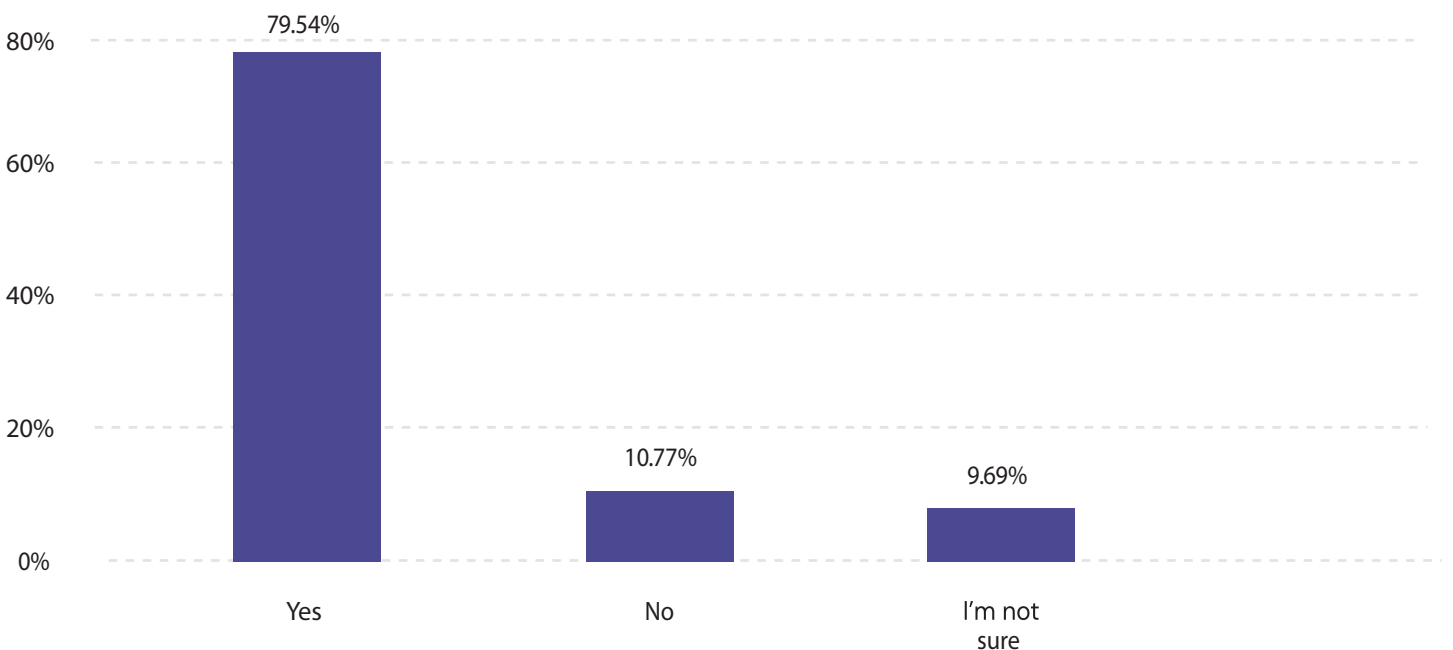


According to the survey, 32% of the respondents stated that the job market in Kosovo can compete with job markets in other European countries. However, 47% denied that Kosovo can compete with the European job market, and 20% expressed that they do not know or are unsure about this matter.

Q20

Do you believe that visa liberalization will make it easier for Kosovo citizens to find jobs in other European countries?

