

WOMEN IN POLITICAL PROGRAMMES DURING THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS 2021

Monitoring Report March – April 2021

Key Findings

The programs of political parties are of outmost importance especially in the pre-election period. For this reason, identifying and addressing issues that improve the life quality of the citizens, especially of the most disadvantaged ones, should be a central part of the political offer of each electoral force. Unfortunately, political parties in Albania continue to face the challenge of ensuring equal participation and representation of women and men at all levels. **Gender mainstreaming in the political programs of the parties remains a problematic that despite improvements from one electoral process to another, still fails to reflect the needs of girls and women in the country.**

A major problem observed was the lack of programs of the two main parties in the elections, the Socialist Party (SP) and the Democratic Party (PD), until the end of March 2021. **Public calls and official requests addressed by AWEN to these parties have not received a response.** The other two monitored political forces, Socialist Movement for Integration (LSI) and Nisma Thurje, have published their electoral proposals/ programs on their official websites since the beginning of the electoral campaign.

- The **SP**, the party that entered these parliamentary elections from the position of the ruling political force, has made several media statements that sporadically mention women's issues, but without going into analysis and without presenting a full program.
- The **DP**, during the month of April has also presented its programs' focal points on their official website. The DP has included a dedicated section on women/gender equality in its' program, but without extending the gender approach to the other sections of the proposed program.
- Women and gender equality are an integral part of the **SMI** program, which has mentioned women in all interventions and priority areas.
- **Nisma Thurje** has a unified approach for all citizens, without specifying initiatives targeting women or gender equality. This approach clearly avoids positive discrimination against women, but it is a practice that we consider premature in a country like Albania, where gender inequalities are very deep.

There is still much work to be done to ensure that issues related to girls and women are integrated in the political programs. Only if gender lenses are used in every political and economic engagement and initiative in the country, it will be possible for gender indicators to improve and for Albanian girls and women to live a dignified life.