1,207

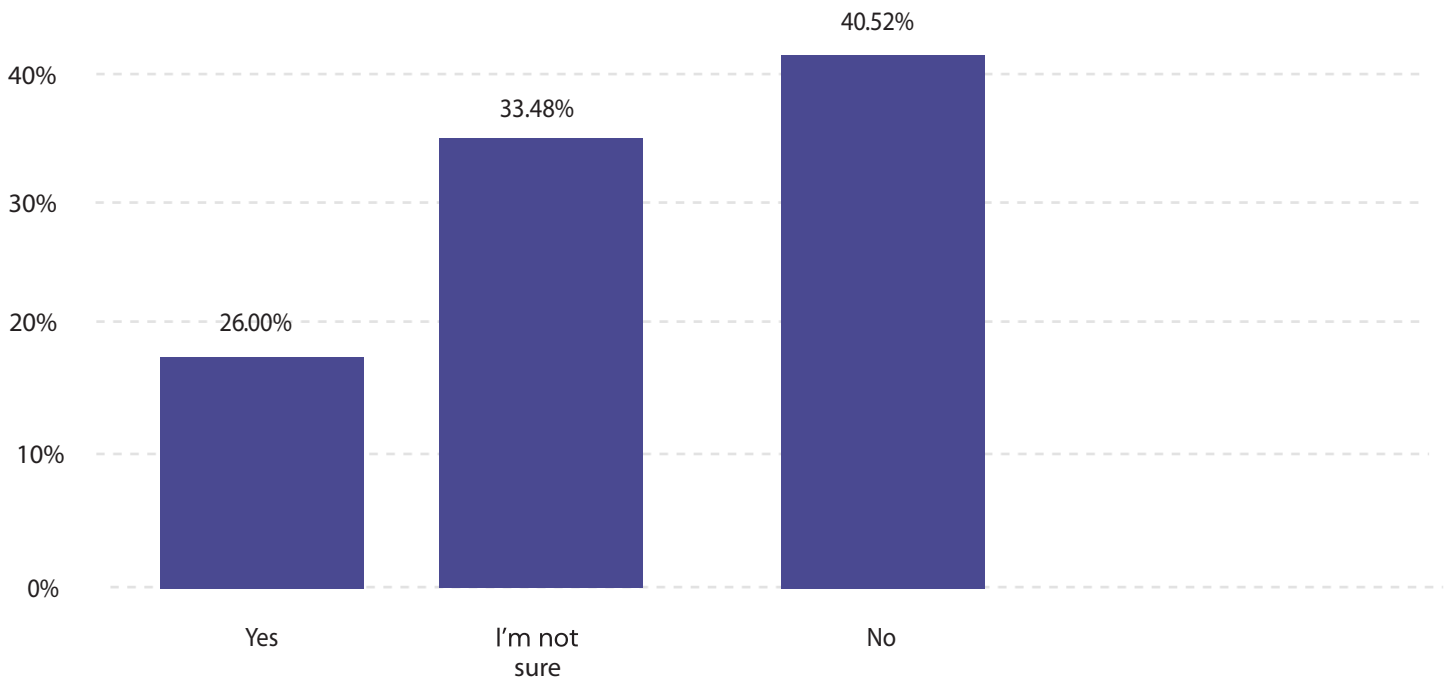


Approximately 80% of the respondents stated that visa liberalization will facilitate job opportunities for citizens of Kosovo outside the country. Around 10% denied this claim, while 9% expressed uncertainty about the impact of visa liberalization on job opportunities abroad.

Q21

Do you plan to emigrate to another country in the foreseeable future?

1,207



Around 41% of the respondents have denied that they wish to emigrate abroad in the near future, while 26% affirmed their desire to emigrate. Approximately 33% are unsure about their future emigration plans.

Q22

If you have considered emigrating to another European country, what is the primary reason?

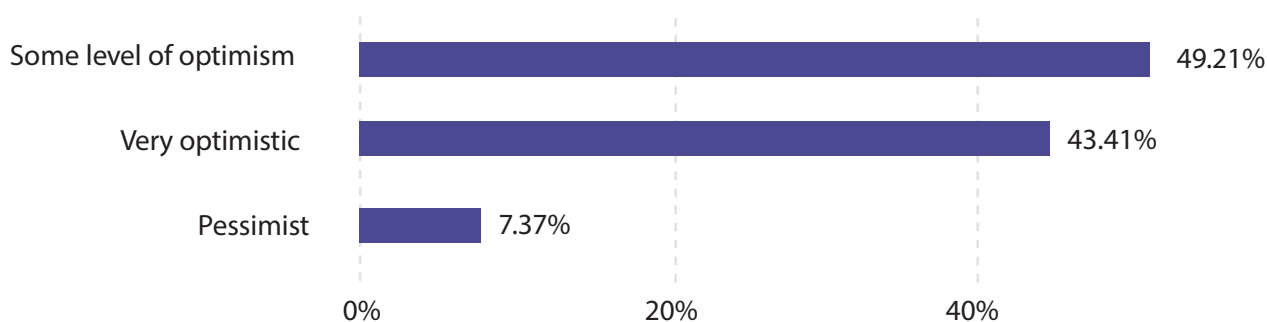
1,207

Primary reason	Amount	Amount in %	% according to the respondents
Quality of life	782	36.96%	64.79%
Better job opportunities	469	22.16%	38.86%
Better educational opportunities	369	17.44%	30.57%
Other	195	9.22%	16.16%
Family reasons	176	8.32%	14.58%
Political or social reasons	125	5.91%	10.36%

According to the survey, the highest quality of life is the main reason for 37% of the respondents who declared that they would consider emigrating abroad. Better job opportunities were mentioned by 22% as the main reason for considering emigration in the future. In the other hand, 17% see better educational opportunities as the primary reason, 6% would consider emigrating for political or social reasons, 8% for family reasons, and 9% for various other reasons.

Impact	Amount	Amount in %	% according to the respondents
Shortage of qualified workforce in Kosovo	820	24.20%	67.94%
Brain drain, as highly qualified workers leave for better job opportunities in the EU	719	21.22%	59.57%
Increase of wages and benefits for workers in Kosovo	708	20.90%	58.66%
Enforcement of labor law in Kosovo	425	12.54%	35.21%
Reduction of competition for jobs	411	12.13%	34.05%
Increase competition for jobs	267	7.88%	22.12%
Other	24	0.71%	1.99%
Decrease in wages and benefits for workers in Kosovo	14	0.41%	1.16%

According to 24% of the respondents, the shortage of qualified workforce in Kosovo could be an impact that could be created by the liberalization of visas in the labor market in Kosovo. Brain drain, as highly qualified workers leave for better job opportunities in the EU, is seen as a reason by 21% of the respondents. The liberalization of visas is believed to have an impact on the increase of wages and benefits for workers in Kosovo according to 20% of the respondents, while 13% think that the enforcement of labor law in Kosovo could also be improved with the visa liberalization. Around 12% believe that the visa liberalization will reduce competition for jobs, whereas 8% think that it will increase competition for jobs, and less than 1% think that it will lead to a decrease in wages and benefits for workers in Kosovo.



A percentage of 43% of the respondents expressed optimism that visa liberalization will impact the improvement of working conditions for workers in Kosovo, while 49% expressed some level of optimism, and 7% expressed pessimism.

Q25

In your opinion, how might visa liberalization affect employers' attitudes in Kosovo?

1,207

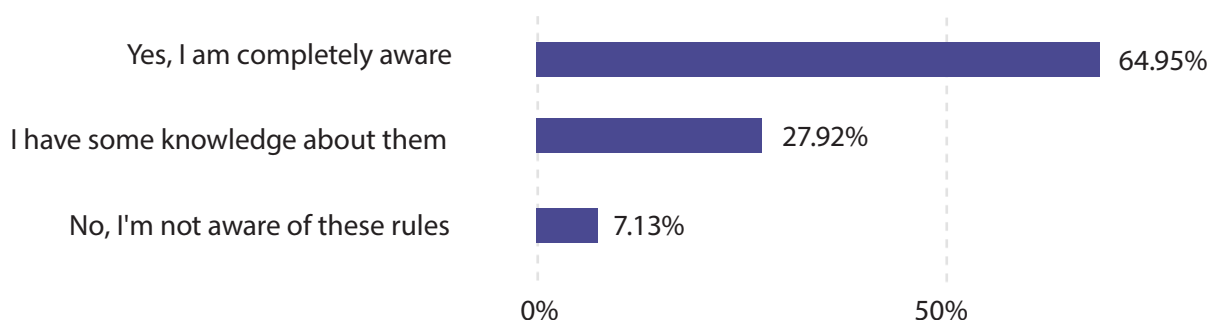
Employers' attitudes	Amount	Amount in %	% according to the respondents
Better treatment of workers due to increase in job opportunities	812	35.85%	67.27%
Increase in competition for qualified labor, leading to higher wages and improved working conditions	710	31.35%	58.82%
The improvement of working conditions offered by employers due to the rise in the number of EU companies investing in Kosovo	508	22.43%	42.09%
There will be greater exploitation of workers due to the labor force shortage	215	9.49%	17.81%
Other	20	0.88%	1.66%

A percentage of 36% of the respondents believe that visa liberalization will impact in better treatment of workers due to the increase in job opportunities. Approximately 31% think that the impact of liberalization will be the increase in competition for qualified labor, leading to higher wages and improved working conditions. The improvement of working conditions offered by employers due to the rise in the number of EU companies investing in Kosovo is chosen by 22%, and 9% believe that there will be greater exploitation of workers due to the labor force shortage.

Q26

Are you aware of the rules regarding visa-free travel and short-term stay for Kosovo citizens in the EU?

1,207

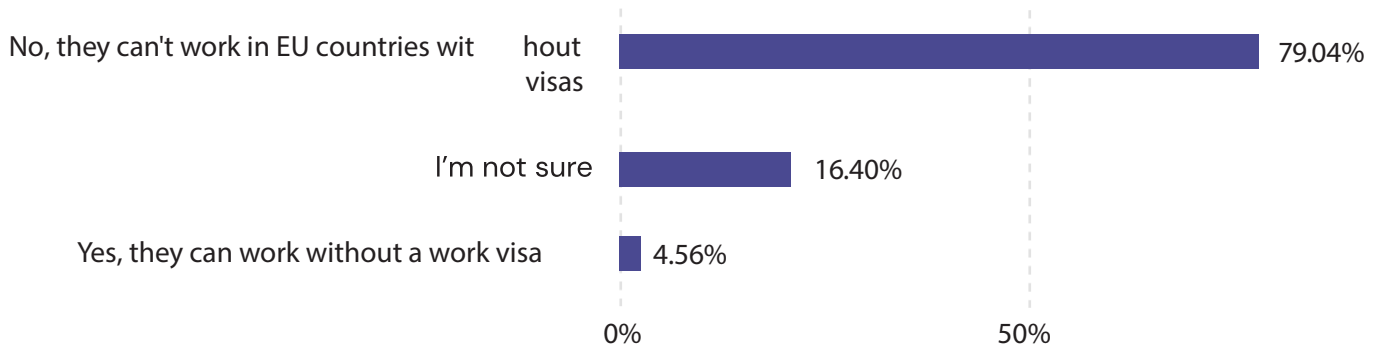


Aware of the rules regarding visa-free travel and short-term stay in EU, were 65% of respondents. Another 28% stated that they have some knowledge about these rules, while 7% stated that they have no knowledge about these rules.

Q27

Will Kosovo citizens be able to work without work visas in EU countries?

1,207



More than 79% of the respondents are informed that citizens of Kosovo cannot work in EU countries without visas, 16% expressed uncertainty, while 4% believe that it is possible to work in EU countries without visas.

Conclusion

Based on the data presented in this study, some conclusions can be drawn regarding the impact of visa liberalization on the labor market in Kosovo:

The majority of respondents have completed their studies at the bachelor's level and are employed full-time, indicating a high level of education and a relatively stable job market in the country.

Professions known as IT and Telecommunications are most frequently chosen by the respondents, while others are employed in various industries such as Banking, Insurance, Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, etc.

Around 89% of the respondents live in urban areas, with most of them being residents of Pristina. This indicates a center of economic activity in urban areas.

Approximately 80% of the respondents believe that visa liberalization will have an impact on the labor market in Kosovo. Some see this as an opportunity for the betterment of job conditions and wages, others see this as an opportunity to find jobs in other European countries. Others are concerned about competition and the risk of qualified workforce leaving (brain drain).

The primary reason for traveling to EU countries is tourism, while a significant percentage of respondents consider traveling for family visits or even job opportunities.

About 21% of the respondents will travel to EU countries for the first time, showing a positive impact of visa liberalization on the free movement of citizens of Kosovo. The majority of respondents are informed and aware of the rules regarding visa-free travel and short-term stay in the EU.

Based on the study data, it seems that visa liberalization will have an impact on the labor market in Kosovo. Some respondents see this as an opportunity to find jobs in other European countries or improve working conditions in the country due to potential foreign investments, while others are concerned about competition and the potential impact on the labor market in Kosovo. It is essential for the authorities and institutions in Kosovo to consider these factors and take measures to address challenges and utilize the opportunities that visa liberalization brings for the development of the labor market in the country.

Gratitude and Acknowledgments

We extend heartfelt gratitude to all survey participants for their valuable input and contributions.

Special thanks to students from Pjetër Budi Collage for their assistance in data collection. The Headhunter team's efforts in preparing the report and analyzing results. Sabedin Meha's exceptional work in visualizing results through Power BI.